



Normand Park,
Lillie Road, London SW6
London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Archaeological Watching Brief Report





**NORMAND PARK
LILLIE ROAD, SW6
LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM**

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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Contents

	<i>Summary</i>	<i>iii</i>
	<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>iv</i>
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	1.1 Project Background	1
	1.2 Site Description	1
2	GEOLOGICAL AND TOPOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	2
	2.1 Geology	2
	2.2 Topography	2
3	ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	2
4	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	2
5	WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY	2
	5.1 Fieldwork	2
	5.2 Health and Safety	3
	5.3 Phases of Work	3
	5.4 Finds Collection and Retention	3
	5.5 Environmental Sampling Strategy	4
	5.6 The Archive	4
6	RESULTS	4
	6.2 Conclusion	4
7	BIBLIOGRAPHY	5

List of Figures

Figure 1 Site plan showing Site and trench location

Cover Trench opening with the 'convent walls' in the background

Back Cover The convent walls

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Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Summary

Wessex Archaeology (London) was commissioned by Balfour Beatty Civil Engineering Ltd. to carry out an archaeological watching brief to observe the opening of two service trenches, one for drainage and one for a fibre optic cable, and the removal of topsoil and landscaped mounds from Normand Park, London SW6. The Site, situated off Lillie road, is in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham and is centred on NGR 524578 177774.

The watching brief was carried out after consultation with Kim Stabler, English Heritage adviser to the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, in order to meet a condition of planning consent. The ground works were conducted by Balfour Beatty Ltd.

The Site is known to overlie the potential remains of Normand House, first recorded in 1649, and reused after 1812, first as an asylum, and then a convent. The building was bomb damaged in World War II and subsequently demolished in 1951 when the site was cleared for the present park.

The watching brief took place between the 23rd and 25th September 2007 and revealed no trace of the original building. The service trenches were opened prior to the topsoil strip and, there being no structural remains of any date noted in these, the watching brief of the topsoil removal was deemed unnecessary. This was agreed by Kim Stabler, English Heritage.

Structural remains noted consisted of concrete pads and drains, and one stretch of possible concrete wall footing of indeterminate date. All of these were deemed to have been constructed post-1950. In addition, one stretch of trench in the east of the site contained high voltage electricity cabling and a water pipe, which would have interfered and obscured any potential remains in this part of site.

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Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Balfour Beatty for commissioning the project and Andrew Strong and the site team from Balfour Beatty for their cooperation, assistance and good humour throughout the course of the works.

The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Lawrence Pontin. The fieldwork was undertaken by Gemma White, who also compiled this report, with illustrations by Kitty Brandon.

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Archaeological Watching Brief Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Balfour Beatty (The Client), to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Normand Park, Lillie Road, London SW6 (hereafter known as the Site). The watching brief was conducted following the advice of Kim Stabler, English Heritage advisor to the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, and was required in order to meet a condition of planning consent.
- 1.1.2 The watching brief involved watching the excavation of two service trenches, one for drainage and one for fibre optic cabling, and observing the removal of topsoil and landscaped mounds from a 65m x 65m area in the north-west of the development area (**Figure 1**).
- 1.1.3 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Wessex Archaeology (WA, 2007) and approved by Kim Stabler of English Heritage.

1.2 Site Description

- 1.2.1 The Site is situated in the northern part of a public park, Normand Park, which lies off Lillie Road, south of Normand Road and west of Bramber Road (**Figure 1**).
- 1.2.2 The Site is bounded on two sides by high walls associated with an adjacent convent and consists of ground landscaped to create a children's play area. This includes areas of tarmac and raised brick built flowerbeds, which were removed during the course of the watching brief.
- 1.2.3 The park is currently being renovated and improved by Balfour Beatty on behalf of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham.

2 GEOLOGICAL AND TOPOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Geology

2.1.1 The underlying geology of the area comprises London Clay Formations (British Geological Society, 1994, South London, Sheet 270). Overlying this on the Site are several levelling and demolition layers, below a shallow topsoil.

2.2 Topography

2.2.1 The modern ground level within the Site is approximately 4.5m above ordnance datum (aOD).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1.1 The Site is not within an area of archaeological priority as defined by the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Unitary Development Plan (adopted 2003).

