

ANGEL CENTRE ISLINGTON  
London  
N1

London Borough of Islington

An archaeological evaluation report

June 2008



MUSEUM OF LONDON

Archaeology Service

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Site Code: ACB08  
National Grid Reference: 531426 183073

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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 The Angel Centre Building, London, N1. The report was commissioned from MoLAS by Buro Four Project Services Ltd.*

*Following the recommendations of Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) to the Local Planning Authority, five evaluation trenches were excavated on the site prior to the refurbishment of the existing building. The results of the evaluation have shown that the eastern area of the site, adjacent to the current building, has been significantly truncated by modern services trenches. The evaluation also demonstrates that ground reduction associated with the existing Angel Centre Building has truncated archaeological deposits in the central and south-western parts of the site. Given the rising natural topographic levels towards the north-western area of the site, potential archaeological deposits are likely to have been entirely removed by the current Angel Centre Building in this area.*

*Archaeological survival in the form of an 18-19th century cess pit and a late post-medieval brick wall foundation has been identified in the central open lightwell of the current building and along the eastern side of the open area adjacent to the current building respectively. These remains were recorded some distance from both the St John Street and Pentonville Road frontages and the archaeological deposits are typical of post-medieval backyard activity, which could be predicted from cartographic sources as well as the standing buildings fronting St John Street and Pentonville Road to the south and west of the site.*

*The proposed piling of the building is likely to impact on any surviving archaeological deposits in the central area of the site, although it should be noted that the construction of the current lightwell will have removed all but the deepest cut features such as wells, cess pits or ditches. Archaeological survival therefore is likely to be limited. The severity of the impact would also depend on the pile size and pile density.*

## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Site background	1
1.2	Planning and legislative framework	3
1.3	Planning background	3
1.4	Origin and scope of the report	3
1.5	Aims and objectives	4
<b>2</b>	<b>Topographical and historical background</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1	Topography	5
2.2	Prehistoric	5
2.3	Roman	6
2.4	Saxon	6
2.5	Medieval	6
2.6	Post-medieval	7
<b>3</b>	<b>The evaluation</b>	<b>9</b>
3.1	Methodology	9
3.2	Results of the evaluation	10
3.3	Assessment of the evaluation	26
<b>4</b>	<b>Archaeological potential</b>	<b>27</b>
4.1	Realisation of original research aims	27
4.2	General discussion of potential	28
4.3	Significance	28
<b>5</b>	<b>Proposed development impact and recommendations</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Appendix I (Specialist Reports)</b>	<b>32</b>

<b>7.1</b>	<b>The pottery assessment</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>7.2</b>	<b>The building material assessment</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>7.3</b>	<b>The bulk and registered finds assessment</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>7.4</b>	<b>The clay tobacco pipe assessment</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>7.5</b>	<b>The conservation assessment</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>7.6</b>	<b>The environmental assessment</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>NMR OASIS archaeological report form</b>	<b>41</b>

## List of Illustrations

*Front cover: Horwood's map of 1799*

Fig 1 Site location	2
Fig 2 Areas of evaluation	11
Fig 3 Plan of Trench 1	12
Fig 4 East Facing section Trench 1	13
Fig 5 Plan of Trench 2	15
Fig 6 East facing section Trench 2	16
Fig 7 Plan of Trench 3	18
Fig 8 West facing section Trench 3	19
Fig 9 Plan of Trench 4	21
Fig 10 North facing section Trench 4	22
Fig 11 Plan of Trench 5	24
Fig 12 North facing section Trench 5	25
Table 1: summary results of geotechnical boreholes	5

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Site background

The evaluation took place at the Angel Centre, London N1, hereafter called 'the site'. The site is located at the Angel Centre in Islington (NGR 531423 183073: Fig 1). The site is bounded by St John Street to the east; the southern tip of the area proposed for redevelopment fronts Chadwell Street but the rest of the southern boundary is formed by the rear boundaries of properties also fronting Chadwell Street; the western boundary is formed by properties fronting Myddelton Square, Claremont Close and Pentonville Road and to the north the site is bounded by Pentonville Road. The OS National Grid Ref. for centre of site is NGR 531423 1830735

The existing building does not have a basement other than a small basement space for plant (AHMM 2007, 6), the excavation of which is likely to have partially or completely removed any archaeological remains within its footprint.

The site lies on a north-west to south-east incline from 34.9m Ordnance Datum (OD) to 30.8m at street level. The site code is ACB08.

A desk-top *Archaeological Assessment* was previously prepared, which covers the whole area of the site (MoLAS, 2007) 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.

