

# Deen City Farm, 39 Windsor Avenue, Mitcham, London Borough of Merton

## An Archaeological Watching Brief Report

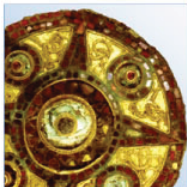
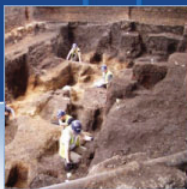
Planning Application Number: 07/P2879

National Grid Reference: TQ 26256 69152

AOC Project no: 30116

Site Code: DCY08

July 2008



ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

---

## Deen City Farm, 39 Windsor Avenue, Mitcham, London Borough of Merton: An Archaeological Watching Brief Report

---

On Behalf of: **Deen City Farm  
39 Windsor Avenue  
Merton Abbey  
London  
SW19 2RR**

**National Grid Reference (NGR): TQ 26256 69152**

**AOC Project No: 30116**

**Prepared by: Ian Hogg**

**Illustration by: Jon Moller**

**Date of Excavation: 28<sup>th</sup> July 2008**

**Date of Report: September 2008**

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

**Author: Ian Hogg**

**Date: August 2008**

**Approved by: Melissa Melikian**

**Date: September 2008**

**Draft/Final Report Stage: Melissa Melikian**

**Date: September 2008**

**Enquiries to:** AOC Archaeology Group  
Unit 7  
St Margarets Business Centre  
Moor Mead Road  
Twickenham  
TW1 1JS  
  
Tel. 020 8843 7380



[www.aocarchaeology.com](http://www.aocarchaeology.com)

## Contents

	Page
List of illustrations.....	iii
Non-Technical Summary.....	iv
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. PLANNING BACKGROUND.....	1
3. GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY.....	2
4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	2
4.1 Prehistoric (Before c.AD 43).....	2
4.2 Roman (c. AD43 – 450).....	2
4.3 Saxon (c. AD451 – 1065).....	2
4.4 Medieval (c. AD1066 – 1540).....	2
4.5 Post-Medieval (c. AD1540-Modern).....	3
5. AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION.....	3
6. STRATEGY.....	4
7. SCOPE OF WORKS.....	4
8. METHODOLOGY.....	5
9. RESULTS.....	6
10. FINDS.....	6
11. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	6
12. BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	6
Appendix A: Context Register.....	12
Appendix B: OASIS FORM.....	13

## List of illustrations

Figure 1 – Site Location Plan

Figure 2 - Detailed Site Location Plan and Trench Location

## **Non-Technical Summary**

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by AOC archaeology at Deen City Farm, Mitcham, London Borough of Merton, on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2008 on behalf of Deen City Farm. Ground reduction for a wind turbine and associated cable was carried out. Natural deposits were not reached and only modern made ground was observed.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document is a report on an archaeological Watching Brief carried out at Deen City Farm, 39 Windsor Avenue, Mitcham, London Borough of Merton, SW19 2RR
- 1.2 The site is centre on National Grid Reference TQ 26256 69152 and is within land bounded by Morden Hall Park to the south, allotments to the east and Lombard Business Park to the north and west (see Figure 2) . It lies in the southern part of Merton; Mitcham is a kilometre to the east and Morden a kilometre to the south. The site is approximately 2 hectares in size.

## 2. PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The local planning authority is the London Borough of Merton. Archaeological advice to the council is provided by the Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS).
- 2.2 Planning permission to undertake the proposed development has been granted under the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) (Ref No. 07/P2879) subject to the following condition

*"No development shall take place until the applicant or any successors in title has made arrangements for an archaeological "watching brief" to monitor development groundworks and to record any archaeological evidence revealed. These arrangements are to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in accordance with the "watching brief" proposals agreed pursuant to this condition and shall be carried out by a suitably qualified investigating body acceptable to the Local Planning."*

*"Reasons for Condition: Important archaeological remains may exist on this site. The Local Planning Authority wishes to ensure that any archaeological "watching brief" is carried out during the development groundworks so that archaeological remains not protected by other measures are investigated and recorded."*

