

ST GILES COURT
St Giles High Street
London
WC2

London Borough of Camden

An archaeological evaluation report

July 2006



MUSEUM OF LONDON

Archaeology Service

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Summary (non-technical)

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out by the Museum of London Archaeology Service on the site of St Giles Court, St Giles High Street, London, WC2. The report was commissioned from MoLAS by Stanhope PLC on behalf of the owner Legal and General.

Following the recommendations of English Heritage an archaeological evaluation was undertaken on the site. A total of 21 evaluation pits were excavated on the site for archaeological and/or geotechnical purposes.

The results of the field evaluation have helped to refine the initial assessment of the archaeological potential of the site.

The report concludes the impact of the proposed redevelopment is severe but the archaeological potential varies considerably across the site.

Large parts of the site have no current basement but the evaluation has shown that most of these areas have suffered some disturbance in the past. Where this disturbance has not occurred a large volume of, principally post-medieval horizontally stratified archaeological material survives. The basement of the present building appears to have removed all of the horizontal archaeological strata in that area. A few deep cut archaeological features might survive beneath the existing basement, but none were found observed in the evaluation pits.

Previous boreholes in the area suggest between 3m and 4m of made ground over river terrace gravels are present at the site.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Site background

This report documents the results of an archaeological evaluation at St Giles Court, St Giles High Street, hereafter called 'the site'. The evaluation was conducted by the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS) in accordance with a previous approved method statement (Malcolm 2005). The site occupies an area of *c* 0.8 hectares to the east of Charing Cross Road and south of New Oxford Street. It is bounded by Bucknall Street to the north, Dyott Street to the east, Earnshaw Street to the west and St Giles High Street to the south. The OS National Grid Ref. for centre of site is 530021 181340. The level of the floor in the existing basement varies between 20.79m OD and 20.82m OD. Modern ground level on the site varies between *c* 25.00m OD near the north-west corner of the site and 23.15m OD in the south-east. The site code is SIC06.

The site contains no scheduled ancient monuments or listed buildings. It is, however, within an Archaeological Priority Area as defined by The London Borough of Camden which covers the area of the Saxon settlement of Lundenwic.

The site is currently occupied by a medium rise office building, seven to nine storeys high, built in the early 1950s. It has a single basement that generally follows the footprint of the building. There are a number of open areas around the building, including car parks which do not have basements.

A desk-top *Archaeological impact assessment* was previously prepared, which covers the whole area of the site (Cowan 2003). The *assessment* document 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.

An archaeological field evaluation was subsequently carried out on a series of test pits within and outside the existing building from 18 May to 23 June 2006. MoLAS undertook the evaluation in conjunction with a geotechnical survey of the site by Arup Associates and Norwest Holst Soil Engineering Ltd and during demolition work by Keltbray. The latter entailed isolating existing services, soft stripping, asbestos removal and the part demolition of the single storey building between the eastern and central wings of St Giles Court.

1.2 Planning and legislative framework

The legislative and planning framework in which the archaeological exercise took place was summarised in the *Archaeological impact assessment*, which formed the project design for the evaluation (Cowan 2003, Section 2).

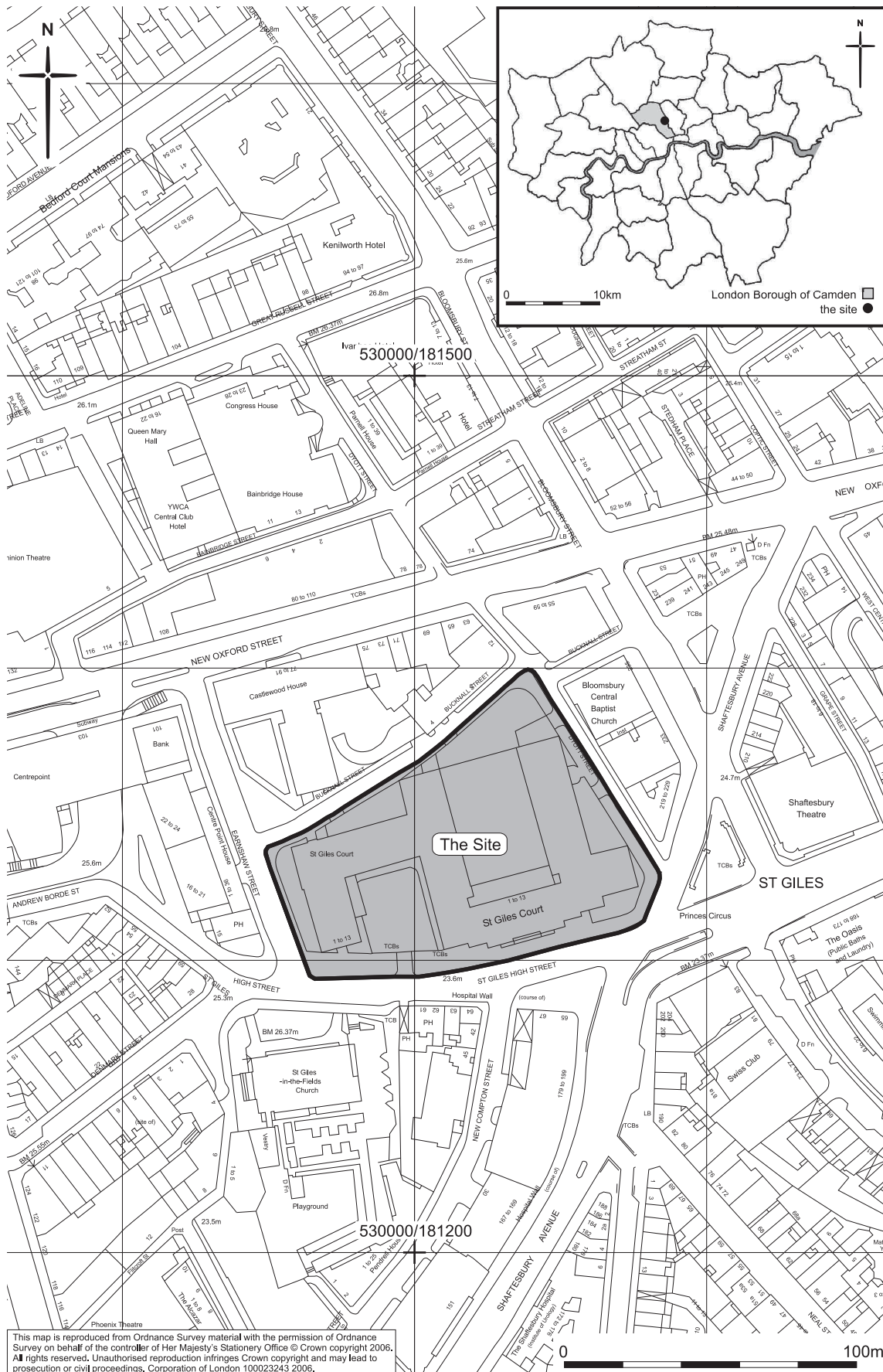


Fig 1 Site location

1.3 Planning background

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken in advance of the proposed redevelopment of the site. It was required under the archaeological planning condition placed on the development (planning application no. 2005/0259/P & 2004/4112/P)

1.4 Origin and scope of the report

This report was commissioned by Stanhope Plc on behalf of the client, Legal and General, and produced by the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS). The report has been prepared within the terms of the relevant Standard specified by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 2001).

Field evaluation, and the *Evaluation report* which comments on the results of that exercise, are defined in the most recent English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage 1998) as intended to provide information about the archaeological resource in order to contribute to the:

- formulation of a strategy for the preservation or management of those remains; and/or
- 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
- formulation of a proposal for further archaeological investigations within a programme of research

1.5 Aims and objectives

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

The limited nature of the proposed works and the archaeological evaluation made it unreasonable to establish many specific archaeological research objectives. The archaeological brief was essentially limited to establishing the levels and nature of surviving archaeological deposits, and to ensure that the digging of the geotechnical and archaeological pits did not cause unnecessary destruction of such deposits. Nevertheless, the following broad research aims and objectives were established in the *Method Statement* for the evaluation (Malcolm 2005, Section 2.2):

- What is the nature and level of natural deposits?
- Is there any evidence for Roman burials on the northern part of the site?
- Do remains of the village of St Giles survive on the site? If so, what is their nature and date?
- Is there any evidence for medieval buildings associated with St Giles Hospital?

- What evidence is there for the post-medieval development of the site during the period when it changed from a village to a London suburb?

2 Topographical and historical background

The archaeological and historical background of is described in the *Archaeological impact assessment* (Cowan 2003, Section 3). For this reason only a brief resumé is given here.

There is limited evidence for prehistoric activity in the area although isolated artefacts and features may be present. During the Roman period the site lay to the west of the main occupation area in London, but burials extended along either side of Watling Street (High Holborn/Oxford Street). Any remains of this date are more likely to be present on the northern part of the site.

Watling Street continued in use during the Saxon period, when it became known as the Broad Military road. The site lies to the north of the Middle Saxon settlement of Lundenwic, but the village of St Giles is thought to have had Saxon origins. Much greater potential exists for the survival of remains from the village during the medieval period. The site lies within the western part of the village, opposite the church and the precincts of the hospital. The village gradually developed into a suburb of London before being fully incorporated into the built-up area by the mid-17th century. A complex pattern of buildings, yards and alleys comprised the fabric of the site until the construction of the existing building in the early 1950s.

3 The evaluation

3.1 Methodology

All archaeological excavation and monitoring during the evaluation was carried out in accordance with the preceding *Method Statement* (Malcolm 2005), and the MoLAS *Archaeological Site Manual* (MoLAS 1994).

A total of 21 test pits were excavated in and around the St Giles Court building for the purposes of geotechnical survey and/or archaeological evaluation. The purpose of these was to provide information on the level and nature of the present foundations, the extent of horizontal truncation and the nature and depth of surviving archaeological deposits. Those excavated principally for the geotechnical survey were referred to as observation pits (OP1–3, OP5–8, TP1, TP4, TP5) and were located in the basement and immediately next to the building in order to establish the depth and nature of foundations. Those excavated for archaeological evaluation were referred to as archaeological pits (AP1–11). They were located to provide information from across the site where different degrees of preservation might be expected: within the existing basement, in areas thought to have had earlier cellars, and in areas which may be relatively undisturbed.

Most test pits were excavated by machine by the contractors although some were partly dug by hand by the contractors or MoLAS staff. The depth of most test pits excavated from modern ground level meant that they could only be recorded safely by making observations and taking measurements from the edge of the excavation. When deep pits had to be entered for purposes of digging and recording they were shored with timber and steel sheet piles (eg TP5), and in one case (AP1) a test pit was stepped.

The locations of the evaluation pits were recorded by the author by measurements taken from adjacent standing walls. The positions of the evaluation pits in the basement were then plotted onto basement survey drawn in November 1951 (Lewis Solomon & Son Drg. No. 11/R2). The locations of those evaluation pits dug from ground level were plotted onto a ground floor plan (Lewis Solomon & Son Drg. No. 12/RS) and a site survey (Arup Associates Drg. No. 7669.02). This information was then plotted onto the Ordnance Survey grid.

A written and drawn record of all archaeological deposits encountered was made in accordance with the principles set out in the MoLAS site recording manual (MoLAS 1994). The height of modern ground level or basement floor level next to each test pit were established in relation to Ordnance Datum from nearby spot heights shown on the site survey plan (Arup Associates Drg. No. 7669.02). The latter were established from an OS benchmark on the north-west corner of St Giles-in-the-Fields Church (value 26.37m OD).

The site has produced: 39 plans and 8 section drawings on 29 plan sheets, 3 trench location plans; 21 trench record sheets; 1 context register; 45 context records; 1 environmental sample sheet; digital photographs and 1 site diary. In addition, several bags of pottery, clay tobacco pipes and brick/tile samples were recovered from the site.

The site finds and records can be found under the site code SIC06 in the MoL archive.

3.2 Results of the evaluation

For trench locations see Fig 2.



