

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at the Great Northern Hotel,
King's Cross Central, London Borough of Camden**

Site Code: KXB07

Central National Grid Reference: TQ 3018 8302

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January 2008**

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January 2008**

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CONTENTS

1	ABSTRACT	3
2	INTRODUCTION	4
3	PLANNING BACKGROUND	7
4	GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY	9
5	ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	10
6	ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY	12
7	SUMMARY OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE	14
8	INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS:	24
9	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	25
10	BIBLIOGRAPHY	28

FIGURES

Figure 1	Site Location
Figure 2	Trench Location
Figure 3	Plan of Trial pits
Figure 4	Detail of Trenches 1-11
Figure 5	Detail of Trenches 13-23
Figure 6	Sections 1, 11, 17, 20 and 23

PLATES

Plate 1	Trial Pit 1
Plate 2	Trial Pit 21
Plate 3	Trial Pit 21 showing general site conditions

APPENDICES

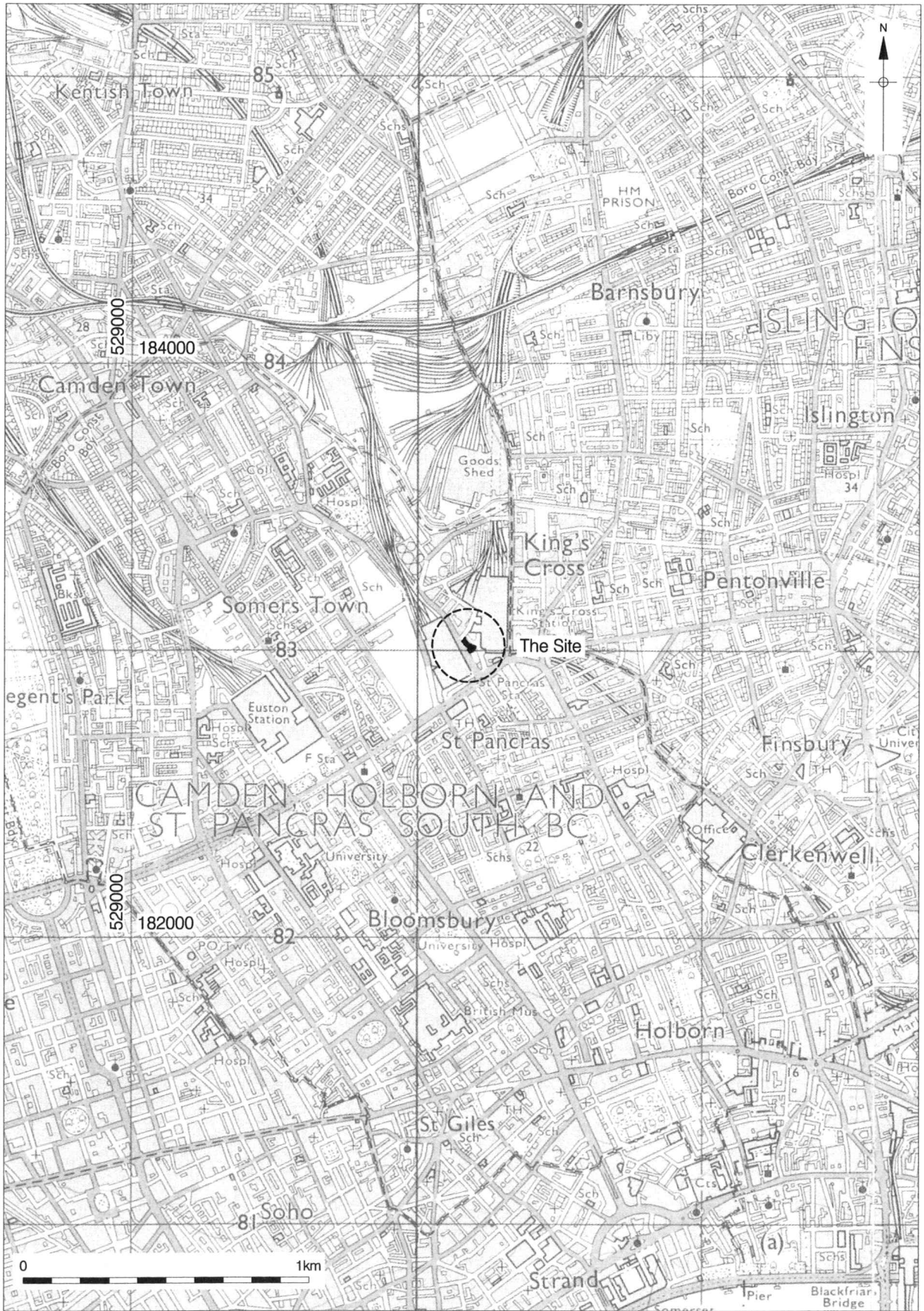
Appendix 1: Context Register	26
Appendix 2: Section Register	27
Appendix 3: Site Matrix	28
Appendix 4: Oasis Form	29

1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results and working methods of an archaeological watching brief for geotechnical trial pits carried out at the Great Northern Hotel, King's Cross Central as part of a structural and geotechnical investigation into the historic buildings and their settings. The watching brief was commissioned by Argent (King's Cross) Limited. The project took place between 11th December 2007 and 18th January 2008, and represents one of a series of watching briefs intended to support the designs of King's Cross Central, in response to the London Borough of Camden planning requirements.
- 1.2 Twenty five geotechnical test pits were carried out across the site. All were monitored by an archaeologist. Nineteenth century brick footings and floor support walls were observed throughout the site.
- 1.3 The majority of the trial pits were located within the interior of the hotel. The watching brief found that all subsurface structures were built on a brick base, supported by a concrete foundation slab resting on a bed of brick rubble. Trial Pits 9, 10 and 22 were located outside of the hotel footprint and revealed brick footings on top of clay deposits. Steel and brick reinforcements for the Fleet sewer were observed in Trial Pit 11 and the brick sewer itself was observed in Trial Pit 23. Two trial pits were abandoned, an exterior trial pit due to live services and an interior one as the Fleet Sewer and its associated supports had been located in trial pit 11.

2 INTRODUCTION

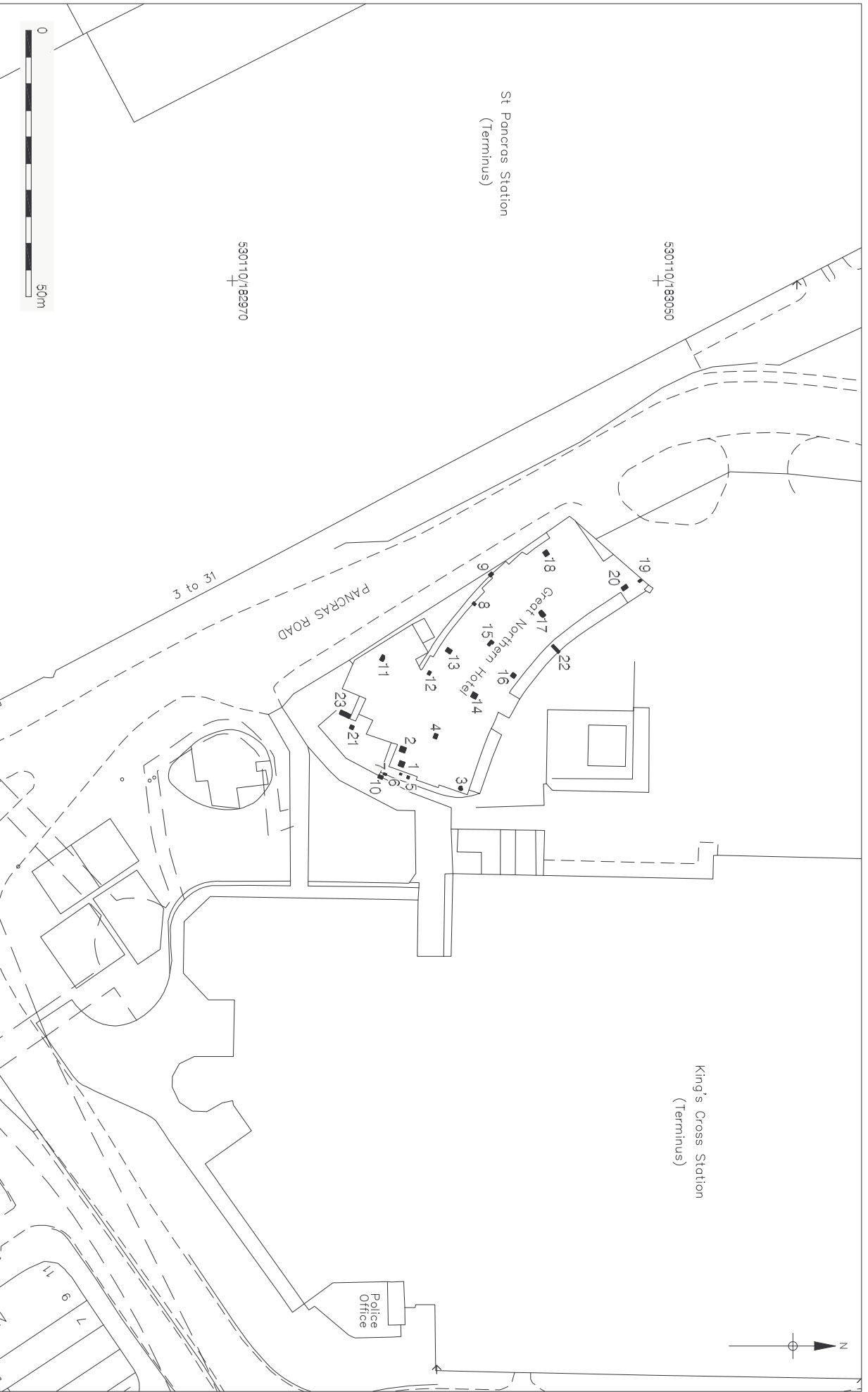
- 2.1 An archaeological watching brief of geotechnical trial pits was undertaken between 11th December 2007 and 18th January 2008 by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited at the Great Northern Hotel, King's Cross Central (Figure 1). The project represents one of a series of watching briefs intended to support the designs of King's Cross Central, in response to the London Borough of Camden planning requirements.
- 2.2 The site is bounded to the west and south by Pancras Road and to the north and east by King's Cross Station (Figure 2). The site is currently occupied by the Great Northern Hotel, built in 1853-4, which is a Grade II listed building.
- 2.3 The site is located at National Grid Reference TQ 3018 8302.
- 2.4 The work was commissioned by IHCM on behalf of Argent (Kings Cross) Limited. The fieldwork was managed by Helen Clough and supervised by the author.
- 2.5 The site was assigned the code KXB07.



