

1 ABSTRACT

Between the 31st August 2005 and 24th January 2006 an archaeological watching brief, on behalf of J Breheney Contractors Ltd, for Lambeth Council, was undertaken to observe the installation of drainage services and traffic management systems within the grounds of West Norwood Cemetery. The Watching Brief was commissioned in response to a planning condition imposed due to the potential for disturbing unmarked burials. The archaeological observations undertaken were associated with a single pipe trench cut through access roads to the north of the cemetery. These works have demonstrated that modern made ground deposited prior to the construction of the access roads lies directly above London Clay, suggesting that the land surface had been truncated in the course of previous construction works. Finds were limited to a single disarticulated human long bone, thought to have been disturbed from its original burial by tree root activity, and numerous fragmented headstones. Of the deposits observed, none were deemed to possess any significant archaeological value. Apart from the single human bone recovered, no other human remains were encountered.

2 INTRODUCTION

Site Location

- 2.1 The site is located in the southern region of the London Borough of Lambeth, and is bordered to the west by Norwood High Street, to the north by Robson Road, to the east by Martell Road, and to the south by Auckland Hill (Figure 1 & 2). The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TQ 3230 7220.

Development Proposals

- 2.2 The development plan is for the insertion of drainage trenches 600mm wide and up to 4m in depth, in the northern area of the cemetery. This is in association with improvements to the road and traffic management within the cemetery, incorporating the construction of retracting bollards.

Planning Background

- 2.3 In accordance with *Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning* (PPG 15, paragraph 6.38, and PPG 16, conditions 16 & 17, & PPG) issued by the Department of the Environment in 1990 (DoE, 1990) and following an application for the Outline Planning Permission (Ref. No. 04/01665/RG3), the LPA archaeological advisor to the London Borough of Lambeth requested that an Archaeological Watching Brief be carried out. This was undertaken in order to determine the potential archaeological impact to the site during development.

- 2.4 A *Written Scheme of Investigation* was prepared (AOC 2005) detailing the methodologies utilized during the course of the archaeological investigations.
- 2.5 The fieldwork was managed Mark Beasley for AOC Archaeology and supervised by the author. The site was monitored by the LPA archaeological advisor on behalf of the London Borough of Lambeth.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Geology and Topography

- 3.1 The underlying geology on site is indicated as being London Clay, which overlies the Woolwich and Reading Beds (BGS 270). No geotechnical investigations have been undertaken on site prior to the production of this document
- 3.2 The development site is located on the northern slope of steeply rising ground, with the highest point located to the south. The ground level changes from 45m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) in the northeast corner of the site, up to 65m AOD in the southern part of the site.

Archaeological Background

- 3.3 The information from the following section is drawn from Weinreb & Hibbert (1983).

Post-Medieval

- 3.4 The modern London suburb of West Norwood only began to substantially develop in the mid-19th century, motivated by the presence of the Crystal Palace railway.
- 3.5 West Norwood Cemetery itself was established in 1837 by the South Metropolitan Cemetery Company, with initial architectural designs based upon a gothic theme. Within five years of the cemetery's opening a Greek cemetery had been established in the northeast corner, containing numerous grand mausolea. Lambeth Council took over ownership in 1966, with the aim of returning the cemetery to operational use and preserving many of the grand funerary monuments, many of which are now listed. Notable residents include Mrs Isobel Beeton, Dr William Marsden, and Sir Henry Doulton.

4 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims of the investigation were defined within the Written Scheme of Investigation (AOC Archaeology 2005) as being the following:

- 4.1 To record and excavate any human remains that are encountered within the infrastructure works, in accordance with the legislative requirements regarding human remains, archaeological guidelines and best practice, and treating the remains with appropriate respect.
- 4.2 To establish the presence/absence of any other archaeological remains within the development site.
- 4.3 To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological deposits and features and to establish the depositional sequence.
- 4.4 To record and sample excavate any such archaeologically important material.
- 4.5 To enable the LPA archaeology advisor to make an informed decision on the status of the condition imposed on planning consent.
- 4.6 The final aim will be to make public the results of the archaeological work.

