

**164 BURY STREET, LOWER EDMONTON, N9**

**LONDON BOROUGH OF ENFIELD**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**



August 2006

164 BURY STREET, LOWER EDMONTON, N9

LONDON BOROUGH OF ENFIELD

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SITE CENTRE NGR: TQ 33917 94485

SITE CODE: BYO06

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## *Abstract*

*This represents a summary of an archaeological evaluation carried out on land to the rear of 164 Bury Street, N9, London Borough of Enfield, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2006. The evaluation was carried out as part of the planning process prior residential redevelopment of the site (LB of Enfield Planning Ref. TP/05/1452). It is considered that the site has potential for prehistoric and Roman remains. In more recent times the site appears to have lain in open land, presumably in agricultural use.*

*Two evaluation trenches were opened covering a total area of approximately 40m<sup>2</sup>. One trench was opened within the western development footprint, the second within the area to be occupied by a car park. The eastern development will be largely within the footprint of the existing two-storey building.*

*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 1820s to the present day. To the west was a reworked soil horizon reflecting cultivation and agricultural land use, along with some post-medieval finds. The eastern trench was truncated by building foundations and has evidence of other modern activity. No earlier material was recovered.*

*Natural deposits of Enfield Silt brickearth were exposed in each trench. The natural consisted of a silty/sandy clay under a subsoil cultivation layer.*

*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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## Introduction

- 1.1 This report represents a summary of archaeological evaluation of land at the rear of 164 Bury Street, N9, London Borough of Enfield. The plot is rectangular, with overall dimensions of approximately 18m north-south by 72m east-west (Figure 1: site approximately centered at National Grid Reference TQ 33917 94485).

The evaluation fieldwork was undertaken by Compasss Archaeology on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2006.

- 1.2 Archaeological assessment was required as a condition of planning consent prior to redevelopment of the site (London Borough of Enfield Planning Ref TP/05/1452). It is proposed to demolish the existing building and to erect two blocks of flats, with associated car parking in the central part of the site and access to Bury Street to the east.
- 1.3 The British Geological Survey (sheet 256, 1993) indicates that the site overlies a natural deposit of brickearth (Enfield Silt, described as sandy clay and silt), Kempton Park Gravel to the east of the site. The present ground surface is at around 20m OD, rising slightly to the west.
- 1.4 It was considered that the site had the potential for archaeological remains, specifically those of prehistoric and Roman date, evidence for which has been found in the surrounding Lea Valley, and within the vicinity of the nearby Cambridge Road (A10) respectively.

In later periods the site appears to have been open land to the north of Lower Edmonton, as illustrated by the 1822 OS map (Fig 2), and it is likely that the site has remained largely undeveloped up to this point.

- 1.5 The scope of the evaluation was laid out by English Heritage, who proposed the excavation of a sample area of 40m<sup>2</sup>, representing 3% of the overall site area of approximately 1300m<sup>2</sup>.

## 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 site presents an opportunity to address the following research questions:

- Is there any evidence for prehistoric activity overlying the natural brickearth? Does this include *in situ* features as well as scattered finds, and how does it relate to other finds in the area?
- Is there any evidence for Roman activity, and can the nature of this be defined (eg, settlement or agricultural land use)?
- Is there any evidence for medieval and/or earlier post-medieval land activity, and can the nature of this be defined?
- What evidence is there for later post-medieval land use, and does this bear out the map record of open but probably cultivated land?

## 3. Evaluation methodology

3.1 The Written Scheme of Investigation 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 3, with Trench 2 at right angles to Trench 1 and measured 12m by 2m and 8m by 2m respectively (a total area of 40 m<sup>2</sup>).

The trenches were opened by a mechanical excavator working under archaeological supervision and using toothed and ditching buckets. There was a general clearance of scrub and overgrown shrubbery before existing soil horizons were removed to a general depth of between 0.7m to 0.85m. 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 digital photography. Individual deposits and features were described on the drawings but not separately contexted. The trenches were located by taped measurement, and were in turn related to the current site survey plan (Fig 3).

Levels taken during the evaluation were derived from two TBMs located at the east and west of the site, values were 19.48m OD and 20.04m OD respectively.

The records from the evaluation have been allocated the site code BYO06 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**

Trench 1 was dug from a more or less level surface at *c* 20.05m OD. Trench 2 was dug from a level of *c* 19.8m OD, decreasing slightly to the east due to the natural slope. In the absence of any significant remains machine excavation was generally to the top of the natural brickearth, removing the overlying made ground and soil horizons. The maximum depths were 19.41m OD for trench 1 and 19.08 for trench 2.