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Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:20,000 at A4



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Figure 2
 Test Pit Location
 1:1,000 at A4

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In November 1990 the Department of the Environment issued Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG16) "Archaeology and Planning" providing guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the preservation and investigation of archaeological remains.
- 3.2 In considering any planning application for development, the local planning authority is bound by the policy framework set by government guidance, in this instance PPG16, by current Structure and Local Plan policy and by other material.
- 3.3 The relevant Development Plan framework is provided by the Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan (2006) which states:

B8 – ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND MONUMENTS

A – SITES AND MONUMENTS OF NATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE:

WHEN CONSIDERING DEVELOPMENT CLOSE TO SITES AND MONUMENTS OF NATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE, INCLUDING SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS, THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK THE PHYSICAL PRESERVATION OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES AND THEIR SETTINGS.

B – SITES AND MONUMENTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE:

THE COUNCIL WILL ONLY GRANT CONSENT FOR DEVELOPMENT WHERE ACCEPTABLE MEASURES ARE UNDERTAKEN TO PRESERVE REMAINS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE AND THEIR SETTINGS. DEVELOPERS SHOULD ADOPT MEASURES THAT ALLOW SUCH REMAINS TO BE PERMANENTLY PRESERVED IN SITU. WHERE THIS CANNOT BE ACHIEVED, NO DEVELOPMENT SHALL TAKE PLACE UNTIL SATISFACTORY EXCAVATION AND RECORDING OF THE REMAINS HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT.

- 3.4 Also of relevance is local policy KC11:

KC11 - HERITAGE

THE COUNCIL WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS FOR THE KING'S CROSS OPPORTUNITY AREA, WHICH SEEK TO ENSURE THAT:

- A) PRESERVE LISTED BUILDINGS OR STRUCTURES AND THEIR SETTING**
B) PRESERVE OR ENHANCE BUILDINGS, STRUCTURES AND OTHER FEATURES OF CHARACTER AND HISTORIC INTEREST, AND THEIR SETTING, WITHIN THE CONSERVATION AREAS

C) PRESERVE THE REMAINS OF SIGNIFICANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE AND THEIR SETTINGS.

9.67

The Opportunity Area has a diverse and unique character with a distinct sense of place. It is of outstanding national, architectural, historical and industrial archaeological importance. Because the Opportunity Area contains one of the more important and complete Industrial Archaeology sites in the country, this is an area of archaeological potential. The St Pancras Archaeological Priority Area is also partly located within the Opportunity Area. The Council will require development to meet the requirements set out in policy B8A and B8B on archaeology and of PPG16.

9.69

Heritage buildings and features are a positive asset. Re-using heritage buildings and bringing disused properties into use is an integral part of the sustainable regeneration of the area. Furthermore, redevelopment may provide the opportunity to salvage and re-use historic items of streetscape and street furniture on the site. Developers will have to demonstrate the balance between the protection of heritage buildings against other social and economic considerations to fulfill wider policy objectives and, as such, to justify any proposal for the removal of heritage buildings and other features in the context of PPG16.

9.70

The Regent's Canal is of strategic importance and is a key feature of the King's Cross Opportunity Area. Specific policies relating to Regent's Canal are contained in section 10. It is important that the redevelopment of the area captures the potential that the Canal offers. In particular the Council will seek development that achieves a successful balance of:

- the protection of the historic canal environment
- the enhancement of the canal's biodiversity
- access to and along the canal for pedestrians
- the use of the canal for recreation
- the use of the canal for transportation, especially during the construction of development

4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 4.1 The British Geological Survey map 256 of the area (1:50,000 series) indicates that the King's Cross site is underlain by London Clay. This is underlain by the Woolwich & Reading Formation, Thanet Formation and Upper Chalk.
- 4.2 The site is relatively flat and is located at a level of 16.29 m OD.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

5.1 GENERAL OVERVIEW

- 5.1.1 A specialist archaeological report was prepared by heritage consultancy IHCM for Argent (King's Cross) prior to the archaeological fieldwork. The following represents a summary of the archaeological and historical background to the site, as represented within this document.

5.2 PREHISTORIC (450,000 BC – AD 43)

- 5.2.1 The King's Cross Central site is generally located on London Clay. The poorer drainage associated with this soil would therefore have not been as conducive to occupation by early settlers as in surrounding areas. Furthermore, any gravel deposits likely to yield material such as flint axes of this date, as have been produced elsewhere in London, have eroded away. No SMR entries relating to this period were noted in the vicinity.

5.3 ROMAN (AD 43 – 410)

- 5.3.1 The study site lies approximately 2km north-west of *Londinium*. Founded within a decade of the arrival of the Romans in AD 43, the city flourished during the 1st and early 2nd centuries. The city contracted in the 3rd and 4th centuries, becoming much less densely populated, inhabited by the wealthy and influential, and was finally abandoned in the early 5th century following the Roman withdrawal from Britain.
- 5.3.2 A number of finds relating to this period are noted in the proximity of the site. These include a road [SMR 080540] to the eastern boundary along York Way, and finds of an iron urn [SMR 080365], and a tombstone [SMR 080382], deriving from Wharfedale road to the south-east of the study site.

5.4 EARLY-MID SAXON (AD 410 – C9th)

- 5.4.1 Little evidence pertaining to the general character of the area in this period exists. A possible settlement [SMR 082063] is documented from the Old St Pancras graveyard, in addition to a 6th or 7th century altar [SMR 081792] from the same location. These, however, lay some way to the south of the study site.

5.5 LATE SAXON-MEDIEVAL (C10th – 1485)

- 5.5.1 The 9th and 10th centuries saw the city becoming increasingly reoccupied, with a presumed farming expansion in north London and therefore most probably into King's Cross. Such activities however, may only leave ephemeral traces in the landscape. The present boundaries of the London boroughs were virtually reached by the 13th centuries, with rural villages existing at St Pancras and Islington. The site itself, according to the *Domesday*, lay within the Ossulstone Hundred; with the land to the west of York Way being in the Prebendal Manor of St Pancras. The Medieval settlement around St Pancras church also lay to the west of the study site. The former manorial and parish boundaries correspond with the present York Way, a portion of the King's Cross Central site laying within the manor of Barnsbury, a property held by Hugh de Berners, from the Bishop of London.
- 5.5.2 Structures from this period were predominantly constructed from timber. High status buildings however, such as churches [e.g. SMR 082053], often utilised more durable materials such as masonry. Such structures may be used to infer the location of past settlements. No such buildings however are documented from the study site itself, the above entry deriving from the south of the site at St Pancras.

