# Great Arnold's Field, Launders Lane, Rainham

A post-excavation assessment

Site Code R-126

Julian Hill

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#### 1 Introduction

#### 1.1 Site location

The site lies on the western side of Launders Lane, north of the A13 and northeast of Rainham in the London Borough of Havering. The site lies at about NGR 55418 18150.

The site was originally identified in about 1960 from cropmarks. As a result, the main features, a Neolithic ring ditch and a 12th century farmstead, were excavated in 1963 in advance of gravel extraction by Dr D.D.A. Simpson and Dr I. Smith for the then Ministry of Public Building and Works. The finds archive was deposited in the Passmore Edwards museum/Newham Museum Service collections. The site records were microfilmed by the RCHME in 1990. A printed copy of this archive was available for this assessment.

The archaeology was recorded as numbered or lettered features – pit 1, ditch A etc – and a scaled, photocopied plan exists. The site can be located from rectified aerial photographs. The finds are numbered in separate series – D.B.1 – 11 for example come from ditch B. The finds need reuniting with their source context, where this can be established

## 1.2 The scope of the project

The stratigraphic record of Great Arnolds Field has not been assessed, although the artefactual evidence has. The field record will require a thorough overhaul, beyond the scope of this assessment, in order to make it suitable for AutoCad digitisation or ORACLE/ExCel indexing. However the site record is small, with only 41 contexts (features) recorded.

The excavations at Great Arnolds Field, Rainham recorded activity dating from the Neolithic, Bronze Age, the Roman period and the 12th century AD., although occupation was not necessarily continuous and some periods are not represented at the site. 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 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.

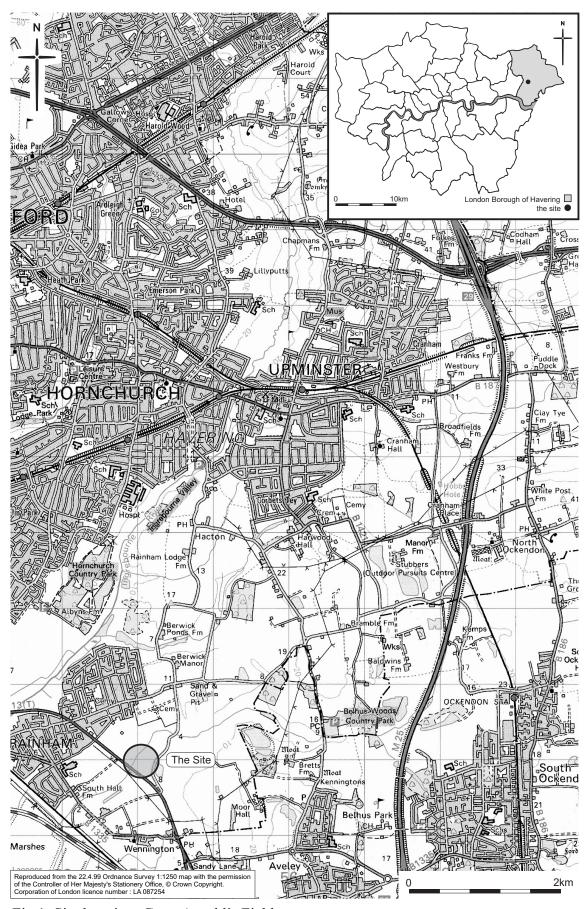


Fig 1 Site location: Great Arnold's Field

## 2 Historical and archaeological background

#### 2.1 Geology and Topography

The site is situated on a spur of the Thames Terrace Gravels bounded by the 7.6m OD contour. The site falls away to the south, towards the Thames marshes, and is also bounded to the east by low-lying ground: it lies, therefore at the southern edge of the inhabited zone in this part of the Thames valley. The gravels are sandy and clayey and overlain by subsoil and topsoil.

#### 2.2 Archaeological background

Great Arnold's Field lies 400m W of the Late Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman activity recorded at Moor Hall Farm, Rainham, (R-MHF77), a site which is also assessed within this project. A Neolithic settlement at Brookway Allotments (Greenwood and Maloney 1993) lies about 1.6 km to the W. A complete Beaker was found in Gerpins Pit, Gerpins Lane, about 1.5 km to the NE, in 1937. However, Beaker and Early Bronze Age remains are sparse in NE London.

There is a marked increase in evidence for settlement and land-use in the study area from the middle and later Bronze Age (about 1700BC onwards). The density of settlement appears to increase through the Iron Age, although the early Iron Age remains little known.

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.

Fig 1 Site location: Great Arnold's Field

## 3 Original research aims

The site was excavated in 1963 in advance of gravel extraction. 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 Great Arnold's Field, Rainham 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

#### 4.1 Introduction

The site (code R-126) was excavated by the mechanical removal of the topsoil. No horizontal stratigraphy had survived ploughing and the archaeological remains were limited to features cutting the natural substrata. Excavation was limited to the central features revealed by the aerial photograph, a circular ditch lying within a rectangular enclosure, and to a number of pits found within this area of investigation.

