



## 5 Upper Cheyne Row London SW3 5JW

Archaeological Watching Brief Report



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London SW3 5JW**

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

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## 5 Upper Cheyne Row London SW3 5JW

### Archaeological Watching Brief Report

#### Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Sally Wakeman to undertake, an archaeological watching brief during ground reduction and underpinning works associated with the excavation of a new basement below the existing property at 5 Upper Cheyne Row, London SW3 5JW centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 527230, 177760. The Site comprises a single domestic house with small gardens to the front and rear and is level, lying at a height of approximately 7m aOD. The underlying geology within the Site has been identified as Thames river terrace gravel deposits overlying London Clay.

Two visits made to the Site during the ground reduction. The first on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2009, when records were made of three underpinning pits in the rear garden immediately to the south of the standing building and the partially excavated backfilled cellar within the building. The second visit on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2009 monitored two further underpinning pits and the final reduction to formation level in the rear garden and further excavation to formation level within the present building. The underpinning pits were observed prior to being fully shored, but excessive depth prevented safe access into the pits for detailed recording.

In the rear garden the underpinning pits penetrated brick rubble with sand and gravel to reveal a c. 0.10m thick concrete slab, presumably the floor of an earlier basement, at approximately 2.40m below the present ground level. This immediately overlay Thames Terrace Gravels which were encountered at approximately 4.60m aOD. No archaeological features were noted cutting into the gravels. The depth of the underpinning pits prevented close examination of the former cellar walls, however, the bricks were clearly machine-made and were laid in English bond.

Within the building the depth of the excavations again prevented close examination of the surviving walls; however, these appeared to be the same as those recorded in the rear garden to the south, being built of machine-made bricks in English bond. The exposed brickwork appeared to be of 19<sup>th</sup> century date, broadly contemporary with the listed terrace of buildings a little to the west. The formation level of the new basement coincided approximately with the base of the concrete floor of the earlier basement. The removal of the concrete floor of the earlier basement exposed terrace gravels directly below it, however, no archaeological features were observed cutting into the gravels.

None of the exposed former basement walls or floors appeared to be earlier than late 19<sup>th</sup> century in date and it is possible/likely that the previous building that stood on the Site was broadly contemporary with listed buildings along the same side of the street. No archaeological features or deposits were observed in any of the underpinning pits or below the earlier concrete basement floors where observation was possible. The former basement or basements appear to have severely truncated the natural Terrace Gravel substrata, possibly by over 1m, and it seems unlikely that any archaeological features or deposits survive below the level of the basement floors.

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## Archaeological Watching Brief Report

### Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Sally Wakeman for commissioning the project and to the on-site contractors Roxburgh Construction Ltd for their assistance and interest. Thanks are also due to Diane Abrams of GLAAS, the archaeological advisor acting on behalf of the local planning authority.

The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Damian De Rosa. The fieldwork was undertaken by Vaughan Birbeck and Jon Smith. This report was compiled by Vaughan Birbeck and the illustrations were prepared by Kenneth Lymer.

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## Archaeological Watching Brief Report

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Sally Wakeman to undertake, an archaeological watching brief during groundworks for the excavation of a new basement below the existing property at 5 Upper Cheyne Row, London SW3 5JW (hereafter 'the Site') (**Figure 1**) centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 527230, 177760.
- 1.1.2 The watching brief was carried out to comply with an archaeological condition attached to planning permission (PP/08/03254) granted for the erection of a single storey ground floor rear extension, including full basement extension.
- 1.1.3 Geotechnical investigation of the Site was undertaken in February 2009 (K F Geotechnical 2009). The work was carried out in order to determine the form of existing foundations and supporting ground conditions for the design of additions and alterations to the property including the construction of the basement.
- 1.1.4 Due to the location of the property within the Archaeological Priority Area (APA) of Saxon and medieval Chelsea (as defined in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) Unitary Development Plan), Diane Walls of the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) acting on behalf of RBKC, advised that a watching brief should be undertaken during the basement reduction works.
- 1.1.5 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WA 2009) setting out the manner in which Wessex Archaeology would implement the archaeological watching brief was submitted to the Client and to GLAAS for approval prior to the commencement of the watching brief programme

### 2 THE SITE

#### 2.1 Site location, description and topography

- 2.1.1 The Site is located in Chelsea, north of Chelsea Embankment and lies within the Cheyne Conservation Area, and forms part of Upper Cheyne Row, which is characterised by 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century townhouses, many of which are listed buildings (see **Appendix 1**). The Site comprises a single domestic house with small gardens to the front and rear.

