DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

VALLEY ROAD, KENLEY

WATCHING BRIEF

Quality Control

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Revision No.	Date	Checked	Approved

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An Archaeological Watching Brief at 16A-18 Valley Road, Kenley, London Borough of Croydon

Site Code: VRK 05

Central National Grid Reference: TQ 3290 5970

Written and Researched by Guy Seddon
Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, June 2005

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1 ABSTRACT

1.1 An archaeological watching brief was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd on behalf of Portland Homes at 16A-18 Valley Road, Kenley, London Borough of Croydon (fig 1). The site is centred on National Grid Reference TQ 329 597. The watching brief was undertaken in two phases. The first phase was concerned with the demolition of the existing properties and took place on the 22nd April 2005. The second phase was in order to monitor the groundworks for the new properties and took place between 13th June and 24th June 2005. The work was supervised Jo Taylor and Guy Seddon of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd respectively. The site code was VRK 05.

1.2 The bulk excavation of two building plots and four soakaways was observed and recorded. Natural deposits of colluvial clayey silt overlying chalk bedrock were observed right across the site suggesting minimal truncation. The nature of the deposits is indicative of solifluction in an easterly direction, down the slope on which the site is situated. No features or finds of archaeological significance were observed.

1.3 The construction of the roadway did not need to be observed as it was being built up from the existing ground surface and therefore would not disturb the buried environment.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 An archaeological watching brief was conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd, on land at 16A-18 Valley Rd, Kenley, London Borough of Croydon, from 13th June to 24th June 2005. The work was commissioned by Richard Meager of CgMs Consulting on behalf of Portland Homes prior to a residential development. The site was supervised by the author and Jo Taylor, project managed by Tim Bradley and monitored by Mark Stevenson of English Heritage.

2.2 The site is centred on National Grid Reference TQ 329 597 and was bounded by Valley Road to the southwest, a railway line to the northeast and housing to the southeast and northwest. The site area is 4800m2.

2.3 The project consisted of the monitoring of the demolition of the previous buildings on the site and the monitoring of the bulk excavation of the new building footprints and the excavation of associated soakaways.

2.4 The completed archive comprising written and drawn records will be deposited at the Museum of London under the site code GSO 05.

