

# 100 GRAY'S INN ROAD & 127 CLERKENWELL ROAD LONDON WC1X 8AU

London Borough of Camden

Archaeological Evaluation Report

January 2024



# 100 Gray's Inn Road and 127 Clerkenwell Road London WC1X 8AU

Site Code: GAI23  
NGR: 531034 181958  
OASIS reference: molas1-519800

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Condition Number: 28

Report on archaeological evaluation

## Sign-off History:

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## Summary

*This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out by MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) at 100 Gray's Inn Road and 127 Clerkenwell Road, London WC1X 8AU. The report was commissioned from MOLA by Global Holdings Management.*

*In accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (MOLA, 2023), an archaeological evaluation was carried out on the site from 14th to 22nd September 2023 comprising three trenches in the basement of 100 Gray's Inn Road (Trenches 1–3) and two trenches at ground level at 127 Clerkenwell Road (Trenches 4–5). Four out of the five proposed evaluation trenches were excavated; Trench 5 was cancelled due to its proximity to live services and an electrical sub-station.*

*Trenches 1–3 at 100 Gray's Inn Road did not exceed 2m x 2m. Trench 3 was the deepest, excavated to 1.7m below ground level (bgl; in a sondage). Trench 4 at 127 Clerkenwell Road measured 2.8m x 1.1m. The results of the field evaluation have helped to refine the initial assessment of the archaeological potential of the site.*

*In situ natural sand and gravel was recorded in Trench 1 at a surface height of 17.16m OD. A sand deposit in Trench 3 with a surface height at 17.23m OD was likely in situ natural but could not be confirmed.*

*Trenches 1–3 at 100 Gray's Inn Road contained archaeological deposits and features. The earliest deposits included a possible plough or garden soil sealing the natural ground in Trench 1. If a plough soil, it could potentially pre-date the 16th-century urban development of the area. If a garden soil, it likely contemporary with the late-16th and 17th century urban development. The earliest deposits in Trench 3 included a possible geological subsoil sealing the natural, or alternatively, a layer redeposited in a dumping sequence, either to level and/or raise the ground surface, or infill within a large refuse or quarry pit. Remains interpreted as post-medieval made ground in Trenches 1 and 2 included a deposit containing pottery sherds dating from 1670–1700, though these finds may be residual. A brick wall foundation in Trench 2, provisionally dated to the 19th century, may be associated with Holborn Town Hall which opened in 1880.*

*Trench 4 to the rear of 127 Clerkenwell Road did not encounter archaeological remains, though potentially there may be survival at lower levels, below the base of the trench.*

*The report concludes that Roman remains are unlikely to be encountered but post-medieval archaeological deposits, including structural remains of late 19th-century Holborn Town Hall, fronting Gray's Inn Road, including would be impacted by the redevelopment.*

*The late 19th-century former Holborn Town Hall building is thoroughly documented and the post-medieval deposits encountered are considered to be of low significance*

*Given the low survival and significance of the archaeological remains in the basemented parts of the site, MOLA considers that there is limited value in further archaeological mitigation here. The results of the evaluation in 127 Clerkenwell Road were inconclusive.*

*The decision on the appropriate archaeological mitigation to the deposits revealed rests with the Local Planning Authority.*

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Site background

- 1.1.1 The archaeological evaluation took place at 100 Gray's Inn Road and 127 Clerkenwell Road, London WC1X 8AU ('the site') from 14th to 22nd September 2023 (Fig 1). The centre of site lies at National Grid Reference: 531034 181958. This document is the Report on that work.
- 1.1.2 A written *Archaeological desk-based assessment* was prepared by MOLA which covers the whole area of the site (MOLA, 2022). This 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.
- 1.1.3 The results of the evaluation have provided further information of the archaeological potential within the site and will enable the local planning authority (LPA) to formulate an appropriate response to offset or mitigate the impacts of the proposed development on archaeology.
- 1.1.4 In accordance with the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) (MOLA, 2023) four out five evaluation trenches were excavated on the site from 14th to 22nd September 2023. The proposed fifth trench in 127 Clerkenwell Road was cancelled due to its proximity to live services and an UKPN electrical substation.

## 1.2 Planning background

- 1.2.1 The legislative and Planning framework in which the evaluation took place was fully set out in the *Archaeological desk-based assessment* (MOLA, 2022, Section 9).
- 1.2.2 The evaluation was carried out in response to draft archaeological condition received by the client that required evaluation prior to ground level demolition. Planning permission was granted by the London Borough of Camden on 20 December 2023 (ref 2022/4259/P) with Condition (28) that requires:
- No below ground level demolition or any construction shall take place until a written scheme of investigation (WSI) has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no development other than demolition above ground level only shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed WSI, and the programme and methodology of site evaluation and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works.*
- If heritage assets of archaeological interest are identified by stage 1 then for those parts of the site which have archaeological interest a stage 2 WSI shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. For land that is included within the stage 2 WSI, no development excluding demolition above ground level only shall take place other than in accordance with agreed stage 2 WSI which shall include:*
- A. The statement of significance and research objectives, the programme and methodology of site investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works;*
- B. Where appropriate, details of a programme for delivering related positive public benefits;*
- C. The programme for post-investigation assessment and subsequent analysis, publication & dissemination, and deposition of resulting material. This part of the condition shall not be discharged until these elements have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the stage 2 WSI.*
- Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policies D1 and D2 if the Camden Local Plan 2017.*

- 1.2.3 The WSI, evaluation and this Report address Stage 1 of the draft condition; any further archaeological work required for Stage 2 will be covered in a separate WSI.

