



KICK START SITE 1
Woodberry Down Estate
London N4

London Borough of Hackney

Evaluation report

April 2009

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Evaluation report

Site Code: WBO09

National Grid Reference: 532447 187481

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Summary (non-technical)

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out by Museum of London Archaeology on Kick Start Site One, Woodberry Down Estate, London, N4. The report was commissioned from MOL Archaeology by Berkeley Homes (North East London) Limited.

Following the recommendations of GLAAS on behalf of the local authority four evaluation trenches were excavated on the site

The results of the field evaluation have helped to refine the initial assessment of the archaeological potential of the site. The only archaeological deposits were the foundations of a 19th century building that is seen on the 1894 OS map, and two other brick walls that are probably either garden walls or the remains of garden features such as a green house or gazebo.

In the light of revised understanding of the archaeological potential of the site, the report concludes the impact of the redevelopment will be limited to 19th century brick features within the footprint of the new buildings.

Contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Site background	1
1.2	Planning and legislative framework	3
1.3	Planning background	3
1.4	Origin and scope of the report	3
1.5	Aims and objectives	3
2	Topographical and historical background	4
2.1	Geology and Topography	4
2.2	Prehistoric	4
2.3	Roman	4
2.4	Medieval	4
2.5	Post-medieval	4
3	The evaluation	7
3.1	Methodology	7
3.2	Results of the evaluation	8
3.2.1	<i>Trench 1</i>	8
3.2.2	<i>Trench 2</i>	9
3.2.3	<i>Trench 3</i>	10
3.2.4	<i>Trench 4</i>	11
3.3	Conclusions	11
3.4	Assessment of the evaluation	11
4	Archaeological potential	14
4.1	Realisation of original research aims	14
4.2	General discussion of potential	14
4.3	Significance	14
5	Proposed development impact and recommendations	15
6	Acknowledgements	15
7	Bibliography	16
8	NMR OASIS archaeological report form	17

List of figures

Front cover: Woodberry Down Estate 2009

Fig 1 Site location	2
Fig 2 Areas of investigation	5
Fig 3 1868 OS map	6
Fig 4 1894 OS map	6
Fig 5 Brick foundations in Trench 1	12
Fig 6 Brick walls in Trenches 2 and 3	13

