

**WALL AT 38 RUSSELL SQUARE
ELECTRICAL SUB-STATION RELOCATION
BRITISH MUSEUM NORTH WEST DEVELOPMENT
LONDON**

London Borough of Camden

Written Scheme of Investigation for
Historic Building Recording

March 2009

Written Scheme of Investigation for Historic Building Recording of a Wall at 38 Russell Square, British Museum, London Borough of Camden

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1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited has been commissioned by the British Museum to prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation for building recording of a wall at 38 Russell Square, British Museum, London Borough of Camden. The work is required by the Local Planning Authority for the North West Development. The proposed development comprises the demolition of a number of buildings as well as an electrical sub-station, sheds and temporary accommodation, and the construction of a new purpose built research, storage and exhibition facility. The proposal includes the relocation of the electrical sub-station to the site of a former 20th century carpenters shop building (built by 1952) to the rear (west) of 38 Russell Square.
- 1.2 Numbers 38-43 Russell Square and attached railings are listed Grade II and are described in the listing description as: *'Terrace of 6 houses. c1800-03. By James Burton. Multi-coloured stock brick with rusticated stucco ground floors. 4 storeys and basements. 3 windows each, No.38 with 5-window return, mostly blind, to Montague Place. Round-arched doorways with pilaster-jambs, cornice-heads, fanlights, sidelights and double panelled doors. No.38 has entrance on return with stuccoed Doric projecting porch. No.40 doorway converted to use as a window. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sashes. Cast-iron balconies to 1st floor windows. Stucco cornice at 3rd floor level. Parapets above attic storey. INTERIORS: not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with urn finials to areas.'*
- 1.3 Listed building consent is required to make a hole in the north wall at the rear (west) of 38 Russell Square for a new service duct to the new electrical sub-station. The brick wall has been built in several phases; the earliest phase, which contains 3 large brick infilled openings, appears to represent the remains of a mid 18th century pavilion building in the garden of Bedford House (Nigel Sunter, architect at Purcell Miller Tritton LLP, pers. comm.). This house was known as Southampton House when it was built in 1657. It is shown on Rocque's map of 1746 to the east of Montague House, a late 17th century mansion, on Great Russell Street. The British Museum first opened to the public in 1759 in Montague House, on the site of the current museum building. Montague House was demolished in the 1840s to make way for larger premises for the British Museum. Bedford House was removed in about 1800 when Francis Russell, 5th Duke of Bedford, developed the area (the house site with its large gardens and the neighbouring fields) with Georgian terraces and Russell Square as its centrepiece using the builder James Burton. It was at this time, c. 1800 -03, that Burton built numbers 38 to 43 Russell Square for the Bedford Estate.
- 1.4 If the wall at the rear of 38 Russell Square does contain the remains of a mid 18th century pavilion building from the garden of Bedford House, it is clearly of significance since buildings, structures and remains of this date have been removed and replaced with the expansion and development of the British Museum and the residential development by the 5th Duke of Bedford in about 1800.
- 1.5 The proposal is to create the hole for the service duct through the brick infill of the central blocked opening of the three blocked openings in the wall.
- 1.6 This document forms the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the building recording of the north wall at the rear (west) of 38 Russell Square before and during works to create a hole in it for a new service duct to the new electrical sub-station and sets out in detail the methodology that will be employed by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited.
- 1.7 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited is a *Registered Archaeological Organisation* with the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

2 THE MITIGATION

- 2.1 The mitigation involves the recording of the wall to be altered by the development. The recording will take the form of a Level 1 record of the wall as set out in English Heritage *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (2006), in advance of the works.
- 2.2 A proposal plan and section of the existing wall and the three blocked openings by Purcell Miller Tritton dated 16 February 2009 have been provided. These will be checked on site, altered if necessary and annotated with phasing and other detail. A photographic survey will be undertaken of the wall before and during works to create a hole through the wall for the service duct. A written report will incorporate the plan and section, a selection of the photographs and a description of the wall.
- 2.3 All works will be undertaken in accordance with standards set out in:
- Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (1997) *Analysis and Recording for the Conservation and control of works to historic buildings*
 - British Archaeologists and Developers Liaison Group (1986) *Code of Practice*
 - British Standards Institution (1998) *Guide to the Principals of the Conservation of Historic Buildings (BS 7913)*
 - English Heritage (Clark, K.) (2001) *Understanding historic buildings and their landscapes for conservation*,
 - English Heritage: *Guidance Paper 98*; GLAAS: *Guidance Paper 3-Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork in London*.
 - English Heritage (Clark K) (2001) *Informed Conservation*
 - English Heritage (2000) *The presentation of historic building survey in CAD*
 - IFA (1999) *Standards and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures*
 - English Heritage: *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (2006)
- 2.4 Site perimeter hoarding/fencing and general security is the responsibility of the client or their agent.
- 2.5 Health & Safety procedure and a risk assessment will be undertaken prior to commencement of works.

3 METHOD STATEMENT

3.1 Access and Safety

- 3.1.1 The Archaeological Advisor for the Local Planning Authority will be informed seven days before the commencement of works.
- 3.1.2 Reasonable access, subject to the health and safety requirements at the site, will be granted to representatives of the Local Planning Authority and the client, or their agent, who wish to be satisfied, through site inspections, that the building recording works are being conducted to proper professional standards and in accordance with the agreements made.
- 3.1.3 All relevant health and safety legislation, CDM, COSHH regulations and codes of practice will be respected.
- 3.1.4 There is a duty of care for the client to provide all information reasonably obtainable on contamination and the location of live services before site works commence.
- 3.1.5 Any site perimeter hoarding, maintenance of gate access and general site security is the responsibility of the client or their agent, unless Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited is instructed to the contrary. The costs of this will be additional to that quoted.

