

THAMES WATER
VICTORIAN MAINS REPLACEMENT WORKS IN
THE VICINITY OF MOUNT PLEASANT,
FARRINGTON ROAD AND CLERKENWELL ROAD
London Boroughs of Islington and Camden
(DMA Crouch Hill 70)

An Archaeological Watching Brief



May 2012



COMPASS



ARCHAEOLOGY

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Abstract

Between February 2010 and April 2012 archaeological monitoring took place during groundworks associated with the Victorian Mains Replacement programme in Clerkenwell, London Borough of Islington, EC1. The works covered a roughly triangular area bounded by Roseberry Avenue and Elm Street to the west, Clerkenwell Road to the south, and Farringdon Road to the east.

In situ archaeology was limited to a section of wall, probably relating to the late 18th-century Clerkenwell House of Correction, on the NW side of Roseberry Avenue opposite the Mount Pleasant Post Office, and a large well/cistern opposite No. 6 Topham Street. Several 19th century coal cellars were also observed in trenching on Farringdon Street.

From observations made across the study area it is clear that the immediate locale has been subject to substantial raising of the ground in the relatively recent past by at least 1.5m in places. This is probably related to the post medieval development of the area from the mid 1600s onwards, and the mid-19th century remodelling of the road network, especially around the major thoroughfares of Mount Pleasant, Clerkenwell Road and Farringdon Road.

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** This report details the results of an Archaeological Watching Brief which took place during groundworks relating to Victorian Mains Replacement works (VMR), in the area defined as District Metering Area (DMA) Crouch Hill 70. The works were conducted by Clancy Docwra and Murphy's on behalf of Thames Water.

The works took place in a broadly triangular area of Clerkenwell, bounded by Mount Pleasant, Elm Street, Farringdon Road and Clerkenwell Road and between November 2010 and April 2012, (Fig.1). The borough boundary between Camden and Islington crosses the DMA area.

- 1.2** Both the London Boroughs of Camden and Islington have policies relating to archaeological remains and sites with archaeological potential within their Unitary Development Plans and core strategies. They have also identified Areas of Archaeological Potential (APAs) across the boroughs. APA 1 (Clerkenwell) cross the DMA study area and the large Islington APA (APA2 Moorfields) is located just to the east of Farringdon Road and a Camden APA is located in the area north of Elm Street. There were no Scheduled Ancient Monuments affected by these works.
- 1.3** The archaeological works programme followed consultation with and advice from Kim Stabler, the English Heritage Advisor to the London Boroughs of Camden and Islington. The watching brief was commissioned by Optimise, on behalf of Thames Water.

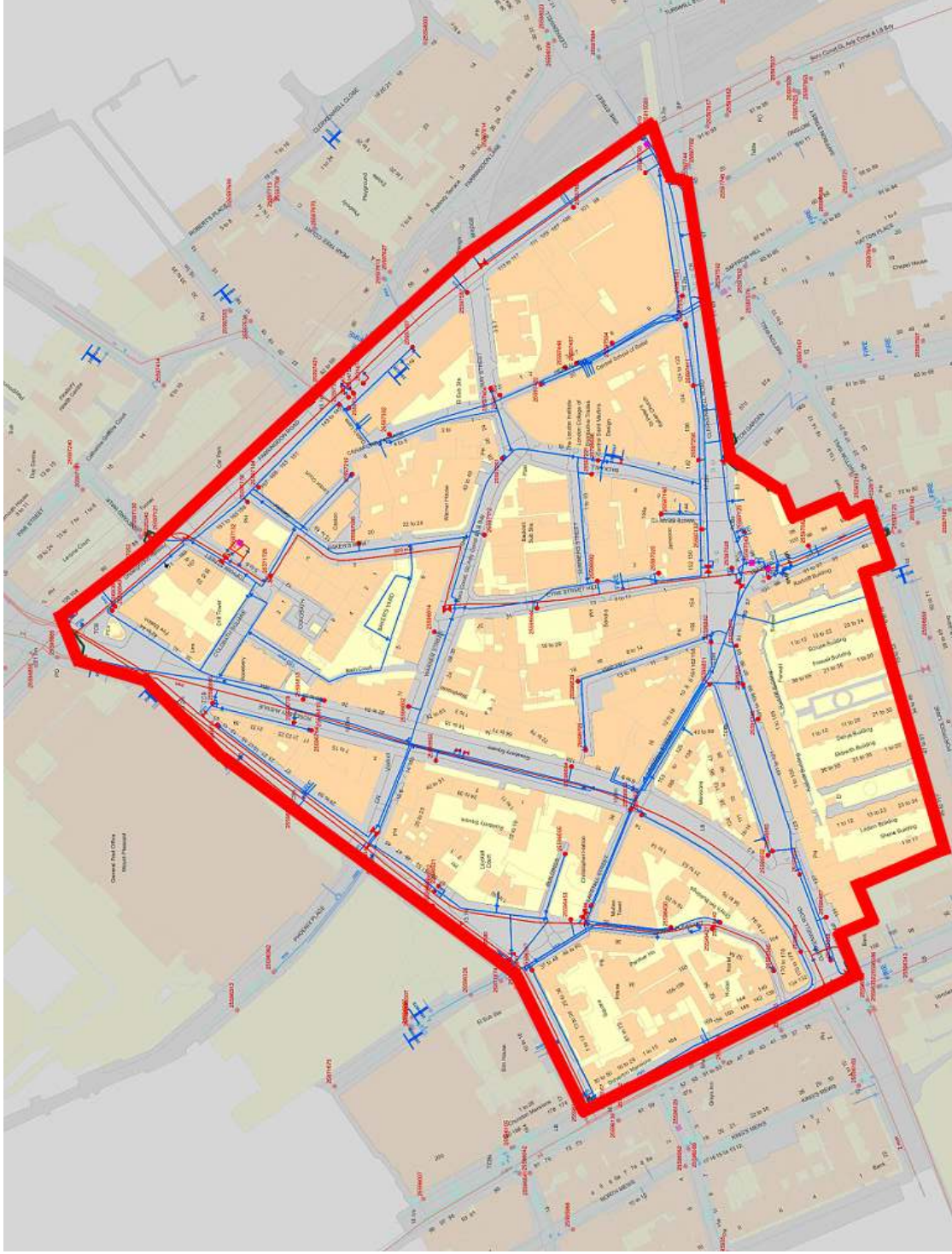


Fig.1: Location of study area adapted from that provided by Thames Water. (Reproduced from OS data with the permission of the Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of HMSO. © Crown Copyright 1999. All rights reserved. Compass Archaeology Ltd., licence no. AL 10003131)

2 SITE LOCATION AND GEOLOGY

Figure 1, above, shows the location of the mains replacement works in the borough. The monitored works were located in a broadly triangular area of Clerkenwell, bounded by Mount Pleasant and Elm Street to the west, Farringdon Road to the east and Clerkenwell Road to the south.

The general topography of the area is one of gently sloping ground, gaining height towards the north and west of the VMR area. The British Geological Survey Sheet 256 shows that the area lies within a corridor of River terrace gravels including Hackney gravels in the main area to the east, and Lynch Hill gravels to the west. In the centre of the corridor are pockets of London Clay and alluvium, (sands and silts), representing the former course of the Fleet River channel.



Fig.2: Extract from British Geological Survey Sheet 256 with the area of the groundworks highlighted in red.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Early History: Prehistoric to Saxon

The London Boroughs of Camden and Islington have a wealth of early prehistoric material and in later prehistory the better drained gravel terraces and fertile river valleys would have been quite densely occupied with settlement evidence probable from the Bronze Age (2,000 to 600 BC), particularly the later Bronze Age.

3.2 Later History: Medieval to the current day

Farringdon and Clerkenwell have a complex medieval and post medieval history. The wider area is characterised by a collection of religious houses and orders such as the Knights Hospitallers and the Benedictine nunnery of St Mary Clerkenwell. The religious history of the area clusters around St. John's Gate (the old south gate of the priory of St. John of Jerusalem), and the old crypt of St. John's Church¹.

Evidence for medieval and early post-medieval activity can best be summarised from cartographic evidence. Early maps, such as the Agas *Civitas Londinum* map of 1562, shows that the development was beginning to spread out beyond St Mary's Nunnery, Smithfields and Charterhouse by the 16th century, (*cf.* Fig. 3 below). The medieval road layout was well established, and the culverted Fleet River is shown to the west. On Agas' map there is a conduit-house at the south-west corner of the boundary wall of St. Mary's nunnery, and the water falls into an oblong trough, which is enclosed by a low wall. St Johns Priory and precinct is shown in the top centre. The original Priory complex had been a focus for the rebels during the Peasant's Revolt in 1381, as the then Lord Treasurer was Grand Prior of the Order in England at the time. The priory was almost completely destroyed, and was later rebuilt. Many 15th century elements of the Priory Church depicted in the Agas Map survive to this day.

¹ Extracted from Thornberry, W, *Old and New London: Volume 2* (1878), pp. 328-338.



Fig.3: Extract from Civitas Londinum attributed to Ralph Agas, produced c.1562, the majority of the study area is on the left of frame and can be seen to be open agricultural land

By the time of Faithorne and Newcourt's map of 1658, the area was intensively developed south of Hatton Wall, (south of the more modern route of Clerkenwell Road), and the study area is shown with houses flanking the major roads with large gardens laid out across the area. To the south of Clerkenwell Road, in the left of frame, the foundations of Hatton Garden and St John's Gardens are also visible.



Fig.4: Faithorne and Newcourt's depiction of the study area in the mid-17th century

A similar view is shown on Leake and Hollar's *An Exact Surveigh* [sic] of 1667 (not illustrated) in the aftermath of the Great Fire, but with the Fleet marked Fleet Ditch and Hatton Garden now annotated as such. At the south-east end of Ray Street is the possible site of the old Clerks' Well, used by the brothers of St. John Priory and the Benedictine nuns, and the place where, the London parish clerks performed their 'Miracle plays'. By 1720 Stow reports that the spring was cared for and sheltered with stone.

