

BOMBER COMMAND MEMORIAL
Piccadilly – Duke of Wellington Place
The Green Park
London W1

City of Westminster

Watching brief

May 2012



**Bomber Command Memorial
Piccadilly – Duke of Wellington Place
The Green Park**

City of Westminster

Site Code: BCM11

A report on the archaeological watching brief

Sign-off history:

Issue No.	Date:	Prepared by:	Checked/ Approved by:	Reason for Issue:
1	30.05.12	Isca Howell	Beliz Tecrili	To be submitted

Graphics: Juan Jose Fuldain

Museum of London Archaeology

© **Museum of London**

Mortimer Wheeler House, 46 Eagle Wharf Road, London N1 7ED
tel 0207 410 2200 fax 0207 410 2201 email MOLAGeneralEnquiries@museumoflondon.org.uk

Summary (non-technical)

This report has been commissioned by Liam O'Connor Architects and Planning Consultants, on behalf of The Bomber Command Association, in order to record and assess the results of an archaeological watching brief.

The watching brief during the groundworks for and associated with the Bomber Command Memorial, at the north-west corner of Green Park, London W1, found the ground adjacent to Piccadilly and Duke of Wellington Place had been made up over the natural gravels. Elsewhere the gravels were encountered 700-900mm beneath modern topsoil.

No finds or deposits of archaeological significance were found during the watching brief.

Table of contents

1	Introduction.....	1
1.1	Site background	1
1.2	The planning and legislative framework	1
1.3	Planning background	1
1.4	Origin and scope of the report.....	1
1.5	Aims and objectives	2
2	Topographical and historical background.....	3
2.1	Prehistoric and Roman.....	3
2.2	Post-medieval	3
3	The watching brief.....	4
3.1	Methodology.....	4
3.2	Results of the watching brief	4
4	Potential of archaeology.....	5
4.1	Original research aims	5
4.2	New research aims	5
4.3	Significance of the data	5
5	Publication and archiving.....	6
6	Acknowledgements.....	7
7	Bibliography.....	8
8	NMR OASIS archaeological report form.....	9

List of illustrations

Front cover: Ordnance Survey 1st edition 5ft: mile map of 1869

Fig 1 Site location

Fig 2 Areas of watching brief

Fig 3 Area of tree removal looking east

Fig 4 Diversion of services looking north

Fig 5 Example of pile probing looking north

Fig 6 Eastern soakaway being excavated looking south-west

1 Introduction

1.1 Site background

The watching brief took place at Green Park, in the City of Westminster, hereafter called 'the site'. The site is located at the corner of Duke of Wellington Place and Piccadilly within the edge of Green Park; a Grade II Registered Park. The southern half of the site slopes gently away towards the east. In the northern half of the site, an embankment of up to 1.2m rises up to the level of the pavement along Piccadilly. Ground levels at the site range from around 13m AOD in the north of the site to 11m AOD in the south of the site (Fig 1). The centre of the site is at OS National Grid Reference 528570 179895. The site code is BCM11.

A desk top *Archaeological risk assessment* was previously prepared by MOLA, which covers the whole area of the site (MOLA April 2010). This document should be referred to for information on the natural geology, archaeological and historical background of the site, and the initial assessment of its archaeological potential.

1.2 The planning and legislative framework

The planning and legislative background to the site has been adequately summarised in the previous *Archaeological risk assessment report* (MOLA April 2010 section 5).

1.3 Planning background

The watching brief was undertaken as a condition of the planning consent.

Registered Plan No. or Planning Reference No. 10/00926/FULL.

Condition 3a relating to archaeology:

'3(a) You must apply to us for approval of a written scheme of investigation for a programme of archaeological work. This must include details of the suitably qualified person or organisation that will carry out the archaeological work. You must not start work until we have approved what you have sent us.'

Reason: To protect the archaeological heritage of the City of Westminster as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 and STRA 29 and DES 11 of our Unitary Development Plan that we adopted in January 2007. (R32BB).'

