



Cranbrook Mews  
Rear of 88-96 High Street,  
Walthamstow E17,  
London Borough of Waltham Forest

Watching Brief Report





**CRANBROOK MEWS  
REAR OF 88-96 HIGH STREET  
WALTHAMSTOW E17  
LONDON BOROUGH OF WALTHAM FOREST**

**Watching Brief Report**

Prepared for:

**Yogo Developments**

Newby House  
309 Chase Road  
Southgate  
London  
N14 6JS

By:

**Wessex Archaeology in London**

Unit 113  
The Chandlery  
50 Westminster Bridge Road  
London  
SE1 7QY

WA Ref: 68820.03  
MoL Code: CBK 08

**August 2008**

**Cranbrook Mews  
Rear of 88-96 High Street  
Walthamstow E17  
London Borough of Waltham Forest**

**Watching Brief Report**

**Contents**

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Scope of Project.....	1
1.2	Planning Background.....	1
1.3	Fieldwork.....	1
<b>2</b>	<b>THE SITE.....</b>	<b>1</b>
2.1	Site Location.....	1
2.2	Topography.....	2
2.3	Geology.....	2
<b>3</b>	<b>ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....</b>	<b>2</b>
3.1	General.....	2
3.2	Palaeolithic.....	2
3.3	Saxon and Medieval.....	2
3.4	Modern.....	3
<b>4</b>	<b>AIMS AND OBJECTIVES.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>3</b>
5.1	Fieldwork.....	3
5.2	Finds Collection and Retention.....	4
5.3	Environmental Sampling Strategy.....	4
5.4	The Archive.....	4
<b>6</b>	<b>RESULTS.....</b>	<b>4</b>
6.1	Depositional sequence.....	4
6.2	Finds.....	5
6.3	Environmental Evidence.....	5
<b>7</b>	<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>5</b>
7.1	General.....	5
7.2	Impact.....	5
<b>8</b>	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>APPENDIX 1 CONTEXT SUMMARY TABLES.....</b>	<b>7</b>

**OASIS Reporting Form**

**List of Figures and Plates**

<b>Figure 1</b>	Site Location
<b>Figure 2</b>	North-facing representative section of Trench 2
<b>Plate 1 (cover)</b>	Trench 2 from the west

**Cranbrook Mews  
Rear of 88-96 High Street  
Walthamstow E17  
London Borough of Waltham Forest**

**Watching Brief Report**

**Summary**

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Yogo Developments (the Client) to undertake a watching brief at Cranbrook Mews rear of 88-98 High Street, Walthamstow E17, in the London Borough of Waltham Forest (the Site). The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 536665, 188878.

The Site lies within a council-designated Archaeological Priority Area defining the historical Walthamstow Medieval Settlement, which lies some 1200m to the east of the Site.

The work was carried out as a means to discharge a planning condition attached to consent for the redevelopment of the Site involving the construction of two two-story residential blocks and associated car parking and bike sheds as well as the relocation of a brick built electricity sub-station.

The watching brief observed the excavation, by the site contractor, of strip foundation trenches to a depth of between 1.4m and 1.8m below the present ground level. It took place intermittently from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008.

The watching brief observed no archaeological deposits or features. All of the archaeological deposits observed during the watching brief contained exclusively 19<sup>th</sup> century or later material.

Geological deposits comprising undulating, silty clay over laminated coarse sandy gravels were observed in all of the excavated areas at heights of between 14.00m aOD (Trench 1) and 13.80m aOD (Trench 2).

The results of this Watching Brief show that the proposed development would not have an impact on significant archaeological deposits.

**Cranbrook Mews  
Rear of 88-96 High Street  
Walthamstow E17  
London Borough of Waltham Forest**

**Watching Brief Report**

**Acknowledgements**

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Harry Theoharous of Yogo Developments for commissioning the work. Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank Mirek and the on-site staff of the Yogo Group for their assistance and cooperation during the fieldwork.

Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank the English Heritage Archaeological Advisor to the London Borough of Waltham Forest, David Divers, for monitoring the works.

