There is a high potential for finding remains of the early 19th century terraced houses and cottages that were built facing onto Farringdon Road. These remains could include basements, foundations, wells and cesspits.

Although these remains are clearly of local significance there is nothing to suggest that they may have either regional or national importance.

4.3 Factors determining archaeological potential of the North Mount Pleasant Site

4.3.1.1 Natural geology

The site is situated on gravel except for the southwest corner of the site, which is situated on the underlying London Clay. 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 fluviatile 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.

During recent trial work on the site a natural deposit of mottled orangey grey silty clay at 0.55m below ground level. The silty clay was found to be sealing London Clay, which was recorded at 1.95m below ground level.

See section 3.2 for a description of the underlying geology.

4.3.1.2 Present land use

The present building was constructed in 20th century and forms part of the Mount Pleasant Mail Centre. The height of the existing slab is not known. Ground level on Mount Pleasant rises from 13.8m at the junction of Mount Pleasant and Phoenix Place to 19.2m OD at the junction of Mount Pleasant and Rosebery Avenue.

4.3.1.3 Earlier (post-medieval–modern) buildings

Prison buildings, dating from both the 18th and 19th century, and the 19th century prison wall are known to have existed on this site. Middleton's plans and sections (Figs 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14) show the foundations of the prison extended to 10 feet (3.05m) below ground level but it may have been necessary to excavate below this level in certain areas where the ground was softer. Below the prison buildings was a complex drainage system that emptied into the Fleet. Middleton's plan and section drawing of the drainage system (Fig 9) show he intended the drains to be between 15 and 20 feet (4.5m to 6.1m) below ground level. The foundations for the perimeter wall (see Fig 14) were intended to be 6 feet 8 inches (2.06m) below ground level but again they may have exceed this depth if the ground conditions were unsuitable.

The extent and depth of the 19th century additions to the prison are not known but could reasonably be expected to be of a similar depth to the 18th century buildings.

The previous buildings would have had an impact upon any archaeological deposits by truncating the site, within the footprints of these structures, to a depth of between 2m and 6m, below the 19th century ground level.