The site lies about 40m to the west of the excavation at Moor Hall Farm (R-MHF77) where some scattered Neolithic and Bronze Age features were recorded. It is likely that these represent outliers of activity centred on Great Arnold's Field and their further analysis should be integrated with that of the evidence from R-126

The original records have been examined. The site was treated as a number of features – ditches, pits etc – which are identified by alphabetical (ditches A - H) or numerical (pits 1 - 19) sequences. Twenty-seven features are thus defined. There is some discrimination between separate fills in some features and the number of contexts has been estimated at 41+. The central pit within the neolithic ring ditch (ditch J) does not appear to have an identifying number and its finds are classified as a subset (finds 2 - 17) of those from the ditch. The site record requires renumbering as part of any analytical process and the finds need attributing to a context. They are currently listed as numerical sequences from features. All references are at feature level or to finds series numbers. No plans have yet been digitised and no phase plans are included within this assessment.

All the prehistoric, Late Iron Age and Roman pottery has been assessed.

#### 4.2 Natural and topography

The natural substrata comprise Taplow/Mucking river terrace gravels at c 5.0m OD. To the south the ground slopes away towards marshland and the Thames.

#### 4.3 Early Neolithic

The uninterrupted circular ditch (J) was completely excavated. The ditch had an internal diameter of c 51 ft (c 15.30m), was 6-7 ft (1.80 – 2.10m) wide at the top and extant to a depth of 2-3 ft (0.60 – 0.90m). It contained early Neolithic pottery, including Mildenhall style bowls. An early neolithic date concords with the evidence of the worked flint, although older, possibly late mesolithic flints were also present as residual material. A pristine neolithic axe (U6) was found in an unstratified position.

It is possible that a pressure flaked blade ([741]) and items of debris ([622]) found at Moor Hall Farm (R-MHF77) belong to this period and are related to the Great Arnold's Field site.

#### 4.4 Late Neolithic – Early Bronze Age (2500 – 1700 BC)

The central pit within the ring ditch, and the ring-ditch itself, contained sherds of late Neolithic Peterborough Ware. A Beaker sherd was also found within the central pit. Two small features ([310], [322]) at Moor Hall Farm (R-MHF77) also contained pottery of this date and should be considered with the evidence from Great Arnold's Field.

#### 4.5 Late Bronze Age (1000 – 700 BC)

Later pottery is represented by a large, unstratified sherd that is likely to be a later Bronze Age urn, possibly a Middle Bronze Age Deverel-Rimbury style urn.

#### 4.6 Iron Age and Roman (800 BC- AD 400)

LIA/Roman pottery was recovered from the fills of Pit 15. Activity from these periods was otherwise absent. This pit may be related to the occupation centred on Moor Hall Farm (R-MHF77).

## 4.7 Medieval (AD 400 – 1500)

Apart from the ring-ditch and central pit (and a modern depression - intervention K) all other datable features proved to be medieval. In general the pottery is typical of the later 11th and earlier 12th centuries, but some could extend into the 13th century. A rectangular enclosure (ditch G) forms the principal feature. In addition, about 15, generally within the enclosure, date to this period. One pit was surrounded by a triangular arrangement of postholes but the pits did not form a coherent plan or provide any evidence for buildings. There is a suggestion in the original archive report that there is some documentary evidence for a 'lost' manor in the immediate vicinity.

## 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.

• No assessment of the site other than reference to the original archive report has been undertaken

#### 5.1.2 Problems with the archive and the assessment

An archive report exists for this site. The specialist data suggests that the dating of the main periods of use of the site concords with that suggested in the original report. The site is small and unlikely to require significant reanalysis.

The structure of the report is, however, likely to cause some problems in transferring the data into a modern format. The site requires breaking down into context units and a concordance between these contexts and their finds established. The site is not securely located and will have to be positioned by digitising a rectified aerial photograph. Unfortunately the aerial photograph within the archive is taken at an extremely oblique angle.

## 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.

- Creation of contexts
- Correlation of finds to source context
- Context information entered into ORACLE database
- Site context matrix compiled
- Context matrices established on BONN Harris matrix software
- Digitisation of plans
- Arcview GIS project generated of digitised contexts
- Linkage of ORACLE spot-dating to Arcview project
- Integration of MoLAS and other specialist reports
- Photographs to be indexed in ExCel (if they are traced)

- 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	41+	
Plans	on photocopy sheets with scalebar	2	Multi-context plans of entire site
Sections	on 1 photocopy sheet with scalebar		
Miscellaneous		Not quantified	Notebooks, correspondence etc
Context matrices	Harris Bonn matrix data	none	
Photographs	Colour prints	unknown	
Colour slides	Slides plastic folders	unknown	
BW slides	Slides plastic folders	unknown	
Aerial photographs	Cropmark photos	2 – more could possibly be obtained	NMR Aerial photographs

Table 1 Stratigraphic Archive

## 5.4 Site archive and assessment: finds and environmental

Building material	1 shoes box - retained. Total 1.67kg
Prehistoric worked flint	295 objects, not weighed
Prehistoric pottery	489 sherds. Total 5.693kg
Roman pottery	5 sherds Total 0.034kg
Late Saxon and medieval pottery	c 720 sherds listed in original report; records vary between 5 and 7 boxes. Not weighed
Post-medieval pottery	None noted
Accessioned finds	15
Animal Bone	213 fragments. Total 1.333kg. 1 archive quality 'shoebox'
Conservation	Bulk pot to be treated

