

SURREY STREET WELL REPLACEMENT SCHEME

PURLEY WAY PLAYING FIELDS SECTION

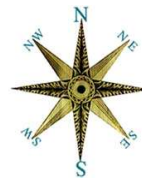
LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION AND RECORDING

ON BEHALF OF THAMES WATER UTILITIES



COMPASS



ARCHAEOLOGY

December 2006

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LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION AND RECORDING

ON BEHALF OF THAMES WATER UTILITIES

SITE CODE: PWF 06

SITE CENTRE NGR: TQ 3182 6368

COMPASS ARCHAEOLOGY LIMITED

5 -7 SOUTHWARK STREET

LONDON SE1 1RQ

Telephone: 020 7403 9660

Facsimile: 020 7403 9661

E-mail: mail@compassarchaeology.co.uk

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Project 346

Abstract

Archaeological observation and recording took place in October and November 2006 during pipeline construction across Purley Way Playing Fields, Croydon, as part of the Surrey Street Well Replacement Scheme. This included monitoring of the initial topsoil strip along the pipe route, some 700m long by 8m wide, and in one section of the subsequent pipe trench excavation.

The project was carried out in response to recommendations made by English Heritage. This area has potential for a range of archaeological remains, reflected in its status as an archaeological priority area in the Borough UDP. It was also hoped that there might be evidence for an historic trackway, which is seen on 18th and 19th century plans and has also been proposed as the possible line of a Roman road.

The topsoil strip was quite shallow (no more than 150mm), and revealed modern reworked soil horizons relating to the present land use and previous allotments. However, this level also produced some residual struck flint of later prehistoric date – debitage comprising nodular shatter and flakes, plus a few scrapers, notched flakes and one pick-like piece.

The deeper pipe trench excavation did not produce any finds, but did cut through the line of the historic trackway. This was about 7m wide and comprised a single layer of compacted chalk rubble and gravel up to 180mm thick. There was no evidence for roadside ditches, and adjacent areas presented the same simple progression of reworked soil merging into natural as seen elsewhere. It seems likely that the track was a fairly minor route: study of historic maps would also suggest that it is a relatively recent feature, superimposed onto an established landscape.

The trackway and adjacent soil horizons overlay a natural sandy clay/silt with pebbles, comparable to that noted on other local sites and apparently a geologically recent colluvium. This in turn sealed weathered and decayed Upper Chalk, the result of periglacial action on the underlying bedrock.

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1. Introduction

Groundworks for a new pipeline installation in Purley Way Playing Fields, forming part of the Surrey Street Well Replacement Scheme, were archaeologically monitored during October and November 2006. The works comprised preliminary topsoil stripping of an easement corridor some 700m long by *c* 8m wide along the line of the proposed pipeline, followed by open-cut trenching (Fig 1).

The project was carried out in response to recommendations made by English Heritage. This area is defined as one of archaeological significance within the Croydon UDP, and has potential for a range of finds and features of prehistoric to post-medieval date.

2. Acknowledgements

The archaeological programme was commissioned by Mr David Jones, Biodiversity and Heritage Advisor, Environment & Conservation, Thames Water Utilities Ltd. Assistance during the project was given by Mr Mike MacCullum and by other representatives of the on-site contractor, Morrison Construction.

The archaeological measures on this site were supported by Mark Stevenson (English Heritage Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service). Background information on the site was also provided by Croydon Local Studies Library.

3. Location and topography

- 3.1** The groundworks were located in open ground towards the northeast corner of Purley Way Playing Fields and adjacent to Waddon Way. The pipeline ran on a south to north line before turning to the west and was about 700m in length (Fig 2: site approximately centred at National Grid Reference TQ 3182 6368).

Land surface levels in this area rise quite steeply to the south, ranging from *c* 61.5m OD in the northwest, where the pipeline crosses Waddon Way, to about 73.0m OD at the southeastern boundary of the playing fields.

- 3.2** The British Geological Survey (*Sheet 270*) indicates that the site stands on Upper Chalk, although with upper levels heavily weathered and fractured by periglacial action. Previous investigations in the area indicate that this is frequently sealed by a more recent mid-light brown clay silt, probably a colluvial or hillwash deposit (as at 542-546 Purley Way - site code PUW 93; Potter 1995, 307).

4. Archaeology and history

- 4.1** The area has potential for prehistoric finds, with previous discoveries ranging from Mesolithic to Iron Age date and including both chance finds and larger assemblages.

Evaluation at the Regina Coeli School, Columbine Avenue (near the southern end of the study area; site code RCS 94) produced 72 pieces of struck flint, mainly miscellaneous flakes and a few cores, plus a probable late prehistoric or Roman baked clay spindle whorl. These finds were mainly recovered from a reworked subsoil some 200mm to 400mm below the present ground surface.

Investigation at 542-546 Purley Way, some 600m to the northwest of the present site, produced nearly 1,400 struck flints (PUW 93; *ibid*). Again the assemblage was mainly composed of miscellaneous flakes with occasional tools and cores and found within a reworked subsoil: most items appeared to be of late Neolithic to Late Bronze Age date, though with later Mesolithic to Neolithic element. There were also quantities of burnt flint, a few sherds of Late Bronze/Early Iron Age pottery and some later (Roman and medieval) material.

Occasional *in situ* prehistoric features have also been recorded – an early to middle Bronze Age pit at 542-546 Purley Way, and to the south a possible hearth overlain by Neolithic and Bronze Age flintwork at Imperial Way (IMW97).

