

**Channel Tunnel Rail Link
Union Railways (South) Ltd**

Project Area 330

**SCALERS HILL TO COBHAM, KENT
ARC SCC 98**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
FINAL REPORT**

Contract S/300/0052 P381

MUSEUM OF LONDON

Museum of London Archaeology Service

June 2000

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Contract S/300/0052 P381

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June 2000

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SCALERS HILL TO COBHAM, AREA 22

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SUMMARY

The Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS) was commissioned by Union Railways (South) Limited (URS) to undertake an archaeological evaluation, sitecode ARC SCC 98, between the 26th and 28th August 1998 and on 29th September 1998 on land to the south of the A2 in the parish of Cobham, Kent (Figure 1). The evaluation trenches were laid out in two blocks; Area 1 (eastern) and Area 2 (western). Area 1 (trenches 3395TT, 3396TT and 3588TT) was centred on URS grid 48045/49533 and sited between Brewers Road and the south side of the A2. Area 2 (trenches 3392TT and 3393TT) was centred on URS grid 47260/49705 and sited to the west of St Thomas's Well in a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (Figure 2).

Geologically, the evaluation was sited on Woolwich and Blackheath Beds.

An ecological plant survey of the SSSI (trenches 3392TT and 3393TT) was undertaken on 21st September and no listed or protected plants were noted in the area of trenches or spoil heaps.

One prehistoric pit was located in trench 3588TT. On the basis of several worked flints and one pottery sherd, this pit possibly belonged to the Bronze Age. This date compares to the Bronze Age activity recorded at Cobham Golf Course (ARC CGC 98) located approximately 1km to the east.

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SECTION 1: FACTUAL STATEMENT

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 The Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS) was commissioned by Union Railways (South) Limited (URS) to undertake an archaeological evaluation, sitecode ARC SCC 98, between the 26th and 28th August 1998 and on 29th September 1998 on land to the south of the A2 in the parish of Cobham, Kent. The evaluation trenches were laid out in two blocks; Area 1 (eastern) and Area 2 (western). Area 1 (trenches 3395TT, 3396TT and 3588TT) was centred on URS grid 48045/49533 and sited between Brewers Road and the A2. Area 2 (trenches 3392TT and 3393TT) was centred on URS grid 47260/49705 and sited to the west of St Thomas's Well in a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (Figures 1 and 2). An ecological plant survey of the SSSI (trenches 3392TT and 3393TT) was undertaken on 21st September and no listed or protected plants were noted in the area of trenches or spoil heaps.
- 1.1.2 The evaluation was originally to be carried out in three separate areas but a single trench (3304TT renumbered 3394TT; 48400/49575), situated directly to the east of Brewers Gate site (ARC BG 98) was not excavated due to dense vegetation.
- 1.1.3 The works formed part of a larger programme of archaeological investigation along the route of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL), the aim of which was to assess the effect of construction upon the cultural heritage of Kent. An Environmental Assessment for the project has been prepared (URL 1994). The evaluation was within route window 16.
- 1.1.4 Evaluation ARC SCC 98 consisted of five trial trenches numbered: 3395TT, 3396TT and 3588TT (Area 1) 3392TT and 3393TT (Area 2).
- 1.1.5 The work was carried out in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation, prepared by RLE on behalf of URS, detailing the scope and methods of the evaluation, including this report. Grid co-ordinates illustrated in all figures or written in the text relate to the Channel Tunnel Rail Link Project Grid unless otherwise stated. The two areas of the evaluation are shown on Figure 2.

1.2 Geology, landscape and landuse

- 1.2.1 The evaluation overlies Woolwich and Blackheath Beds (URS geology map 4 of North Kent). The surface geology was recorded as orange brown sandy pebbly silt recorded as [3] in 3395TT, [5] in 3396TT, [10] and [7] in 3588TT, [13] in 3393TT and [15] in 3392TT.
- 1.2.2 Subsoil consisted of pale yellow sand with moderate rounded flint pebbles recorded as [2] in 3395TT, [4] in 3396TT, [6] in 3588TT, [12] in 3393TT and [14] in 3392TT.
- 1.2.3 A dark grey brown sandy silt topsoil numbered [1] in Area 1, [11] and [12] in Area 2, sealed all trench sequences.
- 1.2.4 In Area 1 current ground level was between 111.49m Ordnance Datum (OD hereafter) and 112.82m OD. In Area 2 ground level was around 109.10m OD. To the west of Area 2 ground level dropped fairly steeply toward Singlewell.
- 1.2.5 Modern agriculture was being practised on Area 1. Area 2 is placed in a clearing in woodland.

