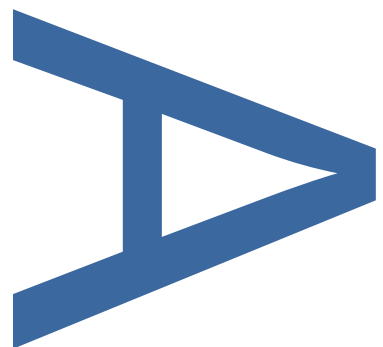
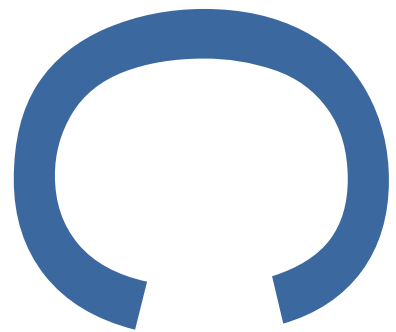


**CITY GATE HOUSE, 39-45  
FINSBURY SQUARE, LONDON EC2:  
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING  
BRIEF**

**SITE CODE: FNS19**

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

**MARCH 2019**



**City Gate House, 39-45 Finsbury Square, London EC2:  
An Archaeological Watching Brief**

**Site Code:** FNS19

**Central NGR:** TQ 3287 8185

**Local Planning Authority:** London Borough of Islington

**Planning Reference:**

**Commissioning Client:** Mills Whipp Projects on behalf of BSREP II City Gate Ltd

**Written/Researched by:** Jim Heathcote (PCIFA)  
Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited

**Project Manager:** Helen Hawkins (MCIfA)

**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  
**E-mail:** [pmoore@pre-construct.com](mailto:pmoore@pre-construct.com)  
**Web:** [www.pre-construct.com](http://www.pre-construct.com)

---

**© Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited**

**March 2019**

© The material contained herein is and remains the sole property of Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited and is not for publication to third parties without prior consent. Whilst every effort has been made to provide detailed and accurate information, Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited cannot be held responsible for errors or inaccuracies herein contained.

**DOCUMENT VERIFICATION**

**Site Name**

**City Gate House, 39-45 Finsbury Square, London EC2**

**Type of project**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief  
Quality Control**

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited Project Code		K	
	<b>Name</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
Text Prepared by:	J Heathcote		11.3.19
Graphics Prepared by:	D Valk		20.3.19
Graphics Checked by:	M Roughley	M Roughley	20.3.19
Project Manager Sign-off:	H Hawkins	H Hawkins	20.3.19

Revision No.	Date	Checked	Approved

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

## CONTENTS

1	ABSTRACT .....	3
2	INTRODUCTION.....	4
4	GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY .....	5
5	ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY .....	12
6	THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE .....	14
7	PHASED DISCUSSION AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES.....	14
8	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	16
9	BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	17
10	PLATES.....	18
	APPENDIX 1: OASIS FORM .....	24
	FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION .....	20
	FIGURE 2: DETAILED SITE LOCATION .....	21
	FIGURE 3: TRIAL PITS ON BASEMENT PLAN.....	22
	FIGURE 4: SECTIONS .....	23

## **1 ABSTRACT**

- 1.1 This report presents the result of an archaeological watching brief conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd at 39-45 Finsbury Square, London Borough of Islington, EC2. The watching brief monitored three trial pits excavated within a double basement.
- 1.2 Natural sands and gravels capped by natural brickearth were observed in all of the trial pits. No archaeological finds or features were identified, and it was clear that the natural deposits had been heavily truncated by the construction of the current building.

## **2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited was instructed by Mills Whipp Projects on behalf of BSREP II City Gate Ltd to carry out an archaeological watching brief on trial pits at City Gate House, 39-45 Finsbury Square, London EC2, London Borough of Islington (Figure 1). The work was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Hawkins 2019).
- 2.2 The site was centred at TQ3287 8185 and measured approximately 3600 square metres in area. The site was bounded to the north by Finsbury Square, to the east by Wilson Street, to the south by Lockington Street and to the west by 50 Finsbury Square. The proposed development comprised the replacement and relocation of foundations, which entailed groundworks in areas of deep modern disturbances.
- 2.3 An archaeological desk based assessment was produced for the site (Mills Whipp 2019) which identified that the site lay within an Archaeology Priority Area as defined by the London Borough of Islington. Laura O’Gorman, Historic England Archaeological Adviser for the London Borough of Islington, recommended that an archaeological watching brief be carried out to see if any archaeological features survived within the areas investigated.
- 2.4 The watching brief was commissioned by Mills Whipp Projects on behalf of BSREP II City Gate Ltd, in advance of development.
- 2.5 The complete archive comprising written, drawn and photographic records and artefacts will be deposited at the MLAA.
- 2.6 The site was given the unique Museum of London site code FNS19.

## **4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

4.1 The following backgrounds are taken from the desk based assessment (Mills Whipp 2019).

4.2 Geology and Topography

4.2.1 The British Geological Survey of England and Wales, Sheet 256 (1:50,000), showed that the site was located upon Hackney Gravel, a post-diversionary Thames River Terrace Deposit of gravel, sandy and clayey in part.

4.2.2 There are no watercourses within the study area. The nearest watercourse is the Walbrook stream and channels leading into the Walbrook.

4.2.3 The site lies on the northern side of the River Thames on the upper part of the valley side. In this area the geology consists progressively of older Pleistocene and Eocene beds outcropping down the riverbank. Basal geology is composed of London Clay buried beneath drift deposits formed of Pleistocene (Quaternary) fluvial sediments deposited by the early River Thames (British Geological Survey, 1:50,000 series, sheet 256). The deposits are arranged in flights or gravel terraces representing the remains of former Thames floodplains, the highest (most northerly) being the oldest with each terrace becoming progressively younger down the valley side.

