

**AN EVALUATION OF THE SITE OF THE PROPOSED
CLAYBURY REPROVISION - SOUTH ACUTE UNIT (LANGTHORNE)
AT LANGTHORNE HOSPITAL, LEYTONSTONE,
LONDON BOROUGH OF WALTHAM FOREST.**

SITE CODE: LE-LH 95

GRID REF: TQ 538940 185980

ACC NO: LDVHM 1995.52

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1 ABSTRACT

The evaluation revealed one possible boundary ditch, the fill of which appeared to be 18th century in date. A number of undated postholes were revealed, also cutting the underlying natural. Evidence was found for more recent activity, in the form of service cuts, backfill and make-up deposits from the demolition of old hospital or workhouse buildings in the later part of this century. A more recent layer of make-up material supported a tarmac surface, partially covered by modern spoil, at ground level.

2 INTRODUCTION

Newham Museum Service was commissioned by the Museum of London Archaeology Service, on behalf of Forest Healthcare Trust, to undertake an evaluation on the site of the proposed Claybury Reprovision - South Acute (Langthorne) in the north-western area of the Langthorne Hospital complex, Leytonstone, in the London Borough of Waltham Forest (see figure 1). The work was required in order to fulfil Condition 14 of Planning Application No. 95/0010, and carried out according to a project design (Falcini 1995) produced to fulfil the English Heritage brief (Pontin 1995). The fieldwork began on 7/8/95 and ended on 10/8/95.

The site lies between two Archaeological Priority Areas, as defined by the London Borough of Waltham Forest Unitary Development Plan (L.B.W.F. 1992), centred on Thorne Close to the south and Cathall Road to the north, and is located on one of the gravel terraces of the River Thames (Taplow gravels). An archaeological excavation immediately to the south of the site in Thorne Close revealed evidence for human activity dating from the 10th century to the 17th century (Thrale and Moore 1995), while an excavation to the north of the hospital revealed no archaeological features older than the 18th century (Farid 1994). The Greater London Sites and Monuments Record shows a scatter of Roman and prehistoric (particularly palaeolithic flint implements) material in the Leyton/Leytonstone area.

The site appears to have been farmland in the 18th century until 1840, when the West Ham Union Workhouse was built (Powell 1973 214). This establishment was progressively enlarged and became part of the National Health Service in 1946, when it was renamed Langthorne Hospital.

3 METHOD

The brief called for two trenches to be excavated within the footprint of the proposed building, measuring 10m x 2m. However, the locations of the trenches were determined by the location of lines and concentrations of live services across the site. The trenches were located on the ground following a Cat and Genny survey which had been undertaken for hidden services. Although it was possible to open up the trenches to the required size, it was necessary to alter their alignments, trench 1 being aligned north-west/south-east and trench 2 aligned east-north-east/west-south-west (see figure 2). The trenches were excavated using a JCB mechanical excavator using a toothless bucket under the supervision of an archaeologist, and located on a disused tarmac and grass area to the east and north of the existing Elderly Day Care Centre. Trench 2 was extended north at its eastern end in order to check for a possible continuation of an apparent alignment of archaeological features observed during the opening of that trench by the machine. Slots were dug through the base of each trench (by machine) into the underlying gravels to ensure such deposits were not redeposited, and to check for palaeolithic horizons.

The trenches were hand-cleaned and recorded using the Single Context Recording Method. Deposits and cut features were recorded on pro-forma sheets, and planned. One long section in each trench was drawn. This written and drawn archive was supplemented by a photographic record comprising of black and white prints and colour slides.

The evaluation set out to answer the research aims enumerated in the Project Design (Falcini 1995), i.e. to look for the presence of prehistoric or Roman activity, the extension of medieval and early medieval activity onto the site and the nature of the topography of the area.

The archive, including the finds, will be deposited with Vestry House Museum, Walthamstow, in the London Borough of Waltham Forest.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCUSSION

The evaluation revealed evidence for five phases of activity, of which four were anthropogenic.

Phase 1

This phase represents the site geology and consists of mixed sands and gravels observed in both trenches (contexts 13, 17 and 25). These natural deposits show a slight rise in height from south and south-west to the north and north-east (14.32m AOD at western end of trench 2, 14.42m at eastern of end trench 2; 14.42m at northern end of trench 1, 14.30m at southern end of trench 1).

Phase 2 (see figures 2 and 3)

This phase is undated and consists of features cut into the natural. In trench 2 three "square" postholes were observed, but appeared to have no recognisable alignments. None of the fills produced any dateable material (contexts 6, 8, and 10). One sherd of a prehistoric vessel was recovered, from an irregular feature excavated in trench 1 (contexts 3 and 4). The feature was interpreted as being caused by tree root action, and the sherd must have originated elsewhere.

