

**122 Leadenhall Street
London
EC3**

City of London

A report on the archaeological watching brief

National Grid Reference: 533175 181170

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**122 Leadenhall Street
London
EC3**

Site Code LHS12

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Summary (non-technical)

This report has been commissioned by Laing O'Rourke in order to record and assess the results of a watching brief carried out at 122 Leadenhall Street, London, EC3.

Work on a new sewer heading was monitored between 05/03/12 and 14/03/12 during redevelopment of the site. This comprised monitoring the digging of a sewer connection southwards between the existing basement to an existing sewer in Leadenhall Street. The total length of the heading was 7.0m and the base was at c 8.50m OD.

No archaeological deposits or features were found during the watching brief. Natural sand and gravel was observed at c 8.50m OD to 10.0m OD.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Site background

The watching brief took place at 122 Leadenhall, London, EC3, in the City of London (National Grid Reference 533175 181170), see **Error! Reference source not found.** The site is bounded by buildings on its western and northern sides and by Leadenhall Street to the south and St Mary Axe to the east. Ground level in this area of Leadenhall lies at c 16.3m Ordnance Datum (OD) to the east of the site, and the junction of Leadenhall Street and St Mary Axe and rises to the west to c 17.1m OD outside 145 Leadenhall Street, to the west of the site. The site is currently undergoing redevelopment. Modern pavement level near to the site lies at c 16.5m OD. The site was previously extensively basemented. The site code is LHS12.

The site does not contain any nationally designated (protected) heritage assets, such as scheduled monuments or listed buildings.

The proposed development involves the excavation and construction of a heading to allow a new sewer connection to be made from 122 Leadenhall Street into the main sewer running under Leadenhall Street. These works are outlined further in section **Error! Reference source not found.**

Further details of the proposed works are outlined in the *Method Statement for an archaeological watching brief (MOLA 2012)*. This document also provides details on the natural geology and archaeological and historical background to the site, and the initial assessment of its archaeological potential. A summary of this is given in section 2

1.2 The planning and legislative framework

The legislative and planning framework in which the archaeological exercise took place was summarised in the *Method Statement* which formed the project design for the watching brief (see Section 1.2, Halsey, 2012)

1.3 Planning background

Planning Consent (Planning Ref 04/000111/FULEIA) was given to the proposed redevelopment on 29th April 2005 as amended by application 10/00659/NMA. The watching brief has been requested by the City of London Archaeologist.

1.4 Origin and scope of the report

This report was commissioned by Laing O'Rourke and produced by Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA). The report has been prepared within the terms of the relevant Standard specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (IFA, 2001).

The purpose of the watching brief was to determine whether archaeological remains or features were present on the site and, if so, to record the nature and extent of such remains. A number of more site-specific research aims and objectives were established in the preceding *Method Statement* and are outlined in the following section.

The purpose of the present report is to analyse the results of the watching brief against the original research aims, and to suggest what further work, including analysis or publication (if any), should now take place.

1.5 Aims and objectives

The following research aims and objectives were established in the *Method Statement* for the watching brief (Section 2.2):

- What was the level of natural topography?
- What are the earliest deposits identified?
- Is there any evidence for pre-Roman activity on the site? If so, what does it indicate about prehistoric occupation or exploitation of the area?
- Is there any evidence for Roman activity on the site?
- Is there any evidence for the Saxon occupation of the area?
- What are the likely nature, extent, character and identification of any medieval activity on the site?
- What information can the site provide regarding the occupation and usage of the site in the post-medieval period?
- What are the latest deposits identified?

All research is undertaken within the priorities established in the Museum of London's *A research framework for London Archaeology, 2002*

2 Archaeological background

2.1 Summary

The site lies on level ground on the northern flank of the eastern of the two gravel hills that underlie the modern City of London. These hills were originally capped with brickearth, though Roman and later truncation has removed much of this deposit.

Excavations at 147-8 Leadenhall Street (site code LNH98), c 50m to the west of the site, noted truncated brickearth at 10.95m OD, suggesting the probable level of natural brickearth in the area of the site, if not truncated, lies at c 11m OD. This deposit would overlie terrace gravels. By comparison the modern street level adjacent to the site in Leadenhall Street is c 16.5m OD.

