Charles House
375 Kensington High Street
Kensington
London

Archaeological Evaluation Report

oxfordarchaeology
southsouthsouth

September 2010

Client: St Edward Homes

Issue No:1
OA Job No: 4828
NGR: TQ 2465 7897

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Client Name:	St Edward Homes
Client Ref No:	
Document Title:	Charles House, 375 Kensington High Street, Kensington, London
Document Type:	Evaluation Report
Issue/Version Number:	1
Grid Reference:	TQ 2465 7897
Planning Reference:	PP/08/01178
OA Job Number:	4828
Site Code:	KTN 10
Invoice Code:	KTN EV
Receiving Museum:	Museum of London
Museum Accession No:	KTN 10
Event No:	

Issue	Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by	Signature
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Document File Location	X:\KECHASCO_Charles_House_Kensington\Evaluation Report
Graphics File Location	\\Server8\invoice codes i thru q\K_codes\KTNEV
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Charles House, 375 Kensington High Street,

Kensington, London

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Summary

In August 2010 Oxford Archaeology (OA) conducted archaeological trial trenching at Charles House, 375 Kensington High Street, Kensington, London. The programme comprised six archaeological evaluation trenches ranging in length from 10 m to 30 m, reaching a maximum depth of 4.70 m below the current ground level. Two further trenches were proposed for excavation following the demolition of Charles House. However, due to the absence of pre-Victorian archaeological remains and the extent of Victorian and modern truncation, Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) determined that no further investigation was necessary.

Victorian remains associated with the Victorian Kensington Crescent were discovered in Trenches 1, 2, 3 and 8. These comprised brick walls, brick built vaulted cellars, internal concrete and brick floors and an external cobbled surface. The remains of the cellars and cobbled surface were less than 1 m below current ground level, and survived relatively intact up to a depth of c 2 m. The cellars, fronting onto Kensington Crescent were in-filled with a combination of sand and demolition debris.

Trenches 5 and 6 both contained Victorian or later brick built soakaways.

No evidence for Roman Akeman Street or associated features were observed in any of the trenches. There was no evidence for any archaeological activity on the site pre-dating the Victorian phase. If earlier features were present it seems likely that they would have been severely truncated by the Victorian buildings, and later ground works associated with the construction and landscaping of Charles House.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 Between the 9th and 20th August 2010 Oxford Archaeology (OA) conducted an archaeological evaluation at Charles House, 375 Kensington High Street, Kensington, London, centred on NGR TQ 2465 7897 (Fig. 1). The evaluation was commissioned by St Edward Homes and was conducted as a condition of Planning Permission in advance of a housing development (ref: PP/08/01178). Following discussion with Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS), the evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI; OA 2010) and comprised excavation of six archaeological evaluation trenches varying in length from 10 m to 30 m (Fig. 2).

1.1.2 The development area is situated on the western boundary of the administrative district of Kensington and Chelsea, and encloses a c. 1.4 ha area containing the recently demolished multi-storey Charles House. It is bordered on the north-western side by Kensington High Street and to the north-east by Warwick Road. Radnor Terrace and waste ground are situated to the south-east, while the south-western part of the site is bordered by the rail network for the London Underground District Line.

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The land slopes from north to south at a height of 6.5 m to 3.5 m above Ordnance Datum (OD). The site has been modified through reduction and made ground at various locations, in relation to the construction of Charles House.

1.2.2 The underlying geology is Gravel overlying London Clay.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 Charles House is located within the historic parish of St Mary Abbots, Kensington. There are no nationally designated sites within the development boundary, nor within the immediate vicinity. The site is, however, located within an area of archaeological priority as defined by the Greater London Sites and Monument Record (GLSMR) due to the proximity of a Roman road immediately to the north.

1.3.2 The Environmental Statement (ES), produced by WSP Group (2010) and included as Appendix 1 within the WSI (OA 2010), states that there are no GLSMR records of any archaeological discoveries of any period within the Charles House site. The following archaeological and historical background is summarised from the WSP Group ES, with additional information established by current research.

Prehistoric period (500,000 BP - 43 AD)

1.3.3 Evidence for human occupation during the Palaeolithic period is extremely rare, especially so in Greater London where the evidence consists of a few stray finds. Knowledge of the Mesolithic period is presently dominated by Earlier Mesolithic sites and surface finds (Lewis 2000a, 55-56).

1.3.4 There is little evidence of Neolithic activity throughout a considerable part of Greater London, including Kensington and Chelsea and the surrounding boroughs. This may be due to the geology of the area which would be unattractive for farming practices and settlement, but may also be linked to the expansion of London in the late 19th and early

20th centuries, during which little, if any archaeological investigation took place (Lewis 2000b, 65).

1.3.5 Artefacts from the later prehistoric periods are more common, although the majority of these have been found in the River Thames, with no real understanding of their depositional context. Artefacts from the Bronze Age have been recovered away from the river, but normally at significant depth, the most relevant of which was of bronze metal working (including axes, knives, gouges and bronze sheet) found at a depth of 5.2 m.

1.3.6 There have been no recorded discoveries dating to any of the prehistoric periods from within the site or surrounding area.

Romano-British period (AD 43-410)

1.3.7 In the Roman period Londinium (London) developed as an urban centre and later became the provincial capital at the centre of Roman Britain's communication system. The heart of Roman London was situated *c* 6 km to the east of the site and the nearest Roman road to the site was Akeman Street, which approximately coincides with the alignment of Kensington High Street.

The medieval period (AD 410-1550)

1.3.8 Evidence of a potential Anglo-Saxon settlement close to the site was uncovered during archaeological works at Edwards Square (*c* 350m to the east). However, it is believed that the majority of the Kensington area during this period would have been used for agricultural purposes.

1.3.9 In *c* 1100, Aubrey de Vere, lord of the manor of Kensington, presented the church and lands in Kensington to the Abbey of St Mary in Abingdon. This grant, which was confirmed by Royal Charter, gave rise to the subsequent use of the name Abbots Kensington for the new manor and to the designation of the church as St Mary Abbots (Sheppard 1973, 25-41).

1.3.10 The earliest detailed map viewed for the ES shows part of the estate of Edward Henry Edwardes and dates from 1694-5. This map shows the site to be located at the very western boundary of the estate, bordered to the west by 'The Sewer', Counters Creek, a stream which arose near Kensal Green and followed a roughly straight course south-south-east to the River Thames (Barton 1992, 45).

1.3.11 There are a number of GLSMR references within the surrounding area, which are indicative of the urban development of the area in the medieval period, including Counters Bridge, some roads and some tenement buildings.

Post-medieval period (AD1550-1899)

1.3.12 Rocque's 1746 map of London shows the site remained undeveloped for some time. Development spread slowly from Kensington westwards, but the site itself did not experience housing development until the construction of Kensington Crescent by 1823, which is first seen on 1829 Crutchley's Map of London. Additional buildings in the south of the site were built soon after, and are first seen on a 1846 map of the Parish of St Mary Abbots, and subsequently on all 19th and early 20th-century maps. The 1846 and 1848 maps show Kensington Crescent at the north of the site, with back gardens to the south. To the south-east of the crescent are additional houses, also with gardens.

1.3.13 In 1820 plans began to transform Counters Creek into a canal which would join the Thames with the Grand Junction Canal at Paddington. The canal was completed in

1828, but terminated a few hundred metres south of the site, with the original stream still forming the western boundary. However, the arrival of the railway soon after the completion of the canal meant the canal was too late to be profitable, and in 1839 it passed into the hands of the Birmingham, Bristol and Thames Junction Railway and was used for carrying sewage. This resulted in the canal and the stream becoming stagnant and filthy, condemned as dangerous in 1854 and filled in. In their place railway lines were laid in 1863, marking the western boundary of the Borough and of the site (Evans 1975, 124-5).

