

1 ABSTRACT

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group on 6th and 7th June 2006 at York House, Frizlands Lane, Dagenham, Essex, on behalf of DWA Architects. The aim of the evaluation was to assess the impact of the proposed development on any surviving archaeological remains.

The evaluation consisted of three machine excavated trenches, two measuring 15m by 2m, the third was reduced to 5.7m by 2m due to on-site practicalities. Cutting the natural Taplow gravels was a single linear feature. This was overlain by an alluvial deposit of yellow clay, suggesting that the feature was probably a palaeochannel.

No archaeological features or deposits were identified in any of the trenches.

2 SITE LOCATION

- 2.1 The site is located in Dagenham, Essex, at the south end of Frizlands Lane. The proposed development is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TQ 4953 8586 (Figure 1).
- 2.2 The site is roughly rectangular in shape and is bounded to the west by Frizlands Lane, to the north and east by residential properties, and to the south by commercial properties. The area affected by the development covers a total area of approximately 0.3 hectares.

3 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 3.1 The British Geological Survey map (BGS Sheet 257), indicates that the site is situated upon Taplow Gravels which seal the London Clay.
- 3.2 Geotechnical investigations were conducted on site by AP Geotechnics (2006). Four boreholes and six continuously open drive samplers were carried out. These indicated that between 0.40m and 0.70m of made ground sealed gravel and clay deposits.

4 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The local planning authority is the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham. Archaeological advice to the Borough is provided by the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS).
- 4.2 The proposed development (Application No.: 05/01227/FUL) of the site comprises the demolition of the existing building and the construction of a care home in its place.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 5.1 The following information is drawn from the Written Scheme of Investigation (AOC 2006). For a full background refer to this document.
- 5.2 Dagenham, originally *Daeccanham* or 'Daecca's village', lies east of the Roding River, between the Thames to the south and Romford to the north. Evidence of prehistoric occupation in the area has been found in the form of stone-age hand axes and flint implements. Dagenham lies in an area of known archaeological resource.
- 5.3 Dagenham lies on the terrace gravels overlooking the Thames floodplain. Extensive archaeological remains have been found to the north of the site during quarrying. The site lies c. 1.5 km north of the floodplain margin, with deep alluvial sequences along the Thames edge overlying the prehistoric landscape. Wooden trackways of Bronze Age date have been recorded in the silt and peat

- sequences. At the Hayes Storage site to the south a burnt flint causeway was recorded (Meddens 1996).
- 5.4 While the site lies on the terrace gravels away from the floodplain margin, extensive activity has been recorded on the gravels. The site lies c. 2.5km south of the Marks Warren quarry where excavation and watching brief (AOC 2003) revealed multi-period prehistoric activity. Mesolithic remains included lithics recovered from a hollow, possibly a tree throw, and from topsoil. Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age lithics and pottery were recovered from the topsoil. Cropmarks show a single-ditched sub-circular enclosure and a multi-ditched rectilinear enclosure. The single-ditched sub-circular enclosure may be of Late Bronze Age origin, possibly continuing in use into the Early Iron Age. A Late Bronze Age hoard is known to have been recovered from the site by a metal detectorist. The multi-ditched rectilinear enclosure appears to date to the early Roman period but it may have an origin in the Late Iron Age. Suggestions of its function have ranged from a stock enclosure to a sacred enclosure. A length of metalled track/road with roadside ditches runs up to the east edge of the enclosure. The ditches produced pottery and tile of mid 1st century date. Traces of buildings with flint foundations have been discovered alongside the road. The site also contains evidence of a medieval enclosure, the foundations of a medieval windmill and traces of ridge and furrow.
- 5.5 Uphall camp (located to the northwest in Redbridge) is believed to be a univallate fort of the Middle Iron Age, originally an enclosure of 48 acres within the angle of the river Roding and the Loxford Water Stream. The remains of a palisade, drainage gullies, small pits, boundary ditches, marks of several round houses or storage buildings, granaries and traces of smithying have all been discovered. A Roman military watch tower or signal post was built on the same site (Evans 1991).
- 5.6 Dagenham lies approximately 14km outside of the main Roman settlement area of *Londinium* where the modern City of London now lies. *Londinium* would have acted as a focus for activity, and its influence would have been felt throughout the region. Multiple Roman coffins and associated grave goods were found during gravel extraction in 1928 on the Mardyke Estate, Hornchurch. Activity at this location has been given a date range to between the 1st and 3rd centuries AD.
- 5.7 There appears to have been a high level of Saxon culture in this part of Essex. To the east is Rainham, once *Roegingaham*, 'settlement of the ruling people.' Here a hoard of swords, spearheads, brooches, rings, shield bosses, small wooden buckets and olive green drinking horns were found (Evans 1991).
- 5.8 After his coronation at Westminster Abbey on Christmas Day 1066, William the Conqueror moved his headquarters to nearby Barking while the Tower of London was built on the remains of Roman and Saxon fortifications. The location was

