THAMES WATER MAINS REPLACEMENT

In the vicinity of Plumstead High Street and Invermore Place
(AMP5, District Metering Area Riverside 12)

LONDON BOROUGH OF GREENWICH, SE18

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

November 2011

Thames Water

COMPASS ARCHAEOLOGY

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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

SITE CODE: TXH11

NGR: TQ 4532 7859 (centre of eastern, Plumstead High Street, area)
TQ 4440 7870 (centre of western, Invermore Place, area)

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Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken between January and October 2011, during water mains renewal and replacement works in two main areas in the Thames Water District Metering Area Riverside 12 (London Borough of Greenwich): around Plumstead High Street, and Invermore Place.

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken during contractors groundworks and consisted of the inspection and recording of all open works accessible during monitoring visits.

This work recorded existing road surfaces and modern hardcore/concrete bedding overlying made-ground deposits in some areas, service disturbance and backfill, and natural deposits (sandy-gravels) in other areas. No finds or features of archaeological significance were uncovered during this watching brief.

The remains of one Victorian coal cellar was observed on the southern side of Plumstead Road, at the junction with Villas Road. This reflects the earlier building frontage along Plumstead Road – clearly further northwards than it is today, and reflecting the earlier narrower line of the road.

The natural deposits were most obviously noticed in the Invermore Place area. This was a sandy-gravel deposit, observed c.0.6m beneath the modern ground-surface. A similar natural deposit – sandy-silt and gravels – were observed in some stretches of trenching (c.0.5 – 0.9m beneath the modern ground-surface) along Plumstead High Street although, interestingly, this was not observed in the trenches to the north of Plumstead High Street.

Various layers of made-ground deposits were observed in the trenching in the roads to the north of Plumstead High Street. These were dated, using pottery evidence, to the 19th – 20th Century, and reflect the late 19th Century development of the area.

The recovery of small pieces of ceramic building material from trenching along Plumstead High Street, dated c.1450-1800, reflects the earlier activity along the High Street (the original centre of Plumstead).

Contents

List of Figures

1 Introduction

1.1 This report details the results of an Archaeological Watching Brief carried out during water mains replacement works in the area around Plumstead High Street and Invermore Place in the London Borough of Greenwich, SE18, between 25th January 2011 and 14th October 2011. The work was undertaken on behalf of Thames Water Utilities by their main contractor Morrison MGJV.

1.2 Archaeological monitoring was undertaken during contractors groundworks and formed a response to recommendations made by English Heritage for an archaeological watching brief. The part of the study area around Plumstead High Street lay within an area of archaeological potential, (APA), as outlined in the London Borough of Greenwich's Unitary Development Plan, and which presumably relates to the prehistoric and Roman potential of the area (see below).

1.3 The archaeological monitoring included an on-site photographic and written record. As a minimum a series of Trench Record sheets were completed for individual excavations or sections of open-cut trench, recording the nature of exposed deposits and details on any archaeological finds and features (including collection of datable finds/samples). Photographs, recording representative trench sections and general site location, were also taken.

1.4 The archaeological work followed consultation with and advice from Mark Stevenson of English Heritage.

The watching brief was commissioned by Nicholas Green of Morrison MGJV. Assistance during the course of the watching brief was given by the site agent, Lee Ladd.

2 Site Location and Geology

The site is located south of the River Thames, to the east of Greenwich, north-east of Woolwich, and north of Shooters Hill (see fig. 1 for broad location of the site). The two specific areas of archaeological monitoring (around Invermore Place and Plumstead High Street) are depicted on fig. 2 – the area around Invermore Place lies to the south of the main east-west running Plumstead Road and to the south-west of Plumstead Station; the area around Plumstead High Street lies approximately in the centre of the High Street, east of the station.

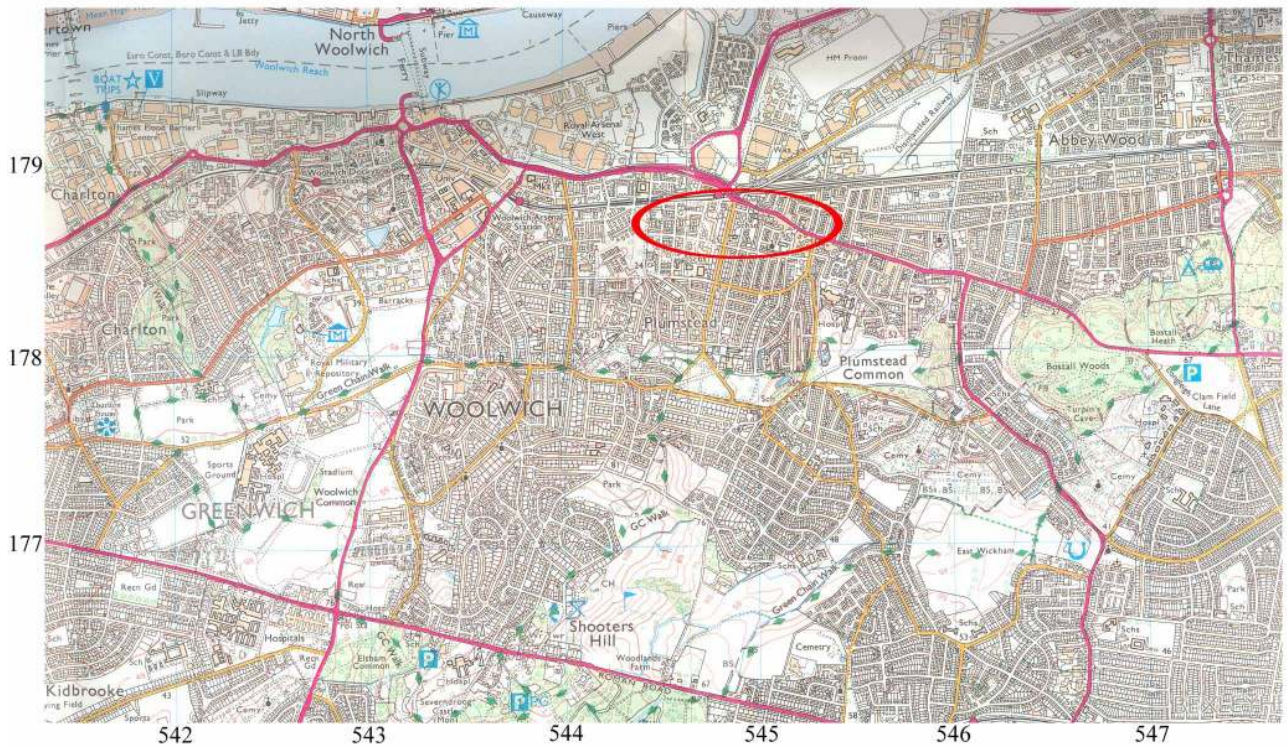

Fig. 1: OS Map showing general area, with the site location ringed.

