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London Borough of Croydon

Archaeological Priority Areas Appraisal

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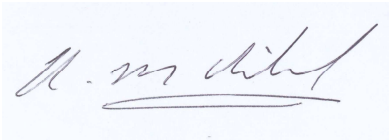
Approval: (Signature)	

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Contents

Introduction	page 4
Explanation of Archaeological Priority Areas	page 5
Archaeological Priority Area Tiers	page 7
Croydon: Historical and Archaeological Interest	page 10
Archaeological Priority Areas in Croydon	page 16
Map of Archaeological Priority Areas in Croydon	page 18
Map of Archaeological Priority Areas and former Archaeological Priority Zones in Croydon	page 19
Area descriptions and map extracts for Tier 1 Archaeological Priority Areas	page 21
Area descriptions and map extracts for Tier 2 Archaeological Priority Areas	page 57
Area descriptions and map extracts for Tier 3 Archaeological Priority Areas	page 153
Glossary	page 158

Introduction

This document has been produced by the Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS), part of the London office of Historic England. The Croydon Archaeological Priority Area Appraisal is part of a long term commitment to review and update London's Archaeological Priority Areas (APA). The review uses evidence held in the Greater London Historic Environment Record (GLHER) in order to provide a sound evidence base for local plans that accord with the National Planning Policy Framework and its supporting Practice Guidance.

The appraisal is an opportunity to review the APA framework in Croydon and produce revised area boundaries and new descriptions. The proposals are being submitted to the London Borough of Croydon for consideration and are recommended for adoption in support of the Local Plan.

The Croydon Local Plan: Strategic Policies - Partial Review takes account of an earlier scoping document. The information within the scoping document has been consulted upon as part of the consultation of the Croydon Local Plan: Strategic Policies - Partial Review (Preferred and Alternative Options). This full review of the Archaeological Priority Areas will support the Proposed Submission publication in summer 2016.

Explanation of Archaeological Priority Areas

An Archaeological Priority Area (APA) is a defined area where, according to existing information, there is significant known archaeological interest or particular potential for new discoveries.

APAs exist in every London borough and were initially created in the 1970s and 1980s either by the boroughs or local museums. In Croydon such areas were formerly known as Archaeological Priority Zones (APZs). The present review of these areas is based on evidence held in the Greater London Historic Environment Record (GLHER). Guidelines have been created to promote consistency in the recognition and definition of these areas across Greater London[1] and have been used in the preparation of this document.

In the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), archaeological interest means evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places and of the people and cultures that made them. However, heritage assets of archaeological interest can also hold other forms of heritage significance – artistic, architectural or historic interest. For many types of above ground heritage asset (e.g. historic buildings, landscapes and industrial heritage) these other interests may be more obvious or important. Sometimes heritage interests are intertwined – as is often the case with archaeological and historical interest. Whilst the APA system does not seek to duplicate protection given by other heritage designations, such as Listed Buildings or Conservation Areas, it does aim to overlap and integrate with such approaches. Understanding archaeological significance can enhance appreciation of historical, artistic or architectural interest and vice versa.

APAs[2] highlight where important archaeological interest might be located based on the history of the area and previous archaeological investigations. They help local planning authorities to manage archaeological remains that might be affected by development by providing an evidence base for Local Plans. This evidence base identifies areas of known heritage assets of historic and archaeological interest and wider zones where there is a likelihood that currently unidentified heritage assets will be discovered in the future. APAs act as a trigger for consultation with the borough's archaeological adviser and are justified by a description of significance which will inform development management advice and decision making. The appraisal can also indicate how archaeology might contribute towards a positive strategy for conserving and enjoying the local historic environment, for example through recognising local distinctiveness or securing social or cultural benefits.

[1] That is the boroughs advised by GLAAS; not the City of London and Southwark which have their own archaeological advisers.

[2] Sometimes called by other names including Archaeological Priority Zones, Areas of Archaeological Significance/Importance/Interest or Areas of High Archaeological Potential.

