32 LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

WC2A 3PH

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

LIN11

AUGUST 2011

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

32 LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Quality Control

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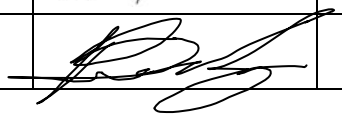
Project Manager Sign-off:	Tim Bradley		August 2011

Revision No.	Date	Checked	Approved

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
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An Archaeological Watching Brief at 32 Lincoln's Inn Fields, City of Westminster, WC2A 3PH

Site Code: LIN11

Central National Grid Reference: TQ 3090 8132

Written and Researched by James Young Langthorne
Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, August 2011

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Commissioning Client: London School of Economics

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ILLUSTRATIONS

1 ABSTRACT

1.1 An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited at 32 Lincoln's Inn Fields, City of Westminster between 10th and 16th June 2011. The evaluation was commissioned by the London School of Economics.

1.2 Archaeological monitoring was required on eighteen test pits which were excavated in order to provide information about the current basement and/or foundations for the structural engineer.

1.3 Truncated natural gravel was recorded in ten of the test pits. Potential post-medieval deposits/deep cut features were encountered within six of the test pits but due to a lack of artefactual evidence and the limited sizes of the test pits precise dating and the character of the deposits could not be confirmed

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 This report details the results and working methods of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited at 32 Lincoln's Inn Fields, City of Westminster, WCA2 3PH (Fig. 1) between 10th- 16th April 2011. The investigations were located in the basement of 32 Lincoln's Inn Fields, the boundaries of which were defined by Serle Street to the east, Portugal Street to the south, the Royal College of Surgeons to the west and Lincoln's Inn Fields to the north.

2.2 The requirements for the archaeological watching brief were outlined by Andy Shelley of Gifford. The investigation entailed the monitoring of nineteen test pits in order to facilitate structural engineering investigations within the basement (Fig. 2), however one of the test pits was later abandoned prior to investigation due to the presence of ducting. The watching brief was commissioned by The London School of Economics, was project managed for Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited by Tim Bradley and carried out by Ireneo Grosso and James Young Langthorne.

