



**68–88 EVELYN STREET
London
SE8**

London Borough of Lewisham

An archaeological watching brief report

March 2006



MUSEUM OF LONDON

Archaeology Service

68–88 EVELYN STREET
London
SE8

London Borough of Lewisham

An archaeological watching brief report

National Grid Reference: 536250 178372

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Summary (non-technical)

This report has been commissioned by Allenbuild Limited in order to record and assess the results of a watching brief carried out at 68 – 88 Evelyn Street, Deptford.

Work on service trenches as well as limited ground reduction was monitored between December 2005 and January 2006 during redevelopment of the site.

Natural ground was observed within the service trenches, overlain only by recent topsoils. Archaeological material within the upper layers dated to the 19th and 20th centuries. Ground reduction on the street frontage revealed only modern landfills. No features of archaeological significance were found or disturbed.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Site background

The watching brief took place at 68-88 Evelyn Street, hereafter called ‘the site’. The site is located on the south side of Evelyn Street, bounded to the rear by Deptford Park (see Fig 1). The centre of the site is at OS National Grid Reference 536250 178372. The ground level within the site varied between 2.3m OD against Evelyn Street and 1.6m OD against Deptford Park to the south. The site code is EVY05.

A desk-based *Archaeological (impact) assessment* was previously prepared by MoLAS, which covers the whole area of the site (Lyon 2003). This document should be referred to for information on the natural geology, archaeological and historical background of the site, and the initial assessment of its archaeological potential. This document informed the design (*Method Statement*) for the watching brief which was eventually carried out (Nielsen 2005).

1.2 The planning and legislative framework

The legislative and planning framework in which the archaeological exercise took place was summarised in the *Method Statement* which formed the project design for the watching brief (see Section 1.2, Nielsen 2005).

1.3 Origin and scope of the report

This report was commissioned by Allenbuild Limited and produced by the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS). The report has been prepared within the terms of the relevant Standard specified by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA, 2001).

The purpose of the watching brief was to determine whether archaeological remains or features were present on the site and, if so, to record the nature and extent of such remains. A number of site-specific research aims and objectives were established in the preceding *Method Statement* and are outlined in the following section.

The purpose of the present report is to analyse the results of the excavation against the original research aims, and to suggest what further work, including analysis or publication (if any), should now take place.

1.4 Aims and objectives

The following research aims and objectives were established in the *Method Statement* for the watching brief (Section 2.2):

What was the level of natural topography?

What are the earliest deposits identified?

What are the latest deposits identified?

All research is undertaken within the priorities established in the Museum of London's *A research framework for London Archaeology*, 2002.