Table 2 Finds & Environmental Archive General Summary

## 5.4.1 The building material

Ian Betts

## *5.4.1.1 Introduction/methodology*

All the 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 (gm)	Weight as % of total
Daub?	54	83	0.735	44
Roman ceramic	9	14	0.925	55
Post-med ceramic	2	3	0.010	0.6
Total	17		1.67	

Table 3 Building material

#### 5.4.1.2 Daub?

The majority of building material assemblage comprises small fragments of daub like material of uncertain date or function. A few fragments from Pit 1.24 are possibly burnt and may have wattle marks. Organic marks are present in the surface of the daub from Pit 17.7 whilst Ditch G.25 has a small shaped fragment of uncertain function. It is possible that the latter may be identified with further study.

#### 5.4.1.3 Roman ceramic building material

5.4.1.3.1 FABRICS

Early Roman fabric

2815

Late Roman fabric

2459A

5.4.1.3.2 FORMS

Roofing tile

All but one of the ceramic tile fragments comprise roofing tile and brick, mostly in fabric type 2459B dated to AD120/140-250.

Flue tile

There is a solitary piece of combed box-flue tile in either fabric group 2815 (type 2459A) or later types 2459B/2459C, the absence of moulding sand preventing more accurate fabric identification.

#### 5.4.1.4 Post-medieval ceramic building material

5.4.1.4.1 FABRICS

Undated fabrics

2276

5.4.1.4.2 FORMS

Roofing tile

What appears to be a small fragment of late medieval or post-medieval peg tile was found in Ditch 01. Alternatively it could be an unusually thin fragment of Roman imbrex in fabric 2459B.

#### 5.4.2 The prehistoric worked flint

Lynne Bevan

### 5.4.2.1 Summary/Introduction

The worked flint from this site was rapidly scanned, as according to the revised project design (Rowsome *et al.* 2002, 33). Flints were identified according to tool or waste type and, where possible, assigned a general date, as well as being quantified by number. They were not weighed, nor were they inputted into the MoLAS database, since a summary catalogue had been previously compiled for the assemblage. Although apparently fairly accurate in its identifications, the handwritten summary finds catalogue was of little use in terms of this assessment and could not be used for inputting flint data into the MoLAS database. The flints had also been extensively illustrated, following which much of the material had been re-bagged out of context, which hindered the scanning and assessment process and would have implications for any further work on the assemblage.

The flints were identified according to tool or waste type and, where possible, assigned a general date. No re-fits were identified but utilisation was noted.

#### 5.4.2.2 Discussion

The worked flint comprised 295 items. Flint colours ranged from light to medium brown and grey, often tinged with yellow, although a few items were made from a higher-quality pebble flint of a distinctive translucent brown colour with a deep orange stripe just beneath the cortex. This was most probably Bullhead Bed flint (Cotton 2002, 69), which was also used at Moor Hall Farm, Rainham and Uphall Camp, Ilford (see reports this volume). 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.

The earliest items in the assemblage comprised a pyramidal Later Mesolithic blade core (find 14, from the central pit within ring ditch J). A large blade core of probable Bullhead Bed flint (find 229, ring ditch J) and a long end scraper might also be of Later Mesolithic date (find 220, ring ditch J). Two other blade cores identified in the assemblage were of Early Neolithic type (find 15, from the central pit within ring ditch J and find 82, , ring ditch J) and several other cores were flake cores of probable Later Neolithic to Bronze Age date which tended to have been worked beyond the point of exhaustion, an indication of resource stress and that good quality flint was at a premium. Of interest in the assemblage was a finely-worked Neolithic axe of opaque grey flint in a pristine condition (U6) found exposed on the mechanically scraped surface. Traces of possible utilisation were noted on some of the other retouched material, particularly the scrapers.

There was an unusually high incidence of retouched items in the collection which included at least 18 scrapers, mainly heavily-utilised end and side and end types, of a general Neolithic to Bronze Age date. Scrapers are a class of material generally associated with habitation *foci* (Schofield 1987), although these tools might have had

a different significance, in terms of their structured deposition perhaps, in an assemblage associated with a ring ditch.

#### 5.4.3 The prehistoric pottery

Charlotte Thompson

#### 5.4.3.1 Summary/Introduction

Four boxes of prehistoric pottery were recovered from this site and all were assessed. 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 type series that has been created during the assessment phase of the project. This type series can be found in the global assessment for prehistoric pottery.

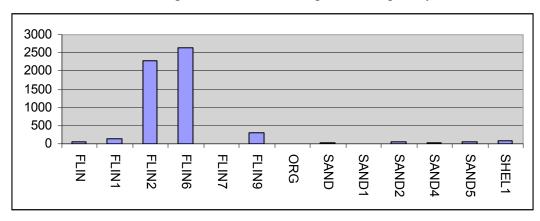


Table 4 Prehistoric pottery quantification by weight

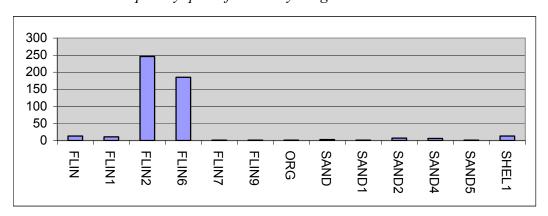


Table 5 Prehistoric pottery quantification by sherd count

Flint-tempered wares, particularly FLIN2 and FLIN6, dominate the assemblage. FLIN6 accounts for 46% of the assemblage by weight, and 37% by sherd count, and FLIN2 makes up 40% of the assemblage by weight but only 11% by sherd count. The

low proportion by sherd count reflects the fact that some of the vessels have been reconstructed, which have for practicality been recorded as a single sherd.

