

**GLA 24: Old Gravel Pit, Blackheath, Potential LIGS**

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Blackheath is so called because of the colour of its soil and not because it was the burial ground of victims of the Black Death (1340-49). Blackheath has been the site of numerous gravel pits, some of which were huge scars that have since been filled in. The map of 1914 shows a number of them surviving in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century and remains of many of the working can be seen today<sup>1</sup>.

GLA 24, known as Eliot Pit, is in the south-west corner of the heath, bounded by St Austell Road and Mounts Pond Road. A visit in May 2012 led to the addition of Vanbrugh Pit in the north-east corner between Vanbrugh Park and Charlton Way within this potential LIGS. Blackheath as shown on the old map had a series of gravel pits at various points over the heath. The most notable ones are GLA24 known as Eliot pit in the south-west and, at the opposite end of the heath, is Vanbrugh Pit, which also exposes the Blackheath Pebbles. This is known as GLA63 and is in the Royal Borough of Greenwich. It is shown in the second picture below.

The old gravel pits are close to the junction of the Harwich Formation and the Lambeth Group. The Lambeth Group are [glauconitic](#) sands overlain by grey clays and sands with brackish fauna, whilst the Harwich Formation (Blackheath Beds) consists of rounded black pebbles, glauconitic sandy clays and very fine-grained glauconitic sand.

Blackheath pebbles can be found on the faces of both pits and on the informal paths into the bottom of the pits. The marshy nature of the base of the pits suggests a horizontal clay layer.

<sup>1</sup> Blackheath 1914: The Godfrey Edition of Old Ordnance Survey Maps, London Sheet 105

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**Blackheath Pebble gravel on the eroded path of Vanbrugh Pit**

Source: Laurie Baker (May 2012)



Site Map

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Source: London's foundations, page 157. Vanbrugh pit is on the NE side of Blackheath in the Royal Borough of Greenwich