Fig 2 Areas of evaluation

3.2.1 Evaluation Pit AP1 (Fig 3 and Fig 4)

<i>Evaluation Pit AP1</i>	
Location	Car park adjacent to St Giles High Street
Dimensions	5.00m by 4.88m, up to 3.38m deep
Modern ground level	23.93–23.97m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	c 23.00–23.50m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	c 2.50m
Level of base of deposits observed	20.90–20.94m OD
Natural (river terrace sand) observed	20.90–20.94m OD

This large evaluation pit was mostly excavated using a tracked machine down to the top of the archaeological deposits. Hand-excavation and cleaning subsequent to this revealed extensive evidence for post-medieval structures, horizontally stratified deposits and cut features.

The surface of compact natural gravel [37] lay at 20.72m OD. Overlying greenish brown clayey sand [36] at 20.90–20.94m OD was also probably a river terrace deposit.

The earliest archaeological remains were a thick layer of grey silty/fine sandy clay [35] and three cellar walls [32]–[34]. The clay contained occasional fragments of tile, brick, Reigate stone, animal bone and oyster shell. The walls were made of orange-red brick without frogs. The best preserved wall [32] was aligned approximately N–S and survived to a height of 15 courses (top at 21.97m OD). A tunnelled modern drain truncated the lower courses of the two adjoining E–W walls. The area enclosed by the walls was filled with dark grey sandy clay [38], which produced pottery dated to 1580–1700. The walls were truncated from above by a cut feature [31].

Intermediate phases of building were represented by wall [3], structure [27] and floors [5] and [29]. These deposits were sealed by layer [25] which contained both clay tobacco pipe and pottery dating to the mid- late-17th century. A cellar wall [21] with an arched brick roof forming a barrel vault [20] represented a later building. This cellar apparently cut through floors [5] and [27].

The latest structures comprised a substantial concrete foundation with an associated floor slab and cavity wall made of brick. Together they appeared to form a basement, probably dating to the mid-20th century, which had been filled with loose brick and concrete rubble. Interestingly, these structures appear to be on a similar alignment to properties maps dating back at least to 1813, suggesting that they were built at a time when the old streets and alleys were still in existence. The extent of this basement was not ascertained during the evaluation, but a borehole augered through the western side of the car park (11m to the west of AP1) did not encounter any evidence for it.

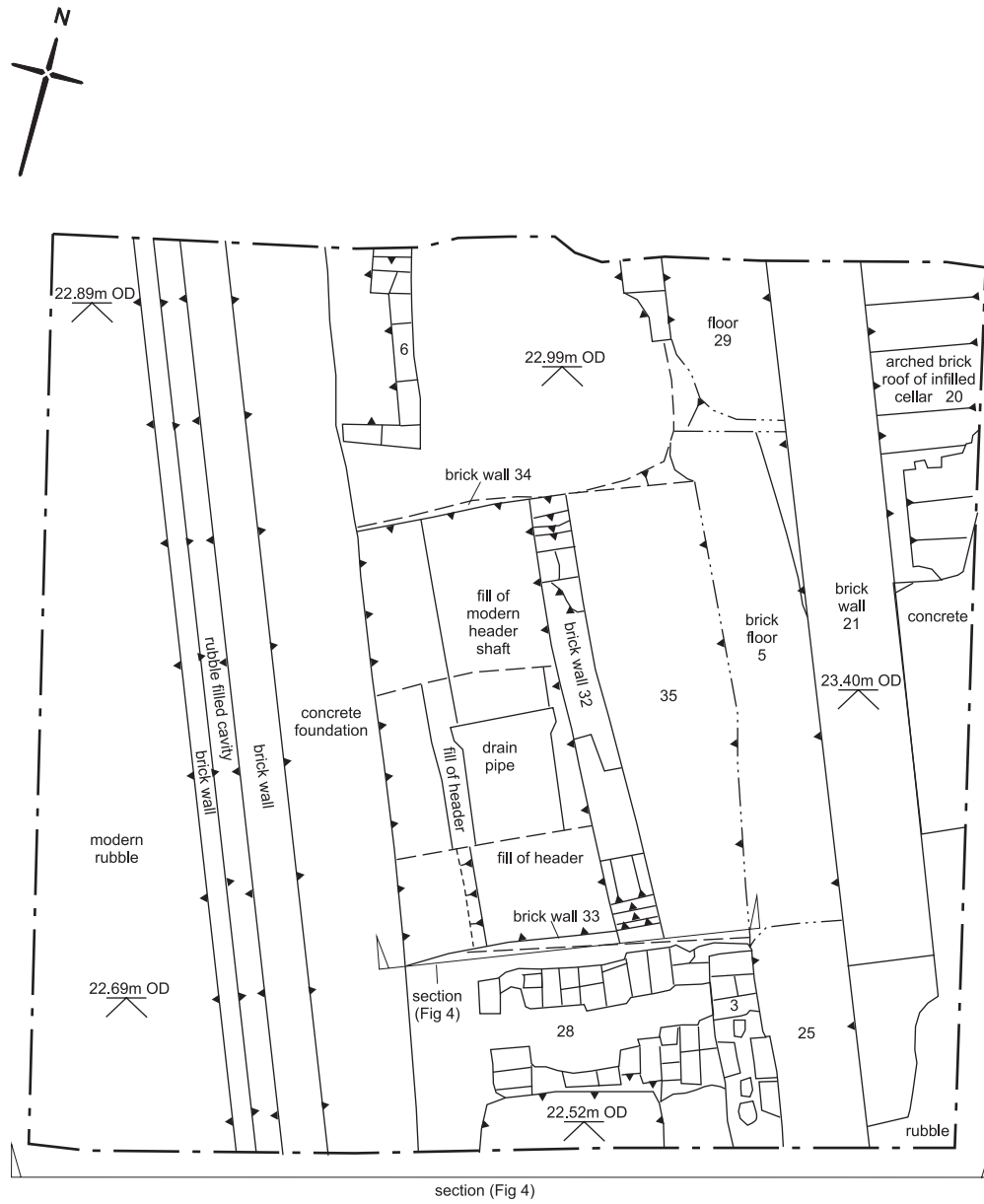


Fig 3 Plan of archaeological evaluation pit AP1

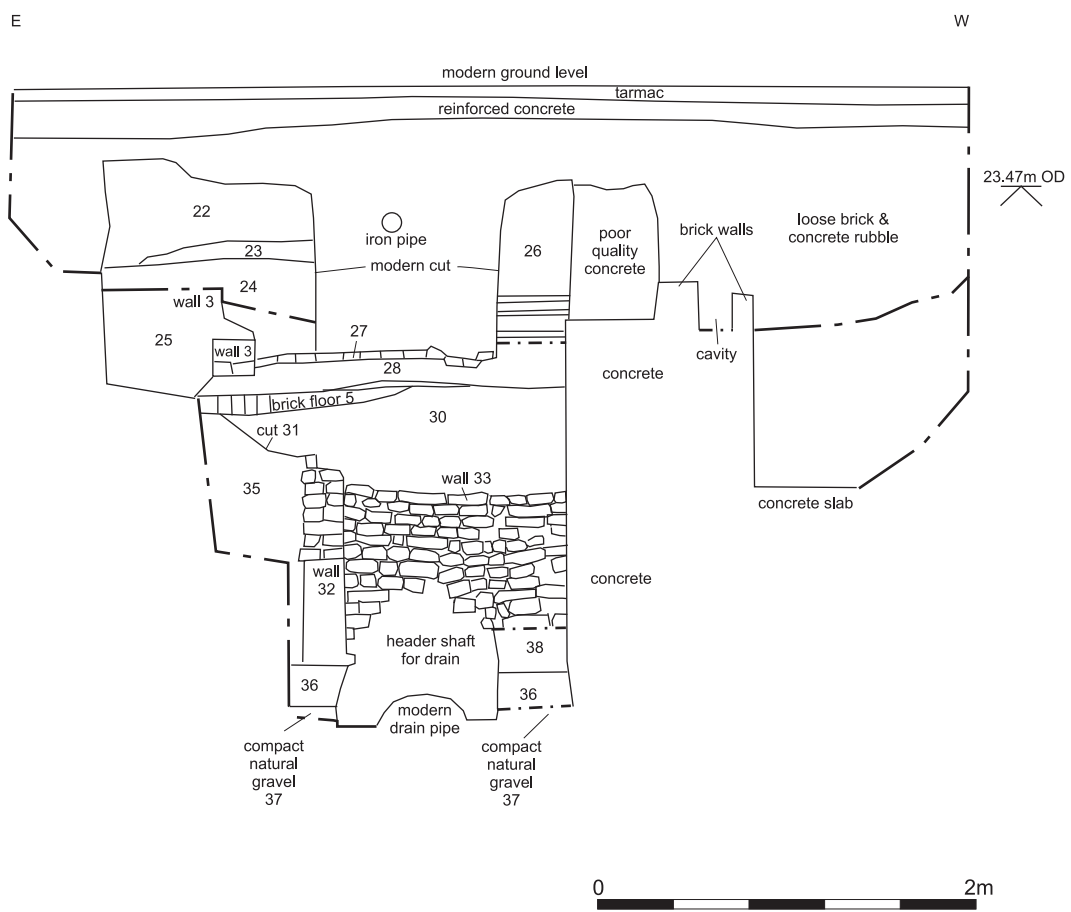


Fig 4 North-facing section across archaeological evaluation pit AP1

3.2.2 Evaluation Pit AP2 (Fig 5)

<i>Evaluation Pit AP2</i>	
Location	Triangular car park in the NE corner of the site, bounded by Bucknall Street and Dyott Street
Dimensions	5.15m by 5.00m, up to 3.50m deep
Modern ground level/top of slab	24.18–24.24m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	c 21.70m OD on SW side of test pit
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	None seen
Level of base of deposits observed	N/A
Natural (river terrace sand?) observed	c 21.70m OD

Small areas of grey clay and orange-brown gravel (probably river terrace gravel) were exposed on the south-west side of the test pit.

The test pit also revealed the remains of a modern basement mainly filled with loose brick rubble. Structural remains consisted of a brick wall on the south-east side of the test pit, a concrete slab (floor) and lift pit. The slab and the base of the lift pit respectively lay at 21.80m OD and 20.83m OD.

The evidence from the test pit suggests that the previous buildings on the street frontage on the north side of the site had fairly extensive basements. Many of these buildings were damaged during the war and the resulting rubble seems to have been levelled before the construction of St Giles Court.

3.2.3 Evaluation Pit AP3

<i>Evaluation Pit AP3</i>	
Location	North side of the site between the basement fuel store in the St Giles Court building and the escape stair on Bucknall Street
Dimensions	3.00m by 2.45m, up to 4.30m deep
Modern ground level	24.71m to 24.45m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	c 21.50m OD on west side, but not established elsewhere
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	None seen
Level of base of deposits observed	N/A
Natural (river terrace gravel?) observed	c 21.50m OD

This pit was located further to the west along Bucknall Street in an area between the escape stair from the basement and the plant room/oil store at basement level. Modern ground level sloped down from 24.71m OD at the south-west corner of the test pit to about 24.45m OD at the south-east corner.

