

113-115 London Road, Mitcham. London Borough of Merton An Archaeological Evaluation Report

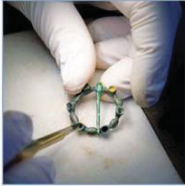
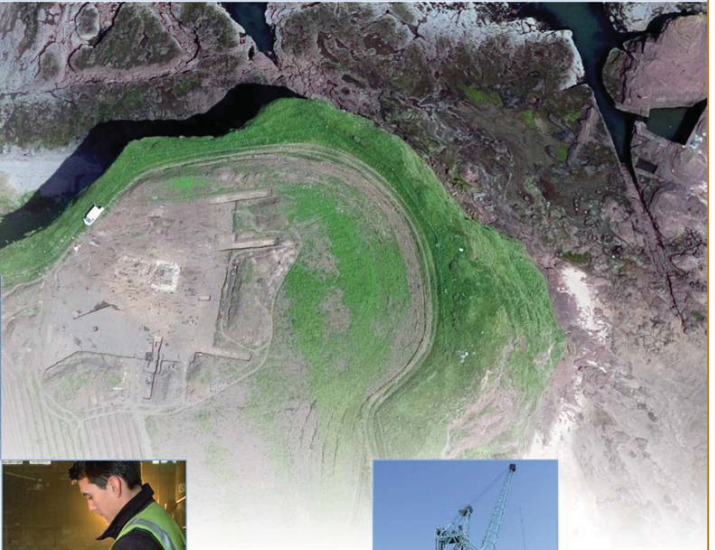
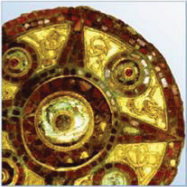
Planning Application Number: 04/P0825

Site Code: ELH07

National Grid Reference Number: TQ 2792 6945

AOC Project no: 7885

Date: April 2009



ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

**113-115 LONDON ROAD, MITCHAM,
LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON
An Archaeological Evaluation Report**

On Behalf of:	Anerley Park Limited Blue Sky House 96D South End Croydon CR0 1DQ
National Grid Reference (NGR):	TQ 2792 6945
AOC Project No:	7885
Prepared by:	Catherine Edwards
Illustration by:	Jonathan Moller
Date of Fieldwork:	8th April 2009
Date of Report:	30th April 2009

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

Author: Catherine Edwards	Date: April 2009
Approved by: Melissa Melikian	Date: April 2009
Final Report Stage:	Date:

Enquiries to: 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



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Non-Technical Summary

An archaeological evaluation, commissioned by Anerley Park Limited, was conducted by AOC Archaeology on the 8th March 2009 at 113-115 London Road, Mitcham, London Borough of Merton. The evaluation comprised the excavation of single trench measuring 8m x 2m at base.

Natural sand and gravel was recorded at between 20.77mOD and 20.27mOD. Cutting into the natural deposits was a sub-square shaped pit which contained dumped ash and clay. Finds recovered from the feature date the pit to between the 1820's and the early 1900's. A post-medieval or modern manhole with associated services was also recorded within the trench.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document is a report on an archaeological evaluation undertaken at 113-115 London Road, Mitcham, London Borough of Merton (Figure 1). The archaeological investigation was commissioned by Anerley Park Limited.
- 1.2 The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TQ 2792 6945, and is within land bounded by private buildings to the north, Blenheim Business Centre to the east, and London Road to the west. The site is approximately rectangular in shape (Figure 2). The area affected by the development covers a total area of approximately 280m².
- 1.3 The proposed scheme involves the demolition of the existing buildings and the erection of a four storey building to provide Class A2 or B1 units on the ground floor and 10 self-contained flats on the ground floor and above.

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), English Heritage.
- 2.2 Planning permission to undertake the development has been granted under the Town & Country Planning Act (1990) (Ref No.: 04/P0825), subject to conditions. The archaeology condition states that:

“No development shall take place until the applicant (or any successors in title) have secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with the written scheme for investigation which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority (ie Merton). The archaeological works shall be carried out by a suitably qualified investigating body acceptable to Merton.”

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.

- 2.3 It was therefore established that a programme of archaeological evaluation by trenching was required within the footprint of the proposed development.
- 2.4 A desk-based assessment was not prepared for this project.
- 2.5 A written scheme of investigation was prepared by AOC Archaeology, and approved by the GLAAS monitor, priory to work on site (AOC 2009).

