

**LAND ADJACENT TO
6-12 Tabard Street
London SE1**

London Borough of Soutwark

Report on archaeological evaluation

March 2016



**LAND ADJACENT TO
6-12 Tabard Street
London
SE1 4JU**

Site Code TBS16
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Report on a Pre-determination archaeological evaluation

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Summary

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out by MOLA at land adjacent to 6-12 Tabard Street, London, SE1 4JU, The report was commissioned from MOLA by Create Design Ltd on behalf of the client Avon Group of Companies.

In accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (MOLA 2016) a single evaluation trench was excavated on the site between Monday 22nd Feb and Friday 4th March 2016.

Modern truncation had removed potential for archaeological remains to 3m below the ground surface (from 4m to 1m AOD). Modern truncation may continue below this level but operational constraints and the proximity of an adjacent party wall, limited investigations to this depth. Comparison with features excavated on adjacent 6-12 Tabard Street would indicate a potential for deep-cut archaeological features to 0.5m below OD (-0.5m OD).

Archaeological potential at the site is likely to be limited to deep cut features such as wells, quarries, ditches or channels. This report recommends that a programme of archaeological monitoring (watching brief) should be carried during phases of ground clearance and bulk ground reduction, prior to the formation of any new basements.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Site background

- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was carried out by MOLA of land adjacent to 6-12 Tabard Street, London, SE1 4JU (site code TBS16) between Monday 22nd Feb and Friday 4th March 2016 (Fig 1).
- 1.1.2 The archaeological desk-based assessment (Archaeological Collective 2015), prepared in advance of the evaluation, should be referred to for information on the natural geology, archaeological and historical background of the site, and the initial interpretation of its archaeological potential.

1.2 Planning background

- 1.2.1 The legislative and planning framework in which the evaluation took place was fully set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation which formed the project design for the evaluation (see Section 1.2, MOLA 2016).

1.3 Scope of the evaluation

- 1.3.1 Evaluation is defined by Historic England as intended to provide information about the archaeological resource in order to contribute to the:
- 1.3.2 - formulation of an appropriate response or mitigation strategy to planning applications or other proposals which may adversely affect such archaeological remains, or enhance them; and/or
- 1.3.3 - formulation of a proposal for further archaeological investigations within a programme of research
- 1.3.4 An archaeological evaluation is a limited fieldwork exercise designed to test the conclusions of preliminary desk based work. It is not the same as full excavation.
- 1.3.5 The evaluation was carried out within the terms of the relevant Standard for evaluation specified by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIFA, 2014).
- 1.3.6 All work has been undertaken within the research priorities established in the Museum of London's A research framework for London Archaeology, 2002
- 1.3.7 All work was undertaken within research aims and objectives established in the Written Scheme of Investigation for the evaluation (Section 2.2)

2 Topographical and historical background

2.1 Topography

- 2.1.1 The site lies on the southern edge of an ancient water channel (palaeochannel) between the Southwark 'mainland' of Thames River gravels to the south, and, to the north, the low-lying sand and gravel islands ('eyots') at the southern edge of the river Thames. Where the gravels and islands were high enough to remain dry they tended to form a focus for human activity and occupation from the prehistoric period onwards, separated by mudflats, marshes and tidal creeks and channels. Periods of higher water levels and flooding would be interspersed with lower levels and silting, causing marshy organic deposits to form.
- 2.1.2 Archaeological investigations adjacent to the site to the north at 6-12 Tabard Street in 1976 (site code SB76) recorded untruncated natural gravel at between 0.97m and 1.17m OD sealed by a grey sandy-silt up to 1.02m and 1.30m OD and 1.02m OD respectively. These were possibly associated with flooding and high river levels in the late-prehistoric to early Roman period. The gravel appeared to have been truncated by river erosion across the north-eastern part of the investigation area to c 0.80m OD, corresponding with the projected edge of the palaeochannel running approximately across the northern part of this site.
- 2.1.3 Directly to the north-west a watching brief at 200 Dover Street in 2010 (site code GDU10) recorded the top of the alluvial sequence at 1.15m OD, although this was possibly truncated. The top of the natural sands and gravels lay at between 0.95m and 1.15m OD. Boreholes undertaken on this site also recorded what appeared to be natural deposits between 0.55m OD and -2.2m OD with the highest survival of archaeological deposits at c 1.5m OD.
- 2.1.4 The site's probable location on the edge of a palaeochannel, suggests potential for a sequence of alluvial deposits containing preserved pollen and other organic material which could provide evidence of past environments and human activity during the prehistoric and early Roman periods.

