An Archaeological Watching Brief at Ferry House, Riverside, Twickenham, London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

Site Code: FRH08

Central National Grid Reference: TQ 1675 7336

Written by Stuart Watson Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, November 2008

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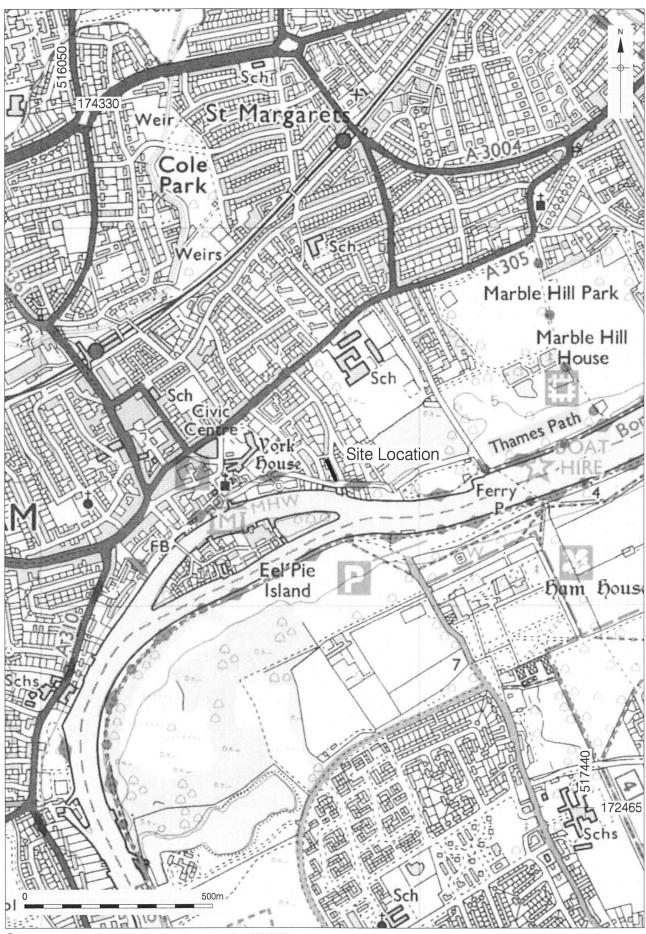
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1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report details the results and working methods of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited on land at the rear of Ferry House, Riverside, Twickenham, London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.
- 1.2 The archaeological investigation (a watching brief) consisted of monitoring and recording the excavation of one trench located in the rear garden of the property prior to the construction of a swimming pool, which represented the only intrusive groundwork associated with the development.
- 1.3 The investigation revealed the partially demolished remains of brick-built foundation walls for an 18th century out-building, along with a brick-lined well shaft which had been incorporated into the wall. While both these features are thought to be contemporary with the main property, Ferry House, the top of the well had been capped at a later date by a brick-built dome, constructed in the early 19th century.
- 1.4 Natural deposits of river flood plain sands were encountered on the site, overlain by post-medieval deposits of sub-soil and garden soil respectively.
- 1.5 No archaeological features pre-dating the early to mid 18th century were encountered during the watching brief.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 An Archaeological Watching Brief was conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd on land to the rear of Ferry House, Riverside, Twickenham, London Borough of Richmond upon Thames. The archaeological fieldwork was undertaken during the excavation of one trench located in the rear garden of the property prior to the construction of a swimming pool.
- 2.2 The investigation was conducted between the 20th and 28th October 2008 and was commissioned by Gilmore Hankey Kirke (GHK) Ltd. on behalf of Mr T Levy.
- 2.3 The site is located in the rear garden of Ferry House, Riverside, Twickenham, London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and is bounded to the south by Riverside (which runs alongside the Middlesex bank of the River Thames), to the west by adjoining properties fronting Riverside, to the east by Lebanon Park and to the north by Little Ferry Road.
- 2.4 The National Grid Reference of the site centre is TQ 1675 7336.
- 2.5 The site was allocated the code FRH08.
- 2.6 The watching brief was supervised by Stuart Watson and the project was managed by Tim Bradley for Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited. The fieldwork was monitored by Ms Diane Walls, English Heritage (GLAAS), on behalf of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.



