

Greenwich Park, Royal Borough of Greenwich: An Archaeological Watching Brief Report

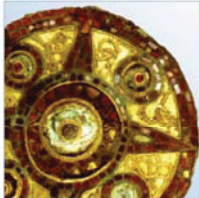
Planning Reference: N/A

National Grid Reference Number: TQ 3884 7754

AOC Project No: 32117

Site Code: TGP 12

Date: March 2012



ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

Greenwich Park, Royal Borough of Greenwich: An Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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National Grid Reference (NGR): TQ 3884 7754

AOC Project No: 32117

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Date of Fieldwork: 1st March 2012

Date of Report: March 2012

This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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Date: March 2012

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Date: March 2012

Draft/Final Report Stage: Draft

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Non-Technical Summary

On the 29th February 2012 AOC Archaeology Group undertook a watching brief in Greenwich Park, Royal Borough of Greenwich. The watching brief was commissioned by Mott MacDonald on behalf of Thames Water. The work comprised the recording of an investigation pit, targeted on an existing water pipe.

Natural sands and gravels were observed at a height of 10.10mOD; they were overlain by a sequence of subsoil and topsoil which was only disturbed by the water pipe trench. No archaeological features or finds were observed during the monitoring.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The site is located in the north of Greenwich Park, Royal Borough of Greenwich (Figure 1). The site is bounded on all four sides by grassland. The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TQ 3884 7754.
- 1.2 The watching brief was focused on the excavation of a single investigation pit which measured 4.00m x 2.00m; it was targeted on an existing water pipe. The investigation pit was part of a programme to repair the water pipe.
- 1.3 This report details the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken on the excavation of the investigation pit.

2 Planning Background

- 2.1 The scale and nature of the works did not require planning permission; however it was deemed to be good practice to implement a programme of monitoring in light of the sensitive location of the site.
- 2.2 The site lies within the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site.
- 2.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared for the site by Mott MacDonald (Mott MacDonald 2012) as part of the initial phase of the project.

3 Geology and Topography

- 3.1 The underlying geology across the site is of Thanet sand overlain by superficial head deposits of clay, silt and gravel. The site is relatively flat and lies at approximately 10.80mOD.

4 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 4.1 The following background material has been summarised from the Written Scheme of Investigation for the site by Mott MacDonald (2012).

Prehistoric to Medieval

- 4.2 There are no recorded prehistoric or Roman finds within 250m of the site, however the Roman road, Watling Street, is recorded to the south of Greenwich Park (Margary 1973) therefore indicating that the area was not devoid of Roman activity.
- 4.3 Greenwich has Saxon origins (*Grenewic*) and originally formed part of the manor of Lewisham (Lysons 1796). A Saxon cemetery was discovered in the area surrounding the site (GLHER 070235) and human remains of possible Saxon date (GLHER 070283/00/00) and undated human burials (GLHER 071119/00/00) are recorded in the wider area.
- 4.4 Evidence of medieval activity is sparse in the immediate area, being limited to a single sherd of Saxo-Norman pottery (GLHER 071515/00/00) and a possible 11th century pottery sherd (GLHER 070404/00/00).
- 4.5 Greenwich Palace was first built in 1426 on the south bank of the Thames (Weinreb *et al* 2008). Greenwich Park was originally a mile-long rectangular parcel of land running from the Thames to Greenwich Hill and was expanded in the 15th century (*ibid*).

