

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
On Land at 39A Salem Place, Croydon, Surrey**

**Project No. 3060  
(NGR TQ 32066, 65162)**



**By  
Alice Thorne**

**October 2007**

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**October 2007**

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*Abstract*

*An archaeological evaluation was conducted on land at 39A Salem Place, Croydon, Surrey in advance of the redevelopment of the site. Three trenches were excavated, and produced evidence of significant ground disturbance. A demolition layer up to 1.30m deep is thought to relate to the demolition of the Victorian properties fronting Pump Pail prior to the construction of Salem Place. The depths of the deposits and the presence of a mid nineteenth century wall of a probable cellar indicate a significant level of ground truncation, and suggest a low probability of survival of archaeological remains on site.*

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## CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction**
- 2.0 Archaeological Background**
- 3.0 Archaeological Methodology**
- 4.0 Results**
- 5.0 Finds**
- 6.0 Discussion and Conclusions**

**Acknowledgements**

**References**

**SMR Summary Sheet**

**OASIS Form**

**Table 1:** Levels Information

**Table 2:** Quantification of the finds from the evaluation at Salem Place, Croydon

**Fig. 1:** Site Location

**Fig. 2:** Trench Location Plan

**Fig. 3:** Trench Sections

**Fig. 4:** Ordnance Survey Map of 1867-8, published 1890

**Plate 1:** Trench 1 Facing NE

**Plate 2:** Trench 2 Facing SW

**Plate 3:** Trench 3 Facing NE

**Plate 4:** Wall 1/002, south facing section

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1** Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of The Centre for Applied Archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, were commissioned by Pivotal Architectural Services on behalf of their client to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of redevelopment on land at 39A Salem Place, Croydon, Surrey (NGR 532066,165152) (Fig. 1).
- 1.2** Due to the archaeological potential of the site the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) Archaeological Advisor, Mark Stevenson recommended that a programme of trial trenching be undertaken in order to ascertain the archaeological potential of the site and inform on any future mitigation strategy.
- 1.3** A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by ASE in response to this recommendation and submitted to Mark Stevenson (GLAAS) for approval.
- 1.4** The site is located to the northeast of Salem Place on flat ground and is bounded to the south and west by the roadway and to the north by residential properties (Fig. 2). The land upon arrival at the site was occupied by areas of concrete hard standing and was overgrown with shrubs. The site had previously been occupied by 1950's garages (Simon Fisher, Pivotal Architects, pers comm.).
- 1.5** The British Geological Survey map Sheet 270 (*South London*) Solid and Drift Edition (1:50,000 scale) indicates that the site lies at the interface between the Hackney Gravels, a Pleistocene post – diversionary Thames River Terrace Deposit, which is described as gravel, sandy and clayey in part, and an outcrop of the Palaeocene Thanet Sand Formation.
- 1.6** The fieldwork was undertaken by Alice Thorne (Field Officer) and Dave Atkins during September 2007 The project was managed by Jon Sygrave (Project Manager) and Louise Rayner (Post-Excavation Manager).

## **2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** The site lies in an area of archaeological potential. The following information was obtained from the London Archaeologist Round-up, and provides an archaeological context for the site:
- 2.2** **500m to the north east**

**3-7 PARK STREET, CROYDON, SURREY, CR0**

'London Archaeologist Round-up 1996': A cultivated soil above natural gravels on the west side of the site contained Late Iron Age pottery, worked flints and burnt bone. On the east side of the site the gravels were cut by two, possibly Roman, parallel linear features, one of which contained 1st-2nd-century pottery and may have been a boundary ditch. Roman material was also recovered from a deposit on the west side of the site. The site subsequently developed a ploughsoil, indicating open land, and several pits from which medieval or early post-medieval material was recovered. One at least of these may have been for gravel extraction. This form of land use appears to have continued until the 18th or 19th century when the site was first built up, evidenced by the remains of footings for a property wall, pits and a packed chalk surface, probably a yard surface.