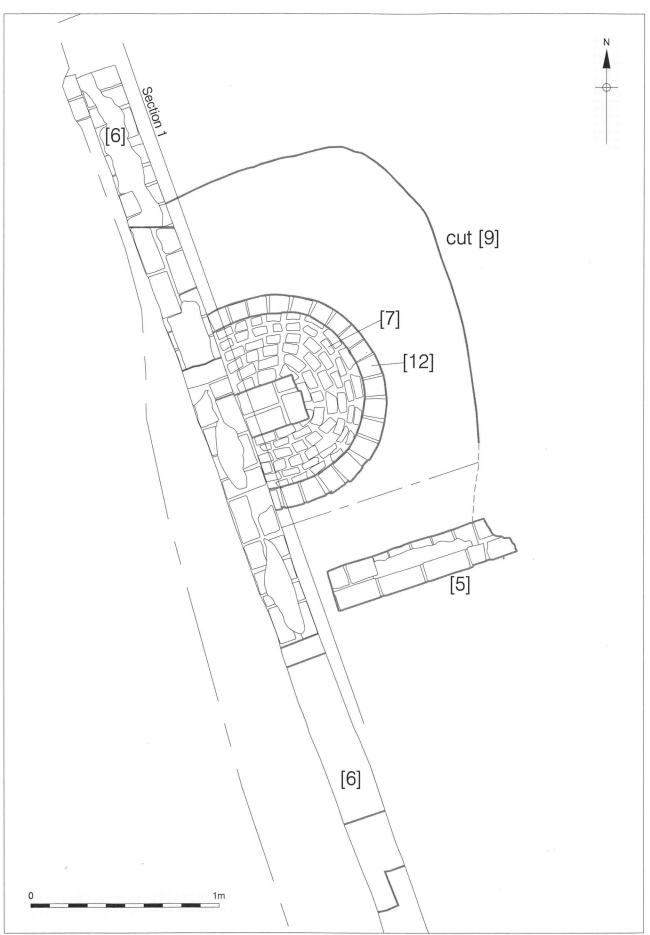
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Figure 2 Trench Location Plan 1:250 at A4



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Figure 3 Plan of Trench 1 1:20 at A4

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND RESERCH OBJECTIVES

3.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd were commissioned by GHK Ltd to undertake work required following recommendations outlined by English Heritage Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service:

No development shall take place until the applicant, their agent or successors in title has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme for investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

- 3.2 The archaeological works followed the schedule as specified in the Written Scheme of Investigation prepared for this site¹ which was submitted to, and approved by, English Heritage on behalf of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.
- 3.3 The Greater London Sites and Monuments Record suggests that the site has potential for prehistoric, medieval and post-medieval remains, and after consultation with Diane Walls, English Heritage GLAAS, it was recommended that an archaeological investigation (in this instance, a watching brief) should be focused on the part of the development proposal likely to have the most significant archaeological impact, namely the ground work associated with the construction of a lap pool in the rear garden of Ferry House, located to the north of the property.
- 3.4 The archaeological works followed the methodologies as set out in:
 - Archaeological Guidance Paper 3: Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork In London (GLAAS 1998).
 - Archaeological Guidance Paper 4: Archaeological Reports (GLAAS 1998).
 - Archaeological Guidance Paper 5: Evaluations (GLAAS 1998).
- 3.5 Ferry House is a Grade II listed building and is located in a conservation area (Twickenham Riverside) and an Archaeological Priority Zone, as defined by London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

¹ Bradley, T. July 2008

3.6 Research Objectives

- 3.7 The general aim of the research objectives at the site are as follows:
 - Locate, define, record and date any surviving archaeological deposits, features or finds on the site.
 - What evidence can be revealed of the natural strata and its' topography at the site?
- 3.8 In addition, the following specific research questions were addressed by the archaeological works on site:
 - Is there any evidence of prehistoric remains in the area of development?
 - Is there any further evidence of Roman activity in the area of the site?
 - Is there any evidence for medieval activity in the area of development?
 - Is there any evidence for post-medieval activity in the area of the site?