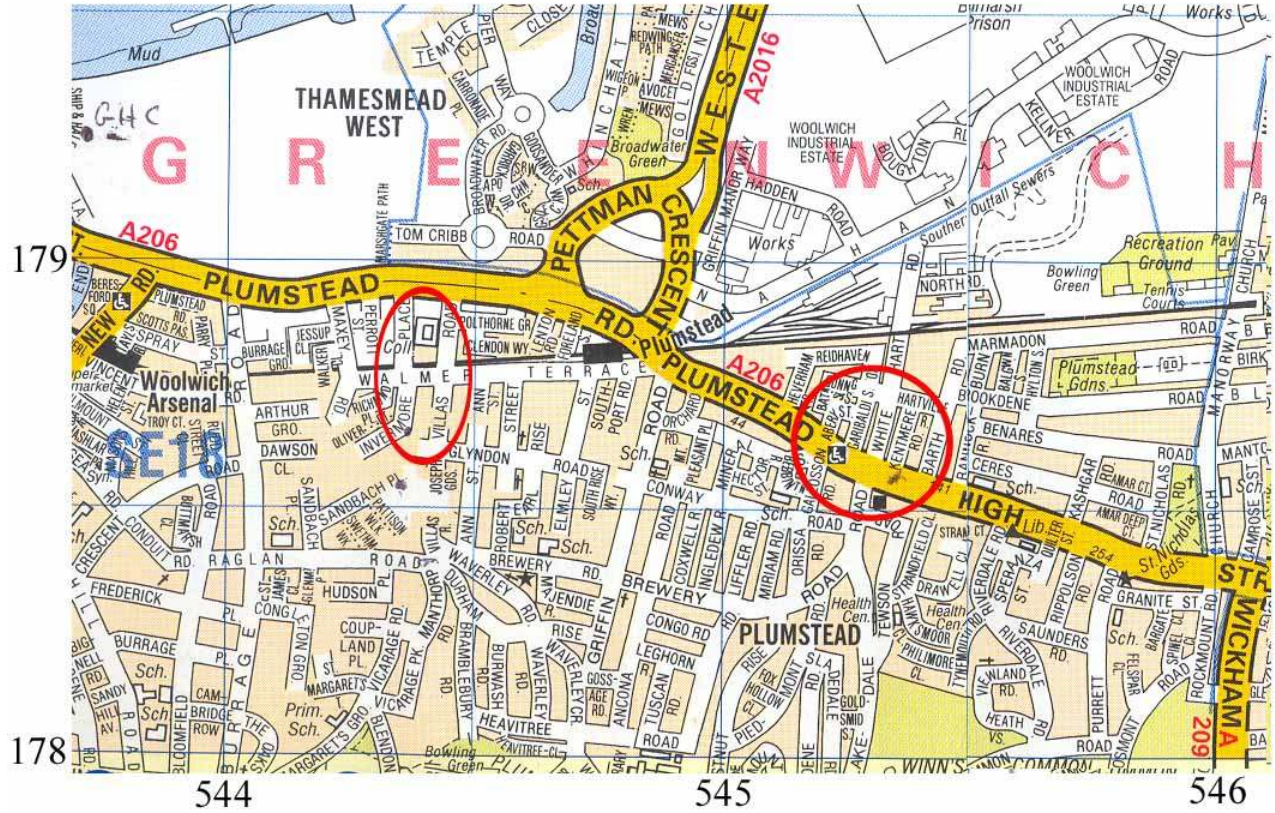

Fig. 2: A-Z Map with the two specific areas of monitoring ringed.

The British Geological Survey (*Dartford. Sheet 271: Solid & Drift,* 1998 – see fig. 3) indicates that parts of the site lie on Thanet Beds (a sand formation), with the far northern areas on Head deposits (silt, sand and clay), and the southern part of the western area on Lambeth Beds (a sandy clay deposit).

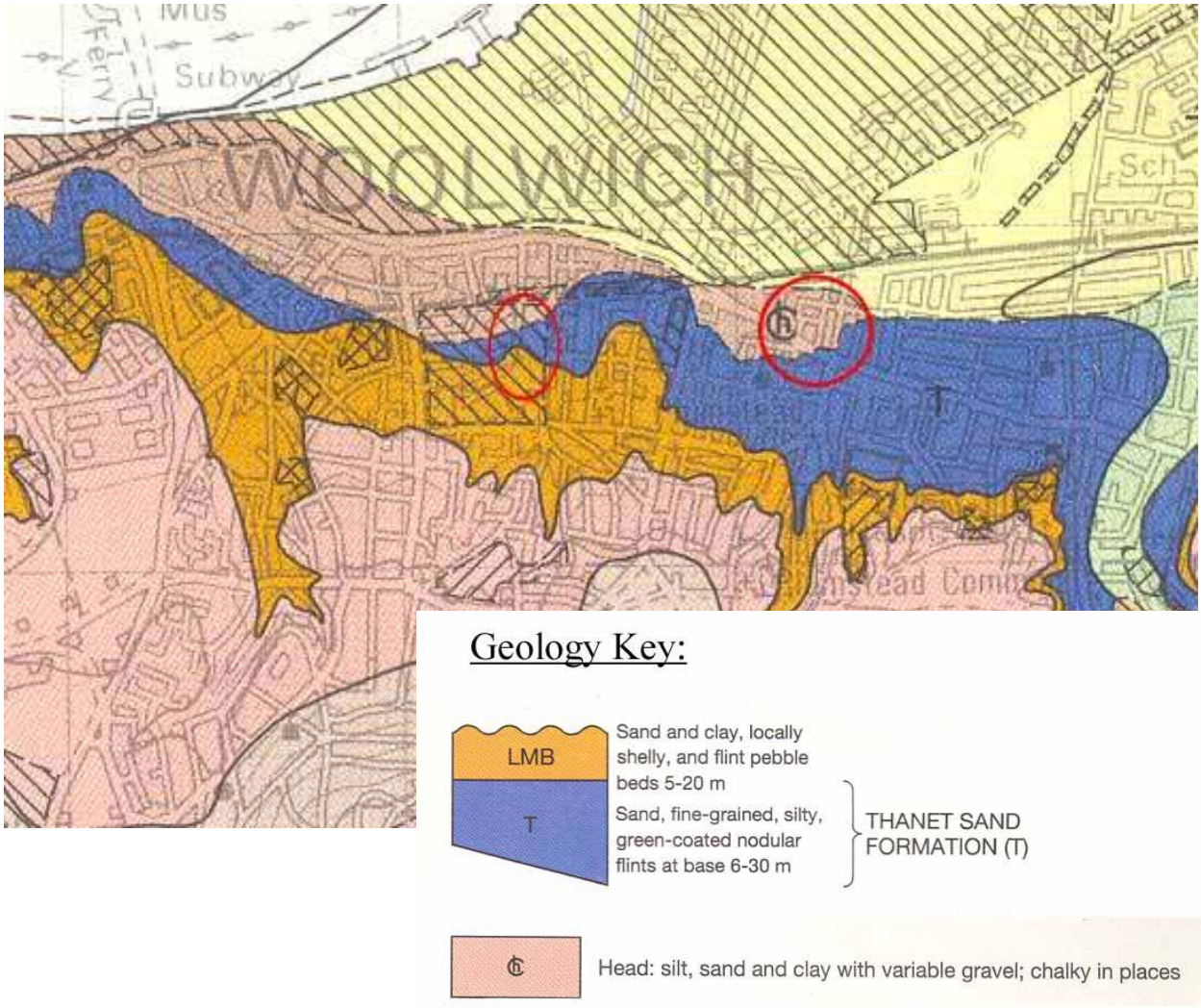

Fig. 3: British Geological Survey (Dartford, Sheet 271, 1998), with two areas of monitoring ringed.