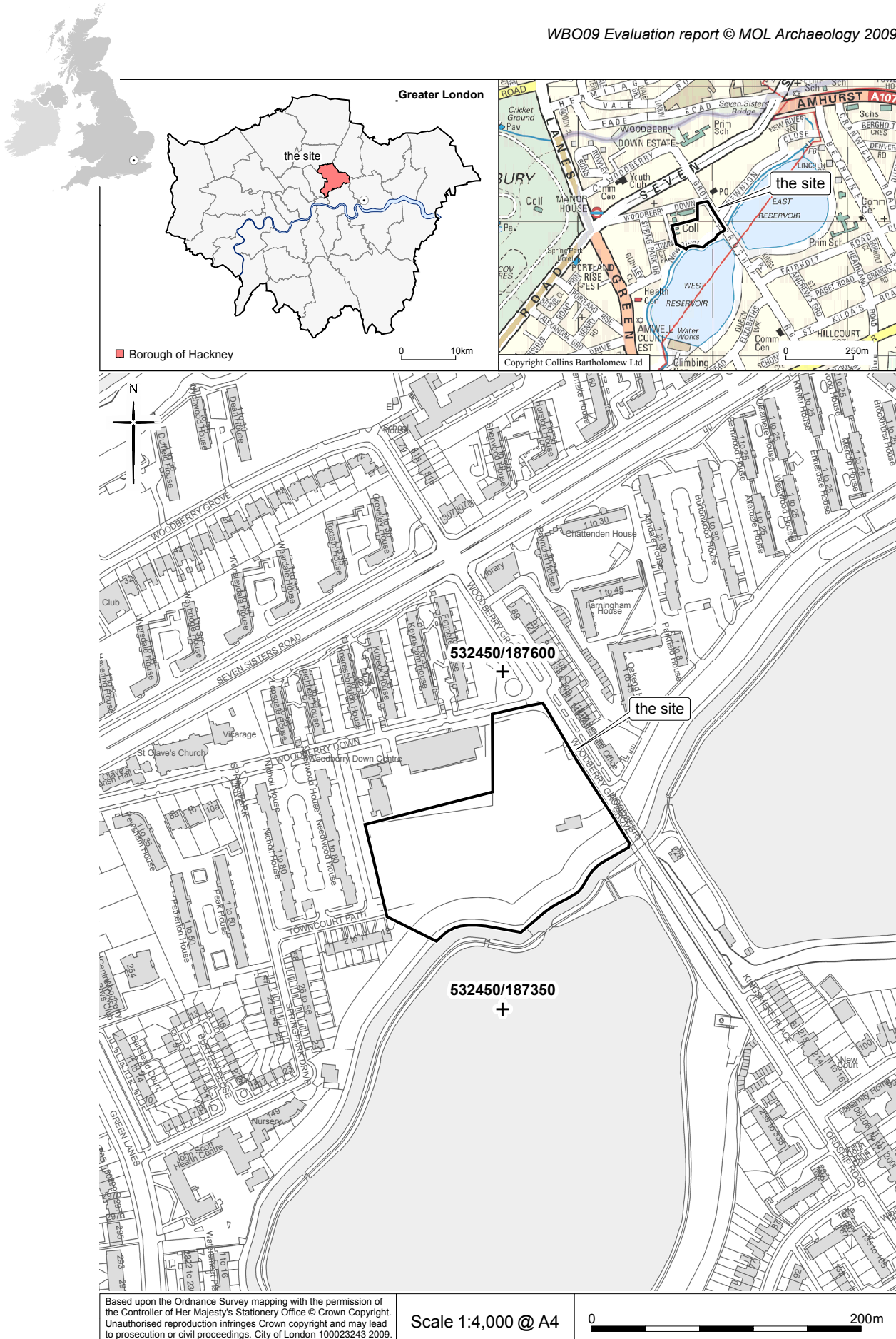
1 Introduction

1.1 Site background

The evaluation took place at 'Kick Start Site 1' Woodberry Down Estate, London, N4.

The site comprises an L-shaped area at the eastern end of Woodberry Down, a road running parallel to Seven Sisters Road. It is approximately 1.5 hectares in size and is bounded by the Community College and Woodberry Down to the north, Woodberry Grove to the east, New River to the south and Town Court Path to the west (Fig 1). The centre of the site lies at National Grid reference 532447 187481. Modern pavement level near to the site lies at c 30.9m OD. The topography of the site itself varies between 32.7m OD at the western edge to 30.7m OD at the eastern extent. The site code is WBO09.

A desk-top *Archaeological assessment* was previously prepared, which covers the whole area of the site (WSP Group 2007). The *assessment* document should be referred to for information on the natural geology, archaeological and historical background of the site, and the initial interpretation of its archaeological potential.



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Scale 1:4,000 @ A4

0 200m

Fig 1 Site location

1.2 Planning and legislative framework

The legislative and planning framework in which the archaeological exercise took place was summarised in the Method Statement (WSP Group, 2007).

1.3 Planning background

This archaeological evaluation was carried out in advance of a proposed development at 'Kick Start Site 1' Woodberry Down Estate, London, N4 as mitigation for a planning condition attached to consent for application No 2007/1841.

1.4 Origin and scope of the report

This report was commissioned by Berkeley Homes (North East London) Limited and produced by the Museum of London Archaeology. The report has been prepared within the terms of the relevant Standard specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (IFA, 2001).

Field evaluation, and the *Evaluation report* which comments on the results of that exercise, are defined in the most recent English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage, 1998) as intended to provide information about the archaeological resource in order to contribute to the:

- formulation of a strategy for the preservation or management of those remains; and/or
- 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
- formulation of a proposal for further archaeological investigations within a programme of research

1.5 Aims and objectives

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 evaluation (Section 2.2):

- What are the earliest deposits identified?
- Is there any evidence for medieval activity?
- Are there remains from 18th- and 19th-century properties?

2 Topographical and historical background

2.1 Geology and Topography

The underlying geology of the area is London Clay, (1:50 000 BGS map 256 North London) that at outcrop has oxidised to a brown colour. Being on a hill there is none of the gravels and Langley Silt cap seen elsewhere in London.

2.2 Prehistoric

Evidence for prehistoric activity in the area is concentrated largely in Stoke Newington, over 1km to the south and in Abney Park cemetery a similar distance to the southeast. This activity has been recorded primarily where gravels exists below the Langley Silt cap. The Woodberry Down Estate is located on a hill where the cap is not present, consequently there are no prehistoric sites close to the site.

2.3 Roman

There are no known Roman sites or artefacts recovered in the vicinity of the site.

