

POTTERS FIELDS HOUSE
Land Off Potters Fields Lane
Potters Fields Park
Potters Fields
London
SE1 2SG

London Borough of Southwark

Pre-determination Evaluation Report

October 2017



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NGR 533433 180046

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Executive summary

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation carried by MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) on the site at Potters Fields Lane, London, SE1 2SG. The site is within the Borough, Bermondsey and Rivers Archaeological Priority Zone as designated by the London Borough of Southwark. The site code is PTT17.

The evaluation was commissioned by Potters Fields Development Limited in association with proposed development at the site. It was requested by the local planning authority in support of a planning application in order to clarify the site's potential for archaeological remains, and their likely significance. The results will inform the consideration by the local planning authority of the archaeological implications of the planning application. The site is located immediately east of a disused burial ground (St Olave's Churchyard/St John's Burial Ground) now Potters Fields public park.

The evaluation comprised a single trench that measured 3.0m by 1.5m. Modern truncation and obstructions were present over areas of the trench and a slot was therefore excavated in an area that was not disturbed. The top of the underlying alluvial clays was encountered at c 2.50m OD (2.30m beneath ground level). Overlying the alluvial clay was 1.6m of infill containing pottery, animal bone and other finds dated to the 18th century that was domestic in character. The infill abutted the northern side of an east–west aligned red brick wall that is thought to date to the 16th century. The wall is considered to be the remains of a cellar that was subsequently infilled. The cellar was most probably part of a row of almshouses located adjacent to St Olave's Churchyard and shown on the 1544 parish map of Horsleydown.

The evaluation results suggest that the burial ground did not extend onto the area of the trench in the 16th century since the almshouses were established contemporary to the burial ground. Later-17th and 18th-century maps show the site as open ground, however, and one piece of residual disarticulated human bone was retrieved from the 18th-century infill deposit on the site. Although the historic boundary of the burial ground is unclear, it is likely that the human bone found on site derives from periodic ground disturbance of the adjacent land.

This report concludes that archaeological remains dated to the 16th century and later would be truncated or removed entirely by the redevelopment of the site, principally foundation construction and excavation for a basement. These remains are considered to be of medium heritage significance, for which preservation by record under a planning condition would be an appropriate mitigation strategy to offset the archaeological impacts of the proposed development. Archaeological monitoring in the form of a watching brief would ensure that any further structures on the site are fully recorded and that any residual disarticulated human remains present are retrieved and dealt with appropriately. The final decision on archaeological mitigation for these works however rests with the local planning authority, as advised by the Southwark Senior Planner Archaeology.

If further human remains are disturbed, a licence will be required from the Secretary of State.

1 Introduction

1.1 Site background

- 1.1.1 The evaluation took place at land adjacent to Potters Fields, London, SE1 2SG hereafter called 'the site'. It is located in the London Borough of Southwark and bounded by the thoroughfare known as Potters Fields to the East and a public park on the other sides. The Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference for centre of site is 533433 180046 (Fig 1). The site code is PTT17.
- 1.1.2 A desk-top Archaeological Assessment was prepared by MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) in 2017 and provides detail on the natural geology, archaeological and historical background of the site, and the initial interpretation of its archaeological potential. The results of the evaluation have provided further information of the archaeological potential within the site. The evaluation has taken place at the pre-planning stage, and the report will be submitted as part of the planning application, to enable the local planning authority to formulate an appropriate mitigation strategy in the light of the impacts of the proposed development.

1.2 Designated heritage assets

- 1.2.1 The site does not contain any nationally designated (protected) heritage assets, such as scheduled monuments, listed buildings or registered parks and gardens. Three Grade II listed 19th century bollards are 40m south-west of the site.
- 1.2.2 The site is within the Borough, Bermondsey and Rivers Archaeological Priority Zone (APZ) as designated by the local planning authority (LPA) due to the archaeological potential of the areas of Roman and medieval settlement and the Southwark riverside. The site is not in a conservation area; it borders Tower Bridge Conservation Area to the east, and Tooley Street Conservation Area is nearby to the south.

1.3 Aims and objectives

- 1.3.1 The purpose of archaeological evaluation as defined by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists is to confirm 'as far as is reasonably possible, the nature of the archaeological resource within a specified area using appropriate methods and practices' (CIfA 2014). The aim of such an investigation 'pre-determination', i.e. prior to the determination of planning consent is to clarify the site's potential for archaeological remains and so inform the LPA's consideration of the implications of the planning application. The results will also help the LPA to set out an appropriate strategy for any further investigation and/or mitigation which may form a condition as part of planning consent.
- 1.3.2 Objectives for this trial trench evaluation were to confirm:
- the extent and depth of modern disturbance;
 - the depth and nature of the natural deposits;
 - the presence of archaeological remains within the site, their nature and significance, primarily:
 - human remains from St Olave's Churchyard / St John's Burial Ground;
 - paleoenvironmental remains within alluvial deposits;
 - remains of prehistoric activity on the gravel eyot;
 - remains of Roman activity on the gravel eyot;
 - post-medieval footings or other remains associated with 19th century houses.

