

## Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment



**Land north of Turle Road  
Norbury  
London  
SW16 5QN**

On behalf of

**Portobello Trust**

January 2022

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*Cover: View looking south towards pavilion at southern end of former NatWest Sports Ground*

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## 1 Executive Summary

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Border Archaeology was instructed to carry out an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment with regard to land north of Turle Road, Norbury, London SW16 5QN (formerly the NatWest Sports Ground). The results of this Assessment can be briefly summarized thus:

**Prehistoric:** The potential for encountering evidence of buried remains of prehistoric date has been assessed as **Low to Moderate**. This reflects the paucity of recorded evidence for prehistoric activity both in the immediate vicinity of the site and its wider environs, while recognizing that the underlying superficial geology towards the northern end of the site (consisting of river terrace gravels associated with the course of the Norbury Brook which runs about 120m north of the site) indicates that there is potential in this area for encountering artefactual evidence associated with human activity dating back to the Palaeolithic.

**Romano-British:** The potential for encountering evidence of Roman activity within the Site has been assessed as **Low to Moderate**. The site is located to the west of a major Roman road from London to Brighton, following the course of the present-day London Road (A23) and the results of a field evaluation undertaken in 1999 in the immediate vicinity of the Sports Ground failed to yield evidence of Romano-British occupation. However, the site would seem to have lain within the hinterland associated with this important Roman highway and consequently there is some potential to encounter evidence of rural settlement, agricultural activity or possibly burials of Romano-British date in the vicinity of the site.

**Medieval:** The potential for encountering remains associated with medieval activity has been assessed as **Moderate**. While recorded archaeological evidence for medieval occupation in the immediate vicinity of the site is slight, documentary and cartographic records show that the site lay at the intersection of three ancient parish boundaries (Mitcham, Streatham and Croydon) and field name evidence ('Potter's Field') further suggests that it may have been a focus for small-scale industrial activity (specifically clay extraction or pottery manufacture) or possibly the site of a burial ground for executed criminals or suicides.

**Post-Medieval/Modern:** The potential for encountering buried archaeological assets of a post-medieval date has been assessed as **Moderate**. Historic mapping shows that the site remained as sparsely-settled agricultural land until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the site was acquired for use as a golf course and subsequently became the NatWest Sports Ground, which was extended in the 1920s/early 1930s. An anti-aircraft battery was established within the centre of the site in 1940 and it appears likely that its construction will have disturbed archaeological deposits in this area. However, there is potential for encountering evidence of post-medieval field boundaries and cultivation features (particularly within the northern part of the site) as well as evidence of activity associated with the military usage of the site during the Second World War.

**Overall Conclusion:** The archaeological potential of the Site has been assessed in overall terms as **Moderate**, with particular reference to encountering archaeological remains of medieval and post-medieval date. The potential to encounter evidence of prehistoric and Romano-British remains has been assessed as **Low to Moderate**.

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**Recommendations:** It is BA's considered opinion that, *prima facie*, the archaeological potential of the site does not present an impediment to the proposed development. Given the overall Moderate potential of the site in archaeological terms, it is respectfully suggested that an appropriate programme of archaeological work, the details of which to be agreed with the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service, will be necessary to determine the extent, depth and significance of buried archaeological features and deposits across the site.

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## 2 Introduction

Border Archaeology (BA) was instructed by Portobello Trust to produce an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (ADBA) in connection with land north of Turle Road, Norbury, London SW16 5QN, which comprises the site of the former NatWest Sports Ground (NGR: TQ 30100 69655) (*Fig. 1*). This ADBA assesses the impact of the proposed development on buried heritage assets (archaeological remains).

It forms an initial stage of investigation of the proposed development site and may be required in relation to the planning process, so that the local planning authority can formulate an appropriate response in the light of the impact upon any known or potential heritage assets, defined as parts of the historic environment considered significant because of their historic, evidential or aesthetic and/or communal interest.

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## 3 Site Description

The proposal site, which covers an approximate area of 8.76 ha, comprises land forming a sports ground (formerly known as the NatWest Sports Ground) which is located to the N of Turle Road, within the residential suburb of Norbury in South London. The southern half of the site comprises a sports pavilion, bowling green and all-weather five-a-side football pitches, while the northern half is heavily overgrown grassland and scrub.

The site is bordered to the N and E by residential housing and to the W and SW by buildings and grounds associated with Woodmansterne School and Children's Centre and Stanford Primary School respectively. The ground level is approximately 34m AOD at the S end of the site adjacent to Turle Road, dropping to about 30m AOD towards the N boundary.

The majority of the site lies within the London Borough of Merton; however, the northern and southeastern portions of the site appear to lie within the boundaries of the London Boroughs of Lambeth and Croydon respectively. The Site is not located within an Archaeological Priority Area or a Conservation Area; however, the Tier 2 Archaeological Priority Area (APA) associated with the London to Brighton Roman Road (APA 2.19) which follows the same route as the present-day London Road (A23) is located about 220m ENE of the site at its closest point. The Norbury Estate Conservation Area is located about 280m S of the site.

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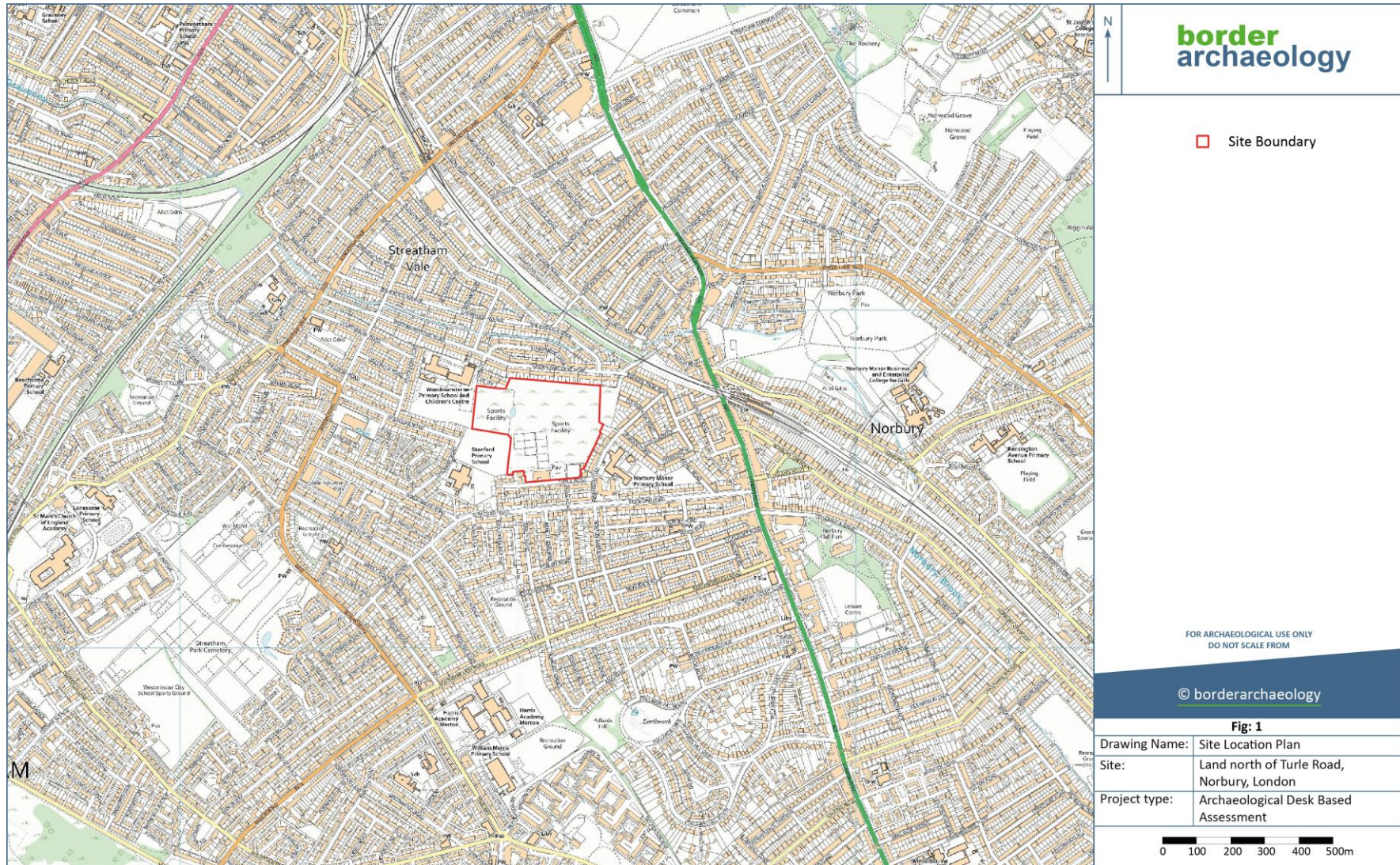
### 3.1 Soils & Geology

The British Geological Survey (BGS) records solid geology of the London Clay Formation comprising sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 48 to 56 million years ago in the Palaeogene Period in a local environment previously dominated by deep seas; no overlying superficial deposits are recorded (BGS 2022).

To the immediate N of the site, the London Clay is recorded as being overlain by superficial deposits comprising Sand and Gravel of the Hackney Gravel Member, formed up to two million years ago during the Quaternary Period within a local environment previously dominated by rivers, while to the NW a discrete area of superficial Head Deposits (Clay, Silt, Sand and Gravel) are recorded, which formed up to three million years ago in the Quaternary Period, within a local environment previously dominated by subaerial slopes (BGS 2022).

No records of geotechnical investigations have been identified within the Site itself, however an archaeological trial trench evaluation undertaken in 1999 ahead of development on two former portions of the Sports Ground identified natural deposits consisting of London Clay in the SE portion of the site (at depths between 31.77m-and 33.02m AOD), while the trenching in the NW part of the site revealed natural river terrace sand and gravel deposits at depths ranging between 28.30m and 29.58m AOD (Carew 1999).