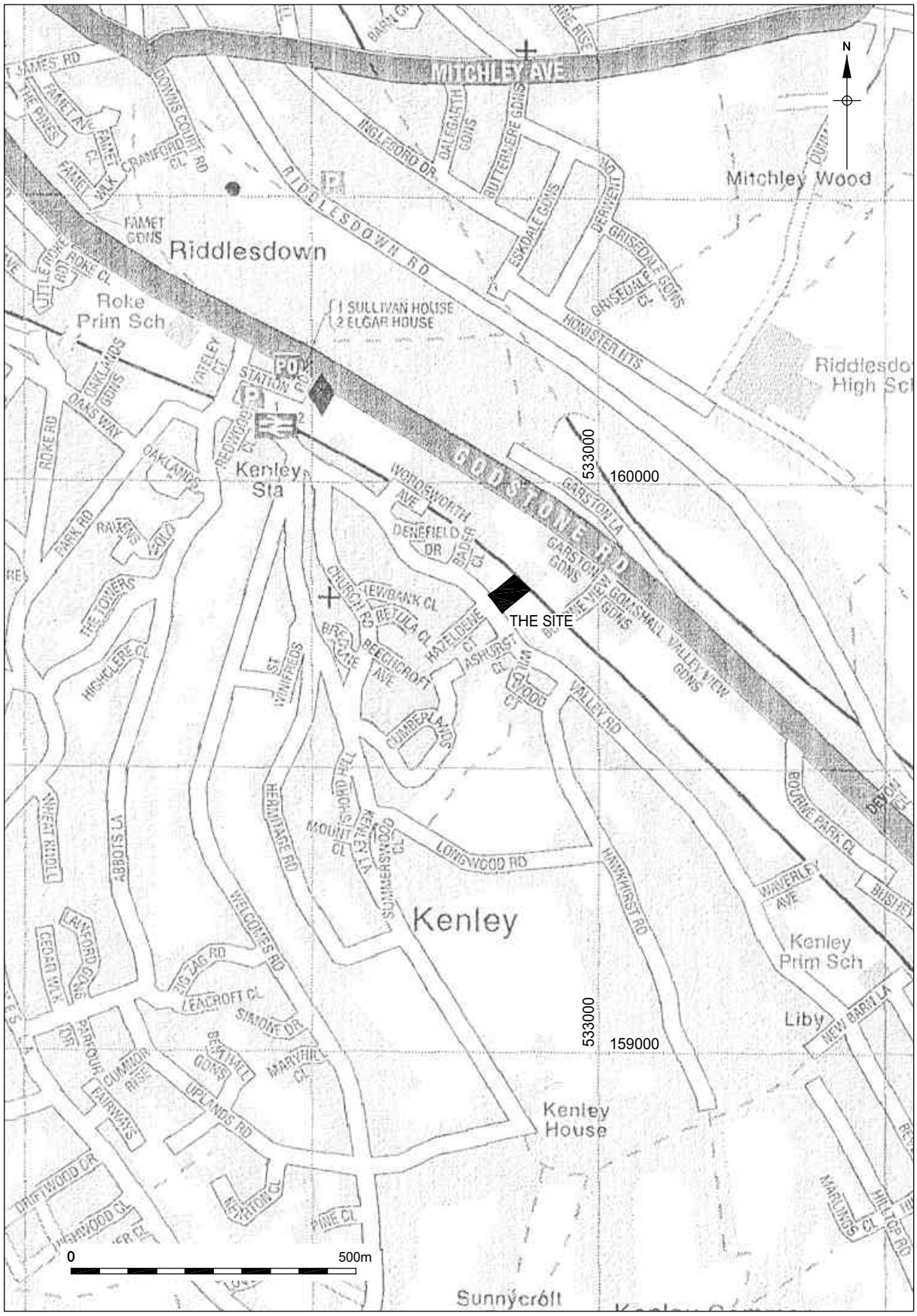
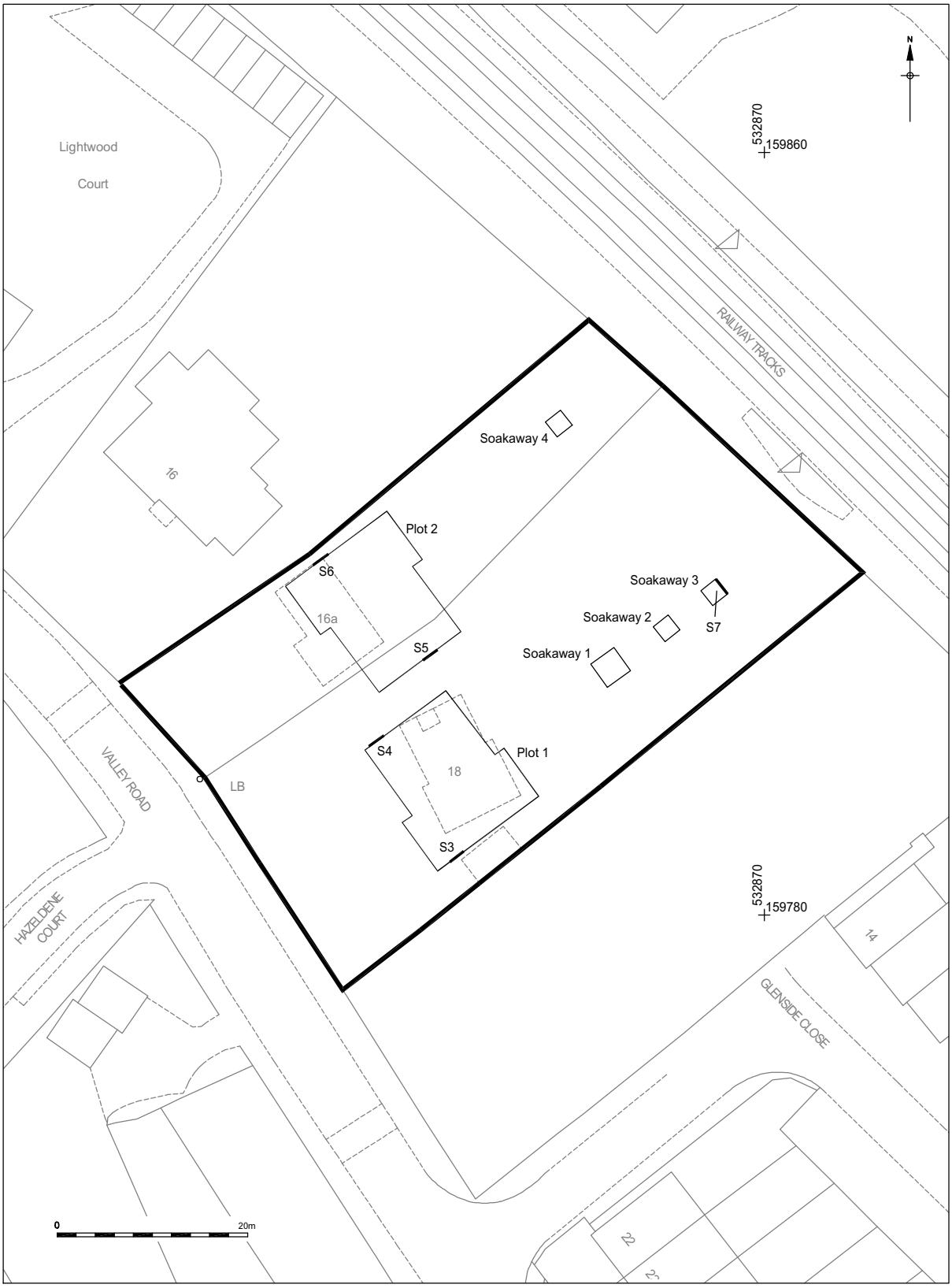