3.2 Recording systems

- 3.2.1 A unique-number site code will be agreed with the Museum of London.
- 3.2.2 The recording systems adopted during the investigations will be fully compatible with those most widely used elsewhere in London and by English Heritage.
- 3.2.3 The site archive will be so organised as to be compatible with the other building recording archives produced in the Local Authority area.
- 3.2.4 A 'site location plan' indicating site north and based on the current Ordnance Survey 1:1250 map (reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO) will be prepared.
- 3.2.5 A full photographic record of the wall will be prepared. This will include black and white (35mm), colour slide (35mm) film and digital images illustrating the walls' character and setting. The colour slides will be mounted in suitable frames for long-term curation in preparation for deposition with the archive.

3.3 Recording: Methods

- 3.3.1 The wall will be recorded to Level 1 where issues of health and safety and access allow.
- 3.3.2 The purpose of the work will be to create an accurate record of the wall and its fabric that enhances the existing understanding of this structure.
- 3.3.3 The recording will take the form of a photographic survey and fabric analysis of the historic and recent building sequence, and materials used. A written description will be produced.

Phase 1: Recording of the wall before works to create the hole for the service duct

Documentary Research

- 3.3.4 No further documentary research is proposed. Readily available sources will be used, such as Purcell Miller Tritton LLP 2009 *British Museum, North West Development, Electrical Sub-Station Relocation, Historical Assessment*.

Drawn Survey

- 3.3.5 No measured survey will be undertaken. A proposal plan and section of the existing wall by Purcell Miller Tritton have been provided. These will be checked on site, altered if necessary and annotated with phasing and other detail.

- 3.3.6 The survey will include:

<u>Drawing</u>	<u>Scale</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Site plan	1:1000	To show the location of the wall on an Ordnance Survey map
Plan of the wall	1:100	Amended Purcell Miller Tritton plan
Section of the wall	1:100	Amended Purcell Miller Tritton section

Photography

- 3.3.7 Black and white (35mm), colour slide (35mm) and digital photography will be used to record the wall and evidence of the sequence of construction. Photographs will also be taken of the general setting of the wall. The photographic record will be accompanied by a photographic register detailing (as a minimum) location and direction of shot.

Written description

- 3.3.8 Descriptive and interpretative notes will be made of the wall, its phasing and its construction. These will record and analyse materials, phases, sequences and former openings. Materials (brick and mortar) will be identified and dated during the works.

Fabric Analysis

- 3.3.9 A specialist will identify and date the various phases of brick in the wall in-situ.

Trial Pit

- 3.3.10 The structural engineer requires a trial pit to be excavated in the north west corner of the footprint of the former carpenters workshop, which has recently been demolished. The trial pit is required to understand more about the foundations of the north wall (expected to continue to some 3 to 3.5m below ground level) to the rear (west) of 38 Russell Square and to provide more information on the made ground in this area. An archaeological watching brief will be undertaken during the excavation of this trial pit (see Section 1.8 in Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited 2008 *Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological evaluation at the British Museum Northwest Development, London Borough of Camden*). The archaeologist will record the part of the wall exposed by the trial pit. This recording will include photographic survey, written description, location plan and may include a drawn elevation.

Phase 2 Recording of the wall during works to create the hole for the service duct

- 3.3.11 A watching brief will be maintained during the creation of the hole for the new service duct. The aim will be to provide more information on the date and nature of the blocking and more information about the opening.

Photography

- 3.3.12 Black and white (35mm), colour slide (35mm) and digital photography will be used to record the wall during the creation of the hole for the new service duct. The photographic record will be accompanied by a photographic register detailing (as a minimum) location and direction of shot.

Written description

- 3.3.13 Descriptive and interpretative notes will be made of the bricks of the infilled window that are removed to create the hole for the new service duct.

Fabric Analysis

- 3.3.14 Bricks removed from the blocked window will be analysed and dated by a specialist.

3.4 Post-Recording Report

- 3.4.1 A report will be prepared based on the above record, describing the wall and its phasing sequence. It will present the results of the building recording.
- 3.4.2 The report will be fully illustrated with a plan, section and photographs and will outline the results of the work. The direction of photographs taken will be indicated within the report. There will be a description of the buildings' architecture and development.
- 3.4.3 The report will have the following contents:

Introduction

Historic background

Description of the wall including its phases of development

Discussion and conclusions

Plan and section

Photographs

- 3.4.4 The report will be delivered within 2 to 3 weeks of completion of the site work.

4 RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMING

- 4.1 The amount of recording will be dependent on the level of safe access available to the wall.
- 4.2 Accommodation, toilet facilities and flushing facilities for the attendant building recording team will be located within reasonable distance of the wall.
- 4.3 The Health and Safety policies of Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited will be followed and in accordance with all statutory regulations. The work will conform to existing site policies and procedures.
- 4.4 The site team will consist of a historic buildings analyst, a brick fabric specialist and a photographer.
- 4.5 The report will be prepared as soon as possible after completion of the on-site work and will be submitted to the client, English Heritage and the London Borough of Camden. Copies will be lodged in the LAARC and the Local Studies Library.