The fast-flowing River Wandle: Croydon in the landscape through time

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Introduction

This report summarises the results of investigation carried out by AOC Archaeology during 2019 at the site of the former Wandle Road Car Park (Fig 1).[1] Excavations took place following evaluation in 2019 (Fig 2)[2] revealing 19th-century terrace housing that had been demolished in the 1960s in advance of the Croydon Flyover, suggesting the possibility that, if earlier archaeological remains had existed, then they might be present.

The excavation revealed three phases of occupation at the site: a small but regionally significant phase of Mesolithic–early Neolithic encampment and two phases of post-medieval settlement. This article summarises the results of the investigation with a focus on the sites as being a preferential location within the Wandle Valley. In the following paragraphs, feature numbers are given in square brackets [000] and fill numbers in round brackets (000).

The Wandle Valley

The site lies on the floodplain of the River Wandle, at the foot of a west-facing slope. The headwaters of the river rise from chalk streams on the North Downs, flowing 23.5km north to the Thames.[3] The Croydon branch, which was noted as fast-flowing with plentiful fish, springs from the Bourne river to the south of Croydon, although numerous other smaller springs also contributed, some, such as the Scarbrook Pond, are historically noted in the vicinity of the site.[4] Prior to being culverted, the river was formed of multiple channels and streams, with the Archbishop's Palace, 300m to the north-west, noted as being on a parcel of land effectively surrounded by streams.[5] The area around present-day Croydon was known for its thick woodlands into the 18th century,[6] so a combination of topography and abundant natural resources suggests the site as a preferential place for human activity throughout multiple periods.[7]

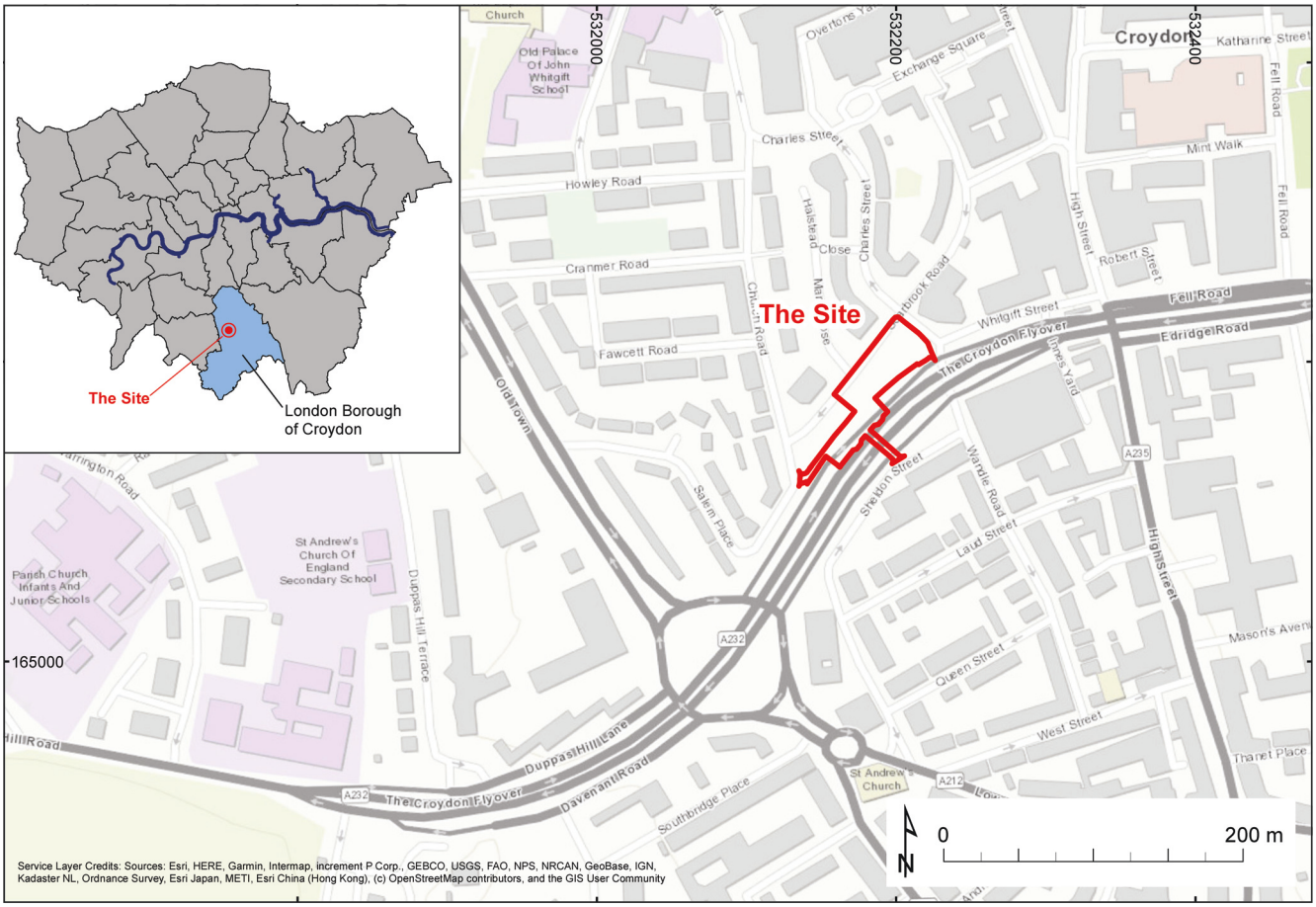

Fig 1: site location within London and Croydon, AOC excavation (NDL19)