2.3 The National Grid Reference of the site was TQ 308 813.

2.4 The site has been allocated the code LIN11.

Figure 1
Site Location
1:20,000 at A4

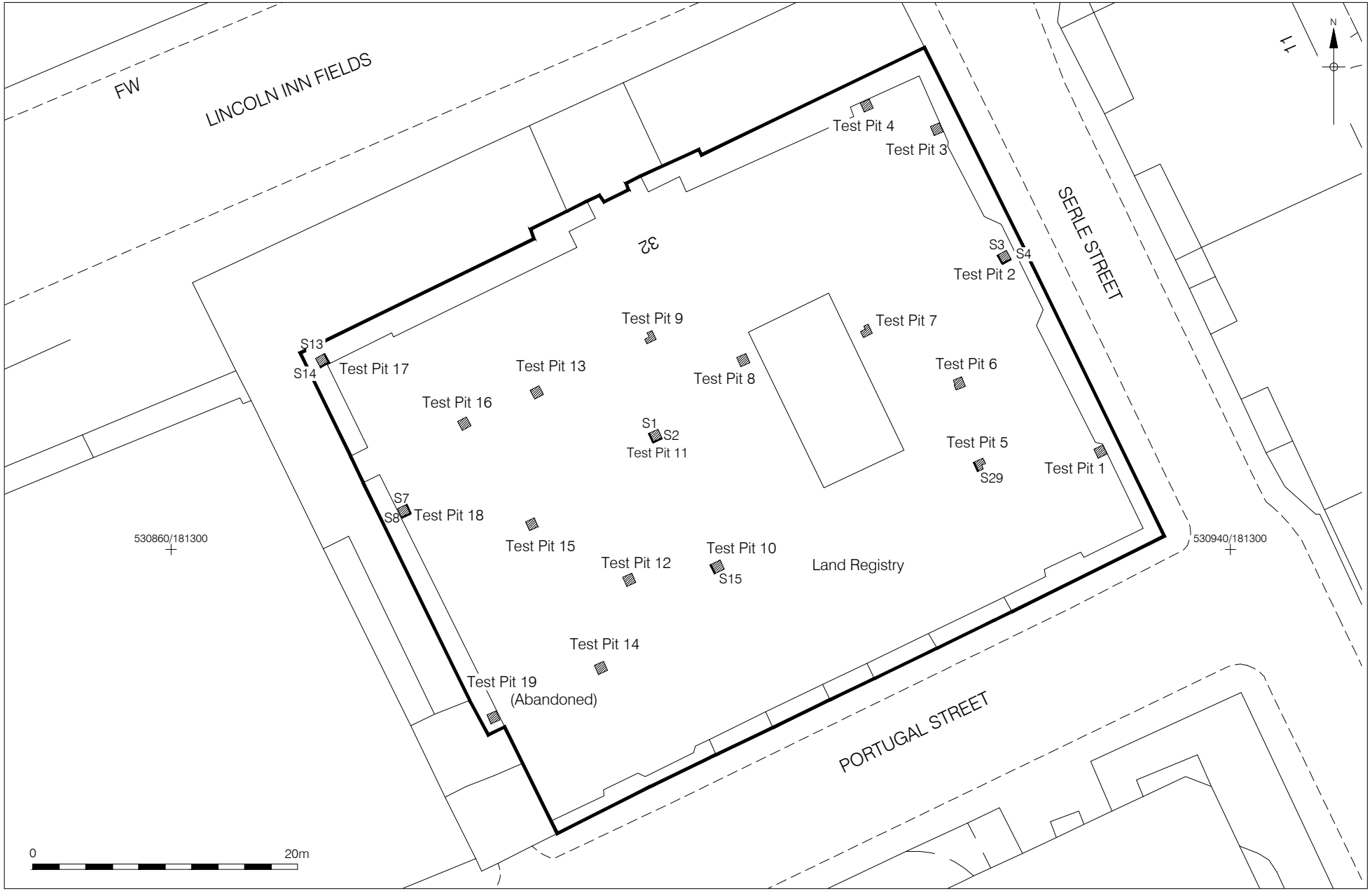


Figure 2
Test Pit Location
1:400 at A4

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND

National Policy: Planning Policy Statement (PPS5)

3.1.1 In March 2010 the Department for Communities and Local Government issued *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (PPS5), which provides guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the investigation and preservation of archaeological remains.

3.1.2 In considering any planning application for development, the local planning authority will be guided by the policy framework set by government guidance, in this instance PPS5, by current *Unitary Development Plan* policy and by other material considerations.

3.1.3 Additionally relevant planning strategy framework is provided by the *London Plan*, published February 2004. It includes the following policy of relevance to archaeology within central London:

> ***Policy 4B.15 Archaeology***
>
> *The Mayor, in partnership with English Heritage, the Museum of London and Boroughs, will support the identification, protection, interpretation and presentation of London's archaeological resources. Boroughs in consultation with English Heritage and other relevant statutory organisations should include appropriate policies in their UDPs for protecting scheduled ancient monuments and archaeological assets within their area.*

4 GEOLOGY, TOPOGRAPHY AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 GEOLOGY

4.1.1 The geology of the area surrounding the site comprises Anglian to Devensian Hackney gravel terrace, which was cut by the Thames during the glacial period. This is overlain by brickearth, often referred to as Langley Silt Complex within London, a fine-grained silt which is thought have accumulated by a variety of processes, such as wind and freeze-thaw, since the Last Glacial Maximum around 17,000BP.

4.1.2 There has been no known recent geological survey performed on or near the site.

4.2 TOPOGRAPHY

4.2.1 The site is located within a basement with a level concrete surface at a height of approximately 15.90m OD.

4.3 BACKGROUND TO THE SITE

4.3.1 32 Lincoln's Inn Fields was constructed in 1913 as the London base for H. M. Land Registry Office and remained under their auspices until recently. The building itself is Grade II listed[1].

[1] http://www.32lincolns.com/building.html

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

5.1 In accordance with the guidance provided by Gifford, the excavation of eighteen test pits was monitored in order to determine the presence, location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quantity of any archaeological remains.

