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Southampton Archaeology Unit

Archaeological Watching Brief at Bransbury Park,
Milton, Portsmouth.

2011/128

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2011

Report

Client: Portsmouth City Council



Table of Contents

1. Summary.....	3
2. Introduction	4
3. Aims of the investigation	4
4. Watching brief methodology.....	4
5. Site location and geology	4
6. Historical and archaeological background	6
7. Results of the watching brief	7
7.1. Introduction	7
7.2. Natural	7
7.3. The creek silting.....	8
7.4. Edwardian Landfill.....	9
7.5. Modern layers	12
8. Conclusions	12
Bibliography	13
Appendix 1. Context list	14
Appendix 2. Finds List.....	15

Table of figures

Fig 1: Site location and location of trenches.	5
Fig 2: Site location on Edward’s map 1716, site in red.	6
Fig 3: View of the site and trenches.	7
Fig 4: East facing section trench 1 showing a typical section.	8
Fig 5: Some of the finds from layer 4.	9
Fig 6: Some of the finds from context 3.	11
Fig 7: Some of the finds from context 3.	11

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SUMMARY

Ordnance Survey grid reference	SU 667 939
Portsmouth Museum Accession number	2011/128
Planning number	09/01576/FUL

Approval was granted for the construction of single storey building adjacent to an existing community centre to form changing rooms, toilets and consulting rooms north of Eastney Community Centre, Bransbury Park, Bransbury Road, Milton, Portsmouth. A requirement of the approval was that an archaeological watching brief took place on the groundworks. The Archaeology Unit of Southampton City Council carried out the archaeological watching brief on behalf of Portsmouth City Council. The area is shown as low lying land on 18th and 19th century maps, and further to the east was a creek leading to Langstone Harbour. Natural clay was observed some 1.8m below the surface. Above the natural was a very dark grey sandy clay loam layer, possibly the result of natural silting. Fragments of 19th – 20th china, glass, and clay pipe were observed in this layer. Above this was some 500mm of soil that contained large amounts of late 19th-early 20th century domestic rubbish with glass and stoneware bottles, china, and bricks and tiles. Above the rubbish layer were subsoil and topsoil layers, presumably imported when the park was created.

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By JI Russel MIfA & EL McDonald BA MA

Archaeology Unit report	1060
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1. Summary

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2. Introduction

Planning approval 09/01576/FUL, with a condition for an archaeological watching brief, was granted for the construction of single storey building adjacent to an existing community centre to form changing rooms, toilets and consulting rooms north of Eastney Community Centre, Bransbury Park, Bransbury Road, Milton, Portsmouth, PO4 9SU (fig 1). The Archaeology Unit of Southampton City Council carried out the archaeological watching brief on behalf of Portsmouth City Council. The observations were made by EL McDonald BA MA between the 4/10/11 and the 6/10/11. The project was managed by JI Russel MIfA, the finds were identified by Dr A Russel MIfA.

3. Aims of the investigation

The aims of the investigation as defined in the written scheme of investigation were *'to determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within the area of groundworks. Any such remains will be recorded and artefacts recovered.'* (SCCAU 2011).

4. Watching brief methodology

The watching brief was kept on groundworks, including level reductions, foundation trenches and service trenches. All archaeological records were made using the Southampton City Council archaeological recording system. The colours of deposits were recorded using the Munsell Soil Color Chart and these are used in this report (Munsell Color 2000).

5. Site location and geology

The site is in the Milton area of Portsmouth on the east side of Estuary Road between Glasgow Road and Bransbury Road, at OS grid reference SU 667 939, just north of the Eastney Community Centre within Bransbury Park. The natural beneath the site is recorded as Valley Brickearth above Plateau

Gravel (GSGB 1976), overlying deposits of Whitecliff Sand and Portsmouth Sand above the London Clay.

