

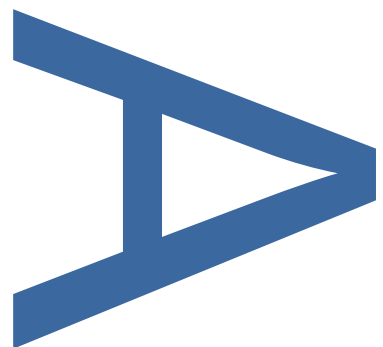
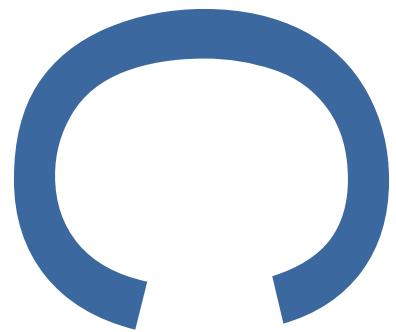
**FRANKLIN HOUSE
151 STRAND
CITY OF WESTMINSTER
WC2R 1HL**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING
BRIEF**

PCA REPORT NO: R12672

SITE CODE: K4650

OCTOBER 2016




PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

**FRANKLIN HOUSE, 151 STRAND
CITY OF WESTMINSTER, WC2R 1HL**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Quality Control

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited			K4650
	Name & Title	Signature	Date
Text Prepared by:	Douglas Killock		October 2016
Graphics Prepared by:	Jennifer Simonson		October 2016
Graphics Checked by:	Josephine Brown		October 2016
Project Manager Sign-off:	Tim Bradley		October 2016

Revision No.	Date	Checked	Approved

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Unit 54
Brockley Cross Business Centre
96 Endwell Road
London
SE4 2PD

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at Franklin House, 151 Strand,
City of Westminster, WC2R 1HL**

Site Code: SRA16
Central National Grid Reference: TQ 30703 80864

Written and researched by Douglas Killock
Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, October 2016

Project Manager: Tim Bradley MCIfA

Commissioning Client: Mills Whipp Projects on behalf of J & S Franklin Ltd

Contractor: Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Unit 54 Brockley Cross Business Centre
96 Endwell Road
Brockley
London
SE4 2PD

Tel: 020 7732 3925
Fax: 020 7732 7896
Email: tbradley@pre-construct.com

Website: www.pre-construct.com

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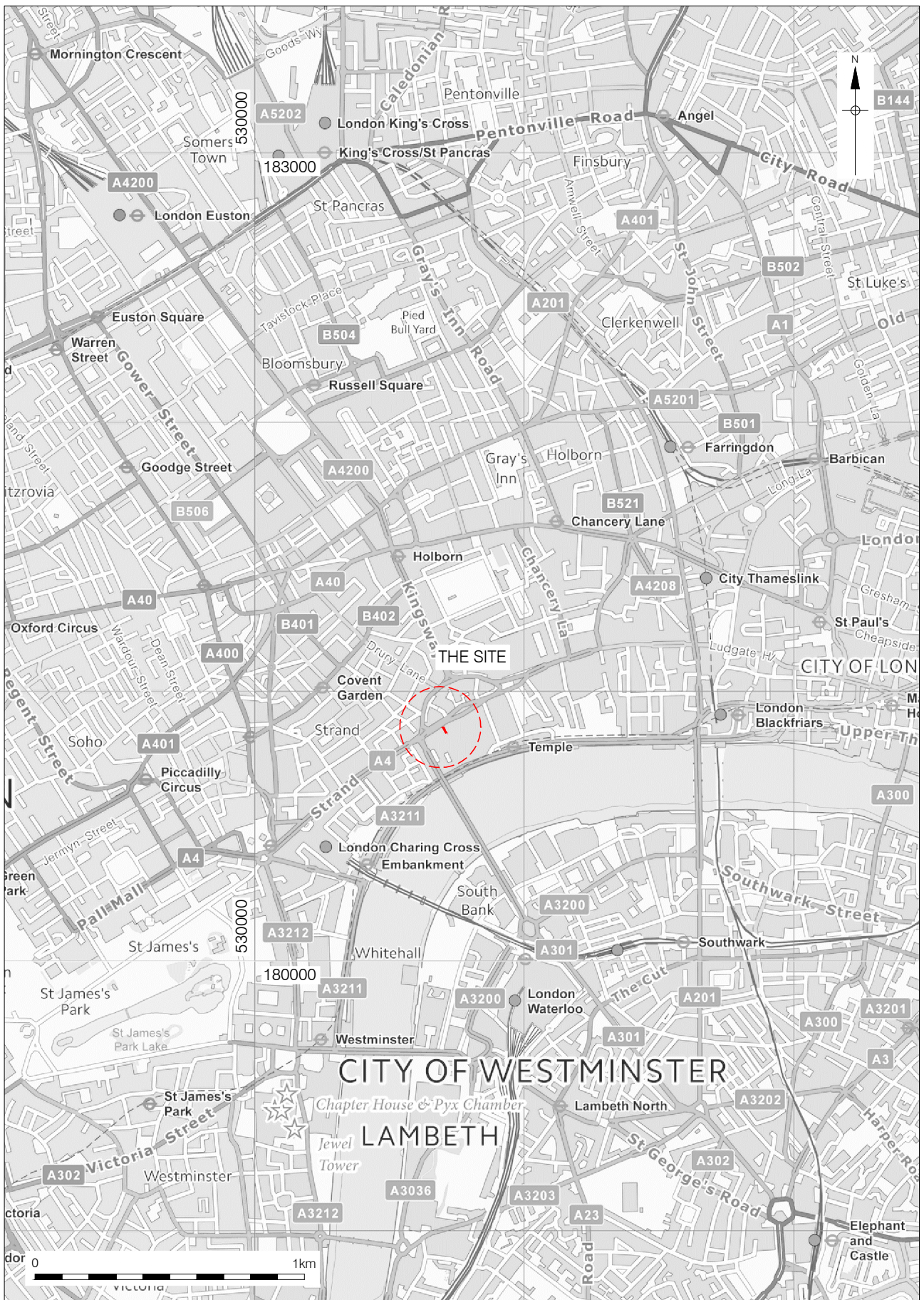
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1 Non-Technical Summary