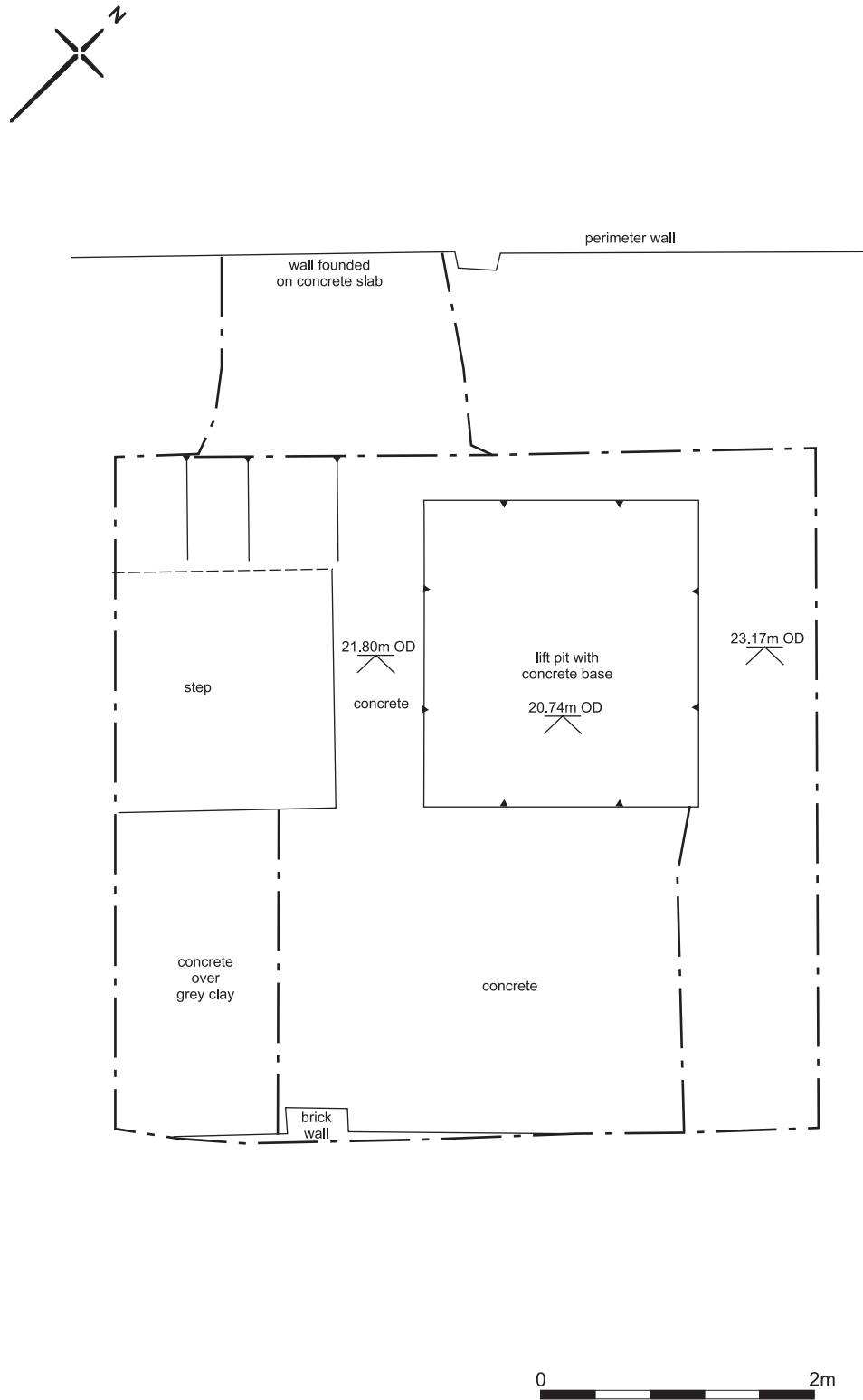


Fig 5 Plan of archaeological evaluation pit AP2

On the west side of the test pit a deposit thought to be river terrace sand and gravel was seen about 3.20m below modern ground level (*c* 21.50m OD). A basement wall forming the west side of the fuel store in the St Giles Court building defined the east side of the test pit. The top of the wall lay 0.35m below modern ground level and extended down to a concrete foundation 4.10m below ground level. The foundation extended out 0.32m from the wall. A 2.20m-deep manhole lay on the south side of the test pit. The rest of the test pit revealed modern dumps of loose brown sandy gravel.

As with AP2, above, the evidence from the test pit suggests that there has been extensive disturbance along the Bucknall Street frontage.

3.2.4 Evaluation Pit AP4 (Fig 6, Fig 7)

<i>Evaluation Pit AP4</i>	
Location	The northern part of the former cafeteria or kitchen area identified on the 1951 ground level plan of the St Giles Court building
Dimensions	2.00m by 1.85m, up to 2.63m deep
Modern ground level/top of slab	24.18–24.19m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	23.68–23.70m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	1.52m
Level of base of deposits observed	22.18m OD
Natural (brickearth) observed	22.18m OD

This test pit was located in the former cafeteria area which was enclosed within the ground floor of the St Giles Court building, in an area with no underlying basement. The building structure in this area seems to comprise several rows of columns on concrete pads connected by ground beams. In the northern part of the cafeteria the areas between the pads and ground beams seems to have been little disturbed, except by earlier intrusions, most of which comprise archaeological features.

The earliest deposit comprised yellow-brown silty clay [19], which was interpreted as natural brickearth. It was excavated to a depth of 0.64m. A 0.35m thick layer of grey-brown earth [18] containing occasional small fragments of red CBM covered the brickearth. The top of the layer, which was probably ploughsoil, lay at 22.53m OD. It was overlaid by a sequence of dump layers [17] that mainly comprised sandy silt and sandy gravel and produced pottery dating from 1612–50 and a clay pipe bowl dating from 1640–60. Together the dumps were between 0.48m and 0.60m thick, and they were cut to the south by a red brick wall [13]. A floor [12] made of a single course of red bricks laid on edge had been laid on top of the dumps and against the north side of the wall. A floor [11] comprising compacted crushed brick and mortar replaced the brick floor. The surface of the later floor lay at *c* 23.20m OD. It was covered by further dump layers [10], which mainly consisted of ash, clinker and coal dust, and contained clay tobacco pipes and potsherds dating from 1630–80.

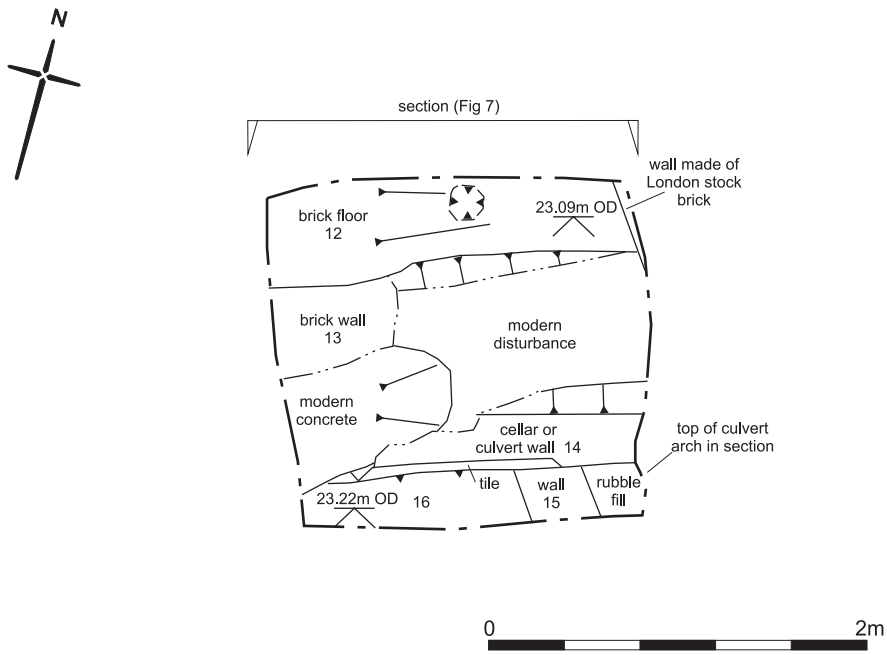


Fig 6 Plan of archaeological evaluation pit AP4 after initial excavation to a depth of up to 1.20m

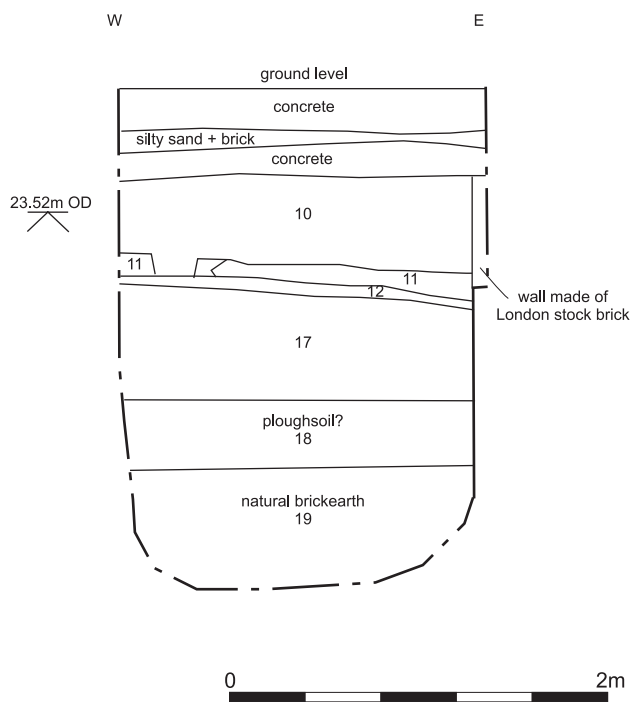


Fig 7 South-facing section across archaeological evaluation pit AP4 after excavation to full depth

The remains of a rubble-filled cellar were revealed in the southern part of the test pit. Its structural remains comprised a section of red brick wall, which was exposed to a depth of 1.82m (top at 23.65m OD). The south (internal) side of the wall was faced with large red tiles. The upper courses of the wall curved southwards to form the beginning of a vaulted roof. Another brick wall [15] on the south side of the test pit was exposed to a depth of 1.65m (top at 23.71m OD).

3.2.5 Evaluation Pit AP5

<i>Evaluation Pit AP5</i>	
Location	In an open area bounded by the south and east wings of the St Giles Court building, and formerly to the north by the library (periodicals) shown on the 1951 ground level plan
Dimensions	c 2.00m by 2.00m, up 3.00m deep
Modern ground level/top of slab	24.02m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	21.72m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	None seen
Level of base of deposits observed	N/A
Natural (brickearth) observed	21.72m OD

This test pit was located in the southern part of the cafeteria in an area where the construction work seems to have been more intrusive. In particular the areas between the ground beams seem to have been disturbed down to basement level.

A small area of natural brickearth comprising yellow-brown sandy clay was briefly glimpsed at c 2.30m below modern ground level, but was almost immediately concealed by rubble collapsing in from the sides of the test pit.

The test pit also revealed the remains of a modern basement mainly filled with very loose brick rubble and orange-brown sandy gravel. Structural remains consisted of a wall on the south side of the test pit and a concrete floor. The wall was made of yellow 'London stock' brick. The top of the wall lay 0.60m below modern ground level (23.42m OD), while the base of its stepped footings lay c 2.30m below ground level (21.72m OD). The basement floor on the north side of the wall was 0.13m thick, and its surface lay 1.82m below ground level (22.20m OD).

Collapsing sides on the north side of the test pit undermined the ground level slab to such an extent that a concrete ground beam and a deeper foundation were respectively exposed 0.80m and 0.90m to the north of the test pit. It was not possible to determine the extent of the disturbed area but the dividing line shown just to the north of AP5 on the modern OS map of the building (Fig 2) may indicate the rough edge of this disturbance.

Evaluation pits AP6–AP11 and pits OP1–3 were all excavated in the basement of the existing building. They were mainly intended to confirm that no archaeological deposits survived at this depth. Only brief descriptions have been included here to indicate the nature of the deposits that were encountered.

3.2.6 Evaluation Pit AP6

<i>Evaluation Pit AP6</i>	
Location	Basement room next to the Dyott Street frontage and near the SE corner of the site
Dimensions	2.00m by 1.60m, up to 1.26m deep
Modern basement level/top of slab	20.81m OD
Base of modern fill	Not exposed
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	None seen
Level of base of deposits observed	N/A
Natural observed	Not exposed

Beneath the reinforced concrete basement floor were modern dumps of loose grey silty sand, clay and brick rubble.

3.2.7 Evaluation Pit AP7

<i>Evaluation Pit AP7</i>	
Location	Basement room to the east of the stairwell near the SE corner of the site
Dimensions	1.70m by 1.50m, up to 1.00m deep
Modern basement level/top of slab	20.81m OD
Base of modern fill	Not exposed
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	None seen
Level of base of deposits observed	N/A
Natural observed	Not exposed

Beneath the reinforced concrete basement floor were modern dump layers of grey sandy clay and orange-brown gravel, which contained occasional fragments of brick, tile, concrete and pottery.

3.2.8 Evaluation Pit AP8

<i>Evaluation Pit AP8</i>	
Location	Basement room on west side of the corridor midway along the east wing of the building
Dimensions	2.10m by 1.75m, up to 1.07m deep
Modern basement level/top of slab	20.81m OD
Base of modern fill	20.81m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	None seen
Level of base of deposits observed	N/A
Natural (river terrace sand and gravel) observed	20.13m OD

Beneath the reinforced concrete basement floor were modern dumps that mainly comprised sandy gravel, but included a layer (c 0.50–0.60m thick) of grey sandy silt and mortar with frequent flint pebbles and moderate fragments of brick and concrete. A substantial concrete footing on the west side of the test pit was exposed to a depth of 0.70m below floor level (20.11m OD). This was the foundation of the external wall of St Giles Court located 1.43m west of the test pit.

