

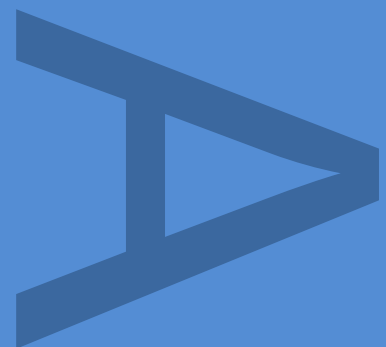
**139-141 MARE STREET
LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY
E8 3RH**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

PCA REPORT NO: R12308

SITE CODE: MRE13

DECEMBER 2015




PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

139-141 MARE STREET
LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Quality Control

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An Archaeological Watching Brief at 139-141 Mare Street, London Borough of Hackney

Site Code: MRE13

Central NGR: TQ 3483 8402

Local Planning Authority: London Borough of Hackney

Planning Reference: 2013/0226

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1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd has been commissioned by Mulalley to undertake an archaeological watching brief at 139-141 Mare Street, Hackney, London, E8 3RH (centred on NGR ref: TQ 3483 8402). The work was carried out intermittently from 29th July to 30th November 2015. This report details the findings and working methods of the watching brief on the site.
- 1.2 As well as the general archaeological potential of the site, the watching brief was designed to determine if the graveyard of the 19th century Baptist Chapel north of the site extended along the south side of the former building and into the very northern edge of the study site. During an evaluation of the north western-most area of the site in May 2013 (Jorgensen 2013) natural sandy clay was encountered at the base of two test pits. While a possible portion of the vestry of the Chapel was uncovered, the excavation of the two trenches revealed no evidence for human burials. In addition to the vestry wall a probable former property boundary wall was also encountered. No features predating the 19th century were observed in either test pit, and no burials or disarticulated human bone was observed.
- 1.3 The watching brief comprised the archaeological monitoring of ground reduction associated with the excavation of pile caps for the construction of the new development. These pile caps were located across the vast majority of the area of the site. The archaeological watching brief encountered no evidence for activity earlier than the twentieth century, nor did it record any natural strata. The only deposits recorded were 20th century made ground layers containing brick rubble.

