

**CHANNEL TUNNEL RAIL LINK
UNION RAILWAYS (SOUTH) LIMITED**

**Archaeological Evaluation at Sandway Road (ARC SWR98),
Nr Sandway, Kent
Environmental Statement Route Window 26**

FINAL FIELDWORK REPORT

30th June 1999

**Contract no. URS/400/ARC/0001
WA Report no. 45992b**

Wessex Archaeology

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Volume 1 of 1

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CHANNEL TUNNEL RAIL LINK UNION RAILWAYS (SOUTH) LIMITED

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Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	1
	1.1 Project Background	1
	1.2 Site Description, Topography, Geology and Hydrology.....	1
	1.3 Methods.....	2
	1.4 Variations.....	2
2	RESULTS	3
	2.1 General.....	3
	2.2 Stratigraphy.....	3
	2.3 Structural Reports	4
	2.4 Other trenches	5
	2.5 Artefactual Reports.....	6
	2.6 Environmental Reports	8
3	CONCLUSIONS.....	9
	3.1 Extent of Archaeological Remains.....	9
	3.2 Nature of the Archaeological Remains.....	9
	3.3 Character of Site	9
	3.4 Site Chronology	10
4	IMPORTANCE OF REMAINS.....	10
	4.1 Scheduled Monument Criteria	10
	4.2 Period	10
	4.3 Rarity.....	10
	4.4 Documentation	10
	4.5 Group Value	11
	4.6 Survival/ Condition	11
	4.7 Fragility/ Vulnerability.....	11
	4.8 Diversity	11
	4.9 Potential	11
	4.10 Discussion.....	12
5	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	14

TABLES

Table 1:	Correlation of Plot and Trench numbers	2
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1:	Context Inventory	15
Appendix 2:	Artefact Quantification	17
Appendix 3:	Ecofact Quantification	18

FIGURES (after Appendices)

Figure 1:	Site location
Figure 2:	Trench layout summarising presence of archaeological remains
Figure 3:	Plans and sections of trenches 3577TT and 3632TT

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Executive Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Union Railways (South) Limited (URS) to carry out an archaeological evaluation of a site on the Sandway Road, between the villages of Harrietsham to the north-west and Sandway to the south-east (centred on URL grid point 68000 31500, NGR grid point TQ 88000 51500).

The evaluation revealed a stratigraphic sequence comprising ploughsoil, colluvium and *in situ* natural sands. The colluvium included occasional worked flint, charcoal flecks and very occasional sherds of Bronze and Iron Age pottery. Four archaeological features were recorded, comprising a probable tree-throw that may be dated to the Middle Neolithic, a ditch and pit of probable Middle/Late Bronze Age date and an undated possible hearth. The features were concentrated in two adjacent trenches to the north-east of Sandway Road, and may therefore indicate a focus for prehistoric activity. A geophysical anomaly previously identified could not be associated with archaeological remains during the evaluation.

FACTUAL STATEMENT

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Union Railways (South) Limited (URS) to carry out an archaeological evaluation of a site on the Sandway Road, to the north-west of the village of Sandway near Lenham (centred on URL grid point 68000 31500, NGR grid point TQ 88000 51500; **Figure 1**). The site is known as **Sandway Road** (site code ARC SWR98, Environmental Statement Route Window 26).

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 1994) and geophysical survey (URL 1996).

1.1.3 The fieldwork was conducted in accordance with a written *Agreement for the Provision of Archaeological Services* (URS 1999), agreed with the County Archaeologist and English Heritage. The evaluation was commissioned in part on the basis of the results of the geophysical survey, which identified an anomaly of possible archaeological interest towards the east edge of the site (URL 1996, 3 and fig. 51).

1.1.4 The fieldwork was carried out between 6th January and 13th January 1999.

1.2 Site Description, Topography, Geology and Hydrology

1.2.1 The approximately subrectangular site comprised the southern portions of two adjacent fields (Plots 1 and 2) to the north-east of Sandway Road and the north-west corner of a field (Plot 3) to the south-west of Sandway Road, covering a total area of *c.* 4 hectares (**Figure 2**). At the time of the evaluation Plot 1 had been ploughed but not planted, Plot 2 was used for sheep grazing and Plot 3 contained a sprouting arable crop (oats).

