

**An Archaeological Watching Brief  
at St Mary Magdalene Churchyard  
Holloway Road, LB Islington**

**NGR: TQ 3140 8496**

**Faculty Ref. No: 2328**

**ASE Project No: 170167**

**Site Code: HWY17**

**ASE Report No: 2017275**

**OASIS id: archaeol6-287373**



**By Jonathan Gardner, PhD**

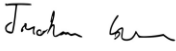

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**Abstract**

*This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out by Archaeology South-East at St Mary Magdalene Churchyard between 25<sup>th</sup> of April and 19<sup>th</sup> of May 2017. The fieldwork was commissioned by Arlington Builders Ltd in order to mitigate any damage to archaeological remains in the churchyard as a new service trench was excavated.*

*No human remains were recovered or disturbed in this work, which was the primary reason for archaeological monitoring. Nonetheless, in the course of the project a small sequence was revealed including features relating to water management in the form of two probable 18<sup>th</sup>-century brick drains predating the churchyard. This was complemented by later evidence of quarrying of the brickearth natural at the margins of the area to the west, potentially in connection with its initial laying out, which then subsequent was used for the deposition of domestic refuse. Additionally, evidence for the pre-garden layout and the functioning churchyard during its usage for burial was found in the presence of a York Stone kerb which corresponds with roadways leading to the former mortuary and coroner's court on the 1873 OS map, prior to the sites redesign in the 1890s.*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Background**

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE) was commissioned by Arlington Builders Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of a new cable trench at St Mary Magdalene Churchyard, Holloway Road, London Borough of Islington (Figure 1; NGR: TQ 3140 8496). The trench ran approximately from the Holloway Road pavement through the south west of St Mary Magdalene's churchyard to St Mary Magdalene Academy' Courtyard School.
- 1.1.2 The site is bounded by Holloway Road to the east, residential and the former Holloway Mortuary and Coroner's Court buildings to the south, with the remainder of the churchyard to the north and west.
- 1.1.3 A Faculty (Ref. No.: 2328) was granted for the excavation of a single trench to lay utilities along the southern boundary of the site between Holloway Road and the Courtyard School. Given the excavations were undertaken within a disused graveyard this archaeological watching brief was undertaken to monitor the impact of these works on below ground deposits.
- 1.1.4 The watching brief was undertaken intermittently between the 25<sup>th</sup> of April and 19<sup>th</sup> of May 2017. ASE were not present at all times on site but only as work that impacted on below ground remains was undertaken. The work followed a pre-agreed Written Scheme of Investigation and Method Statement (ASE 2017).

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

- 1.2.1 The uppermost natural geology on the site comprises brickearth (Langley Silt), approximately 1m below ground level, with this overlying London Clay, itself lying well below the level of the current excavations (BGS 2017).
- 1.2.2 There is a gradual slope across the site from 31.8mOD at the Holloway Road to 34.0mOD at Liverpool Road. In the watching brief this level of natural was found to vary with brickearth as high as 0.8m below ground level (31.00m OD) close to Holloway Road but being entirely absent from the second half of the trench closer to St Mary's Academy Courtyard School.
- 1.2.3 Much of the site's lowest levels were covered in a made ground, which partly utilised re-deposited natural brickearth, which contained archaeological material (see 4.0).

### **1.3 Planning Background**

- 1.3.1 The impact of this project was judged primarily to be to below ground archaeological remains given the trench ran through the disused graveyard, with the works themselves, undertaken by Arlington Builders Ltd, granted a Faculty, (i.e. ecclesiastical permission to undertake works on church property; Ref: 2328).

1.3.2 As part of this faculty, the Diocesan Archaeological Advisor specified that archaeological monitoring was to take place on the site to mitigate any impact on buried archaeological resources and particularly human remains with the churchyard.

1.3.3 This watching brief work followed best practice under ClfA guidance (2014a, 2014b, 2014c, 2014d) and Guidance for Best Practice for the Treatment of Human Remains Excavated from Christian Burial Grounds in England (APACBE 2017) and the Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service's (GLAAS) Archaeological Guidance Papers (Historic England 2015).

## **1.4 Aims and Objectives**

1.4.1 The general aims of the watching brief were:

- To define, insofar as possible, the date, character, form and function of any archaeological features observed on site.
- To establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the footprint of the proposed development and to preserve by record any such remains
- To determine the survival, extent and minimum depth below modern ground level of any such remains
- To determine the nature and significance of any archaeological deposits

1.4.2 Site specific research goals were:

- Are there any features present that pre-date the site's use as a churchyard?
- Are there any in situ human remains present within the location of the proposed cable trench? If present can the individual(s) be identified? What can be determined about their lives from any pathologies?
- Are there any disarticulated human remains present within the location of the proposed cable trench?

1.4.3 As no human remains were encountered on the watching brief these latter two site-specific aims are no longer relevant (as are the research themes the WSI [ASE 2017, p.4] proposed to investigate with regards to APACBE 2017 on human demography, growth and patterns of disease). As a result this report will focus primarily on the material that predates the churchyard (see 4.0).

## **1.5 Scope of Report**

1.5.1 This documents sets out the findings of the period of the watching brief (25/4/12 - 19/5/17) as recorded by attending archaeologists Jonathan Gardner and Stephen White, and is prepared in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (ASE 2017) and Historic England standards for archaeological projects (English Heritage 2008).

1.5.2 This report orders the results of this work by the date of their observation, given

that the cable trench was dug in several phases and minimal archaeological remains were encountered. Prior to this the background to the sites archaeological potential is discussed, as is the archaeological methodology employed in the watching brief. The final part discusses the impact of the works on the archaeological resources as observed during the watching brief.



## 2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Overview

2.1.1 Desk-based assessment of the site suggests there is little evidence for significant activity in the immediate area prior to the 19<sup>th</sup> century (MoLAS 2005). This saw the construction of St Mary Magdalene itself in 1812-14 and the use of its surroundings as a churchyard (discussed further below). The following summaries are based upon this information and the WSI (ASE 2017).

2.1.2 Despite two previous watching briefs undertaken in the area of the churchyard (MoLA 2008, 2013) no evidence of in-situ or disarticulated human remains was recovered, suggesting that burials on the site were confined to specific areas close to the church and outside of the peripheral areas monitored in these works. This corresponds with the plan of the burial ground in 1892 (not reproduced here), prior to its clearance of headstones and establishment as a garden, showing the vast majority of graves and vaults to be clustered around the west door and northwest of the church (MoLAS 2005).

