



**134–142, MITCHAM ROAD  
London sw17**

London Borough of Wandsworth

Evaluation report

March 2016



**134-142 Mitcham Road  
London  
SW17 9NH**

Site Code MIT16

NGR 527785 171065

Oasis Reference molas1-250624

Planning reference 2013/6437  
(Condition Number 10)

A report on the archaeological evaluation

**Sign-off History:**

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# Summary

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out by MOLA at 132-142, Mitcham Road, London, SW17 9NH. The report was commissioned from MOLA by CS Architects on the behalf of the client Mr. H. Patel.

In accordance with the *Written Scheme of Investigation, (MOLA, 2015)*, three evaluation trenches were excavated on the site on the 8th of March 2016.

The trenches revealed a shallow subsoil and garden soil sequence that contained a small assemblage of late 19th century glass and pottery. The soils appear to represent undisturbed deposits suggesting little earlier activity in the area of the site, until its development in the 19th century. The subsoil was recorded overlying horizontal natural sandy clays and gravels. Trench 1 produced a brick foundation wall also of later nineteenth century date.

With the exception of the 19th century brickwork, the results also demonstrated an absence of cut features of any date. The lack of these and any earlier cultural material supports the suggestion that the site was not developed until the later nineteenth century. One clay tobacco pipe bowl of 17th century date was recorded within the subsoil, this may imply the land remained open and under agricultural use until being built upon.

The report concludes that late post-medieval deposits would be impacted locally by the proposed piled foundations for the development. Given the results of the trenches, the low significance of the deposits recorded and the low potential for further remains to be revealed, the report recommends that no further archaeological work would be necessary to mitigate the proposed development.

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Site background

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- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was carried out by MOLA at 134-142, Mitcham Road, London, SW17 9NH, ('the site') between on the 8th of March 2015, (see Fig 1). This document is the Report on that work.
- 1.1.2 A written *Historic Environment Assessment* was previously prepared which covered the whole area of the site, (MOLA, 2015). That 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.

## 1.2 Planning background

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- 1.2.1 The legislative and Planning framework in which the evaluation took place was encompassed within the approved *Written Scheme of Investigation*, (MOLA, 2015), which formed the project design for the evaluation (see Section 1.2 of that document).
- 1.2.2 A detailed summary of the archaeological potential of the site was included in the *Heritage Environment Assessment*, (MOLA, 2015, Section 1.3).
- 1.2.3 The evaluation was carried out to fulfil a condition attached to the Planning Consent given by the London Borough of Wandsworth Local Authority (Consent reference 2013/6437; Condition number 10 as follows)

10. No development shall take place until archaeological investigations have been undertaken by an investigation body approved by the Council. Site investigations shall be carried out in accordance with a detailed scheme to be approved in advance by the local planning authority, unless it is agreed in writing that a site investigation is not required.

In order that the archaeological remains that may exist on the site can be investigated, in accordance with Council policies DMS2(d).

## 1.3 Scope of the evaluation

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- 1.3.1 Evaluation is defined by Historic England as intended to provide information about the archaeological resource in order to contribute to the:
- 1.3.2 -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
- 1.3.3 - formulation of a proposal for further archaeological investigations within a programme of research
- 1.3.4 An archaeological evaluation is a limited fieldwork exercise designed to test the conclusions of preliminary desk based work.
- 1.3.5 The evaluation was carried out within the terms of the relevant Standard for evaluation specified by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIFA, 2014).
- 1.3.6 All work was undertaken within research aims and objectives established in the *Written Scheme of Investigation*, (MOLA, 2015, Section 2), which was prepared for the evaluation.

## 2 Topographical and historical background

### 2.1 Topographical and historical background

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- 2.1.1 Information regarding the geology, archaeology and history of the site and its immediate environs has been included in the *Written Scheme of Investigation*, (MOLA, 2015) and detailed fully in the *Historic Environment Assessment*, (MOLA, 2015). This information is not reproduced here and the reader is referred to the above documents.

## 3 Evaluation methodology

### 3.1 Field methodology

Three evaluation trenches were set out at a suitable location and at an agreeable distance from each other; two of the trenches were rectangular, 4.00m by 2.00m and the third trench was 2.5m square.

