

606 PURLEY WAY
LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON
NGR: TQ 3111 6395

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Museum of London Archaeological Archive Site Code: PUC02

**Report No. 262
November 2002**

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SUMMARY

In September 2002 Foundations Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at 606 Purley Way, Croydon (centred at NGR: TQ 3111 6395). The fieldwork was undertaken during October 2002.

The area to be investigated was 2.24ha in extent (Figure 2). The natural stratigraphy of the site consisted of chalk. This was in turn directly overlain by a tarmac surface.

Potential archaeological features were encountered in Trench 1 in the form of eleven possible postholes. These were associated with no cultural material and may rather, be of natural origin. No archaeological finds or features were present in Trenches 2 and 3.

GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Archaeology

For the purpose of this project, archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains from prehistoric times to the modern era. No rigid upper date limit has been set, but AD 1900 is used as a general cut-off point.

Medieval

The period between the Norman Conquest (AD 1066) and *c.* AD 1500.

Natural

In archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site.

NGR

National Grid Reference from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

OD

Ordnance datum; used to express a given height above sea-level. (AOD Above Ordnance Datum)

OS

Ordnance Survey

Romano-British

Term used to describe the fusion of indigenous Iron Age traditions with the invasive Roman culture. Traditionally dated between AD 43 and AD 410.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document sets out the results of an archaeological evaluation at 606 Purley Way, Croydon (NGR: TQ 3111 6395). The site was bounded to the north by the Queensway and to the east by Purley Way.
- 1.2 The work was undertaken in accordance with a specification prepared by CgMs Consulting (2002). This was produced in order to comply with Planning & Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG16) and the archaeological policies of the London Borough of Croydon. The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations* issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1999). The code of conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists was adhered to throughout.
- 1.3 The evaluation was undertaken over a two day period in October 2002. The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited within six months with the Museum of London Archaeological Archive under accession code PUC02.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Planning permission (02/00948/P) has been applied for the redevelopment of the site for industrial use.
- 2.2 The site lies partly within a priority archaeological zone as defined by the London Borough of Croydon. The Waddon Factory Estate immediately to the north was the subject of a desk-based assessment by CgMs (1999) and a programme of fieldwork undertaken by MoLAS (2000). A large quantity of Bronze Age flint artefacts, which had been redeposited in colluvial deposits, were recovered during the fieldwork associated with that project. Purley Way is also thought to follow the projected line of a Roman road and the possibility existed therefore, for wayside activity or occupation associated with the road. Evidence is also recorded for Saxon and Medieval activity to the north of the site.
- 2.3 The study area appears to have been previously terraced, which may have severely truncated or destroyed archaeological remains.
- 2.4 The study area therefore contained the potential for the presence of archaeological deposits, predominantly associated with the prehistoric and Romano-British periods. This in no way prejudiced the evaluation in the recovery of evidence relating to other periods.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological evaluation were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits in order to provide sufficient information to establish the nature, extent, preservation and potential of any surviving archaeological remains; as well as to make recommendations for the management of the resource, including further archaeological works if necessary. In turn this would allow reasonable planning decisions to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the areas affected by the proposed development.
- 3.2 These aims were achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:
- i) to define and identify the nature of archaeological deposits on site and to date these where possible;
 - ii) to attempt to characterise the nature of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning of features present on the site;
 - iii) to recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence and recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 Three 20m x 1.8m trenches were excavated within the site area. On-site constraints, associated with access, required the minor relocation of one of the trenches from the initially planned position. Final trench locations are detailed on Figure 2.
- 4.2 Deposits of non-significant overburden were removed to the top of the archaeological deposits or the underlying natural chalk, whichever was encountered first. This was achieved through the use of a tracked mechanical excavator with a toothless grading bucket. Thereafter cleaning and excavation was conducted by hand. Spoil tips were scanned for finds.
- 4.3 No suitable contexts for environmental sampling were identified during the course of the evaluation.
- 4.4 All site recording was undertaken in accordance with Foundations Archaeology *Technical Manual 3 (Excavation Manual)*. A written, drawn and photographic record of the evaluation was compiled in accordance with the specification.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 The stratigraphic sequence was essentially uniform throughout and consisted of Chalk sealed immediately beneath tarmac or concrete. No subsoil layers survived within any of the evaluation trenches.
- 5.2 **Trench 1** was orientated north northeast-southwest and was excavated onto natural chalk at an average depth of 0.26m (58.69m OD) from the modern ground surface. The natural was sealed directly beneath a layer of tarmac (101). A number of possible archaeological features were present in the form of eleven sub-circular cuts visually akin to postholes. All eleven features contained sand fills with occasional chalk fragments from which no cultural material was recovered, suggesting that they may represent naturally occurring features. The features are illustrated on Figure 3.
- 5.2 Feature [102] consisted of a sub-oval cut measuring 0.33m long by 0.27m wide by 0.15m deep with a 'U' shaped profile. It contained an orange-brown sand fill (103).
- 5.3 Feature [104] consisted of a sub-circular cut measuring 0.23m in diameter by 0.17m deep with a 'U' shaped profile. It contained an orange-brown sand fill (105).
- 5.4 Feature [106] consisted of an irregular sub-oval cut measuring 0.45m long by 0.25m wide by 0.15m deep predominantly with a shallow 'U' shaped profile, irregular on the northeastern edge. It contained an orange brown sand (107).
- 5.5 Feature [108] consisted of a sub-circular cut measuring 0.21m in diameter by 0.07m deep with a 'U' shaped profile. It contained an orange brown sand (109).
- 5.6 Feature [110] consisted of a sub-oval cut measuring 0.20m long by 0.15m wide by 0.08m deep with a 'V' shaped profile. It contained an orange brown sand (111).
- 5.7 Feature [112] consisted of a sub-circular cut measuring 0.17m in diameter by 0.09m deep with a 'V' shaped profile. It contained an orange brown sand (113).
- 5.8 Feature [114] consisted of a sub-circular cut measuring 0.18m in diameter by 0.06m deep with a shallow 'U' shaper profile. It contained an orange brown sand (115).
- 5.9 Feature [116] consisted of a sub-circular cut measuring 0.20m in diameter by 0.21m deep with a 'V' shaped profile. It contained an orange brown sand (117).
- 5.10 Feature [118] consisted of a sub-oval cut measuring 0.30m long by 0.25m wide by 0.13m deep with a 'U' shaped profile. It contained an orange brown sand (119).

