

Prehistoric features and post-medieval change at Kew Bridge House, Brentford

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There have been no previous archaeological excavations close to this river crossing and so proposed redevelopment on the site of the former Kew Bridge House immediately north of the River Thames, on the west side of the approach to Kew Bridge, provided just such an opportunity (Fig. 1).

Two archaeological evaluations were undertaken, in 1992¹ and 2003,² which established that River Terrace Gravels (First River Terrace)³ were overlain by alluvial silts, clays and sands (but no organic material) up to 2.4m deep at the southern end of the site and by brickearth across the northern half, the latter cut by probable medieval or early post-medieval field boundaries. Deep deposits of post-medieval made ground and 'garden soils' were also encountered over the southern part of the site (which lay at 4.5m OD), whilst post-medieval and modern structures were recorded to the north (at 6.5m OD). Subsequent excavation of the site was undertaken by Wessex Archaeology in 2007 (site code KBG07).⁴

Early Neolithic

A small elongated feature, 0.23m deep with a single fill (pit 1412; Fig. 1) contained 29 sherds of pottery, all but three in a sparsely flint-tempered fabric, most of which refit to form two large non-joining sections of (probably the same) Early Neolithic hemispherical Plain Ware Bowl with a neutral profile and a rolled-over rim (Fig. 2). Although not decorated, the surface of the vessel had been smoothed and wiped with a pad of vegetable fibres. Three small sherds in a sandier fabric come from a second vessel with a plain upright rim. The flint assemblage consists of six flakes, five of which appear to be from the same nodule. Although undiagnostic, all of the flakes are technologically Early Neolithic. Three small featureless fragments of fired clay were also recovered from the pit.

Two further sherds of Early Neolithic pottery, almost certainly from the hemispherical bowl, came from the

upper fill of a ditch (1467) which cut pit 1412. Residual worked flint in later features included three blade-like flakes

