

**THE FORMER SELHURST ARMS PUBLIC HOUSE,
38 SELHURST ROAD,
LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON, SE25 5QF**

An Archaeological Evaluation



July 2014



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38 SELHURST ROAD,
LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON, SE25 5QF

An Archaeological Evaluation

Planning reference: 14/01013/P

Site code: SEL14

NGR: 3308 6728

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July 2014

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Abstract

On July 1st 2014 Compass Archaeology undertook a small scale archaeological evaluation on land at the rear of the former Selhurst Arms Public House in Croydon. A single trial trench, (c6m x 2m), was excavated E-W across the site, partly within the footprint of the former single-storey extension to the rear of the property.

The evaluation confirmed the depth and nature of natural geology on the site at approximately 48.80m OD, and also the absence of any archaeologically significant deposits or features in this part of the site. It is considered therefore that the requirements of the archaeological planning condition have been fulfilled.

The exposed stratigraphy showed that the site had recently been stripped of overburden during remediation works associated with the redevelopment – though evidently truncated even earlier, probably upon construction of the original buildings in the mid-19th century. Hence the drain present on the western side of the trench was cut straight into and through natural, with no overlying or associated soil horizons.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document forms a summary of the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out on July 1st 2014 at the site of 38 Selhurst Road, (grid reference TQ 3308 6728). The evaluation forms a condition of planning consent, (ref. 14/01013/P; Condition No.4), and follows recommendations by English Heritage.

