

# EXCAVATIONS AT KEW BRIDGE HOUSE, KEW BRIDGE ROAD, BRENTFORD, 2007

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## **SUMMARY**

*Excavations undertaken in advance of proposed development on the site of the former Kew Bridge House, adjacent to Kew Bridge, revealed archaeological features and artefacts ranging in date from the Neolithic to the 20th century. Prehistoric features comprised an Early Neolithic pit containing Plain Bowl pottery, whilst a shallow ditch and a small assemblage of Late Bronze Age pottery point to some late prehistoric settlement in the area. Several late medieval or early post-medieval ditches were probably field boundaries. The earliest structural remains may be linked to a ferry service established in the second half of the 17th century. A later L-shaped building, depicted on a mid-18th-century map, probably served an industrial purpose, and was subsequently altered and expanded for use as a malthouse in the 19th century. This closed and was demolished in the early 20th century, followed shortly after by what had been a public house and later a hotel to the south, the sequence of growth and decline reflecting the changing character of Brentford's waterfront over three centuries.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Wessex Archaeology undertook an archaeological excavation on the site of the former Kew Bridge House, Kew Bridge Road, Brentford, centred on NGR TQ 18950 77975 (Fig. 1), in advance of redevelopment. The fieldwork was carried out between January and March 2007, under the site

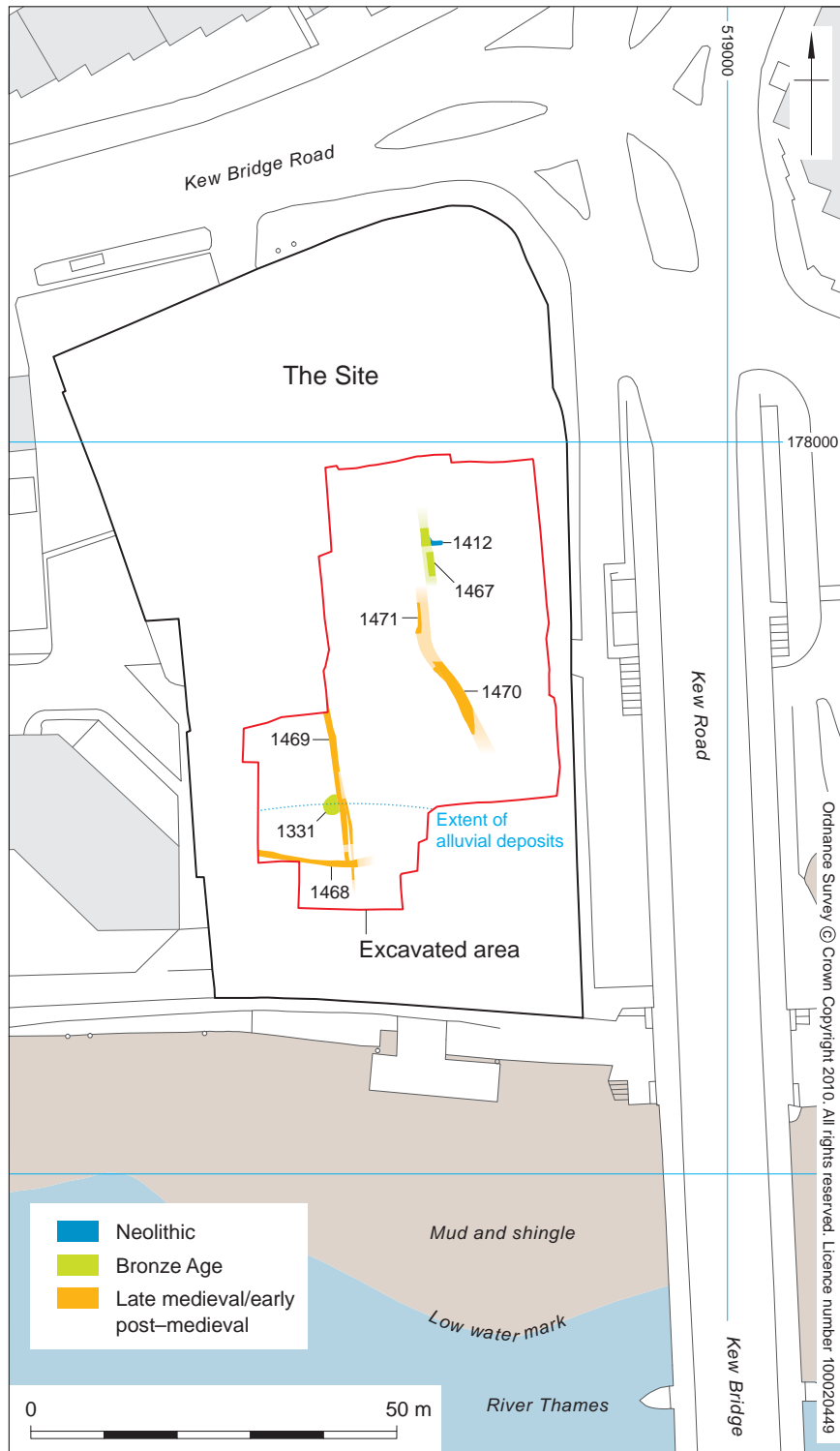


Figure 1. Site location plan and prehistoric and late medieval/early post-medieval features

code KBG 07. The archive is currently stored at the Wessex Archaeology offices in Salisbury and will be deposited in due course at the Museum of London.

The site comprised a roughly rectangular parcel of land, covering 0.6ha, bounded to the east by Kew Road and the northern end of Kew Bridge, to the west by a mixture of residential and commercial properties, to the north by Kew Bridge Road and to the south by the River Thames, which lay approximately 20m from the edge of the excavation.

The British Geological Survey map for the area (sheet no 270 Drift edition) shows that the site lay on the interface between the Quaternary River Brickearths and the River Terrace Gravels (First River Terrace), this interface approximately 30m from the present north edge of the River Thames. These superficial deposits overlie the London Clays laid down in the Eocene. The modern ground surface slopes appreciably from north to south, with the ground level at the northern end of the site some 6.5m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), whilst the land closest to the Thames lies at approximately 4.5m aOD.

Two archaeological evaluations were undertaken in 1992 (MoLAS 1992) and 2003 (CgMs 2005), and these established that the river terrace gravels were overlain by alluvial silts, clays and sands (but no organic material) at the southern end of the site (at *c.* 3.1m aOD) and by brickearth across the northern half (at *c.* 5.3m aOD) The alluvial deposits were up to *c.* 2.4m deep (recorded in the 1992 evaluation) and interpreted as resulting from overbank flooding. In places the brickearth was cut by archaeological features, including probable medieval or early post-medieval field boundaries. Deep deposits of post-medieval made-ground and 'garden soils' were also encountered over the southern part of the site, whilst post-medieval and modern structures were recorded to the north. These included structural remains of a post-medieval L-shaped building, later used as a maltings, first shown on Rocque's map of 1746 (Fig. 2). On the basis of the results from the evaluations, excavation of the footprint of the development was undertaken, primarily to investigate further the evidence for medieval activity and the eastwards expansion of Brentford in the post-medieval period.

