An Archaeological Evaluation at 257-273 Wood Street, Walthamstow, London Borough of Waltham Forest, E 17

Site Code: WFW 05 Central National Grid Reference: TQ 3870 8911

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1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. at 257-273 Wood Street, Walthamstow, London Borough of Waltham Forest, E17. The evaluation was conducted between 15th and 18th August 2005, in advance of the redevelopment of the site. The work was commissioned by Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting on behalf of Fairview Homes.
- 1.2 The evaluation consisted of three trial trenches, aimed at comprehensive coverage of the site, which revealed natural gravel, a 19th century brick drain and soakaway, and some truncation by 20th deposits and features.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report details the results and working methods of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd at 267-273 Wood Street, Walthamstow, London Borough of Waltham Forest, E 17 (see location map, Fig. 1). The evaluation was commissioned by Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting on behalf of Fairview Homes in advance of the redevelopment of the site.
- 2.2 The evaluation covers an area of land centred on National Grid Reference TQ 3870 8911. The land was previously used as a transport depot. The site is bounded to the east by residential houses fronting Foresters Drive, to the north by Buck Lane, to the west by Wood Street and to the south by buildings fronting onto Wood Street. The archaeological evaluation involved the excavation and recording of three trial trenches, aimed at comprehensive coverage of the site (see trench location map, Fig. 2).
- 2.3 The evaluation was conducted between 15th and 18th of August 2005 and followed a written scheme of investigation prepared by CgMs Consulting Limited. The fieldwork was supervised by the author, Neil Hawkins, under the Project Management of Tim Bradley. The site was monitored by David Divers of English Heritage.
- 2.4 The completed archive comprising written, drawn and photographic records and artefacts will be deposited at LAARC.
- 2.5 The site was allocated the site code WFW 05.

