

**H375 Palmerston Road, South Acton,
London Borough of Ealing, Phase 2.1A**

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Inspace Partnerships Ltd**

by Simon Cass and Sean Wallis
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code PSA 06

March 2007

Summary

Site name: H375 Palmerston Road, South Acton, London Borough of Ealing. Phase 2.1A

Grid reference: TQ 20050 79350 and TQ 20230 79390

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 4th–6th September and 2nd–6th November 2006

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Sean Wallis and Simon Cass

Site code: PSA 06

Area of site: c.0.5ha (west) and 0.2ha (east)

Summary of results: Two pits of late post-medieval date were observed.

Monuments identified: Two pits.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Museum of London in due course, with accession code PSA06.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford✓ 19.03.07 Steve Preston✓ 20.03.07

H375 Palmerston Road, South Acton, London Borough of Ealing. Phase 2.1A An Archaeological Evaluation

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Report 06/106

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at H375 Palmerston Road, South Acton, London Borough of Ealing during Phase 2.1A of re-construction on the site. The site comprises two locations approximately 100m apart (TQ 20050 79350 and TQ 20230 79390)(Figs. 1 and 2). The work was commissioned by Mr Bradley Tyrrell of Inspace Partnerships Ltd, Hitchin Road, Shefford, Bedfordshire, SG17 5JS.

Planning permission (App P/2004/5577) was granted by the London Borough of Ealing for the redevelopment of this site for housing. This consent was subject to a condition relating to archaeology requiring a programme of archaeological works, beginning with the field evaluation detailed here but possibly requiring further, more extensive works dependent on the results of the evaluation.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the Borough's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Kim Stabler of Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (English Heritage), archaeological adviser to the Borough. The fieldwork was undertaken by Simon Cass, James Haygreen, Jennifer Lowe, Mary O'Donoghue and Sean Wallis in two phases between 4th–6th September and 2nd–6th November 2006 and the site code is PSA06. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at the Museum of London in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located just to the north of South Acton Station, a short distance to the east of Gunnersbury Park in an area of light industrial units and housing developments of various sizes (Fig. 1). The site lies on a slight north-south slope at a height of approximately 10.35m–11.6m above Ordnance Datum. The underlying geology is river brickearth, but with head deposits just to the north (BGS 1981). Brickearth was observed in all trenches.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in correspondence from Ms Kim Stabler to the Borough. In summary this potential stems from its location close to the site of a Bronze Age round barrow cemetery located to the south-west and discovered during gravel extraction. Other Bronze Age finds are recorded to the north with occupation remains to the south (MoLAS 2000, map 5). It was thus possible that further round barrows (or their levelled counterparts, ring ditches) or other areas of contemporary occupation would be present on the proposal site.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development. The specific aims of the project were to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on the site, given that parts of it have been previously developed; to determine if archaeologically relevant levels of any period are present and to determine if Bronze Age burial and/or occupation deposits are present.

Twelve trenches were to be excavated, each measuring 15m in length and 1.6m in width. In the event, it was not possible to excavate all of the trenches in the larger (western) area due to spatial constraints and live services. The trenches were opened using a JCB-type machine under constant archaeological supervision. Spoilheaps were searched for finds. Removal of foundations during the latter stages of demolition of the western side were archaeologically monitored without observing any deposits of interest.

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Results

The eastern site

Four trenches were excavated in the area of open ground to the east, measuring between 13.3–16.2m long (Fig. 3).

Trench 1

This trench was 15.8m long, between 1.15 and 1.3m deep and orientated NE–SW. The stratigraphy encountered consisted of 0.1m of turf and topsoil above 0.3m of grey brown sandy soil with frequent gravel, interpreted as a made ground/levelling layer. This overlay 0.3m of orange/brown sand and gravel, believed to be a consolidation

layer. Under this was 0.3m of mid grey brown silty clay with brick and tile and china fragments, considered to be a buried soil layer. This overlay orange brown silty clay brickearth natural which was truncated to confirm the correct level had been reached. No archaeological finds nor deposits were revealed.

Trench 2

This trench was 15.0m long, between 1.2 and 1.27m deep and orientated north-south. The stratigraphy encountered in this trench consisted of 0.15m of turf and topsoil above 0.51m of demolition debris (including bricks and concrete). This overlay 0.39m of buried topsoil/subsoil, above natural brickearth. No archaeological finds nor deposits were revealed.

