

**LAND TO THE REAR OF 2-16 HIGH STREET,
PLAISTOW, LONDON E13**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

Planning Application: **P/02/0294**

National Grid Reference: **TQ 4018 8324**

MAY 2007

On behalf of:

Winbourn Associates
30 Jessops Riverside
800 Brightside Lane
Sheffield
S9 2RX

National Grid Reference (NGR):

TQ 4018 8324

AOC Archaeology project no:

7728

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1 ABSTRACT

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group on the 14th May 2007 at land to the rear of 2-16 High Street, Plaistow, London. The aim of the evaluation was to assess the impact of the proposed development of the site on any surviving archaeological remains.

The evaluation consisted of 2 machine excavated trenches measuring 1.50m wide and 15.00m long. Natural gravel was recorded in Trenches 1 and 2, sealed by post-medieval made ground and modern tarmac. Trench 1 was only partially excavated following removal of the tarmac due to asbestos contamination in this area of the site. No archaeological features were identified on the site.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This document is a report on archaeological evaluation at land to the rear of 2-16 High Street, Plaistow, London Borough of Newham (Fig 1). The work was undertaken on behalf of Winbourn Associates.

Site Location

- 2.2 The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TQ 4018 8324, and is within land bounded by Winifred Terrace to the north, Victoria Road to the east, properties fronting onto Upper Road and Victoria Road to the south, and Upper Road to the west. The site is approximately rectangular, 42 m east-west and 17 m north-south (Figure 2). The area affected by the development covers a total area of approximately 650m².

Planning Background

- 2.3 The local planning authority is the London Borough of Newham. Archaeological advice to the council is provided by the Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS), part of English Heritage.
- 2.4 Planning permission to undertake the development has been granted under the Town & Country Planning Act (1990) (Ref No.:P/02/0294), subject to conditions. Condition 9 states that:

“No demolition or development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only take place in accordance with the detailed scheme approved pursuant to this condition. The archaeological works shall be carried out by a suitably qualified investigation body acceptable to the Local Planning Authority.”

- 2.5 This condition has been required in accordance with *Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning* (PPG 16) issued by the Department of the Environment in 1990 (DoE, 1990), and was recommended by GLAAS.
- 2.6 The chapel building on the site is due to be demolished shortly. An area on the east side of the site is covered with tarmac. One of the proposed buildings will be on the west side of the site, fronting onto Upper Road, and will be 3 stories. The other will be on the east side, fronting onto Victoria Road, and will be 2 stories. Neither will contain basements.
- 2.7 The site lies within an Archaeological Priority Area, as defined by London Borough of Newham’s Unitary Development Plan.

- 2.8 The evaluation was conducted with the overall aim of allowing the Archaeological Advisor to the LPA to make an informed decision on the requirement for any further mitigation works. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation, prepared by AOC Archaeology and approved by GLAAS (AOC, 2007).

3 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 3.1 The British Geological Survey map (BGS Sheet 257), indicates that the site is situated upon an area of Taplow Gravel, which is an alluvial sand and gravel river terrace dating to the Pleistocene. This area of gravel is between the rivers Lea to the west and Roding to the east. Natural Terrace Gravels were identified in both evaluation trenches.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistoric (before c.AD 43)

- 4.1 Plaistow is in a favourable topographic position for prehistoric occupation, being within the gravel terrace between the marshy alluvium along the Thames to the south, and heavier soils of the London Clay to the north. This area would have been relatively well drained, and had access to a variety of resources, including those from the wetlands along the river margins. More prehistoric remains have been found within the wetland areas than on the gravel terrace, but this is likely to be due to better preservation conditions, and the activity in the wetlands is likely to be associated with settlement on the gravel.

Roman (c. AD 43 - 450)

- 4.2 The Roman Road from London to Colchester probably crossed the river Lea at Old Ford. There are few records of Roman remains in the vicinity of the site.

Anglo-Saxon (c.451-1065)

- 4.3 There are few records of Anglo-Saxon activity in the vicinity of the site

Medieval (c.1066 - 1485)

- 4.4 The route of the Roman Road was used up to the 12th century, when it was moved by Maud, queen of Henry I to a new crossing of the river Lea at Bow Bridge about a mile to the south-east of Old Ford.
- 4.5 Although the settlement itself is older, the name Plaistow is first recorded in 1414, and means a place where people gathered for play.