1.3.14 Kensington Crescent had been demolished by the time of the 1930 Ordnance Survey map. Bomb damage maps (Saunders, 2005, map 73) show that the site itself was not affected by the air raids during the Second World War. However, the site is highlighted in light blue, a designated 'clearance area'. These were areas which had required replacement before the war and, now war-damaged, were judged suitable for post-war redevelopment (Saunders 2005, 1). In this case, redevelopment was in the form of Charles House, which is first shown on the 1953 Ordnance Survey map.

2 Evaluation Aims and Methodology

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The archaeological trenched evaluation aimed to establish the archaeological potential of the site prior to the demolition of Charles House.

General

- to establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the proposal area.
- to determine and confirm the character of any remains present, without compromising any deposits that may merit detailed investigation under full area excavation.
- to determine or estimate the date range of any remains from artefacts or otherwise.
- to characterise any underlying archaeological strata down to undisturbed geology without significantly impacting upon significant younger (overlying) deposits where possible.
- to determine the geo-archaeological and palaeo-environmental potential of any archaeological deposits encountered.
- to establish what archaeological remains/deposits may be affected by any proposed development.
- to make available the results of the investigation to inform the planning application and the potential for any further mitigation strategy.
- to produce a report and full archive.
- to disseminate the results of the investigation at a level appropriate to their importance.

Specific

- to establish whether a sandy clay geological layer is alluvial, and if so, its potential to be overlying and sealing archaeological deposits from the prehistoric period onwards.
- to locate Akeman Street (which coincides approximately to the alignment of Kensington High Street) or associated evidence such as road side burials, and/or other roadside features and settlement. This aim relates to issues covered in A Research Framework for Greater London (Museum of London 2000).
- the evaluation will seek to determine the potential of remains at the site to further the understanding of the nature and reasons for the evolution of the road system, river crossings and internal street layouts and their importance as engines of development and change.
- the evaluation will look for archaeological evidence of Kensington Terrace in the north of the site.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 The evaluation comprised a 5% sample of the area of proposed impact (excluding the footprints of existing developments). The location of the trenches was dictated by the available spaces around the footprint of Charles House. Three trenches were placed at 90° to the line of Kensington High Street in order to maximise the likelihood of finding evidence for the Roman Road, as well as remains associated with Kensington Terrace.

2.2.2 Eight trenches were scheduled for evaluation (numbered 1 - 8), with two of the eight to be excavated after the demolition of Charles House due to access issues (Fig. 2). Due to the lack of archaeological remains pre-dating the Victorian period, these additional trenches have now been removed from the programme by GLAAS.

2.2.3 Trenches were mechanically excavated to the first archaeological horizon under direct archaeological supervision with appropriate levels of hand excavation undertaken at that horizon. Deeper sondages (test pits) were mechanically excavated in areas of no archaeology in order to test the sandy clay deposit referred to above.

2.2.4 Box shoring was placed within any trench deeper than 1 m that required closer archaeological examination. If no significant archaeological remains were encountered, the trench was recorded from the top only. Due to Health and Safety restrictions, no person was permitted closer than 1 m away from the trench edge. In these circumstances trench sections were recorded by sketch and the thickness of the deposit measured by tape. All field work took place in accordance with the OA field manual (Wilkinson 1992).

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

3.1.1 No significant pre-Victorian archaeological features or artefacts were identified in the course of the evaluation. Standing remains (up to 2 m) of vaulted cellars and structural remains forming properties on Kensington Crescent were observed in four trenches. Descriptions of all deposits and details of trenches are tabulated in Appendix 1.

3.2 General soils and ground conditions

3.2.1 Ground conditions were generally good during the evaluation with only a little rain. All trenches were subject to some disturbance from the construction of Charles House, with Trenches 1 – 3 demonstrating severe levels of disturbance from Kensington Crescent.

3.2.2 Naturally derived deposits were observed within all trenches. Within the west of the site gravel was observed in Trench 1 (116) at a depth of 1.83 m OD (4.7 m below ground level). A sandy deposit overlay the gravel in Trench 1 (115), which was also observed in Trench 8 (815). The sand was overlain by a *c* 0.5 m thick sandy interglacial deposit (114), which was overlain by brickearth. The brickearth was observed in Trenches 1 (108), 6 (608) and 8 (814), and varied in thickness from approximately 0.4 m to 1.25 m, at a depth of around 2.40 and 3.1 m OD. The Trench 1 deposit sequence is illustrated in Fig. 3.

3.2.3 Within the east of the site London Clay was observed in Trench 5 (505) at a depth of 0.07 m OD, which was overlain by gravels observed in Trench 2 at a depth of approximately 2.03 m OD. The deposits were overlain by a sandy clay that most likely formed an alluvial deposit, and was seen in Trench 2 (213), Trench 3 (305) and Trench 5 (504) and was observed between approximately 3.3 – 2.5 m OD (Plate 1). In Trench 5 this deposit was recorded as approximately 3.3 m thick.

3.2.4 The natural deposits were overlain by up to 3 m of demolition material.

3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits

3.3.1 No pre-Victorian remains were discovered in any of the trenches. There was no evidence for Akeman Street or any associated Roman remains in the trenches closest to Kensington High Street. No pottery or any other artefactual remains pre-dating the Victorian era were observed during the evaluation.

3.3.2 Trenches 1 – 3 contained standing structural remains of Victorian vaulted cellars and the demolished basement level of Kensington Crescent. The cellars lay beneath the frontages of brick-built structures fronting Kensington High Street, with the buildings surviving only as low level walls and foundations. The structural remains were best preserved in Trench 2 and have been described in detail below.

3.3.3 The property within Trench 2 (Fig. 4) comprised brick foundations 209 (Plate 2) overlain by a concrete floor (206; Plate 3). Floor 206 was overlain by a roughly laid brick floor and foundations, possibly to support a boiler. The cellar, to the north of 209, was 6.5 m long and over 2 m wide. Brick walls (217 and 220) formed the northern and southern extent of the cellar and the remains of a vaulted roof survived between them (218).

3.3.4 The brick cellars survived as little as 0.5 m below the current ground level (Plate 2). It appeared that in all cases, the roof of the cellar had been demolished and the resulting

void infilled (Plate 4). In Trench 2 this deposit consisted of a clean sandy deposit (219) with demolition rubble.

3.3.5 The walls and cellars revealed in Trenches 1 and 3 can be seen on Fig. 2. The presence of several badly preserved timbers laid horizontally in Trench 3 may be evidence for a timber floor. The cellar also showed evidence for being painted (Plate 5).

3.3.6 A brick built soakaway (507) was observed in Trench 5 and a rubble filled pit and brick culvert (607) were recorded in Trench 6 (609; Fig. 2). Trench 8 contained a cobbled surface (805) that spanned the entire trench (Plate 6). The granite cobbles appeared to relate to two separate phases as two distinct patterns of cobbling was observed. A single coursed brick wall and associated concrete slab and timber beam were noted in the most northerly end of the trench (812). The cobbles may be associated with a back yard or the back access to the properties as indicated on the 1846 map.

3.4 Finds and ecofactual summary

Pottery

3.4.1 The pottery assemblage comprised 19th- and 20th-century vessels recovered from demolition layers. Of note was a complete brown stoneware 'ginger beer' type bottle of common form. Further details can be found in Appendix B.

Clay tobacco pipes

3.4.2 Four pieces of 19th-century clay pipe (18 g) were recovered from a demolition deposit (207).

Ceramic building material (CBM)

3.4.3 The CBM assemblage mostly comprises 19th-century bricks recovered from demolition deposits. Further details can be found in Appendix B.