1.2.2 Topographically, the site occupies a west-facing slope overlooking a small unnamed tributary of the River Len. The ground surface of this slope within the site limits descends from *c.* 110 m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) to *c.* 93 m aOD.

1.2.3 The underlying solid geology comprises Cretaceous Lower Greensand Folkestone Sand Beds, with more recent drift alluvium mapped along the course of the River Len to the south-west (Ordnance Survey 1977).

1.2.4 As noted above, the site is located to the east of a south-flowing unnamed stream feeding into the upper reaches of the River Len, which in turn converges to the west-north-west with the River Medway at Maidstone.

1.3 Methods

1.3.1 As noted above (paragraph 1.1.3), the fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the *Agreement for the Provision of Archaeological Services* (URS 1999), which defined the scope, aims and methods for the evaluation. This methodology will not be repeated in full here, although a brief summary is reiterated 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 1.80 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.*

1.3.2 The evaluation originally comprised eight machine trenches (3574TT – 3581TT), each measuring 30 m by 1.8 m (**Figure 2**), with trench 3577TT widened and an additional trench (3632TT) excavated during the course of the fieldwork (see **Variations** below).

1.3.3 For ease of reference, the evaluation area was divided into three identifiable fields, or plots (**Figure 2**). Trenches within each plot are tabulated below (**Table 1**).

Table 1: Correlation of Plot and Trench numbers

Plot number	Trenches
Plot 1	3575TT, 3577TT
Plot 2	3579TT, 3580TT, 3581TT, 3632TT
Plot 3	3574TT, 3576TT, 3578TT

1.4 Variations

1.4.1 The following agreed variations were actioned during the course of the fieldwork.

- *An additional trench 3632TT measuring 30 m by 1.8 m excavated within Plot 2, parallel and 12 m to the south-east of trench 3577TT in Plot 1.*

- *A rectangular extension to trench 3577TT measuring 3.7 m by 7.5 m excavated, adjoining the north-west side of, and hence recorded as part of trench 3577TT.*

2 RESULTS

2.1 General

2.1.1 In summary, nine evaluation trenches were excavated within the three defined plots (**Figure 2**), revealing four archaeological features concentrated around trenches 3577TT and 3632TT. These include a Middle Neolithic tree throw (trench 3577TT **357705**), a Middle Bronze Age ditch (trench 3577TT **357703**) and Middle/Late Bronze Age shallow pit (trench 3632TT **363208**) and an undated possible hearth (trench 3632TT **363204**).

2.1.2 A number of other potential archaeological features were either hand- or machine-investigated during the course of the evaluation. These were demonstrated to be natural variations in the geology of the area, and were hence not further recorded.

2.1.3 In addition, colluvial layers were recorded across the site, and in particular towards the foot of the slopes in all three plots. Small quantities of Bronze Age and Iron Age pottery and worked flint were recovered from the colluvium.

2.1.4 A context inventory (by trench) is provided in **Appendix 1**, whilst 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:

- *Cretaceous Folkestone Sand*
- *Colluvium*
- *Modern topsoil*

Folkestone Sand

2.2.2 The *in situ* deposit recorded at the base of all trenches. Although generally inclusion-free and yellow in colour, some trenches exhibited darker slightly brownish yellow bands as well as pockets of flint gravel.

Colluvium

2.2.3 Colluvium was recorded in all trenches with the exception of trench 3577TT, ranging in thickness between 0.15 m and 0.60 m and tending to be thickest towards the bottom of the slope in each plot. The deposit generally consisted of yellowish brown silty sand with occasional small subangular flint gravel. It also contained a small quantity of Bronze Age (trench 3579TT) and Iron Age (trench 3575TT) pottery as well as worked flint and charcoal flecks.

Topsoil

- 2.2.4 In general, topsoil encountered was between 0.15 and 0.30 m thick and consisted of dark greyish brown silty sand with occasional flint gravel.

2.3 Structural Reports

Trench 3577TT (Figure 3)

- 2.3.1 Tree throw **357705** comprised an irregular slightly 'S'-shaped elongated discrete feature aligned approximately south-south-west to north-north-east. It was *c.* 4 m long, up to 1 m wide and 0.3 m deep, with an asymmetrical profile comprising a steep west side and a moderate concave east side. The single fill of this feature (fill 357706) comprised a yellowish brown slightly loamy silty sand with generally occasional small subangular flint gravel, tending towards frequent towards the steeper west side. The fill produced worked flint and Middle Neolithic pottery (12 sherds), as well as one sherd which may be Iron Age in date (and therefore possibly intrusive). On the basis of its morphology, it is likely that this feature represents a tree throw, although the quantity of pottery is high for such a feature.

