

200 BOROUGH HIGH STREET
Southwark
London SE1
London Borough of Southwark

Archaeological Watching Brief report

July 2014



200 Borough High Street London SE1

Site Code BHI12

A report on the archaeological watching brief

Sign-off history:

Issue No.	Date:	Prepared by:	Checked/ Approved by:	Reason for Issue:
1	03/12/13	Tony Mackinder	Derek Seeley	First issue

© Museum of London Archaeology

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

Summary (non-technical)

This report has been commissioned by London City Hotel in order to record and assess the results of a watching brief carried out at 200 Borough High Street, London, SE1.

Work on several drain runs was monitored in November 2012 during conversion work on the site.

In one trench there were a series of shallow brick footings that were related to the 19th century building currently occupying the site. Natural ground was not observed.

Table of contents

1	Introduction	5
1.1	Site background	5
1.2	The planning and legislative framework	5
1.3	Planning background	5
1.4	Origin and scope of the report	5
1.5	Aims and objectives	5
2	Archaeological and historical background	7
3	The watching brief	9
3.1	Methodology	9
3.2	Results of the watching brief	9
3.3	Conclusions	13
4	Potential of archaeology	14
4.1	Original research aims	14
4.2	New research aims	14
4.3	Significance of the data	14
5	Publication and archiving	14
6	Acknowledgements	14
7	Bibliography	14
8	NMR OASIS archaeological report form	16

List of figures

Fig 1 Site location plan

Fig 2 Trench locations

1 Introduction

1.1 Site background

A watching brief on the site of 200 Borough High Street, London, SE1 was carried out by Museum of London Archaeology (hereafter MOLA) in November 2012. The site is situated in the London Borough of Southwark on the west side of Borough High Street next to Borough tube station (Fig 1). The centre of the site lies at National Grid reference 532395 179760. The site is occupied by a four storey Victorian terrace with a café on the ground floor and hotel accommodation on the upper floors. The watching brief took place in a small area outside of this building. Modern pavement level near to the site lies at c 4.6m OD.

The proposed development involves the change of use of the rear ground floor from cafe to hotel. This involves the construction of new rooms and new drainage.

The site lies within an Archaeological Priority Zone as defined by the London Borough of Southwark, covering Borough, Bermondsey and the Riverside.

The site code is BHI12.

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, MOLA, 2011)

1.3 Planning background

Planning Consent was given to the proposed redevelopment on 10/11/2011 (ref 11/AP/2093). A condition (condition 3) relating to archaeology was attached to the consent.

1.4 Origin and scope of the report

This report was commissioned by London City Hotel 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* (Section 2.2), 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 (Miller 2011, Section 2.2):

- What is the nature of the natural topography if reached?

- Is there any evidence for prehistoric activity and how does it compare with that known in the vicinity?
- If present what is the nature and extent of the Roman occupation on the west side of the bridge approach road at this location?
- If present how does the Roman sequence compare with that in the immediate vicinity?
- Is there any evidence for activity on this site in the early 5th century following the departure of the Roman army?
- Is there evidence for medieval occupation on this site? How does it compare with evidence known from the vicinity?
- How did the site develop in the post-medieval period?
- How does the documentary, cartographic and archaeological evidence concord?

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

2 Archaeological and historical background

Borough High Street is situated in the historic centre of the London Borough of Southwark, where the potential for survival of archaeological features of prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval date is known to be high. It is for this reason that the area has been designated as an Archaeological Priority Zone within the Borough's Local Development Framework.

The natural topography of the area plays a significant role in understanding how occupation of the area developed, since the site lies at the northern edge of a large promontory of 'mainland', to the north of which lay a series of braided river channels and small islands, the British Geological Survey shows the site as being located on Kempton Park Gravel however. Evaluation by MoLAS in 2008 c 35m to the south of the site at 218-224 Borough High Street (site code BHV08) recorded natural terrace gravels at 1.30m OD, beneath alluvial sands and clays containing occasional fragments of Roman tile, to 1.50m OD. Above these were alluvial silts to 2.25m OD, in turn overlain by post-medieval made ground deposits and features.

