

HERITAGE NETWORK



2 MARKET LINK
Romford, RM1

HN551

Archaeological Evaluation Report



THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD

Registered with the Institute of Field Archaeologists as an Archaeological Organisation

Archaeological Director: David Hillelson, BA MIFA

2 MARKET LINK Romford, RM1

Project: HN551
Site Code: MKK06
NGR: TQ 51155 89055
LPA ref.: P2279.04

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Prepared on behalf of Durkan Ltd

by

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Report no. 362

August 2006

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Abstract

This report represents an archaeological evaluation carried out at 2 Market Link, Romford RM1, London Borough of Havering, which took place in July 2006. The evaluation was carried out as part of the planning process prior to commercial and residential redevelopment of the site (Planning Ref P2279.04). The site had some potential for Roman and medieval remains, and a higher potential for post-medieval remains.

Two evaluation trenches were opened covering an area of approximately 45m². No significant archaeological remains were found: there was a simple sequence of deposits and features, reflecting the development and use of the site from the 1850s to the present day. To the south the site was truncated by disused services, whilst to the north associated cultivation had left reworked soil horizons with some 19th century finds, but no earlier material.

Natural deposits were exposed in each trench, in most areas overlain by a reworked subsoil horizon. The natural itself ranged from a firm sandy silt-clay to patchy sandy gravel, reflecting a probable division between the Hackney Gravel Terrace (here taken to include brickearth silts) to the north and an earlier Head deposit to the south.

Given the lack of any significant findings it is suggested that no further archaeological measures should be undertaken in relation to the proposed development.

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The cover illustration shows John Cary's Map of Rumford, 1786

1. Introduction

- 1.1** This report presents a summary of an archaeological evaluation of the north-west side of 2 Market Link running between St Edwards Way and the Mews, Romford, RM1, London Borough of Havering. The plot is roughly rectangular with an overall site area of approximately 585 m². (Figure 1: site approximately centred at National Grid Reference TQ 51155 89055).

The evaluation fieldwork was undertaken by Compass Archaeology on the 13th July 2006, and was commissioned by the Heritage Network on behalf of their clients Durkan Ltd.

- 1.2** Archaeological assessment of the site was required as a condition of planning consent prior to redevelopment of the site (London Borough of Havering Planning ref. P2279.04). The development proposed the demolition of the existing 20th century single story building and its replacement with a multi-story block providing ground floor commercial use with 24 residential apartments above.
- 1.3** The British Geological Survey 1:50,000 digital Drift Geology map of Romford indicates that the site overlies an island of Hackney Gravel (which may include later brickearth silts), with alluvial silt lying to the west. Head deposits (variable pebbly sandy clay) lie towards the Market Place. The present ground surface is at *c* 16.60m OD.
- 1.4** A desk-based assessment of the site carried out by the Museum of London (Burton 2004) has concluded that there is low potential for the survival of features, deposits or finds of the prehistoric period; a moderate potential for the Roman and medieval period; and a high potential for the post-medieval/modern.

Map evidence from the mid 19th century shows two structures within the boundary of the study area, one to the north of the site and the other to the south. The main structure to the north is likely to have been a 19th century residence and is bisected roughly through its centre by the site boundary leaving the south half of the structure and its entire back garden within the study area. The southern structure is likely to have been an ancillary structure associated with the residence.

The 1920 Ordnance Survey map shows the main structure had been extended north to front onto Church Lane (now St Edwards Way); while the rear of the structure and ancillary building remain unchanged (Fig 3). The site was developed further in the mid-twentieth century with additions to the rear of the northern structure and replacement of the southern utility structure with a larger building. A previously vacant plot at the rear of the back garden now contains a building, part of which lies within the boundary of the study area (Fig 4).

- 1.5** The scope of the evaluation was agreed following discussions between the Heritage Network and the Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service of English Heritage. The Project Design (*Heritage Network HN551, September 2005*) proposed a sample area of 30m², representing 5% of the overall site area of approximately 585m². The final location of the trial trenches was to be determined by circumstances on site.

2. Aims and objectives of the evaluation**2.1 The archaeological brief**

The accepted brief for archaeological evaluation is to determine, as far as is reasonably possible, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance, and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed redevelopment (English Heritage, *Model Brief for an Archaeological Evaluation*). This will provide a basis on which decisions can be taken as to the need for any further archaeological action (eg, preservation *in situ* or further archaeological investigation), or for no further action.

The general methodology is set out in DOE Planning Policy Guidance 'Archaeology and Planning' No.16, November 1990 (PPG16).

