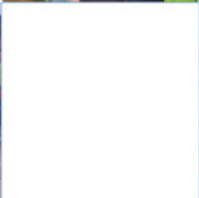
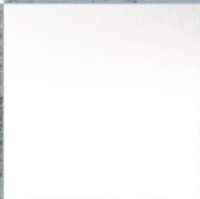
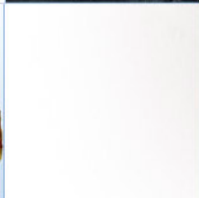
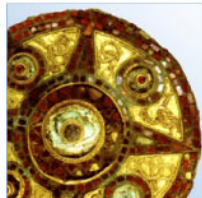


7 – 9 Rathbone Place & 16 – 19 Gresse Street, City of Westminster An Archaeological Evaluation Report

Project 7692
February 2008



ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

7 – 9 Rathbone Place & 16 -19 Gresse Street, City of Westminster An Archaeological Evaluation Report

On Behalf of: Jackson Coles
Construction Consultants
Morelands
5 – 23 Old Street
London
EC1V 9HL

National Grid Reference (NGR): TQ 2966 8144

AOC Project No: 7692

Prepared by: Leigh Savage
Chris Pole

Illustration by: Jonathon Moller

Date of Excavation: 7th – 8th January 2008

Date of Report: February 2008

This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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Non-Technical Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group on the 7th and 8th January 2008 at 7-9 Rathbone Place and 16-19 Gresse Street, on behalf of Jackson Coles Construction Consultants. The aim of the evaluation was to assess the impact of the proposed development on any surviving archaeological remains.

The evaluation comprised the excavation of two machine excavated trenches measuring 11.50m x 1.80m at base and two trial pits measuring 3.00m x 2.00m. The trenches and trial pits revealed the natural Lynch Hill Gravels about 4.00m below the current ground surface.

The only archaeological feature on site was an 18th – 19th century brick cellar wall. However, during works to disconnect services on the margin of the site, brick vaults running under Gresse Street were identified and preliminarily dated to the 18th century.

1. Introduction

1.1 Site Location

- 1.1.1 The site is centered on National Grid Reference (NGR) TQ 2966 8144, and is within land bounded by Gresse Street to the north, properties fronting Hanway Place to the east and south and Evelyn Yard to the west. The site is an irregular shaped piece of land measuring approximately 900m² (Figure 2).
- 1.1.2 Currently the site is occupied by 7 – 9 Rathbone Place and 16 – 19 Gresse Street. The proposed development is for a multi storey structure with a partial basement.

1.2 Planning Background

- 1.2.1 The local planning authority is the City of Westminster. Archaeology advice to the council is provided by the Archaeological Advisor to the City of Westminster, Diane Walls.
- 1.2.2 This document reports on the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken to identify any archaeological remains that might be threatened by the proposed development.

1.3 Geology & Topography

- 1.3.1 The British Geological Survey map (BGS Sheet 256), indicates that the site is situated upon Lynch Hill Gravels overlying London Clay.
- 1.3.2 A desk study of the neighbouring area (Soiltechnics, 2003) considered borehole results which suggest that the gravels are approximately 2.50m below made ground.
- 1.3.3 Test pits carried out on the site indicate that made ground is between 2m and 3m deep.

2. Archaeological and Historical Background

- 2.1 No previous archaeological investigations have occurred on the site. There are a number of entries in the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record (GLSMR) for archaeological features or chance finds within a 250m radius of the site.
- 2.2 The following background information is drawn from the Desk Based Assessment (AOC 2003).

Prehistoric

- 2.3 There is no evidence for prehistoric settlement in the area despite the advantages the Lynch Hill Gravels would have provided, being well-drained and close to reliable water sources.
- 2.4 A number of prehistoric artefacts have been found in the area, mostly in the form of Palaeolithic hand axes. Two Palaeolithic hand axes were found at the junction of Tottenham Court Road and Great Russell Street in 1903. A third, Cordate, hand axe was found on 'Warden Street', actually believed to be Wardour Street.
- 2.5 Little evidence of later prehistoric activity has been noted within the vicinity of the site although it has been postulated that the line of the Roman road under Oxford Street may have originated as a track way during the Iron Age.