2 INTRODUCTION

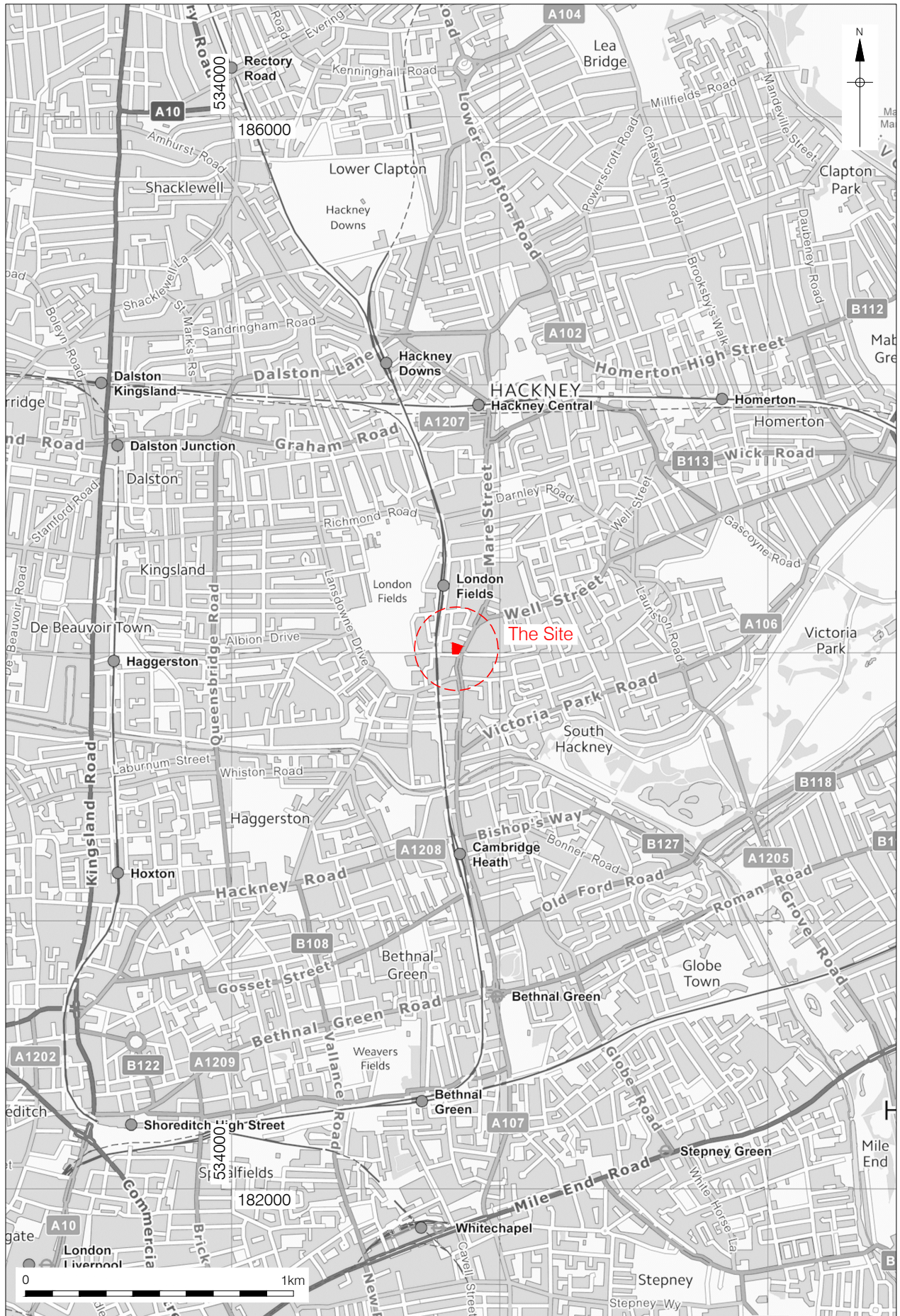
2.1 This report details the results and working methods of an archaeological watching brief undertaken on construction groundwork associated with the redevelopment of 139-141 Mare Street, Hackney, London, E8 3RH.

2.2 On 30th April 2013 Pre-Construct Archaeology carried out the excavation of two archaeological test pits measuring 2m x 2m in plan, which were positioned in the north west corner of the site. Both were excavated to the top of the natural gravels. Subsequently an archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Fergal O'Donoghue and Neil Hawkins of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd under the project management of Tim Bradley, also of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. The work was undertaken following discussions with Adam Single, Historic England GLAAS and in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation for the work (Bradley 2015).

2.3 Prior to the initial test pit phase of work a Desk Based Assessment determining the archaeological potential for the site was produced by CgMs Consulting (Meager 2012).

2.4 The site is located within an Archaeological Priority Zone as defined by the London Borough of Hackney.

2.5 Upon completion of all phases of the work the resultant archive will be deposited with the Museum of London LAARC under the site code MRE13.



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Figure 1
Site Location
1:20,000 at A4

3 BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

3.1 Site location

3.1.1 The site comprises numbers 139-141 Mare Street in the London Borough of Hackney. It is located immediately to the northwest of junction of Warburton Road with Mare Street; these streets delimit the site to the south and east respectively. A commercial property borders the site to the west, whilst an ongoing residential development borders the site to the north.

3.2 Geology

3.2.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited have previously undertaken an archaeological evaluation along the northern perimeter of site (Jorgensen 2013), which itself was preceded by an archaeological desk based assessment (Meager 2012). The following background information is taken from these reports.