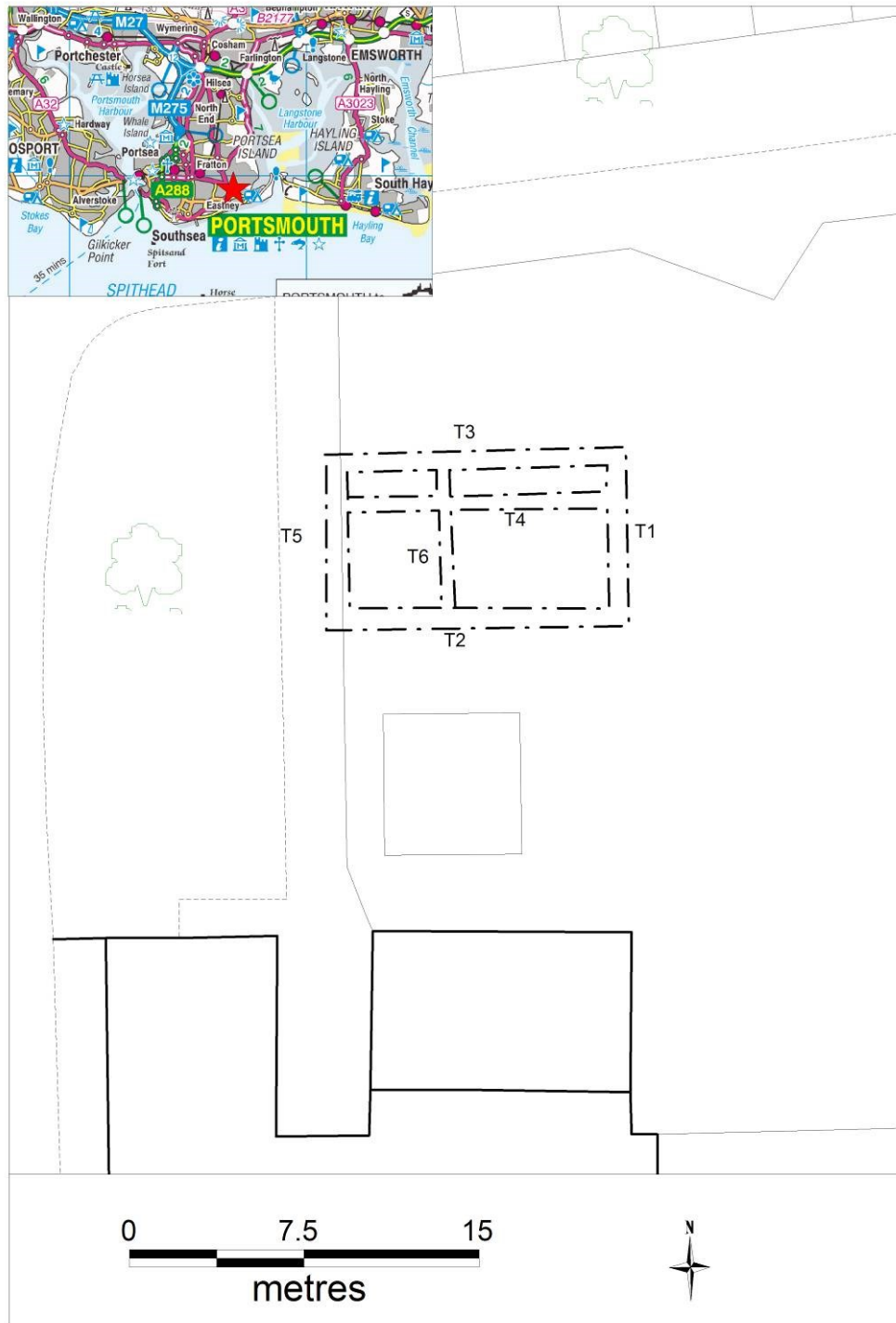


Fig 1: Site location and location of trenches.

6. Historical and archaeological background

The manor of Milton dates back to at least the 12th century when it was granted to Mathew, son of Herbert by King John. The area was rural and included rents from fowling, fishing and woodland (Page 1973). The area was progressively developed for housing during the late 19th century. The site lies within an area that has remained open ground since the early 18th century and was considered to have the potential to preserve evidence for early human occupation of the area. The Edward's map of 1716 shows a creek to the east leading to Langstone Harbour (fig 2).



Fig 2: Site location on Edward's map 1716, site in red.

7. Results of the watching brief

7.1. Introduction

A total of five trenches were dug for the construction of a single storey building adjacent to the existing community centre to form changing rooms, toilets and consulting rooms. All trenches were 2.1m deep and 0.7m wide (fig 1 and 3).