2 Archaeological and historical background

2.1 Topography and geology

- 2.1.1 A description of the topography of the area and underlying geology is given in the Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (MOLA 2017b). There is currently no geotechnical information for the site. Based on nearby historic British Geological Survey (BGS) boreholes, predicted levels of natural deposits are as follows:
- Current ground level is at 4.8m above Ordnance Datum (OD);
 - The top of untruncated alluvium is likely to be at 1.7–2.0m OD, i.e. 2.8–3.4m below ground level (mbgl), or higher;
 - The top of untruncated Gravel is likely to be at 0.3–0.5m OD (4.3–4.5mbgl).
- 2.1.2 Between the top of natural deposits and current ground level is likely to be made ground, which may contain archaeological remains.

2.2 Predicted archaeological potential

- 2.2.1 The potential of the site to contain archaeological remains as predicted prior to the evaluation is set out in the Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment, and summarised here. The degree of archaeological survival in the site was dependent on the depth and extent of any previous cellars, basements and foundations, which will have truncated or removed entirely any earlier archaeological remains in their footprint. On 19th-century Ordnance Survey maps, three terraced houses are shown occupying the site, with small rear yards. One large building is shown on the site by 1916.

Palaeoenvironmental remains

- 2.2.2 The site has a high potential for palaeoenvironmental remains. It is located on the north edge of a former gravel eyot (island) within the ancient alluvial floodplain of the River Thames. Alluvium has been recorded in nearby BGS boreholes and past investigations. Alluvial deposits may contain preserved pollen and floral and faunal remains which can be utilised to reconstruct past local environments. Wood and organic sediment can be dated by radiocarbon, important for establishing the chronology of the sequence. Palaeoenvironmental remains would be of low significance unless layers of peat, or other organic material survive, which could be of medium significance, based on their likely evidential and historic value in providing information on past environments and human activity.

Prehistoric period (800,000 BC–AD43)

- 2.2.3 There is a low to moderate potential for prehistoric remains. The site's location would have been a focus for activity, at the edge of higher gravel close to resources of the Thames channels and intertidal marshland. Land surfaces and peat deposits dating to the Bronze Age, indicating dry land, have been discovered to the east of the site, as well as Iron Age worked and burnt flints. Prehistoric remains at the base of the alluvium are likely to be intact with a high level of preservation due to waterlogging, and of medium or possibly high significance, derived from their evidential value.

Roman period (AD 43–410)

- 2.2.4 There is a moderate potential for Roman remains. The site lay 730m south-east of the Roman settlement at Southwark, on a gravel 'island' that would have provided suitable conditions for agriculture, industry or possibly occupation. No evidence of occupation has been recorded in the vicinity of the site although remains been found indicating it was part of a wider landscape of Roman activity. Evidence of reclamation and drainage ditches, or industrial activity would be of medium significance, derived from evidential value.

Medieval period

- 2.2.5 There is a low potential for medieval remains. No remains of this period have been recovered in the vicinity of the site. It is likely that, due to the post-Roman rise in water levels, the area would have been too wet to permit habitation or exploitation, although later may have been drained as pasture.

Post medieval period

- 2.2.6 The site has high potential to contain post-medieval remains. It may in some periods have been used as part of St Olave's Churchyard (also later called St John's Burial Ground), established in 1582 as an additional burial ground for the parish of St Olave. A parish map originally of 1544 but presumably incorporating later amendments shows the site to the east of an area marked as 'Churche Yarde' i.e. the burial ground (Fig 3). This was used for burials until its closure in 1853. Ordnance Survey maps from 1875 onwards (by which time the burial ground was disused) show a clear boundary along the west side of the site, but it is possible that in earlier periods burials extended into the site, or at least its western edge. Any human remains are likely to have been disturbed and truncated by subsequent building construction and their presence in the site and significance is difficult to predict. Residual disarticulated bones would be of low or medium significance; intact burials would be of medium or high significance depending on date and condition. Any associated structural remains such as vaults, would be of medium or high significance.
- 2.2.7 A row of almshouses is shown in the site on the 1544 map, but 17th and 18th-century mapping show the site as largely open ground although with buildings possibly extending into its southern edge. Buildings are shown on the north edge of the site in the earlier 19th century, and by 1875 three terraced houses are shown on Ordnance Survey maps, fronting onto the street to the east, replaced by one large building by 1916. It is uncertain whether the buildings had cellars, but they may survive below ground. There is also potential for deeply cut features of this period such as ditches, rubbish or cess pits, and wells.
- 2.2.8 The name Potters Fields is derived from pottery manufacture in the area in the 17th century, and dumps of waste material from kilns have also been found nearby. Such remains would be of low or possibly medium heritage significance, depending on their date, nature and extent, derived from their evidential and historical value.