- 2.3.2 Ditch **357703** was aligned approximately south-east to north-west, passing to the north of feature **357705** on a slightly curving route (concave side to the south-west), and was *c.* 1.2 m wide and 0.7 m deep. The upper portion of this ditch (filled with 357704) had moderate to steep concave sides, above a very steep sided lower portion with a narrow rounded base (filled with 357708). Fill 357704 comprised a dark reddish brown silty sand containing moderate small subangular and subrounded flint gravel and occasional ironstone fragments, and produced both worked and burnt flint, as well as a large assemblage of Middle Bronze Age pottery (76 sherds) and a piece of saddle quernstone. Primary fill 357708 comprised a yellowish brown silty sand with occasional to moderate generally subangular flint gravel, and also produced a few sherds of Middle/Late Bronze Age pottery and worked flint. No evidence was recorded to indicate the location of an associated upcast bank, or any other form of barrier, such as a palisade.

Trench 3632TT (Figure 3)

- 2.3.3 Pit **363208** comprised a subcircular feature *c.* 1.1 m in diameter and 0.2 m deep, with shallow concave sides and a rounded base. It was filled with fill 363207, a yellowish brown charcoal-flecked silty sand that contained both Middle/Late Bronze Age and a sherd of Iron Age pottery (which may be intrusive), as well as worked flint.
- 2.3.4 Hearth **363204** was only observed in the north-west trench section. The section exposed indicated a shallow concave-sided pit measuring *c.* 1 m in diameter and 0.25 m deep containing a single charcoal-rich fill of silty sand (fill 363203) containing no artefacts. The interpretation of this feature as a hearth is based on the substantial charcoal component of the fill, although no evidence for *in situ* burning was recorded.

2.4 Other trenches

Trench 3574TT

- 2.4.1 The stratigraphic sequence revealed within this trench comprised 0.30 m of mid to dark brown slightly clayey silt topsoil (357401) with rare small subangular flint gravel, overlying a 0.14 m thick colluvium comprising mid brown clayey silt (357402). The basal *in situ* mixed gravelly sand (357403) was observed at the base of a geotechnic pit through layer 357402.

Trench 3575TT

- 2.4.2 The stratigraphic sequence revealed within this trench comprised 0.30 m of dark greyish brown clayey silt topsoil (357501) with frequent small to medium subangular flint gravel. This overlay 0.30 m of slightly greyish brown slightly clayey silty sand colluvium (357502) with occasional small subangular flint gravel, containing one sherd of Iron Age pottery. The basal *in situ* deposit comprised a mottled brown, yellowish brown and yellow silty sand (357503) with rare small subangular flint gravel.

Trench 3576TT

- 2.4.3 The stratigraphic sequence revealed within this trench comprised 0.24 m of strong brown sandy loam topsoil (357601) with rare small subrounded flint gravel, overlying 0.12 m of dark brown sandy loam colluvium (357602) with rare small subangular flint gravel. The *in situ* deposit recorded at the base of this trench comprised a brownish yellow fine sand (357604) with frequent large patches of brownish yellow sandy mixed flint gravel (357604).

Trench 3578TT

- 2.4.4 The stratigraphic sequence revealed within this trench comprised 0.16 m of mid to dark brown silty sand topsoil (357801) with moderate small to medium subangular flint gravel, overlying 0.10 m of dark brown slightly silty sand colluvium (357802) with very occasional small subangular flint gravel. The basal *in situ* deposit comprised a mottled yellowish brown and yellow sandy mixed flint gravel (357803).

Trench 3579TT

- 2.4.5 The stratigraphic sequence revealed within this trench comprised 0.31 m of brown sandy loam topsoil (357901) with occasional small to medium subangular flint gravel, overlying 0.15 m of yellowish brown loamy sand colluvium (357902) with occasional small subangular flint gravel and rare natural iron concretions. Colluvium 357902 also produced four worked flint flakes, one fragment of undiagnostic ceramic building material and one sherd of Mid to Late Bronze Age pottery. The basal *in situ* deposit was exposed within a geotechnic pit, and comprised a mottled reddish brown and yellowish brown sand (357903) with very rare small subangular flint gravel.