- 5.11 Feature [120] consisted of a sub-oval cut measuring 0.35m long by 0.24m wide by 0.10m deep with a 'U' shaped profile. It contained an orange brown sand (121).
- 5.12 Feature [122] consisted of a sub-oval cut measuring 0.21m long by 0.19m wide by 0.11m deep with a 'U' shaped profile. It contained an orange brown sand (123).
- 5.13 **Trench 2** was orientated approximately north-south and was excavated onto natural chalk at an average depth of 0.23m (59.15m OD) from the modern ground surface in the southern half of the trench and 0.32m (58.89m OD) in the northern half. The natural was sealed beneath a layer of tarmac (201) in the southern half of the trench and beneath a thicker layer of concrete in the northern half. The top of the chalk had been disturbed by modern activity in the form of shallow depressions filled with crushed brick rubble in the latter half. No archaeological finds or features were present.
- 5.14 **Trench 3** was orientated approximately northeast-southwest and was excavated onto natural chalk at an average depth of 0.22m (59.39m OD) from the modern ground surface. The natural was sealed immediately beneath a layer of tarmac. No archaeological finds or features were present.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The evaluation has suggested that features of possible archaeological origin are present only in Trench 1. The trenches were sited to provide a sample across the development area and it remains possible that archaeological features are present outside these areas. The features identified in Trench 1 appeared to represent postholes and their presence in only a single trench also suggests that they were of archaeological origin. The features were generally present in two concentrations approximately 5m apart, with two single features, [110] and [112], present between them. The restricted sample size available hampered a conclusive interpretation of the nature of these features.
- 6.2 The generally clean nature of the sand fills, however, combined with the complete absence of artefactual or other cultural material (including charcoal) may rather suggest that the features represent natural depressions within the chalk. The complete absence of artefactual evidence pre-dating the 19th and 20th centuries, either stratified or unstratified, may be due entirely to the removal of all top and subsoil deposits during the previous phases of development on the site.
- 6.3 The results of the evaluation suggest that previous stripping of the site will have had a significant negative impact on archaeological deposits or features that may have been present. The possible postholes identified within Trench 1 would be threatened by any development proposal that involves excavation into the natural

