

Sutton Archaeological Services

Evaluation Report

on

25 Sharrock Road
Coulsdon, Surrey, CR5
SKU 05: (TQ 2890 5780)

for

Mantle Developments Ltd.

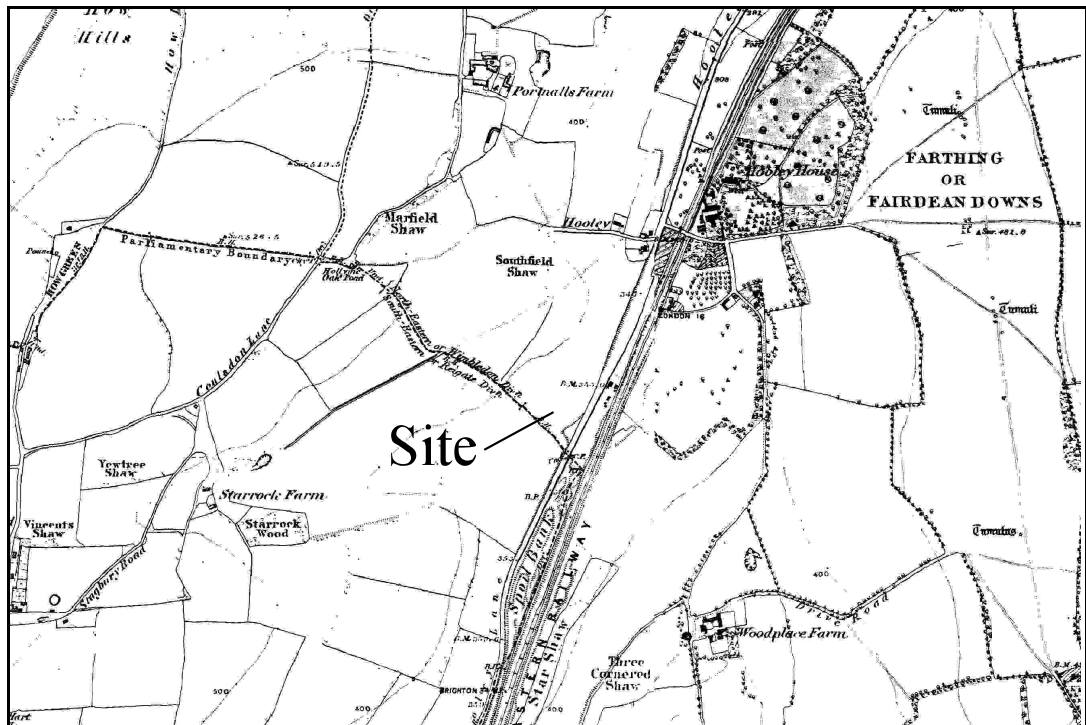


Fig. 1

1871 OS Map

Evaluation Report

on

25 Sharrock Road
Coulston, Surrey, CR5
London Borough of Croydon
SKU 05: (TQ 2890 5780)

by

J G PERRY: November 2005

Summary

Sutton Archaeological Services (SAS) carried out an archaeological evaluation at 25 Sharrock Road, Coulsdon, Surrey, CR5 on 11th November, 2004.

The site lay in an area of archaeological importance as defined in London Borough of Croydon's Unitary Development Plan. Research by Sutton Archaeological Services for the research design indicated that there was Prehistoric, Roman and Saxon archaeology in the surrounding area.

One trench was excavated across the site revealing turf and topsoil, with sub-soil overlying the natural chalk.

No Prehistoric, Roman or Saxon archaeology was found, or finds of any period.

We suggest that no further archaeological monitoring or intervention is needed and that the archaeological condition in the planning consent has been fulfilled. The decision to discharge the archaeological condition, however, rests with the local planning authority on the advice of the Archaeological Officer at English Heritage

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Introduction

This report relates to the proposed development at 25 Sharrock Road, Coulsdon, Surrey, CR5.

Mantle Developments Ltd (the Developers) has commissioned Sutton Archaeological Services (SAS) to carry out an evaluation and any subsequent archaeological work that may be necessary.

