

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AT 17 SOUTH GROVE,
HIGHGATE, LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN**

Site Code: SGQ09

Central National Grid Reference: TQ 2807 8722

Written and Researched by Paw Jorgensen

**Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited,
March 2010**

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Panning Application 2010/0906/P

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March 2010**

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1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results and working methods of an archaeological watching brief during the underpinning of the building at 17 South Grove, Highgate, London Borough of Camden. The watching brief was commissioned by FROG Architects and Surveyors Limited and was carried out very intermittently in December 2009 and February 2010.
- 1.2 In December the exercise comprised monitoring the contractors undertaking hand excavation inside the building adjacent to the north wall fronting South Grove. In February two underpinning pits were monitored located in the northwest and northeast corners of the building. Due to the depth of the trenches the stratigraphic sequence was only recorded from the top of the pits and therefore a full examination of the composition of the deposits could not be undertaken.
- 1.3 No archaeologically significant deposits were encountered in any of the trenches and it was agreed with GLAAS that no further work was necessary.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 An archaeological watching brief during excavation of underpinning pits was carried out in December 2009 and February 2010 by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited. All works were undertaken within the standing building (Figure 1).
- 2.2 The Phase 1 works measured 2m in length and was of similar depth and was located in the northeast corner of the building (Trench 1). In Phase 2 Trench 1 was re-recorded as the trench had been deepened towards the base. Trench 2, located in the northwest corner, measured 1.3m by 1.3m in plan by approximately 4.5m in depth (Figure 2).
- 2.3 The site is located at National Grid Reference TQ 2807 8722.
- 2.4 The work was commissioned by Contractors undertaking hand excavation inside the building adjacent to the north wall fronting South Grove, managed for Pre-Construct Archaeology by Gary Brown and supervised by Stuart Holden (Phase 1) and Paw Jorgensen (Phase 2).
- 2.5 The site was assigned the code SGQ09.



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Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:20,000 at A4

