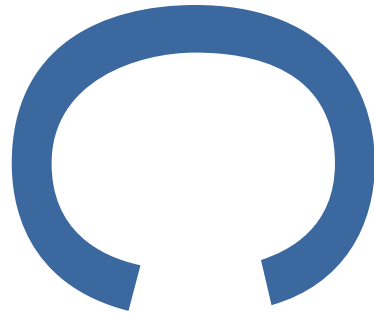
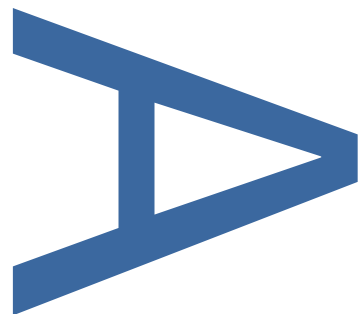


**1 Ashtead Road, Clapton, London  
Borough of Hackney**



**Archaeological Watching Brief**



***Planning reference***                      2018/0581

***Local planning authority***              London Borough of Hackney

***Site Code***                                      ASZ19

***PCA project no***                              K6408                      ***Date***                                      November 19

**PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY LIMITED**

**[www.pre-construct.com](http://www.pre-construct.com)**

Project Information	
Site name	1 Ashtead Road, Clapton, London Borough of Hackney
Project type	Archaeological Watching Brief
Site address	1 Ashtead Road, Clapton, London Borough of Hackney, E5 9BJ
NGR	TQ 34275 87843
Local planning authority	London Borough of Hackney
Planning reference	2018/0581
Commissioning client	RPS
Project dates	November 2019
Archive site code	ASZ19

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## CONTENTS

1	ABSTRACT .....	4
2	INTRODUCTION .....	5
3	GEOLOGICAL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND .....	7
4	ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND .....	8
5	METHODOLOGY .....	10
6	SUMMARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE.....	11
7	CONCLUSIONS .....	12
8	BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	13
9	APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT LIST .....	19
10	APPENDIX 2: STRATIGRAPHIC MATRIX.....	20
11	OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM .....	21
	Figure 1: Site Location.....	14
	Figure 2: Detailed Site Location .....	15
	Figure 3: Plan of Watching Brief Area on Proposed Basement and Section .....	16

## **1 ABSTRACT**

- 1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology at 1 Ashtead Road, Clapton, London Borough of Hackney, E5 9BJ. The central grid reference for the site was TQ 34275 87843. The fieldwork was undertaken on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2019. The work was commissioned by RPS Group.
- 1.2 The footprint of the proposed basement had previously been stripped during demolition. A number of underpinning pits were inspected and additional reduction within two pits monitored as part of the watching brief.
- 1.3 No archaeological finds or features of significance were identified at the site. It is likely that the previous structure had terraced much of the area down and into the natural horizons.
- 1.4 Made ground mixed with topsoil, likely dated to the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries was found along the site frontage and to the rear (east) of the site within the former garden area. These horizons directly sealed natural clay.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 An archaeological watching brief was carried out at 1 Ashtead Road, Clapton, London Borough of Hackney, by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA) in advance of a new basement and residential structure.

2.2 The planning consent, approved under application 2018/0581 included a planning condition relating to archaeology:

*4 No development, including demolition, shall take place until a 'Written Scheme of Investigation' has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority: The written scheme of investigation shall be prepared by a suitably qualified archaeological practice in accordance with English Heritage Greater London Archaeology guidelines. No development shall be implemented in full accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation.*

**REASON:** *To secure the provision of appropriate archaeological investigation*

2.3 The proposed methodology was detailed in a site-specific Written Scheme of Investigation (Fairman 2019), approved by the Archaeological Adviser.

2.4 The monitoring works were undertaken on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2019 and were supervised by the author.

2.5 The works were instructed by RPS on behalf of the client. The project was managed for PCA by Helen Hawkins and was monitored for the local planning authority by Adam Single of Historic England.

