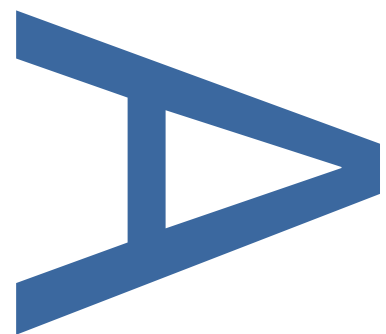
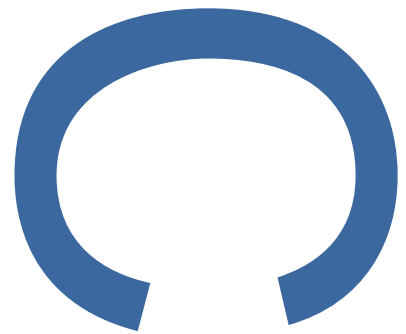


**15 BLUE LION PLACE,  
BERMONDSEY,  
SOUTHWARK,  
LONDON,  
SE1 4PU**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
WATCHING BRIEF**

**SITE CODE: LNU19**

**JUNE 2019**



**PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY**


**DOCUMENT VERIFICATION**

**15 BLUE LION PLACE, BERMONDSEY, SOUTHWARK, SE1 4PU**

**Type of project**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**Quality Control**

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| Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited Project Code |             |  | K5878       |
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| Project Manager Sign-off:                      | Z Pozorski  |  | 11.06.2019  |

| Revision No. | Date | Checked | Approved |
|--------------|------|---------|----------|
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**15 BLUE LION PLACE, BERMONDSEY, SOUTHWARK, LONDON, SE1 4PU**  
**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

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**SITE CODE:** LNU19

**LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:** LONDON BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK

**PLANNING REFERENCE:** 17/AP/4796

**CENTRAL NGR:** TQ 33244 79487

**WRITTEN BY:** TERENCE NEWMAN, PCA

**PROJECT MANAGER:** ZBIGNIEW POZORSKI, PCA

**COMMISSIONING CLIENT:** ARCHAEOLOGY COLLECTIVE ON BEHALF OF THE  
OVERALL CLIENT

**VERSION:** 2.0 WITH ARCHAEOLOGY COLLECTIVE COMMENTS

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**June 2019**

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## **1 ABSTRACT**

- 1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited (PCA) at 15 Blue Lion Place, Bermondsey, Southwark, London SE1 4PU. The site was until recently occupied by an office block and is centred at National Grid Reference TQ 33244 79487. Archaeology Collective managed the project on behalf of the overall client.
- 1.2 The archaeological investigation was conducted between 08 and 19 March 2019 and comprised the inspection and recording of groundworks associated with removal of existing foundations and preparation for piling works.
- 1.3 The excavation of the trenches revealed a basement area that had been back filled. The earliest deposit encountered was a layer of greenish, grey sandy clay that was a deliberate deposit of demolition debris.
- 1.4 This deposit was overlain by a dark grey silty clay with frequent inclusions of CBM, which in turn was overlain by modern plastic sheeting, with the whole area being sealed by modern concrete.
- 1.5 No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were found during the watching brief.
- 1.6 No natural superficial deposits or the natural bedrock were seen during the monitoring.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report details the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited at 15 Blue Lion Place, Bermondsey, Southwark, London SE1 4PU during the inspection and recording of groundworks associated with removal of existing foundations and preparation for piling works. The site was until recently occupied by an office block and is centred at National Grid Reference TQ 33244 79487.
- 2.2 The site is in the London Borough of Southwark and is located to the rear of properties fronting Long Lane (Figure 2). The site comprised a vacant plot of land adjacent to the Blue Lion Place office building.
- 2.3 The monitoring took place between the 08 and 19 March 2019.
- 2.4 An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment was prepared for the site (Archaeology Collective 2018) to support the planning submission. The site is located within a local authority Archaeological Priority Area: Borough, Bermondsey and Riverside. It also lies north of the Bermondsey Lake APA and to the north-east of the Scheduled remains of Bermondsey Abbey. The assessment identified a low potential for prehistoric remains; and high potential for Roman, medieval and post-medieval remains.
- 2.5 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared for the project (PCA 2018), which defined a pro-active programme of observation and recording during the below ground demolition works and further intrusive groundworks.
- 2.6 The investigation was conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited under the supervision of Terry Newman, and the project management of Zbigniew Pozorski. The archaeological work was commissioned by Archaeology Collective on behalf of the overall client.
- 2.7 The site was allocated the unique site code LNU19. The complete archive comprising written, drawn, and photographic records and artefacts will be deposited with the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC).
- 2.8 All works were undertaken in accordance with the following documents:
- *15 Blue Lion Place, Bermondsey, Southwark, London SE1 4PU: Written Scheme of Investigation for An Archaeological Watching Brief* (PCA 2018)
  - *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE) (Historic England 2016)
  - *Guidelines for Archaeological Projects in Greater London* (Historic England Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service HE GLAAS 2015)
  - *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) 2014).

