

Evaluation at Oakfield Playing Fields, Fairlop.
London Borough of Redbridge.

IG - OS 97.

TQ 4470 9085

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Supervisor: M. Beasley.

04.02.1997

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1. Abstract.

1.1. The evaluation showed evidence of 20th. century dumping and land drainage.

2. Introduction.

- 2.1. An archaeological evaluation was conducted by a field team from Newham Museum Service Archaeology Section on 3rd. February 1997 on land at the Oakfield playing fields, Fairlop (*Figs. 1A, 1B*). The evaluation was designed to assess the potential survival of sub-surface archaeological deposits in an area of the playing fields destined for development as a new sports pavilion, in order to fulfil an archaeological planning clause on application number P1153/96.
- 2.2. Two trenches (*Fig. 2*) were located within the building footprint to further examine the results of a geotechnical bore hole survey (Ref.) which indicated the presence of a possible paleochannel on the site.
- 2.3. The evaluation was commissioned by T.J. Harland and Associates for Frenford Clubs (supported by National Lottery funding), managed by Mark Turner for the Museum, and supervised by the author. The author and the Museum would like to thank Terry Harland from T.J. Harland and Associates, the groundstaff at the sports centre, Mark Turner, Alison Telfer and Paul Thrall, Ian Hanson, and Graham Reed for the illustrations.

3. Historical Background.

- 3.1. The site lies in an area of known Prehistoric and later settlement; notably two large multi-period settlements on Fairlop Plain, IG - HR 93 and IG - HR 95 (Turner, 1994, Hodgins, 1996). A watching brief conducted by the Museum to the south and east of the site in 1986 yielded flint implements and a few sherds of prehistoric pottery
- 3.2. It appears from documentary sources that the site has remained largely undeveloped during the past, being within the boundary of Hainault Forest. The geotechnical boreholes indicated no made ground other than that associated with the formation levels for the tennis courts that comprised part of the area.

4. Archaeological Methodology.

- 4.1. Two trenches were positioned in agreement with the developers within the footprint of the proposed building, and as close as possible to Boreholes 1 and 2. These were located to a survey plan at a scale of 1:500.
- 4.2. Both trenches were aligned north-south and were machine excavated to the depth of the natural deposits. Trench 1 was located in the north-west arm of the proposed building which extended onto the playing field, and measured 10m. x 2m. Trench 2 was located to the south-east of this within the area of the tennis court, and was originally intended to measure 11m. x 2m. with a 1m. x 5m. step in the south of the trench to determine the exact depth of alluvial deposits. This was later reduced to a 6m. x 2m. trench with a 2m. x 1m. machine sondage when the nature of the alluvial deposits became clear.
- 4.3. Both trenches were then selectively cleaned by hand to determine the nature of any possible features. Both trenches were recorded on Museum pro-forma trench recording sheets, and photographed. Finds were collected according to standard retrieval methods.
- 4.4. Both trenches were backfilled at the end of the evaluation.
- 4.5. The methodology (Turner 1997) was designed to conform to English Heritage Guidance Paper 3 ("Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork"), and all relevant Health and Safety regulations were followed.

5. Summary of Results.

5.1. In Trench 1 removal of 0.10m. of mid brown sandy clay silt topsoil revealed a horizon of mid brown sandy silt clay subsoil 0.28m. deep. This was cut by two linear mole drains of probable 20th. century date and a 20th. century concrete encased service cut. The subsoil in turn overlay a layer of mid yellow brown sandy clay 0.25m. deep and a layer of mid yellow brown brickearth to a depth of 1.10m. where natural sand and gravel was encountered. No finds were recovered from any of these layers.

5.2. Trench 2 began with the removal of 0.3m. of tarmac and clinker make-up. This overlay three layers of blue grey odoriferous sandy clay with organic patches to a depth of 1.9m. These layers contained numerous finds of 20th. century date. It is these layers that were interpreted from the borehole report as being alluvial fill of the paleochannel.

5.3. These deposits overlay natural sand and gravel.

6. Interpretation and Conclusions.

- 6.1. The results from both trenches matched the results from the borehole survey. Unfortunately, the expected alluvium in Trench 2 is of definite 20th. century date. It is suggested that this may be the result of either brickearth or gravel extraction at the start of the 20th. century, although there were not sufficient finds for the backfilling to be the result of land fill.
- 6.2. In Trench 1 the sequence demonstrated in the borehole was confirmed but no deposits of archaeological interest were found.
- 6.3. There were no deposits of any date other than the 20th. century revealed, and consequently no further investigation is considered necessary. There are no archaeological implications of the proposed development going ahead as planned.

Bibliography.

- Hodgins, A, 1996 “An Archaeological Evaluation at the Fairlop Quarry Extension.” unpublished archive report, Newham Museum Service
- Turner, M, 1996 “Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation at the Proposed Pavillion at Oakfield Playing Fields, Forest Road, Hainault.” unpublished project design, Newham Museum Service.
- Turner, M, 1994 “Fairlop Quarry: An Archaeological Investigation.” unpublished archive report, Newham Museum Service

Palaeolithic	Roman
Mesolithic	Saxon (pre-AD 1066)
Neolithic	Medieval (AD 1066 -1485)
Bronze Age	Post-Medieval 
Iron Age	Unknown

6. PERIOD SUMMARIES. Use headings for each period (Roman; Medieval; etc.), and continue on additional sheets as necessary.

TRENCH 1

TWO LAND DRAINS CUTTING STERILE BRICKEARTH.

TRENCH 2

20TH CENTURY BACKFILLING OVERLYING NATURAL.

7. NATURAL. (state if not observed; please DO NOT LEAVE BLANK)

Type: SAND AND GRAVEL

Height above Ordnance Datum: A.O.D. 33.03m.

8. LOCATION OF ARCHIVES.

a) Please indicate those categories still in your possession:

Notes _____ Plans _____ Photos _____ Negatives _____

Slides _____ Correspondence _____ Manuscripts (unpub. reports etc.) _____

b) All/ some records have been/ will be deposited in the following museum/ records office etc. :

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PLAISTOW,
LONDON E13 OBX.

c) Approximate year of transfer: 1997

d) Location of any copies:

NEWHAM MUSEUM SERVICE,

31, STOCK STREET,
PLAISTOW,
LONDON E13 OBX.

e) Has a security copy of the archive been made? ~~YES~~/ NO

If not, do you wish RCHME to consider microfilming? ~~YES~~/ NO

9. LOCATION OF FINDS.

a) In your possession? ~~ALL/ SOME~~/ NONE

b) All/ some finds have been/ will be deposited with the following museum/ other body:

NEWHAM MUSEUM SERVICE,
31, STOCK STREET,
PLAISTOW,
LONDON.
E13 OBX.

c) Approximate year of transfer: 1997

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Beasley M, 1997 "Evaluation at Oakfield Playing Fields, Fairlop." unpublished client report, Newham Museum Service.

Turner, M, 1996 "Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation at the Proposed Pavillion at Oakfield Playing Fields, Forest Road, Hainault." unpublished project design, Newham Museum Service.

SIGNED:



DATE: 04.02.1997

NAME (Block capitals) M. BEASLEY

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