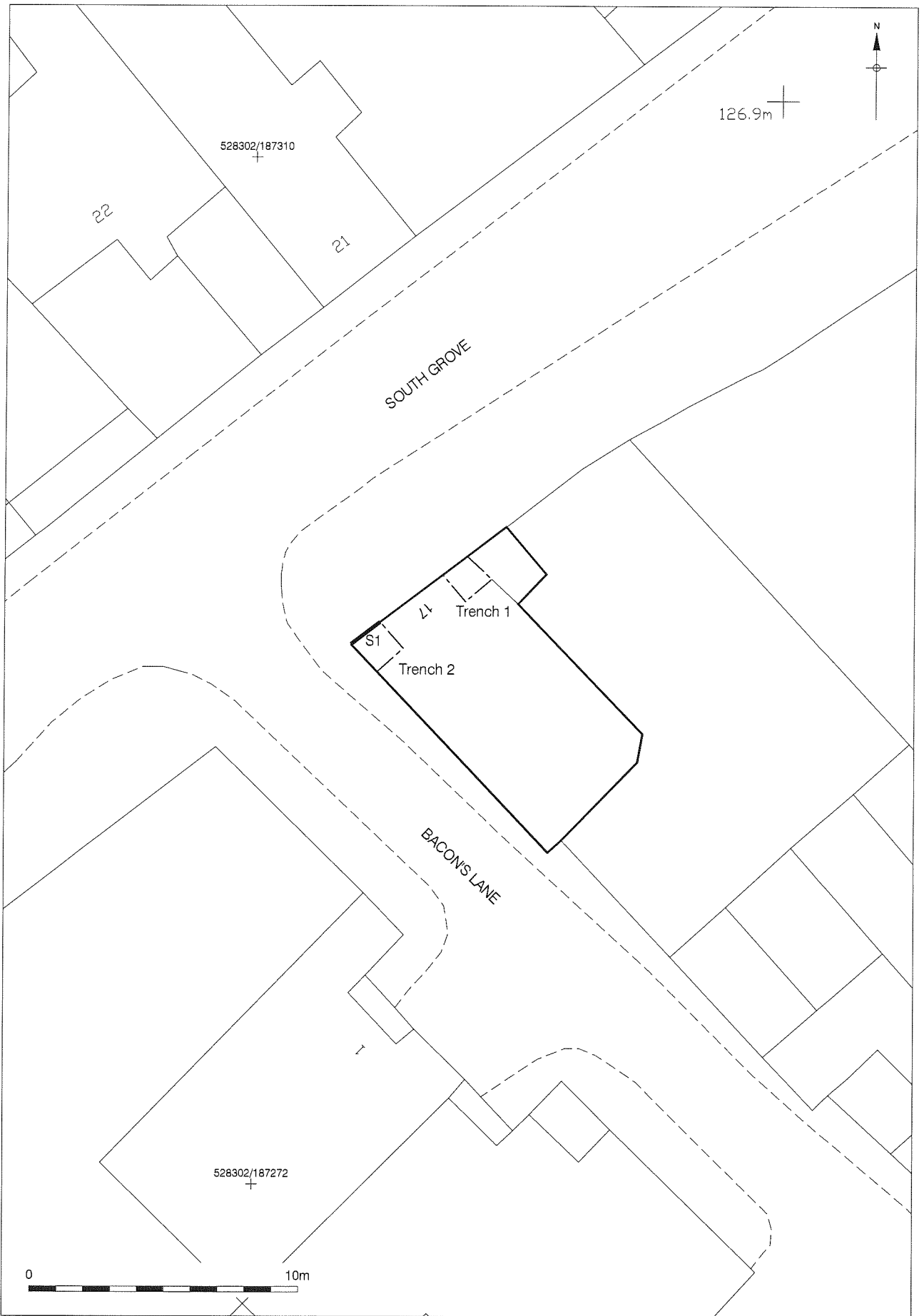


Figure 2
Trench Location
1:200 at A4

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.1 Archaeology in the London Borough Of Camden

- 3.1.1 This study aims to satisfy the objectives of the London Borough of Camden, which fully recognise the importance of the buried heritage for which they are the custodians. The London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan (UDP), adopted in 2000, contains policy statements in respect of protecting the buried archaeological resource.
- 3.1.2 The proposed development of the site is subject to the Council Environmental Policies:

Conservation and heritage

4.69 Chapter 15 identifies two Areas of Special Character: Regents Canal and the Hampstead and Highgate Ridge. These areas are individually important but also make a unique contribution towards London's architectural, historic, environmental and cultural diversity. Each of these areas is covered either wholly or in part by conservation area status.

4.70 Many other areas warrant protection or enhancement for their contribution to the locality and have been designated as conservation areas (EN31- EN37). Buildings which individually or for their group value are important to Camden's heritage have been listed by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and protection is also extended to those buildings and structures from the past of which only archaeological remains have survived.

4.71 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 consolidates previous legislation placing duties on and conferring powers to local planning authorities in relation to the conservation of the built environment. The government, through PPG12 has emphasised the importance of giving high priority to conserving the built and archaeological heritage in reconciling priorities in the public interest. PPG15 contains government policy guidance on the historic environment whilst Circular 14/97 contains relevant directions and gives advice on demolition, following the House of Lords judgment in the case of Shimizu (UK) Ltd v Westminster City Council. Together, PPG15 and Circular 14/97 supersede DoE Circular 8/87. Advice on archaeology is given in PPG16.

4.73 The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport has a duty to compile lists of buildings of special architectural and/or historic interest and some 4,460 buildings in Camden are so listed. Works to listed buildings require consent from the Council, whether these affect the building itself, internally or externally, or structures within the curtilage of the building. Development, which may affect the setting of a listed building, also requires special consideration. In accordance with the conservation agreement, English Heritage will authorise the Council to determine most applications for Grade II listed buildings; the Council will continue to be directed by English Heritage in its decision to grant listed building consent to all Grade I and Grade II* buildings.

Preservation of listed buildings

EN38 There will be a general presumption in favour of the preservation of listed buildings, and all applications for Listed Building Consent will be considered having special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

4.82 Listed buildings are an irreplaceable resource that has to be protected and adequately maintained for future generations. There are 4,460 buildings and structures in Camden that are on the statutory list for their architectural or historic interest. Listed buildings make a contribution to the townscape of Camden, either as individual buildings or for their group value. In order to retain the integrity of a listed

building, the Council needs to control external as well as internal works which would affect its character, appearance or structural stability. Any disturbance to the structure could result in serious defects requiring further works which could put additional strain on the structure. Physical damage to the structure of a listed building can arise from demolition or construction works to the building or adjoining buildings, uses of the building leading to overloading or heavy traffic close to the building. Rebuilding behind the facade of a listed building will not normally be considered acceptable. Where listed buildings are being altered for the provision of access for people with disabilities, the Council will balance this against the interests of conservation and preservation. Listed buildings would have been designed originally to fit into a particular context or form part of a set piece. The setting of a listed building may be limited to its immediate surroundings but often can extend some distance from it, especially if a high or bulky building is proposed. The value of a listed building can be greatly diminished if unsympathetic development nearby mars its appearance or the harmonious relationship with its surroundings.