The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Lawrence Pontin. The fieldwork was undertaken by Cornelius Barton, Gary Evans and Lawrence Pontin.

Gary Evans compiled the report. Illustrations were by Kitty Brandon.

**Cranbrook Mews  
Rear of 88-96 High Street  
Walthamstow E17  
London Borough of Waltham Forest**

**Watching Brief Report**

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Scope of Project**

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Yogo Developments to undertake an archaeological watching brief on a new residential development at Cranbrook Mews (the Site). The Site is situated at the rear of 88-96 High Street, Walthamstow, E17 7LD, centred on NGR 536665,188878 (see **Figure 1**).

### **1.2 Planning Background**

1.2.1 The entire Site is proposed for re-development to provide residential properties. The approved proposal (Planning Application no. 2006/1791) comprises the construction of two two-storey buildings at the southeast and southwest corners of the Site with car parking and bike sheds to the rear. The proposal also includes the relocation of a brick built electricity sub-station from the southeast corner to the northeast corner of the Site.

1.2.2 The Site is situated within a council-designated Archaeological Priority Area defining the historical Walthamstow Medieval Settlement (BHE17, Waltham Forest Unitary Development Plan 2006).

### **1.3 Fieldwork**

1.3.1 The fieldwork programme, which comprised the monitoring of ground works, including the excavation by the ground contractor of foundation trenches, was requested by the Archaeological Advisor to the London Borough of Waltham Forest (AALBWF) who advised that the Site had the potential for archaeological remains. These archaeological works sought to expedite the development of an appropriate mitigation strategy for the impact of the proposed scheme on any archaeological deposits that would be affected by its construction.

1.3.2 This report details the results of the fieldwork that took place intermittently from the 2nd to the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008.

## **2 THE SITE**

### **2.1 Site Location**

2.1.1 The Site, which is rectangular in plan, covers an area of 690m<sup>2</sup> and lies some 1200m to the east of the historical core of Walthamstow. The Site fronts Cranbrook Mews to the south and backs on to the rear of a row of 1960s shops/maisonettes that front on to Walthamstow High Street to the north. To the east the Site is bordered by the car park of an Iceland supermarket and to the west by a brick built "club house" and the backyard of no 86 High Street (**Figure 1**). The Site was, until



recently, occupied by a row of 1960s brick built garages and an open car park for 88-96 High Street. The car park was covered partly in a concrete and tarmac hard standing and compacted pulverized fuel ash.

## 2.2 Topography

- 2.2.1 The height on the roadway in front of the Cranbrook Mews entrance to the Site is 14.40m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The Site itself is generally flat with a slight rise from west to east (northwest corner = 14.40m aOD northeast corner = 14.53m aOD).

## 2.3 Geology

- 2.3.1 The underlying Site geology comprises deposits of Pleistocene river terrace gravels, the Taplow Gravels (British Geological Survey, Map sheet 256). These are believed to have been deposited between *circa.* 250,000 and *circa.* 120,000 years Before Present (BP) (MoL, 2000, 15).

## 3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### 3.1 General

- 3.1.1 No previous archaeological fieldwork has been undertaken on the Site and it is not part of a Scheduled Monument. A number of archaeological finds, mostly found in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, are recorded in the area, with dates ranging from Palaeolithic to medieval. However, few of these can be accurately provenanced.

### 3.2 Palaeolithic

- 3.2.1 The Taplow Gravels have historically been rich sources of Palaeolithic and Pleistocene finds, and prehistoric artefacts have been recovered from the vicinity of the Site. Individual and groups of Lower Palaeolithic hand axes (500,000-150,000 BC) and other flint tools have been found between St James and Walthamstow Central railway stations (MoL 2000, 43). Although these represent isolated poorly provenanced find spots they do serve as an indicator of transient human activity for a time when more comprehensive archaeological evidence is sparse.