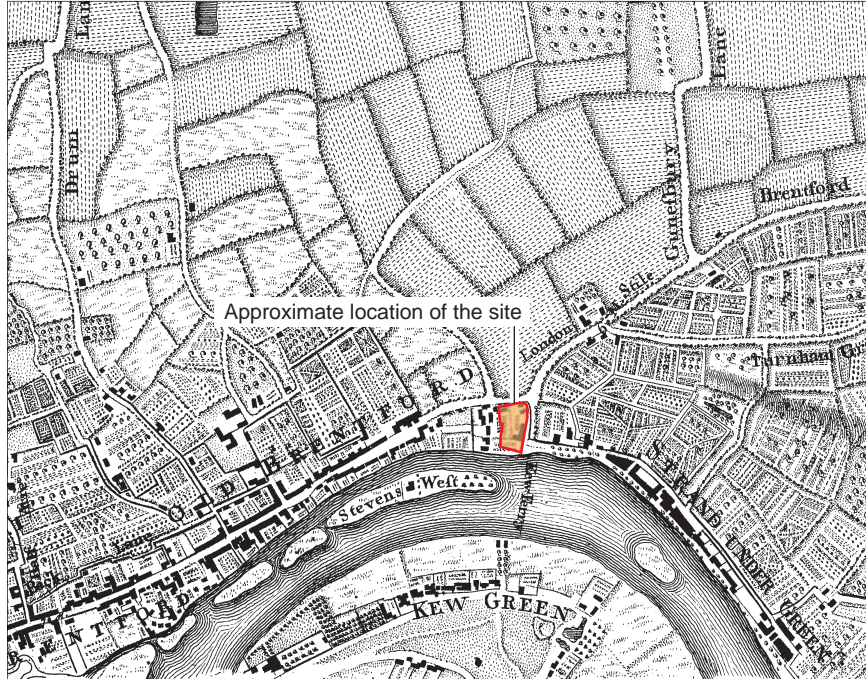


Figure 2. John Rocque's Map of 1746 (extract) reproduced with permission Phillimore & Co.

## THE STRATIGRAPHIC SEQUENCE

The 2007 excavation confirmed that the sequence of deposits varied considerably across the site. The upper layers largely comprised material derived from the demolition of post-medieval and modern buildings and, where practicable, these deposits were largely removed by mechanical excavator. Archaeological features and deposits were encountered at different depths. At the northern end of the site relatively shallow layers of demolition material were removed to reveal *in situ* post-medieval and modern features, deposits and structures. In some areas, cellars had heavily truncated post-medieval and modern deposits, as well as the underlying geology. Towards the southern end of the site it was necessary to mechanically remove substantial deposits of post-medieval material, predominantly comprising made-ground but also some ‘garden soil’, in order to expose underlying medieval and prehistoric deposits and features.

No prehistoric or medieval land surfaces were identified, and it appears that these had not survived later ploughing or post-medieval disturbance.

### **Early Neolithic (c. 4000–3000 BC)**

There was limited evidence for prehistoric activity on the site (Fig. 1). Some Early Neolithic pottery, along with a restricted flint assemblage were recovered from the fill of a small, elongated, 0.23m deep feature (pit 1412) with a single fill. The pottery comprises 29 sherds, all but three in a sparsely flint-tempered fabric, most of which refit to form two large non-joining sections of (probably the same) Early Neolithic hemispherical Plain Bowl with a neutral profile and a rolled-over rim (Fig. 3). Although not decorated, the surface of the vessel had been smoothed and wiped with a pad of vegetable fibres. Three small sherds in a sandier fabric come from a second vessel with a plain upright rim. The flint assemblage consists of six flakes, five of which appear to be from the same nodule. Although undiagnostic, all of the flakes are technologically Early Neolithic. Three small, featureless fragments of fired clay were also recovered from pit 1412.

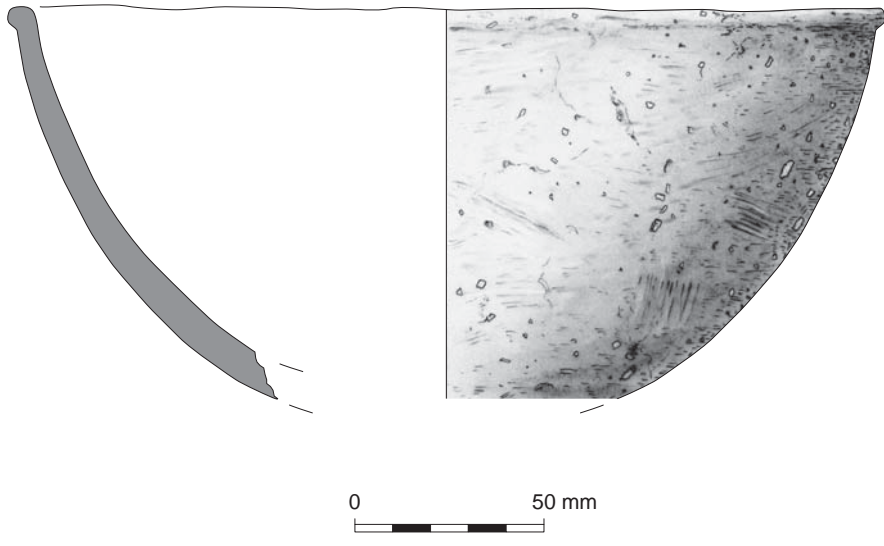


Figure 3. Early Neolithic Plain Ware bowl (from pit 1412)

Two further sherds of Early Neolithic pottery, almost certainly derived from the hemispherical bowl, were recovered from the upper fill of a ditch (1467) which cut pit 1412. Residual worked flint in a late medieval or early post-medieval ditch comprised three blade-like flakes likely to be Neolithic (two had retouched margins, one use wear), and the two probable Late Bronze Age features also contained potentially early worked flint (see below).

### **Late Bronze Age (c. 1200–700 BC)**

Ditch 1467 was probably a Bronze Age feature, possibly a land division, but only a 7m length of this north-south aligned, shallow, 1.5m wide ditch was exposed amongst the post-medieval structural features in this area. In addition to the two sherds of Early Neolithic pottery, other finds from the fill comprise 14 worked flints, some probably redeposited from pit 1412, but others clearly later in character, perhaps of Late Neolithic and Late Bronze Age date. These include a blade-like flake used as a knife, an end scraper and a boring tool with an awl point at the proximal end and a piercer point on the side.

Further evidence for Bronze Age activity was recovered from a shallow alluvial deposit (layer 1331), formed in a hollow approximately 2m in diameter in the underlying natural towards the south-west corner of the site. Layer 1331 contained 39 small and abraded Late Bronze Age post-Deverel-Rimbury plainware sherds in a coarse flint-tempered fabric, including one flat base and one lug handle stump. There were also three small fragments of fired clay, burnt flint and worked flint, the latter including an end scraper on a trimming flake from a flake/blade core with platform preparation and abrasion, a small multi-platform flake/blade core with similar traits (and possibly reused as a scraper) and a patinated distal fragment of a blade. The nature of the layer 1331, the condition of the pottery and the potentially early date of some of the worked flint suggest that they were redeposited in this context.

### **Roman (AD 43–410)**

Five sherds of Romano-British pottery were recovered, all residual in later features, and no deposits or features of Roman date were identified.

