

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT ASHCOMBE HOUSE,
CARSHALTON WAR MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, CARSHALTON, SM5 3BY**

**Site Code: ASW 08
Revision 1**

Central National Grid Reference: TQ 279 639

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1 ABSTRACT

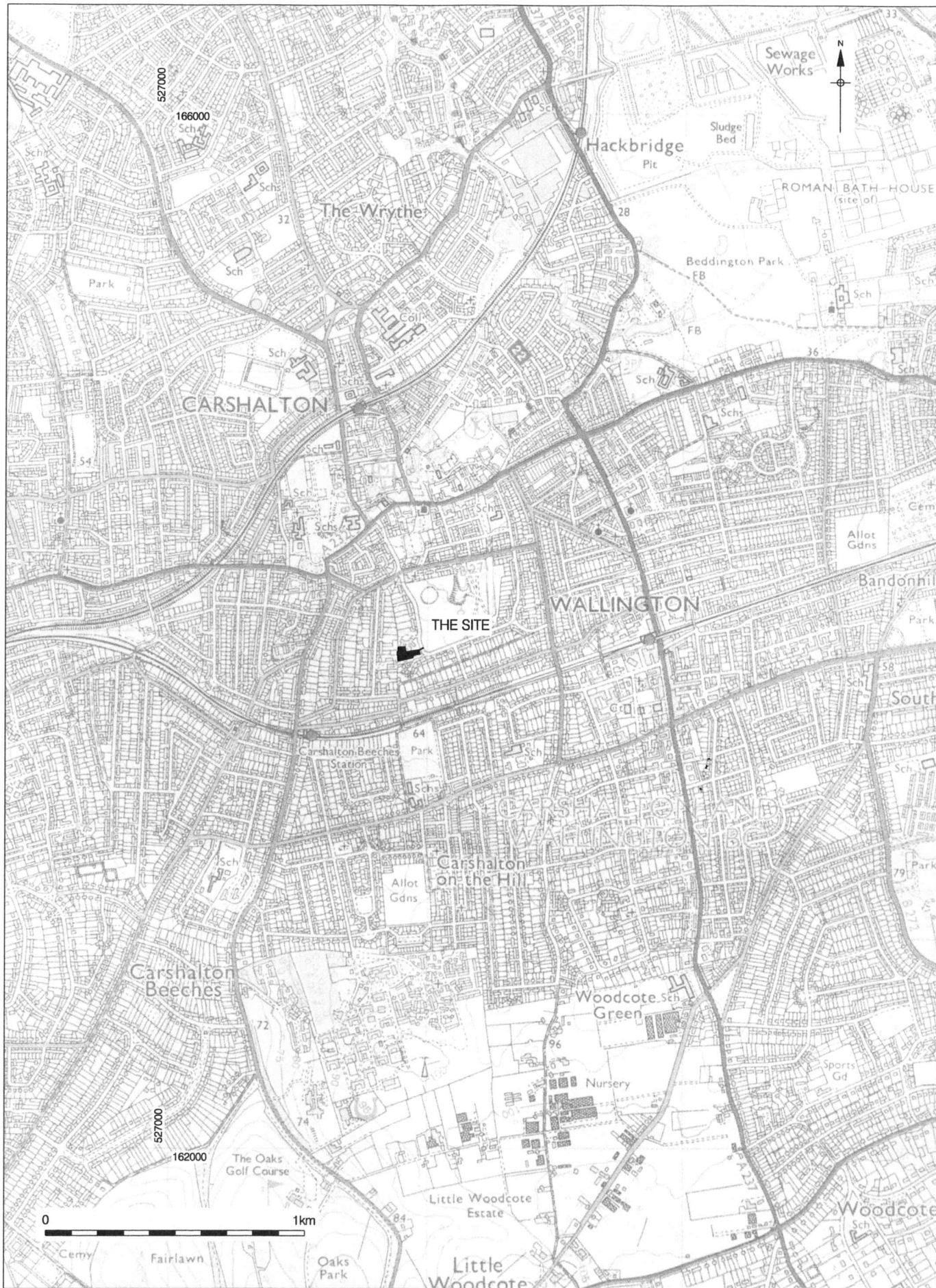
- 1.1 This report details the results and working methods of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited at Ashcombe House, 16a The Park, Carshalton SM5 3BY. The central National Grid Reference for the site is TQ 279 639. The evaluation was undertaken between the 8th and 15th of September 2008. The work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting.
- 1.2 The evaluation consisted of seven trenches. Four of these were located in the immediate environs of the standing building, one to the east and three to the west of it. A fifth trench was located in the northwest of the development area and the two remaining areas investigated were situated in the open area to the east of the standing buildings. The location of the trenches was based on the specification produced by CgMs Consulting. Where necessary trenches were relocated to avoid excavating below tree canopies and services exposed during machining.
- 1.3 Archaeological features and deposits were observed in three of the trenches. These consisted of two possible postholes identified in Trench 1, neither of which contained dating material, and a concentration of cut features, mainly pits but including a truncated ditch, in Trenches 2 and 7 to the east of the standing building. The remaining trenches contained only natural deposits consisting principally of chalk and reddish brown silt and clay. In the trenches located to the west of the standing building these geological deposits were sealed by a subsoil similar to the clay and silt but containing more sand and organic material. This subsoil became progressively thicker as the surface of the chalk sloped down to the west; it was not apparent in the three trenches located to the east of the building which might indicate that this part of the hilltop has been levelled.
- 1.4 The results of the evaluation show that archaeological features survive in the area to the east of the standing building. The archaeological remains unearthed in Trenches 1, 2 and 7 lay almost directly below the modern topsoil and in most cases were c. 0.30m beneath the modern ground surface, with pottery recovered representing a mix of Middle Iron Age and Late Iron Age – early Roman date. No horizontal stratigraphy was apparent but a dense area of intercutting pits was recorded in the western part of Trench 7.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd on the site of Ashcombe House, a former residential care unit which forms part of the now disused Carshalton War Memorial Hospital located at The Park, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 3BY (Fig. 1). The evaluation was conducted between the 8th and 15th of September 2008 and was commissioned by CgMs Consulting.
- 2.2 The evaluation consisted of seven trenches located around Ashcombe House and the open area to the east of it (Fig. 2). The archaeological evaluation followed the methodology laid out in the specification¹. The only exception to this concerned the trench locations which were adapted to take account of services exposed during the course of the trial trenching and existing canopies of large trees, many of which are to be retained and form part of the new development.
- 2.3 The site had previously been the subject of an archaeological Desk Based Assessment which considered the archaeological potential for most periods to be low with the exception of the Bronze Age which was more likely to be represented².
- 2.4 The evaluation was project managed for Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd by Tim Bradley and supervised by the author. The work was monitored by Lorraine Darton, CgMs Consulting and Diane Walls of English Heritage, GLAAS.
- 2.6 The completed archive comprising written, drawn and photographic records will be stored by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd until their eventual deposition in the London Archaeological Archive and Resource Centre (LAARC).
- 2.7 The site was given the unique site code ASW 08.

