



## 184-186 Fleet Street, City Of London Ec4

Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment



**184-186 FLEET STREET,  
CITY OF LONDON EC4**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT**

Prepared on behalf of  
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## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT**

### **Summary**

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Macfarlanes on behalf of DC Thomson Publishers to undertake an archaeological desk-based assessment of land comprising Nos.184-186 Fleet Street, EC4. The site covers an approximate area of 344 square metres centred on TQ 31250 81175.

The Site lies on the north side of Fleet Street in an area between Roman Londinium to the east and the Saxon Lundenwic to the west around Covent Garden. The line of Fleet Street follows the line of a Romano-British/Saxon Road and is therefore significant in terms of trade and communication and urban development and expansion. The road would also have been important in serving the medieval churches and foundations located in the area, including St Dunstan in the West (situated immediately west of the present development site), St. Bride to the east and Whitefriars and the Carmelite friary at Temple to the south/south-east.

There have been no previous archaeological investigations undertaken at the present development site. A number of archaeological excavations have however been undertaken in the vicinity and reflect a Romano-British, Saxon, medieval, and post-medieval presence. Investigated sites include the plot immediately adjacent at 180-183 Fleet Street. Recovered deposits included medieval and post-medieval pits heavily disturbed as a result of modern basement excavation.

A comparative study of available excavation archives indicates the possible expected depth of any surviving archaeological deposits at the site and the depth of the natural geology in the area. Basement depths that cover parts of the site provided by the client extend beneath the depth at which archaeological deposits have been found at the adjacent plot.

The main archaeological issues directly concerning the site are:

- i) The position of the site directly overlying the line of a possible Romano-British/Saxon road. Observations made by Stow in 1595 record the line of a street on the north side of Fleet Street immediately west of St. Dunstan's. A continuation of this line would run directly through the present development site.
- ii) The proximity of the site to the Church of St Dunstan in the West and its location on lands historically occupied by the church. Cartographic analysis shows the medieval graveyard to exist on the east side of the medieval church and associated church buildings depicted as extant on the site. The vestry of the 19<sup>th</sup> century church occupies the western portion of the present development site.
- iii) The existence of medieval deposits recorded during excavation at 180-183 Fleet Street (FLE82).

In summary, the present development site has the potential to contain significant Romano-British, Saxon, and medieval features and deposits related to known features, those being the Romano-British/Saxon road identified by Stow, the Church of St Dunstan in the West and known medieval and post-medieval activity at 180-83 Fleet Street.

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Lawrence Pontin managed the project for Wessex Archaeology. The assessment was researched and compiled by Katharine Barber incorporating previous work by Gail Wakeham. The illustrations were prepared by Mark Roughley and Kitty Brandon.

# **184-186 FLEET STREET, CITY OF LONDON EC4**

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT**

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background**

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Macfarlanes on behalf of DC Thomson Publishers (the client) to undertake an archaeological desk-based assessment of land comprising 184-186 Fleet Street in the City of London, EC4 (TQ 31250 81175), hereafter referred to as ‘the Site’ (Figure 2). The site boundary outlined on figure 2 shows the footprint of the present development site as supplied by the client. It must be noted that structures A B and C indicated on Figure 2 are not in the ownership of the client. The present development site comprises 5 floors over ground floor and basement.
- 1.1.2. This assessment is based on a 1km diameter study area centred on the present development site (Figure 1), hereafter referred to as ‘the Study Area’.
- 1.1.3. This assessment has been carried out in accordance with the requirements and guidance set out in *City of London Planning Advice Note 3 – Archaeological Assessment* (Corporation of London, 1996), and the Institute of Field Archaeologists’ *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-based Assessments* (IFA 2001).

#### **1.2. The Site: location, topography, geology and hydrology**

- 1.2.1. The site is situated on the north side of the east-west running Fleet Street, in the City of London. The Site covers an approximate area of 344 square metres and is bound by Fleet Street to the south, by buildings fronting onto Fetter Lane to the east and to the west by the church of St Dunstan in the West. The northern boundary of the Site is adjacent to grounds associated with Clifford’s Inn at 61-80 Fetter Lane.
- 1.2.2. The Site comprises 3 adjacent properties fronting onto Fleet Street (Nos. 184-186) and associated buildings to the rear. The rear properties are accessed via a laneway off Fleet Street between nos. 184 and 185 leading to a courtyard historically known as ‘Hen and Chickens Court’.
- 1.2.3. The drift geology of the City of London consists of a flood-plain gravel terrace deposited in the Pleistocene period, capped with a layer of brickearth of varying thickness. The site itself is situated on a band of London clay which roughly extends along the westerly line of Fleet Street to the junction with Chancery Lane. South of this Thames gravel declines in gradient towards the River Thames (Museum of London 2000, Maps 8, 10 and 13). Excavation at 180-183 Fleet Street, immediately east of the present development site revealed Taplow Gravel above London Clay (Guy 1982, 3).



- 1.2.4. This present development site is situated at the northern extent of the historical River Thames flood plain, which slopes southwards towards the river from the southern side of Fleet Street
- 1.2.5. The River Fleet, now canalised, once ran over ground to meet the Thames approximately 600m to the east of the present development site along the line of modern Farringdon Street and New Bridge Street (Weinreb, Hibbert, 1983 293).
- 1.2.6. From spot heights recorded on the ground floor site plan, present ground level across the Site slopes gently from north to south from approximately 15.70m aOD to 15.01m aOD. Basement floor levels existing along the frontage of the site and along its eastern extent range in depth from 12.29m aOD to 12.89m aOD.
- 1.2.7. Excavations to the immediate east of the present development site at 180-183 Fleet Street (FLE82) revealed that modern basements had been dug into natural geology therefore eradicating evidence for the natural soil horizon. At the northern extent of the site, truncated natural stratigraphy was observed at 12.62m aOD. Medieval activity in the form of pitting extended to a depth of 12.35m aOD (Guy 1982, 6).
- 1.2.8. Archaeological investigations at the Rolls Estate (Former Public Record Office; (CEY99) , approximately 80m to the north of the present development site, while producing negative archaeological evidence as a result of basement excavation, noted flood plain gravels at a depth of 13.75m aOD-14.43 aOD.
- 1.2.9. At 133-137 Fetter Lane (rear of) (FET76, 1976,) approximately 20m to the north of the present development site, natural gravel was encountered at a depth of between 14.73m aOD and 14.50m aOD.
- 1.2.10. This sample range of natural ground depths suggests that existing basements to a depth of 12.29m aOD extend beyond the natural ground horizon and are therefore likely to have damaged any archaeological deposits within the footprint of the buildings.