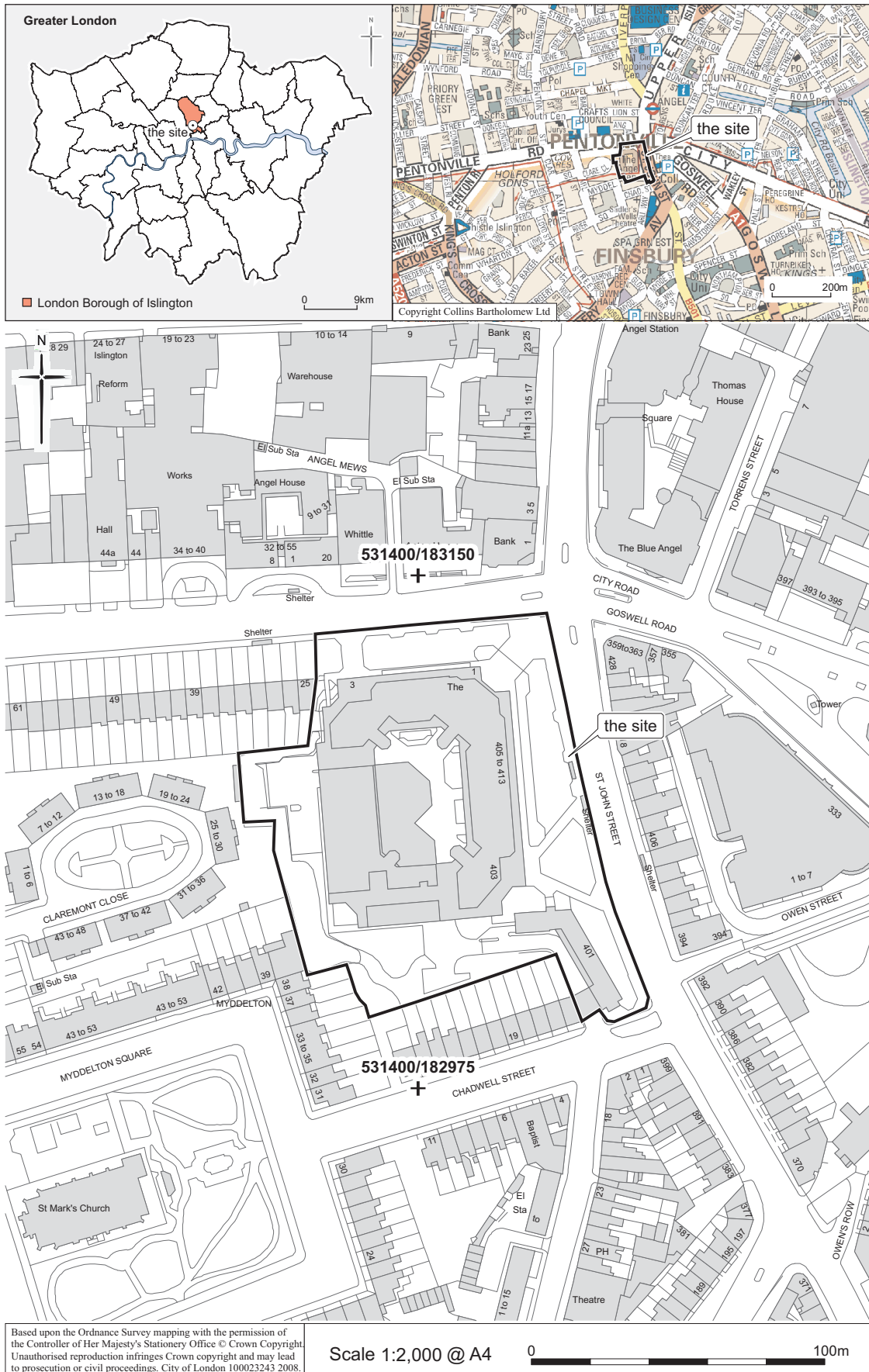


Fig 1 Location map



## 1.2 Planning and legislative framework

The legislative and planning framework in which the archaeological exercise took place was summarised in the *Archaeological Assessment* (MoLAS 2007, section 3)

## 1.3 Planning background

On the basis of this document and other submitted information, English Heritage Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS) recommended that an archaeological condition be placed on planning consent. Consent, Application Reference P072615, was granted on the 20th March 2008 with the following condition:

CONDITION: No development shall take place until the applicant, their agent or successors in title has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme for investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: Important archaeological remains may exist on this site. Accordingly the planning authority wishes to secure the provision of archaeological investigation and the subsequent recording of the remains prior to development, in accordance with the guidance and model condition set out in PPG16. This is in accordance with policies D43, D44, and D47 of the Islington Unitary Development Plan (2002) and policy 4B.14 of the London Plan (2004).

## 1.4 Origin and scope of the report

This report was commissioned by Buro Four Project Services 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).

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 following research aims and objectives were established in the *Method Statement* for the evaluation (Section 2.2):

- What is the nature and level of the natural topography at the site?
- If there is any evidence for prehistoric activity at the site, what is the character and nature of the evidence?
- If there is any evidence for activity at the site dating to the Roman period, what is the nature of the evidence?
- If there is any evidence for Saxon or early medieval activity at the site, what is the character and nature of the evidence?
- The GLSMR records documentary evidence for four possible medieval sites within the proposed development area. These include a possible medieval conduit, medieval wells and a possible windmill owned by Clerkenwell Priory. If there is any evidence for features of this date, are they associated with these sites?
- Cartographic sources suggest a potential for earlier structures at the site, including 18th century buildings fronting onto Pentonville Road and a 'Cow Yard' adjacent to St-John Street. What is the character and nature of these remains?
- What are the latest deposits identified?

## 2 Topographical and historical background

### 2.1 Topography

The site lies on a north-west to south-east incline from 34.9m Ordnance Datum (OD) to 30.8m at street level. The British Geological Survey (BGS 1993 map 269) shows the site overlying gravels of the Boyn Hill gravel formation, although this is contradicted by a recent geotechnical survey. In April 2007, a geotechnical investigation was carried out on the site for engineering purposes. This comprised three boreholes, the results of which are summarised in the Table 1 below (all depths are in metres below ground level). The geotechnical survey indicated the presence of made ground above London Clay, as opposed to Boyn Hill gravels, possibly indicating on a local outcrop of London Clay.

*Table 1: summary results of geotechnical boreholes*

BH ref.	Location	Modern made ground	Undated made ground	London Clay
BH1	Eastern part of site	<0.6	0.6 – 4.45	4.45m+
BH2	Central part of site	<2.0	---	2.0+
BH3	Western part of site	<0.7	0.7 – 2.3	2.3+

Table 1 differentiates between modern made ground, containing identifiably modern inclusion such as concrete, and ‘road chippings’ (but not brick or tile), and undated made ground, which may potentially contain deposits of archaeological interest. This differentiation was not apparent in the original report as it was commissioned for engineering purposes. In all likelihood, the undated made ground comprises backfilled basements or infilled post-medieval gravel pits, along with the demolition layers of earlier buildings on the site.

### 2.2 Prehistoric

There are three isolated findspots of Palaeolithic material in the study area around the site. These comprise a Palaeolithic axe head, *c* 450m west of the site, a Palaeolithic scatter of flint, *c* 500 north-west and an antiquarian record of Palaeolithic finds, *c* 250m to the south. Our understanding of human activity in the later prehistoric periods is limited to one isolated Bronze Age spearhead find *c* 250m to the south of the site.

### **2.3 Roman**

The Roman city of Londinium north of the Thames, *c* 1.7km to the south-east of the site, had an undoubted influence on the development on the surrounding hinterland. The building of a 'new' important city, Londinium, would have drawn upon the resources of surrounding area, placing new demands upon producers and suppliers alike. To maintain the smooth flow of trade into and out of the city a network of roads was built to accommodate such demand. The nearest Roman road north-south ran along Kingsland Road, *c* 2km to the east of the site, and an east-west road ran along Clerkenwell Road and Old Street, *c* 1km to the south of the site. To date no Roman sites or finds have been recorded in the study area.

### **2.4 Saxon**

Following the withdrawal of the Roman army from England in the early 5th century AD the whole country fell into an extended period of socio-economic decline. Over the successive two centuries, immigrations of various Germanic peoples, for example, Saxons and Jutes, took place in varying degrees of intensity. Very different social and economic systems were introduced into the country and while some elements of Roman administration remained, the rest was replaced by tribal administration which eventually resulted in the establishment of the Anglo-Saxon Kingdom of England. Around the 9th and 10th century, the local parochial system began to replace the earlier Saxon Minster system, with formal areas of land centred on nucleated settlement served by a parish church.

Evidence, both documentary and archaeological, regarding the early medieval development of the site is extremely limited. No evidence of Saxon activity has been recovered from any nearby archaeological investigations and there are no antiquarian or modern isolated finds of this period noted in the vicinity. Evidence of Saxon activity has been identified around the division of High Street into Upper and Lower streets, *c* 500m to the north-east of the site, and is likely that there was a settlement here. The site probably lay within the adjacent open fields or was woodland.

### **2.5 Medieval**

Our first real reference to the area of Islington appears in Domesday Book (1086). It refers to a number of sub-manors throughout Ossulton Hundred (an early administrative unit). Evidence regarding the general population throughout the various manors during this period is limited and most documentation that does survive dates mainly from the end of this period.

The main focus of settlement was centred on the division of High Street into Upper and Lower streets, *c* 500m to the north-east of the site. The site probably lay on the periphery of the village, probably within open fields. St John Street, which forms the eastern boundary of the site, was a main north-south thoroughfare and drove road to London and thus the possibility of roadside/ribbon development within the site cannot be ruled out.

