

# PARLIAMENT HILL

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

An Archaeological Watching Brief & Metal Detector Survey



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## ***Abstract***

*Compass Archaeology conducted a watching brief during groundworks carried out on the summit of Parliament Hill to improve drainage. The works comprised four linear trenches between 250mm and 850mm deep, and predominantly 250mm wide.*

*In the central trench, Trench 2, linear feature [208] crossed the trench on a SW-NE alignment, approximately 160mm deep. The feature appeared to end as a rounded terminus at the SW end and contained 72 sherds of Late-Bronze Age / Early Iron Age pottery and two worked flints. The feature lies within a wider prehistoric landscape and may prove of considerable significance if subjected to further investigation.*

*Other periods represented included two fragments of Roman ceramic building material; one box flue tile and the other a possible tegula roof tile or alternatively a repurposed box flue tile.*

*In addition an area of brick surface immediately below existing ground level built from early-20<sup>th</sup> century material bearing the 'Phorpres' stamp and interpreted as a potential platform to house a truck-mounted anti-aircraft gun, or arc light during the First World War, or some form of beacon to commemorate the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953.*

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document sets out the background and arrangements for an archaeological watching brief and investigation to be carried out on and close to the summit of Parliament Hill, within the southeastern part Hampstead Heath (Fig.1). The fieldwork will take place prior to and during groundworks to improve the existing public paths and facilities (Fig.2).

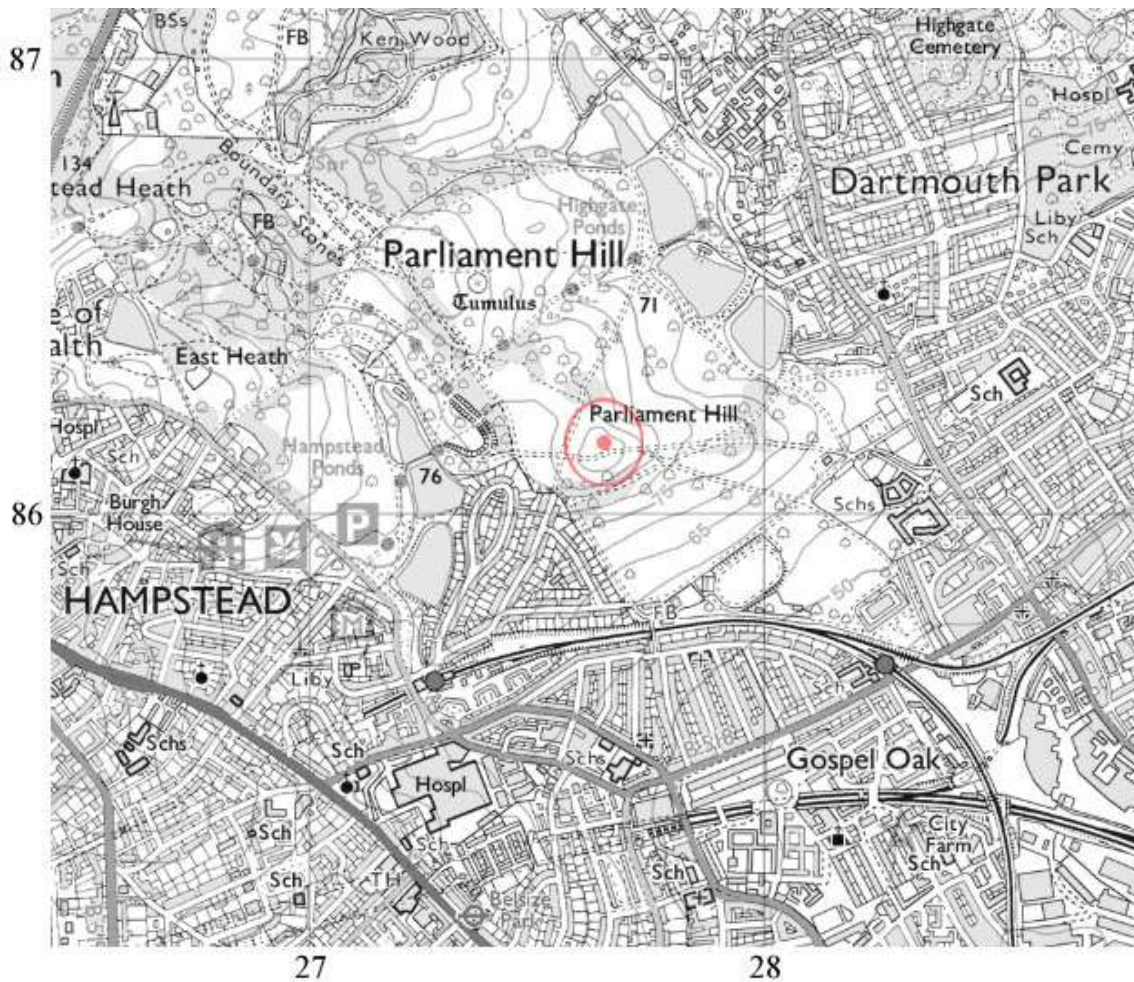


Fig.1: OS location plan showing the groundworks site ringed in red

1.2 The archaeological watching brief has been commissioned by the City of London Corporation, as the body responsible for the administration and upkeep of the Hill and surrounding Heath.

1.3 The site lies within an Open Space and Metropolitan Open Land of Hampstead Heath, as defined by the Borough Planning Policy Map, although it is not in a local Archaeological Priority Zone.

1.4 The anticipated depths of excavation are quite shallow (up to c 600mm; see section 5.1 below). However, the site does have potential for a range of archaeological evidence, from prehistory through to the 17<sup>th</sup> century and on to



defensive use during the First and possibly Second World Wars. Given the topographical location it is also likely that even ancient remains could be close to the present surface.

**1.5** Archaeological monitoring (including a metal detecting survey) will be carried out immediately in advance of and during contractors' groundworks, which are scheduled to start in early June 2017. Liaison will be maintained to ensure attendance at the most appropriate times. Potential archaeological remains and deposits will be investigated by hand, with recording and recovery of dating evidence as required.

The level of subsequent reporting will reflect the site record, but at a minimum will comprise a short illustrated report with a site plan located to the OS grid and details/interpretation of exposed deposits. A completed copy of the OASIS Data Collection Form will be appended, plus a note suitable for publication the *London Archaeologist* annual round-up. The site record will be deposited within the Museum of London Archive.

