130–138 Garratt Lane, Wandsworth,
London Borough of Wandsworth

An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment

for Languard Investments

by Sean Wallis
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code GLW 09/14

February 2009
Summary

Site name: 130-138 Garratt Lane, Wandsworth, London Borough of Wandsworth

Grid reference: TQ 25865 73900

Site activity: Desk-based assessment

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Sean Wallis

Site code: GLW 09/14

Area of site: c. 0.1 ha

Summary of results: The site lies within an archaeological priority area within the Borough though recent fieldwork in the vicinity, including a plot of land immediately to the south, have produced negative results. A part of the site is occupied by a basement which is likely to have removed all archaeologically relevant deposits in that area, though other areas may well be intact. It is anticipated that it will be necessary to provide further information about the potential of the unbasemented part of the site from field observation.
Introduction

This desk-based study is an assessment of the archaeological potential of a roughly rectangular parcel of land located at 130–138 Garratt Lane, Wandsworth (TQ 25865 73900) (Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Ms Julie Sheldrake of Languard Investments, 37 Webbs Road, Battersea, London, SW11 6RX and comprises the first stage of a process to determine the presence/absence, extent, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains which may be affected by redevelopment of the area.

Site description, location and geology

The site consists of a c. 0.1 ha plot of land, most of which is currently occupied by a large retail warehouse, which has recently closed. The south-west corner of the site has been used as a service yard for the warehouse, and is accessed from Furnmage Street. The plot stretches southwards, along the west side of Garratt Lane, from the corner of Twilley Street and Garratt Lane (Fig. 14). A site visit was carried out in February 2009, although access could not be gained to the rear of the site. Part of the site on the Garratt Lane, frontage has basements (Fig 13). The river Wandle flows north to the Thames, to the west of the development area, which is centred on TQ 25865 73900. The site is located on river gravel terraces (BGS 1981), and lies at a height of approximately 10m above Ordnance Datum.

Planning background and development proposals

Planning permission (app no 2007/5233) has been gained from the London Borough of Wandsworth, for the demolition of all the existing buildings on the site, and the construction of a new apartment block, which will front onto Twilley Street and Garratt Lane (Fig. 13). The ground floor of the block will be used for commercial purposes, whilst the upper floors will be residential. The proposal includes provision for a limited amount of underground parking. The consent includes a condition (10) relating to archaeology.

Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16 1990) provides guidance relating to archaeology within the planning process. It points out that where a desk-based assessment has shown that there is a strong possibility of significant archaeological deposits in a development area it is reasonable to provide more detailed information.
from a field evaluation so that an appropriate strategy to mitigate the effects of development on archaeology can be devised:

Paragraph 21 states:

‘Where early discussions with local planning authorities or the developer’s own research indicate that important archaeological remains may exist, it is reasonable for the planning authority to request the prospective developer to arrange for an archaeological field evaluation to be carried out...’

Should the presence of archaeological deposits be confirmed further guidance is provided. *Archaeology and Planning* stresses preservation *in situ* of archaeological deposits as a first consideration as in paragraphs 8 and 18.

Paragraph 8 states:

‘...Where nationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and their settings, are affected by proposed development there should be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation...’

Paragraph 18 states:

‘The desirability of preserving an ancient monument and its setting is a material consideration in determining planning applications whether that monument is scheduled or unscheduled...’

However, for archaeological deposits that are not of such significance it is appropriate for them to be ‘preserved by record’ (i.e., fully excavated and recorded by a competent archaeological contractor) prior to their destruction or damage.

Paragraph 25 states:

‘Where planning authorities decide that the physical preservation *in situ* of archaeological remains is not justified in the circumstances of the development and that development resulting in the destruction of the archaeological remains should proceed, it would be entirely reasonable for the planning authority to satisfy itself ... that the developer has made appropriate and satisfactory provision for the excavation and recording of remains.’

The Wandsworth Unitary Development Plan (LBWUPD 2003), reiterates this point in policies TBE14 and TBE15.