Metalwork

3.4.4 Several metal objects were recovered, most notably a decorative cast iron object and railing from context 303 dating no earlier than late 19th century. Further details can be found in Appendix B.

Stonework

3.4.5 Four pieces of stone were retained. These consist of a piece of slate (207), two pieces of decorative marble (303) and a piece of structural granite from the cobbled surface (805). Further details can be found in Appendix B.

Environmental

3.4.6 Bulk samples were taken from a sequence of deposits within Trench 1 and Trench 3. A monolith was also taken through the brickearth and interglacial feature in Trench 1 for an assessment of the soil micromorphology. The location of the Trench 1 monolith (Sample 4) is shown on Fig. 3.

3.4.7 The three bulk samples demonstrated that the sandy interglacial deposit (114), brickearth (108) and alluvium (305) were well sorted sediments which would have been deposited through low energy processes. Sample 1 (114) is thought to date to the late glacial period, and could be seen to contain laminations of sand interspersed with firm

clay demonstrating periodic changes in the depositional environment. It was overlain by Sample 3 (108), characterised as a late glacial brickearth. This deposit is aeolian in nature and exhibited no clear signs of later disturbance, although there are signs of weathering towards the top of the deposit.

3.4.8 Full details can be found in Appendix C.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

4.1.1 Ground conditions were reasonable and there was good visibility in each trench.

4.2 Evaluation objectives and results

4.2.1 There was no evidence to suggest that the alluvial deposits noted in Trenches 2, 3 and 5 were masking earlier prehistoric deposits.

4.2.2 Brickearth deposits were noted in trenches 1, 6 and 8.

4.2.3 Demolition rubble and standing vaulted cellars associated with Kensington Crescent were observed in Trenches 1, 2 and 3. A cobbled surface and drainage features also probably associated with Kensington Crescent were observed in Trenches 5, 6 and 8.

4.3 Significance

4.3.1 The interglacial deposit and alluvium were well sorted sediments which would have been deposited through low energy processes. The deposits are thought to date from the late glacial period, and contained no evidence for human activity.

4.3.2 No significant pre-Victorian archaeological remains were encountered during the evaluation. The Victorian remains associated with Kensington Crescent are of local historical interest and are likely to have truncated any features associated with Roman Akeman Street (if present).

Appendix A. Trench Descriptions and Context Inventory

Trench 1						
General description					**Orientation**	NW-SE
Trench 1 contained standing remains of a Victorian vaulted cellar and subsequent demolition rubble and levelling deposits. In addition, an area of darker alluvial clay was noted within the brickearth deposit in the south of the trench. This deposit, likely an interglacial feature, was bulk sampled and a monolith and Optical Stimulated Luminescence (OSL) dating samples were also recovered. No archaeological remains pre-dating the Victorian era were detected.					**Avg. depth (m)**	3
					Width (m)	2.7
					Length (m)	25
Contexts						
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Comment**	**Finds**	**Date**
101	Layer	-	0.3	Topsoil. Located at the NW end of Tr 1, Mixed topsoil and demolition deposit. Current rose bed planted into it.	-	-
102	Layer	-	0.15	Hard white grey sandy clay with gravel and demolition material. Only present at the NW end of Tr. 1. Possible modern pathway.	-	-
103	Layer	-	c. 0.10	Compact dark grey clay with frequent bricks and tile, occasional charcoal. Deposit is likely contemporary with the Victorian buildings of Kensington Crescent and may be related to the vaulted cellars. Possibly part of the vaulted cellar roof that has been removed for backfilling and redeposited upside down.	-	-
104	Layer	-	c. 0.80	Compact fine grey silty clay with frequent inclusions of charcoal, small pebbles and demolition material. Demolition deposited situated outside the Victorian cellar walls. Probably contemporary with 105.		
105	Layer	-	c.1.5	Loose red sandy clay with fragments of smashed red bricks. Demolition layer only visible inside the Victorian cellar walls.		
106	Layer	-	c.0.7	Compact dark grey brown silty clay with fragments of broken brick and rounded pebbles and charcoal. Levelling layer for the construction of the Victorian building.		
107	Layer	-	c. 0.6	Loose yellow sandy silt. Naturally derived deposit. Probably the same as 108.		
108	Layer	-	c. 0.4+	Firm yellow white silty clay. Naturally derived deposit.		

109	Layer	-	c. 0.5	Firm mid brown silty clay with inclusions of gravel and light grey brick fragments. Possibly levelling layer prior to construction or post-construction of Charles House.		
110	Struct.	-	c. 0.3	Red brick floor found within the internal space of the Victorian cellar between walls 111 and 112. The floor is separated by wall 117 which may be the party wall for a second house.		
111	Struct.	-	c. 1.5+	Main red brick and sandy mortar northern wall of Victorian cellar. Probably spanned two buildings. Contempoary with 112 and 118, 117 and floor 110.		
112	Struct.	-	c. 1.5+	Red brick and sandy mortar wall with beginnings of vaulted roof along the eastern side of the trench.		
113	Struct.	-	c. 0.5	Red brick and mortar small structure within the northern wall of the Victorian cellar forming a small arch, possibly a drain.		
114	Layer	-	0.38	Compact dark grey clay with fine sandy laminations. Confined to the SE of Tr. 1. Natural deposit, possibly an interglacial feature.		
115	Layer	-	0.15	Friable fine yellow white sand. Natural deposit.		
116	Layer	-	0.1	Friable yellow grey fine sand with frequent inclusions of small rounded and sub rounded flint pebbles. Natural gravel exposed only in the SE end of Tr. 1.		
117	Struct.	-	c. 1+	Red brick and mortar wall. Probably party wall between two vaulted cellars.		
118	Struct.	-	c. 1+	Red brick and mortar wall forming the southern wall of the Victorian vaulted cellar.		
119	Struct.	-	c. 1+	Red brick and mortar wall. Situated 3 m south of 118.		
120	Layer	-	0.3	Modern concrete and block paving. Current parking and pathway around Charles House.		

Trench 2						
General description					**Orientation**	NW-SE
After removal of concrete and block paving, Trench 2 was reduced in length by 6 m due to the presence of a reinforced concrete tie between two of the wings of Charles House. Removal of this structure would have undermined the integrity of the building. Trench 2 contained the remains of Victorian vaulted cellars associated with the houses situated along the former Kensington Crescent. Standing walls and a partially intact vault were recorded. A sondage was excavated at either end of the trench to a maximum depth of 2.03 m OD at the SE and 3.34 m OD to the NW. No archaeological remains pre-dating the Victorian era were detected.					**Avg. depth (m)**	3
					Width (m)	2.7
					Length (m)	30
Contexts						
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Comment**	**Finds**	**Date**
200	Layer	-	0.45	Combined number for modern paving bricks on top of a layer of sand sitting on an earlier layer of black tarmac which in turn sat upon a layer of concrete.	-	-
201	Layer	-	c. 0.5	Friable, fine grained dark grey silty sand with occasional stone and brick fragments. Probably a levelling layer during the construction of Charles House.	-	-
202	Layer	-	c. 1	Soft fine grained clayey sand with occasional pebbles and charcoal fragments. Likely levelling layer		
203	Layer	-	0.1	Soft black red silty clay with larger fragments of burnt brick. Demolition layer. Evidence of burning as bricks are heat affected.		
204	Not used					
205	Layer	-	c. 0.5	Friable fine grained mid yellow brown silty sand with occasional rounded pebbles and charcoal fragments. Backfill over demolished building.		
206	Struct.	1.5	0.25	Concrete layer forming floor of building. Has a 0.20 m raised square area measuring c 1 m x 1 m with iron fittings, possibly to secure a copper/boiler? Overlies 207.		
207	Struct.	1.5	0.15	Red and yellow bricks. Placed at the base of the floor. Concrete 206 laid on top.		
208	Layer		0.4	Mixed firm pinky grey clay with frequent flecks of charcoal. Possible the surface associated with the construction level of		