3. Geology and Topography

- 3.1 Mitcham is situated on the edge of the Wandle Valley. The British Geological Survey map (BGS Sheet 270), indicates that Mitcham is situated upon Hackney Gravel Formation. The underlying bedrock comprises London Clay.
- 3.2 The Hackney Gravels extend to cover Mitcham Common where these gravels are known to have produced evidence of the earliest prehistoric occupation of the Mitcham area.

4. Archaeological and Historic Background

- 4.1 The following background information has been drawn from a Desk Based Assessment for the Brenley Playing Fields, Mitcham (AOC 2005).

Prehistoric (before c.AD 43)

- 4.2 A few recent archaeological investigations in Mitcham have uncovered stone tools from early prehistoric periods. Archaeological evidence from early prehistoric periods encompasses a range of finds across a number of periods, the very earliest consisting of a tusk and possible skull of *Elephas Primigenius*, and unspecified remains of *Bos Primigenius*. Mitcham, however, is well known for significant lower Palaeolithic archaeological remains identified during gravel extraction in the 19th and early 20th centuries, notably in the area now covered by the Mitcham Common Archaeological Priority Zone.

Bronze Age

- 4.3 There are two entries in the GLSMR that are securely datable to the Bronze Age. The first is a part of a Palstave found in 1863, while the second is a scrap of bronze found in Streatham Park Cemetery

Roman (c. AD 43 - 450)

- 4.4 There is evidence for Roman activity in the area, the Roman road to London, Stane Street, surviving as Colliers Wood High Street. The first is a stray Roman coin found on the north side of Mitcham Common. The second is a single piece of Roman tile retrieved from a linear feature during an archaeological evaluation carried out in 1990.

Anglo-Saxon (c.451-1065)

- 4.5 During the Saxon period the area was known as *Micham* or “Big Settlement”. Although no direct archaeological evidence of the location or extent of this settlement has yet been discovered, Mitcham is also well known for a very large Saxon cemetery – the largest of a series of such cemeteries known around the southern outskirts of London – located on either side of Morden Road, west of Mitcham station. This cemetery was first discovered during gravel extraction and building works. A Royal Charter of 967 refers to *Michamingemerke* (the boundary of the people of Micham). This boundary is largely the same as that between the modern Borough of Mitcham and the Urban District of Morden. One hundred years after this reference, Mitcham is known to have been in the hands of Saxon landowners and divided into six main estates, Britric, Ledmer, Edmer and Lank and two unnamed tenants of Chertsey Abbey.

Medieval (c.1066 - 1485)

- 4.6 By the Domesday Survey of 1086, the former holdings of the Saxon landlords in Mitcham had passed to Norman Nobles, principally Bishop Odo of Bayeaux and William Fitz Anscuff, the Sheriff of Surrey. Domesday also records 250 people living in two *vills* (hamlets) - Mitcham (modern Upper Mitcham) and Whitford (the area around, and to the south of, Lower Green). After 1088, the Manors of Mitcham changed hands frequently and by the 13th century much of it was within the estate of Baldwin de l'Isle, Earl of Devon and Wight. De l'Isle gave Mitcham to the Priory of St. Mary Overy in 1249, in whose hands it remained until the Dissolution of 1538. During this period, Mitcham was largely comprised of arable land and was sparsely populated, but in the 14th century, the parish was already beginning to attract wealthy London merchants and by the 16th century had become highly fashionable with those connected with court and government. In the reign of Elizabeth I, both the explorer, Walter Raleigh, and poet, John Donne, resided here for a time and the Monarch herself stayed in the area on three occasions

Post-Medieval (c.1485 - modern)