### **1.3. Planning and legislative background**

- 1.3.1 The City of London Unitary Development Plan (adopted April 2002) takes into account Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16) issued by the Department of the Environment in 1990. The policies in the UDP relating to archaeology form part of the Corporation's environmental and conservation objectives to protect the special character of the City. The following extracts relate to archaeology:

Policy STRAT 11a

*To recognise the archaeological importance of the City as the historic centre of the capital and to seek the adequate safeguarding and investigation of ancient monuments and archaeological remains.*

#### Policy UDP ARC 1

*To require planning applications which involve excavation or groundworks on sites of archaeological potential to be accompanied by an archaeological assessment and evaluation of the site including the impact of the proposed development.*

#### Policy UDP ARC 2

*To require development proposals to preservation in situ, protect and safeguard important ancient monuments and important archaeological remains and their settings, and where appropriate, to require the permanent public display and/or interpretation of the monument or remains.*

#### Policy UDP ARC 3

*To ensure the proper investigation, recording of sites, and publication of the results, by an approved organisation as an integral part of a development programme where a development incorporates archaeological remains or where it is considered that preservation in situ is not appropriate.*

### **1.4. Previous archaeological work within the Study Area**

- 1.4.1. There has been no previous archaeological work undertaken within the footprint of the present development site.
- 1.4.2. An excavation has however been undertaken to the immediate east of the site at 180-183 Fleet Street (Site code FLE82, Figure 2) and revealed medieval and post-medieval deposits. The site serves to give an indication of possible archaeological remains at the present development site and is discussed in paragraph 3.4.14.
- 1.4.3. Within the Study Area, a number of other archaeological excavations and watching briefs have been recorded, dating from 1878 to 2004. A full list of these excavations is given in Appendix 1 and these and important excavations located up to 1km from the site are shown on Figure 1.
- 1.4.4. Those sites which revealed archaeological evidence within 100m are listed below.

Temple Church (Various locations, no site code, works undertaken in 1951 by Godfrey).

50 Fleet Street, c.1950 (GM280)

133-137 Fetter Lane (Rear of), 1976 (FET76).

180-183 Fleet Street, 1982 (FLE82).

The Rolls Estate (Former Public Records Office), 1999 (CEY99)

Rolls and Arnold House, 4-6 Breams Buildings (RLH01).

- 1.4.5. Many of the investigations undertaken in the 1km study area have revealed negative archaeological evidence or truncation of archaeological deposits. This level of ground disturbance reflects the extensive ground intrusive activity undertaken during construction of buildings and basements and the developing streetscape along Fleet Street in the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1. Introduction**

- 2.1.1. The aim of this desk-based assessment is to provide a detailed inventory and assessment of the known archaeological resource within a broad study area and to establish the potential resource within the site itself. A number of sources were consulted to obtain the maximum information available at the time. A brief summary of sources consulted is given below, with a full listing contained in the Bibliography section.
- 2.1.2. The objectives of the assessment were to establish the potential for surviving archaeological deposits and their likely character, extent, context, condition and significance within the Site.

### **2.2 Archive consultation**

- 2.2.1. The Greater London Sites and Monuments Record (GLSMR) has been consulted for entries within the Study Area. Cartographic and secondary printed sources have been viewed at the City of Westminster Archives Centre. The Guildhall Library and the London Archaeology Archive and Research Centre (LAARC) have also been consulted in the process of the study.
- 2.2.2. In the text of the report, references to the sites are made by individual WA numbers allocated for the purpose of this study with their full details given in Appendix 2.

## **3. PERIODS REPRESENTED ON THE SITE**

### **3.1. The Prehistoric Period (500,000 BC – AD 43).**

- 3.1.1. Few *in situ* or residual finds of the Prehistoric period have been found within central London. Due to this comparative rarity of prehistoric occupation in London, surviving evidence is deemed to be of particularly high significance.
- 3.1.2. Within the study area, there are only two findspots recorded of prehistoric date. The first findspot records a flint tranchet axe of Mesolithic date (**WA1**) recovered from the Fleet River. The second. artefact, found in the vicinity of Bouverie Street, which lies 125m to the south-east of the site, is a Bronze Age axe (**WA2**) The existence of prehistoric activity in the vicinity of the development site must therefore be treated tentatively.

### **3.2 The Romano-British period (AD 43 – c. AD 410).**

- 3.2.1. Within a short period after the Roman invasion of Britain, the Romans had established the city of *Londinium* on the north bank of the Thames, within the area now forming the heart of the City of London to the east of the present development site. The city flourished and expanded in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries AD, becoming the capital of the province and containing a large number of major civic structures.
- 3.2.2. The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries saw a major change in the nature of the city, which appears to have started to contract, with a number of the civic structures being demolished. Large numbers of fine, high status houses complete with the trappings of wealth appear to dominate the housing stock in this period, suggesting a concentration of a rich and influential Romano-British society within the city itself, before it was finally abandoned in the early 5<sup>th</sup> century (MoLAS 1995, 14).
- 3.2.3. A series of roads were developed to connect the rural hinterlands with the city. Roads established under Roman rule are known to have continued in use as communication systems through Anglo-Saxon charters. This is likely to be the case for Fleet street (**WA3**) where it is probable that the known Saxon road was preceded by a Roman road into Londinium.
- 3.2.4. Investigations on the south side of Fleet Street at No. 50 (GM280, **WA4**), approximately 75m east of the present development site revealed evidence of reused Roman material in a wall (GLSMR Archive). Fragments of broken tile and Opus Signinum confirm a Romano-British presence. Given the location of this site along the line of Fleet Street, it is possible that this reused Roman material may originate from the Romano-British Road.
- 3.2.5. In addition to the above evidence, Romano-British activity has been recorded at the following locations within the study area. While these sites are not directly related to the development site they do however serve to illustrate Romano-British activity outside the city walls in the vicinity of a key road in and out of the city.
- 3.2.6. A site at 133-137 Fetter Lane (rear of) (FET 76, 1976, **WA5**) approximately 20m to the north of the present development site revealed evidence for a possible Roman ditch oriented NE-SW approximately 3m wide by 1m deep. Natural gravel was encountered at a depth of between 14.73m aOD and 14.50m aOD. The Roman ditch was cut into a yellow grey layer the top of which lay at a height of c.15.10m aOD and contained fragments of Roman brick and a flagon neck (Siegel, LAMAST, Vol. 29, 78). Deposits were heavily impacted upon by basements along Fetter Lane.
- 3.2.7. Evaluation at nos. 11-23 New Fetter Lane (NFL01, **WA6**) approximately 200m to the north-east of the present development site, revealed evidence of reworked or redeposited brickearth of possible Romano-British date.
- 3.2.8. At 4 Kings Bench Walk (KBK92) approximately 160m to the south-west of the present development site, three Romano-British burials (**WA7**) cut into natural ground were truncated by Romano-British or Saxon pits.