3.2.2 In 2005 the URS Corporation carried out a borehole survey of the site. The borehole logs show that severe truncation of up to at least 3m in depth had occurred in the central portion of the site, presumably a result of subterranean petrol tanks installed during the operation of a petrol station on site. Along the peripheral areas of the site the truncation appeared less severe (Meager 2012).

3.2.3 The logs for the boreholes close to the perimeter of the site showed geological deposits occurring from approximately 0.40m below the current ground surface. From this point the logs recorded a deposit varying from medium dense orange/brown coarse grained clayey sand with occasional gravel to firm orange/brown clay with occasional pockets of fine sand (Meager 2012).

3.2.4 This is broadly consistent with the description given by the British Geological Survey for the Hackney Gravel Member forming the drift geology underlying the site. The Hackney Gravel Member is described in the BGS Lexicon of Named Rock units as comprising "sand and gravel, locally with lenses of silt, clay or peat" which averages between 6m and 10m in thickness (British Geological Survey 2013).

3.2.5 The bedrock geology shown by the British Geological Survey to underlie the site comprises London Clay (British Geological Survey 2013). None of the borehole undertaken by URS extended below the superficial deposits into the underlying London Clay.

3.3 Topography

3.3.1 Topographically the site is situated at approximately 17.9m OD. There is currently little variance in levels across the site, which is a result of artificial levelling of the area.

3.4 **Archaeological and Historical Background**

- 3.4.1 The following is a brief summary of the archaeological and historical background of the site as detailed in a Desk Based Assessment prepared for the study site by Richard Meager of CgMs Consulting (2012).
- 3.4.2 Geologically the site is situated over the Hackney Gravel formation, which has proved to be one of the richest sources of Palaeolithic material in the country. Significant flint assemblages were observed during basement excavations and brickearth/gravel extraction during the late 19th century.
- 3.4.3 Activity in the area seems to have waned during the Mesolithic and evidence for human activity in the immediate area of the site during the Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age is absent altogether. There is also a lack of evidence for activity within the area during the Roman period.
- 3.4.4 It has been suggested that the name Hackney is of Saxon origin forming a compound of the words *Haccan* meaning battle and *ey* meaning river or alternatively meaning the island (eyot) of the Saxon chief *Hacca*. Despite the possible Saxon origin of the name, Hackney does not appear in Domesday Book (Meager 2012). There is also an absence of archaeological evidence pointing to Anglo-Saxon occupation in the vicinity of the site.
- 3.4.5 Mare Street immediately east of the site and Hackney Road to the northeast are thought to be of medieval origin. The earliest known documentary evidence for the existence of Mare Street dates to 1443 and refer to a small settlement *Merestret*. Archaeological evidence for activity in the area during the medieval period include the remains of a possible manor house, a timber revetted stream, a well and horticultural soils.
- 3.4.6 By the end of the 16th century settlement along Mare Street had developed and by the time of John Rocque's 1745 survey buildings facing Mare Street are shown within the eastern part of the site. Development of the area continued throughout the 18th century and by the early 19th century a number of buildings existed within the confines of the site. The Mare Street Baptist Chapel was built just north of the study site between March and November of 1812. A small burial ground covering approximately 61m² and which is believed to have been in use from 1812 to c. 1855 existed to the south of the chapel.
- 3.4.7 The chapel is thought to have been rebuilt between 1855 and 1856 after it was destroyed by fire in 1854. Sometime after 1870 but before 1898 a vestry was added onto the southwest corner of the chapel. The vestry extended south into the northwest corner of the study site. By 1870 most of the study site was occupied by buildings.
- 3.4.8 Both the Baptist chapel and the buildings occupying the study site suffered severe bomb damage during World War II when a V2 rocket exploded adjacent to the site in February 1945. The 1948 Ordnance Survey shows the site clear of buildings with the exception of a ruin in the northeast corner. To the north of the site the Baptist chapel is also labelled as a ruin.

3.4.9 With the exception of a car sales lot in the southern part of the site the study site appears to remain undeveloped until 1959 or the early 1960s when a garage was constructed with buildings occupying the western and northern sides of the property. In the early 1980s the garage buildings were demolished and a new service station built. The service station building and canopy are part of the present site layout.