3 The evaluation

3.1 Methodology

- 3.1.1 All archaeological excavation, monitoring and recording during the evaluation was carried out in accordance with the preceding Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI: MOLA 2017a) from 25/09/2017 to 28/09/2017. The evaluation involved the excavation of one archaeological trench (Trench 1) within the northern part of the site to assess the depth and extent of 19th and 20th century truncation and determine archaeological potential and significance, in particular the possible presence of human remains in the site associated with the former burial ground adjacent to the west.
- 3.1.2 The concrete ground slab was broken out and cleared by contractors under MOLA supervision. The slab and upper modern deposits in the trench were excavated by machine by the contractors and monitored by a MOLA Senior Archaeologist. Further excavation was by hand.
- 3.1.3 The position of the trench was recorded by off-setting from adjacent walls and plotted onto a basemap. The trenches were then plotted onto the Ordnance Survey grid.
- 3.1.4 The site has produced: one trench location plan; one trench plan; one trench sheet, three context records and 14 photographs. In addition one box and one crate of finds were recovered from the site.
- 3.1.5 The site finds and records can be found under the site code PTT17 in the Museum of London Archaeological Archive.

3.2 Results

- 3.2.1 For the trench location see Fig 2. A summary of finds is in Section 5.

Evaluation Trench 1

Location	3.5m from northern site boundary and 0.5m from western site boundary
Dimensions	3.0m by 1.5m by up to 2.30m depth
Modern ground level/top of slab	4.80m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	4.30m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	1.2m deep
Level of base of deposits observed and/or base of trench	2.10m OD (in slot)
Natural observed	c 2.50m OD

- 3.2.2 Beneath the ground surface extensive modern truncation was encountered, consisting of a service run to the west and a concrete block to the north-east. At the south of the trench was a post-medieval brick wall [2] aligned east–west: the length recorded was 1.90m although it probably continued beyond the limits of the trench (see, Fig 4, Fig 5 and Fig 6). The remains of the wall were exposed between 3.70m OD and 3.0m OD and comprised eight courses. Samples of the unfrogged red bricks from the wall measured c 220mm by 110mm by 50mm and were assessed by Ian Betts (MOLA Ceramic Building Material Specialist). These have been dated to the 16th century and were considered to have been used only once. The wall is probably part of a cellar. To the north of the wall was a deposit 1.6m thick [1] which appeared to be an infill associated with the wall's disuse, e.g. cellar backfill. A slot 0.60m by 0.95m was dug through this deposit to the top of the underlying alluvial clays (see Fig 4 and Fig 7). Deposit [1] contained pottery, animal bone and other finds generally dated to the 18th century, these were domestic in character. Pottery from this deposit included London delftware, London red ware, various stonewares and white salt-glazed stoneware. Two clay tobacco pipe bowls from the deposit are also 18th century in date. This deposit probably represents the infilling of the cellar in the 18th century after the 16th-century structure went out of use.

- 3.2.3 The cellar infill also produced one piece of disarticulated human bone, a single adult left fifth metatarsal (bone from a foot) suggesting general disturbance of burial ground soils may have encroached on the site over time.
- 3.2.4 Excavation of the slot through deposit [1] identified the underlying alluvial clay which was encountered at c 2.50m OD (2.30mbgl).

3.3 Significance of the results

- 3.3.1 The evaluation recorded evidence of post-medieval activity in the form of a late 16th-century cellar wall and associated 18th-century infill when the structure went out of use. The wall is thought to be the below ground remains associated with almshouses shown on a 16th-century map. The archaeological remains are of local significance and although they are of evidential and historical value they are not considered to be of regional or national importance.

3.4 Assessment of the evaluation

- 3.4.1 The evaluation was intended to assess the depth and extent of 19th and 20th century truncation as well as to test archaeological potential and significance, in particular the possible presence of human remains in the site associated with the former burial ground adjacent to the west.
- 3.4.2 Although as result of existing services and modern disturbance a reduced area of the trench was available for investigation, the depth of truncation was observed and the height of the natural alluvial clay was established, and the results are considered robust. Additionally, remains of a 16th-century cellar wall and associated 18th-century infill were recorded. The wall is thought to be remains of a cellar of a property present in the 16th century, probably part of almshouse buildings shown on 16th-century mapping (Fig 3). This structure was subsequently infilled in the 18th century.
- 3.4.3 The results of the evaluation also suggest that the burial ground to the immediate west did not extend onto the trench area possibly because the almshouses were contemporary with the establishment of the burial ground. The cellar infill did, however, contain a one piece of disarticulated human (foot) bone suggesting general disturbance of burial ground soils which may have been deposited on the site over time. Later-17th and 18th-century mapping shows the site as largely open ground although it is uncertain if burials would have extended into the western edge of the site.