conveniently situated within easy distance of the highway into London and the Thames routes to London and the sea.

- 5.9 The first railway through the parish was the Eastern Counties main line from London to Romford, opening in 1839. However, it was not until 1854 with the establishment of a large railway station in Barking that an era of increased urbanisation was hastened, expanding over much of the surrounding farms and market gardens, a process which continued throughout much of the earlier half of the 20th century.

6 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 6.1 The aim of the evaluation was to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development. This applied to remains of all periods and included evidence of past environments.
- 6.2 The specific objectives of the Evaluation were to:
- Determine the presence of any remains of prehistoric date on the site.
 - Determine the presence of any remains of Roman date on the site.
 - Determine the presence of any remains of Saxon date on the site.
 - Assess the degree and extent of truncation of earlier deposits by the modern development of the site.
- 6.3 This evaluation report will enable the LPA archaeological advisor to make an informed decision on the status of the condition on the planning permission, and any possible requirement for further work in order to satisfy that condition.
- 6.4 The final aim is to make available to interested parties the results of the investigation subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

7 METHODOLOGY

- 7.1 The evaluation consisted of three evaluation trenches. Trench 1 was 5.7m x 2m, Trenches 2 and 3 were both 15m x 2m (Figure 2).
- 7.2 Trench 1 was abandoned in consultation with GLAAS after only 5.7m due to on-site practical considerations.
- 7.3 All overburden was to be removed down to the top of the first recognizable archaeological horizon or the natural deposit in the event that no archaeological horizons were present (in this case the latter), using a JCB 3CX with a 1.8m wide toothless ditching bucket.

- 7.4 All machining was carried out under direct control of an experienced archaeologist.
- 7.5 Excavated material was examined in order to retrieve artefacts to assist in the analysis of the spatial distribution of artefacts.
- 7.6 On completion of machine excavation, all faces of trenches that required examination or recording were cleaned using appropriate hand tools.
- 7.7 No deposits were entirely removed. As the objective was to define remains it was not necessary for all trenches to be fully excavated to natural stratigraphy. However Trenches 2 and 3 were excavated to the underlying natural geology. Even in the case where no remains were located the stratigraphy of the evaluation trenches was recorded.
- 7.8 All excavation was undertaken with a view to avoiding damage to any archaeological features or deposits which appeared to be demonstrably worthy of preservation *in situ*.
- 7.9 After recording, the trenches were backfilled with excavated material.
- 7.10 A Temporary Bench Mark (TBM) was set up on site, transferred from a Bench Mark on a pub on Oxlow Lane.
- 7.13 The evaluation work was undertaken by the Andy Leonard, Project Supervisor, under the overall project management of Ron Humphrey, Project Manager.

8 RESULTS

Summary

- 8.1 The stratigraphy was similar in Trenches 2 and 3. Overlying the natural gravels was a layer of clean yellow clay, probably alluvium, which was in turn sealed by 20th century made ground and demolition material. A linear feature in Trench 2 (Figure 3) was cut through the gravels and was sealed by the alluvium. The clean fill and lack of any evidence for human presence, either in the fill or at the edges of the cut, would suggest that this feature was a naturally formed palaeochannel. Trench 1 was located largely within the footprint of the previous building, dating to the 1930's, and proved to be heavily truncated by foundation footings related to this. The north end, which would have been located outside the previous building footprint was close to a tree with a preservation order, negating the possibility of excavating within a 5m radius. For these reasons Trench 1 was abandoned.

