

COOMBE LODGE
COOMBE RIDINGS
KINGSTON HILL
LONDON BOROUGH OF KINGSTON UPON THAMES
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
REPORT

COM96

Prepared for:
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Wessex Archaeology Ref: 42237

Museum of London Ref: COM 96

August 1996

SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at Coombe Lodge, Coombe Ridings, London Borough of Kingston upon Thames.

In a trench 8.8m long and a maximum of 2.2m deep, C19th/C20th century soils and building debris were seen to overlie natural sands and clays.

No archaeological features or finds were identified to indicate any archaeological deposits within the immediate area.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The work was commissioned by Simon Merrony Architects, on behalf of Roy Bishop and Sons. The project was monitored by Ken Whittaker of English Heritage whose assistance was greatly appreciated.

The fieldwork was carried out by Kit Watson and Natasha Meader. The report was prepared by Kit Watson and illustrations by Karen Nichols. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Jonathan Nowell

**Coombe Lodge, Coombe Ridings, Kingston Hill,
London Borough of Kingston upon Thames**

Archaeological Evaluation Report

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Wessex Archaeology was commissioned to carry out an archaeological evaluation at Coombe Lodge, Coombe Ridings (NGR TQ 20435 71015) on 1st August 1996 by Simon Merrony Architects. This document details the results of the field evaluation.

2. PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The local planning authority (LPA), The London Borough of Kingston Upon Thames, has recently granted conditional planning permission for the demolition of the existing bungalow and construction of a residential house and garage closer to the road frontage.
- 2.2. Condition 12 of the permission relates to archaeological matters and states;

Condition 12

'No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing 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 which shall have been approved by the local planning authority.'

- 2.3. English Heritage, acting as archaeological advisors to the LPA, have therefore recommended that an appropriate initial response to this condition would be the implementation of a field evaluation.
- 2.4. A project design for the evaluation was submitted to English Heritage. Once the project design had received English Heritage approval, Wessex Archaeology was commissioned to carry out the work.

3. LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 3.1. The proposed development site of c.0.15ha is located on Kingston Hill between Richmond Park and Coombe Hill Golf Course, the front of the property opens onto Coombe Ridings.

- 3.2. The site is located on the east-west slope of Kingston Hill at a level of some 35m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). It is situated on a north east facing slope overlooking Beverley Brook and Wimbledon Common beyond. The drift geology is recorded by the BGS survey as comprising High Level Terrace Gravels which overlie the Claygate Beds. There are a number of tributary valleys on the east side of the hill which run east, draining into Beverley Brook.
- 3.3. At present the site has a bungalow to the rear of the property, which is surrounded by gardens.
- 3.4. Restrictions within the site include a series of undefined electrical and water services, a terrace associated with the existing bungalow, large mature trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders and a substantial gravel over tarmac driveway.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 4.1. The proposal site lies within an area of considerable archaeological potential. Recent evaluations and excavations within the area have revealed extensive evidence for prehistoric activity, in particular from the Bronze Age.

5. OBJECTIVES OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION

- 5.1. The primary objective of the field evaluation was to determine, as far as reasonably possible, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development.
- 5.2. An adequate representative sample of all areas where archaeological remains are potentially threatened were to be studied, and attention was to be given to site remains of all periods (inclusive of evidence of past environments). The evaluation also sought to clarify the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusions, and hence assess the degree of archaeological survival of buried deposits and any surviving structures of archaeological significance.
- 5.3. The evaluation on the Coombe Lodge site was specifically designed to:
 - Determine the extent of activity by earlier populations in the vicinity of Kingston Hill which has previously been demonstrated by fieldwork within the area.

6. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

6.1. Introduction

- 6.1.1. It was proposed to achieve the project objectives through the excavation of a single machine excavated trench 15m long by 2m wide within the footprint of the proposed building, to the south of the existing bungalow. However due to the conditions on site (electrical services located by Cable Avoidance Tool, a gravel over tarmac drive, a concrete and brick terrace associated with the bungalow, and trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders) the length of the trench was restricted to 8.8m. The trench layout is given in Fig.1.
- 6.1.2. In the area of the proposed trench modern overburden was removed under archaeological supervision, by a mechanical excavator using toothless bucket. Excavation was continued in spits of up to 300mm thickness to the top of natural deposits. No archaeological features were encountered. A sondage was then excavated to a depth of 2.2m below ground level to confirm the nature of the underlying deposits.

6.2. Results

- 6.2.1. Six layers were excavated. A thin sandy topsoil (1) overlay a compact clayey subsoil (2). The subsoil (2) contained building rubble, particularly at the western end of the trench, evidence of a bonfire, and the roots of a tree stump located just to the north of the trench location. The subsoil seems to date to the construction of the bungalow or its later renovation. Also dating to this period was a service trench which was partly sectioned at the east end of trench.
- 6.2.2. The possible construction layer (2) overlay a thick buried soil layer (3). Layer 3 contained ceramic building material, flower pot and roots. This appears to have been the original topsoil buried during the construction or renovation of the bungalow. Its depth suggests deep digging for gardening or market gardening. Layer 4 appeared to be a thin transitional form of layer 3, appearing wetter, more clayey and containing fewer roots and no finds.
- 6.2.3. Below layer 4, at depth of approximately 1.2m below ground surface (33 m aOD), lay deposit 5 which appeared to be a natural sandy clay. Layer 5 was very wet. Water gathered on the base of the trench where it was excavated into the surface of layer 5. The high water content of the layer was shown by the iron staining of the clayey sand which increased with depth. That the water content of this layer presented a drainage problem is shown by the presence of a mole drain, cut from layer 3, in the western end of the trench.
- 6.2.4. At the western end of the trench the excavation was continued to a depth of 2.2m below ground level (32.33m aOD) to confirm the natural nature of deposit 5. At the base of the sondage a blue gleyed clay was exposed (6) which appeared to be another natural layer.

6.2.5. Bulk environmental soil samples of layers 3 and 5 were taken for confirmation of the nature of the excavated layers but not retained after description.

7. FINDS

7.1. All artefacts from excavated layers were undoubtedly of recent or modern date but a sample were retained to elucidate the date and function of the deposits. The machine-excavated spoil heaps were examined and artefacts of similar date and character to those retained during excavation were noted but not collected.

7.2. All finds retained were undiagnostic other than being of recent (19th century/20th century) date.

Context	No.	Weight	Notes
2	1	132g	Decorated ridge tile (C19th/C20th)
3	3	170g	Tile fragments
	1	59g	Redware flower pot.

