Monitoring of Geotechnical Pits at 6-28 Gwynne Rd, Battersea, London Borough of Wandsworth

Site Code: GWV 10

Central National Grid Reference: TQ 526873 176305

Written and Researched by AidanTurner

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, April 2010

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1. ABSTRACT

1.1. This report details the results and working methods of archaeological monitoring undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited at 6-28 Gwynne Road, Battersea, London Borough of Wandsworth (Figure 1).

1.2. The archaeological work was implemented in advance of proposed redevelopment, and was commissioned by Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting.

1.3 The investigation comprised the archaeological monitoring of four geotechnical test pits which recorded natural strata below made ground. These deposits consisted of sandy clay sub-soil overlying river gravels. The sub-soil had been heavily truncated by modern activity.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1. Archaeological monitoring of geotechnical pits was conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. within the property of 6-28 Gwynne Road, London Borough of Wandsworth.(Figure 1), in advance of a proposed development.

2.2. The work was conducted on the 25 March 2010 and commissioned by Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting.

2.3. The investigation comprised the archaeological monitoring of four geotechnical test pits excavated within the site recently occupied by industrial units (Figure 2).

2.4. The National Grid Reference of the site centre is TQ 526873 176305.

2.5. The monitoring was undertaken by Aidan Turner with the project managed by Tim Bradley for Pre-Construct Archaeology.