## 1.3 Scope of the evaluation

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- 1.3.1 Evaluation is defined by Historic England as intended to provide information about the archaeological resource in order to contribute to the:
- 1.3.2 - 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
- 1.3.3 - formulation of a proposal for further archaeological investigations within a programme of research.
- 1.3.4 An archaeological evaluation is a limited fieldwork exercise designed to test the conclusions of preliminary desk-based work. It is not the same as full excavation.
- 1.3.5 The evaluation was carried out within the terms of the relevant Standard for evaluation specified by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIFA, 2014).
- 1.3.6 All work has been undertaken within the research priorities established in the Museum of London's *A research framework for London Archaeology*, 2002.
- 1.3.7 All work was undertaken within research aims and objectives established in the *Written Scheme of Investigation* for the evaluation (MOLA, 2023, Section 2).

## 2 Topographical and historical background

### 2.1 Topography

- 2.1.1 A description of the geology, archaeology and history of the site was provided in the *Archaeological desk-based assessment* (MOLA, 2022). A summary of the topographical and archaeological background to the site is presented below:
- 2.1.2 The site is located on the western side of the Fleet valley, and the topography of the area in general slopes from west to east, from c 24m on Theobald's Road 250m west of the site, to 15.2m on Clerkenwell Road 300m east of the site. The site itself lies at approximately 21m OD. No topographic survey of the site was available at the time of writing: the given levels are based upon OS legacy spot heights.
- 2.1.3 The underlying geology of the site comprises Lynch Hill Terrace gravels overlying London Clay. In places the Gravels are capped by a fine-grained silt known in London as Langley Silt Complex ('brickearth'), which was laid down as alluvium and/or wind-blown deposits during the last glaciation around 17,000 BC. This produced fertile soils but was often exploited for the manufacture of bricks and much has been removed by quarrying or by subsequent building development.

### 2.2 Archaeology

#### *Roman (AD 43–410)*

- 2.2.1 The site lies 15m from the projected course of a Roman road, and therefore has low to moderate potential for evidence of roadside activity. This could include agricultural ditches, and although considered unlikely, burials and cremations. Any residual finds would be of low significance, ditches would be of medium significance, poorly preserved structural remains would be of moderate significance and burial features, or well-preserved structural remains would be of high significance.

#### *Post-medieval (AD 1485–present)*

- 2.2.2 Historic mapping shows the site first developed by the mid-17th century. There is moderate potential for remains of buried footings dating from the mid-17th century onwards and nearby investigations, notably at Panther House, have discovered a variety of features including 17th-19th century structural remains preceded by 16th-century quarry pits and 17th century dump deposits.
- 2.2.3 The site was subject to changing development in the 19th and 20th centuries culminating in the construction of Holborn Town Hall in 1880. Any remains of buried foundations or basement remains from this period are likely to be of low significance, based on their historic and evidential interest.
- 2.2.4 The site has low potential for remains from other periods. No prehistoric remains have been found in the vicinity.

## 3 Evaluation methodology

### 3.1 Field methodology

- 3.1.1 Four evaluation trenches were excavated. Three trenches measuring c. 2m x 2m x c. 1.2m depth were excavated in the basement carpark at 100 Gray's Inn Road. One trench measuring c 3m x 1m x c 1m depth was excavated at ground level to the rear of 127 Clerkenwell Road.
- 3.1.2 The slab was broken out and cleared by contractors under MOLA supervision. The trenches were machine-excavated by contractors under MOLA supervision. Features of archaeological significance were investigated by hand by a member of MOLA staff.
- 3.1.3 Archaeological excavation was carried out in accordance with the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (MOLA, 2023).
- 3.1.4 Trench locations were plotted on plans provided by the client using an 'offset methodology' and subsequently tied to the OS grid by the MOLA Geomatics team.
- 3.1.5 Where referenced in this report (eg. '13.45m OD'), levels relate to OS Ordnance Datum and were calculated by measurement from spot heights on a borehole location plan provided by the client (Reference: GEA, Geotechnical & Environmental Associates; Site Plan, Job Number: J20106).

### 3.2 Recording methodology

- 3.2.1 A written and drawn record of all archaeological deposits encountered was carried out in accordance with the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (MOLA, 2023).

### 3.3 Site archive

Number of trench record sheets	N/A
Number of overall location plans	2
Number of Context (SU) sheets	9
Number of photographs	15
Number of Plan sheets	4
Number of Sections	5



## 4 Results of the evaluation

For trench locations see Fig 2

### 4.1 Trench 1

Location	100 Gray's Inn Rd. Basement carpark. NW
Dimensions	2m x 2m x 1.2m deep (1.4m in sondage)
Modern ground level (top of slab)	18.27m OD
Base of modern fill	17.57m OD
Depth of archaeological stratigraphy above natural	0.52m
Level of base of lowest features or deposits observed	17.07m OD
Top of surviving natural observed at	17.16m OD
Level of base of trench	16.87m OD

4.1.1 See Figs 2 and 3

4.1.2 *In situ* natural sand and gravel [9] was reached at 1.11m bgl in a sondage excavated in the eastern part of the trench. Overlying this was a 0.35m thick layer of (coarse-grained) sandy clay [8], interpreted as a plough soil or garden soil, and recorded at a surface level of 17.44m OD (0.73m bgl). This deposit contained charcoal flecks, ceramic building material, (CBM; i.e brick and tile) and occasional chalk inclusions. No dateable finds were retrieved. If a plough soil, it could potentially pre-date the 16th-century urban development of the site area; if a garden soil, it could potentially be associated with the late 16th–17th century urban development.

4.1.3 Layer [8] was sealed by a 0.20m thick, firm grey-brown clay [7], presumed to be redeposited and serving as late post-medieval or modern made ground. Again, no finds were recovered. This deposit might have been imported during construction of the existing basement carpark, but potentially could be associated with 19th-century Holborn Town Hall, or earlier 16th/17th-century development. This layer was recorded at a maximum height of 17.60m OD (0.66m bgl).