- 3.1.1 The concrete slab was broken out and cleared prior to the excavation of the trenches which were opened by the site main contractors using a tracked excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket.
- 3.1.2 The work was monitored by a MOLA supervisor and all subsequent archaeological investigation was undertaken by MOLA staff. The site records were compiled and will be archived in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation.
- 3.1.3 Archaeological excavation and recording was carried out in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (MOLA, 2015).
- 3.1.4 Trench locations were plotted on plans provided by the client using an “offset methodology” and were subsequently tied to the OS grid by the MOLA Geomatics department.

### 3.2 Recording methodology

- 3.2.1 A written and drawn record of all archaeological deposits encountered in the evaluation was compiled and supported by photographic images all in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (MOLA, 2015).

### 3.3 Site archive

Number of trench record sheets	0
Number of overall location plans	1
Number of Context (SU) sheets	12
Number of photographs	26
Number of Plan sheets	3 on one sheet
Number of Sections	3 on one sheet

## 4 Results of the evaluation

For the locations of the areas of investigation refer to Fig 2. Photographic images of each of the trenches have been included, refer to Figs 3 to Fig 1.

Archaeological layers deposits and features have been ascribed individual context numbers and those numbers, alluded to in the text, are represented in square brackets [..].

### 4.1 Trench 1

Location	In the north eastern quadrant of the site
Dimensions	4.00m by 4.00m by 1.30m depth
Modern ground level/top of slab	17.20m OD
Base of modern fill/slab/turf	16.85m OD
Depth of archaeological stratigraphy above natural (if any)	0.55m
Level of base of lowest features or deposits observed	16.35m OD
Top of surviving natural observed at	16.35m OD
Level of base of trench	15.90m OD

- 4.1.1 Natural geology was exposed in the base of the trench at a height of c16.35m OD consisted of mottled light brown to orange sandy clay with gravel [9]. The earliest deposit overlying it comprised a 0.25m thick layer of light brown subsoil [8] recorded at 16.60m OD. This deposit appears to be largely undisturbed but some evidence of agricultural reworking (possibly ploughing) was noted in the trench section.
- 4.1.2 The subsoil contained virtually no finds material although a single plain clay tobacco pipe bowl of probable 17th century date was recorded (not retained). The subsoil has also been recorded within trenches 2 and 3 (as described below).
- 4.1.3 The subsoil was sealed by a 0.45m thick layer of dark grey sandy silt garden soil [4] at a height of 16.70m OD. This soil produced a few sherds of printed Staffordshire pottery and bottle glass all dating to the mid to late nineteenth centuries. The presence of this soil suggests a low level of disturbance across the site until the area became developed in the 19th century.
- 4.1.4 A shallow 19th century brick wall foundation [5], extended into the trench, at 16.70m OD. It measured 1.45m in length by 0.22m in width and 0.50m in height. The wall cut through the underlying subsoils and comprised stock bricks measuring 220mm by 100mm by 60-65mm.
- 4.1.5 The higher part of the sequence, 0.50m in thickness, was associated with the modern levelling associated with the recently removed shop floors, at c.17.20m OD.
- 4.1.6 Additionally one of the deep party wall footings was seen to bisect the trench. No other archaeological deposits were found within the trench.



## 4.2 Trench 2

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Location	In the southeastern quadrant of the site
Dimensions	4.00m by 2.00m by 1.20m depth
Modern ground level/top of slab	17.20m OD
Base of modern fill	16.75m OD
Depth of archaeological stratigraphy above natural	0.50m
Level of base of lowest deposits observed	16.30m OD
Top of surviving natural observed at	16.30m OD
Level of base of trench	16.00m OD

- 4.2.1 The natural deposits, [2] and [3], consisted of ferrous stained sandy clay and orange sandy gravels at 16.30m OD. Sealing this was a 0.45m layer of subsoil [1] that produced no finds material. There was no evidence for a surviving upper garden soil. The overlying material belonged to the construction phases of the recently demolished shop floors at c.17.20m OD.

