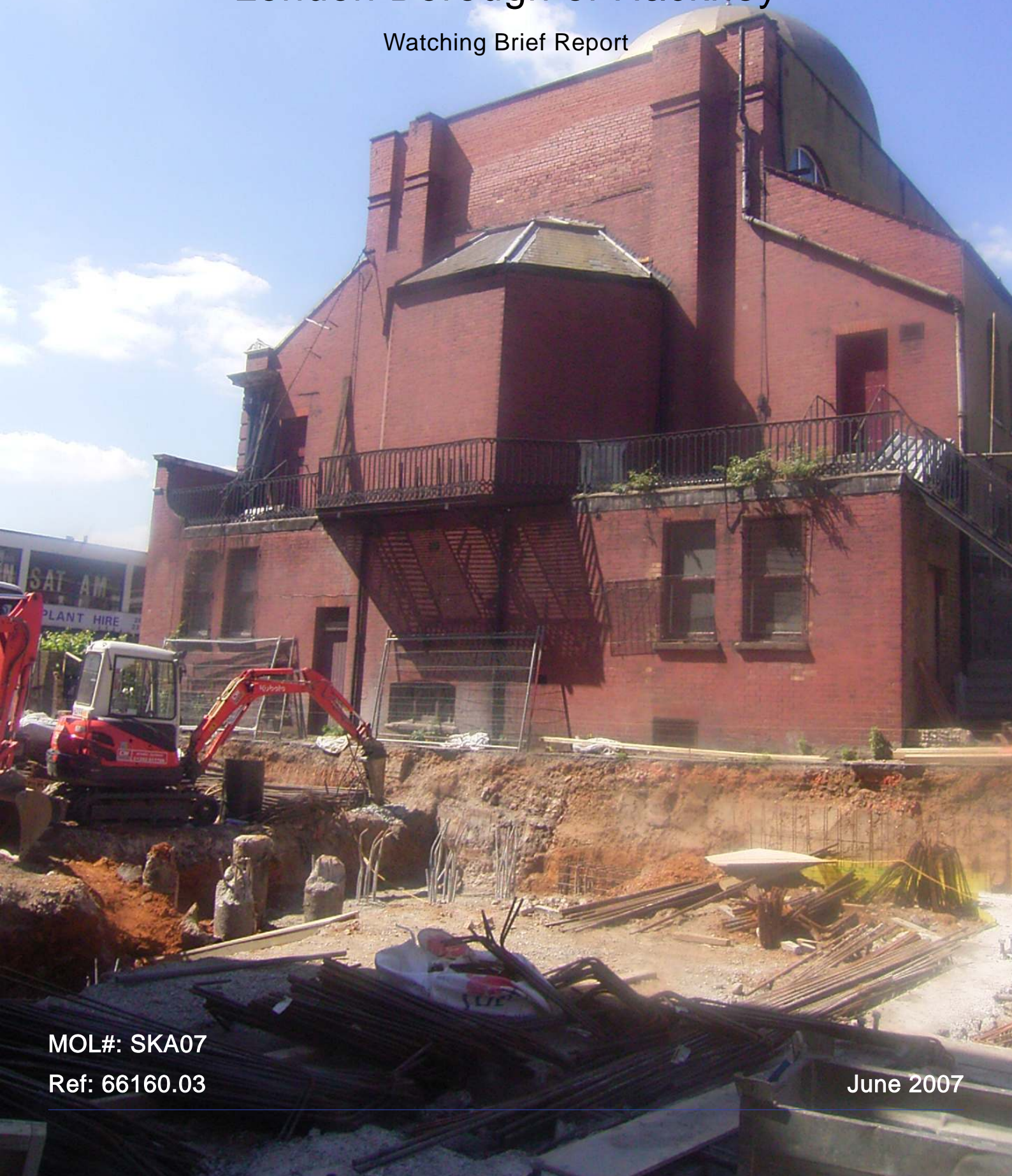




17-19 Shackelwell Lane, E8  
London Borough of Hackney

Watching Brief Report



MOL#: SKA07

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**WESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY LIMITED.**

Head Office: Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 6EB.

Tel: 01722 326867 Fax: 01722 337562 [info@wessexarch.co.uk](mailto:info@wessexarch.co.uk) [www.wessexarch.co.uk](http://www.wessexarch.co.uk)

London Office: Unit 113, The Chandlery, 50 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7QY.