Post-Medieval

- 4.6 The post-medieval period is well-represented in the immediate vicinity of the site, reflecting the expansion of London and its influence upon local settlements. The most significant post-medieval development is at Greenwich Park, to the north of the site. The park was enclosed by a brick wall commissioned by James I in 1619, replacing the former boundary fence. The wall was originally 3.5m high and 3km long and is now Grade II Listed. Parts of the wall have been repaired or replaced at later dates and at least one quarter of the boundary is now defined by iron railings (Listed Building Schedule 1000174). Charles II had the gardens re-landscaped, including the laying out of a parterre garden, the earthworks of which still survive. A rectangular pond (GLHER 071456/00/00), thought to predate the formal parterre garden, is recorded on plans of the park from the 17th to 19th centuries.
- 4.7 Considerable evidence dating to the late 15th to 17th centuries is recorded within 250m of the site, including evidence of an outbuilding associated with Henry VIII's Placentia Palace (the former Greenwich Palace, renamed and rebuilt by Henry VII) (GLHER 070376/07/00) and a Tudor tiltyard (jousting arena) excavated to the north of the site, (GLHER MLO30590), which was connected to the palace by a Long Gallery. The tiltyard was maintained by Queen Elizabeth I and James I, but was dismantled in 1649 and its timbers used to repair other parts of the palace damaged during the first Civil War. A map of 1690 records 'The Laboratory' at the southern end of the tiltyard (GLHER MLO99379), the successor to the Greenwich Armoury. Its functions were transferred to the Woolwich Arsenal in the early 18th century.
- 4.8 The Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site includes the Queen's House designed by Inigo Jones and completed in 1640, the Royal Observatory, designed by Sir Christopher Wren and built in 1675, and the Royal Hospital for Seamen, symbols of 'English artistic and scientific endeavour' in the 17th and 18th centuries. The site is located within the 500m buffer zone around the World Heritage Site but the excavation of the investigation pit was deemed unlikely to disturb associated finds and features due to its small size and peripheral location.
- 4.9 A World War Two air raid shelter is recorded to the north of the site (GLHER 071444/00/00) and a circular feature located within close proximity of the site might represent a World War Two defensive feature (GLHER 071449/00/00, 071450/00/00) though its function is not known.

5 Aims of the Investigation

- 5.1 The general aim of the watching brief was to record the presence/absence of archaeological remains on the site and to establish the character, date and function of any archaeological features or deposits encountered.
- 5.2 The specific aims of the investigation were to determine the presence/absence of any archaeological remains relating to the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site.

6 Methodology

- 6.1 The watching brief was carried out on the 1st March 2012 and focused on the monitoring of the excavation of a single investigation pit targeted on an existing water main (Figure 2); the pit was originally planned to measure 2.50m x 2.00m, but was increased in size to 4.00m x 2.00m due to the size of the pipe. The pit was excavated by a 3 tonne 360 tracked excavator using a toothless bucket under the constant supervision of an archaeologist.
- 6.2 Fieldwork procedures followed the Museum of London Archaeological Site Manual (3rd Edition) (MoL 1994) and the Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct (IfA 2010).

- 6.3 The excavation, recording and reporting conformed to current best archaeological practice and local and national standards and guidelines:
- English Heritage – Management of Archaeological Projects (EH 1991).
 - English Heritage – Archaeological Guidance Paper 3: Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork (EH 1998).
 - English Heritage – Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation (EH 2011).
 - Institute for Archaeologists – Standards and Guidance and Guidelines for Finds Work (IfA 2008a).
 - Institute for Archaeologists – Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (IfA 2008b).
 - Institute for Archaeologists – Code of Conduct (IfA 2010).
 - Rescue/United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – First Aid for Finds (3rd Edition) (2001).
 - United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – Conservation Guidelines No.2 (UKIC 1983).
 - United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – Guidance for Archaeological Conservation Practice (UKIC 1990).
- 6.4 Archaeological recording consisted of:
- Limited hand cleaning of sections and surfaces sufficient to establish the stratigraphic sequence exposed.
 - A scan for dating evidence from in-situ deposits and spoil.
 - Photographic recording of representative exposed sections and surfaces, along with sufficient photographs to establish the setting and scale of the groundworks.
 - Written records on pro-forma sheets.
 - Plans/Section drawings at suitable scales.
 - A record of the datum levels of archaeological deposits, where obtainable.
- 6.5 A unique site code, TGP 12, was obtained from the Museum of London prior to the commencement of fieldwork. This was used as the site identifier on all records.
- 6.6 The investigation pit was accurately located to the National Grid.
- 6.7 The watching brief was undertaken by Ian Hogg, under the overall direction of Paul Mason, Project Manager. The work was monitored by Phillippa Adams for Mott MacDonald, and by Mark Stevenson on behalf of the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS).

7 Results

7.1 Investigation Pit

7.1.1 Surface of Test Pit = 10.80m AOD

Level (OD)	Depth BGL	Context Number	Description/Interpretation
10.80m	0.00m	(1)	Topsoil
10.50m	0.30m	(2)	Subsoil
10.10m	0.70m	(3)	Natural Sands and Gravels

7.1.2 The investigation pit was located over the water pipe; it measured 4.00m x 2.00m (Figure 3).



Plate 1. Investigation pit section facing south-east.

