



C257 ARCHAEOLOGY CENTRAL

Interim Statement

Archaeological Targeted Watching Brief 23–28 Charterhouse Square, Farringdon

(XSF 10)

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1 Introduction

This Interim Report covers an archaeological targeted watching brief at the location of the future Crossrail Farringdon Eastern Ticket Hall, by C257 Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA).

This was carried out between 22/9/11 and 27/09/11 and supervised by MOLA Senior Archaeologist Sam Pfizenmaier.

It was recorded under event code (sitecode) XSF10.

This document is an interim statement of the results of the fieldwork one week after the end of fieldwork. More extensive background, results, and conclusions will be included in the Fieldwork Report which will be submitted within six weeks of the end of fieldwork (Crossrail, *Archaeology, Specification for Evaluation & Mitigation (including Watching Brief, Doc. No. CR-PN-LWS-EN-SP-00001, v 5.0, 13.07.11)*).

The fieldwork was carried out in accordance with:

- A Crossrail **Site-specific Written Scheme of Investigation** (SS-WSI): *Farringdon Station, Site-specific Written Scheme of Investigation, Doc. No. CR-SD-FAR-EN-SY-0001 Version 6, 20.11.09*
- An **Addendum to the WSI**: *Package C136 – Farringdon Station, Addendum to Written Scheme of Investigation: Trial Trench Evaluation, Watching Brief & Detailed Excavation – Eastern Ticket Hall (XSF10), Doc. No. C136-SWN-T1-XAP-M123_WS098-00001 Revision 2.0, 05.07.11*

2 Aims and Objectives

2.1 Research Aims

The original aims and objectives were listed in the SS-WSI Farringdon Station (Doc. No. CR-SD-FAR-EN-SY-0001, see section 1) and stated that ‘Archaeological investigation and mitigation within the Crossrail worksites for Farringdon Station have the potential to contribute to the research themes set out below’:

Evidence for burials and/or features associated with the Charterhouse burial ground may contribute to the following research aims:

- Understanding life expectancy, origins and belief, seen through studying health, diet and disease, and preparing models for future research;
- Considering the relationship between cemeteries and major or minor roads, in terms of symbolism, status, privacy and convenience; and
- Understanding the differences, if any, between burial practices in the city and outlying cemeteries. Understanding the differences, if any, between burial practices in the city and outlying cemeteries.

Archaeological remains associated with post-medieval extra-mural development may contribute to the following aim:

- Contributing to our understanding of the creation of the London suburbs with direct contribution to today’s aspirations for an urban regeneration

2.2 Fieldwork Objectives

The overall objectives of the targeted watching brief was to mitigate the impact of the engineering trial trench at the RBS building, to form preservation by record.

The task-specific aims and objectives from the Addendum to the WSI (Doc. No. C136-SWN-T1-XAP-M123_WS098-00001, see section 1) which relate to the targeted watching brief are:

Specifically, the archaeological investigations have the potential to recover:

- Remains of Roman extra-mural activity, potentially including field systems
- Burials from the Outer Cemetery of medieval charterhouse, and other associated features
- Medieval occupation features, and possibly buildings, from the expansion of extra-mural settlement in the West Smithfield area following the establishment of the livestock market
- Post-medieval buildings and occupation features representing the creation and expansion of the extra-mural suburbs



3 Targeted watching brief methodology

The structural trial trench was located by the principal contractor (C430 Laing O'Rourke / Strabag jv), adjacent to the RBS building, 23–28 Charterhouse Square.

The road surface consisted of cobblestones, which were numbered allowing for their accurate re-laying post excavation. The Modern overburden was removed by the Principal Contractor through vacuum excavation down to the first significant archaeological deposit under supervision of a MOLA (C257) Senior Archaeologist. Prior to entering the trench the approved temporary works were installed by the principal contractor. After this MOLA entered the trench to record and excavate the features exposed. This process was then repeated with the principal contractor removing the subsequent dump in 300m spits. Within this deposit disarticulated human remains were excavated and recovered for further analysis, in accordance with MOJ license number 11-0062. A written and drawn record of all archaeological deposits encountered was made in accordance with the principles set out in the Museum of London site recording manual (MoL 1994).