4.1.4 Layer [7] was sealed by a 0.27m thick modern soil/rubble consolidation capped by the existing concrete floor slab (up to 0.47m thick).



Photo 1: South-east facing section in Trench 1 (Scale: 1m)

## 4.2 Trench 2

Location	100 Gray's Inn Rd. Basement carpark. Centre-East
Dimensions	2m x 1.7m x 1.3m deep
Modern ground level (top of slab)	18.21m OD
Base of modern fill	17.42m OD
Depth of archaeological stratigraphy above natural	0.88m seen – continues below base of trench
Level of base of lowest features or deposits observed	16.91m OD
Top of surviving natural observed at	N/A
Level of base of trench	16.91m OD

4.2.1 See Fig 5 and Fig 6

4.2.2 Natural was not reached in this trench. The earliest deposit was a rubbly grey-brown sandy clay [4], interpreted as made ground. It was observed for a depth of 0.88m but continued below the base of the trench. Two pottery sherds retrieved from [4] date to 1670–1700 but may be residual.

4.2.3 Deposit [4] was truncated by construction cut [5] for a 19th-century red brick wall foundation [6]. The foundation extended for 1.9m along the eastern trench edge, projecting up to 0.22m into the trench. The top of the wall lay at 17.54m OD (0.67m bgl) and was observed for a depth of 0.5m but continued below the base of the trench. The full depth of the foundation was not observed. The foundation may be associated with 19th-century Holborn Town Hall. It was sealed by a 0.27m thick modern soil/rubble consolidation deposit which was overlain by the existing concrete floor slab (up to 0.48m thick).



Photo 2: Wall [6] in south-west facing section in Trench 2 (Scale: 1m)

### 4.3 Trench 3

Location	100 Gray's Inn Road Basement carpark, south part
Dimensions	2m x 2m x 1.3m deep (1.7m in sondage)
Modern ground level (top of slab)	18.28m OD
Base of modern fill	17.24m OD
Depth of archaeological stratigraphy above natural	0.88m
Level of base of lowest features or deposits observed	16.58m OD
Top of surviving natural observed at	Unclear
Level of base of trench	16.58m OD

4.3.1 See Fig 7, Fig 8

4.3.2 The earliest deposit was a light yellowish-brown fine sand with black patches [3], recorded at a surface level of 17.23m OD. The patches are presumed to represent decayed root activity. This deposit might be *in situ* natural or, alternatively, it may have been redeposited in a dumping sequence to raise the ground level, or deposited within a large rubbish or quarry pit, the edges of which were not observed in the trench. The deposit was sealed by a light, reddish-brown silty clay deposit [2], which was exposed for 0.71m depth, but continued below the trench base. A rather 'sterile' deposit with only occasional small to medium stone inclusions, it may be an *in situ* geological subsoil, but as with [3] below, it may be redeposited as part of a

dumping or infilling sequence.

- 4.3.3 Deposit [2] was overlain by a 0.39m thick, compact, mid greyish-brown gravelly clay [1], interpreted as a levelling or ground-raising layer, recorded at a maximum height of 17.43m OD (0.85m bgl). This in turn was overlain by a 0.52m thick sequence of modern soil/rubble made ground, capped by the existing concrete floor slab (up to 0.41m thick).



Photo 3: South-east facing section in Trench 3 (Scale: 1m)

## 4.4 Trench 4

Location	127 Clerkenwell Rd. South-East part of basement
Dimensions	2.8m x 1.1m x 1.2m deep
Modern ground level/top of slab	21.34m OD
Base of modern fill	20.14m OD
Depth of archaeological stratigraphy above natural	N/A
Level of base of lowest features or deposits observed	20.14m OD
Top of surviving natural observed at	N/A
Level of base of trench	20.14m OD

- 4.4.1 The size and depth of this trench were constrained by below-ground obstructions and live services, and the full sequence of deposits was not exposed. Natural ground was not reached.
- 4.4.2 In this trench, up to 0.7m of modern soil/rubble made ground were revealed, sealed by the concrete slab (up to 0.42m thick) which was capped by a 100mm Tarmac surface.



*Photo 4: North-east facing section in Trench 4, (Scale: 1m)*

## 4.5 The finds

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- 4.5.1 The only finds recovered during the evaluation were two pottery sherds from made ground [4] in Trench 2. The sherds have been dated to the late 17th century (1670–1700) by a MOLA Pottery Specialist.
- 4.5.2 The sherds are identified as the upper portion of a London made delftware round bowl (fabric code TGW H) decorated with stylised floral sprays on its outside face and internally with what is revealed as part of building and a Frechen stoneware (FREC) drinking jug.

## 4.6 The site as a whole

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- 4.6.1 Four out of five proposed trenches were excavated on site: three in the basement carpark at 100 Gray's Inn Road and one to the rear of 127 Clerkenwell Road. Trench 5, proposed for 127 Clerkenwell Road, was cancelled due to its proximity to live services and below ground obstructions.
- 4.6.2 Trench 4 at 127 Clerkenwell Road measured 2.8m x 1.1m. Trenches 1–3 at 100 Gray's Inn Road did not exceed 2m x 2m. Trench 3 was the deepest, reaching 1.7m

