Former Worcester Park Sewage Treatment Works, Green Lane, London Borough of Sutton

An Archaeological Evaluation

for St James Homes Ltd

by Clare Challis
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code GNN 03

October 2003
Summary

Site name: Former Worcester Park Sewage Treatment Works, Green Lane, London Borough of Sutton

Grid reference: TQ 2300 6650

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 21st August to 1st October 2003

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Clare Challis

Site code: GNN 03

Area of site: c. 25ha

Summary of results: One small flint flake and fragments of prehistoric pottery, recovered. No cut archaeological features were revealed

Monuments identified: None

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at the Museum of London in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford 07.10.03
                       Steve Preston 07.10.03
Former Worcester Park Sewage Treatment Works, Green Lane, London Borough of Sutton
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Report 01/54c

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at the former Worcester Park Sewage Treatment Works, Green Lane, London Borough of Sutton (TQ 2300 6650) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Anette Etheridge of St. James Homes, Wellington House, 209–217 High Street, Hampton Hill, Middlesex, TW12 1NP.

Planning permission (03/50432/F and 03/50433/F) has been granted by the London Borough of Sutton for demolition of existing buildings on the site and the erection of a mix of housing arranged around the perimeter of the site. The central area of the site is to be parkland. Much of the site is considered to have no archaeological potential due to the invasive nature of the previous structures on the site. Construction in other areas of the site was also considered to have a slight impact on the archaeologically relevant levels. The evaluation was, therefore targeted at one zone on the site where remediation work would impact on the latter levels.

In order to provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site so as to mitigate the effects of development a field evaluation has been requested. This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment’s Planning Policy Guidance, Archaeology and Planning (PPG16 1990), and the Borough policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Mark Stevenson, Archaeology Advisor at the Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service. The fieldwork was undertaken by Clare Challis and Pamela Jenkins between 21st August and 27th August and 1st October 2003 and the site code is GNN03. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at The Museum of London in due course.

An environmental statement (Hardy 2001) summarized that the site lies on a tract of London Clay which is thought to have been thinly settled in prehistoric and Roman times. Various sites and finds are also recorded including an Iron Age settlement to the north west at Old Malden.

A photographic record of the various treatment works structures on the site had already been taken prior to their demolition (Preston 2001).
Location, topography and geology

The site is located to the south-east of New Malden and to the south-west of Morden in the north-west of the London Borough of Sutton. The Beverley Brook flows north-south past the site and forms part of the western boundary. Worcester Park train and bus station lies approximately 1km to the south-west (Fig. 1). The underlying geology is London Clay (BGS 1981) and this was observed in all of the trenches on the site. The site lies at approximately 25m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

A number of sites and finds of archaeological interest have been located in the area including excavations and evaluations. Evidence dating to the prehistoric periods includes a Mesolithic or Neolithic flint assemblage from a pipeline from Chessington to Worcester Park to the south west of the site (Place 1993) and two flint adzes recovered during an excavation in Old Malden. The underlying London Clay is thought to have been thinly settled during these periods. An Iron Age settlement indicated by the presence of at least five ring gullies with one having a hearth and central pit was excavated at Old Malden (Hanworth 1987) along with a second Iron Age occupation site which incorporated features suggesting structures composed of postholes and slots (Neilson 1996). This excavation also revealed a number of features from the Roman period including field ditches and a large possible boundary ditch with medieval features comprising a ditch dated AD 1080–1120. Other features included possible medieval structures evidenced by postholes and slots.

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 redevelopment. The information gained from this fieldwork could then be employed to mitigate the effects of development. Specific aims of the project were:

To determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site given that parts of the site have been previously developed.

To determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present.

Twelve trenches in total were excavated on the site, placed to examine particular areas where ground disturbance would be extensive. Five trenches were excavated using a JCB-type machine and the remainder using a 360°-type machine under the constant supervision of an archaeologist. Trenches were all approximately 20m in length and 1.8m in width excluding the JCB excavated trenches which were 1.6m in width. All possible
archaeological deposits were hand cleaned and all spoil heaps were monitored for finds. Trench 1, intended to be the northernmost of the trenches, had to be relocated after consultation with Mr Mark Stevenson, Archaeological Advisor due to a large heap of topsoil being dumped in the proposed location.

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Results

Trench 1 (Plate 1)
This trench was aligned east-west and was relocated to the south of the site after consultation. The stratigraphy consisted of sandy clay made ground overlying a dark brown clayey made ground containing bricks and modern material overlying the orange natural London Clay. The total depth of the made ground was 1.0m. No archaeological features were observed and no finds recovered.

Trench 2
The location of this trench was in the westernmost part of the site aligned SE–NW. The stratigraphy consisted of dark brown made ground containing glass, bricks and modern rubbish to a depth of 0.90m overlying the natural London Clay. No archaeological features were observed but one small flint flake was recovered from the surface of the London Clay.