However, archaeological research and discovery is a dynamic process so it is not possible to anticipate all eventualities, threats and opportunities. This appraisal should therefore be seen as providing a flexible framework for informed site specific decision making but not a straightjacket.

Archaeological Priority Area Tiers

Previously all parts of Croydon were either inside or outside an Archaeological Priority Zone (APZ). Under the new system all parts of the borough will fall into one of four different tiers of archaeological significance and potential. The tiers vary depending on the archaeological significance and potential of that particular area. New Archaeological Priority Areas (APAs) have been categorised into one of Tiers 1-3 while all other areas within the borough will be regarded as being in Tier 4. Tier levels indicate when there is a need to understand the potential impact of the proposed development on the heritage asset's significance. The type of planning applications and the tier level it is located in indicate the likelihood that archaeology will be a consideration in reaching a planning decision.

Consultation guidelines are set out in the GLAAS Charter. New guidelines will link the tiers to specific thresholds for triggering archaeological advice and assessment. It is expected that as a minimum all major applications[3] within Archaeological Priority Areas (Tiers 1-3) would require an archaeological desk based assessment, and if necessary a field evaluation, to accompany a planning application. In the more sensitive Tier 1 and Tier 2 areas this procedure would also apply to some smaller scale developments. Outside Archaeological Priority Areas (Tier 4) some major developments, such as those subject to Environmental Impact Assessment, may warrant similar treatment. Pre-application consultation with GLAAS is encouraged to ensure planning applications are supported by appropriate information.

Tier 1 is a defined area which is known, or strongly suspected, to contain a heritage asset of national importance (a Scheduled Monument or equivalent); or is otherwise of very high archaeological sensitivity. Thus Tier 1 covers heritage assets to which policies for designated heritage assets would apply and a few other sites which are particularly sensitive to small scale disturbance[4]. They will be clearly focused on a specific heritage asset and will normally

[3] Major applications include development involving 10 or more dwellings or an applications site of 0.5 hectares or more on outline applications. For other types of applications including commercial or industrial development a major application may be defined as being 1000m^2 floorspace or more or an application site of 1 hectare or more on an outline application

[4]However, this does not mean that the policies for assets of national importance would apply to every development in a Tier 1 APA as that will depend upon the nature of the proposals and results of site-specific assessment and evaluation.

be relatively small. Scheduled Monuments would normally be included within a Tier 1 APA[5]

Tier 2 is a local area within which the GLHER holds specific evidence indicating the presence or likely presence of heritage assets of archaeological interest. Planning decisions are expected to make a balanced judgement for non-designated assets considered of less than national importance considering the scale of any harm and the significance of the asset. Tier 2 APAs will typically cover a larger area than a Tier 1 APA and may encompass a group of heritage assets.

Tier 3 is a landscape scale zone within which the GLHER holds evidence indicating the potential for heritage assets of archaeological interest. The definition of Tier 3 APAs involves using the GLHER to predict the likelihood that currently unidentified heritage assets, particularly sites of historic and archaeological interest, will be discovered in the future. Tier 3 APAs will typically be defined by geological, topographical or land use considerations in relation to known patterns of heritage asset distribution.

Tier 4 (outside APA) is any location that does not, on present evidence, merit inclusion within an Archaeological Priority Area. However, Tier 4 areas are not necessarily devoid of archaeological interest and may retain some potential unless they can be shown to have been heavily disturbed in modern times. Such potential is most likely to be identified on greenfield sites, in relation to large scale development or in association with Listed Buildings or other designated heritage assets.

New information may lead to areas moving between the four tiers set out above. For example, a positive archaeological evaluation could result in a Tier 2 area (or part of it) being upgraded to Tier 1 if the remains found were judged to be of national importance. It is important to understand that the new tiered system is intended to be dynamic and responsive to new information which either increases or decreases the significance of an area.

[5] Tier 1 APAs around Scheduled Monuments will often extend beyond the boundary of the scheduled area to reflect the full extent of the asset, including the potential for associated remains. It will not usually be practicable for an APA to define the totality of Scheduled Monument's setting. Instead they will attempt to reflect areas close to the monument that would be especially sensitive. A few Scheduled Monuments which have been designated for their historical or other non-archaeological interest will not merit the definition of a Tier 1 APA.