- 4.7 By the time of the Civil War in 1642 Mitcham had become a prosperous agricultural village, with wealthy merchants and those seeking refuge from the rigours of London life settling in the town. Prominent among these was Robert Cranmer. He had purchased the manor of Mitcham Canons by 1653 and his family remained landlords for five generations. The Canons and other fine houses, some of which still stand, are the legacy of increasing trade in the Stuart and Georgian periods which saw wealth flood into Mitcham. The village became known as the 'Montpelier of England' due to its fine air which was a blessing for Londoners escaping the plague - the worst outbreak of which decimated the city's population in 1665. Mitcham also became an important halting post on the route from London to Brighton and inns such as the King's Head, which survives today as the Burn Bullock, sprung up along the route. Milestones at Figges Marsh and Lower Green West still testify to a time when tollgates exacted taxes from road users at Colliers Wood and Figges Marsh.
- 4.8 The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were marked by the ascendancy of industry. Cultivation and distillation of essential oils, particularly lavender and later peppermint, was undertaken at the works of Ephraim Potter and William Moore. The processing of textiles, snuff, flour and paper was carried out along the Wandle. The Surrey Iron Railway, opened in 1803, which stopped at Mitcham en route from Wandsworth to Croydon, was the first public railway in the world. Its collapse in the 1830s with the advent of steam locomotives was a watershed in Mitcham's fortunes. The town was skirted by the new railway system and thus did not enjoy the suburban expansion of neighbouring Wimbledon and Croydon. The arrival of such anti-social industries as paint, varnish and linoleum manufacture coincided with the exodus of the wealthy families. It was the death knell for major horticultural enterprise in the area (Potter and Moore broke up in 1886) and Mitcham's rural atmosphere disappeared as the population doubled to 29,606 between 1900 and 1910.
- 4.9 The administrative structure had difficulty coping with the rapid expansion and Mitcham was run by a succession of bodies before its incorporation into the new London Borough of Merton in 1965. Thus in less than a century it went from semi-feudal society to an urban municipal society. Much of Mitcham was developed into new housing in the 20 years from 1910 to 1930, but today's open spaces were also made permanent. The achievement of borough status in 1934 was built on the expansion of local industry and Mitcham's position as a booming dormitory town. Inter-war development was surpassed by housing schemes in the years after the Second World War, making significant changes to the area

5. Aims and Objectives

5.1 The aims of the evaluation 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 The specific objectives of the evaluation were to:

- Determine the presence of any remains of prehistoric date.
- Determine the presence of any remains of Saxon date on the site.
- Assess the potential of the site to inform on the post-medieval development and chronology of Mitcham.
- Assess the degree and extent of truncation of earlier deposits by the phases of late post-medieval and modern buildings on the site.

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

6. Strategy

6.1 Fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the following:

- English Heritage – Management of Archaeological Projects (EH 1991).
- English Heritage – Archaeological Guidance Paper 3: Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork (EH 1998a).
- English Heritage – Archaeological Assessment and Evaluation Reports (Guidelines) (EH 1992).
- 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 – 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).

6.2 All works were informed by:

- Council for British Archaeology – *First Aid For Finds* (Second Edition) (CBA 1987).
- Museum of London – *Archaeological Site Manual* (Third Edition) (MoL 1994).

7. Evaluation Methodology

7.1 The excavation of the evaluation trench, measuring 8m x 2m, was undertaken with one minor modification to the methodology as stated in the WSI (AOC 2009). The trench was located slightly further to the east to line up with a proposed foundation line. The trench was still located within the footprints of the proposed building.

7.2 A sondage was excavated into the base of the trench to verify that the gravel observed in the base of the trench was a natural deposit.

7.3 The evaluation was conducted by the author under the overall management of Andy Leonard, Fieldwork Divisional Manager for AOC Archaeology. The site was monitored by Diane Walls of Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service on behalf of the London Borough of Merton.

7.4 The site code **ELH07** was obtained from [London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre \(LAARC\)](#) prior to work on site and was used for all fieldwork.

8. Results

8.1 Trench 1

Height (mOD)	Depth	Context Number	Description/Interpretation
21.55 – 21.30	0.25m	01	Grey silt with concrete, metal, plastic and glass – Modern demolition rubble.
21.30 – 21.07	0.23m	02	Dark brown black sandy clay with pebbles, brick and tile. – Garden Soil.
21.07 – 20.77	0.30m	03	Dark grey clay sand with inclusions of brick, pebbles and post medieval pottery.
20.77 – 20.48	0.29m	09	Loose gravel and sand – Natural
20.48 – 20.27	0.21m	010	Very compact orange sand and gravel with high frequency of iron manganese – Natural.

- 8.1.1 Natural very compacted orange sand and gravel with a high frequency of iron manganese (010) was recorded within a machine excavated sondage located at the southern end of the trench. This was overlain by a 0.29m thick deposit of loose light brown sand and gravel (09) recorded at a height of 20.77mOD.
- 8.1.2 Cutting into (09) was a rectangular shaped shallow pit [06], measuring 1.50m x 2.60m x 0.32m deep at a height of 20.89mOD. Pit [06] contained two fills; (012) and (011). The lowest fill (012) measured 0.08m thick and comprised of loose ash with inclusions of late post-medieval pottery, clay tobacco pipe and glass. This deposit was overlain by a dark to mid brown clay sand with inclusions of flint and charcoal flecks measuring 0.18m thick (011). This pit appears to be domestic in original and probably relates to the domestic dumping of household ash originating from open fireplaces.
- 8.1.3 Also cutting into (09) were two modern pipes both of which ran into a brick manhole. One pipe was set within a linear cut [08] measuring 0.30m x 1.50m. The cut was filled by grey brown claggy clay with stone inclusions (07). The manhole [04] was constructed in red brick measuring 220mm x 110mm x 70mm. Eight courses of brick were recorded in Flemish Bond at a height of 21.30mOD. The manhole was only partially seen in plan, forming a U-shape, measuring 1.77m x 0.22 wide and 0.50m x 0.22m wide. The centre of the manhole had been backfilled with a large quantity of broken tiles and slate (05).
- 8.1.4 Overlying the length of the trench were two deposits of garden soils, (03) and (02), measuring 0.25m and 0.23m thick respectively. The lowest (03), was recorded as dark grey clay sand with inclusions of brick, stone and post-medieval pottery fragments. This was overlain by (02) a dark brown black sandy clay with inclusions of stone, brick and tile. The final deposit recorded in the trench was a 0.25m-0.45m thick deposit representing recent demolition activity (01). This was recorded at 21.55mOD at the southern end of the trench and at 21.58mOD at the north.

