

Trench Phasing.

Trench 1.

Trench Phase 1.1; consists of Groups 1c, 1d.

This consists of three post holes, one stake hole, and a natural feature, all cutting natural gravel. The Trench Phase probably dates to the Middle Bronze Age. The earliest materials on the site consist of re-deposited Mesolithic and Neolithic lithics.

Trench Phase 1.2; consists of Groups 1e, 1f, 1g.

This phase consists of a linear ditch, with two probable re-cuts, with the original spoil banks. This is cut through the natural gravel, and dates to the Romano-British period.

Trench Phase 1.2; consists of Group 1b.

This is the next phase in the trench and consists of plough-soil of Post-Medieval date. This overlies the features of Trench Phase 1.1.

Trench Phase 1.3; consists of Group 1a.

This is the final phase, consisting of two cuts and topsoil of 20th. century date overlying the deposits of Trench Phase 1.2.

Trench 2.

Trench Phase 2.1; consists of Groups 2b, 2e, 2f, 2g, 2h.

The first phase in the trench, this represents features of Middle Bronze Age date cut into natural gravel. The features are composed of a line of four post holes, a line of five post holes, pits, stake holes, and natural features.

Trench Phase 2.2; consists of Group 2c.

This represents plough-soil of Post-Medieval date overlying the features of Trench Phase 2.1.

Trench Phase 2.3; consists of Group 2b.

This group represents 19th. century activity in the trench. It consists of a linear ditch and linear mole drain.

Trench Phase 2.4 consists of Group 2a.

This represents topsoil of 20th. century date, overlying the deposits of Trench Phase 2.3, and forms the last phase in the trench. Trench 3.

Trench Phase 3.1; consists of Groups 3d, 3e.

This is the earliest phase in the trench and represents the natural gravel and a natural feature. The phase is undated.

Trench Phase 3.2; consists of Group 3c.

Trench Phase 3.2 consists of Post-Medieval plough-soil overlying the deposits of Trench Phase 3.1.

Trench Phase 3.3; consists of Group 3b.

This phase represents 19th. century activity in the trench, in the form of a linear mole drain.

Trench Phase 3.4; consists of Group 3a.

This phase is the latest in the trench and represents 20th. century topsoil overlying the deposits of Trench Phase 3.3.

Trench 4.

Trench Phase 4.1; consists of Group 4d.

The first phase in Trench 4, this group represents two post holes cutting natural gravel. It is thought the Trench Phase has a Middle Bronze Age date.

Trench Phase 4.2; consists of Group 4c.

This phase represents two linear ditches of Post-Medieval date. It overlies the deposits of the previous Trench Phase.

Trench Phase 4.3; consists of Group 4b.

This phase overlies the deposits of the previous Trench Phase and represents plough-soil of 19th. century date.

Trench Phase 4.4; consists of Group 4a.

This is the latest phase in Trench 4, consisting of 20th. century topsoil.

Trench 5.

Trench Phase 5.1; consists of Groups 5g, 5h.

This is the earliest phase in Trench 5. It represents Post-Medieval make-up.

Trench Phase 5.2; consists of Group 5f.

This group represents a Post-Medieval brick and cobble surface, possibly a road or courtyard surface. It overlies the dump deposits of Trench Phase 5.1.

Trench Phase 5.3; consists of Groups 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 5e.

This is the last and largest group of contexts in the trench, and represents 20th. century activity. The groups consist of service cuts, rubble make-up, and topsoil. These deposits overlie the probable roadway in the previous Trench Phase.

Trench 6.

Trench not recorded.

Trench 7.

Trench Phase 7.1; consists of Group 7c.

This group represents 19th. century activity in the trench. It consists of a linear brick wall, as yet with no interpretation.

Trench Phase 7.2; consists of Group 7b.

This phase represents further 19th. century activity. It consists of a deep deposit of blue grey clay, probably deposited by water, overlying the wall in Trench Phase 7.1. No interpretation exists as yet for this deposit.

