



making sense of heritage

# Wheelwrights Public House, 126 Southbridge Road, London Borough of Croydon

Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Ref: 100100.02  
September 2013



**Wheelwrights Public House  
126 Southbridge Road  
London Borough of Croydon**

## **Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

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## Quality Assurance

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\* I = Internal Draft; E = External Draft; F = Final

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**Wheelwrights Public House  
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**Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

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**Wheelwrights Public House  
126 Southbridge Road  
London Borough of Croydon**

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

**Summary**

Wessex Archaeology has been commissioned by Reports 4 Planning to carry out an archaeological watching brief at the Wheelwrights Public House, 126 Southbridge Road, London Borough of Croydon, CR0 1AF. The land is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 532362 164652, hereafter referred to as 'the Site' (**Figure 1**).

The proposed work is being undertaken in support of a planning application (Planning Reference: 12/03480/P) for the redevelopment of the Site. The proposed redevelopment comprises:

- The conversion of the public house to form 2 two bedrooms, 2 one bedroom and 1 studio flat, erection of a two storey rear extension and roof extension also at the rear.

The archaeological works were required in compliance with Condition 4 of the planning consent granted by the LPA in relation to the redevelopment.

No finds or features of archaeological significance were noted during the watching brief. A modern shallow wall foundation and a deliberately backfilled modern pit cut to the south of the former Public House were observed.

The archaeological monitoring took place on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2013.



**Wheelwrights Public House  
126 Southbridge Road  
London Borough of Croydon**

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

**Acknowledgements**

The project was commissioned by Reports 4 Planning and Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Lynn Hughes in this regard. Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank Mark Stevenson of GLAAS for his assistance throughout the project.

The project was managed by Rob De'Athe, Project Manager for Wessex Archaeology's Rochester Office. The fieldwork was undertaken by Jo Condliffe.

The report was researched and compiled by Tom Davies and Jo Condliffe, edited by Rob De'Athe with illustrations produced by Adela Murray-Brown.



# Wheelwrights Public House 126 Southbridge Road London Borough of Croydon

## Archaeological Watching Brief Report

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology has been commissioned by Reports 4 Planning to carry out an archaeological watching brief at the Wheelwrights Public House, 126 Southbridge Road, London Borough of Croydon, CR0 1AF. The land is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 532362 164652, hereafter referred to as 'the Site' (**Figure 1**).
- 1.1.2 The proposed work is being undertaken in support of a planning application (Planning Reference: **12/03480/P**) for the redevelopment of the Site. The proposed redevelopment comprises:
- The conversion of the public house to form 2 two bedrooms, 2 one bedroom and 1 studio flat, erection of a two storey rear extension and roof extension also at the rear.
- 1.1.3 Prior to the commencement of the work, a Written Scheme of Investigation for the archaeological works was submitted and approved by the Great London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS) Officer for the London Borough of Croydon. A watching brief was carried out to assess whether the proposed works would damage or disturb remains of archaeological significance, as set out in paragraph 5 of the Grant of Planning Permission for the development (Reference: 12/03480/P).

#### *Condition 4:*

*No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme for investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only take place in accordance with the detailed scheme pursuant to this condition. The archaeological works shall be carried out by a suitably qualified investigating body acceptable to the Local Planning Authority.*

#### *Reason:*

*To safeguard the heritage of the Borough by providing an adequate opportunity to investigate and excavate archaeological remains on the site before development is carried out, in accordance with Policy UC11 of the Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (The Croydon Plan) 2006 Saved Policies*

- 1.1.4 This report, which sets out the strategy and methodology by which Wessex Archaeology have implemented the archaeological watching brief, conforms with current best practice and to the guidance outlined in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic*





*Environment* (MoRPHE, English Heritage 2006) and the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (IfA 2008).

1.1.5 The watching brief was conducted on the 13<sup>th</sup> of September 2013.

## 1.2 The Site

1.2.1 The Site is located in the London Borough of Croydon (LBC) on the west side of Southbridge Road (A236), which forms the Site's eastern boundary, and to the south of the main centre of Croydon. The Site is to the east of the A23 roadway with the A235 to the west. The surrounding area is characterised by residential and commercial properties along Southbridge Road and Dering Road. The rear gardens of the residential properties which front Dering Road, immediately to the rear of the Site, form the western boundary to the Site.

1.2.2 The Site lies on gravel terraces, which were formed during the last quarter of the Pleistocene by the River Wandle. They are broadly equivalent to the Taplow Thames River Gravel. Nearby older geological deposits outcrop on slopes above the Site, such as London Clay, the Woolwich, Reading, Thanet Beds and chalk on the North Downs.