**2.3 1km to the south west**

**WADDON GOODS YARD, PURLEY WAY, CROYDON, SURREY, CR0**

'London Archaeologist Round-up 1996': 154 fragments of worked flint were recovered. Most of the assemblage was in the form of hard-hammer-struck flakes. This form of lithic technology would seem to indicate a general late Neolithic to early Bronze Age date. The only recognisable object was an oblique arrowhead of mid to late Neolithic date. The artefacts had been mixed into a subsoil, with the stratigraphic boundaries of any features obscured by mixing and lessivation.

'London Archaeologist Round-up 1997': Five trenches were excavated in the evaluation phase; all further ground reduction was monitored during the watching brief phase. None of the works revealed any archaeological features, but they did produce a significant assemblage of mid to late Neolithic flint-working debris.

**2.4 500m to the north**

**THE DRUMMOND CENTRE (PHASE II), TAMWORTH ROAD, CROYDON, SURREY, CR0**

'London Archaeologist Round-up 1996': Prehistoric flints were recovered from three cut features in the natural gravels on the east side of the site, and from the subsoil. They were overlaid by modern overburden. Elsewhere the subsoil was cut by modern features or undated tree pits. In one of the trenches the remains of a Victorian brick building were located: one of its walls was supported on

uncoursed greensand blocks.

**2.5 500m to the south east**

**4-20 EDRIDGE ROAD, CROYDON, CR0**

'London Archaeologist Round-up 1995': Natural gravels were overlaid by soil deposits, possibly garden soil or levelling, which contained a very small amount of residual medieval pottery. A single sherd of mid-12th to 13th-century pottery, probably made locally at Limpsfield, was found in a pit. In the south of the site were recorded the remains of two late 18th to early 19th-century walls, which probably related to a boundary or garden perimeter of the Friends Meeting House (documented from 1847).

**2.6 200m to the north east**

**14 WHITGIFT STREET, CROYDON, CR0**

'London Archaeologist Round-up 1995': Hillwash, reworked by cultivation, was cut by late Roman pits and a ditch which contained pottery, 39 3rd-4th-century coins, a ring intaglio and a bronze fibula. Also recorded was a large medieval pit, possibly a quarry pit, from which environmental material was extracted. Residual prehistoric struck flints, including a few Mesolithic tools and cores, were recovered.

**2.7 2-12 WHITGIFT STREET, CROYDON, SURREY, CR0**

'London Archaeologist Round-up 1994': Above natural gravels were the remains of a chalk and flint block wall, possibly Roman in date. After its abandonment there followed a gradual build-up of soil which contained 13/14th-century pottery. This was truncated by a gravel quarry, backfilled with material dating between the 13th and 17th century, and followed by a red brick arched foundation which was associated with a 19th-century outbuilding, a pathway and a garden wall for a known 19th-century house with garden.

**3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

**3.1** The general aim of the archaeological evaluation was to assess the location, form, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains threatened by the development.

**3.2** The evaluation was also designed to seek to ascertain the nature and extent of existing disturbance/truncation and thus the degree of archaeological survival on the site.

- 3.3** The groundwork comprised the excavation of three trenches, each measuring 10m in length, by 1.8m across the site. The trenches were excavated with a JCB, fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. The presence of concrete surfaces and footings across the site required the use of a breaker prior to excavation of the trenches. Site conditions required slight adjustments to the proposed trench locations. The new locations are shown on Fig. 2.
- 3.4** All trenches were scanned with a Cable Avoidance Tool prior to excavation.
- 3.5** All encountered archaeological deposits, features and finds were recorded according to accepted professional standards in accordance with the WSI using standard Archaeology South-East context record sheets. Deposit colours were verified by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart.
- 3.6** The work was undertaken using site code SEM 07, which was obtained from the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC).
- 3.7** A full photographic record of the work was kept (black and white prints, colour slides and digital images) and will form part of the site archive. The archive is presently held at the Archaeology South-East offices at Portslade and will be offered to a suitable local museum.
- 3.8** An overall site plan was maintained at a scale of 1:50 and located on to the 1:1250 map of the area.
- 3.9** As no archaeological remains were uncovered, the excavated trenches were levelled in respect to Ordnance Datum using an OS spot height on the roadway in Salem Place (Value 45.20m OD).
- 3.10** The spoil from the excavations was inspected to recover any artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest.