- below ground level (in a sondage).
- 4.6.3 *In situ* natural sand and gravel was reached in two of the basement-level trenches. A sand deposit recorded in Trench 3 in the basement carpark is likely to be *in situ* natural but could not be confirmed.
  - 4.6.4 Trench 4 to the rear of 127 Clerkenwell was devoid of archaeological remains, though potentially there may be survival at lower levels. Trenches 1–3 at 100 Gray's Inn Road contained archaeological deposits and features. Dating evidence was limited to two late 17th-century pottery sherds recovered from a deposit in Trench 2, though the finds may be residual.
  - 4.6.5 Structural remains were limited to a brick wall foundation in Trench 2 is provisionally dated to the 19th century. It may be associated with the 19th century Holborn Town Hall.
  - 4.6.6 Overall, the evaluation has identified an archaeological sequence beneath the basement carpark at 100 Gray's Inn Road but was unable to confirm archaeological survival at 127 Clerkenwell Road.
  - 4.6.7 Early undated deposits could potentially relate to medieval or earlier activity. Post-medieval remains may relate to activity both before and after urban development began in the area in the 16th century, as well as later urban development, including structures associated with 19th century Holborn Town Hall.
  - 4.6.8 The construction of a proposed new basement and insertion of new piling at the site will truncate the archaeological sequence beneath the existing building.

## 5 Archaeological potential

### 5.1 Answering original research aims

5.1.1 A number of broad objectives and research questions were identified for this evaluation in the Written Scheme of Investigation (MOLA, 2023) can be answered as follows:

#### **What is the nature and level of natural topography?**

5.1.2 In situ natural sand and gravel was recorded at 17.16m OD in Trench 1.

5.1.3 A sand deposit in Trench 3 recorded at 17.23m OD may be in situ natural but its physical relationship with overlying deposits rendered this unclear.

#### **What are the earliest deposits identified?**

5.1.4 A plough soil or garden soil [8] recorded in Trench 1 could potentially pre-date 16th century urban development in the area. If a garden soil, it could potentially date to late-16th and 17th century urban development.

5.1.5 Made ground in Trench 2 contained two pottery sherds dated 1670–1700, but they may be residual.

5.1.6 Undated early deposits in Trench 3 may have included a geological subsoil over natural. An alternative interpretation is a dumping sequence to raise the ground level, or infill within a large rubbish or quarry pit.

#### **Is there any evidence for Roman activity associated with the Roman road thought to run east-west approximately 15m south of the site?**

5.1.7 No evidence for Roman activity was found during the evaluation.

#### **Is there any evidence for activity predating the 17th-century development of the site illustrated on historic mapping?**

5.1.8 Both the plough or garden soil [8] in Trench 1 and the early deposits [2] in Trench 3, likely pre-date 17th-century development, though this could not be confirmed.

#### **Is there any evidence for 17th and 18th century buildings fronting Gray's Inn Road and Liquor Pond Street or associated activity?**

5.1.9 There was no evidence for 17th- and 18th-century buildings fronting Gray's Inn Road and Liquor Pond Street, though the made ground deposits in Trench 2 could potentially be contemporary with this activity.

#### **What are the latest deposits identified?**

5.1.10 The brick wall foundation [6] recorded in Trench 2 is provisionally dated to the 19th century and may relate to the 19th century Holborn Town Hall.

#### **What is the extent of modern disturbance?**

- 5.1.11 In the basement car park trenches (Trenches 1–3), modern disturbance consisted of horizontal truncation to 17.24–17.57m OD above which were modern levelling/make up layers measuring from 0.7–1.04m thick. A pipe trench in Trench 2 truncated deposits in to below base of the trench at 1.9m bgl.
- 5.1.12 In the ground level Trench 4 at 127 Clerkenwell Road all the deposits to the base of the trench were modern. The trench was 1.2m deep, excavated to 20.14m OD and modern made ground is presumed to continue below that level.

## 5.2 General discussion of potential

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- 5.2.1 The evaluation has shown that the potential for survival of ancient ground surfaces (horizontal archaeological stratification above natural ground) in the basement area dating to the 16th–17th centuries on the site is high.
- 5.2.2 There is also potential for survival of cut features, including refuse or quarry pits and post-medieval structural features relating to 19th-century Holborn Town Hall.
- 5.2.3 The potential for archaeological survival in 127 Clerkenwell Road is uncertain. Due to below ground obstructions, only one of the 2 proposed trenches in this area could be excavated. Excavation was limited to a depth of 1.2m and only revealed modern deposits.
- 5.2.4 The depth of archaeological survival ranged from 0.52m in Trench 1 to 0.88m in Trench 2 and Trench 3 in the 100 Gray's Inn Road basement carpark. The top of archaeological deposits in the carpark trenches lay at approximately 17.50m OD, 0.7m bgl. It should be noted that archaeological remains in Trenches 2 and 3 extend below the base of each trench.
- 5.2.5 Trench 4 at 127 Clerkenwell Road was excavated to 1.2m depth, but all deposits at that level were modern.

## 5.3 Significance

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

## 5.4 Assessment of the evaluation

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- 5.4.1 The main objective of the evaluation was to confirm the presence, depth and nature of archaeological deposits.
- 5.4.2 Four out of five proposed trenches were excavated on site: three in the basement carpark at 100 Gray's Inn Road and one to the rear of 127 Clerkenwell Road.
- 5.4.3 Archaeological survival beneath the existing ground surface in the basement carpark at 100 Gray's Inn Road is confirmed, and likely extends across the whole basement footprint. Natural was encountered in two of these trenches and all three trenches revealed archaeological sequences dating from 16th-18th centuries, plus potential preserved structural remains relating to 19th century Hilborn Town Hall in Trench 3.
- 5.4.4 The evaluation investigation to the rear of 127 Clerkenwell Road is inconclusive. Trench 4 was devoid of archaeological remains though potentially there may be survival at lower levels.