4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 4.1 The British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Series Sheet 270 (South London) indicates that the site lies on alluvial flood plain deposits of the River Thames; mainly sand, silt and clay. The excavation confirmed this data, with natural deposits of sand encountered at approximately 1.05m below current ground level at c. 5.85m OD.
- 4.2 The ground level over the entire area occupied by Ferry House and its grounds rises up from south to north by approximately 2.00m. The resulting natural slope has been counteracted in the past by terracing of the northern part of the rear garden with the current ground level at the site at c. 7.07 m OD.
- 4.3 The site is adjacent to the northern bank of the River Thames, which lies approximately 8.0m to the south of the study area.

5 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 5.1 The Ferry House is believed to date to the early to mid 18th century and takes its name from its proximity to the Twickenham ferry.
- Twickenham ferry crossed the River Thames by the shortest route between Ham House on the Surrey side (the southern bank) and the Middlesex side (the northern bank). Despite its name, the ferry is located some distance downstream from the historic centre of Twickenham; Eel Pie Island (a small Thames 'Eyot' opposite the town centre) effectively blocks a more direct route.
- 5.3 The first documented reference to the ferry comes from a Privy Council Ordinance dated 19th August 1652, prohibiting its use after sundown. The Ferry probably owes its existence to the construction of Ham House in 1610, on the opposite bank to Ferry House, by Sir Thomas Vavasour, as the right to licence ferrymen was claimed by the owners of Ham House, most notably the Dysart Family, who took over ownership after Vavasour. Indeed the ferry is often referred to as Dysart Ferry.
- 5.4 Twickenham Ferry features in Charles Dickens' *Little Dorrit* written in 1857, when Arthur Clennam crosses to Ham and back.
- 5.5 When Ham House came into possession of the National Trust in 1948, the ferry transferred to private ownership. A long running dispute on the Rights of Way to the ferry slipway, adjacent to Ferry House, ultimately led to the ferry closing in 1970².
- 5.6 Twickenham itself is medieval in origin, focused on the Parish Church of St. Mary, which dates to the 14th century, located by northern bank of the River Thames. Georgian and early Victorian development continued around the medieval core, but with the advent of the railways in 1863 the focus of development shifted to the current town centre.

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² http://www.twickenham-museum.org.uk/detail.asp?ContentID=172

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 The fieldwork was designed as an archaeological watching brief to monitor and record any archaeological deposits exposed during the groundworks for the construction of a swimming pool in the rear garden of Ferry House.
- 6.2 The study area was located in the grounds of Ferry House, approximately 24m north of the rear of the property. One trench, representing the footprint of the proposed pool, was excavated and the dimensions are as follows: 13.52m north-south by 4.35m east-west, giving a total excavated area of 58.81m².
- 6.3 Overall the site was excavated to a depth of c. 1.60m from current ground level utilising a mini mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket.
- 6.4 The works were monitored by an attendant archaeologist from Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited.
- 6.5 All archaeological features (stratigraphical layers, cuts, fills, structures) were recorded in plan at a scale of 1:20 and in section at a scale of 1:10. All written data was entered on *pro-forma* sheets following standard recording methods, and a photographic record using 35mm colour slide film, monochrome film and digital format was made as appropriate.
- 6.6 Levels were taken with the assistance of the on-site engineer, and were calculated from the finished floor level of the Coach House (adjacent to the north of the site), which has a value of 7.11m OD.
- 6.7 The work was undertaken following English Heritage (GLAAS) guidelines.³

