



ST MARY SOMERSET TOWER DRAINAGE WORKS
Lambeth Hill
London
EC4V

City of London

Archaeological watching brief report

December 2017



© Museum of London Archaeology 2017



Museum of London Archaeology
Mortimer Wheeler House
46 Eagle Wharf Road, London N1 7ED
tel 020 7410 2200 | fax 020 410 2201
www.museumoflondonarchaeology.org.uk
general enquiries:
enquiries@mola.org.uk

ST MARY SOMERSET TOWER DRAINAGE WORKS
Lambeth Hill
London
EC4V

Site Code LHI17
NGR 532160 180881
OASIS reference molas1-296911

Report on an archaeological watching brief

Sign-off History:

Issue No.	Date:	Prepared by:	Checked/ Approved by:	Reason for Issue:
1	18/12/2017	Pat Miller Senior Archaeologist	Louise Davies	First issue

© **MOLA**
Mortimer Wheeler House, 46 Eagle Wharf Road, London N1 7ED tel 0207 410 2200
Unit 2, Chineham Point, Crockford Lane, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG24 8NA, Tel: 01256 587320

email business@mola.org.uk

Summary

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out by MOLA at St Mary Somerset tower, Lambeth Hill, EC4V. The report was commissioned from MOLA by STMS Limited.

In accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (MOLA 2015) a watching brief was carried out on the site on 5th July, 2017 to monitor excavation for a drainage trench at the western area of the tower.

At the northern end of the drainage trench excavations a stone ashlar foundation was encountered at 0.8m below ground level, evidence of the 17th-century tower foundations.

Disarticulated human bone was observed within the made ground deposits of the drainage excavations. These remains were most probably redeposited near the tower as a result of activity around the church and church ground after its disuse and as a result of further disturbance during the tower's mid-20th-century restoration. The bone was retained onsite for reburial.

Contents

Summary	2
Contents	3
1 Introduction	4
2 Topographical and historical background	5
3 The watching brief	7
4 Results of the watching brief	8
5 Archaeological potential	9
6 Publication and archiving	11
7 Acknowledgements	12
8 Bibliography	13
9 OASIS archaeological report form	14

List of Illustrations

Front cover: View of St Mary Somerset tower looking up

Fig 1 Site location

Fig 2 Planned location of the drainage trench

Fig 3 1873 Ordnance Survey map

Fig 4 Drainage trench location and location of ashlar foundation [1]

Fig 5 Excavated drain run looking north

Fig 6 Ashlar foundations of St Mary Somerset tower in drain run looking north-east

Fig 7 Detail of ashlar foundation at north-west corner of St Mary Somerset (0.2m scale)

1 Introduction

1.1 Site background

- 1.1.1 An archaeological watching brief was carried out by MOLA at the former church tower of St Mary Somerset tower, Lambeth Hill, EC4V in the City of London ('the site') on 5th July, 2017. This document is the report on that work.
- 1.1.2 The site comprises the area to the immediate west of the former church tower of St Mary Somerset. The centre of the site lies at National Grid reference 532160 180881 (Fig 1).
- 1.1.3 Further to the condition on Planning Consent a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by MOLA (MOLA 2105). All archaeological work has been carried out in accordance with that WSI.

1.2 Planning background

- 1.2.1 The WSI formed the project design for the watching brief (MOLA 2015). The works were pursuant to condition 10 of the City of London planning permission 05/00194/FULL for the site. A disused burial ground is associated with the former church of St Mary Somerset and a burial license was obtained in the event that human remains were encountered.

1.3 Scope of the watching brief

- 1.3.1 The watching brief was undertaken to monitor contractors hand-digging a drainage trench on the western side of the church tower (see Fig 2).
- 1.3.2 An archaeological watching brief is normally a limited fieldwork exercise. It is not the same as full excavation, though individual features may be fully excavated.
- 1.3.3 The watching brief was carried out within the terms of the relevant Standard for watching brief specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (CIFA 2014).
- 1.3.4 All work has been undertaken within the research priorities established in the Museum of London's A research framework for London Archaeology, 2002.
- 1.3.5 All work was undertaken within research aims and objectives established in the WSI for the watching brief (MOLA 2015, Section 2.2).

