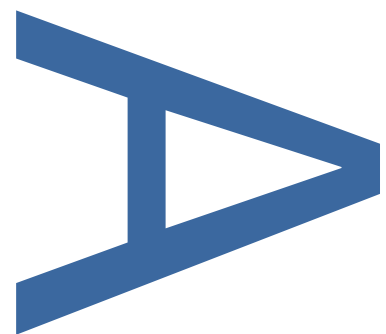
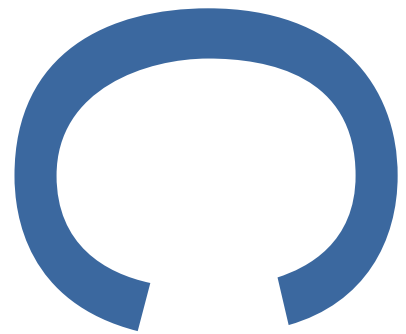


**101 WHITECHAPEL HIGH STREET,  
LONDON E1  
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
EVALUATION**

**SITE CODE: WEA18**

**LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:  
LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER  
HAMLETS**

**MAY 2019**



**101 WHITECHAPEL HIGH STREET, LONDON E1**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

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**Site Code:** WEA18

**Central NGR:** TQ 3389 8144

**Local Planning Authority:** LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

**Planning Reference:** Pre-application

**Other reference if any:** n/a

**Commissioning Client:** CGMS HERITAGE (PART OF THE RPS GROUP)

**Written/Researched by:** JAMES LANGTHORNE  
Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited

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Rev1: GLAAS comments

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**May 2019**

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**DOCUMENT VERIFICATION**

**Site Name**

**101 WHITECHAPEL HIGH STREET, LONDON E1**

**Type of project**

**An Archaeological Evaluation**

**Quality Control**

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited Project Code			K5867
	Name	Signature	Date
Text Prepared by:	J Langthorne		17.5.19
Graphics Prepared by:	D Valk		17.5.19
Graphics Checked by:	M Roughley	M Roughley	17.5.19
Project Manager Sign-off:	H Hawkins	H Hawkins	17.5.19

Revision No.	Date	Checked	Approved
Rev 1: GLAAS comments	17.6.19	HH	CM

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## **1 ABSTRACT**

- 1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd on behalf of CgMs Heritage at 101 Whitechapel High Street in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. This investigation was a product of the conclusions derived from five archaeological trial pits excavated at the site in November 2018 and January 2019 (Brooks & Grosso 2019).
- 1.2 The archaeological investigation was carried out between 23rd April – 15th May 2019 and consisted of two trenches. Excavation and recording were conducted in accordance with the standards specified by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and following the guidelines issued by Historic England.
- 1.3 Natural brickearth overlying natural gravel appeared to have been heavily truncated within both trenches as a result of impacts caused by 19th century basements and post-Second World War clearance works. However, a small amount of earlier activity including a Roman pit and a fragment of redeposited human bone indicated that archaeological deposits pre-dating the 19th century may still be extant in other, less truncated parts of the Whitechapel site.
- 1.4 Natural brickearth was encountered within both trenches at heights between 10.70-10.82m OD.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 An archaeological investigation commissioned by CgMs Heritage was undertaken within vacant land south-west of an NCP car park at 101 Whitechapel High Street, London Borough of Tower Hamlets TQ 3389 8144 (Figure 1), between 23<sup>rd</sup> April – 15<sup>th</sup> May 2019. The boundaries of the entire site were defined by Whitechapel High Street to the southeast, Commercial Street to the southwest, the East London College and Toynbee Theatre to the northeast and Gunthorpe Street and various commercial and residential properties to the northwest, and it encompassed an area of approximately 0.8 hectares.
- 2.2 The archaeological evaluation consisted of two trenches: Trench 1 and Trench 2 (Figure 2), The general objectives of the investigation were to establish the presence or absence of prehistoric, Roman, medieval, post-medieval or modern industrial activity, the extent of any post-depositional impacts, and the survival or truncation of natural brickearth at the site.
- 2.3 The Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Evaluation (Hawkins 2019) detailed the methodology by which the archaeological investigation was undertaken. The WSI followed Historic England guidelines (Historic England 2015) and those of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIFA 2014). The evaluation was supervised by James Langthorne. The site was managed by Helen Hawkins for Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited and monitored by Adam Single and Laura O’Gorman, Historic England Greater London Archaeology Advice Service (GLAAS) Principal Archaeological Advisors. The archaeological consultant for the overall client was CgMs Heritage.
- 2.4 The Whitechapel High Street site does not contain Listed buildings or Scheduled Monuments, nor does it form part of or lie within a World Heritage Site or a Historic Wreck. However, the site does lie within an Archaeological Priority Area as designated by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.
- 2.5 The site was given the site code WEA18. The complete archive comprising written, drawn and photographic records will be deposited with the Museum of London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (MLAA).