2.2 Archaeological research questions

The evaluation presented an opportunity to address several research questions, as defined in the preliminary Project Design:

- the origins and development of settlement in Romford;
- the influences on settlement growth and development in Romford during the Roman period;
- the influences on settlement growth and development in Romford during the Medieval and Post-medieval periods.

3. Evaluation methodology

3.1 The *Project Design* was produced and agreed prior to the commencement of fieldwork. The evaluation was also carried out in accordance with English Heritage guidelines (including *Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork*, 1998) and those of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (*Standard and Guidance for Field Evaluations*).

3.2 The evaluation comprised two trial trenches located within the area of the proposed redevelopment. The trenches were laid out as shown on Figure 4, with Trench 2 at right angles to Trench 1, and measured 20m by 1.5m and 10m by 1.5m respectively (an overall area of about 45 m², approximately 8 % of the total site area).

The trenches were opened by a mechanical excavator (JCB 3CX) working under archaeological supervision and using a breaker, toothed and ditching buckets. Recent deposits, foundations and undifferentiated soil horizons were removed to expose the natural sandy clay. Thereafter the exposed surfaces and sections were investigated by hand and recorded.

At the conclusion of the fieldwork the trenches were backfilled by machine with removed spoil.

3.3 The evaluation record was primarily by scaled plan and section, supplemented by 35mm photography. Individual features were described on the drawings but not separately contexted. The trenches were located by taped measurement, and were in turn related to a site survey plan provided by the Client (Figure 4).

Levels taken during the evaluation were derived from an OSBM located on St Edwards Way, directly north of the site. A TBM was established at the south of the evaluation site, value 16.9m OD.

The records from the evaluation have been allocated the site code MKK06 by the Museum of London Archaeological Archive. An ordered and indexed site archive will be compiled in line with the MoL Guidelines and will be deposited in the Museum of London Archive.

4. The archaeological evaluation

4.1 Summary of the investigation (Figure 4)

The evaluation trenches were dug from a more or less level surface at *c* 16.6m OD. In the absence of any significant remains machine excavation was generally to the top of the clean natural Head or River Terrace Deposits, removing the overlying made ground and soil horizons as well as the weathered upper level of the natural. The maximum depth was about 0.68m, decreasing to the north.

The revealed sequence was quite recent and straightforward. Below the demolition rubble overlying the site was a mixed silt/rubble made ground layer overlying a brown clayey silt subsoil layer with the natural yellow/orange sandy silty clay below this. The natural remained consistent throughout both trenches, the only variation being the depth which decreased slightly to the north.

4.2 Trench 1 (Figures 5-7)

A south-west to north-east running trench measuring 10m by 1.5m was excavated at the north-west end of the site.

The lowest deposit exposed in the trench was a compact silty clay with occasional patches of gravel, and apart from some root traces quite sterile. This deposit was recorded at a maximum of about 16.19m OD approximately 0.43m below present ground level, varying slightly throughout the trench. The gravel patches may represent the top of the natural Head deposit as recorded by the Geological Survey (1.3 above), with the silty clay a brickearth-type element of the Gravel Terrace.

Initial machine work to remove the demolition and made ground layer revealed a north-west to south-east running red stock brick wall at the extreme west of Trench 1 (Fig 7). This probably represents the eastern boundary wall of Church Path (renamed Church Walk), a footpath connecting Church Lane (now St Edwards Way) with Market Place, as recorded by Gotto in his map of 1853 (Fig 2). The northern section of Church Walk was closed off in the 1970's during the construction of the Mews and St Edwards Way, and the footpath was incorporated into the study area to give it its current layout.

Overlying the natural was a mid brown clayey silt cultivation layer containing some building rubble with a maximum thickness of 250mm. This layer forms the subsoil of the site and reflects a general reworking and truncation of previous soil horizons.

The subsoil was overlain by a made ground layer of black sandy silt with mixed rubble inclusions forming a soil profile approximately 100mm thick. The mixed rubble included fragments of brick and tile and other modern materials.

Sealing the soil profile was a layer of rubble and demolition produced with the destruction of the previous building. As most of the demolition material was taken off site, this had a depth of approximately 50-100mm.

4.3 Trench 2 (Figures 8-9)

A 20m by 1.5m trench was excavated at east of site running from north to south at right angles to Trench 1 (Fig 4).

