Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION:
SOUTHBRIDGE PLACE
CROYDON
LONDON

NGR: TQ 3209 6495

on behalf of Hexagon Housing Association

Carina Summerfield-Hill BA MSc

August 2009

ASC: 1207/CSP/2

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Site Data

ASC project code:	CSP	*ASC project no:*	1207
OASIS ref:	archaeol2-62040	*Event/Accession no:*	SOV09
County:	London Borough of Croydon		
Village/Town:	Croydon		
Civil Parish:	Croydon		
NGR (to 8 figs):	TQ 3209 6495		
Extent of site:	755 sq m		
Present use:	Car Parking		
Planning proposal:	Residential Development		
Planning application ref/date:	07/02104/P		
Local Planning Authority:	London Borough of Croydon		
Date of fieldwork:	10/08/09		
Commissioned by:	Eldridge Blexley Limited 173 Coulsdon Road Caterham Surrey CR3 5NU		
Client:	Hexagon Housing Association 130-136 Sydenham Road Sydenham London SE26 5JY		
Contact name:	Alec Welsh (Eldridge Bexley Limited)		

Internal Quality Check

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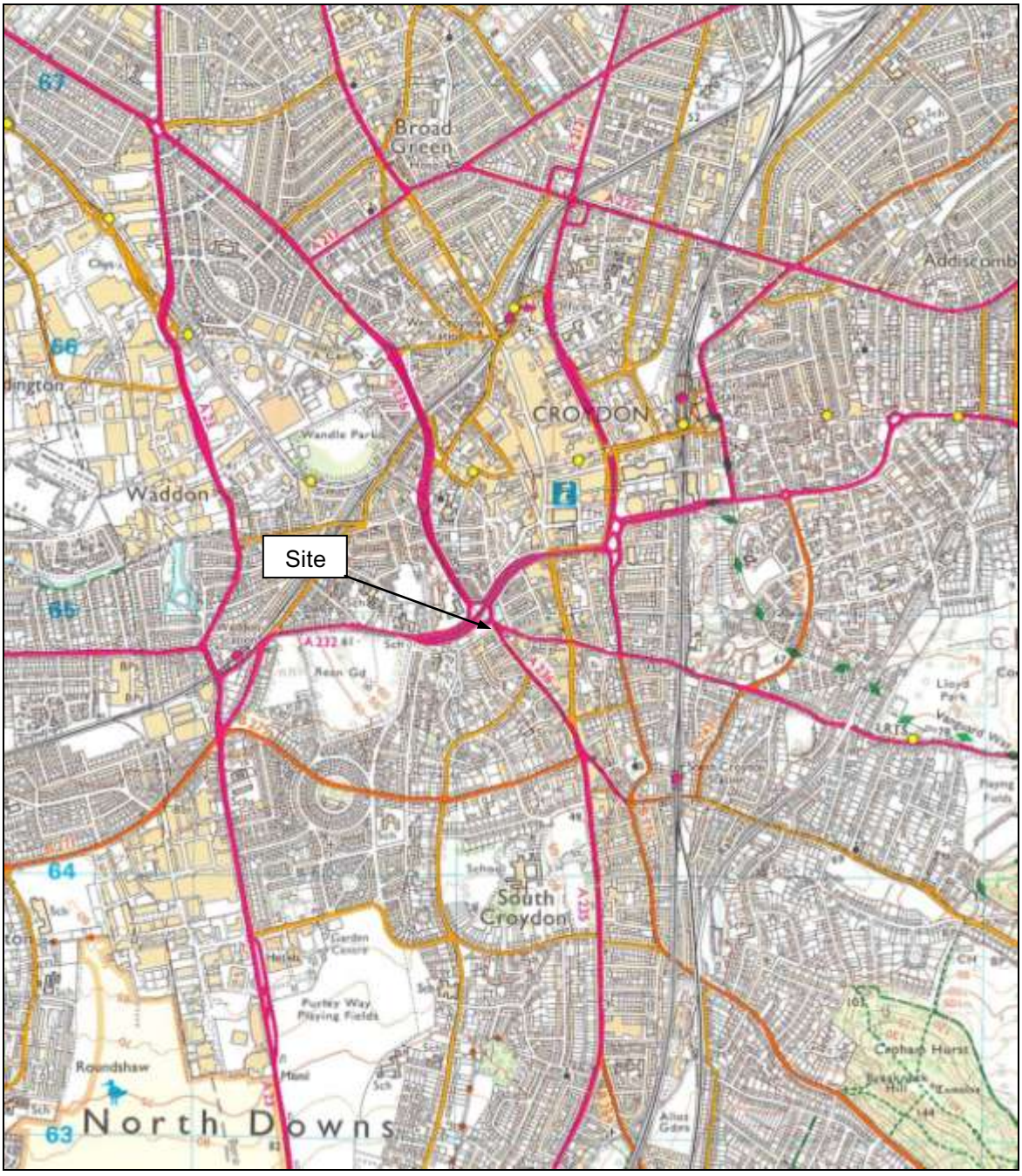


Figure 1: General location *(scale 1:25,000)*

Summary

In August 2009 an evaluation was carried out at Southbridge Place, Croydon, London, prior to redevelopment of the site for residential use. Two evaluation trenches were excavated uncovering a modern linear feature likely to be a footing trench or pipe trench, a modern circular pit-like feature thought to be construction related and a further small pit feature likely to be the base of a modern rubbish pit. The evaluation revealed no deposits or finds of archaeological significance.

