

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

# **58 – 70 YORK ROAD LONDON SW11**

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For Nofax Enterprises

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By Michael Johnson MSc MCIfA & Aaron Clarke BA PCIfA

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L~P:ARCHÆOLOGY

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

# 58 – 70 YORK ROAD LONDON SW11 5ST

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Client: Nofax Enterprises

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Local Authority: London Borough of Wandsworth

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NGR: 526818, 176148

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Planning App: 2017/5818

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Author: M. Johnson, A. Clarke, & R. Soulsby-McCreath

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Doc Ref: LPI510L-WBR-v1.1

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Date: April 19

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Site Code: YRK18

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L-P: ARCHAEOLOGY

A trading name of L - P : Heritage LLP

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# Abstract

*An archaeological Watching Brief was carried out during groundworks at 58-70 York Road, Battersea. The Watching Brief was implemented in response to a planning condition on the application 2017/5818. The work was carried out by L - P : Archaeology. This report has been prepared by Aaron Clarke, Rebecca Soulsby-McCreath and Michael Johnson of L – P : Archaeology on behalf of Nofax Enterprises.*

*The site was previously occupied by the “Battersea Bar” and falls within an Archaeological Priority Area (APA).*

*The objectives of the Watching Brief were to watch for the presence of Medieval and Prehistoric remains on the site.*

*Modern remains of the Battersea Bar were observed, but no remains of archaeological significance were encountered during the Watching Brief that monitored intrusive groundworks. It is recommended that no further archaeological work is required.*

# 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report details the results of an archaeological Watching Brief carried out at 58-70 York Road, Battersea, for Higgins Holmes PLC. The local authority is London Borough of Wandsworth.
- 1.2. The fieldwork was carried out by Michael Johnson, Barbora Brederova and Rebecca Soulsby-McCreath of L - P : Archaeology from February to March 2019.
- 1.3. The site is located in at 58-70 York Road, London SW11 3QD (hereafter “the site”) (FIGURE 1) (FIGURE 2). The NGR is 526818 176148.
- 1.4. The site code allocated by the Museum of London is YRK18.
- 1.5. The work was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by L – P : Archaeology (CHARVET 2018).

## 2. Site Background

### 2.1.PLANNING

2.1.1. Planning consent has been granted for the redevelopment of the site with new commercial and residential properties. The application reference is 2017/5818.

2.1.2. The site lies within an Archaeological Priority Area (APA). The planning consent had attached to it an archaeological condition requiring the implementation of a program of archaeological works was as follows:

#### **Condition 3**

A) No development other than demolition to existing ground level shall take place until the implementation of a programme of site-related archaeological investigation and potential mitigation in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority, and a report on the evaluation has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority.

B) Under Part A, the programme of archaeological investigation shall be implemented in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation.

C) The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under Part (A), and the provision for analysis, publication and dissemination of the results and archive deposition has been secured.

#### Reason

Heritage assets of archaeological interest may survive on the site. The planning authority wishes to secure the provision of appropriate archaeological investigation in accordance with the section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (DCLG 2012).

2.1.3. In order to satisfy this condition, a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared (CHARVET 2018). This detailed the methodologies to be employed in the Watching Brief.

2.1.4. This document seeks to satisfy the condition by describing the results of the Watching Brief and clarifying the status and location of the project archive.

## **2.2.LOCATION AND TOPOGRAPHY**

2.2.1. The site lies approximately 250m to the East of the River Thames, west of Battersea Park and to the North of Clapham Junction.

2.2.2. It sits on level ground at 3.30m OD, fronting onto York Road (A3205). The area is mainly residential with some commercial properties alongside York Road.

## **2.3.GEOLOGY**

2.3.1. The British Geological Survey GeoIndex (BRITISH GEOLOGICAL SURVEY 2018) shows the site to be located on solid geology of London Clay which is described as a silty to very silty clay. It can also contain thin beds of shell or pockets of sand.

2.3.2. The superficial deposits correspond to a layer of alluvium deposited along the Thames which normally comprises soft to firm consolidated, compressible silty clay with various layers of silt, sand, peat and basal gravel. This data is at relatively low resolution and offers only a rough indication of the site geology.