- 1.1 The site at 151 Strand is located within an area which has considerable archaeological potential being situated adjacent to a Roman road and lying toward the eastern periphery of the Saxon town of *Lundenwic*. It is also adjacent to the most recent iteration of Somerset House but lies within the precinct of the earliest palatial complex constructed there in the 16th century. However, the excavation of modern basements had potentially removed any archaeological remains which may have once been present.
- 1.2 The owners of the building intend to submit a planning application for the redevelopment of the site and had previously commissioned Mills Whipp Projects to compile an Archaeological Desk Based Assessment which outlined the archaeological potential of the site (Mills Whipp Project 2016b). An archaeological Watching Brief was conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology on geo-technical investigations being undertaken on the site between the 27th of September and 10th of October 2016. The trial work consisted of a single borehole and four test pits.
- 1.3 Due principally to the extent the concrete and services below the basement slab, the test pits were smaller than had been originally envisaged and only limited archaeological observations could be made. However, it appeared that archaeological remains were extant on the eastern periphery of the site. Though some observations were somewhat equivocal due to the limited size of the trial holes, a north-south aligned brick wall which probably dates to the 16th or 17th centuries was seen below the modern party wall line in Test Pit 2. Associated soil deposits may indicate the presence of a deep cut feature such as a pit or ditch adjacent to the wall but unfortunately no dating material was recovered from these.
- 1.4 Recording of the sequence shown by the excavation of the borehole demonstrated that c. 600mm of 'made ground' survived below the base of the basement slab. This soil matrix contained fragments of ceramic building material, small or crushed chalk fragments, small pieces of animal bone and charcoal. A large piece of medieval peg was also recovered from immediately below the concrete slab. It is impossible to accurately assess the archaeological significance of this material as it could potentially all have been redeposited when the basement slab was constructed; equally this soil horizon could represent the base of a deep cut feature.
- 1.5 The 'made ground' described above transitioned sharply to a sterile reddish brickearth deposit which continued, in places mixed with sands and gravels, to a depth of 2.45m below the base of the slab. Beyond this depth natural sands and gravels were evident.

