

**Land at 52 Weston Street, London SE1
An Archaeological Evaluation Report (WNU 07)**

(TQ 330 799)

Project No. 2860



By

Jon Sygrave

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Abstract

Archaeology South East was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd on behalf of their client to undertake an archaeological evaluation at 52 Weston Street, London SE1. The work was carried out in advance of proposed redevelopment of the site on the 15th March 2007.

One trench was excavated in the centre of the site. The eastern structural wall and rubble filled cellar of a 19th century building was recorded truncating a 17th to 18th century made ground deposit, which in turn sealed the upper sequence of the underlying alluvial deposits. The alluvial deposits were dated to the 17th to 18th centuries and suggest that prior to the later post-medieval period the site was situated in marginal swampy ground.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of University College London Field Archaeology Unit, was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd, on behalf of their client, to undertake an archaeological evaluation at 52 Weston Street, London, SE1, London Borough of Southwark, hereafter referred to as 'the site'. The work was carried out in advance of the proposed redevelopment of the site on the 15th March 2007.

The site is bounded to the north and south by residential property, to the east by a church and to the west by Weston Street.

The modern ground surface across the site was recorded between 4.56m OD (west) and 4.50m OD (east). The underlying natural sediment was not observed due to site constraints (see **Section 3**).

The fieldwork was undertaken by Jon Sygrave (Senior Archaeologist), and Caroline Russell (Archaeologist) and the project managed by Darryl Palmer (Senior Project Manager).

1.1 Planning Background

In considering any planning application for development, the local planning authority is bound by the policy framework set by government guidance, in this instance PPG16, by current Development Plan Policy and by other material considerations.

The relevant Strategic Development Plan framework is provided by the London Plan, published on 10 February 2004. It includes the following policy relating to archaeology within central London:

POLICY 4B.14 ARCHAEOLOGY

THE MAYOR, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ENGLISH HERITAGE, THE MUSEUM OF LONDON AND BOROUGHs, WILL SUPPORT THE IDENTIFICATION, PROTECTION, INTERPRETATION AND PRESENTATION OF LONDON'S ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES. BOROUGHs IN CONSULTATION WITH ENGLISH HERITAGE AND OTHER RELEVANT STATUTORY ORGANISATIONS SHOULD INCLUDE APPROPRIATE POLICIES IN THEIR UDPS FOR PROTECTING SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSETS WITHIN THEIR AREA.

The relevant Development Plan framework is provided by the Emerging Southwark Unitary Development Plan (UDP) dated October 2005. The Plan contains the following policy which provides a framework for the consideration of development proposals affecting archaeological and heritage features:

Policy 3.719 – Archaeology

PLANNING APPLICATIONS AFFECTING SITES OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL WITHIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL PRIORITY ZONES, AS IDENTIFIED IN APPENDIX 9, SHALL BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF THE SITE, INCLUDING THE IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WILL BE REQUIRED TO PRESERVE IN SITU, PROTECT AND SAFEGUARD SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND IMPORTANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS AND THEIR SETTINGS, AND WHERE APPROPRIATE, PROVIDE FOR THE PERMANENT DISPLAY AND INTERPRETATION OF THE MONUMENT OR REMAINS. THE LPA WILL ENSURE THE PROPER INVESTIGATION, RECORDING OF SITES AND PUBLICATION OF THE RESULTS BY A SUITABLY QUALIFIED ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTRACTOR, AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF A DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME WHERE A DEVELOPMENT INCORPORATES ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS OR WHERE IT IS CONSIDERED THAT PRESERVATION IN SITU IS NOT APPROPRIATE.

Southwark has an immensely important archaeological resource. Increasing evidence for prehistoric communities is being found in the north of the borough and along the Old Kent Road.

The suburb of the Roman provincial capital (Londinium) was located around the southern bridgehead of the only river crossing over the Thames at the time and remains of Roman buildings, industry, roads and cemeteries have been discovered over the last 30 years. The importance of the area during the medieval period is equally well attested both archaeologically and historically.

