

THAMES WATER UTILITIES LIMITED

LAND TO THE REAR OF MILTON CRESCENT AND

THROUGH VALENTINES PARK

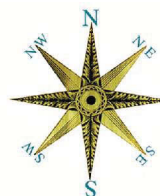
LONDON BOROUGH OF REDBRIDGE

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

November 2007



COMPASS



ARCHAEOLOGY

LAND TO THE REAR OF MILTON CRESCENT AND
THROUGH VALENTINES PARK
LONDON BOROUGH OF REDBRIDGE

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

SITE CODE: MCV07

SITE CENTRE NGR: TQ4406 8796 – TQ4363 8750

COMPASS ARCHAEOLOGY LIMITED
5-7 SOUTHWARK STREET
LONDON SE1 1RQ

Telephone: 020 7403 9660

Facsimile: 020 7403 9661

Email: mail@compassarchaeology.co.uk

November 2007

©Compass Archaeology Limited

Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken between July and October 2007, during flood alleviation works on land to rear of Milton Crescent and in Valentines Park, Ilford, London Borough of Redbridge. The work formed a response to a planning condition and recommendations made by English Heritage.

The watching brief produced no significant archaeological finds or features within any of the stripped or excavated areas. Shallow topsoil and subsoil were removed across Valentines Park, exposing high natural Hackney Gravels with only modern service intrusions. Modern made ground layers were observed in some areas, including beneath the tarmac area around the Valentines Park pavilion and café, and towards the tennis courts to the northeast. A single sherd of pottery recovered from topsoil stripping was dated to the 19th-20th century.

Contents	Page
1 Introduction	1
2 Site Location and Geology	2
3 Archaeological and Historical Background	2
3.1 Prehistoric	2
3.2 Roman	3
3.3 Saxon and later	3
4 Archaeological Research Questions	3
5 The Archaeological Programme	4
5.1 Standards	4
5.2 Fieldwork	5
6 Post-Excavation work	6
7 The Archaeological Watching Brief	7
7.1 Area 1	7
7.2 Area 2	8
7.3 Area 3	9
7.4 Area 4	10
7.5 Area 5	11
7.6 Area 6	12
8 Summary	12
Bibliography	13
Appendix I: OASIS data collection form.	14
Appendix II: London Archaeologist Summary	16

List of Figures		Page
1	Site location plan.	1
2	Areas of archaeological monitoring, based on WIA Notice Sewer Route drawing produced by Thames Water Utilities Engineering.	6
3	Groundworks in Area 1, working shot and section (east facing).	7
4	Ground works in Area 2, south facing section and stripped area.	8
5	Ground works in Area 3, stripped area and section of pipe trench	9
6	Modern dump material in Area 4 and section of pipe trench through natural gravels.	10
7	Ventilation column and ground works in Area 5.	11

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken between July and October 2007, during flood alleviation works on land to rear of Milton Crescent, and in Valentines Park, Ilford, London Borough of Redbridge.
- 1.2 One specific element of the scheme – for a ventilation column within Valentines Park – is also subject to a standard archaeological planning condition (Application No. 0296/07 - Condition 3; approved 16.03.2007).

Upgrade work was planned for sewers along a route to the rear of Milton Crescent and through Valentines Park to the south of Perth Road (see Figure 1). This is in an Archaeological Priority Area, and in the latter area a Registered Park and Garden.

- 1.3 The upgrade route of sewers to the rear of Milton Crescent and through Valentines Park is located between NGR TQ4406 8796 – TQ4363 8750.
- 1.4 The archaeological work was commissioned by Thames Water Utilities Ltd in response to recommendations made by English Heritage.

