



**5 MILES ST
Vauxhall
London SW8**

London Borough of Lambeth

Evaluation report

April 2016



**5 MILES STREET
Vauxhall
London
SW8**

Site Code MLS16
NGR 530215 177658
OASIS reference molas1-248432

Planning reference 11/04428/FULL
Condition number 35

A Report on the archaeological evaluation

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Summary

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out by MOLA at 5 Miles Street, Vauxhall, SW8. The report was commissioned from MOLA by Urbanest on behalf of their client.

This two trench evaluation found alluvial clays associated with former Battersea Channel (a tributary of the River Thames), 18th-century gully, brick-lined cess pit that went out of use some time just after the Metropolitan Commission of Sewers Act 1848, and associated garden soil. The site was levelled by the development mid-late 19th-century housing and the adjacent railway line. A rare Tudor stove tile was found in the modern made ground.

In view of the results this report concludes that no further work on the site is required but the Tudor Stove tile should be presented in the public domain on the MOLA website blog.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Site background

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by MOLA at 5, Miles Street, Vauxhall, London, SW8 ('the site') between the 14th and 18th March, 2016 (see Fig 1). This document is the Report on that work.

The site comprises open land at 5 Miles Street, Vauxhall and is located in the London Borough of Lambeth. The site is bounded by Miles Street to the north, railway lines to the south-east and a depot fronting Miles Street to the west. The centre of the site lies at National Grid reference 530215 177658. The site is currently occupied by a car park. Modern pavement level near to the site lies at c 4.30m OD.

A Written Scheme of Investigation was previously prepared and approved by GLAAS, which covered the whole area of the site (MOLA 2016). This document should be referred to for information on the natural geology, archaeological and historical background of the site, and the initial interpretation of its archaeological potential.

1.2 Planning background

The legislative and Planning framework in which the evaluation took place was fully set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation which formed the project design for the evaluation (see MOLA 2016, Section 2.2).

The evaluation was carried out to fulfil a condition attached to the Planning Consent given by the Local Authority (Consent reference 11/04428/FULL; Condition number 35).

1.3 Scope of the evaluation

Evaluation is defined by Historic England as intended to provide information about the archaeological resource in order to contribute to the:

- formulation of an appropriate response or mitigation strategy to planning applications or other proposals which may adversely affect such archaeological remains, or enhance them; and/or
- formulation of a proposal for further archaeological investigations within a programme of research

An archaeological evaluation is a limited fieldwork exercise designed to test the conclusions of preliminary desk-based work. It is not the same as full excavation.

The evaluation was carried out within the terms of the relevant Standard for evaluation specified by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIFA 2014).

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

All work was undertaken within research aims and objectives established in the Written Scheme of Investigation for the evaluation (Section 3).

2 Topographical and historical background

This section is only a brief resumé from the Written Scheme of Investigation (see MOLA 2016, Section 2.3).

2.1 Topography

The British Geological Survey (BGS) map sheet 270 shows the site lies on the Kempton Park Gravels overlying London Clay. Previous geotechnical investigations on the site recorded 1.6m of made ground at the north of the site and up to 3.5m at the south of the site, in boreholes and window samples (CGL 2014).

The site lies to the east of a now infilled ancient channel, and straddles two topographic/geological zones. To the east, the site overlies the Kempton Park gravel terrace, related to a remnant of a former position and elevation of the River Thames, as it flowed across the area around 30,000 to 150,000 years ago. To the west of the site is alluvium, defining the southern extent of a major south-west to north-east tributary channel of the River Thames, known as the 'Battersea Channel'.

2.2 Archaeology

The site's location just to the east of the Battersea Channel is in an area where potential prehistoric activity on the east edge of the channel may occur. Previous archaeological excavation in the area at Coronation Buildings (site code COR89) in 1989, c 75m to the north-east, located a number of pits containing prehistoric flints and pottery, provisionally dated to the Late Neolithic, Bronze and Iron Ages. An evaluation excavation in 1989 next to Coronation Buildings (site code 30SLR89) and close to the source of the River Effra also revealed evidence of prehistoric activity.

Archaeological investigations within the site vicinity have not recorded remains of Roman activity or occupation. Archaeological and historical evidence suggest that during this period, the site lay at some distance from the main settlements and roads.