Policy TBE14 states:

‘Where development involving ground disturbance is proposed in Archaeological Priority Areas, the Council will require developers to make provision for archaeological investigation. Normally the submission of an archaeological evaluation report will be requested prior to determination. Archaeological investigation may also be required elsewhere in sites of archaeological potential.’
Policy TBE15 states:

‘In appropriate cases, the Council may also require preservation in situ, or excavation. The recording and publication of results will normally be required.’

The site is within an archaeological priority area, as defined in the UDP, on account of its location within the Wandle Valley.

**Methodology**

The assessment of the site was carried out by the examination of pre-existing information from a number of sources recommended by the Institute of Field Archaeologists paper ‘Standards in British Archaeology’ covering desk-based studies. These sources include historic and modern maps, the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record (GLSMR), geological maps and any relevant publications or reports.

**Archaeological background**

*General background*

The site is located on a river gravel terrace, which has yielded a high density of finds from a wide range of archaeological periods. Prehistoric activity is particularly prevalent on the river gravels of the Thames Valley, and a search of the GLSMR shows that Wandsworth is no exception. A plot of the major Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic sites and find spots has highlighted their concentration along tributaries of the Thames, with the river Wandle being a good example of this (MoLAS 2000, 55 and map 2).

It seems that the Wandle played an equally important role in subsequent periods, and it has been suggested that the river was probably navigable in Roman times and would therefore have been a major route in this period (MoLAS 2000, 125).

Saxon occupation in Greater London followed a similar pattern, with settlements and cemeteries being concentrated around the various tributaries of the Thames. Once again, this is particularly true of the Wandle (MoLAS 2000, 178). The settlement of Wandsworth appears to have developed and expanded during the Saxon period, and this expansion continued into medieval times.

The later growth of Wandsworth is largely due to its position on the main road from London to the south-west, which gained further importance when a stone bridge was built across the Wandle in 1569. However, the river Wandle continued to have an influence on the development of the settlement, particularly in respect of
industries such as fisheries and mills. The fisheries were well established by the 15th and 16th centuries, and by the late 18th century it is recorded that 500 people within Wandsworth were employed in factories and mills (VCH 1967).

Greater London Sites and Monuments Record

A search was made of the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record (GLSMR) on 9th February 2009, for a radius of 500m around the proposal site. This revealed 27 entries within the search radius. These are summarized as Appendix 1 and their locations are plotted on Figure 1.

Prehistoric

A number of flint implements have been retrieved over the years, from various locations around the site. A Palaeolithic chipping floor was recorded in 1885–6 and 1902 to the north east of the site, at St Anne’s Hill [1]. The finds included axes, scrapers, flakes and borers of Acheulian and Mousterian type. Further flint implements have been found at Earlsfield [2], where Palaeolithic handaxes, flint flakes and a scraper were recorded, along with a Neolithic axe. Another Palaeolithic handaxe was recovered from All Farthing Lane, which joins Garratt Lane further to the north [3]. St Anne’s Hill has also yielded flint flakes / blades dating to the Mesolithic period [4]. A number of entries in the GLSMR relate to a geoarchaeological investigation to the north of the site, on what is now the Arndale Centre. This provided a wealth of information about the surrounding environment from the Mesolithic to modern times [5].

Roman

The only specific Roman entry in the GLSMR relates to material recovered from the river Wandle, to the north of the site, although it does not describe what was actually found [6].

Medieval

Only one entry specifically relates to this period, and this is for Garratt Lane itself [7]. The route appears to have originated in the medieval period as the main thoroughfare heading south from Wandsworth. The name Garratt is derived from an estate which is known to have existed in 1538.

Post-Medieval

A gravel quarry was identified during fieldwork on Garratt Lane, to the south of the site, along with the remains of a post-medieval cultivation soil horizon [8]. Further surviving cultivation soil deposits were noted in an evaluation to the north of the site, also on Garratt Lane [9]. There is a GLSMR entry for another post-medieval gravel quarry to the south-west of the site, although this entry, for Wandsworth Common, actually covers quite a
large area [10]. An archaeological watching brief to the north of the site, on Garratt lane, found possible
evidence of post-medieval timber revetting and land reclamation, with animal bone waste hinting at nearby
industrial activity, possibly tanning or leatherworking [11]. An earlier watching brief at the same site [16] noted
a minimum of 2.3m of made ground, interpreted as either disturbed archaeological deposits or in situ remains.