				the Victorian house within trench 2.		
209	Struct.		c 0.45	Red bricks and mortar with two small buttresses roughly 1 m apart. Situated underneath the concrete and brick floor. Possibly foundation course.		
210	Struct.	> 1.2	> 0.3	Red brick wall made with half bricks. Situated and extending underneath the eastern limit of the trench. Possible remains of joist within brickwork		
211	Cut		0.2	Possible construction cut for 209 or an area of mortar staining. Probably not cut due to irregular shape.		
212	Fill		0.2	Friable light yellow red silty sand. Possible fill of foundation cut.		
213	Layer		0.5	Firm mid yellow sandy clay with occasional manganese flecks. Naturally derived deposit – possible alluvium.		
214	Layer		> 0.2	Friable fine grained mid brownish yellow sandy silt with gravel inclusions.		
215	Layer		0.4	Soft blueish grey sandy silt with occasional brick fragments and iron panning. Backfill/levelling layer confined to the northern end of trench 2, possible associated with the construction of the houses along Kensington Crescent.		
216	Layer		>1.0	Friable fine grained yellow brown silty sand. Levelling layer prior to the construction of Charles House.		
217	Struct.		>0.3	Red brick and mortar wall. Part of Victorian cellar. Associated with 218 and 220.		
218	Struct. group		>1.5	Red brick and mortar vaulted cellar. Also comprises 220. Eastern wall of vaulted cellar. Remains of neighbouring cellar to the east visible butting up against 218.		
219	Layer	-	c. 1.5	Soft yellow brown sand with frequent pieces of metal, Victorian pottery fragments and brick. Infill of demolished cellar.		
220	Struct.		0.4	Red brick and mortar. Northern wall of Victorian cellar.		
221	Struct.			Vaulted cellar. Partly exposed in east facing section of trench. Butts up against 218.		

Trench 3						
General description					**Orientation**	NW-SE
No archaeological remains pre-dating the Victorian era were observed within Trench 3. The standing remains of a vaulted Victorian cellar were discovered within the central part of the trench, comprising three walls constructed from brick and a concrete floor. The northern limit of the cellar was not excavated due to Health and Safety considerations regarding the proximity of the trench to Kensington High Street. A sondage was excavated at the northern end of the trench to a depth of 1.85 m OD.					**Avg. depth (m)**	3.5
					Width (m)	2
					Length (m)	30
Contexts						
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Comment**	**Finds**	**Date**
301	Layer	-	0.4	Combined number for modern paving bricks on top of a layer of sand sitting on an earlier layer of black tarmac which in turn sat upon a layer of concrete.	-	-
302	Layer	-	c. 0.8	Firm mixed yellow brown sandy clay with moderate charcoal and brick fragments. Make-up layer associated with the construction of Charles House. Same as 312.	-	-
303	Layer	-	c. 0.5	Loose deposit consisting of dark grey sandy clay with frequent bricks. Demolition layer. Very unstable.		
304	Layer	-	c. 0.8	Loose orange and yellow sandy clay with frequent bricks. Demolition layer.		
305	Layer	-	> 0.3	Firm yellow sandy clay. Naturally derived probable alluvial deposit beneath 304, encountered at 2.57 m OD.		
306	Struct.	0.35	c. 2	Red brick and mortar wall c 5 m long to the east of trench 3. Part of Victorian vaulted cellar. Probably party wall between two cellars.		
307	Struct.	0.35	> 1	Red brick and mortar wall forming the southern limit of the cellar. Associated with 306 and 308		
308	Struct.	0.35	c. 2	Red brick and mortar northern wall of cellar.		
309	Struct.		0.4	Concrete and brick wall partially exposed in the eastern side of trench 3 and up to 2 m long. Possible floor surface and possibly associated with timbers 310.		
310	Struct.		0.1	Timber floor comprising three planks approximately 1 m long. Very poor condition. Located c. 2 m below current ground level.		

311	Struct.		0.2	Concrete and brick floor situated between 306 and 308 on the eastern side of the trench. Probable floor of cellar.		
312	Layer		c. 1	Firm brown yellow sandy clay with frequent bricks. Levelling layer associated with the construction of Charles House. Likely the same as 302.		
313	Layer		0.7	Friable dark grey clay silt with frequent bricks. Demolition layer overlying concrete floor 311 and immediately underneath 312.		
314	Layer		0.2	Firm grey brown sandy clay with crushed brick and occasional charcoal flecks. Probably levelling layer associated with the construction of the Victorian buildings. Overlies 305.		
315	Layer		0.4	Firm yellow brown sandy clay. Same as 312.		
316	Layer		0.7	Firm reddish dark brown silty clay situated in the northern limit of trench 3. Possibly associated with unknown service.		
317	Layer		0.2	Friable light grey sandy silt with crushed yellow grey bricks. Possibly associated with the construction of Charles House and subsequent landscaping. Overlies 318.		
318	Layer		0.8	Firm dark brown sandy clay with occasional crushed brick. Demolition deposit associated with Victorian buildings. Overlies 305.		

Trench 5						
General description					**Orientation**	NW-SE
Trench 5 contained rubble/make-up layer to a depth of 1.20 m below current ground level. A sandy clay alluvial deposit was encountered in a test pit at the northern end between 1.20 m and 4.50 m below ground level. No archaeological remains pre-dating the Victorian era were encountered. The eastern edge of Trench 5 clipped the very edge of a Victorian or later soakaway, which contained a brown ceramic waste pipe 0.18 m in diameter. The soakaway was constructed from seven courses of bricks with a concrete support for the pipe. A small patch of petro-chemical contamination was observed in the western side of the trench.					**Avg. depth (m)**	1.6
					Width (m)	2.7
					Length (m)	15
Contexts						
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Comment**	**Finds**	**Date**
501	Layer	-	0.25	Combination of modern tarmac overlying a concrete base to form current parking area.	-	-
502	Layer	-	0.3	Dark grey black sandy clay mixed deposit containing frequent brick and concrete fragments. Levelling layer associated with the construction of Charles House.	-	-
503	Layer	-	0.75	Mid brown red sandy clay with frequent fragments of brick. Demolition layer.		
504	Layer	-	3.3	Light yellow brown sandy clay with occasional small pebbles. River alluvium?		
505	Layer	-	>0.2	Light grey blue sandy clay encountered at 4.50 m below ground level.		
506	Cut	2.34	0.8	Cut of soakaway		
507	Fill	2.34	0.8	Seven coursed of red frogged bricks ca. 1.50 m apart with a brown ceramic waste pipe sitting on a concrete base with mid brown grey silty clay backfill.		

Trench 6						
General description					**Orientation**	NNE-SSW
No archaeological remains pre-dating the Victorian era were revealed. A modern storm-water brick culvert and a soakaway similar to that in Trench 5 were situated in the west of the trench. A small pit filled with red brick was observed in the east of the trench.					**Avg. depth (m)**	3 0.7
					Width (m)	2.7
					Length (m)	30
Contexts						
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Comment**	**Finds**	**Date**
601	Layer	-	0.45	Layer of asphalt and concrete. Current surface around Charles House.	-	-
602	Layer	5	1	Firm dark yellow clay gravel. Deliberate backfill between drain 606 and soakaway 607.	-	-
603	Layer	4.5	0.3	Firm black silty clay with occasional stones and crushed brick. Backfill between 606 and 607. Below 602.		
604	Layer	6	>0.7	Firm mid yellow grey clay with occasional pebbles. Backfill between 606 and 607. Below 605		
605	Layer	-	1	Loose orange red bricks. Demolished soakaway		
606	Struct.	0.35	1	Brick construction associated with modern storm water service.		
607	Struct.	0.4	1	Red brick wall associated with 605. Part of soakaway.		
608	Layer		>1.25	Naturally derived firm yellow brown sandy clay. Brickearth deposit.		
609	Cut	2.5	>0.2	Cut of modern pit containing brick rubble extending under southern baulk. Not excavated.		
610	Fill	2.5	>0.2	Fill of 609. Mid brown red sandy silt with frequent red brick flecks and fragments. Frequent fragments of coal and rare fragments of bone and shell.		