### **3 PLANNING BACKGROUND**

#### 3.1 National Guidance: National Planning Policy Framework

3.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was adopted in 2012 and updated in 2018. The NPPF constitutes guidance for local planning authorities and decision-takers both in drawing up plans and as a material consideration in determining applications. Chapter 16 of the NPPF 2018 concerns the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.

3.1.2 In considering any proposal for development, including allocations in emerging development plans, the local planning authority will be mindful of the policy framework set by government guidance, existing development plan policy and of other material considerations.

#### 3.2 Regional Policy: The London Plan

3.2.1 Additional relevant planning strategy framework is provided by The London Plan, published January 2011. Specifically, Policy 7.8 is of relevance to archaeology within Greater London.

#### 3.3 Local Policy: Archaeology in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets

3.3.1 The Whitechapel High Street site does not contain Listed buildings or Scheduled Monuments, nor does it form part of or lie within a World Heritage Site or a Historic Wreck. However, the site does lie within an Archaeological Priority Area as designated by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

#### 3.4 Site Specific Background

3.4.1 Planning permission is currently being sought for the re-development of the Whitechapel High Street site.

3.4.2 The work herein reported comprised a further evaluation following on from five trial pits excavated across the site in November 2018 and January 2019 (Brooks & Grosso 2019). Works were undertaken in accordance with an archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation which was prepared by PCA (Hawkins 2019) and approved by the archaeological advisor to the local planning authority.

## **4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

### **4.1 Geology**

- 4.1.1 The solid geology of the site is shown by the British Geological Survey ([www.bgs.ac.uk](http://www.bgs.ac.uk)) as London Clay forming the London Basin, overlain by superficial Langley Silt Member deposits, commonly referred to as brickearth.
- 4.1.2 During the trial pit excavations at the Whitechapel High Street site in 2018 and 2019 natural brickearth was identified at a height of 10.02m OD; while natural gravels were recorded at heights of 10.35m OD and 10.50m OD in Trial Pits 4 and 5 respectively (Brooks & Grosso 2019). Natural gravel and brickearth was identified in the evaluation at 10.70m OD and 10.82m OD.

### **4.2 Topography**

- 4.2.1 The natural topography of the Whitechapel High Street site was not fully characterised during the earlier trial pit investigation (*ibid*). Levels taken on natural deposits in Trial Pit 5, situated in the southern part of the site were higher than in Trial Pit 3 located approximately 45m to the north. As the Thames is situated to the south of the site, it was expected that the natural topography would slope downwards towards the river. It was concluded that the levels may have indicated that the natural topography of the site had been altered by brickearth quarrying.
- 4.2.2 The specific current ground level of the Whitechapel High Street site the current evaluation took place on did appear to gently slope from heights of approximately 14.00m OD in the north of the area to c.13.50m OD to the south.



## 5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### 5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The archaeological and historical background in this section has been summarized from the Archaeological Desk Based Assessment prepared by CgMs Heritage (2018) and the Trial Pit Evaluation report (Brooks and Grosso 2019).

### 5.2 Prehistoric

5.2.1 A small number of findspots, including human remains, pottery and flints have been found within about 150m of the Whitechapel High Street and so the likelihood of prehistoric activity was felt to be low.

5.2.2 No evidence of prehistoric features or deposits were recorded during the trial pit evaluation at the Whitechapel High Street site.

### 5.3 Roman

5.3.1 This part of Whitechapel would have been located immediately outside of *Londinium* close to the eastern road and gateway to the settlement. Furthermore, the site is in close proximity to the Eastern cemetery as well as other roadside activities such as quarrying and agriculture.

5.3.2 Possible agricultural activity and a quarry pit was identified at the site during the trial pit evaluation; however, these deposits were undated.

### 5.4 Saxon & Medieval

5.4.1 While no Saxon remains have been identified in the locality of the site. medieval features and deposits including an inn, a church, linear features and quarry pits have all been recorded along Whitechapel High Street.

5.4.2 Possible agricultural deposits and a quarry pit were identified during the earlier evaluation, but none of these layers or the pit was undated.

### 5.5 Post-Medieval & Modern

5.5.1 Cartographic evidence indicated that the surrounding area was developed by 1570 with houses lining the road. The area evolved from a dense network of terraced housing and courtyards into commercial and residential properties throughout the post-medieval period into the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the school being founded in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

5.5.2 The site was heavily damaged during the Second World War, with the majority of the affected buildings at the site being demolished and cleared by 1953. The layout of the site remained unchanged by 1979 with further clearance occurring in 1999.