4.2.4 Deposit modelling by the British Geological Survey (BGS) specifies two gravel terraces within this part of southwest Islington. The older Hackney Gravel lies on the northern side of the site while the younger Taplow Gravel lies beneath the site. Discrete areas of both gravels are shown capped by sandy silt brickearth (Langley Silt) which formed in the Late Devensian stage (32,000-10,000BC). It is considered to be a combination of loess and water lain sediments and was an important source of building material in London in all periods. That closest to the site is shown to lie approximately 400m to the west. Just west of the site the survey indicates that the gravel gives way allowing the basal London Clay beneath two outcrops in two relatively small area.

4.2.5 Archaeological interventions within the study area have been used to refine the BGS model. Excavations at 127-139 Finsbury Pavement in 1996 to the west of the site (site code FIS96) recorded brickearth at 12.28m OD and Taplow Gravel at 11.33m OD. Brickearth was also recorded in 1998 at 50 Finsbury Square (site code FSQ98). It lay at 1.73m OD but was truncated so it too is likely to have originally lain at over 12m OD. It capped the Taplow Gravel. These interventions show that in the immediate vicinity of the Taplow Gravel has brickearth cap which lies at an elevation of over 12m.

4.2.6 The old Hackney Gravel was recorded during several archaeological excavations. At 25-32 Chiswell Street, approximately 120m to the west it was recorded at 14.40m OD (site code: CSU96). At Bunhill Row, approximately 400m northwest of the site, the gravel was

- recorded at 16.50m OD capped with brickearth at 17.10m OD (site code:BRV98). This indicates that the brickearth cap is wide spread in southwest Islington.
- 4.2.7 The brickearth slope down from the western side of Finsbury Pavement to the east and south. At 119-125 Finsbury Pavement west of the site, truncated brickearth lay at 11.30m OD. Approximately 100m to the east at 31-35 Wilson Street it lay at 10.87m OD while excavations at 10-13 Dominion Street revealed the truncated brickearth at 11.18m OD.
- 4.2.8 Brickearth was the highest deposit on the site, below the basement slab at 10.18m OD, this is 4.52m below pavement level, taken from Wilson Street the nearest spot height which was at 14.70m OD. The brickearth geology can attract early settlement as it is well drained and produces lighter soils. It is also a useful building material and was quarried throughout this area from the Roman period onwards. A medieval quarry was recorded at 50 Finsbury Square.
- 4.2.9 On the site the modern ground level slopes down from the north at c.16.50m OD to the south at c.15m OD reflecting vestiges of the historical topography of the area, although heavily masked by later levelling within the Walbrook headwaters. Excavations and observations of the drift geology in the immediate vicinity of the site are hampered by the generally deep modern basements in this part of Moorfields. Mostly removing the brickearth cap and the upper portion of the terrace gravel so altering the original topography. Nevertheless, brickearth and gravel has been recorded at the following elevations during interventions in the immediate vicinity of the site. Maximum elevation has been used: 25-32 Chiswell Street brickearth 14.40m OD, 119-125 Finsbury Pavement truncated brickearth lay at 11.30m OD, 127-139 Finsbury Pavement Brickearth 12.28m OD, 50 Finsbury Square brickearth 11.73m OD, 25 Ropemakers Street gravel 14.17m OD.
- 4.2.10 Topography shaped the early settlement pattern, mainly because of its influence on soil quality and the availability of fresh water. In this case the location of the site on the terrace gravels is characterized by numerous small streams rising from springs further north and draining southwards into the Thames. The area was dominated by the River Walbrook; a dendritic stream system which rose in the Shoreditch area from numerous sources, gradually combining to discharge near Cannon Street Station. Its main channel lay south of Finsbury Circus. The stream's numerous shallow valleys gave rise to marshy valleys cutting the gravels which resulted in a topography of gravel bars.
- 4.2.11 Chiswell Street, approximately 100m west of the site, may follow the line of one such bar which may have formed a natural crossing of the marshy area; it may have provided access to the medieval manor house Finsbury Court. The name "Chiswell" is derived from OE *ceosol* meaning flint, pebble.
- 4.2.12 The data generally shows the natural slope southwards towards the Thames as would be expected. At Bunhill Row, approximately 500m north-west of the site the gravel was



measured at 16.50m OD while by the site it is recorded at 14.40m OD and at Finsbury Circus to the south at 10.20m OD to 7.60m OD 15). A (possibly) natural channel recorded at 127-139 Finsbury Pavement may be one of the tributaries of the Walbrook. During the Roman period the Walbrook became choked with waste and further reduced by building of the City wall c.200 AD which blocked the upper reaches of the Walbrook valley. The land north of the City wall became flooded by excess waters creating a fen or moor which gave the name "Moorfields" to the area; the pre-existing topography being buried by deposits of alluvial silt and clay. Subsequent infilling has masked this landscape.

#### 4.3 Archaeological and Historical Background

##### Prehistoric

4.3.1 Palaeolithic material has been found in the underlying gravel Taplow Terrace but archaeological material from this "would appear to have been derived from earlier higher terraces". Some Mesolithic flints are known from Finsbury Circus and from Great Eastern Street whilst Neolithic axes have been recorded from Finsbury Circus and Liverpool Street.

4.3.2 Generally, there is no evidence that long term prehistoric settlements lay in the City area, although occasional prehistoric finds indicate the presence of transient populations. Evidence for occupation during the Iron Age was found at the northern end of the Honourable Artillery Company's Sport Ground in the 1990s which lies some 300m north-west of the site, where a collection of struck flints, fire cracked stone and a number of sherds dating to the late Bronze Age or early Iron Age represents one of the earliest evidences of human occupation in the vicinity of the site.

