



Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment of 217 Balham High Road, Borough of Wandsworth

February 2013

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This archaeological desk-based assessment has been carried out by West Sussex Archaeology Ltd. on No. 217 Balham High Road. Rutherford House School are looking to apply for planning permission to convert the existing building into a free school. This assessment indicates that the site may contain remains associated with Roman Stane Street and a 19th century suburban villa. Its association with the Roman road has led Wandsworth Borough Council to include the front part of the site within an Archaeological Priority Area. It is recommended that the most appropriate mitigation method relating to the proposed development would be for an archaeological watching brief, although, depending upon the final agreed details of its scale, this approach could be added to or replaced by small-scale pre-determination archaeological evaluation.

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PROJECT BACKGROUND

Site location, topography & geology

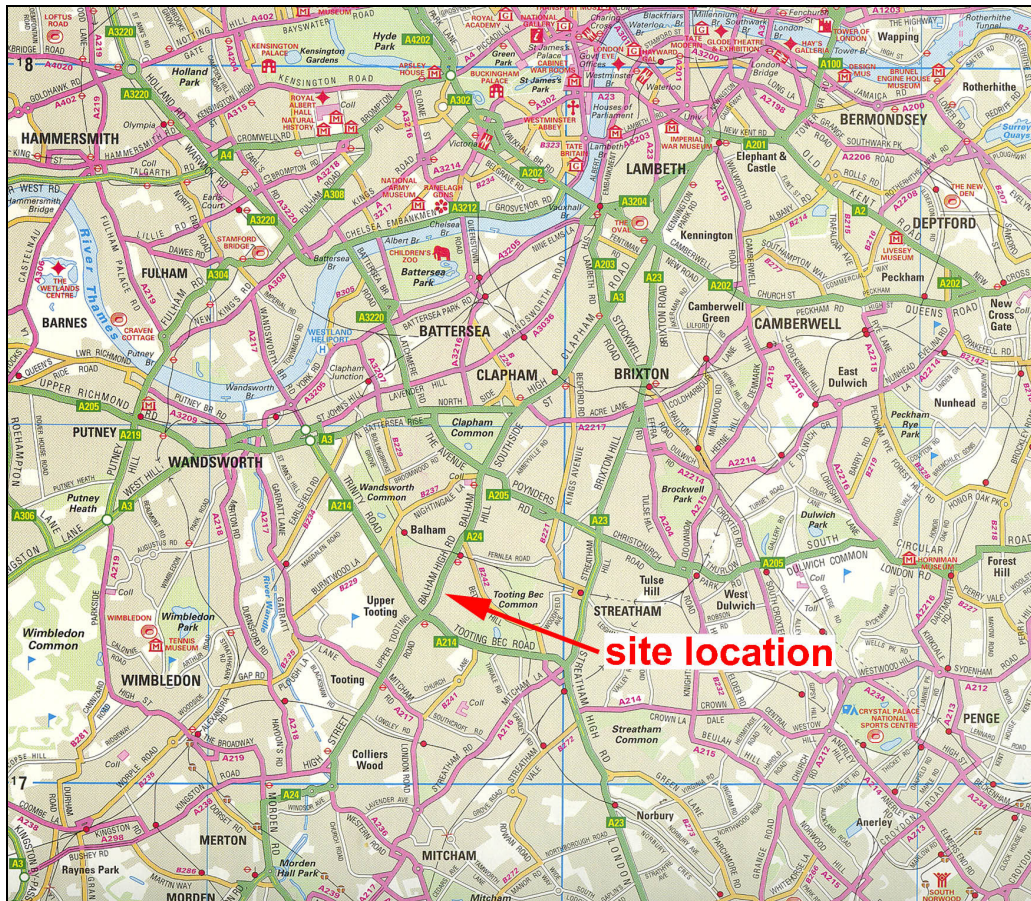


Figure 1 Site location. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. License number: AL100036068

1. No. 217 lies on the east side of Balham High Road within Bedford Ward in the London Borough of Wandsworth (Fig.1). It is located at a height of 25m aOD and is centred at OS grid reference TQ 28295 72740. It is bounded on the west by Balham High Road, to the north by no.215 Balham High Road, on the east by the gardens of nos. 19-25 Fox Bourne, and to the south by an Esso/Tesco Express filling station and the gardens of nos. 1-10 Brook Close. The underlying geology of the site is Boyn Hill Gravel on London Clay.

