

GLA 51: Parish's Pit, Erith, Potential LIGS

London Borough of Bexley, TQ 5100 7815 and TQ 5095 7800

Ownership: Private industrial estate. Permission to visit must be sought from individual owners.

This is a large, half a square kilometre, former pit that mainly worked Thanet Sand between 1805 and about 1970. Strata are horizontal. The natural site was a north east facing slope rising from the top of the Chalk at Thames river level some 30 m to the Harwich Formation plateau. The base of the pit was at about the top of the Chalk. The Thanet Sand can stand in near vertical cliffs, some still visible. Other strata do not stand so steeply and are mainly hidden by impenetrable vegetation, scree and fences. About half the pit floor has been backfilled, the other half has been built over as industrial estates, formerly the Vickers works.

One still spectacular rectangular "Lost World" type of "island" (Site a) is surrounded on three sides by high vertical Thanet Sand cliffs and on its fourth side by a railway cutting. This is shown on a painting and a photograph of the 1870s when the former quarry floor was a cricket ground. Another high Thanet cliff (Site b) is marked by "Danger Falling Rocks" signs as Fraser Road climbs across it. Elsewhere the geology is completely hidden. The site is 500 m south of the London LOOP Section 1 (see <http://www.walklondon.org.uk/section.asp?section=1>).

References:

Lobley, J.L. 1873. Excursion to Erith and Crayford. *Proceedings of the Geologists' Association*, 3, pp. 83 – 86.

Chandler, R.H. & Leach. A.L. 1912. Report of an Excursion to the Lower Tertiary Section and the Pleistocene River Drifts near Erith. *Proceedings of the Geologists' Association*, 23, pp. 183 – 189.

Davies, W.J.K 1959. Parish's Loam Quarries, Erith, Kent. *Narrow Gauge Railway Society Handbook 2*.

Parish's Pit

Source: London's foundations, page 225 (Diana Clements)



Site Map

Source: London's foundations, page 223

