

**THAMES WATER MAINS REHABILITATION
WORKS, SEAFORD ROAD, LONDON BOROUGH OF
EALING, W13 9HS**

An Archaeological Watching Brief



September 2018

THAMES WATER MAINS REHABILITATION WORKS
SEAFORD ROAD, LONDON BOROUGH OF EALING,
W13 9HS

An Archaeological Watching Brief

Site code: SED18
Approximate site centre: NGR TQ 16677 80126

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Abstract

Between the 24th May and 3rd July 2018 Compass Archaeology conducted an Archaeological Watching Brief at Seaford Road, London Borough of Ealing W13 9HS during groundworks associated with the installation of a new water main. The work was commissioned by Claire Hallybone, Senior Archaeologist, Thames Water and undertaken by Instalcom.

The programme of archaeological works entailed the monitoring of the completion of over 200m of open-cut trenching along the western side of Seaford Road carriageway. The trench measured an average of 0.4 – 0.5m in width x 0.8 – 1.1m in depth (c21.2mOD). A number of shorter east-west lengths were also completed to connect the new network to individual residential properties and to accommodate the installation of valves and hydrants.

The stratigraphy recorded was uniform throughout, comprising the existing tarmac road surface (1) overlying a layer of post-medieval brick rubble (2) and loose black asphalt (3). This made ground is taken to be a levelling layer associated with the creation of the late 19th – early 20th century estate and road. Context (3) overlay a homogenous deposit of compact orange-brown clay/silt, taken to be the natural Langley Silt, continuing below the extent of excavation.

No features associated with the land use prior to the creation of the present estate were observed and no finds were recovered.

Contents

	Page	
1	Introduction	1
2	Acknowledgments	1
3	Site Location, Geology and Topography	2
4	Archaeological and Historic Background	3
5	Planning and Objectives	9
6	Methodology	11
7	Results	13
8	Conclusion	17
9	Sources	18
	Appendix I – List of Contexts	20
	Appendix II – OASIS Recording Form	21

List of figures

	Page
Fig.1 Site location, marked in red.	1
Fig.2 Extract from the British Geological Survey (sheets 256 and 270)	2
Fig.3 Saucer brooches from Seward's Pit, Hanwell	4
Fig.4 Extract from Rocque's Map of London (1746)	5
Fig.5 Extract from Bassett's Survey of Ealing (1777)	6
Fig.6 Extract from the OS 6-inch map (1864-6)	7
Fig.7 Extract from the OS 6-inch map (1912)	8
Fig.8 OS plan showing the scope of works monitored	9
Fig.9 Working shot. Facing approximately N	13
Fig.10 Stratigraphy observed at the southern end of Seaford Road. Facing NNE-NE. Scale 1m	14
Fig.11 Stratigraphy observed adjacent to Glenfield Terrace. Facing SE. Scale 1m	15
Fig.12 Working shot. Looking towards Bonchurch Road. Facing NNE	15
Fig.13 Stratigraphy observed between Glenfield Terrace and Milford Road. Facing N. Scale 1m	16

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document forms a summary of the results of an archaeological watching brief conducted at Seaford Road, London Borough of Ealing, W13 9HS by Compass Archaeology between the 24th May and 3rd July 2018 (fig.1).

