

30 OLD BAILY/60 LUDGATE HILL London EC4

City of London

Watching brief report

March 2014



**30 Old Bailey/60 Ludgate Hill
London
EC4**

Site Code OLB11
NGR 531730 181230
OASIS reference molas1-172958

Planning reference 11/00049/FULEIA
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Report on an archaeological watching brief

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Summary

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out by MOLA at 30 Old Bailey/60 Ludgate Hill, London, EC4. The report was commissioned from MOLA by Gleeds Management Services on behalf of the client, Land Securities.

In accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (MOLA 2011b) a watching brief was carried out on the site between July and December 2013.

An area to the north of the double basement, where deposits were thought to survive, was monitored. The southern area, within the existing double basement, was also monitored. No archaeological deposits were found. The natural consisted of truncated London Clay at c 3.00m OD.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Site background

- 1.1.1 An archaeological watching brief was carried out by MOLA at 30 Old Bailey/60 Ludgate Hill, London EC4 ('the site') between July and December 2013 (see Fig 1). This document reports on the findings of the watching brief.
- 1.1.2 A desk top *Archaeological Assessment* (HEA) was previously prepared which covers the whole area of the site (MOLA 2010a). 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).
- 1.1.3 A field evaluation was carried out by MOLA between 25-07-2011 and 03-08-2011. An *Evaluation Report* was written on the results (MOLA 2011a).
- 1.1.4 Further to the archaeological condition on Planning Consent a *Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological watching brief* was prepared (MOLA 2011b).

1.2 Planning background

- 1.2.1 The legislative and planning framework in which the watching brief took place was summarised in the Written Scheme of Investigation which formed the project design for the evaluation (see Section 1.2, MOLA, 2010b). This was also set in full in the Environmental Statement (Waterman 2011).

1.3 Scope of the watching brief

- 1.3.1 As most of the site had been affected by a double basement, the watching brief was primarily aimed at monitoring an area to the north of the site that was outside the current basement (Upper basement B1). This area was considered to have moderate potential (See Fig 2) Ground reduction and the excavation of new pile caps was monitored.
- 1.3.2 The southern area of the site (lower basement B2) was also monitored to identify any deep cut features that may be present. Within this area the excavation of new pile caps was monitored.
- 1.3.3 The watching brief was carried out within the terms of the relevant Standard for watching brief specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (IFA, 2009).
- 1.3.4 All work has been undertaken within the research priorities established in the Museum of London's *A research framework for London Archaeology*, 2002.

- 1.3.5 All work was undertaken within the research aims and objectives established in the *Written Scheme of Investigation* for the watching brief (Section 2.2)

2 Topographical and historical background

- 2.1.1 The planning and legislative background to the site has been adequately summarised in the previous Environmental Statement (Waterman 2011). The reader is referred to this document for further details. A brief summary is provided here.

2.2 Topography

- 2.2.1 The underlying geology of the site consists of the Thames River Terrace Gravels of the Taplow Terrace, overlying London Clay (BGS sheet 256). In places the Terrace gravels are capped by a fine-grained deposit known as brickearth.

- 2.2.2 The site is c 425m north of the modern bank of the River Thames, and c 100m east of one of its main tributaries, the Fleet, now in a culvert beneath Farringdon Street. Evidence of a channel, apparently running westwards or south-westwards through the southern part of the site, was found during archaeological investigations in 1959, and may contain evidence of early prehistoric activity.

2.3 Prehistoric

- 2.3.1 Other than occasional chance finds in the area, possible prehistoric activity is limited to the discovery of a skeleton of an infant, possibly of pre-Roman date, found on the northern eyot in the River Fleet, c 80m north-west of the site.

2.4 Roman

- 2.4.1 The site is located just to the west of the Roman city of Londinium. The eastern boundary of the site is c 35m west of the Roman city walls, and c 25m west of the city ditch. Sites outside the city walls were favoured as burial grounds in the Roman period, and Roman burials have been found during excavations at Old Bailey/Warwick Square, c 40m north-east of the site.

- 2.4.2 There is evidence of a Roman mill close to the site on an eyot in the Fleet, and wharfage activity on another eyot, a short distance to the south. It is likely that there was also activity along the eastern bank of the Fleet during this period. A Roman road ran adjacent to the south edge of the site, and ditches have been recorded just north of the site. The eastern fringe of the site is aligned parallel and very close to the Roman City wall and associated ditch. Being located outside the later

Roman city walls there is the possibility of burials, the nearest have been found at Shoe Lane.

