

**155 GRAY'S INN ROAD,
WC1X 8UE**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING
BRIEF**

**LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:
LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN**

**PLANNING APPLICATION NO.:
2003/0792/C**

SITE CODE: GIC09

PCA REPORT NO: R11415

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PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY



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CAMDEN, WC1X 8UE

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Site Code: GIC09

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1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the working methods and results of an archaeological investigation undertaken during groundworks necessitated by the redevelopment of 155 Gray's Inn Road, Camden, WC1X 8UE, within the London Borough of Camden. The work was commissioned by Paul Chadwick of CgMs Consulting and carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited between 10th and 15th April 2013.
- 1.2 The work was undertaken in response to a condition attached to full planning permission (Ref 2003/0792/C) for the redevelopment of the site. The site lies in an Archaeological Priority Zone as defined in the London Borough of Camden's Local Development Framework.
- 1.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by CgMs Consulting provided a scheme of works, consisting of an archaeological watching brief, which was approved by Kim Stabler, former Archaeology Advisor to the London Borough of Camden. Subsequent project monitoring was undertaken by her successor, Sandy Kidd. In consultation with the Archaeological Advisor, it was agreed that the watching brief would monitor a sample area of the site that would take the form of a north-south transect running across its entire length. This was stripped by machine under archaeological control to expose any archaeological remains and allow their systematic investigation and recording. The work proceeded until no further archaeological horizons were present.
- 1.4 A laminated deposit of natural clay, sand and gravel was found at the base of the sequence, which represents Hackney Gravel. It was sealed by a layer of brickearth, which only survived in the southern end of the trench. This was truncated by a series of intercutting early to mid post-medieval pits, dug for the purpose of gravel extraction. These were sealed by a later ground raising deposit and a gravel surface, which in turn were truncated by another gravel extraction pit. Ground raising and levelling layers and a rubble filled pit were found at the top of the archaeological sequence, which probably represent preparation works associated with the construction of the late 18th to early 19th century terraced housing that surrounds the site. Part of a brick foundation was uncovered which truncated these deposits in the northern end of the trench. This structure most probably represents part of a "U" shaped building that was erected between the late 18th and the late 19th centuries. Map regression evidence indicates that it was constructed some time before 1878 and had been demolished by 1896. It was replaced by a rectangular building that remained extant until this redevelopment (of which this study forms a part) necessitated its removal.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited undertook an archaeological watching brief at 155 Gray's Inn Road, Camden, WC1X 8UE (Figures 1 and 2) between the 10th and 15th April 2013. The work was commissioned by Paul Chadwick of CgMs Consulting in response to an archaeological condition attached to full planning permission received from the London Borough of Camden (Ref 2003/0792/C).
- 2.2 The site lies in an Archaeological Priority Zone as defined in the London Borough of Camden's Local Development Framework. English Heritage had suggested that the line of the Civil War ditch may run approximately east-west across the site.
- 2.3 Ms Kim Stabler, former Archaeology Advisor to the LB Camden, recommended that the archaeological condition should be dealt with by means of an archaeological watching brief. As a result of this CgMs Consulting prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation (Chadwick 2010) for the archaeological works which included a method statement by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited (PCA) (Mayo 2009). The WSI was approved by Ms Stabler, and the ensuing mitigation exercise was monitored by the current Archaeology Advisor to the LB of Camden, Sandy Kidd.
- 2.4 The site is located on the western side of Gray's Inn Road and is bounded by properties fronting Doughty Street to the west, Guildford Street to the south and Gray's Inn Road to the north and east. The site was previously occupied by a 3 storey building comprising a warehouse on the ground floor and offices above.
- 2.5 The proposed development comprises the demolition of previous structures and the erection of a new building. The above ground elements of the former structures were demolished in advance of the watching brief.
- 2.6 In 2007, MoLAS monitored three geotechnical test pits on the site and in 2009 PCA observed the excavation of a further four under the site code GIC09 (Figure 2). The investigations recorded potential channel deposits in Test Pits A and G, a layer of redeposited natural clay in Test Pits B and D and probable 18th century buried soil horizons (presumably within the rear gardens of the residential properties that surround the site) in all seven interventions (Holden 2009).
- 2.7 The groundworks at the site necessitated by the new development consisted of excavations for a basement structure across the full building footprint. The archaeological works comprised an archaeological watching brief, whereby a transect running across the entire footprint of the new development from north to south was stripped by machine under archaeological control to expose any archaeological remains and allow their systematic investigation and recording. This intervention was termed Trench 1 (Figure 2). The work proceeded until no further archaeological horizons were present.
- 2.8 The site was assigned the code GIC09, which was applied to this phase of the project as well as the earlier monitoring exercise undertaken in 2009. Following completion and approval the entire site archive will be deposited at the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC).

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.1 Site Specific Planning Background

3.1.1 The site lies in an Archaeological Priority Zone as defined in the London Borough of Camden's LDF. Although there are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within or near the development site, the Civil War defences of London are thought to run through or pass close by the site.

3.1.2 The proposed development has been granted planning permission (Ref 2003/0792/C). The permission included a planning condition (number 3) as follows:

No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme for investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the local authority.

3.1.3 In accordance with this condition, CgMs Consulting liaised with the Archaeology Advisors to the London Borough of Camden, Sandy Kidd, and his predecessor, Kim Stabler, both of English Heritage, who directed that an archaeological watching brief would be an appropriate mitigation strategy for the site. CgMs Consulting prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation (Chadwick 2010) for the work which was approved by Kim Stabler and the London Borough of Camden.

4 GEOLOGICAL AND TOPOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Series Sheet 256 (North London) indicates that the site is likely underlain by sand and gravel of the "Hackney Gravel Formation".
- 4.2 Earlier monitoring by MoLAS in 2007 and PCA in 2009 revealed natural clayey sand and gravel, presumed to be Hackney Gravel, at a height of c.18.10m OD (Holden, 2009: 9). This level approximates the height of the naturally occurring topography.
- 4.3 At the start of the redevelopment of which this study forms a part, the site rested at a height of c. 20.90m OD (Holden, 2009:9). This suggests that the naturally occurring ground level was raised by almost 3m as a result of human activity during the post-medieval and modern periods.
- 4.4 At the start of this phase of the archaeological watching brief, the ground surface of the site was roughly flat at a level of 19.70m OD (obtained through the use of a temporary bench mark provided by the onsite contractor, Leander Construction, and a dumpy level). This topography is extremely recent and is entirely man-made; it is the result of preparatory ground reduction for the proposed redevelopment that involved the removal of hard standing and modern overburden.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

What follows is a summary of the relevant historical and archaeological data relevant to the site. This chapter is divided into six specific archaeological and historic periods. A section devoted to previous works within the confines of the site is also included.

