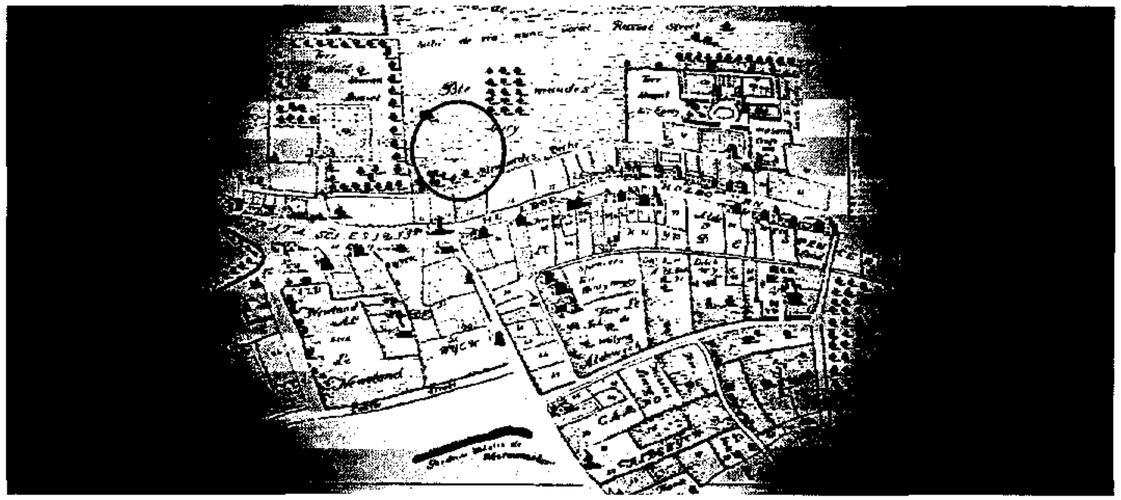
ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORT



125 HIGH HOLBORN
London
WC1

London Borough of Camden

An archaeological impact assessment

December 2004

MUSEUM OF LONDON
Archaeology Service

125 HIGH HOLBORN
London
Wc1

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An archaeological impact assessment

National Grid Reference: 530465 181555

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SUMMARY (NON-TECHNICAL)

This report presents the results of desk-based assessment work carried out by the Museum of London Archaeology Service on the site of 125 High Holborn, London, WC1. The report was commissioned by Montagu Evans on behalf of the client Grandsoft Limited.

The report summarises the potential for archaeological remains on the study site and previous archaeological investigations and findspots in the area. The effect of past and proposed development on archaeological survival has also been considered.

Within the vicinity of the proposed development, sites have produced evidence for human activity from the prehistoric period to the present. Analysis of recorded finds in the area can provide an assessment of the archaeological potential that may be uncovered within the area of the development. Of particular interest is the dispersed Roman cemetery that lay to the north and south of the Roman road that is known to have existed on the general alignment of modern High Holborn/Oxford Street, and any evidence of the precise line of this road. Features and soil profiles relating to land use or occupation in the area during the Saxon, medieval and post-medieval periods would also be of significance.

The proposed development, in particular the construction of a 4.0m deep basement across the entire building footprint, is likely to remove any archaeological deposits that have survived previous development impacts. In the absence of a detailed levelled survey of the existing foundations and basements, these previous impacts can only be estimated, but at present only small areas of archaeological stratigraphy and isolated cut features are expected to have survived.

This report concludes that; subject to the views of the Planning Authority, the actual nature and survival of archaeological deposits and features beneath the standing buildings, and hence the impact of the proposed development on the archaeological resource, could be clarified by small scale trial work on site (an archaeological field evaluation). Such work might be arranged in conjunction with any planned engineers' site investigation.

CONTENTS

125 High Holborn, Archaeological impact assessment © MOLAS
Client:Grandsoft Limited

Cover: Conjectural plan of St Giles and the near vicinity in the 13th century

(After Clinch 1852)

FIGURES

Note: site outlines may appear differently on some figures owing to distortions in historic maps.

1 Introduction

1.1 Site location

The proposed development is located in the London Borough of Camden, on the north side of High Holborn. Although known as 125 High Holborn, the street frontage addresses are: 9–10 Southampton Place, 124–126 High Holborn and 1–13 Southampton Row. The site is bounded by, High Holborn to the south, Southampton Place to the west and Southampton Row to the east. An unnamed lane leading west off Southampton Row and the south wall of 8 Southampton Place defines the north of the site (Fig 1 and Fig 15). Within this report the properties associated with the area described above will be known as 'the site'. The Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference for the site centre is 530465 181555.

1.2 Site status

This document has been prepared in response to the proposed development and associated application for planning consent at the site. The report and will assess the impact upon surviving archaeological deposits likely to be caused by the redevelopment. The site is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area (as designated by the London Borough of Camden) and is also located within Archaeological Priority Area APA 2: London Suburbs. No listed buildings currently exist at the site.

The site is located within the area surrounding the Middle Saxon settlement of Lundenwic, located to the southeast. The site also lies adjacent to a Roman Road. No previous archaeological work has been carried out within the site.

1.3 Origin and scope of the report

This report was commissioned from the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS) by Montagu Evans on behalf of Grandsoft Limited. It forms a desk-based stage in the process of archaeological assessment. The conclusions will provide the Local Planning Authority with sufficient information to decide if further assessment in the form of onsite trial work is necessary within the area of the development. This part of the London Borough of Camden has been the subject of numerous archaeological investigations in the past (see section 3.4) therefore sufficient data exists to advance an outline model of the archaeological potential of the site. The archaeological assessment has been carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 2001).

Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16), issued by the Department of Environment in November 1990, identifies the need for early archaeological consultation to determine the impact of construction schemes upon the buried archaeological heritage. Once the results of the initial desk-based assessment and any on site trial work are known, then an informed decision can be made upon whether further archaeological safeguards are necessary. If the initial assessment stages prove positive, such safeguards may include design measures to preserve archaeological remains *in situ*, or, where this is not feasible, archaeological excavation in advance of development, known as preservation by record.

Note: within the limitations imposed by dealing with historical material and maps, the information in this document is, to the best knowledge of the author and MoLAS, correct at the time of writing. Further archaeological investigation, more information about the nature of the present buildings, and/or more detailed proposals for redevelopment may require changes to all or parts of the document.

1.4 Aims and objectives

A desk-based assessment (*Archaeological assessment*) as defined by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 2001) will

> determine, as far as is reasonably possible from existing records, the nature of the archaeological resource within a specified area. It will be undertaken using appropriate methods and practices which satisfy the stated aims of the project, and which comply with the Code of Conduct, Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology, and other relevant by-laws of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

A desk-based assessment represents

> a programme of assessment of the known or potential archaeological resource within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater. It consists of a collation of existing written, graphic, photographic and electronic information in order to identify the likely character, extent, quality and worth of the known or potential archaeological resource in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate.

The purpose of desk-based assessment is

> To gain information about the known or potential archaeological resource within a given area or site (including its presence or absence, character and extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and relative quality of the potential archaeological resource) in order to make an assessment of its merit in context, leading to one or more of the following:

- the formulation of a strategy to ensure the recording, preservation or management of the resource
- the formulation of a strategy for further investigation, whether or not intrusive, where the character and value of the resource is not sufficiently defined to permit a mitigation strategy or other response to be devised
- the formulation of a proposal for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research

The submission of a desk-based assessment to accompany a planning application also conforms to the intent of paragraph 7 (under 'The role of public authorities and planners') of the *Code of good practice* established by the Cultural Heritage Committee of the Council of Europe (CHCE 2000), which states that 'before taking decisions affecting the archaeological heritage, planners should obtain adequate information and advice, applying non destructive methods of investigation wherever possible'; and also with the intent of paragraph 1 (under 'The role of architects and developers') which states that 'the purpose [of assessment] will be not only to establish if it is necessary to dig but also to build a picture of [the site's] morphology and its potential.'

1.5 Methodology

The assessment has been carried out in accordance with guidance from various bodies including the London Borough of Camden, the Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service, the Institute of Field Archaeologists and the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers. In summary, the work has involved

- identifying the client's objectives
- identifying the sources available for consultation (standard published works and cartographic sources, and archive resources viz the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record, local authority/GLAAS, MoLAS archive)
- assembling, consulting and examining these sources
- consulting specialists within MoLAS as appropriate

The degree to which archaeological deposits actually survive on the site will depend on previous land use, so an assessment is made of the destructive effect of the previous and present activity and/or buildings, from the study of available plan information, ground investigation reports, or similar.

In order that the appropriate archaeological response(s) can be identified, consideration is given to the need for further assessment and/or field evaluation work to identify and locate surviving deposits on the site.

1.6 Proposed development summary

The proposed redevelopment comprises the demolition of the present buildings and the construction of a new six storey building at the site that will be given over to retail and office space. The proposed redevelopment will also incorporate a lower ground floor basement area that extends throughout the building footprint. It will provide space for retail units, car parking and boiler rooms (Fig 15). For further details see section 5.

2 Planning and legislative framework

2.1 Planning policy guidance (PPG16)

The then Department of the Environment published its *Archaeology and planning: a consultative document*, Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG 16), in November 1990. This set out the Secretary of State's policy on archaeological remains on land, and provided recommendations many of which have been integrated into local development plans. The key points in PPG16 are the following:

> Archaeological remains should be seen as a finite and non-renewable resource, and in many cases highly fragile and vulnerable to damage and destruction. Appropriate management is therefore essential to ensure that they survive in good condition. In particular, care must be taken to ensure that archaeological remains are not needlessly or thoughtlessly destroyed. They can contain irreplaceable information about our past and the potential for an increase in future knowledge. They are part of our sense of national identity and are valuable both for their own sake and for their role in education, leisure and tourism.
>
> Where nationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and their settings, are affected by a proposed development there should be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation.
>
> The key to informed and reasonable planning decisions is for consideration to be given early, before formal planning applications are made, to the question of whether archaeological remains are known to exist on a site where development is planned and the implications for the development proposal.
>
> When important remains are known to exist, or when archaeologists have good reason to believe that important remains exist, developers will be able to help by preparing sympathetic designs using, for example, foundations which avoid disturbing the remains altogether or minimise damage by raising ground levels under a proposed new structure, or by careful siting of landscaped or open areas. There are techniques available for sealing archaeological remains underneath buildings or landscaping, thus securing their preservation for the future even though they remain inaccessible for the time being.
>
> If physical preservation *in situ* is not feasible, an archaeological excavation for the purposes of 'preservation by record' may be an acceptable alternative. From an archaeological point of view, this should be regarded as a second-best option. Agreements should also provide for the subsequent publication of the results of any excavation programme.
>
> Decisions by planning authorities on whether to preserve archaeological remains *in situ*, in the face of proposed development, have to be taken on merit, taking account of development plan policies and all other material considerations – including the importance of the remains – and weighing these against the need for development.
>
> Planning authorities, when they propose to allow development which is damaging to archaeological remains, must ensure that the developer has satisfactorily provided for excavation and recording, either through voluntary agreement with the archaeologists or, in the absence of agreement, by imposing an appropriate condition on the planning permission.