- 4.2** Apart from local finds of Roman material (also recorded at the Waddon Factory Estate; QSY00) the pipe route itself crosses the line of a possible Roman road. This follows an historic trackway that formed a southward continuation of the present-day Violet Lane (Margary I D, 1937, *Surrey Archaeol Col* 45, 132 & 1973, *Roman Roads in Britain*, 62). The trackway is shown as a double dotted line on Figures 3 and 4: it also appears on earlier surveys by Rocque (1763) and Lindley & Crosley (1793) and on OS plans up to 1913.
- 4.3** A number of Saxon and (more frequently) medieval finds are recorded in the area, and it is certainly possible that the trackway dates to these periods if not to the Roman. However, there is no obvious relationship between the track and the field boundaries that are shown on Bainbridge's Plan of 1800 (Fig 3). The corners of two fields do coincide with the track, but in other respects the latter appears to have been superimposed on an established landscape.
- 4.4** According to various maps the site area appears to have been open farmland in the past, with playing fields established probably in the 1920s. There were also some allotments, which continued into the Second World War when the area was cultivated as part of the war effort. Aerial photographs from 1988 at Croydon Local Studies Library seem to support the area's agricultural past as plough furrows can be clearly seen. However, such photographs provide no evidence for the trackway that appears on previous maps of the area.

5. Archaeological research questions

The project presented an opportunity to address a number of research questions, as defined in the preliminary *Specification*:

- Is there any evidence for prehistoric activity, either *in situ* features or residual finds? How does this relate to previous finds of Mesolithic and Iron Age date?
- Is there any evidence for Roman activity, either settlement or agriculture?
- What evidence is there for the trackway that is shown crossing the area on historic plans, and can this be dated. What is the construction and does it include features such as roadside ditches?
- Is there any evidence for Saxon or early post medieval activity, and what is the nature of this?

- What evidence is there for the historical landscape and field boundaries on the plan of 1800, and can these features be dated other than in their final disappearance? Is there any evidence for land use?

6. Methodology

6.1 A *Specification for a Programme of Archaeological Observation and Recording* was agreed prior to commencement of the fieldwork (Compass Archaeology, July 2006). The programme was also carried out in accordance with guidelines issued by English Heritage and by the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

6.2 The basic elements of the groundworks were as follows:

- Topsoil stripping to create an easement corridor along the line of the new pipe trench. This was approximately 8.0m wide, 700m long and very shallow at only about 130mm in depth (see Figs 5 & 6).
- Installation of *c* 700m of new pipe, requiring an open-cut trench approximately 1.2m wide and *c* 1.1m to 1.5m deep.

6.3 Archaeological observations were concentrated on the topsoil strip of the easement corridor. The area was stripped by machine under archaeological supervision, exposed deposits were examined for finds and/or buried features, and any potential remains were investigated and recorded.

Monitoring during the subsequent and deeper pipe trench excavation took place within the area of the historic trackway (4.2 above), including a margin of ground on either side of the projected route. This feature was not exposed by the initial soil strip.

Exposed deposits and features were recorded as appropriate by scaled drawing, supplemented by photography. Individual elements are described on the drawings but generally did not produce any artefacts and were not separately contexted. The only finds (modern and residual prehistoric flintwork) were recovered from undifferentiated soil horizons during the topsoil strip.

6.4 The records from the evaluation have been allocated the site code: PWF06 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.

7. The archaeological fieldwork (*Figure 2*)

For descriptive purposes monitoring of the groundworks can be divided into two distinct phases: the initial topsoil strip along the route of the proposed pipeline, and the subsequent narrower but deeper excavation of the pipe trench within the area of the historic trackway.

7.1 The topsoil strip (*Figures 5 & 6*)

Initial topsoil stripping took place within the northwestern part of the Purley Way Playing Fields, along a corridor approximately 700m in length by about 8m wide.

The topsoil strip was quite shallow, typically 130mm in depth, and removed the existing turf, and much of the mid to darker grey-brown sand/silt topsoil. In most areas the strip exposed a subsoil of fairly clean mid-orange brown coloured sandy silt, although with patches of more mixed or burnt material reflecting quite recent disturbance. The subsoil also contained variable quantities of pebbles or flints and (particularly on lower ground to the north) frequent fragments of chalk.

The few finds that were produced by the topsoil strip included small fragments of ceramic building material (mainly brick and tile) plus occasional sherds of commonly occurring 19th to 20th century pottery (Appendix II). There were also a few pieces of glass and metalwork, the latter ranging from a 1903 penny to part of a mid 20th century tobacco box, and scattered fragments of charcoal, clinker and slate.

More significant were the number of pieces of worked prehistoric flint (55 in total) that were recovered from the topsoil strip across the whole area of excavation (Appendix I). The assemblage mainly comprised fragments of debitage, with a few diagnostic tool types – scrapers, notched flakes and a crude pick-like piece. Overall this suggests a later prehistoric (? Bronze Age) date, although there may be a few earlier pieces.

7.2 The pipe trench excavation (*Figures 7 to 11*)

Following the topsoil strip of the easement excavation of the pipe trench proceeded from the southern end of the site. The trench was generally about 1.2m wide and from 1.1m to 1.5m deep, and was archaeologically monitored over a distance of about 100m within the projected area of the former trackway.

The subsoil deposit could now be seen in section as the top of a fairly consistent layer of firm mid orange brown sandy clay with frequent small to large flint pebbles. These latter were mostly rounded, although some more angular flints could also be seen – in some cases possibly broken up by the machine. This layer produced no finds and is clearly a natural deposit, probably of geologically recent colluvial or hillwash origin (as noted elsewhere in the vicinity; *cf.* 3.2 above).