#### 5.4.3.3 Forms

This is an interesting assemblage as there is a number of Early Neolithic Mildenhall style round bottom bowls (Clark 1960). These are burnished on the interior and exterior and have out-turned rims. Some have additional burnished decoration, which on some of the sherds (for example find 97 from ditch J) appear to be reminiscent of basketry as the vertical and sometimes diagonal lines give the exterior surface a ridged appearance. The vessel from find 36 (ditch J) has burnished lines on the interior of the lip, which is also seen at Fussell's Lodge (Whittle 1977, 88) and Hurst Fen (Clark 1960, 235). Rim sherds from finds 25, 26 and 27 (ditch J) have impressed decoration on top of the rim, a feature seen both at Fussell's Lodge and Hurst Fen.

There are 26 rims likely to belong to Mildenhall style bowls represented in the assemblage. There is some variety in the rims, with the majority being out-turned and slightly thickened, as in finds 20, 22 and 129 (ditch J). Although handmade, and thus a single vessel's rim can vary a great deal, there appear to be perhaps fifteen vessels represented as there is some distinction in the rim profiles.

One vessel from finds number 20 (ditch J) has a post-firing hole under the rim, in the neck area, a trait seen at Hurst Fen (Clark 1960). There is a correlation between the Mildenhall style bowls and FLIN6 fabric as the sherds made in FLIN2 fabric tend to have less treated and smoothed surfaces.

Two sherds of Peterborough Ware were recovered from finds numbers 2 and 5 (central pit within ditch J), and a sherd of probable Fengate Style Peterborough Ware were present in recovered from finds numbers 19 and 115 (ditch J). These are in no worse condition than the Early Neolithic sherds. There is a Beaker sherd from finds number 3 (central pit within ditch J), and it is a rim sherd with a straight neck and a slight cordon under the out-turned rim, and the body has horizontal bands of diagonal fine incised decoration. There are also three small body sherds decorated with fine incised lines from finds number 5 (central pit within ditch J). As with the Peterborough Ware, these sherds do not appear to be in any worse condition than the Neolithic sherds.

#### 5.4.3.4 Discussion

When the Mildenhall typesite was published, the pottery found there was considered to be Middle Neolithic (Clark 1960, 242), however it is more generally accepted that this style of pottery belongs to the Earlier Neolithic (Whittle 1977; Gibson 2002).

This assemblage is of great interest as it contains a number of Early Neolithic vessels as well as a scattering of Later Neolithic sherds such as the Peterborough Ware Fengate style sherds in finds numbers 19 and 115 (ditch J). Later pottery is represented by a single Beaker sherd from finds number 3 (central pit within ditch J), and there is also a large sherd in FLIN9 that is likely to be a later Bronze Age urn, possibly a Middle Bronze Age Deverel-Rimbury style urn. However, this sherd is unstratified.

The Neolithic cursus at Springfield in Essex has broadly comparable material, although the assemblage is smaller than this at Great Arnold's Field. It is worth

noting that at Springfield, the majority of the material is Peterborough Ware, rather than Mildenhall style bowls. As in this assemblage, Springfield has small amounts of Beaker, Bronze Age urns and Late Bronze Age pottery (Brown 2001).

There is also some shell-tempered pottery at this site. As discussed in the global document for the East London Gravels Project, the use of shell-temper continues from the prehistoric through to medieval period and from fabric alone it is not easy to establish when the sherds were made. Traditionally, shell-tempered wares are produced in a great quantity in Essex in the Early Iron Age (Brown 1995, 83-87), so the presence of 12 sherds may indicate that shell-tempered pottery was in use at this site much earlier than this as all but one of the shell-tempered sherds occurs in contexts with Neolithic pottery. It is worth noting that Orsett (Hedges & Buckley 1978) and The Stumble (Brown 1980) also have a handful of shell-tempered sherds from Early Neolithic contexts, so this may well be an Early Neolithic pattern.

## 5.4.4 The LIA/Roman pottery

Joyce Compton ECC FAU

December 2003

LIA/Roman pottery was recovered from just three contexts, all fills of the same feature (Pit 15)

## 5.4.4.1 Introduction/methodology

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, and there were no identifiable forms present.

## 5.4.4.2 Pottery factual data

There are five sherds, weighing a total of 34g. The pottery comprises mainly body sherds in coarse fabrics and nothing in the assemblage is closely datable within the Late Iron Age and Roman periods.