2.5 Medieval

2.5.1 During the early Saxon period, settlement was concentrated to the west of the Roman city, in the area of Covent Garden, c 1.5km west of the site. After the abandonment of the city at the end of the Roman period, the Roman wall fell into decay. Excavations, c 60m south-east of the site, showed that the Roman city ditch was recut in the late Saxon period. A Saxon well has been found c 100m north of the site. Evidence of a late-Saxon or early-Norman bridge, and of land reclamation has been found c 115m south-west of the site, on the corner of New Bridge Street and Ludgate Hill. This would still have been an important thoroughfare during Saxon times.

2.5.2 The Fleet Prison was constructed to the west of the site in the late 11th century. Close to the Fleet Prison, in the area now occupied by Seacoal House just outside the western site boundary, was a tavern recorded as early as 1322 when it was called Toppesfeld's Inn. It was known subsequently by various names, and by the 1520s it had become La Belle Sauvage. During the 1950s, evidence for 15th-century occupation in the area of Seacoal House was recorded, in the form of pitting. This may have been in the back yard of the tavern. Chalk and ragstone walls, possibly parts of later medieval cesspits, were found in the southern and eastern parts of the site.

2.6 Post-medieval

2.6.1 In the early 16th century, the Old Bailey and Ludgate Hill frontages of the site would have been lined with houses and shops, with open land to the rear. The buildings on the site would have undoubtedly been affected by the Great Fire of 1666, which is known to have destroyed the Fleet Prison and the Belle Sauvage Inn. By 1672 the site was almost completely built over, with an irregular mixture of properties with rear gardens or yards, alleyways and small courtyards. The Ordnance Survey 1st edition 25" : mile map of 1873 shows the site to contain a variety of buildings; a row of terraced houses lines the northern edge of the site, along Fleet Lane (now Limeburner Lane). Most of the other buildings appear to be primarily non-residential by this time, including a number of public houses fronting Old Bailey. The Belle Sauvage Inn survived until 1873, when it was demolished to make way for the Cassell printing works.

2.6.2 Seacoal House electricity sub-station was constructed in 1952; and two interlinked office buildings known as Hillgate House (to the north and west) and Export House (to the south and south-east), were constructed on the site in 1961. Ground reduction to construct the double basements of these buildings will have removed all or most of any horizontally stratified deposits (e.g. floor levels, road surfaces, etc)

on the site. Features cut into the contemporary ground surface such as cellars, wall foundations, drains and pits may, however, survive below this truncation level.

3 The Watching Brief

3.1 Field methodology

3.1.1 The watching brief was undertaken on the construction of an upper (B1) and lower basement (B2). The works monitored consisted of the demolition of the existing slab, the excavation of new pile caps, lift pits, and new services/drainage with associated shafts.

3.2 Recording methodology

3.2.1 All archaeological recording was carried out in accordance with the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (MOLA, 2011).

3.3 Site archive

3.3.1 All records were allocated the site code OLB11. The records consisted of;

Number of trench record sheets	0
Number of overall location plans	0
Number of context sheets	11
Number of photographs	17
Number of plan sheets	1
Number of sections	0

4 Results of the watching brief

4.1.1 For area locations see Fig 2. The observations made in the two watching brief areas are outlined below.

4.2 Area B1

Location	NE area of site
Dimensions	25m E/W x 10m N/S
Modern ground level	11.50m OD
Base of modern deposits	8.60m OD
Depth of archaeological stratigraphy above natural (if any)	None seen
Level of base of lowest features or deposits observed	N/A
Top of surviving natural observed at	4.64 m OD

4.2.1 Several visits to observe ground reduction in this area found a concrete slab at c 8.60m m OD. Above this was a 2.90m thick deposit of crushed brick and concrete. Further visits confirmed there was more brick rubble below this concrete slab, this was associated with existing concrete piles in this area. All deposits observed were modern and date to when the building was constructed in the 1960's. Any archaeology in this area must have been removed during the construction of the original building. (see Fig 3)

4.3 Area B2

Location	Whole site
Dimensions	100m x 50m
Modern ground level	3.54m OD (south) to 5.74m OD (north)
Base of modern	N/A
Depth of archaeological stratigraphy above natural (if any)	None seen
Level of base of lowest features or deposits observed	N/A
Top of surviving natural observed at	3.00 to 4.64m OD

4.3.1 Several visits were made to observe works for new drainage next to Seacoal House, and new pile caps. No archaeology was found, previous building work had truncated the London Clay to c 3.00m OD. (see Fig 4)

4.4 Conclusions

4.4.1 The watching brief has confirmed the findings of the evaluation (MOLA, 2011) that the potential for survival of archaeological remains on the site was low. Any remains they may have been present have been removed by the basement of the present car park. On the northern side of the site the possibility of 19th century backfilled cellars surviving was considered moderate. However, it is now clear this area was also reduced in the 1960's removing any archaeological deposits.