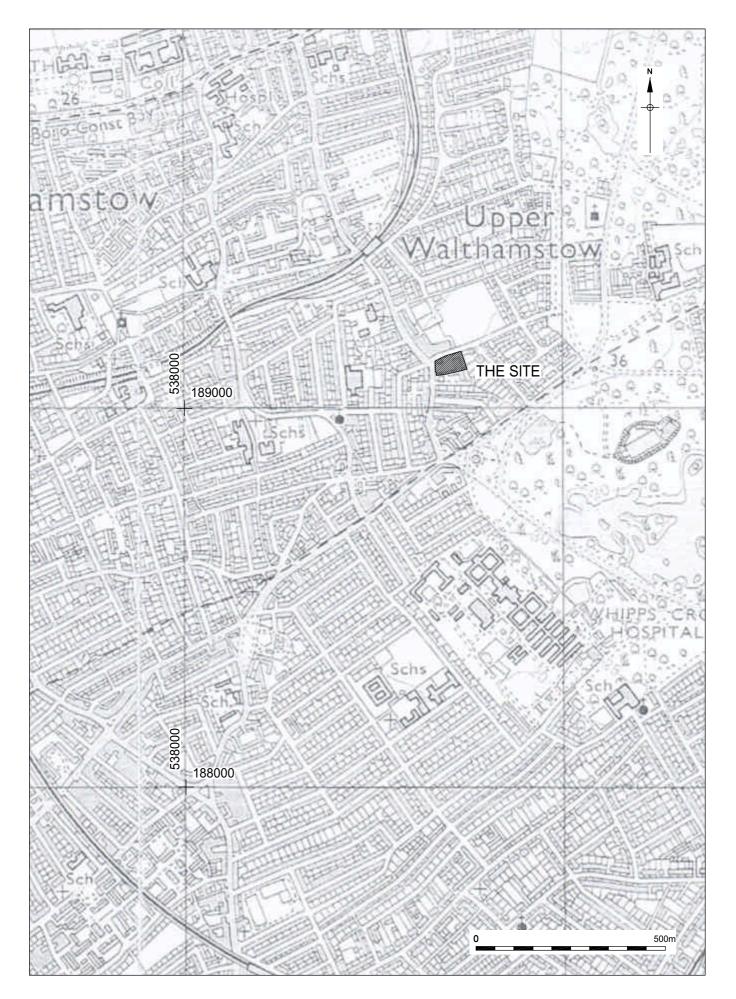


Figure 1 Site Location 1:10,000

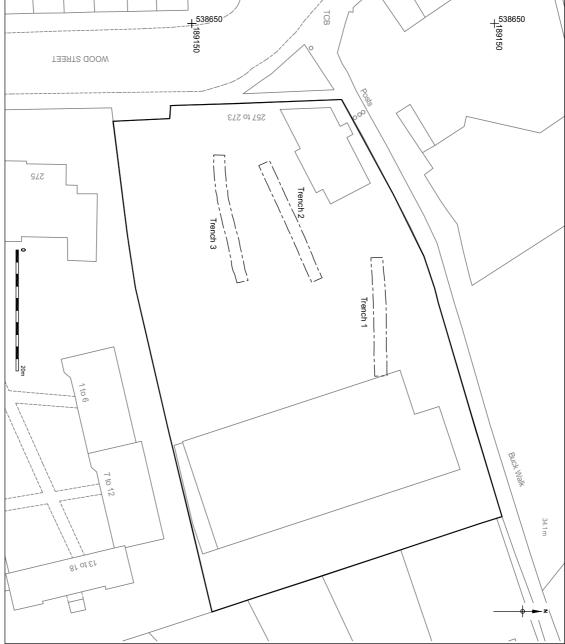


Figure 2 Trench Location 1:625

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.1 ARCHAEOLOGY IN WALTHAM FOREST AND THE UDP

- 3.1.1 In November 1990 the Department of the Environment issued Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG 16) "Archaeology and Planning", providing guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the preservation and investigation of archaeological remains.
- 3.1.2 In considering any planning application for development, the local planning authority will be guided by the policy framework set by government guidance, in this instance PPG 16, by current Development Plan policy and by other material considerations.
- 3.1.3 The study aims to satisfy the objectives of the London Borough of Waltham Forest, which fully recognises the importance of the buried heritage for which they are the custodians. The Borough's deposited draft 'Unitary Development Plan' 1993 contains policy statements in respect of protecting the buried archaeological resource.
- 3.1.4 The proposed development of the site is subject to the Council's Archaeology Policy:

Archaeological Heritage

BHE 16 THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ENCOURAGE THE CONSERVATION, PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE OF THE BOROUGH. WHEN ANY DEVELOPMENT INVOLVING A SITE OF 0.4 OF AN ACRE OR MORE IS PROPOSED WITHIN THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PRIORITY ZONE (AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP), OR FOR ANY SITE IDENTIFIEDBY A **RECOGNISED ARCHAEOLOGICAL AUTHORITY, THE** ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SITE WILL BE CONSIDERED. WHERE APPROPRIATE THE COUNCIL MAY **REQUIRE A PRELIMINARY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE EVALUATION BEFORE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS ARE CONSIDERED. THE** COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ENSURE THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS AND THEIR SETTINGS ARE PERMENANTLY PRESERVED, IF NECESSARY FOR PUBLIC ACCESS AND DISPLAY. SITES OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OR POTENTIAL NOT REQUIRING PERMENANT PRESERVATION SHALL HAVE PROVISION MADE FOR AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION AND EXCAVATION TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY A RECOGNISED ARCHAEOLOGICAL ORGANISATION BEFORE AND DURING THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT. SUCH PROVISION SHALL INCLUDE THE SUBSEQUENT ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND IN

APPROPRIATE CASES, PRESENTATION OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS AND FINDS.