Post-Medieval (c.1485 - modern)

- 4.6 Early 16th century records of Stratford Abbey show that the main settlements in the parish of West Ham were West Ham village, Stratford, and Plaistow. In the 1740s Plaistow appears to have been the largest of these, with a triangular centre comprising the present High Street, North Street, and Richmond Street. From the 16th to the 19th centuries the area was favoured by wealthy individuals working in London. The pattern of growth of the area was influenced by the position of Bow Bridge, which remained the lowest crossing point over the river Lea until the 19th century.
- 4.7 There is some evidence of silk weaving and leather working in Plaistow in the 16th and 17th centuries, but it remained a large and mainly agricultural village until the mid 19th century. Development in the later 18th century was greater in Stratford and West Ham than in Plaistow. Industrial development accelerated from about 1840, when expansion onto marsh pasture land to the south of the site started. Growth of the area was rapid after 1870, due to the docks and manufacturing.

5 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 The aims of the Evaluation were defined in the WSI as being:
- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
 - To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
 - To record and sample excavate any archaeological remains encountered.
 - To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological features and deposits.
 - To determine the extent of previous truncations of the archaeological deposits.
 - To enable GLAAS to make an informed decision on the status of the condition on the planning permission, and any possible requirement for further work in order to satisfy that condition.
 - To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation in order to inform the mitigation strategy as part of the planning process.
- 5.2 The specific objectives of the Evaluation were to:
- Determine the presence of any remains of prehistoric occupation.
 - Determine the presence of any remains of medieval date on the site.
 - Assess the potential of the site to inform on the post-medieval development and chronology of Plaistow.
 - Assess the degree and extent of truncation of earlier deposits by the late 19th century and 20th century buildings on the site.

- 5.3 The final aim is to make public the results of the investigation, subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

6 METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 The field Evaluation comprised of the machine excavation of two trenches measuring 15m x 1.50m at base. The evaluation trenches were situated as shown in Figure 2.
- 6.2 All machining was carried out using a JCB type excavator, under the constant supervision of the Archaeological Project Supervisor. A toothless ditching bucket was used. Undifferentiated topsoil or overburden of recent origin was removed in successive level spits down to the natural geology, as significant archaeological horizons were not encountered above this.
- 6.3 The site code **HGI 07** was obtained for the project, and used for all fieldwork.
- 6.4 All trenches were accurately located to the National Grid. A temporary benchmark with a value of 4.96mOD was established on Victoria Road, directly outside the site (Figure 2).
- 6.5 All recording was in accordance with the standards and requirements of the *Archaeological Field Manual* (Museum of London Archaeology Service 3rd edition 1994).
- 6.6 A continuous unique numbering system was employed. For each trench, a block of numbers in a continuous sequence was allocated. The following registers were kept on standardised forms: contexts; sections; plans; and photographs.
- 6.7 Written descriptions, comprising both factual data and interpretative elements, were recorded on standardised sheets.

7 RESULTS

7.1 Trench 1

Height (mOD)	Context No.	Description
4.89 – 4.59	(1/001)	Tarmac
4.59 – 4.29	(1/002)	Modern brick rubble
4.29 – 3.89	(1/003)	Soft green grey silt
3.89 –	(1/004)	Natural Gravel

7.2.1 Directly below the tarmac (1/001) a layer of modern brick rubble (1/002) was found to contain asbestos tile. Excavation of the trench therefore had to be limited to the eastern end of the trench away from the contamination.

7.1.1 At the eastern end of the trench the natural gravel (1/004) was sealed by a layer of soft green grey silt buried subsoil (1/003). This was sealed by brick rubble (1/002) and tarmac (1/001).

7.1.2 No archaeological features were identified in Trench 1.

7.2 Trench 2

Height (mOD)	Context No.	Description
4.90 – 4.85	(2/001)	Tarmac
4.85 – 4.72	(2/002)	Gravel make up
4.72 – 4.45	(2/003)	Modern brick rubble
4.45 – 3.80	(2/004)	Soft green grey silt
3.80 –	(2/005)	Natural Gravel

7.2.1 The natural gravel (1/004) was sealed by a layer of soft green grey silt buried subsoil (1/003). This was sealed by brick rubble (1/002) and tarmac (1/001).