5.6 POST-MEDIEVAL (AD 1485 – 1750)

- 5.6.1 The general layout of London did not significantly change during this period, the population however quadrupled in size. Neighbourhoods around Islington, Shoreditch and Clerkenwell began to be occupied by the poor, as the suburbs began to consume districts between the commercial areas and those beyond the city walls.
- 5.6.2 Documentation from this period denotes small pox and fever hospitals, north of the Great Northern Hotel. Other structures of note include the Brill settlement [SMR 080447], under St Pancras station, and three burial grounds under the former Goods depot to the west of St Pancras, partly excavated by Pre-Construct Archaeology in 2004.

5.7 INDUSTRIAL (1750-1900)

- 5.7.1 The area under investigation was occupied by tightly packed terrace houses in narrow streets, when King's Cross Station opened in 1852. In 1863 The Great Metropolitan Railway constructed three single track tunnelled connections with newly build Metropolitan Railway to the south, one of which was situated within study area. Subsequent congestion of the station platforms led in 1875 to the construction of two further tracks with platforms outside the western wall of the main station, known as King's Cross Local.
- 5.7.2 Further expansion to the west of the station became necessary as railway system was developing. Terrace houses found in the area previously were demolished and replaced by dock sidings for horses, milk and carriages.
- 5.7.3 The previously open landscape of the study area during the C18th altered drastically with the urbanisation of London. The King's Cross area began to be utilised for quarrying and the manufacture of brick and tile; plus the construction of the Regent's Canal in 1820 facilitated yet further commercial development. A major gas manufacturing works was constructed to the south of the canal, with additional terraced housing and smaller commercial properties. Further industrialisation derived from the construction of railway termini at King's Cross, completed in 1852, and St. Pancras completed c1868, with associated hotels, sidings, maintenance depots and goods handling shed.
- 5.7.4 The Great Northern Hotel was built in 1853-4 by the Great Northern Railway to serve its adjacent London terminus of King's Cross. Two extensions were added to the hotel c. 1900, these were located against the convex south-western façade abutting St. Pancras Road and on the north-western end façade.

5.8 MODERN (1900- PRESENT)

- 5.8.1 The site is currently occupied by the Great Northern Hotel.

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

6.1 The area to be investigated was laid out by the groundwork contractors in accordance with the proposed development plan. The trial pits were hand-dug as a consequence of their location in the basement area of the hotel. Both an archaeologist and the attendant geotechnical engineer monitored ground reduction.

6.2 The trial pits were excavated to investigate foundations of existing structures, determine ground conditions, determine character of foundations and soils of mid to late 19th century and locate any other unforeseen obstructions. Other objectives were to:

- determine the character of site and landscape prior to first phase industrial development
- provide information for the rural topography of the site with evidence of prehistoric to post-medieval land use
- find evidence of mid 18th to early 19th century urban and commercial land uses prior to the development of railway in mid 19th century.
- to locate the north-eastern limit of the Fleet sewer.

6.3 Ground reduction of the trial pits were observed as an archaeological watching brief.

6.4 No artefacts were identified or retained during the watching brief.

6.5 The dimensions of the trial pits (TP) were:

TP1	1.0m (NE-SW) x 1.0m (NW-SE) x 1.82m (deep)
TP2	1.08m (NE-SW) x 1.0m (NW-SE) x 1.92m (deep)
TP3	0.8m (N-S) x 0.84m (E-W) x 1.62m (deep)
TP4	0.66m (NE-SW) x 0.94m (NW-SE) x 1.26m (deep)
TP5	0.46m (NE-SW) x 0.5m (NW-SE) x 0.84m (deep)
TP6	0.4m (NE-SW) x 0.3m (NW-SE) x 0.62m (deep)
TP7	0.6m (NE-SW) x 0.36m (NW-SE) x 0.62m (deep)
TP8	0.62m (NE-SW) x 0.48m (NW-SE) x 0.94m (deep)
TP9	0.62m (NE-SW) x 0.8m (NW-SE) x 1.16m (deep)
TP10	0.9m (NE-SW) x 0.6m (NW-SE) x 0.84m (deep)
TP11	0.7m (NE-SW) x 1.1m (NW-SE) x 0.6m (deep)
TP12	0.5m (NE-SW) x 0.7m (NW-SE) x 0.3m (deep)
TP13	1.1m (NE-SW) x 0.8m (NW-SE) x 1.2m (deep)
TP14	1.0m (NE-SW) x 0.98m (NW-SE) x 1.4m (deep)
TP15	0.7m (NE-SW) x 1.1m (NW-SE) x 1.14m (deep)

TP16	0.8m (NE-SW) x 0.8m (NW-SE) x 1.12m (deep)
TP17	1.26m (NE-SW) x 0.9m (NW-SE) x 1.52m (deep)
TP18	0.96m (NE-SW) x 0.9m (NW-SE) x 1.5m (deep)
TP19	0.42m (NE-SW) x 0.6m (NW-SE) x 1.56m (deep)
TP20	0.7m (NE-SW) x 1.12m (NW-SE) x 1.6m (deep)
TP21	0.7m (NE-SW) x 0.7m (NW-SE) x 1.0m (deep)
TP22	1.86m (NE-SW) x 0.5m (NW-SE) x 1.2m (deep)
TP23	2.0m (NE-SW) x 0.8m (NW-SE) x 2.54m (deep)

- 6.6 Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated and/or 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 drawn at a scale of 1:20 and the sections at 1:10. The recording system used was "single context".
- 6.7 All levels were calculated from spot heights located on the architectural plans.

7 SUMMARY OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

7.1 TP1

- 7.1.1 Trial pit 1 (fig 2) was located inside the basement of the hotel and was excavated to a depth of 1.82m.
- 7.1.2 The earliest deposit was brick rubble [6], observed at 12.37m OD, acting as bedding for a concrete foundation slab [5] observed at 12.79m OD. The slab was 0.46m thick.
- 7.1.3 Above this a brick slab [4], 0.16m thick, was observed at 12.79m OD, acting as a base for a stock brick wall footing [7], and a stock brick cross wall [3]. The footing [7], aligned NNE-SSW, was observed at 13.37m OD. It had one step and was 0.28m deep. The cross wall [3] was observed at 13.66m OD and measured 0.66m in height and 130mm in width.
- 7.1.4 Above the cross walls a brick rubble backfill deposit [2], measuring 0.83m thick, was observed at 13.85m OD. Sealing this a concrete floor slab [1], measuring 0.24m thick, was observed at 13.99m OD.

7.2 TP2

- 7.2.1 Trial pit 2 (fig 3) was located inside the basement of the hotel and was excavated to a depth of 1.92m.
- 7.2.2 The earliest deposit was brick rubble [26], observed at 12.37m OD, acting as bedding for a 0.4m thick concrete foundation slab [11] observed at 12.77m OD.
- 7.2.3 Above this a brick slab [10], measuring 0.16m thick, was observed at 12.93m OD, acting as a base for a WNW-ESE aligned stock brick wall footing [12]. The footing [12], was observed at 13.37m OD, it had three steps and was 0.44m deep.
- 7.2.4 Above this a NNE-SSW aligned stock brick cross wall [9], measuring 0.8m deep, was observed at 13.85m OD.
- 7.2.5 Sealing this a concrete floor slab [8], measuring 0.24m thick, was observed at 13.99m OD.

7.3 TP3

- 7.3.1 Trial pit 3 (fig 2) was located inside the basement of the hotel and was excavated to a depth of 1.62m.
- 7.3.2 A concrete foundation slab [26] was observed at 12.81m OD.
- 7.3.3 Above this a brick slab [15], 100mm thick, was observed at 12.9m OD, acting as a base for a stock brick wall footing [24]. The footing [24], aligned NNE-SSW was observed at 13.37m OD. The footing had three steps and was 0.44m deep.
- 7.3.4 Above the footing a brick rubble backfill deposit [14], measuring 0.8m thick, was observed at 13.73m OD.
- 7.3.5 Sealing this a concrete floor slab [13], measuring 0.26m thick, was observed at 13.99m OD.