Trench 3 (Plate 2)
This trench was excavated partway through a bund that runs around the western edge of the site, aligned SE–NW. The stratigraphy consisted of redeposited clay and soil bund material to a depth of 0.35m overlying a dark made ground containing modern rubbish, bricks and glass. The made ground directly overlay the orange natural London Clay. No archaeological features were observed and no finds recovered.

Trench 4
Trench 4 was also excavated partway through the bund and was aligned north-south. The stratigraphy comprised 0.20m of redeposited clay and soil forming the bund overlying made ground containing modern rubbish, bricks and glass to an overall depth of 1.90m. The made ground then directly overlay the natural orange London Clay. No archaeological finds or features were observed.

Trench 5
The bund was partially removed and levelled for this trench to create a large enough working space for the machine. The stratigraphy comprised made ground containing modern material, bricks and glass to a depth of
0.80m directly over the orange London Clay. No archaeological features were observed and no finds recovered.

Trench 6
Again the bund was partially removed in this area to facilitate excavation of the trench. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.50m of made ground overlying the natural London Clay. The trench was aligned north-south and no archaeological deposits were observed.

Trench 7
This trench was aligned north-south and lay in an area that had previously been stripped of overburden close to the level of the natural clay. The trench was excavated to a total depth of 0.15m and comprised trampled made ground overlying the natural London Clay. No archaeological finds or features were observed.

Trench 8
The stratigraphy consisted of dark brown black silty clay made ground containing modern pottery, glass, bricks and concrete directly overlying the natural orange London clay. The trench was aligned north-south and lay in an area previously stripped of overburden. The trench was a maximum depth of 1.40m and contained no finds or features of an archaeological nature.

Trench 9
This trench lay in a similar area to trench 8 and was aligned nearly west-east. The stratigraphy consisted of dark brown silty clay made ground and trampled soil containing modern material overlying the natural London clay. The trench was excavated to a depth of 0.40m and no archaeological finds or features were observed.

Trench 10
This trench was aligned SW–NE and lay in the area previously stripped of overburden. The stratigraphy comprised trampled made ground to a total trench depth of 0.35m overlying the natural London Clay. Fragments of pottery were recovered from the surface of the natural at 11.60m from the south-western end of the trench and the area cleaned, however the finds were not found to be lying within an archaeological feature. At 6.0m from the south-western end of the trench the natural clay developed bands of dark staining as opposed to the orange coloration observed in other trenches on the site. The darker natural contained moderate gravel inclusions, possibly as a result of river deposition, and may represent an old channel. The trench was extended by a further 4m to check this: however no clear delineation for a river bank was observed.

Trench 11
This trench was also excavated once overburden had been removed and was aligned SW–NE. The stratigraphy again consisted of a dark silty clay made ground containing modern material, overlying the natural orange
London clay. The trench was 1.40m deep and no archaeological deposits were observed.

**Trench 12**
Located in the same area as Trench 11 and aligned NW–SE, this trench was excavated to a depth of 0.90m. The stratigraphy consisted of a dark silty clay containing modern concrete and partial brick walls which overlay the orange natural London clay. No archaeological finds or features were observed.

**Finds**

*Flint* by Steve Ford
A single prehistoric flint flake was recovered from Trench 2. It is not closely datable but is likely to belong to the Neolithic or Bronze Age.

*Burnt Flint* by Steve Ford
Two fragments (180g) of burnt flint were recovered from Trench 2 and one fragment (102g) from Trench 10. This material was not retained.

*Pottery* by Steve Ford
Two badly degraded prehistoric pottery sherds were recovered from the surface of the natural towards the middle of Trench 10. One sherd (10g) was tempered with moderate calcined flint 1-3mm across with an oxidized surface and reduced core. The other sherd was very large with a thickness exceeding 20mm. It was badly preserved weighing about 500g. It was densely tempered with grog up to 3mm across. It was not possible to examine the surface finish. Both pieces are of prehistoric, probably Bronze Age date with the larger sherd perhaps from a Middle Bronze Age urn.

**Conclusion**
The archaeological evaluation at Worcester Park revealed no features of archaeological interest. The finds that were recovered from the trenches were isolated and found lying on the surface of the natural in each case. The site was found to be severely truncated in several places with later backfilling to level the area, possibly occurring either during or after construction of the sewage treatment works, removing any archaeological...
features which may have been present. Nevertheless, the finds themselves are of some interest as relatively few finds or deposits of Bronze Age date are recorded for the London Clay or for the environs of Worcester Park in particular (Hardy 2001). The size of one of the sherds does not suggest that the material has been transported any great distance and suggests that occupation or possibly burial is (or was) present somewhere in this vicinity though not necessarily within the current site.