### 2.2 Period Summaries

#### *Prehistoric to Saxon*

2.2.1 There is no evidence for archaeological remains dating from the prehistoric through to the Saxon period in the vicinity of the site. It is probable, however, that the site was in use for agriculture by at least the Saxon period.

#### *Medieval to 18<sup>th</sup>-Century*

2.2.2 From the medieval period through to the 18<sup>th</sup>-century the site is likely to have lain in an area of agricultural activity alongside Holloway Road. The road itself was established by the 12<sup>th</sup> century as a major route out of London with its course gradually modified to the current major road (the A1) that persists today running from Highbury towards Archway and Highgate (MoLAS 2005, p.12).

2.2.3 Some small-scale medieval settlement is recorded in the neighbourhood, particularly at 'Ring Cross' (later called 'Lower Holloway') to the north of the site close at the junction of Hornsey and Holloway Road, and separately, at the junction of Upper Street and Holloway Road to the south-east.

2.2.4 By the post-medieval period and especially from the late-18<sup>th</sup>-century onwards the surrounding area of the site witnessed increasing residential development initially closer to Upper Street, with the areas along Holloway only really fully developed by the early-19<sup>th</sup>-century.

2.2.5 Maps reproduced in the DBA (MoLAS 2005) including the Parish survey of 1735 show three detached buildings immediately adjacent to Holloway Road and the lane leading to the churchyard that the cable trench in the current works follows. Later maps such as Greenwood's of 1824 also indicated two buildings immediately south of this lane, with one on the site of the current house located in the churchyard. These may have been associated with the church itself and predate the mortuary building still standing to the southeast

of the trench, which was built in 1874 and most recently used as LB Islington's Work's yard.

#### *19<sup>th</sup>-century to Modern*

- 2.2.6 The site's potential lies primarily in its former use as a churchyard. In 1803 a resolution was passed to build a chapel of ease immediately to the north of the site to help cater for the substantial increase in population since the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. The chapel was sited within a spacious burial ground as set out today.
- 2.2.7 An 1892 burial plan for the churchyard is held at the London Metropolitan Archives, showing 593 gravestones and monuments previously located in the graveyard (reproduced in MoLAS 2005).
- 2.2.8 Burial mostly ceased in the churchyard by 1855 with only 55 internments until the mid-1890s, but the chapel of ease itself formally became the local Parish Church for the area in 1894 a further 6 burials were recovered up until 1916 (MoLAS 2005, pp.12-17).
- 2.2.9 The site sees a significant alteration in its planting scheme, pathways and roads following its disuse and establishment of the coroner's court and mortuary in 1874. The laying out of the gardens takes place in the 1890s and is likely responsible for the majority of differences between the 1873 and 1896 OS maps (Figures 5 and 6).
- 2.2.10 The Churchyard today has most recently been altered by the construction of the Academy's Courtyard School in 2013, with the wider gardens continuing to be used as a park.

### **2.3 Recent Archaeological Investigation**

- 2.3.1 Two previous phases of archaeological work have been undertaken at St Mary Magdalene:
- In 2008 seven trial pits were excavated at the north and northeast of the churchyard (MoLA 2008). No archaeological or burial remains were encountered in any of the pits with the natural geology located at approximately 32.1m OD.
  - In 2013 seven trial pits were excavated in the south part of the churchyard (MoLA 2013). None of the pits identified any human remains although low-grade archaeological remains were identified in four of the pits (comprising typically 19<sup>th</sup>-century garden/dump deposits and a cobbled yard surface).

### 3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.1.1 The watching brief comprised the monitoring of the excavation for a single trench across the site which took places in phases. The trench itself curving from an initial straight drive down the lane into the churchyard from Holloway Road of approximately 40 metres, then turn to the south-south-west for some 10metres or so before returning to a straight alignment for another c20 running to the south-west. At the terminus closest to the Courtyard School, the trench made a sharp right angle turn into the building (c.8m). A small 'dog-leg' trench was also dug at the gates of the mortuary to connect with an existing gas supply (approximately 3.5m further to the south from the line of the main trench). Figure 2 shows the trench plan in detail, but the trench varied in width from 0.8m close to Holloway Road for the first c15.5m to 0.5m in middle section before widening back to 0.8m beyond the gas connection at the mortuary gate and for the connection to the school. The formation level of the trench was 0.75m BGL up until this gas connection where upon it dropped to 0.9m BGL in the final trench run to the school.
- 3.1.2 All machine excavation was be undertaken using a 1 ton back-acting mechanical with toothless excavator bucket. The machine excavated through undifferentiated topsoil and modern made ground in spits of no more than 0.25m until archaeological deposits were encountered or the top of the underlying natural sediments reached. At all times the attending archaeologist monitored the deposit under excavation for evidence of human remains and/or grave cuts and coffin wood or furniture. Care was taken that archaeological deposits were not damaged due to over machining.
- 3.1.3 All exposed archaeological features/deposits were cleaned by hand and recorded in plan and section as well as being photographed as per standard guidelines for sites in London (MoLAS 1994, Historic England 2015).
- 3.1.4 Any disarticulated human bone was to be retrieved by the monitoring archaeologist, bagged and reburied within the trench. In practice no suspected human bone was recovered but in the absence of specialist analysis, all recovered disarticulated bone (the c.8 pieces recovered were almost all clearly animal bone) was reburied in the centre of the trench close to the entrance of the former mortuary and coroners court.
- 3.1.5 All excavated archaeological features; layers and/or deposits were planned, photographed and recorded utilising the assigned Museum of London site code (HWY 17).
- 3.1.6 A full digital photographic record was made of all archaeological features. All photographs, except working shots, included a board that detailed: the site code, date and context number, a scale and a north arrow.
- 3.1.7 An ongoing site matrix was compiled during the fieldwork stage, which was phased during the subsequent post excavation stage.

### 3.2 Fieldwork Constraints

- 3.2.1 The site was monitored as excavation progressed meaning on occasion small areas had to be left unmonitored, most significantly the final 5m stretch between the churchyard lane and the pavement of Holloway Road. Though potentially there may have been roadside deposits here, given the truncations across the rest of the upper deposits on site and the high number of services close to the Road itself, there is unlikely to have been much surviving archaeological features in this portion.
- 3.2.2 Due to the rapid nature of the work as digging took place, measured sketch sections and plans were completed for features observed in the trench. These were then transferred to a scaled 1:100 plan that was digitised.

### 3.3 The Site Archive

- 3.3.1 The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Tables 1 and 2).

