



82 EATON SQUARE
London
SW1

City of Westminster

An archaeological watching brief report

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MUSEUM OF LONDON

Archaeology Service

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An archaeological watching brief report

Site Code: EAT06

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Summary (non-technical)

This report has been commissioned by Chinese Estates in order to record and assess the results of a watching brief carried out at 82 Eaton Square, SW1.

The watching brief was undertaken by MoLAS between 20 June 2006 and 16 November 2006 to record the nature and extent of any archaeological remains disturbed during the conversion of the present building from the Irish Circle Club to a single family dwelling unit. The scheme included alterations to the basement for new staff living quarters, kitchens, storage and plant together with a swimming pool and three lift shafts.

MoLAS monitored the excavation by contractors of six areas (some of which were dug by hand and some by machine) for underpinning, drains and a swimming pool. These areas represented a sample of the total area excavated during ground-works.

Contractor's excavations revealed river terrace gravel and, near the south-east end of the building, late post-medieval fill ('made ground'), which the results of a previous geotechnical investigation suggests was over 1.57m thick. The latter may be the infill of construction features for the present building and/or late post-medieval quarries. Excavations also exposed a 19th-century soakaway and culvert, both of which related to the Grade II listed building (built 1826–30) that occupies the site.*

No significant archaeological remains were found.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Site background

The watching brief took place at 82 Eaton Square, hereafter called ‘the site’. The site is located on the north side-west side Eaton Square, and is bounded on the north-east side by Lyall Street (see Fig 1). The centre of the site is at Ordnance survey National Grid Reference 528245 179001. The level of the basement slab varied between 4.60m and 4.78m OD. Modern ground level immediately adjacent to the site is at *c* 7m OD. The site code is EAT06.

A geotechnical survey of the site in the form of six small diameter boreholes down to a depth of 2.7m below basement level and 18 trial pits was previously undertaken by LHB Wembley (2004). This was carried out solely for engineering (ie non-archaeological) purposes, but the results suggested that near the south-east end of the site late post-medieval features up to 1.80m deep had truncated the underlying terrace gravel. The ‘made ground’ filling these unidentified features (possibly gravel pits) comprised silty gravelly sand and contained brick, York stone paving, timber, slate, plaster, mortar and flint mortar and coal fragments.

A desk top *Archaeological (impact) assessment* was also previously prepared by MoLAS, which covers the whole area of the site (Betts 2005). 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.

The watching brief was undertaken to record the nature and extent of any archaeological remains disturbed during the conversion of the present building, a Grade II* listed building, from the Irish Circle Club to a single family dwelling unit. The scheme included alterations to the basement for new staff living quarters, kitchens, storage and plant together with a swimming pool and three lift shafts.

1.2 The planning and legislative framework

The legislative and planning framework in which the archaeological exercise took place was summarised in the *Archaeological impact assessment* (see Betts 2005, Section 2).

1.3 Planning background

The archaeological watching brief was carried out during the redevelopment of the site in order to satisfy a planning condition (Planning ref no. PT/05/00778/Full).

1.4 Origin and scope of the report

This report was commissioned by Richard Pollard on behalf of the client Chinese Estates Holdings Ltd 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).

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* (Aitken 2006, 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 limited nature of the proposed works and the watching brief upon them made it unreasonable to establish many specific archaeological research objectives. The archaeological brief was essentially limited to establishing where, if at all, archaeological deposits may survive (presence/absence), recording where necessary, and to ensuring that the proposed groundworks do not involve the destruction of any archaeological deposits of national significance. Nevertheless, in addition, a few research questions were established in the *Method Statement* for the watching brief (Aitken 2006, Section 2.2):

- *What is the nature and level of the natural deposits?*
- *What are the earliest known surviving archaeological deposits?*
- *Is there any evidence of buildings/activities associated with the Roman Road thought to run north-east of the site?*
- *Is there any evidence of land/estate management associated with the medieval Ebury Manor?*