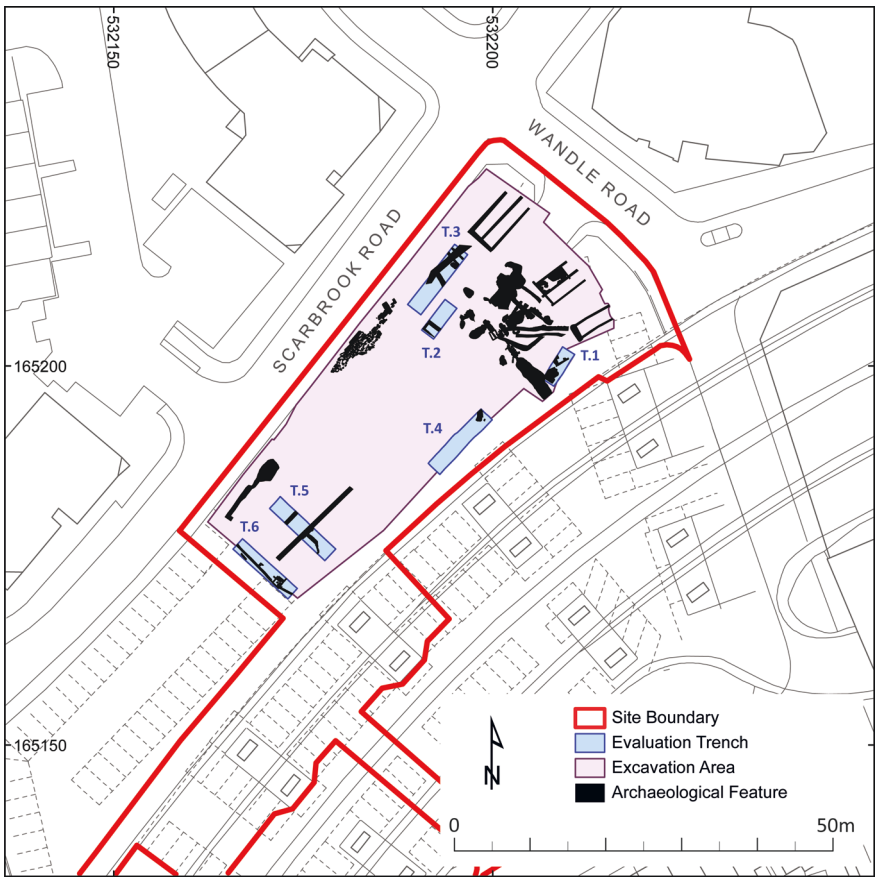

Fig 2: archaeological investigations showing the extent of fieldwork including evaluation trenches

The underlying natural geology is Taplow Gravels[8] consisting of friable, loose sands and gravels of varied colours and size. Despite the site location at the foot of a steep slope, there was little colluvium washed down onto the site. However, in the northern section of the site, a palaeochannel was observed as two deposits of different composition from the surrounding coarser sands and gravels – 0.08m thickness of well-sorted, compact light reddish-brown sandy gravels of smaller sub-angular stones and medium size flints (1126) formed the primary deposit. This was overlain by a 0.15m thick, well-sorted, compact light greyish, white sandy gravels with frequent small sub-angular stones and flints (1115) at an upper height of 44.25m OD.

The sorting of the sands and camber of the hollow they lie in suggest a small aligned south-east/north-west palaeochannel formed from run-off from the slope from present-day Whitgift Street. This accords with other evidence of palaeochannels located near the site,[9] and together with the historically documented Scarbrook pond,[10] they indicate the nature of the site prior to large-scale development.

With geoarchaeological studies of the Wandle valley in the early to mid-Holocene period,[11] the valley is shown to have great potential for identifying the evolution of the landscape and further sites of this period.

The archaeological evidence

Mesolithic/early Neolithic transition (Fig 3)

The earliest remains were concentrated in the east of the site, where a cluster of archaeological features cutting into the natural gravel (1141) had survived later activity. A total of 11 features were identified at an upper height of 44.68m OD in the centre to 44.56m OD in the south, although it is clear that they are truncated and do not reflect contemporary ground level. Some features were intercutting, which suggests multiple phases of activity.

The earliest phase comprises two thin linear features [1188] and [1190] and a rectangular posthole [1169], together forming what is interpreted as a potential shelter (Fig 3, Structure A). The north-east/south-west oriented feature [1190], measured 2.20m by 0.30m with steep sides and a concave base. The northern end was shallow and the extent uncertain, with the southern end truncated by post-medieval buildings. The fill (1191) contained lithic material of late Mesolithic date including four

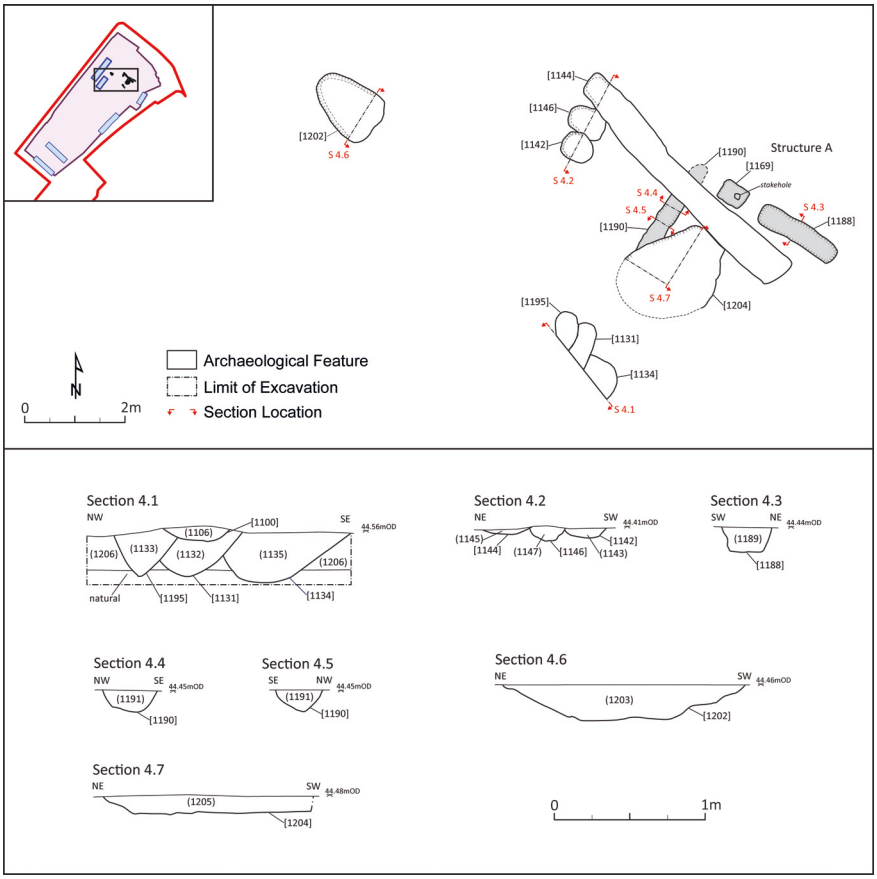

Fig 3: plan of Mesolithic/early Neolithic transition features (Structure A) and section drawings

Fig 4: an overview of three prehistoric features [1144], [1142] and [1146], looking south-east

microburins, a flake and a notched piece, in addition to large amounts of debitage, much of which was in a fresh, unabraded condition.