Fig 3: View of the site and trenches.

7.2. Natural

Natural clay 5 was situated 1.8m below the surface in the east of the site and 1.7m below the surface in the west of the site (fig 4). It was dark bluish grey (GLE Y24/15B) in colour and was at least 300mm thick.



Fig 4: East facing section trench 1 showing a typical section.

7.3. The creek silting

Above the natural was a very dark grey (10YR3/1) sandy clay loam, context 4 (fig 4). It was 500mm thick and contained fragments of twigs and other vegetation, and may have been a result of the silting up of the creek. Fragments of glass, china and clay pipe were observed near the top of this layer (fig 5), although they probably intruded from the layer above. They included one complete pickle jar with rubber seal bearing the words "Haywards Military Pickle". The Hayward Brothers started to make "Military" pickle in 1914 (http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Hayward_Brothers). Half a plate was recovered with the mark WH Grindley, Melbourne on the back and may date from 1896 (<http://www.rafa.com/melbourne.htm>).



Fig 5: Some of the finds from layer 4.

7.4. Edwardian Landfill

Above context 4 was a layer of mixed sandy clay loam, yellowish brown in colour (10YR5/6) and some 500mm thick, context 3. It was situated some 800mm below the surface (fig 4). It contained many fragments of late 19th – early 20th century glass bottles, stoneware bottles, china, bricks and tiles and was probably a Portsmouth corporation rubbish tip. Distinct bedding planes could be observed throughout this layer probably representing individual cartloads of refuse.

Some finds were retained from this layer (figs 6 and 7), they included:

- A near complete bottle bearing the legend "Pikespicer & Co, Brewers, Portsmouth" on it. Mr Pike and Samuel Spicer founded a brewery under the name of Pike & Spicer. In 1840 the company changed its name to "Pike, Spicer & Co" and the company merged with Brickwoods brewery in 1910 (Backhouse 2008).
- A nearly complete bottle with the words "Brickwood & Co Limited, Portsmouth". The 'Guildford' Brickwood family became involved in the brewing trade in Portsmouth from the mid-nineteenth century, and

eventually became the largest brewer and pub owner in the area. The family eventually sold the business to the much larger Whitbread company in 1971 (<http://www.brickwoods.co.uk/Brewery1.html>).

- Almost complete glass bottle with the words "Mumby, makers to HM the King". Charles Mumby established a mineral water company in 1851. The business was located in Portsmouth and the company finally ceased operations in 1971. (<http://genforum.genealogy.com/mumby/messages/20.html>).
- A fragment of a stoneware bottle carried the words "The Southsea Mineral Water Company" on the side.
- Another fragment of stoneware bottle had the words "Landport Mineral Water".
- A Stoneware bottle, with the words "J. Fletcher, Southsea, Home brewed ginger beer".
- Two almost complete bottles carried the words "Baggs Bro's, Portsmouth". This company was established by James Baggs in the 1880's. (<http://www.marinecannon.com/site/books.php?bookID=15866>).
- Fragments of a blue glass soda syphon bottle were also found.
- Remains of five glass bottles were recovered from "The reliable Timothy White, Cash Chemists", together with one complete feeding bottle, with the words "The little stranger feeding bottle, Timothy White Cash Chemists, Made in France" on the side. Timothy Whites was a British chain of dispensing chemists. White himself qualified as a pharmacist in 1869. By 1890 White's was one of four British pharmacists with over ten branches. In 1935 Timothy White merged with Taylors Drug Co. Ltd (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timothy_Whites).
- A complete glass bottle with the words "Gloy, A. W. Collier, London".
- A fragment of a sandstone cylindrical whetstone and a porcelain dove were also recovered.



Fig 6: Some of the finds from context 3.



Fig 7: Some of the finds from context 3.

7.5. Modern layers

Overlying layer 3 was subsoil, context 2. It was a brown (10YR4/3) sandy loam some 500mm deep (fig 4). It was situated 200-300mm below the surface and contained fragments of plastic and concrete.

Topsoil 1 was a dark greyish brown (10YR4/2) sandy loam some 200-300mm thick (fig 4).

