

**264-267 TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD  
& 5 GREAT RUSSELL STREET  
London W1**

London Borough of Camden

An archaeological watching brief report

March 2009

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Site Code: TNC06

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## Summary (non-technical)

This report has been commissioned by Tweeds Ltd on behalf of the client London and Regional Properties Ltd, in order to record and assess the results of a watching brief carried out at 264–267 Tottenham Court Road.

The redevelopment included demolition of buildings fronting onto Tottenham Court road and their replacement with a new five-storey, single-basemented building. The main phase of the watching brief was carried out prior to demolition. Twelve geotechnical trial pits were excavated through ground floor and basement levels to ascertain depths of existing footings. Other works monitored both before and after demolition, included insertion of raking props to support the north wall of the Dominion Theatre (immediately south of the site) and underpinning in the same area. The watching brief was carried out intermittently from February–October 2007.

*In situ* natural ground was observed in all but three of the trial pits. Surface heights ranged from 21.68m OD at the north-west corner of the site, to a maximum 22.81m OD at the south-west corner.

Observations made during the course of the watching brief largely consisted of brick/concrete footings and backfill deposits associated with the existing building, but also included, on occasion, structural remains associated with earlier 20th century development of the building.

The number of archaeological remains was limited and no dating evidence was retrieved. However, earlier features/deposits recorded on site, including refuse dumping/pitting and remains of a brick cellar wall are typically characteristic of urban development in London during the post-medieval period, supporting cartographic evidence that demonstrates the site area being developed in the mid. 17th century.

Later features/deposits included a dump layer or rubbish pit fill, probably associated with buildings that would have fronted onto Tottenham Court Road in the early to mid. 19th century, and a later Victorian brick cellar/basement wall associated with early development of the Horseshoe Hotel, which was established on the site c 1875.

Although limited in number, the archaeological remains are of local significance and will serve to widen our understanding of urban development in this area during the post-medieval period.

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Site background

The watching brief took place at 264–267 Tottenham Court Road, hereafter called 'the site'. The site is situated on the east side of Tottenham Court Road, fronting on to the street. It has an L-shaped footprint which takes the northern site limit to the property at 5 Great Russell Street, a road projecting east from Tottenham Court Road. The site is bounded to the south by the Dominion Theatre (see **Error! Reference source not found.**). The Ordnance Survey National Grid reference is 529831 181438.

Ground level at the main entrance in front of the building is 25.80m OD. Modern street level to the immediate north-east of the site at the junction of Tottenham Court Road and Great Russell Street is 25.90m OD. The existing basement slab lay at a variety of levels: 22.05m OD, 22.10m OD, 22.11m OD, 22.17m OD, 22.48m OD and 22.91m OD (Centre Surveys Ltd. Dwg. No. 12869A4/2). The site code is TNC06.

A desk top *Archaeological (impact) assessment* was previously prepared by MoLAS, which covers the whole area of the site (Tyler, 2003). 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.

A standing building survey was carried out by MoLAS in November 2006 and a *standing building survey report* written on the results (Dwyer, 2007). This document, and the previous *Assessment*, informed the design (*Method Statement*) for the watching brief which was eventually carried out (Aitken, 2006).

The redevelopment included demolition of buildings fronting onto Tottenham Court road and their replacement with a new five-storey, single-basemented building. The property fronting onto Great Russell Street is retained. The construction of the new basement will reduce the truncation level of the existing property to 22.03m OD from a maximum of c 22.61m.

The main phase of the watching brief was carried out prior to demolition. Twelve geotechnical trial pits were excavated through ground floor and basement levels to ascertain depths of existing footings. Other works monitored both before and after demolition, included insertion of raking props to support the north wall of the Dominion Theatre (immediately south of the site) and underpinning in the same area.

The watching brief was carried out intermittently from February–October 2007.

## 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*, which formed the project design for the watching brief (see Section 2, MoLAS, 2003).

### 1.3 Planning background

English Heritage's Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) advised that a condition for an archaeological Watching brief be attached to planning permissions Ref: **2004/1953/P** and **2006/5737/P**.

### 1.4 Origin and scope of the report

This report was commissioned by Tweeds Ltd. on behalf of the client, London and Regional Properties Ltd. and produced by Museum of London Archaeology (MOL Archaeology). The report has been prepared within the terms of the relevant Standard specified by the Institute for 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* (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 survived (presence/absence), recording where necessary, and ensuring that the groundworks did not involve the destruction of any archaeological deposits of national significance. Nevertheless, in addition, a few research questions were outlined:

- What was the level of natural topography?
- What is the character and nature of the deposits present on the site?
- What is the character and nature of the earliest deposits identified?
- Is there any evidence for remains dating to the post-medieval period on the site?
- What is the character and nature of the latest deposits identified?

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

## 2 Topographical and historical background

A description of the geology, archaeology and history of the site was provided in the previous *Archaeological (impact) assessment* (MoLAS 2003). A brief resume is provided here:

### 2.1 Topography

Although no borehole or test pit survey had been undertaken at the site prior to the watching brief, previous works by MoLAS in the area indicate the levels that should be expected for the surface of the geological deposit (MoLAS 1992, 5-8). A trial pit 100m south-west of the site, at the rear of 26 Oxford Street, recorded the surface of the Thames Gravels at c 24.70m OD (only 0.90m below street level). However, an adjacent trial pit, along Falconberg Mews at its junction with Falconberg Court, was excavated through a backfilled cut feature which extended to a level below c 22.70m OD. Modern street level to the east of these observations was 25.60m OD.

### 2.2 Prehistoric

Stray Palaeolithic artefacts have been found in the vicinity of the site, but these are not necessarily indicative of permanent or seasonal settlements here, they are probably redeposited and have travelled a considerable distance from their original location.

### 2.3 Roman

Although Tottenham Court Road, immediately west of the site is suggested as having a Roman origin, there is no archaeological basis for this. However, three isolated Roman finds have been made in the area: a ring from Great Russell Street; an ossuary and a coin from New Oxford Street.