Excavations at Crosby Square (site code CYQ05) to the north-west, have recorded a sequence of Roman buildings with brickearth or opus signinum floors recorded above the natural brickearth. After demolition, these had been overlaid by dumped deposits. During the medieval and later periods the dumped layers were truncated by pitting. Cartographic evidence suggests the site was covered by gardens until the late 19th century.

In brief, archaeological deposits and features, if they survive outside the basemented area, may consist of Roman horizontal deposits and cut features. Typically, the sequence would consist of the levelling of areas of ground, followed by the construction of clay and timber buildings followed by the increasing use of masonry in buildings of greater sophistication as suggested by the presence of mosaic and tessellated pavements. It is possible that deposits of dark earth may seal or have formed around such structural remains that have survived subsequent truncation. It is likely that medieval and post-medieval features, if they survive, will consist of cut features such as sunken-floored buildings, cellars, wall foundations, wells, drains and pits cutting the dark earth or the Roman sequence.

Although it is possible that structural remains of all periods may still exist between the basement wall and sewer within the road, these are more likely to be found above the proposed heading excavations. However, the bases of deeper cut features such as wells and deep pits may survive.

3 The watching brief

3.1 Methodology

All archaeological excavation and recording during the watching brief was done in accordance with the *Method Statement* (MOLA, 2012) and the *Archaeological Site Manual* (MoLAS, 1994).

The basement wall, that was 2.0m thick, was broken out by contractors. A heading 1.5m² was then excavated by hand by the contractors, with shoring being inserted every 0.50m. The spoil removed from the heading was monitored by a member of staff from MOLA.

The location of the heading was confirmed as being on a Basement Survey (ARUP-BS-P-00-41-1621).

The site records can be found under the site code LHS112 in the MoL archive.

3.2 Results of the watching brief

Beyond the basement wall, which was 2.0m thick the heading was dug south a further 5.0m before intercepting the existing sewer located below Leadenhall Street. The exposed face of the heading was observed as it progressed southwards and the spoil removed was scanned for artefacts.

The only deposit encountered was clean orange sand and gravel with occasional large flint nodules. This was the natural geology, the heading being too low for any brickearth deposits that would cap the gravels in this part of the City. The base of the heading was c 8.50m OD and any brickearth deposits would be expected at c 11.0m OD. The gravel deposits are associated with Taplow Gravels formation that was deposited approximately 128–280,000 years ago during the Wolstonian Glaciation (MIS 6–8).

3.3 Conclusions

The heading was too deep into the natural geological deposits for any horizontal archaeology to be found. No deep foundations or cut features were found.

4 Potential of archaeology

4.1 Original research aims

The only research aim that can (partially) be answered is;

- *What was the level of natural topography?*

Natural geology - sands and gravel, were found between c 8.50m to 10.0m OD in the heading. The top of these deposits was not observed.

4.2 New research aims

This watching brief has not led to any new research aims.

4.3 Significance of the data

There were no archaeological features surviving at the level of the heading. The data regarding the natural deposits is of limited significance.

5 Publication and archiving

Information on the results of the excavation 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.

The site archive containing original records and finds will be stored in accordance with the terms of the *Method Statement* (MOLA, 2012) with the Museum of London within 12 months of the end of the excavation.

In view of the limited potential of the material (Sections 4) and the limited significance of the data (Section 4.3) 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* and an NMR OASIS archaeological report form be completed.

6 Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Stephen O'Rourke (Laing O'Rourke) for assistance on site.