1.4 Origin and scope of the report

This report was commissioned by Liam O'Connor Architects and Planning Consultants, on behalf of The Bomber Command Association, 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* (MOLA March 2011), and are outlined in the following section.

The purpose of the present report is to analyse the results of the excavation 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?
- What are the latest deposits identified?
- Is there any evidence of a Roman road? The projected line of an east-west Roman road is thought to run parallel to the north side of Piccadilly, c 50m to the north of the site, although this is very approximate, the road could conceivably have been closer to the site or even passed through it.

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

2 Topographical and historical background

A description of the geology, archaeology and history of the site was provided in the previous *Archaeological risk assessment* (MOLA April 2010). A brief resume is provided here:

2.1 Prehistoric and Roman

The site is thought to lie on a stretch of London Clay between gravel terraces, close to the former course of the Westbourne. Early farming activity was probably located on the fertile and well-drained gravel terraces to the north and south of the site, although settlement and other activity could extend into the site. Prehistoric remains have been found in the vicinity of the site, and such evidence is rare in this part of London, as much of the ancient land surface has been truncated by later urban development. Neolithic or Bronze Age pits and a flint assemblage have been recorded c 265m to the north-west of the site. The chance find of a Neolithic axe c 285m to the south-west, Bronze Age axe c 305m to the north-east, and a late Palaeolithic scraper c 70m to the north-west of the site.

The projected line of an east-west Roman road is thought to run parallel to the north side of Piccadilly, c 50m to the north of the site, although this is very approximate, and the road could conceivably have been closer to the site or even passed through it. A second Roman road is thought to cross Green Park on a north-west to south-east alignment, from an early ford crossing of the Thames near Westminster Bridge. The junction of these projected roads would have been c 175m to the north-east of the site, and this may have attracted settlement and other activity.

2.2 Post-medieval

The Green Park was first recorded in 1554. During the Civil War (1641–1651), a fort was built between Hyde Park and Green Park. The exact location of the Civil War defences is not known, and although the Historic Environment Record (HER) locates it c 50m to the north-west of the site, it is likely to have been built further to the north-west of the site, at the corner of Hyde Park.

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, March 11) and the *Archaeological Site Manual* (MoLAS 1994).

The groundworks were undertaken by contractors, and monitored by a member of staff from MOLA.

The locations of observations were recorded by reference to existing site plans (Alan Baxter Drwg no. C1254/90/100 rev A; see Fig 2).

The site has produced: a series of site notes (transcribed on to a single document) and 35 photographs.

The site finds and records can be found under the site code BCM11 in the MoL archive.

3.2 Results of the watching brief

3.2.1 Tree removal

Tree removal took place on the bank along the northern boundary of site (Fig 3). Observations showed that the no deposits other than recent made ground were disturbed.

3.2.2 Diversion of services

Work to divert the existing services took place on the top of the bank along the northern boundary of site (Fig 4). All services lay within previous excavated service runs; in the case of the gas main, this was up to 2m deep.

3.2.3 Piling activity

This consisted of the monitoring of pile probing within the area of the proposed memorial. Natural gravels were encountered at 1.5m below the ground surface beneath modern made ground (Fig 5).

3.2.4 Tree planting

Several tree planting locations were observed but were in areas where their impact was not greater than previous modern disturbance. Further tree planting is programmed to take place as part of the opening ceremony but it was considered inappropriate and unnecessary to conduct the watching brief during the ceremony.

3.2.5 Additional ground reduction work

Two soakaways were observed to the south of the memorial. Both were machine excavated 6m by 3m pits and found undisturbed natural gravel beneath 700–900mm modern topsoil (Fig 6).

4 Potential of archaeology

4.1 Original research aims

- What was the level of natural topography?

Natural gravels underlay the main area of the site and the raised bank that formed the boundary to the park. The bank is probably the result of the construction of the modern road to the north.

- What are the earliest deposits identified?

No deposits of archaeological significance were encountered during the watching brief.

- What are the latest deposits identified?

No deposits of archaeological significance were encountered during the watching brief.

- Is there any evidence of a Roman road?