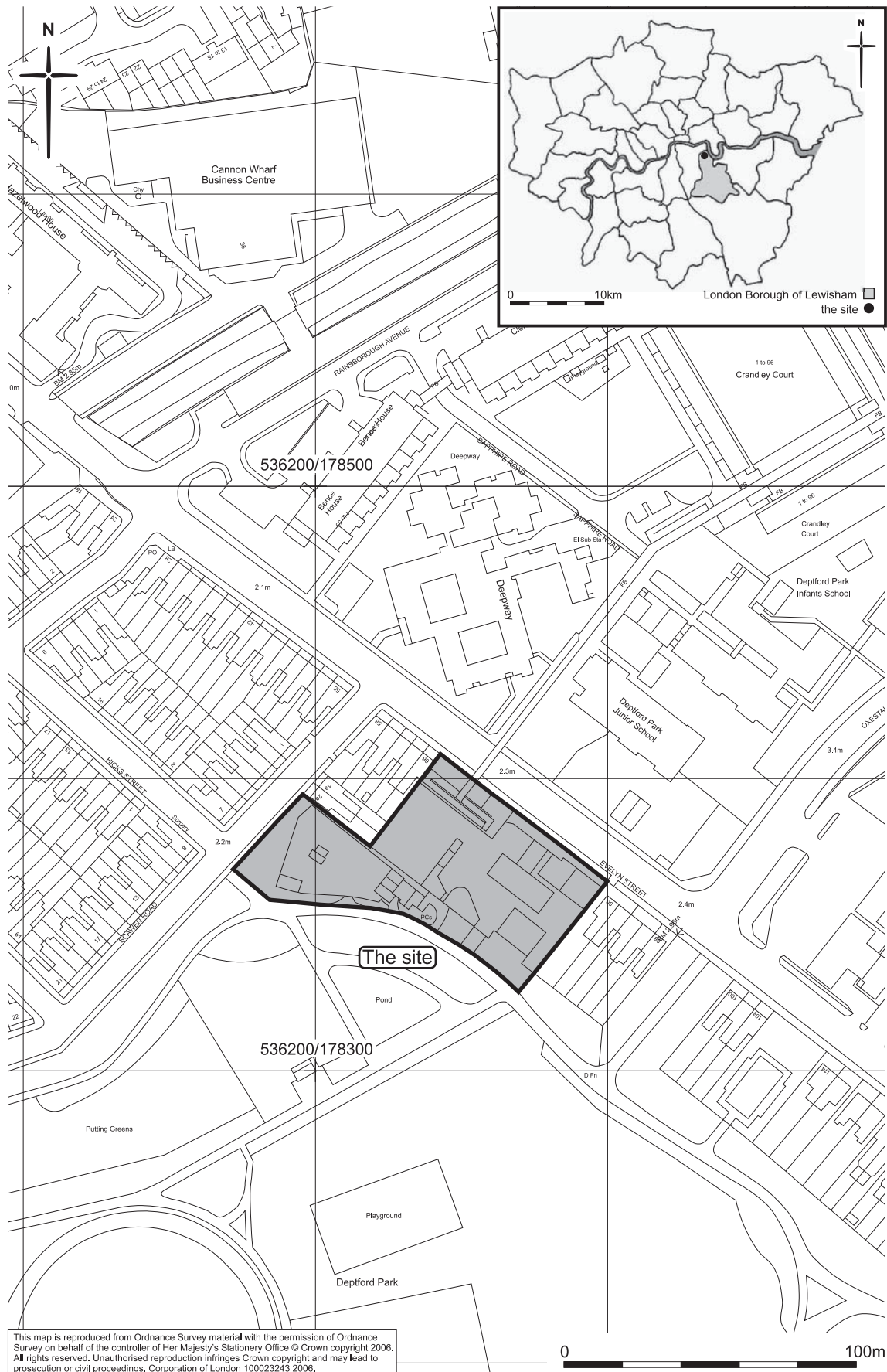
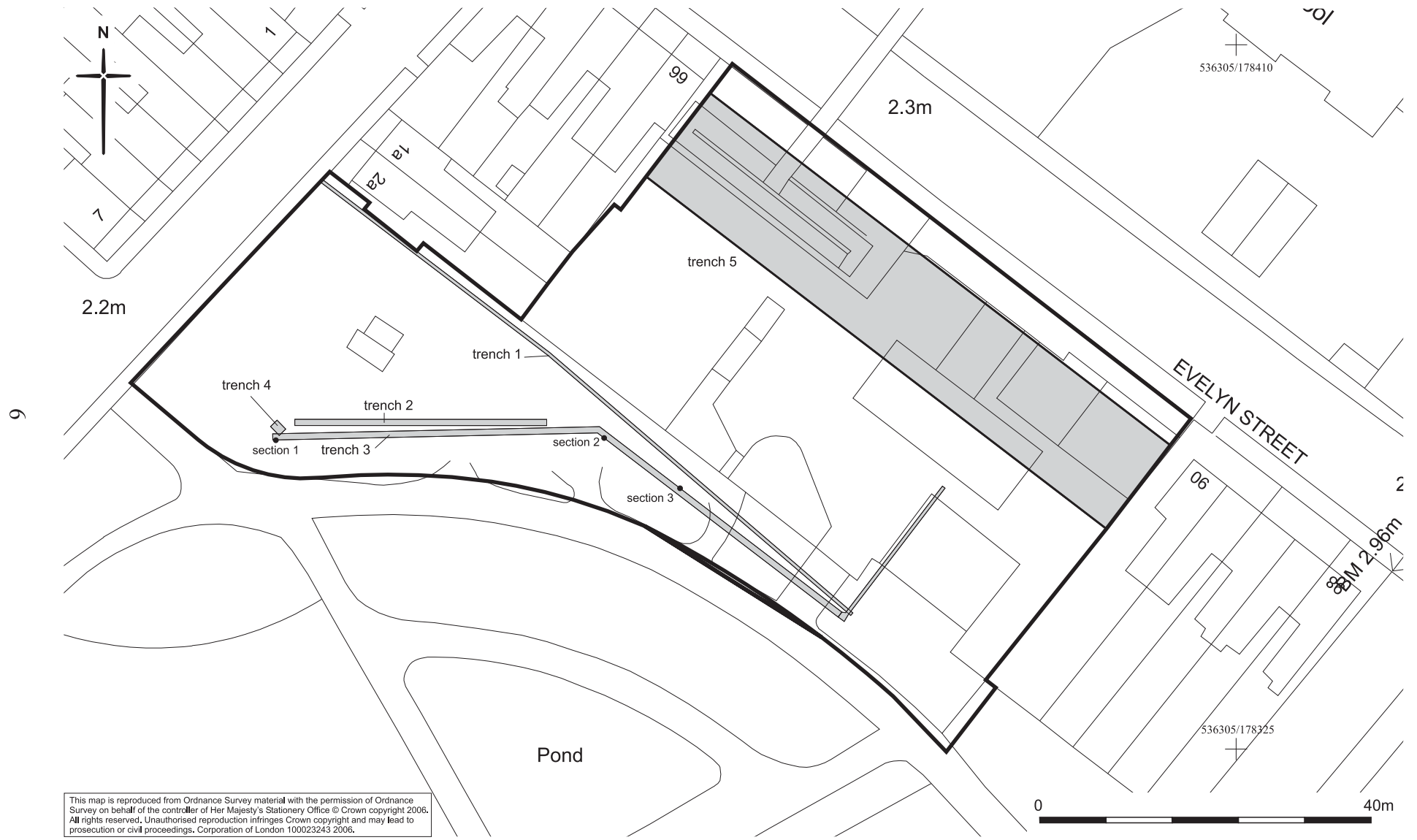


