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92a Broad Street • Canterbury • Kent • CT1 2LU

Tel 01227-462062 Fax 01227-784724 Email 100127.1054@compuserve.com

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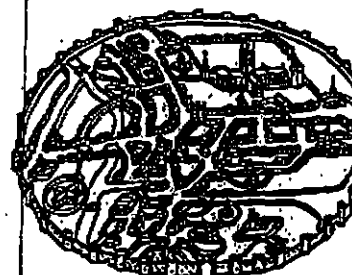
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**Honeywood Road,
Whitfield (Kent):
Archaeological Evaluation**

CAT Site Code: HRW 98
CAT Site No: ###

Draught, print date 6 July 1998

Simon Pratt
Canterbury Archaeological Trust
July 1998

Contents

1 General

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Conventions
- 1.3 Subsoil & modern deposits
- 1.4 Trenching & sampling strategy

2 Stratigraphy

- 2.1 Trench descriptions & tabulation
- 2.2 Context descriptions
- 2.3 Tabulation of depths

3 Finds

- 3.1 Pottery
- 3.2 Flints

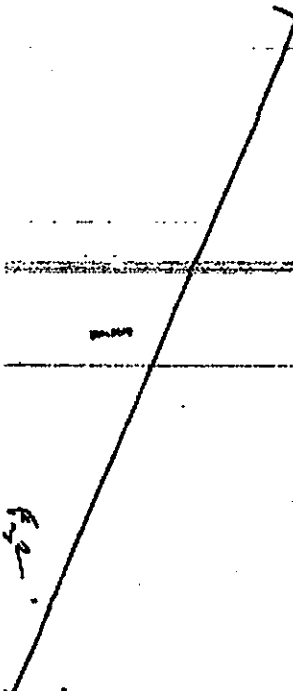
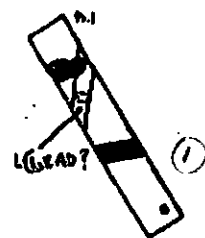
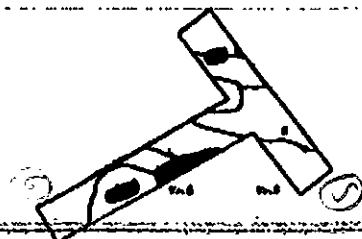
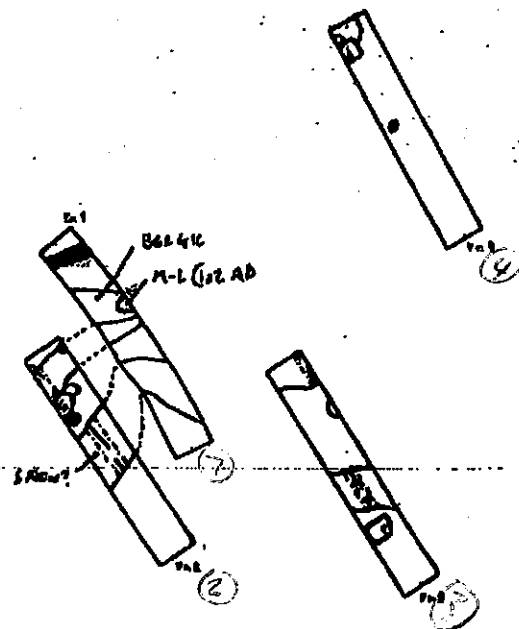
4 Conclusions