Throughout Trench 2 the natural surface was comparable to that in Trench 1, *i.e.*, a sterile silty clay with occasional patches of gravel. Levels for the natural fell slightly from about 16.14m OD at the north to 15.84m OD at the south of the trench, representing a thickening of the overlying profile from 360mm to 700mm from north to south. The patches of gravel also became more frequent towards the south of the trench.

The overlying deposits within the trench are also similar to those in Trench 1. Above the natural layer was a mid brown clayey silt subsoil layer comparable to the cultivation layer within Trench 1. This also contained occasional rubble inclusions within its uppermost level, representing later post-medieval and modern development on the site. The subsoil layer increased slightly in thickness from north to south, from 150mm to 350mm, as the level of the natural fell.

Sealing the subsoil was a made ground layer of dark brown silt with frequent mixed rubble inclusions, approximately 100mm to 200mm thick and similar to the made ground layer in Trench 1. This layer again contained only fairly recent building rubble such as brick, tile and glass. No pottery sherds or other datable materials were recovered.

The south end of Trench 2 was disturbed by the construction of a small water pipe line and a larger sewage pipe.

The uppermost level of the trench comprised recent compacted rubble and demolition material some 50mm to 100mm thick.

5. Assessment of the results of the evaluation

The archaeological evaluation has provided an opportunity to address site-specific objectives that were defined in the Project Design (2.2 above). The responses to these are outlined below:

- *the origins and development of settlement in Romford;*

There was no evidence for any activity on the site prior to the 19th century, nor were any discrete artefacts recovered. Reference to historic maps has demonstrated that this area was mainly open garden in the 1850s, and although it may have been previously cultivated it seems to have been well outside the medieval settlement.

- *the influences on settlement growth and development in Romford during the Roman period;*

There was no evidence of any Roman or other early activity or land use.

- *the influences on settlement growth and development in Romford during the Medieval and Post-medieval periods.*

In view of the lack of evidence it may be that the site lay outside the sphere of activity in the medieval and early post-medieval period. The evaluation has shown that the site has been disturbed and truncated by modern activity, including both buildings and cultivation, but this is not likely to have impacted on potential surviving archaeology to the extent of removing all cut features and artefactual evidence.

6. Conclusion and recommendations**6.1** The archaeological evaluation did not reveal any significant features or finds. The trenches exposed a simple sequence of deposits and features, basically reflecting the development and use of the site from the mid 19th century to the present day.

There were no earlier finds or features. The finds that are noted above are only of value in confirming the date of related and quite recent soil horizons, and have not been retained.

The natural surface of the site was somewhat disturbed but did exhibit an overlying reworked clayey silt subsoil horizon, and there was a gradual fall to the southeast in the natural surface. The character of the natural also reflects a possible north-south change from River Terrace Deposits to Head, as indicated by the Geological Survey.

6.2 In view of the evaluation findings it is suggested that no further archaeological measures should be undertaken in relation to the proposed development.