## 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND AND POTENTIAL

### 2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The recorded archaeology of the Croydon area consists in the main of finds of prehistoric flint tools revealed from gravel excavation in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Other finds of Roman, Saxon and medieval date have been recorded from nearby but these are disparately spread within the vicinity.

#### ***Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic (450,000-1,800BC)***

2.1.2 Fragments of mammoth tooth and tusk from between 200,000-400,000 years ago have been found in the sands and gravels on the site of East Croydon Railway Station.

#### ***Bronze Age (1,800-600BC)***

2.1.3 Some of the finds from archaeological works at 68-74 (Skyline Court) and also 82-86 Park Lane were dated to the Bronze Age and derived from pits and postholes cut into natural gravel. This was interpreted as an indication of a possible settlement in the area.

#### ***Iron Age (600BC - AD43)***

2.1.4 During the Iron Age, Surrey formed part of a large confederacy of indigenous peoples, possibly owing allegiance to a continental elite or dynasty – the Atrebates – centred at the town of Silchester. Local researchers have suggested that a long-distance Iron Age road may have passed to the north of the Site, and Late Iron Age pottery was found at 3-7 Park Street, to the north of the Site.

#### ***Romano-British (AD43-410)***

2.1.5 Croydon was strategically placed on the line of a Roman road, sometimes referred to as the London to Portslade Way. It has been suggested that it may have formed the site of a posting station or *mutatio*.

2.1.6 To the north, the route has been reasonably well established from the Old Town through Broad Green to Streatham, continuing to a junction with Stane Street just to the south of London (possibly at Kennington). The exact route through the central part of Croydon and the south is uncertain but the road may have followed the line of North End and High Street.



2.1.7 A number of Roman burials have been recorded along this route, including a chalk-packed coffin/grave recorded a few metres to the south of the Site boundary. The grave cut through a buried soil containing Roman remains. Two small, truncated curved Roman ditches were located at 113-121 High Street, c.90m to the west, and Roman pottery was also found in various locations along Edridge Road. Further Roman artefacts have also been recorded in the wider surroundings of the Site.

**Saxon / Early Medieval (AD410-1066)**

2.1.8 A richly furnished Saxon cemetery dated to the 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> centuries AD was discovered at Edridge Road during the construction of terraced housing in the 1890s. Due to the haphazard circumstances of recovery the exact location and size of the cemetery remains unknown. Archaeological excavations at Nos. 4, 7, 9, 16 and 23 Edridge Road in 1972, and an evaluation at 4-20 Edridge Road in 1995 failed to recover any burials, as did an evaluation at 5-25 Edridge Road in 1989.

2.1.9 In 1992, an archaeological evaluation by MoLAS at 82–86 Park Lane, uncovered nine inhumations and possibly as many as eight cremations in a limited area. In 1999 and 2000, excavations were carried out at 82–90 Park Lane by Wessex Archaeology which recorded 46 Saxon inhumation graves and two cremation burials. Whole pots exposed beyond the area of proposed buildings were left unexcavated and may also have contained cremations. Three quarters of the graves contained goods, comprising weaponry (33%) - including four swords - jewellery (13%) and other items of status or involved in funerary feasts. The finds span the late 5<sup>th</sup> to late 7<sup>th</sup> and early 8<sup>th</sup> centuries. While there was relatively good preservation of organic remains including textiles, horn, wood and skin/leather, the human remains were poorly preserved with small quantities of bone recovered from only 48% of graves, despite tests which indicated that the soil conditions were neither acidic nor alkali.

2.1.10 The earliest documentary reference to Croydon dates to 9<sup>th</sup> century, when Archbishop Aethered exchanged land in 'Crogedene' for land belonging to Aelfred at Chartham in Kent. Coincidentally, a hoard of 9<sup>th</sup> century coins was found on the site of the later Archiepiscopal Palace, now the Old Palace School of John Whitgift. In the later Middle Ages Croydon was the centre of a large dispersed estate held by the Archbishops of Canterbury. More reliable historical evidence for settlement in Croydon is found in the joint will of Beorhtric and Aelfswyth dated to AD 962, where it is referred to as 'Crogdoene'. No definite early Saxon village has been found, although it would be reasonable to suggest that it was located where the later medieval village grew in Old Town Croydon.

