

**LAND AT ABBEY WHARF,
KINGSBRIDGE ROAD,
BARKING, LONDON:
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
TEST PIT EXERCISE**

SITE CODE: KBD15

REPORT NO: R12269

OCTOBER 2015



**PRE-CONSTRUCT
ARCHAEOLOGY**

**LAND AT ABBEY WHARF, KINGSBRIDGE ROAD, BARKING, LONDON,
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL TEST PIT EXERCISE**

SITE CODE: KBD 15

LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY: LONDON BOROUGH OF BARKING & DAGENHAM

PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER: n/a

CENTRAL NGR: TQ 4487 8303

WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY: FERGAL O'DONOGHUE
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OCTOBER 2015

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October 2015

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DOCUMENT VERIFICATION


Site Name

LAND AT ABBEY WHARF, KINGSBRIDGE ROAD, BARKING, LONDON

Type of project

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL TEST PIT EXERCISE

Quality Control

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited Project Code			K4221
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Revision No.	Date	Checked	Approved

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1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological test pit exercise on land at Abbey Wharf, Kingsbridge Road, Barking, London, London Borough of Barking and Dagenham. The evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, and was commissioned by Mr S Chowdhury.
- 1.2 Two 1.8m x 1.8m test pits were excavated. A third proposed test pit was abandoned as its location and two other possible alternatives were on land still in commercial use.
- 1.3 Trench 1 was moved westwards to allow commercial activity to continue. Trench 2 was moved slightly southwards to avoid a minor water pipe. These new locations were recorded by the surveyor.
- 1.4 A layer of alluvium was covered by up to 5m of late post-medieval and modern made ground. Extensive contamination was noted.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited on land at Abbey Wharf, Kingsbridge Road, Barking, London, IG11 0BD. The site was a square shaped parcel of land bounded by low lying marsh to the west, an unnamed stream to the north, Abbey Wharf Industrial Estate to the south and Kingsbridge Road to the east. The site was centred at NGR TQ 4487 8303.
- 2.2 The archaeological test pits were excavated between 20th and 21st October 2015 and were commissioned by Mr. S. Chowdhury. The work was undertaken in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (Hawkins 2015) and following English Heritage guidelines (GLAAS 2014).
- 2.3 The site is located within an Area of Archaeological Significance in line with policy BP3 (Archaeology) of the Borough wide Development Policies.
- 2.4 The archaeological test pits were supervised by Fergal O'Donoghue and project managed by Helen Hawkins, both of Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited. The work was monitored by John Gould, Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) who are the Archaeological Advisors to the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.
- 2.5 The completed archive comprising written, drawn, and photographic records and artefacts will be deposited with the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC).
- 2.6 The site was allocated the unique site code KBD 15.

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

3.1 National Guidance: National Planning Policy Framework

3.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was adopted on March 27 2012, and now supersedes the Planning Policy Statements (PPSs). The NPPF constitutes guidance for local planning authorities and decision-takers both in drawing up plans and as a material consideration in determining applications.

3.1.2 In considering any planning application for development the local planning authority will be guided by the policy framework set by the NPPF, by current Local Plan policy and by other material considerations.

3.2 Regional Policy: The London Plan

3.2.1 The relevant Strategic Development Plan framework is provided by “The London Plan, Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London Consolidated with Alterations since 2004” (Feb 2008). It includes the following policy relating to archaeology within central London:

Policy 4b.15 Archaeology

The Mayor, in partnership with English Heritage, the Museum of London and Boroughs, will support the identification, protection, interpretation and presentation of London’s archaeological resources. Boroughs in consultation with English Heritage and other relevant statutory organisations should include appropriate policies in their DPDs for protecting Scheduled Ancient Monuments and archaeological assets within their area.