2.6 Watching Brief Objectives

2.6.1 All research was undertaken within the priorities established in the Museum of London's *A research framework for London Archaeology, 2002*. The general aims and objectives for the watching brief are as follows:

- The aim of the forthcoming archaeological work is to characterise and assess the archaeological resource within the site.
- Insofar as possible within the methodological constraints, the aims and objectives will be to explain any chronological, spatial or functional relationships between the structures/remains identified, and to link the archaeological results with the data already recovered in the wider area.
- To identify different levels of survival and truncation of archaeological deposits across the site.

2.6.2 Specific research objectives include the following:

- To record the nature, extent, date, character, quality, significance and state of preservation of any archaeological remains affected by the investigation.
- To establish the presence or absence of any prehistoric activity at the site
- To establish the presence or absence of any roman activity at the site
- To establish the presence or absence of any medieval activity at the site
- To establish the presence or absence of any post-medieval activity at the site

- To establish the extent to which previous development and/or other processes have affected archaeological deposits at the site
- To establish the likely impact on archaeological deposits of the proposed development.
- To report on the results of the investigation.
- To establish the extent of all past post-depositional impacts on the archaeological resource

### **3 GEOLOGICAL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The following information is taken from the Written Scheme of Investigation (Fairman 2019):
- 3.2 The site is located on solid geology of London Clay. No superficial deposits are recorded.
- 3.3 Borehole (BGS ID 18760921) to the south of the site at the top of the hill on Buccleuch Terrace recorded made ground to a depth of 1.10m below ground level, directly over Hackney Gravel (noted at 26.64m OD).
- 3.4 Borehole (BGS ID 846268) to the north of the site identified made ground comprised of sandy gravel with concrete ash and brick to a depth of 2.40m BGL. The latter sealed natural gravels from 11.72m OD.
- 3.5 No topographic data is currently available for the site. Current ground level is at 19.80m OD according to the proposed elevation plans. The site is located part way up a steep hill which slopes down east towards the Lea and up towards Clapton Pond in the west.
- 3.6 The River Lea lies c.315m east of the site, passing on a roughly north-south alignment.
- 3.7 Ground level at the site exhibited a notable declination towards the east.

## **4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 A search of the Greater London Historic Environment Record (GLHER reference number 14821) was made within a 500m radius of the subject site. The following represents a summary:
- 4.2 Prehistoric
- 4.2.1 Palaeolithic tools were uncovered on the west side of Clapton Common in the late 1880s to the north-east of the site. Additional Palaeolithic material was uncovered to the south-east of the site along Firsby Road. The latter included two handaxes dating between 500000 BC and 10001 BC.
- 4.2.2 An evaluation undertaken to the north-east of the site on Timberwharf Road revealed a sequence of alluvial sediments and a buried soil horizon dating between the Early Mesolithic and the Early Iron Age.
- 4.3 Roman
- 4.3.1 Numerous findspots of Roman material and documented inhumations are recorded within the wider area. To the east of the site a stone coffin with lead lid was found pre 1832. A female skeleton was found, but later reburied in Hackney Churchyard.
- 4.3.2 Multiple entries are recorded for the vicinity of Springfield Park, east of the site. Human bones were found close to a sarcophagus in 1834, and in 1814 at least three sarcophagi were found, with a further sarcophagus found in 1837 containing two skeletons. Pottery was found near to the sarcophagus, and it may be these remains that were later drawn.
- 4.3.3 Also in 1814 it is documented that a number of stone coffins were found in land at Spring Field Lane at Upper Clapton. The coffins contained the remains of two skeletons, a male and a female and may be related to the entry described above.
- 4.3.4 Findspots of Roman material are also recorded in Homerton but is likely that these were recovered from the Springfield Park area. These include 12 sherds of samian, of which no other details are recorded.
- 4.4 Saxon and Medieval
- 4.4.1 A settlement known as Stamford Hill is documented from at least 1675, potentially previously known as Sanford or Saunfordhill in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The projected radius of the settlement appears to the immediate west of the study site.
- 4.4.2 The medieval development of the area is also reflected in the origins of modern Rectory Road and Amhurst Road. These are depicted from at least 1745 but are believed to be of medieval origin. A house at 15-17 Clapton Common is also believed to date from the medieval period and was presumably constructed as part of the ribbon development along the main road.
- 4.5 Post-Medieval
- 4.5.1 A number of listed buildings dating to the post-medieval period are noted within the wider area. The closest to the subject site comprise a terrace to the east of the site of numerous properties largely dating from the mid 18<sup>th</sup> to late 18<sup>th</sup>/mid 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. At the southerly end of the terrace is the listed