Roman law forbade the burying of the dead within the city walls, and the cemeteries of Londinium, as elsewhere, are concentrated along roads leading out of the city. The site is just west of a cluster of four Roman burials. Of these burials, three do not appear in the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record (GLSMR). The exception is shown by Hall to be from the site of the Nationwide Building Society headquarters along New Oxford Street at Barter Street, c 400m east of the site and dated to the 1st century AD. Hall has noted three further burials flanking the route of New Oxford Street, that mark the known western extent of an area termed "the western cemetery" (Hall 1996, 58-64). None of these burials is dated, but the location of the westernmost of this group – along Endell Street – implies that the cemetery area continues west, perhaps as far as, or beyond, another burial along Regent Street.

Although none of the archaeological sites in the vicinity have produced Roman finds, it is therefore possible that the site lies within a suburban Roman cemetery beyond the western limits of Londinium.



## 2.4 Saxon

There is no current evidence that there was any Saxon impact on the site area.

## 2.5 Medieval

The site is located within the parish of St Giles, formed 1101, when Queen Matilda, the new wife of King Henry I, founded a leper hospital, on the land surrounding the house located on the site of the current parish church, along St Giles High Street. St Giles was a small village outside London. An outbuilding of the leper hospital was located east of the site, at the current junction of Museum and Great Russell streets.

The Greater London Sites and Monuments Record refers to the medieval road along Tottenham Court Road, and the Braun and Hogenburg map of 1572 shows the site area within a network of fields to the east of the road. It is unlikely that in the period before 1572 the site had been subject to any development.

A series of medieval finds have been made in Windmill Street, c 470m north-west of the site. Their precise location, beyond the street name, is unknown. However, their presence does imply some medieval activity in the site area. A late 13th or early 14th century stone, mortar and tile wall foundation was recorded within the precinct of the medieval hospital at St Giles (the site is beyond the limits of the precinct).

## 2.6 Post-medieval

During the Tudor period (1485–1603), national economic factors led to the population of London quadrupling in size, but the medieval layout of the City did not change significantly. Whilst the City remained the commercial and Westminster the political centre of London, areas between them and beyond the City walls began to be swallowed up by suburbs. In particular, the wealthy moved into the area of the Strand and the Inns of Court, whilst the poor began occupying the suburbs to the east of the City.

The hospital at St Giles was dissolved in 1539 during the dissolution and its lands passed into private hands. The hospital chapel became the new parish church. This was when the words 'in-the-fields' were added to its name. The Tudor expansion took some time to reach the site area – early maps shows the site as undeveloped land at the edge of open fields (see cover). The surrounding streets were also undeveloped.

The Civil War of 1642-6 had major impacts upon London, not just politically but also physically. The core of London – the cities of London and Westminster – was surrounded by a defensive bank and ditch, interrupted by forts and batteries. This was completed in the period 1642-3. The site was crossed by part of the east-west aligned section of the ditch, adjacent to which were two forts flanking Tottenham Court Road. The eastern fort was located on the site (Sturdy 1975, 335-7). None of London's Civil War forts have been excavated.

Some strip development had taken place along Tottenham Court Road by the time of the compilation of the 1658 Faithorne and Newcourt map, but this was limited to areas south of the site. Great Russell Street itself was laid out in 1662 when the local landowners, the Russell family, leased out an area for development. The extent of consolidation in the form of raising the ground level before this development is unknown. The level of the original ground surface may be below that of Great Russell

Street. The first houses were constructed upon the street in the 1670s, and by 1674 it was known as Great Russell Street.

By the time of the Rocque map of 1746 the site was fully built up, with a courtyard within its limits called Well Yard. At the rear of the site, the Horseshoe Tavern was founded in the 17th century.

The Faden map of 1813 depicts the site with a slightly different arrangement of properties; a row fronting onto Tottenham Court Road which must have replaced Well Yard after 1746. These properties were replaced in 1875 by the Horseshoe Hotel. The Dominion Theatre, adjacent to and south of the site, was constructed in 1929 – seen on the 1914 Ordnance Survey map (not illustrated).

## 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 *Archaeological Site Manual* (MoLAS, 1994).

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

Locations of trial pits were plotted on to a Basement Survey (Drg. No. 1100, Job No. 111, Expedition Engineering Limited). The heights of observations and/or archaeological remains were recorded relative to Ordnance Datum, utilising levels information supplied by contractors Kier Group (Drg. refs SK-TP-001–012) and from a Ground floor plan outline (Drg. No. 12869B/2, On Centre Surveys Ltd).

Where relevant, sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10; numbered contexts were allocated where appropriate.

The site has produced: 1 trial pit location plan; 1 underpin/prop location plan; 13 context records; 12 plans at 1:20 and 12 section drawings.

The site finds and records can be found under the site code TNC06 in the MOL Archaeology archive.

### 3.2 Results of the watching brief

In total, 12 separate interventions (trial pits) were excavated through ground floor and basement levels to ascertain depths of existing footings. These have been numbered consecutively. Other works monitored, included insertion of raking props to support the north wall of the Dominion Theatre (immediately south of the site) and underpinning in the same area. There follows a brief description of the archaeological deposits as recorded.

For all trial pit locations see **Error! Reference source not found.**

#### 3.2.1 Trial pit 1

Table 1 Trial pit1 (statistics)

|                                       |                                  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Location                              | Basement, North-west             |
| Dimensions                            | 1.57m x 0.82m x 0.70m max. depth |
| Modern ground level                   | 22.15m OD                        |
| Base of modern fill                   | 21.54m OD                        |
| Depth of archaeological deposits seen | N/A                              |
| Level of base of deposits observed    | 21.45m OD                        |
| Natural observed                      | 21.68m OD                        |

See Fig 2

*In situ* natural sandy gravel was truncated along the north edge of the trial pit by a stepped brick footing for the existing wall, c 0.21m thick where exposed. It was sealed by soil/rubble backfill, up to 0.37m thick, below the existing concrete slab and tiled concrete floor. Two service pipes were sealed within the backfill.