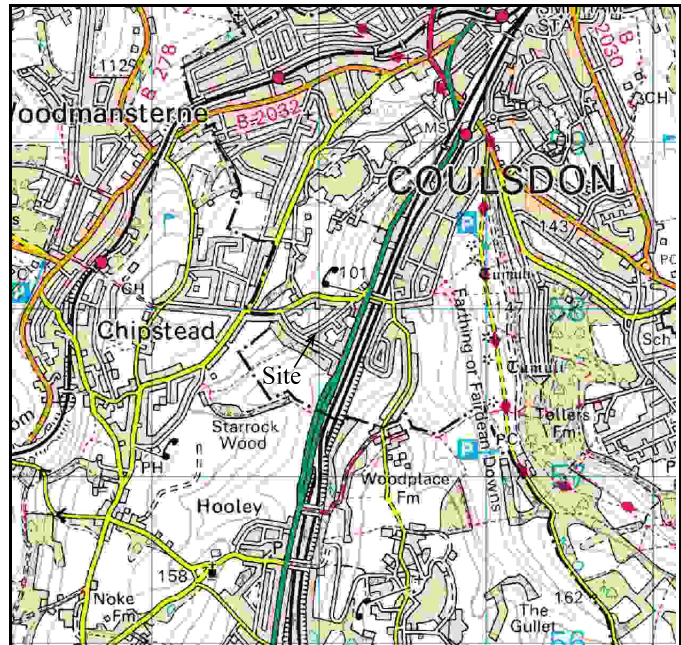


Fig. 2 Site Location © Crown Copyright MC/98/38

Location: The site is located about 1km to the south of the village of Coulsdon and about $\frac{3}{4}$ km east of Chipstead, in the London Borough of Croydon. It lies in a small residential area in a mainly rural landscape. The A23 Brighton Road and the Brighton to East Croydon railway line are to the east, and Farthing Down is on the other side of the valley. The site lies in a triangular area of land at the junction of Starrock Road and Woodfield Hill. Beyond these surrounding roads lies open agricultural land on all sides.

Topography: The site lies on the dip slope of the North Downs, near to the head of a valley running southwards, and close to a spur of high ground splitting the valley into two. The western part of the valley contains the A23 Brighton Road. The other part is the so called *Happy Valley* running to Caterham.

Geology: The land to the west of the site slopes from about 150m OD down to the Brighton Road to the east at about 100m OD. The area of the site is at a height of about 140m OD. The site overlies chalk.

Planning background

The site was part of the grounds of number 25 Sharrock Road.

The proposed development consisted of the construction of a detached, four bedroom dwelling with an integral double garage.