- Para. 8.105 The history of Waltham Forest dates from the time of the earliest settlements in the Forest. Archaeology is an important way in which greater knowledge about the history of the Borough can be discovered. However, the opportunity to carry out archaeological investigations usually only arises during the course of new development when foundations are exposed.
- Para. 8.106 The Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service has defined a number of Archaeological Priority Zones (APZs), which have been identified as having particular archaeological interest. Some of the APZs are extensive and include the whole of the Lea Valley, the valleys of the Ching and Fillebrooke rivers and areas around former Saxon and Medieval settlements such as Chingford, Walthamstow, Leyton, Highams Park and Leytonstone. There are also a number of less extensive APZs. For proposed developments involving a site of 0.4 acres or more within the APZs, the Council will liase with the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service in order to assess the archaeological significance of the site. Where appropriate, a preliminary archaeological site evaluation or desk-based assessment may be required by the Council before such proposals are considered.
- Para. 8.107 The Council considers that wherever possible the most important archaeological remains and their setting should be permanently preserved. Developers can help to achieve this by, for example, preparing sympathetic designs and using foundations which avoid disturbing archaeological remains altogether. If the physical preservation of remains is not feasible, an archaeological excavation for the purposes of "preservation by record" may be an acceptable alternative.
- Para. 8.108 The Council will promote co-operation between landowners, developers and archaeological organisation in accordance with the British Archaeologists and Developers Liaison Group Code of Practice which it endorses.
- 3.1.5 The site lies less than 200m north of an Archaeological Priority Zone as defined by the London Borough of Waltham Forest.

4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 4.1 The site is located on the Boyn Hill gravel terrace, with London Clay located to the west of the site¹.
- 4.2 The site slopes downwards to Wood Street from west to east and has an average height of 32m OD.

¹ British Geological Survey, (1994)

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

5.1 PREHISTORIC – PALAEOLITHIC, MESOLITHIC AND NEOLITHIC

- 5.1.1 A Palaeolithic flint flake was found during works at 127 Essex Road, south of the site (SMR LO3010). A Neolithic barbed arrowhead was found at Farnham Avenue allotments in c. 1950, northwest of the site (SMR LO18476).
- 5.1.2 A broken flint blade and two sherds of prehistoric pottery were found during an archaeological evaluation at Orford Road, southwest of the site (SMR LO65910)².

5.2 BRONZE AGE

5.2.1 The construction of No. 2 reservoir, Chingford, in 1940 revealed several Bronze Age artefacts, including a spearhead, a flint axe, and a hexagonal oak coffin containing a small amount of human bone (SMR LO25873, LO25874 & LO25875)³.

5.3 IRON AGE

5.3.1 No Iron Age finds are recorded from within the area of the site⁴.

5.4 ROMAN

- 5.4.1 A coarse ware cooking pot and wine jar were found in 1920 at 37 Clarendon Road, southwest of the site (SMR LO10203). Works at Whipps Cross in 1933 revealed a shallow earthenware dish dating to the 2nd or 3rd centuries AD (SMR LO8058).
- 5.4.2 Two Roman building tiles were found at allotments on Forest Road c. 1953, northeast of the site (SMR LO18858). Re-used Roman building material can be seen in the fabric of the parish church of St. Mary, west of the site (SMR LO20724). A medal dedicated to 'Dius Neva Traianus' was found at Vallentin Road in 1931 (SMR LO5756)⁵.

² Pickard, (2004)

³ ibid

⁴ ibid

⁵ ibid

5.5 SAXON

5.5.1 No finds of Saxon date have been located within the area 6 .

5.6 MEDIEVAL

- 5.6.1 A 13th/14th century cooking pot was found during rebuilding works at the Monoux almshouses in 1955, west of the site (SMR LO13944). The earthworks of a small rectangular moat are marked on a 1952 Ordnance Survey plan, associated with Brookscroft Hall. It is unclear whether this feature enclosed a medieval building or the Elizabethan Brookscroft Hall (SMR LO14235). A medieval millstone was found at the site of Temple Farm in 1957, west of the site (SMR LO22709).
- 5.6.2 Medieval pottery and tile, interpreted as indicating medieval occupation in the vicinity, was found during an archaeological evaluation in 1994 at Leyton Green Road (SMR LO61485)⁷.

