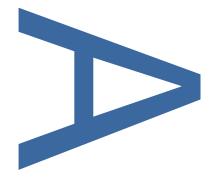
LAND ADJACENT TO NORBURY STATION, NORBURY AVENUE, LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON, SW16 4BT

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SITE CODE: NBY19

APRIL 2019

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY







DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

LAND ADJACENT TO NORBURY STATION, NORBURY AVENUE, LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON, SW16 4BT

Type of project

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Quality Control

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LAND ADJACENT TO NORBURY STATION, NORBURY AVENUE, LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON SW16 4BT: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Site Code:	NBY19
Central NGR:	TQ 30668 69762
Local Planning Authority:	London Borough of Croydon
Planning Reference:	18/04047/FUL
Commissioning Client:	Britbuild Properties Ltd
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April 2019

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1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited on land adjacent to Norbury Station, Norbury Avenue, London, SW16 4BT. The site is located in the London Borough of Croydon and is centred at National Grid Reference TQ 30668 69762.
- 1.2 The work was undertaken prior to the redevelopment of the site consisting of construction of a four-storey building of mixed residential and commercial use (London Borough of Croydon Planning Ref. 18/04047/FUL).
- 1.3 Following a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited (PCA 2019), an archaeological evaluation was undertaken over two days between 1st and 2nd April 2019. A single evaluation trench measuring 22m x 1.8m was excavated and it was located within footprint of the proposed new building.
- 1.4 Natural geology encountered on the site was composed of a yellowish mid brown clayey sand and it had been heavily burrowed and subject to bioturbation. The drift geology was recorded at 35.02m OD at its highest point (in the east of the study area) and at 34.95m OD at the west end of the trench.
- 1.5 Trench 1 contained disturbances caused by bioturbation, animal burrowing and modern interventions. An insubstantial concrete pad was present within the trench and it may have been a vestige of the construction related to the Norbury station.
- 1.6 No other archaeological deposits or features were observed during the evaluation.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited (PCA) on land adjacent to Norbury Station, Norbury Avenue, London, SW16 4BT (Figure 1). The site is located in the London Borough of Croydon and is centred at National Grid Reference TQ 30668 69762. The site comprises a car park situated north/northeast of the station and currently not in use.
- 2.2 The archaeological investigation was undertaken in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by PCA (2019) and approved by Historic England Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS).
- 2.3 The site lies within the London to Brighton Roman Road Archaeological Priority Area (DLO37709) as designated by the London Borough of Croydon.
- 2.4 Planning permission was granted for the construction of a four-storey building comprising of 12 flats (LB Croydon Council Planning Ref. 18/04047/FUL). An archaeological condition, which detailed that the site should be subject to an archaeological trial trench evaluation in the first instance, was added to the permission.
- 2.5 The work was undertaken over two days between 1st and 2nd April 2019 in advance of the proposed development. The investigation comprised of a single archaeological evaluation trench (22m x 1.8m) located within footprint of the proposed new building (Figure 2).
- 2.6 In advance of in the investigation PCA prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation (Pozorski 2019) which provided the design for the evaluation work and was approved by Louise Davies of Historic England's Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS).
- 2.7 The archaeological evaluation was conducted by PCA under the supervision of Tanya Jones. The project was managed by Zbigniew Pozorski of the PCA.
- 2.8 The completed archive comprising written, drawn, and photographic records and artefacts will be deposited with the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC) under the unique site code NBY19.

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Planning permission was granted for the construction of a four-storey building comprising of 12 flats with balconies and a ground floor commercial unit (218sq.m floorspace, Use Class B8 storage and distribution) with associated parking (for 7 cars), bicycle and refuse area; vehicles crossover, pedestrian footpath improvements, new landscaping including communal area (London Borough of Croydon Planning Ref. 18/04047/FUL).
- 3.2 The planning condition (19) attached to the decision issued on 27th March 2019 reads as follows:

A) No development other than demolition to existing ground level shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological evaluation in accordance with a written scheme which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the local planning authority in writing and a report on that evaluation has been submitted to the local planning authority.

B) If heritage assets of archaeological interest are identified by the evaluation under Part A, then before development, other than demolition to existing ground level, commences the applicant (or their heirs and successors in title) shall secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological investigation in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the local planning authority in writing.

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

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

Reason: To safeguard the heritage of the Borough by providing an adequate opportunity to investigate and excavate archaeological remains on the site before development is carried out.