Context sheets	19
Section sheets	0
Plans sheets	2
Colour photographs	0
B&W photos	0
Digital photos	44
Context register	1
Drawing register	0
Watching brief forms	14
Trench Record forms	0

Table 1: Quantification of site paper archive

Bulk finds (quantity e.g. 1 bag, 1 box, 0.5 box 0.5 of a box )	(see table 4 below)
Registered finds (number of)	0
Flots and environmental remains from bulk samples	0
Palaeoenvironmental specialists sample samples (e.g. columns, prepared slides)	0
Waterlogged wood	0
Wet sieved environmental remains from bulk samples	0

Table 2: Quantification of artefact and environmental samples

## 4.0 RESULTS

### 4.1 Trench area monitored between 25- 28/4/2017

- 4.1.1 The first portion of the service trench monitored began 5.5m south-west from the gateposts of the churchyard (the connection in this area to the Holloway Road was not monitored) and stretched parallel to the site's south boundary wall for 20.9m.
- 4.1.2 Though not present throughout the whole area monitored or indeed the whole site the lowest deposit was natural brickearth [1006] rising to 31.30m OD at the furthest end of this initial monitoring area, i.e. furthest from Holloway Road. This brickearth was mostly obscured across the remainder of the trench by a brickearth like clayey-silt [1003] which contained fragments of ceramic building material (CBM: tile and brick), clay tobacco pipe, and very occasional pottery. This layer was observed across the whole site and is interpreted as a made ground laid down prior to the formation of the burial ground. The date ranges of pottery in this dump stretched between the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century to the early 19<sup>th</sup>, suggesting an agglomeration of refuse and other dumped material mixed with re-deposited natural.
- 4.1.3 This [1003] layer (up to 0.4m thick in places) sealed in this part of the monitoring, a brick drain or culvert [1004] which cut the natural [1006] in NW-SE orientation. This ran in near alignment with the existing brick wall corner forming the southern boundary of the lane leading to the churchyard. The main structure of this drain, of which only the top surface was revealed at 0.79m BGL, was formed of at least 7 courses laid on edge forming a semi-circular top, with the addition of a single header course of bricks laid flat against these to the east. These bricks were of broad 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century date though the material in [1003] across the site in general dated up until the 1820s, suggesting, relatively, an earlier date for this brickwork.
- 4.1.4 The remains of a second drain or culvert was also discovered 9m further to the west close to the extant cottage's garage and to modern services. This drain [1008] was, unlike [1004] relatively basic with two lines of bricks laid 0.2m apart some (the top course surviving at 0.64m BGL), again running NW-SE, but laid directly onto the natural brickearth [1006]. It is likely the upper portions of this structure were truncated in the past given the mortar scars on its top courses. It contained an internal fill [1007] a mid-grey-brown clay-silt containing oyster shell, pot and CBM. These 5 sherds of creamware pottery could only be dated to between 1760-1810 though again given the overlying dating of the layer [1003], a date closer to the middle of this range may be possible.
- 4.1.5 Overlying [1003], across the area monitored, was a dark grey-brown clayey silt [1002] up to 0.2m thick with small fragments of CBM and mortar which in turn was covered by 0.1m of levelling [1001] for the modern road surface [1000], itself formed of asphalt. These upper deposits were similar across the site though at times varied in thickness (described in each monitoring date separately below).

## 4.2 Trench area monitored between 2-5/5/2017

- 4.2.1 This area had few archaeological remains different from that previously monitored, with natural [1006] observed 0.64m BGL sealed by a similar sequence of deposits. One slight variation was the presence of broken York Stone slabs in the made ground [1002] in varying quantities for at least 12 linear metres towards the SW. No fragments were observed as being inscribed or otherwise identifiable as gravestones or ledgers.
- 4.2.2 The only feature recorded in this phase was potential cut [1010] which contained a silty fill [1009] located approximately where the trench turned south towards the school and at formation level. This fill had no finds and only occasional charcoal so though potentially a silted up ditch in the natural it is also possible it was a natural gully. This was sealed by made ground [1003]

## 4.3 Trench area monitored between 8- 19/5/2017

- 4.3.1 This area comprised the remainder of the trench as well as the small connecting trench to the gas main shown on Figure 2. Beyond this gas main the trench was widened to 0.8m and deepened to 0.9m BGL.
- 4.3.2 A small pit [1012] was observed cut into [1003] which contained a silty clay fill containing CBM and charcoal but no dated finds.
- 4.3.2 This was sealed by made ground [1002] potentially making it later than the brick drains previously described. Immediately above this feature and cut into [1002] was a York Stone kerb [1016] with a slightly rounded edge still in-situ c. 0.04 thick and 0.15m high, joined to others in section and running approximately NW-SE. This had no apparent construction cut but the back edge was filled with c. 50mm of fragmentary asphalt (included as part of [1001] though possibly earlier). This is likely to be part of an earlier road alignment towards the coroner's court and mortuary (see discussion in 6.0).
- 4.3.3 A similar sequence of deposits was observed in the rest of the monitored area with the exception of two possible backfilled quarry pits [1014] and [1018].
- 4.3.4 The first of these [1014], was at least 8 metres in length and cut the re-deposited natural [1003] at formation level and contained two fills [1015] and [1013]. [1013], the lower fill contained the largest assemblage of pottery on the site and, due to makers marks on one vessel, can be securely dated between the early 1820s to mid-1830s and can be characterised as domestic refuse. The pit itself was fairly steep sided cutting [1003] and likely at a similar angle into the natural below [1006], suggesting a possible original function of brickearth quarrying.
- 4.3.5 Close to the terminus of the trench at the Courtyard School, a second large possibly quarry pit was exposed [1018] whose fill contained similar refuse material and burnt lenses. Again this cut re-deposited brickearth [1003] and was sealed by [1002]. The top of the pit's fill [1017] was located at 0.9m BGL.