7.4 TP4

- 7.4.1 Trial pit 4 (fig 2) was located inside the basement of the hotel and was excavated to a depth of 1.26m.
- 7.4.2 A concrete foundation slab [23] was observed at 12.82m OD.
- 7.4.3 Above this a brick slab [20], 0.12m thick, was observed at 12.93m OD, acting as a base for two NNE-SSW aligned stock brick wall footings [21] and [22]. Footing [21], observed at 13.65m OD, had two steps and was 0.74m deep. Footing [22], observed at 13.77m OD, had two steps and was 0.84m deep.
- 7.4.4 A sandy rubble backfill [19], measuring 0.32m thick, was observed at 13.25m OD. Sealing this a deposit of sandy gravels [18], measuring 0.6m thick, was observed at 13.84m OD.
- 7.4.5 Above this a concrete floor slab [17], measuring 0.15m in thickness, was observed at 13.99m OD.

7.5 TP5

- 7.5.1 Trial pit 5 (fig 2) was located outside the hotel, in the lightwell and was excavated to a depth of 0.84m..
- 7.5.2 A one step stock brick wall footing [30] was observed at 13.11m OD. This was aligned NNE-SSW.
- 7.5.3 Above this an ESE-WNW aligned, stock brick cross wall [32], was observed at 13.17m OD. The wall measured 0.34m deep by 0.2m wide.
- 7.5.4 Above this a deposit of clayey silt [35] was observed at 13.29m OD. This was not bottomed.
- 7.5.5 Sealing this a 0.18m thick deposit of rubble hardcore [34] was observed at 13.47m OD.
- 7.5.6 A concrete surface [33] measuring 0.2m, was observed at 13.67m OD sealing the hardcore.

7.6 TP6

- 7.6.1 Trial pit 6 (fig 2) was located outside the hotel, in the lightwell and was excavated to a depth of 0.62m.
- 7.6.2 The earliest deposit was a deposit of clayey silt [37], observed at 13.41m OD.
- 7.6.3 Sealing this a concrete surface [36], measuring 0.26mm, was observed at 13.67m OD.

7.7 TP7

- 7.7.1 Trial pit 7 (fig 2) was located outside the hotel, in the lightwell and was excavated to a depth of 0.62m.
- 7.7.2 A concrete surface [38] was observed at 13.67m OD. It was decided that no further excavation was necessary.

7.8 TP8

-
- 7.8.1 Trial pit 8 (fig 2) was located outside the hotel, in the lightwell and was excavated to a depth of 0.94m.
 - 7.8.2 A WNW-ENE aligned stock brick wall footing [39] was observed at 12.97m OD. The footing had three steps and measured 0.56m deep.
 - 7.8.3 Above the wall footing a NNE-SSW aligned stock brick cross wall [40] was observed at 13.17m OD. This continued to a depth of 0.4m, the base was not encountered.
 - 7.8.4 Sealing the wall footing a deposit of clayey silt [44], measuring 0.4m thick, was observed at 13.15m OD.
 - 7.8.5 A deposit of rubble hardcore [43], measuring 0.32m thick, was observed immediately above the clayey silt at 13.47m OD.
 - 7.8.6 Sealing the hardcore a concrete surface [42] measuring 0.1m, thick was observed at 13.57m OD.

7.9 TP9

- 7.9.1 Trial pit 9 (fig 2) was located in a storage vault outside the hotel and was excavated to a depth of 1.16m.
- 7.9.2 A deposit of dark blue brown clay [89] was observed at 12.35m OD. This was probably redeposited, but too little was exposed to make a true assessment.
- 7.9.3 Above the clay a stock brick wall footing [90] was observed at 12.41m OD. The footing was aligned NE-SW and its return was aligned NW-SW. It had two steps and measured 0.46m deep.
- 7.9.4 Immediately above the wall footing a bedding deposit of silty sand [88], measuring 0.96m thick, was observed at 13.31m OD.
- 7.9.5 Sealing the silty sand layer a red brick floor [87] was observed at 13.41m OD measuring 0.1m thick.

7.10 TP10

- 7.10.1 Trial pit 10 (fig 2) was located in a vault outside the hotel and was excavated to a depth of 0.84m.
- 7.10.2 The earliest deposit was a dark blue brown clay [55] , observed at 12.63m OD. This was probably redeposited, but too little was exposed to make a true assessment.
- 7.10.3 Above this layer a stock brick wall footing [57] was observed at 13.08m OD which was 0.51m deep. The wall footing was aligned NNE-SSW and had three steps.
- 7.10.4 A deposit of sandy gravels [54], measuring 0.54m thick, was observed at 13.14m OD immediately above the footing.
- 7.10.5 A light yellowy brown bedding sand [53], measuring 0.17m thick, was observed at 13.31m OD, sealing the sandy gravel layer.
- 7.10.6 Sealing the bedding sand layer was a red brick floor [52] which measured 0.1m thick and was observed at 13.41m OD.

7.11 TP11

- 7.11.1 Trial pit 11 (fig 2) was located inside the basement of the hotel extension and was excavated to a depth of 0.6m.
- 7.11.2 A stock brick support footing [70] was observed at 14.63m OD.
- 7.11.3 Immediately above the footing were a deposit of silty clay [71], observed at 14.63m OD, and a NW-SE aligned steel support beam [72], observed at 14.83m OD, measuring 0.14m wide and 0.2m deep.
- 7.11.4 A steel cross beam [69], aligned NE-SW and measuring 0.1m wide and 0.2m deep, was observed slotting into [72] at 14.82m OD.
- 7.11.5 Sealing this a concrete floor [68], measuring 0.2m thick, was observed at 14.83m OD.

7.12 TP12

- 7.12.1 Trial pit 12 (fig 2) was located inside the basement of the hotel and was excavated to a depth of 0.3m.
- 7.12.2 A red brick service cap [29], was observed at 13.97m OD.
- 7.12.3 The service cap was sealed by a concrete floor slab [28], measuring 0.14m thick, was observed at 13.99m OD.

7.13 TP13

- 7.13.1 Trial pit 13 (fig 2) was located inside the basement of the hotel and was excavated to a depth of 1.2m.
- 7.13.2 A concrete foundation slab [66] was observed at 12.93m OD. This was not broken.
- 7.13.3 Above this a brick slab [65] measuring 0.1m thick, was observed at 13.03m OD acting as a base for a stock brick wall footing [67]. The footing [67] aligned WNW-ESE was observed at 13.93m OD, it had one step and was 0.9m deep.
- 7.13.4 Above the footing was a deposit of sandy brick rubble [64] measuring 0.9m thick, the deposit was observed at 13.93m OD.
- 7.13.5 Sealing the rubble was a concrete floor slab [63], measuring 0.1m thick, which was observed at 14.08m OD.

7.14 TP14

- 7.14.1 Trial pit 14 (fig 2) was located inside the basement of the hotel and was excavated to a depth of 1.4m.
- 7.14.2 A concrete foundation slab [99] was observed at 12.80m OD. The slab was not broken.
- 7.14.3 Above this a brick slab [98], measuring 0.12m thick, was observed at 12.92m OD, acting as a base for an internal stock brick wall footing [100]. The footing [100], aligned WNW-ESE was observed at 13.40m OD. The footing had three steps and was 0.48m deep.
- 7.14.4 Immediately above this were two stock brick cross walls [97] and [101]. Cross wall [97], observed at 13.98m OD, was aligned WNW-ESE and measured 1.06m to its base. Cross wall [101], aligned NNW-SSE, was observed at 13.98m OD measuring 1.06m to its base and 0.1m wide.

7.14.5 Sealing this a concrete floor slab [96], measuring 0.1m thick, which was observed at 14.08m OD.

7.15 TP15

7.15.1 Trial pit 15 (fig 2) was located inside the basement of the hotel and was excavated to a depth of 1.14m.

7.15.2 A brick slab [80] was observed at 13.0m OD.

7.15.3 This acted as a base for a two step internal wall footing [76], which was found to be aligned NW-SE. The footing, observed at 13.20m OD, was found to be 0.32m deep.

7.15.4 Three stock brick cross walls [75], [77] and [78], aligned NE-SW, were observed at a level of 13.78m OD. Cross wall [75] was found to be 0.92m deep. Cross wall [78] measured 0.92m deep by 0.24m wide. Only the top of cross wall [77] was exposed.

7.15.5 Above cross walls [77] and [78] a deposit of brick rubble [79] acted as bedding for a service cable. This deposit was observed at 13.78m OD.