PPG16 itself forms part of an emerging European framework that recognises the importance of the archaeological and historic heritage in consideration of

development proposals. This has recently been formulated in the *Code of good practice on archaeological heritage in urban development policies* established by the Cultural Heritage Committee of the Council of Europe, and adopted at the 15th plenary session in Strasbourg on 8–10 March 2000 (CC-PAT [99] 18 rev 3). As stated at the beginning of that document however, 'a balance must be struck between the desire to conserve the past and the need to renew for the future'.

2.1.1 Conservation areas

The site lies within a conservation area (Conservation Area 1: Bloomsbury). A conservation area is defined as 'an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.' (section 69 of the 'Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act' 1990. Local authorities designate conservation areas within boroughs. Designation brings with it a number of controls including: additional controls over the demolition of buildings; strengthened controls over minor development; and special provision for the protection of trees. The objective of these measures is to provide for the preservation and enhancement of the special interest of the place. The intention is not to stifle change, but to provide for the positive management of these unique areas.

2.2 Archaeology and planning in Camden

The London Borough of Camden's Unitary Development Plan was adopted 2 March 2000 after extensive consultation on the draft plan and a public inquiry. This plan has been subsequently revised and a *Revised Deposit Draft* was made available for public consultation in May of 2004. It recognises the importance of the buried archaeological heritage, reflecting the national policies outlined above. The council seeks to ensure the preservation of the archaeological heritage and to promote its interpretation and presentation to the public. The relevant policies and sections in the adopted plan are as follows:

> **POLICY EN41 Preservation of Archaeological Heritage:** The Council will seek to protect, enhance and preserve sites of archaeological interest and their settings. When researching the development potential of a site, developers should in all cases undertake their own archaeological desk-based assessments of whether a site is known to contain archaeological remains. Within Archaeological Priority Areas and on other sites having archaeological potential, the Council may require archaeological field evaluation to be carried out before a planning application is determined.
>
> **POLICY EN42 Retaining Archaeological Sites and Their Setting**: The Council will recommend that important archaeological remains acquire due statutory protection. There will be a presumption in favour of physical preservation of nationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and important archaeological remains should be preserved in situ. Where the preservation of such remains in situ cannot be achieved, the Council will require that no development shall take place until satisfactory excavation and recording of the remains have been carried out on site by an archaeological organisation approved by the Council. In appropriate cases, the Council may seek voluntary agreements to cover such matters, including the publication of the results, or may grant planning permission subject to conditions. Where developers do not propose due provision for accommodating important remains, permission may be refused.

The following background is also of relevance:

Para 4.87 The history of the Borough indicates that there is considerable likelihood that archaeological remains will be found in certain parts of the Borough which are identified on the Proposals Map as Archaeological Priority Areas. There already have been many individual 'finds' in other parts of the Borough, and no location can be ruled out. The Council will consult with and be guided by English Heritage (Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service) on the archaeological implications of development proposals, especially within the Archaeological Priority Areas and in the vicinity of known find spots. A record of these is maintained by the English heritage Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (Greater London Sites and Monuments Record).

Where there is good reason to believe that there are remains of archaeological importance, the Council will consider directing applicants to supply further details of proposed developments, including the results of archaeological desk-based assessment and field evaluation, under the provisions of Article 3(2) of the Town and Country Planning (General Development) Order 1995. If important archaeological remains are found, developers should adopt measures which allow the remains to be permanently preserved in situ. In other cases the Council may seek to secure provision for the analysis, interpretation, display and publication of the results of archaeological investigation and of any finds.

The UDP Deposit Draft of 2004 takes account of the changing circumstances in the area and changes such as the Mayor for London's planning powers, amendments to national planning legislation, Camden's community strategy and the changing property market.

Para 3.75 There is considerable likelihood that archaeological remains will be found in certain parts of the Borough, and these are listed in Appendix 4 - Archaeological Priority Areas and shown on the Proposals Map as archaeological priority areas. However, there have already been many individual finds in other parts of the Borough, and no location can be ruled out. The Council will consult with, and be guided by, English Heritage on the archaeological implications of development proposals, especially within the archaeological priority areas and for sites of archaeological potential. These are recorded in the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record, maintained by English Heritage.

Para 3.76 When researching the development potential of a site, developers should, in all cases, assess whether the site is known or likely to contain archaeological remains. Where there is good reason to believe that there are remains of archaeological importance on a site, the Council will consider directing applicants to supply further details of proposed developments, including the results of archaeological desk-based assessment and field evaluation, under the provisions of Article 3(2) of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995.

Par 3.77 Within archaeological priority areas and for sites of archaeological potential, the Council may require an archaeological field evaluation to be carried out before a planning application is determined. If important archaeological remains are found, developers should adopt measures that allow the remains to be permanently preserved in situ. Where the preservation of such remains in situ cannot be achieved, the Council will require that no development shall take place until satisfactory excavation and recording of the remains have been carried out on site by an archaeological organisation approved by the Council. In appropriate cases, the Council may grant planning permission subject to conditions, or seek voluntary agreements to cover such matters, including making provision for access, interpretation and display for public benefit during excavation and publication of the recorded results. Recorded results should also be provided by the developer for inclusion in the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record. Where developers do not propose due provision for accommodating important archaeological remains, planning permission may be refused.

The Council has designated a number of Archaeological Priority Areas (APAs) in the borough. The present site lies within one of these Zones, **APA2: London Suburbs**. The APAs previously designated in the London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan (UDP) were reassessed in 2002, as the existing proposals map was prepared in 1990. The 2002 revisions to the UDP were implemented with the data from archaeological interventions from the intervening decade. The APAs boundaries have consequently changed to accord better with the available archaeological and historical evidence. The revised draft of the Secondary Planning Guidance on Archaeology in Camden was prepared in 2004.

3 Background: archaeological and historical

3.1 Introduction

The time-scales used in this report are as follows.

Palaeolithic	*c* 450,000–12,000 BC
Mesolithic	*c* 12,000–4000 BC
Neolithic	*c* 4000–2000 BC
Bronze Age	*c* 2000–600 BC
Iron Age	*c* 600 BC–AD 43
Roman	AD 43–410
Saxon	AD 410–*c* 1000
Medieval	*c* AD 1000–1500
Post-medieval–modern (including industrial)	*c* 1500–present

Sites referred to within this section (eg, site 1, site 2) are shown on (Fig 2) and appear in the gazetteer of sites, section 3.4.

3.2 Geology and topography

London occupies part of the Thames Basin, a broad syncline of chalk filled in the centre with Tertiary sands and clays. In most of London, this Tertiary series of bedrock consists of London Clay. During this period southeast England was covered by warm, shallow seas. The London Clay is generally firm, dark brown to bluish grey in colour. At outcrops it becomes weathered, and is brown.

Above the bedrock lie the Pleistocene (Quaternary) fluvial deposits of the River Thames arranged in flights or gravel terraces. These terraces represent the remains of former floodplains of the river, the highest being the oldest with each terrace becoming progressively younger down the valley side. The gravels beneath the vicinity of the site belong to the Lynch Hill Terrace [1].

When not truncated or eroded these gravels are normally overlain by brickearth, a mixed clay-silt loess deposited by wind and water action after the last, most recent glaciation, *c* 10,000 years ago.

The site lies approximately 1km to the southwest of the course of the old Fleet River and *c* 600m south of a former tributary to the Fleet, that is believed to have followed a course from modern day Guilford Street to the north, to join the Fleet at Warner Street to the east. The site of the proposed redevelopment is close to the top of ancient high ground, the crest of which is thought to lie close to High Holborn/New Oxford Street. Modern ground level in the area of the site exhibits a slight slope from north to south and from west to east; from 24.66m OD at 13 Southampton Row to 23.88m OD at

[1] British Geological Survey 1994, Mapsheet 256

124 High Holborn, and from 24.22m OD at 9 Southampton Place to 24.00m at 126 High Holborn. These slopes are very slight, and the degree to which they reflect the depth of made ground beneath the site and the underlying natural topography is uncertain. To the south of the site, the north–south fall in present surface levels is more pronounced, reflecting the fall in the terrace gravels towards the river Thames.

Observations of the untruncated natural drift deposits have been made in the very close vicinity of the site. The closest was located approximately 85m to the south during a MoLAS watching brief undertaken at Aviation House, Kingsway (Fig 2, site 23). Here truncated natural deposits of gravel were recorded at a height of 20.28m AOD (Fig 2, site 1) and were sealed by post medieval demolition and makeup deposits obscuring the natural topography of the area. To the northwest of the site, at 67–73 Southampton Row (Fig 2, site 13) a MoLAS watching brief noted that the surface of the natural gravels had been truncated to 21.96m OD by the basement of the standing building (Cowie 1995). Further MoLAS excavation and evaluation trenches have identified the surface of the natural gravels at *c*. 20.60m OD 140m southwest of the site, at Holborn Town Hall 'Site C' (Fig 2, site 12) and at *c* 18.15m OD, 200m south of the site, at 66–68 Great Queen Street (Fig 2, site 6). The recorded levels illustrate a clear fall of the natural topography from north to south.

The overlying colluvial deposits (brickearth) reflect the ancient local site topography. Deposits of brickearth *c* 0.35m thick were observed at Holborn Town Hall Site C and suggested evidence of weathering. To the south at 66–68 Great Queen Street and in the Covent Garden area generally, the brickearth is known to be up to and occasionally over 0.95m deep. This suggests that the deposit was more susceptible to erosion towards the higher exposed ground, remaining relatively undisturbed towards the lower, more sheltered areas. This pattern of erosion would result in closer variations in the surface topography of the underlying terrace gravels.

Further evidence for the height of surviving natural deposits was recorded during geotechnical fieldwork at 133–136 High Holborn in June of 1996. The results of the geotechnical study give an indication of the nature of the soil profile immediately below the site (Ground Explorations Limited 1996). Here, at a ground level height of 22.90m OD, a 0.90m thick deposit of made ground was logged within a borehole. It is likely that this observation represents the post medieval deposition of demolition debris and construction debris laid down to raise the ground level in this area. Natural deposits of brickearth can often be logged as made ground, the potential therefore for the existence of natural deposits overlying the gravels at approximately 22.00m AOD should not be ruled out. MoLAS fieldwork in this part of London suggests that at least 2.0–2.5m of made ground would normally be found below street level and it is possible that this borehole was located in a semi-basemented area.

3.3 Archaeological and historical summary

Please refer to Fig 2, for the location of the relevant SMR and archaeological sites.

3.3.1 Prehistoric

Occasional finds of flint tools in the vicinity indicate a prehistoric presence from the Palaeolithic onwards. The edge of the Lynch Hill gravel terrace was probably an attractive area for early prehistoric activity as flint tools are found in a band across the southern end of Camden Borough. Palaeolithic finds within the site surroundings include as many as five Palaeolithic hand axes (SMR 081701) that were recovered from the local area around the site by ground workers in the early 20th century. Two further handaxes and a small assemblage of flint flakes were found adjacent to the site at the southern end of Southampton Row (SMR 081706) and a pointed handaxe was recovered from gravel at Eagle Street (SMR 081708) approximately 250m to the east of the site. Two Palaeolithic handaxes were also recovered from gravel during excavations for central railway at High Holborn (SMR 081707). A small assemblage of flint cores were recovered near the junction of Wild Court and Kingsway (SMR 081702), the finds represent evidence for activity in the later prehistoric periods and were dated to the Mesolithic, Neolithic and Late Bronze Age. Despite these finds, no direct evidence for prehistoric settlement has been noted in the vicinity.

