



**DUNHEVED HOTEL**  
**639–641 London Road**  
**Thornton Heath**  
**London CR7**

London Borough of Croydon

Archaeological watching brief report

January 2015



**Dunheved Hotel  
639-641 London Road  
Thornton Heath  
London CR7 6AZ**

Site Code LDT13  
NGR 531381 167312  
OASIS reference

Planning reference 13/01837/P  
Condition Number 6

Report on an archaeological watching brief

**Sign-off History:**

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1	13.01.15	Portia askew	Michael Smith	First issue

Graphics: Judit

## Summary

*This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out by MOLA at 639-641 London Road, Thornton, London CR7 6AZ.. The report was commissioned from MOLA by Stapleton Long.*

*In accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (MOLA 2013) a watching brief was carried out on the site between Thursday 13th and Wednesday 26th November 2014*

*A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of pile cap trenches and ground reduction on the site, to determine whether there was any evidence for the Roman Road that ran from London to Portslade. Natural gravel was located at 42.95m OD overlain by brickearth at 43.85m OD. Subsoil and topsoil capped the natural deposits. No evidence for the Roman road was found or any other archaeological deposits or finds.*

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Site background

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- 1.1.1 An archaeological watching brief was carried out by MOLA at **Dunheved** Hotel, 639-641 London Road, Thornton Heath, London CR7 6AZ ('the site') between Thursday 13th and Wednesday 26th November 2014 NGR ref 531381 167312 (Fig 1). This document is the Report on that work.
- 1.1.2 Further to the condition on Planning Consent a Written Scheme of Investigation was prepared by MOLA (2013). All archaeological work has been carried out in accordance with that WSI.

## 1.2 Planning background

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- 1.2.1 The legislative and planning framework in which the watching brief took place was fully set out in the *Written Scheme of Investigation* which formed the project design for the evaluation (see Section 1, MOLA 2013).
- 1.2.2 The watching brief was carried out to fulfil a condition attached to the Planning Consent given by Croydon Local Authority (Consent reference 13/01837/P Condition number 6).

## 1.3 Scope of the watching brief

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- 1.3.1 An archaeological watching brief is normally a limited fieldwork exercise. It is not the same as full excavation, though individual features may be fully excavated.
- 1.3.2 The area of the watching brief measured 18.50m by 18.50m and comprised a strip, map and record methodology. In addition the excavation of foundation trenches around the perimeter was monitored (Fig 2).
- 1.3.3 The watching brief was carried out within the terms of the relevant Standard for watching brief specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (IFA, 2008).
- 1.3.4 All work has been undertaken within the research priorities established in the Museum of London's A research framework for London Archaeology, 2002.
- 1.3.5 All work was undertaken within research aims and objectives established in the Written Scheme of Investigation for the watching brief (Section 2.2). The limited nature of the proposed work and the strip map and record upon them makes it unreasonable to establish any specific archaeological research objectives. Nevertheless a few research questions can be outlined:
- What is the nature and level of natural topography?
  - What are the earliest deposits identified?
  - What are the latest deposits identified?
  - What is the extent of modern disturbance?
  - Is there any evidence for the Roman road or roadside features?

## 2 Topographical and historical background

2.1.1 The topographical, historical and archaeological background is précised below.

### 2.2 Topography

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2.2.1 The Geological Survey map of the area indicates that Floodplain Gravels underlie the site. In an archaeological evaluation at the Mayday Hospital MDH94 (c 400m to the south-east of the site) gravels were recorded at a level of 45.50m OD; in a subsequent evaluation MDY96 (c 100m to the east of the site) gravels were recorded at a height of 44.50m OD. A further investigation at the hospital, MYD01, c 100 m to the east of the site found gravels at a height of 45.19m OD. Current ground level is at c 44 m OD. There is a gentle slope down from the east end of Dunheved Road South at its junction with London Road at 44.40 m OD to a height of 43.00 m OD at its junction with Dunheved Road West.

2.2.2

### 2.3 Archaeology

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2.3.1 The Croydon area has provided copious evidence of earlier occupation from the prehistoric to the medieval. Its position as a natural gateway to the south has resulted in the concentration of material in a fairly well defined space, particularly along the current London and Brighton Roads. The Roman road from London to Portslade on the south coast definitely followed this course as far as Norbury, where it has been seen during roadworks and appears again to the south of Purley, though at present only projections are available for the line of the road between these points. It is generally assumed that the medieval, and therefore Saxon, road followed the course of its Roman predecessor, and there is no evidence so far to suggest otherwise. Some allowance for deviation has to be made but it seems possible that the road passes just to the east of the site if the current projection is accepted. The evaluations at the Mayday Hospital have, to date, indicated that the construction of the Hospital had seriously truncated and disturbed potential archaeological deposits though residual medieval and post-medieval pottery has been found on the site, while post-medieval pottery was also found during excavation at 518 London Road, c200 m to the south-east of the site. Other investigations in the area have not found archaeological deposits.