Context	Type	Interpretation	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Deposit Thickness m
1000	Masonry	Modern asphalt	Site wide	Trench	0.13
1001	Layer	Modern levelling	Site wide	Trench	0.1
1002	Layer	P.-Med./Mod. made ground	Site wide	Trench	0.2 (max)
1003	Layer	P.-Med. made ground	Site wide	Trench	0.4 (max)
1004	Masonry	Brick drain/culvert	Trench (0.5)	0.7	0.1 (N.F.E.)
1005	Cut	Construction cut for brick drain [1004]	Trench (0.5)	0.7	0.1 (N.F.E.)
1006	Layer	Natural Brickearth	Site wide	Trench	not bottomed
1007	Fill	Fill of brickwork [1008]	Trench (0.5)	0.39	0.1
1008	Masonry	Possible brick culvert	Trench (0.5)	0.39	0.12
1009	Fill	Fill of linear [1010]	1.1	Trench (0.5)	0.1
1010	Cut	Possible linear ditch	1.1	Trench (0.5)	0.1
1011	Fill	Fill of pit [1012]	1.7	0.28	0.35 (not bottomed)
1012	Cut	Possible pit cut	1.7	0.28	0.35 (not bottomed)
1013	Fill	Top fill of [1014]	8.0	Trench (0.8)	0.1 (not bottomed)
1014	Cut	Pit cut	8.0	Trench (0.8)	0.52 (not bottomed)
1015	Fill	Second fill of [1014]	8.0	0.3	0.42 (max)
1016	Masonry	Stone kerb	1.35 (N.F.E.)	0.04	0.15
1017	Fill	Fill of [1018]	6.0	0.85	0.1 (not bottomed)
1018	Cut	Pit cut	6.0	0.85	0.1 (not bottomed)

Table 3: List of all recorded contexts across WB area

## 5.0 THE FINDS

### 5.1 Summary

5.1.1 A small assemblage of finds was recovered and were washed and dried or air dried as appropriate. They were subsequently quantified by count and weight and were bagged by material and context (Table 4). All finds have been packed and stored following CifA guidelines (2014).

Context	Pottery	Weight (g)	CBM	Weight (g)	Stone	Weight (g)	Clay Tobacco Pipe	Weight (g)
1002	1	46			2	654		
1003	12	146						
1004			2	2784				
1007	5	34						
1008			1	1602				
1010	1	20						
1013	24	822					3	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>1068</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4386</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>654</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>

Table 4: Finds quantification

### 5.2 The Pottery by Luke Barber

5.2.1 The archaeological monitoring recovered 43 sherds of pottery, weighing 1060g, from five individually numbered contexts. The material has been fully listed in Table 5 as part of the visible archive. Common names have been used for the wares though MoLA codes have been included for the redwares to avoid any ambiguity.

5.2.2 The earliest pottery from the site appears to relate to the late 17<sup>th</sup> or very early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The absence of white Border ware is quite notable and although some of the tin-glazed wares may well be from the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century they could easily be old vessels in contemporaneous use. There appears to be a continuous presence throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century but the bulk of the overall assemblage was recovered from the 19<sup>th</sup>- century group from context [1013]. This produced a fairly fresh unabraded collection of typically domestic wares generally of the first few decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Maker's marks are unfortunately scarce in the group, however, the Codnor Park English stoneware bottle is very useful in that Burton was only at this pottery between c. 1821 and 1833 (Askey 1998). Even allowing for the bottle to be in circulation a few years after the pottery switched to the new owners the vessel gives a fairly tight date of deposition for the group. The assemblages for both the early and late post-medieval periods are too small to be able to reliably comment on social status but there is nothing present to suggest anything other than lower/middle class households.



Context	Fabric	Period	No	Weight	Comments (including estimated number of vessels represented)
1002	Chinese porcelain	EPM/ LPM	1	46g	Dish x1 (hand-painted blue Chinese floral design)
1003	London-area post-medieval redware (PMR)	EPM/ LPM	1	10g	Uncertain form x1 (clear/green glaze all over)
1003	Red Border ware (RBOR)	EPM/ LPM	1	2g	Uncertain form x1 (clear glaze internally)
1003	English Tin-glazed earthenware	EPM	4	24g	Charger x1 (foot-ring base with blue, orange and green lines); plate x1 (blue annular lines); uncertain forms x2 (x1 a hollow ware)
1003	Frechen stoneware	EPM	2	92g	Bottles x2 (iron wash and salt glaze, x1 with late Bartmann mask). Pale underfired late fabric
1003	Staffordshire slipware	EPM	3	8g	Uncertain form x1 (hollow ware with combed slip externally)
1003	Pearlware	LPM	1	2g	Uncertain form x1 (hand-painted blue leaves)
1007	Creamware	LPM	5	34g	Plates x2; bowl x1 (simple rim)
1010	Essex-type fine redware (PMFR)	EPM	1	18g	?Chamber pot x1 (handle with green glaze all over)
1013	London-area post-medieval redware (PMR) unglazed	EPM/ LPM	2	22g	Dish x1 (beaded rim). For flower pot
1013	London-area post-medieval redware (PMR) glazed	EPM/ LPM	3	294g	Jar x1 (clear glaze all over, x1 horizontal handle); uncertain forms x2 (clear glaze internally)
1013	Red Border ware (RBOR)	EPM/ LPM	1	4g	Uncertain form x1 (clear glaze internally)
1013	Sunderland/Midlands slipware (SUND)	LPM	1	40g	Bowl x1 (white slip internally, clear glaze all over). Rounded club rim
1013	Yellow ware	LPM	2	86g	Baking dish x1 (plain); uncertain form x1 (black and blue annular lines with white slipped girth band to take mocha decoration)
1013	English stoneware	LPM	2	56g	Bottles x2 (iron wash, salt glazed) x1 stamped 'CODNOR PARK [POTTERY] // BURTON'S // SUPERIOR [WARE] // [EX]'
1013	Nottinghamshire/Derbyshire stoneware	LPM	1	162g	Lidded jar x1 (sprigged thistles on lid, iron wash, salt glaze)
1013	Creamware	LPM	3	34g	Jug x1 (inturned rim); uncertain form x1
1013	Pearlware	LPM	1	6g	Uncertain form x1 (late/pale glaze)
1013	Pearlware (transfer-printed)	LPM	7	116g	Plates x2 (x1 willow pattern design with maker's wheel stamp on base; x1 Continental buildings design); bowls x2 (both English landscape designs); cup x1 (floral design with blue transfer on base: 'Flora' within garland, over 'OPAQUE CHINA')
1013	English porcelain (bone china)	LPM	1	4g	Saucer x1

Table 5: Post-Roman Pottery Assemblage (EPM – Early Post-Medieval c. 1525/50-1750; LPM - Late Post-Medieval c. 1750-1900+).

### **5.3 The Ceramic Building Material** by Elke Raemen

- 5.3.1 Three brick samples (weight 4386g) were taken from two different contexts ([1004] and [1008]). All three are reddish purple and vitrified, rendering the fabric and particularly the quartz inclusions unclear. The two bricks from [1004] both contain moderate slag/burnt ash to 7mm, common fine yellow specks, common voids and common calcareous material (probably chalk) to 5mm. They appear to contain common quartz temper too. This fabric B1 is probably equivalent to MoLA fabric 3032, with the addition of chalk temper.
- 5.3.2 Both bricks measure 103mm wide and they measure 60 and 64 mm thick. The complete example (length 220mm) displays a very shallow oval frog measuring c 135 by 46mm by c. 5mm deep. Surviving mortar is pale grey with common chalk to 4.5mm, moderate medium/coarse quartz and rare quartz to 2mm.
- 5.3.3 The sample from [1008] is complete, measuring 214mm long, 101mm wide and 63mm thick. This too displays a shallow frog, measuring c. 140 by 35mm and again c. 5mm deep. The fabric is vitrified and therefore unclear, however, it appears to be B1 or very similar to B1.
- 5.3.4 All three bricks are of 18<sup>th</sup>- to 19<sup>th</sup>-century date.