Planning background



Figure 2 Plan of the site, with the bounds outlined in red. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. License number: AL100036068

1. Rutherford House School are looking to apply for planning permission to convert what was once Balham Magistrate's Court into a free school. In order to inform both themselves and the Local Planning Authority of any potential archaeological issues relating to the development of the site they have commissioned West Sussex Archaeology Ltd. to carry out this Desk-Based Assessment. This follows current planning guidance relating to the historic environment as set out at national, regional and local level.

2. At a national level the relevant planning guidance relating to the historic environment is set out in paras. 126-141 of the Department for Communities and Local Government's National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012). With particular relevance to this assessment paras. 128 & 141 state that:

"128 In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation".

"141 Local planning authorities should make information about the significance of the historic environment gathered as part of plan-making or development management publicly accessible. They should also require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted".

3. At a regional level the relevant planning guidance relating to the historic environment is set out in policy 7.8 (Heritage Assets and Archaeology) of the Greater London Authority's The London Plan: Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London (GLA 2011). With particular relevance to this assessment paras. B, E & 7.32 state that:

"B Development should incorporate measures that identify, record, interpret, protect and, where appropriate, present the site's archaeology".

"E New development should make provision for the protection of archaeological resources, landscapes and significant memorials. The physical assets should, where possible, be made available to the public on-site. Where the archaeological asset or memorial cannot be preserved or managed on-site, provision must be made for the investigation, understanding, recording, dissemination and archiving of that asset".

“7.32 Every opportunity to bring the story of London to people and ensure the accessibility and good maintenance of London’s heritage should be exploited. In particular, where new development uncovers an archaeological site or memorial, these should be preserved and managed on-site. Where this is not possible provision should be made for the investigation, understanding, dissemination and archiving of that asset”.

4. At a local level the relevant planning guidance relating to the historic environment is set out in paras. 2.17-2.29 & Policy DMS 2 of Wandsworth Borough Council’s Wandsworth Local Development Framework: Development Management Policies Document (WBC 2012). With particular relevance to this assessment para. 2.28 and Policy DMS 2 para. d. state that:

“2.28 All applications affecting a heritage asset or its setting must be accompanied by a Design & Access Statement which includes a Statement of Heritage Significance and Assessment of Impact on the Heritage. This shall be proportionate in detail to the value of the asset affected and the impact of the proposal. The Statement of Significance and Assessment of Impact should be carried out by a specialist historic environment consultant where applications involve substantial change or demolition of a heritage asset or new buildings which may impact on a heritage asset. Heritage assets included in this policy include: Listed buildings (designated HA) Locally listed buildings (undesignated HA) Buildings in conservation areas (designated HA) War memorials (undesignated or designated HA) Historic parks and gardens (designated HA) Locally registered parks and gardens (undesignated HA) Scheduled ancient monuments (designated HA) Archaeological Priority Areas (designated HA) Any other building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance warranting consideration in planning decisions (undesignated HA)”.

“Policy DMS 2 d. Proposals for development involving ground disturbance in Archaeological Priority Areas (as identified on the proposals map), will need to be assessed and may be required to be accompanied by an archaeological evaluation report. The recording and publication of results will be required and in appropriate cases, the Council may also require preservation in situ, or excavation”.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES & METHODOLOGY