¹ Darton 2008b

² Darton 2008a



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Figure 1
Site Location
1:20,000 at A4



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Figure 2
Trench Locations
1:500 at A4



Figure 3
Proposed Development Overlaying Trench Locations
1:500 at A4

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.1 The site not located within an Archaeological Priority Zone as defined by the London Borough of Sutton's Unitary Development Plan.

3.2 The London Borough of Sutton's Unitary Development Plan contains the following policy with regard to archaeology;

Policy BE40

Before development proposals are considered within archaeological priority areas (as shown on the proposals map and as set out in Appendix 2, Schedule 2.1) the Council may require a preliminary archaeological field evaluation to be undertaken, in accordance with a written scheme of investigation to be approved in advance by the Council. Where there are reasonable grounds to believe that archaeological remains outside archaeological priority area may be under threat, the Council will, where appropriate, require an archaeological to be undertaken on sites over 0.4 hectares (1 acre), prior to development.

3.3 Following the production of a Desk Based Assessment³, which outlined the archaeological potential of the site, Diane Walls, English Heritage, GLAAS determined that an evaluation should be carried out to establish the extent of archaeological survival.

3.4 CgMs Consulting prepared a written scheme of investigation for the site which was approved by English Heritage prior to the commencement of the evaluation⁴. The aims of the evaluation were:

- To determine the form, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains, irrespective of period, liable to be threatened by the proposed development.
- To clarify the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusions and hence assess the degree of archaeological survival of buried deposits and any surviving structures of archaeological significance.

³ Darton 2008a

⁴ Darton 2008b

- To evaluate the likely impact of past land use and development.
- To provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy.

4 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 4.1 The underlying rock formation is composed of Upper Chalk⁵. The weathered surface of the chalk was exposed in all seven of the evaluation trenches. The eastern half of the site appeared to have been levelled but the surface of the chalk was still higher in this area than the western part of the site. The highest level recorded on the chalk was 59.23m OD in Trench 7. A plateau, probably indicative of levelling, was suggested by the levels recorded in Trenches 1 and 2 which were 59.16m OD and 59.14m OD respectively. The surface of the chalk began to fall away sharply immediately to the west of the standing building. The surface of the chalk sloped from 58.76m OD to 58.48m OD in Trench 5. The chalk also sloped down to the north. The surface recorded in Trench 6 sloped from 58.14m OD in the east to 58.01m OD in the west.
- 4.2 Although the British Geological Survey suggests there are no drift deposits present on the site a considerable depth of subsoil was apparent in the western half of the site. This again suggested that levelling had taken place on the eastern side where this deposit was not extant. The subsoil was composed of a reddish brown fine sandy silt recorded in representative sections as layers [29], [7] and [10] (See Fig 4). The thickness of the subsoil increased from east to west, a maximum of 0.55m was recorded in Trench 5.
- 4.3 The subsoil was composed of material very similar to the reddish brown deposit that filled natural channels and sink-holes in the eroded surface of the chalk. These features were evident throughout the area evaluated and in some cases resembled man-made features that might have been cut into the chalk. However, sample excavation of these areas revealed no signs of human activity and the absence of artefacts and even charcoal flecks, combined with the highly irregular shapes of the sides and bottoms of these features, led to the conclusion that none of these deposits had been the subject of human intervention.
- 4.4 Although the site lies on a chalk hilltop, the geology of the surrounding area is complex and has had a considerable impact on human development in the area. The area to north of the site is covered by London Clay and the sand, silt and gravel deposits of the Thanet, Reading Woolwich and Blackheath

⁵ British Geological Survey Sheet 257 South London

beds⁶. These water-bearing strata supported streams flowing north from the Downs and could provide a water source for wells whereas the depth of the chalk usually precluded this. The gravel terraces of the upper Wandle valley are also located to the north and east of the subject site.

