

**United Kingdom Holocaust Memorial
and Learning Centre**

Environmental Statement (Volume 5)
Appendix I Site Investigation Report (2016)
December 2018



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1 Executive Summary

This report pertains to the site search undertaken by the United Kingdom Holocaust Memorial Foundation (UKHMF) in order to find and select a Central London site for a prominent and iconic National Memorial to the Holocaust.

Following ongoing discussions between the UKHMF, key stakeholders, interested parties and the UK Government to find the most prominent and striking location for the Memorial, on the 27th January 2016, the Prime Minister David Cameron announced, the Memorial was to be built on Victoria Tower Gardens beside Parliament. The Prime Minister stated that the Memorial would be:

"a permanent statement of our values as a nation" and something that would be visited "for generations to come".

This report is a combination of desktop Site Investigation works pertaining wholly to the proposed location of the Holocaust Memorial in Victoria Tower Gardens, Westminster.



1.2 Aim of the Report

The aim of this Site Investigation Report is to provide crucial information on the conditions of the site for the proposed Memorial. It is important that UKHMF understand as soon as possible any restrictions on development of the site due to ground conditions, buried services etc. This information will form part of the Project Brief for the design c

WYG has undertaken the following desktop investigations:

- Services investigations including utilities searches
- Contact with London Underground to establish location and depth of any tube lines and / or the location of any live or disused sewers
- Geotechnical investigations to understand previous uses of the site and likely contamination, flooding issues and ground conditions
- Investigations to understand likelihood of unexploded ordinance
- Review and investigation of survey information of the Parliamentary estate currently held by WYG



2 Background and Context

2.1 Overview

Seventy years on from the end of the Second World War and the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps by Allied forces, The Prime Minister, David Cameron, with cross-party support, established the United Kingdom Holocaust Memorial Foundation (UKHMF) in January 2015. The UKHMF's overarching remit is to ensure that Britain not only remembers the Holocaust in a correct and appropriate manner but to instil and educate across all generations the need to fight prejudice, hostility and persecution.

Following its establishment the UKHMF, drawing on results of a Call for Evidence, identified key gaps in Britain's current Holocaust commemoration and education¹.

One of the fundamental gaps identified was a "widespread dissatisfaction with the current national memorial in Hyde Park"². This, coupled with a further observations regarding ineffective Holocaust education, led the UKHMF to recommend:

- a) A new National Memorial in Central London, combined with
- b) A world-class Learning Centre

In September 2015, the UKHMF began the process of finding and acquiring a site by initiating a Central London site search. The Prime Minister's Holocaust Commission Report identified three sites in London and alongside this the UKHMF, supported by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG), ran a search that was open to the public to nominate a site or sites.

¹ Britain's Promise to Remember: The Prime Ministers Holocaust Commission Report

² Ibid

A Prime Ministerial announcement on the 27th January 2016 fixed the location of the National Memorial on a site within Victoria Tower Gardens, close to the Houses of Parliament and the seat of UK Government.

2.2 Technical Advice

Between January and February 2016, following an open tender run by the DCLG using the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) framework and form of contract, WYG Ltd were engaged to provide Technical Advisory Services to the UKHMF. This Site Investigation work forms part of that initial contract.

2.3 Technical Advisor Team

The Technical Advisory team consists of:

- Joanne Sullivan– Project Management
- Martin Brown – Heritage and Archaeology
- David Beck – Underground Utilities
- Cecilia Macleod –Geo Environmental

2.4 Format of Report

The following pages (5-8) contain extracts from the individual reports and mapping documents. These form the basis of the key findings, conclusions and recommendations. For further detail relating to the GeoEnvironmental, Archaeological & Heritage and the Underground Utilities information please see the following reports:

UKHMF – Desk Top Study – GeoEnv

UKHMF – Desk Top Study – Heritage Statement

UKHMF – Desk Top Study – M&E (Map)

3. Executive Summary of Findings

3.1 Context

All reports were compiled using baseline data that was either readily available in the public realm or procured via third party organisations. Furthermore the Geo Environmental report has been enhanced by a site walkover. No intrusive ground surveys have been undertaken at this stage.