Church of St Thomas dating between 1779 and 1829.

- 4.5.2 The properties listed above front onto Oldhill Street/Clapton Common a park dating from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Other parks within the wider area include Clapton Common and Springfield Park which also date from the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 4.5.3 A review of the historical maps ([www.old-maps.com](http://www.old-maps.com)) shows that in 1851 the site was located in open ground. Spring Hill is marked to the south and Clapton Common to the west. By 1870, the area to the west of the site has been developed with the construction of Buccleuch Terrace but the site is still located in open ground. The same situation remains in 1895. By 1915, Ashtead Road and the other roads around it have all been constructed, and a terraced house built on the site, which remains to the present day.

## **5 METHODOLOGY**

- 5.1 It was intended that machining would be undertaken using a toothless ditching bucket to excavate material under the supervision of an archaeologist. This would continue in manageable spits until either significant archaeological strata / remains were found or natural deposits or formation level was reached.
- 5.2 The site was visited post demolition, when the slab had been removed and the site extensively levelled. Therefore, of the planned underpinning and ground reduction, only three already open areas of underpinning were examined along the south-easterly boundary of the site (see Figure 3). The southernmost pit was extended in depth under archaeological supervision (as shown by the location of Section 1, Figure 3).
- 5.3 The underpinning trenches were not entered due to unsafe depths, and therefore all recording was carried out from ground level.
- 5.4 No archaeological deposits or horizons were identified at the site. An examination of the intact sections suggested that during construction of the original house the ground had been extensively terraced onto natural horizons as the site was located on a hill.

## **6 SUMMARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE**

- 6.1 The following sequence covers the remaining parts of the site seen during the site visit.
- 6.2 Phase 1: Natural
  - 6.2.1 Natural deposits of firm clay [2] were observed across the site. These were excavated to a total depth at the southern limits of the site to c.2.5m below ground level, at which point they continued to an unknown depth.
- 6.3 Phase 2: Modern
  - 6.3.1 Sealing the natural horizons at the southern limits of the site, and still visible in situ to the north-east of the site was a layer of dark brown sandy silt topsoil. This extended to a depth of 0.10m at the east, and c.0.20m at the west. This is likely to represent the former garden soils associated with the demolished property.

## **7 CONCLUSIONS**

- 7.1 The archaeological sequence was found to comprise made ground directly over natural horizons. It appeared that construction for the previous end of terrace property had terraced much of the area and is likely to have generally removed surviving archaeological horizons. The site is on a steep hill and presumably terracing was required to enable construction originally.
- 7.2 No archaeologically significant artefacts or horizons were encountered during the watching brief.