Trench 8						
General description					**Orientation**	NW-SE
No archaeological remains pre-dating the Victorian era were revealed. Remains of a cobbled surface, possibly a roadway associated with the back of Kensington Crescent, was observed across the entire length of the trench. A probable gravel drain was observed at the SW corner and several courses of bricks, a concrete slab and wooden fragments to the NE of the trench, most likely associated with a demolished house.					**Avg. depth (m)**	1.2
					Width (m)	2.7
					Length (m)	15
Contexts						
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Comment**	**Finds**	**Date**
801	Layer	-	0.3	Modern tarmac/concrete layer.	-	-
802	Layer	-	0.42	Mid brown yellow silty clay with frequent fragments of brick, pebbles and metal. Demolition debris forming a levelling layer for the construction or landscaping of Charles House.	-	-
803	Layer	>2.7	0.05	Black silty clay with frequent fragments of coal.		
804	Layer	>2.7	0.15	Cobbled surface consisting of square granite blocks of stone laid in straight lines. Regular sizes approximately 0.10 x 0.10 x 0.17 m.		
805	Layer	>2.7	0.15	Cobbled surface. Contemporary with 804, but cobbles were less regular and placed irregularly but on an E-W alignment.		
806	Layer	0.4	0.08	Concreted layer above cobbles along western side of trench. Lumps contained coal and slag like material. Possible resurfacing?		
807	Layer	2.7	0.1	Small silty gravel pebbles forming the levelling layer for the cobbles.		
808	Fill	0.3	0.15	Fill of 809. Gravel deposit within drain running NW-SE along the side of cobbles 805.		
809	Cut	0.3	0.15	Cut of gravel filled drain running NW-SE along the side of cobbles 805.		
810	Struct.		0.2	Single course of bricks forming probable wall/steps associated with a Victorian house along Kensington Crescent.		
811	Struct.		0.1	Timber support for possible step associated with 810 and 812.		
812	Struct.	0.5	0.15	Concrete slab, possibly a step associated with 810 and 811.		
813	Struct.	0.3	0.2	Concrete and ceramic downpipe		

				associated with 810, 811 and 812.		
814	Layer		0.5	Naturally derived deposit below 807. Mid yellow brown silty clay with sand. Brickearth.		
815	Layer		> 0.2	Mid yellow sand below 814. Naturally derived deposit, only observed in test pit in northern end of trench. Excavated to a depth of 2.08 m OD.		

APPENDIX B. FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Assessment of the post-Roman pottery

By John Cotter

Introduction and methodology

B.1.1 Only two sherds of pottery (523 g) were recovered from two contexts. These are both of relatively recent date – probably Victorian or Edwardian.

Date and nature of the assemblage

Context (104): 1 sherd (520 g). Date: c 1891 - 1908

B.1.2 Description: A complete brown stoneware 'ginger beer' type bottle of common form. Cylindrical body with flat base, sharply carinated (angled) shoulder, with a flattened large beaded rim. Height 175 mm. Perfect condition apart from a slight chip on the base. The vessel had a brown salt-glazed stoneware fabric typical of the late Derbyshire stoneware potteries. Near the base is a large, very clear, stamped proprietor's mark in the form of a rectangular label (32 mm high x 52 mm wide) with indented corners. Within is the inscription 'MALVERN/MINERAL/WATERS Co.'. Further round the base is a small oval manufacturer's mark of typical oval from (max 17 mm wide). This contains the inscription 'BOURNE/EASTWOOD'. This is quite a rare mark as most bottles of this type are stamped 'BOURNE/DENBY' after the Bourne family who ran a very large stoneware factory at Denby in Derbyshire. The stamp here is a late one dating from the takeover by the Bournes of the Eastwood pottery near Nottingham. Bourne/Eastwood marks date from the period *c* 1891 – 1908. Dated examples elsewhere with the same mark date from 1906 – 1908 (Askey 1981, 106). No further work is required but in view of its rarity, condition and unusually close dating, it is recommended that this vessel should definitely be retained.

Context (207): 1 sherd (3 g). Dated: 19th/early 20th century

B.1.3 Description: Body sherd, probably of refined white earthenware with vitreous glaze (REFW). Apparently burnt now with black surfaces, crinkled glaze and reddened edges (but with pure white fabric where freshly broken). Typical product of the industrial potteries of Staffordshire and the Midlands during the 19th century. No further work is required.

B.2 **Clay pipe**

B.2.1 Four pieces of clay pipe (18 g) were recovered from a single context (207).

Context (207). Spot-date: 19th century

B.2.2 Description: The assemblage comprises three plain stem pieces and one stem with a complete heel attached. Two of the stems have stem bores of *c* 1.5 mm and a narrow thickness consistent with a late 19th-century date. One thicker stem has a stem bore of *c* 2 mm and is probably of 18th-century date. The heeled stem is also probably of 19th-century date (SB *c* 1.5 mm). This has a complete squared-off bowl heel of cylindrical form and has an un-trimmed mould seam on the base suggesting a date after *c* 1820. It also has a maker's mark in the usual position either side of the spur. The initials are 'GC' (the 'C' is possibly a 'G'). The style of lettering suggests perhaps an early to mid 19th-century date. The initials correspond with several London pipemakers of around this date as listed by Oswald (1975, 133). These include the following matches:

- George Clarke (1) of Holborn. Active 1789-1820
- George Clarke (2) of Westminster. Active 1873-1883
- George Critchfield of Bethnal Green. Active 1873-1890
- George Carver of Finsbury. Active 1893

B.2.3 Either of the last three is the more likely possibility, so a general late 19th-century date is likely.

B.3 **Ceramic building material**

By John Cotter

B.3.1 The CBM assemblage comprises 8 pieces weighing 9644 g from 6 contexts. This mostly comprises 19th-century bricks. This was examined and spot dated following standard Oxford Archaeology procedures and the data recorded on an Excel spreadsheet. As usual, the dating of broken fragments of ceramic building materials is an imprecise art and spot-dates derived from them are necessarily broad and should therefore be regarded with caution. Detailed descriptions of the CBM and its spot-dates are provided in the spot-dates spreadsheet (see Table 1 below) so will only briefly be summarised here.

B.3.2 Six pieces are from bricks of which one is complete. Most of these are in coarse reddish sandy fabrics. Most pieces appear to be typical 19th-century London 'stock' bricks. One, possibly earlier brick (209), which is complete, is in a finer purplish-red fabric and has a crude or primitive 'frog' (recess for holding cement) suggesting it belongs to the early days of frogged bricks, perhaps *c* 1790-1830? The other pieces are broadly Victorian but, with one exception, may date to the first half of the 19th century rather than later. One unusual machine-made white brick (206) is probably of late 19th- or early 20th-century date as is a piece of refined white earthenware (REFW) wall tile embedded in mortar (205). A single piece of late 18th/19th-century red roof tile was also recovered from (216). Like the single piece of pottery from (207), the two brick fragments from this context appear to have been badly burnt. No further work is recommended.