- 2.1.2 The Site is level and lies at a height of approximately 7m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The underlying geology within the Site has been identified as Thames river terrace gravel deposits overlying London Clay (British Geographical Survey Sheet 270, 1998).

### 3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

#### 3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The Greater London Sites and Monuments Record (**Appendix 1**) was consulted in order to provide information on all known recorded sites within a 100m radius of the Site. A total of fourteen sites are recorded within the 100m radius (**Figure 1**) mainly comprising listed buildings. Two archaeological events are recorded as having taken place within the study area and there is documentary evidence for a tunnel.

- 3.1.2 The Site lies in within an Archaeological Priority Area of Saxon and medieval Chelsea, as defined within the London Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Unitary Development Plan.

#### 3.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 3.2.1 There is documentary evidence for an underground tunnel (**WA1**) in the vicinity of Upper Cheyne Row, possibly related to Shrewsbury House, (demolished in 1813 but thought to have been located to the south on Cheyne Walk) or Cheyne House (to the east at 2 Upper Cheyne Row). The tunnel was documented in 1892 and a letter from a Miss Gulston to Miss Tate, the proprietor of the estate, described the tunnel as being brick built, regularly paved with flag stones and leading towards the river from 8 Upper Cheyne Row. A newspaper article in 1951 referring to the sale of 51 Glebe Place, a property lying almost immediately behind 8 Upper Cheyne Row noted 'a secret passage that is said to link up with the site of Shrewsbury House.
- 3.2.2 Two archaeological investigations have been undertaken within the study area. An archaeological evaluation at 12A and 14 Cheyne Row (**WA2**) c.100m to the west of the Site revealed the presence of natural sand and gravel overlain by subsoil and garden soil in a garden extension to the south of the proposed development. A contour plan of the surface of the natural sand and gravel was prepared from all known boreholes and archaeological excavations in the area. It showed that the site lay on a very slight spur with the sand and gravel dropping gently to the south and east. It was therefore concluded that the site was located within a former quarry pit, probably of post-medieval date.
- 3.2.3 An archaeological watching brief undertaken at 43 Oakley Street c.100m to the east of the Site (**WA3**) identified the presence of natural sand and gravel at a height of 5.44m aOD. Cut into these deposits were an early 18th century pit, a possible ice house dating to the late 18th century, an early-mid 19th century gravel pit and a late 19th century soakaway.
- 3.2.4 The SMR shows that there are ten listed buildings on Upper Cheyne Row dating from the late 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century along with the Church of Our

Most Holy Redeemer and St Thomas More, all dating to the 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century. Other listed buildings in the study area on Oakley Street, Margaretta Terrace and Cheyne Row indicate that this area of Chelsea was being developed for residential purposes from the late 17<sup>th</sup> Century onwards. The current building occupying 5 Upper Cheyne Row itself dates from the 1970s, but map regression and geotechnical investigations indicate that an earlier building existed at the Site at least prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS map of 1874.

### **3.3 Map Regression**

- 3.3.1 Map regression of the Site and its immediate vicinity was undertaken as part of a desk study contained within the geotechnical investigation report (KFG 2009). In summary this showed that:
- 3.3.2 The 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS map of 1874 shows Upper Cheyne Row in existence with the Site itself occupied by a single building with an extension to the rear. To the west of the Site is a terrace of five houses and to the east a pair of semi-detached houses. The area had begun to be developed from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, as indicated by the SMR. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition OS map of 1896 indicates that the building on the Site was most probably made up of two dwellings, which extend fully to the rear of the current Site boundary. Although the area is almost wholly residential the Waterloo Billiard Works are shown to the south of the Site.
- 3.3.3 The OS Maps of 1916 and 1950 show little change although the billiard works are shown in the 1950 map as been developed for residential purposes. The two semi-detached houses to the east are no longer shown on the maps of 1950 and 1954.
- 3.3.4 The OS Map of 1973 shows the current state of the Site with the previous building at 5 Upper Cheyne Row along with the neighbouring buildings having been demolished and the terrace of houses now making up 1-9 Upper Cheyne Row having been constructed in their place.