1. The purpose of this assessment is to first assess the likelihood of archaeological remains surviving within the site which could be damaged or destroyed by development, second to comment upon the importance of any remains and third to suggest possible mitigation methods to preserve and/or record these remains.
2. The following sources were consulted for the vicinity of the development site:
 - Greater London Historic Environment Record (GLHER), all records with a search area of 500m north-south and 200m east-west of the site
 - Wandsworth Heritage Service: all historic maps and documentary records relating to the site
 - Wandsworth Historical Society: response to e-mail enquiry - no relevant material known
 - The National Heritage List for England (English Heritage): no additional records to GLHER information
 - Wandsworth Borough Council records: no response to request for information relating to construction of the current Magistrates Court
 - Ministry of Justice records: no response to request for information relating to construction of current Magistrates Court
 - Victoria County History for Surrey
 - The Archaeology Of Greater London: An Assessment of Archaeological Evidence for Human Presence in the area now covered by Greater London: no relevant information
 - No aerial photographs were consulted for this assessment due to the built-up nature of the site since before the 20th century

RESULTS

Statutory Designations

1. There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the curtilage of the site, the nearest being the Augustinian Priory of St Mary at Merton c.3km to the south-west (SAM No. LO151).
2. There are no registered parks and gardens within the curtilage of the site, the nearest being Springfield Hospital (Parks & Gardens no. 5080), c.1km to the west, which is comprised of the grounds of an early county lunatic asylum, opened in 1841, which was extended and remodelled during the later C19.
3. There are no Listed Buildings within the curtilage of the site, however five, all Grade II, are located within the GLHER search area (see p.10 below).
4. The site does not lie within a Conservation Area, the nearest being the Heaver Estate Conservation Area (ID14), whose boundary lies to the rear of the properties fronting the north side of Ritherdon Road (shaded in blue in Fig.3). The Estate was built by the developer Alfred Heaver between c.1890 – 1910 in Queen Anne style (Wandsworth Council, p.8).
5. There are no Tree Preservation Orders on any of the trees within the curtilage of the site. The nearest lying to the rear of 205 Balham High Road to the north and 268 Balham High Road to the south-west.
6. The front portion of No.217, to the west of the existing Court buildings, lies within an Archaeological Priority Area, as identified on the proposals map appended to Wandsworth Borough Council's Local Development Framework (WBC 2012). This Archaeological Priority Area encompasses the Roman road of Stane Street, together with a margin extending to its east and west (shaded in red in Fig.3). Balham High Road follows the line of Stane Street, which linked Chichester to London in Roman times.
7. There is no record of any WWII bombs landing in the immediate vicinity of the site or of any bomb damage. The nearest effected buildings are nos. 2 -24 Ritherdon Road, c.100m to the south (London Topographical Society, Map 125).

2. These include five Grade II listed buildings:

- **Balham Station** (GLHER No. MLO93822), a northern line station designed by Charles Holden and built in 1926
- **Church of St. Mary** (GLHER No. MLO93777) built c.1806, with later additions and alterations
- **Mansbridge House** (GLHER No. MLO93766), No.207 Balham High Road, a symmetrical 3-bay stucco house of 2-storeys built c.1825



Figure 2 Hamilton Hall, No.211 Balham High Road

- **Hamilton Hall** (GLHER No. MLO93881), 211 Balham High Road, a symmetrical 3-bay stucco house of 2-storeys built c.1825
- **Convent School of St. Austin** (GLHER No. MLO93812), 21 Tooting Bec Road, a late 18th Century three storey building with some 16th Century internal features and later alterations

3. The remaining five records relate to archaeological interventions

- **6 Balham Park Road** (GLHER No. ELO1104). An archaeological evaluation carried out in 2002 by Sutton Archaeological Services. It consisted of one trench, 10m x 2m; nothing of any archaeological significance was found, the underlying geology was river terrace gravel (SAS 2002)
- **197 Balham High Road** (GLHER No. ELO6723). A desk-based assessment followed by an archaeological evaluation carried out in 2005/6 by Pre-Construct Archaeology. The evaluation consisted of

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two trenches, 3m x 1.8m & 14m x 1.8m; a 19th century brick culvert was found, the underlying geology was gravel lying 2m below current ground level (PCA 2005 & 2006)

