

An Archaeological Watching Brief at Ruxley Manor Garden Centre, Sidcup, London Borough of Bromley

Site Code: RUX 07

Central National Grid Reference: TQ 4853 7024

Written and Researched by Paw Jorgensen

**Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited,
January 2008**

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January 2008**

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CONTENTS

1	ABSTRACT	2
2	INTRODUCTION	3
3	GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY	6
4	ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	7
5	ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY	8
6	SUMMARY OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE	9
7	INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS:	12
8	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	13
9	BIBLIOGRAPHY	14

FIGURES

Figure 1	Site Location
Figure 2	Trench Location
Figure 3	Plan of Watching Brief Area
Figure 4	Section 1

APPENDICES

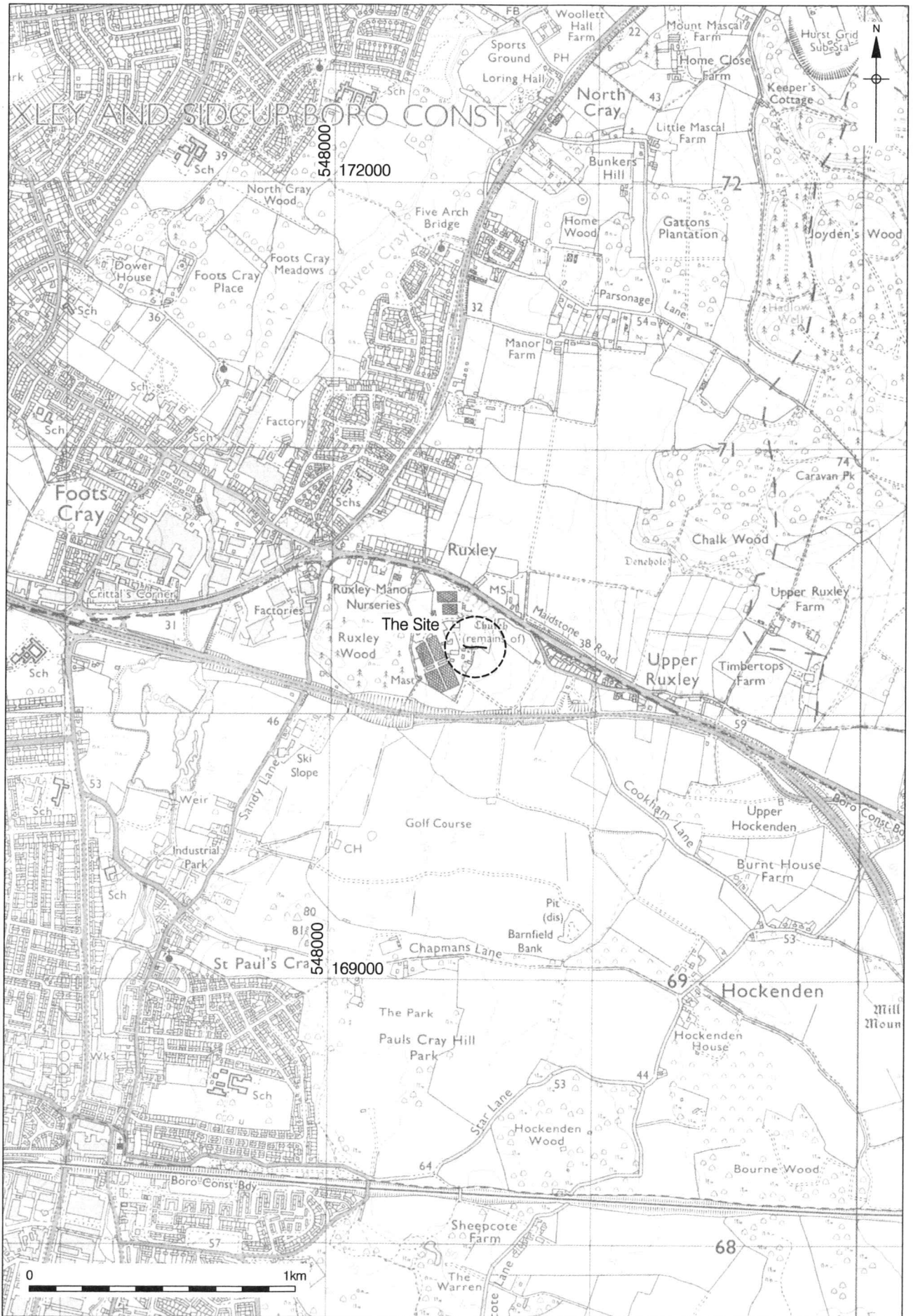
Appendix 1:	Context Register
Appendix 2:	Site Matrix
Appendix 3:	Osteology Report
Appendix 4:	OASIS Form

