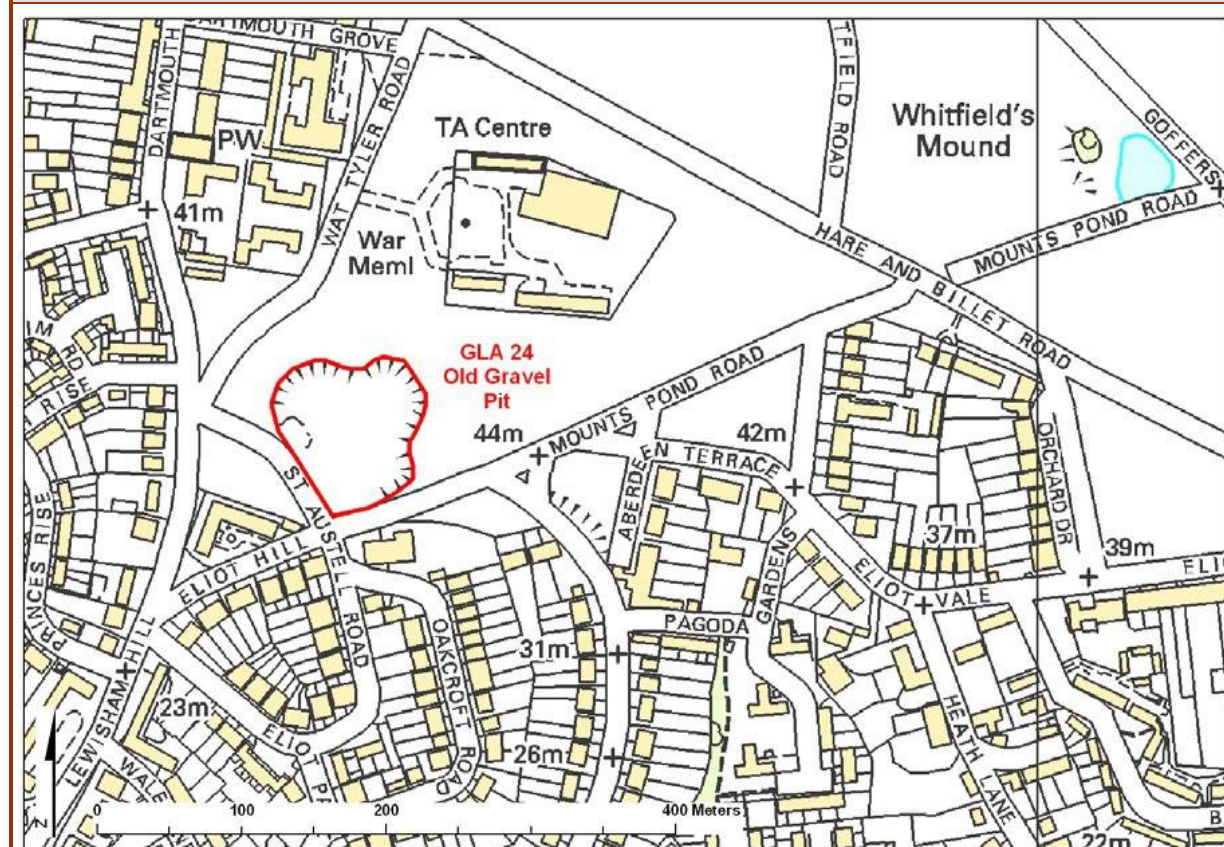


GLA 24 Old Gravel Pit, Blackheath (Eliot Pits)	
Grid Reference: TQ 385 763	Site Type: Former quarry works
Site Area (hectares): 0.84	Current use: Recreational land
Site ownership: London Borough of Lewisham	Borough: London Borough of Lewisham
Field surveyor: Joanna Brayson	Date: March 2011
Visited: Laurie Baker, Diana Clements, Paul Rainey	Date: January 2016
Latest visit: Laurie Baker	Date: February 2021
Current geological designation: LIGS	Other designation: Metropolitan SINC (Blackheath and Greenwich Park)

Site Map OS Topography © Crown Copyright



Stratigraphy and Rock Types

Time Unit: Eocene	Rock Unit: Blackheath Member, Harwich Formation, Thames Group
Rock Type: Sand and gravel	Details: Rounded black pebbles, sandy clays and sand; marine fauna, locally brackish.
Time Unit: Paleocene-Eocene	Rock Unit: Lambeth Group (not seen)
Rock Type: Sand and gravel	Details: Glauconitic sands overlain by grey clays and sands with Brackish fauna and interleaved red and variegated clays and sands.

Site Description

Old gravel pit at the edge of open space in Blackheath.

Assessment of Site Value

Geodiversity topic: Lithostratigraphy; economic geology.

Access and Safety

Aspect	Description
Safety of access	Adjacent to small road, grassy area with no significant dangers.
Safety of exposure	Pit sides are short and grassed over, little risk of falling.
Permission to visit	Open access.

Current condition	Grassed over but shape visible.	
Current conflicting activities	None.	
Restricting conditions	None.	
Nature of exposure	Old grassed over pit.	
Culture, Heritage & Economic		
Aspect	Description	Rating
Historic, archaeological & literary associations	Shown on 1896 OS Historic map as Old Gravel Pit.	8
Aesthetic landscape	Part of large open space.	6
History of Earth Sciences		0
Economic geology	Gravel extraction.	6
GeoScientific Merit		
Geomorphology	None.	0
Sedimentology	If excavation could be carried out, environment of deposition.	4
Palaeontology	None.	0
Igneous/mineral/ Metamorphic Geology	None.	0
Structural Geology	None.	0
Lithostratigraphy	Correlation with other units.	4
Potential use	On-site interpretation; research.	
Fragility	Natural overgrowing.	
Current Site Value		
Community	Valuable open space	8
Education	A board detailing the geology and local plants has been erected. One of 12 sites on the Green Chain walk featured in the audio on London Geodiversity Partnership website	6
Geodiversity value		
LIGS:	Good example for economic history in local area. A second example can be found at the east end of Blackheath at GLA 65 Vanbrugh Pit in Royal Borough of Greenwich.	4

GLA 24 Old Gravel Pit (Eliot Pits)



Eliot Pits (8)

The unconsolidated gravelly rock underlying the Blackheath plateau is known as the Blackheath Member (formerly Blackheath Beds) of Tertiary age. Beneath the gravel are layers of clay, sand and chalk. The Heath was extensively quarried in the late 17th and early 18th centuries but many of the resulting pits were filled in. Eliot Pits was an exception, perhaps because the land slopes away steeply, and was allowed to grow wild. Eliot Pits continue to be conserved as an area of high ecological value.

Species of plants which grow here include the Hairy Sedge and Common Mallow. Butterflies, grasshoppers and stag beetles thrive and mining bees can be found too. They look like honeybees, but are very docile and unlikely to sting. They are active pollinators of wild and garden plants making them highly beneficial.



Hairy Sedge

Stag beetle

Common Mallow

Common Mallow bees make nests in the ground

Photos: Laurie Baker, February 2021

Part of panel