EXCAVATIONS AT WEST HAM BUS GARAGE

GREENGATE STREET, PLAISTOW

HW-BG 93

25/2/93 - 12/3/93

LEVEL III REPORT

BY P.R.THRALE

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ABSTRACT

Excavations at West Ham Bus Garage revealed the west end of an eighteenth century brick building to the north east of the site and a north west running nineteenth century wall to the south of the site.

INTRODUCTION

Between the twenty fifth of Febuary and the twelth of March 1993 trial excavations were carried out at West Ham Bus Garage, Greengate Street, Plaistow. These excavations were funded by London Transport Properties and conducted by fieldstaff of the Passmore Edwards Museum.

This site most recently, as the name indicates, was in use as a bus garage. Preceding this site use it was functioning as a tram depot. Both these uses had involved the extensive construction of deep inspection pits on the site.

The site history as far as it could be traced in archival sources indicates that before its association with transport the site was only partially occupied. Towards the north east of the site there were buildings present (see Rocque 1746 and John James Survey of 1742, Plaistow Ward, West Ham Memorial Documents) and to the south east was the site of Essex House, a large sixteenth century building. Along the east of the site ran a known medieval street (see Rocque 1746).

The remaider of the site was open ground, an orchard as indicated on Rocques map of 1746 and later as a market garden in a street directory of 1896-97 (Brooker J. 1986).

Because of the possition of known Post Medieval occupation and the extensive amount of destruction of relevant deposits caused by inspection pits it was decided that the excavations should be concentrated as close to the north east and south east corners of the site as possible, in an attempt to locate these buildings, see figure 1.

Four trenches were opened by mechanical digger then excavated and recorded by archaeologists using indexed context sheets and single and multi-context planning based on a five meter grid.

The supervisor was Mr Paul Thrale and the site was negociated by the site director, Dr.Frank Meddens of the Passmore Edwards Museum.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author and Passmore Edwards Museum would like to thank London Transport Properties who sponsored the excavation and Mr. D. Whipp of the Mills and Whipp partnership. Additionally, I would like to thank Mr. Steve Waltho for advice and assistance with health and safety on site. Mr. A. Douglas, Mr. N. Truckle and Mr. K. Sable for identifying the finds. Finally, the field staff, Paul Thatcher, Ray Sinclair, Mark Bell and Sean Tamblyn.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS TRENCH 1. GROUP 1.1 27 - Fill 23 - Layer 8 - Layer 16 - Layer Ι Ι Ι 28 - Cut 6 - Layer 17 - Pipe Ι 72 - Cut levels O.D. highest - lowest Fill, concrete 27 _ +7.77 28 - Cut, irregular, linear drain cut +7.72 Layer, light brown, sandy silt 23 -+7.93 6 — Layer, concrete +8.02 _ Layer, concrete 8 +7.81 - 7.71 16 - Layer, dark grey, silt with cess deposits +7.77 17 Pipe, _ metal +7.82 - 7.69 72 - Cut, vertical, linear cut for pipe 17 +7.82 - 7.62 Group 1.1 represents a modern ceramic drain and metalpipe and make up layers for the concrete slab. PLAN - 30 SECT. -CS - 1,1-2,5-6,13-16,25-26 BW - 1,2-3,14-17,26-27 PHASE I

GROUP 1.2

		22 - Wall	14 - Wall	7 –
Wall	21 - Wall	I	I	I
I		т	т	Т
I		_		[_]
I		I		Ţ
19		10		9
		I		I
Ι		73 - Cut	74 -	- Cut
75 – C	Cut			

levels O.D.

highest - lowest 61 -Wall, yellow brick N/W running +7.95 22 -Wall,yellow brick N/E running +7.80 - 7.73 Foundation, concrete 10 +7.73 S/W brick 14 _ Wall,yellow corner +7.68 7 Wall,yellow brick N/W running +7.95 9 Foundation, concrete +7.75 - Wall, yellow brick N/E running 21 +7.81 - 7.72 19 Foundation, concrete +7.72 73 – Cut, vertical sides, linear shape +7.73 Cut, vertical sides, linear 74 shape +7.72 75 -Cut, vertical sides, linear shape +7.72

Group 1.2 represents the foundations and lower brick courses of a building probably associated with a N/E running sub-station.

