

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report  
161 Coombe Road  
London Borough of Croydon**

**NGR 533331 164790**

**ASE Project No: 4744**

**Site Code: CBR 12**

**ASE Report No: 2012082  
OASIS id: archaeol6-122123**

**By Giles Dawkes BA MIFA**

**April 2012**

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**Abstract**

*Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Mr Abid Siddiqui to undertake an archaeological watching brief during foundation work at 161 Coombe Road, London Borough of Croydon.*

*The monitoring of foundation trenches revealed topsoil over natural gravel natural. No archaeological finds, features or deposits were encountered. The topography of the site suggests the plot had been previously terraced into the west-facing slope.*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Background**

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA), Institute of Archaeology (IoA), University College London (UCL) was commissioned by Mr Abid Siddiqui to undertake an archaeological watching brief at 161 Coombe Road, London Borough of Croydon (Fig 1; NGR 533331 164790).

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

1.2.1 According to the British Geological Survey (Sheet 270 South London) the natural geology of the site is sand and gravels of the Harwich Formation.

1.2.2 The site is bounded to the east by Dittoncroft Close and elsewhere by residential properties. The site is level and seems to have been terraced into the west-facing slope by at least 1m.

### **1.3 Planning Background**

1.3.1 The proposed development comprises of the construction of a single residential dwelling inserted into the rear garden of an existing property.

1.3.2 Planning permission for the development has been granted (Application Reference Number: 10/03078/P) subject to an archaeological condition, recommended to the Head of Planning, Croydon Council by Mark Stevenson, Archaeology Advisor, Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS), which states:

*“No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only take place in accordance with the detailed scheme pursuant to this condition. The archaeological works shall be carried out by a suitably qualified investigating body acceptable to the Local Planning Authority.”*

*REASON: To safeguard the heritage of the Borough by providing an adequate opportunity to investigate and excavate archaeological remains on the site before development is carried out, in accordance with Policy UC11 of the Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (The Croydon Plan) 2006 Saved Policies.*

1.3.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the archaeological work was produced by ASE (2012) and was approved, prior to the commencement of work, by Mark Stevenson, Archaeological Advisor, Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS), London Region. This document outlined the methods to be used during the archaeological watching brief including that all works will be carried out in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists standards and guidance (IfA 2008) and the Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service's Archaeological Guidance Papers No's. 3 – 5 (EH 1998).

#### **1.4 Scope of Report**

1.4.1 This report details the findings of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by Giles Dawkes (Senior Archaeologist) on the 28<sup>th</sup> March 2012. The project was managed by Jon Sygrave (Project Manager) and Jim Stevenson (Project Manager, Post-Excavation).

## **2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

### **Prehistoric (500,000BC – 43AD)**

- 2.1 There is little evidence for early prehistoric remains in the area, thought to be due to a lack of clay and flint deposits overlying the natural chalk, an occurrence more prevalent in areas such as Sussex.
- 2.2 Towards the end of the Late Bronze Age there is an increase in artefactual and settlement evidence in the area although this is not continued into the Iron Age where, although artefactual evidence has been recorded on the HER, these are mostly all stray finds of pottery and worked flints.

### **Roman (43AD – 410AD)**

- 2.3 The Roman settlement at Croydon lies some distance to the west of the site and no evidence is noted within the immediate vicinity of this site. However, the line of the Roman road from London to Portslade is thought to run through Croydon, although the exact projection is not known.

### **Saxon and Medieval (410AD – 1500AD)**

- 2.4 There are no Saxon sites in the Greater London HER in the vicinity of the site. The site lies outside the medieval centre of Croydon, in the tithing of Coombe and Croham in an area later known as Park Hill. This name refers to Croydon Park, the deer park of the Archbishops of Canterbury, the boundary of which (the 'park pale') survives as the prominent diagonal hedgerow immediately north of the site which is identifiable on historic mapping as part of a clearly oval boundary characteristic of park pales. It is unknown when the park was founded, but the names of several keepers are recorded in the later medieval period.