5.1 Prehistoric

- 5.1.1 An excavation undertaken in the Great Court of the British Museum recovered a Palaeolithic hand axe. This was stratified in naturally occurring Taplow Terrace gravel of fluvial origin and therefore represents a chance find that was moved from its primary depositional context by water action during the Pleistocene period. Few later prehistoric artefacts have been found in the vicinity of the site, which suggests that it was not situated near a frequently used area (Gould, 2009: 11-13; Haslam, 2011: 13).

5.2 Roman

- 5.2.1 To the southwest of the site, Roman inhumations were found at Southampton Row and Endell Street and a Roman silver ring was unearthed at Great Russell Street. An excavation undertaken in advance of the Great Court redevelopment at the British Museum revealed fragments of redeposited Roman ceramic building material within later contexts. Whilst this could signify Roman settlement in the vicinity of the site, these artefacts could also have been imported from elsewhere and dumped during a post-medieval ground raising episode (Haslam 2011: 13).
- 5.2.2 The Roman urban centre of *Londinium* was situated approximately 1.5km to the southeast of the site in the modern location of the City of London.
- 5.2.3 A Roman road running to *Londinium* passed close by the eastern boundary of the site, near and parallel with the modern trajectories of York Way and Gray's Inn Road (Weinreb & Hibbert, 1993: 774).

5.3 Saxon and Medieval

- 5.3.1 The Saxon urban centre now termed "Lundunwic" was situated just over 1km to the southwest, in and around what is now Covent Garden (Haslam, 2011: 13). To the north, an early Saxon hamlet grew around St Pancras Old Church (Weinreb & Hibbert, 1993: 774).
- 5.3.2 The area now occupied by the site was located between these two areas of settlement and probably consisted of undeveloped land or farmland at this time, a situation that persisted throughout the medieval period.

5.4 Early Post-Medieval

- 5.4.1 London began to rapidly expand during the post-medieval period from the late 15th century onwards. Occupation spilled beyond the city walls as districts like Islington, Shoreditch and Clerkenwell were absorbed into the urban sprawl.
- 5.4.2 The area of land now occupied by the site most probably remained open land throughout

the early to mid Post-Medieval periods.

5.5 **The Civil War: 1642-51**

5.5.1 By the mid 17th century, the site was still undeveloped but would have been in close proximity to the periphery of the growing city, the expansion of which was accelerating (Haslam, 2011: 14). Consequently, it is unsurprising that historic mapping tentatively suggests that the Civil War defences that encircled the entire metropolis either traversed the site or passed close to it (Mayo, 2010: 5).

5.5.2 Historical sources suggest that these defences, historically termed the “Lines of Communication”, included a large, continuous ditch, a defensive rampart and numerous fortifications. At approximately eleven miles in length they represent the largest defensive structure built during the war and the longest continuous earthwork of this period in Europe (Smith & Kelsey, 1996 p.117; Sturdy, 1975). Despite their scale, they have proved elusive to archaeological investigators due to the inaccuracy of the cartographic sources upon which current predictions are largely based. However, the chance of discovering them in their predicted location in the vicinity of this particular site has been increased by the discovery of the first definitive section nearby. An 8m wide ditch and the remnants of a rampart dating to the Civil War period were found to the west, very close to their hypothesised location, during a recent archaeological excavation at the British Museum. These features almost certainly form part of the Lines of Communication (Haslam 2011).

5.6 **Late Post-Medieval**

5.6.1 After the tumultuous events of the Civil War were over the area grew increasingly fashionable. In the latter half of the 17th century aristocratic residences such as Montagu and Southampton Houses were constructed to the west of the site. These would have been positioned on the edge of the City with rural vistas to their north (Wilson 2002: 25). To the north and east of the site, spas centred on springs that fed the River Fleet developed from the mid 18th century onwards, such as Bagnigge Wells and St Chad’s Well. These proved popular with wealthy patrons from the nearby city, intent on sampling their supposedly therapeutic waters (Thornbury, 1878: 296-298; Weinreb & Hibbert, 1993: 447).

5.6.2 From the mid 18th century the area to the immediate west of the site became increasingly urbanised as the new suburb of Bloomsbury blossomed. It was rapidly transformed into a fashionable middle and upper class residential area throughout the late 18th and 19th centuries (Wilson, p.25).

5.6.3 During the latter half of the 18th century to the early 19th century, middle class terraced residential housing was erected around the site itself and these properties, for the most part, are still extant.

5.6.4 The site would have been positioned on the eastern periphery of a geographical area that middle and upper class Londoners of the late 18th and 19th centuries would have considered “respectable”. In contrast to the affluence of Bloomsbury, the character of the area to the north and east of the site grew increasingly insalubrious during this time. This was spurred

by the ever improving transport network in the form of the “New Road” (modern day Marylebone, Euston and Pentonville Roads), constructed in 1756, and the Regent’s Canal, opened in 1820. These transport arteries enabled raw materials and products to be easily imported and exported to the area, triggering industrialisation and a growth in working class housing. It is probably no coincidence that production at Harrison’s Brickworks on Gray’s Inn Road appears to have expanded soon after the New Road opened, contributing to the notorious and gigantic heap of ashes that was to be found on the site of Battle Bridge Field at the northern end of the road (Weinreb & Hibbert, 1993 :272; 447).The opening of the railway termini of Euston, Kings Cross and St Pancras to the immediate north of the New Road during the latter half of the 19th century did nothing to improve the character of this area, which underwent further industrialisation and became increasingly impoverished throughout the period.

5.7 **Earlier Work on the Site**

5.7.1 Previous work on the site was undertaken by PCA in 2009 and these findings were broadly consistent with those of the 2007 MoLAS monitoring exercise (Holden, 2009: 15). The works revealed natural gravel and clay at approximately 18.10m OD. A layer of organic silt was stratified above this in Test Pits A and G, which may have been deposited within a channel or another water-retaining feature as it silted up. This water-filled feature was thought to pass across the southwestern side of the site. A probable overbank deposit, lain down in very low energy aquatic conditions (perhaps from one or more flooding episodes from this watercourse) was found in Test Pit C by MoLAS in 2007. Redeposited clay was observed in Test Pits B and D in the northern section of the site, although the mechanism and reason that lead to its deposition was not determined. Buried humic horizons were also found in each trench. The 18th century dating evidence recovered from them suggested that they are garden soils that are most probably associated with the extant residential housing that surrounds the site. Post-medieval brick foundations forming part of a cellar were found in Test Pit D and a drain of a similar date was uncovered in Test Pit F. These structures are thought to be associated with the late 18th to 19th century building that is shown on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1878. Map regression evidence indicates that this structure was erected some time before 1878 and had been demolished by 1896, when it was replaced with a rectangular building (demolished in advance of the current redevelopment).

