

**57-63 and 67-71 KINGSLAND ROAD  
London  
E2 8AG**

London Borough of Hackney

An archaeological watching brief report

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**Museum of London Archaeology Service**

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**MUSEUM OF LONDON**

**Archaeology Service**

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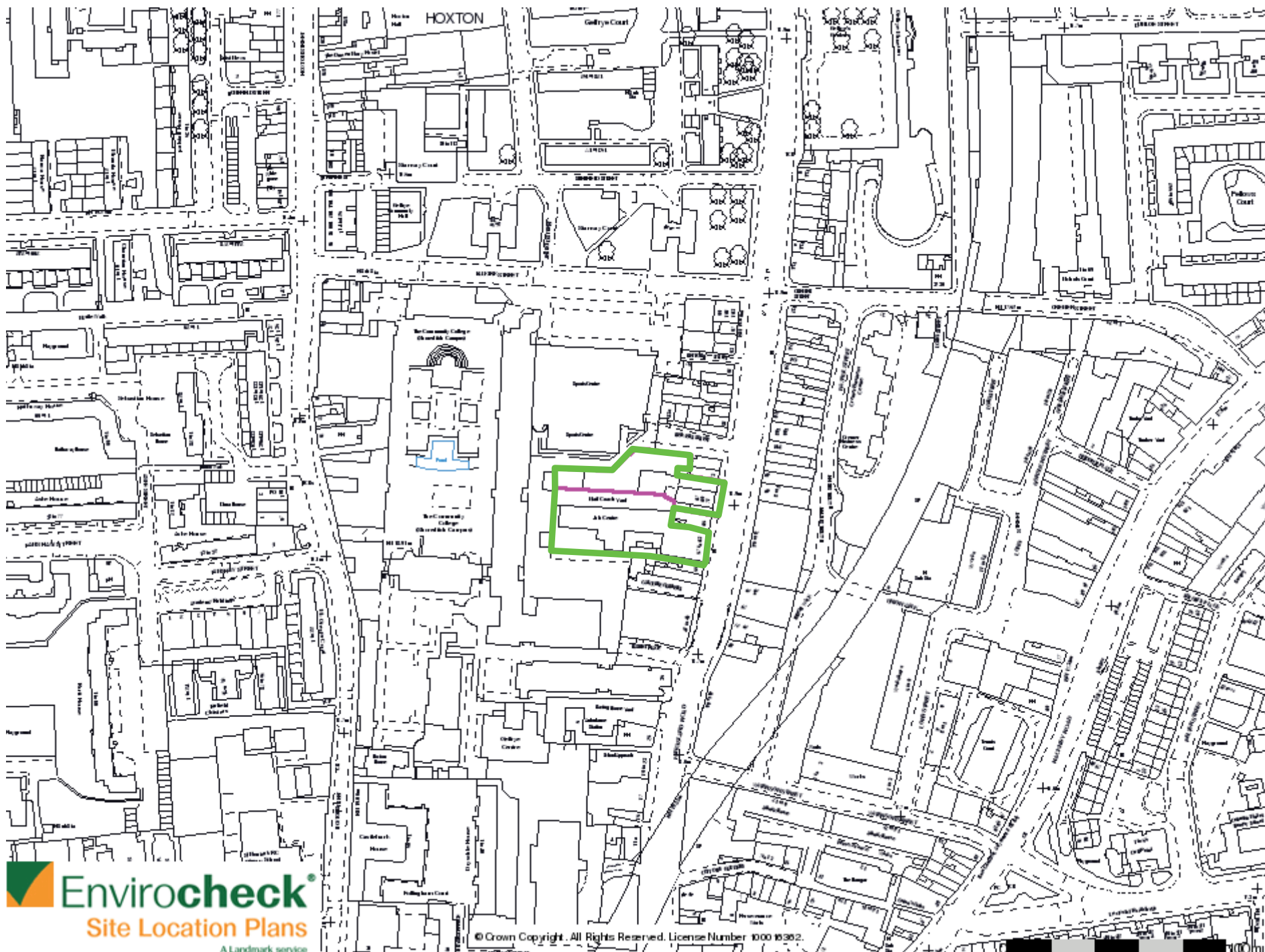
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***Summary***

*This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out by the Museum of London Archaeology Service on the site of 57-63 and 67-71 Kingsland Road, E2 8AG. The report was commissioned from MoLAS by RPS Health, Safety and Environment.*

## **1 Site Background**

The watching brief took place at 57-63 and 67-71 Kingsland Road, E2 8AG, hereafter called 'the site' (*Fig 1*). It is bounded by Kingsland Road to the east, by community college to the west and adjacent commercial properties to the north and south. Modern slab level on the site lies at c 18.90 OD. On the 15th October 2007 a series of four window samples were taken by RPS Health, Safety and Environment on the site (*Fig 2*). The underlying geology comprises brickearth overlying Thames Floodplain Terrace gravels, which would provide a moderately free draining medium. The evaluation revealed natural sand and gravel at a maximum height of approximately 3m-4m OD.





Project: Kingsland Road  
 Project No.: HLL1948  
 Date: October 2007  
 Scale: NTS  
 Figure 2: Site Layout & Borehole Location Plan

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## **2 Archaeological background**

### **2.1 Prehistoric**

To the north of the site, and centred on Stoke Newington and Lower Clapton there is evidence for a large palaeolithic landscape, although artefacts of this period have been found further to the south. Artefacts of Palaeolithic date may occur in the River Terrace Gravels, which are present on the site.

