

**An Archaeological Watching Brief Borthwick and Payne's Wharves,
Borthwick Street, Deptford, London Borough of Greenwich**

**Site Code: BPY 05
Central National Grid Reference: TQ 3728 7808**

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Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, March 2005**

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March 2005**

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CONTENTS

1	ABSTRACT	3
2	INTRODUCTION	4
3	PLANNING BACKGROUND	7
4	ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	8
5	METHODOLOGY	13
6	GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY	14
7	ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE	15
8	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	18
9	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	19
10	BIBLIOGRAPHY	20

ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION	5
FIGURE 2: LOCATION OF TEST PITS	6
FIGURE 3: SECTIONS 2 AND 4.....	7

APPENDIX 1: GLSMR/RCHME SMR REPORT FORM	21
APPENDIX 2: OASIS FORM	23

1 ABSTRACT

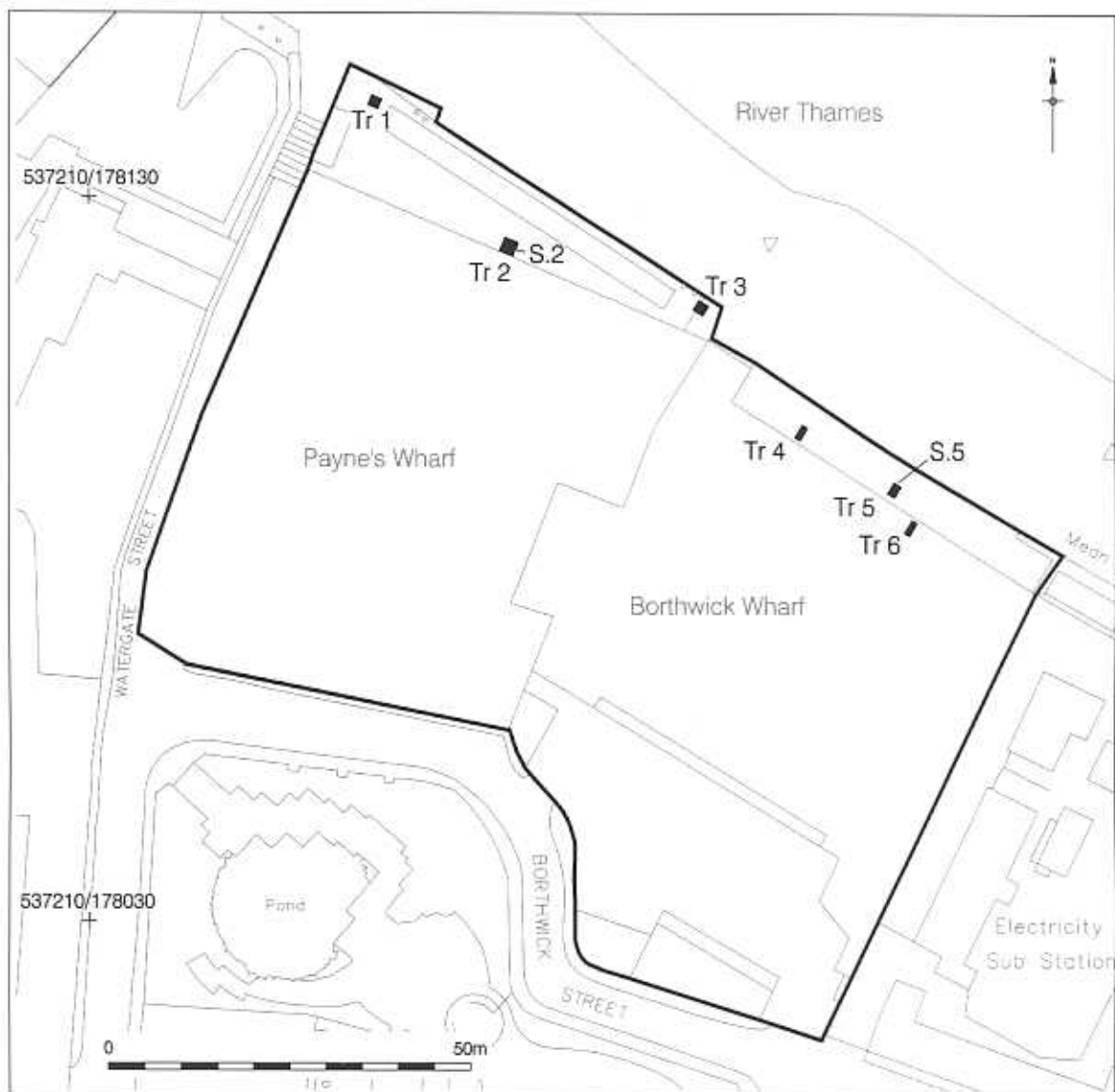
- 1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited at Borthwick and Payne's Wharves, Deptford. The work consisted of the recording of six geotechnical test pits located along the northern edge of the site, adjacent to the River Thames frontage.
- 1.2 This phase of archaeological work was undertaken prior to the redevelopment of the site by George Wimpey Central London and follows the preparation of a desk-based assessment by CgMs Consulting (Hawkins 2004).
- 1.3 In each of the test pits, a series of 19th century made ground layers were observed and recorded.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited at Borthwick and Payne's Wharves, Deptford (Figure 1) prior to redevelopment.
- 2.2 The work was conducted between the 14th February and 2nd March 2005 and was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of George Wimpey Central London.
- 2.3 The watching brief constituted the archaeological recording of six geotechnical test pits (Figure 2).
- 2.4 The National Grid Reference of the centre of the site is TQ 3728 7808
- 2.5 The unique code BPY 05 was assigned to the project.
- 2.6 The work was undertaken by Pete Boyer and Stuart Holden and the project managed by Gary Brown for Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited.



