

**1 Benwell Road, Holloway,
London Borough of Islington**

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For St Mark Homes II plc

by Pamela Jenkins and Sean Wallis

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code BWD 04

February 2004

Summary

Site name: 1 Benwell Road, Holloway, London N7

Grid reference: TQ3120 8528

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 9th February – 16th February 2004

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisors: Pamela Jenkins and Sean Wallis

Site code: BWD 04

Area of site: c.600 sq m

Summary of results: No finds or archaeological features were encountered during the investigation.

Monuments identified: None

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with the Museum of London Museum in due course with site code BWD04.

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 26.02.04
	Steve Preston ✓ 26.02.04

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by Pamela Jenkins and Sean Wallis

Report 03/92

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at 1 Benwell Road, Holloway, London N7 (TQ3120 8528) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr. Bernard Tansey of St Mark Homes II, Heron House, 109 Wembley Hill Road, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 8DA.

A planning consent (P010408) has been granted by the London Borough of Islington to redevelop the site for housing and is subject to a condition which requires a watching brief to be carried out during the groundworks.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the Borough policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Catherine Cavanagh of Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service, the archaeological adviser to the Borough. The fieldwork was undertaken by Pamela Jenkins and Sean Wallis during February 2004 and the site code is BWD04. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at the Museum of London in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the corner of Benwell Road and Drayton Park, about 60m north-east of Holloway Road (Fig. 2). According to the British Geological Survey (BGS 1993) the underlying geology is London Clay and this was confirmed by observations throughout the site. The site was situated at approximately 50m AOD.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site derives from its location within an archaeological priority area (90) on the Borough planning constraint maps. These place the site within the area of potential medieval settlement (MoLAS 2000).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the new construction work. This was to involve examination of areas of ground reduction and the digging of trenches for foundations and services. All spoilheaps were to be monitored for finds.

The groundworks involved the removal of demolition rubble and the foundations of the building which had previously occupied the site. The entire area to be occupied by the new housing development was to be cleared using a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothed bucket. The area was then to be cleaned using a toothless bucket prior to the laying of a concrete "skin".

Results

The ground level of the site was reduced by approximately 2.00m–2.30m. It appeared that the entire site had been truncated by groundworks connected with the building which had previously occupied the site. Large parts of the site were covered with concrete footings, some up to 2.00m thick, which sat directly upon the natural clay. It appeared that the areas between the footings were filled with a mixture of modern make-up deposits and demolition rubble from the recently demolished building. Again, these deposits appeared to lie directly above the natural clay. From a section visible in the north-east edge of the site, it appears that the natural clay may have been truncated by about 0.80m prior to the foundations of the previous building being constructed. It is probable that this ground reduction took place over the entire site. This may explain why no archaeological deposits were observed.

Finds

There were no archaeological finds.

Conclusion

No archaeological deposits or finds were observed during the watching brief. This probably reflects the fact that the site had been heavily truncated prior to the construction of the building which formerly occupied the site.

References

- BGS, 1993, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50 000, Sheet 256, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- MoLAS, 2000, *The archaeology of Greater London: an assessment of archaeological evidence for human presence in the area now covered by Greater London*, Museum of London Archaeology Service Monograph, London
- PPG 16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance 16, HMSO

Appendix 1 GLSMR Archaeological Report Form

1. TYPE OF RECORDING

Watching Brief

2. LOCATION

Borough: Islington

Site Address: 1 Benwell Road, Holloway, London N7

Site Name: 1 Benwell Road, Holloway, London N7

Site Code: BWD 04

Nat. Grid Refs: TQ 3120 8528

3. ORGANISATION

Name of archaeological unit: Thames Valley Archaeological Services

Address: 47-49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading RG1 5NR

Site supervisors: Pamela Jenkins and Sean Wallis

Project manager: Steve Ford

Funded by: St Mark Homes II, Heron House, 109 Wembley Hill Road, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 8DA

4. DURATION

Date fieldwork started: 9 February 2004

Date finished: 16 February 2004

Fieldwork previously notified? NO

Fieldwork will continue? NO

5. PERIODS REPRESENTED

Palaeolithic

Roman

Mesolithic

Saxon (pre-AD 1066)

Neolithic

Medieval (AD 1066-1485)

Bronze Age

Post-Medieval

Iron Age

Unknown

6. PERIOD SUMMARIES

No archaeological deposits or finds were observed

7. NATURAL

Type: London Clay

Height above Ordnance Datum: c. 50.00m AOD

8. LOCATION OF ARCHIVE

a) Please provide an estimate of the quantity of material in your possession for the following categories:

NOtes	PLans	PHotos	NGatives
SLides	COrrispondence	MScRipts (unpub reports, etc.)	
BULK finds	SMall finds	SOil Samples	