### **Post-Medieval (AD1500 onwards)**

- 2.5 Croydon Park was transferred to royal hands in 1540, but re-granted to the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1547. The site itself lay just beyond the park pale, and appears to have been used throughout the post-medieval period as agricultural land, until the development of residential suburbs from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Aims and Objectives**

3.1.1 The aims and objectives of the watching brief were listed in the WSI (ASE 2012) and area as follows:

3.1.2 The general objective of the archaeological work is to monitor all excavations associated with the development including the removal of the foundations of the existing structures and the excavation of any new foundations and service trenches in order to ensure that any features, artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest exposed and affected by the excavations are recorded and interpreted to appropriate standards.

3.1.3 To inform the GLAAS archaeology advisor and the client in the event that significant archaeological remains are encountered.

3.1.4 To make public the results of the archaeological watching brief subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

3.1.5 Specifically the aims of the watching brief are to:

- Identify any Roman remains or associated features and finds. Objectives to be addressed from the London Research Framework (Museum of London, 2002) include:

1 "Elucidating the relationship of the central core to nucleated settlements and villas, or agricultural settlements; did people gradually drift into the roadside settlements and the city itself?" (R3, Para 3)

2 "Analysing the nature and reasons for the evolution of the road system, river crossings and internal street layouts and their importance as engines of development and change" (R4, Para 1)

3 "Identifying regional models for studying population size and character of roadside settlements" (R8, Para 5)

- Identify any remains or finds of Saxon / medieval date. Objectives to be addressed from the London Research Framework (Museum of London, 2002) include:

4 "Studying the transitions between late Roman and early Saxon, including the reasons and implications for shifting settlement patterns" (S1, Para 1)

5 "Studying the relationship between town and country; both in terms of how London was supplied with food and raw materials and how smaller settlements and suburban centres operated within this arrangement" (S7, Para 3)

6 "Elucidating and defining transport networks, including the utilisation of Roman roads and shipping which were all vital to



the success of London as a trading town. Recent technological developments such as geographical information systems (GIS) offer greater opportunities to define London within this network of contacts” (S7, Para 5)

- Identify any remains or finds of post-medieval date. Objectives to be addressed from the London Research Framework (Museum of London, 2002) include:
  - 7 “Understanding how the proximity of the metropolis affected the lives of people living and working in the immediate surrounding area” (L2, Para 2)
  - 8 “Considering the links between leisure, trade and economy” (L7, Para 2)

### 3.2 Method

- 3.2.1 The method comprised of the monitoring of the majority of the foundation trench excavations each measuring 0.6 metre in width down to the top of the underlying natural gravel. The area was excavated under constant archaeological supervision, using a 3 ton 360° excavator, fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. All spoil removed from the excavations was scanned visually and also scanned with a metal detector for the presence of any stray, unstratified artefacts.
- 3.2.2 All encountered archaeological deposits, features and finds were recorded according to accepted professional standards in accordance with the approved ASE WSI (ASE 2011) using *pro-forma* context record sheets. Archaeological features and deposits were planned at a scale of 1:20 and sections generally drawn at a scale of 1:10. Deposit colours were verified by visual inspection.
- 3.2.3 A photographic record of the excavations and associated deposits and features was kept (including monochrome prints, colour slides and digital), and will form part of the site archive.
- 3.2.4 The complete site archive is presently held at the Archaeology South-East offices at Portslade, East Sussex, but will in due course be offered to the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC).

Number of Contexts	2 contexts
No. of files/paper record	1 file
Photographs	7 Digital photographs

Table 1: Quantification of the site archive

## 4.0 RESULTS

Figures 2 and 3

### 4.1

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness
001	Layer	Topsoil	Area	Area	0.6m
002	Layer	Natural gravel	Area	Area	N/A

Table 2: Recorded contexts

- 4.2 The foundation trenches had an identical stratigraphy across the site with topsoil [001] directly overlying the natural brown gravel with occasional weathered chalk fragments [002] at 64.20mOD.
- 4.3 No archaeological features, finds or deposits were recovered during the groundworks.

## **5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1 No archaeological deposits, remains or features were encountered during the excavations monitored at Coombe Road.
- 5.2 The topography of the site clearly suggests that the plot had been previously terraced into the west-facing slope, thereby truncating any potential archaeological deposits to a depth of at least 1m.