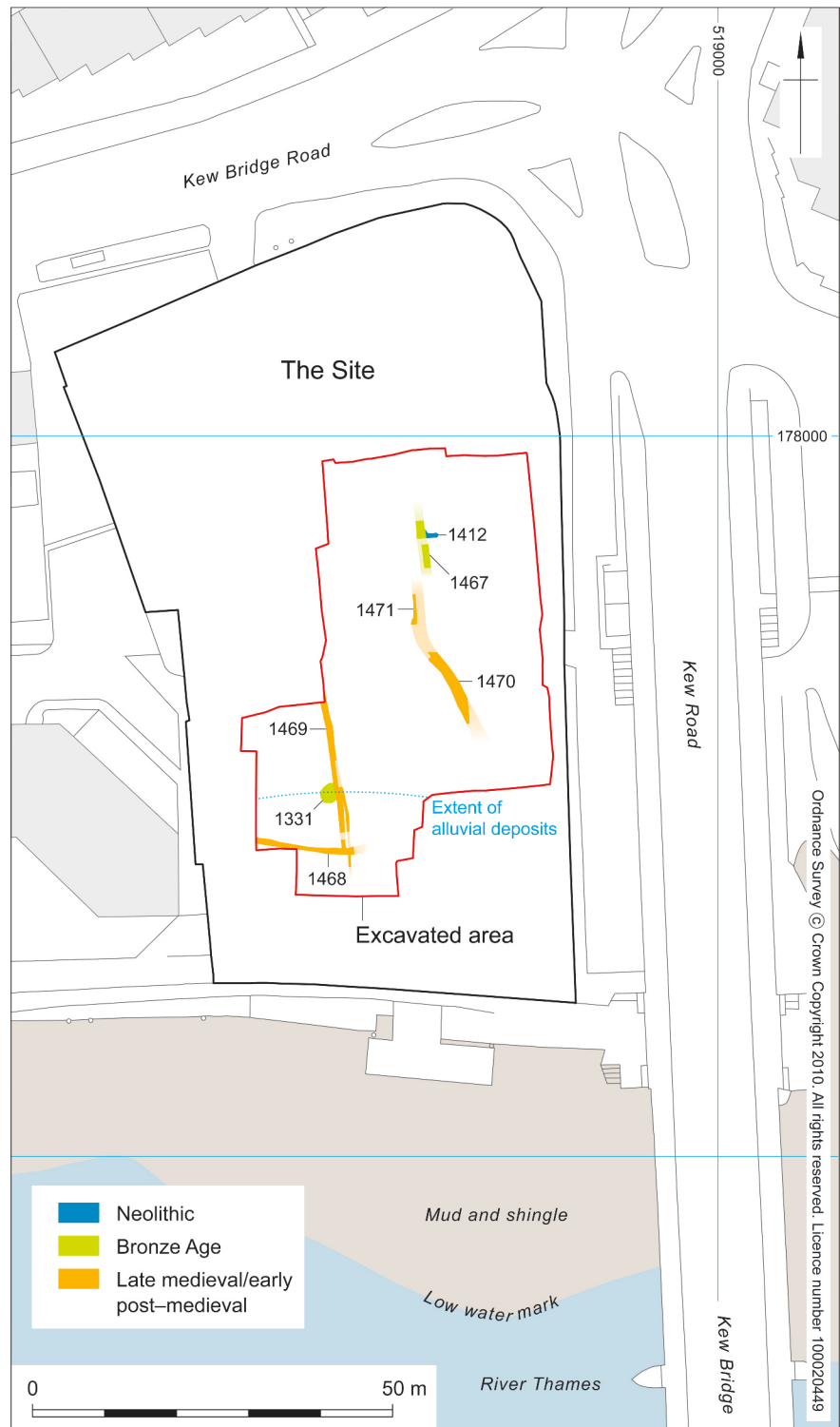


Fig. 1: site location plan

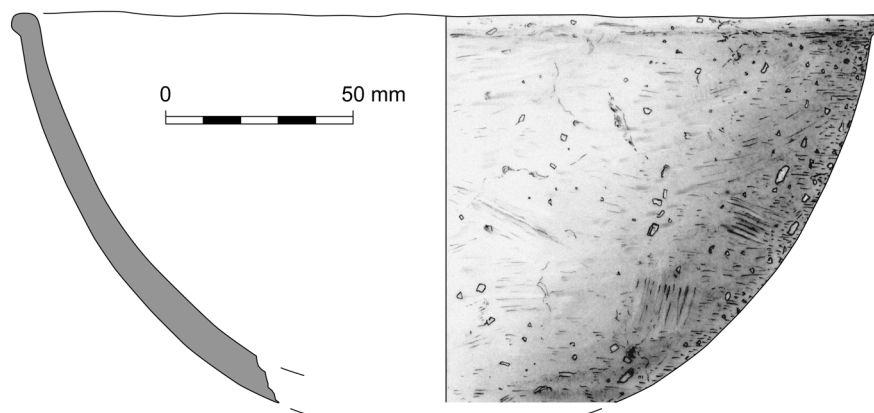


Fig. 2: Early Neolithic Plain Ware bowl (from pit 1412)

likely to be Neolithic (two had retouched margins, one use-wear).

The small pit containing Early Neolithic ceramics and worked flint is likely to represent a further instance of a tradition of deposition that is common across much of Britain during the 4th millennium BC. The repeated occurrence of selected parts of vessels (mostly or only rim and upper body sherds) in small pits or pit groups is widely recognised, although there is no general agreement as to its significance, specifically whether it represents domestic or ritual deposition. More recent excavations by Pre-Construct Archaeology approximately 250m to the west, between Kew Bridge Road and the Thames, revealed a palaeochannel, several large cut features possibly elements of a causewayed enclosure or ring ditch, as well as numerous pits and postholes. They produced a significant assemblage of Early Neolithic and a Late Mesolithic worked flint component, as well as Early Neolithic pottery. The survival of environmental remains was very poor, but the evidence as a whole is suggestive of ritual activity on the bank of the Thames near its confluence with a small tributary. The material from here and from Kew Bridge House adds to the sparse distribution of Early Neolithic ceramics from London, strengthening the existing associations of Early Neolithic activity and riverside environments as seen, for example, in the Lea Valley to the east⁵ and Kingston to the west.⁶

Late Bronze Age

Ditch 1467 was probably a Bronze Age feature, possibly a land division, but only a 7m length of this north–south aligned, shallow, 1.5m wide ditch was

exposed amongst the post-medieval structural features in this area (Fig. 1). In addition to the two sherds of Early Neolithic pottery, other finds from the fill comprise 14 worked flints, some probably redeposited from pit 1412, but others clearly later in character, perhaps of Late Neolithic and Late Bronze Age date. They include a blade-like flake used as a knife, an end scraper, and a boring tool with an awl point at the proximal end and a piercer point on the side.

Further evidence for Bronze Age activity was recovered from a shallow alluvial deposit (layer 1331), formed in a hollow approximately 2m in diameter in the underlying natural towards the south-west corner of the site. Layer 1331 contained 39 small and abraded Late Bronze Age post-Deverel-Rimbury plainware sherds in a coarse flint-tempered fabric, including one flat base and one lug handle stump. There were also three small fragments of fired clay, burnt flint and worked flint, the latter including an end scraper on a trimming flake from a flake/blade core with platform preparation and abrasion, a small multi-platform flake/blade core with similar traits (and possibly reused as a scraper), and a patinated distal fragment of a blade.

The Late Bronze Age material points to domestic occupation in the vicinity of the site, although the small and abraded pottery sherds appear to be redeposited (or at least reworked) in the alluvial deposit in which they were found, as might some of the worked flint. Nevertheless, the ditch of probable Bronze Age date on what would have been drier ground to the north provides evidence for land divisions on the floodplain. The mid–late second millennium saw extensive field systems

established in the Middle–Lower Thames area, on both the terrace gravels and the floodplain, relating to a mixed farming economy. Thereafter, climatic deterioration and other factors led to a decline or abandonment of settlement on the floodplain.⁷

Late medieval–early post-medieval

For much of the Iron Age, Roman, post-Roman and medieval periods the site does not appear to have lain near any settlement, five sherds of Romano-British pottery comprising the only finds from these two millennia.