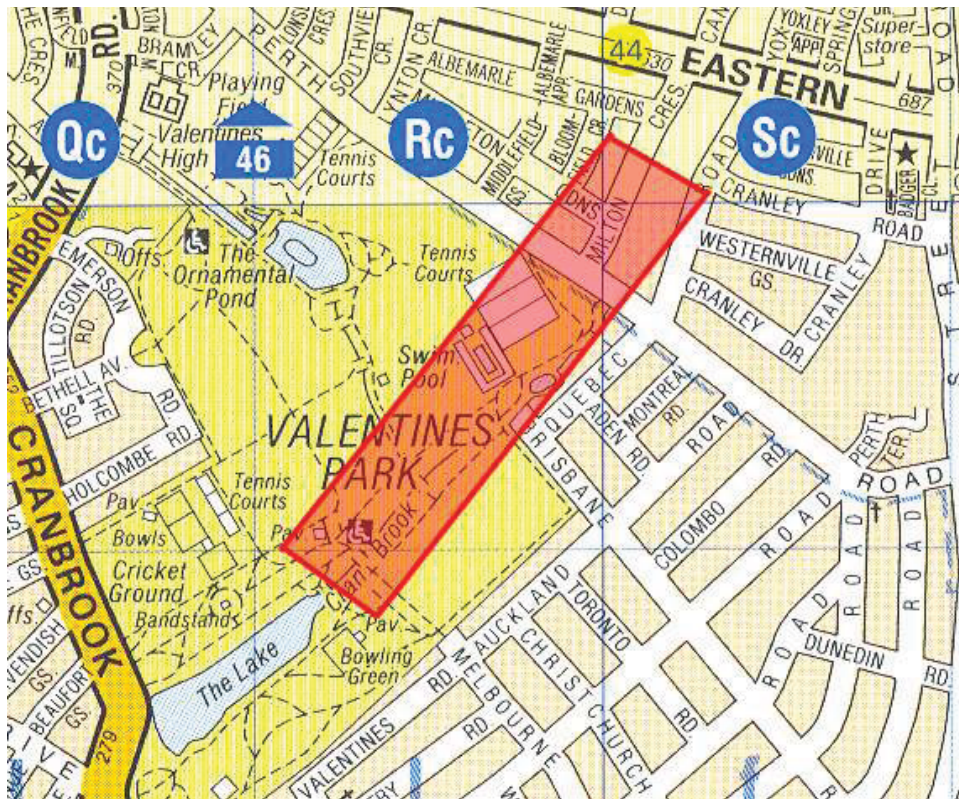


Figure 1: Site location plan. Reproduced from the OS A-Z maps with permission of the HMSO. © Crown Copyright (399000)

2. Site Location and Geology

- 2.1** The archaeological fieldwork took place along the upgrade route of sewers to the rear of Milton Crescent and through Valentines Park. (TQ4406 8796 – TQ4363 8750). As mentioned above, this is situated within an Archaeological Priority Area and largely in a Registered Park and Garden.
- 2.2** The British Geological Survey (1994, *Romford. Sheet No 257*) shows the natural geology of the area of Valentines Park to be Hackney Gravel, with Boyn Hill Gravel in the vicinity also. Both these deposits originate from the Thames River Terrace deposits which are gravel, sand and clayey in part. Surrounding the area is London Clay, with Ilford Silt in nearby Ilford. Along the line of the proposed pipe route the land surface drops to the southwest, from *c* 16.5m to 12.0m OD.

3. Archaeological and Historical Background.

3.1 Prehistoric

Direct evidence for prehistoric activity in the immediate vicinity of the site is so far scarce. However, this does not necessarily mean that such activity did not take place. It is worth noting that there does appear to be evidence for prehistoric activity in the Redbridge area. In particular, according to the *Redbridge Now* website around fifty mammoth skeletons have been found around the area of Ilford Lane. Such discoveries are indeed very rare, and it is unclear whether whole skeletons were excavated, or as perhaps more likely, fifty remains likely to have come from fewer skeletons, but nevertheless such finds are significant.

Worked flint has been found at various sites local to the proposed scheme of work, such as Alborough Hall Farm where flint artefacts were located along with post-medieval pottery, slag and ceramic building material (AHL02; TQ4650 8950). Several pieces of struck flint on natural gravels have been excavated from Balfour Road together with an 18th century brick wall associated with Ilford Lodge (BLF01; TQ4360 8680). Elsewhere at Alborough Hall Farm residual struck flint and 18th and 19th century ditches and pits were discovered (AHF03; TQ4650 8950).

A major Iron Age camp (250 – 50 BC) was discovered at Ilford Lane and finds from this included post holes, pottery and coins (*Redbridge Now* 02/10/06). In addition, an excavation at nearby Loxford Manor (Loxford Lane) showed traces of prehistoric and Roman activity via curvilinear features, post holes and pits, with a second phase of resistivity and trench survey revealing middle Bronze Age features (IG-LH92).