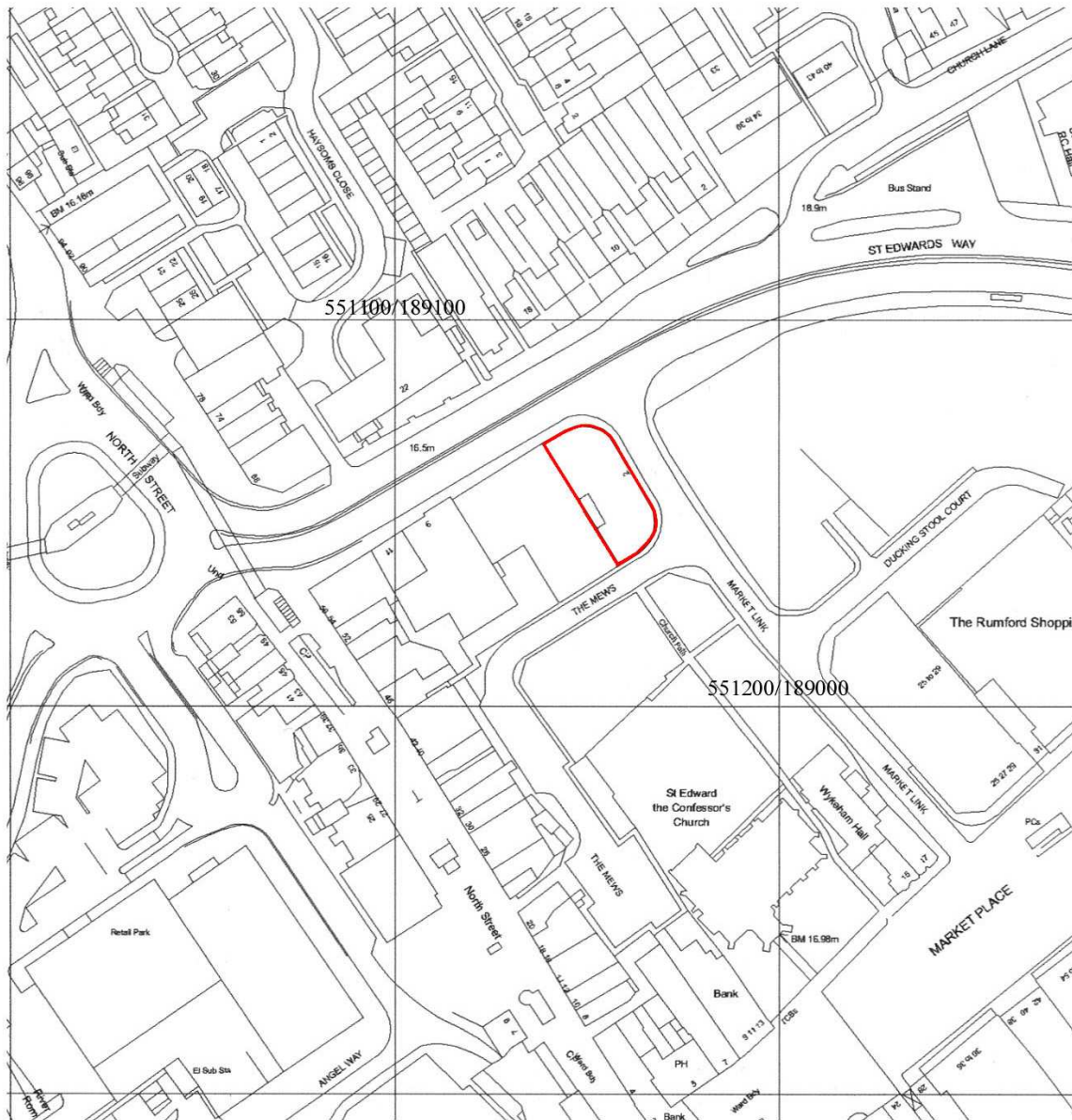


Fig 1 Site outline in relation to the 1:1250 Ordnance Survey map

Reproduced from the 2002 OS 1:1250 map with