5.2 The excavation of all of the test pits (T.P. 1-18) was performed by hand under archaeological monitoring. The table below summarises the dimensions of the test pits:

Test Pit	North-South (m)	East-West (m)	Depth (m)
1	0.80	0.70	0.44
2	0.70	0.76	0.60
3	0.75	0.75	0.58
4	0.73	0.75	1.03
5	0.77	0.76	0.53
6	0.77	0.75	0.65
7	0.77	0.79	0.46
8	0.76	0.76	0.52
9	0.75	0.77	0.55
10	0.76	0.80	0.68
11	0.61	0.81	0.76
12	0.75	0.80	0.54
13	0.75	0.76	0.54
14	0.75	0.71	0.58
15	0.74	0.73	0.47
16	0.76	0.78	0.40
17	0.76	0.80	0.60
18	0.80	0.75	0.60

5.3 A further test pit (T.P. 19) was proposed in the south-western part of the basement, but due to the presence of ducting blocking this area of floor it was abandoned prior to any investigation being initiated.

5.4 After excavation was completed the location of trenches was triangulated from the basement walls and plans and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10. The single context system was used for all recording on the site. A photographic record in digital format was also kept of all the test pits.

5.5 Existing survey drawings of the site indicate that the top of the current basement slab is located at a height of approximately 15.90 m OD across the area of investigation. .

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION

6.1 Phase 1 – Natural (Fig. 4)

6.1.1 The earliest deposit encountered within ten of the eighteen test pits, T.P.s 2-9, 11 and 14, was natural sandy gravel, which consisted of loose, friable, mid reddish brown sandy gravel. The table below summarises the heights that this natural deposit was encountered at within the test pits:

Test Pit	Context Number	Maximum Height (BGL)
2	6	-0.42m
3	12	-0.55m
4	25	-0.93m
5	27	-0.34m
6	28	-0.49m
7	26	-0.43m
8	23	-0.33m
9	22	-0.35m
11	4	-0.73m
14	7	-0.30m

6.1.2 The variation in the heights of the natural sandy gravel across site does not appear to indicate any form of natural slope or undulation but rather the effects of later intrusions, especially that of the current concrete basement slab itself.

6.2 Phase 2 – Later Post-Medieval/Early Modern Deposits (Fig. 4)

6.2.1 Overlying natural sandy gravel in T.P.s 2 and 3 and the earliest deposits encountered in T.P.s 17 and 18 was a friable, mid reddish grey brown, slightly silty sandy gravel with moderate pea grit inclusions. This deposit was interpreted as redeposited natural, possibly caused by weathering/disturbance of the ground during the construction of the basement. The table below summarises the heights and thicknesses of these layers:

Test Pit	Context Number	Thickness	Maximum Height (BGL)
2	5	0.15m	-0.32m

3	11	0.15m	-0.40m
17	14	0.15m	-0.43m
18	9	0.04m	-0.56m

6.2.2 Sealing the natural sandy gravel in T.P.s 4 and 11 and at the bases of T.P.s 1, 12, 13 and 16 was a layer of potential subsoil, described as a firm mid grey brown, slightly silty sandy clay with moderate small subangular and subrounded pebbles. No artefactual evidence was recovered from these deposits and while they have been interpreted as layers it is possible that they are the fills of heavily truncated deep cut features. However, the limited dimensions of the test pits meant that this hypothesis could not be tested. The table below summarises the thicknesses of these layers and the heights that they were encountered at:

Test Pit	Context Number	Thickness	Maximum Height (BGL)
1	10	0.07m	-0.37m
4	24	0.57m	-0.36m
11	3	0.07m	-0.62m
12	18	0.24m	-0.23m
13	20	0.22m	-0.30m
16	21	0.18m	-0.22m

6.2.3 Further possible evidence of fills from truncated features was encountered in T.P. 11 wherein a 0.60m thick layer of compact but friable, mid reddish brown sandy silty gravel [2] overlaid possible subsoil/fill [3] and was succeeded by a 0.15m thick layer of firm, mid-dark brown, sandy clay silt with occasional CBM flecks, oyster shells and charcoal flecks [1]. However the limited nature of the test pit again prevented any potential cut edges being identified. A fragment of post-medieval roof tile was recovered from layer [1].