2.4 Medieval

There are no known medieval sites or artefacts recovered in the vicinity of the site. Several of the nearby roads such as Seven Sisters Road, Holloway Road and Green Lanes, have there origins in the medieval period. Stoke Newington located 1 km to the south was a village at this time.

2.5 Post-medieval

Running just to the south of the site is the New River. This is an artificial waterway that was begun in 1604 and finally completed in 1613 to bring in a reliable water supply from springs in Hertfordshire and Middlesex to the growing city. This was used until the early 19th century but the capacity became insufficient. This led to the use of two large clay pits to the south as reservoirs (East and West reservoirs) and the completion of a pumping station in 1852.

The Roque map of 1745 shows the area to be rural in character. The area remained open fields until 1814 when an Act of Parliament allowed construction in the area. There was a new road network with New Road (later Woodberry Down) built 1814-21 and Seven Sisters Road in 1832. The 1868 OS map shows large houses with extensive gardens built between Woodberry Down and the New River; though a large plot of land (numbered 36) covering most of the eastern part of the site was still not built upon. Within the gardens there are several small buildings, these are probably greenhouses though they could be other garden structures such as gazebos or tool sheds.

By the time of the 1894 OS map the large plot on eastern part of the site had been subdivided and houses built along the new Woodberry Grove. In the 20th century the area became more urban in character especially once Manor House station was opened in 1932.

Post war the area was being cleared for new housing with the new Woodberry Down Estate being completed in 1952. From the mid 1960's until quite recently there was a school on the site.