Fig 1 Site location



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Fig 2 Trench location

2 The watching brief

2.1 Methodology

All archaeological excavation and recording during the watching brief was done in accordance with the *Method Statement* (Nielsen 2005, section 2.3) and the MoLAS Archaeological Site Manual (MoLAS, 1994).

Service trenches were excavated by machine by the contractors, and monitored by a member of staff from MoLAS. Similarly, ground reduction on the street frontage was excavated by machine by the contractors, and monitored by a member of staff from MoLAS.

The locations of the areas of excavation were predetermined on a services drawing with observations and details recorded by MoLAS personnel offsetting from adjacent standing walls and plotted on to the services plan. This information was then plotted onto the OS grid by MoLAS Geomatics section.

The heights of observations and/or archaeological remains were recorded relative to Ordnance Datum via temporary benchmarks set up by the site engineer. Where relevant, sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20.

The trenches were located on an engineers site plan¹ and observations were annotated on to it. Stratigraphic sections were recorded at 1:20 separately. No finds were retained from the site. The site records can be found under the site code EVY05 in the MoL archive.

2.2 Results of the watching brief

There were five main areas of excavation, service trenches and open area reduction. Three long drainage trenches were excavated across the southern part of the site (Fig 2). The northernmost (Trench 1) ranged from 1.4 m deep at its north-western (manhole) end to 0.3m deep. The southernmost two (Trenches 2 and 3) ranged from 2m (to the north-west) to 0.5m in depth. These two trenches were almost adjacent though the southernmost (Trench 3) ran farther to the south-east. This trench turned northwards running through recent made ground at a depth of c 0.4m. In the south-west corner of the site a large trench for an interceptor tank was dug (Trench 4), this at the western end of the two deeper trenches. In the northern half of the site the ground surface was reduced by a maximum of 1.5m (Trench 5).