7.15.6 Immediately above the rubble a stone slab [74] measuring 0.06m thick was observed at 13.84 m OD.

7.15.7 Sealing the stone slab a concrete floor slab [73], measuring 0.18m thick, was observed at 14.02m OD.

7.16 TP16

7.16.1 Trial pit 16 (fig 2) was located inside the basement of the hotel and was excavated to a depth of 1.12m.

7.16.2 A brick slab [94] was observed at 12.94m OD. The excavation did not go below the slab.

7.16.3 The slab acted as a base for a three step wall footing [95], this was found to be aligned NW-SE with a return aligned NE-SW. The footing was 0.46m deep and was observed at 13.42m OD at the top of the footing.

7.16.4 Immediately above the wall footing a NE-SW aligned, stock brick cross wall [93] was observed at 13.88m OD which was 0.94m deep.

7.16.5 Above the cross wall, a possibly live metal service cable [92] was observed at 13.96.m OD.

7.16.6 Sealing the service cable a concrete floor slab [91], measuring 0.12m thick, was observed at 14.08m OD.

7.17 TP17

7.17.1 Trial pit 17 (fig 2) was located inside the basement of the hotel and was excavated to a depth of 1.52m.

7.17.2 A concrete foundation slab [61] was observed at 12.88m OD. Only 0.32m of the slab were excavated.

7.17.3 Above the concrete slab a brick slab [60], measuring 0.14m thick, was observed at 13.02m OD, acting as a base for an internal stock brick wall footing [62]. The footing [62], aligned NW-SE, was observed at 13.93m OD. It had two steps and was 0.26m thick.

7.17.4 Immediately above this footing a NW-SE aligned stock brick cross wall [59] was observed at 13.88m OD measuring 0.86m deep.

7.17.5 Sealing the cross wall a concrete floor slab [58], measuring 0.2m thick, was observed at 14.08m OD.

7.18 TP18

7.18.1 Trial pit 18 (fig 2) was located inside the basement of the hotel and was excavated to a depth of 1.5m.

7.18.2 A concrete foundation slab [106] was observed at 12.82m OD.

7.18.3 Above the foundation slab a brick slab [105], measuring 0.1m thick, was observed at 12.92m OD acting as a base for a stock brick wall footing [107]. The footing [107] aligned NW-SE, was observed at 13.42m OD. It had three steps and was 0.48m deep.

7.18.4 Above the footing a NE-SW aligned, stock brick cross wall [108] was observed at 13.95m OD measuring 0.9m deep.

7.18.5 A deposit of silty sand [104] 0.76m thick, was observed at 13.88m OD, sealing the cross wall.

7.18.6 Sealing the silty sand a deposit of gravels [103], with frequent brick fragment inclusions, was observed at 13.94m OD, measuring 0.28m thick.

7.18.7 Above the gravel deposit a concrete floor slab [102], measuring 0.14m thick, was observed at 14.08m OD.

7.19 TP19

7.19.1 Trial pit 19 (fig 2) was located inside the basement of the hotel and was excavated to a depth of 1.56m.

7.19.2 A concrete foundation slab [85] was observed at 12.79m OD.

7.19.3 Above the concrete slab, a brick slab [84] measuring 0.1m thick, was observed at 12.89m OD acting as a base for a stock brick wall footing [86]. The footing [86] aligned NNE-SSW, was observed at 13.41m OD, it had three steps and was 0.47m deep.

7.19.4 Above the brick slab was a deposit of mid blue brown clay [83], measuring 0.12m thick, was observed at 13.01 m OD.

7.19.5 Sealing the clay deposit, a deposit of silty sand [82] with frequent brick fragment inclusions was observed at 13.85m OD, measuring 0.84m thick.

7.19.6 The silty sand was covered by a timber floor [81], measuring 0.2m thick, observed at 14.05m OD.

7.20 TP20

7.20.1 Trial pit 20 (fig 2) was located inside the basement of the hotel and was excavated to a depth of 1.6m.

7.20.2 The earliest deposit was brick rubble [49], observed at 12.55m OD, acting as bedding for a concrete foundation slab [48] observed at 12.89m OD and measuring 0.34m thick.

7.20.3 Above the rubble, a brick slab [47] measuring 0.12m thick, was observed at 12.99m OD forming a base for a stock brick wall footing [51]. The footing [51] aligned NE-SW, was observed at 13.39m OD. It had three steps and was 0.4m deep.

7.20.4 Sealing the wall footing was a deposit of silty sand [46], with frequent brick rubble inclusions, which was observed at 13.88m OD and measured 0.86m thick.

7.20.5 The silty sand was covered by a timber floor [45], measuring 0.2m thick, observed at 14.05m OD.

7.21 TP21

7.21.1 Trial pit 21 (fig 2) was located outside the Hotel and was excavated to a depth of 1.0m.

7.21.2 A mid grey brown silty sand [110] deposit was observed at 16.00m OD and recorded to a depth of 2.0m.

7.21.3 Sealing the silty sand a concrete surface [109] measuring 0.2m thick, was observed at 16.20m OD.

7.22 TP22

7.22.1 Trial pit 22 (fig 2) was located outside the hotel, in the lightwell and was excavated to a depth of 1.2m.

7.22.2 A deposit of dark bluey brown clay [115] was observed at 12.96m OD.

7.22.3 Two stock brick wall footings [113] and [114] aligned NW-SE were observed. Footing [113], belonging to an exterior store wall, was observed at 13.26m OD and measured 0.28m deep. Footing [114], belonging to the exterior wall of the hotel, was observed at 13.26m OD and measured 0.3m deep. Both footings had two steps.

7.22.4 Above these footings a silty sand [112] deposit with frequent brick rubble inclusions, was observed at 13.76m OD and measured 0.8m thick.

7.22.5 Sealing the silty sand a concrete surface [111] was observed at 13.96m OD to be 0.2m thick.

7.23 TP23

7.23.1 Trial pit 23 (fig 2) was located outside the Hotel and was excavated to a depth of 2.54m.

7.23.2 A red brick culvert [119] (the Fleet Sewer) was observed at 13.99m OD to be aligned NW-SE. The culvert appeared curved.

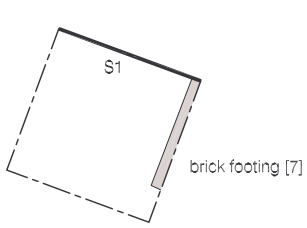
7.23.3 Above the Fleet sewer was a mid to dark grey brown deposit of silty sand [118], observed at 14.09m OD and recorded to a depth of 2.34m.

7.23.4 Immediately above the silty sand was a concrete slab [117] 0.14m thick, was observed at 16.23m OD. The slab sealed the silty sand deposit.

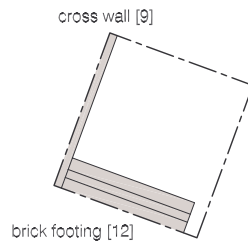
7.23.5 Above the concrete slab a tarmac surface [116], was observed at 16.29m OD which was 0.06m thick.



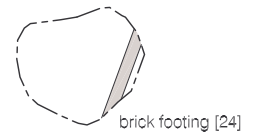
Figure 3
Plan of Test Pits
1:200 at A3



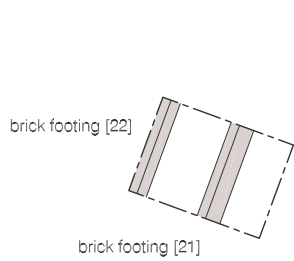
Test Pit 1



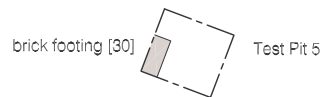
Test Pit 2



Test Pit 3



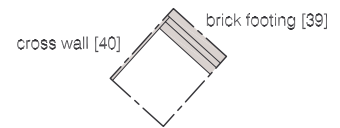
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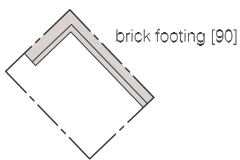
Test Pit 5