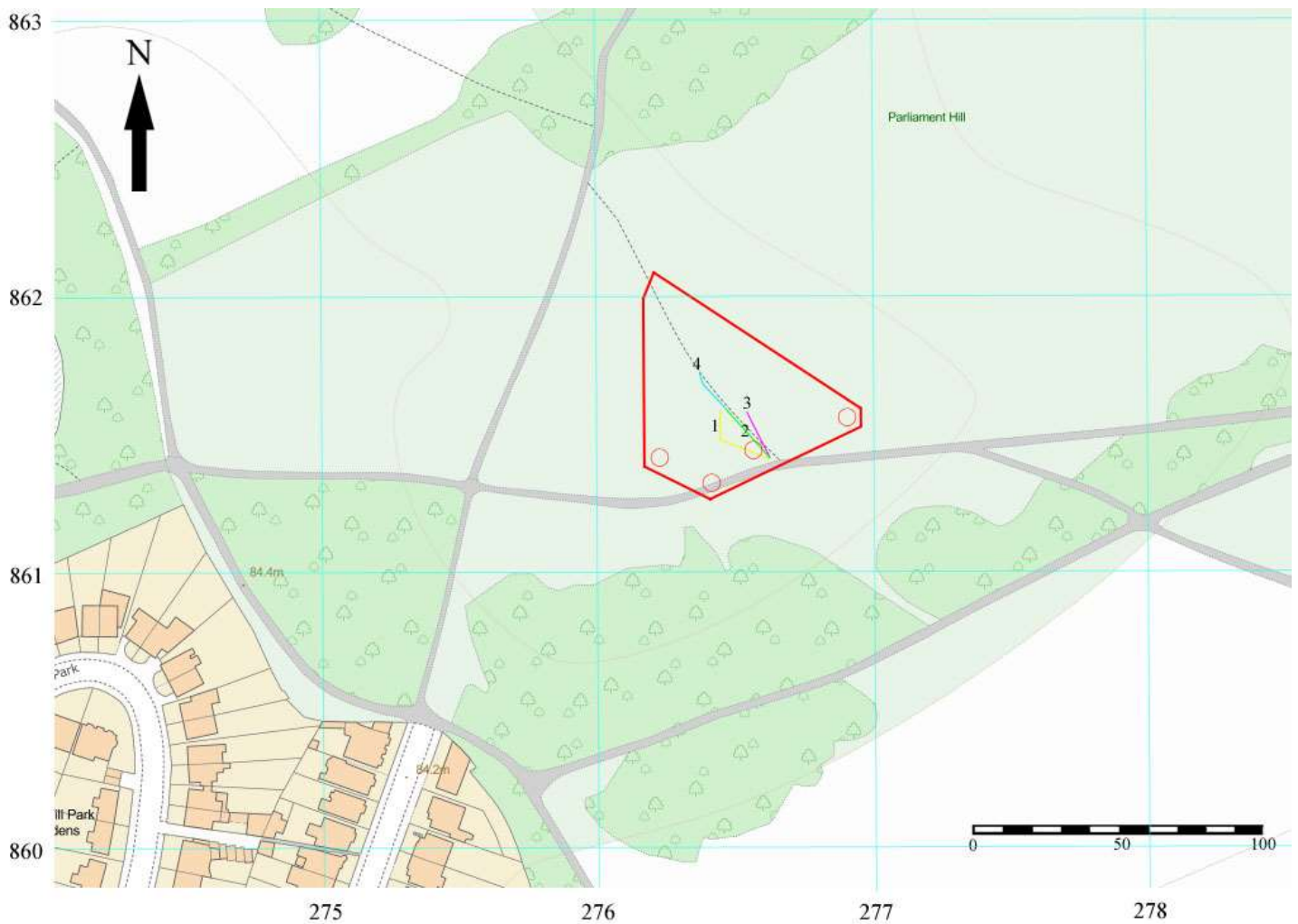


Fig.2: Site location plan trenches are numbered in the order of excavation and the circles indicate benches to be removed

## 2 SITE LOCATION AND GEOLOGY

2.1 The proposed works area is approximately centred at NGR TQ 2765 8615, and covers part of the summit and upper north/northeastern slopes of Parliament Hill. The Hill itself is one of the highest points in London, at a maximum elevation of c98m OD, and is much visited for its panoramic views of the capital's skyline.

2.2 According to the British Geological Survey (North London, England & Wales. Sheet 256) the site overlies Claygate deposits of the London Clay Formation (silt and fine-grained sand). This material is further overlain by Bagshot Formation Sand on the lower ground a few hundred metres to the west and northwest.