There are a number of natural springs in the area and various monastic orders established a number of wells in the Sadler's Wells area to the south-west of the site.

These fed not only their establishments but also acted as medicinal springs for the population of London. The Knights built a number of chapels and hermitages close to these sources, c 50m north-east of the site, as it was believed the waters had curative properties. The establishment of these monastic wells gave the area some focus as they provided a stopping point for travellers out of London.

The GLSMR records documentary evidence for four possible medieval well sites within the proposed development site, details of which are summarised within the *Desk Based Assessment* (MoLAS 2007). None of these features however are shown on historic maps consulted as part of the assessment.

## 2.6 Post-medieval

The geographical location of Islington in relation to London helped to increase its importance; the village was within easy reach of London but far enough away to provide an escape from the pressures of sixteenth century urban and court life. High Street and St John's Street remained a main thoroughfare and drove road to the city. In the 16th century there was an inn named Angel Inn, c 50m to the north of the site.

In 1613, the New River was constructed, which provided a regular water supply to houses in the area and the city. A section of the New River runs past the site from east to west entering the study area as a culvert in Colebrooke Row and ending in the New River Head, c 200m south of the site.

During the Civil War (1642–6), the Common Council undertook a comprehensive scheme for protecting the City, Liberties and outlying parishes against the Royalist forces. This included the construction of a 17 km long line of defences, the northern extent of which lay c 450m to the south of the site, running east-west, whilst a large star-shaped fort was located on Claremont Street closed to the Pentonville Junction/reservoir, c 300m to the west of the site (see MoLAS 2007).

Historical map evidence from the 18th century (MoLAS 2007) indicates built up areas and shows general topographic detail and roads. The maps also appear to show a building in the north-eastern corner of the site and two buildings and an associated garden in the south-eastern corner of the site. The remainder of the site (approximately half) is open pasture.

Horwood's map of 1799 (front cover) is more detailed showing the same buildings. There is a single large building in the north-eastern corner and an L-shaped building and 'Cow Yard' in the south-eastern part of the site. The northern half of the site is divided up into a number of small but uniform fields which are probably under arable cultivation. The southern part of the site is shown as pasture.

Later maps show considerable change within the site. By 1836 a rectangular block of tenements with internal courtyard, known as Angel Terrace, is depicted in the north-west corner of the site. An alley called Metcalfe is shown to the west of this, in the western part of the site. Rows of terraced houses are shown to the south of Angel Terrace, in the centre of the site.

The Ordnance Survey 1st edition (MoLAS 2007) shows the site in considerable detail and clearly depicts intensive development in the area. The northern half and eastern and southern edge of the site comprising terraced housing and their associated gardens and the southern/central part of the site comprising a series of square sheds and open yards named 'Cattle Lairs'.

Later Ordnance Survey maps show minor changes within the site. On the northern and eastern sides of the site several tenements, fronting Pentonville Road and St John Street, have either been removed or structurally altered. The area previously known as the 'Cattle Lair' has been altered; while it maintains its original shape, a number of the internal boundaries have been removed suggesting a change in the use, and the area is no longer named as such.

By the middle of the 20th century the site has undergone further changes, the most obvious of these is the development of Goose Yard, the buildings directly surrounding the yard are noted as a Clothing factory and a Cabinet factory; it is not possible to tell whether either of these factories had any basements. The arrangement of buildings in the northern half of the site has also changed, Metcalfe Place (Lane) has been straightened and the tenement that surrounded the removed section of Metcalfe Place has also been removed. A number of new buildings have been erected on the northern boundary of the site.

The latest Ordnance Survey map consulted shows that by 1987 the site has changed substantially with the construction of the present building on the corner of Pentonville Road and St John Street. The building comprises four wings around a large courtyard. It has no basement other than a small area of basement previously mentioned, located below a section of the ground floor. Landscaping around the site has removed houses in the south-eastern tip of the site and the rest of the factories.

## 3 The evaluation

### 3.1 Methodology

All archaeological excavation and monitoring during the evaluation was carried out in accordance with the preceding *Method Statement* (MoLAS, 2008), and the MoLAS *Archaeological Site Manual* (MoLAS, 1994).

Five evaluation trenches were excavated in the open areas around the existing building (Fig 2). After consultation with English Heritage it was agreed that a sixth trench, originally proposed along the Pentonville Road frontage, would not be excavated as it was located within a root protection area. The trenches were between 3 and 5m in length and between 2m and 3m in width.

The slab/ground was broken out and cleared by contractors under MoLAS supervision. Trenches were excavated by machine by the contractors, and monitored by a member of staff from MoLAS.

The locations of evaluation pits were recorded by MoLAS surveying team. This information was then plotted onto the OS 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). Levels were calculated by from a Bench Mark (value 38.28m OD) on the north-western corner of the reservoir wall fronting Pentonville Road, 250m to the west of the site.

The site has produced: 5 trench location plans; 7 context records; 5 section drawings at 1:20; and photographs. In addition 1 box of finds was recovered from the site.

The site finds and records can be found under the site code ACB08 in the MoL archive.

### 3.2 Results of the evaluation

For all trench locations please refer to Fig 2.

#### 3.2.1 Trench 1

<i>Evaluation Trench 1</i>	
Location	Located on the eastern side of the building <i>c</i> 16m to the west of St John Street and <i>c</i> 21m to the south of Pentonville Road.
Dimensions	5m by 2.25m by 1.3m in depth
Modern ground level/top of slab	33.67m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	33.07m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	0.8m deep
Level of base of deposits observed and/or base of trench	32.18m OD
Natural observed	N/A

Trench 1 was set out as an 8m long trench but was reduced to 5m as the majority of the trench was truncated by live services (Fig 2).

Natural deposits were not observed within the trench as the presence modern service trenches meant that excavations ceased below a depth of 1.3m below the current ground level (Fig 3).

In the western part of trench 1 a deposit of garden soil [3] was recorded Fig 3. The top of the soil deposit was recorded at 33.07m OD and was 0.8m deep. The fragmented base of a delft ware jar dating to the 18th century was recovered from this deposit. The layer is sealed by later construction deposits comprising rubble make-up for the modern concrete slab (Fig 4).