2.3.3. The results of the Watching Brief confirmed the presence of London Clay and the superficial alluvium deposits.



## 3. Archaeological and Historical Background

### 3.1. TIMESCALES USED IN THIS REPORT:

| PERIOD             | FROM    | TO        |
|--------------------|---------|-----------|
| <b>PREHISTORIC</b> |         |           |
| PALAEOLITHIC       | 450,000 | 12,000 BC |
| MESOLITHIC         | 12,000  | 4,000 BC  |
| NEOLITHIC          | 4,000   | 1,800 BC  |
| BRONZE AGE         | 1,800   | 600 BC    |
| IRON AGE           | 600     | 43 AD     |
| <b>HISTORIC</b>    |         |           |
| ROMAN              | 43      | 410 AD    |
| EARLY MEDIEVAL     | 410     | 1066 AD   |
| MEDIEVAL           | 1066    | 1485 AD   |
| POST MEDIEVAL      | 1485    | PRESENT   |

Table 1 - Timescales used in this report

3.1.1. A Desk Based Assessment of the archaeology was prepared in advance of the ground works, containing an archaeological and historical background to the site (EVE & LAINO 2017). A concise summary of that assessment is provided here for the reader. Please refer to the above document for more detailed information.

### 3.2. PREHISTORY

3.2.1. In the general area, especially along the Thames foreshore, and particularly at the confluence of the Thames and the Wandle, there is a large amount of evidence from the Prehistoric periods, mainly in the form of scattered metal or flint artefacts. However, these artefacts have likely been redeposited and due to their unstratified nature can not be taken as clear evidence of Prehistoric occupation.

3.2.2. For Prehistory evidence is quite limited within the area. A small number of artefacts have been found in the local area, approximately 70 metres to the west of the study site pieces of burnt flint and flint flakes where recovered

during an evaluation undertaken in 1991 (MLO57580, JBG91). A selection of unstratified finds have been recorded on sites near by, a flint blade (MLO71822, GWY96) lying in the natural silt and clay at 2.49m OD. Some Bronze Age artefacts are unstratified and mainly recovered from the foreshore of the River Thames (EVE 2015): 16–17).

3.2.3. These suggest that evidence for Prehistoric activity may occur on the site, mainly in the form of unstratified finds recovered from the lain river deposits of the Thames. The site has potential of brickearth deposits and gravel terraces. There is no evidence for Iron Age remains in the area and the potential for remains from this period is considered low.

### **3.3.ROMAN**

3.3.1. Battersea is not known as an area of any significant Roman settlement and it is situated some distance from the areas more densely populated. It is thought that Roman Stane Street ran 3km to the south east of the study site, from London Bridge through Clapham.

3.3.2. Consequently, the potential for Roman remains is considered as very low due to the low amount of evidence recorded in the close vicinity of the site (EVE 2015): 17).

### **3.4.EARLY MEDIEVAL AND MEDIEVAL**

3.4.1. There are no known archaeological deposits from the Early Medieval period in the study area as the main activity was focused around the Clapham area, which is located to the south of the study area (EVE 2015: 18).

3.4.2. The site falls within the Manor of Battersea, held by Earl Harold before the time of the Conquest. The small hamlet of 'Bruges' (MLO73314) existed in the area, however the main focus of settlement was clearly further northeast at Battersea village.

3.4.3. While the manor house or its associated grounds and out-buildings are unlikely to have stretched as far as the study site, it is highly likely that there was some form of settlement or activity within the area during the Medieval period.

3.4.4. A hoard of Medieval coins discovered during the demolition of the Castle Pub

(MLO10512), and a boundary ditch and pit containing medieval pottery were found at Regent and Groves Wharf on Lombard Road (MLO77615), to the north of the site.

3.4.5. The site appears to have lain in a position on the periphery of settlement activity from earliest times up until the late Medieval or early Post Medieval period. There is no clear evidence that the study site was settled during the Medieval period, therefore the potential for significant Medieval remains can be considered low.

### **3.5.POST MEDIEVAL**

3.5.1. The site sits to the north of the 'lost river' of Falcon Brook where evidence of the Early Post Medieval timber revetments that would have reinforced and managed the northern bank of the Falcon Brook were recovered at Bridge's Wharf (KILLOCK 2008).

3.5.2. Rocque's map of 1746 (EVE 2015: 19) shows the site was however covered by fields or gardens which is confirmed by the Tithe map of 1838 (EVE 2015: 34).

### **3.6.MODERN**

3.6.1. The terraced house development survived on site until the second world war when a number of them were bombed or cleared in advance of redevelopment (EVE 2015: 15).

3.6.2. By the Ordnance Survey map of 1984 the site has the same configuration as it does today. The previous terraced houses have been demolished and the Chopper Pub (now called the Battersea Bar), had been constructed. This has now also been demolished prior to the commencement of the groundworks and associated Watching Brief.