6 METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 The archaeological work at the site comprised an archaeological watching brief. Following demolition and clearance, the client's groundworkers lifted the slab and removed the modern overburden. They were then directed by an archaeologist to grade through the underlying deposits with a mechanical excavator, fitted with a flat bladed bucket, carefully and methodically to enable effective recording and investigation of the remains as they were exposed. The on-site archaeological work ceased once natural gravels were reached. The spoil was removed from the trench either by hand or mechanically.
- 6.2 It was agreed with the Archaeological Advisor that archaeological monitoring of a north-south, stepped transect across the entire development area would be an appropriate way to enable the presence or absence of significant archaeological horizons, including the Civil War defences, to be determined. This was 2.00m wide at surface level, 1.00m wide at base and was 20.80m in length. It was dug down the centre of the site and was orientated north-south (Figure 2).
- 6.3 After numerous intrusive pits were identified, a section of the trench was widened at the request of the Archaeological Advisor in order to obtain additional dating evidence. This trench extension was 2.50m east-west by 4.50m north-south (Figure 2).
- 6.4 All recording systems employed were fully compatible with those used elsewhere in London; that is those developed out of the Department of Urban Archaeology Site Manual, presented in PCAs Operations Manual 1 (Taylor 2009).
- 6.5 Plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20 and were located using the Global Positioning System (GPS). Sections were drawn at 1:10 and were located on the trench plans. When deemed necessary, features were planned using GPS rather than hand planning.
- 6.6 A detailed description of all the archaeological strata that was exposed was recorded on pro-forma recording sheets.
- 6.7 Earlier work had been undertaken on the site using the same site code (GIC09). Numbering of contexts, plans and sections in this phase of the project began at 50 in order to avoid conflicts with the existing archive.
- 6.8 Excavated spoil was inspected for finds and indications of archaeologically significant deposits when safe to do so.
- 6.9 Levels in this report were obtained using a dumpy level and were measured from a Temporary Bench Mark that was located on the eastern boundary wall of the site. It had a value of 22.00m OD and was provided by the principal contractor (Leander Group).

7 PHASED ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

The following section provides a chronological account of the archaeological features and deposits that were encountered during the archaeological monitoring exercise. Unless otherwise stated, the following archaeological sequence was recorded in the east-facing section, illustrated in Figure 3.

7.1 Phase 1: Natural

7.1.1 Natural sandy gravel, [59], was observed at the base of the sequence at 18.26m OD towards the north of the trench (where it was horizontally truncated by a later pit), sloping to 18.08m OD in the southern end of the intervention (the only location where the original, natural interface with the overlying layer survived). This deposit probably represents Hackney Gravel (Figure 3).

7.1.2 A deposit of sandy clay, [80], sealed the gravel in the far southern end of the trench (Figure 3; Figure 4; Plate 1). This was 1.00m thick, the top being at a level of 19.08m OD. It is most probably natural in origin, perhaps representing a deposit of brickearth. At the southern end of the trench, it had been destroyed in its entirety during an intensive post-medieval episode of pitting so that the only observable surviving contact between it and the underlying terrace gravel was just 50 mm in length (this was situated at the far southern end of the intervention as shown in Figure 3).

7.1.3 The slight fall in the height of the gravel from north to south could indicate that the land surface once dipped towards the south at this time, perhaps because of erosion from the former presence of a fluvial channel near or beyond the southern site boundary. However, the difference between the highest and lowest levels is not striking and could equally be due to naturally occurring undulations in the surface of the gravel, in which the brickearth subsequently accumulated and sealed. The extensive nature of the truncations that were found in the north and central sections of the trench have rendered any reconstruction of the former natural topographic conditions highly speculative.

7.2 Phase 2: Early to Mid Post-Medieval

7.2.1 A deposit of dark, humic rich, grey blue silty clay, [66], was observed in section, sealing the Hackney Gravel in the southern end of the trench (Figure 3). It had been truncated to the north and south by two large pits, was 0.70m thick, the top being at a height of 18.30m OD, the surviving section being 1.30m in length from north to south. The layer closely resembled river alluvium. Although the edges of a cut were not found, levels taken on the top of the deposit indicate that it must lie within a man-made truncation or a naturally occurring slope or channel of some kind. Natural ground level to the immediate north was identified at 19.08m OD, 0.78m above the top of the alluvium. Whilst it could have been lain down in a fluvial channel that was silting up, it could alternatively represent the primary fill of a large, heavily truncated pit that was left open and repeatedly inundated with flood waters from a

- nearby watercourse. The latter hypothesis seems more probable as a “fining upwards” sequence of sands sealed by silts capped by clays was not present and this would be expected in a natural stream with a flow that was gradually slowing and ceasing.
- 7.2.2 The alluvial layer was sealed by [65], a deposit of silty sandy gravel (Figure 3). This was also truncated to the north and south by two large pits, as well as horizontally by the same features. It may represent the upper fill of the heavily truncated pit described above that also contained the aforementioned alluvium as a primary fill. It was presumably dumped within the feature to level the ground surface some time after the alluvium accumulated.
- 7.2.3 A minimum of eight intercutting pits, group numbered [64] (Figures 3, 4 and 5; Plates 1 & 2), were observed in section to the north of probable fill [65] (Figure 3; Figure 5). The most southerly of these truncated the northern edge of this deposit. They were up to 1.02m deep and the entire sequence extended more than 12.80m to the north. A small amount of natural silting seems to have occurred in the very base of one of the features in the form of [78], perhaps through the erosion of the sides. This indicates that the pit was left open, at least initially.
- 7.2.4 Alluvial material in the form of [79], [71] and [72] then accumulated in the bottom of three of these features at fairly uniform levels (the top of these contexts respectively being at heights of 17.78m OD, 18.03m OD and 17.98m OD). This suggests that the pits were left open for some time, enabling them to be inundated by flood waters leading to the build up of alluvial material in their bases.
- 7.2.5 After this material had been lain down, the pits were deliberately infilled with dumped deposits of orange sandy clayey gravel, [73], and mid yellowish brown sandy silty clay, [63] (Figure 3). The former deposit exclusively infilled the two most northerly pits, whilst the latter was extensive, sealing earlier fill [73] and infilling the remaining six features. The top of this deposit was identified at a level of 18.83m OD. Its homogenous nature was striking, strongly suggesting that the intercutting pits were backfilled simultaneously during an episode of ground levelling. This implies that the topography of the site would have been extremely uneven prior to this, being characterised by numerous open pits to the north of a ridge of undisturbed, upstanding natural ground at the southern end of the trench (Figure 3; Figure 4). This unevenness may have made the area unusable, necessitating this phase of ground levelling. Artefacts retrieved from the backfill included a sherd of Surrey-Hampshire border redware dated 1550-1900 AD. This indicates that the features fell out of use and were backfilled in the post-medieval period, presumably before the late 18th century when the area began to be developed for residential purposes.
- 7.2.6 A further make-up layer, [61], was then lain down (Figure 3). It was between 0.25m and 0.50m thick, taking the form of redeposited natural gravel. This appears to have formed a platform from which at least one more pit was dug. It is possible that it was dumped because in wet conditions its free-draining nature would have provided a better working surface than the underlying clay.
- 7.2.7 Another sizeable pit, [58], was then cut through the southern edge of this layer at the far