Tel: 020 7953 7494 Fax: 020 7953 7499 [london-info@wessexarch.co.uk](mailto:london-info@wessexarch.co.uk) [www.wessexarch.co.uk](http://www.wessexarch.co.uk)





**17-19 SHACKLEWELL LANE, E8  
LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY**

**WATCHING BRIEF REPORT**

Prepared for

**Shacklewell LLP**  
The Office  
57-59 Rochester Place  
London NW1 9JU

by

**Wessex Archaeology in London**  
Unit 113  
The Chandlery,  
50 Westminster Bridge Road  
London  
SE1 7QY

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# 17-19 SHACKLEWELL LANE, E8 LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY

## WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

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## **17-19 SHACKLEWELL LANE, E8 LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY**

### **WATCHING BRIEF REPORT**

#### **Summary**

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned to carry out an archaeological watching brief at 17-19 Shacklewell Lane E8 in the London Borough of Hackney centred on NGR Ref 533659 /185333

The work was carried out as a means to discharge a planning condition attached to a consent for the redevelopment of the Site, and took place on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2007.

The watching brief observed the excavation of a lift shaft and adjacent ground beams to a depth of between 1m and 1.4m below the present ground level. No archaeological deposits or features were observed.

**17-19 SHACKLEWELL LANE, E8  
LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY****WATCHING BRIEF REPORT****Acknowledgements**

The project was commissioned by James Engel of Spaced Out Ltd on behalf of Shacklewell LLP (the Client). Wessex Archaeology would like to thank John Regan of Allfoundations Ltd and his staff for their assistance and co-operation on site.

Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank David Divers of English Heritage Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) for monitoring the project.

The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Lawrence Pontin. The fieldwork was undertaken by Gary Evans, who also compiled this report with illustrations by Kitty Brandon.

## 17-19 SHACKLEWELL LANE, E8 LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY

### WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

#### 1 INTRODUCTION

##### 1.1 Scope of Document

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Spaced Out Ltd on behalf of Shacklewell LLP (the Client) to undertake an archaeological watching brief at 17-19 Shacklewell Lane, E8 in the London Borough of Hackney (the Site), centred on NGR 533659/185333 (**Figure 1**).

1.1.2 This document presents the results of the watching brief which took place on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2007.

##### 1.2 Planning Background

1.2.1 An archaeological planning condition (No. 2005/0264, Condition 10. London Borough of Hackney) has been attached to the consent for the redevelopment of the Site, with the erection of commercial units and residential flats. On this basis, English Heritage, as advisors to the Local Planning Authority, recommended that a watching brief be undertaken during ground works for the development.

1.2.2 It was determined in consultation with David Divers, English Heritage Archaeological Advisor to the London Borough of Hackney, that the watching brief be undertaken during ground works for the proposed lift shaft (**Figure 1**).

1.2.3 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Wessex Archaeology (WA, 2007 ref 66160.01) and approved by the English Heritage Archaeological Advisor.

##### 1.3 Site Description

1.3.2 The Site lies on the north side of Shacklewell Lane and is an approximately 400m<sup>2</sup> rectangular plot of land lying some 100m to the east of Stoke Newington High Street in the Shacklewell district of Hackney. To the east, the Site is bordered by a row of shops and to the west by the UK Turkish Islamic Trust Mosque and Cultural Centre (formally the Stoke Newington synagogue); the area behind the Site is currently open ground and is used as a car park (**Figure 1**).

## **2 GEOLOGICAL AND TOPOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Geology**

- 2.1.1 The underlying geology of the area comprises River Terrace Deposits of Hackney Gravel (British Geological Society, 1994, North London, Sheet 256).

### **2.2 Topography**

- 2.2.1 The land on the Site slopes up from south to north. The modern ground level in Shacklewell Lane is ca 25m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