- 2.3 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 the archaeology advisor to the London Borough of Merton, Diane Walls.
- 2.4 The site lies within an Archaeological Priority Area, as defined by the Unitary Development Plan for the London Borough of Merton.
- 2.5 The proposed scheme involves the construction of a wind turbine and associated cables.
- 2.6 In accordance with PPG 16, it was imposed as a condition on planning consent by the archaeology advisor to the London Borough of Merton that an archaeological Watching Brief be carried out, in order to record any archaeological deposits and features exposed during the development.
- 2.7 A Desk Based Assessment was not required as part of this process due to the limited scale of the development. The WSI (AOC 2008) fulfilled the requirement for a detailed archaeological project design for the first stage in this process - a Watching Brief.

### 3. GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 3.1 The British Geological Survey Map (BGS Sheet 270) indicates that the site lies upon alluvium and sands and gravels of the Second Terrace River Deposits.

### 4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

#### 4.1 Prehistoric (Before c.AD 43)

- 4.1.1 Evidence of archaeological activity before the Bronze Age is sparse in this area, however a Mesolithic flint core was found at 181 Central Road, Morden (SMR Ref No. 1356703).
- 4.1.2 Some Neolithic and Bronze activity was present close to the site, at Kings College Sports Ground, 1km to the east: a series of probable Bronze Age ditches were excavated, Neolithic and Bronze Age pottery was also found.
- 4.1.3 On Varley Way 0.2km east of the site, on an area that was previously part of Deen City Farm, small river channels containing Late Bronze Age pottery were excavated.

#### 4.2 Roman (c. AD43 – 450)

- 4.2.1 Archaeological evidence has identified the presence of a nearby Roman settlement. This includes finds and features of Roman date, the most significant being a cemetery 0.2km east of the site. The inhumations have been left *in situ*.
- 4.2.2 In addition to the cemetery, several inhumations were discovered in a ditch that was dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD by the pottery therein. This was at Varley Way.
- 4.2.3 At Benedict Road (SMR Ref No. 021176-8) ditches and pits containing Roman pottery were excavated, and this suggests direct occupation. Roman activity was also noted during the excavation of Merton Priory Domestic Range on Merantun Way (SMR Ref No. 030376).

#### 4.3 Saxon (c. AD451 – 1065)

- 4.3.1 Although very little evidence of Saxon activity has been noted in the immediate area around the site a very large Saxon cemetery has been excavated on the north bank of the River Wandle. This is also known as a possible site for the Battle of Merton in c. AD871 in which King Ethelred of Wessex was killed.

#### 4.4 Medieval (c. AD1066 – 1540)

- 4.4.1 The Domesday Book reveals Merton to have been the largest settlement in the area. Mitcham was a small farming community and just 14 people occupied Morden. *Michelham* (Mitcham) was noted as having 56 meadows and yielding four hides and one virgate per year. It continued as a largely agricultural area throughout the medieval period, although it expanded towards the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, becoming a country retreat from the City of London and beginning to expand along the banks of the Wandle. An excavation at 80 Church Road, Mitcham (SMR Ref No. 022302-4), 1km east of the site, recorded pits of medieval date that contained domestic pottery. This indicates direct settlement in the immediate vicinity of the pits.
- 4.4.2 Medieval Merton was dominated by the Augustinian priory 0.6km north of the site, founded in 1114. This priory by the Wandle was dismantled in 1538 during the dissolution, and little evidence of it

survives: the Chapterhouse foundations now lie beneath Merantun Way. During the 1988-90 excavations here (SMR ref No. 030376) foundations of four separate phases of building alterations were noted as well as a cemetery to the north of the church.