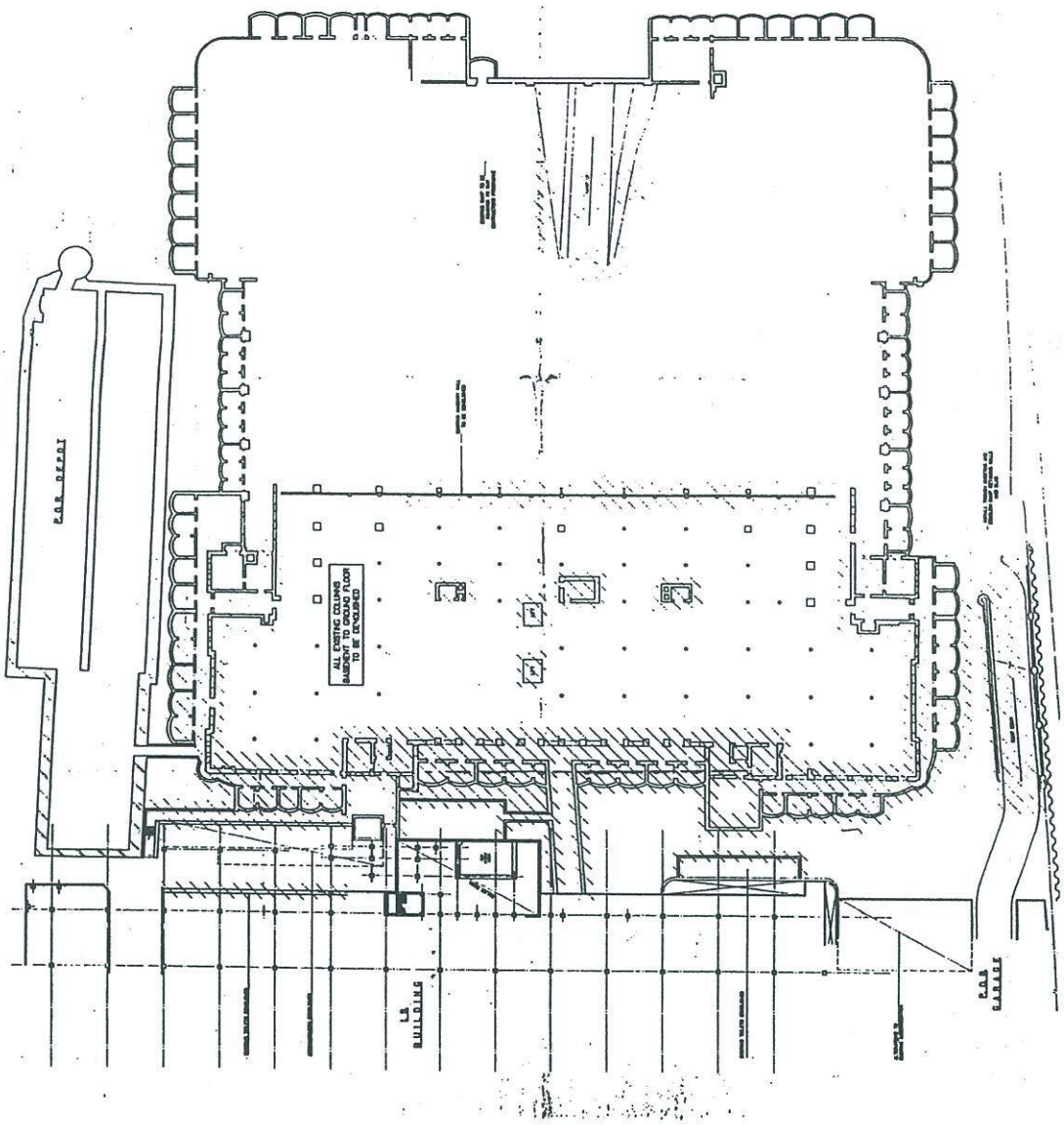

Fig 39 Parcel Office Basement Plan showing demolition works, *c* 1985

R:\Project\isli\1152\fig39

The Parcel Office, which was a basemented building (see Fig 39), stood on this site until it was demolished in the late 20th century.

Building remains and deposits predating the mid 19th century should be treated as part of the archaeological record.

4.3.1.4 Depth of archaeological deposit

In a trial pit (TP314) archaeological deposits interpreted as backfill or levelling deposits were recorded at 2.6m below ground level. Archaeological deposits were encountered in TP316 at 2m below ground level.

4.3.2 Archaeological potential

The nature of possible archaeological survival in the area of the proposed development is summarised here, 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).

4.3.2.1 Prehistoric

Previous finds from the area indicate that there is low potential for *in situ* and redeposited Palaeolithic remains to be present on the site.

Although a single Mesolithic artefact has been found within the vicinity of the site there is a low potential for evidence of Mesolithic remains such as scatters of burnt pebbles and struck flints to be sealed by or within alluvial deposits along the banks for the River Fleet.

The possible presence of alluvium on the site also means the site has a moderate potential for palaeoenvironmental evidence. Such deposits are could contain plant and animal remains (e.g. diatoms, forams, pollen, snails, insects and seeds) and could provide further information about past environments.

Previous finds from the area indicate that there is also a low potential for encountering later prehistoric remains including Bronze Age and Iron Age cut features such as field boundary ditches.

Although prehistoric remains would be of local significance there is nothing to suggest that they may have either regional or national importance.

4.3.2.2 Roman

Isolated archaeological remains from the Roman period have been recorded in the immediate vicinity and might be expected on site but the site is considered to have a low potential for finds dating from the Roman period as the site is outside the Roman City and some way to the north of a Roman Road.

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

4.3.2.3 Saxon

A few Saxon remains have been found to the southwest of the site, in the vicinity of the Farringdon Road, and there is a low potential that cut features dating from this period will be found on the eastern side of the site.

Although these remains are clearly of local significance there is nothing to suggest that they may have either regional or national importance

4.3.2.4 Medieval

Archaeological remains from the medieval period have been recorded in the immediate vicinity and might be expected on site. There is cartographic and documentary evidence to suggest a public laystall may have existed to the south of the site during the late medieval period. Dump activity may have extended across to this northern area. There is a moderate potential for dump deposits to be present on the southern half of the site. Excavation of a similar rubbish mound at Seward Street has shown that a significant depth of material may be preserved.