4.3.3 A flexed burial, described as 1<sup>st</sup> century Roman, was found at 12-15 Finsbury Circus but this would be an extremely unusual posture for a Roman burial. The flexed burial position is common in the Iron Age. The traces of Iron Age occupation found in the area may indicate a small settlement lay on the western bank of the Walbrook. Nonetheless, in the Late Iron Age central London generally appears to have been "peripheral to events taking place to the north and east"

##### Roman

4.3.4 In the mid-1<sup>st</sup> century AD the Romans established the town of *Londinium* as a trading entrepot on the southern side of Cornhill, a low hill on the Taplow Gravel terrace to the east of the Walbrook. By the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century it probably became the *de facto* capital of the province and by the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century its limits were defined by a landward defensive wall. At this time the City occupied two low gravel hills bisected by the valley of the River Walbrook.

- 4.3.5 The site lay approximately 500m north of the City Wall in an area crossed by streams forming the headwaters of the Walbrook. They were prone to seasonal flooding and Roman water management attempts only achieved limited success. As noted above the Walbrook became blocked by debris causing the upper parts of the stream to flood the higher ground north of the City. *Londinium* survived until the mid 5<sup>th</sup> century AD. Excavations to the south of the site have revealed a road running north-south from Cornhill Avenue through Finsbury Circus. This road predated the City wall and seems to have been crossed by an east-west road on the north side of Finsbury Circus. It is possible this north-south road remained open after the construction of the City wall by means of a postern gate near Moorgate. The main road north from the City, Ermine Street, however, lay approximately 500m east of the site.
- 4.3.6 Roman law forbade burial within the *Pomerium* or City limits. This led to the development of cemeteries along the arterial roads out of Roman cities: *Londinium* was no exception. Archaeological investigations indicate a cemetery lined the north-south road Cophall Avenue and Finsbury Circus. It is referred to as the “Upper Walbrook Valley cemetery”. Its focus appears to lie between Finsbury Circus and Eldon Street along an east-west minor road leading from the main road. This was a “discrete entity to the west of the “northern cemetery” which lay by Ermine Street east around Bishopsgate.
- 4.4 Saxon
- 4.4.1 Apart from a supposed Saxon spur from “Moorfields” and one residual sherd of chaff tempered ware there is little evidence for Saxon occupation north of the City wall. The Domesday Book records that the Cannons of St Paul’s held nine acres of land just east of the site at Bishopsgate, in 1086. The area of the site probably belonged to St Paul’s Cathedral in the medieval period and was undoubtedly a marsh.
- 4.5 Medieval
- 4.5.1 In the medieval period the area of Moorfields was part of the prebendal manor of Finsbury owned by St Paul’s. Gradually, expansion from Cripplegate and Bishopsgate led to some limited encroachment but most of the moor was waste ground.
- 4.5.2 The first reference to Finsbury, *Vinisbir*, occurs in 1231. At this time the marsh seems to have been drained sufficiently to grow crops. On the western side of the site the land “appears to have been divided into strips running north-south each reflecting the previous pattern of selions (strips of land). These were then turned into gardens and houses were built on the south side of Chiswell Street, approximately 200m west of the site, in the vicinity of Milton Street. Most of the other fields in the manor were for pasture.
- 4.5.3 In the 13<sup>th</sup> century Finsbury Court manor house lay on a natural prominence within Moorfields marsh at the present junction of Chiswell Street and Finsbury Pavement. It seems the manor house was reached from Aldersgate by a gravel causeway through

marsh, along Chiswell Street. The manor house is likely to have had a manorial court by 1288. The manor house and subject site are shown on the Copperplate map of 1553.

4.5.4 Elsewhere in Moorfields, west of the manor house, a few houses were built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, including a tannery, *le Taninghus*. However, most of the area remained “waste and unprofitable grounds” so that in the early 14<sup>th</sup> century it was all let for 4 marks per annum. In 1301 an inspection of Moorfields by the Lord Mayor’s Court had to be undertaken by boat. The area was transformed in 1415 when the Lord Mayor, Thomas Falconer, breached the City wall to create a new gateway, Moorgate. The causeway became known as Finsbury Pavement. Traces of lime burning were recorded at 4-6 Finsbury Circus.

4.5.5 In 1527 Thomas Seymour Mayor, improved the sluices and ditches and drained the marsh, making “made main and hard ground, which before being overgrown with flags, sedges and rushes, served no use”. Unfortunately, the area proved a useful rubbish tip for Londoners despite prohibitions by the Mayor. In 1544 Wyngaerde shows the causeway with railings leading into Moorfields.

4.5.6 Archaeological investigations corroborate the picture presented by the historical sources. The whole Moorfields area was crossed by streams such as those found at 101-117 Finsbury Pavement, which was canalised to form the eastern arm of Finsbury Court moat, 7-21 Wilson Street and 19-23 Worship Street.

4.5.7 Extensive medieval quarrying has been identified at excavations all around the subject site, such as 25-32 Chiswell Street, 10-13 Dominion Street, Finsbury Island Site, Finsbury Pavement, 127-139 Finsbury Pavement, 10-20 Clifton Street, 30 Crown Place, 27-30 Finsbury Square, Finsbury Avenue Square and 31 Wilson Street. These quarries acted as sumps for the surrounding ground and so accumulated marsh deposits. These deposits are waterlogged and anaerobic which results in good organic preservation. Furthermore, as the disused quarries were ideal for garbage disposal vast amounts of waste leather, horn, wood, timber have survived. Quarries at 25-32 Chiswell Street, 10-13 Dominion Street and 127-139 Finsbury Pavement have all produced well preserved deposits.

