ROSE GARDEN, KENSINGTON PALACE

ROYAL LONDON BOROUGH OF

KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

NOVEMBER 2007

KPE 07

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

An Archaeological Evaluation in the Rose Garden, Kensington Palace, Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea

Site Code: KPE 07

Central National Grid Reference: TQ 258 800

Written and Researched by Rebecca Lythe

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, November 2007

Project Manager: Tim Bradley

Commissioning Client: Historic Royal Palaces

Contractor: Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Unit 54 Brockley Cross Business Centre
96 Endwell Road
Brockley
London
SE4 2PD

Tel: 020 7732 3925
Fax: 020 7732 7896

Email: tbradley@pre-construct.com

Website: www.pre-construct.com

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1 ABSTRACT

1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological evaluation within the Rose Garden, Kensington Palace Gardens, undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. on behalf of Historic Royal Palaces. The project was managed by Tim Bradley and supervised the author, both of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.

1.2 Two trenches were hand dug during the evaluation.

1.3 A thick layer of clayey sandy silt was found in the base of both trenches, probably forming part of the Kempton Park sequence. This was sealed by a well developed subsoil and topsoil, associated with the grassed ornamental garden that is still extant. No archaeological structures, features or deposits were recorded during the fieldwork.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in the Rose Garden, Kensington Palace, in order to establish the nature of the underlying stratigraphy. The evaluation was conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd., between 1st and 5th November 2007, and was commissioned by Lee Prosser, Curator – Historic Buildings, on behalf of Historic Royal Palaces.