5.5.3 An agricultural deposit and a wall foundation dating to the post-medieval period were found in the course of the trial pit evaluation as were demolition deposits, basements and other masonry structures dating to the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

---

## 6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 The Written Scheme of Investigation (Hawkins 2019) defined the general aims of the archaeological evaluation.
- 6.2 All works were undertaken in accordance with the guidelines set out by Historic England and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
- 6.3 The works consisted of the excavation of two trenches. Trench 1, a stepped trench located between Trial Pits 3 and 4 and Trench 2, a shored trench excavated in two stages between Trial Pits 4 and 5. Trench 2 was shored as the area was not wide enough for stepping. Box shoring was used which prevented a full section of the trench being drawn. The dimensions of each trench are detailed in the following table:

Trench	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Maximum height at top (m OD)
1	E-W	15.20	9.00	3.26	13.98
2	N-S	11.56	1.80	2.98	13.68

- 6.4 A 360 machine excavated the homogenous deposits revealed in both trenches under archaeological supervision. Following the cessation of excavation by machine, and the installation of shoring in Trench 2, all deposits were cleaned by the archaeological team using hand tools and then recorded.
- 6.5 The recording systems adopted during the investigations were fully compatible with those widely used elsewhere in London, that is those developed out of the Department of Urban Archaeology Site Manual, now published by the Museum of London (MoLAS 1994), and with the PCA Site Manual (Taylor and Brown 2009).
- 6.6 The locations of the trenches were determined using GPS equipment and a temporary benchmark at 13.76m OD was also established on site using the same method.
- 6.7 A full photographic record was taken, specifically a digital photographic archive maintained throughout the archaeological investigation.
- 6.8 The complete archive produced during the evaluation, comprising written, drawn and photographic records, will be deposited with the Museum of London Archaeological Archive (MLAA).

## 7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

### 7.1 Archaeological Phase 1: Natural (Figures 3 & 4 and Plates 1 & 3)

7.1.1 The earliest deposit recorded in both trenches was loose, mid brownish yellow naturally deposited gravel. Identified as [110] in Trench 1 and [117] in Trench 2, natural gravel was encountered at maximum heights of 10.76m OD and 10.74m OD in Trenches 1 and 2 respectively.

7.1.2 A thin, 0.06m thick, deposit of firm mid brownish yellow brickearth [109] was seen to overlie natural gravel [110] in the east facing section of Trench 1. A more substantial, 0.15m thick, deposit of the same brickearth [116] was found to seal natural gravel [117] in Trench 2.

### 7.2 Archaeological Phase 2: Roman (Figure 3 and Plate 4)

7.2.1 A small, shallow, sub-rectangular cut [113], interpreted as the remnant of a pit, was seen to truncate natural brick earth [116] in the southern half of Trench 2. Pit [113] extended 0.60m north-south by 0.46m east-west and achieved a maximum depth of 0.06m from a height of 10.81m OD. Fill [112] of pit [113] constituted a fairly firm, mid greenish brown clay silt from which four sherds of pottery dating from AD50-150 and a number of fragments of a cow's femur were recovered.

### 7.3 Archaeological Phase 3: 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries (Figures 3 & 4 and Plates 1 & 2)

7.3.1 Natural deposits [109] and [110] in the western extent of Trench 1 were sealed by a fairly firm layer of mid grey brown sandy silt [104]. Made ground [104] was considered to have been deposited during the construction of the basement comprising wall [101] and concrete floor [103]. Basement [101]/[103] was constructed of post Great Fire bricks dating to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Bricks recovered from a culvert [105] and a further basement structure [101] also recorded in Trench 1 dated from this period. The dimensions of the various basement structures and the brick culvert can be found in the table below:

Context no.	Cut no.	North-South (m)	East-west (m)	Maximum Depth Seen (m)	Maximum Height (m OD)
101	-	5.08	0.32	1.55	12.70
102	-	7.15	1.45	2.00	12.80
103	-	1.26	2.32	0.10	11.11
105	106	2.15	0.90	0.85	11.44

7.3.2 Similarly, an east-west orientated construction cut [115] for a basement wall was encountered in the southern part of Trench 2. Cut [115] was found at a height of 10.84m OD, and the clay silt fill [114] of cut [115] contained fragments of animal rib and a single fragment of human tibia. The human bone is considered to have been re-deposited from an earlier, possibly Roman, context.

- 7.3.3 One further north-south aligned linear cut [108] containing a metal pipe [107] was seen a short distance to the east of culvert [105] in Trench 1, at a maximum height of 10.43m OD.
- 7.4 Archaeological Phase 4: Modern (Figures 3 & 4 and Plates 1 & 2)
- 7.4.1 All deposits in both trenches were overlain by made ground deposits principally composed of mid-dark grey brown sandy silt, clay silt, and demolition rubble thought to have originated from the clearance works at the site following the Second World War. These made ground deposits were identified as [100] in Trench 1 and [111] in Trench 2 and were capped by a 0.08m thick deposit of tarmac [+].

## **8 INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 8.1 The archaeological evaluation at 101 Whitechapel High Street indicated a high degree of truncation of potential archaeological deposits both as a result of 19th century building works at the site, and demolition works following the Second World War, The product of these activities was often that natural brickearth was seen to be entirely truncated in the trenches.
- 8.2 However traces of earlier archaeological activity were found to still be extant in Trench 2; specifically the shallow remains of a pit dating to the Roman period, and the presence of re-deposited human bone within a late post-medieval or early modern construction cut which, given the site's proximity to the main eastern Roman road extending from Londinium, could indicate the presence of burials within the vicinity.
- 8.3 As with the earlier trial pit evaluation (Brooks & Grosso 2019) it was concluded that although Victorian commercial structures had severely impacted on potential archaeological deposits in this part of the Whitechapel High Street site, such deposits may yet be extant in other parts of the site unaffected by those buildings; for example the car park area to the north and east of the present area of investigation.