#### 4.0 RESULTS (Figs. 2 and 3)

Trench No	Top of Trench (mOD)	Base of trench (mOD)
1	SW end: 45.40	SW end: 44.34
1	NE end: 45.37	NE end: (sondage) 43.87
2	SW end: 45.36	SW end: 43.76 (sondage)
2	NE end: 45.40	NE end: 44.24
3	SW end: 45.35	SW end: 44.28
3	NE end: 45.62	NE end: 45.22 (area of services)

**Table 1. Levels Information**

#### 4.1 Trench 1 (Plate 1)

**4.2** Trench 1 was orientated south-west to north-east, and was located towards the front of the development plot, closest to Salem Road. It revealed the presence of substantial deposits of disturbed ground and demolition material at the site. The stratigraphic sequence in trench 1 was as follows:

- Context **1/001** comprised a 1.2m thick dark brownish grey clayey silt deposit. It was soft in consistence, and contained substantial quantities of mid 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century ceramic building material (CBM), waste metal, oyster shell, glass, ceramics, sub angular flint nodules and pebbles. This deposit was cut by several defunct ceramic drain pipes, and had substantial recent modern disturbance at its surface, and in the form of intrusive concrete blocks and footings.
- A sondage was excavated at the north-eastern end of Trench one to test the depth of deposits and to establish the character of the underlying geology. This revealed the remnants of a brick-built masonry wall, orientated NW-SE (**1/002**) (**Plate 4**). This was constructed in an English bond with a friable lime mortar. A sample of the brick produced a mid 19<sup>th</sup> century date.
- Below this, the mid yellowish brown sandy flint gravels of the Thames terraces were encountered at a depth of 1.40 – 1.50m below the current ground surface (**1/003**).

#### 4.3 Trench 2 (Plate 2)

**4.4** Trench 2 was orientated south-west to north-east, and was located just to the west of trench 1. This also confirmed the presence of disturbed ground and deposits of demolition material across the site. The stratigraphic sequence observed was as follows:

- Context **2/001** comprised a 0.60m thick surface deposit of a dark to mid brownish grey clayey silt. It was loose, and contained quantities of CBM, metal, glass and ceramics. It was very similar in composition to deposit 2/002 below, but also contained evidence of more recent intrusion and disturbance, such as plastic bottles and toys and Unigate milk bottles. Below Context 2/001 several concrete footings and deposits were encountered, and were broken out to allow investigation of the underlying deposits.
- Below this context **2/002** comprised an 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century deposit of a mid brownish grey clayey silt, containing frequent sub angular flint gravels, tile, brick, ceramics and glass. This deposit had also been cut by several defunct ceramic drain pipes. A sondage excavated at the south-west end of the trench indicated that the deposit extended to a depth of 1.30m below the ground surface. Below this, the mid yellowish brown sandy flint gravels of the Thames terraces were revealed (**2/003**).

#### **4.5 Trench 3 (Plate 3)**

**4.6** Trench 3 was located at the northernmost extent of the site. Due to the presence of services, the easternmost extent of the trench was left high. In the remainder of the trench the deposits encountered were as follows:

- Sequences of modern layers were initially encountered to a depth of approximately 0.80m. These comprised of layers of (in sequence) concrete, a mixed redeposited soil layer, a deposit of tarmac, a mixed clay and flint redeposited natural, and a thin chalk deposit (**3/001**). These deposits are likely to result from the use of the site as a garage in its recent history.
- Below the thin layer of chalk a dark brownish grey clayey silt deposit was encountered to the base of the trench at 1.20m (**3/002**). This contained small quantities of early to mid nineteenth century tile, red brick and ceramic. The presence of a deeply buried service at the far south-western extent of the trench prevented the excavation of a sondage in this area, and so natural ground was not encountered within this trench.