5.7 POST-MEDIEVAL

- 5.7.1 On Chapman and Andre's Map of Essex, 1777, Wood Street is shown as being occupied by a series of manor houses, mostly along the western side. A minor mansion house, 'Buck House', was built c. 1699-1756 on the area of the site⁸.
- 5.7.2 The 19th century transformed Walthamstow into a heavily populated and industrialised urban area. This was also directly associated with the coming of the railway, with Wood Street Station opening in 1873⁹.

⁶ Pickard, (2004)

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Hawkins, (2005)

⁹ Weinreb & Hibbert, (1993), p.946

6 METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 The excavation of three trenches was outlined in the Method Statement prepared by CgMs Consulting¹⁰. The fieldwork was designed to assess the presence or absence of significant archaeological remains, which may require further investigation.
- 6.2 All trenches were machine excavated with a 360-degree mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-bladed ditching bucket, under the supervision of an archaeologist. The maximum dimensions of the trenches are shown in Table 1. Once archaeologically sensitive deposits or features were encountered, machining was stopped to allow archaeologists to clean with hand tools as necessary and record the remains.

Trench Number	Max Dimensions (m)	Max height (m OD)
1	20.00 x 2.00	33.13
2	21.20 x 2.00	32.12
3	21.30 x 2.00	32.16

Table 1: Trench Dimensions

- 6.3 Recording was undertaken using the single context planning method. All features and deposits observed were planned and recorded onto *pro forma* context record sheets. Contexts were numbered sequentially and are shown in this report within square brackets. Plans and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate. A general photographic survey of the site and working conditions was taken.
- 6.4 A temporary benchmark with a value of 31.72m was traversed onto the site from the Ordnance Survey Benchmark of 24.28m OD, located on the north-eastern corner of 19 Oliver Road.

¹⁰ Hawkins, (2005)

7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

7.1 Phase 1 – Natural Terrace Gravels

7.1.1 The earliest deposits encountered throughout Trenches 1-3 were the natural terrace gravels, recorded as [29], [16] and [21] respectively. These contexts comprised a compact deposit of fine sand and gravel, light brownish orange in colour. In Trench 1 the natural gravel sloped downwards from west to east, with a highest level of 32.46m OD at the western end and a lowest level of 31.85m OD at the eastern end. In Trench 2 the natural gravel again sloped downwards from west to east, with a highest level of 31.20m OD at the western end and a lowest level of 30.43m OD at the eastern end. In Trench 3 the natural gravel was encountered at a height of 30.68m OD.

7.2 Phase 2 – 19th Century

- 7.2.1 Cut through the natural gravel [16] in Trench 2 was a circular, domed, brick soak away, [6]. Encountered at a level of 30.45m OD, the soakaway measured 1.55m eastwest and 1.32m north-south. The soakaway was excavated to a depth of 0.30m, 30.15m OD. The brickwork from which the soakaway was constructed was dated to the late 18th century to 1900, with it most likely dating to the middle of that range¹¹. The backfill of the soakaway, [5], and the backfill of the construction cut, [7], both contained pottery dating from the late 18th to the late 19th century¹².
- 7.2.2 Sealing the natural gravel [21] in Trench 3 was a layer of late 19th century redeposited gravel made ground [20]. Encountered at a level of 31.48m OD, it had a maximum thickness of 0.65m. Cutting through this layer of made ground was a brick drain [1]. Running north-south through the trench the drain measured 0.55m wide and 1.50m long, continuing south into the limit of excavation, and was truncated at the northern end by a large late Victorian cut [4]. The drain consisted of brickwork sides and slightly curved roof, with the base being constructed of peg tiles. The building material dated to the late 18th century to 1900, with it most likely being from the middle of that range¹³.