3.3 Local Policy: Archaeology in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

3.3.1 The Barking & Dagenham Local Plan 2010-2025 – “Core Strategy Development Plan” was Adopted in July 2010. Chapter 8 – Policy CP2 covers archaeology and the Historic Environment:

POLICY CP2: PROTECTING AND PROMOTING OUR HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Barking and Dagenham has a rich local history. Signs of our fishing, maritime and industrial heritage can still be seen for example at Barking Town Quay, the Ford works in Dagenham, and the Malthouse and Granary buildings on Abbey Road. The Becontree Estate, the Curfew Tower and remains of Barking and Abbey, Eastbury Manor House, Valence House and Dagenham Village are also important symbols of our past.

However, compared to many other areas the Borough has relatively few protected historic environment assets such as listed buildings and conservations areas. With this in mind the Council will take particular care to:

- Protect and wherever possible enhance our historic environment.
- Promote understanding of and respect for our local context.
- Reinforce local distinctiveness.
- Require development proposals and regeneration initiatives to be of a high quality that respects and reflects our historic context and assets.

3.4 Planning Permission

3.4.1 An archaeological condition was attached to the planning permission for the site. The test pit

work was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Hawkins 2015) previously approved by the archaeological adviser to the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

4 TEST PIT OBJECTIVES

4.1 The Written Scheme of Investigation (Hawkins 2015) highlighted the following research objectives:

- To establish the nature and date of the made ground.
- To establish the nature, date and survival of activity relating to any archaeological periods at the site.
- To establish the extent of all past post-depositional impacts on the archaeological resource.

5 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 5.1 The underlying bedrock (solid geology) of the area is London Clay Formation – clay, silt and sand. The overlying superficial deposit (drift geology) is Alluvium – clay, silty, peaty, and sandy.
- 5.2 The site lies c. 120m to the north of the River Thames and is c. 370m to the west of Mayes Brook. It is c. 30m south of an unnamed stream and c. 50m east of a low lying marsh area. It is also c. 320m east of the River Roding as it begins to meander near the Thames.
- 5.3 Modern ground level is at 4m OD and the site is relatively flat.
- 5.4 Geotechnical works on the site suggested that at least 5m of modern made ground overlay alluvium and peat layers.

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 6.1 The archaeological and historical background is taken from the Written Scheme of Investigation (Hawkins 2015).
- 6.2 Prehistoric
- 6.2.1 In the prehistoric period the River Roding valley was the site of human activity and occupation. The river valleys were used by early scavengers and hunters.
- 6.2.2 A number of finds have been uncovered which provide evidence for human activity and interaction with the surrounding environment in the prehistoric period. The earliest evidence found consists of two primary flakes dating to the Lower Palaeolithic at Wallend. This suggests that there was human activity (flint working) within the immediate surroundings of the site.
- 6.2.3 On the other bank of the River Roding at the Beckton Sewage Works, an animal bone from a *Bos primegenius* – a form of wild cattle, was found and dated by pollen analysis to the mid-Atlantic period. This provides evidence of the activities of Mesolithic hunters in the area.
- 6.2.4 Later prehistoric activity has been found at the former Icon Warne Works, Gascoigne Road. An excavation uncovered a pit of burnt flint. The prehistoric activity represented by this material probably took place in the Neolithic when pollen evidence from the subsoil suggests that the excavated area formed a grassy land surface, which sloped down towards an area of wetland that existed beyond the southern boundary of site. Two flint flakes and a fragment of pottery were all considered to be broadly Neolithic, which suggests that the activity maybe of that date.
- 6.2.5 At Jenkins Lane, Beckton, to the west of the River Roding, a ‘stone axe-hammer’ was found, and a Creekmouth a polished stone axe of basalt was found. Both are attributed to the late Neolithic or early Bronze Age periods.
- 6.2.6 A number of Bronze Age finds have been uncovered in Barking Creek and the neighbouring marshes. This suggests that there was human activity in this period but also that there may have been habitation in this period. Dredging operations ‘at the mouth of the outfall of the Beckton Sewage works’ in 1868 revealed two bronze socketed axes. Another bronze socketed axe was found at Barking Creek along with the remains of a bronze sword hilt.
- 6.3 Roman
- 6.3.1 The Thames valley and its tributaries were exploited by the Romans. Archaeological evidence has been uncovered at 98-178 Abbey Road, Barking consisting of a possible Roman cremation burial in a pit cut into a ditch. In addition two pits, one containing an almost complete 1st century AD pot, and 1st century dumping layers were also recorded.
- 6.3.2 This suggests that there was a Roman settlement nearby or a Roman road alongside which burials took place. Analysis of aerial photographs has also revealed a possible disused dock of Barking Creek and this is thought be possible Roman in date.
- 6.4 Saxon
- 6.4.1 Barking is at least Saxon in origin and is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086. The total population is recorded as 136.5 households which relative to other Domesday settlements is very large. Population is counted in heads of households, so the real population was probably up to five times larger.
- 6.4.2 The place takes its name from the Old English personal name and *ingas* meaning ‘the people of...’. ‘Berica’s People’.
- 6.4.3 Archaeological evidence for the Saxon Period has been found within the search area. At St. Ann’s, Gascoigne Estate, Barking apiece of residual pottery was recovered from a post-Medieval feature, indicating the proximity of Saxon archaeology and by documentary evidence which mentions that Saxon coins were found in a garden to the southeast of the town.
- 6.4.4 In or about 666 AD St. Erkenwald, Bishop of London, founded Barking Abbey as a house for