## 5.0 FINDS by Elke Raemen

5.1 A small assemblage of finds was recovered from the evaluation at Salem Place. A summary of these can be found in Table 2.

Context	Pot	Wt (g)	CBM	Wt (g)	Bone	Wt (g)	Shell	Wt (g)	W. Bone	Wt (g)	CTP	Wt (g)	Glass	Wt (g)	Cement	Wt (g)
1/001	12	994			1	32			1	18	2	16				
1/002			1	2562												
2/002	18	646			4	32	3	26	4	36	5	18	1	94	1	<2
3/002	3	38	3	98												

Table 2. Quantification of the finds from the evaluation at Salem Place, Croydon.

## 5.2 Pottery

The assemblage consists of 33 pieces from three different contexts. All sherds are of late post-medieval date. The earliest fragment is a glazed red earthenware piece from [2/002], dating to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Demolition layer [1/001] contained two pieces from a London brown-washed stoneware jar dating to the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and a later 18<sup>th</sup> century cream ware mug fragment. Three pieces of glazed red earthenware from [1/001], including a large bowl fragment with two bands of rouletted decoration, are of later 18<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> century date. A basalt teapot handle ([2/002]) dates to the late 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century. Early 19<sup>th</sup> century material includes both plain and blue transfer printed pearlware fragments ([1/001], [2/002] and [3/002]), mainly from plates and bowls. Also of 19<sup>th</sup> century date are an unglazed red earthenware flowerpot ([1/001]), an English brown-washed stoneware fragment from a cylindrical bottle ([1/001]), fragments of white and blue transfer printed china ([2/002]), white ([1/001]) and blue transfer printed ([2/002]) porcelain, the latter of which is a base from a Spode-stamped bowl, and yellow ware ([2/002]). A piece of English salt-glazed stoneware from a blacking pot and a London Bristol-glazed stoneware bottle fragment, both of 19<sup>th</sup> century date, were recovered from [2/002].

## 5.3 Ceramic Building Material

A small assemblage of ceramic building material (CBM) was produced by the evaluation. Context [3/002] contained three hard fired roof tile fragments, two of which are abundant fine sand-tempered with rare iron oxide inclusions to 1 mm. The third fragment is of a sparse fine sand-tempered fabric.

A complete medium to hard fired brick dating to the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century was recovered from masonry structure [1/002]. The piece is of a sparse fine sand-tempered fabric with occasional slag inclusions to 6 mm and

occasional angular flint inclusions to 3 mm. The brick has a crude frog and measures 235 mm long, 66 mm high and 99 mm wide.

#### **5.4 Clay Tobacco Pipe**

A total of seven clay tobacco pipe (CTP) fragments were recovered from the site. Context [1/001] contained a plain stem fragment dating to the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and a 19<sup>th</sup> century complete bowl with oak leaf decoration on the seams and a spur with maker's mark "RC". This could refer to Robert Corney, who was working in Croydon between 1836 and 1850. Another four plain stem fragments were recovered from [2/002]. These date to the late 18<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The same context contained a bowl of the same date with embossed floral decoration and oak leaf decoration on the seams. The spur of this piece is missing.

#### **5.5 Other Finds**

Context [2/002] contained a single piece of glass, consisting of a green wine bottle base fragment of 19<sup>th</sup> century date. Context [1/001] produced a bone knife handle from a whittle-tanged knife. In addition, two lower valves and one upper valve of immature oyster shells were recovered from [2/002], as well as a piece of cement render.

#### **5.6 Animal Bone by Gemma Driver**

Context [1/001] contained the proximal end of a left pig radius. The distal end of the radius has been sawn off midway down the shaft. Context [2/002] contains four fragments of animal bone including three cattle sized rib fragments and one sheep pelvis fragment. One of the ribs has been sawn at both ends.

#### **5.7 Potential**

The assemblage, mainly from demolition layers, is not considered to have any potential for further analysis. No further work is required and it is recommended that all finds are discarded.

