

## NOTES

### **Palaeoliths from Castle Avenue, Northey Avenue and West Mead, Ewell**

The purpose of this note is to record seven flint artefacts of Palaeolithic aspect discovered by Mr Tom Walls at three separate locations within the Ewell area during 1960. None of the material considered here has ever been fully published, although the pieces from Castle Avenue and West Mead were listed by John Wymer in his 1968 monograph.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Castle Avenue, Ewell (TQ 226 626)**

A small collection of five artefacts was recovered from a thin bed of gravel overlying Thanet Sand during field-walking activities in the area of Castle Avenue. The findspot is situated above the 46m contour on rising ground 750m to the east of the springs which supply the modern Hogsmill river. Much of the area available to field-walking in the post-war period is now occupied by private housing, and it seems unlikely that any further information regarding this site will be forthcoming in the near future.

The five artefacts, comprising three nondescript waste-flakes and two pieces illustrated here (fig 1:1, 2), are all of poor quality pebble flint with rolled and abraded edges and flake-ridges.

No 1 measures 57mm in length and is of mottled olive-brown flint with a small patch of cortex on its unillustrated face and slight iron-staining on the flake-ridges. It is tentatively identified as a small ovate or discoidal handaxe.

No 2 measures 65mm in length, is of similar olive-brown flint, and represents part of a long, parallel-sided flake which has been anciently broken at its distal end. Its faceted striking platform is a feature characteristic of the Levalloisian 'prepared core' technique, and can be compared with No 3 below.

#### **Northey Avenue, East Ewell (c TQ 240 622)**

No 3, a single, ridged flake of mottled dark olive-green flint measuring 57mm in length (fig 1:3), was probably found on ploughland south of Northey Avenue.<sup>2</sup> The general area of the findspot lies above the 61m contour on the eastern slope of a dry chalk valley 2km south-south-east of the present headwaters of the Hogsmill river. Like the five artefacts considered above, it has rolled and abraded edges and flake-ridges. The main point of interest lies in its faceted striking platform which can be compared with No 2 above and which is similarly referable to Levalloisian knapping techniques.

#### **West Mead, Ewell (c TQ 213 637)**

No 4, the point of a large handaxe measuring 56mm in length (fig 1:4), was found lying amongst a group of stones filling a pothole in a rutted track on open land to the south of West Mead. Presumably forming part of a local gardeners' clearance heap, it is unlikely to have been carried far from where it was originally found. The general area of the findspot lies on the 30m contour overlooking the Hogsmill river, whose present course lies at the foot of a gentle slope to

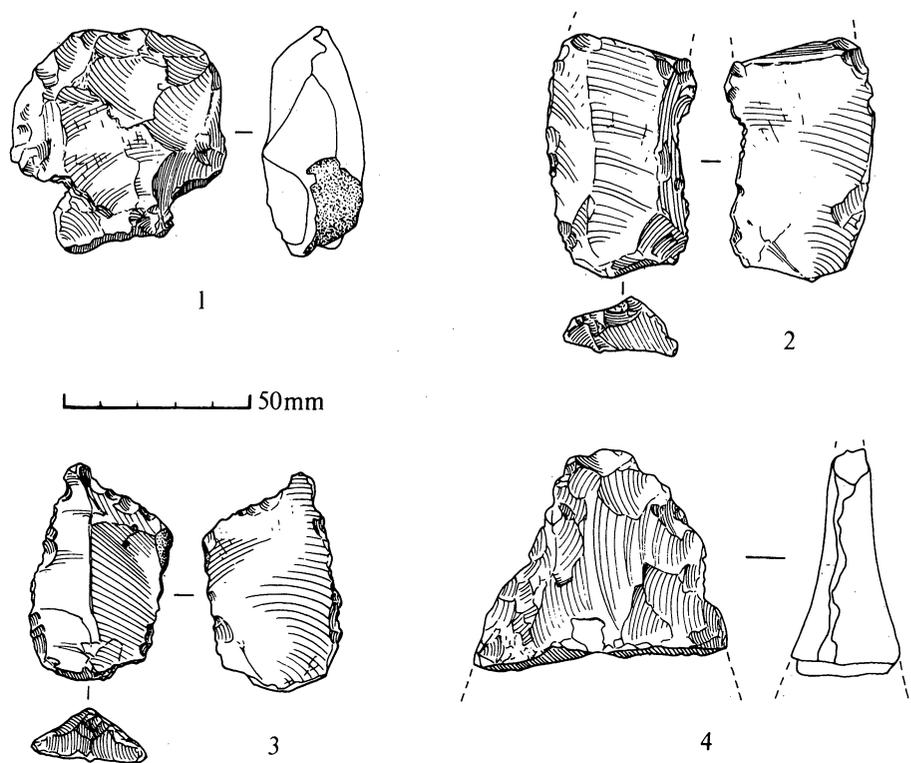


Fig 1 Palaeoliths from Ewell (½)

the south-west. Apparently broken in antiquity, the implement is quite finely worked and has a rolled appearance and light ochreous surface staining.

### Discussion

The seven artefacts described here are the first palaeoliths to have been recorded from Ewell, although their generally undiagnostic nature means that their relevance to Palaeolithic studies is somewhat limited. However, the two Levallois-type flakes from Castle Avenue and Northey Avenue are of interest, and it may be noted that L W Carpenter recovered a single Levallois point from Ruxley Farm, Malden, 2km further down the Hogsmill valley to the north-north-west, in the 1950s.<sup>3</sup>

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## FOOTNOTES

1. Wymer, J J, *Lower Palaeolithic archaeology in Britain as represented by the Thames valley*, 1968, 273; the five artefacts from Castle Avenue published here are accompanied by a sixth — a fire-cracked but very sharp core — which now seems unlikely to be of Palaeolithic date and is therefore not included in the present account.
2. Unlike the other pieces, which are provided with a 6-figure grid reference, the flake is marked simply 'Northey Avenue, Ewell', and in the absence of further information, the ploughland represents only the most likely findspot within the general area.
3. Wymer loc cit

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