

WHITEHALL WOOD, AVELEY ROAD, UPMINSTER

A post-excavation assessment

Site Code UP-WW82

Julian Hill

Contents

1	Introduction	239
1.1	Site location	239
1.2	The scope of the project	239
1.3	Circumstances and dates of fieldwork	239
1.4	Organisation of the report	239
2	Historical and archaeological background	241
2.1	Geology and topography	241
2.2	Archaeological background	241
3	Original research aims	242
3.1	Potential research themes	242
3.1.1	<i>General</i>	242
3.1.2	<i>Ceramic and finds</i>	243
3.1.3	<i>Palaeolithic and Mesolithic</i>	243
3.1.4	<i>Bronze Age</i>	243
3.1.5	<i>Late Iron Age-Roman transition</i>	243
3.1.6	<i>Roman</i>	243
3.1.7	<i>Medieval and post-medieval</i>	244
3.2	Summary	244
4	Site sequence: interim statement on field work	245
4.1	Natural and topography	245
4.2	Late Bronze Age (1000 – 700 BC) and Late bronze Age/Early Iron Age (800 – 500 BC)	245
4.3	Late Iron Age/Roman (50 BC – 400 AD)	245
4.4	Saxon (AD 400 – 1050)	246
4.5	Post-medieval	246

5	Quantification and assessment	247
5.1	Post-excavation review	247
5.1.1	<i>Completed tasks</i>	247
5.1.2	<i>Problems with the archive and the assessment</i>	247
5.2	Provisional post-assessment task list	248
5.3	The site archive and assessment: stratigraphic	249
5.4	Site archive and assessment : finds and environmental	249
5.4.1	<i>The building material</i>	250
5.4.2	<i>Worked flint</i>	251
5.4.3	<i>The prehistoric pottery</i>	251
5.4.4	<i>The Late Iron Age and Roman pottery</i>	253
5.4.5	<i>Saxon pottery (c 400–1050)</i>	254
5.4.6	<i>Medieval pottery (c 1050–1500)</i>	255
5.4.7	<i>Post-medieval pottery (c 1500–1900)</i>	255
5.4.8	<i>The accessioned finds</i>	255
5.4.9	<i>The animal bone</i>	256
5.4.10	<i>Conservation</i>	257
6	Potential of the data	259
6.1	Realisation of the original research aims	259
6.1.1	<i>General</i>	259
6.1.2	<i>Ceramic and finds</i>	259
6.1.3	<i>Paleolithic and Mesolithic</i>	259
6.1.4	<i>Bronze Age</i>	259
6.1.5	<i>Late Iron Age – Roman transition</i>	259
6.1.6	<i>Roman</i>	259
6.1.7	<i>Medieval and post-medieval</i>	259
6.2	General discussion of potential	260

6.2.1	<i>Paleolithic/Mesolithic/Neolithic</i>	260
6.2.2	<i>Late Bronze Age/early Iron Age</i>	260
6.2.3	<i>mid/late Iron Age and Roman</i>	260
6.2.4	<i>Saxon</i>	260
6.2.5	<i>Medieval and post-medieval</i>	260
7	Significance of the data	261
7.1	Local	261
7.2	Regional	261

Figures

- Fig 1 Site location: Whitehall Wood
- Fig 2 Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age activity (1000 – 300 BC) at Whitehall Wood
- Fig 3 Late Iron Age and Roman activity (50 BC – AD 400) at Whitehall Wood
- Fig 4 Early/Middle Saxon activity (AD 450 – 750) at Whitehall Wood

Tables

Table 1 Stratigraphic archive	249
Table 2 Finds and environmental archive general summary	249
Table 3 Building material	250
Table 4 Prehistoric pottery quantification by weight	252
Table 5 Prehistoric pottery quantification by sherd count	252
Table 6 Summary of the accessioned finds by material and period	256
Table 7 Summary of conservation work	257

1 Introduction

1.1 Site location

The site is located by Whitehall Wood, Aveley Road, Upminster in the London Borough of Havering. The approximate centre of the site lies at NGR 55707 18253

Fig 1 Site location: Whitehall Wood

1.2 The scope of the project

The excavations at Whitehall Wood, Upminster recorded activity or artefacts dating from the late Bronze Age, the early, mid and late Iron Age, and the early and late Roman period, as well as debris from a nearby post-medieval brick kiln, although occupation was not necessarily continuous. The assessment of the site itself is confined to immediate vicinity. However, the site forms a part of a broader project – ‘Understanding East London Gravels’ (Project Design MoLAS 2002) – which encompasses sites stretching from Ilford to Upminster.

The Post-excavation assessment and updated project design report is defined in the relevant GLAAS guidance paper (Paper VI) as intended to ‘sum up what is already known and what further work will be required to reach the goal of a well-argued presentation of the results of recording and analysis’ (VI/1).

The principle underlying the concept of post-excavation assessment and updated project design were established by English Heritage in the Management of Archaeological Projects 2 (MAP2), (1991). More recent GLAAS guidance has emphasised the need for this stage to be seen as ‘brief and transitional’, the document acting as a ‘gateway’ to further analysis and eventual publication (EH, GLAAS, 1999 VI/1)

1.3 Circumstances and dates of fieldwork

The site was originally identified from cropmarks recorded by aerial photography in 1976. It was excavated in 1982-3 by the Passmore Edwards Museum, under the direction of Pamela Greenwood, under rescue conditions in advance of gravel extraction. Funding was provided by the GLC.

1.4 Organisation of the report

This report is organised into nine main sections. Section 2 briefly presents the topographic, historical and archaeological background context for the project. Section 3 reiterates the research themes outlined in the original project design for ‘Understanding the East London Gravels’. In section 4 the results of the assessment of the stratigraphic record are presented on a period by period basis. Section 5 contains

the assessments of finds assemblages and their quantification. Section 6 will examine the potential of the data discussed in sections 4 and 5 to answer the research questions outlined in section 3, whilst section 7 will provide a brief synthesis of the site data outlining its significance. The Updated Project Design (Sections 8 to 10) have been compiled as a single, project-wide document and is bound separately.