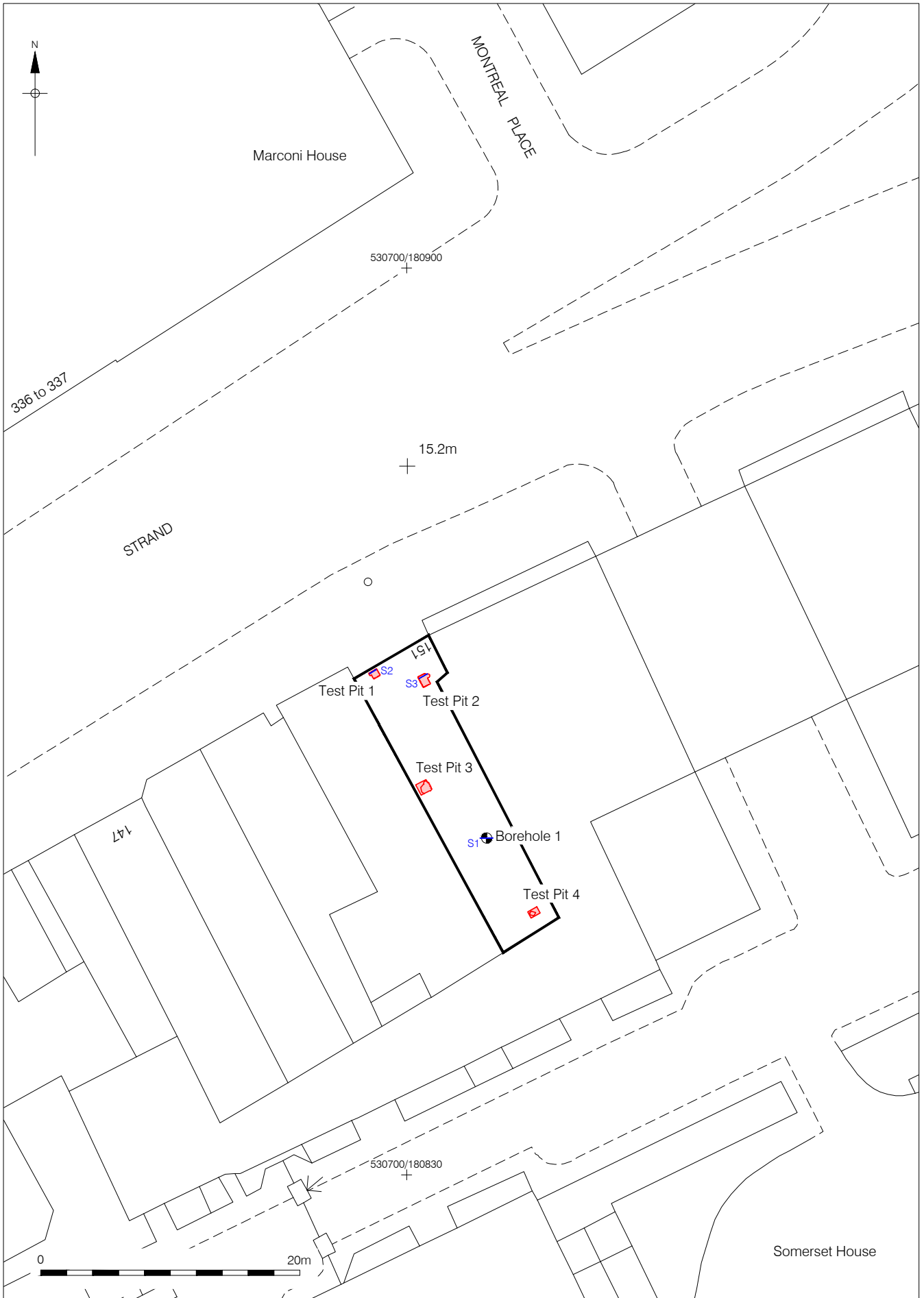
2 Introduction

- 2.1 The site lies on the south side of Strand and is bounded by the pavement of Strand to the north, Somerset House to the east, an open area adjoining Somerset House to the south and Gibraltar House to the west. The proposed re-development covers a footprint of approximately 132m²
- 2.2 The central National Grid Reference for the study site is TQ 3070 8085.
- 2.3 The work was commissioned by Mills Whipp Projects on behalf of J & S Franklin Ltd.
- 2.4 The site was given the unique Museum of London site code SRA16.
- 2.5 The site had previously been the subject of an archaeological Desk Based Assessment (Mills WhippProject 2016b). The Desk Based study demonstrated the possible archaeological potential of the redevelopment area.
- 2.6 Tim Bradley was project manager for Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited; the Watching Brief was undertaken by the author.



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Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:20,000 at A4



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Figure 2
 Test Pit and Borehole Location
 1:400 at A4

3 Planning Background

3.1 National Guidance

3.1.1 The Departments of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) issued a series of planning guidelines, the National Planning Policy Framework, in March 2012. This document superseded the previous guidance contained in Planning Policy Statement 5. The policies regarding archaeology set out in the NPPF are contained in **Section 12 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment**.

3.2 Regional Guidance: The London Plan

3.2.1 The over-arching strategies and policies for the whole of the Greater London area are contained within the Greater London Authority's London Plan (July 2011) which includes the following statement relating to archaeology:

Policy 7.8

Heritage assets and archaeology

Strategic

A. London's heritage assets and historic environment, including listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens and other natural and historic landscapes, conservation areas, World Heritage Sites, registered battlefields, scheduled monuments, archaeological remains and memorials should be identified, so that the desirability of sustaining and enhancing their significance and of utilising their positive role in place shaping can be taken into account.

B. Development should incorporate measures that identify, record, interpret, protect and, where appropriate, present the site's archaeology.

Planning decisions

C. Development should identify, value, conserve, restore, re-use and incorporate heritage assets, where appropriate.

D. Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.

E. New development should make provision for the protection of archaeological resources, landscapes and significant memorials. The physical assets should, where possible, be made available to the public on-site. Where the archaeological asset or memorial cannot be preserved

or managed on-site, provision must be made for the investigation, understanding, recording, dissemination and archiving of that asset.

LDF preparation

F. Boroughs should, in LDF policies, seek to maintain and enhance the contribution of built, landscaped and buried heritage to London's environmental quality, cultural identity and economy as part of managing London's ability to accommodate change and regeneration.

G. Boroughs, in consultation with English Heritage, Natural England and other relevant statutory organisations, should include appropriate policies in their LDFs for identifying, protecting, enhancing and improving access to the historic environment and heritage assets and their settings where appropriate, and to archaeological assets, memorials and historic and natural landscape character within their area.

3.3 Local Guidance: Archaeology in the City of Westminster

3.3.1 The relevant Development Plan framework is provided by the City of Westminster Core Strategy, adopted January 2011, which contains the following relevant policies:

POLICY CS24 HERITAGE

Recognising Westminster's wider historic environment, its extensive heritage assets will be conserved, including its listed buildings, conservation areas, Westminster's World Heritage Site, its historic parks including five Royal Parks, squares, gardens and other open spaces, their settings, and its archaeological heritage. Historic and other important buildings should be upgraded sensitively, to improve their environmental performance and make them easily accessible.

Reasoned Justification

The intrinsic value of Westminster's high quality and significant historic environment is one of its greatest assets. To compete effectively with other major, world-class cities the built environment must be respected and refurbished sensitively as appropriate. Any change should not detract from the existing qualities of the environment, which makes the city such an attractive and valued location for residents, businesses and visitors.

Detailed policies for each type of heritage asset will be set out in the City Management Plan. Area-based characteristics and detailed measures required to protect and enhance heritage assets have been set out in Conservation Area Audit Supplementary Planning Documents and the Westminster World Heritage Site Management Plan.

3.3.2 The subject site also lies within an Area of Special Archaeological Priority as defined by the City of Westminster Unitary Development Plan and is therefore subject to the following additional policy:

DES 11: SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS, AREAS AND SITES OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL PRIORITY AND POTENTIAL

Aim

10.147 To identify archaeological remains of national and local importance, conserve them in their settings, and provide public access to them. Where new development is proposed on sites of archaeological potential, to ensure adequate archaeological impact assessment, followed by appropriate provision for preservation or investigation, recording, and publication.

POLICY DES 11: SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS, AREAS AND SITES OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL PRIORITY AND POTENTIAL

(A) Scheduled Ancient Monuments

Permission for proposals affecting the following Scheduled Ancient Monuments, or their settings, will be granted providing that their archaeological value and interest is preserved:

- 1) the Chapter House and Pyx Chamber in the Cloisters, Westminster Abbey
- 2) the Jewel Tower.

(B) Areas and Sites of Special Archaeological Priority and Potential

Permission will be granted for developments where, in order of priority:

- 1) all archaeological remains of national importance are preserved in situ
- 2) remains of local archaeological value are properly , evaluated and, where practicable, preserved in situ
- 3) if the preservation of archaeological remains in situ is inappropriate, provision is made for full investigation, recording and an appropriate level of publication by a reputable investigating body.