The second linear feature [1188], 1.70m by 0.45m and 0.30m deep, had steep sides and a concave base. Mesolithic material was again recovered, including microburins and small amounts of debitage from fill (1189). Seven charred cereal grains were also found from the bulk soil sample – one grain of bread/club wheat (*Triticum avestio/ compactum*) and two grains of probable oat (cf. *Avena sp*.) were identified. The other grains were too poorly preserved to allow identification to species level.[12]

Situated between the two linear features was a small posthole [1169], 0.50m by 0.40m and 0.10m deep, with steep sides and a flat base. At the base of the posthole was a stakehole, 0.10m by 0.10m and 0.05m deep. No traces of any wood remained, but small finds included burnt flint, a worked flake, and an intrusive sherd of post-medieval glass. All features had a similar fill of dark grey peaty silt with frequent inclusions of sands and gravel.

The arrangement of the three features – [1190], [1169] and [1188] – if considered contemporaneous, suggest a structure of at least 3.20m by 2.20m, although the truncation of what may have been a corner in the north-west means that the precise shape, dimensions and relationship between the features cannot be confirmed.

Truncating the possible structure was a large irregular pit [1204], 1.20m by 1.90m and 0.10m deep, with irregular concave sides and a flat base. The pit was truncated to the south by a later post-medieval feature and clipped at the northern end by ditch [1144]. Several finds were recovered from the fill, including a flint blade, a small piece of burnt flint and fragments of a Kingston ware jug dating to AD 1240–1400. A subsequent phase is represented by the 5m-long ditch [1144] oriented north-east/south-west and measuring between 0.40m by 0.60m wide (Fig 4). The northern terminus was clear but the continuation to the south-west became shallow and imperceptible. Only a poorly preserved fragment of animal bone (of unidentifiable species) was found.

Multiple pits were located around this main core, to the north-west were two circular postholes, both severely truncated by post-medieval features so that only their base was present. The relationship between the postholes could not be ascertained. Posthole [1142], 0.60m by 0.50m and 0.14m deep, and posthole [1146], 0.75m by 0.60m and 0.20m deep, both had steep sides and concave bases. The fill of [1142] comprised light grey sandy silt, while the fill of [1146] was a darker grey peaty silt. Lithics retrieved included a small assemblage of prehistoric flint debitage.

A large, intact irregular-shaped pit

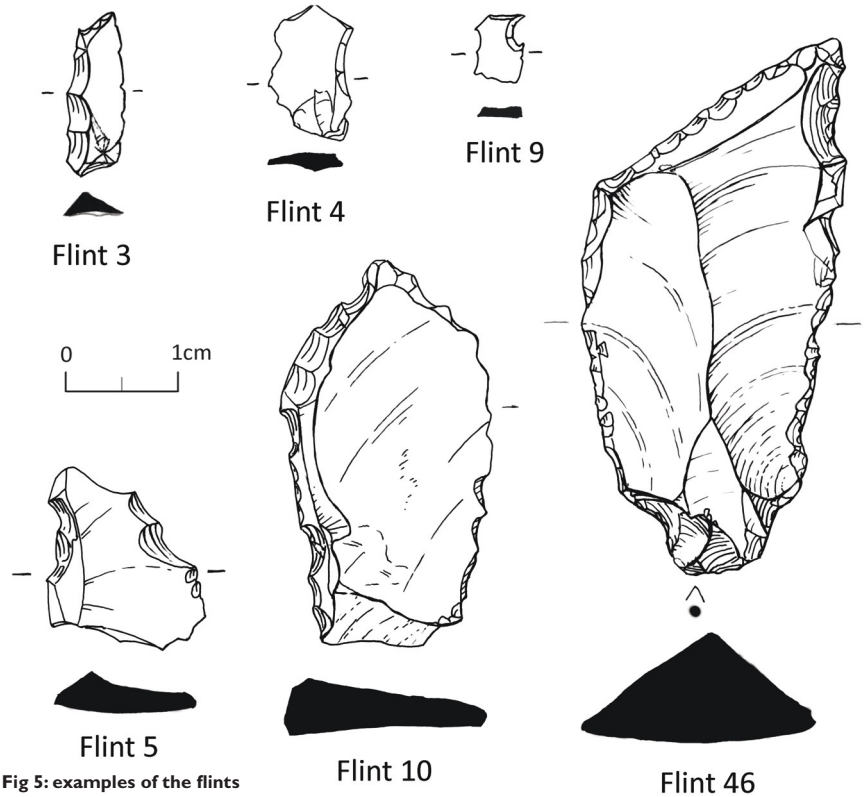

Fig 5: examples of the flints

[1202] was located to the north-west, measuring 1.90m by 1.10m and 0.25m deep, with steep sides and an irregular concave base. The fill (1203) was a dark grey peaty silt with frequent gravel and sand inclusions and a small assemblage of prehistoric lithic debitage and a retouched piercer or borer. To the south of the main concentration of features were three small intercutting pits, [1134], [1131] and [1195], all truncated by later features.

The earliest, [1134], was slightly larger and sub-circular, 0.83m by 0.52m and 0.33m deep, with gradual sides and concave base; a backed bladelet microlith and debitage flakes were recovered. The overlying pit [1131] towards the north, heavily truncated by a later feature, was 0.88m by 0.55m and 0.31m deep, with steep sides and a flat base; a bladelet was retrieved. The uppermost pit [1195] to the north-west was sub-circular, 0.74m by 0.41m and 0.31m deep, with steep sides and a shallow, concave base. The fill of these three small pits was a dark brownish/grey sandy silt with frequent gravel and sand inclusions; small fragments of post-medieval finds were also retrieved from all three features as were intrusive elderberry seeds.

The Lithics *by Rob Engl*

The flint assemblage consisted of 2,112 flint artefacts, most of which came from sampling (Fig 5). The site sits within re-worked Pleistocene period river terrace gravels which overlie cretaceous upper chalk deposits of Lewes Nodular, Chalk Formation, Seaford Chalk Formation and Newhaven Chalk Formation.[13] It is, therefore, no surprise to find that the assemblage is comprised solely of locally-derived chalk and nodular flint. Although flints found *in situ* within features were relatively unabraded, material recovered from overlying deposits often showed signs of heat damage and patination, suggesting that the artefacts had been exposed for a considerable period of time.

Various debitage classes dominate the assemblage, with small chips making up 79% of the material (1665 in number). Irregular flakes (130), shatter (94) and broken flakes (43) are also prevalent. Three small flint nodules were also recovered, which demonstrate the apparent size of the utilised raw material. No core types were identified within the assemblage. However, two rejuvenation flakes (SFDB 1-48 & 14-83) were recovered showing the removal of both the working platform and core face. These artefacts, together with the regular flakes (19) and small blade (15)/bladelet (5) component, identify the presence of a narrow-blade industry within the wider assemblage.