- *Fieldwork Induction Manual: Operations Manual* (Taylor, J & Brown, G. 2009, updated 2018), PCA.

### **3 PLANNING BACKGROUND**

3.1 Planning permission was granted on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2018 for redevelopment of the site comprising the demolition of the existing three-storey office building and its replacement with a 5-storey office building (LB Southwark Council Ref. 17/AP/4796).

3.2 The planning condition (7) attached to the decision reads as follows:

#### *7 Archaeological Watching Brief*

*Before any work hereby authorised begins, the applicant shall secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological watching brief works, in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The watching brief should have the capacity to include full archaeological excavation if important archaeological remains are encountered during the works.*

*Reason: In order that the details of the programme of works for the archaeological mitigation works are suitable with regard to the impacts of the proposed development and the nature and extent of archaeological remains on site in accordance with Strategic Policy 12 - Design and Conservation of The Core Strategy 2011, Saved Policy 3.19 Archaeology of the Southwark Plan 2007 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.*

3.3 In advance of the project a Written Scheme of Investigation was prepared by PCA (2018) and approved by Gillian King, Senior Planner Archaeology for Southwark Council.

### **4 GEOLOGICAL AND TOPOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND**

4.1 According to the British Geological Survey (BGS) of England and Wales, the local solid geology is London Clay forming the London Basin, overlay by alluvium, defined as mainly sand, silt and clay ([www.bgs.ac.uk](http://www.bgs.ac.uk)).

4.2 The site lies on a land generally level at c. 3.50m above Ordnance Datum (OD). The site is located approximately 830m south of the River Thames and is situated within the lower Thames Valley (Figure 1).

### **5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The following background is taken from the site-specific archaeological desk-assessment prepared for the site by Archaeology Collective (2018):