Phase 3 (see figure 4)

This phase was represented in both trenches and consisted of a linear cut (contexts 1 and 2) at the southern end of trench 1 (the fill of which produced material of 19th century date), and a thin layer of a sandy-silty soil present in both trenches (contexts 21 and 24) interpreted as the truncated remains of a ploughsoil. The cut feature, although only partially visible, was interpreted as a possible boundary or field ditch, relating to use of the landscape predating the hospital. This feature was only 0.25m deep but may have been truncated by ploughing.

Phase 4 (see figure 5)

This phase consists of the construction and landscaping works associated with the workhouse, and later hospital, in the 19th century, and is only represented in trench 2. Trench 2 has a make-up layer (context 20), overlain by a layer of what was interpreted as a garden soil (context 22), in its turn cut by a service trench (contexts 15 and 16). This trench was aligned south-east/north-west and led to a brick-built manhole on the southern side of the trench (context 14). The service trench was cut from a height of 14.78m AOD. The top of the manhole was buried by the layer of tarmac forming the current ground surface. A brick foundation course was observed on a similar alignment in section in the south-east corner of the extension to trench 2 (context 32). The base of this structure appeared to rest on the natural surface (at a height of 14.45m AOD) and existed as three courses of stretcher bond (approximately 0.35m in height). Only 0.45m in length was visible, and no cut was observed.

Phase 5

This phase represents the demolition of part of the hospital, landscaping of the area, and construction of a tarmac surface in the latter part of this century. In trench 1, this phase is represented by a large straight-sided cut filled with demolition material (contexts 11 and 12), a smaller cut containing concrete rubble and sand (contexts 29, 30, and 31), and spreads of ash and clinker observed in section (see figure 3). The large cut and its fill appeared to represent the demolition of a structure on the western side of the site, leaving a void which was immediately backfilled. Both trenches were covered by a layer of make-up composed of demolition material, including brick and concrete (context 19), on top of which was a tarmac road surface (context 18), partially covered by a thin soil layer and grass in the area of trench 1 (context 23). These last two form the modern ground surface. Ground-level is at a height of between 14.74m AOD at the southern end of trench 1, sloping up to 14.98m AOD at the northern end of that trench, at which point the current ground surface remains level.

5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The evaluation revealed a number of undateable features (phase 2) cutting the underlying natural deposits (phase 1), over which lay the remains of a ploughsoil, with a possible ditch, dated from the finds to the 19th century (phase 3). Phase 3 would seem to relate to a period when the site lay under fields as farmland, up to and into the 19th century. The ploughing indicated in this phase is likely to have led to the truncation of the underlying archaeology. Phase 4 relates to the use of the site as a workhouse and then hospital, with brick built structures and services provided during the 19th century. These structures were then demolished and the ground made-up to take a tarmac surface in the second half of the 20th century, reflecting changes in the internal arrangements of the hospital.

The sherd recovered from context 3 (a feature caused by tree root action) has been tentatively dated to the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age. Although the sherd is residual in this context, its size and relatively unabraded nature may indicate some nearby activity of this period, possibly located further up the slope to the north and east of the site. No material of this date has been recovered from this part of the Borough of Waltham Forest.

Given the degree of truncation and disturbance caused by the 19th and 20th century activity associated with the hospital, it is felt that there is no significant archaeological survival in the area to be affected by the proposed development, and that further archaeological work would not contribute to answering the research aims of this project.

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Newham Museum Service would like to thank the Museum of London Archaeology Service for commissioning the evaluation, in particular Paul Falcini for his advice and co-operation. Thanks are also due to Forest Healthcare Trust for funding the project, to Mrs G. Mullett (manager of the Health Centre) for her assistance with accommodation, access and communications, and Mr. A. Noyce, the Clerk of Works for Forest Healthcare, for his assistance with the execution of the project.