The revealed sequence was quite recent and straightforward, the principal distinction across the site being between cultivated/reworked soil horizons to the west and concrete foundations and disturbed ground to the east.

### **4.2 Trench 1 (Figures 4-6)**

The lowest deposit exposed in the trench was a compact silty/sandy clay and represents the top of the Enfield Silt as recorded by the Geological Survey (1.3 above). This deposit was recorded at 19.41m OD, some 0.66m below present ground level.

There was a sharp interface between the natural and the overlying layer of light brown silty sand, some 300mm thick and evidently produced by cultivation following development of the site in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. The layer contained frequent post-medieval ceramic building material (brick/roof tile), and occasional flecks of clinker and coal. This layer forms a subsoil and reflects a general reworking and truncation of previous soil horizons.

The subsoil was overlain by a topsoil and sod layer, together forming a profile 450mm thick. The topsoil consisted of a dark grey silty sand containing occasional pebbles and post-medieval building materials.

### **4.3 Trench 2 (Figures 7-9)**

The natural within Trench 2 is comparable to that in Trench 1, *i.e.* a sterile silty/sandy clay, recorded at more or less a level of around 19.2m OD, undulating slightly throughout the trench. A modern rubbish pit cuts the natural at the eastern end of the trench but contained only recent waste materials so was therefore not considered archaeologically significant.

Overlying the natural was a light brown silty sand subsoil as seen in Trench 1, with a thickness of 300mm and again containing occasional fragments of brick and tile.



The distinction between Trenches 1 and 2 is a disturbed subsoil layer within Trench 2, containing a mixture of 19<sup>th</sup> century ceramic finds and more modern materials such as glass and waste metal. This overlies the clean subsoil cultivation layer and has a thickness of approximately 250mm, and probably represents a reworking of dumped layers over time.

## 5. Assessment of the results of the excavation

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

- *Is there any evidence for prehistoric activity overlying the natural brickearth? Does this include in situ features as well as scattered finds, and how does it relate to other finds in the area?*

There was no evidence of any prehistoric activity or land use.

- *Is there any evidence for Roman activity, and can the nature of this be defined (eg, settlement or agricultural land use)?*

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

- *Is there any evidence for medieval and/or earlier post-medieval land activity, and can the nature of this be defined?*

There is no evidence of specific land activity during the medieval and early post-medieval period. It can be assumed that prior to the 19<sup>th</sup> century the site was open land and may have been subject to cultivation or served an agricultural purpose.

- *What evidence is there for later post-medieval land use, and does this bear out the map record of open but probably cultivated land?*

The subsoil horizons exposed in both trenches would seem to suggest a general reworking of the soil for cultivation purposes over a number of years. The disturbed subsoil in Trench 2 containing 19<sup>th</sup> century and more recent material suggests a pattern of dumping of waste material reworked or ploughed over time back into the topsoil/subsoil.

## **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 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present day. To the east the ground was truncated by structural remains and other modern activities creating a disturbed layer above a previous cultivation layer. In the western part of the site associated cultivation and other gardening activity had produced reworked soil horizons with some dateable finds, but had left few earlier deposits *in situ*.

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.

- 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.

## **7. Acknowledgements**

The archaeological evaluation was commissioned by Mr Jason Stockle of Purple Property (UK) Ltd.

The archaeological measures on this site were supported by Kim Stabler (English Heritage Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service).



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

*Reproduced from the current OS 1:1250 map with permission of the HMSO. ©Crown Copyright. All rights reserved.  
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Fig 2 Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1822, showing the approximate site location