chalk, but otherwise the proposed development is unlikely to have a significant impact on archaeological deposits.

- 6.4 The archive will be deposited with the Museum of London Archaeological Archive under accession code PUC02 in accordance with all appropriate standards.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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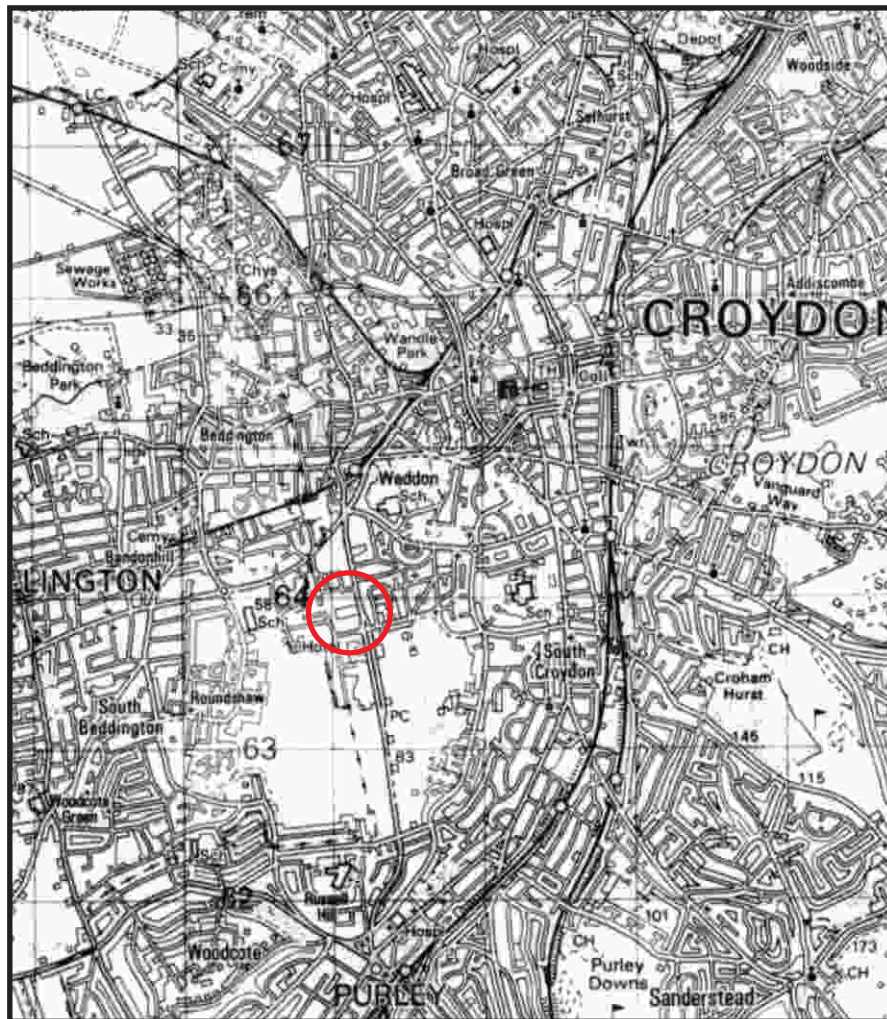
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8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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FIGURE 1: Site Location

