

Water Main Renewal Marylebone Lane London W1

Site Code MWM17
NGR 528428 181355
OASIS reference molas1-284694

Report on an archaeological watching brief

Sign-off History:

Issue No.	Date:	Prepared by:	Checked/ Approved by:	Reason for Issue:
1	10.05.2017	Isca Howell	Marit Leenstra	Draft for client review

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Summary

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out by MOLA on the installation of a new water main on Marylebone Lane, London W1. The report was commissioned from MOLA by Thames Water.

In accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (MOLA 2017)) a watching brief was carried out in the form of two site visits on the 19th April and 10th May 2017.

The results of the watching brief have shown that the route for the new main lies entirely within recently disturbed made ground; presumably the route of the former water main.

No natural deposit nor archaeological finds and features of significance were encountered during the watching brief

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1 Introduction

1.1 Site background

- 1.1.1 An archaeological watching brief was carried out by MOLA in the form of two site visits: on the 19th April and 10th May 2017. This document is the Report on that work.

The site comprises the extent of Marylebone Lane between Wigmore Street to the South and Bentinck Street to the North (

WSI prep\Fig 1 Site location.pdf

- 1.1.2 *Fig 1*). The centre of the site lies at National Grid reference 528428:181355. Modern pavement level in Marylebone Lane lies at c 21.8m OD.
- 1.1.3 Marylebone Lane lies within the Tyburn Archaeological Priority Area, as defined by the City of Westminster unitary authority.

1.2 Planning background

- 1.2.1 The watching brief was undertaken, in accordance with the Water Industry Act (1991) Code of Practice for Conservation, Access and Recreation.
- 1.2.2 The archaeological monitoring of the works was also being undertaken following advice from Historic England.
- 1.2.3 The legislative and planning framework in which the watching brief took place was fully set out in the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (MOLA 2017, Section 1.2).

1.3 Scope of the watching brief

- 1.3.1 An archaeological watching brief as defined by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists is *a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons* (CIFA, 2014).
- 1.3.2 All work has been undertaken within the research priorities established in the Museum of London's A research framework for London Archaeology, 2002.
- 1.3.3 All work was undertaken within research aims and objectives established in the *Written Scheme of Investigation* for the watching brief (MOLA 2017, Section 2.2)

2 Topographical and historical background

2.1.1 This section is only a brief résumé from the Written Scheme of Investigation for the watching brief (MOLA 2017, Section 1.3).

2.2 Topography

2.2.1 The site lies within the bottom of the valley of the Tyburn River, the approximate course of which is shown by the band of alluvium defining the floodplain of the river as mapped on the London Generalised Drift Geology. Although the area was reclaimed and consolidated prior to development in the 18th century, the modern topography still reflects the river valley with a gentle rise to the west and east, and also very slightly down to the south-east towards Oxford Street. Ground level on Marylebone Lane is approximately 21.8m Ordnance Datum (OD). The top of alluvium is predicted to lie at c 19.0m OD (c 3.0m below ground level) and the top of Gravel is predicted to lie at c 18.0–18.5m OD (4.0–4.5m below ground level).

2.3 Archaeology

2.3.1 A piece of Roman flue tile was found during an investigation in the 1970s just south-west of the site, there are no other known finds dating to the Roman period in close proximity to the site.

2.3.2 It is very likely that during this period the site lay within the Tyburn valley, and probably within the main river channel. The channel is likely to have been utilised by the nearby settlement and evidence of timber revetments and other water management features are possible.

2.3.3 Throughout the later medieval period the site lay on the outskirts of settlement, within or very close to the Tyburn channel. The river would have been an important feature and may have been managed through revetments and culverts.

2.3.4 During the post-medieval period, the river was culverted and covered and the low-lying parts of the valley built up, drained and consolidated for the suburban expansion of London from the late 18th century. Rocque's map of 1746 shows the Tyburn channel as a relatively small watercourse running along the western side of Marylebone Lane.

2.3.5 The Tyburn stream, visible in the earlier half of the 18th century was sealed by a culvert under the streets by the end of the 18th century.

3 The watching brief

3.1 Field methodology

- 3.1.1 Initial breaking out was done by contractors appointed by Thames Water. MOLA was notified when the attendance of a MOLA Site Supervisor was required.
- 3.1.2 The work consists of digging launch and receptor pits at intervals for 110m along Marylebone Lane.
- 3.1.3 A MOLA Site Supervisor monitored the work. Any necessary photographic records were made using digital media as deemed appropriate. All recording will be carried out in accordance with national standards (CIFA 2014).
- 3.1.4 *Fig 2, Fig 3 and Fig 4*, at the end of this report shown the conditions on the site.