Trench 3580TT

- 2.4.6 The stratigraphic sequence revealed within this trench comprised 0.32 m of dark slightly reddish brown sandy loam topsoil (358001) with occasional small subangular flint gravel, overlying 0.12 m of slightly reddish brown sandy loam colluvium (358002) with very occasional small subangular flint gravel. Layer 358002 sealed primary colluvium 358003, a reddish brown

silty sand with lenses of pure yellow sand, overlying the basal *in situ* deposit which comprised a slightly reddish yellow sand (358004).

Trench 3581TT

- 2.4.7 The stratigraphic sequence revealed within this trench comprised 0.14 m of pale greyish brown sandy loam topsoil (358101) with occasional small to medium subangular flint gravel, overlying 0.51 m of yellowish brown slightly clayey silty sand colluvium (358102) with very occasional small subangular flint gravel. The latter deposit also produced a comparatively large assemblage (i.e. 13 pieces) of worked flint (including one scraper), examples of which would not be out of place in an early prehistoric (Mesolithic/Neolithic) assemblage. The basal *in situ* deposit comprised a fine yellow sand (358103) with frequent mixed flint gravel spreads.

2.5 Artefactual Reports

by Lorraine Mephram

- 2.5.1 A small quantity of artefactual material, in a limited range of material types, was recovered from five trenches. Finds totals, by material type and by context, and including finds extracted from soil samples, are given in **Appendix 2**. The potential date range of material recovered is prehistoric to post-medieval.

Pottery

- 2.5.2 The small pottery assemblage (97 sherds) includes material of early prehistoric, later prehistoric and post-medieval date. The earliest material is represented by 12 body sherds from one context (trench 3577TT 357706), in coarse, flint-tempered fabrics, including decorated rim and body sherds diagnostic of the Peterborough Ware ceramic tradition of the Middle Neolithic. At least three vessels are represented, in two different Peterborough Ware sub-styles: two Mortlake Ware vessels with expanded rims, twisted cord impressed decoration over the rim and one with finger impressions around the neck; and a smaller, pointed rim decorated with fingernail impressions. The latter is more characteristic of either the Ebbsfleet or Fengate sub-styles.
- 2.5.3 Sherds which have been dated to the Middle Bronze Age make up the bulk of the pottery assemblage; this group consists of 76 sherds from a single context (trench 3577TT 357704). Six of the sherds are in coarse flint-tempered fabrics, and the remaining 70 in finer fabrics with well sorted flint temper. Such fabrics, both fine and coarse, are commonly found within the Deverel-Rimbury ceramic tradition of the Middle Bronze Age, the coarse fabrics deriving from bucket or barrel urns and the finer fabrics from globular urns. In this instance the finer flint-tempered sherds may represent a single vessel, and include rim and body sherds from a globular urn of rounded form with simple, slightly in-turned rim and decorated with a band of impressed and shallow tooled decoration around the neck.
- 2.5.4 Five further sherds, all small and abraded, and all in coarse flint-tempered fabrics (trench 3577TT 357708; trench 3579TT 357902; trench 3632TT

363207) are less diagnostic and are here dated broadly to the Middle/Late Bronze Age.

- 2.5.5 Four plain body sherds, all in moderately coarse sandy fabrics, two with fine flint inclusions, have been tentatively dated to the Iron Age (trench 3575TT 357502; trench 3577TT 357701 and 357706; trench 3632TT 363207), although none are sufficiently diagnostic for closer dating within this period.
- 2.5.6 Three sherds are all of post-medieval date, comprising two glazed redwares (trench 3575TT 357501; trench 3581TT 358101) and one white salt glaze (trench 3579TT 357901).

Worked Flint

- 2.5.7 The worked flint includes little that is chronologically distinctive. The majority of the assemblage consists of flake and core material, unpatinated or lightly patinated, and varying in condition from fresh to slightly edge-damaged. The raw material is likely to derive from a local gravel source. Two scrapers were noted (trench 3581TT 358102; trench 3577TT 357704). In the absence of diagnostic pieces, a broad date range of Neolithic to Bronze Age is suggested for this material. The contemporaneity of one small group with Middle Bronze Age pottery from the same context (trench 3577TT 357704) would not be out of place.
- 2.5.8 There is, however, a recognisable early prehistoric (Mesolithic/Neolithic) component within the assemblage, represented by blade and blade core material. This appears to occur mainly as residual pieces in chronologically mixed groups (trench 3581TT 358102; trench 3579TT 357902; trench 3632TT 363207).
- 2.5.9 A small group found with Middle Neolithic pottery (trench 3577TT 357706) is likely to be contemporary with the pottery and includes a probable microdenticulate.

