

**An Archaeological Evaluation at
160 Handcroft Road, Croydon, CRO 3LE**



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**An Archaeological Evaluation at
160 Handcroft Road, Croydon, CRO 3LE**

NGR 531741 166593

**Project No. 3345
Site Code: HDC 08**

**ASE Report No. 2008059
OASIS id: archaeol6-42092**

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Abstract

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by Archaeology South-East at 160 Handcroft Road, Croydon, CRO 3LE (NGR 531741 166593) for CgMs Consulting on behalf of their client Kitewood Estates Ltd. Two 15m x 1.8m trenches were excavated close to the frontage of Handcroft Road. An earlier Desk Based Assessment (CgMs 2008) suggested that Handcroft Road may be on the alignment of the possible London to Brighton Roman Road. The trenches did not identify any archaeological features or deposits, but did record a modern ditch.

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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, were commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd on behalf of their client, to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of redevelopment on land at 160, Handcroft Road, London Borough of Croydon, CR0 3LE (hereafter referred to as the site). The site is centred on NGR 531741 166593 and its location is shown in Figure 1.

1.1.2 Currently, the site is occupied by two single storey buildings to the east of the trenches, with associated hard standing over the remainder. The site is bounded to west by Handcroft Road, by residential development to the southeast and by retail and residential development to the northeast. The proposed redevelopment of the site comprises the demolition of the current buildings and the construction of a new residential development fronting Handcroft Road.

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 The solid geology of the study site is shown by the British Geological Survey Sheet 270 (South London) to comprise London Clay. The site is located on a fairly gentle, south facing, slope with some indication of levelling at its southern end.

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 CgMs Consulting adhere to a code of Best Practice whereby the potential impact of their activities on archaeological remains is considered and mitigation strategies implicated. In line with this, and as part of CgMs Consulting Ltd normal consultation process, advice was sought from the Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS). It was first decided to produce a Desk Based Assessment, (Meager 2008b), of the development site to establish any possible archaeological potential, and to provide guidance on ways to accommodate any archaeological constraints identified. Given the nature of the groundworks involved and the proximity to known archaeological sites, the GLAAS advisor recommended that an archaeological evaluation would be the appropriate mitigation response (in the first instance). If significant remains were encountered, then further measures may have become necessary.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 The objectives of the archaeological evaluation, as set out in the Specification issued by CgMS are summarised below.

1.4.2 The general aim of the archaeological evaluation was to establish whether any archaeological sites exist in the area, with particular regard to any which are of sufficient importance to require preservation *in situ*.

1.4.3 The evaluation aimed to determine the location, form, extent, date, character,

condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the development.

1.4.4 The evaluation sought to ascertain the nature and extent of existing disturbance and truncation and thus the degree of archaeological survival on the site.

1.4.5 Where physical preservation is likely to be considered as a mitigation option, those factors affecting the present state of preservation and the effects of the proposed development should also be considered.

1.4.6 In addition to these general aims, the evaluation sought 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.

1.4.7 There was also the possibility that evidence associated with the former London to Brighton Roman Road may exist in the vicinity of the western boundary of the site (Meager 2008b).

1.5 Scope of Report

1.5.1 The current report represents the findings of the evaluation undertaken on 8th and 9th May 2008 by Paul Riccoboni, Kayleigh Whiting and Justin Barton.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The Archaeological Desk Based Assessment prepared by CgMs, (Meager 2008b), provides a detailed background study of the site. The key results of this assessment are briefly summarised below.
- 2.2** In summary, the Desk Based Assessment identified the site as having a moderate potential for the Roman Period. This potential is associated with the Roman Road connecting London and Brighton, which may have lain towards the west of the site, along the alignment of the current Handcroft Road.
- 2.3** It was considered that the site had a low potential for all other archaeological and historic periods (Meager 2008b).
- 2.4** Tables 1 and 2, below, give a summary of the HER and previous archaeological interventions within a 750m radius of the site.