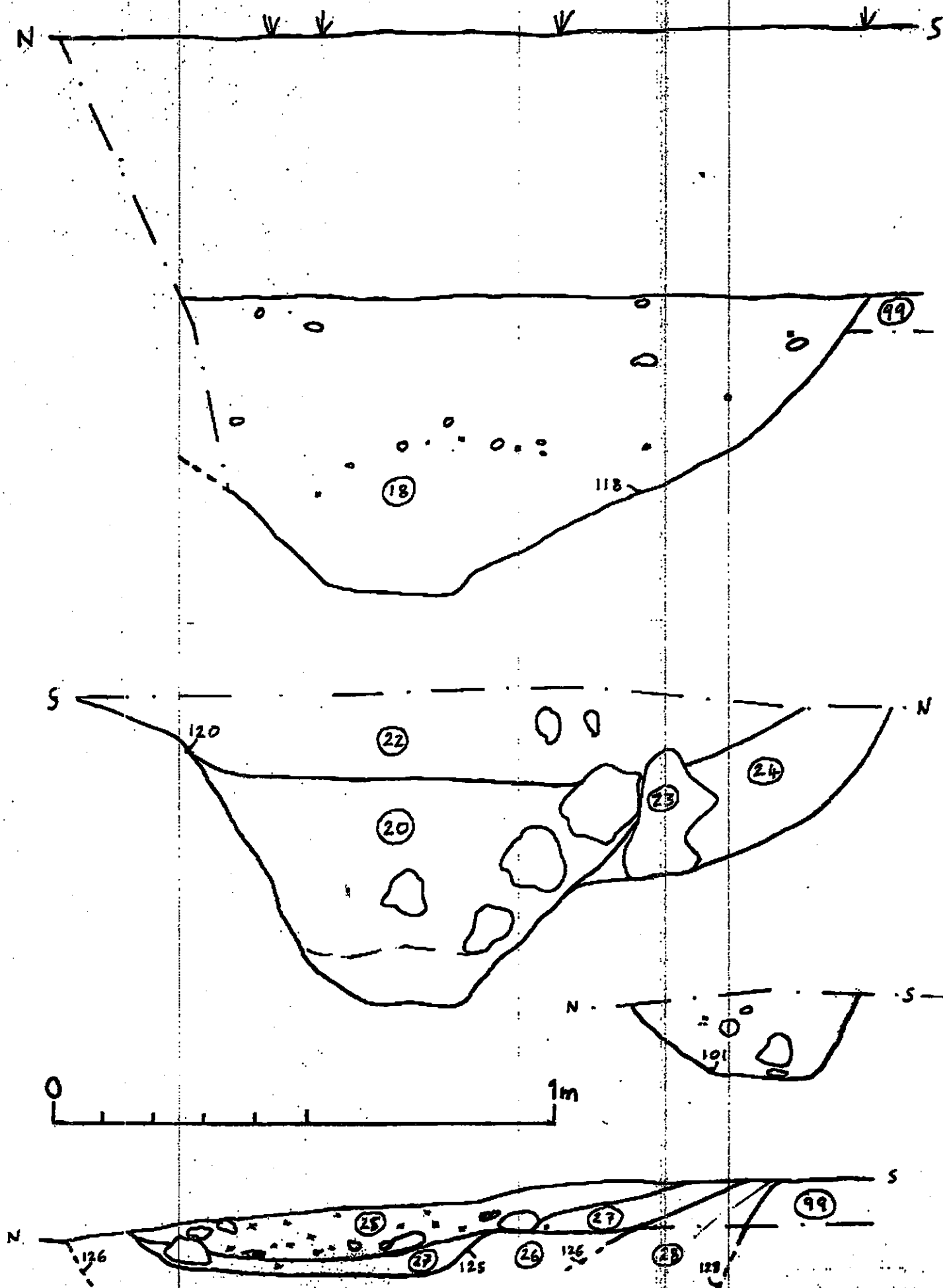
- 4.1 Nature of the site
- 4.2 Levels
- 4.3 Methodological assessment
- 4.4 Confidence rating
- 4.5 Summary

Figures

- 1 Trench location plan (1:500)
- 2 Site plan (1:100)
- 3 Trench plans (1:20)
- 4 Sections (1:10)

MODERN FEATURES BLACKED IN





1 General

1.1 Introduction

In June-July 1998, the Canterbury Archaeological Trust cut and recorded seven evaluation trenches on a proposed development site off Honeywood Road, Whitfield, on council-owned property (TR 304 444). The work was undertaken behalf of and funded by the potential purchasers, Dover Ship Stores Ltd.

1.2 Conventions

Context numbers are in bold type. A conventional north is used throughout. The following abbreviations are used in soil descriptions:

R = Rare	S = Small (<10 mm in each dimension)
C = Common	M = Medium
A = Abundant	L = Large (>100 mm in any dimension)

1.3 Subsoil & modern deposits

In each trench a natural subsoil of compact clay-with-flints (99), consistent with British Geological Survey Map Sheet 290, underlay a layer of brown loamy clay ploughsoil, probably post-medieval in date (98). This was sealed in turn by a similar layer, often mottled with clay, which was probably a ploughsoil disturbed by modern construction work (97). In the westernmost cases modern construction dumps (95), including a hard-standing (96), overlay the upper ploughsoil and a layer of topsoil (94) completed the sequence in each trench. Modern earthmoving accounted for all the superficial irregularities to be seen on the site. Several modern trenches, postholes and pits cut at least the lower ploughsoil and sometimes contained copper earthing rods or wires. These would appear to be relicts of the site's reported previous usage as a "telegraph pole practice area": an unusual class of industrial archaeology yet to appear in the National Monument Records.