2 Topographical and historical background

2.1 Topography

- 2.1.1 The site is currently paved, and modern ground levels directly around the tower lie at c 7.20m OD at the south-east corner and c 7.50m OD at the north-west corner.
- 2.1.2 The estimated level of the surface of the natural gravel is c 4.5m OD to the north of St Mary Somerset. It falls away rapidly to the south towards the river.

2.2 Archaeology

Roman

- 2.2.1 To the north-west of the site, under the site of the Salvation Army building, a series of Roman foundations were found. These were probably part of a temple precinct constructed on earlier rammed chalk terraces. Beyond that at Peter's Hill, a series of structures which may include the unfinished palace of the imperial pretender, Allectus, were begun and abandoned in the last decade of the 3rd century. Immediately south of these was the riverside wall, built in c AD 270. Previous archaeological investigation of the site (site code SYO03, MoLAS 2003) and recorded included structural remains that appeared to be Roman in origin. The highest Roman deposit was recorded at a height of 4.62m OD.

Medieval

- 2.2.2 The earliest references to St Mary Somerset Church are in the 12th century. The name Somerset is probably derived from Somershithe, a nearby wharf (Weinreb and Hibbert 1995, 765). Many of the streets in the area probably had their origins in the late-Saxon period, but are not recorded in any surviving documentary sources until later. The medieval street plan was retained after the 1666 Great Fire, but was lost following Victorian and post-war redevelopment. On the west side of Old Fish Street Hill, to the north-west of the site, was the church and churchyard of St Mary Mounthaw, first recorded in 1150, which may originally have been a private chapel of the Mounthaut family from Norfolk. A 2003 watching brief in the St Mary Somerset gardens recorded evidence of large chalk fragments (that may have been residual) from the original 12th century church foundations.

Post-medieval

- 2.2.3 The church was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666, as was St Mary Mounthaw. St Mary Mounthaw was not rebuilt after the fire, and its parish was amalgamated with St Mary Somerset, which was rebuilt by Wren in 1686–95. St. Mary Somerset church was rebuilt by Wren from 1686-95. It consisted of an east-west aligned church with tower built at the south-eastern end and a burial ground contained within the surrounding church yard. The nave of St Mary Somerset was located to the north-east of the church tower. Remnants of the nave of the church lie beneath the present Lambeth Hill, with the north wall possibly under the pavement adjoining Walker House.
- 2.2.4 St Mary Somerset was demolished as a result of the Union of Benefices Act in 1872 following deconsecration in 1867. It is still shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1873 (Fig 3), which must have been drawn shortly before its demolition. This map shows the site and surrounding area in a period of change, when Queen Victoria Street was being laid out. The church was replaced by warehouses which appear to

follow its wall lines and these may even have retained some of the earlier masonry from the church.

2.2.5 The main changes to the immediate area since the Second World War led to the realignment of streets to the south of Queen Victoria Street. The tower was preserved as a memento and was restored in 1956 following wartime damage.

2.2.6 The previous investigations at St Mary Somerset have revealed evidence of the Wren church and a post-medieval wall. Dumped disarticulated human bone was also recorded in separate locations and was collected for reburial within the church grounds. The bones are thought or have originated from graves destroyed during later construction on the site (MoLAS 2005, 2009).

3 The watching brief

3.1 Field methodology

- 3.1.1 The watching brief was undertaken to monitor contractors hand-digging a drainage trench on the western side of the church tower, as shown in the WSI, and record any archaeological/structural features that may be present. The planned location of the drainage trench is shown on Fig 2.
- 3.1.2 The paving slab was removed and cleared by contractors under MOLA supervision. The drainage trench was excavated by hand and monitored by a member of staff from MOLA.
- 3.1.3 Archaeological excavation of features was carried out in accordance with the WSI (MOLA 2015).
- 3.1.4 Trench locations and/or archaeological features were plotted on plans related to the side of the tower using an 'offset methodology' and subsequently tied to the Ordnance Survey (OS) grid.
- 3.1.5 Where levels are referenced in this report (eg '6.28m OD'), these relate to OS Ordnance Datum and were calculated by measurement from a nearby spot height on survey plans undertaken for previous investigations on the St Mary Somerset site.

