

**THE THRIVE BATTERSEA GARDEN PROJECT,
BATTERSEA PARK,
ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD, SW11

LONDON BOROUGH OF WANDSWORTH

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

July 2008

COMPASS



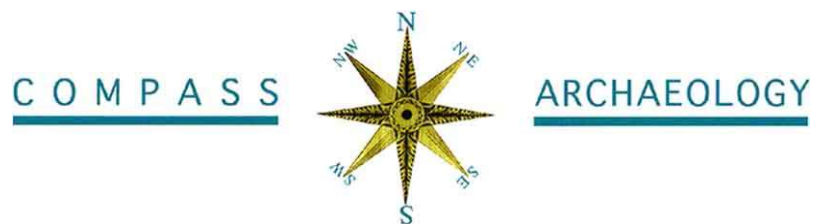
ARCHAEOLOGY

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ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD, SW 11
LONDON BOROUGH OF WANDSWORTH,**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

SITE CODE: TVB 08

SITE CENTRE NGR: TQ 2830 7745



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Abstract

This report describes the results of an archaeological watching brief at the Thrive Battersea Garden Project, Battersea Park, on 28th May 2008. The site is situated in the north-eastern corner of Battersea Park, on the north side of East Carriage Walk and adjacent to the tennis courts at NGR TQ 2830 7745.

The watching brief took place during investigative groundworks carried out by AP Geotechnics. The geotechnical groundworks involved the excavation of two hand-dug test pits and the drilling of five window sample boreholes. All the geotechnical works were observed for potential archaeological deposits and features. A further objective of the window sampling was to ascertain the nature and depth of natural deposits across the site.

'Thrive' is a national charity whose mission is to promote, educate and research the use and advantages of gardening for people with a disability. There are three areas in Battersea Park where Thrive operate and the site concerned currently contains a number of small buildings, potting beds and planted areas. As part of the Thrive Battersea Garden Project's current redevelopment scheme a proposed new building of approximately 120 square metres will replace several existing smaller buildings on the site.

The site area lies within an Archaeological Priority Area (APA) as defined by the LB of Wandsworth UDP. The area has been designated an APA because the river gravel terraces that survive in this area have yielded evidence for later prehistoric finds and occupation activity. These terraces have, however, been covered by 19th century reclamation layers. The present Park forms a registered Park and Garden.

Battersea Park was established in the early 1850s within an area of undeveloped, low-lying or marshy ground, which was prone to frequent flooding. The construction of the Park involved the dumping of some 0.75 million tons of made ground in order to build up the land and alleviate the flooding problems. This imported material was derived from construction of the Surrey Docks

No significant archaeological deposits were found in the test pits or window samples, although the level and nature of the natural River Terrace gravels was ascertained. This is thought to be at a general level of about +1.2m OD. These deposits are overlain by approximately 2m of made ground.

It is recommended that no further archaeological mitigation is required in consideration of the redevelopment works proposed by the Thrive Battersea Garden Project in this area of Battersea Park, although the topographic model for other areas of the park still remains unrecorded.

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1. Introduction

This report describes the results of an archaeological watching brief at the Thrive Battersea Garden Project, Battersea Park, on 28th May 2008. The site is situated in the north-eastern corner of Battersea Park, on the north side of East Carriage Walk and adjacent to the tennis courts. The site is located at NGR TQ 2830 7745 and its location in relation to the park is shown in figure 1.

The watching brief took place during investigative groundworks carried out by AP Geotechnics. The geotechnical groundworks involved the excavation of two hand-dug test pits and the drilling of five window sample boreholes, the locations of which are shown in figure 3. All the geotechnical works were observed for potential archaeological deposits and features. A further objective of the window sampling was to ascertain the nature and depth of natural deposits across the site.

‘Thrive’ is a national charity whose mission is to promote, educate and research the use and advantages of gardening for people with a disability. The Thrive Battersea Garden Project develops gardening programmes to help people learn new skills and improve their health and wellbeing through gardening. There are three areas in Battersea Park where Thrive operate and the site concerned currently contains a number of small buildings, potting beds and planted areas. The entrance to the site is shown in figure 3. As part of the Thrive Battersea Garden Project’s current redevelopment scheme a proposed new building of approximately 120m² will replace several existing smaller buildings on the site (*cf* figure 4). The archaeological brief, as established in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the project, is to ascertain whether the site has archaeological potential, and if so what further mitigation measures should be undertaken in relation to the proposed development¹.