5 Archaeological potential

5.1 Answering original research aims

- *Do archaeological deposits, particularly those associated with the Fleet tributary channels, exist on the site?*

No deposits associated with the Fleet tributary channels were observed.

- *Does surviving stratigraphy exist below the existing slab in the form of deeper cut features cutting into the natural geology (eg, pits, wells, ditches etc)?*

No deeper cut features were identified within the B1 and B2 areas. The material below the existing B1 concrete slab consisted of modern made ground. Within B2 the concrete slab overlaid London Clay.

- *What are the extents and date of truncation both within and outside the existing basement?*

In both B1 and B2 the ground had been truncated by 1960's building activity.

- *What was the level of natural topography?*

The natural was London Clay truncated down to c 3.0m OD

- *What are the latest deposits identified?*

The only deposits encountered were those associated with the 1960's buildings.

5.2 Answering new research aims

5.2.1 There are no new research aims.

5.3 Significance of the data

5.3.1 There is nothing to suggest that the made ground deposits identified on the site are of any archaeological significance.

6 Publication and archiving

- 6.1.1 The results of the watching brief will be made publicly available by means of a database in digital form, to permit inclusion of the site data in any future academic researches into the development of London.
- 6.1.2 The site archive containing original records and finds will be stored in accordance with the terms of the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (MOLA 2011b) with the Museum of London within 12 months of the end of the watching brief.
- 6.1.3 In view of the limited potential of the material (Sections 5) and the relatively limited significance of the data (Section 5.3) it is suggested that a short note on the results of the watching brief should appear in the annual round up of the *London Archaeologist*.

7 NMR OASIS archaeological report form

OASIS ID: molas1-172958

Project details

Project name	30 Old Bailey/60 Ludgate Hill
Short description of the project	Following an earlier evaluation (OASIS molas1-108599), an area to the north of the double basement, where deposits were thought to survive, was monitored. No archaeological deposits were found, natural was truncated London Clay at c 3.00m OD.
Project dates	Start: 17-07-2013 End: 02-12-2013
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	OLB11 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	molas1-108599 - OASIS form ID
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 2 - Offices
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON CITY OF LONDON CITY OF LONDON 30 Old Bailey/60 Ludgate Hill, London
Postcode	EC4
Study area	7200.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 31730 81230 51.5141185784 -0.101373490964 51 30 50 N 000 06 04 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 3.00m Max: 4.64m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	MOLA
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Project brief originator	Corporation of London
Project design originator	MOLA
Project director/manager	Craig Halsey
Project supervisor	Tony Mackinder
Type of sponsor/funding body	Client
Name of sponsor/funding body	Gleeds Management services

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Matrices", "Plan", "Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography
1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	30 Old Bailey/60 Ludgate Hill, London EC4
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Mackinder, T
Date	2014
Issuer or publisher	MOLA
Place of issue or publication	London
Description	client report