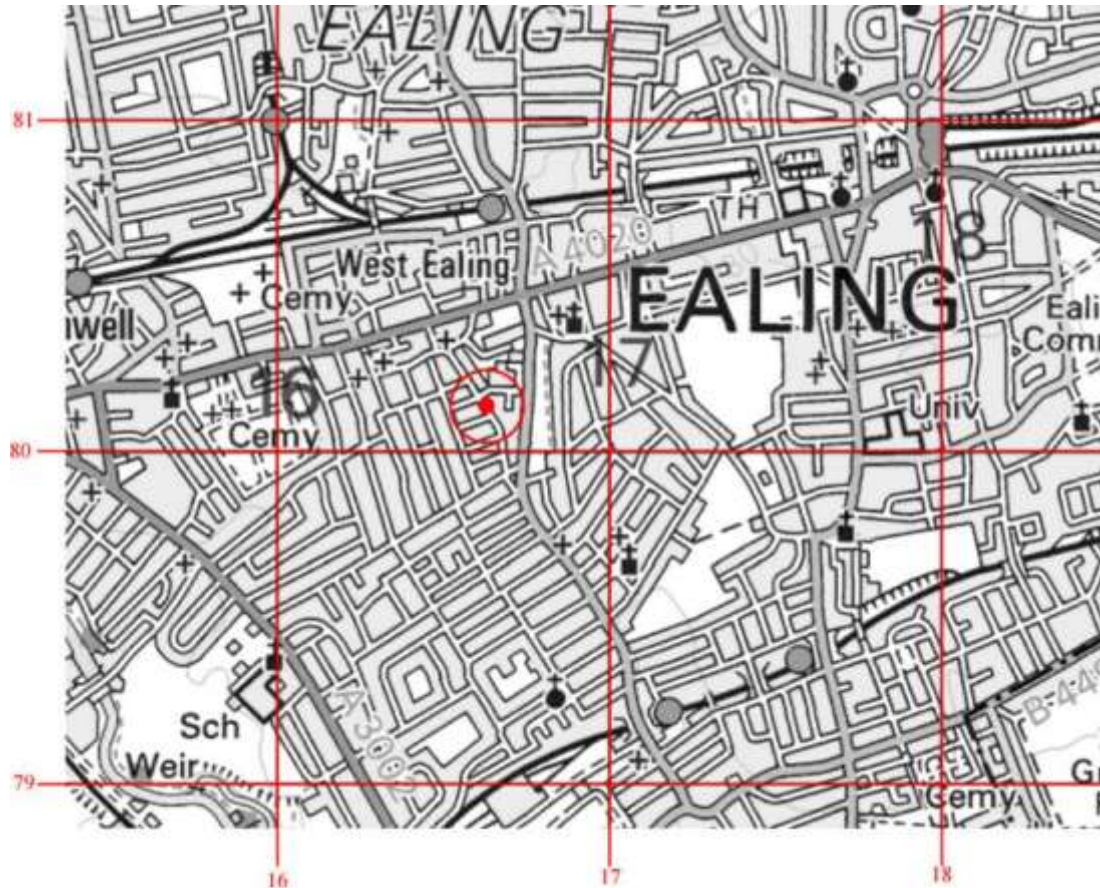


Figure 1: Site location, marked in red.

- 1.2 The watching brief was commissioned by Claire Hallybone (Senior Archaeologist, Thames Water) due to the extensive nature of the works and the use of open-cut trenching in a potentially historic area.
- 1.3 The programme of archaeological works entailed the monitoring of the completion of c200m of open cut trenching along the length of Seaford Road, with additional shorter sections to accommodate the installation of new connections, valves and hydrants.
- 1.4 The mains rehabilitation scheme entailed the abandonment of the existing mains network and installation of a new polyethylene network.

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 2.1 Compass Archaeology would like to thank Claire Hallybone for commissioning Compass to undertake the archaeological watching brief and also to Gyorgy Szoba and Instalcom for ensuring accessibility and support on site during their groundworks.

3 SITE LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 3.1 The scheme is located along the length of Seaford Road, bounded by Leighton Road and Northfield Avenue to the south and Leeland Terrace to the north. The road runs approximately north-south, with the northernmost section running on a NNW-SSE alignment.
- 3.2 According to the British Geological Survey (sheets 256: North London and sheet 270: South London), the site overlies both Langley Silt and Lynch Hill Gravels. Langley Silt is a brickearth deposit while Lynch Hill Gravel is a post-diversionary Thames River Terrace Deposit (fig.2).
- 3.3 The site is relatively flat with a very slight slope from c24mOD at the northern end of Seaford Road to 22mOD at the south.