4.83 The Council's decisions on Grade I and II* listed buildings are subject to the direction of English Heritage (see para 4.73). The Council also has to notify the Royal Commission on Historic and Ancient Monuments for England prior to the demolition of a listed building.

Preservation of archaeological heritage

EN41 The Council will seek to protect, enhance and preserve sites of archaeological interest and their settings. When researching the development potential of a site, developers should, in all cases, undertake their own archaeological desk-based assessments of whether the site is known or likely to contain archaeological remains. Within Archaeological Priority Areas and on other sites having archaeological potential, the Council may require an archaeological field evaluation to be carried out before a planning application is determined.

Retaining archaeological sites and their setting

EN42 The Council will recommend that important archaeological remains acquire due statutory protection. There will be a presumption in favour of the physical preservation of nationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and important archaeological remains should be preserved in situ. Where the preservation of such remains in situ cannot be achieved, the Council will require that no development shall take place until satisfactory excavation and recording of the remains have been carried out on site by an archaeological organisation approved by the Council. In appropriate cases, the Council may seek voluntary agreements to cover such matters, including the publication of the results, or may grant planning permission subject to conditions. Where developers do not propose due provision for accommodating important remains, permission may be refused.

4.87 The history of the Borough indicates that there is considerable likelihood that archaeological remains will be found in certain parts of the Borough which are identified on the Proposals Map as Archaeological Priority Areas. There have already been many individual finds in other parts of the Borough, and no location can be ruled out. The Council will consult with, and be guided by, English Heritage (Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service) on the archaeological implications of development proposals, especially within the Archaeological Priority Areas and in the vicinity of known find spots. A record of these is maintained by the English Heritage Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (Greater London Sites and Monuments Record).

4.88 Where there is good reason to believe that there are remains of archaeological importance, the Council will consider directing applicants to supply further details of proposed developments, including the results of archaeological desk-based assessment and field evaluation, under the provisions of Article 3(2) of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995. If important archaeological remains are found, developers should adopt measures which allow the remains to be permanently preserved in situ. In other cases, the Council may seek to secure provision for the analysis, interpretation, display and publication of the results of archaeological investigation and of any finds.

- 3.1.3 These policies mirror advice contained in the Department of Environment document 'Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16)'. This document identifies the need for early consultation in the planning process to determine the impact of the construction schemes upon buried archaeological strata.

4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 4.1.1 The Geological Survey of Great Britain shows that the solid geology of the development site is comprised of London Clay overlain by Bagshot sand. No onsite geotechnical investigations are known to have been conducted at the site.
- 4.1.2 The site consists of the existing building at 17 South Grove, Highgate in the London Borough of Camden. The building itself is situated at an elevation of 128.3m OD towards the southern edge of Highgate West Hill overlooking London below.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