The natural sandy clay varied in depth but in all areas overlay a surface of weathered and decayed chalk, fairly firm and homogeneous though without a solid structure. This too has been noted elsewhere and represents the top of the Upper Chalk (*cf.* British Geological Survey, *Sheet 270*), reworked by periglacial action.

Continued excavation of the pipe trench revealed the line of the historic trackway, principally in section as a band of compacted chalk rubble plus some gravel *c* 100mm to

180mm thick (*cf.* Fig 11). The track was about 6.5m to 7.0m wide, although somewhat more in the oblique section of the new pipe trench (Fig 9).

There was no sign of a roadside ditch or ditches, and areas adjacent to the trackway presented the same simple progression of reworked soil horizons merging to subsoil and thence natural as seen elsewhere on site. Nor were there any finds from the track or adjacent deposits, although there was nothing to suggest that it is a feature of great antiquity.

8. Assessment of the results

The archaeological fieldwork has provided an opportunity to address the site-specific objectives that were defined within the preliminary *Specification*. The responses are outlined below:

- *Is there any evidence for prehistoric activity, either in situ features or residual finds? How does this relate to previous finds of Mesolithic and Iron Age date?*

Fifty-five pieces of humanly worked flint, generally of later prehistoric date, were found in reworked deposits during topsoil stripping. This provides evidence that prehistoric activity did occur on or close to the site. However, there was an absence of any prehistoric features: this is due in part to the shallow depth of the topsoil strip, but is also attributable to the fact that the area was cultivated in the past, and therefore potential features and deposits may have been ploughed away.

It is worth noting that previous sites in the area have yielded a great deal of struck flint. An excavation at 542-546 Purley Way, *c* 600m from the present site, revealed some 1,400 pieces of struck flint of mostly late Neolithic or Bronze Age date. At Imperial Way (located to the west of the site) *in situ* prehistoric features were discovered, including a middle Bronze Age pit and a possible hearth that was sealed by Neolithic and Bronze Age flintwork. In the narrow area where the present pipe trenching occurred no prehistoric features were evident.

- *Is there any evidence for Roman activity, either settlement or agriculture?*

No evidence of Roman activity was found in the area of excavation. It has been suggested that the trackway that was cut by the pipe trench follows the line of a Roman road. However, there were no finds or other diagnostic features (such as roadside ditches) to substantiate this.

- *What evidence is there for the trackway that is shown crossing the area on historic plans, and can this be dated. What is the construction and does it include features such as roadside ditches?*

No evidence was found for the trackway during the initial topsoil strip, and no indication was discovered from aerial photographs of the site (although it does appear on historic maps up to the early 1900s). However, during the pipe trench cutting remains of the trackway were exposed and could be seen in both sections as a fairly thin (<180mm) layer of compacted chalk rubble with some pebbles or gravel.

There were no roadside ditches present and it was not possible to independently date the track construction. However, the surface of the trackway was at a reasonably shallow

level, some 350mm below present ground level (and approximately 200mm down from the reduced surface of the topsoil strip. The overlying deposit could not really be differentiated from the reworked soil profile that was recorded elsewhere on site, and which produced finds of the 19th to mid 20th centuries.

- *Is there any evidence for Saxon or early post medieval activity, and what is the nature of this?*

There is no evidence of either Saxon or early post-medieval activity on the site, nor any residual finds, although there is evidence for such activity in the vicinity.

- *What evidence is there for the historical landscape and field boundaries on the plan of 1800, and can these features be dated other than in their final disappearance? Is there any evidence for land use?*

There is no evidence for the field boundaries that appear on early plans such as that from 1800 (Fig. 3), although it is possible that remains of these may be more deeply buried below the reworked subsoil that was exposed by the soil strip.

Evidence for land use comes principally from historic maps, which indicate that the site area was farmed and in the earlier 20th century divided between allotment gardens and its modern function as playing fields. There were a few recent features and finds that may well derive from the allotment period, although this cannot be firmly established.

9. Conclusions

The archaeological fieldwork did reveal evidence for the line and construction of the historic trackway, and in addition provided some archaeological finds that add to the corpus of evidence for prehistoric human activity in the area.

As the topsoil strip involved only shallow ground reduction there was not a great deal of visible archaeology, apart from some residual worked flint and signs of modern activity in the form of bits of metal, ceramics, *etc.* and patches burnt material or deeper disturbance. The OS map of 1933 shows that part of the playing fields were then used as allotments, so it is possible that the areas of burning and brick and tile fragments are associated with these activities. Ploughing could also explain why chalk fragments from the natural appear in the topsoil so close to the surface.

The area dug for the pipe trench revealed mostly weathered Upper Chalk and an overlying mid orange-brown natural sandy clay, both of which were quite mixed. However, evidence of the historic trackway was also discovered during this stage of works. Although there was no direct dating evidence it seems most likely that this latter represents a fairly minor route, slightly sunken below its contemporary ground surface but with only had one obvious construction layer. Reference to historic maps also suggests that it is a relatively recent feature, superimposed onto an established landscape and field boundaries.

