

**WEMBLEY W10, WEMBLEY, LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT: AN  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT**

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## 1 ABSTRACT

*The following report details the results of an archaeological Watching Brief undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group between 21<sup>st</sup> January and 20<sup>th</sup> February 2008 on an area to the west of the new Wembley Stadium, London Borough of Brent. The project was undertaken in association with a programme of geo-technical investigations on behalf of RPS Planning. The archaeological investigations involved the observation and recording of five window samples (WS1 001-005) and two machine excavated geo-technical test pits (TP 1001-1002).*

*The archaeological investigations were commissioned to assess the potential for archaeological deposits to survive. All five window samples presented a sequence comprising a layer of rubble-rich made ground overlying redeposited London Clay and naturally deposited London Clay. The two test pits had made ground; only in one of them naturally deposited London Clay was uncovered. It is thought that horizontal truncation took place prior to the deposition of the made ground, removing any previously existing subsoil deposits. The horizontal truncation of deposits is thought to have occurred during the development of the site in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The disturbed nature of all the deposits indicates that the potential for archaeological horizons to survive in these areas is very poor.*

*No significant archaeological remains or finds were identified during the watching brief.*

## **2 INTRODUCTION**

### **Site Location**

- 2.1 The site (W10) is located to the west of the new Wembley Stadium, fronting Wembley Park Boulevard, in the London Borough of Brent (Figures 1 and 2). The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TQ 1901 8565.

## **3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

### **Prehistoric (before c.AD 43)**

- 3.1 There are no known remains in the immediate vicinity of Wembley Stadium, although it is suspected that the Thames terrace gravels, which occur in the area, may potentially contain evidence of an early prehistoric nature.

### **Saxon/Medieval**

- 3.2 Documentary evidence dating to 825AD indicates that the settlement at Wembley was first referred to as *Wemba Lea*. The location of this settlement is thought to be located near Wembley Green and Wembley Hill. The medieval village of Tokyngton is thought to have been located to the west of the current Wembley Stadium.

### **Post-Medieval**

- 3.3 The modern London suburb of Wembley only began to substantially develop in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, motivated by the presence of the main London to Birmingham railway and a local tram network. Wembley Stadium itself was constructed in 1922-3 as a multi-purpose sports and entertainment centre for the British Empire Exhibition of 1924-5. It remained a national landmark until its closure and redevelopment in 2000.

### **Previous Archaeological Investigations**

- 3.4 Previous phases of archaeological monitoring (AOC Archaeology Group 2007a, 2007b, 2007c & 2007d) have taken place within the vicinity of the site (W03, W04, W05 and W07). No archaeological finds or features were observed during the course of the works.

## **4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

- 4.1 The underlying geology on site is indicated as being London Clay, with patches of Thames Gravel known in the vicinity. Notable gravel deposits include Dollis Hill Gravel on Wembley Hill to the west of the site, and Lynch Hill Gravels c. 300m east of the stadium. The British Geological Survey map (BGS Sheet 256).

## 5 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

- 5.1 The aims of the Watching Brief were defined as being:
- To establish the presence/absence of any archaeological remains within the development site;
  - To record and sample excavate any archaeological remains encountered;
  - To enable GLAAS to make an informed decision on the status of any future planning application and any possible conditions for further work required if the application is approved; and
  - To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation in order to inform the requirement (or otherwise) for a mitigation strategy as part of the planning process.
- 5.2 The final aims of the investigation were: to make public the results of the investigation, subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

## 6 METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 A site code **WPB08** was obtained from the Museum of London as the unique site identity.
- 6.2 The watching brief work was undertaken by Chris Clarke and Paolo Guarino, Project Supervisors, under the overall project management of Andy Leonard, Fieldwork Divisional Manager.
- 6.3 The scope of the watching brief involved the examination and recording of five window samples and two geo-technical test pits in Area W10 (Figures 2 and 3), during the programme of geo-technical site investigations by Soil Mechanics.
- 6.4 All the window samples were extracted from the deposits underneath the concrete surface of the multi-storey car park located to the west of the stadium.
- 6.5 The two test pits were excavated in the area located between the stadium and the car park. Test Pit 1001 measured 2.1m x 0.60m and 1002 measured 2.1m x 0.7m.
- 6.6 All of the work was carried out in line with Archaeological Guidance Paper (AGP) 3, Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork (English Heritage 1998); and IFA Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (IFA 1994).