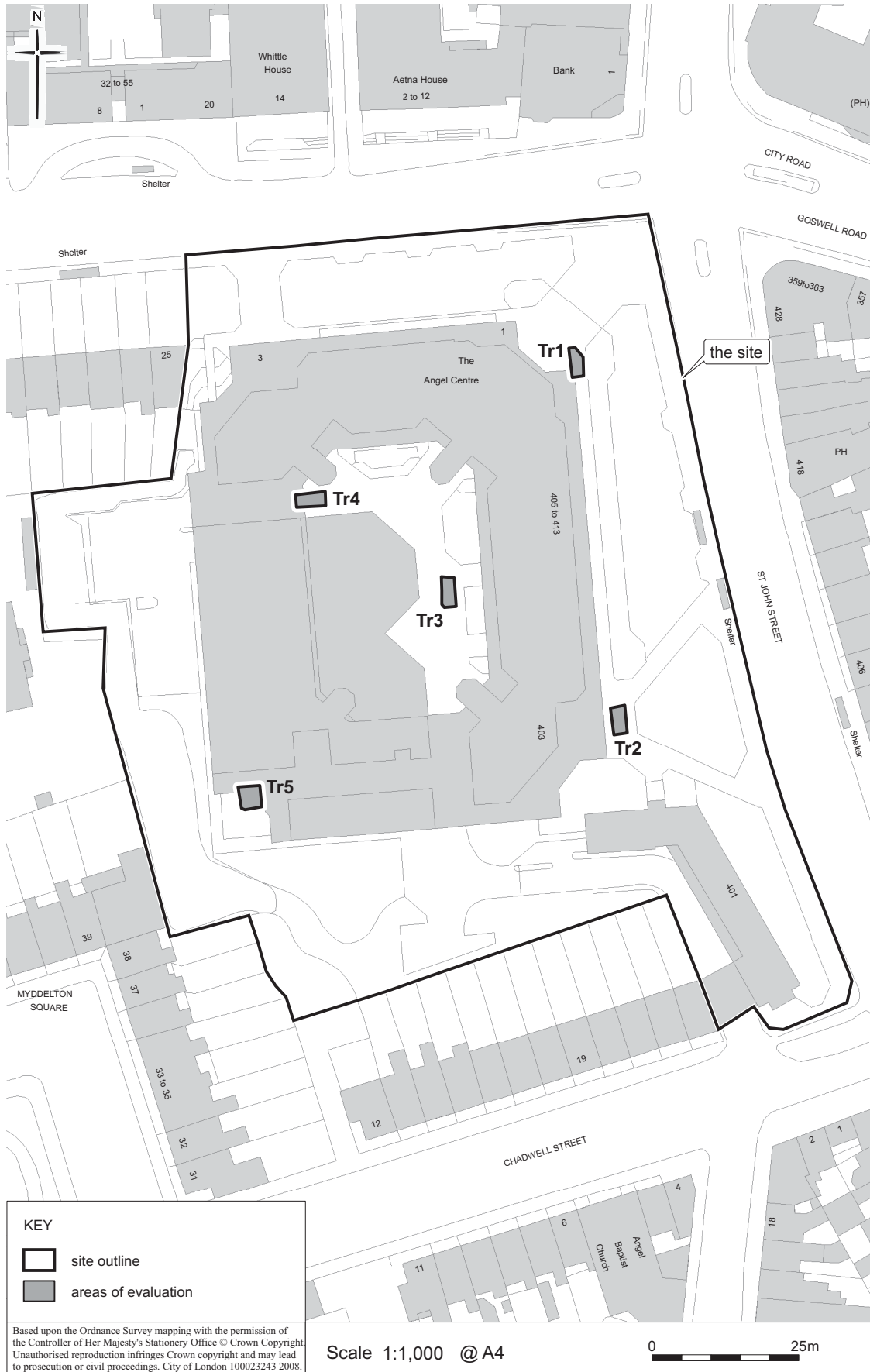


Fig 2 Areas of evaluation

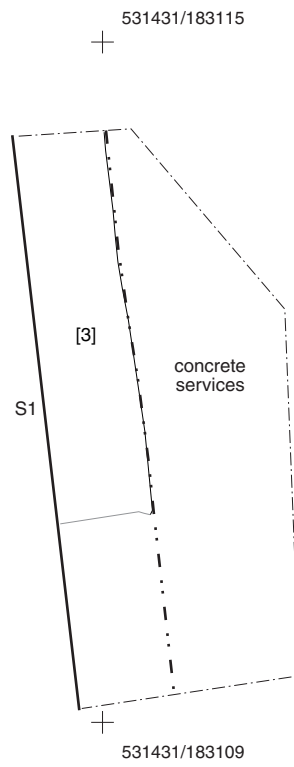


Fig 3 Plan of Trench 1

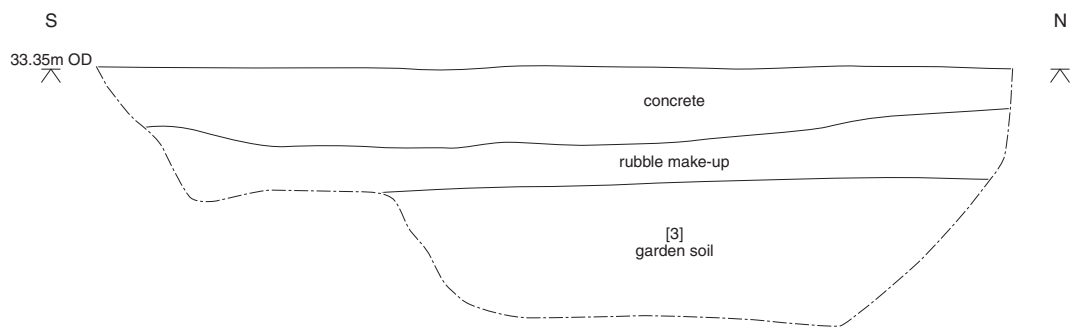


Fig 4 East facing section Trench 1

### 3.2.2 Trench 2

<i>Evaluation Trench 2</i>	
Location	Located on the eastern side of the building to the south of Trench 1 and c 23m to the west of St John Street.
Dimensions	4.4m by 2.6m by 1.3m in depth
Modern ground level/top of slab	31.98m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	31.38m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	-
Level of base of deposits observed and/or base of trench	31.06m OD
Natural observed	31.06m OD

Trench 2 was also originally proposed as an 8m long trench but was reduced to 4.4m to avoid damaging tree roots to the south of the trench (Fig 5).

Disturbed natural deposits of gravel and clay [5] and [6] respectively were observed within the base and the eastern side of the trench at a depth of 31.06m OD (Fig 5). Within the northern part of the trench a brick foundation wall [4] was recorded cutting into the clay deposits [6]. The foundation wall measured 0.8m by 0.5m and was constructed of red bricks of possible 19th century date and concrete. The depth of the wall foundation was not recorded as the presence of live services across the central and eastern areas of the trench (possibly the same service line observed within trench 1) precluded further excavation. The top of the wall was recorded at 31.11m OD and was sealed by later rubble make-up associated with the modern concrete slab (Fig 6).