2.2 The National Grid Reference of the site is TQ 258 800.

2.3 The site was given the code KPE 07.

2.4 The project was managed by Tim Bradley and supervised by the author.

Figure 1
Site location
1:25,000 at A4

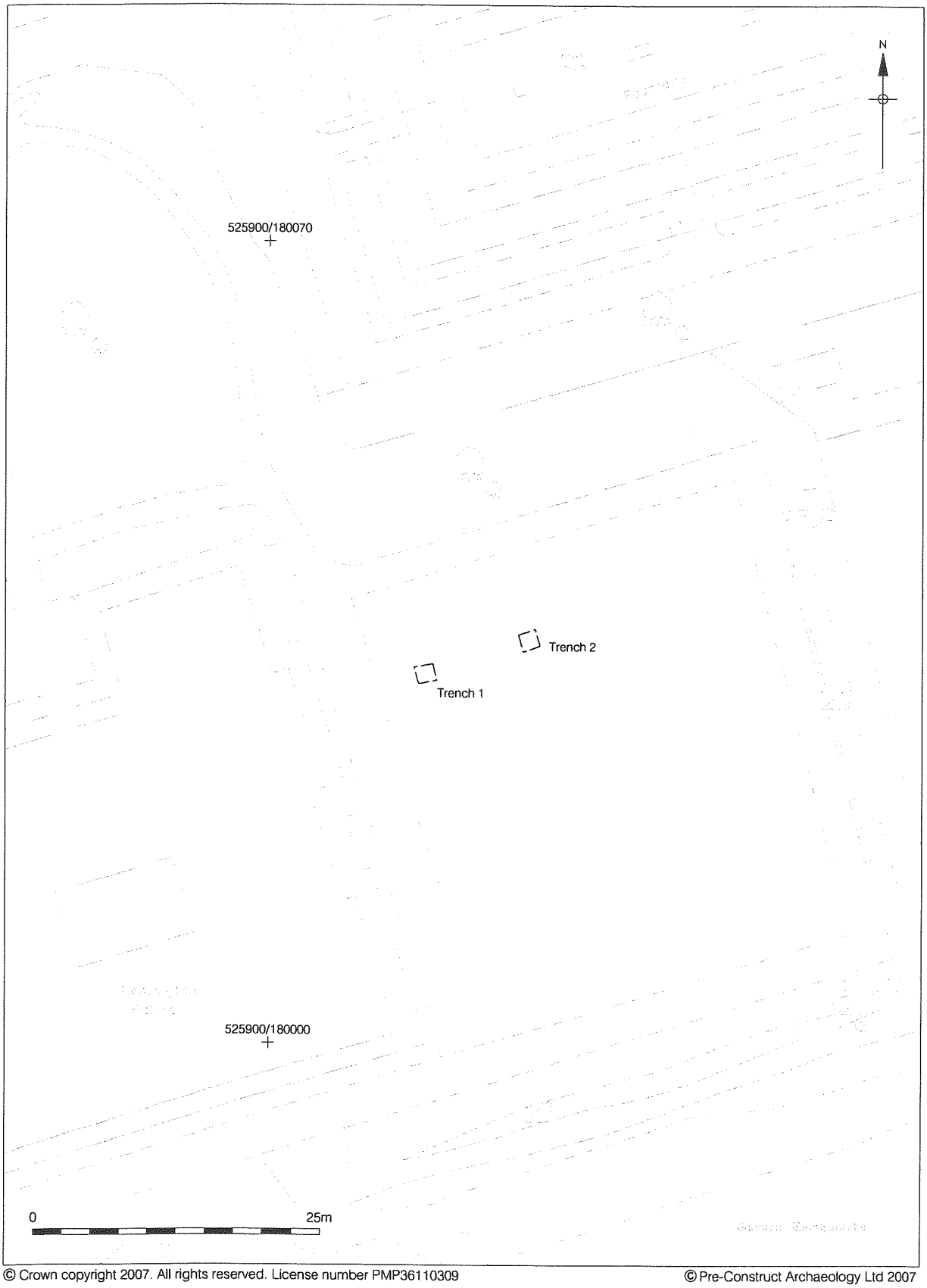


Figure 2
Trench Location
1:500 at A4

3 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

3.1 The underlying geology consists of Kempton Park gravel (British Geological Survey of England and Wales).

3.2 The modern ground surface of the Rose Garden is fundamentally flat, varying between 23.99m OD in the west and 24.07m OD in the east.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A search of the records held by the ADS Archsearch online database was made in order to establish the presence or absence of archaeological activity within a 2km radius of the site.

4.1 Prehistoric

4.1.1 A piece of prehistoric worked flint was recovered from Kensington Gardens in 1999. A prehistoric ditch was also uncovered during an archaeological evaluation of what is now the Diana Memorial Playground, less than 0.5km to the north of site (ADS Archsearch 2006).

4.1.2 Prehistoric and Iron Age features, suggestive of settlement, are recorded approximately 1km to the southwest of Kensington Palace, concentrated around Marloes Road and Wright's Lane to the south of High Street Kensington. Several evaluations and watching briefs were undertaken in the area, along with an excavation at St Mary Abbots Hospital. This revealed the remains of an Iron Age earthwork, accompanied by pits and postholes (ADS Archsearch 2006).

4.2 Roman

4.2.1 The Iron Age settlement detailed above may have continued into the Roman period. Roman buildings were unearthed at Marloes Road, St Mary Abbots Hospital and Kensington Barracks, along with Roman ditches at the latter two sites. Roman remains were also uncovered during works at Wright's Lane (ADS Archsearch 2006).

4.2.2 A Roman beacon is recorded as being present at Notting Hill Gate, under 2km to the northwest. This may be due to the fact that a Roman road probably ran along what is now Bayswater Road (Ordnance Survey Historical Maps: Roman Britain 5th Edition; ADS Archsearch 2006).

4.3 Saxon

4.3.1 As noted in the Domesday Book of 1086, an Anglo-Saxon thegn (a minor land-holder in the service of a greater one) named "Edwin", owned the Manor of Kensington before 1066 (Impey, 2003).

4.3.2 To date, no direct archaeological evidence of Saxon activity has been recovered within a 2km radius of the site. However, the Church of St Mary Abbots, still situated on the corner of High Street Kensington and Kensington Church Street, may have Saxon origins (ADS Archsearch 2006). If this is the case, occupation may have continued into the Saxon period.