### 3.2.2 Trial pit 2

Table 2 Trial pit 2 (statistics)

|                                       |                                  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Location                              | Basement, North                  |
| Dimensions                            | 1.18m x 1.10m x 0.79m max. depth |
| Modern ground level                   | 22.18m OD                        |
| Base of modern fill                   | 21.71m OD                        |
| Depth of archaeological deposits seen | N/A                              |
| Level of base of deposits observed    | 21.39m OD                        |
| Natural observed                      | 21.71m OD                        |

See Fig 2

*In situ* natural sand and sandy gravel was sealed by a 0.08m thick layer of redeposited natural - mixed gravel/clay, which served as bedding for a stepped brick footing for the existing wall. The footing was exposed for a depth of 0.24m; it was sealed by a 0.07m thick layer of gravel bedding below the existing tiled concrete floor slab. Two service pipes were sealed within the gravel bedding. The brickwork was underpinned with concrete, visible in the south-east facing section edge in the north-east corner of the pit.

### 3.2.3 Trial pit 3

Table 3 Trial pit 3 (statistics)

|                                       |                                  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Location                              | Basement, North-east             |
| Dimensions                            | 1.62m x 1.10m x 0.81m max. depth |
| Modern ground level                   | 22.16m OD                        |
| Base of modern fill                   | 21.52m OD                        |
| Depth of archaeological deposits seen | N/A                              |
| Level of base of deposits observed    | 21.35m OD                        |
| Natural observed                      | 21.79m OD                        |

See Fig 2

*In situ* natural sandy gravel was exposed in the east section edge. It was truncated to the north by a 0.20m thick stepped brick footing for a concrete pillar – part of the existing building, and to the south by a 0.20m thick coarse concrete 'slab'. Whether the slab was installed as part of the existing structure was unclear. Both were sealed by modern backfill deposits – redeposited brickearth and brick rubble, up to 0.13m thick, which in turn was sealed below a deep coarse concrete bedding for the existing concrete floor slab.

### 3.2.4 Trial pit 4

Table 4 Trial pit 4 (statistics)

|                                       |                                  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Location                              | Basement, North-east             |
| Dimensions                            | 1.45m x 1.20m x 0.90m max. depth |
| Modern ground level                   | 23.39m OD                        |
| Base of modern fill/slab              | 22.69m OD                        |
| Depth of archaeological deposits seen | N/A                              |
| Level of base of deposits observed    | 22.49m OD                        |
| Natural observed                      | 22.69m OD                        |

See Fig 2

*In situ* natural sandy gravel was sealed by a 0.49m thick sequence comprising two modern backfill deposits – redeposited clay/gravel and stiff clay. The natural was truncated to the west by a 0.41m thick concrete footing or underpin, which in turn was sealed by a concrete slab beneath the existing concrete floor.

### 3.2.5 Trial pit 5

Table 5 Trial pit 5 (statistics)

|                                       |                                  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Location                              | Basement, North-east             |
| Dimensions                            | 1.31m x 0.92m x 0.55m max. depth |
| Modern ground level                   | 23.39m OD                        |
| Base of modern fill                   | 22.84m OD                        |
| Depth of archaeological deposits seen | N/A                              |
| Level of base of deposits observed    | 22.84m OD                        |
| Natural observed                      | N/A                              |

See Fig 2

A concrete platform for a 0.28m thick stepped brick footing – part of the existing building, was exposed in the southern half of the trial pit. The footing supported a concrete pillar. The corner of a 0.23m thick concrete footing or underpin extended into the pit at its north limit. Both concrete structures were sealed by modern backfill deposits comprised of redeposited clay/gravel, stiff clay and brick rubble. They in turn were sealed by a layer of coarse concrete below the existing concrete floor.

### 3.2.6 Trial pit 6

Table 6 Trial pit 6 (statistics)

|                                       |                                  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Location                              | Ground floor, East               |
| Dimensions                            | 1.20m x 0.95m x 1.50m max. depth |
| Modern ground level                   | 25.94m OD                        |
| Base of modern fill                   | 25.46m OD                        |
| Depth of archaeological deposits seen | 1.02m                            |
| Level of base of deposits observed    | 24.44m OD                        |
| Natural observed                      | N/A                              |

See Figs 2, 3, 4

A post-medieval brick cellar? wall [10], aligned SW–NE, extended into the pit from the west section edge (see Section 4.1). Where visible, it measured 1.02m depth by 0.46m width. Its north face had been partly truncated. To the north, the wall was sealed by a 1.02m thick sequence of banded backfill deposits, [2]–[9], largely comprised of mixed soil/rubble layers, some also containing charcoal ([3], [6] and [8]). The sequence included a clay capping layer [2]. To the south, the wall was sealed by a single, deep, soil/rubble backfill [1]. Both the wall and backfill deposits were sealed by a 0.18m thick layer of brick rubble, serving as bedding for a pre-existing concrete slab and floor, below the existing concrete surface.

### 3.2.7 Trial pit 7

Table 7 Trial pit 7 (statistics)

|                                       |                              |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Location                              | Ground floor, East           |
| Dimensions                            | 1.46m x 1m x 1.58 max. depth |
| Modern ground level                   | 25.86m OD                    |
| Base of modern fill                   | 24.28m OD                    |
| Depth of archaeological deposits seen | N/A                          |
| Level of base of deposits observed    | 24.28m OD                    |
| Natural observed                      | N/A                          |

See Fig 2

Modern soil/rubble and concrete/rubble backfill deposits, visible for a combined depth of 1.30m (continuing below the base of the trial pit), were sealed below the existing concrete slab and tiled concrete floor.

### 3.2.8 Trial pit 8

Table 8 Trial pit 8 (statistics)

|                                       |                                  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Location                              | Ground floor, South-east         |
| Dimensions                            | 2.14m x 1.88m x 4.35m max. depth |
| Modern ground level                   | 25.87m OD                        |
| Base of modern fill                   | 21.82m OD                        |
| Depth of archaeological deposits seen | N/A                              |
| Level of base of deposits observed    | 21.52m OD                        |
| Natural observed                      | 21.82m OD                        |

See Figs 2, 5

*In situ* natural sandy gravel was overlain by a series of modern backfill deposits, which also sealed concrete footings associated with the existing building. The section edges were partly obscured by shoring, but a layer of redeposited archaeological material (mixed soil/mortar/charcoal) was visible within the backfilling sequence. Other deposits included: soil/redeposited gravel immediately above the natural, and higher up the sequence - soil/rubble and rubble layers below an earlier concrete slab and floor, below the existing slab and floor. The earlier floor was probably contemporary with a Victorian brick cellar/basement wall, partly visible in the west section edge (see Fig 4 and Section 4.1).