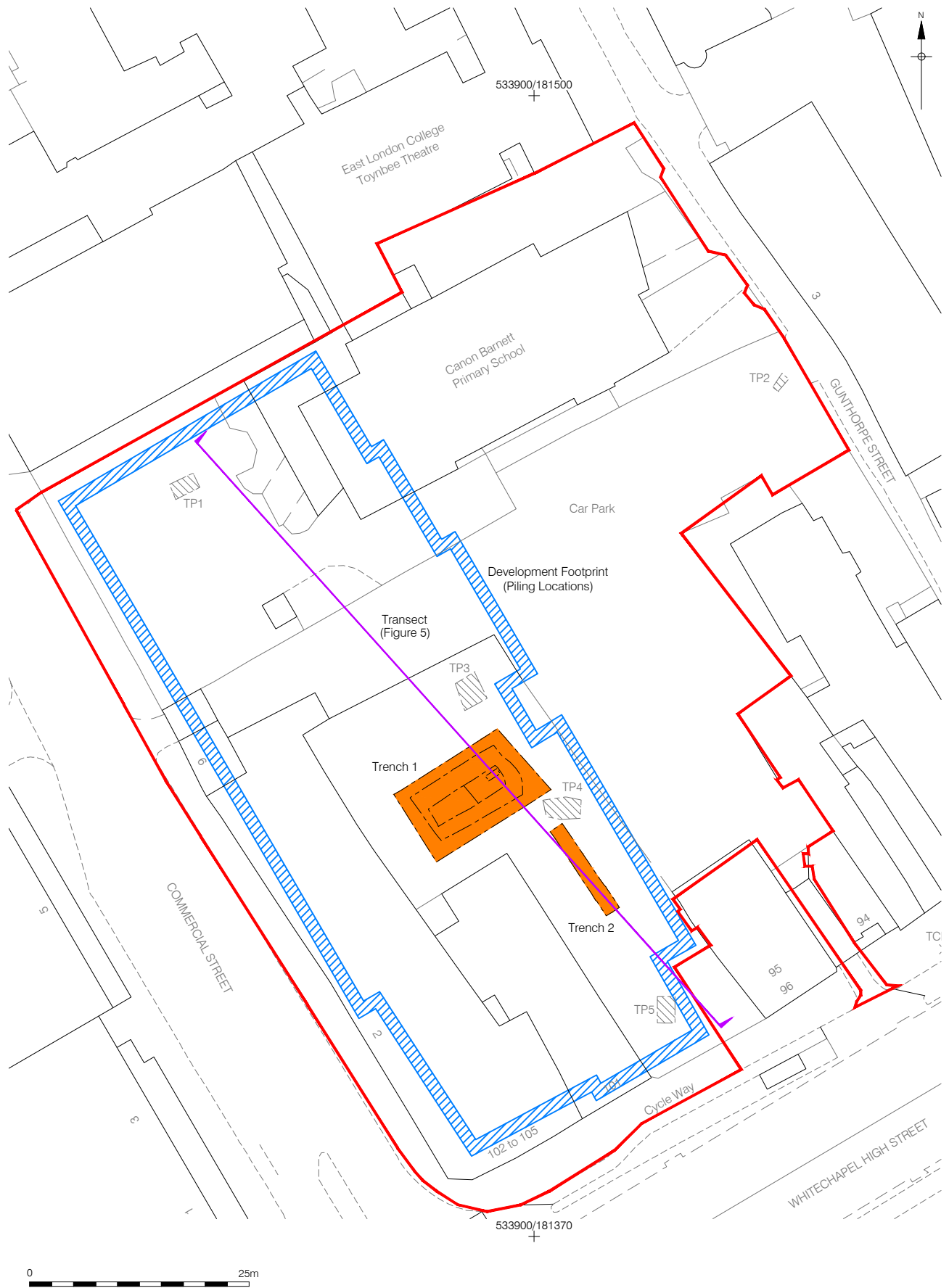
## 9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Alistair Robertson of CgMs Heritage for commissioning the archaeological work.
- 9.2 We also thank Adam Single and Laura O’Gorman, of the Historic England Greater London Archaeology Advice Service (GLAAS) for monitoring the site on behalf of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.
- 9.3 Thanks also to National Car Parks for providing access to the site, Gerard Huguenin and his team for facilitating shoring works in Trench 2, and to Ester Capuz-Duran of PCA for her hard work on site.
- 9.4 The author would like to thank Helen Hawkins for project managing and editing this report, Diana Valk for CAD illustrations, Chris Jarrett for assessing the pottery, Amparo Valcarcel for spot dating the ceramic building material, Kevin Reilly for assessing the animal bone, and John Joyce for logistics.