**Medieval and Post Medieval (AD1066-1799)**

2.1.11 The Domesday Book (AD1086) indicates that the Norman Archbishop Lanfranc held Croydon, subletting much of the estate. It is likely that the estate was managed from a building on the site of the later Episcopal Palace, near to the Church. The church and a mill are included in the Domesday account. The village at this time was largely confined to the Old Town.

2.1.12 A triangular market place, bounded by Surrey Street, High Street and Crown Hill was probably laid out during the 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries.

2.1.13 The area between High Street and Park Lane, including the area of the proposed development site, was laid out as a planned eastern extension to Croydon in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Park Lane formed a back lane to the settlement and High Street continued to serve as the main thoroughfare.



- 2.1.14 Many investigations have recovered medieval pottery – mostly residual from secondary contexts. Excavations at 113–121 High Street exposed a flint and mortar structure with a havette, or shearman’s hook embedded in the floor, provisionally dated to the 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> century which probably dates to the planned extension to the town.
- 2.1.15 Rocque’s 1753 Surrey map and J. Cary’s 1786 map give only the sketchiest outlines of the area but Park Lane is evident as the back lane to High Street with burgage plots set out as strips between the two roads.

**Modern (1800-Present)**

- 2.1.16 The 19<sup>th</sup> century, in common with most of Greater London, saw a phenomenal population growth as communications brought Croydon within the greater metropolitan area of the capital. It was this growth that was to lead to the original development of the area within which the Site is located.
- 2.1.17 A property is shown at the location on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1869. Sources indicate that the building was originally a dwelling and the ‘Wheelwrights’ reference appears to relate to a smithy, which produced cartwheels, first shown on the Ordnance Survey edition of 1897 to the rear of the property (Reports 4 Planning 2013).

### **3 METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Aims and objectives**

- 3.1.1 The objective of the watching brief at The Wheelwrights Public House was to record the location, extent, date, nature, character and significance of any archaeological remains as may exist on the Site. Particular attention to the gravels for any evidence of Palaeolithic activity and features associated with possible prehistoric and Roman activity was adhered to. In conjunction with these aims, particular attention was paid to any Saxon / medieval and post medieval remains which may have been exposed during the course of the groundworks.
- 3.1.2 The general aims of the archaeological fieldwork programme were to:
- provide further information concerning the presence/absence, date, nature and extent of any buried archaeological remains and to investigate and record all archaeological features revealed during excavation and groundwork
  - establish a broad phased plan of the archaeology revealed during the ground works
  - investigate the function of any structural remains and the activities taking place within and close to the Site
  - to inform and provide information for any future mitigation for the Site in compliance with the planning condition

#### **3.2 Fieldwork methodology**

- 3.2.1 The watching brief and the preparation of this report was undertaken in accordance with the methodology set out in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2013) and carried out in compliance with the standards outlined in the Institute for Archaeologists’ *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief* (IfA 2008).
- 3.2.2 The ground works monitored consisted of the mechanical excavation of foundation trenches and associated service trenches for the new development. These were c.0.75m wide and with a maximum depth of 1.2m.



### 3.3 Monitoring

- 3.3.1 An archaeological presence was maintained throughout the ground works. These comprised the excavation of new foundation trenching, to the rear of the building, and an internal test pit, which was undertaken to examine foundation depth. **Figure 1** shows a plan of the monitored trenches.

### 3.4 Recording

- 3.4.1 All deposits encountered during the watching brief were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording sheets and a continuous unique numbering system.
- 3.4.2 A representative section, not less than 1m in length, of deposits from ground surface to the top of the natural geology was recorded where appropriate.
- 3.4.3 All written, drawn and photographic records were compiled in accordance with the Wessex Archaeology Fieldwork Recording Manual.
- 3.4.4 Photographs were taken as appropriate, providing a record of exposed deposits along with images of the overall excavation and the Site as a whole. The photographic record comprises digital photography. A photographic register of all photographs taken is contained within the project archive.

