

Holy Family Technology College, Walthamstow

Site type: Suburban

Fieldwork: PCA (2009 & 2018)

GLHER records: [Trial Trench at Holy Family Technology College](#)

[Open Area Excavation and Watching Brief at Holy Family Technology College](#)

Proposed scheme

Redevelopment of school site for new sports hall.

Archaeological response

The site was located in Walthamstow village, adjacent to the church and at the top of a hill overlooking the former marsh. It was previously used as school playing fields and before that as allotments and so had never been built over. A new sports hall for the school was proposed for the site.

Evaluation in 2009 unexpectedly identified Roman ditches. However, once the area was eventually opened up by PCA in 2018, the remains of a Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age settlement, including a roundhouse drip gully, was also found. The prehistoric remains were overlain by four timber framed Roman buildings forming part of a larger farmstead that extended beyond the investigation area. Sizeable assemblages of building material including box flue tiles were also encountered, suggesting a heated masonry building had been present nearby. A large boundary ditch ran along the edge of the site, along the same alignment as the medieval Vinegar Alley directly adjacent to it and perhaps suggesting continuity of use.

Outcome

A post-excavation assessment and publication were carried out for the site. During the archaeological works, an open day was held on site and talks were given for the school children. Evening lectures for groups such as WEAG were also provided, as was a You Tube talk.

The site correlates with other rural Roman farmsteads found in the Essex area and is clearly of this tradition, rather than relating to the urban centre of Londinium.



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