### 3.3 Saxon and Medieval

- 3.3.1 The Area of Special Archaeological Priority, as defined in the Waltham Forest UDP, highlights the potential for medieval or earlier settlement evidence in the area. Whilst there is no direct evidence of a Saxon or early medieval settlement in the vicinity, the place name; Walthamstow- “a place where strangers are welcome” (Weiner and Hebert, 1983, 945) would suggest some form of settlement at that time.
- 3.3.2 The first reference to a manor at Walthamstow is in a Domesday Book entry dating from 1086. At this date the manor belonged to the Ralph de Toni, standard bearer to William I (Weiner and Hebert, 1983, 946).
- 3.3.3 The area appears to have been part of the Royal Forest of Waltham in the medieval period (Weiner and Hebert, 1983, 946).
- 3.3.4 Throughout the medieval period the area appears to have been rural, with the main focus of settlement being around the 12<sup>th</sup> century parish church of St Mary, some 1200m to the east of the Site.

- 3.3.5 From the 15<sup>th</sup> century onwards the forest was cleared and Walthamstow became a popular site for large houses built by City merchants.
- 3.3.6 The present High Street, formerly called Marsh Street, appears to be relatively ancient. It leads from Hoe Street and the historical centre of Walthamstow along the line of present day Coppermill Lane, to a mill situated on the River Lea. A mill is mentioned in the Walthamstow entry in Domesday Book.

### 3.4 Modern

- 3.4.1 By the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, cartographic evidence records the dramatic expansion of the built up area in Walthamstow and St James following the construction of the Great Eastern Railway Company's Walthamstow Hackney Branch Railway in the 1870s.
- 3.4.2 The 1867-1876 Ordnance Survey Maps (not illustrated) show the Site as a field or orchard laying to the south of Marsh Lane (present day High Street) a large house, Grove House, is shown to the west of the Site and the field/orchard was possibly part of the Grove House estate. By the 1890s the area along High Street had been built on although the Site itself appears to have remained open and was probably used as a yard for the properties fronting High Street. The layout of the Site appears to have remained essentially the same until modern times.

## 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 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) and 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, 2008 ref 68820.01) but in summary it comprised the supervised excavation in 50mm spits, of all ground intrusive works including strip foundation trenches (**Figure 1**). The work was carried out with a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket and all works took place under the supervision of an experienced archaeologist.
- 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 All Finds were treated in accordance with the relevant guidance given in the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2001), the UK Institute of Conservators' *Guidelines Conservation Guideline No 2* and the Museums and Galleries Commission's *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (1991), excepting where they are superseded by statements made below.
- 5.2.2 Where features or deposits were clearly modern finds were examined noted and discarded.

## 5.3 Environmental Sampling Strategy

- 5.3.1 A strategy for sampling archaeological and environmental deposits was developed in consultation with Wessex Archaeology's environmental manager and was set out in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology, 2008, section 6.2).

## 5.4 The Archive

- 5.4.1 The project archive is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in London under the Wessex Archaeology project code Wessex Archaeology 68820.
- 5.4.2 The 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).
- 5.4.3 The resulting archive will be put onto microfiche to the standards accepted by the National Monuments Record (NMR).
- 5.4.4 Following the conclusion of the project and with the permission of the landowner the archive will be prepared for deposition with the Museum of London under MOL Site Code: CBK 08.

## 6 RESULTS

### 6.1 Depositional sequence

- 6.1.1 The following section presents a brief summary of the results and an outline of the depositional sequence observed on Site. Detailed summaries of the trenches are presented in **Appendix 1** and full details are available in the project archive. In the following sections context numbers are given in bold.
- 6.1.2 No archaeological features, deposits or related artefactual material other than modern were observed in any part of the Site.
- 6.1.3 The soil profile observed was broadly similar in all the sections observed (**Figure 2**).
- 6.1.4 The earliest deposit observed was a layer of laminated undulating gravel **06** whose base was not reached at 1.8m below modern ground level (12.90m aOD). This geological deposit, which comprised orange brown coarse sand and clayey gravel made up of frequent small to medium sub-angular to sub-rounded pebbles, contained no artefacts or ecofacts