3.3 Consultation with Louise Davies of Historic England Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS), archaeological advisor to LB Croydon, confirmed the details required for the evaluation to be undertaken on the site.

4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

4.1 Geology

- 4.1.1 The solid geology of the area is London Clay (British Geological Survey). The superficial deposits of alluvial layers overly the sand and gravel belonging to the Lynch Hill Gravel Member of the Wolstonian Stage which are present to the south-east of the site (British Geological Survey 2019).
- 4.1.2 The drift geology was recorded at 35.02m OD at its highest point (in the east of the study area) and at 34.95m OD at the west end of the trench.
- 4.1.3 The soils of the area are described as base-rich loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage and of moderate fertility (Soilscapes 2019).

4.2 **Topography**

- 4.2.1 The modern ground surface on the site is situated between 36.10m and 36.90m above Ordnance Datum (OD) on a land raising towards the south.
- 4.2.2 Norbury Brook flows into the River Graveney 160m to the north of the site, which is a tributary of the River Wandle.
- 4.2.3 The site comprises rectangular plot of land until recently used as a car park. The site is delimited by Norbury Avenue to the north, Norbury Station to the east and south-east and London Road to the west.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

5.1 **Prehistoric**

5.1.1 No prehistoric archaeological remains are known from area in vicinity of the site.

5.2 Roman

- 5.2.1 The site lies within the London to Brighton Roman Road Archaeological Priority Area (DLO37709) as designated by LB Croydon. The London to Brighton Roman road (MLO15077), sometimes referred to as the London to Portslade Roman road, is one of three major routes that led south from London along with the London to Lewes road and Stane Street. Together they linked London with the south coast and the iron producing and corn growing areas of Sussex. The London to Brighton road (MLO107771) branched from Stane Street near Kennington Park and then followed a route marked by several modern roads including Brixton Road, Brixton Hill, Streatham Hill and Streatham High Road. London Road follows the route of the road between Norbury and Broad Green.
- 5.2.2 Part of the road was unveiled *c*. 425m to the north-north-west of the site at Bensham Lane (MLO13008) and in vicinity of Hermitage Bridge (MLO24025) where the ford was present. The road "was 32 feet wide with a ditch that was 15 inches deep on its western side and it also had a kerb that was four inches high and six inches wide. The road was made of flint and surfaced with cobble stones and iron slag". Another section of the read was found c. 230m to the south-south-west, at the junction of London Road and St Helen's Road (MLO16230). The road was also made of flint and cobbles but with support of a layer of mortar over three-inch layer of hazel wood.
- 5.2.3 A Roman coin (MLO12617) was found in Norbury park *c.* 300m to the north-east of the site.

5.3 Saxon and Medieval

5.3.1 The name Norbury derives from North Burh which later became Northborough and the Norbury and related to northern part of Bensham. Norbury was a sub-manor of Croydon Manor and was held by the Carew family between 1385 and 1859. No Saxon or medieval remains were recorded in vicinity of the site.

5.4 **Post-Medieval**

- 5.4.1 Hermitage Bridge was built in 1801 in the location of the earlier 16th century crossing between Streatham and Norbury, c. 350m north-west of the site. Remains of that 19th century structure (MLO4108) were found at Streatham High Road.
- 5.4.2 A terrace row of Locally Listed Buildings is present along London Road to the south-west of the site. Norbury Station (MLO102122) located to the west/south-west of the site, was built in 1878 and is a Locally Listed Building. The tram exchange was also located to the north-west of the site between 1901 and 1951. Some WWII defences are still present in the area, including anti-

tank ditch (MLO105580) just 80m south of the site, on the southern side of the railway tracks, and a defended building (MLO105578) 200m to the west, at Roche Road.