Modern

The GLSMR entries from this period include King George’s Park, which is located to the west of the proposed
development site, on the other side of the river Wandle [12]. The park, originally known as Southfields Park,
was opened by King George V in 1923. The only listed building recorded within the search radius is Earlsfield
House, which is on Garratt Lane, just over 100m to the south of the present site [13]. The entry for this building
indicates that it was built in 1902, as a workhouse for the Wandsworth and Clapham Union. A recent evaluation,
immediately south of the proposed site [14], noted a number of modern cut features (Wallis and Preston 2005).
Further 19th- and 20th-century features were recorded during an evaluation at Swaffield Road, to the south-east
of the present site [15].

Undated

An excavation was carried out in 1968, to the north-east of the site on All Farthing Lane [17]. Details of this
excavation are lacking, as the finds are not with Wandsworth Museum, and the excavator has since died.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the study area.

Cartographic and documentary sources

Wandsworth is a Saxon place name, meaning ‘the enclosure of a man called Waendel’ (Mills 1998). The
settlement has undergone various name changes over the years, from Wendleswurthe in the 7th century,
Wandlesorde and Wandered in the 11th century, and finally Wandsworth in the 14th century. In AD 693 the area
was part of a larger estate, which was granted to the nuns at Barking, and then to Westminster Abbey in AD
1067, after which several estates were formed (VCH 1967; Gerhold 1998). Westminster Abbey had also
established a church in Wandsworth, as at many other manors, by 1157 (Blair 1991). The area surrounding the
site appears initially to have been part of the Dunsford manor, then later The Garratt, which was established
around the 16th century (VCH 1967).
Wandsworth is mentioned in Domesday Book (AD 1086), where it is referred to as *Wandelesorde, Wandesorde and Wendelesorde*, as being held by the Abbot of Saint-Wandille through Ingulf the monk. It was assessed at 1 hide under King Edward, but at nothing under William. There were 3 villans and 2 bordars with 1 plough, and the manor was worth 20 shillings (Williams and Martin 2002, 79). Another manor in the area is recorded as being held by William fitzAnsculf. There were 2 halls, 5 villans, 22 bordars, and it was assessed at 12 hides, with land for 4 ploughs, and 22 acres of meadow. The whole manor was worth 110 shillings before the Norman Conquest, but was worth £8 by the time of Domesday (Williams and Martin 2002, 84). There is no obvious reason for this considerable increase in the value of the manor, which is not seen elsewhere.

A range of Ordnance Survey and other historical maps of the area were consulted at the Public Records Office and the Metropolitan Archive, in order to ascertain what activity had been taking place throughout the site’s later history and whether this may have affected any possible archaeological deposits within the proposal area (Appendix 2).

The earliest map available of the area is Saxton’s 1575 map of Surrey, which clearly shows Wandsworth, but with very little detail for the settlement. The river Wandle is shown flowing north into the Thames, although there is no development shown along the route of the river (Fig. 2). Similarly, a number of later maps of Surrey by Norden (1594), Van Den Keere (1603) and Speed (1611), show no further detail for the study area (not illustrated). By the time of Seller’s 1690 map of Surrey (Fig. 3) Wandsworth appears to have developed significantly, with buildings lining the road from London to Kingston. The river Wandle is still clearly marked, with one small building, presumably a mill, shown along its length, just south of Wandsworth. However, it is not clear if this lies within the boundaries of the proposal site.

Senex’s 1729 map of Surrey (Fig. 4) shows the area in more detail. Wandsworth has developed considerably, with several mills marked in the town and along the route of the river Wandle, both north and south of the site. A road is shown which probably represents Garratt Lane, along with an area called Half Farthing. This is most likely located in the area of the current All Farthing Lane, which lies close to the proposal area. Garratt Green is also marked on this map.