## **Bibliography**

ASE. 2012. 161 Coombe Road, London Borough of Croydon: Written Scheme of Investigation, Archaeological Watching Brief. Unpublished grey literature

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Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service. 1998. Guidance Paper No 4 Archaeological Reports

Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service. 1998. Guidance Paper No 5 Evaluations

IfA 2008. *Standards and guidance for an archaeological field evaluation*, accessed 06.07.2011, <http://www.archaeologists.net>

Museum of London 2002. A Research Framework for London Archaeology.

## **Acknowledgements**

ASE would like to thank Mr Abid Siddiqui for commissioning the work and Mark Stevenson of the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) for his guidance throughout the project.

## HER Summary Form

<b>Site Name:</b> 161 Coombe Road	
<b>Site Address:</b> 161 Coombe Road, London Borough of Croydon	
<b>Summary:</b>  Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Mr Abid Siddiqui to undertake an archaeological watching brief during foundation work at 161 Coombe Road, London Borough of Croydon.  The monitoring of foundation trenches revealed topsoil over natural gravel natural. No archaeological finds, features or deposits were encountered. The topography of the site suggests the plot had been previously terraced into the west-facing slope.	
<b>District/Unitary:</b> London Borough of Croydon	<b>Parish:</b>
<b>Nature of Development:</b> Residential redevelopment	
<b>Period(s):</b> None	
<b>NGR (centre of site : 8 Figures):</b> NGR 533331 164790	
<b>Type of archaeological work (delete)</b> Watching Brief	
<b>Date of Recording:</b> 28 <sup>th</sup> March 2012	
<b>Unit undertaking recording:</b> Archaeology South-East	
<b>Geology:</b> Gravel	
<b>Title and author of accompanying report:</b> An Archaeological Watching Brief at 161 Coombe Road, London Borough of Croydon by Giles Dawkes	
<b>Summary of fieldwork results</b> No archaeological deposits, features or finds were discovered	
<b>Likelihood of surviving archaeological remains on-site:</b> Low: Possible truncation of natural	
<b>Location of archive/finds:</b> Currently held at the offices of ASE	
<b>Contact at Unit:</b> Andy Leonard	<b>Date:</b> March 2012

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**OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England**

**OASIS ID: archaeol6-122123**

Project details

Project name 161 Coombe Road

Short description of the project Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Mr Abid Siddiqui to undertake an archaeological watching brief during foundation work at 161 Coombe Road, London Borough of Croydon. The monitoring of foundation trenches revealed topsoil over natural gravel natural. No archaeological finds, features or deposits were encountered. The topography of the site suggests the plot had been previously terraced into the west-facing slope.

Project dates Start: 28-03-2012 End: 28-03-2012

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference codes CBR12 - Sitecode

Any associated project reference codes 5443 - Contracting Unit No.

Type of project Recording project

Site status None

Current Land use Other 13 - Waste ground

Investigation type 'Watching Brief'

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS

Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON CROYDON CROYDON 161 Coombe Road

Postcode CR2 6DA

Study area 0.05 Hectares

Site coordinates TQ 33331 64790 51.3659870575 -0.08450502244750 51 21 57 N 000 05 04 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 64.20m Max: 64.80m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeology South-East

Project brief originator GLAAS

Project design originator Archaeology South-East

Project director/manager JON SYGRAVE

Project supervisor Giles Dawkes

Type of Private

sponsor/funding body

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient Museum of London

Digital Archive recipient Museum of London

Digital Media available 'Text'

Paper Archive recipient Museum of London

Paper Media available 'Photograph','Plan','Report'

Project bibliography  
1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title Archaeological Watching Brief Report 161 Coombe Road  
London Borough of Croydon