## 4.3 Trench 3

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Location	Set centrally within the site
Dimensions	2.00m by 2.00m by 1.25m depth
Modern ground level/top of slab	17.20m OD
Base of modern fill	16.75m OD
Depth of archaeological stratigraphy above natural	0.50m
Level of base of lowest deposits observed	16.20m OD
Top of surviving natural observed at	16.20m OD
Level of base of trench	16.10m OD

- 4.3.1 Natural deposits in this trench comprised orange sandy clays [12] at c.16.20m OD. This was overlain by a 0.25m thick layer of the sandy silt subsoil [11]. Consistent with the other interventions, this was a sterile deposit containing no finds material. Above this was a 0.30m thick dark grey garden soil/topsoil [10] identical to that noted in the other trenches.
- The overlying modern material, at c.17.20m OD, was related to the shop floors of the recently removed properties.

## 4.4 The finds

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- 4.4.1 Apart from a very few late nineteenth century common Staffordshire "china ware" and glass fragments in the garden soils, the mid-seventeenth century, (1640-1660) clay tobacco pipe bowl was the only earlier artefact present. The pipe bowl was plain and of a common type and lacked any other identifying features and for this reason it was not retained. The general paucity of artefacts in the three trenches implies that the immediate area had remained open ground until later in the post-medieval period.

## 4.5 The site as a whole

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- 4.5.1 The evaluation has demonstrated that natural surfaces lie at between 16.15m and 16.3m OD. A subsoil deposit and overlying garden soil or topsoil contained occasional Victorian pottery and glass fragments. A single brick wall footing of contemporary date was also recorded.
- 4.5.2 The results from the evaluation trenches clearly demonstrate that largely undisturbed natural and 19th century soil sequences survive across the site. The general paucity of finds and lack of archaeological features implies that the boundaries of the site lay within open undeveloped agricultural land and either lay without or between the limits of any earlier (medieval) settlement. The only structural presence identified, prior to modern development was that of the known later nineteenth century land use.

## 5 Archaeological potential

### 5.1 Answering original research aims

5.1.1 The *Written Scheme of Investigation* raised a number of broad objectives and research questions which have been addressed by this evaluation:

- *What is the nature and level of natural topography?*  
The natural deposition comprises sandy clays and gravels; the surface of these occur at c 16.30m OD.
- *What are the earliest deposits identified?*  
The earliest deposit above the natural sequence was a subsoil. It was presumed that this would have been subjected to an agricultural use and periodically reworked until well into the post medieval period; this may be supported by the presence of one seventeenth century clay tobacco pipe bowl within the layer.
- *Is there any evidence of early medieval (Saxon) activity on the site?*  
No evidence to support early medieval activity on the site was recorded, further the trench interventions and recorded soil profiles suggest that the site was located away from, or between settlement areas of this date.
- *Is there any evidence of medieval activity on the site?*  
No deposits or finds were recorded during the archaeological evaluation to suggest any medieval activity present within the site.
- *When was the site first developed?*  
The site did not appear to have been developed until the later part of the post-medieval period (later 19th century). Prior to that it is likely to have been open fields, in use for agricultural purposes such as animal grazing.
- *Does any evidence of the late 18th- and 19th-century buildings previously on the site survive?*  
A fragment of brick foundation wall of this date was identified at the northern end of the site, no earlier structural elements were revealed.
- *What are the latest deposits identified?*  
The 19th century brick wall footing above and a fragment of party wall foundation from the recently demolished buildings within the site represent the latest deposits recorded.
- *What is the extent of modern disturbance?*  
Modern disturbance appeared to be confined to the foundations and works associated with the buildings that have been recently removed.

## 5.2 General discussion of potential

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The results from the trenches have shown that a reasonably shallow rural intact soil sequence survives across the site footprint. A paucity of finds and lack of archaeological features suggest that the site lay within open undeveloped agricultural land, either without or between the limits of any earlier settlement. The only occupational and structural presence identified, prior to the most modern period, was the limited survival associated with the known later nineteenth century property use.

- 5.2.1 The evaluation has shown that the potential for additional archaeological deposits within the site is very low.

## 5.3 Significance

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- 5.3.1 Despite the general lack of archaeological information the information recorded from within the site is of value, as it has further contributed to the archaeological knowledge of the local area and our understanding of landuse in this part of Wandsworth. Whilst the information is of significance on a local level there is nothing to suggest that it is of regional or national importance.