#### **4.5 Post-Medieval (c. AD1540-Modern)**

- 4.5.1 During the Elizabethan period the presence of Lavender fields in the vicinity of the River Wandle led to the idea that it had 'good air'. This led to an influx of the wealthy classes including Sir Walter Raleigh and John Donne who both had residences in the area.
- 4.5.2 Directly south of the site is Morden Hall Park, which contains a villa built in 1770 for John Ewart, a distiller and merchant, who enclosed the land. Other estate buildings survive, including two 18th-century cottages, and two water mills, which until 1922 were used for grinding snuff.
- 4.5.3 Industrialisation saw Mitcham expand rapidly especially along the River Wandle which flows within 0.1km of the site. This industry included the manufacture of paint and iron. The iron industry in this area led to the construction of the Surrey Iron Railway in 1803, the world's first public railway. Despite the subsequent collapse of this in the 1840's Mitcham continued to thrive, doubling in population between 1900 and 1910.
- 4.5.4 Despite the industrialisation of Mitcham from the 18<sup>th</sup> century the area now occupied by Deen City Farm appears to have stayed relatively open. The sites at Varley Way and 181 Central Road Morden both recorded plough soil containing medieval pottery and was only overlain by 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century overburden.

### **5. AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION**

- 5.1 The aims of the Watching Brief were defined 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 the archaeology advisor to the London Borough of Merton 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.
- 5.2.1 The specific objectives of the Watching Brief were to:
- Determine the presence of any remains of prehistoric date.
  - Determine the presence of any remains of Bronze Age date on site.
  - Determine the presence of any remains of Roman date on site, especially relating to the nearby inhumation cemetery
  - Determine the presence of any remains of medieval date on site.



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

## 6. STRATEGY

- 6.1 Fieldwork procedures followed the Museum of London Archaeological Site Manual (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition) (MoL 1994).
- 6.2 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 2002).
  - Institute of Field Archaeology – Standards and Guidance and Guidelines for Finds Work (IFA 1992).
  - Institute of Field Archaeologists – Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations (IFA 1994).
  - Institute of Field Archaeologists – Code of Conduct (IFA 1997).
  - United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – Conservation Guidelines No.2 (UKIC 1983).
  - United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – Guidance for Archaeological Conservation Practice (UKIC 1990).
  - Council for British Archaeology – First Aid for Finds (Second Edition) (CBA 1987).
- 6.3 The Watching Brief was carried out during ground reduction on the site.
- 6.4 A unique site code for the project was obtained from the Museum of London **DCY08**.
- 6.5 The Watching Brief was undertaken by a Project Supervisor under the overall direction of Andy Leonard, Divisional Head of Fieldwork at AOC Archaeology Group.

## 7. SCOPE OF WORKS

- 7.1 A two phase approach was adopted for the groundworks. Phase 1 consisted of the excavation of a block trench measuring 2.5 x 2.5 m for the wind turbine foundation. The second phase involved the excavation of a trench for the associated cables (Figure 2).
- 7.2 The Watching Brief was carried out during the first phase, excavation of the block trench. The results from this were to inform on the need for further monitoring and recording. However, due to the ground reduction being completed in a single day an archaeologist was present to monitor all groundworks.