Archaeological and historical evidence suggests that the site lay between the two medieval settlements of Vauxhall and South Lambeth. It is possible the site was used for farming during this period. The site of a medieval bridge is recorded nearby on the Greater London Historic Environment Records (GLHER 090005). The remains of a large stone structure, built of massive ragstone blocks of varying size and dated provisionally to the 13th or 14th century, was recorded at Coronation Buildings (site code COR89).

Cartographic sources show that the site began developing around the late 18th/early 19th century. The site formerly housed a row of 19th-century terraced houses along the Miles St frontage at the north and a laundry along the west boundary. The site does appear to have suffered any bomb damage in WWII. The terrace houses had been removed by the 1950s but the laundry remained until the site became a car park, its current use, by the 1980s.

3 Evaluation methodology

3.1 Field methodology

Two evaluation trenches were excavated (Trenches 1 and 2, Fig 2).

The surface of the former car park was broken out and cleared by contractors under MOLA supervision. Trenches were excavated by machine by the contractors, and monitored by a MOLA supervisor. The trench were then cleaned and recorded by MOLA archaeologists.

Archaeological excavation was carried out in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (MOLA 2016, Section 4.1).

Trench locations were surveyed on site by members of the MOLA Geomatics team.

3.2 Recording methodology

A written and drawn record of all archaeological deposits encountered was carried out in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (MOLA 2016, Section 4.3).

3.3 Site archive

Number of trench record sheets	2
Number of overall location plans	1
Number of Context (SU) sheets	16
Number of photographs	40
Number of Plan sheets	5
Number of Sections	2

4 Results of the evaluation

For trench locations refer to Figs 2 – Fig 4

4.1 Trench 1

Location	Northern area of site
Dimensions	11m by 4m by 1.9m maximum depth
Modern ground level	4.40m OD
Base of modern fill	4.20m OD
Depth of archaeological stratigraphy above natural (19th century)	1.7m
Level of base of lowest features or deposits observed	1.93m OD
Top of surviving natural observed at	2.50m OD
Level of base of trench	2.50m OD–2.80m OD

Natural gravels and sands [7] were seen in the base of the trench at 2.50m OD (see Photo 1).

Cut into these, at the western end, was a brick-lined pit [4]. The pit was oval-shaped in plan and measured 1.80m by 1.60m and was 0.60m deep (no lining on base). The bricks pre date the Great Fire of London (Sept 1666) but the grey mortar indicates they were re-used sometime after this date (see Table 1). Within the pit was a brick divide [3] and infill [1] and [2] (see Photo 2). The brick divide used Victorian bricks (probably 1850s) and the infill (probably one context) was dated after 1830, and probably no later than the 1850s. The infill was bulk sampled (Samples {1} and {2}, refer to Table 1) during excavation and produced finds and animal bone assemblages reflecting domestic waste from households with relatively good incomes. Sample {1} also produced a small assemblage of coloured Glass beads.

The brick-lined pit maybe the truncated remains of a cess pit that went out of use as a result of the Metropolitan Commission of Sewers Act 1848, which set about ridding the capital of an estimated 200,000 cesspits by insisting that all cesspits should be closed, and that house drains should connect to sewers and empty into the Thames

The brick divide was recorded on site as earlier than the infill but it makes more sense as a later insertion, possibly as consolidation beneath the floor of a later basement

Elsewhere in the trench, over the natural gravels and sands, there were patches of a dark greyish brown sandy silt [6]. This was interpreted as a former garden/plough soil and ceramic fragments recorded in the soil suggest it was formed in the post-medieval period. The garden soil probably extended across the entire area of the trench and was probably contemporary with the brick-lined pit to the west.

The garden soil and brick-lined pit were probably built over in the later 19th century with the development represented by the red-brick walls seen in the sides and upstanding in Photo 1 and corresponding to the terraced housing seen on the map of this period. These remains and their demolition accounted for nearly the entire depth of archaeological remains on the site.