1. Introduction

1.1 In August 2009 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out an evaluation at Southbridge Place, Croydon, London. The project was commissioned by *Hexagon Housing Association*, and was carried out according to the requirements of the *Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service* (GLAAS), archaeological advisors to the local planning authority (LPA), *London Borough of Croydon,* and a project design prepared by ASC (Cuthbert 2009). The relevant planning application reference is 07/02104/P.

1.2 ***Planning Background***

This evaluation was required under the terms of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (PPG16), as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site.

1.3 ***Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd***

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd (ASC) is an independent archaeological practice providing a full range of archaeological services including consultancy, field evaluation, mitigation and post-excavation studies, historic building recording and analysis. ASC is recognised as a *Registered Organisation* by the Institute for Archaeologists, in recognition of its high standards and working practices.

1.4 ***Management***

The project was managed by Karin Semmelmann BA MA MIFA and was carried out under the overall direction of Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

1.5 ***The Site***

1.5.1 *Location & Description*

The site is situated close to Croydon town centre, in the London Borough of Croydon (Fig. 1). It lies at the east end of Southbridge Place, at its junction with Lower Coombe Street and Davenant Road (Figs. 2 & 3) and is centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference TQ 3209 6495.

The site comprises an area of 755 sq m and currently serves as a car park for staff and visitors to the *Victoria House Pupil Referral Unit*, which lies immediately to the west.

1.5.2 *Geology & Topography*

The site is situated in an urban area and the natural soils have not been mapped in detail. The soils are likely to have been disturbed during previous phases of construction and also during terracing operations. The natural soil profile is unlikely to have survived. The underlying geology comprises Hackney Gravels overlying Upper Chalk (BGS, Sheet 270).

A service plan has been issued by the developers and indicates the presence of a water pipe that is located at the east end of the site. Other unknown services may exist.

1.5.3 *Proposed Development*

The development proposal comprises the construction of a four-storey block of flats covering an area of 400 sq m, with associated car parking and services (Fig. 3).

