

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF LAND AT  
103-103A PALACE ROAD, EAST MOLESEY, SURREY**

***Summary***

*An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by the Surrey County Archaeological Unit (SCAU) on the site of a proposed residential redevelopment at 103-103a Palace Road, East Molesey. The work was recommended by a preliminary archaeological assessment which identified the site as having good to high archaeological potential partly due to its proximity to a site of multi-period activity from the Neolithic to the Early Saxon period at Hurst Park. No features of archaeological interest were revealed within the three trenches excavated in the garden of the development site. The trenches revealed evidence for modern disturbance of the site. The only finds of interest recovered from the site were a stray sherd of 14<sup>th</sup> century pottery and two pieces of burnt flint from trench 1. Due to the negative findings of the evaluation it is recommended that no further archaeological work is necessary in association with this development.*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The Surrey County Archaeological Unit (SCAU) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at 103 and 103A Palace Road, East Molesey, on the site of a proposed residential redevelopment, on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2007 (fig 1). The written scheme of investigation undertaken by SCAU in August 2007 (Shaikhley 2007, 11) recommended the archaeological evaluation as the next stage of work. The assessment identified the site as having good to high archaeological potential, in part due to its location only c200m south of a site of multi-period activity, from the Neolithic to Early Saxon period, at Hurst Park (Shaikhley 2007, 3).

1.2 SCAU were commissioned to undertake the archaeological evaluation by English Courtyard Developments Ltd.

## **2.0 METHODOLOGY**

2.1 A total of three trial trenches were excavated within the garden of the development site using a 360° tracked excavator with a 1.5m wide toothless ditching bucket (fig 2). The location of the trenches was adjusted slightly from the pattern agreed prior to the start of the work in order to avoid the line of services running across the site. Trench 1 was 15m long and trenches 2 and 3 were 20m long; all three trenches were 1.5m wide.

2.2 The machining of the trial trenches was carefully watched for the occurrence of any features of archaeological interest, and the spoil heaps were scanned for any artefacts.

## **3.0 RESULTS**

3.1 No features of archaeological interest were revealed within any of the trenches. A few finds were recovered from disturbed levels within trench 1 including a medieval green-glazed sherd of Surrey whiteware pottery of c14th century date, two pieces of burnt flint of possible prehistoric date, and two iron nails of unknown date. A few stray finds

of 19<sup>th</sup> century date, including fragments of pottery, tile and brick were recovered during the machining of trench 3.

3.2 The stratigraphy revealed within the three trial trenches varied slightly, but all three revealed evidence of modern disturbance.

3.3 Trench 1 was excavated to a depth of 0.80-0.90m and was crossed by three inactive service pipes. The stratigraphy observed was 0.60m disturbed dark grey-brown sandy loam, over 0.30m dirty mid-brown sand, over natural mid/light-brown sand. The finds were recovered at a depth of c0.70m.

3.4 Trench 2 was 0.70-0.90cm deep (getting deeper towards the south) and showed evidence for modern disturbance to this depth; the northern half of the trench in particular was heavily disturbed with the deposition of construction debris including tarmac and concrete. No finds were recovered from trench 2.

3.5 Trench 3 was excavated to a depth of 0.40m at its western end, getting progressively deeper towards the eastern end to a maximum depth of 1.15m. The trench showed evidence for modern disturbance throughout its length and revealed a varied stratigraphy: 0.25-0.50m dark disturbed sandy soil, over 0.15-0.25m redeposited gravel, over 0.40m disturbed dirty brown loamy sand, over natural mid-brown sand or gravel. Brick and tile fragments and pottery sherds of 19<sup>th</sup> century date were recovered to a depth of 1.15m at the eastern end of the trench.

3.6 The disturbed nature of the ground revealed within the three trenches indicates that previous site work has resulted in the disturbance of the garden area, including the deposition of construction debris that was subsequently grassed over to form the rear garden of the property.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 No features of archaeological interest were revealed in any of the trial trenches. The only finds of interest recovered during the evaluation were a sherd of 14<sup>th</sup> century pottery and two fragments of burnt flint of possible prehistoric date from trench 1. All three trenches revealed that the garden area of 103-103a Palace Road has been subject to disturbance in recent years, probably a result of site work associated with the redevelopment of the site in the last decade when new buildings and a swimming pool were constructed.