Photo 1 Trench 1, looking west, 0.5m scale



Photo 2 Brick-lined pit [4], looking south, 0.5m scale

4.2 Trench 2

Location	South-western part of site
Dimensions	12m by 4m by 1.2m–1.4m depth Test pit within trench to 3.60m below ground level
Modern ground level	4.38m OD
Base of modern fill	3.30m OD
Depth of archaeological stratigraphy above natural (if any)	1m
Level of base of lowest features or deposits observed	1.63m OD
Top of surviving natural observed at	2.28m OD
Level of base of trench	2.00m OD

Natural sands and gravels [7] were seen at 1m OD in a machine-dug test pit. These were sealed by 1.25m of sandy clay [15], interpreted as marginal floodplain alluvium.

The alluvium was cut by an east–west gully [12] that appeared to have gradually silted up [13] suggesting it may have been a drainage gully. Finds from gully fill [13] include clay tobacco pipe bowl fragments, pottery and glass of 18th-century date (refer to Table 1)

The gully and the alluvium were sealed by layers of made and disturbed ground (contexts [10] and [11]) contemporary to the disuse of the brick-lined pit.

Cutting the layers of made and disturbed ground were the concrete footings of a modern building (see Photo 3)

In addition to the contextualised finds a Green-glazed stove tile of Tudor date (c 1530–1550) (see front cover) was recovered as an unstratified find from the modern made ground sealing the site (also Table 1).



Photo 3 Trench 2, looking north-east, 0.5m scale

4.3 The finds

The following table presents a breakdown of the recovered finds from the evaluation:

Ctxt	Trench	Acc	Material	No sherds / Frags	Date	Brief Comments
1	1		Pottery	4	1830 – 1900	3 sherds Yellow ware dish and a sherd of transfer-printed ware plate
1 sample {1}	1		Glass	10		Assorted window glass and 4 sherds dark green bottle glass
1 Sample {1}	1		Clay tobacco pipe	1		1 stem
1 sample {1}	1		Animal bone	6 frags		2 sheep/goat rib 1 small mammal vertebra 1 chicken toe joint 2 unidentified
1 sample {1}	1		Fish bone	c 40		Mainly vertebrae herring, eel and a cod premaxilla (left side upper jaw)
1 sample {1}	1		Mollusc shell	5		Marine mollusc shell including common/flat oyster and common periwinkle
1 sample {1}	1		Beads	c 20		Glass perforated beads, most <1mm diameter; various colours
1 sample {1}	1		Clinker	Small amount		Hearth waste
1 sample {1}	1		Waterlogged seeds			Including food plants inc grape and fig
2	1		Pottery	11	1830 – 1900	Transfer-printed ware; jug, plate and dish (jug and dish match) Refined white-earthen ware saucer over glazed painted English stoneware
2	1		Glass	7		Assorted window glass and dark green bottle glass
2 sample {2}	1		Glass	1		Colourless phial

2 sample {2}	1		Animal bone	8		Skull and vertebra, lower foreleg rabbit. 5 butchered frags of sheep/goat derived from skull, vertebra, upper fore and hind leg.
2 sample {2}	1		Fish bone	c 225		Largely vertebrae herring cod with a few vertebrae of eel, plaice family, carp family and maxilla (upper jaw) of plaice
2 sample {2}	1		Mollusc shell	1		common/flat oyster
2 sample {2}	1		Bead	1		Same group as sample {1}
2 sample {2}	1		Clinker	Lots		hearth waste
2 sample {2}	1		Waterlogged seeds			Wild plant and food remains inc capsicum and allspice, and possible black pepper, also mulberry
3	1		Ceramic building material	Brick sample	1800 – 1900	Victorian, deep frogged
4	1		Ceramic building material	Brick sample	1550 – 1666	Grey mortar suggests use post-1666
11	1		Glass	4	1800 – 1900	Colourless glass phial Rectangular natural green bottle (medicine) Brown bottle (beer)
11	1		Ceramic building material	1	1800 – 1900	Hard mortar facing
11	1		Clay tobacco pipe	4	1780 - 1820	3 stem frag and bowl
11	1		Nail	1		To be x-rayed
11	1		Pottery	8	1830 - 1900	Transfer-printed ware (3 sherds; two from plates) Refined white earthen ware with bowl slipped decoration

