



ASDA SUPERMARKET: PETROL FILLING STATION
464–504 Old Kent Road
London SE1

London Borough of Southwark

Archaeological watching brief report

July 2017



**ASDA supermarket: Petrol Filling Station
464–504 Old Kent Road
London
SE1**

Site Code OKQ15
NGR 534150 177840
OASIS reference molas1-289161

Planning reference and condition number 15/AP/3240

Report on an archaeological watching brief

Sign-off History:

Issue No.	Date:	Prepared by:	Checked/ Approved by:	Reason for Issue:
1	25.07.17	Senior Archaeologist S. Ranieri	Project Manager C. Cogar	First draft for client review

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Summary

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out by MOLA at Asda supermarket, 464-504 Old Kent Road, London SE1 ('the site') in January 2017. The report was commissioned from MOLA by Gleneagles Project Services Ltd on behalf of the client Asda Stores.

The site is being developed to construct an automated three-pump petrol filling station with two c 15.0m long by c 3.0m wide buried fuel storage tanks in the south-eastern part of the existing supermarket car park (planning application 15/AP/3240). The development proposals received planning permission on 04/12/2015 and included archaeological Condition No 6 (MOLA 2016, Section 1.1).

In accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (2016) the watching brief comprised three excavation trenches.

The earliest features observed were two intercutting ditches. One of them had been previously recorded during evaluation works in 2015 (MOLA 2015) and although had not produced any finds, it was thought to be dating to the prehistoric period.

Across the remainder of the area, were truncated remains of 3 brick pad foundations, two brick-lined wells/soak ways and the brick-lined base of a chimney. These could all be associated with structures and activities associated with the industrial development of the site which included the construction of a series of wharves between the 19th and the 20th century.

Natural gravel was seen between 0.57m and 0.77m OD. This was overlain by a deposit of natural brickearth observed between 0.90m and 0.99m OD.

The site was also subject to an earlier phase of archaeological evaluation which occurred in June 2015. The results of this earlier stage of fieldwork were described and assessed in earlier reports (MOLA 2015 and 2016), but are briefly summarised in this watching brief report as well, and these results have been taken into account throughout the course of the assessment.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Site background

- 1.1.1 An archaeological watching brief was carried out by MOLA at Asda supermarket, 464-504 Old Kent Road, London SE1 ('the site') in January 2017 (see *Fig 1*). This document is the Report on that work.
- 1.1.2 A desk top Archaeological Assessment (HEA) was previously prepared which covers the whole area of the site (MOLA 2014). This 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).
- 1.1.3 Field evaluation was carried out by MOLA in June 2015, and comprised two trenches. An Evaluation Report was written on the results (MOLA 2015).
- 1.1.4 Further to the condition on Planning Consent a Written Scheme of Investigation was prepared by MOLA (MOLA 2016). All archaeological work has been carried out in accordance with that WSI.

1.2 Planning background

- 1.2.1 The Planning and legislative background to the site has been adequately summarised in the previous Historic Environment Assessment (MOLA HEA 2014 section 2) and in Section 1.1 of this document.

1.3 Scope of the watching brief

- 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 watching brief was carried out within the terms of the relevant Standard for watching brief specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (CIFA, 2014).
- 1.3.3 All work has been undertaken within the research priorities established in the Museum of London's A research framework for London Archaeology, 2002.
- 1.3.4 All work was undertaken within research aims and objectives established in the Written Scheme of Investigation for the watching brief (MOLA 2016, Section 2.2)

2 Topographical and historical background

- 2.1.1 A detailed description of the geology, archaeology and history of the site was provided in the earlier Archaeological desk-based assessment (MOLA HEA 2014). A brief summary of the archaeological potential is provided;

The site is on the Gravel terrace 250m south-west of an ancient channel that flowed into the 'Bermondsey Lake' 900m to the east. In-situ flint tools and cut features have previously been found nearby.

The site is in a local authority Archaeological Priority Zone covering the major Roman road which was approximately on the line of Old Kent Road: associated Roman remains such as ditches, pits or quarries could be present. There is a low potential for Roman burials.

There may be evidence in the southern edge of the site for the early-19th century construction of the Grand Surrey Canal, such as revetments or tow path surfaces, as well as the foundations of late-19th wharf buildings and houses.

