

**Channel Tunnel Rail Link  
Union Railways (South) Ltd**

**Project Area 330**

**BREWERS GATE  
ARC BG 98**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION  
INTERIM REPORT**

**Contract S/300/0052 P381**

**MUSEUM OF LONDON**

**Museum of London Archaeology Service**

**September 1999**

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INTERIM REPORT**

Prepared by:
Date:
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Position:
Date:

**Contract S/300/0052 P381**

**Museum of London Archaeology Service  
87 Queen Victoria Street  
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**September 1999**

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Museum of London Archaeology service (MoLAS) was commissioned by Union Railways (South) Limited (URS) to undertake detailed archaeological investigations at Brewers Gate, Cobham Park, Cobham, west of Rochester, Kent, in 1998 (Figure 1). This work formed part of an extensive programme of archaeological investigation carried out in advance of construction of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL).
- 1.2 The site measured approximately 17m by 17m. The centre of the site was approximately at URL grid point 48350 49585 (Figure 2), corresponding to Ordnance Survey national grid reference (NGR) TQ 6836 6958. The area of the site was about 280 sq m, and the ground was level.
- 1.3 The method of investigation was specified as locating the position of the lodge of Brewers Gate, by use of maps and trial trenches, and then removing the minimum of topsoil and any other overburden to expose the full extent of the structure in plan. This was in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation detailing the scope and methods of work, prepared by URL and agreed with English Heritage and the local authority. Work was undertaken in September 1998.
- Background*
- 1.4 The solid geology of the area consists of the Upper Chalk of the North Downs, overlain by Pleistocene deposits of clay-with-flints and local pockets of colluvium. The site lies on the dip-slope of the Downs, on the southern side of a dry valley running eastwards to the River Medway.
- 1.5 A preliminary desk-top assessment conducted for URL by Oxford Archaeological Unit (1994) identified the site as having possible archaeological interest. This was the site of a building identified as the lodge of Brewers Gate, one of the entrances to Cobham Park. The park is a registered historic park or garden, and this building was erected c 1800 and demolished in the 1960s (URL 1994, vol 1, 107–113; vol 2, map 3017; vol 3, gazetteer 1978; vol 4, B22–4, figs B9–11). The site lay immediately to the south of Watling Street, the original road between London and Dover, superseded in the 20th century by the present A2, situated a little further to the north. The site was occupied by a car park with a cinder surface and surrounded by young trees beyond a tall, iron-barred deer fence. A public footpath ran southwards from Watling Street along the eastern edge of the site.
- 1.6 No evaluation or other previous archaeological work had been undertaken with respect to this site, except for map research by MoLAS to determine the number and character of successive phases of the building.

## 2 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

### 2.1 Periods Represented

#### *Post-medieval (AD 1500 to the present)*

- 2.1.1 The foundations and lowest courses of a small building could be dated as post-medieval by reason of the type of bricks and other materials used, the method of construction and the plan. Post-medieval stone and glass bottles and pottery were also found in association with these remains.

### 2.2 Feature Types

#### *Building (identified as the gate lodge at Brewers Gate, Cobham Park)*

- 2.2.1 The foundations of a small building contained the following components:

- a ground-floor room to the east with a bow-fronted east wall, and external doors to the south-east and possibly to the north; this communicated to the west with –
- a room to the west with a large fireplace in its east wall, and smaller rooms to the north (privies?);
- a cellar under the eastern room, subsequently filled with rubble (not excavated);
- provision for piped water supply, drains, a garden and garden path to the south and concrete render on the external wall face to the north and west.

The materials used were almost all brick. There were signs of repair or modification, but no clear indication of an earlier plan than that visible (dated on documentary grounds to about 1900).

#### *Presumed gateway*

- 2.2.2 Immediately adjoining the lodge to its east were the foundations of a substantial brick pier, identified as the west side of a gateway served by the lodge. Well compacted pebbles to the east formed the ground surface, overlain by very little topsoil, and this is interpreted as the drive from the road to the house. The lodge, gate and drive were orientated slightly west of south, so that the drive would have swept westwards and southwards from this point, with a slight slope down from north to south.

### 2.3 Artefactual Remains

#### *Pottery*

- 2.3.1 Fragments of a 19th-century stoneware beer bottle (probably from a brewery in the Old Kent Road, London), and a piece from the base of a moulded object, probably a jardinière, in a white fabric with brown glaze, also 19th-century, probably Doulton, in Lambeth.

### 2.4 Palaeo-environmental and Economic Evidence

- 2.4.1 The method of work excluded this evidence, and no suitable material was found.

### **3 FIELDWORK EVENT AIMS**

3.1 The primary excavation aims were:

- to locate the lodge at Brewers Gate,
- to expose enough to reveal the full extent of the building in plan and understand its successive phases of construction,
- to record the remains so exposed.

3.2 Provisional results of the excavation indicate that these aims were fulfilled entirely, except that not much, if anything, survived of the earlier phases of the building.

## 4 SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL

4.1 This site lies in the ‘landscape zone’ of the North Downs (also called ‘the A2 corridor’). The potential of this site towards answering the research aims of the archaeological component of the CTRL can be considered under the following heading, taken from the CTRL *Archaeological Research Strategy*:

- recent landscapes (AD 1700–1945).

### 4.2 Recent landscapes (AD 1700–1945)

4.2.1 The position of this entrance to Cobham Park, and approach to Cobham House, clearly depends on the existence of a major west–east road here, Watling Street.