### **5.4 The Clay Tobacco Pipe** by Elke Raemen

- 5.4.1 Three clay tobacco pipe stem fragments were recovered from [1013]. All three are plain and undecorated, dating broadly between c. 1750 and 1910.

### **5.5 The Geological Material** by Luke Barber

- 5.5.1 The archaeological monitoring recovered two fragments, measuring up to 38mm thick, from York stone paving slabs (context [1002]). This was a common paving type in the capital and its presence here is not unexpected.

## 6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

### 6.1 Overview of stratigraphic sequence

- 6.1.1 The site stratigraphic sequence generally comprised a layer of modern asphalt overlying a bedding/levelling deposit which in turn sealed a likely 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century made ground. This in turn sealed an earlier made ground which utilised re-deposited brickearth - though in places this was truncated by quarry pits and other cut features.
- 6.1.2 Below the re-deposited made ground lay occasional brick drains and a potential linear feature cutting the natural geology whose maximum height was at 31.14m OD, with the majority obscured by the later artificially laid-down deposits.
- 6.1.3 The range of features was limited to late post-medieval water management with the brick drains and potential brickearth quarrying in two pits, which were subsequently backfilled with domestic refuse of early 19<sup>th</sup> century date.
- 6.1.4 Large areas of the trench consisted only of either blank natural geology or, in the majority of the area monitored, the re-deposited brickearth deposit extending below formation level (max 0.9m BGL), suggesting a levelling of the site prior to its later use as a churchyard (see **6.3**).
- 6.1.5 No human remains were revealed in the course of the works at all, indicating different uses for this area of the site (see **6.3**)
- 6.1.6 The methodology used to monitor the site was effective in identifying archaeological features and monitoring for potential uses for burial of human remains and no archaeological deposits were missed during monitoring as a result. The interpretation of the results of this work is qualified by the relatively small amount of finds recovered (providing limited date ranges) and the small area of each individual feature exposed particularly where the service trench narrowed to only 0.5m width.

### 6.2 Deposit survival and existing impacts

- 6.2.1 The site was likely levelled prior to the establishment of the churchyard with evidence that it also suffered from drainage issues in contemporary early 19<sup>th</sup>-century documents relating to the church's building (MoLAS 2005, p. 15), suggesting it may also have been subject to drainage, and/or land-raising. This potentially explains the extensive deposits of made ground in all areas. These deposits may have obscured earlier features cut into the natural brickearth or indeed, may mask a more general level of truncation across the brickearth.
- 6.2.2 More recent works such as the modification of the churchyard into a garden in the 1890s, and recent (21<sup>st</sup> century) road replacement in the park may also have affected below ground survival. That said, the presence of the original road line (i.e. predating the laying out of the churchyard as a park), as indicated by the kerb described in **4.3.2** and that corresponds to the original maps of the churchyard, would suggest that this impact to be minimal.

- 6.2.3 Lastly, it is also possible the quarrying observed to the SW of the site could have removed earlier deposits though again it is likely any such features lay below the formation level and thus the made ground of re-deposited brickearth.
- 6.2.4 The current service trench works have had minimal impact on the archaeological deposits, not only because of their shallow depth and narrow width, but also given the amount of historic made ground already present on site that potentially masks earlier features.

## 6.4 Discussion of archaeological remains by period

### *Prehistoric to Late Medieval*

- 6.4.1 No evidence of any deposits or finds relating to periods prior to the 18<sup>th</sup>-century were encountered. That said, one possible ditch was seen cutting the natural brickearth [1010] which could not be fully excavated due to formation level, potentially indicating earlier land use, though this may also have been a naturally eroded gully.
- 6.4.2 It is likely at this period the site was agricultural land though is not far from settlement at the junction of today's Upper Street and Holloway Road. Though no evidence was seen for cultivation in this project, medieval plough soil was seen over 100m to the west of the site at Liverpool Road (see 2.2; MoLAS 2013).

### *Post-Medieval to Modern*

- 6.4.3 The majority of the recorded features date to the 18<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> centuries with evidence especially of drainage and quarrying.
- 6.4.4 Two brick drains, with finds from one of them dating to the late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries directly overlay natural geology, suggesting that either drainage or the carrying of waste water was occurring close to Holloway Road. These drains run nearly parallel to the road though are some 30-40m to the west, and likely served the houses shown in the fields close to this major roadway on 18<sup>th</sup> century mapping. The westernmost of these drains runs almost directly towards the current standing cottage on the site, which, again, according to the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century maps (see MoLAS 2005), had several earlier buildings occupying the same site from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century onwards.
- 6.4.5 These features were sealed by redeposited brickearth made ground which contained ceramics dating up until the 1820s suggesting a wholesale process of levelling the land likely in advance of the construction of the church and its environs in 1812. As stated in 6.2.1, this was likely as a consequence of the site being somewhat waterlogged originally.
- 6.4.6 The only other features of note in this period were three pits, two of which were likely connected with quarrying of the brickearth, whilst the third smaller one may have had an unknown function, though potential relates to earlier planting in the gardens given its darker fill and lack of finds.
- 6.4.7 The quarry pits appear to postdate the levelling of the site and thus potentially the establishment of the church with their backfilling of refuse seemingly taking

place no later than the mid-1830s. This may reflect a mixture of uses on the site or small scale brickearth extraction for uses in the immediate area (e.g. land raining elsewhere on site). Without establishing the depth of the pits and their total area it remain unclear what their definite purpose was however.

