

Archaeological Deskbased Assessment of

82 HIGHGATE WEST HILL

Client:	Mr and Mrs Gee
Local Authority:	Camden Borough Council
NGR:	528145, 187118
Planning App:	N/A
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Abstract

A site located at 82 Highgate West Hill, Highgate is proposed for redevelopment. This report contains results of cartographic, archaeological, and documentary research into the site undertaken by L – P : Archaeology on behalf of Mr and Mrs Gee .

The site lies just outside an area designated by Camden Borough Council as an area of Archaeological Priority. The site contains a listed building dating to the Georgian period and is the site of an earlier building.

There is a little evidence to suggest early Prehistoric activity in the area and Highgate is not particularly known as an area of Roman settlement. However Highgate is well documented from the Medieval period onwards when a settlement grew up associated with North Road.

The study site appears to have been first developed in the 16th century with the construction of a residential house. The house was then rebuilt in the eighteenth century.

The proposed redevelopment will consist of the excavation of a basement beneath the house and the construction of an extension. It is likely that archaeological monitoring will be required as there is a high potential that remains of the earlier house will survive below the current house. Any alterations to the house will only be permitted with Listed Building Consent

1. Introduction and Scope of Study

- 1.1. This archaeological desk based assessment has been researched and prepared by Janine Young of L - P : Archaeology on behalf of Mr and Mrs Gee .
- 1.2. The report considers land at 82 Highgate West Hill. The local authority is the London Borough of Camden who take archaeological advice from the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service.
- 1.3. Proposals for the redevelopment of the site include the construction of an extension to the rear of the house and the excavation of a basement beneath the existing house.
- 1.4. The site occupies an area of approximately 1512m² and is centred at National Grid Reference 528145, 187118 (FIGURE 1). The site is bounded on the north side by Highgate West Hill and on the west and east sides by adjacent residential properties and gardens to the rear (FIGURE 2).
- 1.5. The site falls just outside an Archaeological Priority Area around Highgate and a conservation area. The house currently standing on the site is a Listed Building, (further details are given in section 2).
- 1.6. This assessment is based on the results of documentary and cartographic research as well as published and unpublished literature.
- 1.7. This assessment also comprises an examination of the GLSMR (Sites and Monuments Record), local excavations and watching briefs, topographic information and a map regression exercise.
- 1.8. The assessment seeks to address the following issues:
 - ◆ To assess the potential archaeology on this site
 - ◆ To assess the survival of potential archaeology
 - ◆ To assess the impact of the proposed development on the archaeology

2. Planning Background

- 2.1. In November 1990 the Department of the Environment issued PPG 16, "Archaeology and Planning". This document provides guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the preservation and investigation of archaeological remains.
- 2.2. In considering any planning application for development the local planning authority, the London Borough of Camden, is bound by the policy frameworks provided by Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG 16), and the policies within the borough's Unitary Development Plan (adopted June 2006). On matters concerning archaeology and the historic environment the Camden Borough Council take impartial advice from the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS).
- 2.3. The relevant policies and text from the UDP are reproduced below for clarity.

B8 - ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND MONUMENTS

A - Sites and monuments of national archaeological importance When considering development close to sites and monuments of national archaeological importance, including scheduled ancient monuments, the Council will seek the physical preservation of the archaeological features and their settings.

B - Sites and monuments of archaeological importance The Council will only grant consent for development where acceptable measures are undertaken to preserve remains of archaeological importance and their settings. Developers should adopt measures that allow such remains to be permanently preserved in situ. Where this cannot be achieved, no development shall take place until satisfactory excavation and recording of the remains has been carried out.

When researching the development potential of a site, developers should, in all cases, assess whether the site is known or likely to contain archaeological remains. Where there is good reason to believe that there are remains of archaeological importance on a site, the Council will consider directing applicants to supply further details of proposed developments, including the results of archaeological deskbased assessment and field evaluation, under the provisions of Article 3(2) of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995.

3.78 Within archaeological priority areas and for sites of archaeological potential, the Council may require an archaeological field evaluation to be carried out before a planning application is determined. If important archaeological remains are found, developers should adopt measures that allow the remains to be permanently preserved in situ. Where the preservation of such remains in situ cannot be achieved, the Council will require that no

development shall take place until satisfactory excavation and recording of the remains have been carried out on site by an archaeological organisation approved by the Council. In appropriate cases, the Council may grant planning permission subject to conditions, or seek voluntary agreements, to cover such matters, including making provision for access, interpretation and display for public benefit during excavation and publication of the recorded results. Recorded results should also be provided by the developer for inclusion in the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record. Where developers do not propose due provision for accommodating important archaeological remains, planning permission may be refused.