4.4 Medieval

4.4.1 After the Norman Conquest, the manor passed to Aubrey de Vere, a feudal tenant of Geoffrey of Montbray, Bishop of Coutances. According to the Domesday Book of 1086, it extended for 1500 acres and contained woodland for 200 pigs, pasture, plough-land and a *vinea* (vinyard). "Land to support a priest" (Impey, 2003 p.11) is also mentioned, implying the presence of a church, presumed to be St Mary Abbots. A church requires a congregation, and as a result the presence of a small medieval settlement can be inferred (Impey, 2003). The results of archaeological work at Wright's Lane (immediately southwest of the junction between Kensington Church Street and High Street Kensington) supports this, as remains indicative of medieval occupation were recovered. As detailed above, the settlement may date back to the Saxon period or earlier, perhaps continuing unbroken from Roman times (Weinreb & Hibbert 1995, ADS Archsearch 2006).

4.4.2 The manor of Eia, located to the immediate east of the manor of Kensington, had been partitioned into three smaller manors by 1100. One section, later called "Hyde", was situated in the approximate position of modern-day Hyde Park, between the Tyburn and West Bourne streams (Impey, 2003). Two newly created roads, now known as Kensington High Street and Kensington Church Street, ran parallel with the manor's southern and western limits (ADS Archsearch 2006).

4.4.3 By the 12th Century, part of the Manor of Hyde had been granted to the Abbot of Abingdon by the de Vere family. It consisted of a long strip of land termed "Abbots' Manor", 270 acres in size, situated to the east of Kensington Church Street. The manor of Hyde became the property of the monks of Westminster from 1100 onwards, before falling into the hands of the Crown in the 16th Century (Impey, 2003).

Post-Medieval

4.5 16th Century

4.5.1 Hyde was acquired by King Henry VIII in 1536 and 600 acres were converted into a deer park. Bayswater Road, named Acton Road in the 16th century, marked the northern boundary of the park, whilst the forerunner of High Street Kensington delineated the southern boundary. In 1538, during the Reformation, Abbot's Manor also passed to the Crown, remaining property of the King until the end of the century. In 1599, it was sold to Sir Walter Cope, joint Keeper of Hyde Park and Chamberlain of the Exchequer. He also bought the neighbouring manors of West Town in 1591 and Notting Barns (Impey, 2003 p.11).

4.6 17th Century

4.6.1 Unless referenced otherwise, the information contained within this section has been taken from "A Building History" compiled by Historic Royal Palaces (http://www.hrp.org.uk/KensingtonPalace/stories/buildinghistory/default.aspx).

4.6.2 At some point before his death in 1614, Sir Walter Cope sold off a strip of land that would later become the grounds of Kensington Palace. It was bound by Hyde Park to the east, Kensington Church Street to the west, Acton Road to the north and the forerunner of Kensington High Street to the south. George Coppin, Clerk of the Crown and friend of Cope's, purchased the land between 1605 and 1614 (Impey, 2003).

4.6.3 Coppin was responsible for the first phase of Kensington Palace's construction, between 1605 and 1620. He commissioned a villa-style Jacobean mansion, probably designed by land surveyor and antiquary John Thorpe. The villa was rectangular in plan, its long axis being orientated east-west. Bay windows were centrally placed on the north, east and west facing exterior walls, whilst the main entrance was located in the middle of the southern wall. Internally, the building consisted of a long, central hall, orientated north-south, with rooms leading off to the east and west. This would later become the Palace's core, around which later additions would be added (Impey, 2003).

4.6.4 Whilst much was replaced, vestiges of the Jacobean core can still be recognised in the modern-day layout of Kensington Palace. A series of architectural drawings (reproduced in Impey 2003) suggest the north and south facing walls of what is now the Cupola Room are in the probable positions of the northern and southern walls of

the original core, whilst the northern and southern entranceways of the King's Drawing Room appear to mark the approximate position of its demolished eastern wall.