Figure 2: Extract from the British Geological Survey (sheets 256 and 270), with site location marked in red.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORIC BACKGROUND

The archaeological and historical background of the site was discussed at length in the preceding Written Scheme of Investigation (Compass Archaeology, May 2018) so shall not be reproduced. Included here is a summary of the major historical periods with reference to specific Greater London Historic Environment Record (GLHER) and cartographic sources.

4.1 *Prehistoric*

During the prehistoric period the area appears to have been well frequented, with a large quantity of tools being found in the vicinity, dating from the Palaeolithic to the Early Bronze Age period. The gravel geology of the area would have lent itself to prehistoric settlers, through given the lack of structural or cut features in the archaeological record, they may have been nomadic.

The plethora of flint tools found include handaxes and several different types of flake. These finds are likely to be residual, carried by floodwaters into the gravels deposited by the ancient courses of the River Thames.

The most significant evidence of prehistoric activity in the area surrounding the site is a large Sarsen standing stone, dated to the Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age (MLO283). The stone was recovered from a gravel pit nearby and is now on display in Elthorne Park. It is possible the stone represents some attempt to permanently settle in the area, or at least establish a marked point to return to.

4.2 *Roman*

In the Roman period settlement was focused within the city of *Londinium*, which extended from Ludgate Hill in the west to Aldgate / Tower Hill in the east – 15km east of the site. A number of well-established roads extended out of the city, the westernmost of these was Watling Street, which passed through Edgware to St Albans, nearly 10km to the north-east of Seaford Road.

4.3 *Saxon*

Ealing is thought to have developed during the Saxon period. Its name derives from *Gillingas* meaning ‘the people of Gilla’, probably the name of an Anglo-Saxon settler. The name went through a number of incarnations including Yealing, Zelling and Eling, before becoming Ealing in the 19th century.

A significant antiquarian find of seven Saxon burials and associated grave goods is recorded to have been discovered in 1886 on the site of the County Schools, Oakland Road (MLO271). The individuals were buried alongside spearheads, and it is theorised they were the casualties of war between the West Saxons and the Romano-British occupants of Middlesex (Sharpe 1912, 112). A photograph taken of the brooches worn by the individuals confirms they were indeed West Saxons, as they are decorated by the saucer pattern associated with the population (fig.3).

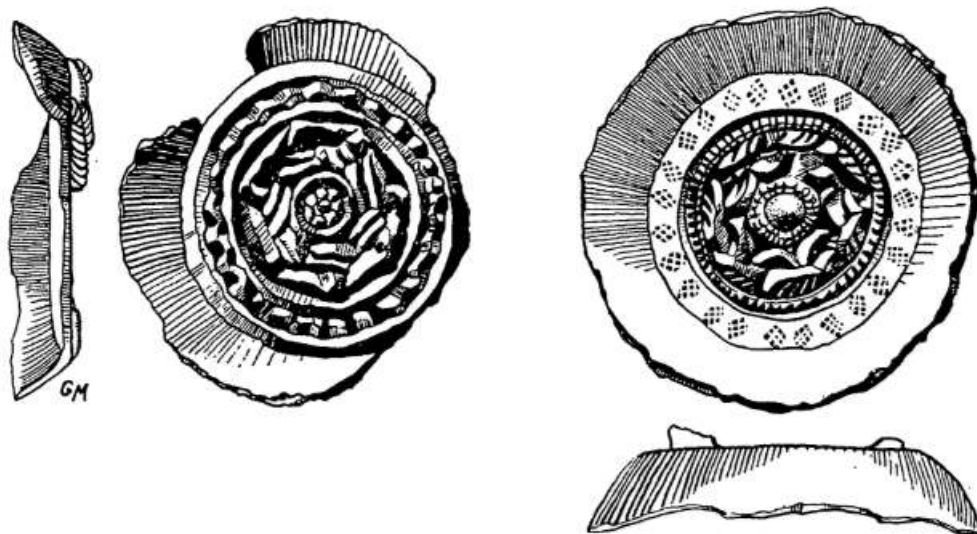


Figure 3: Saucer brooches (LM 49.107/967/969) from Seward's Pit, Hanwell. Actual size; Cockburn et al. 1969).