The river terrace deposits comprised fine horizontal bands of orange-brown and yellow-brown sand at 20.13m OD above orange-brown sandy gravel at 19.91m OD.

3.2.9 Evaluation Pit AP9

<i>Evaluation Pit AP9</i>	
Location	Basement room near the north end of the east wing of the building
Dimensions	1.55m by 1.55m, 1.05m deep
Modern basement level/top of slab	20.80m OD
Base of modern fill	19.87m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	None seen
Level of base of deposits observed	N/A
Natural (river terrace gravel) observed	19.87m OD

Beneath the reinforced concrete basement floor was a modern dump of sandy clay and clayey sand containing frequent flint pebbles, moderate brick fragments and occasional large concrete fragments.

3.2.10 Evaluation Pit AP10

<i>Evaluation Pit AP10</i>	
Location	Basement room in the NW quarter of the site, near the Bucknall Street frontage
Dimensions	1.80m by 1.70m, up to 0.72m deep
Modern basement level/top of slab	20.80m OD
Base of modern fill	20.32–20.38m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	None seen
Level of base of deposits observed	N/A
Natural (river terrace gravel) observed	20.30–20.35m OD

Beneath the reinforced concrete basement floor was a layer of dark grey ash and clinker, which was up to 0.20m thick.

3.2.11 Evaluation Pit AP11 (Fig 8)

<i>Evaluation Pit AP11</i>	
Location	Basement room near the SW corner of the site
Dimensions	1.60m by 1.50m, 0.50–0.67m deep
Modern basement level/top of slab	20.79m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	20.10–20.43m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	None seen
Level of base of deposits observed	N/A
Natural (river terrace gravel) observed	20.38m–20.43m OD

The test pit revealed dumps of sandy clay and gravel. On the west side of the test pit the dumps overlay a shallow feature cut into the natural gravel and filled with brick rubble and grey mortar. Clay tobacco pipe from this feature has been dated 1680–1710.

3.2.12 Evaluation Pit OP1

<i>Evaluation Pit OP1</i>	
Location	In a basement room on the south side of the site, near a stairwell and the main entrance to the existing building on the St Giles High Street frontage
Dimensions	2.20m by 1.80m, up to 1.40m deep
Modern basement level/top of slab	20.79m OD
Base of modern fill and foundations	19.45–19.65m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	None seen
Level of base of deposits observed	N/A
Natural (river terrace gravel) observed	19.65m OD

The test pit revealed modern dumps mainly comprising gravel with occasional brick fragments, the base of which lay *c* 1.15m below basement floor level (19.65m OD).

On the south and west sides of the test pit the concrete foundations of the St Giles Court building extended down 1.35m below floor level (19.45m OD).

3.2.13 Evaluation Pit OP2

<i>Evaluation Pit OP2</i>	
Location	In a basement strong room near the middle of the site next to the engineers workshop and fan chamber
Dimensions	3.08m by 2.20m, 2.34m deep
Modern basement level/top of slab	20.81m OD
Base of modern fill and foundations	18.73–19.61m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	None seen
Level of base of deposits observed	N/A
Natural (river terrace gravel) observed	19.61m OD

River terrace gravel comprising orange-brown sandy gravel was exposed in the east side of the test pit. A layer of dumped gravel, about 1.00m thick, overlay the river terrace deposits. A substantial concrete foundation in the western half of the test pit extended out 0.96m from the west (corridor) wall of the strong room. The top of the foundation lay 0.88m below floor level (19.93m OD). As the foundation was about 1.20m thick its base would have been located at *c* 18.73m OD.

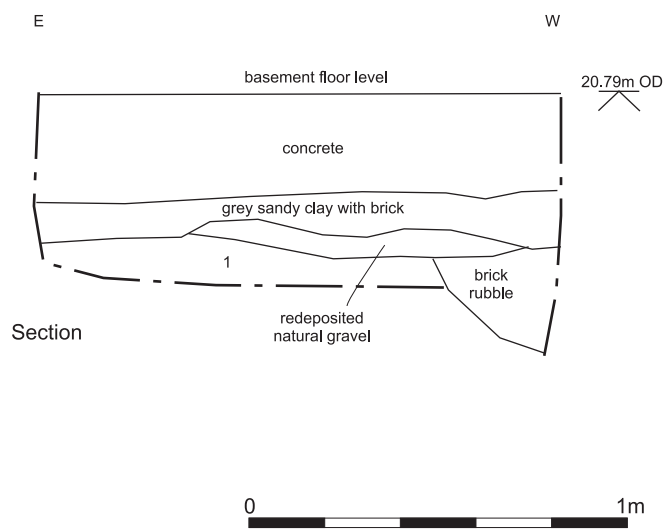
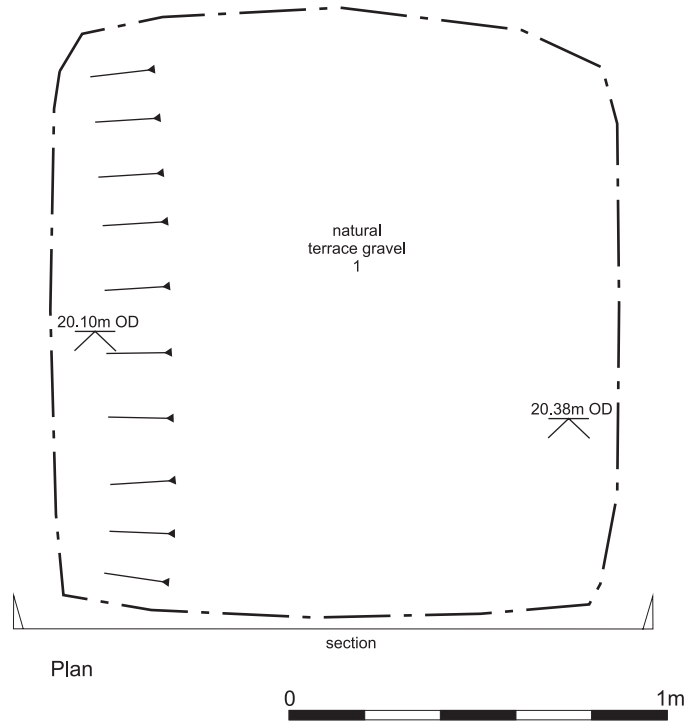


Fig 8 Plan and north-facing section across archaeological evaluation pit AP11

3.2.14 Evaluation Pit OP3

<i>Evaluation Pit OP3</i>	
Location	In the NE corner of the basement boiler room, on the Bucknall Street frontage
Dimensions	1.80m by 1.70m, up to 1.42m deep
Modern basement floor level/top of slab	20.80m OD
Base of modern fill and foundations	19.65–19.75m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	None seen
Level of base of deposits observed	N/A
Natural observed	19.65m OD

Modern dumps of sandy silt and rubble and an earlier concrete slab overlay river terrace gravel. The earlier slab was 0.14m thick and lay *c* 0.80m below basement floor level. Substantial (1m-thick) concrete foundations for the boiler room walls lay on the north side of the test pit immediately below the 50mm-thick concrete screed that formed the floor surface.

3.2.15 Evaluation Pit OP4

<i>Evaluation Pit OP4</i>	
Location	At basement level in the stairwell for the escape stair next to Bucknall Street
Dimensions	2.00m by 1.60m, up to 0.35m deep
Modern basement level/top of slab	20.82m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	Not seen
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	N/A
Level of base of deposits observed	N/A
Natural (river terrace gravel) observed	N/A

The excavation of this test pit was abandoned.

3.2.16 Evaluation Pit OP5

<i>Evaluation Pit OP5</i>	
Location	Against the outside of the NW corner of the St Giles Court building
Dimensions	1.50m by 1.40m wide, 3.00m deep
Modern ground level	24.74m OD
Base of modern fill	Below 21.74m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	None seen
Level of base of deposits observed	N/A
Natural observed	Not exposed

The test pit was located towards the base of the berm on the Earnshaw Street frontage. The only deposits revealed were modern dumps of sandy gravel containing occasional fragments of brick and concrete.

3.2.17 Evaluation Pit OP6

<i>Evaluation Pit OP6</i>	
Location	Outside the St Giles Court building near the main entrance on the St Giles Street frontage
Dimensions	2.50m by 1.60m
Modern ground level	23.53m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	21.21m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	None seen
Level of base of deposits observed	21.21m OD
Natural (river terrace gravel) observed	N/A

This pit was located in the pavement on St Giles High Street, opposite New Compton Street. Concrete foundations associated with the building mixed with gravel make-up deposits extended down to 21.21mOD. At this point a more substantial concrete slab, or foundation was encountered.

3.2.18 Evaluation Pit OP7 (Fig 9)

<i>Evaluation Pit OP7</i>	
Location	At the south end of a triangular open space between the St Giles Court building and Dyott Street
Dimensions	3.50m by 1.50m, up to 3.25m deep
Modern ground level/top of slab	23.55m OD
Base of modern fill/structures	Depth unknown, but below 20.30m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	None seen
Level of base of deposits observed	N/A
Natural observed	Not exposed

This test pit located on the Dyott Street frontage revealed the remains of a Victorian or early 20th-century basement filled with loose brick rubble and brown sandy gravel. Structural remains consisted of walls aligned roughly NE–SW and NW–SE, which were exposed to a depth of 1.30m below modern ground level, and survived to a maximum height of 0.58m below ground level. Two faces of the walls were covered with render. A concrete foundation at 3.25m below ground level extended out 1.10m from the St Giles Court building.