The Trench was surveyed by the Principal Contractor, Laing O'Rourke.

4 Provisional Results

4.1 Trench 1



Photo 1, RBS structural trench looking north. Natural sandy gravels exposed between 2.9 and 4m bGL

Trench 1 Targeted watching brief trench	
Location	North side of RBS building, 23–28 Charterhouse Square, Farringdon,
Dimensions	2.7m north to south and 2.7m east to west x 2.9m deep
LSG grid coordinates	82253 36603
OS National grid coordinates	531897 181890
Modern Ground Level/top of the slab	116.99m ATD
Modern subsurface deposits	Concrete foundation along southern edge of trench protruding 1.68m into trench to minimum of 1.5m bGL (115.49m ATD)
Level of base of archaeological deposits observed and/or base of trench	Archaeology recorded at maximum depth of 2.9m bGL (114.09m ATD)
Natural observed / truncated	Untruncated orange sandy gravels at

	2.30m bGL (114.69m ATD)
Extent of modern truncation	Truncation cut associated with current RBS building to the south extends 1.5m from southern edge to a depth of 1.6m bGL. Modern levelling and previous road works truncate to 1m bGL
Archaeological remains	Dating Evidence, Finds, and Samples
[68] - Inorganic fill of brick lined cess/rubbish pit [69]. Constructed from reused unfrogged whole red bricks. [70] - Construction cut for structure truncates natural between 2.30 and 2.90m bGL (114.69-114.09m ATD)	[68]: pot – post-medieval (provisionally 18th century), tobacco pipe stem (provisionally 18th-century) [69]: 4x brick samples (provisionally dated as 17th–18th-century)
[71] - Rubble rich silty sand deposit between 1.2-2.3m bGL. (115.79-144.69m ATD)	[71]: Disarticulated human remains (provisionally identified as two femurs and a tibia), brick fragments consistent with 19th century-construction (not kept)
[67] – brick wall aligned east west, truncated by modern cut at western edge. 0.95m bGL (116.04m ATD) Continues beyond eastern LOE.	
Interpretation and summary	
<p>Natural geology in the form of Pleistocene river terrace gravels (Hackney Sands and Gravels) was recorded at 2.3m bGL (114.69m ATD) at the southern area of the trench. Sloping gently down to the north at a maximum depth of 2.45m bGL (114.54m ATD). Coarse sandy gravel overlay slightly laminated fine sandy lenses at 2.7m bGL. (114.29m ATD). The deepest natural recorded was at 2.90m bGL (114.09m ATD) at the base of construction cut [70] for A brick cess pit [69] measuring approximately 1m³ in the centre of the trench at 2.3m bGL. Bricks (dates to be confirmed by specialists) point to a construction date of sometime during the 17/18th centuries, although the variety in brick sizes suggests the latter date, as do finds from [68] of pottery and tobacco pipe stems. No related structures survive within the vicinity of the trench. This is probably a domestic rubbish/cess pit associated with nearby dwellings in use at the time.</p> <p>Sealing this was a extensive deposit of mixed silty sand [71] over 1m thick. This would appear to be a demolition/levelling deposit facilitating later masonry constructions, of which [67] is an example. The small amount of disarticulated human remains recovered from within [71] is tantalising evidence for the western extremity of the known Charterhouse burial ground. Potentially it may have reached this far west, and subsequent truncations entirely removed any evidence of in situ burials. However, the small quantity of human remains found would suggest that they are equally likely to have been deposited from construction works undertaken a short distance to the east.</p> <p>Twentieth-century intrusions fill the top 1.2m of the trench, with the RBS building's (c 1960s) construction cut truncating [71] to around 1.6m bGL (115.29m ATD) in the southern most end of the trench, and culminating 1.3m from the RBS basement wall (the southern boundary of the trench sheeting).</p>	



Photo 2, RBS structural trench looking east. 19th-century wall remnant [67]



Photo 3, RBS structural trench looking west. Brick cess/rubbish pit truncating natural between 2.30 and 2.97m bGL.

