

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report
Land East of Hancock Road, Bromley-by-Bow,
London Borough of Tower Hamlets**

NGR: TQ 3800 8280

Planning Consent Ref. PA/11/02423

ASE Project No: 6955

Site Code: HCK 13

**ASE Report No: 2014332
OASIS ID: archaeol6-191538**

By Ian Hogg

October 2014

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Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of their client to undertake an archaeological watching brief at land east of Hancock Road, Bromley-by-Bow, London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

The work comprised the monitoring of the works associated with the installation of a piling mat in the north-west of the site. Natural deposits were not recorded; the earliest deposit recorded was modern crushed concrete made ground, this was overlain by a concrete slab. No archaeology was observed during the monitoring.

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction**
- 2.0 Archaeological Background**
- 3.0 Archaeological Methodology**
- 4.0 Results**
- 5.0 Finds**
- 6.0 Discussion and Conclusions**

Acknowledgements
Bibliography

HER Summary Sheet
OASIS Form

FIGURES

- Figure 1: Site location
- Figure 2: Watching Brief Location Plan

TABLES

- Table 1: Quantification of site archive
- Table 2: List of recorded contexts

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA), Institute of Archaeology (IoA), University College London (UCL) was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of their client to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks on land east of Hancock Road, Bromley-by-Bow, London Borough of Tower Hamlets (NGR TQ 3800 8280; Figures 1 and 2).

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 The solid geology of the site is shown by the Institute of Geological Sciences (IGS 1979) as London Clay deposits forming the London Basin. The British Geological Survey Sheet 256 (North London: 1994) shows the site to lie on the edge of a large area of alluvium, defined as 'mainly sand, silt and clay', which runs along the Lea Valley above the gravels. Taplow Gravels defined as 'gravel, sandy and clayey in part' outcrop within the western part of the site.

1.2.2 The site lies on an east-facing slope on the edge of the floodplain of the River Lea. Levels within the site slope down from the western boundary at between 7.0 and 8.0m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum) to the eastern edge of the site between 6.0 and 7.0m AOD.

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 Planning permission for the redevelopment of the site has been granted (planning ref. PA/11/02423) subject to the following condition:

Condition B10

The development hereby approved shall not commence until a programme of archaeological and standing historic buildings recording work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority. No development or demolition shall take place other than in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation.

The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of the results (including public interpretation) and archive disposition has been secured.

Reason: As important archaeological remains may exist on site the Local Planning Authority wishes to secure the provision of an archaeological investigation and the recording of any remains prior to commencement of development, in accordance with Policy DEV43 of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Unitary Development Plan (adopted 1998 and saved from 18 September 2007 in accordance with the direction from the Secretary of State) and Policy 7.8 of the London Plan (adopted July 2011).

- 1.3.2 A Desk Based Assessment of the archaeological potential of the site had been prepared by CgMs Consulting (CgMs 2011). The first phase of the fieldwork consisted of a borehole survey (ASE 2013a); this survey showed there was low potential for the recovery of environmental material due to contamination immediately above the lower gravels.
- 1.3.3 The next phase of work was an archaeological evaluation (ASE 2013b), this phase of work concluded that heavy truncation had occurred across much of the site although alluvial deposits and possible peat were recorded in the north-west.
- 1.3.4 Despite the lack of archaeological remains found during the previous work a programme of monitoring was decided upon due to the potential for burials associated with nearby St Leonards Priory.
- 1.3.5 Accordingly, a written scheme of investigation (WSI) was prepared (CgMs, 2014), which detailed the methodology for the works. It was approved by Adam Single of the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) on behalf of the local planning authority. All work was undertaken in accordance with this document at with the relevant standard and guidance documents of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008) GLAAS (GLAAS 2009) and English Heritage (English Heritage 2008).

1.4 Aims and Objectives

- 1.4.1 The main objective of the archaeological monitoring was to record any archaeological artefacts and ecofacts and their context.
- 1.4.2 The archaeological monitoring had the following general objectives:
- To establish the presence or absence of deposits with palaeoenvironmental potential and to determine the survival, extent and minimum depth below modern ground level of such remains.
 - To establish the presence or otherwise of prehistoric, Roman, medieval, post-medieval and modern activity, and to define the date and nature of such activity.
 - To determine the survival, extent and minimum depth below modern ground level of any such remains.
 - To determine the presence or absence of burials associated with St Leonards Priory
 - To determine the nature and significance of any archaeological deposits.
 - To establish the environmental context of prehistoric, medieval, post-medieval and modern activity.
 - To establish the date and nature of land reclamation.
 - To establish the presence or absence of any remains associated with the house and grounds of the 17th century Bromley House.
 - Evaluate the likely impact of past land use and development.
 - To establish the location and likely impact of a Victorian sewer believed to underlie the study site.