permission of the HMSO. ©Crown Copyright. All rights reserved.
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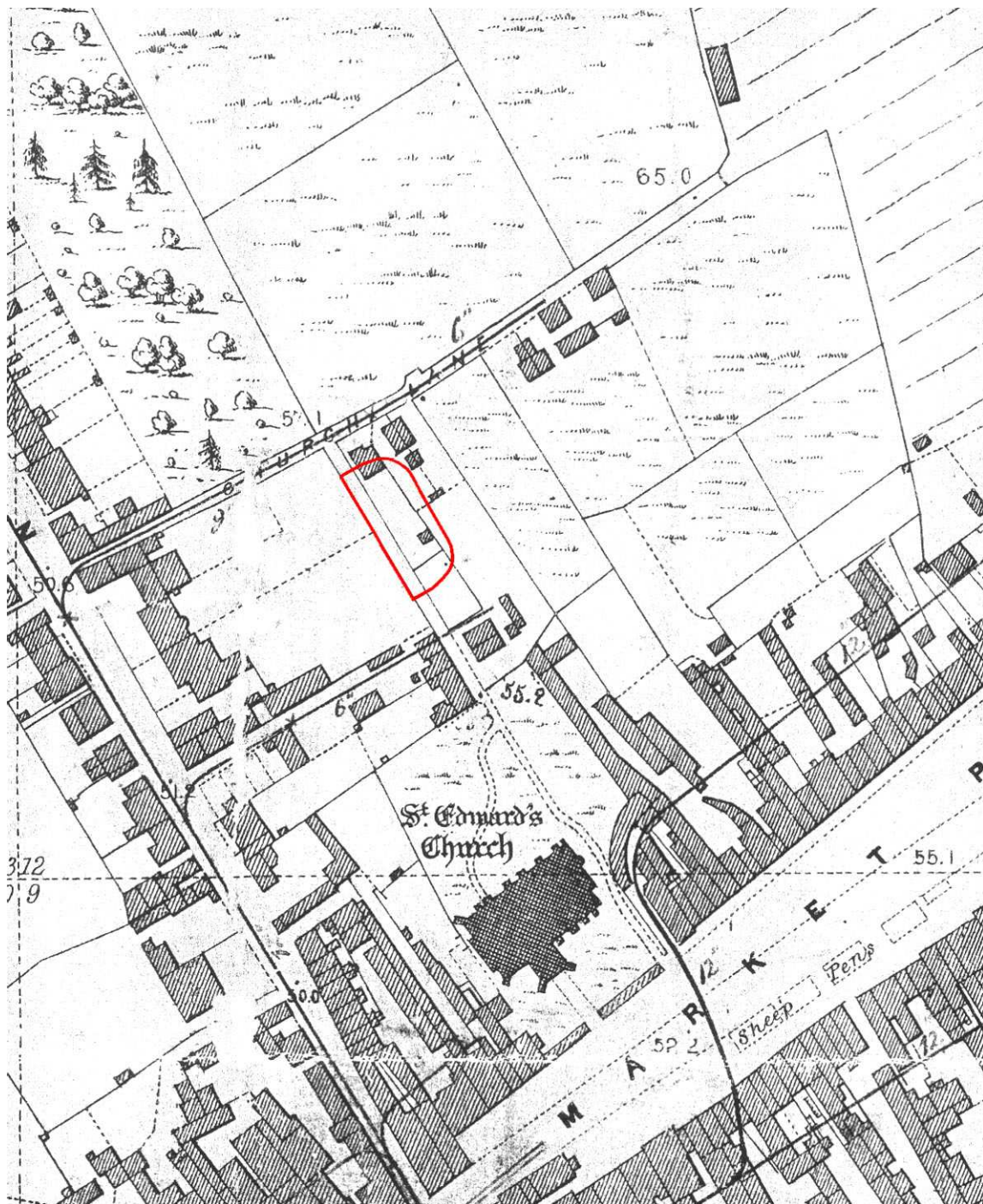