Figure 1
Site Location
1:10,000



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Figure 2
Location of testpits
1:1000

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.1 Planning background

3.1.1 The study aims to satisfy the objectives of London Borough of Greenwich, which fully recognises the importance of the buried heritage for which they are the custodians. The London Borough of Greenwich Unitary Development Plan First Deposit Draft (February 2002) contains policy statements in respect of protecting the buried archaeological resource. These are laid out in detail in section 2 of the desk-based assessment (Hawkins 2004).

3.1.2 The site is located within an 'Area of Archaeological Potential' as defined by the London Borough of Greenwich, and contains a Grade II listed building- Payne's Wharf.

3.2 Research Objectives

3.2.1 The work aimed to record any evidence of archaeologically sensitive material that may be affected by the excavation of the test pits and subsequent redevelopment of the site. The desk-based assessment highlighted the possibility of encountering Saxon, medieval and post-medieval remains.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 4.1 An archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (Hawkins, 2004) was prepared prior to the commencement of the evaluation. Below is a summary of the findings of this exercise.

4.2 Prehistoric

- 4.2.1 There is a low potential for the discovery of prehistoric activity on the site with very few finds recorded from the area. Of particular note is the absence of any prehistoric material from the recent excavations at Convoys Wharf to the west and Greenwich Reach to the east of the site.

4.3 Roman

- 4.3.1 The likelihood for the recovery of evidence relating the to Roman period is defined as low to moderate with the former higher ground to the south of the site holding the greatest potential. A small assemblage of pottery sherds was recovered during the excavations at Greenwich Reach.

4.4 Anglo-Saxon and Early Medieval

- 4.4.1 The name Deptford is thought to have derived from the Anglo-Saxon for 'deep ford', indicating the crossing point of the River Ravensbourne. The 't' appeared in the name from the 15th century onwards. The site lies in an area known as Deptford Strand and may indicate a beach where boats were landed in the Saxon period.
- 4.4.2 The first known mention of Greenwich was as part of the large 'multiple estate' of Lewisham. The estate of Lewisham, including Greenwich and Woolwich, was granted to the Abbey of St Peter at Ghent by King Edgar in 964. After a period in which the Abbey lost control of the lands, the grant was confirmed by King Edward the Confessor in accordance with a promise he had made in 1016, and by William the Conqueror in 1081.
- 4.4.3 The Greenwich settlement probably formed the river port of the Lewisham estate. The estate as described in the Domesday Book included a port worth 40 shillings a year, probably on the Thames at Greenwich, but possibly at the mouth of Deptford Creek. The area now called Deptford, known as West Greenwich in the manorial centuries, was probably also included in this estate.