- To enable the archaeological advisor at GLAAS to make an informed decision as to the requirement for any further archaeological work at the site in order to fulfil any archaeological planning condition.

1.5 Scope of Report

- 1.5.1 This report details the results of the archaeological watching brief carried out on the site on the 1st September 2014 and has been prepared in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (CgMs 2014). The work was carried out by Tom Rugg (Assistant Archaeologist). The fieldwork was managed by Andy Leonard and the post-excavation work by Jim Stevenson.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The following is taken from the WSI with due acknowledgement (CgMs, 2014). Historically, the site has been developed for industrial purposes. It is evident from the existing levels within the site, that the central and eastern parts of the site have been raised off the floodplain. Therefore, the natural topography of the study site has been significantly altered and post-medieval and modern made ground can be expected across the site.
- 2.2 The site lies within an 'Area of Archaeological Importance', defined by the Borough's Unitary Development Plan Proposals Map, designated around the banks of the River Lea and a possible crossing at Bow Bridge. The archaeological desk-based assessment (CgMs 2011) considered the site to have a low-moderate or moderate potential for Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age artefact bearing deposits and a moderate-high potential for the remains of 17th century post-medieval garden features associated with Bromley House.
- 2.3 More recently, the Archaeological Officer at English Heritage has highlighted the potential for remains associated with St Leonards Priory.
- 2.4 Geoarchaeological investigations were undertaken on the site during June 2013. These investigations recorded significant depths of made ground comprising building material and industrial waste. A programme of archaeological trenching was also undertaken on the site during August 2013. The two trenches were excavated in the northwest and southwest of the site. Trench 1 was 10m long with a width of 2m. Constraints meant that Trench 2 needed to be excavated in two sections, measuring a combined 12m in length with a width of 2m. Natural river terrace gravels were observed in the south-west of the site (Trench 1) between 2.94m and 3.31m below ground level at between 3.95 and 4.22m AOD. Natural alluvium was encountered in the north-west (Trench 2) at 3.70m below existing ground level at 3.15m AOD> They were overlain by modern, contaminated industrial waste, modern made ground and a concrete surface. The evaluation demonstrated the presence of a possible in-filled water feature or channel in the northwest corner of the site, but no other remains were identified. The depth of modern deposits over the natural layer suggests that the industrial use of the site in recent times is likely to have truncated the original natural horizon resulting in the probable removal of archaeological remains.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The work comprised the monitoring of the excavations associated with the installation of a piling mat within an area measuring approximately 49.00m x 25.00m in plan (Figure 2).
- 3.2 Spoil from the test pits was visually scanned for finds.
- 3.3 All deposits were recorded using standard ASE recording sheets, with colours recorded by visual inspection only.
- 3.4 A digital photographic record was taken of the work.
- 3.5 ASE informed the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC) before the commencement of fieldwork that a site archive would be generated. The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at the LAARC in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

Number of Contexts	2
No. of files/paper record	1
Photographs	4 digital

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS

- 4.1 The monitored area was located in the north-western corner of the site. The earliest deposit observed during the watching brief was modern concrete and brick rubble [002], this deposit measured at least 0.50m in thickness. It was overlain by a 0.25m thick concrete slab [001].

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Deposit Thickness m
001	Masonry	Concrete slab	25.00	15.00	0.25
002	Layer	Concrete and brick rubble (made ground)	25.00	15.00	0.50

Table 2: List of recorded contexts

- 4.2 Due to the fact that the works did not penetrate through the made ground [002], no archaeological deposits or features were observed and no finds were recovered.

5.0 FINDS

- 5.1 No finds were retrieved from the site and no environmental samples were taken.

6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The natural deposits were not observed during the monitoring as the groundworks did not reach a sufficient depth, only reaching 0.75m below ground level into modern made ground. The evaluation had demonstrated that the natural deposits were located at a greater depth, approximately 3.0m below ground level (ASE 2013).
- 6.2 As a result of the shallow nature of the excavations, no evidence of remains associated with the St Leonards Priory or the Bromley House garden features were observed. It seems likely that had such remains existed they would have been truncated by the modern industrial works which were recorded in the archaeological evaluation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank CgMs Consulting for commissioning the work and for their assistance throughout and GLAAS for their guidance and monitoring.