Natural gravel was only glimpsed at the western end of Trenches 2 and 3 (and within Trench 4), at a height of -0.21m OD (Fig 3). This was overlain by a sand that varied in texture, becoming less coarse farther eastwards. The sand was some 0.50m thick at

¹ Alan Conisbee & Associates, job no 030109, drg no DL(0)01

the western end of Trenches 2 and 3 though shallower excavation farther east did not establish its thickness. There were occasional lenses of grey sand and in some instances, generally to the east, the interface between the sands and the overlying clays were indistinct. The clay horizon was only clearly apparent in one area 10m eastwards along Trench 1 but for a longer stretch in Trenches 2 and 3 between 15m and 35m eastwards.

A distinct horizon separated the clay from a silt layer that appeared throughout. However, this stratum varied in texture from sandy to organic. Eastwards, beyond the concrete foundations of the demolished park buildings, this silt had distinct areas of peat. Overlying this material in the upper reaches of most of the three southernmost trenches, was an anthropogenic topsoil. There were one or two fragments of late 19th century pottery within the organic silts. Material within the topsoil comprised pottery and glass of late 19th to mid 20th century date.

The only 'features' recorded were a north-south modern 'trench cut' in Trench 3 and the aforementioned foundations farther along. The surface of the latter area comprised up to a metre of demolition rubble.