¹¹ Brown, J. pers comm

¹² Jarrett, C. pers comm

¹³ Brown, J. pers comm

7.3 Phase 3 – Late 19th to 20th Century

- 7.3.1 Sealing the natural terrace gravel, [29], in Trench 1 was a layer of 20th redeposited gravel made ground [28], which was sealed by 21st century made ground. These layers had a combined thickness of 0.30m, and were encountered at a level of 32.91m OD.
- 7.3.2 Truncating the brick soakaway [6] in Trench 2 was an oval brick feature [10]. Encountered at a level of 30.37m OD, it measured 1.44m east-west and 1.86m north-south and was excavated to a depth of 0.35m. The brickwork used in the construction was dated to late 19th/early 20th century¹⁴ and the inside of the feature was rendered with plaster. This oval brick feature may have represented a well or possibly a storage tank. Sealing this was a layer of redeposited gravel made ground [17], encountered at a level of 31.34m OD, which had a maximum thickness of 0.90m. A similar layer [13] was encountered at the eastern end of the trench at a level of 31.85m OD. This layer had a maximum thickness of 0.55m. Truncating layers [17] and [13] was a large modern cut associated with an interceptor tank which was encountered at surface level during the machining. The tank and its associated cut encompassed 12.30m of the eastern half of the trench. Sealing this was a layer of modern demolition material.
- 7.3.3 Truncating the brick drain [1], and continuing east in Trench 3, was a large late Victorian pit [4]. The fill contained large amounts of late Victorian pottery and bottles. Encountered at a height of 31.47m OD, it encompassed over 7m of the eastern end of the trench and continued into the eastern, northern and southern limits of excavation. The pit also extended below the 1.20m depth of the evaluation trench. Sealing the redeposited gravel layer [20] to the west of the brick drain [1] was a sequence of two layers of made ground, [26] and [22]. The highest level of these two layers was 31.47m OD and they had a combined thickness of 0.87m. Sealing the Victorian pit [4] and layers [26] and [22] was a layer of late 20th century made ground [25]. A thin layer of modern demolition material sealed this. These layers had a combined thickness of 0.67m OD and had a maximum height of 31.92m OD.

¹⁴ Brown, J. pers comm

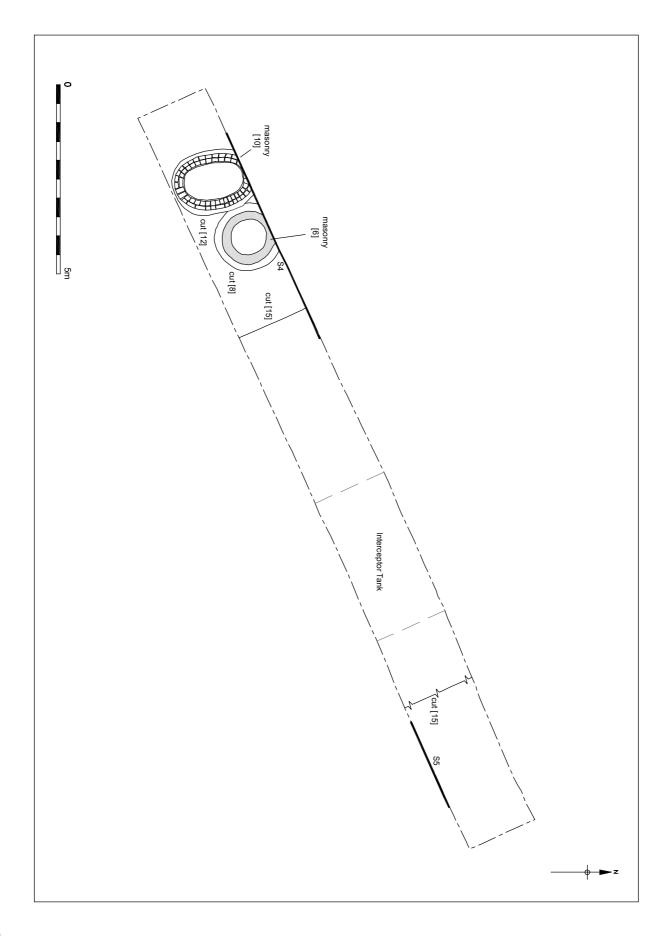
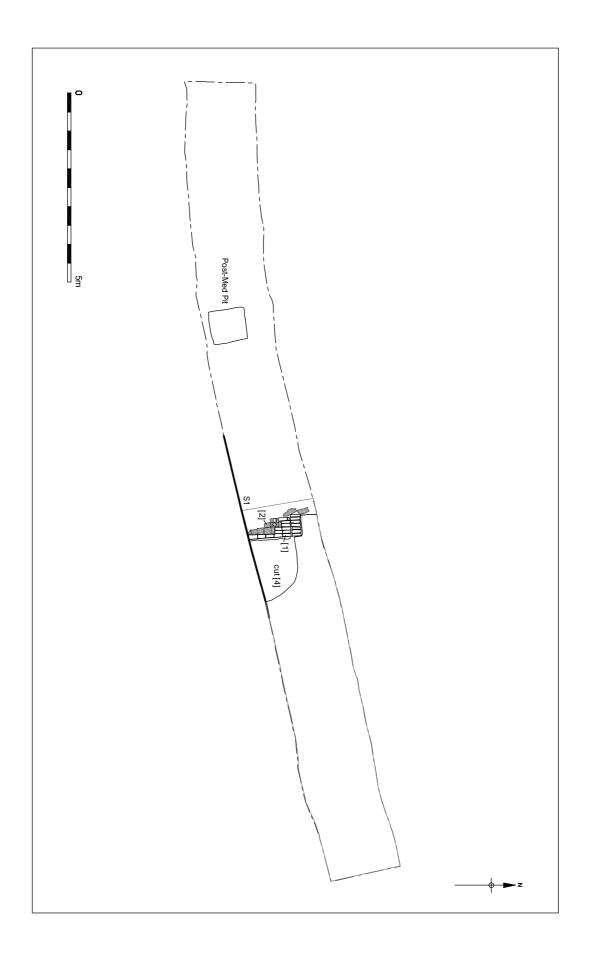