Burnt Flint

- 2.5.10 Burnt, unworked flint was also recovered in very small quantities (trench 3577TT 357701 and 357704; trench 3632TT 363203). This material type is intrinsically undateable, but is often taken as an indicator of prehistoric activity.

Ceramic Building Material

- 2.5.11 Of the twelve fragments of ceramic building material recovered, six are roof tile fragments in soft, fine heavily abraded fabrics; all are from handmade tiles and although not particularly diagnostic could, on the grounds of fabric, be dated to the medieval period (trench 3577TT 357701; trench 3579TT, 357901; trench 3581TT 358101). The remaining six fragments are small and undiagnostic, and could be either of medieval or post-medieval date (trench 3579TT 357901 and 357902).

Glass

- 2.5.12 One piece of post-medieval green bottle glass was recovered (trench 3579TT 357901).

2.6 Environmental Reports

By Dr M J Allen and S Wyles

Introduction

2.6.1 Three bulk samples of 15 litres each were taken from prehistoric and undated features, and processed for the recovery and assessment of charred plant and charcoal remains. The samples comprised sample 1 (trench 3577TT, Middle Neolithic tree throw **357705**, fill 357706), sample 2 (trench 3577TT, Middle Bronze Age ditch **357703**, fill 357704) and sample 3 (trench 3632TT, undated hearth **363204**, fill 363203).

2.6.2 The bulk samples were processed by standard flotation methods; the flot retained on a 0.5 mm mesh and the residues 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 plant macrofossils quantified (**Appendix 3**), in order to present data to record the preservation and nature of the charred plant and charcoal remains.

Charred Plant Remains

2.6.3 The flots from samples 1 and 2 were small (average flot size for a 10 litre sample is 60 ml) while the flot from sample 3 was exceptionally large. The flots contained between 15 and 70% rooty material and variable quantities of uncharred weed seeds, both of which can be considered indicative of stratigraphic movement. No grain was found, but small quantities of charred weed seeds were recovered in all flots.

Charcoal

2.6.4 Charcoal was noted from the flots of all the bulk samples, with charcoal fragments of greater than 5.6mm retrieved in high numbers from hearth 363204. A few large charcoal fragments were also recovered from the residue resulting from sample 1.

Animal Bone

2.6.5 Animal bone was not recovered from the site, and as with mollusca, is normally poorly preserved in such deposits.

Summary

2.6.6 Evidence of domestic activity in the form of grain or chaff was not recovered from either the Middle Neolithic or Middle Bronze Age samples although neither sampled feature (tree throw and ditch) is ideal for the recovery of such remains. If features more directly related to settlement activity are present then it is likely that the full complement of charred plant remains will be present and preserved. Charred plant remains and charcoal (other than grain or chaff) recovered from the tree throw have the potential to provide important information on the character of the Middle Neolithic woodland on these sandy soils.

STATEMENT OF IMPORTANCE

3 CONCLUSIONS

3.1 Extent of Archaeological Remains

- 3.1.1 The four archaeological features recorded were concentrated in one area in the two adjacent trenches 3577TT and 3632TT, only some 12 m apart. The trenches were located on a slight terrace towards the foot of the slope on which the site was located, overlooking the stream passing to the west of the site.
- 3.1.2 There was a background scatter of prehistoric worked flint and pottery within the colluvial deposits recorded throughout the site, with examples of worked flint (and post-medieval material) also recovered from the topsoil. The worked flint assemblage recovered from topsoil and colluvial deposits, particularly in Plot 2, may be indicative of associated activity towards the top of the slope to the north-east, beyond the limits of the site.
- 3.1.3 It is not possible from the results of this evaluation to relate the isolated geophysical anomaly previously identified (URL 1996, 3 and fig. 51) to archaeological remains.