Evidence for *in situ* prehistoric land use is closely allied to the survival of brickearth deposits. Generally Mesolithic and later finds would normally lie within this and the overlying natural soil profile; thus finds of this date have been found to the south and southeast of the site where the brickearth is thicker and less eroded. The more ancient (Palaeolithic) implements are occasionally found within the underlying river terrace gravels and are not normally *in situ*, having been eroded out of earlier deposits by glacial phases of the River Thames.

Work further south, in the Covent Garden area, has suggested that in-situ prehistoric land use evidence is only likely to be present if the overlying brickearth stratum has survived the truncating effect of more recent activity, especially modern basements. The degree of such survival on the study site is uncertain.

A Neolithic stone axe was discovered at 107–115 Long Acre and at 55–57 Drury Lane (DRY90, site 5) a soil horizon of Iron Age date was also examined during the excavation.

No on Fig 2	SMR ref	Address	Period	Type
1	081708	Eagle Street	Palaeolithic	Axe
2	081707	High Holborn	Palaeolithic	Axe
3	081706	Southampton Row	Palaeolithic	Flint artefact
4	081701	Kingsway/Great Queen Street	Palaeolithic	Axe
5	081702	Kingsway	Mesolithic	Core

3.3.2 Roman

The site is located some distance outside of the Roman City (Londinium) within the presumed rural hinterland on the fringes of the city. Roman roads ran under Holborn/Oxford Street (from Newgate to Silchester) immediately adjacent to southern site boundary. Roman infrastructure also extended along the line now followed by the Strand further to the south and also along the line of Theobalds Road and Bloomsbury Way (Fig 2). Roman law required the dead to be buried outside the City perimeter and dispersed cemeteries are known to have been established along the side of roads in the 1st century, some were still in use up until the end of the Roman administration in the 4th century.

Several finds associated with roadside burial have been made nearby. An urned cremation was recorded at Southampton Row (SMR 081782) and a Roman cremation urn was also found during the construction of Holborn Station in 1909 (SMR 083787). In 1911 a marble tombstone was recovered from Lambs Conduit Street (SMR 080359). To the west a tombstone inscribed to G. Pomponius Valens was discovered at Barter Street (SMR 081774) and an ossuaria for cremated remains in New Oxford Street (SMR 081786). Although these finds reflect Roman burials, there is no clear evidence for an extensive cemetery alongside the Roman road. This may be a consequence of the destruction of burials without record during successive periods of development along High Holborn, but it is possible that the burials may have been more scattered, either focused on the road frontages, or set within a number of smaller cemetery enclosures.

The evidence to suggest roman occupation of the area local to the site is rather sparse perhaps reflecting the scale of Roman settlement outside the Roman city walls. Occasional finds have been reported from the area around the site. To the south a limestone figurine was recovered from Drury Lane (SMR 081263). The remains of a statue (SMR 081186) were discovered at the junction of Wild Court and Kingsway a little to the west of Lincolns Inn Fields. A brooch (SMR 081772) was also found at Kingsway at the junction with Parker Street some 95m to the south.

There is little current evidence for a concentrated Roman settlement in the zone immediately around the site. No evidence for structural remains near to the site has been recorded however, a Roman field system may have been imposed on the roadside areas that were not in use for burial. Evidence of this, or other extramural land uses such as quarrying or refuse disposal may survive at the site.

Occasional Roman features and residual finds have come from a number of recent archaeological investigations in the area. A small assemblage of abraded pottery sherds were retained from buried soil layers recorded during an archaeological evaluation at Holborn Town Hall Site C (site 18, STY96), the finds are thought to reflect Roman agricultural land use in the area. A compacted gravel surface and a number of cut features, including an east–west aligned ditch and three shallow gullies, were recorded during a MoLAS watching brief at Aviation House, Kingsway (site 23, KGY 99). Pottery retained from the features included a fragmented vessel which dated to *c* AD 50–80, and Roman brick recovered from the backfill of the ditch suggests that it had fallen out of use by AD 140–200. More recently three large brickearth quarry pits dating to *c* AD 120–150 were recorded during archaeological

excavations at Holborn Town Hall (site 22 HHN 99), the quarry pits were backfilled with industrial and possibly domestic refuse dump deposits. At the City Literary site (site 17, KEL00) three pits were found, containing Roman pottery and ceramic building material. The sites appear in close proximity to the line of the Roman road along Holborn (Fig 2).

No on Fig 2	SMR ref	Address	Period	Type
6	083787	Holborn Station	Roman	Cremation urn
7	081186	Kingsway	Roman	Statue
8	081782	Southampton Row	Roman, 1st Century AD	Cremation urn
9	081774	Barter Street	Roman	Tombstone
10	081772	Kingsway	Roman	Brooch
11	080359	Lambs Conduit Street	Roman	Tombstone
12	081786	New Oxford Street	Roman, 1st Century AD	Ossuaria
13	081263	Drury Lane	Roman	Figurine

3.3.3 Saxon

Britain was abandoned by the Roman administration at the beginning of the 5th century AD. With this departure Roman Londinium (the present City of London) seriously declined. The collapsed and probably ruinous nature of Londinium was one of the factors which led to the establishment of a separate Saxon settlement, in the 7th and 8th centuries, on the western side of the river Fleet in the area of what is now Aldwych, the Strand and Covent Garden. This trading settlement (referred to as an emporium by the historian Bede) was known as Lundenwic (the *wic* or *wych* in these names implying a market or port). Areas of the old Roman town seem to have been reoccupied or remained occupied as ecclesiastical and possibly royal estates.

Lundenwic has been charted, mostly by excavations since its discovery in 1984, by plotting the finds and structures dating from the 7th to 9th centuries (Cowie 1988, Vince 1990). From present knowledge the settlement covered over 60 hectares bordered roughly by the National Gallery at Trafalgar Square in the west, the river Thames to the south, and Oxford Street/High Holborn on the north. Though no finds have been made in the zone between Kingsway and Chancery Lane, a small number have been found to the east of Chancery Lane, including a fine sword pommel from Fetter Lane. The original eastern boundary of Lundenwic may therefore have been along the deep Fleet valley that separated it from the old city of Londinium, although at present, a probable Saxon pit or well from Alexandra House, Kingsway (Fig 2, site 1, ALO91) represents the most easterly evidence for occupation.

Generally Saxon occupation sites within Lundenwic are characterised by surfaces, alleyways, burials, pits, wells, ditches, postholes, beam slots, wattle and daub walls and floors of brickearth. A number of archaeological sites have been excavated within the Lundenwic area that have produced extensive Saxon remains of this kind, these include site 10 (RUS87), site 11 (SGA89), site 5 (DRY90), site 2 (BOB91) and site 3 (BRU92) (Fig 2).

A loomweight of Saxon date was found in Kingsway in the 1920s (SMR 081230) and more recently, a sherd of Ipswich-type pottery was also recovered from Kingsway near Wild Court (SMR 082188). A Saxon pit was recorded during archaeological work at Crown Court near Russell Street to the south of the site (SMR 082140). Archaeological excavations at 27–29 Macklin Street (site 7, MAC89) approximately 200m to the southwest of the site produced evidence for Saxon activity in the area. A probable Saxon soil horizon or midden containing Ipswich ware pottery was sealed beneath later soil deposits and at 66–68 Great Queen Street (site 6, KWH96) a number of Saxon pits and structures were recently recorded. Further evidence for Saxon activity was identified during archaeological excavations *c* 320m to the south of the site at Keeley Street (site 17, KEL00). A cesspit believed to be of Saxon date was cut into natural deposits of brickearth and sherds of Saxon pottery and fragments of loomweight were recovered. Further south at Hanover Place (site 15, HVR02) several rubbish pits and the remains of a timber lined well were recorded which are believed also to be of Saxon date. To the southwest of the site at Endell Street (site 19, EDL98) a number of cut features were recorded and animal bone associated with the features was radiocarbon dated to *c* AD 432–644, the Early Saxon period.

At 45–7 Floral Street/51–54 Long Acre (ROH90, not illustrated) site evaluation by the MoLAS uncovered Saxon deposits, two undated inhumations and a number of scattered human bones. This has led to a suggestion that occupation on and north of Long Acre may represent some kind extension of the Saxon town; an earlier centre to the south (with these burials on its periphery) and further extensions to the north in later times. Archaeological excavation by the MoLAS at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden (ROP95, not illustrated) have revealed extensive evidence for Saxon Lundenwic, the remains included structures, roads, pits, and two inhumations (Malcolm and Bowsher 2003).

From the current archaeological data it appears that the Saxon town is established to the south of the site. It seems likely, however, that the area of the proposed redevelopment would have been located within the suburban borders of the Saxon town and therefore has some potential to yield archaeological remains of this date.

In the Saxon system of field division it was usual to leave a strip of land, known as a 'headland', running alongside a road with fields divided behind that. It is possible that there was a headland with an associated field system that ran on either side of the main road (now High Holborn), and the town was situated to the south of that. Evidence of this field system may still exist, for example as ditches and plough furrows.

In AD 886 King Alfred repossessed the City of London, ejecting Viking invaders, and the later Saxon (850–1100) and the medieval City of London was established within the protection of the original Roman city walls (known in Alfred's time as Lundenburgh). This Alfredian settlement then grew continuously and the old settlement of Lundenwic was abandoned, its lack of defences in a time of unrest probably accounting for this.

The old Roman road (High Holborn/Oxford Street, Fig 2) seems to have continued in use throughout the Saxon period and by the 10th century the area of Saxon

Lundenwic, north of the Strand and south of Holborn had become part of the Westminster Abbey estates.

No on Fig 2	SMR ref	Address	Period	Type
14	082140	Crown Court	Saxon	Pit
15	081230	Kingsway	Saxon	Loomweight
16	81288	Gate Street, Kingsway	Saxon	Pot sherd

3.3.4 Medieval

The site is located within the ancient parish of St. Giles in the fields, a settlement that became established after the foundation of a leper hospital by Queen Maud, wife of Henry I in the early 12th century (Le-Faye 1971). St. Giles in the fields is bounded by the parishes of St Andrew and St Pancras to the north and Bloomsbury to the west.

The 'Agas' map (Fig 3), based on the Copperplate map of *c* 1559, shows that the site lay in what was still essentially a medieval rural landscape east of the village of St Giles. The site lies in a field west of Grays Inn, north of High Holborn and east of a (13th century in origin) medieval moated manor house. It would appear that the area was still relatively undeveloped at this time although it is difficult to scale accurately from this rustic (though helpful) drawing.

Drury Lane may originally have been part of the Saxon street plan, at least in part. It continued in use as a major way from Aldwych and the church of St Clement Danes to Holborn and villages or hamlets to the north and west, such as St. Giles and Tottenham Court. There may have been some quarrying for brickearth to use in making roof and floor tiles and bricks, but this activity was more common in fields on the eastern, Aldgate side of the City (where the associated fumes of kilns, under prevailing winds, were taken away from the City itself).

Considerable extra mural development did take place to the west of the site in the medieval period, with the foundation of the Inns of Court and Chancery: Grays Inn (13th century), New Inn (14th century), Lincolns Inn (SMR 0202308) and Clements Inn (15th century). The channelling of fresh water from springs to the north of the site to the settled areas nearby, a water pipe believed to be of medieval date has been recorded along the line of Theobolds Road (SMR 082347). Reasonably little evidence for medieval activity has been recorded during archaeological investigations in the vicinity of the proposed development, a small number of finds have been made which suggest that there is some potential for the recovery of medieval remains at the site. During work associated with Holborn underground a sword believed to date to the 15th century was recovered (SMR 083788) and a metal hoard was recorded at Kingsway (SMR 081137). A double edged dagger broadly dating to the 11th–16th century was recorded during work at Lincolns Inn Fields (SMR 084212).