3.3.3 In terms of designated heritage assets, as defined above, no Scheduled Ancient monuments, Historic Wreck sites or Historic Battlefields lie within the study site. Somerset House is a Grade I listed building.

4 Geology and Topography

4.1 Geology

- 4.1 The British Geological Survey shows that the underlying formation in the area consists of the London Clay Formation which was formed approximately 34 to 56 million years ago in the Palaeogene Period.
- 4.2 The London Clay is sealed by sands and gravels of the Taplow Gravel Formation which formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period.

4.2 Topography

- 4.2.1 The site lies at the top of the escarpment which slopes sharply to the south; it was formed by the riverine erosion of the Thames and its ancient predecessors. The top of the slope would have been at c. 11.50m OD. Ground level at the modern Victoria Embankment which encloses the river lies at c. 4.50m OD (Mills Whipp Projects 2016a).
- 4.2.2 River levels have varied widely in the past as climatic change has affected the height of sea level. This is a highly complex subject but it is well documented that river levels fell considerably during the Roman period before beginning to rise, probably in the early Medieval period. By the middle Saxon period when the port of *Lundenwic* was operational the level of high tide probably reached c. 0.60m OD. This was the base level of both the waterfronts recorded at York Buildings and more recently at the Adelphi Building (Cowie, R 1992 164-168, Killock and Boyer 2015).

5 Archaeological and Historical Background

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The archaeological and historical background reproduced below was originally written for the Archaeological Desk Based Assessment (Mills Whipp Projects 2016a).

5.2 Prehistoric

- 5.2.1 Limited prehistoric material has come from the study area. During the construction of Kingsway in the early 20th century 5 Palaeolithic handaxes were found and a flake was reported just to the west. A possible Mesolithic flint core was also found on Kingsway. Two fragments of possible prehistoric pottery were found at Kingsway Hall. An Acheulian handaxe was reportedly found on the Strand.
- 5.2.2 Evaluation at Exeter Street recorded natural gravel and sand overlain by brickearth at 15.8m OD and a thin layer of prehistoric occupation material. A prehistoric pit was recorded overlain by a further prehistoric layer which contained a struck flint and a sherd of Iron Age pottery. Excavation at Arundel Great Court in 2013 revealed an organic deposit of prehistoric or Roman date. A chance find of a prehistoric spearhead of possible Neolithic/Bronze Age date was made at Savoy Place
- 5.2.3 Whilst it is possible that transient prehistoric populations may have used the area it is unlikely that any significant traces of their occupation will survive.

5.3 Roman

- 5.3.1 The principal Roman settlement was *Londinium*, the walled city of London. High Holborn follows the course of a major Roman road, as does the Strand. Undoubtedly, farms surrounded Roman London and much of the landscape was probably cultivated. A Roman cremation from the north end of Endell Street, a Samian bowl from St Martin's Lane and a possible Roman burial at Savoy Place may represent burials associated with farms.
- 5.3.2 The amount of Roman material from the vicinity of the site is small and limited largely to individual objects. Archaeological investigations have revealed residual Roman pottery and tile on several sites but definite Roman features are absent. Residual Roman material has been found at Temple Place, the foreshore at Victoria Embankment, at the Lyceum Theatre, Somerset House and St Mary le Strand. The lack of Roman stratigraphy probably reflects a lack of settlement.

5.4 Saxon

- 5.4.1 Some time after the Romans left the province of Britain the capital *Londinium* was abandoned. However, the incoming Saxons established a trading settlement called *Lundenwic* along the Strand which, as the name suggests, was a beach. Shallow draught vessels were able to land goods for trading. The centre of *Lundenwic* seems to have been the area of Covent Garden piazza, about 300m north-west of the subject site. The outskirts of the town stretched from Trafalgar Square to Aldwych, excavations to the east of the subject site notably failing to produce significant Middle Saxon material (Cowie 1988 37, Vince 1990 16). The St Clement's stream near said church may have formed the natural boundary of *Lundenwic* on the eastern side.
- 5.4.2 The existence of *Lundenwic* was forgotten but archaeological excavations in the 1980s revealed lost *Lundenwic*. Numerous excavations around the Strand and Covent Garden have uncovered remnants of a wealthy, well organised town. The settlement may have covered more than 150 acres (Cowie 1988 47).
- 5.4.3 The town was based on manufacturing and commerce, evidence surviving for widespread trading links across Northern Europe. The buildings were timber with clay or daub infilling. Gravel was laid down to provide roads and yard surfaces. Quarries, wells and rubbish pits were dug into the underlying brickearth subsoil. The town thrived from the 7th to 9th centuries (the Middle Saxon period). In 886 it seems that Alfred ordered the reoccupation and refortification of the old Roman City following repeated Viking attacks. *Lundenwic* was abandoned and its flimsy buildings disintegrated leaving only faint traces in the soil. The area became known as the Old Town or *Eald Wic*, hence Aldwych.
- 5.4.4 Major excavations have been carried out at Jubilee Hall, south of the Covent Garden Piazza, the Bedfordbury Peabody Estate and the Royal Opera House extension. More than 40 other smaller excavations have also provided further details of *Lundenwic*.
- 5.4.5 At Temple Place remnants of the Saxon foreshore had survived buried under later developments. On the Strand itself lines of Saxon pits, perhaps for the disposal of commercial butchery debris, have been found at the Lyceum Theatre. Saxons pits were observed at 132-140 Strand and Somerset House. Unstratified material was found on Arundel Street and a gold earring in Aldwych.
- 5.4.6 The most relevant site investigations were undertaken in King's College about 50m east of the subject site, at the Laws Building, 152-158 Strand. Following those investigations and additional research (MOLA 2014a, 2014b) it is understood that the natural gravel lies at c.11.5m OD on the Strand frontage, dropping to 5m OD on the southern side of Somerset House Courtyard and 0m OD at the former line of the Thames by the modern Embankment.
- 5.4.7 The subject site appears to have lain on the eastern periphery of the *Lundenwic* settlement.