4 Proposed development impact and recommendations

- 4.1.1 The proposed development comprises the construction of a multi-storey dwelling with a basement. The maximum extent of the new basement would occupy the entire site footprint. A lift would be located in the south-western corner of the site, and piled foundations are assumed.
- 4.1.2 In situ human remains associated with the disused burial ground adjacent to the site were not encountered, however residual disarticulated human bone was retrieved from a cellar infill deposit. Later 17th and 18th century mapping show the site as open ground although it is uncertain if it was associated with the adjacent burial ground. Foundations for the development and the proposed basement would truncate or remove entirely post-medieval remains on the site including any further evidence of 16th-century or later buildings. Any prehistoric or Roman remains at the base of the alluvium or cut into the underlying gravel might survive beneath the basement formation level.
- 4.1.3 The remains encountered in the evaluation are considered to be of medium heritage significance, for which preservation by record under a planning condition would be an appropriate mitigation strategy to offset the archaeological impacts of the proposed development. Archaeological monitoring in the form of a watching brief during groundworks would ensure that any further structures on the site are fully recorded and that any residual disarticulated human remains present are retrieved and dealt with appropriately. A suitable working method with appropriate contingency arrangements for significant remains would also need to be agreed, in the form of a WSI approved by the Southwark Senior Planner Archaeology.
- 4.1.4 The final decision on archaeological mitigation for these works rests with the local planning authority, as advised by the Southwark Senior Planner Archaeology.
- 4.1.5 If further human remains are disturbed, a licence will be required from the Secretary of State.

5 Summary of finds

Context	Accession	Material	Sherds/ Fragments	Period	Date	Comments
1	-	Post-medieval pottery	27	Post-medieval	1735–1750	London delftware, London red ware, various stonewares including Midland Purple, and white salt-glazed stoneware. Dated to 1730s by delftware teabowl with manganese ground panel decoration.
1	-	Clay pipe	3	Post-medieval	1700–1750	2 bowls
1	-	Animal bone	0.650 kg, approximately 30+ fragments	Post-medieval	-	Well-preserved hand-collected animal bone derived from cattle <i>Bos taurus</i> (15 fragments), sheep/goat, probably all sheep <i>Ovis aries</i> (15 fragments), and pig <i>Sus scrofa</i> (three fragments). Cattle included fragments of foetal or neonate calf, with fragments of adult skull, vertebra, rib, innominate (pelvis) and first phalange (basal toe joint). Sheep/goat included fragments of adult rib, ulna (lower fore-leg), tibia (lower hind-leg), metacarpal (fore-foot) and metatarsal (hind-foot). Pig included single fragments of sub-adult skull, humerus (upper fore-leg) and juvenile metatarsal (hind-foot or trotter). Clear butchery marks, mainly indicating use of cleavers, were seen on each of these species. There was no evidence of burning or gnawing. In general, this group includes waste produced by primary carcase preparation, butchery and consumption of veal, beef, mutton and pork, with most of the fragments from skeletal areas of good meat-bearing quality. There is no evidence for horn- or bone-working.
1	-	Human bone	1	Post-medieval	1582–1853	An adult left fifth metatarsal.
2	-	Brick	2 bricks	Post-medieval	1500–1600/1666	Fabric no 3033

6 Planning framework

- 6.1.1 Current planning legislation and policies are detailed in the Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (MOLA 2017b).

7 Bibliography

- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, (CIFA), 2014 *By-Laws, Standards and Policy Statements of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, Standards and guidance*
- MOLA, 2017a *Potters Fields, London SE1, Pre-determination trial trench evaluation, Written Scheme of Investigation*, MOLA unpub. document, September 2017
- MOLA, 2017b *Potters Fields House, Land off Potters Fields Lane, Potters Fields Park, London SE1 2SG: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment*, MOLA unpub. report, October 2017
- Museum of London, 1994 *Archaeological Site Manual 3rd edition*
- Museum of London, 2009 *General Standards for the preparation of archaeological archives deposited with the Museum of London*

8 NMR OASIS archaeological report form

OASIS ID: molas1-298069

Project details

Project name	Potter's Fields, London, SE1 2SG
Short description of the project	The evaluation comprised a single trench that measured 3m by 1.5m. Overlying the alluvial clay was 1.6m of infill that contained pottery, animal bone and other finds dated to the 18th century and were domestic in character. The infill abutted the northern side of an east-west aligned red brick wall formed of eight courses that is thought to date to the 16th century. The wall is considered to be remains of an internal cellar that was subsequently infilled. The wall is thought to be remains of almshouses located adjacent to St Olave's Churchyard shown on the 1544 parish map of Horsleydown. The site was subsequently redeveloped in the 19th century with terrace housing. The site is located adjacent to a disused burial ground (St Olave's Churchyard//St John's Burial Ground) now Potters Fields public park. The evaluation results initially suggest the burial ground did not extend onto the site however one piece of residual disarticulated human bone was retrieved from the infill deposits.
Project dates	Start: 25-09-2017 End: 28-09-2017
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	PTT17 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)
Current Land use	Other 13 - Waste ground
Monument type	WALL Post Medieval
Monument type	DEPOSIT Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Significant Finds	BRICK Post Medieval
Significant Finds	CLAY PIPE Post Medieval
Significant Finds	ANIMAL BONE Post Medieval
Significant Finds	HUMAN BONE Uncertain
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Prompt	Archaeological Priority Area
Position in the planning process	Pre-application