4.6.5 The estate remained property of the Coppins for a further two generations, before passing to the Finch family some time around 1630. Deeds suggest the grounds consisted of ornamental gardens combined with orchards, woodland, pastoral and arable land at the time of sale. A series of outbuildings are also listed, including barns and stables. The writings of Samuel Pepys, who visited the house in 1664, mention the presence of a fountain. A "marble conduit" and a grotto, situated in a plot next to the southwest corner of the main building, were documented in 1662 (Impey, 2003).

4.6.6 An inventory, compiled in 1676, suggests the property contained at least thirty rooms, indicating a phase of enlargement, perhaps in the location of the Queens Apartments. The estate remained in the possession of the Finch family for three generations. It became known as Nottingham House after Sir Heneage Finch II was made 1st Earl of Nottingham in 1681 (Impey, 2003).

4.6.7 Before the reign of William (1689-1702) and Mary (1689-1694), the main royal residence in London was Whitehall Palace. This changed in 1689, when the Monarchs purchased Nottingham House from Daniel Finch, 2nd Earl of Nottingham. The King and Queen then commissioned a series of works designed to modernise the building. They were carried out under the instruction of Sir Christopher Wren (Surveyor of the King's Works, 1669 to 1718) and Nicholas Hawksmoor (appointed Clerk of Works, 1689-1715).

4.6.8 It is thought that, in order to save time and money, the Jacobean core of Nottingham House was left intact. Wren's modifications were then added to its four corners, creating a more modern, classical look. The extensions, known as "pavilions", were three storeys high with attics, providing additional space for the Royal Court. Wren also re-orientated the building by designing a new entrance and service courtyard, known as Great Court or Clock Court, on its western side. Kitchens were situated on the northern side of this and an archway and clock tower (still extant today) were added to the west. On the south side, a narrow range containing The Stone Gallery was constructed. This connected Wren's new main entrance with the southwest pavilion.

4.6.9 The building became known as Kensington House when the Royal Court took up residence, some time after 1689. Shortly afterwards, Queen Mary instigated further building work with the intention of enlarging and improving her personal apartments. This resulted in the construction of The Queens Gallery, replete with its own staircase.

4.6.10 In November 1691, Kensington House was partially damaged by fire. Part of the southern range of Great Court was destroyed, necessitating repair work. The reconstructions provided an opportunity to remodel the approach to the Royal Apartments, during which the King's Staircase was rebuilt in marble and a lavishly decorated Guard Chamber was constructed at its base.

4.6.11 The last modification undertaken at the request of William III was the construction of the South Front, built in 1695, probably by Hawksmoor. This contained a long gallery at first-floor level.

4.7 18th Century

4.7.1 Few modifications were made to the Palace during the reign of Queen Anne (1702-1714), although her apartments were extended with the addition of several new rooms. The same cannot be said of the gardens, upon which £26,000 was spent. Several outbuildings were constructed, the most famous being The Orangery, which still stands to the north of the Palace. This was used as a greenhouse for the wintering of exotic plants, a "summer supper house" and a place of entertainment.

4.7.2 A survey conducted in 1716 at the request of George I (1714-1727) found Kensington House to be in a very poor state of repair. As a consequence, a restorative campaign was launched under the supervision of William Benson, Surveyor of the King's Works (1718 to 1719). It is thought that the core of the Jacobean building was partially replaced by three new State Rooms, known as the Privy Chamber, the Cupola Room and the Withdrawing Room. They were probably designed by Colen Campbell, Deputy Surveyor of the King's Works, and elaborately decorated by the painter William Kent. The palace played an important role in the Courtly life of George II, until his death in 1760.

4.7.3 George III (1760-1830) did not live at Kensington Palace after his father's death, which marked the last time a reigning monarch would reside there. As a result, the palace gradually fell into disrepair throughout the latter half of the 18th century.

4.7.4 In 1798, George III's brother, the Duke of Kent, was granted two dilapidated floors in the south-east corner of the Palace. He therefore instigated repair work, accompanied by a series of modifications to the lower floors. A new porch was constructed on the eastern side of Great Court, along with an entrance hall and a double staircase, which

lead into the Red Saloon and others beyond. The work was carried out under the supervision of the architect James Wyatt, Surveyor-General to the Board of Works.