5.5 Medieval

- 5.5.1 After *Lundenwic* was abandoned most of the town gradually returned to open countryside. There seems to have been a Danish enclave around St Clement Danes church by the late 10th century (Vince 1990, 63) and there may have been patchy roadside development elsewhere along the Strand.
- 5.5.2 The Strand remained the major road to Westminster and the west of England during the Late Saxon period. During the medieval period a series of extravagant palaces were erected for prelates and nobles. These included Durham House, Exeter House and Bath Inn. The Knights Templar established their Temple just southeast of St Clement's Church and perhaps built St Clement's Bridge to carry the road over a stream.
- 5.5.3 Several law colleges or Inns of Court were established around the area including St Clement's Inn, Lyons Inn and New Inn. Building tended to be confined to the Strand frontage, extensive gardens reaching to the Thames on the south or into the fields on the north. Churches included St Mary le Strand, later demolished for Somerset House and rebuilt on its present site in 1714, and St Clement Danes.

5.6 Post-Medieval

- 5.6.1 As noted above the Strand frontage was a popular location with the great and powerful in Tudor England. Great houses included those of the Bishops of Exeter, Bath and Wells, Llandaff, Chester, Worcester, Norwich, and Durham. In 1525 the site was recorded as lying within rents providing revenue for the Bishop of Chester's Inn, first mentioned in 1294 (Lobell 1991, 69).
- 5.6.2 By 1531 these mansions had been joined by houses belonging to the King, the Queen, the Dukes of Norfolk, Suffolk and Richmond, and the Marquesses of Dorset and Exeter. The crowded townscape was recorded by Wyngaerde in 1544 where the site is shown to the west of the tower of St Mary le Strand church.
- 5.6.3 When Henry VIII died in 1547 his son, Edward VI, was a minor. Edward Seymour, the boy's uncle, seized this opportunity and had himself created Lord Protector and Duke of Somerset. The new Duke and Protector, desirous of possessing a residence suitable to his high rank, was determined to build himself a palace.
- 5.6.4 The Duke already owned land on a site between the Thames and the Strand. It was here that he began building his great mansion, Somerset House, in 1547. However, clearing the site required the demolition of a number of the Inns, including Chester Inn (the subject site), and St Mary le Strand church. This was an extremely unpopular and provocative move. It caused a clash with the ruling Privy Council and was the subject of the indictment that led to the Duke's arrest and brief

- imprisonment in the Tower of London in 1549, although he soon obtained his release and reinstatement.
- 5.6.5 By 1551 Somerset House was virtually complete, having cost over £10,000 to build. Although it was a courtyard house in the Tudor tradition, with a gatehouse to the Strand and a great hall opposite on the river front, the Strand facade departed from the old Gothic style of architecture and, instead, combined Doric and Ionic pillars in the most serious attempt at classical composition yet seen in England. The identity of the architect is not known. The subject site lay within the footprint of the north-western tower and wing of the Strand frontage of Somerset House.
- 5.6.6 However, the Duke had little opportunity to enjoy Somerset House. In 1551 his opponents had him arrested again and tried for the much more serious crime of treason. This time there was no escape. The Duke of Somerset was executed on Tower Hill in January 1552.
- 5.6.7 After Somerset's execution the building passed into the hands of the Crown. Finally completed in 1553, the house was occupied by Princess Elizabeth, the future Queen Elizabeth I, until her accession to the throne in 1558. As Queen, she preferred to live at the palaces of Whitehall or St. James's, while using Somerset House for occasional meetings of her council and as a lodging-house for foreign diplomats.
- 5.6.8 The first depiction of Somerset Place (House) was drawn in 1562 which shows the crenelated buildings on the Strand with elaborate formal gardens to the Thames. A bird's eye view of 1593 shows the great quadrangle and gardens.
- 5.6.9 Following the death of Elizabeth in 1603, James I of England and VI of Scotland acceded to the throne. James had married Anne of Denmark and Norway in 1589 who was given Somerset House for her own use. She took up residence and entertained there on a lavish scale, renaming the place Denmark House, it became the centre of English social and artistic life.
- 5.6.10 Besides hosting entertainments at Denmark House, Anne initiated a major reconstruction of the palace from 1609. Buildings were erected to form a new three-sided courtyard while the original Lower Court was substantially remodelled. Further reconstruction around the Upper Court saw the introduction of an open arcade of nine arches to the entrance, and the rebuilding of the ranges on the east and west sides, in a style to match the Strand front constructed sixty years earlier.
- 5.6.11 The cost of the building works was some £34,500 which, together with furnishing and equipment, made Somerset House one of the most expensive enterprises of James I's reign. To complete the renovation, the river front was rendered to imitate stone, the Strand front repaired and the Hall refaced with stone. Work continued until Anne's death in 1619.
- 5.6.12 Charles I came to the throne in 1625 and, later that year, married Henrietta Maria of France, a devout Catholic. Shortly after, she became entitled to the use of Denmark House when further