3.6.3. The Battersea Bar did not have a basement, and geotechnical work indicates that the previous terrace buildings did not have basements.

## 4. Aims and Objectives

4.1. As laid out in the WSI (CHARVET 2018), the general aims of the Watching Brief were:

- ◆ To record archaeological remains revealed during the groundworks operations.
- ◆ To ensure that should significant remains be encountered, that Historic England be informed and appropriate action be taken.

4.2. As the site lies within the designated Archaeological Priority Area (APA), the specific aims of the Watching Brief are:

- ◆ To watch for the presence of any Late Prehistoric evidence in relation to the brickearth deposits.
- ◆ To watch for any Medieval remains on the study site.
- ◆ To record evidence for the land use of the site and its nature over time.

## 5. Methodology

- 5.1.L - P : Archaeology carried out the Watching Brief works according to the methodology agreed in the WSI (CHARVET 2018)
- 5.2.The works comprised of a monitoring area of 950 square meters with works covering the entire area (FIGURE 3).
- 5.3.All excavation was undertaken by a mechanical excavator with a toothless bucket which was under constant supervision by a qualified archaeologist.

## 6. Results

6.1.Contexts that are deposits, fills or layers are marked within (parentheses), cuts within [square brackets], and masonry underlined.

6.2.A sequence of made ground was observed and is represented in **FIGURE 3** and **PLATE 1**. The topsoil (1303) consisted of a loose dark brown/grey silt clay with frequent 20<sup>th</sup> century demolition fragments. A subsoil (1304) of firm orange/yellow silty sand was present overlaying the natural, London Clay (1305).

6.3.No archaeological deposits were encountered during the works.



*Plate 1 - Section 1 on south facing limit of excavation*

## **7. Finds**

7.1.No finds were recovered.

## 8. Conclusions

- 8.1. An archaeological Watching Brief was carried out on the site of 58-70 York Road, London.
- 8.2. The Watching Brief revealed no archaeological deposits therefore, it is recommended that no further archaeological work is required.



## 9. Archive

9.1. The archive is to be deposited by arrangement with Museum of London, under the site code BLG18.

9.2. The documentary archive consists of:

- ◆ 1 x Photographic Register
- ◆ 1 x CD Digital Photographs
- ◆ 1 x Context Register
- ◆ 1 x Drawing Register
- ◆ 3 x Permatrace

# SOURCES CONSULTED

## BIBLIOGRAPHIC

BRITISH GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, 2018. 'British Geological Survey GeoIndex'. Available at:  
<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex>.

CHARVET, A., 2018. *Written Scheme of Investigation for a Watching Brief at 48-70 York Road, Battersea*.

EVE, S., 2015. *Archaeological Desk Based Assessment for land at 58-70 York Road, Wandsworth SW11*.

EVE, S. & LAINO, F., 2017. *Archaeological Desk Based Assessment: 58-70 York Road*. London: L - P: Archaeology.

KILLOCK, D., 2008. *An Archaeological Excavation at Bridge's Wharf, Battersea, London SW11, London Borough of Wandsworth*. London: Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.