8. CONCLUSIONS

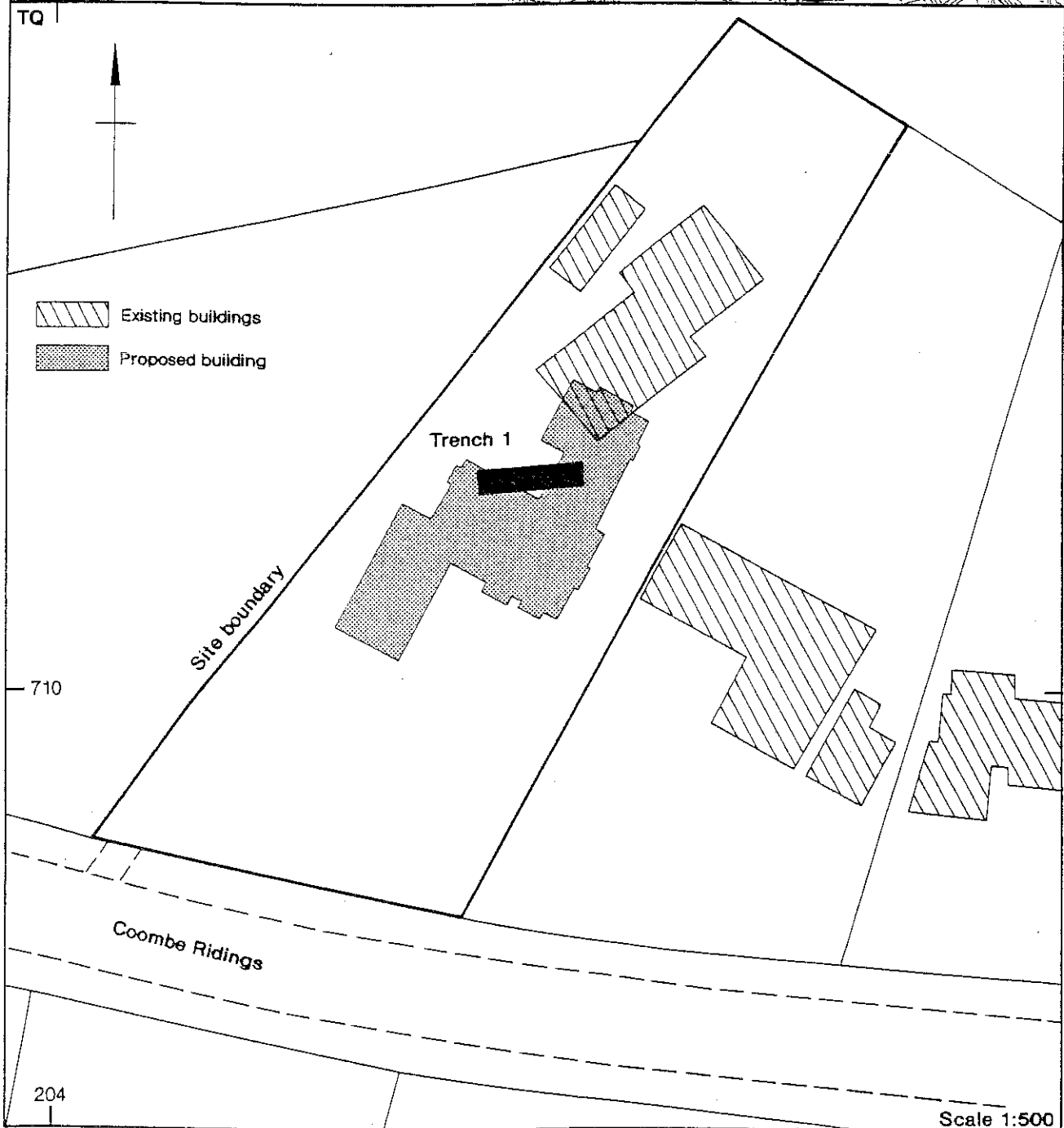
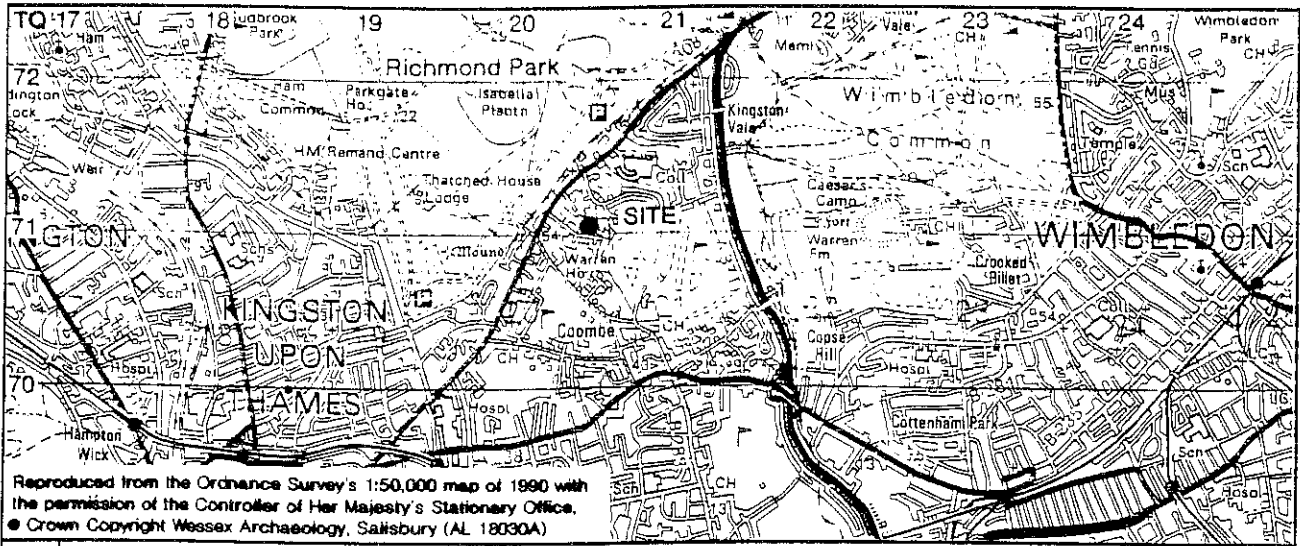
8.1. No archaeological deposits were identified. Natural sands and clays appear to be overlain by modern soils and building layers.

