Identification of subterranean features
Listed buildings, structures and tunnels.
All the significant buildings at Seething Wells are ‘listed’: the Nuffield Pumping Station; and Chelsea and Lambeth coal stores; the attached tunnels and conduits; and perhaps even the suction wells are listed by default, no matter what their architectural merit. Steps were taken to remediate ‘listing oversights’ and applications were made to English Heritage (March, 2002). This included the Lambeth uncovered coalstore, associated tunnel beneath the Portsmouth Road and its demolished portal. This was granted August, 2002. Once the ‘water was tested’, applications were made (Jan, 2003) for inclusion in the statutory list *apropos*: Lambeth District offices and stores building (which sits atop the Lambeth Tunnel); the Lambeth Muniments Building and the small pumping station on the wharf.
Grade 11 listing was granted in October 2003 having been judged to be buildings of special historic interest. This did not include the small pumping station on the wharf as it …had been disfigured by the insertion of twentieth century doorways and too much inappropriate refurbishment had been carried out [sic]. It lacked the ‘group value’ afforded by buildings south eastern side of the Portsmouth Road although it remains a Building of Townscape merit. (BTM).
Lambeth Tunnel
The two coal tunnels either side of the conduit are therefore protected by their attachment to listed buildings. This was ruled on by the Inspector at the Sainsbury’s Public Inquiry although was too late for the Lambeth Tunnel Portal, partially demolished during the period between the Sainsbury’s Inquiry and 2000. This is located a few metres from the borough boundary, under an ever-growing cotoneaster bush, just outside the inner fencing. Contract drawings at Thames Waters HQ in Reading reveal limited detail on the subterranean features so perhaps one of the best journeys along the tunnel can be seen: [http://www.28dayslater.co.uk/forums/showthread.php?t=48194](http://www.28dayslater.co.uk/forums/showthread.php?t=48194)

The Cotoneaster can be seen here marking the Lambeth Tunnel Portal.
Journey along the Chelsea Tunnel
The Chelsea Tunnel was listed before the portal could be destroyed. Although now covered by thick vegetation it is possible to see through these pictures how the site would have looked (2002). Coal, sand, grit, shell would be loaded into hoppers on rails, to be man-propelled down the rake into the tunnels and under the road to the coalstores. Fig. 1 clearly shows the rake down to the Chelsea tunnel. There was consternation when the red pipe (Fig.2) was fitted without the appropriate permissions, across the listed tunnel although it is not known whether the Conservation Team ever carried out enforcement action.

Fig 3 below shows the breeze blocked portal, although one brick has always been loosened to allow bat access. It is thought that the brick has been entirely removed in recent years, although the dense vegetation across the portal now creates a barrier into the tunnel. This is perceived as an unfortunate limitation on the accuracy of the eagerly awaited Archaeological Assessment, 2011, which will accompany the ‘pre-development’ Environmental Impact Assessment. The tunnel has been blocked from the university side to prevent parties within the interior, on a serious note there is a danger of gas build up from this type of structure which must be treated as a confined space in terms of Health and Safety legislation.
The barge tunnel has no protection as it is not attached to a listed building and was not considered worthy of spot listing during the English Heritage Inspection (although it was never visited due to lack of access). Attempts were made (2010) to obtain listing for the entire site to achieve greater protection and recognition for the barge tunnel. The barge tunnel can only be entered cautiously by boat as there are a number of submerged hazards of the puncturing kind. At one time it was possible to alight the several steps from a boat and enter the site. A crane hoist still exists with the tunnel recesses and evidence of the iron plates which formed the crane base see Fig 5. For a detailed discussion on the transferring of materials from the Barge Tunnel to the Coal Stores refer to the work of Ron Howes (possibly *Hampton Waterworks and its Railway System*, by Ron Howes and Ann Grant (from Kew Bridge Steam Museum).
Intake pipes
Simplistically the intake conduit enters the wharf site from Filter Bed 1, traverses under the little pumping station and crosses the Portsmouth Road. It enters the main pumping station via large sluice gates situated at the road end of the Nuffield building (below).

Although demolition of subterranean structures requires planning permission the borough has signed an agreement giving permission to undertake maintenance in the winter. Thames Water made an application to demolish 24 deep suction wells and other subterranean features as part of the S106 agreement to accompany the last wharf application. (Costings by Lewin, Fryer and Partners Consultant engineers.)

The many underground structures, conduits, culverts, suction wells and the (BTM) Building of Townscape Merit etc within this site, stretching for ½ mile along the river are important in terms of their bat interest. ...........see next instalment.