Benedictine nuns. The medieval settlement of Barking centred on the abbey and the market place. The river was an important to the wharf at Barking Abbey.

6.5 Medieval

6.5.1 In the medieval period the marshes to the south of the parish to the east of the River Roding and north of the River Thames were part of the marshland commons and were more than likely used to graze sheep. Attempts were made in 1321 to 1322 to bring the marshes under cultivation but this was difficult and expensive. Crops sown there were sometimes lost by flooding, as occurred in 1409 and in the late 14th and 15th centuries there was a succession of floods on this part of the coast.

6.5.2 The marshes of Barking lie between Ripple Road and the Thames, and between the Back River and the Roding, a total of some 1,300a. In most parts of this area the land is now less than 10ft above mean sea-level. During the Middle Ages it was probably several feet higher, but even then flooding was frequent. Serious floods could cause the temporary loss of large tracts of valuable pasture land, and from the 13th century. If not earlier, attempts were being made in this parish to keep out the sea by means of walls and drainage ditches. The primary responsibility and burden for keeping out the sea rested by means of walls and drainage ditches rested on the tenants of the marshland, and especially on the Abbess of Barking, as lady of the manor and owner of the demesne farms of Eastbury and Westbury. Through her manor court the abbess was able to put pressure on her tenants to share in the maintenance of the sea defences. In 1440 to 1441 land drainage was being supervised through a special session of the manor court called the 'watergang', which imposed fines for failure to scour ditches.

6.5.3 By the mid-13th century the Crown was beginning to supplement contractual obligations by efforts of its own. In the 14th and 15th centuries such obligations were enforced by means of commissions of walls and ditches, *de walliis et fossatis*.

6.6 Post-Medieval

6.6.1 Areas within which commissioners of sewers carried out their duties were known as 'levels' and these began to emerge in the later 16th century. In 1563 Barking was under the jurisdiction of a court of sewers, whose area extended from West Ham to Mucking.

6.6.2 Andre's Map of 1777 and the Tithe Map of 1847 give an impression of what the pre-enclosure landscape would have looked like. Barking was enclosed in 1863 and the rights over the common marshland were extinguished.