2. Acknowledgements

Compass Archaeology would like to thank ‘Thrive’ for commissioning the archaeological watching brief and the following individuals:

Susan Stuart, Garden Manager, Thrive Battersea Garden Project
Richard Allwood and Richard Jones, Horticultural Therapists, Thrive Battersea Garden Project
Diane Walls, Archaeology Advisor English Heritage GLAAS
Helen Pedder, Pedder and Scampton Architects
Adrian Smith, Brian Whitnall and Jamie Priestman of A P Geotechnics

¹ Potter, G. 8th May 2008 ‘Written scheme of investigation for an archaeological watching brief during ground investigation works at the Thrive Battersea Garden Project, Battersea Park, London Borough of Wandsworth’ *Compass Archaeology in-house report*

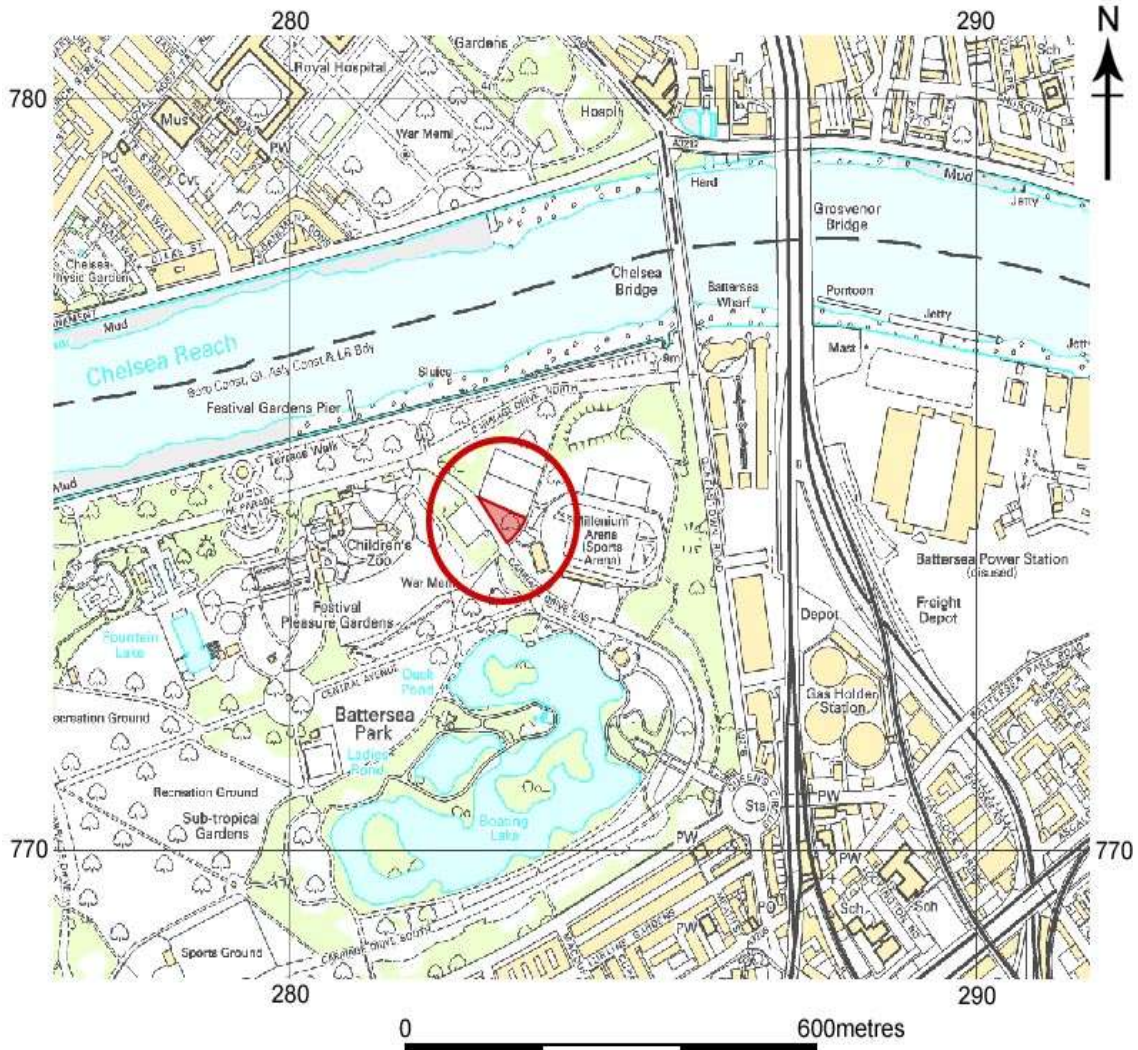


Figure 1 General location plan, showing the Thrive Battersea Garden Project site in red.

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3. Site Location and Geology

The site is located on the eastern side of Battersea Park and approximately centred at NGR TQ 2830 7745 (*cf* figure 1). The site surface morphology is essentially level at about +3.2m OD and undulations in the local topography are generally the results of landscaping elements in the park, with the natural topography being generally flat, with the River Thames just less than 200m to the north.

The geological map indicates that the site overlies a natural ground surface of Langley Silt a sandy clay and silt (Brickearth), which forms an extensive deposit over almost the whole area of the present Park (*cf* figure 2, British Geological Survey 1998. *South London, Sheet 270*). There is some alluvium in the southeast and southwest corners, and River Terrace gravel along the southern boundary of the park. Made ground is shown to the northeast of the site, and continuing across the river frontage and eastern end of the Park.