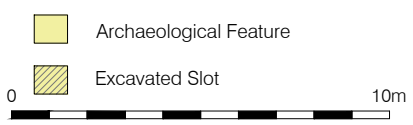
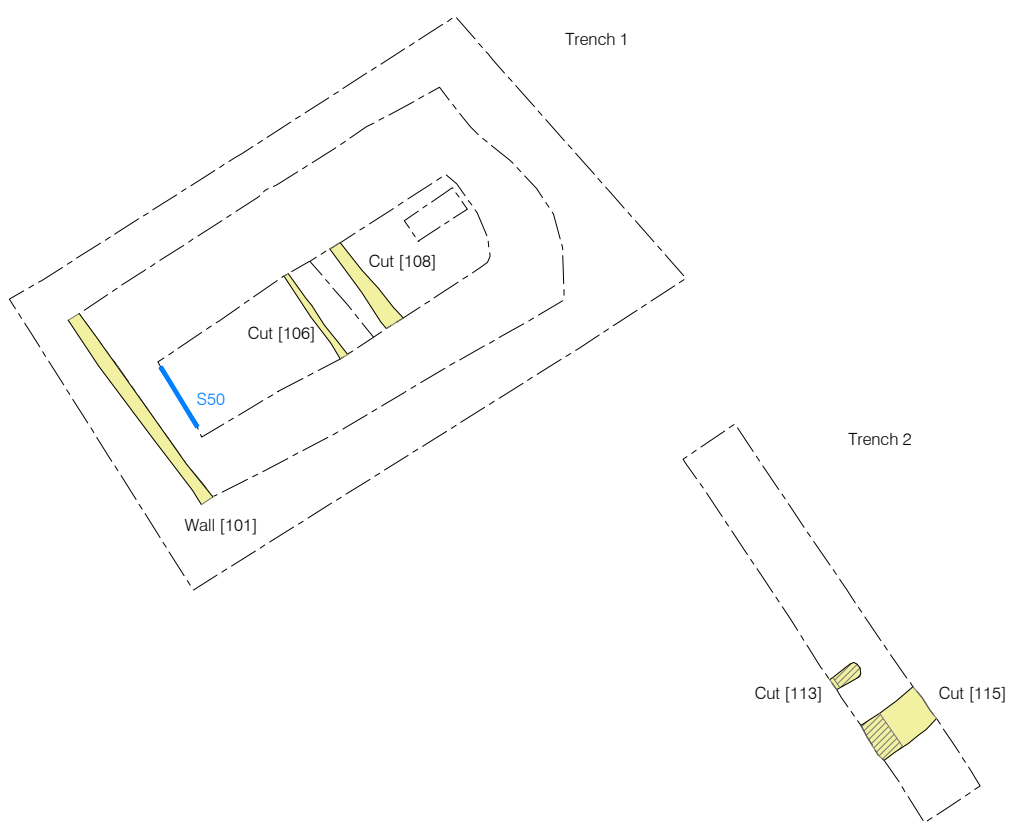
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