3.3 John Rocque's map of 1746 shows the whole area as being built up with development extending as far north as the northern most point of the DMA at the junction of Mount Pleasant and Farringdon Street, (annotated Coppice Row), and most of the plots between the streets have been infilled with buildings.

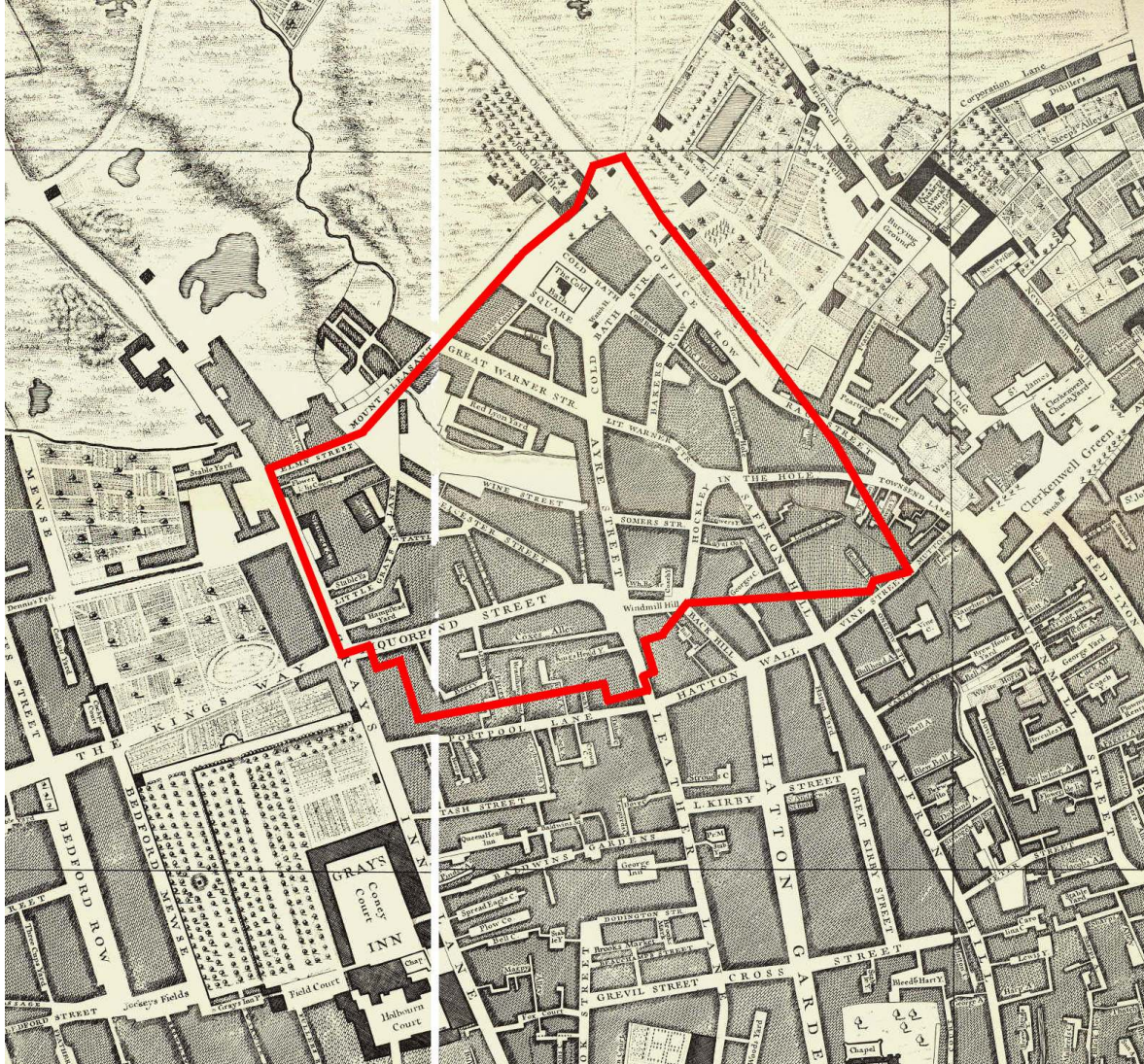


Fig.5: Extract from Rocque's Survey of London 1746

Coldbath Square, (seen in the top centre of frame), allegedly derives its name from a well known cold bath in London, fed by a spring which was discovered by a Mr. Baynes, in 1697. The industrious gentleman declared the water had great power in curing nervous diseases, and equalled those of St. Magnus and St. Winifred. In Mr. Baynes's advertisement in the Post Bag he asserts that his cold bath 'prevents and cures cold, creates appetite, helps digestion, and makes hardy the tenderest constitution. The coach-way is by Hockley-in-the Hole'.

3.4 An adapted version of Horwood's map, produced by Faden in 1813, shows a more detailed, but broadly similar picture to that of Rocque's survey 60 years earlier. The last of the open spaces in the immediate area of the groundworks have been built upon, in Red Lion Yard. The Clerkenwell House of Correction is depicted in the upper left of the frame opposite Cold Bath Square and next to the site marked Sir John Oldcastle's on Rocque's survey.

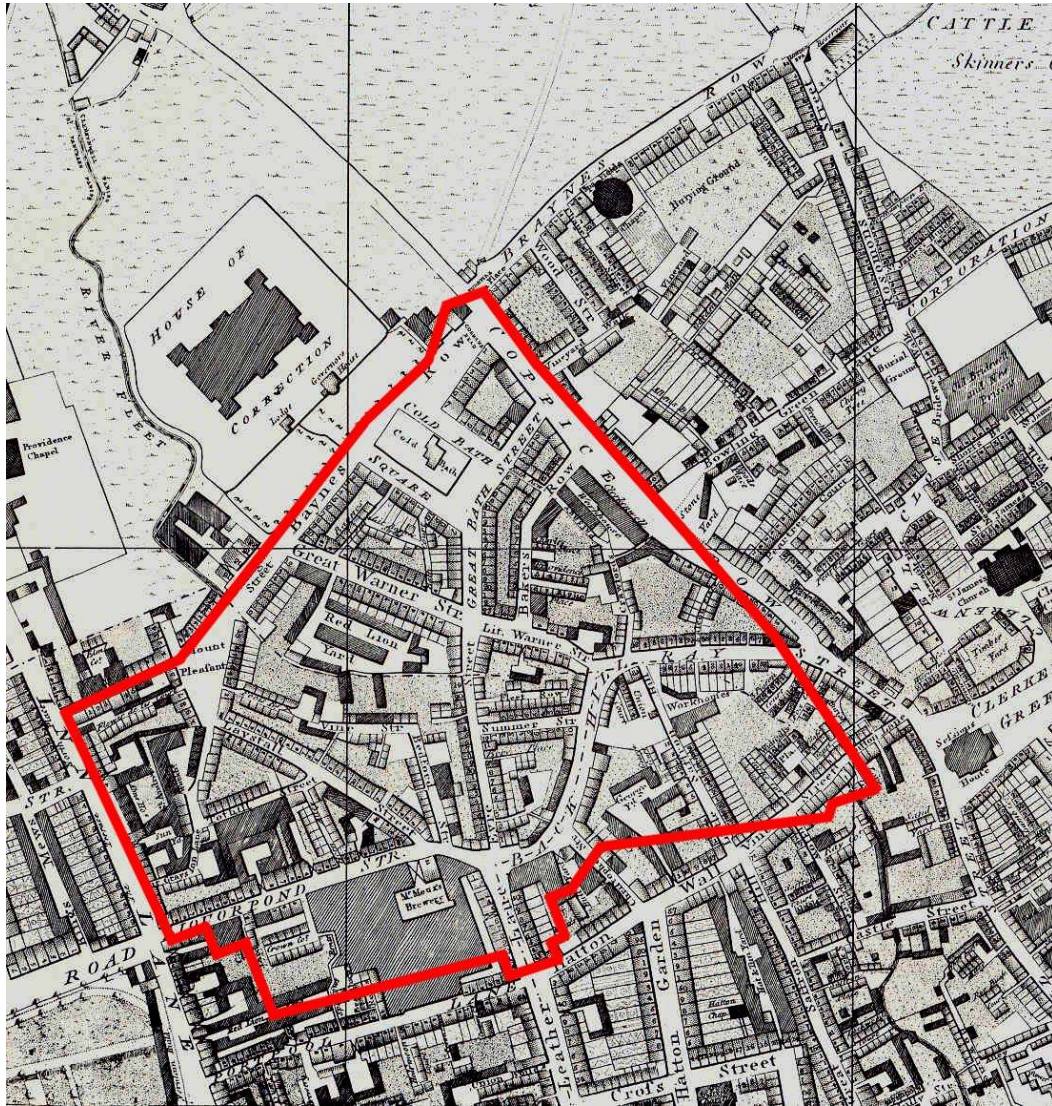


Fig.6: Horwood's Map of 1813 with the study area highlighted

The Coldbath Fields Prison (known as the Clerkenwell House of Correction²) dates back to 1774, and was rebuilt on several occasions, in 1794, 1818, and 1845. The oldest portion of the Coldbath Fields Prison was built on marshland just to the north of Mount Pleasant in the area of Cold Bath, in 1774, at an expense of £65,650, as Bridewell Prison was full.