## 7 RESULTS

- 7.1 The sequence of deposition on site tended to consist of natural clay overlaid by made ground and demolition rubble.

### Window Sample 1 001

- 7.2 The table below sets out the stratigraphic sequence encountered in WS1 001.

Depth (BGL)	Description
0m- .40m	Concrete surface of the car park
0.40m-1.50m	Dark sandy clay with rubble. Made ground
1.50m-2.00m	Redeposited London Clay
2.00m...	Naturally deposited London Clay

- 7.3 Natural London Clay was encountered at 2m below the ground level. It was overlaid by a layer of redeposited clay and a layer of made ground.

### Window Sample 1 002

- 7.4 The table below sets out the stratigraphic sequence encountered in WS1 002.

Depth (BGL)	Description
0m- .20m	Concrete surface of the car park
0.20m-0.60m	Hardcore. Made ground
0.60m-0.90m	Dark hydrocarbon-contaminated clay
0.90m-1.80m	Soft light brown clay. Redeposited London Clay
1.80m-3.00m	Naturally deposited London Clay

- 7.5 Natural London Clay was encountered at 1.80m below the ground level. It was overlaid by a layer of redeposited clay, a layer of grey, hydrocarbon contaminated clay and a layer of made ground.

### Window Sample 1 003

- 7.6 The table below sets out the stratigraphic sequence encountered in WS1 003.

Depth (BGL)	Description
0m- .30m	Concrete surface of the car park
0.30m-0.80m	Tar, sand, modern bricks. Made ground
0.80m-2.10m	Soft light brown clay. Redeposited London Clay
2.10m...	Naturally deposited London Clay

- 7.7 Natural London Clay was encountered at 2.10m below the ground level. It was overlaid by a layer of redeposited clay, and a layer of made ground.

### Window Sample 1 004

- 7.8 The table below sets out the stratigraphic sequence encountered in WS1 004.

Depth (BGL)	Description
0m- .50m	Concrete surface of the car park
0.50m-0.60m	Concrete fragments with clay. Made ground
0.60m-2.00m	Soft light brown clay. Redeposited London Clay
2.00m...	Naturally deposited London Clay

- 7.9 Natural London Clay was encountered at 2.00m below the ground level. It was overlaid by a layer of redeposited clay, and a layer of made ground

### Window Sample 1 005

- 7.10 The table below sets out the stratigraphic sequence encountered in WS1 005.

Depth (BGL)	Description
0m- .30m	Concrete surface of the car park
0.30m-0.70m	Concrete fragments with clay. Made ground
0.70m-1.20m	Soft light brown clay. Redeposited London Clay
1.30m...	Naturally deposited London Clay

- 7.11 Natural London Clay was encountered at 1.30m below the ground level. It was overlaid by a layer of redeposited clay, and a layer of made ground.
- 7.12 No archaeological finds or features were encountered in any of the sample windows.

### Test Pit 1001

- 7.13 The level of the surface of Trench 1001 is not known.

Depth (BGL)	Context Number	Description
0m-0.25m	(1001/001)	Tarmac grade 1. Modern car park surface
0.25m-2.30m, NFE	(1001/002)	Compact, dark brown, 20% large CBM and concrete fragments in sandy clay matrix and frequent small stones. Made ground.

- 7.14 The earliest deposit exposed in Test Pit 1001 underneath the tarmac (1001/001) was a layer of made ground comprising concrete fragments and CBM in a matrix of sandy clay (1001/002).
- 7.15 No finds or features of archaeological significance were identified in Test Pit 1001.

