

**249-251 Merton Road,
London Borough of Wandsworth SW18
Archaeological Evaluation**

**Site code: MWA 08
NGR: TQ 252 738**

**ASE Project no. 3258
ASE report no. 2008014**



David Jamieson

February 2008

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Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd, on behalf of their client, to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at 249-251 Merton Road, Wandsworth. The work was carried out between 28th and 29th January 2008 in advance of proposed redevelopment of the site.

Four, 10 x 1.8m trenches were excavated across the site. No archaeological deposits or finds were encountered.

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Centre for Applied Archaeology, was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd, on behalf of their client, to undertake an archaeological evaluation at 249-251 Merton Road, Wandsworth, London, hereafter referred to as 'the site' (Figure 1), (centred on NGR TQ 252 738). The fieldwork was carried out between 28th and 29th January 2008 in advance of the proposed redevelopment of the site.
- 1.2 The proposed development is bounded to the north by the rear of terraced housing on Camborne road, to the west by Merton Road, to the south by Kimber road and to the east by Storage Solutions Ltd depot. The site is roughly level at around 9.00m OD and is currently open ground.
- 1.3 The proposed redevelopment of the site comprises the demolition of existing buildings and the construction of a new depot. Due to the location of the site within an Archaeological Priority Zone, as defined in the London Borough of Wandsworth Unitary Development Plan, a programme of archaeological trenching was required in order to ascertain the archaeological potential and inform on any future mitigation strategy.
- 1.4 A *Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation* was subsequently prepared by CgMs Consulting Ltd (Meager 2008) and submitted to Ms Diane Walls Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) Officer for the London Borough of Wandsworth) for approval. A *Written Scheme of Investigation* was prepared by ASE (Sygrave 2008) in response to the *Specification* and submitted to CgMs Consulting Ltd for onward submission to the London Borough of Wandsworth. All work was carried out in accordance with the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) *Archaeological Guidance Paper No.3 (AGP3)* unless otherwise stated below. Any variations, via CgMs Consulting Ltd, were agreed with the London Borough of Wandsworth and GLAAS, in their capacity as advisors to the Borough on archaeological planning matters.
- 1.5 The fieldwork was undertaken by David Jamieson (Senior Archaeologist), and Paul Derwent (Archaeologist). The project was managed by Jon Sygrave (Project Manager) and Louise Rayner (Post-Excavation Manager).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The underlying geology of the site is shown on the British Geological Survey sheet 270 (1998) as Kempton Park Gravels. The River Wandle runs north-south c 360m to the east of the site (Meager 2007, 5).
- 2.2 The archaeological background is presented in detail in the Desk-Based Assessment prepared for the site, including a summary of finds from within a 750m radius of the site as held on the Greater London Sites and Monument Record (Meager 2007).
- 2.2 The DBA summary concluded that although large quantities of early prehistoric flintwork was recovered from the area, much of this is without provenance and 'nearly all derived from 19th century gravel extraction and development to the east of the site' (ibid, 6).
- 2.3 No records of Roman finds and few Saxon and medieval finds occurred (ibid, 6). Overall the archaeological potential of the site for all periods was categorised as low (ibid, 6-10).
- 2.4 Geotechnical investigations undertaken at the site in 2007 revealed concrete and made ground (0.5-1.4m) above layers of sand and clays (ibid, 5).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The aims and objectives of the evaluation were set out in the *Specification* issued by CgMs Consulting Ltd (CgMs 2008) and are summarised below with due acknowledgement. The general aim of the archaeological evaluation is to assess the location, form, extent, date, character, condition significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains threatened by the development.
- 3.2 The evaluation should also seek to ascertain the nature and extent of existing disturbance and truncation and thus the degree of archaeological survival on the site.
- 3.3 In addition to these general aims, this investigation should seek to address the following site specific objectives.
- To establish the presence or otherwise of any archaeological remains, and to define the date and nature of such activity.
 - To establish the environmental context of any archaeological remains, together with any earlier and/or later activity.
 - Evaluate the likely impact of past land use and development.
 - Provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy.
 - Where physical preservation is likely to be considered as a mitigation option, the primary factors affecting the present state of preservation and the direct and indirect affect of the proposed development should also be considered.
- 3.4 The trench layout was agreed prior to the evaluation between CgMs Consulting Ltd and the London Borough of Wandsworth, and was designed to provide a representative sample of the redevelopment area not truncated by previous activity (see Figure 2). The evaluation consisted of four trenches, each 10m x 1.8m. The precise location of the trenches was agreed in advance with CgMs Consulting Ltd (Richard Meager).
- 3.5 The trenches were excavated using a 13-tonne tracked machine. The machine was fitted with a toothless grading bucket and the trenches were excavated through undifferentiated topsoil and modern (19th/20th century) made ground in spits of no more than 0.25m until archaeological deposits or the top of the underlying natural sediments was reached. Care was taken so that archaeological deposits were not damaged due to over machining.
- 3.6 All recording was undertaken in accordance with accepted professional standards according to the UCLFAU Fieldwork Manual (draft) and the Written Scheme of Investigation (ASE 2007).
- 3.7 The spoil from the excavations was inspected by the archaeologist in order to recover any artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest.
- 3.8 A photographic record of the trenches was kept in black and white, colour slide film and digital.