- 4.4.4 The grant of 964 included the churches and churchyards within the Lewisham estate. It is not known when the parish church of St Nicholas was founded at Deptford. It is not mentioned in the Domesday Book, but that does not mean that it did not exist. During the Saxon period, the location of the church would have been dramatic, on a low gravel cliff overlooking seasonally flooded marshes towards the Thames. The earliest known reference to it was in the list of churches belonging to the diocese of Rochester in the Textus Roffensis of c.1115.
- 4.4.5 Few finds of Saxon material are recorded from the immediate vicinity of the site, though a number of early Anglo-Saxon artefacts, including burials, are recorded further south in the area of Deptford Broadway. The most significant find in the vicinity of the site is a ditch containing Saxon pottery recorded on the Greenwich Reach site, immediately east of St Nicholas Church.
- 4.4.6 Despite the paucity of finds of this period in the vicinity, the area of Deptford Broadway should probably be considered as a focus of early to mid-Saxon settlement, and St Nicholas Church as a focus of mid to late-Saxon settlement.
- 4.5 **Medieval**
- 4.5.1 In the Domesday Book survey of 1086, the present Deptford was not mentioned by that name, but was referred to as the Manor of Grenviz (ie West Greenwich), held by Gilbert de Magminot, Bishop of Lisieux, from Bishop Odo of Bayeux, brother of William the Conqueror. Prior to this, Grenviz had been held as two manors, held by Earl Harold Godwinson and Brixi Cild, perhaps corresponding to two settlement centres at the Broadway and St Nicolas Church.
- 4.5.2 Gilbert de Magminot was said to have built a castle at Deptford. Evidence for its location is not good but in the 17th century it was thought to be represented by 'some remains of stony foundations' on the Thames bank near Sayes Court.
- 4.5.3 The chief Manor of West Greenwich was passed on by Gilbert de Magminot to his family the Maminots and it remained with them until the 12th century and then passed to their descendants, the de Says. The Manor was then given the alternative name of Sayes Court. In the 15th century the Manor was held by the de la Pole Earls of Suffolk and confiscated by the Crown in 1487. In the early-16th century the Manor passed through the hands of various royal courtiers before returning to Henry VIII in 1535 and has been held by the Crown ever since.

- 4.5.4 The medieval Manor house of Sayes Court was in existence by 1405 and constructed of timber, located to the west of the site within the boundaries of Convoys Wharf. In the 16th century a gateway was added. The whole house was rebuilt in the same place in 1568. Late in the 16th century the house was separated from the Manor and estates were attached to it, taken from the demesne lands of the Manor. In 1585 it was leased to the Browne family and eventually to their descendants, the Evelyns, in the 17th century.
- 4.5.5 It is not known at what date the flood defence embankments were first built along the Thames in the area. Local property transactions mention the river walls of the Thames and the Ravensbourne from 1296 onwards. The earliest of a series of royal commissions to review and repair the river banks on the south side of the Thames was dated 1295 but they may have functioned satisfactorily for some centuries before this. A breach in the river wall between Bermondsey and Greenwich received commissions in 1313 and 1325. King Edward IV had the Thames wall repaired in 1470-1 with fences and hedges, and again in 1481-2.
- 4.5.6 The Deptford Strand area along the river walls of the Thames was certainly populated by the 13th century and increasingly so in the later medieval period. There are a number of references to tofts, houses and gardens there throughout the 14th century. A wharf had recently been made on land of Deptford Strand Manor in 1463-64. Medieval pottery has been found on the Thames foreshore between Watergate Street and Deptford Green.
- 4.5.7 The initial basis of the economy of the Deptford Strand settlement was probably fishing in the Thames. In 1349 Greenwich fishermen were found guilty of using nets of too fine mesh and there are further references in the 14th and 15th centuries to fishermen and fisheries along the strand shore.
- 4.5.8 The shipbuilding industry at Deptford Strand is first recorded in 1418/1420 with the rebuilding and refitting of royal ships, and the digging of a dock for one of them in a former garden belonging to William Ramessy. By the end of the 15th century shipbuilding was well established in the area with a number of references being in existence, many of them regarding royal ships. A shipwright is recorded as being buried at St Nicholas Church in 1494.
- 4.5.9 Other late medieval industries are known from the area include brick making at Deptford Strand from 1418 onwards. Nearly 2 million bricks were made at Deptford to build a new manor house at Dartford for Henry VIII.