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## 4 Methodology

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### 4.1 Aims and Objectives

This ADBA seeks to identify any known or potential archaeological and built-heritage assets (both designated and undesignated) in the vicinity of the specific study area and to establish the importance of these archaeological and built heritage assets (including an assessment of their character, extent and quality) within a local, regional and national context.

### 4.2 Criteria for Assessment of Potential and Importance of Heritage Assets

- Potential

This assessment contains a record of the known and potential archaeological and built-heritage assets in the vicinity of the proposed development. The potential for encountering a particular resource in the vicinity of the site has been assessed according to the following scale:

**Low** – Very unlikely to be encountered;

**Moderate** – Possibility that features may be encountered in the vicinity of the site;

**High** – Remains highly likely to survive in the vicinity of the site.

- Importance (Value)

The criteria used to determine the importance of archaeological and built heritage assets in the vicinity of the proposed development (*Table 1*) has been informed by guidelines for assessing cultural heritage assets contained in *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Sustainability and Environment Appraisal LA 106: Cultural Heritage Assessment* (revised January 2020) and informed by relevant Historic England guidance regarding the assessment of archaeological assets, including: *The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (Historic England 2017), *Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets Historic England Advice Note 12* (Historic England 2019) and *Preserving Archaeological Remains* (Historic England 2016).

BA is also cognisant of general guidelines on the assessment of heritage assets within the *National Policy Planning Framework* Chapter 16, in particular paragraph 194 stating that *...in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance* (MHCLG 2021).

This ADBA also reflects local and regional planning policy guidance regarding the assessment of archaeological assets contained in the *London Plan* (Policy 7.8 Heritage Assets and Archaeology) and in the *Merton Local Plan 2011-2026* (adopted July 2011) in particular Policy CS 14 (Design) which states that *'All development needs to be designed in order to respect, reinforce and enhance the local character of the area in which it is located and to*

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*contribute to Merton's sense of place and identity. We will achieve this by: conserving and enhancing Merton's heritage assets and wider historic environment particularly the valued centres, suburban neighbourhoods, industrial heritage and iconic green spaces, through conservation areas, statutory and locally listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens and archaeological sites and other non-designated heritage assets' (Merton Council 2011, 144).*

**Table 1: Factors for assessing the importance of archaeological and built heritage assets**

<b>Very High</b>	World Heritage Sites (including nominated sites). Assets of acknowledged international importance. Assets that can contribute significantly to acknowledged international research objectives.
<b>High</b>	Scheduled Monuments (including proposed sites). Undesignated assets of schedulable quality and importance. Assets that can contribute significantly to acknowledged national research objectives.
<b>Medium</b>	Designated or undesignated assets that contribute to regional research objectives.
<b>Low</b>	Designated and undesignated assets of local importance. Assets compromised by poor preservation and/or poor survival of contextual associations. Assets of limited value, but with potential to contribute to local research objectives.
<b>Negligible</b>	Assets with very little or no surviving archaeological interest.
<b>Unknown</b>	The importance of the resource has not been ascertained.

### 4.3 Consultation of Archaeological Records

In order to understand the full archaeological and historical context of the Site, information was collected on the known cultural heritage features within a 500m radius, the results of which are shown on a series of maps and accompanying gazetteers (Figs. 2-5; Tables 2-4). These maps show the location of known archaeological and built heritage features (including archaeological events and monuments) and previous archaeological interventions within the study area, which are listed in the gazetteer and referenced in the text.

The research carried out for this ADBA consists of the following elements:

- Greater London Historic Environment Record (HER): Information from past investigations, findspots, documentary & cartographic sources etc. A total of 37 archaeological monuments, 17 archaeological events, four Listed Buildings and 14 Locally Listed Buildings were recorded within a 500m radius of the site;
- Historic England: Information on statutory designations including SAMs, Registered Parks and Gardens and Listed Buildings along with identified Heritage at Risk;
- British Geological Survey (BGS): Solid and drift geology mapping and geological borehole record data;
- The British Library, London Metropolitan Archives and the National Archives: Historic maps, illustrations and relevant primary & secondary sources;
- Internet sources: Including the Local Planning Authority Local Plan and information on Conservation Areas, Archaeological Priority Areas and locally listed buildings.
- Aerial photographs dating back to 1948 were consulted at the Historic England Archive & Surrey History Centre
- Photographs of the site and its setting were obtained to determine the presence of archaeological remains in the vicinity.

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## 5 Archaeological Assessment

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### 5.1 Previous Archaeological Investigations

In the immediate vicinity of the proposal site at the former NatWest Sports Ground, a limited trial-trench evaluation was undertaken in February 1999 by Pre-Construct Archaeology in advance of residential development on land at the NW and SE corner of the Sports Ground (ELO10029; Carew 1999). Five trenches were dug in the SE part of the Sports Ground (Tr. 1-5) and another three trenches in the NW corner (Tr. 5-8). No features or deposits of archaeological significance were identified during the evaluation and all the cultural material recovered was of modern date. Natural deposits were encountered in all eight trenches, comprising London Clay in Trenches 1-5 (at depths ranging between 31.77m and 33.02m AOD) and river terrace sand and gravel in Trenches 6-8, between 28.30m and 29.58m AOD.

To the E of the site, in the vicinity of the London Road, several investigations undertaken by the Norbury Archaeological Society in 1961-62 revealed evidence of the course of the Roman road from London to Brighton (Humphreys 1962); however more recent fieldwork in the vicinity of London Road has yielded largely negative results, with post-medieval and modern made ground deposits observed (eg. Perkins 2019).

### 5.2 Prehistoric

No records of prehistoric remains have been identified within the 500m search radius selected for this study and evidence of prehistoric activity in the wider locality is similarly limited. A possible focus of late prehistoric activity may be represented by the earthworks of an enclosure at Pollards Hill, c.725m S of the site, comprising the remains of a low bank between 0.5m-1.3m high surrounding a circular area of flat ground, although previous investigations on the site in 1962 and 1996 failed to determine the date of the enclosure (MLO104055; Thompson 1996).

However, the trial trench evaluation undertaken in 1999 on land which then lay within the NW corner of the Nat West Sports Ground (now Lacrosse Way) identified river terrace gravels of the Hackney Formation which were probably associated with the course of the Norbury Brook (River Graveney) which extends on a roughly E-W alignment about 120m N of the site, running parallel and to the N of present-day Woodmansterne Road and then continuing eastwards across the present-day A23 at Hermitage Bridge and into Norbury Park (Carew 1999). The course of the Norbury Brook is now largely flanked by a concrete culvert.

The Hackney Gravels have been recognised elsewhere as having potential to contain lithic finds, in particular Levallois material of the Lower Palaeolithic (Juby 2011); moreover, a discrete area of superficial Head Deposits is also recorded to the NW of the site, which may have potential to conceal and preserve earlier land surfaces and to contain unstratified or reworked artefactual remains dating back to the Palaeolithic. The location of the site on the edge of a gravel terrace to the S of the Norbury Brook suggests that there could be potential to encounter evidence of seasonal hunter-gatherer activity of early prehistoric date in this area.

**Conclusion:** The potential for encountering evidence of buried remains of prehistoric date has been assessed as **Low to Moderate**. This assessment reflects the paucity of recorded evidence for prehistoric activity both in the immediate vicinity of the site and its wider environs, while acknowledging that the underlying superficial geology

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towards the northern end of the site (consisting of river terrace gravels) indicates that there is potential in this area for encountering artefactual evidence associated with human activity dating back to the Palaeolithic. Should evidence of prehistoric remains be identified, this would be considered to be of **High** significance in archaeological terms, as little is known generally regarding the chronology and extent of prehistoric activity in this area.

### 5.3 Romano-British

The site of the proposed development lies about 220m WSW of an Archaeological Priority Area associated with the course of a Roman road from London to Brighton (GLHER DLO37709). The London to Brighton road was one of three major routes that led S of London, linking it with the south coast and the iron producing and corn growing areas of Sussex (Historic England 2016, 133). The course of the Roman road is presumed to have followed the line of the present-day London Road (A23) between Norbury and Broad Green; however, the exact course of the highway to the S of Broad Green remains uncertain (Margary 1973, 62).

Evidence for the Roman road was identified during archaeological investigations carried out in association with carriageway works in three separate locations on the London Road at Norbury in 1961-62. Excavations to the N of Hermitage Bridge, where the London Road crosses the Norbury Brook, identified a section of the Roman road which was constructed of flint with a cobblestone and iron slag surface, measuring 9.75m wide with a c. 0.40m deep ditch on its W side and a kerb c. 0.10m high and c. 0.15m wide (MLO24025). Evidence for the Roman ford across the Brook was also identified during widening of the culvert at Hermitage Bridge, consisting of a layer of hard packed flint and gravel about 1.37m thick, laid on the existing bed of the river and extending c.30.5m W and c.45.7m to the E. A bronze object, possibly forming part of a figurine, was found in a silt layer above the ford (Humphreys 1962, 88-89).

Further to the S along the London Road, another section of the Roman road was revealed during excavations near to the junction with St Helen's Road, about 495m E of the site (MLO16230), consisting of a heavy flint foundation with a layer of mortar about 2 inches thick, which in turn overlay a three-inch thick raft of hazelwood which carried the road surface over boggy ground (Humphreys 1962, 89; Margary 1973, 62).

The proximity of the site to the Roman road would suggest that there is some potential for evidence of Romano-British rural settlement, land divisions or burial activity to be encountered in the vicinity of the site, however the results of the archaeological evaluation undertaken at the Sports Ground in 1999 yielded no evidence of Romano-British activity (Carew 1999) and more recent investigations elsewhere along the line of the Roman road in Norbury have yielded largely negative results to date. Evidence for Romano-British activity was identified in the vicinity of the earthworks at Pollards Hill, represented by a coin hoard found in 1942 and during subsequent excavations carried out there in 1962, suggesting that the site may have been utilised as a signal station associated with the nearby Roman road (Thompson 1996).