6.2.4 Sealing redeposited natural sandy gravel in T.P.s 17 and 18 were deposits of construction trample which were typically firm, mid grey brown, sandy clay silt with moderate small, subangular and subrounded pebbles and occasional CBM, charcoal and oyster shell flecks and fragments. These layers, [13] and [8], were 0.23m and 0.13m thick in T.P.s 17 and 18 respectively.

6.3 Phase 3 – Early Modern Structures (Figs. 3 & 4)

6.3.1 The bases of T.P.s 10 and 15 contained concrete foundations, [17] and [19] respectively. It is considered that these are the foundations that the basement has been constructed on as they do not appear to have been truncated by the current basement walls. They were encountered at maximum heights of -0.68m BGL in T.P. 10 and -0.45m in T.P. 15.

6.3.2 An unfrogged yellow stock brick structure [16] with concreted light-mid yellowish grey mortar in a stretcher bond was seen to partially rest on concrete foundation [17] in T.P. 10. The character of this structure could not be full discerned due to the limited dimensions of the test pit but it could conceivably be a brick drain.

6.3.3 The concrete foundation [17] and the masonry structure [16] in T.P.10 had also been backfilled by a friable, loose, mid grey brown sandy silt with moderate pebble, pea grit and occasional CBM flecks [15].

6.3.4 The deposits in all of the test pits were sealed by the concrete slab of the current basement [+], the thickness of which, at 0.25m-0.45m, varied considerably across the site. .

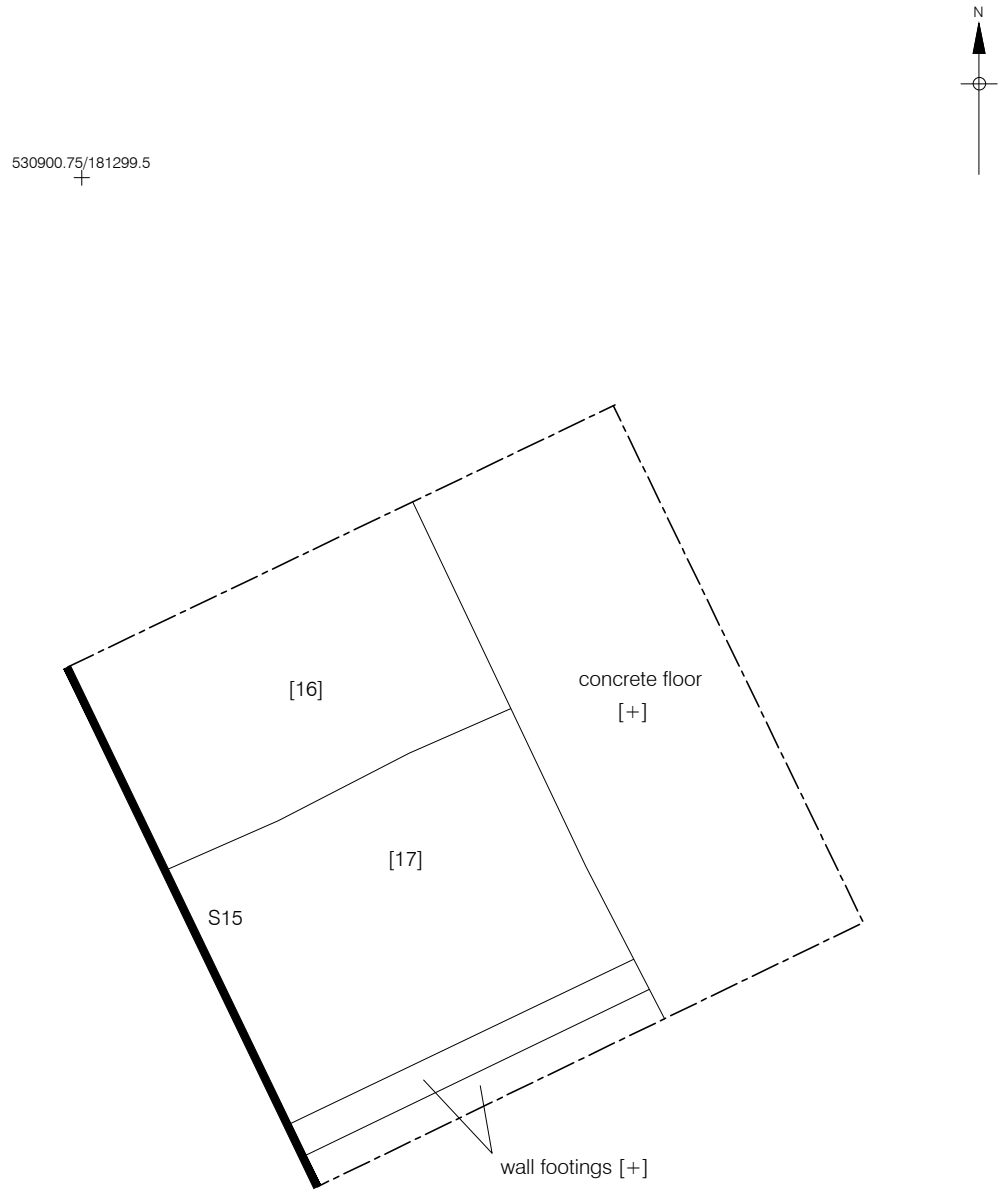
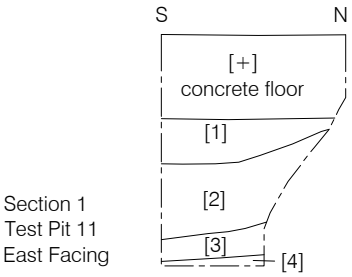
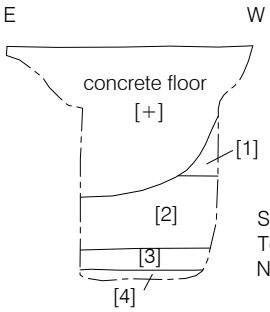