9. Finds

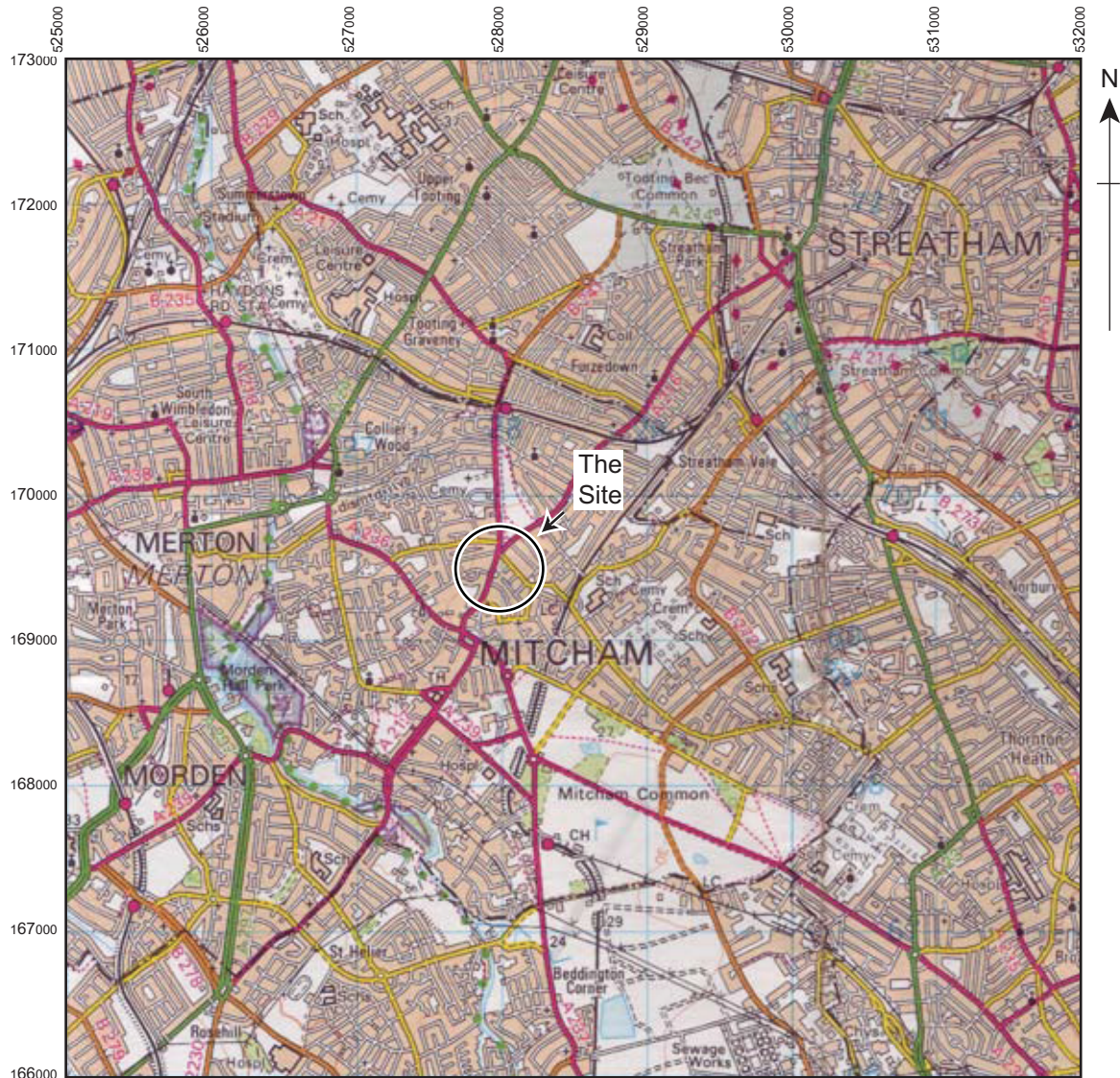
- 9.1 Finds from pit fill (012) were retained for processing and spot dating (Appendix B). The small assemblage of ceramic, clay tobacco pipe, glass and one iron nail dates the context to between the 1820s and the early 1900s.
- 9.2 The pottery recovered from (012) has been identified as examples of colour transfer printed wares (two sherds) and terracotta flower pot, (one sherd). The underglazed transfer printed ware consists of a red/white floral decorated cup (or small jug) upper body piece with rim and a pale black branch effect print from a plate base. The clay tobacco pipe bowls are of the late 19th/early 20th century small upright style (Figure 4). Example <1> has been identified as late 19th century style with a partial stem. It has a cricket bat, ball and wicket decoration on both sides. This piece may be linked historically with the once famed Mitcham Cricket Club. The second example <2> is a bowl with partial damage to a flared rim. It is heavily patterned with central stretched diamond with surrounding circles.
- 9.3 A boat shaped glass ink bottle (Figure 4) and one shard from a Codd bottle were also retrieved from context (012). Both are of late 19th/early 20th century in date. Two pieces of animal bone were identified as a juvenile sheep/goat metatarsal and a rib shaft from sheep/goat/pig. Both bones show evidence of butchery. A single nail shaft was recovered from (012). Assessment of the nail provided not further information.

10. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 10.1 The naturally-lain sand and gravels form a relatively flat horizon within the trench ranging from 20.72mOD at the north end to 20.77mOD at the south end. No subsoil was recorded within the trench. Cutting into natural was a late post-medieval pit relating to domestic ash dumping. Within the northern limits of the trench were two modern pipes and a brick manhole. Covering the trench were two deposits of garden soil which are likely to relate to the property that previously occupied the site.
- 10.2 The archaeological evaluation has met its aims to determine the presence or absence of archaeological remains. One archaeological feature (post-medieval pit) was recorded.
- 10.3 North of the trench, the site appears to have been terraced by the previous structure formerly occupying the site. A concrete slab covers the lower terraced area. The manhole and services recorded within the trench are likely to relate to the former on site structure, as well as the terraced housing adjacent to the site.
- 10.4 It is the authors recommendation that no further work is required, however the final decision rests with the London Borough of Merton and its archaeology advisor, Diane Walls (GLAAS).
- 10.5 Publication of the results will be through the ADS OASIS form (Appendix C) with a short summary submitted to the London Archaeologist Round-Up. The archive will be deposited with the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC).

11. Bibliography

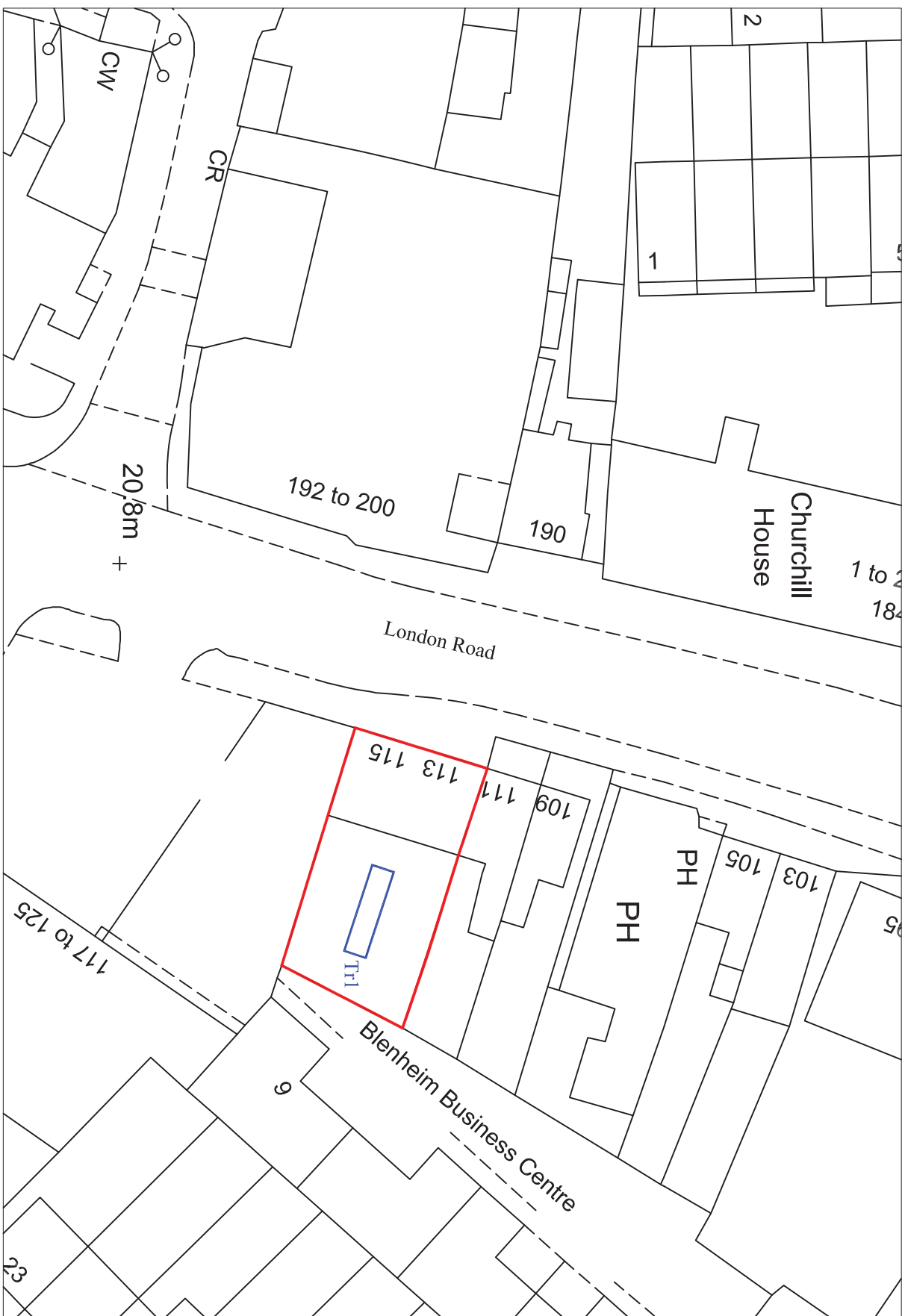
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Figure 1: Site Location



Based on the Ordnance Survey's Supermap Digital Data of 2007
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Figure 2: Detailed Site Location

- Site Boundary
- Evaluation Trench



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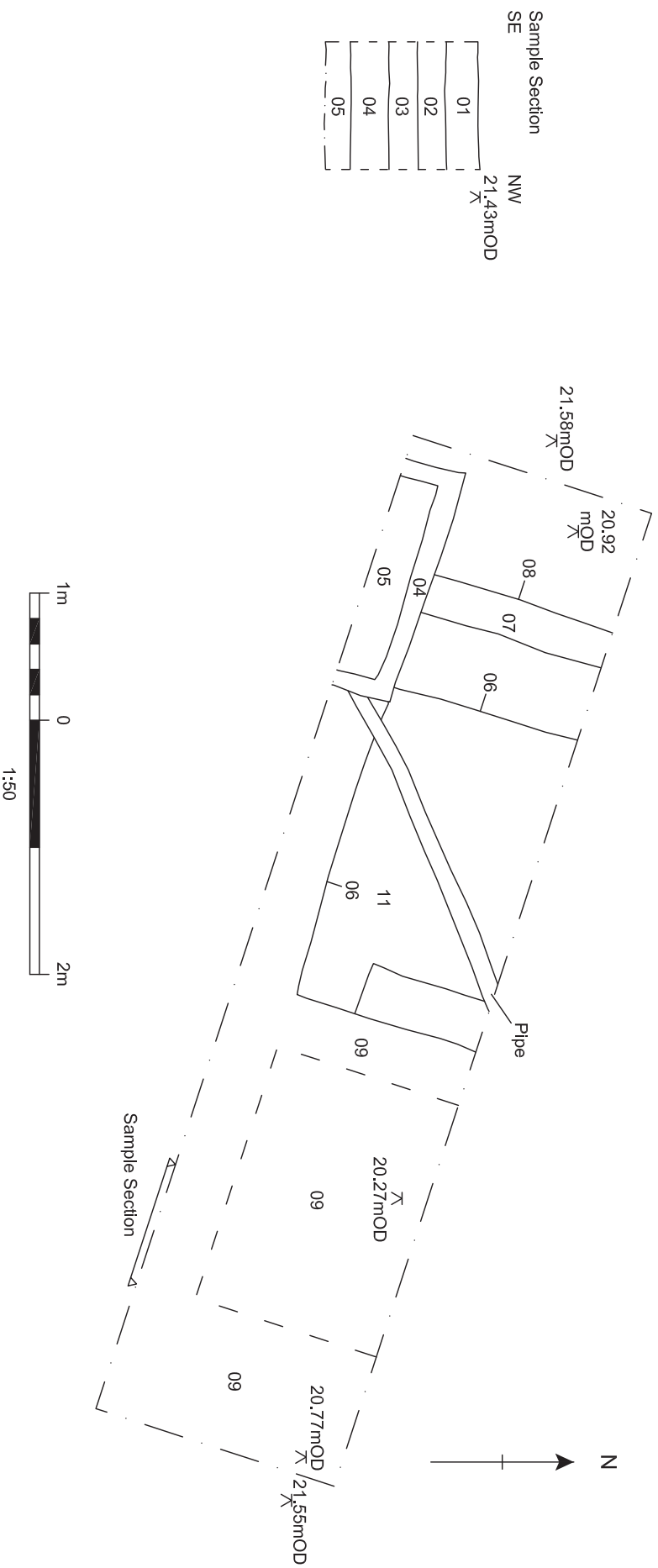
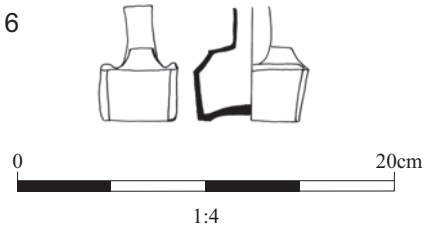
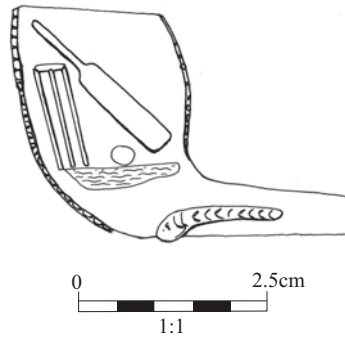