## **4 GEOTECHNICAL INVESTIGATIONS.**

- 4.1.1 A total of six trial pits and one borehole were investigated by K.F. Geotechnics (KFG 2009) in order to determine the form of existing foundations and supporting ground conditions for the design of additions and alterations to the property including the construction of the basement.
- 4.1.2 Within the borehole the natural gravel was revealed at a depth of 2.30m, below the ground surface, overlain by a layer of concrete overlain by brick and concrete rubble. Within all the trial pits backfilled loose brick, concrete, sand and gravel in fill material was revealed indicating that the original building on the Site must have had a basement. The floor (brick or concrete) of the in filled basement extended to a maximum depth of 2 to 2.40m below existing ground level.



## 5 AIMS

### 5.1 Archaeological Watching Brief

5.1.1 The aims of the watching brief was to:

- provide further information concerning the presence/absence, date, nature and extent of any buried archaeological remains and to investigate and record all archaeological features revealed during excavations and groundworks.
- to inform and provide information for any future archaeological evaluation or other stages of archaeological mitigation that maybe required.

## 6 METHOD STATEMENT

### 6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 A Museum of London Site Code **UCH09** was obtained prior to the commencement of the fieldwork.

6.1.2 All work was undertaken in accordance with the GLAAS Archaeological Guidance Papers (GLAAS 1999) and with the standards and guidelines as set out in The Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (revised 2008) excepting where they are superseded by statements made below.

6.1.3 The following methodology was undertaken in order to meet the aims and objectives of the watching brief.

### 6.2 Fieldwork

6.2.1 Suitably experienced archaeologists twice visited the Site, the first time on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2009 to record underpinning pits in the rear garden and the excavation of the backfilled cellar below the present building. A second visit was made on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2009 to monitor the ground reduction in the rear garden. The monitoring work ceased when it became clear that there were no archaeological features or deposits left to be revealed and the groundworks had reached formation level.

6.2.2 All recording was undertaken using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording sheets and recording system. Details of Wessex Archaeology's recording system are available on request. Where Health and Safety restrictions prevented the close examination or recording of features or deposits these were recorded using photography, sketch plans and sections only.

## 7 RESULTS

### 7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 Two visits were made to the Site during the ground reduction, the first on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2009, when records were made of three underpinning pits in the rear garden immediately to the south of the standing building and the partially excavated backfilled cellar within the building. The second visit on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2009 monitored two further underpinning pits and the final reduction to formation level in the rear garden and further excavation to formation level within the present building (**Figure 2**). The underpinning pits were observed prior to being fully shored, but excessive depth prevented safe access into the pits for detailed recording.

### 7.2 The Soil Sequence

7.2.1 In the rear garden the underpinning pits penetrated brick rubble with sand and gravel to reveal a c.0.10m thick concrete slab, presumably the floor of an earlier basement, at approximately 2.40m below the present ground level. This immediately overlay Thames Terrace Gravels which lay at approximately 4.60m aOD. No archaeological features were noted cutting into the gravels. The underpinning pits were between 3m and 4m deep, truncating the natural gravel substrata by a further 0.60m to 1.60m. At the time of the second visit (7<sup>th</sup> August 2009) the area between the underpinning pits was being reduced to formation level, which coincided approximately with the earlier basement floor and did not expose the underlying natural gravels.

### 7.3 The Cellar

7.3.1 Parts of the cellar walls were seen in the garden to the south of the building, including part of an internal division. In the south-west of the Site the former basement walls were rendered, and elsewhere showed traces of whitewash (**Plate 1**). The depth of the underpinning pits prevented close examination of the former cellar walls, however, the bricks were machine-made and were laid in English bond.

7.3.2 Within the building, although the concrete floor was not fully exposed at any one time, it appeared to be at an approximately similar level to the concrete basement floors in the rear garden. Again the depth of the excavations prevented close examination of the surviving walls. The only former basement wall exposed within the building was the western wall; this appeared very similar to those recorded in the rear garden to the south, being built of machine-made bricks in English bond. An internal brick buttress was noted keyed into the western wall (**Plate 2**). The exposed brickwork recorded during both visits appeared to be of 19<sup>th</sup> century date, broadly contemporary with the listed terrace of buildings (**WA11**) a little to the west. The formation level of the new basement coincided approximately with the base of the concrete floor of the earlier basement. The removal of the concrete floor of the basement within the building exposed terrace gravels directly below it, however, no archaeological features were observed cutting into the gravels.

## **8 CONCLUSIONS**

- 8.1.1 None of the exposed former basement walls or floors appeared to be earlier than late (Victorian) 19<sup>th</sup> century and it is possible/likely that the previous building that stood on the Site was broadly contemporary with listed buildings along the same side of the street. No archaeological features or deposits were observed in any of the underpinning pits or below the earlier concrete basement floors where observation was possible. The former basement or basements appear to have severely truncated the natural Terrace Gravel substrata, possibly by over 1m, and it seems unlikely that any archaeological features or deposits survive below the basement floors.