Other (please specify)

b) The complete archive will be deposited in the following location: Museum of London

c) Approximate year of transfer: 2006

d) Location of any copies:

e) Has a security copy of the archive been made? YES

If not, do you wish RCHME to consider microfilming? NO

9. LOCATION OF FINDS

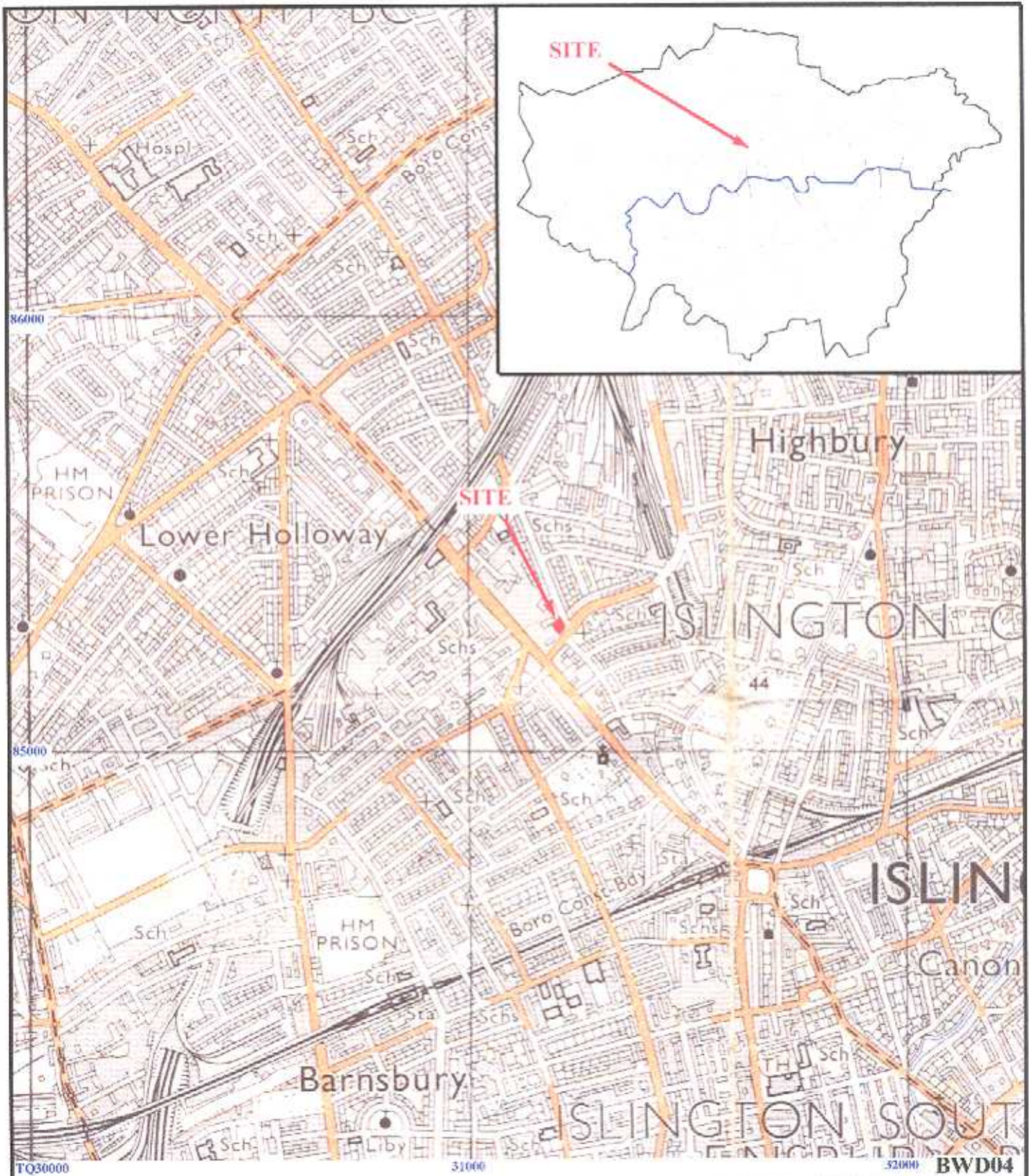
There were no finds.

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Jenkins, P and Wallis, S, 2004, 1 Benwell Road, Holloway, London Borough of Islington, an archaeological watching brief, Thames Valley Archaeological Services report 03/92, Reading

NAME: P JENKINS

DATE: 27/2/04



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Figure 1. Location of site within Islington and
Greater London.

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Figure 2. Location of site within Islington

T H A M E S V A L L E Y

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