## 8. METHODOLOGY

- 8.1 The Project Supervisor was present to observe and record any deposits revealed by the excavation. The Supervisor was positioned outside the working area of the mechanical excavator, in the normal working arrangement. If access to the trench was needed the machine ceased operations and if necessary relocated to ensure safe access. Subject to safe access, the archaeologist would enter the trench to carry out close inspection or record limited sections.
- 8.2 If an area was excavated to a vertical depth beyond 1.2m, recording would be conducted from ground level, and no archaeologist would enter an unshored excavation in excess of 1.2m.
- 8.3 Machining was carried out with a flat bladed bucket (toothless), and in horizontal spits
- 8.4 Archaeological recording, where not precluded by Health & Safety considerations, consisted of:
- Limited hand cleaning of archaeological sections and surfaces sufficient to establish the stratigraphic sequence exposed.
  - The collection of dating evidence from *in-situ* deposits and spoil scans.
  - A scaled photographic recording of representative exposed sections and surfaces, along with sufficient photographs to establish the setting and scale of the groundworks.
  - A record of the datum levels of archaeological deposits.
- 8.5 Records were produced using either pro-forma context or trench record sheets and by the single context planning method and were compatible with those published by the Museum of London (MoL 1994)
- 8.6 A record of the full sequence of all archaeological deposits as revealed in the Watching Brief was made. Plans and sections of features would be drawn at an appropriate scale of 1:10 or 1:20, with sections drawn at 1:10.
- 8.7 All recording was in accordance with the standards and requirements of the *Archaeological Field Manual* (Museum of London Archaeology Service 3rd edition 1994).
- 8.8 A continuous unique numbering system was employed. A block of numbers in a continuous sequence was allocated. The following registers were kept on standardised forms: contexts; sections; plans; and photographs.
- 8.9 Written descriptions, comprising both factual data and interpretative elements, were recorded on standardized sheets. Where stratified deposits are encountered a 'Harris'-type matrix was compiled during the course of the excavation.
- 8.10 Single context planning will be used as the standard method, and was used where there were stratigraphic relationships between features and layers, although it would be acceptable for multiple isolated features, such as post-holes, to be planned on the same sheet.
- 8.11 A full black and white, and colour (35mm transparency) photographic record was maintained. This illustrated the principal features and finds both in detail and in a general context. The photographic record also included working shots to represent more generally the nature of the fieldwork. Digital photography was also be used to supplement the record on film.

- 8.12 At the beginning of the project (prior to commencement of fieldwork) the landowner and the relevant museum were contacted regarding the preparation, ownership and deposition of the archive and finds.

## 9 RESULTS

Context	Thickness	Description
1	0.30m	Mid brown sandy silt topsoil
2	1.00m	Dark orangey brown sandy silt made ground
3	0.05m	Redeposited grey brown clay layer

- 9.1 The excavated area was 2.5m square and 1.35m deep, while the cable trench was 100m long and 0.85m deep. Natural deposits were not reached during the ground reduction. The lowest horizon was a layer of grey brown clay made ground (3) 0.05m thick, this was not fully excavated; it contained lumps of plastic and brick. This was overlain by (2), a layer of dark orangey brown made ground 1.00m thick, this contained pieces of brick.
- 9.2 Layer (2) was sealed by the mid brown topsoil (1) which was 0.30m thick.

## 10. FINDS

- 10.1 No finds were retained from the contexts. Only modern plastic and brick were observed in any of the contexts.

## 11. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 The investigation achieved its aims in establishing the absence of any archaeology in the investigation area. Only modern material was observed in the contexts excavated. It is possible that archaeology is present beneath the contexts revealed; however, these would not be disturbed by the groundworks.
- 11.2 Consequently, no further archaeological work is recommended. The results of the watching brief will be made public via the ADS OASIS (Appendix B) project. A copy of this report will be made available to the local studies library. No further analysis or reporting is considered necessary.

## 12. BIBLIOGRAPHY

AOC Archaeology Group 2003. *Fieldwork Sector On-Site Handbook*.

AOC Archaeology Group 2008. *Deen City Farm, 39 Windsor Avenue, Mitcham, London Borough of Merton: A Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*.

Association of County Archaeological Officers, 1994. *Model Briefs and Specifications for Archaeological Assessments and Field Evaluations*

Council for British Archaeology (1987). *First Aid For Finds (Second Edition)*.

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

English Heritage 1991. *Management of Archaeological Projects*.

English Heritage 1998 *English Heritage London Region Archaeological Guidance Papers 2, 3, and 4*

English Heritage 2002. *Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation*.

Geological Survey of Great Britain (England and Wales) 1981. Sheet 270 South London.

Institute of Field Archaeology 1992. *Standards and Guidance and Guidelines for Finds Work*.

Institute of Field Archaeologists 1994. *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations*.

Institute of Field Archaeologists 1997. *Code of Conduct*.

