

**An Archaeological Evaluation
of Land at Sutherland Road, Walthamstow
(London Borough of Waltham Forest)**

NGR: TQ 3593 8999

Planning Ref: 2014/1165

**ASE Project No: 7221
Site Code: SUT14**

**ASE Report No: 2015254
OASIS id: archaeol6-218311**

**By Stephen White and Kristina Kraviec
Illustrations by John Cook**



July 2015

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Date of Issue:	July 29 th 2015		
Revision:			

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Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by the East Thames Group to undertake an archaeological evaluation on a site at Sutherland Road, Walthamstow between the 13th and 15th of July, 2015. The work comprised of the excavation of four evaluation trenches across the site. These revealed horizontally truncated, disturbed and weathered London Clay and soliflucted clay deposits, recorded between 11.45m and 11.78m AOD, and overlain by up to 2.20m of recent made ground. No archaeological finds or features were recorded.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of The Centre for Applied Archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, was commissioned by East Thames Group to undertake a programme of archaeological work on land at Sutherland Road, Walthamstow (Figure 1, NGR: TQ 3593 8999).

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 The site was situated at an altitude of approximately 14 metres OD. The previous warehouse buildings and hardstanding had been removed prior to the commencement of the archaeological fieldwork. The entire site was level. The surrounding area has been modified by modern development and the construction of large reservoirs.

1.2.2 The underlying natural geology of the site comprises London Clay. The southeast corner of the site is overlain by drift deposits of Taplow Gravel, while the area immediately to the west is overlain by alluvium (BGS 2015).

1.2.3 The site lies within Terrain 5, as defined by the Lea Valley Mapping Project (Corcoran *et al.*, 2011, 42). This comprises the steeply sloping valley sides of the Lea and is typically characterised by exposed London Clay overlain by soliflucted gravelly clay and Holocene colluvium. The site itself lies within the a subdivision of Terrain 5 -- Landscape Zone 3.8 (Corcoran *et al.*, 2011, 92) in which the London clay dips westwards towards the Lea and is overlain by several metres of gravelly/sandy clay. This represents sediments derived from the bedrock moved downslope via solifluction processes during the cold stages of the Pleistocene. In places there are also Holocene colluvial deposits.

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 Planning permission has been granted for the demolition of the existing industrial units and construction of 4 new blocks including both dwellings and a new doctors surgery (Ref. No.: 2014/1165). Due to the archaeological potential of the site as outlined in a prior *Desk Based Assessment* of the site (ASE 2013) The Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS), who advise the London Borough of Waltham Forest on their archaeological obligations, attached the following conditions to the consent:

A). *No demolition or 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 in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*

B) *No development or demolition shall take place other than in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under Part (A).*

- C) *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 approved under Part (A), and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of the results and archive deposition has been secured.*

REASON: Heritage assets of archaeological interest survive on the site. The planning authority wishes to secure the provision of archaeological investigation and the subsequent recording of the remains prior to development, in accordance with policy CS12 of the Waltham Forest Local Plan (March 2012).

- 1.3.2 A *Written Scheme Of Investigation* which outlined the scope of the archaeological works, in the form of a trial trench evaluation of the site, was subsequently prepared by Archaeology South-East (ASE 2014) and duly approved by GLAAS. All work was undertaken in accordance with this document and with the relevant standard and guidance documents of GLAAS and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (GLAAS 2015; CIfA 2014a, 2014b)

1.4 Scope of Report

- 1.4.1 This report details the results of the archaeological trial trench evaluation carried out on the site in July 2015. The site work was carried out by Stephen White and Tom Rugg. The fieldwork was managed by Andy Leonard; the post excavation analysis by Jim Stevenson.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The following archaeological information is drawn from the Written Scheme of Investigation (ASE 2014) for the site, with due acknowledgement.

2.2 Prehistoric

2.2.1 The site lies on the east bank of the River Lea, in an area of gravel terraces associated with this tributary of the Thames. Such terraces were a favoured location for early human communities to settle, although many of the earlier prehistoric horizons in the valley have since been buried beneath thick deposits of later alluvium, and the visible record tends to be restricted to a scatter of artefacts, apart from where deep interventions such as the excavations for the Lea Valley reservoirs in the later 19th century expose earlier deposits, including those of significant palaeoenvironmental value.

