

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 which 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’.

2.2 The London Plan

The over-arching strategies and policies for the whole of the Greater London area which are contained within the GLA’s *London Plan* (Feb. 2004) also include statements relative to archaeology.

Para 4.60 ...The Mayor wishes to see the sensitive management of London’s extraordinary historic assets planned in tandem with the promotion of the very best modern architecture and urban design. Designation of historic buildings is not enough. Sensitive management requires clear details of what needs to be protected, how and why. The Mayor expects boroughs and others to use appropriate tools to manage the historic environment, including character appraisals and conservation plans.

Policy 4B.14 Archaeology The Mayor, in partnership with English Heritage, the Museum of London and boroughs, will support the identification, protection, interpretation and presentation of London’s archaeological resources. Boroughs in consultation with English Heritage and other relevant statutory organisations should include appropriate policies in their UDPs for protecting scheduled ancient monuments and archaeological assets within their area.

2.3 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 was made available for public consultation on June 26 2003. 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).

Para 4.88 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 2003 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, undertake their own archaeological desk-based assessments of 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 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 archaeological remains, planning permission may be refused.

The Council has designated a number of Archaeological Priority Zones in the borough. The present site does not lie within one of these Zones.

2.4 Archaeology and planning in Islington

The London Borough of Islington's *Unitary Development Plan* (UDP) was adopted in 2002. The policies set out in this document determine the position of archaeology as a material consideration in the planning process and incorporate recommendations from the Department of the Environment's *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (PPG 16). The Council's principal policies and statements on archaeology in the borough are as follows:

Para 12.4.14 ... The Council considers that the archaeology of the borough is a common asset and that its preservation is a legitimate objective, against which the needs of development must be balanced and assessed.

Para 12.4.15 The Council wishes to further public appreciation of the archaeological heritage of the borough and to encourage its effective management as an educational, recreational, and tourist resource. It will therefore promote the conservation, protection, and enhancement of archaeological sites and their interpretation and presentation to the public.

Para 12.4.16 The protection of the archaeological resource is a material consideration for a local planning authority, and applicants will need to demonstrate that proposed development can meet the objectives of the Council's archaeological heritage policies...

Para 12.4.17 Where development may affect land of archaeological significance or potential, the Council will expect applicants to have properly assessed and planned for the archaeological implications of their proposals ... To assist in this, the Council... has defined 'archaeological priority areas'. These are shown on the Proposals Map ... Within these areas a preliminary archaeological assessment will be required before any proposals that may affect archaeological remains are determined. The assessment should be prepared by an appropriately qualified individual or organisation... Small-scale archaeological fieldwork (an evaluation) may be required to determine the actual extent and degree of survival on site...

Para 12.4.18 The designated archaeological priority areas identify the principal areas where archaeological evidence is currently anticipated to survive; they do not represent the only areas in which important archaeological remains may be present. There will also be a number of smaller areas and individual sites outside the priority areas where development may affect the borough's archaeological heritage. These areas/sites will be identified by the Council on the basis of appropriate archaeological advice. Wherever possible the Council will specify this in planning briefs prior to a planning application being submitted....

Para 12.4.19 Where it is considered that important archaeological remains will be affected by a development proposal there will be a presumption in favour of physical preservation of the remains, against which the merits of the proposal will be considered. Preservation could be achieved through the design of building layouts, for example to ensure the preservation of archaeological remains beneath open spaces; or by the use of less destructive foundation designs and methodologies..

Para 12.4.20 On archaeological sites where physical preservation is not considered necessary, the Council will ensure that as part of the redevelopment works landowners and developers make proper provision for the investigation and recording of the site by a

recognised archaeological organisation, in accordance with a scheme of works approved in advance with the Council...

Policy D43 The Council will promote the conservation, protection and enhancement of the archaeological heritage of the borough and its interpretation and presentation to the public. In particular it will seek to ensure that the most important archaeological remains and their settings are permanently preserved

Policy D44 The Council will ensure the preservation of locally and nationally important archaeological remains and their settings within the borough, whether these are designated as 'Scheduled Ancient Monuments' or not. It will take the necessary steps to safeguard the borough's archaeological heritage through the planning process and will normally refuse planning permission for applications which adversely affect important archaeological remains or their settings.

