Evaluation at Buttsbury Estate, Loxford Lane, Ilford. London Borough of Redbridge.

IG - LH 92.
LDPEM/ACIG/206.

Level III Report.

M. Beasley.

Introduction.

Further archaeological evaluation work was carried out between the 20th. November 1993 and the 25th. November 1993 by field staff from the Newham Museum Service. The evaluation was part of a continuing programme of archaeological investigations on the Buttsbury Road estate and adjacent playing fields in advance of development by London and Quadrant Housing Association. The first two phases of the investigation involved assessment work in the estate itself and on the playing field, with extensive rescue excavation on the playing field, totalling 10 trenches. These two phases revealed extensive archaeological remains on the site, principally of Middle Bronze-age date, with some Neolithic, Roman, and post-medieval deposits.

The evaluation described in this report has been designated Phase 3, and was designed to assess the impact to surviving archaeological remains to the east of Phases 1 and 2, following an extension to the projected development area.

The evaluation was funded by London and Quadrant Housing Association, negotiated for, and directed by Frank Meddens, and supervised by the author.

Abstract.

The assessment revealed concentrated deposits of probable Bronze Age date. These took the form of linear ditches, with postholes, pits, and a semi-circular stakehole structure. There was also evidence of post-Medieval, 19th. Century, and modern activity.

Resistivity Survey.

The survey was conducted using a Geoscan RM15 Basic resistivity meter with 0.5m. twin probe separation. The machine operated on 1mA current with x10 gain on a 1m. zig-zag traverse and sample interval. Results were processed on Geoplot software. Obstructions were dummy-logged and survey information was logged on Museum pro-forma sheets.

The survey area consisted of rough, ankle length grass, with no visible obstructions. A fence bounded the area to north, west, and south the remaining side was open. The ground appeared to be well drained and sloped gently to the south.

A total of nine complete and incomplete grids were surveyed (Fig. 1), with the survey area extending to the south of the

projected development.

The results showed strong low resistance readings, over the whole of the survey area. These included three well-defied linear low resistance anomalies forming three sides of a rough rectangle. At least one of these, running east-west in the south of the survey area (Grids) tallies to a similar anomaly registered in a previous survey. This may form a rectilinear compound of some sort. Between these ditches a area of higher resistance may represent a rise in the under lying deposits. Confused low resistance readings in this area of higher resistance may represent concentrated features too small to register individually.

To the north of this rough rectangle two large semi-circular low resistance features were apparent. These were in excess of 20m. in diameter. These appear to be too large for conventional ring ditches, and may, therefore, represent some larger ditched structure. Equally, these features may be back-filled bomb craters.

The plot indicated archaeology was surviving over the survey area and that the archaeology already revealed to the west continued into the development

Excavation Summary.

Two assessment trenches were planned to check the results of the resistivity. The first of these, Trench 11 was located over the most northerly of the large circular low resistance features. It was a machine excavated trench measuring 10m. x 2m., aligned north-east to south-west.

After removing topsoil (800) a linear cut of probable 20th. Century date was revealed ( ). It is thought this relates to an allotment plot. This was cut into a layer of orange brown sandy silt clay; probably a plough soil of 19th. century date.

This overlay a layer of mid grey sandy silt (layer). into this were cut two pits and a curvi-linear ditch or gully (cuts). These are thought to be of middle Bronze Age date. Layer was found to overlie natural sand and gravel.

Trench 12 was a machine excavated 10m. x 2m. trench aligned east-west, to the south of Trench 11. Stripping of topsoil revealed a similar sequence of deposits to that recorded in Trench 11. Topsoil ( ) was machine excavated to reveal a layer of orange brown silt clay. This was cut by a linear field drain. Layer was removed to reveal a layer of mid grey silt clay. This was cut by a large linear ditch, a semi-circular stake hole structure, and other pits and post holes. Layer overlay natural sand and gravel. These cuts were excavated by hand, and the results recorded on Museum pro-forma sheets.

Group Discussion.

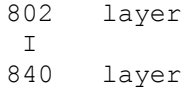
Methodology.

The findings of this report are structured using the Harris

matrix system as a model. The Harris matrix is a representation of the chronology of the site in the form of a flow diagram, showing the earliest events at the bottom working to the later events at the top. The numbers in the text represent archaeological contexts, or single archaeological events. The groups establish sequences of chronology of related events. Phases constitute distinct periods of activity on the site to which groups can be related.

Group 1a.

802 layer;mid orange brown sand and gravel
840 layer;orange yellow sand



Two layers of natural sand and gravel. Undated.

Plan: -- Section: 11

C/S: --
B/W: --
Phase 1.

Group 1b.

833 layer;orange brown silty sand
834 fill;light brown sandy silt
835 cut;linear, concave, gradual change to concave bottom