4.6 **Post-Medieval**

- 4.6.1 In the late-15th and early-16th centuries Deptford increasingly felt the influences of Greenwich Palace on its economy. The increase in the number of courtiers resulted in the pastures of Deptford being used to supply cattle to the royal household. The King's Slaughterhouse was established beside the Ravensbourne on the site of Harold's Wharf. The Browne family of Says Court oversaw operations here as 'Clerks of the Green Cloth' in the late-16th and early-17th centuries.
- 4.6.2 The first great boost to Deptford's economy was the decision by Henry VIII to found a royal Dockyard here, formalising the ad hoc arrangements of his father who had rented facilities here.
- 4.6.3 The earliest map of the site is John Evelyn's map of 1623. By this date the site was largely built up and divided in two by a north-south road, 'Middle Watergate', which ran just to the west of the kink in modern Borthwick Street. Towards the northeast of this road, a pier extended into the Thames. The west of the site was occupied by 'Stone Wharf' that had been in existence since at least 1607 when it was leased by the East India Company. The east side of the site was subdivided by 'Lower Street', running east-west and occupied by a residence and storehouses belonging to Captain Merrells and by domestic houses.
- 4.6.4 The Evelyn map shows docks to the west and east of the site, but none on the site itself suggesting that maritime activities here were restricted entirely to wharfage rather than ship construction.
- 4.6.5 The site appears relatively unchanged in 1662 and 1746 although the density of development is likely to have increased. Thomas Milton's 1753 plan of the Royal Naval Dockyard shows the site in detail with the east of the site largely occupied by houses, many of which have stores or workshops to the rear. The west side however, sees the erection of a number of substantial 'warehouse' type buildings towards the Thames frontage with some houses towards Butchers Row (now Borthwick Street). This name may be indicative of the activities being undertaken here at the time.
- 4.6.6 The Deptford Pier Company plan of 1831 shows a drawing dock on the northwest of the site; however, this has been deleted by 1868. Views of the site made in 1841 show a steam-powered mill, known to have existed since 1834 on the site of Payne's Wharf with a mixture of post-medieval buildings on the remainder of the site.

- 4.6.7 By 1868 all the previous buildings that had existed on the site had been demolished. A 'Marine Boiler Works' owned by John Penn & Sons that traded from c.1860 to 1913 occupied Payne's Wharf, in part. Borthwick Wharf was occupied by part of Humphrey's and Tennants Foundry and Engineering Works, who continued to occupy the site until shortly before the First World War.
- 4.6.8 In 1913 Payne's Wharf was occupied by Payne Bros Ltd and used as a paper storage warehouse. By 1937, Borthwick Wharf had been redeveloped into its existing form. This building had been constructed in 1934 as a meat cold store. Since this time, changes to the site have been insignificant.

5 METHODOLOGY

- 5.1 The fieldwork was designed to record any archaeologically sensitive deposits affected by the excavation of the geotechnical test pits and subsequent redevelopment of the site.
- 5.2 All works were undertaken in accordance with the guidelines set out by English Heritage and the Institute of Field Archaeology.
- 5.3 The test pits were excavated by hand by geotechnical engineers following the breaking out of the concrete floor surface by pneumatic drill. The sides of the test pits were supported to enable the safe excavation to a maximum depth of 2.5m below ground level.
- 5.4 The resulting sections were drawn at an appropriate scale on polyester based drawing film and the deposits recorded onto pro forma context sheets. The positions of the test pits were located to Ordnance Survey data using trigonometric methods.