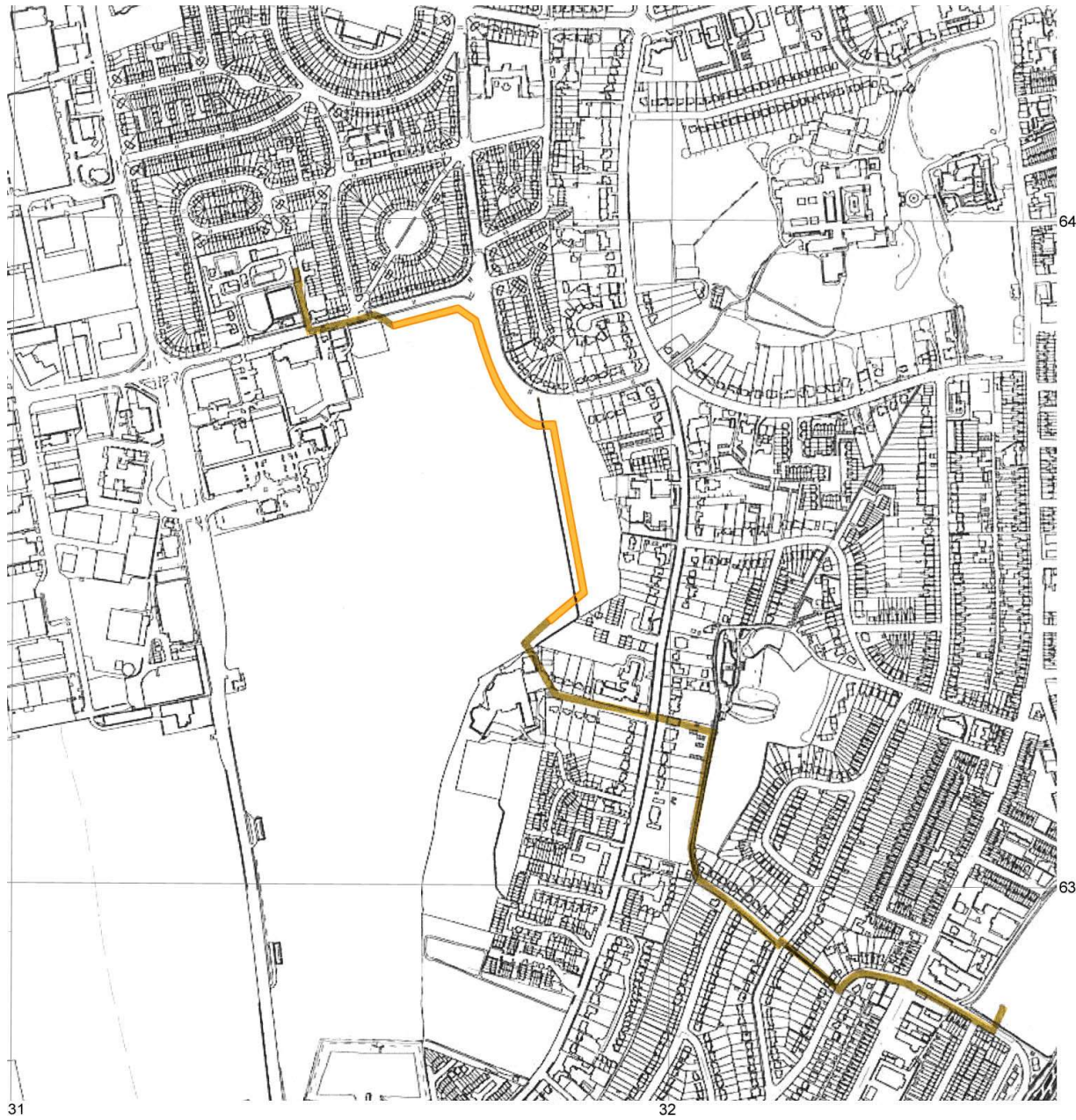


Fig 1. Plan showing the approximate route of the Surrey Street Well Replacement Scheme, from Sanderstead Road Recreation Ground to Waddon Treatment Works in the northwest. The area of archaeological observation and recording is highlighted in orange