### 3.3. Saxon (AD410-AD1066).

- 3.3.1. During the Saxon period, activity in central London moved from the site of the Romano-British centre at the site of the modern city to the area around Covent Garden and the Strand to the west of the development site. In the late Saxon period (AD 850-1066), the largely abandoned Romano-British walled city to the east of the development site was reoccupied.
- 3.3.2. Fleet Street's strategic location between the sites of the Romano-British and Saxon urban cores emphasises the importance of the street as a thoroughfare and communication link between the two centres (**WA8**).
- 3.3.4 A road following the line of The Strand (**WA3**) towards the city was first mentioned in a charter of 1002 by the name *Akemanestraete* (GLSMR), the road is also recorded in 1170 (Pevsner & Bradley 1997, 495). The continuity of the route towards the Romano-British centre is strongly suggested by archaeological evidence. A Saxo-Norman abutment designed to support a bridge over the River Fleet leading to Ludgate circus (GZ CT8) at the eastern extent of Fleet Street is known. The eastern extent of the road has also been recorded during excavations at Ludgate Hill (PWB88: McCann and Orton 1989, 105 in Museum of London 2000, 184).
- 3.3.5. More specific to the present development site, there is post-medieval documentary evidence to suggest that the line of *Akemanestraete* ran east-west to the immediate west of the site, parallel with the line of Fleet Street. In 1598, in his Survey of London, John. Stow noted the remains of an earlier street on the north side of Fleet Street, between Chancery Lane and St Dunstan's Church (Stow 1994, 23 in Butler 2005, 6). A continuation of this line would run directly through the present development site. Stow's contemporary account reads "When the labourers had broken up the pavement of hard stone, more sufficient than the first...under which they had found in the made ground, piles of timber driven very thick, and almost come together". A depth of 4ft below Fleet Street is given as the buried depth of the road by Kingsford (1908, 43 in Museum of London 2000, 184).
- 3.3.6.. Archaeological evidence concerning Saxon activity in the vicinity of the site is to date sparse. 110m to the south-west of the present development site at Hare Court, Middle Temple, a hoard of 241-251 coins were recovered in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (**WA9**). The coins are datable to the Saxon period, c.841-2 and reflect at the very least a Saxon presence in the area at this time.
- 3.3.7. It is also possible that the church of St Dunstan's in the West on Fleet Street (**WA10**), adjacent to the western boundary of the present development site is of Saxon foundation. St Dunstan was canonised in AD 1018 (Clarke 1898, 189) suggesting a pre-Norman foundation of the church as it is unlikely that an Anglo-Saxon name would have been chosen following the Norman Conquest.
- 3.3.8. Archaeological investigations in the area have not revealed any further evidence for Saxon activity within the study area.

### 3.4. The Medieval Period (AD 1066-AD 1500).

- 3.4.1 It is common for the level ground at the edge of a flood plain to be delineated by a track or roadway (such as Fleet Street) separating the flood prone, soft ground from the more suitable building ground further away from the river. The result is an entirely different topography north and south of Fleet Street; the northern side was prone to an urban precedent beginning with concentrated linear development along the line of the street while the marshier ground to the south was occupied by religious establishments during the medieval period (e.g. Temple).
- 3.4.2. The western suburb of the medieval city along Fleet Street has not been the subject of the extensive investigations that have been undertaken in other parts of the city and is therefore less well understood (Thomas 2002, 23). The area was sufficiently underdeveloped to allow for the siting of religious establishments e.g. Whitefriars Carmelite friars and Knights Templar house at Temple on the south side of Fleet Street. Such establishments were usually sited on land outside the main urban centre. The siting of parish churches along Fleet Street such as St Brides (Eastern end of Fleet Street) does however indicate the existence of communities in their immediate vicinity (Thomas 2002, 23).
- 3.4.3. The medieval development of Fleet Street was confined largely to the line of the street. Few streets lead off it in a northerly direction with the exception of Fetter Lane known from c.1245 between Fleet Street and Holborn as Faytureslane and Chancery Lane (**WA11**). Medieval Fetter Lane, east of the site was originally known as Faiter or Faytor Lane and later Fewterers Lane. The word may be derived from the French meaning ‘Lawyer’ or in the 14<sup>th</sup> century ‘idler’ (Weinreb, Hibbert 1983, 283). Alternatively the name may derive from the Fetters worn by the Knights Templar who had their workshops there (Weinreb, Hibbert 1983, 283). Chancery Lane was built by the Knights Templar around 1160 and paved in 1542 and 1547.
- 3.4.4. A series of courts and laneways such as *Hen and Chicken Court* (located within the present development site) enabled access to the rear of Fleet Street. medieval plots are usually deep and narrow with little street frontage. This precedent is retained in parts of the modern plot divisions in Fleet Street. Indeed the footprint of 184-186 Fleet Street with the laneway and court to the rear would appear to retain its original medieval format. Cartographic study has shown the same footprint at the beginning of the post-medieval period (Ogilby and Morgan, Figure 3).
- 3.4.5. In general, the north side of modern Fleet Street has fewer large 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings and more narrow frontages than the south side suggesting a higher potential for the survival of medieval plot divisions beneath the existing streetscape.

- 3.4.6. The possible Saxon foundation of the church of St Dunstan in the West (**WA10**) has already been discussed (Refer paragraph 3.3.4.), however, the first documentary mentions of the site have been noted from 1170 (Pevsner & Bradley 1997, 214; **WA12**) and 1185 (Weinreb and Hibbert 1983, 292). Clarke gives a date of 1237 when Richard De Barking, Abbot of Westminster gave the church and patronage to King Henry III when he founded a house called the Rolls for converted Jews (at the site of the former Public Record Office, **WA13**: Clarke 1898, 192). The king assigned the profits and endowments to St Dunstan's for the maintenance of the Rolls (Clarke 1898, 193). Under Edward III, a rector was appointed to the church and much of the profits were returned to the parish. In 1362 the foundation passed to the Bishop of London and in 1386 to the Convent of Alnwick in Northumberland. There was no vicar appointed until 1437 when John Plongar was appointed, the church remained in the hands of the monastery until the Dissolution when it reverted to the Crown.
- 3.4.7. During the medieval period, Fleet Street would have been an important route between the church of St Dunstan and that of St Bride and on eastwards to St Pauls (Clarke 1898, 193).
- 3.4.8. The medieval church extended south of the present church into what is now Fleet Street. The extant modern church occupies the location of the chancel and north side chapel of the medieval building and the bulk of the medieval churchyard (**WA12**). Evidence for the material fabric of the medieval Church is unusually sparse for the City of London. Cartographic representation of the church is limited to 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century Maps which may be used to interpret the medieval church. Agas' Map (Figure 3) dating from the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century gives a birds eye view of the layout of the city. St Dunstan's is named at this date as 'S. Dosto in the west' and is depicted as a rectangular tower on the west side of the body of the church. The church is set within a walled compound which extends southwards into the line of Fleet Street. The church is entered from a gateway in front of the church off Fleet Street. To the west, a laneway accesses a courtyard to the rear of the church. This plot is not accessible from the church grounds and therefore is unlikely to be associated with it; later map evidence supports this theory.
- 3.4.9. The west-east running enclosing wall defining the Fleet Street frontage of the church turns 90 degrees east of the south-eastern corner of the church to run in a northerly direction before turning a further 90 degrees to run east-west parallel with Fleet Street to meet Fetter Street on a line north of the street frontage. This 'dog leg' of the enclosing wall would appear to occupy the site of the current development.
- 3.4.10. Within the footprint of the present development, the following structures are noted. Firstly, outside the enclosing wall, in the area created by the dog leg south of the church wall, a singular building is depicted. Secondly, within the eastern extent of the compound two adjacent pitched roofed structures are shown, the most easterly of the pair fronts onto Fetter Lane. The gable ends abut the enclosing wall along Fleet Street. The wall terminates west of the eastern structure allowing access from Fleet Street. These structures are bound

to the immediate north by an east-west aligned building, this structure would appear to lie immediately north of the church enclosure. The adjacent pitched roof structures do however lie within the church wall and as such may have served some sort of associated religious function.