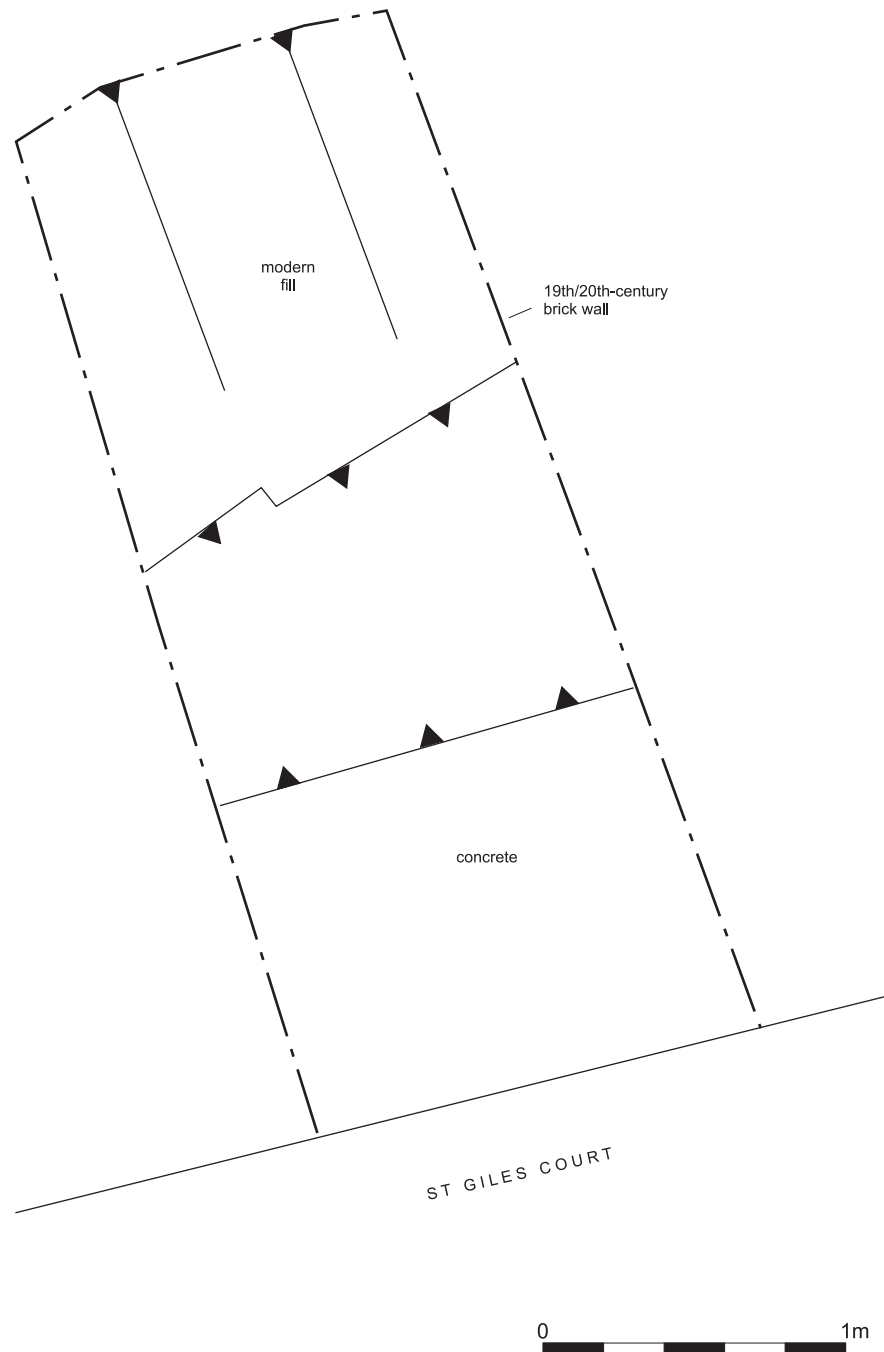


Fig 9 Plan of Observation pit OP7

3.2.19 Evaluation Pit OP8

<i>Evaluation Pit OP8</i>	
Location	Outside NE corner of the St Giles Court building
Dimensions	3.00m by 1.50m, up to 3.40m deep
Modern ground level/top of slab	24.06–24.09m OD
Base of modern fill/structures	Depth unknown, but below 20.42m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	None seen
Level of base of deposits observed	N/A
Natural observed	Not exposed

The test pit revealed modern dumps of grey sandy silt and loose brick rubble. The dumps overlay stepped concrete foundations at 20.42m and 20.72m OD that respectively extended out 1.50m and 1.60m from the north side of the St Giles Court building.

3.2.20 Evaluation Pit TP1 (Fig 10)

<i>Evaluation Pit TP1</i>	
Location	In the SE corner of the site, at Princes Circus
Dimensions	3.00m by 1.00m, up to 3.00m deep
Modern ground level/top of slab	23.15m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	22.65–22.92m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	1.50m
Level of base of deposits observed	Depth unknown, but below 19.65m OD
Natural observed	Not exposed

This test pit was located in the small fenced space between the pavement and the south-east corner of the current building. Access to the area for the machine and space for spoil storage was fairly difficult limiting the excavation to a relatively narrow trench.

The excavation revealed two cellar walls, [8] and [9], which stood side by side and were aligned at right angles to St Giles High Street. The walls probably belonged to two contiguous properties fronting onto the street. The top of wall [8] lay 0.23m below modern ground level, while the top of wall [9] was slightly lower. Both extended down below the base of the test pit at 19.65m OD. Wall [8] was made of red brick and its east face was covered with render. Wall [9] was also made of brick, but thinner and poorly built. Dumps of sandy silt, sand and gravel lay on the east side of wall [8], and loose brick rubble lay to the west of wall [9].

The evidence from the test pit suggests that a sequence of buildings were probably present with successive structures utilising foundations and walls from earlier buildings with occasional ‘new-build’ to replace irredeemable elements.

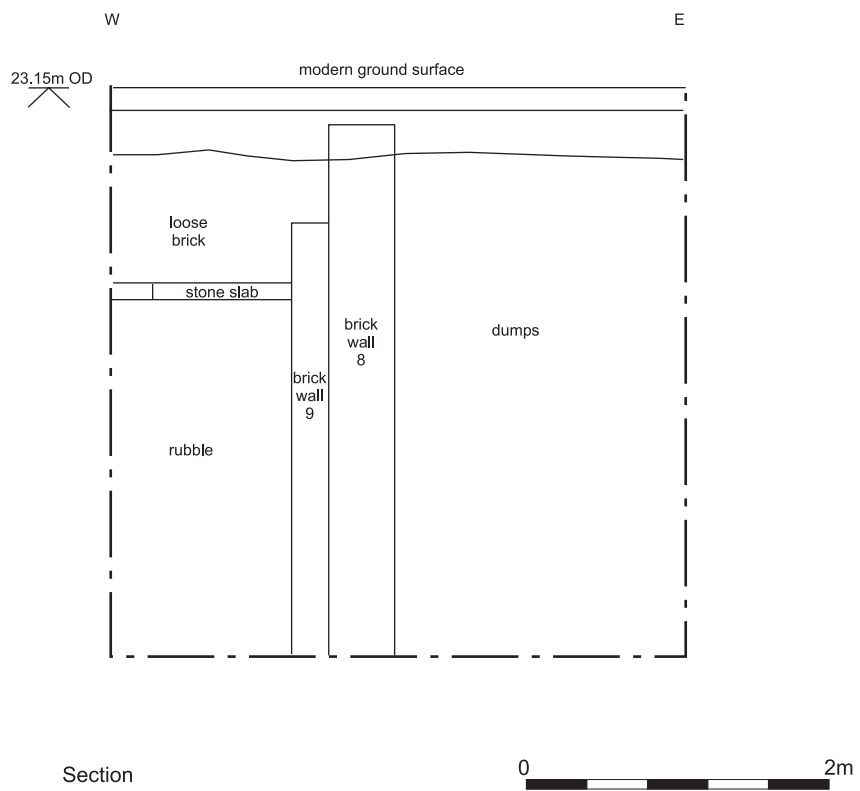
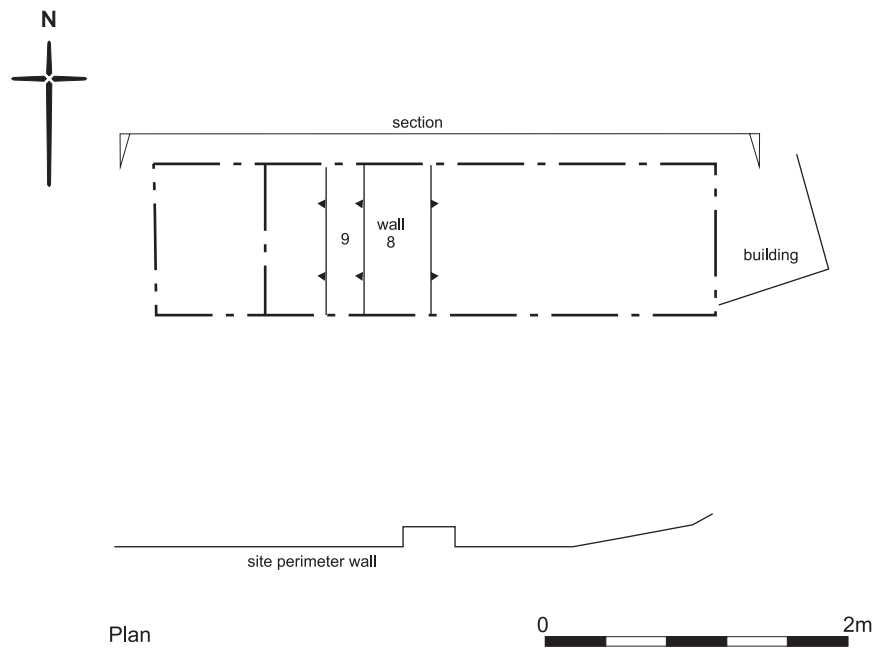


Fig 10 Plan and south-facing section of evaluation pit TP1

3.2.21 Evaluation Pit TP4 (Fig 11)

<i>Evaluation Pit TP4</i>	
Location	West side of site, on north side of steps leading to Earnshaw Street
Dimensions	1.30m by 1.30m, up to 3.50m deep
Top of slab	24.07m OD
Base of modern strata	22.67m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	1.10m
Level of base of deposits observed	Depth unknown, but below 21.57m OD
Natural (river terrace gravel) observed	21.12m OD

The test pit revealed a dump layer or fill [2] comprising grey sandy clay, which contained frequent large fragments of brick without frogs and occasional sherds of pottery mostly dating from the mid-17th century, with one intrusive later plate fragment.

3.2.22 Evaluation Pit TP5 (Fig 12 and Fig 13)

<i>Evaluation Pit TP5</i>	
Location	Pavement in St Giles High Street, close to junction with Earnshaw Street and the SW corner of St Giles Court
Dimensions	3.50m by 1.60m, up to 3.50m deep
Modern ground level	24.60m OD
Base of modern strata	24.08m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	c 3.00m
Level of base of deposits observed	21.12 m OD
Natural (river terrace gravel) observed	21.12m OD

This pit was located in the pavement of St Giles High Street opposite the west wing of the current building.

The earliest deposit comprised moderately compact brown sandy gravel, which was interpreted as river terrace gravel, although somewhat discoloured at its surface through contact with the overlying archaeological stratum. It was overlaid by successive dumped deposits, which were probably the fills of a deep feature cut into the natural. The earliest dump comprised organic silty clay [45] with frequent fragments of charcoal, occasional animal bone, oyster shell and a small tile fragment (possibly a tessera). This was overlaid successively by grey-brown sandy clay [44], yellow-brown sandy gravel [43] and grey sandy clay [42]. The latter contained occasional animal bone and a fragment of tile. The top of this sequence of strata, which was 0.56m thick, lay at 21.65m OD.

The sequence was covered by a cellar floor [41] comprising a single course of red bricks (without frogs). The surface of the floor lay at 21.76m OD. It was later

replaced by a concrete slab, which was 0.12–0.17m thick with its surface at 21.98m OD. At the east end of the test pit the floors were associated with a brick wall [39] and a fireplace and flue [39]. These survived to a height of 2.10m above the concrete floor (24.08m OD).

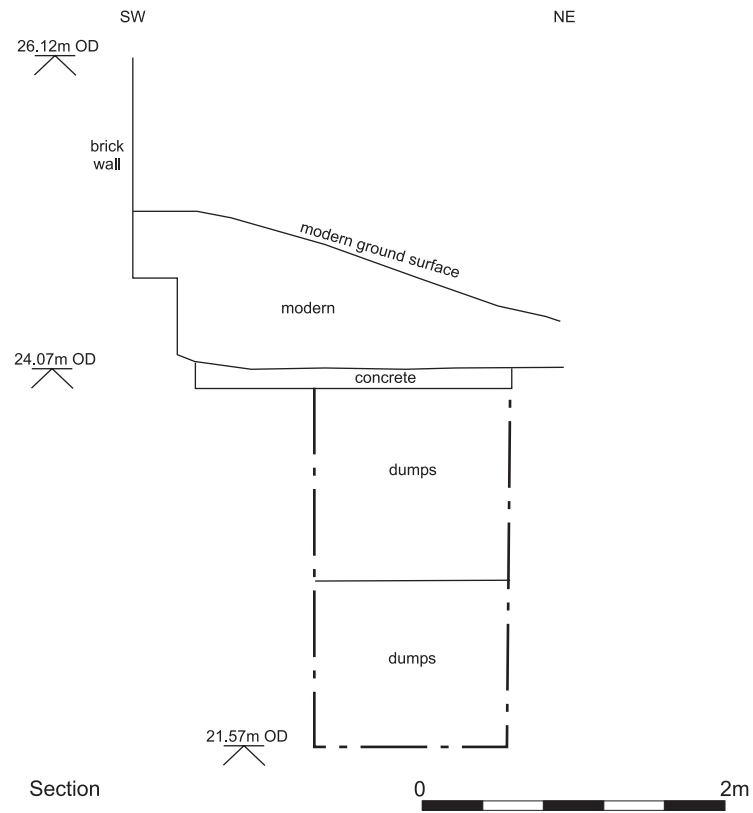
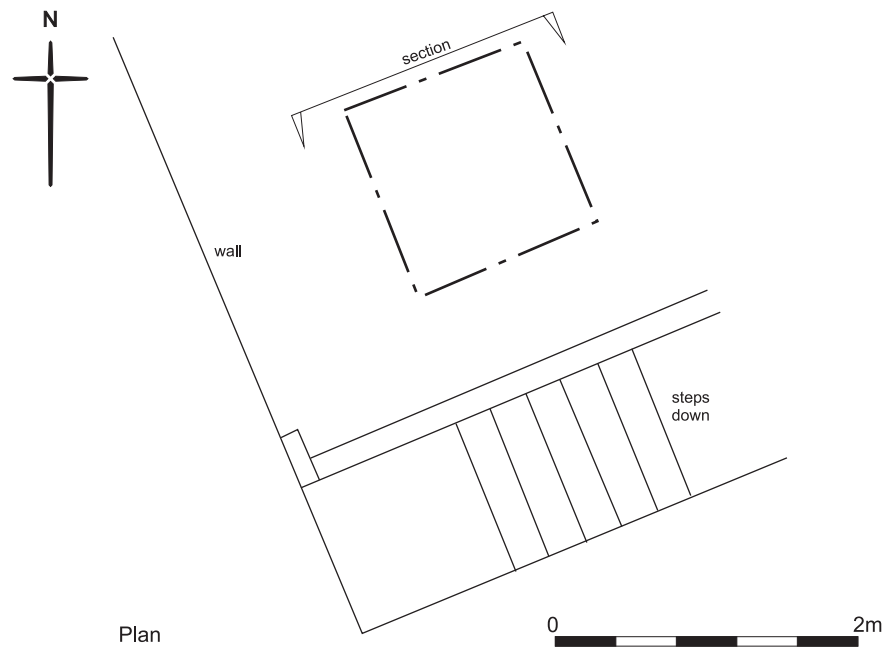