## **6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

**6.1** The evaluation produced evidence of substantial levels of late post medieval to modern disturbance across the site. Evidence of demolition material was encountered in each of the excavated trenches. This deposit is thought to derive from the demolition of the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century structures fronting Union Street, which occupied the site prior to the construction of Salem Place in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century (Fig. 4). The presence of a brick built wall at the north-east end of Trench 1 may represent the remnant of a Victorian cellar, and confirm that the site has suffered from considerable levels of ground truncation. Health and safety considerations prevented the excavation of the trenches beyond 1.20m deep. However, sondages dug in trenches 1 and 2 indicate the presence of the natural flint gravels at a depth of between 1.3 to 1.5m below the current ground surface. The likelihood for survival of archaeological remains at the site is therefore considered to be very low.

### **Acknowledgements**

Thanks are due to Pivotal Architectural Services for commissioning the work and to Mark Stevenson (GLAAS) for his guidance throughout the project.

### **References:**

Collings, M. 2007., *Land at 39A Salem Place, Croydon, Surrey Archaeological Evaluation; Written Scheme of Investigation*. ASE Project no. 3060

'London Archaeologist Round-up', Accessed LAARC  
<http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/laarc>

**SMR Summary Form**

Site Code	SEM 07					
Identification Name and Address	39A Salem Place,					
County, District &/or Borough	Croydon, Surrey					
OS Grid Refs.	NGR TQ 32066, 65162					
Geology	Hackney Gravels					
Arch. South-East Project Number	3060					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval. ✓	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban ✓	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval. 24 – 25/09/07	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Pivotal Architectural Services					
Project Manager	Jon Sygrave					
Project Supervisor	Alice Thorne					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other Modern		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>An archaeological evaluation was conducted on land at 39A Salem Place, Croydon, Surrey in advance of the redevelopment of the site. Three trenches were excavated, and produced evidence of significant ground disturbance. A demolition layer up to 1.30m deep is thought to relate to the demolition of the Victorian properties prior to the construction of Salem Place. The depths of the deposits and the presence of a mid nineteenth century wall of a probable cellar indicate a significant level of ground truncation, and suggest a low probability of survival of archaeological remains on site.</i></p>						

## OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

### Printable version

**OASIS ID: archaeol6-32714**

#### Project details

Project name            An Archaeological Evaluation

Short description of the project    An archaeological evaluation was conducted on land at 39A Salem Place, Croydon, Surrey in advance of the redevelopment of the site. Three trenches were excavated, and produced evidence of significant ground disturbance. A demolition layer up to 1.30m deep is thought to relate to the demolition of the Victorian properties fronting Pump Pail prior to the construction of Salem Place. The depths of the deposits and the presence of a mid nineteenth century wall of a probable cellar indicate a significant level of ground truncation, and suggest a low probability of survival of archaeological remains on site.

Project dates            Start: 24-09-2007 End: 25-09-2007

Previous/future work        No / Not known

Any associated project reference codes    3060 - Contracting Unit No.

Any associated project reference codes    SEM07 - Sitecode

Type of project            Field evaluation

Site status                None

Current Land use        Other 13 - Waste ground

Significant Finds        CERAMICS Post Medieval

Methods & techniques    'Sample Trenches'

Development type Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)

Prompt Planning condition

Position in the planning process After full determination (eg. As a condition)

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### Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON CROYDON CROYDON 39A Salem Place

Postcode XXXXXX

Study area 100.00 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 32066 65152 51.3695368438 -0.102533343676 51 22 10 N 000  
06 09 W Point

Height OD Min: 44.00m Max: 46.00m

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### Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeology South East

Project brief originator Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body

Project design originator Archaeology South-East

Project director/manager JON SYGRAVE

Project supervisor Alice Thorne

Type of sponsor/funding body Client

Name of sponsor/funding Pivotal Architectural Services

body

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**Project archives**

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Local Museum
Digital Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum
Paper Contents	'Animal Bones', 'Ceramics', 'Glass', 'Stratigraphic', 'Survey'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet', 'Correspondence', 'Diary', 'Map', 'Notebook - Excavation', ' Research', ' General Notes', 'Photograph', 'Plan', 'Report'

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## **OASIS:**

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