## 5.4 Assessment of the evaluation

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- 5.4.1 The distribution of the trenches allowed for a broad view across the plot rather than a biased concentration in one area; the interventions were set in areas unaffected by deep utility runs, particularly along the northern and western perimeter of the site. They were also positioned to avoid deep footings of the recently demolished buildings. The trench evaluation was undertaken in good weather conditions within the open site. These factors have maximised the evaluation in areas of greater potential survival, therefore a high degree of confidence can be placed in the results of the exercise.

## 6 Proposed development impact and conclusions

- 6.1.1 Taking into account the results of the trenching it appears that a simple sequence of principally horizontal soil deposits survive on the site, although these will have been truncated during the development of the site from the 19th century onwards.
- 6.1.2 The proposed redevelopment involves installation of new piled foundations. The impact of these on the remaining surviving archaeological deposits will be limited to the diameter of the pile and the formation of any associated pile caps.
- 6.1.3 In the light of the revised understanding of the site, the potential for further archaeological deposit survival is considered to be very low.
- 6.1.4 Given these results, it is recommended that no further archaeological work is necessary to mitigate the proposed redevelopment.
- 6.1.5 The decision on the appropriate archaeological mitigation rests with the Local Planning Authority.

## 7 Acknowledgements

- 7.1.1 The author would like to thank CS Architects for commissioning the project from MOLA on the behalf of the client Mr H Patel. Thanks also to Mark Stevenson of Historic England for monitoring the archaeological work as the boroughs adviser.

## 8 Bibliography

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, (CIFA), 2014 *By-Laws, Standards and Policy Statements of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, Standard and guidance: field evaluation*

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MOLA, 2015, 134-142 Mitcham Road, London, SW17 9NH, *Historic Environment Report*, MOLA unpub. report

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Museum of London, 2002 *A research framework for London archaeology 2002*