6 METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 The methodology for the proposed excavation of the trench was outlined in the Written Scheme of Investigation produced for the site (PCA 2019).
- 6.2 The evaluation was designed to comprise a single archaeological trench located within footprint of the proposed new building (Figure 2). The trench measured 22m x 1.80m.
- 6.3 The trench was laid out as specified in the WSI with a little modification to take into account a number of concrete pads and a readings of the CAT scanner. The trench was scanned after each spit in order to check for buried services which were not marked on the service plan.
- 6.4 The trench was excavated by a JCB 3CX type mechanical excavator under archaeological supervision until either significant archaeological horizons or natural deposits were encountered, at which point deposits were cleaned and excavated by hand.
- 6.5 Once excavation had been completed and the trench cleaned, all deposits were then recorded on proforma context sheets. Trench plans were drawn at scales of 1:50 and 1:20 and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20. A digital photographic record was also kept of all eight trenches.
- 6.6 A temporary benchmark (TBM) at a height of 36.04 OD was established on site for levelling purposes using the GPS system. This system was used to set out and locate the trenches upon excavation.
- 6.7 The completed archive produced during the evaluation, comprising written, drawn, photographic records and artefacts will be deposited with LAARC, identified by site code NBY19.

7 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

7.1 The archaeological sequence encountered within Trench 1 has been separated into four phases, as follows:

PHASE	PERIOD	DATE	ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE	INTERPRETATION
1	Holocene	c.11 650	Natural alluvial layers sealing the Lynch	Alluvial layers possibly derived
		BP	Gravel Member	from Norbury Brook to the north.
2	Post	18 th – 19 th	Bioturbation, tree-throws and animal	Land clearance & draining on
	Medieval	Century	burrowing.	farmland prior to the arrival of the
			Terracotta land drain (AD 1700 – 1900)	railway.
3	Post	$19^{th} - 20^{th}$	Made ground layers, modern detritus and	Construction of Norbury Train
	Medieval	Century	fragmentary building materials	Station.
			Concrete pad.	
4	Modern	20 th century	Tarmac surfaces and bedding layers	Car park surface
		- Present		



Plate 1: Trench 1, view south-east

7.2 Phase 1: Natural

7.2.1 The earliest deposit encountered was a disturbed layer of friable, yellowish, mid-brown clayey silt with sand [10,14,15,16] which contained a high degree of bioturbation and animal burrowing. It was recorded at 34.95m OD in the east of the trench and at 34.92m OD in the western section.

7.3 Phase 2: Post-Medieval (Land Clearance & Drainage)

7.3.1 In Section 1 a low-level of bioturbation or animal burrowing [9] was noted, whose fill [8] was a firm, greyish dark brown silty sand which had been sealed by greyish dark-brown clayey-silt layer [7]. (Figure 3, Section 1; Plate 2).



Plate 2: View south-west, Section 1, scale 1m. Bioturbation or animal burrowing [9] is visible to the left of photograph sealed under the black layer [7]

7.3.2 The high degree of bioturbation and animal burrowing was even more pronounced in the center of the trench at Section 2 where a large, irregular feature [6] resembled a tree-throw. It measured 1.62m by 0.61m wide and was 0.29m deep. Its fill, [5] was comprised of a friable, brownish light grey silty sand. A single burnt flint was recovered from this fill. Equally, this feature may have been a cavity or hollow created by land clearance (consisting of the removal of tree and scrub) and the result of intentional human agency (Figure 3, Section 2; Plate 3). Layer [4] was recorded as being a possible relict soil layer as it was composed of a soft, dark grey, sandy-silt with occasional rounded pebble inclusions.



Plate 3: View to the north-east, Section 2, scale 1m. Tree-throw or animal burrow [7] is at the bottom of the sequence, overlain by a possible relict soil layer [4]. These in turn are sealed by a number of tipped or dumped made-ground layers



Plate 3: View to south-east, Section 3, scale 1m. Land drain [12] in bottom right-hand side. Earlier agricultural activity has been both truncated by later development in the 19th century and natural 'mixed' by ongoing bioturbation and animal burrowing.

7.4 Phase 3: Early modern (19th – 20th Century)

- 7.4.1 A number of post-medieval made ground layers sealed the earlier agricultural activities further down the sequence. Layer [7] in Section 1 and layers [1-3] in Section 2 were all ones which that had either been dumped or tipped onto the site to raise the ground level.
- 7.4.2 Further modern intrusions and an isolated concrete pad [17] may have been associated with the construction of Norbury Train station. The pad was just over 1m x1m square set upon a thin bed of gravel [18].
- 7.4.3 The Balham Hill & East Croydon Line was constructed by the London Brighton & South Coast Railway (LB&SCR) which began service in 1862. However, Norbury station was not opened for another 16 years until 1878, where the surroundings were described as 'very rural' (Howard Turner 1979).
- 7.4.4 A terracotta land -drain was also recorded in Section 3 at the western end of the trench. Due to the amount of disturbance and soil-mixing that occurred, the cut for the drain was difficult to see, as a number of roots had travelled down towards the drain no doubt attracted by its moisture and presence of minerals. The land drain had been cut into the top of the natural to drain what would have been the subsoils above. This type is known to have been fabricated over a wide date range, *c*. AD 1700 1900 (Appendix 2) (Figure 3, Section 3; Plate 4).