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# FIGURES

FIGURE I // Site Location - General



PROJECT // 1510L - 58-70 York Road, SW11

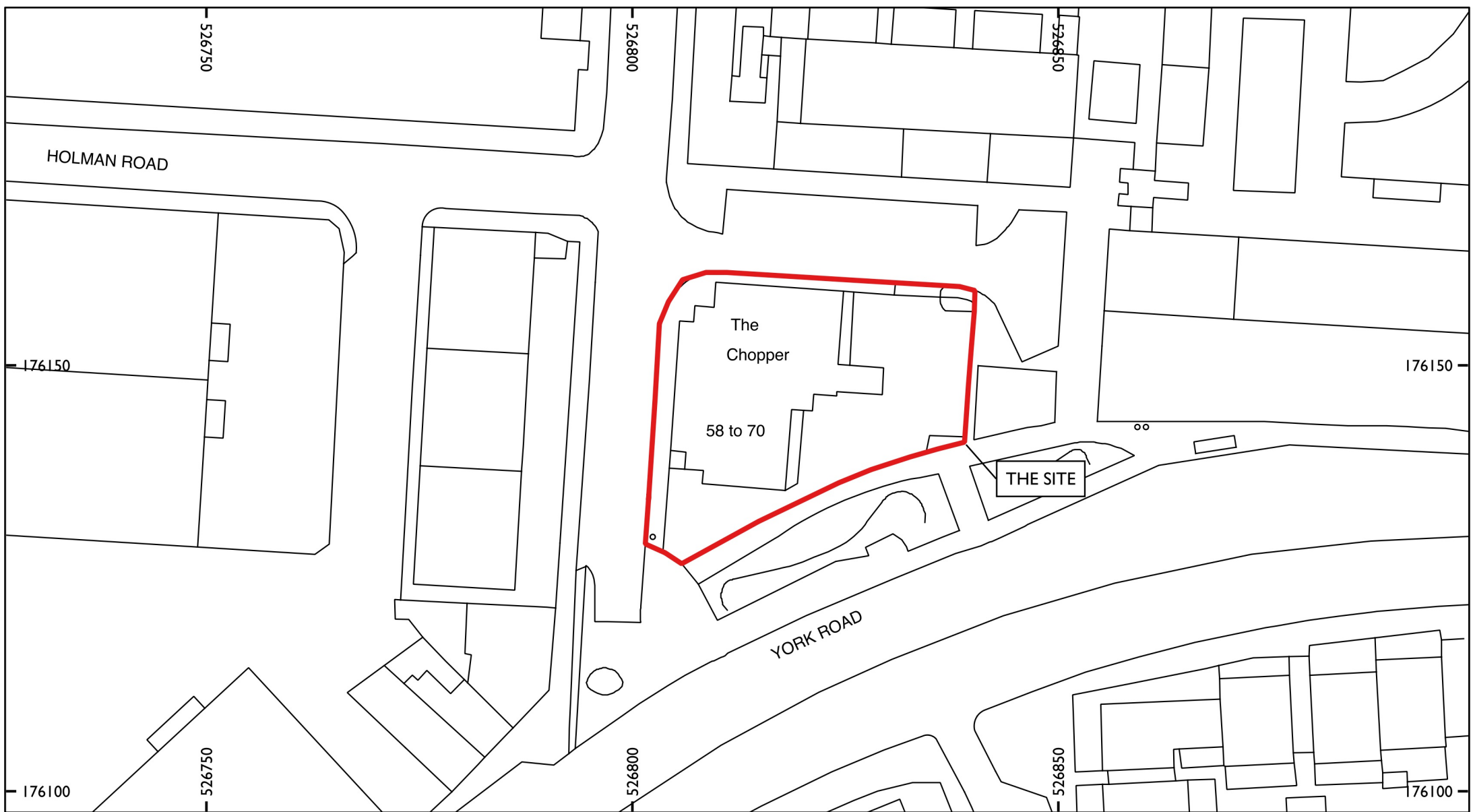
DESCRIPTION // Site Location - General

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DOC REF: LPI 1510L-WBR-v1

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FIGURE 2 // Site Location - Detail