Trench Phase 7.3; consists of Group 7a.

This is the final phase in the trench. It comprises a layer of concrete screed, overlying the clay of Trench Phase 7.2. It dates to the 20th. century.

Trench 8.

Trench Phase 8.1; consists of Groups 8d, 8e, 8f, 8g, 8h, 8i.

This phase represents the major phase of activity in Trench 8. It is composed of features of Middle Bronze Age date, mainly in the form of numerous pits. The phase also includes structural elements of the settlement in the form of two post hole lines, and a fence or palisade line. There is also evidence for a hedge or tree line.

Trench Phase 8.2; consists of Group 8c.

This phase represents the 19th. century activity in the trench. It is composed of Post-Medieval plough-soil cut by linear mole drains. The deposits overlie those of Trench Phase 8.1.

Trench Phase 8.3; consists of Groups 8a, 8b.

This is the latest phase of activity in the trench, and represents topsoil and a cut of 20th. century date.

Trench 9.

Trench Phase 9.1; consists of Group 9c.

This phase is the earliest phase in Trench 9. It consists of fire deposits and post holes cutting natural silt. The phase has a Middle Bronze Age date.

Trench Phase 9.2; consists of Group 9b.

The phase represents plough-soil overlying the deposits of

Trench Phase 9.1, cut by three linear mole drains. The phase dates to the 19th. century.

Trench Phase 9.3; consists of Group 9a.

This is the latest phase in the trench and represents 20th. century topsoil overlying the deposits of Trench Phase 9.2.

Trench 10.

Trench Phase 10.1; consists of Group 10g.

This is the earliest phase of activity in the trench and consists of a probable structure composed of a linear gulley flanked by post holes. The phase is differentiated from Trench Phase 10.2 as the features of the phase are cut by those of 10.2.

Trench Phase 10.2; consists of Groups 10c, 10d, 10e, 10f.

The phase represents storage pits, pits, and post holes, a linear ditch, and natural features, cutting natural gravel. The phase dates to the Middle Bronze Age.

Trench Phase 10.3; consists of Group 10b.

This is the next phase in the trench and represents Post-Medieval plough-soils, cut by two linear mole drains and cuts of 19th. century date.

Trench Phase 10.4; consists of Group 10c.

The final phase in the trench, Trench Phase 10.3 represents 20th. century topsoil.

Inter-Trench Phasing.

Phase 1; consists of Trench Phase 3.1.

This is the first and earliest phase on the site. It consists of natural gravel in Trench 3. The phase is undated.

Phase 2; consists of Trench Phase 10.1

Phase 2 represents the earliest structural form on the site. It is composed of a linear gulley, flanked by post holes, and cut by features belonging to Phase 3. The phase has a Middle Bronze Age date.

Phase 3; consists of Trench Phases 1.1, 2.1, 4.1, 8.1, 9.1, 10.1

Phase 2 represents evidence of continued human activity. The phase is composed of structural elements of a settlement. These include post hole lines in Trench 2, a fence line or palisade in Trench 8, a gulley, and a ditches in Trench 10. It also includes a possible fire in Trench 9, and apparently unrelated pits, post holes and stake holes in most trenches.

It should be noted that the silt in Trench 9 is being considered as being of the same phase but the exact relationship

between the gravel forming the natural sub-strata in the other nine trenches and the silt in Trench 9 was not determined in the excavation.

The phase, like Phase 2, has a Middle Bronze Age date, but is differentiated by the fact that features of this phase cut the features of Phase 2.

Phase 4; consists of Trench Phase 1.2.

This phase represents recognisable Romano-British activity on the site. It comprises a linear re-cut ditch in Trench 1. The feature is included in a separate phase to distinguish it from earlier Middle Bronze Age features, although all are cut through natural gravel. The phasing is based on dating from pottery recovered from contexts in the two phases.

Phase 5; consists of Trench Phases 1.2, 2.2, 3.2, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2.