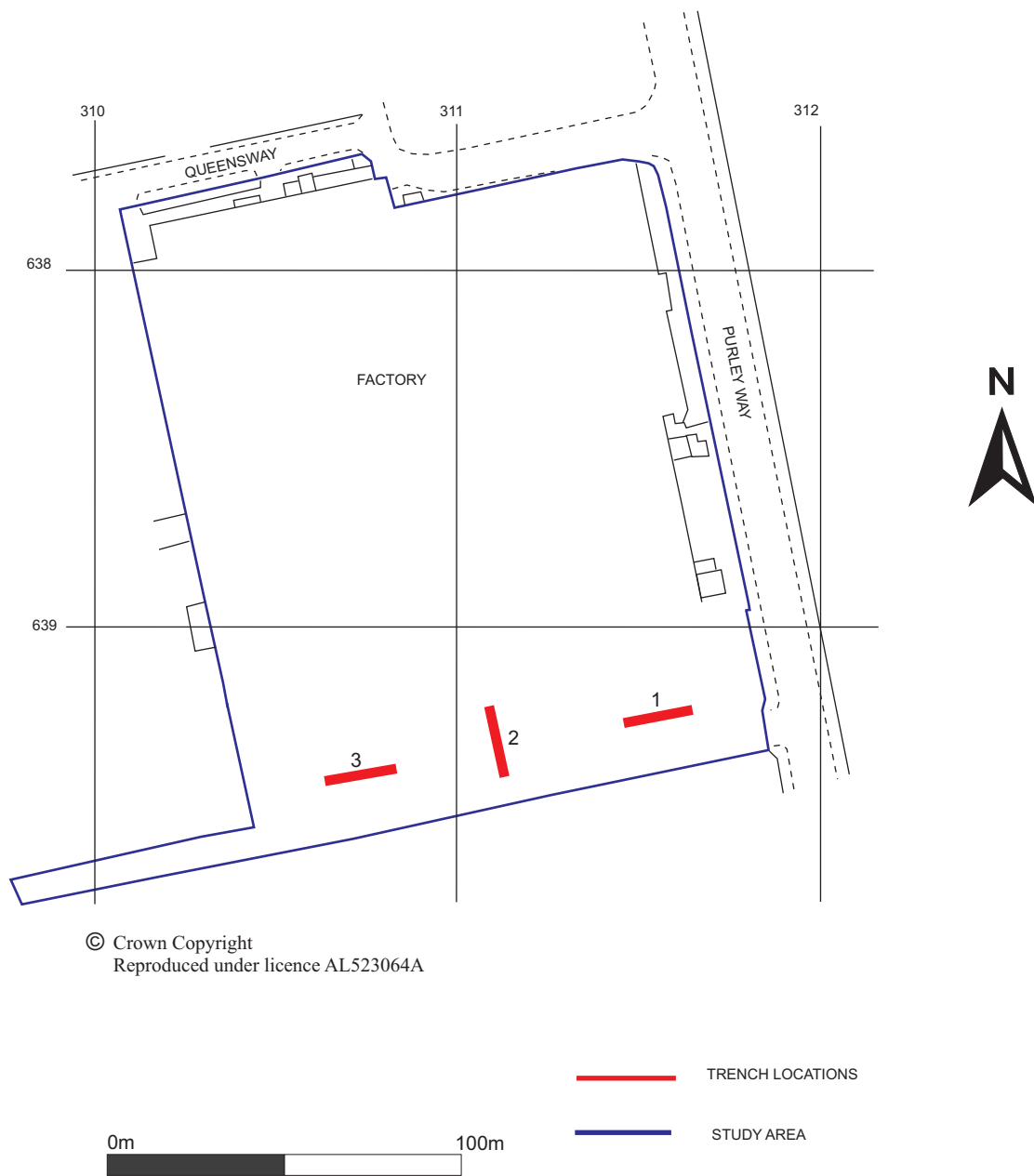
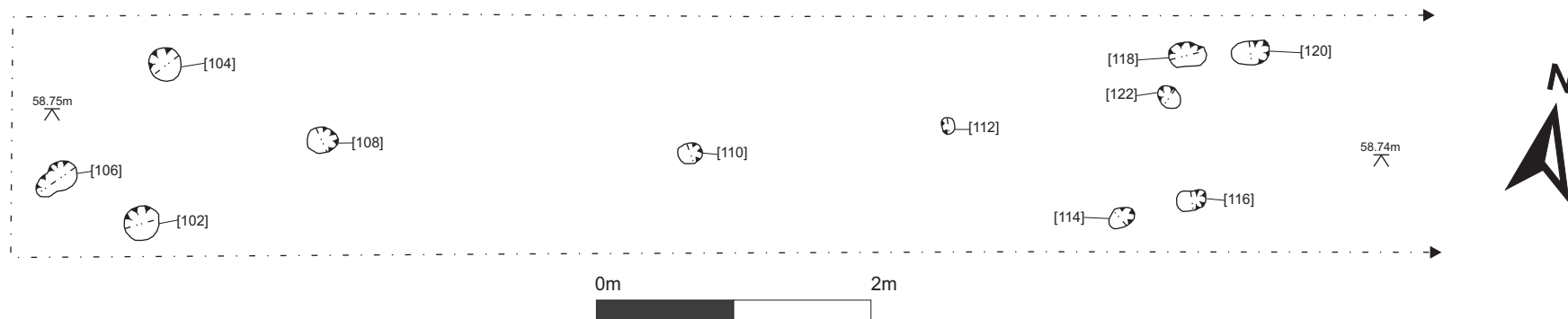
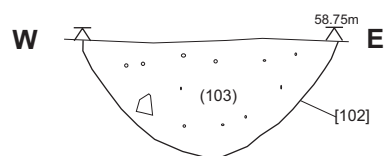