						Bone china saucer with Chelsea sprig Refined white earthen ware saucer Post-medieval redware flower pots
11	1		Animal Bone	1		Adult rabbit, innominate (pelvis), left side not butchered
11	1	<3>	Copper	1		To be x-rayed
11	1	<1>	Iron	1		To be x-rayed
11	1	<2>	Iron	1		To be x-rayed
13	2		Animal Bone	1		Sheep scapula, right side
13	2		Ceramic building material	1	1630 – 1900	Pantile
13	2		Clay tobacco pipe	2	1700 – 1770	Stem frag and bowl frag
13	2		Glass	1		Green bottle glass
13	2		Pottery	2	1700 – 1800	Surrey Hampshire red border ware bowl and tin-glazed jar
16	(Modern made ground)	<4>	Ceramic building material	1 large	1530 – 1550	Green-glazed Tudor stove tile, with similarities to stove tiles found at Whitehall Palace, possibly made in Germany (Ian Betts pers comm) see Front Cover

Table 1 Finds and environmental summary

With the exception of the metal objects that need to be X-rayed, all processing of finds has been completed. The Tudor stove tile <4> may need further conservation.

4.4 The site as a whole

The evaluation has defined the following four periods on the site:

- The natural topography of the site appears to slope to the west which together with the alluvium in Trench 2 suggesting the site is on the margins of the Battersea Channel,
- In the 18th and early 19th century the site was open land but may have been within the grounds of a relatively wealthy property,
- In the mid–late 19th century the terraced housing was evident on the north side of the site, which may have been developed at the same time as the railway to the south-east, contributing to wide scale impact on any earlier remains,
- And in the 20th century the site was developed with commercial buildings.

5 Archaeological potential

5.1 Answering original research aims

The following research aims were established in the Written Scheme of Investigation for the archaeological watching brief (MOLA 2016).

- What is the nature and level of natural topography?

Natural gravels and sands were seen at 2.50m OD in Trench 1 and at 1.00m OD in Trench 2 indicating a slope to the west. Furthermore, a silty clay in Trench 2 indicated this slope was part filled, to 2.25m OD, with the marginal deposits from a former river course

- What are the earliest deposits identified?

With the exception of the natural deposits the earliest features were the brick-lined pit [4] in Trench 1 and the possible gully [12] in Trench 2; both dated to the 18th century. These were probably contemporary with the garden soil in Trench 1.

- Is there any prehistoric activity on the site?

There was no prehistoric activity defined on the site.

- Is there any medieval activity on the site?

There was no medieval activity defined on the site.

- When was the site first developed?

The site has been developed in the 18th century as the ground of a larger property, but it was not till the mid–late 19th century that building remains were identified.

- What are the latest deposits identified?

The latest deposit were those associate with the demolition of the mid–late 19th century housing.

- What is the extent of modern disturbance?

20th century footings only had localised impact on the site. However if the mid–late 19th-century development is considered a modern disturbance then it is extensive, removing all but the base of any horizontal archaeological stratigraphy and cut features such as wells and pits.

5.2 General discussion of potential

The evaluation has shown the potential for survival of cut features prior to the development on the site in mid–late 19th century.

However there was no evidence for any features earlier than the 18th century.

The Tudor stove tile <4> cannot be confirmed as coming from the site, or even the vicinity, because it was found in modern made ground and may have been imported by the construction of the railway.

In conclusion the potential site is high for later post-medieval cut features and low for features of other periods.

5.3 Significance

Whilst the archaeological remains are of local significance there is nothing to suggest that they are of regional or national importance.

The Tudor stove tile <4> (front cover) may be considered regionally important because of its rarity in the London region, possibly an expensive import. The contextual information for this find however has been lost as it was recovered from the modern made ground spread over the site.

5.4 Assessment of the evaluation

In order to illustrate what level of confidence can be placed on the information from the evaluation, an assessment of the results is made in this section.

Two trenches to the north and south-west of the site have shown the limited survival of archaeological remains which can be assumed across the site because of mid-late 19th-century development of the site.

Natural deposits were seen in both trenches to profile the deposits across the site.

Given that both trenches were opened and excavated through a fully recorded archaeological sequence into levels of natural deposition, a high degree of confidence can be placed in the results.