3.2 Nature of the Archaeological Remains

- 3.2.1 All archaeological features survive as cuts into the upper surface of the *in situ* Folkestone Sand. The Middle Neolithic tree throw and Middle Bronze Age ditch were sealed directly by topsoil whilst the probable Middle/Late Bronze Age pit and undated hearth were sealed by colluvium. Inter-relationships between features were not observed, nor were structural remains identified.
- 3.2.2 Datable finds evidence from the colluvium is ambiguous, but apparently indicates a general prehistoric date for its origin, probably as a result of agricultural practices broadly contemporaneous with the features noted above. Such evidence includes Iron Age pottery from trench 3575TT, Mid to Late Bronze Age pottery from trench 3579TT and largely undiagnostic prehistoric worked flint from trench 3581TT. It should, however, be noted that the Mid to Late Bronze Age pottery was recovered in association with a fragment of undiagnostic ceramic building material that is likely to post-date the pottery.

3.3 Character of Site

- 3.3.1 The body of evidence points to Middle Neolithic and Middle/Late Bronze Age activity concentrated in the area of trenches 3577TT and 3632TT. The evidence for Iron Age and medieval activity is limited to a few fragments of pottery and tile respectively, whilst there is no evidence for Roman or Saxon

activity at the site. The identification of Iron Age pottery should be treated with caution. Post-medieval artefacts were restricted to topsoil contexts.

3.3.2 The steep profile of the Middle Bronze Age ditch, possibly representing an enclosure ditch rather than field boundary, coupled with the quantity of artefacts recovered from its fill, suggests that this ditch is located close to a settlement centre. It is of note that the ditch did not continue from trench 3577TT into trench 3632TT, suggesting that it must either terminate or turn to either the south-west or north-east within the intervening gap of *c.* 12 m.

3.3.3 It is also of note that the recorded features represent four distinct activities/events; falling trees, ditch and pit digging and possibly cooking/heating. On balance the evidence therefore appears to indicate some form of enclosed Middle to Late Bronze Age settlement.

3.4 Site Chronology

3.4.1 Secure chronological indicators demonstrate Middle Neolithic and Middle to Late Bronze Age activity. Iron Age and post-medieval activity at the site is represented by less well-dated pottery. It is also likely that some of the examples of worked flint may be Mesolithic in origin, although insufficient quantities were recovered to be certain. Some of the fragments of ceramic building material recovered from topsoil contexts may be medieval in origin.

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.

4.2 Period

4.2.1 The nature of prehistoric settlement patterns in the area is poorly understood. As such, the Neolithic and Bronze Age features are certainly of local importance.

4.3 Rarity

4.3.1 Although generally the archaeological features recorded during the evaluation are unremarkable, the presence of significant quantities of datable artefacts associated with these features is of note. If, as anticipated, this indicates the proximity of contemporaneous Neolithic and Bronze Age occupation sites, such evidence is comparatively rare in the area.

4.4 Documentation

4.4.1 Prior to the CTRL little had been previously documented regarding the archaeological resource of the site or surrounding area, other than a large

assemblage of Mesolithic flints recovered by Lord Monckton during fieldwalking in fields c. 3 - 400 m to the west of the site.

4.4.2 CTRL investigations within the site limits comprise a geophysical survey of a transect through Plot 2 (ARC SNDW95), which identified an isolated geophysical anomaly (URL 1996, 3 and fig. 51) at the east end of the site.

4.4.3 Beyond the site limits, fieldwalking exercises also in advance of the CTRL were undertaken to the south-west and south-east of the village of Sandway revealing both compact (URL 1994, A69 no. 1346) and diffuse (*op. cit.* no. 1347) scatters (respectively) of prehistoric worked flint. Both scatters contained elements considered to be at least Neolithic in date, with scatter no. 1347 also including a possible Palaeolithic hand axe (URL 1995, 26).

4.5 Group Value

4.5.1 Although the features recorded during the course of the evaluation combine to represent four distinct activities, as noted above, insufficient evidence exists to place these results into a wider landscape. As a group the features would be consistent with settlement evidence.

4.6 Survival/ Condition

4.6.1 Archaeological features recorded during the evaluation survive as shallow cuts in the surface of the natural sand and are sealed by colluvial subsoil and/or topsoil. The subsoil will serve to protect some of these features from present-day ploughing, although it is very likely that all have suffered varying degrees of truncation in the past.