3.2 Roman

There is evidence of Roman occupation close to the site. Excavations such as the Iron Age camp above have also yielded Roman evidence, such as an intact Roman

Flagon (*Redbridge Now* 02/10/06). Moreover, Wanstead Villa, located close to the Roman Road, has provided a wealth of finds including wall plaster, mosaics, roof tiles and an under floor heating system (*Redbridge Now* 02/10/06).

3.3 Saxon and later

So far no evidence for Saxon activity in the area has been discovered. However, it is likely that the Roman road would have been used throughout Saxon and Medieval times. Past excavations have shown evidence for later deposits. For example Woodford Green provided rare china associated with the merchants of the 1600s, and one of the more unusual finds included a jar that was used as a mousetrap (*Redbridge Now* 02/10/06).

In particular agricultural deposits have been discovered. This is perhaps unsurprising given that maps (*eg.* the 1838 Sales Particulars Plan & the 1863 25-inch OS) show the site to have been predominately farmland until at least 1893-94. In fact the northern part of Valentines Park was only acquired in 1906, and beyond this Milton Crescent was only developed in the interwar period. An excavation at Alborough Hatch Chapel (Newbury Park) revealed a layer of post-medieval agricultural soil overlaid by a timber building (rebuilt and modified in the 16th-17th century), with a chapel and adjoining buildings (OKL98; TQ45758923). At Valentines Mansion (Valentines Park) natural clays and gravels overlaid by post-medieval agricultural deposits were revealed, as well as part of the 17th – 18th century dairy and 1769 drainage culvert (CRK00, TQ43308792). Also in Valentines Park remains of a garden kitchen and 18th century garden were found on top of the natural clay (Frinton Mews: ILV02; TQ4350 8800). The fact that such features are located on top of the natural clays and gravels indicates that very little activity was taking place, and it is worth noting that a number of excavations (*eg.* Oakslane, Victoria Road, Horns Road, Loxford and Alborough Road/Roy Gardens) revealed nothing significant (*cf.* LAARC).

From 1914 densely packed dwellings were erected in the area, particularly around the area of St. Margaret's Church, with more housing being built to 1939 and beyond. Later buildings such as these may truncate any earlier features that are present on the site.

4. Archaeological Research Questions

The fieldwork presented an opportunity to address several research questions:

- Is there any evidence for earlier courses, overbank flooding, *etc.*, associated with the CranBrook, and does this include any palaeo-environmental material?
- Is there any evidence for prehistoric activity, and can the nature of this be defined?

- Is there any evidence for Roman activity, either *in situ* features/deposits or residual finds? What is the date range: is there more than one phase and how does it relate to previous finds in the area?
- Is there any evidence for Saxon to early post-medieval activity, and what is the nature of this (eg, field boundaries, drainage ditches or other evidence for agriculture)?
- What evidence is there for later post-medieval land use or division to complement the cartographic sources?

5. The Archaeological Programme

5.1 Standards

The field and post-excavation work was carried out in accordance with English Heritage guidelines (in particular, *Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork, Guidance Paper 3*). Works will also conform to the standards of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (*Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*). Overall management of the project was undertaken by a full Member of the Institute.

5.2 Fieldwork

5.2.1 Attendance

Machine stripping of soil horizons within the Park, and where appropriate other excavation, was archaeologically monitored. Potential archaeological evidence was investigated and recorded as appropriate, including recovery of finds and/or samples.

The level of monitoring during excavation of the open-cut pipe trench, manholes and ventilation column foundation was guided by the results of the initial topsoil strip, specifically whether finds had been made and also how much of the soil profile/natural ground surface had been revealed.

The basic watching brief required one archaeologist on site to monitor works and to investigate potential archaeological remains. English Heritage were advised of the on-site start date. Both the Client and Heritage were kept advised of the progress of the fieldwork.

5.2.2 Methodology

Archaeological remains were investigated and recorded in stratigraphic sequence, with the application of additional techniques where appropriate.

Deposits and features were recorded as appropriate on *pro-forma* context sheets and/or drawn in plan or section, generally at scales of 1:10 or 1:20. The

investigations were recorded on a general site plan and related to the Ordnance Survey grid. The fieldwork record was supplemented as appropriate by photography.