7.1.3 Natural orange-brown sands and gravels (3) were observed at a height of 10.10mOD; they were sealed by mid brown silty sand subsoil (2), 0.40m thick. The subsoil was cut by the water pipe trench [6], this was linear with vertical sides and a flat base, it measured 4.00m in length, 0.70m in width and was 2.00m deep. The water pipe itself (5) was cast iron covered in bitumin tape and was 0.60m in diameter; the pipe trench backfill (4) consisted of soft yellow sand. The trench was overlain by topsoil (1), a dark brown sandy silt, 0.30m thick. No archaeology was observed in the pit.

8 Finds and Environmental Samples

- 8.1 No finds were retrieved from the investigation pit and no environmental samples were taken.

9 Conclusions

- 9.1 During the course of the watching brief a sequence of natural sands and gravels overlain by subsoil and topsoil was observed, this was disturbed only by the water pipe trench within the pit. No finds were retrieved from the pit.
- 9.2 No further work is required considering the lack of archaeological remains and the very limited nature of the works taking place.

10. Publication and Archive Deposition

- 10.1 Due to the nature of the project, publication will be restricted to a summary of results in the London Archaeological Round Up, and via the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) (Appendix B).
- 10.2 The archive, consisting of paper records, drawings, photographs, finds and digital records will be deposited with the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC).

11 Bibliography

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Site Location Within London



Based on the Ordnance Survey's 1:50 000 Landranger map of 2004 with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright. Licence No. AL 100023757