3 Archaeological and Historical Background

3.1 Prehistoric

Evidence for prehistoric activity has been found in and around the Plumstead area, particularly because it lies close to the floodplain of the River Thames.

Plumstead Common is known to have been a centre for Bronze Age burial barrows - Two pre-Roman burial mounds have been uncovered in the vicinity – one at Winn's Common (to the south of Plumstead High Street), and one at Brinklow Crescent (further to the south-west of Plumstead High Street).

Further evidence for prehistoric activity is reflected in the discovery of an Iron Age gold stater and late Bronze Age to early Iron Age coin, both unprovenanced find-spots in the Plumstead region.

3.2 Roman

There is substantial evidence for Roman activity in this area.

The main Roman road in this area – Watling Street – runs to the south of Plumstead, along the present A207, although another Roman road supposedly ran along the line of Plumstead High Street (in line with the Romanised settlement at Woolwich on the Thames). It is possible that some form of Roman roadside activity may have taken place in this area.

Coin evidence also reflects the Roman activity in this area, and particularly in association with the Roman road through Plumstead. A number of Roman coins have been discovered along Plumstead High Street, in Ceres Road (just to the north of the High Street), and Kentmere Road (just off the High Street). Furthermore, one Roman interment was supposedly uncovered on Plumstead High Street in 1879. Other Roman findspots appear in the Greater London HER attributed to Plumstead – including a fragment of a slide key.

3.3 Saxon

There is documentary evidence for the existence of Plumstead from 960AD, when King Edgar gave four plough lands, known as 'Plumstead', to St Augustine's Abbey near Canterbury. Earl Godwin then seized these lands from the monastery and gave it to his fourth son, Tostig. Edward the Confessor, on taking power, gave the land back to the monastery, however Tostig then seized it again after Edward's death in 1066.

After the Battle of Hastings, William the Conqueror gave the land to Odo (Bishop of Bayeux), however Lanfranc (Archbishop of Canterbury) interceded to reclaim a portion of the land for the monastery, such that there are two entries for Plumstead in the 1086 Domesday Book. In 1074, however, Odo supposedly granted the remainder of Plumstead parish to Canterbury. The

entry in the Domesday Book must, therefore, reflect the earlier situation in relation to Plumstead.

Plumstead was, therefore, clearly a settlement from at least the Saxon period, although little archaeological evidence exists for this. It was presumably a small settlement / hamlet, centred around the High Street and church, similar to that in the medieval period (see discussion below).

3.4 Medieval

Plumstead manor remained a possession of St Augustine's in Canterbury until its final dissolution in 1539, when the abbey and all of its revenues were surrendered into the hands of Henry VIII. Throughout the medieval period, there are documentary references to Plumstead, including an incident in 1314 when the abbot of St Augustine's was called in front of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and questioned about his rights for free warren, a weekly market, and a yearly fair, in Plumstead.

The original medieval settlement of Plumstead was a hamlet, centred around the parish church of St Nicholas, which dates from the 12th Century and retains some 12th and 13th Century fabric. It was an agricultural region – focusing on growing plums – and was basically formed of a long high street with the parish church and manor house at its eastern end, marshes and river to the north, and fields and common-land to the south.

Some archaeological evidence has been found indicating medieval activity in the Plumstead region. For example, a medieval iron dagger and rowel spur have supposedly been uncovered in this area

3.5 Post Medieval

Plumstead expanded rapidly in the 1880s. Its growth was particularly associated with that of Woolwich, particularly its production of arms and armaments (at the Royal Arsenal, which hugely expanded in the mid-19th Century), and the fact that Woolwich was a major garrison town and home to a major dockyard of the Royal Navy. The need to provide houses for the workers at the Arsenal led to a huge expansion in housing – Plumstead's population jumped from 8,000 to 28,000 between 1851 and 1871, with a station being constructed at Plumstead in 1859. By 1914, most of the land in Plumstead had been built on, so new development shifted to Eltham.

3.6 Historic map regression

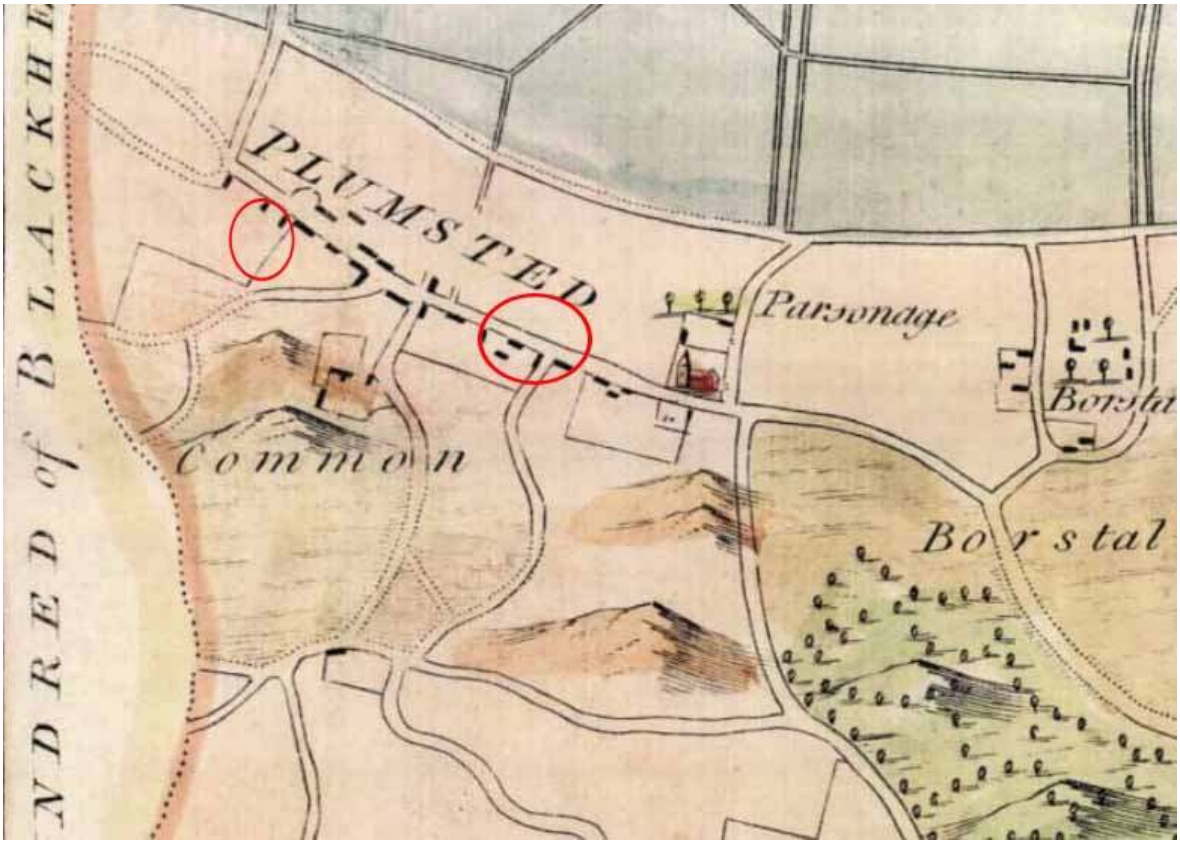

Fig. 4: Hasted's 1778 Map of Kent, with the two areas of monitoring circled.