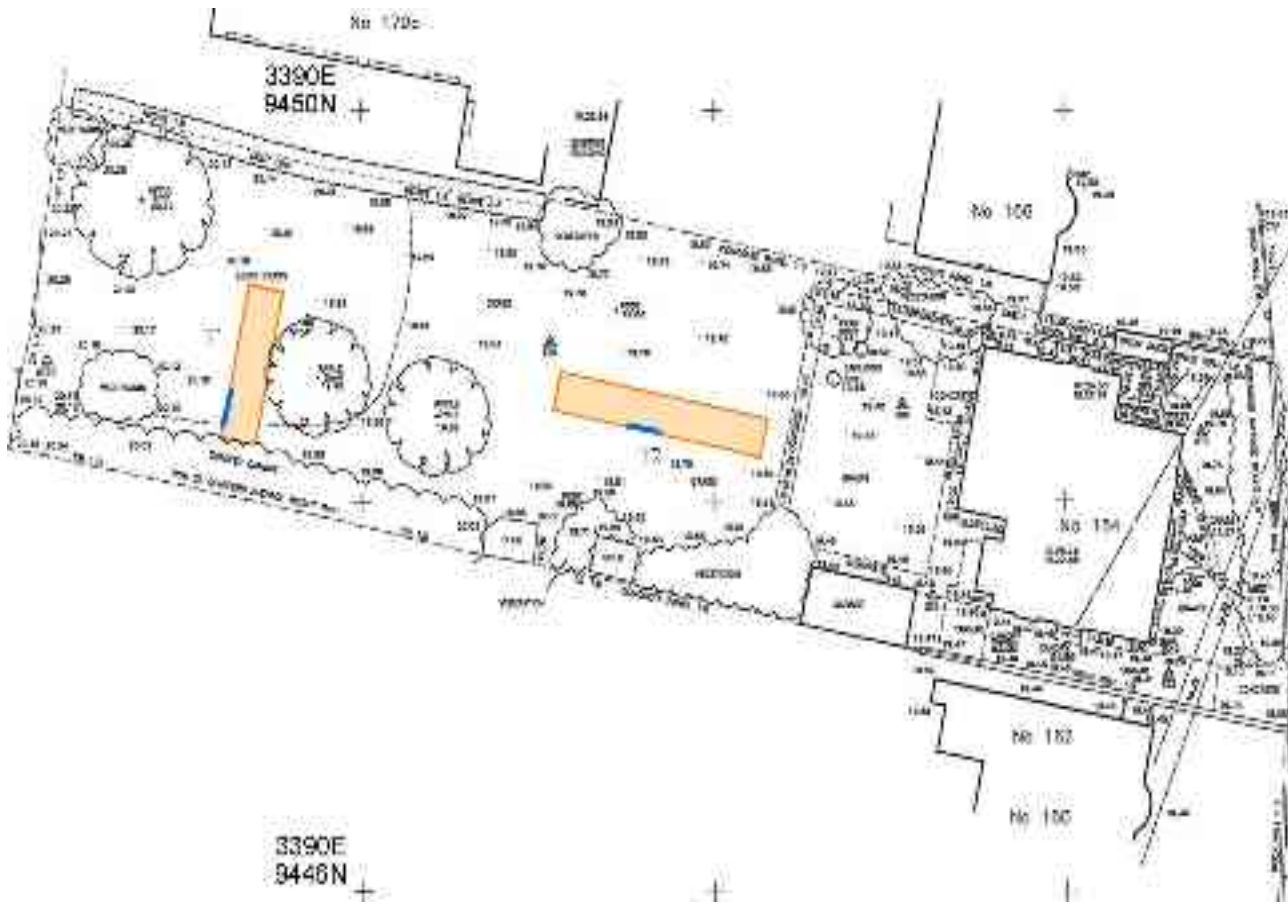


Fig 3 Proposed location of the two evaluation trenches (c 2m x 8m and 2m x 12m in plan), in relation to the current site survey (*EDI Surveys Ltd., job No. 8852*). Drawn sections are marked in blue.





Fig 4 General view of Trench 1, looking southwest and showing the exposed surface of the natural silty/sandy clay (*0.5m scale*)