- 5.1 The site is located within a local authority Archaeological Priority Area: Borough, Bermondsey and Riverside. It also lies north of the Bermondsey Lake APA and to the north-east of the Scheduled remains of Bermondsey Abbey.
- 5.2 The site has a low potential for evidence of prehistoric activity. The nearest find of those periods was a Neolithic bowl found 224m to the south west. During the prehistoric period the River Thames was wider and shallower, and the Southwark area was formed of low-lying marshes and river channels which were interspersed by gravel and sand islands. Excavations in the Bermondsey area identified the shoreline of a silting Late Glacial lake as well as evidence of Mesolithic worked flints at Tooley Street, 575m to the north of the Site, and Lafone Street, 530m to the north east of the site.
- 5.3 Evidence of Bronze Age activity in the vicinity includes an area of peat located 236m to the north of the site.
- 5.4 Within the wider area, evidence of Iron Age settlement has been recorded at Grange Road, c. 280m to the south west of the site, and along Tooley Street, to the north of the site.
- 5.5 The site is located in an area which has been identified for its importance relating to the evidence for Roman activity within in it (the Bermondsey, Borough and Riverside APA). Although there is evidence for Roman activity in close vicinity, the main concentration of Roman activity is located outside of this area, and the site is considered to be on the periphery of main occupation activity. Two inhumations, pits and ditched were found c. 160m to the south-east of the site. Pottery deposits on the then river foreshore were found c. 190m to the north west. Various remains, including masonry wall, were also found in proximity of the site. The potential for Roman evidence on the site is considered moderate.
- 5.6 The Scheduled remains of Bermondsey Abbey founded in 1082 are located c.110m to the south east of the site. Although there are no upstanding remains of the Abbey surviving, previous archaeological investigations have identified and recorded below ground remains associated with Abbey. The works within the Abbey, Bermondsey Square and along the Long Lane were mostly conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd and provided a wide range of evidence of occupation and development of the area. Other archaeological features dating to Saxon and early medieval periods were found to the south-west (95m), east (c. 190m) and south-east (c. 220m) of the site, and included ditched, pits, burials, a hearth, drains, fence and walls.
- 5.7 Investigations at the Scheduled Monument, Bermondsey Abbey, revealed numerous structures as privy houses, cloister, undercroft or dormitory, infirmary, cellar, cemetery, refectory, a conventual church and an infirmary chapel. The location of the first parish church was also found at today's churchyard of St Mary Magdalene Church, c. 165m to the east of the site. Several other features related to the Abbey complex were found including later Manor House built after the Dissolution. Other medieval features, including burials, a burial vault, walls, foundations and pits were found in proximity of the site.



5.8 Post-medieval development of the site and the immediate area was characterised by its industrial character. Numerous warehouses, factories, tanneries and metal works were located in this part of Southwark, as well as domestic and social buildings. Historic maps show gradual seizure of the site by the small buildings and the site appears to have been completely occupied by a large structure from 1950s onwards.

## 6 RESEARCH DESIGN

6.1 In line with the approved WSI (PCA 2018) the general aim of the watching brief was to preserve 'by record' the extent and significance of any surviving archaeological features and deposits within the site.

6.2 The project also aimed to answer following research questions:

- Is there an evidence of a peat, possibly of the Bronze Age origin, on the site?
- Is there an evidence of Roman activity on the site?
- Is there any archaeological evidence of Anglo-Saxon and early medieval activity?
- Are there any burials present on the site, in particular those associated with the Bermondsey Abbey?
- Are there any post-medieval remains on the site and do they relate to industrial development of Southwark in 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries?

## 7 METHODOLOGY

7.1 The proposed methodology of the archaeological work was detailed in the site-specific Written Scheme of Investigation (PCA 2018) and comprised the archaeological monitoring of below ground demolition works and other associated intrusive groundworks (Figure 3).

7.2 The standing three-storey building on the site had been demolished before the groundworks took place (Plates 1-3). The works on the site were undertaken by building contractors using a 360° mechanical excavator. The concrete slab covering the site, was broken using a hydraulic breaker and the excavation was completed using a toothless bucket. Two trenches were excavated to remove earlier foundations and assess site conditions. Trench 1 measured 3.00m x 1.5m x 1.5m and Trench 2 measured 2.00m x 1.00m x 1.5m (Figure 3). In addition, three areas of excavation were located within the site where parts of the foundations have been removed and the ground levelled for installation of a piling matt. The latter work involved excavation till c. 0.50m BGL.

7.3 All recording systems adopted during the investigation were fully compatible with those most widely used elsewhere in London Borough of Southwark; presented in PCAs *Operations Manual 1* (Taylor & Brown 2009, updated 2018). A selective section of each test pit was drawn

by hand at a scale of 1:10 in order to illustrate the observed sequences, modern disturbance and current ground level. In addition to a series of digital photographs recording the encountered deposits a written record of each deposit was also produced. Location of the section drawing was located by offsetting from the internal walls and plotted onto OS mapping data by CAD.

- 7.4 Following the completion of all phases of fieldwork and reporting the project archive will be deposited in its entirety with the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC) with the unique site code LNU19.