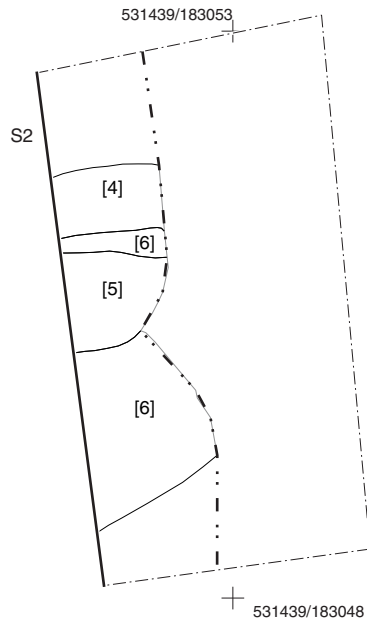


Fig 5 Plan of Trench 2

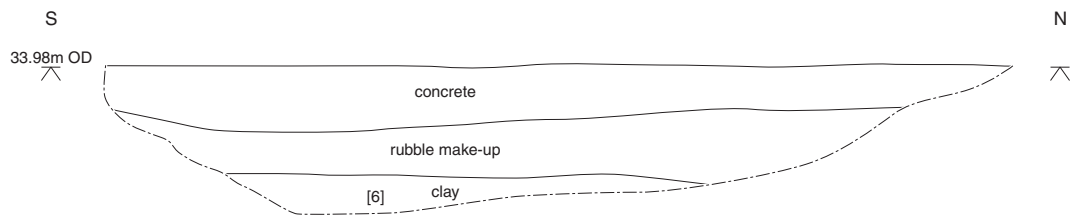


Fig 6 East facing section Trench 2

### 3.2.3 Trench 3

<i>Evaluation Trench 3</i>	
Location	Located in the central lightwell, c 45m to the west of St John Street.
Dimensions	5.1m by 2.2m by 0.9m in depth
Modern ground level/top of slab	32.41m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	31.63m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	N/A
Level of base of deposits observed and/or base of trench	31.49m OD
Natural observed	31.63m OD

Natural deposits of clay [6] were also observed within the base of this trench at a height of 31.63m OD (see Fig 7). The natural deposits are truncated on the western side of the trench by a 0.4m wide service trench. Due to the presence of live services further excavation ceased at this level. The service trench and clay were sealed by rubble make-up for the slab associated with the current building.

No archaeological deposits were identified within trench 3.

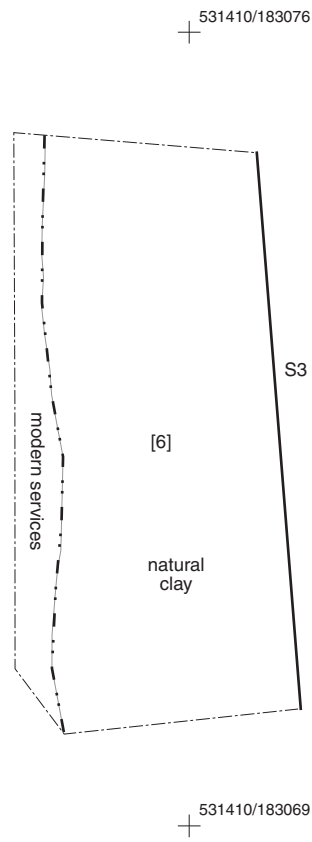


Fig 7 Plan of Trench 3



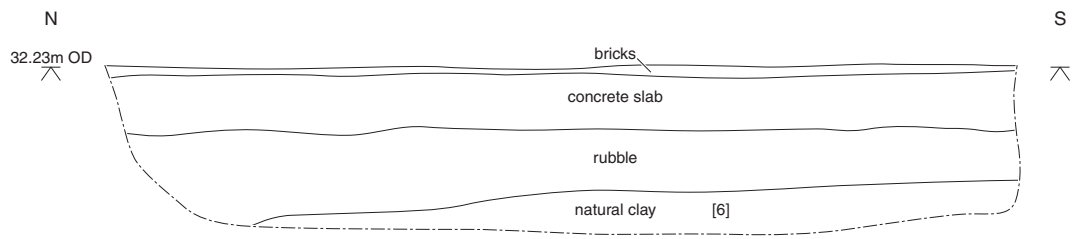


Fig 8 East facing section Trench 3

### 3.2.4 Trench 4

<i>Evaluation Trench 4</i>	
Location	Located on the eastern side of the central lightwell, c 40m to the south of Pentonville Road.
Dimensions	5.2m by 2.2m by 1.3m in depth
Modern ground level/top of slab	32.43m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	31.48m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	0.7m
Level of base of deposits observed and/or base of trench	30.78m OD
Natural observed	31.48m OD

Natural clays [6] and gravels [7] were recorded within the base of the trench at a height of 31.48m OD. In the centre of the trench a small rectangular cess pit [2] has been cut into the clay and gravel (Fig 9). The fills of the cess pit produced finds of 18th century date and include pottery and a fragment of unglazed floor tile. Pottery of 19th century date was also recovered from the upper fill of the feature, suggesting that it had gone out of use sometime towards the end of the 18th or 19th centuries. The pit measured 2.16m east-west by 0.8m north-south and was 0.7m in depth. The pit was rectangular with right angled corners and vertical sides and had been truncated at its west and eastern ends by modern construction. The fill of the cess pit, [1] comprised a dark grey sandy silt which also contained fragments of ceramic building material and occasional fragments of animal bone. A number of small metal objects and clay tobacco pipe fragments were also recovered. A detailed assessment of the finds is provided within section 7.

An environmental sample from the pit was also retained and was found to contain occasional waterlogged seeds, as well as occasional freshwater and marine molluscs, along with fragments of large mammal bone. The cess pit and exposed natural deposits were sealed by re-deposited clays and modern rubble make-up (Fig 10).

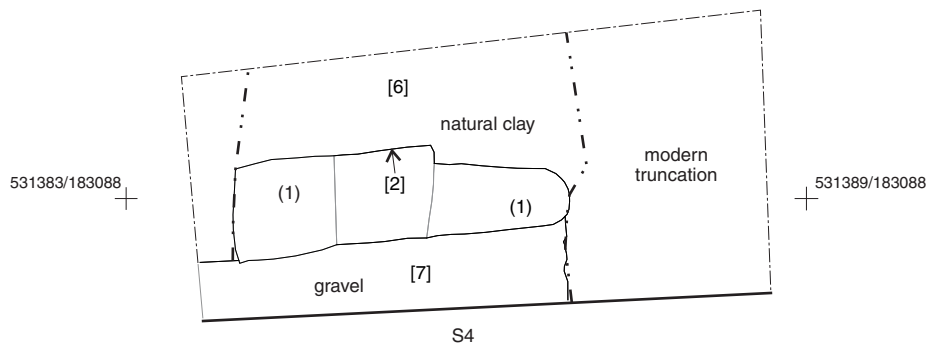


Fig 9 Plan of Trench 4

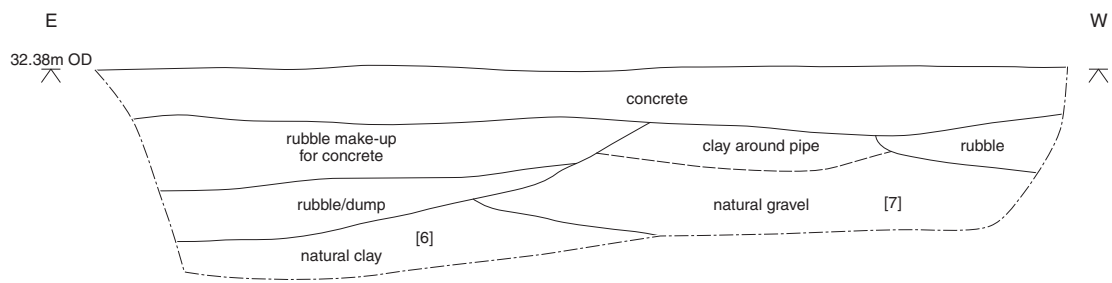


Fig 10 North facing section Trench 4

### 3.2.5 Trench 5

<i>Evaluation Trench 5</i>	
Location	Located in an area previously used as a car park on the south-western corner of the existing building.
Dimensions	3.4m by 3.35m by 0.9m in depth
Modern ground level/top of slab	32.44m OD
Base of modern fill/slab	31.84m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	-
Level of base of deposits observed and/or base of trench	31.60m OD
Natural observed	31.75m OD

Natural clays [6] were also identified within the southern side of trench 5 and deposits of gravel were noted within the central and northern parts of the trench. The surface of the gravel and clay was contaminated by minor hydrocarbon seepage that had possibly derived from the nearby plant room building located to the north of the trench (Fig 11).

