

LAG 24/427



27 & 27a THE GRANGE
Wimbledon
SW19

London Borough of Merton

Archaeological watching brief report

February 2008

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MUSEUM OF LONDON
Archaeology Service

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Site Code: GG108
National Grid Reference: 523741 170925

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Summary (non-technical)

This report has been commissioned by Fleetwood Developments Limited in order to record and assess the results of a watching brief carried out at 27 & 27A The Grange, Wimbledon.

Work on a new residential building was monitored between 7th of February and 21st February.

Modern 20th century deposits were observed overlying the natural ground surface, which was recorded at c53.80mOD. No archaeological features were uncovered on the site.

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Front cover: Site location from Sandford's map of 1862

Fig 1 Site location plan

Fig 2 Trench locations

1 Introduction

1.1 Site background

The watching brief took place at 27 & 27A The Grange, Wimbledon, hereafter called 'the site'. The site is situated to the east Wimbledon common, to the rear of the houses fronting Southside Common (see Fig 1). The centre of the site is at OS National Grid Reference 523741 170925. Modern ground level immediately adjacent to the site is c54.40mOD. The site code is GGI08.

A written scheme of investigation/method statement was previously prepared by MoLAS, which covers the whole area of the site (MoLAS,2008). 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.

1.2 The planning and legislative framework

The legislative and planning framework in which the archaeological exercise took place was summarised in the *Method Statement* which formed the project design for the watching brief (see Section 1.2, MoLAS,2008)

1.3 Planning background

The archaeological watching brief on the site was undertaken in response to an archaeological planning condition placed on the development.

1.4 Origin and scope of the report

This report was commissioned by Fleetwood Developments Limited 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 purpose of the watching brief was to determine whether archaeological remains or features were present on the site and, if so, to record the nature and extent of such remains. A number of more site-specific research aims and objectives were established in the preceding *Method Statement* (2.2), and are outlined in the following section.

The purpose of the present report is to analyse the results of the excavation against the original research aims, and to suggest what further work, including analysis or publication (if any), should now take place.

1.5 Aims and objectives

The following research aims and objectives were established in the *Method Statement* for the watching brief (Section 2.2).

- What is the nature and level of natural topography?
- What are the earliest deposits identified?
- Is there any evidence of prehistoric activity on the site?
- Is there any evidence of Roman activity on the site?
- Is there any evidence of Saxon/medieval activity on the site?
- What are the latest deposits identified?

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

2 Topographical and historical background

The site is located near the top of Wimbledon Hill. Here the surrounding ground is generally level at c 54-55m OD. The underlying geology comprises of sandstone Claygate Beds overlain by terrace gravels, from the Black Park Gravel Formation, which forms an extensive plateau over Wimbledon Hill.

In all cases any cultural (archaeological) deposits will overlay or cut into the geological deposit.

2.1 Archaeological background

The time-scales used in this report are as follows.

Palaeolithic	c 450,000–12,000 BC
Mesolithic	c 12,000–4000 BC
Neolithic	c 4000–2000 BC
Bronze Age	c 2000–600 BC
Iron Age	c 600 BC–AD 43
Roman	AD 43–410
Saxon	AD 410–c 1000
Medieval	c AD 1000–1500
Post-medieval–modern (including industrial)	c 1500–present

1.1.1 Prehistoric

The earliest indication of human activity on Wimbledon Hill comes from finds of Mesolithic and Neolithic date (8000-2500 BC). Evidence for settlement is considerably later, in the form of the substantial earthwork now known as Caesar's Camp. This lies on the Common, approximately 1300m due east of the present site. The earthwork is roughly circular, up to 300m in diameter, and probably dates from the Late Bronze/Early Iron Age (700-600BC).

1.1.2 Roman

The name Caesar's Camp appears to be a 19th century invention and there is no actual evidence to suggest Roman occupation or activity in the immediate vicinity of the site. Artefacts recovered from the Common, and from excavations at Marryat Road and Arthur Road have produced evidence in the form of occasional pot sherds, one of which has been identified as Highgate C Ware (AD70-160).

1.1.3 Saxon and Medieval

There is a possibility that Wimbledon Village was of Saxon origin. A late Saxon

Charter (AD 950) refers to the place name of Wunemannedun. The sites at Maryatt Road, Arthur Road and Claremont House (on the High Street) produced pot sherds dating from the 11th century through to the 15th century. These artefacts were recovered from linear features, thought to be associated with agricultural activity.