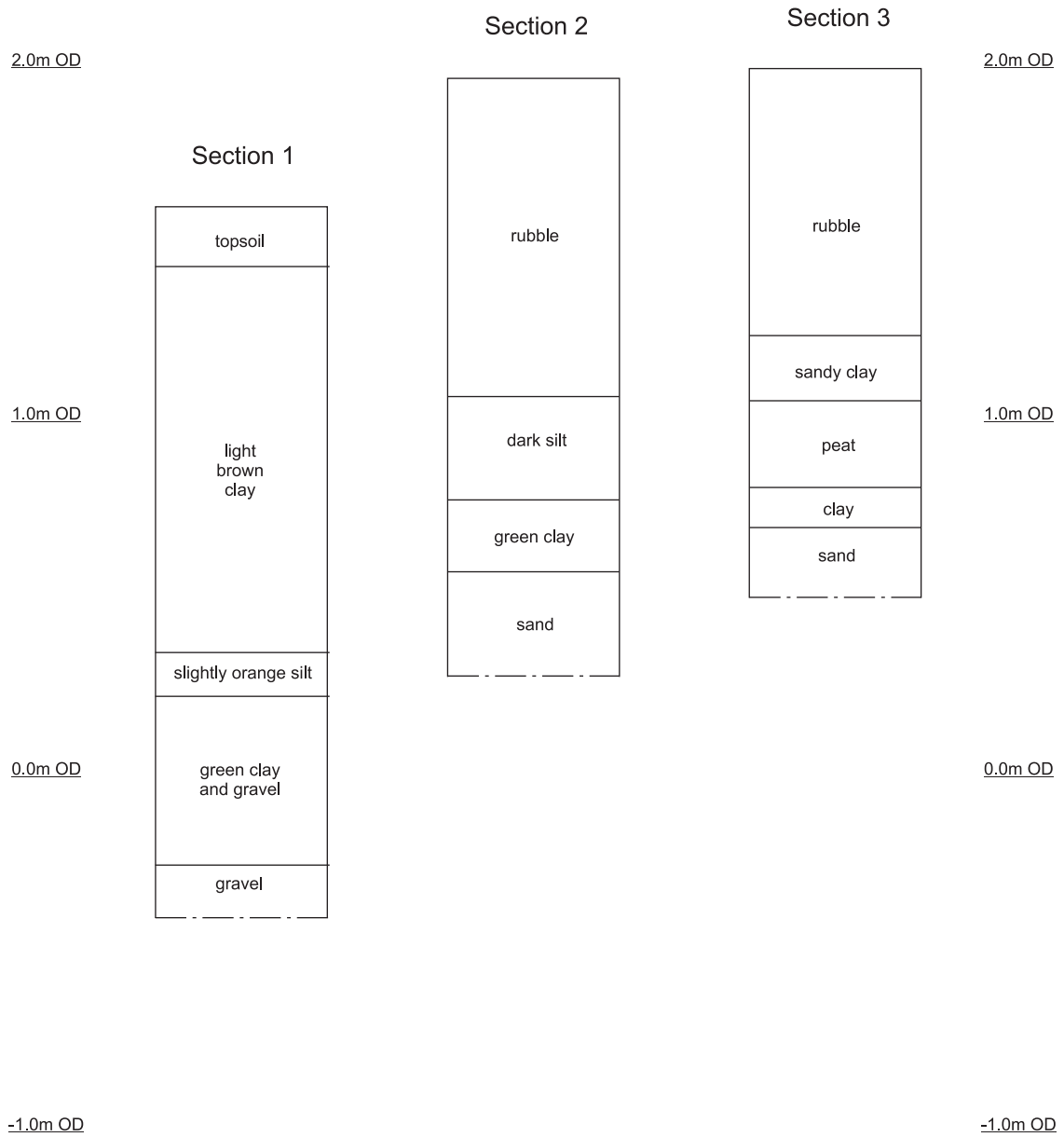


Fig 3 Stratigraphic sections

3 Potential of archaeology

3.1 Original research aims

What was the level of natural topography?

The natural topography survives to a relatively high level within the southern half of the site. River Terrace Gravel was only recorded in the south-western corner of the site. This was overlain throughout by alluvial deposits of sand, clay and silts. Although undatable, the sand and clay deposits are suggestive of an open grassland environment. Some of the upper silts were slightly organic indicating occasional inundation, which, judging by the limited dating evidence, may be associated with 19th century redevelopment of the wider area.

What are the earliest deposits identified?

The natural strata remain largely undatable though the gravels will be Pleistocene in origin. The earliest archaeological evidence comes from one or two pottery fragments in the upper silts that date to the second half of the 19th century.

What are the latest deposits identified?

Pottery fragments and 'lemonade bottles' within the upper silts and in anthropomorphic topsoil horizons ranged in date from the late 19th century to the mid 20th century. Only within rubble demolition layers was there later 20th century material.

3.2 Significance of the data

There were no archaeological remains or features of any significance on the site. A few pieces of late 19th century pottery were present in the upper layers to the south whilst the rubble fills alongside the street were largely associated with wartime demolition and post-war dumps. Such negative evidence is nevertheless a useful record in determining the extent of settlement activity within the Deptford area.

The topographical evidence appears to corroborate the historical data in that the area of the site was largely open ground until the 19th century. Localised water management, almost certainly associated with development, however, led to damper ground conditions.

4 Publication and archiving

Information on the results of the excavation will be made publicly available by means of a database in digital form, to permit inclusion of the site data in any future academic researches into the development of London.

The site archive containing original records and finds will be stored in accordance with the terms of the *Method Statement* (MoLAS, 2005) with the Museum of London within 2 months of the end of the excavation.

In view of the limited potential of the material (Sections 3) and the relatively limited significance of the data (Section 3.2) it is suggested that a short note on the results of the watching brief should appear in the annual round up of the *London Archaeologist*.

5 Acknowledgements

The Museum of London Archaeology Service would like to thank Allenbuild Limited for commissioning this report. We are particularly grateful to Messrs John Chappell and Harish Taank of Allenbuild and Feirooz Mohammed of Alan Conisbee and Associates for their assistance.

6 Bibliography

6.1 Site Specific

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7 NMR OASIS archaeological report form

OASIS ID: molas1-13680

Project details

Project name	68-88 Evelyn Street, London SE8
Short description of the project	Watching brief on service trenches for new development. No archaeological remains were revealed. Natural clays overlay natural gravels.
Project dates	Start: 07-12-2005 End: 25-01-2006
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	EVY05 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)
Current Land use	Other 13 - Waste ground
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON LEWISHAM DEPTFORD AND NEWCROSS 68-88 Evelyn Street, London SE8
Postcode	SE8
Study area	4500.00 Square metres

National grid reference TQ 36250 78372 Point

Height OD Min: 1.30m Max: 1.30m

Project creators

Name of Organisation MoLAS

Project brief originator English Heritage/Department of Environment

Project design originator MoLAS

Project director/manager Robin Nielsen

Project supervisor JMC Bowsher

Sponsor or funding body Allenbuild Limited

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient LAARC

Digital Archive ID EVY05

Paper Archive recipient LAARC

Paper Archive ID EVY05

Project bibliography 1

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