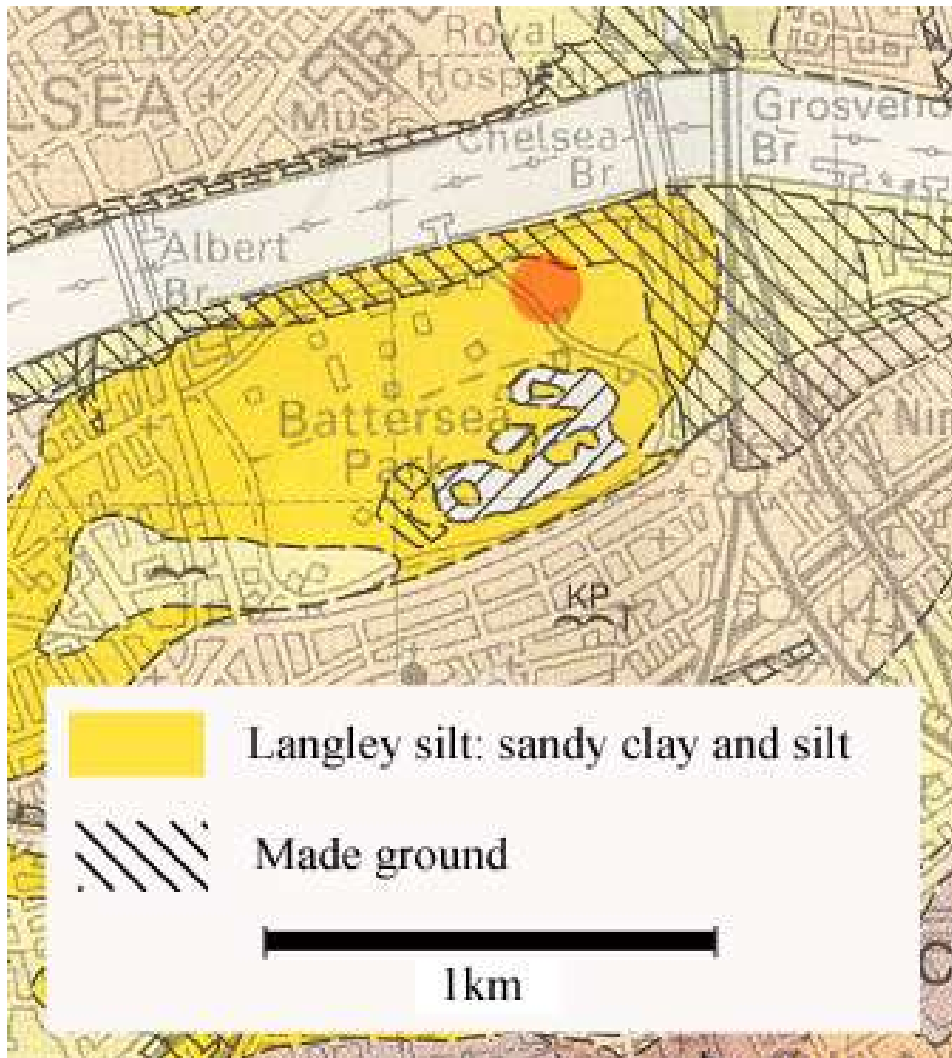


Figure 2 Extract from the British Geological Survey 1998. South London Sheet 270 showing the site location in red.

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4. Archaeological and Historical Background

The site area lies within an Archaeological Priority Area (APA) as defined by the LB of Wandsworth UDP. The area has been designated an APA because the River Terrace gravels that survive in this area have yielded evidence for later prehistoric finds and occupation activity. These terraces have, however, been covered by 19th century reclamation layers. The present Park forms a registered Park and Garden.

Battersea Park was established in the early 1850s within an area of undeveloped, low-lying or marshy ground, which was prone to frequent flooding. This marsh area appears on Rocque's map of c 1746 as *Battersea Common Field*, and at that time extended well to the south, east and west of the present Park boundaries. A similar picture is given by the first Ordnance Survey 2-inch: mile map (surveyors drawings 1804 & published 1822), which records the area as *Battersea Fields*.

The construction of the Park involved the dumping of some 0.75 million tons of made ground in order to build up the land and alleviate the flooding problems. This imported material was derived from construction of the Surrey Docks (Wandsworth Council website – *History of the Park*). The main features of the present Park – the carriage drives, Central Avenue and Boating Lake – were established by 1854, and are shown on Stanford's subsequent *Library Map* of 1862. This survey also shows a minor path (now lost) running southwest to northeast close to the southern end of the present site.

5. Objectives of the watching brief

The watching brief presented an opportunity to establish whether the site had archaeological potential, what the nature and depth of this was, and in the event of archaeological remains surviving what further measures might be undertaken.

Of particular relevance was the presence and depth of 19th century made ground (as it was not known whether these deposits extended into this area), and also the nature of the underlying surface and/or natural deposit, if exposed.