Sixteen artefacts show signs of secondary modification. The majority of these revealed microlithic retouch and can be categorised as microburins/notch and snap (6) (SFDB 9-3, 9-4, 9-4, 9-6, 7-13 & 8-99), fragmentary microliths (3) (SFDB 7-18), a backed bladelet microlith (SFDB 3-107), two notched flake (SFDB 9-7 & DB 57), two flakes with microlithic edge retouch (SFDB 7-19), a denticulated flake (SFDB 10-95), and a borer/piercer (DB 46).

Five of the modified artefacts were retrieved from context (1191) with a further four from context (1189). Though small in number, the presence of the narrow-backed bladelet, small proximal microburins and the notch and snap piece appear to place the assemblage within the so-called 'Early Pioneering' phase of the later Mesolithic, together with other microlithic assemblages of the late 7th millennium such as the material recovered from Kettlebury.[14]

Late medieval – early post-medieval activity (17th to early 18th century) (Fig 6)

There is sparse evidence of activity on the site up until the 17th century. Despite copious evidence of Roman features with high quality finds such as coins, brooches and an intaglio recovered west of the site[15] and finds of coins on Wandle Road,[16] there was only a single piece of confirmed Roman pottery recovered.[17]

There was also little evidence of medieval activity, with only seven sherds of pottery, dominated by Surrey whitewares including Kingston-type ware (KING, 1240-1400) and Cheam ware (CHEA, 1350–1500), all of which are green glazed.[18] The single neck sherd of Ashtead ware (ASHT, 1200–1400) from context (1050) is likely to be a fragment from a puzzle jug, decorated with groups of vertically-

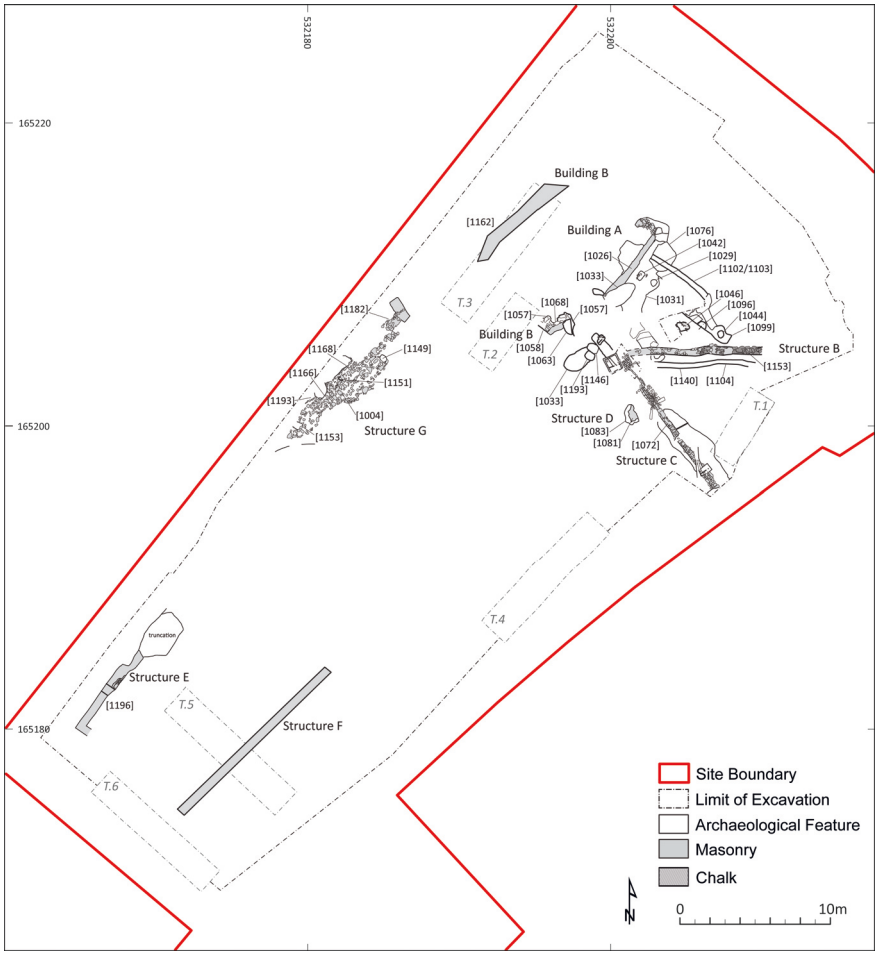

Fig 6: plan of late medieval – early post-medieval features

Fig 7: Building A, [1026], looking north-east

incised lines above a cordon/change in the body angle, marked with a horizontal incised line (Fig 8).[19]

There was only a thin and intermittent deposit of the silty clay, which can be compared to the colluvial deposits that overlay gravels observed nearby,[20] indicating the ground had been levelled – the prehistoric features were almost directly underneath the next surviving phase of activity.

The early post-medieval activity was characterised by the construction of at least two buildings, with either boundary walls or perhaps walls surrounding a yard area, a drain and yard surfaces. Within the core of surviving activity in the east of the site, the wall of Building A [1026] was laid directly upon this deposit, forming a corner measuring 3.70m long, 2.00m long on the return and 0.40m wide (Fig 7). It was constructed with roughly-hewn chalk blocks surviving to 44.53m OD and irregular coursing with a bond, which consisted of chalky fragments mixed with light brown silty clay and occasional small sub-rounded pebbles. A compacted, worn chalk yard surface (1043=1051) was associated with this building, with multiple small features cutting the surface at an average height of 44.80m OD.

Bounding the yard to the south was another north-west/south-east oriented, identically-constructed chalk wall (Fig 6, Structure B), although this was not aligned with Building A. The wall [1100] was robust; at over 8.80m by 0.54m and 0.29m deep, surviving to 44.86m OD. The robustness of the wall does suggest a load-bearing structure; a small posthole [1053] was cut into the wall, 0.36m by 0.34m and 0.08m deep, indicating a timber superstructure.

Another building (B) was represented by a small, truncated corner of chalk wall to the north and west of the chalk yard. One north-east/south-west oriented wall, 2.02m long and a maximum of 0.80m wide, survived to an upper height of 44.39m OD. A small spur of it was oriented in a north-west direction. This, too, had a small posthole cut into the corner, measuring 0.33m by 0.32m and 0.14m deep. Tool marks, possibly from a pick, were present on the underlying chalk blocks.

