Report on Evaluation at Hood House, Woodford Bridge.
London Borough of Redbridge.

IG-HH 91.

LDPEM/ACIG/144.

Level III Report.

M.Beasley.

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Level III Report.

M. Beasley.

Introduction.

Excavations at Hood House, Woodford Bridge were conducted by members of the Passmore Edwards Museum excavation staff between the 24th. of October 1991, and the 31st. October 1991. The evaluation took the form of a resistivity survey, borehole sampling, and controlled excavation.

The excavation designed to assess archaeological deposits, specifically the possibility of a Roman road on the site of a Barnados Homes development.

The project was negotiated for, and directed by, Dr. F. Meddens, and funded by Barnados Property Services.

Abstract.

The investigation of the site revealed deposits of 19th. and 20th. century date, down to natural soil strata.

Method.

Resistivity survey.

The resistivity survey was conducted using the museums' Geoscan RM 15 instrument, in conjunction with Geoplot software. A total area of 1480 square metres of the site, at a sample interval of 1.0m. was covered.

Borehole Survey.

The coring was conducted by members of the Museum of London, Department of Urban Archaeology on behalf of the Passmore Edwards Museum. Twelve boreholes were drilled at 5m. intervals to a depth of 2m., across the site on a north-south axis.

Controlled excavation.

One 1m. x 3m. trench was sited on an anomaly revealed by the resistivity survey. The trench was hand dug to a limit of 1.10m., at which point the natural deposits were reached. Excavation revealed layers of modern dumped material, layers (1), (2), (3), (4), and (5). These overlay two layers of 19th. century deposits, layer (6) and (9). Layer (9) was cut by a linear cut, fill (7), cut (8). These deposits overlay a brickearth natural.

Matrix:

Trench 1.

1
I
2
I
3
I
4
I
5
I
6
I
7
I
8
I
9
I
10

Group Discussion.

group 1a.	description	levels A.O.D. max.	min.
1	layer;grey brown clay and silt	27.970m.	-27.960m.
2	layer;light brown sandy silt clay	27.960m.	-27.880m.
3	layer;brown black sandy silt clay	27.880m.	-27.840m.
4	layer;dark yellow brown silt clay	27.840m.	-27.315m.
5	layer;grey black sandy silt clay	27.315m.	-27.245m.

1
I
2
I
3
I
4
I
5

Dump layers and topsoil of 20th. century date.

Colour Slide: 1.4, 1.5
Black and White: 1.4, 1.5
Plan: -- Section: 1
Phase 4.

2a

6	layer;grey black sandy clay	27.245m.	-27.160m.

6

Possibly natural deposition layer of 19th. century date.

C/S: 1.4, 1.5
B/W: 1.4, 1.5
Plan: -- Section 1
Phase 3

3a.

7	fill;grey brown silt clay	27.020m.	-26.810m.
8	cut;linear (?), straight sides, flat bottom, dimensions 1m. x 1m.	27.020m.	-26.810m.
9	layer;grey brown sandy silt clay	27.160m.	-26.850m.

7
I
8
I

9

Possibly linear fill and cut, cutting garden layer of 19th. century date

C/S: 1.2 - 1.5
B/W: 1.2 - 1.5
Plan: 8 Section: 1
Phase 2.

4a.
10 layer;orange brown silt clay 26.850m.--------

10

Natural brickearth.

C/S:1.4, 1.5
B/W:1.4, 1.5
Plan: -- Section: 1

Phase 1

Phasing Discussion.

Phase 1.
consists of group 4a.

This group represents the lowest and earliest phase on the site. It represents the natural brickearth, and as such is undateable.

Phase 2.
Consists of group 3a.

This group represents a probable garden layer of 19th. century date, cut by a possibly linear cut, running east-west. This overlies the brickearth of phase 1.

Phase 3.
Consists of group 2a.

This group represents further 19th. century build-up on the site, in the form of a black malodorous sandy clay deposit. This overlies the garden layers of phase 2.

Phase 4.
Contains group 1a.

This group represents 20th. century dumping on the site, predominately of orange clay. These dumps contained much demolition rubble in the shape of broken bricks. These dump layers overlie the deposition layer of phase 3.

Resistivity Survey Report.

The survey was conducted using a Geoscan RM 15 Basic resistivity meter with Twin array, and a probe separation of 1m. Five 20m. x 20m. grids were surveyed using a zig-zag traverse, with 1m. traverse and sample intervals. Obstructions were dummy-logged.