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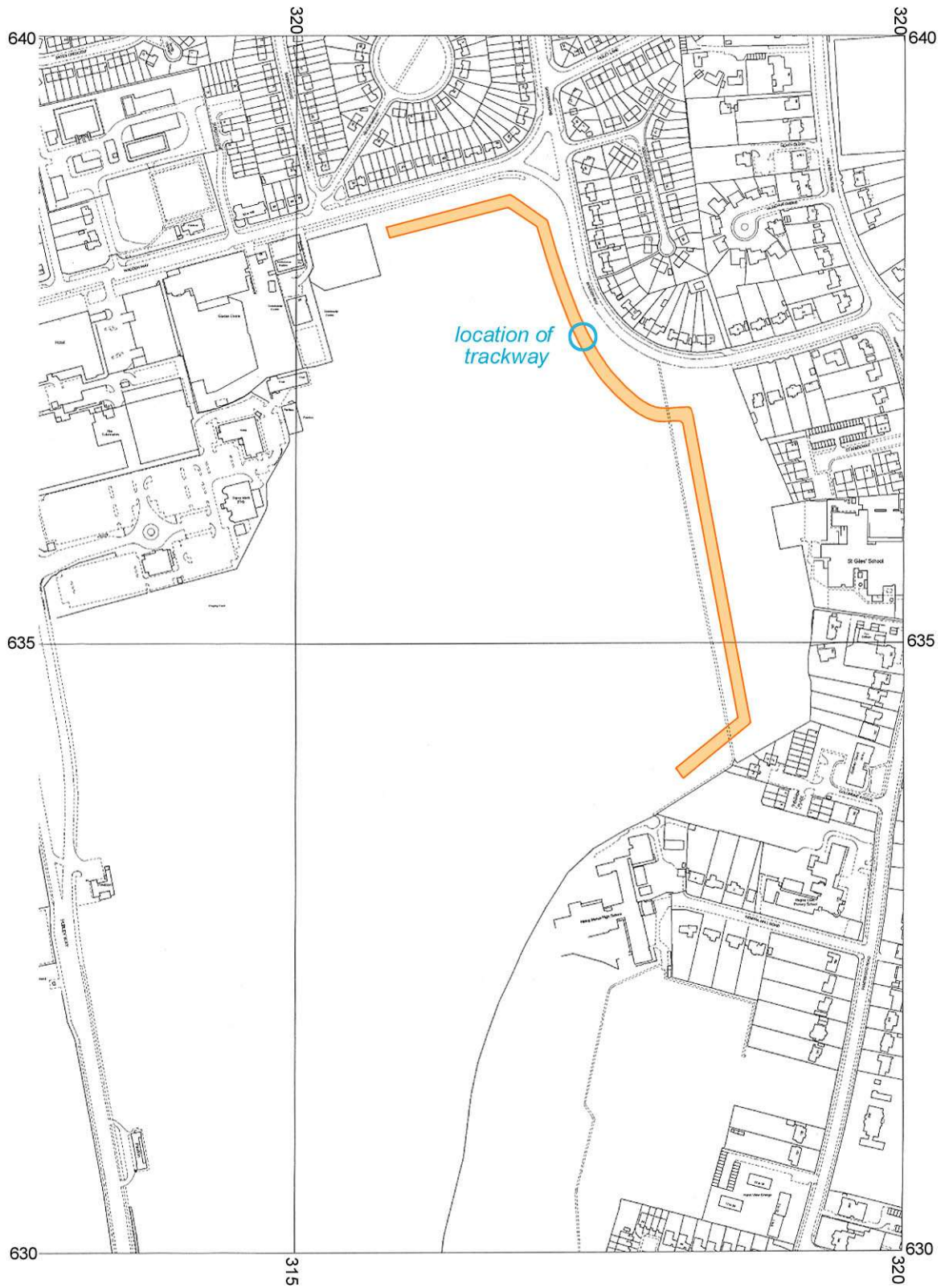


Fig 2. The extent of the watching brief and the position of the historic trackway in relation to the 1:2500 Ordnance Survey plan (reproduced here at 1:5000)

*Reproduced from the 2002OS map with the permission of the Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of HMSO.
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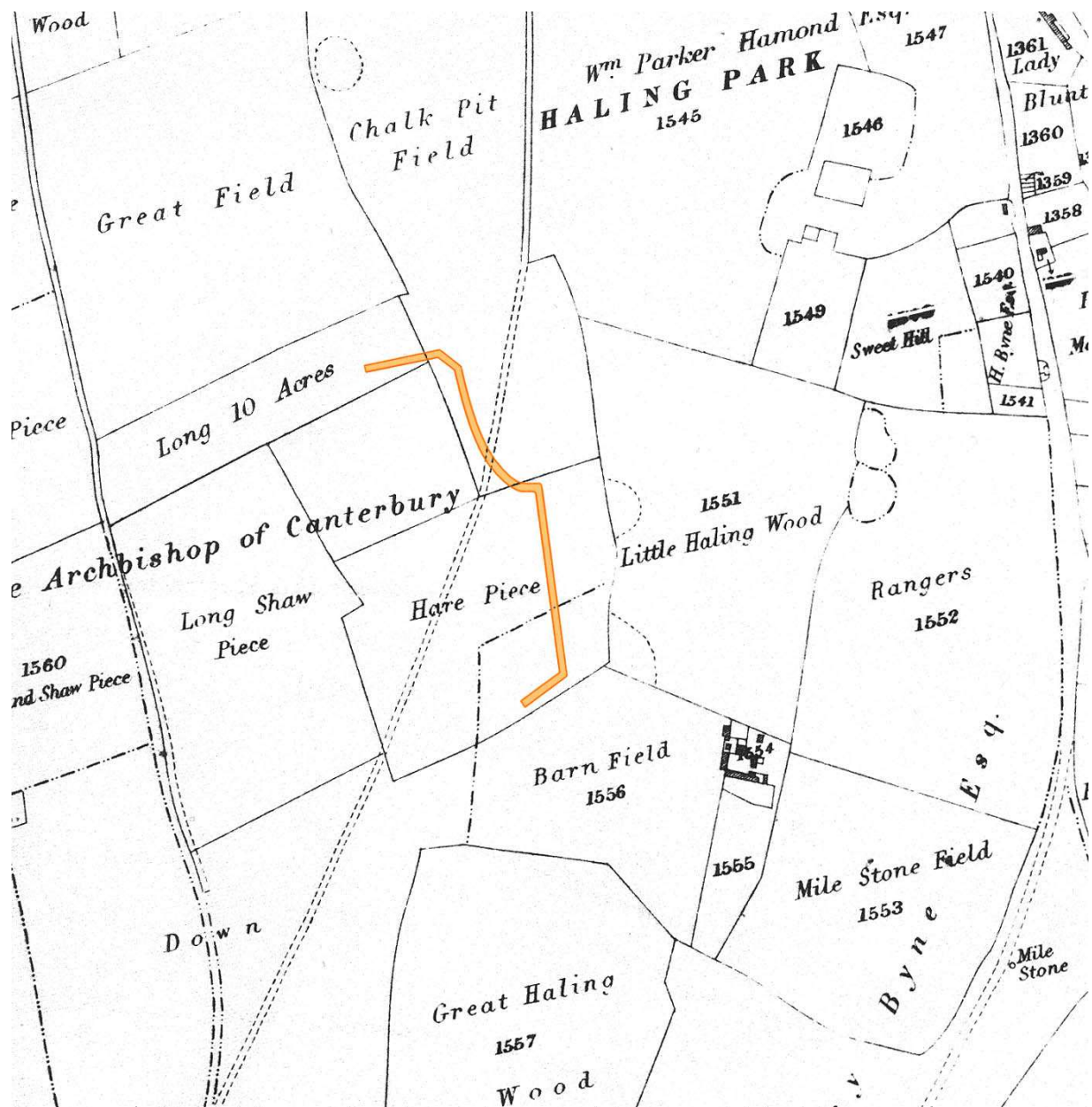