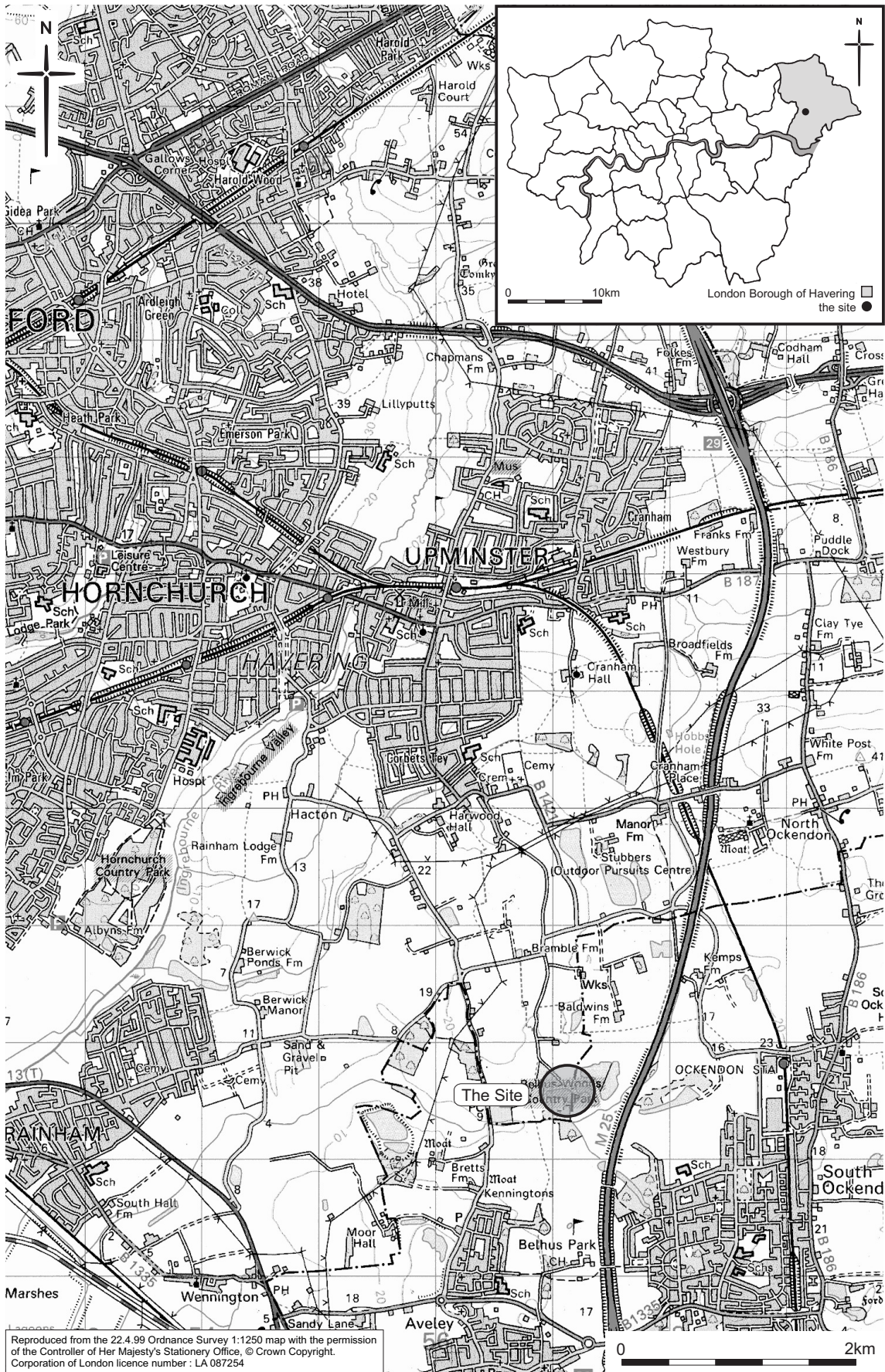


Fig 1 Site location: Whitehall Wood

2 Historical and archaeological background

2.1 Geology and topography

The site is situated on the Lynch Hill/Corbets Tey Thames Terrace Gravels at c 15.0m OD. The gravels are overlain by subsoil and topsoil.

2.2 Archaeological background

Only about 435m separates the site at Whitehall Wood from the site to the northwest at Hunts Hill (UP-HH89), excavated in 1989-97, and the two clearly should be considered together. The main periods of activity at the two sites appear to be broadly similar and to concentrate on the late-Bronze Age/Iron Age transition, and the early/mid Saxon.

By the late Bronze Age there appears to be a marked increase in activity in the area with probable occupation, burial and industrial activity at sites at Linford near Mucking, and Moor Hall Farm, as well as occasional findspots. Evidence of the Iron Age is known from such sites as Manor Farm, Great Sunnings Farm, Belhus Park, Orsett and Arndale School.

There is ample evidence from pottery finds, the known alignments of Roman roads, cremations and interments to infer relatively dense occupation in this part of the Thames valley in the Roman period.

Saxon activity has been recorded at Gerpin's Pit, Arndale School and possibly Whitehall Wood. It is also evident from the numerous Saxon place names in the area such as Rainham and Dagenham.

3 Original research aims

The site was excavated under rescue conditions. All subsequent research is undertaken within the priorities established in the Museum of London's A research framework for London Archaeology, 2002. Research aims and priorities follow the outlines in *Management of Archaeological Projects 2 (MAP2)*, *English Heritage London Division Guidelines Paper 3*.

Additionally, the project design (MoLAS 2002) highlighted a series of 'potential' research themes, or original research aims. These have been paraphrased below. They refer to the East London Landscape project as a whole rather than to Whitehall Wood, Upminster specifically.

3.1 Potential research themes

The sites in this project have the potential to illustrate the landscape development on the gravel terraces of the East London area by establishing certain fundamental details of that landscape such as aspects of its architecture and the nature of specific activities seen through their resultant archaeological residues. The project will therefore establish a considerable amount of detail of acts of inhabitation for all periods. This will allow broad discussion of cultural themes concerning the development of a settled landscape and farming practises in the estuarine Thames from the 3rd millennium BC to the 17th/18th century.

The following research aims have been crystallised from a number of broad themes which run through each of the site objectives. These questions have been formulated into a series of larger questions focusing on the most promising (in terms of potential) elements of the sites and their datasets.

For the purposes of this assessment the author these Aims have been regrouped whilst retaining the original numbering used in the project design document (MoLAS 2002).

3.1.1 General

- Aim 1: In co-operation with other relevant agencies to establish limits to a future study area which will address an emerging research agenda for prehistoric and Romano-British activity in East London (English Heritage 1997, 56 (L4) and 60 (MTD11)).
- Aim 5: To collate and present the evidence for the ritual or ceremonial activities, and to propose a framework for their development (English Heritage 1997, 44 (PC3)).
- Aim 11: To recreate landscapes from historical, archaeological, ecological and topographical data, interpret partitioning, alignments and territory and chart the way successive societies used and transformed the landscape. To demonstrate the extent to which natural and man-made features influenced

later land use and settlement patterns in the study area, and in the wider regional context (English Heritage 1997, 56 (L4)).