2.4. The study site falls just on the boundary of an Archaeological Priority Area as designated by the London Borough of Camden. The site also falls within the Highgate Conservation area which means that conservation area consent will be required for alterations in the area.

2.5. In addition 81- 83 Highgate West Hill is a grade 2 Listed Building (478423) and all works to the building itself will require Listed Building consent. The listing covers the following elements of the house; boundary wall, detached house, gate, icehouse and terraced house.

3. Geology and Topography

3.1.GEOLOGY

3.1.1. The British Geological Survey GeoIndex shows the site to be located on Thames Group Clay Silt and Gravel with no superficial deposits. This data is at relatively low resolution and it is in general inaccurate to state the geology only from this source (WWW.BGS.AC.UK).

3.1.2. Further geotechnical information is not currently available for the study site. More detailed information, if it becomes available, will add to our understanding of the site formation process and the potential for preserved archaeological deposits.

3.2.TOPOGRAPHY

3.2.1. The site is currently occupied by a large double fronted, three storey house which occupies most of the site area, and continues into the adjacent property, to the rear of the house is a large garden

3.2.2. Highgate West Hill is a steep road and the site itself slopes to the south east in keeping with the rest of the road.

4. Archaeological and Historical Background

4.1. TIMESCALES USED IN THIS REPORT:

PERIOD	FROM	TO
PREHISTORIC		
PALAEOLITHIC	450,000	12,000 BC
MESOLITHIC	12,000	4,000 BC
NEOLITHIC	4,000	1,800 BC
BRONZE AGE	1,800	600 BC
IRON AGE	600	43 AD
HISTORIC		
ROMAN	43	410 AD
EARLY MEDIEVAL	410	1066 AD
MEDIEVAL	1066	1485 AD
POST MEDIEVAL	1485	PRESENT

4.2. It is not the aim of this assessment to present a complete history of Highgate from earliest times, nor is it the intention of this report to examine every artefact found in the local area. Rather, the aim of this assessment is to review the data available and to use this to construct a model of the potential archaeology of the specific study site.

4.3. A search of the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record (GLSMR) within a 1km radius of the study site reveals a number of archaeological findspots dating almost exclusively to the Medieval and Post Medieval periods. GLSMR records are represented in the text below in the following format (MLOXXX).

4.4. PREHISTORIC

PALAEOLITHIC

4.4.1. No Palaeolithic findspots are recorded in the GLSMR for the area around the study site.

4.4.2. The gravel terraces of the River Lea and the River Thames are the main focus for Palaeolithic activity and settlement in the London area. However both of

these areas are some distance away, and there is no current evidence to suggest activity extended as far as the Highgate area.

- 4.4.3. The potential for remains from the Palaeolithic should therefore be considered low.

MESOLITHIC

- 4.4.4. Evidence from the Mesolithic period in the area is similarly limited although one record dating to the period is recorded in the GLSMR.
- 4.4.5. A watching brief, which was carried out by MoLAS in 1992 (site code BGP92), along a N-S pipeline across Hampstead Heath revealed several Mesolithic flints (MLO59915).
- 4.4.6. Deposits and finds from this period are usually preserved by waterlogged/peat deposits and no such deposits are known in the area. Despite the single findspot the archaeological potential for remains dating from this period being present on the study site is considered very low.

NEOLITHIC

- 4.4.7. Once again there are no entries relating to this period recorded in the GLSMR. However, it remains possible that this may be due to lack of investigation rather than a lack of activity within the area.
- 4.4.8. Due to this dearth of evidence the potential for archaeological remains from the Neolithic period is considered to be low.

BRONZE AGE

- 4.4.9. There is a continued dearth of activity or at least absence of evidence for activity in the area surrounding the study site during the Bronze Age period.
- 4.4.10. A single monument is recorded in the GLSMR, this represents a Bronze Age Bell barrow which is located on Parliament Hill (c900m to the west of the study site). This barrow is Scheduled Monument number L07 and has been the subject of much investigation and discussion throughout history. The barrow consists of a large mound surrounded by a bank and ditch.