Fig 3. The area of archaeological interest highlighted in relation to the Croydon Enclosure map of 1800

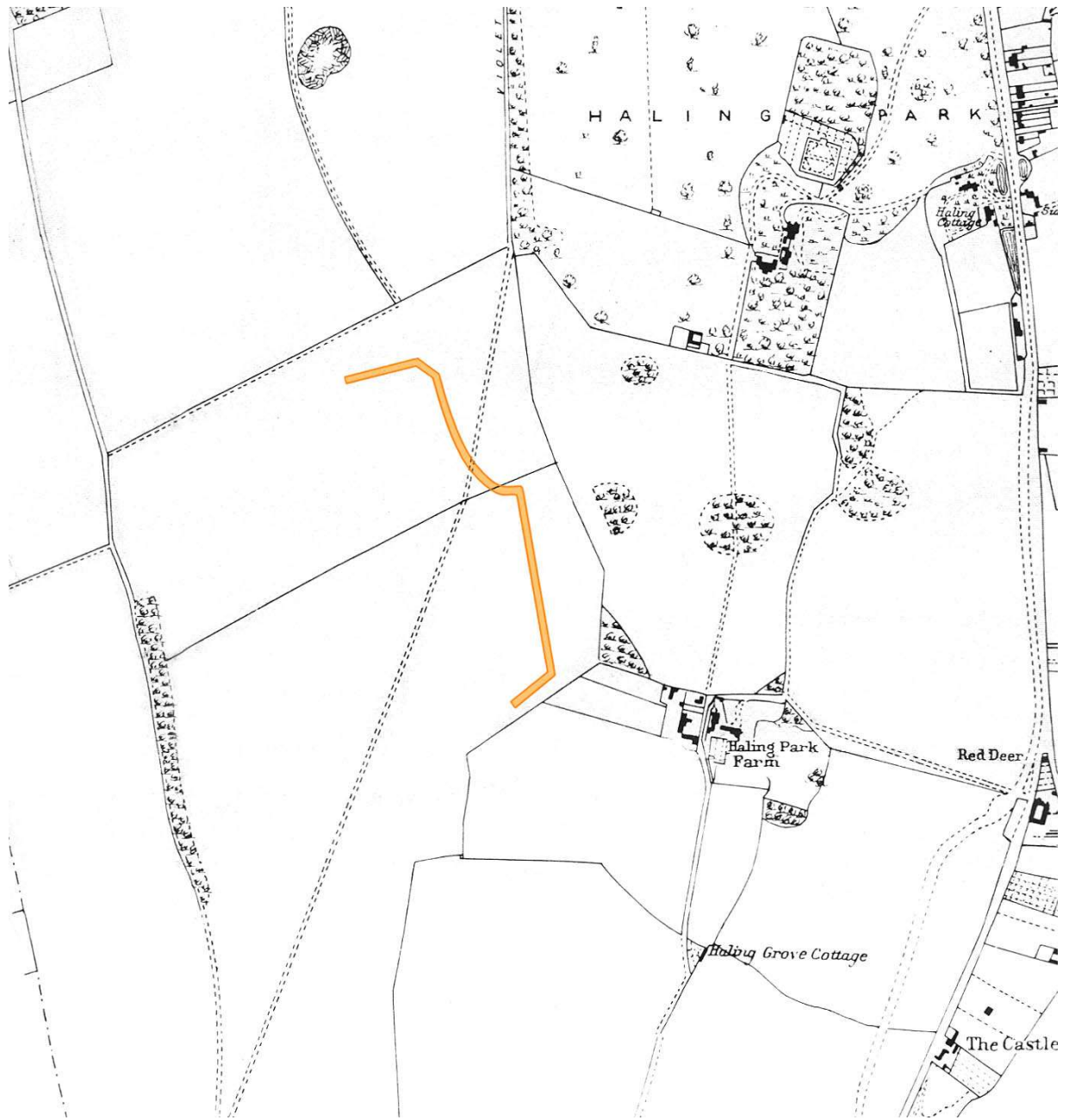


Fig 4. The area of archaeological interest highlighted in relation to the Croydon Tithe plan of 1847



Fig 5. Photograph showing the machine topsoil stripping that took place during the first phase of works on the site, facing north towards Waddon Way



Fig 2 Views of the site during the initial topsoil strip and a 1:1250 plan showing the extent of groundworks, spot heights and location of Figures 3-9



Fig 6. Closer view of the topsoil stripping, facing northeast towards St Giles School



Fig 7. Photograph facing north towards Waddon Way, showing the pipe trench with the buried trackway visible as a relatively thin chalk layer near the top of the 0.5m scale. *See also Fig. 9*



Fig 8. The pipe trench and buried trackway, in the same area as above but facing west towards Purley Way