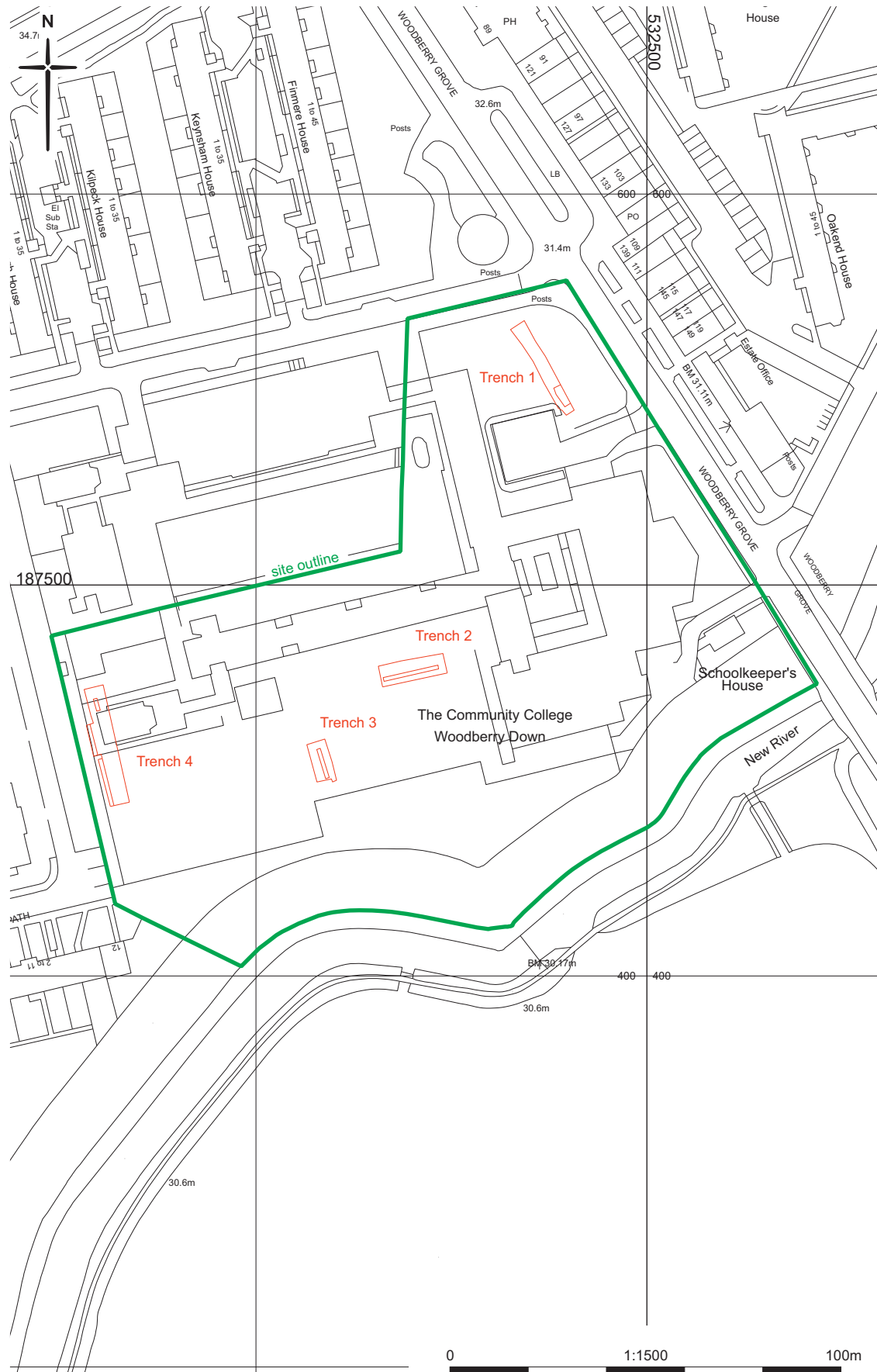


Fig 2 Areas of investigation



Fig 3 1868 OS map

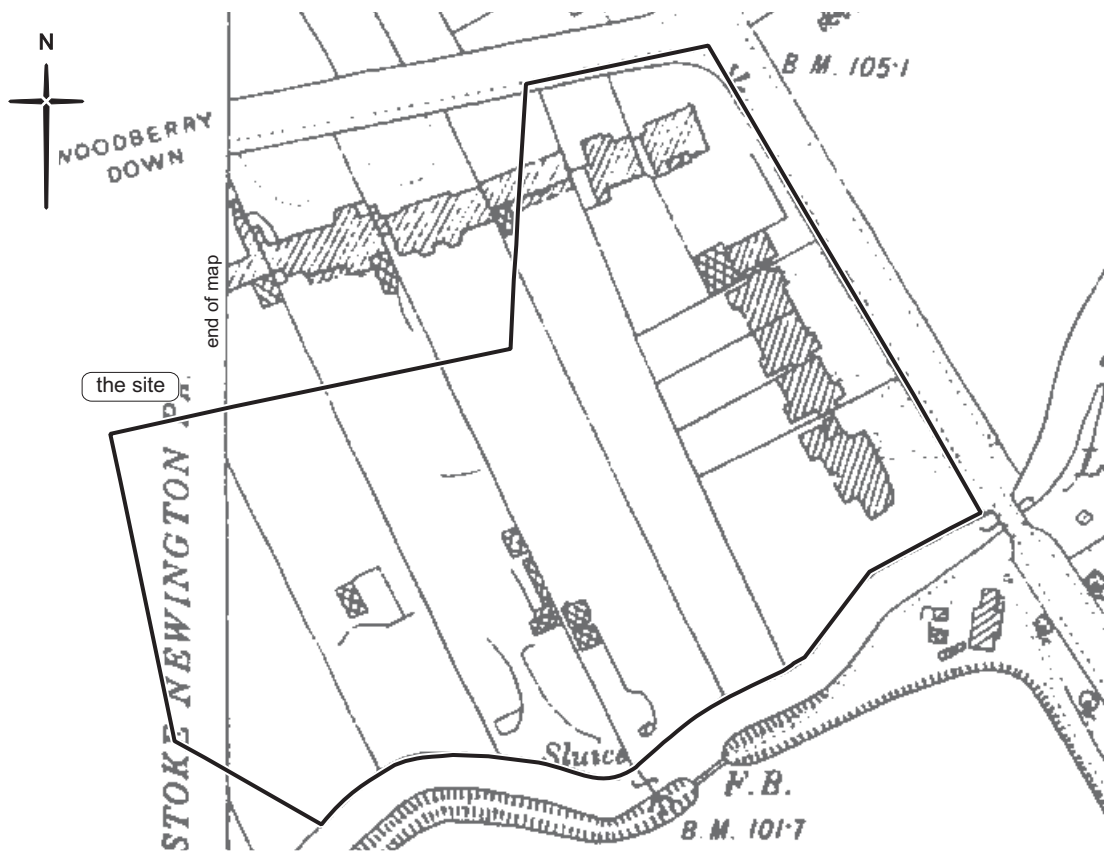


Fig 4 1894 OS map

3 The evaluation

3.1 Methodology

All archaeological excavation and monitoring during the evaluation was carried out in accordance with the preceding *Method Statement* (MOL Archaeology, 2008), and the *Archaeological Site Manual* (MoLAS, 1994).