The projected line of an east-west Roman road is thought to run parallel to the north side of Piccadilly, c 50m to the north of the site, although this is very approximate, the road could conceivably have been closer to the site or even passed through it. There was no evidence of the Roman road.

4.2 New research aims

No new research aims were produced as a result of this watching brief.

4.3 Significance of the data

No significance can be attached to the data produced as a result of this watching brief.

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 April 2001) with the Museum of London within 12 months of the end of the excavation.

In view of the low potential of the material (Sections 4) and the lack of 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*.

6 Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Sam Clingen of Gilbert Ash NI Ltd and Liam O'Connor from Liam O'Connor Architects and Planning Consultants for their assistance with the management of the project.

7 Bibliography

City of Westminster, 2007 Unitary Development Plan

Cultural Heritage Committee of the Council of Europe, 2000 Code of Good Practice On Archaeological Heritage in Urban Development Policies; adopted at the 15th plenary session in Strasbourg on 8-10 March 2000 (CC-PAT [99] 18 rev 3)
Dept. of Communities and Local Government 2010, Planning Policy Statement 5, Planning for the Historic Environment

English Heritage, 1991 Exploring our past: Strategies for the archaeology of England

English Heritage, 1991 Management of archaeological projects (MAP2)

English Heritage, 1997 Sustaining the historic environment: New perspectives on the Future

English Heritage, May 1998 Capital Archaeology: Strategies for sustaining the historic legacy of a world city

English Heritage Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service, 2009
Archaeological Guidance Papers 1-5

Institute for Archaeologists (IFA), 2001 *By-Laws, Standards and Policy Statements of the Institute for Archaeologists* (rev. 2001), *Standard and guidance: watching brief*

Institute for Archaeologists (IFA), supplement 2001, *By-Laws, Standards and Policy Statements of the Institute for Archaeologists: Standards and guidance – the collection, documentation conservation and research of archaeological materials*

MOLA, April 2010 Bomber Command Memorial, Archaeological risk assessment, unpub client rep

MOLA, March 2011 Bomber Command Memorial, Method statement for a an archaeological watching brief, unpub client rep

Museum of London, 1994 Archaeological Site Manual 3rd edition

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

8 NMR OASIS archaeological report form

OASIS ID: molas1-127456	
Project details	
Project name	Bomber Command Memorial
Short description of the project	A watching brief during the groundworks for and associated with the Bomber Command Memorial, at the north-west corner of Green Park, London W1, found the ground adjacent to Piccadilly and Duke of Wellington Place had been made up over the natural gravels. Elsewhere the gravels were encountered 700-900mm beneath modern topsoil.
Project dates	Start: 16-09-2011 End: 21-05-2012
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	BCM11 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	English Heritage List of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest
Current Land use	Other 14 - Recreational usage
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON CITY OF WESTMINSTER WESTMINSTER Bomber Command Memorial
Postcode	W1
Study area	800.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 28570 79895 51.5028494511 -0.147379572549 51 30 10 N 000 08 50 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 10.00m Max: 13.00m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	MOL Archaeology
Project brief originator	Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service
Project design originator	MOL Archaeology
Project manager	Beliz Tercili
Project supervisor	Isca Howell

Type of funding body	Client
Name of funding body	Liam O'Connor Architects and Planning Consultants
Project archives	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Archive ID	BCM11
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography','Survey','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Archive ID	BCM11
Paper Media available	'Diary','Report','Survey '
Project bibliography	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Bomber Command Memorial, Piccadilly-Duke of Wellington Place, The Green Park, London
Author	Howell, I
Date	2012
Issuer	MOL Archaeology
Place of issue	London
Description	Unpublished client report