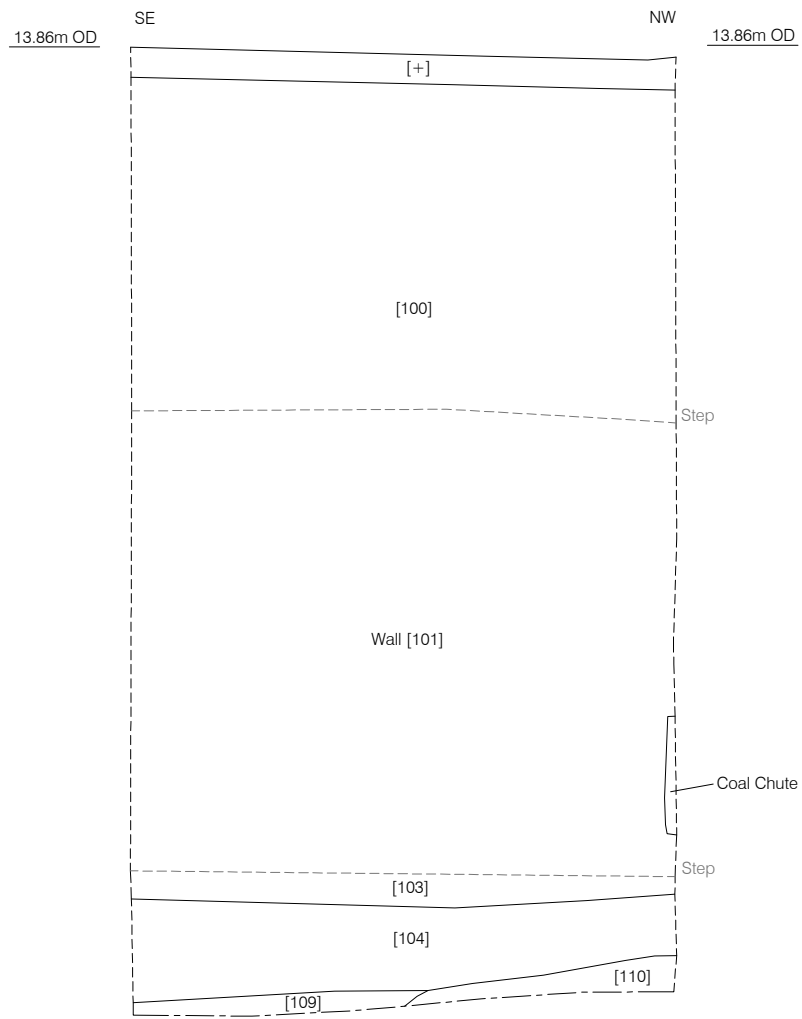
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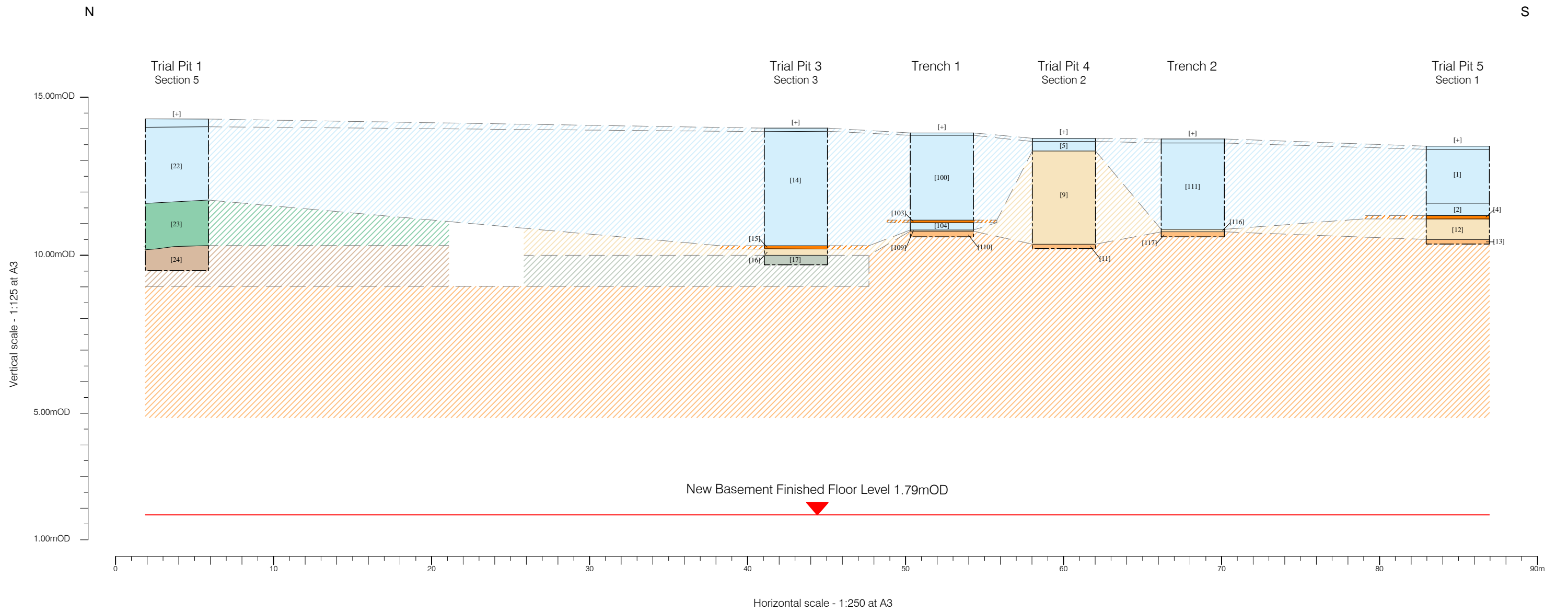






