

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS**  
**AT**  
**GEORGE MITCHELL SCHOOL PLAYING FIELDS**  
**HIGH ROAD, LEYTON, LONDON E4**

**LE - HR 92**

**ACCESSION NO. LD PEM/AC/LE/209**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Excavations in advance of the New Arts Building at the George Mitchell School Playing Fields, Leyton, revealed a number of archaeological features. A large number of pits, post-holes and stake-holes were found in two out of three trenches cut into the natural gravel. Because of the dense concentration of the features in such a small area no structural alignments could be discerned. Pottery and flint tools in some of the pits date this activity to the Early Iron Age, circa 600-300 BC. Above this a ditch was found with associated agricultural activity which has been dated to the Medieval Period. By the Post-Medieval Period the previous field system was abandoned and the whole area ploughed over. Previous to being used as a school playing field the site had been the Essex County Cricket Ground since the late nineteenth century.

## **INTRODUCTION AND METHOD**

Between the 9th and the 28th of November 1992, an archaeological evaluation and rescue excavations were carried out in advance of the construction of a New Arts Building at the George Mitchell School Playing Fields, High Road, Leyton, London E4 (see fig.1a).

The redevelopment required an archaeological evaluation because the site lies within the London Borough of Waltham Forest's Archaeological Priority Zone for Leyton (U.D.P.). The Leyton area has had many Prehistoric stone tools found within the parish and Roman and Medieval structures and deposits found near to the site ( Kennedy, p2; Greenwood, 1979).

In order to fulfil a condition imposed on planning application number 92/0263/BC, an archaeological evaluation was required. The evaluation was commissioned, and kindly funded by, the Architectural Department of the London Borough of Waltham Forest.

The evaluation was based on an archaeological project design (Moore, 1992) drawn up to sample the archaeological deposits under threat. As it was proposed that all ground deposits to a depth of 0.80 metres were to be removed within the new building for foundation purposes, three evaluation trenches, 5 x 5 metres in size, were located within the building footprint (see Fig. 1b).

The trenches were opened by mechanical excavator and then hand excavated down to the top of the natural gravel where archaeological features were excavated. The level of the archaeological deposits in the south of the site was below the level threatened by the proposed development. However, as the archaeological deposits in the north of the site were located at a depth which would be destroyed by the development and because of the imminent start of construction work, Trench 1 was extended to the north and east and the resultant archaeological deposits excavated before commencement of the development.

All the excavated areas were recorded using the Single Context Planning Method based on a five meter grid. All deposits were recorded on pro-forma context sheets and planned at a scale of 1:20. All finds were washed, marked and listed. Only the Prehistoric finds warranted further analysis (see Appendix II). All paper records and finds will be deposited as an archive in the Vestry House Museum, Walthamstow.

The site was project managed by Peter Moore, and supervised by Paul Thrale for Newham Museum Service (formerly the Passmore Edwards Museum).

## **PHASE DISCUSSION**

### **PHASE 1**

Phase 1 consisted of groups 1.10, 2.4 and 3.5 and represented the natural Taplow River Terrace Gravel that comprises the site geology (British Geological Survey, 1994).

### **PHASE 2**

Phase 2 consisted of groups 1.7, 1.8, 1.9 and 3.4 and represented a series of features cut into the natural gravel, providing the earliest evidence of human activity on the site. Within Trench 1 were a series of stakeholes, post holes and pits (see Fig.2) which produced pottery and flint tools datable to the Early Iron Age. Trench 3, located further to the south-west of the site produced one large pit which was surrounded by a large number of stake holes(see Fig. 3). The pit contained several sherds of Early Iron Age pottery (see appendix II) along with flint and stone tools(see Fig.6) and associated waste material from tool manufacture. All these artefacts appear to date from the Early Iron Age. No datable material was recovered from the excavated stake holes although they appear to respect the position of the pit and so are probably contemporary with it. Due to the density of features in such a relatively small area of both trenches, it was not possible to discern any structural patterns in the post and stake holes. However, given the evidence recovered from the pits, it is reasonable to assume that this represents settlement activity in the Early Iron Age.

### **PHASE 3**

Phase 3 consisted of group 1.6 and represented a north-west to south-east aligned ditch, parallel to which were 3 linear features spaced approximately 2 metres apart (see Fig. 4). The size and regular spacing of these features suggests that they are the vestiges of ridge and furrow ploughing and that the ditch was a contemporary field boundary. The ditch was deliberately backfilled with a single deposit from which a sherd of pottery, dated to the 12-13th centuries was recovered.

### **PHASE 4**

Phase 4 consisted of groups 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.11, 2.3 and 3.3 and represented further evidence of agricultural activity after the abandonment of the earlier field system of phase 3. Groups 1.3, 1.5, 2.3 and 3.3 are plough soils that appear to be of 17th century date. Associated with these deposits are a series of linear plough marks (group 1.11)(see Fig. 5). Although these linear features are on a similar alignment to those of the previous phase, this is the result of the continuing need to plough across the north-south slope for drainage purposes, rather than the result of a contemporary relationship.

## **PHASE 5**

Phase 5 consisted of groups 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1 and 3.2 and represented a series of features associated with the modern land use of the site, first as the Essex County Cricket Ground and then as a local sports facility.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The site lies on the eastern edge of the floodplain of the River Lea, on the high ground of the gravel terrace overlooking the valley. Such a location, affording close access to both the rich alluvial area of the Lea marshes and dry and fertile land for cultivation, would have made an ideal location for a Prehistoric settlement. Indeed, due to gravel extraction and other deep excavations during the 19th and 20th centuries, the area has been the source of a great many finds of flint implements, dating from the Palaeolithic to the Neolithic periods (Powell, 1973, p.155).

Approximately 650 metres to the south-west of the site, excavations by Newham Museum Service on the Oliver Close Estate have revealed evidence of an extensive settlement dating to the Late Bronze Age c.1000-600 BC (Burgess, 1980) including roundhouses and domestic rubbish pits (Sabel, forthcoming).

Evidence of Roman occupation has also been revealed nearby. In 1718 the masonry foundations of a massive Roman building, complete with arches, were discovered near the present Grange Park Road, to the south of the site. Various contemporary accounts describe Roman ruins over a large area, and many stray finds have been recovered in the locality (Powell, 1973, p.155). In 1978 excavations by Passmore Edwards Museum on Church Road recorded Roman and Medieval ditches (Greenwood, 1979).