- 4.5 The natural slope rises from the west of the site to the east and from the north to the south. The study site is situated very close to, if not on, the highest point of the hill which slopes down to the east as it crosses Carshalton Park. The highest levels recorded on the ground surface were 59.47m OD in the east, 59.62m OD in the west and 58.88m in the northwest.
- 4.6 The hilltop on which the site is situated offers a panoramic view to the north over the heathlands of what is today Mitcham Common and could be seen as a strategic point close to the upper reaches of the Wandle. The ridge of high ground that runs from Sydenham to South Norwood provides the only interruption to the view to the northeast.

⁶ Adkins and Needham 1985, Fig 17

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

5.1 The archaeological background to the site has been covered in the Desk Based Assessment⁷ and it is not proposed to reproduce all of the research contained in that document. Some detail is given regarding the later prehistoric and Roman periods as features dating to these periods were represented on the site.

5.2 Prehistoric

5.2.1 The site lies at the junction of two distinct geological areas where the chalk uplands of the Downs meet the river valley of the upper Wandle which is principally cut through sands and gravels but also passes through areas of London Clay. Both of these areas have produced a wide array of finds dating to the later prehistoric period and the Bronze Age in particular.

5.2.2 The site is located in the vicinity of two large prehistoric hilltop enclosures. The first of these is the relatively poorly investigated Carshalton Camp which occupies a spur of chalk upland that looks out over Tooting and Streatham. This monument consists of a double ditch and bank enclosure that probably dates to the later Bronze Age or early Iron Age⁸. No modern archaeological work has been carried out on the site but bronze objects, possibly associated with the enclosure, were reported to have been found during excavations for railway cuttings that passed through the area. The camp is located c. 0.60km to the northwest of the site. A much better documented late Bronze Age site is located on the site of the former Queen Mary's Hospital, located c. 1.5km to the south of the site. This consists of circular enclosure defined by a ditch c. 150m in diameter. It is probable that a bank once stood adjacent to the ditch but that levelling of the hilltop has destroyed all trace of this. The monument was first investigated in 1903-04, partially excavated again in 1937 and 1939⁹ and more recently investigated in 1999¹⁰. This monument also dates to the late Bronze Age, and the two enclosures typify the abundant finds that represent the remains of the later prehistoric period in the area surrounding the site. In addition to these an important late Bronze Age ritual enclosure

⁷ Darton 2008a

⁸ Birch 1925

⁹ Both of these interventions were documented in Adkins and Needham 1985

¹⁰ Groves and Lovell 2002

was excavated on the gravel terrace at Westcroft Road, c. 500m to the northwest of the study site¹¹.

- 5.2.3 A late Bronze Age or early Iron Age ditch and three late Bronze Age pits were found at Carshalton Park House only 100m to the north of the study site.

5.3 Roman

- 5.3.1 Very little evidence exists for large-scale Roman occupation or exploitation of the area surrounding the site. The nearest known Roman road, Stane Street which linked London to Chichester, lies some 5km to the east. However, the major Roman site consisting of the villa and bathhouse at Beddington, although still some 4m distant to the northeast, would almost certainly have been visible from the hilltop now occupied by the disused War Memorial Hospital. The edge of the chalk escarpment would certainly not have remained unexplored by the local Roman population.
- 5.3.2 Small quantities of Roman pottery and metalwork have been recovered from the area surrounding the study site but these are almost all located over 500m from Ashcombe House.

¹¹ Proctor 1999

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 All of the trenches were stripped of turf, hard standing composed of tarmac, and modern topsoil using a 180° mechanical excavator. In Trenches 1, 2 and 7, all situated to the east of Ashcombe House, the removal of the topsoil exposed levels composed of natural chalk and clearly defined archaeological features. In Trenches 3-6, located to the west of the standing building, a considerable depth of natural subsoil was evident below the topsoil. This homogenous deposit was also stripped to the surface of the chalk which sloped down to the west. No archaeological features were evident below the subsoil. All of the machine reduction was undertaken under archaeological supervision. Subsequent investigation of trenches used hand tools only.
- 6.2 Each trench measured 10m by 2m. Archaeological features were revealed in three of the seven trenches opened. Trenches were located using baselines which were located by a professional surveyor and tied into the National Grid.
- 6.3 Recording on site was undertaken using the single context recording system as specified in the Museum of London Site Manual. Representative plans and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate. Contexts were numbered sequentially and recorded on pro-forma context sheets. Where referred to in the text context numbers are given in square brackets, i.e. pit [36].
- 6.4 All trenches, and where appropriate individual features, were photographed using black and white print, colour slide and digital formats.
- 6.5 Two temporary bench marks (TBMs) were established on the site. Trenches 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 were served by TBM 1 which had a value of 59.34m OD. Trenches 2 and 7 were served by TBM 2 which had a value of 59.53m OD. Both of the values were established by transferring a level from the bench mark located on the southern brick pier of the entrance to the War Memorial Hospital on The Park, the value of which is 59.46m OD.
- 6.6 The site was given the unique code ASW 08.

7 ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCUSSION

7.1 Negative Trenches

- 7.1.1 No archaeological deposits or features were found in Trenches 3 to 6, all of which were located to the west of the standing building (See Fig 2). The only exception to this was a pit recorded in the western section of Trench 4 (Fig. 5). Pit [6] was cut into the surface of the natural subsoil [7] and contained pottery that was clearly produced in the first half of the twentieth century. An extensive deposit of modern demolition rubble composed of brick and concrete was evident above this.
- 7.1.2 Apart from the clearly modern interventions described above the only features evident in these trenches consisted of patches of reddish brown clay and silt in the surface of the weathered chalk. Some of these were partially excavated in order to confirm that they were not the result of human intervention. None of these features produced any sign of man-made activity and they were not recorded or described in detail. The only deposits evident in these four trenches were natural formations that have been dealt with more fully above in Section 4 Paras 2 and 3.