PLAN - 30 SECT. -CS - 1,1-2,5-6,13-16,21-26 BW - 1,2-3,6-7,14-17,22-27, PHASE II

GROUP 1.3

25	30	35	26	29	24	13
I	I	II	I	I	I	I
⊥ 77	I	II	I	I	I	76
I	I	II	_I		I	II
	I I	I	I	I	I	I
I 15	32	3	4		31	12
тJ	I 78	I 79		I 80		

levels O.D.

highest - lowest

Layer, cobbled surface 30 +7.85 - 7.65 35 - Layer, light grey, mortar +7.72 26 – Layer, dark grey, tiled surface +7.75 - 7.68 brick, 32 - Wall, red N/E running +7.82 brick, 34 -Wall, red N/W running +7.74 - 7.67 29 - Layer, mixed cobble and tile surface +7.75 - 7.55 24 - Layer, orange brown brick rubble and mortar +7.76 - 7.36 31 -Wall, red brick, N/W running +7.74 Wall, red brick, N/E 13 _ running +7.87 25 red brick, N/W Wall, running +7.72 15 - Layer, dark grey brown, silty clay +7.68 _ linear, 76 Cut, not excavated +7.66 77 _ Cut, linear, not excavated +7.71 78 linear, excavated Cut, not -+7.76 linear, 79 — Cut, not excavated +7.73 _ Cut, linear, 80 not excavated +7.74 12 - Layer, dark grey brown, silty clay +7.71

Group 1.3 represents cobble, brick, mortar and tile surfaces and three brick walls.

PLAN - 30 CS - 1,1-2,5-6,13-16,21-26 17,22-27 PHASE III SECT.-BW - 1,2-3,6-7,14GROUP 1.4 18 - Layer 20 - Layer levels O.D. highest - lowest 18 - Layer, dark grey, sandy silt, not excavated +7.62 20 - Layer, Dark grey, sandy silt, not excavated +7.71 Group 1.4 represents two silt deposits containing organic cess material. Both layers are cut by the brick and concrete structure described in group 1.2, and are probably origionally the same deposit. PLAN - 30 SECT. -CS - 1,5-6,21-26 BW - 1,6-7,22-27 PHASE III GROUP 1.5 11 - Wall Т 81 - Cut levels O.D. highest - lowest Wall, red brick, N/E running 11 -+7.73 - 7.18 81 - Cut, linear, vertical sides +7.73 - 7.18 Group 1.5 represents a red brick wall running N/E beyond limit of excavation and truncated by wall 61 in west. Possibly part of 18th century building described in group 2.5 (see fig.2). PLAN - 30 SECT.-CS - 1,13-16,25-26 BW - 1,14-17,26-27 PHASE VI GROUP 1.6 60 - Layer Ι 62 - Layer levels O.D. highest - lowest 60 - Layer, dark grey, sand silt clay +7.36 - 7.06 62 - Layer, grey green, sand silt clay +7.06 - 6.66

Group 1.6 represents two layers of possible garden soil machine excavated and recorded in section only. PLAN - SECT.-CS - BW -

PHASE VII

GROUP 2.1 64 - Layer I 65 - Wall Ι 66 _ Foundation levels O.D. highest - lowest 64 - Layer, grey brown, clay gravel 64 +7.75 -Wall, yellow brick wall +8.05 - 7.75 -Foundation, 66 concrete +7.75 Group 2.1 represents a N/E running stucture cutting wall 33 and contempory with 20th century stucture in trench 1, see group 1.2. PLAN -SECT.-CS - 1,3-4,31-32. 2,12-14 BW - 1,4-5,35-36. 2,12-13 PHASE II Group 2.2 38 - Layer Ι 2 - Fill Ι 3 - Cut levels O.D. highest - lowest Layer, red brick surface 38 -+7.81 - 7.66 2 - Fill, light yellow, chalk sand mortar +7.66 - 7.47 3 – Cut, concave, linear +7.86 - 7.47 Group 2.2 represents the western edge of a cut through brick surface 1, the cut was then filled with brick and mortar rubble and the surface relaid. PLAN - 3 SECT.-CS - 1,17-20 BW - 1,18-21 PHASE III