3.1.2 Ceramic and finds

- Aim 2: In co-operation with other agencies to establish a means of ensuring that prehistoric ceramics and lithics recovered from the sites in the project can be assessed and referenced in a commonly agreed and accepted manner.
- Aim 3: In co-operation with other agencies to achieve an understanding of the relationship between the pottery fabrics and forms from the Neolithic through to the Iron Age-Roman transition. The absence of a clear chronological framework for the Iron Age in Essex has been a barrier to understanding regional social and economic processes (Bryant 2000, 14). The project team will establish a regional pottery sequence supported, where possible, by absolute dates (Nixon *et al* 2002, 19–20, English Heritage 1997, 55 (L3)).

3.1.3 Palaeolithic and Mesolithic

- Aim 4: To report on the few finds and features of Palaeolithic and Mesolithic date from the sites in this project, and to relate them to known activity in the locality.

3.1.4 Bronze Age

- Aim 6: To examine the evidence for the transformation from a ceremonial landscape to an enclosed agrarian landscape with increasingly long-lived patterns of settlement during the late 2nd and 1st millennium BC (Nixon *et al* 2002, 21).
- Aim 7: To explore the further changes taking place in the agricultural landscape during the 1st millennium BC and the appearance of nucleated settlements in the study area in the late 1st millennium BC and to analyse the associated activity traces (Nixon *et al* 2002, 21, English Heritage 1997, 48 (P8)).

3.1.5 Late Iron Age-Roman transition

- Aim 8: To examine and interpret the evidence for the Late Iron Age-Roman transition. In particular to understand the rate, scale and causes of change (Haselgrove *et al* 2001, English Heritage 1997, 44 (PC4)).

3.1.6 Roman

- Aim 9: To characterise the nature of Roman hinterland occupation, to determine its links with the pre-existing landscape and the wider world, and to explore the nature of activities, chronology and reasons for the changes in land use apparent between the early and later Roman periods (Nixon *et al* 2002, 24–5 and 36–7). To examine critically the notion that a decline in or change of land use occurred in the study area between the middle of the 2nd century AD and the end of the 3rd century AD.

3.1.7 *Medieval and post-medieval*

- Aim 10: To characterise the post-Roman development of the East London landscape identifying foci of activity in chronological and spatial terms (English Heritage 1997, 44 (PC5), Nixon *et al* 2002, 38–9).

3.2 Summary

The potential of the project has been considered at four levels:

- The potential to reconstruct the architectural settings and types of occupation and activities which occurred within the evolving landscape of what is now East London.
- The potential that constructional and depositional evidence, and environmental evidence have to expand current understanding of the particular research themes, within regional (and national) prehistoric and Roman and later studies.
- The potential that the selected multi-site dataset has to contribute to the regional model of changing landscapes.

The information that already exists in the form of interim reports, partially completed analysis reports and previous assessment work provides a substantial knowledge-base upon which to build. However, significant gaps remain, so a targeted selection of tasks needed to assess the potential of the archive have been formulated.

4 Site sequence: interim statement on field work

The site has not been sub-grouped and all references are at context level.

The discussion of the site sequence by chronological period which follows is informed by the fact that all of the prehistoric, Late Iron Age, Roman and Saxon pottery has been assessed. However, much of these assemblages was undiagnostic and only broadly datable.

The assessment has avoided conjecture where possible and has generally only included securely dated material within the provisional phase plans. As a result these plans may differ from those previously suggested by the excavators.

4.1 Natural and topography

The natural substrata comprise Thames gravels at c 15.0m OD.

4.2 Late Bronze Age (1000 – 700 BC) and Late bronze Age/Early Iron Age (800 – 500 BC)

There is little evidence of occupation before the late Bronze Age. The evidence for late Bronze Age occupation is provided by the worked flint, the vast majority of which was characteristic of Late Bronze Age technology. The location of the flints have not been incorporated within the figures. There is just one group of feature sherds from [441] (a fill of [10030]), a decorated everted rim coarseware jar, that is likely to be Late Bronze Age. In general dating tends more to the Late/Bronze Age/Early Iron Age transition. Activity of this period may be associated with the creation of field boundaries but this is unclear and some, at least of the pottery of this period was found in linear ditch [10003], which also contained late Iron Age/Romano-British pottery.

Fig 2 Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age activity (1000 – 300 BC) at Whitehall Wood

4.3 Late Iron Age/Roman (50 BC – 400 AD)

It was difficult to derive precise dating from the pottery assemblage, which appears to represent an unstructured scatter across the site. Consequently it is difficult to determine whether the rectilinear system of boundary ditches (such as [10003]) dates to this period or is an earlier landscape feature that was retained in use.

Fig 3 Late Iron Age and Roman activity (50 BC – AD 400) at Whitehall Wood

4.4 Saxon (AD 400 – 1050)

Dating is also problematic for the Saxon pottery, but it is most likely to date to the later 6th or 7th centuries; though the 8th century is also possible. The Saxon pottery was concentrated on the eastern side of the site.

Fig 4 Early/Middle Saxon activity (AD 450 – 750) at Whitehall Wood

4.5 Post-medieval

The majority of the building material related to the use of an adjacent brick kiln.