Fig 2 Site location in relation to *A Plan of Romford District.... under the Public Health Act.* Surveyed in 1853 by Edward Grotto

Excerpt from a map held by the Central Library, Romford

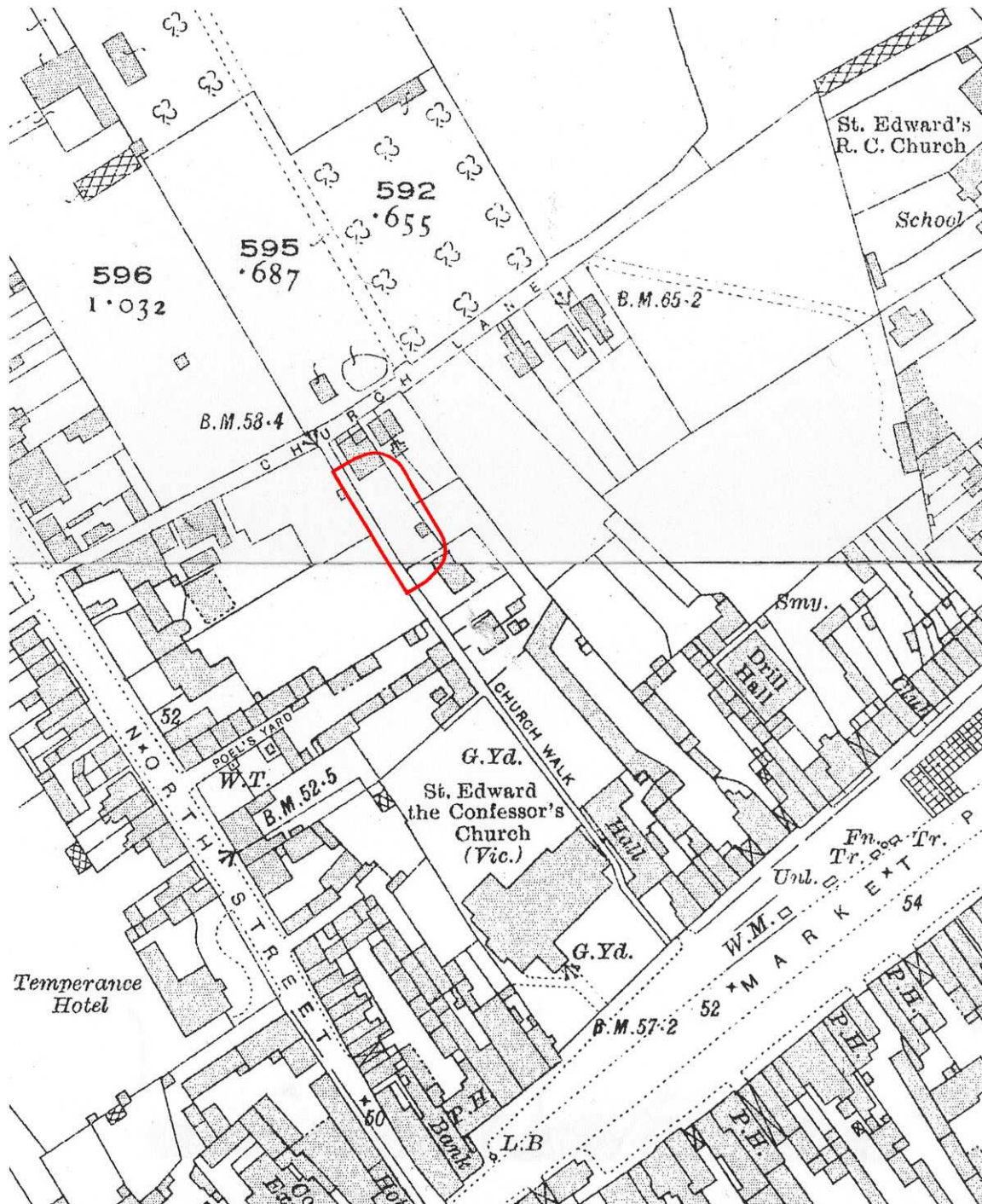


Fig 3 Site location in relation to the Ordnance Survey 25-inch map of 1920, and covering the same area as Figure 2.