### 3.2.9 Trial pit 9

Table 9 Trial pit 9 (statistics)

|                                       |                                  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Location                              | Basement, South-east             |
| Dimensions                            | 1.30m x 1.15m x 1.10m max. depth |
| Modern ground level                   | 22.44m OD                        |
| Base of modern slab                   | 22.08m OD                        |
| Depth of archaeological deposits seen | N/A                              |
| Level of base of deposits observed    | 21.34m OD                        |
| Natural observed                      | 22.08m OD                        |

See Fig 2

*In situ* banded layers of natural gravel were exposed immediately below the existing concrete slab and overlying concrete floor.

### 3.2.10 Trial pit 10

Table 10 Trial pit 10 (statistics)

|                                       |                                  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Location                              | Basement, South                  |
| Dimensions                            | 1.20m x 1.03m x 1.51m max. depth |
| Modern ground level                   | 22.78m OD                        |
| Base of modern fill                   | 21.77m OD                        |
| Depth of archaeological deposits seen | N/A                              |
| Level of base of deposits observed    | 21.27m OD                        |
| Natural observed                      | 21.93m OD                        |

See Fig 2

*In situ* natural sand and sandy gravels were sealed by a concrete footing that extended to the base of the pit on its south side. A stepped brick footing, c 0.15m thick, part of the existing south wall, was built on top of the concrete. The brick footing was sealed by layers of redeposited sand, serving as bedding for a concrete slab and floor which pre-dated the existing floor. They were sealed by a 0.30m thick layer of brick rubble below the existing concrete slab and lino floor.

### 3.2.11 Trial pit 11

Table 11 Trial pit 11 (statistics)

|                                       |                                  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Location                              | Basement, South-west             |
| Dimensions                            | 1.10m x 1.03m x 0.97m max. depth |
| Modern ground level                   | 23.21m OD                        |
| Base of modern fill                   | 22.39m OD                        |
| Depth of archaeological deposits seen | 0.39m                            |
| Level of base of deposits observed    | 22.23m OD                        |
| Natural observed                      | 22.23m OD                        |

See Figs 2, 6, 7

*In situ* natural sandy gravel was sealed by a 0.39m thick layer of clayey sand/silt [11], which *may* have been an *in situ* archaeological deposit. If so, it was either a dump layer or rubbish pit fill. It contained fragments of clay tobacco pipe and a ceramic bottle (not kept), probably of early to mid. 19th century date. However, it may have been redeposited archaeological material, utilised as backfill over the concrete footing also exposed in the pit. It was truncated to the south by the concrete footing, which in turn was overlain by a 0.30m thick brick footing for the existing wall immediately south of the pit. The brickwork was sealed below backfill deposits - mixed clay/gravel, below clay/gravel/rubble, below the existing concrete slab/concrete floor.

### 3.2.12 Trial pit 12

Table 12 Trial pit 12 (statistics)

|                                       |                                  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Location                              | Basement, South-west             |
| Dimensions                            | 1.17m x 0.90m x 0.82m max. depth |
| Modern ground level                   | 23.20m OD                        |
| Base of modern fill                   | 22.81m OD                        |
| Depth of archaeological deposits seen | N/A                              |
| Level of base of deposits observed    | 22.38m OD                        |
| Natural observed                      | 22.81m OD                        |

See Fig 2

*In situ* laminated natural sands and sandy gravels were truncated to the south by a concrete footing, supporting a 0.20m thick stepped brick footing for the existing wall. The brickwork was sealed by a 0.20m thick backfill deposit, comprised of mixed gravel and concrete rubble, below the existing concrete slab and concrete floor.

### 3.2.13 Other groundworks

See Figs 2, 8

Other works monitored, included insertion of eleven thrust blocks and raking props to support the north wall of the Dominion Theatre (immediately south of the site) and underpinning in the same area. This area had been partially observed previously, during monitoring of Trial pits 8–12. Trenches excavated to accommodate the props were dug through *in situ* natural sands and gravels to 3–4m below existing floor level. No further archaeological remains were present in these areas.

An underpinning trench excavated towards the south-west corner of the site partially exposed the edge of a post-medieval rubbish pit [13] (see **Error! Reference source not found.**). The top of the pit was recorded at c 22.30m OD; it was 0.70m wide and 1.50m deep. Its fill [12] was an organic sandy silt. Tile fragments within the fill towards the base of the pit were inaccessible, but may indicate a relatively early post-medieval date, perhaps mid to late 17th century (see Section 4.1).



## 4 Potential of archaeology

### 4.1 Original research aims

The archaeological brief was essentially limited to establishing where, if at all, archaeological deposits survived (presence/absence), recording where necessary, and to ensuring that the groundworks did not involve the destruction of any archaeological deposits of national significance. In addition, five specific research questions were outlined:

- *What was the level of natural topography?*

The surface of *in situ* natural sands and sandy gravels ranged in height from 21.68m OD at the north-west corner of the site (Trial pit 1), to a maximum of 22.81m OD at the south-west corner of the site (Trial pit 12).

- *What is the character and nature of the deposits present on the site?*

Observations made during the course of the watching brief largely consisted of brick/concrete footings and backfill deposits associated with the existing building. Trial pits 3, 6, 8 and 10 also exposed floor slabs associated with 20th century development pre-dating the existing building.

With the exception of Trial pits 5, 6 and 7, *in situ* natural ground was observed in all other monitored areas.

Occasional archaeological remains recorded during the watching brief included post-medieval walls and rubbish dumps/pit fills? None pre-dating the 17th century.

