CHANNEL TUNNEL RAIL LINK
UNION RAILWAYS LIMITED

Archaeological Evaluation at Hurst Wood (ARC HWD97), Charing Heath, Kent

Environmental Statement Route Window 28

FINAL FIELDWORK REPORT

2nd December 1997

Contract no. 194/870
WA Report no. 43504d

Wessex Archaeology

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Volume 1 of 1

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CHANNEL TUNNEL RAIL LINK
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Executive Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Union Railways Limited to carry out an archaeological evaluation on a site to the south of Charing Heath (centred on URL grid point 72960 28460; NGR grid point TQ 93000 48500), known as Hurst Wood. The potential for archaeological remains within the evaluation area had been identified by an earlier Environmental Statement (URL 1994b) which included fieldwalking survey (URL 1994a; URL 1995). This potential was defined as the possibility of discovering features and remains associated with a surface concentration of worked flint recovered during the fieldwalking survey.

The evaluation revealed a small number of undated archaeological features, located within the area of the previously recorded concentration of fieldwalking finds. The archaeological features comprised two fired clay and charcoal-rich shallow pits, a small gully, a shallow stake-hole and an irregular feature that may represent the truncated remains of a third pit. In addition, a quantity of worked flint, including a Late Neolithic / Early Bronze Age plano-convex flint knife, was recovered from topsoil contexts within the same area. Although no datable artefacts were recovered from the excavated features, their distribution in relation to the concentration of prehistoric worked flints from topsoil contexts (from both fieldwalking and machine trenching) would suggest that the features may be broadly contemporaneous.

FACTUAL STATEMENT

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Union Railways Limited (URL) to carry out an archaeological evaluation on a site to the south of Charing Heath (centred on URL grid point 72960 28460; NGR grid point TQ 93000 48500; **Figure 1**), known as **Hurst Wood** (site code ARC HWD97; Environmental Statement Route Window 28).

1.1.2 The evaluation forms part of a programme of archaeological investigation along the proposed route of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL), and was preceded by an Environmental Assessment (URL 1994b) and fieldwalking survey (URL 1994a; URL 1995).

1.1.3 The fieldwork was conducted in accordance with a written *Agreement for the provision of Archaeological Investigations* (URL 1997), which defined the scope, aims and methods for the project. In addition to general aims, the following site specific aims were identified:

- *determine the presence/absence etc. of any subsoil features or deposits of archaeological interest which may be associated with, or in close proximity to, a surface concentration of prehistoric worked flint recorded during the CTRL Environmental Assessment.*

1.1.4 The fieldwork was carried out between 6th October 1997 and 9th October 1997, with preliminary survey work carried out on 12th May 1997.

1.2 Site Description, Topography, Geology and Hydrography

1.2.1 The site was situated within a parcel of land defined by the M20 motorway to the south-west, and existing field boundaries to the west and east. The northern boundary of the site was defined by the limit of proposed development, and did not correlate with existing land divisions. The site covered an area of *c*. 4.1 hectares. The evaluation comprised 14 machine trenches (trench 1590TT - trench 1603TT inclusive), each measuring 30 m by 1.50 m, within a single plot of recently seeded rape.

1.2.2 The site occupied a very gentle south-facing slope on the north side of the River Great Stour flood plain, descending within the site limits from a height of *c*. 75 m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) to 71.5 m aOD. In a broader context, the area is situated to the south of, and below, the sand, gault and chalk ridge that rises to form the North Downs, which in the immediate area

are at a height of *c*. 190 m aOD, along the line of the North Downs/ Pilgrims' Way.

1.2.3 Underlying drift geology for the area is recorded as Pleistocene Head Brickearth, with more recent alluvium associated with the course of the River Great Stour to the south-west. Solid geology is recorded as comprising Cretaceous Lower Greensand Sandgate Beds, outcropping at the base of the sand, gault and chalk ridge that forms the edge of the North Downs to the north (Ordnance Survey 1976).

1.2.4 The hydrography of the area is dominated by the River Great Stour, which follows a meandering course from north-west to south-east along the foot of the North Downs, *c*. 1 km to the south of the site. In the immediate vicinity of the site a number of unnamed south-flowing streams spring from the footslopes of the North Downs, feeding into the Great Stour, two of which pass within 300 m to either side of the site.