Four evaluation trenches were investigated.

The ground was cleared using a tracked machine under MOL Archaeology supervision. Trenches were excavated by machine by the contractors, and monitored by a member of staff from MOL Archaeology.

The locations of evaluation trenches were surveyed by MOL Archaeology and this information was then plotted onto the OS grid.

A written and drawn record of all archaeological deposits encountered was made in accordance with the principles set out in the MOL Archaeology site recording manual (MOLAS, 1994). Levels were calculated by using a bench mark of 31.11m OD on Woodberry Grove.

The site has produced: 13 context records; 4 section drawings at 1:20; and 23 photographs. No finds were recovered from the site.

The site records can be found under the site code WBO09 in the MoL archive.

3.2 Results of the evaluation

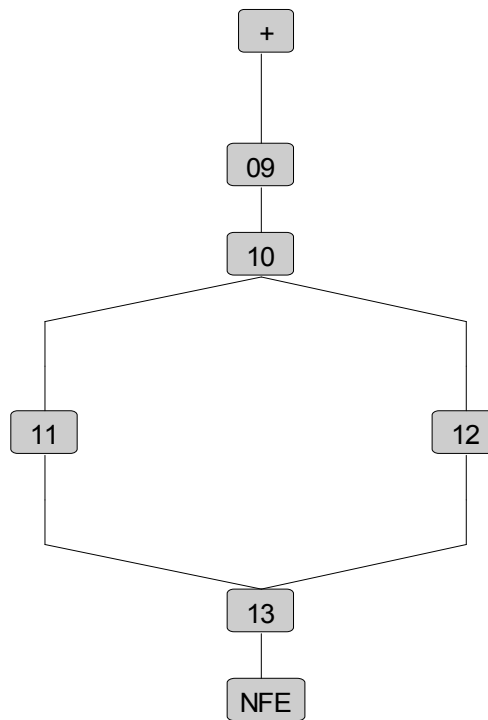
For trench locations see Fig 2.

3.2.1 Trench 1

See fig 5

Evaluation Trench 1	
Dimensions	24m x 5m
Modern ground level	32.10 – 32.16m OD
Thickness of modern deposits	0.50m
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	n/a
Level of base of deposits observed	30.70m OD
Natural observed	31.22m OD

Trench matrix



Stratigraphy

The lowest deposit [13] was natural clay; the highest survival was 31.22m OD at the northern end of the trench. At the southern end it appears to be truncated to a level of 30.70m OD.

Cutting through the clay was a series of late 19th century brick foundations. The majority were all of one build [12], these comprised mid red to orange bricks with shallow frogs and were 102mm broad x 60mm thick x 215mm long. In places a thin layer of slate had been used presumably as a form of damp course. These foundations are probably those of one of the large residential buildings seen in this corner of the site on the 1894 OS map.

There was also another more flimsy wall [11] at 31.40m OD that was different in form to foundation [12] and may represent a later addition to the original building, though so little survived it is difficult to interpret its function.

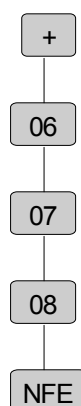
There was a later phase of activity in this trench as both walls [11] and [12] were sealed by a 0.40m thick silty-sand deposit [10] that appears to be a make-up deposit for an overlying brick floor [09] laid at c 31.60m OD. This floor was seen only in the eastern side of the trench and presumably extended further to the east. The bricks were quite distinctive being a yellowish red colour without frogs and were 112mm broad x 75mm thick and on average 190mm long (none appeared to be whole lengths). The floor surface appears to have been laid after the original 19th century building was demolished in the late 1940s/early 1950s which would suggest it was of mid-20th century date.

3.2.2 Trench 2

See fig 6

Evaluation Trench 2	
Dimensions	15m x 5m
Modern ground level	33.44m OD
Thickness of modern deposits	1.25m
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	0.70
Level of base of deposits observed	31.24m OD
Natural observed	32.54m OD

Trench matrix



Stratigraphy

The lowest deposit [08] was natural clay at 32.54m OD and this was over 1.30m deep. Above this there was a deposit of clayey gravel [06] that reached a maximum thickness of 0.70m towards the east. Flecks of coal and building material suggests this deposit was dumped material, possibly to raise the ground surface.