As a result of the negative findings of the evaluation, it is recommended that no further archaeological work is necessary in association with this development.

## **Bibliography**

Shaikhley, N, 2007 *A preliminary archaeological assessment of the proposed redevelopment at 103-103a Palace Road, East Molesey, Surrey* (SCAU limited circulation report)

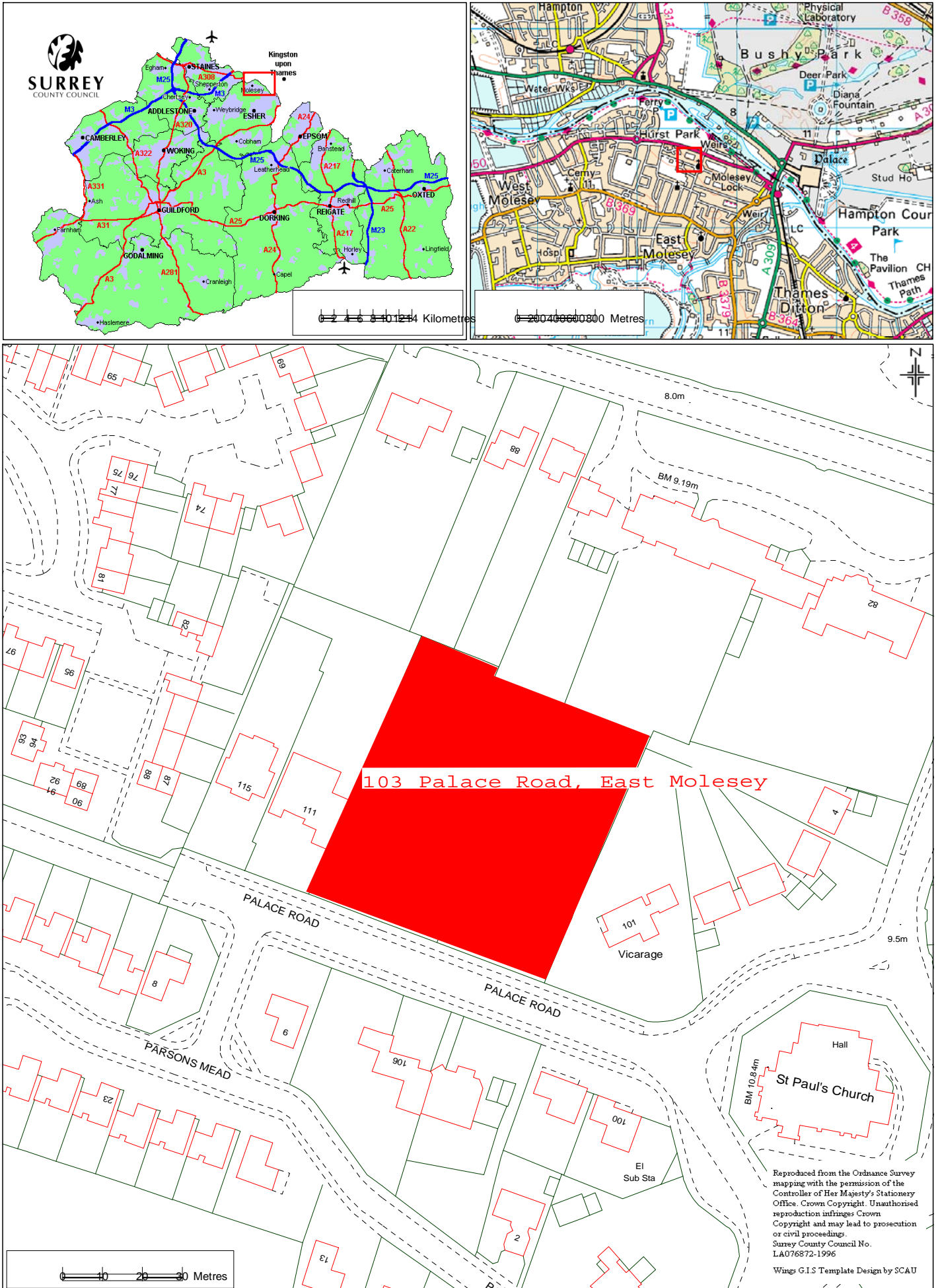


Fig 1 103-103a Palace Road, East Molesey: site location