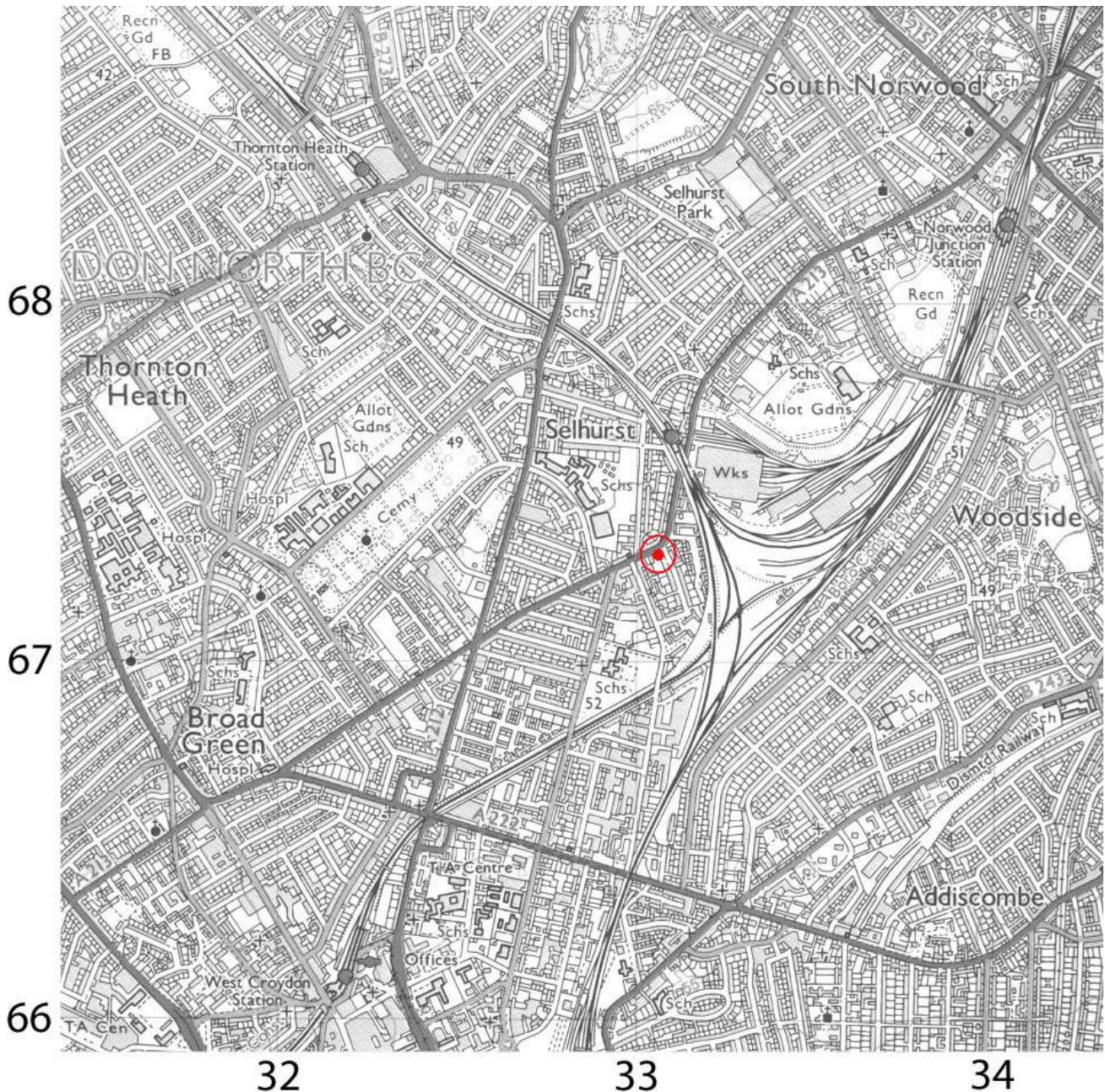


Fig.1: *Site location*

1.2 The evaluation took place within the footprint of the proposed rear extension to the existing building, (the former Selhurst Arms public house), and comprised a single trial trench, aligned roughly east-west and measuring overall c 6m by 2m in plan (fig.4).

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Compass Archaeology would like to thank Mr Hussein Aziz of Golfrate Property Management for commissioning and supporting the fieldwork and report, and also Mr German Escalante of Milan Babic Architects Ltd for his help and support during the implementation of the works programme.

3 SITE LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 3.1 The site faces north onto Selhurst Road, on the corner with Selhurst New Road, which is situated to the east. The site backs onto another new development fronting Selhurst New Road to the south, and is adjacent to No.36 Selhurst Road to the west, (fig.2). It is currently occupied by the vacant Selhurst Arms public house to the north with an open space previously used as a yard and part of the pub car park to the rear, (south).



Fig.2: Detailed location plan

The site measures approximately 33m N-S by between 13m to 16m E-W, tapering towards the northern frontage onto Selhurst Road. This amounts to roughly 480m², including the footprint of the standing building.

3.2 The geological map, (British Geological Survey 1998, Sheet 270), indicates that the site overlies superficial deposits of Lynch Hill gravels on the border of the London Clay formation. Exploratory boreholes indicate that between *c* 0.60m and a metre of made ground may cover the site¹.

3.3 The site lies on essentially flat ground between *c*50.7mOD and 50.9mOD.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Prehistoric

Prehistoric activity in the Croydon Area is well documented, with references from both archaeological excavation and chance finds. Settlement appears to have been scattered, although from the Bronze Age onwards concentrated within areas of geologically recent river terrace gravels.

4.2 Roman

Croydon lay on the line of a Roman road to the south coast and itself formed a small settlement or town. To the north of Croydon the Roman road appears to coincide with the present London Road, passing some 1.4km to the southwest of the present site. Finds have been made of Roman coins on White Horse Lane, to the northwest of the site.

4.3 Saxon and Medieval

The name Selhurst is derived from the Saxon meaning ‘dwelling in the woods’, and during the construction of Selhurst railway station in the 1890s, *c*300m to the north of the site, a large quantity of 9th century Saxon coins were found along with some of Frankish and others of Arabic origin².

In the medieval period the area may well have formed agricultural land associated with Sellis Place, (referenced from the 15th century onwards), situated on the far side of Dagnall’s / Selhurst Woods to the northeast. Sellis Place later devolved into Selhurst Farm, by the middle of the 19th century.