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

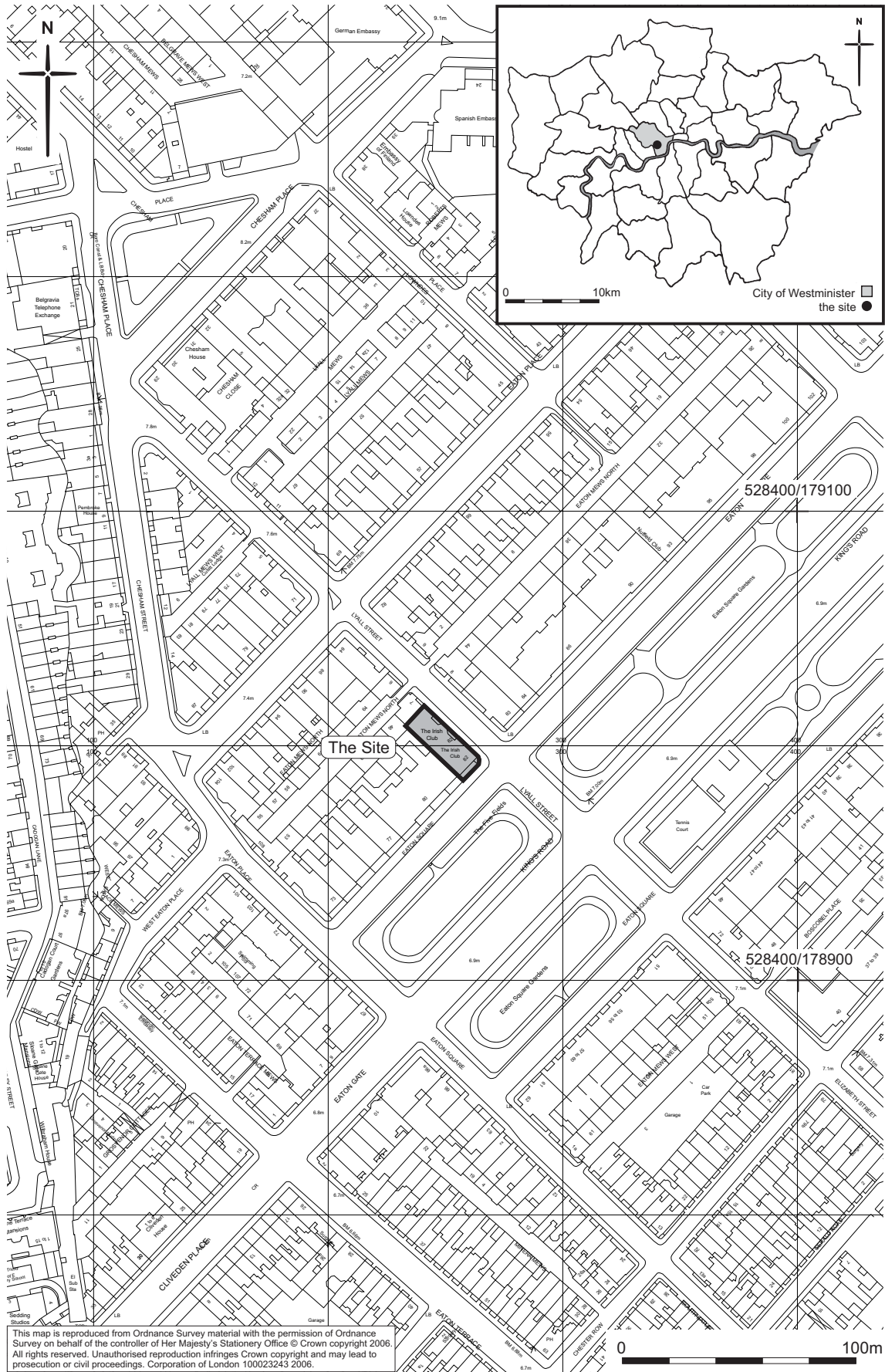


Fig 1 Site location

2 Topographical and historical background

The topographical, historical and archaeological background is provided by the previous *Archaeological Assessment* (Bett 2005, Section 3) and summarised in the *Method Statement* (Aitken 2006, Section 1.3). However, a brief review of some aspects of the local topography and later post-medieval history of the site is given here to put the results of the archaeological evaluation in context.

The site lies on the Kempton Park gravel which boreholes in the building has shown to compose orange-brown sand and gravel which in some cases was found to be clayey in the uppermost levels (LBH Wembley 2004, 4). The site lies on an area of slightly higher ground 74m to the east of a north–south band of river alluvium marking the position of the former course of the Westbourne a tributary of the Thames.

The site was first developed in the second quarter of the 19th century, which at the time lay within an area known since the medieval period as ‘Five Fields’. In 1824 Thomas Cubitt took a lease of the ‘Five Fields’, and began building the first block of Eaton Square in 1826 (Weinreb and Hibbert 1983, 259). Greenwood’s Map of 1827 (Betts 2005, fig 5) indicates that the street plan and at least the foundations of No 82 Eaton Square had been set out by this time and the building was probably completed by 1830. This building, a grand four-storey terrace building, still stands on 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* (Aitken 2006) and the MoLAS Archaeological Site Manual (MoLAS 1994). It was carried out by MoLAS between 20 June 2006 and 16 November 2006.