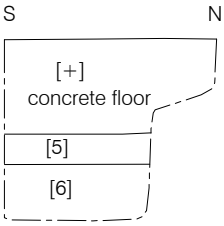
Figure 3
Test Pit 10
1:10 at A4



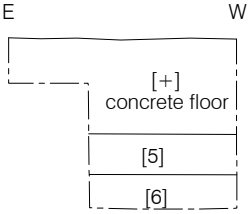
Section 1
Test Pit 11
East Facing



Section 2
Test Pit 11
North Facing



Section 3
Test Pit 2
East Facing



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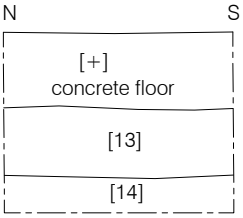
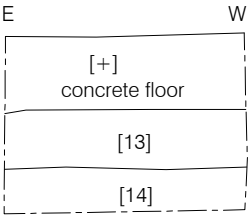
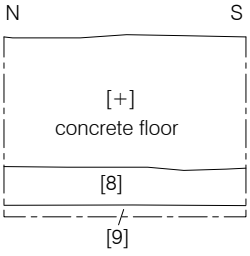
Test Pit 2
North Facing



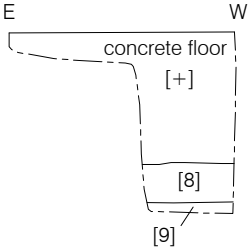
Section 13
Test Pit 17
West Facing



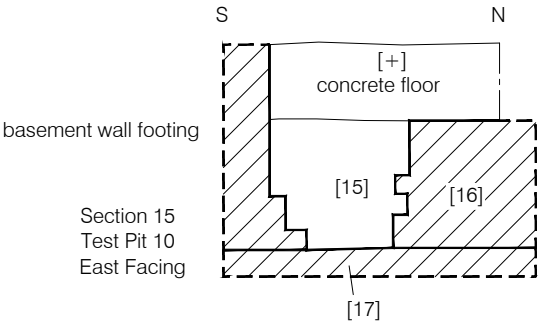
Section 14
Test Pit 17
North Facing



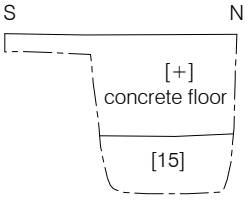
Section 7
Test Pit 18
West Facing



Section 8
Test Pit 18
North Facing



Section 15
Test Pit 10
East Facing



Section 29
Test Pit 5
East Facing

0 1m

Figure 4
Sections
1:25 at A4

7 INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Interpretation

7.1.1 It was clear from the presence and heights of natural sandy gravel in ten of the test pits at 32 Lincoln's Inn Fields that only the deepest archaeological deposits would have remained extant following the construction of the current basement in the early part of the 20th century.

7.1.2 While traces of possible subsoil or fills were recorded in six of the test pits (T.P.s 1, 4, 12, 13, 16 and most notably 11) it was unclear, due to the limited sizes of the test pits, what the precise character of these deposits were and, indeed, in the cases of all the deposits except those encountered in T.P. 11, they remain undated.

7.1.3 The roof tile found in uppermost fill of T.P. 11 was post-medieval in character but could conceivably be a residual fragment within a layer created during the construction of the current building during the early modern period.

7.5 Conclusions

7.5.1 It is evident that the existing basement slab has removed any previous archaeological horizons which may have overlain the natural gravel in the area of the basement. However, the watching brief has indicated that potentially, if piecemeal, deep cut post-medieval archaeological features may still be extant in areas below the basement.

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

8.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Andy Shelley of Gifford for commissioning the work on behalf of the London School of Economics, and for their support and for funding the work.

8.2 The author would like to thank Joe Denty and his crew, from Sykes, for their assistance on site; Tim Bradley for his project management and editing this report, Jennifer Simonson for the illustrations and Ireneo Grosso for undertaking the early part of the monitoring.

9 BIBLIOGRAPHY

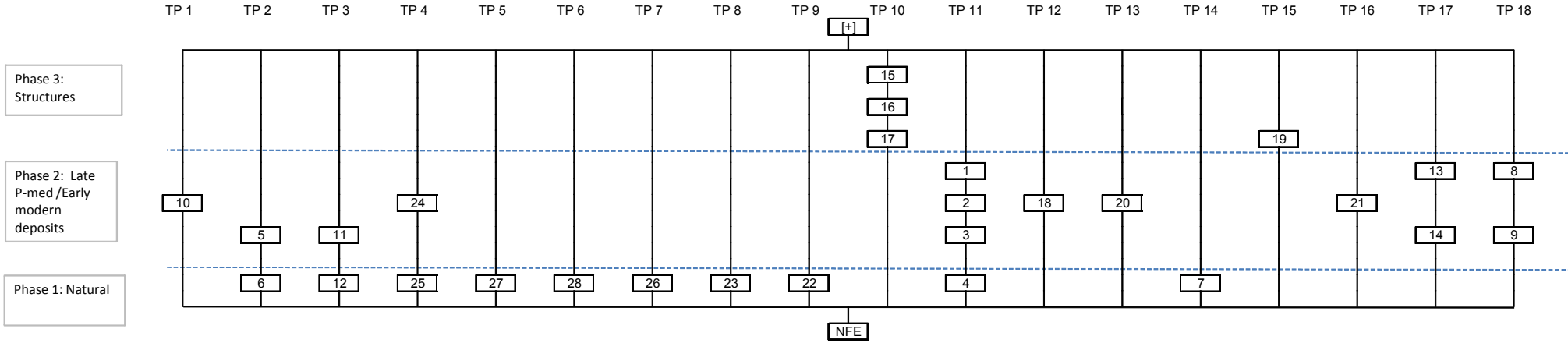
Internet resource: http://www.32lincolns.com/building.html