7.2 Trench 1

- 7.2.1 Trench one was located immediately to the east of the standing building and orientated north-south.
- 7.2.2 Two possible post-holes were recorded in Trench 1. Posthole [2] was a sub-circular feature 0.58m in diameter and 0.39m deep. Posthole [4] was located immediately to the north of [2] and measured 0.42m in diameter by 0.19m deep. Neither of the postholes contained any artefacts but both fills were flecked with charcoal. The tops of these features were found at 59.02m OD.
- 7.2.3 Although no finds were recovered from the postholes a small fragment of residual pottery dating to the Middle Iron Age was recovered during the machining of Trench 1.

7.3 Trench 2

- 7.3.1 Trench 2 was to have been located in the vicinity of Trench 1 but was placed further to the east to avoid disturbing the root systems of the large chestnut trees situated in the proposed location. Trench 2 was orientated roughly northwest to southeast. A concentration of archaeological features cut into the surface of the chalk was evident in this area. These included a range of pits, a posthole and a truncated ditch. Not all of the features were investigated or fully excavated but a wide range of artefacts were recovered from those that were sampled.
- 7.3.2 A large sub-circular pit [12] was evident in the southern part of the Trench. The feature measured more than 1.70m in diameter; and extended beyond the limit of investigation to both the south and east. The pit was not fully excavated but an area of the fill was sectioned in order to recover dating evidence. A relatively small quantity of burnt flint formed part of the assemblage; some animal bone was recovered. Pottery dating to the Middle Iron Age was also present as was a fragment of fired clay which might be a large well fired piece of burnt daub or part of a loomweight. The highest level recorded on the top of this feature was 59.10m OD.
- 7.3.3 A slightly smaller circular pit [14] was excavated in the central area of the Trench. This steep-sided pit measured 1.55m in diameter and was at least 1.02m deep, it may have been bottomed but this is not certain. A small quantity of burnt flint was again present, as was pottery dated to the Middle Iron Age. Animal bone was also present, notably in the form of a sheep skull found near the base of the pit. The pit was not fully excavated but half-sectioned, the western limit of the feature extended beyond the limit of excavation. The highest level recorded on the top of this feature was 59.07m OD.
- 7.3.4 A feature of similar dimensions was apparent to the east of pit [14] where a defined area of dark grey sandy silt appeared to represent the fill of a cut feature (Fig. 3). This feature was not excavated.
- 7.3.5 A linear cut [16] extended from east to west through the northern part of the Trench, and continued beyond the limit of excavation to both the east and west. The maximum width of the cut was 0.93m, it was 0.30m deep and was cut from a level of 58.94m OD. A notable find recovered from the fill of this

feature was a large fragment of diagnostic Middle Iron Age pottery which showed the form of both the shoulder and rim. The size of this fragment clearly demonstrated that it had not travelled far from the point at which it had once been discarded.

- 7.3.6 A shallow somewhat irregular rectangular cut [26] was evident to the north of the linear cut [16]. This feature extended beyond the limit of excavation to the west, as seen it measured 1.10m east-west by 0.98m north-south and was 0.18m. The irregular nature of this feature suggested that it might have been a small treethrow but small quantities of burnt flint and pottery dated to the Middle Iron Age were recovered from the fill.
- 7.3.7 A circular posthole [28] was located to the north of the linear cut [16] and to the east of the shallow pit [26]. The posthole was 0.24m in diameter and 0.20m deep. No artefacts were recovered from the fill of the posthole which appeared to be considerably darker than the surrounding reddish brown sandy silt deposit. This feature may have been a posthole but it was not as clearly defined as the remaining pits and ditches excavated in this trench.
- 7.3.8 Two possible cut features were apparent in the corners of the northern part of the Trench, neither of which were excavated.

7.4 Trench 7

- 7.4.1 Trench 7 was located in the east of the open area to the south of the access road leading from the site entrance on The Park. The Trench was orientated roughly east-west.
- 7.4.2 A large circular pit [18] was excavated in the western part of the Trench. The pit measured a maximum of 1.70m in diameter and was 1.14m deep, it was cut from a height of 59.27m OD. Relatively few artefacts were recovered from this feature; some fired flint was evident as was a small quantity of animal bone. A small quantity of pottery dated to the Middle Iron Age was also recovered, although this may have been residual as it was clear from the digging of this pit that it formed part of complex sequence of intercutting features.
- 7.4.3 The eastern side of pit [18] was relatively clearly defined. The natural chalk was evident close to the surface but this was not the case in any other part of

the pit, except the base. The fills of deep cut features could be observed on all sides of pit [18], these fills were very similar to that excavated within the pit itself and it could not be said without doubt that pit [18] was the latest feature in this sequence.