A thin deposit of compact light greyish white small, fragmented chalk overlaid the wall (1065). It was suggested it was either a form of bond or a foundation deposit to fill in between the rougher chalk blocks, to allow a superstructure, associated with the posthole, or a wooden sill to be placed on a level surface. Pottery dating between 1570 and 1846 was found within this deposit. A small, truncated triangle of chalk floor or yard surface (1064) was recorded to the north-east of the wall corner. It is suggested that this remnant connects to a second wall [1162] to the north, 0.93m wide and potentially over 7.30m long.

The north-west/south-east oriented wall was 7.30m long by 0.80m and 0.75m, surviving to a depth of 44.15m OD. It was constructed of irregular,

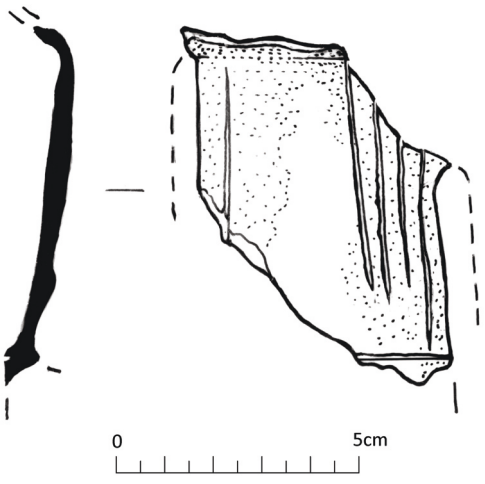

Fig 8: intrusive sherd of an Ashtead puzzle jug from [1050]

Fig 9: Structure C, chalk drain, looking south-east

roughly-hewn chalk blocks, with irregular coursing and fine chalk fragments used as a form of mortar. Two corners were suggested by the slight curves of the wall, but both were heavily truncated, leaving interpretation tentative. An external yard surface (1157) of compact mid-greyish brown sandy clay with frequent flint nodules and sub-angular and sub-rounded stones was present north of the building at an upper height of 43.91m OD.

A long chalk-built drain (Structure C) was present in the south of the site external to Structure B, but also surrounded by patches of surviving chalk yard surface (Fig 9). The drain was constructed of roughly-hewn chalk blocks forming two sides, with larger blocks as the roof. The surface of the drain was formed of small sub-rounded stones. The drain was 6.70m by 0.38m and 0.19m deep with the upper height of the drain roof at 44.73m OD and the inner surface of the drain at 44.54m to 44.51m OD showing a downwards slope to the north. The drain continued beyond the site to the south but to the north the drain had been reconstructed in a later phase of activity.

To the south and west of the chalk yard and drain was a small truncated pedestal of chalk structure, 1.22m by 0.59m and 0.18m deep (Structure D). The masonry [1082] was identical to the others. Little interpretation can be made from this one remnant, other than to show that the chalk structures continued further to the south and west of the main concentration of the yard and main buildings.

In the southern limit of the site was a 14.00m long roughly-hewn chalk block foundation wall [1010] with bonding material of fine packed chalk and occasional sub-rounded stones and occasional pieces of red ceramic building material (CBM) (Structure E).[21] Identified in the evaluation, it was

Fig 11: a halfpenny trade token from [1103]

Fig 10: Structure G, wall [1004] with posthole [1149], looking south-west

constructed using chalk blocks of variable size.

Overlying its surface was a fine packed, compact greyish-white deposit (1186), a maximum of 0.16m thick forming a level surface at 44.72m OD. This was interpreted, like other walls, as being a foundation deposit to create a level surface for a timber-framed building or structure. Unfortunately, no return or any other associated walls were uncovered, so it appears likely that this was a boundary wall or possibly a very large barn-like structure, where the associated wall had been removed or was present outside of the excavation area to the south.

Two structures were found adjacent to Scarbrook Road. Structure F was 7.50m by 2.00m and present from an upper height of 44.21m OD. The interpretation is uncertain as so little was uncovered, it aligns with Structure E and could have either been a heavily truncated continuation of this wall, or some form of floor surface. Structure G was a south-west/north-east wall further to the east, 8.80m by 1.20m (Fig 10). The wall's true alignment was unclear as earlier demolition of the feature had pulled chalk blocks down and scattered them down to 44.37m OD.

Within the wall were three postholes: [1149] was located within the northern end of the wall and measured 0.47m in diameter and 0.33m in depth, with pottery, retrieved from its backfill, dating the feature to 1570–1846. There was a sub-circular posthole [1151] in the centre of the wall 0.47m to 0.50m in diameter and 0.18m deep. It contained the neck sherd of an Ashtead puzzle jug dating to 1200–1400, which was likely to be residual. A sub-square posthole [1153] with rounded corners lay within the limits of excavation in the south of the wall, 0.48m to 0.54m in diameter and 0.46m deep. These postholes were likely to be the remains of the upper structural framework of a substantial timber-and-post building or another robust boundary wall.

Very few finds were recovered dating from this period. However, a notable find of a halfpenny trade token issued by Francis Bray of Cow Cross (St John Street) and dated to 1666 (Fig 11)[22] was found within a small linear ditch [1103] defining the chalk yard. A probable post-medieval copper-alloy pin with a solid conical shaped head[23] was recovered from a large feature truncating the yard. Other finds were largely from demolition deposits including some hand-wrought iron nails and highly decorative late 18th-century pewter shoe buckles with silver plating and with iron fastenings. Shoe buckles grew in popularity in Britain during the 17th and 18th centuries and were used by virtually all social classes by 1760, remaining popular until the 1890s.[24]

Late post-medieval activity (late 18th century to present) (Fig 12)

The earlier chalk features were sealed by a series of demolition deposits of various dates, suggesting that the area was developed in phases between the late 18th century and the mid-19th century. This accords with the Croydon