Table 1: Summary of CBM by context

Context	Spot-date	Form	Pieces	Weight	Comments
205	L19/E20C	Wall tile	1	1039	Damaged wall tile in plain refined white earthenware with clear glaze (REFW). Set into thick slab of grey mortar (2 layers of mortar: finer behind tile and coarser mortar base to bond to wall). Sort of tile used in basements, kitchens and lavatories etc. Probably rectangular with complete width (W) 118 mm, surviving length (L) 114 mm+.
206	L19/E20C	Brick	1	2347	Around ¾ complete brick. Fairly fresh. Unusual dense off-white, fine sandy fabric. Probably machine-made with neat frog of V-shaped section, length (L) 180 mm+, width (W) 108 mm, thickness (T) 65 mm. Trace of mortar on broken end. Industrial-type brick?
207	19C	Brick	2	1184	Fragments from a single broken yellowish stock brick. Probably burnt and distorted - spongy in places. Traces mortar. Includes 1 complete end W 115 mm, T 68 mm. Unfrogged .
209	*c* 1790-1830?	Brick	1	2695	Complete brick in fine sandy purplish-red fabric. Some yellowish ? lime mortar on surfaces. There appears to be a very shallow and crude frog (*c* 40 mm wide) on one side only - so probably a v early frogged brick. L 235 mm, W 105 mm, T 65 mm. Very worn from use along one edge and partly across one of the larger faces - possibly used as a floor brick? or for a step, or badly worn by passing traffic (e.g. in a busy entrance)?
210	19C	Brick	1	1685	Brick fragment embedded in thick lime mortar. Includes complete end W 105 mm, T 65 mm. Purplish-brown with black core. Possibly frogged? Possibly E19C as brick in (209) but overfired?
216	*c* 1800-1850?	Brick	1	546	Broken stock brick. Purplish with yellow surfaces in places. Coarse flinty fabric. Shallow frog. Complete end W 110 mm, T 66 mm. Worn.
216	L18/19C ?	Roof tile	1	148	Corner fragment handmade flat roof tile in fine red sandy fabric. 12 mm thick.
Total			**8**	**9644**	

B.4 Metal finds

By Ian Scott

B.4.1 The metalwork assemblage comprises 8 objects, 7 iron and 1 copper alloy (see Table 2 below). The copper alloy find is cast fitting (205), probably a pipe connector knurled on the exterior and with a screw thread on the interior.

B.4.2 The iron objects comprise a strip with attached loop, possibly a bolt plate, for securing a door; and a cast iron plate with a small knob at one edge, from a cooking range or stove (both context 205). There are 2 scaffolding couplers from context 208. From context 219 is a large enamelled jug, now partly crushed.

B.4.3 Finally there are two pieces of decorative cast ironwork from context 303. One piece comprise a panel apparently from railings, the other piece is a decorative element, which appears to have been part of a larger decorative fitting or feature. None of the metal is earlier than late 19th-century. The scaffolding coupliers (context 208) are 20th-century in date. Tubular metal scaffolding is first used in early 20th century but was not universally used until after World War 2. The decorative cast iron objects (context 303) are probably of late 19th-century date.

Table 2: Summary of metalwork by context

Context	Copper alloy	Iron	Dating
205	1	2	Late 19th century or later
208		2	20th century
219		1	Late 19th century or 20th century
303		2	Late 19th century
Total	**1**	**7**	

B.5 Stone

By Ruth Shaffrey

B.5.1 Four pieces of stone were retained. These consist of a piece of slate, two pieces of decorative marble and a piece of structural granite. See table below.

Table 3: Summary of stone by context

Context	Description
207	1 small fragment of slate, possible rooftile fragment, weight 123g.
303	1 small marble slab with polish on. Possibly from windowsill or mantelpiece, weight 2139g.
303	1 side piece of marble hearth/fire surround with internal fixing point on rear, no polish, weight 8.2Kg
805	1 small structural granite block, weight 3494g.

B.6 **Decorative building object**

By Alison Kelly and Julian Munby

B.6.1 Two fragments of the same object were recovered from context 303. These are fragments of a scroll cornice support and appear to be composite in nature, with obvious concrete elements and possible stone elements. It is possible that the fragment is made entirely from concrete or that concrete forms part of a later repair to a stone piece. There is a lead internal fixing visible within the fabric and the external faces have been covered with paint washes.

B.6.2 If the piece is fully concrete then it is likely to date to the early 20th century. If the fragment has been repaired in concrete then it will probably be of an earlier date (18th/19th century). To fully identify the nature of the fabric it would be necessary to chip a corner section from the fragment in order to identify the material beneath.

APPENDIX C. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

C.1 Environmental samples

By Julia Meen

Introduction

C.1.1 Three bulk soil samples were taken for sediment characterisation and for the recovery of artefacts and ecofacts. Sample 1 (114) was taken from a low-energy alluvial clay deposit in Trench 1, possibly dating to the late glacial period. Sample 2 (305) was taken from a yellow brown sandy clay layer in Trench 3 interpreted as Holocene alluvium. Sample 3 (108) was taken from a brickearth deposit overlying Sample 1 in Trench 1.

C.1.2 A monolith (Sample 4) was also taken through the late glacial sequence for sediment description and further analysis. Samples 5 and 6 were taken for Optically Stimulated Luminescence (OSL) dating of deposits 108 and 114 if the need arose.

Aims

C.1.3 Sampling was undertaken to:

C.1.4 Record the range of soils and sediments on site, and in particular, help characterise the sedimentary sequence.

C.1.5 Recover and identify any small artefacts, particularly those which could be used to date the deposits.

C.1.6 Determine whether ecofacts and environmental evidence (such as plant remains, animal bone, human bone and molluscs) which could be used for dating are present.

C.1.7 Determine the quality, range, state and method of preservation of any ecofactual evidence.

Methodology

C.1.8 Sample 1 was processed for the recovery of environmental material by water flotation using a modified Siraf style flotation machine. Gloves were worn at all times due to the high lead content identified in the field. The flot was collected on a 250µm mesh and dried in a heated room. The heavy residue was sieved to 500µm and was assessed by eye whilst still wet for artefacts and ecofactual remains. None were observed in the residue, so it was discarded at this stage due to concerns over retaining residues that were potentially contaminated with lead. The flot was scanned for charred plant remains using a binocular microscope at approximately x15 magnification.

C.1.9 1 litre sub-samples of Samples 2 and 3 were hand-floated for the recovery of waterlogged plant remains (WPR), and the flots and the residues were collected separately on 250µm meshes and stored in water-filled containers in cold storage, with the remaining sediment retained. The waterlogged flots were scanned for WPR and insects using a binocular microscope at approximately x15 magnification.

C.1.10 Monolith 4 was assessed and is available for later study.

C.1.11 OSL samples 5 and 6 have been retained for analysis if needed.

Results

Sediment

C.1.12 Sample 1 (114) was a brown (7.5YR 5/4 to 5/6) sediment consisting of approximately 70% silty clay, with the remaining 30% a silty sand. The overall structure was in the form of fairly well compacted plate blocks, up to 50 mm in thickness, with regular, smooth, upper and lower surfaces. The blocks varied in size but in their proportions they were fairly consistent. The 70% of the sediment with a high clay content was firm and difficult to break down, forming stiff clay granules during wet-sieving. The sandy element of the sediment was dominated by fine to medium sand particles, with the result that it was friable, soft and was easily broken down. It was noticeably found around the edges of the more clay-dominated blocks, suggesting that it was originally laid down in lenses or laminations within the deposit, the sediment having then fractured along these weaker points and with the smooth surfaces of the clayey blocks representing the surfaces of contact with the lenses. The sediment overall was well sorted, with inclusions limited to rare, sub-rounded/sub-angular, small stone pebbles and occasional quartz granules. The discarded residue from wet-sieving contained only occasional stone granules and a low quantity of medium sand. 10L was processed for the recovery of artefacts or ecofacts, none were recovered.