7.5 Phase 4: Modern (20th Century – Present)

7.5.1 Modern layers that had been introduced to the site for the raising of the car park were all noted as (+) layers, as they only consisted as a gravel bedding and make-up layers of preparation to receive the parking area's present tarmac surface.

8 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Research Objectives

8.1.1 The evaluation aimed to answer following research objectives contained within the Written Scheme of Investigation (PCA 2019):

Were there Roman remains present on site and do they relate to the known Roman road nearby?

8.1.2 The site did not contain any archaeological features dating to the Roman period. A small, abraded pottery sherd of an oxidized sandy ceramic was recovered from fill [8] of possible animal burrow [9]. Although in an eroded state, it may have dated to the Roman period; however, a later dating was considered more likely (Appendix 1). Furthermore, the sherd was small, heavily abraded (the surfaces had been eroded) and was not supported by any other finds. It is likely to have been a fragment introduced through ploughing, bioturbation or animal burrowing.

Were there remains of the 19th century activity on the site relating to the train station?

8.1.3 All three sections recorded made ground to some degree. Roughly central to the trench, a small area of a thin concrete pad or surface [17] was uncovered which was only 0.08m thick, resting upon a gravel bed [18]. Its purpose remained unknown and it was clearly not a structural component. It did, however, seal the natural deposit below.

8.2 Conclusions

- 8.2.1 Little in the way of site formation processes were noted during excavation, except for the presence of an almost imperceptible fall from south to north. The 'upper' drift geology showed evidence for bioturbation, animal burrowing and possibly, later land clearance. Bioturbation may have been exacerbated due to its proximity to the Norbury Brook only 160m to the north. The study area may have been situated on the edge of the brook's flood plain which would have promoted undergrowth along its southern bank.
- 8.2.2 The presence of a terracotta land drain (manufactured to between AD 1700-1900) suggests a program of drainage to facilitate cultivation which may have occurred in the 18th-19th centuries. The O.S. map of 1894 shows that the landscape around the train station was still a mixture of open fields and agricultural plots which supports this interpretation.
- 8.2.3 No archaeological features relating to the Roman period were uncovered during the excavation. The single, heavily-abraded pottery sherd recovered from the bioturbation feature [8] dated either to a later period or was intrusive.
- 8.2.4 The small area of concrete pad or floor surface [17] uncovered was too insubstantial to have been an intrinsic structural component of a building, so was likely to have represented an outside yard surface or interior surface for a smaller, peripheral building. No dating material was found in association with the concrete.

8.2.5 Once the project is deemed complete and this report approved by the London Borough of Bromley, the completed archive comprising all site records from fieldwork will eventually be deposited with LAARC under site code LOK18 and a summary report published in the *London Archaeologist* annual round-up.

9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Britbuild Properties Ltd for commissioning the work and Louise Davies of GLAAS for her input and advice to the project.
- 9.2 The author would like to thank Tanya Jones for supervising the fieldwork and undertaking the GPS survey.
- 9.3 The author also thanks Zbigniew Pozorski for project managing the evaluation and editing this report and Diana Valk for the CAD illustrations.

10 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Historic England, 2016, *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* MoRPHE

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Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd, Z 2019 Land adjacent to Norbury Station, Norbury Avenue, London Borough of Croydon SW16: Written Scheme of Investigation for An Archaeological Evaluation. Unpublished report.