A series of late medieval or early post-medieval field boundary ditches (Fig. 1) were all relatively shallow, between 0.8m and 1.5m wide and up to 0.3m deep. None of them is particularly well dated, though small quantities of late medieval–early post-medieval pottery and clay pipe were recovered from the upper fills of ditches 1469, 1470 and 1471, and from an alluvial layer cut by ditch 1468.

In the late medieval period the site lay in the lands of the settlement of Brentford, which was formerly divided into two parts, known as Old and New Brentford by the 15th century. New Brentford lay to the west of the River Brent in the parish and manor of Hanwell, and Old Brentford to the east in the parish and manor of Ealing, which stretched as far east as the Kew Bridge area. Neither of the Brentford settlements is mentioned in *Domesday* (1086), which only records their parent manors, and neither developed into a parish in the 11th–12th centuries, suggesting that they were not very populous at this time.⁸

The area between the main road (Brentford High Street/Kew Bridge Road) and the River Thames was probably meadowland, divided between the manorial tenants in doles. In the 15th century there was a meadow here called *Floodmede*, in which small plots of a quarter or half an acre (0.1–0.2ha) were assigned to tenants by lot.⁹ Some of the boundaries between these doles may be represented by the excavated ditches, but there is unlikely to have been any settlement in the vicinity. At least part of the area towards the east end of the manor was called the Hallows or Hollows in the 16th and 17th centuries.

Late 17th century

The earliest evidence for occupation took the form of part of a brick building (1043; Fig. 3). This comprised a room measuring 4.4m by 3.3m at the western end of a building which extended beyond the eastern edge of the excavation. The orange hand-made bricks used were not found anywhere else on site, and were laid in a Flemish bond and bedded in a very fine lime mortar. Only the foundations survived but they suggested a building of more than one storey. The absence of any associated floor surfaces and other deposits make dating its construction difficult; however, building 1043 had certainly been demolished by the mid-18th century.

From the 17th century onwards Brentford developed a large number of inns on the High Street and wharves along the River Thames frontage, including the Hollows. The wharves were reached by a series of passages running south from the High Street. Between them, the former meadows were enclosed and built over in a piecemeal fashion. By 1635 buildings were present along both sides of the High Street, extending eastwards from Brentford to the northern frontage of the site.¹⁰

The site was probably part of the property held here for most of this period by the Tunstall family, who owned all the land on the waterfront from the Hollows eastward to the parish boundary and operated a ferry across the Thames to Kew on the site of the bridge, a service started in 1659 by Robert Tunstall.

Robert claimed that he began the ferry "for the accomadacion of the neighbourhood and for the convenience of his lyme kilne", but he had to fight off two cases in the Court of Exchequer brought by John Churchman, the owner of the main Brentford ferry, which had operated from further upstream at Ferry Lane¹¹ since at least the 1630s.¹² The ferry at Kew was later held by Henry Tunstall, who died in 1697; he was followed by his son Robert (died 1708) and his grandson Thomas (died 1727).¹³

Brick building 1043 may have been connected to the operation of the ferry as it stood adjacent to the approach to the landing place on the Middlesex

bank. It was perhaps the western end of a toll-house and may, therefore, have been part of quite an ornate structure. A mortgage of 1703 refers to the ferry and the ferry house,¹⁴ and John Rocque's map appears to show a pair of small rectangular toll-houses still flanking the landing place on the Surrey bank in 1746.

Early 18th century

Rocque's map of 1746 (Fig. 4) also shows that the site on the Middlesex bank was dominated by a large L-shaped building comprising a long north-south range running along the ferry approach and a short east-west range to the west. To its south a formal garden appears to have lain beside the Thames.

The excavations revealed elements of the L-shaped building against the eastern edge of the site, probably built early in the 18th century (Fig. 3). The north-south range was 18m long and at least 4m wide. The ground floor of this wing was set below the surrounding surface, and traces survived of the lower sills and reveals of three windows in the western wall, which was over a metre in height in places. There was no evidence for internal subdivision of this wing and no contemporary floor surface survived.