Fig 1 Site location

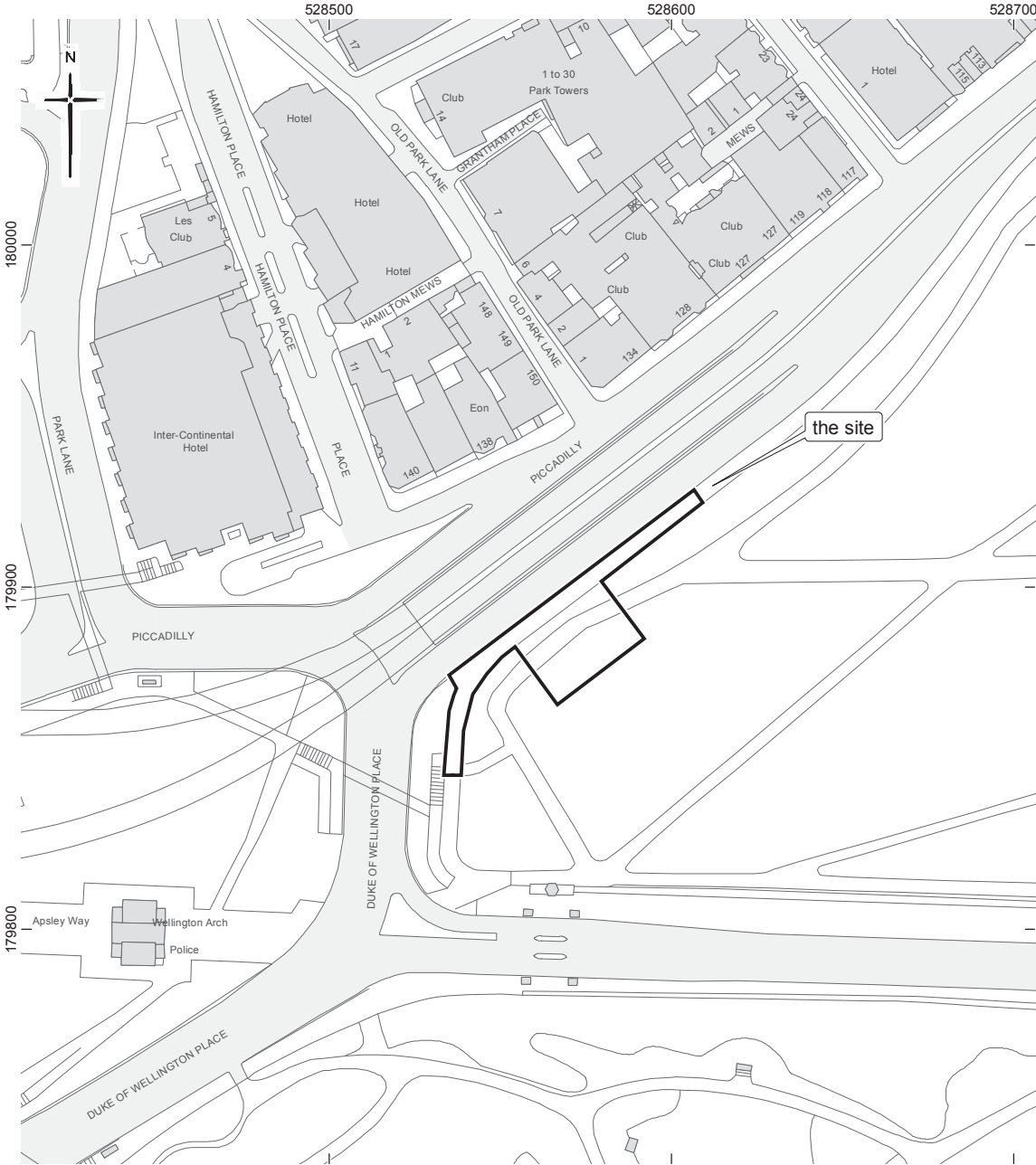
Fig 2 Areas of watching brief

Fig 3 Area of tree removal looking east

Fig 4 Diversion of services looking north

Fig 5 Example of pile probing looking north

Fig 6 Eastern soakaway being excavated looking south-west



Based upon the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. City of London 100023243 2012.

