

An Archaeological Watching Brief During the Installation of New Signage at the Tower of London, London Borough of Tower Hamlets, EC3 – An Addendum to a Previous Site Report

Site Code: TOL 105

Central National Grid Reference: TQ 3346 8051

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October 2009

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report details the methodology and results of an archaeological watching brief conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd during the excavation of two trenches for new signage at the Tower of London, London Borough of Tower Hamlets, EC3.
- 1.2 The watching brief was undertaken on the 13th of August 2009. It supplements the watching briefs undertaken during earlier phases of signage installation in October 2007 and March 2008, which has previously been reported upon (Watson 2008) - Watson, S. 2008. An Archaeological Watching Brief During the Installation of New Signage at the Tower of London, London Borough of Tower Hamlets EC3. Unpublished: Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited.
- 1.3 The work was commissioned by Sharon Kerrigan, Historic Royal Palaces and monitored by Jane Spooner, Curator, Tower of London. The groundwork contractors were Wood and Wood. The work was supervised by Sarah Barrowman and managed by Chris Mayo for Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.
- 1.4 The two trenches were located immediately west of the Middle Tower (Figure 1). The National Grid Reference of the site centre is TQ 3346 8051.
- 1.5 The Tower of London is a World Heritage Site (No. 488), and also a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Greater London No. 10).
- 1.6 The investigations found evidence of layers of post-medieval garden soil, with a layer of post-medieval demolition rubble in the northern of the trenches. No archaeological features or natural deposits were observed, nor were any deposits pre-dating the post-medieval period.

2 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 Two trenches were excavated for the installation of a new sign in the grassed area immediately to the west of the Middle Tower at the Tower of London (Figure 1). This investigation follows on from a watching brief undertaken during earlier signage installations at various points within the Tower of London (Watson 2008).
 - 2.2 The two trenches were hand-dug by contractors from Wood and Wood, and monitored by the author. The trenches were positioned in a line aligned north-south, with E198 A being the southern and E198 B being to the north. Both had dimensions of 0.60m by 0.60m, with E198 A excavated to a depth of 0.48m below ground level, and E198 B excavated to 0.46m below ground level.
 - 2.3 Levels in this report have been estimated from topographic data indicated on Ordnance Survey maps, with the closest being a surface ground level of 4.20m OD at 20m due west of the trenches.
 - 2.4 Site records were compiled in plan and section at a scale of 1:10. All written data was entered on pro-forma sheets following standard recording methods, and a photographic record was made as appropriate.
 - 2.5 As prior work had been undertaken at the Tower of London under the Site Code TOL 105, context and section registers were continued from those previously used. The trenches were referred to as E198 A and B in keeping with the established numbering system initiated by the project designers (Aukett Brockliss Guy).
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3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

3.1 Trench E198 A (Figure 1, Plate 1)

- 3.1.1 The earliest deposit observed in this trench was a layer of garden soil [31]. It was composed of friable dark greyish-brown clayey-silt, with moderate inclusions of clay tobacco pipe, and occasional ceramic building material dating from c1660-1800, 18th century pottery and oyster shell. This was observed to extend beyond the limits of excavation of the trench and was at least 0.24m thick, having been encountered at 3.97m OD.
- 3.1.2 This was overlain by a layer of friable light yellowish-brown clayey-silt [30], also apparent garden soil, which contained frequent small to medium sub-angular gravels and occasional ceramic building material flecks. This also extended beyond the limits of excavation, was 0.18m thick, and was encountered at 4.10m OD.
- 3.1.3 The trench was sealed by a layer of modern topsoil [29] which formed the modern grassed area in which the trench was located at 4.20m OD.

3.2 Trench E198 B (Figure 1, Plate 2)

- 3.2.1 The earliest deposit observed in this trench was a layer of garden soil [34] composed of friable dark greyish-brown clayey-silt, which contained occasional small gravels. The deposit extended beyond the limits of excavation, with a thickness of 0.10m, having been encountered 3.79m OD.
- 3.2.2 This was overlain by a layer of demolition rubble [33], which was comprised of red bricks, varying from complete to fragmentary, and mortar, dating from 1660-1800. The whole bricks had dimensions of between 212mm by 100mm by 61mm up to 222mm by 104mm by 65mm. Also contained within the layer were occasional inclusions of clay tobacco pipe, and a service pipe was seen to lie within it also. This layer extended beyond the limits of excavation, with a thickness of 0.25m, and it was encountered at 4.01m OD.
- 3.2.3 The demolition rubble [33] was overlain by a layer of garden soil [32], which was composed of friable light yellowish-brown clayey-silt, with moderate amounts of small sub-angular gravels, and occasional flecks of ceramic building material. The layer was observed to be 0.15m thick, and extended beyond the limits of excavation, having been encountered at 4.10m OD.
- 3.2.4 The trench was sealed by the layer of modern topsoil [29] which formed the existent grassed area in which the trench was located at 4.20m OD.