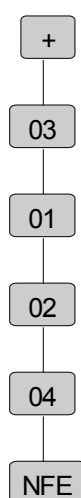
Cutting through the natural clay there was a brick wall [07] running north-west to south-east across the west end of the trench, the highest survival was at 32.92m OD. The bricks were red/orange, unfrogged and measured 100mm broad x 63mm thick x 228mm long forming a 0.40m wide wall. This was either a garden wall or the wall to a garden structure such as a green house or gazebo, both of which can be seen on the 1868 OS map (see fig 3), so is mid-19th century in date.

3.2.3 Trench 3

See fig 6

Evaluation Trench 3	
Dimensions	10m x 5m
Modern ground level	33.08 – 32.93m OD
Thickness of modern deposits	1.10m
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	1.20m
Level of base of deposits observed	30.90m OD
Natural observed	32.40m OD

Trench matrix



Stratigraphy

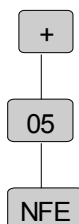
The lowest deposit was [04] natural clay at 32.40m OD, and this was over 1.50m deep. Above this was a gravelly clay deposit [02] that was up to a maximum of 0.50m thick in places. This was sealed by a dark silt deposit [01] that was 0.30 to 0.60m thick. This deposit contained flecks of building material and fragments of slate and coal.

Cutting through [01] was a brick wall [03] that was running north-west to south-east and the highest survival was at 32.95m OD. The bricks were reddish/orange, unfrogged and measured 106mm broad x 65mm thick x 220mm long forming a 0.25m wide wall. This was either a garden wall or the wall to a garden structure such as a green house or gazebo, both of which can be seen on the 1868 OS map (see fig 3), so is mid-19th century in date.

3.2.4 Trench 4

Evaluation Trench 4	
Dimensions	20m x 5m
Modern ground level	32.69 – 33.54m OD
Thickness of modern deposits	0.36m
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	n/a
Level of base of deposits observed	31.09m OD
Natural observed	33.18m OD

Trench matrix



Stratigraphy

Much of this trench was disturbed by modern foundations, resulting in three discontinuous sections. The only deposit in this trench was natural clay [05] the highest survival was at 33.18m OD at the north end of the trench. This deposit was over 2.20 m thick.

3.3 Conclusions

The natural clay found in all the trenches was the weathered London Clay known to underlie the area. The only archaeological features are 19th century in date. The extensive brick wall foundations in trench 1 belong to the houses seen on the 1894 OS map, and the brick walls found in trench 2 and trench 3 are probably those seen in the gardens on the 1868 OS map.

3.4 Assessment of the evaluation

GLAAS guidelines (English Heritage, 1998) require an assessment of the success of the evaluation 'in order to illustrate what level of confidence can be placed on the information which will provide the basis of the mitigation strategy'. In the case of this site, there is a high level of confidence the results of the evaluation reflect the site sequence. The trenches were positioned mainly in the footprint of the new buildings, and the size of the trenches is to allow c 5% of the site to be evaluated.