## **3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 3.1.1 The Site is defined within the London Borough of Hackney Unitary Development Plan (adopted June 1995) as being within an Area of Archaeological Priority.
- 3.1.2 The Site lies to the south of an important series of Lower Palaeolithic (500,00-150,00 BC) sites, including a relatively undisturbed artefactual assemblage and a "Palaeolithic floor", centred on the area between Alkham Road Northwold Road / Geldestone Road and Stoke Newington Common (MoLAS, 2000, 35, 41 Map 1). A number of stray Lower Palaeolithic finds have come from the vicinity, including animal remains from Shacklewell Lane and flint tools, including a flint bifacial tool, from Hackney Downs and Rectory Road (MoLAS, 2000, 41 Map 1). The importance of these sites for our understanding of the Lower Palaeolithic is noted in the English Heritage / Museum of London Research framework for London as is the need for further research in the area (MoL, 2002, 19-20).
- 3.1.3 These sites are concentrated along the edges of the Hackney Brook which formerly flowed above ground from Crouch Hill to the River Lea via Stoke Newington, the western side of Hackney Downs and Mare Street, Hackney. The Site lies to the southwest of the presumed course of the Brook which now flows below ground but was visible for parts of its course in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 3.1.4 No significant Romano - British Sites are known from the immediate area of the Site. However, Stoke Newington High Street which runs ca 100m to the west of the Site, is thought to follow the line of an important Roman Road (Ermine Street) as it approaches London from Lincoln and York (Weinreb and Hibbert, 1983, 850).
- 3.1.5 Shacklewell appears to have been a rural hamlet built up around Shacklewell Green and Shacklewell Ponds until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A manor house is recorded in the area in ca 1522. However, only 14 households are listed in the area for the hearth tax of 1672. The development of the area, a mix of housing and light industry, took place in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century with



further development occurring in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.asp>).

3.1.6 There has been no previous archaeological work carried out on Site.

## **4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

4.1.1 The overall objective of the watching brief was to establish and record, as far as reasonably possible, any archaeological remains that may survive beneath the present ground surface.

4.1.2 It sought to characterise the nature, date, depth and state of preservation of any features and deposits and to retrieve where present, stratified assemblages of finds and ecofacts.

## **5 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY**

### **5.1 Fieldwork**

5.1.1 All watching brief work was conducted in compliance with the standards outlined in the Institute of Field Archaeologists' Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (2001), English Heritage's London Region Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork (1998) excepting where they are superseded by statements made below.

5.1.2 The fieldwork strategy is described in detail in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WA, 2007 ref 66160.01) but in summary it comprised the supervised excavation in 50mm spits, of the proposed lift shaft and immediately adjacent areas (**Figure 1**). The work was carried out with a mechanical mini excavator fitted with a toothless bucket and all works took place under the supervision of an experienced archaeologist. The lift shaft measured 9.68m<sup>2</sup> and was 1.4m deep; the adjacent areas were excavated to a depth of 1m.

5.1.3 All archaeological deposits were recorded by means of Wessex Archaeology's pro forma recording sheets. A photographic record was made by means of black and white prints, colour slides and digital images. Plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20 or 1:50 and sections at 1:10.

### **5.2 Finds Collection and Retention**

5.2.1 No artefactual material was recovered from the excavations. Material observed in the upcast from the excavations was of twentieth century origin.

### **5.3 Environmental Sampling Strategy**

5.3.1 Due to the absence of suitable deposits, no samples were taken for environmental analysis.

## 5.4 The Archive

- 5.4.1 The completed project archive will be prepared in accordance with the guidelines outlined in Appendix 3 of Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage 1991) and in accordance with the guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long term storage (UKIC 1990).
- 5.4.2 The archive from the project will be deposited with the Museum of London under MOL Site Code SKA 07.

## 6 RESULTS

- 6.1.1 No archaeological features or related artefactual material were observed in any part of the Site.
- 6.1.2 The soil profile observed was broadly similar in all the sections observed. A 0.3m thick layer of modern demolition material overlay deposits of coarse sand, **104**, **105** and **112**. These deposits sloped generally down towards the southwest. The colour and makeup of the sands differed from one part of the Site to another but all were highly laminated with thin lens of clay and fine angular gravels (**Plates 1-2**).
- 6.1.3 These deposits overlay a layer of coarse sandy gravel **113/106** whose base deposit was not reached at 2.4m below modern ground level. This natural geological deposit comprised coarse sand with frequent small sub angular and occasional medium well rounded pebbles as well as occasional undulating lens of light blue grey clay (**Plates 1-2**).
- 6.1.4 At the western edge of the Site, observation of the section revealed a deposit of coarse sandy gravel **106** at the base of the stratigraphic sequence. This deposit, whose base was not reached at 2.2m m below the present ground level of the adjacent property, was overlain by undulating highly laminated deposits of natural sand **104**, **105**. These in turn were overlain by former plough soils **102** and **103**. These deposits were 0.6m thick in total and contained flecks of charcoal and fragments of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century pottery, mainly blue and white transfer printed "Willow pattern" as well as occasion fragments of green bottle glass. The lowest of the plough soils **103** was essentially the same as the upper plough soil **102** but contained markedly more pebbles.
- 6.1.5 The former plough soils were sealed by a series of levelling/bedding layers **101** and **107** and were cut by the remains of a 19<sup>th</sup> century brick lined soak away **109/110** which was seen to continue beyond the western most edge of the Site. This circular feature was backfilled with 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century deposits and was observed cutting through the lowest levelling layer and the plough soils into the underlying natural sands and gravels.