- **260 Balham High Road** (GLHER No. ELO2730). An archaeological evaluation carried out in 1998 by AOC. It consisted of two trenches, 10m x 1.65m; nothing of any archaeological significance was found (AOC 1998)
- **219-221 Balham High Road** (GLHER No. ELO2796). A desk-based assessment followed by an archaeological evaluation carried out in 1997 by Lawson-Price Environmental and the Museum of London Archaeology Service respectively. The evaluation consisted of three trenches, 10m x 3m; a brick culvert was found together with a shallow pit containing c.AD1700 pottery, the underlying geology was gravel lying c.1.2m below current ground level (Lawson Price Environmental 1997 & MOLAS 1997)
- **278-280 Balham High Road** (GLHER No. ELO8476). A desk-based assessment was undertaken in 2002 by CgMs Consulting (CgMs).

Historic Mapping (all viewed at Wandsworth Heritage Service)



Figure 5 Extract from a map of 1729 by Thomas Browne

1. A copy of a map of 1729 by Thomas Browne for Wriothesley Russell, Duke of Bedford, depicts the manor of Tooting Bec. The two hamlets of Balham and Upper Tooting are marked, with the area in between, along either side of Stane Street, being fields. The greater part of No.217 Balham High Road lies within a field named “Great Holloway Mead”, while its eastern end sits within “Nearer Gravelly Field”. The former name “Mead” (meadow) probably results from the fact that the field lay alongside the Falcon Brook to the south, while the latter name presumably refers to the underlying geology of the Boyn Hill gravels.



Figure 6 Extract from a map of 1741-5 by John Rocque

2. John Rocque's map of 1741-5 indicates a broadly similar picture to that on the 1729 map, with the land between Balham (or Ballam) and Upper Tooting given over to fields either side of Stane Street. However, while the overall block of fields is broadly as shown earlier, the shape and arrangement of the individual fields is considerably altered. It would seem unlikely that such a dramatic change has actually occurred in the space of no more than 15 years, therefore it must be concluded that Rocque's fields are illustrative rather than accurate.



Figure 7 Extract from the Tithe map of 1840

3. The next map at a sufficiently detailed scale is the Tithe Map of 1840. This shows the position of the new housing built c.1825. No.217 is one of seven identical properties, of which Mansbridge House and Hamilton Hall/House are surviving examples. The map also appears to show a stream running along the backs of the new housing and discharging into the Falcon Brook, which then runs away to the south-east (this feature is confirmed as a stream by being coloured blue on a map of 1843 <http://www.bonhams.com/auctions/13812/lot/305/>).



Figure 8 Extract from Stanford's map of 1862

4. Stanford's map of 1862 shows the situation relatively unchanged. The site is named "Davertry House", a name which it retained at least until 1939 when the house was turned into a Police Court. The Stanford map lacks the accuracy of the Tithe and later OS editions, most obviously in incorrectly indicating the number and dimensions of the house plots along the east side of Balham High Road.