Natural deposits were sealed by modern make-up for a tarmac surface. It was evident from the difference in ground level between this area of the site (32.44m OD) and the adjacent properties fronting the south side of Chadwell Street and the east side of Myddelton Square (34.86m OD) that this area had been terraced into the natural ground surfaces, probably during construction of the current Angel Centre Building. The difference in height between the site ground levels and the surrounding properties ground levels indicate that this part of the site has been reduced by *c* 3m. Subsequently it is likely that any surviving archaeological deposits within this part of the site would have been entirely removed by previous construction.

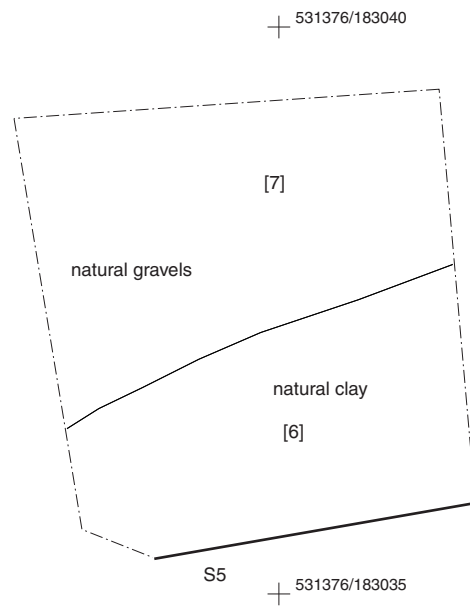


Fig 11 Plan of Trench 5

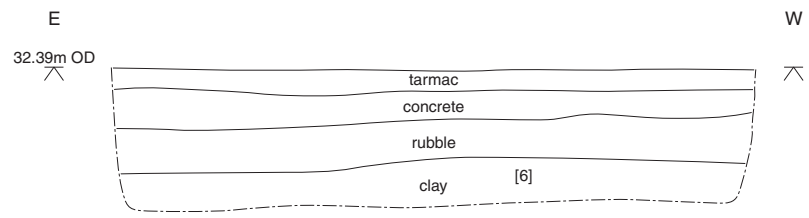


Fig 12 North facing section Trench 5

### **3.2.6 Trench 6**

The location of this trench was originally proposed within the northwest corner of the site, adjacent to Pentonville Road. Due to its location within an area of tree and root protection, it was agreed in consultation with the archaeological advisor for the borough, that the trench would not require excavation. During discussion with the advisor it was also noted that the proposed location of the trench falls directly within the projected line of earlier basement lightwells that can still be seen adjacent to the northwest corner of the Angel Centre Building (property no 25 Pentonville road, see Fig 2). It is thought likely therefore that the archaeological potential within this part of the site would have been greatly reduced by the construction of the earlier terraced buildings that would have once existed at the site and were presumably demolished to make way for the current building.

### **3.3 Assessment of the evaluation**

GLAAS 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 site the evaluation trenches have shown that in areas outside the building footprint, construction associated with the Angel Centre Building has impacted upon a range of dispersed 18th-19th century archaeological deposits. The installing of services on the eastern side of the building and ground reduction in both the central lightwell and the southern side of the site has also either truncated or removed archaeological remains of late post-medieval date.

Archaeological survival appears to be marginally better in the central lightwell area, although it should be noted that cess pits generally comprise deep cut features and only the base of this feature appears to have survived intact. The current lower level of the ground in the central part of the site (*c* 32.4m AOD) would suggest that any archaeological deposits other than deeper cut features would have been removed during construction of the lightwell. Where archaeological deposits do survive they are typical of late post-medieval backyard activity which could be predicted either from cartographic sources as well as from the standing buildings fronting St John Street and Pentonville Road, south and west of the site.



## 4 Archaeological potential

### 4.1 Realisation of original research aims

- What is the nature and level of the natural topography at the site?

Natural topography of the site is difficult to determine given the level of truncation especially on the southern side of the site. The depth of truncated natural clay varied from 31.75 on the southern side of the site to 30.22m OD in the central part of the site. Truncated gravel was encountered at 31.75m OD in the south-western area of the site.

- If there is any evidence for prehistoric activity at the site, what is the character and nature of the evidence?

There was no evidence of prehistoric activity on the site.

- If there is any evidence for activity at the site dating to the Roman period, what is the nature of the evidence?

There was no evidence of Roman activity on the site.

- If there is any evidence for Saxon or early medieval activity at the site, what is the character and nature of the evidence?

There was no evidence of Saxon activity on the site.

- The GLSMR records documentary evidence for four possible medieval sites within the proposed development area. These include a possible medieval conduit, medieval wells and a possible windmill owned by Clerkenwell Priory. If there is any evidence for features of this date, are they associated with these sites?

There was no evidence of medieval activity on the site.

- Cartographic sources suggest a potential for earlier structures at the site, including 18th century buildings fronting onto Pentonville Road and a 'Cow Yard' adjacent to St-John Street. What is the character and nature of these remains?

The only 18th century remains within the site comprise the backfilled cess pit. The finds from the feature most likely derived from a domestic building that originally fronted on to either Pentonville Road, St John Street or Metcalfe Place. Some of the building material recovered from the cess pit backfill shows signs of heat damage, suggesting it may have been used in some sort of kiln or oven structure, although no evidence for such a structure was identified. Garden soil recorded on the north-eastern

corner of the site probably formed backyard deposits for buildings fronting St John Street.

- What are the latest deposits identified?

The latest deposits were the post-medieval backyard activity in the form of cess pit within trench 4, garden soils within trench 1 and a fragment of wall foundation recorded within trench 2.

#### **4.2 General discussion of potential**

The evaluation has demonstrated that the potential for survival of ancient ground surfaces (horizontal archaeological stratification) on the site is variable with survival of horizontally truncated deeper cut features, such as cess pits, possible within the central lightwell area. There is also potential for survival of garden soils and garden related features towards the northeast corner of the site. Such survival however, is likely to be limited due to the presence of extensive modern service trenches, previous ground reduction (particularly in the centre of the site) and terracing in the southwest and northern areas of the development area. The average depth of archaeological deposits where they do survive is likely to be 0.7-1m below current ground levels.