HER Summary Form

Site Code	HCK 13					
Identification Name and Address	Land east of Hancock Road, Bromley-by-Bow					
County, District &/or Borough	Tower Hamlets					
OS Grid Refs.	TQ 3800 8280					
Geology	Terrace Gravels					
Arch. South-East Project Number	6955					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief✓	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban✓	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB. 01-09-2014	Other		
Sponsor/Client	CgMs Consulting					
Project Manager	Andy Leonard					
Project Supervisor	Tom Rugg					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other None		
<p>Summary <i>The work comprised the monitoring of the works associated with the installation of a piling mat in the north-west of the site. Natural deposits were not recorded; the earliest deposit recorded was modern crushed concrete made ground, this was overlain by a concrete slab. No archaeology was observed during the monitoring.</i></p>						

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-191538

Project details

Project name	Land East of Hancock Road, Bromley-by-Bow
Short description of the project	The work comprised the monitoring of the works associated with the installation of a piling mat in the north-west corner of the site. Natural deposits were not recorded; the earliest deposit recorded was modern crushed concrete made ground, this was overlain by a concrete slab. No archaeology was observed during the monitoring.
Project dates	Start: 01-09-2014 End: 01-09-2014
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	6955 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	HCK 13 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON TOWER HAMLETS BOW Land East of Hancock Road, Bromley-by-Bow
Study area	1225.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 3800 8280 51.5267280793 -0.0104461327206 51 31 36 N 000 00 37 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
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Project brief originator	GLAAS
Project design originator	CgMs Consulting
Project director/manager	Andy Leonard/Jim Stevenson
Project supervisor	Tom Rugg
Type of sponsor/funding body	CgMs Consulting
Name of sponsor/funding body	CgMs Consulting

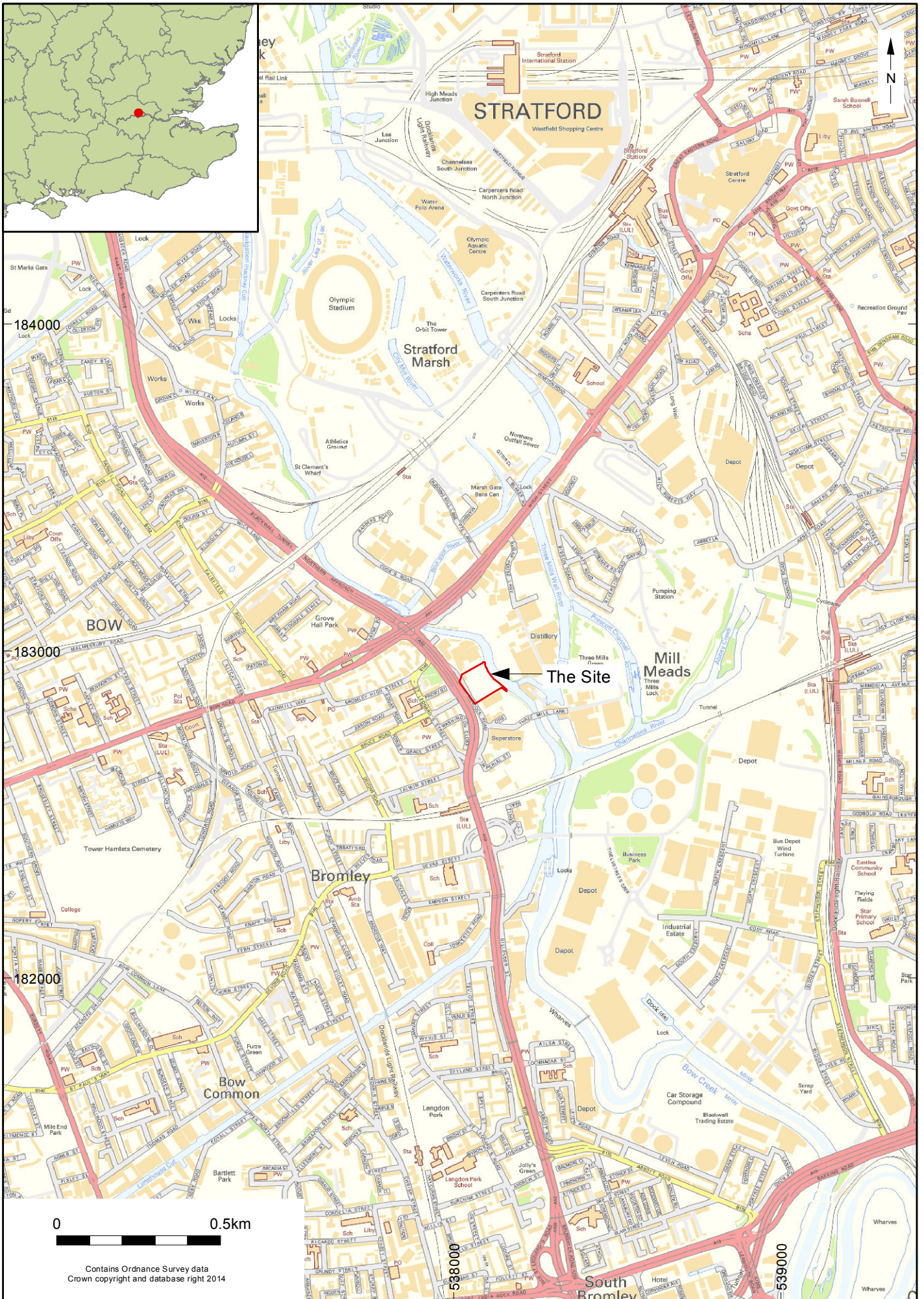
Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Report", "Unpublished Text"