Figure 3 Trench 2 1:100



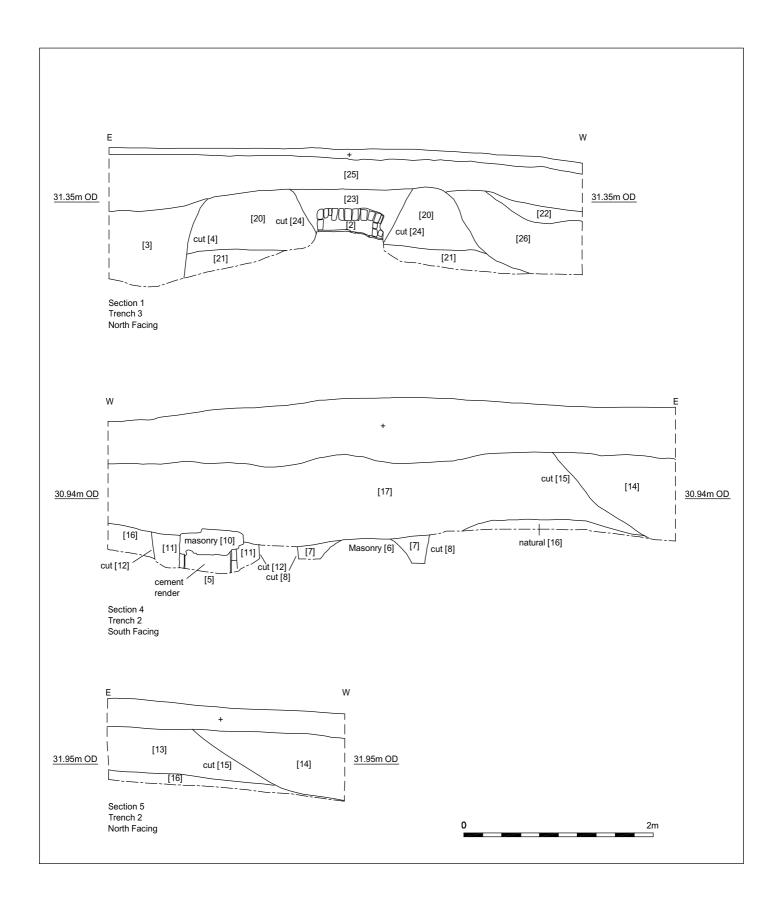


Figure 5 Sections 1, 4 and 5 1:40

8 TRENCH SUMMARY

8.1 TRENCH 1

8.1.1 Trench 1 revealed natural terrace gravel sealed by modern made ground and demolition material.

8.2 TRENCH 2

8.2.1 Trench 2 revealed natural terrace gravel truncated by a 19th century brick soakaway, which was in turn truncated by an early 20th century brick feature and made ground. An interceptor tank was also encountered at surface level, associated with the works building previously located on the site.

8.3 TRENCH 3

8.3.1 Trench 3 revealed natural terrace gravel truncated by a 19th century brick drain, made ground and a large late Victorian pit.

9 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

9.1 DISCUSSION

- 9.1.1 The evaluation revealed natural deposits in all trenches consistent with the underlying terrace gravel. Other than the later post-medieval period, no evidence for occupation was encountered within the evaluation trenches.
- 9.1.2 Trench 1 encountered no archaeological remains, with only a large modern concrete base associated with the buildings that previously occupied the site being recorded. The paucity of archaeological remains and the thin layer of modern made ground encountered imply that this eastern area of the site may have been stripped at some time in the 20th century.
- 9.1.3 Trenches 2 and 3 both encountered 19th century brick features; a drain and an oval soakaway. These features may have been contemporary and associated with one another. The later addition of a further brick feature some time during the early 20th century, which truncated the soakaway in Trench 2, implies that they were not in use for an extended period of time.