This map depicts the early (18th Century) development and layout of Plumstead, before the 19th Century expansion. Development is clearly focused along the High Street itself – with the Church and Parsonage depicted at the eastern end of the High Street.

The area of monitoring around Plumstead High Street clearly falls within this area of early development. The road depicted heading south is the present Lakedale Road.

The area of monitoring around Invermore Place, however, is less clearly developed at this date falling, instead, slightly south of the main areas of development in apparent fields / open space.

A similar situation is depicted on the 1805 Ordnance Survey Map (not depicted), with development still centred along the High Street, and the area around Invermore Place not yet developed.

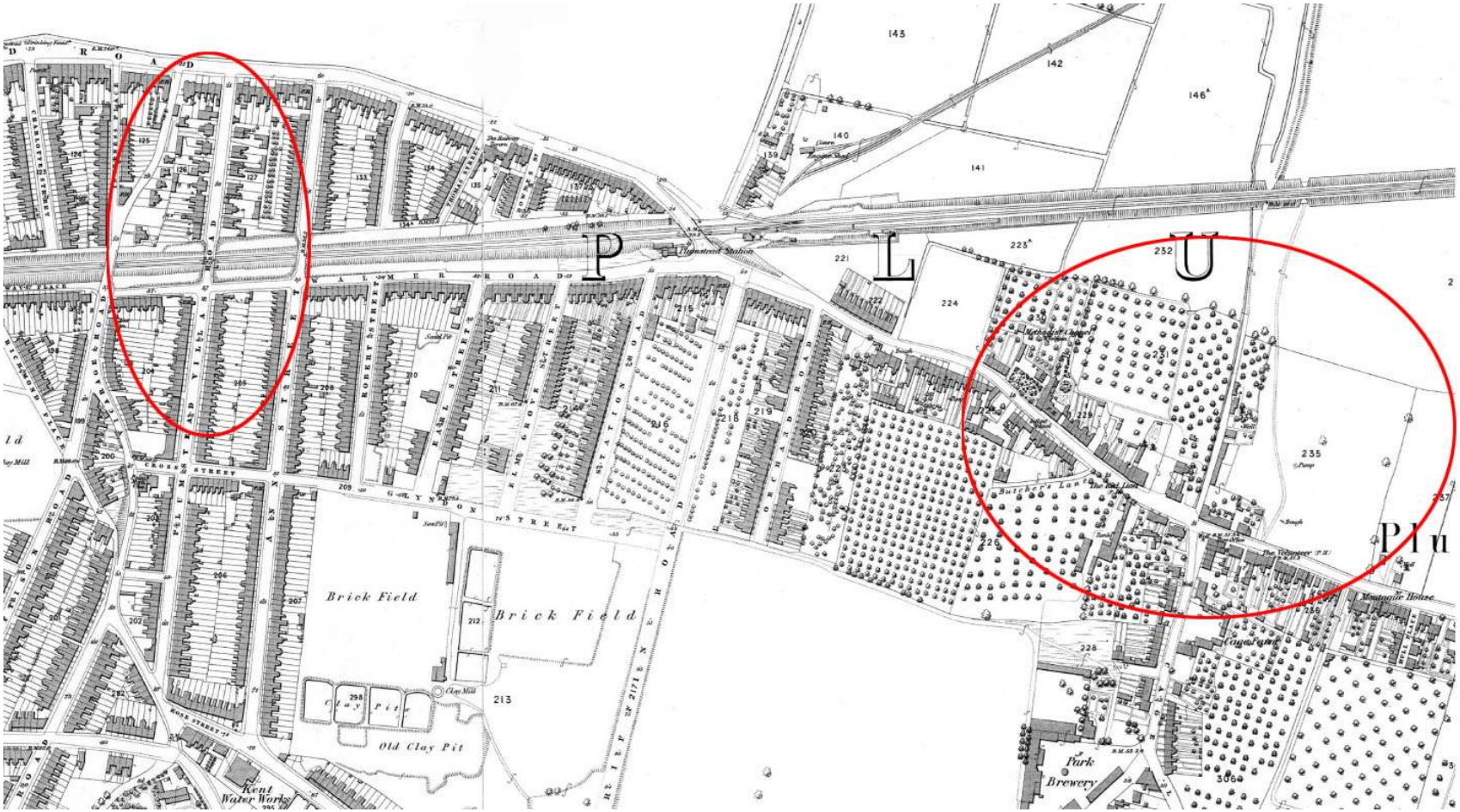

Fig. 5: First Edition 25inch OS Map (1864), with areas of monitoring ringed.

This shows the 19th Century development of the area, such that the area around Invermore Place had been developed, with lines of Victorian terraced houses and the railway line. Development around Plumstead High Street was still centred on the High Street itself, with the outlying areas (to the north and south) remaining under agriculture (with trees, etc). The late 19th and early 20th Centuries witnessed the further development of this area (see discussion above), to include the roads monitored to the north of Plumstead High Street.

4 Archaeological Research Questions

The research objectives of the archaeological watching brief as set out in the preliminary *Specification* (Compass Archaeology January 2011, Section 5), were as follows:

- Is there any evidence for prehistoric to medieval activity, and what is the nature of this?
- Is there any evidence of the Roman road system?
- Is there any artefactual data to support the numerous Roman find spots in this area?
- Is there any evidence for the line of the medieval roads or early settlement patterns in this area?
- What evidence is there for post-medieval activity in the area?
- At what level do archaeological deposits survive in the highways across the area?
- Can the watching brief works inform on the site-specific research questions of local archaeological sites and archaeological priority areas?

5 The Archaeological Programme

5.1 Standards

The field and post-excavation work was carried out in accordance with current English Heritage guidelines (in particular, *Standards and Practice in Archaeological Fieldwork, Guidance Paper 3)* and to the standards of the Institute of Field Archaeologists *(Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs).* Overall management of the project was undertaken by a full member of the Institute.

The recording system followed the procedures set out in the Museum of London recording manual. By agreement with MoLA the recording and drawing sheets used were directly compatible with those developed by the Museum.

5.2 Fieldwork

The archaeological watching brief took place during contractors' groundworks, and generally involved one archaeologist on site, as required, monitoring works and investigating and recording any archaeological remains. Contact was maintained with the groundworks team to ensure a presence on site as and when necessary.

Where archaeological remains were exposed adequate time was given for investigation and recording, although every effort was made not to disrupt the contractor's programme.

The Client and the representatives of English Heritage were kept advised of the progress of the fieldwork.

5.3 Methodology

Archaeological deposits and features were investigated and recorded in stratigraphic sequence and, where appropriate, finds dating evidence recovered.

Archaeological deposits and features were recorded on *pro-forma* context or trench sheets, and/or drawn in plan. The investigations were recorded on a general site plan and related to the Ordnance Survey grid. The fieldwork record was supplemented as appropriate by digital photography

6 Post Excavation Work

The fieldwork was followed by off-site assessment and compilation of this report, and by ordering of the site archive.