7 METHODOLOGY

- 7.1 The evaluation was undertaken according to a Written Scheme of Investigation (Hawkins 2015) which was approved in advance by John Gould, GLAAS, Archaeological Adviser to the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham. The aim of the work was to define and characterise any archaeological deposits and features, in order to allow an assessment to be made of the heritage potential of the site, and the impact upon it from the proposed development.
- 7.2 The test pit investigation saw the excavation of two test pits. A third test pit had to be abandoned as no suitable location for it could be identified. All test pits were laid out with GPS survey equipment and checked with a CAT scanner prior to excavation.
- 7.3 All excavations were supervised by the author and proceeded in 100mm spits using a JCB excavator with a toothless bucket. Where modern concrete obstructions were encountered a mechanical breaker attached to the excavator was used to break the concrete.
- 7.4 The trench dimensions and highest and lowest levels are tabulated below:

Test Pit	Length	Width	Highest level	Lowest level
1	1.8m	1.8m	5.22m OD	0.22m OD
2	1.8m	1.8m	5.45m OD	0.95m OD
3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

- 7.5 Test Pit 1 consisted of alluvial deposits at the base of the sequence which were observed at a height of 0.52m OD. Above this was a dark silty clay layer, 1.50m in thickness, which appeared to contain some organic material such as branches and twigs, however this layer was very heavily contaminated with a very strong smell of tar. Above the alluvium was a brown layer of clay, 1.00m thick. Some Victorian pottery was seen in this layer but due to levels of contamination it was not kept. Above the clay was 2.20m of modern made ground.
- 7.6 Test Pit 2 was excavated to a depth of 0.95m OD. At this point, the trench suffered heavy ingress of water. The lowest deposit seen was a very thick black silty layer which contained 19th and 20th century pottery. This layer also contained diesel/petrol which was evident by its smell and glossy appearance of the soil, subsequently none of the pottery was kept for further analysis. This layer was excavated to a thickness of 3.10m. Above the black silty layer was 1.70m of modern made ground.
- 7.7 Test Pit 3 was abandoned as the original location was behind a locked gate which could not be accessed. Three other alternative sites for the pit were considered however they proved to be unsuitable due to the land being sub-let to another business who was unable to allow us to dig; foodstuffs being stored where our spoil would have been placed with a risk of contamination to the foodstuffs; and finally being in a location too close to where HGVs would be passing..
- 7.8 Trenches were CAT scanned after each spit was removed in order to check for buried services which were not marked on the service plan.
- 7.9 All open test pits were backfilled immediately before commencing the next test pit for safety reasons. The site itself was securely fenced by the client.
- 7.10 The test pits were recorded from the top and photographed. Due to the nature and make-up of the made ground, the test pits were not entered. Recording of the deposits was accomplished using test pit sheets.
- 7.11 The proposal follows IFA guidelines, and the methodologies set out in English Heritage (GLAAS) Guidance Papers for standards and practices in archaeological fieldwork watching briefs and assessments and evaluation.
- 7.12 Two Temporary Bench Marks (TBMs) were established adjacent to each test pit on the site

using GPS survey equipment.

- 7.13 The test pits were backfilled with the upcast material and compressed by the machine until the surfaces were level.

8 ARCHAEOLOGICAL PHASE DISCUSSION

Three phases of activity were noted during investigations:

- Phase 1 represented the natural geology encountered during investigations
- Phase 2 represented a period of post-medieval activity
- Phase 3 represented the modern over burden across site

Test Pit 1

8.1 Phase 1

8.1.1 The natural geological deposits consisted of alluvium [6] located at 0.52m OD.

8.2 Phase 2

8.2.1 A 1.00m thick post-medieval clay layer [4] located at 3.02m OD sealed an organic layer [5], 1.50m thick which was heavily contaminated by modern industrial processes seeping down to it.

8.3 Phase 3

8.3.1 This phase consisted of a concrete demolition rubble layer [1] 0.80m thick, followed by a sandy layer [2] which was 0.40m in thickness. The final layer in Phase 3 was a crushed red brick demolition rubble layer 1.00m thick.

Trench 2

8.4 Phase 1

8.4.1 There were no Phase 1 deposits observed in this pit.

8.5 Phase 2

8.5.1 Black silty layer [12] was located at 3.75m OD. The layer was 3.10m thick and contained some 19th and 20th century pottery, however the layer was contaminated and therefore the pottery was not kept. No further excavation was carried out due to water obscuring the base of the test pit.