2.2 Archaeological background

- 2.2.1 The site also has potential to contain archaeological remains dated to the prehistoric period. Its location on the edge of a water channel offering food resources, and within reach of the more extensive resources of the Thames, would have made it attractive for activity or settlement. Evidence of flint-working has been found in the vicinity of the site and two struck flakes and one flint core found adjacent to the site during investigation at 6-12 Tabard Street directly to the north.
- 2.2.2 The site has high potential to contain archaeological remains dated to the Roman period. A major Roman road, Watling Street, running south from London Bridge connected Londinium with the Channel ports is thought to be located close to the site. It has been found close to modern Borough High Street and Great Dover Street in the vicinity of the site and recent research suggests it is either located just to the west of the site (MOLA 2011) or possibly on the site. Additionally during the Roman period, burial of the dead was forbidden within towns. Cemeteries were generally located along the major roads outside the towns, and many Roman roadside burials have been recorded in Southwark.
- 2.2.3 Also close to the site, c 40m to the west, remains of an AD 2nd to 3rd century Roman temple complex were excavated at Tabard Square at the junction of Tabard Street and Long Lane in 2002 (site code LLS02). Prior to its development as a

religious precinct a series of AD 1st to 2nd century suburban buildings were constructed around a north-east-south-west road that must have run of Watling Street to the west (Killock D *et al.* 2015, Fig 2.7). However this multi-period site predominantly revealed two Romano-Celtic temples, numerous plinths, altars and columns within a precinct that was further modified in the 4th century and subsequently went out of use. Numerous finds were recovered from the site including a sealed tin-ally canister that still contained its contents thought to be a cosmetic cream (Killock D *et al.* 2015, 31).

- 2.2.4 Within the site itself, there is the potential for localised survival of early Roman levelling layers, and later Roman remains. Directly to the north of the site excavations at 6-12 Tabard Street recorded evidence of flooding and silting on low-lying ground in the early Roman period. Sand was used to consolidate the ground in the 1st century AD and a 1st-century pit and a late Roman well were located on this site. These were cut to a depth of -0.52m OD (0.52m below OD) and -0.08m OD (0.08m below OD). Previous historical development across the site may have truncated archaeological remains however cut features of Roman date may survive.
- 2.2.5 The site has a low potential to contain archaeological remains dated to the early medieval (Saxon) period. It is likely that the area of the site was sparsely populated and in agricultural or pastoral use; early medieval remains are rare in the area.
- 2.2.6 The site has potential to contain archaeological remains dated to the later medieval period. Situated on a main road, close to a parish church of St George the Martyr, which is situated c 60m to the north-west of the site. By the end of the 12th century there was continuous development along the main road from London Bridge to St George's (Carlin 1996, 22). Excavations at 6-12 Tabard Street revealed a succession of deeply-cut pits close to Tabard Street, some possibly originally wood-lined, probably associated with properties along the street frontage, and dated from pottery within the fills to the 11th or 12th century (Yule 1989). The pits were cut to -0.40m OD to 0.23m OD and are possibly evidence of gravel quarrying and suggesting deeply-cut features would be likely to survive on the site.
- 2.2.7 The site has potential to contain archaeological remains dated to the post-medieval period. The semi-rural character of the area continued into the post-medieval period, but it was soon replaced by small-scale industry and manufacturing. Historical mapping indicates that the site was occupied by buildings from at least the late 17th century, as shown on Morgan's map of 1682, and was redeveloped over the 18th and 19th centuries until the late 20th century when it became open ground. In the 19th century the site was located just to the south of a tallow works as shown on the 1876 Ordnance Survey map of the site. Evidence of building foundations and associated activity dating from the 17th century or earlier could be present on the site.
- 2.2.8 Bombing during World War II caused much damage in the area. The London County Council's bomb damage map (London Topographic Society 2005, map 76) shows that buildings at the west of the site were damaged beyond repair with lesser damage to the east, the western buildings were subsequently removed and in the later 20th century the whole site was cleared.
- 2.2.9 Basements or cellars of 19th and early 20th-century buildings on the site will have removed any archaeological remains within their footprint, and localised areas of truncation are expected on the site. However even in deeply disturbed areas of the site the surrounding depth recorded of features excavated to the north of the site at 6-12 Tabard Street would suggest that deeply-cut features (pits and or ditches) may survive.