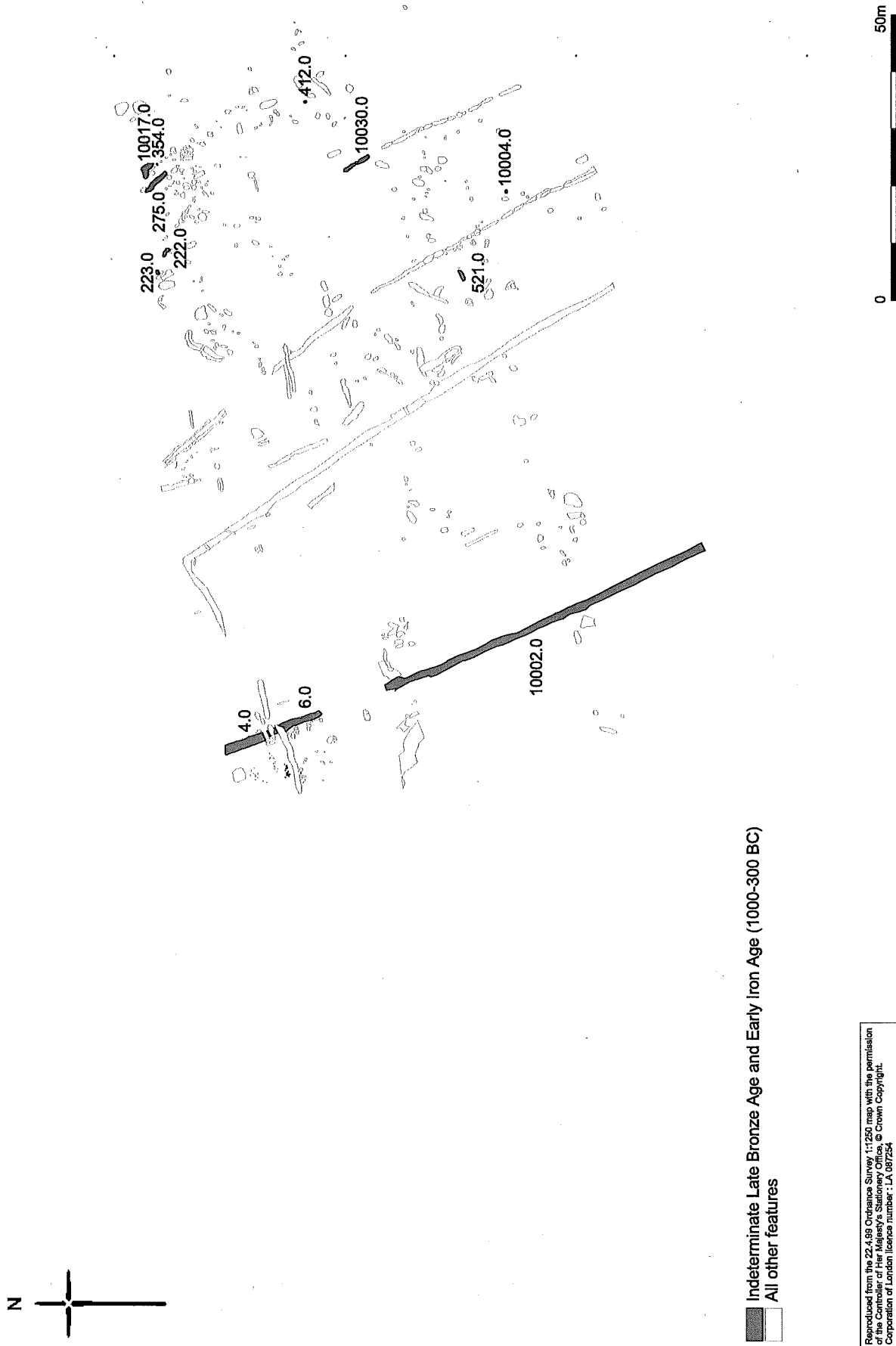


Fig 2 Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age activity (1000 - 300 BC) at Whitehall Wood

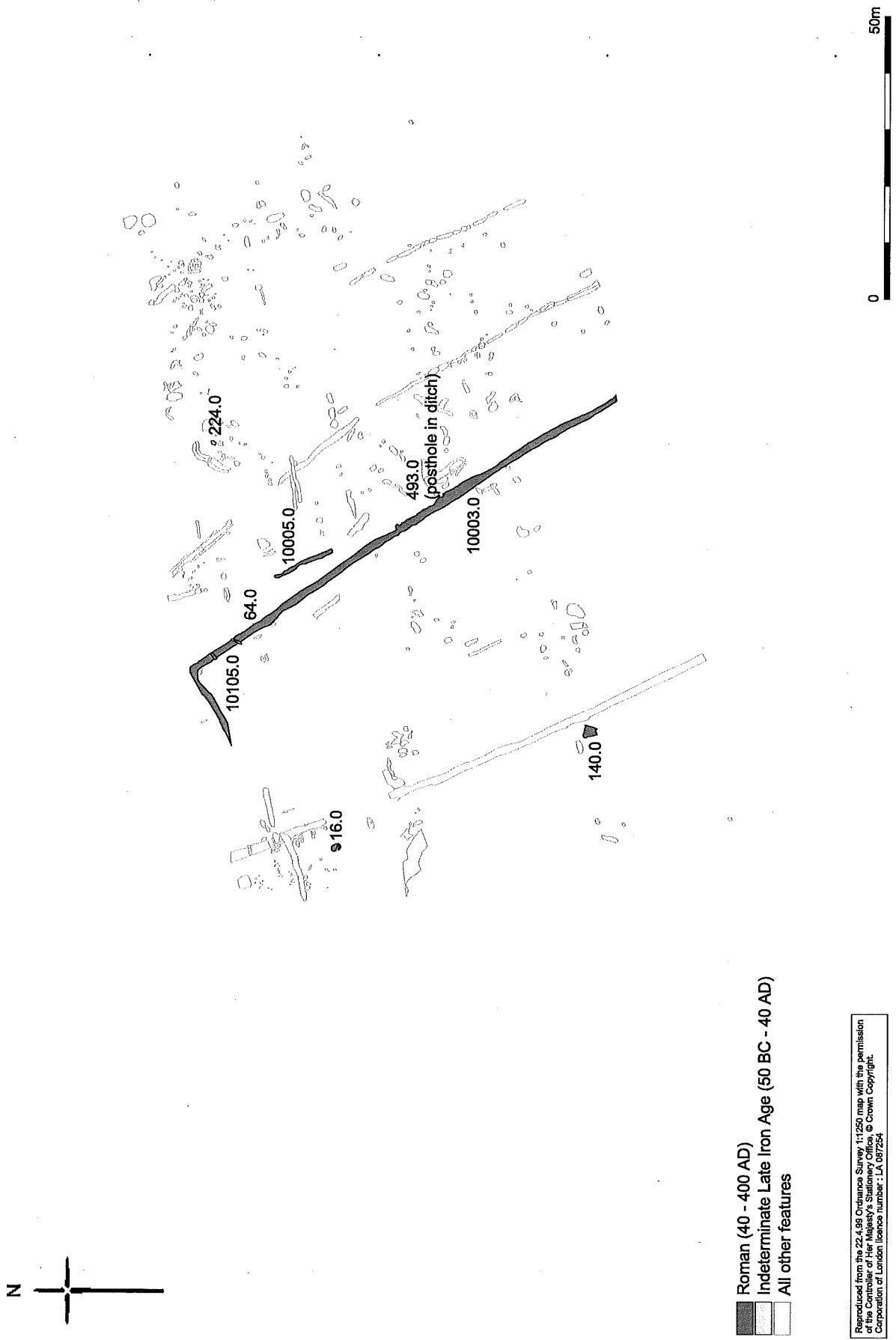


Fig 3 Late Iron Age and Roman activity (50 BC - AD 400) at Whitehall Wood



Fig 4 Early/Middle Saxon activity (AD 450 - 750) at Whitehall Wood

5 Quantification and assessment

5.1 Post-excavation review

5.1.1 Completed tasks

This section lists the tasks completed so far prior to authorship of the post excavation assessment.