## 6 Proposed development impact and conclusions

- 6.1.1 Archaeological survival has been confirmed at 100 Gray's Inn Road but remains unconfirmed at 127 Clerkenwell Road. The depth and breadth of the archaeological sequence at Gray's Inn Road suggests that an archaeological sequence also likely survives at 127 Clerkenwell Road, though this was not confirmed.
- 6.1.2 The impact of the construction of the new basement, which is proposed across the whole site footprint, and insertion of new piles, will be to truncate the archaeological sequence beneath the existing building.
- 6.1.3 The decision on the appropriate archaeological mitigation to the deposits revealed rests with the Local Planning Authority.

## 7 Acknowledgements

- 7.1.1 MOLA would like to thank Global Holdings for commissioning the work, Avison Young for their support and Louise Davies and Joanna Short, Archaeological Advisors at GLAAS for advice throughout.
- 7.1.2 The author would like to thank MOLA Project Managers Antonietta Lerz and Marit Leenstra, MOLA Senior Archaeologist Stephen Turner and Archaeologist Domenico Molinari, Mark Burch and Alessandra Riva from the MOLA Geomatics Team and Nigel Jeffries, MOLA Principal Specialist (Ceramics).

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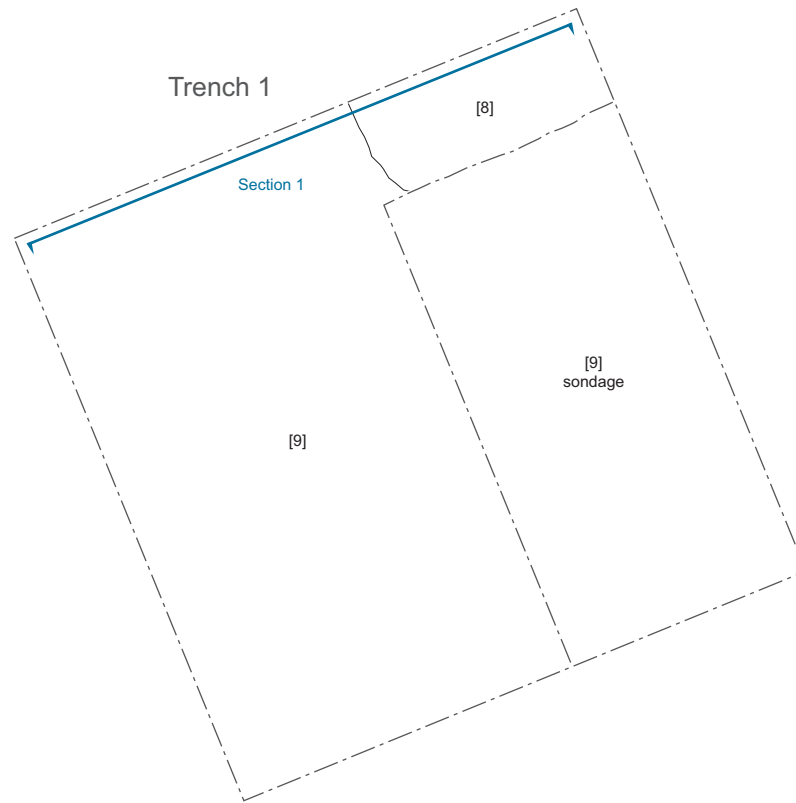
Fig 1 Site location