- 3.4.11. A churchyard is not denoted on the Agas plan however the existence of a medieval graveyard is inferred by Daniell who claimed that the rebuilt post-medieval church was built in the churchyard of its predecessor (**WA12**). A possible location for the graveyard could therefore be in the vacant plot of land between the church and the double pitch roofed structures and the plot to the rear of the church. This suggestion is given credence by Ogilby and Morgan's Map of 1676 which names the churchyard in this location (Figure 3).
- 3.4.12. While post-medieval in date, Ogilby and Morgan's Map of 1676 shows us the first clear plan of the medieval footprint of St. Dunstan's church and immediate environs, discussion of the map is relayed in the post-medieval section of the report (Refer paragraph 3.5.4).
- 3.4.13. In 1666, the Great Fire of London swept across the city and was only 'distinguished within ten or twelve yards of the door (of the church)' (Clarke 1898, 189). It is therefore possible that the buildings depicted by Ogilby and Morgan immediately east of St Dunstan's (that is the site of the present site) reflect those rebuilt after the fire.
- 3.4.14. The medieval church is also depicted on Rocque's Map of 1749 (Figure 3) and Horwood's Map of London, 1799 (Figure 3). These maps provide no additional evidence concerning the development of and lands associated with St Dunstan's Church.
- 3.4.15. Archaeological evidence of medieval activity in the locality can be seen through several investigations. Excavation undertaken to the immediate east of the site at 180-183 Fleet Street (FLE82, **WA14**, Figure 2) revealed the base of a late 14<sup>th</sup> century chalk lined feature. The modern basement at the site had destroyed all other archaeological remains (London Archaeologist Vol. 4, No. 10, 276). A trench (16m N-S by 5m E-W) was opened running approximately north-south along the eastern boundary of the site adjacent to Fetter Lane. Investigations were not extended into the western part of the plot, adjacent to the present development site as deep basement excavation had previously taken place. Medieval evidence comprised a sub-rectangular pit (1.20m x 1.15m) found towards the east of the trench. The surviving depth which was truncated by modern basement was 0.40m. The pit was cut into gravel (centre of deposit 12.30m aOD) at a depth of 12.35m aOD. Within the pit there were the remains of iron nails, decayed wood (possibly representing planking) and chalk deposits, possibly the remains of a lining (Guy 1982, 6). The function of the pit is uncertain, it may have been a rubbish or cess pit or maybe originally a well or a sump (Guy 1982, 7). The excavation report records a piece of medieval pottery recovered from the pit datable to the late 14<sup>th</sup> century. The Fetter Lane Appraisal report (covering 180-183 Fleet Street; Cowgill 1984, 1) also mentions a knife blade fragment of mid-late 14<sup>th</sup> century date from the site. Post-medieval activity is noted in paragraph 3.5.9. of the report.



Medieval activity is therefore recorded to the immediate west and east of the present development site.

- 3.4.16. A medieval chalk lined pit was also recorded at 154-160 Fleet Street (GM62, **WA15**), approximately 125m to the east in 1924-5. Investigations at 1-3 Pemberton Row (PEM 90, **WA16**) 150m north-east of the development site revealed evidence for a medieval ditch, garden soils and post-medieval rubbish pits (London Archaeologist vol. 6, 276).
- 3.4.17. Situated to the south/south-west of the present development site is the medieval Temple complex now part of the Inns of Court (**WA17**). In 1161, the Knights Templar acquired land between Fleet Street and the Thames where they built New Temple (consecrated 1185). Stow noted 'houses, gardens and orchards alongside the Thames' in this area in 1595 (Stow 1994, 23 in Butler 2005, 6). The Templar's built a monastery around the site covering the modern areas of Inner and Middle Temple. The Knights Templar were suppressed in 1308 and dissolved in 1312. The lands were passed to the Knights Hospitallers of the Order of St John in 1338 (Butler 2005, 7).
- 3.4.18. The temple precinct was defined by a wall which would appear to have run south of Fleet Street. An earthen wall was noted to the rear of 17-40 Fleet St (**WA18**) and to the rear of 50 Fleet Street (**WA19**); work revealed a wall foundation of possible reused Romano-British material which may also represent the precinct wall. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Hilton Price further discovered chalk blocks which may represent the Temple boundary at 1 Fleet Street (**WA20**). The existence of this containing wall, housing the various elements of the Temple complex, suggests that it is unlikely that associated buildings extended beyond these walls towards the present development site. The present development site is separated from the Temple complex not only by the enclosing wall but also by the topographical boundary of Fleet Street (Refer paragraph 1.2.5.).
- 3.4.19. Following the suppression of the Hospitallers by Henry VIII in 1540, the establishment became the property of the Crown and was leased to lawyers. The area was struck by fires throughout the post-medieval period, including the Great Fire in 1666.
- 3.4.20. A Carmelite Friary was founded at Whitefriars to the south-east of the present development off Bouverie Lane in the mid 13<sup>th</sup> century. While no surface trace remains, excavations have recovered considerable remains including foundation walls (BOV95) **WA21**, pits (BVS97) **WA22** and the tiled paving of the cloister walk and a 14<sup>th</sup> century crypt (Weinreb and Hibbert 1983, 985).

### **3.5. The Post-medieval Period (AD 1500-AD 1800).**

- 3.5.1. During the post-medieval period, Fleet Street was established as a centre for printing and publishing. Around 1500, Wynkyn de Worde of Caxton's in Westminster moved to the street in the vicinity of Shoe Lane (east of Fetter Lane) (Weinreb, Hibbert 1983, 293).