³ English Heritage, GLAAS. 1998

7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

7.1 Introduction

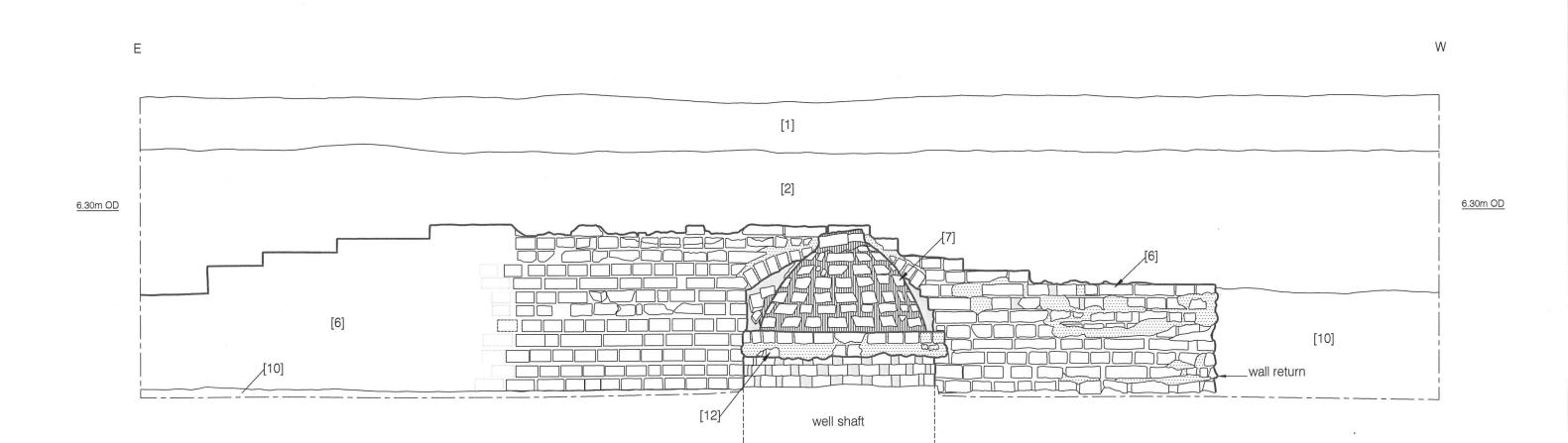
- 7.2 The following description of the stratigraphy details the main characteristics of each context and its position in the phased stratigraphic matrix. Further information regarding the contexts can be found in Appendix 1.
- 7.2 Only archaeological features relating to the post-medieval period were identified in the area excavated. These consisted of early 18th century brick foundations and an associated brick-lined well, which had been capped in the early 19th century.

7.3 Phased Discussion

- 7.4 The earliest deposit recorded during the investigation was layer [10], a natural deposit of light to mid yellowish brown fine sand with no inclusions (Figure 4). This layer represented the alluvial flood plain deposits from the River Thames, and was observed across the base of the trench. The highest level for this layer was encountered at c.1.05m below current ground level at 5.85m OD, and continued beyond the limit of excavation of the trench.
- 7.5 Cut into layer [10] was a sequence of brick structures (Figures 3 & 4) given the collective structure number [11]. This structure consisted of wall [6], and brick capping [7] for well [12]. Wall [5] was also included under this structure number as it was contemporary with [6], but was encountered higher up in the stratigraphic sequence (see below).
- 7.6 Wall [6] was a brick built foundation wall, aligned north-south, and located along the western edge of the trench. It measured 5.60m north-south by 0.22m east-west. The height of the surviving wall was 0.88m. The top of wall [6] was revealed at c. 0.70m below ground level at 6.20mOD. The base of the wall was at 1.57m below ground level at 5.34mOD.
- 7.6 Wall [6] was observed to continue in a straight line beyond the southern limit of the trench. The northern end of the wall returned at 90° (thus forming a corner) and continued beyond the western limit of the trench. This corner would suggest that wall [6] represents the outer wall of the building, possibly an out-house built off the garden boundary wall, located 2.50m to the west. Analysis of the brick fabric and mortar type