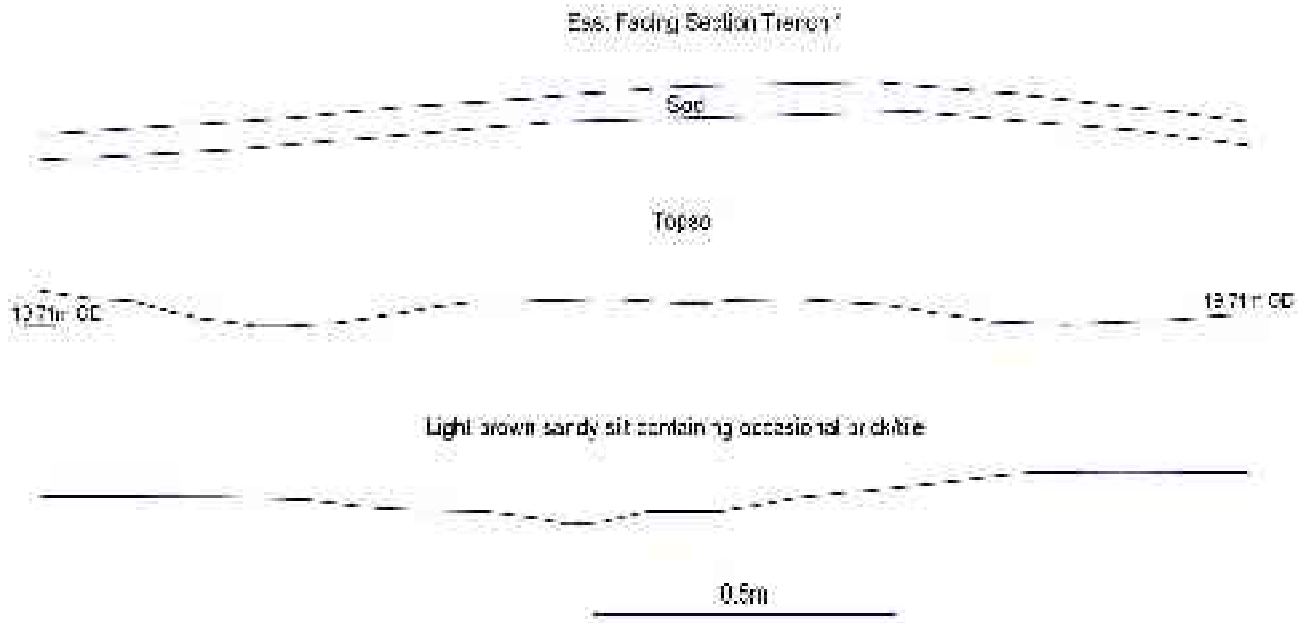


Fig 5 Drawing of part of the east facing section of Trench 1, located on Figure 3



Fig 6 View of the deposits shown in Figure 5



Fig 7 General view of Trench 2 looking northwest (*0.5m scale*)





## Appendix I. OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

**OASIS ID: compassa1-17354**

### Project details

Project name	164 Bury Street, Enfield, N9
Short description of the project	Archaeological evaluation carried out at rear of 164 Bury Street, Enfield, prior to residential redevelopment. Consisted of two trenches measuring 2 x 8m and 2 x 12m respectively. Site had potential for prehistoric and Roman archaeology, remained open land up to 19th century. Both trenches excavated to natural Enfield Silt (silty/sandy clay). Trench 1 contained a reworked subsoil layer representing cultivation of land for agricultural purposes. This layer contained 19th century building materials (brick/tile), but no earlier material. Trench 2 contained a modern pit cut into natural at east end. Overlying natural was a subsoil cultivation layer similar to that of Trench 1, also containing 19th century material. Above this layer was a disturbed layer of dumped material containing 19th century and later finds, which had been reworked or ploughed out.
Project dates	Start: 03-08-2006 End: 03-08-2006
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	BYO06 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	TP/05/1452 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	PIT Modern
Significant Finds	CERAMICS Post Medieval
Significant Finds	CERAMICS Modern
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	Not known / Not recorded

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### Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON ENFIELD ENFIELD 164 Bury Street, Enfield
Postcode	N9 9LQ
Study area	1300.00 Square meters
National grid reference	TQ 33917 94485 Point
Height OD	Min: 19.08m Max: 19.41m

### 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	Colin Reid
Sponsor or funding body	Developer

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive Exists?	No
Paper Archive recipient	Museum of London Archive
Paper Media available	'Drawing', 'Map', 'Notebook - Excavation', 'General Notes', 'Photograph', 'Plan', 'Unpublished Text'

Entered by	Colin Reid (mail@compassarchaeology.co.uk)
Entered on	15 August 2006

## **Appendix II. London Archaeologist summary**

164 Bury Street, Lower Edmonton N9 9LQ. TQ 33917 94485. CA (Colin Reid).  
Evaluation. August 2006. Purple Property (UK) Ltd. BYO06

No significant archaeological remains were found: there was a simple sequence of deposits and features reflecting the development of the site from the 1820s to the present day. To the west was a reworked soil horizon indicating agricultural land use, whilst the eastern trench was truncated by building foundations and had evidence of other modern activity. No earlier material was recovered.

Natural deposits of Enfield Silt brickearth were exposed in each trench, consisting of a silty/sandy clay under a subsoil cultivation layer.