#### **4.3 Significance**

The archaeological remains are of limited local significance however there is nothing to suggest that they are of regional or national importance.

## **5 Proposed development impact and recommendations**

The proposed redevelopment at Angel Centre, Islington involves the refurbishment and extension of the existing main building. Cladding would be stripped from the existing main building, whilst retaining the structure. Extensions to the floor plates around part of the perimeter and within the existing lightwell are proposed, which would require piled footings below any new columns.

The extensions will all require additional ground works for foundations with some associated levelling work. This is likely to be greatest in the south-west and north-west corners, with new retaining walls required around these positions.

The evaluation has shown that the eastern area adjacent to the building has been significantly truncated by modern services trenches. The evaluation has also shown that there has already been significant ground reduction in the central and south-western areas of the site and, given the topography, the north-western area of the site is also likely to have been significantly reduced.

Piling in the central open area would remove archaeological remains within the footprint of each pile. The severity of the impact would therefore depend on the pile size and pile density. Given the current archaeological potential of the site a relatively low level archaeological response is likely to be required to adequately mitigate the archaeological resource at the site.

The decision on the appropriate archaeological response to the deposits revealed during the evaluation rests with the Local Planning Authority and their designated archaeological advisor.

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## 7 Appendix I (Specialist Reports)

### 7.1 The pottery assessment

Lyn Blackmore

#### 7.1.1 Site archive

Post Medieval Pottery	650 gm	43 sherds 38 ENV
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#### 7.1.2 The pottery

Post-Roman pottery	0.65 kg	43 sherds
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#### 7.1.3 Summary/introduction

Forty three sherds of post-medieval pottery weighing a total of 65gm were recovered from two contexts, (3) and (1).

A small assemblage was recovered from fill [1] of a cesspit in trench 4. Most were hand-collected, but nine sherds are from sieved sample <1>. Sherd size is generally small (average 15g)

#### 7.1.4 Methodology

The pottery was examined macroscopically and using a binocular microscope (x 20) where appropriate, and recorded on paper and on the MoLAS Oracle database using standard Museum of London codes for fabrics, forms and decoration. The numerical data comprises sherd count, estimated number of vessels and weight.

#### 7.1.5 Fabrics

The pottery falls into 17 different fabric codes based on ware type and decoration, and these in turn fall into ten broad classes defined by either source area or general tradition. Tin-glazed wares are the most common type by sherd count (14 sherds) and the third most common by weight. Surrey-Hampshire border wares are the second most common by both sherd count and weight (six sherds, 117g). London-area redwares are the most common by weight (236g) but only comprise five sherds. Also with five sherds are non-local wares, comprising Staffordshire slipware and embossed Staffordshire slipware. Other categories, all represented by three sherds or less, comprise Essex redwares (four sherds of post-medieval blackwares and fine post-medieval redware), imports, non-local wares (Staffordshire slipwares), two categories of stoneware (Staffordshire and other English types) and industrial finewares. The latter are the latest type and comprise only two sherds of creamware and transfer-printed ware.

### **7.1.6 Forms**

Most of the forms are quite typical. Most are tablewares associated with the serving and consumption of food and drink: mugs, posset pots, bowls, dishes, plates; forms associated with storage and cooking vessels are very much in the minority, as are sanitary wares. Three finds are of interest. The first is a flanged dish in Surrey-Hampshire border redware with slipped decoration which, very unusually, has green glaze on the back. The others comprise sherds from two Staffordshire slipware dishes with embossed decoration, a type that is generally uncommon in London.

### **7.1.7 Discussion**

All the pottery examined is from fill [1] of cesspit [2] in trench 4 and a sherd of Delftware from context (3) in trench 1. Most is of later 18th-century date (1760–1780), but the refined whiteware sherd and transfer-printed ware date to the early 19th century (1807–1830). It would appear from the site information that the latter are intrusive or that they date the final filling of the cess pit.

Due to the lack of diagnostic features and the small size of the assemblage, there is limited potential for further analysis.

### **7.1.8 Significance of the data**

The post medieval pottery is of limited local significance and indicates post medieval activity in the area.

### **7.1.9 Analysis of potential**

The post-medieval pottery has potential as dating evidence and can be used to offer a comment on the nature of the property in which they were used, assumed to be a house in Metcalf Place. This would appear to have been of average status, although the lack of higher quality wares such as more Staffordshire stoneware, English porcelain or Chinese porcelain does not necessarily reflect status – it could simply mean that the items were carefully curated by the owner(s) and not discarded on site. The pottery found so far suggest that there is the potential to recover a larger assemblage should further excavation be carried out on the site, and this would offer a more meaningful sample for statements on social and economic conditions.

### **7.1.10 Revised research aims**

No new research aims can be proposed at this stage.

## 7.2 The building material assessment

Ian M. Betts

### 7.2.1 *Summary Note on Building Materials*

A total of 38 fragments of building material were recovered from a cess pit fill (context [1]) at ACB08, although the vast majority comprises very small pieces of abraded/broken brick. In addition to the brick fragments, there is a piece of fine grained, light grey sandstone rubble and part of a floor tile.

The building material from ACB08 has been fully recorded and the information added to the Oracle database.

### 7.2.2 *The building material*

Listed below is a summary of the building material in context [1]:

Fabric	Type	Date
3032	brick	1666-1900
3041?	Brick?	1700?-1900?
3216	floor	?
3121	rubble	?

### 7.2.3 *Introduction/methodology*

The building material, from a single context, has been recorded using standard Museum of London recording forms and fabric codes. Data from the recording forms has been added to the Oracle database.

### 7.2.4 *The data*

None of the building material can be dated with any precision. The floor tile, which is probably of Low Countries origin, has no top surface. There is no glaze on the surviving edge suggesting it is of unglazed type. If correct this would indicate a 1580/1600-1900 date.

One interesting feature is that some of the building material shows signs of heat damage, suggesting it may have been used in some sort of kiln or oven structure. The floor tile has intense burning on its bottom surface, whilst the fine sandstone rubble has a red burnt surface and a part blackened interior. Three small fragments of brick are also overfired and vitrified.



### **7.2.5 Significance of the building material**

The building material is only of limited local significance, although the presence of heat damaged fragments may be of interest if it could be related to industrial activity in the area. All the material would appear to be post-medieval in date.

### **7.2.6 Further work**

No further work is required on the building material.

### **7.3 The bulk and registered finds assessment**

Beth Richardson

#### **7.3.1 The registered finds**

There are two registered finds from ACB08, both from context [1]: a small copper pin (<1>) and part of an iron object (<6>).

The pin (<1>) has a spherical wound wire head and a short shank, now curved (10mm). It is post-medieval, 17th or 18th century.

The piece of iron is from a square or rectangular object – a base or top surface (width approximately 55mm) with the remains of parallel sides. It is heavily corroded. It may be part of a square-sectioned pipe or drain, or part of a piece of machinery. It has not been x-rayed, but x-raying would probably not reveal further detail.