1.3 Methodology

1.3.1 As noted above (paragraph 1.1.3), the fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the *Agreement for the provision of Archaeological Investigations* (URL 1997), which contains a detailed methodology for all aspects of the evaluation fieldwork. This methodology will not be repeated in full here, although a brief summary is reiterated below:

- *allowing for agreed variations noted below, all trenches were located to a horizontal accuracy of ±0.50 m and elevation accuracy of ±0.02 m (per kilometre traverse) in relation to trench location plans provided and Ordnance Datum (Newlyn);*

- *all trenches were excavated in discrete 0.10-0.20 m spits using a tracked excavator with a 1.50 m wide toothless ditching bucket under close archaeological supervision, to either 1.20 m depth, the surface of* in situ *geology, or the surface at which archaeological remains could be identified, whichever was encountered first;*

- *all trenches were cleaned manually, with a sufficient sample of all exposed features investigated, and sampled where appropriate, in order to fulfil the aims of the evaluation; and,*

- *all recording conformed to the standards of current best practice, and included a full graphic and photographic record of all stages of the evaluation.*

2 RESULTS

2.1 General

2.1.1 In summary, 14 evaluation trenches were excavated within the defined plot (**Figure 2**), revealing 5 archaeological or potentially archaeological features, all of which were investigated. These features were located within a discrete area towards the south-east end of the site, which correlated with the previously recorded concentration of worked and burnt flint from fieldwalking (URL 1995, maps 12a and 12b). In addition, a number of ploughmarks cutting the surface of *in situ* natural deposits were noted throughout the site. The ploughmarks were aligned with the modern ploughing regime, and hence after planning were not investigated further.

2.1.2 Of the archaeological features, two were identified as pits (trench 1598TT **105** and trench 1601TT **181**), one as a gully (trench 1603TT **132**), one as a stake-hole (trench 1603TT **135**) and one as a shallow irregular feature which may represent a truncated pit (trench 1600TT **157**). No datable artefacts were recovered from these features, although a fragment of burnt flint was recovered from gully **132** (trench 1603TT). In addition, a considerable quantity of fired clay and charcoal was recovered from pit **105** (trench 1598TT), and to a lesser extent pit **181** (trench 1601TT) and feature **157** (trench 1600TT).

2.1.3 A context inventory (by trench) is provided in **Appendix 1**, whilst deposits and features of note are described below.

2.2 Stratigraphy

2.2.1 The stratigraphic sequence identified within the evaluation area can be broadly summarised as:

- Head Brickearth
- Buried soil towards the south-western edge of the site; and
- Modern topsoil.

Head Brickearth

2.2.2 This natural deposit was recorded within all trenches, predominantly sealed directly by modern topsoil, and can be characterised as a brownish yellow silty to clayey sand, with very occasional chalk flecks. It was not clear whether the chalk-flecking was an *in situ* component, or the result of an agricultural process that had migrated down through the sequence from overlying topsoil.

Buried soil

2.2.3 A comparatively recent buried soil, characterised as a dark greyish brown silty loam with occasional small subrounded flint gravel, was recorded in trench 1599TT, on the south-western edge of the site. This material did not extend along the full length of the trench, and was thickest (0.21 m) to the west. This probably represents redeposited topsoil generated by the construction of the adjacent M20 motorway.

Topsoil

2.2.4 In general, topsoil encountered throughout the evaluation area comprised 0.25 - 0.35 m thickness of mid to dark yellowish brown sandy silty loam with occasional amounts of small to medium subrounded flint gravel, occasional lenses of matted straw, and very occasional small chalk flecks.

2.2.5 In three trenches (trenches 1591TT, 1596TT and 1601TT) it was possible to define the most recently ploughed uppermost horizon of topsoil (i.e. *c*. 0.20 – 0.25 m thickness) as a separate context. However, this differentiation was based on friability rather than matrix, and as such both deposits are considered as topsoil.

2.2.6 Although the topsoil represents a disturbed modern context, a number of residual finds were recorded from this horizon. These include a small quantity of worked flint from a zone encompassing trenches 1594TT, 1598TT - 1600TT, and 1602TT – 1603TT, as well as single pieces from trench 1595TT and 1596TT. Although predominantly undiagnostic prehistoric material, this assemblage did include a Late Neolithic / Early Bronze Age plano-convex flint knife from trench 1600TT.