Elsewhere in Southwark, the routes of Roman roads (along the Old Kent Road and Kennington Road) and the historic village cores of Peckham, Camberwell, Walworth and Dulwich also have the potential for the survival of archaeological remains. PPG16 requires the Council to include policies for the protection, enhancement and preservation of sites of archaeological interest and of their settings.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The Aims and Objectives of the evaluation were laid out in the *Specification* (ASE 2007a) and are reproduced below.

- To determine the palaeotopography of the site.
- To determine the presence or absence of prehistoric activity.
- To determine the presence or absence of Roman activity.
- To establish the presence or absence of Medieval and Post Medieval activity.
- To establish the extent of past post depositional impacts on the archaeological resource.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

The archaeological background of the study site was defined in the preceding Desk Based Assessment (CgMs 2007) and is reproduced below in summary. For a full discussion of the archaeological background please refer to the Desk Based Assessment.

2.2 Prehistoric

The established palaeotopographical model for the Bermondsey area comprises a series of sand and gravel islands, surrounded by mudflats together with braided channels and tributaries of the River Thames (Allen et al 2005: 73). The immediate vicinity of the study site is likely to have been subject to prolonged periods of flooding, while during regression periods the study site would have been marshy marginal land until effective drainage schemes were implemented in the early Post Medieval period.

The sole Prehistoric find from a 200m radius of the study site comprises a pit containing a flint tool, together with Bronze Age peat, found at 74-90 Weston Street, south of the study site (MLO63746, MLO63752, TQ3298 7980).

2.3 Roman

The bulk of the recorded archaeological finds within a 200m radius of the study site are of Roman date, and include a range of artefactual and activity based evidence, associated with the waterfront of the Roman suburb at Southwark. The evidence would appear to indicate that the study site lay on the periphery of known areas of Roman settlement and activity, and during this period was probably still subject to periodic flooding.

2.4 Anglo-Saxon and Medieval

Throughout the later Medieval period the study site is known to have lain within an area known as 'The Maze', which comprised walks, gardens and tenements originally belonging to Battle Abbey, specifically an inn which lay close to the Thames. The Maze was known as a manor in 1386, and had been alienated from Battle Abbey by 1472. The gardens included a pond and waterways, the latter of which ran close by the study site (VCH 1912: 142-143; Mawton & Stenton 1934: 31). Evidence of land reclamation in the form of Medieval made ground over Roman river clays have been identified at New Guys House, west of the study site.

2.5 Post-Medieval and Modern

The Manor of the Maze is known to have been bought by a John Weston of Sutton in 1654, and remained in that family's possession until at least 1812, when the Maze is known to have been owned by John Webbe Weston of Sutton Place (VCH 1912: 142). From their ownership come the street names Webb Street and Weston Street.

Evidence for post medieval leather working within the study area, derived from Ordnance Survey map evidence, has included the site of a large tannery at Tyres Gate, c.190m southeast of the study site, a smaller tannery operating in 1872 from Camarthen Place, 200m southeast of the study site and two small tanneries are also known from Leathermarket Gardens, c.240m southeast of the study site.

The earliest available map for the study site, Ogilby & Morgan's map dated 1676-1682, shows the site as an open field. John Rocque's Survey dated 1739-1745 shows the presence of waterways associated with the Maze Pond (positioned to the west of the site) running in close proximity to the study site, and Wood Yard to the south of Maze Court. Richard Horwood's Survey dated 1792-1799 shows the creation of Melior Street and Weston Street for the first time. The study site is shown occupied by one or more buildings fronting Weston Street. The First Edition Ordnance Survey (1872) shows the site occupied by two properties fronting Weston Street, together with yardage and part of the Roman Catholic chapel fronting Melior Street. The Second Edition Ordnance Survey (1893) shows changes to the ground plan of the Chapel; the study site is shown as before, though now including a much smaller area of the Chapel. No changes are shown to the study site on the 1907 Ordnance Survey. The 1914 Ordnance Survey shows further changes to the Chapel, so that the study site is occupied by buildings fronting Weston Street, rear yards, and ancillary buildings to the east. The 1946 Ordnance Survey shows the study site occupied by a single building rather than two, although World War Two Bomb Damage Maps prepared the same year by the London County Council shows No 52 Weston Street coloured black, which signifies total destruction. The study site is therefore shown as vacant on the 1951 GOAD Insurance Plan together with subsequent Ordnance Surveys.