This type of terrain on the gravel terrace close to the Thames was also often favoured by prehistoric peoples, and this has been supported by a scatter of prehistoric finds from the area. However, the potential for prehistoric archaeological remains on the site should generally be regarded as low.

The cluster of islands within what is now Southwark provided the platform for Roman Stane Street to cross the River Thames, and the node towards which various other routes converged. The road seems to have forked somewhere in the vicinity of the site, with one branch, later known as Watling Street, running east to Canterbury and Dover, on a projected alignment similar to that of modern Tabard Street (which was formerly known as Kent Street). Stane Street ran off to the south-west, on the approximate route of Borough High Street, although it may have been to the west of the modern road. The junction of Borough High Street and Marshalsea Road forms the point at which the first channel had to be crossed by these roads, and it is therefore unsurprising that the remains of roads from this period have been found during archaeological work beside Borough High Street. Roman urban settlement spread south from possibly the only permanent Thames crossing, in the vicinity of modern London Bridge. It is not clear whether this extended across the channel which lay to the north of the site, although there is likely to have been activity or development alongside the major road running south from the Thames crossing. The presence of numerous Roman remains nearby, including those recently uncovered beneath St George the Martyr church, c 50m to the north-east of the site (site code SGY05) is a strong indication that the site has the potential for further remains of a similar age. Archaeological evidence from surrounding sites suggests that the site may have been within or on the edge of land reclaimed during the Roman period. A major road may have been nearby, possibly with associated buildings or burials alongside. These however, are likely to be below the depth of excavation required for the new foundations.

In the immediate post-Roman period, the established roads south of the Thames may still have been used as dry routes through the low-lying ground of the area, but possibly with little maintenance. London Bridge itself probably fell into disrepair, and this, combined with a rise in the level of the Thames, brought a decline in Southwark's population; there is no evidence for settlement in the early Saxon period (Carlin 1996, 6–8). In common with much of north Southwark, there is little evidence

for settlement on the site area during the Saxon period, and it seems that occupation recommenced only in the medieval period.

Information from surrounding archaeological investigations provides the evidence for medieval and post-medieval activity in the area and, indeed, within 218-224 Borough High Street to the south, where excavation in 1979 (site code 218BHS79) discovered a medieval ditch on the western part of the site. Overlying these features were 17th-century demolition and occupation layers and several features including a brick-lined gully and a red tile and brick floor. Further excavation on the same site in 2008 (site code BHV08) revealed a series of external 16th-century gravel and brick surfaces, which lay at c 3m OD or c 1.20m below ground level. The remains of an 18th century brick and flint wall footing and a brick surface was also recorded. The level of the brick surface was recorded at an upper height of 3.43m OD or c 0.80m below ground level and 19th century activity a c 3.80m OD (MoLAS 2008, 15).

During this post-medieval period the site was progressively developed, as attested by the cartographic evidence, with houses fronting onto Borough High Street and gardens or orchards behind. The cartographic record illustrates that Borough High Street was already developed by the mid-15th century. The timbered buildings with back gardens depicted in Wyngaerde's panorama of c 1544 were gradually replaced by tenements with backyards. Newcourt and Faithorne's map of 1658, although not detailed, almost certainly shows the site. The western side of the street was by this time obviously fully developed, with buildings on the site and gardens behind. By the mid 18th century the Rocque map of 1746 shows the site as most probably fully built over except for a small yard, Peel's Yard, over parts of the site. Horwood's map of 1799 shows small tenement's with rear yard's or opens space on the site. By the time of the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map the tenements had been removed and the site was part of a large building. The 2nd edition Ordnance survey map of 1893 shows the building that occupies the site today.

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, 2011) and the *Archaeological Site Manual* (MoLAS, 1994).

The ground slab was broken out and cleared by contractors and several trenches for drains were excavated by hand by the contractors.

The locations of these trenches were recorded by offsetting from adjacent standing walls and plotted on to a Basement Survey (Drg. No 200BHS/204D John Dickinson architect). This information was then plotted onto the OS grid.

The heights of observations were recorded relative the slab which was between 4.42 and 4.44m OD (information supplied by architect).

The site has produced: 1 trench location plan; 1 page of notes, 3 digital photographs. No finds were recovered from the site.

The site records can be found under the site code BHI12 in the MoL archive.