2.3 Structural Report (Figures 3 and 4)

Trench 1598TT (Figure 3)

2.3.1 A subcircular pit (**105**) was located towards the northern end of the trench, cut from the surface of the natural subsoil layer (104) and sealed by modern topsoil (103). It was *c*. 1 m in diameter and 0.13 m deep, with shallow slightly concave sides and a rounded base, and was filled with a primary layer of reddish brown fired clay fragments (107), sealed by an upper fill of very dark brown/black charcoal-rich silty clay (106). Other than fired clay and charcoal fragments, this feature did not produce any artefacts. It is provisionally interpreted as a pit, although the primary layer of fired clay and charcoal-rich upper fill may indicate that this was a hearth or a similar feature of pyrotechnical function. There was no evidence to suggest that the fired clay represented an *in situ* lining.

Trench 1600TT (Figure 3)

2.3.2 An irregular subcircular feature (**157**) was located towards the southern end of the trench, cut from the surface of the natural subsoil layer (158) and sealed by modern topsoil (155). The west side of this feature lay beyond the

limit of the evaluation trench, recordable dimensions indicating a feature 0.8 m long (north to south), at least 0.60 m wide (east to west) and up to 0.06 m deep. It had irregular shallow sides and an undulating base, and was filled with a mixed layer of greyish brown and reddish brown silty clay containing occasional small fragments of fired clay and charcoal (156). Other than the fired clay and charcoal fragments, which were noted but not recovered, this feature did not produce any artefacts. On the basis of the anthropogenic components, it is possible that this represents the truncated remains of a feature similar to pits **105** (trench 1598TT) and **181** (trench 1601TT).

Trench 1601TT (Figure 4)

2.3.3 An approximately east to west aligned 'tear-drop'-shaped pit (**181**) was centrally located within the trench, cut from the surface of the natural subsoil layer (186) and sealed by modern topsoil (180). The north side of this feature lay beyond the limit of the evaluation trench, recordable dimensions indicating a feature 1.45 m long (east to west; tapering to the east), at least 0.65 m wide (north to south) and up to 0.12 m deep. It had steep concave sides, tending to moderate into the tapering east side, with a broad flat base.

2.3.4 It was filled with four definable contexts, comprising: a primary deposit of red fired clay (185) predominantly surviving on the upper edges to the south and east and probably associated with adjoining areas of heat-affected *in situ* natural subsoil; a secondary dark grey ashy fine silt loam (184) banked against the south side of the pit; a tertiary grey silty loam containing profuse quantities of fired clay (183) overlying layer 184; and an upper fill of grey fine silty loam (182) containing fragments of fired clay and charcoal. Other than the fired clay and charcoal fragments this feature did not produce any artefacts.

2.3.5 As with pit **105** (trench 1598TT), although provisionally interpreted as a pit, the primary layer of fired clay may indicate that this was a hearth or some other feature of pyrotechnical function. Unlike pit **105** (trench 1598TT), the presence of heat-affected *in situ* natural subsoil at the base of the cut in association with the fired clay may suggest that the fired clay does represent an *in situ* lining or burning.

Trench 1603TT (Figure 4)

2.3.6 A south-south-west to north-north-east aligned gully (**132**) crossed the northern end of the trench, cutting the surface of natural subsoil (133) and sealed by topsoil (130). It was 0.27 m wide and 0.07 m deep, with moderate sloping even sides and a very slightly rounded base, and filled with a mottled yellowish and greyish brown silty sand (131) containing occasional chalk fragments and a single piece of burnt flint. Adjacent to, and east of, gully **132** was a small circular stake-hole (**135**), also cutting the surface of natural subsoil (133) and sealed by topsoil (130). It was 0.10 m in diameter and 0.02 m deep with shallow even sides and a conical base, and filled with greyish brown sandy silt containing very occasional chalk flecks.

2.4 **Artefactual Report** by Lorraine Mepham (unless stated otherwise)

2.4.1 Small quantities of artefactual material, in a limited range of material types, were recovered from 13 trenches, predominantly from topsoil contexts, but also from three archaeological features. Finds were also recovered from unstratified contexts within Plot 1. Finds totals, by material type and by context, and including finds extracted from soil samples, are given in **Appendix 2**. The date range of much of the material recovered is post-medieval or modern, although some earlier material, in the form of worked and burnt flint, was present. Post-medieval/modern finds are not described in detail here, but are summarised in section 2.4.7. Other finds are briefly described by material type below.

