8 Planning for London's Archaeology: Views from the Public Sector

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Abstract

Written at a timely moment (in Autumn 2018) with a new version of the London Plan soon to be at Examination in Public, this paper explores how London's archaeological management has become embedded in the planning system, what this means for its practice and what local government archaeologists think lies in store. In a generation we have gone from 'rescue digs' to planning-led evaluation and mitigation strategies and from a Sites and Monuments Record card index to a Historic Environment Record using a relational database and Geographical Information System.

In this celebration of 50 years since the first issue, we acknowledge the significant role that *London Archaeologist* has played as a champion of archaeological interest, leading many to engage with a particular place, person, object or period of time. The magazine has always been popular and accessible, reaching a wide audience without sacrificing academic value. Maintaining this delicate balance is the challenge for modern archaeological decision makers and is at the core of effective planning advice, as well as the successful delivery of projects that contribute to place-shaping, social value, community benefit, public wellbeing and the transfer of knowledge.

So what have we learnt from the last 50 years about managing the capital's archaeology? Despite recurring worries, the number of interventions has mushroomed generating vast quantities of data. Planned, systematic investigations working to a regional research agenda have made considerable contributions to archaeological and historic knowledge and provided innovative public access to sites and their interpretation.

Looking forward, we explore how we can manage all this information in new and creative ways and how our interventions could be better focused to deliver new knowledge, shape places and tell engaging stories to connect with London's diverse communities. We argue that the sector can and should work together to be more effective at providing public value and that we need to demonstrate that value to maintain and improve our position in public policy.

We believe that delivering public value imaginatively should be at the core of what we all do and should be our positive vision for London and Londoners.

Retrospect and Context

Kathryn Stubbs, City of London Corporation

More than 25 years ago, the publication of PPG16 (DoE, 1990) set out government guidance to local planning authorities, developers, archaeologists, amenity societies and the general public, transforming the way that archaeology was dealt with in the planning process. Archaeology was properly recognised as a material consideration for planning applications and stronger local plan policies were adopted. The prediction and identification of archaeological potential, and assessment of whether those remains should be preserved *in situ*, or preserved by record gave weight to archaeological issues and planning for their management at an early stage. Long held concerns about archaeological finds holding up development were gradually allayed by a systematic approach in assessing sites, development impacts and the integration of archaeological investigation and recording

in demolition and construction phases of development. This success is due to cross-profession working and collaboration with skilled archaeologists, enlightened developers, architects, engineers and construction personnel, and planning archaeologists working in, or advising, local authorities.

The situation today is far from the often underfunded or sometimes unrecorded archaeological work on many significant or overlooked sites developed in the post-war period. Archaeological monuments and remains, whether scheduled or not, are integral to historic environment policies and firmly embedded in the NPPF. We have moved from a reactive 'rescue archaeology' to a proactive and systematic method of planning archaeological work. We owe a great debt to our predecessors working on frequently difficult sites, racing against time to record remains on nationally important sites such as Billingsgate and Huggin Hill bathhouses, the Roman and medieval London Wall. They uncovered numerous aspects of the early development and origins of London in the City and Southwark, published in *London Archaeologist*.

Many examples demonstrate how a monument or archaeological remains and their setting have been enhanced by incorporation in new buildings or sensitive new development. Careful interpretation has widened appreciation and understanding of a monument for residents, visitors and workers adding to place making.

Public Value: what is it and why does it matter?

Sandy Kidd, Historic England (GLAAS)

If the last 50 years have taught archaeologists anything, it must surely be that for the discipline to thrive we need to win both 'hearts and minds'. We must both capture the public's imagination and persuade decision-makers that regulatory and funding systems should allow us to respond effectively to threats and opportunities. The combination of the drama of the Rose Theatre's discovery in 1989 followed by the publication of the first planning guidelines for archaeology (PPG16) a year later provide an obvious example of making just such a link.

