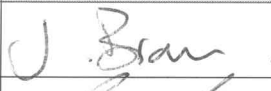



DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

164 GLOUCESTER ROAD, CROYDON  
WATCHING BRIEF

Quality Control

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**An Archaeological Watching Brief at 164 Gloucester Road, London  
Borough of Croydon, CR0 2DG**

**Site Code: GSO 05**

**Central National Grid Reference: TQ 3300 6700**

**Written and Researched by Joanna Taylor  
Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, April 2005**

**Project Manager: Tim Bradley**

**Commissioning Client: Makespace Architects on behalf of Alpha  
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# 1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results and working methods of an archaeological watching brief undertaken during groundworks associated with the redevelopment of land at 164 Gloucester Road, Croydon. The site is centred at National Grid Reference TQ 3300 6700 (fig. 1).
- 1.2 The watching brief monitored the mechanical excavation of foundation trenches associated with the construction of a three storey side extension to the existing property (fig. 2).
- 1.3 The watching brief found evidence for a natural sand layer sealed by late 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century made ground in the northwest of the site at c.0.50m below the current ground surface at a height of approximately 50.8m OD. Natural deposits were not encountered elsewhere on site and the remainder of the deposits within the monitored trenches consisted of made ground, concrete slabs, basements associated with the development of the site in the late 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century and demolition material (fig. 3).

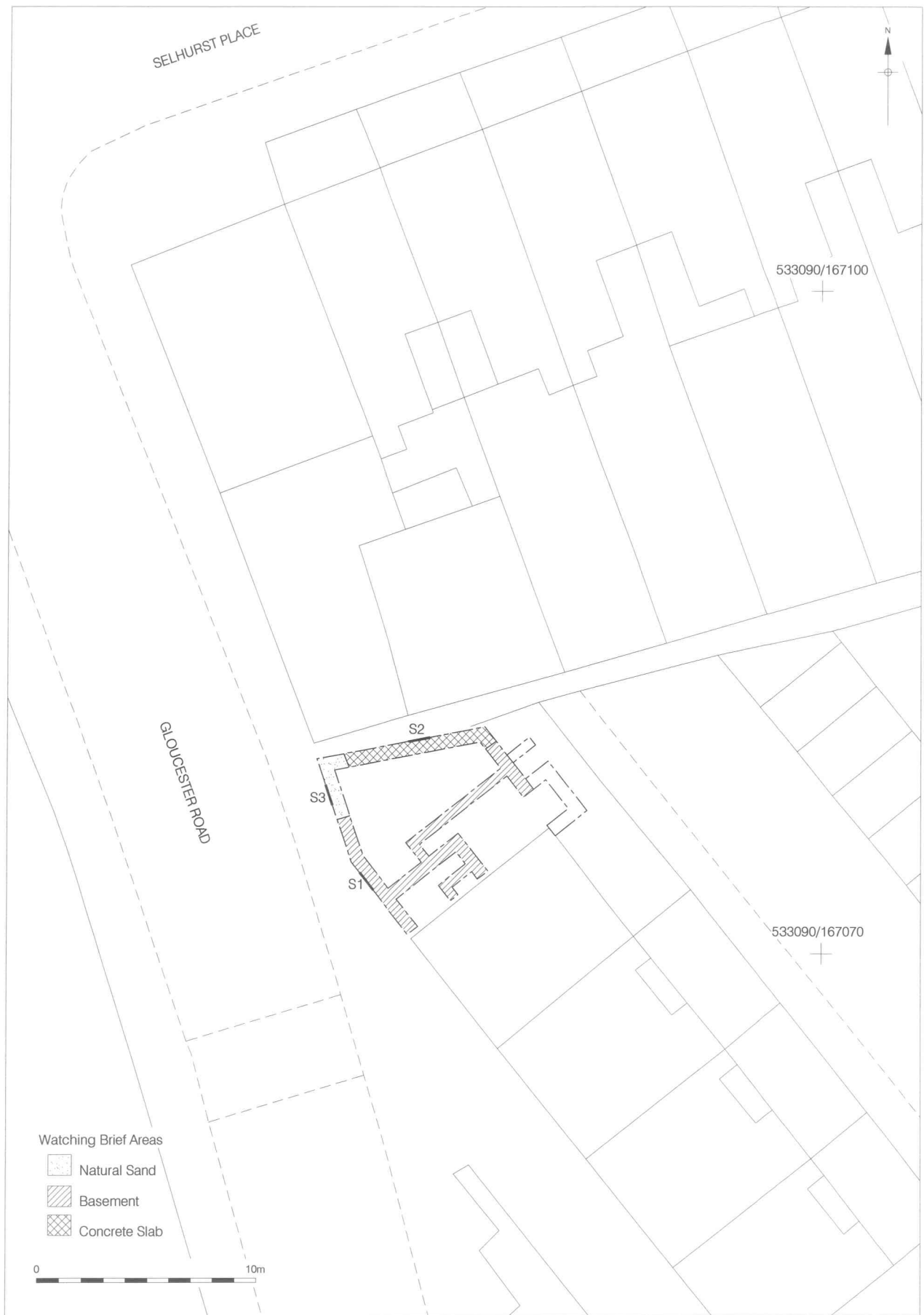
## **2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at 164 Gloucester Road, London Borough of Croydon, by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd on the 21<sup>st</sup> April 2005 (fig.1).
- 2.2 The commissioning client was Makespace Architects on behalf of Alpha Construction (London) Ltd and the watching brief was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd under the supervision of Joanna Taylor and the project management of Tim Bradley.
- 2.3 The site is bounded to the west by Gloucester Road, to the north and south by shops and properties fronting onto Gloucester Road, and to the east by an associated car park (fig.1).
- 2.4 The completed archive comprising written and drawn records will be deposited at the Museum of London under the site code GSO 05.