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

4.3.2.5 Post-medieval–modern

Archaeological remains from the post-medieval–modern period have been recorded on this site. There is a high potential for encountering remains associated with the 18th and 19th century prison that is known to have stood here. There is also a high potential for encountering 18th century dump deposits across the site.

Although these remains are clearly of local significance there is nothing to suggest that they may have either regional or national importance.

4.4 Factors determining archaeological potential of the Phoenix Place Site

4.4.1.1 Natural geology

A recent trial pit (TP302) has shown that gravel is present at 3.6m below ground level. In trial pit 304 two layers of brickearth were recorded. The top of these deposits was recorded at 2.3m below ground level. In trial pit 307 natural grey clay deposits were encountered at 2.60m below ground level and gravel at 3.7m below ground level. A mid orangey brown clay was recorded at 3.30m below ground level in TP310.

See section 3.2 for a description of the underlying geology.

4.4.1.2 Present land use

The site is currently occupied by a number of commercial buildings; the largest of which is the three storey high Calthorpe House at 15–20 Phoenix Place. This building, which was constructed in the early 20th century, is believed to be basemented. The area at the southern end of Phoenix Place is currently an open area used for car parking and has been since the second half of the 20th century.

The building is probably built on a single concrete raft *c* 0.5m thick.

4.4.1.3 Earlier (post-medieval–modern) buildings

Small-scale industrial activity including a brass foundry is known to have existed in this area during the 19th century and it appears likely that this area was used for a similar purpose in the 18th century. Houses fronting onto Mount Pleasant are known to have stood on the site in the mid 18th century, and 19th century terraced housing fronted on Gough Street. The 19th century houses are likely to have been three or possible four storeys high with basements. The basements could have extended to 3.2m below ground level. A backfilled basement was recorded in a trial pit (FDR05 - TP304), to the west of Phoenix Place, to a depth of at least 1.5m below ground level. However, remnants of basement walls that still exist on the southern area of the site show that basements depths varied across the site and therefore it should be remembered 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 treated as part of the archaeological record.

The extent of foundations associated with any of these buildings can only be estimated but there is a high possibility that such foundations will have truncated underlying archaeological deposits.

4.4.1.4 Depth of archaeological deposit

Trial pits in this area have shown that post-medieval dump deposits survive to a depth of more than 4.4m below ground level. Archaeological deposits were encountered in TP308 at approximately 0.8m below ground level. Archaeological deposits were recorded below modern rubble and concrete slab at 0.55m below present ground level in TP310.

4.4.2 Archaeological potential

The nature of possible archaeological survival in the area of the proposed development is summarised here, 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).

4.4.2.1 Prehistoric

Previous finds from the area indicate that there is low potential for *in situ* and redeposited Palaeolithic remains to be present on the site.

Although a single Mesolithic artefact has been found within the vicinity of the site there is a low potential for evidence of Mesolithic remains such as scatters of burnt pebbles and struck flints within any alluvial deposits.

The possible presence of alluvium on the site also means the site has a moderate potential for palaeoenvironmental evidence. Such deposits are could contain plant and animal remains (e.g. diatoms, forams, pollen, snails, insects and seeds) and could provide further information about past environments.

Previous finds from the area indicate that there is also a low potential for encountering later prehistoric remains including Bronze Age and Iron Age cut features such as field boundary ditches.

Although prehistoric remains would be of local significance there is nothing to suggest that they may have either regional or national importance.

4.4.2.2 Roman

Isolated archaeological remains from the Roman period have been recorded in the immediate vicinity and might be expected on site but the site is considered to have a low potential for finds dating from the Roman period as the site is outside the Roman City and some way to the north of a Roman Road.

Although these remains are clearly of local significance there is nothing to suggest that they may have either regional or national importance.

4.4.2.3 Saxon

A few Saxon remains have been found to the southwest of the site, in the vicinity of the Farringdon Road, and there is a low potential that cut features dating from this period will be found on the eastern side of the site.