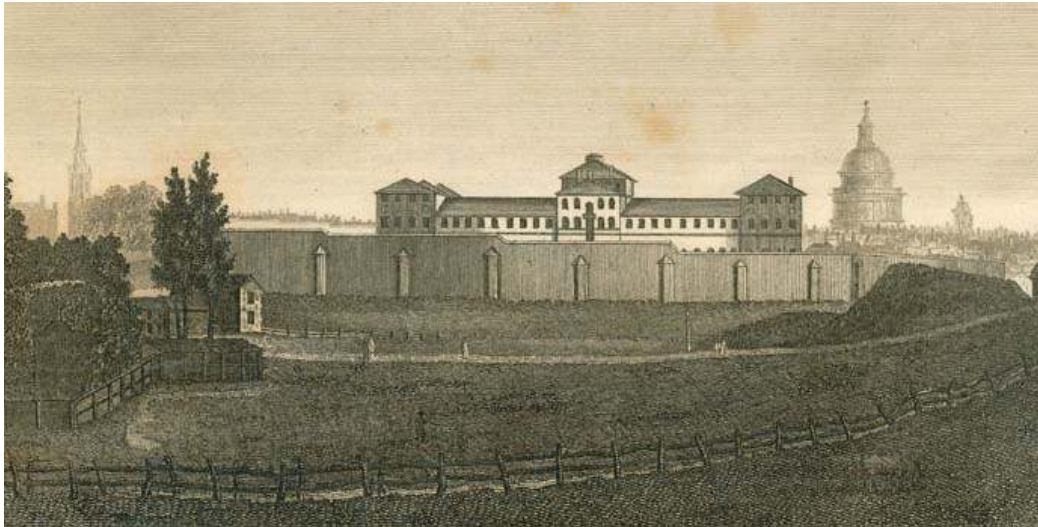


Fig.7: An engraving of Coldbath Fields Prison dated 1798

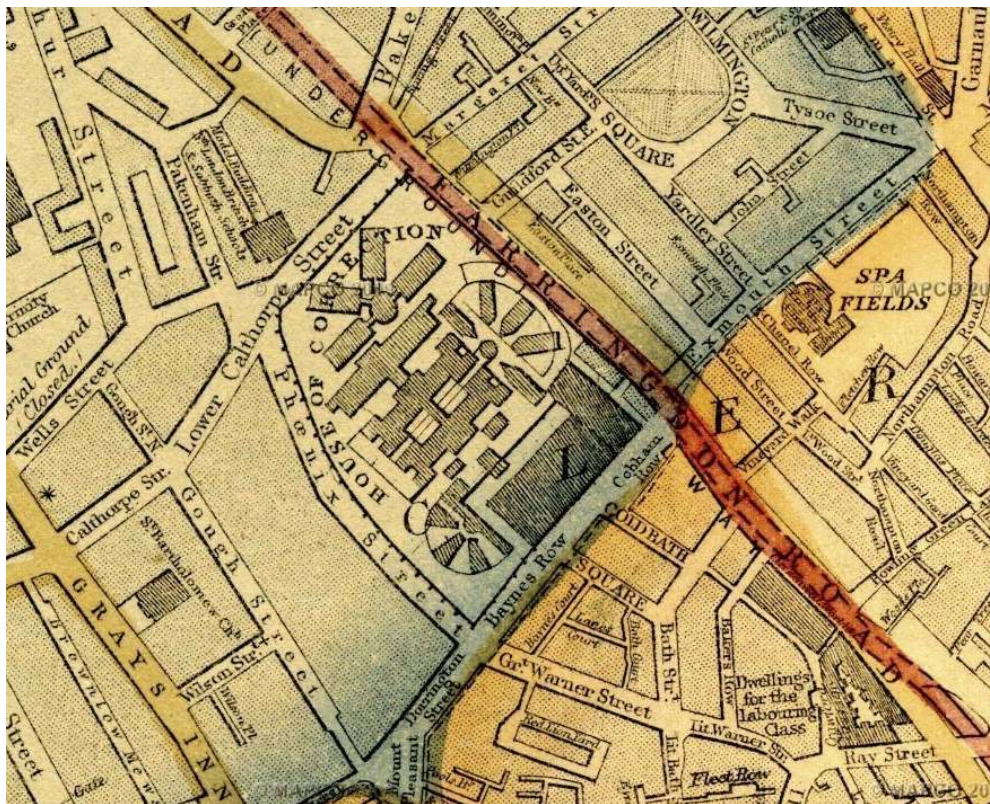
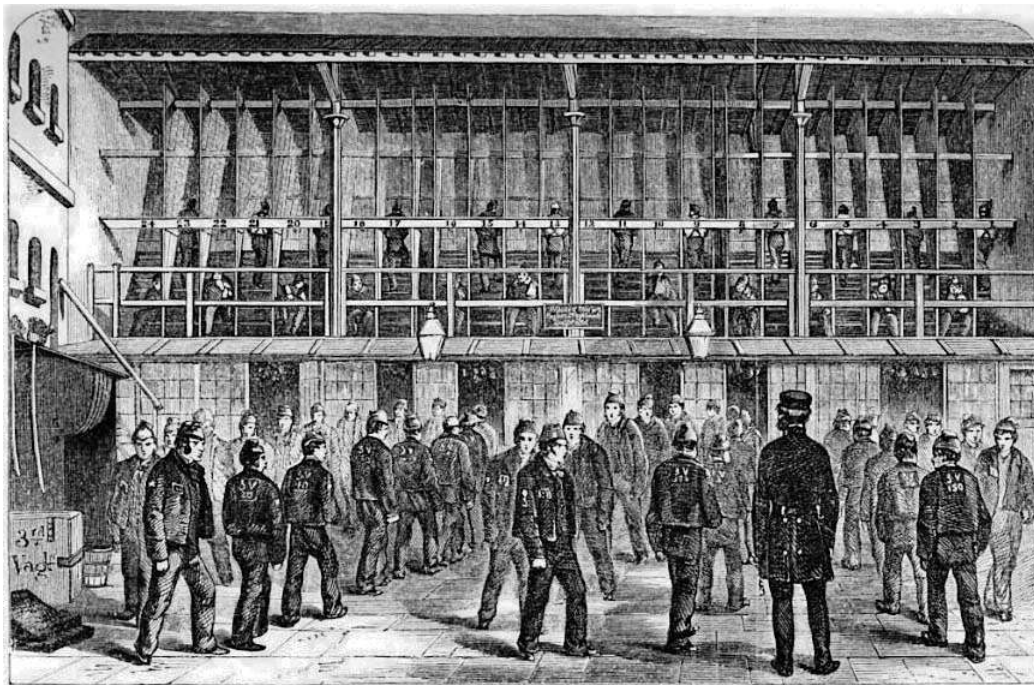


Fig.8: Extract from map by Edward Weller 1868, depicting the Clerkenwell House of Correction

² In contrast the Clerkenwell House of *Detention* is located to the east of the DMA area in Sans Walk.

The prison had a reputation for severity and the Report of the Inspector of Prisons for 1861 speaks of the Coldbath Fields cells as *'too crowded and badly ventilated, the prisoners being sometimes 700 or 800 in excess of the number of cells, and sleeping either in hammocks slung too close together in dormitories, or, still worse, on the floors of workshops, only a short time before emptied of the working inmates'*³.

The most infamous scene in the life of the prison was perhaps the attempt in 1867 to rescue the Fenian prisoners, Burke and Casey.



PRISONERS WORKING AT THE TREAD-WHEEL, AND OTHERS EXERCISING, IN THE 3RD YARD OF THE VAGRANTS' PRISON, COLDBATH FIELDS.

(From a Photograph by Herbert Watkins, 179, Regent Street.)

Fig.9: A depiction of life within the Clerkenwell House of Correction showing the treadmills and exercise yard. In 1877 the Treadmills were destroyed by fire, but no prisoners were injured

³ Thornberry, W. 1878 'Coldbath Fields and Spa Fields', *Old and New London: Volume 2* (1878), pp. 298-306.

3.5 The Ordnance Survey 25 inch 1st Edition, (surveyed 1870, published 1872), shows the street layout broadly as it is today. The Clerkenwell Workhouse is shown on the corner of Bakers Row and Farringdon Road. The map record shows that the major streets have been straightened out and widened in several locations. This means that many of the historic properties that originally fronted onto these streets are now buried beneath the road and pavement line. There was a good chance that the 17th and 18th century foundations and cellars of these buildings would be exposed by the proposed works and provide an opportunity to learn more of the residential, social, commercial and industrial, (and possibly ecclesiastical) history of this area.