Therefore, although the area under excavation was relatively small, the density of prehistoric features recorded is of significance to the developing settlement pattern of the area. It has unfortunately not been possible to discern any structural patterns from the large number of stakeholes and post holes revealed during the excavation, however, given the absence of any prehistoric features in trench 2 coupled with the density of stakeholes in trench 3 (see Fig 3) only 5 metres to the south-east, it can be hypothesised that the excavation has perhaps revealed the western extent of an Early Iron Age settlement (600-300 BC) (Burgess, 1980) as defined by a succession of wooden fences. These fences would have been replaced on a frequent basis, leaving a complex and sometimes indecipherable pattern of stakeholes cut into the gravel. A similar pattern of densely concentrated post and stake holes has emerged from the Oliver Close excavations (pers. comm. Ken Sabel)

The evidence for settlement rather than animal stockading comes from the flint and pottery remains recovered from the pits. Although the pottery assemblage is small (only 12 sherds were recovered from 3 features), the flint and stone implements are significant. The flint assemblage contains several worked tools such as blades and scrapers (see appendix II) along with some debitage. This debitage would appear to point to in situ flint knapping. Perhaps more interesting are the stone implements that were recovered from the pit in trench 3. Five fragments of quartzite pebbles were recovered along with one large smooth pebble with a worn, flat end. These artefacts have been interpreted as being smoothing, grinding and pounding implements, perhaps reflecting the processing of skins or foodstuffs. These artefacts when taken together with the other evidence would appear to indicate occupation of some permanence with a variety of on site activities.

No further evidence of occupation after the Early Iron Age was present in the archaeological record until the excavation of the Phase 3 ditch and associated ridge and furrow ploughing which appears to have occurred in the 12th -13th centuries. Similar evidence of this typical Medieval cultivation technique, which produces characteristic linear furrows approximately 2.0 metres apart, has been recorded to the north of the site at Salisbury Hall Playing Fields, Walthamstow (Pontin, 1994) and at Chingford Hospital, Chingford (Truckle, 1993).

Following the abandonment of the Medieval field system, represented by the infilling of the boundary ditch, the site appears to have remained under cultivation, as all 3 trenches produced evidence of deep linear ploughing associated with plough soils containing 17th century material.

This agricultural land use is typical of the area as its well drained soils and proximity to the huge market of the City of London made agriculture a profitable occupation, factors prevalent until the coming of the railways made it possible to import produce from much further afield, and turned the Leyton area into a dormitory suburb. The site managed to escape the wholesale redevelopment that enveloped the area as it was purchased in 1886 by the Essex County Cricket Club and remained as a County Cricket ground until its sale in 1933, from which time it has remained as a general sports ground (Powell, 1973, p.184).

Therefore, the excavation conducted on the site of the George Mitchell School Playing Fields produced significant evidence of Early Iron Age occupation and later agricultural activity. The prehistoric settlement evidence is particularly important in that it adds further to the developing pattern of settlement in the area as evidenced by the earlier remains recorded at Oliver Close, and the later, Roman discoveries made at Church Road and Grange Park Road.

It can be presumed that further important evidence of prehistoric occupation lies beneath the sports ground, certainly to the north-east of the present site, and further development in the area would pose a severe threat to any surviving archaeological deposits.



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The authors would also like to thank David Divers, Al Douglas, Shahina Farid and Alison Telfer for their hard work on the site, Peter Moore for his project management and Graham Reed for the illustrations.

**APPENDIX I**

**GROUP DISCUSSION**

**TRENCH 1**

Group 1.1

Levels in metres  
Above Ordnance Datum

	1		
	I		
<u>Context</u>		Max.	Min.
(1) - Layer,brown,sandy clay silt`		12.84	12.64

Group 1.1 represents the topsoil

PLAN          SECT. - 1  
CS  
BW -  
PHASE V

Group 1.2

	I																			
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
2	7	9	12	14	20	71	79	309	315	318	328	334	338	342	344	346	348			
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
3	8	10	13	15	21	72	77	I	316	319	329	335	339	343	345	347	349			
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	78	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
	I																			

....

I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
359	409	411	417	421	423	459	
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
360	410	412	418	422	424	460	
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
...	I	I	I	I	I	I	I

(2) - Fill,dark grey-brown,sandy clay gravel	12.64	
12.08		
(3) - Cut,vertical sides,square post hole	12.64	12.08
(7) - Fill,brown sandy clay silt	12.67	12.37
(8) - Cut,vertical sides circular stake hole	12.67	12.37
(9) - Fill,light orange,sandy gravel	12.60	11.94
(10) - Cut,vertical sides,square post hole	12.60	11.94
(12) - Fill,grey-brown,clay silt	12.60	12.29
(13) - Cut,vertical sides,sub-circular post hole	12.60	12.29
(14) - Fill,grey-brown,clay silt	12.62	12.34
(15) - Cut,vertical sides,circular post hole	12.62	12.34
(20) - Fill,dark brown,sandy clay silt		12.48
12.05		
(21) - Cut,vertical sides,square post hole	12.48	12.05
(71) - Fill,dark grey-brown,sandy clay silt	12.38	12.16
(72) - Cut,vertical sides,rectangular post hole	12.38	12.16
(77) - Fill,grey-brown,sandy clay silt	12.40	12.30
(78) - Cut,vertical sides,circular stake hole	12.70	12.30
(79) - Fill,grey-green,sandy clay silt	12.70	12.40
(309) - Layer,orange grave	12.53	
(315) - Fill,brown-black,sandy clay silt	12.44	12.20
(316) - Cut,concave,circular shape	12.44	12.20
(318) - Fill,not excavated	12.43	
(319) - Cut,not excavated	12.43	
(328) - Fill,brown silty gravel	12.45	12.07
(329) - Cut,concave,sub-circular,post hole	12.45	12.07
(334) - Fill,not excavated	12.48	
(335) - Cut,not excavated	12.48	
(338) - Fill,dark brown,silty gravel	12.45	12.30
(339) - Cut,vertical sides,circular post hole	12.45	12.30
(342) - Fill,grey-brown,silty clay	12.42	12.18
(343) - Cut,concave,circular shape	12.42	12.18
(344) - Fill,dark grey-brown,sandy silty clay		12.42
12.18		
(345) - Cut,concave,square shape	12.42	12.18
(346) - Fill,grey-brown,silty clay	12.40	12.17
(347) - Cut,concave,ovoid shape	12.40	12.17
(348) - Fill,grey-brown,silty clay	12.40	12.25
(349) - Cut,concave,square shape	12.40	12.25
(359) - Fill,grey-brown,sandy clay silt gravel	12.39	12.26
(360) - Cut,concave,circular shape	12.39	12.26
(409) - Fill,not excavated	12.49	
(410) - Cut,not excavated	12.49	
(411) - Fill,dark grey,sandy clay silt	12.48	12.23
(412) - Cut,vertical sides,square post hole	12.48	12.23
(417) - Fill,black-grey,sandy clay silt	12.48	12.28
(418) - Cut,vertical sides,circular shape	12.48	12.28
(421) - Fill,dark grey,sandy clay silt	12.45	12.25
(422) - Cut,vertical sides,square post hole	12.45	12.25

(423) - Fill,black grey,sandy clay silt 12.24	12.44	
(424) - Cut,vertical sides,circular shape	12.44	12.24
(459) - Fill,black grey,sandy clay silt 12.19	12.44	
(460) - Cut,vertical sides,square post hole	12.44	12.19

Group 1.2 represents a number of late 19th-20th century post holes and pit cuts, probably part of an early boundary structure for the cricket pitch.

