

Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Recording

Fish and Coal Offices

King's Cross Central General Partner Ltd

April 2008

King's Cross

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THE COAL AND FISH OFFICES London NW1

London Borough of Camden

Written Scheme of Investigation for
Archaeological Recording

National Grid Reference: TQ 3005 8344

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**Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Recording of the Coal and Fish
Offices, King's Cross, London NW1**

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April 2008**

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1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Coal and Fish Offices are some of a number of historic buildings that are located in the vicinity of King's Cross Station and former Goods Yard that form King's Cross Central, a major regeneration development scheme. As part of the suite of permissions for the King's Cross Central (KXC) scheme granted by the London Borough of Camden, outline planning consent has been granted for the refurbishment and reuse of the unlisted Coal and Fish Offices, situated within the Regent's Canal Conservation Area.

Condition 55 of the Outline Planning Permission (2004/2307/P) requires a programme of 'Building Recording and Analysis'.

Condition 55 of the Outline Planning Permission states:

"No works shall take place in relation to each phase of the Development... until the applicant, their agent or successors in title has secured the implementation of a programme [of] assessment, recording and historical analysis, which considers building structure, architectural detail and archaeological evidence. This shall be undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation submitted by the applicant and approved by the local planning authority." This document forms the WSI for the Coal and Fish Offices.

- 1.2 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. is a *Registered Archaeological Organisation* with the Institute of Field Archaeologists (#23).
- 1.3 The Coal and Fish Offices lie in the narrow space between the southern access road (now Wharf Road) to the north and the Regent's Canal towpath to the immediate south.
- 1.4 The Coal and Fish Offices were built as a range in several phases between c.1851 and the early 1860s, the initial phase being part of Lewis Cubitt's design for the Goods Yard complex. The Offices provided accommodation for the clerical staff needed to handle the paperwork generated by the incoming traffic in coal and fish. The buildings lie on the south side of the Wharf Road Viaduct, with their south (rear) elevations rising sheer from the Regent's Canal towpath.
- 1.5 The offices served throughout the working life of the railway goods yard. They were disused by the early 1980s, when they were gutted by fire. They were repaired structurally and made weatherproof in the late 1990s, but the internal finishes were stripped. The offices are currently disused.

2 THE MITIGATION

- 2.1 The mitigation involves the preservation by record of the structures to be removed by the development. The recording will take the form of a Level 4 record of the structure, as set out in English Heritage *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (2006), in advance of the works.

- 2.2 The record will take the form of drawn plans of the building location, all the floors of the buildings where there is safe access, longitudinal and transverse sections of the building, and architectural detail drawings. Drawings will be made of all elevations, and a photographic survey will be undertaken of the buildings. The survey will incorporate a written report and description.
- 2.3 All works will be undertaken in accordance with standards set out in:
- Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers: *Analysis and Recording for the Conservation and control of works to historic buildings* (1997)
 - British Archaeologists and Developers Liaison Group: *Code of Practice* (1986)
 - British Standards Institution: *Guide to the Principals of the Conservation of Historic Buildings (BS 7913)* (1998)
 - English Heritage (Clark, K.): *Understanding historic buildings and their landscapes for conservation*, (2001)
 - English Heritage: *Guidance Paper 98*; GLAAS: *Guidance Paper 3-Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork in London*.
 - English Heritage (Clark K): *Informed Conservation* (2001)
 - English Heritage: *The presentation of historic building survey in CAD* (2000)
 - IFA: *Standards and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (1999)
 - Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England (now part of English Heritage): *Recording historic buildings: a descriptive specification*, 3rd edition (1996)
 - 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 The erection of all scaffolding is the responsibility of the client or their agent.
- 2.6 The site was visited on the 28th April and is currently empty. 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 During site work PCA will give reasonable access to the site to the client and their representatives, subject to the health and safety requirements at the site. Such access may be deemed necessary in

order that the client is satisfied, through site inspections, that the archaeological works are being conducted to proper professional standards and in accordance with the agreements made.

- 3.1.2 All relevant health and safety legislation, CDM, COSHH regulations and codes of practice will be respected.
- 3.1.3 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.
- 3.1.4 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 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 archaeological archives produced in the Local Authority area. This requirement for archival compatibility extends to the use of computerised databases.
- 3.2.4 A 'site location plan' indicating the 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 investigations will be prepared. This will include medium format black and white and colour negative film, illustrating the buildings' as-found character, setting, external elevations, internal room space types, and features and fittings. Record shots of all spaces will be taken with a digital camera. The photographic record will also include shots to illustrate the site work in progress, and any relevant photographs found at the archives. The transparencies will be mounted in suitable frames for long-term curation in preparation for deposition with the archive.

3.3 The Recording work: Scope

- 3.3.1 The structure of the Coal and Fish Offices survives relatively complete, though post-fire repair has removed most of the internal structure and finishes. The repair has introduced replacement floor and roof structures, and also renewed sections of brickwork. These include the easternmost gable wall,

which has been rebuilt to its original alignment. The range, of total length about 100 m, follows a curved plan form on the south side of the Wharf Road Viaduct, with its south (rear) elevation rising sheer from the canal towpath on this site boundary wall.