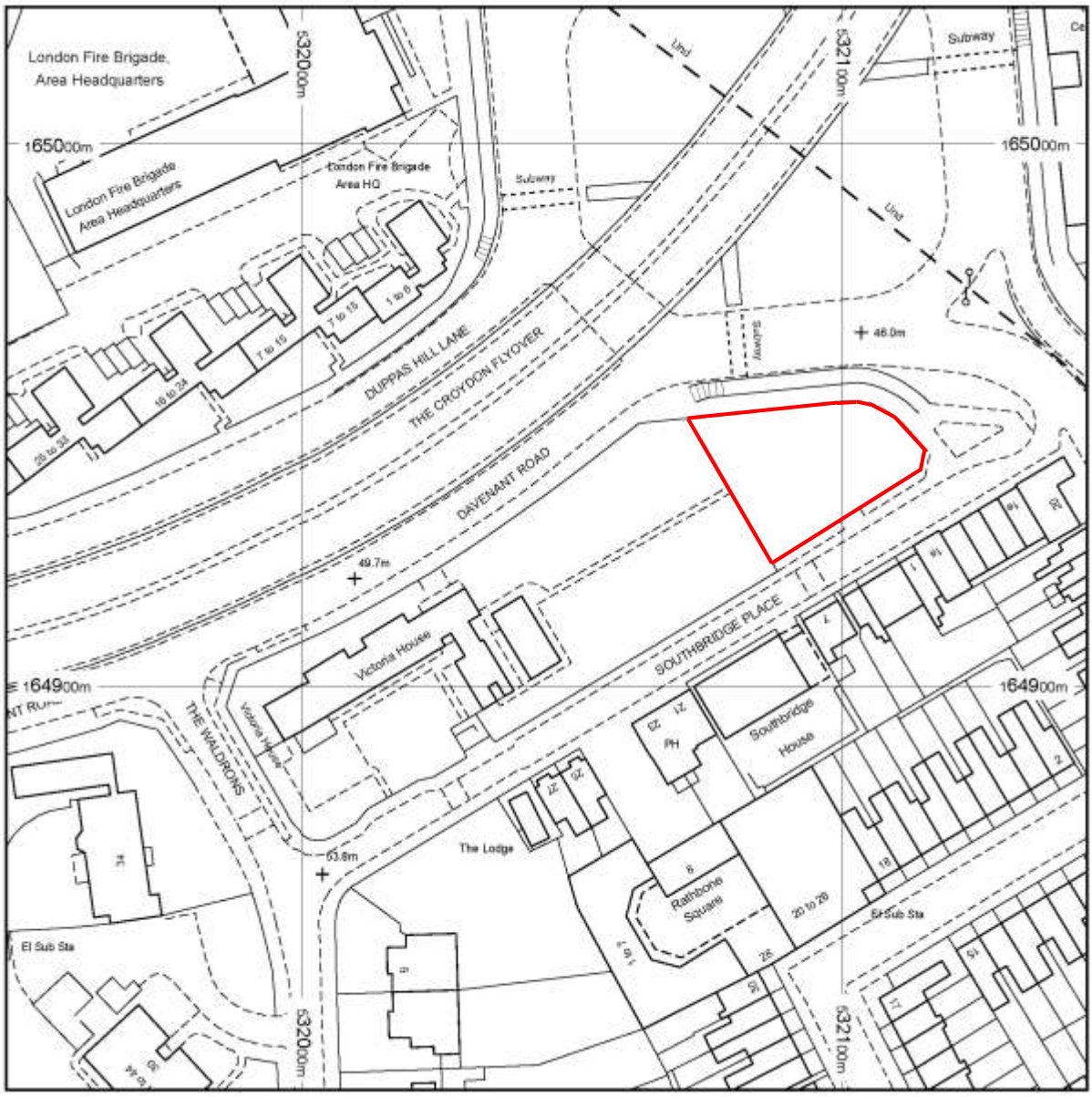


Figure 2: Site plan *(scale 1:1250)*

Figure 3: Plan of proposed development *(scale 1:500)*

2. Aims & Methods

2.1 *Aims*

In line with the requirements of GLAAS, the aims of the evaluation were:

- To determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains

2.2 *Standards*

The work conformed to the requirements of project design, to the relevant sections of the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001) and *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000a), to English Heritage guidelines (EH 1991, EH 2006), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual.*

2.3 *Methods*

In line with the requirements of GLAAS, the methods to be adopted for this project were:

- All machine excavation was carried out under the direct supervision of an experienced archaeologist;
- An appropriate machine was used, fitted with a wide, toothless ditching bucket, and where necessary, for instance the removal of modern obstacles (e.g. concrete slabs) a toothed bucket and/or breaker was employed;
- The machine was used to remove topsoil or recent overburden down to the first significant archaeological horizon;
- A 5% sample, equal to *c.*20 linear metres of trial trenching, was excavated within the footprint of the proposed development. Trench locations are shown in Fig. 4.

2.4 *Constraints*

No constraints were placed on the work.

3. Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 The following section provides a summary of the readily available archaeological and historical background to the development site and its environs. The site lies within an area of archaeological and historical interest, and has the potential to reveal evidence of a range of periods.

This section has been compiled with information from: Fell, D. Desk-based assessment: Southbridge Place, Croydon; SMR = GLAAS Sites and Monuments Record number.

3.2 ***Prehistoric*** *(before 43AD)*
Croydon was probably an area of considerable importance during the early prehistoric periods. Little large-scale archaeological work into this period has taken place in the immediate vicinity, but a number of finds of Neolithic date have been recorded. These include an area on Purley Way, south of the site, where evidence for cooking or boiling liquids was recorded (Cotton 2004, 25) and a Neolithic arrowhead (SMR 23305), which was recorded *c.*200m west of the site, on Duppas Hill Lane. Further prehistoric flint implements have been recorded *c.*300m northeast of the site, on Charles Street and on Nottingham Road *c.*400m to the south.

3.3 ***Roman*** *(AD43-c.450)*
There is an increasing corpus of information to suggest that there was a small settlement in the area of what is now Croydon town centre during the Roman period. A Roman road is recorded running through Croydon, which linked *Londinium* (London) with the site at Hassocks, in Sussex (Bird & Bird 1987, fig.7.7). The presence of this road has been recorded immediately east of the site, on Lower Coombe Street (SMR 15116).

The centre of the Roman site has not been identified, but settlement may have developed either side of the Roman road. A number of finds of this period have been made around the site, notably a hoard of 182 coins, at South End *c.* 400m south of the site (SMR 18796). Further coins and also pottery sherds have been recorded in the area (*e.g.* SMR 9057, 12308, 12373, 12383) and Bird (1987, 169) suggests that this implies the presence of '*more than a farm or hamlet'*.

3.4 ***Saxon*** *(c.450-1066)*
The early development of Croydon is not understood in detail, but the town may have originated during the Saxon period. It may have been the site of a Minster Church (Blair 1991, 92) and a synod was held at Croydon in 809 (*ibid*, 103). The nucleus of the Saxon and early medieval settlement was to the northwest of the site, centred on the site of the Church of St John. This area is often referred to as the '*Old Town'*.

There is evidence for Saxon activity to the east of the site, along Park Lane and Edridge Road. A Saxon period cemetery, comprising forty-three inhumations was recorded at 82-90 Park Lane (SMR 76750; Welch 1997; MoL 2002, 51) and further early Saxon burials have been recorded in Edridge Road (SMR 24037; MoL 2000, 182). It is not clear whether these burials formed part of a single cemetery serving the *Old Town*, or we're associated with a separate settlement, further to the east.