Reproduced from Ordnance Survey 1:25,000. Crown Copyright 1988.

Figure 1  
Site Location  
1:20,000



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Figure 2  
Trench Location  
1:250

### 3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.1 The site is located within the London Borough of Croydon's Archaeological Priority Zones (APZ) and the following is a brief summary of the Borough's Unitary Development Plan:

Para. 6.3: Archaeological remains are the main surviving evidence of Croydon's past. They are important to local identity, and are valuable for their role in education, recreation and tourism. Archaeological remains are a finite and fragile source easily destroyed by development. Once they are gone, part of the Borough's past is lost forever.

Para. 6.4: The archaeology of the Borough can best be protected if as much information as possible is available at the planning application stage. The watching brief, which may involve fieldwork, is needed so that the Council can assess the archaeological implications of proposals. Where appropriate the watching brief may also show how development can be designed so that they do not harm a site. The Council will also seek the advice of English Heritage on the competency and expertise of the organisations intending to undertake archaeological site watching brief.

Para. 6.6: The national importance of some remains may be such to warrant their preservation in situ. Archaeological remains are often highly fragile and vulnerable to damage and irreplaceable evidence may be lost as a result of development or even as a result of prior archaeological excavation. Preservation by record involves excavation of a site to record archaeological remains in advance of development.

Para. 6.7: Other archaeological sites contain information which is vital to an understanding of Croydon's past. This can only be retrieved through proper excavation, analysis and recording. The information cannot be used as a local educational and cultural recourse unless finds are looked after and results published. The Council will encourage landowners, archaeologists and developers to co-operate in accordance with the Code of Practice agreed by the British Archaeologists and Developers Liaison Group. In line with this code, and in place of a local alternative, the approved museum for the donation or lodging of archaeological finds is currently the Museum of London.

POLICY ARC4: On sites where archaeological remains do not need to be preserved in situ, the Council will make sure there is investigation, excavation, recording, analysis and publication to a specification agreed by the Council, secured where appropriate by the use of agreements.



## **5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

### **5.1 Roman**

5.1.1 Whilst it is generally considered that a well-established settlement existed in Croydon in the Roman period it has not been possible to date to establish the nature or extent of the Roman settlement. However, excavations over the past two decades suggest the core of the settlement is located to the south west of Croydon and Roman activity in the vicinity of the site is unlikely (Askew, 2003; Brown, 1992; Clough, 2003; Duckering, 2002; Proctor, 1999; Taylor, 2005; Wooldridge, 1999).