## **9 ARCHIVE**

### **9.1 Preparation and Deposition**

- 9.1.1 The complete project archive comprises an A4 ring bound folder comprising context record sheets, photographic register, Risk Assessment and various background documentation. There is an accompanying archive of photographs in colour digital format. The entire archive is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology where they are held under the Museum of London Site Code **UCH 09** and Wessex Archaeology project code 72020. The completed archive for all stages of work will be deposited with The Museum of London under Site Code **UCH 09**.

### **9.2 Copyright**

- 9.2.1 Wessex Archaeology shall retain full copyright of any report under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved. Excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of the report by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the specification. Any document produced to meet planning requirements may be copied for planning purposes by the Local Planning Authority.

### **9.3 Security Copy**

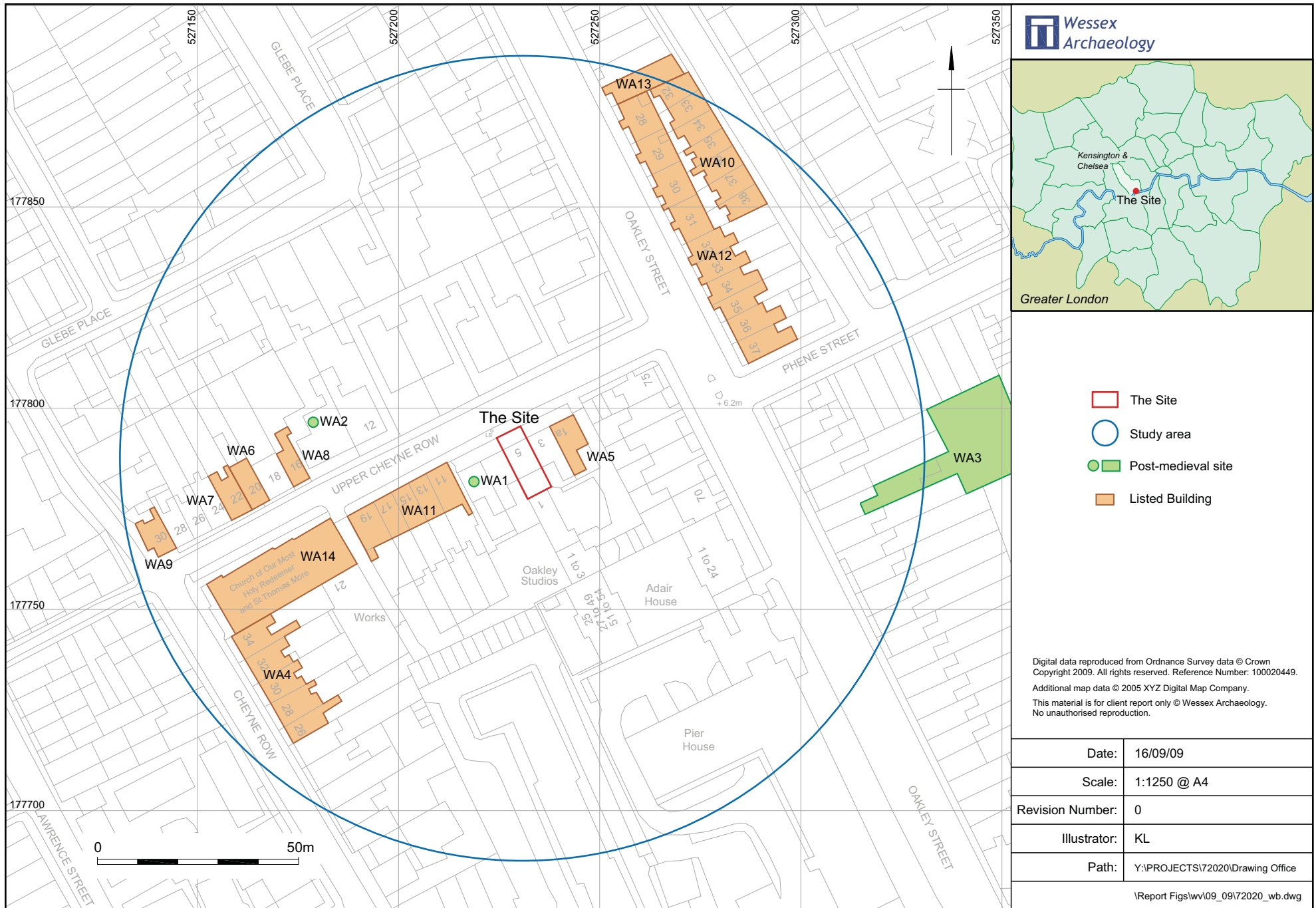
- 9.3.1 In line with current best practice, on completion of the project a security copy of the paper records will be prepared, in the form of microfilm. The master jackets and one diazo copy of the microfilm will be submitted to the National Monuments Record Centre (Swindon), a second diazo copy will be deposited with the paper records at the Museum, and a third diazo copy will be retained by Wessex Archaeology.