- 3.5.2. The publisher and printer Richard Pynson moved to the corner of Fleet Street with Chancery Lane, next to St Dunstan's Church, which had formally belonged to the College of St Stephen in Westminster. The site was named 'The George' or 'St George'. In 1508, he became printer to the king (Weinreb, Hibbert 1983, 293). William Jaggard was in business in 'St Dunstan's Churchyard, Fleet Street' from 1594-1608 (Weinreb, Hibbert, 1983, 295).
- 3.5.3. Both ends of Fetter Street were often used as places of execution and punishment during the post-medieval period (Weinreb, Hibbert 1983, 284).
- 3.5.4. Ogilby and Morgan's Map of London (Figure 3) give us a more accurate idea of the buildings at the site in 1676 than that suggested by the Agas Map in the preceding century (Refer section 3.4.7.-3.4.10.). The enclosing wall delineating the southern boundary of the church is no longer as obvious. The line would appear to follow the front of the church but does not continue as previously in a dog leg to join Fetter Lane. The building noted on Fleet Street, outside the church wall is no longer *in situ*.
- 3.5.5. The footprint of buildings occupying the present site have changed dramatically since Agas' 16<sup>th</sup> century map and reflect a similar footprint as that in existence today. The site lies immediately adjacent to the churchyard. Hen and Chicken Court is in place, as are the frontages of nos. 184, 185 and 186 Fleet Street. To the rear of 186 Fleet Street, a building extends north-westwards following the line of the churchyard terminating at the northern extent of the present development site. There is no visible access to this structure from the church yard at this time, however the map does not generally show building access. It is therefore difficult to determine whether the buildings on the part of the site shown within the church boundary on the Agas map still had any association with the church at this time.
- 3.5.6. In 1693, the vicarage house which had been located at 183 Fleet Street was sold (Clarke 1898, 198).
- 3.5.7. Rocque's Map of 1749 and Horwood's of 1799 as already noted confirm the location of the medieval church of St Dunstons. Rocque also names 'Hen and Chicken Court' for the first time, its position on the clearer Horwood's Map reflects its modern location. Horwood does not however show any detail of buildings to the rear of 184 Fleet St and east of Hen and Chicken Court. Buildings are extant at the site of structures B and C (Figure 2).
- 3.5.8. During the Post-medieval period c.1580-1596 and 1607-1621 part of the refectory of the former ecclesiastical complex of Whitefriars on the east side of Bouverie Lane came to be used as a playhouse (GLSMR MLO73242, **WA23**). The existence of such a leisure establishment reflects a change in the traditional use of the area as a religious enclave.
- 3.5.9. Archaeological investigations reflect post-medieval activity in the vicinity. Excavation undertaken to the immediate east of the present development site at 180-183 Fleet Street (FLE82, **WA24**) revealed medieval (Refer paragraph

3.4.23) and post-medieval material. The post-medieval material comprised a rectangular brick lined pit with its base at a depth of 12.02m aOD. The fill of the pit was organic in nature possibly suggesting a cess pit (Guy 1982, 8). There was much evidence for modern building disturbance across the site including pits, walls, drains and a lift shaft.

3.5.10. A watching brief at 2-4 Gough Square (GOG90, **WA25**) in 1990 approximately 125m north-east of the present development site revealed post-medieval pits, cut into natural gravels reflecting an absence of human activity in the vicinity until the post-medieval period. Further post-medieval evidence was recovered in 2001 at 17 Gough Square (GHE01, **WA26**) which included a dark grey silt deposit overlaid by 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century building deposits.

3.5.11. Similar investigations at 1, 2 and 4 Pemberton Row (PEB94, PEM90, **WA27**.) approximately 110m north-east of the site revealed possible late medieval or early post-medieval dump layers cut by post-medieval pits and medieval ditch and garden soils.

3.5.11. Investigations at Hare Court (HRC98 **WA28**) situated approximately 150m to the south-west of the present development site revealed evidence for medieval and post-medieval activity including gravel pits backfilled with domestic rubbish and 16<sup>th</sup> century borderware drinking jugs.

### **3.6. Modern Developments (AD 1800-present).**

3.6.1. The City of London Gas Company set up its first works at the southern end of Fetter Lane. The company had moved by 1815, at which time the proprietors were in court for polluting the atmosphere in this congested inner city space (**WA29**). Consulted cartographic evidence does not allude to the exact location of the gas works, its proximity to the present development site is therefore not known. Given however the continuity of building form on the site, it is unlikely that it was located here.

3.6.2. By the early 19<sup>th</sup> century the medieval church of St Dunstan was in a state of disrepair. An Act of parliament was passed on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 1829 under George IV by which the extant building was taken down and a 'new church erected in the former churchyard with its front put back many feet, so as to double the width of the street in front of the church (**WA30**; Clarke 1898, 191). Additional ground was purchased to the rear of the church to accommodate the new build. The monies to pay for the church were levied on the houses of the parish under the Act. It was one of the last City medieval churches to be rebuilt (Pevsner, Bradley, 1997, 214). Cassell's Map of London (Figure 4) dating from 1862 is the first known map to show the location of the rebuilt church. The map shows the church plot to have been moved in line with the northern side of Fleet Street. Given the maps small scale and use of shading, it is difficult to determine further information concerning the present development site.

- 3.6.3. The new church was built in Gothic style with an octagonal footprint and south tower, by John Shaw in 1830-33. In 1841, Fetter Lane was widened (Weinreb, Hibbert 1983, 284).
- 3.6.4. The Ordnance Survey Map of London Edition of 1874 (5ft to 1 Inch Edition; (Figure 4) gives an impressive insight into the layout of the site at the time. The map shows the rebuilt octagonal church squeezed into the plot west of the present development site. The eastern wall of the main church adjoins the western boundary of the site. A doorway exits the main body of the church into the vestry which occupies the building to the immediate rear of 186 Fleet Street (Buildings B and C, Figure 2; Building A is not extant at this date), within the present development site. The vestry is named and its perimeter defined as doubled walled in the way of the adjoining church. Pevsner refers to the vestry of St Dunstan in the west as a 'Rudimentary Gothic vestry, accessed by Hen and Chicken Lane (Pevsner, Bradley 1997, 501) and notes the location of the vestry door on the east side of the church interior. The remainder of the plot/building divisions within the development site are delineated with singular lines. This implies that the vestry situated within the development site on land once enclosed by the medieval church boundary was still in the ownership of the church at this time. The remainder of the buildings on the site reflect the same divisions as apparent today.
- 3.6.5. The Ordnance Survey Maps of London, 5ft to 1 Inch Edition of 1894 and 1949 (Figure 4) reflects a continuation of the same building footprint. The only significant change is that the vestry occupying part of the western extent of the present development site has been reduced in size to occupy the footprint of Building B only (Figure 2). Access is still retained from the church and the smaller area still defined by a double wall. The structure is no longer named as a vestry. Building A (refer Figure 2) is not extant at this date.
- 3.6.6. The 1953 edition of the Ordnance Survey (1:1250 series, consulted but not included for copyright reasons) shows the exact site footprint as it exists today. In the 5 years since the event of the 1949 edition, access between the church and vestry has been blocked and the vestry (Building B, Refer Figure 2) is no longer depicted as double walled. Building A (Figure 2) is now extant.
- 3.6.7. Of the extant buildings on the site, No 184 was designed by Farebrother, Ellis and Clarke. No 185 dates from 1892-3 and incorporates an oriel inserted within a big relieving arch. No. 186 was probably designed by Meakin, Archer and Stoneham c. 1913 and has mosaic bands with the name of the newspapers resident here (Pevsner, Bradley 1997, 501). According to Pevsner, Nos. 184 and 185 replaced the last early 17<sup>th</sup> century timber framed group of buildings in Fleet Street (Pevsner. Bradley, 1997, 501).