3.2 Recording methodology

- 3.2.1 A written and drawn record of all archaeological deposits encountered was carried out in accordance with the WSI (MOLA2015).

3.3 Site archive

Number of trench record sheets	-
Number of overall location plans	1
Number of Context (SU) sheets	-
Number of photographs	7
Number of Plan sheets	1
Number of Sections	-

4 Results of the watching brief

4.1 Drainage trench

Location	West side of St Mary Somerset tower
Dimensions	5.20m by 0.70m by up to 1.4m deep
Modern ground level/top of slab	7.50m OD
Base of modern fill/slab/turf	Concrete slab c 0.75m
Depth of archaeological stratigraphy	c 6.70m OD (0.80 bgl)
Level of base of lowest features or deposits observed	6.28m OD
Top of surviving natural observed at	N/A
Level of base of trench	6.28m OD to 6.10m OD

- 4.1.1 The trench was located on the western side of the church tower and was excavated up to a depth of 1.4m at the south (see Fig 4 and Fig 5). Within the trench a concrete slab c 0.75m deep overlay a mixed made ground deposit c 0.50m thick which contained modern inclusions suggesting a date of the mid-20th century.
- 4.1.2 No features were evident over the majority of the trench except towards the northern end where a stone ashlar foundation [1] was observed protruding from the north-west corner of the original line of the tower (see Fig 6 and Fig 7). These were encountered at 0.8m below ground level (bgl) and the exposed blocks were bonded together with a hard light grey lime mortar. The ashlar foundation extended 0.40m to the west and 0.28 north of the edge of the tower wall and are evidence of the below ground 17th-century tower foundations.
- 4.1.3 Disarticulated human bone was observed within the made ground deposits of the drainage excavations. These remains were most probably redeposited near the tower as a result of general activity around the church and church ground after its disuse and as a result of further disturbance during the tower's mid-20th-century restoration. The bone was retained onsite for reburial.

5 Archaeological potential

5.1 Answering original research aims

5.1.1 The WSI included the following research aims:-

- *Do any disarticulated human remains exist on the site?*

5.1.2 Disarticulated human bone was observed within the drainage excavations and is most probably a result of disuse of the church and church ground and later development around the tower. The bone was retained onsite for reburial.

- *Is there any evidence or building material relating to the 12th-century church?*

5.1.3 No evidence of the original 12th-century church was observed during the watching brief.

- *Is there any evidence for Roman structures?*

5.1.4 No evidence of Roman structures was observed during the watching brief.

- *What evidence is there for the demolition of the 17th-century church and construction of the Victorian warehouses?*

5.1.5 No evidence of the demolition of the 17th-century church was observed. However evidence of the 17th-century tower foundation was observed at the northern end of the drainage trench. These were located under the modern concrete slab and were comprised of ashlar blocks seen at the north-west corner of the tower below the current ground level. Evidence of the Victorian warehouses (located to the north of the tower) was not seen.

- *What is the nature and level of natural topography?*

5.1.6 Natural deposits were not reached during the investigations.

5.2 Answering new research aims

5.2.1 No new research aims were raised from the results of the watching brief.

5.3 Significance of the data

5.3.1 The works confirmed that disarticulated human remains are present in redeposited layers around the church tower. The deposits these were found in suggest they date to the mid-20th-century and indicate similar to previous investigation on the site that the area around the tower was probably levelled during the tower restoration in the 1950s with general deposits from the church yard that contained redeposited human bone.

5.3.2 The drainage works also established that areas of the original the 17th-century tower foundations remain below the modern concrete slab at the north-west corner of the tower.

- 5.3.3 Whilst the archaeological remains are undoubtedly of local significance they are not thought to be of regional or national importance.