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 The medieval pottery (c AD 400–1500)

Lyn Blackmore

#### 5.4.5.1 Summary/Introduction

The site is adjacent to that of Moor Hall Farm. It is the most southerly of those in the project. A report on the pottery was written by Hugo Blake and Steve Moorhouse in the 1970s, and some of the finds were also drawn; a copy of the microfilm text was found but the original text and drawings are missing. The archive records in box 1 contain an A4 page listing the contents of the different finds boxes, and there is supposed to also be a pottery (sketch) record (missing). No pottery record sheets were found.

A copy of the microfilm text was only found after the pottery had been scanned. This is short but thorough piece of work in a format that was standard for its time and much of it has the potential to be reused. The report consists of ware descriptions, a discussion, table of quantification by feature, a catalogue of finds by context (lacking fabric codes) and a draft catalogue of illustrated material. There are also notes of a meeting at Southend Museum where the finds were compared to those from Rayleigh and other Essex sites. Much of this information remains valid, although updating of the fabric codes will have repercussions on the tables and discussion of dating. The original illustrations are clear and informative, but exist only as photocopies.

As far as the assemblage itself is concerned, it is not known what the recovery policy was on site, but it would appear that only rims, and decorated or glazed sherds were kept, unless the body sherds clearly formed part of a complete pot. It will, therefore, be difficult to make valid statements on the quantities present in different part of the site (ie patterns of rubbish disposal) or the proportions of different fabric types. As far as the fabrics are concerned, however, there is the scope to extend the fabric types series and to distinguish between London and Essex shell-tempered wares by means of scientific analysis. This work would feed into research already started for the London shelly-sandy wares, which included a small number of samples from Essex (Blackmore in prep).

#### 5.4.5.2 *Methodology*

The sherds from each different vessel in each context had already been separated and numbered sequentially by vessel equivalent (eg pit 1 has finds P1.1 to P1.21). It is, therefore, possible to guess the approximate number of vessels (although in some cases sherds from more than one pot share the same number), but the total sherds is unknown. As a report had already been prepared and the time available was limited it was decided that it would be more informative to scan all the finds, rather than to rerecord a sample. The text, however, was not located until after the pottery was examined.

The bags were checked against the original list of pottery box contents and the slips within the boxes (see below); this showed that some contexts were present in the boxes but had not been listed on the box label or list inside the box. This needs to be checked against the list of finds included in the pottery report. All the illustrated sherds and selected other sherds were examined with a binocular microscope (x 20) where appropriate. Some sherds had been glued for display, although the pots have now partially collapsed. A loose sherd from H4 in box 3(?) is from a pot that was removed for conservation and is possibly now missing.

#### 5.4.5.3 *Fabrics*

The fabrics were originally coded by letter number (A-L). Most are typical of the later 11th and earlier 12th centuries, but some could extend into the 13th century. They include a range of coarsewares that have equivalents in the London fabrics EMSS, EMSH, ESUR and SSW, with a few new types that must be local. One of these is a thick-walled pot in a fabric that is basically the same as EMSHX (pit 7.3), but which also frequent iron-rich pellets and large quartz grits (1mm-2mm across). This was first thought to be similar to pottery from Northolt, and could be an Essex equivalent of LSS. A cooking pot from ditch J2 also resembles LSS in form, although not in fabric.

One fabric is similar to EMSS, but finer and is probably a sandy variant of SSWX. A bowl from ditch B2 is in the silty fabric that is typical of Essex, but contains moderate quartz, mostly under 0.5mm, but up to 2mm across (fabric code to be determined). Another fabric that is similar to EMSHX at Hunts Hill has a fine silty texture, wood/organic matter, sparse sand and voids form leached out shell (ditch G5; fabric code to be determined). A slightly coarser variant is also present (Ditch G8).

Non-local wares include a fine buff ware (P1.5) with a yellow glaze could be from Stamford and a small amount of red-painted ware is present in ditch H (H5) and other context(s). London type wares are present in pit 1 (sherds form early style jugs and others in the North French style, dated 1180-1270), pit 17 and ditches B and H.

#### 5.4.5.4 Forms

There are numerous cooking pot/jar rims, some everted, others more upright. Arguably the earliest is a typical LSS profile (complete) that was illustrated for the original pottery report (no.11). One has thumbed decoration on the rim (original illustration no.11). Other forms include a pipkin within internally thickened rim (Ditch G5), bowls and curfews. Many of these appear to be handmade, but several rims in SSWX are wheel-finished, if not wheel made. Some of the rims are like those found in London forms (eg P19.3, illustration no.14, and P19.3), but others quite different (eg P19.2). Table/serving wares are in the minority, but include London-type ware jugs in the Rouen and North French styles. In addition there is part of a ceramic bead from ditch B10 (to be accessioned).

#### 5.4.5.5 Discussion

The pottery was originally dated to the 12th century (Med Arch 1964), but in the pottery report a longer chronology was suggested, extending into the 14th century. The site was heavily ploughed, and little relationship could be established between the features. However, the original pottery report indicates that some of the pottery (groups B, C, D) was associated with a large timber building that was dated to between c.1100 and the mid-13th century. Other groups were thought to probably associated with modifications to the structure (groups G, H, R). The building was eventually demolished and replaced by a moat.