## 7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1.1 The watching brief observed no archaeological deposits or features.
- 7.1.2 Natural geological deposits comprising undulating, laminated fine and coarse sands overlying coarse sandy gravels were observed in all of the excavated areas.
- 7.1.3 A 2.2m high section on the western edge of the Site, revealed the remains of a former plough soil **102/103** overlaying the natural geological deposits of fine undulating laminated sands **104** and **105** above coarse sandy gravels **106**. The buried plough soil, which contained 19<sup>th</sup> century material, lay beneath a 0.7m deposit of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century building rubble which was almost certainly laid down during the construction of the former Synagogue (now the Turkish Mosque) at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 7.1.4 A circular, brick lined 19<sup>th</sup> century soak away **108/110** was also observed at the western edge of Site cutting through the former plough soil **102/103** into the underlying natural sands and gravel.

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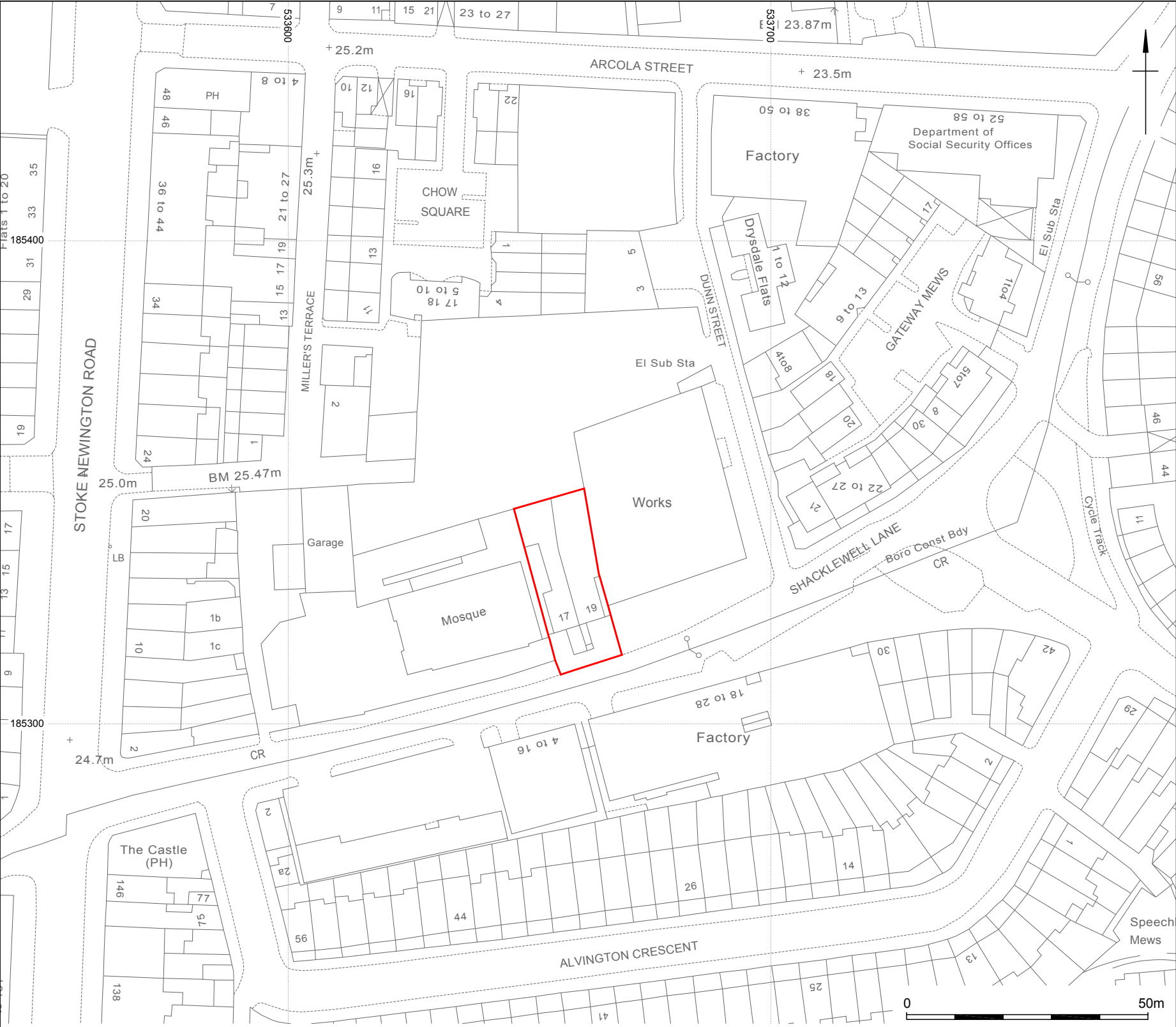
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<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report>