Very little remained of the original western range, although its northern and southern extents were identified, making it 10m wide and at least 16m long. Towards the south-eastern corner of this range lay a cellared room (1014)

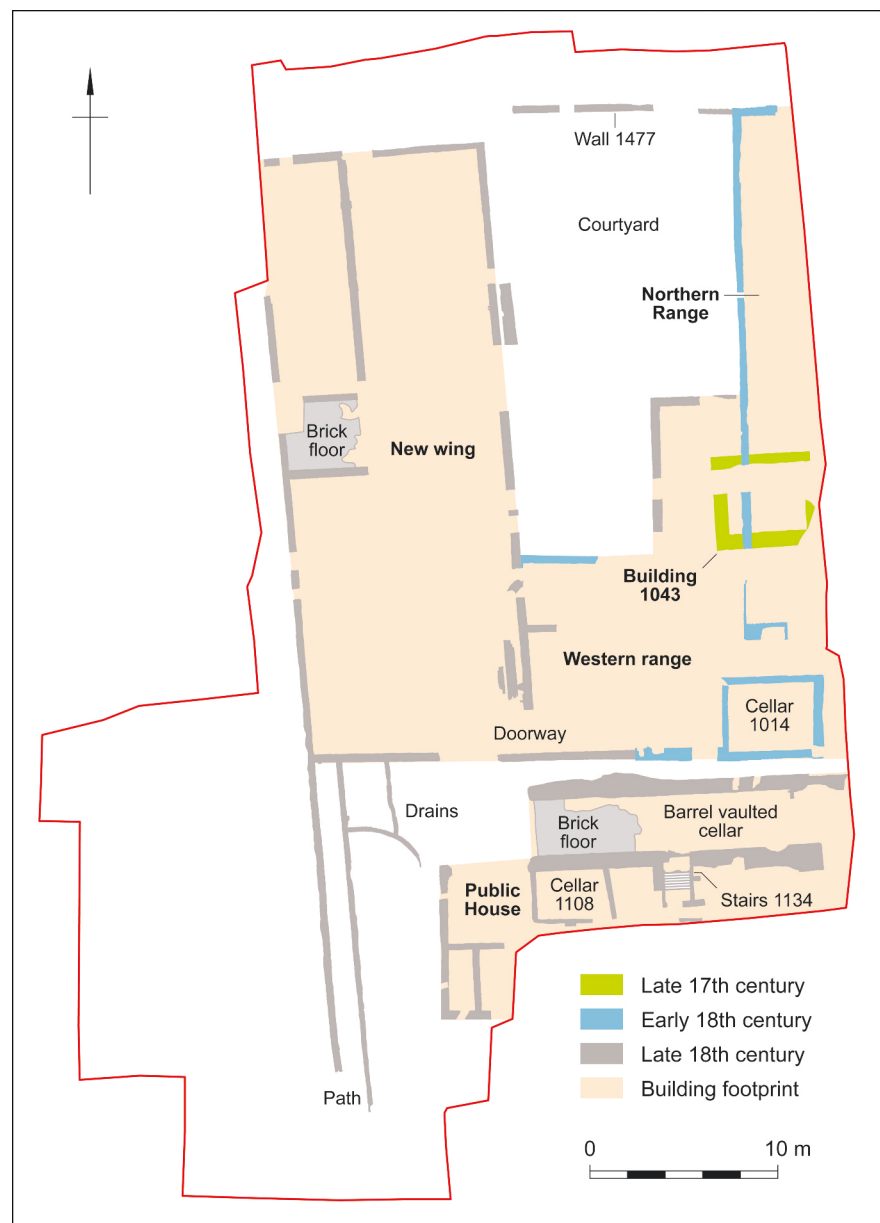


Fig. 3: late-17th- and 18th-century structures

KEW BRIDGE HOUSE

with a floor of blackened bricks, suggesting that it may have been used for storing coal. A complex of narrow walls to the north of cellar 1014 could reflect divisions within the western range. From the backfill of cellar 1014 came several small, cylindrical phials, all relatively tall examples, and this may place them later in the potential mid-17th to 18th century date range.¹⁵ The pottery from cellar 1014 comprised mainly locally produced coarse earthenwares which, where datable, suggest a date range from at least the 16th century, although most here are probably 18th century.

The original function of the large L-shaped building is unclear but its size, form and location suggest an industrial use.

The entire site was still the freehold property of the Tunstall family at this time. They held both freehold and copyhold property in Old Brentford, including a copyhold house in the Hollows, with a yard and garden.¹⁶ The Tunstalls continued to operate or lease lime kilns at the Hollows in the 18th century and Thomas Tunstall (died 1727) also had brick kilns.¹⁷ He was followed as head of the family by his son Robert (died 1762).¹⁸

Robert Tunstall had the first Kew Bridge built in 1758–9 by John Barnard, under an Act of Parliament of 1757; it was made of timber and had 11 arches.¹⁹ Tolls from the bridge probably

produced more income than those from the ferry, though maintenance costs must have been higher.

Late 18th century

Late in the 18th century the L-shaped building was expanded by the addition of a second north–south range or wing at the western end of the original western range, the new wing measuring some 32m by 11m (Fig. 3). It was accessed from the old west range through a door in its south-eastern corner, and some evidence for internal subdivisions and flooring were recorded towards the north-west corner. Other features associated with the enlarged building included a wall (1477) enclosing the northern side of the courtyard which lay between the old eastern range and the new western range. A narrow path, bounded by two brick walls and at least 18m long led from the south-west corner of the new wing down towards the Thames.