Although these remains are clearly of local significance there is nothing to suggest that they may have either regional or national importance.

4.4.2.4 Medieval

Archaeological remains from the medieval period have been recorded in the immediate vicinity and might be expected on site. There is cartographic and documentary evidence to suggest public laystall may have existed to the east of the site during the late medieval period and there is a moderate potential that substantial dump deposits survive on the site. Although these remains are clearly of local significance there is nothing to suggest that they may have either regional or national importance.

4.4.2.5 Post-medieval–modern

Trial pits in this area have shown that post-medieval dump deposits survive to a depth of more than 4.4m below ground level. Dumps deposits were encountered across the Phoenix Place site in trial pits TP301, TP305, TP306, TP308 and TP310 and extended beyond the limit of excavation (up to 4.4m below ground level). Waterlogged organic dark, silty rubbish dumps with abundant domestic waste and cess were also encountered in TP307 at approximately 1.4m below ground level. A trial pit on the south side of this area near the junction of Mount Pleasant and Phoenix Place has shown that post-medieval backfilled cellars survive in this area of the site.

There is also a high potential that remains from the brass foundry and other industrial activities survive on the site.

There is a low potential of finding remains of 18th century water supply from New River Head such as wooden pipes and trenches as they may have been removed by 19th century water mains.

Table 2 Archaeological potential in the four areas of the site

Area and Period	Archaeological Potential		
	Low	Medium	High
South Mount Pleasant Mail Centre site			
Palaeoenvironmental		●	
Prehistoric	●		
Roman	●		
Saxon	●		
Medieval		●	
Post-Medieval			●
North Road Area			
Palaeoenvironmental		●	
Prehistoric	●		
Roman	●		
Saxon	●		
Medieval		●	
Post-Medieval			●
North Mount Pleasant Site			
Palaeoenvironmental		●	
Prehistoric	●		
Roman	●		
Saxon	●		
Medieval		●	
Post-Medieval			●
Phoenix Place Site			
Palaeoenvironmental		●	
Prehistoric	●		
Roman	●		
Saxon	●		
Medieval		●	
Post-Medieval			●

5 Impact of proposals

5.1 Impact on the South Mount Pleasant Mail Centre site

The proposed works in this area involve the demolition of and clearance of the existing buildings and a mixed use development of housing, offices and other amenities will be constructed. This will also include underground car parking and service areas. This will require additional truncation beneath the present basement. It has been assumed that some extra disturbance below this level will be inevitable during the construction process.

The greatest impact upon buried archaeological remains would be from the construction of piled foundations and additional service trenches. Piling would remove all archaeological remains within the footprint of each pile cap.

The effect of this truncation will be to remove or partially remove archaeological deposits. The greatest archaeological impact of the proposed works will probably be on buried post-medieval, and possible late medieval, dump deposits, which are known to extend to at least 4m below ground level in some areas of the site. Piling could also impact on alluvial deposits that may contain palaeoenvironmental evidence.

5.2 Impact on the North Road Area

It is proposed that this area will be maintained as existing. Therefore there will be no additional impact below the existing level of truncation.

5.3 Impact on the North Mount Pleasant Site

The proposed works in this area involve the demolition of and clearance of the existing buildings and the construction of a new Mail Centre. This is likely to included underground car parking and service areas. This will require additional truncation beneath the present basement. It has been assumed that some extra disturbance below this level will be inevitable during the construction process.

The greatest impact upon buried archaeological remains would be from the construction of piled foundations and additional service trenches. Piling would remove all archaeological remains within the footprint of each pile cap.

The effect of this truncation will be to remove or partially remove all archaeological deposits down. The greatest archaeological impact of the proposed works will probably be on buried post-medieval, and possible late medieval, dump deposits, which are known to extend to at least 4m below ground level in some areas of the site. Piling could also impact on alluvial deposits that may contain palaeoenvironmental evidence.

5.4 Impact on the Phoenix Place Site

The proposed works in this area involve the demolition of and clearance of the existing buildings and a mixed use development of housing, offices and other amenities will be constructed. This will also include underground car parking and service areas. This will require additional truncation beneath the present basement. It has been assumed that some extra disturbance below this level will be inevitable during the construction process.