3.5 **Planning Background**

3.5.1 In March 2012, The Department for Local Communities and Local Government published the *National Planning Policy Framework* (replacing *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment*). Chapter 12, "Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment", provides guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the conservation preservation and investigation of Heritage Assets.

3.5.2 In considering any proposal for development, the planning authority will be mindful of the policy framework set by the above government guidance, by current Development Plan policy and by other material considerations.

3.5.3 The relevant Strategic Development Plan framework is provided by 'The London Plan' (July 2011). The relevant local policy is provided by the London Borough of Hackney's Core Strategy, adopted in 2010. It contains the following policy statement regarding the Historic Environment:

Core Strategy Policy 25: Historic Environment

All development should make a positive contribution to the character of Hackney's historic and built environment. This includes identifying, conserving and enhancing the historic significance of the borough's designated heritage assets, their setting and where appropriate the wider historic environment.

3.5.4 Planning permission has been granted for the development of the site (**2013/0226**). The planning permission includes a condition (Condition 11) relating to archaeology

11 A) No demolition or development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the local planning authority.

B) No development or demolition shall take place other than in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under Part (A).

C) The development shall not be occupied until the investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under Part (A), and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of the results and archive deposition had been secured.

REASON: Heritage assets of archaeological interest survive on the site, including potential human remains. The planning authority wishes to secure the provision of archaeological investigation and historic buildings assessment followed by the subsequent recording of significant remains prior to development (including preservation of important remains), in accordance with recommendations given by the borough and in PPS 5/NPPF.

3.5.5 This archaeological watching brief has been undertaken in accordance with Condition 11 of the planning permission (2013/0226) and the approved Written Scheme of Investigation for the archaeological watching brief (Bradley 2015).

3.6 **Aims and Objectives**

3.6.1 The aim of the archaeological work was to preserve 'by record' the extent and significance of any surviving archaeological features and deposits within the site.

3.6.2 Insofar as possible, within the methodological constraints, explain any chronological, spatial or functional relationships between the structures/remains identified, and to link the archaeological results with the data already recovered in the wider area.

3.7 **Archaeological Methodology**

3.7.1 The archaeological methodology for the watching brief is detailed in the site specific Written Scheme of Investigation (Bradley 2015). The watching brief consisted of the excavation of a number of pile locations and associated pile caps across the majority of the area of the site. These ground works were undertaken under archaeological supervision.

3.7.2 The machining was undertaken using a mechanical excavator. The mechanical excavator used a toothless ditching bucket to remove modern overburden under the constant supervision of an archaeologist. Spoil was mounted a safe distance from the edge of the excavation.

3.7.3 Machine excavation continued in spits until either significant archaeological strata was found or formation level was reached. Hard surfacing and overburden layers were removed by mechanical excavator, under archaeological control. Hand-excavation was undertaken once the top of the archaeological remains were exposed.