3.2 Results of the watching brief

In total, 4 separate trenches were made for new drainage. These have been numbered 1-4 consecutively. There follows a brief description of the archaeological deposits as recorded.

For all trench locations see **Error! Reference source not found.**

Trench No 1

The trench ran north east to south west.
Dimensions: 0.30m wide x 4.0m long x 0.25m deep
Slab 0.10m thick, top at 4.44m OD

The only deposit observed in this trench was a granular clinker; this was probably a yard make-up (as this was originally an external area).



Trench 1 looking south-west

Trench No 2

The trench ran north west to south east.
Dimensions: 0.30m wide x 8.0m long x 0.25m deep
Slab 0.10m thick, top at 4.44m OD

This trench includes an area for an inspection chamber at south east end. The only deposit observed in this trench was a granular clinker; this was probably a yard make-up (as this was originally an external area). The northern side included the stepped wall of the current building.



Trench 2 and junction with Trench 1 looking south-east

Trench No 3

The trench curved from the north west round to the south.
Dimensions: 0.30m wide x 4.0m long x 0.30m deep
Slab 0.10m thick, top at 4.42m OD

Five parallel rows of bricks running north west to south east were found in this trench and are probably to support an earlier (possibly wooden) floor. The bricks were red and measured 0.10m wide x 60-70mm thick x 0.23m long and are probably 19th century in date.



Trench 3 with brick footings looking north

Trench No 4

Trench ran north east to south west.

Dimensions: 0.25m wide x 2.30m long x 0.25m deep
Slab 0.10m thick, top at 4.42m OD

Only modern concrete was seen in this trench.

3.3 Conclusions

The shallow depth these trenches were excavated to meant only fairly recent deposits were found. The parallel brick walls found in trench 3 relate to the current building which was built in the 19th century (see front cover). Natural was not observed.

4 Potential of archaeology

4.1 Original research aims

The only original research aims relevant are;

- *How did the site develop in the post-medieval period?*

A brick building was constructed in the 19th century.

- *How does the documentary, cartographic and archaeological evidence concord?*

The brick walls found in trench 3 are probably part of a large building that appears on the 1872 OS map.

4.2 New research aims

There are no new research aims.

4.3 Significance of the data

Whilst the archaeological remains are undoubtedly of local significance there is nothing to suggest that they are of regional or national importance.

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, 2011) 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 relatively 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*

6 Acknowledgements

MOLA would like to thank David Knight, and London City Hotel who commissioned this watching brief and Chris Constable who monitored the site on behalf of Southwark Council.

7 Bibliography

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 Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service, June 1998 *Archaeological Guidance Papers 1-5*

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

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

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 2011, *200 Borough High Street, London SE1 1JX, written scheme of investigation for a archaeological watching brief* MOLA unpub

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: molas1-148643

Project details

Project name	200 Borough High Street, London SE1
Short description of the project	A watching brief on several drain runs was monitored in November 2012 during conversion work on the site. In one trench there were a series of shallow brick footings that were related to the 19th century building currently occupying the site. Natural ground was not observed.
Project dates	Start: 15-11-2012 End: 16-11-2012
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	BHI12 – Site code
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Community Service 2 - Leisure and recreational buildings
Monument type	BRICK WALLS Post Medieval
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG15
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON SOUTHWARK BERMONDSEY ROTHERHITHE AND SOUTHWARK 200 Borough High Street, London
Postcode	SE1
Study area	1250.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 32395 79760 51 0 51 30 02 N 000 05 32 W Point
Project creators	
Name of	MOLA

Organisation

Project brief originator London Borough of Southwark

Project design originator MOLA

Project director/manager Derek Seeley

Project supervisor Tony Mackinder

Type of sponsor/funding body Client

Name of sponsor/funding body London City Hotel

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient LAARC

Digital Archive recipient LAARC

Paper Archive recipient LAARC

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

Project bibliography

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title 200 Borough High Street, London SE1. Watching Brief Report

Author(s)/Editor(s) Mackinder, T

Date 2013

Issuer or publisher MOLA

Place of issue or publication London

Description client report

Entered by Tony Mackinder (tmackinder@mola.org.uk)

Entered on

22 April 2013