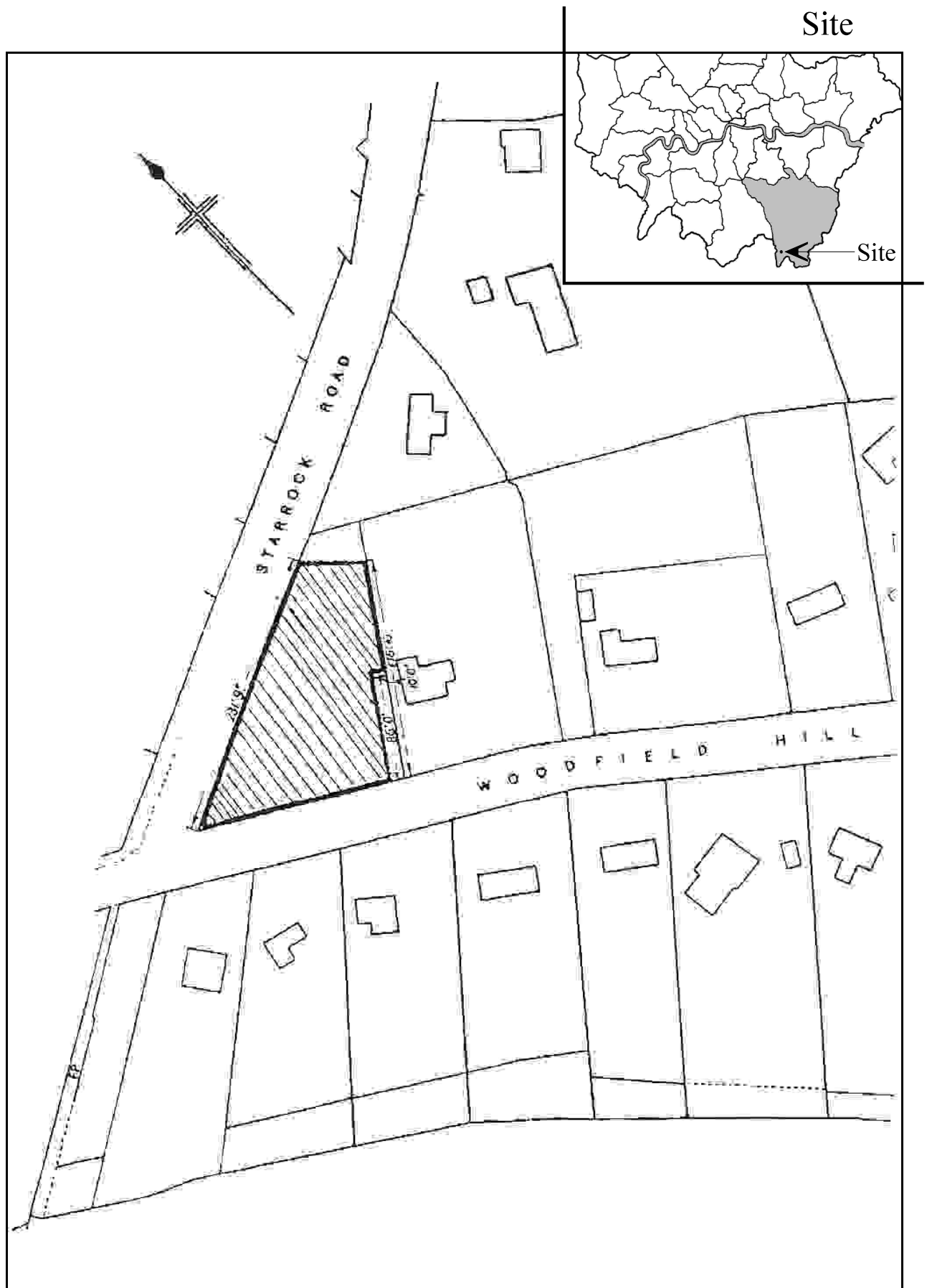


Fig. 3

Site Location Plan

© Crown Copyright MC/98/38

The site lies in an area of archaeological importance as defined in London Borough of Croydon's Unitary Development Plan (see Appendix II of our research design).

English Heritage has advised the London Borough of Croydon that an archaeological condition under PPG 16, paragraph 14¹ should be included in the planning approval.

Planning permission was refused by the London Borough of Croydon, but was granted on appeal. Condition 23 in the Appeal Decision (APP/L5240/04/1155802) dated 13 July 2005 referred to the implementation of the standard archaeological condition:

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 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 Local Planning Authority.

Archaeological and historical background

Taking the evidence as a whole, before the evaluation, the potential for Prehistoric settlement and activity in the area of the site was considered **medium to high**. The pre-evaluation evidence showed a **low to medium** potential for Roman and Saxon settlement and activity and a **low** potential for Medieval and Post-Medieval settlement and activity in the area of the site.

Prehistoric

A distribution map of Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic flints shows large concentrations across Surrey on the well drained Greensands beds, with hardly any on the Gault clay to the north or Wealden clay to the south of the sands². The flints from the Coulsdon area show that Palaeolithic and Mesolithic groups were penetrating further inland, using the valley as an access route northwards. One Palaeolithic flint was very close to the proposed site. These flints may also indicate some form of temporary settlement(s) in the area, similar to other possible settlements across Surrey. Many more flint artefacts would no doubt be found if more detailed fieldwork were to be undertaken. This might indicate a much more diverse settlement pattern than appears from current evidence.