Fig 2 Trench locations



531017/181967  
+



531022/181967  
+



Fig 3 Plan of Trench 1

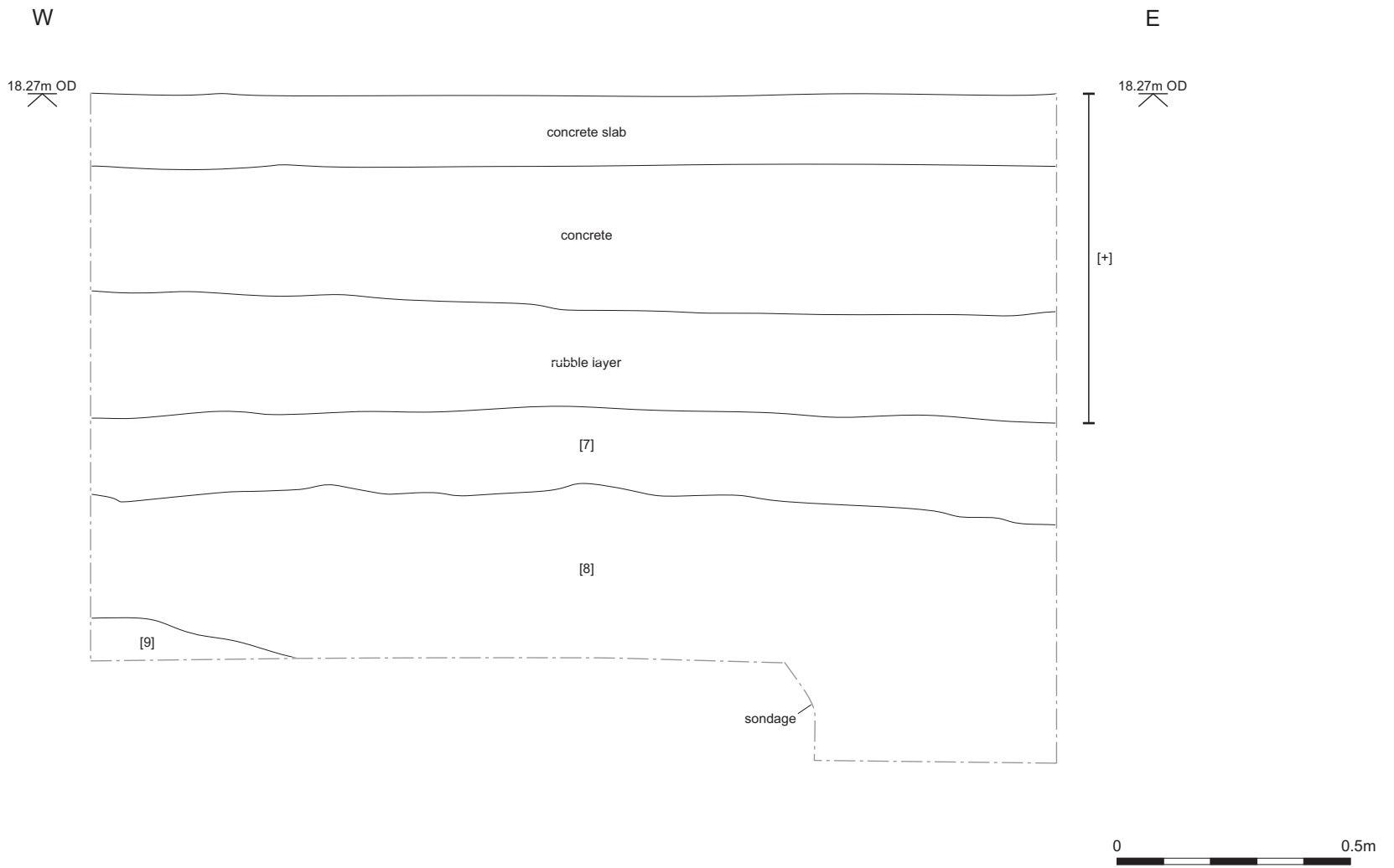
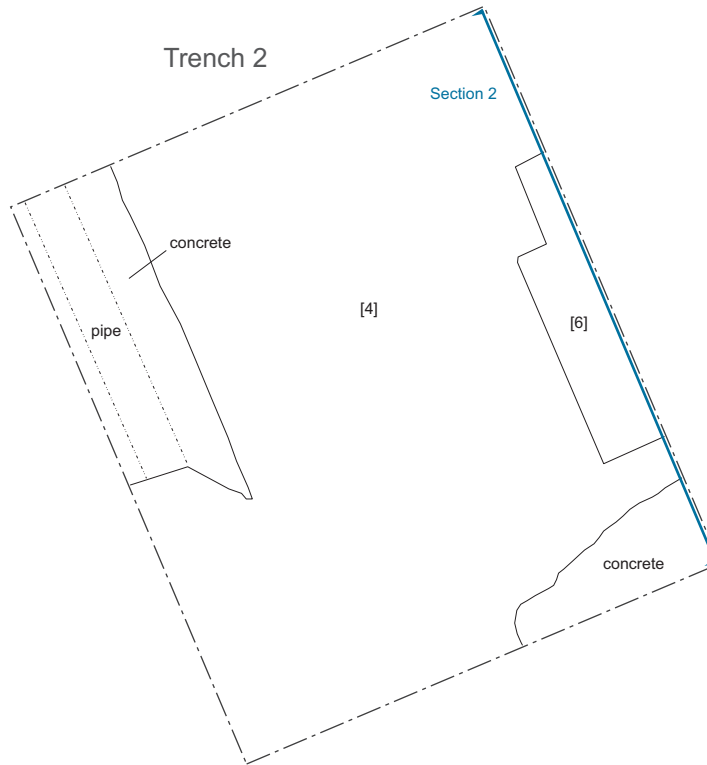