- 6.1.5 This deposit was overlain by a 0.3m thick layer of stiff yellowish brown silty clay (**05**) which contained few inclusions and no finds and almost certainly represents the upper surface of the drift geology.
- 6.1.6 The clay deposit was sealed by dark grey brown clay silt (**04/08**) which comprised the former topsoil. This was up to 0.6m thick although in some of the sections observed this deposit had been substantially or completely removed by modern truncation. In the centre of the Site this deposit was a much darker grey and showed signs of having been severely waterlogged by seepage from a modern drain and manhole.
- 6.1.7 Over most of the Site the former topsoil was overlain by rubble rich deposits (**03** and **07**). These levelling / bedding layers were up to 0.6m thick in total and contained red and yellow brick fragments, roofing slate and other demolition material. There was also occasional fragments of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century pottery and green bottle glass mixed with the former topsoil. In parts of the Site the bedding layer lay directly over the clay deposits of the drift geology.
- 6.1.8 In parts of the Site the bedding layer was overlain by a layer of tarmac and compacted pulverized fuel ash (**02**) and in areas by a thin layer of concrete (**01**) which formed the surface of the modern car park. The walls of the modern garages and a number of modern services cut through these deposits.

## 6.2 Finds

- 6.2.1 The only artefacts recovered on Site were modern in origin. These were noted but not retained

## 6.3 Environmental Evidence

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

## 7 CONCLUSION

### 7.1 General

- 7.1.1 The watching brief observed no archaeological deposits or features.
- 7.1.2 Geological deposits comprising undulating, silty clay over laminated coarse sandy gravels were observed in all of the excavated areas at heights of between 14.00m aOD (Trench 1) and 13.80m aOD (Trench 2). No artefacts or ecofacts were uncovered from these deposits.

### 7.2 Impact

- 7.2.1 The results of the watching brief show that the proposed development would not have an impact on significant archaeological deposits.

## 8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

English Heritage London Region (1998) *Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork – Archaeological Guidance Paper 3*

Institute of Field Archaeologists (2001) *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

Museum of London (2000) *The archaeology of Greater London: An assessment of archaeological evidence for human prescience in the area now covered by Greater London*

Weinreb, B and Hibbert, C (1983) *The London Encyclopaedia*

Wessex Archaeology (2008) Cranbrook Mews, rear of 88-96 High Street Walthamstow, E17 7LD. Written Scheme of Investigation for Watching Brief. Ref 668820.01

## 9 APPENDIX 1 CONTEXT SUMMARY TABLES

### Trench 1 (New Electricity Sub-Station)

(+) = base of feature or deposit not reached

Context no.	Description	Interpretive keywords	Height in metres aOD
01	Concrete	Construction slab of car park	14.53
02	Tarmac and compacted pulverized fuel ash.	Construction slab of yard/car park	14.43
03	Rubble rich deposit. Red yellow brick (frogged) fragments, crushed white and yellow mortar, yellow sand, 19 <sup>th</sup> and 20 <sup>th</sup> century pottery, occasional fragments of green bottle glass	Construction. Bedding/ levelling layer. "Made ground"	14.33
04	Dark greyish brown, clay silty. Frequent charcoal flecks throughout, occasional small fragments of red roof tile, some bioturbation, roots throughout	Topsoil. Cultivation	14.23
05	Mid yellowish brown stiff silty clay with 20% mid orange brown mottles. No intrusions	Drift geology. "Natural"	14.00
06	Mid orange brown, laminated clayey coarse sandy gravel. Gravel – small to medium sub rounded to sub angular pebbles	Drift geology. "Natural"	Top-13.80 Base- 13.10 (+)

### Trench 2 (South western house)

(+) = base of feature or deposit not reached

Context no.	Description	Interpretive keywords	Height m aOD
02	Tarmac and compacted pulverized fuel ash. Did not cover all of Trench 2	Construction slab of yard/car park	14.50
07	Dark-mid grey loose clayey silt with frequent fragments of tarmac, small sub rounded pebbles, red brick	Bedding/ levelling layer. Construction. "Made ground"	14.50
08	Mid greyish brown, fine sandy clay silt. Occasional small to well rounded pebbles, small fragments of red roof tile, roofing slate, 19 <sup>th</sup> and 20 <sup>th</sup> century pottery, occasional fragments of green bottle glass throughout	Former topsoil. Cultivation	14.40
05	Mid yellowish brown stiff silty clay with 20% mid orange brown mottles. No intrusions	Drift geology. "Natural"	13.80
06	Mid orange brown, laminated clayey coarse sandy gravel. Gravel – small to medium sub rounded to sub angular pebbles	Drift geology. "Natural"	Top-13.50 Base- 12.90 (+)