6.1 Finds and samples

Finds and samples were treated in accordance with the appropriate guidelines, including the Museum of London's *'Standards for the Preparation of Finds to be permanently retained by the Museum of London'*. Finds and artefacts were retained and bagged with unique numbers related to the context record. Assessment of finds and samples was undertaken by appropriately qualified staff.

6.2 Report procedure

Copies of this report will be supplied to the client Morrison MGJV, Thames Water, English Heritage and the local studies library.

A short summary of the fieldwork is appended using the OASIS Data Collection Form, and in paragraph form suitable for publication within the 'excavation round-up' of the *London Archaeologist*.

7 The Site Archive

The records from the archaeological project will be ordered in line with MoL *Guidelines for the Preparation of Archaeological Archives* and will be deposited in the Museum of London Archaeological Archive.

8 The Archaeological Watching Brief

The archaeological watching brief was undertaken during contractors' groundworks in the area around Plumstead High Street and Invermore Place. The groundworks took place as part of a Thames Water Utilities Ltd scheme of Victorian water mains replacement. Archaeological monitoring was undertaken on areas of open-cut trenching, trial pits and in launch pit areas, access pits and exit points of other methods. Approximately 466m of trenching was observed within the study area. The results of the archaeological watching brief are listed below, and are discussed in the order in which they were monitored.

8.1 Area around Invermore Place:

Twelve pits (used for insertion) were archaeologically monitored in the area around Invermore Place – mainly on Villas Road and the adjacent roads. The results of these are described below:

Pit Number	Road / Location	Dimensions (in metres)
1	Villas Road – eastern side – just north of junction with Polthorne Grove.	4 X 1.2 X 1.1
2	Villas Road – eastern side – between railway and Polthorne Grove.	4 X 1.2 X 1.1
3	Villas Road / Plumstead Road (junction between).	8 X 3.6 X 1.2
4	Villas Road – eastern side – at junction with Walmer Terrace.	6 X 1.3 X 1.1
5	Polthorne Grove – northern side – at junction with Villas Road.	7 X 3 X 0.6
6	Polthorne Grove – northern side.	1.8 X 0.6 X 1.4
7	Polthorne Grove – northern side.	1.4 X 0.6 X 2
8	Polthorne Grove – northern side.	1.8 X 1.2 X 1.4
9	Polthorne Grove – northern side (far eastern pit).	2.4 X 1.8 X 2
10	Access road off Villas Road, just north of railway line – southern side – at junction with Villas Road.	4 X 1 X 1.6
11	Access road off Villas Road, just north of railway line – northern side – at junction with Villas Road.	0.5 X 0.5 X 1
12	Access road off Villas Road, just north of railway line – southern side – eastern end.	2 X 0.9 X 1.5.

Fig. 6: Plan of the area around Invermore Place (left-hand side of frame), with trenches / pits monitored marked (1-12, mainly along Villas Road and adjacent roads).

8.1.1 Two insertion pits (1 + 2), approximately 4m in length, by 1.2m in width, and *c.*1.1m in depth, were observed on the eastern side of Villas Road (on the eastern kerb), between the railway line and Plumstead Road (fig. 7). These revealed a modern road-base of paving slabs on sand bedding. This overlay a number of services (including a large existing watermain at the base of the trench), and service backfill. Cleaner yellow sandy gravels with small well-rounded pebbles were observed *c.*0.6m beneath the modern road-surface, and was probably the natural deposit. No significant archaeological finds or features were observed.

Fig. 7: Photograph of pit 2 on Villas Road, looking north towards Plumstead Road.

8.1.2 Another insertion pit (3), measuring *c.*8m north-south by 3.6m, by 1.2m in depth, was observed at the junction of Villas Road and Plumstead Road – essentially on the southern pavement of Plumstead Road. This revealed tarmac and road make-up. The northern part of this pit was disturbed by a large modern drain housing, with no finds or features of archaeological significance. In the southern part of this pit, however, a purple-brown brick cellar wall was visible running east-west across the trench. This wall was a maximum of 1.2m in width (north-south), ran across the whole width of the trench (3.6m) east-west, and stretched down for *c.*1.8m in depth. A disturbed vaulted arch was also visible in the south-western corner of this pit. This is thought to have been a late 19th – early 20th Century cellar. It must be noted, however, that this wall is about 10m beyond the current property boundary line, suggesting that the earlier properties on Plumstead Road were located further north than they are today, and that Plumstead Road was originally narrower.

Fig. 8: Extract from the First Edition 25inch OS Map (1864), with the approximate location of the cellar found in pit 3 ringed (presumably associated with the properties depicted on this map). Compare with fig. 6 to show how Plumstead Road was much narrower in the 19th Century.

8.1.3 One further large pit (4) (*c.*6m long) was observed on the eastern side of Villas Road (on the pavement), at the junction with Walmer Terrace. This revealed a modern paving-surface (paving slabs over a sand bedding), over service backfill, over the natural sandy gravels c.0.6m beneath the modern ground surface (as in the other pits on Villas Road). No significant archaeological finds or features were observed in this pit.

8.1.4 Five pits (5 – 9) were observed on the northern side of Polthorne Grove (on the pavement), running east from the junction with Villas Road. They varied in size (see table above): *c.*1.4m – 7m in length, 0.6 – 3m in width, and 0.6 – 2m in depth. They all, however, consisted of modern road-surfaces (tarmac and road make-up layers, to a thickness of *c.*0.5 – 0.6m), over natural moderately-comapcted orange / light brown sandy gravels. This was with the exception of pit 5 (at the junction with Villas Road, fig. 9) which was too shallow to observe the natural deposits, and pit 9 (the eastern-most pit on Polthorne Grove) which was heavily disturbed by service fills. No archaeologically significant finds or features were observed in these pits.

Fig. 9: Photograph of pit 5 on Polthorne Grove.

8.1.5 Three insertion pits (10 – 12), ranging in size from *c.*0.5 – 4m, by 0.5 – 1m, by 1 – 1.6m in depth, were observed in the small access road leading to the east off Villas Road, just to the north of the railway line. This revealed a modern road-surface (tarmac over concrete), over natural sterile orange banded gravels, with lenses of sand and rounded pebbles, observed *c.*0.5m beneath the modern ground-surface. No archaeologically significant finds or features were observed in these pits.

8.1.6 The pits in this area generally revealed a modern road-surface over natural sandy – gravelly deposits, *c.*0.5 – 0.6m beneath the modern ground-surface. This reflects the fact that these pits are located mainly on areas of Thanet Sands. Some pits were disturbed by modern services, etc, and the remains of a Victorian coal cellar were observed in one pit, which reflects the earlier line of the street frontage. Interestingly, no made ground / dumped deposits were observed in any of these pits. This presumably reflects the fact that this area remained broadly undeveloped until the 19th Century expansion (see discussion and maps above), when the road layout was introduced in broadly the same way as it remains today.