1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results and working methods of an archaeological watching brief for a electrical service trench carried out to the north of St Botolph's Church, Ruxley Manor Garden Centre, Maidstone Road, Sidcup, London Borough of Bromley. The watching brief was commissioned by Ruxley Manor Garden Centre. The project took place from 23rd-27th October. The electricity cable trench proposal was not submitted as part of the planning process and therefore an archaeological planning condition was not attached to the works. However, human bones were encountered during the excavation of the trench and therefore an archaeological watching brief was requested by Mark Stevenson the Archaeology Advisor to the London Borough of Bromley, and Liz Whitbourn, Field Monument Warden for English Heritage.
- 1.2 During the excavation of the cable trench three human burials were discovered. Additionally, large quantities of disarticulated human remains were recovered from the site. Kathelen Sayer, Pre-Construct Archaeology's osteologist, conducted an analysis of the human remains found. The results of this analysis are presented in Appendix 3 of this report.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 An archaeological watching brief for a electrical cable trench was undertaken in October 2007 by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited to the north of St Botolph's Church, Ruxley Manor Garden Centre, Maidstone Road, Sidcup, London Borough of Bromley (Figure 1).
- 2.2 The site lies directly to the north of St Botolph's Church, which is of 13th – 16th century date. The church has Saxon origins and is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM no. LO104). The church was deconsecrated in 1557.
- 2.3 Restoration of the church is ongoing and is funded by English Heritage. The electricity cable trench proposal was not submitted as part of the planning process and therefore an archaeological planning condition was not attached to the works. However, human bones were encountered during the excavation of the trench and therefore an archaeological watching brief was requested by Mark Stevenson the Archaeology Advisor to the London Borough of Bromley, and Liz Whitbourn, Field Monument Warden for English Heritage.
- 2.4 The site is bordered by the garden centre car park to the north and St Botolph's Church to the south. The cable trench measured roughly 1m in width and c. 90m in length and is aligned east-west. The trench depth was c. 1m (Figure 2).
- 2.5 The site was located at National Grid Reference TQ 4853 7024.
- 2.6 The maximum depth of ground reduction was 0.72m below current ground level. The electrical cable trench was recorded as a watching brief.
- 2.7 The work was commissioned by Ruxley Manor Garden Centre. The project was managed for Pre-Construct Archaeology by Helen Clough and supervised by Alistair Douglas and Irenao Grosso.
- 2.8 The site was assigned the code RUX07.



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Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:20,000 at A4



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Figure 2
 Electrical Service Trench Location
 and Area of Burials
 1:500 at A4

3 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 3.1 Topographically the site is situated on a slight eastward slope. The site slopes from c. 57.0m OD to c. 54.0m OD
- 3.2 The natural drift geology identified in the base of the trench comprised a light to mid yellow clayey sand, containing frequent quantities of rounded pebbles.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 GENERAL OVERVIEW

4.1.1 St. Botolph's Church stands directly to the south of the site. It is a single cell church built during the 13th century. Cardinal Pole allegedly deconsecrated it in 1557, after which it fell into disuse. The current building rests partly on the foundation of an even earlier church purportedly dating to the 11th or 12th century. The earlier structure appears to have been a two cell church. During previous archaeological excavations several burials were discovered both inside and outside the church.