4.4.11.No detailed results survive from excavations which have been carried out on the site and the monument has been fancifully referred to in the past as Boudicca's grave.

4.4.12.Bell barrows were often constructed on high ground during the Bronze Age as funerary markers and high status burials, and it seems that Parliament Hill and the raised area of Highgate in general would be an attractive place for further monuments of this type. However no evidence to suggest the presence of any similar monuments is known.

4.4.13.In light of this monument existing in seeming isolation and its distance from the study site means the possibility of any further remains dating to the Bronze Age being present on the study site is considered to be very low.

IRON AGE

4.4.14.There are no records dating to this period in the study site again. However, as above it does remain possible that this may be due to lack of investigation rather than a lack of activity within the area.

4.4.15.The potential for archaeological remains dating from this period is nevertheless considered to be low.

4.5.ROMAN

4.5.1. There is evidence of some limited activity in the Highgate area during the Roman period, although the study site is located some distance from any known significant Roman settlements or roads.

4.5.2. Highgate wood was a centre of pottery production during the Roman period, with a substantial amount of evidence from excavations carried out over a number of seasons in the 1970s. At least ten kilns were excavated and evidence suggests that the area was used as a centre for pottery production for over 100 years. However no evidence for any Roman settlement within the area of production has ever been found.

4.5.3. Highgate wood is however just under 1km from the study site and as such this is not indicative of any activity taking place in the vicinity of the study site.

- 4.5.4. The closest Roman road is the *Verulanium* to London road, which passes north at the west end of Hampstead Heath (THE VIATOIRES 1964, 121).
- 4.5.5. There are several records in the GLSMR which pertain to the Roman period. MLO17774 records a rumour that a 4th century coin hoard was discovered c. 300m to the north of the site, however it seems there is no certainty that this was actually ever found as it no longer exists so this record should be considered unreliable.
- 4.5.6. A possible burial pit or kiln was discovered in Southwood Lawn Road in 1971 when an extension was excavated. Other finds from this site included a complete ring necked flagon and a series of red potsherds with some tile and burnt clay (MLO1651).
- 4.5.7. In very close proximity to the study site the GLSMR records the discovery of an alleged Roman pavement at 8 Holly Lodge Gardens. A herring bone pavement was apparently found in 1947 where the stables used to stand. Once again the exact details in the record are somewhat vague, however this discovery does strongly suggest settlement activity in the area of the study site during this period (MLO17833).
- 4.5.8. In addition field walking and metal detecting along a N-S pipeline across Hampstead Heath carried out in 1992 revealed a series of Roman coins, although no further details are given (MLO59916).
- 4.5.9. From the evidence contained within the GLSMR it seems possible that the Highgate area was perhaps subject to more activity during the Roman period than is currently known. However in light of existing evidence the potential for any significant activity taking place on the study site during this period is considered to be low.

4.6. EARLY MEDIEVAL

- 4.6.1. During this period the study site lay within the parish of St Pancras, and it seems likely that the land was contained within the manor of Canteloves, although Highgate West Hill represented the boundary between two manors, Canteloves and Tottenhill so the study site probably lay on the border between

the two.

4.6.2. At the time of Domesday the parish of St Pancras was assessed as having, 3,300 acres, and a population of around 300 people,

'At St Pancras the canons of St Pauls hold four hides (Cantelowes), the land is 2 carucates. The villeins have only one plough and another plough can be made, wood for hedges, pasture for cattle and (rendering 20 pence rent. There are four villeins who hold this land under the canons and 7 cottagers. With all its profits its worth 40 shillings, the same when received in King Edwards time 60 shillings' (BAKER 1982).

4.6.3. During the Early Medieval period the area in general was very sparsely populated with a small hamlet where Highgate village is today. MLO3221 records a small hamlet based on Pond Square, Highgate, which had a small chapel of ease.

4.6.4. It seems likely that most of the wider area of Highgate and Hampstead was forested during this period.

4.6.5. No other records dating to the Early Medieval period are contained within the GLSMR and the potential for archaeological remains dating to this period being present on the study site is considered to be very low, as it is likely that the site was either forested or part of agricultural estate lands belonging to Cantelowes manor during this period.

4.7.MEDIEVAL

4.7.1. Highgate began to develop in the Medieval period into the settlement it is today. The initial cause for this development was the construction of North Road, which was cut through the Bishop of Londons park in the late 13th century.