The recording system followed the procedures set out in the Museum of London recording manual. By agreement the recording and drawing sheets used were directly compatible with those developed by the Museum.

6. Post-Excavation Work

The fieldwork was followed by off-site assessment and compilation of this report, and by ordering and deposition of the site archive.

6.1 Finds and samples

Finds were treated in accordance with the appropriate guidelines, including the Museum of London's *'Standards for the Preparation of Finds to be permanently retained by the Museum of London'*. Finds and artefacts were retained and bagged with unique numbers related to the context record, although building material may be discarded following assessment. Assessment of finds and samples was undertaken by appropriately qualified staff.

6.2 Report procedure

Copies of this report will be supplied to the Client, English Heritage, local planning authority and the local studies library.

The level of reporting depended upon the results of the fieldwork. A short summary of the fieldwork is appended using the OASIS Data Collection Form, and in paragraph form suitable for publication within the 'excavation round-up' of the *London Archaeologist*.

6.3 The site archive

The records from the archaeological project will be ordered in line with Museum of London *Guidelines for the Preparation of Archaeological Archives* and will be deposited in the Museum of London Archaeological Archive. The integrity of the site archive should be maintained, and the landowner will be urged to donate any archaeological finds to the Museum.

7. The Archaeological Watching Brief

The results of the archaeological brief will be discussed by division into six separate areas, as defined in Figure 2 below. Areas 1-5 were within Valentines Park and constituted turf and topsoil stripping prior to open-cutting of the pipe trench. Area 6, through the northeast corner of the Park and to the rear of Milton Crescent, used micro-tunnelling and thus no land stripping or open cutting was required.



Figure 2: Areas of archaeological monitoring, based on WIA Notice Sewer Route drawing produced by Thames Water Utilities Engineering.

7.1 Area 1

7.1.1 List of Recorded Contexts

Context	Description	Interpretation
1	Modern tarmac and base.	Tarmac
2	Dark grey-brown silty clay deposit with frequent gravel inclusions. Modern brick and tarmac fragments observed within, compact.	Recent ground makeup layer below tarmac.
3	Mid orange-brown sandy gravels.	Natural gravels.

7.1.2 Summary and Discussion

Area 1 was located within the tarmac area around the pavilion and café, north of the boating lake. The stripped area measured approximately 60m (north-south) by 32m (east-west), with a 2m wide pipe trench excavated within this area. The initial machine strip removed tarmac and shallow base to a depth of 0.21m, overlying dark-grey/brown ground makeup 0.35m in thickness. The pipe trench section exposed natural gravels beneath these deposits for the remaining depth. The pipe trench was excavated to 2.6m below the existing ground surface when observed and partially backfilled with shingle. No archaeological finds or features were exposed in this area.



Figure 3: Groundworks in Area 1, working shot and section (east facing).

7.2 Area 2

7.2.1 List of Recorded Contexts

Context	Description	Interpretation
1	Mid brown-grey topsoil with gravel inclusions, occasional modern brick and pottery.	Topsoil below turf. Single pottery sherd recovered from this context was dated to the 19 th -20 th century.
2	Light orange-brown silty clay with occasional gravel inclusions.	Shallow subsoil.
3	Mid orange-brown sandy gravels.	Natural gravels.

7.2.2 Summary and Discussion

Area 2 measured approximately 130m (northeast-southwest) by 45m (northwest-southeast). Initial machine stripping removed topsoil and subsoil to a depth of 300-400mm below the turf level. A single pottery sherd was recovered from this context, identified as a fragment of a large stoneware bowl or planter, of 19th – 20th century date (pers. comm. Paul Blinkhorn: 2007). Natural Hackney gravels were exposed beneath these deposits. A section of the pipe trench excavated through this area measured 10m in length by 5m in width and was observed at a depth of 7m below the existing ground level. The gravels were very mobile, not compact and presented a possible danger of collapse. As such, metal siding was used to shore the sections and provide a safe working environment. Groundwater was visible in the base of this trench. No archaeological finds or features were observed in Area 2.



Figure 4: Ground works in Area 2, south facing section and stripped area.