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON SOUTHWARK SOUTHWARK Potter's Field

Postcode	SE1 2SG
Study area	4.5 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 33433 80046 51.503076948572 -0.077291005733 51 30 11 N 000 04 38 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 2.5m Max: 2.5m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	MOLA
Project brief originator	MOLA
Project director/manager	Christina Holloway
Project supervisor	Isca Howell
Type of sponsor/funding body	Client
Name of sponsor/funding body	Potters Fields Development Limited

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	LAA
Physical Archive ID	PTT17
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Human Bones","other"
Digital Archive recipient	LAA
Digital Archive ID	PTT17
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"GIS","Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	LAA
Paper Archive ID	PTT17
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic","Survey","other"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Miscellaneous Material","Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes","Photograph","Plan","Report","Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Potters Fields, London SE1 2SG, Pre-determination Evaluation Report

Author(s)/Editor(s)	Miller, P
Date	2017
Issuer or publisher	MOLA
Place of issue or publication	London
Description	A4 client report by MOLA detailing the results of the archaeological evaluation on the site

Entered by	Pat Miller (pmiller@mola.org.uk)
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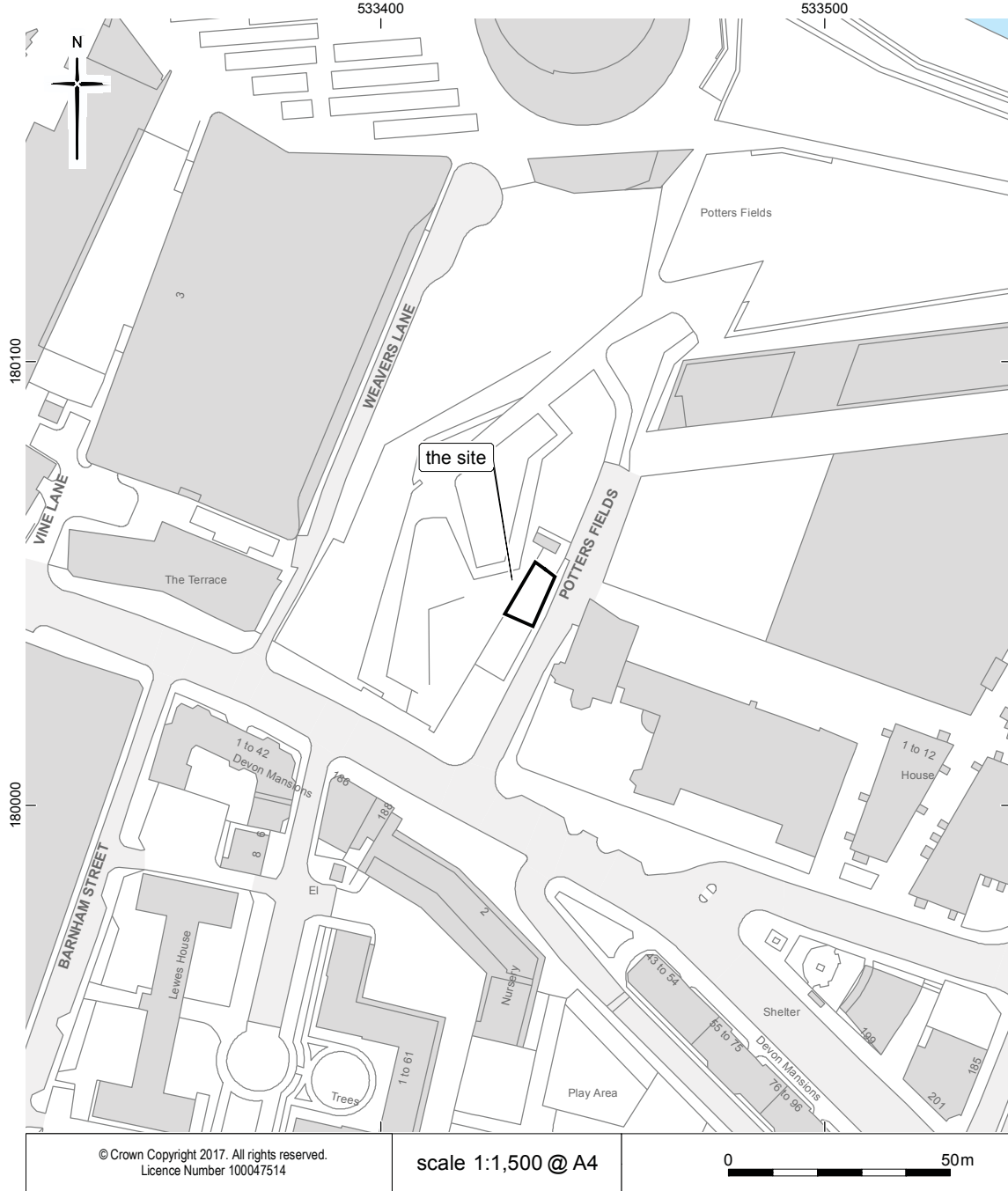
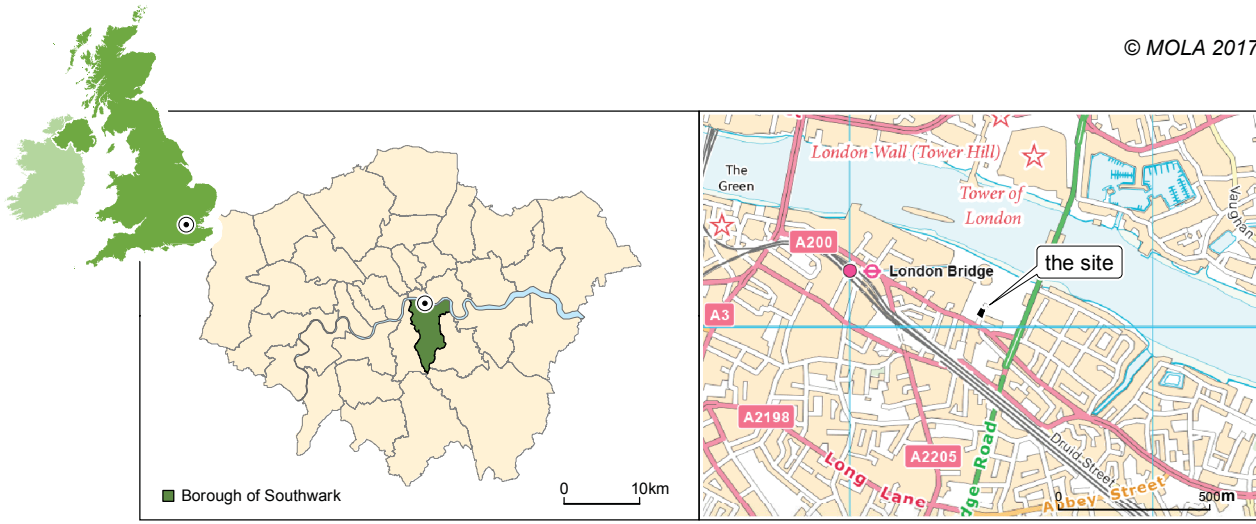
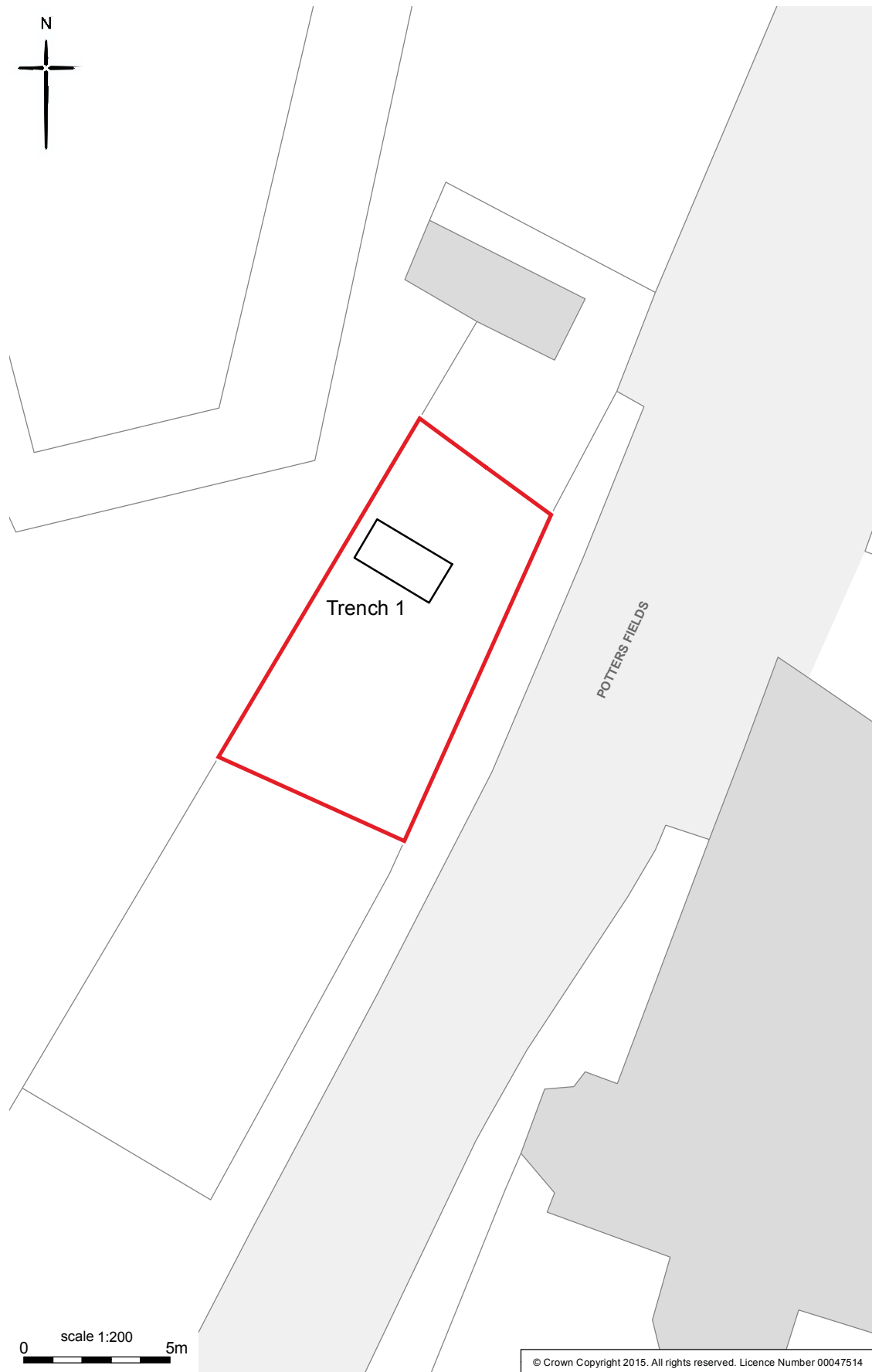


