

CHIGWELL (EX)

**THE LAND AT 729 CHIGWELL ROAD
WOODFORD BRIDGE, ESSEX
TQ427920**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

PROJECT CODE WO-CR 96

**OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT
APRIL 1996**

**LAND AT 729 CHIGWELL ROAD
WOODFORD BRIDGE, ESSEX
NRG TQ427920**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

Summary

A modern rubbish dump and ditch were revealed. Bottles, pots and rural metal implements were recovered. No archaeology of an earlier period was encountered.

1 *Introduction*

- 1.1 At the request of English Heritage, on behalf of the London Borough of Redbridge, the Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) conducted an archaeological watching brief on the land at 729 Chigwell Road, Woodford, Essex, during the removal of contaminated soil in preparation of residential construction work. An evaluation was to be carried out should there prove to be any archaeological deposits remaining after the removal of the contaminated soil.
- 1.2 The contractors were Laing Homes Limited.
- 1.3 The OAU visited the site on March 27th, 28th and 29th 1996, and monitored the removal of the contaminated layers.

2 *Geology and Topography*

- 2.1 The site is situated to the east of Chigwell Road on the north west face of a hill. The south eastern half of the site is generally at a higher elevation than the north western half. The site sits on Boyn Hill Gravel and London Clay.

3 *Archaeological and Historical Background*

- 3.1 The original early fifteenth century settlement of Woodford Green lies to the south of the site. The settlement developed around the home of Thomas de Pont de Woodford which is known to date from 1238. The site of Woodford Manor House which dates from the eleventh or twelfth century lies further to the south.
- 3.2 A desk based assessment undertaken by the Passmore Edwards Museum suggested that a Roman road existed to the south east but field work by the OAU and the Passmore Edwards Museum has revealed no further evidence.
- 3.3 The site has been used for light industry and commercial outlets which were situated along the north east wall until recently.

4 *Results*

- 4.1 Soil was removed up to a depth 1.5 m, though this depth was not consistent through out the site. The contaminated layers were thicker at the south eastern end of the site (the highest point).
- 4.2 The natural (9), tenacious dark mottled orange brown and light grey clay and gravel was present through out the site. This was overlain at the south east by a tenacious yellowish, orange brown sandy clay (3) which was no more than 0.2 m thick and contained some flecks of charcoal, though these were only present in the upper 50 mm of the layer.
- 4.3 Cutting (3) was a linear ditch (5) which ran from the east corner of the site for 9 m in a north westerly direction. The ditch was 1.8 m wide, 0.44 m deep and filled by three deposits (6), (7) and (8). The earliest fill (7) was a tenacious blue grey clay with occasional flecks of charcoal. Fill (8) was a slightly tenacious mixed dark grey and orange brown silty clay with clay patches and filled the north east edge of (5) only. Overlying (7) and (8) was a friable dark grey silty clay which included small pebbles, flecks of charcoal, metallic fragments and sherds of ceramic piping.
- 4.4 Overlying (3) at the south east edge of the site was a loose dark grey clay loam with 20% charcoal and 40% domestic rubbish (2). This extended westwards for 16 m and along the south east wall for nearly 30 m.
- 4.5 A layer of compacted modern building materials (1) sealed (9) at the North of the site, (3) at the east and (2) at the south east of the site. (1) butted a loose dark grey clay loam with gravel and charcoal (4). Cutting (4) were four modern post pits which were filled with brick and concrete fragments.