FIGURE 2: Trench Location Plan

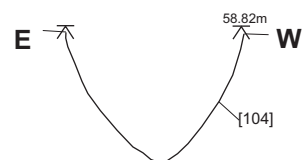
TRENCH 1 PLAN



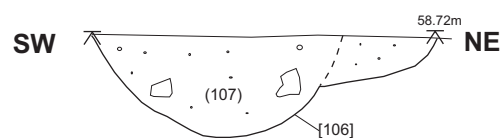
SOUTH FACING SECTION [102]



PROFILE OF [104]



NORTHWEST FACING SECTION [106]



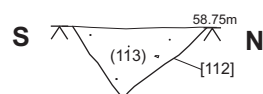
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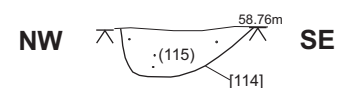
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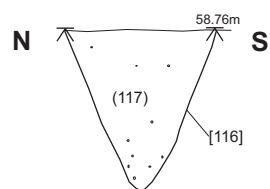
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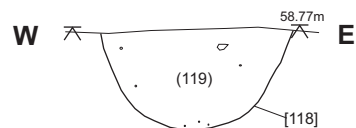
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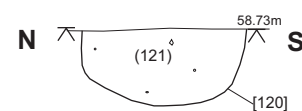
EAST FACING SECTION [116]



SOUTH FACING SECTION [118]



WEST FACING SECTION [120]



SOUTHEAST FACING SECTION [122]

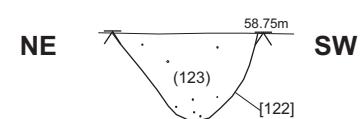


FIGURE 3: Trench 1 Plan and Sections