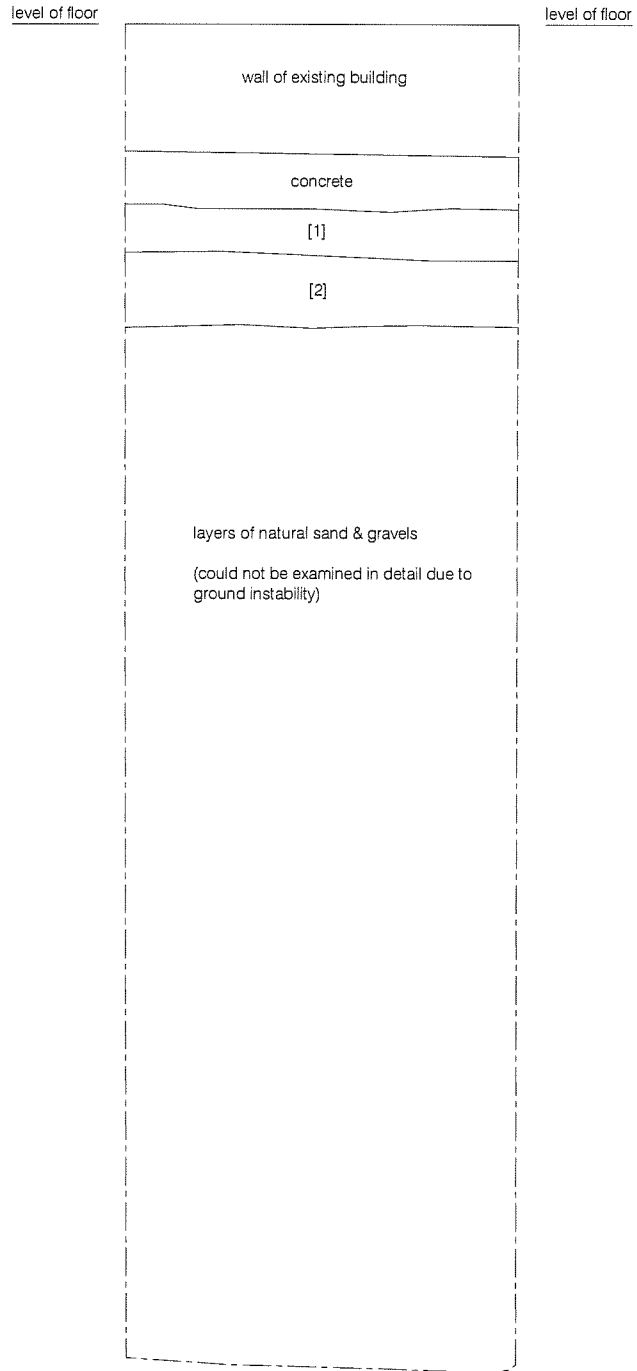
- 5.1 Highgate developed as a small hamlet following the opening of the Bishop of London's toll road, the Great North Road from London to Finchley, in 1386. The earliest records mentioning Highgate date to the mid- to late 14th century and are almost exclusively in connection with the road or in reference to the hermits who lived nearby and maintained the road. The name itself likely relates to the Hilltop gateway leading into Hornsey Park just off the Great North Road (London Borough of Camden 2007).
- 5.2 It is likely that the village owes its early growth to the trade generated by the general traffic between Hornsey Park and London and also in parts to the hermitage in the village, which attracted a considerable amount of pilgrims by 1464. During the 15th century it became customary for the wealthier inhabitants of the village to leave considerably amounts of money to the hermitage, which steadily grew as a result (Lovell and Marcham 1936).
- 5.3 The study site is located on what was during the 16th century part of the 'Old Hall' estate belonging to Sir William Cornwallis who had acquired the property in 1588. It is likely that by the time of Sir William's acquisition the estate already consisted of a dwelling house with auxiliary buildings situated on three acres of land (Baker and Elrington 1980).
- 5.4 In 1610 the estate passed on to Thomas, 14th Earl of Arundel in whose possession it remained until 1636. Sir Francis Bacon, a friend of the Earl's, frequently visited the estate in Highgate and indeed spent his final days there when he contracted a fatal case of pneumonia after, as legend has it, stuffing the carcass of a fowl with snow in an attempt to prove that decreasing the temperature of the bird would aide in preserving the meat (Lovell and Marcham 1936).
- 5.5 By 1691 the dwelling house had been at least partially demolished and a new "capital messuage" been built in its place. Although it has since undergone many changes the building still survives (Grade II* listed) to the south of the study site (London Borough of Camden 2007).
- 5.6 Throughout the 17th century Highgate became an increasingly more popular location for summer residences because of the rural setting it offered within close proximity to London. The village enjoyed steady growth throughout the 18th century, but as a result of the declining coach trade in the mid- 19th century this growth was somewhat halted (Baker and Elrington 1980).

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 The Phase 1 trench (Trench 2) was located adjacent to the north wall fronting South Grove in the northwest corner. The hole originally measured measures 2m x 0.60-1m and 2m in depth, but was subsequently modified to being square and 4.5m deep. and is positioned in the northeast corner. The Phase 2 trench, Trench 1, was 1.3m² and 4.5m deep and was located in the northeast corner of the building. The trench numbering sequence of the Phase 2 watching brief has been utilised for the report, despite the fact that Trench 2 was actually the first recorded. Prior to archaeological attendance the floor surface over the two trenches had been removed in preparation of the works.
- 6.2 The Phase 1 trench was hand dug where as in Phase 2 the trench was deepened using a 3.5 tonne 360° style tracked excavator. The mechanical excavator was used to excavate Trench 1. The spoil was loaded onto a conveyer belt and transported to a skip situated on the pavement to the north of the building.
- 6.3 All recording systems employed were fully compatible with those 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). Detailed descriptions of all deposits excavated and exposed were recorded on pro-forma recording sheets. The site produced two sections at a scale of 1:20; and four context records.
- 6.4 As the contractors undertaking the works were not undertaking any surveying or utilising benchmarks, OD levels were calculated from those available on OS maps, and as such are to be considered as approximates.
- 6.5 Trenches were monitored for archaeologically significant deposits and finds throughout excavation by a suitably qualified archaeologist.
- 6.6 No deposits relevant to environmental sampling were encountered.