8.2 Area around Plumstead High Street:

The monitored groundworks in the area around Plumstead High Street consisted of some work to the north of Plumstead High Street (six pits (in White Hart Road), and open-cut trenching in Hartville Road and Garibaldi Road). The groundworks along Plumstead High Street itself took the form of open-cut trenching (mainly along the southern side of the road, with one stretch of 90m along the northern side), and were monitored in stretches of *c.*50 – 80m in length. The results of these are described below:

Pit / Trench Number	Road / Location	Dimensions (in metres)
1	Hartville Road – northern side – between Garibaldi Street and White Hart Road.	24 X 0.6 X 1
2	Garibaldi Road – western side – between Gunning Street and Reidhaven Road.	60 X 0.45 X 1.15
3	White Hart Road – western side – opposite Nos. 31 – 36 – just south of railway line.	2 X 1 X 1.2
4	White Hart Road – western side – opposite Salvation Army building – just south of pit 3.	1.3 X 1 X 1.2
5	White Hart Road – western side – opposite Salvation Army building – just south of pit 4.	1.8 X 1.2 X 1.2
6	White Hart Road – eastern side – outside No. 21.	1.6 X 0.6 X 0.5
7	White Hart Road – western side – just south of junction with Hartville Road.	4 X 1.5 X 1.2
8	White Hart Road – western side – opposite No. 20.	5 X 1.2 X 1.2
9	Plumstead High Street – southern side – between Riverdale House and No. 174 Plumstead High Street.	66 X 0.4 X 1
10	Plumstead High Street – southern side – between No. 174 and No. 150.	50.6 X 0.42 X 0.9
11	Plumstead High Street – southern side – between No. 115 and Lakesdale Road.	40 X 0.5 X 1
12	Plumstead High Street – southern side – between Lakesdale Road and Gallosson Road.	82 X 0.5 X 0.75
13	Plumstead High Street – northern side – between Bath Road and White Hart Road.	90 X 0.39 X 0.9

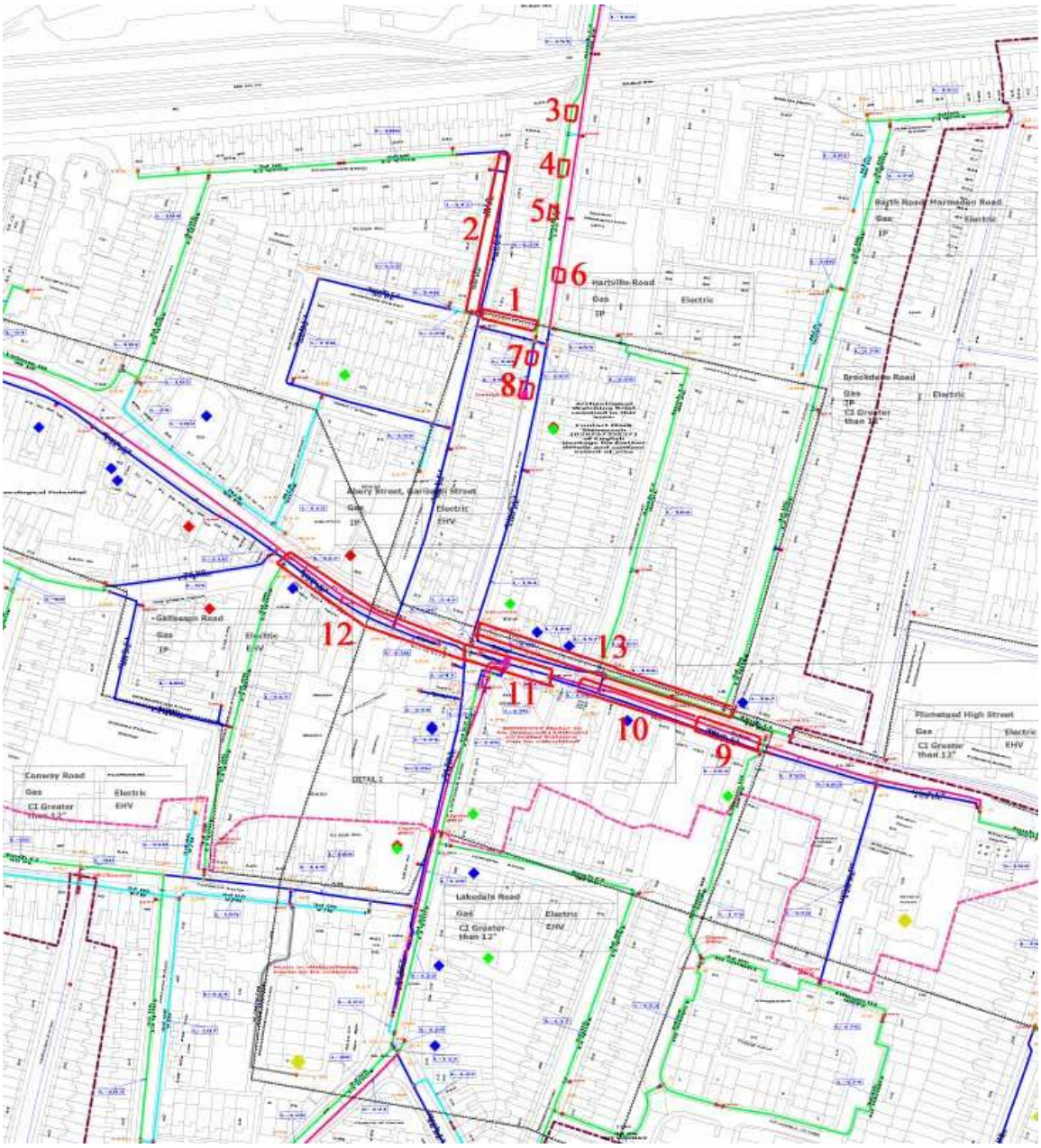

Fig. 10: Plan of the area around Plumstead High Street (running across the centre of the frame), with trenches / pits monitored marked.

8.2.1 One long open-cut trench (1) was observed running along the entire length of the northern side of Hartville Road, between Garibaldi Street and White Hart Road (figs. 11 + 12). This measured approximately 24m in length, by 0.5 – 0.6m in width, and *c.*1m in depth. A modern road-surface, consisting of tarmac overlying a rubble and mortar bedding, was observed for *c.*0.3m. This overlay *c.*0.6m of a black clay-silt deposit, and 0.1m of grey-black silty gravels. These are probably post-medieval dumping / made-ground layers. No finds or features of archaeological significance were observed.

Fig. 11: Photograph of the open-cut trench along Hartville Road, looking west (trench 1).

Fig. 12: Photograph of the section in the trench in Hartville Road (trench 1), clearly showing the modern road-surface overlying the black clay-silt deposit and silty gravels towards the base of the trench.

8.2.2 An open-cut trench (2) was observed along the western side of Garibaldi Street, in the northern part of this street running between Gunning Street and Reidhaven Road (fig. 13). This measured approximately 60m in length, by 0.45m in width, by a maximum of 1.15m in depth. A modern road-surface (consisting of tarmac over a bedding layer of rubble and mortary-gravels for *c*.0.3m) was observed, overlying up to four layers of accumulated made ground deposits. In the east-facing section in the central part of this trench, the uppermost deposit was a rusty-brown silt deposit with glass, tar, ceramic building material, and pottery in (for *c*.0.4m; context 1). This overlay a thick malleable green-grey, largely sterile, clay deposit, for *c*.0.1m. Underlying this was a dark grey silty-clay deposit was frequent pebbles and gravels (*c*.0.2m thick), over mixed black silts with pottery and gravel (0.1m thick; context 2). The east-facing section in the far northern part of this trench consisted of the rusty-brown silt deposit, overlying a dark brown-grey clay-silt deposit with gravels, iron staining, and pottery (context 3). The pottery recovered from all of these contexts was mass-produced earthenwares, dated to the 19th – 20th Century (see pot report, appendix III). This reflects the late 19th Century development of this area.