5 METHODOLOGY

- 5.1 A site code **WNJ05** was obtained from the London Archaeological Archive Research Centre (LAARC) before work commenced..
- 5.2 A watching brief condition was imposed on all ground works and intrusive activities. These works consisted of the excavation of trenches for the insertion of drainage services, the insertion of ground stabilising geo-matting, and insertion of retractable road bollards. This condition was mitigated in the course of the project, occurring after approximately two-thirds of the drainage trenching had been observed. Due to the lack of any archaeological significant features or deposits being observed in the latter stages of the trenching, it was decided that the archaeological commitment would be reduced to an intermittent inspection of the remaining trenching required.
- 5.3 The work was undertaken with the use of both a 2 ton mechanical excavator and JCB 3CX, utilising a 600mm wide toothless bucket.
- 5.4 All of the work was carried out in line with Archaeological Guidance Paper (AGP): 3, Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork (English Heritage June 1998); and IFA Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (IFA October 1994).

6 RESULTS

Drainage Service Trench

- 6.1 At the point of cessation of the watching brief, approximately 220m of trenching had been observed. The service run originated in the northeast corner of the cemetery, following the established pathways into the southern area. For ease of description each length of service trench has been individually numbered, 1 to 4, and is reported on individually (Figure 2). For further information on contexts identified see Appendix A

Trench Section 1

- 6.2 The first section of the drainage trench to be monitored was 30m in length (Figure 3). The lowest deposit was firm mid-brown clay (1/007) with no apparent inclusions, and observed at its highest point at 43.14m above Ordnance Datum (OD). This was the 'natural' undisturbed geological deposit, London Clay. Overlying this towards the southern end of the trench was a highly mixed layer of dark silty clay (1/006) with frequent stone inclusions, fragments of ceramic building material (CBM) and gravelly patches. This deposit was most likely a consequence of tree root disturbance, and adjacent contexts were similarly mixed (1/003 and 1/005). In the centre of the trench was a layer of soft dark greyish brown silty clay (1/005) containing moderately sized fragments of CBM. The organic appearance of this deposit suggested it was a previously buried soil horizon.
- 6.3 Towards the northern end of the trench, this buried soil was sealed by a thick band of brown clay (1/004) at 42.40m OD. This had clearly been redeposited and is most likely evidence of deliberately raising the ground level, perhaps landscaping within the formally-laid out cemetery. At the southern edge of this rise was a wide area filled with fragmented CBM plus lenses of clay and dark brown silt (1003). Two finds were identified: the first was a disarticulated human tibia, found at approximately 43.55m OD at the southern end of the trench. The tibia was in good condition and believed to have been disturbed from its original burial location by root action. The second find was a headstone with a moulded edge, Headstone 1. These finds indicate that the CBM and associated silt were deposited after the cemetery had been established in the 1837, perhaps after 1966, when clearance work was undertaken.
- 6.4 Lying above the rubble and silt was a uniform layer of yellow 'stock' bricks, marked with the name THISTLE, and measuring 230mm by 110mm by 80mm (1/002). All were laid on the same east-west alignment with random spacing, resulting in an irregular appearance. These may have been part of an earlier path surface, laid down before the current Tarmac path (1/001).

Trench Section 2

- 6.5 Section 2 of the drainage service trench measured 50m in length (Figures 2 and 3). The clay 'natural' was not seen here; instead the lowest deposit observed was a soft, dark brown clay, with a highly mixed appearance (1/010). Its highest point was 44.33m OD. The appearance of the deposit was characterised by frequent fragments of CBM, pockets of sand and gravel, in association with a moderate density of root material, so had clearly been reworked, most likely through the excavation and backfilling of modern service runs through this area of the cemetery. Within this context Headstones 2, 3 and 4 were recorded.
- 6.6 Throughout the length of the trench this mixed clay had been truncated by the insertion of a modern communications service trench [1/009]. The trench had purposely followed the line of the path to limit disturbance to the cemetery. The trench had been backfilled using a variety of material including sharp sand, gravel, and elements of the local soil (1/008). The majority of the Headstones recovered over the course of the project derived from this context. Headstones 5 to 21 were located in a 2m wide zone at the eastern end of trench section 2, with Headstones 22 to 39 located in a 10m wide zone at the western end of trench section 2. It was recognised that the larger of the headstones recovered were placed irregularly and horizontally on the surface of backfill (1/008), effectively sealing the service trench. Directly above the headstones was the hardcore and Tarmac forming the current surface of the path (1/001).
- 6.7 One of the most interesting headstones contains a fragment of verse from 'The Pillar of the Cloud' by John Henry Newman, also known as 'Lead Kindly Light'. It commemorates a five-year old boy (headstone 5).