**Conclusion:** The potential for encountering evidence of Roman activity within the Site has been assessed as **Low to Moderate**. This assessment reflects the fact that the site is located at some distance to the W of the course of the Roman road from London to Brighton and the results of the 1999 trial-trench evaluation in the vicinity of the Sports Ground failed to yield evidence of Romano-British occupation. However, the site would seem to have lain within the broader rural hinterland associated with this important Roman highway and consequently there is some

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potential to encounter evidence of rural settlement, agricultural activity or possibly burials of Romano-British date in the vicinity of the site. Should groundworks reveal evidence of Romano-British activity, this would be considered to be of **High** importance as the nature and extent of Roman rural settlement in this particular area remain poorly understood generally.

## 5.4 Medieval

Recorded evidence of medieval occupation in the immediate vicinity of the site is sparse, suggesting that it probably lay within a landscape of agricultural land and woodland remote from any significant focus of settlement during this period. During the medieval period, it appears that the nearest focus of settlement was located to the E of the Roman road from London to Brighton (which remained as an important highway and boundary feature), represented by the manor house of Norbury which lay at the junction of present-day Norbury Avenue and Kensington Avenue about 960m E of the proposal site.

The manor of Norbury (first recorded as 'Northbury' in a document of 1359) formed a sub-holding of the extensive manor of Croydon belonging to the Archbishop of Canterbury and was granted to the Carew family of Beddington in the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century. In 1377, Nicholas Carew received a grant of free warren in the manor of Norbury. The manor remained in the possession of the Carew family until 1859 (Malden 1912, 219). The eastern part of the proposal site appears to have lain within the boundaries of the Carew estate of Norbury but it is unclear whether the entire site came within the boundaries of Norbury Manor.

Documentary and cartographic evidence shows that the site lay at the meeting point of three long-established parish boundaries, namely Streatham to the N, Mitcham to the S and SW and Croydon to the E and SE. The southern boundary of Streatham parish extends directly across the N half of the site and is represented by a sinuous, curvilinear feature which appears as a field boundary on historic mapping until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century and is clearly discernible on LiDAR mapping of the site (*fig. 16*). During the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it marked the boundary between the London County Council and the Borough of Mitcham (then in Surrey).

Of particular interest is the fact that the Streatham tithe map of 1840 records the name of the field occupying the northern portion of the site as 'Potters Field' (Plot No. 14). This field name suggests that the site lay within a marginal landscape at some distance from any major focus of occupation and could therefore have been a focus for clay extraction or pottery manufacture, small-scale industrial activities which were commonly found on the periphery of settlement.

Another possibility is that the field name might refer to a 'deviant burial ground' for persons who were excluded from society such as executed criminals or suicides, such cemeteries often being located in remote sites at the intersection of parish or hundredal boundaries (and often close to a major highway) and in some cases dating back to the Anglo-Saxon period (Reynolds 2009). An RAF aerial photograph of the site taken in 1948 (*fig. 15*) and current LiDAR imagery (*fig. 16*) show a number of roughly circular features in the northern part of the site which could possibly represent evidence of pits although they could be associated with the usage of the site as an anti-aircraft battery during the Second World War.

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**Conclusion:** The potential for encountering remains associated with medieval activity has been assessed as **Moderate**. This assessment acknowledges that while recorded archaeological evidence for medieval occupation in the immediate vicinity of the site is slight, documentary and cartographic records show that the site lay at the intersection of three ancient parish boundaries (Mitcham, Streatham and Croydon) and field name evidence further suggests that it may have been a focus for small-scale industrial activity (specifically clay extraction or pottery manufacture) or possibly the site of a burial ground for executed criminals or suicides.

Evidence for industrial activity (specifically pottery manufacture), if encountered, could potentially add to our knowledge of medieval material culture in Surrey and thus would be considered to be of **Medium to High** significance, while evidence of burial activity would be of **High** importance as it could potentially contribute to our understanding of marginal burial sites which often appear to have been situated at the intersection of parish or hundredal boundaries.

## 5.5 Post-Medieval/Modern

Examination of cartographic evidence indicates that the proposal site remained as undeveloped agricultural land through to the late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century when there was a rapid expansion of suburban development in the vicinity of Norbury.

The earliest map to show the study area with an appreciable level of topographical detail is Rocque's map of Surrey dated 1762 (*fig. 6*). While Rocque's map is somewhat schematic in terms of its depiction of topographical detail, it appears to show that the northern part of the site comprised a large swathe of pasture to the S of the Norbury Brook while the southern half partially encroached upon an area of woodland, with a discrete block of arable fields extending to the E and SE of the site towards the London Road. Little evidence of settlement activity was noted in close proximity to the site although there some evidence of settlement is depicted to the immediate N of the crossing of the Norbury Brook at Hermitage Bridge.

An OS surveyor's drawing of Croydon and district dated 1804 (*fig. 7*) appears to show that the overall pattern of landscape in the immediate vicinity of the site had changed relatively little since the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century although it appears that some of the wood on the S and SE margins of the site (marked as Mitcham Wood) had been subject to enclosure and partial clearance for agricultural purposes.

More accurate and detailed information regarding the pattern of land use, settlement and field boundaries in the vicinity of the site is provided by the tithe maps for Streatham (1840) covering the N half of the site, Mitcham (1847) covering the S and SW portions and Croydon (1838) which covers the E and SE periphery of the site (*figs. 8, 9 & 10*). The Streatham tithe map of 1840 (*fig. 8*) shows that the northern part of the site lay on the extreme S boundary of the parish within a large arable field called Potter's Field (Plot No. 14) which extended along the S bank of the Norbury Brook. The meandering form of the southern boundary of this field suggests that it may at one time have been a drainage ditch or watercourse, possibly a tributary of the Norbury Brook.

The Mitcham tithe map of 1847 (*fig. 9*) shows that the southern half the site then lay within four fields, namely (running from W to E) Plot Nos. 754 (Six Acres), 755 (Fourteen Acres), 756 (Bennetts Wood) and 757 (Three Cornered Field), all of which were then under arable cultivation and were owned and occupied by one Samuel

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Martin. It may be noted that Plot No. 756 and 757 are respectively described as former woodland and meadow which had been converted to arable, suggesting that these had formed part of the woodland shown on Rocque's map of 1762 and the OS surveyor's drawing of 1804, at least part of which seems to have been enclosed and cleared for agricultural purposes by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

The Croydon tithe map of 1838 (*fig. 10*) shows that the E and SE portions of the proposal site extended into Croydon parish and partially lay within two arable fields which formed part of the Carew estate of Norbury Manor, namely Plot Nos. 3658 (Burgess's Six Acres) and 3659 (Twenty Acre Piece) and the SW corner of another arable enclosure in separate ownership, known as 'The Copyhold' (Plot No 3657). The large, irregular form of these fields is suggestive of early post-medieval enclosure.

The OS 1<sup>st</sup> edition map of 1870 (*fig. 11*) shows that the site still lay within a sparsely-settled agricultural landscape of enclosed fields, although the line of the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway is shown as running to the NE of the site while further to the W, the Lonesome Chemical Works and Slaughterhouse had been established on the site of a small, isolated farmstead in the early 1860s (MLO108700); the latter place name attesting to the remote character of this neighbourhood in the mid-late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The pattern of field boundaries had changed relatively little since the 1840s although Plots 756 and 757 as shown on the Mitcham tithe map had been amalgamated to form a single field. Local newspaper records show that part of the site (most likely the large open field within Streatham parish) was used for horse racing during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the course used for the 'Streatham Races' appears to have extended W across towards Lonesome Farm and Chemical Works.

The OS 2<sup>nd</sup> edition map of 1894 (*fig. 12*) still shows the site as predominantly open and rural in character although there had been some suburban development on the northern fringes of the study area at Streatham and Norbury, mainly focused to the N of the railway line along the London Road. Of particular interest is that three fields within the southern part of the site within Mitcham parish had been amalgamated to form a single enclosure which is marked as a 'Golf Course'. This represents the Norbury Golf Course, which was originally established as a 9-hole course in 1893. The golf course was subsequently moved further to the S and enlarged, remaining in use until its closure in 1931 to make way for housing development.

The NE portion of the golf course marked on the 1894 map was subsequently purchased in 1899 by a group of employees of the London and Westminster Bank for the establishment of a sports club and grounds, representing the nucleus of what would become the NatWest Sports Ground (Anon 1998). The sports ground was opened on 5<sup>th</sup> May 1900; the Ordnance Survey 3<sup>rd</sup> edition map of 1914 (*fig. 13*) shows the extent of the 'Bank Sports Ground' at that date which occupied a trapezoidal shaped enclosure to the S of the parish boundary with Streatham, with a small pavilion constructed at the S end of the ground.

There had been some suburban development to the E and SE of the site, with the laying out of Stanford Road and other residential streets to the W of the London Road, although the area immediately surrounding the sports ground to the N, S and W was still largely undeveloped at that date. During the First World War, a branch of the Croydon Military Hospital was established on Stanford Road to the SE of the site in 1915, partially utilising buildings which had originally been built for use as a school two years earlier (now Norbury Manor Primary School). The hospital comprised a total of 165 beds and was dedicated to the treatment of mandibular fractures caused by

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shrapnel and gunshot (MLO107327). As far as can be determined, there is no evidence that the Sports Ground accommodated ancillary structures associated with the hospital.

Following the First World War and the amalgamation of the London and Westminster Bank with Parrs Bank in 1917, there was an increased need for larger playing facilities (including a 'Ladies Ground' and separate pavilion) consequently the sports ground was extended to the N with the purchase of 10 acres of land in 1923-25 and another five acres to the W of the site in 1931 (Anon 1998). The original pavilion in the S part of the sports ground was also rebuilt and enlarged in 1925. The extent of the new ground is shown on the 4<sup>th</sup> edition map of 1938 (*fig. 14*) which also shows that new residential streets had been laid out to the N and NW of the site (including Woodmansterne Road) although they had not yet been fully developed with housing, while the land immediately S of the site still remained largely undeveloped (probably due to the presence of the Norbury Golf Course).