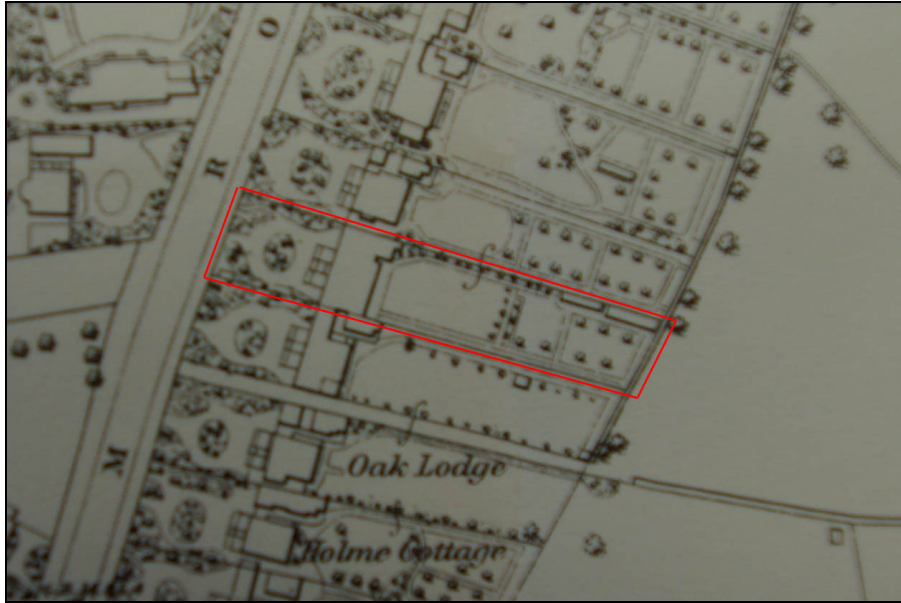


Figure 9 Extract from the 1872 OS 1:2500map

5. The Ordnance Survey 1872 1:2500 edition provides more detail of the internal layout of No.217. At the front the house has a circular drive, centred around a central planted bed. To the rear the garden is divided into three compartments by paths, that closest to the house probably laid as lawn, while the other two contain some trees. Against the north wall towards the rear of the garden are two long narrow buildings, probably garden sheds or stores.

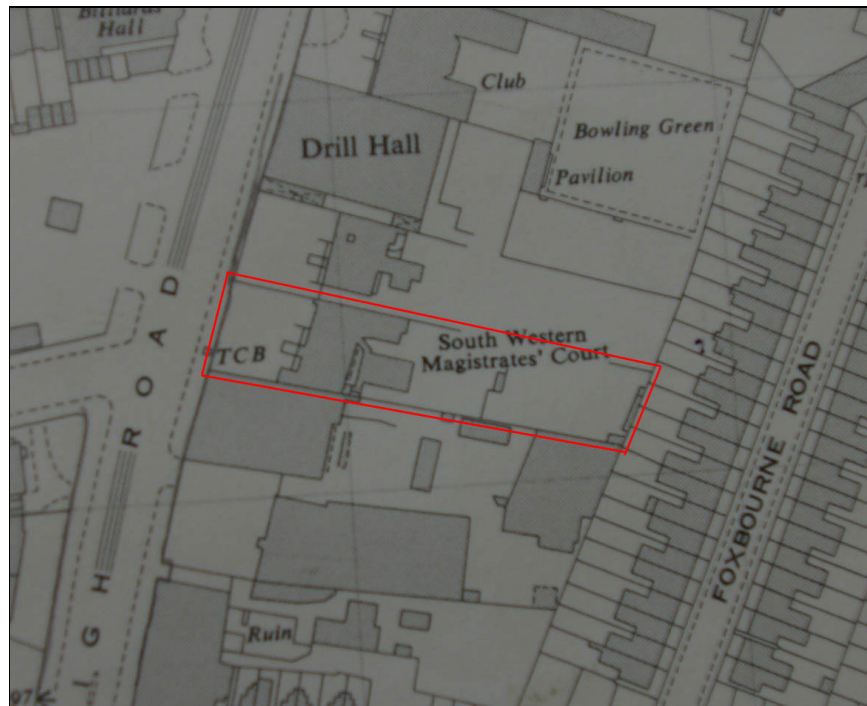


Figure 10 Extract from the 1950 OS 1:2500map

6. The situation shown on the 1872 edition does not change to any marked degree until the 1950 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 edition, by which time No.217 has become the Police Court. This new use has resulted in a reconfiguration of the rear garden, with a building added adjacent to the house and a number of small structures further to the east, including a wall dividing the backplot into two. The stream to the rear of the property has also disappeared, probably having been channelled into a below ground culvert.
7. A number of additional maps were viewed, but the scale at which they were drawn did not shown sufficient detail to add to information gleaned from those described above. These maps included: T. Bowles' Map containing Towns etc. 20 miles round London (1730); Bary's map of Country 15 miles round London (1786); W. Faden's map of London and 25 miles around (1802); Froggett's Map of country 30 miles round London (1840); J. Wyld's Atlas of London and environs (1843); B.R. Davies' map of London and its environs (1847) and Paterson's map of 24 miles round London (1809).