Trench 1

Sample section: 0.00m = 10.36m

0.00-0.40m	(1/001). Loosely compacted sandy silt with crushed brick and concrete inclusions 20 th century demolition debris.
0.40-0.70m	(1/002). Moderately compacted brown clayey silt with building material inclusions. 20 th century made ground.
0.70-2.00m+	(1/003). Mixed, moderately – firmly compacted silty clay with moderate lenses of gravel. Redeposited/disturbed natural clays and gravels.

8.2 Trench 1 was located to the northwest of the site. It was reduced in length and the angle altered due to the presence of a tree with a preservation order. It was subsequently abandoned due to the large amount of truncation caused by the previous building footings.

8.3 *In situ* natural deposits were not observed in this trench. Excavation was stopped at 2.00m depth due to health and safety considerations. The earliest deposit (1/003) was a mixed layer of silty clay and gravel which appeared to be redeposited natural Taplow gravels and London Clay (as observed in the other trenches, see below). This was the result of the intrusive activity associated with the construction of the previous building. It was sealed by a moderately compacted brown clayey silt made ground deposit (1/002). This was in turn sealed by a layer of demolition material (1/001) associated with the current programme of works.

8.4 No archaeological finds or features were identified in Trench 1.

Trench 2 (Figure 3)

Sample section: 0.00m = 10.12mOD

0.00-0.40m	(2/001). Loosely compacted dark grey sandy silt with frequent building material inclusions. 20 th century made ground.
0.40-1.00m	(2/002). Firmly compacted mid-yellow, clean silty clay. Alluvial deposit.
1.00-1.60m	(2/005). Firmly compacted light brown sandy gravels. Natural Taplow gravels.
1.60-1.90m	(2/006). Firmly compacted dark-mid brown clay. London clay.

8.7 Trench 2 was located in the centre of the site on an east-west alignment.

8.8 The earliest deposit recorded in Trench 2 was a firmly compacted dark brown clay (2/006). This layer was devoid of finds and any other inclusions. It also underlay the natural gravels suggesting it is the London clay referred to in the

- archaeology background (see above). The natural Taplow gravels (2/005) sealed the London clay and were truncated at the west end of the trench by a linear feature [2/004], 4.50m wide and 2m long (to the limit of excavation). This was aligned northeast-southwest, had moderately steep sides and contained a fill (2/003) of dark yellow silty clay with no inclusions. The excavation of this feature was abandoned when it reached a depth of 1.10m (2.10m from ground level) because the trench sides started collapsing. The nature of this feature combined with its location below alluvium indicates that this was a natural feature, probably a palaeochannel.
- 8.9 Linear feature [2/004] was sealed by a clean yellow clay (2/002) which was 0.60m thick and considered to be an alluvial deposit. This was sealed by a deposit of 20th century made ground (2/001).
- 8.10 No archaeological finds or features were identified in Trench 2

Trench 3

Sample section: 0.00m = 10.12mOD

0.00-0.60m	(3/001). Loosely compacted dark grey sandy silt with frequent building material inclusions. 20 th century made ground.
0.60-1.10m	(3/004). Firmly compacted mid-dark yellow, clean silty clay. Alluvial deposit.
1.10-1.40m	(3/005). Firmly compacted light brown sandy gravels. Natural Taplow gravels.

- 8.11 Natural Taplow gravels (3/005) were sealed in Trench 3 by a yellow alluvial clay (3/004). This was a maximum 1.10m thick and was cut by a linear feature [3/003] aligned northwest-southeast. Feature [3/003] contained a fill (3/002) of loosely compacted dark grey silty clay with frequent inclusions of 20th century pottery, glass and building material. It was not clear what the function of this feature was but it was probably a disused service trench. Sealing feature [3/003] and representing the latest deposit in Trench 3 was a layer of 20th century made ground.

9 FINDS

- 9.1 No finds were retrieved from the site.

10 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 No evidence for any archaeological activity was identified on the site.