This document comprises an appraisal of all the new APAs in Croydon which have been allocated to one of Tiers 1-3. Each APA has an associated description which includes several different sections. A "Summary and Definition" section provides a brief overview of the key features of the APA, the justification for its selection, how its boundaries were defined and gives an explanation as to why it has been placed in a particular tier group. A "Description" section goes into more detail about the history and archaeology of the APA to describe its overall character. Finally a "Significance" section details the heritage significance of the APA with particular reference to its archaeological interest and related historical interest. Each description will also have a list of "Key References" along with a related map showing the extent of the APA boundary. A glossary of relevant terms is included at the end of the document.

Croydon: Historical and Archaeological Interest

The London Borough of Croydon was created in 1965 and was previously part of Surrey. It is located in south London and straddles the North Kent Plain (113), Thames Basin Lowlands (114) and North Downs (119) National Character Areas. It is bordered by Lambeth to the north, Bromley to the east, Merton and Sutton to the west and its southern boundary also forms the border between Surrey and Greater London. No natural features such as rivers are used to mark the borough's boundaries although a section of a Roman road in the south east of the borough and a prehistoric boundary feature in the west of the borough were followed by later parish boundaries and subsequently part of the borough boundary.

The northern part of the borough is low lying and its geology consists of clay and silt. Until the post medieval period a dense wooded area known as the North Wood is thought to have covered most of the northern part of Croydon. In contrast the land rises steeply across the south due to the North Downs running across it. The North Downs consist of chalk which contains rich seams of flint although there are pockets of clay interspersed across the chalk bedrock. The divide between the low lying north and upland south is marked by a number of chalk promontories such as Riddlesdown, Farthing Down, Croham Hurst and Addington Hills which are flanked by steep valleys. These valleys were formed by water running off the Downs. The most notable valley was formed by the River Wandle which runs between Croydon and Coulsdon and is followed by Brighton Road between Croydon and Purley and the A23 between Purley and Coulsdon. The Wandle now rises near Croydon town centre but the only place it is visible before it flows into Sutton is in Waddon Ponds where it forms a lake.

Croydon town is the most significant historic settlement within the borough which took its name. It was regarded as one of the most important towns in northern Surrey and its location, approximately ten miles south of the city of London, meant that it became a stopping point for people travelling to or from the city. There are only a few other historic settlements within the borough and until the 19th century it was a predominantly rural area with a few settlements and numerous farms. While the rapid urban spread and population growth of the 19th and 20th centuries has led to the majority of the borough being developed it still retains large open areas particularly in the south. Within these open areas are surviving historic rural landscapes of hedged fields, open commons and ancient woodlands which illustrate how land was used and managed before the spread of modern urban development. Such historic landscapes can make a significant contribution to local character, the natural environment and green infrastructure. Many of the borough's surviving historic buildings, particularly but not exclusively the few surviving medieval or 16th/17th century buildings, will also be of archaeological interest and are mostly located within historic settlements.

Prehistoric (500,000 BC to 42 AD)

Prehistoric finds such as pottery fragments, weapons and tools, have been recovered from across the borough particularly in the North Downs area and close to the borough boundary with Sutton. Collectively these finds show that human activity was taking place in Croydon throughout the prehistoric period. Prehistoric communities would have considered the upland areas of the south, particularly those where pockets of cultivatable soil were located, attractive areas for settlement due to the commanding views they could provide over the surrounding area. Preservation of any prehistoric finds and features is also more likely to be recognised in the chalk areas where earthworks can be preserved within the landscape. The fact that there are more undeveloped areas in the south compared to the north also makes the discovery of prehistoric finds and features there more likely.