¹ Department of the Environment: *Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning*, HMSO, 1990.

² Wymer, J.J. 1987 *op. cit.*, fig. 3.4, p.56.

The Neolithic evidence suggests some form of activity (but not settlement) on the eastern side of the valley and on the high ground beyond. Activity on the eastern side of the valley could indicate similar activity on the western side, in the area of the site. There were probably no Neolithic settlements in the area of the site. Settlements would tend to be concentrated on the lighter soils and gravels, where forest clearance would be easier. Most ancient habitation sites are close to a source of water and most Prehistoric settlements would have been in the river valleys and on the sands. The burials at Whyteleafe are not closely dated and may be later than Neolithic.

The evidence shows more finds from the Bronze Age, suggesting greater exploitation of the area. The major Bronze Age settlement and tribal centre was at Queen Mary's Hospital, 4km to the north. There would also have been smaller settlements and villages across the area, such as at the old Netherne Hospital. The amount of bronze items in the area suggests some wealth and considerable agricultural exploitation.

The settlement at Queen Mary's Hospital may have continued into the Iron Age. Another hillfort is known from the Caterham area, at War Coppice. Iron Age farms and field systems are known in the valley; one at Chaldon, to the south, and another in the area of the site. These, together with the Belgic pottery found close to the site, suggest a possible Iron Age settlement in the area, perhaps near to the site. However, the field system near the site was identified at the beginning of the 19th century, when archaeological knowledge was in its infancy. This field system may well be later and associated with the Saxon one on Farthing Down.

Pre-evaluation evidence suggested there was a **medium to high** potential for Prehistoric archaeology on this site.

Roman

The main Roman occupation is recorded at Croydon with its main access along the line of the present A23 Brighton Road. It has also been suggested that Croydon may have originally been a Roman *Mutatio* or posting station. *Mutatio*'s were constructed at 10 mile intervals along Imperial Roads: Croydon is 10 miles south of London. Roman Roads attracted settlements and activity along their routes. The sites found on both sides of the A23 Brighton Road - at Hooley, Woodplace Farm, the old Netherne Hospital, Starrock Wood and Marlpit Lane - demonstrate this.

The site is close to the line of the known Roman road, but there is no information to show where along the route occupation or remains may be found.

There is too little information to be precise about the Roman occupation in the immediate area, so we predicted only a **low to medium** potential for archaeology on this site.

Saxon

There is Saxon activity around the Starrock Road and Cane Hill, and on Farthing Down. Evidence for Saxon settlement within the area comes from the skeleton from Starrock Road, the cemetery at Cane Hill, and the barrow burials and flat graves on Farthing Down. Again, it is hard to predict where occupation will be found within this wide area.

Pre-evaluation evidence suggested there was a **low to medium** potential for Saxon archaeology on this site

Medieval and Post-Medieval

The main focus of Medieval and Post-Medieval occupation was probably around Coulsdon at the manor house and church, over 1.5km from the site.

There was therefore a **low** potential for Medieval and Post-Medieval occupation on the site.

Research objectives

In October 2005 Sutton Archaeological Services produced its research design. Based on our brief assessment of the evidence, we formed the objectives to look for signs of Prehistoric, Roman or Saxon occupation and activity on the site, and if found to determine their extent, date, condition and significance.

The Institute of Field Archaeologists has defined the purpose of a field evaluation as follows.

“The purpose of field evaluation is to gain information about the archaeological resource within a given area or site (including its presence or absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality), in order to make an assessment of its merit in the appropriate context, leading to one or more of the following:

- the formulation of a strategy to ensure the recording, preservation or management of the resource
- the formulation of a strategy to initiate a threat to the archaeological resource
- the formulation of a proposal for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research.”

Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations, IFA, 2001

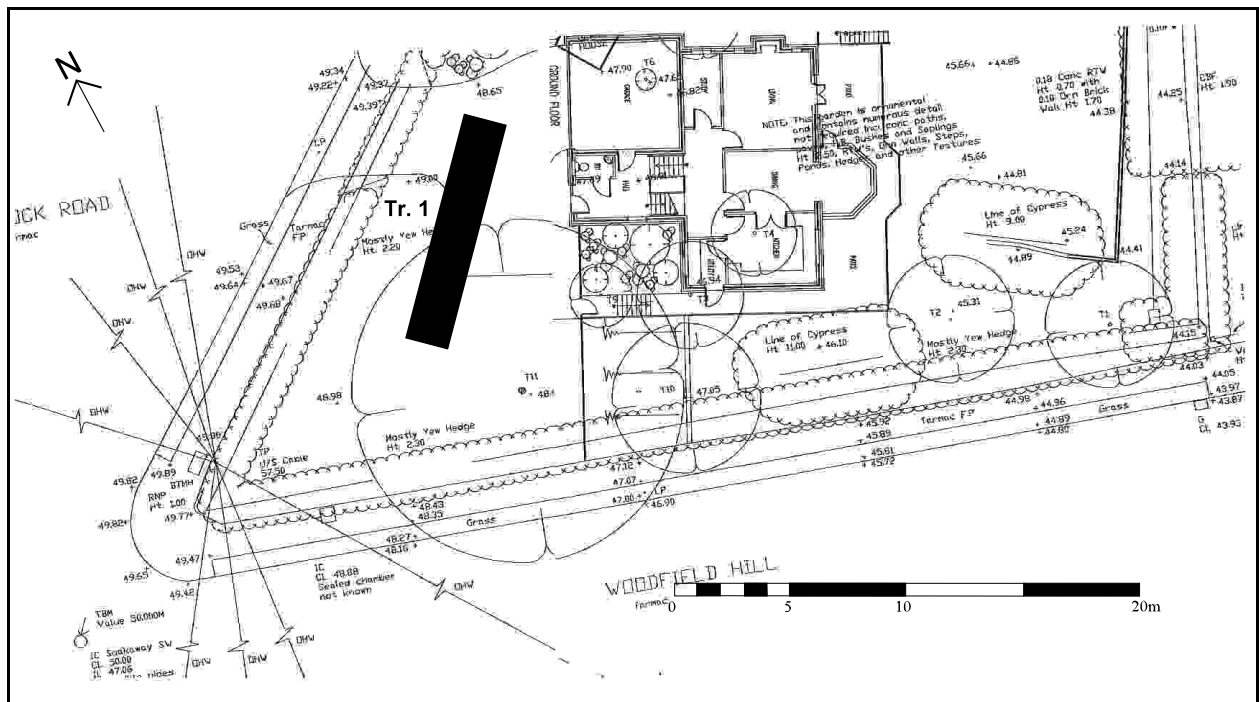


Fig. 4 Development plan and trench layout

Archaeological proposals

Usually, where development may destroy archaeology, evaluation is undertaken to identify the presence or absence, extent, character, quality and date of any threatened deposits and, where necessary, to develop an appropriate mitigation strategy.

SAS proposed to cut 1 archaeological trench 10m x 2m.

Archaeological methodology

Standards: SAS carried out the archaeological evaluation in accordance with

- our research design dated October 2005. (See below for the change we had to make in positioning the trench.)
- the Institute of Field Archaeologists' Code of Conduct, Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangement in Field Archaeology, Standards and Guidance for Field Evaluations
- the archaeological guidance papers issued by English Heritage.
- Planning Appeal Decision APP/L5240/04/1155802 dated 13 July 2005

Control: All excavation work was done under the control of the archaeologists on site.

Trenches: We dug 1 trench as shown on fig 4. The proposed house lay in a part of the garden that had been previously terrace by up to 1m. After consultation with English Heritage, the position of

the trench was moved approximately 2m north of its intended location and aligned roughly east to west. This did not interfere with our aims to spread the trenches evenly across the site.

We broke open the trench with a JCB 3CX Site Master, using a wide-bladed (1.50m+) smooth-edged ditching bucket and, where appropriate, a toothed bucket.