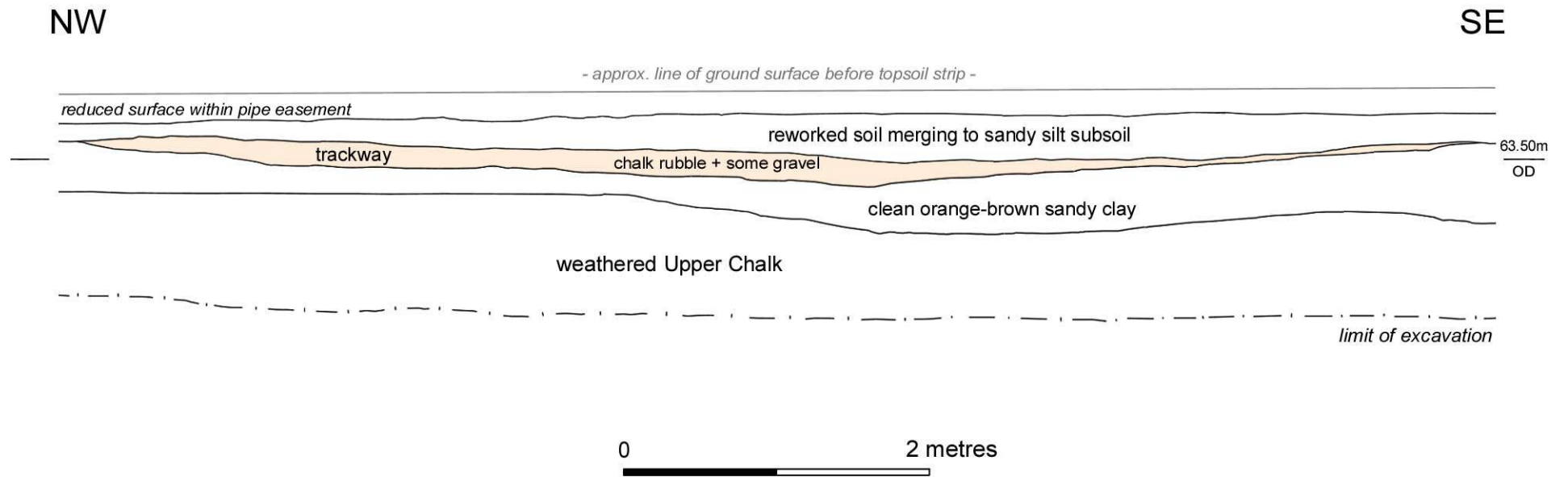


Fig 9. Section drawing of the trackway identified on the eastern side of the pipe trench and shown in Figures 7 above and 10-11 below. It should be noted that the track is obliquely cut by the trench, and that the actual width is no more than 7m



Fig 10. Detailed photograph of the area of pipe trench shown in Figure 7, with the trackway visible as a thin chalk and gravel layer



Fig 11. Further photograph of the above area looking north along the line of the pipe trench, with the trackway visible as a thin layer in section at the level of the 0.2m scale

Appendix I. The prehistoric flintwork

Jon Cotton, Senior Curator (Prehistory), Museum of London

In all 73 surface-collected flints were presented for examination (see Table below), the result of a watching-brief conducted during topsoil stripping along the course of the pipeline easement. These included 16 natural thermally-shattered pieces and two unmodified burnt fragments, leaving 55 pieces of humanly-worked material to be considered here.

Nodule testing/shatter	10
Flakes (primary)	5
Flakes (secondary)	15
Flakes (tertiary)	8
Flakes (frags)	3
Flakes/ blades	3
Scrapers	3
Scraper (frag)	1
Miscellaneous notched/utilised	6
Pick-like piece	1
(Natural thermal shatter)	(16)
(Burnt unworked pieces)	(2)

The raw material appears to derive from two main secondary sources, both locally available: cobbles of river gravel flint with smooth worn cortex; and surface nodules of North Downs flint with rough, pitted cortex. Several pieces have been re-corticated ('patinated') to varying degrees and many are iron-stained, some – like the pick-like piece – extensively so.

The collection is dominated by fragments of debitage comprising nodular shatter and flakes. Many of the latter are small, thick and squat with wide striking platforms, and several have hinge terminations. These are all characteristic of muscular later prehistoric (? Bronze Age) knapping techniques.

The few diagnostic tool types – scrapers, notched flakes and the pick-like piece – are of little further help in terms of dating, though crude picks are often assumed to have earlier (*i.e.* Mesolithic/Neolithic) affinities. This may be so, but on balance a later prehistoric date is favoured for the bulk of the flintwork examined here.

This small surface collection can be added to a number of other similar assemblages already known from the general area.

Appendix II. Post-medieval and other finds from the topsoil strip (including metal detecting)

1. Undated

Eleven pieces of burnt flint; total 316gm (individual range 5 to 66gm)

2. Post-medieval

2.1 Pottery

Several sherds of a plain white fine earthenware cup. Makers' name on base **T. F. & S. L^{TD}** (Thomas Forester & Sons Ltd., Longton, Staffs. 1883-1959).

Base of a beaker or jar in similar fabric, registered mark on base **SOL** and makers' name **J & G MEA....** (J & G Meakin Ltd, Hanley, Staffs. Reg^d mark 1912+).

Five other body sherds in similar plain refined white earthenware fabric, all fairly recent (19th century+).

Three transfer-printed sherds – two blue & white (lid & ?bowl), one with red band decoration (?saucer). 19th century or earlier 20th century.

One sherd of glazed redware (?dish, 19th century), plus one other small bodysherd in similar fabric.