4.7.2. It seems that at the same time as the construction of the North Road the route of Hampstead lane was also cut along the boundary of St Pancras parish and toll gates were placed at Spainards and the Gatehouse. It is thought that these gates presumably earned the settlement its name. The tollgate at the Gatehouse is recorded in the GLSMR as built by the Bishop of London (MLO17823).

4.7.3. The study site fronts onto Highgate West Hill, the exact origins of Highgate

West Hill are not known for certain, however sources in general agree that the road has Medieval origins and Richardson states that, ' there is no doubt that upper West Hill existed by 1480'(RICHARDSON 1983).

4.7.4. Highgate developed into an important settlement in the Medieval period, located as it was at an important road intersection and convenient stop over place on the route into London. A series of inns and trade developed around this road junction, the study site is located c. 300m from this area of activity. The Roque map of Middlesex shows several of the roads of Highgate clearly and these are recorded also in the GLSMR (MLO17871.MLO17897, MLO17822, MLO17832, MLO17825), map not reproduced here.

4.7.5. Most of the GLSMR entries refer to the roads of the area and the settlement, there is very little archaeological evidence dating to this period contained within the record, although MLO59924 records the discovery of Medieval artefacts during fieldwalking and metal detecting on Hampstead Heath in 1992.

4.7.6. Despite the lack of archaeological evidence the potential for archaeological remains dating to the Medieval period being present on the study site is considered to be high. The site is located in close proximity to the centre of activity in Highgate during this period and whilst it is unclear what exactly would have stood on the site, it is possible that the settlement may have extended this far and the site may have been developed. Alternatively it is possible that the land was farmland associated with the nearby settlement.

4.8.POST MEDIEVAL

4.8.1. During the early Post Medieval period this area of Highgate saw substantial development and the irregular triangle bounded by Highgate West Hill, South Grove and Swains Lane saw some of the earliest substantial houses being built and the area quickly became an area occupied by influential and wealthy inhabitants.

4.8.2. This development was in keeping with the rest of Highgate during this period which was attracting wealthy Londoners and ambitious building, the village was beginning to outgrow neighbouring settlements in size at this time

growing to cater both for the rich as well as travellers (RICHARDSON 1983).

- 4.8.3. John Richardson goes into some detail into the development of the particular area surrounding the study site in his book, 'Highgate Past' which can be consulted directly for further detail. A very brief summary is given here of the development of the land around the study site.
- 4.8.4. The main feature of the area in the early Post Medieval period was Arundel House, located c.100m to the east of the study site. This was a large estate house, probably built by William Cornwallis in 1588 and described as a 'very faire house' by John Norden in 1593. The house continued as a large residence until the 18th century when it was first divided into two then knocked down and rebuilt.
- 4.8.5. Several other large houses were clearly in existence by the late 16th century along Highgate West Hill, with buildings known at South Grove House and Voel House, adjacent to the study site.
- 4.8.6. On the study site itself, it seems that a significant house was built on the site of 81-83 at some point during the 16th century, although its exact construction date is unclear. An engraving dated to 1710 focusing on Ashurst House shows the building located at 81-83 at this time clearly as a large five gabled three storey house (FIGURE 6). Richardson records this house as belong to Francis Blake in 1664. The engraving shows a substantial landscaped garden associated with the house extending down the slope to the south (RICHARDSON 1983).
- 4.8.7. Plans chart the ownership of the area around Ashurst House which changes hands from part of the Ashurst Estate in 1682, to Blake family lands in the late 17th century to part of the Coutts Estate in the 18th century. A building is clearly shown at 81-83 Highgate West Hill during this period.
- 4.8.8. It seems that by the mid 18th century the 16th century building on the site had been replaced by a new large dwelling, which still stands on the site today and is a listed building. This building was made into two residences by the end of the 18th century and number 83 was added in 1823. The current building contains two large chimneys which are thought to remain from the earlier 16th century house. The garden of the building is also thought to contain a

probable ice well.