- 2.1.2 As previously stated a cut feature (a ditch) of unknown date was recorded during a prior stage of archaeological evaluation in 2015. A description of this feature and the 19th century archaeological deposits recorded in the site can be found in the MOLA evaluation report (MOLA 2015). A brief summary of the findings of the two evaluation trenches is provided below (see also Figs 2 and 3 of this WSI, MOLA 2016);

A shallow ditch aligned north–south was sealed by a subsoil horizon. Both deposits were undated, but the ditch may have been cut in the late prehistoric period. The subsoil was also cut by features of 19th century date that produced an assemblage of white-glazed pottery and yellow London Stock brick. They comprised a crudely built brick-lined manhole, pits and other indeterminate cut features.

3 The watching brief

3.1 Field methodology

- 3.1.1 Archaeological excavation of features was carried out in accordance with the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (MOLA 2016).
- 3.1.2 The slab was broken out and cleared by contractors under MOLA supervision. The trenches were excavated by machine by contractors to the top of archaeological deposits. All archaeological features were excavated by hand by MOLA archaeologists and when necessary, investigation slots were dug by machine by contractors, and monitored by a member of staff from MOLA.
- 3.1.3 Archaeological features were recorded by MOLA archaeologists using a base line placed length side across the trench and trench locations was plotted on plans provided by the client using an 'offset methodology' and subsequently tied to the OS grid by MOLA Geomatics.
- 3.1.4 Where referenced in this report (eg '13.45m OD'), levels relate to OS Ordnance Datum and were calculated by traverse from a nearby OS benchmark set out by MOLA surveyors.

3.2 Recording methodology

- 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 2016).

3.3 Site archive

Number of trench record sheets	0
Number of overall location plans	1
Number of Context (SU) sheets	73
Number of photographs	101
Number of Plan sheets	12
Number of Sections	2

4 Results of the watching brief

For trench locations see *Fig 2*

For feature plans see *Fig 3*

4.1 Trench 3

Location	Centre south of the site
Dimensions	33m by 4m by 1.07m depth, (3m depth considering the robber cut)
Modern top of slab	1.93mOD
Base of modern fill	1mOD
Depth of archaeological stratigraphy above natural (if any)	c 0.20m (2.10m is the depth of the robber cut)
Level of base of lowest features or deposits observed	0.86mOD (-1.24mOD base of robber cut)
Top of surviving natural observed at	0.59m-0.99mOD
Level of base of trench	0.59mOD (-1.24mOD base of slot through robber cut)

- 4.1.1 Natural gravel [60] was observed at 0.59mOD. Above it, natural brickearth [59] was recorded between 0.90m and 0.99mOD. This was overlay by a yellowish-brown, silty clay deposit [58], thought to be naturally deposited.
- 4.1.2 The earliest feature cutting through [58] was a ditch on a north to south alignment. This feature, which had been previously observed during an earlier phase of archaeological evaluation (MOLA 2015), survived in two separate sections, [38] and [45], and extended for c 10m. It was c 0.90m wide by c 0.20m deep and was filled with naturally deposited dark-pinkish silty clay, [39] and [44]. No dateable finds were retrieved, but it has been suggested that the ditch could date to the Middle-Late Bronze Age or Late Iron Age (MOLA 2015, Trench 1).
- 4.1.3 Truncating this feature to the south was ditch [42]. This was on a north-west/south-east alignment and extended for 3.3m. It was c 1m wide by c 0.40m deep and was filled with fills [48], [47] and [49]. These were mainly constituted of light to mid-brown grey silty clay with occasional inclusion of sand and are thought to be all naturally deposited. No artefacts were retrieved, but as ditch [38] and [45], this feature could date to the Middle-Late Bronze Age or Late Iron Age.
- 4.1.4 Additional cut features and brick-lined structures were observed within the trench outline. These cut through deposit [58] and can all be associated with structures and activities associated with the construction of wharves between the 19th and the 20th century.
- 4.1.5 Two roughly squared shallow pits [34] and [36] were observed along the eastern edge of the trench. These were on a north to south west alignment, and measured between 0.70m and 1.20 in width by 1m-1.60m in length. The pits were only 0.20m deep and were filled with mid-brown clayey silt which contained small fragments of clay pipes and glass dated to the post-medieval period. These features are thought to be pad foundations part of the 19th-20th century wharves' structures. They are on the same alignment of pad foundation [43] which contained a single course of post-medieval bricks.
- 4.1.6 Two circular brick lined features, [32] and [57] were observed, respectively, to the north and the south of the trench. These, which were only recorded in plan but not

excavated, had a similar diameter of c 1.40m and are interpreted as possible brick well/soak away. They were constructed using red and yellow London Stock brick and were filled with dark brown silty-clay which contained spread mortar, fragments of building material and pottery dated to the post-medieval period.