- *What is the character and nature of the earliest deposits identified?*

The number of archaeological remains was limited and no dating evidence was retrieved. However, wall [10] and rubbish dumps [2]–[9] recorded in Trial pit 6, and rubbish pit [13] recorded in the underpin trench, are typically characteristic of urban development in London during the post-medieval period, and support cartographic evidence that shows the site area being developed from the mid. 17th century onwards.

- *Is there any evidence for remains dating to the post-medieval period on the site?*

All archaeological remains on site date to the post-medieval period:

Brick wall [10] in Trial pit 6 was sealed on its north side by a sequence of banded backfill deposits, indicative of refuse dumping over an extended period of time rather than a single phase of waste disposal. The wall seemed too substantial to have been a purpose-built brick-lined rubbish pit. It was probably part of a cellar that went out of use and was then utilised as a dumping area. Cartographic evidence suggests that the site remained as open land until development from the mid. to late 17th century. The Morgan map of 1682 (see **Error! Reference source not found.**) shows buildings in

what appears to be roughly the same location as Trial pit 6. It seems likely that wall [10] originally dates to this phase of development.

Rubbish pit [13] was located in a position that may well have been a backyard area serving buildings associated with early development of the site, as depicted on the Faithorne and Newcourt map, 1658 (see front cover).

- *What is the character and nature of the latest deposits identified?*

Layer [11] in Trial pit 11 *may* have been an *in situ* archaeological deposit. If so, it was either a dump layer or rubbish pit fill, located in a back yard area associated with buildings fronting onto Tottenham Court Road. It contained fragments of clay tobacco pipe and a ceramic bottle (not kept) probably of early to mid. 19th century date.

A Victorian brick cellar/basement wall in Trial pit 8 probably dates to early development of the Horseshoe Hotel, established c 1875.

## 4.2 Significance of the data

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

## 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 12 months of the end of the excavation.

In view of the limited potential of the material (Section 4) and the relatively limited significance of the data (Section 4.2) 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 author would like to thank the following for their contributions and help in producing this report:

Simon Leigh (Tweeds) for providing photographs and existing measured surveys of the buildings and Richard Bysouth (Kier London) for access to the site.

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## 8 NMR OASIS archaeological report form

### 8.1 OASIS ID: molas1-54302

#### Project details

Project name 264-7 Tottenham Court Road and 5 Great Russell Street

Short description of the project The redevelopment included demolition of buildings fronting onto Tottenham Court road and their replacement with a new five-storey, single-basemented building. Twelve geotechnical trial pits were excavated through ground floor and basement levels to ascertain depths of existing footings. Other works included insertion of raking props to support the north wall of the Dominion Theatre (immediately south of the site) and underpinning in the same area. The watching brief was carried out intermittently from February-October 2007. In situ natural ground was observed in all but three of the trial pits. Surface heights ranged from 21.68m OD at the north-west corner of the site, to a maximum 22.81m OD at the south-west corner. Observations made during the course of the watching brief largely consisted of brick/concrete footings and backfill deposits associated with the existing building, but also included, on occasion, structural remains associated with earlier 20th century development of the building. Archaeological features/deposits recorded on site, including refuse dumping/pitting and remains of a brick cellar wall are typically characteristic of urban development in London during the post-medieval period, supporting cartographic evidence that demonstrates the site area being developed from the mid. 17th century onwards. Later features/deposits included a dump layer or rubbish pit fill, probably associated with buildings that would have fronted onto Tottenham Court Road in the early to mid. 19th century, and a later Victorian brick cellar/basement wall associated with early development of the Horseshoe Hotel, which was established on the site c 1875.

Project dates Start: 06-02-2007 End: 11-10-2007

Previous/future work Yes / No

Any associated project reference codes TNC06 - Sitecode

Type of project Recording project

Site status Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area

Current Land use Industry and Commerce 3 - Retailing

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Monument type      | RUBBISH PITTING/DUMPING Post Medieval           |
| Monument type      | BUILDING Post Medieval                          |
| Significant Finds  | NONE  |
| Investigation type | 'Watching Brief'                                |
| Prompt             | Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16 |

#### **Project location**

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Country           | England   |
| Site location     | GREATER LONDON CAMDEN HOLBORN 264-7 Tottenham Court Road and 5 Great Russell Street |
| Postcode          | W1T 7RQ   |
| Study area        | 1020.00 Square metres   |
| Site coordinates  | TQ 29831 81438 51.5164285656 -0.128651374936 51 30 59 N 000 07 43 W Point           |
| Height OD / Depth | Min: 21.68m Max: 22.81m   |

#### **Project creators**

|                              |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Name of Organisation         | MOL Archaeology      |
| Project brief originator     | MoLA project manager |
| Project design originator    | MoLAS                |
| Project director/manager     | Ros Aitken           |
| Project supervisor           | Jez Taylor           |
| Type of sponsor/funding body | London and Regional  |

### Project archives

|                           |       |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Physical Archive Exists?  | No    |
| Digital Archive recipient | LAARC |
| Paper Archive recipient   | LAARC |

### Project bibliography 1

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Publication type              | Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)  |
| Title                         | 264-7 Tottenham Court Road and 5 Great Russell Street; An archaeological watching brief report |
| Author(s)/Editor(s)           | 'Taylor, J.'   |
| Date                          | 2009   |
| Issuer or publisher           | MOL Archaeology  |
| Place of issue or publication | London   |
| Description                   | A4 client report   |

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| Entered by | Jez Taylor (jtaylor@museumoflondon.org.uk) |
| Entered on | 21 January 2009                            |