During the Second World War, the Sports Ground was requisitioned for the site of a heavy anti-aircraft artillery battery which appears to have been in operational use from January 1940 to December 1943 (MLO68291). Available documentary records appear to show that the battery was manned by units of the 60<sup>th</sup> (City of London) Anti-Aircraft Brigade and the Home Guard (Dobinson 2001, 573). The site of the battery appears to have been located within an emplacement dug in the centre of the sports ground in front of the main pavilion and its extent is traceable on an RAF vertical photograph of 1948 (*fig. 15*), along with evidence for possible searchlight features to the NW of the battery. Apparently, the emplacement was dug to a considerable depth (reputedly up to 6 feet (1.8m) below existing ground level) as the requisitioned ground took considerable time to be reconstructed and the pitches were not ready for play until 1951 (Anon 1998).

By 1945, the area immediately surrounding the sports ground had been heavily developed with suburban housing as shown on the 1948 aerial photograph, with the laying out of a grid of residential streets to the S of the site including Turle Road. The NatWest Sports Ground closed in 1998 and portions of the grounds to the immediate NW and SE of the site were sold off for development shortly afterwards. The area immediately in front of the pavilion has been used until recently for five-a-side football pitches but have since fallen into a state of disrepair, while the outlying portions of the playing fields (within the N half of the site) have become heavily overgrown.

**Conclusion:** The potential for encountering buried archaeological assets of a post-medieval date has been assessed as **Moderate**. Historic mapping shows that the site remained as agricultural fields, remote from any significant focus of settlement, until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the site was acquired for use as a golf course and subsequently as the NatWest Sports Ground, which was extended in the 1920s/early 1930s. An anti-aircraft battery was established within the centre of the site to the north of the main pavilion in 1940 and it appears likely that the construction of the emplacement will have disturbed archaeological deposits in this area.

However, there remains potential for encountering evidence of post-medieval field boundaries and cultivation features (particularly within the northern part of the site) as well as evidence of activity associated with the military usage of the site during the Second World War (which could include evidence of military paraphernalia and evidence of features such as searchlight platforms, as well as buried ordnance). Evidence of post-medieval field boundaries or cultivation features would be assessed as being of **Low** (ie. local) significance in archaeological terms, while evidence of military activity associated with the Second World War anti-aircraft defences would probably be regarded as being of **Medium** significance.

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## 6 Historic Environment Record Gazetteers and Maps

BA Ref	MonUID	PrefRef	Name	Date	NGR
1	MLO15077	MLO15077	London Road, Croydon {Roman Road}	Romano-British	TQ 32094 64589
2	MLO16230	020696/00/00	London Rd (Roman Road)	Romano-British	TQ 3069 6948
3	MLO24025	021322/00/00	Norbury Park (Roman Road)	Romano-British	TQ 3052 6994
4	MLO8095	090476/00/00	Brixton Rd (Roman Road)	Romano-British	TQ 3094 7391
5	MLO107771	MLO107771	Line of Roman Road Roman from London to Brighton. {Line of Roman Road}	Romano-British - Medieval	TQ 3335 4488
6	MLO13553	MLO13553	Streatham High Road/Streatham Hill/Brixton Hill/Brixton Road, Streatham, Lambeth {Medieval road}	Medieval - Post-medieval	TQ 30655 73730
7	MLO4108	090081/00/00	Streatham High Road	Post-medieval	TQ 3052 6996
8	MLO4122	090103/00/00	Hermitage Lane	Post-medieval	TQ 3057 7009
9	MLO68291	300049/00/00	Norbury (Anti-Aircraft Battery)	Post-medieval	TQ 3010 6960
10	MLO75600	MLO75600	St Andrews Roman Catholic School, Streatham, Lambeth	Post-medieval	TQ 3028 7000
11	MLO103650	MLO103650	Streatham High Road (No 608), Streatham, Lambeth {19th century semi-detached house}	Post-medieval	TQ 30493 70144
12	MLO103651	MLO103651	Streatham High Road (No 610), Streatham, Lambeth {19th century semi-detached house}	Post-medieval	TQ 30495 70142
13	MLO107673	MLO107673	Norbury Avenue / Kensington Avenue/Heatherset Gardens/Green Lane, Norbury [Norbury Park], Croydon, SW16 3LX {mid-20th century public park}	Post-medieval	TQ 3098 6988
14	MLO88395	MLO88395	Guildersfield Road (Nos 53a-e), Streatham Vale, Lambeth {site of 19th century Church}	Post-medieval	TQ 30155 70176
15	MLO97920	MLO97920	Streatham High Road (No. 381) - [Sinclair House]	Post-medieval	TQ 30514 70216
16	MLO107327	MLO107327	Stanford Road, [Stanford Road School], Norbury, {Croydon War Hospital during World War One}	Post-medieval	TQ 30264 69473
17	MLO105758	MLO105758	S side of Roche Road at its junction with London Road (no. 1523), Norbury.	Post-medieval	TQ 3060 6973
18	MLO105759	MLO105759	S side of Roche Road at its junction with London Road (no. 1523), Norbury.	Post-medieval	TQ 3060 6973
19	MLO108700	MLO108700	Rowan Road, (No 61-137), / Rowan Crescent, (No 22-62 and 99-109), / Rowan Close, Mitcham, Merton SW16 {Lonesome Chemical Works}	Post-medieval	TQ 2936 6966

Table 2: Gazetteer of archaeological monuments recorded within a 500m radius of the Site based on consultation of the Greater London Historic Environment Record (HER).

BA Ref.	EvUID	Name	Date	NGR
E1	ELO11494	Streatham High Road (Nos. 604-610), London, SW16: Desk Based Assessment	2010	TQ 304 701
E2	ELO17009	London Road [former Norbury Police Station], Norbury, Croydon, SW16 4ES: Built Heritage Statement	2016	TQ 3058 6986
E3	ELO6446	Streatham High Road (No. 381) - [Sinclair House]: Evaluation	2005	TQ 30514 70216
E4	ELO7373	Streatham High Road (Nos 427-463), [Land to the Rear], Streatham, Croydon: Desk Based Assessment	2004	TQ 30592 70017
E5	ELO19067	London Road [Former Norbury Police Station] Norbury Croydon: Evaluation	2017	TQ 3058 6986
E6	ELO18852	Streatham High Road (604-610) Streatham London Borough of Lambeth: Desk Based Assessment	2010-2017	TQ 3048 7013
E7	ELO2377	Streatham High Road (419) [King William IV Public House] London Borough of Lambeth: Desk Based Assessment	2004	TQ 30579 70105
E8	ELO10029	Turle Road, [The National Westminster Sports Ground], Norbury, SW16: Evaluation	1999	TQ 29972 69636
E9	ELO20857	Norbury Avenue [Norbury Station], Norbury, London, SW16 4BT: Evaluation	2019	TQ 3067 6976
E10	ELO1610	18 Danbrook Road/594-600 Streatham High Road: Excavation	1979	TQ 30416 70112
E11	ELO1919	Norbury: Desk Based Assessment	-	TQ 3010 6960
E12	ELO1983	1-15 Hepworth Road (Rear of): Excavation	1979	TQ 3044 7015
E13	ELO2037	Hermitage Lane: Desk Based Assessment	-	TQ 3057 7009
E14	ELO2050	Streatham High Road	-	TQ 3052 6996
E15	ELO2171	Norbury Park: Excavation	-	TQ 3052 6994
E16	ELO2181	Norbury Park: Excavation	-	TQ 3052 6994
E17	ELO5886	London Road: Excavation	-	TQ 3069 6948

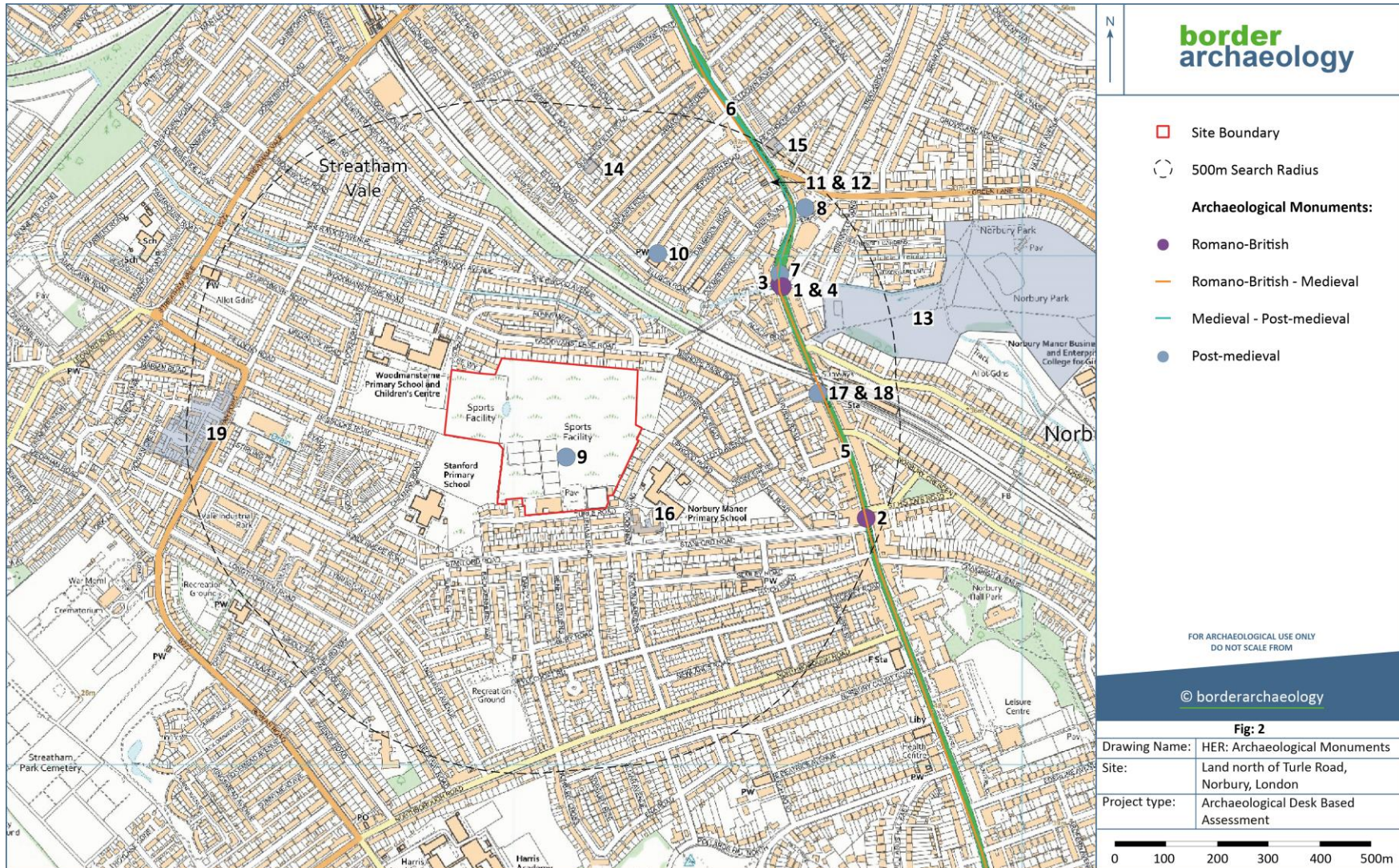
Table 3: Gazetteer of archaeological events recorded within a 500m radius of the Site based on consultation of the Greater London Historic Environment Record (HER).