## 4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

- 4.1.1 The trenching undertaken to the rear of the building extended from the building and ran parallel to the back wall at a distance of 1.7m (**Plate 1**). The trench measured 7m in length and 0.7m wide and lay just beyond the location of an earlier extension which, with the exception of toilet at the south corner, had been removed. The toilet was demolished prior to trenching of the area.
- 4.1.2 The stratigraphic sequence encountered in the foundation trenching lay beneath a 0.15m thick concrete slab **101**, which makes up the current yard surface. The slab lay over two c.0.25m deep layers of made ground. These consisted of gravelly yellow orange sand **102** observed along the length of the trench and a deposit of dark brown silt with fragments cement and mortar and medium sized gravels **103** observed at the far north-west of the trench. These sealed a deposit of garden soils **104** which was formed of dark greyish brown clay silt and measured c.0.35m in thickness. Below this four successive natural deposits were uncovered **105-109** (**Plate 2**). **105** comprised thick light brownish yellow clay silt measuring c.0.3m thick. **106** comprised a 0.3m thick mid orangey brown clay silt brick earth. Deposit **107** comprised small to large rounded gravels stained dark brown/black, measuring 0.2m thick, and **108** was formed of small to medium gravels in a yellowish brown sandy silt which was extended beneath the depth of trenching.
- 4.1.3 The foundation of a modern brick wall **109**; 0.37m deep and 0.3m wide; was removed during excavation which ran from the north-west site boundary wall along the eastern edge of the trench (**Plates 3 & 4**). The foundation was constructed of red and yellow bricks laid into a concrete base. The composition and sizing of the red brick, along with the use of cement as bonding, indicates that the wall would have formed part of an earlier extension to the building which stood during the 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 4.1.4 In the southern half of the foundation trench a large modern concaved cut **110** was observed (**Plate 5**). It contained a loosely compacted mid-dark clay sandy silt with heavy rooting and fragments of CBM and mortar. No dating evidence was retrieved nor was the south-eastern side of the feature observed. Given the soft compaction and rooting of the



fill it was interpreted as being a post-medieval or modern cut with a deliberate backfill; possibly relating to the previous use of the rear of the site as a wheelwrights premises.

4.1.5 A test-pit was hand excavated against the north-western wall of the basement of the building to investigate the depth of the existing internal foundations (**Plates 6 & 7**). The test pit measured 0.9m x 0.6m x 0.65m and revealed a 0.2m thick concrete slab (**201**) overlaying mid-brown sandy gravels (**202**), which were interpreted as natural geology. The gravels had a rounded angular form indicative of having been water-worn. The concrete floor of the basement was c.2m below ground level and had been shown to have truncated the natural gravels.

4.1.6 No features of archaeological significance were identified during the watching brief.

## **5 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE**

5.1.1 No artefactual evidence was recovered during the watching brief.

## **6 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE**

6.1.1 No features or deposits suitable for environmental sampling were identified during the watching brief.

## **7 ARCHIVE**

### **7.1 Preparation and deposition**

7.1.1 The complete project archive will be prepared in accordance with Wessex Archaeology's Guidelines for Archive Preparation and in accordance with Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-Term Storage (Walker 1990) and following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995). On completion of the project, the archive will be deposited with a suitable local museum.

### **7.2 The Archive**

7.2.1 Following the fieldwork all artefacts were transported to Wessex Archaeology's Salisbury Office where they were processed and assessed for this report. The accompanying documentary records from the archaeological works have been compiled into a stable fully cross-referenced and indexed archive in accordance with Appendix 6 of *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991).

7.2.2 The contents of the project archive, comprises one A4 ring binder file containing the following:

- 3 Trench Record Sheets
- 3 Photographic Record Sheets
- Day Book
- A copy of the WSI
- A copy of the Watching Brief Report



7.2.3 The project paper archive including plans, photographs and written records is currently held at Wessex Archaeology's Rochester Office under the site code **100100**.

7.2.4 Details of the Site, including a copy of this report, will be submitted online to the OASIS (Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations) database.

### **7.3 Copyright**

7.3.1 The Trust for Wessex Archaeology shall retain full copyright of any report under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved. Excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of the report by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the specification. Any document produced to meet planning requirements may be copied for planning purposes by the Local Planning Authority.

7.3.2 A licence will also be granted to English Heritage, for the use of all documents arising from this project in all matters relating directly to the project, as well as for bona fide research purposes.

### **7.4 Security Copy**

7.4.1 In line with current best practice, on completion of the project a security copy of the paper records will be prepared, in the form of microfilm. The master jackets and one diazo copy of the microfilm will be submitted to the National Monuments Record Centre (NMR) (English Heritage) in Swindon; a second diazo copy will be deposited with the paper records at an appropriate local museum, and a third diazo copy will be retained by Wessex Archaeology.