- Context sheets checked
- Context information entered into ORACLE database
- All located contexts are digitised as single contexts in AutoCAD, data extracted from multi-context plans at variously 1:20 and 1:100.
- Arcview GIS project generated of digitised contexts
- Linkage of ORACLE spot-dating to Arcview project
- Integration of MoLAS and other specialist reports

5.1.2 Problems with the archive and the assessment

Some of the principal problems encountered include

- Contextual relationships between features had not always been finalised, for instance it had not always been recorded whether a feature(s) was earlier, later or contemporary to another feature(s), but a physical relationship(s) was recorded. Hopefully these issues have been cleared up in most cases by clear dating evidence.
- The absence of an accurate site location survey. The digitised plan information has been located in GIS to the best of current knowledge by using modern boundaries marked on the Ordnance Survey and locating the site as a best fit within them. There is some scope for slight modification of the site location but this is likely to be in the range of 1 – 5 metres.
- The difficulty of locating features on multi-context plans.

The original contexts were numbered 1–587 and 1000–1021. Feature numbers were widely employed. In this system a cut and its fill were given the same number. This has been left unchanged where possible, but obviously caused problems in features with more than one fill. In these situations the additional contexted fills were sandwiched within a number that denoted both the top fill that sealed them and the cut that contained them. Additional contexts 10001-10044 to act as the cuts in these circumstances, creating a total of 653 contexts in Oracle, under code UP-WW82, of which 469 are digitized (which including fills accounts for 586 of the site contexts). Of the remaining 67 undigitised contexts 36 were void, unlocated, unexcavated, ephemeral or features such as furrows or root action. Twenty features (which including fills account for the remaining 31 contexts) require digitization, although

not all can necessarily be located. These are [76], [77], [78], [138], [158], [1893], [197], [214], [260], [383], [397], [444], [565], [1003], [1004], [1005], [1019], [1020], [10013] and [10020].

No matrix dataset has yet been entered for this site, partly because the absence of apparent depth of phasing suggested that one might be a priority for this phase of work. Nor has any provisional phasing been entered with the Oracle inputting as the site is best treated as subsidiary to whatever phasing is defined for Hunt's Hill.

5.2 Provisional post-assessment task list

Below is a list of some of the main tasks that need to be addressed at the next stage of analysis, leading to publication.

- The following contexts require digitisation
- Final site context matrix to be compiled
- Context matrices to be established on BONN Harris matrix software
- Photographs to be indexed in ExCel
- Complete digitisation of section locations/creation of parent context locations for strata recorded in section only
- Complete the attribution of context numbers to sections
- Arcview GIS project generated from all digitised contexts
- Creation of subgroups
- Inputting of context to subgroup mapping in Oracle database
- Sub-group annotation of context matrices
- Reloading of context level .lst file into BONN to generate functioning matrix
- Compilation of sub-group matrices in BONN/ArchEd
- Apply dating evidence to sub-group matrices
- Establish group structure and compile group descriptive text; compile group matrices
- Map subgroup to group data into ORACLE database
- Establish landuse sequence and diagrams and compile landuse descriptive text
- Map group to landuse data into ORACLE database
- Establish periods; map period data into ORACLE database
- Establish period and/or phase driven plans using Arcview GIS linked with ORACLE completed dataset
- Principal author reading of MoL and other specialist publication reports
- Assessment of proximate sites data
- Establish final period and/or phase driven plans using Arcview GIS linked with ORACLE completed dataset

- Authorship of stratigraphic period text
- Finds review to finalize illustration and photography lists
- Full integration of all MoL and other specialist reports into stratigraphic text
- Prepare and submit stratigraphic, finds and environmental material to archive

5.3 The site archive and assessment: stratigraphic

Type	Description	Quantity	Notes
Context sheets	Excavation	608	Single context sheets
Plans	1:20/1:100 variously sized permatrace sheets	81	Multi-context plans and tachymetry survey
Sections	1:10, 1:20	45	
Miscellaneous		Not quantified	Notebooks, correspondence, project designs, finance documents, planning documentation, plans and summaries etc
Photographs	Colour prints	Not quantified	
Colour slides	Slides plastic folders	about 500	No digital index
BW slides	Slides plastic folders	about 325	No digital index
Aerial photographs	Cropmark photos	Not quantified	NMR Aerial photographs

Table 1 Stratigraphic archive

5.4 Site archive and assessment : finds and environmental

Building material	3 boxes of which 2 recorded. All building material retained. Current total 0.97kg
Worked flint	207 items, 2.963kg
Prehistoric pottery	125 sherds. Total 0.418kg
LIA/Roman pottery	37 sherds Total 0.169kg
Saxon and medieval pottery	52 Saxon sherds, weighing 0.329kg, from an estimated 21 vessels, medieval not recorded
Post-medieval pottery	Not recorded
Accessioned finds	4
Animal Bone	3 fragments, 0.010kg ,1 archive quality 'shoebox'
Conservation	None

Table 2 Finds and environmental archive general summary

5.4.1 *The building material*

Ian Betts

5.4.1.1 *Introduction/methodology*

The sampled building material has been recorded using the standard recording forms used by the Museum of London. This has involved fabric analysis undertaken with a x10 binocular microscope. The information on the recording forms has been added to an Oracle database.

Material	Count	Count as % of total	Weight (kg)	Weight as % of total
Stone	8	17	0.018	1.9
Roman ceramic	6	13	0.210	21.7
Post-med ceramic**	34	71	0.740	76.5
Total	48		0.97	

Table 3 Building material

5.4.1.2 *Roman ceramic building material*

5.4.1.2.1 FABRICS

Late Roman fabrics

2459B

5.4.1.2.2 FORMS

Brick

A brick measuring 29-31mm in thickness was found in context [3].

5.4.1.3 *Post-medieval stone building material*

Roofing

Slate roofing, probably 19th century in date, was found unstratified ([+]) and in context [2]. The former is purple in colour, the later has both purple and grey types.

5.4.1.4 *Post-medieval ceramic building material*

5.4.1.4.1 FABRICS

Later fabrics

2275, 3202, 3203

Undated fabrics

2276, 3215

5.4.1.4.2 FORMS

Roofing tile

Peg tile

Late medieval – post-medieval peg tile in fabric 2276 was found in various areas of context [2].

Pantile

Pantile in a variety of fabric types (2275, 3202, 3203) was found in context [2]. These are probably 18th-19th century in date.

Red brick

A very small fragment of what is probably post-medieval brick in fabric 3215 was found in context [2].

5.4.2 Worked flint

Lynne Bevan

5.4.2.1 Summary/Introduction

All of the worked flint from this site has been assessed and quantified by number and weight. Recording of the data was difficult, due to the original recording system used, in which feature/layer and grid numbers were used instead of context numbers. The flints were identified according to tool or waste type and, where possible, assigned a general date. Utilisation and re-fits were noted. The flints were weighed by context (or other) group for inputting into the MoLAS database.