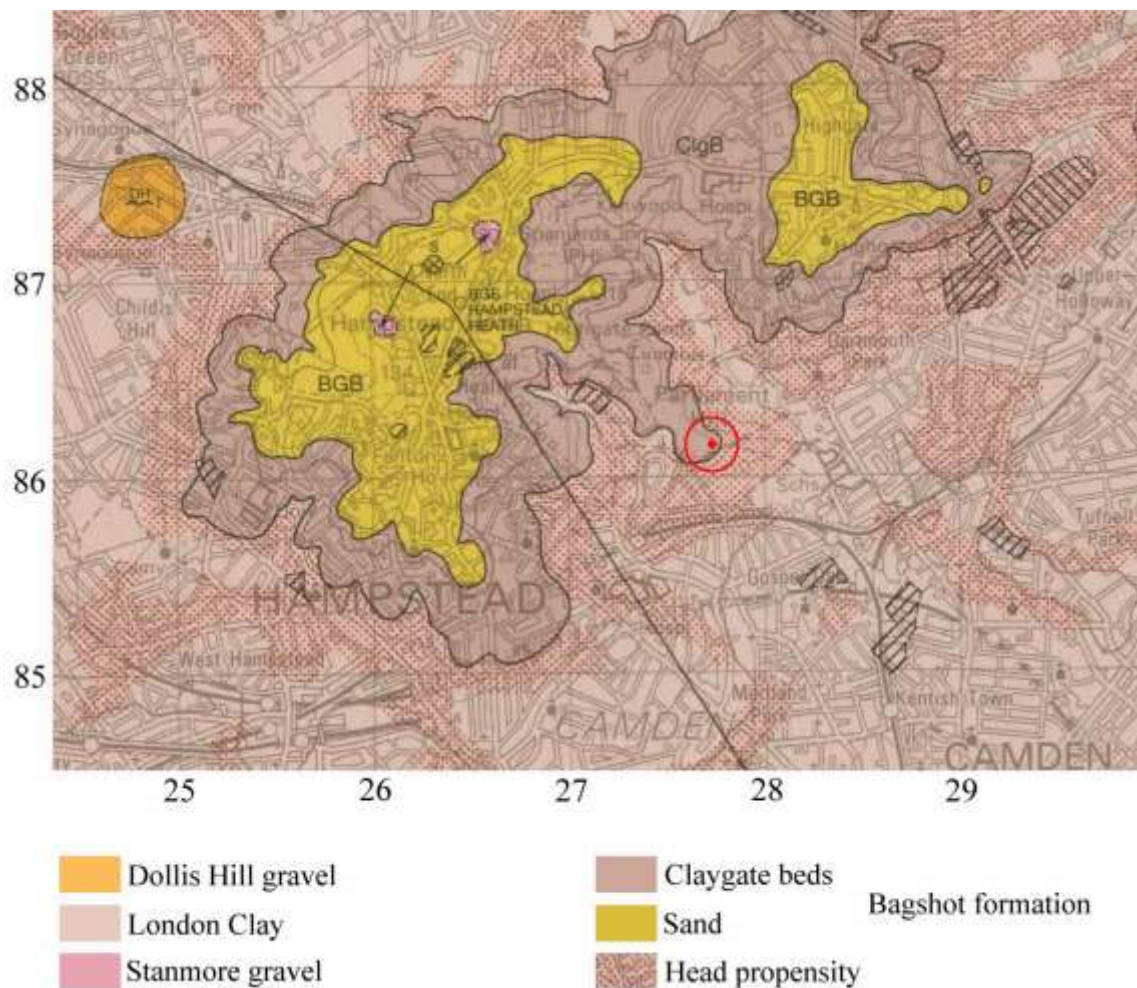


Fig.3: Extract from the British Geological Survey Sheet 256: North London. Approximate site location circled in red

### 3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORIC BACKGROUND

#### 3.1 Prehistoric

**3.1.1** This area has some potential for prehistoric remains, in particular relating to the early-middle Bronze Age.

**3.1.2** The most notable evidence for prehistoric activity is a tumulus or bell barrow (sometimes popularly referred to as *Boadicea's Grave*), located some 450m to the northwest of Parliament Hill (& as illustrated on Figs. 5 & 6 below). This feature is now a Scheduled Ancient Monument (list entry No: 1002059), and survives today as a large roughly circular-shaped earthen mound some 36m in diameter and up to 3m high, with vestiges of a surrounding ditch some 5-6m across (from which material to construct the barrow would have been derived). Although partially excavated in 1894 only fragments of charcoal were recovered: it was suggested by the excavator that any human remains had wholly decayed due to the acidity of the soil. However, it is reported that a chance find of several silver items – subsequently registered as treasure trove – was made in 1892 (Weinreb & Hibbert 1983, 585).



Fig.4: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 5 foot: mile Edition of 1894-96, (London Sheets II.80 /90 & III.71 /81)



## **3.2 Roman - Medieval**

**3.2.1** There is little evidence of Roman activity in the vicinity, but a Saxon boundary and ditch is recorded just to the southwest of the Hill, running roughly southeast northwest and continuing between the Tumulus and Hampstead Ponds. Further possible Saxon or later medieval boundary lines have also been identified to the north of the Hill (City of London 2008).

## **3.3 Post-medieval**

**3.3.1** Parliament Hill has had several previous names – including Traitors' Hill, supposedly an allusion to it being the site from which the Gunpowder Plot conspirators planned to watch the destruction of the Houses of Parliament on the 5<sup>th</sup> November 1605. It also appears to have been referred to as *Brock Hill* in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, although it is suggested the present name derives from occupation by Parliamentary troops during the Civil War of the 1640s. This is certainly possible – given its' elevation and commanding views the Hill may well have had some contemporary military value. A later and still current name is Kite Hill, reflecting a popular pastime here from the later-19<sup>th</sup> century onwards; the land having been purchased for public use in 1888 for the sum of more than £300,000. It may well have been as a result of the land purchase that a new path was established crossing the summit of the Hill and southern boundary of the present site (*cf.* Fig.6).

**3.3.2** The Hill certainly played a military role during the Great War, when it formed part of a defensive network to protect London against attack from the air. An anti-aircraft battery was established here by 1915 and apparently manned by the RNVR. During a raid on London by Zeppelin L.13 on the night of 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> September 1915 it is recorded that a shell fired from the gun on Parliament Hill was the only one of twenty-six defending the capital to come close to the intruder, which was then forced to climb steeply before making her escape.

Records from 1916 indicate that an anti-aircraft section comprised up to forty-three men, including both gun crews and those operating acetylene-lit searchlights. In May 1917 the defences on Parliament Hill were reorganised as part of the central sub-command, with 3-inch AA guns supplied by the beginning of 1918.

**3.3.3** As well as military and public use livestock also continued to be reared on the Hill until the 1940s, and sold through the London meat market at Smithfields. Concurrent with this manorial rights to the land also remained in private hands until lapsing in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. It would seem likely that the Hill was also used for military purposes during the Second World War, at least by the Observer Corps, although no specific reference has been found for this.

#### 4 ARCHAEOLOGY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The fieldwork presented an opportunity to address several research questions:

- Is there any evidence for prehistoric activity or associated features?
- Is there any evidence for Saxon or medieval activity?
- Is there evidence for earlier post-medieval activity or features? Can these be related (at least potentially) to the reputed military occupation of the Hill by Parliamentary forces during the Civil War?
- What evidence is there for later post medieval activity, and can any of this be related to the use of the Hill as an anti-aircraft position during the Great War?
- Is there any evidence for military use of the Hill during the Second World War?
- At what levels are any archaeological deposits, and also natural horizons, present across the site?