7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE AND INTERPRETATION

- 7.1 Stratigraphically both of the trenches comprised a sequence of naturally deposited sands and gravels truncated at the top by the construction of the current building. Overlying the natural sequence was a layer of modern made ground approximately 0.5m in thickness providing the base for a raised floor in the northern half of the building. This is consistent with the stratigraphic sequence observed during the excavation of an earlier underpinning pit in December of 2009.
- 7.2 Due to the depth of the trenches the natural sequence could not safely be fully investigated although visual inspection from the top of the underpinning pits revealed a sequence of sand and gravels to approximately 0.75m below the current floor surface. The top of the natural strata comprised mid-yellowish brown coarse sand [1] with moderate inclusions of small rounded pebbles and occasional roughly horizontal manganese streaks [2].
- 7.3 Underlying this at approximately 1.00m below the floor surface was a circa 0.40m thick deposit of coarse sand with occasional manganese streaking. Unlike [1], the lower deposit did not appear to contain any pebbles.
- 7.4 No archaeological strata was observed during this exercise and no artefacts were recovered.



0 1m
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Figure 3
Section 1
1:25 at A4

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 8.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank FROG Architects for commissioning the project, in particular Ian Birch. Thanks also to the groundworkers who undertook the excavation of the service trenches and the safe maintenance of the site. We would also wish to acknowledge the support and practical considerations given to this project by Kim Stabler, GLAAS.
- 8.2 The author would like to thank Gary Brown for his project management and Jennifer Simonson for producing the illustrations.

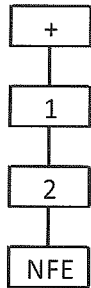
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Appendix 1: Context Register

Site Code	Context No.	Section	Type	Phase	Description
SGQ09	1	S.1, S.2	Deposit	Natural	Natural sand
SGQ09	2	S.1, S.2	Deposit	Natural	Natural sand

Appendix 2: Site Matrix



Appendix 3: OASIS form

OASIS ID: preconst1-73448

Project details

Project name 17 South Grove, Highgate
Short description of the project Archaeological watching brief during the underpinning of the building at 17 South Grove, Highgate, London Borough of Camden. The excavation of two underpinning pits was monitored during the watching brief. These were located in the northwest and northeast corners of the building. Due to the depth of the trenches the stratigraphic sequence was only recorded from the top of the pits and therefore a full examination of the composition of the deposits could not be undertaken.
Project dates Start: 10-02-2010 End: 18-02-2010
Previous/future work No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes SGQ09 - Sitecode
Type of project Recording project
Site status Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)
Current Land use Residential 1 - General Residential
Monument type MADE GROUND Modern
Investigation type 'Watching Brief'
Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Project location

Country England
Site location GREATER LONDON CAMDEN HAMPSTEAD 17 South Grove, Highgate
Postcode N6 6BP
Site coordinates TQ 2807 8722 51.5687985754 -0.151915103319 51 34 07 N 000 09 06 W Point
Height OD / Depth Min: 127.55m Max: 127.55m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project brief originator Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project design originator Gary Brown
Project director/manager Gary Brown
Project supervisor Paw Jorgensen
Type of sponsor/funding body Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body Salt Evans

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No
Digital Archive recipient LAARC
Digital Media available 'Images raster / digital photography', 'Spreadsheets', 'Text'
Paper Archive recipient LAARC
Paper Media available 'Context sheet', 'Plan', 'Report', 'Section'

Project bibliography

1
Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title Archaeological Watching Brief at 17 South Grove, Highgate, London Borough of Camden
Author(s)/Editor(s) Paw Jorgensen
Date 2010
Issuer or publisher Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Place of issue or publication Brockley
Description Unpublished client report

Entered by Paw Jorgensen (pjorgensen@pre-construct.com)
Entered on 02-Mar-10

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