Trench 3 (Pl. 1)

This trench was 16.2m long, between 1.3 and 1.4m long and orientated NW–SE. The stratigraphy encountered consisted of 0.15m of turf and topsoil, above 0.75m of made ground. The made ground had various materials in it, ranging from bricks and concrete in the south end to a more gravelly deposit at the north end. Below this was 0.3m of greyish brown silty clay with occasional brick, clinker and glass fragments. This overlay natural brickearth. No archaeological finds nor deposits were revealed.

Trench 4 (Fig. 5; Pl. 2)

This trench was 13.3m long, 1.25m deep (excepting a 1.7m deep test pit at the eastern end) and orientated east-west. The stratigraphy encountered consisted of 0.15m of turf and topsoil above 0.6m of made ground, showing various tiplines and including brick rubble, but mainly gravel. This lay above 0.45m of greyish brown silty clay with occasional brick, clinker and glass fragments (as in Trench 3), interpreted as a buried soil. Below this was brickearth natural. No archaeological finds nor deposits were revealed.

The western site

In the larger western area only four of the eight trenches could be excavated as originally intended. These were 8.6–17.1m long. Trenches 9 and 11 could not be accessed due to the presence of demolished debris; Trench 5 was located below the site welfare facilities and the position for Trench 7 was bisected by high voltage cables and would have obstructed access to the site. In all of these cases it was not possible to reposition the trenches due to extant structures such as a row of garages or an electricity substation.

Trench 6

This trench was 12.2m long, 0.5m deep and orientated NW–SE. The stratigraphy encountered consisted of 0.05m of Tarmac surfacing, above 0.15m of rubble hardcore, presumably a levelling layer for the Tarmac. This sealed 0.2m of dark blackish brown silty clay with brick/tile fragments which overlay natural brickearth. No archaeological finds nor deposits were revealed.

Trench 8 (Pl. 3)

This trench was 16.1m long, 1.2m deep at its deepest point and orientated almost east–west. The stratigraphy in this trench consisted of 0.3m of demolition rubble, above 0.39m of disturbed topsoil/ subsoil mix. This overlay 0.51m of made ground (dark grey/black silty clay) with brick/tile and glass inclusions which lay directly above natural brickearth. No archaeological finds nor deposits were revealed.

Trench 10 (Pl. 4)

This trench was 17.1m long, 1.0m deep and orientated SE–NW. The stratigraphy encountered consisted of 0.2m of topsoil above 0.22m of demolition rubble. Under this layer was 0.51m of dark grey/black silty clay made ground with brick inclusions. Below this was natural brickearth.

Two pits (1 and 2) were encountered in the base of this trench (Fig. 4). Pit 1 was not fully exposed within the trench but was at least 0.85m wide and 0.25m deep, filled with dark greyish brown sandy clay with frequent small flint inclusions. Finds from this feature consisted of small fragments of brick/tile, burnt flints and a short length of clay pipe stem along with a struck flint core. Pit 2 was entirely exposed within the trench and was 0.28m deep and 1.13m in diameter. The fill of this pit was the same as in pit 1 and it contained small brick/tile fragments and another length of clay pipe stem. Neither of these features are believed to be older than late post-medieval in date.

Trench 12

This trench was 8.64m long, 0.98m deep and orientated NE–SW. The stratigraphy encountered in this trench consisted of 0.19m of topsoil above 0.25m of demolition rubble relating to a previous phase of demolition. Below this was 0.52m of dark grey/black silty clay made ground, with brick inclusions. This overlay natural brickearth. This trench contained three modern truncations, interpreted as rubbish pits, containing scrap metal, brick, glass and wood. No archaeological finds nor deposits were revealed.

Finds

Flint by Steve Ford

A single worked flint was found as a residual item in late post-medieval pit 1 in Trench 10. From its size and the number of removals it is most unlikely to be a product of accidental damage in modern times and it is possibly a small core or more likely a denticulate scraper. It is not closely datable but probably of Neolithic or Bronze Age date.

Conclusion

For the majority of the trenches no finds nor deposits of archaeological interest were observed. One trench contained two pits, both of which are unambiguously of late post-medieval date, although one contained a residual prehistoric struck flint. On the basis of these results, the two parts of the site have no archaeological potential.