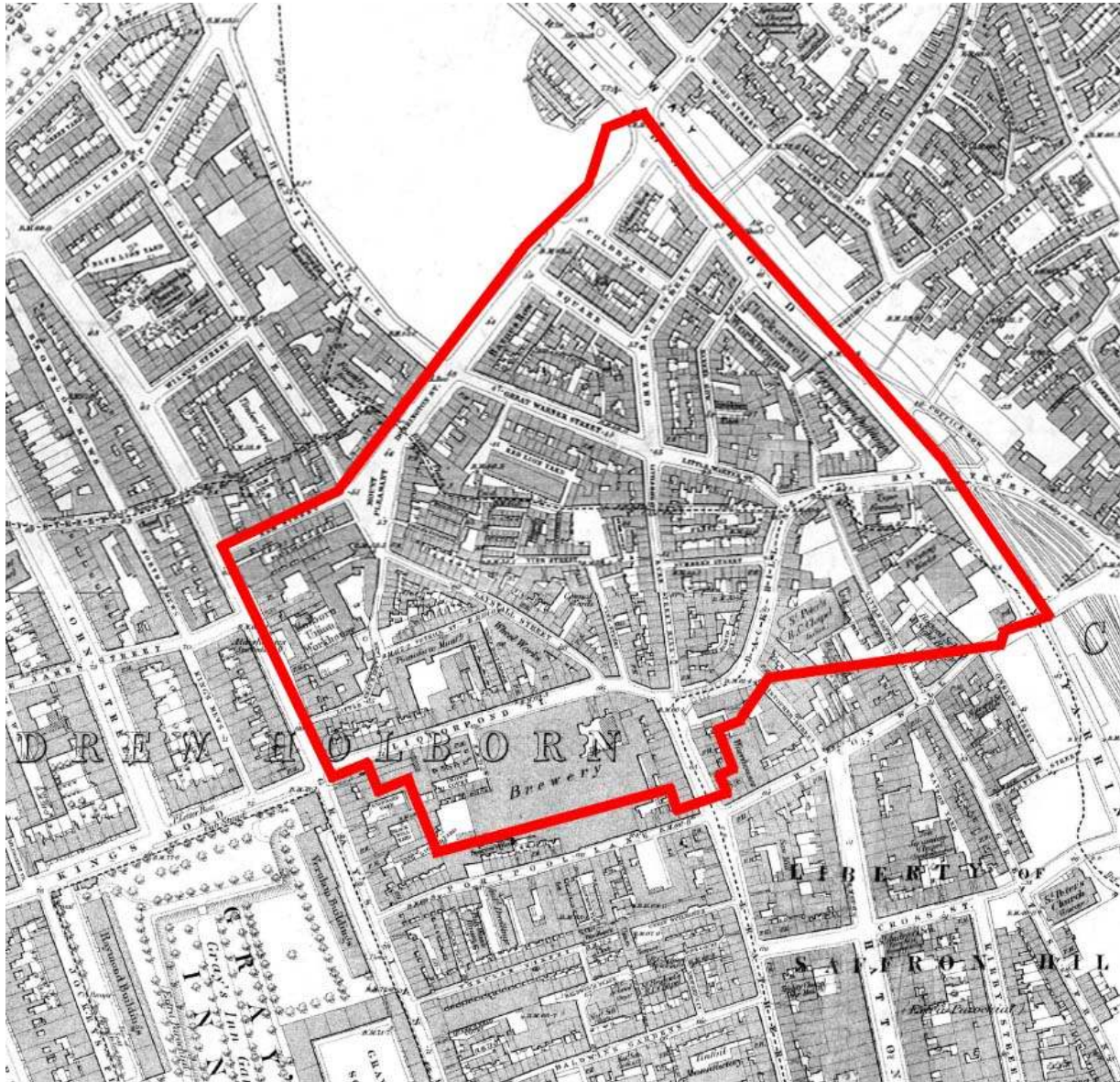


Fig.10: Extract from the 1891 OS Map depicting the derelict site of the former House of Correction, later to become the Mount Pleasant Post Office

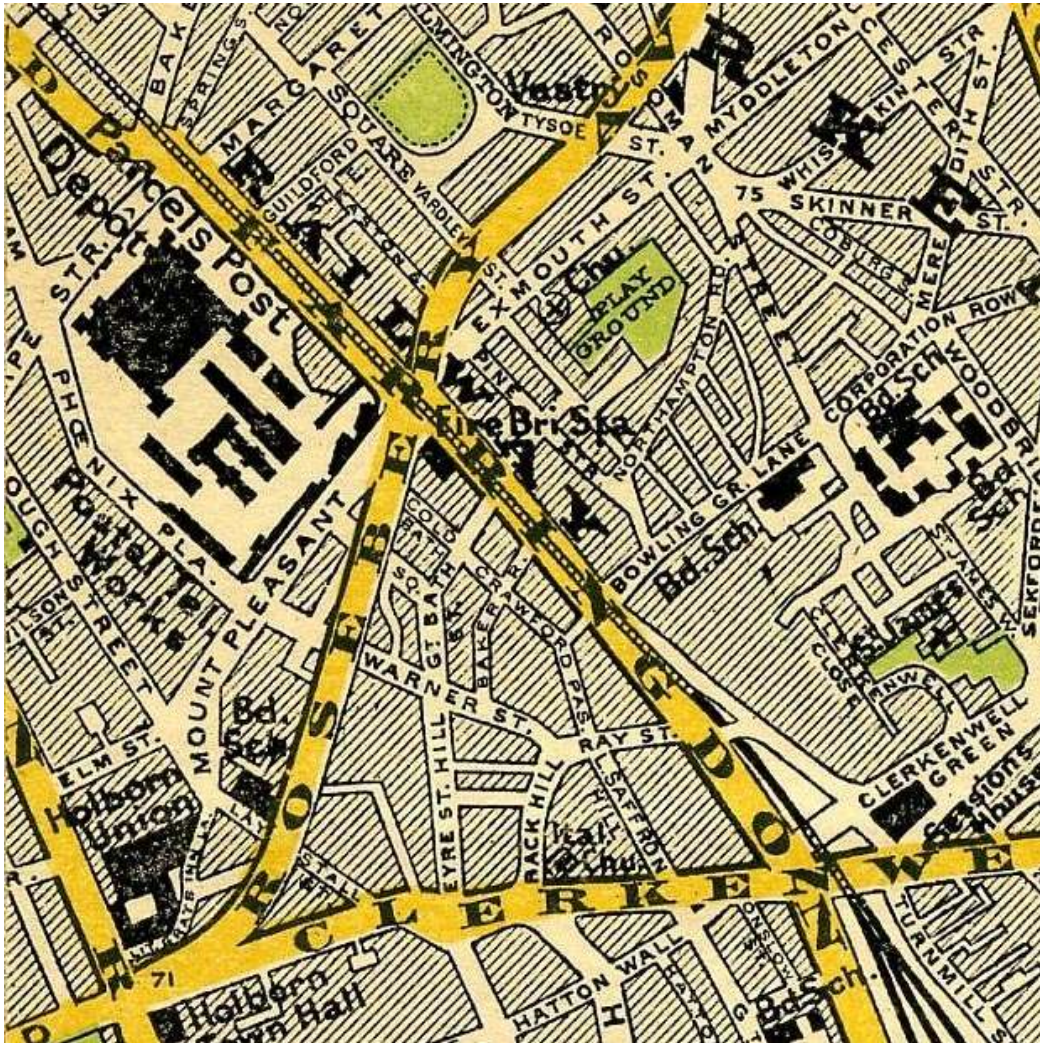


Fig.11: Extract from an ink copy of Stanford's Map dated 1897 showing the study area much as it is today with Farringdon Road, Clerkenwell Road and Mount Pleasant creating the familiar triangular plot

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The objectives of the archaeological watching brief included contributing to knowledge of the archaeology of the area through the recording of any remains exposed as a result of excavations in connection with the groundworks. The fieldwork presented an opportunity to address the following general and specific research questions:

- Is there any evidence for prehistoric to medieval activity, and what is the nature of this?
- Is there any evidence for the line of the medieval roads or early settlement patterns in this area?
- Is there any archaeological evidence relating to the Cold Bath or the Clerkenwell House of Correction?
- What evidence is there for post-medieval activity in the area?
- Can the watching brief works inform on the residential, social, commercial, ecclesiastical and industrial history of the area?
- At what level do archaeological deposits survive in the roadways across the area?
- Can the watching brief works inform on the site-specific research questions of local archaeological sites and archaeological priority areas?

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Fieldwork

The fieldwork was carried out in accordance with current English Heritage guidelines (in particular, *Standards and Practice in Archaeological Fieldwork, Guidance Paper 3*) and to the standards of the Institute for Archaeologists (*Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*). Overall management of the project was undertaken by a full member of the Institute.

Ground reduction works were undertaken by machine and finished off by hand, with new mains pipes being inserted as close as possible to the existing main. Contractor methods included open-cut trenching, directional drilling, pipe-bursting and insertion.

Adequate time was given for investigation and recording of the observed trenches, although every effort was made not to disrupt the contractors' programme. The archaeological monitoring included an on-site photographic and written record. As a minimum *pro forma* Trench Record sheets were completed for individual excavations or sections of open-cut trench; recording the nature of exposed deposits and details of any archaeological finds and features. Where suitable finds/samples were collected from archaeological deposits for dating purposes. Photographs, recording representative trench sections and general site location, were also taken.

Close liaison was maintained with the groundworks team to ensure a presence on site as and when necessary. The Client and Kim Stabler of English Heritage were kept advised of the progress of the fieldwork.

5.2 Post-excavation work

The fieldwork was followed by off-site assessment and compilation of a report, and by ordering and deposition of the site archive.

Finds were treated in accordance with the appropriate guidelines, including the Museum of London's '*Standards for the Preparation of Finds to be permanently retained by the Museum of London*'. Finds and artefacts were retained and bagged with unique numbers related to the context record, although some material was discarded following assessment. Assessment was undertaken by appropriately qualified staff.

Copies of this report will be supplied to the Client, English Heritage and the local planning authority. A short summary of the fieldwork has been appended to this report using the OASIS Data Collection Form, and in paragraph form suitable for publication within the 'excavation round-up' of the *London Archaeologist*.

6 RESULTS

The archaeological watching brief was undertaken during contractors' groundworks in the area illustrated in Fig.1. The groundworks took place as part of the Thames Water scheme of Victorian water mains replacement. Archaeological monitoring was undertaken on areas of open-cut trenching, trial pits and in launch pit areas, access pits and exit points of other methods. Numerous roads within the study area were archaeologically monitored and the results of the archaeological watching brief are listed below, many visits were made, but only the principal visits are noted here (discussed in alphabetical order).

Back Hill

On the 1st of April 2010 a 42m length of open cut trenching was opened along the eastern side of Back Hill. The trench was approximately 600mm wide and between 800-900mm deep. Observed stratigraphy was - at the base of the trench - a fine, homogenous, mid-grey/brown silty clay representing reworked soils cut by numerous existing services. Sealing this was 400mm of crushed concrete and granite setts forming the existing ground surface.