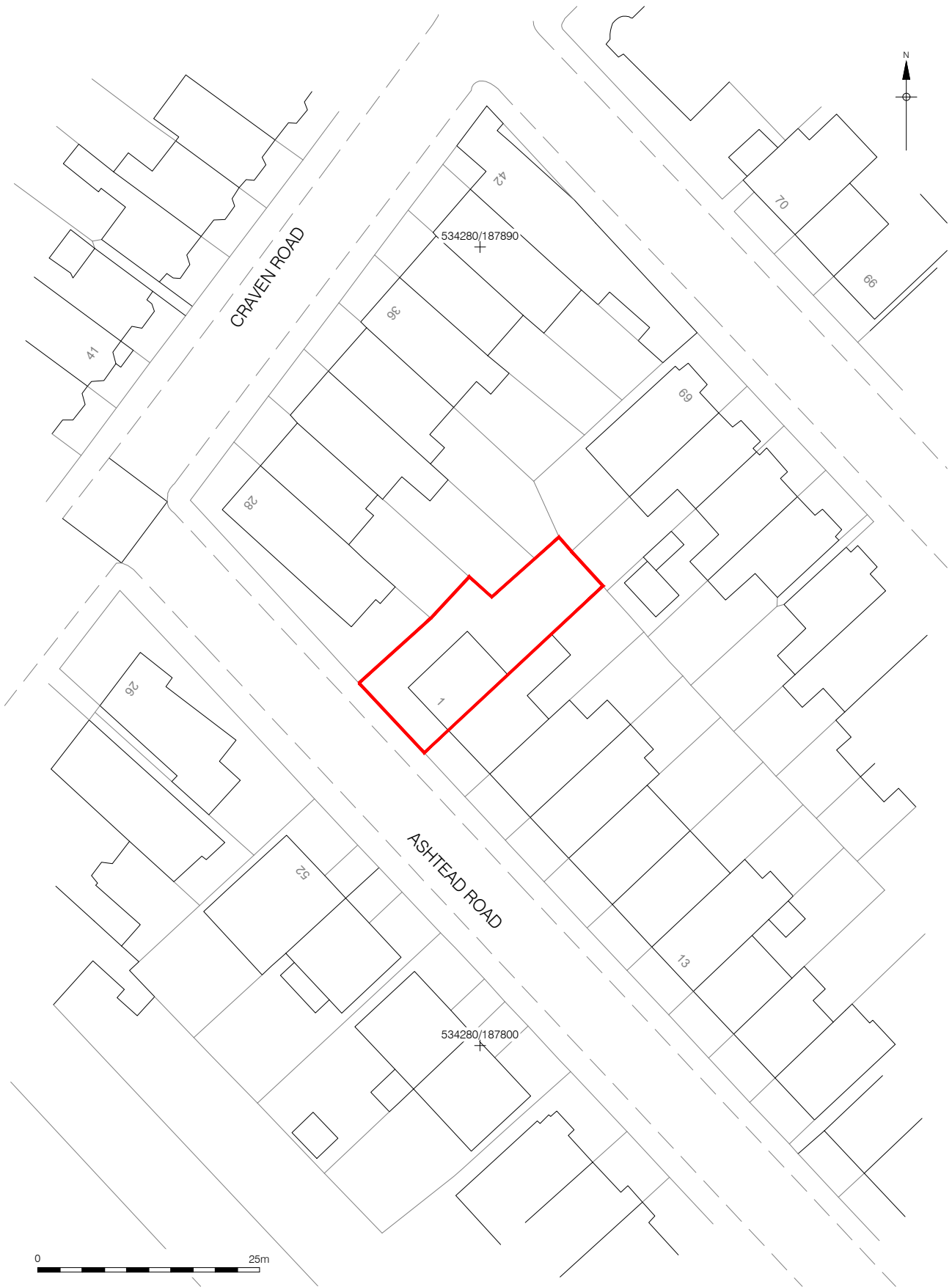
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20/01/19 RM