Excerpt from a map held by the Central Library, Romford

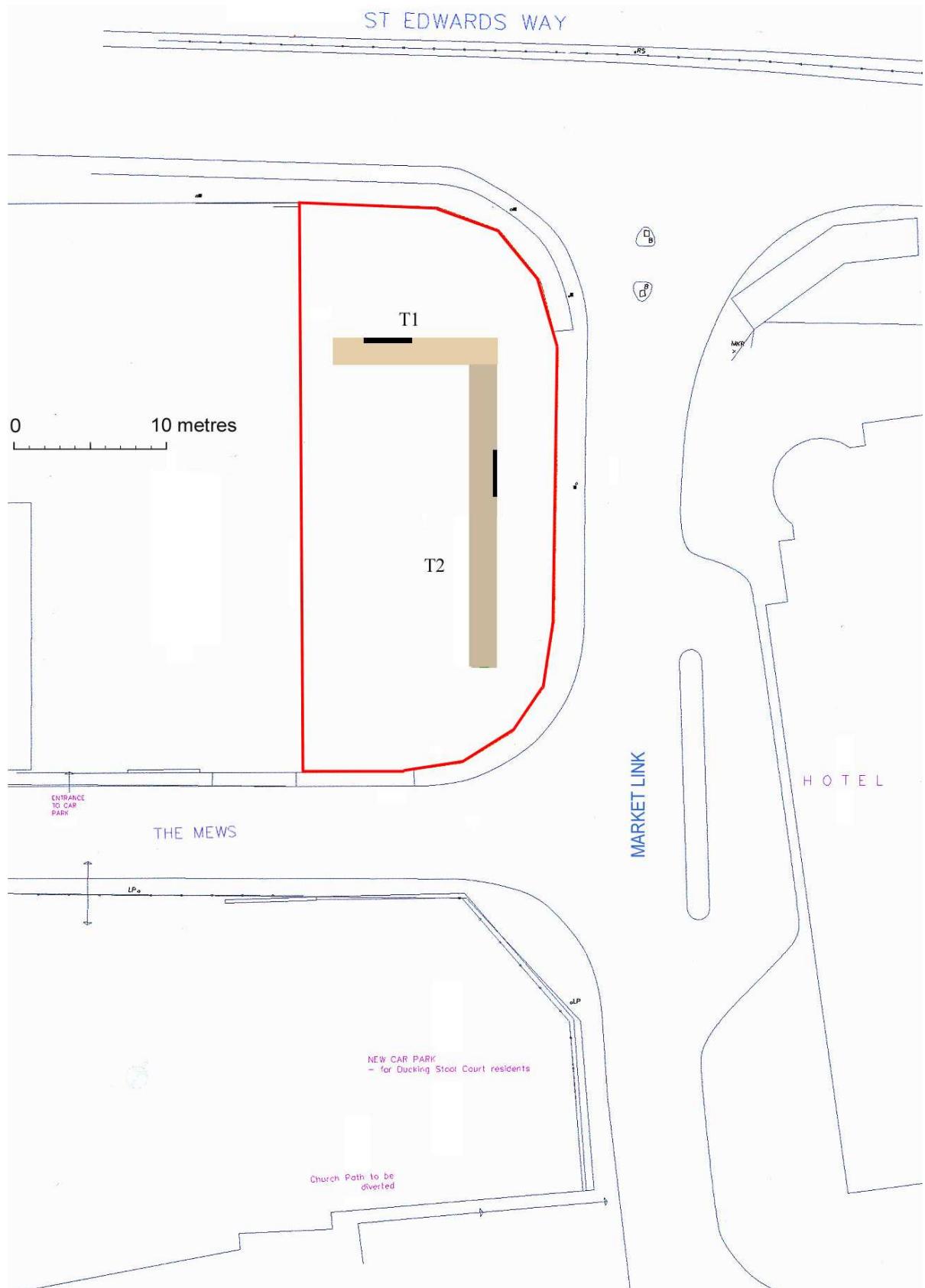


Fig 4 Location of the evaluation trenches (T1+2) and drawn sections (marked black) in relation to the site boundary and adjacent features

Base reproduced from a site survey drawing supplied by the Client



Fig 5 General view of Trench 1, looking northeast and showing the exposed surface of the natural sandy/clayey silt (0.5m scale)



Fig 6 View of wall in Trench 1, looking south-west (0.2m scale)

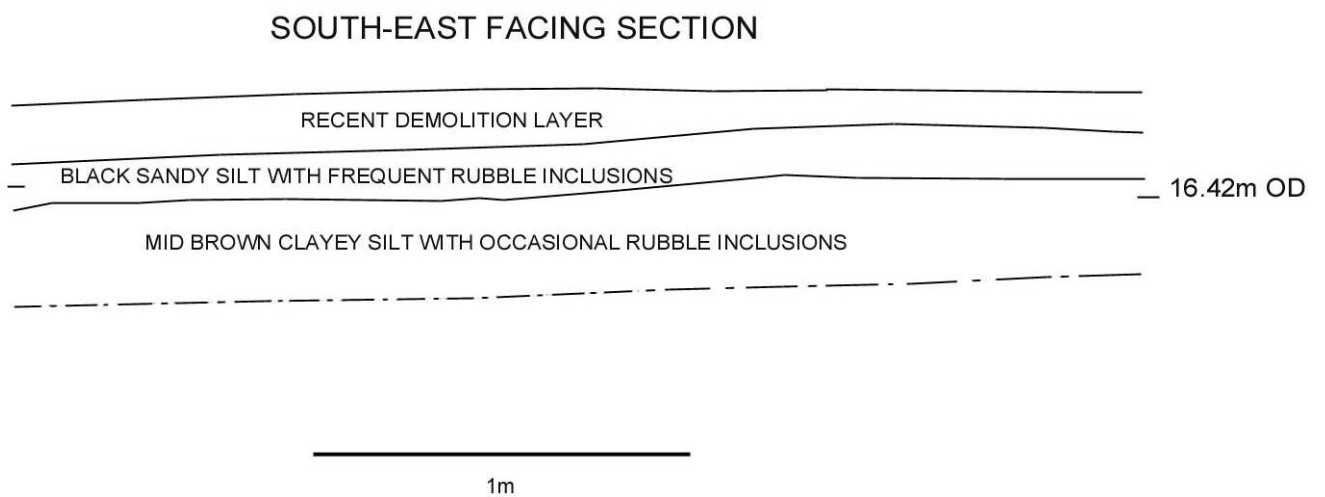


Fig 7 Drawing of part of the north-western section of Trench 1, located on Figure 4



Fig 8 General view of Trench 2 looking southeast towards the Mews (0.5m scale)