7.2.2 No archaeological features were identified in Trench 1.

8 FINDS

8.1 No finds were recovered from the site.

9 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 No archaeological features were identified in during the evaluation and no finds were recovered from the site.

9.3 The evaluation met its primary objective: to establish the presence/absence of any archaeological remains. No archaeological remains were encountered and it is therefore recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork is required to satisfy the archaeological planning condition on this site. This is subject to the agreement of the archaeological advisor to the LPA.

9.4 Publication of the results will be through the ADS OASIS form (Appendix B) with a short summary submitted to the *London Archaeologist* archaeological roundup 2007.

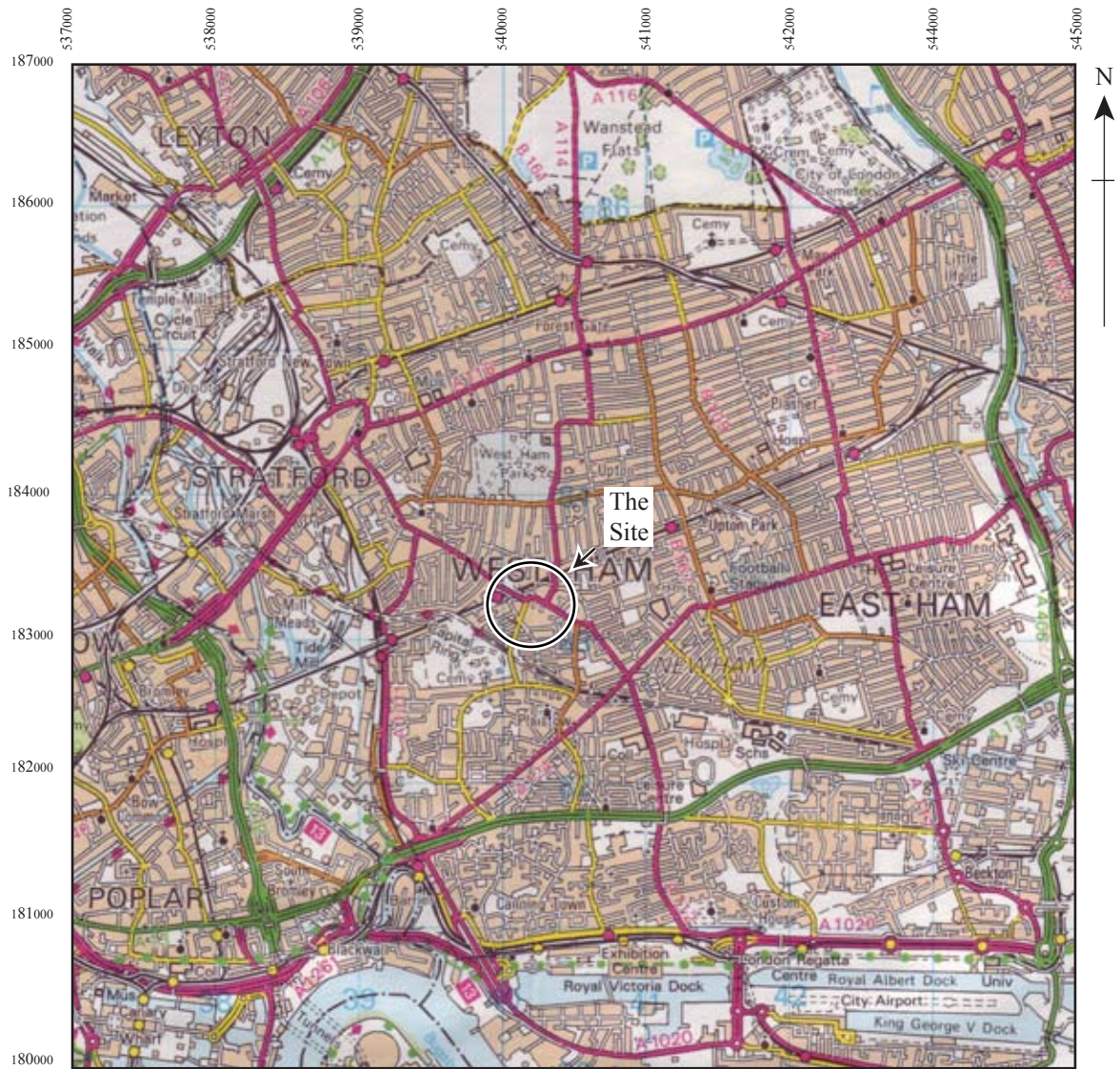
10 BIBLIOGRAPHY

AOC Archaeology Group Ltd (2007). *Land to the Rear of 2-16 High Street, Plaistow, London E13: A Written Scheme Of Investigation For An Archaeological Evaluation.*