2.2.2 Later prehistoric evidence is scarcer in this part of Greater London, particularly on the London Clay (although this may be partly due to lack of excavation). Many of the key sites are located on the gravel terraces to the west of London. These have been extensively investigated in recent years as part of works associated with the construction of Heathrow Terminal 5 (Framework Archaeology 2006, 2010)

2.2.3 Nonetheless, a concentration of Bronze and Iron Age material has been recovered from the river valley in the Walthamstow area, much of it during reservoir construction. These include wooden waterside structures (including a possible crannog like structure and trackways) and quantities of artefacts including a shield and sword (Brown & Cotton 2000; Wait & Cotton 2000), although much of the contemporary settlement is likely to have been located on the higher gravel terrace slopes above the seasonally flood-prone valley floor.

2.2.4 As stated above, the Lea Valley Mapping Project (LVMP) has defined the area as lying within Landscape Zone 3.8 which is defined as sloping valley sides with exposed London Clay in places overlain by thick deposits of soliflucted London Clay and Holocene colluvium (Corcoran *et al.*, 2011, 92). This area would have been remained wildwood for much of the prehistoric period and may have persisted until the medieval period. The heavy clay soils would have meant this area would have been at the margins of cultivation, which would have been preferentially located on the lighter soils of the river terraces (Corcoran *et al.*, 2011, 93).

2.3 Roman

2.3.1 The importance of London in the Roman period is well-known. The establishment of an early trading centre around the Thames bridgehead, and its later importance as the administrative centre of initially the province, and later the diocese, of Britain, has produced a rich corpus of archaeological data from within the central London area (the City and Southwark). However, the wider environs are less well known, and would seem to confound the

pattern seen at other Roman towns in the province where the main settlement had a densely occupied zone (or territorium) around it. These territoria were intensively exploited to supply the towns with food and other essential commodities, and were often the location of country estates (villas) for the urban elite. The area around London seems to have been significantly less densely settled, although this may partly reflect the relative paucity of fieldwork in the outskirts of the modern urban area (Perring & Brigham 2000). Where settlement has been found it has concentrated in river valleys such as the Lea.

- 2.3.2 Little is known about Roman settlement in Walthamstow, which lay some distance from major Roman roads: the main road to Lincoln (Ermine Street) ran to the west of the River Lea, through Tottenham and Enfield.

2.4 Anglo-Saxon

- 2.4.1 The early Saxon period saw central London largely abandoned. Instead, a number of small settlements grew up around the periphery, with particular emphasis along the Thames and its tributaries. Walthamstow originated as one of these small settlements, next to the boundary between Essex and Middlesex. The landscape would have been primarily rural, with a scattered settlement pattern.

2.5 Medieval

- 2.5.1 Walthamstow is first mentioned in 1067. There were initially two manors in Walthamstow: Wilcumbestou (Walthamstow) and Hecham (Higham), Higham being the smaller of the two, though both were later subdivided. Higham was held in 1066 by Haldan, a free man, as a manor and 5 hides; in 1086 it was held in demesne by Peter de Valognes. One of the 5 hides, held before 1066 by 2 free men, was added to the manor after the Conquest and in 1086 was held of Peter by William.
- 2.5.2 Walthamstow is recorded in Domesday as a large manor held in demesne by Judith, Countess of Aumale, widow of Earl Waltheof of Huntingdon, who had been executed for treason in 1076. There was arable land for 22 plough-teams and woodland for 300 pigs, together with 80 acres of woodland, a watermill and six fisheries. This manor later became known as Walthamstow Tony after Ralph de Tony/Toni acquired it by marriage in 1103, and subsequently the Beauchamp Earls of Warwick.
- 2.5.3 In 1086 the parish woodland (sufficient for 600 pigs) was equally divided between the two manors, though the extent of forest was gradually whittled away through assarting to form small inclosures for arable use. Newly cleared land seems to have been farmed in severalty, but elsewhere in the parish common agriculture was practiced, Higham Hill common being one of three open fields surviving until the mid-19th century. This open field system is clearly evident on Coe's parish map from 1822 and the 1840 tithe map, but inclosure was granted by an award in 1850.