Author(s)/Editor(s) Giles Dawkes

Date 2012

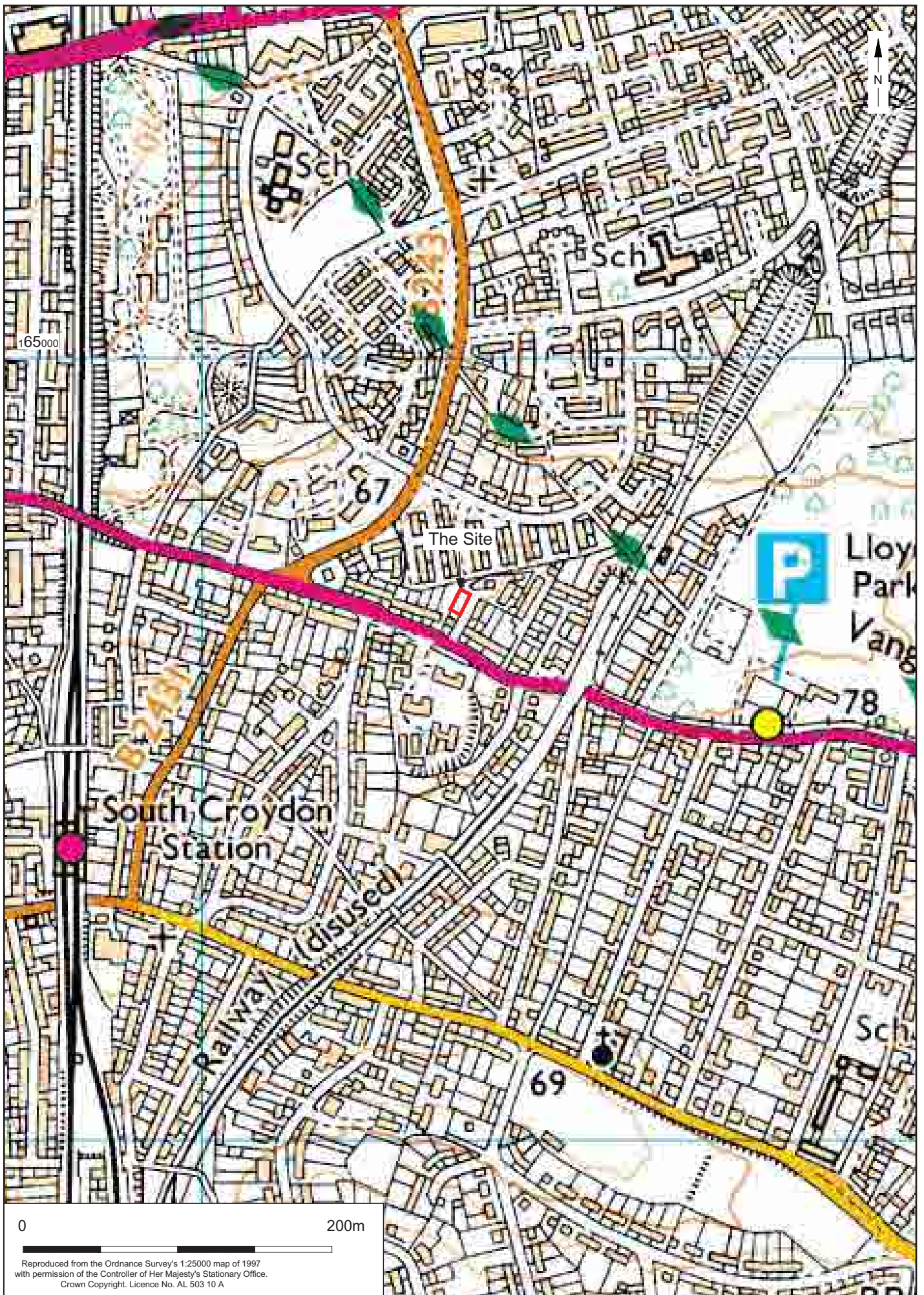
Issuer or publisher Archaeology South-East

Place of issue or publication Portslade

Description Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Centre for Applied Archaeology (UCLCAA), was commissioned by Mr Abid Siddiqui to undertake an archaeological watching brief at 161 Coombe Road, London Borough of Croydon (NGR 533331 164790). The monitoring of the foundation trenches revealed topsoil over natural gravel natural and no archaeological finds, features or deposits were encountered. The topography of the site suggests the plot had been previously terraced into the west facing slope.