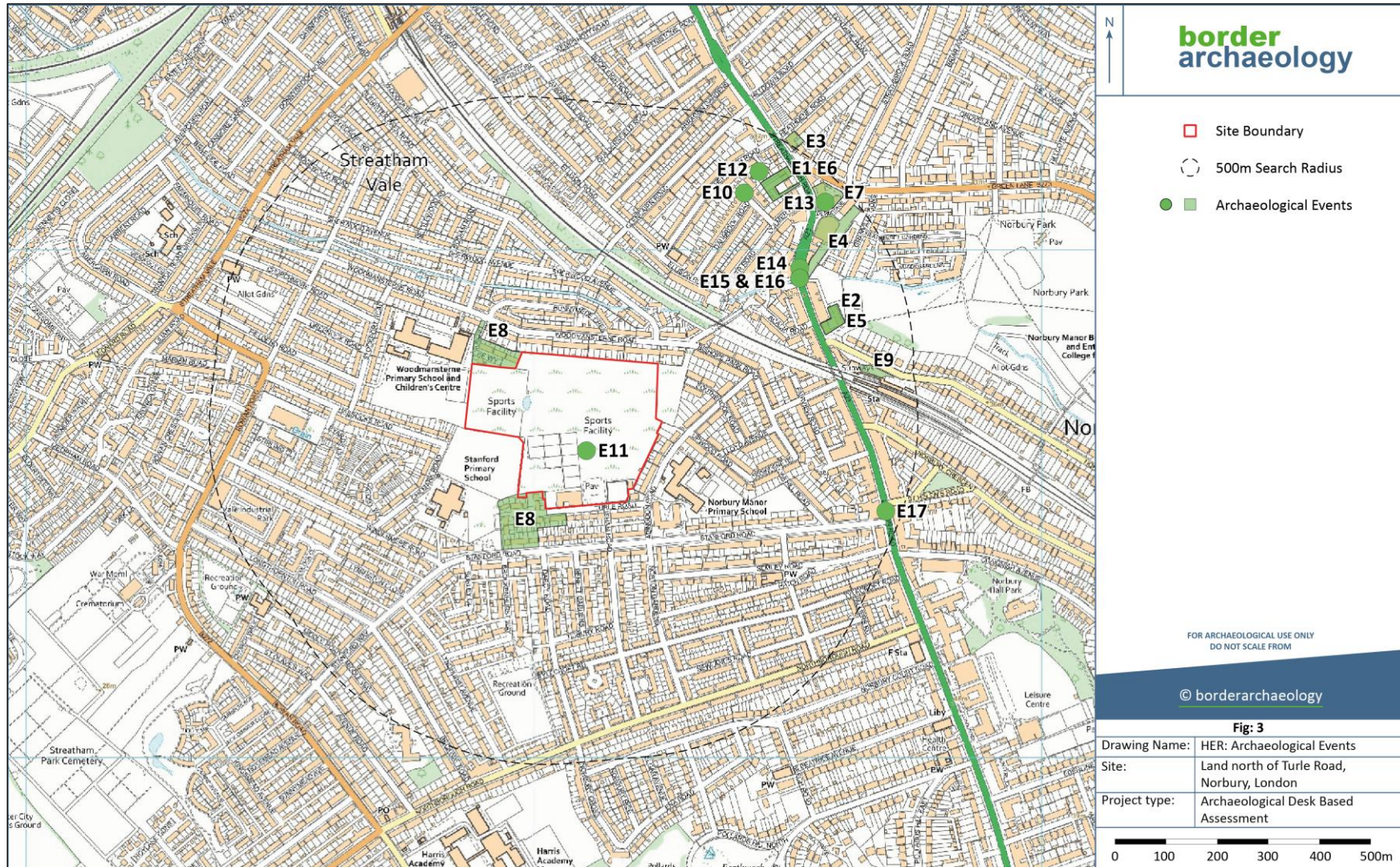
BA Ref.	DesigUID	Grade	PrefRef	Name	NGR
B1	DLO17206	II	1188819	Barclays Bank	TQ 30666 69639
B2	DLO23825	II	1263506	St Andrews Church Hall	TQ 30199 70211
B3	DLO23849	II	1299755	St Andrews Vicarage	TQ 30178 70202
B4	DLO24054	II	1358247	Front Wall, Fence and Gates to Church and Vicarage of St Andrew	TQ 30156 70196

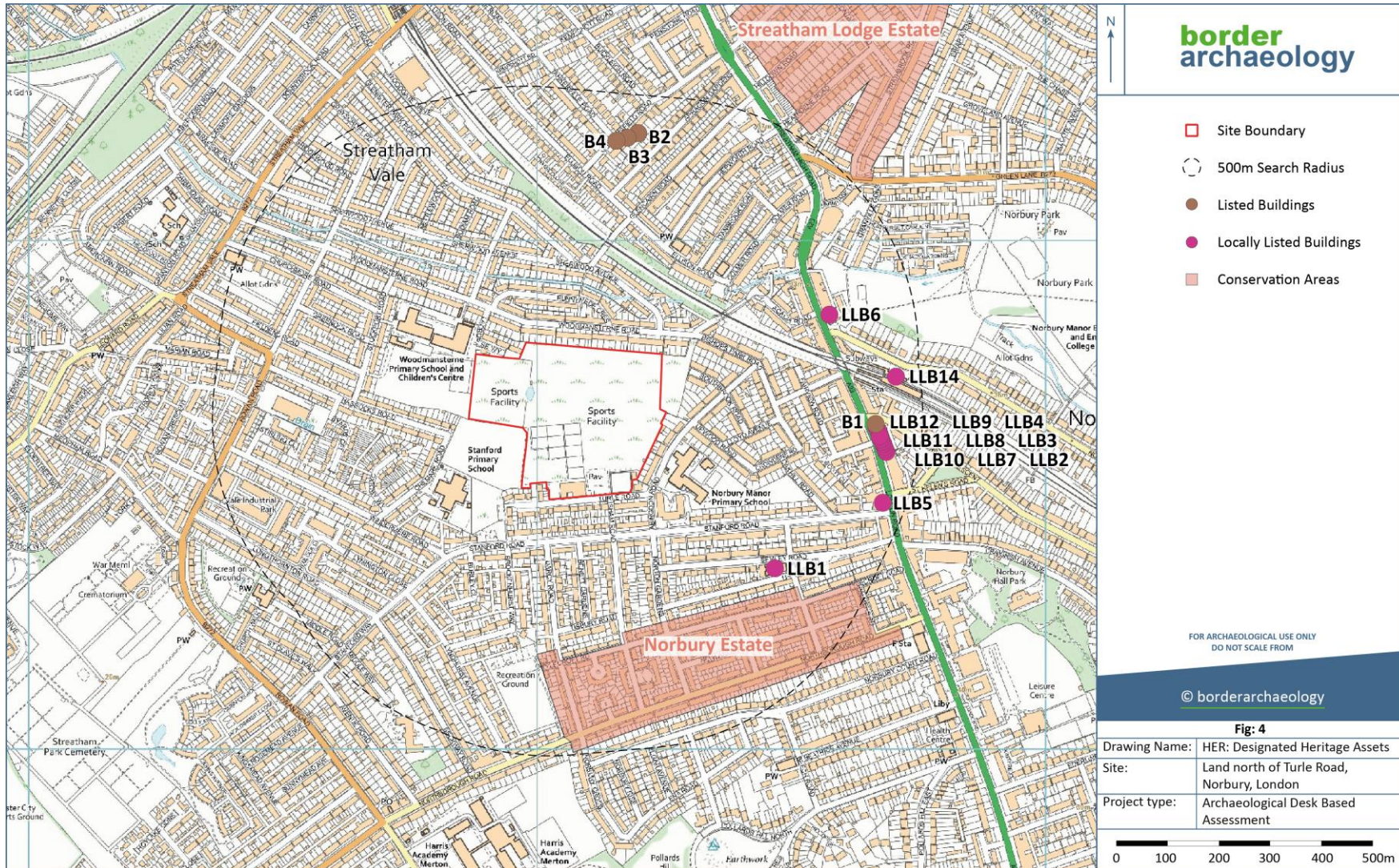
Table 4: Gazetteer of designated heritage assets recorded within a 500m radius of the Site based on consultation of the Greater London Historic Environment Record (HER).

