



128-136 HIGH STREET, PLAISTOW, E13 LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM

Archaeological Watching Brief Report



MOL#: PLZ05

Ref: 63100.02

August 2006

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PLAISTOW, E13
LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

London Site Code

PLZ05

REF 63100.02

August 2006

Prepared for

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Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology (London) would like to thank Inforum Ltd for commissioning the project and Advanced Demolition Ltd for their assistance during this stage of the project. Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank David Divers of English Heritage Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) for monitoring the work.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Hilary Valler, who also prepared this report. The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology (London) by Lawrence Pontin. Mark Roughley prepared the illustrations.

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

Non-technical Summary

Wessex Archaeology (London) was commissioned by Inforum Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief on the removal of the petrol holding tanks at 128-136 High Street, Plaistow, E13 in the London Borough of Newham centred on NGR 540590 183070 (the Site).

The works were commissioned as part of the determination of a planning application to redevelop the Site for residential development.

Observations on the removal of the petrol holding tanks showed the remains of the external wall at the frontage of the original late 19th century terrace houses with the backfilled cellars, no other archaeological finds or deposits were noted. The report concludes that archaeological deposits do not exist on the Site; any remains which may have been present will have been truncated by the construction of the petrol holding tanks across the whole Site.

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of Document

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Card Geotechnics Ltd (the Client) to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation and removal of petrol holding tanks at 128-136 High Street, Plaistow (the Site), centred on NGR 540590 183070 (**Figure 1**).
- 1.1.2 The watching brief was undertaken following the consideration of the results of a previous phase of evaluation.
- 1.1.3 The watching brief was undertaken between 4th and 10th July 2006.
- 1.1.4 This document sets out the results from the observation of the excavation and removal of the petrol holding tanks.

1.2 Planning Background

- 1.2.1 A planning application has been submitted for the residential redevelopment of the Site, with the erection of residential flats. As part of this process, further information was requested by the Local Planning Authority on the survival of any archaeological deposits within the Site.
- 1.2.2 Following observation of geotechnical boreholes, it was determined in consultation with David Divers, English Heritage Archaeological Advisor to the London Borough of Newham, that an archaeological evaluation of the Site be undertaken (Wessex Archaeology 2006). The evaluation was undertaken in view of the limited archaeological potential of the Site and it was agreed that a watching brief be undertaken during the removal of the petrol holding tanks. The watching brief and a report on the results will complete the programme of archaeological work to meet the condition attached to the planning application.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 The Site

- 2.1.1 The Site was a disused petrol filling station, with much of the central area filled with petrol holding tanks. It is at the junction of High Street with Greengate Street at the corner with Winkfield Road, to the south of an area known as Broadway (Figure 1).

2.2 Topography and Geology

- 2.2.1 The modern ground level within the site is approximately 10m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).
- 2.2.2 The drift geology of the area comprises Flood Plain Gravel terraces of the Thames and Roding. This is underlain by Eocene London Clay (British Geological Society, North London, Solid and Drift Edition, Sheet 257).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Historic Mapping and Area of Archaeological Priority

- 3.1.1 The Site is defined within the London Borough of Newham Unitary Development Plan (adopted in June 2001) as being within an Area of Archaeological Priority. The area is presumed to contain evidence of early post-medieval housing along the course of the historic West Ham Lane. Some evidence may also exist of Roman activity given the use of Roman building material in the medieval church of All Saints to the north and evidence of a Roman building recorded in 1964 was found adjacent to Newham General Hospital, to the south.
- 3.1.2 The Site appears on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1869 as parkland. Prior to 1896 (2nd edition Ordnance Survey map) a row of terrace houses had been built on the land fronting onto the High Street with gardens to the back of the properties. These buildings were demolished prior to the compilation of the 1951 Ordnance Survey map; this shows the Site clear of buildings. In the early 1960s buildings were established along the north west side of the Site when it became a garage. The garage and the first house have been demolished as part of the works for this project.