Fig 4 South-east facing section in Trench 1



531030/181966  
+



531035/181966  
+



Fig 5 Plan of Trench 2



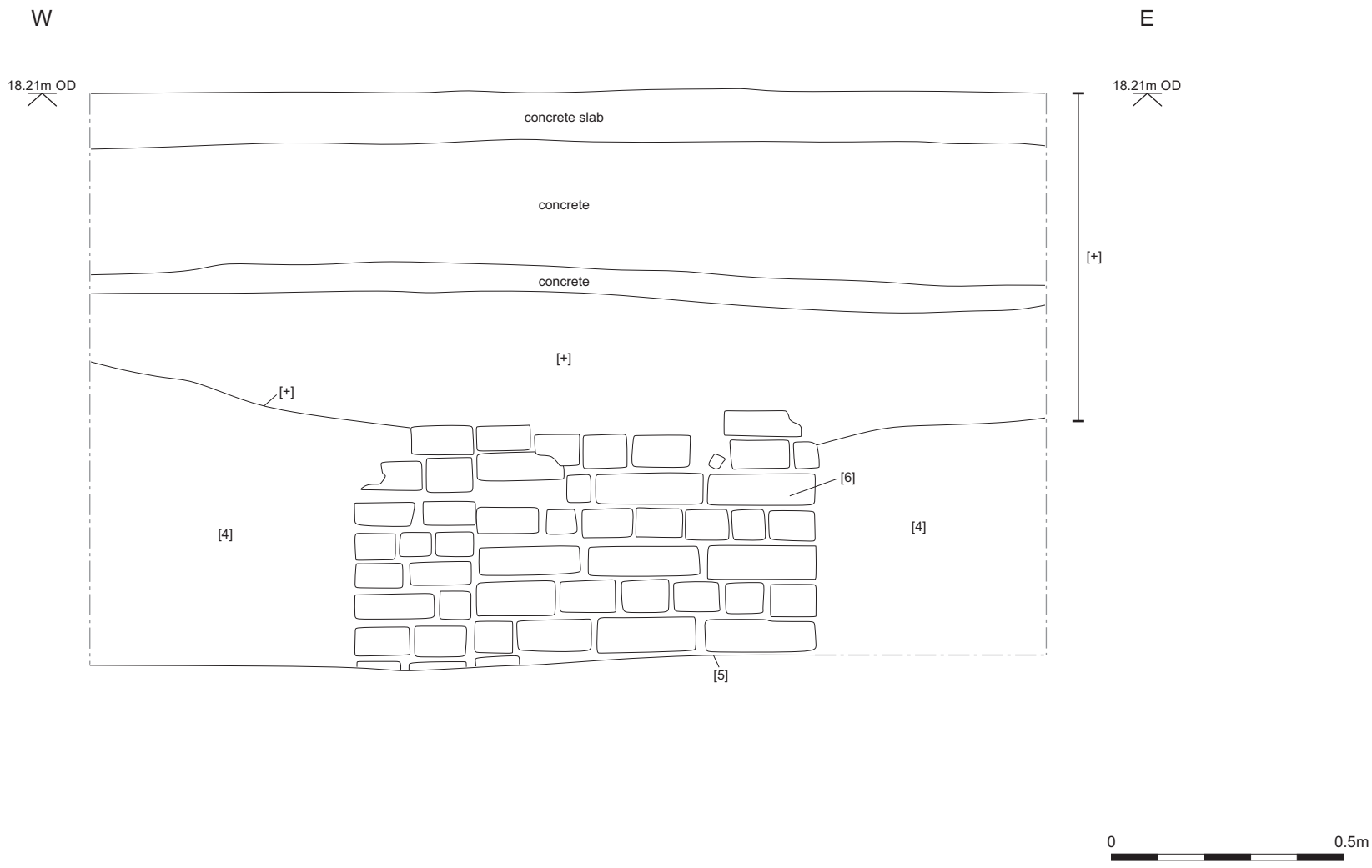


Fig 6 South-west facing section in Trench 2



531032/181950  
+

531038/181950  
+

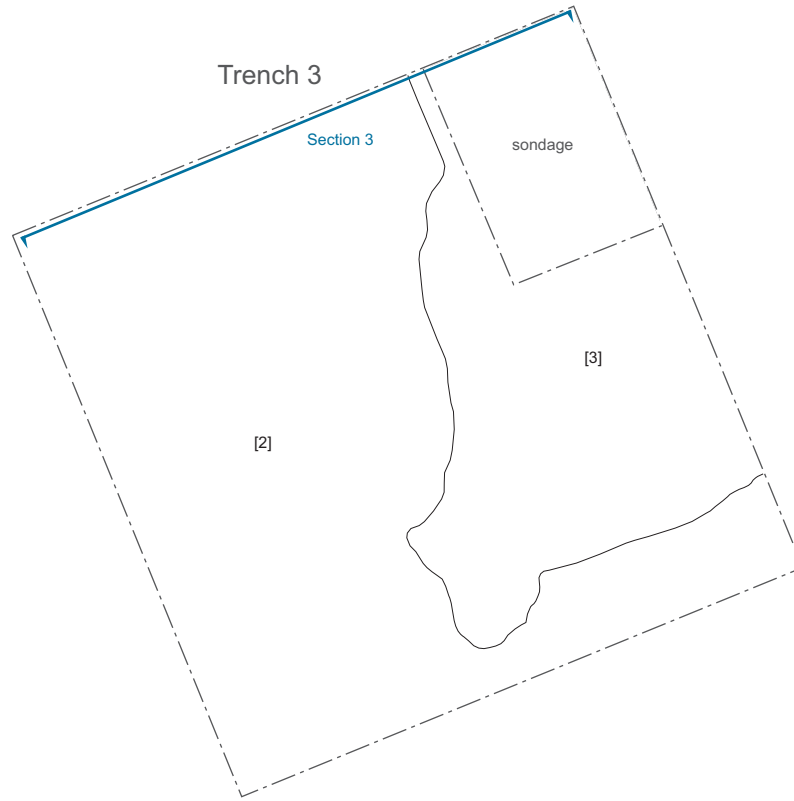


Fig 7 Plan of Trench 3

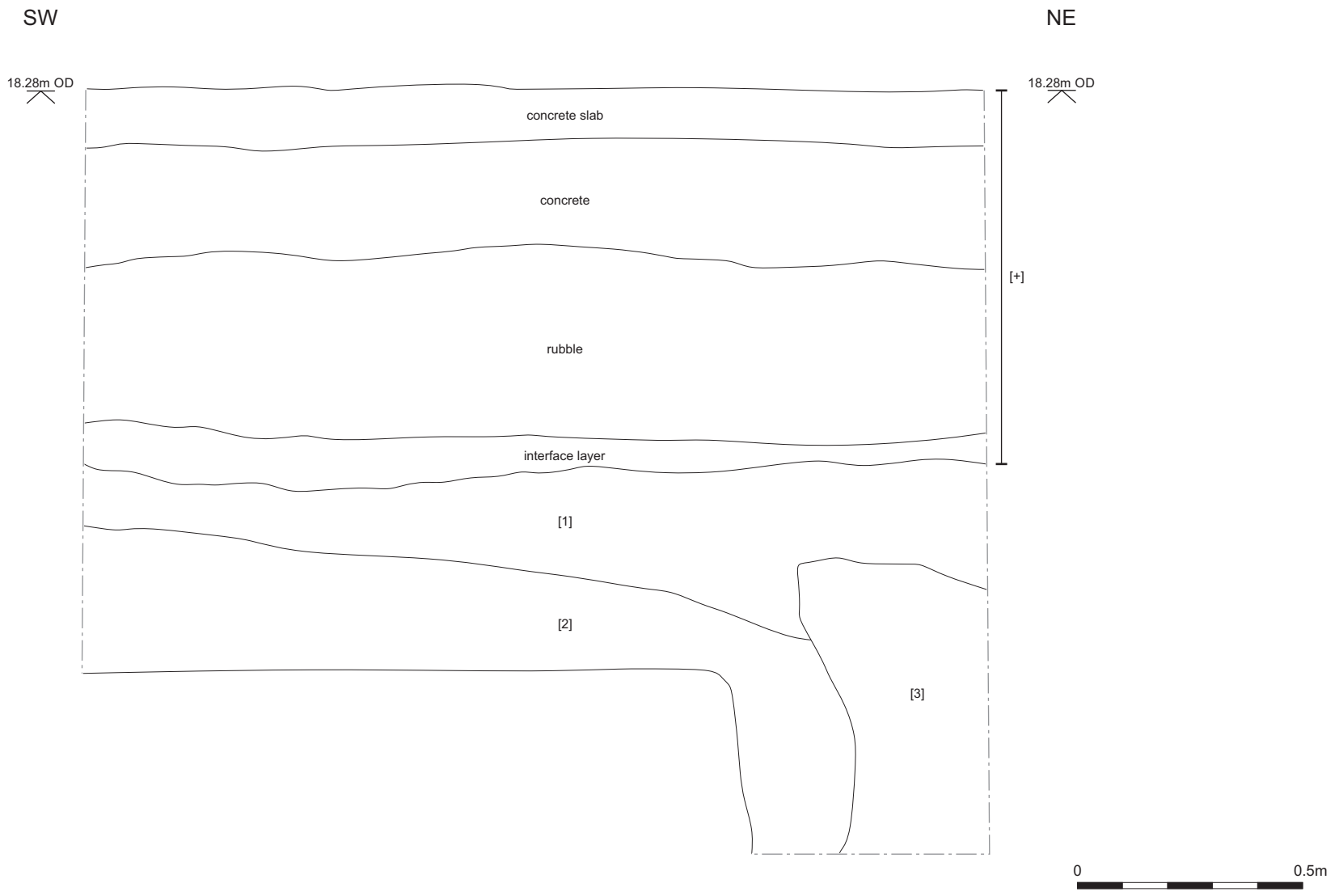


Fig 8 South-east facing section in Trench 3

## 9 OASIS archaeological report form

OASIS ID (UID)	molas1-519800
Project Name	Evaluation at 100 Gray's Inn Road and 127 Clerkenwell Road, London WC1X 8AU
Sitename	100 Gray's Inn Road and 127 Clerkenwell Road, London WC1X 8AU
Sitecode	GAI23
Project Identifier(s)	GAI23
Activity type	Evaluation
Planning Id	2022/4259/P
Reason For Investigation	Planning requirement
Organisation Responsible for work	MOLA
Project Dates	14-Sep-2023 - 22-Sep-2023
Location	100 Gray's Inn Road and 127 Clerkenwell Road, London WC1X 8AU NGR: TQ 31026 81944 LL: 51.521227, -0.112862 12 Fig: 531026,181944
Administrative Areas	Country: England County/Local Authority: Camden Local Authority District: Camden Parish: Camden, unparished area
Project Methodology	Four evaluation trenches were excavated. Three trenches measuring c. 2m x 2m x c. 1.2m depth were excavated in the basement carpark at 100 Gray's Inn Road. One trench measuring c. 3m x 1m x c. 1m depth was excavated in an external area at ground level to the rear of 127 Clerkenwell Road. The slab/ground was broken out and cleared by contractors under MOLA supervision. The trenches were machine-excavated by contractors under MOLA supervision. Archaeological excavation was carried out in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (MOLA, 2023). Trench locations were plotted on plans provided by the client using an 'offset methodology' and subsequently tied to the OS grid by the MOLA Geomatics team.

Project Results	<p>In accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (MOLA, 2023), four out of five proposed evaluation trenches were excavated on site, from 14th to 22nd September 2023. The fifth trench was cancelled due to its proximity to live services.