TRENCH 2

Group 2.3 1 - Layer Ι 4 - Layer Ι 37 - Wall levels O.D. highest - lowest 1 - Layer, red brick surtace +7.86 - 7.81 4 - Layer, cream grey, sandy mortar +7.87 - 7.52 37 - Wall, N/E running red brick +7.87 - 7.72 Group 2.3 represents an irregular patterned brick surface overlying a mortar layer and two courses of bricks running $\ensuremath{\mathsf{N/E}}$, probably acting as a foundation for the brick surface. PLAN - 1 , 3 SECT.-CS - 1,7-12 BW - 1,8-13 PHASE III GROUP 2.4 67 - Layer levels O.D. highest - lowest 67 - Layer, grey green, sand clay silt +7.75 - 7.45 Group 2.4 represents a layer similar to layer 36 but deposited after construction of wall 5 and 33. PLAN -SECT.-CS -BW -PHASE V

GROUP 2.5

levels O.D.

highest - lowest

33 - Wall, red brick, N/E and N/W running +7.86 - 7.12 5 - Wall, red brick, N/E running +7.76 - 7.12 68 - Cut, linear, vertical, N/E running +7.45 - 7.14

Group 2.5 represents the south west side of a north west running early 18th century building. The structure has two internal buttresses on the south wall, either a strengthening because of the ground sloping to the south or a foundation support for a fire place. The internal north west corner was located by excavating west beyond the original limit of excavation (see fig.2).

PLAN - 5 , 33 SECT.-CS - 1,27-36 2,1-13 BW - 1,28-36 2,2-13 PHASE VI

GROUP 2.6

36 - Layer

levels O.D.

highest - lowest

36 - Layer, dark grey green, sand silt clay +7.45 - 6.85

Group 2.6 represents a layer of possible garden soil cut by walls 33 and 5.

PLAN -	SECT
CS -	BW -
PHASE VII	

GROUP 2.7 69 - Layer T 70 - Layer highest - lowest 69 - Layer, orange brown, silt sand clay +6.85 - 6.25 70 - Layer, cream brown, clay sand flint gravel +6.25 Group 2.7 represents a layer of natural brickearth and natural gravel. PLAN - SECT.-CS - BW -PHASE VIII GROUP 3.1 55 - Layer Ι 56 - Layer levels O.D. highest - lowest 55 - Layer, concrete slab and make up layer +8.35 - 7.75 - layer, black, sand clay silt 56 +7.75 - 7.42 Group 3.1 represents a modern concrete slab and its make up layer overlying a dark silt layer. SECT.- 2 PLAN -CS - 2,21-30 BW - 2,20-28 PHASE I Group 3.2 57 - Layer levels O.D. highest - lowest 57 - Layer, green brown, sand clay silt +7.59 - 7.07 Group 3.2 represents a layer of possible garden soil. PLAN -SECT.- 2 CS - 2,21-30 BW - 2,20-28 PHASE VII Group 3.3 58 - Layer Ι 59 - Layer levels O.D. highest - lowest 58 - Layer, orange brown, sand silt clay +7.09 - 6.70 59 - Layer, light orange brown, clay sand flint gravel +6.82 Group 3.3 represents a layer of natural brickearth and natural gravel.

TRENCH 3

23

PLAN -CS - 21-30 PHASE VIII

SECT.- 2 BW - 20-28

TRENCH 4 GROUP 4.1 48 - Layer Ι 54 - Layer levels O.D. highest - lowest 48 - Layer, concrete slab and make up layer +8.29 - 7.89 54 - Layer, brick tile and concrete rubble +8.00 - 7.02 Group 4.1 represents the concrete slab and its make up layers. Layer 54 is the remains of an earlier concrete slab and make up layer which has been disturbed during the construction of the existing slab 48. PLAN -SECT.- 1 CS - 2,15-16 BW - 14-15 PHASE I Group 4.2 49 - Layer I 50 - Layer I 40 - Layer Ι 51 - Layer Т 52 - Laver levels O.D. highest - lowest 49 - Layer, dark grey, sand clay silt +7.99 - 7.61 50 - Layer, dark green brown, sand clay silt +7.70 - 7.49 40 - Layer, orange, silty clay brick mortar +7.42 - 7.00 51 - Layer, grey green, sand clay silt +7.61 - 7.33 52 - Layer, grey, sand clay silt +7.33 - 7.19 Group 4.2 represents a number of layers overlying drain 44 and wall 39. SECT.- 1 PLAN -CS - 2,15-16 BW - 2,14-15