Base of stoneware bottle, 62mm diam. Late 19th or earlier 20th century

Bodysherd in salt-glazed stoneware, ?19th century.

Four sherds of modern flowerpot.

2.2 Glass:

Two complete *United Dairies* one-third pint bottles.

Two other moulded vessels – one small bottle; one paste jar embossed *Brand & Co.* on base.

Miscellaneous fragments of green/brown bottle glass and plain window (or horticultural) glass.

2.3 Building material

2.3.1 Ceramic

Some fairly recent brick and tile fragments.

Two frags. of modern ceramic tile with plain white glaze.

One fragment of decorative glazed path border.

One fragment of drain pipe.

2.3.2 Stone

Seven fragments of white marble, probably from a fire surround. Largest piece *c* 216mm x 110mm, all pieces 21.5mm thick. Wear and occasional mortar on original polished face & edges indicates reuse.

2.4 Metal:

One worn 1903 (Edward VII) penny.

Two bronze fragments of anti-aircraft shell and one Eley No. 12 cartridge case end.

Aluminium? plate 60mm x 37mm, advertising RINGERS A1 LIGHT TOBACCO. Probably part of a small box, mid 20th century; the firm operated from premises in Bristol.

Iron spike or peg 240mm long, probably for horticultural use, plus a few iron nails, *c* 60 to 155mm in length.

2.5 Miscellaneous:

Part of a modern carborundum hone, circular x-section (37mm diam.) tapering to one end.

A few fragments of coal, clinker & slate.

3. Summary

None of the above finds are of archaeological or intrinsic value. The pottery, for example, comprises commonly occurring and mass-produced fabrics such as refined white earthenware and transfer-printed ware, of 19th to 20th century date (more so the latter where clearly identifiable).

Overall the assemblage merely confirms the reworked and quite recent date of the upper soil horizon. Some of the finds may well relate to the recorded use of part of this area for allotment gardens, as shown on the 1930s Ordnance Survey.

Appendix III.

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

[Printable version](#)

OASIS ID: compassa1-21042

Project details

Project name	Surrey Street Well Replacement, Purley Way Playing Fields
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief was commissioned by Thames Water Utilities to oversee work on the Purley Way Playing Fields section of the Surrey Street Well Replacement scheme, London Borough of Croydon. The site is in an archaeological priority area, and in particular it was thought that evidence of a trackway that could be seen on historic maps of the area could be found during the works. The initial topsoil strip was very shallow (<150mm) and revealed mostly modern material, though it did yield some worked flint indicating later prehistoric activity in the area. The deeper pipe trench revealed no finds, but did provide evidence of the trackway. This was at a fairly shallow level, up to 7m wide and was made up of moderately compact chalk rubble and gravel.
Project dates	Start: 10-10-2006 End: 13-11-2006
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	PWF 06 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)
Current Land use	Other 14 - Recreational usage
Significant Finds	TRACKWAY Uncertain
Significant Finds	WORKED FLINT Uncertain

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON CROYDON PURLEY Surrey Street Well Replacement Scheme
Postcode	CR0
Study area	6000.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 3182 6368 51.3563641037 -0.106611484270 51 21 22 N 000 06 23 W Point
Height OD	Min: 61.00m Max: 72.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Compass Archaeology
Project brief originator	English Heritage/Department of Environment
Project design originator	Compass Archaeology
Project director/manager	Geoff Potter
Project supervisor	Christine Wilson
Type of sponsor/funding body	Water Authority/Company
Name of sponsor/funding body	Thames Water Utilities

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Museum of London archaeological archive
Physical Contents	'Worked stone/lithics'
Digital Archive recipient	Museum of London archive
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient	Museum of London Archive
Paper Media available	'Miscellaneous Material', 'Plan', 'Report', 'Section'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	A forthcoming report
Title	Surrey Street Well Replacement Scheme, Purley Way Playing Fields, London Borough of Croydon. Archaeological Observation and Recording
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Wilson, C
Other bibliographic details	Project 346
Date	2006
Issuer or publisher	Compass Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Compass Archaeology
Description	Spiral bound report, 24 pages
Entered by	Wilson, C (mail@compassarchaeology.co.uk)
Entered on	28 December 2006

Appendix IV. London Archaeologist Summary

Purley Way Playing Fields, Croydon (Surrey Street Well Replacement scheme). NGR: TQ 3182 6368. CA (Christine Wilson). Watching brief. October–November 2006. Thames Water Utilities. PWF06

Summary:

Observations took place on a new pipeline in the Purley Way Playing Fields section of the Surrey Street Well Replacement scheme. This is in an archaeological priority area, and is also crossed by a trackway that is recorded on 18th century and later maps.

The initial topsoil strip was very shallow and revealed mostly modern material, though it did yield some residual worked flint indicating later prehistoric activity. The deeper pipe trench revealed no finds, but did provide evidence for the trackway. This was up to 7m wide, with a single construction layer (<180mm) of moderately compact chalk rubble and gravel.

The trackway was probably a fairly minor route, and reference to historic maps suggests that it may be a relatively recent feature superimposed onto an established landscape.

The natural deposit comprised sandy clay with flint pebbles – probably a geologically recent colluvium - overlying weathered and decayed Upper Chalk.

References:

Compass Archaeology (July 2006) *Thames Water Utilities Ltd. Surrey Street Well Replacement Scheme.... Specification for a Programme of Archaeological Observation & Recording*

Potter, G, 1995 A prehistoric site at 542-46 Purley Way, Croydon. *London Archaeol* Vol. 7 (12), 307-12