2.3.2 The earliest maps of Thornton Heath show no occupation in the site area (e.g. Rocque 1763 see front cover) and later cartographic evidence confirms that this situation continued until the second quarter of the nineteenth century when residential properties were built adjacent to London Road.

## 3 The watching brief

### 3.1 Field methodology

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- 3.1.1 The slab was broken out and cleared by contractors under MOLA supervision. Areas and trenches were excavated by machine by the contractors, and monitored by a member of staff from MOLA.
- 3.1.2 Trench locations and/or archaeological features were plotted on plans provided by the client using an 'offset methodology' and subsequently tied to the OS grid by MOLA Geomatics.

### 3.2 Recording methodology

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- 3.2.1 A written and drawn record of all archaeological deposits encountered was carried out in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (MOLA xxx).

### 3.3 Site archive

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Number of trench record sheets	2
Number of overall location plans	1
Number of Context (SU) sheets	0
Number of photographs	8
Number of Plan sheets	0
Number of Sections	0

## 4 Results of the watching brief

For area and/or trench locations see



Fig 2

For area and/or trench feature plans see Fig 3

## 4.1 Trench 1

Location	South side of site
Dimensions	18.50m by 3m by 1.30m depth
Modern ground level/top of slab	44.25mOD
Base of modern slab	43.97mOD
Depth of archaeological stratigraphy above natural	N/A
Level of base of lowest features or deposits observed	N/A
Top of surviving natural observed at	43.85mOD brickearth; gravel 43.45m OD
Level of base of trench	42.95m OD

- 4.1.1 Trench 1 was located on the south side of the site, parallel with Dunheved road North (Fig 3). Natural gravel was located at a height of 43.45m OD overlain by 0.40m thick brickearth at 43.85m OD. Sealing the brickearth was a 0.12m depth of bioturbated subsoil at a height of 43.97m OD. Above the subsoil, was the modern make-up and asphalt surface of the modern ground, at a height of 44.25m OD (Fig 4). No archaeological deposits or features were present.

## 4.2 Trench 2

Location	North side of site
Dimensions	18.50m by 3m by 1.30m depth
Modern ground level/top of slab	44.25m OD
Base of modern turf	44.05m OD
Depth of archaeological stratigraphy above natural	N/A
Level of base of lowest features or deposits observed	N/A
Top of surviving natural observed at	43.80m OD mixed brickearth and gravel
Level of base of trench	42.95m OD

- 4.2.1 Mixed natural brickearth and gravel was found to survive to a height of 43.80m OD, overlain by bioturbated subsoil at height of 44.05m OD. The sequence was sealed by topsoil, the top of which was recorded at 44.25m OD. No archaeological deposits or features were present..

## 4.3 Central area

- 4.3.1 An area measuring 15m by 12m was monitored during ground reduction (Fig 5). Removal of the asphalt revealed mixed natural brickearth and gravel cut through by a modern drain on the south side of the area, just to the north and parallel with Trench 1. No archaeological features or deposits were seen.

## 4.4 The finds

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4.4.1 No finds were present on the site.

## 5 Archaeological potential

### 5.1 Answering original research aims

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- 5.1.1 The limited nature of the proposed works and the strip, map and record upon them makes it unreasonable to establish many specific archaeological research objectives. Nevertheless a few research questions were outlined:
- What is the nature and level of natural topography?
- 5.1.2 Natural gravel was found at 8.90m OD overlain with brickearth at 9.30m OD on the south side of the site in Trench 1. Elsewhere the gravel and brickearth were mixed, below the topsoil and subsoil and survived to a height of 9.72m OD on the north side of the site.
- What are the earliest deposits identified?
- 5.1.3 The earliest deposits identified on the site are geological in nature..
- What are the latest deposits identified?
- 5.1.4 The latest deposits are represented by the bioturbated subsoil overlain by topsoil.
- What is the extent of modern disturbance?
- 5.1.5 There was very little disturbance to the ground, apart from the present of a drain on the south side of the site. Tree rooting was evident but this was restricted to the north side of the site.
- Is there any evidence for the Roman road or roadside features?
- 5.1.6 No evidence for the Roman Road or roadside features was found.