- 4.1.7 A cut feature [53], on a west to east alignment, cut through ditches [42] and [45]. It was 3m wide by 5m long and it continued beyond the eastern boundary into Trench 3 as feature [65]. It was recorded to a depth of 2.10m -1.24mOD, and was filled with mid-greyish brown silty clay [52]. The feature, due to its depth and irregular shape, has been interpreted as a possible robber cut, associated with the dismantling the wharves' structures during the 20th century. No finds were retrieved.
- 4.1.8 All of the above features underwent horizontal truncation, observed at c 1.08m OD. This is likely to have occurred in relation to the development of the site into a car park during the second half of the 20th century. The site was subsequently levelled using c 0.80 of granular sub-base which was overlain by 0.10m of tarmac.

4.2 Trench 4

Location	Eastern side of the site
Dimensions	5m by 2m by 0.85m depth
Modern ground level/top of slab	1.85mOD
Base of modern fill/slab/turf	1mOD
Depth of archaeological stratigraphy above natural (if any)	0.06m
Level of base of lowest features or deposits observed	1mOD
Top of surviving natural observed at	0.94mOD
Level of base of trench	0.66m OD

- 4.2.1 Natural gravel [71] was observed between 0.66m and 0.77mOD. Above it, natural brickearth [70] was recorded at c 0.94mOD. This was overlay by a pale, greyish brown, silty clay deposit [66], thought to be naturally deposited. It was observed at c 1m OD and was truncated by two modern pipe trenches.
- 4.2.2 Deposit [66] underwent horizontal truncation, observed at c 1mOD. This is likely to have occurred in during the development of the site into the present car park during the second half of the 20th century. The site was subsequently levelled using 0.76m of granular sub-base which was overlain by c 0.10m of tarmac.
- 4.2.3 No archaeological deposits or features survived within the footprint of the trench.

4.3 Trench 5

Location	Eastern side of the site
Dimensions	20m by 3m by 3m depth (base of slot to investigate chimney base)
Modern ground level/top of slab	1.91mOD
Base of modern fill/slab/turf	between 0.85m and 1.28mOD
Depth of archaeological stratigraphy above natural (if any)	2.10m OD (depth of the chimney base)
Level of base of lowest features or deposits observed	-0.82mOD (level at base of the chimney)
Top of surviving natural observed at	0.89mOD
Level of base of trench	0.57m OD

- 4.3.1 Natural gravel [73] was between 0.57m and 0.69mOD. Above it, natural brickearth [72] was recorded between 0.77m and 0.89mOD.
- 4.3.2 Construction cut [63] for a brick chimney base [62] cut through the brickearth [72]. The chimney base, observed at its highest at c 1.28mOD, had a 5m diameter and extended down a further 2.10 m. It was constructed using 19th century LBC Phorpres bricks and its use may be associated with the industrial activity carried out within the wharves. The chimney base was backfilled with blackish-brown, ashy silt mixed with brick rubble and fragments of 19th-20th century pottery and glass, dumped within it after falling in disuse. These finds were not retained.
- 4.3.3 To the south of the brick chimney base [62], a deep cut feature [65] was observed. This feature, on a west to east alignment, is clearly the continuation of cut feature [53], previously seen in Trench 1. Its function, although still not certain, could be associated with the dismantling the wharves' structures during the course of the 20th century.
- 4.3.4 As also observed in Trench 1 and 2, the whole site underwent horizontal truncation, observed at c 0.90m OD. This is likely to have occurred in relation to the development of the site into a car park during the second half of the 20th century. This was sealed by c 1m of made ground found below 0.10m of tarmac.

5 Archaeological potential

5.1 Answering original research aims

- Is there any further evidence for the ditch previously recorded during the archaeological evaluation, if so what is the extent of the feature?

Further evidence of this ditch was observed within Trench 1. It survived in two separate sections, [38] and [45], and extended for c 10m.

- Is there any dating evidence associated with the ditch?

No dating evidence was retrieved.

- What evidence is there for further prehistoric remains within the site?

A second ditch was recorded on site. This was on a north-west/south-east alignment and truncated ditch [45] along its south-eastern edge. It is thought to be prehistoric but no dating material was retrieved to confirm it.

- What evidence is there for Roman roadside activity in the site?

No evidence of Roman roadside activity was observed on site.

- Is there any evidence for the early-19th century Grand Surrey Canal known to have been located towards the south of the site?

No evidence of the Grand Surrey Canal was observed on site. It is possible that this had been truncated away by the foundation of the 19th-20th century development.

- What evidence is there for any late 19th century wharf buildings or any other contemporary activity within the areas of watching brief?

Trench 1 revealed evidence of 3 pad foundations and two brick-lined wells; Trench 2 contained remanence of a dismantled brick chimney base. These remains can be clearly associated with structures and activity part of the 19th-20th century wharf development.