Significance of Results (*provisional*)

4.2 Summary of Fieldwork Results

Untruncated natural Pleistocene river terrace gravels (Hackney Sands and Gravels) were recorded at 2.3m bGL (114.69m ATD).

No evidence for prehistoric, Roman or Saxon activity was found.

The extent to which earlier horizons have been horizontally truncated is difficult to ascertain. The lack of residual artefacts (pottery, clay pipes etc), might suggest there was little development in the area during the late medieval period. However, Lobel's reconstruction of 1520 (Lobel, M., 1989, *British atlas of historic towns: Vol. 3, The City of London*) and Agas' map of c 1562, show a gate house (of Charterhouse) on or close to this site, which like the buildings to the west is presumably of medieval origin. The areas to the south and east, however, remained open ground at this time.

Post-medieval activity on the site appears to have truncated natural sandy gravels down to 2.90m bGL. The earliest feature being the brick lined cess/rubbish pit [67] which survived in isolation within the confines of the trench. It is possible that it is related to either the gate house to the western entrance to Charterhouse Square or dwellings on the junction of Charterhouse Square and Charterhouse Lane visible on the Ogilby and Morgan map of 1682 and subsequent publications.

This feature was sealed by a substantial dump layer [71], which may be the residue from a large demolition event or an attempt at landfill/levelling that occurred sometime in the 19th century. That human remains were found within this deposit is not surprising, due to the proximity of the known Charterhouse burial ground. These are, based on the small quantity of remains found, thought to be residual and redeposited, rather than disturbed *in situ*. However, given the degree of truncation that appears to have occurred prior to the deposition of demolition debris layer [71] (at 2.3m bGL 114.69m ATD), any burials at similar depths to that seen in Charterhouse Square Gardens in 1998 (c 1.5m bGL, 116.5m ATD) would have been removed. This evidence is, therefore, equivocal as to whether this trench lay within or outside the burial ground.

Late post-medieval activity in the form of a wall of unknown function was uncovered between 0.98 and 1.4m bGL, and aligned east–west. This is evidence for the continuing alterations undertaken in the area during the 19th century. Its alignment is not reflected by contemporary maps, suggesting that it may be the remnant of a manhole or sewage related structure.

4.3 Importance of Resources

The archaeological remains identified in the fieldwork are provisionally assessed as being of low importance, as the post-medieval features identified are of common everyday use and of widespread construction methods and materials.



4.4 **Provisional conclusions for future work**

- The targeted watching brief has demonstrated the survival of low importance post-medieval remains at this location, which truncate to and below the natural surface of geology at 2.3m bGL. (114.69m ATD)
- Any future work has potential to help to identify the western limit of the Charterhouse burial ground, and in particular to ascertain the extent of any survival of *in situ* burials in the Charterhouse Square area.
- The construction cut for the RBS building is roughly 2.3m in width and a maximum depth of 1.6m within the trench area.