3.2 Aims and Objectives

- 3.2.1 The aims of the watching brief was to elucidate the nature and character of any archaeological remains disturbed by the excavation and removal of the petrol holding tanks and to assess their potential significance.

4 WATCHING BRIEF STRATEGY AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Methodological Standards

- 4.1.1 All excavation was undertaken in compliance with the standards outlined in the Institute of Field Archaeologist's *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching briefs* (as amended 2001). No brief or specification was provided.

4.2 Health and Safety

- 4.2.1 All work was undertaken in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992, and all other relevant Health and Safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice in force.

4.3 Fieldwork

- 4.3.1 The petrol holding tanks were excavated and removed by a 360° excavator. The fieldwork was undertaken under archaeological supervision.
- 4.3.2 All spoil was visually inspected for artefacts.
- 4.3.3 A photographic record was maintained using digital images.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1.1 The Site did not contain any features of archaeological significance. The brick frontage of the original building's cellars were visible and had previously been backfilled with brick rubble, through this the petrol holding tanks had been installed.
- 5.1.2 The area did not encroach upon the natural with the depth of excavation to approximately 3 metres.
- 5.1.3 The excavated spoil was scanned by eye for artefacts. The only material found was of 20th Century origin.

6 CONCLUSION

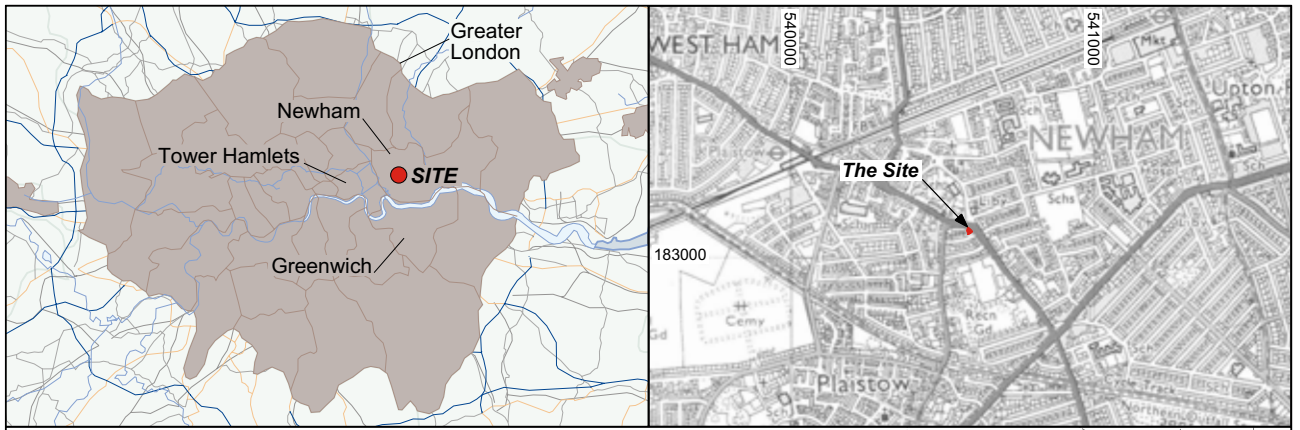
- 6.1.1 No remains of any archaeological significance were detected on the Site. However, given the nature of the watching brief, absence of evidence is probably due to any archaeological remains having been truncated by intrusions due to the buildings on the frontage and the petrol holding tanks across the Site.


7 SOURCES

Newham Unitary Development Plan

<http://www.newham.gov.uk/NR/ronlyres/20C26A87-34EB-4C34-8254-D73A1ADE46D2/0/UDP3EnvironmentQuality.pdf>

Wessex Archaeology, 2006, *128-136 High Street, Plaistow, E13, London Borough of Newham: Archaeological Evaluation Report*



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| | Date: | 14/08/06 | Revision Number: | 0 |
| | Scale: | 1:250 @ A4 (Inset 1:25,000) | Illustrator: | MR |
| | Path: | London: Y:\Projects\63100\Drawing Office\Report Figures (06-05) | | |

Site Location Maps showing area covered by Watching Brief

Figure 1



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