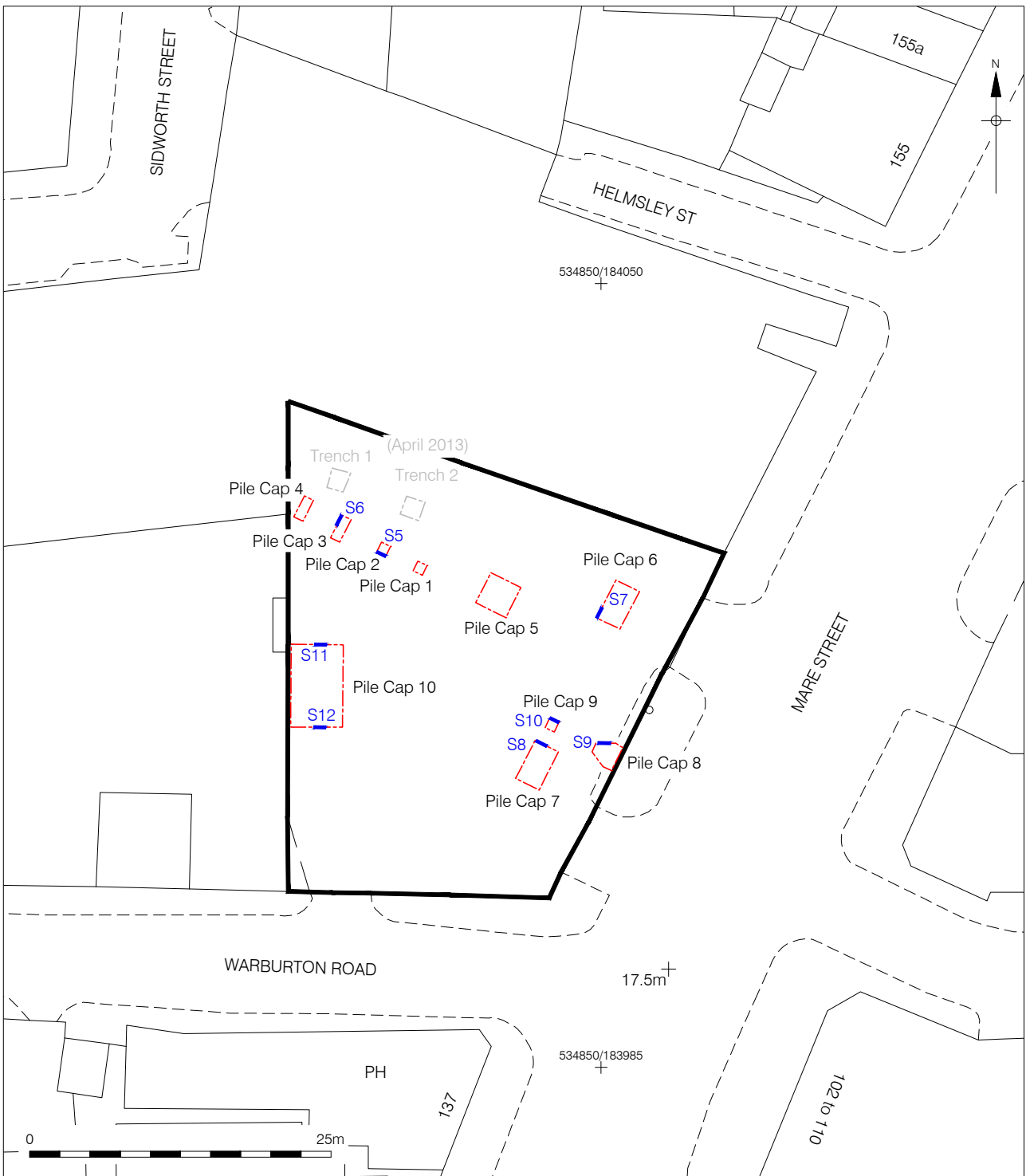
3.7.4 All significant archaeological deposits and features were survey located using a Leica 1200 GPRS unit. Deposit and feature descriptions were recorded on pro-forma context sheets comparable to those used elsewhere in the Greater London area and a representative section of each test pit was drawn on polyester based drafting film (permatrace) at a scale of 1:10. In addition to this all significant features were photographed using a high resolution digital camera.

3.7.5 In order to prevent unauthorised access to the excavation areas the site was secured by the Main Contractor.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