According to Rocque’s 1768 map of Surrey (Fig. 5), Garratt Lane (shown as Garret Lane) now exists, with the river Wandle located to the west of it. The land between the river and Garratt Lane has remained as meadows, apart from an area of what appears to be formal gardens with buildings fronting onto the Wandle. Lindley and Crosley’s 1793 map (not illustrated) shows no further significant development. By 1822, according
to the Ordnance Survey Old Series (Fig. 6), the route of an ‘iron railway’ is marked on the map along the length of Garratt Lane. This is depicted as a track rather than an actual railway, and represents the course of the Surrey Iron railway, which was built in 1801 by Act of Parliament. This was the first public railway, linking Wandsworth Dock with Croydon, and it continued in use until 1848 (Bayliss 1985). A number of buildings appear within the proposed development site at this time, with what appears to be a formal garden immediately to the south.

The First Edition Ordnance Survey from the 1870s (Fig. 7) shows the site in more detail. The Royal Paper Mill is located to the north of the site and is, at this time, well established. The proposed site is undeveloped and appears to lie within an area of formal gardens, associated with Wandle House. The site is bisected by a track which runs from Garratt Lane towards buildings to the west and south. According to the Second Edition Ordnance Survey of 1894/6 (Fig. 8), Wandle House appears to have lost its formal gardens, although this may simply be a more austere mapping style. The track still exists, with the area to the north, immediately east of Wandle House, appearing to have a number of trees, whilst the southern area is open.

Major development of the area as a whole had taken place by 1916, and the Ordnance Survey of that year (Fig. 9) shows the area around Wandle House being bounded by three new roads; Twilley Street, Esparto Street and Furmage Street. The southern part of the proposed site, which roughly equates to the area south of the track shown in 1894/6, is occupied by terraced residential properties fronting onto Garratt Lane, with gardens to their rear. The northern part of the site is still undeveloped at this time, remaining as gardens to Wandle House which still stands.

The study area appears to have remained relatively unaltered by the time of the 1920 Ordnance Survey (not illustrated) but, by the time of the 1938 Ordnance Survey (Fig. 10), it appears that Wandle House was demolished at some point between 1920 and 1938. The northern end of the site is shown as undeveloped, and although the demolition of Wandle House does not seem to have significantly affected the proposal site itself, it is interesting that the 1938 map shows a number of new land boundaries. The terraced houses at the southern end of the site are still shown, along with their rear gardens. No major changes can be seen on the 1949 Ordnance Survey (not illustrated), but the area has again changed significantly by 1954, when the Ordnance Survey (Fig. 11) shows a new building(s) at the northern end of the site. Although the scale of the 1954 map does not allow for much detail, this building probably represents part of the warehouse which currently stands there. A new low rise apartment block, fronting onto Twilley Street and Esparto Street, also appears to have been built between 1949 and 1954. This block still stands, and is rather confusingly called Wandle House. It is interesting to note
that this block and the probable warehouse mentioned above roughly occupy the land boundaries shown on the 1938 Ordnance Survey. The terraced houses which originally appeared on the 1916 Ordnance Survey seem to have been demolished between 1949 and 1954, including all of those in the southern part of the proposed site. The area formerly occupied by these houses, including their gardens, is shown as open space on the 1954 map.

The 1968 Ordnance Survey (Fig. 12) shows the proposal site much as it is today. A southern extension to the warehouse appears to have been built between 1954 and 1968, occupying the area of the demolished terraced houses. This extension would probably have been cellared from the outset, meaning that much of the area previously occupied by the terraced houses will have been truncated.

The only major change to the area since 1968 has affected the land immediately south of the proposed site. This site was the subject of an earlier archaeological desk-based assessment (Lowe 2003), which was followed by an evaluation in 2005 (Wallis and Preston 2005).

**Listed buildings**

There are no Listed Buildings on the proposed site. The only Listed Building in the vicinity is the former workhouse known as Earlsfield House, which is over 100m to the south of the site. The proposed development is unlikely to have any effect on the setting or character of this building.

**Registered Parks and Gardens; Registered Battlefields**

The only registered park in the vicinity is King George’s Park, which is located on the other side of the river Wandle, just over 100m to the west of the proposed development site, and screened from it by several blocks of development.