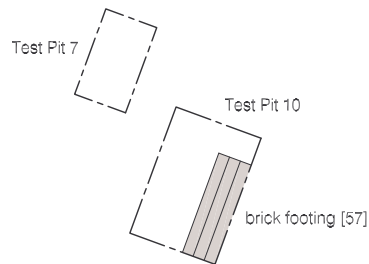
Test Pit 6



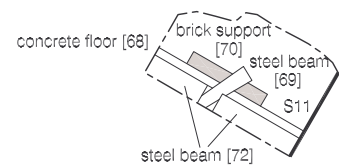
Test Pit 8



Test Pit 9



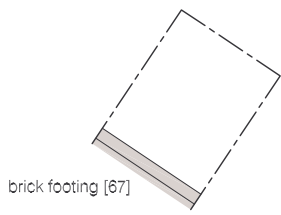
Test Pits 7 & 10



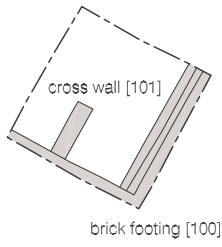
Test Pit 11

0 2m
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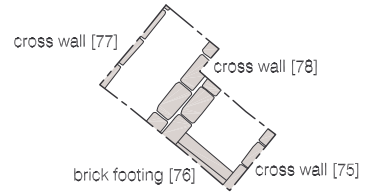
Figure 4
Detail of Trenches 1 - 11
1:50 at A4



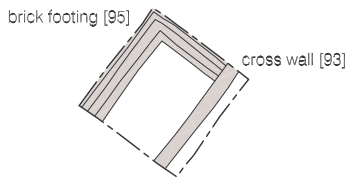
Test Pit 13



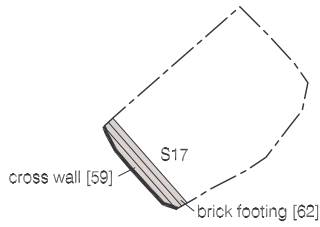
Test Pit 14



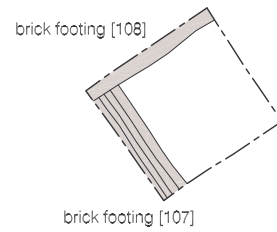
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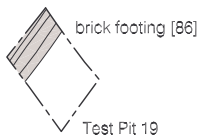
Test Pit 16



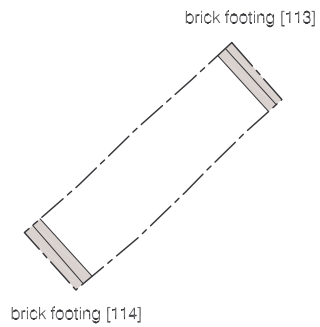
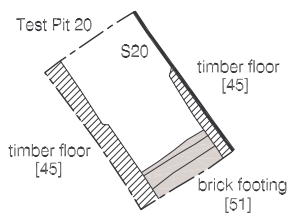
Test Pit 17



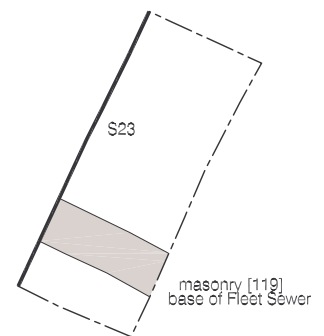
Test Pit 18



Test Pits 19 & 20

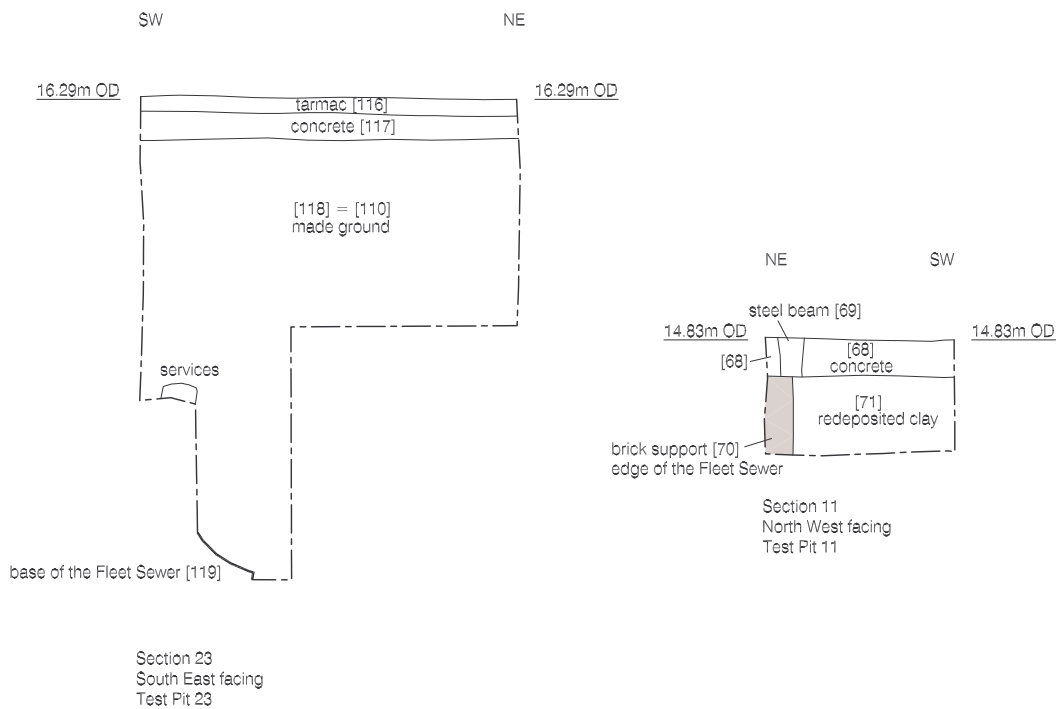
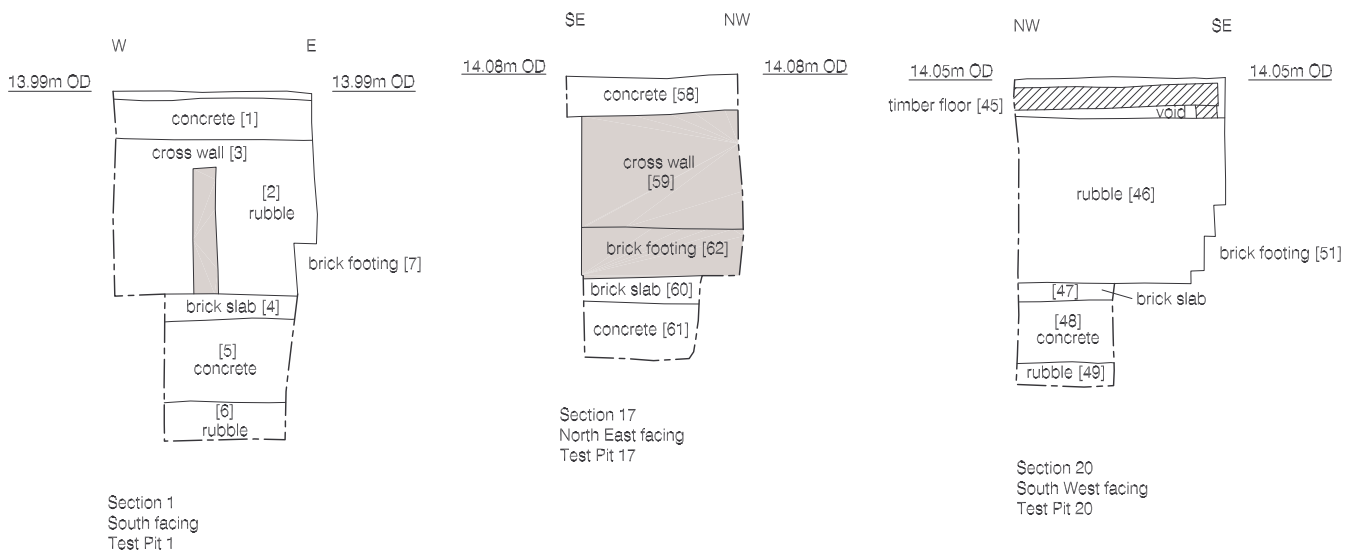


Test Pit 22



Test Pit 23





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Figure 6
Sections 1, 11, 17, 20 & 23
1:40 at A4

8 INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS:

- 8.1 Results from the test pits show that the hotel has been built on a concrete foundation supported by a bed of rubble hardcore. A brick slab was then laid over the concrete. The footings for both the exterior and interior hotel walls were probably keyed into this for structural integrity. The various cross walls observed in the basement area may have acted as supports for the original floor. This was possibly made of large stone slabs, as observed in Trial Pit 15 and stacked for removal elsewhere in the basement. The present concrete floor is probably a later addition.
- 8.2 Clay deposits were observed outside the building footprint, it was not possible to ascertain if they were natural or redeposited as not enough of the deposit was exposed.
- 8.3 The north-eastern limit of the Fleet Sewer was identified in Trial Pits 11 and 23. The brick and steel reinforcements, observed in Trial Pit 11, were built to support the weight of the extension to the hotel built c.1900. Outside the building footprint no reinforcements were needed.
- 8.4 No deposits dating to earlier than the construction of the hotel, 1853–4 were observed.