0 50 m



PROJECT // 1510L - 58-70 York Road, SW11

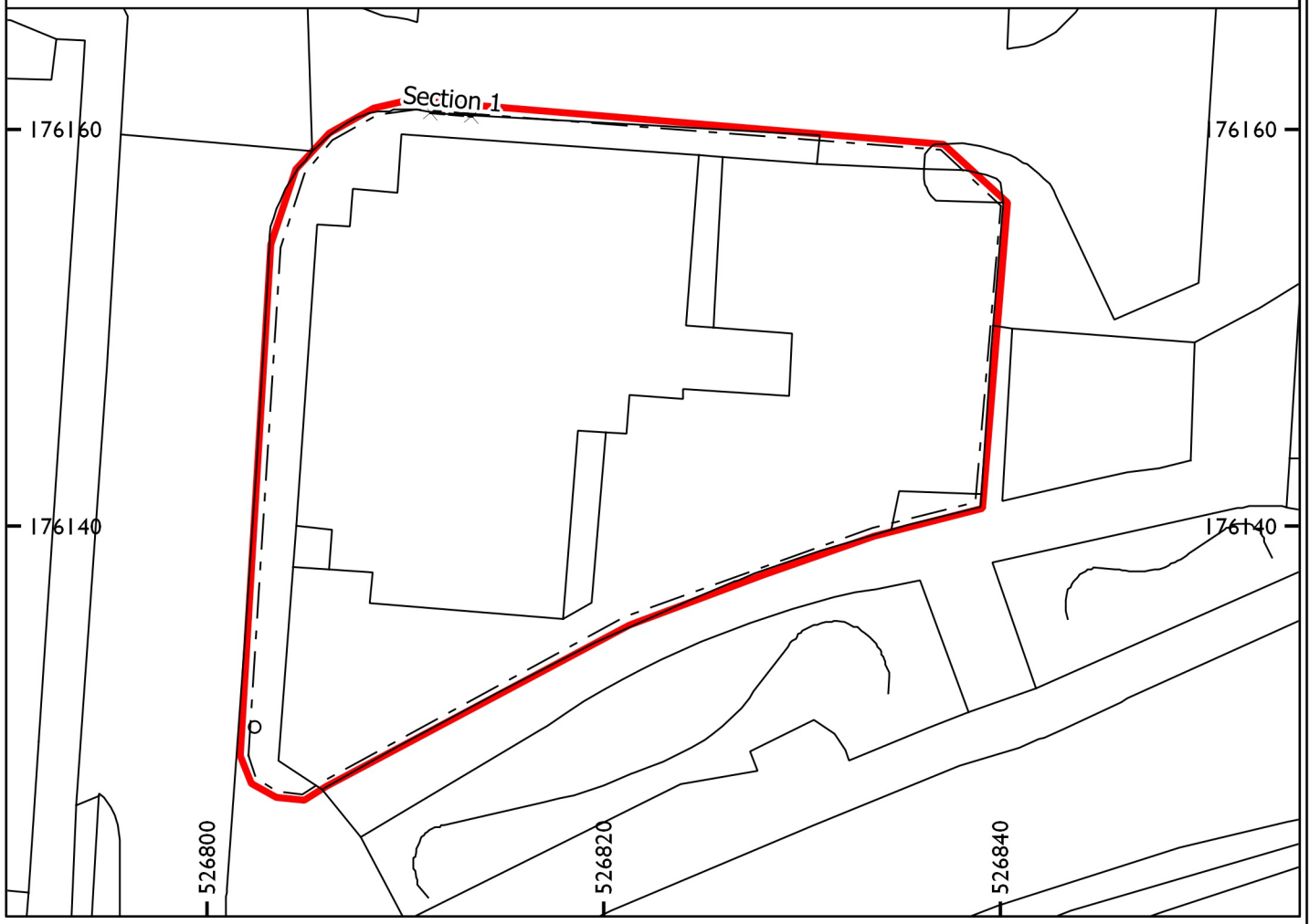
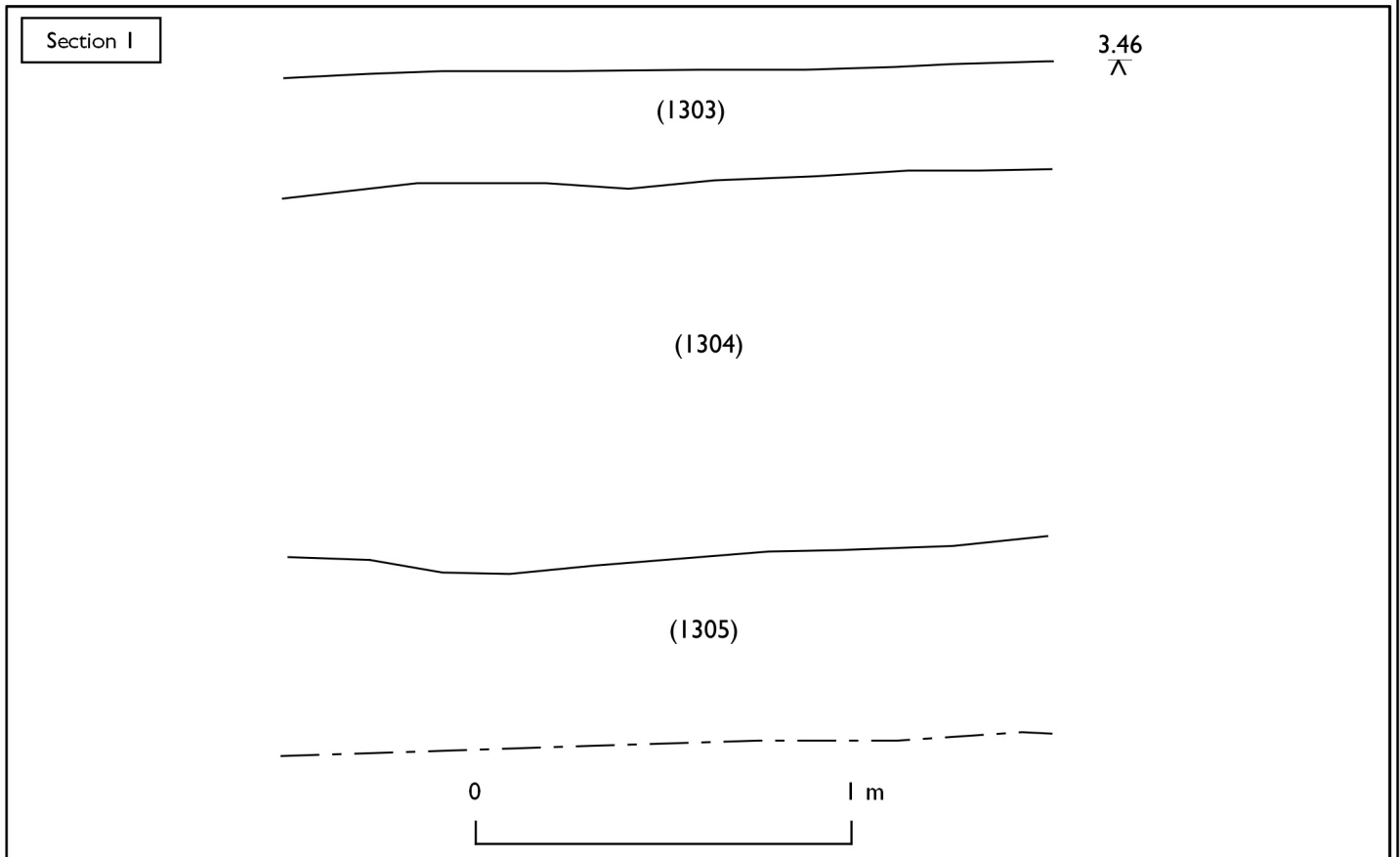
DESCRIPTION // Site Location - Detail