While finds from the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic periods have been made in Croydon no major sites dating to either of these two periods have been discovered. Flint extraction took place in Croydon during the Neolithic period at sites such as Pampisford Road and Croham Hurst; better understanding of this specialised activity would be desirable. The round barrow at the summit of Croham Hurst is thought to be Bronze Age while a burial mound found on Russell Hill may also belong to the same period. Mounds formerly situated in Addington Park may have been prehistoric funerary features. Newe Ditch on Riddlesdown Common and the Mere Bank in the west of the borough are thought to have been boundary features dating to the late Bronze Age or Iron Age and might relate to nearby settlements. The Iron Age settlements found at Atwood School and Kings Wood near Sanderstead are examples of prehistoric settlements that have been identified in Croydon.

Further prehistoric finds and features should be anticipated and would enhance what is known about the nature and extent of activity within Croydon. However, the prehistory of Croydon needs to be viewed within the wider context of the Thames Basin and Southern English chalk downs. Research priorities prepared for Kent, Surrey and South-East England may therefore be as relevant as those for Greater London itself.

Roman (43 AD to 409 AD)

The most significant Roman features within Croydon are the two major roads that run through it. Both the London to Brighton Roman road and the London to Lewes Roman road ran from London to the south and connected the city to the iron producing and corn growing areas of Sussex. The London to Lewes road only passes through a small area in the south-east of the borough, although the borough boundary with Bromley is based on its route for a short distance. The London to Brighton road had a far more significant impact on the

development of Croydon particularly Croydon town itself which is thought to have been a significant settlement on the road and developed as a result of the traffic passing along it. Its location approximately 10 miles south of the Roman city of *Londinium* would have made it a convenient stopping point for people making their way to or from the city especially after descending from or in anticipation of ascending to the North Downs.

The quantity of Roman material recovered from Croydon town centre demonstrates that some form of settlement was situated there although its precise nature and location is unknown. The route of parts of the London to Brighton road is also uncertain and it may have had a number of different routes that were used according to local conditions. Smaller settlements probably developed along the major roads or lesser roads that may have been based on earlier prehistoric routes throughout the borough. The 11 burials recovered from near Deepfield Way in the 1960s may be associated with such a settlement. A Roman villa complex was located in Beddington in Sutton but its lands and influence would have extended into Croydon too.

Key archaeological interests relating to Roman Croydon would be to understand the role of the settlement at Croydon town and how land was used and managed at this distance from *Londonium*. Whether, for example, there was an emphasis on specialised production for the market or Roman administration and did this vary. It is also unclear whether the local population during the Roman period was predominantly native Britons or a more diverse group influenced by the Roman city or the traffic passing through it to or from the ports on the south coast. The extent of woodland across the borough during the Roman period would be worthy of research using environmental information and may have had an effect on the distribution and character of settlements.

Anglo-Saxon (410 AD to 1065 AD)

An impressive concentration of Anglo-Saxon burial grounds has been uncovered in Croydon. Saxon cemeteries or burials have been positively identified at Farthing Down, Lion Green Road, Hook's Hill, Riddlesdown Road and Park Lane/Edridge Road near Croydon town centre while a probable Saxon cemetery is also located at Russell Hill near Purley. The sheer number of burials identified makes Croydon remarkable and further cemeteries may be present. The grave goods found with the burials have included weapons, jewellery and other objects such as urns, buckets and plates. Some of the burials found in Croydon dated to the 5th century and would have been part of the earliest Saxon migrations into Britain. During this time Germanic mercenaries were recruited and came to Britain before their families followed and settled permanently. Other burials, sometimes in the same cemetery, dated from later in

the Saxon period so together they can provide information on the local population across a period of several centuries.

By the 7th century Croydon had become part of the *suthre ge* (southern district) which became Surrey. It is thought that Croydon town continued to be an active settlement during the Saxon period perhaps without any period of abandonment following the end of the Roman administration in Britain. Saxon settlements also existed at Sanderstead, Old Coulsdon and Watendone since they are all mentioned in documents dating to the Saxon period and another settlement may have existed at Addington too. Croydon, Sanderstead, Old Coulsdon and Watendone were all in manors owned by influential ecclesiastical institutions during the Saxon period. The manor of Croydon was owned by the Archbishops of Canterbury and a manor house belonging to the Archbishops is thought to have been established in Croydon town at some point in the Anglo-Saxon period. The presence and patronage of the Archbishops undoubtedly helped the town to flourish and cemented its position as the most important settlement within the immediate area. The manor that Old Coulsdon and Watendone were located in was controlled by Chertsey Abbey while the manor of Sanderstead was owned by Hyde Abbey near Winchester. All these religious institutions were located some distance from these manors and demonstrate the far reaching control and influence such institutions could exercise. However, relatively little structural evidence dating to the Saxon period has yet been found.