Fig 1 Site location



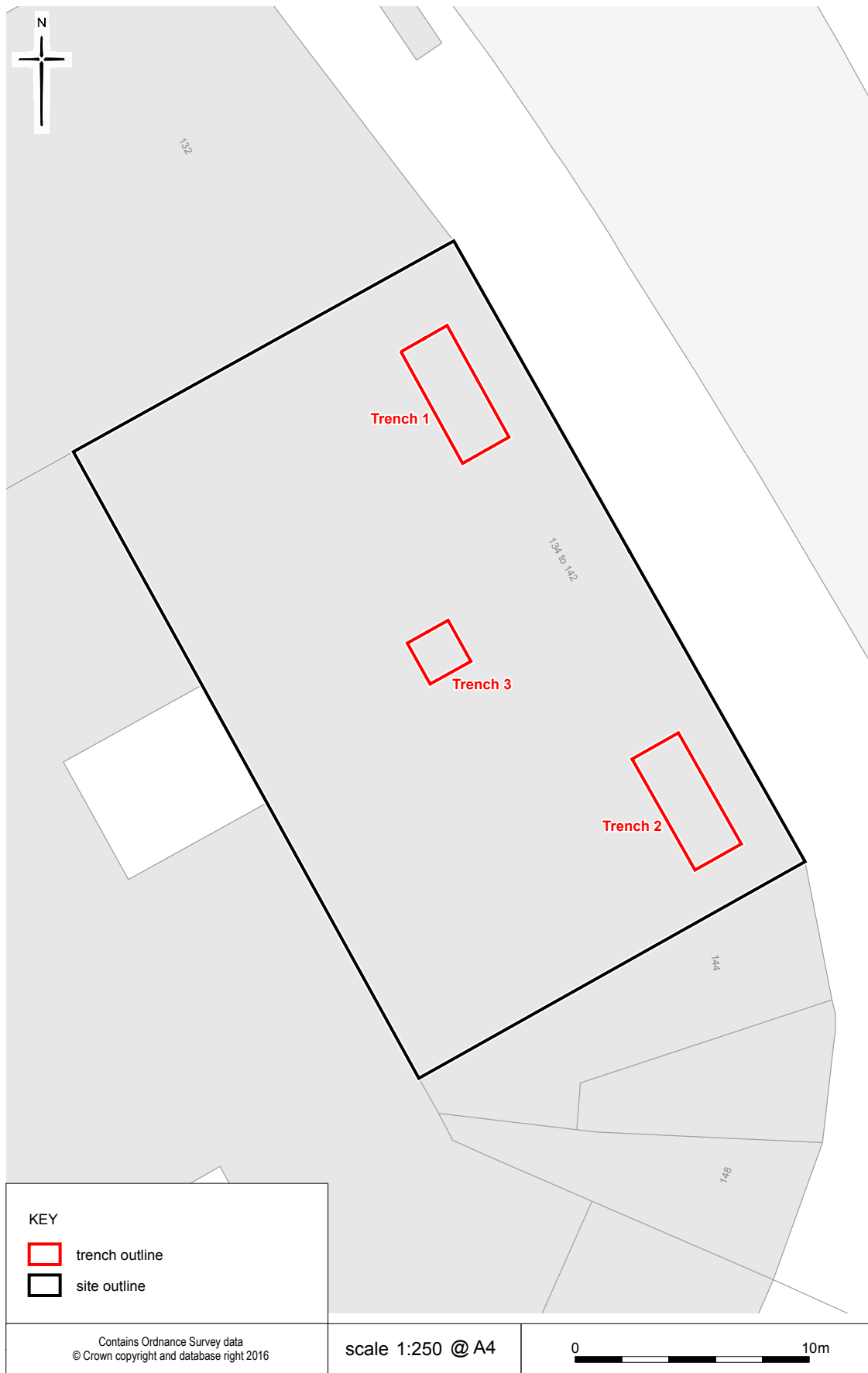


Fig 2 The areas of investigation



Fig 3 A photograph of Trench 1 showing the natural sandy clay, {9}, in the deeper slot, the subsoil, [8], to the left, the wall footing, [5], in the foreground and a modern footing to the right. The view is towards the north-east; a 20cm scale has been included



Fig 4 A photograph within Trench 2 showing detail of the subsoil, [1], in section, immediately below the modern material and upon the natural sandy clay,[2]. Viewed looking towards the north-east; a 20cm scale has been included





Fig 5 A photograph of Trench 2 showing the natural sandy clay, [2], and gravel, [3], in the base of the trench. The view is towards the north-west; a 20cm scale has been included



Fig 6 A photograph of Trench 3 showing the natural sandy clay and gravel, [12], in the base of the trench with the overlying subsoil, [11], and garden soil, [10], in section, lying beneath the modern material. The view is looking towards the north-west; a 20cm scale lies in place

## 9 OASIS archaeological report form

<b>OASIS ID: molas1-250624</b>	
<b>Project details</b>	
Project name	134-142 Mitcham Road, London
Short description of the project	Three evaluation trenches revealed a post medieval shallow subsoil and garden soil sequence overlying horizontal natural sandy clay and gravel. One location revealed a brick foundation later nineteenth century date. The absence of artefacts suggests the site was not developed until the later nineteenth century. One clay tobacco pipe bowl was the only item seen within the subsoil; this may imply the land remained open and under agricultural use until built upon.
Project dates	Start: 08-03-2016 End: 08-03-2016
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	MIT16 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 2 - Offices
Monument type	WALL Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Sample 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)
<b>Project location</b>	
Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON WANDSWORTH TOOTING 134-142, Mitcham Road, London
Postcode	SW17 9NH
Study area	450 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 27785 71065 51.423664606269 -0.1618769023 51 25 25 N 000 09 42 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 16m Max: 17m
<b>Project creators</b>	

Name of Organisation	MOLA
Project brief originator	GLAAS
Project design originator	MOLA
Project manager	Simon Davis
Project supervisor	Richard Hewett
Type of funding body	Client
Name of funding body	CS Architects (applicant)
<b>Project archives</b>	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Archive ID	MIT16
Digital Contents	"Survey"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Survey", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Archive ID	MIT16
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Notebook - Excavation", "Research", "General Notes", "Plan", "Report", "Survey "
<b>Project bibliography</b>	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	134-142 Mitcham Road: report on archaeological evaluation
Author	Hewwet, R
Date	2016
Issuer	MOLA
Place of issue	London
Description	Unpub client rep