

Archaeology West - Contract No. C254
Archaeological Watching Briefs in the vicinity of Bond Street
Stations Event Code XSC10
 Interim Statement

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1. SCOPE OF WORK

- 1.1.1 A series of archaeological investigations were undertaken by Oxford Archaeology/Gifford (OAG), in the vicinity of the Crossrail's new Bond Street Station Western Ticket Hall (WTH), centred around 65 Davies Street (TQ 295 813) and the Eastern Ticket Hall (ETH), centred around Hanover Square. Both areas lie within the City of Westminster, London.
- 1.1.2 This report is an interim statement pending the completion of the works and the production of a full Fieldwork Report in line with Section 8F of the *Specification for Evaluation and Mitigation* (CR-PN_LWS_EN_SP_0001). The detail of the contents are commensurate with the production timeframe.
- 1.1.3 The intermittent watching brief works covered by this report commenced in June 2010 and continued through to December 2010. They recommenced in January 2011, and are currently ongoing. OAG undertook watching brief works in areas of ground disturbance which potentially contained archaeological remains as set out in the Site Specific Written Scheme of Investigation (SSWSI) for Bond Street (Document No: C132-WSP-T1-RGN-C125-00009) and when informed by either the works programme or by site contractors. The scope of attendance included any activities (including those associated with site set-up and demolition) undertaken by the Principal Contractor or sub-contractors that involved the removal of modern material, made ground and topsoil, subsoils, and superficial geological deposits such as alluvium and colluvium.
- 1.1.4 The works were carried out in accordance by the directives of the SSWSI for the sites, whereby a Targeted Watching Brief (TBW), 'shall comprise observation and recording of the Principal Contractor's works, with specific operations carried out under the supervision of the Archaeology Contractor'.
- 1.1.5 Targeted watching briefs are used for areas of known occasional, dispersed features which are either not considered to be of sufficient significance to warrant archaeological investigation in advance of construction, or where access prior to construction has not been possible and where, as a result, there is a possibility of unexpected discoveries, (*ibid*).
- 1.1.6 Targeted Watching Brief investigations were required for the following works:
- Bond Street Station, Western Ticket Hall (WTH) utility diversion advance works;
 - Hanover Square, Eastern Ticket Hall (ETH) utility diversion advance works;
 - Construction of the grout shaft excavations (itemised in the SSWSI C132-WSP-T1-RGN-C125-00009 section 3.1.4)
 - Box construction for Hanover Square; (obstruction clearance, excavation and construction of the diaphragm walls); and
 - Demolition of subterranean vaults below Hanover Square pavement and street, 18-19 Hanover Square (ETH) and 1a Tenterden Street (ventilation shaft).

- 1.1.7 Services requiring diversion works included electricity, water, sewerage, gas, cable and BT (communications). Frequently the test pits and accompanying trenches were done separately for each of the services. This resulted in a series of parallel trenches within close proximity of each other.
- 1.1.8 A Watching Brief, as defined in Crossrail's Generic WSI, is 'a programme of archaeological monitoring (*i.e.* observation, investigation and recording) which is carried out by a suitably qualified archaeologist during site investigations (*e.g.* geotechnical test pits, boreholes and utilities trial trenches) and construction works'. The purpose of the watching brief was to identify the potential of any archaeological remains that were uncovered in the course of the works and record them appropriately (as far as was reasonably practicable).
- 1.1.9 The works were carried out under the stipulation that 'except in cases where unexpected, potentially nationally important, archaeological remains are discovered, the targeted watching brief shall be designed and implemented so as to avoid adverse impact on the construction programme, wherever practicable', (Specification for Evaluation and Mitigation (CR-PN_LWS_EN_SP_0001, Section 7.H.6).

2. RESULTS

- 2.1.1 The majority of the below-ground intrusive work in the vicinity of Bond Street Station (WTH) had a minimal negative impact on any archaeology, as little or no archaeological remains were shown to be present.
- 2.1.2 In locations where archaeological remains did survive they were found to be generally later 19th- to 20th-century deposits and brick structures. The results provide information on aspects of the urban environment that has vanished, but were part of the growth and development of the area. The results also assist in the acquisition of data regarding the earlier landscape development by highlighting where natural or alluvial deposits were seen.
- 2.1.3 Deposits that were confidently identified as being naturally formed were seen only in the areas where the deepest work was undertaken. The geological sequence in this area of London should consist of clayey brickearth; overlying sandy gravels of the Lynch Hill series, which in turn which overlie London Clay.
- 2.1.4 **Timber Pump:** Approximately half way along St Anselm's Place, at the lowest point in the present day topography, a timber pipe was visible in the works. The timber feature consisted of a horizontal segment that was presumed to join a vertical segment that was retrieved. The vertical segment consisted of several component parts. There was an intact tapered cylinder (context 4000) with an iron protrusion. The cylinder was 0.3m in diameter and 0.4m in length and this appeared to be encased within part of a trimmed tree trunk (4001), both of which fit into a crosspiece (4002). The tapered cylinder was carefully worked and retained some tool marks. There was a large diameter hole on one side and above it a smaller one was positioned. The outer case (4001) and crosspiece (4002) appeared to be of tree trunks with minimal trimming to the exterior faces but with chamfered edges for joining sections and a bored/drilled hole, which may be part of the construction rather than for water flow. The hole was a narrow bore, less than 0.1m diameter. The remains are consistent with a force pump used for extracting water from relatively shallow depths. Such pumps have been in use for over two millennia and the water extraction is either for use or for drainage purposes.