Figure 1
Site Location
1:10,000



Notes
No. 16a equals Building 1
No. 18 equals Building 2
Plots 1 and 2 were new footings

Figure 2
Area of Development
1:625

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.1 The study aims to satisfy the objectives of the London Borough of Croydon, which fully recognises the importance of the buried heritage for which they are the custodians. The council's deposited draft 'Croydon Unitary Development Plan', adopted in 1997, contains policy statements in respect of protecting the buried archaeological resource:

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.

3.2 The London Borough of Croydon have attached a condition to the planning application that a watching brief is necessary during works, and this has been endorsed by their archaeological advisors at English Heritage. The condition reads:

"No development including excavations for drainage and foundation work shall take place within the site until the applicant has secured implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only be carried out in accordance with the agreed programme.

Reason: To safeguard the heritage of the Borough by providing an adequate opportunity to investigate and excavate archaeological remains on the site before development is carried out…"

This report will be submitted to English Heritage and the London Borough of Croydon in order to satisfy the above condition.

3.3 A specification[1] for the archaeological works was prepared and approved prior to the commencement of the archaeological works

[1] Method Statement for an Archaeological Watching Brief at 16A-18 Valley Road, Kenley, London Borough of Croydon, CR8 5DG. Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd, unpublished report.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

4.1 The first phase of activity monitored the demolition of the existing structures under archaeological supervision on the 22nd April 2005. The results of which were observed and recorded.

4.2 The second phase, between 13th and 24th June 2005 was to observe the reduction of buildings footprints and footings as well as the excavation of the soakaways. These were excavated utilising a mechanical digger under archaeological supervision, the results of which were observed and recorded.

4.3 All material excavated was observed and stratigraphic changes were recorded until natural deposits were penetrated. Changing depths of the underlying materials were recorded at intervals and representative section drawings produced.

4.4 Site levels were calculated from engineering spot heights situated across the area of the site.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

5.1 Demolition

5.1.1 During the demolition of Building 1 colluvium [1], [3], [4] & [5] was found to be on top of chalk bedrock [2]. No features or finds of archaeological significance were recorded.

5.1.2 During the demolition of Building 2 redeposited chalk of a modern date [6] was recorded above a colluvial layer [7]. No features or finds of archaeological significance were observed.

5.2 Excavation of Plot 1

5.2.1 During the excavation of Plot 1, topsoil [8] was recorded at a maximum height of 88.78m OD, sloping down in a northeasterly direction to a height of 87.36m OD. It had a thickness of *c* 0.20m. Beneath the topsoil was a firm, mid reddish brown clayey silt subsoil of colluvial origin [9], with a maximum thickness of *c* 1.61m. This had a maximum height of 88.56m OD to the southwest and a minimum of 87.25m OD to the northeast. Underlying the colluvium was chalk bedrock [10], the maximum height of which was 87.42m OD falling in a northeasterly direction to 86.20m OD. No features or finds of archaeological significance were observed.