Fig. 13: Photographs of sections in the trench along Garibaldi Street (trench 2), clearly showing the modern road-surface overlying various layers of made-ground deposits.

8.2.3 A series of pits and small trenches (3 – 8) were observed along the western side of White Hart Road (see above table and fig. 10). These varied in size, from *c.*1.2 – 5m in length, 1 – 1.5m in width, and *c.*1.2m in depth. The southern-most pit (8), outside No.20 White Hart Road, lay directly over a modern service, and so only associated service backfill, etc, was observed. In the other pits, a modern road-surface of tarmac over concrete (*c.*0.4m) was observed overlying a grey-brown sandy-silt, with medium well-rounded pebbles. It is possible that this is the natural deposit. No finds or features of archaeological significance were observed.

8.2.4 These areas of trenching – all in roads to the north of Plumstead High Street – revealed modern road-surface overlying, in many cases, various post-medieval made-ground deposits. The trenching in White Hart Road, however, had been disturbed by services and consisted mainly of service backfill. Interestingly, the natural deposits were not definitely observed in any of these trenches.

8.2.5 Sections of open-cut trenching were observed and monitored along Plumstead High Street on different dates. The results of these, arranged in chronological order based on the date when they were monitored, are discussed below.

8.2.6 66m of open-cut trenching (9) was observed along the southern side of Plumstead High Street, between Riverdale House and No.174 Plumstead High Street (in the area between Riverdale Road and Bannockburn Road, fig. 14). This measured *c.*0.4m in width and was 0.8 – 1m in depth. A modern road-surface (tarmac over concrete) was observed for a depth of *c.*0.5m, and, in some places, to the whole depth of the trench. This overlay redeposited rounded gravels, over coarse mid-brown sandy silt (possibly the natural deposits). It must be noted, however, that a deep gas main ran along the base of the entire length of the trench, and heavily disturbed the deposits within it.

Fig. 14: Photograph of part of the trenching along Plumstead High Street (trench 9), looking west, showing a huge depth of modern road-surface / concrete, overlying sandy-silt and gravels.

8.2.7 A further 50.6m of open-cut trenching (10) was observed along the southern side of Plumstead High Street, running east from Bannockburn Road and the trench previously recorded, up to No. 50 Plumstead High Street (figs. 15 + 16). This measured *c*.0.42m in width, by 0.9m in depth. A thick modern road-surface was observed (tarmac over concrete and MOT Type 1 material). This was *c*.0.7m in depth, however in half of the trench the concrete / MOT Type 1 material stretched down to the base of the trench. In other places, a fine sandy-silt was observed, with the possible top of natural gravels observed at *c*.0.9m beneath the modern road-surface.

Fig. 15: Photograph of part of the trenching along Plumstead High Street (trench 10), looking west.

Fig. 16: Photograph of part of the trenching along Plumstead High Street (trench 10), showing the depths of modern MOT-Type 1 road make-up layers (the pink material).

8.2.8 Another 40m of open-cut trenching (11) was observed continuing along the southern side of Plumstead High Street, from approximately outside No. 115 Plumstead High Street to No. 132 Plumstead High Street (just east of the junction with Lakedale Road). This measured *c.*0.5m in width, and was *c.*1m deep. A modern road-surface (tarmac over concrete) was observed over mixed and disturbed service fills, from the large service just to the south-west of the trench.

8.2.9 One further stretch of open-cut trenching (12) was observed running along the southern side of Plumstead High Street, running for 82m between the junction with Lakesdale Road and Gallosson Road (fig. 17). This measured 0.5m in width, by 0.75m in depth. A modern road-surface (tarmac over concrete) was observed to a maximum depth of 0.7m, particularly in the eastern half of the trench. Less concrete was observed in the western part of the trench, with a mid-brown clayey-silt with frequent gravel inclusions observed beneath this (context 4), becoming gravelly with depth (observed at 0.4m beneath the modern ground-surface). One flake of brick, dated 1450-1700, was recovered from this context (see appendix IV, CBM report), which may reflect the medieval – early post-medieval activity in this area.

Fig. 17: Photograph of a further stretch of trenching along Plumstead High Street (trench 12), looking west.

8.2.10 90m of open-cut trenching (13) was observed on the northern side of Plumstead High Street, running approximately between the junction with Bath Road and the junction with White Hart Road (fig. 18). This measured *c*.0.4m in width and 0.9m in depth. A modern road-surface (tarmac over concrete, thickness of *c*.0.41m) was observed overlying a mid grey-brown clayey-silt, with rounded gravels (for *c*.0.35m). This overlay a compacted pale brown silty-clay (*c*.0.15m in thickness), with fragments of ceramic building material (context 5: section at eastern end of trench; context 6: section in centre of trench) which were dated 1480-1800 and 1450-1700 respectively (see appendix IV, CBM report). These are presumably made ground layers, indicating the relatively early activity along Plumstead High Street. These deposits were, however, truncated by various services (a gas main, sewage pipe, etc) and associated service backfills (a mid-brown clayey-silt with gravel, bands of silty-clay and sandy-gravel, etc).

Fig. 18: Photograph of a section in the trenching along Plumstead High Street (trench 13), showing the modern road-surface overlying service backfill.

8.2.11 The various stretches of trenching along Plumstead High Street revealed little of archaeological significance. A modern road-base was observed in all stretches of trenching – in some areas a huge thickness of this was present, stretching down to the base of the trench. Some areas of trenching were also disturbed by services, etc, and just consisted of service backfills. There was, however, some indication of possible made-ground layers, particularly noticeable in the stretch of trenching on the northern side of the road where ceramic building material was recovered from two separate deposits and which was dated to the late medieval – early post-medieval period. This may indicate the presence of earlier activity / development in this area, as witnessed in the cartographic evidence. There was also an indication of the natural deposits in some of the stretches of trenching – both sandy-silt deposits and gravels. No features of archaeological interest were, however, observed.

9 Summary and Conclusions

Archaeological monitoring undertaken during the Victorian water mains replacement programme around Plumstead High Street and Invermore Place, London Borough of Greenwich, recorded existing road surfaces and modern hardcore/concrete bedding overlying made-ground deposits in some areas, service disturbance and backfill, and natural deposits (sandy-gravels) in other areas. No finds or features of archaeological significance were uncovered during this watching brief.

The remains of one probable Victorian coal cellar was observed on the southern side of Plumstead Road, at the junction with Villas Road. This reflects the earlier building frontage along Plumstead Road – clearly further northwards than it is today, and reflecting the earlier narrower line of the road.

The natural deposits were most obviously noticed in the Invermore Place area. This was a sandy-gravel deposit, observed *c.*0.6m beneath the modern ground-surface. A similar natural deposit – sandy-silt and gravels, presumably Thanet Sand – was observed in some stretches of trenching (*c.*0.5 – 0.9m beneath the modern ground-surface) along Plumstead High Street although, interestingly, this was not observed in the trenches to the north of Plumstead High Street.

