



C261 ARCHAEOLOGY EARLY EAST

Summary Report

Archaeological Evaluation and Watching Briefs

Stepney Green Shaft (XRV10)

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1 Summary for London Archaeologist

Tower Hamlets

Stepney Green Shaft, Stepney Way and Garden Street, E1 TQ 3578 8164 MOLA (David Sankey, Robert Hartle, Sam Pfizenmaier) evaluation, watching brief Jul 2010–Feb 2011
Crossrail XRV10

Work was carried out on the Stepney Green Shaft and surrounding worksite. Natural gravels were overlain by brickearth, cut in one trench by several small, truncated and possibly natural features containing fragments of Late Bronze Age - Iron Age pottery. The brickearth was also cut in several trenches by substantial remains relating to the 16th-c Worcester House known to have occupied the site. This courtyard house (also known as 'King John's Tower' or 'Palace') was owned by Henry Somerset, 1st Marquess of Worcester during the 17th century. The earliest remains were from the brick gatehouse which may date to late 15th or 16th centuries, with evidence of 17th-c modifications. A range of rooms on the W of the site possibly dates to the 16th to 17th centuries, whilst a wall which appears to be part of the same structure is of 17th to 19th-c date. Remains on the E of the site include alterations using bricks of 17th-c type. A 16th to 17th-c brick footing for an apparent polygonal structure was recorded on the W side of Garden Street, although its function is unknown. A watching brief on a Thames Water sewer diversion at the N end of Garden Street also revealed brickearth cut by a substantial 16th-c wall which may relate to either a Tudor W wing of the house or a perimeter garden wall. Although a 17th-c meeting house is documented on the S part of the site, no remains were found; it may have lain outside the evaluation area or been removed by later activity. Although an 18th-c red brick wall was recorded E of Garden Street and a row of possible planting holes for fruit trees were observed in the central area, the majority of later remains were of 19th-c date. These consisted of the remains of the Congregational Church and the associated Congregational School and buildings on the W side of Garden Street which included a small paved internal courtyard (which had previously had a small well), cess pits, a post hole and a rubbish pit with a clinker fill suggesting local industrial activity. On the E side of Garden Street, a brick wall relating to the use of Worcester House as a Baptist college (1810–1855) was recorded, together with a line of regularly spaced cess pits containing finds of contemporary date. Monitoring of a water pipe trench located S of Stepney City Farm also revealed foundations of the 19th-c Congregational Church and remains of 20th-c buildings whilst monitoring of groundworks and the excavation of a new 'pig wallow' at Stepney City Farm exposed a 20th-c wall beneath the modern concrete slab.

2 Summary for Britannia

Not required

3 Summary for Medieval Archaeology

Not required

4 Summary for Post Medieval Archaeology

TOWER HAMLETS

STEPNEY GREEN SHAFT (TQ 35780 81640) An evaluation undertaken by D Sankey and three watching briefs undertaken by R Hartle and S Pfizenmaier revealed substantial remains relating to the 16th-century Worcester House which is known to have occupied the site. The earliest remains were from the 16th-century, or possibly late 15th-century, brick gatehouse, which also shows signs of modifications made during the 17th century. A range of possible 16th–17th-century rooms were revealed on the W of the site and a later wall of 17th–19th-century date. Remains on the E of the site include alterations using bricks of 17th-century type. A brick footing for what appears to be a polygonal structure of unknown function was recorded on the W side of Garden Street. A substantial 16th-century wall which may relate to either a Tudor west wing of the house or a perimeter garden wall was revealed during a watching brief. An 18th-century red brick wall was recorded E of Garden Street, and a row of possible planting holes for fruit trees were observed in the central area. Remains dating to the 19th-century date include the evidence of the Congregational Church and Congregational School, and a small paved internal courtyard, cess pits, a post hole and a rubbish pit with a clinker fill suggesting local industrial activity. Also found were a brick wall relating to the use of Worcester House as a Baptist college (1810–1855), together with a line of regularly spaced cess pits containing finds of contemporary date.

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