Table 1: HER data summary (750m radius of site)

HER No	NGR	Description
MLO19564	TQ3201 6584	A whole tusk of <i>Elephas Primigenius</i> was found at Waddon New Road
MLO67704	TQ3215 6572	Burnt and struck flint dated to Late Mesolithic and Early Neolithic identified within cut features at the Drummond centre, Tamworth Road.
MLO19603	TQ3200 6700	A Bronze Age socketed axe with side loop, known from the general Broad Green area.
MLO9081	TQ3200 6700	A Gallo Belgic Stater of the Bellovaci has been identified from the general Broad Green area.
MLO12754	TQ3178 6580	Four Greek Drachma and Egyptian bronze of Ptolemy VI were found in the garden of a house fronting Cuthbert Road, likely to have been antiquarian imports.
MLO9063 & MLO9065	TQ3170 6660	Two Roman coins from the vicinity of Handcroft Road.
MLO19600	TQ3185 6581	Hoard of Fourth Century coins (mainly dated to 337AD) were identified at Pitlake, south of the study site.
MLO16221	TQ31946544	12 th Century church
MLO722293-4	TQ322 657	Extensive medieval habitation and activity found within the historic centre of Croydon.
MLO61848	TQ3163 6713	Sherds of medieval pottery found close to Mayday hospital to the north of the study site
MLO77954	TQ3115 6625	Medieval pottery sherds found near the church of St John the Baptist to the southwest.

Table 2: Previous Archaeological investigations (750m radius of site)

HER No.	NGR	Description
MLO74841	TQ3190 6680	Evaluations at 344-354 London Road Croydon, north-east of the study site, revealed extensive modern disturbance and no archaeological finds or features.
MLO75671	TQ3166 6688	Evaluations at 390 London Road, north of the study site, revealed modern deposits overlying natural gravel.
MLO60123	TQ3226 6671	An evaluation at 14-15A St James Park, north-east of the study site, revealed no archaeological finds or features.
MLO98196	TQ31524 66981	Evaluation at 399-403 London Road, north of the study site, revealed a post medieval pit and Victorian cellar
MLO66952	TQ3214 6598	Evaluation at Tamworth Road, south of the study site, revealed previous activity of a 19 th Century date
MLO67706	TQ3215 6572	Evaluation at Tamworth Road, south of the study site, revealed previous activity of a 19 th Century date
MLO67824	TQ3218 6601	128 North End, identified 19 th Century remains.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1** The two trenches were excavated to a length of 15m and to a width of 1.8m. The maximum depth reached was 1.2m at the southern end of Trench 1. The general trench depth across the site was c. 0.40m beneath the current ground level.
- 3.2** The excavations were undertaken using a 360° tracked excavator fitted with a 1.8m wide ditching bucket. This excavation was taken down to the top of any archaeological horizons or the underlying natural sediments. A breaker was used to break through the tarmac and concrete hardstanding. The removed spoil was scanned for the presence of artefacts.
- 3.3** All encountered archaeological deposits, features and finds were recorded according to accepted professional standards, using context record sheets based upon the Central Excavation Unit recording system as modified for use by Archaeology South-East.
- 3.4** A full photographic record of the work was kept and will form part of the site archive. The archive (including the finds) is presently held at the Archaeology South-East office in Portslade and will be offered to a suitable local museum in due course.
- 3.5** The trenches were levelled in relation to a Bench Mark on the corner of Christ Church, Longley Road, (43.62m AOD).

Table 3: Quantification of site archive

Number of Contexts	20
No. of files/paper record	24
Plan and sections sheets	1
Bulk Samples	0
Photographs	11 digital / colour slide and B&W
Bulk finds	11
Registered finds	0
Environmental flots/residue	0

4.0 RESULTS

Table 4: Trench 1; List of recorded contexts

No	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Depth	Height AOD m
1/001	Deposit	Concrete and tarmac hard standing	15m	1.8m	0.28m	46.61m (S) 46.71 (N)
1/002	Deposit	Deposit	10m	1.8m	0.08m	c.46.43m
1/003	Deposit	Made ground	15m	1.8m	0.20-0.24m	46.35m
1/007	Deposit	Tarmac	5m	1.8m	0.05m	c.46.11m
1/004	Deposit	Made ground	15m	1.8m	0.10 - 0.50m	c.46.06m
1/005	Deposit	Deposit	10m	1.8m	0.28-0.50m	c.45.56m
1/006	Deposit	Natural	15m	1.8m	/	c.45.06m