3.2 Key Findings

The following is a list of key findings for the site

- A. There is an existing sewer running underneath the park, bisecting it between the Burghers of Calais and the Buxton Memorial. The sewer runs underneath Great Peter Street, through Victoria Tower Gardens, discharging into the Thames. Based on the information from Thames Water this is a storm drain, with dimensions of 1676x914mm. The plan also shows that the Invert Level (IL) – the lowest point of the pipe – is 5.78m. Therefore, we can say that the surface depth is approx 4.1m. However, we would recommend a Geo Physical survey to confirm the exact depth of the pipe.
- B. There are no existing Gas or HV/LV cables running beneath the Victoria Tower Gardens.
- C. Transport for London have confirmed that London Underground have no assets within 50 metre of Victoria Tower Gardens.
- D. Given the nature of the site and its history of development, the near surface soils are likely to comprise Made Ground. Made Ground can be made up of soils that have variable geotechnical properties and are difficult to characterise. The vertical and lateral extent of these soils will need to be established across the site to ensure that the foundation can be safely constructed to pass through them and bear upon more reliable undisturbed natural soils.
- E. Due to the man-made and naturally occurring geotechnical risks on site (Made Ground, Alluvium, underground sub-structures and groundwater), it is considered unlikely that shallow conventional foundations will be suitable and a piled foundation may need to be considered.

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- F. The site lies within an area considered to be at risk from extreme flooding by the Environmental Agency (flood risk Zone 3 - Rivers or Sea). However, as per most of Central London, the site is defended by the Thames Barrier system and therefore flooding is not considered a major risk.
- G. A preliminary Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) report indicates that the site has a category 3 rating, indicating a medium probability of UXO encounter.
- H. Aside from the Post-Medieval reclamation, there appears to be limited potential for previously unrecorded archaeological remains of Roman, Early Medieval, Medieval, Post-Medieval and Industrial date
- I. There is potential for foundations of buildings, yards and wharfs beneath the modern surface which relate to Victoria Tower Gardens use pre 19th Century and the improvements to the Embankment and the restoration of the Palace of Westminster.
- J. The significant number of listed buildings, up to and including Grade I, and the location of the site adjacent to a World Heritage site means that any potential structure within the gardens has potential to have an effect on the setting of both the WHS and the designated structures.
- K. The potential impact of any installation on the Outstanding Universal Values of the WHS, one of which relates to parliamentary democracy, must be considered. However, the nature of the Memorial may be considered to be complementary as most immediate listed structures are commemorative artworks within the Victoria Tower Gardens and relate to the campaign for female suffrage, the abolition of slavery and, in Rodin's *Burghers of Calais*, both Anglo-French alliance during the Great War and, crucially, civilians victims of conflict (Jones, 2010).
- L. As stated the nature of the existing monuments means that the concept of the proposed Memorial should not be problematic but its form and scale may still have potential to affect the setting of these pieces, especially in relation to the surrounding listed buildings.

3.3 Conclusion and Recommendations for Further Action

Based on the initial desktop investigations, the critical issue is the extent and depth of the storm drain that runs directly underneath UKHMF's preferred location for the Memorial within the demise of Victoria Tower Garden. Based on the current information available we believe the drain to be approx 4m below the surface. UKHMF should therefore consider:

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- Refining the area of land within Victoria Tower Gardens that is preferred for the Memorial, avoiding being directly over the drain;
- Ensuring that the design competition stipulates that any potential foundation for the Memorial does not reach down to the level of the drain; and/or
- Active liaison with Thames Water and Royal Parks to discuss possible re-routing through another section of Victoria Tower Gardens.

This information should be included as part of the design brief for the Memorial.

Other potential issues include unknown archaeology and the setting of the Memorial in the context of Listed Buildings and World Heritage Site. However, given the importance of the work, its high-profile nature and the context of the Memorial within the setting of Victoria Tower Gardens, we would suggest that these are not insurmountable and that they are readily resolvable with open dialogue of all interested parties and statutory bodies.

3.3.1 Recommendations

Based on the information contained within this report we would recommend the following actions / next steps:

- Commissioning of intrusive ground investigations in order to characterise and understand the ground conditions. The structural loads and the layout of the development footprint will primarily dictate pile lengths and diameters, however it is considered likely that embedment within the London Clay Formation will be required, and therefore site investigations will be required to characterise the engineering properties of the clay to inform pile design.
- Commissioning a Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) survey, primarily to understand the extent of the sewer and provide accurate data for the design commission.
- A secondary investigation using an electromagnetic scanner (EM-61) to look for buried metal. However, an EM survey could take up to 4 days and would require closure of the park, therefore we would suggest that this is undertaken immediately prior to construction to minimise disruption to the park.
- Initial liaison with Thames Water to discuss the storm drain as we would expect Thames Water to express concerns relating to any structure built over the top of it (fear of collapse, subsidence etc).



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The drain could be re-routed but this could be quite a substantial cost due to the size the drain, its IL depth and the geo-physical conditions of London Clay.

- During any intrusive Site Investigations, we would recommend having an archaeological presence to monitor any trial pits and report on any findings.
- Begin initial pre-application discussions with the local planning authority to understand the planning requirements. This information should be included within the Project Brief for the design to ensure all mandated requirements are met.