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Scale 1:1,000 @ A4

0 50m

Fig 1 Site location

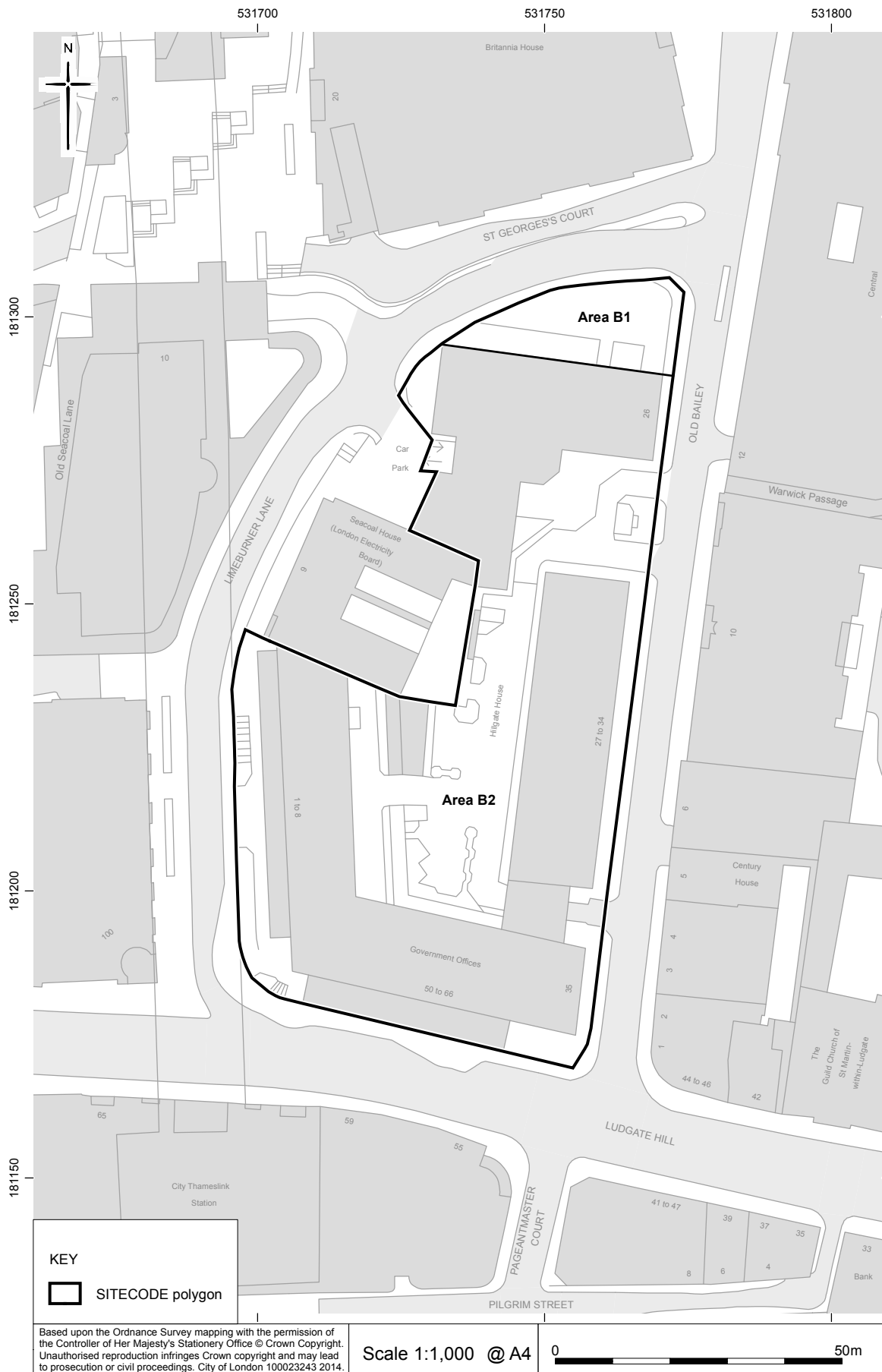


Fig 2 Areas of investigation