4.5.8 As land reclamation proceeded large amounts of soil and debris were imported to raise the ground level. At Bunhill Street levelling was reportedly 10m deep, but such a depth undoubtedly encompasses a backfilled quarry. Elsewhere, such as 25-32 Chiswell Street, 10-13 Dominion Street, Finsbury Square Car Park, Honourable Artillery Company Ground and South Place, the dumped soils could be 1.0m to 5.5m deep.

#### Post-Medieval

4.5.9 The Copperplate Map of 1553 shows the general area being used for archery, grazing and as a tenterground (for cloth stretching).

- 4.5.10 Maps of 1562 and 1572 show open ground being used for a variety of purposes. In the early 16<sup>th</sup> century the paths crossing the fields were formalised as gravel walks and avenues of trees planted, being described in 1607 as “the gardens of this city and pleasurable place of sweet airs for citizens to walk in” (Weinreb & Hibbert 278). The site is depicted as occupying part of the Moor Fields.
- 4.5.11 In Stow’s *Survey of London* (1608) he records that Hog Lane (Worship Street) no longer consisted of pleasant fields, but “filthy cottages, inclosures and laystalls”, deteriorating in an “unsavoury and unseemly” manner. The layout of the Moorfield gardens is shown in 1658. In 1665 the Great Plague broke out in London, claiming more than 100,000 victims. By this time the area of Moorfields was particularly unhealthy as dung, rotten, vegetables and discarded offal from the City streets were dumped there. The corporation opened additional graveyards at Moorfields in Finsbury Fields and next to Bunhill Fields.
- 4.5.12 As London life approached normality the Great Fire broke out in September 1666. Following the Great Fire, Moorfields became a refugee camp for the homeless where Pepys found the area “full of people, and poor wretches carrying their goods there” (Pepys 5<sup>th</sup> Sept 1666). Debris from the Fire was spread over open ground around the City. Including Moorfields and has been found at 2-14 Bunhill Row and Finsbury Avenue Square.
- 4.5.13 The site was not affected by the Great Fire but was steadily built up during the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. Moorfields remained an open park in the midst of an increasingly crowded city. Morgan’s map of 1677 shows the site was open ground. In 1672 Moor Gate itself had been rebuilt and in 1676 the New Bethlehem Hospital (Bedlam) was built on the southern side of Moorfields, although by the early 18<sup>th</sup> century there were still large open spaces to the north. Finsbury Court was burnt down during rioting in 1695.
- 4.5.14 The square itself is the only open area left from the original fields, though underneath it is a car park. In 1746 the layout of Moorfields still recognisably retained the early 17<sup>th</sup> century pattern of a park including the site. The pressure on the road at Moorfields was increased when a new road, City Road, was built in 1761 to improve access to London Bridge and the open ground of Moorfields became attractive for building. Consequently, between 1775 and 1800 a new Finsbury estate was designed by George Dance with its centre at Finsbury Square. This included the site.
- 4.5.15 In 1799 the site is shown as occupied by a terrace on the north with open ground and sheds to the south. Further road improvements in 1840 involved the creation of Moorgate Street to extend the main route to London Bridge. By 1873 the whole of the subject was occupied by buildings. Similarly, in 1894 and 1913. From 1907 to 1914, 39 Finsbury Square was the home of the City of London Yeomanry.

4.5.16 In 1930 the site was cleared and City Gate House was built to the designs of Frederick Gould and Giles Gilbert Scott to serve as a private club. Subsequently, the building became an office block. The building was extensively refurbished and rebuilt at basement level in 2000.

## 5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 5.1 The archaeological investigations at City Gate House 39-45 Finsbury Square consisted of a watching brief conducted during the excavation of three trial pits, which were excavated to assess the foundations of the current building. These were excavated to a depth consistent with the formation level required.
- 5.2 The three trial pits were located in different parts of the basement. Trial Pit 1 was in the Pump Room and measured 3.10m x 2.92m and was excavated to a depth of 1.24m BGL. Trial Pit 2 was located in the Store Room in the western wing of the basement. The Trial Pit measured 1.40m x 1.30m and was excavated to a depth of 1.80m BGL. Trial Pit 3 was in the Gas Intake Room, this measured 1.30m x 1.30m and was excavated to a depth of 1.32m BGL.
- 5.3 The removal of the modern deposits, such as the basement concrete floor, was undertaken using a manually operated breaker under the observation of an attendant archaeologist.
- 5.4 The modern deposits from the Trial Pits were excavated by the contractor using appropriate hand tools. Following the removal of the deposits, within the Trial Pits this was followed by the investigation of archaeological/geological deposits by hand, with cleaning, examination and recording both in plan and section.
- 5.5 Recording was undertaken using the single context recording system as specified in the Museum of London Site Manual. Location plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20, and 1:50 representative sections at a scale of 1:20. Contexts were numbered sequentially and recorded on pro-forma context sheets.
- 5.6 The fieldwork was carried out according to the relevant methodologies, as follows:
- London Borough of Islington Council UDP;
  - Historic England (GLAAS), Guidelines for Archaeological Projects in Greater London, 2015;
  - The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standards and guidance for archaeological watching brief* (2017);
  - The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 'Code of Conduct' (2017);
  - The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 'Code of Approved Practices for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology' (2017);
- 5.7 All recording systems adopted during the investigations were fully compatible with those most widely used elsewhere in London; that is those developed out of the Department of Urban Archaeology Site Manual, now published by Museum of London Archaeology (MoLAS 1994). Individual descriptions of all archaeological and geological strata and features excavated and exposed were entered onto pro-forma recording sheets. All plans and sections of archaeological deposits were recorded on polyester based drawing film,

the plans being at scale 1:20 and 1:50 the section at 1:20. The OD heights of all principle strata were calculated and indicated on the appropriate plans and sections.