Roman

- 2.6 Although the main Roman settlement is known to have existed some 2km to the east of the site, archaeological investigation and the discovery of chance finds has produced evidence to suggest that an occupation site was present in the area along Oxford Street. Oxford Street itself delineates the line of the Roman road from *Londinium* to Silchester. Tottenham Court Road, New Oxford Street and Bloomsbury Way are also thought to have originated in the Roman period.

Saxon

- 2.7 There is no evidence for Saxon activity within a 250m radius of the site. However, the Saxon settlement, *Lundenwic*, lies approximately 1km to the southeast of the site.
- 2.8 By the end of the Saxon period the area of Westminster immediately to the south of the site had begun to develop with the building of the palace and Minster by Edward the Confessor. At this time the Strand would have become an important and busy thoroughfare. However, to the north of the Strand the area covered by the site appears to have remained open and not built upon until further development in the 17th century.

Medieval

- 2.9 The majority of the finds recorded within the radius of the site relating to the medieval period are isolated finds including the iron frame of a medieval purse, a leather costrel and three medieval spurs, all found on Windmill Street approximately 250m to the north of the site.
- 2.10 The medieval settlement of Tyburn is thought to have existed approximately 1km to the west of the site, near to a medieval bridge which crossed the Tyburn River. However, little is known about the extent of this settlement. Evidence for medieval development nearer the site was discovered at Denmark Street where an excavation in 1999 identified a medieval foundation aligned east-west. Dating of the tiles in the foundation suggests a 13th century date and were thought to be part of the medieval hospital of St. Giles.

Post-medieval

- 2.11 The 18th century heralded the start of major expansion in London's urban development. This was characterised by the laying out of a number of formal squares including Soho Square (originally known as King's Square) and Bedford Square as depicted in Rocque's map of 1746.
- 2.12 By the start of the 19th century rows of terraced buildings lined Gresse Street, some of which lie within the boundary of the proposed development site. However, much of the site was dominated by yard surface, including Black Horse Yard.
- 2.13 The Bomb map of World War II demonstrates that the site suffered damage during the war. Several of the buildings towards the north-east boundary of the site were damaged beyond repair, whilst the remainder of the site was seriously damaged, possibly beyond repair. As a result of the damage, the layout of the site changed: a car park replaced the buildings to the north-east of the site and Black Horse Yard is now known as Evelyn Yard.

3. Aims & Objectives

- 3.1 The aims of the Evaluation were:
- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
 - To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
 - To record and sample excavate any archaeological remains encountered.
 - To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological features and deposits.
 - To determine the nature and extent of existing truncations of the archaeological deposits.
 - To enable the Archaeology Advisor to make an informed decision on the status of the condition on the planning permission, and any possible requirement for further work in order to satisfy that condition.
 - To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation in order to inform the mitigation strategy as part of the planning process.
- 3.2 The specific objectives of the Evaluation were to:
- Determine the presence of any prehistoric activity on site.
 - Determine the presence of any remains of medieval date on site.
 - Determine the presence of any remains of post-medieval date on the site.
 - Assess the degree and extent of truncation of earlier deposits by the phase's of late post-medieval and modern buildings.
- 3.3 The final aim is to make public the results of the investigation, subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

4. Methodology

- 4.1 The evaluation consisted of two machine-excavated trenches measuring 11.50m x 1.80m at base, and two trial pits measuring 3.00m x 2.00m.
- 4.2 Following the breaking of 1.00m thick concrete footings, remaining overburden was removed using a 360° 14 ton tracked excavator using a smooth bladed ditching bucket under the direct control of an experienced archaeologist. Excavated material was examined using a metal detector and exposed surfaces were inspected for archaeological finds and features.

5. Results

Trench 1

OD Height	Thickness	Context	Description
23.20m	0.30m	1/001	Loosely compacted mid grey brown sandy silt with brick and concrete fragments. Made Ground.
22.90m	NFE	1/002	Moderately compacted orange poorly sorted gravel with yellow green sand lenses. Natural Gravels.