- reconstruction and redecoration followed, overseen by Inigo Jones, with contributions by John Webb and Nicholas Stone. A reconstruction of Somerset House c.1640 has been produced.
- 5.6.13 During the Civil War Denmark House was used as quarters for General Fairfax who commanded the Parliamentary Army. When Parliament ordered the dispersal of the royal treasures for the benefit of the army, much of the collection was gathered at Denmark House in 1649 where it was inventoried and sold. Cromwell died in 1658 and in 1660 the monarchy was restored. A bird's eye view from 1658 of the area shows Somerset House dominating the crowded streetscape of the Strand
- 5.6.14 After Charles II's restoration in 1660, Henrietta Maria, Charles I's widow and now Queen Dowager, returned to Denmark House. During this time, as well as the construction of stables, coach houses and apartments, a significant new building was erected housing the Presence Chamber and Privy Chamber. A riverfront gallery was also built. The layout of Somerset House was depicted in 1682.
- 5.6.15 Queen Catherine of Braganza took up permanent residence at Somerset House following the death of her husband Charles II in 1685. When she was asked to become Regent of Portugal, she left England in 1693, the last queen to inhabit the palace.
- 5.6.16 During the early part of the 18th century, Somerset House was used to provide grace and favour apartments and also for entertainment. However, the palace gradually fell into ruin. In 1718 Vanbrugh observed that Somerset House was the most out of repair of all the royal palaces and no longer able to keep out the weather. The site was drawn in 1746 and a detailed survey was produced in 1775.
- 5.6.17 The continued neglect led to the inevitable decision to pull the building down and George III agreed that the site be given over to public offices, with the provision Buckingham House should take the place of Somerset House as the official dower house for the queen. Demolition began in 1775 and continued in stages as the new Somerset House was constructed around it (Somerset House Trust website). The new Somerset House had a smaller Strand frontage than the old building so the subject site lay outside the curtilage of the new Somerset House which was finally completed in 1835.
- 5.6.18 In 1838 the subject site was occupied by a four storey building owned Braggs, a rifle manufacturer, and the building was used as an Archery & Shooting Gallery. The building survived until it was demolished in the latter part of the 20th century and replaced by the existing structure.

6 Archaeological Methodology

- 6.1 The watching brief consisted entirely of observations made on four test pits and window samples taken during the drilling of a single borehole. The limited sizes of the test pits and the presence of modern concrete and brick foundations did not facilitate either the archaeological excavation or full recording of deposits or features that were exposed.
- 6.2 The fieldwork and reporting was carried out according to the relevant methodologies, as follows:
- Archaeological Guidance Paper 3: Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork In London (GLAAS 1998);
 - Archaeological Guidance Paper 4: Archaeological Reports (GLAAS 1998);
 - Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage, 1990)
 - The Institute for Archaeologists Code of Conduct (1999)
 - The Institute for Archaeologists Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology (1999).
 - The Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief (1994, Revised 2001).
 - The Treasure Act (1996)
 - The Burial Act (1857)
- 6.3 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited is a Registered Archaeological Organisation (Number 23) with the Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists and operates within the Institute's 'Code of Practice'.
- 6.4 A photographic record of the investigations was made using digital format only.
- 6.5 The complete site archive including site records, photographs and finds will be deposited at the London Archaeological Archive Research Centre, (LAARC) under the site code SRA16.

7 Watching Brief Results

7.1 Borehole 1

- 7.1.1 The concrete basement slab in the location of the borehole was c. 300mm thick with an upper level of 12.50m OD. The borehole was located in the central part of the largest central basement room.
- 7.1.2 The borehole demonstrated that c. 600mm of 'made ground' survived below the base of the basement slab. This soil matrix contained fragments of ceramic building material, small or crushed chalk fragments, small pieces of animal bone and charcoal. A large piece of medieval peg was also recovered from immediately below the concrete slab. This material could all have been redeposited when the basement slab was constructed; equally this soil horizon could represent the base of a deep cut archaeological feature.
- 7.1.3 The 'made ground' described above transitioned sharply 11.60m OD to a sterile reddish brickearth deposit which continued, in places mixed with sands and gravels, to a depth of 2.43m below the base of the slab at 9.77m OD. Beyond this depth natural sands and gravels were evident.

7.2 Test Pit 1

- 7.2.1 Test Pit 1 was located in the north-west corner of the basement. It measured a maximum of 0.70m east-west by 0.50m north-south. The basement slab was c. 300mm thick at an upper level of 12.50m OD.
- 7.2.2 Around 500mm below the top of the slab (ie 12m OD) a clean yellowish brown to orange clayey brickearth deposit was evident below the slab make-up layer. The brickearth did not contain any artefacts or other material such as charcoal indicative of human activity and appeared to be an *in situ* natural deposit. However, this interpretation may be erroneous as very similar material was seen in Test Pit 2 sealing what appeared to be the fill of a pit or ditch.



Test Pit 1 facing east showing the brickearth horizon

7.3 Test Pit 2

7.3.1 Test Pit 2 (top of slab 12.50m OD) was located in the northern part of the building adjacent to the east wall. It was an irregular shape but the main area measured 0.80m north-south by 0.60m east-west. An additional 300mm diameter concrete core had been taken out of the slab to the east of this to facilitate excavation below the party wall. The thickness of the slab was variable in this location, from 260-350mm.

7.3.2 A north-south aligned wall was exposed in the extreme eastern side of the test pit (highest observable height approx. 11.70m OD). Although excavation was very limited it appeared that the wall was built from red sandy bricks held together with lime mortar. This type of brickwork is typical of early post-medieval buildings dated to the 16th and 17th centuries. The base of the wall was exposed c.1.60m below the top of the basement slab (ie 10.90m OD).

7.3.3 A dark grey clayey silt deposit approximately 0.45m thick was evident adjacent to the wall. The soil matrix contained fragments of animal bone, frequent oyster shells and charcoal flecks. Unfortunately no datable artefacts were recovered from this deposit but it may be notable that no

ceramic building material was evident, suggesting that this deposit may pre-date the medieval period.

- 7.3.4 Access to the eastern part of test pit was very limited but it appeared that the dark grey silt deposit described above was possibly the fill of a cut feature such as a pit or ditch which had been truncated by the construction of the wall.