- 6.4.8 These pits and the remainder of the re-deposited brickearth being sealed by another level of stonier made ground would suggest further levelling of the site potentially reflecting a building up of the ground in the early-mid-19<sup>th</sup> century prior to the suspension of regular burial in 1855. This deposit was overlain by the single line of a York Stone kerb which appears to correspond to the western edge of a roughly N-S roadway leading towards the coroners court and mortuary that predates the current road layout. Its subsequent burial by later levelling deposits and asphalt (which itself its likely of 21<sup>st</sup>-century date and replacing order material) indicates how as shown on the OS maps, the site gained more winding and narrower pathways as part of its conversion to a garden in the 1890s.
- 6.4.9 The significance of the archaeological deposits is low and without further work on residential sites closer to the main roadway, gives really only a low level insight into the development of Lower Holloway in the 18<sup>th</sup>- to 21<sup>st</sup>-centuries.
- 6.4.10 The lack of human remains however does show that the burial map of 1892 (see MoLAS 2005) is likely to be accurate as no internments were found in this south/south-western portion of the churchyard, which potentially may be useful for any subsequent development that takes place.

## 6.5 Consideration of research aims

6.5.1 The research aims as laid out in 1.4 are discussed below in turn.

6.5.2 General aims:

*To define, insofar as possible, the date, character, form and function of any archaeological features observed on site.*

*To establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the footprint of the proposed development and to preserve by record any such remains*

*To determine the survival, extent and minimum depth below modern ground level of any such remains*

*To determine the nature and significance of any archaeological deposits*

These aims were achieved with characterisation of the archaeological deposits through the service trench as considered in section 4.0, 5.0 and in this discussion section. The survival of archaeological deposits was recorded on site and a record was made of all archaeological features and the natural geology, which has retained as part of the site archive. The significance of the archaeological remains was established as low given the small areas and depths observed and the relatively sparsity of archaeological material.

6.5.3 Site specific research aims:

*Are there any features present that pre-date the site's use as a churchyard?*

*Are there any in situ human remains present within the location of the proposed cable trench? If present can the individual(s) be identified? What can be determined about their lives from any pathologies?*

*Are there any disarticulated human remains present within the location of the proposed cable trench?*

6.5.4 There was a limited range of archaeological features that indeed pre-dated the site's formation as a burial ground but none of these predated the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The post-medieval archaeological features discussed in this report are concerned the drainage of the site or nearby properties, and later potentially extraction of brickearth with subsequent refuse deposition.

6.5.5 There were no human remains present on site, either articulated or disarticulated, so the second site-specific research aim could not be achieved. The few fragments of disarticulated bone present were almost certainly animal (visually identified by the attending archaeologists) but were reburied on site as a precaution and not kept as part of the archive.

## **6.6 Updated Research Agenda**

6.6.1 Any future works in the immediate area to the service trench are unlikely to encounter human remains, thus whilst a monitoring presence would likely be required, the research aims for future development should be adjusted to primarily focus on earlier phases of use of the site.

6.6.2 Such research aims could include:

*What evidence is there for earlier post-medieval settlement in lower Holloway?*

*Does medieval agricultural evidence survive beneath made ground deposits in this area?*

*Are there any earlier archaeological periods represented cut into the brickearth or has a general truncation across the area taken place?*

## **6.7 Conclusions**

- 6.7.1 The site presented the opportunity to ascertain the survival of burials in this area of St Mary Magdalene churchyard as well as an insight into earlier uses of the area, complementing the two previous watching briefs (MoLA 2008, 2013). Though no human remains were encountered in the event, nonetheless this absence allows us to confirm the accuracy of the 1892 burial plan and suggest with a high degree of confidence that this side of the churchyard was not used as intensively for burial as areas close to the west and northeast of St Mary Magdalene.
- 6.7.2 Despite the sparsity of features and finds, the site did give an insight into settlement in the area in the late-18<sup>th</sup> and early-19<sup>th</sup>-centuries as the district of Lower Holloway was rapidly urbanising. The drains and later, the quarry pits reuse as refuse dumps indicates continued settlement throughout the period connected to the 'infilling' of formerly agricultural land close to Holloway Road.
- 6.7.3 Lastly, the site also provided some confirmation of the former road layout for the churchyard close to the coroner's court and mortuary with the presence of the original stone kerb beneath the realigned garden paths.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

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**HER Summary**

<b>Site code</b>	HWY 17					
<b>Project code</b>	170167					
<b>Planning reference</b>	(Faculty 2328)					
<b>Site address</b>	St Mary Magdalene Churchyard					
<b>District/Borough</b>	London Borough of Islington					
<b>NGR (12 figures)</b>	TQ 3140 8496					
<b>Geology</b>	Brickearth overlying London Clay					
<b>Fieldwork type</b>			WB			
<b>Date of fieldwork</b>	25/04/2017- 19/05/2017					
<b>Sponsor/client</b>	Arlington Builders Ltd					
<b>Project manager</b>	Andy Leonard					
<b>Project supervisor</b>	Jonathan Gardner					
	Post-Medieval					
<b>Project summary</b>	This watching brief was undertaken at St Mary Magdalene churchyard in order to ensure human remains were not disturbed by the excavation of a new service trench. Though no human remains were revealed, a small sequence including features relating to water management in the form of two probable 18th-century brick drains predating the churchyard. Later evidence was present of quarrying of the brickearth natural at the margins of the area and evidence of the pre-garden layout of the churchyard, was found in the presence of a York Stone kerb which corresponds with roadways leading to the extant former mortuary on the 1873 OS map.					

**OASIS Form****OASIS ID: archaeol6-287373****Project details**

Project name	St Mary Magdalene Churchyard, Holloway Road, London Borough of Islington
Short description of the project	This small watching brief was undertaken at St Mary Magdalene churchyard in order to ensure human remains were not disturbed by the excavation of a new service trench. Though in the event o human remains were recovered or disturbed in this work, a small sequence was nonetheless revealed including features relating to water management in the form of two probable 18th-century brick drains predating the churchyard. This was complemented by later evidence of quarrying of the Brickearth natural at the margins of the area to the west, potentially in connection with its initial laying out, which then subsequent was used for the deposition of domestic refuse. Additionally, evidence for the pre-garden layout and the functioning churchyard during its usage for burial was found in the presence of a York Stone kerb which corresponds with roadways leading to the former mortuary and coroner's court on the 1873 OS map, prior to the sites redesign in the 1890s.
Project dates	Start: 25-04-2017 End: 19-05-2017
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	HWY 17 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	170167 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Conservation Area
Current Land use	Other 4 - Churchyard
Monument type	CEMETERY Post Medieval
Monument type	GARDEN Post Medieval
Monument type	QUARRY PIT Post Medieval
Monument type	DRAIN Post Medieval
Monument type	RUBBISH PIT Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Significant Finds	TOBACCO PIPE Post Medieval
Significant Finds	BRICK Post Medieval
Significant Finds	TILE Post Medieval
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Faculty jurisdiction