1.4 Trenching & sampling strategy

Originally, five 10 m trenches were intended, all aligned north-south and in a staggered pattern with each lying along the centre-line of one of the five bays in the proposed building. In order to clarify the layout of ditches exposed in these trenches, an additional cross-trench (Tr.6) was cut from Tr.5 and another north-south trench (Tr.7) cut between Tr.2 and Tr.3. Almost all of the apparently ancient features exposed in Tr.1 to Tr.4 were sampled but, in order to concentrate resources on exposing and planning the ditches and in view of the low frequency of pottery found in the sampled features, only one in the remainder. The sectioning of this last feature, hearth 125 in Tr.7, was particularly useful as it contained a significant quantity of datable pottery and provided a clear *terminus ante quem* for three other features (pit/posthole 110 and ditches 103=128 and 126=?=118).

2 Stratigraphy

2.1 Trench descriptions & tabulation

#[struck & burnt flint inclusions to be added, most pottery not yet examined in detail]#

2.1.1 Trench 1

A narrow ditch or beam-slot (101) crossed the trench from NE to SW. It yielded two joining sherds of sandy pottery probably dating to the mid to late first century AD and one of Upchurch ware datable to the late first to third centuries AD. South of 101 lay a posthole (114) and north of it was another feature, probably a small pit or posthole (113).

A modern service(?) trench terminal (unnumbered) cut the ditch and northern feature, another modern service(?) trench (unnumbered) crossed the evaluation trench between 101 and 114.

Date	Feature	Cut	Fill(s)	Finds
Modern	Service(?) trench	-	-	-
Modern	Service(?) trench	-	-	-
Roman	Ditch	101	1	1 sherd late C1-C3 AD 2 sherds late C1 AD
?	Pit/posthole	113	13	-
?	Posthole	114	14	-

2.1.2 Trench 2

A wide but apparently shallow ditch (105) crossed the trench from NE to SW and almost certainly continued into Tr.7: this contained a (fragmented) sherd of Saxon pottery, datable to c.550-700 AD, about halfway up its fill. A shallow E-W ditch (103) to the north had cut a small oval pit or posthole (110) and also continued into Tr.7. A smaller posthole (107) lay just north of 103 and another (104) at the bottom of its SE side. It was not clear whether 103 and 104 were contemporary or whether one cut the other. A shallow feature (106) cut the fills of 110 and 103 and must also have post-dated 104. 106 was probably a post-pit as a posthole (108) was found in its base.

A modern posthole (109) cut the fill of 103 and another (111) that of 106.

Date	Feature	Cut	Fill(s)	Finds
Modern	Posthole	109	9	-
Modern	Posthole	111	11	-
Saxon?	Ditch	105	5	1 sherd mid C6-C7 AD
?	Ditch	103	3	-
?	Post-pit?	106	6	-
?	Pit/posthole	110	10	-
?	Posthole	104	4	-
?	Posthole	107	7	-
?	Posthole	108	8	-

2.1.3 Trench 3

Two deep, parallel ditches, probably continuations of features in Tr.5. (6 & 7. crossed the trench from NW to SE. The northern (118) had a simple, undifferentiated fill (18) but in the southern (120), a relatively clean clay fill (24) down the NE side was covered by a layer (23) of unusually large flint nodules, perhaps a deliberate revetting or loose glacia but more probably a dumped deposit. The main fill (20), which abutted the flints, was overlain by a darker lens (22). An oval(?) pit(?) (119) lay between the ditches and a shallow subrectangular pit (121) to their south.

No modern features were noted in this trench.

Date	Feature	Cut	Fill(s)	Finds
?	Ditch	120	22	-
			20	-
			23	-
			24	-
?	Ditch	118	18	-
?	Pit	121	21	-
?	Pit?	119	19	-

2.1.4 Trench 4

A shallow oval(?) pit (115) was found at the NW corner of the trench, where it was partially truncated by a still shallower subrectangular pit(?) (116).

A modern posthole (117) lay to the south of 116.