- What is the extent and depth of the modern disturbance across the site?

The whole site underwent horizontal truncation, observed between 1m and 1.08m OD. This is likely to have occurred in relation to the development of the site into a car park during the second half of the 20th century.

- What are the heights and depths of natural deposition across the site?

The top of natural gravel within the trenches was recorded between 57m OD and 0.77m OD. This was overlain by truncated natural brickearth observed between 0.77m OD and 0.99m OD.

5.2 Answering new research aims

5.2.1 The watching brief at 464-504 Old Kent Road has not raised new research aims.

5.3 Significance of the data

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

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 will be stored in accordance with the terms of the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (MOLA 2015) with the Museum of London Archaeological Archive within 12 months of the end of the watching brief.
- 6.1.3 In view of 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 MOLA would like to thank Gleneagles for commissioning the archaeological work on behalf of the client, Asda Stores and Broham Construction Limited for their help on site.

8 Bibliography

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Fig 1 Site Location

Fig 2 Trench location

Fig 3 Archaeological feature plan

Fig 4 Intercutting ditches [42] and [45], looking north-west

Fig 5 Remains of brick chimney base [62], looking north

9 OASIS archaeological report form

9.1 OASIS ID: molas1-289161

Project details

Project name	ASDA supermarket: Petrol Filling Station
Short description of the project	A watching brief was carried out at the site and comprised three excavation trenches. Two intercutting ditches of uncertain date were observed, possibly prehistoric. Across the remainder of the area were remains of 3 pad foundations, two brick-lined wells and the base of a brick-lined chimney. These features could all be associated with structures and activities associated with the 19th-20th century industrial development of the site. Natural gravel was seen between 0.57m and 0.77m OD. This was overlain by a deposit of natural brickearth observed between 0.90m and 0.99m OD.
Project dates	Start: 01-01-2017 End: 31-01-2017
Previous/future work	Yes / Yes
Any associated project reference codes	molas1-215859 - OASIS form ID
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 3 - Retailing
Monument type	DITCHES Uncertain
Monument type	CHIMNEY BASE Post Medieval
Monument type	BRICK LINED WELL Post Medieval
Development type	Service infrastructure (e.g. sewage works, reservoir, pumping station, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON SOUTHWARK CAMBERWELL AND DULWICH ASDA supermarket: Petrol Filling Station
Postcode	SE1
Study area	2860 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 34151 77835 51.483055555556 -0.067777777778 51 28 59 N 000 04

04 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 0.59m Max: 1.08m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	MOLA
Project brief originator	Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District Archaeologist)
Project design originator	MOLA
Project director/manager	Claire Cogar
Project supervisor	Antony Baxter
Type of sponsor/funding body	Asda Stores

Project archives

Physical Archive ID	OKQ15
Digital Archive ID	OKQ15
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"GIS"
Paper Archive ID	OKQ15
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Drawing", "Report"

Entered by S. Ranieri (sranieri@mola.org.uk)