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

### 4.1. Archaeological Potential.

- 4.1.1. There have previously been no archaeological investigations undertaken at the present site. Consequently there is no available data concerning the potential depth of any archaeological deposits that may survive at the site, or indeed of the depth of natural ground. Excavations to the immediate east of the site at 180-183 Fleet Street (FLE82) do however record truncated natural at 12.62m aOD and medieval deposits at 12.35m aOD giving an indication of possible depths of any surviving archaeology at the site. Excavations at this site also showed severe ground disturbance as a result of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century building including basements and services.
- 4.1.2. Investigations and documentary evidence within the designated study area, reflect a range of archaeological activity. Indications of Romano-British, Saxon, medieval and post-medieval archaeology can be located on the site as stated below.

### 4.2. *Romano/Saxon Road.*

- 4.2.1. The position of the Site directly overlying the line of a possible Romano-British/Saxon road. Observations made by Stow in 1595 record the line of a street on the north side of Fleet Street, between Chancery Lane and St Dunstan's Church running parallel with Fleet Street. A continuation of this line would run directly through the present development site. Consequently, there is a **high** potential that the Romano-British/Saxon road with information on its construction, periods of use and repair would exist on the Site. To have clear evidence showing the continued use of the road or its abandonment from the end of the Roman period to the documented reoccupation of the City in the 9<sup>th</sup> century would be of potential national significance.
- 4.2.2.. Along with the road, one would also expect to find traces of burials and or buildings. Any trace of either would be of regional significance informing on the spread of burials or extra mural settlement in the Roman period west of the City. Any trace of Saxon burials or settlement would also be of regional significance indicating the limits or spread of Saxon activity east of Lundenwic.

### 4.3. *Saxon/Medieval/Post-medieval Church of St Dunstan in the West.*

- 4.3.1. The Site is situated in immediate proximity to the extant Church of St Dunstan in the West and on lands historically occupied by the church. Cartographic analysis shows the medieval graveyard and possible associated church structures to exist on the east side of the medieval church within the current Site boundary. It is therefore possible that elements of both activities dating back to the Saxon period would survive *in situ* within the Site footprint. Evidence for Saxon buildings, ecclesiastic or domestic and/or burials would be of national significance. Evidence of medieval and post medieval ecclesiastic structures or activities would be of regional significance.

#### 4.4. *Medieval/Post medieval Non Ecclesiastic Deposits.*

4.4.1. Excavation undertaken to the immediate east of the present development site at 180-183 Fleet Street (FLE82) revealed the base of a late 14<sup>th</sup> century chalk lined feature (depth at base 12.35m aOD) and the base of an 18<sup>th</sup> century chalk lined pit (depth at base 12.02m aOD). Medieval and post-medieval activity is therefore recorded immediately adjacent to the present site. Buildings at the site currently fronting onto Fleet Street occupy a medieval footprint and consequently there is a **high** potential that evidence for medieval and post medieval domestic activity could exist within the boundary of the present development site. It should be stressed that existing basement excavation depths (to 12.29m aOD) are slightly shallower than the depths of revealed medieval deposits found at 180-183 Fleet Street suggesting that the potential for the survival of medieval and post-medieval remains exists in both basemented and non-basemented areas of the site.

#### 4.5. *Summary*

4.5.1. In summary, the present development site has the potential to contain significant archaeological deposits. Specific potential can be divided into three separate elements;

4.5.2. The Roman/Saxon road linking the City of London with Lundenwic with associated settlement and burial activity

4.5.3 The Saxon, medieval and post medieval graveyard and ancillary structures relating to St Dunstons prior to its reconstruction in 1830-33

4.5.4 The evidence for medieval and post-medieval non ecclesiastic activity to the east of the Site.

4.5.3. In non-basemented areas (e.g. Hen and Chicken Court) there is the potential for the recovery of all the types of deposits as described with the additional factor that these would exist in a more complete form, as they will have not been truncated by post medieval/modern basementing. Such levels of potential survival as a group if present would be considered rare within the City of London.

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## **APPENDIX 1: GAZETTEER OF PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS**

Arranged in chronological order of date of investigation:

GM

1 Fleet Street

Hilton Price 1878

N-S running wall may represent boundary wall of New Temple. Beneath the wall in gravel, a 13<sup>th</sup> century copper cauldron was found. Also found an undercroft and a well (May be the same as MLO55676).

GM62

154-160 Fleet Street

GM 1924-25.

Four wells and one late medieval chalk lined pit and one brick-lined post-medieval which contained a flame-shaped blade. No traces of Romano-British occupation were recovered.

GM280

50 Fleet Street

MOLGM 1949-55

Investigations recovered a wall containing reused Romano-British material. The foundation trench was cut through natural gravels and lined with clay and contained fragments of broken tile and opus signinum.

GM

Temple Precinct

Godfrey 1951

Excavations by Godfrey revealed part of a N-S wall interpreted as the east end of the chancel or apse. Stone coffins were recovered on the NW side of the choir. Burials occurred here until the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Underneath the choir, remains of the free standing treasury built within the temple cloister were recovered. Further foundations were found beneath the north wall, possibly representing the sub structure of a bell tower.

FET76

133-137 Fetter Lane (Rear of)

ILAU 1976

SMR No. MLO15009/1455

Structural remains and foundation walls of pre-fire chambers of Clifford's Inn. Pits, ditches and garden soils dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries predate the chamber construction. The results confirm cartographic evidence that the site was not built on until the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Also found was a NE-SW running Roman ditch at least 3m wide and 1m deep.



FLE82  
180-183 Fleet Street  
DUA 1982  
SMR No. MLO65082  
Bottom of a late 14<sup>th</sup> century medieval pit and post-medieval pit. Heavily truncated by later building activity.

PEM90  
1-2 Pemberton Row  
DUA 1990  
SMR No. MLO23273/26614  
Medieval ditch and garden soil and post-medieval rubbish pits.

GOG90  
2-4 Gough Square  
DUA 1990  
SMR No. MLO58568  
Bases of post-medieval pits. Severe horizontal truncation noted.

KBK92  
4 Kings Bench Walk  
MoLAS 92  
SMR Nos. MLO65846/65847/65848/65849  
Three Romano-British burials cut into natural truncated by Romano-British or Saxon pits. Tile kiln dated to between 1210 and 1280. Three phases of medieval pitting and an 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> century cellar were recorded.

PEB94  
4 Pemberton Row  
MoLAS 1994.  
SMR No MLO60895/60897  
Possible late medieval or early post-medieval dump layers cut by a large post-medieval rubbish or cess pit.

BOV95  
10 Bouverie Street  
MOLAS 1995  
SMR No. MLO66353/66354/66355  
Watching Brief revealed east-west aligned chalk foundation wall forming possible part of the north wall of the nave of medieval Whitefriars Church. The wall was underlain by a series of medieval dumps.

HRC98  
Hare Court  
MoLAS 1995  
SMR No. MLO73654/73655  
Gravel pits backfilled with domestic rubbish including two complete 16<sup>th</sup> century Border Ware drinking jugs. Two layers of truncated medieval make-up and a construction cut for a post-medieval Wall.