**Project location**

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON ISLINGTON HOLLOWAY St Mary Magdalene Churchyard
Postcode	N7 8LT
Study area	0 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 3140 8496 51.547719060763 -0.104734968615 51 32 51 N 000 06 17 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 31m Max: 31.14m

**Project creators**

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Diocesan Archaeologist
Project design originator	ASE
Project director/manager	Andrew Leonard
Project supervisor	Jonathan Gardner
Type of sponsor/funding body	Client
Name of sponsor/funding body	Arlington Builders Ltd

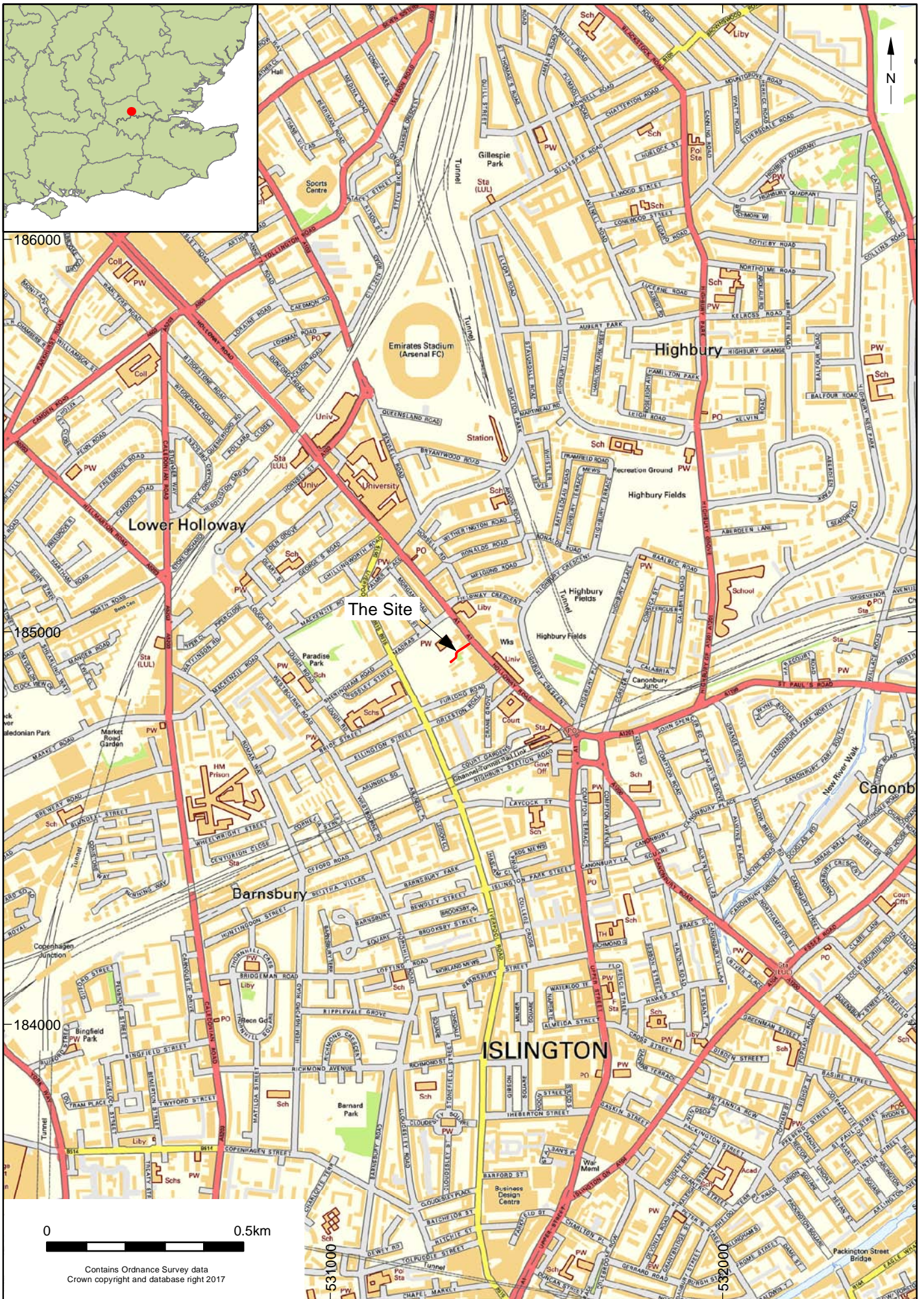
**Project archives**

Physical Archive recipient	LAARC
Physical Contents	"Ceramics","other"
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic","Survey"
Digital Media available	"Database","GIS","Images raster / digital photography","Spreadsheets","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Contents	"Ceramics","Stratigraphic","Survey"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Drawing","Map","Matrices","Photograph","Plan","Report","Survey","Unpublished Text","Unspecified Archive"