3.5 ***Medieval*** *(1066-1500)*

The settlement is mentioned in the Domesday Survey (1086), where it is referred to as *Croindene*. The land was held by *Archbishop Lanfranc* and contained a church and a mill. It was assessed as 80 hides, but prior to the Norman Conquest had been assessed at 16 hides (Williams & Martin 2003, 73).

The medieval parish church of St John was situated *c.*700m north of the site. This was originally a medieval building and a number of monuments from the 16th century survive within the building. Much of the fabric was destroyed by fire in 1867 and the church was largely rebuilt, to a design by Sir Gilbert Scott (Cherry and Pevsner 2002, 208-209).

There is little evidence for medieval activity in the area adjacent to what was to become Southbridge Place and the area probably comprised open ground, part of the common field, to the south of the town.

3.6 ***Post-Medieval*** *(1500-1900)*

Settlement along the present High Street, which is situated *c.*300m north of the parish church, probably developed from the 18th century. A post-medieval cross, found at the junction of the High Street and Lower Coombe Street (SMR 7378) indicates the boundary of the post-medieval settlement.

The development of the site commenced in the first half of the 19th century. The site formed part of two land parcels. The boundary between the two parcels crossed the centre of the site and a detached house occupied the east end of the southern land parcel.

The first edition large scale Ordnance Survey map of the area was published in 1868 and shows the site in detail. A house in the southeast part of the site is shown, and had a formal garden to the rear. A number of linear buildings occupied the north part of the site, part of a larger group of buildings, extending towards Duppas Hill Lane, and were probably factories or commercial buildings.

3.7 ***Modern*** *(1900-present)*

The character of the site changed during the early decades of the 20th century, when a large square building was constructed in the centre of the site. This was labelled "warehouse" on the 1954 edition map and was probably demolished during the second half of the 20th century. The site is currently used as a car park.

4 Results

4.1 *General*

Two trial trenches targeted the proposed development area (Fig. 4), both of which were excavated down to the natural strata. The evaluation findings are summarised below. Detailed descriptions of the trial trenches and their contents are provided in Appendix 1.

4.1 **Trench 1** (Figs. 4-6: Plates. 1-4)

The trench was aligned east to west and measured 15m in length, 2m in width, and 1.3m in depth. The stratigraphy consisted of:

- 0.0 – 0.36m – Tarmac and brick rubble sub-base
- 0.36 – 1.26m – Made-ground (100), comprised of dark brown, loose, silty soil, with frequent small angular/sub-angular stones, bricks and sand
- 1.26m+ - Natural (105): light orangey brown, loose, sandy gravel with frequent medium-large sub-angular/rounded flint nodules

At the western end of the trench a modern linear feature [101] was excavated, orientated NW-SE. It measured 0.9m in width, >2.2m in length, 0.5m in depth and extended beyond the limit of excavation. Its fill (102) consisted of very dark greyish brown, loose, clayey silt, similar to the made-ground, and contained modern building debris. The feature is likely to be a modern footing trench or pipe trench, cut into the natural strata.

To the west of [101], a further modern circular pit-like feature [103] was excavated. It measured 1.70m in width, >1.5m in length, >1.1m in depth and extended beyond the limit of excavation. Its fill (104) consisted of dark brown, loose sandy silt, with modern pottery, animal bone, modern ceramic building material, glass, wire, concrete, and clay pipe. The feature is likely to be construction related; a machine cut feature of some sort cut into the natural strata. The made-ground overlying both features had slumped down into [103]: the fill was very loose and was a result of backfilling.

4.2 **Trench 2** (Figs. 4-6: Plates. 5 & 6)

The trench was aligned north to south and measured 5m in length, 2m in width, and 1.0-1.2m in depth. The stratigraphy consisted of:

- 0.00 - 0.33m – Tarmac and rubble sub-base
- 0.33 - 0.39m – Made-ground (200): dark brown, loose, silty, with frequent small angular/sub-angular stones, bricks and sand.
- 0.39m+ - Natural strata (203): light orangey brown, loose, sandy gravel with frequent medium-large sub-angular/rounded flint nodules.

Towards the northern end of the trench a modern small circular pit-like feature was excavated [201]. This measured 0.5m in width, 0.5m in length, and 0.1m in depth. Its fill (202) consisted of very dark grey/black, soft, silty clay with flecks of charcoal and modern metal fragments. The feature is likely to be the base of a modern rubbish pit cut into the natural strata.