Figure 3: Trench 1: Plan & Sample Section

Glass: Context 6



Clay Tobacco Pipe: Context 6 <1>



Clay Tobacco Pipe: Context 6 <2>

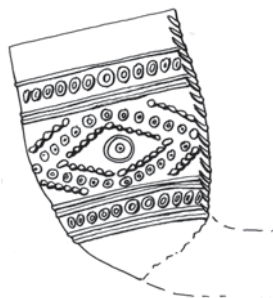


Figure 4: Finds

Appendices

Appendix A Context Register

Context	Length	Width	Depth	Description
01	8.00m	2.00m	0.25m	Grey silt with concrete, metal, plastic and glass – Modern demolition rubble.
02	8.00m	2.00m	0.23m	Dark brown black sandy clay with pebbles, brick and tile. – Garden Soil.
03	8.00m	2.00m	0.30m	Dark grey clay sand with inclusions of brick, pebbles and post medieval pottery.
04	1.77m & 0.50m	0.22m	0.60m	Red Brick manhole
05	1.22m	0.35m+	NFE	Slate and tile backfill
06	2.60m	1.50m	0.32m	Late post medieval pit
07	1.50m	0.30m	NFE	Dark brown clay. Fill of 08
08	1.50m	0.30m	NFE	Modern service trench
09	8.00m	2.00m	0.29m	Loose gravel and sand – Natural
010	1.80m	1.60m	0.21m+	Very compact orange sand and gravel with high frequency of iron manganese – Natural.
011	2.60m	1.50m	0.18m	Dark mid brown clay sand. Secondary fill of [06]
012	2.60m	1.50m	0.08m	Grey Ash. Primary fill of [06]

Appendix B Finds Assessment

By Paul Fitz

Introduction

Finds were collected from one context (012) during archaeological evaluation work at the site of 113-115 London Road, Mitcham in April 2009.

The small assemblage of ceramic, glass and one iron nail dates the context to between the 1820's and the early 1900's with two tobacco pipe bowls being of limited interest.

Pottery

Three sherds of pottery were retrieved. Two of these are colour transfer printed wares and one is a terracotta flower pot sherd. The underglazed transfer printed ware consists of a red/white floral decorated cup (or small jug) upper body piece with rim and a pale black branch effect print from a plate base.

No further work is required for the pottery other than recording on the LAARC archive finds inventory

Clay tobacco pipe

Two tobacco pipe bowls were retrieved both of which, whilst not bearing makers stamps have been registered due to their decorative features. Both bowls are of the late nineteenth, early twentieth century small upright style.