Re-examination of the pottery suggests that most dates to the 12th century, although the dating of the shell-tempered wares needs to be considered in the light of more recent work. Most finds probably date to between 1140-1200, but some could be earlier, while the London wares date to after 1170/1180 as they include jugs in the Rouen and North French styles. The largest group is from ditch G; a number of sherds were also found in pit 3.1, although most are from a single pot. Pit 1 contains a mix of

sandy and shelly wares and also sherds from a number of London ware jugs; some from P1.2 may be from the same jug as P1.7.

#### 5.4.6 accessioned finds

Angela Wardle

#### *5.4.6.1 Introduction/methodology*

There is no finds list for this site and the only accessions are those retrieved from the bulk materials. One is numbered SF83 and in case more objects previously accessioned are found subsequently, numbers allocated to the new accessions begin at 101. Details of the artefacts are held on the MoLAS Oracle database.

R-126	pre/I Age	Roman	Med	P-med	unknown	total
Stone	1				13	14
Ceramic	1					1

Table 6 Summary of accessioned finds by material and period

#### 5.4.6.2 Summary of the finds by date and materials

Most items recovered at assessment are of stone and thirteen of the 14 are fragments of quern, mostly small pieces of lava, which are likely to be Roman in date. These are assessed elsewhere by Hilary Major. One sandstone hone was recovered, SF 112 and one unidentified ceramic object, possibly briquetage, SF 113.

## 5.4.6.3 Querns

Hilary Major

A fragment of sandstone saddle quern came from context [173]. The nature of the context may be of interest, as the summary details of the site note an early Neolithic ritual site. Saddle querns (or fragments) are a frequent component of Neolithic structured deposits.

#### 5.4.6.4 Provenance of objects

The finds come from ditches and pits of unknown date.

#### 5.4.7 The animal bone

Alan Pipe

#### 5.4.7.1 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, carcase-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 carcase-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.

#### 5.4.7.2 Results

This site produced only 1.333 kg, appoximately 213 fragments, of moderately or poorly preserved animal bone mainly in the 25-75 mm size range. This material mainly derived from adult head, upper limb and lower limb with a single recovery of foot from [29]. Contexts [1], and [6] each produced head elements of horse. Evidence suitable for study of age-at-death consisted of only two mandibular tooth rows and a single epiphysis. There were no measurable or complete longbones. There was no evidence for modification

#### 5.4.8 Conservation

Liz Goodman

#### *5.4.8.1 Introduction/methodology*

The following assessment of conservation needs for the accessioned and bulk finds from the excavations at Great Arnold's Field, 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)
Inorganics	Ceramic			bulk pot
	Stone	13		

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.

#### 5.4.8.2 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.

## 5.4.8.3 Work required for illustration/photography

Six post-Roman pots were identified as requiring conservation input to prepare them for photography or illustration.

## 5.4.8.4 Preparation for deposition in the archive

The inorganic objects appear to be stable. The finds from this site were packed to the Passmore Edwards standards of the 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.

## 5.4.8.5 Remedial work outstanding

There is no remedial work outstanding.

## 6 Potential of the data

#### 6.1 Realisation of the original research aims

The original research aims are defined in Section Error! Reference source not found.

#### 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 presence of shell-tempered ware in Neolithic contexts is interesting as in Essex this ware is generally associated with the Early Iron Age (Brown 1995: 83-87). The 12 sherds of shell-tempered pottery at this site will undoubtedly help contribute to **Research Aim 1**.
- The neolithic circular ditch provides evidence for ritual or ceremonial activities and the analysis of it and its associated finds is likely to realise **Research Aim 5**.
- The evidence for the neolithic and medieval occupation on the site will realise **Research Aim 11**.

#### 6.1.2 Ceramic and finds

- The assessment of the complete prehistoric pottery assemblage will contribute to the realisation of **Research Aim 2.** Similarly the assessment and anlaysis of the lithic assemblage, on which much of the previous cataloguing and illustration conducted was unnecessary and difficult to interpret, will realise this aim
- The site will contribute to **Research Aim 3.** The group of Mildenhall style bowls has good potential for further analysis, in particular the creation of a typology of the rims from Mildenhall style bowls found at this site and linking them to those from those set out in Clark (1960). The presence of Peterborough Ware and a sherd of Beaker ware have meant that fabric definitions for these distinctive wares have been established (SAND4 and SAND5, respectively). There is a clear link between FLIN6 and Mildenhall style vessels, but as the global fabric type series indicates, this fabric is not exclusive to the Early Neolithic.

## 6.1.3 Paleolithic and Mesolithic

• In contrast to the other East London Gravel assemblages, the Mesolithic component of the Great Arnold's Field assemblage has considerable potential to contribute to **Research Aim 4** and should be should be reported upon and related to known activity in the locality

#### 6.1.4 Bronze Age

• Although a Beaker sherd complements those from Moor Hall Farm (R-MHF77), there is little evidence for this period from the site and it does not contribute significantly to the realisation of **Research Aim 6** or **Research Aim 7**.

## 6.1.5 Late Iron Age -- Roman transition

• The site will not contribute to **Research Aim 8**.

#### 6.1.6 Roman

• The site will not independently contribute to **Research Aim 9** but aspects of the finds assemblage should be compared with the evidence from Moor Hall Farm (R-MHF77). The, albeit sparse, building material evidence complements that at Moor Hall Farm and suggests a hypocausted building may have stood in the vicinity.