4.4 Post-medieval

Maps from the 18th and early-19th centuries show that the site was still undeveloped. The site appears to have lain within the area of Croydon Common, with Dragnalls / Dagnalls Wood, later renamed Selhurst Wood, immediately to the east. The boundary between the study site and the wood seems to be quite an ancient one and well established.

¹Terragen Environmental Consultants Ltd (March 2013, p9) & Environmental Management Solutions (Nov 2013 & March 2014)

² VCH, (1912), p205

Gloucester Road was established by 1818, and housing appeared to the north and west by the middle of the 19th century. The surrounding road layout, (Selhurst New Road *etc.*), was essentially complete by the 1860s. Buildings first appear on the site in 1867, and the pub is first labelled in 1898. Several outbuildings have come and gone in the area immediately behind the pub, most of which are now buried beneath or incorporated into the current footprint. The main exception is a fairly large but single storey flat-roofed extension, now demolished to make way for the present redevelopment.

5 PLANNING AND OBJECTIVES

- 5.1** An archaeological evaluation of the development area has been recommended by English Heritage as part of the Local Authority planning process, to form a condition of planning consent.
- 5.2** The protection of archaeological sites is a material planning consideration. An initial evaluation should be designed to provide all parties, particularly the Local Planning Authority, with sufficient material information upon which to base informed decisions, incorporating adequate heritage safeguards. Where an evaluation produces positive results safeguards will be applied; these would normally consist of either design modifications to preserve archaeological remains *in situ* or, where this is not achievable, archaeological rescue excavation in advance of development.
- 5.3** The evaluation will conform to the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, (NPPF), adopted in March 2012, which replaces PPS 5 ‘*Planning for the Historic Environment*’ and policies HE6 and HE7.
- 5.4** The London Borough of Croydon includes policies with regards to archaeology and archaeological sites within its current Unitary Development Plan, adopted July 2006, specifically Policies U11, U12, and U14, (pp 47-51). This document can be accessed via the Croydon Borough Council website at:
<http://www.croydon.gov.uk/contents/departments/planningandregeneration/pdf/localplan/replacement-udp.pdf>
- 5.5** The site lies within Archaeological Priority Zone 8, Sellis Place, as designated by the London Borough of Croydon, (see fig. 3)³, and has potential for a range of archaeological remains pertaining to the medieval and post-medieval farm.

The site is not a Scheduled Ancient Monument, and no listed buildings will be affected by the proposals.

³Extracted from Croydon Local Plan, Policy map: North, available at:
<http://www.croydon.gov.uk/contents/departments/planningandregeneration/pdf/localplan/clpnorth.pdf>