- 5.8 A photographic record of the investigations was made using only digital format.
- 5.9 A temporary benchmark at approximately 10.50m OD on the basement's floor was used to calculate the Ordnance Datum heights of the deposits.
- 5.10 The complete site archive including site records, photographs and finds will be deposited at the Museum of London Archaeological Archive, (MLAA) under the site code FNS19.

## 6 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

### 6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 No archaeology survived within the basement areas which were investigated.

Trial Pit no./WB Area	Dimension	Maximum depth below floor level
1	3.10m x 2.92m	1.24m
2	1.40m x 1.30m	1.80m
3	1.30m x 1.30m	1.32m

### 6.2 Phase 1: Natural Brickearth and Sands.

6.2.1 In Trial Pit 1 the base of the brickearth was at 9.26m OD and the top of the brickearth was at 10.18m OD. The brickearth was truncated by modern foundations on the north and south side of the trench and a service cut in the southeast corner of the trench.

6.2.2 In Trial Pit 2 the earliest deposit recorded during the watching brief was the natural sands with lenses of gravel. The base of this deposit was at 8.70m OD and the top was at 9.10m OD. The sand was sealed by a layer of gravel the top of which was at 9.40m OD. Overlying the gravel was a layer of natural fine sandy silty clay the top of which was at 9.58m OD. The silty clay was sealed by a layer of brickearth, the top of which was at 10.16m OD. The brickearth was truncated by a 20<sup>th</sup> century service trench along the southern side of the trench, which was sealed by the concrete basement slab which was 0.30m thick.

6.2.3 The base of Trial Pit 3 was at 9.18m OD and comprised a layer of gravel, the top of which was at 9.50m OD. The gravel was sealed by a layer of brickearth the top of which was at 10.02m OD. The brickearth was sealed by redeposited material 0.16m thick, dating to when City Gate House was built, and this layer was sealed by the concrete basement slab. The eastern side of the trial pit was truncated by a modern foundation trench.

## 7 PHASED DISCUSSION AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

### 7.1 Phased Discussion

7.1.1 The sequence identified in the trial pits consisted of natural sands and gravels in turn capped by brickearth. The natural sand and gravel horizon was found between 8.70m OD and 9.50m OD and the brickearth horizon was found between 9.26m OD and 10.18m OD which is consistent with the levels recorded in the close vicinity of the site such as 127-139 Finsbury Pavement to the west of the site (site code FIS96) which recorded brickearth at 12.28m OD and Taplow Gravels at 11.33m OD. Brickearth was also recorded at 50 Finsbury Square (site code FSQ98). The brickearth at this site lay at 11.73m OD, was heavily truncated and could have been originally at 12.00m OD. The brickearth capped the



Taplow Gravels across the areas of the site which had been investigated. Truncation from modern development was identified in all three of the trial pits.

7.1.2 No archaeological material of any period was found within the area which was investigated.

## **8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- 8.1.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Mills Whipp Projects for commissioning the archaeological works, and Laura O’Gorman, Historic England Archaeological Adviser for the London Borough of Islington for monitoring the archaeological investigation.
- 8.1.2 The author would like to thank Helen Hawkins for the project management.

## 9 BIBLIOGRAPHY

### 9.1 Printed Sources

Hawkins H 2019 *City Gate House, 39-45 Finsbury Square, London EC2: Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Watching Brief* unpublished planning document

Mills Whipp Projects 2019 *City Gate House, 39-45 Finsbury Square, London EC2 LB Islington: Archaeological Desk Based Assessment* unpublished client report

### 9.2 Internet Sources

BGS (British Geological Society), 2016, Geology of Britain viewer

<http://mapapps.bgs.as.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

National Planning Policy Framework

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf)

London Borough of Islington Council UDP  
([http://www.islington.gov.uk/services/planning/planningpol/unit\\_dev\\_plan/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.islington.gov.uk/services/planning/planningpol/unit_dev_plan/Pages/default.aspx))