MoLAS monitored the excavation by contractors of six areas (some of which were dug by hand and some by machine) for underpinning, lift pits, drains and a swimming pool.

The locations of the areas of excavation observed during the watching brief were recorded by offsetting from adjacent standing walls and plotted on to a Basement Floor Plan (Project No. 2156, Dwg. No. 01, Cadplan Land and Building Surveyors). This information was then plotted onto the Ordnance Survey grid.

The heights of observations and/or archaeological remains were recorded relative to the levels on the basement floor as shown on the Basement Floor Plan, which were related to the Ordnance Datum benchmark at the base of the boundary wall of 69 Eaton Place (value 7.748m OD).

The site finds and records can be found under the site code EAT06 in the MoL archive and are summarised in (Table 1).

Table 1 Contents of the site archive for the evaluation

Type	Quantity	Comments
Trench record sheets	3	3 A4 sheets (Areas 4–6)
Basement Floor Plan	1	Cadplan Land & Building Surveyors Dwg. No. 2156-01. With Areas 4–6 marked in pencil
Scale plans (scale 1:50)	3	3 plan sheets (Areas 4–6)
Sketch plans	2	2 A4 sheets of paper photocopied from notebook (Areas 1 and 2)
Sketch sections	3	On the same sheets as the sketch plans
Method statement	1	p:\west\1374\na\PM\MSWB.doc
Watching brief report	1	p:\west\1374\na\field\wb01.doc
Levels and survey data	1	1 A4 sheet
Photographs	7	Digital images
Site summary	1	p:\west\1374\na\field\sum01

3.2 Results of the watching brief

In total, six separate interventions were monitored for the purposes of the watching brief. These have been numbered 1–6 consecutively. These represent a sample of the total area excavated during ground-works. There follows a brief description of the deposits as recorded.

For all area locations see Fig 2

3.2.1 Watching Brief Area 1

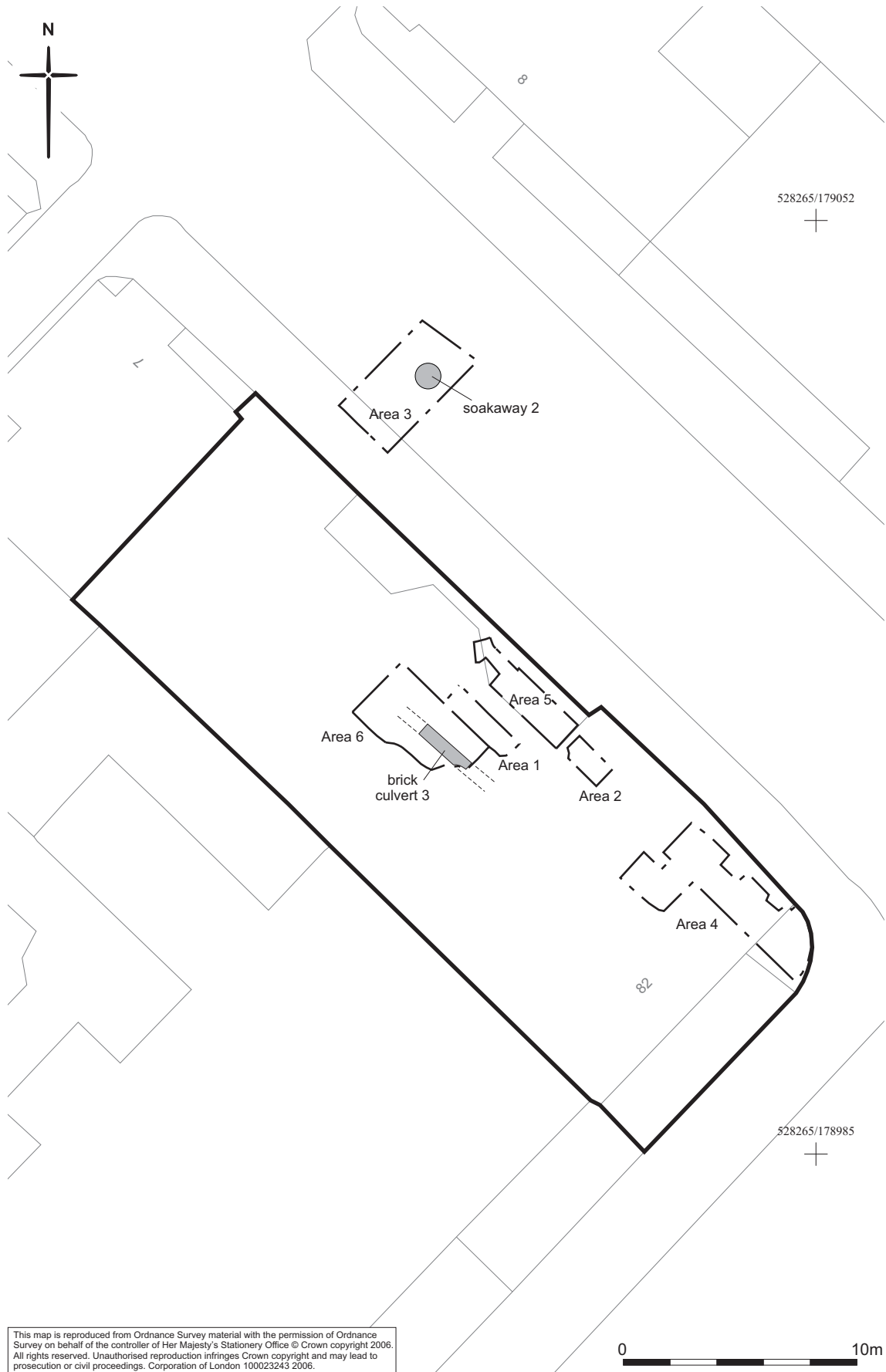
<i>Watching Brief Area 1</i>	
Location	NE side of site, immediately next to light well on Lyall Street frontage
Dimensions	3.73m by up to 1.60m, and 2m deep
Modern basement floor level/top of slab	4.76m OD
Base of modern fill	3.98m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	None seen
Level of base of deposits observed	2.76m OD
Natural observed	3.98m OD

