

**The Westmount Centre, Delamere Road,  
Hayes, Middlesex**

An Archaeological Evaluation (Phase 2)

for

Barratt West London

DLM98/8(2)

May 1998

**The Westmount Centre, Delamere Road, Hayes, Middlesex  
An Archaeological Evaluation (Phase 2)**

by Graham Hull

Report 98/8(2)

**Introduction**

This report documents the results of a second phase archaeological field evaluation carried out at The Westmount Centre, Delamere Road, Hayes, Middlesex (TQ 119 808). The work was commissioned by Mr. A. Ainsworth of Barratt West London, Barratt House, Alexandra House, Balfour Road, Hounslow, Middlesex, TW3 1JX. The evaluation was carried out so that an informed decision could be made prior to the granting of planning permission for redevelopment of the site for housing. This work is the conclusion of the process of evaluation which was commenced in January 1998 (Pine 1998). The first phase of evaluation took place prior to demolition and because of this, parts of the site were inaccessible at that time. The archaeological potential of the site could not be fully appraised and consequently the trench described in this report was opened once the standing buildings had been demolished. The Phase 2 trench was located in the immediate vicinity of the trenches that had produced artefactual evidence in Phase 1.

In accordance with the Department of the Environment's Policy and Planning Guidance Note, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG 16, 1990), this field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr. Robert Whytehead, Archaeological Advisor, Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS), who advise the local planning authority in archaeological matters.

The fieldwork was supervised by Graham Hull with the assistance of Alan Ford. It took place on 26th of May 1998. The site code is DLM 98/8.

### **Location, Topography and Geology**

The site is located on a parcel of land between the north side of the Grand Union Canal (Paddington Branch) and the rear of properties fronting Delamere Road (Figs 1 and 2). The site lies at a height of approximately 28 m above Ordnance Datum, on level ground which is the result of made-ground on the site typically 0.5 - 1.5 m thick which masks the original topography. The site lies on the floor and side of the small valley of the original course of the Yeading Brook with the original ground levels generally rising to the east. The underlying geology of the site, according to the British Geological Survey (BGS 1994), is Langley silts (brickearth), although a geotechnical investigation (Fugro 1997) indicated the presence of alluvium, London Clay and river gravel (Taplow terrace) as well. The site lies within an area where extensive quarrying of brickearth for brick manufacture has taken place (BGS 1994) and it was not clear from the geotechnical investigation if the general lack of brickearth on the site was due to mineral extraction or to natural erosion caused by Yeading Brook.

### **Archaeological Background**

A search of the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record revealed a small number of entries for the general area of the site but no archaeological finds or deposits are recorded within the development area or in its immediate vicinity. Three evaluations involving machine trenching have been carried out to the north-west of the site. Two of these did not locate archaeological deposits and the third (GLSMR no. 052490) located a number of undated pits, a ditch, and a quantity of Mesolithic flint-work. Small numbers of stray finds of Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic/Bronze Age flintwork are also recorded and point to some Prehistoric

use of the general area. It is possible that, as for other better documented regions, Prehistoric settlement is preferentially located on the banks of streams in the area.

The fieldwork carried out on the site earlier this year (Pine 1998) did not locate archaeological features but did result in the retrieval of a number of struck and burnt flints as well as a sherd of Prehistoric pottery. These artefacts and the previous archaeological work in the vicinity, led the excavator to infer that Prehistoric activity may have been present on, or near to, the development site.

### **Objectives and Methodology**

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development, and more particularly beneath the building that could not be examined in the earlier evaluation (Pine 1998). A single trench 15 m long and 4.5 m wide was opened within the footprint of the factory marked Block B (Fig. 2). The trench was allocated the identification number 11, in order to be numerically sequential to the trenches excavated by Pine (*ibid.*). A 360° machine with a toothless grading bucket was employed under direct and continuous archaeological supervision to remove made-ground until natural deposits were reached. The spoilheap of the trench was monitored for finds.

### **Results**

Modern overburden was removed by machine and proved to be 0.5-0.6 m deep. The base of the trench was seen to be heavily disturbed by the foundations of a 20th century building. Patches of a dark grey brown alluvium survived in places but Modern material (brick and glass) was observed to be imbedded in the alluvium. Two worked flints, identified as broken

flakes, and a burnt flint lump were recovered from the surface of the alluvium. No archaeological features were observed at this level (29.17 m above OD).

In the light of discussions held previously with Mr. Whytehead (GLAAS) it was decided to excavate through the alluvium to ascertain if archaeological deposits were present below the river deposits. Undifferentiated alluvium was observed to overlie river gravels that were encountered at a depth of 28.07 m above OD. No archaeological deposits were seen.

Brickearth was not observed at any level within the trench. The presence of alluvium, above river gravels may be indicative of the course of a former small river valley.

### **The Finds**

*Struck and burnt flint* by Steve Ford

Two broken flakes were recovered from the trench. They are likely to be Prehistoric in date.

A single piece of burnt flint weighing 34 gms was recovered from the trench.

### **Conclusion**

No archaeological features were recorded in the trench, either on the surface of the alluvium or within the river gravels. The three flints were recovered from the surface of the alluvium and were found immediately adjacent to deposits of modern material such as brick and glass. The flints found in the earlier evaluation on the site (Pine 1998) were undiagnostic other than being of broadly Prehistoric date. Similarly, it is possible that the flints recovered from this phase of the evaluation process are indicative of Prehistoric activity in the vicinity. There was no direct evidence of any archaeological activity in the area examined by the trench.

## References

- BGS, 1994, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 256, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth.
- FUGRO, 1997, Site Investigation, Delamere Road, Hayes, Report J79300-1, Hemel Hempstead.
- PINE, J., 1998, The Westmount Centre, Delamere Road, Hayes, Middlesex, Thames Valley Archaeological Services Report 98/8, Reading.
- PPG 16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Department of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance Note 16, HMSO.



**6. PERIOD SUMMARIES (use headings for each period (ROMAN; MEDIEVAL; ETC.) and additional sheets if necessary).**

Due to the undiagnostic nature of the finds they can only broadly be described as Prehistoric. The finds were two broken flakes and a piece of burnt flint.

**7. NATURAL -**

Type: Alluvium

Height above Ordnance Datum: 29.17 m (top of alluvium)

**8. LOCATION OF ARCHIVES**

a) Please tick those categories still in your possession:

Notes      Plans      Photos      NGatives  
Slides      Correspondence      MScripts (unpublished reports, etc.)

b) All/some records have been/will be deposited in the following museum, record office, etc. unknown

c) Approximate year of transfer: unknown

d) Location of any copies: N/A

e) Has a security copy of the archive been made? y/n: Not yet but will be in due course

If not, do you wish RCHME to consider microfilming? y/n:

**9. LOCATION OF FINDS:**

a) In your possession (All/Some/None): All

b) All/Some finds have been/will be deposited with the following museum/other body: All

c) Approximate year of transfer: unknown

**10. BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

Hull, G., 1998, The Westmount Centre, Delamere Road, Hayes, Middlesex, Archaeological Evaluation (Phase 2), Thames Valley Archaeological Services Report 98/8(2), Reading.

SIGNED:

DATE: 26/01/98

Graham Hull