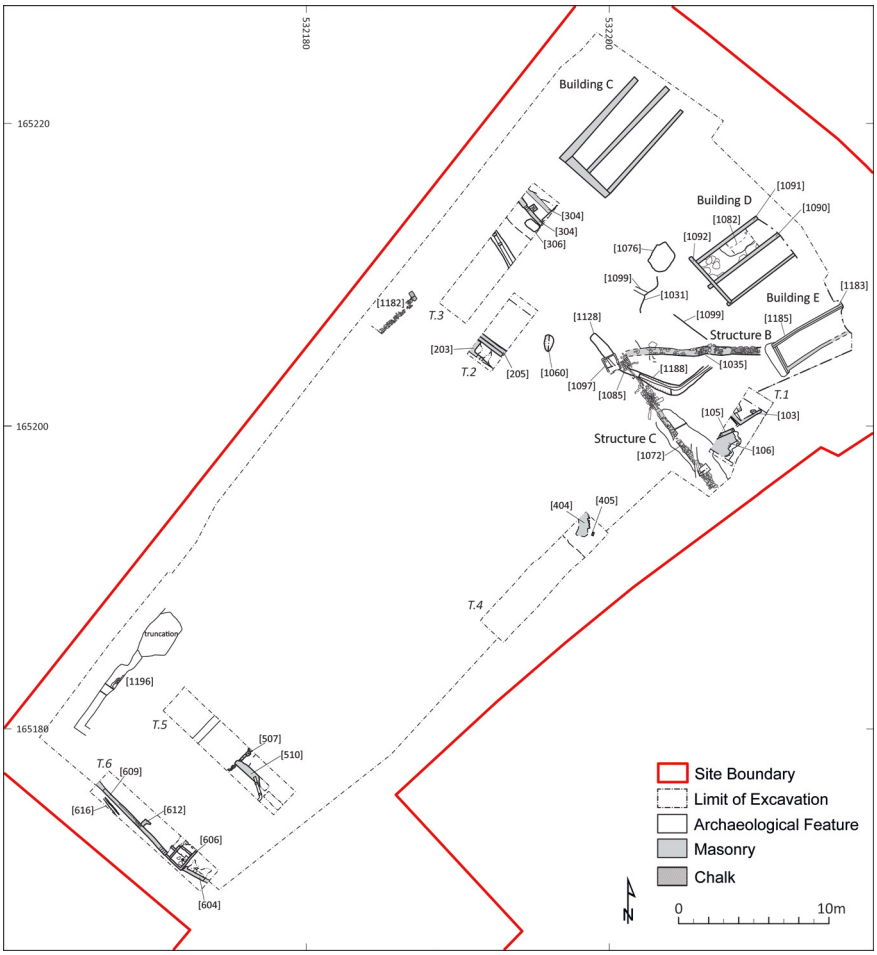

Fig 12: plan of late post-medieval features

Tithe map of 1800[25] which illustrates the site as separate plots, probably sold off at different times. Building A was demolished and some of the rubble used to consolidate the ground prior to the new phase of use.

Finds from the demolition suggest a *terminus post quem* in the mid-19th century. Building B in the north was demolished and levelled with two deposits; one with pottery dated to 1745–1900, the second dated by pottery to 1745–1830. Overall, the demolition of Building B can therefore be suggested with a *terminus post quem* of between 1745 and 1830, probably for the construction of terrace houses along Scarbrook Road.

A series of five cellars were investigated fronting on to Wandle Road (Buildings C–E), two were fully excavated. They were separate structures of two double cellars and a single cellar to the south-east. Building C measured 7.00m by 1.50m internally, surviving to 44.53m OD. The cellar walls [1015–1019] were constructed with unfrogged red and bright orange bricks measuring 230mm by 100mm and 70m thick, dated to 1780–1900 with rare re-used bricks dated to 1650–1800. Remnants of lime plaster had survived on the internal facing of the walls, and a coal chute recorded which would have been supplied from the pavement. The cellar had been subdivided with frogged red bricks, measuring 240mm by 110mm and 70mm thick, dated to 1860–1950. Overall, the cellar was probably built between 1780–1860, with repair and subdivision between 1860 and 1900.

Double-cellared Building D (Fig 13) survived to 44.67m OD. It was very similar to Building C, although it had originally been subdivided. The brick floor was made of mixed poor quality re-used red bricks, 240mm by 110mm and 50mm thick, and dated to between 1850 and 1900, indicating the bricks had not been part of the original floor. In the south-east corner of the site, fronting on to Wandle Road, was a single isolated cellar (Building E), which was not excavated.

Overall, the construction of the three buildings, if they are contemporary as the building style suggests, appear to be dated to 1780–1860. The space between the buildings may have been the entrance to inner yards and working areas which pre-date the first Ordnance Survey map. The evidence suggests that these buildings were partially demolished, and the cellars re-used for the later houses on Wandle Road known as Whitgift Terraces.

Historic maps (Fig 14) show that Whitgift Terraces were physically separated from Scarbrook Road, with open yards to the rear and a larger industrial business in the centre of the site. The remains of 19th-century terrace housing, outbuildings and yards were recorded during the evaluation. Remains in Trenches 1, 2 ,3 and 4 were from the Whitgift Terraces and their backyards. Trenches 5 and 6

Fig 13: overview of the excavation showing the chalk yard surface in the background and Building D in the foreground

represented Scarbrook Road although no cellars were built here. The walls generally survived only to ground level with evidence of internal grey slate floors and external re-used worn, brick surfaces which possibly derived from the earlier buildings on site.

A small domestic refuse pit [306], 0.94m by 0.55m and only 0.12m deep, was filled with dark reddish-brown silty ashy silt (307) and finds included a Doulton Lambeth stoneware ink bottle and pottery sherds of domestic tableware including ointment jars, tea cups, an egg cup and bone china teapots. A turquoise glass jar, bottle and lid, and a metal utility key were also recovered. One bottle was stamped ORIONS SAUCE. Metal finds of small pins and other fragments indicated delicate metal crafts. The finds suggest a date between 1825–1900.

The Scarbrook Road terraces were also demolished to ground level with some surviving concrete surfaces, ceramic drainage and garden soils. Drainage continued to be an important feature in the south of the site, with the earlier Structure C being re-used and re-built at least twice. Firstly, it was as a circular brick drain and later combined with a curvilinear ceramic drain, dated to the 19th century, which flowed from Whitgift Terraces and linked up to drains flowing towards the houses on Scarbrook Road.