A pit opened across the junction between Back Hill and Clerkenwell Road on the 17th November 2011 measured 4.3m N-S by 2.9m E-W and was up to 1.65m deep. Again no archaeologically significant deposits were observed. Made ground was present 300mm below the existing granite setts and crushed concrete bedding. On this occasion the made ground was in two distinct layers or episodes of dumping, the uppermost being a very dark grey silty clay containing rounded gravels and the lower being a strong russet-brown clay silt.



Fig.12: Pit opened on Back Hill 7th November 2011, facing W

Clerkenwell Road

Numerous visits were made to the study area and on the 18th May 2011 an open-cut trench was excavated on the junction between Herbal Hill and Clerkenwell Road, measuring 7m E-W across the junction and 5m N-S extending along the western kerb line of Herbal Hill. This pit contained extensive existing services, so no archaeological deposits were observed, merely the existing tarmac road surface overlying a bed of concrete 400mm thick overlying made ground and service backfill.

On the 24th of May an open cut trench extending west from that observed on the 18th was opened for a further 16m, measuring 550mm wide and up to 1m deep. Though some service cuts were still present, (backfilled with yellow sand), there was also a thick made ground deposit of dark-grey clay silt containing occasional large fragments of brick-rubble and mortar, probably representing backfilled debris from clearing the path for the modern route of Clerkenwell Road.



Fig.13: *South facing section through trenching on Clerkenwell Road, 24th May 2011. (1m scale)*

A total of c.45m of open-cut trenching was observed between the 24th and 28th June 2011, measuring between 500-600mm wide and up to 1.4m deep in places. Observed stratigraphy comprised dark russet-brown gravels and mid-grey sandy clay containing frequent CBM fragments representing made ground deposits, present from between 300-500mm below the present ground level, sealed below concrete and tarmac forming the modern road surface. No archaeologically significant deposits were encountered.

A visit on the 11th October 2011 observed 8.5m of trenching along the northern side of Clerkenwell Street across the junction with Laystall Street. The exposed deposits included 550mm of very-dark-grey to black clay-silt

containing frequent CBM rubble and mortar flecking and some post-medieval finds including a late-17th century clay tobacco pipe bowl and a sherd of post-medieval redware⁴. This deposit was beneath a mixture of concrete bedding and former granite setts sealed by the existing tarmac road surface, (being the uppermost 590mm of the trench). The trench was 550mm wide and up to 1.1m deep.

30m of open-cut trenching was observed extending W from the trench observed on the 11th. This trench was 600mm wide and 1.10m deep with the uppermost 500mm of the trench being the existing road surface of tarmac over a bed of concrete. Below the modern ground surface the remainder of the trench contained sand backfilled around an existing service in the north section and made ground in the southern section comprised of a silty-sand, containing fragments of CBM, mortar patches and sub-angular gravels to the base of the trench and beyond. In the centre of the trench, approximately 15m from the western end, a single section of red-brick wall aligned N-S was observed from 780mm below the modern ground surface to the base of the trench at 1100mm. The wall was 340mm wide and up to 4 courses high, bonded with a coarse grey mortar.



Fig.14: *Brick wall in base of trenching 28th October 2011, facing S. (20cm scale)*

⁴ Context 6 in pottery report, Appendix I

A further 25m of open-cut trenching was excavated on the north side of Clerkenwell road to the junction with Roseberry Avenue on the 7th November 2011, and 15.5m E-W to the junction with Farringdon Road on the 24th November. Neither portion of trench exposed archaeologically significant deposits, and the observed stratigraphy was very similar to that observed elsewhere along the road; made ground overlain by the modern road base. Basal deposits of made ground produced residual sherds of Post-medieval redware, Frechen ware and Creamware, dating from the 16th to 18th centuries respectively⁵.



Fig.15: South facing section through east end of trenching on Clerkenwell Road, (Farringdon Street end). Note the tip lines of the different made ground deposits that have been spread over the surrounding area. (1m scale)

Coldbath Square

A total of 68m of open-cut trenching was observed around Coldbath Square, including 36m NW-SE from the junction with Roseberry Avenue to the corner with Topham Street on 24th February 2010, and 32m NW-SE from the junction with Topham Street to the junction with Baker's Row on 18th May 2011. Deposits observed comprised made ground of dark-grey silty-clay containing crushed brick, mortar and even a pocket of crushed bottle glass. These were sealed by mixed sand / concrete bedding overlain with granite setts and a layer of twin tarmac. The crushed glass is typical of late Victorian made ground deposits.

⁵ Contexts 10 and 8 in pottery report, Appendix I



Fig.16: *Crushed glass backfill within made ground exposed along Cold Bath Square, 24th February 2010. (1m scale)*

Crawford Passage

Two launch pits were monitored on the 9th March 2011 at the NW end of the passage and on the SE corner opposite Dabbs Lane. The pits measured 3.2m and 2.8m long respectively and 1m to 0.8m wide and were excavated up to 1.3m deep. The north-western pit contained nothing but pea-grit, whilst the south-eastern pit contained a dark-silty reworked black soil.

Elm Street

35m of open-cut trenching was investigated along the southern side of Elm Street on the 4th May 2011. The trench was aligned E-W from The junction with Mount Pleasant to the junction with Holsworthy Square, and measured 800mm wide by 850mm deep. The trench was devoid of any archaeologically significant finds, being a mass of services and MOT Type 1 backfill below 400mm of concrete and tarmac road base. As such no photographs were taken.

Eyre Street Hill

In November 2010 37m of trenching was observed; north from opposite 'The Gunmaker's' pub to the junction with Warner Street. An existing gas main cut the trench obliquely and the cast iron Victorian water main along the eastern section and as such any underlying deposits had been truncated away and backfilled with orange sand backfill and heavily disturbed black silts containing mortar rubble, gravels and fragments of CBM. A wide range of

pottery was collected from this made ground with a predominance of material from the 18th century⁶.



Fig.17: Trenching along Eyre Street Hill, November 2010, facing N, (left), and NE (right) (1m scale)

On the 6th of July 2011 a further 15m of trench were observed along the western side of Eyre Street Hill from where the street narrows opposite No.2 to the junction of Clerkenwell Road. Underlying stratigraphy was comprised of 1.05m of dark brownish-grey sandy-clay with frequent CBM fragments and mortar rubble and gravels, overlain by 150mm of concrete and 100mm of tarmac.

Farringdon Road

On the 19th January 2012 an 18m stretch of open-cut trenching aligned N-S along the western kerb line of Farringdon Street was observed. The Trench began at the junction with Clerkenwell Road and extended to the north end of the Yo Sushi restaurant. The southern end of the trench was heavily disturbed by existing services and their associated sand and gravel backfills, but the northern end showed signs of surviving made ground deposits, comprising dark grey-brown clay silt containing brick rubble and lenses of crushed mortar. This was c.450mm below the current ground level, sealed below the concrete and tarmac road base.

⁶ Context 9 in pottery report, Appendix I

A large pit excavated in the central traffic island on the western side of the junction between Clerkenwell Road and Farringdon Road was observed on the 26th January. The pit measured 2.5m N-S by 2.2m E-W and up to 1.15m deep. However the stratigraphy was heavily disturbed by existing services and no *in situ* archaeological deposits were observed. 500mm below the modern ground surface a thick deposit of dark-grey to black silty-clay was present containing crushed brick and mortar, and large quantities of gravel, all representing made ground during the creation of the modern road junction. This was overlain by builders sand and gravels supporting the kerb line, alongside with concrete forming the bed for a tarmac road surface.

Between the 1st February and 15th February 2012 a further 72.2m of open-cut trenching was observed on the western side of Farringdon Street extending North from that observed on the 19th January up to the junction with Ray Street. The trenching was between 400-500mm wide and up to 1m deep. Directly below the western kerb line a series of arched coal cellar walls were exposed. They were constructed of red brick and measured approximately 1.5m across, (N-S), and would have belonged to properties that once lined the street before the widening of Coppice Row to create Farringdon Street in the mid 19th century. These cellar walls were directly overlain by the concrete and tarmac road base, which was 0.4m thick.



Fig.18: *Curved back wall of coal cellar present beneath western kerbing of Farringdon Road, facing SSW 15th February 2012, (1m scale)*

A series of pits were observed on the 13th March 2012 between 119 Farringdon Road and the southern corner of Bakers Row. They measured between 2.3-7.6m long N-S by 0.76-2.3m wide E-W, but were all excavated to a depth of approximately 1.2m. As little as 240mm below the ground surface a very-dark grey clay silt was present representing made ground and containing crushed CBM. This deposit was observed to the full depth of the excavated pits and was sealed below the existing concreted gravel road base or previous granite setts which were in turn overlain by the modern tarmacadam road surface.

Two more insertion pits were opened between Bakers Row and Coldbath Square on the 19th March, but they exposed similar deposits to those observed elsewhere along Farringdon Road, producing several residual sherds of mid-18th century porcelain and salt-glaze ware.

On the 4th April 2012 30m of open-cut trenching was monitored on the western side of Farringdon Road from the junction of Topsham Street to past the northern end of no.171 Farringdon Road. The trench was 550mm wide

and up to 1.1m deep, exposing mid-dark brown silty sand containing CBM fragments and rounded pebbles, from 600mm below present ground level. This deposit was overlain by concrete, granite setts and tarmac. No archaeologically significant deposits or features were observed.