- 3.3.2 The range is in five units, all in a similar austere sub-Classical style in multicoloured stock brick with door and window openings spanned by segmental brick arches. Brick chimneystacks mark the location of fireplaces, some of which remain within the range. The windows were originally vertical sash windows in timber frames. Sills are of stone.
- 3.3.3 For descriptive purposes the units are here identified as A-E, with A being the easternmost and E the westernmost units. Units A and B are essentially rectangular on plan, although tapering in depth towards the west, while the distinctive curved plan form appears in Units C, D, and E. The taper on plan continues westward.
- 3.3.4 Unit A, set back from the main frontage line of offices, has 5 bays and two storeys above road level with a symmetrical-pitched roof. Unit B, the largest, has six bays and three very tall storeys with a gabled double-pitched roof. Units C and D, both have six somewhat broad bays and match each other in their details, although C has three storeys with a double-pitched roof hipped at its western end while D has only one storey with a gabled double-pitched roof. Unit E has eight unequal bays and is one storey in height with a flat roof.
- 3.3.5 Units A and B each have a basement, although that of Unit A is currently inaccessible. Units C, D, and E stand above a series of basement vaults, formerly used as stables, which extend under the Wharf Road Viaduct. They are accessed from the roadway leading down westwards from Wharf Road towards the lower levels of the Western Goods Shed and Western Coal Drops. There is no connection between these basement vaults and Units C, D, and E. They will be recorded as part of Wharf Road Viaduct, in a separate phase of work.
- 3.3.6 The external elevations of the buildings will be recorded by electronic survey and photography, as extensively as is possible given the potential difficulties posed by the Regent's Canal directly to the south.
- 3.3.7 The setting and major views of the buildings will be recorded photographically.
- 3.3.8 Fabric analysis will be undertaken of internal and external materials used in the construction of the building, and samples taken where required. Fabric analysis of the ceramic and stone materials used in construction will be undertaken using the London System of fabric classification.

3.4 Recording: Methods

- 3.4.1 The purpose of the work will be to create an accurate record of the structures and the fabric that enhances the existing understanding of the buildings.
- 3.4.2 The recording will take the form of manual and electronic measured survey, producing plans, elevations and sections, a photographic survey, and fabric analysis of the historic and recent building sequence, materials and technology and techniques used. A written description will be produced.

Measured Survey

- 3.4.3 The measured survey will be undertaken by hand and electronically. The survey will be undertaken to produce conventional architectural drawing, executed according to the English Heritage (2006) specifications.
- 3.4.4 The survey will include:
- A site plan, drawn at 1:200
 - Plans of all floors, including the basement (exclusive of stable vaults), drawn at 1:100
 - A roof plan, drawn at 1:100
 - External elevations, drawn at 1:100
 - A long sectional elevation drawn at 1:50
 - Five cross-sectional elevations drawn at 1:50
 - Detail drawings, drawn at 1:20 and 1:10, recording features related particularly to office function, phasing of rooms and spaces within the building, basement construction (exclusive of stable vaults) including ground floor structure where visible, any surviving interior decorative elements, window structures, fireplaces, chimney stacks and adjacent hard landscape features related to the buildings
- as specified in Appendix A of the IHCM specification.
- 3.4.5 All drawings will be produced digitally using AutoCAD (2004/2006) following English Heritage guidelines and using an appropriate layering system. All drawings will, wherever possible, be tied into the overall site grid and the Ordnance Survey National Grid. Plans, sections and elevations will be printed at a scale of 1:50, 1:100 or 1:200, depending on the level of detail to be shown. Roof trusses and other elements may need to be drawn at a scale greater than 1:50.
- 3.4.6 The AutoCAD drawings will be constructed in a way which will be compatible with the GIS being developed for the whole Kings Cross Central scheme, and the data will be provided in appropriate formats for incorporation into the GIS.
- 3.4.7 The survey work on the Coal and Fish Offices will be keyed into the three-dimensional topographical survey of the King's Cross site undertaken by Plowman Craven Associates as specified by IHCM.

- 3.4.8 All drawings will be produced to a sufficient standard that they may offer support to the Architect and Engineer in designing the reuse functions where the historic fabric and features are to be retained, and to Argent for longer-term management requirements of the retained heritage elements.

Photography

- 3.4.9 Medium format black and white photography will be used to record as-found character, evidence of the sequence of construction, elevations, typical and unusual spaces and architectural details, and important fixtures and fittings. This will be supplemented by colour photography, which will be used to illustrate as-found character, external elevations, major rooms and significant details. Record photographs of each internal space will be taken with a digital camera. Photographs will also be made of the general context of the buildings. For exterior photographs the original design and period of the various phases will be taken into consideration, so that there are photographs of historically important views of the buildings in their landscape. Photography will conform to the requirements laid out in Appendix B of the IHCM specification.