3 Evaluation methodology

3.1 Field methodology

- 3.1.1 A single evaluation trench 3m by 2m was excavated in two sections, an eastern side within a relatively modern cellar and a western section outside of the cellar.
- 3.1.2 The ground was broken out and cleared by contractors under MOLA supervision.
- 3.1.3 The east side was excavated first by machine, through loose rubble backfill of a modern cellar, two walls of which provided secure sides to the trench, leading to the east end of the trench being 170mm wider than the planned 2.0m width. Below a metre depth the loose nature of the fill was unstable and the opposing two sides were shored with trench sheets and external and internal wooden frames. The trench was excavated to 2.5m below ground level, where a concrete floor was encountered. Coring and drilling through the concrete cellar slab has demonstrated that it was 500mm thick. As this depth was at the maximum limit of the trench excavation (3m below ground level), given the proximity of the 6-12 Tabard Street buildings party wall, this floor was not broken out and the cellar was backfilled.
- 3.1.4 West of the cellar wall, the trench had to be shored on 3 sides. It was excavated to 3.0m below ground level but only modern fills were exposed. The cellar wall had a 300mm-wide offset foundation at 2.5m below ground level – the same level as the floor on the opposite side. East of that only loose brick rubble was exposed.
- 3.1.5 Archaeological excavation was carried out in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (MOLA 2016)
- 3.1.6 The trench location was offset surveyed on site to features that also occur on the OS 1:1250 map. Levels were recorded from ground level

3.2 Recording methodology

- 3.2.1 A written and drawn record of all archaeological deposits encountered was carried out in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (MOLA 2016).

3.3 Site archive

Number of trench record sheets	1
Number of overall location plans	1 digital
Number of Context (SU) sheets	0
Number of photographs	6 digital
Number of Plan sheets	0
Number of Sections	0

4 Results of the evaluation

4.1.1 For trench location see Fig 2.

4.2 Evaluation Trench

Location	Open land in use as a small car park that lies to the south of 6-12 Tabard Street
Dimensions	3.25m E–W by 2.0m – 2.17m N–S by <3.0m depth
Modern ground level/top of slab	4m OD
Base of modern slab	3.7m OD
Depth of archaeological stratigraphy above natural (if any)	None
Top of surviving natural observed at	N/A
Level of base of trench	1m OD

- 4.2.1 On the east side of the trench, a modern cellar was exposed with a concrete base at 1.5m OD. This was drilled and found to be 480–500mm thick. Excavations were ceased at this level as this was the maximum limit of excavation possible because of the proximity of adjacent party walls. A modern 300mm-wide stepped foundations was exposed on the west side of the cellar wall, also at 1.5m OD.
- 4.2.2 West of the cellar, modern rubble indicated the ground had been reworked in the 20th century beyond the limit of 3m below ground level, 1m OD.
- 4.2.3 No archaeological features were observed or recorded within the trench. The modern basemending and made-ground confirm that there is no potential for archaeological deposit survival to 3m below the current ground levels (1m AOD), in this part of the site.