9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank IHCM and Argent (King's Cross) Limited for commissioning the project, and Wallace who carried out the onsite work, and in particular the assistance of Stan Smith. Thanks to the digging crew who undertook the excavation of the pits and the safe maintenance of them.
- 9.2 The author would like to thank Helen Clough for her project management and the geotechnical crew for their on-site co-operation. Illustrations were produced by Hayley Baxter. Finally thanks to Richard Hughes and Michael Bussell, IHCM.

Plates



Plate 1 Trial Pit 1



Plate 2 Trial Pit 21



Plate 3 Trial Pit 21, showing general site conditions

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Appendix 1 context index

Site Code	Context No.	Plan	Section Elevation	Type	Description	Date
KXB07	1	TP1	S1	Masonry	Concrete Floor	Post-Medieval
KXB07	2	TP1	S1	Layer	Rubble Dump	Post-Medieval
KXB07	3	TP1	S1	Masonry	Wall	Post-Medieval
KXB07	4	TP1	S1	Masonry	Brick Slab	Post-Medieval
KXB07	5	TP1	S1	Masonry	Concrete Foundation Slab	Post-Medieval
KXB07	6	TP1	S1	Layer	Rubble Hardcore	Post-Medieval
KXB07	7	TP2	S2	Masonry	Brick Footing	Post-Medieval
KXB07	8	TP2	S2	Masonry	Concrete Floor	Post-Medieval
KXB07	9	TP2	S2	Masonry	Brick Cross Wall	Post-Medieval
KXB07	10	TP2	S2	Masonry	Brick Slab	Post-Medieval
KXB07	11	TP2	S2	Masonry	Concrete Foundation Slab	Post-Medieval
KXB07	12	TP3	S3	Masonry	Brick Footing	Post-Medieval
KXB07	13	TP3	S3	Masonry	Concrete Floor	Post-Medieval
KXB07	14	TP3	S3	Layer	Rubble Dump	Post-Medieval
KXB07	15	TP3	S3	Masonry	Brick Slab	Post-Medieval
KXB07	16	TP3	S3	Masonry	Concrete Foundation Slab	Post-Medieval
KXB07	17	TP4	S4	Masonry	Concrete Floor	Post-Medieval
KXB07	18	TP4	S4	Layer	Sandy gravels	Post-Medieval
KXB07	19	TP4	S4	Layer	Silty Sand	Post-Medieval
KXB07	20	TP4	S4	Masonry	Brick Slab	Post-Medieval
KXB07	21	TP4	S4	Masonry	Brick Footing	Post-Medieval
KXB07	22	TP4	S4	Masonry	Brick Footing	Post-Medieval
KXB07	23	TP4	S4	Masonry	Concrete Foundation Slab	Post-Medieval
KXB07	24	TP3	S3	Masonry	Brick Footing	Post-Medieval
KXB07	25	VOID				
KXB07	26	TP3	S3	Layer	Rubble Hardcore	Post-Medieval
KXB07	27	VOID				Post-Medieval
KXB07	28	TP12	S12	Masonry	Concrete Floor	Post-Medieval
KXB07	29	TP12	S12	Masonry	Brick Service Cap	Post-Medieval
KXB07	30	TP5	S5	Masonry	Brick Footing	Post-Medieval
KXB07	31	VOID				
KXB07	32	TP5	S5	Masonry	Brick Wall	Post-Medieval
KXB07	33	TP5	S5	Masonry	Concrete Surface	Post-Medieval
KXB07	34	TP5	S5	Layer	Rubble Hardcore	Post-Medieval
KXB07	35	TP5	S5	Layer	Gravelly Silt Dump	Post-Medieval
KXB07	36	TP6	S6	Masonry	Concrete Surface	Post-Medieval
KXB07	37	TP6	S6	Layer	Gravelly Silt Dump	Post-Medieval
KXB07	38	TP7	S7	Masonry	Concrete Surface	Post-Medieval
KXB07	39	TP8	S8	Masonry	Brick Footing	Post-Medieval
KXB07	40	TP8	S8	Masonry	Brick Cross Wall	Post-Medieval
KXB07	41	TP8	S8	Layer	Tarmac	Post-Medieval
KXB07	42	TP8	S8	Masonry	Concrete Surface	Post-Medieval
KXB07	43	TP8	S8	Layer	Rubble Hardcore	Post-Medieval
KXB07	44	TP8	S8	Layer	Clayey Silt Dump	Post-Medieval
KXB07	45	TP20	S20	Timber	Timber Floor	Post-Medieval
KXB07	46	TP20	S20	Layer	Silty Sand Dump	Post-Medieval
KXB07	47	TP20	S20	Masonry	Brick Slab	Post-Medieval

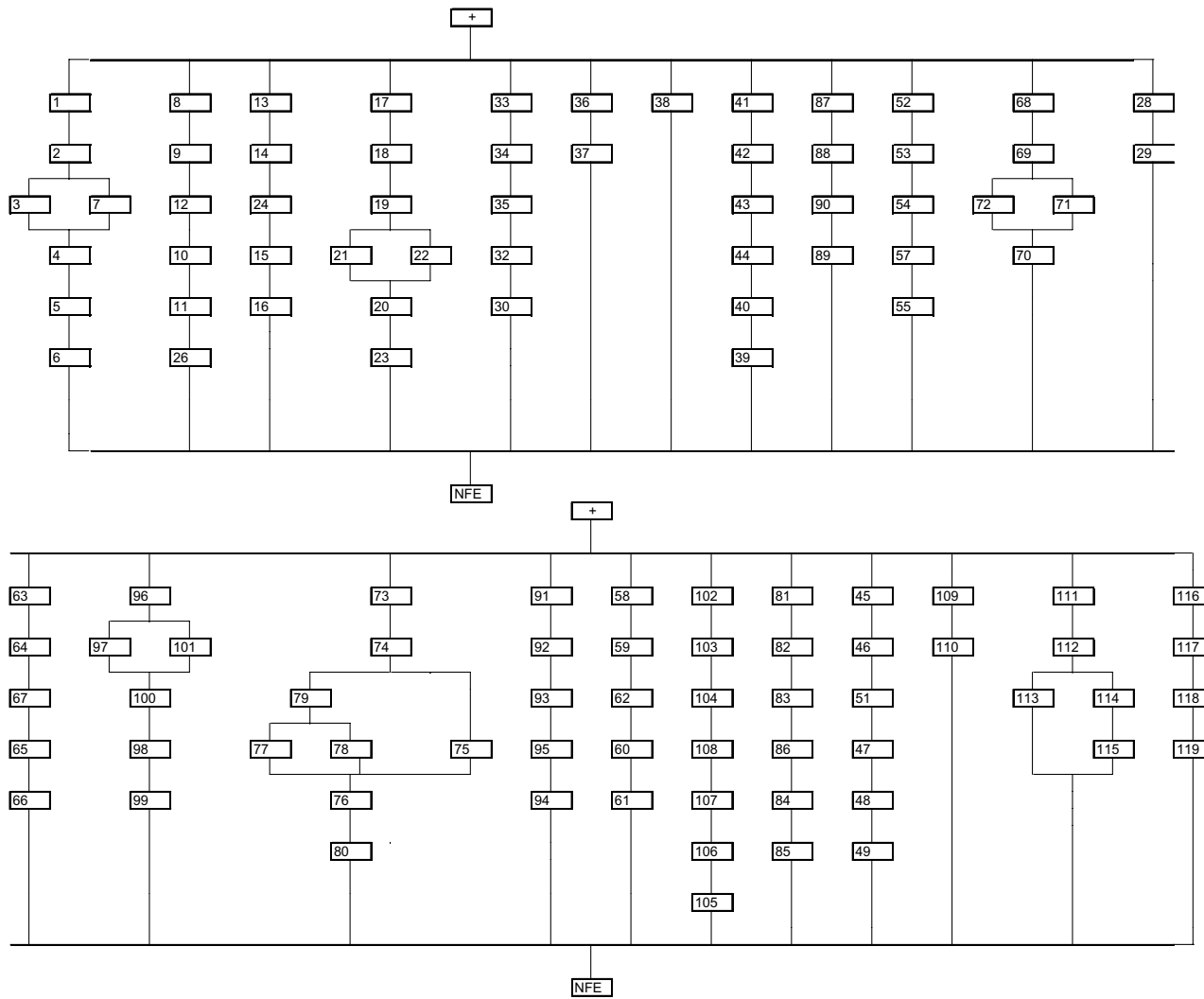
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KXB07	51	TP20	S20	Masonry	Brick Footing	Post-Medieval
KXB07	52	TP10	S10	Masonry	Brick Floor	Post-Medieval
KXB07	53	TP10	S10	Layer	Bedding Sand	Post-Medieval
KXB07	54	TP10	S10	Layer	Gravel Dump	Post-Medieval
KXB07	55	TP10	S10	Layer	Clay Deposit	Post-Medieval
KXB07	56	VOID				
KXB07	57	TP10	S10	Masonry	Brick Footing	Post-Medieval
KXB07	58	TP17	S17	Masonry	Concrete Floor	Post-Medieval
KXB07	59	TP17	S17	Masonry	Brick Cross Wall	Post-Medieval
KXB07	60	TP17	S17	Masonry	Brick Slab	Post-Medieval
KXB07	61	TP17	S17	Masonry	Concrete Foundation Slab	Post-Medieval
KXB07	62	TP17	S17	Masonry	Brick Footing	Post-Medieval
KXB07	63	TP13	S13	Masonry	Concrete Floor	Post-Medieval
KXB07	64	TP13	S13	Layer	Sandy Rubble Dump	Post-Medieval
KXB07	65	TP13	S13	Masonry	Brick Slab	Post-Medieval
KXB07	66	TP13	S13	Masonry	Concrete Foundation Slab	Post-Medieval
KXB07	67	TP13	S13	Masonry	Brick Footing	Post-Medieval
KXB07	68	TP11	S11	Masonry	Concrete Floor	Post-Medieval
KXB07	69	TP11	S11	Metal	Steel Beam	Post-Medieval
KXB07	70	TP11	S11	Masonry	Brick Support	Post-Medieval
KXB07	71	TP11	S11	Layer	Silty Clay	Post-Medieval
KXB07	72	TP11	S11	Metal	Steel Beam	Post-Medieval
KXB07	73	TP15	S15	Masonry	Concrete Floor	Post-Medieval
KXB07	74	TP15	S15	Masonry	Stone Slab	Post-Medieval
KXB07	75	TP15	S15	Masonry	Brick Cross Wall	Post-Medieval
KXB07	76	TP15	S15	Masonry	Brick Footing	Post-Medieval
KXB07	77	TP15	S15	Masonry	Brick Cross Wall	Post-Medieval
KXB07	78	TP15	S15	Masonry	Brick Cross Wall	Post-Medieval
KXB07	79	TP15	S15	Layer	Rubble Dump	Post-Medieval
KXB07	80	TP15	S15	Masonry	Brick Slab	Post-Medieval
KXB07	81	TP19	S19	Timber	Timber Floor	Post-Medieval
KXB07	82	TP19	S19	Layer	Silty Sand Dump	Post-Medieval
KXB07	83	TP19	S19	Layer	Clay Deposit	Post-Medieval
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KXB07	85	TP19	S19	Masonry	Concrete Foundation Slab	Post-Medieval
KXB07	86	TP19	S19	Masonry	Brick Footing	Post-Medieval
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KXB07	96	TP14	S14	Masonry	Concrete Floor	Post-Medieval