On the basis of the available evidence the study site does not appear to lie within the area of a known burial ground or cemetery. However due to adjacent finds relating to the tanning industry, such remains may survive at the study site itself, where not truncated by later deposits and the impact of World War Two bomb damage.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

The trench layout was agreed prior to the evaluation between CgMs Consulting Ltd and Southwark Borough Council (Chris Constable) (see Figure 2). The evaluation consisted of one 1.7m by 10m trench, which had to be shortened to 1.7m by 7m due to on site constraints. Changes to the trench were agreed with CgMs Consulting Ltd (Richard Meager) who subsequently agreed them with the Senior Archaeological Officer at Southwark Borough Council (Chris Constable).

The trenches were broken out and excavated using an 8T tracked machine. The machine was fitted with a smooth grading bucket and the trench was excavated through modern (19th/20th century) made ground in spits of no more than 0.25m until archaeological deposits were reached. Care was taken so that archaeological deposits were not damaged due to over machining.

Due to the confined nature of the site and the proximity of nearby buildings the trench could only be dug to a general depth of c. 1m. A sondage was excavated through backyard deposits in the east of the trench to a depth of c. 2.5m below modern ground level (the maximum reach of the machine from a safe position). The sondage was opened in the presence of the Southwark Borough Council monitor (Chris Constable) and the spoil kept separate before the sondage was immediately backfilled, due to Health and Safety concerns. The site specific Health and Safety requirements were set out in the preceding Risk Assessment (ASE 2007b).

All recording was undertaken in accordance with accepted professional standards according to the UCLFAU Fieldwork Manual (draft) and the Method Statement (ASE 2006).

The spoil from the excavations was inspected by the archaeologist in order to recover any artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest.

A photographic record of the trenches was kept in both Black and White and Colour Slide film.

The trenches were levelled in relation to a nearby bench mark.

The trenches were measured to known points and reproduced on a site plan in relation to the Ordnance Survey (see Fig 2).

A trench record sheet was filled out and measured sketch sections produced.

An on line OASIS form was filled out for the site, a copy of which is reproduced as an appendix to this document.

The archive is presently held at the Archaeology South East office in Ditchling and will be offered to a suitable museum (LAARC) in due course. All finds are the property of the landowner, but will be donated to a suitable museum.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Stratigraphy (Figs 2 and 3)

The results are presented by trench. Only finds used for dating are discussed in this section, for a full discussion of the finds please refer to **Section 4.2**.

Trench 1

Trench 1 was located in the centre of the site and measured 7m by 1.7m. The underlying natural sediments were not reached due to on site constraints (see **Section 3**).

The earliest deposits recorded on the site were within the sondage cut through the eastern end of the trench (see Figure 3) and have been interpreted as the upper levels of the underlying alluvium sequence. No evidence of gravel deposits was recorded.

Deposit [002] was recorded at a height of c. 2.41m OD to an excavated depth of 2.01m OD and was described as a mid brownish grey to grey clayey silt with occasional inclusions of shell, charcoal and bone and interpreted as a alluvial deposit. Deposit [002] was recorded as c. 0.4m deep (to the limit of excavation) and contained pottery dated to the 17th century.

Deposit [002] was sealed by deposit [001] recorded at a height of 2.81m OD and was described as a dark grey fading to mid brownish grey (at depth) clayey silt with inclusions of shell, charcoal and bone and interpreted as a alluvial deposit. Deposit [001] was recorded as c. 0.4m deep and contained pottery dated to the 17th to 18th century.