C.1.13 Sample 2 (305) was a light yellowish brown (10YR 6/4 to 6/6) moist silty sand alluvium. The sand was mostly fine to medium and the overall texture was soft and slightly sticky. No structure could be seen, and the sediment was very friable. It was well sorted and had very few inclusions – these were limited to one sub-angular, medium pebble sized flint, and occasional small stone pebbles. 1L was processed for the recovery of WPR and the remaining 20L were retained in case further analysis is required. There was no obvious sign of waterlogging upon initial inspection of the sediment, or during processing.

C.1.14 Sample 3 (108) was a brownish yellow (10YR 6/8) slightly moist silty sand. The sand was mostly fine to medium, and the sediment was soft and very friable, occasionally forming friable, slightly brittle, pebble sized clods. The sediment was well sorted, with occasional rounded to subangular stone small pebbles, and with frequent granule sized mineral concretions. 1L was processed for the recovery of WPR and the remaining 10L were retained in case further analysis is required. There was no obvious sign of waterlogging upon initial inspection of the sediment or during processing.

C.1.15 The assessment of Monolith 4 demonstrated that context (114) has been heavily disturbed by root activity.

Bones and artefacts

C.1.16 No finds were recovered from any of the samples.

Plant Remains

C.1.17 All three samples were very poor, with charred material limited to a single item of charcoal approximately 5 mm in diameter from Sample 1, and two flecks of charcoal less than 2 mm in size observed from Sample 3. No waterlogged plant material or insects were observed in either of the samples processed for waterlogged material.

Discussion and recommendations

C.1.18 All three bulk samples consist of well sorted sediments which would have been deposited through low energy processes. No small mammal bones or other artefacts

were recovered. However, Sample 1 is thought to date to the late glacial period, and could be seen to contain laminations of sand interspersed with firm clay demonstrating periodic changes in the depositional environment. It underlies Sample 3, characterised as a late glacial brickearth. This deposit is aeolian in nature and exhibited no clear signs of later disturbance, although there are signs of weathering towards the top of the deposit. Sample 2 was taken from a Holocene alluvial layer and no plant remains or artefacts were recovered from this deposit, and there were no indications of waterlogging.

C.1.19 Due to the absence of any evidence of human activity, no further work is recommended for the monolith or OSL samples.

Appendix D. Bibliography and References

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APPENDIX E. SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Charles House, 375 Kensington High Street, Kensington, London

Site code: KTN 10

Grid reference: TQ 2465 7897

Type: Evaluation

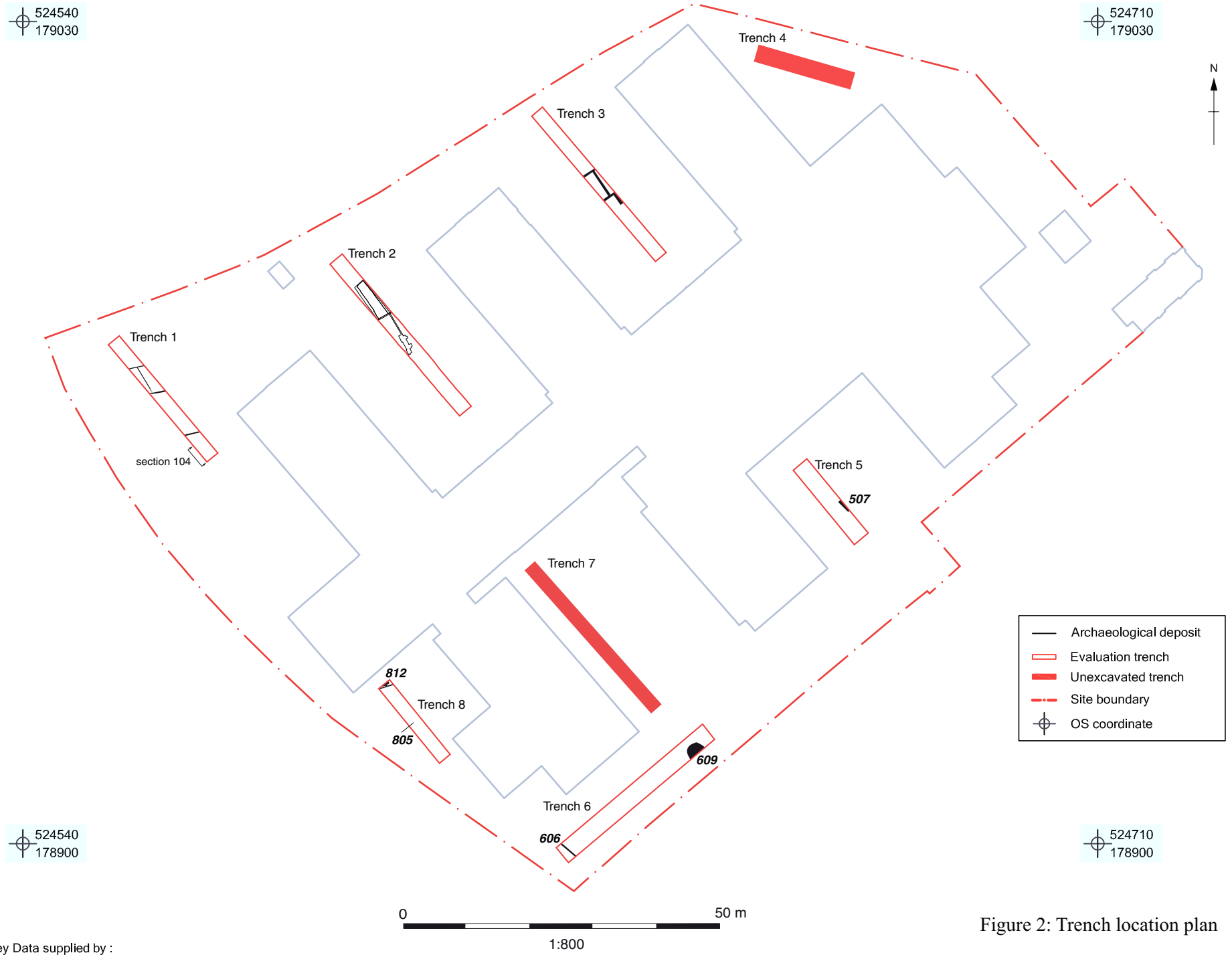
Date and duration: 9th-20th August 2010

Area of site: 1.4 ha

Summary of results: Six evaluation trenches were excavated around the standing building of Charles House. Three trenches were machined at 90 degrees to Kensington High Street to look for evidence of Roman Akeman Street and any associated features. No Roman remains were uncovered in any of the trenches. Trenches 1, 2, 3 and 8 contained remains associated with Kensington Crescent, built upon the site around 1823 and subsequently demolished. These remains consisted of standing brick built vaulted cellars surviving up to 2m in height. Concrete and brick floors and foundations from the associated building were also recorded. A cobbled surface, likely associated access road or courtyard was observed in Trench 8. Trenches 5 and 6 contained modern soakaways and deposits associated with the construction of Charles House.

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with the Museum of London in due course, under the following accession number: KTN 10.