### **Late medieval–early post-medieval (15th–17th century)**

A series of late medieval or early post-medieval field boundary ditches (see Fig. 1) were dug through the natural brickearth and the gravels and alluvium at the southern end of the site. These ditches comprised 1309, 1325 (recut as 1469), 1468, 1470, 1471 and pit/ditch 1267 (truncated or recut by 1470). All were relatively shallow, between 0.8m (1468) and 1.5m (1470) wide and up to 0.3m deep, and had been allowed to silt naturally. The southernmost ditch, 1468, was dug parallel to the river and probably acted both as a boundary ditch and as a flood defence on the northern river bank. Alluvial deposits to the north of this ditch, and indeed cut by it, were probably laid down by occasional episodes of overbank flooding, whilst the heavy alluvial clays to the south suggest more regular and longer lasting episodes of flooding.

None of these features is particularly well dated. Small quantities of medieval pottery were recovered from the fills of ditches 1469, 1470 and 1471, as well as from an alluvial layer (1272) cut by ditch 1468. Three fabrics are represented (LCOAR, KING and a miscellaneous sandy/flint tempered coarseware), but diagnostic forms are absent. Together these have a wide potential date range spanning the medieval period, and suggest no more than very sporadic activity on the site at this time. In addition, two plain, unglazed and abraded floor tiles came from ditches 1325 and 1469, and peg tile from later contexts included both medieval as well as post-medieval examples. Sherds of post-medieval pottery (mostly PMR) and two early/mid 17th-century clay pipe bowls (Atkinson and Oswald 1969, bowl types 5 and 9) came from the upper fills of ditches 1468 and 1469, incorporated within later levelling material which subsequently slumped into the silted ditches. These ditches pre-date the earliest attempts to raise the ground level within the southern half of the



site. Pottery and a clay pipe (Atkinson and Oswald 1969, bowl type 5) from one of these early dump layers (1112, lain directly on the natural brickearth; not shown on plan), dates to the 16th / early 17th century. In addition, two 17th-century farthings (found in later contexts), both struck in the reign of Charles I (1625–49), attest to activity in the first half of the 17th century.

In the late medieval period the site lay in the lands of the settlement of Brentford, which was formerly divided into two parts, known as Old and New Brentford by the 15th century. New Brentford lay to the west of the River Brent in the parish and manor of Hanwell, and Old Brentford to the east in the parish and manor of Ealing. This manor had probably belonged to the Bishop of London since the grant of the Fulham estate to his see in *c.* 704. Neither of the Brentford settlements is mentioned in *Domesday* (1086), which only records their parent manors, and neither developed into a parish in the 11th–12th centuries, suggesting that they were not very populous at this time (Baker and Elrington 1982, 113–14).

The manor of Ealing stretched as far east as the Kew Bridge area. In the medieval period and later parts of this area were copyhold lands of the manor, held by customary tenants and transferred in sessions of the manorial court baron. There were open fields to the north and south of the main road in 1383, in which the villeins or customary tenants held scattered cultivation strips. The site itself, and the land to its west, was freehold land, held by the free tenants of the manor, and transferable by sale and inheritance. Some small pieces of land alongside the main road were manorial waste, which became copyhold tenancies, including the sites of the later inns the *Waggon and Horses* and the *Star and Garter*. These were parts of a series of villein holdings along the road, several lying near London Style on the eastern boundary with Chiswick, but there is no evidence for any dwellings (Baker and Elrington 1982, 114). There is unlikely to have been any medieval settlement in the immediate vicinity of the site.

The area between the main road and the River Thames was probably meadowland, divided between the manorial tenants in doles. In the 15th century there was a meadow here called *Floodmede*, in which small plots of a quarter or half an acre (0.1–0.2ha) were assigned to tenants by

lot (GL MS 11766). The boundaries between these doles may be represented by the medieval and early post-medieval ditches excavated. At least part of the area towards the east end of the manor was called the Hallows or Hollows in the 16th and 17th centuries.

### **Late 17th century**

The earliest evidence for occupation took the form of part of a brick building (1043, see Fig. 4). This comprised a room measuring 4.4m by 3.3m at the western end of a building which extended beyond the eastern edge of the excavation. The orange, hand-made bricks (unfrogged, measuring 225 x 105 x 65mm) used were not found anywhere else on site, and were laid in a decorative Flemish bond and bedded in a very fine lime mortar. Only the foundations survived but these were wide load-bearing walls, suggesting a well-constructed building of more than one storey. The absence of any associated floor surfaces and other deposits make dating its construction difficult. However, building 1043 had certainly been demolished by the mid-18th century, perhaps early in that century, and was replaced by a large L-shaped building which is shown on the 1746 Rocque map of the area (see Fig. 2).

From the 17th century onwards Brentford developed a large number of inns on the High Street and wharves along the River Thames frontage, including the Hollows. The wharves were reached by a series of passages running south from the High Street. Between them, the former meadows were enclosed and built over in a piecemeal fashion. By 1635 buildings were present along both sides of the High Street, extending eastwards from Brentford to the northern frontage of the site (Baker and Elrington 1982, 115–16 and 140).

The nascent town developed a reputation for dirt and poverty, its fishermen and watermen living in alleys of weatherboarded cottages and frequenting the many small alehouses. The Hearth Tax returns of 1664 indicate that Old Brentford was already much poorer than New Brentford. In the 17th century fruit, bricks and fish were shipped downstream to London, which sent return