By shifting the onus for funding development-related archaeological investigation on to the developer, PPG16 took a leap forward on the fundamental problem of how to resource archaeological projects. In contrast to the 36 pages of PPG16, today's NPPF contains only a few paragraphs explicitly relating to archaeology within just 3.5 pages dedicated to the historic environment in all its manifestations (MHCLG, 2019). Nevertheless, the NPPF not only retains the key principles of PPG16, but offers much more. Instead of a choice between 'preservation *in situ*' and 'preservation by record' of archaeological remains, the NPPF sees archaeological interest as potentially residing in any aspect of the historic environment alongside architectural, artistic and historic interests. The planning system now promotes 'sustainable development' – that is, development which delivers economic, social and environmental benefits – and the historic environment has a part to play in all of these. By changing the way we think about and practice archaeology, we can better contribute to these wider public benefits and are on the way to delivering what the Government calls 'public value'.

However, in the world of modern government it is more complicated than that. At a time of austerity, the Government wants to improve the productivity of public services. Sir Michael Barber led a treasury study into how to do this (Barber, 2017). His Public Value Framework seeks to optimise the process of turning funding into policy outcomes for citizens by focusing on four Pillars: Goals, Inputs (ie resources), Engaging Users and Citizens, and Developing System Capacity. The keys to achieving improvement are measurement, leadership and innovation. The public sector is being urged to avoid a 'command and control' mentality and instead champion an open, vibrant and creative culture where ideas are welcome regardless of where they come from.

The ALGAO: London Committee has articulated four ways in which an archaeological project can deliver public value outcomes:

- **Discovery**: the thrill of the new covers everything from evaluations informing decision-making to exciting and newsworthy findings.
- **Place-shaping**: is about contributing to design. It covers all aspects of archaeology influencing new design including preserving physical remains and using them (or the memory of them) to provide a locally distinctive sense of place. It can apply anywhere.
- **Advancing understanding**: is about building intelligently on the established archaeological practices of investigating heritage assets affected by development followed by publishing and archiving.
- **Education and enjoyment**: engaging local communities and visitors through public education, outreach and active participation, seen as peripheral under PPG16, is central to a public value approach (Lloyd-James, 2018).