Policy D45 Within the 'archaeological priority areas' shown on the Proposals Map, all planning applications likely to affect important archaeological remains must be accompanied by an archaeological assessment of the impact of the scheme on the borough's archaeological heritage. This should be commissioned by the applicant from a suitable archaeological organisation acceptable to the Council. The Council may also require an assessment to be submitted for other development proposals, where it is considered that important archaeological remains may be present. Small scale archaeological fieldwork to determine the actual degree of archaeological survival on a site, (an 'evaluation') may be required as part of the assessment.

Policy D46 Where an archaeological assessment and / or evaluation has demonstrated the survival of important archaeological remains, there will be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation in situ. The Council will require applicants to demonstrate how this will be achieved, and will control development layout and foundation design accordingly.

Policy D47 Where physical preservation of archaeological remains is not justified, the Council will ensure that necessary measures are taken by the applicant to mitigate the impact of their proposals, through archaeological fieldwork to investigate and record remains in advance of development work, and subsequent analysis and publication of the results. This will usually be secured through section 106 agreements.

The Council has designated a number of Archaeological Priority Areas in the borough. The present site does not lie within one of these Areas.

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, etc) are shown on Fig 23 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 sands and clays. Above this 'bed-rock' lie the fluvial deposits of the River Thames arranged in flights or gravel terraces. These terraces represent the remains of former floodplains of the river. Truncated London Clay has been recorded on the eastern side of the site at between 13m OD and 13.3m OD. The London Clay on the western side of the site was found to be between 9.5m OD and 11m OD. In some areas this slope was capped by east–west aligned bed beds of gravel and sand.

A series of boreholes, taken in 1929, demonstrate that this east–west slope continues to the south of the site. The east–west slope is the eastern side of the Fleet Valley and the gravel and sands are floodplain deposits. On the north side of the site a drift filled scour hollow was discovered during the construction of the Post Office railway in 1915–1916. These features are common in the London region and were formed by fluvial and periglacial action in the late Quaternary period. This particular feature extends to the northwest of Calthorpe Street and may be up to 305m across and 30m deep.

The original course of the River Fleet ran beneath the western half of the site. The Fleet, which is also known as the Holbourne, Turnmill or the River of Wells, is a tributary of the River Thames and flows from its source in Hampstead to join the Thames at Blackfriars. The steep sides of the valley can still be seen today in the steep slope from Gray's Inn Road down to Phoenix Place and from Farringdon Road down to Phoenix Place. The height of present ground level on Farringdon Road is 18.3m at the junction of Farringdon Road and Calthorpe Road and 21.7m at the junction of Farringdon Road and Mount Pleasant. At the junction of Mount Pleasant and Phoenix

Place ground level is 13.8m OD and in Gough Street ground level is approximately 16m OD.

By the late 18th century the River Fleet was so polluted with industrial and domestic waste that in the early 19th century a decision was taken to culvert the river, as can be seen on the 1827 Plan of the Parish of Clerkenwell (front cover). However, in the vicinity of the site its original course is still recognised as the Borough boundary between Islington and Camden.

Excavation on the site in 1992 (Fig 24, Site 3) found substantial alluvial deposits which suggested that the river valley was gradually silting up across its eastern flood plain and deeper western part of the river bed. In some areas, the silt deposition was in excess of 1.2m thick. Across parts of the silt deposition along the southern side of the site, there is some evidence to suggest that the river silts were banking up against a southern obstruction. This may indicate that the river was meandering east and west across its flood plain as it flowed down towards the River Thames. On a map of the Fleet River course published in 1875 (Fig 3), its meandering plan is clearly seen around the area of the site. Also on the map of 1875, it is clear that a small channel links into the Fleet valley somewhere across the southwestern side of the valley close to the site. Although this channel would not have been visible along the eastern side of the river valley, its location shows that valley formed a complex river valley system with feeder streams running into the main river, rather than a single north-south channel.