Thanks are due to P. Moore for negotiating and directing the site and for his help in the preparation of this report. Thanks also to Graham Reed for the illustrations, and to the excavation team, D. Divers, N. Truckle and I. Hanson. The finds were identified by Pamela Greenwood, Christopher Jarrett, and Peter Moore. The project was supervised by the author.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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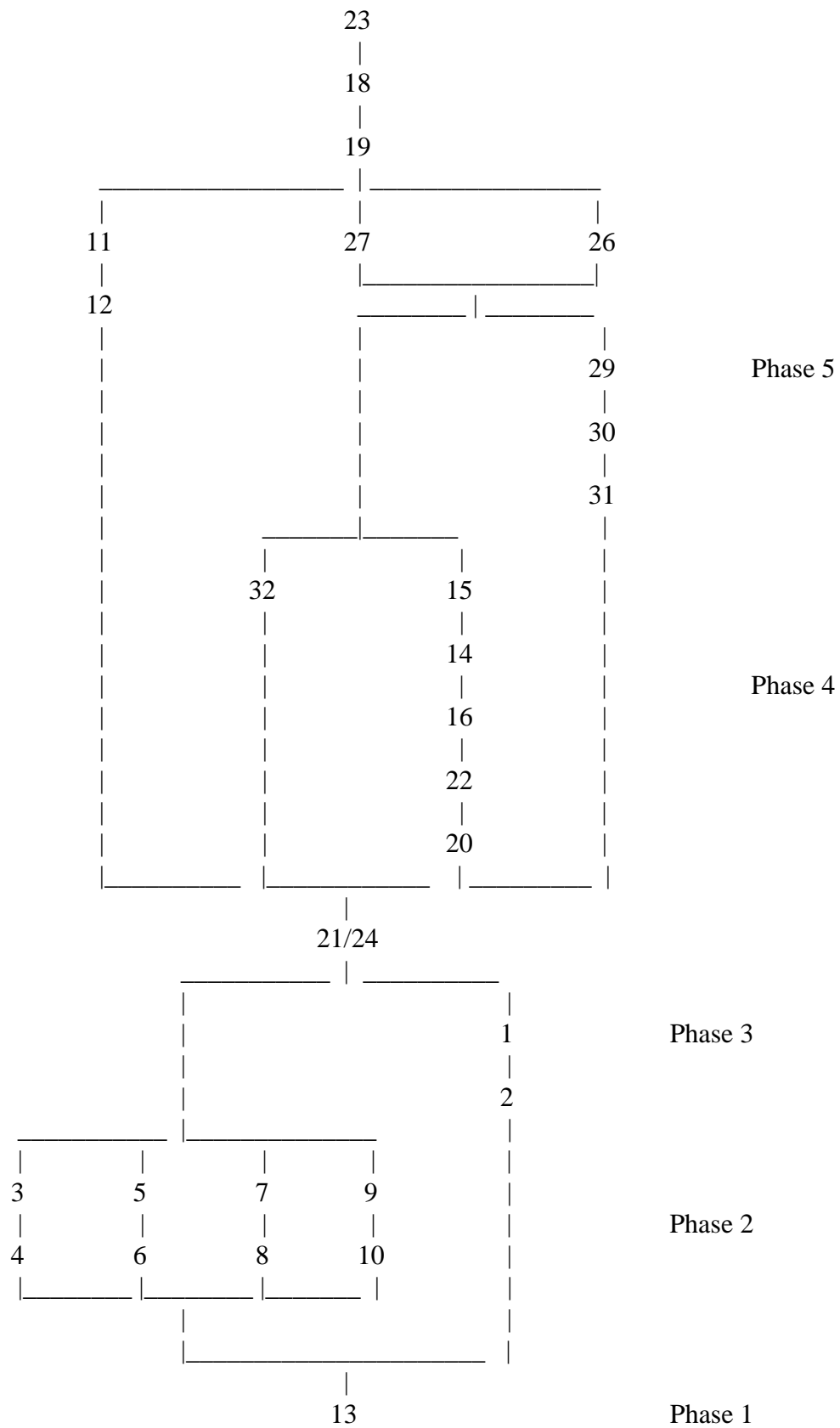
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8 APPENDICES

APPENDIX I SITE MATRIX



APPENDIX II ARCHIVE INDEX

<u>Context No.</u>	<u>Plan No.</u>	<u>Section No.</u>	<u>Phase No.</u>	<u>Photographs.</u>
1	2	1	2	B/W1;17-20 C/S1;17-20
2	2	1	2	B/W1;17-20 C/S1;17-20
3		1	2	
4	4	1	2	B/W1;26-29 C/S1;26-29
5			2	B/W1;9-16 C/S1;9-16
6	6		2	B/W1;21-24 C/S1;21-24
7			2	B/W1;9-16 C/S1;9-16
8	8		2	B/W1;21-24 C/S1;21-24
9			2	B/W1;9-16 C/S1;9-16
10	10		2	B/W1;21-24 C/S1;21-24
11	1		5	B/W1;1-8 C/S1;1-8
12			5	
13		1	1	B/W1;1-8 C/S1;1-8
14	1B		4	B/W1;9-16 C/S1;9-16
15		2	4	B/W1;9-16 C/S1;9-16
16	1B	2	4	
17		2	1	B/W1;9-16 C/S1;9-16
18		1, 2	5	B/W1;1-16 C/S1;1-16
19		1, 2	5	
20		2	4	B/W1;9-16 C/S1;9-16
21		2	3	B/W1;9-16 C/S1;9-16
22		2	4	B/W1;9-16 C/S1;9-16
23		2	5	B/W1;9-16 C/S1;9-16
24		1	3	B/W1;1-8 C/S1;1-8
25		1	1	B/W1;1-8 C/S1;1-8
26		1	5	
27		1	5	
28		1	5	B/W1;1-8 C/S1;1-8
29		1	5	
30		1	5	
31		1	5	
32			4	B/W1;9-16 C/S1;9-16

APPENDIX III FINDS LIST

Context 1

1 x Post Medieval Redware	1600 - 1800.
1 x Transfer Printed Ware	1780 - 1900.
1 x glass vessel rim	Post-medieval.