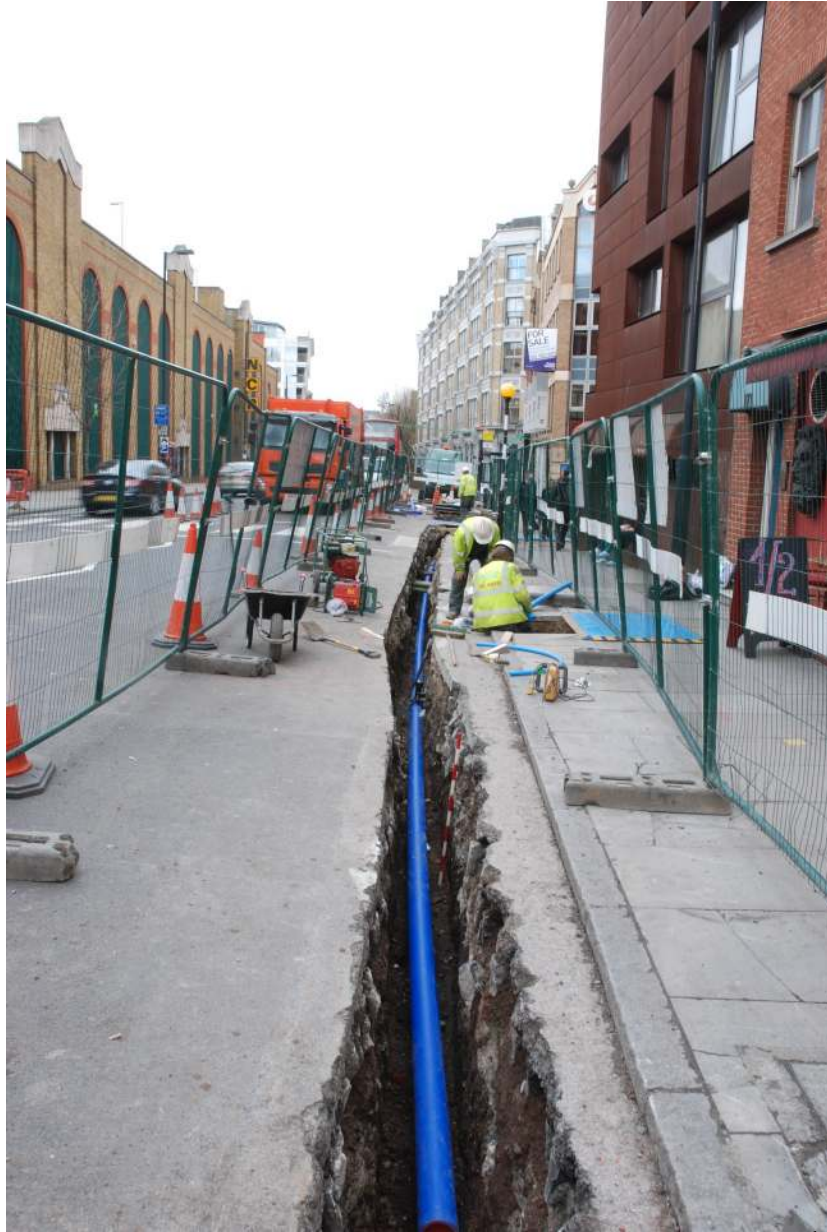


Fig.19: Trenching open on western side of Farringdon Road, 4th April 2012. Facing SW, (1m scale)

Grays Inn Road

On the 21st June 2011 a trip was made to Grays Inn Road and 25m of trenching was observed along the eastern side of the road south of the junction with Elm Street and down to the junction of Clerkenwell Road. The trench was approximately 0.5m wide and up to 1.10m deep. Stratigraphy included 700mm of mid-greyish-brown sandy clay containing frequent CBM, mortar and gravels representing a deliberate made ground deposit, sealed beneath the modern road bed of concrete topped with tarmac.

A shorter 12m section of trench was then inspected on the 6th July revealing similar stratigraphy. The trench was aligned N-S on the eastern side of the road between Nos.160-162, and was excavated to a slightly shallower depth of 950mm.



Fig.20: Trenching along Grays Inn Road, 6th July 2011, facing S. (1m scale)

In trenching works observed on the 14th of July the surviving remnants of three stub walls were revealed projecting 100mm from the eastern section. They were uniform in nature, being approximately 230mm wide, (about one stretcher / two headers wide), and were six courses high (420mm). The walls probably formed the remains of basements / cellars belonging to earlier

properties that perhaps fronted onto the street as they had surviving off-white plaster on their interior faces. No evidence of returning walls or opposing stub walls was seen and the full extent / depth of the walls were exposed, continuing below the limit of excavation.



Fig.21: *Stub walls within trench outside No.136 Grays Inn Road, facing E, 14th July 2011. (1m scale)*

Herbal Hill

A series of launch pits were opened along Herbal Hill between December 2010 and end of January 2011. No archaeological deposits or features were observed in these works as the narrow road, (2.5m wide), had numerous services present truncating underlying stratigraphy along its entire length. The only deposits encountered below the existing tarmac and concrete road base were heavily disturbed dark silty soil backfills within the service cuts.

Laystall Street

The entire length of Laystall Street was monitored between Clerkenwell Road and Roseberry Avenue, amounting to *c.*70m of trenching, 0.57m wide and up to 1.05m deep. Beneath 450mm of tarmac and concrete were mixed mid-brown sandy silts containing brick rubble, pebbles and frequent service cuts and associated backfills. No archaeologically significant deposits were encountered, and no photos were taken.

Leather Lane

A single launch pit was observed in the centre of Leather Lane opposite no.101 on the 11th September 2011. The pit measured 7m long, (N-S), by 2.2m wide, (E-W), and up to 1.2m deep. Stratigraphy comprised 700mm of dark-brown silty clay containing frequent CBM overlain by 500mm of concrete road base and tarmac road surface. A large service cut containing sand and shingle was also present in the western half of the pit.



Fig.22: Pit opened on Leather Lane, 11th September 2011, facing NW

Mount Pleasant

On the 1st April 2010 two large insertion pits were monitored at the southern end of Mount Pleasant by the junction with Gough Street, Elm Street, and Pooles Buildings. In some places the pits were dug to a depth of 2.0m but no natural ground was encountered illustrating how this area must have been built up considerably. The presence of a large cast iron water main at 1.6m below the modern ground surface meant that no archaeology was encountered, as the pits contained backfilled silty clay material and tile around the buried services.



Fig.23: Pit opened on Mount Pleasant, 1st April 2010, facing E. (1m scale)

30m of open-cut trenching was investigated on the 2nd March 2011, but no archaeologically significant deposits were observed. Made ground comprised of dark-brown / black silty sand containing crushed CBM and mortar, and was present sealed beneath the concrete and tarmac of a previous road surface which was in turn overlain by the existing road surface atop a bed of MOT Type 1. The trenching was 500mm wide and up to 900mm deep.



Fig.24: Trench opened on the SW side of Mount Pleasant, 2nd March 2011, facing S, (1m scale)

Ray Street

On the 3rd November 2010 a trench was observed on the E side of Ray Street, between Herbal Hill and Back Hill. The trench measured 22m long N-S and 0.48m wide and was excavated to a depth of c.0.75m. The underlying stratigraphy had been heavily disturbed by services creating a mixed brown silt containing gravels and general rubbish backfilled material. This was sealed beneath the existing concrete and tarmac road base.

Roseberry Avenue

On the 4th October 2011 an 8m length of open-cut trench was excavated NW-SE across the junction between Roseberry Avenue, Mount Pleasant and Coldbath Square. The trench measured 0.7m wide and up to 1.4m deep. A soil-like grey-black deposit containing CBM fragments and pebble gravels was observed, 740mm below the existing ground surface, but no archaeological features were noted. This made-ground deposit was overlain by a thick layer of concrete forming the bed of the tarmac road surface.

On the 21st October 10.5m of open-cut trench was investigated on the eastern side of Roseberry Avenue opposite no.3/4 Roseberry court just NW of the overpass with Warner Street. Again a made ground deposit was observed 600mm below the current ground level containing similar gravels and was sealed below concrete and tarmac.

Another open-cut trench, (9m long by up to 1.9m wide and 1.9m deep), was observed on the 2nd November between nos.17-21 Roseberry Avenue. This trench was dug directly over the existing water main and so no surviving, *in situ*, stratigraphy was present and the entire trench contained disturbed brown silty-sand sealed below up to 900mm of concrete, overlain by a thin layer of tarmacadam.

On the 24th November a trench aligned approximately NNE-SSW was monitored on the far eastern side of Roseberry Avenue, just south of the junction with Farringdon Road. This trench measured 500mm wide and between 800-900mm deep. However, the observed stratigraphy was quite mundane, being concrete to the base of excavation on the western side and being cut by the existing gas main in the eastern section. As a result no archaeology was observed.

However, on the 6th December 25m of trenching was opened up on the western side of Roseberry Avenue, 10m north of the junction with Mount Pleasant and extending NNE to outside the Post Office. Towards the centre of the trench, 9.3m from the southern ends and extending for a further 3.7m were the remains of a substantial wall. The remains formed a NNE-SSW aligned wall crossing the trench obliquely and emerging from the eastern section to cross the trench at a right angle to the first stretch of wall, approximately NNW-SSE. The two sections of wall met towards the eastern section to form a corner, with a rounded buttress projecting 320mm NW. The walls were present from c.490mm below modern ground level, and were constructed of yellow and red brick, bonded with grey mortar cement, surviving to at least seven courses high amounting to approximately 500mm. The lower two courses were stepped outwards suggesting the beginnings of the wall foundations. The walls were up to 800mm thick, with the NNW-SSE section being truncated by existing services. The walls were surrounded and sealed by a very dark-grey to black silty-soil deposit containing CBM fragments, mortar, shell, and gravels suggesting a mix of demolition debris and deliberate made ground deposits associated with the levelling of the structure to which the remains belonged.