#### **7.3.2 The bulk finds**

##### **7.3.2.1 Glass**

There are eleven fragments of glass from wet-sieving (context [1]). Six are colourless, three natural blue/green and two dark green (from wine bottles). All the fragments could come from phials, window glass and wine bottles, all items of glass typically found in 17th and 18th century post-medieval contexts.

##### **7.3.2.2 Iron**

There are shanks and heads from approximately 9 corroded nails from context [1]. One has a domed head and shank (L35mm); the others are fragmentary and mainly shanks.

##### **7.3.2.3 Slag**

There are three small fragments of slag (weight 14.6 grams) from context [1].

#### **7.3.3 Further work**

No further work is recommended on these finds

## **7.4 The clay tobacco pipe assessment**

Tony Grey

### **7.4.1 Introduction**

The clay tobacco pipes from ACB08 were recorded in accordance with current MoLAS 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) and refined by Oswald 1975 into OS types. Quantification and recording follow guidelines set out by Higgins and Davey (1994; Davey 1997).

A total of nineteen fragments were submitted including eight bowls and eleven stems from Context (1) and including four accessioned bowls. Two of the bowls and one stem were recovered via wet sieving.

### **7.4.2 Forms and dating**

The forms fall within a narrow date range from *c* 1700-1760 and include two form types. Seven of the pipe bowls are type OS10 dated *c* 1700-40 and one is possibly an OS11 dated *c* 1730-60. Four of the OS10 pipe bowls bear a maker's mark moulded in relief on the sides of the heel. Three of these depict a flower <1>, <2>, <3> while one <4> bears the initials WB. Oswald 1975, 132, has a lengthy list of possible makers from the earlier 18th century and it is not possible to isolate any one in particular. The pipe stems are not diagnostic and so not closely datable.

### **7.4.3 Discussion**

The assemblage is from Context (1) the fill of 18th century cess pit [2] in Trench 4. The pipes appear well used and some are fragmentary. The assemblage dates to the earlier half of the 18th century. The pipes are probably of local London manufacture though no maker in particular can be isolated. It is not certain whether the flower mark is from the same maker as WB.

### **7.4.4 Further work**

No further work is recommended.

## 7.5 The conservation assessment

Liz Goodman

Summary of conservation work

	<b>Material</b>	<b>No. accessioned</b>	<b>No. conserved</b>	<b>No. to be treated (see below)</b>
Metals	Copper alloy	1 (0 coins)	0	0
	Iron	1	0	0
Inorganics	Ceramics	4	0	0

### 7.5.1 Introduction/methodology

The following assessment of conservation needs for the accessioned and bulk finds from the excavations at the Angel Centre, Islington, encompasses the requirements for finds analysis, illustration, analytical conservation and long term curation. Work outlined in this document is needed to produce a stable archive in accordance with MAP2 (English Heritage 1992) and the Museum of London's Standards for archive preparation (Museum of London 1999).

### 7.5.2 Finds analysis/investigation

The accessioned finds were reviewed with reference to the finds assessments by Beth Richardson. No analytical work was identified by the small finds specialist.

### 7.5.3 Work required for illustration/photography

No items were identified as requiring conservation input to prepare them for photography.

### 7.5.4 Preparation for deposition in the archive

The small finds from this site are appropriately packed for the archive. No further work is necessary for transfer into the archive.

### 7.5.5 Remedial work outstanding

There is no remedial work outstanding.

## 7.6 The environmental assessment

Anne Davis

### 7.6.1 Introduction/methodology

A single, 20 litre, soil sample was taken from an 18th century cesspit fill for environmental analysis. It was processed by flotation, using a Siraf flotation tank and meshes of 0.25mm and 1.00mm to catch the flot and residue respectively. Both fractions were dried, and the residue sorted by eye for any finds or environmental material. The abundance and diversity of plant macrofossils and faunal remains from the residue were recorded on the MoLAS Oracle database and are summarised in below.

### 7.6.2 The finds

#### 7.6.2.1 Waterlogged remains

Occasional unidentified waterlogged seeds were recorded from the sample residue.

#### 7.6.2.2 Faunal remains

Occasional shells of freshwater and marine molluscs were found in the sample residue, as were fragments of large mammal bone.

#### 7.6.2.3 Artefactual remains

Ceramic building materials and iron objects were moderately frequent in the sample residue, and occasional pot, glass, copper and slag were also seen.

### 7.6.3 Assessment work outstanding

No further work is necessary

context	sample	BI	datin g	Proc Vol.	unproc. soil	fraction	Flora/fauna	abund	diver s	notes
1	1		1730- 1760	20	N	res	Bone mam	1	1	Dry flot charcoa l gravel residue
						res	Molsc FW	1	1	
						res	Molsc marine	1	1	
						res	WLG seeds	1	1	
							<b>finds</b>	<b>freq</b>		
							CBM	M		
							CU OBJ	O		
							FE OBJ	M		

							GLASS	O		
							POT	O		
							SLAG	O		

## 8 NMR OASIS archaeological report form

OASIS ID: molas1-43232

### Project details

Project name Angel Centre Building Islington

Short description of the project Five evaluation trenches were excavated on the site prior to the refurbishment and extension of the existing main building. The evaluation has shown that eastern area adjacent to the current building has been significantly truncated by modern services trenches. The evaluation has also shown that there has already been significant ground reduction in the south-western areas of the site and, given the topography, the north-western area of the site is also likely to have been significantly reduced. The earliest archaeological remains on site was an 18th/19th century backfilled cess pit and garden soils.

Project dates Start: 12-05-2008 End: 19-05-2008

Previous/future work No / Not known

Any associated project reference codes ACB08 - Sitecode

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area

Current Land use Industry and Commerce 2 - Offices

Monument type CESS PIT Post Medieval

Monument type GARDEN Post Medieval

Significant Finds N/A Post Medieval

Methods & 'Targeted Trenches'  
techniques

Development type Building refurbishment/repairs/restoration

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Position in the Not known / Not recorded  
planning process

**Project location**

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON ISLINGTON ISLINGTON Angel Centre  
Islington

Postcode N1

Study area 9750.00 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 31423 83073 51.5307542655 -0.105108100877 51 31 50 N 000  
06 18 W Point

Height OD Min: 31.06m Max: 31.75m

**Project creators**

Name of MoLAS  
Organisation

Project brief MoLAS project manager  
originator

Project design MoLAS  
originator

Project Simon Davis  
director/manager

Project supervisor Heather Knight

Type of Buro 4 PS  
sponsor/funding  
body



Name of Buro 4 PS  
 sponsor/funding  
 body

**Project archives**

Physical Archive LAARC  
 recipient

Physical Contents 'Animal Bones','Ceramics','Environmental'

Digital Archive LAARC  
 recipient

Digital Contents 'Stratigraphic','Survey'

Digital Media 'Database','GIS','Images raster / digital photography','Text'  
 available

Paper Archive LAARC  
 recipient

Paper Contents 'Stratigraphic'

Paper Media 'Context sheet','Drawing','Manuscript','Map','Notebook -  
 available Excavation',' Research',' General  
 Notes','Plan','Report','Section','Unpublished Text'

**Project  
 bibliography 1**

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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Author(s)/Editor(s) Knight, H.

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