102–104 STEWARTS ROAD
Battersea
SW8

London Borough of Wandsworth

An archaeological evaluation report

March 2007

REGISTERED ORGANISATION IFA

MUSEUM OF LONDON
Archaeology Service

102–104 STEWARTS ROAD
Battersea
SW8

London Borough of Wandsworth

An archaeological evaluation report

Site Code: STX06
National Grid Reference: 529297 176599

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Summary (non-technical)

This report has been commissioned by Kilmarten London Ltd in order to set out the results of the excavation carried out at 102-104 Stewarts Road, Battersea, SW8 4UF.

An archaeological evaluation in December 2006 resulted in two trenches undergoing excavation in the north and western part of the site, which produced a flint scatter, possibly Bronze Age in date, within the alluvium. In addition geoarchaeological samples undertaken indicated that the westernmost trench (1), was located on an eyot (island) which may have been settled during the prehistoric period. The second trench (2) provided evidence of a channel, possible associated with the Falcon Brook. Remains of a 19th century structure were also recorded.

On the basis of the results from the evaluation, an excavation was carried out in March 2007, consisting of an area measuring 20 metres by 20 metres, in the northwest part of the site. However, the excavation revealed that this part of the site had been heavily truncated, by late 19th century and 20th century construction activity associated with the Southeastern and Chatham Railway. No evidence for prehistoric activity was recorded in the area. The remains of cut features such as pits, postholes, drains, and foundation trenches of 19th century date were extant over much of the area with the uppermost surviving at a height of 1.41m OD.

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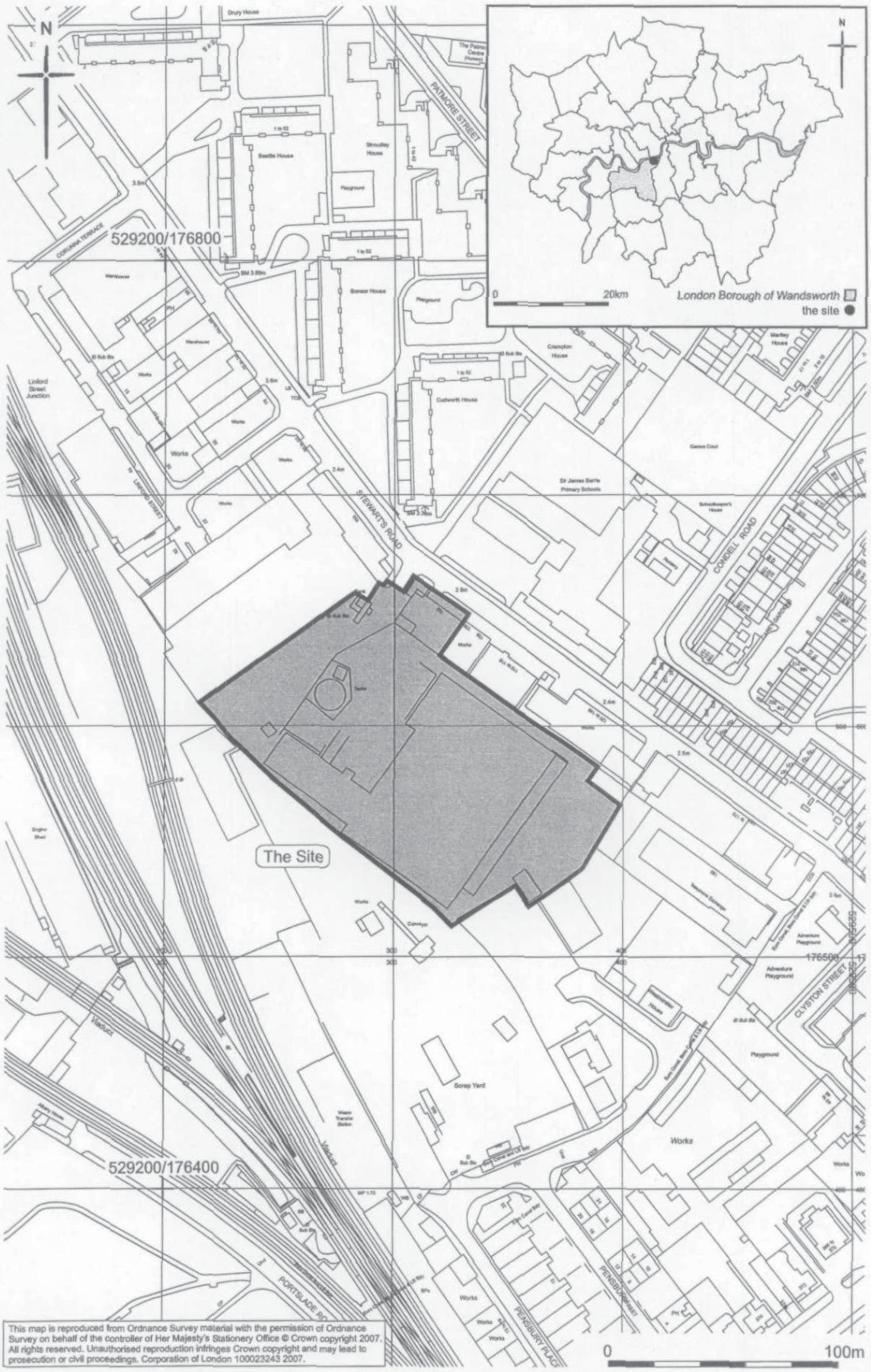