PLAN - 3,21,72      SECT.-  
 CS - 1;3-12,29-32. 3;16-24  
 BW - 1;20-22. 2;10-12,16-18. 3;12-20  
 PHASE V

Group 1.3

I  
4  
I

(4) - Layer,mid-brown,sandy clay silt with gravel	12.64	12.37
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Group 1.3 represents Post Medieval plough soil dated to the 17th Century.

PLAN - 3,46      SECT. - 1  
 CS -  
 BW -  
 PHASE IV

Group 1.4

I				
I	I	I	I	I
22	24	26	28	30
I	I	I	I	I
23	25	27	29	31
I	I	I	I	I
I				

(22) - Fill,grey,sand silt with gravel	12.50	12.38
(23) - Cut,concave,circular stake hole	12.50	12.38
(24) - Fill,grey,clay sand silt with gravel	12.53	12.41
(25) - Cut,concave,sub-circular stake hole	12.53	12.41
(26) - Fill,grey,clay sand silt with gravel	12.53	12.46
(27) - Cut,vertical sides,circular stake hole	12.53	12.46
(28) - Fill,grey,clay sand silt with gravel	12.53	12.39

(29) - Cut,sloping sides,circular stake hole	12.53	12.39
(30) - Fill,grey,clay sand silt with gravel	12.53	12.37
(31) - Cut,sloping sides,circular stake hole	12.53	12.37

Group 1.4 represents a number of stake holes below layer (4) and cutting layer (19).  
May be contemporary with Group 1.12.

PLAN - 19            SECT.-  
CS - 1;18-20  
BW - 1;16-18  
PHASE IV

Group 1.5

I  
19  
I

(19) - Layer,light brown,clay sand with gravel	12.51	12.39
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Group 1.5 represents 17th Century plough soil..

PLAN - 19            SECT.- 1  
CS - 1;18-20  
BW - 1;16-18  
PHASE IV

Group 1.6

I    I    I    I  
57 310 263 317  
I    I    I    I  
58 320 351 473  
I    I    I    I

(57) - Fill,brown,clay silt gravel	12.50	12.04
(58) - Cut,sloping sides,linear ditch	12.50	12.04
(310) - Fill,clay silt gravel	12.51	12.41
(320) - Cut,sloping sides,linear	12.51	12.41
(263) - Fill,brown,silty sandy gravel		12.41
12.27		
(351) - Cut,sloping sides,linear	12.41	12.27
(317) - Fill,brown,silt clay sand with gravel	12.47	12.32
(473) - Cut,sloping sides,linear	12.47	12.32

Group 1.6 represents a ditch on a NW - SE alignment. Parallel to the ditch to the NE and SW were the remains of three linear features. The size and regular spacing of these features, circa 2 metres apart, suggests that cuts (320), (351) and (473) are the remains of the bottom of furrows from the ridge and furrow ploughing method. The ditch would seem to be a division between two areas of cultivation. The ditch was backfilled with a single deposit which contained a single sherd of pottery dated to the 12-13th Century. It therefore seems likely that the ridge and furrow system was abandoned and a different type of ploughing introduced, see Group 1.11.

PLAN - 58,351                      SECT.- 1  
 CS - 1;5-10,13-14,25-28,22-24  
 BW - 1;30-35. 2;16-18  
 PHASE III

Group 1.7

I								
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
43	54	59	64	66	68	99	206	208
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
44	55	I	65	67	69	100	207	209
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
I								

(43) - Fill,red-brown,silt clay sand with gravel	12.37	12.10
(44) - Cut,concave,sub-circular pit	12.37	12.10
(54) - Fill,yellow-orange,clay sand	12.40	12.19
(55) - Cut,sloping sides,circular	12.40	12.19
(64) - Fill,orange-brown,clay sand with gravel	12.40	12.22
(65) - Cut,concave,semi-circular	12.40	12.22
(66) - Fill,brown,clay sand gravel	12.40	12.25
(67) - Cut,sloping sides,circular post hole	12.40	12.25
(68) - Fill,orange-grey,sand with gravel	12.37	12.16
(69) - Cut,sloping sides,circular	12.37	12.16
(99) - Fill,grey-brown,sand silt with gravel	12.40	12.23
(100) - Cut,sloping sides,sub-circular	12.40	12.23
(206) - Fill,dark grey-brown,clay silt gravel	12.44	12.24
(207) - Cut,vertical sides,circular post hole	12.44	12.24
(208) - Fill,dark grey-brown,clay silt gravel	12.45	12.29
(209) - Cut,vertical sides,circular post hole	12.45	12.29

Group 1.7 represents a number of pits, post holes and stake holes below layer (19) and cut into the natural (56). It is interpreted that they are associated with Group 1.9 and are therefore of an Early Iron Age date.

PLAN - 314            SECT.-  
 CS - 1;1-4  
 BW - 1;20-22,25-27  
 PHASE II

Group 1.8

.....  
 I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I  
 66 73 75 80 82 85 87 90 91 93 95 313 326 330 332  
 I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I  
 67 74 76 81 83 86 88 89 92 94 96 314 327 331 333  
 I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I.....

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 I  
 I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I  
 340 355 357 361 363 365 369 371 375 381 383 385 389 393 403 413  
 I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I  
 341 356 358 362 364 366 370 372 376 382 384 386 390 394 404 414  
 ....I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I.....  
 I

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 I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I  
 415 417 425 429 431 433 435 439 441 443 445 447 449 453 461  
 I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I  
 416 418 426 430 432 434 436 440 442 444 446 448 450 454 462  
 ... I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I.....

.....  
 I I I  
 465 469 471  
 I I I  
 466 470 472  
 .....I I I

(66) - Fill,brown sandy clay with gravel	12.40	12.25
(67) - Cut,concave,circular post hole	12.40	12.25
(73) - Fill,dark grey-brown,sandy silt gravel		12.38
12.18		
(74) - Cut,vertical sides,sub-circular shape	12.38	12.18
(75) - Fill,brown,silty sand with gravel	12.39	12.27
(76) - Cut,vertical sides,sub-circular stake hole	12.39	12.27
(80) - Fill,dark grey-brown,sand clay silt gravel	12.45	12.29