An area excavated for underpinning work revealed natural river terrace deposits [1] comprising horizontal layers of reddish brown sandy gravel and light brown sand. These were covered by a layer of sandy gravel, which was up to 0.28m thick and interpreted as redeposited natural gravel.

3.2.2 Watching Brief Area 2

<i>Watching Brief Area 2</i>	
Location	NE side of site, immediately next to Lyall Street frontage
Dimensions	2m by 1m, up to 0.90m deep
Modern basement floor level/top of slab	4.76m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	4.54m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	None seen
Level of base of deposits observed	3.86m OD
Natural observed	4.54m OD

An area excavated for underpinning work revealed natural river terrace deposits [1] comprising successive layers of and light brown sand and reddish brown sandy gravel. The terrace gravel survived to a height of 4.54m OD at the south-east end of the area, but across much of the area it had been truncated to a level of 3.86m by a service trench.



This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright 2006. All rights reserved. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Corporation of London 100023243 2006.

Fig 2 Location of recorded areas

3.2.3 Watching Brief Area 3

<i>Watching Brief Area 3</i>	
Location	Vault under Lyall Road- at north end of site, extending NE from Lyall Street frontage
Dimensions	c 5m by 2.9m
Modern basement floor level/top of slab	4.78m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	Not seen
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	None seen
Level of base of deposits observed	3.58m OD
Natural observed	N/A

The top of a soakaway [2] was exposed at a depth of 0.50m below basement floor level (4.28m OD). The soakaway comprised a shaft, which was circular in plan, with a domed roof made largely of hard grey mortar. It was about 1.10m across (external diameter) and at least 3m deep (its base was obscured by brick rubble fill). It was made of yellow London Stock brick. A lead pipe ran in through the roof of the soakaway and down the open shaft to the rubble fill.

3.2.4 Watching Brief Area 4

<i>Watching Brief Area 4</i>	
Location	SE corner of the site, extending into the light well on the Eaton Square frontage
Dimensions	8.5m by up to 4.8m, and up to 1m deep
Modern basement floor level /top of slab	4.76m OD
Base of modern fill	Not seen
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	None seen
Level of base of deposits observed	3.76m OD
Natural observed	N/A

An area excavated for drains revealed late post-medieval/modern dumps of brown silty sandy gravel with occasional brick fragments. A test pit (TP3) excavated during the earlier geotechnical survey indicated that 'made ground' in one part of Watching Brief Area 4 was at least 1.57m thick.

3.2.5 Watching Brief Area 5

<i>Watching Brief Area 5</i>	
Location	Light well on NE side of site (Lyall Street frontage)
Dimensions	5.5m by 1.42m, and up to 0.9m deep
Modern basement floor level/top of slab	4.72m OD
Base of modern fill	Not seen
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	None seen
Level of base of deposits observed	3.82m OD
Natural observed	N/A

An area excavated for drains revealed modern dumps that mainly comprised orange-brown sandy clay and orange-brown sand, and contained occasional fragments of concrete.