Entered by	Ian Hogg (ian.hogg@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	1 October 2014

OASIS:

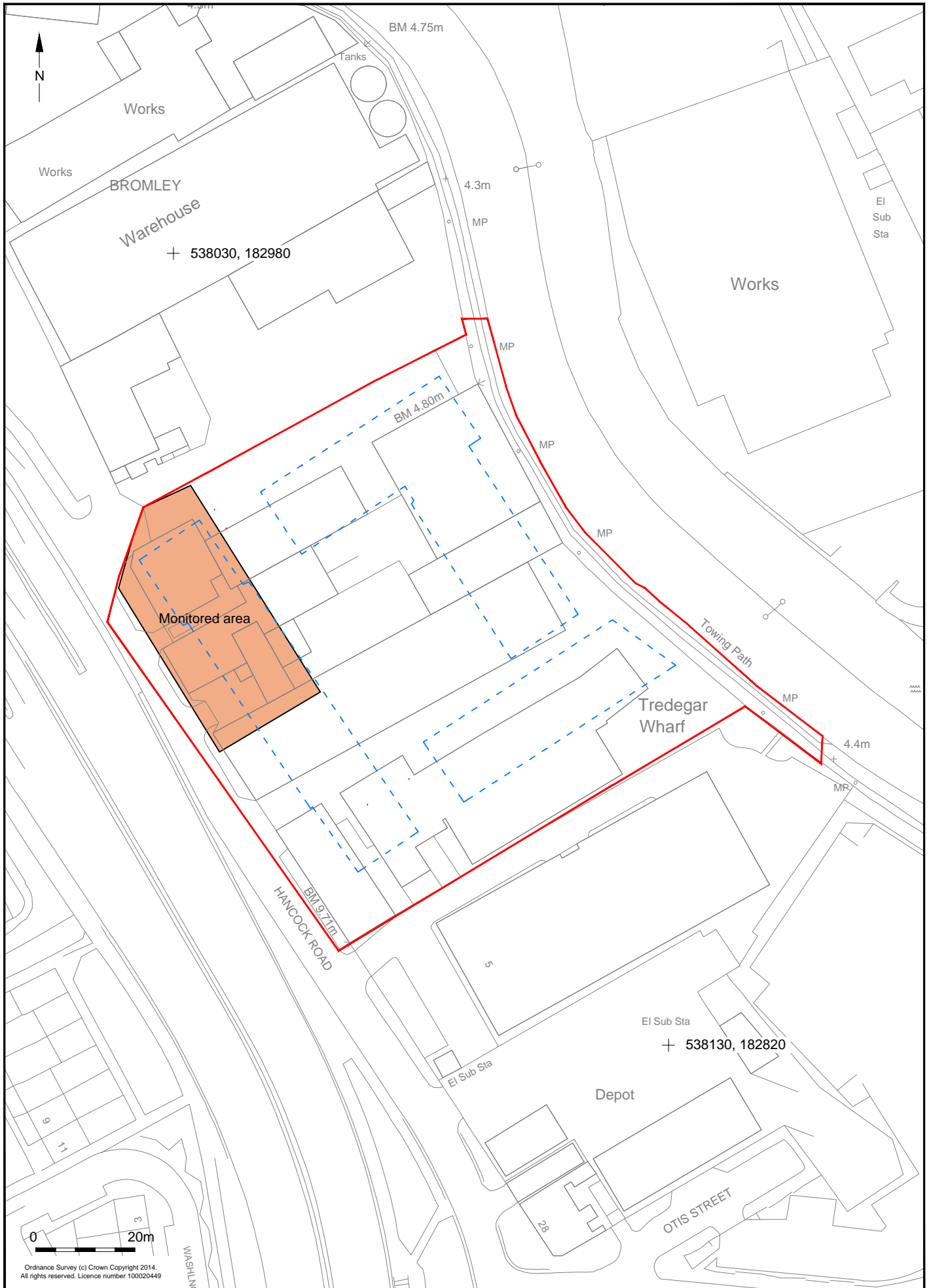
Please e-mail [English Heritage](#) for OASIS help and advice
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Project Ref: 6955	October 2014	Site location	
Report Ref:	Drawn by: RHC		

Fig. 1



© Archaeology South-East		Land at Hancock Road, Stratford		Fig. 2
Project Ref: 6955	October 2014	Monitored area		
Report Ref:	Drawn by: RHC			

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