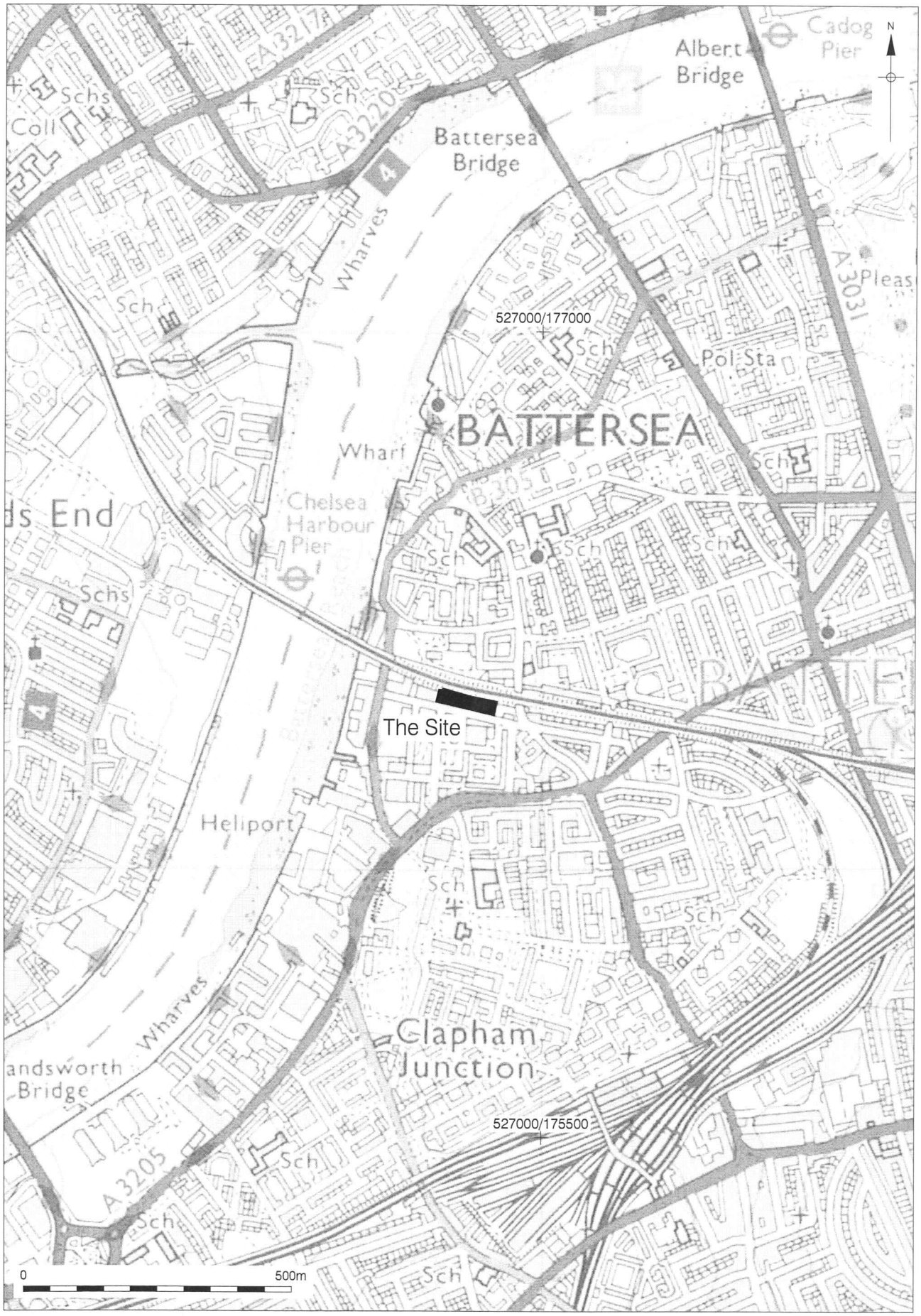


Figure 1
Site Location
1:10,000 at A4

Figure 2
Detailed Site and Test Pit Location Plan
1:500 at A4

3. RESEACH OBJECTIVES

3.1. Research Objectives

The following research aims were addressed during the course of the archaeological investigation:

- Is there any evidence of prehistoric activity on the site?
- Is there any evidence of Roman activity on the site?
- Is there any evidence of Saxon activity on the site?
- Is there any evidence of medieval activity on the site?
- Are there any post-medieval remains on the site?
- What is the extent of the modern truncation to the site?

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1. Prehistoric period

An abraided struck flint and a fragment of burnt flint were recovered during an archaeological evaluation of the site immediately to east, at 2-4 Gwynne Rd.

4.2. Roman period

The nearest recorded Roman remains were the chance find of a coin and a pin, from Battersea park, c200m away. No settlement activity has been found in the immediate area.

4.3. Saxon

Excavations conducted 500m to the north, at Althope Grove, may have identified part of a late Saxon settlement. Several beam slots for buildings were recorded as well as Saxon pottery.

It is likely that the site remained open land or was wooded throughout this period, as any settlement is unlikely to have extended as far as the site at Gwynne Road.

4.4. Medieval

Medieval pottery has been recovered during excavations conducted c300m north of the site, at Battersea Sq; and c300m south east of the site at the former Price's Candle Factory, Cotton Row, York Place.

The village of Battersea would have continued to develop and expand throughout the medieval period, but there is no evidence that the settlement extended as far southwest as the site at Gwynne Road. It is likely that the site remained open land or was wooded throughout this period.

4.5. Post Medieval

Rocgues map of 1749 shows the site as being gardens or orchards, c300m from the village of Battersea. Stanfords map of 1862 records arrival of the railway on the northern boundary of the site and labels the site as 'market gardens'. The site is shown still undeveloped in the first edition ordnance survey of 1869.

The second edition ordnance survey of 1894 shows the site built up as terraced housing, save for the south east corner.

During the Second World War bomb damage, caused by a V1 strike, lead to the demolition of houses on the eastern side of the site.

The 1950 edition of the ordnance survey shows the eastern two thirds of the site with replacement detached housing, the site remaining unchanged by 1965.

Planning records show site was used for motor engineering purposes in 1970 and that the site was cleared by 1973, remaining vacant until 1986, when light industrial premises were constructed on the site.

The industrial premises were demolished during the first quarter of 2010, and the final removal of foundations was nearing completion during the watching brief.

5. GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

5.1 Based on British Geological Survey 1:50,000-scale survey sheet No. 270 South London (Solid and Drift edition) the stratigraphic sequence in the vicinity of the site is as follows:

Langley Silt Member (Neogene)
Kempton Park Gravel Formation (Neogene)
London Clay Formation (Palaeogene)

5.2 Langley Silt Member

The Langley Silt Member comprises silt and clay with occasional sand lenses and likely to be several metres in thickness beneath the site.

5.3 Kempton Park Gravel Formation

The Kempton Park Gravel Formation comprises of sandy gravels in a variably silty and clayey matrix, likely to be a few metres in thickness in the site vicinity.

5.4 London Clay Formation

The London Clay Formation comprises of Low permeability, firm to stiff, brown and blue/grey clay with variable silty and sandy parts and is likely to be over 70m in thickness beneath the site.

5.5 Made Ground is present across the site as a result of past construction and demolition activities.

6. METHODOLOGY

6.1. The fieldwork was designed to assess the presence or absence of significant archaeological remains during the course of the excavation of the geotechnical test pits, which may require further investigation.

6.2. A mechanical excavator was employed to undertake the excavation work with an archaeologist in attendance. Investigation was limited to identifying the extent and nature of the deposits and to recover any dating evidence.

6.3. All archaeological features were recorded in plan and in section as necessary using standard recording methods. A photographic record was also made as appropriate.

6.4. A spot height (value 3.5mOD) is present on the road directly outside the entrance to the site that approximates to the level of the site ground surface. This value was used in the course of this investigation to provide levels of the individual deposits.