7.3 Area 3

7.3.1 List of Recorded Contexts

Context	Description	Interpretation
1	Mid brown-grey topsoil with gravel inclusions, occasional modern brick.	Topsoil below turf.
2	Light orange-brown silty clay with occasional gravel inclusions.	Shallow subsoil.
3	Mid orange-brown sandy gravels.	Natural gravels.

7.3.2 Summary and Discussion

Area 3 measured approximately 110m by 40m and was located on the opposite side of a north-south hedgerow from Area 2. Topsoil and subsoil were removed to an average depth of 400mm across the whole area and the 5m wide pipe trench was excavated through the centre. Part of the pipe trench excavated in this area was observed to a depth of 8m below the existing ground level, with groundwater visible in the base. No archaeological finds or features were exposed in Area 3.



Figure 5: Ground works in Area 3, stripped area and section of pipe trench.

7.4 Area 4

7.4.1 List of Recorded Contexts

Context	Description	Interpretation
1	Mid brown-grey topsoil with gravel inclusions, occasional modern brick.	Topsoil below turf.
2	Light orange-brown silty clay with occasional gravel inclusions.	Shallow subsoil.
3	Concrete foundations cutting natural gravels [4].	Remnants of concrete swimming pool foundations.
4	Dark brown sand and gravel containing frequent brick, glass, concrete and modern composite materials.	Modern spread of dumped material overlying natural.
5	Mid orange-brown sandy gravels.	Natural gravels.

7.4.2 Summary and Discussion

Area 4 measured approximately 135m by 40m and ran as a continuation of Area 3 within a separate compound. The same topsoil, subsoil and natural sequence was observed within this area but a further context has been applied to the surviving elements of concrete foundations representing a former swimming pool. Again, no archaeological finds or features were observed in this area, but numerous service cuts were visible following the stripping down to a natural to a depth of 350mm.

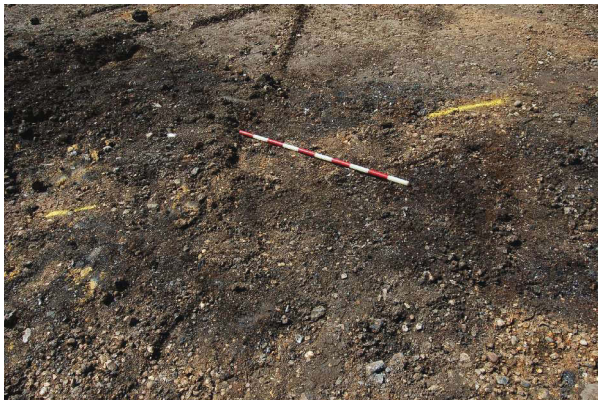


Figure 6: Modern dump material in Area 4 and section of pipe trench through natural gravels.

7.5 Area 5

7.5.1 List of Recorded Contexts

Context	Description	Interpretation
1	Mid brown-grey topsoil with gravel inclusions, occasional modern brick.	Topsoil below turf.
2	Light orange-brown silty clay with occasional gravel inclusions.	Shallow subsoil.
3	Dark grey/black gravel with frequent brick inclusions.	Modern made ground layer below subsoil.
4	Mid orange-brown sandy gravels.	Natural gravels.

7.5.2 Summary and Discussion

Area 5 measured approximately 30m by 35m and was located within an area that was formerly occupied by tennis courts. The present courts originally extended much further to the southwest, to slightly beyond the junction between Areas 4 and 5, and survived in this form at least to the 1960s.

In this area a different deposit was observed underlying the topsoil and subsoil, namely a very dark grey sand and gravel deposit. This represents recent made ground and is presumably contemporary with the pre-war construction of the tennis courts. Area 5 was also the location of the ventilation column subject to a separate planning condition (Application No. 0296/07 - Condition 3; approved 16.03.2007). The excavation was monitored and the stripped area observed prior to work beginning. No archaeological finds or features were observed in the designated area so the construction of the ventilation shaft went ahead as planned (see location on Figure 2).



Figure 7: Ventilation column and ground works in Area 5.

7.6 Area 6

Area 6 measured approximately 220m by 50m and continued across the tennis courts at the northeast corner of Valentines Park and thence into the land to the rear of Milton Crescent. This section of pipe was laid using micro-tunnelling as opposed to open cutting and thus the below-ground stratigraphy was not observable.