Date	Feature	Cut	Fill(s)	Finds
Modern	Posthole	117	17	-
?	Pit?	115	15	-
?	Pit?	116	16	-

2.1.5 Trenches 5 & 6

A NW-SE ditch (130) crossed the eastern end of Tr.6 and the southern end of Tr.5. this was probably a continuation of 120 (Tr.3). A parallel ditch (133) lay to its north, the fill of which was cut by an oval pit or the terminal of another NW-SE ditch (132). One of these two features was probably a continuation of 118 (Tr.4). A large, oval(?) pit(?) (131) extended under the southern edge of Tr.6. Three small, irregularly spaced postholes (134, 135 & 136) lay in a roughly north-south line along Tr.5. These probably marked a fence-line: the most southerly cut the fill of ditch 130 and the carbonized remains of the foot of the post still remained in the central one (135).

A large modern pit cut the fills of 130 and 131, and that of 131 was also cut by a large modern (double?) posthole. The fill of 133 was cut by a further modern posthole. No numbers were assigned to any of these late features.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Feature</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill(s)</i>	<i>Finds</i>
Modern	Pit	-	-	-
Modern	Posthole	-	-	-
Modern	Posthole	-	-	-
?	Posthole	134	34	-
?	Posthole	135	35	-
?	Posthole	136	36	-
?	Pit?	131	31	-
?	Pit/ditch terminal	132	32	-
?	Ditch	130	30	-
?	Ditch	133	33	-

2.1.6 Trench 7

A ditch (129) crossed the trench from SE to NW: it may have been a continuation of 120 (Tr.3) and there was a suggestion of the beginnings of a curve as it entered the western side of the trench, so that it probably linked up with 105 (Tr.2). North of this an E-W ditch (128) crossed the trench, apparently a continuation of 103 (Tr.2) and was cut away on its northern side by another NW-SE ditch (126), containing a sherd of 'Belgic' pottery and perhaps a continuation of 118 (Tr.3). A small, shallow, probably circular feature (125) was cut into the fill of 126. The primary fill or base (27) of the included several burnt flints in its surface, yielded a sherd of 'Belgic' pottery and was overlain by a main fill (25) containing much charcoal and burnt daub flecking, about a score of 'Belgic' pottery sherds (most from a single vessel, largely broken *in situ* and datable to the mid-late first century AD) and a few fragments of iron(?) slag and semi-vitrified daub or pottery. The feature was probably a hearth though it is not yet clear whether it was used for cooking or metal working: a soil sample was recovered for metallurgical analysis but has not yet been processed.

A modern service(?) trench (unnumbered) crossed the northern end of the evaluation trench.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Feature</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill(s)</i>	<i> Finds</i>
Early Roman	Hearth?	125	25	c.20 sherds mid-late C1 AD
			27	1 sherd 'Belgic'
'Belgic'?	Ditch	126	26	1 sherd 'Belgic'
'Belgic'	Ditch	128	28	-
?	Ditch	129	29	-

2.2 Context descriptions

Depths of cuts are in millimetres below the surface of 99. All recorded features cut 99. modern features also cut 98 (their relationship with 97 was seldom clear and not recorded), all other features exposed in the surface of 99 were sealed by 98.
#[struck & burnt flint inclusions generally to be added]#