4.1 Trench 1: Summary

- 4.1.1 Trench 1 was excavated to a length of 15m and a width of 1.8m. The stratigraphy at the northern end of the trench consisted of the following contexts. The natural substrate [1/006] was encountered at the base of the trench and was a mid brownish orange clay with concentrated gravel patches throughout. Directly above this, (at the northern end), was context [1/004], a c.0.10m thick, dark greyish black, heterogeneous made ground deposit. This context contained lenses of mixed gravels and sands throughout and also some crushed building materials, likely to be of 19th Century date. Overlying this was a thin layer of buried tarmac, [1/007] (present in north of trench only). Above this was context [1/003], a c.0.24m thick, yellowish brown sand, which contained some crushed chalk fragments and other building materials. The final recorded deposit was [1/001], 0.28m of tarmac and concrete forming the current hardstanding.
- 4.1.2 At the southern end of the trench the stratigraphy was slightly different. At the base of the trench was the natural orange brown clay with patches of gravel, [1/006]. This was overlain by [1/005], a 0.28-0.50m thick deposit of dark blackish brown clay (present in south of trench only), which had some mixing with [1/004], a 0.50m thick deposit of made ground. Above [1/004], was [1/003], a 0.20m thick, yellow brown, made ground which had a high sand content with chalk and crushed building materials throughout. Above this and present only in the south of the trench, was context [1/002], a 0.08m thick deposit of a dark brown, silty sand which had a firm consistency. This deposit was likely modern and laid down as bedding before the c. 0.30m thick concrete / tarmac, [1/001], was lain.
- 4.1.3 No archaeological features or layers were present and no ancient artefacts were recovered.

4.2 Trench 2: Summary

Table 5: Trench 2; List of Recorded Contexts

No	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Depth	Height AOD m
2/008	Deposit	Tarmac	15m	1.8m	0.04m	46.63m (S) 46.61m (N)
2/009	Deposit	Concrete slab	5m	1.8m	0.14m	46.59m
2/010	Deposit	Bedding for concrete slab	5m	1.8m	0.17m	46.45m
2/013	Surface	Stone paving	10m	1.8m	0.10m	46.57m
2/014	Deposit	Bedding for stone paving	10m	1.8m	0.04m	46.47m
2/016	Deposit	Sand layer	5m	1.8m	0.03m	c.46.46m
2/015	Deposit	Cement and flint gravel	10m	1.8m	0.17m	46.43m
2/011	Deposit	Deposit	10m	1.8m	0.16m	46.28m
2/012	Deposit	Disturbed natural	10m	1.8m	0.07m	c.46.21m
2/018	Cut	Cut of a modern ditch	2m	2m	0.81m	46.10m
2/019	Fill	Fill of [2/018]	2m	2m	0.50m	46.10m
2/020	Fill	Fill of [2/018]	2m	2m	0.30m	45.60m
2/017	Deposit	Natural	15m	1.8m		c.46.02m- 46.34m

4.2.1 Trench 2 was excavated to a length of 15m and a width of 1.8m. The stratigraphy can be summarised as follows. The natural substrate was encountered at the base of the trench and consisted of clay and gravels, [2/017]. Towards the north of the trench the natural was slightly disturbed / mixed, (context [2/012]). Directly above the natural clays/gravels was context [2/011], a 0.16m thick layer of dark, blackish brown silty clay. Overlying this was layer, [2/015], a made ground deposit consisting of cement and mixed gravels (only seen in the northern half of the trench). At the northern end of the trench, overlying [2/015], was a sequence of c. 0.05m thick hardcore levelling, [2/014], followed by square stone paving, [2/013], forming the ground surface. At the south of the trench, overlying [2/015], was a layer of sand, [2/016], followed by a rubble layer, [2/010]. Overlying this was concrete, [2/009], and tarmac, [2/008], which formed the current ground surface in this part of the trench.

4.2.2 A ditch, feature, [2/018], was recorded orientated approximately north-east to south-west. This feature was cut into the natural clay and gravels, [2/017], and sealed by layer [2/011]. It was c.1m in width and 0.80m in depth with very steep sides and a flat base. Two fills were identified. At the base was [2/020], a mixed layer of dark greyish black clay with very frequent tarmac chippings and flint fragments. Overlying this was [2/019], a light to mid yellow brown clay silt of a firm consistency. This fill contained two bricks dated to the 19th century.

4.2.3 The natural gravels, encountered at the base of the trench were stained in many areas by diesel spillages/leakages.

5.0 THE FINDS by Elke Raeman

- 5.1** A small sample of 18-19th century ceramic building materials was recovered from two separate contexts, quantified in Table 6.