*...And with the moon
Those angel faces smile
Which I have loved long since
And lost awhile.*

- 6.8 One of the most complete headstones was in two pieces, headstones 24 and 25. The text is given here.

THE PRIVATE GRAVE
OF
MR FREDERICK TURNER
OF LAMBETH
(In affectionate Remembrance of
(HEN)RIETTA TURNER
(BELOVED) MOTHER OF THE ABOVE
(WHO DIED)-1ST JANUARY 1864
--(18)77
--(MU)CH LAMENTED

Trench Section 3

- 6.9 Trench section 3 was the longest trench section observed, being 140m long (Figure 3), and London Clay (1007) was seen throughout. Its southern end was considerably higher than its northern end, the natural deposit at 53.13m OD; a rise of 9.13m. All the deposits recorded were uniform throughout its length. The lowest observed was a continuation of the undisturbed London Clay deposit (1/007). The clay was sealed by made ground; dark brown clay with CBM fragments, pockets of gravel and lenses of silty clay, identical to that seen to the northeast (1/003). This had been laid in preparation for the Tarmac surfacing of the current service road (1/001).

Trench Section 4

- 6.10 Due to the limited discovery of archaeological material in the previous three trench sections, further archaeological observations were limited to drainage works and the insertion of traffic control bollards adjacent to the cemetery crypt. These observations identified a similar sequence of deposits as revealed in trench section 3, with 'natural' clay overlain by made ground, sealed by a Tarmac road surface. No material of an archaeological nature was observed.

7 FINDS

- 7.1 Finds recovered during the course of the watching brief included human remains and headstone fragments. The human remains recovered were restricted to a single disarticulated tibia, assumed to be disturbed from its original burial by root activity. This was discovered adjacent to the boundary wall, in trench section 1, context (1/003). In addition to this, 49 fragments of decorated or inscribed headstone were recovered from trench section 2 that runs at a right angle from the eastern boundary wall. All fragments are interpreted as being derived from modern disturbance or landscaping (1/003), (1/008) and (1/010). Due to the sensitive nature of the finds, all were returned to the cemetery authorities for disposal or reinterment in an appropriate manner.

8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The watching brief clearly demonstrated that the intrusive works did not disturb deposits of an archaeological nature and avoided impact on intact burials.
- 8.2 During the course of the works on site the nature and extent of the archaeological potential was observed, in addition to the associated disturbance of this potential. The trenching for the drainage works, in association with improvements to the traffic management system, produced the discovery of only a single human bone, which was subsequently interpreted as being disturbed from its original burial.

This leads to the clear conclusion that no human remains have been interred beneath the observed sections of the road before their construction. The roads and paths through the cemetery are shown on the 1875 Ordnance Survey Map and on Bacon's 'four-inch' map of 1888, so only Section 1 and section 2 will have cut through potential burial plots. Sections 3 and 4 were cut through the original pathways.

- 8.3 Further to this, the limited sequence of archaeological deposits recorded indicated that apart from the observations undertaken in the northeast of the cemetery, the upper ground surface was composed of topsoil over natural London Clay. There was no evidence of earlier archaeological features. Only in the northeast corner of the cemetery, beneath the smaller access path, had modern deposits been allowed to accumulate.
- 8.4 The latest datable fragment of headstone collected during the work dated to 1907. Notably, the majority of the stone was limestone, and clearly some was less well-wearing than others. There were no full inscriptions on any of the pieces.
- 8.5 Over the course of the archaeological investigations at West Norwood Cemetery no archaeological significant remains or features were observed.

9 PUBLICATION

- 9.1 Due to the limited nature of the project, publication is to be limited to a summary in the London Archaeology Round-up and publication via the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) (Appendix C).