southern end of the trench (Figure 3; Figure 4). It was 2.00m north-south, over 1.40m east-west and was over 1.65m deep. The southern side of this feature was most probably originally 0.36m higher than the northern side as the former edge truncated previously undisturbed natural ground at the far southern end of the trench (this natural ground would have been upstanding at a height of 19.08m OD at the time that the pit was dug). The pit contained a deposit of alluvial material, [57], in its base, the top of which was found to be at an acute angle indicative of deliberate dumping or slumping rather than the horizontal contact that would be generated by natural silting. This was sealed by dumped fills [56], [55], [62] and [54], which were presumably deposited in order to close and level the feature. Dating evidence in the form of clay building material suggested a depositional date of 1200 to 1600 AD. Given that stratigraphically lower, secure evidence dating to 1550 AD or later was obtained from an earlier context, this deposit is presumed to err towards the end of this date range or to be slightly later than the scant artefactual assemblage suggests. It is probable that dump layer [60] was lain down during this same episode of levelling, creating a surface that was once again flush with the naturally occurring ground to the south.

7.2.8 The presence of these pits suggests that the area of the trench was intensively quarried throughout the early to mid post-medieval periods for the purposes of gravel and brickearth extraction. The lower fills of these features were frequently of alluvial origin, suggesting that they were left open for a time after they fell out of use and were flooded, perhaps by a nearby watercourse that repeatedly burst its banks. An episode of levelling punctuated the pitting activity, presumably when the site became so uneven as to be unworkable. Pitting then recommenced, but a little further south. A second episode of levelling then occurred that restored the original topography of the former natural ground.

7.2.9 The site would have been situated near the very edge of the growing metropolis in the early to mid post-medieval periods. As the underlying geology consisted of materials that were useful to the construction industry (i.e. clay for brick production and gravel that was used in mortar, road surfaces and so forth) it is unsurprising that it was intensively quarried for this purpose. The site's proximity to the city would have enabled these materials to be imported quickly and easily, either in their raw state or as finished products. Indeed, by the turn of the 19th century, brick manufacturing was one of the main industries around the King's Cross area to the immediate north of the site, with local landowners letting large areas to building contractors (Baker & Elrington, 1985: 24; Walford, 1878: 340), with brick fields, kilns and other ancillary structures devoted to brick making becoming prominent features in the local landscape (Baker & Elrington, 1985: 24, 30-31). It is possible that the area has a long post-medieval history of brick manufacturing extending back beyond the early 19th century; indeed, Harrison's brickworks was established near the northern end of Gray's Inn Road in the 18th century. Extensive quarrying for brickearth and gravel in the vicinity of such works would therefore be expected.

7.3 Phase 3: Late 18th – 19th Century

- 7.3.1 The deposits described in the previous paragraph were sealed by a series of dump layers, [53], [51], [50], [70] and [69], presumed on the basis of the artefacts that they contained to be late 17th or 18th century in date (Figure 3). In all probability they are contemporary with the construction of the surrounding residential houses that are still extant, dating to the late 18th to early 19th centuries. Most probably they represent ground raising and levelling layers associated with the construction of these buildings and their rear gardens. Together they raised the ground surface to a level of 19.60m OD, creating a roughly flat surface.
- 7.3.2 It is probable that these deposits were capped in places by soils that would have been present in the gardens of the properties that surround the site. Although none survived within the confines of this trench, they were previously identified in the geotechnical pits that were monitored by MoLAS and PCA between 2007 and 2009.
- 7.3.3 A small pit, [68], truncated the top of the sequence of dump layers (Figure 3). It was observed in section only and had been backfilled with [67], a deposit that was rich in rubble and mortar. This suggests that building waste or rubble from a demolished structure was buried in the pit, which is presumed to be late 18th or 19th century in date.
- 7.3.4 A masonry wall foundation, [77], was unearthed in the northern end of the trench (Figure 2; Figure 6; Plate 3). It was two courses wide and curvilinear in plan, the observable section being 4.10m north-south, 1.00m east-west and 1.95m deep. Its construction cut was dug from the very top of the archaeological sequence, suggesting an 18th century or later construction date. This was confirmed by the fabric of the bricks that were used, which were manufactured between 1775 and 1900. The foundations form part of the “U” shaped building that is shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1878.

Plate 1: Photograph of Trench 1



Photograph of Trench 1. Note the upstanding ridge of natural brickearth, [80], in the southern edge of the trench and the intercutting quarry pits to the immediate north. Photograph faces northwest.

Plate 2: photograph of Section 50



Photograph of the south-central section of Section 50 showing part of intercutting pit group [64]. Photograph faces west.

Plate 3: Photograph of Trench 1



Photograph of Trench 1, facing south. Note curvilinear foundation [77] in the foreground exposed on the eastern upper step of the trench.

8 INTERPRETATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

8.1 The objectives of the archaeological works as outlined in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Mayo 2010) were as follows:

- Is there any evidence of prehistoric activity on the site?
- Is there any evidence of Roman activity on the site?
- Is there any evidence of Saxon activity on the site?
- Is there any evidence for possible Civil War defences which are suggested to have been located in the vicinity of the site?
- Are there any post-medieval remains on the site?
- To establish the extent of all post post-depositional impacts on the archaeological resource.