4.1.2 Also in the vicinity of the site is Ruxley Manor House which dates from the 17th century.

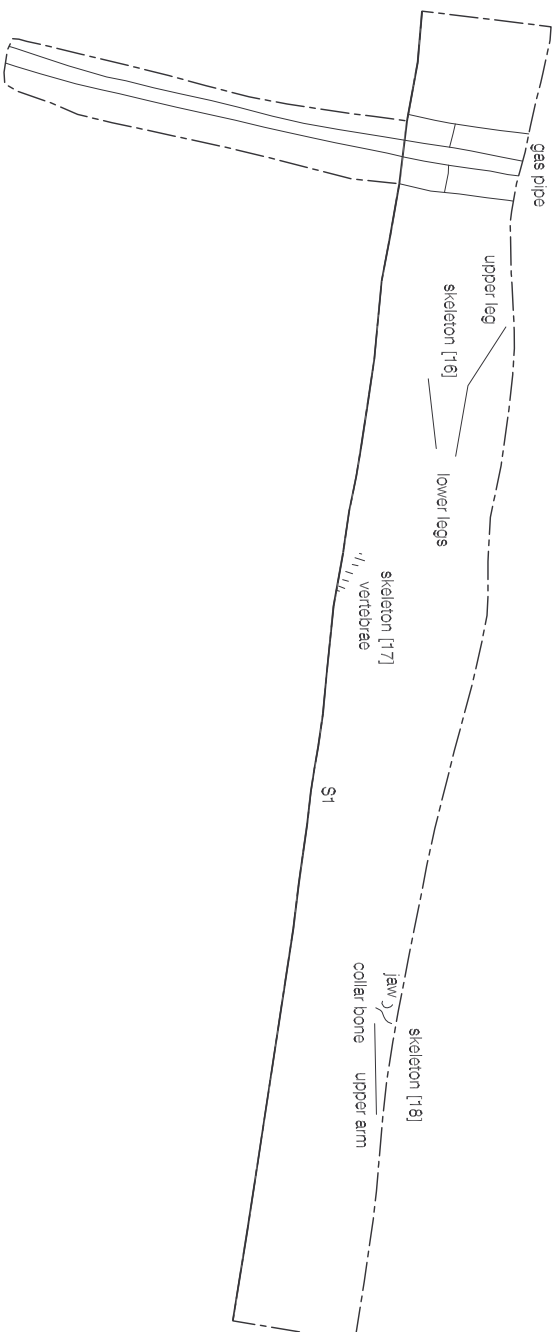
ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 5.1 The area of the electrical service trench was laid out and had been partly excavated before Pre-Construct Archaeology was commissioned by Ruxley Manor Garden Centre to undertake the archaeological watching brief. The remaining ground reduction was monitored by an archaeologist.
- 5.2 The objective of the watching brief was to record human burials uncovered prior to the commencement of the work and to recover any human remains found in the spoil of the trench.
- 5.3 A number of graves had been exposed and were cleaned and recorded in preparation for preservation in situ. All human bone in the spoil from the trench was collected and retained pending reburial.
- 5.4 The cable trench measured roughly 1m in width and c. 90m in length and was aligned east-west. The trench depth was c. 1m.
- 5.5 Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated and/or exposed were entered onto pro-forma recording sheets. All plans and sections of archaeological deposits were recorded on polyester based drawing film, the plans being drawn at a scale of 1:20 and the sections at 1:10. The recording system used was "single context".
- 5.6 The trench location was surveyed on 24th October 2007. During the survey OD heights were taken at several points along the trench. The ground surface sloped down towards the east. The highest point was located along the western edge of the trench at 57.85m OD and the lowest point was along the eastern edge at 54.28m OD.