(81) - Cut,vertical sides,circular shape	12.45	12.29
(82) - Fill,dark grey-brown,sand clay slt gravel	12.41	12.23
(83) - Cut,vertical sides,circular shape	12.41	12.23
(85) - Fill,brown,silty sand with gravel	12.39	12.25
(86) - Cut,vertical sides,circular stake hole	12.39	12.25
(87) - Fill,dark brown,slity sand with gravel	12.39	12.26
(88) - Cut,vertical sides,sub-circular stake hole	12.39	12.26
(90) - Fill,grey-brown,sandy silt with gravel		12.39
12.21		
(89) - Cut,vertical sides,sub-circular shape	12.39	12.21
(91) - Fill,grey-brown,sandy silt	12.43	12.26
(92) - Cut,vertical sides,sub-circular stake hole	12.43	12.26
(93) - Fill,grey-brown,sandy silt	12.43	12.27
(94) - Cut,vertical sides,circular stake hole	12.43	12.27
(95) - Fill,grey-brown,sandy clay silt	12.43	12.30
(96) - Cut,vertical sides,circular stake hole	12.43	12.30
(326) - Fill,not excavated	12.45	
(327) - Cut,not excavated	12.45	
(330) - Fill,grey-brown,sand clay silt with gravel	12.45	12.22
(331) - Cut,sloping sides,circular stake hole		12.45
12.22		
(332) - Fill,brown,silty gravel	12.47	12.27
(333) - Cut,concave,sub-circular post hole	12.47	12.27
(340) - Fill,dark brown,silty gravel	12.43	12.31
(341) - Cut,sloping sides,circular stake hole		12.43
12.31		
(357) - Fill,grey-brown,silty clay gravel	12.37	12.28
(358) - Cut,concave,irregular shape	12.37	12.28
(361) - Fill,grey-brown,sand silt clay with gravel	12.39	12.24
(362) - Cut,vertical sides,circular shape	12.39	12.24
(363) - Fill,not excavated	12.41	
(364) - Cut,not excavated	12.41	
(365) - Fill,brown,sand silt clay with gravel	12.41	12.31
(366) - Cut,vertical sides,circular shape	12.41	12.31
(369) - Fill,grey-brown,silt clay with gravel	12.41	12.27
(370) - Cut,concave,irregular shape	12.41	12.27
(371) - Fill,grey-brown,silt gravel	12.38	12.24
(372) - Cut,near vertical sides,circular shape	12.38	12.24
(375) - Fill,grey-brown,silt clay gravel	12.36	12.27
(376) - Cut,concave,ovoid shape	12.36	12.27
(381) - Fill,grey-brown,silt clay with gravel	12.37	12.26
(382) - Cut,concave,irregular shape	12.37	12.26
(383) - Fill,grey-brown,sandy gravel		12.35
12.26		
(384) - Cut,concave,circular shape	12.35	12.26
(385) - Fill,not excavated	12.36	
(386) - Cut,not excavated	12.36	
(389) - Fill,brown silty gravel	12.34	12.27
(390) - Cut,concave,circular stake hole	12.34	12.27

(393) - Fill, grey-brown, silt clay with gravel	12.35	12.21
(394) - Cut, concave, irregular shape	12.35	12.21
(403) - Fill, dark grey-brown, sand silt with gravel	12.44	12.32
(404) - Cut, sloping sides, circular stake hole		12.44
12.32		
(413) - Fill, dark brown, sand silt clay with gravel	12.46	12.39
(414) - Cut, irregular sides, irregular shape	12.46	12.39
(415) - Fill, dark brown, sand silt clay with gravel	12.46	12.36
(416) - Cut, vertical sides, circular stake hole		12.46
12.36		
(417) - Fill, black-grey, sand clay silt with gravel	12.48	12.28
(418) - Cut, vertical sides, circular stake hole		12.48
12.28		
(425) - Fill, dark brown, sand silt clay with gravel	12.41	12.26
(426) - Cut, vertical sides, circular stake hole		12.41
12.26		
(429) - Fill, dark brown, sand clay silt	12.42	12.32
(430) - Cut, vertical sides, circular stake hole		12.42
12.32		
(431) - Fill, dark brown, sand clay silt	12.42	12.30
(432) - Cut, vertical sides, circular stake hole		12.42
12.30		
(433) - Fill, dark grey-brown, sand silt with gravel	12.42	12.24
(434) - Cut, vertical sides, circular stake hole		12.42
12.24		
(435) - Fill, dark grey-brown, sand silt gravel		12.42
12.24		
(436) - Cut, vertical sides, circular stake hole	12.42	12.24
(439) - Fill, grey-brown, sand silt gravel	12.47	12.33
(440) - Cut, vertical sides, circular stake hole	12.47	12.33
(441) - Fill, grey-brown, sand silt gravel	12.47	12.36
(442) - Cut, vertical sides, circular stake hole		12.47
12.36		
(443) - Fill, dark grey, sand silt with gravel	12.47	12.34
(444) - Cut, vertical sides, circular stake hole		12.47
12.34		
(445) - Fill, dark grey-brown, clay silt with gravel	12.48	12.33
(446) - Cut, vertical sides, circular stake hole		12.48
12.33		
(447) - Fill, dark grey-brown, sand silt with gravel	12.48	12.34
(448) - Cut, vertical sides, circular stake hole		12.38
12.34		
(449) - Fill, dark grey, sand clay silt	12.47	12.29
(450) - Cut, vertical sides, circular stake hole		12.47
12.29		
(453) - Fill, dark brown, sand silt with gravel		12.47
12.32		
(454) - Cut, concave, circular stake hole	12.47	12.32
(461) - Fill, dark brown, sand clay silt with gravel	12.44	12.34

(462) - Cut, irregular sides, circular shape	12.44	12.34
(465) - Fill, orange-brown, silt clay gravel	12.40	12.19
(466) - Cut, concave, circular shape	12.40	12.19
(469) - Fill, brown, clay silt with gravel	12.31	12.20
(470) - Cut, vertical sides, circular stake hole	12.31	12.20
(471) - Fill, brown, clay silt	12.31	12.15
(472) - Cut, concave, circular stake hole	12.31	12.15

Group 1.8 represents a large number of stake holes and post holes below layer (4) and cutting the natural gravel (56). It is presumed that they are associated with Group 1.9 and are therefore of an Early Iron Age date.

PLAN - 67,314,356            SECT.-  
CS - 1;1-2,5-6,9-10,13-14,29-30  
BW - 2;10-12,16-18  
3;22-24            3;18-20  
PHASE II

Group 1.9

I	I	I
336	400	463
I	I	I
337	401	464
I	I	I

(336) - Fill, brown, silty sandy gravel	12.49	
12.16		
(337) - Cut, concave, circular pit	12.49	12.16
(400) - Fill, grey, clay sand silt with gravel	12.37	12.15
(463) - Fill, orange-brown, clay silt with gravel	12.40	12.24
(464) - Cut, concave, circular pit	12.40	12.24

Group 1.9 represents three pits cut into the natural gravel (56). Pit (337) is cut by ditch (58) and contains no finds. Pits (464) and (401) are below layer (4) and both contain Prehistoric finds. The finds consisting of one flint tool and five sherds of pottery are dated to the Early Iron Age.

PLAN - 337,401            SECT.-  
CS -  
BW -  
PHASE II

Group 1.10

I  
56

(56) - Natural river terrace gravel deposits 12.39

PLAN - SECT.- 1  
CS -  
BW -  
PHASE I

Group 1.11

I				
I	I	I	I	I
311	312	262	264	265
I	I	I	I	I
321	322	350	352	353
I	I	I	I	I
I				

(311) - Fill,brown,silty sandy gravel		12.48
12.40		
(321) - Cut,sloping sides,linear	12.48	12.40
(312) - Fill,brown,silty sandy gravel		12.46
12.38		
(322) - Cut,sloping sides,linear	12.46	12.38
(262) - Fill,brown,silty sandy gravel	12.42	12.34
(350) - Cut,sloping sides,linear	12.42	12.34
(264) - Fill,brown,silty sandy gravel	12.40	12.29
(352) - Cut,sloping sides,linear	12.40	12.29
(265) - Fill,brown,silty sandy gravel		12.37
12.28		
(353) - Cut,sloping sides,linear	12.37	12.28

This group consists of a series of plough marks, preserved because of their depth. They run parallel to the ditch and furrows in Group 1.6, however their irregular spacing shows their random nature.