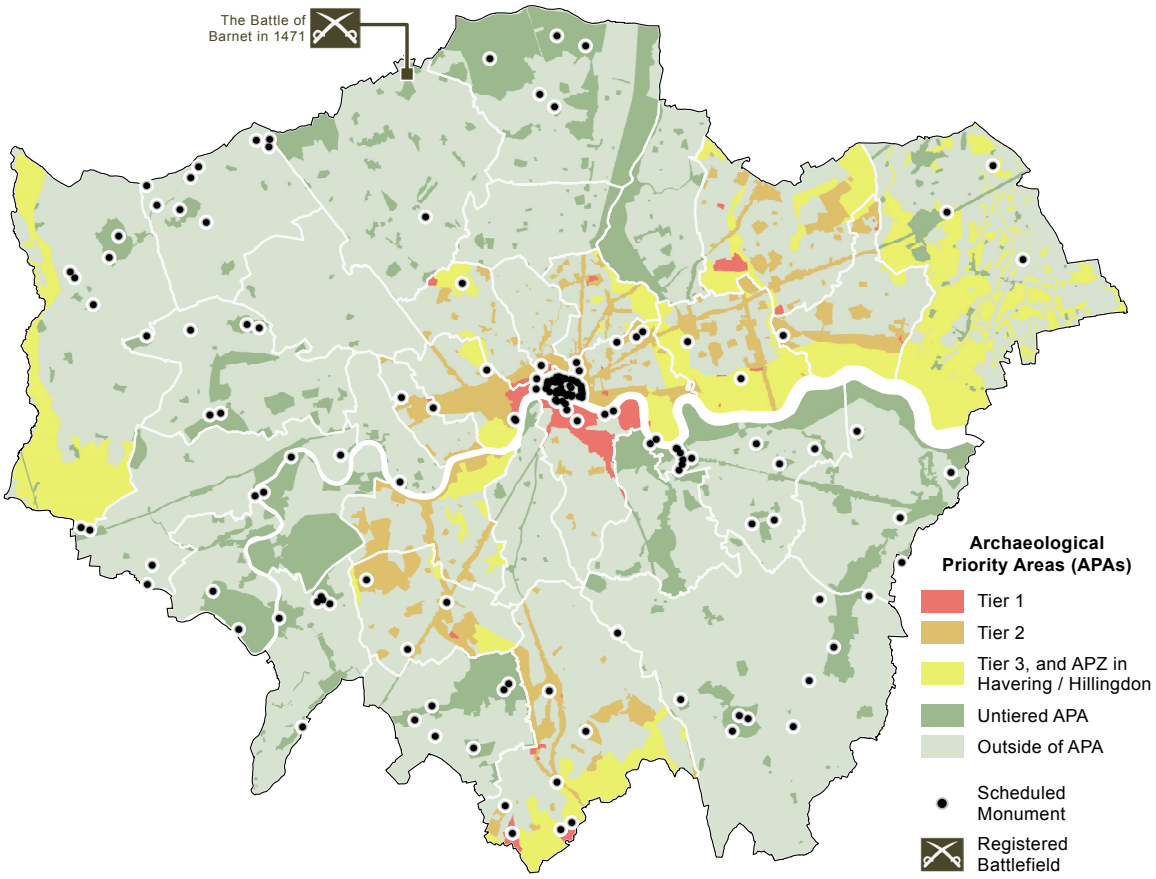

Fig. 8.1 London's Archaeological Priority Areas (APAs)

Our case studies illustrate how local government archaeologists are engaging with this new way of thinking, how we envisage the future of archaeology in the capital and how we lobby with our sectoral partners to obtain the local planning policies needed to achieve those aims.

Development in London is not only governed by the NPPF. The Mayor published the London Plan – the Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London – which set a framework for Local Plans that contain local development policies. Together these plans provide the context within which planning decisions are taken. When the London Plan came due for replacement, ALGAO: London worked with Historic England and partners across the archaeological sector to present a coherent message on why archaeology should be valued and how it should be treated across the capital. We published a topic paper entitled: *Archaeology in the London Plan: Delivering Better, Faster and Focused Public Benefits*, which sits alongside related topic papers (Anon, 2017). The treatment of archaeology in the draft new London Plan, published in December 2017, is a significant improvement on the original plan (Pipe & Ali, 2017). Its Examination in Public began in January 2019.

London faces immense development pressures arising from its success as a World City: social challenges, environmental pressures, rapid technological change, and the need to provide affordable housing and functional transport. In comparison, archaeology is a small voice, but unless it is heard there is little protection. Greater London has only 166 scheduled monuments, covering about 0.2% of the city's area. In contrast, Archaeological Priority Areas identified in Local Plans cover around 30% of London, and this is increasing as boroughs are reviewed using robust criteria and up-to-date evidence. Focus is needed to deal with pressures: Greater London authorities typically receive 17–18% of the 430,000 planning applications submitted in England each year, but in 2017–18 the capital only had 4.5% of the country's local government archaeologists (Anon, 2017).

Archaeology is a consideration in about 2% of London's planning applications, but perusal of *London Archaeologist*'s annual Fieldwork and Publication Round-ups illustrates the variable outcomes of the numerous interventions. GLAAS has sought to learn from this data to better target all parties' resources. Places are not all equally sensitive and decisions to intervene or not are now taken with reference to a risk model. So, while a precautionary approach is taken to smaller scale development in very sensitive locations, that strategy would be disproportionate and result in wasted effort if applied uncritically elsewhere. Resources freed up by not initiating low-risk projects are re-invested in driving quality outcomes on those with high public value potential.

Evidence and its Interpretation

Sandy Kidd, Historic England (GLAAS)

A generation ago, large swathes of England including much of Greater London were still archaeologically-speaking virtually '*terra incognita*', particularly for the pre-medieval periods. Since then, large-scale investigations have in some places, such as around Heathrow, dramatically changed that situation and moved us into the era of 'big data'.