- 1 Fill of 101. Compact reddish brown loamy clay, RSM flint, RS charcoal, RM pottery. Cut by modern (unnumbered) service(?) trench.
- 2 = 97, q.v.
- 3 Fill of 103. Compact brownish grey loamy clay mottled with greyish yellow loamy clay, RSM flint, RM burnt flint, RS charcoal. Cut by 106 & 109, relationship with 4 & 104 uncertain, =28.
- 4 Fill of 104. Compact brownish grey loamy clay mottled with greyish yellow loamy clay, RSM flint, RS charcoal. Cut by 106, relationship with 3 & 103 uncertain.
- 5 Fill of 105. Compact yellowish grey loamy clay, RSML flint, CS charcoal, CS burnt daub RM pottery. Charcoal and daub concentrated in upper half of deposit. Unexcavated AM flints exposed below 5 may be within 105 or a natural band in 99. = 20?, = 29?
- 6 Fill of 106. Fairly compact grey clay loam merging into compact brownish grey loamy clay to west. RSM flint, RS charcoal. Relationship with 8 & 108 uncertain.
- 7 Fill of 107. Compact yellow grey loamy clay, RSM flint, RS charcoal.
- 8 Fill of 108. Fairly compact grey clay loam, RSM flint, RS charcoal. Relationship with 6 & 106 uncertain.
- 9 Modern, unexcavated fill of 109. Fairly loose grey silty loam, RM brick.
- 10 Unexcavated fill of 110. Compact reddish brown loamy clay, CM flint. Cut by 103 & 106.
- 11 Modern fill of 111. Very loose grey loamy sharp sand, RSM flint, CS charcoal, RSMAL brick, RSM mortar.
- 12 Not used.
- 13 Fill of 113. Compact reddish brown loamy clay, RSM flint, RS charcoal. Cut by modern (unnumbered) service(?) trench.
- 14 Fill of 114. Compact reddish brown loamy clay, RSM flint, RS charcoal.
- 15 Fill of 115. Compact yellow brown loamy clay, RSM flint, RS charcoal. Cut by 116.
- 16 Fill of 116. Compact grey clay loam mottled with orange brown loamy clay, RSM flint, RS charcoal.
- 17 Modern, unexcavated fill of 117. Fairly loose grey sandy loam, CM flint, RS charcoal, copper earthing rod.
- 18 Fill of 118. Compact orange brown loamy clay, RSM flint, RS charcoal. , = 28?, = 32 or 33?
- 19 Unexcavated fill of 119. Fairly compact yellowish grey loamy clay, RSML flint, RS charcoal.
- 20 Main fill of 120. Compact orangey brown loamy clay becoming yellower with depth, RSML flint, RS charcoal. Charcoal #[or iron or manganese?, sample to be checked]# becoming commoner with depth. Under 22, over/abuts 23, = 5?.
- 21 Fill of 121. Compact
- 22 Uppermost fill of 120, lens 50-150 mm deep. Compact grey brown loamy clay, RSM flint, RS charcoal. Over 20.

- 23 Tip-line/revetment of large flints down NE side of 120. Compact grey brown loamy clay, RMAL flint, RS charcoal. Under/abuted by 20, over/abuts 24, fills 120.
- 24 Fill/packing between 23 and NE side of 120. Compact brownish grey loamy clay. RSM flint, RS charcoal. Under/abuted by 23, fills 120.
- 25 Uppermost fill of 125, 100 mm deep. Compact grey clayey loam, RSM flint, RSM burnt flint, CSRM charcoal, CSRM daub, CSM pottery. Over 27.
- 26 Unexcavated fill of 126. Compact reddish brown loamy clay, RSM flint, RS charcoal, RM pottery. Cut by 125, under 27, = 18?
- 27 Lower fill/base of 125. Compact brownish grey loamy clay, RSM flint, RSCM burnt flint, RS charcoal, RM pottery. Under 25, over 26.
- 28 Unexcavated fill of 128. Compact greyish yellow loamy clay mottled with brownish grey loamy clay, RSM flint, RS charcoal. Cut by 126, = 3.
- 29 Unexcavated fill of 129. Compact reddish brown loamy clay, RSM flint, RS charcoal. = 5?, = 20?, = 30?
- 30 Unexcavated fill of 130. Compact reddish brown loamy clay, RSM flint, RS charcoal. = 5?, = 20?, = 29?. cut by 136 and by unnumbered modern pit.
- 31 Unexcavated fill of 131. Compact brown loamy clay, RSM flint, RS charcoal. Cut by unnumbered modern features.
- 32 Unexcavated fill of 132. Compact brown loamy clay, RSM flint, RS charcoal. = 18?
- 33 Unexcavated fill of 133. Compact mottled orange, yellow and grey clays, RSM flint, RSM charcoal. = 18?, cut by 132 and by unnumbered modern posthole.
- 34 Unexcavated fill of 134. Compact grey loamy clay.
- 35 Unexcavated fill of 135. Charcoal, presumably a wooden post carbonized *in situ*.
- 36 Unexcavated fill of 136. Compact brown loamy clay.
- 37-93 Not used.
- 94 Modern topsoil in all trenches. Fairly loose grey clayey loam, RSM flint *etc*, very heavy rooting. Over 95 & 97.
- 95 Modern construction dumping in Tr.1-2. Heavily mixed deposits. Under 94, over 96 & 97.
- 96 Modern hard-standing in Tr.2. Compact brick hardcore and gravel. Under 95, over 97.
- 97 Upper ploughsoil in all trenches, disturbed by modern construction work. Compact grey brown clayey loam, RSM flint, RS charcoal. Under 95 & 96, over 98.
- 98 Lower ploughsoil in all trenches. Compact orange brown loamy clay, RSM flint, RS charcoal. Under 97, over 99.
- 99 Natural subsoil in all trenches. Compact yellow brown loamy clay, RSM flint. Under 98.
- 100 Not used.