6.5. The test pits monitored during this exercise were assigned the labels TP1-4. The test pits may be referred to by alternate numbers by the attending geotechnical engineer. The test pits had the following dimensions:

Geotechnical Test Pit	*Length*	*Width*	*Max depth*
1	3.0m	1.8m	1.4m
2	3.0m	1.8m	1.5m
3	2.9m	1.8m	1.3m
4	2.4m	1.8m	1.35m

6.6. The work was undertaken following English Heritage (GLAAS) guidelines (English Heritage 1998).

7. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

7.1. Summary

A similar sequence was seen across the site and consisted of natural sandy clayey gravel overlain by sandy clay sub-soil. In all of the test pits the subsoil had been significantly truncated by intrusive features, probably representing recent demolition activity, or previous demolition activity during the 20th century.

7.2. Phase 1 Natural (Figure 3)

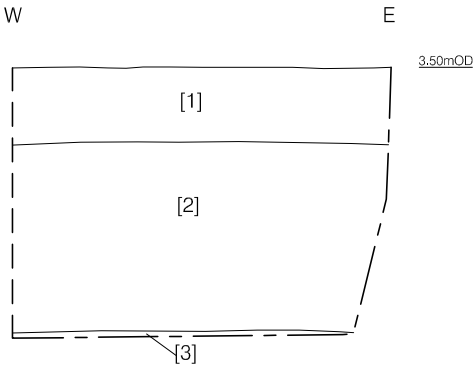
Clayey sand and gravel was observed in the base of Test Pits 1 to 4 (Contexts 3, 5, 7 and 9). This was overlain by sandy clay subsoil in Test Pits 1, 2 and 3 (Contexts 2, 4, and 6). The deposit was between 0.3 to 0.4m thick.

7.3. Phase 2 Garden Soil (Figure 3)

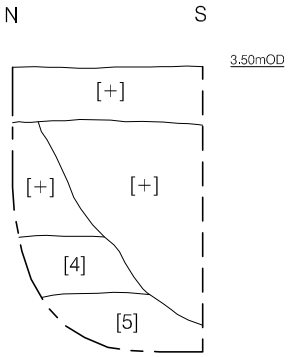
In Test Pit 4 the subsoil observed in the other test pits was not represented. In this test pit the natural gravels were directly overlain by a modified subsoil of greyish appearance (Context 8). This has been interpreted as being the remains of a historic garden soil. No dating evidence was recovered from this deposit. The deposit was up to 0.9m thick.

7.4. Phase 3 – Modern (Figure 3)

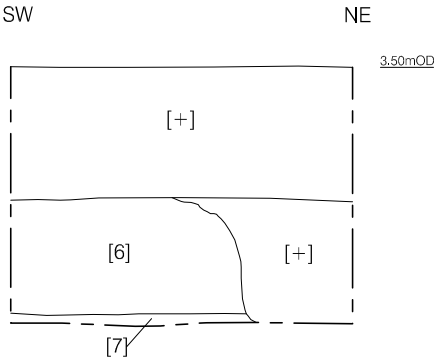
In all test pits the aforementioned deposits were covered in a layer of topsoil mixed with demolition material (Context 1). This layer was the product of recent demolition activity. It varied in thickness from 0.3m to 0.6m. It formed the surface of the site at approximately 3.5m AOD.



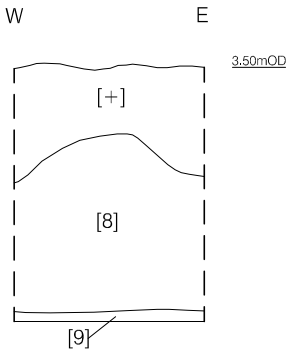
Section 1
Test Pit 1
South Facing



Section 2
Test Pit 2
West Facing



Section 3
Test Pit 3
Southeast Facing



Section 4
Test Pit 4
South Facing

0 2.5m

Figure 3
Sections 1-4
1:40 at A4

Image 1: Test Pit 2, Facing North, Showing Truncated Subsoil Horizon

Image 2: Test Pit 3, Facing South East

Image 3: Test Pit 3, Facing South East

Image 4: Test Pit 4, Plan View, Facing West

Image 5: Test Pit 4, Plan View, Facing West

Image 6: Test Pit 4, Section View, Facing North

Image 7: Area of Truncation from Previous Construction, West End of Site, Facing East

8 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 No evidence for prehistoric, Roman, Saxon, or medieval material was recorded on the site.

8.2 The grey clay deposit [8] found above the gravel in Test Pit 4 may represent the remains of a garden soil deposit in the western side of the site, although it is unclear why the subsoil is not preserved in this area, and it may be that context [8] represents reworked subsoil. Although this deposit remains undated it appears consistent with the area being used for market gardening during the post-medieval period.