This phase also saw the construction of a new building to the south of the earlier western range. The building is shown on later maps as a public house, but may have started life as a private dwelling. Some internal rooms were identified, whilst a small cellar (1108) was built against the original northern wall of the building. This was floored with neatly laid bricks and entered through a door in its south-eastern corner, later blocked up, and

originally lit through a light well in the northern wall, also later blocked.

These changes appear to have been necessitated by the construction of a substantial barrel vaulted cellar to the north, 3m wide and at least 16m long, the walls of which survived to a height of nearly 2m in places (Fig. 5). Parts of the original brick floor survived *in situ*, and the cellar was originally accessed from the south, down a flight of stairs (1134).

Much of the pottery from the excavation relates to the use of this complex, including the public house. The assemblage largely comprises locally produced coarse earthenwares, dominated by utilitarian forms, in particular bowls, with some tea ware forms (plates, cups and small bowls), probably largely 18th century and later. Clay pipes included four bowls dated to c. 1740–80 and one to c. 1780–1820.²⁰

Industry expanded in Brentford in the late 18th century, especially along the waterfront, and included distilling, brewing and malting, all fuelled by coal brought in barges. Robert Tunstall's son Robert commissioned the first stone bridge, with seven arches, built by James Paine in 1783–9, and the Tunstalls continued to collect tolls.²¹ A wharf extending 49ft (14.9m) to the west of the bridge was apparently built at the same time, and was later regarded as belonging to the bridge.²² In the same area Robert Tunstall leased out a malthouse to Thomas Lawrence with a house, offices, yards, gardens and stables,²³ probably part of the excavated complex.

19th–20th century

Substantial changes to the western wing of the building were made in the early 19th century, involving the construction of an engine house for a steam engine, whilst walls to the east of the engine house may represent the footings for an oast house. Late 19th century photographs show the distinctive roof of an oast house close to the location of the new engine house.²⁴

Elsewhere, the barrel-vaulted cellar to the south was remodelled, and from it came a variety of glass bottles and drinking vessels, most of the material dating to the late 18th–20th centuries, and almost certain to derive from the public house (the *Poplar Inn* by 1867,

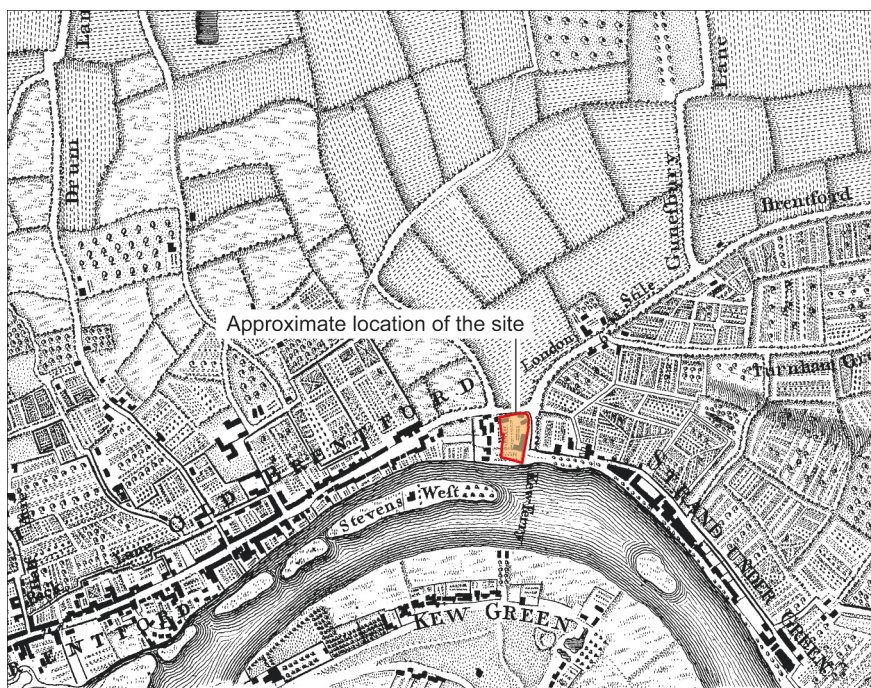


Fig. 4: John Rocque's Map of 1746 (extract)

see below) which occupied this part of the site.