Fig 11 Plan and south-facing section across evaluation pit TP4

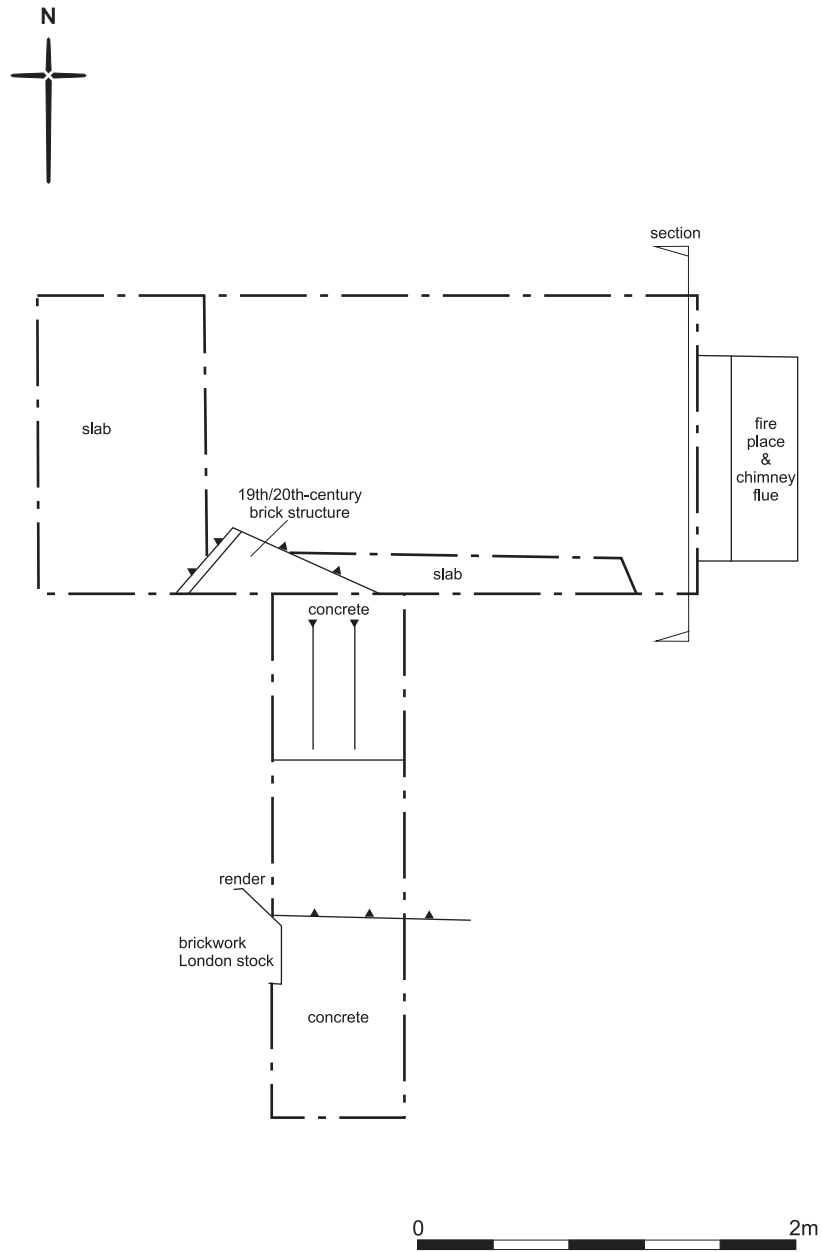


Fig 12 Plan of evaluation pit TP5

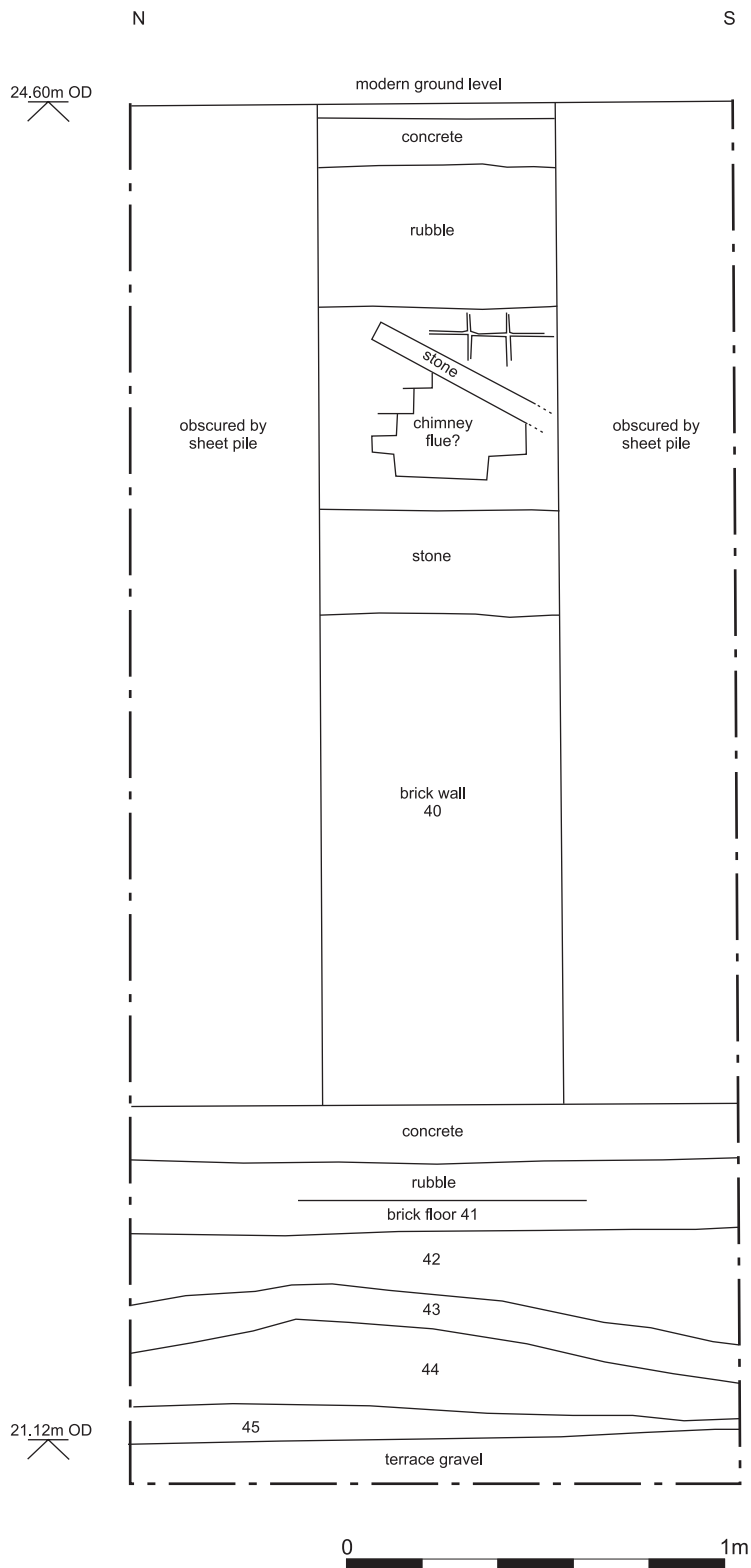


Fig 13 West-facing section across evaluation pit TP5

The corner of another brick structure was revealed on the south side at *c* 23.10m OD. It extended down about 0.60m, and its north-west face had been covered in render that had been painted scarlet and brown. No associated floor was found.

Narrow trenches were dug out from the north and south sides of TP5. The southern trench revealed brickwork, possibly of Victorian date, at a depth of 0.33m below ground level. It appeared to form part of a window, presumably for a basement or lower ground floor.

3.3 Assessment of the evaluation

Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service guidelines (English Heritage, 1998) require an assessment of the success of the evaluation ‘in order to illustrate what level of confidence can be placed on the information which will provide the basis of the mitigation strategy’. In the case of this evaluation the archaeological test pits have provided information that appears to be fairly representative of the site as a whole. The test pits were positioned to investigate areas with and without basements within the footprint of the existing building and all open areas outside it. Apart from test pit AP4, which was 2.63m deep, all test pits were excavated to depths of between about 3.00m and 5.70m below modern ground level.

The evaluation confirmed that no archaeological strata or features are likely to survive beneath the basement and wall foundations of the existing building, and severe truncation by Victorian/early 20th-century basements, modern services appears occurred across much of the rest of the site (Fig 14). Nevertheless, structures and deposits of archaeological interest survived in some of the evaluation pits, and there is potential for localised areas of horizontal archaeological strata to survive outside the footprint of the existing basement.

4 Archaeological potential

4.1 Realisation of original research aims

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

A borehole survey undertaken by Norwest Holst Soil Engineering Ltd indicated river terrace gravel lay beneath made ground at a depth of 3.50m below modern ground level at BH02 and BH03. Relative to Ordnance Datum river terrace gravel was located in BH02 and BH03 at c 20.60m OD and 20.40m OD respectively. The river terrace gravel in these boreholes was 2.05m and 2.60m thick respectively and overlies London Clay.

During the archaeological evaluation the truncated surface of river terrace gravel was observed in test pits AP2, A8–AP10 and OP1–OP3 at levels between 19.61m OD and 21.70m OD. In addition, the surface of deposits also thought to be river terrace gravel was observed in AP1, AP3 and TP5 at levels between 20.90m OD and 21.50m OD.

Test pits AP4 and AP5 revealed yellow-brown (with rusty brown iron staining) silty clay and sandy clay, containing occasional to moderate flint pebbles, at 22.18m OD and 21.02m OD respectively. This deposit was probably natural brickearth. The silty clay in test pit AP4 did not appear to have been truncated from above, for it was apparently overlaid by soil. However, the natural deposits in all other test pits had suffered to varying degrees truncation from above.

Despite their considerable depth (relative to modern ground level) test pits AP6, AP7, OP5, OP7 and TP1 and TP4 did not reveal any natural deposits (geological strata).

- *Is there any evidence for Roman burials on the northern part of the site?*

No evidence was found for Roman burials at the site.

- *Do remains of the village of St Giles survive on the site? If so, what is their nature and date?*

No evidence was found for medieval structures on the site. It is possible that the earliest strata in test pits AP 1 (context [35]) and TP5 (contexts [42]–[45]) might represent the fills of features dating to the medieval period, as the absence of post-medieval inclusions is striking when compared with most strata on the site. The earliest brick walls in test pit AP1 [32]–[34], and possibly in test pits AP4 and TP1 might also date to the time when St Giles was still a village on the edge of the burgeoning metropolis.

- *Is there any evidence for medieval buildings associated with St Giles Hospital?*

No evidence was found for any medieval buildings on the site (see above).