10 ARCHIVE DEPOSTION

- 10.1 The archive will be deposited with the London Archaeological Archive Research Centre (LAARC).

11 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Figure 1 Site Location

Figure 2 Detailed Site Location/Trench Location

Figure 3: Trench Sections

APPENDIX A Context Register

Context No.	Context Description	Length/m	Width/m	Depth/m
1/001	Tarmac and hardcore	Trench	Trench	0.12-0.22
1/002	Stock brick layer	15.70	Trench	0.16
1/003	Made ground layer	Trench	Trench	0.2-0.4
1/004	Re-deposited clay	14.00	Trench	0.58
1/005	Buried soil horizon	18.40	Trench	0.30
1/006	Mixed soil horizon	5.45	Trench	0.49
1/007	Natural clay	Trench	Trench	>2.00
1/008	Cable trench backfill	50.00	Trench	0.20-0.30
1/009	Cable trench cut	50.00	Trench	0.20-0.30
1/010	Disturbed clay	50.00	Trench	>1.50

APPENDIX B Record Of Headstones

Headstone No.	Context	Length/ m	Width/ m	Thickness/ m	Stone Type	Inscription
1	1/003	0.26	0.24	0.15	Marbled Limestone (?)	-
2	1/010	0.37	0.16	0.05	Limestone	I...LOVIN...GEORGE...WHO...F...MARC...AG ED..."SWEEPING T...OF THE NE...WASHED...IN THE...J. ALLEN...53 ERNEST...
3	1/010	0.36	0.17	0.05	Marbled Limestone	..ry...IFE...COOK,...THIS LIFE...ED 30 YEARS. ...AND I BRING, ...LOSS I CLING. ...BE DONE." 31766.
4	1/010	0.30	0.29	0.64	Limestone	..GED...A...ALICE SUS...DIED DEC 13 th 1...GEORG...IED FEB..
5	1/008	0.22	0.22	0.4	Fine Limestone	CEDRIC ARTHU...WHO FELL ASLEEP...OCTr 11 th ...IN HIS 5 th ...AND WITH THE ANGEL FACES WHICH I HAVE L...AND LOST...MINUTE..
6	1/008	0.38	0.37	0.2	Limestone	IN UNDYING MEMORY OF OUR DARLING "HARRY BOY"
7	1/008	0.31	0.22	0.07	Fine Grain Siltstone	W...SON...D...TH..
8	1/008	0.23	0.16	0.03	Fine Limestone	..LSO OF...AM...ST...ST..
9	1/008	0.15	0.14	0.08	Limestone	..W...DL..
10	1/008	0.35	0.33	0.07	Fine Grained Limestone	..O...WHO...IN...ALSO...THOM...WHO DIED THE...IN H..
11	1/008	0.29	0.14	0.08	Fine Grain Limestone/ Siltstone	SO...
12	1/008	0.23	0.22	0.08	Fine Grain Limestone/ Siltstone	..CH...
13	1/008	0.25	0.23	0.07	Limestone	THE F...JOHN...OF..
14	1/008	0.38	0.34	0.07	Limestone (?)	..ED 1...AGED...BELOVED IN D..