Section 50  
Northeast Facing  
Trench 1





## 11 APPENDIX 1: PLATES

*Plate 1: West facing view of Trench 1 (1m scale)*



Plate 2: West facing view of basement structure [101]/[103] (1m scale)



Plate 3: North facing view of northern extent of Trench 2 (1m scale)



*Plate 4: West facing view of pit cut [113] in southern extent of Trench 2 (1m scale)*

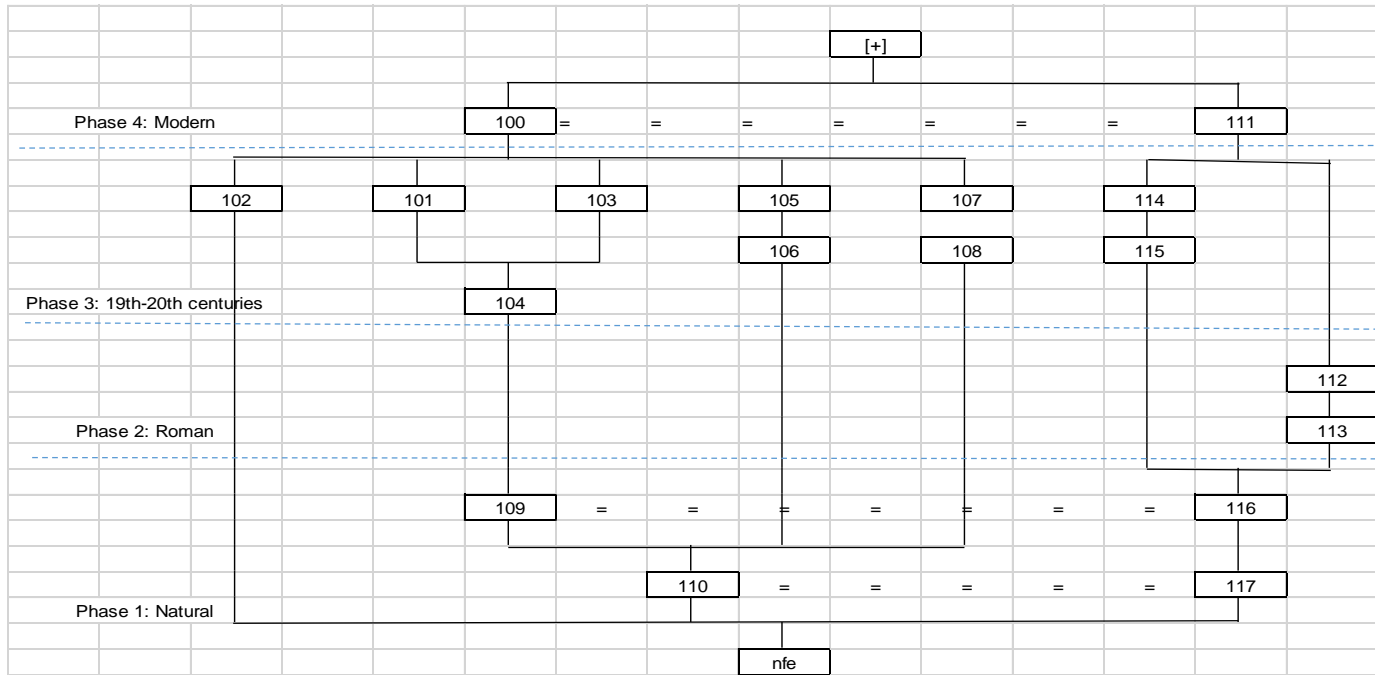


## 12 APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX

Context	Type	Trench	Interpretation	Highest Level (m OD)	Lowest Level (m OD)	Phase
100	Layer	1	Made ground	13.87	13.37	4
101	Masonry	1	Basement wall	12.70	12.55	3
102	Masonry	1	Wall foundation/ Basement wall	12.80	12.73	3
103	Masonry	1	Basement floor	11.11	11.03	3
104	Layer	1	Made ground	11.11	-	3
105	Masonry	1	Culvert	11.44	10.59	3
106	Cut	1	Cut for [105]	11.44	-	3
107	Fill	1	Fill of [108]	10.43	-	3
108	Cut	1	Services cut	10.43	-	3
109	Natural	1	Brickearth	10.74	10.70	1
110	Natural	1	Gravel	10.76	10.58	1
111	Layer	2	Made ground	13.68	-	4
112	Fill	2	Fill of [113]	10.81	10.76	2
113	Cut	2	Possible pit	10.81	10.75	2
114	Fill	2	Fill of [115]	10.84	-	3
115	Cut	2	Construction cut for basement wall	10.84	10.71	3
116	Natural	2	Brickearth	10.82	10.76	1
117	Natural	2	Gravel	10.74	10.58	1



### 13 APPENDIX 3: SITE MATRIX



## **14 APPENDIX 4: POTTERY ASSESSMENT**

Chris Jarrett

A total of four sherds (35g) of Roman pottery was recovered by hand and from a single deposit: context [112]. The pottery consists only of Verulamium/London white ware dated c. AD 50–150 and all of the non-diagnostic sherds were derived from a flagon-type vessel.

The pottery has no significance as it occurs in such a small quantity and with little meaning. The pottery does have the potential to date the contexts it was recovered from. There are no recommendations for further work on the pottery.

## 15 APPENDIX 5: CBM ASSESSMENT

Amparo Valcarcel

The ceramic building material consisted of six complete brick samples all of which have a fabric and form consistent with the early 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The bricks are frogged and heavy, with sharp arises that suggests a machine manufacture, and were made of post Great fire (3032) and Gauld (3261) fabrics. The material was collected from basement wall [101], the foundation [102] and culvert [105]

From fill [112] from possible pit [113] was collected a natural brownstone.

### BUILDING MATERIALS SPOT DATES

Context	Fabric	Form	Size	Date range of material		Latest dated material		Spot date	Spot date with mortar
101	3032	Post Great fire frogged bricks	2	1666	1900	1666	1900	1800-1900	1800-1900
102	3032;3261	Post Great fire and Gauld frogged bricks	2	1666	1950	1800	1950	1875-1925	1875-1900
105	3032	Post Great fire frogged bricks	2	1666	1900	1666	1900	1800-1900	1800-1900
112	3108	Brownstone fragment (natural)	1					No datable	

All the structures remained in the site are built using just two fabrics: 3032 and 3261. Both types of bricks have the same characteristics: sharp arises, frogged, well manufactured and very heavy, suggesting an early 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The items recovered from the excavation are not remarkable, no further work is recommended.