The land in the area around the site and that belonging to the previously mentioned leper hospital is known to have been marshy land that was divided up and drained via a local network of hedges, gullies and ditches (Le-Faye 1971). Blemunds ditch – presumably named as such as it belonged to and defined part of the boundary with the

parish of Bloomsbury (Blemundsbury) and St. Giles – is shown on a conjectured plan of the parish in the 13th century (see cover). Blemunds ditch is known to have run east–west to the north of High Holborn and at the further end of the gardens of the properties that fronted onto the north side of High Holborn (Le-Faye 1971). The ditch appears to have been used both as a drainage feature and as a parish boundary suggesting that it was both wide and deep, there is a limited potential for the ditch (or fragments of it) to be encountered at the site.

No on Fig 2	SMR ref	Address	Period	Type
17	202308	Lincolns Inn	Medieval, 15th Century	Site of Lincoln's Inn
18	082347	Theobalds Road	Medieval	Water pipe
19	083788	Holborn underground	Medieval	Sword
20	081136	Kingsway	Medieval	Metal hoard
21	084212	Lincoln Inn	Medieval	Dagger

3.3.5 Post-medieval–modern

It seems probable that the land continued to be used for grazing/agriculture. Archaeological evidence to the southwest of the present site (site 12, STY96) implies that the area had been fairly deeply ploughed prior to the mid 17th century.

The post-medieval history of the area really begins with the establishment of Covent Garden, the first purpose built square in Britain. It was planned by Inigo Jones in the 1630s and is the origin of the present Piazza. Houses were built in the areas around the Piazza to provide accommodation for gentry and professionals flocking to the widening attractions of Westminster in the 17th century. Lincolns Inn Fields to the east of the site were also developed during this period by William Newtown who built 32 houses around the square.

Fairly accurate maps have been made of London from the mid 17th century onwards and the later history of the site can be deduced using these maps as guides. The 1658 Hollar 'Panorama' (Fig 4) and Faithorne and Newcourt's map (Fig 5), by comparison with the Agas map of *c* 1562 (Fig 3) indicate the scale of the 17th century transformation of the area. By 1658 the street pattern, still essentially the same today, has been imposed, and these streets are all lined with buildings, mostly with gardens to the rear. Both 1658 views show that some buildings have been constructed on the area of the present site, with gardens to the rear (the present site appears to occupy several holdings, the principal Holborn frontage lined with what Hollar shows as five storey structures). By 1682 Morgan's map (Fig 6) shows that much of the area of the site has been built on, with ranges of tenements along all the street frontages. A central courtyard was accessed from King Street (present day Southampton Row).

The origin of the street name *'Kings Gate/Way'* seen in the Faithorne and Newcourt and Morgan maps has been explained as deriving from the route by which James I went from Whitehall to Theobald's, the Royal palace in Hertfordshire. This particular

way (now Theobalds Road) was taken to avoid the more congested Holborn route and the entrance to this private road was barred by a gate at its meeting place with Holborn. A gate is depicted on the Agas map leading to a road bypassing Holborn to Gray's Inn Road.

To the north of the site is the location of the Lamb's Conduit. This was the conception of William Lamb, a clothworker and a 'gentleman of the Chapel of Henry VIII' who thought of the idea of constructing a conduit to carry fresh spring water from the source (present day Dombey Street) to Snow Hill, where it would be available to the people of Holborn. The project, one of the earliest of its kind was successively completed in 1577 with water conveyed in lead pipes 2,000 feet long. The Lamb's Conduit was rebuilt in 1667 from a design by Sir Christopher Wren. The conduit was not demolished until 1746 when the Foundling Hospital was built and in 1718 the water was still described as 'clear as crystal....Chiefly used for drinking' [sic]. These conduits are most clearly seen in Morgan's map (Fig 6), that shows the springs, ponds and channels present in the vicinity of the site in the 17th century, including Lamb's Conduit. The route of the main conduit southwards, along the eastern side of Red Lion Fields is also shown, a route preserved today in Lamb's Conduit Street and Red Lion Street.

The site lies well to the south of the line of the Civil War fortifications which formed part of a defensive ring around London, completed in two phases of work undertaken in 1642 and 1643, and eventually comprised 18 miles of trenches and ramparts linking 24 forts and redoubts.

Rocque's map of 1746 (Fig 8) shows considerable development in the areas north and east of the site. The map shows the buildings on the site without an internal courtyard, but this may be an omission in his survey.

During the 19th century the block including the site appears to have undergone a number of changes. Goads' fire insurance plan of 1888 (Fig 12) clearly depicts a number of business properties at the site in the late 19th century, during this time the buildings are not marked with basements. Greenwood's map of 1824–6 (Fig 9) shows buildings along all street frontages, enclosing a large central courtyard. Stanford's 'Library Map' of 1862 (Fig 10) is lacking on detail, but shows the West Central Post Office occupying the southwest corner of the block, in the position of the present 126 High Holborn. The 1873 Ordnance Survey map of the area (Fig 11) shows the central courtyard subdivided and encroached on by building, and the property boundaries which form the present site's northern limit are clearly established. King Street has been renamed as Southampton Row.

The early years of the 20th century saw the construction of the bulk of the present standing structure on the site, shown on the 1914 Ordnance Survey map (Fig 13) and the Goad fire insurance plan of 1944 (Fig 14) alongside a rebuilt Southampton Row, widened to the east to form an important thoroughfare with the newly built Kingsway and its tram subway. The Goad plan shows that properties 9–10 that front onto Southampton Street have basements and the stairwells depicted at the site imply further basementing at this time. On architectural grounds, numbers 3–9 Southampton Row are thought to have been rebuilt during the 1930s, although this observation is not clearly supported by the cartographic evidence.

3.4 Gazetteer of adjacent or relevant archaeological sites

The list below represents a gazetteer of archaeological excavations and observations in the vicinity of the site, and should be read in conjunction with (Fig 2).

3.4.1 Museum of London sites

Site 1: Alexandra House, 29–33 Kingsway WC2
NGR: 530645 181150 Site Code: ALO91
An archaeological evaluation was carried out by MoLAS and recorded a single Middle Saxon pit or well surviving beneath the deep basements of the standing building.

Site 2: 67–68 Long Acre WC2
NGR: 53037 181130 Site Code: BOB91
An archaeological excavation was carried out by DGLA. Saxon occupation deposits including numerous pits, a timber building and a series of brickearth floors were recorded sealing two Saxon inhumation burials.

Site 3: Bruce House, Kemble Street WC2
NGR: 530600 181100 Site Code: BRU92
An archaeological excavation and mitigation strategy, carried out by MoLAS. Evaluation suggested Middle Saxon structural remains exist on parts of the site. The areas subsequently excavated revealed mostly Middle Saxon and later cut features. The middle Saxon features were sealed by layers of 'dark-earth' which appeared to have formed on the abandoned settlement site from the later Saxon to early post medieval periods.

Site 4: 44–46 Drury Lane WC2
NGR: 530430 181140 Site Code: DRU 88
An archaeological watching brief, carried out by DGLA recorded a series of pits and deposits of probable Middle Saxon date.

Site 5: 55–57 Drury Lane WC2
NGR: 530480 181100 Site Code: DRY90
An archaeological excavation, carried out by DGLA recorded a sequence of Middle Saxon storage/refuse pits, wells and fragmentary timber structures.

Site 6: 66–68 Great Queen Street, WC2
NGR: 530548 181327 Site code: KWH96
An archaeological excavation was carried out by MoLAS in 1996 which recorded Middle Saxon features at *c.* 19.20m OD. Two rubbish pits and different phases of structures were found. A possibly contemporary soil horizon, disturbed by later activity, was also noted in section. Natural brickearth was found at 19.20m OD.

Site 7: 27–29 Macklin Street, WC2
NGR: 530410 181400 Site code: MAC89
An archaeological excavation was carried out by MoLAS in which post medieval rubbish pits and the base of a barrel well were recorded. A midden deposit of apparently Middle Saxon date was excavated.

Site 8: 32 Museum Street, WC1
NGR: 530110 181550 Site code: MUS95
An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by MoLAS in 1995. A sequence of 17th century deposits apparently filling a large feature, probably a gravel pit, which cut deeply into the river terrace (the base of the feature was about 3.70m below modern ground level) were recorded. The conjectured quarry may be connected with the construction of Civil War defences located less than 200m to the north. A late 17th or 18th century brick wall ran across the backfilled quarry. This was probably the rear of a building which once fronted onto the street. Behind the wall, in what once was a garden or backyard area, were deposits containing numerous clay pipes with a date range of 1660–1910, and a brick-lined well.

Site 9: 12 Queen Square, WC1
NGR: 530548 181327 Site code: QNS94
An archaeological watching brief was carried out by MoLAS in 1994. The site revealed natural gravel. Within the limits of the standing building this was overlain by demolition debris which derived from the original 18th century buildings on the site. To the rear of the standing building, within the former garden area, the truncation was to a greater depth. The natural gravel was overlain by a consolidation layer, into which was cut an 18th century cesspit.

Site 10: Drury House, junction of Drury Lane and Russell Street WC2
NGR: 530510 181060 Site Code: RUS87
An archaeological watching brief, carried out by DGLA recorded a single Middle Saxon pit.

Site 11: 2–26 Shorts Gardens WC2
NGR: 530130 181120 Site Code: SGA89
An archaeological excavation, carried out by DGLA. Complex Middle Saxon occupation deposits were recorded, including wattle and daub walls, hearths, and floor/yard surfaces.

Site 12: Holborn Town Hall, Site C, Stukeley Street WC2
NGR: 530130 181121 Site Code: STY96
An archaeological evaluation, carried out by MoLAS. The surface of the natural brickearth was found to have been subject to considerable weathering. Abraded pottery of Roman and medieval date was found in later contexts. The site had been subject to ploughing in the post medieval period, prior to a phase of dumping and construction, relating to the development of the area in the 17th century.

Site 13: 67–73 Southampton Row, WC1
NGR: 530340 181800 Site Code: SUW95

Natural gravels were truncated by the basements of the existing buildings. Exposed in the NW corner of No 71 was a floor composed of reused bricks of mid–late 17th century or 18th century date.

Site 14: Peabody Estate, Wild Street WC2
NGR: 530528 181150 Site Code: WID91

An archaeological evaluation, carried out by DGLA recorded probable Middle Saxon features and deposits, sealed by 'dark-earth'.

Site 15: 11–14 Hanover Place, 48/51, 49 Floral Street, 7–8, 10–12 Bow Street, 55–59 Long Acre, WC2
NGR: 530370 181100 Site Code: HVR02
Above the natural brickearth, several rubbish pits and a timber lined well were found. These were probably Saxon or early medieval in date. They were sealed by modern makeup.

Site 16: Odhams Press Site, Long Acre, WC2
NGR: 530300 181100 Site Code: ODM77
Observations in 1977 recorded evidence of a plague pit of probable 17th century date.