- 2.1.5 The water pipe was aligned north-to-south. The extent of the feature remains unknown, but it was not seen within the main excavation area to the north. The water pipe may have been designed to provide water to households or businesses or it may have been part of the extraction end of the process such as from a well. In this area of London a pump such as this may well have provided a local water supply for an adjacent business or dwelling. The wooden waterpipe was cut through a number of earlier deposits, which probably result from the occupation, general activity and deliberate dumping of material to level the area.
- 2.1.6 Other examples of these pipes are known of, such as the elm drain in Wimbledon Museum (<http://www.wimbledonmuseum.org.uk/tour.php?cat=services&page=objects>). Documentary and archaeological evidence show that prior to the use and availability of metal, many English towns had elm water mains, including Bristol, Norwich, Reading, Exeter, Southampton, Hull, Gosport and Liverpool, as well as London, (<http://www.british-trees.com/treeguide/elms/nbnsys0000003812.htm>). The pump may belong to a slightly later date than many of these, but since there were no associated datable finds it is difficult to confirm. The use of elm drains dates generally to the 19th century, and probably the earlier rather than the later part of that century.
- 2.1.7 **Arched Vaults:** Vaulted/arched structures were seen in three locations and all appear to be part of the same phase of activity. The vaults were initially seen along Weighhouse Street in an electricity utility trench; a second range of vaults was seen along Gilbert Street, in two separate areas (in the BT diversion at the southern end and also along the western edge of the excavation site). Here there were at least 11 arched structures, over 1.5m in height and approximately 1.75m wide.
- 2.1.8 They were clearly built in one event, and were constructed with red brick in alternating header and stretcher courses, with the arch continuing the same build. The archways appear to have been used as cellars since there was evidence of whitewash on the internal surfaces. This was commonly done to help increase light levels in areas with no windows, light either filtering through from lightwells along the edge of the streets or artificial internal lighting. Throughout London there were properties built, particularly in the Georgian period, with recessed subterranean storage on the opposite, street-side, to the main entrance. In some instances the roads and the storage were an integral construction.
- 2.1.9 The regularity of the build indicates that these could only have been built as part of a wide-ranging event and they extend beyond the confines of the plot of land occupied by 65 Davies Street. It seems most likely that these vaulted structures could date to the early 19th century, a period when there was a significant amount of rebuilding in the area carried out by Seth Smith. This rebuilding took place between 1818 and 1833, when an agreement between Earl Grosvenor and Seth Smith saw a large-scale redevelopment of the area. This area included most of Weighhouse Street from Davies Street nearly to Duke Street, most of Gilbert Street, and much of the east side of Binney Street. Documentary evidence notes that the properties were to be substantial brick houses of four square storeys with as many 'as will completely occupy and fill up' the street frontages (*ibid*) being built. The original development encompassed sixty-three new houses with shops, as well as a warehouse, stables and coach-houses and a dissenting chapel. Later redevelopments have meant that No. 27 Gilbert Street is the only element of this early 19th-century wholesale redevelopment phase that survives above ground.

- 2.1.10 **Walls:** Various elements of walling seen in the watching briefs are attributed to 19th century. A number of these were of yellow London Stock bricks and are likely to be of mid 19th-century date or later. These walls seemed to protrude beneath the streets in a number of locations. This probably reflects various subterranean elements of buildings that no longer exist, such as coal cellars, basements and storage areas, but could denote changes in the pavement and road arrangements, meaning features that were part of the street frontages became 'orphaned' beneath roads.
- 2.1.11 **Surfaces:** The squared granite setts seen below the present road surfaces in St Anselm's Place and the Haunch of Venison Yard are representative of this earlier era of road surfacing before the widespread use of Tarmac (after 1901). Granite setts required a greater investment of time in terms of producing the setts and then having to individually lay each one, manually, into a bedding layer. Although the surfaces could become uneven the setts themselves were extremely hardwearing and could aid drainage. In the Tenterden Street area a different type of external surface was seen. This consisted of rounded cobbles, which although densely packed were less regularly laid. This variation in the materials used may have been either because the surfaces were of a different date and could represent an earlier phase or a later repair or the surface was specified by different clients.

3. ONGOING WORKS

- 3.1.1 Targeted Watching Brief work in relation to construction of the grout shafts is still pending. A full Watching Brief Fieldwork Report incorporating full below ground impact (service and inspection trench) mapping and localised stratigraphic descriptions will be completed following these works and the completion of any other works which arise within the area defined under event code XSC10.



St Anselm's Place: A third service diversion trench being dug. The earlier ones are to the left of the picture. Looking west



Brick vaults in Gilbert Street, looking north



Arched vaults below Gilbert Street, visible beyond the western side of the XSC10 excavation, looking south-west



St Anselm's Place: Timber pipe 4002, looking north



St Anselm's Place: Timber pump element 4000, ex situ