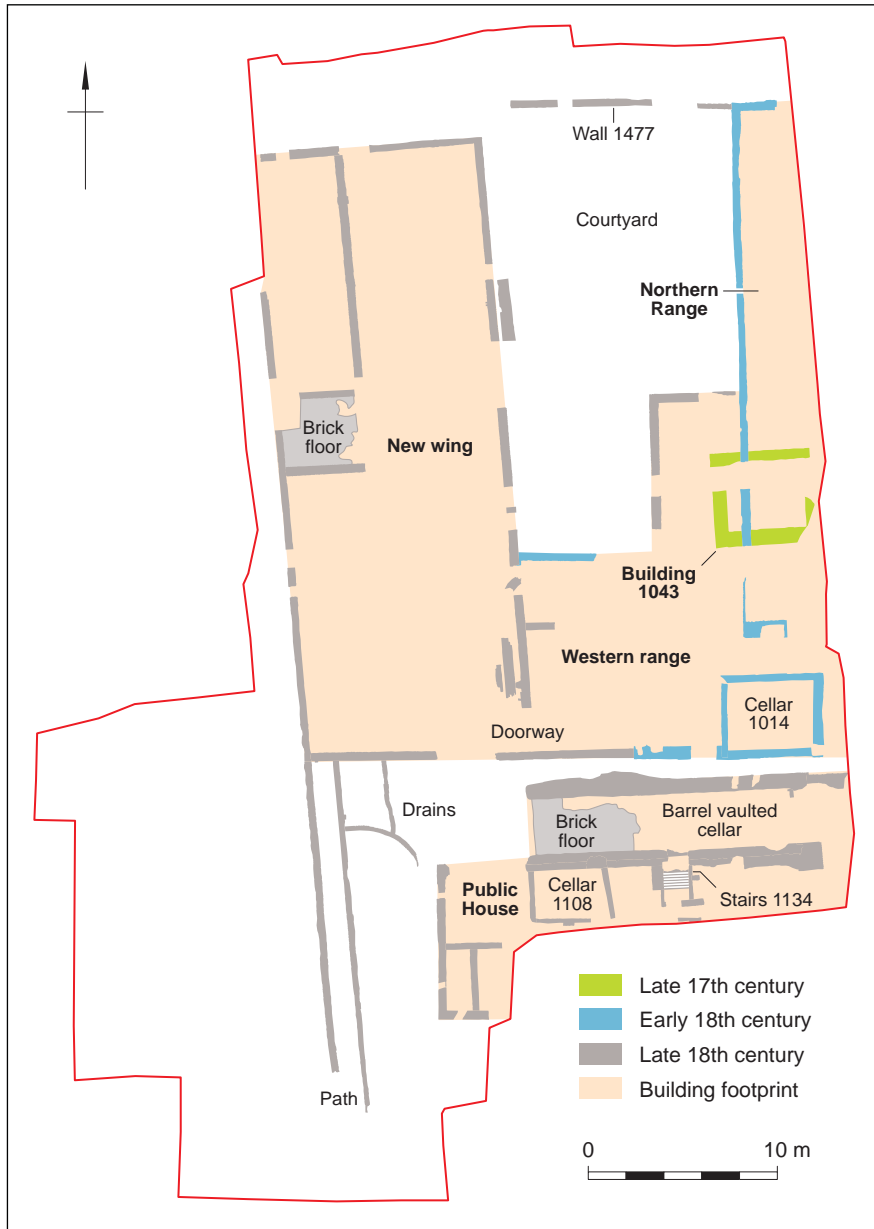


Figure 4. Late 17th and 18th century structures

cargoes of coal and dung. There was a dung wharf by 1609 and coal was used for making bricks in Brentford by 1679 (Baker and Elrington 1982, 116 and 139).

The site was probably part of the property held here for most of this period by the Tunstall family, who owned all the land on the waterfront from the Hollows eastward to the parish boundary and operated a ferry across the Thames to Kew on the site of the bridge, a service started in 1659 by Robert Tunstall. He purchased land on the south bank of the river in Kew and was therefore able to form landing places on his own land on both shores, by cutting away the banks and laying gravel.

Robert claimed that he began the ferry “for the accomadacion of the neighbourhood and for the convenience of his lyme kilne”. He employed the bargeman Henry Dibble to convey lime, passengers and freight over the river. He had to fight off two cases in the Court of Exchequer brought by John Churchman, the owner of the main Brentford ferry, which had operated from further upstream at Ferry Lane (LMA Acc 879/1; TNA: PRO E 134/1659/Mich 30) since at least the 1630s (Faulkner 1845, 169). Both ferries charged tolls for passengers and goods, and were competing for the same customers. The eastern ferry was later held by Henry Tunstall, who died in 1697; he was followed by his son Robert (died 1708) and his grandson Thomas (died 1727) (CLSL: P F Ransby’s Notes on the Tunstall family of Brentford).

The well-built brick building (1043; see Fig. 4) may have been connected with the operation of the ferry as it stood adjacent to the approach to the landing place on the Middlesex bank. It was perhaps the western end of a toll-house and may, therefore, have been part of quite an ornate structure. A mortgage of 1703 refers to the ferry and the ferry house (LMA Acc 1376/2). John Rocque’s map of 1746 appears to show a pair of small rectangular toll-houses still flanking the landing place on the Surrey bank (see Fig. 2).

The Tunstalls also had lime kilns at the Hollows (Baker and Elrington 1982, 141). Robert Tunstall built these *c.* 1649 to burn lime for building houses and improving agricultural soils in Middlesex and Surrey. His tenant of the lime kilns was Thomas Rowe (TNA: PRO E 134/1659/Mich 30). In July 1679 Robert Tunstall, a cooper of Old Brentford, and his brother John

Tunstall, a brewer, mortgaged premises at the Hollows consisting of a freehold messuage in which Robert lived, three nearby cottages, and six acres (c. 2.4ha) of adjoining arable land and pasture, with lime kilns, a barn, a stable, wharves, gardens, yards and other buildings (LMA Acc 250/1–3). Robert made a further mortgage of the same premises in April 1686 (LMA Acc 526/6), and again in March 1703, adding the ferry and the ferry house (LMA Acc 1376/2).

There were also malthouses in Brentford from the late 17th century onwards, which were dependent on the corn market at New Brentford. There were large malting businesses in Old Brentford, some of which also dealt in corn and coal (Baker 1982 and Elrington, 139 and 142). It is not known if these activities took place on the site in this period.

### **Early 18th century**

John Rocque's map of 1746 (Fig. 2) shows that there were two cottages on the western corner of Brentford High Street and the approach to the ferry. These lay beyond the excavated area. The site was dominated by a large L-shaped building, comprising a long north–south range running along the ferry approach and a short east–west range running to the west. This was apparently industrial in character, but its function is not clear. To its south a formal garden appears to have lain beside the Thames.

The excavations revealed elements of the L-shaped building against the eastern edge of the site. It was probably built early in the 18th century (Fig. 4). The north–south range was clearly identifiable, 18m long and at least 4m wide, extending beyond the limit of excavation to the east. The walls were constructed of hand-made, unfrogged, dark orange/red-brown bricks set in a soft yellowish lime mortar on a slightly stepped foundation, and lime-plastered internally. The ground floor of this wing was sunken, set below the surrounding surface, and traces survived of the lower sills and reveals of three windows set into the western wall, which was over a metre in height in places. There was no evidence for internal subdivision of this wing and no contemporary floor surface survived.

Very little remained of the original western range, although its northern and southern extents were identified, making it 10m wide and at least 16m long. Towards the south-eastern corner of this range lay a cellared room (1014) with a floor of blackened bricks, possibly suggesting that it was used for storing coal. The walls of this cellar were later thickened in the 19th century, perhaps for structural reasons. No means of access into this cellar was identified. A complex of narrow walls to the north of cellar 1014 may reflect a division within the western range.

From the backfill of cellar 1014 came several small, cylindrical phials, all but one complete, hand-blown and in varying sizes. One is in green metal, while all the rest are clear. Hand-blown phials of this type appeared from the middle of the 17th century and were in use throughout the 18th century (Willmott 2002, 90, type 26.2). The complete phials found here are relatively tall examples, and this may place them later in the potential date range, as height seems to have increased through the 18th century (Charleston and Vince 1984, 86). The pottery from cellar 1014 comprised mainly locally produced coarse earthenwares (see below) which, where datable, suggest a date range from at least the 16th century, although most here are probably 18th century.

The original function of this L-shaped building is unclear. It underwent alterations and was later used as part of a malthouse complex. The form of the building, the absence of associated features, deposits or significant assemblages of domestic material and the apparent lack of any sub-division in the better preserved north wing, suggest an industrial use.

The entire site was the freehold property of the Tunstall family at this time. Thomas Tunstall (died 1727) was followed as head of the family by his son Robert (died 1762) (CLSL: P F Ransby's Notes on the Tunstall family of Brentford). The Tunstall family held both freehold and copyhold property in Old Brentford at this time, including a copyhold house in the Hollows, with a yard and garden (LMA Acc 276/157–8).