Photographs



Figure 31 Broxash, No.215 Balham High Road

1. Only one historic photograph of relevance was seen during the course of this assessment, and it shows No.215 Balham High Road c.1911, prior to its demolition (Loobey, p.65). This was the neighbouring

property to No.217. The close similarity between this building and Hamilton Hall (see Fig.7) is immediately apparent, confirming the evidence of the historic mapping that this row of houses, including No.217, were all built of a pattern.

Documentary Sources

1. The Victoria County History records that: Balham was historically part of the parish of Streatham. This parish included a number of separate medieval manors of which the area around No.217 would appear to have lain within that named Tooting Bec. This is confirmed by the 1729 map of the lands of the manor of Tooting Bec (see Fig. 5). Tooting Bec consisted originally of two separate estates, described in the Domesday Survey as in Tooting and Streatham, and held, one by Estarcher, the other by Erding, of Edward the Confessor. Both came afterwards to Richard de Tonbridge, lord of Clare, by whom they had been granted before 1086 to the abbey of Bec Hellouin in Normandy. Tooting Bec was to remain with the Abbey of Bec until c.1440 when it was amongst the lands of the alien priories seized by the Crown. For much of the next one hundred years it formed part of the grants of lands to the gild of St.Mary in Allhallows Church, Barking for the maintenance of a chantry. In the mid 16th century it once again was seized by the Crown and then came into the possession of the Pakenham family (16th century), the Howlands (17th century), the Duke of Bedford (18th century) and the Borradailes (19th century), until in 1873 the manor, as a legal entity, was absorbed into local government control (VCH, pps. 92-102).
2. It was in the 1770's that the pattern of development was to start, initially on Balham Hill, which was to turn Balham from a village into a suburb of London (Gower, p.10). In 1825 this extended for the first time to the south of the later underground station when Richardson Borradiale built sixteen villas along the east side of Stane Street (Gower, p.14). It is these villas, including No.217, which appear on the 1840 Tithe Map (see Fig.7). No.217 was to remain a private house until 1939, when in the London Gazette of 10th February of that year it is recorded that it became a Police Court (<http://www.london-gazette.co.uk/issues/34597/pages/934/page.pdf>), and later the Magistrates Court when re-built in the 1960's/1970's. It closed in December 2011.

Site Visit

1. A site visit was made on 11th February 2013. The plot of No.217 is divided into three parts: to the west, and fronting onto Balham High Road, is an area of tarmac, paving and grass (see Fig.12); the central area is filled with the current Court building, which is 6 storeys high (with a basement) at the front and 2 storeys to the rear (see Figs.13 7 14); to the east the remainder of the plot is entirely filled by tarmac (see Fig. 15).



Figure 42 View of the front part of No.217, looking west from the roof.



Figure 5 View of the front of No.217, looking north-west across Balham High Road. No.217 is the plot immediately to the north of the Esso sign



Figure 64 View of the rear of No.217, looking west from the back of the plot.