Site Code	Context No.	Plan	Section / Elevation	Type	Description	Date
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KXB07	99	TP14	S14	Masonry	Concrete Foundation Slab	Post-Medieval
KXB07	100	TP14	S14	Masonry	Brick Footing	Post-Medieval
KXB07	101	TP14	S14	Masonry	Brick Cross Wall	Post-Medieval
KXB07	102	TP18	S18	Masonry	Concrete Floor	Post-Medieval
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KXB07	104	TP18	S18	Layer	Silty Sand Dump	Post-Medieval
KXB07	105	TP18	S18	Masonry	Brick Slab	Post-Medieval
KXB07	106	TP18	S18	Masonry	Concrete Foundation Slab	Post-Medieval
KXB07	107	TP18	S18	Masonry	Brick Footing	Post-Medieval
KXB07	108	TP18	S18	Masonry	Brick Cross Wall	Post-Medieval
KXB07	109	TP21	S21	Masonry	Concrete Surface	Post-Medieval
KXB07	110	TP21	S21	Layer	Sandy Silt Dump	Post-Medieval
KXB07	111	TP22	S22	Masonry	Concrete Surface	Post-Medieval
KXB07	112	TP22	S22	Layer	Silty Sand Dump	Post-Medieval
KXB07	113	TP22	S22	Masonry	Brick Footing	Post-Medieval
KXB07	114	TP22	S22	Masonry	Brick Footing	Post-Medieval
KXB07	115	TP22	S22	Layer	Clay Deposit	Post-Medieval
KXB07	116	TP23	S23	Layer	Tarmac	Post-Medieval
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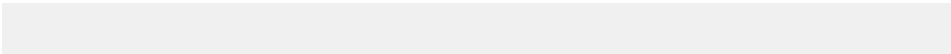
Appendix 2 section register

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KXB07	3	1:20	13.99m OD	TP3	approximately ENE facing
KXB07	4	1:20	13.67m OD	TP4	approximately SSW facing
KXB07	5	1:20	13.67m OD	TP5	approximately ESE facing
KXB07	6	1:20	13.67m OD	TP6	approximately ESE facing
KXB07	7	1:20	13.67m OD	TP7	approximately ESE facing
KXB07	8	1:10	13.67m OD	TP8	approximately NW facing
KXB07	9	1:20	13.41m OD	TP9	approximately SW facing
KXB07	10	1:20	13.41m OD	TP10	approximately SSW facing
KXB07	11	1:20	14.83m OD	TP11	approximately NW facing
KXB07	12	1:20	14.03m OD	TP12	approximately NW facing
KXB07	13	1:20	14.03m OD	TP13	approximately SE facing
KXB07	14	1:20	14.08m OD	TP14	approximately SSW facing
KXB07	15	1:20	14.02m OD	TP15	approximately NE facing
KXB07	16	1:20	14.08m OD	TP16	approximately NW facing
KXB07	17	1:20	14.08m OD	TP17	approximately NE facing
KXB07	18	1:20	14.08m OD	TP18	approximately NE facing
KXB07	19	1:20	14.05m OD	TP19	approximately ESE facing
KXB07	20	1:20	14.05m OD	TP20	approximately NW facing
KXB07	21	1:20	16.20m OD	TP21	approximately ENE facing
KXB07	22	1:20	13.96m OD	TP22	approximately NNE facing
KXB07	23	1:20	16.29m OD	TP23	approximately SE facing

Appendix 3 matrix



Appendix 4 oasis form



OASIS ID: preconst1-36819



Project details

Project name Great Northern Hotel, Kings Cross Central

Short description of the project Monitoring of geotechnical trial pits in the basement area of the Great Northern Hotel, Kings Cross, was carried out as a watching brief. All structural sub surface features were located and recorded. These included internal and external wall footings, foundation slabs and cross walls. The north eastern edge of the Fleet Sewer was located and recorded.

Project dates Start: 11-12-2007 End: 18-01-2008

Previous/future work Not known / Not known

Any associated project codes reference KXB07 - Sitecode

Type of project Recording project

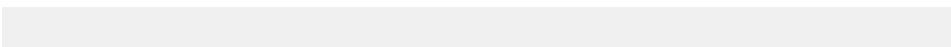
Site status Listed Building

Current Land use Other 2 - In use as a building

Monument type MASONRY Post Medieval

Investigation type 'Watching Brief'

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16



Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON CAMDEN CAMDEN Great Northern Hotel Kings Cross

Study area 825.00 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 3018 8302 51.5305665047 -0.123039216241 51 31 50 N 000
07 22 W Point

Project creators

Name of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Organisation

Project brief Argent Limited
originator

Project design IHCM
originator

Project director/manager Helen Clough

Project supervisor Shane Maher

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title An Archaeological Watching Brief at the Great Northern Hotel,
King's Cross Central, London Borough of Camden

Author(s)/Editor(s) Maher T.S.

Date 2008

Issuer or publisher Pre-Construct Archaeology

Place of issue or London
publication

Entered by T. S. Maher (jtaylor@pre-construct.com)

Entered on 25 January 2008