Table 6: Quantification of finds

Context	CBM	weight (g)
2/019	2	2076
1/004	3	420

- 5.2** Context [1/004] contained a fragment of yellow stock brick, together with an unfrogged red brick fragment measuring 30mm thick, and an undiagnostic red brick fragment.
- 5.3** Context [2/019] contained two red bricks with shallow frog and adherent pale buff sandy mortar. The fabric is well fired coarse sand temper with frequent iron rich, chalk, flint and burnt organic inclusions up to 7mm, poorly sorted. Both bricks have a maximum thickness of 65mm.
- 5.4** The assemblage holds no scope for further analysis

6.0 DISCUSSION

- 6.1** The archaeological evaluation suggests that modern made ground deposits exist across much of the development site. In all probability this made ground occurred during the initial construction of the existing buildings.
- 6.2** The area where the trenches were positioned was thought to be previously unaffected by any deep excavations. This is borne out to an extent by the results of the evaluation, which shows that there were no substantial former groundworks in the immediate vicinity. However, the made ground layers seen within the trenches suggest that at the southern end of the site there has been some importation/redistribution of material and it is possible that the surface of the natural substrate has been truncated during these works and that any archaeological remains present may have been removed.
- 6.3** It is possible that layers [1/005] and [2/011] represent the remnants of a buried subsoil / topsoil. However, modern ditch [2/018] was sealed by [2/011] which would suggest that this layer is probably of recent origin.
- 6.4** The only feature present was a ditch, clearly of modern date. There was no evidence of any kind, (features or artefacts), which may have been associated with the Roman Road alignment.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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SMR Summary Form

Site Code	HDC 08					
Identification Name and Address	160 Handcroft Road, London Borough of Croydon, CRO 3LE					
County, District &/or Borough	Croydon					
OS Grid Refs.	531741 166593					
Geology	London Clay					
Arch. South-East Project Number	3345					
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. 8 th & 9 th May 08	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	CgMs Consulting					
Project Manager	Diccon Hart					
Project Supervisor	Paul Riccoboni					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other Modern		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>An archaeological evaluation was carried out at 160 Handcroft Road, Croydon, CRO 3LE (NGR 531741 166593) for CgMs Consulting on behalf of their client Kitewood Estates Ltd. Two 15m x 1.8m trenches were excavated close to the frontage of Handcroft Road, as the Desk Based Assessment (CgMs 2008) identified that Handcroft Road may be on the alignment of the possible London to Brighton Roman Road. The trenches did not identify any archaeological features or deposits, but did record a modern ditch.</i></p>						

OASIS ID: archaeol6-42092	
Project details	
Project name	An Archaeological Evaluation at 160 Handcroft Road, Croydon, CRO 3LE
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation was carried out at 160 Handcroft Road, Croydon, CRO 3LE (NGR 531741 166593) for CgMs Consulting on behalf of their client Kitewood Estates Ltd. Two 15m x 1.8m trenches were excavated close to the frontage of Handcroft Road, as the Desk Based Assessment (CgMs 2008) identified that Handcroft Road may be on the alignment of the possible London to Brighton Roman Road. The trenches did not identify any archaeological features or deposits, but did record a modern ditch.
Project dates	Start: 08-05-2008 End: 09-05-2008
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	HDC 08 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status (other)	Archaeological Priority Zone
Current Land use	Other 2 - In use as a building
Monument type	DITCH Modern
Significant Finds	BRICK Modern
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Urban commercial (e.g. offices, shops, banks, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After outline determination (eg. As a reserved matter)
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON CROYDON 160 Handcroft Road, Croydon
Postcode	CRO 3LE
Study area	100.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 31741 66593 51.3825638749 -0.106665682131 51 22 57 N 000 06 24 W Point