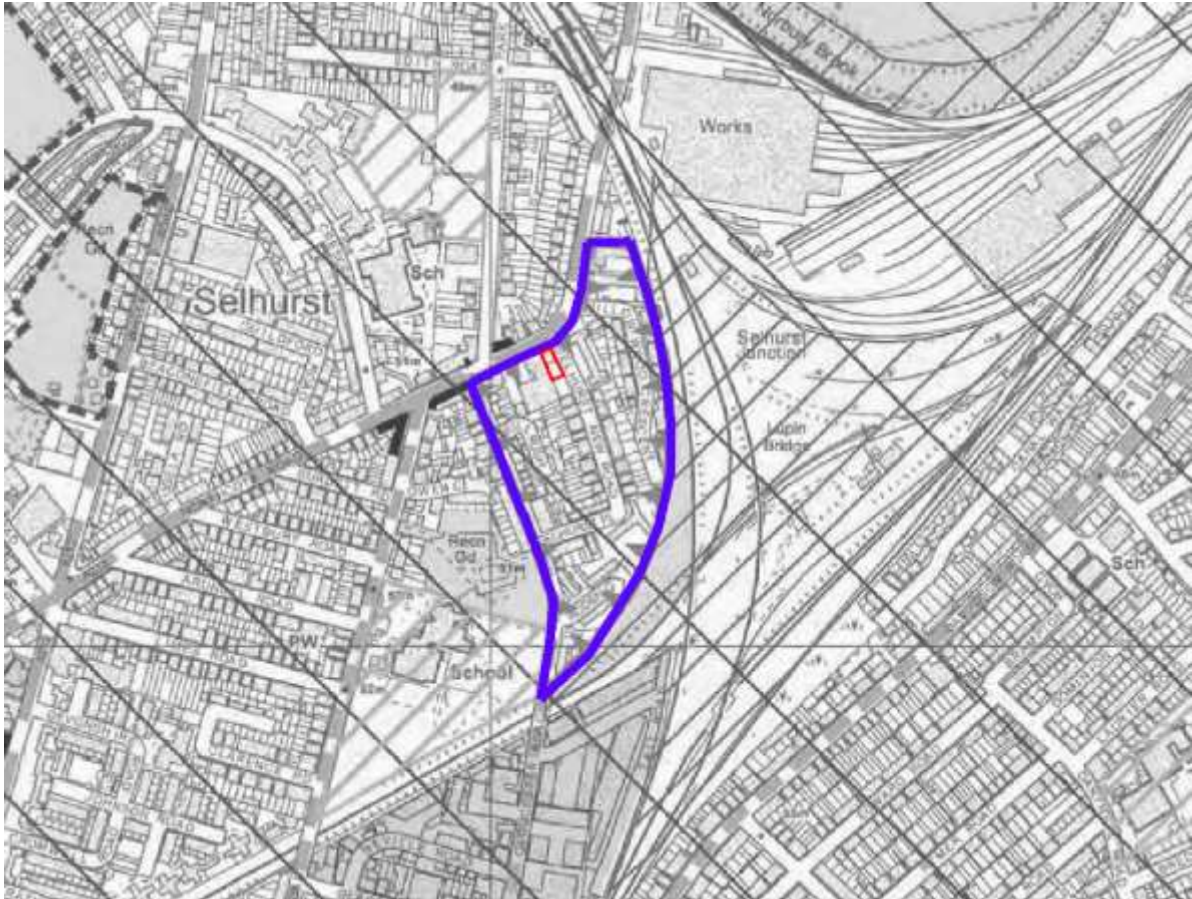


Fig.3: The site (red) in relation to Archaeological Priority Zone 8. Extracted from the Local Plan Policy Map

5.6 Archaeological research questions

The evaluation presents the opportunity to answer the following specific research questions:

- Is there any evidence of prehistoric activity taking place on the river terrace gravels?
- Is there any evidence of Roman activity, especially roadside settlement?
- Is there any evidence of medieval activity, particularly agricultural activity associated with a wider estate based around Sellis Place?
- Is there any evidence of the post-medieval development of the site in terms of former field boundaries or other agricultural use of the land, or for the later use as a pub with associated outbuildings?
- At what level does archaeology and natural geology survive across the site?

6 METHODOLOGY

6.1 Standards

- 6.1.1** The fieldwork and off-site assessment was carried out in accordance with English Heritage guidelines (in particular, *Standards for Archaeological Work*, July 2009). Works also conformed to the standards of the Institute for Archaeologists, and overall management of the project was undertaken by a full Member of the Institute.
- 6.1.2** The objective of the evaluation was to define the character, extent and significance of potential remains, and to recover dating and environmental evidence, rather than to fully excavate.
- 6.1.3** Fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the Construction (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations. All members of the fieldwork team will have valid CSCS Cards, (Construction Skills Certificate Scheme), and wear hi-visibility vests or jackets, hard-hats, and steel-toe-capped boots during excavation.