6 Publication and archiving

- 6.1.1 The results of the watching brief will be made publicly available by means of a database in digital form, to permit inclusion of the site data in any future academic researches into the development of London.
- 6.1.2 The site archive containing original records and finds will be stored in accordance with the terms of the WSI (MOLA 2015) with the Museum of London Archaeological Archive (LAA) within twelve months of the end of the watching brief.
- 6.1.3 In view of the limited potential of the material (Sections 5) and the relatively limited significance of the data (Section 5.3) it is suggested that a short note on the results of the watching brief should appear in the annual round up of the *London Archaeologist*.

7 Acknowledgements

- 7.1.1 The author would like to thank the following for their contributions and help in producing this report: Sam Pfizenmaier (MOLA) who supervised the archaeological works on the site.

8 Bibliography

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, (CIFA), 2014 *By-Laws, Standards and Policy Statements of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, Standard and guidance: watching brief*

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, (CIFA), 2014 *By-Laws, Standards and Policy Statements of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, Standard and guidance: the creation, compilation deposition and transfer of archaeological archives*

English Heritage, 1991 *Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2)*

MOLA, 2015 St Mary Somerset, Lambeth Hill, City of London Written Scheme of Investigation for a Watching brief, MOLA unpub. document

MoLAS, 2003 St Mary Somerset Garden, Lambeth Hill, An archaeological watching brief report, MoLAS unpub. report

MoLAS, 2005 Tower of St Mary Somerset, Lambeth Hill, EC4, An archaeological evaluation report, MoLAS unpub. report

MoLAS, 2009 St Mary Somerset, Lambeth Hill, EC4, An archaeological watching brief report, MoLAS unpub. report

Museum of London, 2002 *A research framework for London archaeology 2002*

Weinreb B and Hibbert C, 1995 *The London Encyclopaedia*

9 OASIS archaeological report form

OASIS ID: molas1-296911

Project details

Project name	St Mary Somerset tower, Lambeth Hill, London, EC4V
Short description of the project	The watching brief was undertaken to monitor contractors hand-digging a drainage trench on the western side of the tower associated with the church. At the northern end of the drainage trench excavations a stone ashlar foundation was encountered at 0.8m below ground level, evidence of the below ground 17th-century tower foundations. Additionally disarticulated human bone was observed within the made ground deposits of the drainage excavations. These remains were most probably redeposited near the tower as a result of general activity around the church and church ground after its disuse and as a result of further disturbance during the tower's mid-20th-century restoration. The bone was retained onsite for reburial.
Project dates	Start: 05-07-2017 End: 05-07-2017
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	LHI17 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	SYO03 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)
Current Land use	Other 8 - Land dedicated to the display of a monument
Monument type	WALL FOUNDATION Post Medieval
Significant Finds	DISARTICULATED HUMAN BONE Uncertain
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON CITY OF LONDON CITY OF LONDON St Mary Somerset tower, Lambeth Hill, EC4V
Postcode	EC4V 4HG
Study area	4 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 32160 80881 51.51087230664 -0.095310802821 51 30 39 N 000 05 43 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 0m Max: 0m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	MOLA
Project brief originator	MOLA
Project design originator	Louise Davies
Project director/manager	Louise Davies
Project supervisor	Sam Pfizenmaier
Type of sponsor/funding body	Client
Name of sponsor/funding body	STMS Limited

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	LAA
Physical Archive ID	LHI17
Digital Archive recipient	LAA
Digital Archive ID	LHI17
Paper Archive recipient	LAA
Paper Archive ID	LHI17

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	St Mary Somerset Tower Drainage Works, Lambeth Hill, London, EC4V, Archaeological watching brief report
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Miller, P
Date	2017
Issuer or publisher	MOLA
Place of issue or publication	London

Description	A4 unpublished MOLA client report detailing results of watching brief on the site
Entered by	Pat Miller (pmiller@mola.org.uk)
Entered on	27 September 2017