6 SUMMARY OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

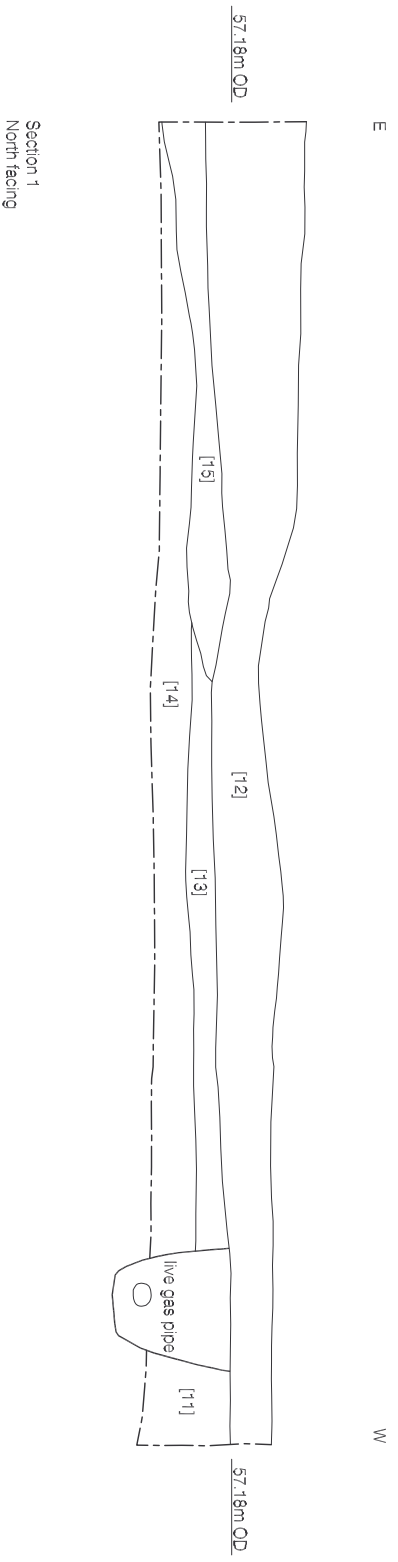
6.1 Electrical service trench

- 6.1.1 The site lies directly to the north of St Botolph's Church, which is of 13th – 16th century date. The church has Saxon origins and is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM no. LO104). The church was deconsecrated in 1557 (Figures 1 and 2).
- 6.1.2 The earliest deposit observed was a layer [19], found at 56.85m OD. The deposit consisted of light to mid yellow clayey sand, containing frequent quantities of rounded pebbles.
- 6.1.3 Directly above layer [19], layer [14] comprised reddish brown silty sandy clay mottled with light green silty sandy clay. This layer contained frequent inclusions of rounded pebbles, occasional inclusions of charcoal flecks and fragments, and occasional flint nodules. Layer [14] probably represents cemetery soil dating to the medieval period. Three human skeletons [16-18] were discovered below layer [14] (Figure 3). The excavation of the electrical service trench had heavily truncated the graves and only a few bones remained in situ.
- 6.1.4 Overlying the cemetery soil [14] was a layer of made ground [13] comprised of grey silty sandy clay mottled with reddish brown silty sandy clay containing frequent inclusions of chalk fragments and very frequent inclusions of medium rounded pebbles. Another layer of made ground [15] overlaid [13]. This deposit comprised moderately compacted grey to brown silty sandy clay. Occasionally occurring charcoal and CBM fragments and frequently occurring chalk fragments were observed throughout the deposit (Figure 4). Disarticulated human remains were also found on site. These remains were collected onsite and later analysed by Kathelen Sayer, Pre-Construct Archaeology's osteologist; the results of the analysis are presented in Appendix 3 of this report.
- 6.1.5 Modern truncation caused by the installation of a north-south aligned gas pipeline had occurred in the eastern portion of the trench. This had caused vertical truncation of layers [11, 13, and 14].