The battle from which these inhumations originated is thought to have happened in the mid-6th century between invading Saxons and the Romano-British inhabitants. The theory is that they clashed on the slope of Cuckoo Hill, c10km north-west of the site, which was known as 'The Bloody Croft' until the early 20th century (*ibid*). Hanwell is also thought to have derived its name from this engagement; *Heanwael*, meaning 'slaughter on high ground'. The Romano-British forces won and the Saxons retreated south to bury their dead.

Additional Saxon remains were found after the school was bombed in the Second World War, indicating the presence of a sizeable burial ground, though no further investigation has taken place.

4.4 *Medieval*

At the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086 Hanwell was an established settlement listed as described as farmland with a mill, home to around 100 inhabitants. This would indicate that it had been founded in the Saxon period. Ealing was not mentioned in Domesday as it was part of the larger manor of Fulham. The settlement of Ealing developed around St Mary's Road c500m east of the site. St Mary's Church was founded in c1130, with the first mention of Ealing also appearing around this time. Ealing was fairly rural during the medieval period, surrounded by farmland and pasture.

4.5 *Post-medieval*

Ealing remained a rural settlement, with development scattered along the main roads of St Mary's Road and Uxbridge Road until well into the mid-19th century (fig.4).



Figure 4: Extract from Rocque's Map of London (1746) with approximate location of Seaford Road marked in red.

The above extract from Rocque's Map of London shows Ealing in the mid-18th century as a sparsely developed ribbon settlement surrounded by open farmland. There is a fairly extensive road network linking the various hamlets together. St Mary's Road is the most developed, with buildings on both sides surrounded by more formally drawn gardens, potentially market gardens as well. Northfield Road is present, annotated as North Field Lane, running north-south between Ealing Dean and Little Ealing. Due to the fact that the road is named it is probable that it is significantly older, perhaps with medieval or Saxon origins. Seaford Road itself has yet to be constructed, with the Thames Water scheme lying over open fields, crossing one boundary.



Figure 6: Extract from the OS 6-inch map (1864-6) with Seaford Road marked in red.

The opening of the Great Western Railway in the 1830s contributed significantly to the changes that can be seen in the 1860s map. A station was opened at Ealing Broadway in 1838 causing a large amount of speculative building work to take place throughout the mid-1800s. These developments were mostly semi-detached residences, examples of which can be seen north of the site on Uxbridge Road. Further development in Ealing itself is beginning to obscure the countryside. Seaford Road remains open ground, though now annotated as a Nursey and drawn in detail, suggesting formal rows of planting.



Figure 7: Extract from the OS 6-inch map (1912) with Seaford Road marked in red.

In the early-20th century development was prolific. Charles Jones, Borough Surveyor from 1863-1913 was responsible for turning Ealing into a town, with the creation of new roads, utilities, schools and public buildings, as well as large housing estates. The countryside is much depleted, appearing only in the large parks such as Walpole and Lammas. Seaford Road is part of large estate that was constructed between 1894 and 1912, with rows of terraced housing named after Australian streets and cities.

Ealing has remained much the same since this period, with minor alterations here and there, including the construction of a new shopping centre in the centre of town in 1985, and a new development constructed in the mid to late-1900s between Seaford Road and Northfield Avenue over the erstwhile allotments.

5 PLANNING AND OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 The groundworks entailed the completion of over 200 metres of open-cut trenching along the western side of the main north-south carriageway. Shorter east-west sections were opened on the western side, linking the new network to the existing residential properties along the length of Seaford Road. The trenching measured an average of 0.4-0.5m in width x 0.8 – 1.1m in depth (c21.5 - 21.2mOD) (fig.8).