Fig 1 Site location

1 Introduction

1.1 Site background

The excavation took place at 102-104 Stewarts Road, Battersea, London SW8 4UF hereafter called 'the site'. The site is bounded by Stewarts Road to the east and by light industrial enterprises on the south, west and northern sides (Fig 1). The centre of the site is at OS National Grid Reference 529297 176590. The level of the basement slab varied between 2.81m OD and 2.88mOD. Modern ground level immediately adjacent to the site is 2.98m OD. The site code is STX06.

A desk top *Archaeological (impact) assessment* was previously written (Knight 2006) for the site. This document should be referred to for information on the natural geology and the historical background of the site, and the initial assessment of its archaeological potential.

A field evaluation was also carried out between 5th and 8th December 2006 and an *Evaluation report* written on the results of this exercise (Menary, 2007). This document, and the previous *Assessment*, informed the design for the excavation which was eventually carried out (*Method Statement* MoLAS, 2007).

1.2 Planning and legislative framework

The legislative and planning framework in which the archaeological exercise took place was summarised in the *Archaeological impact assessment* which formed the project design for the excavation *(Method Statement for an archaeological excavation* Section 2, MoLAS 2006)

1.3 Planning background

Planning Consent was given to the proposed redevelopment (Application No. 2006/4701) on 08/12/06. The following Condition (condition 6) relating to archaeology was included:

No development shall take place until the applicant, their agent or successors has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme for investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the local planning authority. The archaeological works shall be carried out by a suitably qualified investigating body acceptable to the local planning authority. In order that the archaeological remains that may exist on the site can be investigated, in accordance with Council policies TBE14 & TBE15.

1.4 Origin and scope of the report

This report was commissioned by Kilmarten London Ltd 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 report analyses the results of the excavation carried out on the site between 5th and 13th March 2007.

1.5 Research aims and objectives of excavation

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

The following research aims and objectives were established in the *Method Statement* for the excavation (Section 2.2);

- *Does the untruncated surface of natural gravels survive?*
- *What evidence is there to suggest that the site lies on a possible eyot?*
- *What evidence is there to suggest the presence of a prehistoric, possible Bronze Age land surface?*
- *Is there any evidence for prehistoric/Bronze Age flint working on the site?*
- *Is there any evidence of occupation on the site relating to the Bronze Age?*
- *Is there any geo-archaeological evidence to provide information on the environmental conditions in and around the area of the site during the Bronze Age?*
- *Is there further evidence of peat or waterlogged organic layers on the site? If such deposits are present a contingency will be activated to test for the presence of pollen, diatoms and ostracods/foraminifera and to provide dating evidence (radiocarbon).*

2 Topographical and historical background

The topographic and historic background has been covered in the preceding *impact assessment* (Knight, 2006) and *method statement for an archaeological evaluation* (MoLAS, 2006). This information has been amplified by the results of the evaluation, (Menary 2007) which can be summarised as follows:

The underlying natural topography comprised of natural sand and gravels overlain by sand and then a fine clay (alluvial) deposit. This alluvial deposit was recorded at 1.50m OD and several flint debitage flakes were found scattered on the surface. This layer was interpreted as a possible Bronze Age land surface.