The fundamental philosophical challenge is to understand the maturing of archaeological investigation from exploring 'unknown lands' to recognising patterns and testing models of historical processes which might have given rise to such patterns. An analogy might be found in the exploration of the South Seas in the 18th and 19th centuries. The botanist Joseph Banks sailed with Cook to islands previously unknown to western science. He followed the only rational strategy in such a circumstance – to collect and record as much as he could. When Charles Darwin followed a similar course 60 years later, he started to recognise patterns, for example in the form of Galapagos finches, that led eventually to his general theory of evolution. Modern science advances knowledge by using theory to design specific experiments, the results of which then improve the theory in a self-reinforcing virtuous cycle. That is the transition archaeology needs to make.

The practical challenge is to manage our data better so that it is both accessible and worth having. Adam Corsini's paper in this volume addresses this from the perspective of the Museum of London's full-to-bursting physical archive. Equally important today is digital data, which barely existed in archaeology 50 years ago. The GLHER, the ADS and Historic England's Heritage Information Access Strategy are critical to the digital future, but we must change working practices so that data is gathered and archived consistently so that the patterns referred to above can be recognised and studied (Jones, 1989). We are beginning to re-imagine what an accessible GLHER might look like and interact with the many other invaluable datasets. So how can the new GLHER contribute to an open, vibrant, and creative culture that helps unlock ideas and creativity?

Case study: The Arches Project – building the new GLHER

Stuart Cakebread, Historic England (GLAAS)

Since its creation 35 years ago as an initiative of the then GLC, the GLHER has served as a primary resource for planning, conservation, and public understanding and enjoyment of the historic environment. One of the largest, if not the largest, and busiest HER in the country, the GLHER database contains over 94,000 entries on archaeological sites, buildings, historic parks and gardens, landscapes, finds, fieldwork and supporting sources of information. It supplies information for on average 800 enquiries per year, the vast majority of which are planning related. The GLHER is accessible to general users online through the Heritage Gateway (https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/) or ADS's Archsearch (http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archsearch/basic.xhtml), although these are only updated periodically and do not contain the full data record. Up until now, full access to the GLHER data has only been available at Historic England's London Office through the GLHER team (Gilman & Newman, 2018).

In 2016, Historic England began a collaborative project with the City of Lincoln Council and the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) to develop a new software system using Arches, one that could be used by other historic environment records across the country (Arches Project, 2019). Arches, an initiative between the GCI and the World Monuments Fund, is an open source, web and computerised map-based information system for recording cultural heritage. It has been designed to be:

- compliant with international cultural heritage and data standards,
- intuitive and easy to use with minimal training,
- accessible through a web browser,
- highly customisable by users without need for extensive IT knowledge or support, and
- community developed so users benefit from other users experience and Arches modifications.
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The first trial version of this new 'HER' Arches system, Arcade, was launched by the City of Lincoln in May 2018 (Lee Enriquez, 2018). GLAAS is now working on developing the next full version, as yet unnamed, which will include a casework/project component. This, with the launch of the Arches mobile app in winter 2018, will allow the GLAAS archaeological advisors to:

- view on site the London HER and their own planning cases,
- access associated documents and images, and
- upload directly to the HER site/meeting notes, add planning cases and images.

Additionally, it will enable the GLHER swiftly to create bespoke datasets – for specific areas of London or types of heritage site for example – and supply them to external users securely and tailored to their requirements. This might be for consultants carrying out work for Historic England, or local heritage/community groups undertaking surveys, revising locally listed buildings or thematic assessments for example. Users will be able, based on their access privileges, to interrogate, add or revise records and then upload them, on site or at home, to the Arches HER system as provisional data records, ready for assessment by the GLHER team before becoming visible on the public website.