### Trench 3 (South eastern house)

(+) = base of feature or deposit not reached

Context no.	Description	Interpretive keywords	Height m aOD
03	Dark grey brown. Rubble rich deposit. Demolition mixed with humic topsoil. Frequent red and yellow brick (frogged) fragments, crushed white and yellow mortar, yellow sand, roofing slate	Bedding/levelling layer. Construction. "Made ground"	14.63
04	Dark greyish brown, clay silt. Frequent charcoal flecks throughout, occasional small fragments of red roof tile, some bioturbation, roots throughout	Former Topsoil. Cultivation	14.00
05	Mid yellowish brown stiff silty clay with 20% mid orange brown mottles. No intrusions	Drift geology. "Natural"	13.80
06	Mid orange brown, laminated clayey coarse sandy gravel. Gravel – small to medium sub rounded to sub angular pebbles	Drift geology. "Natural"	Top-13.60 Base-12.80 (+)

(+) = base of feature or deposit not reached

# OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

[List of Projects](#) | [Search Projects](#) | [New project](#) | [Change your details](#) | [HER coverage](#) | [Change country](#) | [Log out](#)

## Printable version

**OASIS ID: wessexar1-46759**

### Project details

Project name	Cranbrook Mews, rear of 88-96 High Street, Walthamstow, London Borough of Waltham Forest: watching brief
Short description of the project	Wessex Archaeology carried out a watching brief in order to discharge a condition attached to planning permission for the redevelopment of the site, which lies in an Archaeological Priority Area. Observations during the excavation of foundation trenches showed modern levelling deposits up to 0.60m deep overlay former topsoil or, in some areas, natural geology. No archaeological features or deposits were observed, and finds of modern date only were noted; none were retained.
Project dates	Start: 02-06-2008 End: 30-06-2008
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	68820 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	CBK08 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status (other)	Archaeological Priority Area (Walthamstow Medieval Settlement)
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'



Prompt                      Planning condition

### Project location

Country                      England  
Site location                GREATER LONDON WALTHAM FOREST WALTHAMSTOW  
Cranbrook Mews, rear of 88-96 High Street, Walthamstow  
  
Study area                    690.00 Square metres  
  
Site coordinates            TQ 36665 88878 51.5816769715 -0.02731827689170 51 34 54 N  
000 01 38 W Point

### Project creators

Name of Organisation      Wessex Archaeology  
  
Project brief originator    Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory  
body  
  
Project design originator   Wessex Archaeology  
  
Project director/manager   L. Pontin  
  
Project supervisor        G. Evans

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?    No  
  
Digital Archive recipient    Museum of London  
  
Digital Archive ID            CBK08  
  
Digital Contents              'other'  
  
Digital Media                 'Images raster / digital photography','Text'

available

Paper Archive recipient Museum of London

Paper Archive ID CBK08

Paper Contents 'other'

Paper Media available 'Context sheet','Photograph','Report','Unspecified Archive'

---

### **Project bibliography 1**

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title Cranbrook Mews, rear of 88-96 High Street, Walthamstow, E17, London Borough of Waltham Forest: watching brief

Author(s)/Editor(s) Wessex Archaeology

Other bibliographic details Report no. 68820.03

Date 2008

Issuer or publisher Wessex Archaeology

Place of issue or publication London

---

Entered by C Butterworth (c.butterworth@wessexarch.co.uk)