5.4.2.2 Discussion

A high proportion of the flint originally collected was found to comprise unworked chunks and pebbles, often water-rolled and broken by thermal, or other natural, agency. The vast majority of the remaining worked flint, 207 items, weighing 2.963kg, comprised large rough chunks and flake cores characteristic of Late Bronze Age technology, and often of poor quality. Flint colours ranged from light to medium brown and grey, often tinged with yellow. The unpredictable quality and, where present, thin remnant cortex, indicated that most, if not all, of the flint originated from a secondary, probably river gravel, source.

No formal tools and few retouched items were noted, which is also suggestive of a Late Bronze Age date (Herne 1991), or possibly even an Early Iron Age date (Humphrey and Young 2003). The assemblage was comparable to similar material from the much larger assemblage recovered from the Late Bronze Age riverside zone at Runnymede Bridge, Egham, Surrey (Bevan forthcoming).

Evidence for re-fitting in the collection was limited to three flakes from a large flake core of a distinctive speckled brown flint of a superior quality to the rest of the collection and of probable Late Bronze Age date (F77). A large flake core of probable Bronze Age date was also recovered from F77.

Traces of possible utilisation were noted on some of the material, although much of the unretouched flakes and other debitage appears to have sustained edge damage which is easily confused with utilisation.

5.4.3 The prehistoric pottery

Charlotte Thompson

5.4.3.1 Summary/Introduction

All of the prehistoric pottery from this, the smallest site assemblage in the East London Gravels project, has been assessed. It has been particularly difficult to record the data as the sherds have been assigned a varying assortment of feature, layer and grid numbers. Where possible, the pottery has been recorded by feature/layer numbers, which are being used as context numbers. However, there are 14 'contexts' which are marked with a grid reference only or have been assigned multiple feature numbers. These have therefore been recorded as unstratified.

The site assemblage was recorded according to the guidelines set out by the Prehistoric Ceramics Research Group (PCRG 1995). The sherds were examined with a x20 binocular microscope and recorded by fabric form and decoration where appropriate. The pottery was also quantified by sherd count and weight.

5.4.3.2 Fabrics

All of the sites in the East London Gravels project have been recorded using a single typology that has been created during the assessment phase of the project. This typology can be found in the global assessment for prehistoric pottery.

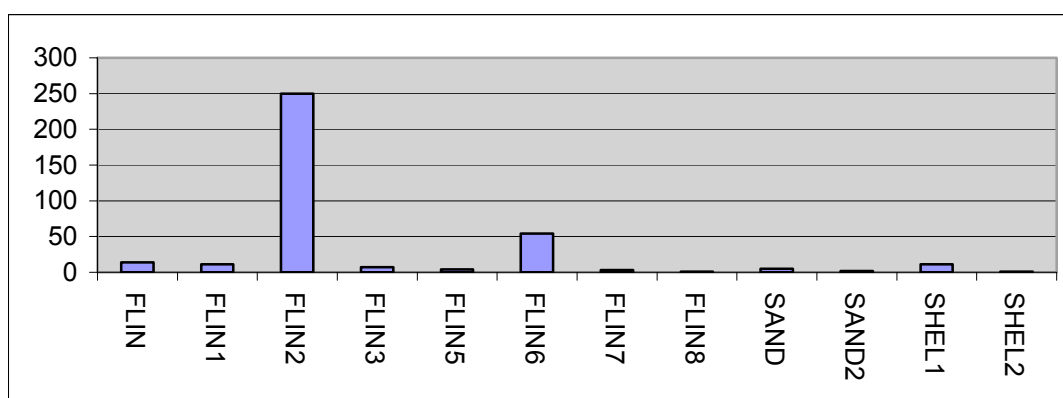


Table 4 Prehistoric pottery quantification by weight

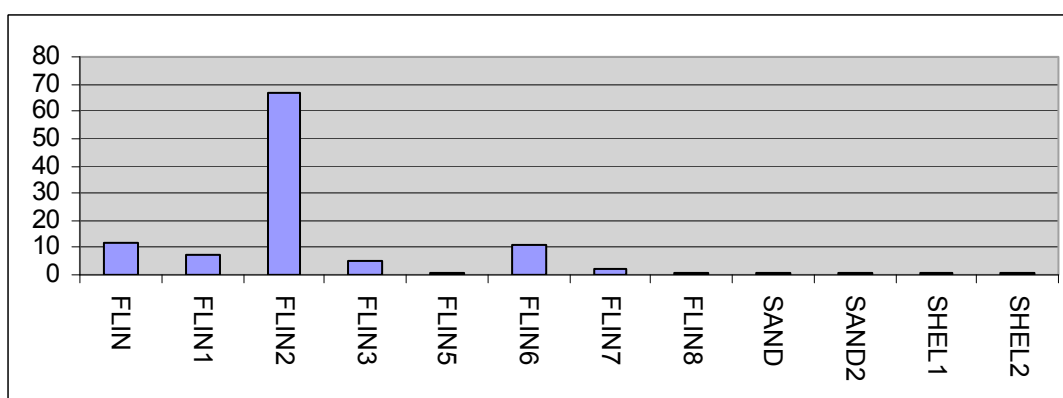


Table 5 Prehistoric pottery quantification by sherd count

Flint-tempered wares, particularly FLIN2, dominate this site assemblage, accounting for 95% of the fabrics. Sand-tempered wares make up fewer than 2% by both weight and sherd count, and shell-tempered sherds account for no real greater proportion than sand-tempered sherds.

5.4.3.3 *Forms and decoration*

This is the smallest site assemblage in the East London Gravels project and there is just one group of feature sherds in the entire assemblage, in context [441]. Almost all of the 49 sherds in the assemblage are likely to belong to a single vessel, an everted rim coarseware jar with notches on the rim and possible stabbed decoration at the top of the rounded body, decorative traits that are paralleled in the Late Bronze Age assemblage at North Shoebury (Brown 1995, 81).

5.4.3.4 *Discussion*

As mentioned, this recording of the site assemblage has been problematical, as the site does not appear to have been excavated using context numbers. Added to this, the 'contexts' are all small. Discounting the unstratified sherds, the mean average is six sherds per context, and eight contexts contain a single sherd.

As noted, there is just one group of feature sherds from [441], a decorated everted rim coarseware jar that is likely to be Late Bronze Age. However, a broad Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age date has been assigned to this site assemblage, and refining the dating for contexts is unlikely as it would be heavily reliant upon small proportional changes of temper in the fabrics. Whilst it is generally accepted that fabrics become less flint-tempered and more sand-tempered as the Iron Age progresses, as prehistoric pottery is made by hand it is unlikely that changes in proportions of temper occurred in a linear and standardised way.