3.2.6 Watching Brief Area 6

<i>Watching Brief Area 6</i>	
Location	Centre of site in area of proposed swimming pool
Dimensions	5.3m by 3m, and c 0.6m deep
Modern basement floor level /top of slab	4.76m OD
Base of modern fill	c 4.15m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	None seen
Level of base of deposits observed	c 4.15m OD
Natural observed	c 4.15m OD

An area excavated for a swimming pool revealed river terrace deposits [1] comprising successive layers of yellow-brown sand and loose orange-brown sandy gravel. The gravel was cut by the remains of an arched brick culvert [3], which was exposed at a depth of c 0.35m below basement floor level (c 4.4m OD). It was 2.65m long (although it extended beyond the south-east limit of excavation and was truncated to the north-west) and was 0.50m wide and c 0.40m high.

Grey-brown sandy gravel with varying amounts of brick and concrete rubble overlay the natural gravel.

4 Potential of archaeology

4.1 Original research aims

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

The truncated surface of river terrace sand and gravel was revealed at between 3.98m and 4.54m OD. No soil horizons survived. This would accord with the results of an earlier geotechnical survey of the site by LBH Wembley (2004), which indicated that the truncated surface of the natural gravel lies at between *c* 3.35m and 4.75m OD. The deepest truncation was at the south-east end of the site, where 'made ground' extended down over to 2.2m. The latter may be the infill of construction features for the present building and/or late post-medieval quarries.

- *What are the earliest known surviving archaeological deposits?*

No significant archaeological remains were found. The earliest features were a 19th-century soakaway and culvert, both of which were associated with the existing Grade II listed building.

- *Is there any evidence of buildings/activities associated with the Roman Road thought to run north-east of the site?*

No evidence for Roman structures or other features was found.

- *Is there any evidence of land/estate management associated with the medieval Ebury Manor?*

No evidence for medieval features associated with Ebury manor was found.

4.2 Significance of the data

No significant archaeological remains were found.

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 will be stored in accordance with the terms of the *Method Statement* (Aitken 2006) with the Museum of London within 2 months of the end of the watching brief.

In view of the very limited potential of the material (Section 4) it is suggested that a short note on the results of the watching brief should appear in the annual round up of the *London Archaeologist*.

6 Acknowledgements

The archaeological watching brief and this report were commissioned and funded by Chinese Estates.

MoLAS wishes to thank Richard Pollard of Chinese Estates for his assistance and Diane walls at English Heritage for advising on the scope of the project. Thanks are also due to staff of the main contractor on site, especially Alan Coverdale, for their help and cooperation.

The author would like to thank the following for their contributions and help in producing this report: Rosalind Aitken for project management and support throughout the project, Jez Taylor and Simon Gannon for information about their observations on site in June and July 2006 respectively, Mark Burch for preparing digital watching brief area location plans from field drawings. Ken Lymer prepared the figures in this report.

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8 NMR OASIS archaeological report form

8.1 OASIS ID: molas1-20931

Project details

Project name 82 Eaton Square, SW1

Short description of project Contractor's excavations revealed river terrace gravel and possible quarry fills. They also exposed a 19th-century soakaway and culvert, both of which related to the Grade II listed building (built in the second quarter of the 19th century) that occupies the site.

Project dates Start: 20-06-2006 End: 16-11-2006

Previous/future work No / No

Any associated project reference codes EAT06 - Sitecode

Type of project Recording project

Site status Listed Building

Current Land use Residential 1 - General Residential

Monument type CULVERT Post Medieval

Monument type SOAKAWAY Post Medieval

Investigation type 'Watching Brief'

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Project location

Country England
Site location GREATER LONDON CITY OF WESTMINSTER PADDINGTON
BAYSWATER AND KNIGHTSBRIDGE 82 Eaton Square, SW1
Postcode SW1
Study area 450.00 Square metres
Site coordinates TQ 28245 79001 51.4948883388 -0.152385043898 51 29 41 N
000 09 08 W Point
Height OD Min: 3.98m Max: 4.54m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Molas

Project brief originator Greater London Advisory Service

Project design MoLAS
originator

Project director/manager Ros Aitken

Project supervisor Robert Cowie

Project supervisor Jez Taylor

Type of Developer
sponsor/funding body

Name of Chinese Estates
sponsor/funding body

Project archives

Physical Archive No
Exists?

Digital Archive LAARC
recipient

Digital Archive ID EAT06

Paper Archive LAARC
recipient

Paper Archive ID EAT06

Project bibliography

1

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