4.8 19th Century

4.8.1 The future Queen Victoria was born at Kensington Palace in 1819, living there with her mother, the Duchess of Kent, until her accession in 1837. Throughout the reign of William IV (1830-1837), the Duchess made several changes to the building. Under the supervision of architect Sir Jeffry Wyatville, the King's Gallery was partitioned into three rooms for the use of Princess Victoria. The Duchess' personal living quarters were also extended into the unused State Apartments on the second floor.

4.8.2 After Victoria became Queen (1837-1901), Kensington Palace ceased to be occupied as a residence. The State Apartments were neglected, being used as a storage area for objects from other palaces. As a result, the structural fabric of the building deteriorated; the brickwork began to degrade and much of the woodwork became infested with dry rot. An article in an 1888 issue of "The Queen's Homes" described the State Apartments as being "...empty, bare, dreary and comfortless...nothing but bare walls and bare boards".

4.8.3 During the 1890s, a plan concerning the Palace's demolition was put forward, a proposition that may have come to pass were it not for the intervention of the Queen. In 1897, Parliament was persuaded to pay for restorative building work, the aim of which was to recreate the Palace of George II. After the work was completed, The State Apartments were opened to the public and used as an exhibition space. This took place on the Queens 80th birthday, on 24th May 1899.

4.9 20th Century

4.9.1 The State Apartments were acquired by London Museum in 1911, before being used as offices for charitable organisations throughout the First World War (1914-1918).

4.9.2 In 1932-1933, further restorative work was carried out on Queen Victoria's apartments at the request of Queen Mary.

4.9.3 The State Apartments were subject to bomb damage during the Second World War (1935-1945), the Queen's Apartments being particularly badly affected. It was therefore necessary to close the Palace to the public for a total of five years, whilst

repairs were made. It was then reoccupied by London Museum, which remained there until 1976.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Two trenches were opened during the evaluation, in order to investigate the underlying drift geology and identify the presence or absence of archaeology. They were situated in a grassed area forming part of an ornamental garden associated with Kensington Palace, immediately to the east of the State Apartments.

5.2 The dimensions of the trenches are detailed below:

Trench 1	1.46m north-south x 1.64m east-west
Trench 2	1.44m north-south x 1.58m east-west

5.3 The attendant archaeologists excavated the underlying deposits by hand to a depth of 1.20m.

5.4 The sides and bases of the trenches were hand-cleaned prior to recording. Representative sections were then drawn, along with plans of the trenches. All recording systems were fully compatible with those most 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 Archaeology Service (MoLAS 1994). Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated and exposed were entered onto pro-forma recording sheets. Plans and sections were recorded on polyester based drawing film, the plans being drawn at a scale of 1:20 and the sections at 1:10. The OD heights of all principal strata were calculated and indicated on the appropriate plans and sections. A full photographic record of the investigations was prepared, including both black and white prints and colour transparencies on 35mm film.

5.4 Levels were taken from a Temporary Bench Mark (TBM) with a value of 24.07m OD, situated on the northwest corner of the footpath that circles the garden. This was traversed from an Ordnance Survey benchmark with a value of 27.66m OD, located on a boundary marker on the eastern side of The Broad Walk. The trenches were located using a total station and were tied into the Ordnance Survey grid.

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL PHASE DISCUSSION

6.1 Phase 1- Natural

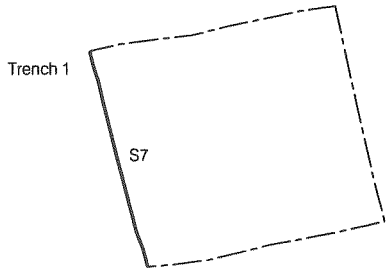
6.1.1 The earliest deposit to be encountered was a layer of mid reddish yellow sandy clayey silt, termed context [64] in Trench 1 and [68] in Trench 2. It appeared flat, being observed at a level of 23.48m OD in Trench 1 and 23.45m OD in Trench 2. The layer was over 0.30m thick, continuing beyond the vertical limit of excavation in both trenches. It was interpreted as natural silt, probably forming part of the Kempton Park sequence.