2.5.4 The parish remained rural in nature throughout the period with a number of small scattered hamlets set within open fields, though a crude latticework of streets developed in the vicinity of Forest Road (previously Mill Lane) which served as the main east-west route between Epping and Tottenham. The river crossing (over two channels, the Lea and the Fleet, the latter dug as a mill leat) was by two bridges, first recorded in 1277

2.6 Post-Medieval

2.6.1 In common with many of the market towns and villages around London, Walthamstow retained its character as a small agricultural settlement into the 19th century, when the construction of the railways opened up the hinterland of the city and allowed the spread of suburbs which eventually absorbed the earlier settlement areas. Up until this time, the site lay on the edge of the enclosed marshlands of the Lea Valley. A ferry was recorded by 1722, forming an alternative crossing to the toll bridge. The development of Higham Hill Common began in 1876, and the rural character of the area dwindled rapidly after the construction of Blackhorse Road railway station in 1894 attracted industry to the area. Numerous industries were established in the area to the north of Forest Road, with the site and its immediate environs occupied by engineering, glass, rubber and dyeing and cleaning works among others.

2.7 Project Aims and Objectives

2.7.1 The main aims of the evaluation are as follows:

- To determine the presence or absence of archaeological remains on the site.
- To determine, if present, the depth, date, character and survival of said archaeological remains
- To make public the results of the archaeological evaluation.
- To enable the GLAAS archaeology advisor to make an informed decision on the requirement for any further work in order to fulfil Condition 2.

2.7.2 With reference to the research framework for London archaeology (Museum of London, 2002) the evaluation may also have the potential to address the following research objective:

- P5, para 4: Understanding the relationship between the wooden trackways in the floodplain and the settlements to which they presumably led. What was happening in the areas between the wetlands and the settlements? What light do the trackways shed on woodcraft and woodland management

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

3.1.1 Four trenches, each measuring 30m in length, were excavated on site between the 13th and 15th of July 2015, as shown in Figure 2. Site logistical constraints required some revision to trench positions: Trench 3 was moved 6m to the north-west (on its original alignment) and Trench 4 was doubled in width to allow a full bucket width slot at base. All the trenches required stepping to get below the level of modern makeup/truncations.

3.2 Archive

3.2.1 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	23
No. of files/paper record	4
Plan and sections sheets	
Digital photos	
Permatrace sheets	
Trench Record Forms	4

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS

Trench no.	Context no.	Type	Description	Deposit Thickness (m)	Max. height (m AOD)
1	1/001	Layer	Made ground	0.29-0.40	13.18-14.50
1	1/002	Layer	Made ground	0.45-0.53	12.68-14.00
1	1/003	Layer	Made ground	0.37-1.16	12.31-12.84
1	1/004	Layer	Soliflucted London Clay	0.51-0.58	11.80-12.26
2	2/001	Layer	Made ground	0.19-0.30	13.91-13.96
2	2/002	Layer	Made ground	0.12-0.40	13.66-13.72
2	2/003	Layer	Made ground	1.05-1.14	13.31-13.60
2	2/004	Layer	Soliflucted London Clay	0.20-0.30	12.26-12.46
3	3/001	Layer	Made ground	0.16-0.26	13.74-13.86
3	3/002	Layer	Made ground	0.23-0.40	13.58-13.60
3	3/003	Layer	Made ground	0.40-0.51	13.20-13.28
3	3/004	Layer	Made ground	0.88-1.00	12.78-12.80
3	3/005	Layer	Made ground	0.26-0.56	11.78-12.01
3	3/006	Layer	Soliflucted London Clay	0.15-0.60	11.45-11.52
4	4/001	Layer	Made ground	0.21-0.49	13.38-13.44
4	4/002	Layer	Made ground	0.24-0.40	13.06-13.23
4	4/003	Layer	Made ground	0.10-0.22	12.82-12.83
4	4/004	Layer	Made ground	0.26	12.83
4	4/005	Layer	Made ground	0.30-0.61	12.48
4	4/006	Layer	Disturbed London Clay	0.41-0.54	12.32
4	4/007	Layer	Weathered London Clay	0.80-3.34	11.78
4	4/008	Fill	Modern backfill	0.20-0.36	12.27
4	4/009	Cut	Modern truncation	0.20-0.36	12.27

Table 2: Archaeologically negative trenches: list of recorded contexts

4.1 Trench 1 (Figures 2 and 3)

4.1.1 Trench 1 was located in the northern part of site, on a north-south alignment. The trench was excavated down to 1.20m below ground level, with additional 0.50m wide sondages excavated a further 1.20m at each end of the trench.

4.1.2 The earliest deposit recorded within this trench comprised dark grey brown gravelly clay [1/004], recorded in the southern sondage at a maximum height of 12.26m AOD. This is likely to represent soliflucted London Clay deposits. This was sealed by a sequence of three deposits of recent made ground [1/003], [1/002] and [1/001]. A series of concrete wall foundations were cut through the uppermost layer of made ground (see Figure 2) though these were not recorded in detail.