</p> <p>Trench 4 at 127 Clerkenwell Road measured 2.8m x 1.1m. Trenches 1–3 at 100 Gray’s Inn Road did not exceed 2m x 2m. Trench 3 was the deepest, reaching 1.7m below ground level (in a sondage).</p> <p>In situ natural sand and gravel was recorded in Trench 1, surface height at 17.16m OD. A sand deposit in Trench 3, surface height at 17.23m OD, was likely in situ natural, but could not be confirmed.</p> <p>Trenches 1–3 at 100 Gray’s Inn Road contained archaeological deposits and features. Trench 4 to the rear of 127 Clerkenwell was devoid of archaeological remains, though potentially there may be survival at lower levels</p> <p>Early deposits included a possible plough or garden soil sealing natural ground in Trench 1. If a plough soil, it could potentially pre-date 16th century urban development in the area. If a garden soil, it likely dates to late-16th and 17th century urban development. Early deposits in Trench 3, included a possible geological subsoil sealing natural, or alternatively, a layer redeposited in a dumping sequence, either to level and/or raise the ground surface, or infill within a large rubbish or quarry pit. Remains interpreted as post-medieval made ground in Trenches 1 and 2 included a deposit dated 1670–1700, though the finds may be residual. A brick wall foundation in Trench 2, provisionally dated to the 19th century, may be associated with Holborn Town Hall, opened in 1880.</p> <p>Early undated deposits could potentially relate to medieval or earlier activity. Post-medieval remains may relate to activity both before and after urban development began in the area in the 16th century, as well as later urban development, including structures associated with 19th century Holborn Town Hall.</p>
Keywords	Building - POST MEDIEVAL - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Pot - POST MEDIEVAL - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus
Funder	Private or public corporation Global Holdings Management
HER	Greater London HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	Antonietta Lerz, Jeremy Taylor
HER Identifiers	
Archives	Physical Archive, Documentary Archive, Digital Archive - to be deposited with Museum of London;

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