The project involved the monitoring of investigative groundworks carried out by AP Geotechnics. The geotechnical groundworks involved the excavation of two hand-dug test pits and the drilling of five window sample boreholes, the locations of which are shown in figure 3.

6. The Watching Brief

The field and post-excavation work was carried out in accordance with English Heritage guidelines (in particular, *Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork, Guidance Paper 3*).

The works also conformed to the standards of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (*Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*). Overall management of the project was undertaken by a full Member of the Institute.

By agreement, the recording system followed the procedures set out in the Museum of London recording manual.



Figure 3 Site plan showing the approximate location of the two test pits (blue) and the five window samples (green). The size of the TPs and WSs is obviously shown at a larger scale for identification purposes.

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6.1. Test Pits (TP 1 and 2)

Test Pit 1 was located to the rear of the wooden kitchen and toilet block building, centrally placed on the northern boundary of the site (*cf* figures 3 and 4). The test pit measured 0.56m NW-SE x 0.6m NE-SW and was hand excavated to a depth of 1.2m deep. The test pit was located between the rear of the wooden kitchen building and the fence of the tennis court.



Figure 4 General view of the location of Test Pit 1 (shown highlighted in red), looking southwest from the centre of the tennis courts to the north of the site.

Test Pit 2 was located just to the east of the entrance to the Thrive Battersea Garden Project site (*cf* figures 3 and 5). The test pit measured 0.38m NE-SW x 0.48m NW-SE and was hand excavated to a depth of 1.2m. The test pit was located in the south-west corner of a flower bed by the main entrance.



Figure 5 Entrance to the Thrive Battersea Garden Project, showing the excavation of test-pit 2 to the right of the image.



Figure 6 Detail of the area of Test Pit 2.