Worked and Burnt Flint by John S.C. Lewis

2.4.2 The small worked flint assemblage comprises almost exclusively waste flakes, made from locally exploited raw materials, and exhibiting a variable degree of edge damage and patination. Close dating of this assemblage is hampered by the absence of retouched or other chronologically distinctive pieces, although the form of the flakes and the technology employed would suggest a general Bronze Age date.

2.4.3 One piece, however, warrants further comment. This is a plano-convex knife (trench 160TT, topsoil 155; **Figure 5**), made on a blade, which is of Late Neolithic / Early Bronze Age date.

2.4.4 Two pieces of burnt, unworked flint were also recovered from two trenches. This material type is intrinsically undatable, and its origin is uncertain, but frequent association with prehistoric material has led to its use as an indicator of prehistoric activity.

Ceramic Building Material

2.4.5 The ceramic building material is almost all of post-medieval date, and is summarised below. One fragment, however, has been identified as possibly being of earlier date (1602TT). This fragment is in a soft, fine fabric quite distinct from the other post-medieval fragments. It is abraded with no surviving surfaces and is therefore undiagnostic, but it may be noted that such fine fabrics are frequently used for Romano-British ceramic building material.

Fired Clay

2.4.6 Fired clay was recovered from environmental samples taken from two features. Most of this derived from two contexts within pit **105** (trench 1598TT, fills 106 and 107), and the remainder from the upper fill of pit **181** (trench 1601TT, fill 182). All of the fired clay comprises small, abraded fragments with no surviving surfaces or other features; it is possible that it derives from the use of these two pits as hearths. The fired clay itself is of unknown date, and the two pits did not produce any other artefactual material.

Post-medieval and modern finds

2.4.7 These comprise ceramic building material, pottery, and one copper alloy coin, and are summarised in **Table 2** below:

Table 1: Post-medieval artefact summary

Category	Description
CBM:	Fragments of roof tiles, not closely datable
Pottery:	One sherd tinglazed earthenware (17th/18th century); one sherd redware flowerpot (19th/20th century)
Copper alloy:	George V halfpenny, dated 1913

2.5 Environmental Report by Michael J Allen

Introduction

2.5.1 Three 10 - 20 litre bulk samples were taken from two undated pits (trench 1598TT, pit **105**, fills 106 and 107; trench 1601TT, pit **181**, fill182) for the retrieval of charred plant and charcoal remains. The samples were pre-soaked in water, with the addition of small quantities of hydrogen peroxide (100vol. *c.* 30% H_2O_2). After soaking the samples were transferred to a flotation tank, within a wire basket holding a nylon mesh of 0.5 mm aperture. Water was pumped through the sample and the flot retained on a 0.5 mm nylon mesh. The residues were fractionated into 5.6 mm, 2 mm and 1 mm fractions and dried. The coarse fractions (>5.6 mm) were sorted, weighed and discarded. The flots were scanned under a x10 - x30 stereo-binocular microscope and presence of charred remains quantified (**Appendix 3**), in order to present data to assess the preservation and nature of the charred plant and charcoal remains.

Charred plant remains

2.5.2 The samples produced very small flots (the average size for 10 litres would be *c*. 60 millilitres) with 50 – 60 % rooty material and sparse numbers of uncharred weed seeds, which can be indicative of stratigraphic movement. A few charred weed seeds were observed in pit **105**, sample 2 (trench 1598TT).

Charcoal

2.5.3 Charcoal was noted from the flots and coarse residue fractions of the bulk samples. Charcoal pieces greater than 5.6 mm have been retrieved in sufficient quantities from pit **105**, sample 2 (trench 1598TT) to allow species identification and/or radiocarbon dating.

STATEMENT OF IMPORTANCE

3 CONCLUSIONS

3.1 Extent of Archaeological Remains

3.1.1 Five archaeological features were recorded in trenches within the south-eastern area of the site (trenches 1598TT, 1600TT, 1601TT and 1603TT). There were no perceived concentrations within this area, although two features (gully **132** and stake-hole **135**) were identified within one trench (trench 1603TT). None of the archaeological features were dated, although a fragment of burnt flint (trench 1603TT, gully **132**, fill 131) and a quantity of fired clay and charcoal (trench 1598TT, pit **105**, fills 106 and 107; trench 1600TT, feature **157**, fill 156; trench 1601TT, pit **181**, fills 182 - 185) were noted and/or recovered. In addition, worked flint was recovered from the topsoil contexts of a number of trenches, predominantly, but not exclusively, in the vicinity of the subsurface archaeological features. This assemblage included a Late Neolithic / Early Bronze Age plano-convex flint knife (trench 1600TT, topsoil 155).