Entered on 3 July 2017

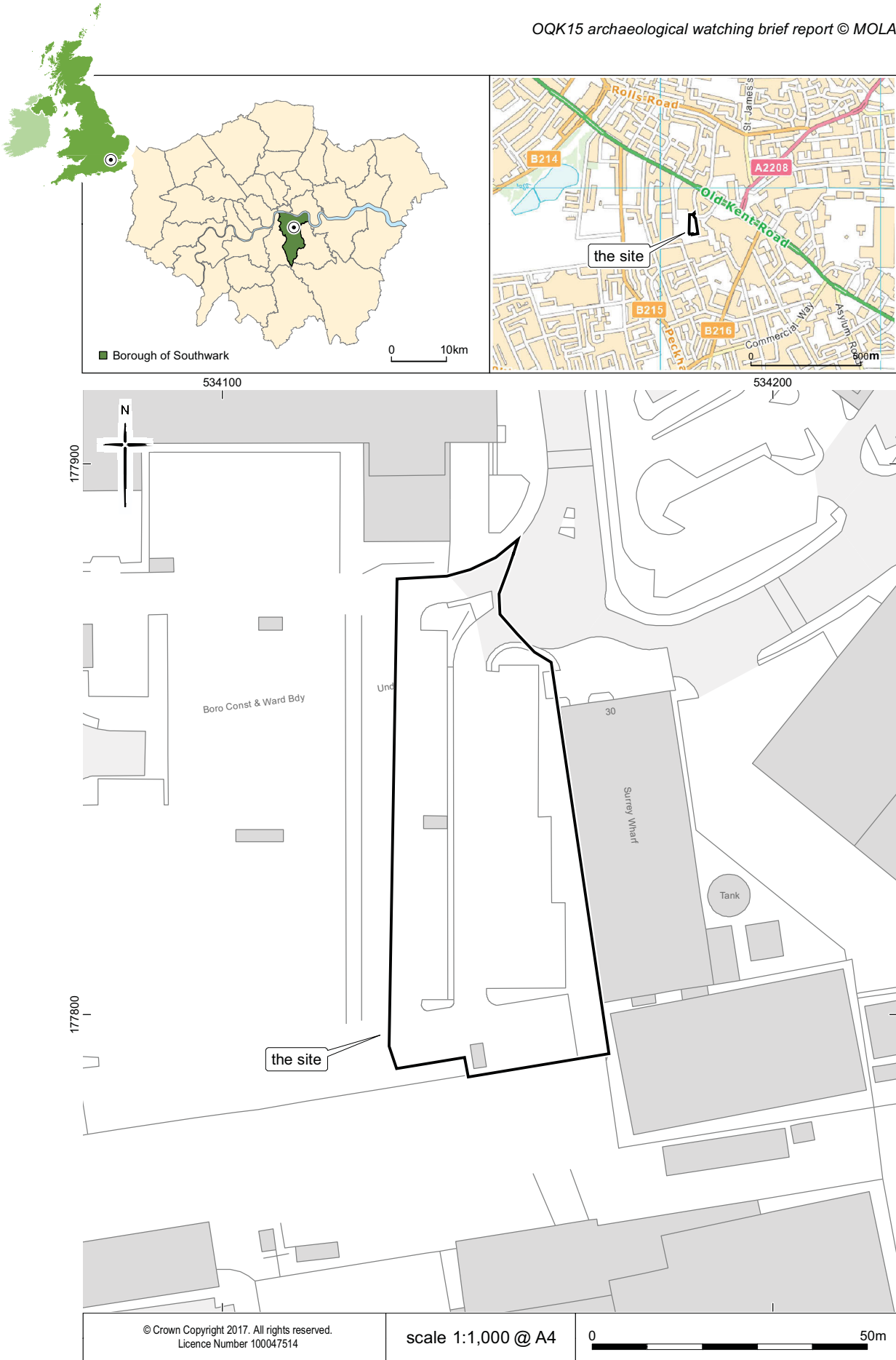


Fig 1 Site location



Fig 2 Trench location

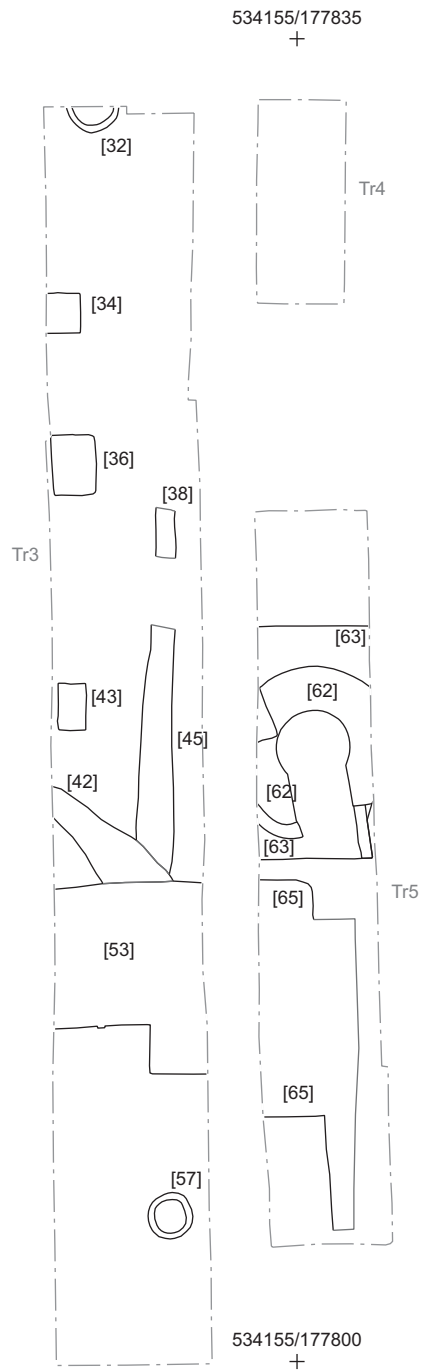


Fig 3 Archaeological feature plan



Fig 4 Intercutting ditches [42] and [45], looking north-west



Fig 5 Remains of brick chimney base [62], looking north