PLAN - 58,35 SECT - 1  
CS - 1;5-10,13-14,25-28,32-34  
BW - 1;30-35. 2;16-18  
PHASE IV

## Group 1.12

I	I
313	355
I	I
314	356
I	I

(313) - Fill,brown silty gravel	12.48	12.35
(314) - Cut,near vertical sides,circular shape	12.48	12.35
(355) - Fill,grey-brown,silty clay gravel	12.37	11.99
(356) - Cut,concave,ovoid shape	12.37	11.99

This group consists of postholes, possibly contemporary with Group 1.4.

## **TRENCH 2**

### Group 2.1

I  
5  
I  
16  
I  
18  
I  
17  
I  
6  
I  
41  
I  
62  
I

(5)- Layer,Tarmac	13.00	12.62
(16) - Fill,blue-grey,clay silt	12.68	12.12
(18) - Fill,dark grey,silty clay	12.12	12.68
(17) - Cut,irregular pit	12.45	12.68
(6) - Layer,grey-brown,sandy silty clay	12.62	12.54
(41) - Layer,grey,sandy silty	12.54	12.49
(62) - Layer,orange-brown	12.49	12.15

Group 2.1 represents the tarmac surface and make-up layers of a tennis court, initially built in the 1930's.

PLAN - 17            SECT.- 2  
CS-  
BW.-  
PHASE V

Group 2.2

I  
42  
I  
61  
I

(42) - Fill,dark grey-brown,clay silt	12.15	11.71
(61) - Cut,irregular pit	12.08	11.71

Group 2.2 represents a late Victorian pit.

PLAN - 61            SECT.-  
CS -  
BW.-  
PHASE V

Group 2.3

I  
84  
I

(84) - Layer,orange-brown,sandy clay silt gravel	12.24	12.18
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Group 2,3 represents possible plough soil

PLAN -                SECT.-  
CS-  
BW.-  
PHASE IV

Group 2.4

I  
101  
I

(101) - Natural Gravel	12.18	
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Group 2.4 represents natural river terrace gravel deposits

PLAN                      SECT.- 4  
 CS-  
 BW - 2;25-27,32-35  
 PHASE I

**TRENCH 3**

Group 3.1

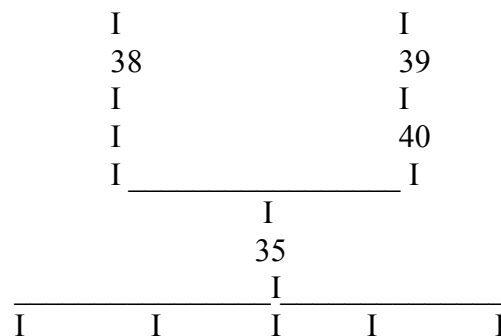
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(5) - Layer,tarmac	13.00	12.95
(11) - Layer,gre-brown,sandy silty clay	12.95	12.91
(33) - Layer,gre,silty sandy clay	12.91	12.75
(34) - Layer,gre,sandy clay gravel	12.75	12.65

Group 3.1 represents the tarmac surface and make-up layers of a tennis court,initially built in the 1930's.

PLAN -                      SECT.- 5,6.  
 CS -  
 BW. -  
 PHASE V

Group 3.2



45	47	49	51	36
I	I	I	I	I
46	48	50	52	53
I	I	I	I	I
I	I	I	I	37
I	I	I	I	I

(38) - Layer,light orange,sandy gravel	12.65	12.55
(39) - Brick wall,six courses of headers	12.73	12.20
(40) - Cut,regular,vertical,linear	12.60	12.20
(35) - Layer,grey,silty sandy clay	12.60	12.52
(45) - Fill,dark grey,silty sandy clay	12.57	12.21
(46) - Cut,irregular,linear slot	12.57	12.21
(47) - Fill,grey,silty sandy clay	12.60	12.49
(48) - Cut,irregular,linear slot	12.59	12.49
(49) - Fill,grey,silty sandy clay	12.59	12.50
(50) - Cut,irregular,linear slot	12.59	12.50
(51) - Fill,dark grey,silty sandy gravel clay	12.63	12.48
(52) - Cut,irregular linear slot	12.63	12.48
(36) - Fill,dark brown,clay silt	12.62	12.42
(53) - Fill,grey-brown,silty clay gravel	12.62	11.92
(37) - Cut,regular	12.62	11.92

Group 3.2 represents a brick wall and four irregular cuts. Cut (37) is probably the result of gravel extraction.

PLAN - 39,37,46                      SECT.-5,6  
 CS - 1;17-24  
 BW.- 1;14-16. 2;2-9  
 PHASE V

Group 3.3

I  
 63  
 I  
 70  
 I

(63) - Layer,red silty sand	12.62	12.02
(70) - Layer,orange,silty clay gravel	12.59	12.29

Group 3.3 represents two layers, (63) is redeposited whilst (70) is possibly the result of ploughing.

PLAN - 63,70                      SECT. - 5,6  
 CS -  
 BW. - 1;23-24



PHASE IV

Group 3.4

I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
107	111	112	113	116	117	118	119	120	121	122	123	124	125	26	
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
232	261	247	115	244	260	249	266	227	235	234	219	236	267	237	
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
I	I	I	248	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I

I

I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
127	128	130	131	132	133	134	135	136	137	138	140	141	143		
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
268	241	269	270	257	258	238	259	246	245	242	306	253	252		
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I

I

I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
144	145	146	148	149	150	151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158		
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
245	272	254	256	243	251	273	274	275	276	277	278	279	280		
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I

I

I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
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- (107) - Fill,brown-orange,silty clay with gravel 12.23 12.03
- (232) - Cut,vertical sides,circular stake hole 12.23 12.03
- (111) - Fill,unexcavated 12.29
- (261) - Cut,unexcavated 12.29
- (112) - Fill,clay silt gravel 12.28 11.82
- (247) - Cut,near vertical sides,oval post hole 12.28 11.82
- (113) - Fill,grey-brown,clay silt gravel 12.29 12.14
- (114) - Cut,vertical sides,circular stake hole 12.29
- 12.14