### Trench 1002

- 7.16 The level of the surface of Trench 1002 is not known

Depth (BGL)	Context Number	Description
0m-0.25m	(1002/001)	Tarmac grade1. Modern car park surface
0.25m-0.80m	(1002/002)	Firm, dark greyish brown silty clay with frequent CBM and lenses of ash and charcoal. Made ground
0.80m-3.00m	(1002/003)	Natural clay deposit. Firm, dark orange-brown clay.

- 7.17 The earliest deposit identified in Test Pit 1002 was a 2.2m+ thick layer of orange-brown clay which is interpreted as London Clay (1002/003). It was

overlain by a 0.55m layer of made ground (1002/002) and a 0.25m layer of tarmac grade1 and make up (1002/001).

- 7.18 No finds or features of archaeological significance were identified in Test Pit 1002.

## **8 FINDS**

- 8.1 No finds were collected during the course of the Watching Brief.

## **9 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 The watching brief did not identify any archaeological remains. However, it has been demonstrated that the deposit horizons are very disturbed, and the potential for archaeological remains to survive is low.
- 9.2 Natural London Clay was identified in all window samples and one of the two geo-tech pits, ranging in depth from the surface from 1.30m to 2.10m.
- 9.3 It appears that the early 20<sup>th</sup> century phase of horizontal truncation removed any possible archaeological deposits, impacting the entirety of the area of site inspected.

## **10 PUBLICATION**

- 10.1 Due to the nature of the results, it is suggested that publication be limited to a summary in the London Archaeology Round-up and publication via the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) (Appendix B).

## **11 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION**

- 11.1 The archive, consisting of paper records, drawings, and digital photographs, will be deposited with the London Archaeological Archive Resource Centre (LAARC) at the Museum of London.

## 12 BIBLIOGRAPHY

AOC Archaeology (2007a). *Wembley W03, Wembley, London Borough of Brent: An Archaeological Watching Brief Report.*

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Museum of London (1994). *Archaeological Site Manual (3<sup>rd</sup> ed).*



Figure 1: Site Location Plan

Figure 2: Detailed location plan

## APPENDIX A - Context Register

Context No.	Context Description	Length/m	Width/m	Depth/m
1001/001	Tarmac	2.1m	0.6m+	0.25m
1001/002	Made ground	2.1m	0.6m+	0.255m
1002/001	Tarmac	2.1m	0.7m+	0.25m
1002/002	Made ground	2.1m	0.7m+	0.55m
1002/003	Clay	2.1m	0.7m+	2.2m+

## APPENDIX B - OASIS Form

OASIS ID: aocarcha1-38630

### Project details

Project name	Wembley W10
Short description of the project	An archaeological Watching Brief was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group between 21st January and 20th February 2008 on an area to the west of the new Wembley Stadium, London Borough of Brent. The project was undertaken in association with a programme of geo-technical investigations on behalf of RPS Planning. The archaeological investigations involved the observation and recording of five window samples (WS1 001-005) and two machine excavated geo-technical test pits (TP 1001-1002). No significant archaeological remains or finds were identified during the watching brief.
Project dates	Start: 21-01-2008 End: 20-02-2008
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	WEM07 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	WKW07 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 3 - Built over
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	SMR enhancement

### Project location

Country	England
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Site location	GREATER LONDON BRENT WEMBLEY Wembley W10
Postcode	HA9
Site coordinates	TQ 1901 8565 51.5566758803 -0.283119494429 51 33 24 N 000 16 59 W Point

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	AOC Archaeology Group
Project brief originator	RPS (PTE)
Project design originator	RPS (PTE)
Project director/manager	Andy Leonard
Project supervisor	Chris Clarke
Project supervisor	Paolo Guarino
Type of sponsor/funding body	RPS

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive Exists?	No
Paper Archive recipient	Museum of London
Paper Archive ID	WPB08
Paper Media available	'Context sheet', 'Report', 'Unpublished Text'

Paper Archive  
notes

Stratigraphic

### Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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## OASIS:

Please e-mail [English Heritage](#) for OASIS help and advice

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