4.2.2 This building is a pointer to the character of a designed landscape of the 18th and 19th centuries. The orientation and setting of the building are important to the replanning of Cobham Park by Humphry Repton (documented *c* 1790). Previously the entrance to the park here was by a gate apparently on this site, but the approach from the gate to the house was by a straight drive. This drive was the most northerly of several avenues radiating symmetrically from the west front of the house, in a plan typical of the late 17th and 18th centuries. Repton’s plan replaced this straight approach with a less formal, more naturalistic curve to the west, the previous avenue being incorporated in earthworks to its east. A public footpath runs at present along the line of the drive, through the site of the gate. Did this right of way exist in Repton’s time? If so does it partly explain why a gate lodge was built, incorporating a dwelling and providing constant supervision of the park entrance?

4.2.3 The lodge is documented as having been rebuilt in about 1900, and its latest plan can be analysed as a service building of that date. Both lodge and gate were demolished in the 1960s.

4.2.4 All the potential contributions of the results of the excavation of this site to the research aims above are of local, and no wider, importance.

4.2.5 The pottery confirms the 19th-century date and character of the lodge and is not worth further work.

## **5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This interim report was prepared by the site supervisor, Andrew Westman, with the help of Lynn Blackmore (post-medieval pottery) and Kieron Tyler (map research).

## **6 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

URL (Union Railways Limited), 1994 *Channel Tunnel Rail Link, Assessment of Historic and Cultural Effects, Final Report*, Oxford Archaeological Unit

URL, 1998 *Agreement for the provision of archaeological investigations at Pepper Hill to the River Medway (package 381)*



## APPENDIX 1 - ARCHIVE INDEX

ITEM	NUMBER OF ITEMS	NUMBER OF FRAGMENTS	CONDITION (No. of items) (W=washed; UW=unwashed; M=marked; P=processed; UP=unprocessed; D=digitised; I=indexed)
Contexts records	11		
A1 plans			D
A4 plans	1		D
A1 sections			
A4 sections			
Small finds (boxes)			
Films (monochrome) S=slide; PR=print			
Films (Colour) S=slide; PR=print	1PR (+ second set)		
Flint (boxes)			
Pottery (boxes)	1 standard		UW
Fired clay (boxes)			
CBM (boxes)			
Stone (boxes)			
Metalwork (boxes)			
Glass (boxes)			
Slag (boxes)			
Human Bone (boxes)			
Animal Bone (boxes)			
Soil Samples (No.)			
Soil Samples (bags/tubs)			
Soil Samples (Monolith/kubina tin)			

## Key to Box Sizes

Standard box: 0.46m x 0.18m x 0.13m
Large box: 0.46m x 0.27m x 0.25m
Tub: 0.31m x 0.31m x 0.16m

## **APPENDIX 2: INTERIM SUMMARY REPORT**

As part of a larger programme of archaeological investigation along the route of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, Union Railways (South) Limited (URS) commissioned the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS) to undertake an archaeological excavation at Brewers Gate, Cobham Park, Cobham, Kent (ARC BG 98). Map research and the excavation took place in September 1998. The site was situated on the southern side of Watling Street, itself situated to the south of the A2 at Cobham. The site was identified from map evidence as being the location of the gate lodge at one of the main entrances to the park, built c 1800 to a design by John Repton, son of Humphry Repton, who had redesigned and relandscaped the park c 1790. The excavation located the gate lodge and identified it as a 19th-century rebuild, nothing earlier surviving. The west side of the gate itself and part of the metalled drive were also found immediately adjoining the lodge to the east.

## APPENDIX 3: KENT SMR RECORD SHEET

<b>Site Name:</b> Brewers Gate, Cobham Park, Area 330, Kent			
<b>Site code:</b> ARC BG 98			
<b>Summary:</b> A limited excavation of the site of the gate lodge at Brewers Gate, Cobham Park, Cobham, west of Rochester, Kent, was commissioned by Union Railways (South) Limited and carried out by the Museum of London Archaeology Service in September 1998.			
<b>District:</b> Gravesham		<b>Parish:</b> Cobham CP	
<b>Period(s):</b> 1. Post-medieval			
NGR to centre of site:		NGR 100km square: TQ	
NGR Easting 6836		NGR Northing 6958	
<b>Type of Recording:</b>			
<del>Evaluation</del>		<del>Watching-Brief</del>	
<del>(Delete)</del>		<del>Field-Walking</del>	
Excavation		Geophysical Survey	
		Measured Survey	
<b>Date of Recording: (From)</b> 21 September 1998 <b>(To)</b> 28 September 1998			
<b>Unit Undertaking Recording:</b> Museum of London Archaeology Service, Walker House, 87 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4V 4AB			
<b>Summary of Field Results:</b> The brick foundations of a presumed rebuild of the gate lodge (documented <i>c</i> 1900), with a cellar, privies and a garden, were found and recorded. There was no sign of an earlier phase of construction (the lodge being documented as built <i>c</i> 1800 in connection with the redesign of Cobham Park by Humphry Repton). The west side of the gateway and a metalled drive were found immediately adjoining the gate lodge to the east. The building and gate were demolished <i>c</i> 1960.			
<b>Location of Archive/Finds:</b> MoLAS Temporarily			
<b>Bibliography:</b> URL, 1994 <i>Channel Tunnel Rail Link, Assessment of Historic and Cultural Effects, Final Report</i> , Oxford Archaeological Unit  URL, 1999 <i>Brewers Gate (ARC BG 98), archaeological excavation, interim report</i> , Museum of London Archaeology Service			
<b>Summary Compiler:</b> Andrew Westman			<b>Date:</b> 23 July 1999