Site 17: The City Literary Institute, Keeley House, Keeley Street WC2
NGR: 530540 181232 Site Code: KEL00

The excavation and watching brief followed an earlier evaluation (see *LA* Vol. 9, supp 3, 69). Prehistoric activity on site was represented by a single residual shred of pottery, possibly of Late Bronze Age date (1000–700 BC). Three rubbish pits may be of Roman date. Roman activity within the locality is evidenced by finds of residual Roman pottery and the presence of Roman ceramic building material. The middle Saxon features (AD 730–850) consisted of one wattle lined well, a number of cess and rubbish pits, while structural evidence consisted of shallow postholes and one timber building. There were two superimposed areas of gravel yard metalling, plus external dumps of daub rich, organic rubbish. Saxon finds included fragments of loom weights and lava quern stones. One large ditch or stream channel (aligned northwest–southeast) is Middle or Late Saxon in date. During the medieval period the site was a field, activity represented by a thick build up of topsoil.

In *circa* 1630 a large residence known as 'Wild House' was built on the western portion of the site, while within the eastern portion of the site (where the excavations were carried out) formal gardens were laid out. It is likely that the garden was represented by the later topsoil horizons. During the 18th century 'Wild House' was replaced by rows of small, brick built cellared houses, which remained in used until the late 19th century. The cellar walls of these houses and their internal features including one well, several drains and various brick lined cesspits and soakaways were well preserved. Finds from these features included masses of domestic pottery and a gold finger ring.

Site 18: 68A Neal Street, WC2
NGR: 530210 181210 Site Code: NEL90

A watching brief in 1990 om a site close to an area of Middle Saxon settlement recorded deep cut features, at present undated.

Site 19: St Paul's Hospital Site, 24 Endell Street, 26–34 Betterton Street, WC2
NGR: 530230 181220 Site code: EDL98

A series of pits and linear features were recorded which cut the natural or disturbed gravel. No dating evidence was retrieved except for animal bone fragments one of which has been C-14 dated to AD 432–644. In the centre of the site was a number of 16th–17th century intercutting gravel extraction pits. The 18th–19th c was represented by a soil deposit, probably of agricultural origin, and brick structures, one of which, in the SE of the site, was associated with a large number of copper pins, suggesting a local industry of either tailoring or pin production. The latest period of activity related to demolition of slums in 1847 and to the present building.

Following an evaluation in 1998 (LA 9, supp. 1 (1999), 3), a watching brief took place. The earliest recorded features consisted of six pits and two probable field boundaries that probably dated to the 17th and 18th c, when the site was part of St Giles Fields. There was also residual evidence of probable Saxon occupation. The pits and ditches were succeeded by foundations, domestic pits and a soil deposit which all relate to the expansion of the city northwards during the 17th and 18th c. The final phase of activity consisted of demolition, levelling and foundation deposits relating to the erection St Paul's hospital building.

Site 20: 61–61A Endell Street, WC2
NGR: 530230 181220 Site code: ENL97

The site is located at the N edge of the Middle Saxon settlement of Lundenwic. The surface of natural gravels was encountered at between 19.60 and 20.02m od (about 3m below the present ground surface). It is assumed that they have been severely truncated and the overlying brickearth deposits completely removed, probably by a large gravel quarry. A single (probably linear) feature cut into the natural gravels; pottery datable to the late 17th or early 18th c was recovered from either the top fill of this feature or from the deposit immediately above it. Pottery and clay pipe, datable to between the 17th and 19th c, were recovered from the overlying soil and rubble deposits. Brick wall footings and a possible 'saw pit' of 19th or 20th c date were also recorded. It was concluded that had any mid Saxon deposits been present, they had been removed by later truncation.

Site 21: New Oxford Street, Museum Street, High Holborn, WC1
NGR: 530200 181400 Site Code: NOS64

Three truncated brick lined pits and a rubbish pit were examined, and dated by their pottery content to the late 17th or early 18th centuries.

Site 22: Holborn Town Hall, Stukeley Street WC2
NGR: 530355 181415 Site Code: HHN99

The excavation revealed evidence relating to the Roman and post medieval periods. Several Roman features were recorded within the main excavation trench and surrounding watching brief areas, provisionally interpreted as domestic refuse and backfilled quarry pits. Post medieval features and deposits included masonry structures, (cellar? walls, a brick-lined cess pit and a brick-lined well), rubbish/cess pits, horticultural features and garden soils.

The concentration of Roman features within a relatively small area, and in particular the quarry pits, suggests a level of industrial and perhaps domestic activity previously

unrecorded in the vicinity. Although scattered Roman burials are known to lie over a wide area to the north and south of the Roman road, finds from excavations carried out nearby have tended to be residual and representative of agricultural rather than domestic activity.

The post medieval archaeology recorded on site will help to substantiate both the cartographic evidence for urban development, deduced from maps dating from the mid 17th century onwards, as well as documented

Site 23: Aviation House, Holy Trinity Church, Kingsway, WC2
NGR: 530450 181450 Site Code: KGY 99

In the natural gravels a possible periglacial stream channel was identified, which may be the same as that tentatively identified to the South (KWH96). Above the channel were possible ploughsoil deposits that contained late medieval material; earlier 11th and 12th century finds and Roman building material were found in medieval and post medieval contexts. Garden soils and yard make-up dumps, relating to properties fronting onto Holborn, Newton Street and the former Little Queen Street, represented the post medieval period. A late 17th century cesspit and a brick wall footing of uncertain date were recorded.

Site 24: 60 Parker Street, WC2
NGR: 530540 181400 Site Code: PKC01

A section of a 17th century brick wall, a contemporary brick-lined well and a large pit, possibly of the same date, were revealed above the natural gravels. Walls relating to the 18th and 19th century redevelopment of the site were also recorded.

Site 25: 77–97 Kingsway, WC2
NGR: 530550 181350

The modern basement was observed to truncate natural gravels.

Site 26: 78–87 Chancery Lane, 8–14 Bishop's Court, 1–17, 2–12 Chichester rents, WC2
NGR: 530800 181300 Site Code: CHC88

A watching brief in 1988 on 13 testpits and others excavated by developers revealed evidence of cut features, probably post medieval refuse pits, some of them cutting into a soil layer of uncertain character. A brick floor and layer of debris were also noted. There was extensive modern truncation.

Site 27: Lincoln's Inn (north gardens), Newman's Row, Whetstone Park, WC2
NGR: 530800 181400 Site Code: LIN86

Observation in 1988 of a trench across an embankment at the N boundary wall recorded beneath the garden soil building rubble overlying brick footings; three clay pipe bowls suggest that the demolition occurred in the late 17th c. Beneath the modern debris in a second trench was found redeposited brickearth from which sherds of medieval pottery were recovered.

Site 28: 27–28 Lincoln's Inn Fields, Holborn, WC2
NGR: 530820 181500 Site Code: LIF97

Three trenches revealed archaeological deposits with good dating evidence, appearing to post date 1700, when the N side of Lincoln's Inn Fields was redeveloped. Two other trenches were below modern ground level in the 19th and 20th century basements; no significant deposits were encountered.

Site 29: Lacon House and Adastral House, Theobald's Road, WC1
NGR: 530650 181850 Site Code: TEO 98

The evaluation consisted of three trial trenches located in the front courtyard of Lacon House, which is the only area not affected by the deep basements of the present buildings. Trenches 1 and 2, in the south west and north east corners of the courtyard, revealed the presence of earlier infilled basements, belonging to 19th century properties fronting Theobald's Road and Harpur Mews. Below each of the basements was truncated natural gravel at heights of *c* 22.0m OD (trench 1) and *c* 21.40m OD (trench 2). Trench 3, in the centre of the courtyard, revealed truncated natural gravel at an average height of *c* 21.85m OD. Above this was a sequence of dumped deposits, dated provisionally to the late 17th century. These dumps were removed partially by a number of pits, drainage/sewer trenches and foundation trenches, of 18th and 19th century date.

Site 30: The Chapel, Lincoln's Inn, Old Square, WC2
NGR: 531030 181425 Site Code: LNI93

Work to the N and S of the Chapel followed work in the Chapel undercroft in 1991 (LA 6 no 15 (1992) 416). A large pit or trench of 16th/17th c date cut the natural brickearth. This and a buried soil were sealed by extensive levelling deposits of similar date, probably in preparation for the construction in the 16th and 17th c of the earlier buildings currently occupying the site, in particular, the Old Hall, the Old Buildings and the Chapel itself.

Site 31: Lincoln's Inn: Chapel undercroft, Old Square, WC2
NGR: 531030 181425 Site Code: LIC91

A watching brief, funded by The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn, took place between March and May 1991, during ground reduction before laying a new floor in the undercroft of the 17th c chapel. The work monitored limited disturbance to interments and other archaeological features. An adult inhumation below the ledger slab of Polydore Plumtree (d. 1777) was recorded and reburied, as was a slab found within another grave shaft warning grave diggers that they were approaching the top of the coffin of Peter Holford (d. 1804). A trial pit exposed a short length of wall, built with mortared chalk and greensand. This appears to be medieval and indicates that an earlier structure, possibly a chapel, stood on the site.

Site 32: 43–46 Southampton Buildings, WC2
NGR: 531060 181570 Site Code: SNB00

Excavations in the light well in the NE of the site revealed natural gravels cut by a possible ditch which contained an E–W inhumation burial. The burial had been truncated by one of a series of intercutting Roman features. These features were succeeded by a substantial, curved chalk foundation which may be identified as the remains of the first church of the Knights Templars, dated to the 12th c. In a watching brief in the area of the basement, further Roman deposits were recorded.

Site 33: Water Feature, New Square Gardens, Lincoln's Inn, WC2

NGR: 530988 181327 Site Code: NSQ03

Following demolition of the existing fountain, archaeological deposits were recorded in section in three trenches. Natural ground was not observed, and the highest survival of archaeological deposits occurred at 0.25m below ground level.

4 Archaeological potential

4.1 Factors determining archaeological potential

4.1.1 Natural geology

The level of natural gravel is estimated to lie at *c* 21.00m OD. Truncated natural gravels were recorded during a watching brief at Aviation House, Kingsway at a height of 20.28m OD. Natural gravel was also recorded at a height of approximately 21.10m OD during a geotechnical survey at 133–136 High Holborn. Surviving deposits of brickearth in the vicinity may overlie the gravels to a thickness of 0.50–1.0m. The surface of surviving brickearth may, therefore, be expected to lie at approximately 21.60m OD.

Refer to section 3.2 for a description of the underlying geology.

4.1.2 Present land use

The site is occupied by five and six storey buildings, most of which were constructed in the early years of this century. Numbers 3–9 Southampton Row are more recent and are believed to have been constructed in the 1930s. These structures comprise a mixture of load bearing masonry and beam and column construction (Ground Exploration Limited 1996).

The buildings have basements, but no accurate levelled survey of these, or of a number of courtyards and/or light-wells is available, therefore all levels should be regarded as provisional. Based on Plowman, Craven and Associates drawing no 5928–3A, the site does not have a single uniform basement, but a series of basement rooms, at various heights. From the few levels given on this drawing, the basement floor levels vary between 20.67m OD and 20.83m OD. However, there are a number of light-wells, along the northern site boundary and towards the centre of the site. There are no levels for the central light-wells, but the northern ones are ascribed floor levels of 22.62m OD and 21.28m OD.