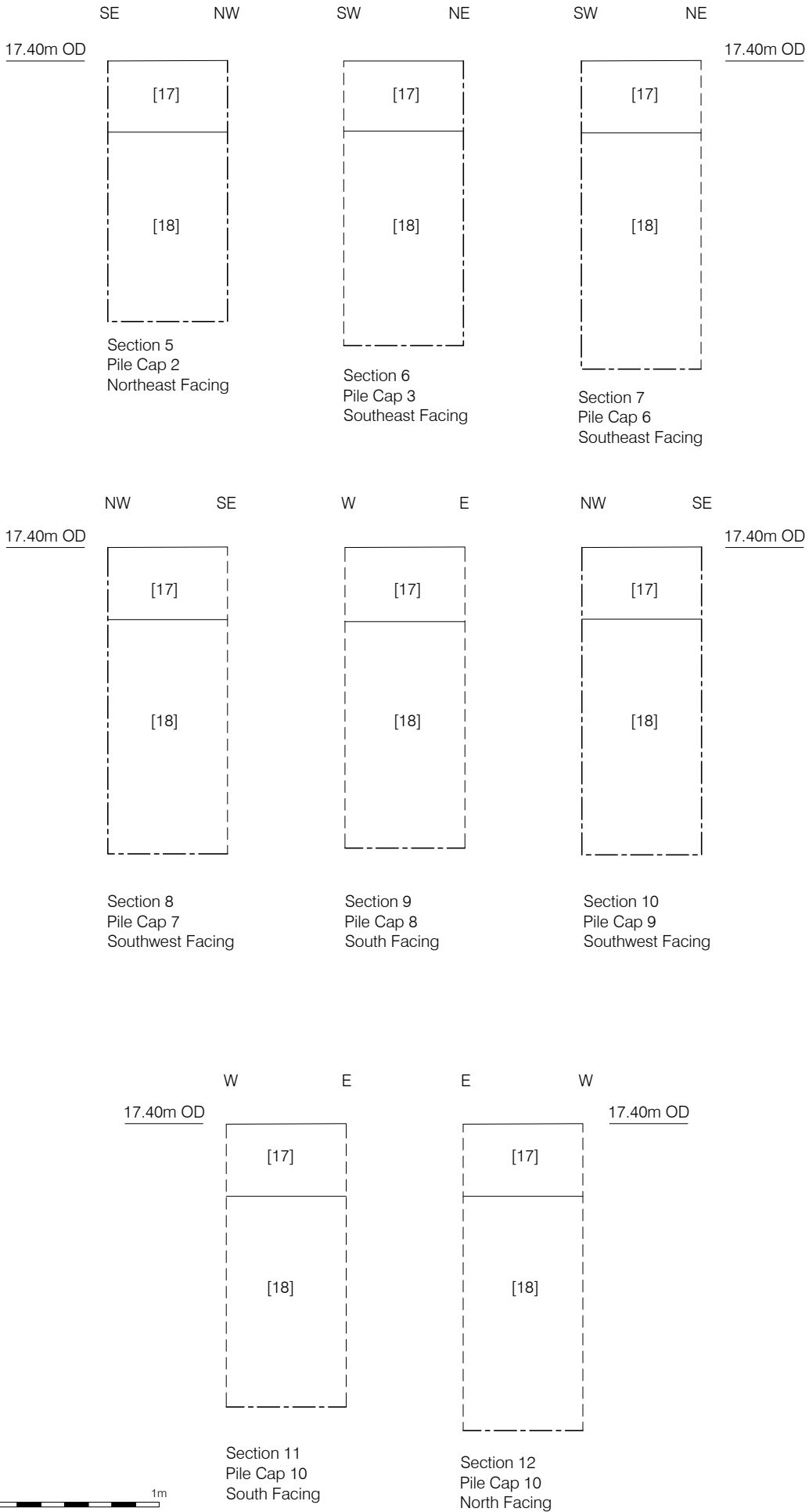
4.1 Phase 1: Modern

- 4.1.1 Recorded within all the watching brief pile cap pits was the identical sequence of modern deposits. This consisted of layer [18], a mixed clay-silt deposit which contained frequent inclusions of modern brick rubble. Located at 17.10m OD this deposit was between 0.80m and 1m thick but continued deeper beyond the required depth of the ground works. This was sealed by a modern deposit, [17], located at 17.40m OD and represented the current ground surface level.
- 4.1.2 No natural deposits or archaeological features or structures were recorded during the course of the watching brief fieldwork. The disturbance recorded is likely to be associated predominantly with the former use of the site as a petrol filling station.
- 4.1.3 Whilst the preceding archaeological evaluation recorded natural deposits at the extreme north west of the site, this area is likely to have been outside the areas of truncation from later phases of development. The construction groundwork in this area of the site was restricted to the lifting of the concrete slab, so no further evidence of the intact natural ground was observed.