5.4.4 *The Late Iron Age and Roman pottery*

Joyce Compton ECC FAU

5.4.4.1 *Introduction/methodology*

LIA/Roman pottery was recovered from sixteen contexts and was recorded without recourse to context information.

The pottery was recorded by fabric and form onto Museum of London pottery proforma sheets adapted for the project. The fabrics were recorded using the ECC FAU fabric series. There were no identifiable forms present, except for three contexts which contained single undiagnostic jar rim sherds.

5.4.4.2 *Pottery factual data*

The assemblage comprises 37 sherds, weighing a total of 169g, much of which is in a poor and abraded condition. The pottery consists mainly of small body sherds in coarse fabrics and nothing present is closely datable within the Late Iron Age and Roman periods. Most of the sherds occur singly in disparate features, probably representing a scatter of Roman pottery across the site.

5.4.4.3 *Assessment work outstanding*

None.

5.4.4.4 *list of groups for quantification*

None.

5.4.4.5 *List of pottery for illustration*

None.

5.4.5 *Saxon pottery (c 400–1050)*

5.4.5.1 *Introduction/Methodology*

The time originally allocated for this site was 0.25 day. It has to be said that it took almost this long to find the material, as it involved opening every bag. The pottery was rebagged as it was recorded.

The pottery was examined macroscopically and using a binocular microscope (x 20) where appropriate, and recorded on paper and computer using standard Museum of London codes for fabrics, forms and decoration. The numerical data comprises sherd count, estimated number of vessels and weight. The pottery was excavated by layers at different co-ordinates, and some was given small find numbers on site. This information was retained for the paper record; only the layer numbers were used for Oracle but the grid reference is noted in the comments field.

5.4.5.2 *Fabrics*

All the sherds are chaff-tempered, mostly with fine sandy matrix, although some are more sandy. Two new, closely related, variants of the established types CHSF (fine) and CHFS (sandy) stand out from the usual range in that they contain moderate rounded quartz grains up to 1mm but usually 0.3-0.5mm across (CHSFRQ and CHFSRQ). The clay used is quite noticeably micaceous, and in some sherds this includes biotite as well as muscovite. In some sherds sparse flint and/or pellets of weathered clay/iron oxide are also noticeable. Fabric CHSFRQ amounts to at least 36 sherds (69% of the collection by sherd count, 78% by weight).

5.4.5.3 *Forms*

Only one rim was found; this is of everted form and from a jar. A few bases are present, one up to 15 mm thick ([349] <17>), but most of the other finds are body sherds.

5.4.5.4 *Discussion*

The site lies on the eastern fringe of the study area for this project, and the nearest comparable assemblage is that from Hunt's Hill. This is one of the larger groups of Saxon pottery in the project. Dating is problematic, but the fact that all is chaff-tempered, with no typically Early Saxon fabrics such as sandstone-tempered ware, suggests that the activity dates to the later 6th or 7th centuries; it is not impossible, however, that the site dates to the 8th century (Blackmore 1988; 1989; 2003).

5.4.6 Medieval pottery (c 1050–1500)

5.4.6.1 Summary/Introduction

Medieval pottery was not covered in the time allocated for the assessment, but some was recorded in error, and further sherds were found.

5.4.6.2 Methodology

As above.

5.4.6.3 Fabrics

These were not recorded in detail. The most interesting is a soft, coarse whiteware that is not typical of Surrey and is too coarse for Scarborough ware or an import (see below).

5.4.6.4 Forms

The most interesting find is a tubular object in a soft, coarse whiteware that could be an import. This is abraded but was originally green-glazed.

5.4.7 Post-medieval pottery (c 1500–1900)

5.4.7.1 Summary/Introduction

Medieval pottery was not covered in the time allocated for the assessment, but some was recorded in error, and further sherds were found.

5.4.7.2 Methodology

As above

5.4.7.3 Fabrics

Most sherds are in industrial finewares dating to the late 18th and 19th centuries, but a few redwares are present that could be a little earlier.

5.4.7.4 Forms

Many of the sherds are very small, but all appear to derive from domestic items such as plates, jars and bottles.

5.4.7.5 Assessment work outstanding (all periods)

None

5.4.8 The accessioned finds

Angela Wardle

5.4.8.1 Introduction

The original small finds lists records 20 objects of which seven are worked flint and ten are pottery, both materials considered elsewhere and not entered on the Oracle registered finds database. (Draft notes for a flint report, by L Richardson, contain both accessioned and unaccessioned finds – see archive, Box 3.) Of the remaining finds a clay loom weight SF<4> context [2/7?] has been examined, and two copper alloy objects SF <6> and <7> are 20th century.

Miscellaneous copper and iron from context [2], sorted from the bulk materials have not been accessioned as all are modern.

UP-WW82	pre/I Age	Roman	Med	P-med	unknown	total
Stone	1					1
Ceramic	1					1
Copper				2		2
Total	2	0	0	2	0	4

Table 6 Summary of the accessioned finds by material and period

5.4.8.2 Methodology

Finds were examined together with the archive documents available and details were entered on to the MoLAs Oracle database.

5.4.8.3 Categories by dating and materials

The stone object <21> [2] is a fossil, which may be significant in an Iron Age context, although it appears to be unstratified. A fragmentary ceramic weight <4> [2/7] is an Iron Age example of triangular form.

5.4.8.4 General character of the assemblage

The only object that can be ascribed to functional category is the loom weight.

5.4.8.5 Provenance of objects

The accessioned artefacts appear to be from topsoil.

5.4.9 The animal bone

Alan Pipe

5.4.9.1 Introduction/methodology

Each context group was described directly onto the MoLAS/MoLSS animal bone assessment database in terms of weight (kg), estimated fragment count, preservation, fragment size, species-composition, carcass-part representation and modification; and the recovery of epiphyses, mandibular tooth rows, measurable bones, complete longbones, and sub-adult age-groups. All identifications of species and skeletal element were made using the MoLSS Environmental Archaeology Section animal bone reference collection. When accurate identification to species or genus level was

impossible, fragments were assigned to the approximate categories ‘ox-sized’ mammal or ‘sheep-sized’ mammal as appropriate. It should be noted that unidentifiable ‘longbone fragments’, whether of ‘ox-sized’ or ‘sheep-sized’ mammal, were recorded only in terms of their contribution to the overall bone weight and fragment count for each site and context group; they are not recorded in the detailed summary tables which deal with carcass-part representation, modification and recovery of sub-adult age-groups. In view of the generally very poorly preserved and highly fragmented nature of the hand-collected assemblage, the prevalence of unidentifiable, ‘ox-sized’ and ‘sheep-sized’ mammal longbone fragments, and the lack of recovery of fish, amphibians or small mammals, no attempt was made to assess the wet-sieved bone.