Robert Tunstall had the first Kew Bridge built in 1758–9 by John Barnard, under an Act of Parliament of 1757; it was made of timber and had 11 arches (Faulkner 1845, 168; Baker and Elrington 1982, 104). Presumably the tolls from the bridge produced more income than those from



Figure 5. The site from the south-west, showing (mainly) 18th and early 19th century structural remains

the ferry, although the maintenance costs must have been higher. The bridge is shown on the Ealing parish map of 1777).

The Tunstalls continued to operate or lease lime kilns at the Hollows in the 18th century. Thomas Tunstall (died 1727) also had brick kilns (CLSL: P F Ransby's Notes on the Tunstall family of Brentford). Elsewhere in Old Brentford there were brickfields and tile kilns (Baker and Elrington 1982, 141; LMA Acc 276/157). Coal was brought into Brentford by river barges in the 18th century to fire lime, tile and pottery kilns, and also for malting (Baker and Elrington 1982, 139).

### **Late 18th century**

Late in the 18th century the L-shaped building was expanded by the addition of a second north-south range or wing at the western end of the original western range, this new wing measuring some 32m by 11m (Figs 4 and 5). This was accessed from the old west range through a door in its south-eastern corner, and some evidence for internal subdivisions and flooring were recorded towards the north-west corner, although much damage had been done by the lowering of floor surfaces below the contemporary ground surface in the late 19th or 20th century.

Drainage for the new wing was provided by two brick-built vaulted drains (not illustrated) running south towards the river. A second, smaller and more basic drainage system lay to the south of this wing in an area of post-medieval garden soil. Other features associated with the enlarged building included an insubstantial wall (1477) enclosing the northern side of the courtyard which lay between the old northern and western ranges and the new wing, and a lean-to structure within the south-eastern corner of the courtyard. A narrow path, bounded by two brick walls and at least 18m long led from the south-west corner of the new wing down towards the Thames.

This phase also saw the construction of a new building to the south of the earlier western range, associated with a group of cellars. The building is shown on later maps as a public house, but may have started life as a private dwelling. Some internal rooms were identified, whilst a small





Figure 6. Late 18th century barrel vaulted cellar, with 19th century malthouse and engine house to rear. Kew pumping station tower in background. View from south-east

cellar (1108) was built against the original northern wall of the building. This was floored with neatly laid bricks and entered through a door in its south-eastern corner, later blocked up. It was originally lit through a light well in the northern wall, but later a crude light well was cut into the north-eastern corner.

This change appears to have been necessitated by the construction of a substantial barrel vaulted cellar to the north, 3m wide and at least 16m long, the walls of which survived to a height of nearly 2m in places (Fig. 6). The eastern end of the cellar lay beyond the limit of excavation, whilst the western end was later modified. Parts of the original brick floor survived *in situ*, and the cellar was originally accessed from the south, down a flight of stairs (1134).

Much of the pottery from the excavation relates to the use of this complex, and the public house, both in this and successive periods. It includes quantities of locally produced coarse earthenwares (BORD, METS, PMBL, PMR, PMSR), dominated by utilitarian forms, in particular bowls, probably largely 18th century and later. These are augmented by at least one Midlands Purple ‘butter pot’. German stonewares (KOLFREC) are not well represented, and there are few early English stonewares (SWSG), perhaps for chronological reasons. Other wares suggest a date range focussing on the 18th and 19th centuries (STMB, BBAS, TGW, CHPO, BONE, CREA, PEAR, REFR, REFW, YELL); these occur mainly in tea ware forms (plates, cups and small bowls), but also in utilitarian forms (chamber pots).

A small number of clay pipes were recovered, including four bowls dated to *c.* 1740–80 and one to *c.* 1780–1820 (Atkinson and Oswald 1969, bowl types 26 and 27 respectively).

Industry expanded in Brentford in the late 18th century, especially along the waterfront, and included distilling, brewing and malting, all fuelled by coal brought in barges. Some of the breweries and malthouses between Old Brentford High Street and the Thames were owned by the Trimmer family, and stood on copyhold land (Baker and Elrington 1982, 116 and 142; GL MSS 10465/109, 338; 10465/110, 114–15). These were probably towards the west end of the Hollows.

The buildings on and around the site are shown schematically on the map of Ealing parish of 1777, and the name “R. Tunstall Esq.” is printed next to them. On the eastern corner of the London road and the Kew Bridge approach the *Star and Garter* tavern is shown for the first time. This also belonged to the Tunstalls and their tenant there in 1790/1 was Thomas Kent; the premises included gardens, a stable yard, stables and coach houses (LMA DRO 37/D1/2). The original *Waggon and Horses* stood on copyhold land and belonged to Elizabeth Martin, widow, who died in 1777, leaving it in trust for her granddaughter (LMA Acc 891/2/5/702).

Robert Tunstall’s son Robert commissioned the first stone bridge in 1783–9, built by James Paine, raising the money to pay for it by setting up a tontine trust (an investment plan for raising capital); the bridge had seven arches. The Tunstalls collected the tolls payable by the traffic crossing the bridge (Faulkner 1845, 168; Baker and Elrington 1982, 104; CLSL: P F Ransby’s Notes on the Tunstall family of Brentford; LMA Acc 638/251). A wharf extending 49ft (14.9m) to the west of the bridge was apparently built at the same time, and was later regarded as belonging to the bridge (LMA MJ/SPB/816a).

In 1780 Richard Thorogood had a malthouse in Old Brentford, formerly run by someone called Clinton (LMA DRO 37/B1/2). In 1790/1 this was a malthouse and sheds by the lime wharf leased by Robert Tunstall to Richard Thorogood and John Wallace. These were probably premises lying to the east of the *Star and Garter*. In the same area Tunstall also leased another malthouse with a house, offices, yards, gardens and stables to Thomas Lawrence at this time. This probably refers to the buildings on the site. Robert Tunstall himself occupied two dwelling houses further to the west, with a stable, a whiteing shed, a workshop, a wharf and a garden field (LMA DRO 37/D1/2).

The land to the west of the Tunstall premises is shown on the Ealing parish map of 1777 as “Mr Trimmer’s”. This comprised the land in the Hollows leased by the Tunstalls to the Trimmer family along with the lime kilns, which had their own dock or wharf. In 1790/1 there were also two lime kilns, sheds for chalk, breeze (furnace refuse) and ashes, yards and a limeburner’s house,

besides the Trimmers' dwelling houses and ancillary buildings (GL MS 12698; LMA DRO 37/D1/2). Trimmer and Son were listed as brick and tile merchants in Brentford in this year (Wakefield 1790). The Trimmers also had lime kilns and tile kilns near the east side of Kew Bridge at the east end of the parish (Faulkner 1845, 168).

### **19th century**

The early 19th century additions to the late 18th century buildings largely comprise drains and industrial features, with various modifications to the buildings themselves (Fig. 7). Substantial areas of brick flooring survived, one of which, 1176, on the west side, showed signs of heavy burning, with many of the bricks both blackened and badly damaged by heat. Efforts had had been made to maintain this floor by patching it with newer bricks. This burning was contemporary with the use of the complex as a malthouse.