6 Proposed development impact and conclusions

Taking into account the results in both trenches it appears that only later sparse post-medieval cut features survive on the site.

In view of the limited potential of the material and the relatively limited significance of the data it is also suggested that a short note on the results of the watching brief should also appear in the annual round up of the *London Archaeologist*. It is also proposed to disseminate the discovery of the Tudor stove tile in the public domain by presenting a blog on the MOLA website (see <http://www.mola.org.uk/blog>) at a future date.

The results of the evaluation will also 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.

In the light of the results of the evaluation, MOLA considers no further mitigation fieldwork is necessary on the site.

The decision on the appropriate archaeological response for the proposed scheme rests with the Local Planning Authority.

7 Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Kate O'Donoghue of Tower Eight for commissioning this programme of archaeological work.

8 Bibliography

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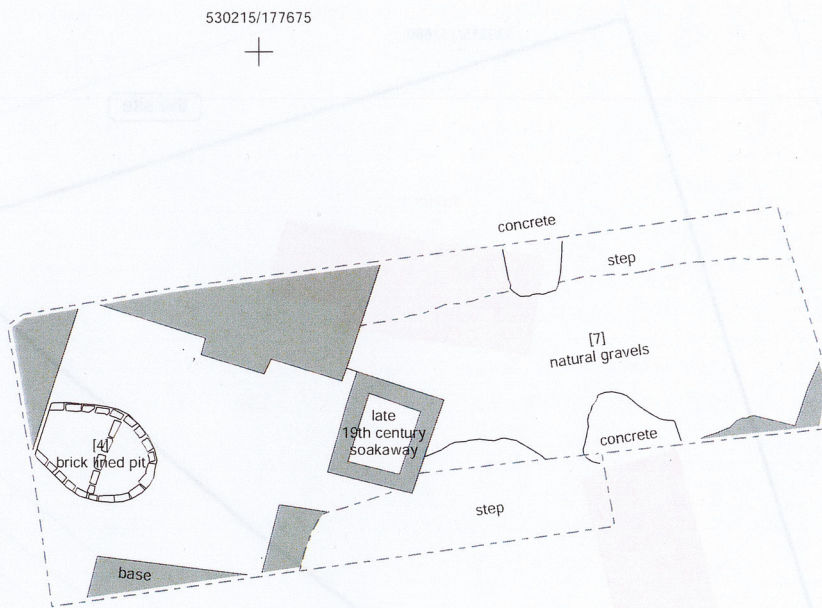
Treasure Act 1996 Code of Practice (2nd Revision) 1996, DCMS