4.1.3 Earlier (post-medieval–modern) buildings

The present site appears to lie over a number of separate older properties. The historical cartographic sources (Fig 4–14) show that the site has undergone several phases of redevelopment and construction and there is some potential that fragments of the earlier building fabrics may survive at the site. The extent of cellaring associated with any of these buildings is uncertain, but their impact on surviving archaeology is to have removed all of the horizontal deposits within its extent.

Assuming a street level of *c* 24m OD at High Holborn itself, and an estimated cellar depth of *c* 4.0m, truncation from post-medieval–modern cellars might be assumed down to *c* 20.75m OD. It should be remembered, however, that the extent and depth of these cellars across the site as a whole is unlikely to have been consistent and

archaeological survival may well have been higher in places. Building remains and deposits predating the mid 19th century should be regarded as part of the archaeological record.

4.1.4 Depth of archaeological deposit

It is estimated that the current building basement and foundations are built over and cut into the surface of natural geology. Survival of deposits outside the current basement areas is likely to be greater. Archaeological deposits may survive to a depth of 1m in such an area. The bases of deeply cut features such as Blemundsbury ditch for example, or large pits and wells may survive across the base of the property.

4.2 Archaeological potential

The nature of possible archaeological survival in the area of the proposed development is summarised within this section, taking into account the levels of natural geology (see section 3.2 and relevant levels OD in section 3.4), the level and nature of later disturbance and truncation (see section 4.1) and the nature of archaeological deposits and features known from adjacent sites (see section 3.4).

The estimate of potential is made before the impact of the proposed development is taken into account, and is therefore valid for the whole site.

4.2.1 Prehistoric

Previous archaeological work in the vicinity indicates that the site has little potential for the discovery of *in situ* archaeological prehistoric remains. A number of isolated finds have been found in the vicinity of the site and the possibility that further remains may exist at the site cannot be ruled out.

4.2.2 Roman

Previous archaeological work in the vicinity indicates that the site has little potential for the discovery of *in situ* archaeological remains from the Roman period. However a number of isolated finds have been found in the vicinity of the site. The site is located adjacent to the north side of High Holborn which is thought to have been a Roman road, numerous cremations recorded in the vicinity of the road and the site suggest that there is some potential for the discovery of further burials or structures associated with a Roman cemetery in this area. Although it should be noted that due to the high level of truncation evident at the site, the potential for deposits of this kind is thought to be low.

4.2.3 Saxon

The area of High Holborn lies within the settlement area of Saxon Lundenwic. Numerous finds have been made to the south of the site at Kingsway and previous excavations nearby (see section 3) have recorded evidence for Saxon occupation and settlement, the presence of associated features and deposits within the site remains a possibility.

4.2.4 Medieval

Archaeological remains from the medieval period have been recorded in the immediate vicinity of the site and include chance finds such as a metal hoard at Kingsway and a dagger from Lincoln's Inn Fields. Cartographic sources suggest that the area around the site still comprised a largely rural landscape that was known to be wet and marshy. Blemundsbury Ditch potentially runs through the site and the presence of further associated features and deposits within the site remains a possibility.

4.2.5 Post-medieval–modern

Archaeological remains from the post medieval period have been recorded in the immediate vicinity and might be expected on site.

Structures and features relating to the earlier properties known to have existed at the site may also be present. Garden deposits may remain in some parts of the site. In some instances it may be possible to investigate the character and original relationship between gardens and historic buildings.

It is likely that previous ground reduction will have removed all or most of any horizontal stratification (eg floor levels, road surfaces). Specific features cut into the contemporary ground surface such as cellars, wall foundations, drains and pits however, may survive below this truncation level.

5 Impact of proposals

The current proposed works involve the demolition of the existing buildings and construction of a new six-storey infill block with a basement (see (Fig 15). The proposed basement depth is approximately 4.0m and the construction of the basement will result in the truncation of the natural deposits to a height of approximately 20.50m OD. It has been assumed that some extra disturbance below this level will be inevitable during the construction process and a truncation level of *c* 20m OD is thought more likely.

The proposed new building mainly occupies the same area as the existing buildings, and fills in the present 'gaps', which will result in the removal of any surviving pockets of archaeological strata.

The effect of this truncation will be to remove all archaeological deposits within the area of the new building.

6 Conclusions and recommendations

Within vicinity of the there is a general background of archaeological potential as outlined above and reflected in its status as an Archaeological Priority Area. The presence of natural springs to the north may have been attractive for early settlement as may have been the case with the light, well drained soils of the gravel and brickearth. The main focus of interest is the nature and alignment of the Roman road, thought to follow approximately the route of High Holborn. Any evidence of associated land use, settlement or funerary activity in the Roman or Saxon periods would be of considerable local significance. There may have been occasional medieval buildings on the main road frontage and evidence of the progressive urbanisation and utilisation of the area from the area from the Tudor period onwards could also be present.

The existing buildings of 125 High Holborn have had a major impact on any potential archaeological survival. The basement areas, some of which have floors at approximately 20.75m OD, have probably removed all but deeper archaeological cut features, although survival in the light well areas, and around the perimeter of the site could be significantly higher.

The construction of the proposed basement and foundations would remove surviving archaeological deposits within the site outline. In these circumstances the next logical step (in line with the relevant government guidance and planning policies) would be to carry out selective onsite trial work (an archaeological field evaluation). The purpose of this would be to determine the actual degree of archaeological survival present on the site as opposed to the theoretical potential established via this report.

The overall recommendation is therefore that feasible approaches to selective archaeological trial work on the site are now considered in more detail with the development team for this project, including particularly the consulting engineers. It may, for example, be possible to combine this cost effectively with any planned engineers' site investigation, as a joint exercise to assess both the structural and archaeological properties of made ground sequences within the proposed development area.

The Greater London Archaeological Advisor (GLAAS) for the London Borough of Camden, may require further archaeological assessment to be carried out on the site to clarify the results of this purely desk based report and to allow a proper archaeological strategy to be formulated. The final decision regarding archaeological mitigation resides with the local authority and is designated archaeological advisor (GLAAS).

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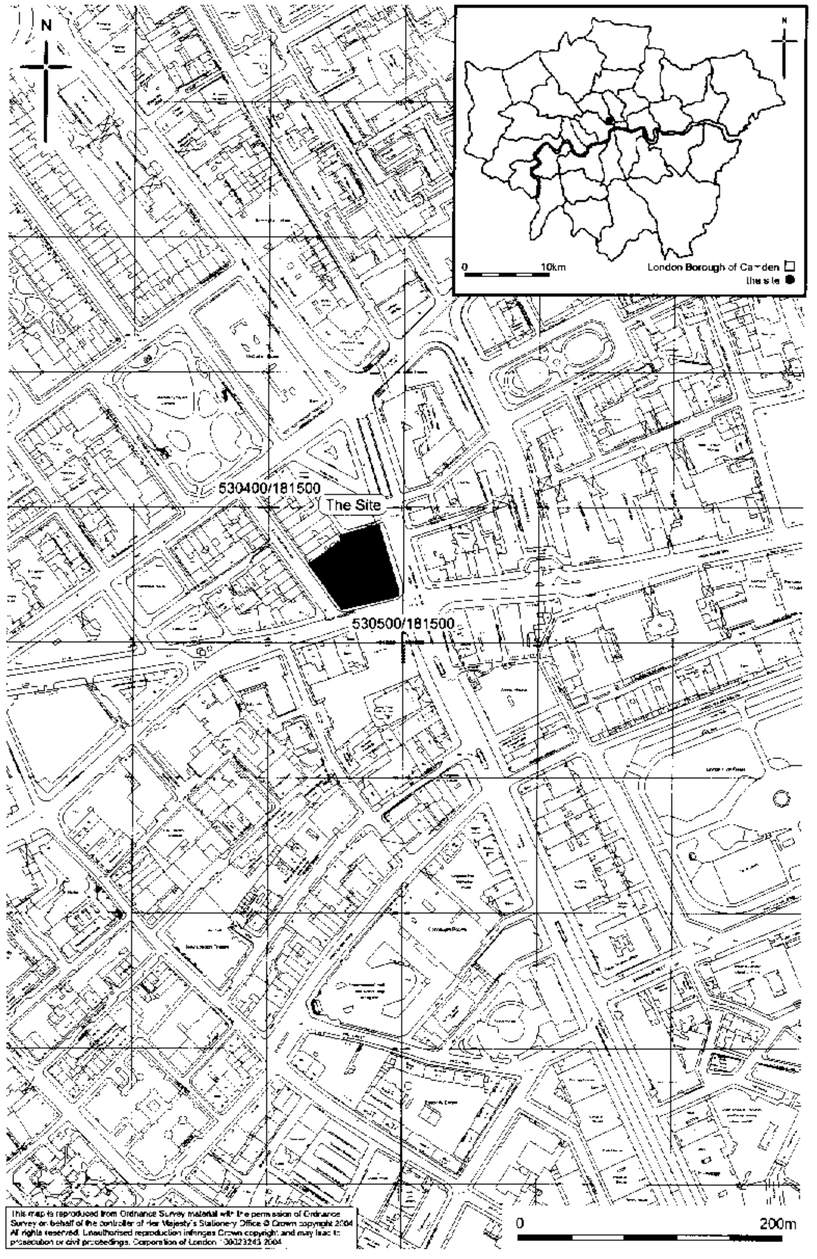

Fig 1 Site location

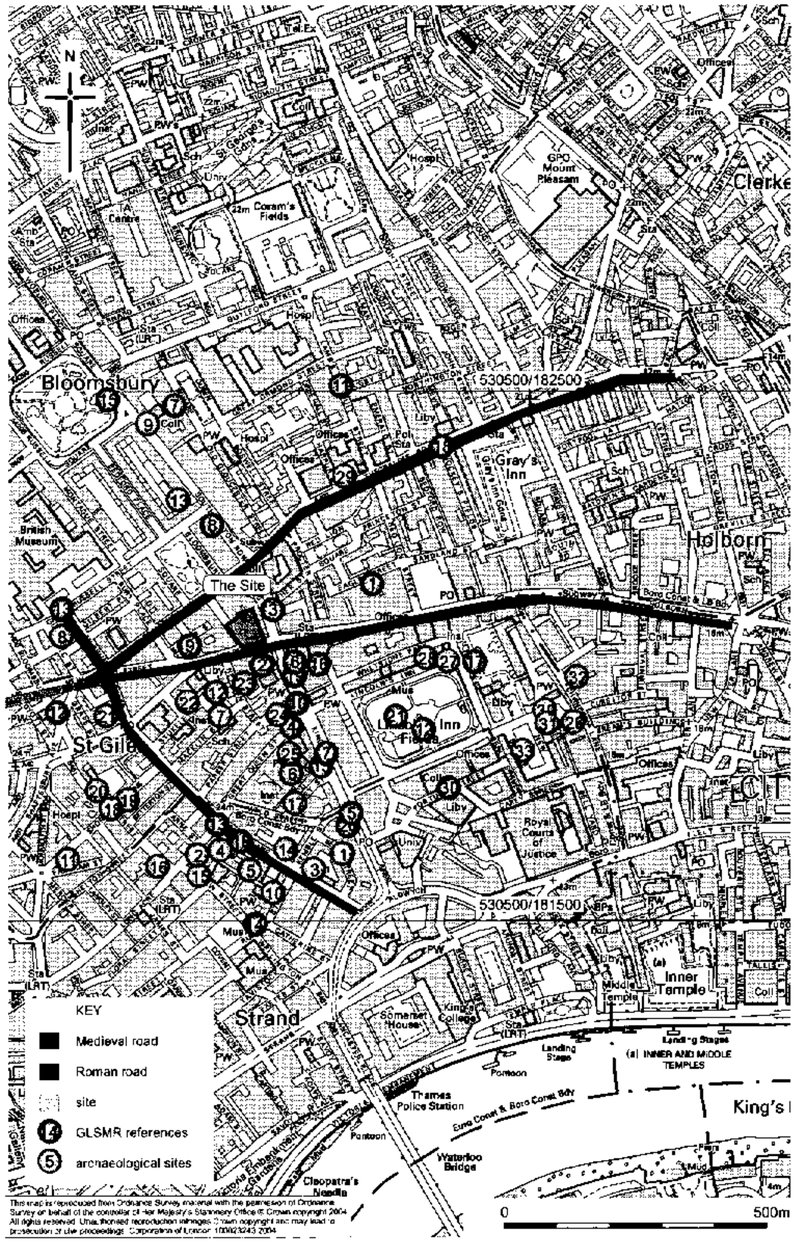

Fig 2 Previous archaeological investigations and GLSMR references in the vicinity