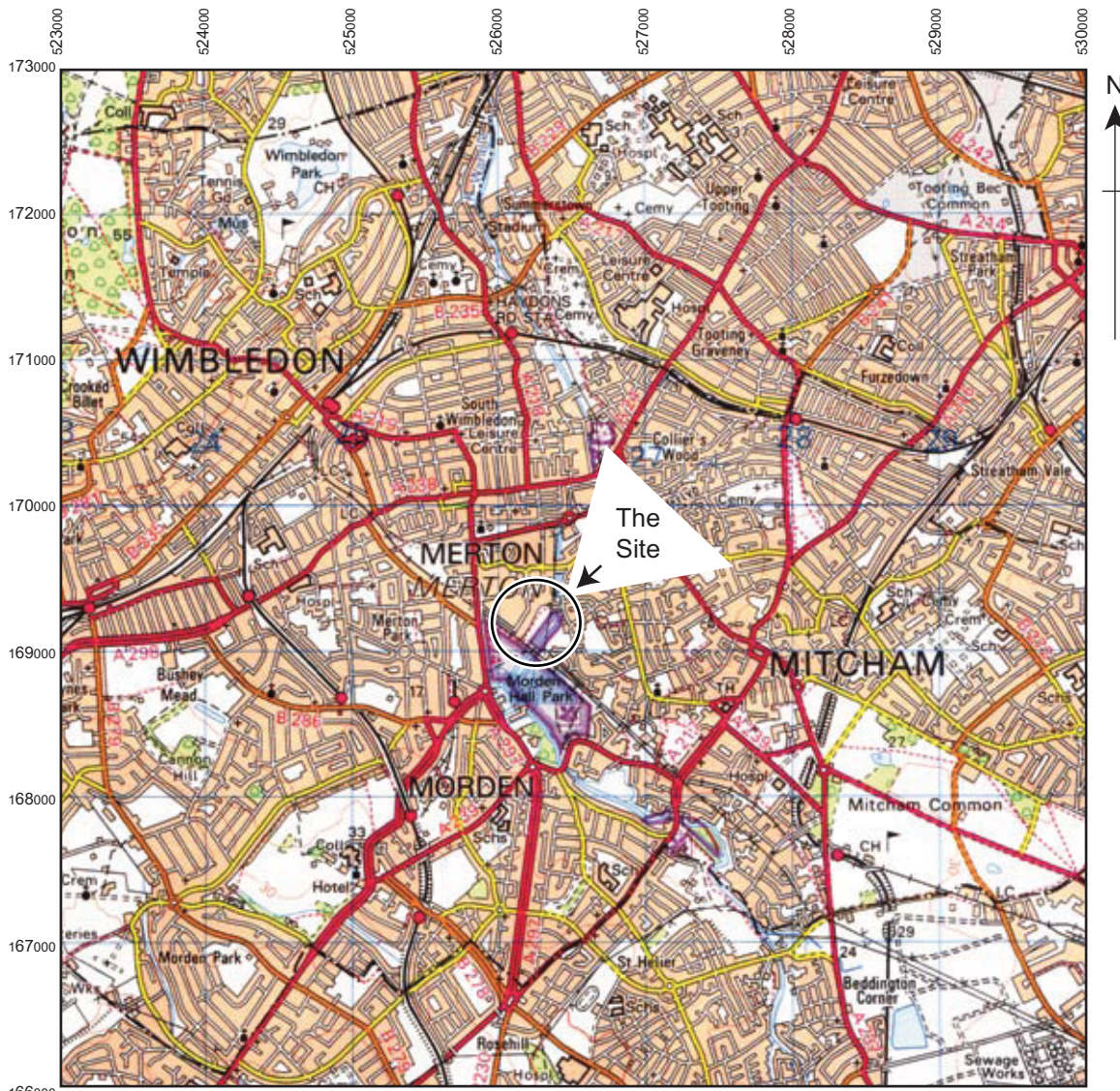
Institute of Field Archaeologists 2001. *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

Museum of London 1994. *Archaeological Site Manual, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition*

Museum of London 2002. *A research framework for London Archaeology*

United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (1983). *Conservation Guidelines No 2*.