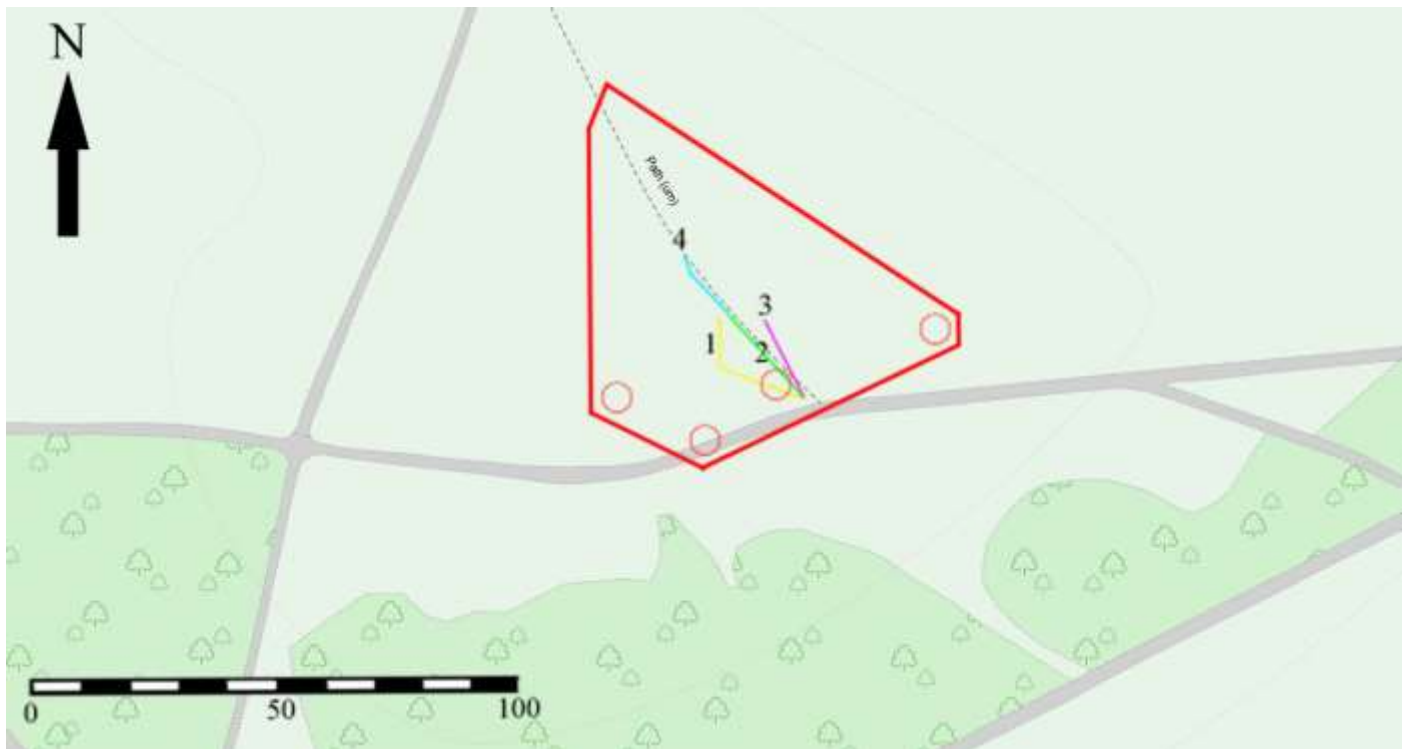


Fig.5: Site plan showing location of the groundworks, trenches are numbered in the order of excavation and the circles indicate benches to be removed

## **5 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROGRAMME**

### **5.1 The proposed works**

A number of works were to be undertaken on the top of Parliament Hill in order to improve public access and use. These changes have been marked up on Figure 4 above and included the following:

- Excavation of an estimated three drainage gulleys down the slope of the hill, each c 15m in length and approximately 500-600mm in depth.
- Repairs to existing paths and power harrowing of an area of heavily consolidated ground on the northern side of the summit. The limited depth of these works in light of observations in the drainage gulleys meant that this process was not monitored.
- Removal of four public benches and installation of new seats slightly lower down the slope. It is anticipated that the main ground disturbance will occur with the removal of the existing concrete bases, the new screw fixings being much less intrusive. In the event these works were not observed due to the perceived lack of a significant impact.

### **5.2 Standards**

The field and post-excavation work was carried out in accordance with Historic England guidelines (*Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service: Guidelines for Archaeological Projects in Greater London*). Works also conformed to the standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (*Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief*). Overall management of the project was undertaken by a full Member of the Institute.

Fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the Construction (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations. All members of the fieldwork team held CSCS (Construction Skills Certificate Scheme) Cards, and were equipped with PPE as required. All members of the fieldwork team would also follow contractors' health and safety guidelines.

### **5.3 Fieldwork**

An initial metal detector survey of the site was undertaken before groundworks commenced. An archaeological watching brief and further detecting was conducted during groundworks for the proposed improvements as described above (5.1), with investigation and recording of any potential archaeological remains or deposits.

Where archaeological remains were exposed adequate time was allowed for investigation and recording, although every effort was made not to disrupt the

contractor's programme. During excavation spoil from archaeological levels was deposited separately, in such a way as to facilitate examination.

#### **5.4 Methodology**

Archaeological deposits and features were investigated and recorded in stratigraphic sequence, and finds dating and environmental evidence recovered. Additional techniques were applied as appropriate, more specifically, metal detecting.

Archaeological contexts were recorded as appropriate on *pro-forma* sheets by written and measured description, and drawn in plan and section, at a scale of 1:20. The investigations were recorded on a general site plan and related to the Ordnance Survey grid. The fieldwork record was supplemented by digital photography (24.7mp), in .jpeg and RAW formats.

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

The Client and Historic England were advised of the progress of the fieldwork, and in particular of any significant finds or remains that were exposed and that may require additional work.

### **6 POST-EXCAVATION AND REPORT PROCEDURE**

The fieldwork was followed by off-site assessment and compilation of a written and illustrated report, and by ordering and deposition of the site archive.

#### **6.1 Finds and samples**

Assessment of finds was undertaken by appropriately qualified staff (see Appendix I). 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*'. All identified finds and artefacts have been retained and bagged with unique numbers related to the context record. Sensitive artefacts will be properly treated, in line with the appropriate Standards.

## **6.2 Report procedure**

Copies of this report will be supplied to the Client, Historic England (GLAAS) and the HER.

The report contains a description of the fieldwork plus details of any archaeological remains or finds, and an interpretation of the associated deposits. Illustrations have been included as appropriate, including at a minimum a site plan located to the OS grid. A short summary of the project has been appended using the OASIS Data Collection Form, and in paragraph form suitable for publication within the 'excavation round-up' of the *London Archaeologist*.

There is no provision for further analysis or publication of significant findings. Should these be made the requirements would need to be discussed and agreed with the Client.

## **6.3 The site archive**

Assuming that no further work is required, an ordered indexed and internally consistent archive of the evaluation will be compiled in line with MoL *Guidelines for the Preparation of Archaeological Archives*, and will be deposited in the Museum of London Archaeological Archive. The integrity of the site archive should be maintained, and the landowner will be urged to donate any archaeological finds to the Museum.



## 7 RESULTS

**7.1** What follows is a written description of the trenches as excavated, detailing observations made, accompanied by illustrative photographs to highlight key findings. Contexts are shown in the text in rounded brackets, (xxx), for deposits, and squared brackets, [xxx], for cut features. Contexts are prefixed with the trench number in which they were observed; therefore (100) and (101) were present in Trench 1, contexts (201) - [221] were observed in Trench 2 and so on.

### 7.2 THE METAL DETECTOR SURVEY

**7.2.1** An initial sweep of the work site produced a large number of lost coins, (16 in total; and of all denominations from 1p to £1), and discarded bottle tops / ring pulls, (31), along with a single copper alloy button and four pieces of silver wrapping foil. All in all the kind of surface detritus you would expect on any large open space.