5.4.9.2 Results

This site produced only 0.010 kg, three fragments, of well-preserved animal bone between 25-75mm in length. This material derived from adult sheep/goat/‘sheep-sized’ lower limb, vertebrae and ribs. There was no evidence suitable for study of age-at-death or stature. There was no evidence for modification or the presence of sub-adult age-groups.

5.4.10 Conservation

5.4.10.1 Introduction/methodology

The following assessment of conservation needs for the accessioned and bulk finds from the excavations at Whitehall Wood, Upminster, encompasses the requirements for finds analysis, illustration, analytical conservation and long term curation. Work outlined in this document is needed to produce a stable archive in accordance with MAP2 (English Heritage 1992) and the Museum of London’s Standards for archive preparation (Museum of London 1999).

	Material	No. accessioned	No. conserved	No. to be treated (see below)
Metals	Copper alloy	2 (0 coins)		
Inorganics	Ceramics	1		
	Stone	1		

Table 7 Summary of conservation work

Conservation support at the time of the excavation was provided by conservators working for Passmore Edwards Museum.

Treatments are carried out under the guiding principles of minimum intervention and reversibility. Whenever possible preventative rather than interventive conservation strategies are implemented. Procedures aim to obtain and retain the maximum archaeological potential of each object: conservators will therefore work closely with finds specialist and archaeologists.

5.4.10.2 Finds analysis/investigation

The accessioned finds were assessed by visual examination of both the objects and the X-radiographs, closer examination where necessary was carried out using a binocular microscope at high magnification. The accessioned finds were reviewed with reference to the finds assessments by Angela Wardle. No analytical work was identified by the small finds specialist.

5.4.10.3 Work required for illustration/photography

No items were identified as requiring conservation input to prepare them for photography or illustration.

5.4.10.4 Preparation for deposition in the archive

The metal and inorganic objects, appear to be stable. The small finds from this site were packed to the Passmore Edwards standards of the late 1980's, these are now considered to be inadequate for deposition in the LAARC. All the material, including the bulk finds, needs to be re-packed according to current best practice. It is suggested that the Museum of London Standard's for archive preparation (Museum of London 1999) are used.

5.4.10.5 Remedial work outstanding

There is no remedial work outstanding.

6 Potential of the data

6.1 Realisation of the original research aims

6.1.1 *General*

- A complete assessment of this site would create a site archive that would realise **Research Aim 1** by contributing to an emerging research agenda for prehistoric and Romano-British activity in East London.
- The assessment data to date contains no evidence for ritual or ceremonial activities and the site is unlikely to realise **Research Aim 5**.
- The imprecise dating for the site and generally sparse assemblages means that the site has only limited potential to contribute to **Research Aim 11**.

6.1.2 *Ceramic and finds*

- The assessment of the prehistoric pottery assemblage has contributed to the realisation of **Research Aim 2**. The character of the prehistoric pottery assemblage makes it unlikely to contribute to **Research Aim 3**.

6.1.3 *Paleolithic and Mesolithic*

- The site will not contribute to the realisation of **Research Aim 4**.

6.1.4 *Bronze Age*

- The dated evidence from this site for periods before the late Bronze Age/Iron Age transition is sparse. On the evidence assessed to date, the site does not contribute significantly to the realisation of **Research Aim 6** or **Research Aim 7**.

6.1.5 *Late Iron Age – Roman transition*

- The dating for this site is too imprecise and unstructured to contribute to **Research Aim 8**.

6.1.6 *Roman*

- The dating for this site is too imprecise and unstructured to contribute to **Research Aim 9**.

6.1.7 *Medieval and post-medieval*

- The Saxon material from the site, particularly if used in conjunction with that from Hunts Hill (UP-HH89), has the potential to contribute to the realisation of **Research Aim 10**.

6.2 General discussion of potential

It is recommended that the potential of the site will be best served by integrating its dataset with that from Hunts Hill (UP-HH89).

6.2.1 *Paleolithic/Mesolithic/Neolithic*

The site has no potential for these periods.

6.2.2 *Late Bronze Age/early Iron Age*

The incidence of late Bronze Age/early Iron Age pottery suggests activity on the site in this period. As such it may fall into a general pattern of increased population density that could be defined across the study area. It is particularly important to integrate this period of activity with that found at Hunts Hill (UP-HH89). Further analysis should attempt to refine the evidence for the whether the field systems evident at Whitehall Wood belong to this period or are potentially later. However, the condition of the prehistoric pottery, both the records and the sherds themselves, is poor. The flint assemblage is largely undatable and often unstratified and mainly comprises waste material occurring singly or in small groups, precludes the need for further analysis of the assemblage as a whole, with the exception of the refitted core ([77]).

6.2.3 *mid/late Iron Age and Roman*

The poorly defined dating evidence from this period means that the site has little potential. The small size of the sherds, and the lack of any groups of appreciable size, is particularly limiting. Attention should however be paid to attempting to define the probable date of the field systems evident at the site. Evidence should be compared and integrated with Hunts Hill (UP-HH89).

6.2.4 *Saxon*

Rather more Saxon sherds were found on this site than on most others in the project, and appear to concentrate in the east of the site. This suggests that there was domestic occupation nearby. One rim sherd merits illustration. The site lies on the eastern fringe of the study area, and so the finds can be compared with those from sites towards the Thames estuary as well as Hunts Hill (UP-HH89) and Lessa Sports Ground (Blackmore in prep, a). Through thin section and chemical analysis the pottery has the potential to aid the definition of Essex pottery industries in the later 5th-8th centuries. This in turn will add to the developing picture from the London area as a whole (Blackmore in prep, b)).

The Saxon activity at Whitehall Wood requires further analysis and in particular integration and comparison with that evident at Hunts Hill (UP-HH89).

6.2.5 *Medieval and post-medieval*

The medieval and later pottery was only scanned, but has little potential for further work. The roofing material encountered on site indicates post-medieval occupation. In general the site has no potential for these periods.

7 Significance of the data

7.1 Local

The site has local significance for a number of reasons

The worked flint and prehistoric pottery indicates some activity at the site occurring in the Late Bronze Age and possibly Early Iron Age. The late Iron Age and Roman pottery has no significance other than its contribution to the site chronology.

- The site has significance in that it can complement the stratigraphic and artefactual data from Hunts Hill (UP-HH89).

7.2 Regional

The site has regional significance for the following reason.

- The site may mark an early/mid Saxon settlement site.
- The late-7th/8th century Saxon pottery assemblage is one of the larger from the project and complements that from Hunts Hill (UP-HH89). The combined assemblage from these sites merits further analysis and will contribute to the study of the patterns of supply for the London region.