Fig 1 Site location



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Fig 2 Evaluation trench location

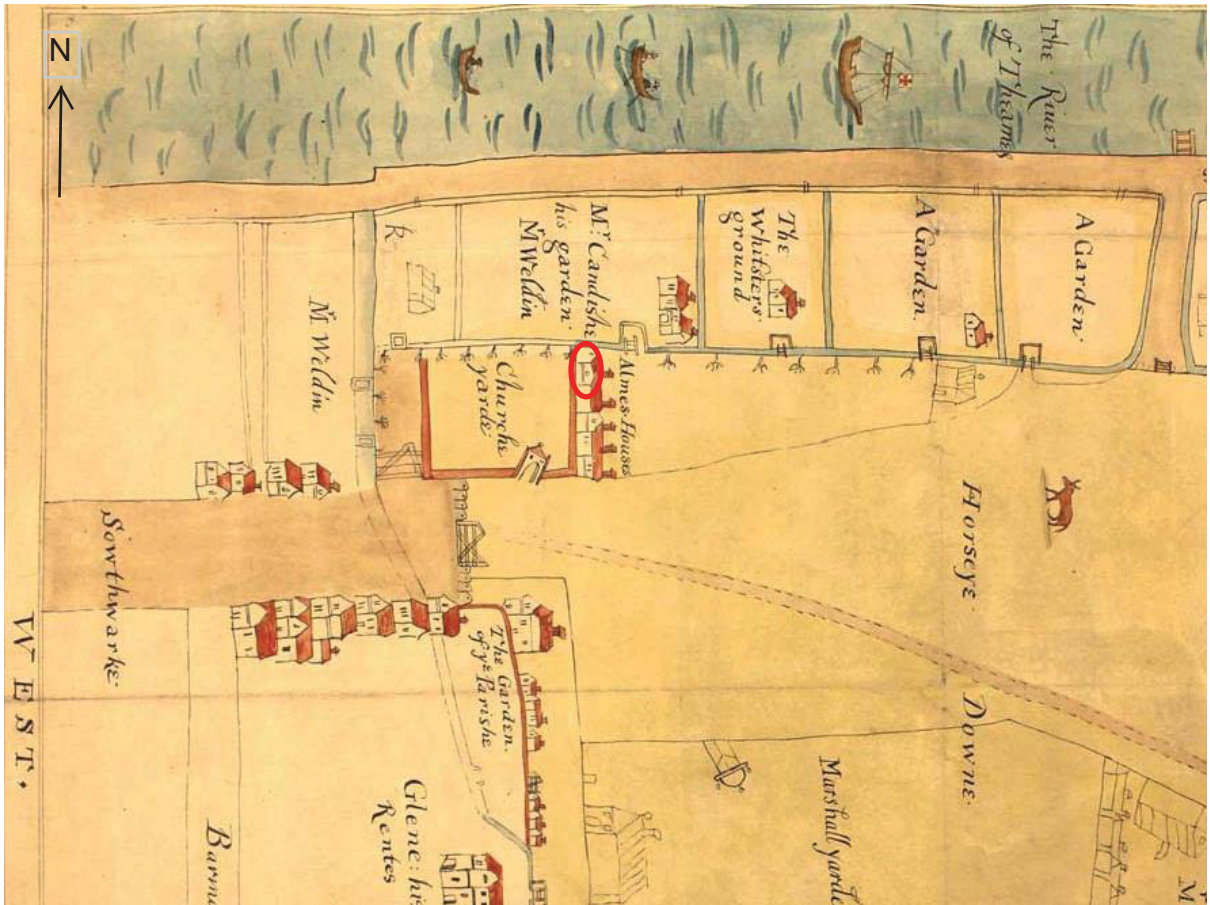


Fig 3 Parish map of Horsleydown, 1544

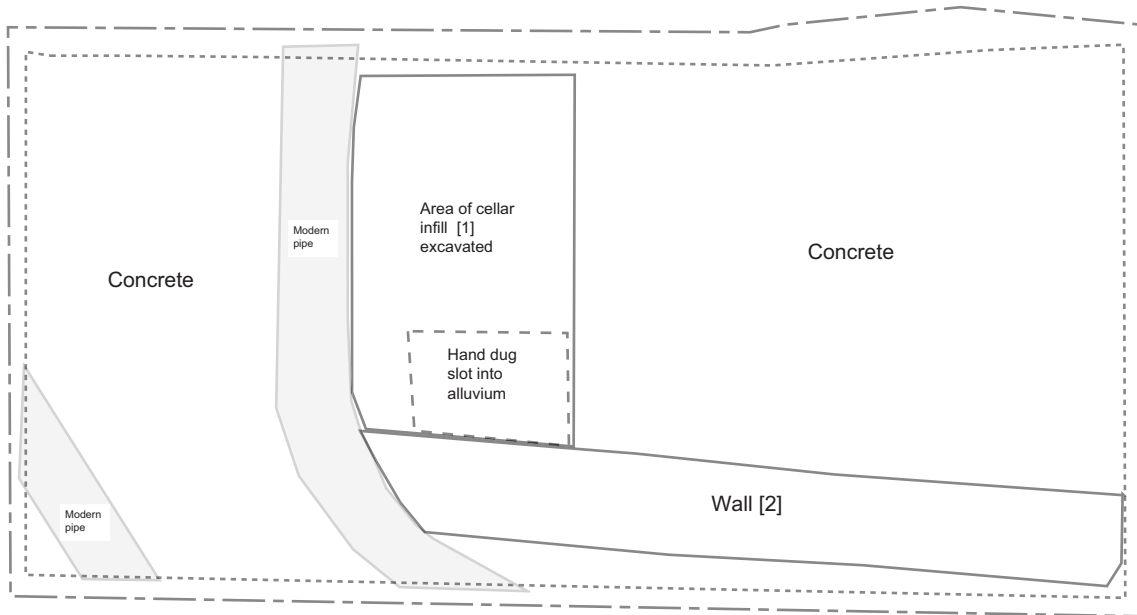


