

GLA 64 Waterlow Park

Grid Reference: TQ 2857 8722

Site Type: Public laid-out gardens on Highgate Hill

Site Area (hectares): 10.1

Current use: Recreational

Site ownership: London Borough of Camden

Borough: London Borough of Camden

Field surveyors: Ann Davidson, Peter Collins, Diana Clements

Date: 24 March 2014

Current geological designations:

Other scientific:

Site Map

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Stratigraphy and Rock Types

Time Unit: Eocene	Rock Unit: Bagshot Formation at the base of the Bracklesham Group
Rock Type: sand	Details: thick-bedded, fine-grained sands, with a basal fine gravelly sand developed in places.
Time Unit: Eocene	Rock Unit: London Clay Formation and Claygate Member, Thames Group
Rock Type: Clay, silt, sand	Details: Fine, sandy, silty clay/ clayey silt, clay.

Site Description

The length of the park covers three lithologies: London Clay at the base, with the more sandy Claygate Member above and topped by the Bagshot Sand at the Highgate end. The park slopes downwards, approximately from NW to SE, and is artificially terraced. This site includes land which was formerly landscaped as gardens for several large houses, including historic Lauderdale House, which still stands within the park and is presently used as arts centre and café. There are three ponds, fed from natural springs, of which there are several. During a recent visit, one spring was visible at TQ 2864 8721. The ponds have been landscaped and excavated, since being incorporated within the gardens in the sixteenth century.

The middle pond, at TQ 2871 8706, has an elevation of approximately 95m. This equates approximately to the base of the Claygate Member. No obvious exposure was noted, even around the ponds. As far as could be ascertained, the drinking fountain, at TQ 2866 8726, is sited on the boundary between Bagshot Sand and Claygate Member at c. 110m. There are spectacular views of London especially from the level of uppermost of the three ponds. The plaque near the statue of Sir Sydney Waterlow, TQ 2872 8722, states that this viewpoint is at the same elevation (100m) as the top of the dome of St. Paul's.

Assessment of Site Value		
Geodiversity topic: lithostatigraphy, geomorphology.		
Access and Safety		
Aspect	Description	
Road access and parking	From Dartmouth Park Hill, Highgate Hill and Swains Lane. Restricted parking. Buses 271, 210 and 143 stop outside Lauderdale House	
Safety of access	Good. Park is open all year during daytime	
Safety of exposure	N/A	
Permission to visit	Open access	
Current condition	Well-maintained public park	
Current conflicting activities	None	
Restricting conditions	Lack of exposure	
Nature of exposure	Implicit	
Culture, Heritage & Economic		
Aspect	Description	Rating
Historic, archaeological & literary associations		3
Aesthetic landscape	Beautifully laid out park with stunning views of London	9
History of Earth Sciences	Borehole section at adjacent St. Aloysius College (Tracey et al, 2002)	(7)
Economic geology	(Brick making close by on the Archway Road from the clay excavated from the Archway 'tunnel'.)	(7)
GeoScientific Merit		
Geomorphology	Although landscaped, inferences can be made with reference to springs, ponds and topography.	4
Sedimentology	No exposures of sand, clay or gravel but spring-lines infer. When seen on the adjacent Hampstead Heath the Bagshot Sand is predominantly fine sand showing stratification and locally iron rich. Below, the Claygate Member of the London Clay is usually laminated, clays/silts/sands, coarsening upwards. The London Clay is clay becomes progressively siltier close to the Claygate Member.	2
Palaeontology	The adjacent Archway Road was the site for many of the fossils from the London Clay now in the Natural History Museum 'Highgate Collection'. They come from Division E2 of King (1981), immediately beneath the Claygate Member (Division E3)	(6)
Igneous/mineral/ Metamorphic Geology		
Structural Geology		
Lithostratigraphy	Three strata: Bagshot Sand, London Clay and Claygate Member.	4
Potential use		
Fragility		
Current Site Value		
Community	Park is close to Highgate Village, and is well-used. Arts Centre and restaurant/café in Lauderdale House. Hornsey Historical Society has produced local trails: geology could possibly be added.	10
Education	There is an education centre within the park (currently under discussion) and educational activities on the geology could include information on the Archway Road brickmaking and 'Highgate Fauna' fossils as well as the different lithologies within the park and occurrence of spring lines	(7)
Geodiversity value		
Worthy of LIGS because of the three separate lithologies within the park denoted by spring lines		

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Photos: Diana Clements 2014



probable spring lines



View across London