PHASE III

Group 4.3

63 - Fill Ι 43 - Fill Ι 47 - Fill Ι 44 - Drain Ι 45 - Cut Ι 39 - Wall levels O.D. highest - lowest 63 – Fill, dark grey, clay silt +7.16 - 6.93 -Fill, grey, clay 43 silt +7.19 - 6.91 47 - Fill, dark grey, sand silt +6.96 - 6.82 44- Drain, made of pantiles, bricks, chimney pot+7.19- 6.91 45 - Cut, linear, vertical sides +7.19 - 6.91 39 -Wall, brick, running N/W +7.84 - 7.06 Group 4.3 represents a N/E running drain made of roof tiles, brick and a chimney pot passing through a purpose built arch in wall 39 (see fig.3). PLAN - 44, 45, 39 SECT.-CS - 2,31-34 BW - 2,31-34 PHASE IV Group 4.4 46 - Fill Т 71 - Cut levels O.D. highest - lowest 46 - Fill, red brown, brick tile mortar +7.02 - 6.82 71 - Cut, linear, shallow sloping side +7.02 - 6.82

Group 4.4 represents a shallow N/S running cut into brickearth, filled with a layer of brick tile and mortar used as a foundation for wall 39.

PLAN - 46, 71 SECT.- 1 CS - 2,31-34 BW - 2,29-34 PHASE IV

Group 4.5 53 - Layer levels O.D. highest - lowest 53 - Layer, brown green, clay silt +7.43 - 7.19 Group 4.5 represents a layer of possible garden soil PLAN -SECT.- 1 CS -BW -PHASE VII Group 4.6 41 - Layer Ι 42 - Layer levels O.D. highest - lowest 41 - Layer, orange brown, sand silt clay +6.99 - 6.76 42 - Layer, blue grey, sandy flint gravel +6.76 Group 4.6 represents a layer of natural brickearth 41 overlying natural gravel 42. PLAN - 41 SECT.- 1 CS - 2,19-20,31-34 BW - 2,18-19,29-34 PHASE VIII

It has been possible to determine seven distinct phases of activity.

PHASE I

This phase consists of groups 1.1, 3.1 and 4.1 . These represent a much repaired concrete slab with a number of service pipes running beneath. This phase represents the sites use as a bus depot from 1960 onwards.

PHASE II

This phase consists of groups 1.2 and 2.1 which represents a yellow brick and concrete foundationed building, dated 1937-1940. This represents a substation located to the north east of the site and constructed during the modification of the tram depot for use by trolley buses (VCH, vi, 63 and L.P.T.Board. Drawing No.R.S.17D-377).

PHASE III

This phase consists of groups 1.3, 1.4, 2.2, 2.3 and 4.2. These represent cobbled, tiled and brick surfaces contemporary with the sites use as a tram depot between 1906 and 1937.

PHASE IV

This phase consists of groups 4.3 and 4.4 which represent a N/W running brick wall and contemporary drain structure located to the south of the site.

PHASE V

This phase consists of group 2.4 and represents a layer of possible garden soil overlying layer 36 and the brick building in group 2.5.

PHASE VI

This phase consists of groups 1.5 and 2.5 which represents the south west side of a rectangular brick structure with two associated buttresses.

PHASE VII

This phase consists of groups 1.6, 2.6, 3.2 and 4.5. These represent a layer of garden soil present in all four trenches.

PHASE VIII

This phase consists of groups 2.7, 3.3 and 4.6. These represent a layer of natural brickearth overlying a layer of natural gravel.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Prior to the development of the site, archaeological trial excavations were undertaken due to the proximity of Essex House and a known medieval street.

Two trenches were opened in the north east corner of the site in an attempt to locate any building activity as seen on Rocques map of 1746. Another two trenches were opened in the south east corner as close to the site of Essex House as possible.