Structural additions include a small thick-walled square structure (possibly a chimney base, close to burnt brick floor 1176) at the southern end of the east wing, the thickening of the walls of the earlier cellar nearby and the insertion of a number of internal walls. The earlier lean to structure was rebuilt at this time and probably extended the full width of the south end of the courtyard.

There were substantial additions to the new wing to the west. The main changes involved the construction of an engine house for a steam engine. Moulded firebricks made by E J and J Pearson of Stourbridge found in the demolition rubble in the immediate vicinity suggest that a Cornish boiler and steam engine were installed in the malthouse (see Fig. 6). A channel set into the floor probably housed a pipe taking water to the boiler from a brick-lined well immediately to the south of this room (Fig. 7). Late 19th century photographs show the distinctive roof of an oast house close to the location of this new engine house (B & C 1978, cover), and walls to the east of the engine house may represent the footings for the oast house. Drainage within this wing was improved by the construction of several brick-lined drains.

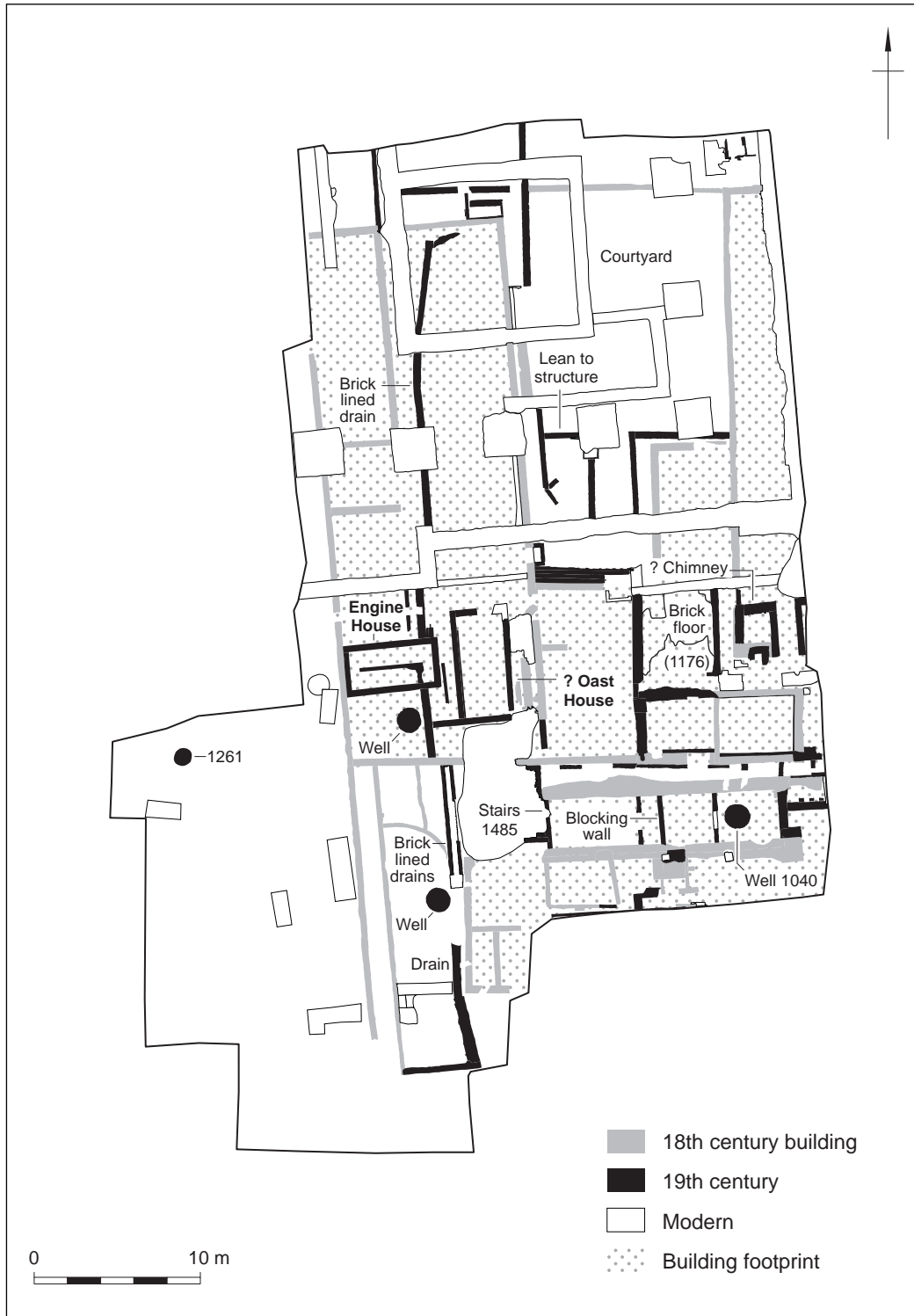


Figure 7. 19th century structures

Elsewhere, the barrel vaulted cellar to the south was divided into three by the insertion of two cross walls, each with a central doorway and the steps and doorway were remodelled. Later, the cellars were divided into two by a blocking wall, with the newly created western cellar accessed by a new staircase at its western end (1485). This may mark a change in ownership – the eastern cellar had its brick floors removed and a well (1040) inserted, whilst the floor in the western cellar was retained.

Other 19th century changes, mostly minor, included a series of lean-to structures and associated surfaces built in the courtyard to the north, further walls and a well associated with the public house to the south, and a pit (1261) dug close to the western edge of the site.

Much of the 19th century pottery assemblage was recovered from the material used to fill the barrel vaulted cellar, and includes tea wares (plates, cups and small bowls) as well as other items such as chamber pots, and a number of stoneware bottles amongst which are examples stamped by the Royal Brewery Company (1832–1923), the York Mineral Company (1909+), Gordon Jones Ltd of Twickenham (1890–8) and Alkuris Limited. Some of these could have been made by the local Fulham pottery (Green 1999, fig. 138, 416), while others are stamped with makers' marks as far afield as Derby.

A variety of glass bottles and drinking vessels was also recovered, from various contexts, most of the material dating to the late 18th–20th centuries. From the backfill of well 1040 came two complete bottles of cylindrical form, dating from the late 18th or early 19th century, along with a complete octagonal bottle of similar date. Six drinking vessels also came from this well, one with a trumpet bowl and plain stem, four with bucket bowls and knopped stems, and one surviving as a basal footring only, all likely to be of late 18th century date or later. These bottles and vessels are almost certain to derive from the public house (the *Poplar Inn* by 1867, see below) which occupied this part of the site from the 18th century or earlier. Some of the later bottles from machine clearance levels bore the marks of the Royal Brewery Company, the York Mineral Water Company

and Batey and Co. Ltd. Bottle forms (upright with screw tops, and 'Codd type forms) indicate a date from the 1880s into the early years of the 20th century.

Brentford in the early 19th century had a rapidly growing population, composed mostly of labourers in industry, fishing and market gardening. On the north side of the High Street were the shops and private houses, and on the south side the wharves and factories. From the 1830s onwards coaching traffic declined, which had a negative impact on the inns and shops of the town, adding further weight to its working-class character (Faulkner 1845, 162; Baker and Elrington 1982, 117). A copyhold house in the Hollows was sold by a coal merchant to a fisherman in 1804 (LMA Acc 1376/3). A cottage there was the home of a barge master in 1809 (LMA Acc 276/161).