Non-archaeological deposits: In each trench we removed by machine, in level spits of no more than 10-15 cm, the top and subsoil deposits. Work continued removing all overburden until we reached the first significant archaeological layer (or the natural deposits), at which point all machine work ceased in that trench. (We excavated up to 10cm into the natural to make sure we had reached true natural and not re-deposited material.) In this way we excavated the trench without finding any archaeological deposits.

Site records: We recorded all features as we proceeded, by written records, plans, sections and photographs. In all, we recorded 3 contexts - numbered [001] to [003] - in a single context recording system. The site was recorded in accordance with the Fieldwork Methodology in our research design, and using the Museum of London's recording system.

Appendix 1 to this report is a list of the contexts found.

Levels: All levels were taken from an Ordnance Survey spot height, value 151.05m aOD, near the junction of Hollymeoak Road and Woodfield Hill, Coulsdon.

Backfilling: After excavating and recording we backfilled the trenches and roughly levelled the ground, leaving surplus spoil on site.

Evaluation results

Trench 1

Trench 1 was located in the northern part of the site and oriented east to west. Context [001] was the turf and topsoil (east: 141.56m aOD to west: 141.96m). This covered the site to a depth of 16-21cm.

Underlying [001] was the sub-soil, a silty clay context [002] (east: 141.40m aOD to west: 141.75m). The deposit had a depth of 10-14cm with a clear horizon to the next context, the natural geological deposit.

Context [003] (east: 141.30m aOD to west: 141.61m) was the natural chalk and extended across the whole of the trench.

There were no archaeological finds or features of any period.

Assessment and interpretation

The evidence from the SAS preliminary research indicated that there was Prehistoric, Roman and Saxon archaeology in the surrounding area.

The evaluation only revealed turf and topsoil, with the sub-soil overlying the natural chalk.

There was no evidence for archaeology or finds of any period in the trench.

Archaeological Potential

Following the evaluation our revised view is that this site has no potential for archaeological remains of any period.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Our findings set out above lead us to conclude that the proposed development did not threaten to destroy any archaeological remains of national, regional or local importance, deserving further investigation or preservation.

We suggest that no further archaeological monitoring or intervention is needed and that the archaeological condition in the planning consent has been fulfilled. The decision to discharge the

archaeological condition, however, rests with the local planning authority on the advice of the Archaeological Officer at English Heritage.

Publications and dissemination

The evidence is not worthy of publication but a note on the evaluation will be placed in the *London Archaeologist's* round-up and a copy of the report lodged in the local library.

Archive

The resulting archive, including all of the finds, will be donated by the developer and deposited with the Museum of London when the final report has been completed.

Context No.	Trench	Description	Interpretation
001	1	A friable to very soft, dark brown silty clay containing occasional small to medium flint pebbles	Turf and topsoil
002	1	A very soft, medium brown silty clay, containing frequent small to medium chalk fragments	Sub-soil
003	1	An indurate, off white chalk, containing occasional large flint pebbles	Natural chalk