## APPENDIX 1

| Context no. | Description   | Interpretive keywords   | Height below present ground level |
|-------------|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| 100         | Tarmac and gravel bedding layer   | Construction.<br>Pavement/path  | 0.0-0.10m                         |
| 101         | Dark-mid grey brown, clay silt, lens of gravel made up of small medium well rounded pebbles. Frequent fragments red frogged brick up to half bat  | Mixed soil and building rubble  | 0.28-0.75m                        |
| 102         | Layer. Mid brownish grey, fine sandy silt well sorted deposit. Occasional charcoal flecks, small fragments peg tile small –medium well rounded pebbles, black glass and 19 <sup>th</sup> century “Willow pattern” pottery | Plough soil   | 0.75-1.10m                        |
| 103         | Layer. Mid brownish grey, fine sandy silt. Frequent medium well rounded sub rounded pebbles, occasional flecks charcoal and red CBM   | Plough soil   | 1.10-1.40m                        |
| 104         | Layer. Mid brown orange, coarse clayey sand frequent thin lens of fine sub angular pebbles up to 10mm, very undulating lower boundary   | Natural Geology   | 1.35-1.70m                        |
| 105         | Layer, Light yellowish grey with mid orange brown mottles, fine sand with small lens of light grey clay up to 20mm thick  | Natural Geology   | 1.70-1.80m                        |
| 106         | Dark-mid orange brown, coarse sand and gravel, gravel = occasional medium well rounded pebbles, frequent small sub angular pebbles  | Natural Geology   | 1.80-2.20m (+)                    |
| 107         | Layer. Dark grey brown, silt and sand. Frequent sub rounded well rounded pebbles, very frequent red frogged brick fragments, almost 40% of total.   | Construction.<br>Levelling/bedding layer derived from building debris | 0.10-0.28m                        |

|            |  |   |                         |
|------------|--|---|-------------------------|
| <b>108</b> | Cut. Filled with <b>109</b> , <b>110</b> and <b>111</b> . Sides vertical. Circular in plan, 0.6m diameter. Flat base   | Construction. Foundation trench of brick lined soak away                        | Top-0.30m<br>Base-1.60m |
| <b>109</b> | Fill of <b>108</b> . Mid-dark grey, loose gravel and clay. Frequent fragments red brick  | Construction. Backfill of foundation trench of brick lined soak away <b>108</b> | Top-0.30m<br>Base-1.60m |
| <b>110</b> | Wall of soak away. Red and purple red brick lain on bed, one brick wide, no bonding  | Construction. Wall/lining of soak away <b>108</b>                               | Top-0.30m<br>Base-1.60m |
| <b>111</b> | Fill. Light grey, clay silt, mixed deposit, frequent lens of gravel, clay silt   | Construction. Backfill of brick lined soak away <b>108</b> .<br>Use/Disuse      | Top-0.30m<br>Base-1.50m |
| <b>112</b> | Layer. Mid orange brown, coarse sand, horizontally bedded. Occasional, thin 30mm thick, lens of yellow clayey sand   | Natural Geology   | 1.35-1.80m              |
| <b>113</b> | Mid orange brown, coarse sandy gravel, occasional lens of coarse yellow sand and light blue grey clay. Gravel= occasional medium well rounded pebbles, frequent medium small sub angular pebbles | Natural Geology   | 1.80-2.40m(+)           |