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Figure 3
Detail of Area of Burials
1:40 at A4



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Figure 4
Section 1
1:40 at A4

7 INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 Excavation of the electrical service trench revealed three in situ human burials that had been heavily truncated by the excavation of the trench. Layers dating to the medieval period overlay the burials. In addition to the burials, disarticulated human remains were found throughout the site. The results of the analysis of these are presented in Appendix 3. No evidence of any features earlier than the medieval period was found.
- 7.2 It is anticipated that it will be possible for the human remains to be reburied within the nearby churchyard extension to St James Church in Parsonage Lane. The parish where Ruxley Church is located was previously North Cray cum Ruxley so the use of St James in this respect would be most applicable.

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 8.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank James Evans of Ruxley Manor Garden Centre for commissioning the project.

- 8.2 The author would like to thank Helen Clough for her project management and Alistair Douglas and Irenao Grosso for supervising the project. Illustrations were produced by Hayley Baxter.

9 BIBLIOGRAPHY

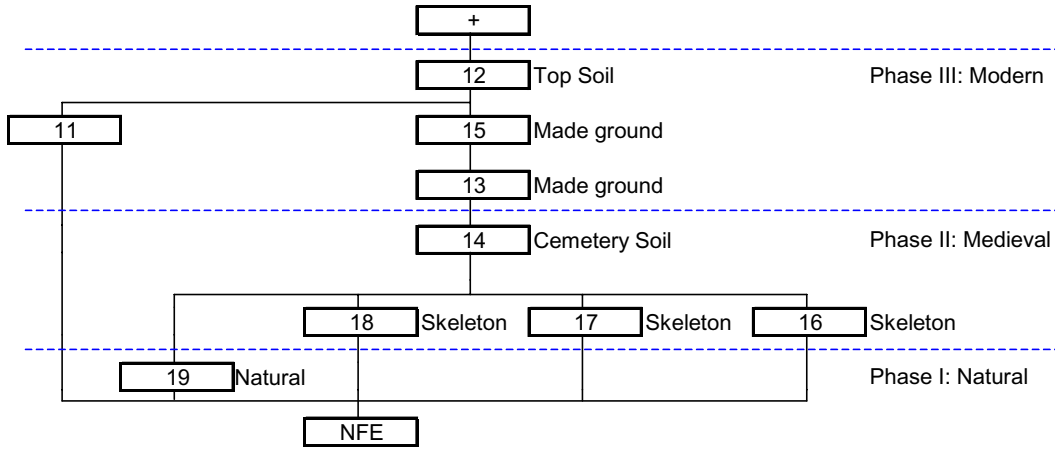
Clough H 2007 *Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief at Ruxley Manor Garden Centre, Sidcup, London Borough of Bromley* Pre-Construct Archaeology unpublished report

Appendix 1 Context Register

Context Number	Trench	Plan Number	Section Number	Phase	Type	Description
11	Electrical Service Trench	N/A	1	III	Layer	Made ground
12	Electrical Service Trench	N/A	1	III	Layer	Top soil
13	Electrical Service Trench	N/A	1	III	Layer	Made ground
14	Electrical Service Trench	N/A	1	II	Layer	Cemetery soil
15	Electrical Service Trench	N/A	1	III	Layer	Made ground
16	Electrical Service Trench	N/A	1	II	Skeleton	Skeleton
17	Electrical Service Trench	N/A	1	II	Skeleton	Skeleton
18	Electrical Service Trench	N/A	1	II	Skeleton	Skeleton
19	Electrical Service Trench	N/A	1	I	Natural	Natural sandy clay

Appendix 2 Site Matrix

RUX-07 Electrical Service Trench



Appendix 3

Analysis of disarticulated human bone from Ruxley Church, Bromley, RUX 07

Kathelen Sayer

Introduction

Following the excavation of a service trench at Ruxley Church, Sidcup, London Borough of Bromley, human bone was recovered from the spoil. It is believed that the service trench removed some *in-situ* burials. All of the remains are now co-mingled and it is not possible to analyse any single individuals, therefore the remains had to be recorded as disarticulated bone. As such all bones present were identified individually, any evidence of possible age and sex and pathology noted. Fragments of mandible were present, the dentition of which was recorded as below.