<1> is a complete bowl of late nineteenth century style with a partial stem. It has a cricket bat, ball and wicket decoration on both sides. This bowl is of regional interest due to the once famed Mitcham Cricket Club of which it is said Admiral Lord Nelson attended matches. It is also of interest to the wider field of cricket memorabilia.

<2> is a bowl with partial damage to a flared rim. It is heavily patterned with central stretched diamond with surrounding circles. Upper and lower banding of the bowl also contain circles.

It is recommended that the bowls are illustrated and catalogued for the Museum of London tobacco pipe database.

Glass

One glass boat ink bottle with slight damage to the body and one shard from a Codd bottle were retrieved from context (06). Both are of late nineteenth/early twentieth century in date.

It is recommended that the near completeness of the ink 'boat' bottle makes this vessel worthy of illustration.

Animal Bone

Two pieces of animal bone were retrieved from context (012). This consists of a juvenile sheep/goat metatarsal and a rib shaft from sheep/goat/pig. Both bones show evidence of butchery. No further work is required on the animal bone other than recording for the archive finds inventory.

Iron nail

A single iron nail shaft, 71mm in length, was retrieved from context (012). It is moderately concreted but requires no conservation. It will be recorded on the archive finds inventory and boxed with the other bulk finds.

Significance and Recommendations

Whilst very small and relatively modern, the assemblage (dated, by the pottery, to the nineteenth or early twentieth century) has three objects that warrant further work.

The two tobacco pipe bowls should be recorded on Museum of London tobacco pipe context record sheets and illustrated for the final report. The cricket design bowl is of local interest due to the Mitcham Cricket Club based at Cricket Green, off London Road. They are reportedly the world's oldest cricket club, established 1685, and it is likely these special tobacco pipes were on sale at the club.

The ink bottle of the boat style with elongated neck (funnel) is worth illustration for the final report.

Appendix C Oasis Form

OASIS ID: aocarcha1-58084

Project details

Project name 113-155 London Road, Mitcham

Short description of the project A one trench evaluation was conducted by AOC archaeology to ascertain the presence or absence of archaeological remains on site. The evaluation revealed natural sand and gravel deposits into which was cut a late post-medieval pit. Modern service pipes and a brick manhole were also recorded within the trench. Covering the trench were two deposits of garden soil overlaid by recent demolition rubble.

Project dates Start: 08-04-2009 End: 08-04-2009

Previous/future work No / Not known

Any associated project reference codes ELH07 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

Current Land use Industry and Commerce 2 - Offices

Monument type PIT Post Medieval

Monument type MANHOLE Modern

Significant Finds CERAMICS Post Medieval

Significant Finds CLAY TOBACCO PIPE Post Medieval

Significant Finds GLASS Post Medieval

Methods & 'Sample Trenches'
techniques

Development type Urban commercial (e.g. offices, shops, banks, etc.)

Development type Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Position in the After full determination (eg. As a condition)
planning process

Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON MERTON MITCHAM 113-115 London Road, Mitcham

Postcode CR4 2JA

Study area 280.00 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 2794 6942 51.4088443378 -0.160242347228 51 24 31 N 000 09 36 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 20.41m Max: 20.77m

Project creators

Name of AOC Archaeology
Organisation

Project brief English Heritage
originator

Project design AOC Archaeology
originator

Project Andy Leonard

director/manager

Project supervisor Catherine Edwards

Type of Developer
sponsor/funding
body

Name of Anerley Park Limited
sponsor/funding
body

Project archives

Physical Archive LAARC
recipient

Physical Contents 'Ceramics','Glass'

Digital Archive LAARC
recipient

Digital Media 'Database','Images raster / digital photography','Spreadsheets','Survey','Text'
available

Paper Archive LAARC
recipient

Paper Media 'Context
available sheet','Matrices','Microfilm','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section','Unpublished Text'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title 113-115 London Road, Mitcham London Borough of Merton. An Archaeological Evaluation Report

Author(s)/Editor(s) Edwards, C

Date 2009

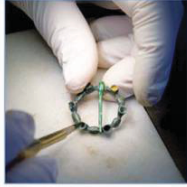
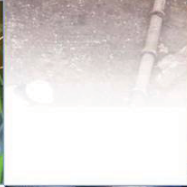
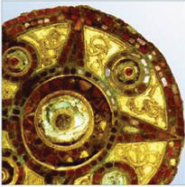
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AOC Archaeology Group, Unit 7, St Margarets Business Centre, Moor Mead Road, Twickenham TW1 1JS
tel: 020 8843 7380 | fax: 020 8892 0549 | e-mail: london@aocarchaeology.com

www.aocarchaeology.com