## 8 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

- 8.1 The earliest deposit encountered consisted of a greenish grey sandy clay [1]. This deposit was interpreted as a deliberate deposit of material. This layer was found in the base of the 1.5m deep Trench 1 and it may have extended across the site.
- 8.2 Above context [1] was a deposit of made ground consisting of dark grey silty clay [2]. It was observed between 0.30m to 1.5m below ground level and was seen across the site.
- 8.3 The trenches were both sealed by a sheet of blue plastic and a layer of modern concrete, c. 0.30m this.



*Plate 1: Breaking up of the concrete slab, looking south-south-west*





*Plate 2: General view of the site during demolition, looking west*



*Plate 3: General view of the site, looking east-south-east*





*Plate 4: The site and Trench 1, looking east*



*Plate 5: Trench 1, looking south-east*





*Plate 6: Trench 2 under excavation, looking west*



*Plate 7: The site prepared for piling works, looking east-south-east*



*Plate 8: Piling works in progress, looking east*

## **9 INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 9.1 The results of the watching brief did not allow to identify the level of the bedrock geology or any superficial natural deposits. The only deposits were of made ground character and were present to 1.50m BGL and to maximum depth of the excavation.
- 9.2 No datable finds were found in these deposits other than 20<sup>th</sup> century debris mixed with occasional 19<sup>th</sup> century china and pottery fragments recovered from [2]. No indication of earlier occupation on the site has been recorded.
- 9.3 The upper made ground was likely a result of construction of the modern building which had been recently demolished. The lower made ground could not be identified although it is believed it was deposit of the early modern origin.

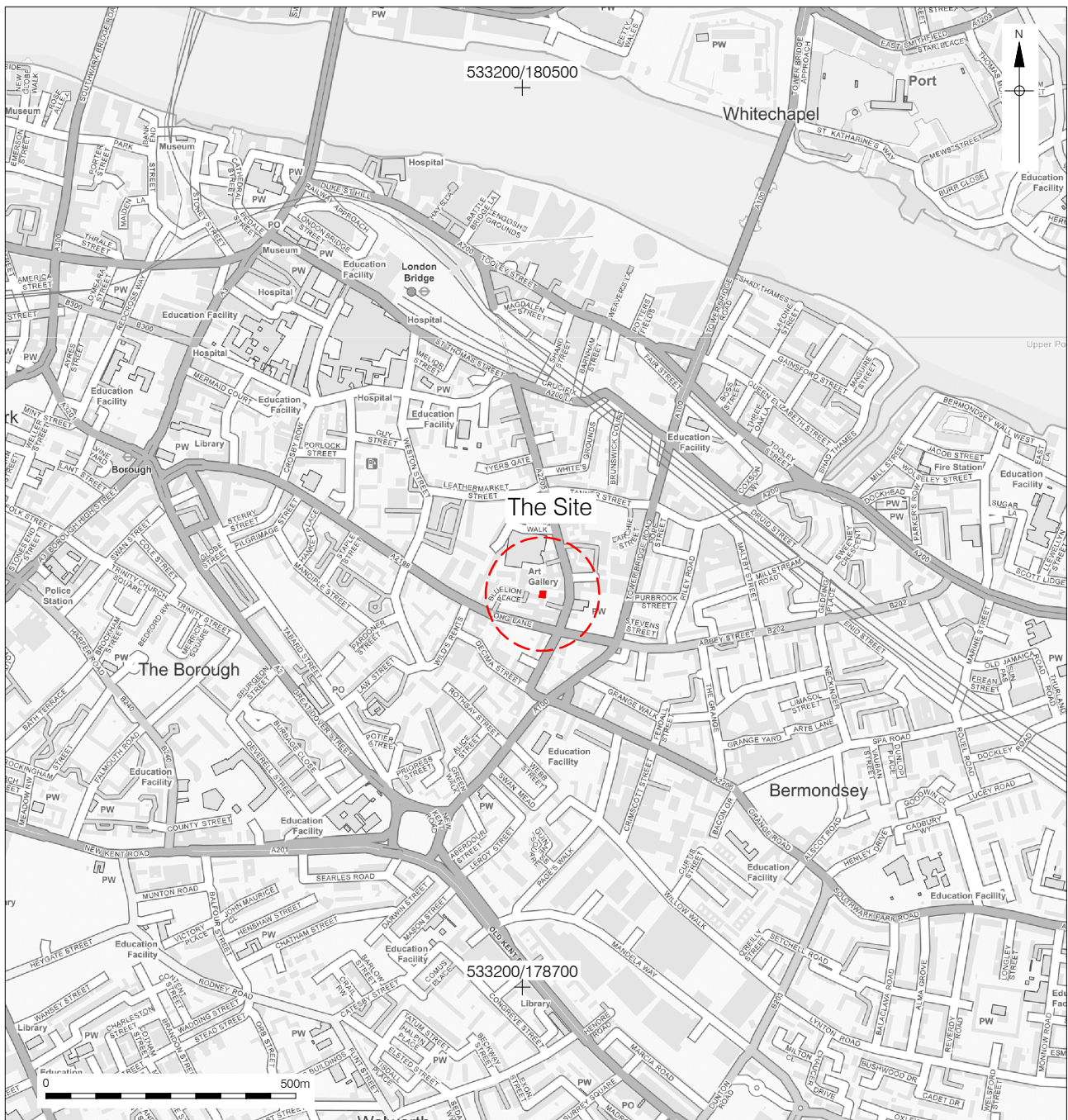
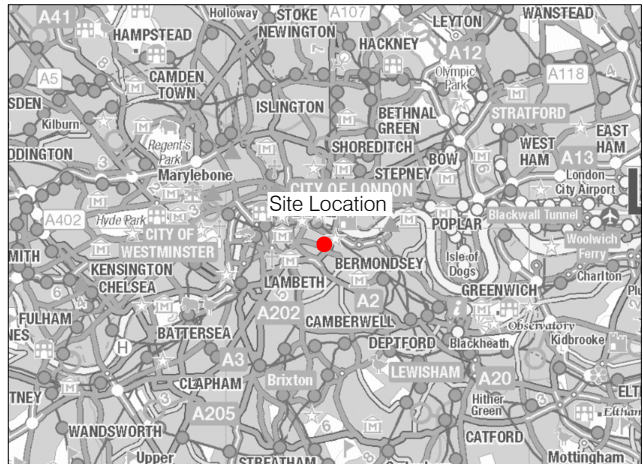