- 3.9 The trenches were measured to known points and reproduced on a site plan in relation to the Ordnance Survey (see Fig 2).
- 3.10 A trench record sheet was filled out for each trench and measured sketch sections were produced. Standard UCLFAU context record sheets were filled in for each archaeological deposit encountered.
- 3.11 An online OASIS form was filled out for the site, a copy of which is reproduced as an appendix to this document.
- 3.12 The archive is presently held at the Archaeology South East office in Portslade and will be offered to the Wandsworth Museum in due course. All finds are the property of the landowner, but will be donated to a suitable museum.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Trench 1

The top of trench 1 was recorded at 8.55m OD (see Plate 1)

The earliest deposit encountered comprised natural orange gravel at 7.53m OD. This was cut toward the north of the trench by a probable palaeochannel measuring 7.00m north-south. This channel was filled by a light to mid green sandy silt with frequent gravel inclusions 0.40m thick. In turn the entire trench was covered by a dark brown very sandy silt 0.15m- 0.30 thick. This in turn was overlain by 0.70m of modern made ground.

No archaeological deposits were present.

4.2 Trench 2

The top of trench 2 was recorded at 8.16-8.21m OD (see Plate 2)

Natural brick earth was encountered at 7.80m OD this was overlain by up to 0.40m of dark fine sandy silt. This in turn was overlain by modern made ground.

No archaeological deposits were present.

4.3 Trench 3

The top of trench 3 was recorded at 8.42m OD (see Plate 3)

Truncated natural gravel was encountered at 7.40m OD and was overlain and cut through by a series of modern foundations and made ground to a depth of up to 1.0m.

No archaeological deposits were present.

4.4 Trench 4

The top of this trench was recorded at 8.11m OD

Natural gravel was encountered at 7.71m OD. This was overlain by up to 0.40m of modern made ground.

No archaeological deposits were present.

5 DISCUSSION

- 5.1 The four excavated trenches uncovered no evidence of archaeological deposits nor were any archaeological finds recovered during the evaluation.
- 5.2 The natural brickearth and gravels were seen in the base of all four trenches at a height of between 7.40 – 7.80m OD. Only modern foundations were observed cutting the natural in Trench 3.
- 5.3 The findings of the evaluation concord with the sequence recorded in the geotechnical investigations where made ground lay above natural deposits (Meager 2007, 5).
- 5.4 The results of the evaluation suggest impact on archaeological deposits by the proposed development is likely to be low given the lack of any evidence recovered.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology South-East would like to thank CgMs Consulting Ltd (Richard Meager) for commissioning the work.

REFERENCES

Meager, R, 2007 Desk based assessment for 249-251 Merton Road, London, SW18, CgMS Consulting

Meager, R, 2008 Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation at 249-251 Merton Road, London, SW18, CgMS Consulting

Sygrave, J, 2008, 249-251 Merton Road, London, SW18, Archaeological Evaluation, WSI, ASE unpubl

APPENDIX 1: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: archaeol6-37877

Project details

Project name	249-251 Merton Road, Wandsworth
Short description of the project	Archaeology South-East was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd, on behalf of their client, to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land at 249-251 Merton Road, Wandsworth. The work was carried out between 28th and 29th January 2008 in advance of proposed redevelopment of the site. Four, 10 x 1.8m trenches were excavated across the site. No archaeological deposits or finds were encountered.
Project dates	Start: 28-01-2008 End: 29-01-2008
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	MWA08 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	3258 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 4 - Storage and warehousing
Methods & techniques	'Targeted Trenches'
Development type	Urban commercial (e.g. offices, shops, banks, etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
Position in the planning process	Pre-application

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON WANDSWORTH WANDSWORTH 249-251 Merton Road,
Postcode	SW18
Study area	72.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 252 738 51.4488252761 -0.198073639341 51 26 55 N 000 11 53 W Point
Height OD	Min: 7.40m Max: 7.80m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	CgMs Consulting
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Jon Sygrave
Project supervisor	Dave Jamieson
Type of sponsor/funding body	Client