Plate 1: Trench 1, looking east

Plate 2: Stratigraphy of trench 1, looking north

Plate 3: Northwest section of modern linear feature [101]

Plate 4: South facing section of modern pit-like feature [103]

Plate 5: Trench 2, looking south

Plate 6: West facing section of modern small pit-like feature [201]

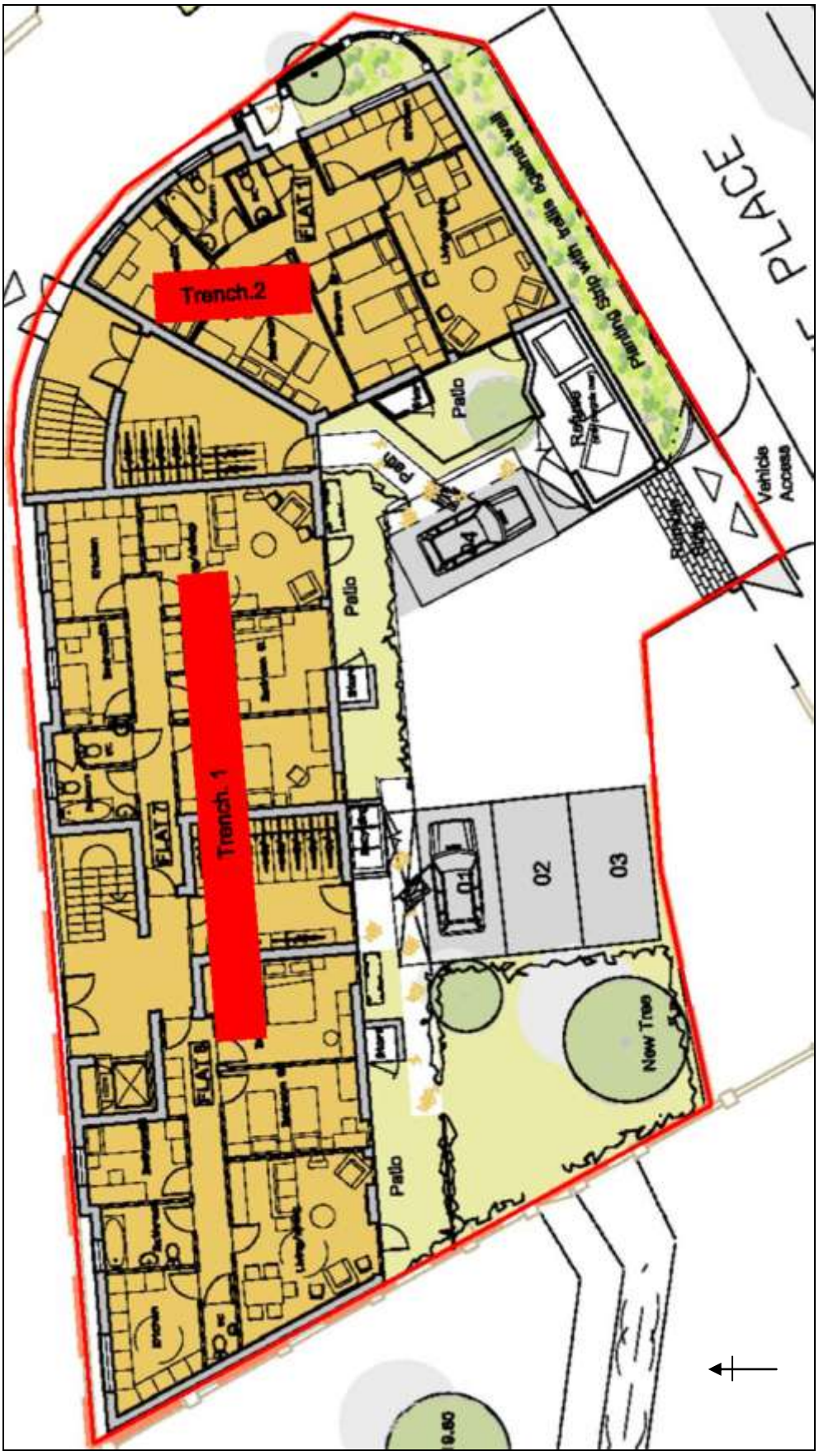


Figure 4: Trench locations *(scale 1:200)*

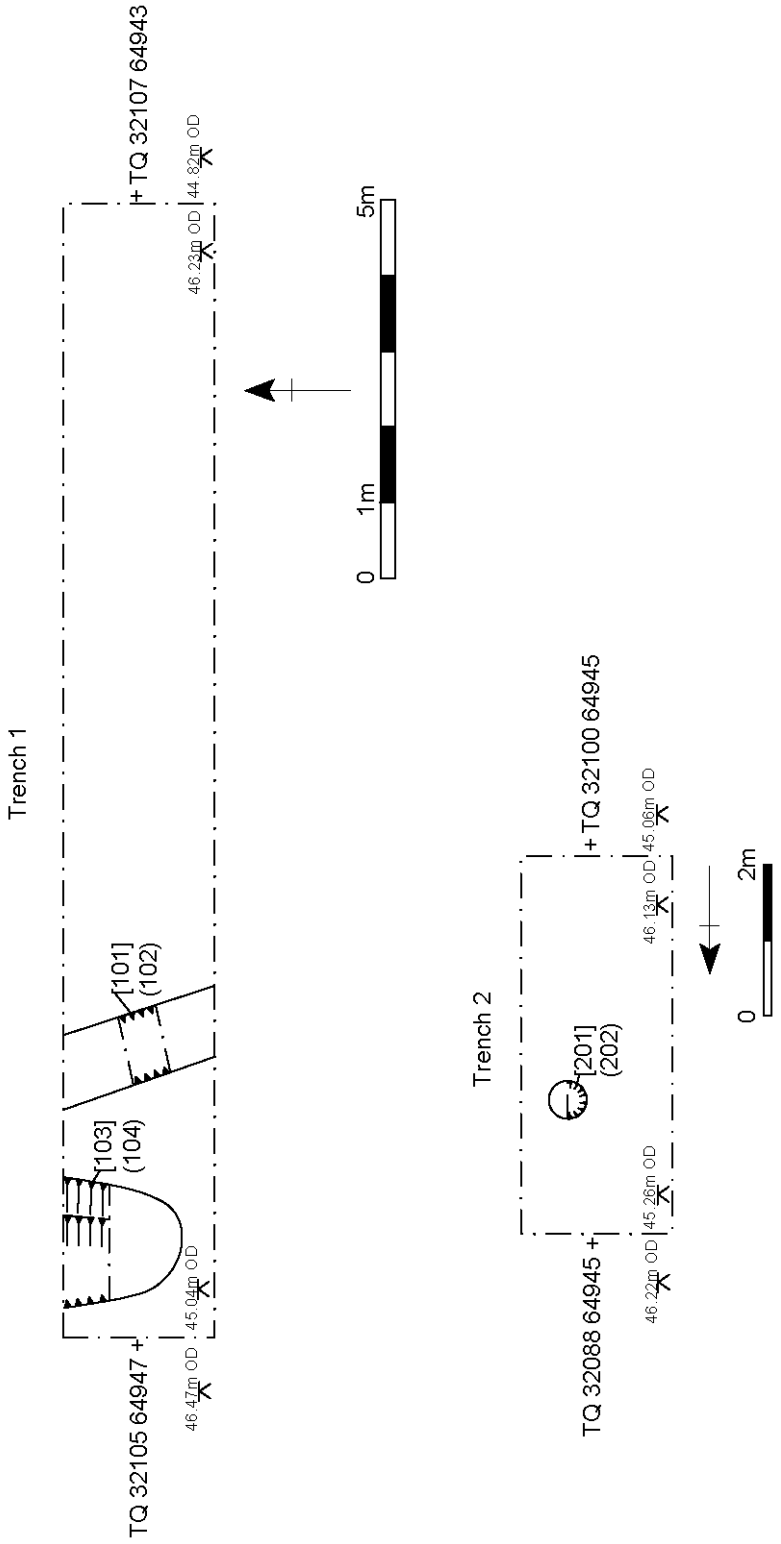
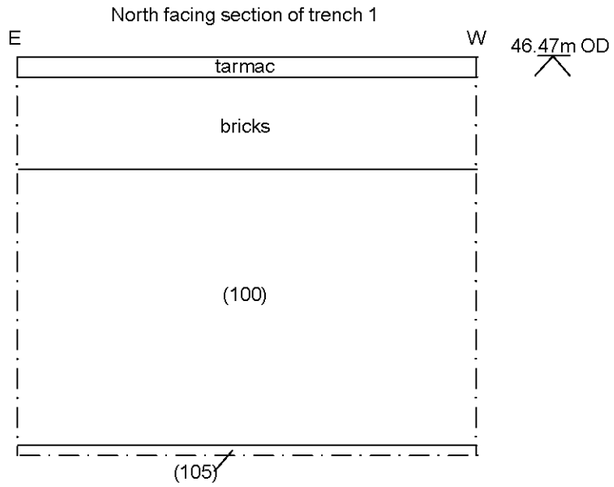
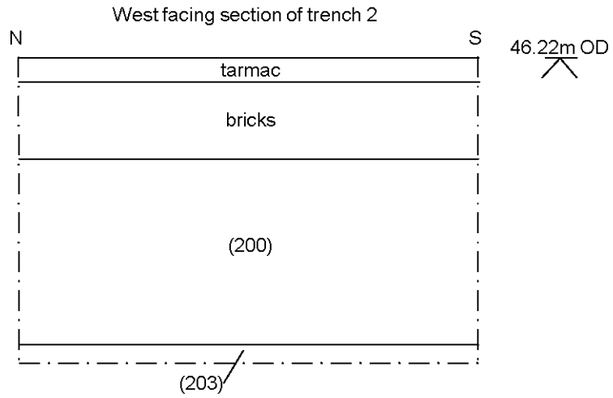
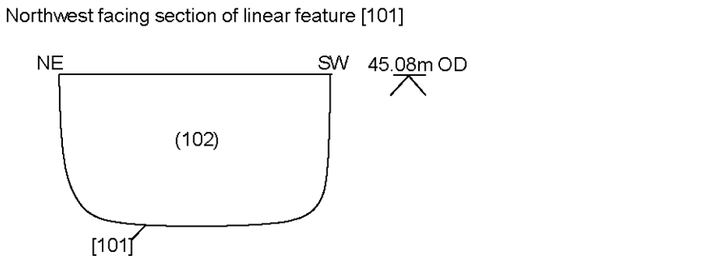
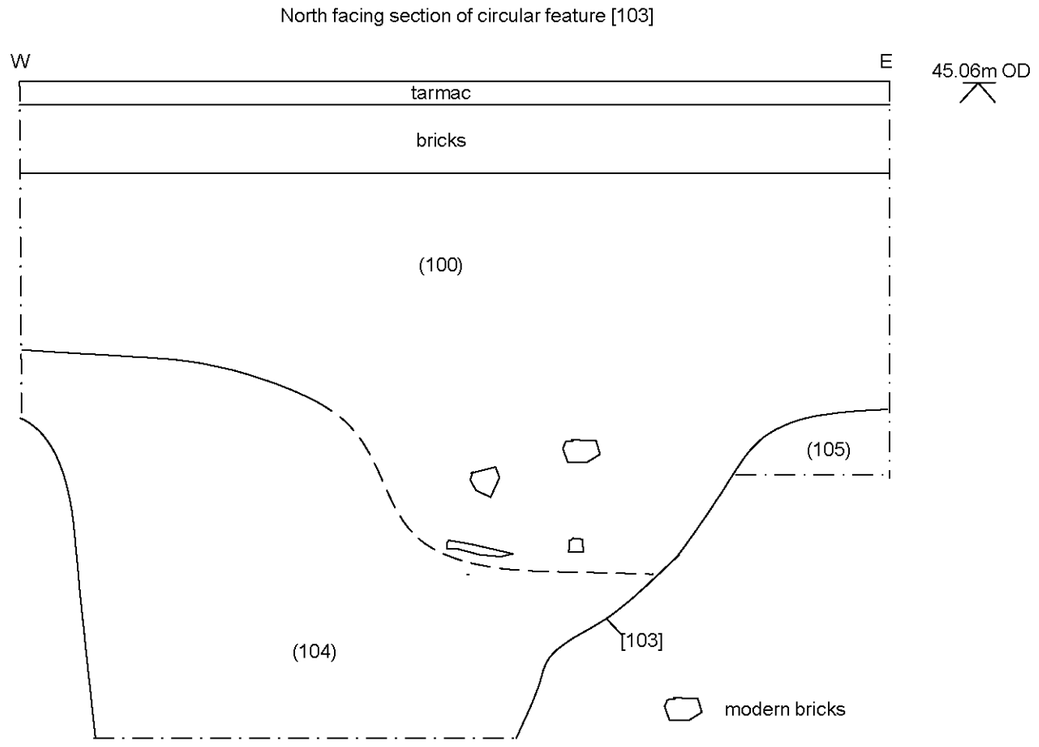