4.1.3 No archaeological finds or features were identified.

4.2 Trench 2 (Figures 2 and 4)

4.2.1 Trench 2 was located in the centre of site, aligned north-west to south-east. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 2.20m below ground level, including a narrow trench along the base. The earliest deposit recorded

consisted of a probable soliflucted London Clay deposit of dark grey gravelly clay [2/004], recorded at a maximum elevation of 12.46m AOD. This was overlain by a sequence of three layers of modern made ground [2/003], [2/002] and [2/001]. No archaeological finds or features were recorded. Modern truncation

4.3 Trench 3 (Figures 2 and 5)

4.3.1 Trench 3 was located in the centre of site, and was excavated on a north-west to south-east alignment. The trench was excavated to a depth of 1.20m below ground level with a narrow trench excavated a further 1.00m along the centre of the trench. Probable soliflucted London Clay, comprising dark grey gravelly clay [3/006] was recorded at a maximum height of 11.52m AOD. This was sealed by a sequence of five deposits of recent made ground totalling some 1.80m in depth, including [3/005], [3/004], [3/003], [3/002] and [3/001]. No archaeological finds or features were recorded.

4.4 Trench 4 (Figures 2 and 6)

4.4.1 Trench 4 was located in the southernmost part of site, excavated on a north-west to south-east alignment. The earliest deposit encountered consisted of a layer of oxidised clay which appears to represent weathered London Clay [4/007], overlain by a further layer of mixed (and presumably redeposited) clay [4/006]. A large sub-rectangular cut [4/009] was observed to cut through layer [4/006], the fill of which [4/010] contained a large machine sawn timber of probable 19th-20th century date.

4.4.2 No archaeological finds or features were observed.

5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Overview of stratigraphic sequence

5.1.1 The sequence of deposits recorded on the site comprised horizontally truncated, disturbed and weathered London Clay and soliflucted clay deposits that were recorded between 11.45m and 11.78m OD, overlain by various layers of recent made ground. No archaeological finds or features were recorded.

5.2 Deposit survival and existing impacts

5.2.1 The modern truncation on site was observed to extend to depths of between 1.80m and 2.20m below ground level. Underlying this was weathered London Clay, comprising blue-veined orange brown stiff clay in Trench 4. In Trenches 1-3 a dark grey gravelly clay was recorded underlying the made ground which is likely to represent a soliflucted London clay. This occurs under periglacial conditions where surface thawing allows saturated material to move gradually downslope over a still frozen substrate.

5.2.2 The results of the evaluation correlate well with the predicted deposits as presented in the model in the Lea Valley Mapping Project (LZ 3.8, Corcoran *et al.*, 2011, 92). This described a steep valley-side profile overlain by several metres of periglacial clay deposits along with areas where the London Clay outcrops at the surface. The potential for archaeological deposits to be present within this area of the valley is low, and it is likely that the area remained wildwood in the early Holocene and was not cleared until the medieval period. Any prehistoric remains within this landscape zone are likely to be found adjacent to or within former watercourses, which were not recorded at the site.

5.3 Discussion of archaeological remains by period

5.3.1 No archaeological remains were recorded during the course of the investigation.

5.4 Potential impact on archaeological remains

5.4.1 Due to the lack of archaeological finds and feature within the trenches, and the character of the underlying geology and the site location along the valley sides, the potential impact on archaeological remains is considered to be low.

5.5 Consideration of research aims

- To determine the presence or absence of archaeological remains on the site.

No archaeological features were identified in the evaluation trenches

- To determine, if present, the depth, date, character and survival of said archaeological remains

No archaeological features were identified in the evaluation trenches.

- To make public the results of the archaeological evaluation.

No archaeological features were identified in the evaluation trenches.

- To enable the GLAAS archaeology advisor to make an informed decision on the requirement for any further work in order to fulfil Condition 2.

No archaeological features were identified in the evaluation trenches.

- P5, para4: Understanding the relationship between the wooden trackways in the floodplain and the settlements to which they presumably led. What was happening in the areas between the wetlands and the settlements? What light do the trackways shed on woodcraft and woodland management?

No archaeological features were identified in the evaluation trenches.

5.6 Conclusions

- 5.6.1 The extensive modern truncation at the site would presumably have removed any archaeological features. This, coupled with the position of the site, along the valley side of the River Lea on heavy clay, makes the presence of archaeological features from earlier periods very unlikely.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank East Thames Group for commissioning the work and for their assistance throughout the project, and GLAAS for their guidance and monitoring. The excavation was directed by Stephen White. The author would like to thank all Tom Rugg, the archaeologist who worked on the excavations; Justin Russell who produced the figures for this report; Andy Leonard who project managed the excavations and Jim Stevenson who project managed the post-excavation process.