## 8 REFERENCES

English Heritage, 2006. *Management of Research projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)*. London, English Heritage

Institute for Archaeologists, 2008. *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

Reports 4 Planning 2013 *Phase I Contaminated Land Assessment Desk Study and Site Reconnaissance 126 Southbridge Road Croydon CR0 1AF*  
Bromsgrove

SMA, 1995 *Towards an Accessible Archaeological Archive*. Society of Museum Archaeologists

Walker K. 1990 *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-Term Storage*. UKIC Archaeology Section

Wessex Archaeology, 2013. *Wheelwrights Public House, 126 Southbridge Road, London Borough of Croydon CR0 1AF: Written Scheme of Investigation*. Ref: T17259

### Online Sources

British Geological Survey (BGS) Online Maps:  
<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>



## 9 APPENDICES

### 9.1 Appendix 1: Context Descriptions

#### Exterior foundation trench

Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (max)
101	Slab	Concrete slab	0.00 - 0.13m
102	Made ground	Friable gravelly yellow/orange sand	0.13 - 0.37m
103	Made ground	Dark brown silt with inclusions of ceramic fragments, mortar lumps and medium sized gravel	0.13 – 0.37m
104	Garden soils	Dark grey brown clay silt with inclusions of small-medium angular gravels, cement fragments and roots	0.37 - 0.72m
105	Natural	Light brown yellow clay silt- soft compaction	0.72 - 1.1m
106	Natural	Mid orangey brown clay silt – Brick earth	1.1 – 1.2m
107	Natural	Small-large rounded gravel in a dark black silt matrix	1.2 - 1.4m
108	Natural	Mid yellowy brown sandy gravels (small-medium sorting)	1.4m+
109	Wall	Post-medieval brick wall with cement bonding	0.00 – 0.37m
110	Cut	Large modern cut, rounded sides- unknown function	3.5m wide – 1.5 m deep
111	Fill	Mid- dark grey brown silt loam with inclusions of numerous roots and occasional cement and mortar fragments	3.5m wide – 1.5 m deep

#### Internal test-pit

Context	Interpretation	Description	Depth (max)
101	Slab	Concrete floor	0.00 - 0.2m
102	Natural	Rounded angular gravels (small-large sorting) in a mid brown yellow sand matrix	0.2m+





## 9.2 Appendix 2: Greater London County Council HER Summary Form

<b>Site Name:</b> Wheelwrights Public House, 126 Southbridge Road, London Borough of Croydon	
<b>Site Address:</b> Wheelwrights Public House, 126 Southbridge Road, London Borough of Croydon	
<b>Summary:</b> Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Reports for Planning to undertake an Archaeological Watching Brief at Wheelwrights Public House, 126 Southbridge Road, London Borough of Croydon, hereafter 'the Site', centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 532362 164652.  The watching brief monitored the excavation of foundation trenching and a test pit as part of the conversion of the public house to residential use, which includes erection of a two storey rear extension and roof extension also at the rear. The trenching measured 0.7m wide by a maximum of 1.5m deep. A basic stratigraphy was observed of made ground and garden soils which in turn overlay the natural geology of sand and clay. A section of 19 <sup>th</sup> or 20 <sup>th</sup> century wall was uncovered in the exterior trenching and natural deposits were uncovered in the internal test pit.  No finds or features of archaeological significance were noted during the watching brief.	
<b>District/Unitary:</b> Croydon	<b>Parish:</b>
<b>Period(s):</b> N/A	
<b>NGR (centre of site : 8 figures):</b> 532362 164652.	
<b>Type of archaeological work</b> Watching Brief	
<b>Date of Recording:</b> 13 <sup>th</sup> September 2013	
<b>Unit undertaking recording:</b> Wessex Archaeology	
<b>Geology:</b> Gravel terraces	
<b>Title and author of accompanying report:</b> Wheelwrights Public House, 126 Southbridge Road, London Borough of Croydon Author: J. Condliffe	
<b>Summary of fieldwork results (begin with earliest period first, add NGRs where appropriate)</b>  No finds or features of archaeological significance were noted during the watching brief. Only a post-medieval or modern shallow wall foundation and a deliberately backfilled modern cut to the south.	
<b>Location of archive/finds:</b> Wessex Archaeology (Rochester Office)	
<b>Contact at Unit:</b> R. M. De'Athe	<b>Date:</b> September 2013



Plate 1: North-east facing shot of foundation trench and rear of existing building



Plate 2: North-east facing section of foundation trench


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Plate 3: South-west facing shot of foundation excavation showing wall **109**



Plate 4: South-east facing section of foundation trench showing wall **109**


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Plate 5: North-east facing section of foundation trench with cut 110



Plate 6: South-west facing shot of interior basement



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Plate 7: South-east facing section of basement test pit

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