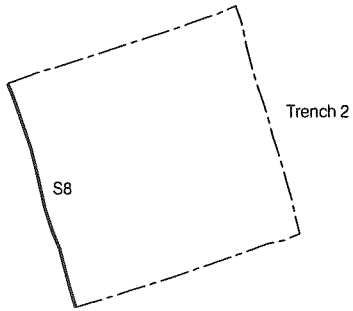
6.2 Phase 2- Post-Medieval

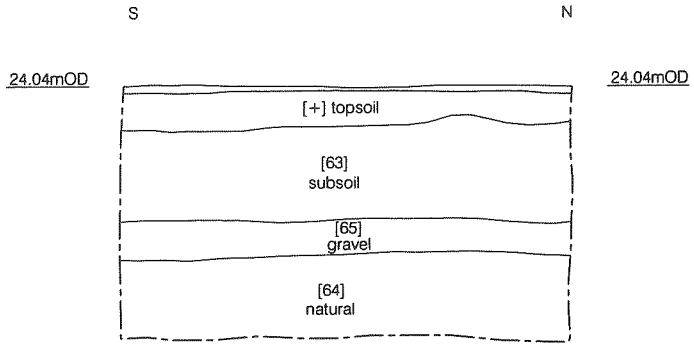
6.2.1 The natural silt was sealed by a layer of mid greyish brown sandy silt, termed context [65] in Trench 1 and [67] in Trench 2. It had a variable thickness, being 0.10m thick in Trench 1 and 0.28m thick in Trench 2, the top being observed at a height of 23.60m OD in both trenches. Frequent rootlets and vertical striations were noted within the deposit. It was therefore interpreted as a bioturbated interface between the underlying natural silt and the overlying topsoil.

6.2.2 Sealing interface [65] / [67] was a firm, mid greyish brown deposit of sandy silt, termed context [63] / [66]. The layer was 0.46m thick in Trench 1, the top being at a height of 23.91m OD, and 0.22m thick in Trench 2, the top being at a level of 23.85m OD. Several highly fragmented pieces of red fabric CBM were retrieved from the deposit, along with some sherds of probable flower pot. Unfortunately, the finds were not diagnostic, the pottery yielding a date range of 1480 to 1900 (Jarrett,C. *pers. comm.*) and the CBM suggesting a 15th to 17th century date (Seddon, B, *pers comm.*.). The deposit was therefore interpreted as a layer of post-medieval subsoil. The horizon has probably been active throughout the late post-medieval period, continuing into the present day.

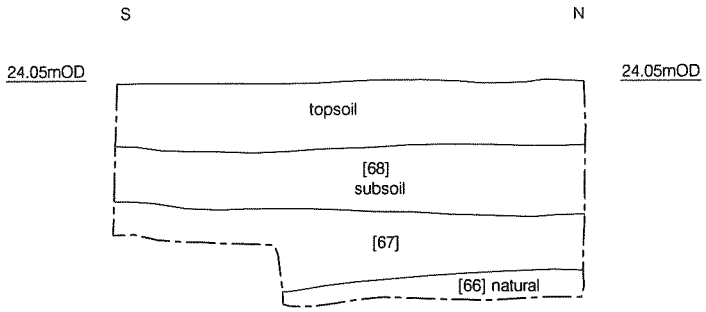
6.2.3 The subsoil was sealed by a layer of topsoil, approximately 0.10m to 0.20m thick, which was in turn sealed by grass. This forms the modern ground surface.







Section 7
East facing
Trench 1



Section 8
East facing
Trench 2

Figure 3
Sections 7 & 8
1:25 at A4

7 INTERPRETATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 The principal objectives of the archaeological evaluation were to assess the nature of the underlying drift geology and to determine the presence or absence of archaeological activity. These objectives were achieved and the results are summarised below.