Figure 5: Plan of trenches 1 and 2 *(scale 1:100)*









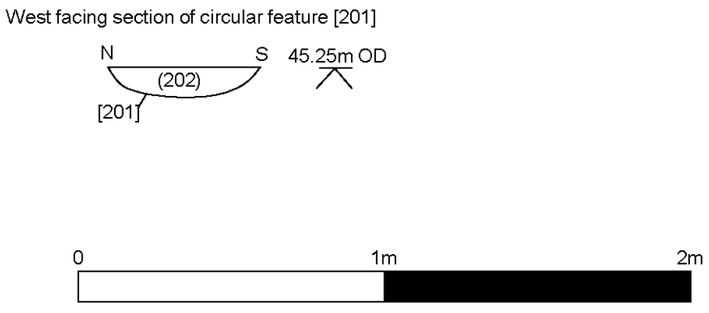


Figure 6: Section drawings *(1:20)*

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5. Conclusions

5.1 The site has the potential to reveal archaeological occupation evidence from the prehistoric to the post-medieval periods. However, no archaeological features or deposits were observed in either of the trenches. This indicates that the development area may be beyond settlement activity, and thus provides more information regarding site boundaries.

5.2 While the existence of individual isolated archaeological features away from the trenches cannot be specifically excluded, it is unlikely that large numbers of archaeological features were present on the site. It is unlikely that the proposed development will have a significant impact on archaeological remains.

5.3 ***Confidence Rating***
The work was carried out in good conditions and the results can be given a high confidence rating.

6. Acknowledgements

The evaluation was commissioned by *Hexagon Housing Association*. The writer is grateful to *Eldridge Bexley Ltd* for their assistance. The project was monitored by *Greater London Archaeological Service* (GLAAS) on behalf of the local planning authority.

The project was managed for ASC by Karin Semmelmann MA MIFA. Fieldwork was carried out by David Kaye BA AIFA and Carina Summerfield-Hill BA MSc. The report was prepared by Carina Summerfield-Hill and edited by Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

7. Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Project Design
2. Initial Report
3. Clients site plans
4. Site records
5. Site record drawings
6. List of photographs
7. B/W prints & negatives
8. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with *London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre* (SOV09).