- 4.8.9. The earliest detailed map of the area are the parish maps of 1804 and 1834, when the building is clearly marked as two residences and the garden area is shown as much reduced from the 1710 engraving. St Michaels church is by this date shown to the east of the study site on the site once occupied by Arundel House (FIGURE 7 AND FIGURE 8).
- 4.8.10. Successive OS maps from 1869, 1893 and 1913 (FIGURE 9) all mark the progressive development of Highgate West Hill and Highgate as a whole which becomes increasingly built up during this time. However none of these plans show any marked change in the study site which is occupied by the same building during this period and remains static. Alterations to the house are known from 1960 when a rear wing was added.
- 4.8.11. The GLSMR contains a wealth of information and records within a 1km radius for the Post Medieval period, this time represents a large period of growth in the Highgates' history. As this report is primarily concerned with changes which occurred on the study site itself these records are not here referred to in any detail, suffice to say that the changes and building development on the study site itself in general kept pace with similar developments which were occurring around it in the village of Highgate.
- 4.8.12. The potential for Post Medieval archaeological remains surviving on the study site is considered high. The first known building on the site dates from the mid 16th century, and whilst it is likely that the current building may have destroyed some of the evidence for this original structure the possibility remains that some evidence for the building will still be present on the site. The garden of the building during this period is shown on plans as heavily landscaped and much more extensive than it is today and evidence for this landscaped garden may also survive within the current garden area.
- 4.8.13. The standing building on site today is of archaeological interest itself as confirmed by its listed status, and any development proposals will need to take this into consideration and listed building consent will be necessary.

5. Site Conditions and the Proposed Redevelopment

5.1. SITE CONDITIONS

- 5.1.1. The site is located at 81-83 Highgate West Hill, in the village of Highgate.
- 5.1.2. The site currently contains a large Georgian house and its associated landscaped garden.
- 5.1.3. A building stood on the site from the 16th century. It is possible that this original building will have truncated any Medieval or earlier deposits that may have survived in the footprint of the building when it was constructed.
- 5.1.4. The 16th century building was demolished to make way for the current Georgian building, in turn, the construction of the Georgian building may well have truncated archaeological remains of the earlier building, although it is equally possible that some of the remains of this earlier building still survive, in fact it is thought that the two chimneys used in the house today are from the earlier house.

5.2. PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT

- 5.2.1. The proposed development will involve ground excavation for the enlargement of the existing basement to an area just over the size of the existing building. A rear extension and the creation of a lightwell is also planned.
- 5.2.2. The extent of ground excavation necessary for the basement enlargement is shown on FIGURE 9 which is reproduced from a plan by Gregori Chiarotti.
- 5.2.3. This ground excavation will have a significant impact on archaeological deposits which survive in the footprint of the area.

6. Summary and Conclusions

- 6.1. A site at 81- 83 Highgate West Hill is proposed for redevelopment. The site is currently occupied by a large Georgian house which has been divided up into three residences.
- 6.2. The proposed redevelopment involves the enlargement of the existing basement, the construction of a rear extension and creation of a lightwell.
- 6.3. Examination of the available data indicates that the site does not contain any known archaeological deposits of national importance or any Scheduled Ancient Monuments. The site does however contain a Listed Building.
- 6.4. There is no known activity on the site from Prehistoric or Roman periods, and very little evidence in the immediate vicinity to suggest the site was a focus of settlement during these early periods.
- 6.5. Highgate first starts to develop in the Medieval period with the construction of the North road which connected the previously small hamlet with the city of London. The village slowly develops around the intersection of roads as it becomes a popular stop over point for travellers. The study site is located in close proximity to this road junction and it is possible that the area of the site saw some development during the Medieval period either settlement, or agricultural activity associated with the nearby village.
- 6.6. Evidence from the Post Medieval period suggests the site itself was first built upon in the mid 16th century when a large five gabled house was constructed on the site. This development was in keeping with the general developments in Highgate at this time as wealthy Londoners were attracted to the area and started constructing grand houses.
- 6.7. This original house was then replaced in the mid 18th century with a large house which was then later turned into two residences. This 18th century house still stands today and is a Listed Building.
- 6.8. It is highly possible that the remains of the original 16th century house survive within or beneath the current house.

6.9. Excavation of ground beneath the current house in order to construct the planned basement will have a negative impact on any surviving archaeological remains in its footprint, as will any groundworks required for the construction of the rear extension.

6.10. It is possible that the ground excavation will need to be carried out under archaeological supervision or a programme of investigative works will be required in order to establish the presence or absence of any archaeological deposits.

6.11. It should also be noted that the house currently standing on site is also of archaeological interest and any redevelopment should be sympathetic. This has not been addressed in detail in this report as it is assumed that this issue is dealt with elsewhere in the application for listed building consent. Should any significant internal alterations be proposed then a programme of building recording may also be required.