The new London Arches system launch is expected to be early in 2020. It will greatly expand access to London boroughs' Conservation Officers and Archaeological Advisers (City and Southwark), researchers, community groups and the wider public, reaching out beyond those usually interested in heritage.

We will also look to link to initiatives such as Colouring London (Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis, University College London) and the Layers of London (Institute of Historical Research, University of London) projects. Collaborations like these provide opportunities for place-based social action with local communities, developers and the wider cultural sector on a much larger scale than before.

Engaging with People and Place: Introduction

Gillian King, London Borough of Southwark

As archaeologists, we work with the conviction that archaeology provides an unbiased evidence-base, which links us to past everyday people and places and to an understanding of our common humanity and the world around us. Yet archaeology and its merits do not grab everyone's attention and it is a constant challenge to find ways to reach the wider audience.

A recent discernible pattern is that the top engagement successes seem to be either in the form of a single extraordinary discovery by an everyday archaeologist or conversely an everyday discovery by an extraordinary archaeologist or linked to a recognisable celebrity or historical figure, for example, Richard III in the car-park. To reach a wider audience it helps to have a story focused on either a relatable person or a sensational find.

For London, one such extraordinary find was the unexpected discovery in summer 2017 of an *in situ* Roman stone sarcophagus at Harper Road, Southwark. The sarcophagus' age, rarity, size and craftsmanship, its unknown occupant(s), potential for buried treasure, fate at the hands of antiquarian grave-robbers and discovery in 2017, had all the ingredients of a fascinating story. It reached a broad audience, because the changing biography of the sarcophagus documented at least three different stories of three different worlds.

The sarcophagus and its landscape context had a primary story of ancient Roman wealth, grief, ritual and reverence for the dead, but then a secondary story of post-medieval grave-robbing, immorality, poverty and violation of the dead. Its third story told of its discovery, excavation, scientific analysis and display by modern archaeologists. The sense of 'place' also resonated with people demonstrating how this once funereal roadside cemetery was now a vibrant, urban setting, a place celebrating the living. Separated by time, the story of the sarcophagus had a different interpretation for the bereaved Roman citizen, the post-medieval grave robber and for the modern Londoner, reminding us that the stories of a place look different depending on who you are and where you are looking from.

Case Study 1: The Harper Road Sarcophagus and the Roman Dead exhibition

Gillian King, London Borough of Southwark

This story began in January 2017 when CgMs/PCA began an archaeological evaluation for a planning application at 25–29 Harper Road, Southwark, on behalf of Galliard Homes. It quickly became apparent that archaeological survival across the site was good and the evaluation progressed immediately into a phased full excavation of the whole site. PCA initially uncovered a long section of Roman Stane Street dating from AD 55–70, which showed evidence of maintenance throughout the Roman period. Archaeologically, this discovery alone is monumental and has completely redrawn the Roman road-map of Southwark, aligning the road much further east than previously estimated. Complex evidence of Roman roadside settlement and land-use was also recorded. Then, in July 2017, seven months into the excavation, the extraordinary discovery of the sarcophagus was made.

The Harper Road site lies within a major ritual landscape, located close to the junction of the

two Roman roads into *Londinium* from Sussex (Stane Street) and Kent (Watling Street). The site was within the Roman 'Southern Cemetery' and just south-west of the important temple complex at Tabard Square, with examples of varied and lavish Roman burial practice. The Harper Road excavations found the chalk foundations of a high-status roadside building, interpreted as a mausoleum (AD 270–5), which had been truncated in the late 3rd or early 4th century for the structural insertion of the large stone sarcophagus.

The stone sarcophagus was made of Ancaster freestone, a Lincolnshire limestone, and with its lid and base weighed over 1,000kg. The burial had obviously been robbed in the post-medieval period, evidenced by a large robber-cut and the lid of the sarcophagus having been pushed to the side. The lid and base of the sarcophagus had been damaged in antiquity.