Mandible	Right								Left							
	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
/	lost post-mortem								X lost ante-mortem							
-	tooth present but jaw missing								U present							
NP	not present								PE partially erupted							
O	tooth erupting								B broken							
V	tooth unerupted								-- tooth and jaw not present							
PU	pulp exposed								R root only							

The minimum number of individuals (MNI) was calculated from duplicated skeletal elements.

Results

The detail of the bones present is contained in the table below.

The remains represent a minimum number of 6 individuals, identified by the presence of 6 right ulnas. Amongst the remains it was possible to identify at least one adult male, two possible adult females, at least one juvenile and an adolescent. It is not possible to say definitely how many burials were disturbed by the recent work as some of the bone might have already been disarticulated and many of the bones do appear to have old post-mortem breaks. However it was possible to identify the remains of an adult male of large stature and a juvenile, indicating at least two burials were disturbed.

The bone was largely in good or moderate condition.

Very little pathology was noted. Calculus was noted on the teeth present, ante-mortem tooth loss was found in 4 out of the 5 mandibles present, cribra orbitalia, associated with anaemia, was identified in a skull fragment and Schmorl's nodes, associated with strain on the back, were found in some of the vertebrae.

No further work on the remains is necessary.

SKELETAL ELEMENT	AGE	SEX	CONDITION	COMMENTS
Left humerus; proximal AS,	Adult	?	Very good	Modern

proximal and mid shaft				break to distal end of bone.
Left femur; mid and distal shaft, distal AS	Adult	?	Good	Post mortem damage to distal AS.
Right femur; lesser trochanter, shaft and distal AS.	Adult	?	Good	
Left humerus; shaft and medial half of distal AS	Adult	?	Good	Modern break to the proximal shaft and lateral AS
Left tibia; shaft	Adult	?	Good	Post-mortem break through the proximal epiphysis and modern break to the distal shaft.
2 left rib	Sub-adult or adult	?	Good	
5 right ribs	Sub-adult or adult	?	Good	
Left Rib	Juvenile	?	Moderate	
6 skull fragments; 3 occipital, 3 unidentified	Sub-adult adult	?	Moderate	
Left clavicle; lateral shaft	Sub-adult or adult	?	Good	Modern breaks to both ends of fragment
Right clavicle; shaft	?	?	Good	Modern breaks to both end of shaft.
Hand phalanx	?	?	Good	Modern break to proximal AS
Left 4 th metatarsal	?	?	Moderate	Post-mortem break to proximal AS
Right 2 nd metatarsal	?	?	Good	
Metacarpal	?	?	Good	
Left 3 rd metatarsal	Juvenile (less than 12 years)	?	Good	Proximal epiphysis unfused
Left Scapula; acromion and spine	?	?	Good	
Right humerus; distal shaft and AS	Sub-adult or adult	?	Good	Modern break through mid shaft
Right humerus; mid and distal shaft and distal AS	?	?	Moderate	Post-mortem break to lateral distal epiphysis. Septal aperture

