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Southampton Archaeology Unit

Archaeological Evaluation at 12-14 Millbrook Road East, Southampton.

SOU 1846

Report 1405
Version 2

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Client: Southampton City Council



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Front cover: Trench 3 showing typical section through the deposits.

Summary Sheet

Site name / address: R/O 12-14 Millbrook Road East , Southampton
SOU site code: SOU 1846
Contractor site code: SOU 1846
HET consultation number: 9305
Grid reference of site: 441024 112228
Fieldwork dates: 11/10/2019
Type of fieldwork: Evaluation
Name of contracting unit: Southampton City Council Archaeology Unit
Report authors: Dr AD Russel
Name of client: Southampton City Council
<p>Non-technical summary</p> <p>Southampton City Council Archaeology Unit carried out an archaeological evaluation at the rear of 12-14 Millbrook Road East, Southampton. Historically the site had been occupied by two late 19th century houses, which were turned into hostel accommodation in the post-war period. There are proposals to build new Container Homes on the site, but there were local stories that an area of concrete on the boundary at the rear was the site of a WWII or Cold War shelter. If this were true it would be an undesignated heritage asset and might need further recording before the development could take place, and possibly compromise the digging of foundations. An archaeological evaluation was carried out to check the story. The natural was brickearth beneath garden soil, which contained a few modern artifacts. A brick wall was found marking the boundary between the gardens of No 12 and No 14. In the garden of No 12 was a stone-flagged path. In the post-war period concrete was laid to cover the uneven path, and further concrete was laid in the garden of No 14, perhaps as the base of a shed. More recently a children's play area was laid, and much of the concreted areas were covered in rubber chippings, giving the impression the whole arrangement was of one date. There was no evidence of underground structures.</p>

Archaeological Evaluation at rear of 12-14 Millbrook Road East, Southampton

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1. Summary

Southampton City Council Archaeology Unit carried out an archaeological evaluation at the rear of 12-14 Millbrook Road East, Southampton. Historically the site had been occupied by two late 19th century houses, which were turned into hostel accommodation in the post-war period. There are proposals to build new Container Homes on the site, but there were local stories that an area of concrete on the boundary at the rear was the site of a WWII or Cold War shelter. If this were true it would be an undesignated heritage asset and might need further recording before the development could take place, and possibly compromise the digging of foundations. An archaeological evaluation was carried out check the story. The natural brickearth was found beneath garden soil, which contained a few modern artifacts. A late 19th century brick wall marked the boundary between the gardens of No 12 and No 14. In the garden of No 12 was a stone flagged path. In the post-war period concrete was laid to cover the uneven path, and further concrete was laid in the garden of No 14, perhaps as the base of a shed. More recently a children's play area was laid, and much of the concreted areas were covered in rubber chippings, giving the impression the whole arrangement was of one date. There was no evidence of underground structures.

2. Introduction

2.1. There are proposals to build new Container Homes on parts of the site, but there were local stories that an area of concrete on the boundary at the rear was the site of a WWII or Cold War shelter. If this were true it would be an undesignated heritage asset and might need further recording before the development could take place. An archaeological evaluation was carried out check the story.

2.2 The archaeological evaluation was commissioned by Keith Gunner of Southampton City Council.

2.3 The definition of an archaeological evaluation is *a limited programme of non-intrusive and/or intrusive fieldwork which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater. If such archaeological remains are present field evaluation defines their character, extent, quality and preservation, and enables an assessment of their significance in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate.* (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2015).

2.4 Southampton City Council Archaeology Unit were commissioned to carry out the archaeological work. A Written Scheme of Investigation was written and approved by Southampton City Council Planning Team prior to the evaluation (Southampton Archaeology 2019). All work was carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.

2.6 The HET number is 9305.

3. Site Location, description, and geology

3.1 The site is situated to the south of Millbrook Road East at 441024 112228 (fig 1).



Figure 1. Location of the site, marked by a red star.

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3.2 The site lies on the edge of a fairly steep cliff that drops down towards the River Test. The ground also drops, although much less steeply, towards Millbrook Road East to the north.

3.3 The geology map (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>) shows that the site lies on the Wittering Formation (sand silt and clay) overlain by River Terrace Deposits of Terrace No 2.