## 6.1.7 Medieval and post-medieval

• The site was clearly a focus of medieval activity, and the post-Roman pottery can contribute to **Research Aim 10**.

#### 6.2 General discussion of potential

#### 6.2.1 Paleolothic/mesolithic

The site has some limited potential to contribute to the study of Mesolithic occupation in the East London area.

#### 6.2.2 Neolithic

The site has considerable potential for this period. The circular ditch, and probably the associated central pit, appear to be early Neolithic in origin and to reflect ritual use of the landscape. Finds from this period are otherwise sparse in the project area, which makes the significance of this site all the greater. Contemporary finds from Moor Hall Farm should be treated as a subset of Great Arnold's Field assemblage.

#### 6.2.3 Late Neolithic/early Bronze Age (2500 – 1700 BC)

Although the Neolithic monument may continue in use into the early Bronze Age, as suggested by the Beaker sherd from the central pit, stratigraphic analysis may alternatively indicate that the deposits of this date mark its abandonment. The Beaker sherd may be associated with the evidence from Moor Hall Farm for this period. The site should be seen as having only limited potential for this period.

## 6.2.4 Late Bronze Age/early Iron Age

The site has no potential for this period.

#### 6.2.5 mid/late Iron Age and the impact of the Roman conquest

The site has no potential for this period.

#### 6.2.6 Roman (AD 40 - 400)

The site has a limited potential to complement Moor Hall Farm (R-MHF77) for this period. Roman occupation in the area is indicated by the presence of roofing tile, perhaps from a rural farm building and the solitary box-flue tile from a hypocaust may have the same source as similar items at Moor Hall Farm (R-MHF77) and hint at the presence of a more substantial structure in the vicinity

#### 6.2.7 Saxon, medieval and post-medieval

The medieval period has considerable potential. The medieval pottery forms a good homogenous group that can be related to a standing structure and the moat that replaced it. There are numerous large pieces and some profiles; the more complete pieces have been on display (in the Passmore Edwards Museum?). There are also various rims and featured body sherds.

## 6.2.8 Aerial photography

There is considerable potential for the use of rectified/digitised aerial photographs in order to relate cropmarks at and near Great Arnold's Field to the datable sequence at Moor Hall Farm (R-MHF77) and to thus extend the chronology of landscape features into the surrounding landscape.

## 7 Significance of the data

#### 7.1 Local

The site has local significance because

• The site has local significance because of its ability to complement the evidence from Moor Hall Farm and assist the interpretation of the landscape

## 7.2 Regional

The site has regional significance for a number of reasons.

- The site has well dated evidence for a Neolithic ring ditch.
- The worked flint attests to mainly Neolithic activity at the site associated with the ring ditch. Moreover, much of the worked flint appears to have been derived from contexts also containing a broad range of dated Neolithic pottery, which increases the dating potential of the assemblage and offers the opportunity to study changing core reduction strategies through time and the composition of cross-material culture assemblages. As with the pottery, comparisons can be sought with material from Mildenhall Fen, Suffolk (Clark 1960) as well as with other, more local sites. Additionally, insights might be gained into the artefactual make-up of the assemblage and its deposition, which, in view of its close association with a ring ditch, could go beyond strictly functionalist interpretations. This assemblage may be of national significance.
- This prehistoric pottery assemblage represents perhaps 15 Mildenhall style
  vessels as well as containing some Peterborough Ware and Beaker pottery. It
  is likely that this represents repeated activity at the site throughout the
  Neolithic period.
- The site has evidence for a Medieval farmstead which may be related to a documented 'lost' manor.
- The medieval pottery can be associated with this occupied site. The assemblage could establish Great Arnold's Field as a type site for this period in this area of Essex. It is possible that the pottery can help to phase the site into earlier and later periods of activity, while the presence of wares from outside Essex (London, Surrey, Germany) indicates external contacts. The site is the closest to the Thames of those in the East London Gravels project, and this may account for the fact that it has the highest proportion of non-local and imported wares. Comparison of the assemblage with other contemporary groups such as Hunts Hill, Rayleigh Castle, Hadleigh Castle and Pleshey, and sites such as Horndon-on-the-Hill that have been excavated by Essex County Council offers scope for discussion of trade and consumerism.

# 8 Appendix

Table 8 List of contexts/sherds present in the boxes that were examined

Box	Original list	Present in box	Comment
1	Pit 1	P.1, P1.1, P1.7, P1.8, P1.9, P1.21	
1	Pit 2	P2.2, P2.5, P2.8, P2.13	
1	Pit 3	P3.1, P3.2	
1	Pit 13	P13.5, P13.10, P13.16	
1	Pit 17	P17.2	
1	Pit 19	P19.2, P19.3	
1	Ditch B	B2, B2a, B3, B4	
1	Ditch G	G5, G6, G8, G14	
1	Ditch H	H1, H2, H7, H15	
1	Ditch J	J	
2	Pit 6	P6.1, P6.2	
2	Pit 7	P7.2, P7.3, P7.1	Coarsewares
2	Pit 9	P9.2	
2	Pit 11	P11.2, P11.3	
2	Pit 14	P14.1, P14.2	coarsewares
2	Pit 15	P15.1, P15.2, P15.3	P15.3 Roman?
2	Pit 19		
2	Ditch B		
2	Ditch G	G1, G2, G4, G7, G9, G10, G15, G16, G17, G18, G19, G20, G21, G26, G27, G28, G30, G31, G32, G33, G38, G39,	
2	Ditch H	H18	H18 is CBM
2	Ditch J		
3	Pit 1	P1.2, P1.3, P1.4, P1.5, P1.6, P1.10, P1.11, P1.12, P1.13, P1.14, P1.15, P1.16, P1.17, P1.18, P1.19, P1.20, P1.22	
		P19.4, P19.5	
3	Ditch A	A	
3	Ditch B	B1, B5, B6	
3	Ditch H	H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H11, H12, H13, H14, H15, H16, H17, H19,	H18 IS TILE; H19 is Roman
3	Ditch J	J5	