8.2. The depth of layers 3 and 4 suggests deep digging was necessary to improve the wet sandy/clay soils. This may have removed traces of earlier activity, however, no finds such as flint or pottery were recovered to support this.

8.3. The evaluation gave no indication of any archaeological deposits within the immediate area. It can, therefore, be concluded that there will be little or no archaeological impact as a result of the proposed development.

WESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY

August 1995



Site & trench location

Figure 1

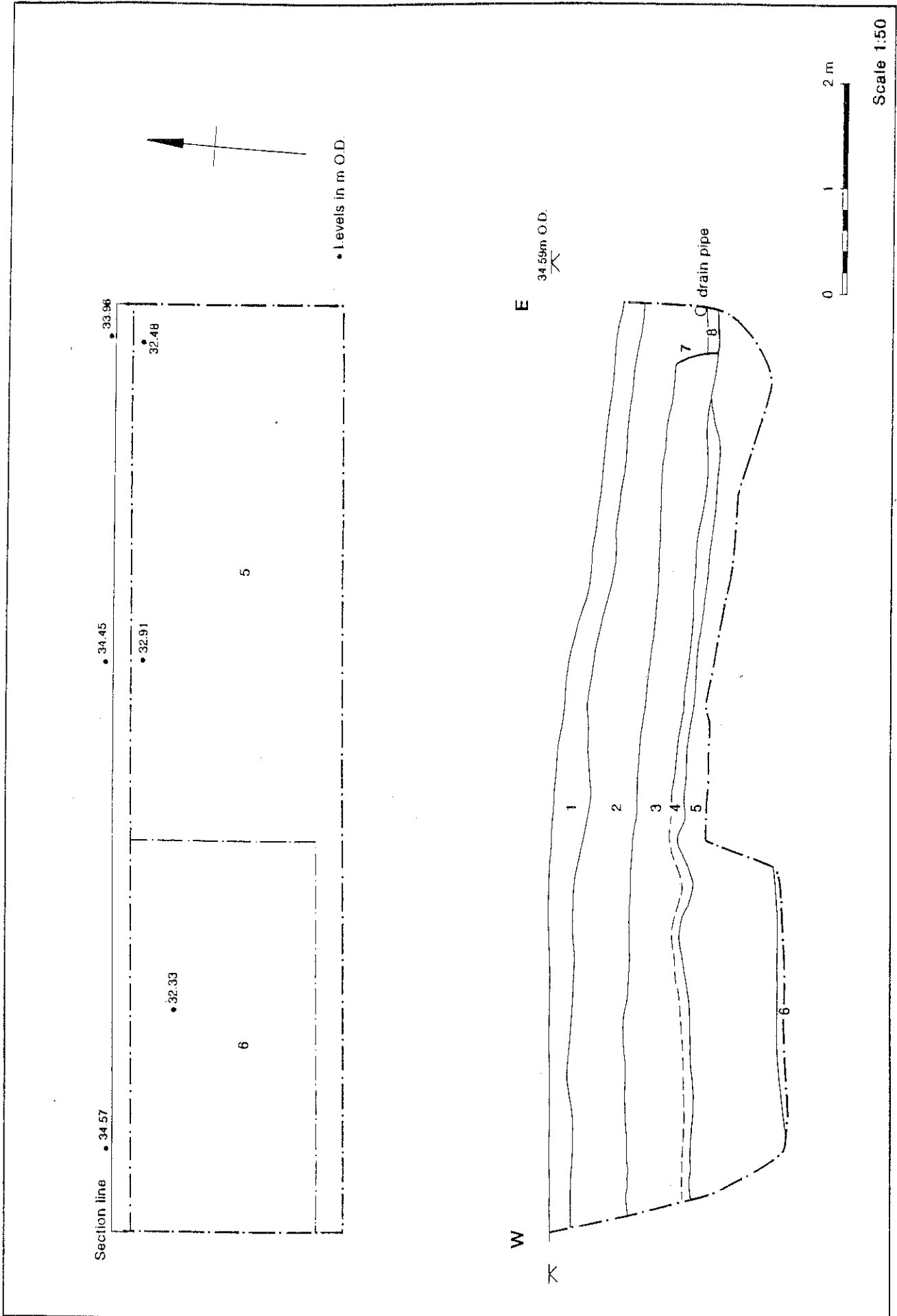


Figure 2

Trench plan & section

GLSMR/RCHME NMR ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORT FORM

1) TYPE OF RECORDING		
Evaluation: ✓	Excavation:	Watching Brief:
Other (please specify)		
2) LOCATION		
Borough: Kingston upon Thames		
Site address: Coombe Lodge, Coombe Ridings, Kingston Hill		
Site Name: Coombe Lodge		Site code: COM 96
Nat Grid Refs:	centre of site: NGR TQ 20435 71015	
limits of site:	a)	b)
	c)	d)
3) ORGANISATION		
Name of archaeological unit /company/society: Wessex Archaeology		
Address: Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP4 6EB		
Site director/supervisor: Kit Watson		Project Manager: Jonathan Nowell
Funded by: Roy Bishop and Sons		
4) DURATION		
Date fieldwork started: 1/8/96		Date finished: 1/8/96
Fieldwork previously notified ?		YES