Deposit [001] was sealed by deposit [003] recorded at a height of 3.90m OD and was described as a dark grey friable silty sand with inclusions of shell, charcoal and bone. Deposit [003] was recorded as 1.1m deep and interpreted as a levelling/made ground deposit and contained pottery dated to the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries.

Deposit [003] was truncated to the west by 19th century wall [004], recorded to a height of 3.94m OD and interpreted as the eastern boundary of the building shown on the later OS maps and destroyed during WWII (see Section 2.5). The rubble filled cellar of the building was recorded to the west of wall [004] and partitioned by east west wall [005] recorded to a height of 3.59m OD.

The building represented by walls [004] and [005] was concreted over at the trenches eastern extent post demolition, probably to reinforce the road after the buildings destruction during WWII.

4.2 The Finds by Elke Raemen

The evaluation produced only a small assemblage from four different contexts. A summary of the assemblage can be found in Table 1.

Context	Pot	Wt (g)	CBM	Wt (g)	Bone	Wt (g)	Shell	Wt (g)	Clay pipe	Wt (g)	Mortar	Wt (g)
1	4	144			2	78					2	62
2	1	50	11	73 2	1	86	2	34			2	36
3	6	122			1	<1			1	8		

Table 1: Quantification of the finds

The majority of the pottery is of a 17th to early 18th century date. Deposit [001] produced four high fired glazed red sandy earthenware fragments, one of which is a fragment of a flanged jar. These date to the 17th to early 18th century. A 17th century base fragment of yellow-glazed Borderware was recovered from deposit [002]. Two additional sherds of yellow-glazed Borderware were produced from deposit [003], one of which is a fragment of a plate or shallow dish, while the other one is a possible pipkin, with external sooting. A black glazed earthenware fragment with thick black glaze and slight corrugation of the body is possibly from a tyg and dates to the 17th to early 18th century. Two glazed red sandy earthenware pieces were also recovered from this context. One of these is a sherd of a very abraded slipware plate. In addition, [3] contained an intrusive piece of 19th century white china.

Ceramic Building Material (CBM) was only recovered from deposit [002]. All pieces are of early post-medieval date. Five roof tiles were recovered, two of which are hard fired and sparse to medium fine sand-tempered with sparse white chalk inclusions to 2 mm. One of these shows blackening and vitrification on the edge, as well as traces of mortar on both upper and lower surfaces, suggesting it may have come from the backing of a fire place. The other three pieces are medium to well fired with moderate fine sand-tempering. A medium fired, fine-sand-tempered possible floor tile, with a width measuring 17 mm, was also recovered. Two brick fragments show abundant chalk inclusions to 3 mm, some of which are burned out leaving voids. The pieces are medium to hard fired and abundant fine sand-tempered with frequent iron oxide inclusions to 3 mm. One of these shows traces of light grey sandy mortar. Another three pieces of brick are abraded and low to medium fired, with abundant fine to crude sand-tempering and iron-oxide inclusions to 3 mm.

Deposit [003] contained a plain stem fragment from a clay pipe dating to the early 18th century. Two pieces of mortar from deposit [001] and two pieces from deposit [002] were also recovered. All of these are an off-white powdery fine sand mortar, mixed with abundant chalk inclusions to 5 mm and sparse coal inclusions to 1 mm. In addition,

deposit [002] produced two pieces of oyster shell: an upper valve and a lower valve, both in good condition.

The three fragments of bone recovered from deposits [001] and [002] were identified as cattle. [001] produced a fragment of cranium and an innominate displaying chop marks, and [002] a contained a talus displaying saw marks. [003] produced a single sheep phalanx.

The assemblage is not considered to hold any potential for further analysis. However, if any Stage 2 works produce more finds, these should be studied in conjuncture with the current assemblage.