Fig 1 Site location





Fig 2 Location of trial pits and sections / other groundworks

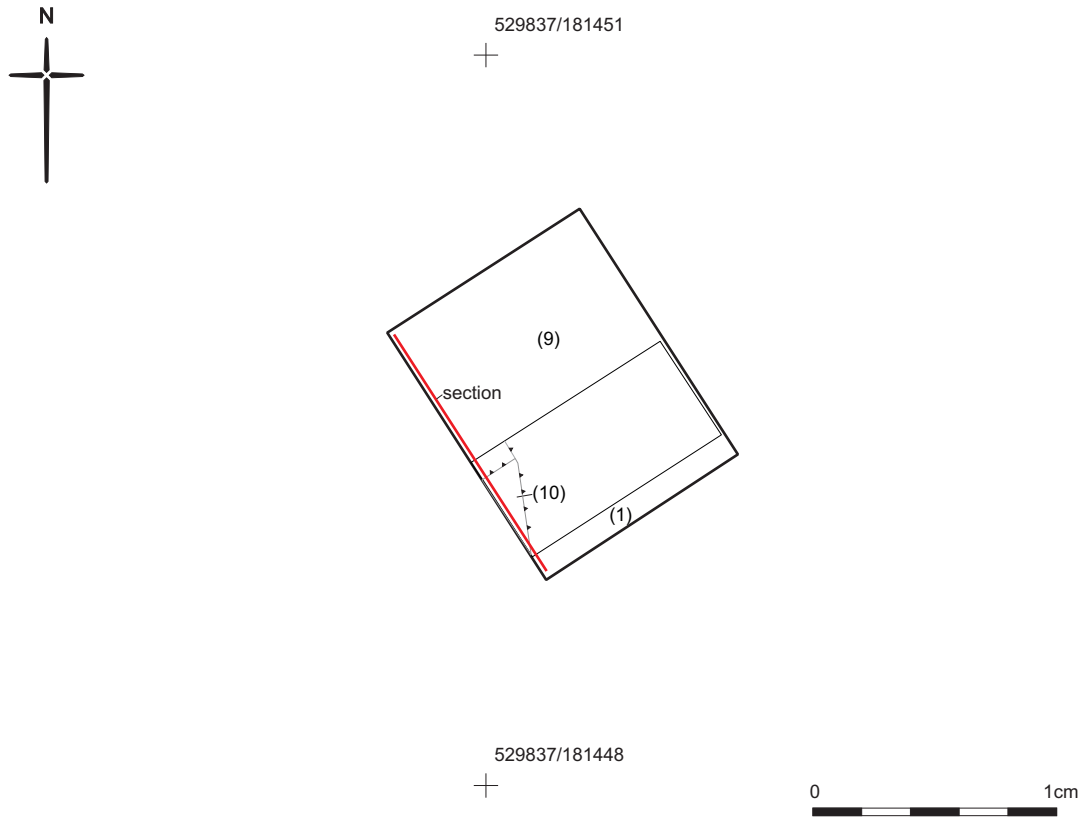


Fig 3 Plan of Trial pit 6

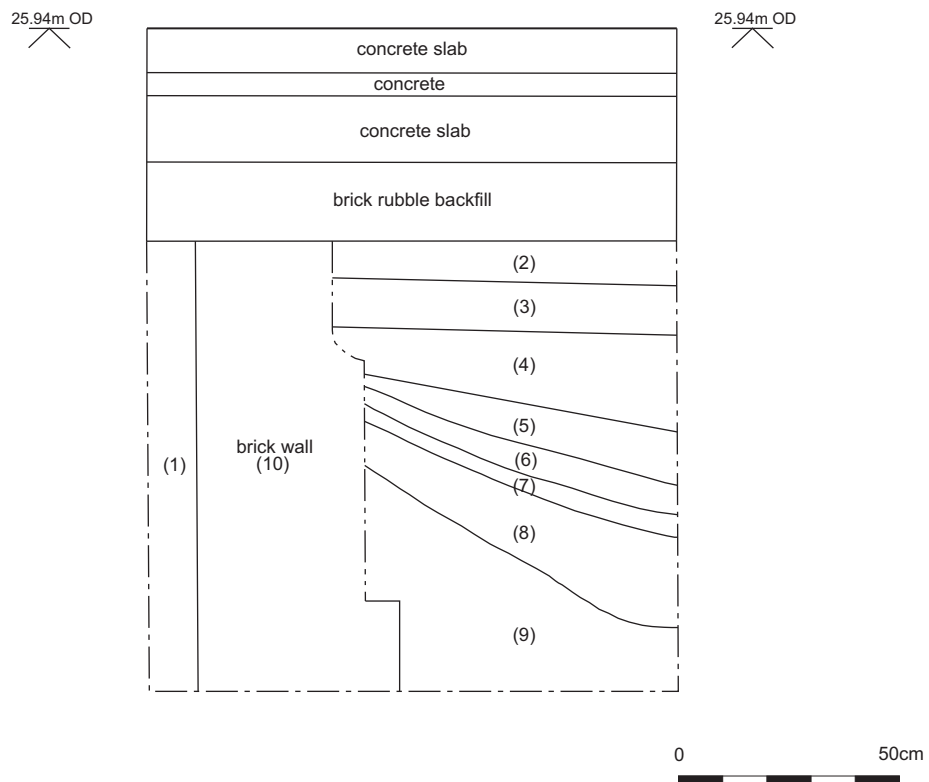