4 INTERPRETATION & CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 Both of the trenches excavated revealed deposits of post-medieval garden soil, evidence of the landscaping around the Tower. The layer of demolition rubble contained brick and mortar types with a date range of 1660-1800, and it is likely that it is also representative of landscaping, possibly having been used as ground make up during such work.
- 4.2 No natural deposits were observed during the watching brief.
- 4.3 No archaeological finds or features pre-dating the post-medieval period were identified during the investigation.

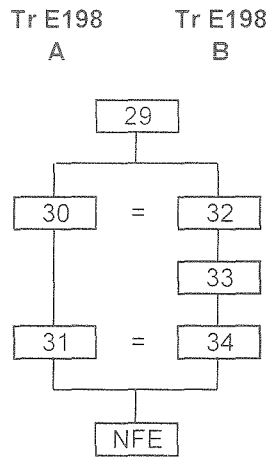
5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 5.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Sharon Kerrigan of Historic Royal Palaces, Tower of London, for commissioning the work and Jane Spooner of Historic Royal Palaces, Tower of London, for monitoring it. Thanks are also extended to the staff at Wood and Wood who undertook the work on site.
- 5.2 The author would like to thank Chris Mayo for his project management, Kevin Hayward and Chris Jarrett for providing spot dates, and Mark Roughley for the illustrations.

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT REGISTER

Context No.	Plan	Section / Elevation	Type	Description	Date
29	N/A	S5, S6	Layer	Modern Topsoil	Modern
30	N/A	S5	Layer	Garden Soil	Late Post-Medieval
31	E198 A	S5	Layer	Garden Soil	Late Post-Medieval
32	N/A	S6	Layer	Garden Soil	Late Post-Medieval
33	Sketch	S6	Layer	Demolition Rubble	Late Post-Medieval
34	E198 B	S6	Layer	Garden Soil	Late Post-Medieval

APPENDIX 2: MATRIX



APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-63398

Project details

Project name	The Tower of London
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief undertaken during the excavation of two trenches for the installation new signage at the entrance to the Tower of London, which follows on from previous work undertaken as part of the same program of work in October 2007 and March 2008. The investigations found evidence of layers of post-medieval garden soil, with a layer of post-medieval demolition rubble in the northern of the trenches. No archaeological features or natural deposits were observed, nor were any deposits pre-dating the post-medieval period.
Project dates	Start: 13-08-2009 End: 13-08-2009
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	TOL 105 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	World Heritage Site
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	BRICK Post Medieval
Significant Finds	CLAY TOBACCO PIPE Post Medieval
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Scheduled Monument Consent
Prompt	World Heritage Site

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON TOWER HAMLETS TOWER HAMLETS The Tower of London
Postcode	EC3
Study area	1.20 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 3346 8051 51.5072407188 -0.07672656803860 51 30 26 N 000 04 36 W Point
Lat/Long Datum	Unknown

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Project brief originator	Historic Royal Palaces
Project design originator	Chris Mayo
Project director/manager	Chris Mayo
Project supervisor	Sarah Barrowman
Type of sponsor/funding body	Historic Royal Palaces
Name of sponsor/funding body	Historic Royal Palaces

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Historic Royal Palaces
Physical Archive ID	TOL 105
Physical Contents	'Ceramics'
Digital Archive recipient	Historic Royal Palaces
Digital Archive ID	TOL 105

Digital Contents	'none'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography','Images vector','Spreadsheets','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	Historic Royal Palaces
Paper Archive ID	TOL 105
Paper Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Matrices','Report','Section'
Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An Archaeological Watching Brief During the Installation of New Signage at the Tower of London, London Borough of Tower Hamlets, EC3
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Barrowman, S.
Date	2009
Issuer or publisher	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Place of issue or publication	London
Description	A4 bound client report
Entered by	Chris Mayo (cmayo@pre-construct.com)
Entered on	7 October 2009

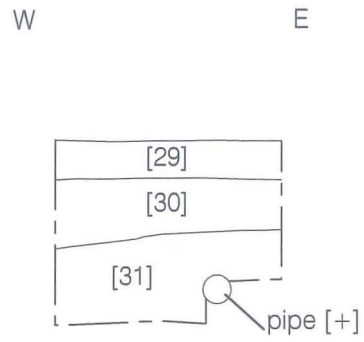
APPENDIX 4: SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



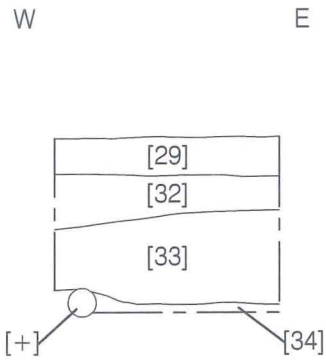
Plate 1: Trench E198 A, facing north.



Plate 2: Trench E198 B, facing east.



E198 A
South Facing Section



E198 B
South Facing Section



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Figure 1
Location of Watching Brief Trenches E198 A and B
Plan= 1:1000, Sections= 1:20 at A3