**7.2.2** Surveys of the individual trenches open and during excavation revealed little more of interest, and largely similar finds including both decimal and pre-decimal coinage, (the latter represent by a 1927 6d and a later-Victorian farthing), along with various bottle tops / ring pulls, strips of lead and hollow tubing reminiscent of cable sheathing, and the occasional nail or screw. All finds are deemed accidental losses or simply litter left over from previous works / visitors.

**7.2.3** The single metal find of any intrinsic interest was an epaulette badge depicting a flaming grenade, and attributed to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers. The plain style of the badge suggests a pre-1920s date, and probably of the First World War period.



Fig.6: *Epaulette badge of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers found in Trench 3*

### 7.3 TRENCH 1

**7.3.1** Trench 1, was dug in two sections; the northernmost measuring 10.20m long and aligned NE-SW and another measuring 17.20m and aligned NW-SE. Both sections of trench measured approximately 0.25m wide and were dug between 0.35m and 0.45m deep.

**7.3.2** Observed stratigraphy included (102); natural brown-orange sandy-silty-clay deposits at the base of the trench and comprising the lowermost 0.15m of the trench. This was overlain by up to 0.15m of pale-brown-orange subsoil containing occasional rounded flint pebbles, (101) sealed below a compacted sandy-silty grey-brown topsoil, (100), between 0.10m and 0.15m thick.



*Fig.7: Sample section through NW-SE aligned arm of Trench 1, facing west, 0.6m scale*

## 7.4 TRENCH 2

**7.4.1** Trench 2 was the central trench, excavated NW-SE from near the east-west path crossing the brow of the hill and extending across the platform at the top of the hill for 23.50m. The trench was dug 0.25m wide, (later extended up to 0.85m over feature [208]), and up to 0.70m deep.

**7.4.2** Natural geology, (209), was exposed from 0.60m below ground level comprised of compacted mid-brown-orange-russet sandy-clay.

**7.4.3** The natural deposit was cut by shallow, linear, cut [208] aligned SW-NE across the trench. The feature was no more than 0.18m deep where excavated. The feature was present c15.20 from the northwestern end of the trench extending for at least 5.00m north of this point and being at least 1.20m wide. The cut appeared to curve west, back into the section forming a rounded terminus at the southern end, (figs.8 and 11). The feature was backfilled with a pale-brown silty-sand, (207), containing 13 sherds of pottery thought to represent at least nine different vessels, and two flints, providing a provisional date of Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age, c800BC<sup>1</sup>. The feature was cut along its eastern side and in the terminal end by several small stake-holes; [211], [213], [215], [217], [219], and [221] measuring 50mm to 600mm in diameter and up to 50mm deep. These were infilled with a dark-grey sandy-silt.



Fig.8: *Cut [208]  
facing NW, 0.5m  
scale*

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix I



Fig.9: Section through Trench 2 over feature [208] facing NNW, 0.80m scale

**7.4.4** Feature [208] and the associated stake-holes were sealed below a very dark-grey, charcoal flecked, silt, (206), measuring up to 0.24m thick. The deposit was thicker towards the terminal end of [208], thinning out towards the northern end of the exposed feature. It produced a substantial quantity of flint-tempered and sand-tempered pottery, including several decorated sherds; showing signs of combing, scoring and impressing<sup>2</sup>. The concentration of pottery towards the perceived terminal end of the feature is significant and may indicate a ritual deposition typical of the period. The collection itself is thought to be one of the largest of its kind in the nearby vicinity and certainly the first of its kind in this location. Deposit (206) was not present beyond the end of the cut for [208], but may have survived as spread (205) which shared some of its qualities, but produced no pottery to the south. It may be that (205) represents eroded / slumped / disturbed material derived from (206).

**7.4.5** Deposits (205), and (206) were sealed below a thick build-up of mid-brown orange subsoil containing rare flint pebbles, and root disturbances, (204). This layer was between 0.26m and 0.36m thick. This in turn was overlain by extant topsoil and compacted path material comprised of a pale-brown sandy-silt containing frequent rounded pebbles, (200). For the trench stratigraphy see figs.9 and 12.

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix I



**7.4.6** Approximately 12.75m south of the northern end of the trench was a brick surface comprised of roughly placed, dry-laid bricks dated to the early-20<sup>th</sup> century, bearing the 'Phorpres' stamp inside the frogged surface. The bricks measured on average 230mm long x 110mm wide x 60mm thick, (fig.10). This layer, (201), was a single brick thick and lay on top of a shallow deposit of pebble-rich made ground up to 0.20m thick, (202). The bricks and made ground had been laid within a shallow cut within the topsoil, [203]. The surface was approximately 2.5m<sup>2</sup> and aligned on a NE-SW axis.



Fig.10: *Brickwork (201) facing N, 0.5m scale*

**7.4.7** It is presumed that this feature may have served as some form of temporary, hastily-built, platform for either a truck-mounted anti-aircraft gun or arc-light during the war or maybe a beacon site during the coronation celebrations of Queen Elizabeth II.