6 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 6.1 The following information has been extracted from the desk-based assessment (Hawkins, 2004).
- 6.2 The study site is broadly at around 4.2 to 4.8mOD
- 6.3 The bedrock geology of the site is thought to be Thanet sand or chalk. This is thought to be overlain by Thames floodplain gravels.
- 6.4 Recent archaeological work undertaken to the east at Greenwich Reach and west at Convoys Wharf suggests that the site is located at the edge of a high gravel headland which juts out northwards into an area of low lying alluvial marsh. Gravels may therefore be present on the south side of the site at relatively shallow (c.1m to 1.5m) depth below modern ground level, while alluvial deposits up to 5m thick may be present on the north of the site.
- 6.5 Overall it is likely that there will be a considerable variation in the depth and stratification of Holocene deposits across the site reflecting its former topography. The floodplain gravels will be highest on the southern part of the site, falling sharply in level towards the Thames frontage. Consequently the thickness of alluvial clays will be greatest on the northern part of the site. Peat deposits may be present on the site, but if so will probably be thickest in association with the higher gravels, thinning out towards the Thames frontage.

7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

7.1 Summary

7.1.1 The general sequence of deposits encountered in each of the test pits was of 19th century made ground capped with concrete floor surfaces. The following section details the deposits recorded in each of the test pits. The data available referring to the height above Ordnance Datum for the site is broadly between 4.2 and 4.8m therefore a nominal figure of 2.5mOD has been used as a guide level for the present ground level from which each of the test pits was cut.

TP1 - Excavated to a depth of 2.20 m

Context	Description	Top mOD	Depth from surface	Thickness
	Concrete	2.50	0	0.40
01	Loose, dark grey silty sand with freq cinders, occ cbm, mod sub-rounded pebbles ≤30mmΦ, occ Fe waste	2.10	0.40	0.55
02	Mod firm Mid brown, silty clay mod cbm frags, mod sub-rounded pebbles ≤40mmΦ, occ mortar frags	1.55	0.95	0.95
03	Loose mid brown sand and sub-rounded and angular gravel ≤60mm Φ	0.60	1.90	0.30*
	Excavations ceased	N/A	N/N	N/A

*Denotes maximum thickness of the deposit as exposed

freq-frequent, mod-moderate, occ-occasional, cbm-ceramic building material, frags-fragments

TP2 (Figure 3)- Excavated to a depth of 2.65m

Context	Description	Top mOD	Depth from surface	Thickness
	Concrete	2.50	0	0.15
04	Loose, friable, dark grey silty sand with cinders	2.35	0.15	0.10
05	Loose mid grey sandy silt with occ cbm flecks, occ mortar frags, occ sub-rounded pebbles ≤20mmΦ	2.25	0.25	0.15
06	Mod compact mid brown sandy silt with mod sub-rounded pebbles ≤40mmΦ. mod cbm frags incl. ½ bricks, occ charcoal frags	2.1	0.40	0.35
07	Loose to mod compact whitish grey sandy silt and chalk frags ≤ 200mm Φ, high iron staining from 1.8m below the surface and beyond, v.occ green sandstone frags ≤80mmΦ, mod sub rounded pebbles ≤40mmΦ v.occ. cbm frags incl. ½ bricks	1.75	0.75	1.90*
	Excavations ceased	N/A	N/N	N/A

TP3 - Excavated to a depth of 2.50m

Context	Description	Top mOD	Depth from surface	Thickness
	Concrete	2.50	0	0.30
08	Loose dark grey sandy silt and cinders with Fe objects and Fe panning	2.20	0.30	0.30
09	Mod compact mid brown clayey sand and gravel $\leq 50\text{mm}\Phi$ with occ cbm $\leq \frac{3}{4}$ brick, occ charcoal	1.90	0.60	1.90*
	Excavations ceased	N/A	N/A	N/A

TP4 (Figure 3)- Excavated to a depth of 2.50m

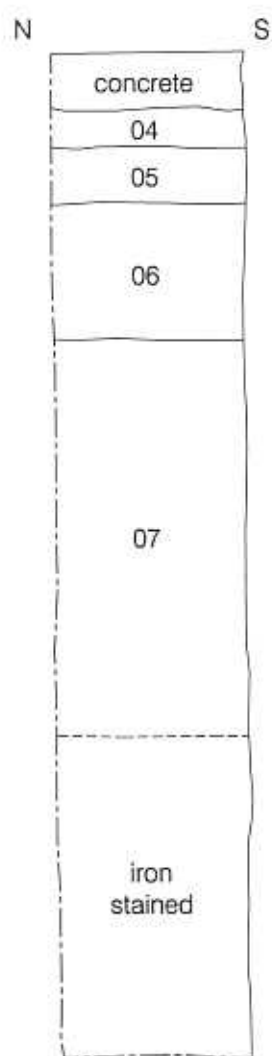
Context	Description	Top mOD	Depth from surface	Thickness
10	Concrete	2.50	0	0.34
11	Loose mid greyish brown silty sand with frequent concrete and cbm fragments	2.16	0.34	0.42
12	Loose dark brown silty sand with frequent cbm frags, mod Fe and Cu objects	1.74	0.76	0.74
13	Concrete	1.00	1.50	0.10
14	Very loose dark brown silty sand with frequent cbm and wood frags, mod Fe and Cu objects	0.90	1.6	0.90*
	Excavations ceased	N/A	N/A	N/A