Artefacts of later pre-Roman cultural groups have also been found in the vicinity, although the majority of finds dating from the Neolithic and Bronze Ages have come from sites closer to a water course, e.g. the Thames and Lea.

### **2.2 Roman**

Around AD.50 London was founded and a road system established. Two of these roads ran close to the location of the site;

Old Street, crossing east-west to the south, which linked London with Colchester.

Ermine Street, which led north to York by way of Lincoln. The line of this road is approximately followed today by Shoreditch High Street, Kingsland Road (to the west of the site) and Stoke Newington High Street.

### **2.3 Saxon**

The site is located in the vicinity of three presumed Saxon foundations; Shoreditch, Hoxton and Haggerston. The first documentary reference to Shoreditch comes from a manuscript of AD 1148, but it is not specifically mentioned in the Domesday Book, although both Hoxton and Haggerston are.

### **2.4 Medieval**

Although Shoreditch itself expanded during the 12th and 13th centuries, there is no evidence from the historical records to suggest that the area of the site was anything other than open agricultural land until the early 18th century.

### 3 Results of watching brief

<i>Window Sample 1</i>	
Location	
Modern ground level/top of slab	18.90m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	1.58m below ground level
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	1.58m - 3.45m below ground level
Level of base of deposits observed and/or base of trench	3.55m below ground level
Natural observed	Yes

A series of deposits were observed below the modern made ground. At 1.37m below surface a possible red brick surface was observed, below this was a medium brown dump approx 0.3m deep. It contained occasional oyster shell and moderate amounts of small sub angular stones. At 1.89m below surface a friable clayey silt dump was observed. This contained frequent animal bone fragments, oyster shell and red brick fragments. Below this at 2.44m there was a mid brown mixed sandy deposit containing burnt brick and clay pipe, this was approximately 0.26m deep. At 2.7m a deposit of medium grained sand and mixed clayey silt sat on top of natural. This had ceramic fragments, probably from the late 19th century and bone and red brick fragments throughout it. Natural gravel was observed at 3.55m below surface.

<i>Window Sample 2</i>	
Location	
Modern ground level/top of slab	18.09m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	1m below ground level
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	1m – 2.84m below ground level
Level of base of deposits observed and/or base of trench	2.91m below ground level
Natural observed	Yes

At 1m below surface, a damp silty clay containing occasional small brick, bone and 19th/20th century ceramic fragments. This was approximately 0.7m deep below which was a firm clay deposit with moderate small stones throughout it. At 1.85m below surface a dark brown/black deposit with frequent charcoal fragments through it was seen. This was sitting on a similar deposit which had a higher frequency of burnt red brick and clay pipe fragments in it and was approximately 0.35m deep. Below this was a firm clayey dump sitting on the natural gravels which were observed at 2.84m below surface.

<i>Window Sample 3</i>	
Location	
Modern ground level/top of slab	18.09m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	0.96m below ground level



Depth of archaeological deposits seen	0.96m - 3.69m below ground level
Level of base of deposits observed and/or base of trench	3.99m below ground level
Natural observed	Yes

Beneath modern made ground was a 0.24m deep deposit of loose light brown sand. This was sitting on top of a dark brown, charcoal rich layer containing a high frequency of small sub-angular stones. At 1.4m below surface this deposit began to contain a concentration of mortar like material and shell fragments (not oyster). This mixed dump was around 0.15m deep in total. Below this was dark brown sticky silt with some rooting through it, it also contained red brick fragments and frequent small rounded stones. At 2.22m a deposit of chalk and mortar was observed, this measured a thickness of approximately 0.14m. Beneath this was a clay deposit with modern demolition debris through it (modern brick fragments and charcoal). This was sitting on dark brown silty clay and a mixed dump containing mortar and tile fragments, glass fragments and clay pipe pieces, probably 18th century. Natural gravel was observed beneath this at 3.99m below surface.

<i>Window Sample 4</i>	
Location	
Modern ground level/top of slab	18.09m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	0.26m below ground level
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	0.26m – 2.7m below ground level
Level of base of deposits observed and/or base of trench	3m below ground level
Natural observed	Yes

Beneath the slab, which was 0.26m thick, a modern dump of firm dark brown silt was observed with small red brick fragments and occasional stones throughout it. At 1.3m sandy silt with brick and clay pipe fragments was sitting on a deposit of medium brown clayey silt. This was 0.12m thick approximately. Under this at 1.72m below surface was a layer of dark brown clayey silt containing oyster shell and clay pipe. There were also deposits of medium brown clay throughout. At 2m a clay deposit with frequent charcoal fragments was on top of mixed sandy silt with mortar and red brick fragments in it. This deposit was about 0.3m thick and was on dark brown/black firm silt. At 3m below surface natural gravel was observed.

## **4 Conclusions**

It is difficult from this limited investigation to accurately assess the surviving archaeology; however it does appear that dumps of archaeological interest (17th century onwards) may have been preserved. The natural brickearth that was expected in this area was not observed in the samples taken. This could be due to it having been stripped for brick making which was prevalent in the area.

There was no evidence from these window samples of the Roman or indeed Saxon occupation and roads that lay close to the site, here the lowest deposits could be dated to the 17th century at the earliest.