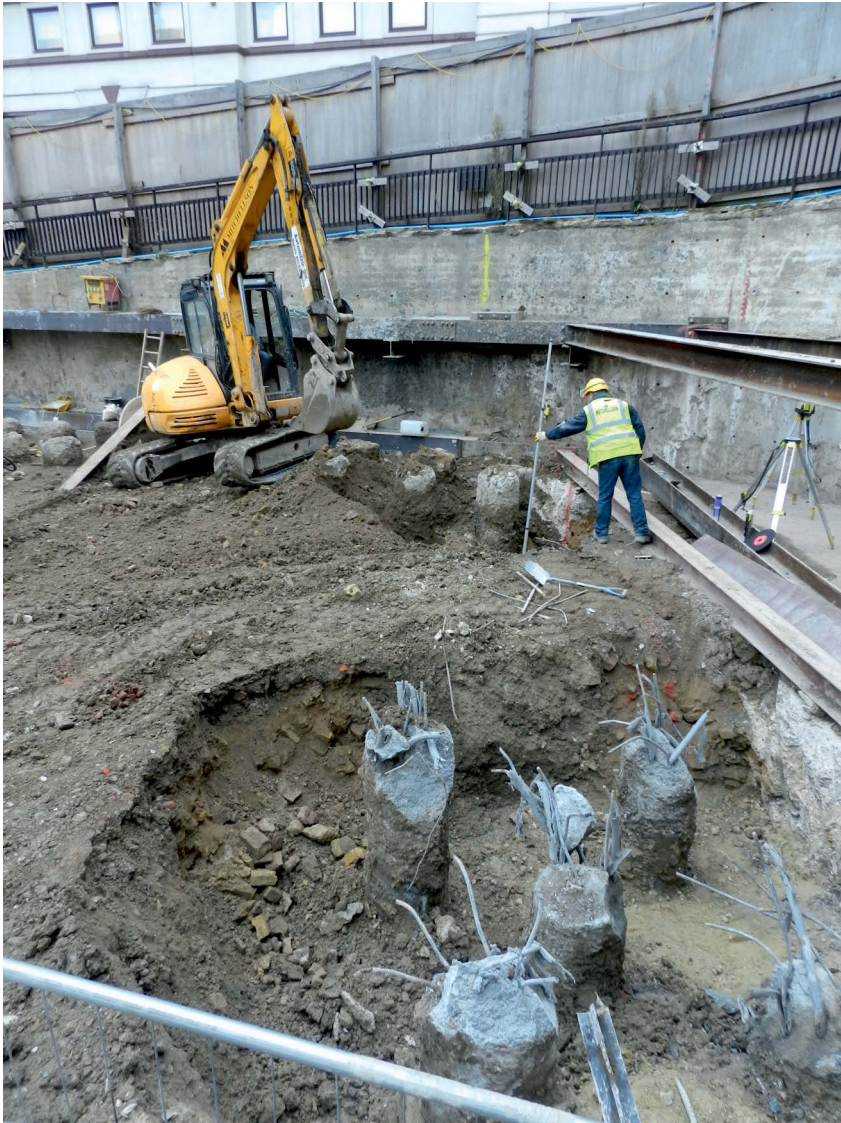


Fig 3 Area B1 - ground reduction

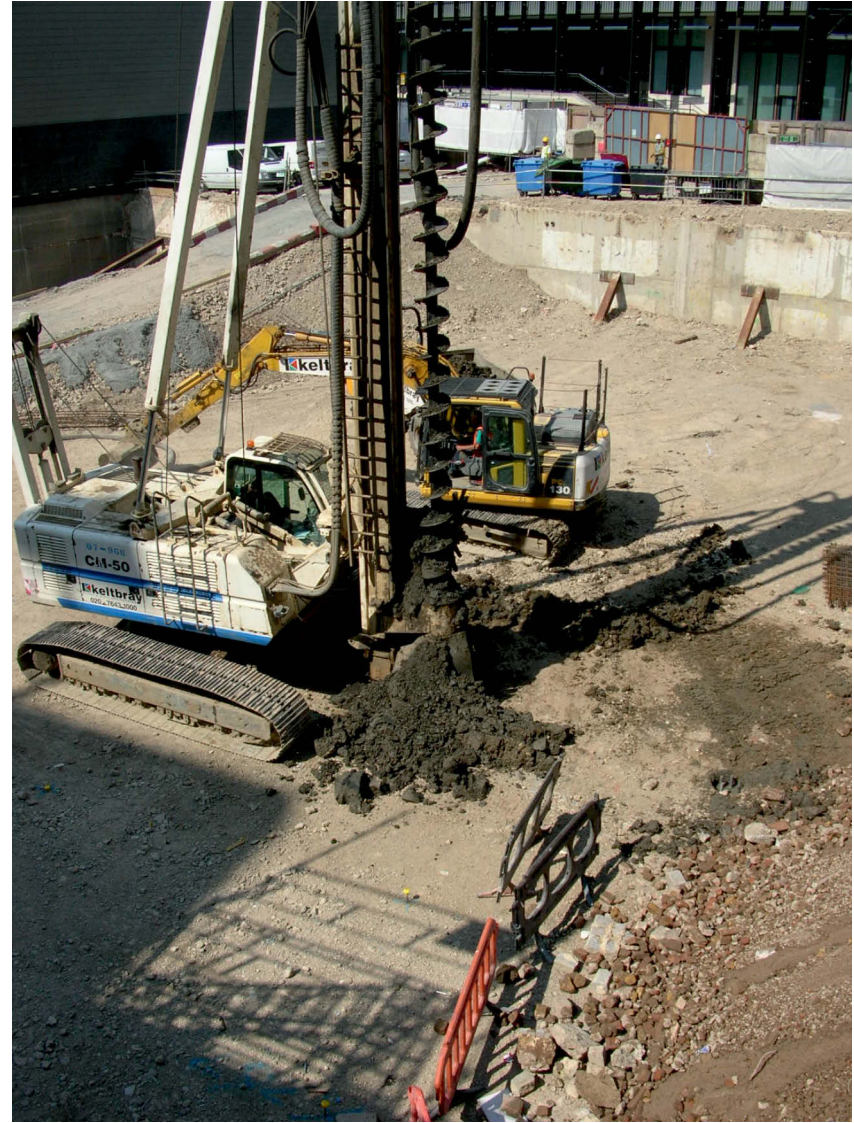


Fig 4 Area B2 - piling rig with London Clay