2 SPECIFICATIONS

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 In general the works aimed to provide information to determine:

- the presence / absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains within the area of the evaluation;
- the presence and potential of environmental and economic indicators preserved in any archaeological features or deposits;
- the local, regional, national and international importance of such remains, and the potential for further archaeological fieldwork to fulfil local, regional and national research objectives.

2.1.2 Specifically the works aimed to:

- to extend archaeological knowledge in the area to the west of the URS excavations of Roman Watling Street (ARC WS 98) and Cobham Golf Course (ARC CGC 98).

3 METHODS

3.1 General

3.1.1 A detailed Written Scheme of Investigation for the evaluation was prepared by URS and agreed with the County Archaeologist and English Heritage. The following text is intended only to amplify certain aspects of the evaluation methodology.

3.2 Survey

3.2.1 The trench locations were located by MoLAS surveyors, based on a trench location plan supplied by URS (drawing numbers 330-DGH-04525-62052-AA and 330-DGH-04430-62051-AA).

- From drawing 330-DGH-04525-62052-AA trench 3303TT was renumbered 3588TT and trench 3304TT was renumbered 3394TT and was not excavated.
- From drawing 330-DGH-04430-62051-AA trench 3392TT was moved 40m to the east and positioned to the south of 3393TT.

3.2.2 The trenches were accurately positioned using a total station and datalogger, traversing off the URS survey control. The trenches were marked out with pegs on the western side of a north to south trench or the southern side of an east to west trench,

3.2.3 The trenches have been plotted on Figure 2 from digital information provided by URS using an AutoCAD graphics programme. The trenches are located on the URS site grid.

3.2.4 Archaeological features were planned at 1:20, taking as a grid the line between the two survey pegs used to mark out the trial trench. Trench sections were sketched and later drawn at 1:100. An archaeological profile was drawn at 1:20.

3.3 Excavation

3.3.1 Five trenches were excavated in total. Trenches 3395TT, 3396TT and 3588TT were excavated using a 360° tracked excavator fitted with a ditching bucket 1.60m wide. Trenches 3392TT and 3393TT were excavated using a JCB 3CX fitted with a ditching bucket 1.50m wide. Topsoil and subsoil were removed to expose deposits or features of archaeological significance or, if absent, the underlying geological strata. Trenches were deepened to c. 1.20m to test the natural geology.

3.3.2 A sample area at each end of all the trenches was hand cleaned to ensure that the stratigraphy could be accurately recorded.

3.3.3 An archaeological feature in the form of a small pit was hand cleaned and fully excavated. Pottery and struck flints were recovered (Appendices 1 and 2).

3.4 Recording

3.4.1 Recording was by the standard Museum of London single context recording system. All deposits in all trenches were numbered separately except topsoil in Area 1 which was consistently numbered [1]. A trench sheet was completed for each trench, on the reverse of which a sketch plan and section (of the entire trench) was drawn using metric measurements and OD heights.

- 3.4.2 The archaeological feature was drawn in plan and profile at 1:20.
- 3.4.3 For all trenches OD heights were established, each trench having a Temporary Bench Mark incorporated onto one of the survey marker pegs.
- 3.4.4 A photographic record of the evaluation was compiled of the excavated archaeological feature, cleaned sections and excavated trenches.

4 RESULTS

4.1 General

4.1.1 The evaluation was sited on Woolwich and Blackheath Beds.

4.1.2 A pit was located in 3588TT, 0.76m down, beneath topsoil and subsoil. Only the lower 0.27m of the pit survived, it appeared that the upper parts have been truncated by medieval/post-medieval plough action. Finds from the pit (pottery and struck flints) appeared to date to the ?Neolithic/Bronze Age.

5 TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS

AREA 1 (Eastern)

5.1 Trench 3395TT (Figure 2)

5.1.1 Levels and stratigraphic sequence:

- Topsoil [1] at 112.62m OD
- Orange brown silty clay [2] at 112.30m OD
- Light yellow sands [3] at 112.00m OD

5.2 Trench 3396TT (Figure 2)

5.2.1 Levels and stratigraphic sequence:

- Topsoil [1] at 111.05m OD
- Orange brown silty clay [4] at 110.72m OD
- Orange brown sandy clay and flint [5] at 110.51m OD