APPENDIX 1 – CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context No.	Test Pit	Plan	Section / Elevation	Type	Description	Date	Phase
1	11	Site plan	S1 & S2	Layer	Construction trample?	Post-medieval-early modern	2
2	11	Site plan	S1 & S2	Layer	Redeposited natural	Post-medieval-early modern	2
3	11	Site plan	S1 & S2	Layer	Possible Subsoil/Garden soil	Post-medieval-early modern	2
4	11	Site plan	S1 & S2	Layer	Natural sandy gravel	N/A	1
5	2	Site plan	S3 & S4	Layer	Redeposited natural	Post-medieval-early modern	2
6	2	Site plan	S3 & S4	Layer	Natural sandy gravel	N/A	1
7	14	Site plan	S5 & S6	Layer	Natural sandy gravel	N/A	1
8	18	Site plan	S7 & S8	Layer	Redeposited clay	Post-medieval-early modern	2
9	18	Site plan	S7 & S8	Layer	Redeposited natural	Post-medieval-early modern	2
10	1	Site plan	S9 & S10	Layer	Possible Subsoil/Garden soil	Post-medieval-early modern	2
11	3	Site plan	S11 & S12	Layer	Redeposited natural	Post-medieval-early modern	2
12	3	Site plan	S11 & S12	Layer	Natural sandy gravel	N/A	1
13	17	Site plan	S13 & S14	Layer	Construction trample?	Post-medieval-early modern	2
14	17	Site plan	S13 & S14	Layer	Redeposited natural	Post-medieval-early modern	2

15	10	N/A	S15	Deposit	Backfill	Post-medieval-early modern	3
16	10	T.P.10	S15	Masonry	Wall foundation or brick drain?	Post-medieval-early modern	3
17	10	T.P.10	S15	Masonry	Concrete foundation	Post-medieval-early modern	3
18	13	Site plan	S16 & S17	Layer	Possible Subsoil/Garden soil	Post-medieval-early modern	2
19	15	T.P. 15	S18	Masonry	Concrete foundation	Post-medieval-early modern	3
20	12	Site plan	S19 & S20	Layer	Possible Subsoil/Garden soil	Post-medieval-early modern	2
21	16	Site plan	S21 & S22	Layer	Possible Subsoil/Garden soil	Post-medieval-early modern	2
22	9	T.P.9	S23	Layer	Natural sandy gravel	N/A	1
23	8	Site plan	S24 & S25	Layer	Natural sandy gravel	N/A	1
24	4	Site plan	S26 & S27	Layer	Possible Subsoil/Garden soil	N/A	1
25	4	Site plan	S26 & S27	Layer	Natural sandy gravel	N/A	1
26	7	T.P.7	S28	Layer	Natural sandy gravel	N/A	1
27	5	T.P.5	S29	Layer	Natural sandy gravel	N/A	1
28	6	T.P.6	S30	Layer	Natural sandy gravel	N/A	1

APPENDIX 2 – SITE MATRIX



APPENDIX 3 – OASIS FORM

Project details

Project name	An Archaeological Watching Brief at 32 Lincoln's Inn Fields, City of Westminster
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken between 10th-16th June 2011 at 32 Lincoln's Inn Fields, City of Westminster, WC2A 3PH by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited. Archaeological monitoring was required on eighteen test pits which were excavated in order to provide information about the current basement and/or foundations for the structural engineer. Truncated natural gravel was recorded in ten of the test pits. Potential post-medieval deposits/deep cut features were encountered within six of the test pits but due to a lack of artefactual evidence and the limited sizes of the test pits precise dating and the character of the deposits could not be confirmed
Project dates	Start: 10-06-2011 End: 16-06-2011
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 2 - Offices

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON CITY OF WESTMINSTER CITY OF WESTMINSTER 32 Lincoln's Inn Fields, City of Westminster
Postcode	WC2A 3PH
Study area	1800.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 3090 8132 51.5151208036 -0.113295873099 51 30 54 N 000 06 47 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.
Project brief originator	Gifford
Project design originator	Gifford
Project director/manager	Tim Bradley

Project supervisor	James Young Langthorne
Type of sponsor/funding body	Landowner
Name of sponsor/funding body	London School of Economics

Project archives

Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Digital Media available	'Spreadsheets','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Media available	'Matrices','Plan','Report','Section','Unpublished Text'

Entered by	Tim Bradley (tbradley@pre-construct.com)
Entered on	23 June 2011

P C A

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