In trenches 1 and 2, cobble, tile and brick surfaces relating to the sites use as a tram depot from 1906-1933 were uncovered. In both trenches these surfaces were truncated by the remains of a north east running brick and concrete structure,

most probably the sub-station built as part of the sites conversion to a trolley bus depot in 1933 (VCH, vi, 63).

In trench 2 the south west end of a 17th century brick building was uncovered. This may well be the building shown on Rocques map of 1746 and mentioned in John James Survey of 1742 (West Ham Memorial Documents, Plaistow Ward).

In trench 4 a north west running 18th-19th century brick wall and contemporary drain structure were found. A layer of garden soil was present in all four trenches suggesting that the site was used as an orchard as indicated on Rocques map of 1746 and later as a market garden as mentioned in a street directory of 1896-1897 (Brooker J. 1986). THE FINDS

Context 4. Layer.

29 sherds of transfer printed tile C19th 7 fragments of floor tile with burnt glaze surface 2 fragments of floor tile C19th broken floor tile with stamp 1 C19th fragments of burnt peg tile 2 1500 - 1900 1 sherd of flower pot 5 fragments of clay pipe including bowl C18th glass 9 fragments of C19th Context 44. Drain. complete 2 pantiles 1660 - c1800 1 re-used chimney pot Context 46. Layer. 1 sherd of Rhinish stoneware C17th fragments of clay pipe 3 C18th 5 fagments of bone
3 fragments of slate roof tile fragments of peg tile 6 1500 - 1900 sherd of Post Medieval Redware 1 1600 - 1800 Context 49. Layer. 2 sherds of stoneware C19th 1 sherd of Victorian china with guilding C19th sherds of Victorian china 4 C19th fragment of peg tile 1 1500 - 1900sherd of glass 1 - bottle C19th Context 50 2 sherds of porcelain sandwich plate C19th

2 sherds of glass C19th 1 sherd of Post-Medieval Redware 1600 - 1700 2 fragment of floor tile 1 fragment of bone 1 fragment of with pantile with complete nib 1660 - c1800 1 fragment of peg tile 1500 - 1900 Context 51 1 fragment of floor tile fragment of peg tile 1 1500 - 1900 2 fragments of flower pot 2 fragments of bone 1 fragment of drain pipe Context 54. Layer. fragment of Post Medieval Redware, Greenglaze 1 1600 - 1800fragment of Post Medieval Redware 1 1600 - 1800 1 fragment of stoneware - bottle neck C19th Context 63. Fill of Drain 44. 1 fragment of bone 1 fagment of clay pipe sherds of Victorian china 2 C19th fragment of glass 1 C19th 1 fragment of sandy mortar 4 fragments of brick 8 fragments of tile Unstratified Trench 2. 1 fragment of stock moulded brick from fire place C19th 1 fragment of floor tile with fiering fault

2 fragments of concrete

BUILDING MATERIAL

Context 4

Brick [3032], unfrogged, yellow speckling, frequent inclusions. Dimensions: 218/225/98-105mm Date: mid 18th century to early 19th century.

Brick [3033], unfrogged, frequent inclusions, no yellow speckling. Dimensions: 220/105/60mm

Date: mid 18th century to early 19th century.

Context 5 and 33

Brick [3032], re-used, unfrogged, indented borders, occassional inclusions, no yellow speckling. Dimensions: 200/108/63mm also 230/110/64mm Date: 18th century to early 19th century.

Brick[3033], re-used, unfrogged, indented borders, occassional inclusions, no yellow speckling. Dimensions: 230/110/63mm Date: 18th century to early 19th century.

Context 1.

Brick [3032], shallow frogged, sharp edges, yellow surface. Dimensions: 215/90/62mm and 220/107/62mm Date: 19th century.

Context 37.

Brick [3032], shallow frogged, sharp edges Dimensions: 200/108/63mm and 230/110/64mm Date: 19th century.

Brick [3033], unfrogged, occassional inclusions. Dimensions: 230/110/63mm Date: 17th century to early 19th century.

FINDS DISCUSSION

To the south of the site in trench 4, finds recovered from drain fill 63 and foundation layer 46, date wall 39 and contemporary drain 44 to the nineteenth century.