- 7.4.4 Careful cleaning of the machined surface of Trench 7 demonstrated that almost all of the western half of it was composed of mixed material similar to the fill of pit [18] and the fills of the other cut features revealed in the sections surrounding it. The surface of the weathered chalk was not evident in this part of the Trench. It was clear from the evidence revealed in both plan and section that a complex sequence of intercutting pits occupied the western part of Trench 7 and that a far more extensive campaign of excavation would have been required in order to fully excavate these features.
- 7.4.5 A shallow pit [20] was located in the central part of the Trench. This slightly irregular sub-rectangular cut extended beyond the limit of excavation to the south, as seen it measured 1.52m by 0.54m by 0.34m deep, it was cut from a height of 59.22m OD. The eastern part of the pit was cut into weathered chalk whereas the western half had been excavated into an earlier pit fill which was well defined by the frequent chalk fragments included in it.
- 7.4.6 A large quantity of burnt flint was recovered from this small pit which might suggest that it was a prehistoric feature. However, the pottery recovered from this feature included fragments of Middle Iron Age, Roman and possibly medieval fabrics.
- 7.4.7 The most substantial feature excavated during the evaluation was a sub-circular pit or shaft [22], which was located in the eastern part of Trench 7. The feature measured c. 1.20m in diameter at the surface but was undercut on all sides and was 1.60m wide at the depth at which excavation ceased c. 1.50m below the surface. The pit was cut from 59.23m OD.
- 7.4.8 A large quantity of burnt flint was recovered from the fill of the shaft but a large quantity of early Roman pottery was also evident as was a large iron nail. The purpose of this feature was not apparent. The base of the feature was not found but the depth and shape suggested that it might have been an extraction pit but it was not clear which material might have been sought after. It is possible that beds of flint might be contained within the chalk.

- 7.4.9 Two further possible pits were evident in the eastern half of Trench 7, neither of which were excavated (Fig. 3).

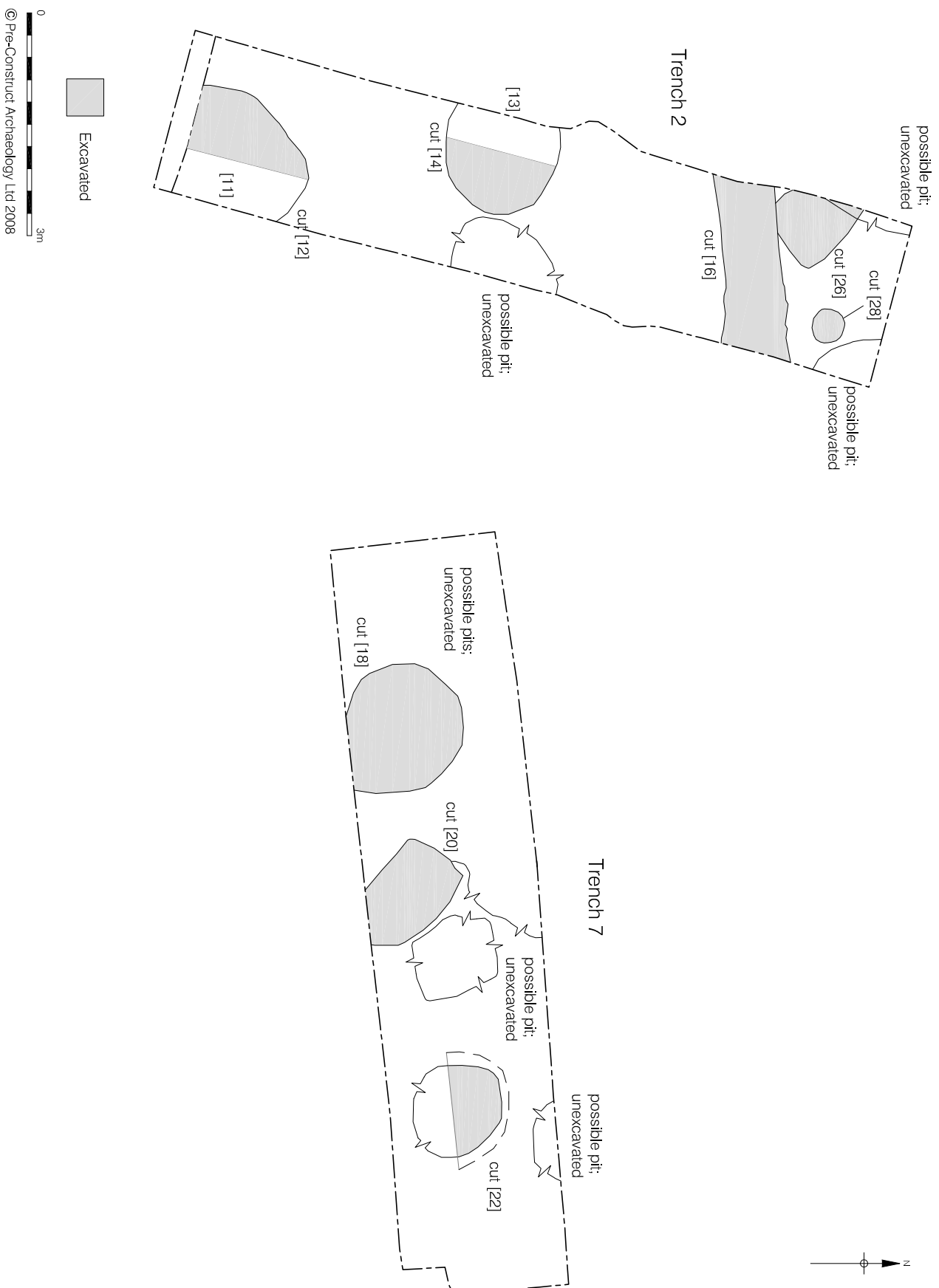
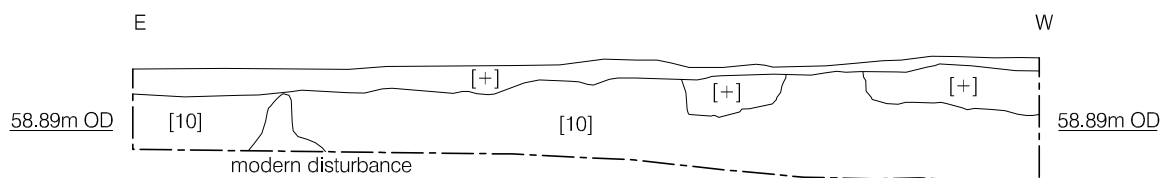
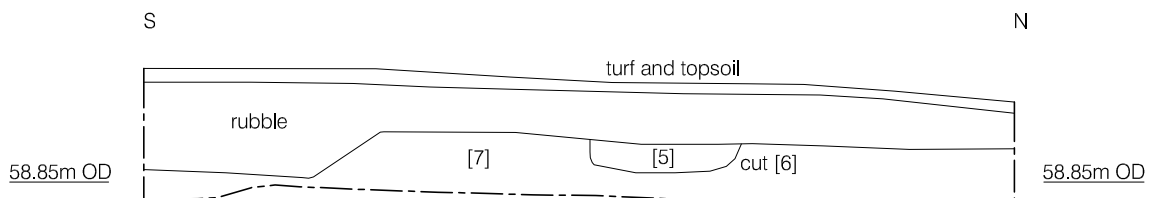
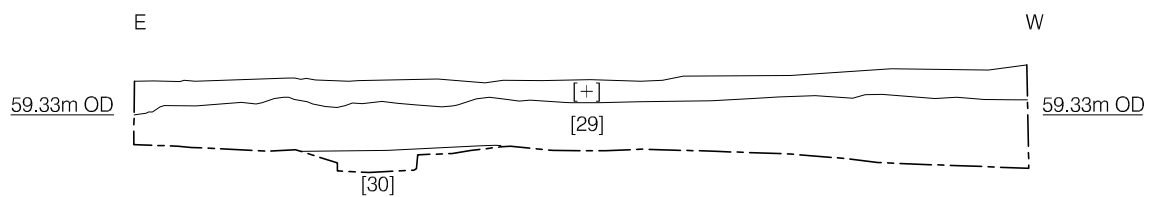