3.1.2 A buried soil (trench 1599TT, layer 160) recorded towards the western extent of the trench is almost certainly a result of the construction of the adjacent M20 motorway.

3.1.3 The preliminary fieldwalking survey of the evaluation area highlighted a concentration of worked and burnt flint that broadly defined the extent of the subsurface archaeological remains identified above (URL 1995, map 12a and 12b). When viewed in conjunction with the distribution of worked flint from topsoil contexts during this evaluation, it is possible that the subsurface features identified are likely to be of prehistoric origin, although such an interpretation should be viewed with caution.

3.2 Nature of Archaeological Remains

3.2.1 All archaeological features survived as shallow cuts (i.e. not greater than 0.13 m deep) excavated into the surface of the *in situ* geological subsoil, and were sealed by modern topsoil. Inter-relationships between features were not observed.

3.2.2 Structural remains, comprising a single stake-hole (trench 1603TT **135**), were recorded in one trench, adjacent to a narrow gully. It is not possible to suggest that this feature represents building remains, at this stage it is perhaps more likely that it indicates a fenceline.

3.2.2 The adjacent gully (trench 1603TT **132**) is provisionally interpreted as a field boundary or drainage feature. However, it is possible that this well-defined and relatively flat-bottomed feature may represent a beam slot or similar structural element.

3.2.3 The remaining three features were all discrete (trench 1598TT, pit **105**, trench 1600TT, feature **157** and trench 1601TT, pit **181**), and on the basis of archaeological components within their fills, morphologically very similar. Although undated, these three features are therefore considered broadly contemporaneous. All three features preserved vestigial remains of what may have been clay-linings, surviving as concentrated patches of fired or heat-affected clay at the base of the cuts, with subsequent overlying deposits containing quantities of ash, charcoal and fired clay. Although provisionally interpreted as pits, it is therefore possible that these features represent hearths or similar features associated with pyrotechnical activity.

3.2.4 A considerable proportion of all artefacts recovered were provenanced from topsoil contexts, including a concentration of predominantly undiagnostic prehistoric worked flint in the vicinity of the subsurface remains. This assemblage included a Late Neolithic / Early Bronze Age plano-convex flint knife (trench 1600TT, topsoil 155). It is possible that this material represents more than just casual losses in an agricultural environment, and that in conjunction with the subsurface features, are indicative of settlement activity in the vicinity.

3.3 Character of Site

3.3.1 None of the archaeological features examined produced dating evidence, and as such it is not possible to characterise confidently the site in terms of a chronologically distinct period of activity. However, the body of evidence (incorporating all fieldwalking results, topsoil finds from machine trenches and subsurface archaeological features) would appear to indicate an area of prehistoric settlement activity within the south-eastern portion of the site. Although the only securely datable find from this area was a Late Neolithic / Early Bronze Age flint knife, it is considered perhaps more likely that this evidence represents later activity (i.e. Mid to Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age).

3.3.2 Although downslope movement of artefacts is unlikely to be a contributing factor in relation to the concentration of topsoil finds, the relatively large quantity of worked flint (five pieces) and other finds from the topsoil in trench 1602TT is possibly a tillage-induced headland effect, transporting material away from the concentration of archaeological features to the west.

3.3.3 The nature of the archaeological features (summarised above) would suggest that the remains are indicative of settlement activity, with domestic features such as pits and/or hearths and structural remains such as stake-holes and a

putative beam slot or gully. There was no evidence of an enclosing feature such as a boundary ditch, and it must therefore be assumed that the settlement was unenclosed.

3.4 Site Chronology

3.4.1 All archaeological features examined remain undated. Other than post-medieval and modern material recovered from the topsoil (including a 1913 halfpenny), the majority of the remaining topsoil artefacts comprise undiagnostic prehistoric worked flint, undated burnt flint (generally considered to be indicative of prehistoric activity) and a single datable Late Neolithic / Early Bronze Age flint knife. A single small abraded undiagnostic fragment of ceramic building material may have been Romano-British.