Photographs of both Scarbrook and Whitgift Terraces[26] show them as typical terraces, but with no indication of the cellars beneath. There was evidence for the final use

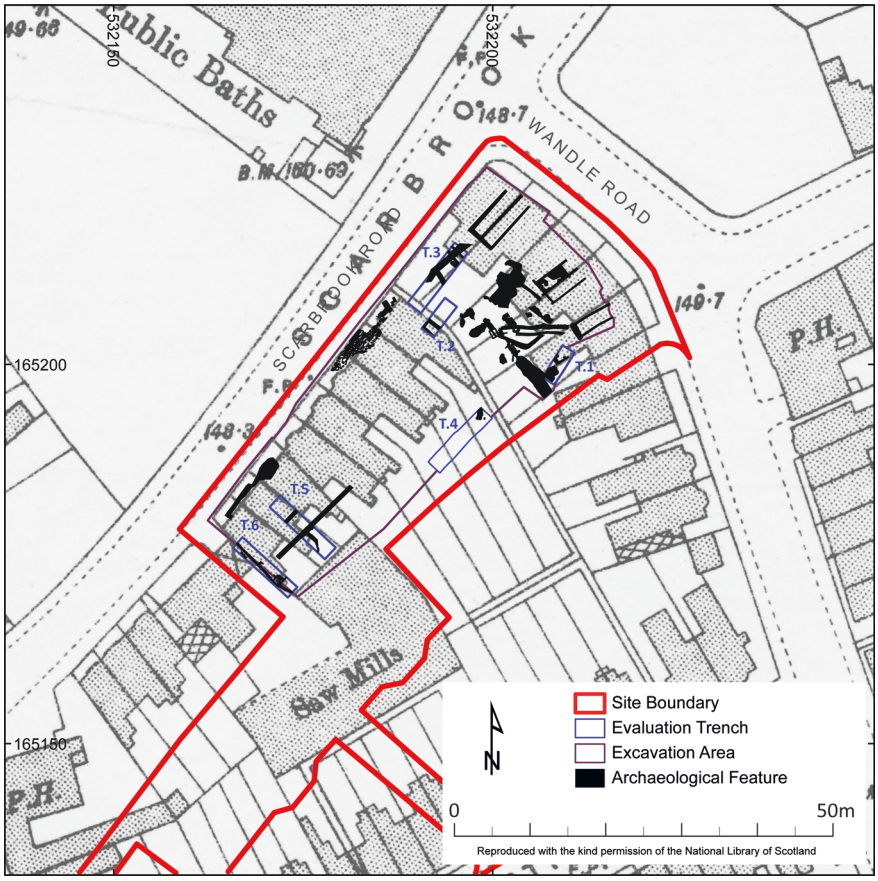

Fig 14: plan of late post-medieval features mapped over the 1893 OS London map (scale: Five-foot to the mile (1:1,056), 1893–1896 – Sheet XVII.15)

in Building C in the form of a rusted intact cast-iron stand for a Singer sewing machine and the iron grate for a fire. Within the cellar of Building D, there was extensive evidence of a fire (Fig 15), with deposits of black ash, charred timber and charcoal.

Multiple artefacts included an *in situ* iron fire grate with coal bucket and the remains of a wooden work bench. The bench had metal fragments of tools, a melted plastic box of small hexagonal pale green decorative tiles, a gas valve and piping, material sacks filled with a carbonised deposit, various glass bottles and thin copper wire on a bobbin. A single George VI halfpenny from 1942, with a reverse of the Golden Hind, was also recovered. The deposits clearly suggested a small workshop that had been burnt before the tenants left the building for its demolition in advance of building the Croydon flyover.

Evidence of the domestic lives of the residents was found in demolition deposits including a possible George V penny dating to 1910–36[27] retrieved from the infill within Building C. Three of these finds are illustrated in Fig 16: a near-complete ivory nail- or clothes-brush from (1024),[28] and two glass inkwells from (1024) and (1123). In addition, there was a folding iron knife with bone plates, a copper-alloy dessert spoon and lid of a shaker (for salt or pepper) and a pewter toy miniature spoked wheel from (1025). More prosaic items, such as keys and a mortice lock, were also recovered.

Ceramics are dominated by common tablewares and domestic household vessels including plates,

Fig 15: Building D, cellar [1048], looking south-west

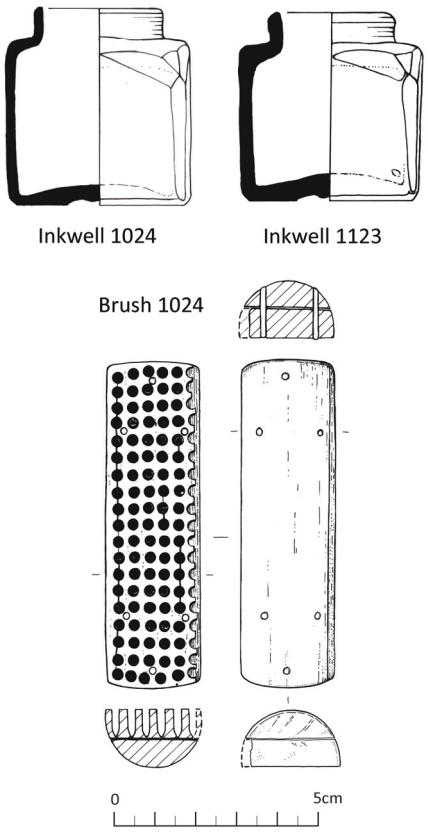

Fig 16: finds from the post-medieval activity on the site: inkwells from (1024) and (1123); brush from (1024)

teacups and teapots, jugs and mugs, with hygiene and ablution items in the form of ointment pots (Fig 17) and fragments of wash basins dating to the 18th and 19th centuries. Although appearing insignificant, these finds are an integral part of understanding the lives of those who lived there.[29]

Discussion – the Wandle Valley

The site is compact and contains three intermittent phases of activity but, combined with the numerous excavations in the vicinity, it creates a strong picture of Croydon within the landscape of the Wandle Valley as an advantageous location for human activity. It provides the first evidence of Mesolithic period features within the area presenting a possible seasonal encampment. This finally ties together the extensive evidence of residual lithics found within the area and the later phases show the site as a thriving place of activity far outside the Archbishop's Palace and traditional location of old Croydon.

The Mesolithic period

Isolated findspots of Mesolithic activity are common in the broader Thames valley, but large numbers of Mesolithic lithics has been found at Orchard Hill, Carshalton and Wallington,[30] suggesting *in situ* production. Lithics of different periods are often mixed, such as the Mesolithic tranchet adze and other blade types at 14 Whitgift Street, 75m to the north-east of the site. However, the nearest site with *in situ* features is in Beddington, 4km north-west of the site, which recorded three pits with an associated later Mesolithic lithic assemblage.[31] Beddington was not considered to be a settlement, but was possibly used as a flint extraction site – the assemblage contained typological similarities to material recovered at Croydon.

The prehistoric features at Croydon are noted for their inclusion of later, intrusive finds. This both suggests insecurity as to the *in situ* state of the earlier finds used to date this phase of activity, but is also related to the nature of the friable nature of the geology which enabled movement of finds. The site was also heavily disturbed by later post-medieval activity, which affected the secure nature of these contexts.