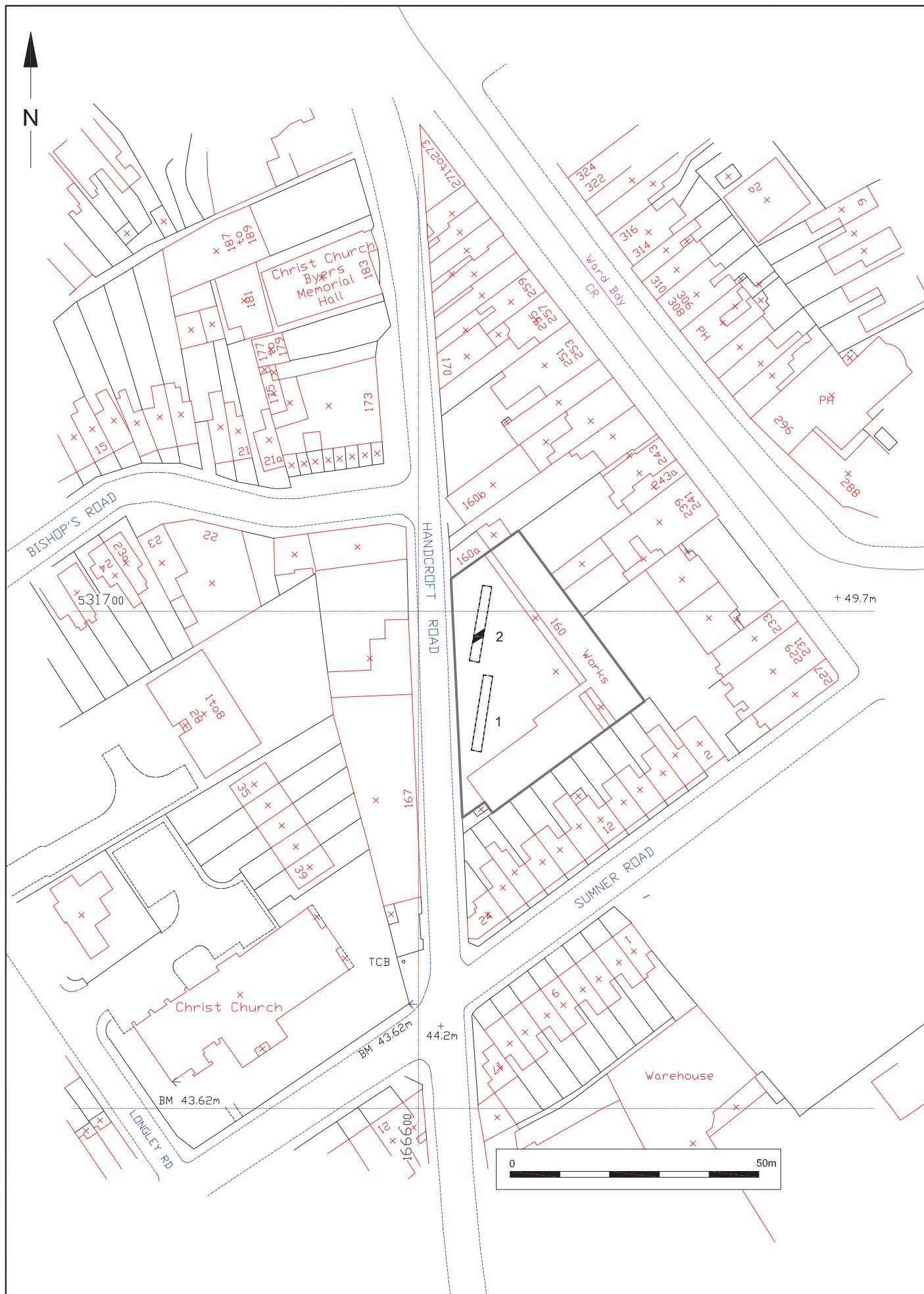
Height OD	Min: 46.02m Max: 46.71m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	CgMs Consulting
Project design originator	CgMs Consulting
Project director/manager	Diccon Hart
Project supervisor	Paul Riccoboni
Type of sponsor/funding body	CgMs Consulting
Project archives	
Physical Archive recipient	Local Museum
Physical Contents	'other'
Digital Archive recipient	Local Museum
Digital Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Digital Media available	'Text'
Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum
Paper Contents	'Stratigraphic','Survey'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section','Survey ','Unpublished Text'
Project bibliography 1	
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© Archaeology South-East		160, Handcroft Road, Croydon	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 3345	April 2008	Site Location	
Report Ref:	Drawn by: HLF		

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© Archaeology South-East		160 Handcroft Road, Croydon	Fig. 4
Project Ref: 3345	June 2008	General shot of Trench 1- looking south	
Report Ref: 2008059	Drawn by: HLF		



© Archaeology South-East		160 Handcroft Road, Croydon	Fig. 5
Project Ref: 3345	June 2008	Working shot of Trench 2 looking north	
Report Ref: 2008059	Drawn by: HLF		

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