Overlying the alluvial deposit was a series of modern make up layers, truncated by the construction cut and footings for a nineteenth century brick building. This footing survived to a height of 200mm before being truncated from above, and covered by further make up layers.

Also evident was the remains of a substantial concrete foundation base recorded for a length of 11m and a depth of 1.1m. This structure was thought to be related to the railway goods depot. When compared with early maps of the site (1968 OS map) it is possible that the concrete structure may relate to the travelling crane marked as being located in this area.

3 The excavation

3.1 Methodology

All archaeological excavation and recording during the excavation was done in accordance with the preceding *Method Statement* (MoLAS, 2007) and the MoLAS *Archaeological Site Manual* (MoLAS, 1994).

An area measuring 20 metres by 20 metres was initially broken out and cleared by the contractors, down to the level at which archaeological survival was evident and the area hand-cleaned by MoLAS staff.

The locations of the area of excavation and surviving archaeological features were recorded by the MoLAS Geomatics team using Global Positioning Systems (GPS), and located on the OS grid.

The heights of observations and/or archaeological remains were recorded relative to Ordnance Datum from a site survey carried out by Baynham Meikle Partnership for the client (dwg. 7642/101 Rev E). A reduced level of 2.88m OD was (located on the slab on the north side of the site) was used for this purpose.

The site has produced: 1 trench location plan at 1:20, levels data, survey data and one site photograph.

The site records can be found under the site code STX06 in the MoL archive.

3.2 Results of the excavation

In total one archaeological intervention was made consisting of an open area in the northwestern part of the site (Fig 2).

A brief description of the archaeological deposits follows below. For the area of excavation see Fig 3.

Excavation Area 1

Following the removal of *c* 1.50m of modern overburden deposits, the area of the site was hand-cleaned. The western side of evaluation trench 1 was revealed during the cleaning process, located on the eastern side of the excavation area. It was evident that this part of the site had been truncated laterally by 19th and 20th century construction, associated with railway development. Neither residual flint tools or evidence for occupation was found in the site. The only surviving archaeological evidence consisted of pits, drains, postholes, and track foundations, backfilled with clinker and 19th century pot fragments.