## 16 APPENDIX 6: ANIMAL BONE ASSESSMENT

Kevin Reilly

### Methodology

The bone was recorded to species/taxonomic category where possible and to size class in the case of unidentifiable bones such as ribs, fragments of longbone shaft and the majority of vertebra fragments. Recording follows the established techniques whereby details of the element, species, bone portion, state of fusion, wear of the dentition, anatomical measurements and taphonomic including natural and anthropogenic modifications to the bone were registered.

### Description of faunal assemblage

The excavations provided a total of three bones, these taken from the fill (112) of pit [113] and the fill (114) of the construction cut [115] for a 19<sup>th</sup> century brick wall. The former fill is dated to the Roman period. This provided a cattle distal femur, while two cattle-size rib pieces, as well as part of a human tibia, were taken from fill (114). Notably the femur had undergone some erosion, while the ribs (and human tibia) were in very good condition. In addition, the (112) cattle femur is rather large.

### Conclusion and recommendations for further work

These few bones offer very little information regarding animal usage within the respective occupation periods. It is of interest that the Roman cattle femur is large, this comparable to several specimens from Drapers' Gardens, perhaps providing further evidence for the noted increase in size of cattle within the first two centuries of Roman occupation (see Rielly in prep and Johnstone and Albarella 2002, 43).

Further excavation will undoubtedly provide more bones but on this evidence, it can be assumed that the resulting assemblage is unlikely to be sufficient large to provide any meaningful information concerning animal usage in this part of London during the stated occupation periods.

### References

Johnstone, C, and Albarella, U 2002 *The Late Iron Age and Romano-British Mammal and Bird Bone Assemblage from Elms Farm, Heybridge, Essex* (Site Code: Hyef93-95), Centre for Archaeology Report 45/2002

Rielly, K, in prep 'The animal bones', in N, Hawkins, *Excavations at Drapers' Gardens, City of London*, PCA Monograph Series

## **17 APPENDIX 7: HUMAN BONE ASSESSMENT**

James Langthorne

A single fragment of human tibia shaft was recovered from construction cut fill [114]. The shaft was in a good state of preservation and no pathological lesions were seen on the bone. It was not possible to age or sex the bone fragment.

There are no recommendations for further work on the human bone; although it could be carbon dated to establish the original date of the material should this be required.

## 18 APPENDIX 8: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-351843

### Project details

Project name 101 WHITECHAPEL HIGH STREET, LONDON E1 AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Short description of the project An archaeological evaluation undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd at 101 Whitechapel High Street in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The archaeological investigation was carried out between 23rd April - 15th May 2019 and consisted of two trenches. Natural brickearth overlying natural gravel appeared to have been heavily truncated within both trenches as a result of impacts caused by 19th century basements and post-Second World War clearance works. However, a small amount of earlier activity including a Roman pit and a fragment of redeposited human bone indicated that archaeological deposits pre-dating the 19th century may still be extant in other, less truncated parts of the Whitechapel site. Natural brickearth was encountered within both trenches at heights between 10.70-10.82m OD.

Project dates Start: 23-04-2019 End: 15-05-2019

Previous/future work Yes / Not known

Any associated project reference codes WEA18 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area

Current Land use Other 13 - Waste ground

Monument type PIT Roman

Monument type WALL Post Medieval

Significant Finds HUMAN BONE Uncertain

Significant Finds POTTERY Roman

Methods & techniques "Sample Trenches"

Development type Car park (flat)

Prompt National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Position in the planning process Pre-application

### Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON TOWER HAMLETS TOWER HAMLETS 101 Whitechapel High Street

Postcode E1

Study area 0.8 Hectares

Site coordinates TQ 3389 8144 51.515497025524 -0.070180420722 51 30 55 N 000 04 12 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 10.7m Max: 10.82m

### 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 James Langthorne  
Type of sponsor/funding body House builder  
Name of sponsor/funding body n/a

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient LAA  
Physical Archive ID WEA18  
Physical Contents "Animal Bones", "Ceramics", "Human Bones"  
Digital Archive recipient LAA  
Digital Archive ID WEA18  
Digital Contents "Animal Bones", "Ceramics", "Human Bones"  
Digital Media available "Database", "GIS", "Spreadsheets", "Survey", "Text"  
Paper Archive recipient LAA  
Paper Archive ID WEA18  
Paper Contents "none"  
Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Plan", "Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title 101 WHITECHAPEL HIGH STREET, LONDON E1 AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION  
Author(s)/Editor(s) Langthorne, J  
Date 2019  
Issuer or publisher Pre-Construct Archaeology  
Place of issue or publication London

Entered by archive (archive@pre-construct.com)  
Entered on 17 May 2019

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