References

- BGS, 1981, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 270, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
MoLAS, 2000, *The archaeology of Greater London; an assessment of archaeological evidence for human presence in the area now covered by Greater London*, MoLAS Monogr
PPG16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance 16, HMSO

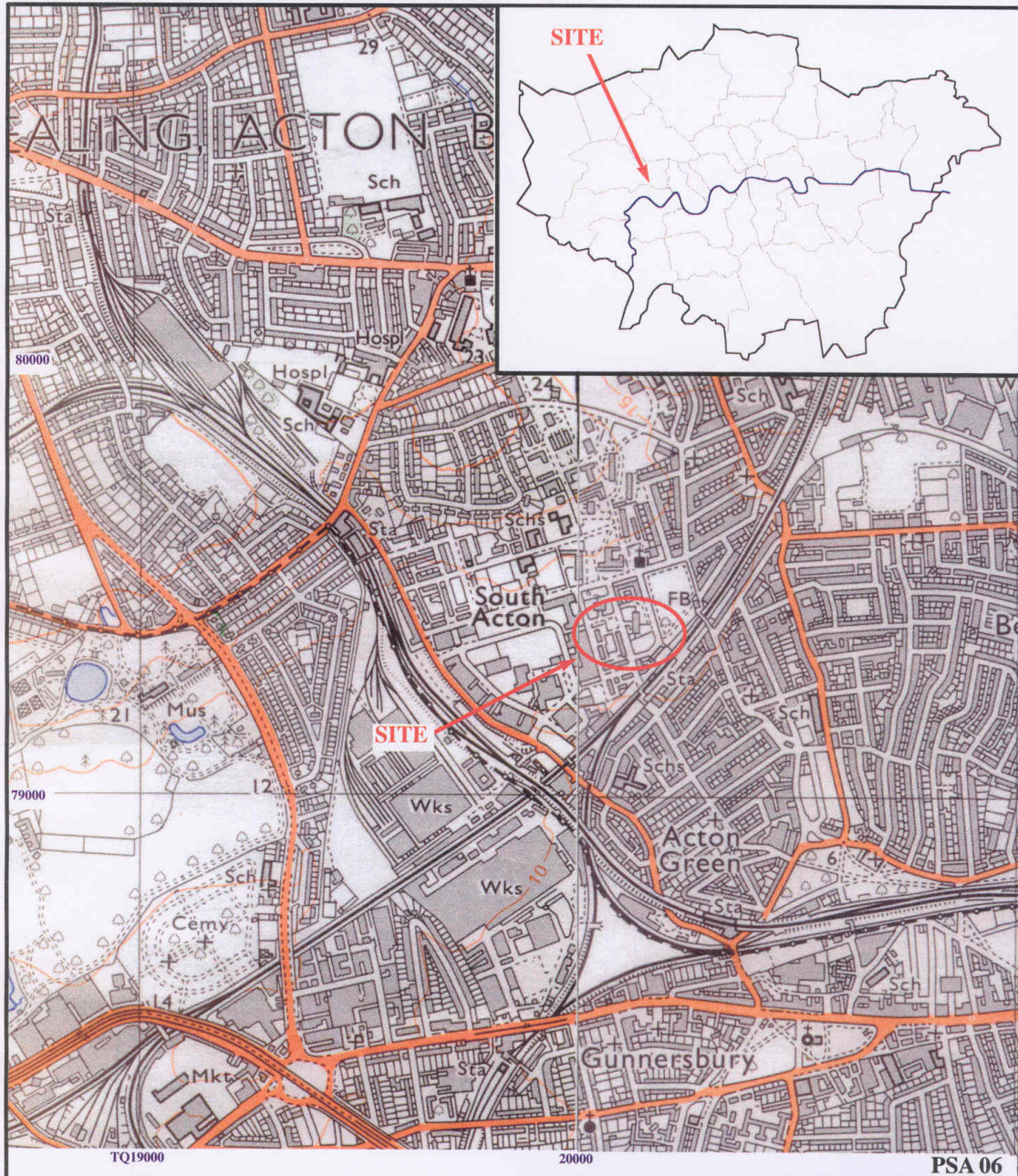
APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at south or west end