4 IMPORTANCE OF REMAINS

4.1 Scheduled Monument Criteria

4.1.1 The Secretary of State's criteria for scheduling monuments has been addressed. The remains recorded during this evaluation do not appear to satisfy any of the criteria as defined. However, in the absence of a secure dating framework for the remains recorded, it is difficult to fully assess the importance of the remains. If the Late Neolithic / Early Bronze Age plano-convex flint knife proves to be representative of the period of activity associated with the subsurface remains encountered, then in relative terms the site would clearly possess greater importance than if, for instance, the site was of Late Bronze Age/ Early Iron Age date.

4.2 Condition

4.2.1 Archaeological features recorded during the evaluation are preserved as shallow cuts in the surface of *in situ* geological deposits, all sealed by the modern ploughsoil. However, although not quantifiable, it is very likely that these features have been truncated by ploughing in the past, as emphasised by the relatively shallow nature of the stake-hole in trench 1603TT and the ephemeral feature in trench 1600TT.

4.2.2 Cultural remains have survived, including pottery, ceramic building material, worked flint, burnt flint and metal objects. However, with the exception of worked flint, these finds are not particularly prolific, virtually all of which can be confidently identified as post-medieval or later. Worked flint is most coherently represented in the topsoil horizons, and includes material recovered between trenches.

4.2.3 Environmental analysis has demonstrated that very little palaeo-environmental material has survived, or was ever present, in the samples examined. However, charcoal is present, with substantial quantities retrieved from some deposits.

4.3 Period

4.3.1 Prehistoric settlement patterns are not well-documented in the area. Secure chronological indicators from the evaluation are restricted to a single Late Neolithic / Early Bronze Age flint knife, post-medieval pottery and ceramic building material and a 1913 halfpenny, all of which were recovered from topsoil contexts. The remainder of the flintwork, although undiagnostic, is considered prehistoric in origin.

4.4 Rarity

4.4.1 The archaeological remains recorded during the evaluation are of note, appearing to represent a range of feature types often regarded as characteristic of 'settlement' activity. In particular, the observation of a relatively high proportion of discrete features within the footprint of machine trenches is noteworthy. The recovery of a virtually undamaged Late Neolithic / Early Bronze Age plano-convex flint knife is a rare occurrence.

4.5 Vulnerability

4.5.1 The presence of modern plough marks in some of the trenches indicates that the archaeological remains have been subjected to a degree of truncation. However, the site occupies only a very gentle south-facing slope, and therefore downslope movement of ploughsoil induced by tillage will not greately accelerate this rate of truncation. Should deeper ploughing or any other invasive groundwork occur, then this situation will clearly not remain the case. All archaeological remains will be under threat from construction of the CTRL.

4.6 Diversity

4.6.1 Although feature types include both discrete and linear remains, with the exception of the Late Neolithic / Early Bronze Age flint knife there was no significant diversity of features or finds.

4.7 Documentation

4.7.1 Little is recorded of the evaluation area. Hurst Wood itself is marked on 17th-century estate plans, and may well have medieval origins, whilst both Lenham Heath and Charing Heath are both recorded as heathland that were enclosed in the 19th-century. In addition, the public footpath from Hurst Lane to Foxen Farm is recorded as a track on the Charing 1840 Tithe map (URL 1994b).

4.8 Group Value

4.8.1 There appears to be little group value that can be attributed to the results of this evaluation.

4.9 Potential

Structural

4.9.1 As undated remains, the archaeological features recorded offer little potential for contributing to the understanding of settlement and agricultural activity in the area. However, on the basis of all available evidence, it is not unreasonable to suggest that the majority of the features represented indicate settlement activity, as opposed to landscape elements (i.e. field boundaries), and that such settlement activity is likely to be prehistoric in origin.

Artefactual

4.9.2 The majority of finds are of post-medieval or modern date and have no further archaeological potential; it is recommended that these finds are discarded prior to the final deposition of the archive. The single piece of possible Romano-British ceramic building material is unstratified and can be used only as a possible indicator of activity in the vicinity, and there is no potential for further analysis. Although worked flint was recovered, the paucity of diagnostic pieces leaves no potential for further analysis.