Brentford in the early 19th century had a rapidly growing population, composed mostly of labourers in industry, fishing and market gardening. On the north side of the High Street were the shops and private houses, and on the south side the wharves and factories.²⁵ Robert Tunstall leased out properties on both sides of the junction between the High Street and the Kew Bridge approach in the 1820s, but on his death in December 1833 these descended to his great nephew John Haverfield,²⁶ and the Haverfield family held the land around the Kew Bridge approach for the remainder of the century.²⁷ The bridge itself was purchased in June 1825 by George Robinson, and he built a check clerk's house, a warehouse and other buildings on the west side of the bridge approach.²⁸

The Jupp family were operating a malthouse on the site 1826–7 and were still running it in 1899.²⁹ The Jupps had malthouses to the east of Ferry Lane in Old Brentford as early as 1780, and were the leading 19th-century maltsters of Brentford,³⁰ also acting as coal and corn merchants.³¹ The public house to the south of the malthouse on the site was empty in 1839,³² but was called the *Poplar Inn* in 1867; by 1877 it had been renamed the *Oxford and Cambridge Hotel*, probably a reflection of its popularity with rowing clubs.³³

In 1873 the trustees of George Robinson sold Kew Bridge to the Bridges Joint Committee of the Metropolitan Board of Works and Corporation of London for £57,300,³⁴ and four decades later the third and present Kew Bridge was built in 1903 for the Middlesex and Surrey County Councils, to the design of Sir John Wolfe-Barry and Cuthbert Brereton.³⁵

During the early 20th century

industry withdrew from Brentford,³⁶ trade declined, and the malthouse complex on site had been demolished by 1915, with the *Oxford and Cambridge Hotel* closed in 1923,³⁷ the majority of the site thereafter used as a timber yard.³⁸ Kew Bridge House, a large office block was built in the 1960s, but stood for less than 40 years before demolition.

Such a pattern of post-medieval expansion and the growth of a similar range of riverside crafts, trades and industries, followed by 20th century decline and regeneration, has been documented elsewhere in west London, for example at Kingston,³⁹ and reflects the changing nature of these waterfront areas.

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting, who commissioned the work on behalf of the developer St George plc.

The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Nick Truckle, and the fieldwork directed by Nicholas Cooke and John Powell, assisted by Vasilis Tsamis, Andy Sole, Elinor Brook, Matthew Law and Piotr Orczewski. The documentary research was undertaken by Christopher Phillpotts, and the finds were analysed by Lorraine Mephram, Matt Leivers and Jessica M. Grimm. The illustrations were drawn by Rob Goller, and this report was edited by Phil Andrews. We are grateful to Frank Meddens of Pre-Construct Archaeology for providing information in advance of publication on their recent excavations at Kew Bridge Road.

Nicholas Cooke has been digging since 1987, working on a variety of sites of different ages and periods. His main interests lie in the Roman period, and in particular in the study of Roman burial



Fig. 5: late-18th-century barrel vaulted cellar, with 19th-century malthouse and engine house to rear. Kew pumping station tower in background. View from south-east.

practices and in numismatics. He has worked for Wessex Archaeology since 1996, and has been involved in a number of large-scale projects, most notably Terminal 5 at Heathrow, Stansted Airport and the excavations in advance of the construction of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link. Christopher Phillpotts, who died in 2013, was widely known as a specialist in medieval towns, to whose history and archaeology he brought extensive field experience combined with palaeographical skills in medieval French and Latin. He contributed to many monographs and journals on London and its suburbs as well as numerous other medieval settlements. Wessex Archaeology was fortunate to have him undertake documentary research on a number of their sites in and around London, such as Battersea, Greenwich, Kingston, West Thurrock and Heathrow.

1. Kew Bridge House, Brentford, Middlesex unpublished MoLAS report (1992).

2. CgMs Consulting *Land at Kew Bridge House. Specification for an archaeological excavation* unpublished report (2005).

3. British Geology Survey, West London; England and Wales Sheet 271 (Drift geology).

4. Fuller details of the site sequence, finds and documentary research can be found in the archive, assessment report (*Kew Bridge Road, Brentford. Assessment of the results of a programme of archaeological excavation* (2008)) and Wessex Archaeology online report (WA site code 64940).

5. A.B. Powell *By river, fields and factories: the making of the Lower Lea Valley. Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Investigations on the site of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games* Wessex Archaeology Monograph 29 (2012).

6. D. Serjeantson, D. Field, J. Penn and M. Shipley 'Excavations at Eden Walk II, Kingston: environmental reconstruction and prehistoric finds' *Surrey Archaeol Collect* 81 (1992) 71–90.

7. J. Sidell, J. Cotton, L. Rayner, and L. Wheeler *The prehistory and topography of Southwark and Lambeth* MoLAS Monograph 14 (2002); MoL (Museum of London) *A research framework for London archaeology 2002* (2002) 24.

8. D.K. Bolton, P.E.C. Croot and M.A. Hicks (eds T.F.T. Baker and C.R. Elrington) *A History of the County of Middlesex: volume 7 – Acton, Chiswick, Ealing and Brentford, West Twyford, Willesden*, 113–4 (1982).

9. Guildhall Library MS 11766.

10. *Op cit* fn 8, 115–6 and 140.

11. London Metropolitan Archives Acc 879/1; National Archives: Public Record Office E 134/1659/Mich 30.

12. T. Faulkner *The History and Antiquities of Brentford, Ealing and Chiswick* (1845).

13. Chiswick Local Studies Library: P F Ransby's Notes on the Tunstall family of Brentford.

Brandon House unearthed

New evidence for the palace of the Duke of Suffolk in Southwark reveals a flowering of exuberant Tudor architectural ornamentation. Frank Meddens and Richard Humphrey of Pre-Construct Archaeology discuss the work in progress.