Test Pit 2 facing east. Thin strip of wall exposed below party wall
(Top of photograph below large circular core through basement slab)

- 7.3.5 The dark grey clayey silt was sealed by a yellowish orange brickearth layer (approximately 0.38m thick) that appeared very similar to that seen in Test Pit 1. This material clearly was not an *in-situ* natural layer but may have been brickearth redeposited during the construction the basement, or earlier.

7.4 Test Pit 3

- 7.4.1 Test Pit 3 was located in the large central room that dominates the basement area and was situated against the western wall of the building. The Test Pit measured c. 0.90m north-south and 0.90m east-west.

7.4.2 Unfortunately no archaeological information could be gained from this test pit as a concrete clad pipe or narrow strip footing c 0.40m wide passed through the centre of the trench. The deposits on either side of the pipe/footing consisted of sand and gravel which was almost certainly backfill of the construction trench.



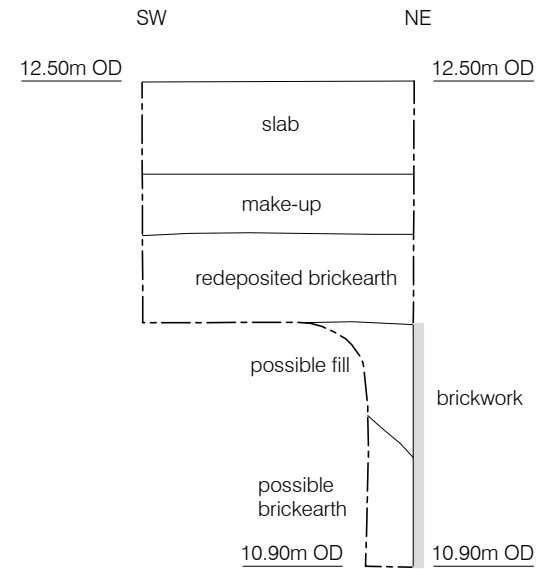
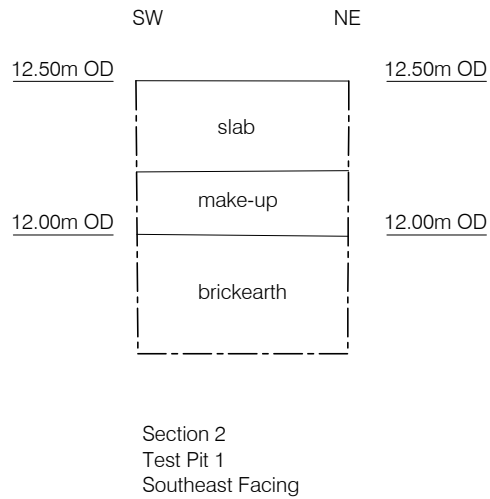
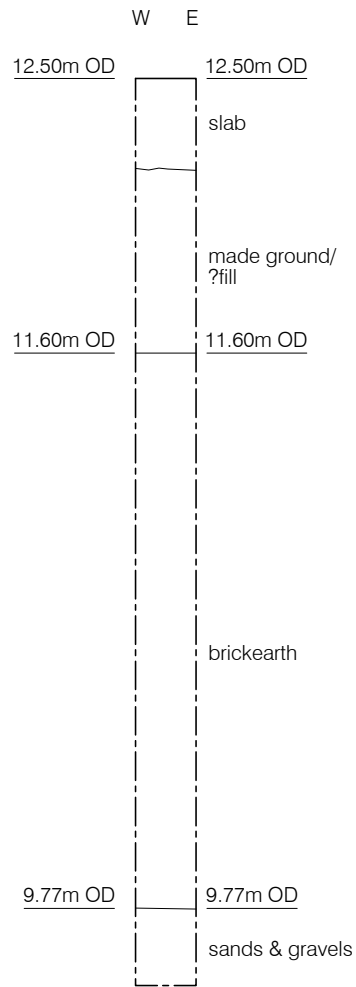
Test Pit 3 facing north

7.5 Test Pit 4

7.5.1 Test Pit 4 was located in the kitchen which forms part of the southern area of the basement. It measured a maximum of 0.80m east-west by 0.52m north-south. However, the trench was almost entirely filled by a concrete footing the right-angled faces of which were evident in the western part of the trench. The faces of the footing had clearly been made by pouring concrete against timber formwork and it was therefore hardly surprising that the soil adjacent to it appeared to be modern backfill consisting mainly of redeposited brickearth mixed with brick rubble. This material was excavated to a depth of 1.90m below the top of the slab.



Test Pit 4 facing north



8 Conclusions

- 8.1 The results of the watching brief were slightly limited as a result of the constrained size of the test pits and their locations being adjacent to or blocked by modern foundations. However, natural and archaeological deposits were recorded, suggesting that whilst stratified archaeological deposits are likely to have been truncated by the current basement, some deep cut archaeological features and building foundations remain.
- 8.2 Within Test Pit 1 in the northern area of the site what appeared to be natural brickearth was identified approximately 500mm below the top of the slab and make-up deposits.
- 8.3 The brick wall found below the eastern party wall in Test Pit 2 is likely to date to the 16th or 17th centuries and if this is the case probably formed part of one of the earlier iterations of Somerset House.
- 8.4 The dark grey clayey silt deposit found adjacent to the wall appeared to be the fill of a cut feature, possibly a pit or ditch. No dating evidence was recovered from this deposit but the absence of any ceramic building material may be significant. Tile was produced in abundant quantities in the medieval period and might be expected to be present in deposits of this date or later. A pit or ditch fill containing abundant oyster shell and animal bone would not be out of place in a Saxon context.
- 8.5 The brick foundation seen in the eastern limit of Test Pit 2 was trench built. It follows that the construction trench for the foundation would have been cut through earlier deposits. The pit or ditch fill, if it is *in situ*, must therefore pre-date the construction of the wall.
- 8.6 Within BH1 in the central south of the basement 600mm of 'made ground' survived below the base of the basement slab. This soil matrix contained fragments of ceramic building material, small or crushed chalk fragments, small pieces of animal bone and charcoal. A large piece of medieval peg tile was also recovered from immediately below the concrete slab. This soil horizon could represent the base of a deep cut archaeological feature.
- 8.7 Overall the archaeological monitoring of the geotechnical investigations has been informative. Much of the site has been damaged by modern intrusions and the present basement. However, the natural brickearth has been identified, a possible Middle Saxon cut feature has been revealed, late medieval deposits appear to be present and a brick wall, possibly part of the first Somerset House, has been uncovered. Given the constraints of working in a confined basement within an occupied building the monitoring exercise has been successful and provided enough information for an informed planning decision to be made.