This is the next phase on the site and represents Post-Medieval activity on the site. It is mainly composed of plough-soils overlying the Middle Bronze Age activity of Phases 2 and 3. Also included in the phase are linear ditches in Trench 4, and Post-Medieval dump layers and the brick and cobble surface in Trench 5.

Phase 6; consists of Trench Phases 2.3, 3.3, 4.3, 8.2, 9.2, 10.2

Phase 6 represents the 19th. century activity on the site, mainly in the form of land drains, indicating land improvements and agricultural activity during the period.

Phase 7; consists of Trench Phases 1.3, 2.4, 3.4, 4.4, 5.3, 8.3, 9.3, 10.3

Phase 7 is the latest and last phase of the site. It represents 20th. century activity over all ten trenches. The phase includes make-up dumps in Trench 5, and topsoil and modern cuts, usually service runs, in the other trenches.

Interpretation and Conclusions.

The excavations revealed evidence for occupation of the site since the Middle Bronze Age, with extensive agriculture during the Post-Medieval period and the 19th. century, as well as evidence for possible Mesolithic and Neolithic occupation in the form of re-deposited lithics.

The majority of activity on the site appears in Phase 3. The results of the excavation indicate a large settlement from the Middle Bronze Age to the 1st. century A.D. The trend of the activity appears to be towards the north-east of the area designated Construction Area 2B, that is to the north-east of the playing field area included in the development. Although no domestic structures were identified, there is sufficient structural evidence in the form of post holes lines, gullies and ditches, as well as the fence or palisade line, to indicate the proximity of a settlement.

In addition, in Trench 9 the presence of a patch of burning with charcoal and burnt flint (possibly pot-boilers), along with the collection of pottery and worked flint and flint cores suggests a working floor of about this period. The silt itself may indicate a previous course of the Loxford, and given this it may be expected that activity areas be located near the river bank. The remaining features in the phase appear to be of a type consistent with the presence of a settlement in the immediate area.

If the location trend is correct the settlement would be located to the east of Trenches 8 and 10, the fact that archaeological evidence was revealed across Trenches 1, 2, 8, 9, and 10 indicates a sizeable settlement.

The deposits of Phase 4, differentiated from Phase 3 deposits on grounds of finds dating, indicate development on the site through the Middle Bronze age to the Romano-British period. The only firm evidence for activity of the latter period occurs in the form of a linear ditch in Trench 1. It should be stressed that this interpretation may change in the light of further work

on the site.

Phase 5 of the site indicates substantial agricultural activity on the site during the Post-Medieval period. The presence of deep ploughing during the period would to a certain extent explain the lack of deposits dating to the Post-Roman and Medieval periods, the evidence having been ploughed away.

Phase 6 represents a continuation of Phase 3, with further agricultural activity, with the addition of attempts at land improvements with a network of ceramic mole drains being established. Again evidence of activity relating to this phase exists mainly on the playing field area; construction having removed deposits in the housing estate itself.

Phase 7 deposits are broadly split into construction dumps around the housing estate, and deposits relating to the previous use of the playing field as allotment gardens.

The presence of Middle Bronze Age (Phases 2 and 3) and Romano British (Phase 3) deposits on the playing field has important implications for the site. It is possible this settlement may represent a satellite settlement for the Uphall Camp Iron Age and Roman settlement to the west (ILF - UC, LDPEM/ACIG/035), especially as the Loxford appears to have been tidal up to this point until canalisation in the 20th. century, indicating the possibility of a crossing point of the river.

The Post-Medieval landscape appears to have been predominantly agrarian, as indicated by maps of the period, and although there was no excavation evidence, it seems likely that the Medieval landscape would have been similar.

It seems likely that the buildings relating to the Loxford Estate itself have been destroyed by the construction of the Buttsbury Road housing estate, and evidence of associated land-use ploughed away during the late Post-Medieval and Victorian periods. If any remains do still exist, it seems likely that they will be in the areas outside the estate itself, as evidenced by Trench 4, and the brick surface in Trench 5. It also seems likely that any such remains will be at a substantial depth.

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