HER Summary Form

Site Code	SUT14					
Identification Name and Address	An Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Sutherland Road, Walthamstow					
County, District &/or Borough	Waltham Forest					
OS Grid Refs.	TQ 3593 8999					
Geology	London Clay					
Arch. South-East Project Number	2015254					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval. X	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban X	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval. 13/7/2015- 15/7/2015	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	East Thames Group					
Project Manager	Andy Leonard					
Project Supervisor	Steve White					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other Modern X		
<p>Summary</p> <p><i>Archaeology South-East was commissioned by the East Thames Group to undertake an archaeological evaluation on a site at Sutherland Road, Walthamstow between the 13th and 15th of July, 2015. The work comprised of the excavation of four evaluation trenches across the site. These revealed horizontally truncated, disturbed and weathered London Clay and soliflucted clay deposits, recorded between 11.45m and 11.78m AOD, and overlain by up to 2.20m of recent made ground. No archaeological finds or features were recorded.</i></p>						

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-218311

Project details

Project name	An Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Sutherland Road, Walthamstow (London Borough of Waltham Forest)
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East was commissioned by the East Thames Group to undertake an archaeological evaluation on a site at Sutherland Road, Walthamstow between the 13 th and 15 th of July, 2015. The work comprised of the excavation of four evaluation trenches across the site. These revealed horizontally truncated, disturbed and weathered London Clay and soliflucted clay deposits, recorded between 11.45m and 11.78m AOD, and overlain by up to 2.20m of recent made ground. No archaeological finds or features were recorded.
Project dates	Start: 13-07-2015 End: 15-07-2015
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	SUT14 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 4 - Storage and warehousing
Monument type	N/A None
Significant Finds	N/A None
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON WALTHAM FOREST WALTHAMSTOW Land at Sutherland Road
Postcode	E17 6BH
Study area	3755.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 3593 8999 51.5918487667 -0.0374901927872 51 35 30 N 000 02 14 W Polygon

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	East Thames Group
Project design originator	ASE
Project director/manager	Andy Leonard
Project supervisor	Steve White
Type of sponsor/funding body	Client
Name of sponsor/funding body	East Thames Group

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	LAARC
Physical Archive ID	SUT14
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	LARC
Digital Archive ID	SUT14
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic", "Survey"
Digital Media available	"Database", "GIS", "Survey", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Archive ID	SUT14
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic", "Survey"
Paper Media available	"Map", "Notebook - Excavation", ' Research', ' General Notes', "Plan", "Report", "Survey "

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Sutherland Road, Walthamstow (London Borough of Waltham Forest)
Author(s)/Editor(s)	White, S
Date	2015
Issuer or publisher	ASE
Place of issue or	Portslade