6.2 Fieldwork

- 6.2.1** The evaluation involved the excavation of a single trial trench and the subsequent investigation and recording of any archaeological deposits and features therein. A decision was made on-site according to the extent and likely significance of such remains and dictate the extent of hand-excavation required. Sufficient work was undertaken to establish the nature of deposits and features, with adequate recovery of finds dating and other evidence. Additional techniques were applied as appropriate, for example metal detecting or environmental sampling.
- 6.2.2** Initial clearance of the trial trench was undertaken by a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless bucket and working under archaeological supervision. Deposits were generally be removed in this way to the latest significant archaeological horizon, or in the absence of remains to a clean natural subsoil.
- 6.2.3** Due to a concrete footing encountered during the course of work it was necessary to slightly amend the size of the trench, whilst retaining the same overall coverage.
- 6.2.4** One trial trench was excavated. This was aligned approximately E-W across the site, and within the footprint of the proposed extension as outlined on Figure 4, and measured overall *c* 6m long by 2m wide.

It was considered that this provided an effective and representative coverage of the development footprint. It represents an approximate 9% sample of the redevelopment footprint, (approx. 100m²).

- 6.2.5** Following initial clearance any archaeological deposits and features were selectively excavated and recorded in stratigraphic sequence. Archaeological contexts were recorded on *pro-forma* sheets by written and measured description and drawn in plan and/or section. Areas of investigation, discrete deposits and features were recorded on a general site plan, at appropriate scales, and this in turn related to the Ordnance Survey grid.

Levels were taken on the top and bottom of archaeological features and deposits, transferred from the nearest OSBM (at the junction of Selhurst Road & Edith Road, value 48.49m OD).

The fieldwork record was supplemented as appropriate by digital photography.

- 6.2.6** All finds and samples are treated on-site in accordance with the appropriate guidelines, including the Museum of London's '*Standards for the Preparation of Finds*'. All identified finds and artefacts are retained and bagged with unique numbers related to the context record, although certain classes of building material may be discarded if an appropriate record has been made.
- 6.2.7** Should human remains be encountered during the course of fieldwork they will, if at all possible, be preserved *in situ*. If necessary, the Ministry of Justice will be contacted and an AASI licence obtained. The procedures will all be in accordance with the Ministry of Justice's 2008 statement: 'Burial Law and Archaeology'. This document sets out the requirements for licence applications to be made under the Burial Act of 1857 wherever human remains are buried in sites to which the Disused Burial Grounds (Amendment) Act 1981 or other burial ground legislation does not apply.
- 6.2.8** Any finds identified as treasure under the Treasure Act (1996) and the Treasure (Designation) Order (2002) are recorded, protected as necessary and removed to a safe place as soon as possible – ideally on the same day.

6.3 Post-excavation work & report procedure

The fieldwork was followed by a programme of off-site processing and assessment; by compilation of a post-excavation report; and by ordering and deposition of the site archive.

- 6.3.1** Appropriately qualified staff undertook the on and off-site assessment and, where appropriate, conservation of finds and samples.
- 6.3.2** This report provides details of methodology and of archaeological remains and finds, plus an interpretation of the deposits investigated, and will include a series of scale drawings, photographs and context descriptions. A short summary of the fieldwork is appended using the OASIS Report Form, and in paragraph form suitable for publication within the 'excavation round-up' of the *London Archaeologist*. Copies of the report will be supplied to the Client, English Heritage, the local planning authority and local studies library

6.4 Archive

Following the issue of the report and any further work that may be agreed, an ordered, indexed and internally consistent site archive will be compiled in line with MoL *Guidelines for the Preparation of Archaeological Archives*

It is proposed that the archive will be deposited in the Museum of London Archaeological Archive under site code SEL14. The integrity of the site archive should also be maintained, although in this instance there are no retained archaeological finds that would require donation to the Museum.