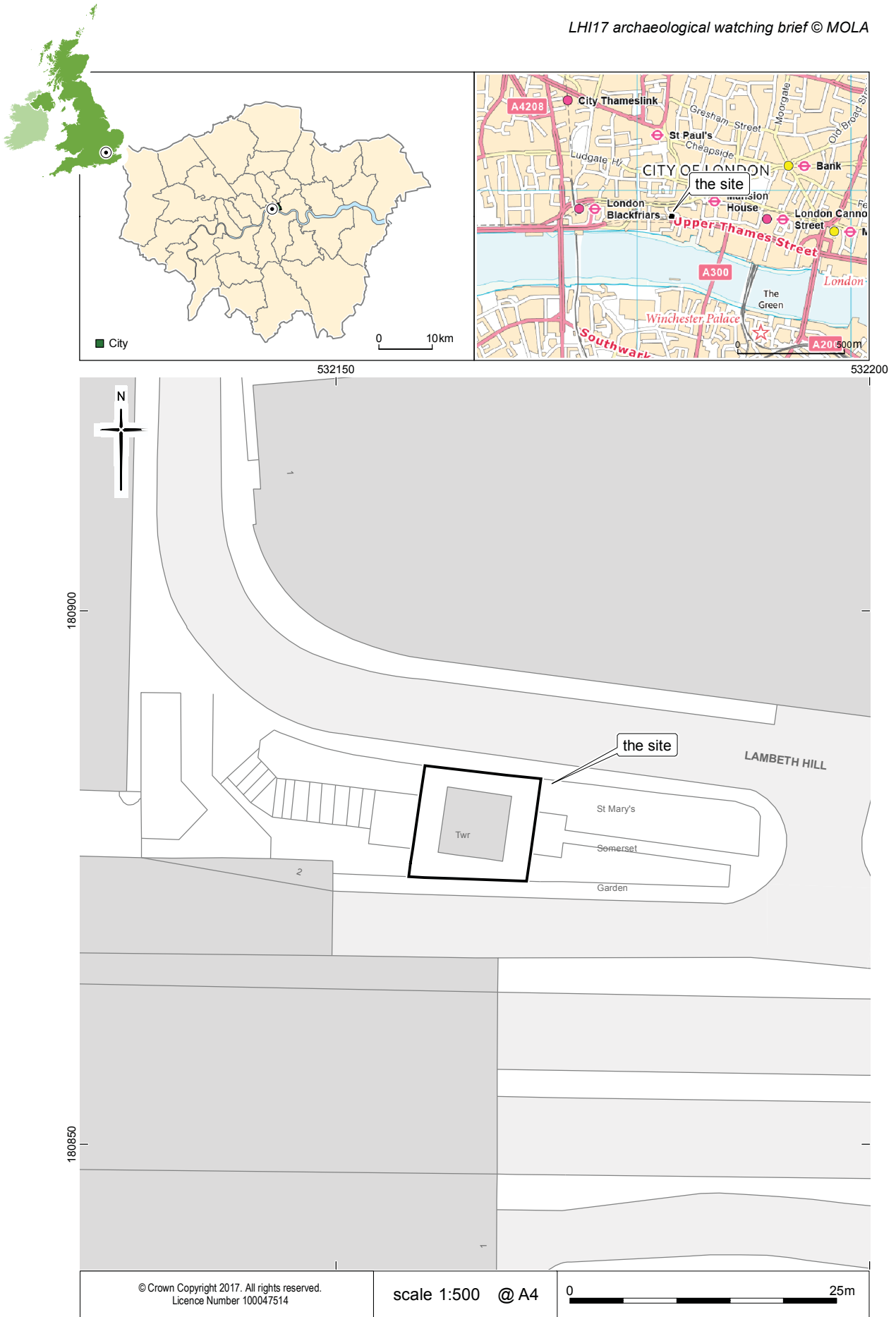


Fig 1 Site location

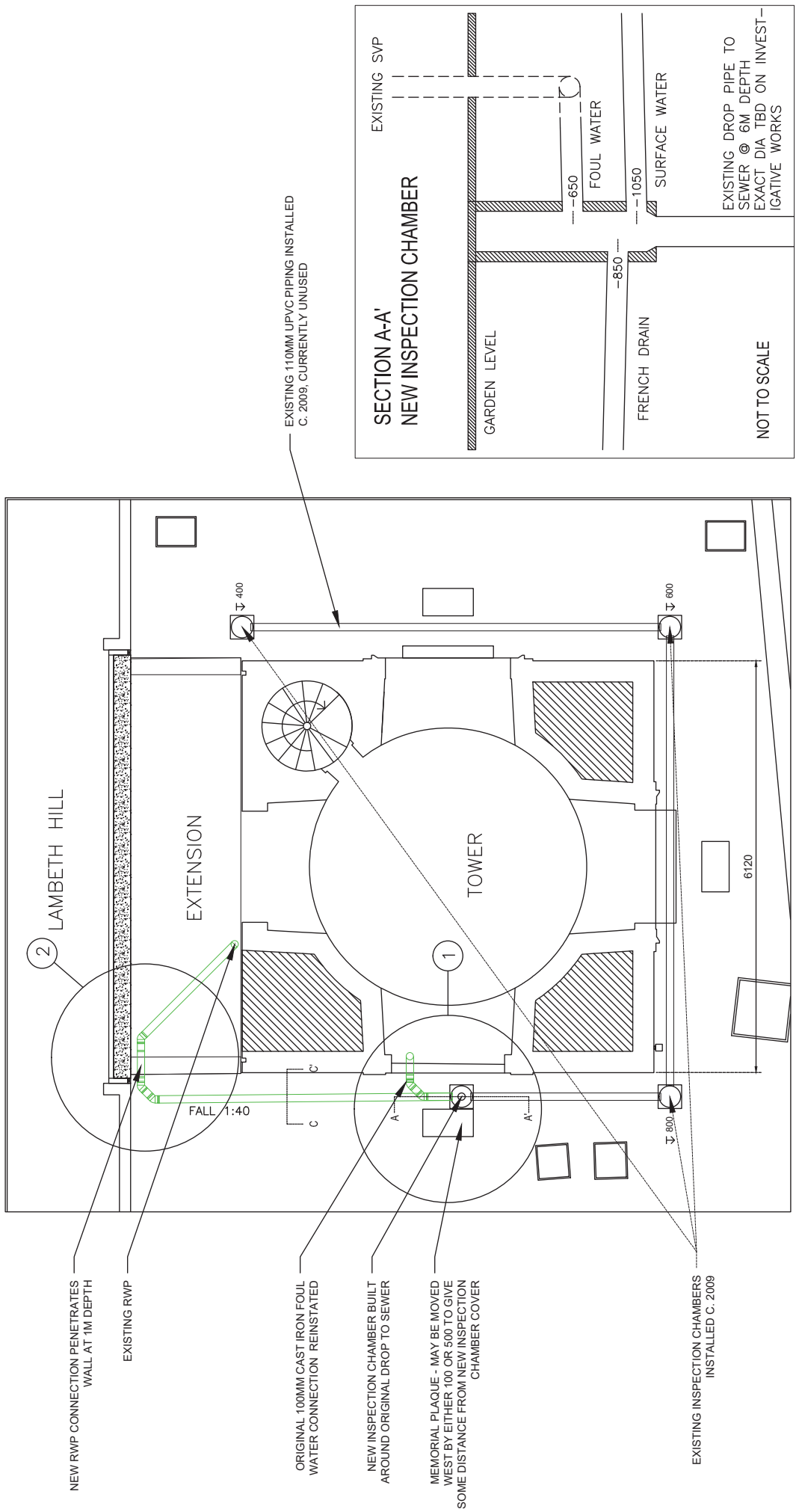


Fig 2 Location of new drainage run

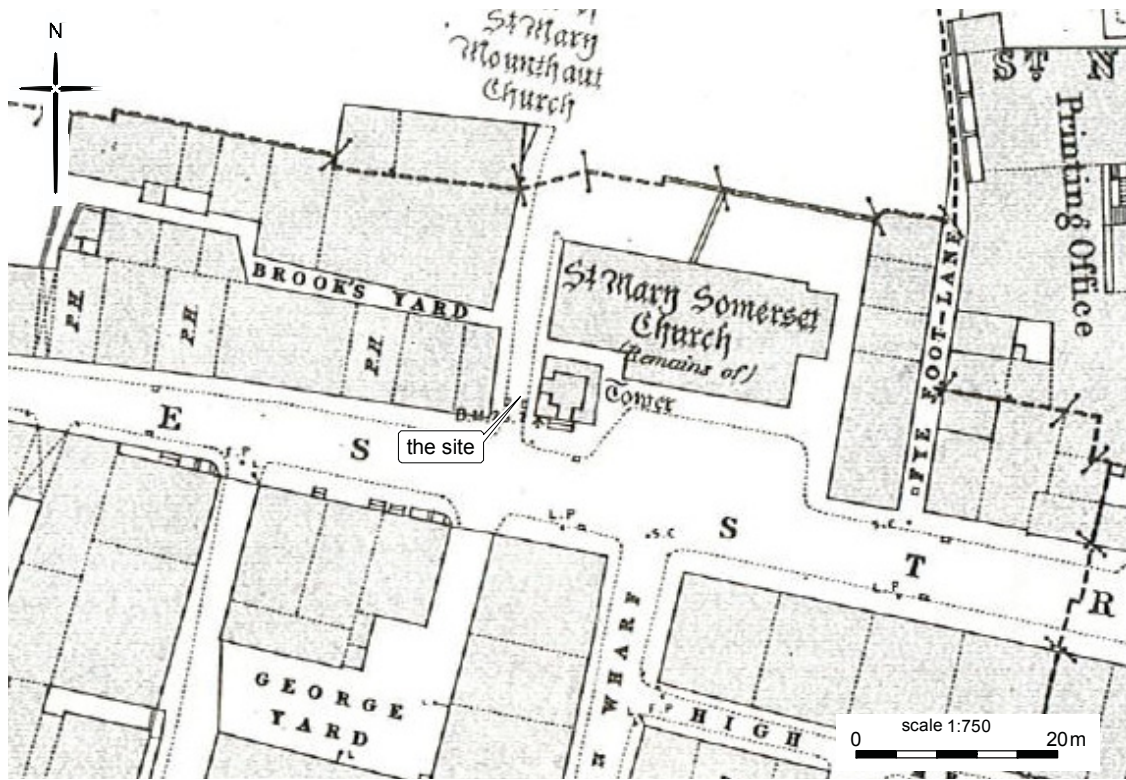