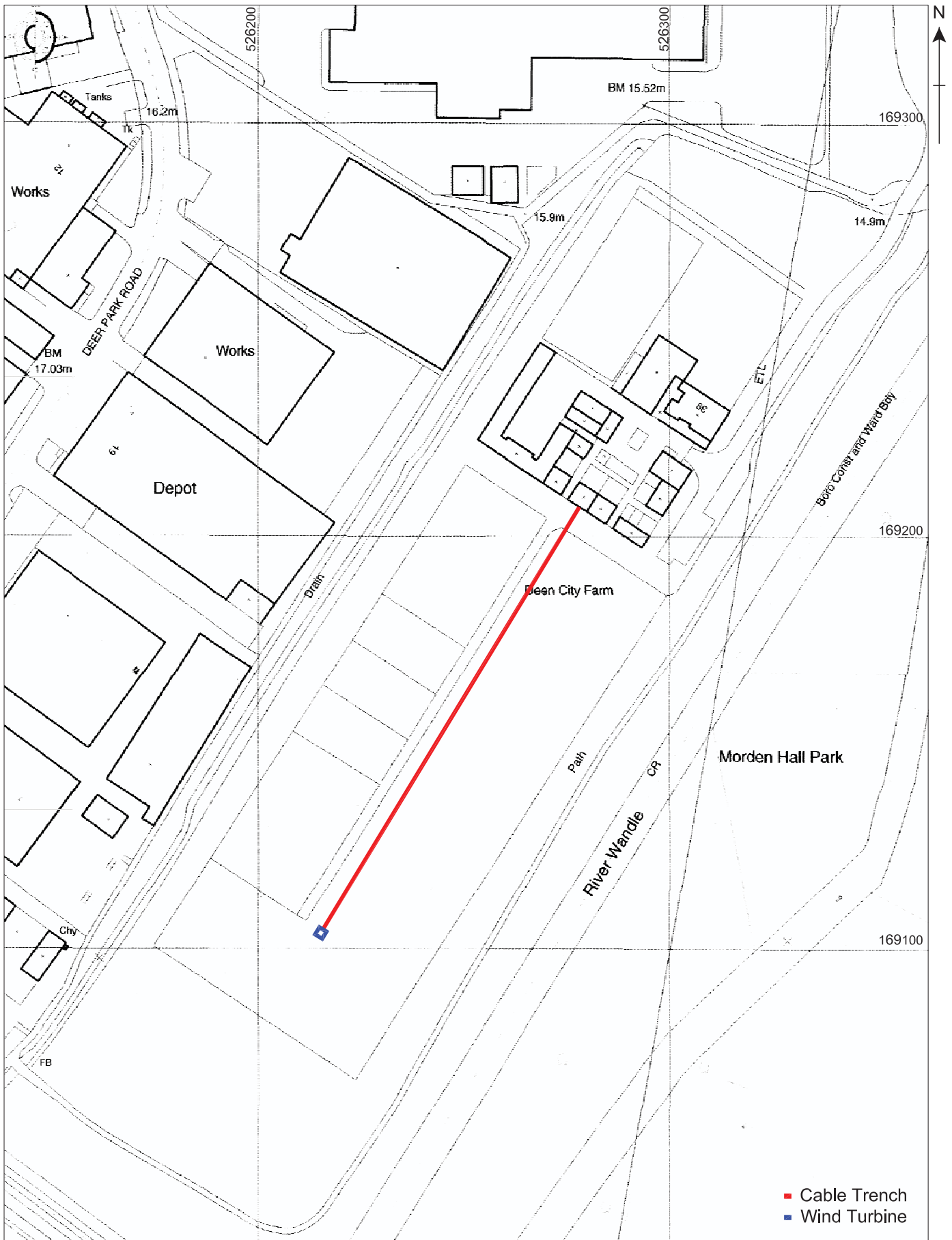
United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (1990). *Guidance for Archaeological Conservation Practice*.