BVS97

4&8 Bouverie Street

MOLAS 1997

SMR No. MLO076622

Evaluation found large number of medieval pits, possibly associated with the construction of the Carmelite Friary.

CEY99

The Rolls Estate (former Public Record Office)

MoLAS 1999

SMR MLO75870

No archaeological deposits were recovered at or above the depth of natural deposits.

NFL01

New Fetter Lane, No. 11-23

MoLAS 2002

SMR No. MLO78398/78399

Reworked or redeposited brickearth may have been of Romano-British date. Ashy dump deposit of possible medieval or post-medieval date. Brick cellar and 17<sup>th</sup> century cesspit with kitchen pottery assemblage also found.

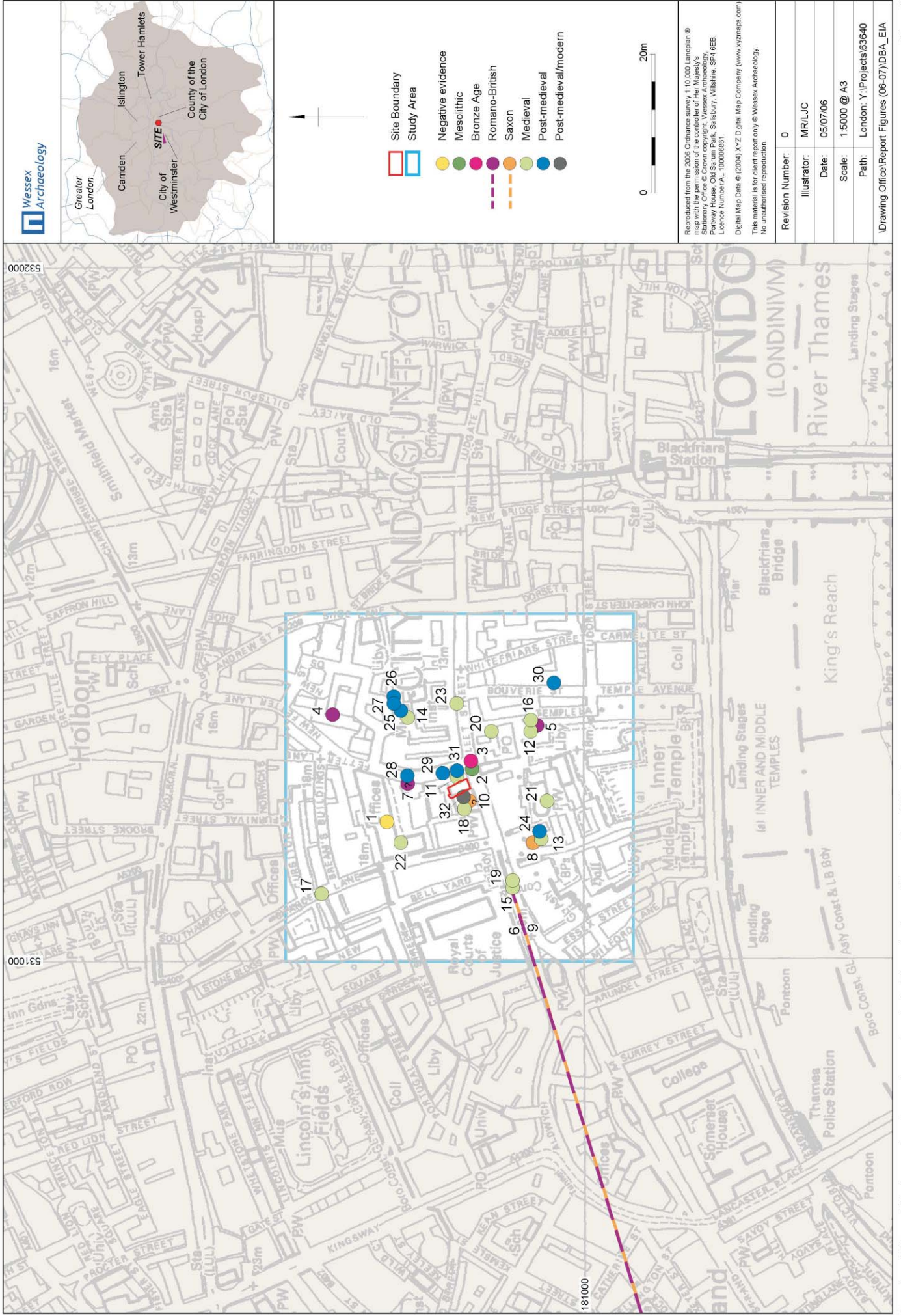
GHE01

Dr Johnson's House, 17 Gough Square

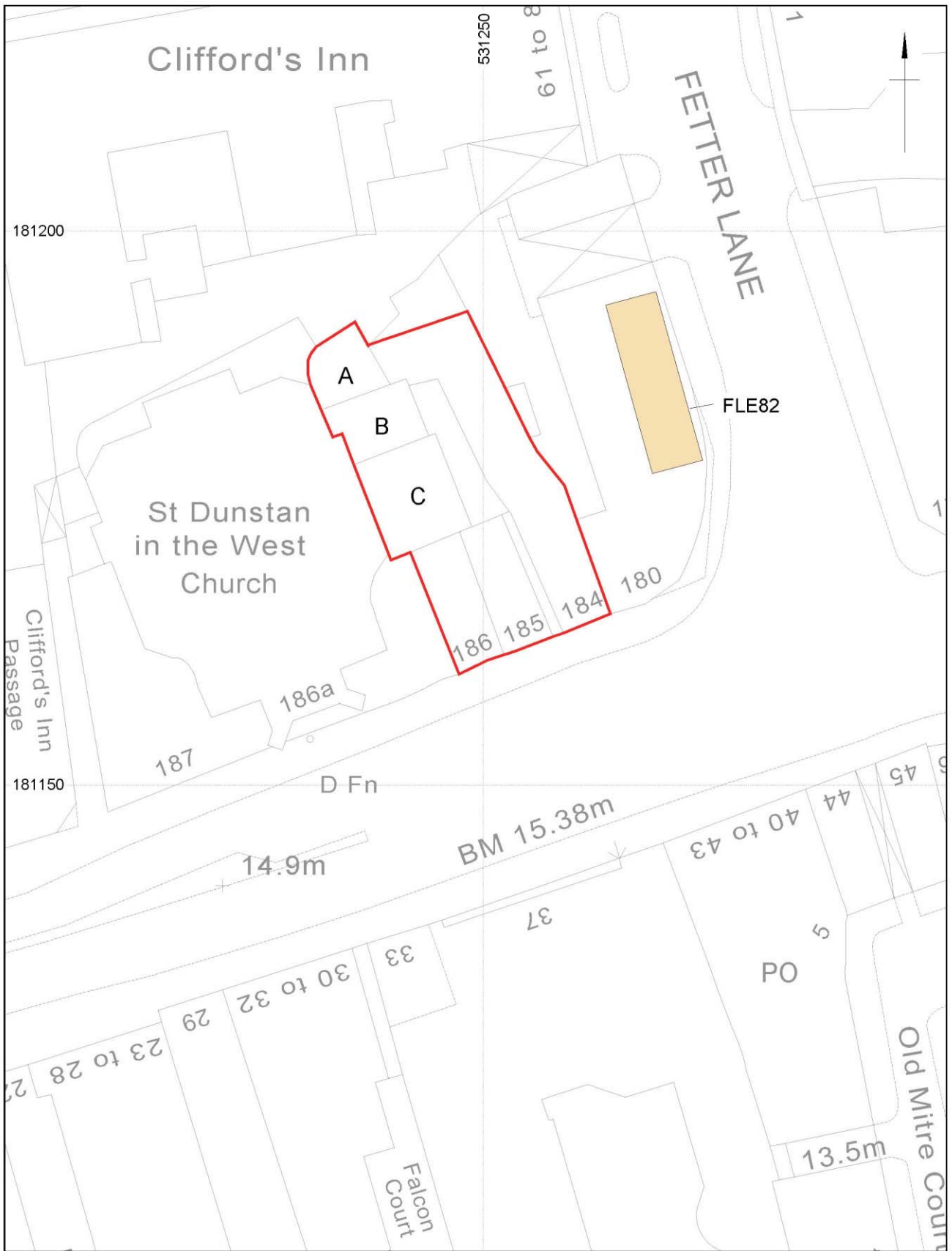
MoLAS 2002




SMR No. MLO76224

Undated dark clay silt deposit overlaid by 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century building rubble deposit.



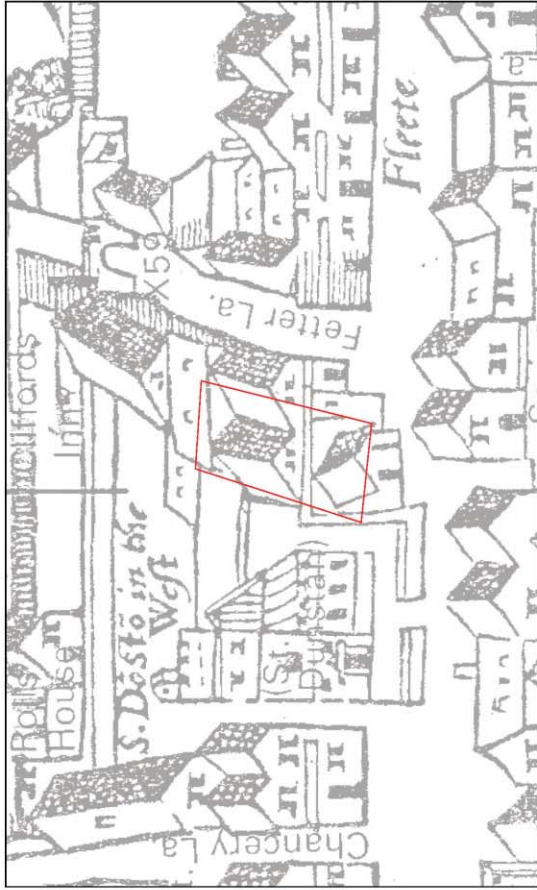
Location of Site and Study area showing previous archaeological investigations and known sites (WA nos).