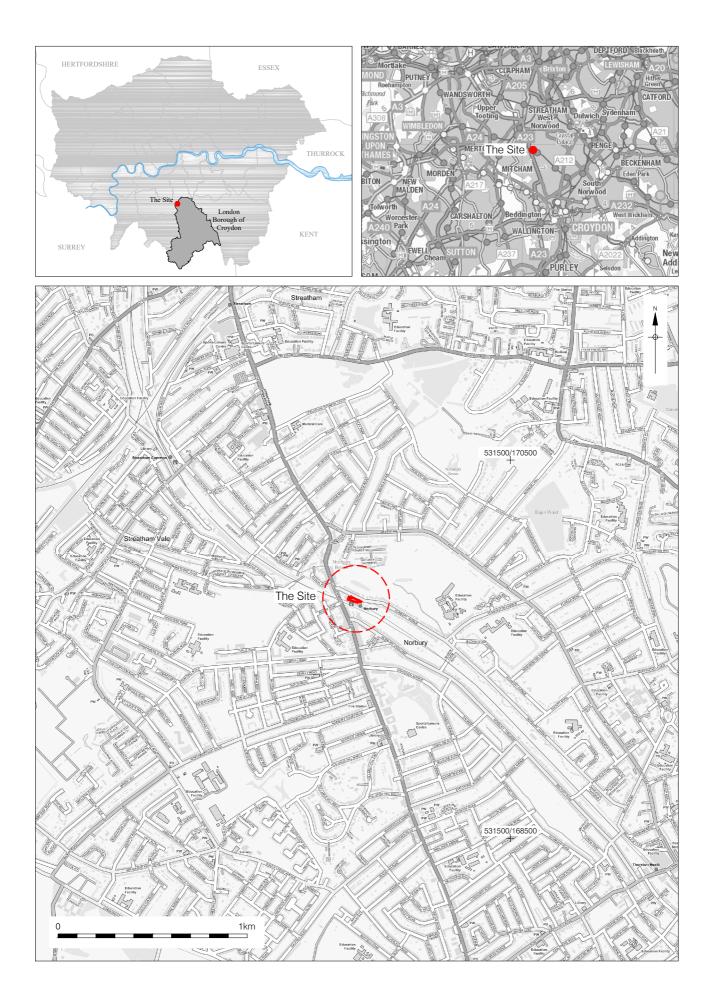
Taylor, J with Brown, G 2009, *Fieldwork Induction Manual: Operations Manual 1,* Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited

Online Resources

British Geological Survey (Geology of Britain Viewer) http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html

Cranfield Soil & Agrifood Institute

http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/#



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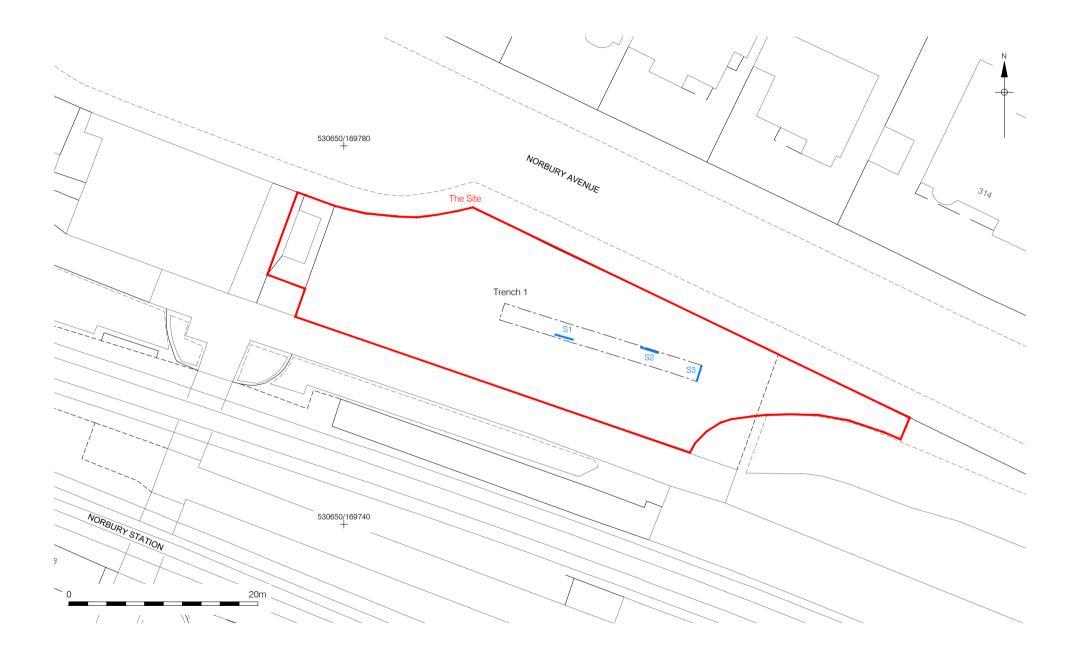
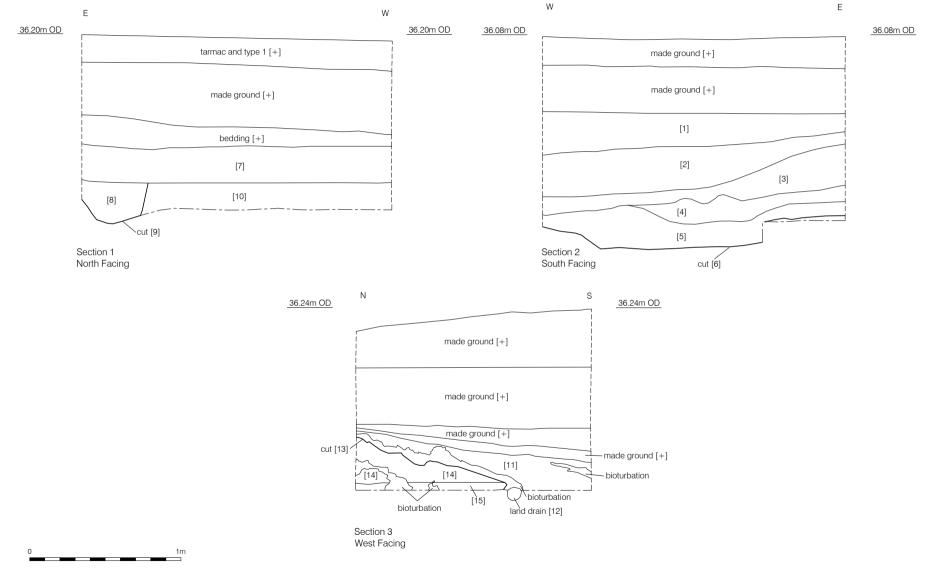