## 10 PLATES



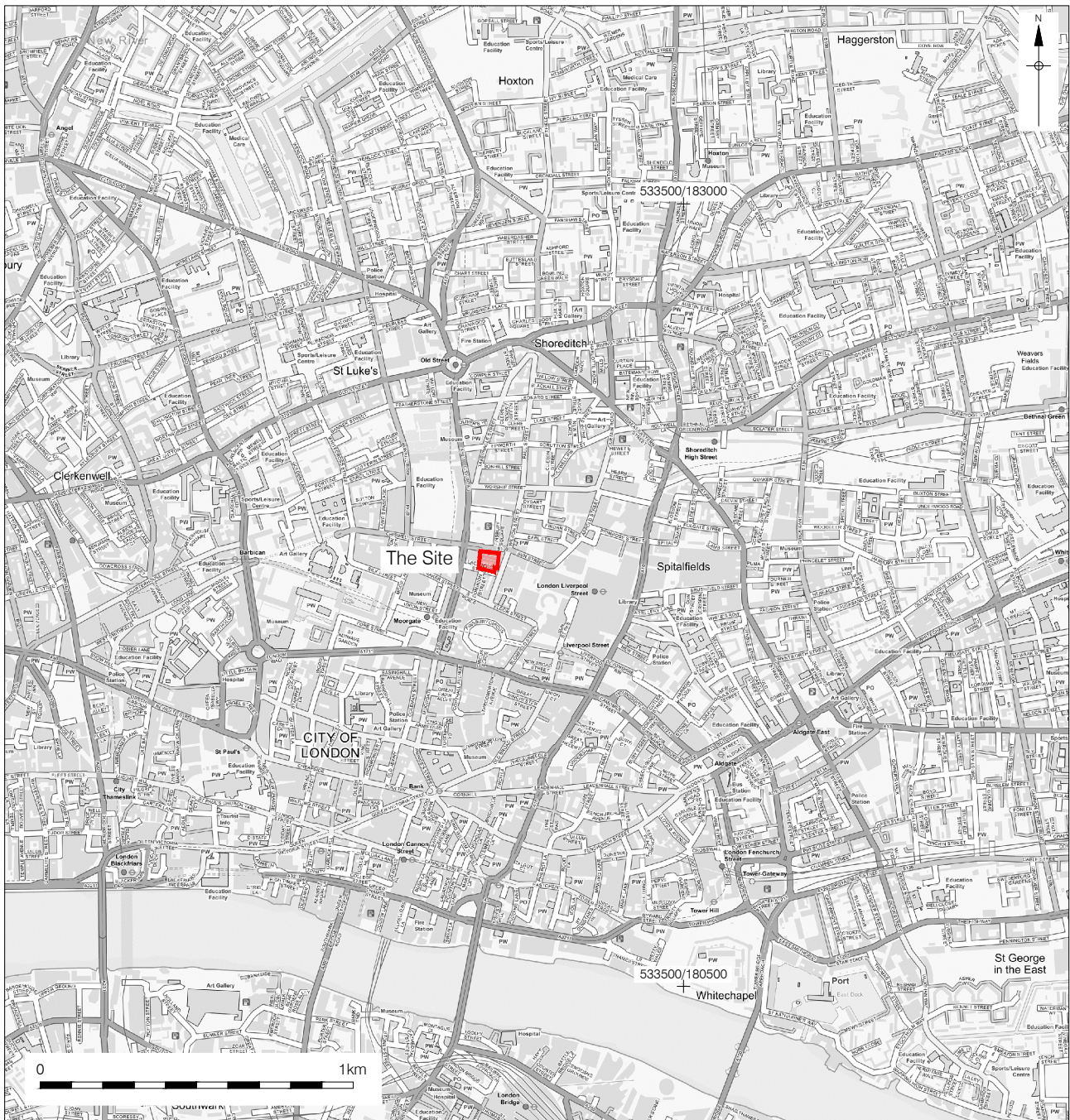
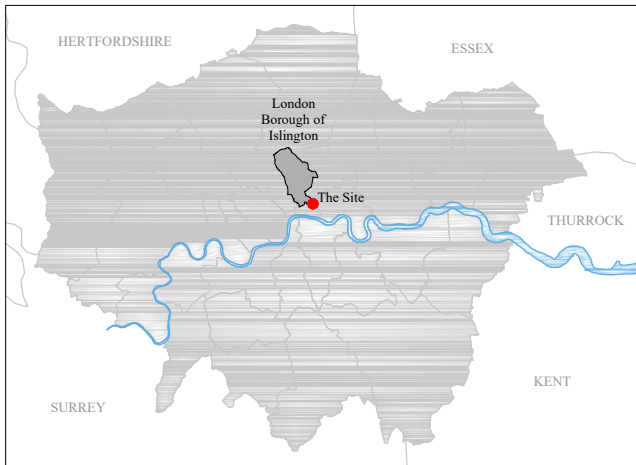
Plate 1: Section Trial Pit 1 facing east