Figure 8: OS plan showing the scope of works monitored (red).

- 5.2 The works were undertaken via mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket to clear the bulk of the material, followed by hand excavation in narrower areas to allow for the installation of the new network.

Upon completion of each length of open-cut trenching the new PE main was installed and connected to an existing network.

- 5.3 The work followed the standards set out in the London Plan (*Chapter Seven: London's Living Spaces and Places*) which states that new developments are expected to align with the following procedures:

Historic Environment and Landscapes

Policy 7.8 *Heritage assets and archaeology*

Strategic

- A** *London's heritage assets and historic environment, including listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens and other natural and historic landscapes, conservation areas, World Heritage Sites, registered battlefields, scheduled monuments, archaeological remains and memorials should be identified, so that the desirability of sustaining and enhancing their significance and of utilising their positive role in place shaping can be taken into account.*
- B** *Development should incorporate measures that identify, record, interpret, protect and, where appropriate, present the site's archaeology.*

Planning decisions

- C** *Development should identify, value, conserve, restore, re-use and incorporate heritage assets, where appropriate.*
- D** *Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural design.*
- E** *New development should make provision for the protection of archaeological resources, landscapes, and significant memorials. The physical assets should, where possible, be made available to the public on-site. Where the archaeological asset or memorial cannot be preserved or managed on-site, provision must be made for the investigation, understanding, recording, dissemination and archiving of that asset.*

LDF Preparation

- F** *Boroughs should, in LDF policies, seek to maintain and enhance the contribution of built, landscaped and buried heritage to London's environmental quality, cultural identity and economy as part of managing London's ability to accommodate change and regeneration.*
- G** *Boroughs, in consultation with English Heritage, Natural England and other relevant statutory organisations, should include appropriate policies in their LDFs for identifying, protecting, enhancing and improving access to the historic environment and heritage assets and their settings where appropriate, and to archaeological assets, memorials and historic and natural landscape character within their area.*

5.4 The fieldwork presented the opportunity to answer the following general and more specific research questions:

- Is there any evidence of prehistoric activity or occupation? If so, what form does this take?
- Is there any evidence of the potentially Saxon or medieval origins of Northfield Avenue? If so, what form does this take?
- Is there any evidence of the footpath that can be seen in figure 5 crossing Seaford Road?
- If observed, what level does the natural geology appear at, and what form does it take?
- At what level were archaeological features encountered?

6 METHODOLOGY

6.1 Standards

6.1.1 The field and post-excavation work was carried out in accordance with Historic England guidelines (*Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service: Standards for Archaeological Work, 2015*). Works also conformed to the standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (*Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief 2014*). Overall management of the project was undertaken by a full member of the Chartered Institute.

6.1.2 Fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the Construction (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations. All members of the fieldwork team held valid CSCS (Construction Skills Certificate Scheme) cards, and wore hi-vis jackets, hard-hats, steel-toe-capped boots, etc., as required. All members of the fieldwork team also followed the contractors' health and safety guidelines.

6.1.3 The Client and Historic England were kept informed of the progress of fieldwork and any finds recovered.

6.2 Fieldwork

6.2.1 The archaeological watching brief took place during groundworks associated with a mains rehabilitation scheme along the length of Seaford Road. Over 200m of open-cut trenching were monitored and recorded between May and July 2018.

6.2.2 Archaeological contexts were recorded as appropriate on *pro-forma* sheets by written and measured description, and drawn in plan or section, generally at scales of 1:10 or 1:20. The investigations were recorded on a general site plan and related to the Ordnance Survey grid. Levels were taken on archaeological features or deposits, transferred from the nearest Ordnance Datum Benchmark, a spot height noted on

Ordnance Survey Plans *Leighton Road*, at 22.3mOD. The fieldwork record was supplemented by digital photography, in.jpeg and RAW formats, and shapefiles in .shp and .dwg formats.