8.3 Although the original subsoil (contexts [2], [4] & [6]) was observed in three of the test pits, it had been largely truncated by recent disturbance, and in two of the test pits it had been completely removed to the underlying gravels.

8.4 It is likely that the subsoil deposit would have the most potential for any archaeological features, which would be expected to appear as discrete features within it. The significant truncation to this horizon as evidenced in the watching brief would suggest that the chances of any archaeological features surviving intact are low.

9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting for commissioning the work.

9.2 The author would also like to thank Mark Roughley for the illustrations and Tim Bradley for his project management and editing.

10 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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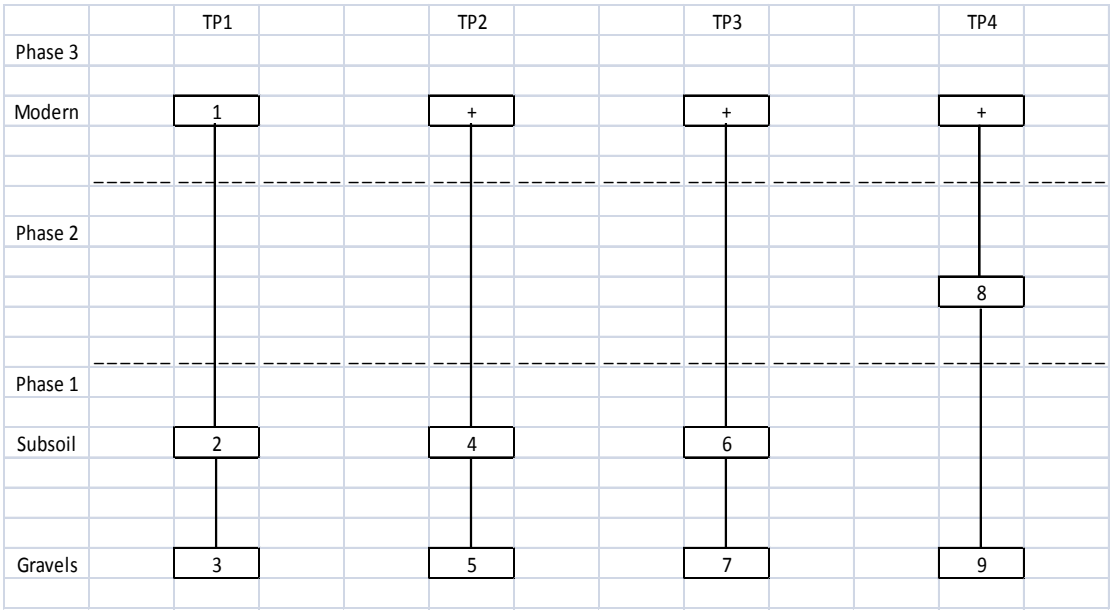
MoLAS June 2008 *6-28 Gwynne Road, Battersea, Archaeological Desk Based Assessment* Unpublished client report *Haves, Allen & Page*

APPENDIX 1: MATRIX



APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context No.	Test pit	Plan	Section / Elevation	Type	Description	Date	Phase
1	1	-	1	Layer	mixed topsoil demolition material	Modern	3
2	1	-	1	Layer	sandy clay subsoil	Natural	1
3	1	1	1	Layer	sandy clay gravel	Post-Med	1
4	2	-	2	Layer	sandy clay subsoil	Post-Med	1
5	2	2	2	Layer	sandy clay gravel	Natural	1
6	3	-	3	Layer	sandy clay subsoil	Natural	1
7	3	3	3	Layer	sandy clay gravel	Natural	1
8	4	-	4	Layer	modified topsoil	Historic	2
9	4	3	4	Layer	sandy clay gravel	Natural	1

APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

Project details

Project name	6-28 Gwynne Road, Battersea
Short description of the project	The investigation comprised the archaeological monitoring of four geotechnical test pits. The monitoring has recorded natural strata below made ground. These deposits consisted of sandy clay sub-soil overlying river gravels. The sub-soil had been heavily truncated by modern demolition activity.
Project dates	Start: 25-03-2010 End: 25-03-2010
Previous/future work	Not known / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	GWV 10 - Sitecode
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON WANDSWORTH BATTERSEA 6-28 Gwynne Road
Postcode	SW 11
Study area	2512.76 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 526873 176305 50.9373030848 0.173365022189 50 56 14 N 000 10 24 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 2.10m Max: 3.50m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project brief originator	CgMs Consulting
Project design originator	CgMs Consulting
Project director/manager	Tim Bradley
Project supervisor	Aidan Turner
Type of sponsor/funding body	PLC
Name of sponsor/funding body	Goldcrest Land PLC

Project archives

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

Entered by	archivist (archive@pre-construct.com)
Entered on	29 March 2010