Fig 1 Site location



Fig 2 Trench locations



late 19th century brick work

0 1:100 scale @ A4 5m

Fig 3 Trench 1 plan

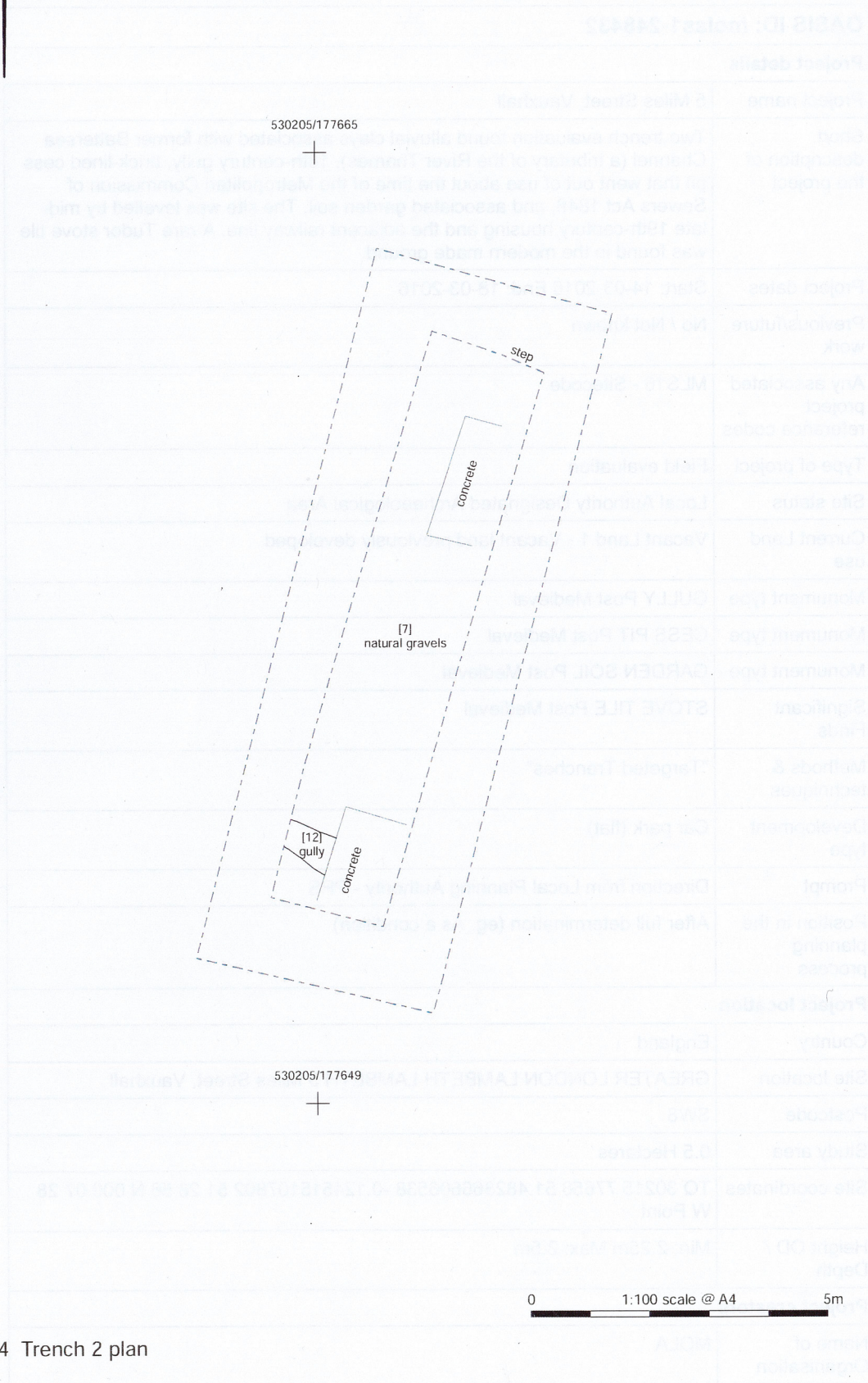


Fig 4 Trench 2 plan

9 OASIS archaeological report form

OASIS ID: molas1-248432	
Project details	
Project name	5 Miles Street, Vauxhall
Short description of the project	Two trench evaluation found alluvial clays associated with former Battersea Channel (a tributary of the River Thames), 18th-century gully, brick-lined cess pit that went out of use about the time of the Metropolitan Commission of Sewers Act 1848, and associated garden soil. The site was levelled by mid-late 19th-century housing and the adjacent railway line. A rare Tudor stove tile was found in the modern made ground.
Project dates	Start: 14-03-2016 End: 18-03-2016
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	MLS16 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Monument type	GULLY Post Medieval
Monument type	CESS PIT Post Medieval
Monument type	GARDEN SOIL Post Medieval
Significant Finds	STOVE TILE Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Car park (flat)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON LAMBETH LAMBETH 5 Miles Street, Vauxhall
Postcode	SW8
Study area	0.5 Hectares
Site coordinates	TQ 30215 77658 51.482366606538 -0.124515107802 51 28 56 N 000 07 28 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 2.25m Max: 2.5m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	MOLA

Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	MOLA
Project manager	Simon Davis
Project supervisor	Greg Laban
Type of funding body	Commercial developer
Name of funding body	Urbanest
Project archives	
Physical Archive recipient	LAARC
Physical Archive ID	MLS16
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Environmental","Glass","Metal","Textiles"
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Archive ID	MLS16
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Images vector","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Archive ID	MLS16
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Plan","Report","Section"
Project bibliography	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	5 Miles Street Vauxhall, London SW8
Authors	Laban, G and Howell, I
Date	2016
Issuer	MOLA
Place of issue	London
Description	Client report