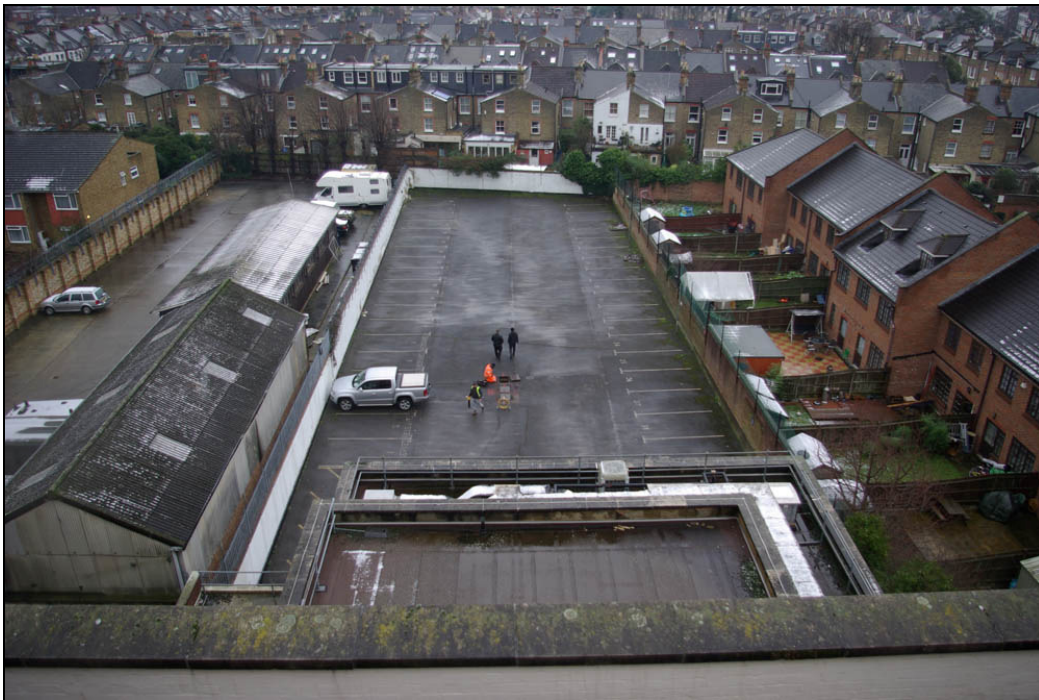


Figure 75 View eastwards from the roof of the No.217.

2. The site visit coincided with undertaking of geotechnical test pits which permitted a measurement of the depth of the underlying geology. In the one available test pit, at the rear of the Court, the depth of Boyn Hill Gravel was found to be 0.75m below the current ground surface.

SYNTHESIS

1. This period synthesis of the site deals only with the known archaeological remains. It should be stated that it is entirely possible that significant archaeological remains, dating to any period, may lie within the bounds of the site, for which no evidence currently exists.

Roman

1. The presumed line of Roman Stane Street runs along Balham High Road, passing immediately in front of No.217. It is probable that the road was flanked with drainage ditches, but the width of the Roman road is not known, nor is the distance from the road to its side ditches. However it is possible that the eastern ditch lies within the plot of No.217. Should evidence for the road or its ditches lie within the site, it would not only provide valuable confirmation of the alignment of Stane Street, but also potentially of its use and character.
2. Roman roads are also often the foci for contemporary or later settlement. It is therefore possible that remains associated with such settlement may lie within the bounds on the site.

Modern

1. There is no evidence for any activity on the site, aside from its inclusion within agricultural fields, until the first half of the 19th century, when Richardson Borradiale built one of his row of sixteen villas on the plot. Two survivals of these villas still exist on Balham High Road, namely Mansbridge House and Hamilton Hall, both of which would appear to have been exact matches of that at No.217. The latter was demolished in the 1960's or 1970's to make way for the current Magistrate's Court. It is probable that little or nothing remains of the 19th century building due to the building works associated with its replacement, including a basement. However some evidence may remain under the rear tarmac for the two garden buildings shown on the 1st edition OS (see Fig.9).

STATEMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

1. The site has a **medium** potential for the archaeological remains relating to Roman Stane Street, in particular the eastern of its side ditches, and for the remains of 19th century garden buildings.
2. The site has a **low** potential for archaeological deposits relating to Roman or later settlement associated with Stane Street and for deposits relating to the 19th century villa which once stood on the site.
3. The development will have no impact upon the setting of any designated heritage assets.

PROPOSED MITIGATION METHODS

1. The current design of the development, in particular with reference to the re-landscaping of the front and rear areas, is still to be determined. It seems probable at the time of writing that any new construction works will be within the footprint of the current building, but some alteration to surface treatments is likely elsewhere.
2. Taking into consideration the likely small-scale of any below ground works associated with this development, together with the limited, but real, potential for significant archaeological remains, it is recommended that an archaeological watching brief, maintained over any ground-works is the most appropriate method of mitigation. However, depending upon the final agreed details of the development's scale, this approach could be added to or replaced by small-scale pre-determination archaeological evaluation.

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