8.2 The Archaeological Watching Brief undertaken at 155 Gray's Inn Road in the London Borough of Camden demonstrated that the archaeological remains that survived on the site dated from the early to mid post-medieval period onwards. They have undergone relatively little truncation from previous development – where seen disturbance was localised in plan although extensive in depth, continuing beyond the level of the naturally occurring ground.

8.3 Natural Hackney Gravel was seen at the base of the sequence at a height of 18.08m OD at the southern end of the trench, rising to over 18.26m OD further north where it had been truncated horizontally by a later pit. These levels are comparable with those taken on the natural gravel that was observed during the earlier monitoring exercise, which suggested that it outcropped at an approximate height of 18.10m OD. This indicates that the natural topography of the site either exhibited a gentle slope towards the south or was characterised by a series of gentle undulations. It is difficult to reconstruct accurately due to the damaging effects of later intensive quarrying that largely destroyed the upper boundary of the gravel.

8.4 Hackney Gravel was sealed by natural clayey silt, which is thought to represent a deposit of brickearth. The presence of terrace gravel sealed by brickearth suggests that the site was situated on dry land throughout the early to mid Holocene. Earlier work on the site did not encounter brickearth. This is not surprising as intensive quarrying appears to have destroyed this horizon within the confines of the observable area, the only surviving section being at the southern extremity of the trench.

8.5 No evidence for prehistoric, Roman or medieval activity was seen, although some residual fragments of medieval to early post-medieval clay building material was recovered from later contexts, attesting to potential activity from that period in the vicinity. It should also be remembered that later activity in the form of intensive pitting could have destroyed earlier deposits and features across the site.

8.6 The earliest archaeological deposit was a layer of alluvial material of probable early to mid post-medieval date, encountered in the south-central section of the trench. It must have accumulated in a natural channel or more probably the base of a quarry pit.

- 8.7 Cutting this layer were eight or more brickearth and gravel extraction pits of early to mid post-medieval date. These were left open for a while after they were dug, allowing deposits of alluvial material to accumulate in their bases, presumably after they were inundated by an overflowing watercourse situated nearby. This suggests that this once largely dry area was sporadically flooded by the post-medieval period. The alluvial deposits identified during the earlier monitoring exercises in Test Pits A, C and G (interpreted in an earlier report as silted channels or overbank deposits) may instead infill other large quarry pits; the geotechnical interventions that were monitored during the earlier phase of work would have been too small to properly determine the nature of these features.
- 8.8 After the site became unworkable due to its uneven nature, the quarry pits were backfilled and sealed by dumped clay and capped by a gravel surface. Similar redeposited natural clays were unearthed during the first phase of the project in Test Pits B and D. The reason for the deposition of this material was not previously understood, but it seems likely that it fills similar quarry features.
- 8.9 Another quarry pit was then dug, which truncated an earlier example to the north but also truncated virgin ground (which it no doubt targeted) to the south.
- 8.10 A second round of early to mid post-medieval ground levelling and raising then ensued until an approximation of the probable original natural topography was reached.
- 8.11 In the late 18th or early 19th century a third episode of ground raising ensued, which was presumably associated with the construction of the surrounding extant residential structures.
- 8.12 Garden soils probably originally capped these dump layers as these were identified in Test Pits A to G. They did not survive within the boundary of Trench 1 but were presumably once located within the gardens of the properties that border the site.
- 8.13 The late 18th to 19th century make-up layers were truncated by a small rubble filled pit and a curvilinear masonry foundation. The latter represents a late 18th or 19th century building as shown on the 1878 Ordnance Survey map. Elements of the same building were identified during earlier work on the site (Figure 2). These took the form of post-medieval brick foundations forming part of a cellar in Test Pit D and an associated drain in Test Pit F. Cartographic evidence indicates that this structure was erected some time before 1878 and had been demolished by 1896, when it was replaced with a rectangular building.
- 8.14 The results of this archaeological investigation will be published as an entry in the London Archaeologist 'Round Up'.
- 8.15 Following approval of this report by the client and the Archaeology Advisor to the London Borough of Camden, the entire site archive will be deposited at the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC) under site code GIC09. PCA will provide a copy of this report to the local studies library, and it will be supplied to the Greater London Historic Environment Record by the Archaeology Advisor to the London Borough of Camden.

9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Paul Chadwick for commissioning the project. Many thanks are also be extended to the site manager, John Hawker of Leander Group, and his team for their invaluable assistance and co-operation during the works.
- 9.2 The author would like to thank Chris Mayo for his project management and Iain Bright for overseeing the works on 12th and 15th April 2013.
- 9.3 Illustrations were produced by Jennifer Simonson. The pottery and clay pipes were dated by Chris Jarrett and the CBM assemblage by Kevin Hayward. Surveying was conducted by Richard Archer.

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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX

Context Number	Type	Description	Interpretation	Phase	Trench Number	Plan Number	Section Number	Dimensions			Levels (m OD)	
								N-S	E-W	Depth / Thickness	Highest	Lowest
50	Layer	Loose, dark brownish grey silty sand	18th Century ground preparation and levelling immediately prior to the construction of the surrounding residential properties and their gardens	3	Watching Brief Trench1	N/A	50	3.00m	N/A	0.30m	19.66	19.63
51	Layer	Dark grey loose silty sand	18th Century ground preparation and levelling immediately prior to the construction of the surrounding residential properties and their gardens	3	Watching Brief Trench1	N/A	50	0.60m	N/A	0.45m	19.42	N/A
52	Void	Void	Void	Void	Void	Void	Void	Void	Void	Void	Void	Void
53	Layer	Loose, dark greyish brown silty clayey sand	18th Century ground preparation and levelling immediately prior to the construction of the surrounding residential properties and their gardens	3	Watching Brief Trench1	N/A	50	7.80m	N/A	0.40m	19.42	19.32
54	Fill	Of pit [58]. Firm, dark grey brown silty clay	Backfill of a post-medieval gravel extraction pit	2	Watching Brief Trench1	50	50	1.96m	1.46m	0.45m	19.13	19.08
55	Fill	Of pit [58]. Firm, mid brownish yellow with yellow brown lenses of silt, clay and gravel	Backfill of a post-medieval gravel extraction pit	2	Watching Brief Trench1	N/A	50	1.80m	N/A	0.70m	18.78	18.68
56	Fill	Of pit [58]. Firm, mid grey brown silty clay with occasional CBM fragments	Backfill of a post-medieval gravel extraction pit	2	Watching Brief Trench1	50	50	2.00m	1.00m	1.20m	18.08	N/A

