

**Nea Farm, Somerley,  
Ringwood, Hampshire, Phase GP9**

**An Interim Report  
For Tarmac Southern Ltd**

by Andy Taylor  
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code SOM 11/72

**November 2011**

# Nea Farm, Somerley, Ringwood, Hampshire, Phase GP9. An Archaeological Excavation: Interim Report

by Andy Taylor

**Report 11/72**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the interim results of an excavation carried out at Nea Farm, Somerley, Ringwood, Hampshire, Phase GP9 (SU 1310 0870) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Andy Cadell of Tarmac Southern Limited, Stancombe Quarry, Stancombe Lane, Flax Bourton, Bristol, BS48 3QD. A planning application had been gained (06/88238) for mineral extraction from Hampshire County Council as part of an ongoing extraction programme, of which this is the final gravel extraction phase. The consent was subject to a condition (31) relating to archaeology.

## **The excavation**

The site was stripped in two phases either side of the estate trackway that bisected the area east- west. Subsequently the latter was also stripped under archaeological supervision. The northern part of the site had previously been evaluated and uncovered the remains of a Roman wall along with linear features and pits and postholes of the same date. The southern side had only been fieldwalked, but this had identified concentrations of Roman pottery.

### The northern area (Fig 2)

Within this area were isolated pits of Late Bronze Age date, however, the majority of the features were early Roman in date. These Roman features consisted of the typical large numbers of pits and postholes, dug for a variety of reasons along with gullies and ditches forming parts of fields and enclosure. At least two separate phases of the latter were identified.

Two stone built structures normally referred to as ‘corn driers’ were also identified in this area, one of which accounted for the wall identified in the evaluation. These were ‘T-shaped’ structures and were constructed from locally sourced sandstone. The northernmost (Pl. 1) was the less well preserved with the back chamber

surviving to four courses with the flue section much more truncated with only one course remaining along the majority of its length. The southern corn drier (Pl. 2) was much better preserved as it had been constructed with a deliberately dug hollow and survived, in places, up to eight courses.