- suggests that the building was constructed in the late 17th to early 18th century, with the latter being a more likely date, and is contemporary with the Ferry House and the western garden boundary wall.
- 7.7 Mid-way along the exposed section of wall [6], a shallow brick arch was observed, into which the upper section of a brick lined well shaft [12] had been constructed, the top of which was recorded at 5.65mOD (Figures 3 & 4).
- 7.8 The top of well [12] had been capped over at a later date by a brick built dome-shaped structure [7]. Circular in plan, the well had a diameter of 0.80m by 0.50m (Figures 3 & 4)). The thick beds of mortar were a mid-brown cement 'Roman' mortar, and the structure was partly constructed from 19th century frogged brick, and partly from re-used 18th century brick. On site analysis gave a date of the early 19th century for the capping. The top of this feature was recorded at 6.15mOD and the base at 5.65mOD.
- 7.9 After the removal of the brick cap [7], the brick lining of well [12] was observed to continue down to a depth of at least 2.10m from the base of [7], to c.3.30mOD (Figures 8 & 9). The well had not been backfilled, was dry, and the base appeared to be the natural sand [10].
- 7.10 The construction cut [9] for well [12] was observed extending in a 0.50m diameter at the top of the well, where it had gradual sloping sides, narrowing down to a diameter of c. 0.30m, were it became vertical (Figure 3). The top of the cut was observed at 6.04mOD whilst the base was unexcavated. The backfill [8] for the construction cut was dark greyish brown silty sand at the higher level, becoming course gravel lower down. No construction cut was observed for the wall itself, which is presumed to have been trench built.
- 7.11 Located at 90° to wall [6] was a short section of brick wall [5], measuring 0.94m eastwest by 0.22m north-south and 0.13m thick (two brick courses) (Figure 3). The western end of the wall was a true terminus, while its eastern end has been truncated in the past and probably originally continued eastwards. While not physically attached to wall [6] (being separated by 0.14m gap), wall [5] was constructed of the same brick fabric and mortar type as wall [6], and may be presumed to be contemporary with it (18th century) it has therefore been included under the same structure number [11]. However, it was identified higher up in the stratigraphic sequence, being built onto layer [2], rather than cut into natural layer [10] as in the case of wall [6], and its

- precise function in relation to wall [6] is unknown. The highest level for wall [5] was 6.18mOD and its lowest is 6.04mOD.
- 7.12 Sealing [10] and overlying structure [11] was layer [2] (Figure 4). This was a deposit of mid greyish brown silty sand sub-soil with frequent inclusions of ceramic building material, and occasional pottery, glass, animal bone and clay tobacco pipe fragments. The pottery has a broad range of spot dates; 1550-1700 in the case of a Frechen stoneware jug base, whilst a complete yellow ware bowl dated 1820-1930+. A complete glass cylindrical wine bottle has a date of c.1840. The ceramic building material is presumed to originate from the demolition of structure [11]. This layer was approximately 0.75m thick and the top of the layer was at 6.60mOD while the base was at 5.85mOD.
- 7.13 Cut into the top of layer [2] was a north west south east aligned linear feature [3]. Measuring 2.80m in length and 0.40m wide, this feature had a shallow 'U'-shaped profile 0.20m deep. The feature terminated at its north-west end and contained a mid yellow brown sand fill [4], identical to the natural [10], and therefore is presumed to be re-deposited natural sand. One sherd of pottery, a small fragment of tin glazed earthenware, was recovered from the fill, giving a date of between 1570-1846, but probably 17th century. The top of the cut was at 6.26mOD and its base at 6.08mOD. The function of this feature is unclear, but may possibly be a garden feature; a planting trench for example.
- 7.14 Built into layer [2] was wall [5], which is discussed above (7.3.4).
- 7.15 Overlaying layer [2] and all of the preceding features was layer [1], a c.0.30m to 0.40m thick later of dark greyish black silty sand with very small occasional subangular pebbles as inclusions. This is interpreted as a humus rich modern garden soil layer, the top of which was at 6.90mOD and the base at 6.60mOD.
- 7.16 All of the above features were sealed by modern paving slabs and turf, which formed the current ground level at 7.02mOD.



Section S2 Trench 1 East Facing

Roman mortar - Early C19th

Off-white, limestone mortar - Early C18th

Voids

8 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

8.1 The original research objectives of the investigation are listed below with a summary of the archaeological evidence recovered to formulate interpretations and conclusions.