Context Number	Type	Description	Interpretation	Phase	Trench Number	Plan Number	Section Number	Dimensions			Levels (m OD)	
								N-S	E-W	Depth / Thickness	Highest	Lowest
57	Fill	Primary fill of pit [58]. Soft mid blue grey sandy gravely clay	Primary fill of a post-medieval gravel extraction pit. Alluvial material, the acute angle of which suggests that it either collapsed into the feature or was deliberately dumped.	2	Watching Brief Trench1	50	50	0.80m	0.60m	0.02m	17.88	17.5
58	Cut	Large pit Moderately compact greyish yellowish red laminated clays, sands and gravels	Post-medieval gravel extraction quarry	2	Watching Brief Trench1	50	50	2.00m	1.40m	over 1.65m	19.08	17.5
59	Layer	Natural Hackney Gravel	Natural Hackney Gravel	1	Watching Brief Trench1	50, 84	50	over 21.50m	over 3.25m	N/A	18.48	N/A
60	Layer	Firm, dark grey brown silty clay dump layer	18th Century ground preparation and levelling immediately prior to the construction of the surrounding residential properties and their gardens	2	Watching Brief Trench1	50	50	3.00m	N/A	0.40m	19.08	N/A
61	Layer	Firm mid brownish yellow silty sandy gravel	Post-medieval levelling layer	3	Watching Brief Trench1	50	50	11.00m	N/A	0.50m	18.88	18.58
62	Fill	Of [58]. Moderately compact mid yellowish brown sandy silty clay	Backfill of a post-medieval gravel extraction pit	2	Watching Brief Trench1	N/A	50	1.02m	N/A	0.46m	18.8	18.32
63	Fill	Of [64]. Moderately compact mid yellowish brown sandy silty clay	Upper fill of a series of post-medieval gravel extraction pits. Probably dumped into the pits during one backfilling episode.	2	Watching Brief Trench1	50, 84	50	11.60m	1.00m	0.90m	18.83	18.28

Context Number	Type	Description	Interpretation	Phase	Trench Number	Plan Number	Section Number	Dimensions			Levels (m OD)	
								N-S	E-W	Depth / Thickness	Highest	Lowest
64	Cut	Series of intercutting pits Firm, mid brownish yellow silty sandy gravel	Gravel extraction pits of probable medieval to post-medieval date; probably created gradually, pit by pit, and then infilled during one episode.	2	Watching Brief Trench 1	50, 84	50	12.80m	2.00m	1.02m	18.83	17.63
65	Layer		Redeposited natural? Alluvial deposit, possibly in the base of a heavily truncated quarry pit. The deposit is recorded as a layer because no edges of the "feature" were identified (the deposit was recorded in section only and was truncated both to the north and south).	2	Watching Brief Trench 1	N/A	50	0.50m	N/A	0.27m	18.58	N/A
66	Layer	Mid blue grey sandy gravel and clay. Occasional CBM		2	Watching Brief Trench 1	50	50	1.30m	N/A	0.70m	18.3	N/A
67	Fill	Of [68]. Loose, dark grey silty sand with frequent CBM, rubble and mortar	Fill of small 18th century pit	3	Watching Brief Trench 1	N/A	50	1.25m	N/A	0.55m	19.58	N/A
68	Cut	Small rubble filled pit	Cut of a probable 18th century pit 18th Century ground preparation and levelling immediately prior to the construction of the surrounding residential properties and their gardens	3	Watching Brief Trench 1	N/A	50	1.25m	N/A	0.55m	19.58	19.03
69	Layer	Loose, greenish grey silty clayey sand		3	Watching Brief Trench 1	50	50	9.50m	N/A	1.15m	19.6	19.56

Context Number	Type	Description	Interpretation	Phase	Trench Number	Plan Number	Section Number	Dimensions			Levels (m OD)	
								N-S	E-W	Depth / Thickness	Highest	Lowest
70	Layer	Loose, silty sandy clay	18th Century ground preparation and levelling immediately prior to the construction of the surrounding residential properties and their gardens	3	Watching Brief Trench1	N/A	50	0.45m	N/A	0.20m	19.28	N/A
71	Fill	Of [64]. Soft, mid blue grey sandy clay	Alluvial deposit in the base of a quarry pit. It could be the result of natural silting.	2	Watching Brief Trench1	N/A	50	1.40m	N/A	0.57m	18.03	N/A
72	Fill	Of [64]. Soft mid blue grey sandy silty clay	Alluvial deposit in the base of a quarry pit. It could be the result of natural silting.	2	Watching Brief Trench1	N/A	50	1.65m	N/A	0.25m	17.98	17.85
73	Fill	Of [64]. Loose to moderate, orange sandy silty clay	Dumped deposit within a quarry pit	2	Watching Brief Trench1	N/A	50	1.80m	N/A	0.27m	18.47	17.95
74	Fill	Of [64]. Firm mid grey blue, silty sandy clay	Alluvial deposit in the base of a quarry pit. It could be the result of natural silting.	2	Watching Brief Trench1	N/A	50	1.15m	N/A	0.88m	18.48	N/A
75	Fill	Backfill of [76]	18th century backfill around masonry wall [77] within construction cut [76].	3	Watching Brief Trench1	N/A	50	4.10m	0.20m	1.95m	19.76	N/A
76	Cut	Construction cut for [77]	18th century construction cut for an apsidal shaped structure	3	Watching Brief Trench1	N/A	50	4.10m	1.20m	1.95m	19.76	18.95
77	Masonry	Wall foundation	Apsidal-shaped wall foundation for a probable 18th century residential or ancillary structure.	3	Watching Brief Trench1	GPS Plot	N/A	4.10m	1.00m	1.95m	19.76	18.95
78	Fill	Of [64]. Soft, dark red brown silty clay	Primary fill within a quarry pit	2	Watching Brief Trench1	N/A	N/A	0.30m	N/A	0.20m	17.98	17.73

Context Number	Type	Description	Interpretation	Phase	Trench Number	Plan Number	Section Number	Dimensions			Levels (m OD)	
								N-S	E-W	Depth / Thickness	Highest	Lowest
79	Fill	Of [64]. Firm mid grey blue, silty sandy clay	Alluvial deposit in the base of a quarry pit. It could be the result of natural silting.	2	Watching Brief Trench1	N/A	N/A	0.92m	N/A	0.12m		
80	Layer	Natural clay-brickearth?	Light brownish yellow sandy clay	1	Watching Brief Trench1	1	50	over 1.60m	over 0.50m	1.02m	19.08	N/A

APPENDIX 2: POST-ROMAN POTTERY ASSESSMENT

By Chris Jarrett, PCA

Introduction

A total of thirteen stratified sherds, representing 12 estimated number of vessels, all dating to the post-medieval period was recovered from the archaeological watching brief. The material is in a good condition, indicating that it was deposited soon after breakage. The assemblage consists of sherd material with identifiable forms recognisable. The pottery was quantified by sherd count and estimated number of vessels (ENV) and was classified according to the Museum of London Archaeology (LAARC 2007). The assemblage is discussed by context as an index.