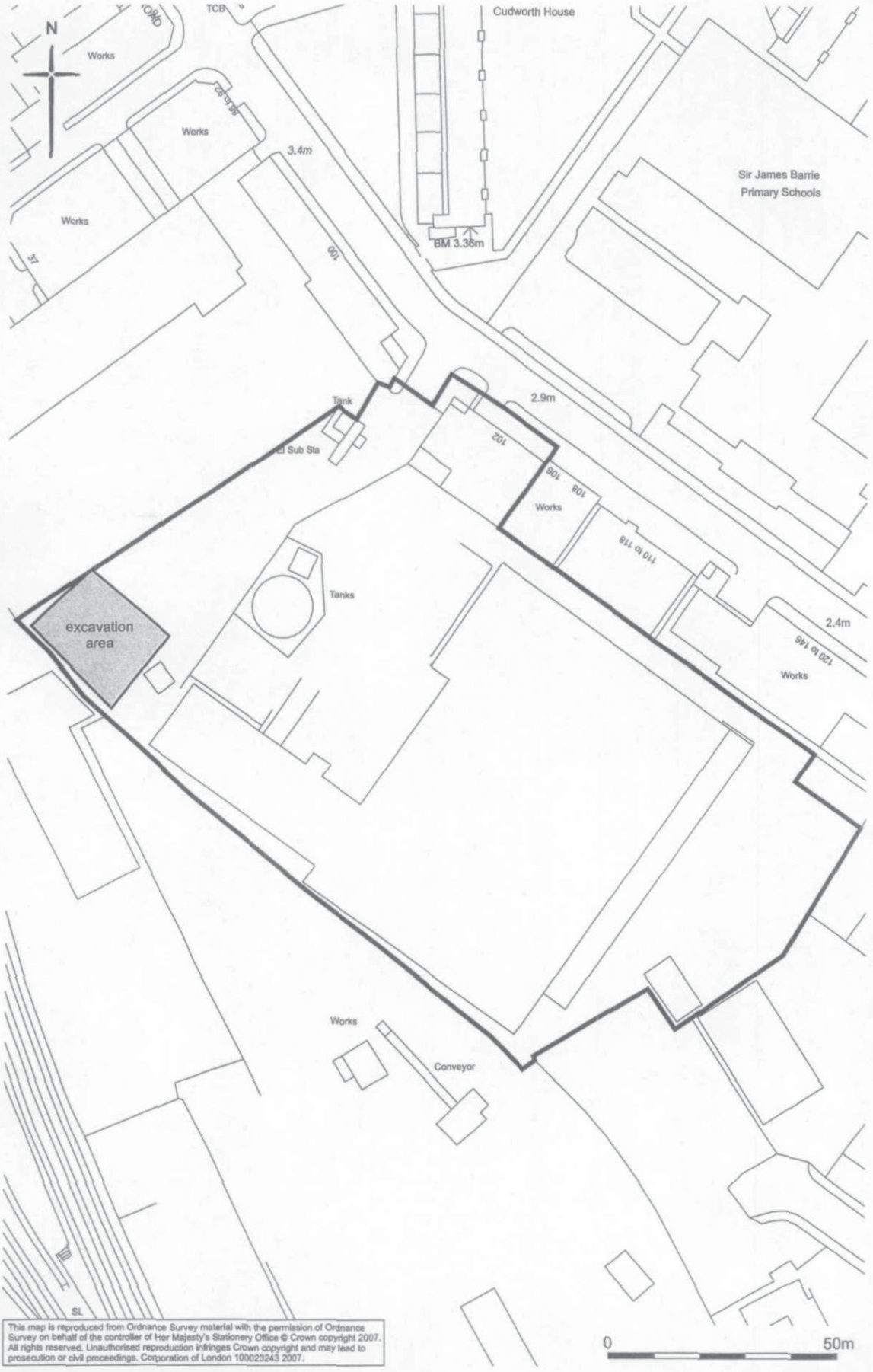

Fig 2 Plan of excavation area

Fig 3 Plan of excavation showing 19th-century features

4 Potential of archaeology

4.1 Realisation of original research aims

- *Does the untruncated surface of natural gravels survive?*

No evidence for natural gravel was revealed during the excavation. An auger hole, proposed in the method statement (MoLAS, 2007), would have answered this research question, but was not carried out at this time following advice from English Heritages' Scientific Advisor. The level of Late Pleistocene gravel was recorded in trench 1 via a borehole (AH1) during the evaluation stage. The natural gravel was located at a height of -1.48m OD.

- *What evidence is there to suggest that the site lies on a possible eyot?*

The sand and gravel sequence recorded in trench 1, at the evaluation stage had a much higher elevation (1.5m OD) and were far more weathered than the gravels in trench 2 (AH2), recorded at -0.38m OD. Following this deposition, the higher levels of AH1 must have been exposed at some point in the Early Holocene as a high dryland surface with the formation of a soil horizon and consequent prehistoric activity until later historic inundation. The high energy gravel deposits in AH2 are probably related to a channel flowing to the south of the site. The gravel sequence slopes southwards and is likely to relate to the channel deposits found at a site directly southeast of the current location (120 to 140 Stewart's Rd).

- *What evidence is there to suggest the presence of a prehistoric, possible Bronze Age land surface?*

No evidence for a prehistoric/Bronze Age land surface was found during the excavation, due to truncation by 19th and 20th century activity.

- *Is there any evidence for prehistoric/Bronze Age flint working on the site?*

No evidence for prehistoric/Bronze Age flint working was found during the excavation.

