

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT  
LEYTON ORIENT F.C. SOUTH STAND,  
BUCKINGHAM ROAD,  
LEYTON, LONDON E10.**

**SITE CODE: LE-LO 96**

**GRID REF.: TQ 3788 8640**

**Alison A. Telfer**

**28th August 1996**

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## **1 ABSTRACT**

An archaeological evaluation took place on the site of the south stand of the Leyton Orient Football Club, Buckingham Road, Leyton, between the 13th and 16th of August, 1996, by Newham Museum Service (Figure 1). Two trenches were excavated revealing features cut into a post-medieval ploughsoil and the underlying natural brickearth. A number of postholes were recorded, along with a horn drain dating to the post-medieval period.

## **2 INTRODUCTION**

2.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on the site of the south stand of the Leyton Orient Football Club by Newham Museum Service between the 13th and 16th of August, 1996. This was in advance of the development of a new seating structure with a deep basement to contain various sports facilities.

2.2 The work was commissioned by Leyton Orient Football Club Ltd. to fulfil a planning condition imposed upon Planning Application No.96/0200 by the London Borough of Waltham Forest. This planning condition was on the advice of the English Heritage Planning Officer for North-East London.

2.3 The principal aim of the evaluation was to assess the survival of archaeological deposits on the site, which lies within an archaeological priority zone, as defined in the London Borough of Waltham Forest Unitary Development Plan.

2.4 Newham Museum Service would like to thank Leyton Orient Football Club for funding the excavation, Mr. John Goldsmith for his help and interest, Mrs Janet Hasler of Leyton Orient Football Club and Lawrence Pontin, English Heritage Planning Advisor (North-East London). The author would like to personally thank Mark Turner for negotiating the site, Graham Reed for the illustrations, Dave Lawrence and Alice Hodgins for their assistance and Ian Hanson and Shaun Tamblyn for their sterling work on site. Work on site was supervised by the author.

### **3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

3.1 The site is in the vicinity of the interface between river terrace gravels (Taplow) and the alluvial floodplain of the River Lea (British Geological Survey, 1993, Sheet 256). This location is thought to have been favoured by prehistoric communities due to its environmental amenities.

3.2 Previous excavations in the area, such as investigations at Oliver Close in 1993 (Sabel, 1994 and forthcoming) revealed the remains of a Bronze Age settlement. This site was only a few hundred yards to the west of the Football Stadium. Prehistoric activity was also recorded to the north-east, at the George Mitchell School (Thrale, 1993).

3.3 Ruckholt Manor was a major estate in the Leyton area from the 13th to the 19th century. It is known that Coronation Gardens, directly to the south-east of the stadium, was previously a pond associated with this estate until at least the mid 19th century (Stable, 1864).

## **4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

4.1 The methodology was based on the archaeological brief and conformed to the standards set out in Guidance Paper No.3 (Standard Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork), No.5 (Archaeological Assessment and Evaluation Reports) and all relevant Health and Safety Regulations.

4.2 An evaluation was deemed necessary as no previous excavations had taken place on the site, which lies within an archaeological priority zone.

4.3 The demolition of the south stand of the football ground had already been undertaken. Two evaluation trenches measuring 10m x 2m were located by the specification outlined in the Guidance Brief. Trench 1, aligned east-west, was positioned to the west of the area under investigation, with Trench 2 in a north-south alignment to the east (Figure 2).

4.4 The site was scanned using a CAT scan, to ensure that no live services were located in the vicinity, prior to excavation.

4.5 The trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator (JCB) under archaeological supervision until archaeological features were reached. The trenches were then cleaned by hand and any features examined for datable material and to determine their nature. Trench 1 revealed a number of archaeological features cut into the natural brickearth and the contingency in the Project Design (Turner, 1996) was used to extend this trench to 12m x 4m with a further extension of 4m x 2m to the south-east (Figure 3). Trench 2 was machined to a depth of 2.40m, exposing a post-medieval ploughsoil, and was recorded on a pro-forma trench recording sheet.

4.6 The site was supervised by Alison Telfer and negotiated by Mark Turner on behalf of Newham Museum Service.

## **5 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS**

5.1 Two trenches were excavated. Twenty-two contexts were identified and recorded. In both trenches, a deep layer of demolition and incineration material overlay a series of post-medieval layers, two of which appeared to be ploughsoils (Figure 4). These were machined out in Trench 1 to reveal a layer of naturally deposited brickearth below at 6.76m A.O.D. This, in turn, overlay a natural gravel layer at 6.62m A.O.D.

5.2 The deposits recorded in the trenches reflected the stratigraphy from five boreholes, which were sunk up to a depth of 10m into an area skirting the south stand of the Football Stadium. This was undertaken in May 1996 by John Pryke and Partners. The borehole report (Grant, 1996), which details the results of the borehole logs, substantiates the site's proximity to the alluvial flood plain and gravel terrace boundary and reveals an undulating prehistoric landscape.

5.3 Trench 1 revealed a number of postholes, one of which contained fragments of daub. The exact date of these features is unclear.