British Geological Survey map (BGS Sheet 257)

Department of the Environment (1990). *Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning (PPG16).*

Museum of London (1994). *Archaeological Site Manual (3rd ed).*



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 1000 16114



Figure 1. Site Location

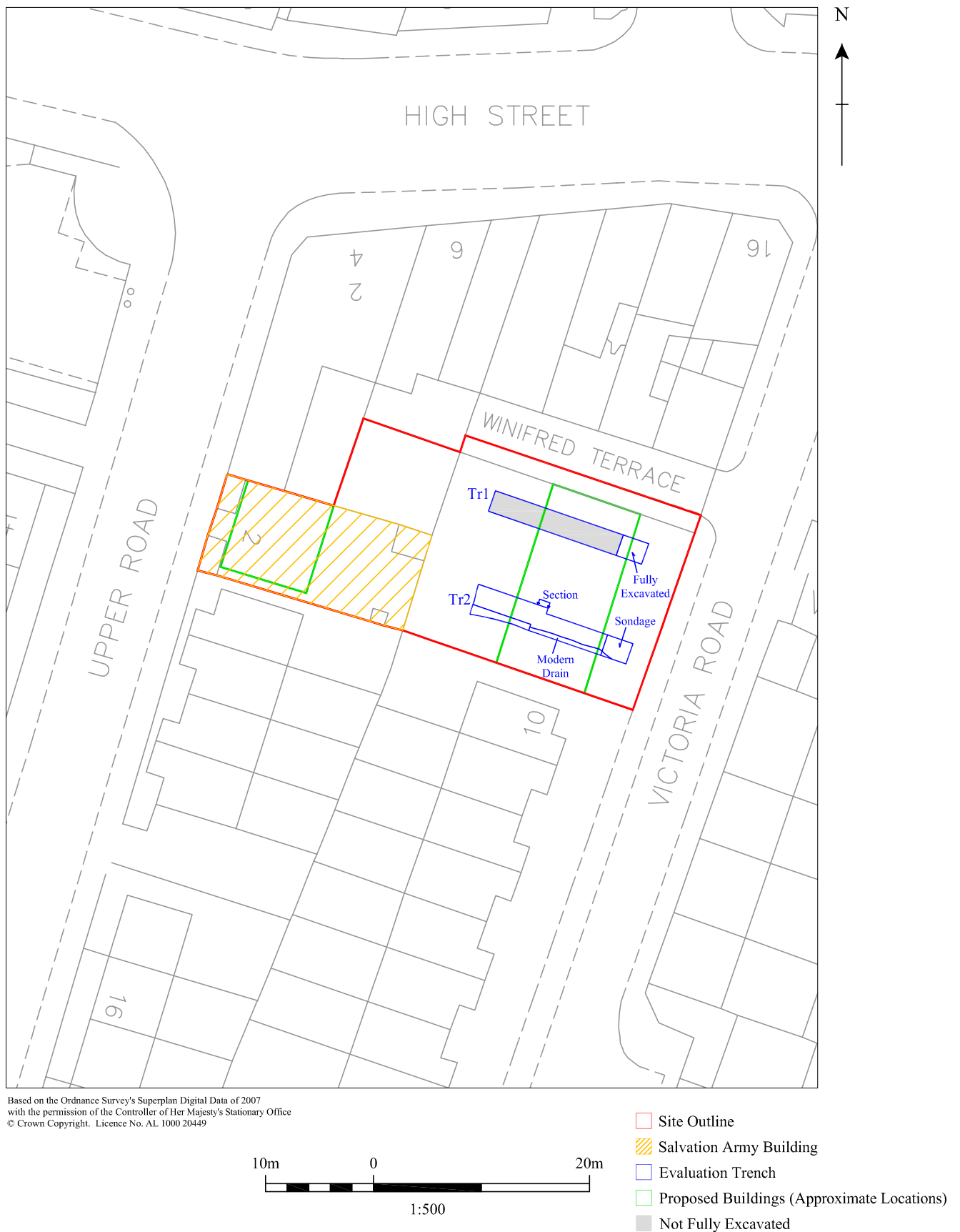


Figure 2: Detailed Site Location

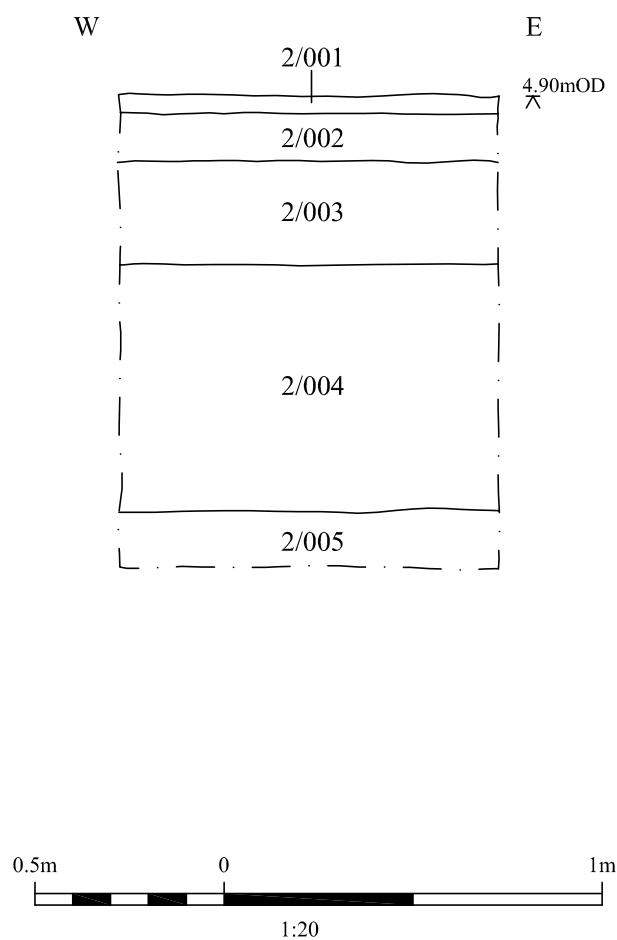


Figure 3: Trench 2: Sample Section

APPENDIX A – Context Register

Context No.	Context Description	Length	Width	Depth
1/001	Tarmac	15.00m	1.50m	0.30m
1/002	Modern brick rubble	15.00m	1.50m	0.30m
1/003	Soft green grey silt	15.00m	1.50m	0.40m
1/004	Natural Gravel	15.00m	1.50m	NFE
2/001	Tarmac	15.00m	1.50m	0.05m
2/002	Gravel make up	15.00m	1.50m	0.13m
2/003	Modern brick rubble	15.00m	1.50m	0.27m
2/004	Soft green grey silt	15.00m	1.50m	0.65m
2/005	Natural Gravel	15.00m	1.50m	NFE

NFE = No Further Excavation

APPENDIX B – Oasis Form

4.1 OASIS ID: aocarcha1-26956

Project details

Project name 2 - 16 High Street, Plaistow

Short description of the project An archaeological evaluation and watching brief was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group on the 14th May 2007 land to the rear of 2-16 High Street, Plaistow, London. The evaluation consisted of 2 machine excavated trenches measuring 1.50m wide and 15.00m long. Natural gravel was recorded in Trenches 1 and 2, sealed by post-medieval made ground and modern tarmac. Trench 1 was only partially excavated following removal of the tarmac due to asbestos contamination in this area of the site. No archaeological features were identified on the site.

Project dates Start: 14-05-2007 End: 14-05-2007

Previous/future work No / No

Site status None

Site status (other) Archaeological Priority Area

Current Land use Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed

Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON NEWHAM NEWHAM LAND TO THE REAR OF 2-16 HIGH STREET, PLAISTOW,

Postcode E13 0XX

Study area 650.00 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 4018 8324 51.5301440517 0.02113734774990 51 31 48 N 000 01 16 E Point

Height OD Min: 3.80m Max: 3.89m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	AOC Archaeology
Project brief originator	English Heritage/Department of Environment
Project design originator	AOC Archaeology
Project director/manager	Tim Carew
Project supervisor	Dan Eddisford
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Winbourn Associates

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Plan','Section','Unpublished Text'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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