Figure 2 Detailed Site Location 1:400 at A4



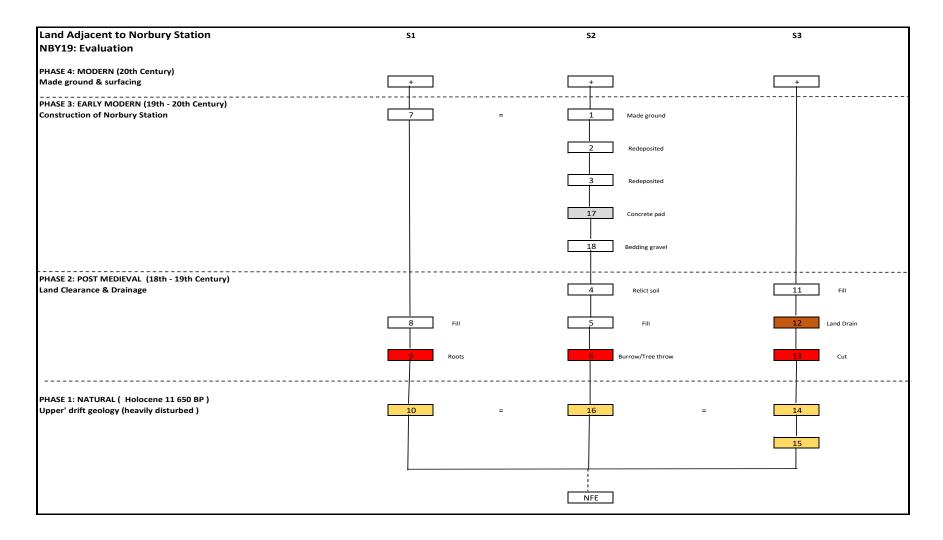
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Figure 3 Sections 1:25 at A4