- 6.2.3 The recording system followed the procedures set out in the Museum of London (MoL) recording manual. By agreement the recording and drawing sheets used are directly compatible with those developed by the Museum.

6.3 Post-excavation

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

6.3.1 Finds and samples

No finds or samples were recovered during the programme of archaeological monitoring.

6.4 Report procedure

- 6.4.1 This 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 a site plan located to the OS grid. A short summary of the project has been appended using the OASIS Data Collection Form.

- 6.4.2 Copies of this report will be supplied to the Client and Historic England.

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

6.5 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 under site code SED18. 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 The following forms a written description of observations made during the watching brief. Deposits are shown as (x), cuts and structures as [x]. The text is supplemented with illustrative photographs.
- 7.2 Trenching was undertaken from the southern end of Seaford Road working in a northerly direction. The trench was linear in plan, located on the western side of the carriageway, measuring between 0.4-0.5m in width (fig.9).



Figure 9: Working shot, showing the main trunk trench with spurs seen to the left of frame. Facing approximately N. No Scale.

7.3 The stratigraphy was uniform throughout all observable sections, comprising 160mm of the existing black tarmac road surface and bedding layer (1) overlying 210mm of loosely compacted post-medieval brick rubble (2). The rubble overlay 150mm of a loose black asphalt layer (3). Context (3) overlay a well compacted orange clay / silt, taken to be the natural geology (4), which measured a minimum of 370mm in thickness, continuing below the level of excavation (figs.10-13).



Figure 10: Stratigraphy observed at the southern end of Seaford Road. Approximately 0.4m of post-medieval and modern stratigraphy can be seen above natural clay. Facing NNE-NE. Scale 1m.



Figure 11: Stratigraphy observed adjacent to Glenfield Terrace. Facing SE. Scale 1m.



Figure 12: Working shot, looking towards Bonchurch Road. Facing NNE. No scale.



Figure 13: Stratigraphy observed between Glenfield Terrace, looking towards Bonchurch Road and Milford Road. Facing N. Scale 1m.

- 7.4** The limited stratigraphy encountered across the site is taken to be a reflection of the relative absence of development which has occurred in the area. Historically the site was open fields, which was then levelled, presumably using large amounts of rubble, context (2) when the current estate was created in the late 19th – early 20th century. Since its creation the area has undergone only minor changes, the most notable being the resurfacing of road to its current tarmac form.
- 7.5** No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed during the watching brief.

8 CONCLUSION

The following section provides a summary of the work undertaken with reference to the original research questions set out above.

8.1 *Is there any evidence of prehistoric activity or occupation? If so, what form does this take?*

No evidence of prehistoric activity or occupation was recorded during the watching brief. This is probably due to the relatively shallow depth of the groundworks, and what appeared to be a widespread truncation of land down to the natural geology, removing any potential earlier archaeology.

8.2 *Is there any evidence of the potentially Saxon or medieval origins of Northfield Avenue? If so, what form does this take?*

No features predating the post-medieval housing estate were observed, as detailed above this is likely to be due to truncation and the limited scope of the groundworks.

8.3 *Is there any evidence of the footpath shown on the 1777 plan of Ealing?*

The footpath marked on the 1777 plan of Ealing crosses Seaford Road between Bonchurch Road and Milford Road, however no variation in the observable stratigraphy was recorded. This is likely to be a combination of the widespread levelling seen across the site and the relatively ephemeral nature of a feature such as a footpath.

8.4 *If observed, what level does the natural geology appear at, and what form does it take?*

Langley Silt was observed across the entire length of the open-cut trenching at a depth of c0.6m (c21.7mOD). The deposit was well compacted, orange-brown in colour and homogenous throughout. Localised disturbances were noted where previous services had been installed. The natural is taken to continue below the level of excavation at c21.2mOD.