Fig.25: Substantial brick masonry found on Roseberry Avenue on 6th December 2011. Facing NNE. (0.5m scale)



Fig.26: Wall found in trenching on Roseberry Avenue, 6th December 2011. Facing NE (0.5m scale)



Fig.27: Corner buttress in brickwork of prison wall. Facing SSW, 6th December 2011

From the dimensions of the remaining structure, and its construction materials it is suggested that it probably relates to part of the Clerkenwell House of Correction. It was possibly part of the perimeter wall, and maybe even represents of one of the buttresses as depicted on a plan of the complex dated to 1884, (*cf.* fig.28 below). This plan is especially useful as it also illustrates the proposed line of the modified Roseberry Avenue, thus making it easier to more accurately identify the relationship between the observed archaeology and its wider context.

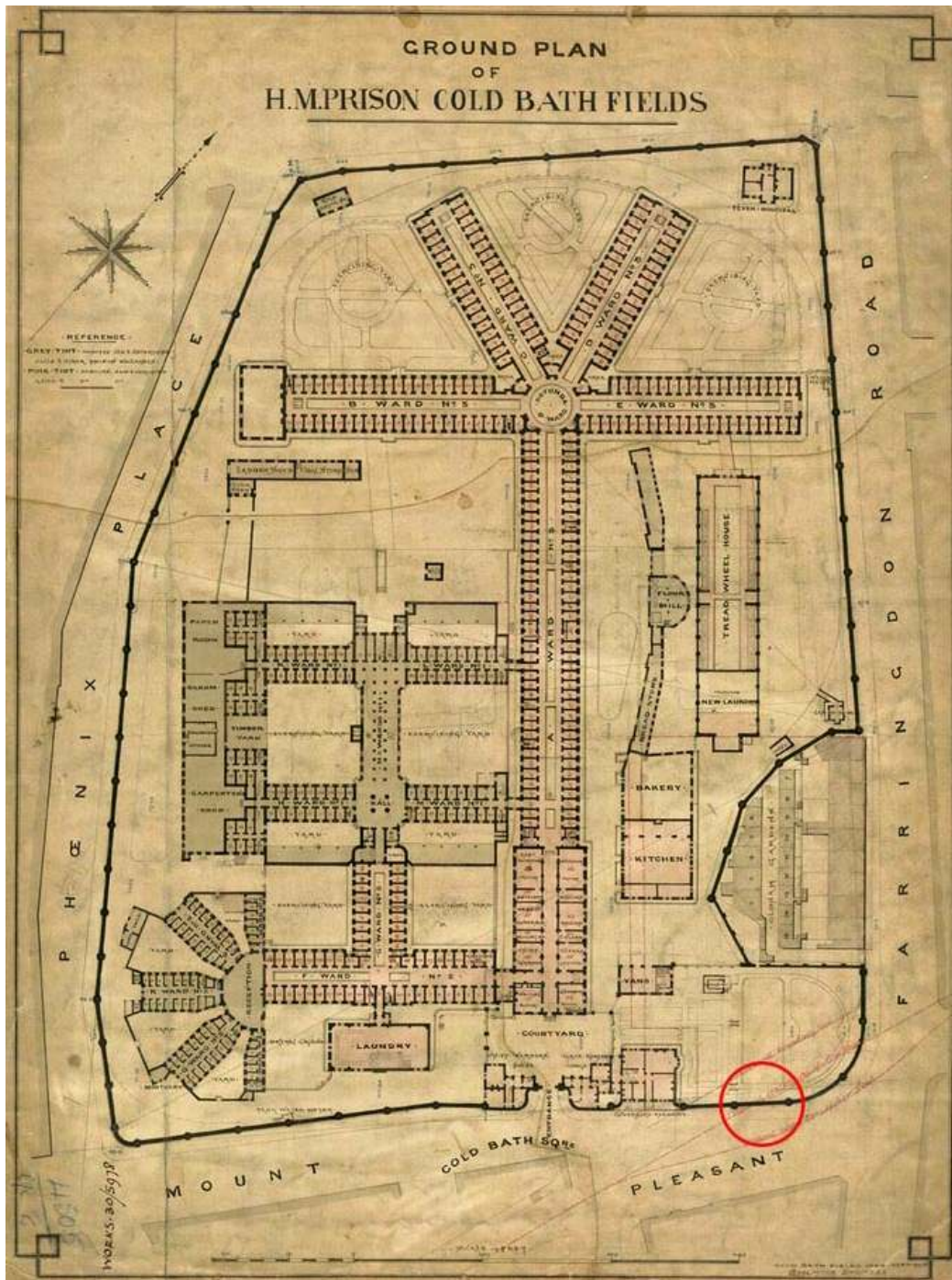


Fig.28: Plan of Clerkenwell House of correction c.1884. With the probable location of masonry uncovered during groundworks circled in red

A 21m open-cut trench was opened along the southern end of Roseberry Avenue on the 26th January 2012 between no.1 and the school buildings opposite Laystall House. The trench was on the western side of the road 1m from the kerb line with a 2m long connection trench cut W into Laystall Street. The trench measured 600mm wide and up to 1.1m deep, with the uppermost 600mm of trench exposing the existing tarmac and concrete road base, overlying a homogenous dark-brown to black silty clay containing frequent CBM fragments, mortar flecking and oyster shell, which is typical of the made ground deposits observed elsewhere in the CH70 area. These deposits were observed continuing to the base of the trench and beyond, with no archaeological features present.

Topham Street

On the 1st April 2010 a 28m trench was opened on the NW side of Topham Street. It measured 600mm wide and was on average 1.15m deep but was dug deeper to 1.5m at the south-western end to expose the buried services. Despite the depth, no archaeologically significant deposits were exposed. Made ground comprised the majority of the stratigraphy containing several service cuts, and taking the form of a finely sorted black soil mixture.

A single pit was excavated in the centre of the junction of Topham Street and Farringdon Road on the 24th May 2011. This pit measured 7m long, by 4m wide and up to 1.1m deep. It was located directly over the existing water main and so no archaeological deposits were observed, merely mid-brown sandy-silt backfill around the cast iron pipework and the concrete and tarmac road base.

On the 6th June 2011 monitoring took place on open-cut trenching along the length of the alleyway linking Topham Street and Bakers Row. This trench was approximately 500-600mm wide and up to 1.2m deep. In the centre of the trench, opposite No.6 Topham Street, the uppermost remains of a large cistern or well were observed and recorded. The structure was present from 430mm below current ground level and extended to the base of the trench and beyond for an un-qualified depth. The feature measured approximately 2.84m across, and was sub-circular in plan, extending from the NW section of the trench and curving in towards where it met the opposite side of the trench. The feature was constructed of various brick types, the majority taking the form of large orange-red bricks forming a dome or cap to the cistern which had been partially repaired with purple/yellow stock brick in its upper courses. Around the outer masonry were larger stones forming a surrounding superstructure around the well / cistern and stepping up into the section. Brick samples taken from the structure dated to c.1700-1900AD and conformed to London series brick fabric type 3047, with sharp arrises and fine moulding⁷. This complex arrangement would suggest a major undertaking and the cistern may have formed an important element of the local infrastructure in the 19th century, potentially relating to the Cold Bath or nearby New River Head.

⁷ See Appendix II, pg.40



Fig.29: Cistern in Topham Street, facing NW. 6th June 2011, (1m scale)



Fig.30: Cistern in Topham Street, facing NNW. 6th June 2011, (1m scale)



Fig.31: Cistern in Topham Street, facing WSW. 6th June 2011, (1m scale)

Vine Hill

Vine Street was monitored in February and March of 2010, no archaeological deposits were encountered and observed stratigraphy included mixed silty-clay⁸ up-cast from nearby basement construction in the recent past, overlain by concrete and tarmac.



Fig.32: Vine street facing E from steps off Roseberry Avenue. 19th February 2010



Fig.33: Vine Street facing S towards Clerkenwell Road. 3rd March 2010

Warner Street

Two sections of open-cut trenching were opened along Warner Street on the 18th March 2010. The westernmost extended from the junction with Mount Pleasant to just beneath the Roseberry Avenue overpass, (30m), and the easternmost 10m east of Bakers Row to the junction with Ray Street. Both sections were aligned along the northern side of the street and were approximately 600mm wide by 800mm deep. Natural ground was observed in the base of the trench comprised of sticky yellow clay mottled with patches of grey. It was sealed beneath dark-grey silt containing brick, concrete, sand and mortar, which was interpreted as either backfill around existing services or a dump of excavated material derived from nearby basemending. The uppermost 500mm of material was concrete bedding material overlain by the tarmac of the existing road surface.

⁸ Context 7 in Appendix I.

7 Summary and Conclusions

Archaeological deposits were encountered only sporadically in the course of this watching brief, and were confined to larger, more substantial features which could survive the high levels of truncation and artificial ground raising that have occurred across the study site.

The brickwork associated with Coldbath Prison is an interesting glimpse into the social history of the area, and considering the size of the Mount Pleasant Post Office development all the more surprising in its survival. The well or cistern on Topham Street is structurally complex and perhaps can shed light on the early infrastructure of the New River Head Company (or the Cold Bath) that could very well have played an important part in its original construction; providing a source of fresh water to the surrounding area.

The only other comment is that the deep deposits of made ground observed across the DMA suggest that the study area has been subject to considerable alteration of ground levels in the relatively recent past and so earlier archaeological deposits may still survive, but at a greater depth than those reached during these groundworks. Therefore the research questions regarding prehistoric and medieval archaeology have remained unanswered on this occasion.