Fig 3 Ordnance Survey map 1873



Fig 4 Drainage trench location and location of ashlar foundation [1]



Fig 5 Excavated drain run looking north

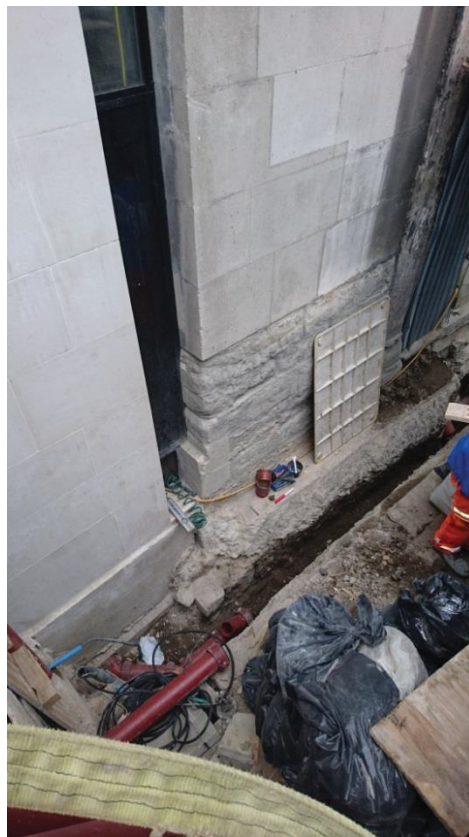


Fig 6 Ashlar foundations of St Mary Somerset tower in drain run looking north-east



Fig 7 Detail of ashlar foundation at north-west corner of St Mary Somerset (0.2m scale)