5.4 Trench 1 also revealed a north-south orientated horn core lined land drain (Figure 3). The drain was packed full of cow horn and bone, which would have eased the flow of water that the drain would have carried. It is likely that the drain had been truncated from above, probably from prolonged ploughing. The location and orientation of this drain correlates with a 19th Century map of the area (ref. Stable, 1864) when Coronation Gardens (see Figure 1) was called Ruckholts Pond. It is known that 'horn drains' were in use sometime between the 17th and late 18th centuries and were associated with butchery, tanning or horn-working (Armitage, 1989).

5.5 Trench 2 revealed an east-west running ditch (Figure 4), which may have been a boundary ditch. Its delineation also appears on Stable's map of 1864 and may have been associated with the horn drain.

## **6 CONCLUSIONS**

6.1 The evaluation at the south stand of the Leyton Orient Football Club revealed deposits dating to the post-medieval period. A horn drain and a possible field boundary were recorded, both of which appear associated with field systems belonging to the Ruckholt Estate.

6.2 A number of postholes were also recorded, one of which contained fragments of daub. Although the dating for these is inconclusive, the stratigraphy from Trench 1 suggests a phase of activity earlier than the horn drain.

6.3 In the event of the development of either the northern or western areas of the stadium, it would be necessary for a further archaeological assessment to be applied.

6.4 It is the recommendation of this report that construction work may go ahead in the area of the former south stand of the Leyton Orient Football Club.



## **7 APPENDED INFORMATION**

### **7.1 APPENDIX I**

#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Armitage, P.L. 1989, *The Use of Animal Bones as Building Material in Post-Medieval Britain in Diets and Crafts in Towns eds D. Serjeantson and T. Waldron.*
- British Geological Drift Survey 1993, North London, England and Wales, Sheet 256. Solid and Geology. 1:50 000
- English Heritage 1991, *Management of Archaeological Projects II.* London.
- English Heritage (London Division) 1992, *Archaeological Guidance Papers 2, 3, 5 and 6.* London.
- Grant, M. 1996, *Report on a Soil Investigation at the Southern End of Leyton Orient Football Club Ground, Brisbane Road, London E10.* Unpublished report, John Pryke and Partners.
- Pontin, L. 1996, *Brief for Archaeological Field Evaluation at Proposed Development at Leyton Orient FC South Stand.*
- Sabel, K. 1993, *Archaeological Evaluation at Oliver Close, Leyton.* Unpublished archive report, Newham Museum Service.
- Sabel, K. Forthcoming, *Archaeological Excavations at Oliver Close*
- Stable 1864, *Ruckholt Map, The British Library*
- Thrale, P. 1993, *Excavations at George Mitchell School Playing Fields, High Road, Leyton, London, E4.* Unpublished archive report, Newham Museum Service.
- Turner, M. 1996, *Tender for an Archaeological Evaluation of the site of the Proposed Development at Leyton Orient FC South Stand.*

The site records and archive are currently held at the Archaeology and Local History Centre, 31, Stock Street, Plaistow, London, E13 OBX.



Funded by: LEYTON ORIENT FOOTBALL CLUB LTD

#### **4. DURATION**

Date fieldwork started: 13/08/96

Date finished: 16/08/96

Field work previously notified?

~~YES~~/ NO

Fieldwork will continue?

~~YES~~/ NO/ ~~NOT KNOWN~~

#### **5. PERIODS REPRESENTED**

Palaeolithic

Roman

Mesolithic

Saxon (pre-AD 1066)

Neolithic

Medieval (AD 1066 -1485)

Bronze Age

Post-Medieval 4

Iron Age

Unknown

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

#### POST-MEDIEVAL

Two trenches were excavated revealing features cut into a post-medieval ploughsoil and the underlying natural brickearth. A number of postholes were recorded in Trench 1, to the east of the site; one of which contained fragments of daub. A horn core lined drain was also recorded, running north-south, which dated to the 18th century. Trench 2 revealed an east-west orientated ditch, which may have been a field boundary and associated with the horn drain.

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

Type: NATURAL BRICKEARTH

Height above Ordnance Datum: 6.76m A.O.D.

#### **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. :

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

c) Approximate year of transfer: 1996

d) Location of any copies: AS ABOVE

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: 1996

## **10. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Armitage, P.L.                  | 1989, The Use of Animal Bones as Building Material in Post-Medieval Britain <i>in Diets and Crafts in Towns eds D. Serjeantson and T. Waldron</i> |
| British Geological Drift Survey | 1993, North London, England and Wales, Sheet 256. Solid and Geology. 1:50 000   |
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- English Heritage (London Division) 1992, Archaeological Guidance Papers 2, 3, 5 and 6. London.
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- Thrale, P. 1993, Excavations at George Mitchell School Playing Fields, High Road, Leyton, London, E4. Unpublished archive report, Newham Museum Service.
- Turner, M. 1996, Tender for an Archaeological Evaluation of the site of the Proposed Development at Leyton Orient FC South Stand.

**SIGNED:**

**DATE:** 28th August 1996

**NAME** (Block capitals): ALISON A. TELFER

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).