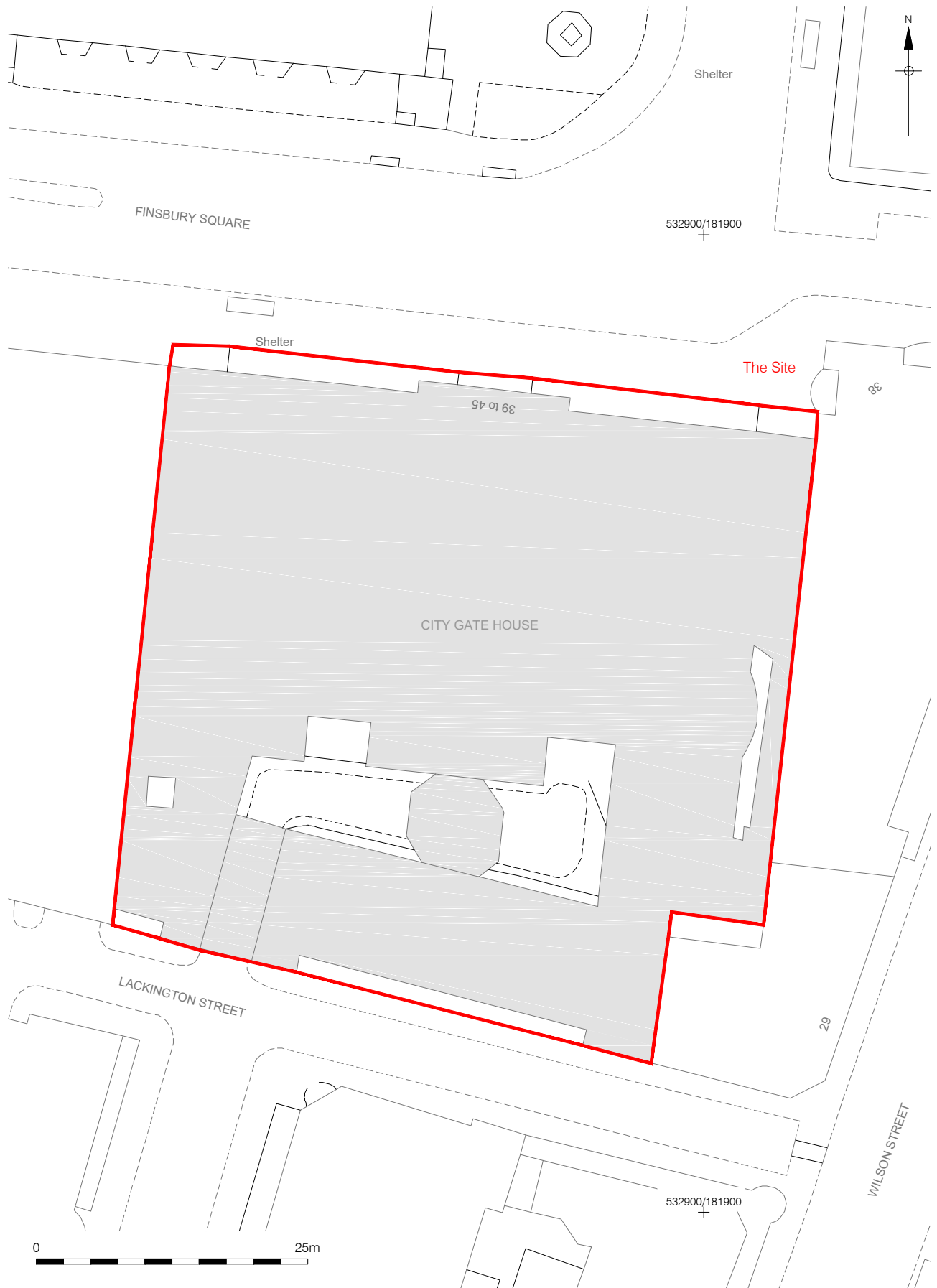


Plate 2: Trial Pit 2 facing south-east



Plate 3: Trial Pit 3 facing south





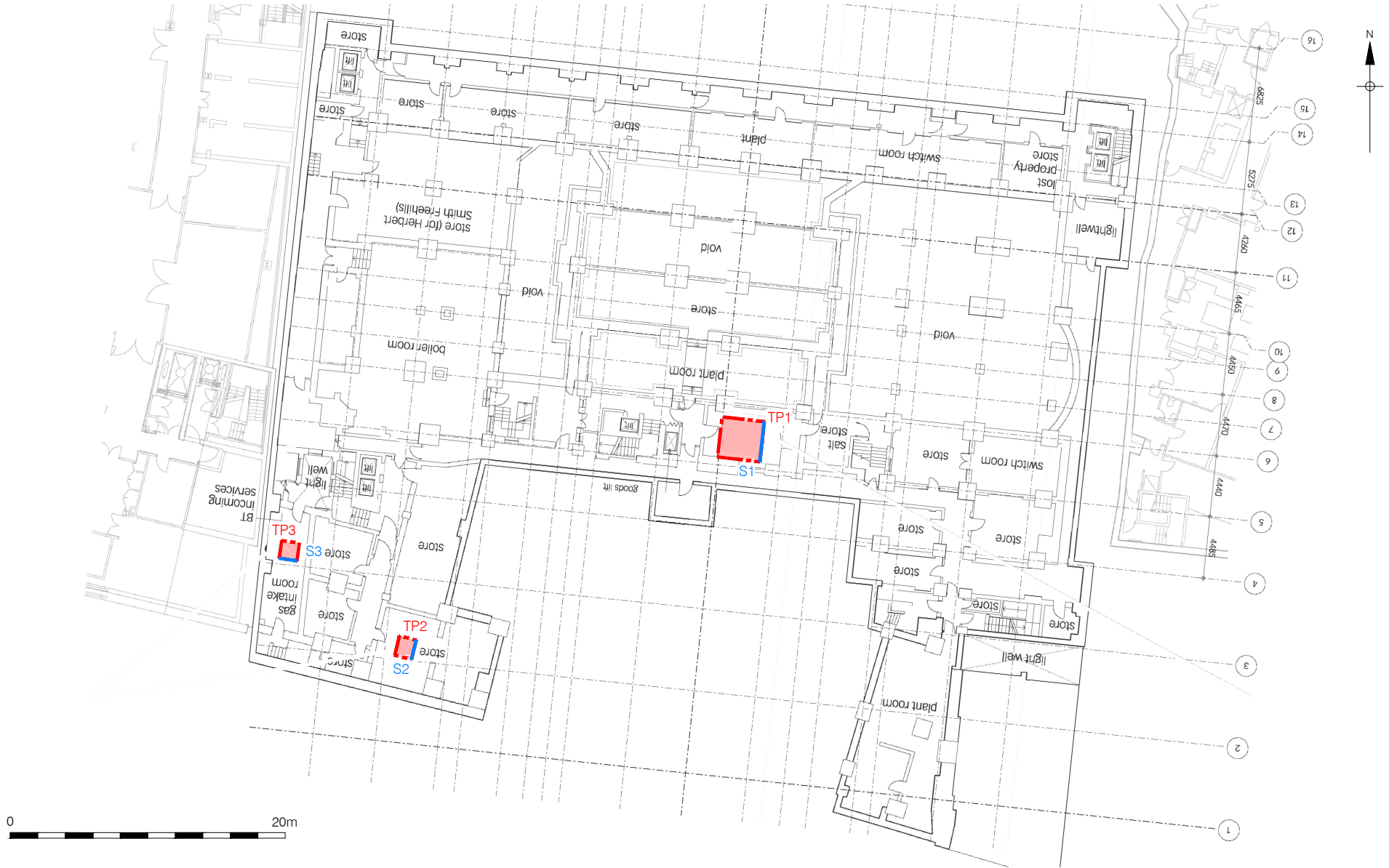
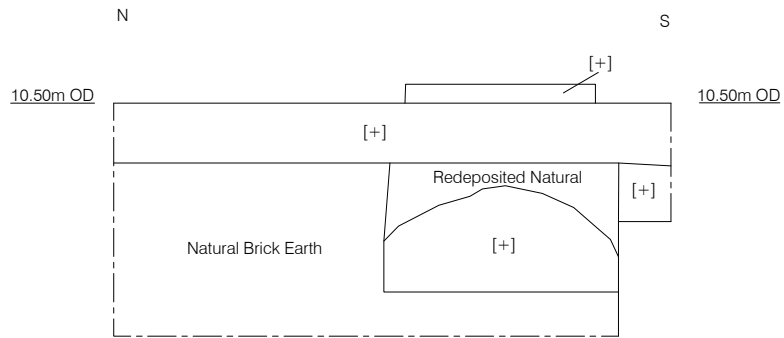
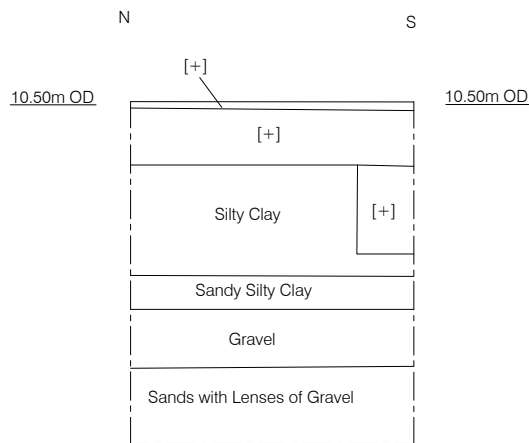