The results of the survey were inconclusive, apparently only showing the topography of the terrain. Dot density plots revealed o clear contacts, and certainly none that were consistent with the ditches and surfacing of a Roman road.

One possible anomaly perceived after processing was investigated in trench 1. The results of this are shown above. It seems unlikely however that the cut excavated in the trench can be the possible linear feature shown on the resistivity plot, as the depth at which it was excavated , along with its size means that it would be unlikely to have been picked up by the equipment.

The uniformity of the plot over the entire site suggests that the modern clay dumps revealed in trench 1 continue over the whole site. The band of high resistance contacts running north-west to south-east across the plot is likely to be the result of of water distribution at the foot of the slight ridge discernible on the ground, rather than any archaeological feature.

Borehole Report.

On 29/10/91, a team from the Department of Urban Archaeology were seconded to the Passmore Edwards Museum to drill a total of 12 auger holes as part of an evaluation of the Hood House site at Woodford Bridge. The site appeared to be located on a natural hillock sloping away to the south and west. A Roman road, aligned east-west, was thought to run across it. A resistivity survey had indicated that a possible ditch survived on site, but no firm evidence of a road surface was apparent. Previous sightings of the road were at Claybury hospital, further west of the site, in the 1960's. The purpose of the auger holes was to detect any surviving portion of the road.

Twelve positions were laid out by the Passmore Edwards Museum team at Hood House; all were drilled except number 9, which appeared to have concrete or other such material which prevented drilling. The boreholes were spaced at 5 metre intervals along the north/south axis of the site (number 1 starting at the northern end), 15 metres east of the grid baseline. A maximum depth of 2 meters for each auger hole was stipulated.

Summary.

The two holes in the northernmost part of the site (1 and 2) showed a similar sequence of c.1.00m. of top soil followed by c. 1.00m. of natural clay. All auger holes drilled to the south of these showed that considerable disturbance, of up to a metre at the top of the sequence, had taken place in recent times, possibly associated with the playground formerly on the site, or the construction of buildings nearby.

Some potentially archaeological features were revealed, however. In auger hole 4, a grey silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks was recorded 1.00m. beneath the ground surface, in which a sherd of medieval pottery was found. In auger hole 6, a similar material was recorded 0.90m. beneath the ground surface. Other deposits that may represent the backfill of features were also found in auger holes 7, 8, and 10 between c. 0.70m. and 1.00m. beneath the ground level. The two southernmost holes, 11 and 12, were located on the southern slope of the hill and were 1.00m. deep. No possible archaeological features were observed in the cores, which appear to show a mixed silt and rubble dump of material above natural clays.

In conclusion, recent disturbance has occurred across most of the site, probably truncating any surviving archaeological features. No deposits that can be interpreted as a Roman road were observed in any of the auger holes. It is possible, however, that some features may survive cutting into the natural clays.

- S. Gibson, Dept. of Urban Archaeology.

Interpretation.

The combination of techniques used during the course of the evaluation resulted in coverage in general of the whole site. Detailed coverage was restricted to a single excavation trench, sited to examine a possible anomaly revealed by the resistivity survey of the site.

Comparison of the excavation and augering results show a marked similarity of stratigraphy, especially in auger hole 4, the closest to trench 1. The sequence of mixed material to a depth of c. 0.80m. can be related to the sequence of layers (1), (2), (3), (4), and (5) in trench 1. The silt with charcoal flecks and brick/tile fragments at 0.08m. below ground surface may be comparable to layers (6) or (9), interpreted as being 19th. century deposits. The grey silt clay beneath this may indeed be medieval, as the recovered sherd suggests, though considering the generally disturbed nature of the stratigraphy it may be redeposited.

The other eleven auger holes are inconclusive, showing no direct parallels through the profiles, other than their being interpreted as disturbed ground. In conjunction with the results of the resistivity survey this suggests that the entire site is covered with redeposited material to a fairly consistent 1.0m. depth.

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Level II Index.

Context	Plan	Section	C/S	B/W
1	--	1	1.4,5	1.4,5
2	--	1	1.4,5	1.4,5
3	--	1	1.4,5	1.4,5
4	--	1	1.4,5	1.4,5
5	--	1	1.4,5	1.4,5
6	--	1	1.4,5	1.4,5
7	--	1	1.4,5	1.4,5
8	8	1	1.2-5	1.2-5
9	--	1	1.4,5	1.4,5
10	--	1	1.4,5	1.4,5

Finds List.

context 1.

1	x	Transfer Printed ware	19th.
1	x	Brown glazed Post-medieval red ware	1600-1800
1	x	Amorphous burnt clay	undated

context 3.