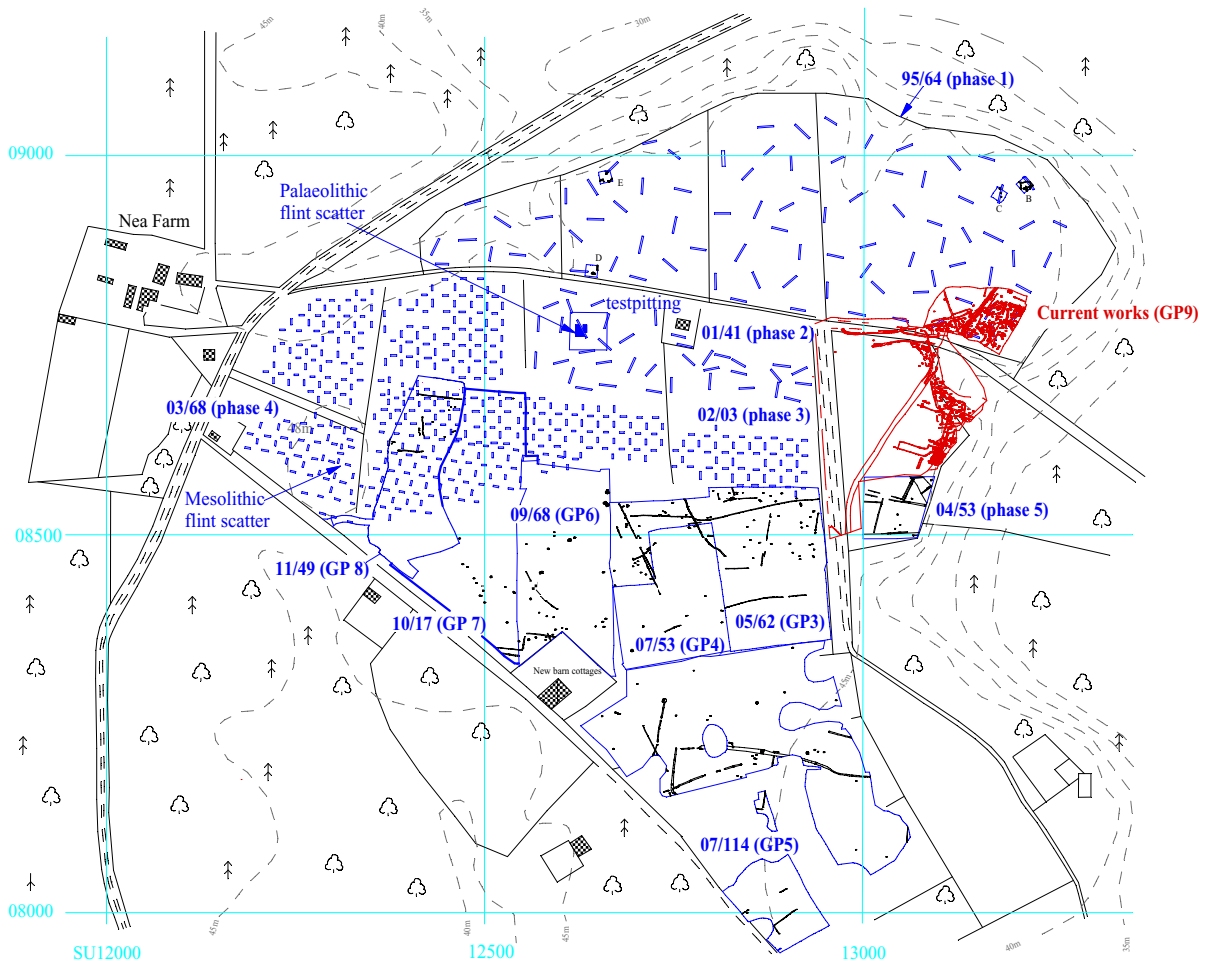
Three graves were identified in this area, aligned both north-south and east-west. No skeletal material survived within these grave cuts due to the acidic nature of the gravels, but coffin nails were evident as well as, in one case, hob nails (Pl. 3) from a pair of shoes that had concreted onto the gravel allowing the shape of the shoe to remain.

#### Southern side (Fig 2)

The north-eastern corner of this area had been previously truncated by a rubbish tip and had removed any archaeological deposits that may originally have been present there. The deposits closest to this area consisted of further pits (some substantial) and postholes of early Roman date along with linear gullies, most of which were undated. However, these linear features are most likely contemporary with the other Roman deposits in this area.

Towards the southern end of this area there was evidence for a medieval enclosure and settlement on the valley edge. The remains of what appeared to be at least five medieval timber buildings were recorded. Two of these consisted of large postholes forming rectangular structures with the other three comprising both large postholes as well as beam slots (Pl. 4).

The post-fieldwork has been commenced for the project.