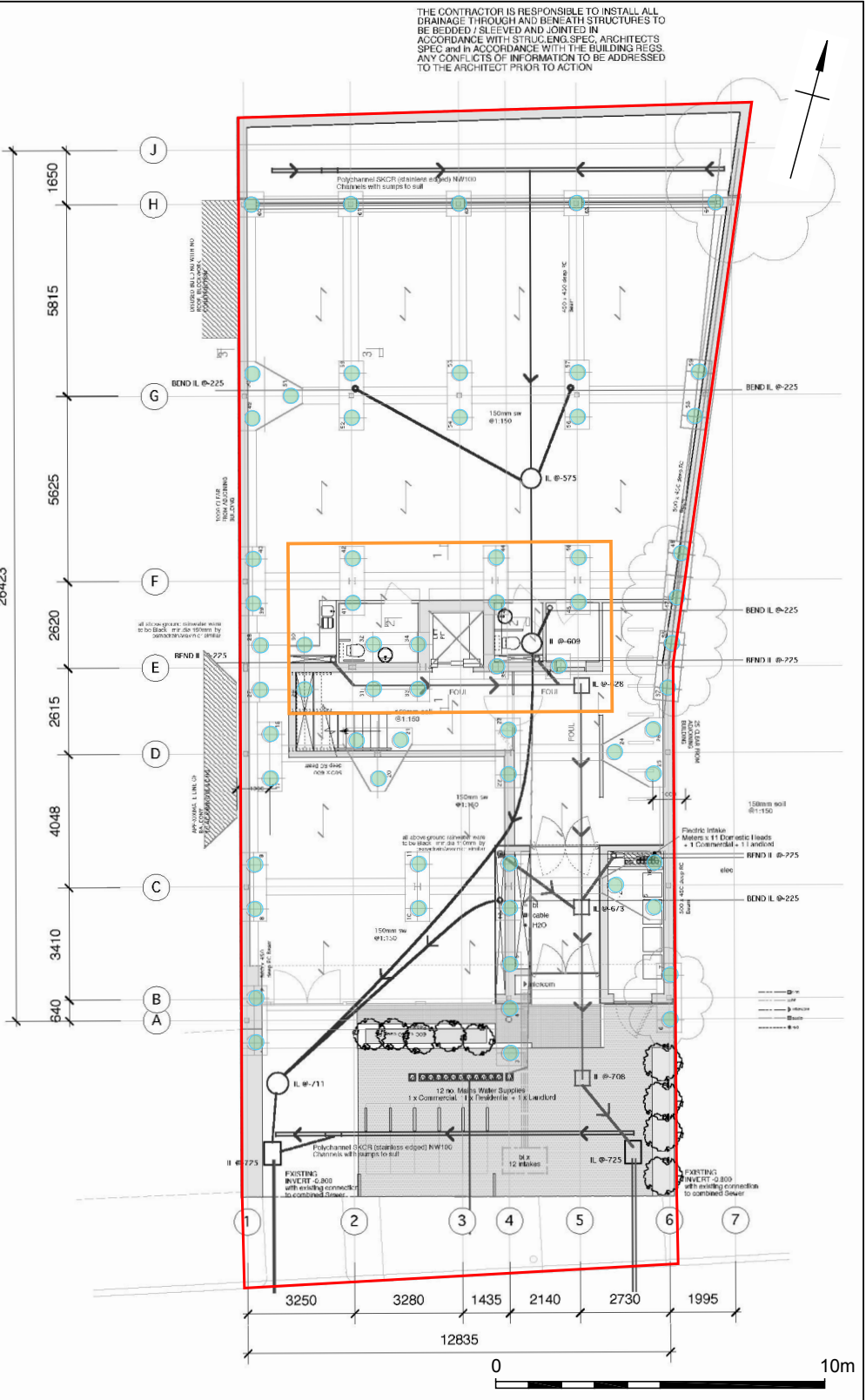




MOL# SKA 07



- Site boundary
- Previously undertaken piles
- Area of Watching Brief



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Site Location Plan and Area of Watching Brief

Figure 1



Plate 1: South facing section in north side of lift shaft



Plate 2: North facing section in south side of lift shaft



Plate 3: Excavated lift shaft from north-west