1	x	plastic	20th.
2	x	unidentified objects	undated
11	x	Fe fragments; hooks or trappings	undated
2	x	unidentified objects	undated
1	x	rib of small ungulate; with evidence of butchery	undated
2	x	bottle glass	undated
5	x	plant pot	19th.
1	x	porcelain electricity fitting	20th.
2	x	Transfer Printed ware	19th.
1	x	Victorian China	19th.
1	x	brown glazed Post-medieval red ware, possibly a puzzle jug	18th.
1	x	Porcelain	19th.
5	x	white kaolin pipe stems, unmarked	1600-1900

context 4.

2	x	oyster shell	undated
1	x	white kaolin pipe bowl fragment	18th.
1	x	tin glazed ware	1600-1800
2	x	blue Creamware	early 19th.
1	x	Transfer Printed ware	19th.
2	x	porcelain	19th.
1	x	lateBorderware	17th.
1	x	unidentified pottery	19th.
1	x	blue glazed tile	20th.
1	x	Late-medieval Sandy ware handle	14th.
1	x	peg tile	1600-1900
5	x	Late-medieval red ware	13th./14th.
5	x	Post-medieval red ware	1600-1800
1	x	unidentified	undated

context 5.

1	x	porcelain	19th.

1	x	unidentified	undated

context 6.

2	x	Fe wire	undated
1	x	sheep/goat radius	undated
1	x	sheep/goat ulna	undated
4	x	bottle glass	19th./20th.
4	x	window glass	19th./20th.
1	x	bottle stopper	19th./20th.
1	x	highly eroded glass	undated
2	x	white kaolin pipe stem	mid 17th.
2	x	brown glazed Post-medieval red ware prob.	late 17th.
2	x	late London Stoneware	19th.
1	x	brown glazed Post-medieval red ware	1600-1800
19	x	plant pot	19th.
3	x	Post-medieval red ware; incised LT(D?)	1600-1900
3	x	Transfer Printed ware	19th.
2	x	Porcelain	19th.
3	x	Victorian China	19th.
2	x	blue Creamware	early 19th.
1	x	peg tile	undated

context 7.

1	x	Fe object; possible bolt	undated
11	x	plant pot	19th.
2	x	peg tile	1600-1800
2	x	Victorian China	19th.
1	x	white kaolin pipe stem	19th.
1	x	white kaolin pipe stem	1600-1900

context 9.

1	x	amorphous burnt clay	undated
1	x	fire cracked pebble	undated
1	x	sheep/goat scapula	undated
1	x	bottle top	19th.
13	x	plant pot	19th.
2	x	Post-medieval red ware	1600-1800
1	x	English Stoneware	18th.
3	x	brown glazed Post-medieval red ware	prob. 17th.
2	x	eroded unidentified	undated
3	x	Victorian China	19th.
1	x	white kaolin pipe stem	19th.

Auger hole 4.

3	x	Frechen/Raeren imported Stoneware	1350-1600

Unstratified.

1	x	tile; probably peg tile	1600-1900
1	x	plant pot rim	19th.
3	x	Post-medieval red ware	1600-1800
2	x	Victorian China	19th.

Finds Discussion.

Context 1.

The finds from this layer consist of a sherd of Transfer Printed ware, and a sherd of Post-Medieval red ware. It is likely that, as the context represents topsoil, the finds from this layer are residual.

Context 3.

The finds from this layer suggest a 19th. century date for the context. The presence of a piece of plastic, and an electric light fitting may suggest that the layer is twentieth century dump material.

Context 4.

The finds from this layer represent a broad spread of periods, from the 14th. century to the present, and as such must be considered as residual finds in a layer of dumped material.

Context 5.

The one identifiable find from this context would suggest a 19th. century date.

Context 6.

The finds in this context are mostly of 19th century date, with few sherds of earlier origins, these consisting of two sherds and two pipe stems of 17th. century date. The presence of these could be attributed to gardening activities in the 19th. century, and are consequently probably residual.

Context 7.

The date ranges of the few finds in this context would suggest a 19th. century date for this context also.

Context 9.

The finds from context 9 suggest a 19th. century date for the layer. The earlier sherds, 17th. and 18th. century red ware, may be indicative of gardening activities, and therefore residual.

Auger Hole 4

The finds recovered from auger hole 4 would suggest that earlier deposits are present. However, given the evident disturbance of the site it is perhaps reasonable to suggest that they may be residual.

Unstratified Finds.

The unstratified finds conform to the general trend of 19th. century spread recovered from other