Archaeological mitigation works are underway at the site of the former Brandon House, on the corner of Borough High Street and Marshalsea Road in Southwark. The works are being carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology supported by Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting on behalf of Crest Nicholson, the client. The project is being monitored by Dr Chris Constable of the Southwark Council Planning Department.

The site of Brandon House (or Suffolk Place), is the onetime London residence of the Brandon family, with the property being in their hands from at least 1465. Between 1518 and 1522 it was extensively remodelled by Charles Brandon, 1st Duke of Suffolk and 1st Viscount Lisle, who styled it as

a renaissance palace with some of the earliest documented use of terracotta decorative panelling in England. Charles was influential at court and held a succession of offices in the royal household. As a result of his marriage to Mary Tudor, his third wife, he became brother-in-law of Henry VIII, to whom the property subsequently passed and who in 1536 carried out minor repairs and alterations. Between 1545 and 1551 it was in part used as a Royal Mint, to again briefly be drawn on as a Palace before Mary I granted it to the Archbishop of York who divested himself of the estate in 1557. By 1562 the exuberant decorative style of the buildings had fallen out of favour resulting in their demolition.

The current investigations have uncovered significant elements of Charles Brandon's palace. Fortuitously, recently published papers on material specifically relevant to this Tudor palace, including a piece in an earlier issue of this magazine, provide an important setting for some of the recent finds. These comprise a paper by Bruce Watson in *London Archaeologist* (Summer 2011) and a more detailed and



thorough analysis of this data in the *Journal of Post-medieval Archaeology*.¹

A remarkable collection of elaborate renaissance terracotta elements which derive from the façade of the Tudor palace, illustrated in Wyngaerd's London panorama of 1544, have been found in the current excavations. The 310 pieces recovered to date display a range of highly refined design motifs. A number of these reflect examples recovered from other locations in the area, including finds from recently excavated Thameslink sites.

These elements include a design central to a string band of regular repeating components comprising the profile head of a girl with plaits and wings,² and numerous fragments of laurel / bay leaf garlands³ which would have originally enclosed the profile



Notes cont'd from Cooke and Philpotts...

14. London Metropolitan Archives Acc 1376/2.
15. R.J. Charleston and A.G. Vince 'The glass' in A. Thompson, F. Grew and J. Schofield 'Excavations at Aldgate, 1974' *Post-Medieval Archaeol* 18 (1984) 84–91.
16. London Metropolitan Archives Acc 276/157–8.
17. *Op cit* fn 13.
18. *Op cit* fn 13.
19. *Op cit* fn 12, 168.
20. Atkinson and Oswald bowl types 26 and 27 respectively; D. Atkinson and A. Oswald 'London clay tobacco pipes' *J Brit Archaeol Assoc* 32 (1969) 171–227.
21. *Op cit* fn 12, 168; *op cit* fn 8, 104; *op cit* fn 13; London Metropolitan Archives Acc 638/251.

22. London Metropolitan Archives MJ/SPB/816a.
23. London Metropolitan Archives DRO 37/D1/2.
24. *Brentford and Chiswick As It Was* Brentford and Chiswick Local History Society and Hounslow Library Services (1978), cover photograph.
25. *Op cit* fn 8, 117; *op cit* fn 12, 162.
26. London Metropolitan Archives Acc 638/251.
27. *Op cit* fn 13; Guildhall Library MS 12698; London Metropolitan Archives Acc 638/251; National Archives: Public Record Office IR 29/21/13 and PRO B 11/1827 quire 54.
28. London Metropolitan Archives MA/D/BR/41.
29. Chiswick Local Studies Library: Notes on Jupp family.
30. *Op cit* fn 8, 143.

31. Pigot and Co *London and Provincial Directory* (1834).
32. National Archives: Public Record Office IR 29/21/13 nos 140–1.
33. G. Clegg *Brentford and Chiswick* (2005).
34. London Metropolitan Archives MA/D/BR/41; MJ/SPB/814.
35. *Op cit* fn 8, 104 and 118.
36. *Op cit* fn 8, 139.
37. *Op cit* fn 33, 54.
38. Ordnance Survey map 1935; Chiswick Local Studies Library aerial photograph.
39. P. Andrews, J. Lowe, K. Nichols, C. Phillpotts and A.B. Powell *Charter Quay, the spirit of change. The archaeology of Kingston's riverside* Wessex Archaeology (2002).

head centre piece. Such pieces also include cornice bands, pilaster and column bases, and pilaster panelling with intricate decoration.

Previously unknown or rare designs include a Tudor-type rose centre panel, a number of profile heads, a rare flaming urn theme and a number of rather chubby cherubs.⁴

Aspects of the terracotta assemblage from Brandon House include distinctive mounting holes for cast iron bars to hold pilaster panels in place and adhering paint residues. Remarkable too is the lack of mortar present on the great majority of the pieces.