By the time of The Domesday Survey (1086) documentary evidence indicated that this area was part of the manor of Mortlake. Considerable agricultural activity is recorded, and it is likely that some of this took place on Wimbledon Common. There is also a reference to the manor church, which may be the site of the current St Mary's Church. Wimbledon Village first appears in the historical record in the 13th century.

1.1.4 Post-medieval-modern

By the later 16th century Wimbledon Village was well established and included amongst its inhabitants several wealthy families. A number of substantial residences were constructed or improved in the following century, notably the Manor House (c1588).

The village underwent only gradual change in size and extent during this period. Rapid growth followed the development of the local railway network in the mid 19th century.

3 The watching brief

3.1 Methodology

All archaeological excavation and recording during the watching brief was done in accordance with the *Method Statement* (MoLAS,2008) and the MoLAS Archaeological Site Manual (MoLAS, 1994).

The heights of observations were recorded relative to Ordnance Datum via the level of the modern pavement level.

The site finds and records can be found under the site code GGI08 in the MoL archive.

3.2 Results of the watching brief

There follows a brief description of the archaeological deposits as recorded.

For all trench locations see Fig 2

<i>Watching Brief Trench 1</i>	
Location	Across whole area of site
Dimensions	8.30m by 13.00m
Modern ground level	C54.40m OD
Base of modern fill	53.80m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	1.80 m
Level of base of deposits observed	52.60m OD
Natural observed	53.80m OD or N/A

The western area of the site was excavated to a depth of 1.80m (52.60m OD) which revealed 0.60m of 20th century made ground, consisting of dark grey silt containing occasional mixed pebbles, charcoal flecks, brick fragments, concrete fragments and mortar flecks. This overlay truncated natural consisting of lenses of pale brown sand and gravel. In the eastern area of the site the ground had been reduced by 0.40m. A service trench had been excavated along the north, east and southern limit of excavation which measured 1.50m deep and 0.60m wide. The sections revealed by the excavation of the service trench showed the same sequence as in the western area.

4 Potential of archaeology

4.1 Original research aims

- What is the nature and level of natural topography?
Sandstone Claygate Beds overlain by terrace gravels.
- What are the earliest deposits identified?
20th century made ground.
- Is there any evidence of prehistoric activity on the site?
There is no evidence of prehistoric activity on site.
- Is there any evidence of Roman activity on the site?
There is no evidence of Roman activity on site.
- Is there any evidence of Saxon/medieval activity on the site?
There is no evidence of Saxon or Mediaeval activity on site.
- What are the latest deposits identified?
The latest deposits on site are 20th century.

4.2 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 researches 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, 2008) 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 4.2) it is suggested that no further action is necessary.

6 Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the following for their contributions and help in producing this report: Fleetwood Developments Limited for commissioning this report, and Paul Sweeney the site manager for his help on site. Thanks also to Diane walls of the Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service for her suggestions and guidance on this project.

7 Bibliography

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8 OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

8.1 OASIS ID: molas1-38354

Project details

Project name watching brief

Short description of the watching brief at 27 27a The Grange, wimbledon project

Project dates Start: 07-02-2008 End: 21-02-2008

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference codes GGI08 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status None

Current Land use Other 13 - Waste ground

Monument type WALLS Modern

Significant Finds NONE Modern

Project location

Country England

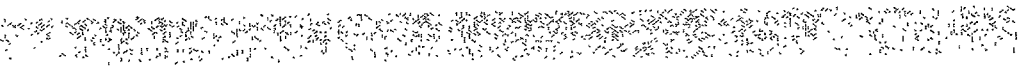
Site location GREATER LONDON MERTON WIMBLEDON AND MERTON 27 and 27a The Grange

Postcode SW19 4PS

Study area 104.00 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 523741 170925 50.9325512020 0.168685328990 50
55 57 N 000 10 07 E Point

Height OD Min: 53.80m Max: 53.80m



Project creators

Name of Organisation MoLAS

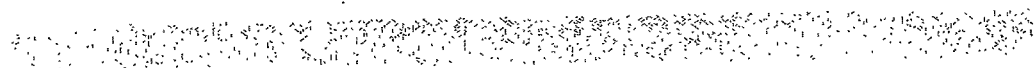
Project brief originator English Heritage/Department of Environment