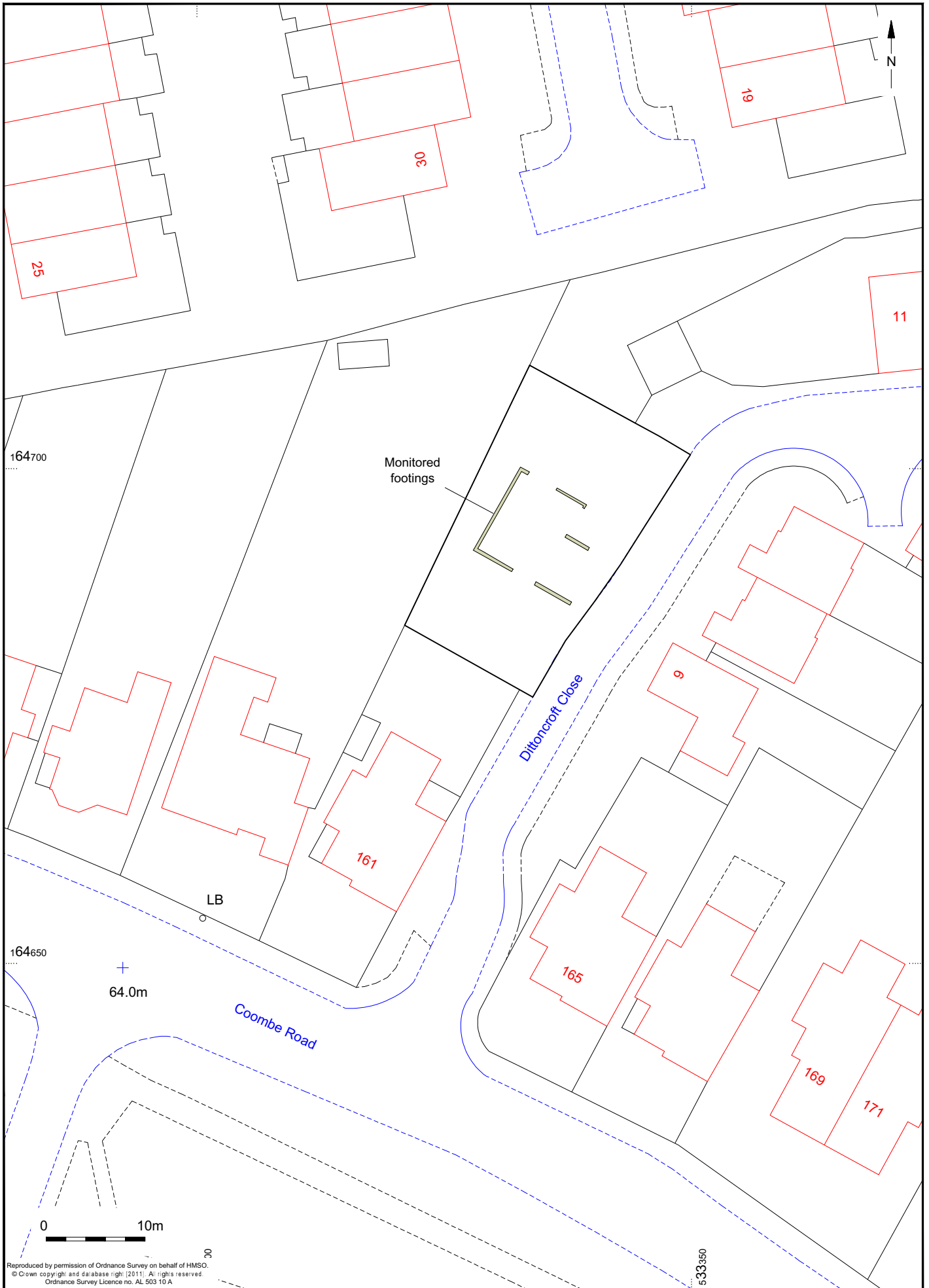
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Entered on 28 March 2012



© Archaeology South-East		161 Coombe Road, Croydon	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 5443	April 2012	Site location	
Report Ref: 2012082	Drawn by: JLR		





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© Archaeology South-East		161 Coombe Road, Croydon	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 5443	April 2012	Area of watching brief	
Report Ref: 2012082	Drawn by: JLR		



Foundation trench



Extent of terracing across the site

© Archaeology South-East		161 Coombe Road, Croydon	Fig. 3
Project Ref: 5443	April 2012	Photographs	
Report Ref: 2012082	Drawn by: JLR		

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