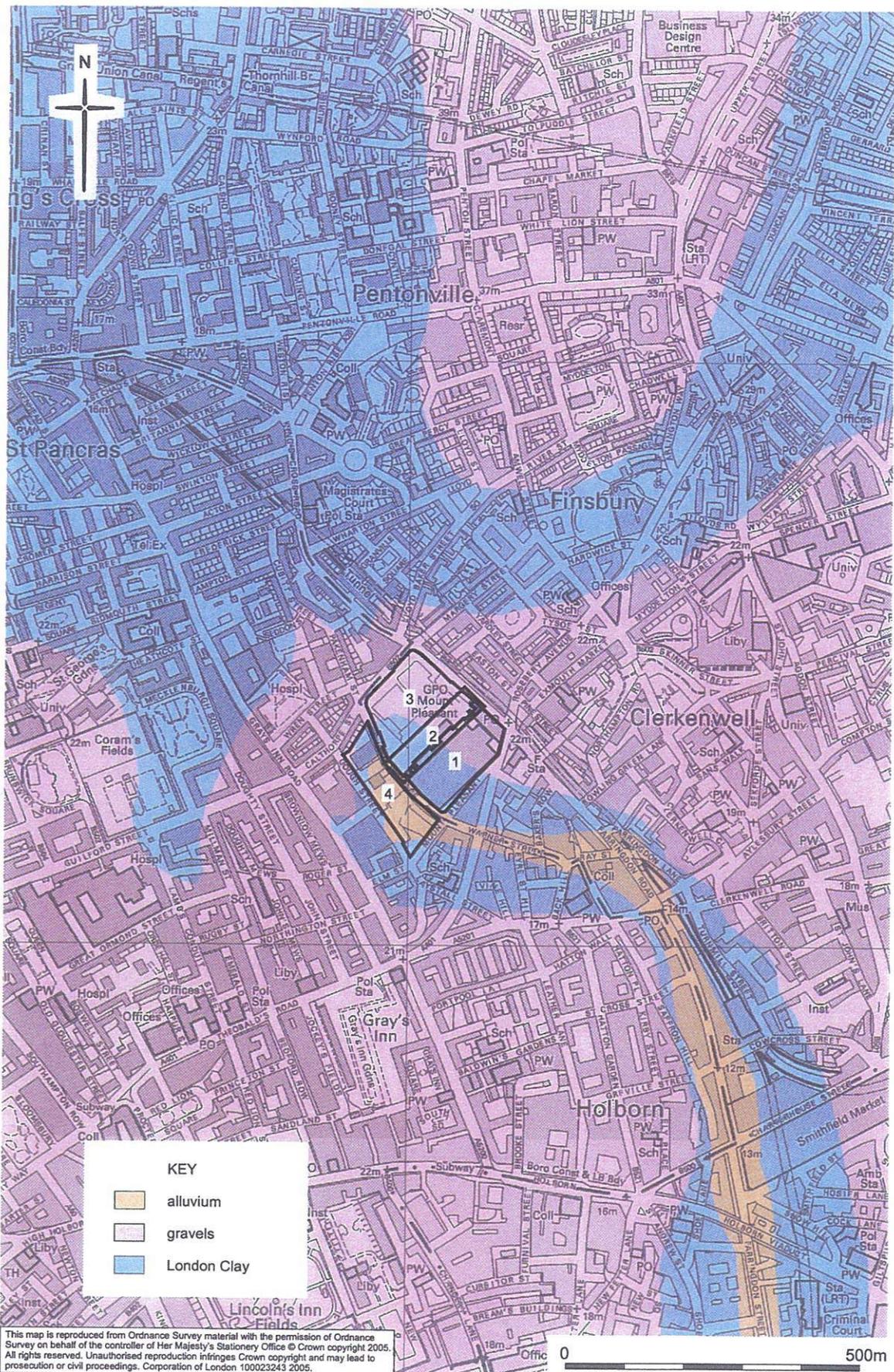


Fig 2 Geology

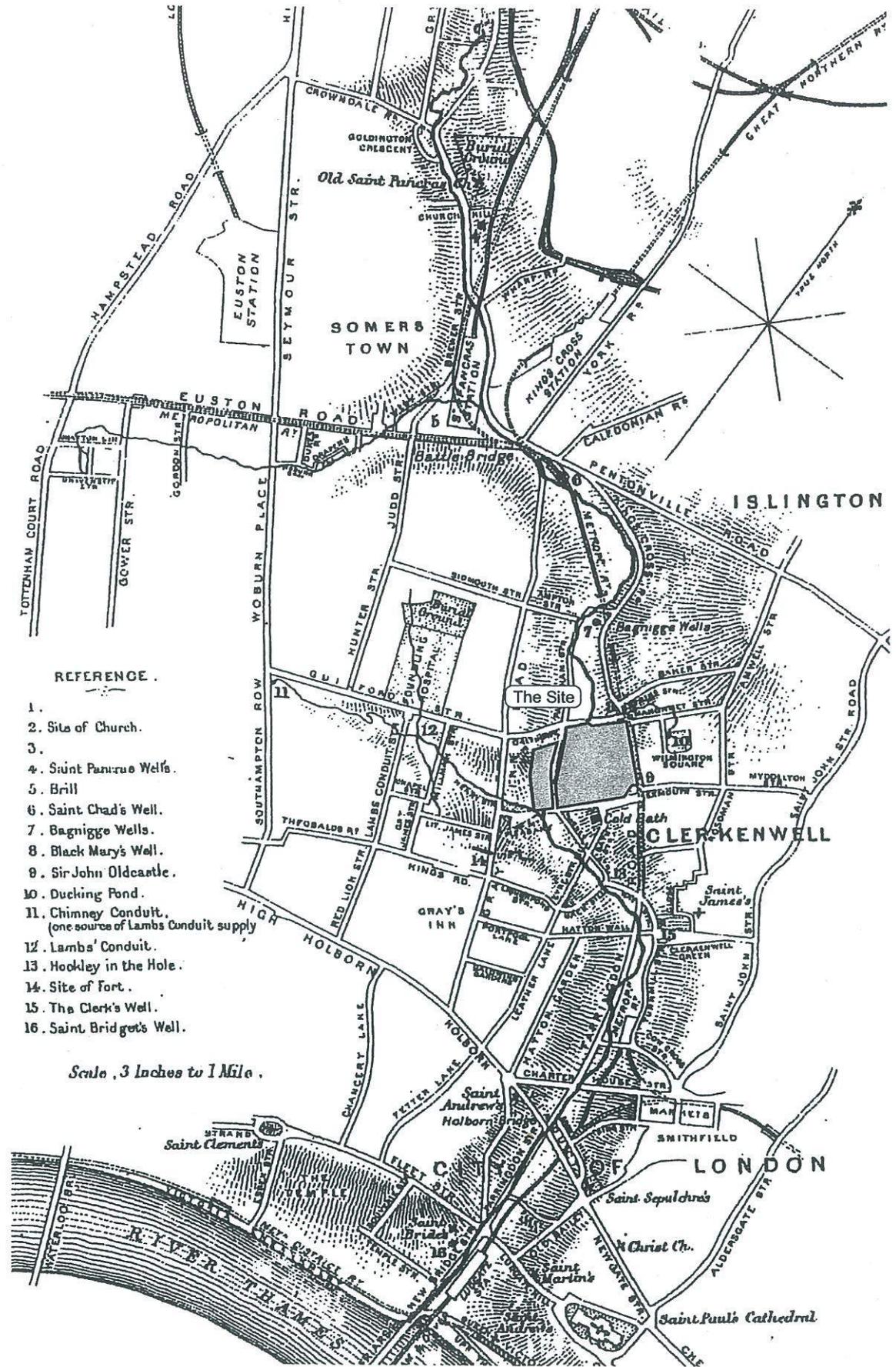


Fig 3 Map of the River Fleet, 1875

3.3 Archaeological and historical summary

3.3.1 Prehistoric

There are Palaeolithic remains within the vicinity of the Mount Pleasant site. Palaeolithic flint tools and flakes have been recorded approximately 90m to the west of the Phoenix Place site (Fig 23, ref 33). Another Palaeolithic axe (Fig 23, ref 36) was found redeposited within the gravel 150m to the southeast of the site. Approximately 150m to the north of the site a Palaeolithic kill site has been recorded (Fig 23, ref 17) where animals were hunted for food and then butchered.

The Fleet valley would have been an attractive location for Mesolithic communities. The Thames tributaries, such as the Colne and the Wandle to the west of the City, have shown that the environment these tributaries provided contained a wealth of natural resources. A Mesolithic axe has been found approximately 90m to the west of the Phoenix Place site (Fig 23, ref 33), which would indicate that the Fleet Valley was inhabited during this period.