8.5 *At what level are archaeological features encountered?*

Post-medieval brick rubble was observed across the length of the open-cut trenching in both the east and west facing sections. The material, (2) and (3), was encountered beneath the existing road surface (1) at a depth of 0.16m, terminating at a depth of c0.52m where it overlay the natural clay / silt (4).

9 SOURCES

9.1 Digital Sources

Ealing Council. Local History https://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/201130/area_history

Greater London Historic Environment Record. glher@HistoricEngland.org.uk

London Archaeological Archive & Resource Centre (LAARC) database. <http://archive.museumoflondon.org.uk/laarc/caralogue/>

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Cockburn J.S., King H.P.F., and McDonnell K.G.T. (eds.). (1969). 'Archaeology: The Pagan Saxon Period', in *A History of the County of Middlesex: Volume 1, Physique, Archaeology, Domesday, Ecclesiastical Organization, the Jews, Religious Houses, Education of Working Classes to 1870, Private Education from Sixteenth Century*. Accessed online: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/middx/vol1/pp74-79#fnn19>

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Hibbert, B. & Weinreb, C. (1983). *The London Encyclopaedia*.

Historic England. (2015). *Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service: Guidelines for Archaeological Projects in Greater London*.

Historic England. (2015). *Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service: Standards for Archaeological Work*.

Mayor of London. (2015). *The London Plan*.

9.3 Cartographic sources (chronological order)

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Bassett A. (1777). *An actual survey and Plan of the Processional Boundaries of the Parish of Ealing.*

Ordnance Survey. (1864). *Six-inch-to-the-mile.*

Ordnance Survey. (1912). *Six-inch-to-the-mile.*

APPENDIX I: LIST OF CONTEXTS

Number	Description
(1)	Tarmac road surface and bedding layer
(2)	Post-medieval brick rubble below (1)
(3)	Looser black asphalt below (2)
(4)	Natural clay

APPENDIX II: OASIS RECORDING FORM

OASIS ID: compassa1-327494

Project details

Project name	Thames Water Mains Rehabilitation Works, Seaford Road, London Borough of Ealing W13 9HS
Short description of the project	Archaeological Watching Brief conducted on Thames Water mains rehabilitation works at Seaford Road, Ealing between the 24th May and 3rd July 2018. The programme monitored over 200m of open-cut trenching along the western side of the carriageway, with shorter east-west connections to each house on the road. Trenching measured 0.4-0.5m in width x 0.8-1.1m in depth. The stratigraphy observed throughout was uniform, comprising the existing road surface over post-medieval levelling rubble and natural clay. No finds or features were observed.
Project dates	Start: 24-05-2018 End: 03-07-2018
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	SED18 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Transport and Utilities 1 - Highways and road transport
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Water Act 1989 and subsequent code of practice

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON EALING EALING Seaford Road
Postcode	W13 9HS
Study area	200 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 516682 179918 50.940819743534 0.159020527088 50 56 26 N 000 09 32 E Line
Site coordinates	TQ 516621 180110 50.940993901927 0.158941753106 50 56 27 N 000 09 32 E Line
Height OD / Depth	Min: 21.9m Max: 22.4m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Compass Archaeology
Project brief originator	Thames Water Utilities Ltd
Project design originator	Compass Archaeology

Project director/manager	Geoff Potter
Project supervisor	Heidi Archer
Type of sponsor/funding body	Thames Water Utilities

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Museum of London Archaeological Archive
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	Museum of London Archaeological Archive
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Photograph", "Plan", "Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Thames Water Mains Rehabilitation Works, Seaford Road, London Borough of Ealing W13 9HS. An Archaeological Watching Brief.
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Archer, H.
Date	2018
Issuer or publisher	Compass Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	250 York Road, London SW11 3SJ
Description	A short report summarising the results of a watching brief. Report comprises background information, including local geology, historical and archaeological background, and details pertaining to the requirement for archaeological investigation. The second part comprises results of the trenching containing photographs, with an analysis and concluding remarks.