### 5.2 Answering new research aims

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- 5.2.1 No new research aims not raised in the original Written Scheme of Investigation have been raised

### 5.3 Significance of the data

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- 5.3.1 No archaeological remains of local significance, regional or national significance were found on the site..

## 6 Publication and archiving

- 6.1.1 The results of the watching brief 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.
- 6.1.2 The site archive containing original records and finds will be stored in accordance with the terms of the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (MOLA 2014) with the Museum of London within 12 months of the end of the watching brief..
- 6.1.3 In view of the limited potential of the material (Sections 5) and the relatively limited significance of the data (Section 5.3) 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*.

## 7 Acknowledgements

- 7.1.1 The author would like to thank the following for their contributions and help in producing this report: Stapleton Long for funding the watching brief and Christos Pafides of Polygon Construction for his assistance on site.

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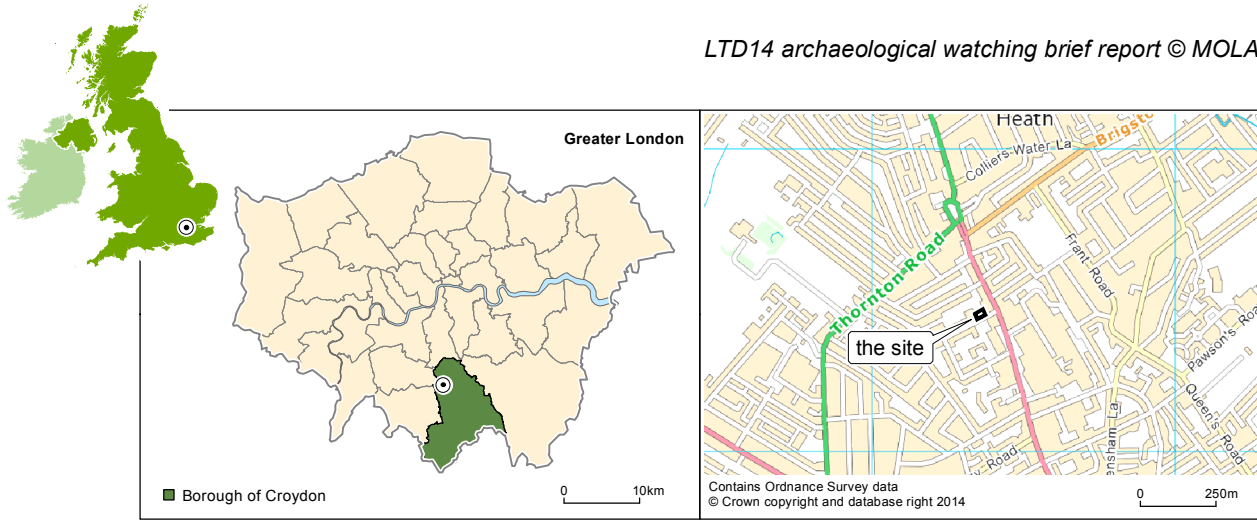
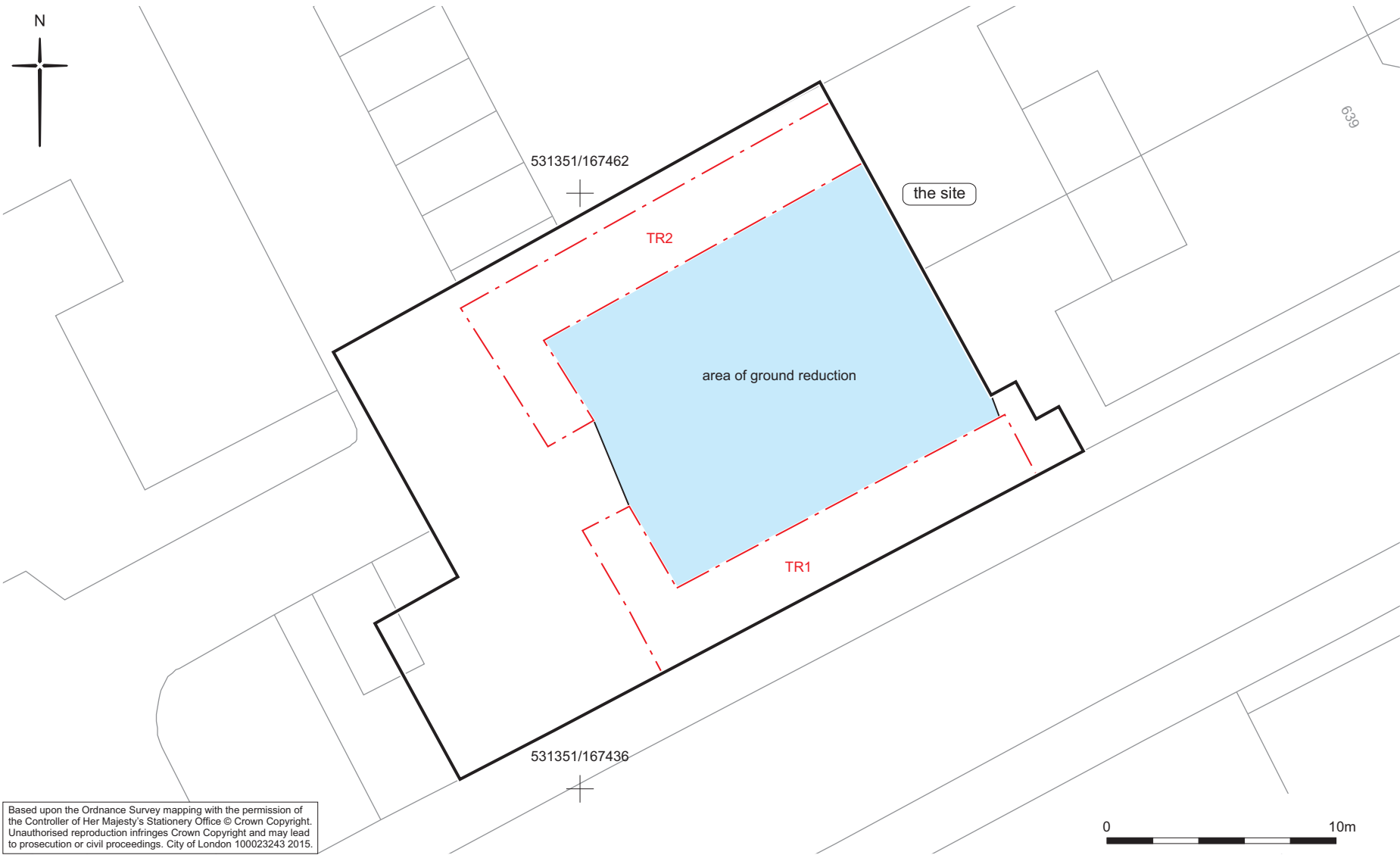