8. Summary of Archaeological Results

No significant archaeological finds or features were observed in any of the five stripped and open-cut trench areas. Stripping of topsoil and shallow subsoil exposed the top of the natural Hackney Gravels in Valentines Park, with isolated made-ground layers in certain areas. Modern intrusions were observed in places, for example the concrete foundations of a swimming pool in Area 4, but nothing of any archaeological significance was observed. The requirements of planning consent attached to the ventilation column (Application No. 0296/07 - Condition 3; approved 16.03.2007), were fulfilled with full monitoring of the stripping and excavation. In this area modern made ground was observed overlying the natural gravels, and it is quite possible that the construction of the former tennis courts truncated, any potentially surviving archaeological features. Consequently, the columns excavation was considered to pose no threat to archaeological horizons and thus the excavations went ahead, as discussed above in Area 5.

In conclusion, nothing of archaeological significance was observed during the course of flood alleviation works in land to the rear of Milton Crescent and through Valentines Park. Occasional fragments of modern pot and CBM were observed; only one item was submitted for specialist assessment and this was identified as part of a large 19th–20th century stone bowl or planter.

Bibliography

Compass Archaeology. 2007. Land to the rear of Milton Crescent and through Valentines Park London Borough of Redbridge: Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief.

Online Sources

Redbridge Now (www.redbridge.gov.uk/planning/archrebmuseum.cfm)

Laarc database (www.museumoflondon.org.uk/laarc/)

The restoration of Valentines Park
(www.myweb.tiscali.co.uk/london.gardens/features/valentines.htm)

Other Sources

The British Geological Survey (1994, *Romford Sheet No. 257*)

LB of Redbridge Local Studies Library

Valentines Park. Historic Survey & Restoration Management Plan. Land Use Consultants
Nov.1999

Valentines Mansion Conservation Plan. Richard Griffiths Architects 2003

Appendix I: OASIS Data Collection Form

OASIS ID: compassa1-33410

Project details

Project name	Land to the rear of Milton Crescent and through Valentines Park, Ilford, London Borough of Redbridge
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief, commissioned by Thames Water, produced no significant archaeological finds or features. Natural Hackney gravels were exposed in large stripped areas through Valentines Park, cut by modern service intrusions.
Project dates	Start: 24-07-2007 End: 03-10-2007
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	MCV07 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Current Land use	Other 14 - Recreational usage
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON REDBRIDGE ILFORD Land to the rear of Milton Crescent and through Valentines Park
Study area	2400.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 4406 8796 51.5715812398 0.07897413235890 51 34 17 N 000 04 44 E Point
Site coordinates	TQ 4363 8750 51.5675574442 0.07258498086230 51 34 03 N 000 04 21 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Compass Archaeology
Project brief originator	Compass Archaeology
Project design originator	Compass Archaeology
Project director/manager	Geoff Potter
Project supervisor	Rosie Cummings

Type of sponsor/funding body Thames Water Utilities

Name of sponsor/funding body Thames Water

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive 'Photograph'

Paper Archive recipient Museum of London Archive

Paper Contents 'none'

Paper Media available 'Context sheet', 'Map', 'Miscellaneous Material', 'Photograph', 'Plan', 'Report'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title Land to the rear of Milton Crescent and through Valentines Park:
An Archaeological Watching Brief

Author(s)/Editor(s) Cummings, R

Date 2007

Issuer or publisher Compass Archaeology

Place of issue or publication Compass Archaeology, 5-7 Southwark Street, London.

Entered by Rosie Cummings (rosiecummings@aol.com)

Entered on 02/11/07

Appendix II: London Archaeologist publication summary

Site Address: Land to rear of Milton Crescent and through Valentines Park, Ilford, London Borough of Redbridge.

Project type: Watching brief.

Dates of Fieldwork: 24th July – 3rd October 2007.

Site Code: MCV07

Supervisor: Rosie Cummings

NGR: TQ4406 8796 – TQ4363 8750

Funding Body: Thames Water Utilities Ltd.

An archaeological watching brief undertaken on land to the rear of Milton Crescent and through Valentines Park produced no significant archaeological finds or features. Shallow topsoil and subsoil were stripped from large areas within Valentines Park exposing high natural Hackney Gravels with only modern service intrusions. A single piece of pottery recovered from the topsoil was identified as a stoneware planter from the 19-20th century.