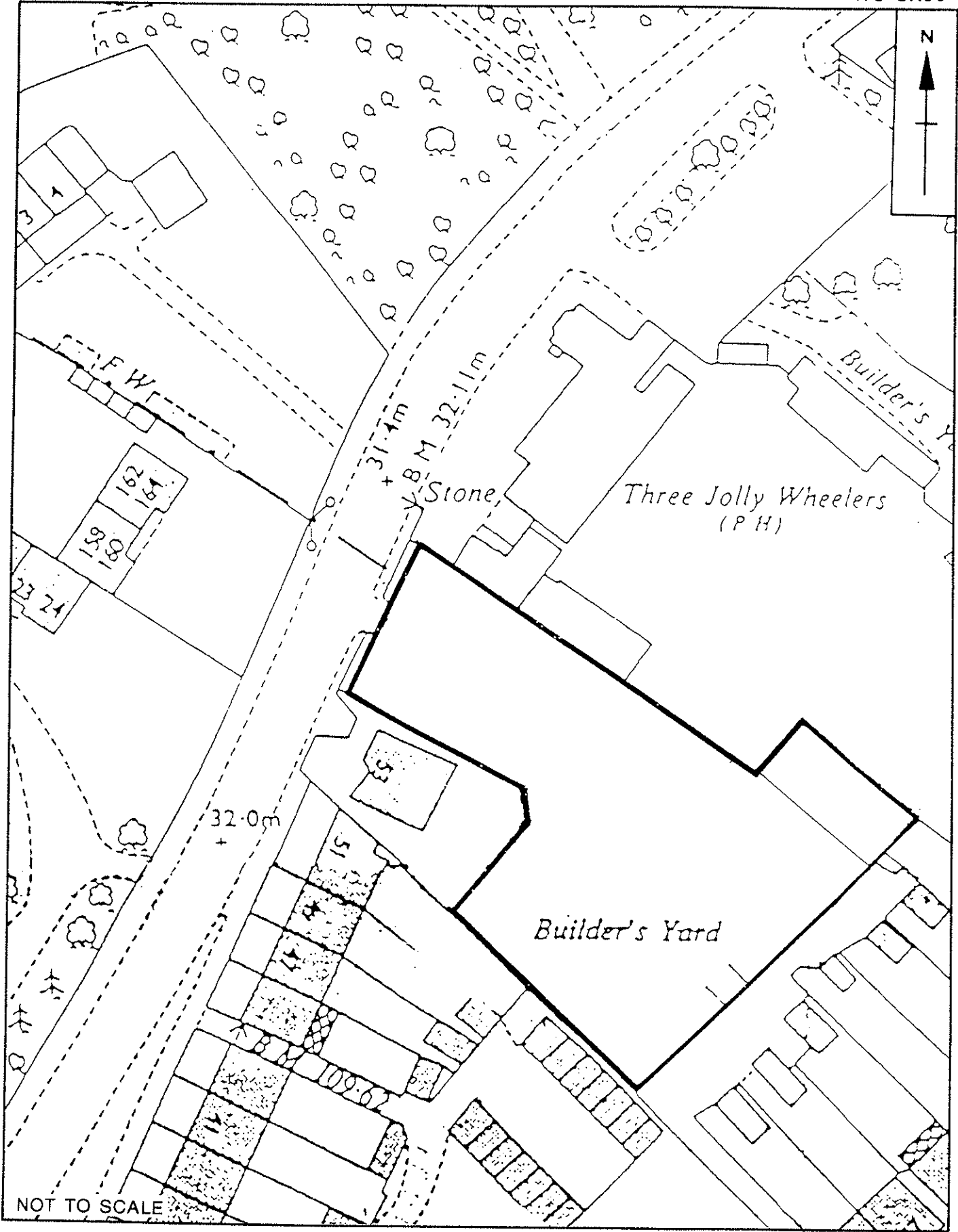
5 *Discussion*

- 5.1 The layer (3) which covered most of the higher part of the site is probably a thin colluvial deposit and had been partially contaminated by layer (2).
- 5.2 The ditch (5) at the east edge of the site was modern in date and produced glass, pottery, metal fragments and clay pipe. The ceramic piping fragments that were also recovered indicate that the ditch was probably dug for the insertion of the pipe.
- 5.3 Layer (2) is a modern rubbish dump which produced a number of bottles, domestic ceramics and a variety of metal implements including buckets and a pitchfork.
- 5.4 The modern post pits that cut the garden soil (4) belong to a lean-to which was pulled down very recently.
- 5.5 All the pottery was interpreted as post-medieval.

6 *Conclusion*

- 6.1 A modern ditch and rubbish dump were encountered during the removal of the contaminated soils. Once these deposits had been removed no further archaeology was observed. No evaluation or special foundation works were necessary.

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