Pottery index

Context [50], considered spot date: 18th century

Chinese blue and white porcelain (CHPO BW), 1580-1900, one sherd, form: unidentified, decorated with a trellis border.

London-area post-medieval redware (PMR), 1580-1900, one sherd with internal and external glaze, form: unidentified.

Context [53], considered spot date: late 18th century

Chinese blue and white porcelain (CHPO BW), 1580-1900, one sherd, form: medium rounded bowl with a central c.1750-1800 dated sword border surrounding a competently painted landscape.

Chinese blue and white porcelain (CHPO BW), 1580-1900, one sherd, form: dish base with a floral design.

Chinese blue and white porcelain (CHPO BW), 1580-1900, one sherd, form: plate rim with a floral design.

Chinese Imari porcelain (CHPO IMARI), 1680-1900, one sherd, form: plate with a recessed base and internal blue and red foliage decoration.

London-area post-medieval redware (PMR), 1580-1900, one sherd, form: bowl or dish rim with an internal coarse glaze.

London-area post-medieval redware (PMR), 1580-1900, one sherd, form: jar with a collared rim with an internal and external glaze.

Surrey-Hampshire border redware (RBOR), 1550-1900, one body sherd, form: unidentified, glazed internally.

English tin-glazed ware (TGW), 1570-1846, two body sherds, form: albarello, decorated with blue bands on white.

English tin-glazed ware (TGW), 1570-1846, one sherd, form: unidentified, body sherd decorated with blue flowers on white, end of 17th-18th century.

Context [63], considered spot date: 1550-1900

Surrey-Hampshire border redware (RBOR), 1550-1900, one base sherd, form: unidentified.

Significance and potential of the assemblage and recommendations for further work

The assemblage has little significance at a local level and the pottery types present fit the ceramic profile for London and all of the pottery types are frequently encountered in post-medieval excavations in the region. However, context [53] did produce a large quantity of Chinese porcelains of a very good quality and indicate that this group of pottery was derived from a house hold of middle or high socio-economic grouping. This is perhaps not surprising as the location of the site was and still is located in an affluent part of London and one of the centres for the legal profession. The potential of the pottery is to date the contexts it was recovered from and gives an indication of social status. None of the pottery requires illustrating. There are no recommendations for further work.

APPENDIX 3: CLAY TOBACCO PIPE ASSESSMENT

By Chris Jarrett, PCA

A single fragment of a bowl, surviving mostly as a heel and stem with a fine bore was recovered from context [53] and can be broadly dated to the late 17th and 18th century. It has no significance or potential beyond being broadly dateable and there are no recommendations for further work on the item.

APPENDIX 4: CLAY BUILDING MATERIALS ASSESSMENT

By Kevin Hayward, PCA

Ceramic Building Material Index

The table below contains a full inventory of the ceramic building material that was found during the watching brief, describing and categorising the fabrics that were recovered and providing a full list of date ranges for each fragment along with spot dates for the relevant contexts.

Recommendations and Summary

The ceramic building material recovered from GIC09 contains items of medieval and post medieval roofing and brick, together with fragments of daub from context [56]; this could represent the dumping of wattle and daub from a structure formed from this material.

The assemblage contains no items of interest. The brick from [77] is later 18th century – 19th century on the basis of narrow width and height, conforming to the regulations brought in by the brick tax of 1770s. The peg tile and pan tile is mainly post medieval apart from a small group with coarse moulding sand from [56] one tile in a coarse sandy fabric 3216 had splash glaze and was manufactured between 1200 and 1450. The material forms a standard post-medieval assemblage. No further work is recommended.

Context	Fabric	Description	Size	Date range of material		Latest dated material		Spot date	Spot Date Mortar
50	2279	Fresh Pan Tile	1	1630	1850	1630	1850	1630-1850	No mortar
53	2271 2276	Unglazed late medieval post medieval peg tile coarse moulding sand	5	1180	1900	1480	1900	1480-1700	No mortar
56	3117; 3102; 2586; 3216	Glazed and unglazed medieval peg tile, burnt flint and burnt daub	6	1500bc	1800	1200	1800	1200-1600+	No mortar
63	2276	Post medieval peg tile fine moulding sand	1	1480	1900	1480	1900	1480-1900	No mortar
66	2586	Medieval/early post medieval peg tile no glaze	1	1180	1800	1180	1800	1180-1600+	No mortar
77	3032R	Post Great Fire Narrow brick white shelly mortar	1	1664	1900	1664	1900	1775-1900	1700-1850

APPENDIX 4: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-148699

Project details

Project name	155 Gray's Inn Road
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at 155 Gray's Inn Road, Camden, WC1X 8UE, within the London Borough of Camden. It was undertaken in response to a condition attached to full planning permission for the redevelopment of the site. The watching brief monitored a north-south transect running across the entire length of the development area. This was stripped by machine under archaeological control to expose any archaeological remains and allow their systematic investigation and recording. The work proceeded until no further archaeological horizons were present. A laminated deposit of natural clay, sand and gravel was found at the base of the sequence, which probably represents Hackney Gravel. It was sealed by brickearth, which only survived in the far southern end of the watching brief trench. This was truncated by a series of intercutting early to mid post-medieval pits, dug for the purpose of gravel and brickearth extraction. These were sealed by a later ground raising deposits and a gravel surface, which in turn were truncated by another gravel extraction pit. Ground raising and levelling layers and a rubble filled pit were found at the top of the archaeological sequence, which are probably associated with the late 18th to early 19th century terraced housing that surrounds the site.
Project dates	Start: 10-04-2013 End: 15-04-2013
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	GIC09 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	2003/0792/C - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Monument type	QUARRY Post Medieval
Monument type	BUILDING Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Significant Finds	TILE Post Medieval
Significant Finds	PIPE (SMOKING) Post Medieval
Significant Finds	BRICK Post Medieval
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON CAMDEN HOLBORN 155 Gray's Inn Road
Postcode	WC1X 8UE
Study area	575.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 30750 82320 51 0 51 31 26 N 000 06 54 W Point
Lat/Long Datum	Unknown