The well drained soils away from the London Clay would have been more attractive to the farmers of the Neolithic and Bronze Age which may reflect why so few finds dating from these periods have been found in the vicinity of the site. A Neolithic axe was found approximately 90m to the west of the Phoenix Place site (Fig 23, ref 33) and a Bronze Age spear (Fig 23, ref 7) was found 480m to the northeast of the North Road area of the site.

There is more evidence of the area being settled during the Iron Age period as is demonstrated by the presence of a fragment of pottery (Fig 23, ref 55). There was pressure on land during the Later Bronze Age when, what previously had been considered marginal land, was bought into cultivation. The Iron Age ditch located 400m to the southeast of the site (Fig 23, ref 65) may well be evidence of this take up of marginal land.

3.3.2 Roman

During the Roman period the area now known as Mount Pleasant was to the northwest of the Roman city of Londinium close to the route of a Roman road that crossed the Fleet near to the junction of the modern Clerkenwell Road and Farringdon Road. The Roman road (Fig 23, ref 75) ran east-west approximately 300m to the south of the site. Often Roman burials are found close to Roman roads although the only burial within the vicinity of the site is a cremation (Fig 23, ref 7) found 480m to the northeast of the North Road area of the site, which is 700m to the north of the Roman road. Another Roman cremation urn and a coin (Fig 23, ref 71) have been recorded from the south of the site but the exact location of these finds is uncertain. A coin was recorded as being found in Gough Street, which is adjacent to the Phoenix Place site. The only other evidence of Roman occupation in the area comes from coins

(Fig 23, ref 43) and a pot fragment (Fig 23, ref 59) found 195m to the south of the site.

3.3.3 Saxon

Saxon settlement was concentrated to the southwest of the site at Lundenwic, in the area around the area now known as Covent Garden. The land along the banks of the Fleet to the north of Lundenwic would have been marshy marginal land at this time. Saxon finds such as potsherds and loom weights have been found on a number of sites to the southwest in Clerkenwell. Although it is known that the Roman walled City was re-occupied in the late 9th century, evidence for Saxon activity to the north of the walls is largely limited to place name.

Settlement in the late Saxon period seems to have been confined to a suburban straggle alongside the roads running northwards from the city from Aldersgate and Cripplegate.

The only Saxon finds from the area are a Saxon well (Fig 23, ref 60) 305m to the southeast of the site, a bead (Fig 23, ref 36) found 150m to the southeast of the site close to the route of the modern Farringdon Road.

3.3.4 Medieval

The earliest map showing the area in detail was made by Ralph Agas in c 1553 (Fig 3). It shows the site to be open land with a track to the east, which in later centuries became Farringdon Road (Fig 23, ref 28).

The site was situated to the northwest of the nunnery of St Mary Clerkenwell that was founded in 1145. A number of other monastic houses were founded in first half of the 12th century to the north of the City; possibly as a result of the area being relatively undeveloped. The foundation grant of St Mary's describes the site of the nunnery as being "in a field". A vineyard (Fig 23, ref 32) is recorded as 95m to the southeast of the site, which is also testament to the rural nature of the area during this period. Archaeological evidence from sites within the monastic precincts seems to confirm the absence of substantial settlement immediately predating the monastic foundations. However St Mary's Clerkenwell soon became the focus of medieval activity and settlement in the area.

During the medieval period the River Fleet was a wide deep channel from the Thames up to Holborn. At Holborn the channel became shallower but would still have been navigable by small craft. In the Parliamentary records of 1307 show that the Earl of Lincoln complained about the state of the Fleet and that the waste from tanners and other trades that deposited rubbish into the river, together with the rising number of wharfs and mills, was causing the river to clog up.

The name Mount Pleasant appears to be an ironic one. The site seems to have been used as a dumping ground, possible from the 15th century. Benjamin Cole's map of 1750 shows a mound of considerable size on the east bank of the River Fleet (Fig 7). Strype, in his Survey of London, written in 1720, said of Mount Pleasant that it was:

'A dirty place with some ill buildings and runneth down to the ditch'