References
Place, C, 1993, ‘Chessington to Worcester Park Pipeline’, Archaeology South East, Ditchling
APPENDIX 1: Trench details
0m at S or W end

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trench No.</th>
<th>Length (m)</th>
<th>Breadth (m)</th>
<th>Depth (m)</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.50</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.00-1.0m Made Ground, 1.0+ Orange Natural London Clay at 23.925mOD. No Archaeology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>20.50</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.00-0.90m Made Ground, 0.90m+ Orange Natural London Clay at 20.925mOD. One flint flake. No archaeological features.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.10 (max)</td>
<td>0.00-0.35m Made Ground (Bund material), 0.35-2.0m Made Ground, 2.0m+ Orange Natural London Clay at 19.820mOD. No Archaeology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>21.10</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.10 (max)</td>
<td>0.00-0.20m Made Ground (Bund material), 0.20-1.90m Made Ground, 1.90m+ Orange Natural London Clay at 19.795mOD. No Archaeology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.90</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.00-0.80m Made Ground, 0.80m+ Orange Natural London Clay at 21.150mOD. No Archaeology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.00-0.55m Made Ground, 0.55m+ Orange Natural London Clay at 21.200mOD. No Archaeology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.00-0.05 Trampled Made Ground, 0.05m+ Orange Natural London Clay at 21.265mOD. No Archaeology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>20.10</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.40 (max)</td>
<td>0.00-1.40 Made ground, 1.40m+ Natural London clay at 21.678mOD. No archaeological finds or features.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.40 (max)</td>
<td>0.00-0.40 Made ground and trample, 0.40m+Natural London clay at 22.833mOD. No archaeological finds or features.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.00-0.30m Made Ground, 0.30m+ Orange Natural London Clay at 23.428mOD. Small fragments of pottery, no archaeological features</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>0.00-1.40m Made Ground, 1.40m+Natural London clay at 23.393mOD. No archaeological finds or features.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.00-0.90m Made ground and trample, 0.90m+Natural London clay at 23.893mOD. No archaeological finds or features.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. TYPE OF RECORDING

Evaluation YES  Excavation  Watching Brief

Other (please specify)

2. LOCATION

Borough: Sutton

Site Address: Former Worcester Park Sewage Treatment Works, Green Lane, London Borough of Sutton

Site Name: Former Worcester Park Sewage Treatment Works  Site Code: GNN 03

Nat. Grid Refs:

centre of site: TQ 230 665

limits of site:

a)  b)

c)  d)

3. ORGANISATION

Name of archaeological unit: Thames Valley Archaeological Services

Address: 47–49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading RG1 5NR

Site director/supervisor: Clare Challis  Project manager: Steve Ford

Funded by: St James Homes Ltd

4. DURATION

Date fieldwork started: 21st August 2003  Date finished: 1st September 2003

Fieldwork previously notified? YES

Fieldwork will continue? NO

5. PERIODS REPRESENTED

Palaeolithic  Roman

Mesolithic  Saxon (pre-AD 1066)

Neolithic  Medieval (AD1066-1485)

Bronze Age YES  Post-Medieval

Iron Age  Unknown
6. PERIOD SUMMARIES Use headings for each period (ROMAN, MEDIEVAL ETC.) and additional sheets if necessary.

Bronze Age
A flint flake of Neolithic or Bronze Age date was found along with two badly preserved sherds of Bronze Age pottery. One of the sherds was very large and may have been derived from an urn.

7. NATURAL
Type: London Clay
Height above Ordnance Datum: 21mAOD

8. LOCATION OF ARCHIVE
a) Please provide an estimate of the quantity of material in your possession for the following categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Plans</th>
<th>Photos</th>
<th>NGatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SLides</td>
<td>COrrrespondence</td>
<td>MScripts (unpub reports, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BKlk finds</td>
<td>SMall finds</td>
<td>SOil Samples</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) The complete archive has been/will be deposited in the following location: Museum of London
c) Approximate year of transfer: 2005
d) Location of any copies:
e) Has a security copy of the archive been made? YES
   If not, do you wish RCHME to consider microfilming?

9. LOCATION OF FINDS
a: In your possession (delete as appropriate): ALL
b: All/some finds have been/will be deposited with the following museum/other body: Museum of London
Approximate year of transfer: 2005

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY:

NAME: CLARE CHALLIS DATE: 7th October 2003
Former Worcester Park Sewage Works, Green Lane, London Borough of Sutton, 2003
An Archaeological Evaluation

Figure 1. Location of site within Worcester Park and Greater London.

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Former Worcester Park Sewage Treatment Works, Green Lane, London Borough of Sutton

Fig 2: Location of Site within Worcester Park
Former Worcester Park Sewage Treatment Works,
Green Lane, London Borough of Sutton

Fig 3. Location of trenches within site
Plate 1. Trench 1, looking south-west, scales 2m, scale 1m.

Plate 2. Trench 3 section, looking south-west, vertical scale 2m; horizontal scale 1m.