				present. Small in size
Right humerus; mid and distal shaft	?	?	Poor	Modern breaks to shaft and distal epiphysis
Left humerus: mid and distal shaft and distal AS.	?	?	Good	Some post-mortem damage to distal AS.
2 ulna or radius shaft fragments	?	?	Good	
Right ulna; shaft	?	?	Good	
Right femur; shaft	Sub-adult or adult	?	Good	
Left femur; mid shaft	?	?	Good	
Right femur; distal shaft and metaphysis	Juvenile (less than 15 years)	?	Good	Distal epiphysis unfused.
Right tibia; distal AS	Sub-adult or adult	?	Moderate	
5 tibial shaft fragments	?	?	Moderate	
Right Ilium; auricular surface and sciatic notch	Adult	Male	Moderate	
Right pubis	Adult	Male	Moderate	Post-mortem damage to the pubic symphysis
Sternum	?	?	Moderate	
2 fibula shaft fragments	?	?	Moderate	
26 long bone shaft fragments	?	?	Poor	
5 left ribs	?	?	Moderate	
2 right ribs	?	?	Moderate	
16 rib fragments	?	?	Moderate	
Left rib	Juvenile	?	Moderate	
Right ulna; proximal AS and shaft	Sub-adult or adult	?	Good	
Right ulna; proximal AS	Sub-adult or adult	?	Good	Modern break
Right ulna; Coronoid process and proximal shaft	Sub-adult or adult	?	Moderate	Modern break
Right ulna; coronoid process and proximal shaft	Sub-adult or adult	?	Moderate	
Right ulna; proximal AS	Sub-adult or adult	?	Moderate	
Left ulna; proximal AS and shaft	Sub-adult or adult	?	Moderate	2 fragments
Left ulna; distal shaft and AS	Sub-adult or adult	?	Good	
Right radius; Proximal AS and shaft	Sub-adult or adult	?	Good	
Right radius; proximal AS and shaft	Sub-adult or adult	?	Good	
Right radius; proximal shaft	Juvenile (less than 12 years)	?	Good	
Right radius; mid and distal shaft	Juvenile (less than 17 years but probably	?	Good	

	same as above)			
Right radius; shaft	Sub-adult or adult	?	Good	
Left radius; proximal AS and shaft	Sub-adult or adult	?	Good	
Left radius; distal AS	?	?	Moderate	
7 radial or ulna shafts	Sub-adult or adult	?	Moderate	
Right humerus' distal AS	Sub-adult or adult	?	Good	Modern break
Right humerus; proximal and mid shaft	Sub-adult or adult	?	Moderate	
Left humerus; distal shaft	?	?	Moderate	Very slight. Septal aperture present
Left humerus; distal shaft and medial AS	Sub-adult or adult	?	Moderate	
Left humerus; proximal and mid shaft	Sub-adult or adult	?	Moderate	
Left scaphoid	Sub-adult or adult	?	Good	
Left hamate	Sub-adult or adult	?	Good	
Left lunate	Sub-adult or adult	?	Good	
2 middle hand phalanges	Sub-adult or adult	?	Good	
Left 2 nd metacarpal	Sub-adult or adult	?	Good	
Left 4 th metacarpal	Sub-adult or adult	?	Good	
Left 5 th metacarpal	Sub-adult or adult	?	Good	
Right 1 st metacarpal	Sub-adult or adult	?	Moderate	
Right 4 th metacarpal	Sub-adult or adult	?	Good	
Metacarpal shaft	Sub-adult or adult	?	Moderate	
Metacarpal shaft	Juvenile	?	Moderate	
Right tibia; Proximal AS, proximal and mid shaft	Sub-adult or adult	?	Moderate	
Right tibia; Proximal medial AS and proximal shaft	Sub-adult or adult	?	Poor	
Right tibia; distal shaft and distal AS	Sub-adult or adult	?	Moderate	
Left tibia; Proximal AS and shaft	Sub-adult or adult	?	Moderate	2 fragments
9 tibial shaft fragments	Sub-adult or adult	?	Poor	
Right clavicle; lateral shaft and AS	Sub-adult or adult	?	Moderate	
Right clavicle	Sub-adult or adult	?	Moderate	Modern breaks to both ends
Left clavicle; mid and lateral	Sub-adult or adult	?	Moderate	Modern break to the