Figure 4
Plan of Trenches 2 and 7
1:75 at A4



8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The evaluation revealed that features dating to the Middle Iron Age and early Roman periods were present to the east of the standing building. These ranged from large postholes, indicating that evidence of structures may still survive on the site, to linear cuts that could define an enclosure.
- 8.2 The presence of features dating to the Middle Iron Age is surprising given that well stratified Middle Iron Age material is not common in the vicinity or the Greater London area as a whole, and the area has previously been associated with earlier Bronze Age activity. The size of some of the pottery sherds recovered indicates nearby activity and the condition of the pottery is comparable to other assemblages from settlements of this date.
- 8.3 The presence of a feature dating to the early Roman period is also unusual, although clearly the location of the site on the edge of the chalk escarpment, which was attractive to a Middle Iron Age population, may also have supported Roman occupation.
- 8.4 The complexity of the Middle Iron Age pit sequence identified in the western part of Trench 7 precluded full excavation of this area. However, the evaluation has clearly shown the archaeological potential of the site where cut features dating to the later prehistoric and Roman periods have both been identified.

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10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 10.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank CgMs Consulting who commissioned the work and in particular Lorraine Darton who acted as consultant for the client. Thanks also to Diane Walls who monitored the site for English Heritage, GLAAS.
- 10.2 The author would like to thank Tim Bradley for project managing the evaluation and editing the report and Jenny Simonson for the illustrations. Thanks go to Louise Rayner who studied the ceramics and Kevin Rielly who examined the animal bone. Thanks also to Rob Nicholson and Lisa Lonsdale who provided logistic support to the excavation and organised machine hire. The evaluation was surveyed by Nathalie Barrett and Aiden Turner who are both thanked for their help.
- 10.3 Thanks are also offered to Vincent Auletta and his team who helped gain access to the site and provided welfare facilities. Finally thanks are given to the excavation staff Imogen Smythson and Dave Hodson for their hard work.