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive Exists?	No
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC

Paper Media available 'Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes','Plan','Report'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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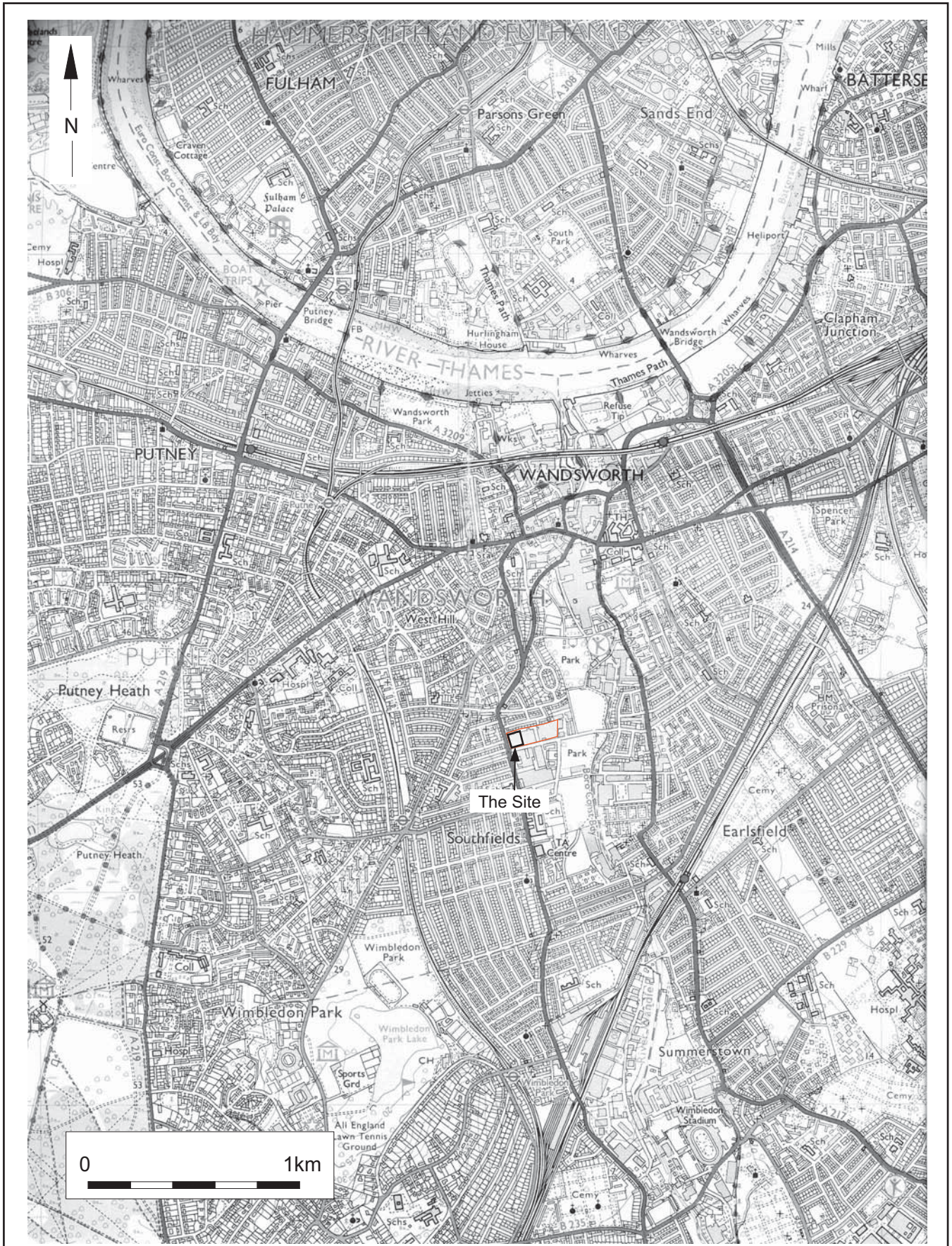
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© Archaeology South-East		Merton Road, Wandsworth	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 3258	Feb 2008	Site Location Plan	
Report Ref: 2008014	Drawn by: SM		



© Archaeology South-East		Merton Road, Wandsworth	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 3258	Feb 2008	Trench Location	
Report Ref: 2008014	Drawn by: JLR		



Plate 1: Trench 1



Plate 2: Trench 2



Plate 3: Trench 3



Plate 4: General site shot

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