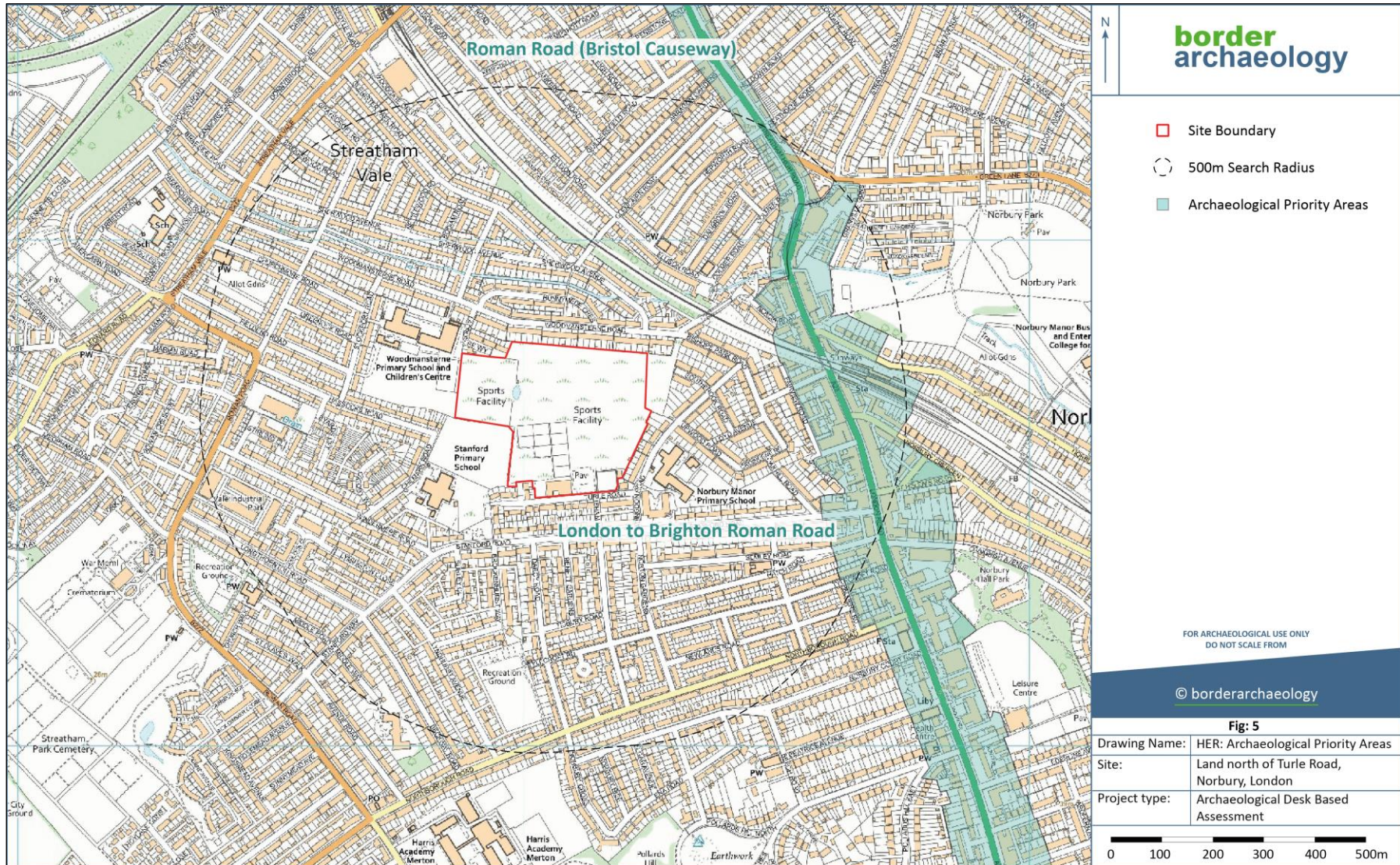
BA Ref.	DesigUID Grade	PrefRef	Name	NGR
LLB1	DLO33941	NY012	Bavant Road, [Norbury Baptist Church], Norbury	TQ 3046 6935
LLB2	DLO34531	NY009	London Road, (No.1428),	TQ 3067 6962
LLB3	DLO34532	NY009	London Road, (No.1430),	TQ 3067 6962
LLB4	DLO34533	NY008	London Road, (No.1432),	TQ 3066 6963
LLB5	DLO34534	NY010	London Road, (No.1433),	TQ 3068 6948
LLB6	DLO34535	NY007	London Road, (No.1516), [Norbury Police Station],	TQ 3057 6985
LLB7	DLO34540	NY021	London Road, (No.1414),	TQ 3068 6958
LLB8	DLO34541	NY021	London Road, (No.1416),	TQ 3068 6958
LLB9	DLO34542	NY021	London Road, (No.1418),	TQ 3068 6959
LLB10	DLO34543	NY021	London Road, (No.1420),	TQ 3068 6960
LLB11	DLO34544	NY021	London Road, (No.1422),	TQ 3067 6960
LLB12	DLO34545	NY021	London Road, (No.1424),	TQ 3067 6960
LLB13	DLO34546	NY021	London Road, (No.1426),	TQ 3067 6961
LLB14	DLO34595	NY016	Norbury Avenue, [Norbury Station],	TQ 3070 6973

Table 5: Gazetteer of non-designated heritage assets recorded within a 500m radius of the Site based on consultation of the Greater London Historic Environment Record (HER).









## 7 Site Assessment

It should be noted that it was not possible to fully access the whole site; however, a number of photographs were obtained from key vantage points in order to ascertain the potential presence of archaeological remains in the vicinity. The proposal site, which covers an approximate area of 8.76 ha, comprises land forming a sports ground (formerly known as the National Westminster Bank Sports Ground) which is located to the N of Turle Road within the residential suburb of Norbury.

At the S end of the site is a raised terrace occupied by large sports pavilion, a substantial two-storey building of brick construction with a central block with portico and flanking wings (*Plate 1*), constructed in 1926 on the site of an earlier building erected in 1900 and further enlarged in the 1950s. The pavilion is currently boarded up and in a derelict state. To the E of the pavilion is a separate enclosure containing a Bowling Green which is still currently in use.

Immediately to the N and below the terrace occupied by the pavilion is a series of modern all-weather five-a-side football pitches subdivided by tall fencing, which extends across the central part of the site (formerly occupied by the cricket pitch prior to closure of the Sports Club in 1998). The football pitches roughly occupy the site of the Second World War anti-aircraft battery which is marked on a RAF vertical photograph of the site taken in 1948. No features associated with the usage of the site during the Second World War were noted.



*Plate 1: View looking N towards pavilion on terrace at S end of Sports Ground*



The N portion of the site, to the N of the football pitches consists of an extensive area of heavily overgrown grassland and scrub bordering the rear gardens of the residential properties in Woodmansterne Road. Due to the extent and density of the undergrowth, it was not possible to determine the presence (or not) of archaeological features in this area, although it is possible that they may be obscured by tall grass and scrub.



*Plate 2: General view looking NNW from the terrace looking across the central and northern parts of the site*

## 8 Conclusions

### 8.1 Potential Impacts

Full details of the proposed development were not available at time of writing. Subsequent publication of more detailed, revised proposals and specifications for the proposed development, together with updated plans and elevation drawings, may necessitate revisions to this report and the conclusions reached. Should the proposed development entail the construction of new buildings on the site, it is considered that potential impacts on sub-surface remains, in broad terms, could include topsoil removal, the excavation of building foundations, trenching for new services (including drainage and electricity) and excavations associated with the provision of vehicular access or landscaping works.

- *Topsoil removal*

It is assumed for the purposes of this report that topsoil would be removed across the entire site as part of the preliminary site works. Removal of topsoil is a potential impact as (in the addition to loss of any residual evidence

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it contains) it would expose any archaeological remains that may be present immediately below the surface of the topsoil. These may then be affected by movement of vehicles and plant involved in construction activities.

- *Standard strip foundations*

Standard strip foundations would entail the removal of any archaeological remains within the footprint of each excavated strip to a typical depth of 1.0 – 1.5m below existing ground level as assumed for the purposes of this assessment. It is possible that the bases of archaeological features such as pits or ditches would remain intact beneath these impact levels but their context could be lost.

- *Landscaping and other groundworks*

The excavation of new service trenches, drains and other landscaping features, may extend to a depth of at least 1.0 – 1.5m below existing ground level as assumed for the purposes of this assessment. This would entirely remove or truncate any archaeological remains within the footprint of the works.

## 8.2 Overall Conclusions

The archaeological potential of the site has been assessed in overall terms as **Moderate**, with particular reference to encountering archaeological remains associated with medieval or post-medieval activity. The potential to encounter evidence of prehistoric and Romano-British remains has been assessed as **Low to Moderate**. Although the 1999 trial trench evaluation to the immediate NW and SE of the Sports Ground produced negative results, this should not preclude the possibility that archaeological remains may exist within the remainder of the site which was not subject to investigation.

It appears likely that sub-surface deposits and features of archaeological significance will have been heavily disturbed within the central portion of the site to the N of the pavilion, both by the construction of the anti-aircraft gun emplacement during the Second World War and by landscaping works associated with the subsequent restoration of the Sports Ground and, more recently, the laying out of all-weather sports pitches.

Within the northern half of the site, there appears to be greater potential to encounter evidence of undisturbed archaeological deposits and features, including evidence of the parish boundary between Streatham and Mitcham (which is clearly visible as a feature on aerial photographs and LiDAR imagery) and possibly evidence of medieval and post-medieval industrial activity or possibly burials, as suggested by the field name evidence ('Potter's Field').