Context 3

1 x coarseware	late Neolithic/early Bronze Age.
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Context 20

1 x London Stoneware	1670 - 1900.
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GLSMR/RCHME NMR ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORT FORM

Evaluation ✓	Excavation	Watching brief
Other (please specify)		

Borough: Waltham Forest.

Site address: Langthorne Hospital, Langthorne Road, Leytonstone, London, E10.

Site name: Langthorne Hospital, Acute Unit Site code: LE-LH' 95

Nat. Grid Refs: Centre of site: TQ 538940 185980

Limits of site:

a)	b)
c)	d)

Name of archaeological unit: Newham Museum Service

Address: Archaeology Centre, 31 Stock Street, Plaistow, London, E13 0BX

Site supervisor: M. D. Turner Project manager: P. Moore

Funded by: Forest Healthcare Trust.

Date fieldwork started: 7/8/95 Date finished: 10/8/95

Field work previously notified? NO

Fieldwork will continue? NO

Palaeolithic	Roman
Mesolithic	Saxon (pre-AD 1066)
Neolithic ?	Medieval (AD 1066 -1485)
Bronze Age ?	Post-Medieval ✓
Iron Age	Unknown ✓

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

Neolithic/Bronze Age: One sherd recovered from a feature caused by tree root action.

Post-medieval: A possible boundary ditch observed in trench 1, and a layer of a truncated ploughsoil apparent in both trenches were dated from finds to the early 19th century. A brick foundation, make-up layers and a service trench were identified as belonging to the mid to late 19th century and representing the earlier phases of the hospital (or workhouse) in the vicinity of the trenches. Later cuts, demolition debris and make-up layers point to remodelling of the hospital complex into the 20th century, with the most recent activity comprising of a tarmac surface, itself partially covered in grass and soil.

Unknown: Three nearly square postholes were identified cutting the underlying natural deposits in trench 2. No dateable finds were recovered, but they stratigraphically preceded the 19th century ploughsoil.

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

Type: Sand and gravel (Taplow Gravels).

Height above Ordnance Datum: 14.30m (min.) to 14.42m (max.).

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 records will be deposited in the following museum: Vestry House Museum, Walthamstow, London, E17.

c) Approximate year of transfer: 1995

d) Location of any copies: N/A

e) Has a security copy of the archive been made? NO

If not, do you wish RCHME to consider microfilming? NO

9. LOCATION OF FINDS.

a) In your possession? ALL

b) All finds will be deposited with the following museum: Vestry House Museum, Walthamstow, London, E17.

c) Approximate year of transfer; 1995

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY.

SIGNED:

DATE:

NAME (Block capitals): M. D. Turner.

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).

NEWHAM MUSEUM SERVICE

Annual Sites Summary Form

Name of site: South Acute Unit (Langthorne) **Grid Ref.** TQ 538940 185980

Address of site: Langthorne Hospital, Langthorne road, Leytonstone, E10.

Parish: Leyton.

Project Manager: P. Moore

Supervisor: M. D. Turner

Date of excavation: 7 - 10/8/95

Size of site: 2 x 2m x 10m

Purpose of excavation: Evaluation

Funded by: Forest Healthcare Trust

Location of Finds: Vestry House Museum
Walthamstow

Further work anticipated? No

Date and location of interim and final report:

Summary

Summary author: M. D. Turner

Two trenches were excavated east and north of the existing Elderly Day Care Centre. These revealed three nearly square postholes of unknown date cutting the underlying natural deposits. One sherd of late Neolithic/early Bronze Age pottery was recovered from a feature interpreted as being caused by a tree root, but was clearly residual. Overlying these features was a layer of ploughsoil and a ditch of possible early 19th century date. Stratigraphically superimposed on this was evidence for an earlier phase of building on the site of what is now the Langthorne Hospital, dating from the 19th century, which included brick foundations and service cuts. In the final phase (second half of the 20th century) are layers of demolition material (from these earlier hospital buildings) used to make-up the ground to take the existing tarmac surface, itself partially covered by grass and soil.