8. Conclusions

The dark blue clay 1.8m below the surface in the east of the site and 1.7m below the surface in the west probably represents the bed of the creek shown on early maps. Above the natural was a very dark grey sandy clay loam layer that may have been a result of natural silting. Edward's map of 1716 shows this part of Bransbury Park was fields by that date. The fragments of china, clay pipe and a complete glass pickle jar from this layer were probably intruded from the context above, which was a thick layer of domestic rubbish with large amounts of glass bottles, stoneware bottles, china, bricks and tiles. The companies represented were of the late 19th and early 20th century, suggesting the area was used for disposal of Portsmouth's rubbish in the Edwardian period. The modern subsoil and topsoil layers probably represent the deposits used to create the park.

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Appendix 1. Context list

Number/letter codes (e.g. 10YR 3/1) = Munsell soil colour codes.

sa = stone abundance – 0 = virtually stone free; 5 = gravel

Context	Type	Below / filled by	Description
1	Layer		Topsoil. Sandy loam. 10YR4/1. sa3
2	Layer	1	Subsoil. Sandy loam. 10YR4/3. sa3
3	Layer	2	Landfill. Sandy clay loam. 10YR5/6. sa3
4	Layer	3	Estuary silting. Sandy clay loam. 10YR3/1. sa3
5	Layer	4	Natural. Clay. GLEY24/15B. sa2

Appendix 2. Finds List

Finds recording form				
Context no:	Mat Type	Find Type	No of frag:	Description:
3	GLASS	BOTTLE	1	Almost complete "Mumby, makers to HM the King"
3	POT	PORCELAIN	1	Porcelain dove
3	GLASS	BOTTLE	4	4 complete bottles
3	GLASS	STOPPER	3	Complete
3	GLASS	BOTTLE	3	Perfume bottles? Inc 1 cork.
3	GLASS	BOTTLE	1	"Pikespicer & Co, Brewers, Portsmouth". Almost complete. 1840-1910
3	GLASS	BOTTLE	4	Complete
3	GLASS	BOTTLE	5	Complete. Ink bottle?
3	GLASS	BOTTLE	4	"The reliable Timothy White, Cash Chemists" 3x square and 1 round, complete
3	GLASS	BOTTLE	1	Complete
3	GLASS	BOTTLE	1	Complete. "The little stranger feeding bottle, Timothy White Cash Chemists, Made in France"
3	GLASS	BOTTLE	1	Complete. "Gloy, A. W. Collier, London"
3	PIPE CLAY	TOBACO PIPE	1	1932
3	POT	BOTTLE	1	Fragment of stoneware bottle "?? Landport mineral water"
3	POT	JAR	3	Ointment Jars. 1oz, 2oz and 4 oz
3	GLASS	BOTTLE	2	2 almost complete bottles, "Baggs Bro's, Portsmouth"
3	POT	BOTTLE	1	Stoneware bottle fragment
3	GLASS	FRAGMENT	3	Fragments of blue poison bottle
3	GLASS	FRAGMENT	2	Window glass?
3	GLASS	JAR	1	Complete, badly cracked
3	GLASS	BOTTLE	1	Almost complete. "Timothy White, Cash Chemists"
3	GLASS	BOTTLE	1	"Landport"
3	POT	BOTTLE	1	Stoneware bottle. "J. Fletcher, Southsea, Home brewed ginger

Finds recording form				
Context no:	Mat Type	Find Type	No of frag:	Description:
				beer"
3	GLASS	BOTTLE	1	Nearly complete, "Brickwood & Co Limited, Portsmouth"
3	POT	BOTTLE	1	Fragment of a Stoneware bottle. "The southsea mineral water company"
3	POT	JAR	1	Almost complete
3	POT	FRAGMENT	13	China
3	POT	JAR	1	Complete, stoneware
3	STON	WHET	1	Sandstone
4	POT	PLAT	1	WH Grindley, 1896, Melbourn, Flow Blue
4	GLASS	BOTTLE	1	Complete. "Haywards Military Pickle", 1914 +. Rubber seal
4	POT	FRAGMENT	1	Stoneware?
4	POT	FRAGMENT	1	China
4	SLATE	ROOF TILE	2	