8. References

Standards & Specifications

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Appendix 1: Trench Summary Tables

Trench 1

Max Dimensions (m)					
Length	15m	**Width**	2m	**Depth**	1.3m

Levels	
Trench base west	45.04m OD
Trench top west	46.47m OD
Trench base east	46.23m OD
Trench top east	44.82m OD

NGR Co-ordinates			
E	TQ 32107 64943	**W**	TQ 32105 64947
Orientation	E-W		
Reason for Trench	Evaluation		

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL:mm)
(100)	Deposit	Dark brown, loose, silty, frequent small angular/sub-angular stones, bricks and sand – Made-ground.	2m	900mm	0mm
[101]	Cut	Linear in plan, square in section, shear break of slope at base/top, sheer sides, flat base, nw-se orientation – Footings or pipe trench.	900mm	500mm	900mm
(102)	Fill	Very dark greyish brown, sandy silt, loose, slate brick flint <100mm – fill of [101].	900mm	500mm	900mm
[103]	Cut	Circular in plan, east side: moderate break of slope at top/gradual at base; west side: sharp break of slope at top/unknown at base, east side: gradual sloping and stepped side; west side: vertical side, base unknown as feature not fully excavated – Construction related, machine cut of some sort.	1.70m	>1.10m	900mm
(104)	Fill	Dark brown, loose/soft, clay silt, frequent small rounded, sub-rounded/angular stone, flint inclusions, flecks of ceramic building material and charcoal, finds: modern pottery, bone, ceramic building material, glass, wire, concrete, clay pipe – fill of [103].	1.70m	>1.10m	900mm
(105)	Deposit	Light orangey brown, loose, sandy gravel, frequent medium-large sub-angular/rounded flint nodules – Natural strata.	2m	/	1.3m

Trench 2

Max Dimensions (m)					
Length	5m	**Width**	2m	**Depth**	900mm-1.2m

Levels	
Trench base north	45.26m OD
Trench top north	46.22m OD
Trench base south	46.13m OD
Trench top south	45.06m OD

NGR Co-ordinates			
N	TQ 32088 64945	**S**	TQ 32100 64945
Orientation		N-S	
Reason for Trench		Evaluation	

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL: mm)
(200)	Deposit	Dark brown, loose, silty, frequent small angular/sub-angular stones, bricks and sand – Made-ground.	2m	600mm	300mm
[201]	Cut	Circular in plan, shallow break of slope at top/base, curved sides, flat base – Base of modern rubbish pit?	500mm	100mm	900mm
(202)	Fill	Very dark grey/black, soft, silty clay with flecks of charcoal and modern metal fragments, flint <60mm – fill of [201].	500mm	100mm	900mm
(203)	Deposit	Light orangey brown, loose, sandy gravel, frequent medium-large sub-angular/rounded flint nodules – Natural strata.	2m	300mm	900mm

Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAME: Southbridge Place, Croydon, London			**SITE NO/CODE:** 1207/CSP
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1	√	√	Trench 1, looking east
2		√	Trench 1, looking east
3	√	√	North facing section of trench 1
4		√	North facing section of trench 1
5		√	North facing section of trench 1
6		√	North facing section of trench 1
7	√	√	Trench 2, looking south
8		√	Trench 2, looking south
9	√	√	NW facing section of linear feature [101]
10		√	NW facing section of linear feature [101]
11	√	√	West facing section of modern small pit-like feature [201]
12		√	West facing section of modern small pit-like feature [201]
13	√	√	South facing section of modern circular feature [103]
14		√	South facing section of modern circular feature [103]

Appendix 3: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	Southbridge Place, Croydon, London		
Short Description:	In August 2009 an evaluation was carried out at Southbridge Place, Croydon, London during a residential development. Two evaluation trenches were excavated uncovering a modern linear feature likely to be a footing trench or pipe trench, a modern circular pit-like feature thought to be construction related and a further small pit feature likely to be the base of a modern rubbish pit. The evaluation revealed no deposits or finds of archaeological significance.		
Project Type: (indicate all that apply)	Evaluation		
Site status: (eg. none, SAM, Listed)	None	Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	Unknown
Current land use:	Car parking	Future work: (yes / no / unknown)	Unknown
Monument type:	N/A	Monument period:	N/A
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	London Borough of Croydon	OS reference: (8 figs min)	TQ 3209 6495
Site address: (with postcode if known)	Southbridge Place, Croydon, London, CRO 4HA		
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	755 sq m	Height OD: (metres)	46.23m
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	GLAAS	Project design originator:	Martin Cuthbert BA PIFA
Project Manager:	Karin Semmelmann MA MIFA	Supervisor:	David Kaye BA AIFA
Sponsor / funding body:	Hexagon Housing Association		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	10/08/09	End date:	10/08/09
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (SOV09)	B&W prints and negatives	
Paper:		Site records, report, site plans	
Digital:		Images, report	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Southbridge, Croydon, London		
Serial title & volume:	ASC Ltd Report ref. 1207/CSP/2		
Author(s):	Carina Summerfield-Hill BA MSc		
Page nos	24	Date:	20/08/09