To the norh of the site in trench 2, the finds recovered from layer 4 date the backfill of the demolished building in group 2.5 to the nineteenth century. LEVEL III REGISTER

Context Group Phase			Plan		Section	n Photo
1		1		_		BW - 1,8-13
2.3	III	-				
2			_		CS -	1,7-12
2.2	III					
3 2.2	III	3		—		BW - 1,18-21
	± ± ±				cs -	1,17-20
4 2.3	III		4		-	-
5		5				BW - 1,32-34
2.5	VI					0 0 0
					cs -	2,2-3 1,27-30,34-36
c			~ ~			2,2-3
6 1.1	I		30		-	_
7			30		-	-
1.2 8	II		8		_	_
1.1	I		0			
9	T T		30		-	-
1.2 10	II		30		-	_
1.2	II					
11 1.5	V		30		-	_
12			30		-	-
1.3 13	III		30		_	_
1.3	III					
14 1.2	II		30		-	-
15			30		-	_
1.3 16	III		30			
1.1	I		30		-	_
17	Ŧ		30		-	-
1.1 18	I		30		_	_
1.4	III					
19 1.2	II		30		-	_
20			30		-	-
1.4 21	III		30		_	_
1.2	II					
22 1.2	II		30		-	-
23	<u>т</u> т		30		-	-
1.1 24	I		20			
24 1.3	III		30		-	-

25	ттт		30		-	-
1.3 26	III		30		_	-
1.3 27	III		30		_	-
1.1 28	I		_		_	-
1.1	I		20			
29 1.3	III		30		-	_
30 1.3	III		30		_	-
31			30		_	_
1.3 32	III		30		_	_
1.3 33	III	2.2				
2.5	VI	33		-		BW - 1,35-36
						2,12-13 1,31-33,37 2,12-14
34			30		-	-
1.3 35	III		30		_	_
1.3	III					
36 2.6	VII		_		_	-
37			-		-	-
2.3 38	III		38		_	_
2.2 39	III	20				2 16 17 20 20
39 4.3	IV	39	-		BW -	2,16-17,29-30,
40	ттт	40		1	cs -	33-34 2,17-18,33-34 BW - 2,14-15
4.2	III				cs -	2,15-16

41		41		_	_
4.6	VIII		1		0 1 0
42 4.6	VIII	42	1	BW -	2,19
				CS - 2,20	
43 4.3	IV	-		-	-
44	τv	44	1	BW - 2,	31-34
4.3	IV			CS - 2,31-34	
45		-		-	_
4.3	IV	1.0			
46 4.4	IV	46		_	-
47		47		-	-
4.3 48	IV	_		1	_
4.1	I				
49 4.2	III	-		1	-
50	± ± ±	_		1	-
4.2	III			1	
51 4.2	III	—		1	-
52		_		1	_
4.2 53	III	_		1	_
4.5	VII			-	
54 4.1	I	-		-	_
55	±	-		2	_
3.1 56	I			2	_
3.1	I			Ζ.	
57	57 7 T	-		2	-
3.2 58	VII	_		2	_
3.3	VIII				
59 3.3	VIII	_		2	_
60		-		-	-
1.6 61	VI	_		_	_
1.2	II				
62 1.6	Т 7 Т	-		-	-
1.6 63	VI	_		-	_
4.3	IV				
64 2.1	II	-		-	_
65		_		-	_
2.1 66	II	_		_	_
2.1	II				
67 2.4	V	_		-	_
68	v	_		_	_
2.5	VI				

69		_	-	_
2.7	VIII			
70		-	-	-
2.7	VIII			
71		-	-	-
4.4	IV			
72		-	-	-
1.1	I			
73		-	-	-
1.2	II			
74		-	-	-
1.2	II			
75		-	-	-
1.2	II			
76		-	_	-
1.3	III			
77		_	-	-
1.3	III			
78	TTT	-	-	-
1.3	III			
79 1 2	ттт	-	—	-
1.3 80	III			
1.3	ттт	_	_	-
1.3 81	III	_	_	_
o⊥ 1.5	V	-	_	-
Τ•Ο	V			

Street Directory of 1896-1897 (Brooker J. 1986).

John James Survey of 1742 (West Ham Memorial Documents, Plaistow Ward).

John Rocque's map of 1746.

Victoria County History, vi,63.