

GLA 66 Tripcock Ness Submerged Forest

Grid Reference: TQ 4527 8096	Site Type: Natural foreshore exposure of submerged forest
Site Area (hectares): 0.61	Current use: foreshore
Site ownership: Port of London Authority	Borough: Royal Borough of Greenwich
Field surveyor: Laurie Baker, Diana Clements, Paul Rainey	Date: June 2013
Current geological designations:	Other scientific:

Site Map OS Topography © Crown Copyright



Stratigraphy and Rock Types

Time Unit: Holocene	Rock Unit: Alluvium & peat
Rock Type: Alluvium	Details: peat horizons at varying horizons

Site Description

The submerged forest is visible at low tide at several places along the Thames Estuary. The best exposure is at Erith (GLA 39) but the exposure at Tripcock Ness is the best within the Royal Borough of Greenwich and is rather more accessible with steps down to the foreshore from the Thames Path. At Erith whole tree trunks are revealed amongst the root balls and occasional nuts and seeds can also be found. It has been extensively researched and trees have been dated ranging from approximately 3,000 years to over 5,000 years ago. Tripcock Ness is likely to be of a similar age. The exposure is more modest with tangles of root balls and only the occasional trunk. Low tides are required to view the submerged forest which can be seen from the tow path when not masked by vegetation.

Assessment of Site Value

Geodiversity topic: Holocene processes in the Thames

Access and Safety

Aspect	Description
Safety of access	The exact location can only be reached on foot along the Thames Path. Nearest parking in Princess Ave. to SW with steps leading to the foreshore, 130m east of the GR 144 post. The path from GR 144 can be obscured by overgrown vegetation. Access should only be attempted on a falling tide and never alone as there are slippery boulders to negotiate.
Safety of exposure	Storms could potentially damage the exposure as could any development along this stretch

	of the Thames	
Permission to visit	Permission is not required to visit.	
Current condition	The foreshore is muddy, slippery and dangerous and should not be attempted alone.	
Current conflicting activities	None known	
Restricting conditions	Tide, weather, mud	
Nature of exposure	Natural foreshore exposure of Neolithic submerged forest	
Culture, Heritage & Economic		
Aspect	Description	Rating
Historic, archaeological & literary associations	Details of Erith can be found in Seel, 2000 and Sidell & Haughey, 2007.	7
Aesthetic landscape	Not a particularly attractive stretch of the Thames Path but useful for locals	6
History of Earth Sciences		3
Economic geology	None	0
GeoScientific Merit		
Geomorphology	Record of changing sea levels in the Thames Estuary	4
Sedimentology	Peat horizon with tree roots and trunks	4
Palaeontology	Potential for research, possible nuts as well as roots & trunks	4
Igneous/mineral/ Metamorphic Geology	None	0
Structural Geology	None.	0
Lithostratigraphy	Holocene Submerged Forest probably dating between 5,000 and 3,000 BP	4
Potential use	Research; further education; on-site interpretation.	
Fragility	Storms; human engineering of Thames estuary	
Current Site Value		
Community	Valuable, as can be seen from tow path	6
Education	Evidence for teaching about past environments of the Thames Estuary and about global warming and sea-level rise	6
Geodiversity value		
Potential LIGS: The best exposure of the Neolithic submerged forest in Greenwich with reasonable access for local community.		4

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Photo: Diana Clements, May 2013