9 Research Review

9.1 General Research Objectives

9.1.1 All the research will be undertaken with respect to the priorities established in the Museum of London's 'A research framework for London Archaeology 2002' (Mills Whipp 2016b)

9.2 Specific Research Questions

9.2.1 The site specific research question contained in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Mills Whipp 2016b) were:

- *What is the nature of the natural geology?*
- *What is the evidence for prehistoric occupation?*
- *What is the evidence for Roman occupation?*
- *What is the evidence for Middle Saxon occupation*
- *What is the evidence for mediaeval structures on the site?*
- *What is the evidence for the Tudor period Somerset House?*

9.3 Answers to Research Questions

9.3.1 As stated previously in this document the scope for archaeological recording and observation was severely limited by the size of the test pits excavated. However, taking into account these limitations:

- The natural geology consisted of brickearth capping sands and gravels.
- No evidence was found for prehistoric occupation.
- A possible Middle Saxon pit or ditch was identified in Test Pit 2 No medieval structures were seen though the presence of medieval peg roof tile demonstrates that these must have once been present on or near the site.
- The brick wall evident in Test Pit 2 cannot be precisely dated to the Tudor period but the brick fabric evident would be consistent with a structure dating to that period or slightly later.

10 Acknowledgements

- 10.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Mills Whipp Projects for commissioning the work on behalf of J & S Franklin Ltd.
- 10.2 The author would like to thank:
- Tim Badley for project managing the excavation and editing the report
 - Jennifer Simonson for the CAD illustrations

11 Bibliography

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12 OASIS

OASIS ID: preconst1-265874

Project details

Project name	Franklin House, 151 Strand, City of Westminster
Short description of the project	An archaeological Watching Brief was conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology on geo-technical investigations being undertaken on the site between the 27th of September and 10th of October 2016. The trial work consisted of a single borehole and four test pits. Archaeological remains were extant on the eastern periphery of the site. A north-south aligned brick wall which probably dates to the 16th or 17th centuries was seen below the modern party wall line in Test Pit 2. Associated soil deposits may indicate the presence of a deep cut feature such as a pit or ditch adjacent to the wall but unfortunately no dating material was recovered from these. Recording of the sequence shown by the excavation of the borehole demonstrated that c. 600mm of 'made ground' survived below the base of the basement slab. This soil matrix contained fragments of ceramic building material, small or crushed chalk fragments, small pieces of animal bone and charcoal. A large piece of medieval peg was also recovered from immediately below the concrete slab. It is impossible to accurately assess the archaeological significance of this material as it could potentially all have been redeposited when the basement slab was constructed; equally this soil horizon could represent the base of a deep cut feature. The 'made ground' described above transitioned sharply to a sterile reddish brickearth deposit which continued, in places mixed with sands and gravels, to a depth of 2.45m below the base of the slab. Beyond this depth natural sands and gravels were evident.
Project dates	Start: 27-09-2016 End: 10-10-2016
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
Monument type	WALL Post Medieval

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON CITY OF WESTMINSTER CITY OF WESTMINSTER Franklin House, 151 Strand, City of Westminster
Postcode	WC2R 1HL
Study area	132 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 30703 80864 51.511068165546 -0.116302748119 51 30 39 N 000 06 58 W

Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Project brief originator	Mills Whipp Projects
Project design originator	Mills Whipp Projects
Project director/manager	Tim Bradley
Project supervisor	Douglas Killock
Type of sponsor/funding body	Landowner
Name of sponsor/funding body	J & S Franklin Ltd

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Spreadsheets", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Media available	"Section", "Unpublished Text"

Entered by	Tim Bradley (tbradley@pre-construct.com)
Entered on	19 October 2016

PCA

PCA SOUTH

UNIT 54
BROCKLEY CROSS BUSINESS CENTRE
96 ENDWELL ROAD
BROCKLEY
LONDON SE4 2PD
TEL: 020 7732 3925 / 020 7639 9091
FAX: 020 7639 9588
EMAIL: info@pre-construct.com

PCA NORTH

UNIT 19A
TURSDALE BUSINESS PARK
DURHAM DH6 5PG
TEL: 0191 377 1111
FAX: 0191 377 0101
EMAIL: info.north@pre-construct.com

PCA CENTRAL

THE GRANARY, RECTORY FARM
BREWERY ROAD, PAMPISFORD
CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB22 3EN
TEL: 01223 845 522
FAX: 01223 845 522
EMAIL: info.central@pre-construct.com

PCA WEST

BLOCK 4
CHILCOMB HOUSE
CHILCOMB LANE
WINCHESTER
HAMPSHIRE SO23 8RB
TEL: 01962 849 549
EMAIL: info.west@pre-construct.com

PCA MIDLANDS

17-19 KETTERING RD
LITTLE BOWDEN
MARKET HARBOROUGH
LEICESTERSHIRE LE16 8AN
TEL: 01858 468 333
EMAIL: info.midlands@pre-construct.com