Figure 2  
Detailed Site Location  
1:625 at A4

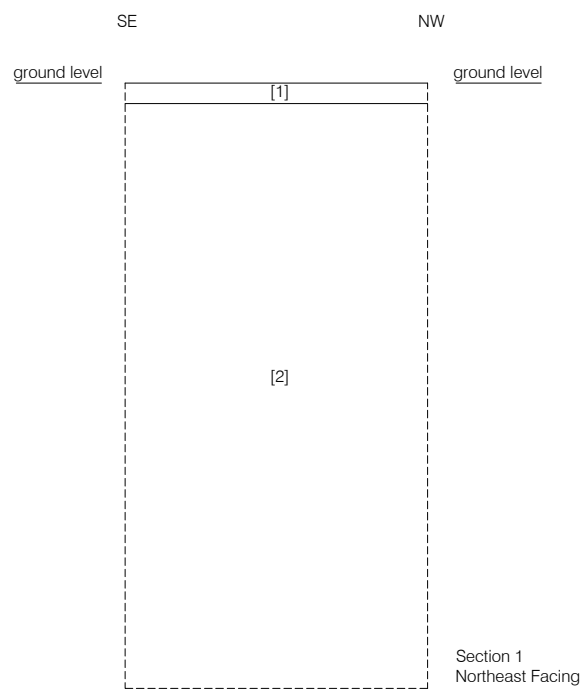


Figure 3  
Plan of Watching Brief Area on Proposed Basement and Section  
Plan 1:200 and Section 1:25 at A4





*Plate 1: View to east of underpinning at eastern boundary*



*Plate 2: View to south of underpinning along central southern boundary illustrating depth of terrace foundations*

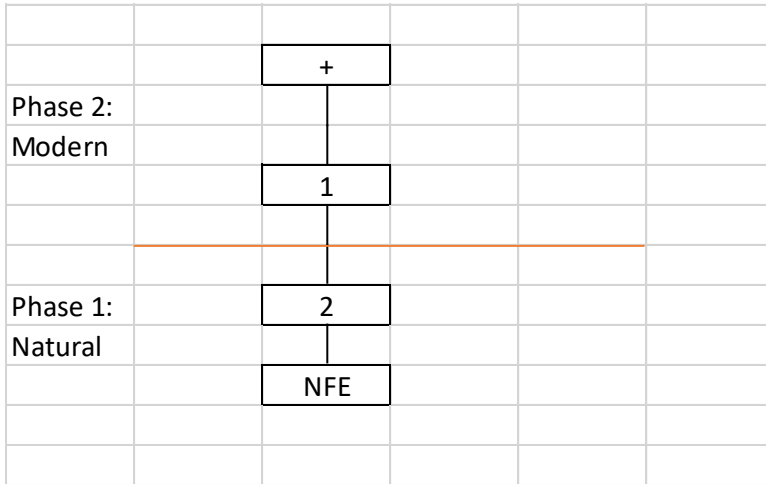


*Plate 3: View to east of Section 1*

## 9 APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT LIST

Site Code	Context No.	Context Type	Description	Phase
ASZ19	1	Layer	Made Ground/Topsoil	2
ASZ19	2	Layer	Natural Clay	1

## 10 APPENDIX 2: STRATIGRAPHIC MATRIX



## 11 OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-374552

---

### Project details

Project name 1 Ashtead Road, Clapton

Short description of the project An archaeological watching brief was carried out on underpinning at 1 Ashtead Road, Clapton, London Borough of Hackney, E5 9BJ. No archaeological features or horizons were identified. Modern made ground was observed to directly overlie natural horizons.

Project dates Start: 12-11-2019 End: 12-11-2019

Previous/future work No / Not known

Any associated project reference codes ASZ19 - Sitecode

Type of project Recording project

Site status None

Current Land use Other 3 - Built over

Investigation type ""Watching Brief""

Prompt Planning condition

---

### Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON HACKNEY HACKNEY 1Ashtead Road

Postcode E5 9BJ

Site coordinates TQ 34275 87843 51.572951006273 -0.062190924546 51 34 22 N 000 03 43  
W Point

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### Project creators

Name of Organisation PCA

Project brief originator Adam Single

Project design originator Amelia Fairman

Project director/manager Helen Hawkins

Project supervisor Amelia Fairman

Type of sponsor/funding body Private Developer

---

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient LAA

Digital Archive ID ASZ19

Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography","Text"

Paper Archive recipient LAA

Paper Archive ID ASZ19

Paper Media available "Miscellaneous Material","Section"

---

**Project bibliography**

1

Publication type                    Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title                                    1 Ashtead Road, Clapton, London Borough of Hackney

Author(s)/Editor(s)            Fairman, A

Date                                    2019

Issuer or publisher            Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Place of issue or London  
publication

Description                    pdf

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