500m 0 2 km

1:50 000

Figure 1: Site Location

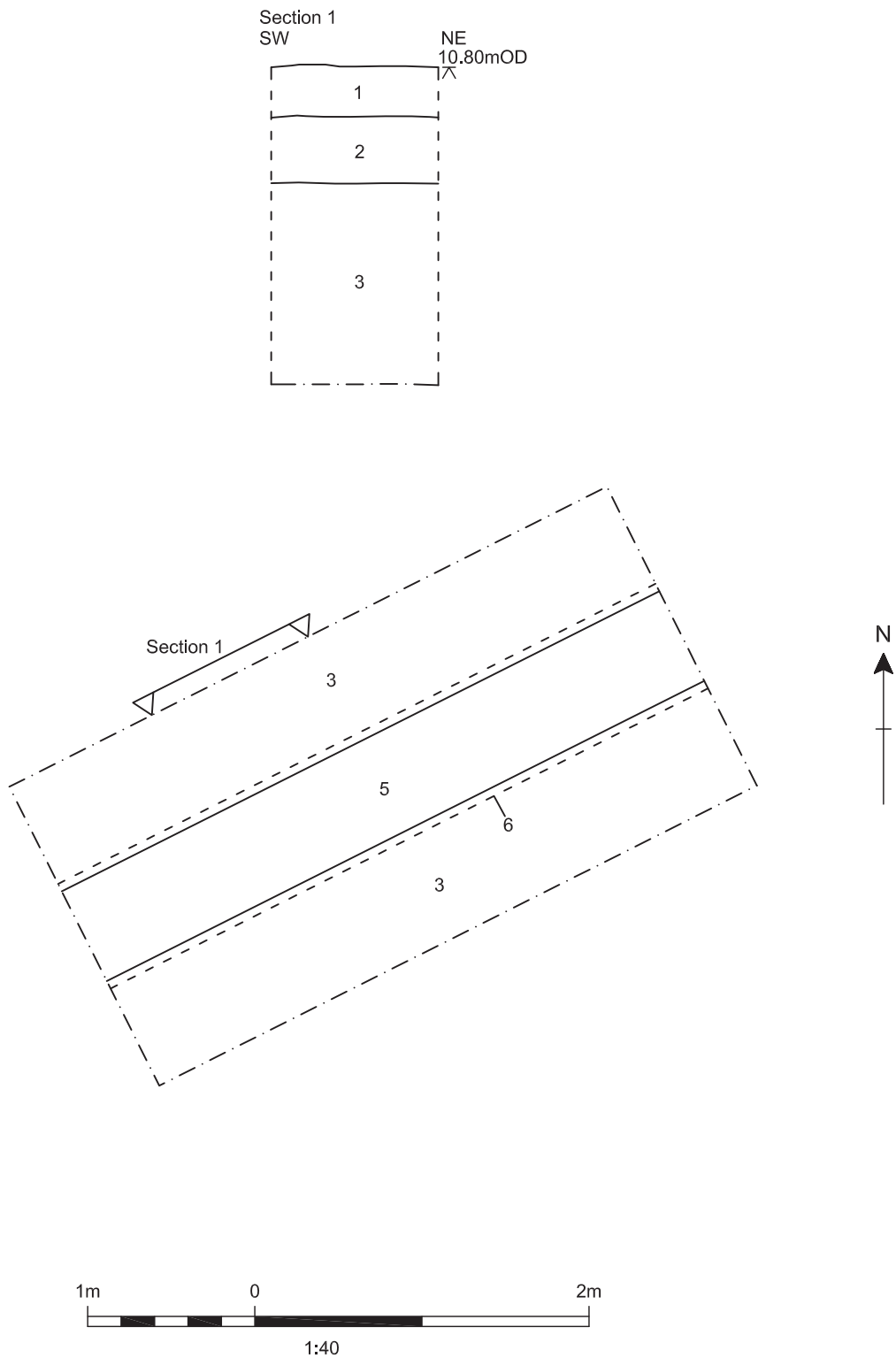


Figure 3: Investigation Pit Plan and Section



Appendices

Appendix A – Context Register

Context No.	Context Description	Length	Width	Depth
1	Topsoil	4.00m	2.00m	0.30m
2	Subsoil	4.00m	2.00m	0.40m
3	Natural	4.00m	2.00m	1.20m
4	Pipe Trench Backfill	4.00m	0.70m	2.00m
5	Water Pipe	4.00m	0.60m	0.60m
6	Pipe Trench Cut	4.00m	0.70m	0.70m

Appendix B – Oasis Form

OASIS ID: aocarcha1-119521

Project details

Project name Greenwich Park

Short description of the project The work comprised the recording an investigation pit, targeted on an existing water pipe. Natural sands and gravels were observed at a height of 10.80mOD; they were overlain by an undisturbed sequence of subsoil and topsoil. No archaeological features or finds were observed during the monitoring.

Project dates Start: 29-02-2012 End: 29-02-2012

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference TGP12 - Sitecode codes

Any associated project reference 32117 - Contracting Unit No. codes

Type of project Recording project

Site status World Heritage Site

Current Land use Grassland Heathland 1 - Heathland

Monument type NONE None

Significant Finds NONE None

Investigation type 'Watching Brief'

Prompt Voluntary/self-interest

Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON GREENWICH GREENWICH Greenwich Park

Postcode SE10

Study area 8.00 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 3884 7754 51.4792500805 -0.0004144952054390 51 28 45 N 000 00 01
W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 10.80m Max: 10.80m

Project creators

Name of
Organisation AOC Archaeology Group

Project brief
originator Mott MacDonald

Project design
originator Mott MacDonald

Project
director/manager Paul Mason

Project supervisor Ian Hogg

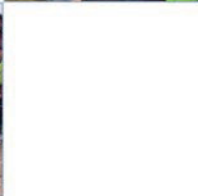
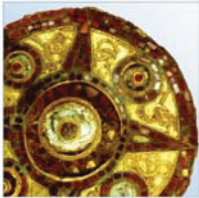
Type of
sponsor/funding
body Water Authority/Company

Name of
sponsor/funding
body Thames Water

Project archives

Physical Exists?	Archive	No
Digital recipient	Archive	Museum of London-LAARC
Digital Archive ID		TGP12
Digital Contents		'Stratigraphic'
Digital available	Media	'Images raster / digital photography','Text','Spreadsheets'
Paper recipient	Archive	Museum of London-LAARC
Paper Archive ID		TGP12
Paper Contents		'Stratigraphic'
Paper available	Media	'Context sheet','Microfilm','Plan','Report','Section','Unpublished Text'
Project bibliography		1
Publication type		Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title		Greenwich Park, Royal Borough of Greenwich-Archaeological written scheme of investigation
Author(s)/Editor(s)		Adams,P
Date		2012
Issuer or publisher		Mott MacDonald
Place of issue or publication		Cambridge,UK

Entered by Ian Hogg (ian.hogg@aocarchaeology.com)
Entered on 1 March 2012



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