## 10 REFERENCES

- British Geological Survey, 1998, Sheet 270. *Solid and Drift Geology. 1:50,000.*
- Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS) 1999 (Reprinted). *Archaeological Guidance Papers*
- Greater London Sites and Monuments Record.  
[SitesandMonumentsRecords.glsmr@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:SitesandMonumentsRecords.glsmr@english-heritage.org.uk)
- K F Geotechnical, 2009. *Report on Desk Study and Ground Investigation at 5 Upper Cheyne Row London SW3* Report Ref: G/020903/001
- Wessex Archaeology 2009. *5 Upper Cheyne Row, London, SW3 5JW. Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief.* MoL site code UCH09. WA Ref 72040.01

**Appendix 1: Greater London Sites and Monuments Record within a 100m radius of the Site**

WA No	GLSMR	Period	Description	Easting	Northing
1	MLO75197	Post-medieval	There is documentary evidence for an underground tunnel in the vicinity of Upper Cheyne Row, possibly related to Shrewsbury House. It was documented in 1892 and was described as being brick-built, regularly paved with flagstones and leading towards the river from 8, Upper Cheyne Row.	527200	177750
2	ELO6066	Post-medieval	An archaeological evaluation at 12a-14 Cheyne Row identified the presence of natural sand and gravel cut by a large, probably post-medieval, gravel pit sealed below the present garden soils.	527150	177780
3	MLO97908	Post-medieval	An archaeological watching brief at 43, Oakley Street identified natural sand and gravels at a height of 5.44m aOD. Cut into these deposits were an 18 <sup>th</sup> century pit, a possible ice house of late 17 <sup>th</sup> century date, an early-mid 19 <sup>th</sup> century gravel pit and a late 19 <sup>th</sup> century soak-away.	527336	177792
<b>LISTED BUILDINGS</b>					
4	MLO87999	Post-medieval	26-34 (even), Cheyne Row, Grade II listed terrace of buildings, dated 1708.	527183	77726
5	MLO87589	Post-medieval	1, Upper Cheyne Row, Grade II listed building, dated c. 1715.	527239	177770
6	MLO87590	Post-medieval	20, Upper Cheyne Row, Grade II listed building, dated c. 1716.	527161	177782
7	MLO87591	Post-medieval	22, Upper Cheyne Row, Grade II listed building, dated c. 1716.	527155	177779
8	MLO87588, MLO87722	Post-medieval	16, Upper Cheyne Row; Grade II listed building and railings, dated 1767	527172	177788
9	MLO87594	Post-medieval/ Modern	Flat 1, 30, Upper Cheyne Row, Grade II listed building, dated 18 <sup>th</sup> - 19 <sup>th</sup> century	527138	177770
10	MLO87417	Modern	32-38 (consecutive), Margareta Terrace, Grade II listed terrace of buildings, early-mid 19 <sup>th</sup> century date.	527266	177880
11	MLO87721,	Modern	11-19 (odd), Upper Cheyne Row; Grade II listed terrace of buildings, 19 <sup>th</sup> century date.	527220	177765
12	MLO87436, MLO87593	Modern	28-35 (consecutive), Oakley Street, Grade II listed terrace of buildings, later 19 <sup>th</sup> century date.	527278	177841
13	MLO87806	Modern	26, Oakley Street, Grade II listed building, dated c. 1860.	527258	177881
14	MLO87716	Modern	Church of Our Most Holy Redeemer and St Thomas More, Upper Cheyne Row, Grade II listed building, dated 1895.	527171	177759



Site location plan and GLSMR

Figure 1





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Site Plan showing underpinning pits and ground reduction work observed

Figure 2



Plate 1: Southern wall with whitewash traces



Plate 2: Internal basement wall with buttress

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