5.3 Trench 3588TT (Figures 2, 3 and 4)

5.3.1 Levels and stratigraphic sequence summary:

- Topsoil [1] at 111.77m OD
- Orange brown silty clay [6] at 111.48m OD
- Pale yellow sands [7] at 111.01m OD
- Pit [9] filled with [8] at 111.01m OD
- Orange brown sandy clay and flint [5] at 111.01m OD

5.3.2 Geological layer [5] was fairly level at 111.01m OD. In the eastern part of the trench layer [5] was overlain by a thin layer of natural sand [7]

5.3.3 In the western part of the trench layer [5] was cut by truncated oval pit [9] (dimensions: 0.64m x 0.45m x 0.27m deep). The pit was filled with an orange brown silty sand with moderate flint pebbles [8]. Prehistoric pottery and struck flints (possibly dating to the Bronze Age) were recovered from the fill. It is likely that the upper parts of pit [9] have been truncated by later plough action.

5.3.4 Sealing pit fill [8] and sand layer [7] was pale yellow brown silty clay [6], 0.47m thick. Evidence from pit [9] implies that layer [6] has been plough disturbed.

5.3.5 Topsoil [1] capped the sequence.

AREA 2 (*Western*)

5.4 **Trench 3392TT** (Figure 2)

5.4.1 Levels and stratigraphic sequence:

- Topsoil [11] at 110.07m OD
- Light grey brown silty sand with frequent flints [12] at 109.89m OD
- Mid yellow brown silty sand [13] at 109.56m OD

5.5 **Trench 3393TT** (Figure 2)

5.5.1 Levels and stratigraphic sequence:

- Topsoil [11] at 108.93m OD
- Light brown to yellow grey silty sand with frequent flints [14] at 108.77m OD
- Mid yellow brown silty sand [15] at 108.54m OD

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORIES

6.1 Table 1: Events dataset

EVENT_NAME:Scalers Hill to Cobham - Area 22
EVENT_CODE:ARC SCC 98
EVENT_TYPE:Evaluation
CONTRACTOR:Museum of London Archaeology Service
DATE:26/8/98-28/8/98, 29/9/98
GRID: 48045/49533 and 47260/49705 (URS Grid)
PROJECT:CTRL
COUNTY:Kent
DISTRICT:Gravesham
PARISH:Cobham CP
SMR:KentSMR
SITE_TYPE:Cultivated Land 3, operations to a depth >0.25m
PERIOD:Neolithic/Bronze Age
METHOD:Mechanical removal of topsoil; hand excavation and recording of sections of archaeological features.
PHASING:Neolithic/Bronze Age
ENVIRON:None
FINDS:Pottery and four worked flints
GEOLOGY: Woolwich and Blackheath Beds
CONTEXT_NUM:15 (+5 TRENCH SHEETS)
THREAT:CTRL
SAMPLE:0.6%
SUMMARY:One pit which contained prehistoric pottery and struck flints.
ARCHIVE:Stored by URS at Aylesford
ACC_NUM:

6.2 Table 2: Archaeological context inventory

TRENCH_URS	CONTEXT	TYPE	PERIOD	ASSOCIATION	RES_I NT	COMMENTS
3395TT	1	Deposit				Topsoil
3396TT	1	Deposit				Topsoil
3588TT	1	Deposit				Topsoil
3395TT	2	Deposit				Subsoil
3395TT	3	Deposit				Natural sand
3396TT	4	Deposit				Ploughsoil
3396TT	5	Deposit				Natural clay, sand & flint
3588TT	6	Deposit				Disturbed natural sand
3588TT	7	Deposit				Natural sand
3588TT	8	Deposit		9		Pit fill
3588TT	9	Cut		8		Pit cut
3588TT	10	Deposit				Natural clay, sand & flint
3392TT	11	Deposit				Topsoil
3393TT	11	Deposit				Topsoil
3392TT	12	Deposit				Subsoil
3392TT	13	Deposit				Natural
3393TT	14	Deposit				Subsoil
3393TT	15	Deposit				Natural

SECTION 2: STATEMENT OF IMPORTANCE

7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Extent of archaeological deposits

7.1.1 One small pit was located in 3588TT.

7.2 Nature of archaeological deposits

7.2.1 Small pit cutting natural geological layers, sealed by plough disturbed subsoil.

7.3 Character of the site

7.3.1 The site is characterised by a small pit that may date to the Bronze Age. Pottery and struck flints from the pit fill may indicate a degree of occupation in the area.

7.4 Date of occupation

7.4.1 The pottery sherd could only be identified as prehistoric but four worked flints have been dated to the ?Neolithic/Bronze Age.