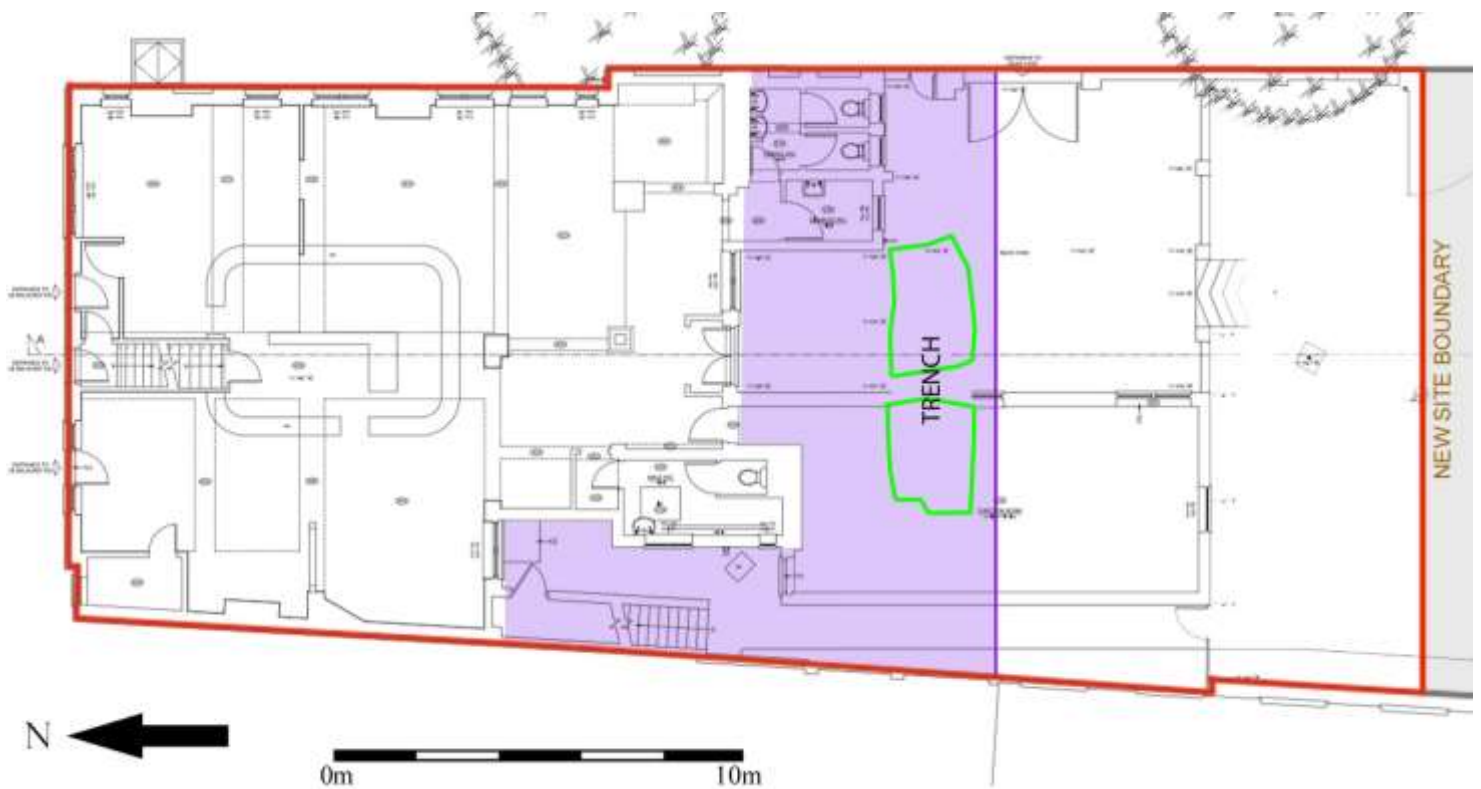


Fig.4: Site plan with trench location in green

7 RESULTS

- 7.1 The evaluation was undertaken over the course of a single day, 1st July 2014, with excavation, recording and all backfilling taking place then. The trench was excavated by machine and subsequently cleaned by hand and revealed no archaeologically significant remains. The trench was positioned straddling the footings of the previous single-storey extension which stood at the rear of the pub, and the depth of the footing meant that it could not be removed. As a result the eastern end of the trench was extended by a further 1.0m and the western end by approximately 0.50m to compensate for the loss of coverage, ending in a trench approximately 6.3m long, (E-W), by 2.0m wide, (N-S), see fig.9.