**Historic Hedgerows**

There are no hedgerows, historic or otherwise, on the site.

**Aerial Photographs**

The site lies within an urban area which has been developed since before the advent of aerial photography. No photographic collections have therefore been consulted.
Discussion

In considering the archaeological potential of the study area, various factors must be taken into account, including previously recorded archaeological sites, previous land-use and disturbance and future land-use including the proposed development.

The survey of archaeological and historical sources and the designation of the area as an archaeological priority area within the Borough Unitary Development Plan indicate that the site lies within an area of generalized archaeological potential. The location of the site on the river gravels, and its close proximity to the river Wandle, would increase the possibility of encountering archaeological deposits. The Wandle has been the focus for human activity from the earliest prehistoric periods, as attested to by the preponderance of Palaeolithic material recovered from the area around the proposed site. This activity has continued, to some extent, through to the post-medieval and modern periods. This generalised perception however, has to be qualified by the results of recent fieldwork in the surrounding areas, including an evaluation immediately to the south of the present site. This work has failed to identify any archaeological material. Extensive quarrying has also been identified in various locations close to, and on, Garratt Lane which would also have removed any archaeological deposits encountered.

The cartographic evidence suggests that the site remained fairly undeveloped until the early 20th century, when terraced houses were built in the south-east portion. Prior to this, the site had been used as formal gardens for Wandle House, which was demolished at some point between 1920 and 1938. After remaining as open ground for a number of years, the northern part of the site was redeveloped between 1949 and 1954, with the erection of the warehouse building which currently stands on the site. At some time during the same period, the terraced houses at the southern end of the site were demolished, and were replaced by an extension to the warehouse at some time between 1954 and 1968. The site has remained relatively unchanged since.

The 1950s/60s warehouse extension included basements, which will almost certainly have destroyed any archaeological remains in the south-east corner of the site but as the rest of the site shows no evidence of ever being cellared, there is therefore the possibility of encountering archaeological deposits across this latter area.

As the site lies within an archaeological priority area within the Borough, it is anticipated that it will be necessary to provide further information about the potential of the unbasemented part of the site from field observations, in order to draw up a scheme to mitigate the impact of development on any below-ground archaeological deposits if necessary. A scheme for this evaluation will need to be drawn up and approved by the archaeological advisers to the Borough, and implemented by a competent archaeological contractor.
References

Bayliss, D A, 1985, Retracing the first public railway, Living History Local Guide (2nd ed)
Blair, J, 1991, Early Medieval Surrey, Stroud
Gerhold, D, 1998, Wandsworth Past, Historical Publications Limited
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### APPENDIX 2: Historic and modern maps consulted

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

130-138 Garratt Lane, Wandsworth, London
Borough of Wandsworth, 2009
An Archaeological Desk-based Assessment

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Explorer 161 at 1:12500 Ordnance Survey Licence 100025880
Figure 2. Saxton’s Map of Surrey, 1575

Approximate location of site

130-138 Garratt Lane, Wandsworth, London
Borough of Wandsworth, 2009
An Archaeological Desk-based Assessment

Figure 2. Saxton’s Map of Surrey, 1575
Figure 3. Seller’s map of Surrey, 1690

130-138 Garratt Lane, Wandsworth, London
Borough of Wandsworth, 2009
An Archaeological Desk-based Assessment
Figure 4. Senex’ map of Surrey, 1729

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Figure 4. Senex’ map of Surrey, 1729
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Figure 5. Rocque’s map of Surrey, 1768
Figure 6. Ordnance Survey Old Series, 1822

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Figure 6. Ordnance Survey Old Series, 1822
Figure 7. First Edition Ordnance Survey map, 1870’s
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Figure 8. Second Edition Ordnance Survey map, 1894/6
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Figure 9. 1916 Edition Ordnance Survey map
Figure 10. 1938 Edition Ordnance Survey map

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Figure 10. 1938 Edition Ordnance Survey map
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Figure 11. 1954 Edition Ordnance Survey map
Figure 12. Ordnance Survey TQ 25 73NE, 1968

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Figure 13. Plan of site showing existing basements
Figure 14. Current plan of site.
Scale: 1:1250