Trench	Length (m)	Breadth (m)	Depth (m)	Comment
1	15.8	1.5	1.3	0-0.1m turf/topsoil; 0.1-0.4m grey brown sandy soil with frequent gravel (made ground/levelling layer); 0.4-0.7m orange/brown sand/gravel; 0.7-1.0m mid grey brown silty clay (buried soil); 1.0+ brickearth natural geology (9.83m AOD).
2	15.0	1.5	1.27	0-0.15m turf/topsoil; 0.15-0.66m demolition debris; 0.66-1.05m buried soil; 1.05m+ brickearth natural geology (9.77m AOD).
3	16.2	1.5	1.4	0-0.15m turf/topsoil; 0.15-0.9m made ground; 0.9-1.2m greyish brown silty clay (buried soil); 1.2m+ brickearth natural geology (9.69m AOD). [Plate 1]
4	13.3	1.5	1.3 Test pit 1.7m	0-0.15m turf/topsoil; 0.15-0.75m made ground; 0.75-1.2m greyish brown silty clay (buried soil); 1.2m+ brickearth natural geology (9.69m AOD). [Plate 2]
5	-	-	-	-
6	12.2	1.5	0.5	0-0.05m Tarmac; 0.05-0.2m rubble hardcore; 0.2-0.4m dark blackish brown silty clay with brick; 0.4m+ brickearth natural geology (10.82 AOD).
7	-	-	-	-
8	16.1	1.5	1.2	0-0.3m demolition rubble; 0.3-0.69m disturbed topsoil/ subsoil; 0.69-1.2m made ground; 1.2m+ brickearth natural geology (10.54m AOD). [Plate 3]
9	-	-	-	-
10	17.1	1.5	1.0	0-0.2m topsoil. 0.2-0.42m demolition rubble; 0.42-93m made ground; 0.93m+ brickearth natural geology (10.09m AOD). Pits 1 and 2 [Plate 4]
11	-	-	-	-
12	8.64	1.5	0.98	0-0.19m topsoil; 0.19-44m demolition rubble; 0.44-96m made ground; 0.96-0.98m brickearth natural geology (10.07m AOD). Three modern truncations of natural geology.

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
10	1	50	Pit	Post-Medieval	Clay Pipe, Brick
10	2	51	Pit	Post-Medieval	Clay Pipe, Brick



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Figure 1. Location of site within South Acton and Greater London.

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1174 (TQ06/16) & 1175 (TQ27/37) at 1:12500
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site between
Palmerston Road and Stanley Road.

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1:2000

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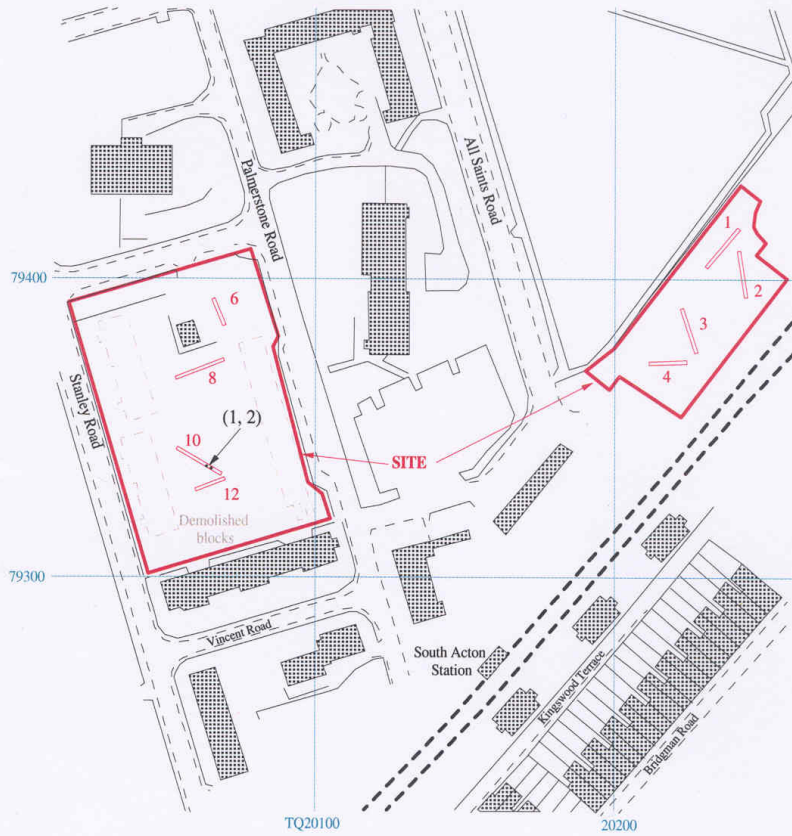


Figure 3. Location of trenches.