Fieldwork will continue ?		NO
5) PERIODS REPRESENTED		
Post-Medieval		

6) PERIOD SUMMARIES Use headings for each period (**ROMAN; MEDIEVAL; etc.**), and additional sheets if necessary.

C19th/C20th soils and building debris overlying natural sands and clays

7) NATURAL (state if not observed; please **DO NOT LEAVE BLANK**)

Type: Pale grey Clayey sands with iron staining overlying blue gleyed clay

Height above Ordnance Datum: 33m aOD

8) LOCATION OF ARCHIVES		
a) Please indicate those categories still in your possession:		
NOtes: ✓	PLans: ✓	PHotos: ✓
NGatives: ✓	SLides: ✓	COrrespondence: ✓
MScripts (unpub reports, etc): ✓		
b) All/some records have been/will be deposited in the following museum, records office etc: to be advised		
c) Approximate year of transfer: Unknown		
d) Location of any copies:		
e) Has a security copy of the archive been made?		NO
If not, do you wish RCHME to consider microfilming		NO
9) LOCATION OF FINDS		
a) In your possession (delete as appropriate):		ALL
b) All finds will be deposited with the following museum, other body etc: to be advised		
c) Approximate year of transfer: unknown		
10) BIBLIOGRAPHY		
SIGNED:		DATED: 6/8/96
NAME (Block capitals): Kit Watson		

Please return the completed form to The Greater London Sites and Monuments Record, Rooms 214 -217
English Heritage, London Region, 23 Saville Row, London W1X 1AB.
Tel: 0171 973 3731 / 3779 (direct dial) Fax 0171 973 3249