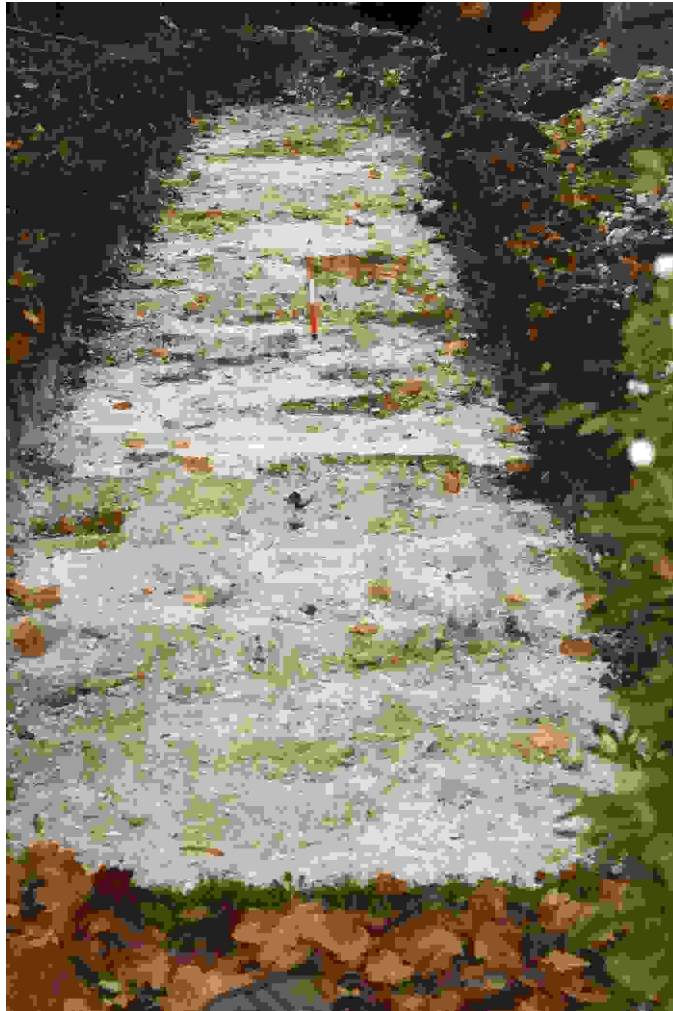


Plate 1

Tr. 1: looking east

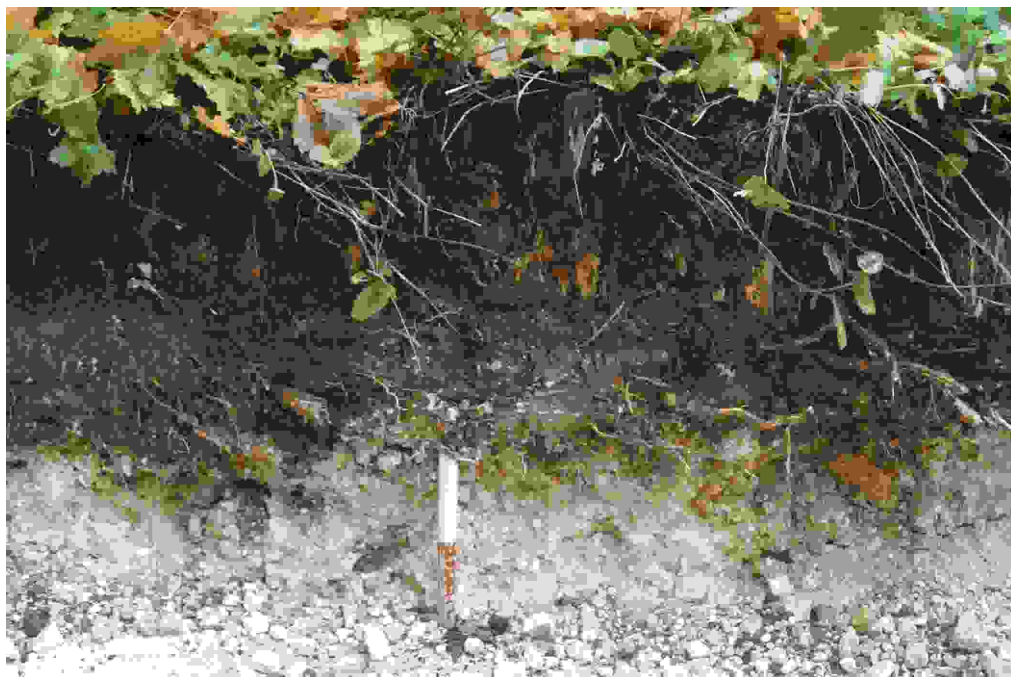
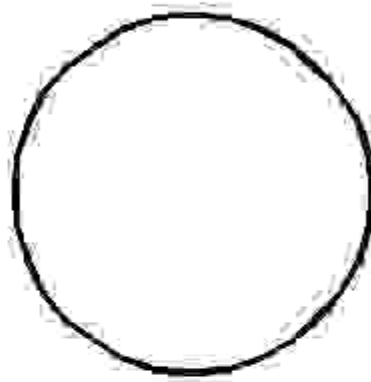


Plate 2

North section



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