Environmental

4.9.3 None of the sampled contexts produced any charred grain or chaff in the flots and these are unlikely to remain in the residues. The potential from these samples is therefore low. However, this may not necessarily be true of any other unexposed features beyond the limits of machine trenches. If further work is undertaken a standard and routine approach to sampling should be maintained to ensure that the distribution of charred remains is not highly localised. Although the charcoal fragments are not highly significant in themselves, particularly without a secure archaeological and chronological framework, radiocarbon dating, and possibly species identification, may be considered viable analysis for this material.

4.10 Discussion

4.10.1 The potential for archaeological remains within the evaluation area had been identified by an earlier Environmental Statement (URL 1994b) and fieldwalking survey (URL 1994a; URL 1995). This potential was defined as the possibility of discovering features and remains associated with a concentration of prehistoric worked flint within the south-eastern portion of the site.

4.10.2 A small number of undated archaeological features was found, within the general area of the fieldwalking finds concentration noted above. These features included pits and/or hearths, a gully and a stake-hole, the gully producing a single small piece of burnt flint. The pits and/or hearths all produced charcoal and fired clay fragments, although palaeo-environmental material had not survived.

4.10.3 There was no significant variation in the stratigraphic sequence of topsoil directly overlying *in situ* geological subsoil, a buried soil recorded adjacent to the M20 motorway is almost certainly a result of the motorway construction. However, a quantity of worked flint was recovered from topsoil contexts within the area of the recorded archaeological features, and it is possible that this material is derived from these and/or other subsurface features by more recent ploughing. The topsoil flint assemblage included an Early Bronze Age plano-convex flint knife in pristine condition.

4.10.4 The specific aim of the evaluation (section 1.1.3) was achieved. A number of subsoil features were discovered which were in close proximity to and possibly associated with the surface flintwork recorded during the CTRL Environmental Assessment fieldwork (URL 1994a; 1995). However, no dating information is available for either the flintwork recorded during the Environmental Assessment, or the features recorded during this evaluation. Therefore, it is difficult to present any coherent form of interpretation for these remains (if indeed they all prove to be contemporaneous) other than to suggest that the evidence appears to represent prehistoric (settlement ?) activity.

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Appendix 1: Context Inventory

Context inventories per trench are provided in stratigraphic order where possible
Artefact quantification represents count only, see **Appendix 2** for full quantification. CBM = ceramic building material
Prehist = undiagnostic Prehistoric; EBA = Early Bronze Age; RB = Romano-British; PMed = Post-medieval

Trench	Context	Type	Associations	Finds	No.	Date
1590TT	151	Topsoil	Seals 152	CBM	4	PMed
	152	Head Brickearth	Sealed by 151			
1591TT	176	Topsoil	Seals 177			
	177	Topsoil	Sealed by 176 Seals 178			
	178	Head Brickearth	Sealed by 177			
1592TT	101	Topsoil	Seals 102	CBM	4	PMed
	102	Head Brickearth	Sealed by 101			
1593TT	153	Topsoil	Seals 154	CBM	3	PMed
	154	Head Brickearth	Sealed by 153			
1594TT	126	Topsoil	Seals 127	CBM Worked Flint	3 2	PMed Prehist
	127	Head Brickearth	Sealed by 126			
1595TT	162	Topsoil	Seals 163	CBM Worked Flint	1 1	PMed Prehist
	163	Head Brickearth	Sealed by 162			
1596TT	187	Topsoil	Seals 188	Worked Flint	1	Prehist
	188	Topsoil	Sealed by 187 Seals 189			
	189	Head Brickearth	Sealed by 188			
1597TT	108	Topsoil	Seals 109	CBM	3	PMed
	109	Head Brickearth	Sealed by 108			
1598TT	103	Topsoil	Seals 106 and 104	CBM Worked Flint	2 1	PMed Prehist
	106	Upper charcoal fill of pit **105**	Sealed by 103 Seals 107 Fill of **105**			
	107	Primary fired clay fill of pit **105**	Sealed by 106 Fill of **105**			
	105	**Shallow circular pit**	Filled with 106 and 107 Cuts 104			
	104	Head Brickearth	Sealed by 103 Cut by **105**			
1599TT	159	Topsoil	Seals 160	Worked Flint	1	Prehist
	160	Buried soil	Sealed by 159 Seals 161			
	161	Head Brickearth	Sealed by 160			
1600TT	155	Topsoil	Seals 156 and 158	Worked Flint	2	Prehist and EBA
	156	Fill of feature **157**	Sealed by 155 Fill of **157**			
	157	**Shallow irregular feature (possibly a truncated pit)**	Filled with 156 Cuts 158			
	158	Head Brickearth	Sealed by 155 Cut by **157**			