TP5 - Excavated to a depth of 2.50m

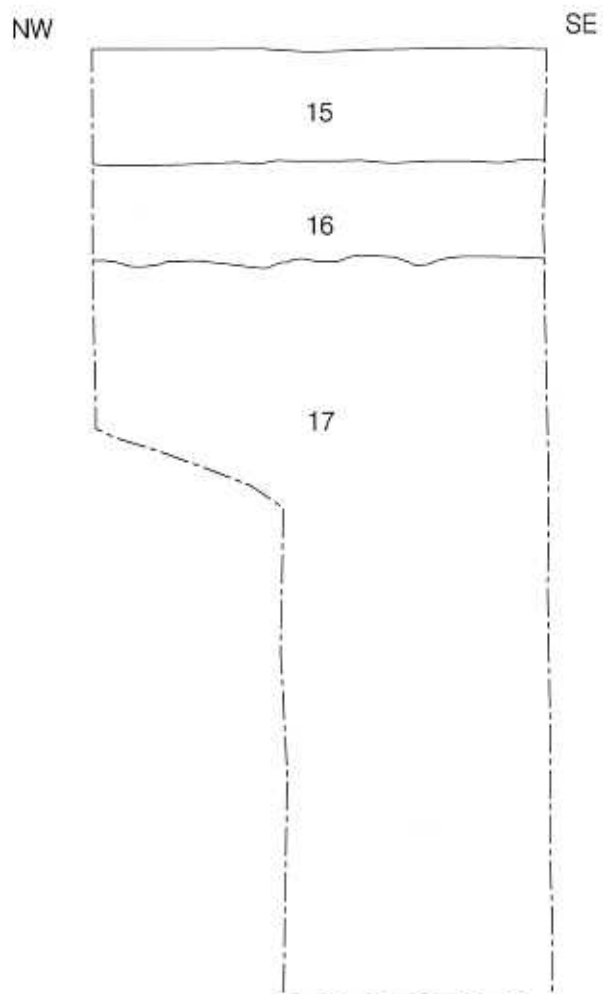
Context	Description	Top mOD	Depth from surface	Thickness
15	Concrete	2.50	0	0.30
16	Loose mid greyish brown silty sand with mod concrete and cbm frags	2.20	0.30	0.25
17	Very loose dark greyish brown silty sand with freq cbm frags \leq full yellow stock bricks, wood frags, mod Fe and objects, slag	1.95	0.55	1.95*
	Excavations ceased	N/A	N/A	N/A

TP6 - Excavated to a depth of 2.05m

Context	Description	Top mOD	Depth from surface	Thickness
18	Concrete	2.50	0	0.27
19	Loose mid greyish silty sand with mod cbm frags	2.23	0.27	0.30
20	Loose dark brown silty sand with freq cbm frags, cinders and occ Fe objects	1.93	0.57	1.48*
	Excavations ceased	N/A	N/A	N/A



Section 2
West facing section of Trench 2



Section 5
South-west facing section of Trench 5



Figure 3
Sections 2 and 5
1:20

8 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The main purpose of the pits was to obtain geotechnical information close to the river wall. As such all of the pits were located in the vicinity of the wall. In the event limited qualitative information was obtained regarding the buried archaeological resource.
- 8.2 The watching brief indicated that should any archaeologically sensitive deposits survive to the east of the site, where the work was undertaken, they are likely to be present below the depth to which the geotechnic test pits were excavated. The desk based assessment and the topography of the underlying natural, implies that towards the west of the site any surviving archaeological deposits would be encountered at a higher level. Any further test pitting should be monitored using a similar methodology to this phase of work. An archaeological evaluation should be implicated prior to the commencement of any phase of redevelopment that involves intrusive groundwork.