9.2 CONCLUSIONS

- 9.2.1 The evaluation encountered no evidence for the 17th/18th century minor manor house,
 'Buck House', which was thought to be located on the site.
- 9.2.2 The evaluation has shown that the western area of the site shows signs of later postmedieval occupation in the form of 19th and 20th century brick features. However, this area has seen large amounts of truncation from the various buildings that occupied the site throughout the 20th century, including a large Victorian pit and 20th century underground tanks and smaller interceptor tanks. The building of these features may have involved the stripping of the area, which appears to be the case for the eastern area of the site as illustrated in Trench 1. Therefore the area of the site has seen widespread truncation during the 20th century.

10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 10.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting Limited for commissioning the project on behalf of Fairview Homes.
- 10.2 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would also like to thank David Divers of English Heritage for monitoring the work.
- 10.3 The author would like to thank the field staff Stuart Watson, Hayley Baxter for the illustrations, Nathalie Barrett for the surveying and Tim Bradley for his project management and editing.

11 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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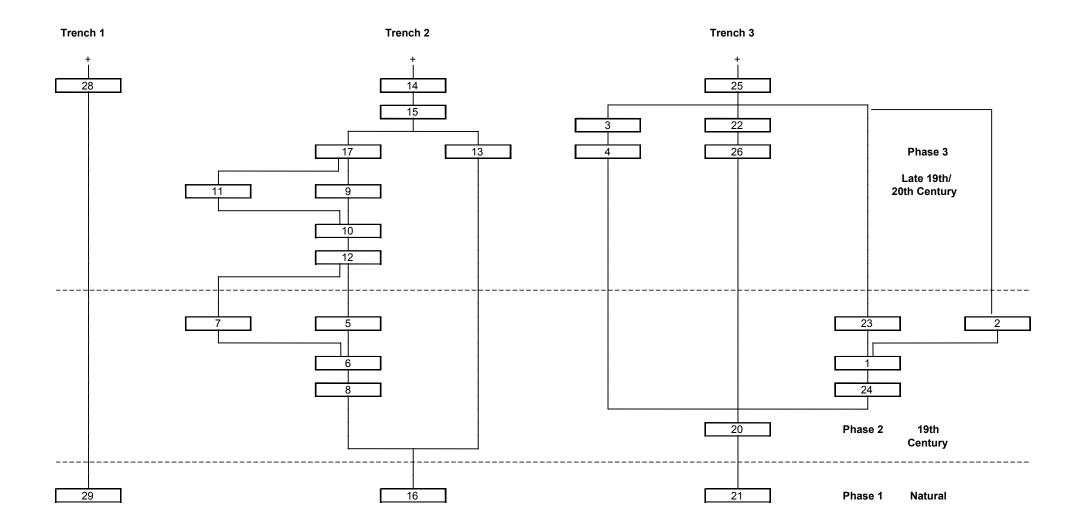
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Weinreb, B. & Hibbert, C., (1993), *The London Encyclopaedia*. Macmillan London Limitied, London