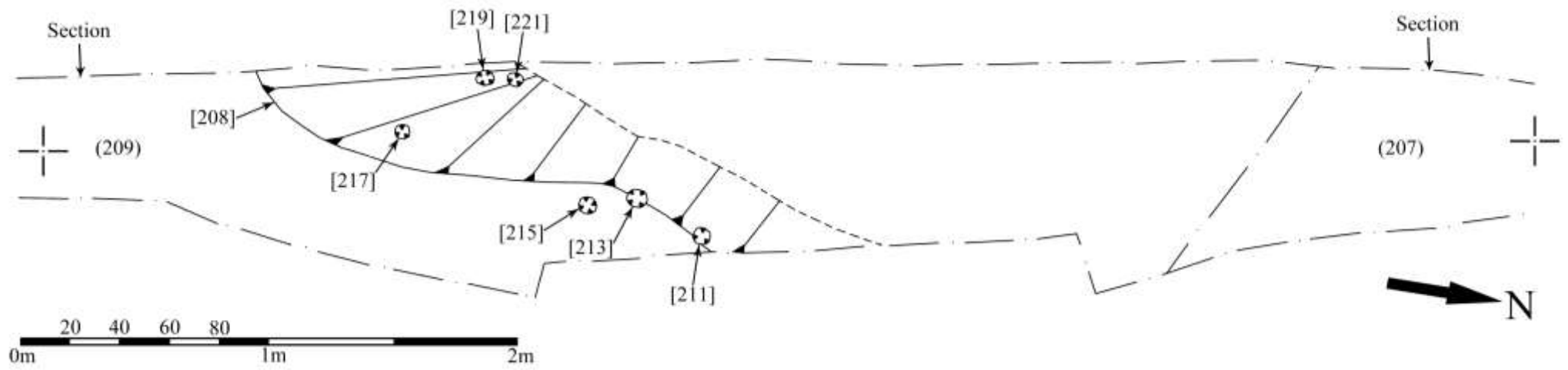


Fig.11: Plan of Trench 2

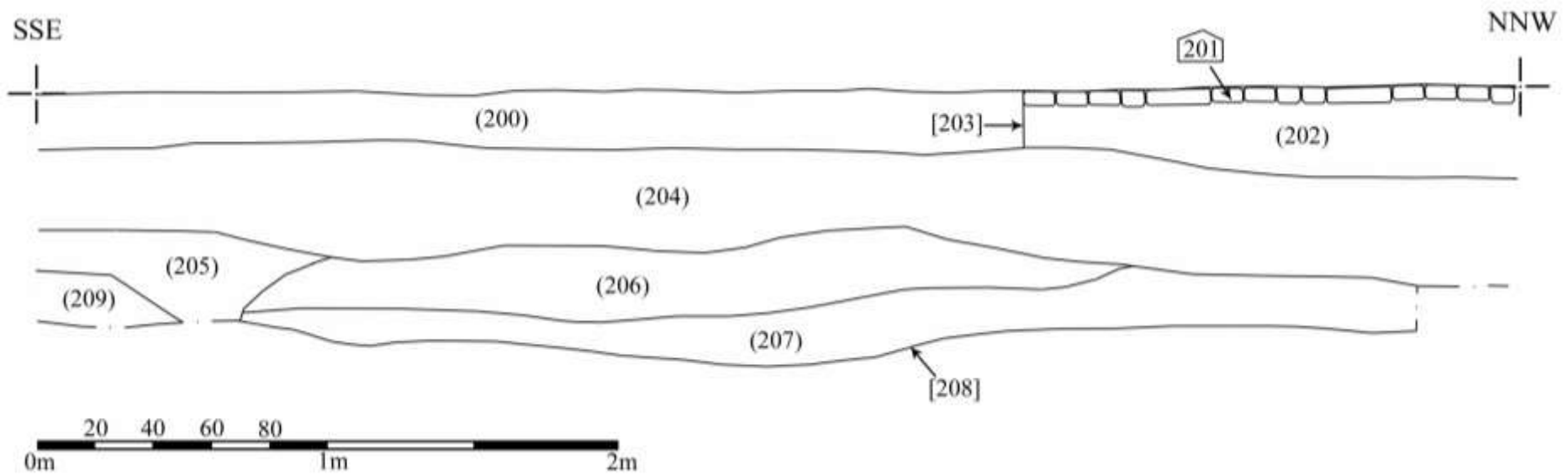


Fig.12: East-facing section through Trench 2

## 7.5 TRENCH 3

**7.5.1** Trench 3 was the easternmost of the trenches dug and measured 17m long, 0.25m wide and between 0.25m to 0.45m deep making it the shallowest of the trenches excavated. The trench was aligned NNW-SSE.

**7.5.2** Natural deposits were not reached in this trench due to the relatively shallow depth of the excavations. Subsoil (301) of a mottled brown-grey-orange hue and comprised of a sandy-silt between 0.29m and 0.31m thick at the deepest part of the trench and continuing below the base of the trench. This was overlain by a grey sandy-silty topsoil (300), from 0.13m and up to 0.20m thick, and containing frequent rounded pebbles, (fig.13).

**7.5.3** A single fragment of Roman box-flue tile was found within the subsoil, (301), showing signs of secondary use; the surface having been further reduced as if by additional firing or subjection to intense heat.



Fig.13: *Section through Trench 3, facing ENE, 0.20m scale*

## 7.6 TRENCH 4

**7.6.1** Trench 4 was dug as an extension of Trench 2, continuing the line of the gully NW from the brow of the hill and further downslope. The Trench measured c15.00m long by 0.50m wide and between 0.50m and 0.65m deep. The trench was dug to provide additional drainage coverage but also to see if the feature recorded in Trench 2, [208], continued round the crest of the hill.

**7.6.2** Natural geological deposits of mottled orange-brown silty-clay (402) was present from between 0.33m to 0.50m below ground surface, being first found at a deeper depth higher up the hill, (fig.14). Natural geology was overlain by up to 0.30m of a strong-brown clay-silt (401), containing rare flint pebbles and CBM / pottery fragments, including early post-medieval glazed ware, blue and white transfer-printed-ware and a fragment of possible Roman box-flue-tile or tegula. These deposits were sealed below the compacted grey-brown sandy-loam forming the extant footpath, (400).

**7.6.3** The presence of Roman tile up on this high spot is tantalising to say the least. It would seem highly unlikely that it would have found its way to the spot by accident, and if not then may indicate some form of structure stood close by.



Fig.14: *East-facing section through Trench 4, facing W, 0.6m scale*



*Fig.15: Working shot of Trench 4, facing NNW*

## **8 CONCLUSIONS**

**8.1** The watching brief has proved successful in several ways; helping inform us as to the levels of natural ground across the site; the levels at which archaeological deposits survive; and some indications as to the nature of those deposits. We will now return to the research questions set out in the original WSI and pass comment based upon the findings so far.

**8.2** Is there any evidence for prehistoric activity or associated features?

*It is clear that the site was utilised by some of the earliest prehistoric communities who left behind significant evidence of how they used the landscape. This includes physical evidence in the form of a linear feature on the top of the hill, which produced a substantial quantity of Late Bronze Age / Early Iron Age pottery.*

**8.3** Is there any evidence for Saxon or medieval activity?

*No evidence of Saxon or medieval activity on the site was revealed during the watching brief.*

**8.4** Is there evidence for earlier post-medieval activity or features? Can these be related (at least potentially) to the reputed military occupation of the Hill by Parliamentary forces during the Civil War?

*Only a small number of sherds of earlier post-medieval pottery were recorded from the subsoil of Trenches 2 and 4. These sherds were relatively fresh, with minimal abrasion suggesting they were primary deposition, but do not indicate intensive use of the site, but rather typical 'background noise'. No evidence of Civil War period use of the site was observed.*

**8.5** What evidence is there for later post medieval activity, and can any of this be related to the use of the Hill as an anti-aircraft position during the Great War?

*The brick surface exposed in Trench 2 comprised early 20<sup>th</sup> century material, and could potentially have been associated with some form of platform for a truck-mounted anti-aircraft gun or arc-light. It is possible that the*

**8.6** Is there any evidence for military use of the Hill during the Second World War?

*Note the answer to the previous question above.*



- 8.7** At what levels are any archaeological deposits, and also natural horizons, present across the site?