9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank CgMs Consulting for commissioning the work on behalf of George Wimpey Central London. PCA would also like to extend our gratitude to CARD Geotechnics for their cooperation and communication during the archaeological works. The author would like to thank the CAD staff at PCA for providing the illustrations.

9 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Hawkins, D. 2004 *Archaeological Desk Based Assessment, Borthwick and Payne's Wharf*. CgMs unpublished report

APPENDIX 1: GLSMR/RCHME SMR REPORT FORM

1. TYPE OF RECORDING

Evaluation Excavation Watching brief ✓

Other (please specify)

2. LOCATION

Borough: Greenwich

Site address: Borthwick and Payne's Wharves, Borthwick Street.

Site name: Borthwick and Payne's Wharves

Site code: BPY 05

Nat. Grid Refs: TQ 3728 7808

Limits of site: a)N:- River Thames b)E:- Former Deptford Power Station
 c)S:- Borthwick Street d) W:- Watergate Street

3. ORGANISATION

Name of archaeological unit/company/society: Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited

Address: Unit 54, Brockley Cross Business Park, 96 Endwell Road, Brockley, SE4 2PD

Site director/supervisor: Stuart Holden and Pete Boyer Project manager: Gary Brown

Funded by: CgMs Consulting on behalf of George Wimpey Central London

4. DURATION

Date fieldwork started: 14/02/05 Date finished:

Field work previously notified? n

Fieldwork will continue? Not Known

5. PERIODS REPRESENTED

Palaeolithic	Roman
Mesolithic	Saxon (pre-AD 1066)
Neolithic	Medieval (AD 1066 -1485)
Bronze Age	Post-Medieval ✓
Iron Age	Unknown

6. PERIOD SUMMARIES. Use headings for each period (Roman; Medieval; etc.), and continue on additional sheets as necessary.

Post-Medieval

Successive layers of 19th century made ground were recorded in each of the six test pits.

7. NATURAL. (state if not observed; please DO NOT LEAVE BLANK)

Not observed.

8. LOCATION OF ARCHIVES.

a) Please indicate those categories still in your possession:

Notes Plans Photo ~~Negatives~~

~~Slides~~ Correspondence Manuscripts

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY.

Holden, S &. An Archaeological Watching Brief at Borthwick and Payne's Wharves,
Deptford, London Borough of Greenwich. Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
unpublished report 2005

SIGNED:

DATE:

NAME (Block capitals):

Please return completed form to The Greater London Sites and Monuments Record, GLAAS,
English Heritage, 23 Savile Row, London, W1X 1AB. Tel. 020 7973 3731/ 3779 (direct dial).

APPENDIX 2: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-7146

Project details

Project name	Borthwick and Payne's Wharves, Deptford
Short description of the project	A watching brief on the excavation of six geotechnical test pits was undertaken in February and March 2005 in order to record any archaeologically sensitive deposits that may be affected by their excavation or the subsequent redevelopment. Layers of 19th century made ground was observed in each of the test pits
Project dates	Start: 14-02-2005 End: 02-03-2005
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	BPY 05 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 3 - Built over

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON GREENWICH GREENWICH Borthwick and Payne's Wharves, Deptford
Postcode	SE8
Study area	8500 Square metres
National grid reference	TQ 37280 78080 Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project brief originator	CgMs Consultants Ltd
Project design originator	CgMs Consultants Ltd
Project director/manager	Gary Brown
Project supervisor	Stuart Holden
Sponsor or funding body	George Wimpey Central London

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	LAARC
----------------------------	-------

Physical Contents	'Ceramics'
Physical Archive Exists?	Yes
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Contents	'other'
Digital Media available	'Text'
Digital Archive Exists?	Yes
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Contents	'other'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Drawing','Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes','Report'
Paper Archive Exists?	Yes

Project bibliography

1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Borthwick and Payne's Wharves, Deptford
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Holden, S
Date	2005
Issuer or publisher	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Place of issue or publication	London
Description	Unpublished document
Entered by	Stuart Holden (sholden@pre-construct.com)
Entered on	7 March 2005