### **5.2 Saxon**

5.2.1 It is known that a Saxon settlement existed in the Croydon vicinity however it is unlikely that the settlement encroached on the site as it is thought to have been focused further to the south and southwest (Askew, 2003).

### **5.3 Medieval**

5.3.1 The earliest documentary reference to Croydon dates to the 9<sup>th</sup> century when Archbishop Aethered exchanged land in 'Crogedene' for land belonging to Aelfred at Chartham in Kent (Askew, 2003).

5.3.2 By the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086 the Manor of Croydon, 'Croindene', belonged to the Archbishop of Canterbury (Askew, 2003).

5.3.3 The study site is potentially archaeologically significant due to its proximity to the former medieval manor of Sellis Place (Bradley, 2005).

### **5.4 Post-medieval**

5.4.1 Croydon continued to develop through the later medieval period and by the 16<sup>th</sup> century it had become a large market town at the centre of a the nearby charcoal burning industry of the 'Great North Wood' (Askew, 2003). Sellis Place was owne, in 1793, by Joseph Humphrey of Ashburton Park. He was an important landowner, but the area of the site is likely to have been predominantly agricultural at this time.

5.4.2 Areas of Croydon sustained heavy bomb damage during the Second World War, a factor which, if relevant to the area, may have impacted significantly on any archaeological deposits on site.

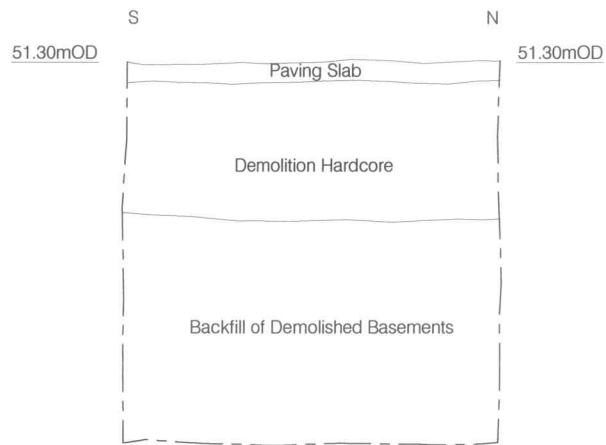
## 6 METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 The watching brief monitored the mechanical excavation of foundation trenches associated with the new development of the site (fig.2).
- 6.2 The watching brief trenches were 0.60m in width and excavated to between 0.70m and 1.00m in depth.
- 6.5 Deposits within the trenches were removed by a mechanical excavator until either significant archaeological deposits were encountered or the appropriate project level was attained.
- 6.6 Following fill clearance representative sections of the trenches were drawn.
- 6.7 Recording on site was undertaken using the single context recording system as specified in the Museum of London Site Manual. Plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20, and full or representative sections at a scale of 1:10. Contexts were numbered sequentially and recorded on *pro-forma* context sheets.
- 6.8 The site was given the code GSO 05.

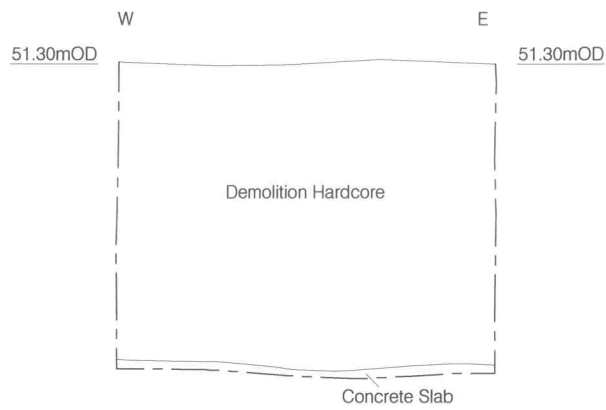
## 7 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