**Recommendations:** It is BA's considered opinion that, *prima facie*, the archaeological potential of the site does not present an impediment to the proposed development. Given the overall **Moderate** potential of the site in archaeological terms, it is respectfully suggested that an appropriate programme of archaeological work (which could possibly include geophysical survey and evaluation trial-trenching) the details of which to be agreed with the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service, will be necessary to determine the extent, depth and significance of buried archaeological features and deposits across the site.

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## 9 Copyright

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## 10 References

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## 10.1 Cartography

(All maps were obtained from the National Archives unless otherwise stated).

1762: John Rocque's Map of the County of Surrey (NA PRO 30/75/171)

1804: OS Surveyor's drawing of Croydon and district (British Library)

1822: Greenwood's Map of Surrey

1838: Tithe Map of Croydon parish (NA IR 30/34/42)

1840: Tithe map of Streatham parish (NA IR 30/34/114)

1847 Tithe Map of Mitcham parish (NA IR 30/34/87)

1870: OS 1<sup>st</sup> Edition 25-inch Map

1894: OS 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 25-inch Map

1914: OS 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition 6-inch Map

1938: OS 4<sup>th</sup> Edition 6-inch Map

1955: OS 1:1250 Scale National Survey

1969: OS 1:1250 Scale National Survey

(RAF oblique and vertical aerial photographs of the study area dating back to 1948 were consulted using records held at the Historic England Archive, Swindon and Surrey History Centre, Woking)

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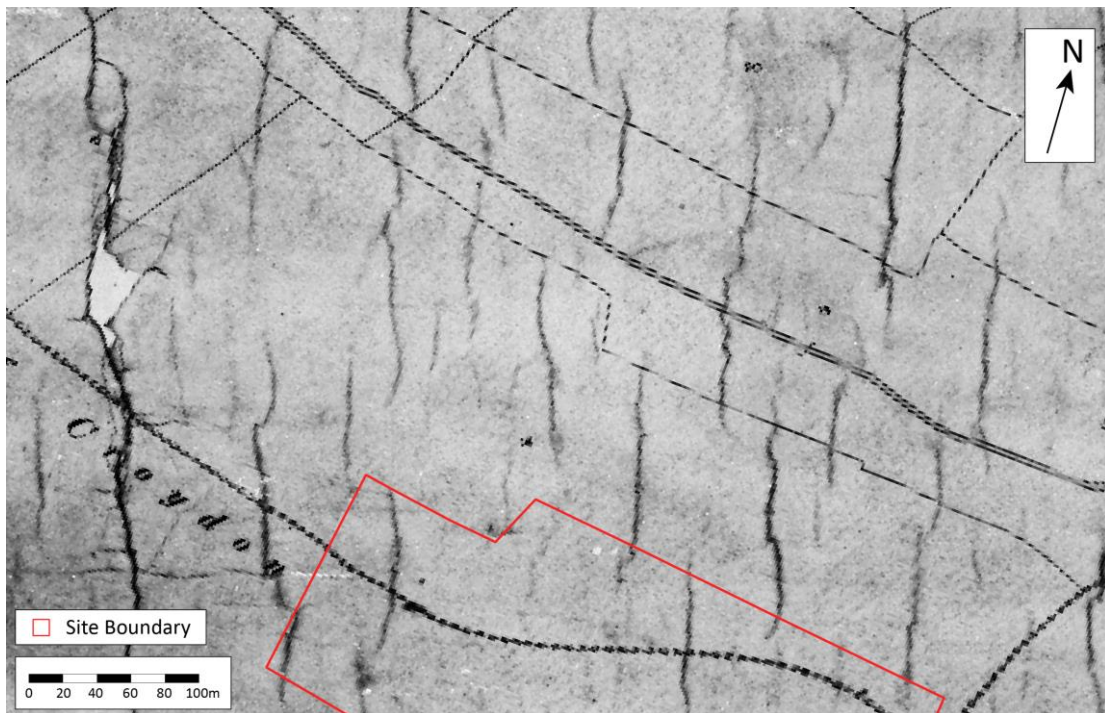
## 11 Appendix 1: Historic Maps



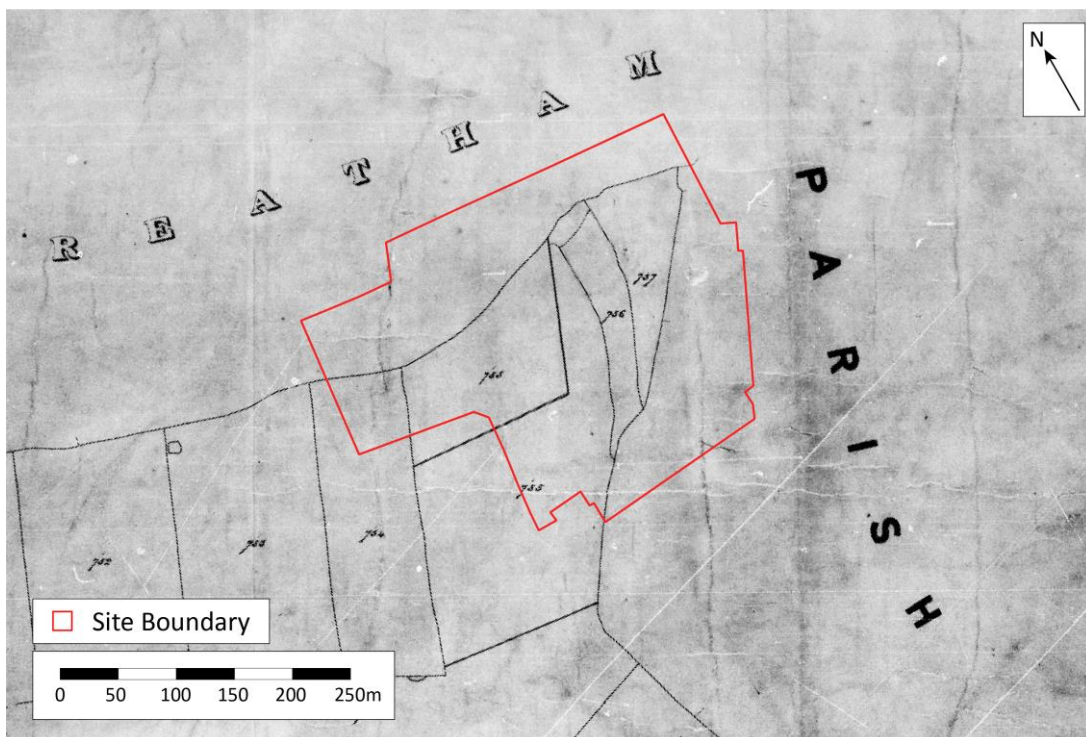
*Fig. 6: Extract from John Rocque's Map of Surrey (1762)  
(Reproduced by courtesy of the National Archives)*



*Fig. 7: Extract from the OS Surveyor's Drawing of Croydon and District (1804)  
(Reproduced by courtesy of the National Archives)*



*Fig.8: Extract from the Streatham Tithe Map (1840) showing the site (marked in red)  
(Reproduced by courtesy of the National Archives)*



*Fig.9: Extract from the Mitcham Tithe Map (1847) showing the site (marked in red)  
(Reproduced by courtesy of the National Archives)*

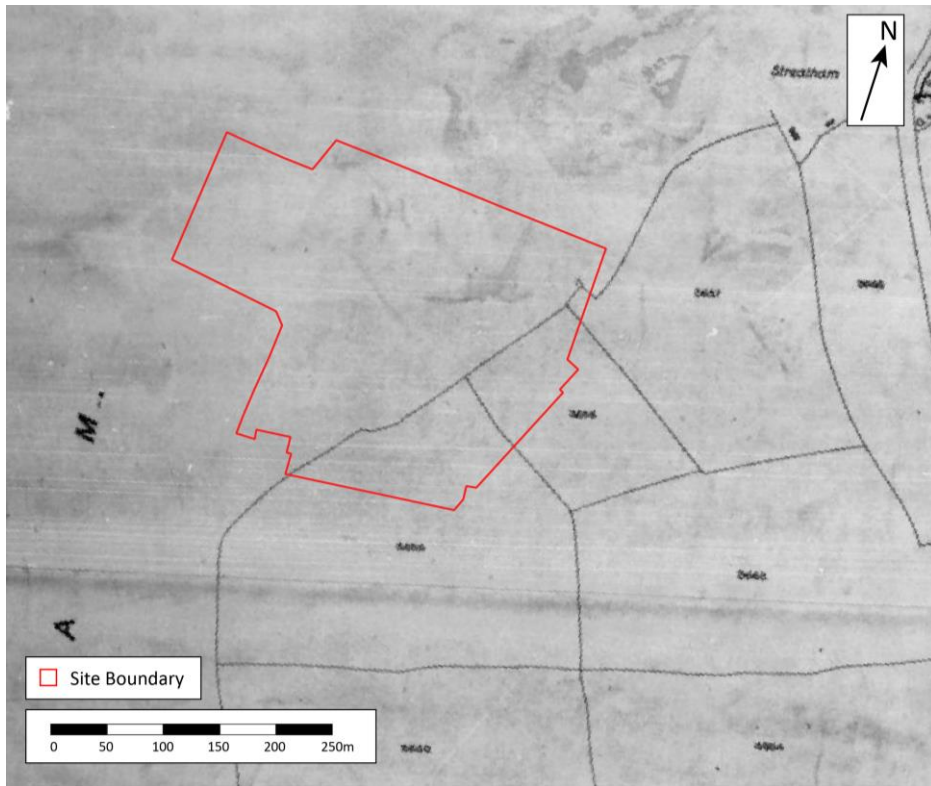


Fig.10: Extract from the Croydon Tithe Map (1838) showing the site (marked in red)  
(Reproduced by courtesy of the National Archives)