(115) - Fill,orange-brown,clay silt gravel	12.23	11.91
(248) - Cut,vertical sides,circular post hole	12.23	11.91
(116) - Fill,grey,clay silt with gravel		12.26
12.11		
(244) - Cut,near vertical sides,ovoid post hole	12.26	12.11
(117) - Fill,grey,clay silt gravel	12.28	11.98
(260) - Cut,sloping sides,sub-circular post hole	12.28	11.98
(118) - Fill,grey,clay silt with gravel		12.27
11.99		
(249) - Cut,sloping sides,ovoid stake hole	12.27	11.99
(119) - Fill,not excavated	12.28	
(266) - Cut,not excavated	12.28	
(120) - Fill,grey-brown,clay silt gravel	12.19	11.99
(227) - Cut,sloping sides,sub-circular stake hole	12.19	11.99
(121) - Fill,grey-brown,clay silt gravel	12.18	11.94
(235) - Cut,vertical sides,circular stake hole		12.18
11.94		
(122) - Fill,grey-brown,clay silt gravel	12.19	11.91
(234) - Cut,sloping sides,circular stake hole		12.19
11.91		
(123) - Fill,brown,sand silt gravel	12.20	12.05
(219) - Cut,vertical,sub-circular stake hole	12.20	12.05
(124) - Fill,grey,clay silt gravel	12.21	12.07
(236) - Cut,vertical sides,circular stake hole		12.21
12.07		
(125) - Fill,not excavated	12.21	
(267) - Cut,not excavated	12.21	
(126) - Fill,orange-brown,clay silt gravel	12.19	11.99
(237) - Cut,vertical sides,circular stake hole		12.19
11.99		
(127) - Fill,not excavated	12.21	
(268) - Cut,not excavated	12.21	
(128) - Fill,grey-brown,clay silt gravel	12.23	12.04
(241) - Cut,vertical sides,sub-circular stake hole	12.23	12.04
(130) - Fill,not excavated	12.28	
(269) - Cut,not excavated	12.28	
(131) - Fill,not excavated	12.28	
(270) - Cut,not excavated	12.28	
(132) - Fill,grey-brown,clay silt gravel	12.30	12.14
(257) - Cut,vertical sides,ovoid stake hole	12.30	12.14
(133) - Fill,grey,clay silt gravel	12.29	12.07
(258) - Cut,vertical sides,sub-circular post hole	12.29	12.07
(134) - Fill,grey-brown,clay silt gravel	12.22	12.02
(238) - Cut,vertical sides,circular post hole	12.22	12.02
(135) - Fill,orange-brown,clay silt gravel	12.27	12.18
(259) - Cut,vertical sides,circular stake hole	12.27	12.18
(136) - Fill,grey-brown,clay sand silt	12.28	11.82
(246) - Cut,sloping sides,sub-circular post hole	12.28	11.82

(137) - Fill, grey, clay silt, with gravel 12.12	12.26	
(245) - Cut, vertical sides, circular stake hole 12.12	12.26	
(138) - Fill, grey clay silt with gravel 11.86	12.21	
(242) - Cut, vertical sides, circular stake hole	12.21	11.86
(140) - Fill, brown clay silt sand with gravel	12.26	11.93
(306) - Cut, concave, sub-circular pit	12.26	11.93
(141) - Fill, orange-brown, clay silt gravel	12.26	12.06
(253) - Cut, vertical sides, sub-circular stake hole	12.26	12.06
(143) - Fill, grey-brown, sandy clay silt	12.24	12.09
(252) - Cut, vertical sides, circular stake hole 12.09	12.24	
(144) - Fill, orange-brown, clay silt gravel	12.26	12.12
(245) - Cut, vertical sides, circular stake hole 12.12	12.26	
(145) - Fill, not excavated	12.28	
(272) - Cut, not excavated	12.28	
(146) - Fill, grey, clay silt gravel	12.27	12.06
(254) - Cut, vertical sides, sub-circular stake hole	12.27	12.06
(148) - Fill, grey-brown, clay silt gravel	12.28	11.90
(256) - Cut, sloping sides, circular stake hole 11.90	12.28	
(149) - Fill, grey-brown, clay silt gravel	12.24	12.04
(243) - Cut, vertical sides, sub-circular stake hole	12.24	12.04
(150) - Fill, orange-brown, clay silt gravel	12.26	12.08
(251) - Cut, vertical sides, circular stake hole 12.08	12.26	
(151) - Fill, not excavated	12.29	
(273) - Cut, not excavated	12.29	
(152) - Fill, not excavated	12.26	
(274) - Cut, not excavated	12.26	
(153) - Fill, not excavated	12.27	
(275) - Cut, not excavated	12.27	
(154) - Fill, not excavated	12.28	
(276) - Cut, not excavated	12.28	
(155) - Fill, not excavated	12.29	
(277) - Cut, not excavated	12.29	
(156) - Fill, not excavated	12.27	
(278) - Cut, not excavated	12.27	
(157) - Fill, not excavated	12.27	
(279) - Cut, not excavated	12.27	
(158) - Fill, not excavated	12.28	
(280) - Cut, not excavated	12.28	
(159) - Fill, orange-brown, clay silt gravel	12.22	12.07
(224) - Cut, sloping sides, circular stake hole 12.07	12.22	
(160) - Fill, light brown, clay silt gravel	12.21	12.04

(220) - Cut,sloping sides,circular stake hole		12.21
12.04		
(161) - Fill,not excavated	12.23	
(282) - Cut,not excavated	12.23	
(162) - Fill,not excavated	12.22	
(283) - Cut,not excavated	12.22	
(163) - Fill,gre-brown,clay silt gravel	12.23	11.93
(250) - Cut,sloping sides,circular stake hole		12.23
11.93		
(164) - Fill,not excavated	12.24	
(284) - Cut,not excavated	12.24	
(165) - Fill,not excavated	12.21	
(285) - Cut,not excavated	12.21	
(166) - Fill,not excavated	12.22	
(286) - Cut,not excavated	12.22	
(167) - Fill,not excavated	12.20	
(287) - Cut,not excavated	12.20	
(168) - Fill,not excavated	12.26	
(288) - Cut,not excavated	12.26	
(169) - Fill,not excavated	12.29	
(222) - Cut,not excavated	12.29	
(170) - Fill,not excavated	12.28	
(171) - Fill,gre-brown,sandy clay silt	12.24	12.08
(225) - Cut,vertical sides,circular stake hole		12.24
12.08		
(172) - Fill,orange-brown,clay silt gravel	12.21	12.01
(223) - Cut,sloping sides,sub-circular stake hole	12.21	12.01
(173) - Fill,brown,silty gravel	12.19	12.06
(215) - Cut,sloping sides,sub-circular stake hole	12.19	12.06
(174) - Fill,orange-brown,clay silt gravel	12.19	12.03
(228) - Cut,vertical sides,circular stake hole	12.19	12.03
(175) - Fill,orange-brown,silty gravel	12.20	12.05
(218) - Cut,vertical sides,circular stake hole	12.20	12.05
(176) - Fill,brown silty gravel	12.23	12.03
(221) - Cut,vertical sides,circular stake hole		12.23
12.03		
(177) - Fill,orange-brown,silty gravel	12.20	12.00
(217) - cut,sloping sides,sub-circular stake hole	12.20	12.00
(178) - Fill,brown,silty gravel	12.21	11.99
(216) - Cut,vertical sides,sub-circular stake hole	12.21	11.99
(179) - Fill,brown silty gravel	12.21	11.81
(212) - Cut,sloping sides,circular stake hole		12.21
11.81		
(180) - Fill,brown,silty gravel	12.19	11.86
(213) - Cut,sloping sides,sub-circular stake hole	12.19	11.86
(181) - Fill,not excavated	12.21	
(290) - Cut,not excavated	12.21	
(182) - Fill,orange-brown,clay silt gravel	12.26	12.02
(239) - Cut,vertical sides,sub-circular stake hole	12.26	12.02