3	Ditch Q	Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5	
3	Ditch R	R1	
4	Pit 2	P2.14	
4	Pit 3	P3, P4, P5, P6	Coarsewares
4	Pit 12	P12.1, P12.2, P12.3,	
4	Pit 13	P13.6, P13.11, P13.12, P13.13, P13.14, P13.15,	
4	Pit 17	P17.1, P17.3, P17.4, P17.5, P17.6	
5	P.31, DJ1.2		

Table 9 Illustrated sherds that were located

Box	Fig	Context	Fabric	Form	Comment
1	2/21	P1.8	SSWX	cooking pot/jar	
	31/32	P1.1	LOND NFR	Jug	
	3.31	P1.7	LOND?	jug (unglazed)	more sherds in another box?
1, 5	2/26	P1.21	EMGRX	Storage jar; applied strips	
	2/17	P2.3	SSWX	Bowl/curfew	
	2/23	P2.8	EMSHX?	Cooking pot/jar	
	2/18	P2.2	SSWX	Curfew (perforated)	
	2/25	P2.13	SSWX	Storage jar; applied strips	
	1/16	P3.2	EMSX	Cooking pot, thumbed rim	
	3/29	P13.16	ESUR	cooking pot/jar	
	1/5	P13.10	EMSX	cooking pot/jar	
1, 5	1/4	P13.5	EMSSX?	Base	
	1/6	P14.2	EMSHX?	Cooking pot (everted)	
	1/1	P17.2	REDP	jar	
	2/22	P19.2	SSWX?	Cooking pot (rounded rim)	
	2/22?	P19.3	SSWX	Cooking (flat everted rim)	
	2/28	B2a	Check	Bowl (thumbed rim)	
	2/19	B2	SSWX	Curfew (perforated)	
	1/7	B4	EMSHX	Cooking pot (everted rim)	
	1/15	В3	Check	Cooking pot (everted)	
	1/9	G6	SSWX	Cooking pot	
	1/8D	G5	EMSHX?	Pipkin?	
	3/33	G14	LOND	Jug (small sherd)	More elsewhere?
	2/10f	G8	Check	Cooking pot/dish?	
	1/11	J3+4	EMSHX?	Cooking pot	
	1/12	J6	EMSHX	Dish (thumbed rim)	
	3/30	H1	EMSSX	Cooking pot/jar (thumbed rim)	
	1/2	H2	EMS	Cooking pot/jar	
	1/13	H7	EMSHX	Cooking pot/jar (thumbed rim)	
	1/10	H15	EMSHX	Jar	

Table 10 Sherds that might merit illustration

Box	Sherd	Fabric	Form	Comment
1	P1.9	SSWX	Cooking pot/jar	
1	???	EMSSX	Cooking pot/jar	Not marked with context no. but possibly 3.1
	P2.5	SSWX	Cooking pot/jar	
5	P3.1	EMSSX	Cooking pot/jar	Large pot; display; reconstruct
5	Ditch J2	EMSHX?	Cooking pot/jar (everted rim, very sagging base)	display
5	P19.1	SSWX	Cooking pot/jar, applied strip	
3	1.19	SSWX	Cooking pot/jar	
3	P1.20	EMSHX	Cooking pot/jar	
3	P1.10		Cooking pot/jar	
3	P1.11		Cooking pot/jar	
3	P1.12		Cooking pot/jar	
3	P1.13		Cooking pot/jar	
3	P1.14		Cooking pot/jar	
3	P1.15		Cooking pot/jar	
3	P1.16		Cooking pot/jar	
3	P1.17		Cooking pot/jar	
3	P1.18		Cooking pot/jar	
3	Q1	EMSHX	Dish	
3	Q2	ESUR?	Dish?	
4	P3.3	EMSSX	Cooking pot/jar	
	P12.2	EMSHX	Cooking pot/jar	
	P12.1	EMSHX/SSWX	Cooking pot/jar	
	P13.11	EMGRX	Cooking pot/jar	
	P13.14	EMSX	Cooking pot/jar	
	P.13	EMSHX	Cooking pot/jar; applied cordon	2 pots?
2	P14.1	EMSSX	Cooking pot/jar	
2	G1	SSWX	Cooking pot/jar	
	G7	EMSHX	Dish?	
	G9	SSWX	Cooking pot/jar	
	G20	EMSHX/SSWX	Cooking pot/jar	