## 10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

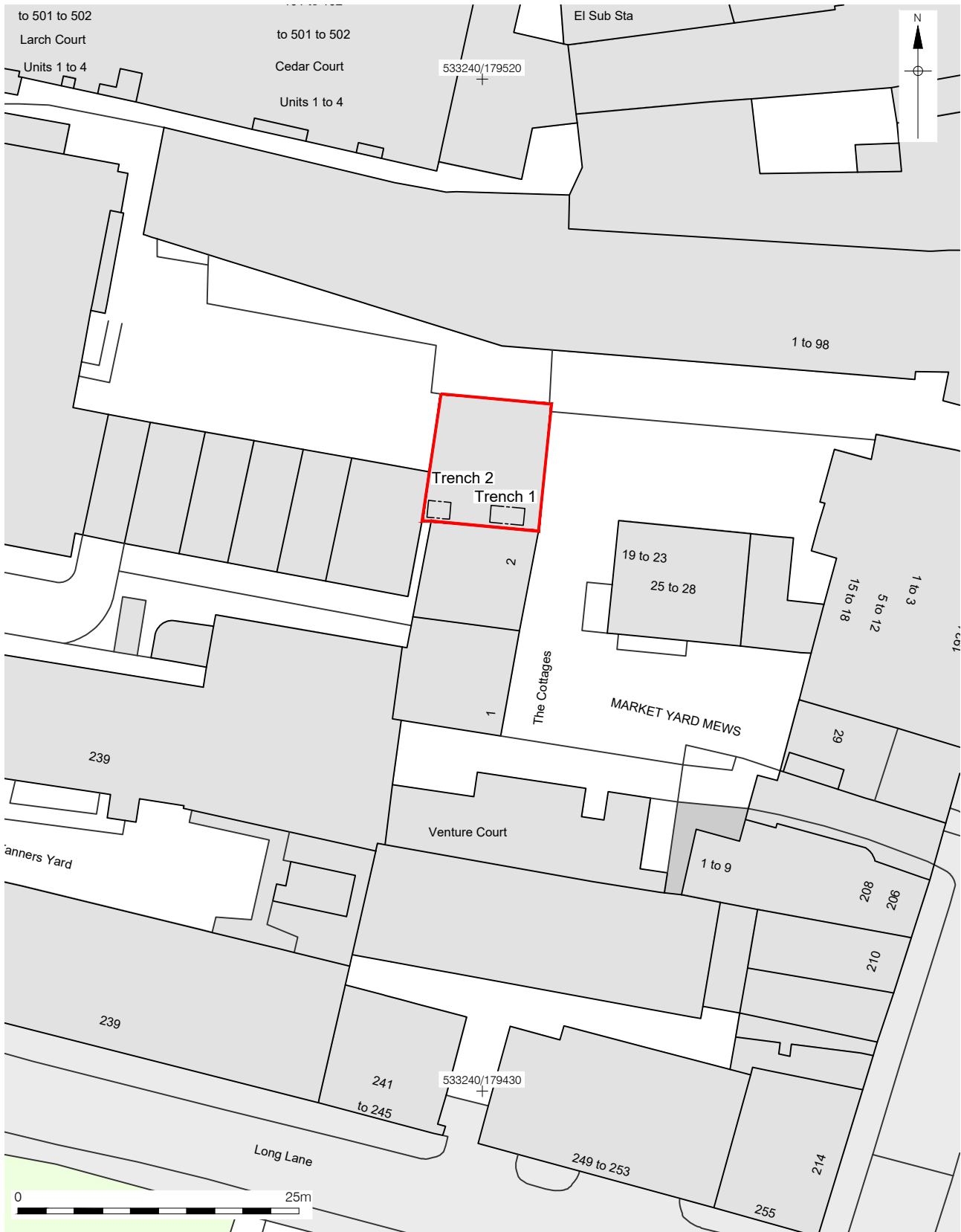
- 10.1 Pre-Construct would like to thank Rebecca Ryan of Archaeology Collective for commissioning the work on behalf of the overall client. We also thank Gillian King, the Senior Planner Archaeology Southwark Council for her input to the project.
- 10.2 The author would also like to thank Zbigniew Pozorski for his project management and editing this report, and Ray Murphy for the illustrations.