Robert Tunstall leased out properties on both sides of the junction between the High Street and the Kew Bridge approach in the 1820s, including the *Star and Garter* on the east side and the *Waggon and Horses* to the north-west of the site. Tunstall also bought the old Ferry Lane ferry (Faulkner 1845, 163). By this time he was living on the south side of the river in Kew. On his death in December 1833 Robert Tunstall's freehold and copyhold property in Brentford descended to his great nephew John Haverfield, a lieutenant in the 43rd Regiment of Foot, including his wharf and lime kilns. The Haverfield family held the land around the Kew Bridge approach for the remainder of the century (CLSL: P F Ransby's Notes on the Tunstall family of Brentford; GL MS 12698; LMA Acc 638/251; TNA: PRO IR 29/21/13; PROB 11/1827 quire 54). There were still other Tunstalls in Old Brentford, where Thomas Tunstall was a cooper and beer retailer in 1834 (Pigot 1834, 890).

John Haverfield bought out the last of the tontine annuitants of Kew Bridge (LMA Acc 638/251). The bridge itself was purchased in June 1825 by George Robinson. He built a check clerk's house, a warehouse and other buildings on the west side of the bridge approach (LMA MA/D/BR/41).

The original *Waggon and Horses* was built of timber and plaster on a small strip of copyhold land on the south side of the High Street to the north-west of the site, evidently derived

from the manorial waste along the roadside. In 1828 Douglas and Henry Thompson, the owners of the inn, surrendered this to Robert Tunstall, and he leased it back to them. It was described as “old and decayed and of a mean class of building”. In 1840 John Haverfield leased to Douglas Thompson and his partner John Bird Fuller, brewers, a strip of freehold land behind the east part of the inn, 60ft (18.3m) wide and stretching back to the River Thames, to enable them to rebuild the inn in brick on a larger scale. This strip was on the west side of the site. The new inn was to have stables and outbuildings, and drains leading to the river. The reconstruction was accomplished by 1850, when the leases were held by Messrs Fuller, Smith and Turner. Haverfield added a lease of another small strip of freehold land on the west side of the new building in 1855. In 1864 he purchased the enfranchisement of the copyhold portion from the manor of Ealing (GL MSS 10465/143,387–8; 10465/179, 451; LMA Acc 891/2/5/10, 701, 702; Acc 891/2/6/197–8, 200, 202, 2187, 2192; Acc 891/2/10/1).

On the east side of the *Waggon and Horses*, the *Plough* public house existed as a beerhouse by 1853 (Clegg 2005, 78). To the east of this, beyond the north end of the excavation area, the house at no 22 Kew Bridge Road was occupied by Thomas Leyton, a local lighterman, corn dealer, coal merchant, and antiquarian collector (1819–1911) (Pigot 1834, 890; Cameron 1983, 66). It was held on lease from the Haverfields. The gardens of the house stretched down to the Thames in the western part of the site (LMA Acc 638/251; TNA: PRO IR 29/21/13 no 134a; see Fig. 8).

Documents indicate that the *Star and Garter* had a stable yard with stables and coach houses on the west side of the road in 1839, on the north part of the excavated area. There were three cottages at its eastern end, to the rears of which the excavated late 19th-century lean-to structures were probably added (TNA: PRO IR 29/21/13 nos 135, 136 and LMA Acc 891/2/5/687).

The Jupp family were operating a malthouse on the site 1826–7 and 1839 (CLSL Notes on Jupp family). The former stables were subsequently incorporated into the works (TNA: PRO IR 29/21/13 nos 137–9). The Jupps had malthouses to the east of Ferry Lane in Old Brentford as early as 1780, amongst other properties. They were the leading 19th-century maltsters of Brentford



(Baker and Elrington 1982, 143) and also acted as coal and corn merchants (Pigot 1834, 890). The malthouse on the site is labelled on a Thames panorama of c. 1829, although most of the buildings are hidden behind a riverside public house (GL Collage no 34492), and is shown on maps and plans of c. 1829–40 (LMA Acc 891/2/10), the tithe map of 1839 (TNA: PRO IR 30/21/13) (Fig. 8), and the Ordnance Survey maps of 1865 and 1871.

The public house to the south of the malthouse on the site was empty in 1839 (TNA: PRO IR 29/21/13 nos 140–1). It was called the *Poplar Inn* in 1867 and was popular with rowing clubs (Clegg 2005, 54). It appears on the Thames panorama of c 1829 with two two-storey bay windows flanking the doorway on the southern front, and the gables of north–south ranges on both its east and west sides, the east range of three storeys. A map of 1839 shows that a path ran from the malthouse down the western side of the public house to the riverside, with a pair of boat houses on its western side (Fig. 8).

In 1873 the trustees of George Robinson sold Kew Bridge, with its toll house, check house and gates at the north end in the parish of Ealing, to the Bridges Joint Committee of the Metropolitan Board of Works and Corporation of London for £57,300 (LMA MA/D/BR/41; MJ/SPB/814). A drinking fountain was built near the north end of the bridge in 1877, and became the focus of an open market, leading to much traffic congestion. A covered site for the market was provided to the north of the London road in 1893 (Baker and Elrington 1982, 118). On the west corner of Brentford High Street and the bridge approach, the property of Thomas Leyton was redeveloped after 1871 to centre on a large house with a bay window (LMA Acc 638/251; Ordnance Survey map 1894; CLSL 388).

The Jupps were planning to rebuild the Kew Bridge malthouse in 1877, and were still running it in 1899. For the rest of the century they also continued to trade as coal and corn merchants (Baker and Elrington 1982, 143; CLSL Notes on Jupp family). The cone of the malthouse can be seen behind the boathouses on a postcard view of Kew Bridge in c. 1905, and a