The discovery of the sarcophagus led to extensive press coverage across local, national and international newspapers, television news and numerous social media forums. The public engagement had begun with a site 'Open Day' for local councillors, residents and interested parties much earlier in the dig. This interest was maintained and early visitors to the discovery of the sarcophagus were Peter John, the Leader of the Southwark Council, council planning officers, and the council press officer, Jane Evans. This led to a flurry of activity showing the power of local government to champion archaeology. Working with a dynamic team, made up of the developer, Galliard Homes, their agents CgMs, the archaeologists PCA, the Museum of London, and a range of other experts, such as Cliveden Conservation, the story soon took off. The lifting of the sarcophagus was filmed live by the BBC and broadcast on the national news (Hilts, 2017).

The base, with contents intact, was lifted and excavated by PCA at LAARC. Excavation revealed that the sarcophagus still contained the partial remains of a woman at least 35 years old, probably buried date in the 3rd century, and the partial remains of a neonate. The grave goods, which would have accompanied the body, had been robbed, but a fragment of gold, possibly an earring, and a stone intaglio depicting a Bacchic satyr survived. The sarcophagus was conserved and repaired by Taylor Pearce and went on to form the centrepiece of *Roman Dead* – a major exhibition about Roman death and burial in London at the Museum of London in Docklands – which ran from May to October 2018 and attracted over 36,500 visitors.

There are many people to thank for this successful story of public engagement who cannot all be acknowledged here; it was an exemplar of a large team of committed professionals working in harmony together, with the generous funding and support of Galliard Homes and the Museum of London.