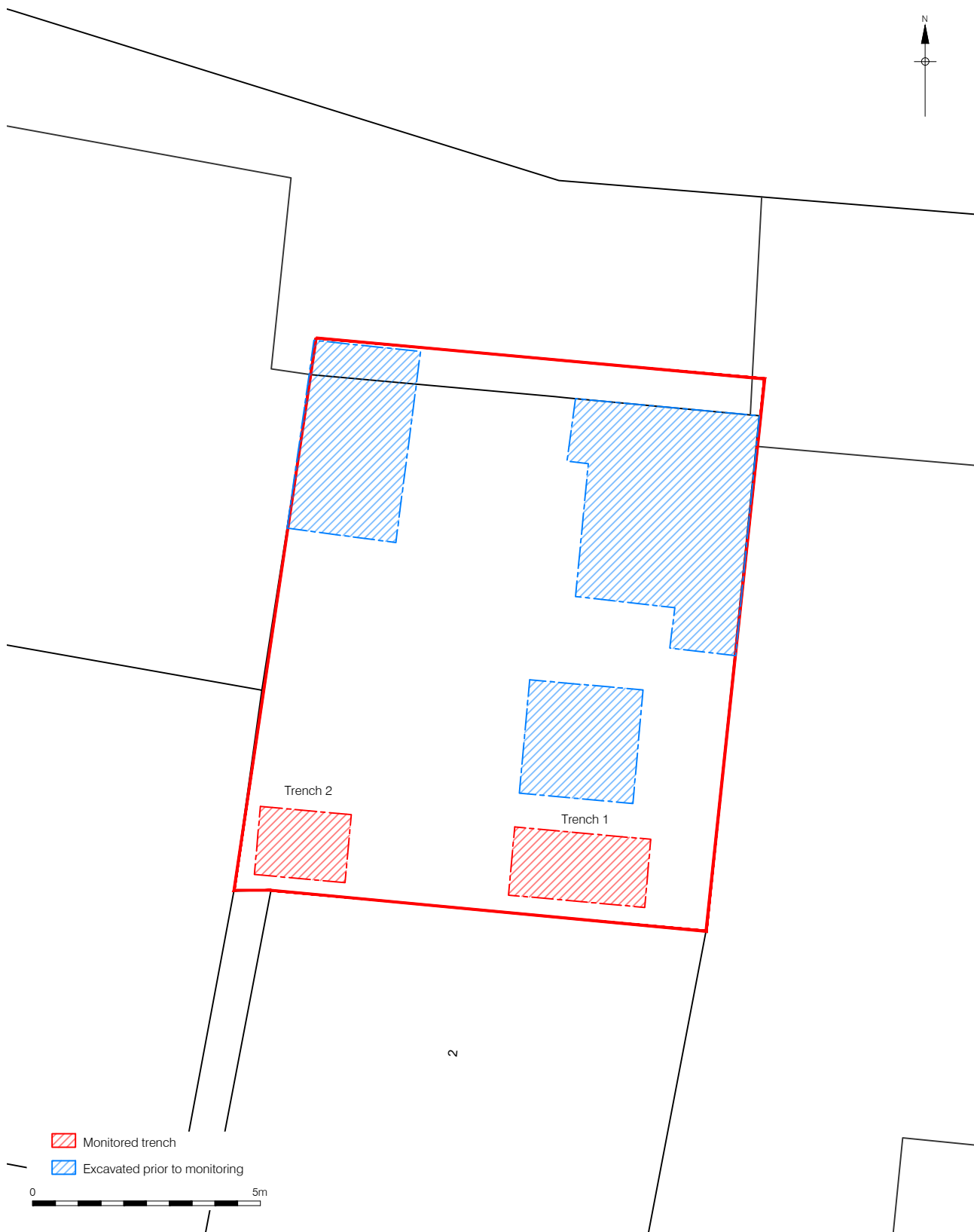
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## APPENDIX 1: OASIS FORM

### Project details

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Project name                           | 15 Blue Lion Place Bermondsey Southwark SE1 4PU  |
| Short description of the project       | A watching brief monitoring groundworks connected with the redevelopment of the site, demolishing an existing three storey office block and replacing it with a five storey office building. The monitoring involved watching two trenches being excavated during the course of the demolition phase and inspection of ground reduction. |
| Project dates                          | Start: 11-03-2019 End: 15-03-2019  |
| Previous/future work                   | No / No  |
| Any associated project reference codes | LNU19 - Sitecode   |
| Type of project                        | Recording project  |
| Site status                            | Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area   |
| Current Land use                       | Industry and Commerce 2 - Offices  |
| Investigation type                     | "Watching Brief"   |
| Prompt                                 | Planning condition   |

### Project location

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Country          | England   |
| Site location    | GREATER LONDON SOUTHWARK BERMONDSEY ROTHERHITHE AND SOUTHWARK<br>15 Blue Lion Place |
| Postcode         | SE1 4PU   |
| Site coordinates | TQ 33244 79487 51.498097660368 -0.080223939202 51 29 53 N 000 04 48 W Point         |

### Project creators

|                           |                        |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Name of Organisation      | PCA                    |
| Project brief originator  | Archaeology Collective |
| Project design originator | Archaeology Collective |
| Project director/manager  | Zbigniew Pozorski      |
| Project supervisor        | Terence Newman         |

### Project archives

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Paper Media available | "Context sheet","Manuscript","Photograph","Unpublished Text" |
|-----------------------|--|

Entered by Terence Newman (beija\_flor@btinternet.com)

Entered on 14 May 2019

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