However, the large number of lithics, particularly those found within features, and the fact that all of the secondary modified material was recovered from secure stratigraphic contexts relating to pit and beam-slot fills, suggests that the activity is predominantly from the late Mesolithic/early Neolithic transition.

The presence of large quantities of debitage found at Croydon, coupled with the relatively high number of modified materials, suggest that tool production and resource processing activities were being intensively undertaken. The Croydon site may therefore represent a small temporary or seasonal encampment – perhaps one of many centred around readily available natural resources. Despite its small size and limited assemblage, the site is of regional significance in providing firm evidence of later Mesolithic settlement within the Wandle Valley.

The modern period

While the focus of human activity moved away from this specific location until the early post-medieval period, its next phase is characterised by the construction of at least two buildings, with either boundary walls or perhaps walls surrounding a yard area, a drain and yard surfaces.

The surviving features are concentrated in the east of the site, closer to the chalk foundation remains found adjacent to the site to the north-east.[32] They may be associated with the same complex of buildings, although perhaps slightly later in date, and are possibly those illustrated on the early maps of Croydon. The load-bearing chalk foundation sills suggest timber post-and-framework superstructures for the buildings, which would be substantial and possibly more than one storey high. Although the remains were heavily truncated with little indication of function in terms of retrieved finds or environmental samples, their presence, is still important for representing the development of Croydon.

Conventional interpretations of Croydon and of other suburb towns are that they grew in the 18th century as ribbon developments alongside improved highways and that the area (where the site is) was open ground behind the High Street. However, the complex of well-built structures does suggest activity in this area. It could represent infrastructure, such as additional stabling for the public houses (documented from the High Street from the end of the 16th century). This may explain the paucity of finds from the site, especially compared with the building remains slightly further up the slope.

Although maps show that Whitgift Street was formally laid out in the 19th century, it may have developed from an existing route. Alternatively, the remains could represent warehousing, storage or an open working area.

The phased demolition of the earlier post-medieval buildings is followed by buildings on Wandle Road indicating intensifying development from the end of the 18th century with perhaps some of the backyard structures still in use. This is seen in the re-use of the chalk drain and some small pits cut into the chalk yard. In the mid-19th century these buildings were demolished, and the cellars re-used for the construction of the Whitgift Terraces.

Further terraces were constructed along Scarbrook Road sometime in the early to mid-19th century, showing the area was a preferential location

for residential and small industry development, resulting in the archaeological evidence of the lifestyles of the most recent inhabitants. This expansion is noted as having a wide-ranging effect upon the site, introducing wide-scale drainage and backyard components including small rubbish pits and brick yard surfaces.

These buildings survived into the 1960s. Demolished for the construction of the Croydon Flyover, the area was then used as a car park. While later development of the site was perhaps aided by the loss of the fast-flowing River Wandle, when it was drained and culverted from the 19th century onwards, the site has remained a good location for humans to live and work.

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Fig 17: Atkinson's bear grease, lid of ointment pot[33]

London Archaeologist has published 11 articles in the past about excavations in the Croydon area and around the River Wandle. Please see inside the back cover for a list of their titles and links to PDF versions online at the Archaeology Data Service.

1. Site code: NDL19; NGR TQ32190 65189.

2. AOC Archaeology *Wandle Car Park, Croydon: an archaeological evaluation report* (2019), AOC Archaeology unpub client rep.

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6. H E Malden (ed) 'Croydon: Introduction and Croydon Palace' in *A History of the County of Surrey: Vol 4* (1912), 205–17. Available online at https://tinyurl.com/78b3fu45 [accessed 5 May 2021].

7. See P Askew 'Excavations at 2–14 Whitgift Street, Croydon' *London Archaeol* **12** (10) (2010), 259–66, suggesting that the valley was suitable for seasonal migration of animals and therefore a favourable hunting area.

8. *British Geological Society*. Available at https://tinyurl.com/57eaxtzke [accessed 5 May 2021].

9. *Op cit* fn 6; R Humphrey *An Archaeological Excavation at 1 Wandle Road and 19 Scarbrook Road, London Borough of Croydon, London CR0 1EX* Pre-Construct Archaeology (2014) unpub rep.

10. Plan of the town of Croydon drawn by Jean-Baptiste Say in 1785 Museum of Croydon Archives (AR47: GB-352-ar47). The name of the street indicates the original function of this feature; Scar-brook Road.

11. C J Halsey, R G Scaife and K Roberts 'The Mesolithic landscape in the Wandle Valley' *London Archaeologist* **12** (7) (2009), 191–6.

12. M Hastie *Wandle Road Carpark, Croydon. Assessment of plant remains* (2020), AOC Archaeology unpub rep.

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16. A hoard of 3,800 coins dated to the 4th century AD was found in 1903 at Wandle Road, just to the south-west of Whitgift Street, *op cit* fn 6.

17. E Hudak, in K McDermott 'The Post-Medieval Pottery', AOC Archaeology unpub rep (2020).

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22. A Celovsky 'Coin Assessment', Unpub report (2019); M Dickinson *Seventeenth century trade tokens of the British Isles and their values*. Spink and Son Ltd (1986).

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25. J C Anderson *Plan and award of the commissioners appointed to inclose the commons of Croydon* (1889); incorporating A Plan of the Parish of Croydon in the County of Surrey Shewing the allotments in the Common and Common fields as divided by Act of Parliament in the Year 1800 by Thos Bainbridge.

26. Museum of Croydon Archive (PH-96-9573), Whitgift Terrace, Wandle Road in 1964, showing No 64 as a tailor's shop.

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29. See V Crewe ' "Ancient luxury and modern filth": new insights into 19th-century life at Sheffield Manor Lodge' *Post-Medieval Archaeol* **46**/2 (2012), 333–41; T Licence *What the Victorians Threw Away* (2015).

30. See J English, R Ellaby & C Taylor 'Excavations at Orchard Hill, Carshalton, 1964–5' *Surrey Archaeological Collections* **101** (2018), 195–208; J Leary, N Branch & B J Bishop '10,000 years in the life of the river Wandle: excavations at the former Vinamul site, Butter Hill, Wallington' *Surrey Archaeological Collections* (2005) **92**, 1–28.

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32. Thanks to Jon Butler and Tim Bradley of Pre-Construct Archaeology for allowing a preview of their work: 1 Wandle Road and 19 Scarbrook Road, Croydon pending publication in *Surrey Archaeological Collections*.

33. See *London Archaeol* **15** (12) (2019), 356.