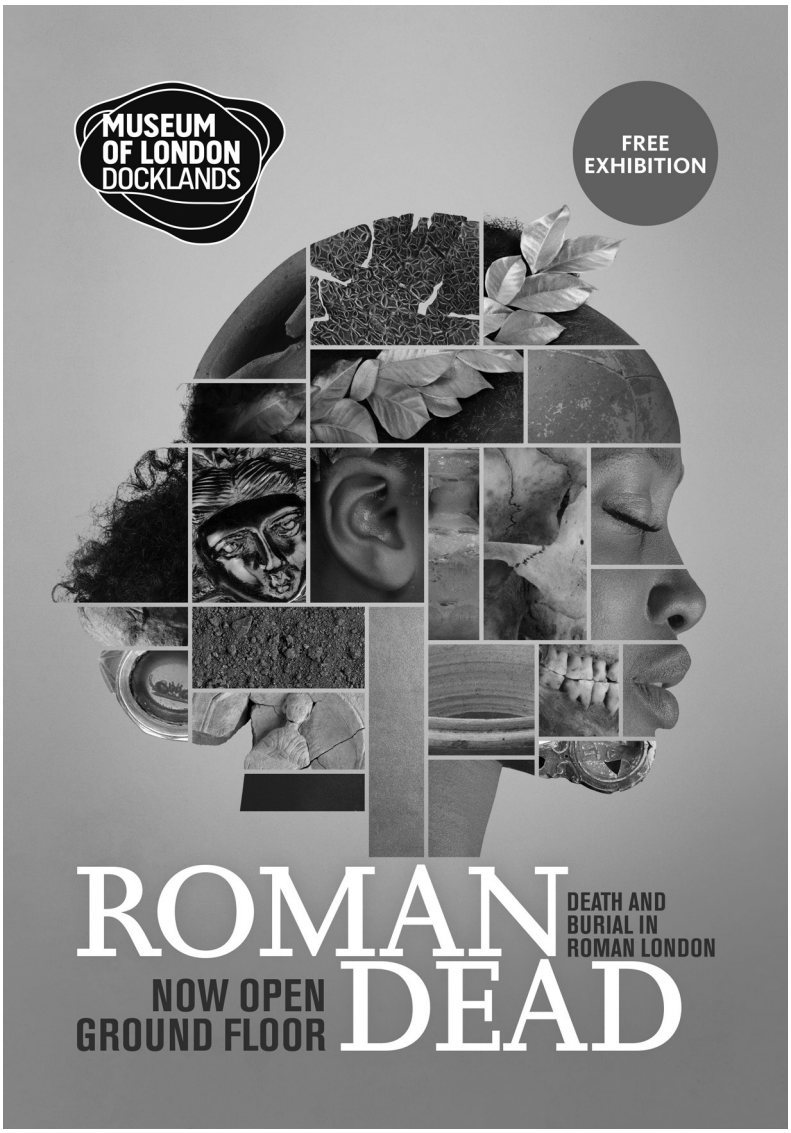

Fig. 8.2 Poster for the Museum of London Docklands Roman Dead exhibition

Case study 2:Outer London Outreach – Barking Abbey, LB Barking and Dagenham

Adam Single, Historic England (GLAAS)

The history of Barking Abbey is a rich one, spanning 900 years from the seventh century to the Reformation, boasting Saxon saints, powerful abbesses, Viking raiders and royal patronage. Its archaeological investigation dates back more than 100 years to the work of Alfred Clapham. Subsequent work has often been recorded in *London Archaeologist* (eg Redknap, 1991).

Two key but not fully published excavations were in 1985 and 1990. Led by Ken MacGowan and the Passmore Edwards Museum at the then-new Abbey Retail Park, they very productively investigated land lying between the scheduled abbey and the River Roding (MacGowan, 1996).

Fig. 8.3 A public open day at Barking Abbey (reproduced with kind permission of Steve Ford, TVAS)

In 2013, Abbey Retail Park was proposed for residential redevelopment. This offered the opportunity to revisit the Passmore Edwards investigations and their immediate vicinity, as well as securing greater public benefit from the results than was possible under planning policy at the time. Following research, pre-determination fieldwork and deposit modelling, GLAAS recommended that redevelopment of the site could be permitted, subject to conditions and Section 106 [needs more documentation, I think] obligations for fieldwork and outreach.

This investigation was carried out by TVAS. Fortunately, development impact in the 1980s and 1990s was found not to have been comprehensive and structural remains contemporary with the Abbey were uncovered, along with two phases of prehistoric settlement. High-status Saxon and mediaeval metalwork and pottery were recovered, along with plentiful Roman material.

The planning condition for public engagement obliged the developer to implement an approved programme of events. This resulted in four schools visits and a public open Saturday with 80 visitors. Information boards, posters, leaflets and an article in the *Barking and Dagenham Post* all reported on finds and publicised the open day. Television company 360 Productions deployed a dig diary camera to record footage proposed for inclusion in the *Digging for Britain* programme. Social media coverage of site discoveries was provided via the @UKTVAS account on Twitter.

Links were created with Valance House Museum and the future East End Women's History Museum, who propose to occupy part of the redeveloped site and reflect its long history of influential women. Importantly, the results of the investigation are planned to feed into the borough's proposed HLF-funded accessible synthesis of all previous investigations at the Abbey.

Challenges with the programme of engagement included obstacles around space and timings that resulted from sharing the site with decontamination work. Audience development, although ubiquitous in museums and other cultural and heritage sectors, is still in its infancy in archaeology. Archaeologists encountered a regular and persistent perception that the site would be only of interest to other archaeologists and local societies. In the absence of any audience analysis, it was harder to make a case that, for example, the notable local populations of Polish Catholics or African Pentecostals might have been approached fruitfully, given the site's obvious Christian heritage. However, the schools work was particularly successful in terms of numbers and engagement and led to a children's archaeological art competition, entries for which went on to adorn the site hoardings.

Case study 3: The City Wall, Vine Street, City of London

Kathryn Stubbs, City of London Corporation

As the financial district and historic centre of London, the City is characterised by a rich mix of historic and contemporary architecture. It has a unique combination of heritage and innovation in a diverse environment. Through the rapid pace of development in the City over the last 50 plus years, many sites have been investigated and new discoveries made. Some sites have been investigated more than once over this time, giving opportunities to reinterpret previous archaeological interventions.