8 IMPORTANCE OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS

8.1 Survival and conditions

- 8.1.1 The pit appeared to have been truncated by medieval/post-medieval ploughing of the overlying layer. Original prehistoric land surfaces appear to have been lost.

8.2 Period

- 8.2.1 Pottery from the single pit could only be identified as 'prehistoric' but four worked flints probably date to the ?Neolithic/Bronze Age.

8.3 Rarity

- 8.3.1 Pits dating to the Bronze Age are relatively rare. However, similar dated pits have also been located at URS excavation Cobham Golf Course (ARC CGC 98) situated approximately 1km to the east of ARC SCC 98.

8.4 Fragility and vulnerability

- 8.4.1 It is likely that archaeological remains would be liable to damage or destruction due to construction activity.

8.5 Diversity

- 8.5.1 The site portrayed a lack a diversity.

8.6 Documentation

- 8.6.1 There is no documentation for archaeological finds relating directly to the site.

8.7 Group value

- 8.7.1 Pits dating to the Bronze Age have also been located at URS excavation at Cobham Golf Course (ARC CGC 98) situated 1km to the east of ARC SCC 98.

8.8 Potential

- 8.8.1 A single prehistoric pit was located in the evaluation and has little potential beyond noting the presence of activity in the locality.

9 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Archaeological Site Manual (MoLAS)

MoLAS, 1997

Method Statement for the Provision of Archaeological Investigations: Packages 1- 4, Part I: Generic Method Statement (MoLAS)

URL, 1994

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URL, 1997

Agreement for the Provision of Archaeological Investigations (URL)

URL, 1997, Cobham Park Golf Course, Cobham, Kent

Archaeological Evaluation Report (Prepared for URL by OAU)

APPENDIX 1**POTTERY***By Louise Rayner with Jon Cotton***1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The evaluation at Scalers Hill (ARC SCC 98) produced a total of one sherd (6g) of prehistoric date. The pottery was examined using a x20 binocular microscope and recorded using standard MoLAS codes on pro-forma sheets. Quantification of the material was by sherd count and weight. Pottery was recorded from context [8] 3588TT.

2 FABRICS

- 2.1 The sherd is tempered with burnt, crushed flint, ill-sorted and coarse in size. The fabric is reduced to dark grey-black.

3 ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL AND FURTHER WORK

- 3.1 Prehistoric pottery being hand made and less uniform in appearance need a certain group size to be recognised as age specific. The small group of one sherd results in an assemblage that is of minimal potential.

3.2 Table 3: Bulk dataset, pottery

CONTEXT	MATERIAL	COUNT	WEIGHT	COMMENTS
8	POTTERY	1	6g	Prehistoric

APPENDIX 2**FLINTS**

By Jonathan Cotton

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 Four pieces of struck flint were recovered from context [8], fill of pit [9], comprising one blade with traces of utilisation along one long edge; one squat flake; and two distal fragments. They were probably struck during Neolithic or Bronze Age.
- 1.2 The raw material comprises both chalk and gravel derived flint, suggesting that diverse sources were locally available.

2 TABLE 4: BULK DATASET, FLINTS

CONTEXT	MATERIAL	COUNT	WEIGHT	COMMENTS
8	FLINT	4	17.4	?Neolithic/ Bronze Age: 1 blade, 1 flake, 2 distal frags

Site Name: Area 22, Scalers Hill to Cobham			
Site code: ARC SCC 98			
Summary:			
An evaluation of five trenches, commissioned by Union Railways Limited, was carried out by the Museum of London Archaeology Service in August and September 1998 at Scalers Hill, near Cobham, Kent.			
District: Gravesham		Parish: Cobham CP	
Period(s): 1. ?Neolithic/Bronze Age			
NGR Easting 568100		NGR Northing 169600	
Type of Recording:	Evaluation	Watching-Brief	Field-Walking
(Delete)	Excavation	Geophysical Survey	Measured Survey
Date of Recording: (From) 26/08/1998		(To) 29/09/1998	
Unit Undertaking Recording:			
Museum of London Archaeology Service, Walker House, 87 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4V 4AB			
Summary of Field Results:			
One shallow, oval shaped pit (0.64m by 0.45m), containing four struck flints and one fragment of prehistoric pottery, was recorded.			
Location of Archive/Finds:		URS archive at Aylesford	
Bibliography:		Evaluation report	
Summary Compiler: Niall Roycroft		Date: 3/6/1999	