Entered on 11 August 2008

---

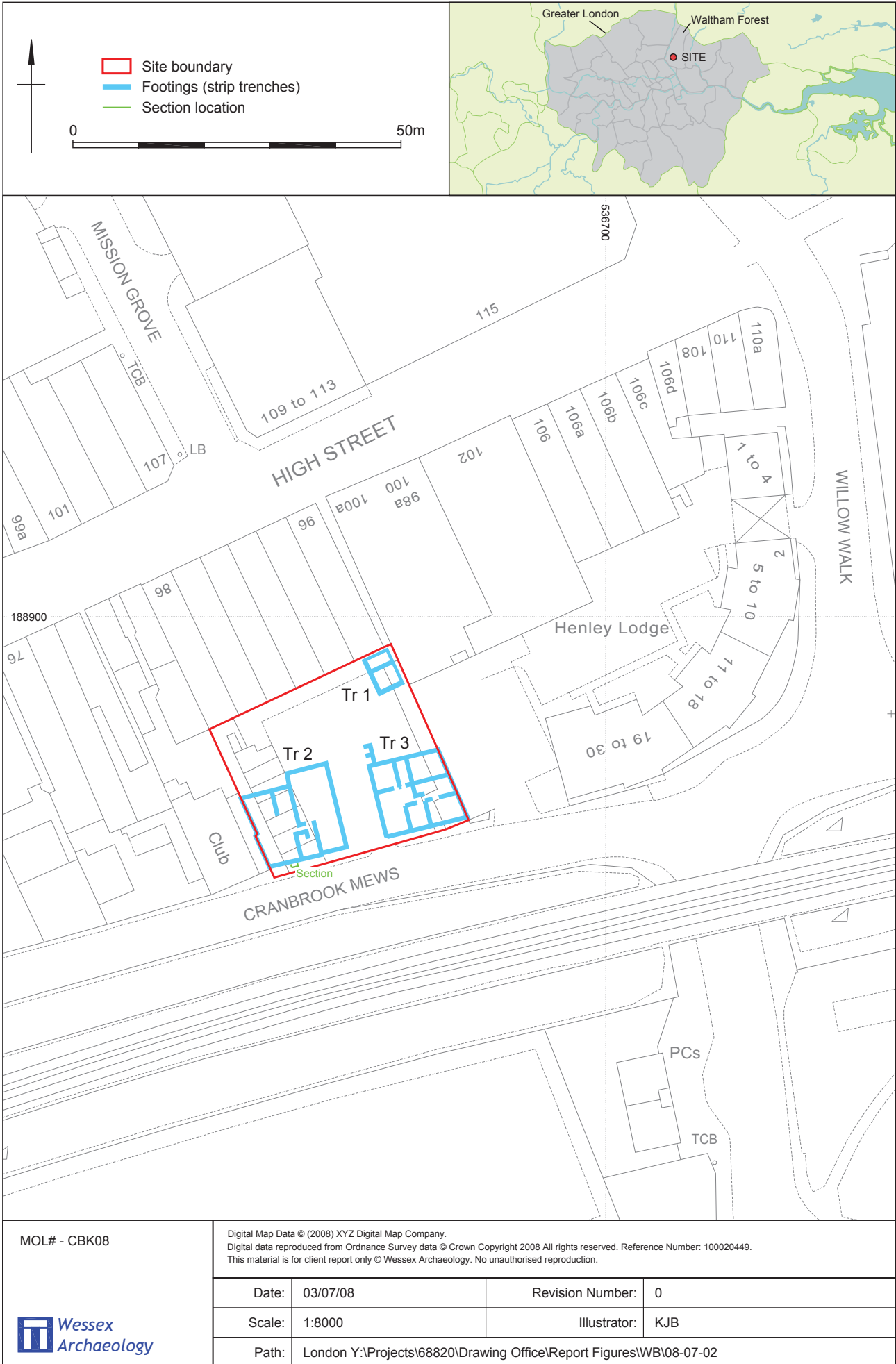
## **OASIS:**

Please e-mail English Heritage for OASIS help and advice

© ADS 1996-2006 Created by Jo Gilham and Jen Mitcham, email Last modified Friday 3 February 2006

Cite only: <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/oasis/print.cfm> for this page





MOL# - CBK08

Digital Map Data © (2008) XYZ Digital Map Company.  
 Digital data reproduced from Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright 2008 All rights reserved. Reference Number: 100020449.  
 This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.