Various layers of made-ground deposits were observed in the trenching in the roads to the north of Plumstead High Street. These were dated, using pottery evidence, to the 19th – 20th Century, and reflect the late 19th Century development of this area.

The recovery of small pieces of ceramic building material from trenching along Plumstead High Street, dated *c.*1450-1800, reflects the earlier activity along the High Street (the original centre of Plumstead).

10 Bibliography

Compass Archaeology, 2011, *Thames Water Water mains replacement works in the vicinity of Plumstead High Street and Invermore Place, London Borough of Greenwich (AMP 5 Year 1 Riverside 12), Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

Department of the Environment 2010, *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment*

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London Borough of Greenwich Unitary Development Plan

Plumstead: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plumstead

Plumstead Common Conversation Area: Character Appraisal and Management Strategy: http://www.greenwich.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/738C5029-B176-4426-BB37-054A41BFDD7C/0/Plumstead.pdf

The Story of Plumstead: http://www.yourplumstead.com/plumstead-history.html

Various OS Maps – different scales and dates

Weinreb B, & Hibbert C, 1993 The *London Encyclopaedia*

APPENDIX 1: OASIS Form

OASIS ID: compassa1-113596

Project details

Project name	Thames Water Mains Replacement in the vicinity of Plumstead High Street and Invermore Place (Riverside 12)
Short description of the project	Archaeological monitoring undertaken during the Victorian water mains replacement programme around Plumstead High Street and Invermore Place, London Borough of Greenwich, recorded existing road surfaces and modern hardcore/concrete bedding overlying made-ground deposits in some areas, service disturbance and backfill, and natural deposits (sandy-gravels) in other areas. The remains of one Victorian cellar was uncovered, and some post-medieval made-ground deposits. No finds or features of significant archaeological importance were, however, uncovered during this watching brief.
Project dates	Start: 25-01-2011 End: 14-10-2011
Previous/future work	No / No
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)
Current Land use	Transport and Utilities 1 - Highways and road transport
Monument type	CELLAR Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Significant Finds	CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL Post Medieval
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Water Industry Act 1991 and subsequent code of practice

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON GREENWICH ELTHAM Vicinity of Plumstead High Street and Invermore Place
Postcode	SE18
Study area	250.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 4532 7859 51.4870542696 0.093277765487 51 29 13 N 000 05 35 E Point
Site coordinates	TQ 4440 7870 51.4882790721 0.08007993691260 51 29 17 N 000 04 48 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Compass Archaeology
Project brief originator	English Heritage/Department of Environment
Project design originator	Compass Archaeology

Project director/manager	Compass Archaeology
Project supervisor	Gill King
Type of sponsor/funding body	Morrison Utility Services

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Museum of London Archive
Physical Contents	'Ceramics'
Digital Archive recipient	Museum of London archive
Digital Contents	'Ceramics'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	Museum of London Archive
Paper Contents	'Ceramics'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Correspondence','Drawing','Map','Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes','Photograph','Report','Unpublished Text'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Thames Water Mains Replacement in the vicinity of Plumstead High Street and Invermore Place
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Jeffery, E
Date	2011
Issuer or publisher	Compass Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	5-7 Southwark Street, London, SE1 1RQ
Description	Short report of the archaeological watching brief undertaken during the water mains replacement works undertaken in the vicinity of Plumstead High Street and Invermore Place, London Borough of Greenwich. Includes discussion of historical, archaeological, geological, and cartographic background of the area. Also includes discussion of each pit / trench monitored, including photographs and finds analysis, and a location plan of where each of these were. Finally, includes conclusions reached.

Entered by	Emma Jeffery (emma@compassarchaeology.co.uk)
Entered on	15 November 2011

APPENDIX II: London Archaeologist Summary

Site Address:	Thames Water Utilities Ltd Victorian Water Main Replacement Works in the vicinity of Plumstead High Street and Invermore Place, London Borough of Greenwich, SE18
Project Type:	Archaeological Watching Brief
Dates of Fieldwork:	25.1.2011 – 14.10.2011
Site Code:	TXH11
Supervisor:	Gillian King
NGR:	TQ 4532 7859; TQ 4440 7870
Funding body:	Morrison Utility Services

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken between January and October 2011, during water mains renewal and replacement works in two main areas in the Thames Water District Metering Area Riverside 12 (London Borough of Greenwich): around Plumstead High Street, and around Invermore Place.

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken during contractors groundworks and consisted of the inspection and recording of all open works accessible during monitoring visits.

This work recorded existing road surfaces and modern hardcore/concrete bedding overlying made-ground deposits in some areas, service disturbance and backfill, and natural deposits (sandy-gravels) in other areas. No finds or features of archaeological significance were uncovered during this watching brief.

The remains of one Victorian coal cellar was observed on the southern side of Plumstead Road, at the junction with Villas Road. This reflects the earlier building frontage along Plumstead Road – clearly further northwards than it is toady, and reflecting the earlier narrower line of the road.

Various layers of made-ground deposits were observed in the trenching in the roads to the north of Plumstead High Street. These were dated, using pottery evidence, to the 19th – 20th Century, and reflect the late 19th Century development of this area.

The recovery of small pieces of ceramic building material from trenching along Plumstead High Street, dated *c.*1450-1800, reflects the earlier activity along the High Street (the original centre of Plumstead).

The natural deposits were most obviously noticed in the Invermore Place area. This was a sandy-gravel deposit, observed c.0.6m beneath the modern ground-surface. A similar natural deposit – sandy-silt and gravels – were observed in some stretches of trenching (c.0.5 – 0.9m beneath the modern ground-surface) along Plumstead High Street although, interestingly, this was not observed in the trenches to the north of Plumstead High Street.

APPENDIX III: Pottery Report

Pottery from Plumstead (Site TXH11)

Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 23 sherds with a total weight of 613g. It was all mass-produced earthenwares of 19th – 20th century date (Museum of London fabric 'CHINA'; Vince 1985), and entirely domestic in nature. The pottery occurrence was as follows:

Context 1: 8 sherds, 354g.
Context 2: 4 sherds, 41g.
Context 3: 11 sherds, 218g.

Bibliography

Vince, AG, 1985 The Saxon and Medieval Pottery of London: A review *Medieval Archaeology* **29**, 25-93

APPENDIX IV: Ceramic Building Material Report, Sue Pringle

Three small pieces of ceramic building material – two brick fragments and one roof tile fragment – were recovered from trenching on Plumstead High Street (two fragments, contexts 5 + 6, from trenching on the northern side of the High Street; and one fragment, context 4, from trenching on the southern side). These were all dated *c.*1450-1800, and therefore reflect the existence of earlier (medieval and early post-medieval) activity along the High Street.

Context	*Period*	*Fabric*	*Form*	*Count*	*Weight*	*L*	*B*	*T*	*Condition*	*Comments*	*Date*
4	PM	3033	Brick	1	308				Mortar, reduced	Flake. Surface reduced and mortared.	1450-1700.
5	PM	2276	Roof tile	1	20				Abraded		1480-1800
6	PM	3033	Brick	1	693	85+	106	63	Vitrified, mortar, reduced	Slightly silty version of fabric. Reduced and vitrified on most faces.	1450-1700