

Fairlop's Distant Past

Where shall we settle?

An activity using and interpreting maps to investigate the early settlement of Fairlop Plain

Curriculum Areas

KS2 History

Pupils should be taught about changes in Britain from the Stone Age to the Iron Age. This could include Neolithic (Stone Age) hunter-gatherers and early farmers

KS2 Human geography

Describe and understand types of settlement and land use and the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals and water

KS2 Physical geography

Describe and understand biomes, vegetation belts and rivers

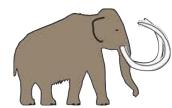
Previous knowledge

Some knowledge of the limits of technology in the middle Stone Age

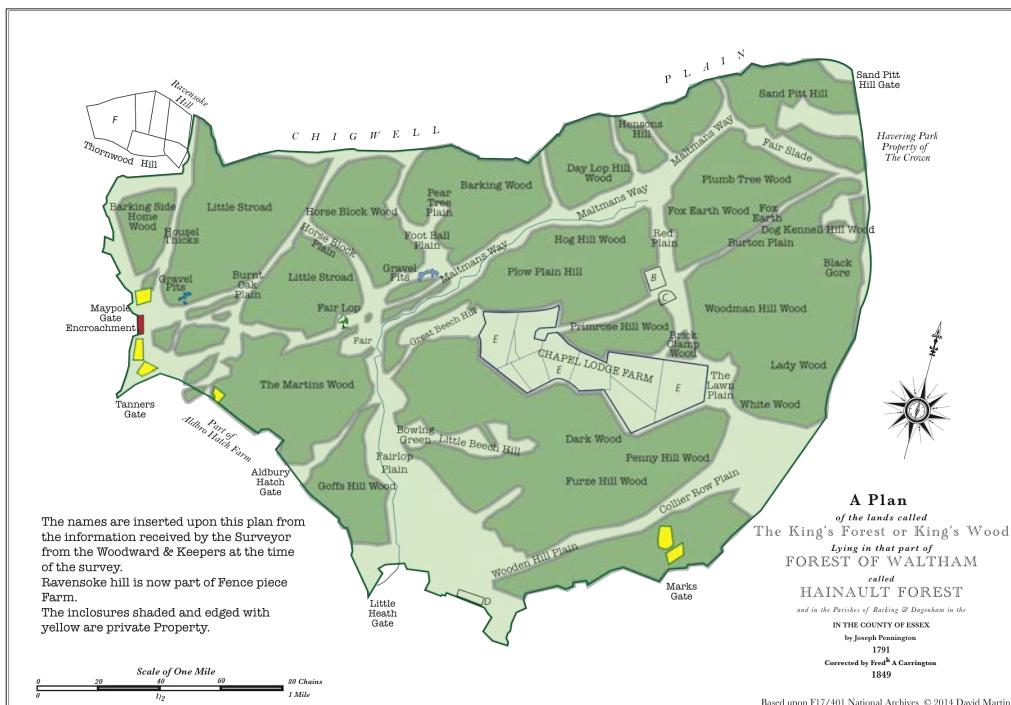
- all materials used in everyday life are natural
- no use of metals
- tools made of stone including sharp flints, wood and animal bones, antlers etc.
- farming is supplemented by hunting, fishing and gathering "wild" food

Resources

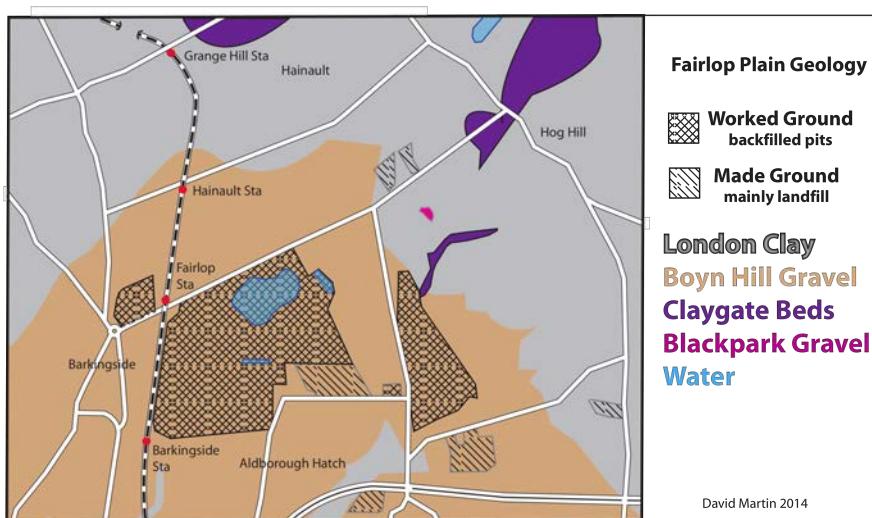
1849 map of the Kingswoods (the Plain before the 1851 forest clearance, representing the area for millennia)