Based on the Ordnance Survey's 1:50 000 Landranger map of 1999 with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright. Licence No. AL 1000 16114



Figure 1: Site Location



Based on the Ordnance Survey's 1:1250 Superplan Digital Data of 2008 with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office © Crown Copyright, Licence No. AL 100023757



1:1250

Figure 2: Detailed Site Location Plan



---

## Appendices



## Appendix A: Context Register

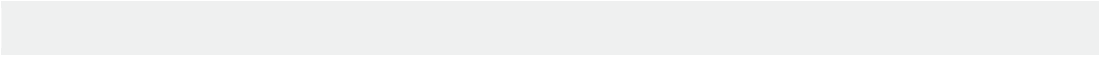
Context No.	Context Description	Length	Width	Depth
1	Topsoil	2.5m	2.5m	0.30m
2	Modern made ground	2.5m	2.5m	1.00m
3	Modern made ground	2.5m	2.5m	0.05m

## Appendix B: OASIS FORM

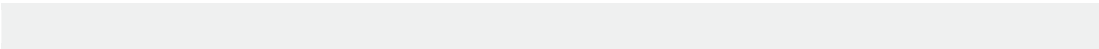
### OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

[List of Projects](#) | [Search Projects](#) | [New project](#) | [Change your details](#) | [HER coverage](#) | [Change country](#) | [Log out](#)

#### Printable version



**OASIS ID: aocarcha1-46639**



#### Project details

Project name Deen City Farm, Mitcham

Short description of the project An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by AOC archaeology at Deen City Farm, Mitcham on behalf of Deen City Farm. Ground reduction for a wind turbine and associated cable was carried out. Natural deposits were not reached and only modern made ground was observed.

Project dates Start: 28-07-2008 End: 28-07-2008

Previous/future work No / Not known

Any associated project reference codes DCY08 – Site code

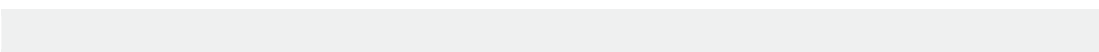
Type of project Recording project

Site status Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)

Current Land use Cultivated Land 2 - Operations to a depth less than 0.25m

Investigation type 'Watching Brief'

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16



#### Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON MERTON MITCHAM Deen City Farm, 39 Windsor Avenue, Mitcham, Merton

Postcode SW19 2RR

Study area 2.00 Hectares

Site coordinates TQ 26256 69152 51.4068137315 -0.184540295789 51 24 24 N 000 11 04 W Point

### Project creators

Name of Organization AOC Archaeology Group

Project brief originator EH GLAAS

Project design AOC Archaeology Group  
originator

Project director/manager Andy Leonard

Project supervisor Adam Lord

Type of Developer  
sponsor/funding body

Name of Deen City Farm  
sponsor/funding body

### Project archives

Physical Archive No  
Exists?

Digital Archive LAARC  
recipient

Digital Contents 'Stratigraphic'

Digital available      Media 'Images raster / digital photography','Text'

Paper recipient      Archive LAARC

Paper Contents      'Stratigraphic'

Paper available      Media 'Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes','Report'

---

Entered by              Ian Hogg (ian.hogg@aoc.com)

Entered on             6 August 2008

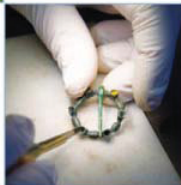
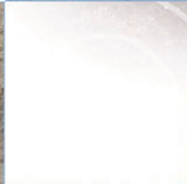
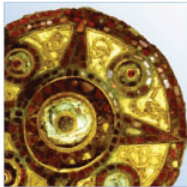
---

## OASIS:

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

© ADS 1996-2006 Created by [Jo Gilham and Jen Mitcham, email](#) Last modified Friday 3 February 2006

Cite only: <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/oasis/print.cfm> for this page



**AOC Archaeology Group**, Unit 7, St Margarets Business Centre, Moor Mead Road, Twickenham TW1 1JS  
tel: 020 8843 7380 | fax: 020 8892 0549 | e-mail: london@aocarchaeology.com

[www.aocarchaeology.com](http://www.aocarchaeology.com)