Fig.5: *Trench facing west, (1m scale)*

- 7.2 Natural geology, context (5), was exposed from c500mm below the existing ground surface, (48.82 to 48.84mOD), and consisted of a mottled, pale-brown orange sandy-silt containing pockets of rounded pebbles and subangular flints within a bluey-grey clay matrix. The natural also showed infrequent evidence of iron-panning, and was highly compacted in nature. This corresponds well with expectations as indicated by the British Geological Survey data.
- 7.3 The upper layers of exposed natural were slightly more mixed / 'dirty' suggesting that it had been exposed / disturbed in the recent past, and can be partly explained by the recent groundworks that had taken place on site during the demolition of the single storey extension to the rear of the pub. This truncated natural was context (4).

- 7.4 Overlying the truncated natural was a mix of crushed brick, roof-tile, wall and floor tile, mortar, glass, and modern detritus associated with the former extension, context (1). This spread was approximately 150-300mm thick, and loosely compacted, having very recently been spread across the site to create new levels.



Fig.6: *Section through northern side of Trench, east side, facing N, (0.50m scale)*

- 7.5 This was the basic stratigraphy as exposed during the evaluation. The only exception was the presence of a circular ceramic drain, [2], measuring approximately 300mm in diameter and aligned NE-SW across the western part of the trench. The drain was set within a vertical-sided linear cut, [3], dug into the natural and probably associated with one of the earliest phases of the public house in the mid 19th-century.

The eastern side of the trench had a square, vertical-sided, cut within the southern section, which represented the northern edge of one of the sampling pits dug on site during the recent asbestos survey.



Fig.7: Eastern end of trench facing E, (1m scale)