5.3 Excavation of Plot 2

5.3.1 The reduction of Plot 2 revealed topsoil [11], 0.11m thick with a maximum height of 88.66m OD in the southwest falling to 85.62 in the northeast. Underlying the topsoil was a firm, mid reddish brown clayey silt subsoil of colluvial origin [12]. The subsoil had thickness of 0.21m and a maximum height of 88.55m OD in the southwest sloping down to a height of 85.47m OD in the northeast. Beneath the subsoil lay the chalk bedrock [13], with a maximum height of 88.34m OD in the southwest falling to 85.23m OD in the northeast. No features or finds of archaeological significance were observed.

5.4 Excavation of Soakaway 1

5.4.1 The excavation of Soakaway 1 revealed a firm mid reddish brown clayey silt subsoil [14], 0.46m thick at a height of 84.59m OD overlying chalk bedrock [15], at 84.13m OD. No features or finds of archaeological interest were observed.

5.5 **Excavation of Soakaway 2**

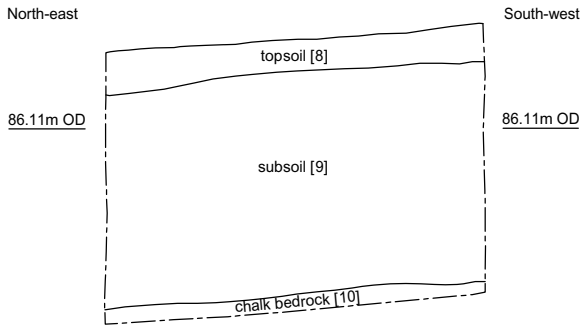
5.5.1 Soakaway 2 revealed a firm mid reddish brown clayey silt subsoil [16], 0.42m thick at 83.64m OD. Underlying the subsoil was chalk bedrock [17], at a height of 83.22m OD.

5.6 **Excavation of Soakaway 3**

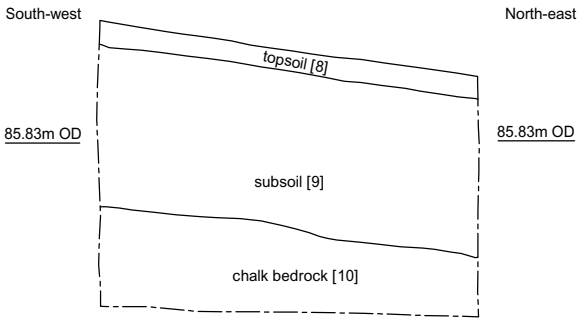
5.6.1 Soakaway 3 revealed a firm mid reddish brown clayey silt subsoil [18], 0.45m thick at a height of 82.91m OD. This overlay chalk bedrock [19], which had a height of 82.46m OD.

5.7 Excavation of Soakaway 4

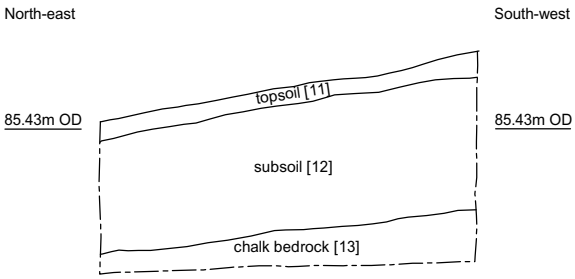
5.7.1 The sequence revealed in soakaway 4 was of a firm mid reddish brown clayey silt [20], 0.21m thick at a height of 82.96m OD. Underlying this was chalk bedrock [21] which had a height of 82.75m OD.