publication

Description Grey Lit

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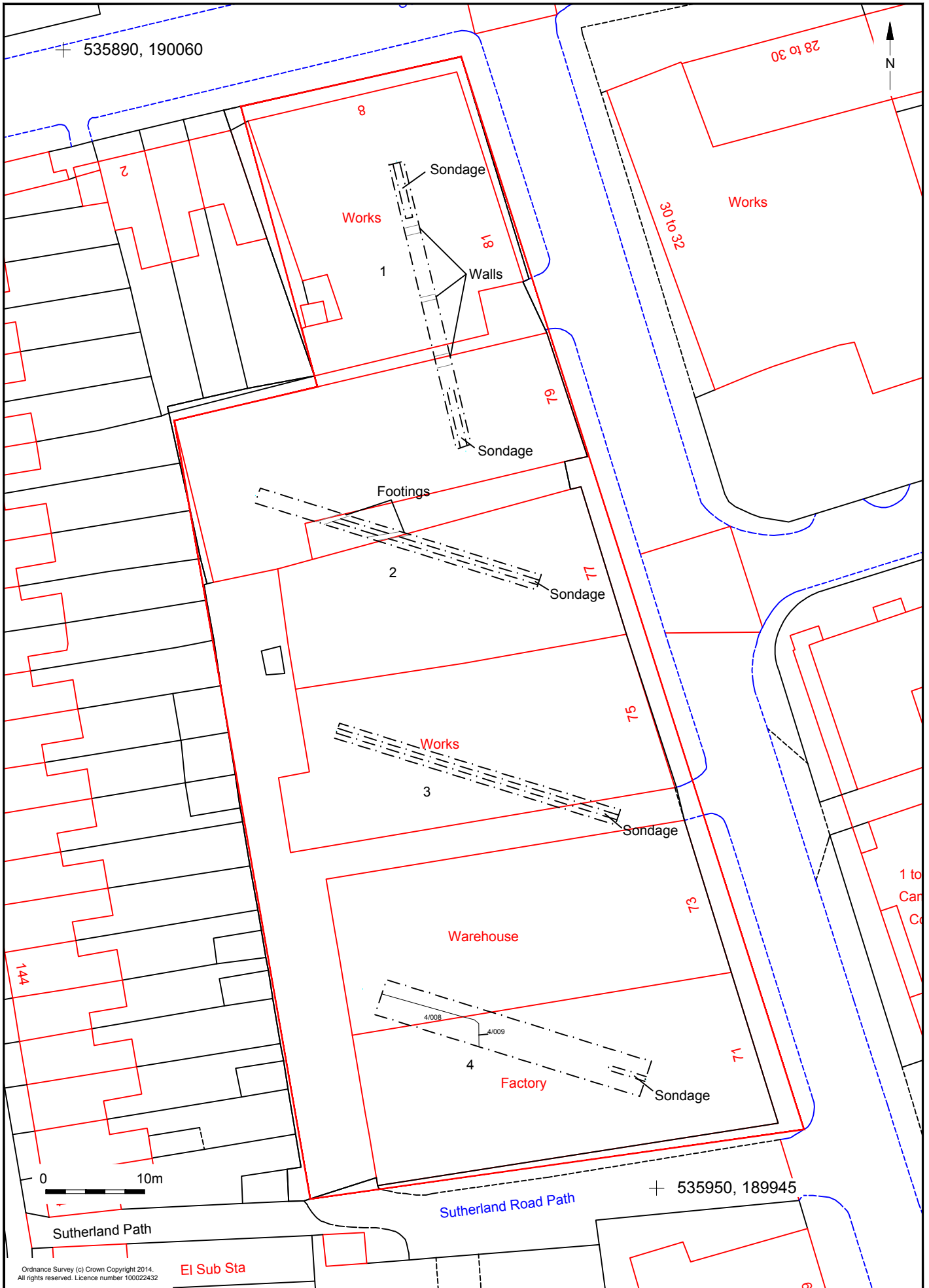
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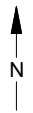
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Project Ref: 7221	July 2015	Site location	
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Fig. 1



© Archaeology South-East		Sutherland Road, Walthamstow	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 7221	July 2015	Trench location	
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Trench 1 under excavation



Trench 1 looking north



Trench 1 looking south

© Archaeology South-East		Sutherland Road, Walthamstow	Fig. 3
Project Ref: 7221	July 2015	Trench 1 photographs	
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Trench 2 looking north-west



Trench 2 looking south-east



Trench 3 looking north-west



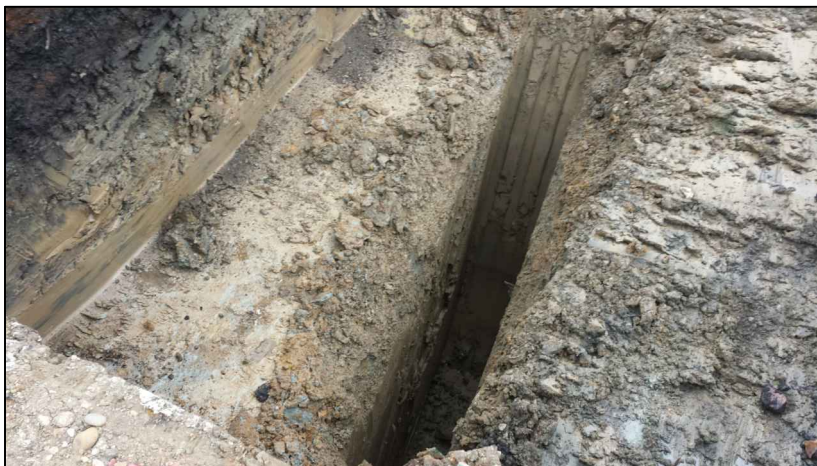
Trench 3 looking south-east



Trench 4 looking north-west



Trench 4 looking south-east



Trench 4 sondage through clay deposits 4/006 and 4/007

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