Scale 1:2,000 @ A4

0 100m

Fig 1 Site location

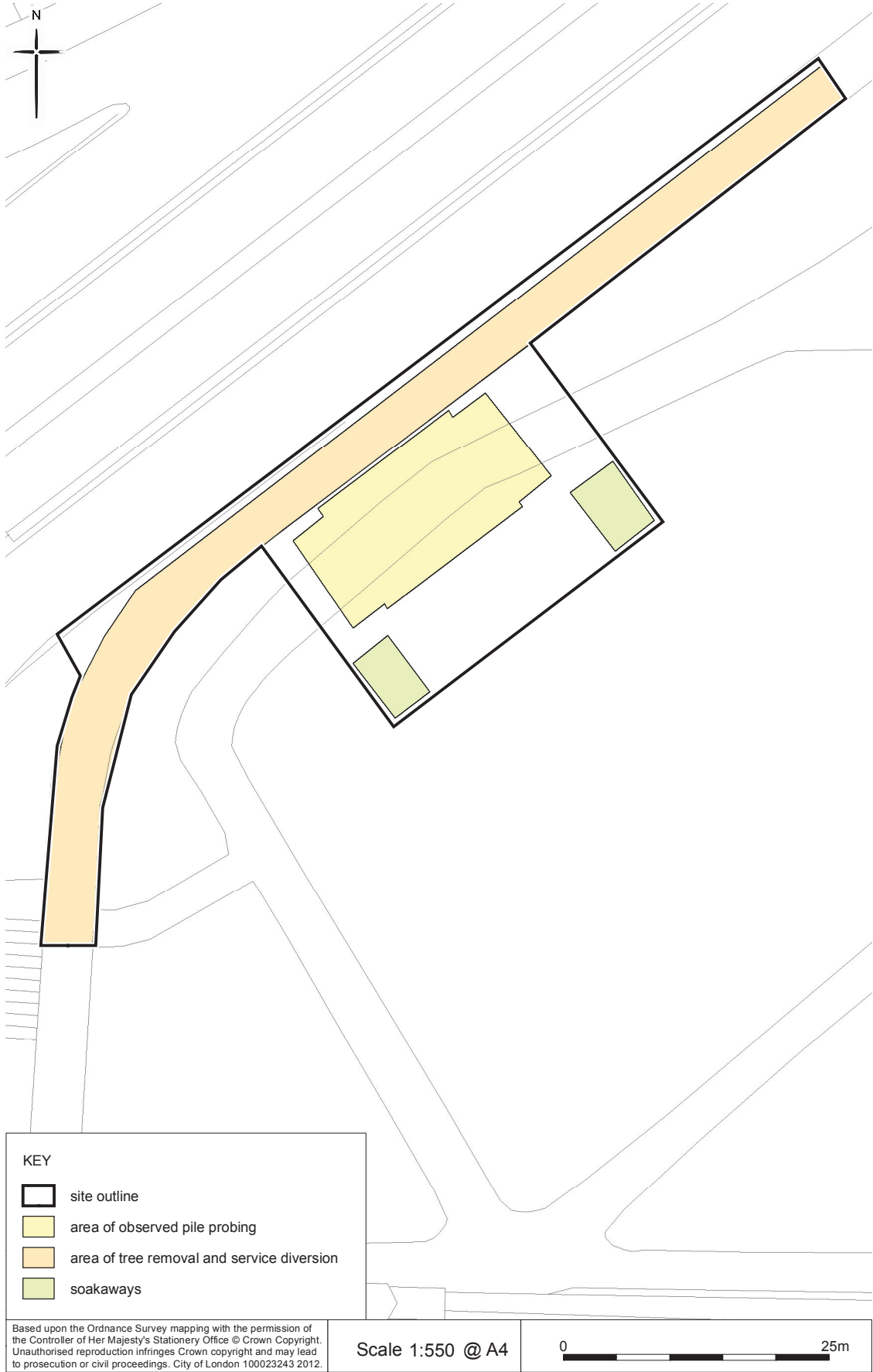


Fig 2 Areas of watching brief



Fig 3 Area of tree removal looking east



Fig 4 Diversion of services looking north



Fig 5 Example of pile probing, looking north



Fig 6 Eastern soakaway being excavated, looking north