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FIGURE 3//Watching Brief Area & Section I



 The Site



PROJECT // 1510L - 58-70 York Road, SW11

DESCRIPTION // Watching Brief Area & Section I

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# OASIS FORM

## APPENDIX I



# OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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## Printable version

**OASIS ID: Iparchae1-348567**

### Project details

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Project name                           | 58-70 York Road, London, SW11   |
| Short description of the project       | An archaeological watching brief was carried out during groundworks at 58-70 York Road, Battersea. The Watching Brief was implemented in response to a planning condition on the application 2017/5818. The work was carried out by L - P : Archaeology. This report has been prepared by Aaron Clarke, Rebecca Soulsby-McCreath and Michael Johnson of L - P : Archaeology on behalf of Nofax Enterprises. The site was previously occupied by the |
| Project dates                          | Start: 24-10-2013 End: 11-02-2019   |
| Previous/future work                   | Yes / No  |
| Any associated project reference codes | Yrk18 - Sitecode  |
| Any associated project reference codes | 1510L - Contracting Unit No.  |
| Any associated project reference codes | Iparchae1-164154 - OASIS form ID  |
| Type of project                        | Recording project   |
| Site status                            | None  |
| Current Land use                       | Other 2 - In use as a building  |
| Monument type                          | - None  |
| Significant Finds                      | - None  |
| Investigation type                     | "Watching Brief"  |
| Prompt                                 | Planning condition  |

### Project location

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Country       | England   |
| Site location | GREATER LONDON WANDSWORTH BATTERSEA 58-70 York Road, London, SW11 |
| Postcode      | SW11 3QD  |
| Study area    | 960 Square metres   |

### Project creators

|                              |                                 |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Name of Organisation         | L - P : Archaeology             |
| Project brief originator     | Contractor (design and execute) |
| Project design originator    | L - P : Archaeology             |
| Project director/manager     | Mike Johnson                    |
| Project supervisor           | Rebecca Soulsby-McCreath        |
| Project supervisor           | Aaron Clarke                    |
| Type of sponsor/funding body | Developer                       |
| Name of sponsor/funding body | Nofax Enterprises               |

### Project archives

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Physical Archive Exists?  | No   |
| Digital Archive recipient | Museum of London   |
| Digital Archive ID        | Yrk18  |
| Digital Contents          | "none"   |
| Digital Media available   | "GIS","Images raster / digital photography","Images vector","Spreadsheets","Survey","Text" |
| Paper Archive Exists?     | No   |

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| Entered by | Aaron Clarke (a.clarke@lparchaeology.com) |
| Entered on | 9 April 2019                              |

## OASIS:

Please e-mail [Historic England](#) for OASIS help and advice

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