8.2 General Research Objectives

- 8.2.1 What is the nature of the surviving archaeological deposits, features or finds on the site?
- 8.2.2 The investigation revealed evidence of early 18th century foundation walls of a possible out-building and an associated well, with a later early 19th century capping of the well.
- 8.2.3 What evidence can be revealed of the natural strata and its' topography at the site?
- 8.2.4 Natural alluvial deposits of River Thames flood plain sands were encountered at the site approximately 1.00m below current ground level.

8.3 Specific Research Objectives

- 8.3.1 Is there any evidence of prehistoric remains in the area of development?
- 8.3.2 No evidence for any activity in the prehistoric period was discovered.
- 8.3.3 Is there any further evidence of Roman activity in the area of the site?
- 8.3.4 No evidence was found for activity in the Roman period specific to this location.
- 8.3.5 Is there any evidence for medieval activity in the area of development?
- 8.3.6 No evidence for activity in the medieval period was discovered.
- 8.3.7 Is there any evidence for post-medieval activity in the area of the site?
- 8.3.8 Substantial evidence for post-medieval activity was uncovered at the site (see Figures 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8).
- 8.3.9 The foundation walls [5] and [6] observed in the south west corner of the trench have been dated to the early 18th century and are contemporary with Ferry House and the western boundary garden wall. The observation of a corner to the wall, continuing to

- the west, would suggest that this was possibly an out-building constructed off of the garden wall.
- 8.3.10 The explanation of the well [12], and its later capping [7], is more problematic. The well is contemporary with the wall, but how it was accessed is difficult to ascertain. Access was from the western side of the wall (only the eastern side was exposed during the investigation) via a shallow arch constructed in the wall. However most of the well lies beyond the exterior line of the wall, and can only be accessed by a gap of approximately 0.40m, giving very limited head room. How this worked practically is unclear.
- 8.3.11 The early 19th century capping [7] to the well is equally problematic. Time and effort had gone into the construction of the capping, a brick built dome with thick bedding layers of 'Roman' mortar. This cap completely sealed off the well, but the question remains as to why such effort was used in building a dome rather than, for example, a simple slab is unclear, particularly on a feature that was below ground and unseen. It is possible that this feature had a function beyond a capping devise, possibly the foundation base for a structure above.
- 8.3.12 The structures discussed above were sealed by 19th century subsoil and topsoil.

9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

9.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Mr T Levy and GHK Limited for commissioning the work. The author would also like to thank of the contractors of Symm Limited for their invaluable assistance on site. PCA CAD department produced the drawings, Kevin Haywood dated the brick and mortar, Chris Jarrett dated the pottery and Tim Bradley undertook the project management and editing.

10 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Papers: 1 Written Schemes of Investigation; 2 Desk-Based Assessments; 3 Standards and
Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork in London; Archaeological Reports; 5 Evaluations.

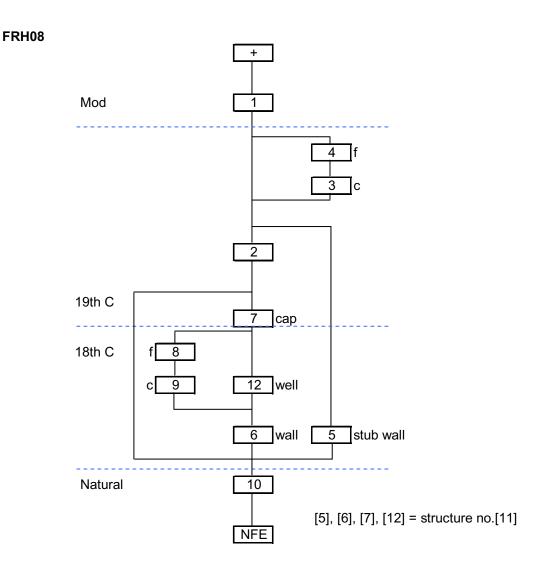
Cartographic sources.

British Geological Survey. 1;50 000 Series, England and Wales Sheet 270 (South London) 1998.