5 **Future Deliverables**

The remaining deliverables for the site, and their delivery dates as specified by *Crossrail, Archaeology, Specification for Evaluation & Mitigation (including Watching Brief, Doc. No. CR-PN-LWS-EN-SP-00001, v. 0.3, 26.06.09, are:*

- **Survey Report** by 12 October
- **Fieldwork Report** (including HER Summary Sheet) by 9 November
- **Summary Report** by 23 November



6 Annex 1 – Trench Location Plan

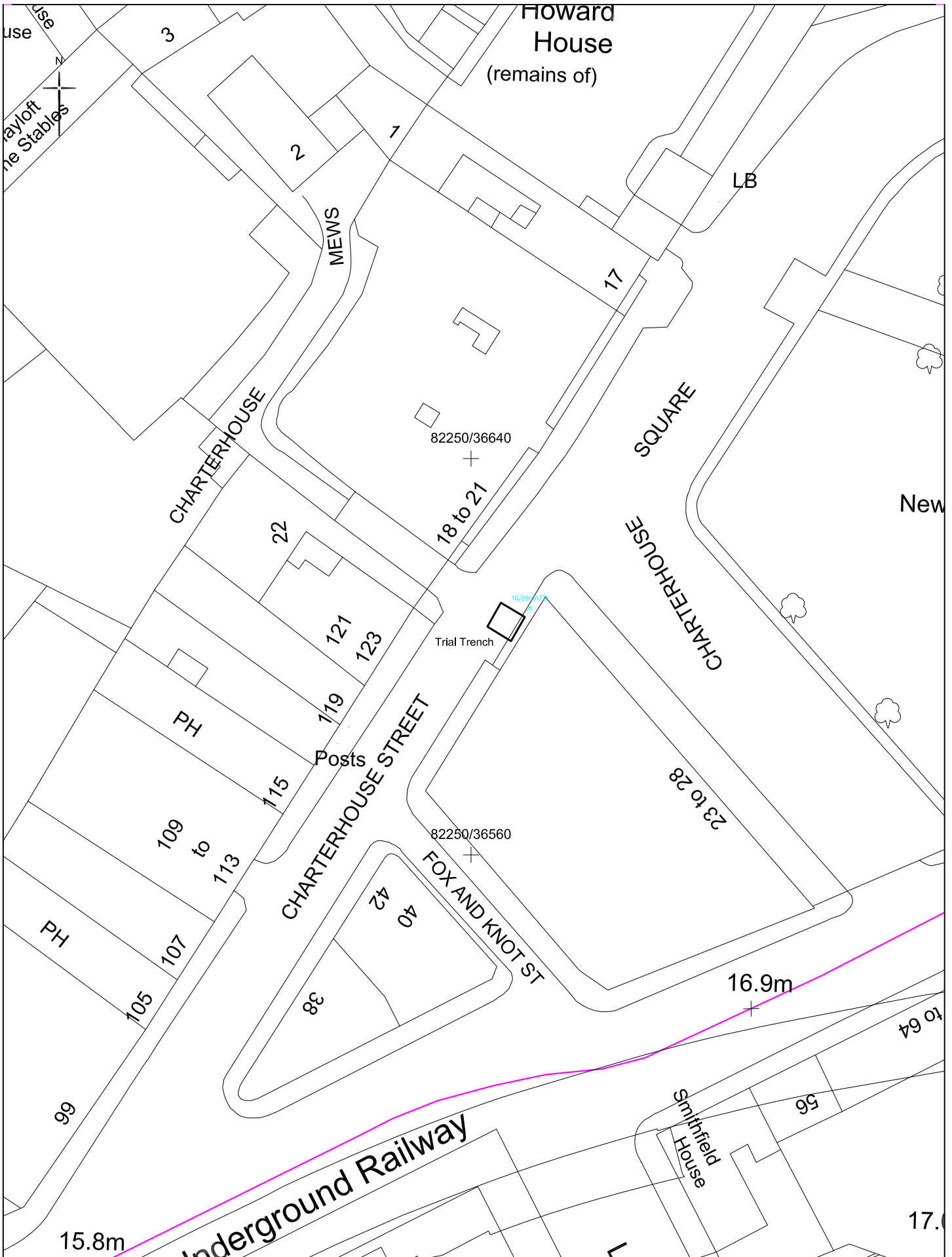


Fig 1 Site location

trench edge
x 10.24mOD TBM

1:500 @ A4
 0 20m

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