4.3 The site as a whole

- 4.3.1 Comparing levels at 6-12 Tabard Street that was investigated in 1976 (site code SB76) where untruncated natural gravel was exposed at between 0.97m and 1.17m OD sealed by a grey sandy-silt up to 1.02m and 1.30m OD and 1.02m OD respectively. These were possibly associated with flooding and high river levels in the late-prehistoric to early Roman period. We can demonstrate that modern truncation extends to at least 1m OD and maybe below this level. The only potential for archaeological remains would appear to be in deep cut features (eg. quarries, ditches). Potential for such features can be demonstrated by the presence of a Roman well and pit at 6-12 Tabard Street. They had been dug to 0.52m below OD and 0.08m below OD (1.5m below the lower limit of the evaluation trench).

5 Archaeological potential

5.1 Answering original research aims and general discussion of potential

5.1.1 Modern disturbance continues below 1m OD. No archaeological or natural deposits were observed. This level of truncation would have removed all but lower/deeper cut features and natural deposits.

5.2 Assessment of the evaluation

5.2.1 A high degree of confidence can be placed in the archaeological evaluation down the levels of 3m below the existing ground level. Below these levels there remains and archaeological potential within the site, although this potential could not be sufficiently investigated . Given the depths of the modern truncation (disturbance) however, any such remains are likely to be limited to deep cut features such as quarries, ditches or wells.

6 Proposed development impact and conclusions

- 6.1.1 As previously identified within the Written Scheme of Investigation (MOLA 2016) the lies in the general vicinity of an ancient water channel and there is potential for evidence of human activity dating to the later prehistoric and early Roman periods. Excavations near to the application site have also recorded evidence of Roman activity, it is possible that the site lies in the direct vicinity of a Roman road.
- 6.1.2 The full depth of modern truncation could not be established, although it has been recorded at a height of 1m AOD. If the extent of modern disturbance is limited to c 1m OD, then it is likely that any horizontal archaeological deposits will have been removed by the existing basemending. A Roman road for example, may have been entirely removed. Potential exists however for deep cut archaeological features (such as roadside ditches, or quarry pits) to be present beneath the modern basement levels. Any surviving archaeological deposits may of course have been further truncated by earlier (post-medieval) building activities within the application footprint.
- 6.1.3 It is proposed to build over the open ground of the site adjacent to 6-12 Tabard Street. Piled foundations will penetrate below the level of the modern cellars, deeper than 1m OD. The impact of piled foundations and any targeted ground clearance would be to remove archaeological deposits within the local area of the pile.
- 6.1.4 A new basement is also proposed in the eastern 2/3rds of the application site. Construction of the basement and removal of the existing buried cellars in this area would be likely to remove any archaeological deposit survival, if such exist.
- 6.1.5 Given that archaeological potential for deep cut features such as wells, quarries or ditches/channels has been identified at the site, and that this cannot be ruled out by the archaeological trenching exercise, a programme of archaeological monitoring (watching brief) would be recommended.
- 6.1.6 Archaeological monitoring should be undertaken during phases of ground clearance or remediation within the site and during bulk ground reduction prior to the formation of the new basement.
- 6.1.7 The decision on the appropriate archaeological mitigation to the deposits revealed rests with the Local Planning Authority.

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8 OASIS archaeological report form

OASIS ID: molas1-245251

Project details

Project name	LAND ADJACENT TO 6-12 Tabard Street London SE1 4JU
Short description of the project	Evaluation trench limited to 3m deep (from 4m OD) exposed only modern deposits. Actual potential depends on depth of truncation but from 1m OD to 0.5m BELOW OD deep cut features had been dug below the level of underlying archaeologically sterile natural deposits on adjacent 6-12 Tabard Street
Project dates	Start: 22-02-2016 End: 04-03-2016
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	TBS16 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Not recorded
Position in the planning process	Pre-application

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON SOUTHWARK BERMONDSEY ROTHERHITHE AND SOUTHWARK LAND ADJACENT TO 6-12 Tabard Street London SE1 4JU
Postcode	SE1 4JU
Study area	140 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 3253 7969 51.500090344722 -0.090428807158 51 30 00 N 000 05 25 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	MOLA
Project design originator	Avon Group of Companies
Project director/manager	Simon Davis
Project supervisor	David Sankey
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Avon Group of Companies