The deposits exposed in both test pits are consistent with the geological map (South London Sheet 270, figure 2), which shows 19th century made ground along the north and east region of Battersea Park. The test pits both revealed made ground to a depth of 1.2m (c. +2m OD). The shallow depth of excavation (just 1.2m) revealed only made ground in the form of a dark brown humic garden soil deposit with frequent inclusions of small concrete and CBM fragments, pebbles, gravel and sand and occasional inclusions of shell, bone and clay tobacco pipe stem (undateable). No archaeological deposits were found in either test pit.

The following table shows a summary of the deposits within each pit:

Test pit	Fill	Depth (m)
1	Dark brown silty humic garden soil deposit with CBM fragments, flint gravel, shells and clay pipes (made ground)	1.2
2	Backfill over dark brown humic, very compact, silty clay containing of concrete, brick, tile and flint with roots (made ground)	0 to 1
	Similar deposit to above but becoming more sandy from 1m depth.	1.2



Figure 7 Deposits in Test Pit 1 after full excavation to a depth of 1.2m (scale 0.5m).



Figure 8 View of deposits in test pit 2 after full excavation (scale 0.5m).

Figures 7 and 8 show general views of the excavated test pits and demonstrate their narrow width, allowing for economical excavation of the underlying deposits. As shown in the summary table above, made ground was excavated to 1.2m below ground level, TP 2 appeared to indicate the surface of a sandier silt deposit, possibly the brickearth shown on the geological map (Figure 2).

6.2 Window Samples (WS 1 –5)

Five geotechnical window samples were also drilled across the site and the logs from these works archaeologically assessed. The following table is a summary of the deposits in each window sample:

WS	Fill	Depth (m)
1	Topsoil	0.2
	Brown sandy clay with fragments of brick (made ground)	0.2 to 1.9
	Dense to medium dense orange sand and brown gravel	1.9 to 3.4
2	Topsoil	0.1
	Brown sandy clay with brick fragments and flint (made ground)	0.1 to 1.5
	Dense orange sand and gravel	1.5 to 4m
3	Topsoil and tree roots	0.2
	Brown clay and brick fragments (made ground)	0.2 to 1.9
	Dense becoming medium dense orange sand and gravel	1.9 to 3.6
4	Topsoil	0.1
	Brown clay and brick fragments (made ground)	0.1 to 1.5
	Brown clay (made ground)	1.5 to 1.9
	Dense becoming medium dense orange sand and gravel.	1.9 to 3.4
5	Topsoil	0.1
	Brown sandy clay and brick fragments (made ground)	0.1 to 2
	Dense orange sand	2 to 3m
	Medium dense orange wet sand	3 to 4m

(Deposit and depth information for the window samples provided by AP Geotechnics)

The summary table above shows that no significant archaeological deposits were recovered in any of the five window samples. 19th century made ground was observed in all five of the window samples: at depths of 1.9m below ground level in WS1; 1.5m in WS2; 1.9m in WS3; 1.9m in WS4 and 2m in WS5. These depths are broadly consistent with the levels of made ground excavated in both test pits. Dense orange natural gravel was observed below the made ground in all the samples. It is possible that the brown clay recorded at a depth of *c* 1.5m below current ground surface (approximately +1.7m OD) in WS4 and WS5 may represent a truncated band of the Langley Silt brickearth surviving in a small area of the truncated gravel surface, but this cannot be proven and this could equally represent a further deposit of imported made ground.



Figure 9 General view showing the extraction of window samples in the centre of the site (WS 4).



Figure 10 Similar view showing the extraction of WS 4.

7 Conclusion

No significant archaeological deposits were found in the test pits or window samples, although the level and nature of the natural River Terrace gravels was ascertained. This is thought to be at a general level of about +1.2m OD. These deposits are overlain by approximately 2m of made ground. It would appear unlikely that any significant archaeological remains survive on the site, as the made ground materials appear to date from the 19th century and are probably derived from the documented infilling of this area of Battersea with imported materials derived from the construction of the Surrey Docks (see Section 4).

It is recommended that no further archaeological mitigation is required in consideration of the redevelopment works proposed by the Thrive Battersea Garden Project in this area of Battersea Park, although the topographic model for other areas of the park still remains unrecorded.