- *Is there any evidence of occupation on the site relating to the Bronze Age?*

No evidence for occupation relating to the Bronze Age was found during the excavation.

- *Is there any geo-archaeological evidence to provide information on the environmental conditions in and around the area of the site during the Bronze Age?*

No geo-archaeological work was carried out during the excavation, following advice from English Heritages' Scientific Advisor.

- *Is there further evidence of peat or waterlogged organic layers on the site? If such deposits are present a contingency will be activated to test for the presence of pollen, diatoms and ostracods/foraminifera and to provide dating evidence (radiocarbon).*

No geo-archaeological work was carried out during the excavation.

4.2 General discussion of the archaeology

The excavation has shown that evidence for prehistoric settlement was not found. This is probably due to the widescale truncation of this part of the site by the construction of 19th and 20th century railway structures, whose remains were evident as black clinker-filled cut features.

4.3 Significance of the data

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

5 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 research 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, 2007) with the Museum of London within 12 months of the end of the excavation.

In view of the limited potential of the material (Sections 4) and the relatively limited significance of the data (Section 4.3) it is suggested that a short note on the results of the excavation should appear in the annual round up of the *London Archaeologist*.

In addition a publication on the deposit modelling of the geoarchaeological boreholes recorded during the evaluation is proposed and will be prepared by the MoLAS Geoarchaeological Team.

6 Conclusions

Though no archaeological evidence for prehistoric occupation was found during the excavation, a deposit model will be produced and may be published in conjunction with the environmental results from 120-140 Stewarts Road (to the southeast of the site) to provide a reconstruction of the changing environment and indirect evidence of human activity for the Late Glacial and Holocene periods.

7 Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the following for their contributions and help in producing this report: Jago Brown for commissioning the archaeological investigations, Kilmarten London Ltd for funding, and Kanti Patel and Colin Davis of Clayden Associates for their assistance on site.

8 Bibliography

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9 NMR OASIS archaeological report form

9.1 OASIS ID: molas1-25439

Project details

Project name	102-104 Stewarts Road
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation in December 2006 resulted in two trenches undergoing excavation in the north and western part of the site, which produced a flint scatter, possibly Bronze Age in date, within the alluvium. In addition geoarchaeological samples undertaken indicated that the westernmost trench (1), was located on an eyot (island) which may have been settled during the prehistoric period. The second trench (2) provided evidence of a channel, possible associated with the Falcon Brook. Remains of a 19th century structure were also recorded. On the basis of the results from the evaluation, an excavation was carried out in March 2007, consisting of an area measuring 20 metres by 20 metres, in the northwest part of the site. However, the excavation revealed that this part of the site had been heavily truncated, by late 19th century and 20th century construction activity associated with the railways. No evidence for prehistoric activity was recorded in the area. The remains of cut features such as pits, postholes, drains, and foundation trenches of 19th century date were extant over much of the area with the uppermost surviving at a height of 1.41m OD.
Project dates	Start: 05-03-2007 End: 13-03-2007
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	STX06 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 3 - Retailing
Monument type	PITS Post Medieval

Monument type	RAILWAY Modern
Significant Finds	POT Modern
Methods & techniques	'Targeted Trenches','Topographic Survey'
Development type	Urban commercial (e.g. offices, shops, banks, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON WANDSWORTH BATTERSEA 102-104 Stewarts Road
Postcode	SW8
Study area	400.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 2997 7659 51.4728241902 -0.128434840760 51 28 22 N 000 07 42 W Point
Height OD	Min: 1.41m Max: 1.50m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	MoLAS
Project brief originator	MoLAS project manager
Project design originator	MoLAS
Project director/manager	Stewart Hoad

Project supervisor	Portia Askew
Type of sponsor/funding body	Kilmarten London Ltd
Name of sponsor/funding body	Kilmarten London Ltd

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Media available	'Survey'
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Media available	'Diary','Photograph','Plan','Report','Unpublished Text'

Entered by	Portia Askew (portiaa@molas.org.uk)
Entered on	21 March 2007

OASIS:

Please e-mail English Heritage for OASIS help and advice