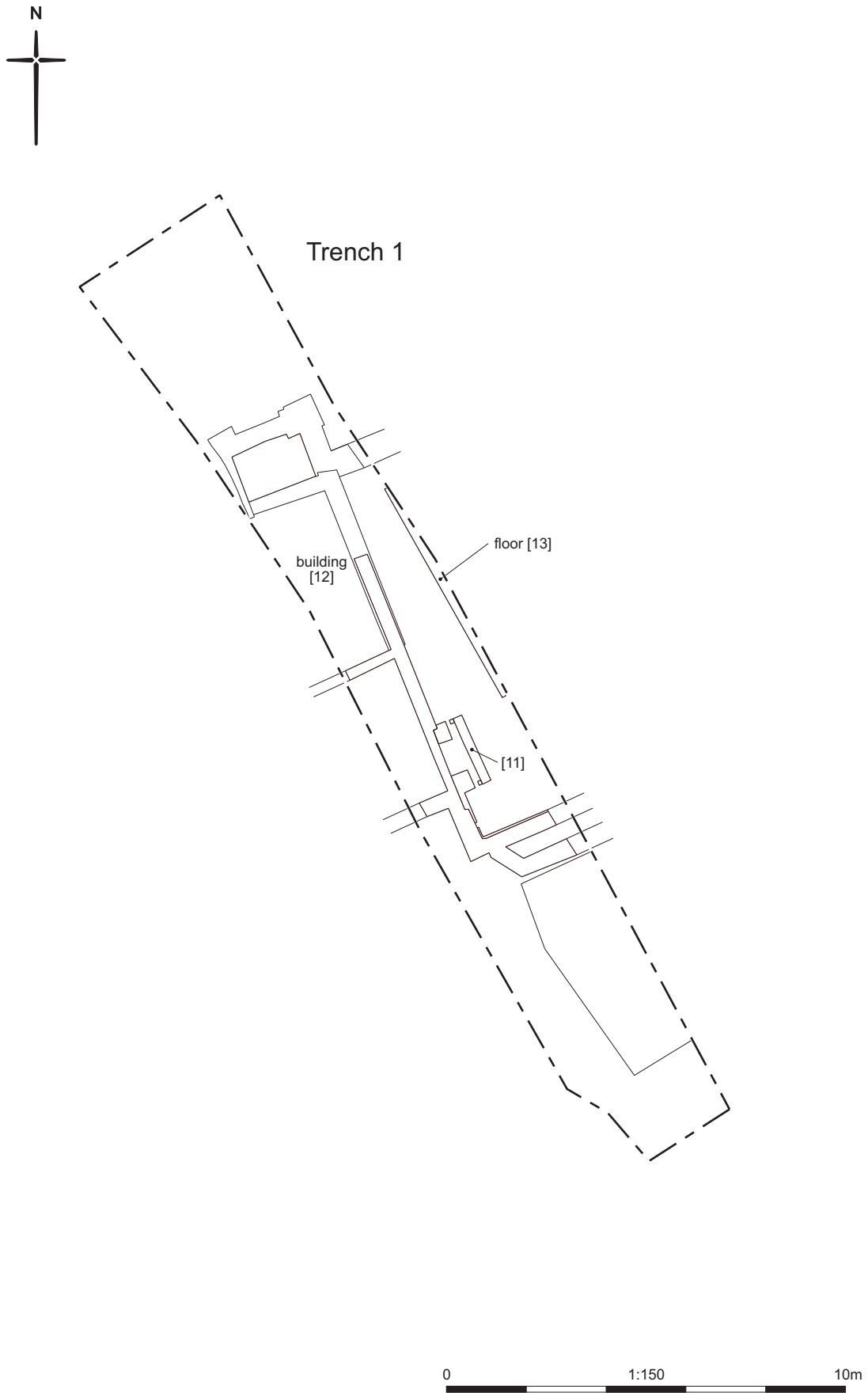


Fig 5 Brick foundations in Trench 1

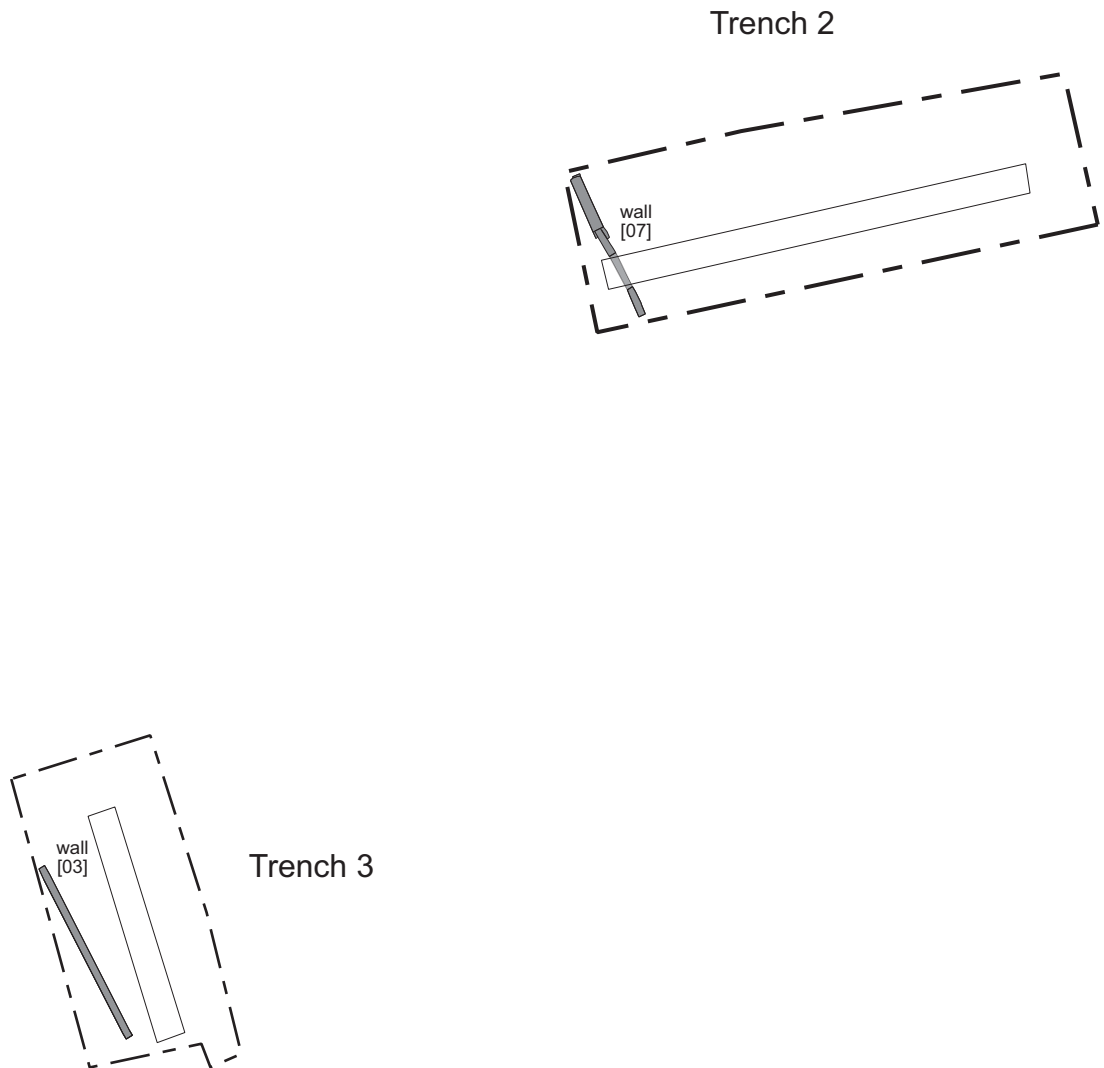


Fig 6 Brick walls in Trenches 2 and 3

4 Archaeological potential

4.1 Realisation of original research aims

- *What are the earliest deposits identified?*

The earliest deposits are 19th century brick walls and foundations.

- *Is there any evidence for medieval activity?*

There is no evidence of medieval activity.

- *Are there remains from 18th- and 19th-century properties?*

There are remains of a 19th century house and two brick walls from garden features - these can be seen on the 1868 and 1894 OS maps.

4.2 General discussion of potential

The evaluation has shown that the potential for survival of ancient ground surfaces (horizontal archaeological stratification) on the site is low. There is some potential for the survival of brick foundations. However such survival is likely to be limited to areas nearest the roads.

4.3 Significance

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

5 Proposed development impact and recommendations

The proposed redevelopment at Site 1, Woodberry Down Estate involves the construction of seven residential housing blocks. The impact of this on any surviving archaeological deposits will be to remove them.

The assessment above (Section 4) does not suggest that preservation *in situ* would be the only appropriate mitigation strategy. MOL Archaeology considers that the remaining archaeological deposits are not of sufficient archaeological to warrant any further site investigation.

The final decision on the appropriate archaeological response to the deposits revealed rests with the Local Planning Authority and their designated archaeological advisor.