Project design originator MoLAS

Project director/manager Stewart Hoad

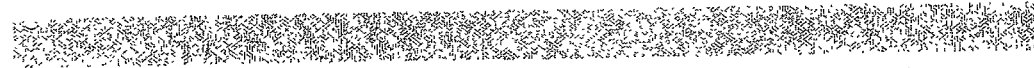
Project supervisor P. Cardiff

Type of sponsor/funding Fleetwood Developments limited
body



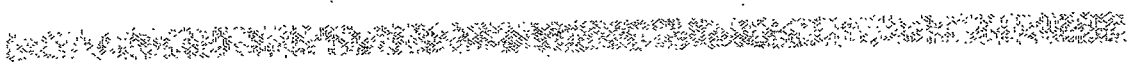
Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No



Entered by P. Cardiff (pcardiff@molas.org.uk)

Entered on 22 February 2008



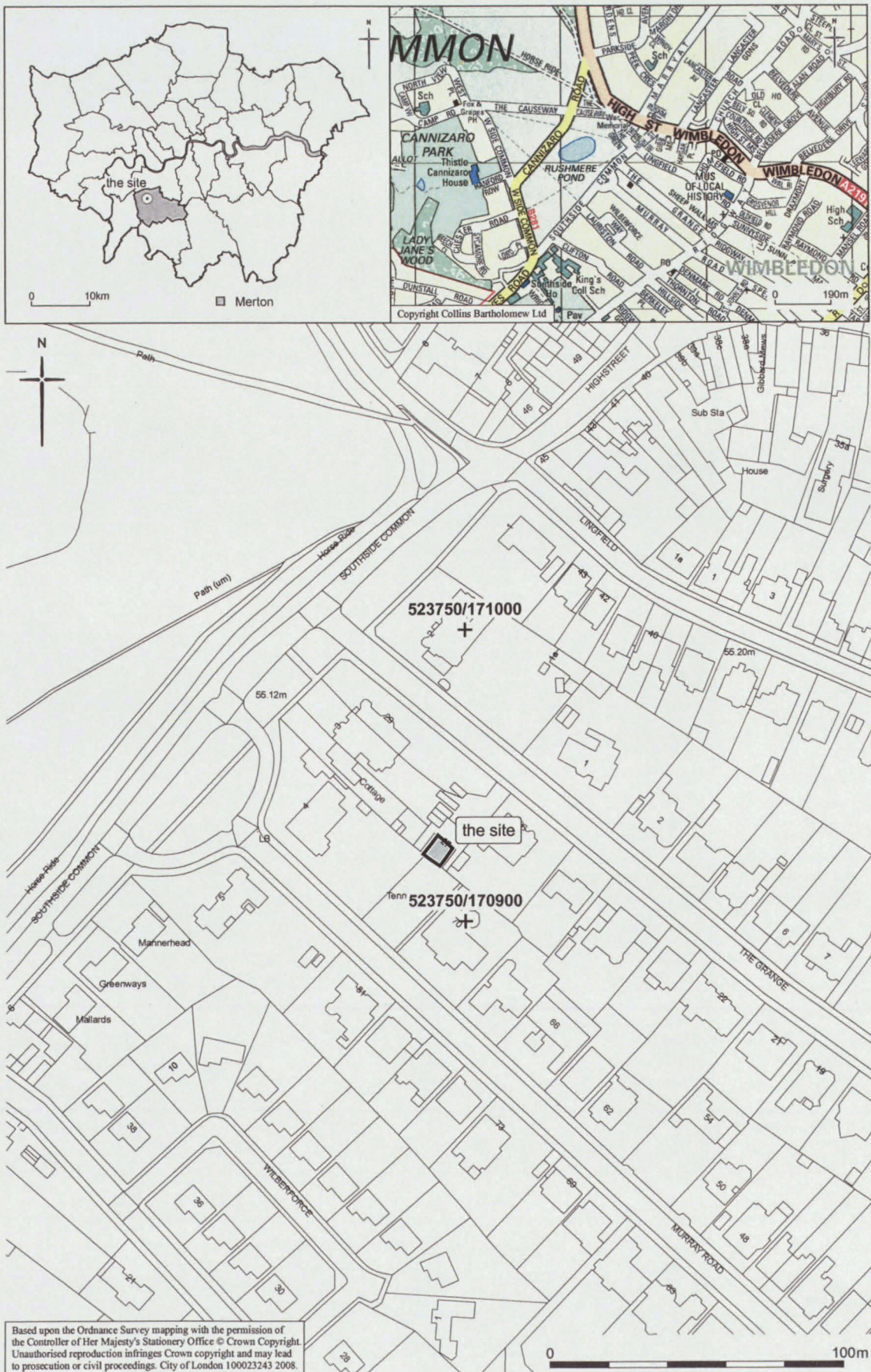
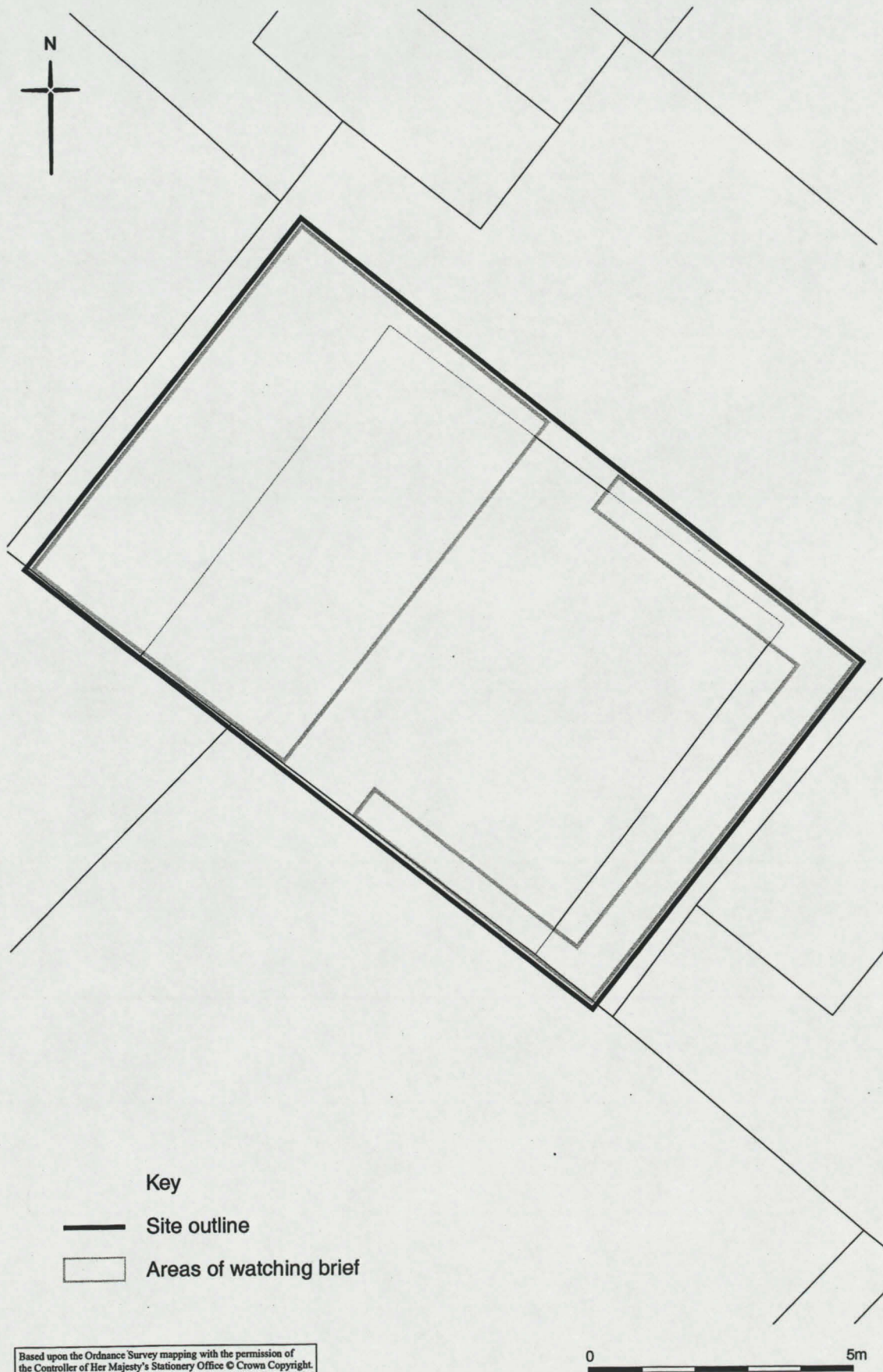


Fig 1 Location map



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Fig 2 Trench location plan