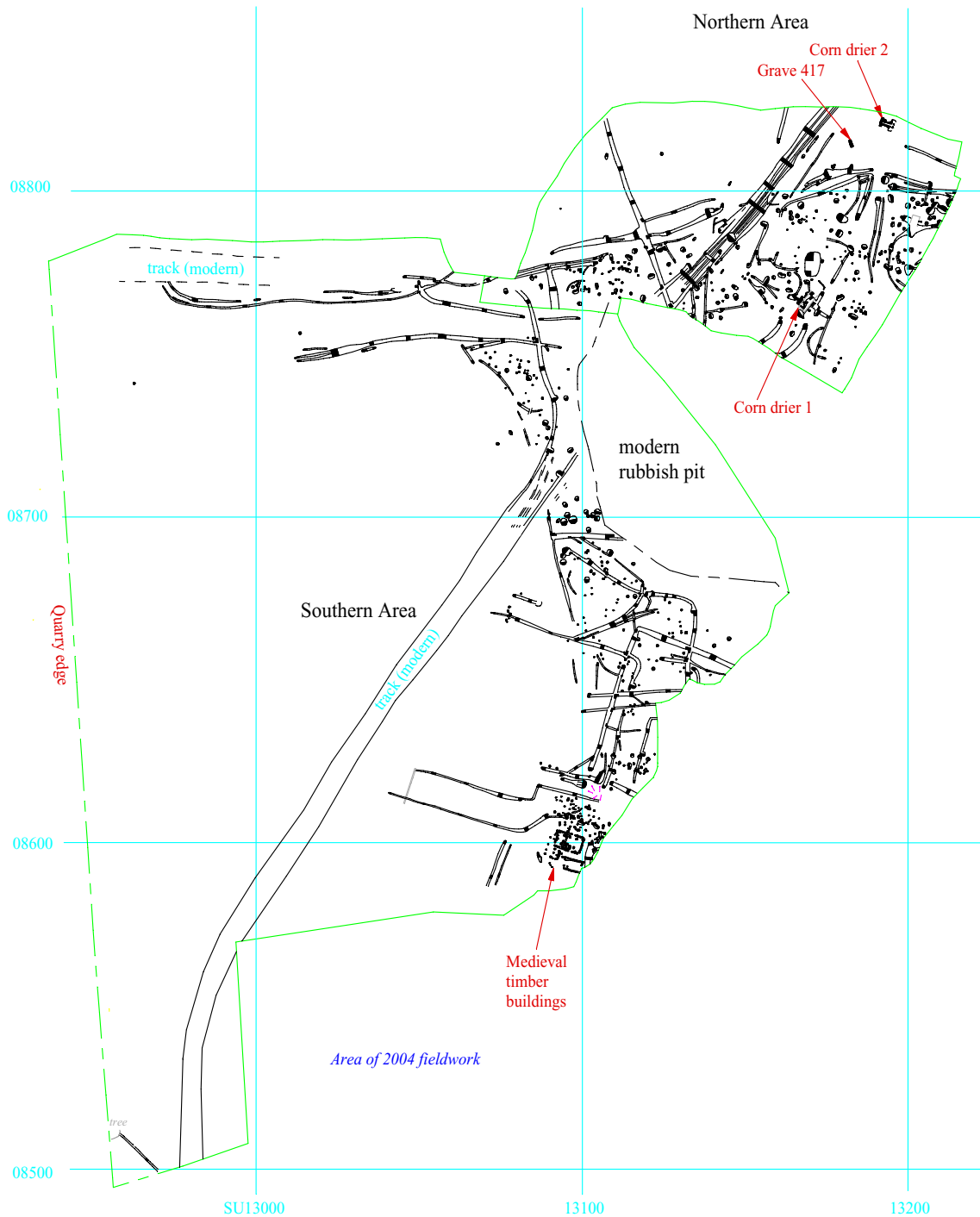
SOM 11/72

**Nea Farm, Sand Phase GP9, Somerley, Ringwood,  
Hampshire, 2011  
Archaeological Excavation- Interim Plan**

Figure 1. Detailed location of current site (red) and previous phases of excavation and evaluation work (blue) within Nea Farm.



THAMES VALLEY  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SERVICES



SOM 11/72

**Nea Farm, Sand phase GP9, Somerley, Ringwood,  
Hampshire, 2011  
Archaeological Excavation - Interim Plan**

Figure 2. Detail of area.





Plate 1. 'Corn Drier' 1, looking north west, Scales: 2m, 1m, 0.5m and 0.1m.



Plate 2. 'Corn Drier' 2, looking south south west, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.

SOM 11/72

Nea Farm, Somerley, Ringwood,  
Hampshire, Phase GP9, 2011  
Archaeological Excavation  
Plates 1 and 2.

THAMES VALLEY  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SERVICES



Plate 3. Shoe, in grave, Scales: 0.5m and 0.1m.



Plate 4. Working photograph during excavation of Medieval timber building, looking south.

SOM 11/72

Nea Farm, Somerley, Ringwood,  
Hampshire, Phase GP9, 2011  
Archaeological Excavation  
Plates 3 and 4.

THAMES VALLEY  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SERVICES