The greatest impact upon buried archaeological remains would be from the construction of piled foundations and additional service trenches. Piling would remove all archaeological remains within the footprint of each pile cap.

The effect of this truncation will be to remove or partially remove archaeological deposits. The greatest archaeological impact of the proposed works will probably be on buried post-medieval, and possible late medieval, dump deposits, which are known to extend to at least 4m below ground level in some areas of the site. Piling could also impact on alluvial deposits that may contain palaeoenvironmental evidence.

6 Conclusions and recommendations

6.1 Conclusions and recommendations for the South Mount Pleasant Mail Centre site

This *Archaeological impact assessment* has shown that the there is a low potential for prehistoric, Roman and Saxon remains, a moderate potential for palaeoenvironmental and medieval remains and a high potential for post-medieval remains.

Previous activity will have removed a significant amount of archaeological deposits but is unlikely to have removed all the post-medieval cut features, foundations and dump deposits.

The principal impact of the proposed development on surviving archaeology will be to severely truncate or completely remove archaeological remains within the footprint of any proposed underground car parking areas and within the footprint of the pile caps. Within the footprint of the piles any archaeological remains will be completely removed.

The recent watching brief of the trial pits has shown that archaeological deposits survive on neighbouring areas of the site and it is recommended that further archaeological field evaluation is necessary, especially within the footprint of any proposed buildings. Field evaluation will provide further information on the nature and levels of deposits beneath the basement slab. This will enable an appropriate mitigation strategy to be recommended by the local planning authority.

6.2 Conclusions and recommendations for the North Road Area

This *Archaeological impact assessment* has shown that the there is a low potential for Prehistoric, Roman and Saxon remains, a moderate potential for palaeoenvironmental and medieval remains and a high potential for post-medieval remains.

Previous activity will have removed a significant amount of archaeological deposits but is unlikely to have removed all the post-medieval cut features, foundations and dump deposits.

As it is intended this area should remain as existing there will be little or no impact on archaeological remains in this area and it is therefore recommended that no further archaeological field evaluation is necessary in this area.

6.3 Conclusions and recommendations for the North Mount Pleasant Site

This *Archaeological impact assessment* has shown that the there is a low potential for Prehistoric, Roman and Saxon remains, a moderate potential for palaeoenvironmental and medieval remains and a high potential for post-medieval remains.

Previous activity will have removed a significant amount of archaeological deposits but is unlikely to have removed all the post-medieval cut features, foundations and dump deposits.

The principal impact of the proposed development on surviving archaeology will be to severely truncate or completely remove archaeological remains within the footprint of any proposed underground car parking areas and within the footprint of the pile caps. Within the footprint of the piles any archaeological remains will be completely removed.

The recent watching brief of the trial pits has shown that archaeological deposits survive on the site and it is recommended that further archaeological field evaluation is necessary, especially within the footprint of any proposed buildings. Field evaluation will provide further information on the nature and levels of deposits beneath the basement slab. This will enable an appropriate mitigation strategy to be recommended by the local planning authority.

6.4 Conclusions and recommendations for the Phoenix Place Site

This *Archaeological impact assessment* has shown that the there is a low potential for Prehistoric, Roman and Saxon remains, a moderate potential for palaeoenvironmental and medieval remains and a high potential for post-medieval remains.

Previous activity will have removed a significant amount of archaeological deposits but is unlikely to have removed all the post-medieval cut features, foundations and dump deposits.

The principal impact of the proposed development on surviving archaeology will be to severely truncate or completely remove archaeological remains within the footprint of any proposed underground car parking areas and within the footprint of the pile caps. Within the footprint of the piles any archaeological remains will be completely removed.

The recent watching brief of the trial pits has shown that archaeological deposits survive on the site and it is recommended that further archaeological field evaluation is necessary, especially within the footprint of any proposed buildings. Field evaluation will provide further information on the nature and levels of deposits beneath the basement slab. This will enable an appropriate mitigation strategy to be recommended by the local planning authority.

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