Fig.8: *West end of trench facing E, (1m scale)*

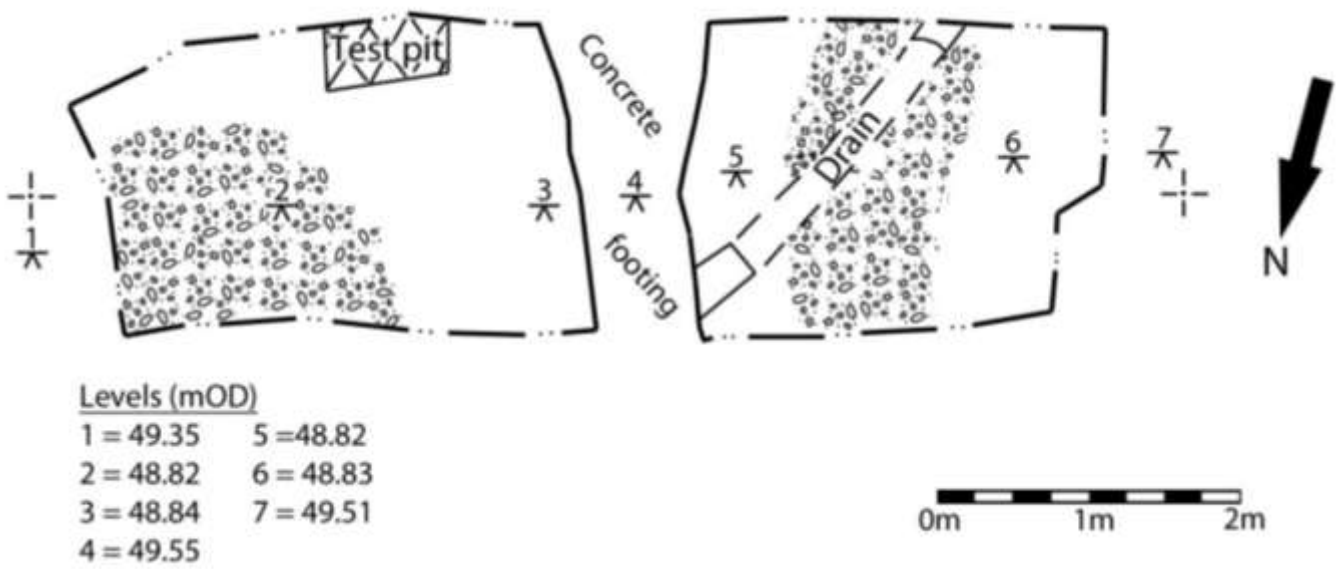


Fig.9: Plan of evaluation trench

8 CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation confirmed the depth and nature of natural geology on the site at approximately 48.80m OD, and also the absence of any archaeologically significant deposits or features in this part of the site.

The exposed stratigraphy showed that the site had recently been stripped of overburden during remediation works associated with the redevelopment of the site – though evidently truncated even earlier, probably upon construction of the original buildings in the mid-19th century. Hence the drain present on the western side of the trench was cut straight into and through natural, with no overlying or associated soil horizons.

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Appendix I OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

OASIS ID: [compassa1-183949](#)

Project details

Project name	38 Selhurst Road, Croydon, SE25 5QF An Archaeological Evaluation
Short description of the project	A single trial trench was excavated within the rear yard of the former Selhurst Arms Public House. The trench measured 6.30m long by 2.0m wide and was excavated by machine to a depth of c0.50m in depth. No archaeologically significant remains were observed in the trench, natural ground was exposed in the base of the trench, (between 48.82 and 48.84mOD). The natural consisted of a pale-brown-orange sandy silt with pockets of flint-based gravels within a bluey-grey clay matrix.
Project dates	Start: 01-07-2014 End: 01-07-2014
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	SEL14 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	croy020 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Other 2 - In use as a building
Monument type	LAND DRAIN Post Medieval
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Small-scale (e.g. single house, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON CROYDON NORWOOD 38 Selhurst Road
Postcode	SE25 5QF
Study area	12.60 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 3308 6728 51.3884253481 -0.0871760097425 51 23 18 N 000 05 13 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 48.82m Max: 48.84m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Compass Archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Compass Archaeology
Project director/manager	Geoff Potter
Project supervisor	James Aaronson
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Golfrate Property Management

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Museum of London Archaeological Archive
Digital Contents	"other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Museum of London Archaeological Archive
Paper Contents	"other"

Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Map", "Miscellaneous Material", "Plan", "Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title THE FORMER SELHURST ARMS PUBLIC HOUSE, 38 SELHURST ROAD, LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON, SE25 5QF An Archaeological Evaluation

Author(s)/Editor(s) Aaronson, J

Date 2014

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Description A brief summary of the findings of the field evaluation. Includes site location plan, trench location plan, trench plan, and a descriptive interpretation of exposed stratigraphy supplemented by appropriate photography.

Appendix II LONDON ARCHAEOLOGIST SUMMARY

Site Address: 38 Selhurst Road, Croydon, SE25 5QF
Project Type: Field evaluation
Dates of fieldwork: 1st July 2014
Site code: SEL14
Site Supervisor: James Aaronson

On July 1st 2014 Compass Archaeology undertook a small scale archaeological evaluation on land at the rear of the former Selhurst Arms Public House in Croydon. A single trial trench, (c6m x 2m), was excavated E-W across the site, within the footprint of the former single-storey extension to the rear of the property.

The evaluation confirmed the depth and nature of natural geology on the site at approximately 48.80m OD and also the absence of archaeologically significant deposits in this part of the site. The exposed stratigraphy showed that the site had recently been stripped of overburden during remediation works associated with the redevelopment of the site – though evidently truncated even earlier, probably upon construction of the original buildings in the mid-19th century. Hence the drain present in the western side of the trench was cut straight into and through natural with no overlying or associated soil horizons.