				medial end
Right scapula; glenoid fossa, acromion, spine, coracoid	Sub-adult or adult	?	Moderate	2 fragments
Right scapula; inferior half of glenoid fossa, spine	Sub-adult or adult	?	Poor	
Right scapula; inferior half of glenoid fossa, and axillary border	Sub-adult or adult	?	Poor	
Right scapula; spine	Sub-adult or adult	?	Moderate	
Left scapula; spine	Sub-adult or adult	?	Moderate	
3 fragments of scapula	Sub-adult or adult	?	Moderate	
Right femur; femoral head and greater trochanter	Adult	?	Moderate	
Right femur; shaft	Sub-adult or adult	?	Good	2 fragments
Right femur; proximal, mid and distal shaft, distal AS	Adolescent (between 15 years and early and late teens)	?	Good	Fusion line of distal epiphysis. still visible. 2 fragments
Left femur; femoral head, lesser and greater trochanters, proximal shaft.	Adult	?	Good	
3 femoral shaft fragments	?	?	Moderate	
Sacrum; 1/3 present	Adult	?	Poor	
Lumbar vertebrae 1 - 5	Adult	?	Moderate	Schmorl's nodes on L3, 4 and 5. Osteophytic lipping L3, 4 and 5.
Thoracic vertebrae 9, 10 and 11	Adult	?	Moderate	Schmorl's nodes on T10 and 11
Axis	Adult	?	Good	
Axis; odontoid peg and superior AS	Adult	?	Moderate	
Atlas, right half	Adult	?	Moderate	
5 fragments of cervical vertebra	Adult	?	Poor	
Left ilium	Juvenile	?	Good	
Left acetabulum and ischium	Adult	?	Moderate	2 fragments
Right ilium	Adult	?	Moderate	
Left ilium	Adult	?	Moderate	
Ilium fragment	Adult	?	Moderate	
Right ischium and acetabulum	Adult	Male	Good	
2 fragments of right innominate	Adult	?		
Right sciatic notch	Adult	Male	Good	
57 skull fragments	?		Moderate	Fragments belong to at least 5 individuals, including 2 possible females and 1 male. Cribra orbitalia

				observed in an orbit.
Right half and medial portion of mandible. Dentition Right Left V U U // U U U U U / - - - - -	Adult	Male	Moderate	Tooth attrition suggests a young adult. Calculus
Right half and medial portion of mandible. Dentition Right Left V U X / U U U / // - - - - -	Adult	Male ?	Moderate	Tooth attrition suggests middle adult. Ante-mortem tooth and calculus present.
Left half and medial portion of mandible. Dentition Right Left - - - - - X X / X X X X X	Adult	?	Moderate	Ante-mortem tooth loss
Right half of mandible Dentition Right Left X X X X - - - - -	Adult	Male ?	Moderate	Ante-mortem tooth loss
Left mandible Dentition Right Left - - - - - X X X X	Adult	?	Moderate	Ante-mortem tooth loss.

AS = articular surface

Appendix 4 OASIS form

OASIS ID: preconst1-36061

Project details

Project name Ruxley Manor Garden Centre

Short description of the project The site lies directly to the north of St Botolph's Church, which is of 13th - 16th century date. The church has Saxon origins and is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM no. LO104). Excavation revealed three in situ human burials that had been heavily truncated by the excavation of an electrical service trench. Layers dating to the medieval period overlay the burials. In addition to the burials, disarticulated human remains were found throughout the site.

Project dates Start: 25-10-2007 End: 25-10-2007

Previous/future work No / Not known

Any associated project codes RUX-07 - Sitecode reference

Type of project Recording project

Monument type HUMAN BURIALS Medieval

Investigation type 'Watching Brief'

Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON BROMLEY BROMLEY Ruxley Manor Garden Centre

Postcode DA14 5BQ

Site coordinates TQ 4831 7025 51.411380 0.132860 51 24 40 N 000 07 58 E Point

Project creators

Name of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Organisation

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Project design Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
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Project Helen Clough
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Name of Ruxley Manor Garden Centre
sponsor/funding
body

Project archives

Digital Archive LAARC
recipient

Digital Media 'Text'
available

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title An Archaeological Watching Brief at Ruxley Manor Garden Centre, Sidcup, London Borough of Bromley

Author(s)/Editor(s) Jorgensen, P.

Date 2008

Entered by Paw Jorgensen (pjorgensen@pre-construct.com)

Entered on

4 January 2008