3.4 The Historic Environment Team reference number for the site is 9305.

4. Historical Background

4.1 The site lies within the large parish of Millbrook, to the southeast of village of Shirley, which is first mentioned in the Domesday Book. Millbrook Road and Shirley Road were medieval routes from Southampton to the west and Romsey respectively (fig 2). A lease of 1423 relating to "la Park" in Millbrook, records an agreement to construct "a chapel in honour of the blessed Virgin" (Greatrex 1978). It has been suggested that this lay somewhere in the area of the site. During the medieval period there are references to a settlement at Hill to the north of the site and by the post-medieval period the settlements of Sidford and Four Posts had grown up to the east of the site.

4.2 Historic maps show the area as undeveloped until the early 19th century (fig 3). The 1871 6 inch map shows that the later Nos 12 and 14 Millbrook Road occupied one single plot situated between *Elmfield* to the west and *Castle Lodge* to the east (fig 4). The two houses were built by 1895 (fig 5).



Figure 2. Taylor's map of Hampshire of 1759, with position of site marked by red circle.



Figure 3. Greenwood's map of Hampshire of 1826 with approximate position of site marked by red circle.



Figure 4. Extract from the 6 inch map of Hampshire & Isle of Wight sheet LXV. Surveyed 1866 to 1869 and published in 1871. Nos 12 and 14 Millbrook road were one single plot situated between Elmfield to the west and Castle Lodge to the east. The approximate area of the concrete investigated is outlined in red.



Figure 5. Extract for the 25 inch map of Hampshire and Isle of Wight Sheet LXV.10, revised 1895 and published 1897. Numbers 12 and 14 Millbrook road are shown. The approximate area of the concrete

5. Archaeological Background

5.1. The site lies within Area 7 of the Local Areas of Archaeological Potential (LAAP) as defined in the City of Southampton Core Strategy 2010. Area 7 is described as

Prehistoric occupation evidence has been found across much of the area. Roman occupation evidence has been found around the Magistrates Court development in London Road/Inner Avenue and in Archers Road. In the Middle Ages this was a suburban area used for agriculture. Of interest in this respect are the farm of Bannister's Park and the village of Hill. Also included are Conduit Head, Conduit House, the medieval route and clay mine of Rockstone Lane, the medieval marker at Blackberry Mount and the site of the unfinished 18th century Polygon. The rest of Hill Lane appears in this area, as well as parts of the Avenue and all of the Inner Avenue. The Rollesbrook flows through the area, draining southwards from the Common to the Test Estuary. Near the south end of Rollesbrook is the site of Archard's or Acorn Bridge, perhaps the bridge on the road between medieval Southampton and Redbridge.

5.2 Nearby sites where archaeology has been found are:

MSH173

SU 41162 12314

Pottery, beads, jettons and a Roman coin (dating to (BC 27 - AD 14) so the local Late Iron Age) were found during WWII at the former 149 Commercial Road.

MSH2514

SU 41050 12349

A 1st century Roman coin was found at 34 Shirley Road in or before 1981.

MSH600

SU 40940 12366

A watching brief took place on groundworks for new housing at 45 - 51 Millbrook Road East in 1997 (SOU 847). A small number of residual and unstratified early medieval pottery sherds were found. Most activity on the site appeared to date to the high medieval period, when the site was probably used for agriculture, followed by a decline in use. A system of boundary/drainage ditches, a number of pits and a very large ?clay quarry pit, are thought to be of high medieval date. Burnt demolition material found in the large pit may have come from a demolished farmhouse in the area. Unstratified late medieval and post-medieval pottery was found. One pit may date to the late medieval period.

5.3 Street Directories were searched from 1940 to 1970 to look for potential uses that might require a large air raid shelter during the Second World War or the Cold War. In 1940-1 No 12 was occupied by Percy I St George, and No 14 by Reginald Periman. There was also *The Bungalow* listed, occupied by Rev Hardinge. Neither property were listed in 1946, or in 1948, although 1948 again lists Rev Hardinge in *The Bungalow*. In 1954 Nos 12 and 14 are listed as flats, together with Rev Hardinge in *The Bungalow*. By 1960 the two plots had become a Welfare Hostel.