7.2 A layer of natural silt was found at the base of the sequence in both trenches, presumably forming part of the Kempton Park sequence. This was sealed by a thin bioturbated interface, which was in turn sealed by a layer of post-medieval subsoil. A layer of topsoil and grass sealed both trenches, forming the modern ground surface. No significant archaeological remains were observed in either trench.

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

8.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. would like to thank Lee Prosser and Jo Thwaites for commissioning the work on behalf of Historic Royal Palaces.

8.2 The author would like to thank Tim Bradley for his project management and editing, Hayley Baxter for the illustrations and Iain Bright for his hard work and assistance in the field. The author would also like to thank Jem Roggers for the surveying and Lisa Lonsdale for her technical and logistical support. Thanks are also due to Maureen Roberts of Historic Royal Palaces, for logistical assistance on site.

9 Bibliography

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Appendix 1- Context Index

Site Code	Context No.	Plan	Trench No.	Section / Elevation	Type	Description	Date	M OD	Phase	Photos No.
	1 to 62	N/A	N/A	N/A	VOID	NOT USED	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	63	1	1	7	Layer	Subsoil	Post-medieval	23.91	2	Film 3, frames 18-23 Film 6, frames 2-7
	64	1	1	7	Layer	Natural clayey silt	Natural	23.48	1	Film 3, frames 18-23 Film 6, frames 2-7
	65	1	1	7	Layer	Bioturbated interface	Post-medieval	23.6	2	Film 3, frames 18-23 Film 6, frames 2-7
	66	2	2	8	Layer	Subsoil	Post-medieval	23.45	1	Film 3, frames 24-29 Film 6, frames 8-13
	67	2	2	8	Layer	Bioturbated interface	Post-medieval	23.6	2	Film 3, frames 24-29 Film 6, frames 8-13
	68	2	2	8	Layer	Natural clayey silt	Natural	23.45	1	Film 3, frames 24-29 Film 6, frames 8-13

Appendix 2 – Oasis Report Form

OASIS ID: preconst1-35571

Project details

Project name	Rose Garden, Kensington Palace Gardens, Archaeological Evaluation
Short description of the project	This report details the results of an archaeological evaluation within the Rose Garden, Kensington Palace Gardens, undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. on behalf of Historic Royal Palaces. Two trenches were hand dug during the evaluation. A thick layer of clayey sandy silt was found in the base of both trenches, probably forming part of the Kempton Park sequence. This was sealed by a well developed subsoil and topsoil, associated with the grassed ornamental garden that is still extant. No archaeological structures, features or deposits were recorded during the fieldwork.
Project dates	Start: 01-11-2007 End: 05-11-2007
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA KENSINGTON Rose Garden, Kensington Palace Gardens
Postcode	W8
Study area	10.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 2580 8000 51.5044178270 -0.187234534240 51 30 15 N 000 11 14 W Point

Height OD	Min: 23.45m Max: 23.48m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project brief originator	Historic Royal Palaces
Project design originator	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project director/manager	Tim Bradley
Project supervisor	Rebecca Lythe
Type of sponsor/funding body	Historic Royal Palaces
Name of sponsor/funding body	Historic Royal Palaces

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Media available	'Survey'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Drawing','Matrices','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section','Survey '
Entered by	Tim Bradley (tbradley@pre-construct.com)

Entered on 12 December 2007

P C A

PRE - CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY LIMITED

UNIT 54

BROCKLEY CROSS BUSINESS CENTRE

96 ENDWELL ROAD

BROCKLEY

LONDON SE4 2PD

TEL: 0207 732 3925 0207 639 9091

FAX: 0207 639 9588

EMAIL: info@pre-construct.com

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY LIMITED (NORTHERN OFFICE)

UNIT 19A

TURSDALE BUSINESS PARK

DURHAM DH6 5PG

TEL: 0191 377 1111

FAX: 0191 377 0101

EMAIL: info.north@pre-construct.com