- *What evidence is there for the post-medieval development of the site during the period when it changed from a village to a London suburb?*

Walls and floors in test pit AP1 appear to represent at least three phases of pre-Victorian cellars. The dating evidence for most of the features points to intensive activity during the 17th century. Pre-Victorian brick structures may also have been observed in AP4, TP1 and possibly TP5. The evidence from the test pits indicates that there is extensive survival of post-medieval buildings and associated features in the areas outside the current basement.

The basements Victorian and/or early 20th-century buildings were recorded in test pits AP1, AP2, AP4 and AP5 and to the south of TP5.

4.2 Discussion of potential

The evaluation has demonstrated that survival of archaeological deposits at the site varies considerably. The relatively large number of test pits has provided sufficient information to make an assessment of overall survival at the site. For the purposes of assessing the potential the site has been divided into areas, shown on Fig 14. Three cross-sections through the site have also been produced to provide a predictive tool for future assessment (Fig 15, Fig 16).

4.2.1 The current basement

This area has been labelled as area 1 on Fig 14, it comprises the footprint of the current basement. The evaluation pits have confirmed that there is no survival of archaeological deposits below the current basement.

4.2.2 Dyott Street and Bucknall Street frontages

This area, labelled 2 on Fig 14, lies outside the current basement footprint but the evaluation pits have revealed that there has been extensive disturbance from previous basemented and cellared buildings. The potential for the survival of any features of any interest is considered to be very low. The area at the corner of Bucknall Street and Earnshaw Street also seems to have been badly disturbed and to have very little potential.

4.2.3 The former cafeteria of the current building

This area, labelled 3 on Fig 14, lies outside the current basement footprint but was within the ground floor area of the building. The pits in this area have indicated that the southern part of the area has already been truncated and disturbed to the level of the basement. The northern extent of this disturbance is not certain but thought to extend between 7m and 10m north from the northern edge of the actual basement. The area to the north of this has suffered some localised disturbance from column bases and ground beams associated with the building, and some underground services. The northern part of this area will also have been disturbed by previous structures fronting onto Bucknall Street. However, an area roughly 30–35m by c 25m in the centre of the cafeteria appears to have been only moderately disturbed by the discreet column bases etc (Fig 16).

The test pits demonstrate that a maximum of about 1.5m depth of deposits of archaeological interest survive in this area perhaps indicating 600–800 cubic metres of archaeological deposit after taking account of more localised truncation.

4.2.4 Car park, western part of St Giles High Street frontage and Earnshaw Street

This area, labelled 4 on Fig 14, lies outside the current basement footprint. A part of the area was formerly used as a car park/loading area. The majority of the remainder is currently part of the pavement along St Giles High Street. On Earnshaw Street the ground has been landscaped to form a berm sloping down from pavement level to about 24mOD. As a result of the pavement level being higher on this side of the site truncation from the landscaping is less than it would have been elsewhere around the site (Fig 15).

The three test pits in this area all provided evidence for the survival of post-medieval structures and horizontally stratified deposits. Towards the base of the archaeological sequence a number of layers that did not contain obvious post-medieval inclusions probably relate to medieval activity. No evidence for masonry structures was encountered but this is not too surprising given that only evidence for a village is anticipated from this period.

The post-medieval sequence was represented by at least three phases of buildings dating to the early through to late 17th century. More recent structures were also present but are not generally considered as part of the archaeological sequence. Within the car park area there was evidence for part of the central area having been disturbed much more recently by a basement or other large intrusive feature. The full extent of this is unclear but it must have been located between the western side of AP1 and the position of borehole 3, where it was not encountered (Fig 14, Fig 15). The feature may have been a large service routeway extending across the car park from the street at the same level as the basement.

Over a large part of this area more than 2m of archaeological deposit survives covering 900–1000 square metres. After taking account of both known and anticipated truncation perhaps *c* 1200 cubic metres of stratified deposits might be present.

4.2.5 St Giles High Street frontage

This area, labelled 5 on Fig 14, lies outside the current basement footprint, and most of it of outside the building as existing. The evidence from the test pits suggests that there is considerably more truncation along this part of the St Giles High Street frontage than further west, but that there are some localised pockets of survival. The majority of the features of interest are likely to be structural elements from post-medieval structures surviving either intact, or after being subsequently incorporated into later buildings.

4.2.6 Overall potential

The potential for the survival of prehistoric, Roman or Saxon material at the site is considered to be low. No features of this date were recorded during the evaluation and the area where Roman burials might be present has been severely truncated. While the

presence of isolated features or finds from these periods cannot be ruled out, it is unlikely that anything of any great significance will be encountered.

For the medieval period the evaluation has indicated an absence of widespread masonry buildings at the site (no such structures were located in any of the test pits) tending to support the fact that buildings related to St Giles' Hospital are not present. Some deposits representing medieval ground levelling, possibly horticultural activity, have been recorded but the potential for important remains of this period should be considered as being limited.

By far the greatest potential lies in the extensive remains relating to the post-medieval development of the area. There is evidence for a succession of buildings and associated floors, drains, yards etc. The survival of these remains is concentrated in two main areas: the former cafeteria and, especially, the car park fronting St Giles High Street. The main period represented appears to be a succession of phases during the 17th century. Given that the survival covers relatively large areas (for central London) there is some potential for matching artefact assemblages to individual properties and then undertaking more socio-cultural studies.

4.3 Significance

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

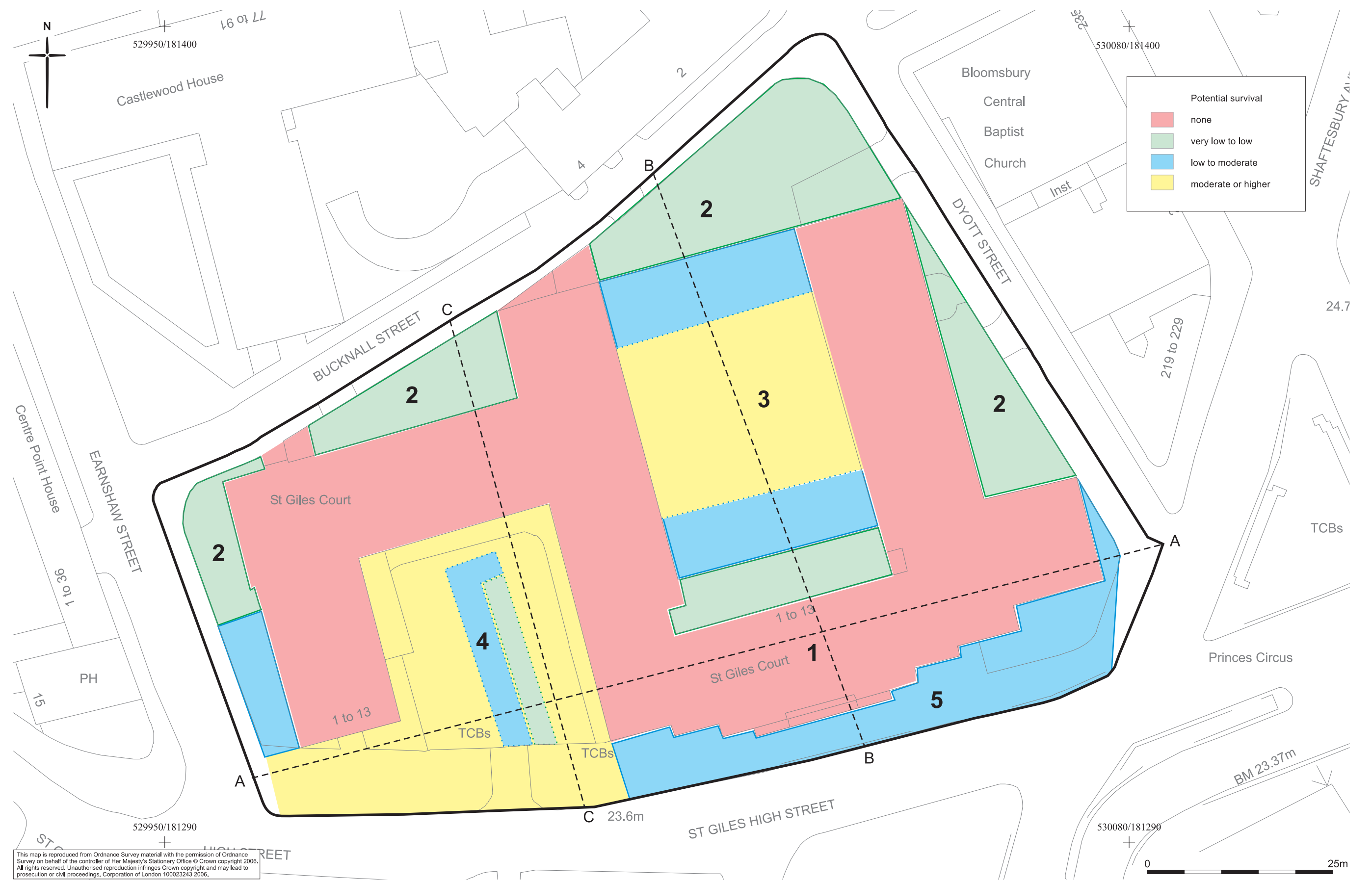


Fig 14 Plan showing areas of archaeological potential at St Giles Court (SIC06)

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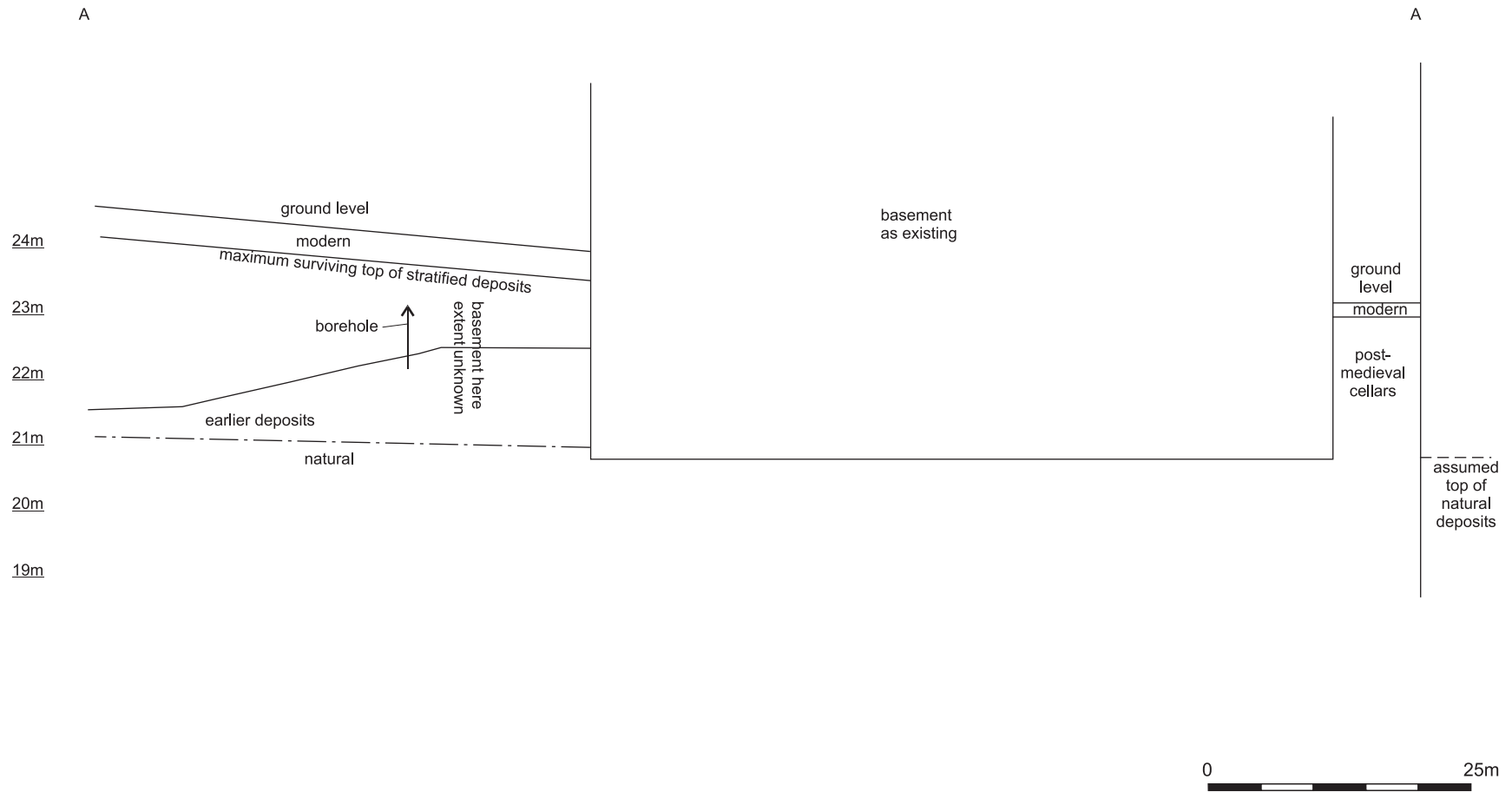