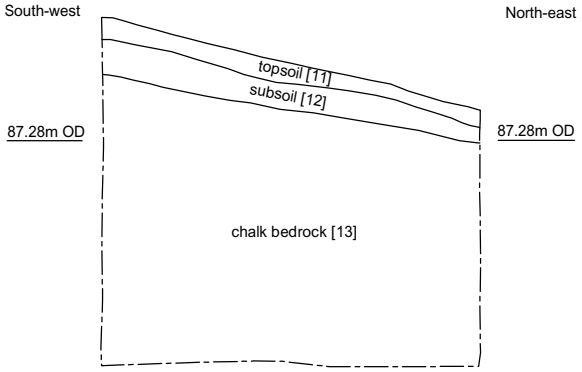
S3: Plot 1
North-east facing



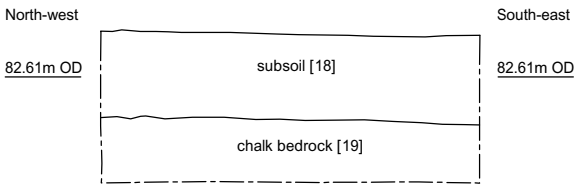
S4: Plot 1
South-west facing



S5: Plot 2
North-east facing



S6: Plot 2
South-west facing



S7: Soakawy 3
South-west facing

Figure 3
Sections
1:40

6 INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The sequence of topsoil and subsoil, underlain by chalk bedrock, was recorded across the entirety of the site during the monitoring of the demolition of the previous buildings and the excavation of the new foundations and associated services. Other than limited and localised impact from the foundations of the previous buildings, the area had been subject to minimal previous truncation.

6.2 Despite this, no features or finds of were observed at any time. The site sloped relatively steeply from west to east, and is therefore likely to have been topographically unsuitable for occupation/utilisation prior to the modern period.

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

8.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Richard Meager of CgMs Consulting for commissioning the work on behalf of Portland Homes and Mark Stevenson for monitoring the project. The author would also like to thank Jo Taylor for her work on site, Adrian Nah for the illustrations and Tim Bradley for project management and editing.

APPENDIX 1
CONTEXT INDEX

Context No.	Type	Description	Area
1	Layer	Colluvium	Building 1
2	Layer	Chalk Bedrock	Building 1
3	Layer	Colluvium	Building 1
4	Layer	Colluvium	Building 1
5	Layer	Colluvium	Building 1
6	Layer	Redeposited Chalk	Building 2
7	Layer	Colluvium	Building 2
8	Layer	Topsoil	Plot 1
9	Layer	Subsoil	Plot 1
10	Layer	Chalk Bedrock	Plot 1
11	Layer	Topsoil	Plot 2
12	Layer	Subsoil	Plot 2
13	Layer	Chalk Bedrock	Plot 2
14	Layer	Subsoil	Soakaway 1
15	Layer	Chalk Bedrock	Soakaway 1
16	Layer	Subsoil	Soakaway 2
17	Layer	Chalk Bedrock	Soakaway 2
18	Layer	Subsoil	Soakaway 3
19	Layer	Chalk Bedrock	Soakaway 3
20	Layer	Subsoil	Soakaway 4
21	Layer	Chalk Bedrock	Soakaway 4

APPENDIX 2
OASIS FORM

1. OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

1.1. OASIS ID: preconst1-8964

Project details

Project name	16a-18 Valley Rd Kenley, Surry
Short description of the project	A watching brief during the excavation of footings for two buildings and four soakaways. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed Natural chalk was recorded sealed by colluvial subsoil and topsoil across the area of the site.
Project dates	Start: 13-06-2005 End: 24-06-2005
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	VRK 05 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON CROYDON COULSDON 16a-18 Valley Rd, Kenley, Surry
Postcode	CR8 5DG
Study area	4800.00 Square metres
National grid reference	TQ 329 597 Point

Height OD	Min: 81.73m Max: 91.93m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project brief originator	CgMs Consultants Ltd
Project design originator	Richard Meager
Project director/manager	Tim Bradley
Project supervisor	Guy Seddon
Sponsor or funding body	Portland Homes

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Local museum
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Local museum
Digital Contents	'none'
Digital Media available	'Spreadsheets','Text'
Digital Archive Exists?	No
Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum
Paper Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Drawing','Map','Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes','Plan','Report','Section'
Paper Archive Exists?	Yes

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	16A-18 Valley Rd, Kenley, London Borough of Croydon
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Seddon, G
Entered by	Guy Seddon (gseddon@pre-construct.com)
Entered on	28 June 2005