5.4 The Archaeology Unit holds archive material from the Second World War including plans for numerous shelters, wardens posts, emergency kitchens etc, but Nos 12 and 14 Millbrook Road are not listed. Little Cold War-period material appears to have survived (or has been made public). The Archaeology Unit holds sets of OS map sheets and copies of them used by the Council's Engineers Dept in the post-war period to produce up-to-date plans. Sheets showing the present site in 1951 and 1953 survive, but they show no works at Nos 12 and 14.

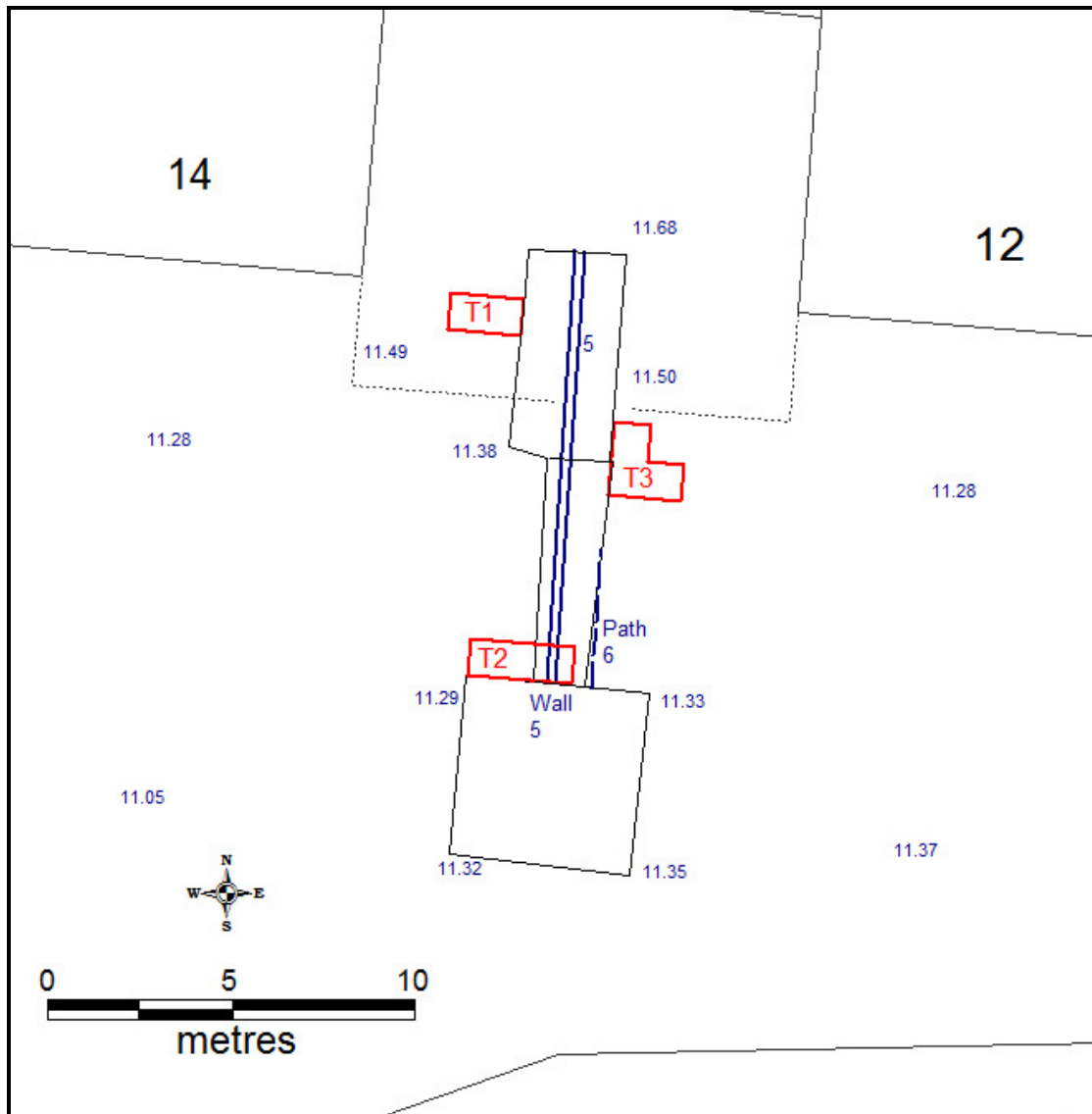


Figure 7. Final trench plan with features and spot heights.