3.2 Recording methodology

- 3.2.1 A written and drawn record of all archaeological deposits encountered was carried out in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (MOLA 2017, Section 3.2).

3.3 Site archive

Number of trench record sheets	0
Number of overall location plans	1
Number of Context (SU) sheets	0
Number of photographs	20
Number of Plan sheets	0
Number of Sections	0

4 Results of the watching brief

4.1 Site visit Wednesday 19th April 2017

- 4.1.1 Seven launch and receptor pits along the line of the former main were open at the time of this visit. They were located at irregular intervals from the Junction with Bentinck Street to opposite Jason Court. All were different shapes in plan but had a uniform depth of c 800mm.
- 4.1.2 The only deposit observed was the infill of the earlier water main service trench. No finds of archaeological significance were observed in this fill.

4.2 Site visit Wednesday 10th May 2017

- 4.2.1 Nine launch and receptor pits along the line of the former main were open at the time of this visit. They were located at irregular intervals from opposite Jason Court to the Junction with Wigmore Street. All were different shapes in plan but had a uniform depth of c 800mm, except t largest pit at the junction with Wigmore Street that measured 2.10m by 1.40m and 1.00m deep.
- 4.2.2 The only deposit observed was the infill of the earlier water main service trench. No finds of archaeological significance were observed in this fill.

5 Archaeological potential

5.1 Answering original research aims

- 5.1.1 The individual research aims raised in the Written Scheme of Investigation have been answered as follows:
- What is the extent of modern disturbance?
The works to install the new water main only encountered modern disturbed ground; presumably the rout of the former water main.
 - Are there any alluvial deposits present related to the Tyburn channel?
No alluvial deposits related to the Tyburn were encountered, nor any evidence for their proximity, such as tips of clay or gravel.
 - Are there any structures or part of structures present related to the Tyburn, such as revetments or culverts?
There was no evidence for any structures related to the Tyburn

5.2 Answering new research aims

- 5.2.1 No new research aims were raised by the watching brief.

5.3 Significance of the data

- 5.3.1 No archaeological significance can be attached to the results of this watching brief.

6 Publication and archiving

- 6.1.1 The site archive containing original records and finds will be stored in accordance with the terms of the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (MOLA 2017, Section 3.5) with the Museum of London Archaeological Archive within 12 months of the end of the watching brief.
- 6.1.2 In view of the limited potential of the negative results, it is suggested that only a short note on the watching brief should appear in the annual round up of the *London Archaeologist*.

7 Acknowledgements

7.1.1 The author would like to thank Adam Fowler of Thames Water for his assistance.

8 Bibliography

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[WSI prep\Fig 1 Site location.pdf](#)

Fig 1 Site Location

[Placeholder page]



Fig 2 Works in Marylebone Lane (19th April 2017)



Fig 3 Launch/receptor pit



Fig 4 Pit at junction with Wigmore Street

9 OASIS archaeological report form

OASIS ID: molas1-284694	
Project details	
Project name	Water main renewal, Marylebone Lane, London W1
Short description of the project	A watching brief found no evidence of archaeological remains related to the Tyburn as the works were confined to the previous water main route.
Project dates	Start: 19-04-2017 End: 10-05-2017
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	MWM17 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Transport and Utilities 1 - Highways and road transport
Current Land use	Transport and Utilities 3 - Utilities
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Water Act 1989 and subsequent code of practice
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON CITY OF WESTMINSTER MARYLEBONE ST JOHNS WOOD AND MAYFAIR Marylebone Lane
Postcode	W1
Study area	500 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 28428 81355 51.516003966937 -0.148892678774 51 30 57 N 000 08 56 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 20m Max: 22m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	MOLA
Project brief originator	Thames Water
Project design originator	MOLA
Project manager	Marit Leenstra
Project supervisor	Isca Howell
Funding body	Client
Funding body	Thames Water
Project archives	

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC
Digital Archive ID	MWM17
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	LAARC
Paper Archive ID	MWM17
Paper Media available	"Report","Survey "
Project bibliography	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Water Main Renewal, Marylebone Lane, London W1
Author	Howell, I
Date	2017
Issuer	MOLA
Place of issue	London
Description	Unpublished client report