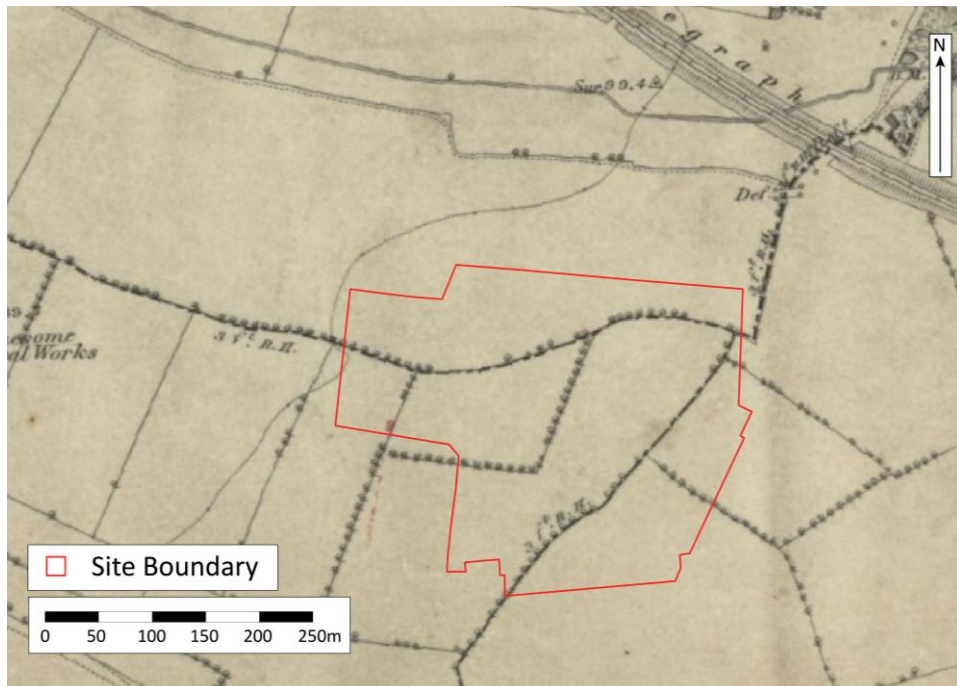


Fig. 11: Extract from the OS 1<sup>st</sup> edition 25-inch map (1870) with site marked in red  
(Reproduced by courtesy of the National Archives)



Fig. 12: Extract from the OS 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 25-inch map (1894) with site marked in red (Reproduced by courtesy of the National Archives)

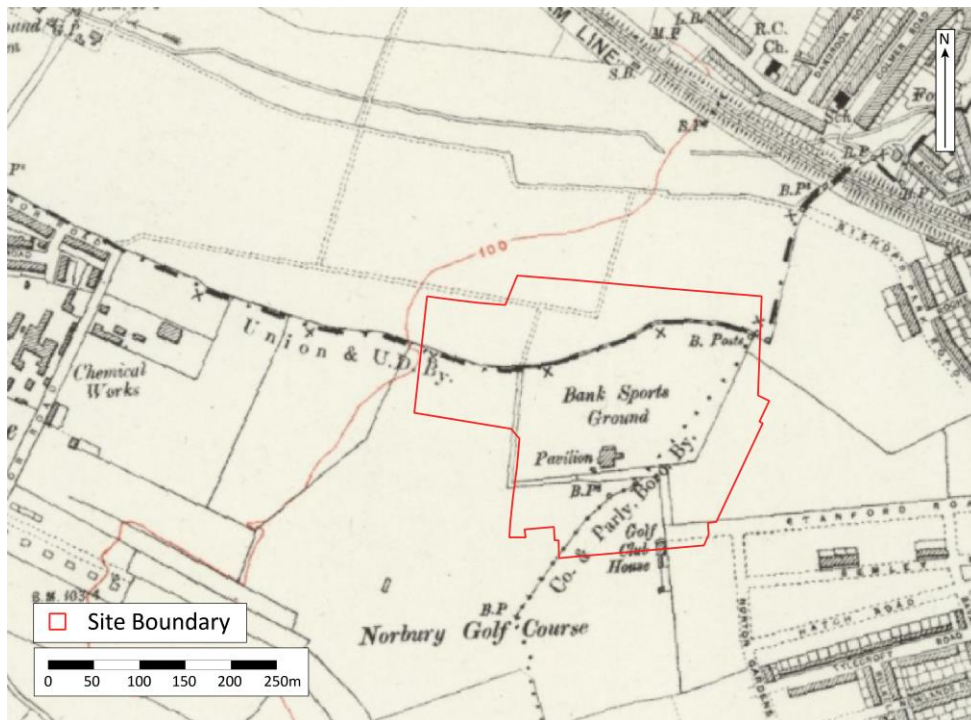


Fig. 13: Extract from the OS 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 6-inch map (1914) with site marked in red (Reproduced by courtesy of the National Archives)



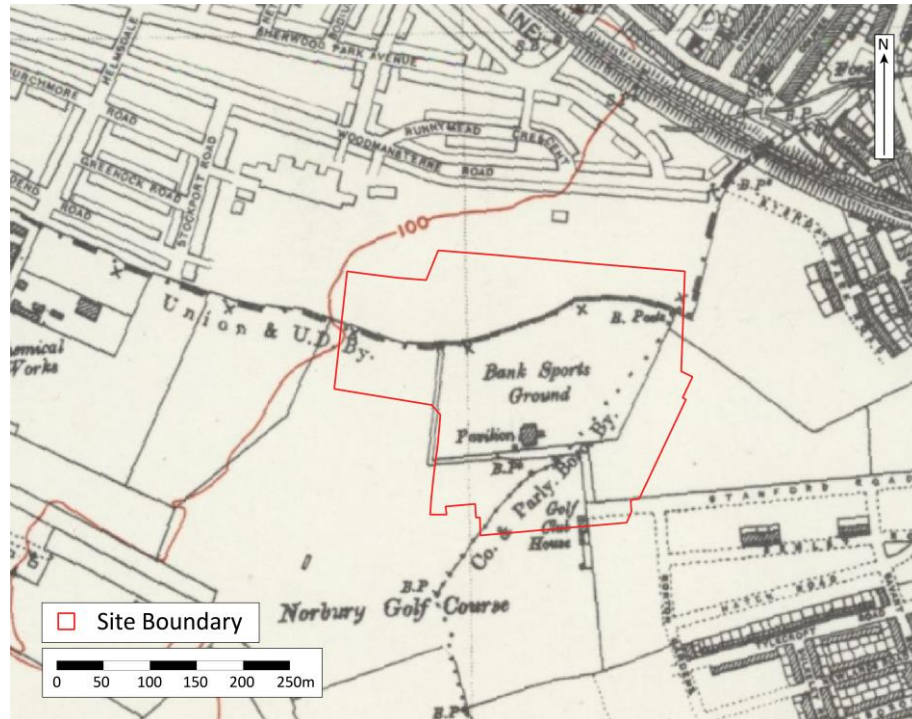
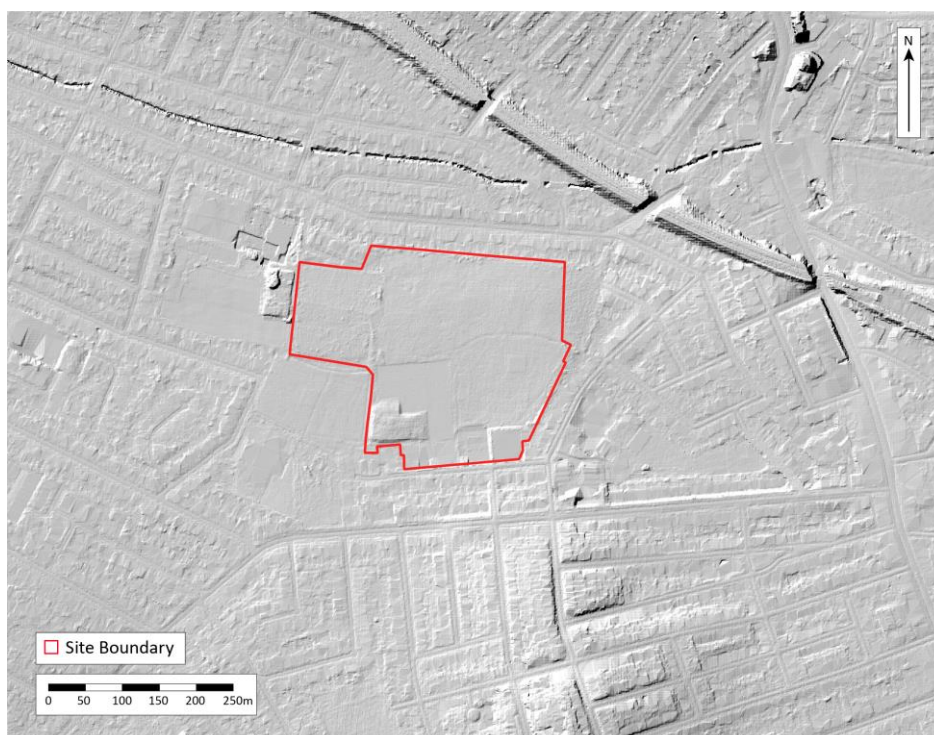


Fig. 14: Extract from the OS 4<sup>th</sup> edition 6-inch map (1938) with site marked in red  
(Reproduced by courtesy of the National Archives)



Fig. 15: Extract from an RAF vertical aerial photograph of Norbury and environs (1948)  
(Reproduced by courtesy of the Surrey History Centre)



*Fig. 16: Extract from current LiDAR imagery of the site (1m DTM)  
(Reproduced by courtesy of the Environment Agency)*

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Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment: Land north of Turle Road Norbury London SW16 5QN		BA21127THUR	
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Artwork	Holly Litherland BA (Hons)		
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