8.6 Phase 3

8.6.1 This phase comprised crushed concrete [7] 0.40m thick overlying a sandy layer [8] 0.10m thick. Next in the sequence was a concrete slab [9] 0.40m thick with two make-up layers, crushed concrete [10] which was 0.30m thick and a layer of crushed red brick [11] which was 0.50m in thickness.

9 CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1 The test pit exercise identified three layers in the two test pits. These layers all appear to date to the late post-medieval period, except the alluvial layer which was undated.
- 9.2 Alluvial clay was encountered in the western test pit closest to the River Roding. This demonstrated that alluvial material in the area was located at a height of 0.52m OD. This would correspond to the top of the marsh area seen to the west of the site at a much lower level. It is clear that the Abbey Wharf site is located on a modern built up area, probably originally backfilled when the sewage treatment works was no using the site. The most recent made ground relates to the current use of the site for rubbish processing.
- 9.3 These findings suggest that the area investigated was marginal ground and only exploited by human activity after the expansion of urban London into rural Essex.

10 BIBLIOGRAPHY

10.1 Printed Sources

Collins, M, October 2014, *ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK BASE ASSESSMENT In respect of application for planning permission for the erection of a banqueting hall Abbey Wharf, Barking*, Unpublished client report.

Hawkins H, 2014, *ABBEY WHARF BANQUETING HALL, KINGSBRIDGE ROAD, BARKING, IG11 0BD, LONDON BOROUGH OF BARKING AND DAGENHAM: WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL TEST PITS*, unpublished client report.

11 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 11.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology would like to thank Kevin O'Callaghan for commissioning this investigation on behalf of Mr S Chowdhury.
- 11.2 Pre-Construct Archaeology would like to thank John Gould of Historic England for monitoring the work.
- 11.3 The author would like to thank Richard Archer for the surveying and CAT scanning.
- 11.4 Special thanks are given to Helen Hawkins for her project management and the editing of this report.

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT REGISTER

Site Code	Context No.	Location	Plan	Section	Type	Description
KBD 15	1	Test Pit 1	TP Location Plan	TP 1 Sketch	Layer	Demo Rubble/Made Ground
KBD 15	2	Test Pit 1	N/A	TP 1 Sketch	Layer	Sand
KBD 15	3	Test Pit 1	N/A	TP 1 Sketch	Layer	Demo Rubble/Crushed Bricks
KBD 15	4	Test Pit 1	N/A	TP 1 Sketch	Layer	Clay
KBD 15	5	Test Pit 1	N/A	TP 1 Sketch	Layer	Organic Deposits with Tar Seepage
KBD 15	6	Test Pit 1	N/A	TP 1 Sketch	Layer	Alluvium
KBD 15	7	Test Pit 2	TP Location Plan	TP 2 Sketch	Layer	Crush
KBD 15	8	Test Pit 2	N/A	TP 2 Sketch	Layer	Sand
KBD 15	9	Test Pit 2	N/A	TP 2 Sketch	Layer	Concrete Slab
KBD 15	10	Test Pit 2	N/A	TP 2 Sketch	Layer	Made Ground/Crushed Concrete
KBD 15	11	Test Pit 2	N/A	TP 2 Sketch	Layer	Made Ground/Crushed Bricks
KBD 15	12	Test Pit 2	N/A	TP 2 Sketch	Layer	Silty Deposits with Diesel Seepage