Trench	Context	Type	Associations	Finds	No.	Date
1601TT	179	Topsoil	Seals 180			
	180	Topsoil	Sealed by 179 Seals 182 and 186			
	182	Upper fill of pit **181**	Sealed by 180 Seals 183 Fill of **181**			
	183	Tertiary fired clay fill of pit **181**	Sealed by 182 Seals 184 Fill of **181**			
	184	Secondary ashy fill of pit **181**	Sealed by 183 Seals 185 Fill of **181**			
	185	Primary charcoal fill of pit **181**	Sealed by 184 Fill of **181**			
	181	**Subcircular pit**	Filled with 182, 183, 184 and 185 Cuts 186			
	186	Head Brickearth	Sealed by 180 Cut by **181**			
1602TT	128	Topsoil	Seals 129	Burnt Flint CBM Worked Flint Pottery	1 2 5 1	? Prehist PMed (1poss RB) Prehist 17th/18th-century
	129	Head Brickearth	Sealed by 128			
1603TT	130	Topsoil	Seals 131, 134 and 133	CBM Worked Flint	2 2	Pmed Prehist
	131	Fill of gully **132**	Sealed by 130 Fill of **132**	Burnt Flint	1	? Prehist
	132	**Narrow SSW/NNE aligned gully**	Filled with 131 Cuts 133			
	134	Fill of stake-hole **135**	Sealed by 130 Fill of **135**			
	135	**Circular stake-hole**	Filled with 134 Cuts 133			
	133	Head Brickearth	Sealed by 130 Cut by **132** and **135**			
Plot 1	110	Number allocated to unstratified finds recovered from the surface of Plot 1 that were not attributable to individual trenches	-	Worked Flint Pottery Cu Alloy	4 1 1	Prehist 19th/20th-century 1913 halfpenny

Appendix 2: Artefact Quantification

NB: Quantities are presented by number/weight in grammes, apart from Fired Clay (weight only), and Cu Alloy (number only)
CBM = ceramic building material

Trench	Context	Burnt Flint	CBM	Fired Clay	Flint	P-med. Pot	Cu Alloy
Plot 1	U/S 110				4/68	1/4	1
1590TT	Topsoil 151		4/74				
1592TT	Topsoil 101		4/114				
1593TT	Topsoil 153		3/76				
1594TT	Topsoil 126		3/74		2/34		
1595TT	Topsoil 162		1/16		1/1		
1596TT	Topsoil 187				1/18		
1597TT	Topsoil 108		3/52				
1598TT	Topsoil 103		2/84		1/30		
1598TT	Pit **105**; Fill 106			27 g			
1598TT	Pit **105**; Fill 107			851 g			
1599TT	Topsoil 159				1/4		
1600TT	Topsoil 155				2/22		
1601TT	Pit **181**; Fill 182			59 g			
1602TT	Topsoil 128	1/38	2/36		5/83	1/30	
1603TT	Topsoil 130		2/109		2/16		
1603TT	Fill 131	1/2					
TOTALS		**2/40**	**24/635**	**937 g**	**19/276**	**2/34**	**1**

Appendix 3: Ecofact Quantification

Sample				Flot							Residue
Feature no	**Context no**	**Sample no**	Size litres	Size ml	Grain	Chaff	Weed seeds (Burnt)	Weed seeds (Unburnt)	Charcoal >5.6 mm	Other	Charcoal >5.6 mm
Pit 181	**Fill 182**	**1**	20	10 (6)	-	-	C	-	-	-	5
Pit 105	**Fill 106**	**2**	10	5 (2.5)	-	-	C	C	C	-	*c.* 75
Pit 105	**Fill 107**	**3**	10	5 (2.5)	-	-	C	-	-	-	1

KEY: A** = exceptional, A* = 30+ items, A = 30 - 10 items, B = 9 - 5 items, C = < 5 items
Flot size is total, but value in parenthesis is ml of rooty material