Fig 4 North-east facing section, Trial pit 6

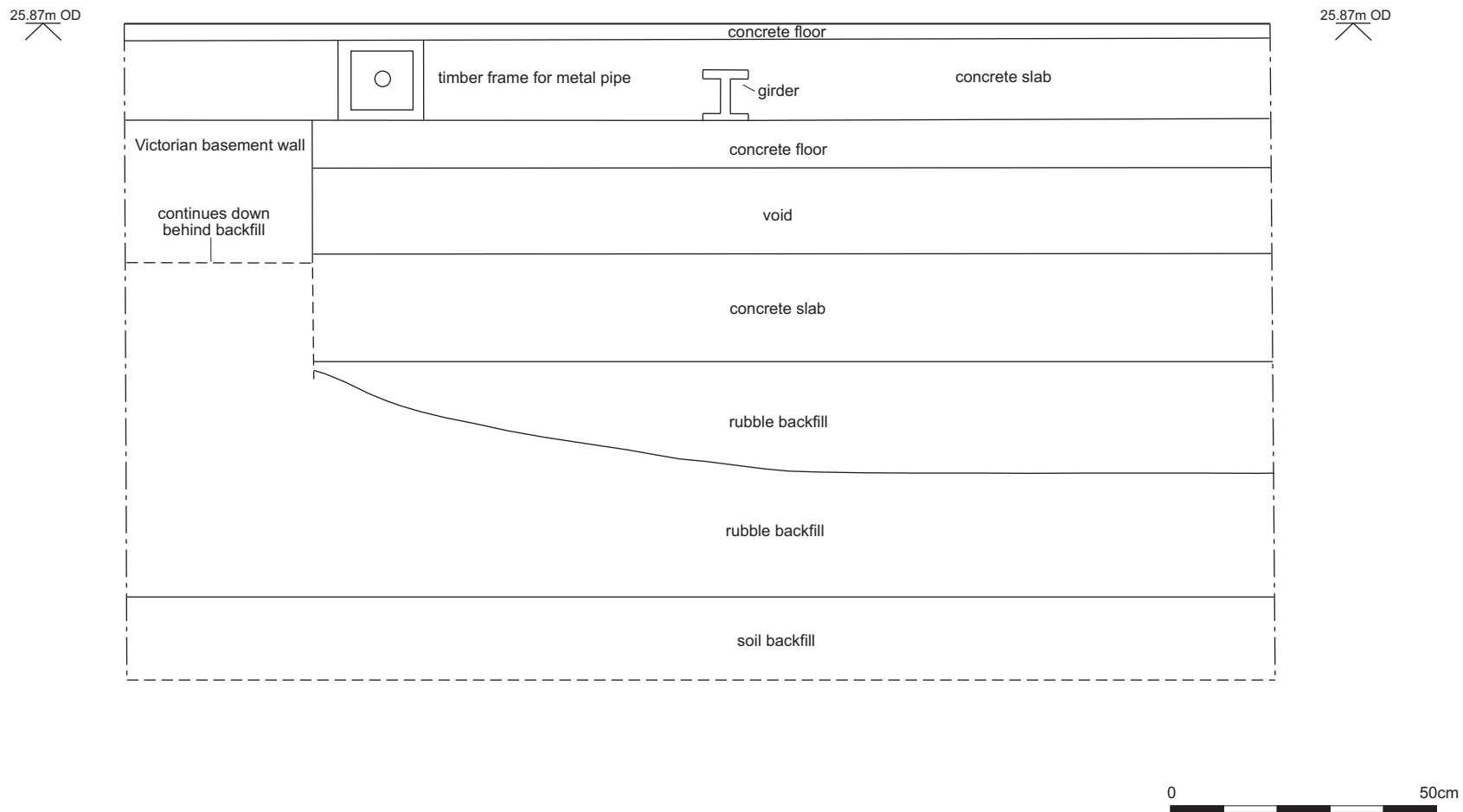


Fig 5 Trial pit 8, upper north-east facing section

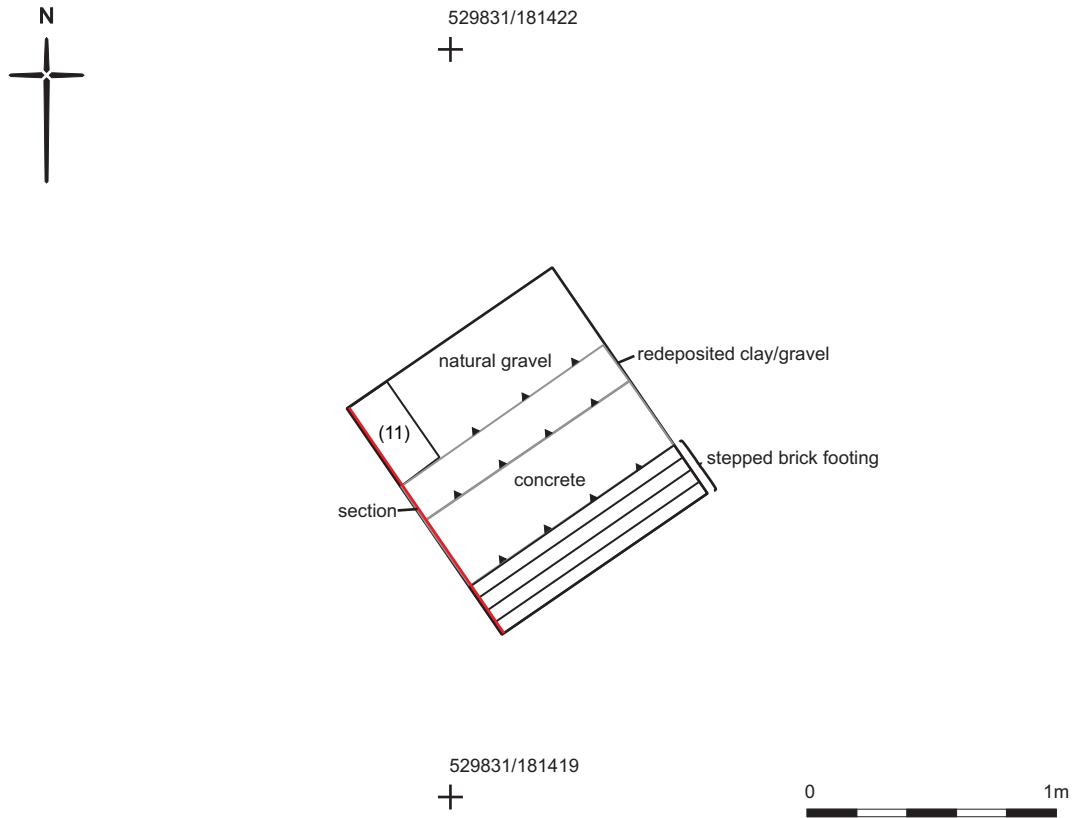


Fig 6 Plan of Trial pit 11