- 5.1 Trench 1 was located in the centre of the site and aligned east west (Figure 1) and contained no archaeological finds or features.

- 5.2 Natural Lynch Hill Gravels (1/002) were observed at a height of 22.80mOD. Overlying the gravels was a layer of made ground comprised of crushed brick and concrete hardcore in a sandy silt matrix (1/002).

Trench 2

OD Height	Thickness	Context	Description
23.02m	0.40m	2/001	Loosely compacted mid grey brown sandy silt with brick and concrete fragment inclusions. Made Ground.
22.62m	NFE	2/002	Moderately compacted orange poorly sorted gravel with yellow green sand lenses. Natural.

- 5.3 Trench 2 was located to the west of the site and aligned north south (Figure 1) and contained no archaeological finds or features.
- 5.4 The trench revealed Natural Lynch Hill Gravels (2/002) at a height of 22.80mOD. Overlying the gravels was a layer of made ground consisting of crushed brick and concrete hardcore in a sandy silt matrix (2/002).

Trial Pit 3

OD Height	Thickness	Context	Description
26.69m	0.10m	3/001	Black Tarmac. Surface.
26.59m	4.00m	3/002	Loosely compacted mid grey brown sandy silt with brick and concrete demolition inclusions. Made Ground.
22.59	NFE	3/003	Moderately compacted orange poorly sorted gravel with yellow green sand lenses. Natural.

- 5.5 Trial Pit 3 was located in the north west of the site close to the site boundary and contained a 18th – 19th century brick wall.
- 5.6 Natural Lynch Hill Gravels (3/003) were revealed at a height of 22.59mOD. These gravels were used as a solid construction base for an 18th – 19th century brick cellar wall (3/004). This was present in section only on the north face of the pit and measured 4m deep and had a one brick step foundation. The bricks measured 22cm long, 11cm wide and 7cm deep and were hand made but it was not possible to determine if they were unfrogged. Backfilled into the cellar was a layer of made ground consisting of crushed brick and concrete hardcore in a sandy silt matrix (3/002). Overlying this layer was a tarmac surface (3/001).

Trial Pit 4

OD Height	Thickness	Context	Description
26.69m	0.10m	4/001	Black Tarmac. Surface.

26.59m	3.90m	4/002	Loosely compacted mid grey brown sandy silt with brick and concrete demolition inclusions. Made Ground.
22.69	NFE	4/003	Moderately compacted orange poorly sorted gravel with yellow green sand lenses. Natural.

- 5.7 Trial Pit 4 was located in the centre west of the site (Figure 1) and was moved northwards due to the presence of site cabins. Trial Pit 4 contained no archaeological finds or features.
- 5.8 Natural Lynch Hill Gravels (4/003) were observed at 22.59mOD No archaeological remains were present overlying or cutting this deposit. Overlying that was a layer of crushed brick and concrete hardcore in a sandy silt matrix. (4/002) this was interpreted as a large demolition rubbish dump, used to level the area before the previous building was erected. Overlying this was a tarmac surface (4/001).

Service Disconnection

- 5.9 During works to divert services in advance of the proposed development outside of the application area a brick built cellar vault was revealed. The vault was visible in section only and measured 3.50m long and 1.40m deep, although it was not fully excavated. The vaults appeared to run underneath Gresse Street.
- 5.10 The cellar vault consisted of three arches, one of which was exposed to its full width and measured 2.60m across from the top of the pillars. The bricks used in the vaults' construction were handmade, unfrogged and measured 22.5cm long, 11cm wide and 7cm deep. The bricks were bonded with a dark grey mortar with large inclusions and was constructed using a double layer of bricks on brick built pillars. The vaults were backfilled with demolition

6. Finds

- 6.1 No archaeological finds were present in the trenches or trial pits.