 Site Boundary  Previous excavation	Digital data reproduced from Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright 2006. All rights reserved. Reference Number: 100020449. This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.		
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Site location showing location of excavation undertaken at adjacent property (180-183 Fleet Street)

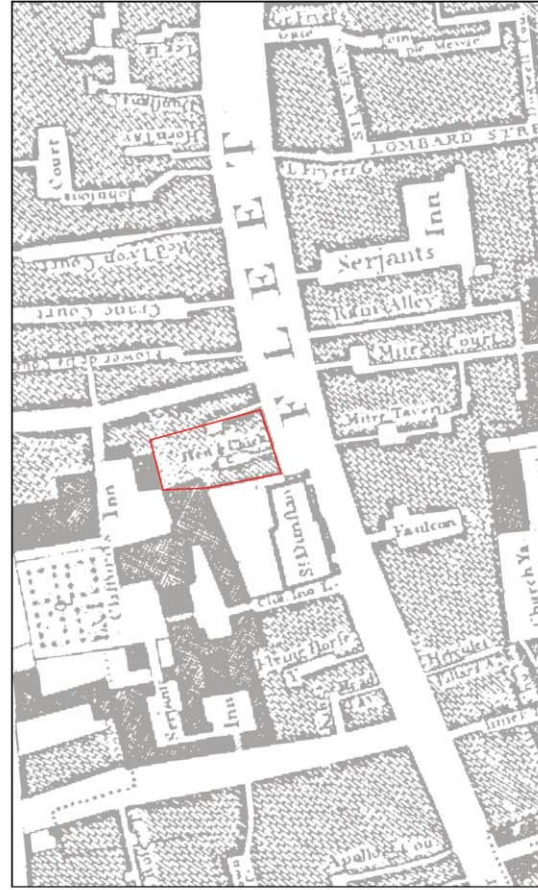
Figure 2



A. "Agas" map of London, mid 16th century



B. Ogilby and Morgan's map of London 1676



C. Rocque's map of London 1746

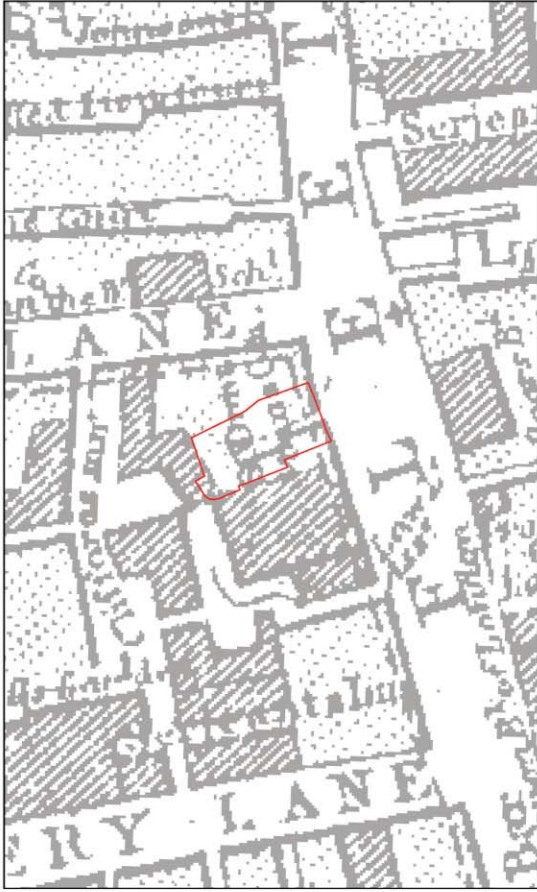


D. Horwood's map of London 1799



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A. Cassell's map of London 1862



B. Ordnance Survey map 5' to 1" edition 1874



C. Ordnance Survey map, London 5' to 1" edition 1894



D. Ordnance Survey map, London 5' to 1" edition 1949


 Wessex  
 Archaeology


 Approximate Site location

0  50m

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