*Archaeological deposits were only encountered in and isolated section of Trench 2. The uppermost levels of archaeology were immediately below the surface with the brick surface, 201, and the prehistoric feature was c0.60m below existing ground level.*

*Natural geology was sporadically exposed across the four trenches, from as little as 0.33m below existing ground level, and at its lowest was first exposed at 0.60m below ground level, comprised of a mottled orange-brown sandy-silty-clay.*

- 8.8** It is clear that the site has high potential to contain significant remains relating to the prehistoric period, specifically the Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age. Considering the rarity of the find and its seeming uniqueness in the immediate vicinity it is of considerable importance.

- 8.9** The presence of Roman building material in the form of two fragments of box-flue-tile is of significance in that it indicates the presence of some form of structure in the nearby vicinity. Of note is the fact that at least one of these fragments shows signs of secondary use, (with the surface having been reduced), in a similar way to Saxon practice of using Roman material as the base for hearths<sup>3</sup>. This may be tentatively interpreted as evidence of a Saxon presence on the site, maybe reusing an earlier prehistoric monument as the base for later ritual activity?

- 8.10** The evidence recovered from the watching brief would suggest that Parliament Hill played an important role in a wider landscape and may have been the focus for some form of monument from the earliest times. The presence of Roman and possibly later activity also indicates a continuity of use / perceived importance of the site and if confirmed through further investigation could prove of local / regional importance.

- 8.11** Any further excavation works in this area should be monitored closely under archaeological supervision. If it is deemed appropriate the site is a good candidate for targeted archaeological investigations, focussing on research into the sites form, role and function during the prehistoric and Roman periods.

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<sup>3</sup> Pers.comm. Sue Pringle, 04.07.17

## 9 SOURCES

### 9.1 Digital Sources

Greater London Historic Environment Record. [GLHER@HistoricEngland.org.uk](mailto:GLHER@HistoricEngland.org.uk)

London Archaeological Archive & Resource Centre (LAARC) database.  
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**APPENDIX I:** Worked flint and pottery by *Jon Cotton*

**Parliament Hill, LB Camden (PMN17): A preliminary finds appraisal**

Small assemblages of prehistoric pottery and struck flint from Parliament Hill, LB Camden were presented for appraisal. The finds were recovered by Compass Archaeology from successive fills of a shallow, apparently linear feature located during drainage improvement works. The site location is SE of Boudica's Grave close to the summit of Parliament Hill and between two streams that form the headwaters of the river Fleet.

**The pottery**

A total of 72 sherds weighing 749g and representing over 20 separate vessels was recovered from successive fills of a shallow linear cut, contexts [206] (upper fill) and [207] (lower fill). (These figures do not include two fragments of fired clay from context [206], weighing 24g.) As Table 1 makes clear, over 80% of the ceramic assemblage was recovered from upper fill [206].

Two main ceramic fabric groupings were readily identifiable in hand specimen, comprising flint-tempered (FLIN) and sand-tempered (SAND) sherds. Across both contexts, FLIN outnumbered SAND 5:1 by sherd count, 4.6:1 by weight, and 3:1 by ENV. Vessel forms comprised round-shouldered jars and bi-conical and round-shouldered bowls, the former mainly in FLIN fabrics, and the latter wholly in SAND fabrics.

Surface treatment included finger-smearing, wiping and smoothing, with traces of burnishing on several of the fine SAND bowls. Decoration incorporated finger impressions on one rim, and on the shoulders of several jar forms. One fingertip impressed FLIN jar also had traces of external combed decoration, with non-conjoining sherds belonging to the same vessel present in both contexts. One fine SAND bowl had traces of tooled decoration on its rounded shoulder carination.

*Table 1: Pottery from contexts [206] and [207] (SC=sherd count; ENV=estimated number of vessels)*

|                   | <b>FLIN</b> |            |               | <b>SAND</b> |            |               |
|-------------------|-------------|------------|---------------|-------------|------------|---------------|
| <b>Context No</b> | <b>SC</b>   | <b>ENV</b> | <b>Wt (g)</b> | <b>SC</b>   | <b>ENV</b> | <b>Wt (g)</b> |
| <b>206</b>        | 50          | 11         | 494           | 9           | 4          | 129           |
| <b>207</b>        | 10          | 7          | 122           | 3           | 2          | 4             |
| <b>Totals</b>     | <b>60</b>   | <b>18</b>  | <b>616</b>    | <b>12</b>   | <b>6</b>   | <b>133</b>    |

*Dating and affinities*

All but one small sherd of sand-tempered (?Roman) pottery can be confidently identified as prehistoric. Although small the prehistoric ceramic assemblage is made up of material diagnostic of Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age vessel types, expressed in terms of fabric, form and decoration. The presence of SAND fabrics, and of decorated sherds indicates that the bulk of the assemblage is likely to post-date 800 BC, at a time of gradual ceramic change along the Thames valley. As such, the Parliament Hill Fields assemblage is best described as belonging to the Early Iron Age, in conventional terminology.

Elements of the assemblage find ready parallels on sites further to the west such as Heathrow Runway 1 (west extension) Site K (Canham 1978), and Stockley Park, Dawley. Ceramic assemblages of Early Iron Age date are thinner on the ground towards modern central London, though potentially comparable material has been reported from Isleworth (Bell 1996) and Brentford (Knight and Cotton 2016). Furthermore, a small mixed Iron Age ceramic assemblage lies further down the Fleet valley from Parliament Hill at the Engineer's Car Park site in Clerkenwell (ENG84; Lyn Blackmore pers comm).

If the character of the ceramic assemblage – a mix of coarser FLIN jars and fine SAND bowls – is not untypical of Thames valley assemblages, its context and topographic location is less easily accounted for, and may require further field investigation. The nature of the activity represented by the apparently linear feature remains unclear, although it must presumably relate in some way to the headwaters of the river Fleet, one of the more prominent of the capital’s now lost rivers. Early activity has been noted around the headwaters of other tributary streams, such as the Carshalton and Croydon Wandle, and the river Hogsmill at Ewell, for example.

### Struck flint

A total of nine pieces of struck flint were recovered: five from three stratified contexts, and four from un-stratified contexts (see Table 2). Apart from a single bladelet with a shallow notch from context [204], none of the material had been retouched.

Table 2: Struck flint from all contexts

| Cxt           | Flake (frag) | Bladelet          | Chip/spall | Other           | Total    |
|---------------|--------------|-------------------|------------|-----------------|----------|
| +             | (1)          | 1                 | 1          | 1 tested pebble | 4        |
| 204           |              | 1 (shallow notch) |            |                 | 1        |
| 206           | 1 (1*)       |                   |            |                 | 2        |
| 207           | 2            |                   |            |                 | 2        |
| <b>Totals</b> | <b>3 (2)</b> | <b>2</b>          | <b>1</b>   | <b>1</b>        | <b>9</b> |

The small size of the lithic assemblage and lack of diagnostic pieces makes close dating impossible. However, the presence of sherds of Early Iron Age pottery in two of the contexts suggests that at least some of the struck flint is likely to be of later prehistoric date (as Humphrey 2007).