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX

Context No.	Trench	Plan	Section / Elevation	Type	Description	Date
1	Trench 1	0	0	Fill	Fill of [2]	09/09/2008
2	Trench 1	Tr1	0	Cut	Posthole	09/09/2008
3	Trench 1	0	0	Fill	Fill of [4]	09/09/2008
4	Trench 1	Tr1	0	Cut	Posthole	09/09/2008
5	Trench 4	0	S2	Fill	Fill of [6]	09/09/2008
6	Trench 4	0	S2	Cut	Pit	09/09/2008
7	Trench 4	0	S2	Layer	Natural subsoil	09/09/2008
8	Trench 4	Tr4	S2	Layer	Natural chalk	09/09/2008
9	Trench 5	Tr5	S3	Layer	Natural chalk	11/09/2008
10	Trench 5	0	S3	Layer	Natural subsoil	11/09/2008
11	Trench 2	0	0	Fill	Fill of [12]	11/09/2008
12	Trench 2	Tr2	0	Cut	Pit	11/09/2008
13	Trench 2	0	0	Fill	Fill of [14]	11/09/2008
14	Trench 2	Tr2	0	Cut	Pit	11/09/2008
15	Trench 2	0	0	Fill	Fill of [16]	11/09/2008
16	Trench 2	Tr2	0	Cut	Ditch/gully	11/09/2008
17	Trench 7	0	0	Fill	Fill of [18]	12/09/2008
18	Trench 7	Tr7	0	Cut	Pit	12/09/2008
19	Trench 7	0	0	Fill	Fill of [20]	12/09/2008
20	Trench 7	Tr7	0	Cut	Pit	12/09/2008
21	Trench 7	0	0	Fill	Fill of [22]	14/09/2008
22	Trench 7	Tr7	0	Cut	Pit/shaft	14/09/2008
23	Trench 6	0	0	Fill	Fill of [24]	15/09/2008
24	Trench 6	Tr6	0	Cut	Natural channel	15/09/2008
25	Trench 2	0	0	Fill	Fill of [26]	15/09/2008
26	Trench 2	Tr2	0	Cut	Pit	15/09/2008
27	Trench 2	0	0	Fill	Fill of [28]	15/09/2008
28	Trench 2	Tr2	0	Cut	Posthole	15/09/2008
29	Trench 3	0	S1	Layer	Natural subsoil	09/09/2008
30	Trench 3	0	S1	Layer	Natural chalk	09/09/2008

APPENDIX 2: POTTERY ASSESSMENT BY LOUISE RAYNER

Introduction

A small but interesting assemblage of pottery was examined from the evaluation at Carshalton War Memorial Hospital. A total assemblage of 77 sherds (718g) were examined from seven individual contexts and unstratified material. The pottery proved to represent a mix of Middle Iron Age and Late Iron Age – early Roman date with a possible single medieval sherd (see Table 1 for spot-dates and comments).

Methodology

The assemblage was recorded on pro-forma sheets to standards outlined by the Museum of London. Fabric and form codes of MoL/LAARC were used for the Roman material but in the absence of a London-wide system of coding for pre-Roman, a site specific fabric type series has been outlined using guidelines as defined by the Prehistoric Research Ceramics Group (1997). This fabric type series should be considered provisional at this stage which may develop if further material is recovered during further stages of fieldwork.

All sherds were examined with a x20 binocular microscope and quantified by sherd count and weight.

Overview of Fabrics and Forms

Pre-Roman Material

Material of this date comprised the majority of the assemblage with a range of fabric types present including: shell-tempered, flint-and-sand-tempered, glauconite-rich and sandy-wares. This diverse range of fabric types has on other sites from the London area indicated a date in the range 400-200 BC and it is likely the material from this site can be broadly placed in this period. As flint-tempered fabrics are still present and grog-tempered fabrics absent from these groups, they are unlikely to date much into the 1st century BC, although stratified groups of this date are lacking from the London area.

The majority of these sherds are plain body sherds, typically with well finished burnished surfaces. Few forms can be identified although a handful of simple upright rims are present likely to derive from open jars and bowls with simple profiles. The most complete profile was recovered from [15] (fill of gully [16]) which comprised a

large rim and shoulder sherd from a jar with short upright rim and low rounded shoulder. This fits with the date range outlined above.

Roman Material

Post-conquest Romanised pottery was recovered from [21] (fill of pit/shaft [22]), [19] (fill of pit [20]) and from the unstratified material from Trench 7. In these latter two contexts, this consists only of single grey ware body sherds that cannot be closely dated. A further oxidised sandy sherd in [19] may even be of medieval date.

The most interesting group of this period is from [21] which produced the largest assemblage from the evaluation. Here two Romanised vessels, a sherd of butt beaker and carinated shoulder jar, were recovered amongst a group of coarse-tempered material of pre-Roman ceramic traditions. Shell-tempered and sandy wares persist, but in this context grog-tempered sherds are also present, as would be expected amongst a group much closer in date to the early Roman period. A flint-and-sand tempered jar with finger-tipped decoration is likely to be residual from the Middle (or even early) Iron Age; this may indicate that some of the other coarse-tempered sherds are residual from the earlier period.

The two Romanised vessels are in forms usually indicative of pre-Flavian activity and with the absence of large quantities of other Roman pottery, would suggest a date of 45/50-70/100 AD. The butt beaker is in a fabric (EROX) known in central London, where it is typically found in pre-Flavian contexts (50-70 AD).

Significance

Well stratified Middle Iron Age material is not common from the London or Greater London area and its presence here is perhaps surprising. The recovery of these assemblages from pits and a gully suggest settlement activity is likely to be located nearby. The size of some sherds indicates nearby activity and the condition of the pottery is comparable to other assemblages from settlements of this date. The presence of carbonised residues on some sherds again supports the likelihood of nearby domestic activity.

If further material of this date is recovered through further fieldwork, it is likely to form a useful addition to our understanding of ceramics traditions for this period. In particular, material with residues suitable for radiocarbon dating will form an important contribution to the growing number of dates obtained for the Greater London area.

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Context	Period	Date	Group Size	Comment
11	MIA	400-200 BC	Small	Range of fabrics suggest 400-200 period but some flint fabrics still present
13	MIA	400-200 BC	Small	
15	MIA	400-200 BC	Small	Good jar profile
17	MIA	400-200 BC	Small	
19	MIXED		Small	MIA with Roman and ?medieval
21	ROM	50-70/100	Med	with residual Iron Age; two vessels post-conquest but probably pre-Flavian
25	M/LIA	400-200BC	Small	
Tr. 7 u/s	MIXED			Mixed MIA and Roman
Tr. 1 u/s	MIA		Small	

Table 1: Spot dates by Context

APPENDIX 3: ANIMAL BONE ASSESSMENT BY KEVIN RIELLY

Introduction

A total of 44 animal bones were hand recovered from two out of the seven evaluation trenches at this site. These two provided the sole evidence for dated archaeological deposits, namely Trench 2 and 7, each with a series of cut features, mainly pits. The majority of the bones in these deposits had suffered some root damage, but the assemblage, in general, was in a very good state of preservation with minimal fragmentation.