**Project bibliography 1**

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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Date	2017
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Entered by	Jonathan W Gardner (jonathan.gardner@ucl.ac.uk)
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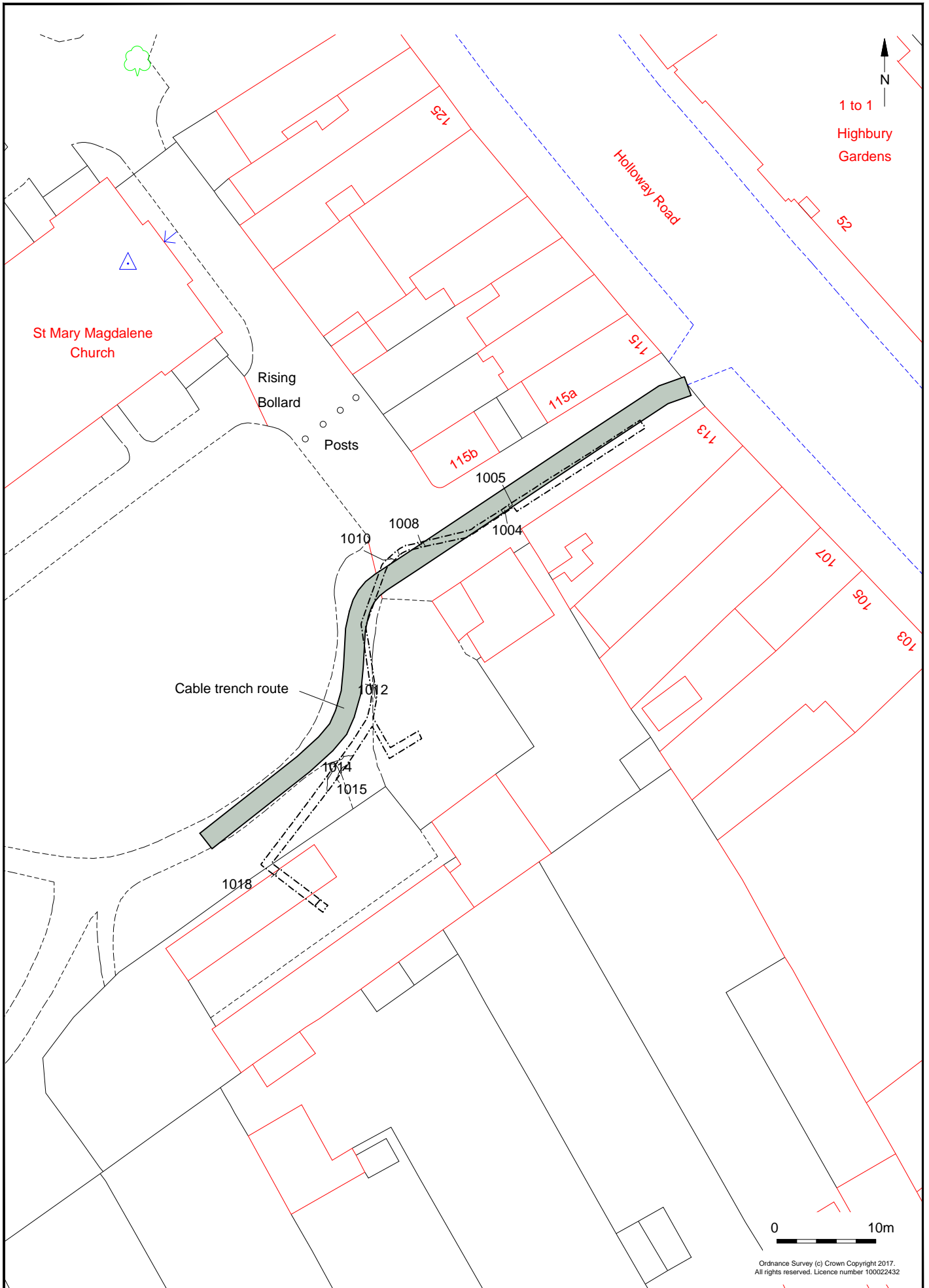




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Project Ref: 170167	June 2017	Site location		
Report Ref: 2017275	Drawn by: AR			





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Project Ref: 170167	June 2017	Monitored cable trench route	
Report Ref: 2017275	Drawn by: AR		



Representative stratigraphic sequence in the service trench



1005, looking north east



1010, looking north east



1014, looking north



1018, looking north



1016, looking north



1004, looking north

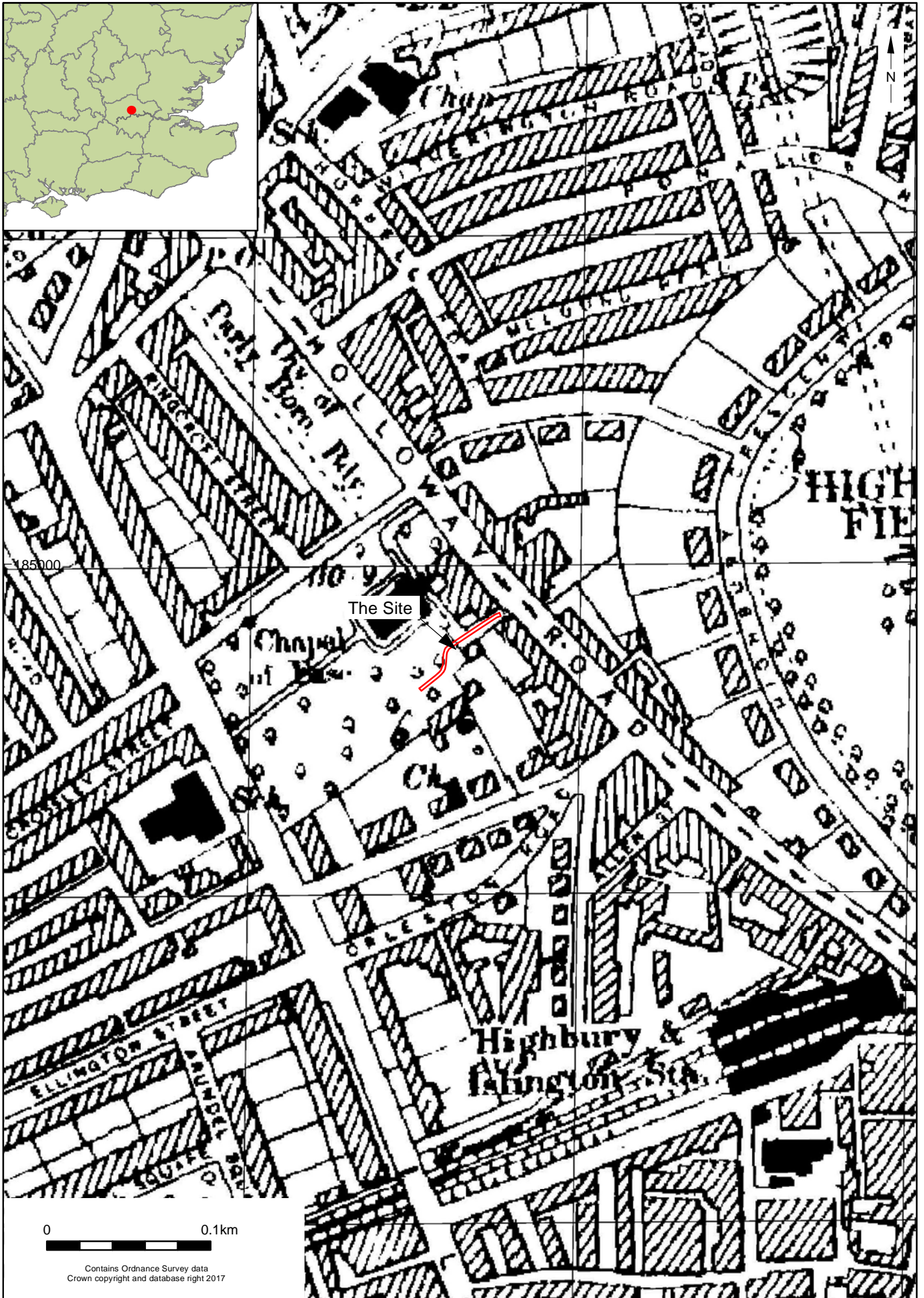




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Project Ref: 170167	June 2017	1873 OS map at 1:2,500	
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Project Ref: 170167	June 2017	1896 OS map at 1:10,560	
Report Ref: 2017275	Drawn by: AR		

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