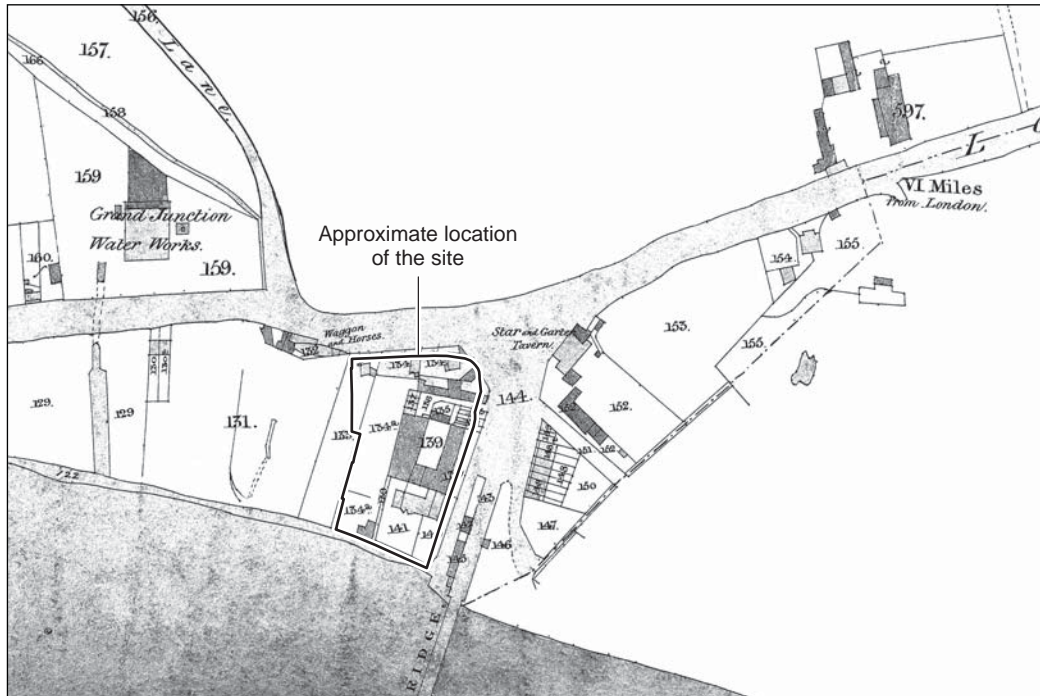


Figure 8. Tithe map of Ealing parish 1839 (from TNA: PRO IR 30/21/13) reproduced with permission The National Archives, Kew

photograph of the bridge approach (B & C 1978, cover). The malthouse buildings appear on the Ordnance Survey map of 1894 and a plan of the Kew Bridge approach in 1897.

## **20th century**

The excavations revealed few early 20th century additions to the malthouse complex – largely the insertion of modern drains and the blocking of one of the doorways within the vaulted cellar.

The Kew Bridge approach became a tram terminus in 1901. The third and present Kew Bridge was built in 1903 for the Middlesex and Surrey County Councils, to the design of Sir John Wolfe-Barry and Cuthbert Brereton (Baker and Elrington 1982, 104 and 118), and appears on a postcard view of *c.* 1905 (CLSL). The western corner of the road was trimmed back onto part of Leyton's property, to improve the approach to the bridge (CLSL 388; see Fig. 8).

Industry withdrew from Brentford during the early and mid-20th century, and its importance as a retail centre also declined (Baker and Elrington 1982, 139). On the site and surrounding area the story was one of progressive demolition and dereliction. The malthouse complex had been demolished by 1915 (Ordnance Survey map 1915), and. Leyton's house and its outbuildings were sold to the Royal Brewery of Brentford in 1919 and demolished in the mid-1920s (LMA Acc 638/251). The *Poplar Inn* to the south of the malthouse had been renamed the *Oxford and Cambridge Hotel* by 1877 (Clegg 2005, 54). Both the hotel and its boat houses appear on the postcard view of Kew Bridge in *c.* 1905 (CLSL), the southern range facing the river by now reduced to a single storey. The buildings also appear on the Ordnance Survey map of 1915, but the hotel closed in 1923 (Clegg 2005, 54), its boat houses surviving until the early 1930s, with the remainder of the site open and used as a timber yard (Ordnance Survey map 1935; CLSL aerial photograph). The *Waggon and Horses* was rebuilt in 1937–8 and still stands (Clegg 2005, 78), though the *Plough* was demolished in 2000. Kew Bridge House, a large concrete and brick office block was built on the site in the 1960s, but stood for less than 40 years and was demolished late in the 20th century.

## DISCUSSION

The excavations at Kew Bridge House have revealed remains of prehistoric activity on the north bank of the River Thames in the Early Neolithic and Late Bronze Age, late medieval or early post-medieval period field boundaries and evidence for the easterly expansion of Brentford and the increasing industrialisation of the area from the late 17th century onwards.

The small pit containing Early Neolithic ceramics and worked flint is most likely to represent a further instance of a tradition of deposition that is common across much of Britain during the 4th millennium BC. The repeated occurrence of selected parts of vessels (mostly or only rim and upper body sherds) in small pits or pit groups is widely recognised, although there is no general agreement as to its significance, specifically whether it represents domestic or ritual deposition. More recent excavations by Pre-Construct Archaeology approximately 250m to the west, between Kew Bridge Road and the Thames, revealed a palaeochannel, several large cut features possibly elements of a causewayed enclosure or ring ditch, as well as numerous pits and postholes. These produced a significant assemblage of Early Neolithic and a Late Mesolithic worked flint component, as well as Early Neolithic pottery. The survival of environmental remains was very poor, but the evidence as a whole is suggestive of ritual related activity on the bank of the Thames near its confluence with a small tributary. Divorced from any contemporary features on the floodplain and laying approximately 50m from the Thames foreshore, the material from Kew Bridge House cannot shed further light on this debate. It does, however, add to the sparse distribution of Early Neolithic ceramics from London, strengthening the existing associations of Early Neolithic activity and riverside environments as seen, for example, in the Lea Valley to the east (Powell 2012, 23–7 and 31) and Kingston to the west (Serjeantson *et al.* 1992).

The Late Bronze Age material points to domestic occupation in the vicinity of the site, although the small and abraded pottery sherds appear to be redeposited (or at least reworked) in the

alluvial (overbank flooding) deposit in which they were found. Nevertheless, the ditch of probable Bronze Age date on what would have been drier ground to the north provides evidence for land divisions on the floodplain. The mid–late second millennium saw extensive field systems established in the Middle–Lower Thames area, on both the terrace gravels and the floodplain, relating to a mixed farming economy. Thereafter, climatic deterioration and other factors lead to a decline or abandonment of settlement on the floodplain (Sidell *et al.* 2002, 52; MoL 2002, 24; Powell 2012, 61–4).

For much of the Iron Age, Roman, post-Roman and medieval periods the site appears to have not lay near to any settlement, five sherds of Romano-British pottery comprising the only finds from these two millennia.. Ditches dating to the late medieval or early post-medieval period, however, indicate the subsequent division of land to the east of Brentford, probably into arable fields for farming. Only small quantities of finds were recovered, suggesting these ditches lay some distance from contemporary settlement.

The earliest structure on the site is broadly contemporary with the first formalised river crossing at this point – the ferry crossing started in the mid-17th century – and may indeed have acted as an office or toll house. It was traffic to and from this ferry which is likely to have led to further development of the site and the surrounding area. From this time onwards, the history of the site is inextricably linked to the eastwards expansion of Brentford and its changing fortunes. Much of this 18th and 19th century development was associated with the industrial growth within the town, with malhouses, whilst breweries, lime kilns, wharves and warehouses lining the north bank of the Thames, taking advantage of the transport possibilities afforded by the river.

The construction of the first bridge in 1758–9 appears not to have altered the character of the site or surrounding area. The number of malhouses increased, and public houses continued to proliferate throughout the 19th century, with a malhouse and public house established within the site. Indeed, the industrial character of the area only changed with the widespread decline of industry within Brentford during the early 20th century, after which the buildings on the site were

progressively shut down, abandoned and cleared, until redevelopment in the 1960s with the construction of Kingston Bridge House. Such a pattern of post-medieval expansion and the growth of a similar range of riverside crafts, trades and industries can be seen elsewhere in west London, for example at Kingston upon Thames, to be followed by decline and regeneration (Andrews *et al.* 2002).

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### Abbreviations used in text

CLSL Chiswick Local Studies Library

GL Guildhall Library

LMA London Metropolitan Archives

TNA: Public Record Office (PRO) National Archives

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