- 101 NE-SW ditch in Tr.1. Flat bottom, sloping NW side, Steep SE side. Filled by 1. 190 mm deep.
- 102 Not used.
- 103 E-W ditch in Tr.2. Flat bottom, sloping S side, shallow sloping N side. Filled by 3, cuts 10 relationship with 4 unclear. = 128?. 360 mm deep.
- 104 Subrectangular posthole in base/side of 103 in Tr.2. Flat bottom, vertical sides. Filled by 4, relationship with 3 unclear. 360 mm deep.
- 105 NE-SW ditch in Tr.2. Flat bottom, sloping S side, shallow sloping N side. Filled by 5, = 120?. 300 mm deep (but see 5).
- 106 Roughly circular(?) post-pit(?) in Tr.2. Irregular but roughly flat bottom, shallow N side. Filled by 6, cuts 3, 4 & 10, relationship with 8 unclear. 120 mm deep.
- 107 Oval posthole in Tr.2. Flat bottom, vertical sides. Filled by 7. 210 mm deep..
- 108 Oval posthole in base of 106 in Tr.2. Slightly concave bottom, vertical S side, steep N & W sides. Filled by 8, relationship with 6 unclear. 200 mm deep.
- 109 Unexcavated modern oval posthole in Tr.2. Filled by 9, cuts 3.
- 110 Unexcavated oval (?) pit or posthole in Tr.2. Filled by 10.
- 111 Modern subrectangular posthole in Tr.2. Flat bottom, vertical sides. Filled by 11, cuts 6. 230 mm deep.
- 112 Not used.
- 113 Oval(?) pit/posthole(?) in Tr.1. Flat bottom, vertical N side, near vertical E side. Filled by 13. 150 mm deep.
- 114 Subrectangular posthole in Tr.1. Flat bottom, near vertical sides. Filled by 14. 150 mm deep.
- 115 Oval(?) pit(?) in Tr.4. Flat bottom, shallow sloping S side. Filled by 15. 170 mm deep.
- 116 Subrectangular(?) pit(?) in Tr.4. Filled by 16, cuts 15. 50 mm deep.
- 117 Modern unexcavated oval posthole in Tr.4. Filled by 17.
- 118 NW-SE ditch in Tr.3. Slightly concave bottom, sloping sides. Filled by 18, = 103?. 580 mm deep.
- 119 Unexcavated oval(?) pit(?). Filled by 19.
- 120 NW-SE ditch in Tr.3. Slightly concave bottom, sloping upper sides, steep lower sides. Filled by 20, 22, 23 & 24. = 105?. 640 mm deep.
- 121 Subrectangular pit in Tr.3. Slightly concave bottom, near vertical sides. Filled by 21. 240 mm deep.
- 122-124 Not used.
- 125 Oval(?) hearth in Tr.7. Flat bottom, steep N side, sloping W side, shallow sloping S side. Filled by 25 & 27. 100-150 mm deep.
- 126 Unexcavated NW-SE ditch in Tr.7. = 118?.
- 127 Not used.
- 128 Unexcavated E-W ditch in Tr.7. = 103.
- 129 Unexcavated NW-SE ditch in Tr.7. = 105?, = 120?
- 130 Unexcavated NW-SE ditch in Tr.5 & 6. Filled by 30, = 105?, = 120?, = 129?
- 131 Unexcavated oval(?) pit(?) in Tr.6. Filled by 3.
- 132 Unexcavated oval(?) pit or NW-SE ditch terminal in Tr.5 & 6. Filled by 32, cuts 33, = 118?
- 133 Unexcavated NW-SE ditch in Tr.5. Filled by 33, = 118?
- 134 Unexcavated oval(?) posthole in Tr.5. Filled by 34. Compact grey loamy clay.
- 135 Unexcavated circular posthole. Filled by 35.
- 136 Unexcavated circular posthole. Filled by 36, cuts 30.