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context		Plan	Section	Description	Date
No.	Type	No.	No.		
1	Layer	-	S.2	Top-soil	Modern
2	Layer	3	S.2	Sub-soil	Post-med
3	Cut	3	-	Linear feature	Post-med
4	Fill	3	-	Of cut [3]	Post-med
5	Masonry	M/C	S.1	E/W stub wall	18 th C.
6	Masonry	11	S.2	N/S Wall	18 th C.
7	Masonry	11	S.2	Brick capping	19 th C
8	Fill	M/C	-	Of C/cut [9]	18 th C
9	Cut	M/C	-	C/cut of well	18 th C
10	Layer	TR 1	S.2	Natural Sand	Geological
11	Structure	11	S.2	Walls [5], [6], [7],[12]	Post-med
12	Masonry	11	S.3	Well	18 th C.

APPENDIX 2: MATRIX



APPENDIX 3: PHOTOGRAPHS (figs 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9)



Figure 5. West facing view of wall [6], well [12] and capping [7] (structure No 11). Scale is 1.00m



Figure 6. West facing view of well [12] and capping [7]. Scale is $0.5 \mathrm{m}$



Figure 7. South West view of structure [11]. Scale is 1.00m



Figure 8. West facing view of opened well [12]. Scale is 0.5m

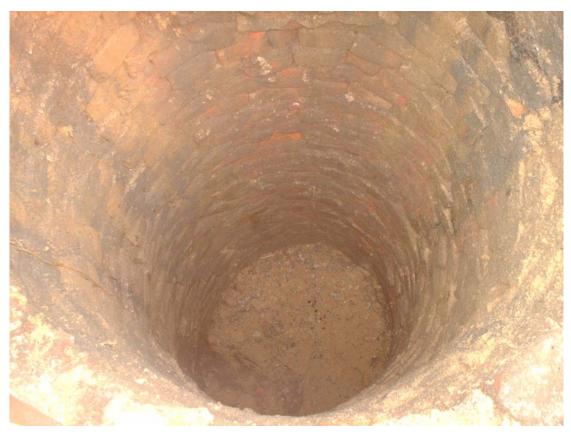


Figure 9. East facing view of interior of well [12].

APPENDIX 4: OASIS FORM

Project details

Project name An Archaeological Watching Brief at Ferry House, Riverside,

Twickenham, London Borough of Richmond upon Thames

the project

Short description of A Watching brief on the excavation for a swimming pool in the rear garden of Ferry House, Twickenham Riverside, uncovered early 18th century wall foundations to an out-house, with an associated well that had a been capped with a brick dome in the early 19th century. Natural Sand from the River Thames Flood Plain was also observed, c. 1.10m below ground level. No archaeology pre-dating

Start: 20-10-2008 End: 28-10-2008

the 18th century was discovered at this site.

Previous/future

Project dates

work

No / Not known

Any associated project reference

codes

FRH08 - Sitecode

Type of project

Field evaluation

Site status

Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area

Current Land use

Other 5 - Garden

Monument type

FOUNDATION WALLS, WELL Post Medieval

Monument type

BRICK CAPPING TO WELL Post Medieval

Significant Finds POTTERY Post Medieval

Methods & techniques

'Visual Inspection'

Development type

Building refurbishment/repairs/restoration

Prompt

Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Position in the

After full determination (eg. As a condition)

planning process

Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON RICHMOND UPON THAMES TWICKENHAM

Ferry House, Riverside, Twickenham

Postcode TW1

Study area 58.81 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 1675 7336 51.4466789370 -0.319776285680 51 26 48 N 000

19 11 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 5.30m Max: 8.85m

Project creators

Name of

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Organisation

Project brief

GLAAS

originator

Project design

originator

Tim Bradley

Project

Tim Bradley

director/manager

Project supervisor

Stuart Watson

Type of

Private Developer

sponsor/funding

body

Project archives

Physical Archive

LAARC

recipient

Physical Contents

'Animal Bones','Ceramics','Glass','Metal'

Digital Archive

No

Exists?

Paper Archive

LAARC

recipient

Paper Contents

'Animal Bones','Ceramics','Glass','Metal'

Paper Media

'Context sheet','Matrices','Photograph','Plan','Section'

available

Project

bibliography 1

Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Publication type

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