7. Conclusions & Recommendations

- 7.1 The evaluation revealed significant truncation on the site, partly as a result of the construction of post-medieval cellars (3/004). The natural Lynch Hill Gravels were revealed approximately 4.00m below the current ground surface.
- 7.2 The presence of previously unknown brick vaults on the margins of the site would need to be investigated in more detail to establish their extent, date and character. These vaults are, however, outside of the application area.
- 7.3 It is therefore recommended that no further archaeological fieldwork is required to satisfy the archaeological planning condition on this site. However, the final decision regarding any further work will rest with the London Borough of Westminster and its archaeology advisor, Diane Walls (GLAAS).

- 7.4 Publication of the results will be through the ADS OASIS form (Appendix C) with a short summary submitted to the London Archaeologist fieldwork round-up.

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Figure 1 – Site Location

Figure 2 – Detailed Site location

Figure 3 – Trench Location

Figure 4 – Trenches 1 & 2

Figure 5 – Trenches 3 & 4

Figure 6 – Vaults Section

Appendices

Appendix A – Context Register

Context No.	Context Description	Length	Width	Depth
1/001	Made Ground	Trench	Trench	0.40m
1/002	Natural Gravels	Trench	Trench	NFE
2/001	Made Ground	Trench	Trench	0.30m
2/002	Natural Gravels	Trench	Trench	NFE
3/001	Tarmac Surface	Pit	Pit	0.10m
3/002	Demolition Backfill / Made Ground	Pit	Pit	4.00m
3/003	Natural Gravels	Pit	Pit	NFE
3/004	Brick Cellar Wall	3.00m+	NFE	4.00m
4/001	Tarmac Surface	Pit	Pit	0.10m
4/002	Made Ground	Pit	Pit	3.90m
4/003	Natural Gravels	Pit	Pit	NFE

Appendix B – OASIS Form

OASIS ID: aocarcha1-37908

Project details

Project name 7-9 Rathbone Place and 16-19 Gresse Street, City of Westminster

Short description of the project An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group at 7-9 Rathbone Place and 16-19 Gresse Street. The evaluation comprised the excavation of two trenches and two trial pits. The trenches and trial pits revealed the natural Lynch Hill Gravels about 4.00m below the current ground surface. The only archaeological feature on site was an 18th - 19th century brick cellar wall. However, during service works immediately outside the application area brick vaults running under Gresse Street were identified and preliminarily dated to the 18th century.

Project dates Start: 07-02-2008 End: 08-02-2008

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference codes GEI 07 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)

Current Land use Industry and Commerce 2 - Offices

Monument type VAULTS Post Medieval

Methods & techniques 'Sample Trenches','Test Pits'

Development type Urban commercial (e.g. offices, shops, banks, etc.)

Prompt Planning condition

Position in the After full determination (eg. As a condition)
planning process

Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON CITY OF WESTMINSTER WESTMINSTER 7-9 Rathbone
Place and 16-19 Gresse St

Postcode W1T

Study area 900.00 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 2966 8143 51.5163888889 -0.131111111111 51 30 59 N 000 07 52 W Point

Height OD Min: 22.57m Max: 22.59m

Project creators

Name of AOC Archaeology Group
Organisation

Project brief Jackson Coles
originator

Project design AOC Archaeology Group
originator

Project Andy Leonard
director/manager

Project supervisor Leigh Savage

Type of Developer
sponsor/funding
body

Name of Jackson coles

sponsor/funding
body

Project archives

Physical Archive No
Exists?

Digital Archive Museum of London
recipient

Digital Media 'Images raster / digital photography'
available

Paper Archive Museum of London
recipient

Paper Media 'Context sheet','Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General
available Notes','Plan','Section'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

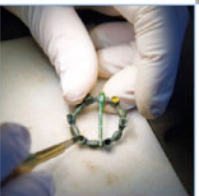
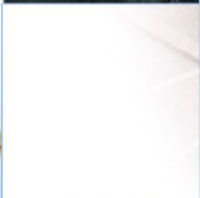
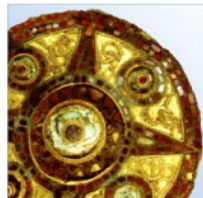
Title 7-9 Rathbone Place and 16-19 Gresse Street

Author(s)/Editor(s) Savage, L

Date 2008

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