Date: 03/07/08

Revision Number: 0

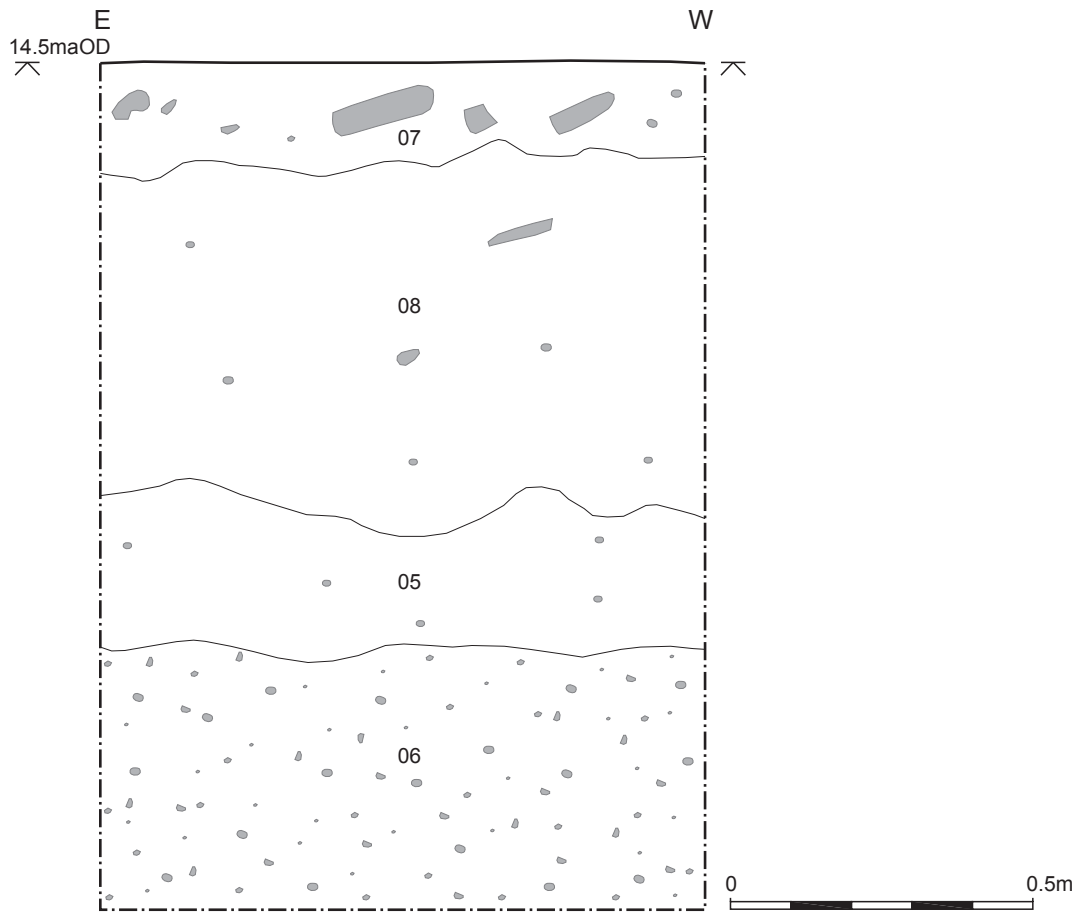
Scale: 1:8000

Illustrator: KJB

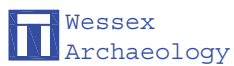
Path: London Y:\Projects\68820\Drawing Office\Report Figures\WB\08-07-02

Site location

Figure 1



This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.



Date: 03/07/08

Revision Number: 0

Scale: 1:12.5

Illustrator: KJB

Path: London Y:\Projects\68820\Drawing Office\Report Figures\WB\08-07-02

North-facing representative section of Trench 2

Figure 2



**WESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY LIMITED.**

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

Tel: 01722 326867 Fax: 01722 337562 info@wessexarch.co.uk 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 www.wessexarch.co.uk