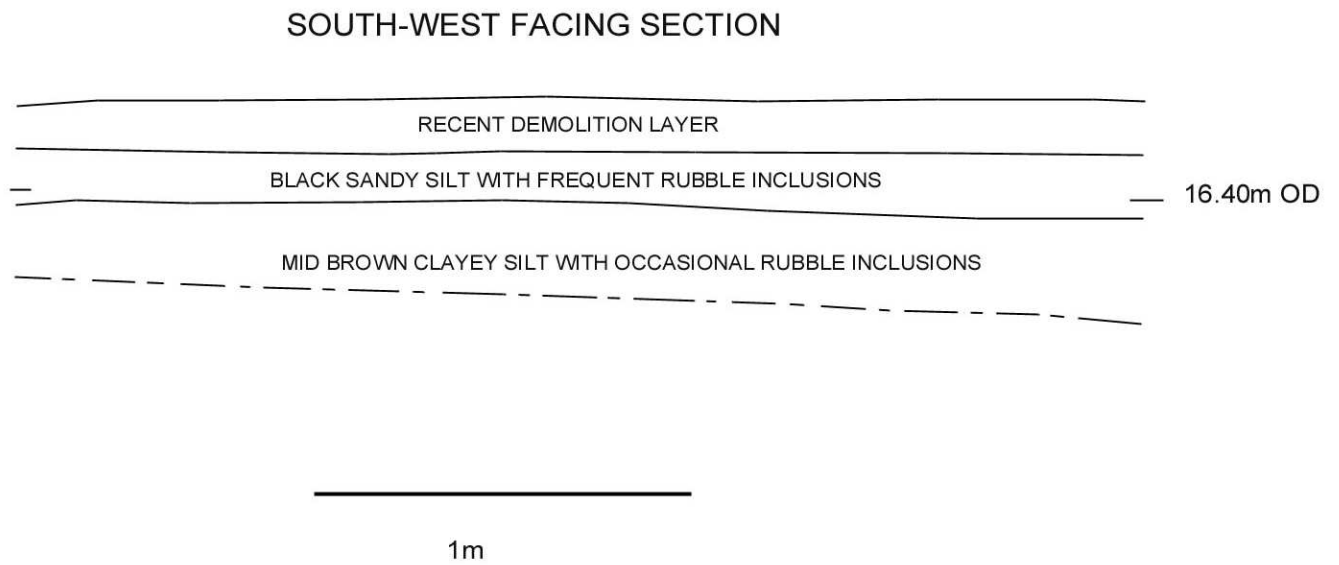


Fig 9 Drawing of part of the north-eastern section of Trench 2, located on Figure 4

Appendix I OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

OASIS ID: compassa1-16837

Project details

Project name 2 Market Link, Romford, RM1, London Borough of Havering

Short description of the project This represents a brief summary of an evaluation carried out at 2 Market Link, Romford, RM1. Two evaluation trenches were excavated covering an area of approximately 45 square meters, representing approximately 8% of the total site area. The trenches measured 10m by 1.5m and 20m by 1.5m respectively. The only evidence found related to 19th and 20th century building activity and cultivation of associated back garden subsoil. Trench 1 contained the remains of the east boundary wall of Church Walk, a pedestrian access way to Market Place. Trench 2 contained no archaeological features or deposits, and was truncated by a water and sewage pipeline. The sequence of deposits in both trenches was similar; Above the natural clay was a cultivated garden subsoil layer. This was covered by a mixed rubble/silt made ground layer.

Project dates Start: 13-07-2006 End: 13-07-2006

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference codes MKK 06 - Sitecode

Any associated project reference codes P2279.04 - Planning Application No.

Type of project Site status Field evaluation None

Current Land use Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed

Monument type WALL Post Medieval

Significant Finds CBM Post Medieval

Methods & 'Sample Trenches' techniques

Development type Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Position in the planning process After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country England
Site location GREATER LONDON HAVERING HAVERING 2 Market Link, Romford, RM1

Postcode RM1
Study area 45.00 Square metres
National grid TQ 51155 89055 Point
reference
Height OD Min: 15.85m Max: 16.14m

Project creators

Name of Compass Archaeology
Organisation
Project brief English Heritage/Department of Environment
originator
Project design Heritage Network
originator
Project Compass Archaeology
director/manager
Project supervisor Colin Reid

Project archives

Physical Archive No
Exists?
Digital Archive No
Exists?
Paper Archive Museum of London Archive
recipient
Paper Contents 'none'
Paper Media 'Aerial Photograph','Diary','Drawing','Map','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section'
available

Appendix II. London Archaeologist summary

2 Market Link, Romford RM1. TQ 51155 89055. CA (Colin Reid). Evaluation. July 2006. The Heritage Network Ltd. MKK06

Summary

Two trial trenches were opened covering an area of approximately 45m². No significant remains were found: a simple sequence of deposits and features reflected the development the site from the 1850s to the present day. Cultivation had left reworked soil horizons with some 19th century finds, but no earlier material.

Natural deposits ranged from a firm sandy silt-clay to patchy sandy gravel, reflecting a probable division between the Hackney Gravel Terrace (taken here to include brickearth silts) and an earlier Head deposit to the south.