(183) - Fill,brown silty gravel	12.18	12.00
(211) - Cut,vertical sides,circular stake hole	12.18	12.00
(184) - Fill,not excavated	12.18	
(291) - Cut,not excavated	12.18	
(185) - Fill,brown silty gravel	12.21	12.08
(214) - Cut,sloping sides,sub-circular stake hole	12.21	12.08
(186) - Fill,not excavated	12.17	
(292) - Cut,not excavated	12.17	
(187) - Fill,not excavated	12.14	
(293) - Cut,not excavated	12.14	
(188) - Fill,not excavated	12.12	
(294) - Cut,not excavated	12.12	
(189) - Fill,grey-brown,clay silt gravel	12.24	12.07
(240) - Cut,vertical sides,circular stake hole		12.24
12.07		
(190) - Fill,not excavated	12.20	
(295) - Cut,not excavated	12.20	
(191) - Fill,orange-brown,clay silt gravel	12.19	12.01
(233) - Cut,sloping sides,sub-circular stake hole	12.19	12.01
(192) - Fill,grey-brown,clay silt gravel	12.17	12.02
(229) - Cut,vertical sides,sub-circular stake hole	12.17	12.02
(193) - Fill,orange-brown,clay silt gravel	12.16	11.99
(230) - Cut,sloping sides,circular stake hole		12.16
11.99		
(194) - Fill,brown silty sand with gravel	12.18	12.04
(210) - Cut,vertical sides,circular stake hole		12.18
12.04		
(195) - Fill,not excavated	12.17	
(296) - Cut,not excavated	12.17	
(196) - Fill,not excavated	12.21	
(297) - Cut,not excavated	12.21	
(197) - Fill,not excavated	12.13	
(298) - Cut,not excavated	12.13	
(198) - Fill,not excavated	12.15	
(299) - Cut,not excavated	12.15	
(199) - Fill,not excavated	12.16	
(300) - Cut,not excavated	12.16	
(200) - Fill,brown,clay silt gravel	12.24	12.07
(226) - Cut,vertical sides,sub-circular stake hole	12.24	12.07
(202) - Fill,not excavated	12.17	
(302) - Cut,not excavated	12.17	
(203) - Fill,not excavated	12.14	
(303) - Cut,not excavated	12.14	
(204) - Fill,not excavated	12.15	
(304) - Cut,not excavated	12.15	
(205) - Fill,grey,clay silt gravel	12.24	12.08
(231) - Cut,sloping sides,sub-circular stake hole	12.24	12.08



## APPENDIX II

### PREHISTORIC FINDS FROM GEORGE MITCHELL SCHOOL, LEYTON, (LE-HR 92) by Pamela Greenwood.

#### LIST OF PREHISTORIC FINDS BY CONTEXT

Context (6)

- 1 flint blade

Context (43)

- 1 piece of burnt flint now broken into 3 (7g), white with a reddish tinge

Context (57)

- 1 flint flake

Context (66)

- 2 pieces of burnt flint (6g), whitish colour

Context (140)

- 2 sherds pottery, medium sandy fabric (27g)
- 4 sherds pottery, fine sandy fabric (21g)
- 1 sherd pottery, flint-gritted fabric (17g)
- 1 sherd or piece of fired clay/daub in many crumbs
- 1 flint scraper, recently damaged
- 1 end-scraper on an irregular flint flake
- 1 flint blade, burnt
- 1 waste flint flake with a worked edge
- 1 waste flake (Small Find no.4)
- 3 waste flint flakes
- 10 pieces of burnt flint (409g), reddened
- 23 pieces of burnt flint (617g), most in the blue-grey colour range, 2 reddened.
- 1 piece of flint shattered from a large pebble/nodule - not deliberately knapped, possibly plough damage
- 1 piece of shattered flint, not worked, possibly plough damage
- fragments of 1 piece of burnt quartzite with smooth surfaces, possibly a rubber (97g)
- 2 fragments of a burnt quartzite pebble with smooth surfaces (47g)
- 1 fragment of a smooth burnt quartzite pebble, possibly a smoother or polisher (36g)
- 1 fragment of a quartzite pebble (31g)
- 1 large, smoothed pebble probably used as a pounder/pestle (871g)
- 1 piece of burnt quartzite (20g)



- fragments of charcoal

Context (400)

- 2 sherds pottery, sandy fabric (11g)
- 1 flint side-scraper

Context (463)

- 3 sherds pottery, flint-gritted pottery (12g), one with a seed impression

## THE LITHIC MATERIAL

The scrappy nature of the flint industry, particularly those unpatinated items, points to a later Prehistoric date and would fit with the probable Early Iron Age date of the pottery. The patinated flint implements are likely to be earlier.

The burnt flint is undatable unless associated with other dated finds or by Thermoluminescence Dating. Neither Thermoluminescence Dating nor identification of what types of heating processes produced the different types of burnt flint (Bowersher, 1991) could be justified at this site.

### Context (6)

1. distal end of a blade, single serrated edge, mid-brown-grey flint; prehistoric.

### Context (57)

1. Serrated flake, tip broken, one edge serrated, other with cortex remaining in patinated flint; earlier than the fresher flint, pre-early Iron Age?

### Context (140)

The flint with evidence of human working includes 3 waste flakes and the following implements:

1. Edge-trimmed flake with irregular retouch and possible damage caused by use along both edges; light to mid-grey, slightly patinated flint. Earlier than the other implements, possibly Neolithic.
2. Scraper, mid-dark grey flint, badly damaged recently on ventral side. Prehistoric, probably relatively late, could be early Iron Age.
3. Burnt, bilaterally serrated blade, blue-grey in colour, distal end broken off; Prehistoric, could be early Iron Age.
4. End-scraper with serrated edges on an irregular flake, part broken away recently, light to mid-grey-brown flint with black mottles. Prehistoric, could be early Iron Age.
5. Waste flake, one worked edge, mid-grey flint with much cortex remaining. Prehistoric, quality of workmanship points to later date, perhaps as late as the early Iron Age.

The next group of contains some worked stone belonging to the general category of rubbing, smoothing, grinding and pounding implements, though some pieces may simply be very heavily burnt quartzite pebbles with the original shape burnt beyond recognition.:

1. Fragments of one piece (97g) burnt quartzite with smooth surfaces, possibly a rubber.
2. 2 fragments (47g) of the same burnt quartzite pebble with smooth surfaces.
3. Fragment (36g) of a smooth burnt quartzite pebble, with smooth surfaces, possibly a smoother or polisher.
4. Fragment (31g) of a quartzite pebble.
5. Fragment (20g) of burnt quartzite.
6. 1 large, smooth pebble (871g), roughly oval with one end worn flat, probably used as a pestle or pounder.