6 Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Ian Southern (Coinford), Berkeley Homes (North East London) Limited for commissioning this archaeological evaluation, and David Divers of English Heritage Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service. The project was managed by Derek Seeley at MOL Archaeology.

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8 NMR OASIS archaeological report form

OASIS ID: molas1-57459

Project details

Project name	Site 1 Woodberry Down Regeneration
Short description of the project	Four trenches were investigated. The only archaeological deposits were the foundations of a 19th century building that is seen on the 1894 OS map, and two other brick walls that are probably either garden walls or the remains of garden features such as a green house or gazebo.
Project dates	Start: 16-03-2009 End: 20-03-2009
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	WBO09 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Monument type	WALLS Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
Position in the planning process	Not known / Not recorded

Project location

Country England

Site location	GREATER LONDON HACKNEY HACKNEY Woodberry Down Estate, Hackney
Postcode	N4
Study area	1.50 Hectares
Site coordinates	TQ 32447 87481 51.5701309684 -0.08869256950210 51 34 12 N 000 05 19 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 31.00m Max: 33.00m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	MOL Archaeology
Project brief originator	Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service
Project design originator	MOL Archaeology
Project director/manager	Derek Seeley
Project supervisor	Tony Mackinder
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Berkeley Homes (North East London) Limited
Project archives	
Physical Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC

Project bibliography

1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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