3.1.2 The Site overlies the potential remains of Normand House which was first recorded in 1649. The house remained in private use until 1812 when it became an Asylum and then subsequently a convent from 1885.

3.1.3 Due to World War II bomb damage the convent was abandoned and the Site was cleared by 1951 for the present park (<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.asp>).

4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

4.1.1 The objective of the watching brief was to establish and record, as far as reasonably possible, any archaeological remains related to the form and function of Normand House that may survive beneath the present ground surface.

4.1.2 It also sought to characterise the nature, depth, date and state of preservation of any features and deposits and to retrieve where present, stratified assemblages of artefacts.

5 WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY

5.1 Fieldwork

5.1.1 All watching brief work was conducted in compliance with the standards outlined in the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (2001) and English Heritage's *London Region Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork* (1998), except where they are superseded by statements made below.

5.1.2 All archaeological deposits were recorded by means of Wessex Archaeology's pro forma recording sheets.

5.1.3 A photographic record was made by means of black and white prints, colour slides and digital images. Sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10 and plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20 or 1:50. Where no archaeological

remains were present, the area was recorded by means of digital photography.

5.1.4 The work was carried out with a 360° rubber tracked excavator fitted with a toothless bucket and all works took place under the supervision of an experienced archaeologist.

5.1.5 In agreement with Kim Stabler of English Heritage, it was decided, given the absence of any remains associated with Normand House in the service trenches, that observation of the stripping of topsoil, due to take place a week after the initial brief, was unnecessary.

5.2 Health and Safety

5.2.1 All work was undertaken in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992, and all other relevant Health and Safety legislations, regulations and codes of practice which are in force.

5.2.2 Health and Safety considerations were of paramount importance in conducting all fieldwork, and safe working practices took priority over archaeological considerations at all times.

5.3 Phases of Work

5.3.1 There were two main phases of work conducted on the Site.

5.3.2 The first comprised the excavation, by the site contractor, of two service trenches, (drainage and fibre optic cabling). This took place from the 23rd to the 25th September 2007.

5.3.3 The second involved the removal of a 300mm thick layer of topsoil across the whole of the Site.

5.4 Finds Collection and Retention

5.4.1 No finds were retrieved during these works.

5.5 Environmental Sampling Strategy

5.5.1 Due to the absence of suitable deposits, no environmental samples were taken during the watching brief.

5.6 The Archive

5.6.1 The completed project archive, including site drawings and photographic records, is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Salisbury under the WA project code 67280.

5.6.2 Following the conclusion of the project, the archive will be prepared for deposition with the Museum Of London under the MOL Site Code NPK 07, in accordance with the *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage* (UKIC 1990).

6 RESULTS

6.1.1 No archaeological features or related artefactual material were present in any of the watching brief areas.

6.1.2 The service trenches revealed layers of made ground and levelling material associated with the current use of the park to a depth of around 3.9m aOD. Below this was what appeared to be a naturally formed layer of silty clay with charcoal flecking likely to have been introduced through bioturbation.

6.1.3 Concrete pads and drains were noted in both trenches and are believed, from their material, depth and general appearance, to have been built post-1950, and thus do not represent part of the original Normand House.

6.1.4 The only feature that may represent structural remains was a north-south orientated wall footing running along, and under, the eastern baulk of the north-western trench, at a depth of 4.028m aOD. This was made of a concretion of small stones and is unlikely to be of significant date. This may represent a later addition to the house or grounds and was found below a dark layer containing slate, tile and brickwork that may be associated with a demolition event. This is however a tentative hypothesis and it may be more likely that the footing in question represents a post-war addition to the park.

6.2 Conclusion

6.2.1 No archaeological remains survive within the watching brief areas.

6.2.2 After consideration of the watching brief results and consultation with Kim Stabler of English Heritage, it was decided that no further archaeological mitigation was required on the Site.

6.2.3

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

British Geological Society (1994) *South London*, Sheet 270

English Heritage London Region (1998) *Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork – Archaeological Guidance paper 3*

Institute of Field Archaeologists (2001) *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

Wessex Archaeology, (2007) *Normand Park, Lillie Road, London SW6, London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, Written Scheme of Investigation for a Watching Brief*. Ref: 67280.01



Site location and plan of service trenches

Figure 1



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