2.3 Tabulation of depths

The following depths are in millimetres from current ground surface.

Top of context:	--Tr. 1--		--Tr. 2--		--Tr. 3--		--Tr. 4--		--Tr. 5--		--Tr. 6--		--Tr. 7--	
	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S	E	W	N	S
94 Topsoil	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
95 Dumping	80	60	100	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150
96 Hard-standing	-	-	260	400	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	540
97 Upr ploughsoil	450	500	530	640	250	250	110	120	200	150	200	160	180	680
98 Lvr ploughsoil	670	700	680	800	450	420	290	350	480	300	430	370	590	840
99 Natural subsoil	850	860	940	1150	650	600	390	480	630	450	570	550	590	1140

The figures tabulated below indicate the levels at which natural subsoil was found and archaeological features exposed: they are in millimetres and have been calculated from a temporary benchmark, sprayed red, on the top of a low wall surrounding the foot of a telecommunications mast a little to the northwest of the site.

Top of subsoil:	--Tr. 1--		--Tr. 2--		--Tr. 3--		--Tr. 4--		--Tr. 5--		--Tr. 6--		--Tr. 7--	
	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S	E	W	N	S
mm below TBM	1500	1530	1495	1615	1545	1405	1510	1625	1560	1300	1425	1490	1575	1605

3 Finds

3.1 Pottery

Over 20 sherds of pottery have been recovered from the site, one (fragmented) from the southern ditch in Tr.2 (fill 1), three (two of which join) from the ditch in Tr.1 (fill 5), one from the northern ditch in Tr.7 (fill 26), one from the base of the hearth in the same trench (fill 27) and the remainder, mostly from a single vessel, from the hearth's upper fill (25). The bulk of the material suggests an early Roman date although there is one sherd datable to the early to mid Saxon period.

#[to be expanded]#

3.2 Flints

Although many broken flint nodules are present, very few are clearly struck. #[to be expanded]#

¹ Peters out about 2 m from northern end of trench.

4 Conclusions

4.1 Nature of the site

Despite some modern disturbance, the development site appears to be underlain by a well preserved mixture of pits, ditches and postholes. Datable material is scarce but such as there is suggests a date no earlier than the late first century AD for the ditch in Tr.1 whilst the hearth in Tr.7 can be dated to the mid to late first century AD: at least two ditches and, probably, a posthole pre-date the hearth but it is not clear whether these are early or late prehistoric. The early to mid Saxon sherd from the more southerly ditch in Tr.2 could have been deposited during the silting up of a Roman or earlier feature. Despite the paucity of domestic refuse, the density of features and the presence of the hearth suggests that this is probably a settlement site, though perhaps only towards the edge of one. The large proportion of broken (rather than struck) flint nodules and the deposit of large nodules in ditch 120 might be indicative of mining or quarrying activities nearby.

4.2 Levels

The archaeological features appear in the surface of the natural clay-with-flints around 400-600 mm below the ground level (around 1.4-1.6 m below TBM) as it existed prior to the recent construction dumping over the western part of the site.

4.3 Methodological assessment

The trenching plan adopted appears to give a good coverage of the footprint of the proposed building, although no areas outside of it were investigated. Most of the trenches lay parallel to each other but this is unlikely to pose a problem given the frequency of trenches and the fact that ancient linear features tended to lie at around 45° to them. Machining left features showing reasonably clearly although trowelling was required to define the edges. A heavier sampling strategy of features exposed during the evaluation would probably not significantly improve the dating of the site although it would be useful to date more of the ditches.

4.4 Confidence rating

The scarcity of pottery means that phases earlier than Roman and 'Belgic' might also be represented (except in completely rural sites, later features almost always tend to yield more pottery etc.). All the identified modern features were very clear and it is unlikely that many if any of the undated features were modern.

4.5 Summary

Seven evaluation trenches were cut in June-July 1998 on a proposed development site (TR 304 444) off Honeywood Road, Whitfield. Several ditches, pits and postholes were exposed. One ditch yielded a three sherds of Romano-British pottery, several others came from a hearth, a 'Belgic' sherd from a ditch pre-dating the hearth and a sherd datable to c.550-700 AD from another ditch. No other pottery nor other domestic refuse (save a few fragments of burnt flint) was found. An undated ditch contained a deposit of large flint nodules spilling down or reverting one side. Many broken flint nodules were encountered in the various features but few intentionally struck flints were found.