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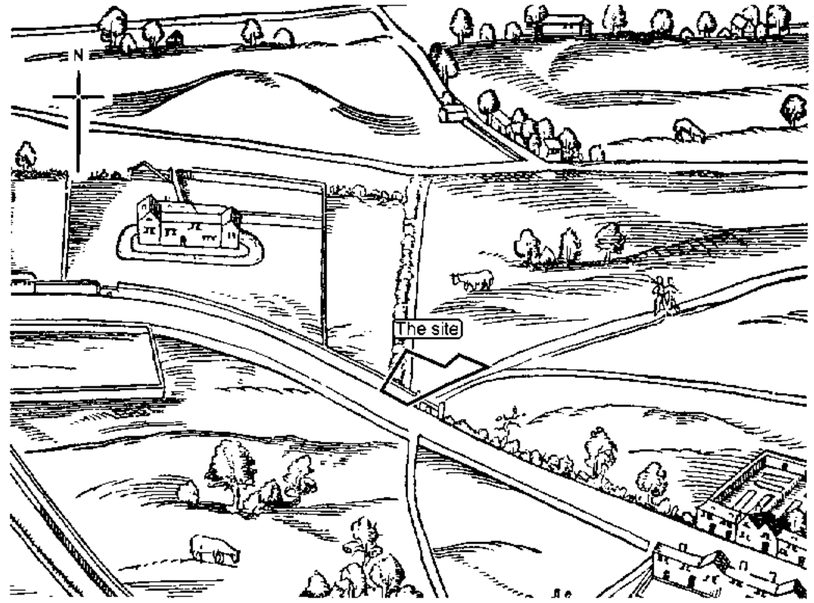

Fig 3 The Agas map of 1562

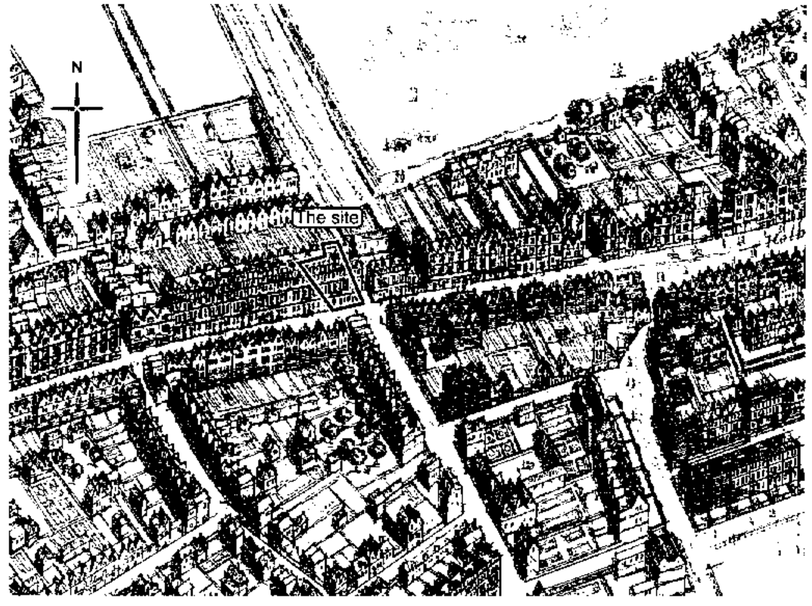

Fig 4 Hollars' 'Panorama' of 1658

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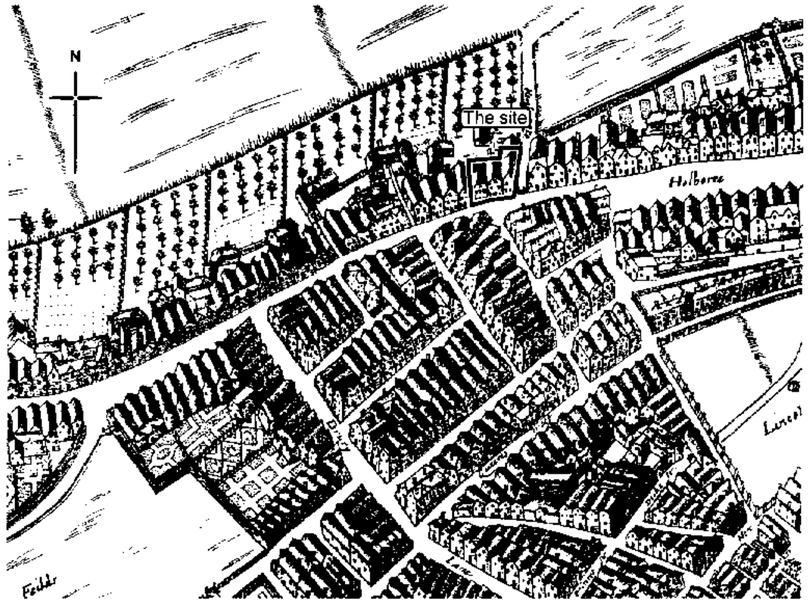

Fig 5 Faithorne and Newcourt's map of 1658

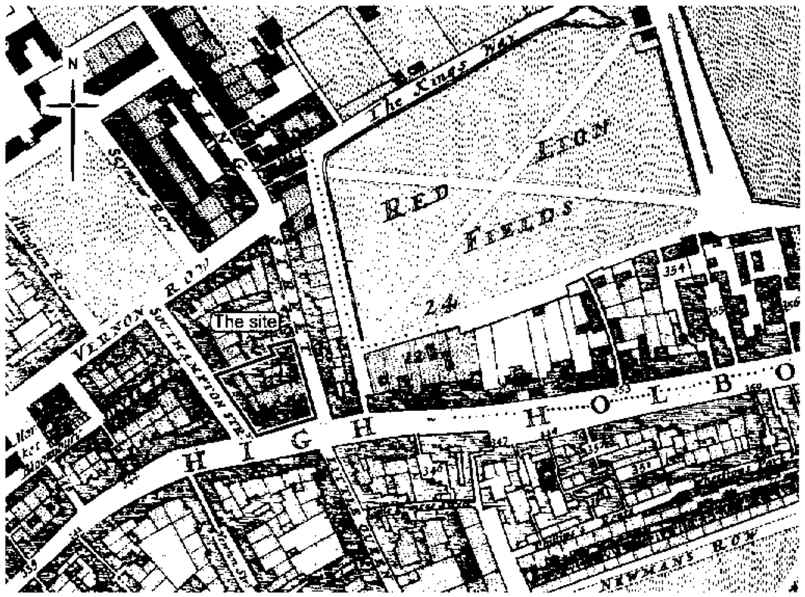

Fig 6 William Morgans' map of 1682

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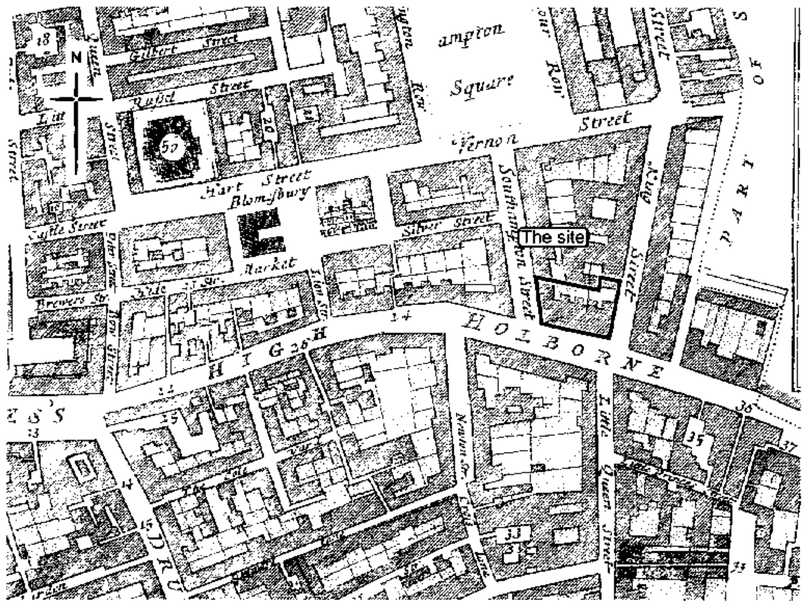

Fig 7 Strype's map of 1720

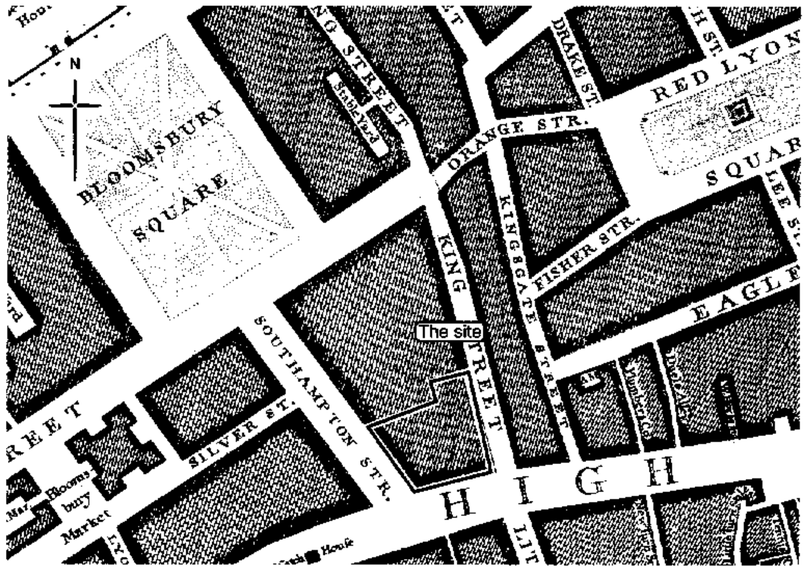

Fig 8 John Roque's map of 1746

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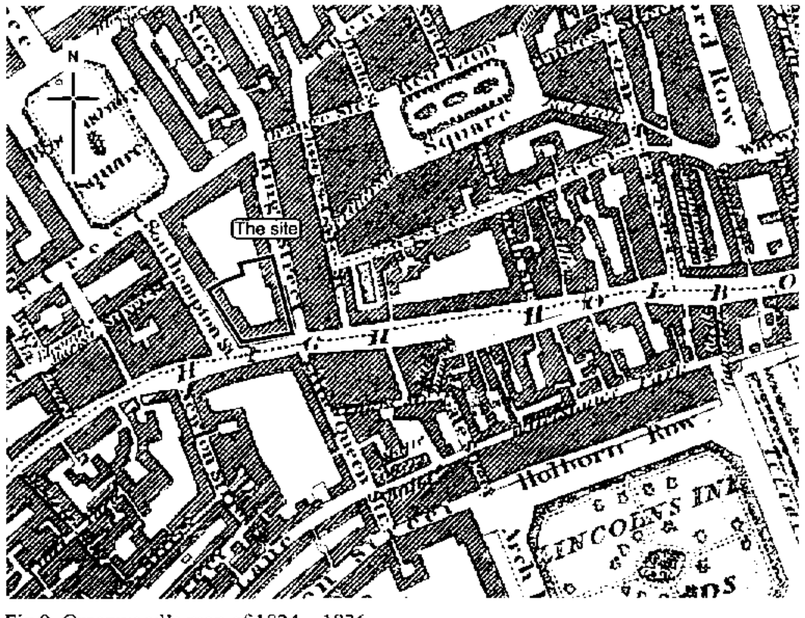