### References

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Knight, H and Cotton, J, 2016 ‘An Iron Age enclosure at Commerce Road, Brentford’, in *London Archaeologist* 14 (7), 191-95

**APPENDIX II:** Catalogue of the metal detector survey

| Context      | Bottle tops / ring pulls | Cu alloy obj | Iron obj | Lead obj                                | Steel obj | Brass obj | Coinage (Decimal) | Coinage (Pre-dec.)                                                                | Other                                                                                                                 |
|--------------|--------------------------|--------------|----------|-----------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Surface scan | 31                       | 1 x button   |          | 1 x lead strip                          |           |           | 16                |                                                                                   | 4 x silver foil                                                                                                       |
| (101)        | 7                        |              | 1 x nail | 3 x pieces of tubing (cable sheathing?) | 1 x tube  | 1 x screw | 6                 | 1 x 6d (1927)                                                                     | 3 x silver foil                                                                                                       |
| (204)        | 6                        | 1 x button   | 1 x nail |                                         |           |           |                   |                                                                                   | 1 x spoke nut<br>1 x fragment of .22 cartridge                                                                        |
| (301)        | 9                        |              |          | 2 x strips<br>1 x tube                  |           | 1 x screw | 6                 | 1 x farthing;<br>Head of Victoria pre-1895 form.<br>Exergue for date so post 1860 | 1 x Epaulette badge of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers; plain flaming grenade style<br>5 x silver foil |

### APPENDIX III: OASIS data collection form

#### OASIS ID: [compassa1-289422](#)

##### Project details

|                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Project name                           | Watching brief and metal detector survey on Parliament Hill                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Short description of the project       | Compass Archaeology conducted a watching brief during groundworks carried out on the summit of Parliament Hill to improve drainage. The works comprised four linear trenches between 250mm and 850mm deep, and predominantly 250mm wide. In the central trench, Trench 2, linear feature [208] crossed the trench on a SW-NE alignment, approximately 160mm deep. The feature appeared to end as a rounded terminus at the SW end and contained 72 sherds of Late-Bronze Age / Early Iron Age pottery and two worked flints. The feature lies within a wider prehistoric landscape and may prove of considerable significance if subjected to further investigation. Other periods represented included two fragments of Roman ceramic building material; one box flue tile and the other a possible tegula roof tile or alternatively a repurposed box flue tile. In addition an area of brick surface immediately below existing ground level built from early-20th century material bearing the 'Phorpres' stamp and interpreted as a potential platform to house a truck-mounted anti-aircraft gun, or arc light during the First World War, or some form of beacon to commemorate the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953. |
| Project dates                          | Start: 06-07-2017 End: 12-07-2017                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Previous/future work                   | No / Not known                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Any associated project reference codes | PMN17 - Sitecode                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Type of project                        | Recording project                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Current Land use                       | Other 14 - Recreational usage                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Monument type                          | LINEAR FEATURE Late Bronze Age                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Monument type                          | BRICK SURFACE Modern                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Significant Finds                      | WORKED FLINT Late Prehistoric                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Significant Finds                      | POTTERY Late Bronze Age                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Significant Finds                      | POTTERY Early Iron Age                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Significant Finds                      | POTTERY Post Medieval                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Significant Finds                      | EPAULETTE Modern                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Significant Finds                      | COINS Modern                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Investigation type                     | "Watching Brief"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Prompt                                 | Voluntary/self-interest                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

##### Project location

|                  |                                                                           |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Country          | England                                                                   |
| Site location    | GREATER LONDON CAMDEN HAMPSTEAD Parliament Hill                           |
| Postcode         | NW3 1BP                                                                   |
| Study area       | 24.5 Square metres                                                        |
| Site coordinates | TQ 2765 8615 51.559277127029 -0.158361112855 51 33 33 N 000 09 30 W Point |



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### Project creators

|                              |                            |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Name of Organisation         | Compass Archaeology        |
| Project brief originator     | Historic England           |
| Project design originator    | Compass Archaeology        |
| Project director/manager     | Geoff Potter               |
| Project supervisor           | James Aaronson             |
| Type of sponsor/funding body | City of London Corporation |
| Name of sponsor/funding body | City of London Corporation |

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### Project archives

|                            |                                                                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Physical Archive recipient | Museum of London archaeological archive                                     |
| Physical Contents          | "Metal", "Worked stone/lithics", "Ceramics"                                 |
| Digital Archive recipient  | Museum of London Archaeological Archive                                     |
| Digital Media available    | "Images raster / digital photography", "Text"                               |
| Paper Archive recipient    | Museum of London Archaeological Archive                                     |
| Paper Media available      | "Context sheet", "Map", "Photograph", "Plan", "Section", "Unpublished Text" |

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### Project bibliography 1

|                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Publication type              | Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Title                         | PARLIAMENT HILL LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN An Archaeological Watching Brief and Metal Detector Survey                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Author(s)/Editor(s)           | Aaronson, J                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Date                          | 2017                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Issuer or publisher           | Compass Archaeology                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Place of issue or publication | 250 York Road, Battersea, SW11 3SJ                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Description                   | A brief summary of the watching brief including; the background to the groundworks, the archaeological and historic background, observations made and descriptions of the features and stratigraphy, conclusions reached, supplemented by plans, sections, and illustrative photographs. Attached OASIS form and London Archaeologist fieldwork round-up |

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#### **APPENDIX IV: London Archaeologist fieldwork round-up**

**Drainage improvement works on Parliament Hill, Hampstead Heath, NW3 1BP, TQ 2765 8615**  
James Aaronson Watching brief 6<sup>th</sup> June – 12<sup>th</sup> June 2017 The City of London Corporation PMN17

Compass Archaeology conducted a watching brief during groundworks carried out on the summit of Parliament Hill to improve drainage. The works comprised four linear trenches between 250mm and 850mm deep, and predominantly 250mm wide.

In the central trench, Trench 2, linear feature [208] crossed the trench on a SW-NE alignment, approximately 160mm deep. The feature appeared to end as a rounded terminus at the SW end and contained 72 sherds of Late-Bronze Age / Early Iron Age pottery and two worked flints. The feature lies within a wider prehistoric landscape and may prove of considerable significance if subjected to further investigation.

Other periods represented included two fragments of Roman ceramic building material; one box flue tile and the other a possible tegula roof tile or alternatively a repurposed box flue tile.

In addition an area of brick surface immediately below existing ground level built from early-20<sup>th</sup> century material bearing the 'Phorpres' stamp and interpreted as a potential platform to house a truck-mounted anti-aircraft gun, or arc light during the First World War, or some form of beacon to commemorate the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953.