Future investigations could concentrate on the transition period between the Roman and Anglo-Saxon periods and the effect it had on the local area. Saxon migration is reflected in the burial grounds and cemeteries that have been uncovered but more needs to be learnt about tribal organisation during the same period and how it developed into organised kingdoms. Relatively little structural evidence dating to the Saxon period has yet been found but any future discoveries would enhance our knowledge of Saxon settlement considerably.

Medieval (1066 AD to 1539 AD)

Croydon, Sanderstead, Old Couldson, Addington and Watendone are all mentioned in the Domesday survey. However, during the medieval period the fortunes of these areas varied depending on a range of different circumstances. Croydon continued to flourish, a weekly market and annual fair was established, the archiepiscopal manor continued to expand while the parish church of St John the Baptist was one of the largest in the area. However, the settlement of Watendone was abandoned apparently at some point in the mid-14th century. Numerous manor houses would have been built across the borough during the medieval period. In many cases the exact location of these manor houses is not known

because they were later demolished and a new manor house was built elsewhere. One such manor house was a moated site located at Elmers End which is now a Scheduled Monument.

Croydon itself was an important ecclesiastical manor and one of a ring of medieval market towns around London. Archaeology combined with historical research may enable a better understanding of how the town and its surrounding countryside were affected by these influences.

Post medieval (1540 AD to 1900 AD) & Modern (1901 AD to present day)

After the dissolution, control of the manors that Coulsdon and Sanderstead were located in was taken away from Hyde and Chertsey Abbeys and given to aristocratic families. On the Rocque map of Surrey produced in the 1760s the area is shown as still predominantly rural and interspersed by numerous villages, hamlets, country houses and farms. At this point Croydon town was the only town and it is still the most important urban centre within the borough. By the post medieval period the archbishops' residence in Croydon town was referred to as a palace but in the late 18th century it was sold and Addington Palace became the Croydon base for the Archbishops of Canterbury during the 19th century. The palace buildings in Croydon town gradually fell into disrepair or were demolished but a few survive including the Great Hall, Chapel and State Apartments and are incorporated within Old Palace School.

It was not until the 19th century that Croydon began to lose its rural character as an increasing number of settlements developed and expanded while the population of the area also increased dramatically. This was due to the development of the steam railways which by the end of the 1840s had placed Croydon on the main line between London and Brighton. Before the development of the steam railways the horse drawn Surrey Iron Railway had been established in the early 19th century which transported goods between Croydon, Mitcham and Wandsworth. The Croydon, Merstham and Godstone Railway was built as an extension into northern Surrey and the scheduled embankment near Lion Green Road is a surviving part of it. These early railways represent an important part of Croydon's industrial heritage. Urban expansion continued into the 20th century although the borough still retains many open areas which retain their historic landscape character particularly in the upland areas of the south.

Part of Kenley Common was requisitioned by the Royal Flying Corps during the First World War and became a military airfield. It expanded in the 1930s and was an important airfield during the Second World War particularly during the Battle of Britain. It continued to be used as a military airfield until 1959 and as a non-military airfield until the 1970s. Many of

its wartime buildings survive including 11 fighter pens that are now Scheduled Monuments. Croydon airport was established in 1915 on a site to the west of Purley Way and it became London's main airfield during the inter war period. It became a military airport during the Second World War and like Kenley saw action during the Battle of Britain. It returned to a civilian role after the war but it was unable to expand as aircraft traffic increased and Heathrow gradually became London's main airport. Croydon airport closed in 1959 although a number of its buildings survive. Both Kenley and Croydon represent an important part of London's aviation heritage.