4.3 Environmental Samples

No environmental samples were taken during the evaluation due to on site constraints. It is intended that environmental samples be the subject of the next phase of work as recommended in **Section 6**.

5 DISCUSSION

The archaeological evaluation showed that the building shown on later OS maps and destroyed during WWII did have a basement, although its depth could not be established due to on site constraints. Evidence from the sondage excavated in the east of the trench suggests that the ground level was raised during the later post-medieval period by means of 1.1m deep made ground deposit [003]. This made ground deposit seemed to seal the upper sequence of the underlying alluvial deposits represented by [001] and [002].

The presence of alluvial deposits, absence of gravel and use of levelling deposit [003] suggest that the site was situated on marginal swampy ground reclaimed during the later post-medieval period. This would suggest that the site lies off the sand gravel islands and therefore away from the centre of Roman activity.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Due to on site constraints the deeper deposits were only observed in a narrow sondage cut through the eastern extent of the trench. For this reason it is proposed to conduct an archaeological watching brief during the proposed ground reduction so that deposits under the cellar may be observed and the underlying alluvial sequence be properly recorded and sampled.

7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology South-East would like to thank CgMs Consulting Ltd (Richard Meager) for commissioning the work and Southwark Borough Council (Chris Constable) for monitoring the work.

8 REFERENCES

ASE 2007a *Method Statement for an Archaeological Evaluation*, ASE unpub report

ASE 2007b *Risk Assessment for an Archaeological Evaluation*, ASE unpub report

CgMs 2007 *Desk Based Archaeological Assessment of Land at 52 Weston Street, London SE1* CgMs unpub report

9 APPENDIX

9.1 OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-25776

Project details

Project name	52 Weston St
Short description of the project	single 7m trench - 19th century basement cutting probable alluvial sequence
Project dates	Start: 15-03-2007 End: 15-03-2007
Previous/future work	No / Yes
Any associated project reference codes	2860 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	WNU07 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Monument type	ALLUVIUM Post Medieval
Monument type	BUILDING Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POT SHERDS Post Medieval
Significant Finds	BRICKS Modern
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	Between deposition of an application and determination

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON SOUTHWARK SOUTHWARK 52 Weston Street
Postcode	SE1
Study area	100.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 330 799 51.5018670701 -0.08358164215050 51 30 06 N 000 05 00 W Point
Height OD	Min: 4.50m Max: 4.56m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	CgMs Consulting

Project design originator	CgMs Consulting
Project director/manager	Darryl Palmer
Project supervisor	Jon Sygrave
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	CgMs Consulting

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	LAARC
Physical Contents	'Animal Bones','Ceramics'
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Contents	'other'
Digital Media available	'Text'
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Contents	'Stratigraphic','Survey'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Correspondence','Map','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section','Unpublished Text'