Appendix I. OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

OASIS ID: compassa1-45526

Project details

Project name	Thrive Battersea Garden Project, Battersea Park, London Borough of Wandsworth
Short description of the project	Compass Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief at the Thrive Battersea Garden Project, Battersea Park, on 28th May 2008. The site is situated in the north-eastern corner of Battersea Park, on the north side of East Carriage Walk and adjacent to the tennis courts at NGR TQ 2830 7745. The watching brief took place during investigative groundworks carried out by AP Geotechnics. The geotechnical groundworks involved the excavation of two hand-dug test pits and the drilling of five window sample boreholes. All the geotechnical works were observed for potential archaeological deposits and features. A further objective of the window sampling was to ascertain the nature and depth of natural deposits across the site. As part of the Thrive Battersea Garden Project's current redevelopment scheme a proposed new building of approximately 120m ² will replace several existing smaller buildings on the site. The site area lies within an Archaeological Priority Area (APA) as defined by the LB of Wandsworth UDP. The area has been designated an APA because the river gravel terraces that survive in this area have yielded evidence for later prehistoric finds and occupation activity. These terraces have, however, been covered by 19th century reclamation layers. Battersea Park was established in the early 1850s within an area of undeveloped, low-lying or marshy ground, which was prone to frequent flooding. The construction of the Park involved the dumping of some 0.75 million tons of made ground in order to build up the land and alleviate the flooding problems. This imported material was derived from construction of the Surrey Docks. No significant archaeological deposits were found in the test pits or window samples, although the level and nature of the natural River Terrace gravels was ascertained. This is thought to be at a general level of about +1.2m OD. These deposits are overlain by approximately 2m of made ground.
Project dates	Start: 28-05-2008 End: 28-05-2008
Previous/future work	No / No
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Community Service 2 - Leisure and recreational buildings
Monument type	None
Monument type	None
Significant Finds	None
Significant Finds	None

Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON WANDSWORTH BATTERSEA Thrive Battersea Garden Project, Battersea Garden, London Borough of Wandsworth
Postcode	SW11
Study area	120.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 2830 7745 51.4809357094 -0.152156880151 51 28 51 N 000 09 07 W Point
Height OD	Min: 1.00m Max: 1.20m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Compass Archaeology
Project brief originator	English Heritage/Department of Environment
Project design originator	Compass Archaeology
Project director/manager	Geoff Potter
Project supervisor	Gill King
Type of sponsor/funding body	Other Charitable Trust
Name of sponsor/funding body	Thrive Battersea Garden Project
Project archives	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Museum of London archive
Digital Contents	'none'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient	Museum of London Archive
Paper Contents	'none'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet'

**Project
bibliography 1**

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	The Thrive Battersea Garden Project, Battersea Park, London Borough of Wandsworth. Archaeological watching brief
Author(s)/Editor(s)	King, G.
Date	2008
Issuer or publisher	Compass Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Compass Archaeology
Description	A4 Compass Archaeology in house developer report, 15 pages
URL	mail@compassarchaeology.co.uk
Entered by	Gill King (mail@compassarchaeology.co.uk)
Entered on	31 st July 2008

Appendix II. London Archaeologist summary

Site Address: Thrive Battersea Garden Project, Battersea Park, Albert Bridge Road, SW11

Project type: Watching Brief.

Dates of Fieldwork: 28 May 2008

Site Code: TVB 08

Supervisor: Gill King

NGR: TQ 2830 7745

Funding Body: Thrive

Compass Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief at the Thrive Battersea Garden Project, Battersea Park, on 28th May 2008. The watching brief took place during investigative groundworks carried out by AP Geotechnics. The geotechnical groundworks involved the excavation of two hand-dug test pits and the drilling of five window sample boreholes, the logs for which were archaeologically assessed. No archaeological deposits were found in the test pits or window samples, although the level and nature of the natural River Terrace gravels was ascertained at *circa* +1.2m OD. These deposits were overlain by approximately 2m of made ground and dumped deposits, these appear to relate to the 19th century importation of made ground to this part of Battersea from the construction of the Surrey Docks in the mid 19th century.