- 10.2 Although Trench 1 was not excavated to its full extent as stipulated in the written scheme of investigation, it demonstrated that the footings of the previous building would have comprehensively destroyed any archaeological remains on this area of the site.
- 10.3 It is therefore recommended that no further work is required to satisfy the planning condition on this site. However, the final decision regarding any further work will rest with the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham and its archaeology advisor David Divers (GLAAS).
- 10.4 Publication of the results will be through the ADS OASIS form (Appendix B) with a short summary submitted to the London Archaeologist fieldwork round-up. No further analysis or reporting is considered necessary.

11 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Figure 1 – Site Location

Figure 2 – Trench Locations and plans

Figure 3 – trench 2 section

APPENDIX A – CONTEXT REGISTER

Context No.	Context Description	Length	Width	Depth
1/001	20th century demolition layer	Trench	Trench	0.40m
1/002	20th century made ground	Trench	Trench	0.30m
1/003	Redeposited natural clay and gravel	Trench	Trench	1.30m
2/001	20th century made ground	Trench	Trench	0.40m
2/002	Alluvial layer	Trench	Trench	0.60m
2/003	Fill of [2/004]	2.00m	4.40m	1.10m
2/004	Natural linear cut	2.00m	4.40m	1.10m
2/005	Natural Taplow gravels	Trench	Trench	0.40m
2/006	Natural London clay	4.00m	2.00m	1.00m
3/001	20th century made ground	Trench	Trench	0.60m
3/002	Fill of [3/003]	2.00m	2.10m	1.00m
3/003	Modern service cut	2.00m	2.10m	1.00m
3/004	Alluvial layer	Trench	Trench	1.10m
3/005	Natural Taplow gravels	Trench	Trench	0.30m+

APPENDIX B

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

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1.1.1 Printable version

1.2 OASIS ID: aocarcha1-15491

Project details

Project name	York House, Dagenham - An Archaeological Evaluation
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group on 6th and 7th June 2006 at York House, Frizlands Lane, Dagenham, London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, on behalf of DWA Architects. The aim of the evaluation was to assess the impact of the proposed development on any surviving archaeological remains. The evaluation consisted of three machine excavated trenches, two measuring 15m by 2m, the third was reduced to 5.7m by 2m due to on-site practicalities. Cutting the natural Taplow gravels was a single linear feature. This was overlain by an alluvial deposit of yellow clay, suggesting that the feature was probably a Palaeochannel. No archaeological features or deposits were identified in any of the trenches.
Project dates	Start: 06-06-2006 End: 07-06-2006
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	FZL 06 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status (other)	Area of known archaeological resource
Current Land use	Other 13 - Waste ground
Methods & techniques	'Targeted Trenches'

Development type Public building (e.g. school, church, hospital, medical centre, law courts etc.)

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Position in the
planning process After outline determination (eg. As a reserved matter)

Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON BARKING AND DAGENHAM DAGENHAM York House,
Dagenham

Postcode RM10 7YT

Study area 0.30 Hectares

National grid
reference TQ 4953 8586 Point

Height OD Min: 8.21m Max: 9.02m

Project creators

Name of
Organisation AOC Archaeology Group

Project brief
originator Contractor (design and execute)

Project design
originator AOC Archaeology Group

Project
director/manager Ron Humphrey

Project supervisor Andy Leonard

Sponsor or
Developer

funding body

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient Valence House Museum

Digital Archive ID FZL 06

Digital Contents 'none'

Digital Media available 'Images raster','Images vector'

Digital Archive notes Archive to be retained at AOC until deposition with the museum

Paper Archive recipient Valence House Museum

Paper Archive ID FZL 06

Paper Contents 'none'

Paper Media available 'Manuscript','Map','Matrices','Microfilm','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section','Unpublished Text'

Paper Archive notes Archive to be retained at AOC until deposition with the museum

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title York House, Frizlands Lane, Dagenham, Essex: Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological evaluation

Author(s)/Editor(s) Eddisford, D.

Date 2006

Issuer or publisher AOC Archaeology Group

Place of issue or publication AOC Archaeology Group

Description A4 bound document

**Project
bibliography 2**

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title York House, Frizlands Lane, Dagenham, London Borough of Barking and Dagenham:
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Author(s)/Editor(s) Leonard, A.

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