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX

Site_id	Site_Code	Context	CTX_Type	Trench	Phase	CTX_Interpretation	CTX_Category	CTX_Length	CTX_Width	CTX_Depth	CTX_Levels_high	CTX_Levels_low	CTX_Owner
150	NBY19	1	Layer	1	NBY19-PH3		Make-up				35.59	35.57	wperkins
150	NBY19	2	Layer		NBY19-PH3		Make-up				35.44	35.3	wperkins
150	NBY19	3	Layer	1	NBY19-PH3		Make-up				35.38	35.03	wperkins
150	NBY19	4	Layer	1	NBY19-PH2		Horticultural				35.08	34.9	wperkins
150	NBY19	5	Fill	1	NBY19-PH2		Accumulation				35.08	35	wperkins
						Tree-throw or animal							
150	NBY19	6	Cut	1	NBY19-PH2	burrowing	Other				35	34.68	wperkins
150	NBY19	7	Layer	1	NBY19-PH3		Make-up				35.47	35.47	wperkins
150	NBY19	8	Fill	1	NBY19-PH2		Infilling				35.22	35.22	wperkins
						Tree-throw or							
150	NBY19	9	Cut	1	NBY19-PH2	bioturbation	Natural				35.22	35	wperkins
150	NBY19	10		1	NBY19-PH1		Natural				35.04	35.04	wperkins
150	NBY19	11	Fill	1	NBY19-PH2		Disuse				35.4	35.19	wperkins
150	NBY19	12			NBY19-PH2	Land drain	Drain				35.02	35.02	wperkins
150	NBY19	13	Cut	1	NBY19-PH2	Land drain	Drain				35.4	35.4	wperkins
150	NBY19	14	Layer	1	NBY19-PH1		Natural				35.4	35	wperkins
150	NBY19	15	Layer	1	NBY19-PH1		Natural				35.04	35.04	wperkins

APPENDIX 2: SITE MATRIX



APPENDIX 3: POTTERY ASSESSMENT

Chris Jarrett

Two sherds (3g) of ceramic were recovered from the archaeological work and these were found in different deposits. Context [8] produced an abraded fragment of an oxidised sandy ceramic (1g) with its surfaces missing. The fragment is difficult to assign any attribution to and the item is undatable, although a Roman or post-Roman date is more likely. Context [4] produced a small sherd (2g) of white salt-glazed stoneware (SWSG), dated AD 1720–1780.

The pottery is of no significance as it is fragmentary and has no meaning. The only potential of the sherds is to date the contexts it was found in. There are no recommendations for further work and the finds can be discarded as it has been fully recorded.

APPENDIX 4: CERAMIC BUILDINGS MATERIALS DATING

Amparo Valcarcel

Context	Fabric	Form	Size		e range of naterial	Latest dated material		Spot date	Spot date with mortar	
1	2276	Post-medieval peg tile	1	1480	1900	1480	1900	1700-1900	No mortar	
2	2276; 2279	Post-medieval peg and pan tile	2	1480	1900	1480	1900	1700-1900	No mortar	
7	3033; 3064F	Post-medieval sandy red brick; encaustic floor tile	3	1450	1950	1850	1950	1850-1950	No mortar	
12	Terracotta	Drain pipe	1	1700	1900	1700	1900	1800-1900	No mortar	

APPENDIX 5: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-348420

Project details Land Adjacent to Norbury Station, Norbury Avenue, London Borough of Project name Croydon SW16 Short description A single-trench evaluation was undertaken at Land Adjacent to Norbury Station over two days on the 1st and 2nd April 2019. Work was of the project undertaken prior to the redevelopment of the site. The natural drift geology was found to be a very 'mixed' and bioturbated yellowish mid-brown clayey sand with evidence for animal burrowing. It was recorded as being between 35.02m and 34.95m OD. Two features were investigated and found to be the result of either natural disturbance or as the result of early land clearance which - would have included the up-rooting of trees and scrub. A terracotta land drain (c.1700-1900) was recorded in the east of the trench which was an indication of agricultural activity. A small area of concrete pad (or surface) measuring c.1mx1m was revealed but considered too insubstantial to be structural. It may have related to the building of Norbury Station in 1878. Project dates Start: 01-04-2019 End: 02-04-2019 Previous/future No / No work Any associated NBY19 - Sitecode project reference codes Field evaluation Type of project Site status None Site status (other) London to Brighton Roman Road Archaeological Priority Area Current Land use Industry and Commerce 1 - Industrial Monument type **TERRACOTTA DRAIN Post Medieval** Monument type **CONCRETE SURFACE Post Medieval**

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON CROYDON NORWOOD Land Adjacent to Norbury Station
Postcode	SW16 4BT
Site coordinates	TQ 30668 69762 51.411294820593 -0.120910493145 51 24 40 N 000 07 15 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 34.95m Max: 35.02m
Project creators	

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Project brief originator	Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Project design originator	Zbigniew Pozorski
Project director/manager	Zbigniew Pozorski
Project supervisor	Wayne Perkins
Project archives	
Physical Archive recipient	LAARC
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Diary","Drawing","Matrices","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section"
Entered by	Wayne Perkins (WPerkins@pre-construct.com)
Entered on	8 April 2019

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