Methodology

The bone was recorded to species/taxonomic category where possible and to size class in the case of unidentifiable bones such as ribs, fragments of longbone shaft and the majority of vertebra fragments. Recording follows the established techniques whereby details of the element, species, bone portion, state of fusion, wear of the dentition, anatomical measurements and taphonomic including natural and anthropogenic modifications to the bone were registered.

Description of faunal assemblage

All the dated Middle Iron Age bones were taken from Trench 2, specifically from pits [12] and [14]. The former feature produced a few cattle and sheep bones, probably all from adult animals apart from a cattle radius from a young calf. Pit [14] provided a special collection composed of a complete sheep skull, with both mandibles. Two horse bones, a scapula fragment and a loose upper maxillary tooth (the second premolar) and a cattle-size vertebra completed the collection from this pitfall. The skull featured two short and stubby horncores, suggesting it was a ewe. The placing of this skull at the base of the pit is strongly indicative of a deliberate act, possibly ritual in nature. Both horse bones are from medium-sized adult individuals, the tooth from an animal about 9 years old (calculated from the crown height using Levine 1982). None of these bones displayed any cut marks.

The later early Roman and mixed deposits provided a small collection of bones, mainly composed of cattle and sheep, represented by a wide array of skeletal parts. The great majority of these bones are from adult individuals with the exception of a pelvis from [19] where the acetabulum is just fused. This would suggest an age of about 9 to 12 months (after Schmid 1972, 75). The same bone also displayed a variety of cut marks, clearly made with a sharp metal instrument,

reminiscent of cuts typically found on bones of Roman and later date from London sites (PCA archive). Similar marks were also to be seen on three bones, a humerus, a vertebra and a rib, from [21]. The use of this butchery tool obviously demonstrates the likely later date assumed for these features and perhaps for trench 7 in general.

Finally, the two loose mandibular molars from [21] are clearly from a moderately sized horse. The crown heights suggest an age of about 5 years i.e. a young adult.

Conclusion and recommendations for further work

The Middle Iron Age collection is of importance due to the presence of the sheep skull, with its state of completeness and its position at the base of the pit strongly suggesting a ritual deposit. The presence of horse bones in the same pit may also have some significance. Given the relative absence of Middle Iron Age bone assemblages from the area, this assemblage is significant, with nearby sites representing similar activity generally being Late Bronze Age in date. For example, the site of Westcroft House recorded a number of intercutting Late Bronze Age pits, including two, or possibly three, with placed deposits. One contained a complete horse skull, another two red deer skulls and the third, a highly fragmented collection of sheep bones, which have been interpreted as the remains of a 3 to 10 month old lamb (Proctor 1999, 56-59; Bendrey 1997).

The Roman assemblage, while not of great value in itself, could be indicative of potential importance, considering the relative absence of Roman bone assemblages within this general area.

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APPENDIX 4: BURNT FLINT SUMMARY

ASW08 Burnt Flint Summary

Context	Number of pieces	Weight (kg)
(11)	34	1.3
(13)	15	0.8
(15)	2	0.1
(18)	66	2.5
(19)	51	2.3
(21)	111	4.9
(25)	6	0.2

All the burnt flint has been heated to high heat hence its white appearance.

Context (25) contains 1 piece of struck flint.

APPENDIX 5: OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-48584

Project details

Project name	Ashcombe House
Short description of the project	Field evaluation consisting of seven 10 x 2m trenches which revealed a multi-period resource composed of cut features dating to the Middle Iron Age and Late Iron Age - early Roman periods.
Project dates	Start: 08-09-2008 End: 15-09-2008
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	ASW 08 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Residential 2 - Institutional and communal accommodation
Monument type	PIT Roman
Monument type	PIT Middle Iron Age
Monument type	DITCH Middle Iron Age
Monument type	POSTHOLE Uncertain
Significant Finds	POTTERY Middle Iron Age
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Methods &	'Sample Trenches'

techniques

Development type Public building (e.g. school, church, hospital, medical centre, law courts etc.)

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Position in the planning process After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country England

Site location GREATER LONDON SUTTON CARSHALTON Ashcombe House

Postcode SM5 3BY

Study area 0.45 Hectares

Site coordinates TQ 279 639 51.3592393994 -0.162805510285 51 21 33 N
000 09 46 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 58.01m Max: 59.23m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Project brief originator CgMs Consulting

Project design originator Lorraine Darton

Project director/manager Tim Bradley

Project supervisor Douglas Killock

Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
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Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	LAARC
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Physical Contents	'Animal Bones','Ceramics','Metal','Worked stone/lithics'
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Digital Contents	'Survey'
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Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
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Paper Contents	'Survey'
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Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Drawing','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section','Survey','Unpublished Text'
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Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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Title	AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT ASHCOMBE HOUSE, CARSHALTON WAR MEMORIAL HOSPITAL CARSHALTON, SM5 3BY
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Author(s)/Editor(s)	Douglas Killock
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Date	2008
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