Project bibliography 1

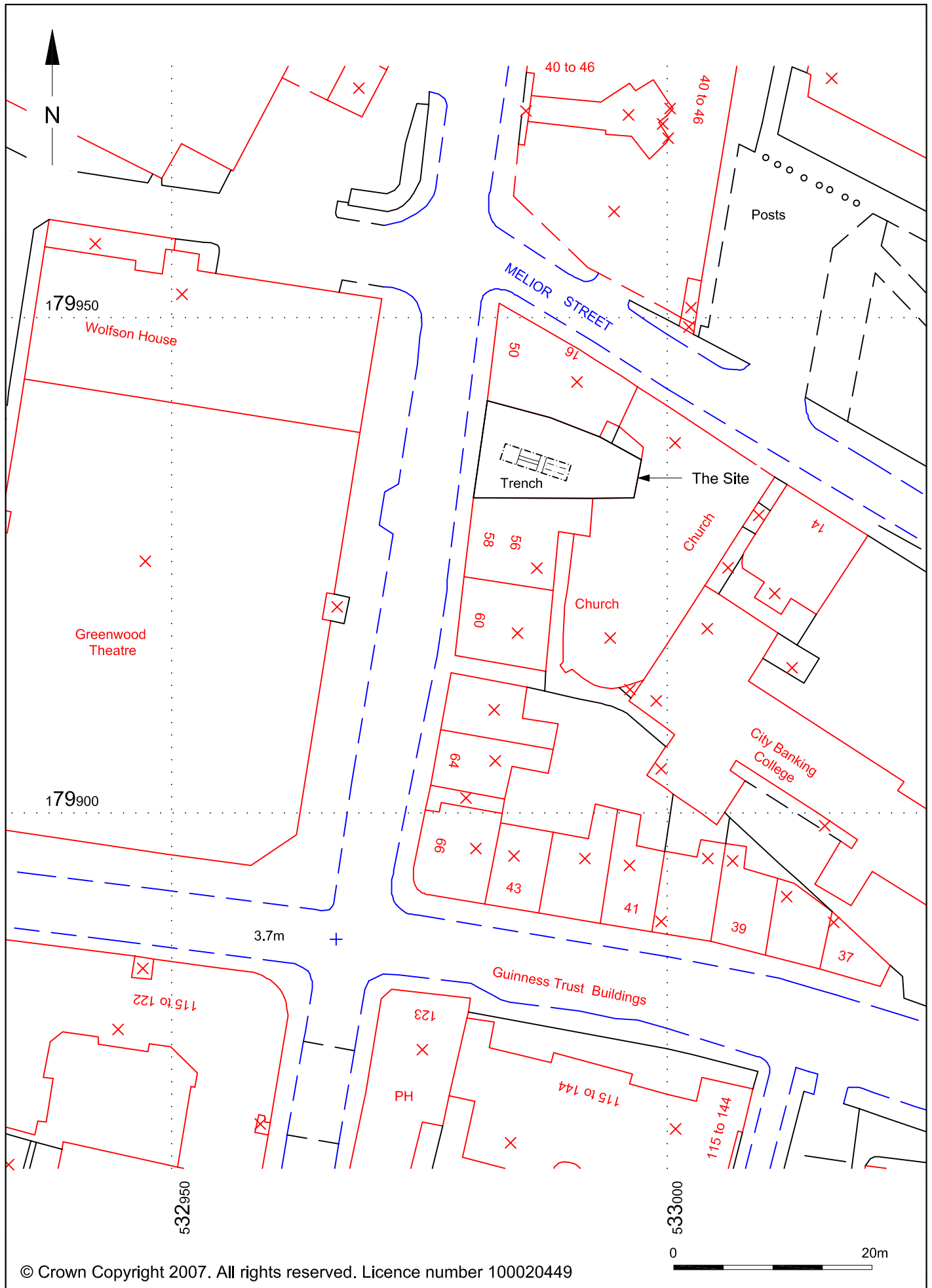
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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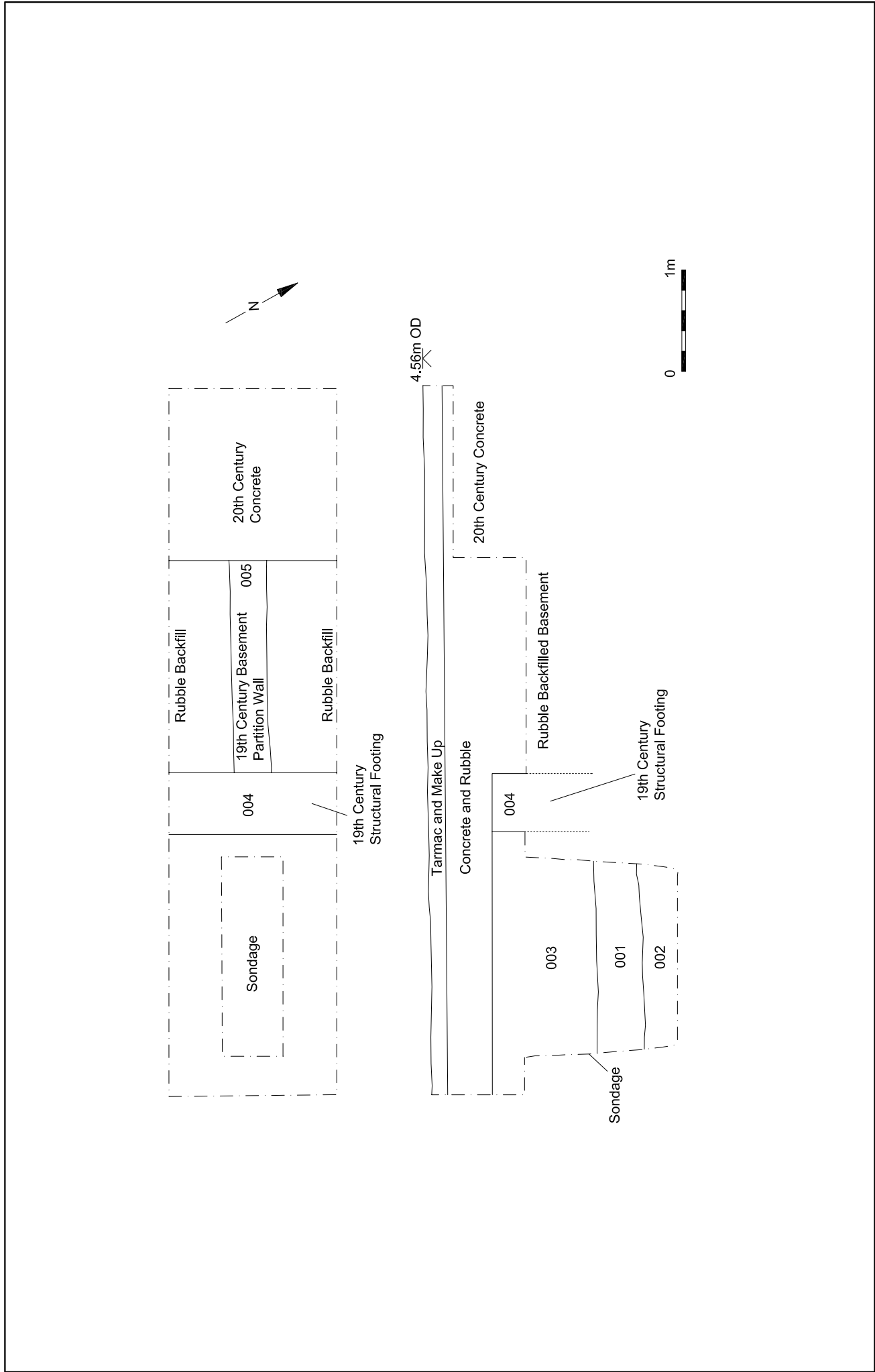
© Archaeology South-East			52 Weston Street, Southwark	Fig. 1
Ref: 2860	March 2007	Drawn by: JLR	Site Location Plan	

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© Archaeology South-East			52 Weston Street, Southwark		Fig. 2
Ref: 2860	March 2007	Drawn by: JLR	Trench Location Plan		



© Archaeology South-East		Weston Street, Southwark		Fig. 3
Ref: 2860	March 2007	Drawn by: JNC	Trench Plan and Section	

Head Office
Units 1 & 2
2 Chapel Place
Portslade
East Sussex BN41 1DR
Tel: +44(0)1273 426830 Fax:+44(0)1273 420866
email: fau@ucl.ac.uk
Web: www.archaeologyse.co.uk



London Office
Centre for Applied Archaeology
Institute of Archaeology
University College London
31-34 Gordon Square, London, WC1 0PY
Tel: +44(0)20 7679 4778 Fax:+44(0)20 7383 2572
Web: www.ucl.ac.uk/caa

The contracts division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology, University College London 

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