#### Context (400)

1. Large side-scraper with heavy retouch on one side and partially over the tip, mid-dark grey-brown flint. Prehistoric, could be as late as early Iron Age.

## THE POTTERY

### Introduction

The pottery assemblage from the George Mitchell School site is extremely small, some 12 sherds in all, weighing 88gms. The minimum number of sherds from which the dating of a defined episode of occupation can be determined with any confidence is that in the range 25-30 sherds (PCRG Guidelines,1992,5).

Most of the sherds are small, and from a limited number of fabrics and vessels. The number of different vessels is likely to be 5 given that some of the sherds are the result of recent breaks. The size and scrappiness of the assemblage with only one reasonably identifiable form, one that has a wide date range, makes identification and dating not very secure.

There is one rim sherd, a plain rim from a plain bowl and one body sherd that may come from such a vessel. The Prehistoric pottery was recovered from a few contexts, mostly pits. Most of the sherds are small and a number have broken during excavation or subsequently. Some are coated with an iron-pan like deposit. Two may have residues internally, one of these appears to have a seed-impression.

The aim of the report, given the limited nature of the assemblage, was to attempt to date the pottery and identify the fabrics, and to aid the interpretation of the contexts in which pottery was found together with the flint and worked stone.

### Methodology

This collection was analysed using the pottery recording system in the PCRG guidelines (1992). The variables considered are recorded on the NMS Prehistoric and Roman pottery record sheets. All sherds were assigned a fabric type after microscopic examination and under X 10 magnification, then counted and weighed to the nearest whole gram. The single diagnostic sherd was assigned a form type.

The pottery is described by context.

#### Context (140)

This context produced the largest quantity of pottery, some 7 sherds/ 65 gms in weight, together with the greatest number of other Prehistoric finds, including burnt flint, stone artefacts and a piece of daub.

#### Medium sandy fabric

2 sherds (27 g), one rim (24g) and 1 body sherd (3g), most probably from the same vessel.

Plain rimmed bowl, hand-made inoxidized, soft mid-dark grey, slightly gritty fabric with irregular fracture; moderate, well-sorted, fine-medium rounded sand inclusions,

rare, angular burnt flint-temper and rare, angular voids, probably shell; smoothed mid-brown-grey surfaces, largely obscured by some sort of iron deposit.

Form and fabric probably early Iron Age.

Fine sandy fabric

4 sherds ( 21g), of which two are cross-joins; highly probable that they are all from the same hand-made vessel, the shape of the sherds indicating a coil-made pot. Soft mid-dark grey inoxidized, silky smooth becoming slightly gritty fabric with an irregular fracture; moderate well sorted, fine-medium well rounded quartz sand grains, occasional coarse-very coarse grains, probably natural inclusions; yellow-brown burnished external surface, mid-dark grey smoothed internal surface.

Fabric type early-middle Iron Age.

Flint-gritted fabric

1 body sherd (17g), possibly from a hand-made plain rimmed bowl.

Soft, dark grey-black inoxidized, smooth-gritty fabric with a hackly fracture; sparse, well-sorted, coarse-very coarse angular burnt flint temper and sparse, well-sorted, fine-medium rounded to well rounded quartz sand inclusions, probably natural; dark grey-brown-black surfaces, both smoothed, externally to a higher degree.

Fabric type later Prehistoric, possibly early Iron Age

Context (400)

2 body sherds (11g), one with traces of residue? from a hand-made vessel.

Soft, orange-red/dark grey incompletely oxidized, slightly soapy with a touch of grittiness, iron-rich fabric with an irregular fracture; moderate, well-sorted, fine rounded quartz sand inclusions and sparse, medium well-sorted rounded black sand inclusions; mid-brown-grey smoothed external surface, mid-brown to grey-black internal surface, smoothed on one sherd; other sherd has traces of residue?.

Fabric possibly early Iron Age

Context (463)

3 sherds from the same hand-made vessel (12g); soft red-brown/dark grey, irregularly fired soft, slightly gritty iron-rich fabric with irregular fracture; sparse, well-sorted, medium-coarse angular burnt flint temper and very sparse well-sorted, fine-medium rounded quartz sand inclusions (probably natural); internal surface dark grey-black, external dark grey-black and was probably smoothed. Traces of a blackened residue internally with a seed impression on one sherd.

Fabric type possibly early Iron Age

## CONCLUSIONS

This small collection of finds does not appear to belong to a single period; some of the patinated flint implements may be earlier than the majority of finds. A single piece of late stoneware may have entered context (140) during later agricultural activity.

The bulk of the worked flint is of sufficiently low quality to match the possible dating of the pottery which has a range of fabrics such as that found in the early Iron Age, somewhere in the timespan 700-400BC. It is not conclusive that the pottery belongs to this period, there being so little found, but this appears to be the most likely dating. The fabrics are similar to those of the early Iron Age both in east and west London at sites such as Moor Hall Farm, Rainham (NMS Archive) and Dawley (Jon Cotton pers. comm.).

### Acknowledgements

Jon Cotton for information on west London material.

### References

- Bowsher, J. 1991 A Burnt Mound at Phoenix Wharf, South-East London: A preliminary report in Hodder and Barfield (eds) 1991, 11-19
- Hodder, M. and Barfield, L 1991 Burnt Mounds and Hot Stone Technology
- Prehistoric Ceramics Research Group 1992 The Study of Later Prehistoric Pottery: Guidelines for Analysis and Publication. Occasional Paper No 2.



additional sheets as necessary.

#### IRON AGE

Evidence was recorded of a series of pits and post holes, together with a dense concentration of stake holes. The stake holes are interpreted as forming the south-western boundary of a settlement. Pottery dating to the Early Iron Age was recovered from the pits, along with flint tools, debitage and worked stone implements.

#### MEDIEVAL

A linear ditch with a north-west to south-east alignment was recorded, associated with contemporary ridge and furrow ploughing.

#### POST MEDIEVAL

17th century plough soils and associated plough marks were recorded, beneath features associated with the former Essex County Cricket Ground that formerly occupied the site.

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



Type: Taplow Terrace Gravel

Height above Ordnance Datum: 12.20 m

### **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. : The Vestry House Museum, Walthamstow, London

c) Approximate year of transfer: 1995

d) Location of any copies:--

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:

c) Approximate year of transfer; 1995

### **10. BIBLIOGRAPHY.**

Paul Thrale and Nick Truckle	1995 Archaeological Excavations at George Mitchell Playing Fields, High Road, Leyton. <i>Unpublished Report, Newham Museum Service.</i>
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**SIGNED:**

**DATE: 2/8/1995**

**NAME** (Block capitals): NICK TRUCKLE

Please return completed form to The Greater London Sites and Monuments Record, English Heritage London Region, 30 Warwick St., London W1R 5RD. Tel. 0171 973 3731/ 3779 (direct dial).