Headstone No.	Context	Length/ m	Width/ m	Thickness/ m	Stone Type	Inscription
15	1/008	0.20	0.1	0.1	Limestone	-
16	1/008	0.23	0.18	0.08	Sandstone or Siltstone	Illegible
17	1/008	0.36	0.2	0.08	Sandstone or Siltstone	SA..
18	1/008	0.32	0.32	0.08	Limestone (?)	..EBRUARY...GED 60 YE...ALSO OF...MMA. HIS W...ED AUGUST... GED 85 YEA..
19	1/008	0.23	0.2	0.08	Limestone (?)	N/A
20	1/008	0.32	0.28	0.07	Limestone	..REN...ER...LAWRENCE...OWON..THE HILL...56...LONDON...TON..
21	1/008	0.42	0.24	0.08	Limestone	..T. ..GHT,...3,..
22	1/008	0.5	0.23	0.07	Limestone	Illegible
23	1/008	0.7	0.7	0.08	Limestone (?)	WHO DIED...UST...GEORGE CURTIS...WHO DIED NOVEMBER 2 1887. AGED 78 YEARS. ALSO ROBERT BROWN WHO DIED JANUARY 15 1890. AGED 67 YEARS. A...CURTIS DIED MARCH...AGED 86 YEARS. ALSO...ELCHER BROWN DIED DEC 31 st 1905. AGED 80 YEARS. HUMPHRIS HERN...
24	1/008	0.86	0.38	0.07	Limestone	Together these stones read THE PRIVATE GRAVE OF Mr FREDERICK TURNER OF LAMBETH...ectionate Remembrance of...IETTA T URNER...MOTHE.. OF THE ABOVE...st J..NUARY 1864...77...H LAMENTED.
25	1/008	0.5	0.41	0.07	Limestone	
26	1/008	0.33	0.24	0.1	Limestone	N/A
27	1/008	0.43	0.4	0.07	Limestone	..EAR...S JOHNSTON...DECEMBER 1851...1 st YEAR.
28	1/008	0.18	0.16	0.05	Sedimentary Stone (Limestone?)	..BAH..

Headstone No.	Context	Length/ m	Width/ m	Thickness/ m	Stone Type	Inscription
29	1/008	0.28	0.23	0.06	Limestone	..OS...TIH...AGED..
30	1/008	0.3	0.24	0.07	Limestone	To...ANN..
31	1/008	0.56	0.28	0.08	Limestone (?)	..beth. ...GHT...20 th 1891...RS...E. ...1907..
32	1/008	0.28	0.28	0.08	Siltstone (?)	...BT 30...AG...This stone c...
33	1/008	0.41	0.27	0.08	Limestone	WHO DI A...
34	1/008	0.5	0.4	0.1	Marbled Limestone	Roberts.
35	1/008	0.64	0.4	0.07	Limestone	-
36	1/008	0.39	0.28	0.07	Fine Grain Sedimentary Stone	..CAMB...E...ART...JUN...HIS..
37	1/008	0.42	0.32	0.06	Limestone	In...remembrance...JOHN TALBOT TYLER
38	1/008	0.42	0.29	0.07	Fine Grain Sedimentary Stone	-
39	1/008	0.28	0.18	0.04	Marbled Limestone	..ER...LOVING...IA...C..

APPENDIX C OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: aocarcha1-12893**Project details**

Project name	West Norwood Cemetery
Short description of the project	Between the 31st August 2005 and 24th January 2006 an archaeological watching brief, on behalf of J Breheney Contractors Ltd , for Lambeth Council, was undertaken to observe the installation of drainage services and traffic management systems within the grounds of West Norwood Cemetery. Such archaeological investigations were commissioned due to the potential for disturbing unmarked burials. The archaeological observations undertaken were associated with a single pipe trench cut through access roads to the north of the cemetery. These works have demonstrated that modern made ground deposited prior to the construction of the access roads lies directly above London Clay, suggesting that the land surface had been truncated in the course of previous construction works. Finds were limited to a single disarticulated human long bone, thought to have been disturbed from its original burial by tree root activity, and numerous fragmented headstones. Of the deposits observed, none were deemed to possess any significant archaeological value. Apart from the single human bone recovered, no other human remains were encountered.
Project dates	Start: 31-08-2005 End: 24-01-2006
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	WNJ05 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	7096 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	04/01665/RG3 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 15 - Other
Significant Finds	HUMAN LONG BONE Post Medieval
Significant Finds	HEADSTONES Post Medieval

Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON LAMBETH STREATHAM West Norwood Cemetery
Postcode	SE27 9PB
Study area	17.00 Hectares
National grid reference	TQ 3230 7220 Point
Height OD	Min: 45.00m Max: 65.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	AOC Archaeology
Project brief originator	English Heritage
Project design originator	AOC Archaeology
Project director/manager	Mark Beasley
Project supervisor	Chris Clarke
Sponsor or funding body	London Borough of Lambeth

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Museum of London
Digital Archive ID	WNJ05
Digital Contents	'none'

Digital Media available	'Images raster','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	Museum of London
Paper Archive ID	WNJ05
Paper Contents	'none'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Matrices','Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes','Plan','Report','Section'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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