Height OD / Depth	Min: 18.00m Max: 18.00m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	CgMs Consulting
Project director/manager	Chris Mayo
Project supervisor	Rebecca Haslam
Project supervisor	Iain Bright
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	J-Ross Developments Limited
Project archives	
Physical Archive recipient	LAARC
Physical Archive ID	GIC09
Physical Contents	"Ceramics","other"
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Archive ID	GIC09
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Database","Images raster / digital photography","Images vector","Spreadsheets","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Archive ID	GIC09
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Miscellaneous Material","Plan","Section"
Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	155 Gray's Inn Road, London Borough of Camden, WC1X 8UE: An Archaeological Watching Brief
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Haslam, R.
Other bibliographic details	PCA R11415
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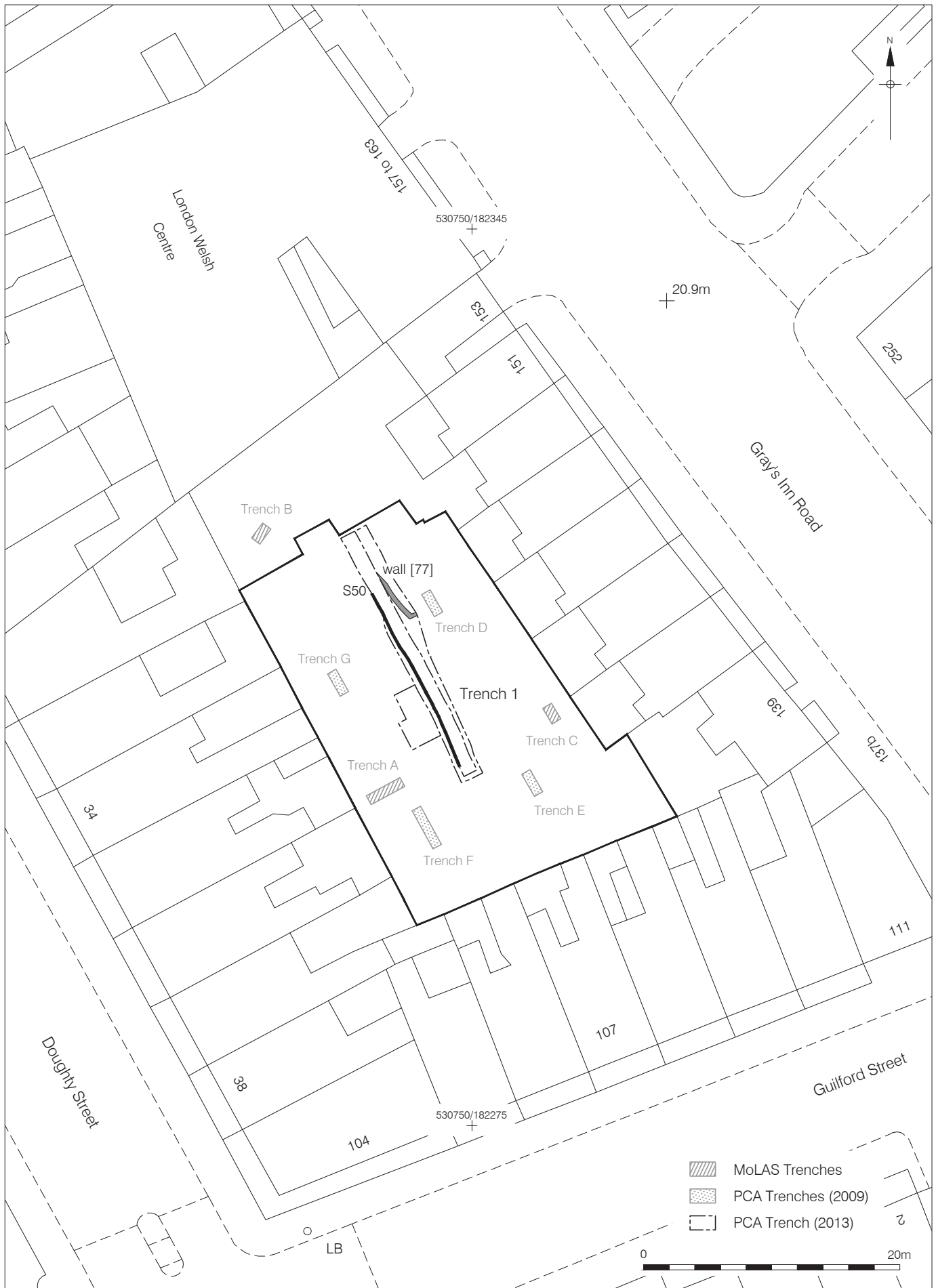


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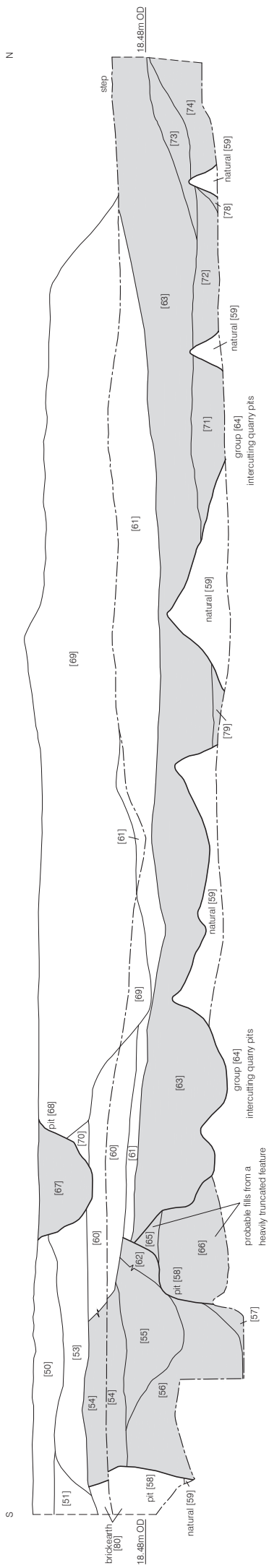
Figure 1
Site Location
1:20,000 at A4



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Figure 2
Trench Location
1:400 at A4



Section 50
Trench 1
East Facing



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Figure 3
Section 50
1:40 at A3

PCA

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