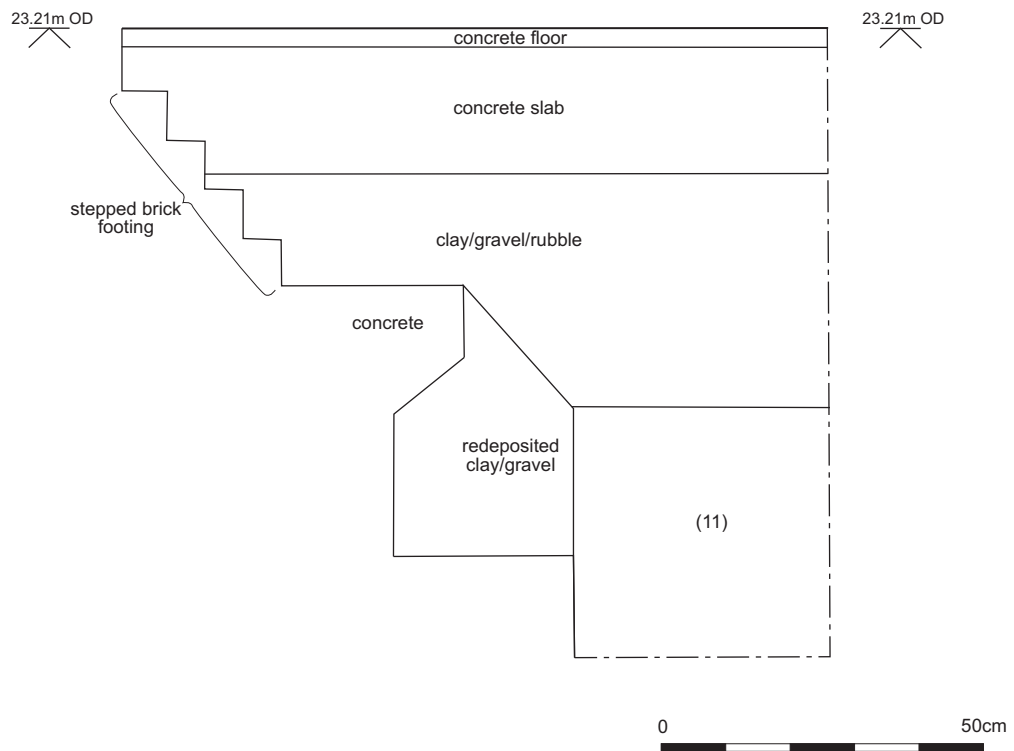


Fig 7 North-east facing section, Trial pit 11

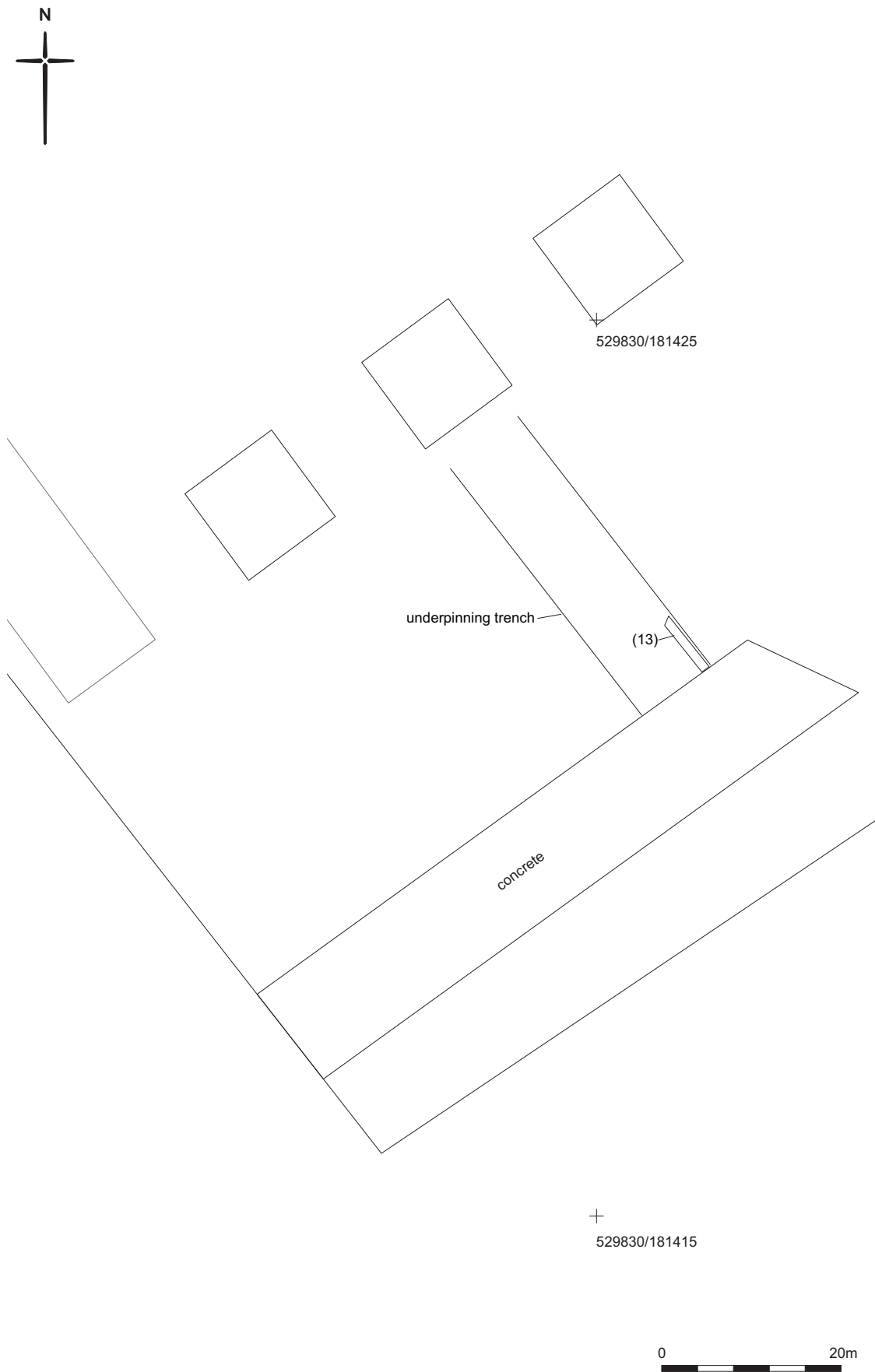


Fig 8 Location of rubbish pit [13] (underpinning trench)