Fig 15 Schematic E-W cross-section across the site

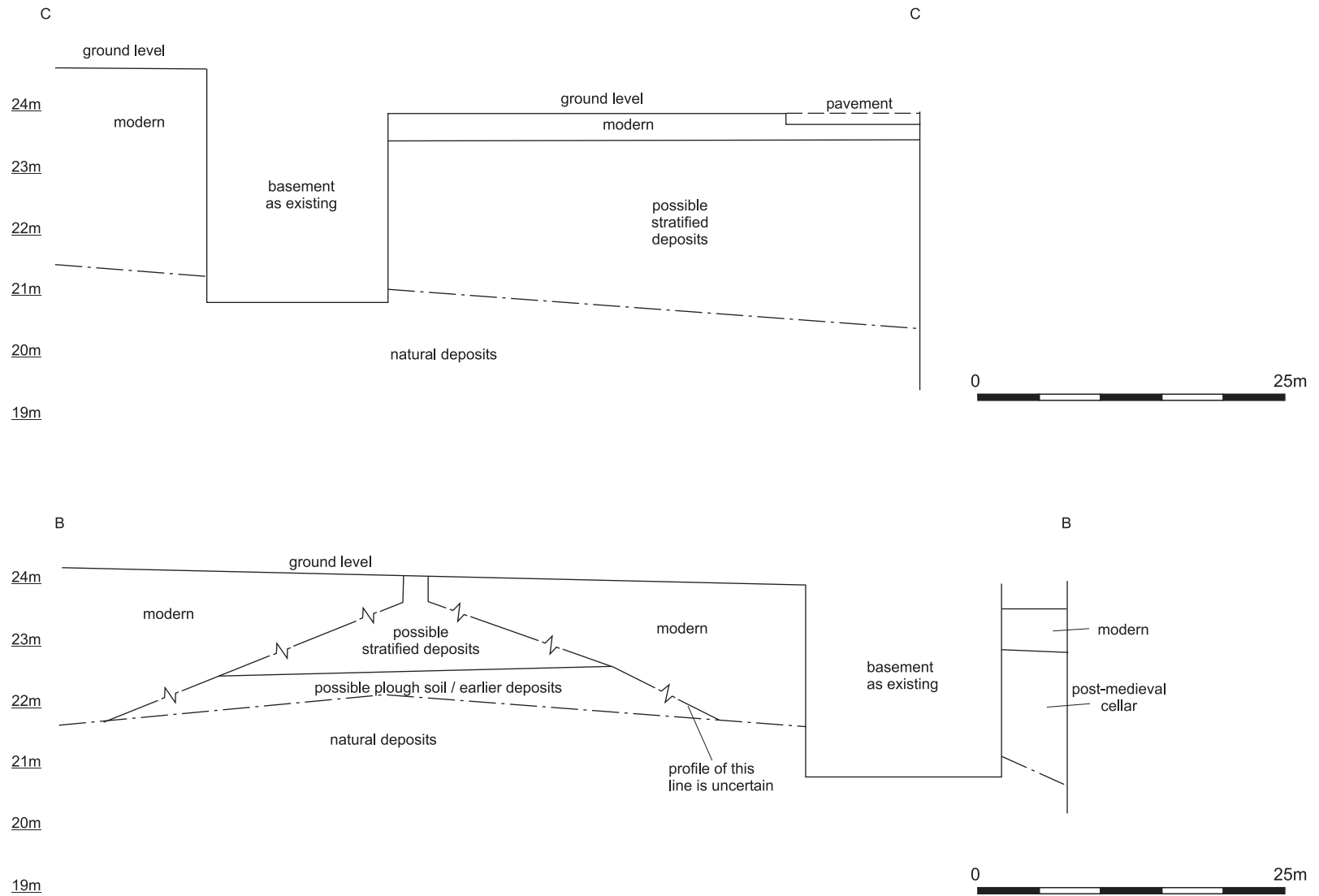


Fig 16 Schematic N-S cross-section across the site

5 Proposed development impact and recommendations

The proposed redevelopment at St Giles Court involves the demolition of the existing building and its replacement with a new property consisting of office, residential and retail units with public open space and a basement car park with a finished floor level of 18.10m OD. Thus the level of the new basement would be between *c* 5.00m and 6.90m below the present ground level. The impact of this on the surviving archaeological deposits will be to completely remove them.

In addition, there are to be improvements to Denmark Street/St Giles High Street/Earnshaw Street junction and the forecourt of the church.

The extent of new drains and other service connections to the new building is not yet known. Also, the nature of the type of new foundations is unknown. However, piling, pile caps, pre-piling obstruction removal and any temporary works will truncate archaeological deposits.

There is little or no potential for the survival of any archaeological features beneath the basement and external wall foundations of the existing building. The current basement floor level is between *c* 2.40m and 4.20m below present ground level, and to this must be added the thickness of the slab, make-up layers and foundations which are substantially deeper. Therefore the proposed new basement would probably have no archaeological impact in this area. Note that the basement slab is at a level of about 20.80m OD throughout but surrounding ground level varies considerably.

There is, however, potential for the survival of archaeological deposits outside the footprint of the existing basement (discussed in more detail in section 4). The new basement would remove all surviving archaeological deposits in these areas.

The decision on the appropriate archaeological response to the deposits revealed outside the footprint of the existing basement rests with the Local Planning Authority and their designated archaeological advisor. This might entail the archaeological excavation of the archaeological deposits in advance of any further ground reduction (ie preservation by record) in those areas where the greatest potential resides with possibly some monitoring through a watching brief upon areas where potential is lower. No further work is recommended in those areas of the site where deposits of archaeological interest have already been completely truncated, such as within the existing basement area, or along the Bucknall Street frontage.

6 Acknowledgements

The archaeological evaluation was commissioned by Stanhope on behalf of the owner Legal and General. Particular thanks are due to Ron German and Matthew Lusty of Stanhope and Jeremy Castle of Legal and General.

MoLAS is grateful to Rob Whytehead and Diane Walls (GLAAS, English Heritage) for advice on the scope of the evaluation and the monitoring of the test pits.

The author would like to thank the staff of Keltbray, especially Lance McCarty and Tom O’Dea, for their assistance during the work on site. Thanks are also due to Jonathan Harris (Norwest Holst Ltd) and Theerasak Kaewkhluab (structural engineer, Arup Associates) for providing information, borehole logs and digital photographs.

The help of several colleagues at MoLAS is gratefully acknowledged. They include Daniel Brace (MoLAS) who assisted the author on site with the recording of test pits AP1 and AP4 and surveying.

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8 Appendices

8.1 Post-medieval pottery from St Giles Court (SIC06)

Jacqui Pearce

8.1.1 Introduction

Twelve sherds of post-medieval pottery from a minimum of 11 vessels were recovered from six small contexts, none of which yielded more than five sherds. There are only two joining sherds and no complete vessel profiles. The pottery is in good condition, as is usual for post-medieval material from London. It was recorded by fabric, form and decoration, according to current MoLAS practice, employing standard codes; the data were then entered onto the Oracle database. Minimum quantification was carried out, by sherd count and minimum number of vessels (ENV).

8.1.2 The pottery

The latest sherd, from context [2], comes from the base of a plate in refined white earthenware (REFW), with a printed mark underneath, showing a crown over the words 'JOHNSON.....ENG...'. This stands for Johnson Bros, and dates after 1913, when they first started using this mark (Godden 1991, 356). All other pottery recorded dates to the 17th century. The presence of post-medieval black-glazed ware (PMBL), made at kilns around Harlow in Essex, dates contexts [25], [30] and [38] to c 1580–1700. PMBL was used mainly for drinking vessels covered inside and out with a lustrous black glaze, and is found here in the form of cylindrical mugs and tall, trumpet-shaped tygs. The small size of these contexts and the absence of any later pottery makes further refinement of the dating impossible on ceramic grounds, although clay pipe evidence can give much tighter dates within this range. There is also a sherd from a pipkin in post-medieval fine redware (PMFR) in context [17], also made at the Harlow kilns between c 1580 and 1700. The context is dated, however, to c 1612–50 by the presence of a sherd from a dish with polychrome, geometric decoration in tin-glazed ware or delftware (TGW A). A sherd from a polychrome dish in mid 17th-century delftware (TGW D) dates context [10] slightly later, to c 1630–80. London-area post-medieval redware (PMR), the standard pottery for everyday use in the kitchen and storeroom, is represented by only two sherds, both from bowls, in contexts [17] and [38]. The complete base of an upright candlestick in clear-glazed Surrey-Hampshire border whiteware (BORDY) was also found in context [38], together with a sherd from a Bartmann jug in Frechen stoneware (FREC), the only imported pottery found on the site.

All the 17th-century sherds recovered come from fabrics and forms common throughout the London area, and widely available. They represent decorative tablewares (the TGW dishes), drinking vessels (PMBL mugs), cooking vessels (PMFR pipkin) and general purpose pots (bowls in PMR), as well as imported

stoneware jugs for wine or ale (FREC Bartmann) and lighting equipment (BORDY candlestick). Apart from the one 20th-century plate sherd from [2], all pottery dates to the 17th century, with no fabrics present introduced later than c 1630.

8.2 A note on the clay tobacco pipes from St. Giles Court, London (SIC06)

Tony Grey

8.2.1 Introduction

The clay tobacco pipes from SIC06 were recorded in accordance with current MoLSS practice and entered onto the Oracle database. The pipe bowls were classified and dated according to the Chronology of London Bowl Types (Atkinson and Oswald 1969). Quantification and recording follow guidelines set out by Higgins and Davey (1994; Davey 1997).

A total of five fragments was submitted, all of them bowls, from three contexts ([10], [17] and [25]).

8.2.2 Forms

The forms fall within the date range c1640-c1710 and include four form types. There are two type AO20 forms dated 1680-1710 and a type AO21 also dated 1680-1710 from context [10]. The pipe bowl from context [17] is a type AO9 dated 1640-60 and the bowl from context [25] is a type AO15 dated 1660-80.

8.2.3 Discussion

None of the pipes are complete. Two of the bowls are incomplete. All show signs of having been smoked and all are stained. The pipe bowl from context [25] is scorched/burnt. Four of the pipes are milled but none are burnished. None are decorated and none bear makers' marks so no maker identity can be suggested. The pipes are probably of local London manufacture.

Context [1] is pipe dated 1680-1710, context [17] is pipe dated 1640-60 and context [25] is pipe dated 1660-80.

9 NMR OASIS archaeological report form

9.1 OASIS ID: molas1-16743

Project details

Project name	St Giles Court
Short description of the project	PPG16 evaluation
Project dates	Start: 15-05-2006 End: 03-07-2006
Previous/future work	No / Yes
Any associated project reference codes	SIC06 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 2 - Offices
Monument type	CELLAR Post Medieval

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON CAMDEN HOLBORN St Giles Court
Postcode	WC2
Study area	4500.00 Square metres
National grid reference	TQ 53002 18134 Point
Height OD	Min: 22.18m Max: 19.61m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Molas
Project brief originator	Contractor (design and execute)
Project design originator	MoLAS
Project director/manager	Gordon Malcolm
Project supervisor	Robert Cowie
Sponsor or funding body	Legal and General
Sponsor or funding body	Legal and General

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	LAARC
Physical Contents	'Ceramics'
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Contents	'Ceramics','Stratigraphic'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Drawing','Plan','Report'
Entered by	Gordon Malcolm (gordonm@molass.org.uk)
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