8. Results

The results are presented in stratigraphic order from the earliest to the latest.

8.1. Natural

8.1.1 The earliest deposit was natural brickearth, context 3. It was found at the base of Trench 2 at 420mm below the surface (fig. 8) and at the base of trench 3 some 900mm below the surface (fig. 9). It was yellowish brown (10YR 5/4) silty clay loam with some evidence of worm activity in both trenches and common tree roots in Trench 3.



Figure 8. Trench 2 looking west. Brickearth 3 at base of trench overlain by gravel 2 and topsoil 1.

8.2. 19th century.

8.2.1 When the plot was developed in the late 19th century a foundation trench, 4, was excavated and brick wall 5 was built in it. The foundation trench was some 730mm. The wall was built of red bricks, some 225mm by 110mm by 65mm with shallow frogs. It was exposed in Trench 2 (figs. 10 and 11) and could be seen at ground level further north between later slabs of concrete. To the west of the brick wall in trench 2 was a layer of gravel, 2, (fig. 8), which contained fragments of 19th century brick. To the east was a flower bed and then a Purbeck stone-flagged path, context 6. The topsoil, layer 1 probably existed prior to these works, as it lay beneath the stone path, but it had been redeposited over the gravel 2 in trench 2. The topsoil was a very dark gray (10YR 3/1) silty clay loam up to 500mm thick.

8.2.2 The stone-flagged path was also visible in the west section of Trench 3 (fig. 9).



Figure 9. Trench 3 looking west. Brickearth 3 at base of trench, below topsoil 1. Flagstones of path 6 visible below the concrete.



Figure 10. Trench 2 looking east with brick wall 5 in the far section. Concrete haunching of play area to right.



Figure 11. Trench 2 looking east with brick wall 5 in the foreground. Beyond lies a narrow flowerbed, then Purbeck stone path 6 with a brick edging beneath the peeled back rubber chipping layer.

8.3. 20th century.

8.3.1 Concrete slabs were found to east and west of wall 5. Trench 3 showed that it had there been laid over path 6 (fig. 9) in two sections, slightly stepped. On the west of the wall was a single concrete slab, perhaps the base of a shed. The brick wall had been demolished to ground level after the episodes of concreting.

8.4. 21st century

8.4.1 The most recent phase of activity was the construction of a square play area at the south edge of the site. Its construction cut the brick wall and the stone path. It was joined to the concrete slabs by a further strip of concrete with a contoured upper surface which had been coated in a layer of rubber chippings (fig. 9).

9. Conclusion

9.1 The natural was found to be brickearth. It was cut by a late 19th century garden wall which formed the boundary between the gardens of No 12 and No 14. In the garden of No 12 was a stone-flagged path. In the post-war period concrete was laid to cover the uneven path, and further concrete was laid in the garden of No 14, perhaps as the base of a shed. More recently a children's play area was laid, and much of the concreted areas were covered in rubber chippings, giving the impression the whole arrangement was of one date.

9.2 There was no evidence of underground structures

10. Bibliography

Southampton Archaeology 2019 *Written Scheme of Investigation for Evaluation at Rear of 12-14 Millbrook Road East.*

Appendix 1. Context details

CONTEXT	CATEGORY	KEY WORD	DEPTH	MUNSEL Colour	TEXTURE	DESCRIPTION	FILL OF	ABOVE	FILLED BY	CUT BY	BELOW	PERIOD
1	Layer	Topsoil	500mm	10YR 3/1	Silty clay loam	Garden soil		2, 3		4		Late 19 th ?
2	Layer	Gravel	170mm	5YR 5/8	Sandy gravel	Sandy gravel with rare brick fragments that match wall 5		3			1	Late 19 th ?
3	Layer	Brickearth	440+mm	10YR 5/4	Silty clay loam	Natural brickearth				4	1, 2	
4	Feature	Construction trench	730mm						5			Late 19 th
5	Fill	Brick wall	730mm			Red bricks 225mm by 110mm by 65mm. Shallow frogs.	4					Late 19 th
6	Feature	Garden path	180mm			Purbeck stone slabs with yellow brick edging.		1				Late 19 th