Fig 9 Greenwood's map of 1824 – 1826

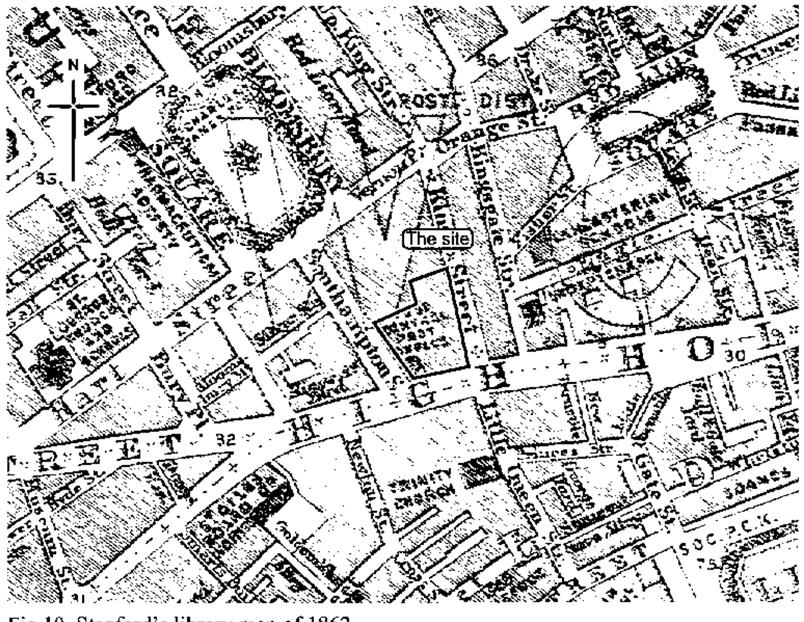

Fig 10 Stanford's library map of 1862

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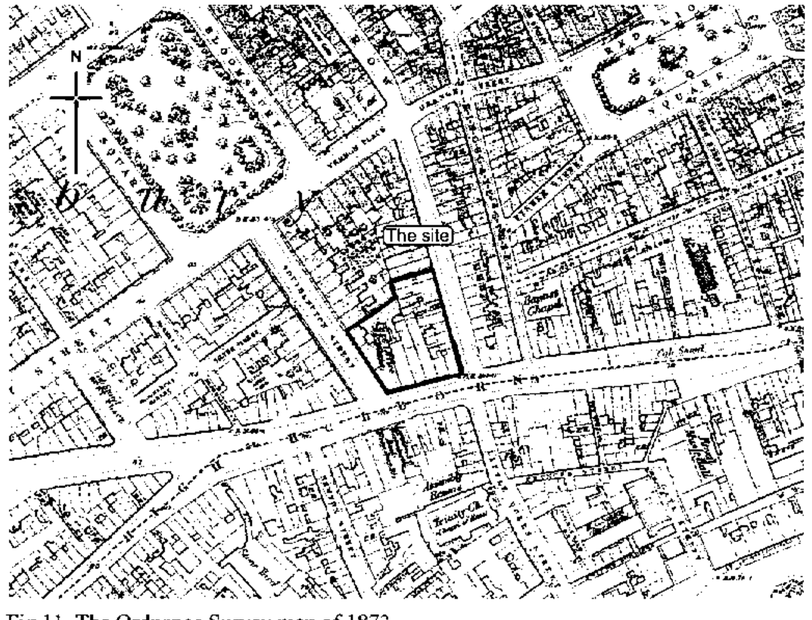

Fig 11 The Ordnance Survey map of 1873

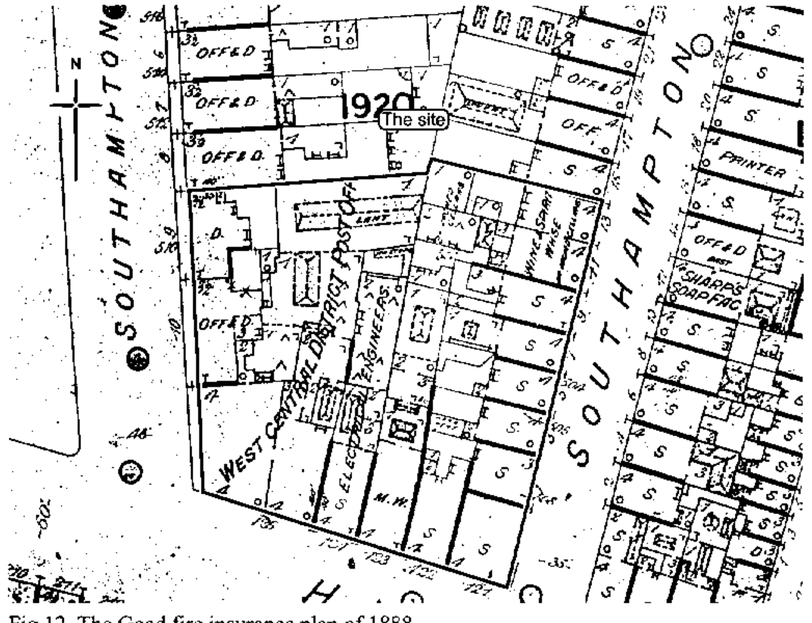

Fig 12 The Goad fire insurance plan of 1888

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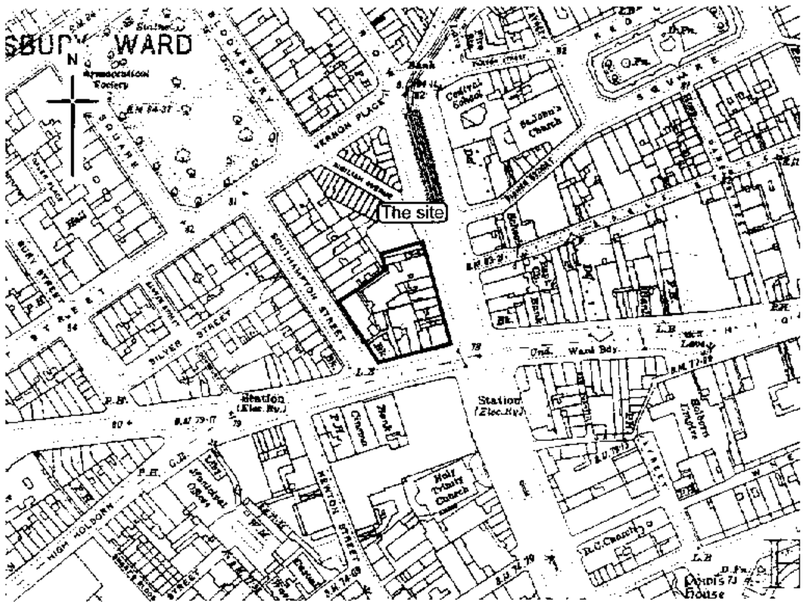

Fig 13 The Ordnance Survey map of 1914

Fig 14 The Goad fire insurance plan of 1944

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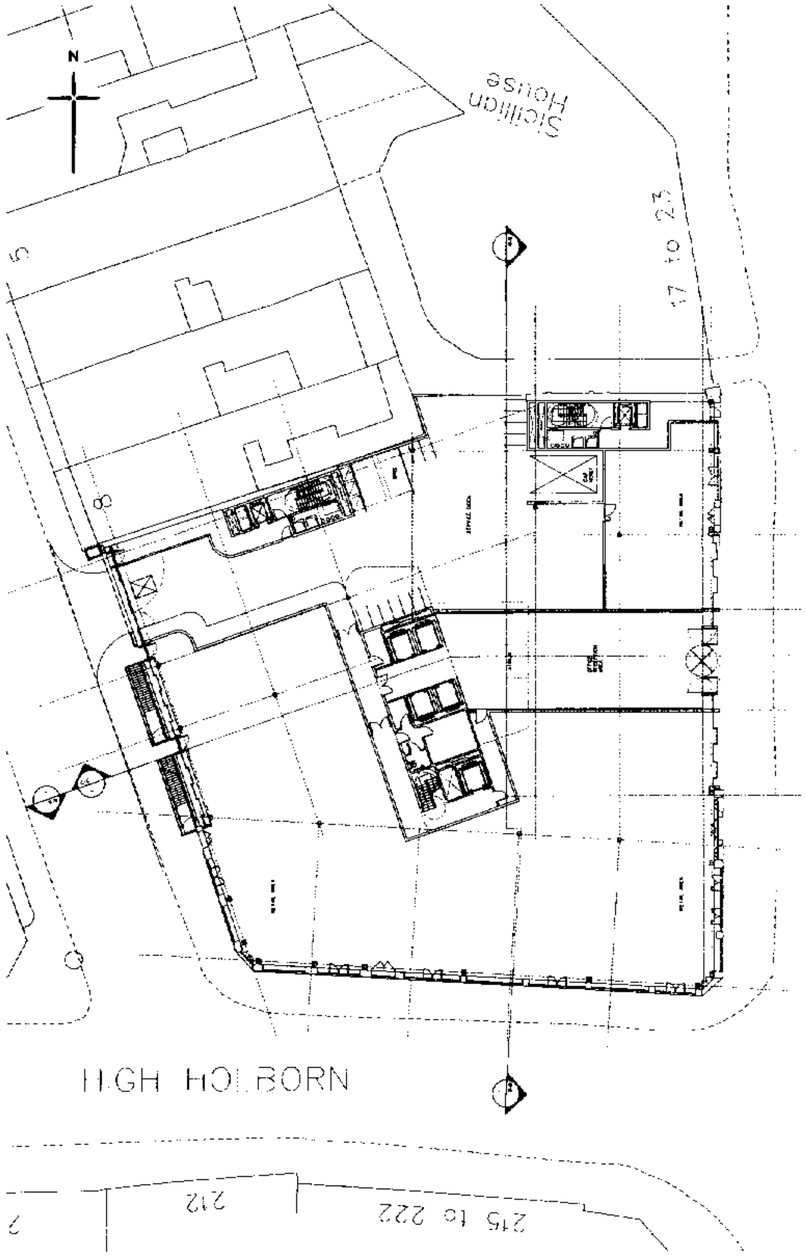

Fig 15 Plan of proposed development

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