Safeguarding monuments and archaeological remains is an important part of the City's policy framework and development management. Good placemaking and delivering high density buildings within a sensitive historic context is a major objective. Where possible, the public display, interpretation and enhancement of visible or buried monuments and archaeological remains is sought, in order to provide a link to our past, broaden appreciation and understanding for residents, workers and visitors, and connect the historic and modern townscape.

A new mixed-use development in Vine Street by Urbanest, which included student accommodation, offices, display of the City Wall in a new double height public exhibition space, a café, new public route and urban realm, was granted planning permission and Scheduled Monument Consent in 2014. The City and Historic England have worked closely with the development team to achieve the improved setting and understanding of the monument.

The 2nd century wall and bastion is 11m long, a significant survival and one of many stretches of the City's Roman and medieval defences which are Scheduled Monuments. It survives to a height of *c.* 2m above the Roman ground level and the later 4th-century rectangular bastion extends 5.4m from the face of the wall. It is an excellent, well-preserved example of Roman construction techniques. The wall and bastion were preserved following excavations in 1905, and by the DUA in 1979–80 (Maloney, 1980). Their location was marked by a Museum of London Wall Walk plaque, but, although visible in building basements, there was no public access.

Fig. 8.4 The City Wall within the exhibition space at Vine Street (reproduced by kind permission of Hopkins Architects)

The setting and enhancement of the monument were key factors in the early stages of design of the new development, prior to making a planning application. Archaeological assessment and review of the archaeological archive records by MOLA indicated that a section of the wall core had survived to the south of the scheduled area. This was confirmed by evaluation on site in 2014 and the scheduled area has been revised to include this.

The dismantling of the modern building above and adjoining the City Wall was carefully planned to ensure that the wall remained protected from any damage or impacts from the demolition or construction activities. Prior to this, Cliveden Conservation carried out condition and structural surveys and conservation work to consolidate areas of friable or loose material. The wall is being monitored throughout to measure vibration and potential movement.

An integral part of the new development, the City Wall will be prominent in views from street level – the new pedestrian route runs between Vine Street and Jewry Street, the café and student accommodation entrance hall. It will be within an attractive exhibition space, curated in partnership with the Museum of London, with displays on the history of the wall and evolution of the site. This new cultural and visitor attraction within the City, open seven days a week and free of charge, will add to attractions in the area and strengthen the link between surviving stretches and interpretation of the City wall circuit.

Looking Forward

Laura Hampden and Sandy Kidd, Historic England (GLAAS)

Our paper has explored how the small band of local government archaeologists promotes the value of archaeology to London and Londoners. Looking forward to the next 50 years we must recognise British society is continues to change. We need to focus on understanding and responding to both changes and the needs of our stakeholders so that we can continue to stress how archaeology and the planning sector deliver public benefits – particularly social value.

The government believes that social value flows from thriving communities, and to help communities thrive we need to look at the five foundations of social value: people, places, the social sector, the private sector and the public sector. Essentially the government wants us all to do more with less; one way of achieving this is to empower people and communities to do more for themselves – to act as influencers and collaborators through the process of change, and to take ownership of the places that they live and work in. The government's Civil Society Strategy emphasises that "'Global Britain" is rooted in "local Britain"': we can all benefit from the sense of empowerment that comes from feeling connected to our neighbours and taking responsibility for the places we live in. By working collaboratively, we can make more sensitive and appropriate policy, and achieve better social and economic results. This concept has been embedded into law and public policy through the Social Value Act which is expected to be applied to the whole of government spending and decision-making.

In the specific context of development-led archaeology, we believe that the future lies in better focused interventions, collaborating to improve systems, creating accessible digital data and a broader understanding of public value as central to our purpose. We will know we have left the old worlds of 'rescue' and 'preservation by record' behind us when we receive assessments and project designs that articulate historical propositions as testable research hypotheses, show how the site's history and archaeology have informed the new development design, contain a discussion of the nature of local communities, the relevance of the archaeology to them and a plan for engaging and benefitting them. This is our vision for the next generation.

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