Fabric Analysis

- 3.4.10 Descriptive and interpretative notes will be made of the buildings and their construction, recording and analysing function, materials, phases, sequences, historical techniques used, missing fabric, fixtures and fittings (both former and current). Materials (brick, stone, timber, metal, render and mortar) will be identified and dated during the works. The recording of the buildings' fabric will be undertaken using a modular pro-forma system based upon English Heritage levels of recording as defined in *Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good practice*. The information will be entered into a Microsoft Access database for the purposes of generating an electronic record that may be usable with GIS systems. Where the building fabrics are deemed to be of national or regional importance materials will be sampled analysed and dated by a specialist, where appropriate or practical. Where the sensitivity of the fabric precludes sampling the material will, where possible, be identified in-situ.

Written description

- 3.4.11 A report will be prepared based on the above record, describing the form and function of the buildings. It will present the results of the building recording and indicate the direction of any further work arising from it, before it is taken forward to publication.

3.5 Post-Recording Report

- 3.5.1 The report will be fully illustrated with plans, sections, elevations and photographs and will outline the results of the work. The direction of photographs taken will be indicated within the report. There will be an analysis of the buildings' architecture, development and changing historic functions and operation.

3.5.2 The buildings' significance in terms of their architecture and operation will also be analysed within a local, regional or national context. The report will identify the significance of the findings and the level to which they require publication, which will meet the 'minimum requirements set out in Appendix 7 of the English Heritage *'Management of Archaeological Projects'* (1991).

3.5.3 The report will have the following contents (in accordance with Appendix C of the IHCM specification):

- Introduction
- Historic background
- Building description
- The development of the buildings (including their fixtures/operations and the historic sequence)
- Architectural context
- Discussion and conclusions
- Fabric description appendix
- Survey drawings (plans, sections & elevations; details of important architectural features)
- List of photographs

3.6 Treatment of Finds and Samples

3.6.1 No finds are envisaged, but if located they will be retained as part of the site archive.

3.6.2 In the unlikely event of finds of national or regional importance being encountered they will be treated in a proper manner and to standards agreed in advance with the recipient museum. They will be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with the guidelines set out in the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation's *'Conservation Guidelines No.2'*. Metal objects of importance will be x-rayed and then selected for conservation (except in those cases where the nominated representative of the LPA agrees that this will not be necessary).

3.6.3 Ceramic (pottery, clay tobacco, building material fabric and brick form) reference collections may be referred to for descriptive and analytical purposes in order to ensure that terminology is consistent.

3.6.4 Samples of building material considered to be of regional or national importance will be taken where appropriate and practical, unless precluded by the sensitivity of the material. Any samples thus taken will receive the appropriate level of cleaning, conservation and archiving according to the guidelines set out in the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation's *'Conservation Guidelines No.2'*.

3.7 Reports and archives

3.7.1 The integrity of the site archive will be maintained. Any finds and records will be available for public consultation. Appropriate guidance set out in the Museum and Galleries Commission's *'Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections (1992) Towards an Accessible Archaeological Archive. The Transfer of Archaeological Archives to Museums: Guidelines for Use in England, Northern Ireland Scotland and Wales'*. SMA 1995.

- 3.7.2 If finds are not to be donated to the appropriate Museum, arrangements will be made for a comprehensive record of all relevant materials (including detailed drawings, photographs and descriptions of individual finds), which can instead constitute the archaeological archive.
- 3.7.3 The minimum acceptable standard for the site archive is defined in the '*Management of Archaeological Projects 5.4*' and '*Appendix 3*'. It will include all materials recovered, (or the comprehensive records of such materials as referred to above) and all written, drawn, and photographic records, including a copy of all reports relating to the investigations undertaken. It will be quantified, ordered, indexed, and internally consistent before transfer to the appropriate museum. It will also contain a site summary and brief written observations on the artefactual and environmental data.
- 3.7.4 United Kingdom Institute for Conservation guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage (1990) will be followed.
- 3.7.5 The archive will be deposited with the LAARC following completion of site works and reporting.
- 3.7.5 An assessment of the results of the work, even if negative, will be bound into the client report for submission to the LPA and the GLSMR as soon as possible after the completion of archaeological works.
- 3.7.6 Minimum requirements for public dissemination is for SMR report forms to be submitted to the LPA as soon as possible within 6 months of completion of fieldwork, and the provision of a short paragraph summary of the results for publication in a local journal. Such publications will meet the minimum requirements set out in Appendix 7, '**Management of Archaeological Projects**' 1991, and derive from a 'phase 2 review' as defined in the same document.

4 RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMING

- 4.1 The amount of recording will be dependent on the duration of the demolition process and the level of safe access available to the buildings.
- 4.2 Accommodation, toilet facilities and full washing facilities for the attendant archaeological team will be located within reasonable distance of the Coal and Fish Offices.
- 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, three historic buildings assistants, a surveyor and a photographer.
- 4.5 The report will be prepared as soon as possible after completion of the fieldwork and will be submitted to the client, to IHCM, English Heritage and the London Borough of Camden. Copies will be lodged in the LAARC, the Local Studies Library and the National Monuments Record.

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