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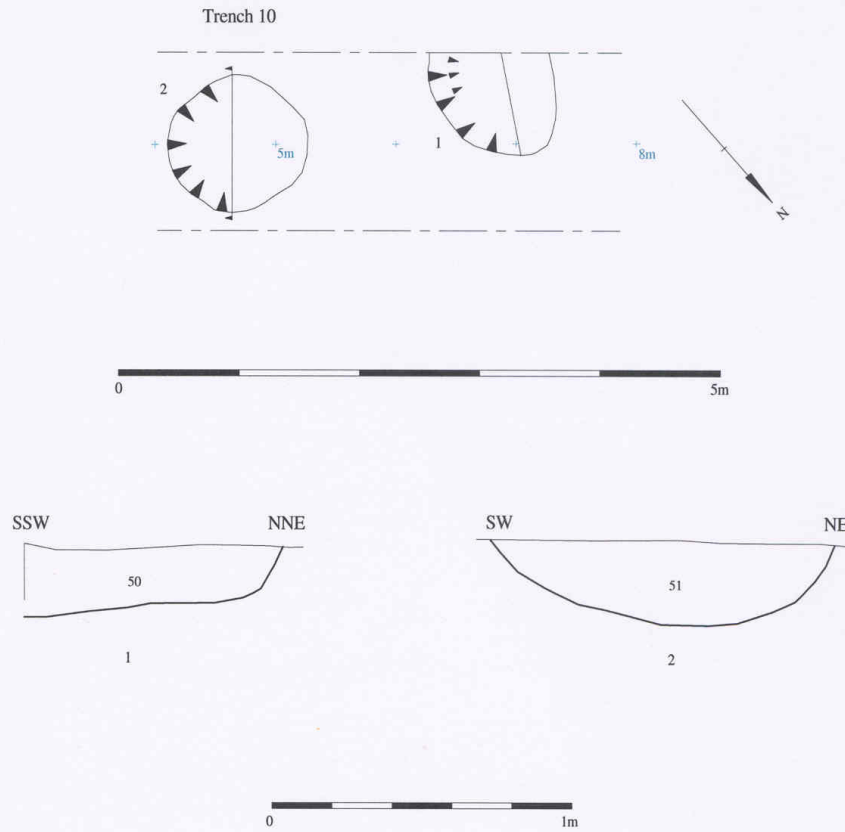
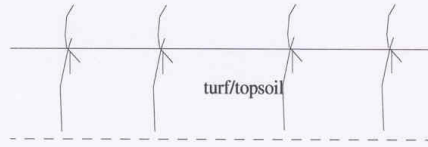


Figure 4. Plan of Trench 10 and sections of pits 1 and 2.

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Made ground

Grey/brown silty caly (buried soil)

9.69m AOD

Brickearth

base of trench



Figure 5. Representativer section of Trench 4.



Plate 1. Trench 3 looking north-north west, Scale: 2m.



Plate 2. Trench 4, looking west, Scale: 2m.



Plate 3. Trench 8 looking west-south west, Scales: horizontal 2m, vertical 1m.

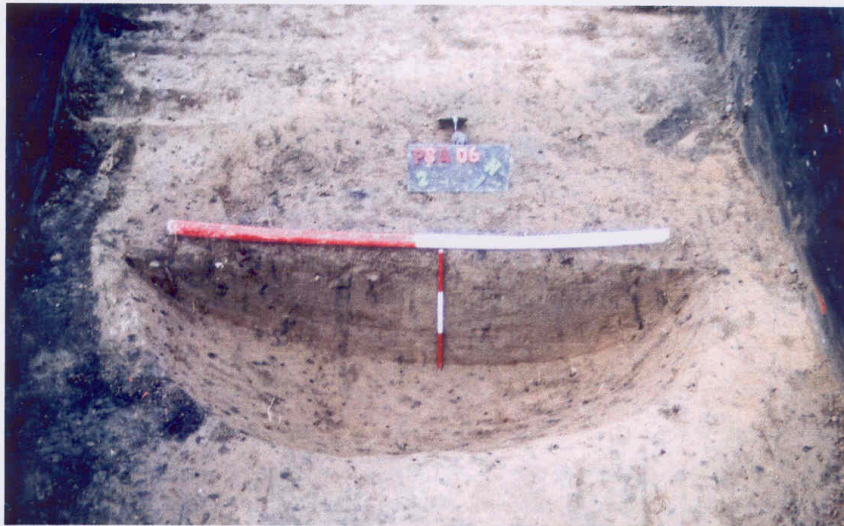


Plate 4. Trench 10, pit 2, looking north-west, Scales: horizontal 1m, vertical 0.3m.