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Appendix I: Pottery analysis by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 37 sherds with a total weight of 426g. It was recorded using the fabric codes of the Museum of London post-Roman type-series (Vince 1985), as follows:

BORD: Border ware, 1550-1700. 1 sherd, 7g.
 CHINA: 'Ironstone' china, 1800-1900. 3 sherds, 33g.
 CHPO: Chinese porcelain, 1580-1900. 2 sherds, 13g.
 CREA: Creamware, 1740-1880. 7 sherds, 59g.
 FREC: Frechen Stoneware, 1550 – 1700. 2 sherds, 12 g.
 LONS: London stoneware, 1670-1900. 1 sherd, 31g.
 PMR: Post-medieval redware, 1580 – 1900. 10 sherds, 131g.
 SWSG: Staffordshire white salt-glazed stoneware, 1720-1780. 3 sherds, 97g.
 TUDG: 'Tudor Green' ware, 1380-1550. 2 sherds, 4g
 TGW: English tin-glazed ware, 1600-1800. 6 sherds, 38g.

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*. The range of fabric types is typical of sites in the London area, and the material appears entirely domestic in nature. All the sherds were in reasonably good condition, other than some of the residual material.

Table 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

Cntxt	BORD		FREC		PMR		TGW		LONS		CHPO		SWSG		CREA		CHINA		Date
	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
5											1	12	1	14	1	10			M18thC
6					1	2	1	6											17thC
7																	1	13	19thC
8			1	4	2	29								2	9				M18thC
9	1	7			5	70	5	32	1	31	1	1	2	83	4	40	2	20	19thC
10			1	8	2	30													L16thC
Total	1	7	2	12	10	131	6	38	1	31	2	13	3	97	7	59	3	33	

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Appendix II: Ceramic Building Material analysis by Sue Pringle

Location	Interpretation	Context CBM date	Period	Fabric	Form	Count	Weight	L	B	Th	Condition	Comments
Clerkenwell Road	Base of brick wall	1450- 1700	PM	3033?	Brick	1	984	0	113	0	M	Indented margin. Brick is distorted and part vitrified. Grey lime mortar with coal flecks and white calcareous inclusions
Clerkenwell Road	Base of brick wall	1450- 1700	PM	3033?	Brick	1	2971	0	102	63	M	Header to wall face. Chunk of wall
Clerkenwell Road	Base of brick wall	1450- 1900	PM	V	Brick	1	0	0	100	70	M, V	Very over-fired brick, 3033 or 3032, stretcher to wall face. Chunk of wall, grey lime mortar with coal flecks and white calcareous inclusions.
Clerkenwell Road / Farringdon Road	Basal layer, East end of trench	1600- 1700	PM	3033	Brick	1	971	130+	110	69	M, Rd	Lime mortar. Upper surface uneven, probably because of exposure to heat
Grays Inn Rd	Northern wall	1750- 1800	PM	3033	Brick	1	1783	175+	113	65	M	Upper and lower faces mortared. C17 version of fabric
Grays Inn Rd	Northern wall	1750- 1800	PM	3032	Brick	1	1314	159+	103	67	M, Rd	Neatly made with sharp arrises and shallow moulded frog, c.50mm wide x 9mm deep. Brown mortar
Grays Inn Rd	Northern wall	1750- 1800	PM	3032	Brick	1	1161	120+	108	62	Rd	Neatly made with sharp arrises and shallow moulded frog, c.50mm wide x 9mm deep. Brown mortar (later C18 type) on smooth face has frog impression from adjacent brick; coal frag in mortar.
Grays Inn Rd	Southern wall	1650- 1700	PM	3032	Brick	1	865	85+	115	68	M, Rd	Surfaces mortared
Grays Inn Rd	Southern wall	1650- 1700	PM	3033	Brick	1	2030	178+	110	65	M, Rd	Later version, C17

Location	Interpretation	Context / CBM date	Period	Fabric	Form	Count	Weight	L	B	Th	Condition	Comments
Grays Inn Rd	Southern wall	1650-1700	PM	3033	Brick	1	742	80+	117	62	M, Rd	Surfaces obscured; C17 version of fabric
Grays Inn Rd	Middle wall stud	1600-1800	PM	3033?	Brick	2	1204	0	99	62	M, Rd, V	Vitrified fabric, either 3033 or 3032. Dates probably C17th or C18th
Grays Inn Rd	Middle wall stud	1600-1800	PM	3033?	Brick	0	0	0	0	67	M, Rd, V	Vitrified fabric, either 3033 or 3032. Dates probably C17th or C18th
Topham Street	Brick to east overlying soakaway/well	1700-1900	PM	3047	Brick	1	5000+	275+	240+	78	M	Fabric probably 3047 because of unusual form. Very large, thick brick with grey mortar on flat faces. 18th/early 19th c?
Topham Street	Bricks from soakaway/well	1700-1900	PM	3047?	Brick	1	2095	232	118	43	M	Sharp arrises, fine moulding sand. Slightly sandy erosion of fabric
Topham Street	Bricks from soakaway/well	1700-1900	PM	3047	Brick	1	2057	235	119	44	M	Sharp arrises, fine moulding sand
Topham Street	Brick to east, overlying soakaway/well	1700-1900	PM	3047	Brick	1	5000+	270+	200+	75	M	Part of very large brick. Sharp arrises; fine moulding sand. Thick layer brown mortar on upper surface. Probably later 18th c.

Appendix III: OASIS data collection form

OASIS ID: **compassa1-123470**

Project details

Project name	Thames Water Victorian Mains Replacement, CH70
Short description of the project	Between February 2010 and April 2012 archaeological monitoring took place during groundworks associated with the Victorian Mains Replacement programme in Clerkenwell, London Borough of Islington, EC1. The works covered a roughly triangular area bounded by Roseberry Avenue and Elm Street to the west, Clerkenwell Road to the south, and Farringdon Road to the east. <i>In situ</i> archaeology was limited to a section of wall, probably relating to the Clerkenwell House of Correction, on the NW side of Roseberry Avenue opposite the Mount Pleasant Post Office, and a large well/cistern opposite No.6 Topsham Street. Several 19th century coal cellars were also observed in trenching on Farringdon Street. From observations made across the study area it is clear that the immediate locale has been subject to substantial ground raising in the relatively recent past by at least 1.5m in places. This is probably related to the post medieval development of the area from the mid 1600s onwards, and the mid-19th century remodelling of the road network, especially around the major thoroughfares of Mount Pleasant, Clerkenwell Road and Farringdon Road.
Project dates	Start: 24-02-2010 End: 04-04-2012
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	TXC11 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Area of Archaeological Potential 1 (Clerkenwell)
Current Land use	Other 3 - Built over
Monument type	COAL CELLARS Post Medieval
Monument type	CISTERN / WELL Post Medieval
Monument type	HOUSE OF CORRECTION Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY SHERDS Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY SHERDS Post Medieval

Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Water Act 1989 and subsequent code of practice
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON ISLINGTON FINSBURY Clerkenwell CH70, London Boroughs of Camden and Islington
Postcode	EC1
Study area	9.80 Hectares
Site coordinates	TQ 3116 8238 51.5245871839 -0.109155986861 51 31 28 N 000 06 32 W Polygon
Site coordinates	TQ 3143 8206 51.5216482645 -0.105385262481 51 31 17 N 000 06 19 W Polygon
Site coordinates	TQ 3099 8197 51.5209418228 -0.111757790172 51 31 15 N 000 06 42 W Polygon
Site coordinates	TQ 3093 8210 51.5221241496 -0.112573879752 51 31 19 N 000 06 45 W Polygon

Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Compass Archaeology
Project brief originator	English Heritage/Department of Environment
Project design originator	Compass Archaeology
Project director/manager	Compass Archaeology
Project supervisor	Numerous staff members
Project supervisor	Compass Archaeology
Type of sponsor/funding body	Water utility/company

Name of sponsor/funding body	Thames Water
Project archives	
Physical Archive recipient	Museum of London Archive
Physical Contents	'Ceramics'
Digital Archive recipient	Museum of London archive
Digital Contents	'other'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography','Survey','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	Museum of London Archive
Paper Contents	'other'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Correspondence','Drawing','Map','Plan','Survey','Unpublished Text'

Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	THAMES WATER VICTORIAN MAINS REPLACEMENT WORKS IN THE VICINITY OF MOUNT PLEASANT, FARRINGDON ROAD AND CLERKENWELL ROAD
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Aaronson, J
Date	2012
Issuer or publisher	Compass Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	5-7 Southwark Street
Description	Short report of the results of the watching brief. Includes historical, archaeological, geological and topographical background of the site, details of the methodology used, photographs and descriptions of all trenches monitored, and brief conclusions reached.

Appendix IV: London Archaeologist summary

Site Address: Thames Water Victorian Mains Replacement CH70, Clerkenwell, area defined by Clerkenwell Road (south), Farringdon Road (east), and Mount Pleasant (west)

Project Type: Watching Brief

Dates of Fieldwork: February 2010-April 2012

Site Code: TXC 11

Site Supervisor: Gill King 2011, James Aaronson 2012

NGR: TQ 3116 8238 (Northern tip)
TQ 3143 8206 (Southeastern tip)
TQ 3099 8197 (Southwestern tip)
TQ 3093 8210 (Western end of Elm Street)

Funding Body: Optimise

Between February 2010 and April 2012 archaeological monitoring took place during groundworks associated with the Victorian Mains Replacement programme in Clerkenwell, London Borough of Islington, EC1. The works covered a roughly triangular area bounded by Roseberry Avenue and Elm Street to the west, Clerkenwell Road to the south, and Farringdon Road to the east.

In situ archaeology was limited to a section of wall, probably relating to the late 18th-century Clerkenwell House of Correction, on the NW side of Roseberry Avenue opposite the Mount Pleasant Post Office, and a large well/cistern opposite No.6 Topham Street. Several 19th century coal cellars were also observed in trenching on Farringdon Street.

From observations made across the study area it is clear that the immediate locale has been subject to substantial raising of the ground in the relatively recent past by at least 1.5m in places. This is probably related to the post medieval development of the area from the mid 1600s onwards, and the mid-19th century remodelling of the road network, especially around the major thoroughfares of Mount Pleasant, Clerkenwell Road and Farringdon Road.