### 7.1 Foundation Trench (fig. 2 & 3)

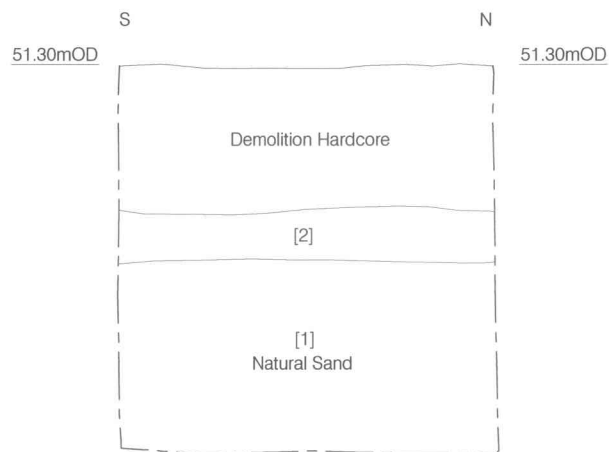
- 7.1.1 The earliest deposit recorded within the foundation trench was a naturally deposited sand layer [2] encountered at c.0.50m below the current ground surface at a height of 50.8m OD. This deposit was only seen in the northwest corner of the site.
- 7.1.2 Sealing the natural horizon was a 0.50m thick layer of dark brown, poorly sorted, silty sand [1] which contained fragments of CBM and represents a dump/levelling layer deposited in advance of the construction of the late 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century buildings that once occupied the site.
- 7.1.3 Truncating context [2] to the south was a backfilled basement associated with the 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century building that once stood on site. The basement had been in-filled with brick hardcore created from the demolition of the associated buildings. The base of the basement was not seen during the watching brief for it continued beyond the project level of 1.00m below ground surface (50.3m OD).
- 7.1.4 Truncating context [2] to the east was a 0.30m thick concrete slab which continued throughout the northeastern area of the site. Due to the presence of the concrete slab project level was attained at 0.70m below ground surface (50.6m OD) with no further excavation taking place.
- 7.1.5 Sealing the concrete slab and the basement deposits was a 0.40m - 0.70m thick layer of loose brick rubble and sand demolition material which was seen to continue throughout the site and formed the level of the current land surface.



Section 1  
East Facing



Section 2  
South Facing



Section 3  
East Facing



Figure 3  
Sections 1, 2 & 3  
1:20

## 8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The watching brief found evidence for a natural sand layer, sealed by late 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century made ground, in the northwest of the site at c.0.50m below the current ground surface at a level of approximately 50.8m OD. Natural deposits were not encountered elsewhere on site and the remainder of the deposits within the monitored trenches consisted of made ground, concrete slabs, basements associated with the development of the site in the late 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century and demolition material (fig. 3).
- 8.2 No archaeological features or deposits predating the layer 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century were seen to truncate or seal the sand horizon, and the depth of modern truncation across the site is such that it ensures that archaeological deposits are highly unlikely to have survived elsewhere.

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## **10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- 10.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Mr Shahed Saleem of Makespace Architects for commissioning the work on behalf of Alpha Construction and Mark Stevenson (English heritage) for monitoring the site.
- 10.2 The author would like to thank Adrian Nash for the illustrations and Tim Bradley for his project management and editing.

## Appendix 1: OASIS FORM

### Project details

Project name An Archaeological Watching Brief at 164 Gloucester Road, London Borough of Croydon, CR0 2DG

Short description of the project The watching brief found evidence for a natural sand layer, sealed by late 19th/20th century made ground, in the northwest of the site at c.0.50m below the current ground surface (50.8m OD). Natural deposits were not encountered elsewhere on site and the remainder of the deposits within the monitored trenches was constituted by made ground, concrete slabs, basements associated with the development of the site in the late 19th/20th century and demolition material.

Project dates Start: 21-04-2005 End: 21-04-2005

Previous/future work No / No

Type of project Recording project

Site status Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)

Current Land use Other 15 - Other

Investigation type 'Watching Brief'

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

### Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON CROYDON CROYDON 164 Gloucester Road

Study area 100.00 Square metres

National reference grid TQ 3300 6700 Point

### Project creators

Name of Organisation Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Project brief Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service



originator

Project design  
originator Tim Bradley

Project  
director/manager Tim Bradley

Project supervisor Joanna Taylor

Sponsor or  
funding body Mr Shahed Saleem, Makespace Architects

### Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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## 1 OASIS:

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