The exceptional collection of decorative terracottas together with the extensive range of surviving foundation evidence will contribute significantly to our understanding of the construction, ground plan and above ground architectural details of the ducal palace. The pieces of the façade will not only improve our understanding of the details of its appearance but also its manufacture, sourcing of the materials and origins of the designs.

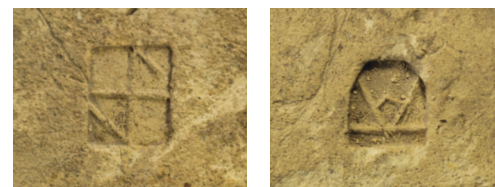
The antecedents to this opulent style of architectural embellishment are in Italian and German architectural design.⁵ Continental specialists were

being brought over to England to render this then state of the art fashion available to the English elite. Italian craftsmen are, for example, known to have been employed by Cardinal Wolsey in the ornamentation of Hampton Court in or prior to 1521⁶ and elsewhere.

Similar renaissance architectural decoration is known to have been drawn upon at Westhorpe Hall, the Suffolk residence of Charles Brandon and Mary Tudor, and decorative renaissance terracottas were employed at Hampton Court, at Sutton Place in Surrey, Layer Marney Hall in Essex, East Barsham Manor in Norfolk and elsewhere. The Brandon House pieces are among the finest quality examples known to date.

The palace is founded in part on remnants of a medieval house, built by Charles Brandon's grandfather and previously known only from historical accounts. Current excavations have revealed the first structural evidence of this house, including substantial chalk foundations and pieces of monumental medieval masonry.

The estate of the Brandon family was erected in part on marshy ground situated a little northwest of the large Tabard Square Roman temple complex. Roman deposits and remnants of clay



and timber buildings are being revealed in the excavations. Along the southwest margin of the excavation area, on a section of rising topography, some *in situ* late prehistoric pottery and a contemporary dog burial have also been uncovered.

In a carefully considered planning agreement between the council and the developer, the ongoing fieldwork serves to ensure the judicious preservation *in situ* of large sections of the remains of the palace. In addition the southwest side of the site, where extensive basements are due to be constructed, will be investigated and recorded in a meticulously controlled excavation.

Notes

1. Terrence Paul Smith, Bruce Watson, Claire Martin and David Williams 2014 Suffolk Place, Southwark London: *A Tudor palace and its terracotta architectural decoration*, *Post-medieval Archaeol* 48 (1) 90-132.
2. Idem, 100, Fig 7.1.
3. Idem, 100, Fig. 7.5.
4. Pers. Comm. Chris Green 2015.
5. Simon Thurley 2003 *Hampton Court: a social and architectural history*.
6. H.M. Colvin, D.R Ransome and J. Summerson, 1975 *The History of the King's Works (1485-1660)* vol 3, part 1.

OPPOSITE TOP Early brick built foundations of Charles Brandon's Tudor palace
OPPOSITE LEFT A paired dragon (dragi) pilaster panel design and a profile head
ABOVE RIGHT Some terracottas display a range of makers' marks, rarely found previously
LEFT A Roman measuring rod of exactly 295mm, a Roman foot, recovered from earlier levels of the Brandon House site near the Tabard Square complex
 All photos ©Pre-Construct Archaeology



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

In the Spring 2015 edition of the *London Archaeologist*, Dominic Perring's review of the MOLA monograph (No 67) on the 10 Gresham Street excavations discussed the date of the Hadrianic Fire. The authors of this monograph argue that the evidence from their site suggests that it was not affected by fire until *c.* AD 130-140. They cite a date of *c.* AD 120-130 for the Hadrianic fire, while stating that 'a date of *c.* AD 130, should be preferred to AD 120-125' (p 61). This conflagration was originally discovered and dated to AD 120-130 by Gerald

Dunning during his 1929-31 fieldwork at Regis House. Subsequent analysis of the Regis House samian produced a date of *c.* AD 120-125. During 1994-96, a comprehensive programme of archaeological work at Regis House was carried out by MoLAS and directed by ourselves (see interim reports in *London Archaeologist* 1986, Nos 2 & 3). The excavation of the two phases of fire debris on site revealed an extensive finds assemblage. Finds from the lower debris, which was probably derived from the buildings destroyed on site date to *c.* AD 125-130, while the upper debris appears to have been imported later and therefore is of little use for

dating purposes. Incidentally, the subsequent redistribution of some fire debris at 10 Gresham Street might explain the relatively broad date range of the associated ceramics.

Sadly, the Regis House excavations which produced the earliest evidence for the port of Roman London, redated a phase of quay from the Flavian to the Neronian period (revising the start date of some of the associated ceramics as a result), and also revised the date of the Hadrianic fire are unpublished. As private individuals we are now seeking funds to publish this important data.

Trevor Brigham and Bruce Watson