APPENDIX 1: Context Descriptions

Context No.	Туре	Trench	Phase	Description
1	Masonry	3	2	Brick Drain
2	Fill	3	2	Fill of Brick Drain
3	Fill	3	3	Fill of [4]
4	Cut	3	3	Large 19th/20th Century Pit
5	Fill	2	2	Backfill of Brick Soakaway [6]
6	Masonry	2	2	Brick Circular, Domed Soakaway
7	Fill	2	2	Backfill of Construction Cut [8]
8	Cut	2	2	Construction Cut for Brick Soakaway [6]
9	Fill	2	3	Backfill of Oval Brick Feature [10]
10	Masonry	2	3	Oval Brickwork, Pos. Soakaway
11	Fill	2	3	Backfill of Construction Cut [12]
12	Cut	2	3	Construction Cut for Brick Feature [10]
13	Layer	2	3	Redeposited Gravel Made Ground
14	Fill	2	3	Fill of [15]
15	Cut	2	3	Modern Cut associated with Interceptor Tank
16	Natural	2	1	Natural Terrace Gravel
17	Layer	2	3	Redeposited Gravel Made Ground
18	VOID			
19	VOID			
20	Layer	3	2	Redeposited Gravel Made Ground
21	Natural	3	1	Natural Terrace Gravel
22	Layer	3	3	Made Ground
23	Fill	3	2	Backfill of Construction Cut [24]
24	Cut	3	2	Construction Cut for Brick Drain [1]
25	Layer	3	3	Made Ground
26	Layer	3	3	Made Ground
27	VOID			
28	Layer	1	3	Redeposited Gravel Made Ground
29	Natural	1	1	Natural Terrace Gravel

APPENDIX 2: SITE MATRIX



APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

Project details

Project name	257-273 Wood Street, Walthamstow
Short description of the project	An Archaeological Evaluation at 257-273 Wood Street, Walthamstow consisting of 3 trenches which revealed natural gravel truncated by 18th/19th century brick soakaway and drain and 20th made ground
Project dates	Start: 15-08-2005 End: 18-08-2005
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	WFW 05 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 1 - Industrial
Monument type	SOAKAWAY Post Medieval
Monument type	DRAIN Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	'Targeted Trenches'
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Position in the Not known / Not recorded planning process

Project location			
Country	England		
Site location	GREATER LONDON WALTHAM FOREST WALTHAMSTOW 257-273 Wood Street, Walthamstow		
Postcode	E17		
Study area	2400.00 Square metres		
National grid reference	TQ 3870 8911 Point		
Height OD	Min: 30.43m Max: 32.46m		

Project creators Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project brief originator	CgMs Consultants Ltd
Project design originator	CgMs Consultants Ltd
Project director/manager	Tim Bradley
Project supervisor	Neil Hawkins
Sponsor or	Fairview New Homes Ltd.

funding body

Project archives Physical Archive recipient	LAARC
Physical Contents	'Ceramics','Glass'
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Media available	'Database','Survey','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Correspondence','Diary','Drawing','Map','Matrices', 'Photograph','Plan', 'Report','Section','Survey ','Unpublished Text','Unspecified Archive'
Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An Archaeological Evaluation at 257-273 Wood Street, Walthamstow, E17
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Hawkins, N.
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Entered by Neil Hawkins (nhawkins@pre-construct.com)

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