Site Code	Context No.	Phase	Highest Level	Lowest Level	N-S (length)	E-W (width)	Thickness/Depth	Photos No.	Findings
KBD 15	1	3	5.22m OD	5.22m OD	1.80m	1.80m	0.80m	D1, 2-8	N/A
KBD 15	2	3	4.42m OD	4.42m OD	1.80m	1.80m	0.40m	D1, 2-8	N/A
KBD 15	3	3	4.02m OD	4.02m OD	1.80m	1.80m	1.00m	D1, 2-8	N/A
KBD 15	4	2	3.02m OD	3.02m OD	1.80m	1.80m	1.00m	D1, 2-8	N/A
KBD 15	5	2	2.02m OD	2.02m OD	1.80m	1.80m	1.50m	D1, 2-8	N/A
KBD 15	6	1	0.52m OD	0.52m OD	1.80m	1.80m	0.30m	D1, 2-8	N/A
KBD 15	7	3	5.45m OD	5.45m OD	1.80m	1.80m	0.40m	D1, 11-17	N/A
KBD 15	8	3	5.05m OD	5.05m OD	1.80m	1.80m	0.10m	D1, 11-17	N/A
KBD 15	9	3	4.95m OD	4.95m OD	1.80m	1.80m	0.40m	D1, 11-17	N/A
KBD 15	10	3	4.55m OD	4.55m OD	1.80m	1.80m	0.30m	D1, 11-17	N/A
KBD 15	11	3	4.25m OD	4.25m OD	1.80m	1.80m	0.50m	D1, 11-17	N/A
KBD 15	12	2	3.75m OD	3.75m OD	1.80m	1.80m	3.10m	D1, 11-17	N/A

APPENDIX 2: SITE MATRIX

	Crush/Concrete			Test Pit 1		Test Pit 2
	Sand					
				+		+
	Crushed Brick					
	Clay			1		7
	Organic/Diesel Infused					8
	Alluvial					
		Phase 3 - Modern		2		9
						10
				3		11
		Phase 2 - Post-Medieval		4		
				5		12
		Phase 1 - Natural		6		
				NFE		NFE

APPENDIX 3: OASIS REPORT FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-228523

Project details

Project name LAND AT ABBEY WHARF, KINGSBRIDGE ROAD, BARKING, LONDON,

Short description of the project An archaeological test pit exercise was carried out on land at Abbey Wharf, Kingsbridge Road, Barking, London, London Borough of Barking and Dagenham. The evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited. Two 1.8m x 1.8m test pits were excavated. A third proposed test pit was abandoned as its location and two other possible alternatives were on land still in commercial use. A layer of alluvium was covered by up to 5m of late post-medieval and modern made ground. Extensive contamination was noted.

Project dates Start: 20-10-2015 End: 21-10-2015

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference codes KBD15 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area

Current Land use Industry and Commerce 4 - Storage and warehousing

Monument type NONE None

Monument type NONE None

Significant Finds NONE None

Significant Finds NONE None

Methods & techniques "Test Pits"

Development type Urban commercial (e.g. offices, shops, banks, etc.)

Prompt Planning condition

Position in the planning process After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON BARKING AND DAGENHAM BARKING Abbey
Wharf, Barking

Postcode IG11 0BD

Study area 500 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 448700 830300 51.527070086079 0.088624605014 51 31 37 N 000 05
19 E Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 0m Max: 0m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited

Project brief originator GLAAS

Project design originator Helen Hawkins

Project director/manager Helen Hawkins

Project supervisor Fergal O'Donoghue

Type of sponsor/funding body Developer

Name of sponsor/funding body Mr S Chowdhury

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient LAARC

Digital Archive ID KBD15

Digital Contents "none"

Digital Media available "Database","Spreadsheets","Survey","Text"

Paper Archive recipient LAARC

Paper Archive ID KBD15
Paper Contents "none"
Paper Media "Context sheet","Map","Photograph","Plan","Report","Survey
available ","Unpublished Text"

**Project
bibliography 1**

Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Publication type
Title LAND AT ABBEY WHARF, KINGSBRIDGE ROAD, BARKING, LONDON,
Author(s)/Editor(s) O'Donoghue, F
Date 2015
Issuer or publisher PCA
Place of issue or London
publication
Entered by archive (archive@pre-construct.com)
Entered on 30 October 2015