Fig 1 Site location



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Fig 2 Archaeological investigation areas





Fig 3 Trench 1 (looking northeast)



Fig 4 Section through deposit sequence in Trench 1



Fig 5 Excavation of central are of site (looking northwest)

## 9 NMR OASIS archaeological report form

**OASIS ID: molas1-200066**

### Project details

Project name	Dunheved Hotel, 639-641 London Road, Thornton Heath, CRY 6AZ
Short description of the project	A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of pile cap trenches and ground reduction on the site, to determine whether there was any evidence for the Roman Road that ran from London to Portslade. Natural gravel was located at 42.95m OD overlain by brickearth at 43.85m OD. Subsoil and topsoil capped the natural deposits. No evidence for the Roman road was found or any other archaeological deposits or finds.
Project dates	Start: 13-11-2014 End: 26-11-2014
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	LDT14 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)
Current Land use	Vacant Land 2 - Vacant land not previously developed
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON CROYDON CROYDON Dunheved Hotel, 639-641 London Road, Thornton Heath, London
Postcode	CR7 6AZ
Study area	370.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 31 67 51.3863937875 -0.117158723559 51 23 11 N 000 07 01 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 43.80m Max: 43.85m

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### Project creators

Name of Organisation	MOLA
Project brief originator	MOLA project manager
Project design originator	MOLA
Project director/manager	Mike Smith
Project supervisor	Portia Askew
Type of sponsor/funding body	Stapleton Long
Name of sponsor/funding body	Stapleton Long

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### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Archive ID	LDT14
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Archive ID	LDT14
Paper Media available	"Diary","Photograph","Plan","Report","Survey ","Unpublished Text"

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### Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Dunheved hotel, 639-641 London Road, Thornton Heath, London CR7 6AZ
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Askew, P
Date	2015
Issuer or publisher	MOLA
Place of issue or publication	Mortimer Wheeler House, 46 Eagle Wharf Road, London N1 7ED
Description	A4 client report

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Entered on 14 January 2015

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