Figure 3  
 Test Pit Locations on Basement Plan  
 1:400 at A4

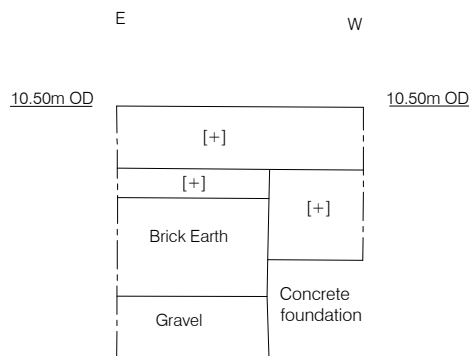




Section 1  
West Facing  
Test Pit 1



Section 2  
West Facing  
Test Pit 2



Section 3  
North Facing  
Test Pit 3



## **APPENDIX 1: OASIS FORM**

OASIS ID: preconst1-345600

---

### Project details

Project name	City Gate House, 39-45 Finsbury Square, London EC2: An Archaeological Watching Brief
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief was conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd at 39-45 Finsbury Square, London Borough of Islington, EC2. The watching brief monitored three trial pits excavated within a double basement. Natural sands and gravels capped by natural brickearth were observed in all of the trial pits. No archaeological finds or features were identified, and it was clear that the natural deposits had been heavily truncated by the construction of the current building.
Project dates	Start: 26-02-2019 End: 01-03-2019
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	FNS19 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 2 - Offices
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Recorded Observation"
Prompt	Planning condition

---

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON ISLINGTON ISLINGTON City Gate House, 39-45 Finsbury Square
Postcode	EC2
Study area	100 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 328700 818500 51.519423238306 -0.084718698344 51 31 09 N 000 05 04 W Point

Height OD / Depth      Min: 9.1m Max: 10.18m

---

### Project creators

Name of                      Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited

Organisation

Project brief                GLAAS

originator

Project design              Mills Whipp Projects

originator

Project                        Helen Hawkins

director/manager

Project supervisor        James Heathcote

Type of                        Developer

sponsor/funding

body

Name of                        BSREP II City Gate Ltd

sponsor/funding

body

---

### Project archives

Physical Archive          No

Exists?

Digital Archive            MLAA

recipient

Digital Archive ID        FNS19

Digital Contents          "none"

Digital Media              "Images raster / digital photography","Text"

available

Paper Archive              No

Exists?

---

### Project

#### bibliography 1

Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Publication type

Title	City Gate House, 39-45 Finsbury Square, London EC2: An Archaeological Watching Brief
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Heathcote, J
Date	2019
Issuer or publisher	PCA
Place of issue or publication	London

---

# PCA

## **PCA CAMBRIDGE**

THE GRANARY, RECTORY FARM  
BREWERY ROAD, PAMPISFORD  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB22 3EN  
t: 01223 845 522  
e: [cambridge@pre-construct.com](mailto:cambridge@pre-construct.com)

## **PCA DURHAM**

UNIT 19A, TURSDALE BUSINESS PARK  
TURSDALE  
DURHAM DH6 5PG  
t: 0191 377 1111  
e: [durham@pre-construct.com](mailto:durham@pre-construct.com)

## **PCA LONDON**

UNIT 54, BROCKLEY CROSS BUSINESS CENTRE  
96 ENDWELL ROAD, BROCKLEY  
LONDON SE4 2PD  
t: 020 7732 3925  
e: [london@pre-construct.com](mailto:london@pre-construct.com)

## **PCA NEWARK**

OFFICE 8, ROEWOOD COURTYARD  
WINKBURN, NEWARK  
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE NG22 8PG  
t: 01636 370410  
e: [newark@pre-construct.com](mailto:newark@pre-construct.com)

## **PCA NORWICH**

QUARRY WORKS, DEREHAM ROAD  
HONINGHAM  
NORWICH NR9 5AP  
T: 01223 845522  
e: [cambridge@pre-construct.com](mailto:cambridge@pre-construct.com)

## **PCA WARWICK**

UNIT 9, THE MILL, MILL LANE  
LITTLE SHREWLEY, WARWICK  
WARWICKSHIRE CV35 7HN  
t: 01926 485490  
e: [warwick@pre-construct.com](mailto:warwick@pre-construct.com)

## **PCA WINCHESTER**

5 RED DEER COURT, ELM ROAD  
WINCHESTER  
HAMPSHIRE SO22 5LX  
t: 01962 849 549  
e: [winchester@pre-construct.com](mailto:winchester@pre-construct.com)