OASIS ID: molas1-245251 cont'd

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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Entered by	David Sankey (DSankey@mola.org.uk)
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Fig 1 Site location

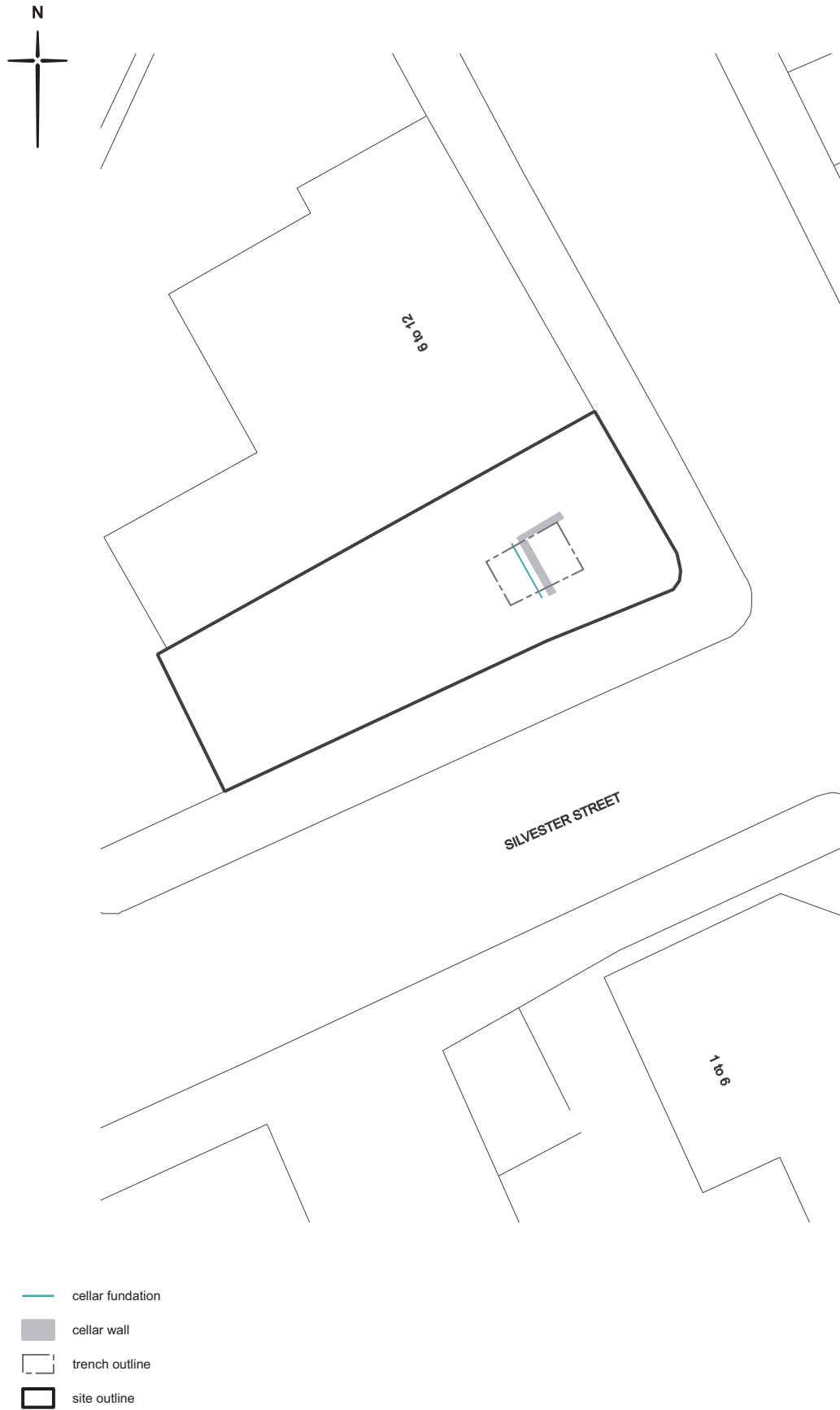


Fig 2 Trench location



Fig 3 Trench detail and cellar



Fig 4 Cellar looking south



Fig 5 Trench west of cellar looking east