Figure 1: Site location



Survey Data supplied by :
Premier Energy Surveys/OA

Figure 2: Trench location plan

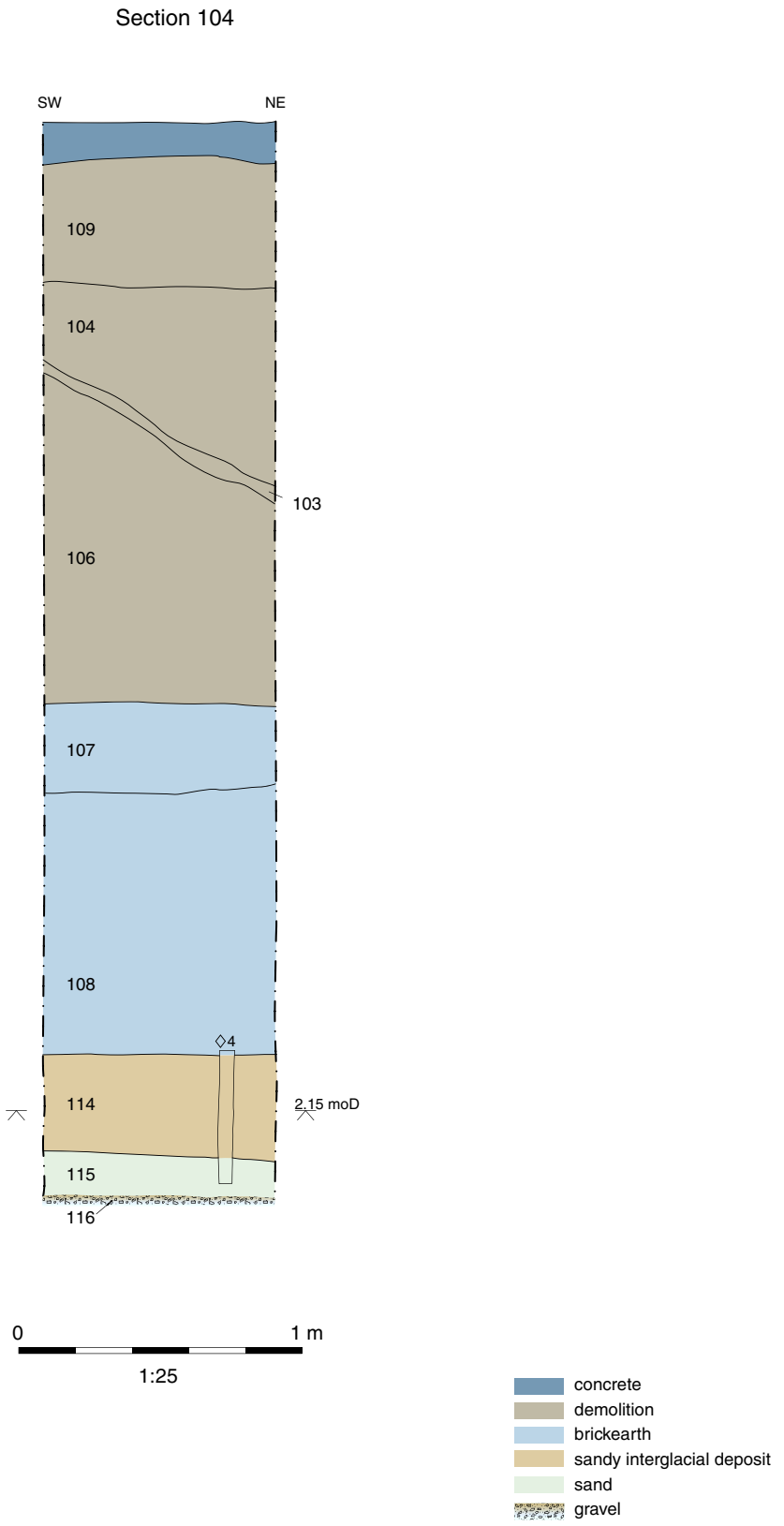


Figure 3: Trench 1, deposit sequence

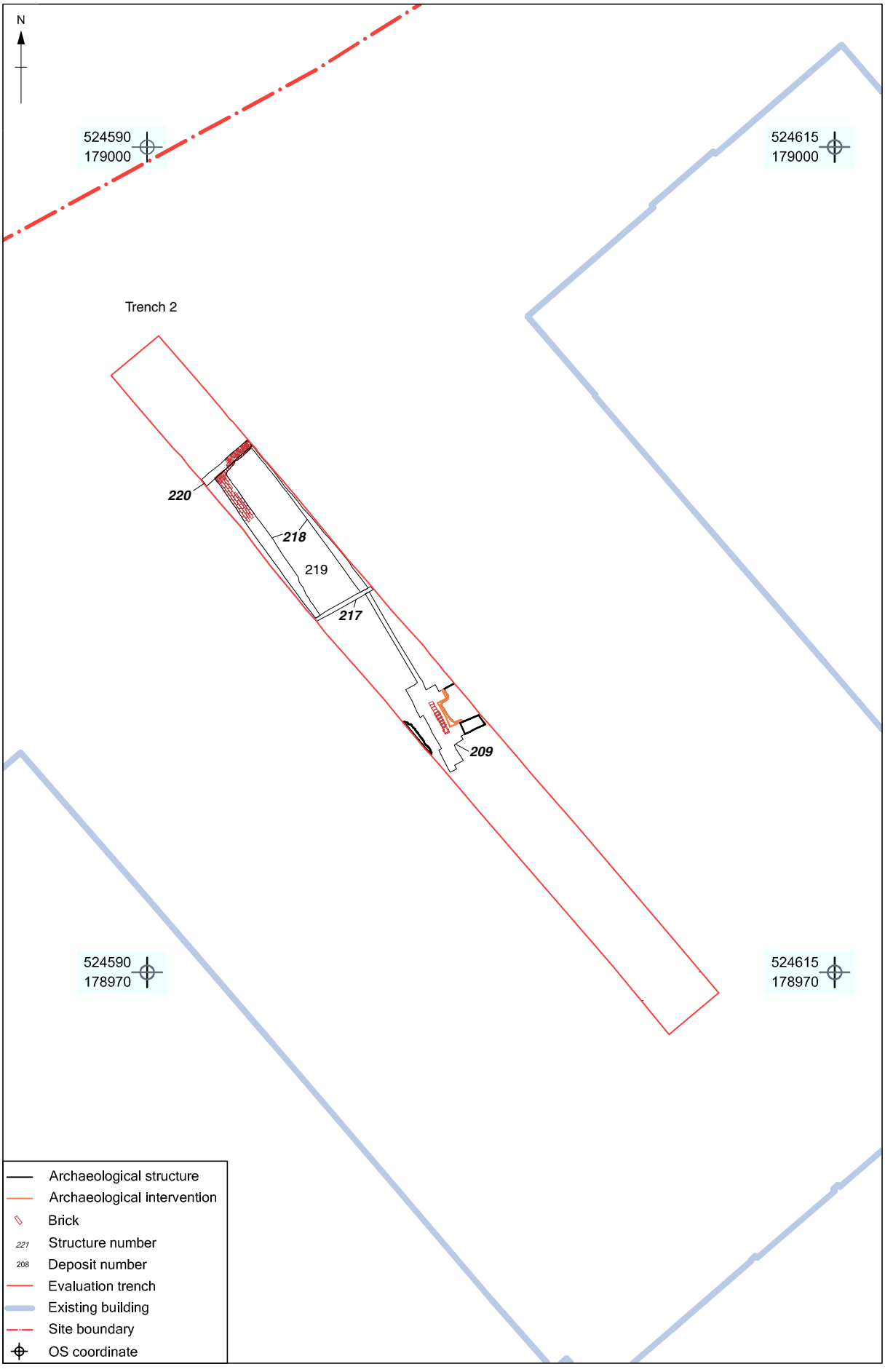


Figure 4: Trench 2, plan.

Plate 1: Test pit at northern end of Trench 3 showing alluvial deposit.

Plate 2: Building foundations ***209*** in Trench 2, looking south.

Plate 3: Concrete floor ***206*** in Trench 2, looking south.

Plate 4: Vaulted cellar ***218*** and ***220*** in Trench 2, looking south-east.

Plate 5: Cellar within Trench 3, looking north-west.

Plate 6: Cobbled surface ***805*** within Trench 8, looking north-west.

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