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Figure 2
 Trench Location
 1:500 at A4



0 1m
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Figure 3
 Sections 5 - 12
 1:25 at A4

5 INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Interpretation

- 5.1.1 The archaeological watching brief encountered no evidence for activity earlier than the twentieth century, nor did it record any natural strata. The only deposits recorded were 20th century made ground layers containing brick rubble. Indeed these deposits continued deeper than the formation level of the ground works monitored.
- 5.1.2 A previously undertaken borehole survey across the site (Meager 2012) illustrates severe truncation, up to at least 3m in depth, in the central portion of the site. The recorded depositional sequence during the watching brief appears to attest to this level of truncation. This severe truncation may relate to the installation of subterranean petrol tanks associated with the previously extant petrol station located on the site. An alternative explanation for the severe truncation may be the impact of a V2 rocket in an adjacent site in February 1945. This had an effect on the site as illustrated by the 1948 Ordnance Survey map which shows the site to be clear of buildings which previously occupied the entirety of the area. Any site clearance associated with post-bomb damage clean up may also therefore have had a severe impact on below ground deposits.
- 5.1.3 The depositional sequence recorded during the watching brief was in stark contrast to that encountered during the previously undertaken evaluation in the northwestern corner of the site (Jorgensen 2013). This identified brick foundations associated with the 19th century Baptist Chapel known to have been extant in that location. This previous evaluation did not however identify any evidence that this area to the south of the chapel had been utilised as a graveyard. The previous evaluation also encountered natural deposits at 16.64m OD; a level which is higher than the formation level of the ground works monitored during the watching brief, between 16.30m and 16.10m OD. This further attests to the levels of truncation across the vast majority of the site being below the natural strata as recorded in the peripheral north west area of the site.

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 6.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Mulalley and Company Ltd for commissioning the work on behalf of their client, Sherrygreen Homes Ltd.
- 6.2 The author would like to thank Tim Bradley for his project management, Neil Hawkins for his supervision of site, and Jennifer Simonson for preparing the illustrations.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Plates



Plate 1: Pile Cap 1, facing west



Plate 2: Pile Cap 2, facing west



Plate 3: Pile Cap 4, facing south



Plate 4: Pile Cap 6, northwest facing



Plate 5: Pile Cap 10, northwest facing

Appendix 1: Context Register

Context	Type	Height (m OD)	Description
17	Layer	17.40	Modern Made Ground
18	Layer	17.10	Modern Made Ground

Appendix 2: OASIS Form

OASIS ID: preconst1-232937

Project details

Project name	An archaeological watching brief at 139-141 Mare Street, London Borough of Hackney, E8 3RH
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief at 139-141 Mare Street, London Borough of Hackney, E8 3RH consisted of the monitoring of the excavations of pile caps for the construction of a new development. The watching brief only encountered modern deposits.
Project dates	Start: 29-07-2015 End: 30-11-2015
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	MRE13 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 3 - Retailing
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON HACKNEY HACKNEY 139-141 Mare Street, London Borough of Hackney
Postcode	E8 3RH
Site coordinates	TQ 3483 8402 51.538460108348 -0.055652365497 51 32 18 N 000 03 20 W Point

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Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.
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Project design originator	Tim Bradley

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Project supervisor Fergal O'Donoghue and Neil Hawkins
Type of sponsor/funding body Private Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body Mulalley

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No
Digital Archive recipient LAARC
Digital Media available "Text"
Paper Archive recipient LAARC
Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Unpublished Text"

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