Fig 4 Plan of evaluation trench, scale 1:20



Fig 5 Wall [2] looking south (0.5m scale)

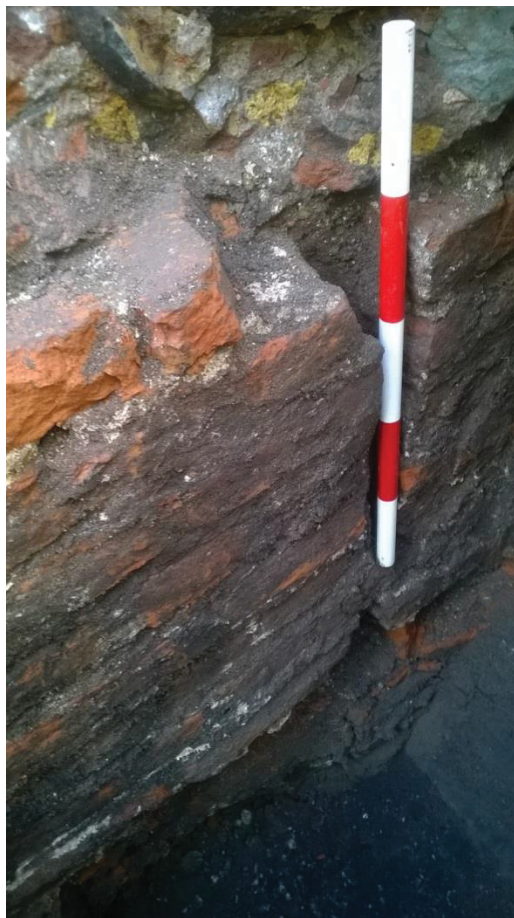


Fig 6 North face of wall [2] (0.5m scale)



Fig 7 Slot through infill [1] and wall [2] in foreground (0.5m scale)