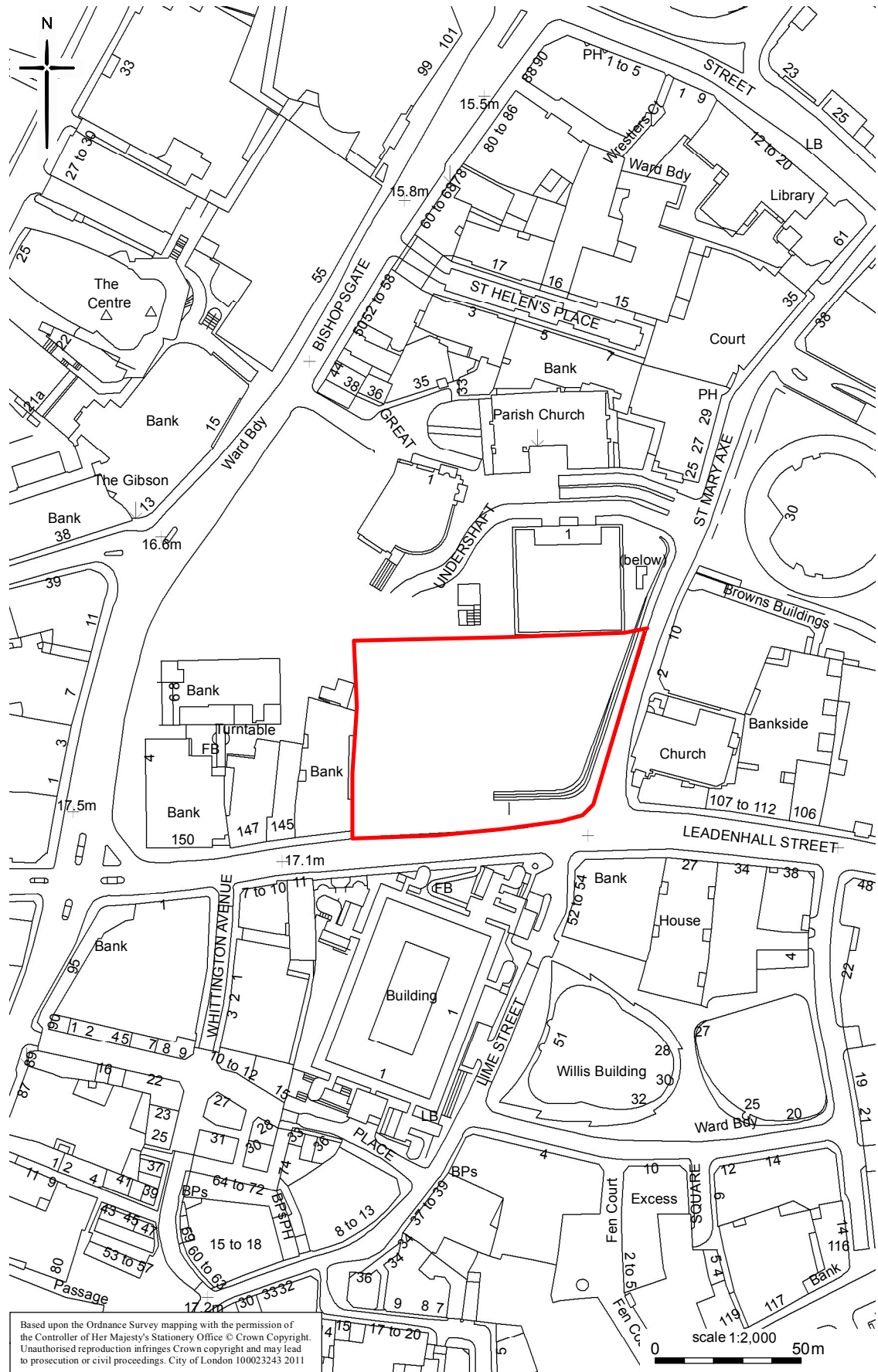


Fig 1 Site location



Fig 3 The sewer heading



Fig Natural sand and gravels in the sewer heading

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8 NMR OASIS archaeological report form

OASIS ID: molas1-121601

Project details

Project name	122 Leadenhall Street, London EC3
Short description of the project	Work on a new sewer heading comprised monitoring the digging of a sewer connection southwards between the existing basement to an existing sewer in Leadenhall Street. The total length of the heading was 7.0m and the base was at c 8.50m OD. No archaeological deposits or features were found during the watching brief. Natural sand and gravel was observed at c 8.50m OD to 10.0m OD.
Project dates	Start: 05-03-2012 End: 14-03-2012
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	LHS12 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 5 - Mineral extraction
Monument type	NATURAL None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON CITY OF LONDON CITY OF LONDON 122 Leadenhall Street, London

Postcode	EC3
Site coordinates	TQ 33175 81170 51.5132398079 -0.080581846636 51 30 47 N 000 04 50 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 8.50m Max: 10.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	MOLA
Project brief originator	Corporation of London
Project design originator	MOLA
Project director/manager	Craig Halsey
Project supervisor	Tony Mackinder
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Laing O'Rourke

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Physical Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC

Paper Media available 'Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes'

Project bibliography
1

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