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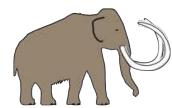


Geological maps (indicating underlying rocks, soil types, minerals, etc)

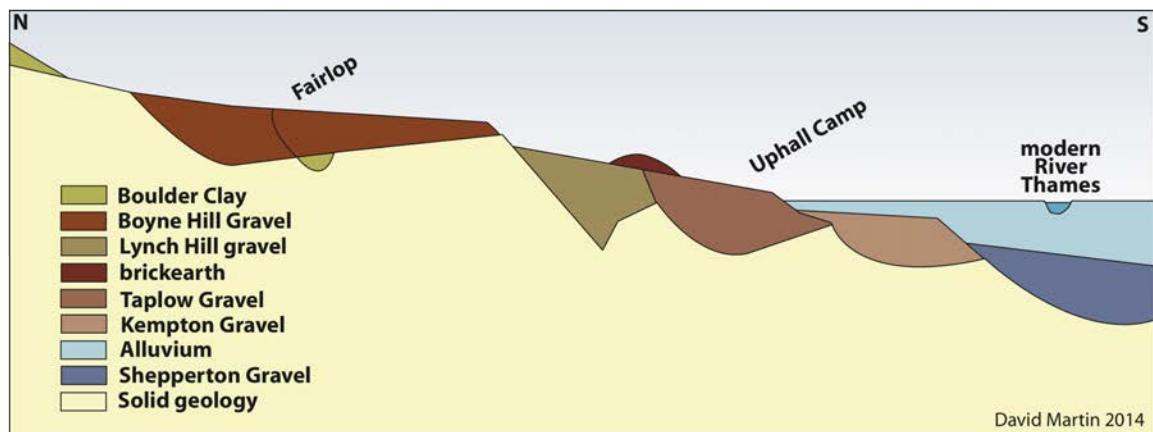


The geology of the site is uncomplicated. Old river terraces of Boyn Hill Gravel are scattered irregularly and of varying depths over the surface of London clay which is between 30 and 40 metres thick. Immediately below the clay are the Woolwich and Reading beds and Thames Sands. All but the Boyn Hill gravels belong to the Eocene period and overlie the Upper Chalk of the Cretaceous period. The angle of dip is about 1° to the north. Any relief is the result of an eroded terraces rather than folding.

Source: Maurice Pickering Associates Report to LB Redbridge 1976



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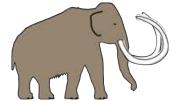


Schematic cross section showing gravel sites in relation to the Thames

Images of pre-historical/local archaeology (hand axes, etc)



Ribbed Axe-head. Late Bronze Age (1,000 -700BC)
(David Martin)



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Activity a) Where shall we settle?

Group discussion

- What are the basic necessities for survival?
- If you lived in the Middle Stone Age, what sort of resources would you need to survive? (eg. food sources, building materials, etc.)

Introduce the maps, explaining that:-

- for many hundreds (if not thousands) of years the Fairlop Plain area was forest and this map indicates what the landscape was like
- forest land is not only trees, but clearings between them
- clearings may occur naturally if areas of soil are not right for growing trees (too rocky, too boggy, too dry, etc)
- grazing animals and people with tools can keep clearings free of trees

Group discussion

Imagine you are a group of Middle Stone Age people thinking of settling on Fairlop Plain. Using your knowledge of Middle Stone Age technology and lifestyles and the natural resources needed for survival, decide on a good location on the map for your new settlement

- What are the advantages of your chosen site?
- Are there any disadvantages or dangers?
- What sort of homes, food and drink would you have?
- What sort of work will have to go on to make your settlement a success?
- Could you persuade other groups that your site is best?