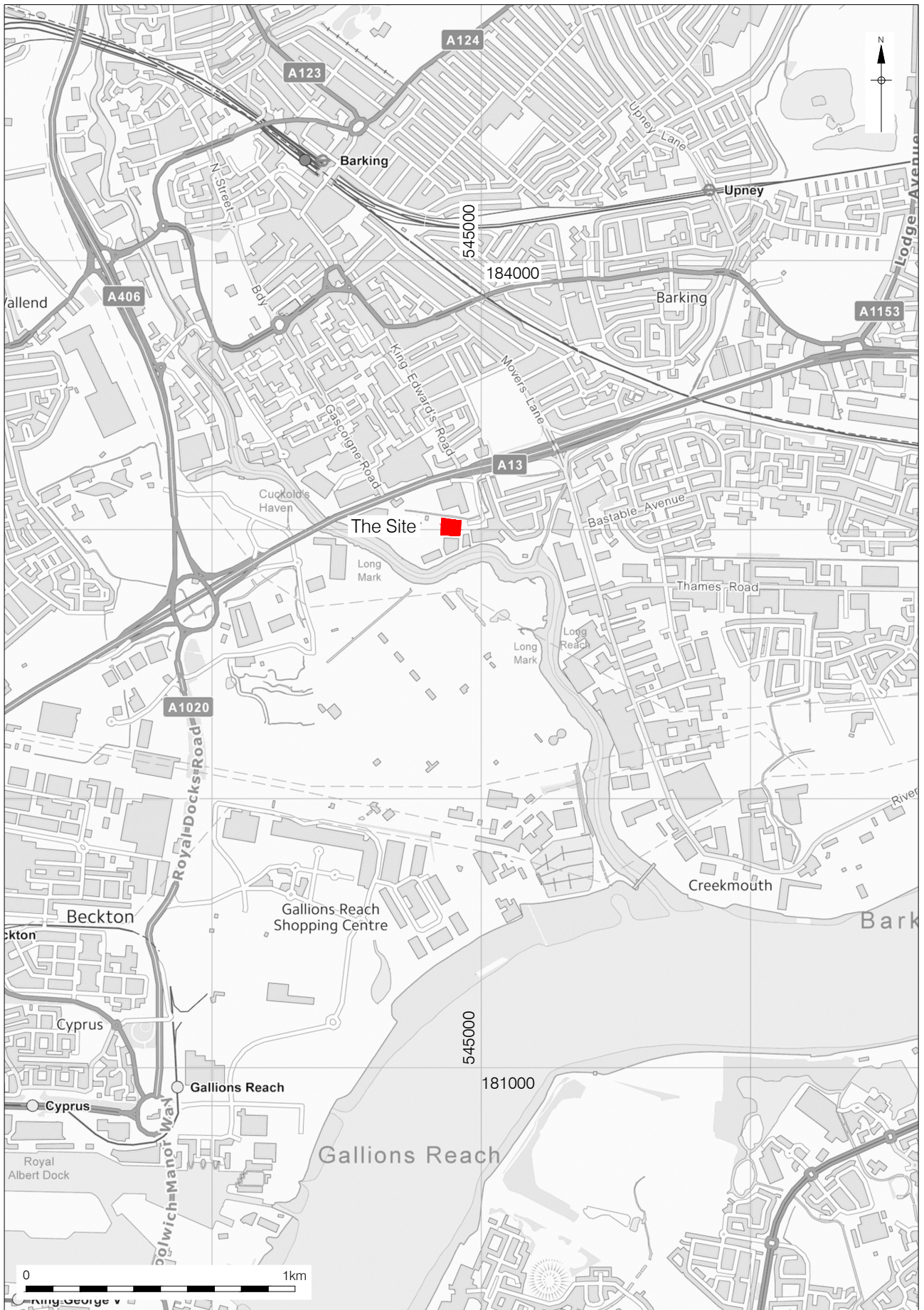
APPENDIX 4: PLATES

Plate 1: Test Pit 1, Looking northwest



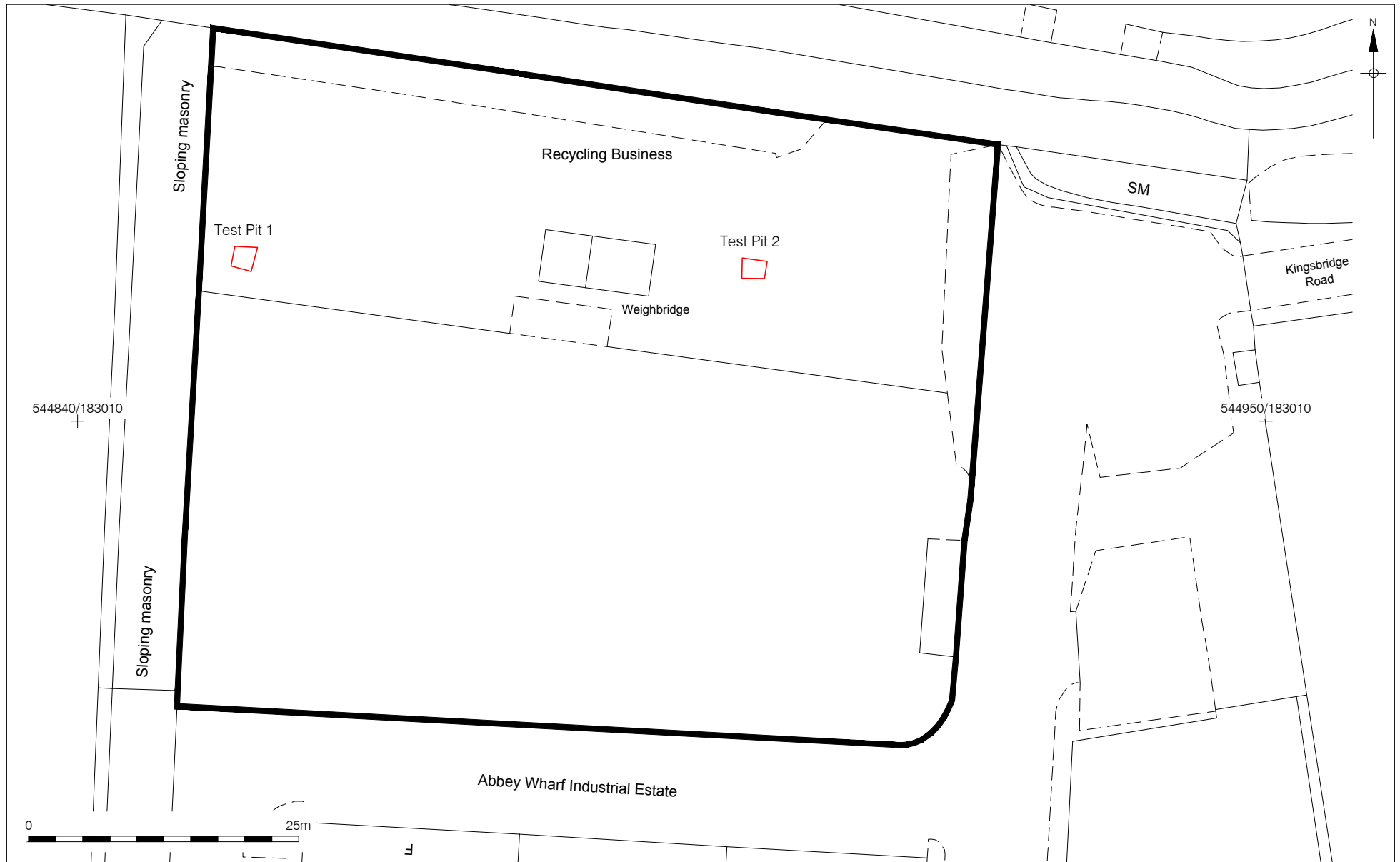
Plate 2: Test Pit 2, Looking north, see water in base





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Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:20,000 at A4



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Figure 2
 Test Pit Locations
 1:500 at A4

PCA

PCA SOUTH

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