4.7 Fragility/ Vulnerability

4.7.1 The archaeological remains in Plot 2 are already sealed by a colluvial deposit below topsoil, and are therefore protected from further truncation through ploughing to a normal depth. The features in Plot 1, however, are recorded immediately below topsoil, and will be gradually truncated further through ploughing, as downslope movement of ploughsoil reduces the thickness of the overlying topsoil. All features will be impacted by the construction of the CTRL.

4.8 Diversity

4.8.1 Although the four features recorded represent four distinct feature types, the feature types themselves are unremarkable, and are relatively common on rural sites of earlier prehistoric date.

4.9 Potential

Structural

4.9.1 The archaeological features and deposits recorded offer some potential for contributing to the understanding of the nature of Middle Neolithic and Middle/Late Bronze Age settlement and agricultural activity in the area. The

range of feature types identified may be considered indicative of past human activity in the immediate vicinity.

Artefactual

4.9.2 The presence of Middle Neolithic pottery and flint in one context is significant; pottery attributable to this period is not common, and any occurrence, even if not *in situ*, is worthy of note. This material may have derived from an isolated feature (or features) or activity at ground level, rather than indicating the existence of any more complex structural remains. The small group of Middle/Late Bronze Age pottery and flint is also interesting. Both groups of pottery would warrant further limited fabric and form analysis and summary illustrated publication.

4.9.3 Otherwise the small prehistoric pottery and flint assemblage is useful as an indicator of activity in the Middle/Late Bronze Age and possibly Iron Age, but is otherwise of limited significance, and there is little potential for further analysis.

Environmental

4.9.4 The quantification of charred plant remains indicates that a 15 litre sample size is appropriate. Charcoal is present in all samples, indicating pyrotechnic activities probably associated with both the Neolithic and Bronze Ages. The site has demonstrated a potential to recover sufficient quantities of charcoal from which information relating to the nature and management of the local woodland can be gained. If further work is undertaken a standard sampling strategy of examining a range of feature and deposit types, of all phases spatially across the site should be employed.

4.9.5 The recovery of charcoal also has the potential to provide radiocarbon determinations for the associated activities. This is particularly important for the construction and refinements of the Peterborough Ware chronology, in providing absolute dates for the nature of the natural woodland resource exploited at this time.

4.9.6 The presence of colluvium is important in understanding the human impact on the local landscape. This can be achieved by attempting to date any sequences by the presence of included and diagnostic artefacts (i.e. pottery), and detailed pedological and/or sedimentological descriptions of the sequence.

4.10 Discussion

4.10.1 The evaluation has revealed a small number of archaeological features grouped together on a flatter area overlooking a small river to the west, which today passes under the Sandway Road.

4.10.2 Dating evidence suggests that these features may represent both Middle Neolithic and Middle/Late Bronze Age activity, although the possible presence of residual and intrusive material cannot be discounted. The Middle to Late Bronze Age period is the most coherently represented and the

steep sided ditch, shallow pit and possible hearth may combine to indicate settlement activity in the immediate vicinity.

- 4.10.3 The evidence recovered from the colluvium ranges in date from potential Mesolithic flintwork to fragments of probable medieval or later ceramic building material. As such, there does not appear to be a consistent pattern to indicate accelerated downslope movement during any particular period.

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Appendix 1: Context Inventory

Context inventories per trench are provided in stratigraphic order where possible

Associations are restricted to stratigraphic, not physical relationships

CBM = Ceramic Building Material

MNEO = Middle Neolithic; MBA/LBA = Middle/Late Bronze Age; IA = Iron Age; Med = Medieval; Pmed = Post-medieval

Trench	Context	Type	Associations	Finds	No.	Date etc.
3574TT	357401	Topsoil	Seals 357402			
3574TT	357402	Colluvium	Sealed by 357401 Seals 357403			
3574TT	357403	Natural gravelly sand	Sealed by 357402			
3575TT	357501	Topsoil	Seals 357502	Worked flint Pottery	2 1	Pmed
3575TT	357502	Colluvium	Sealed by 357501 Seals 357503	Pottery	1	IA
3575TT	357503	Natural sand	Sealed by 357502			
3576TT	357601	Topsoil	Seals 357602			
3576TT	357602	Colluvium	Sealed by 357601 Seals 357603 and 357604			
3576TT	357603	Natural sandy gravel.	Sealed by 357602 Equivalent to 357604			
3576TT	357604	Natural sand	Sealed by 357602 Equivalent to 357603			
3577TT	357701	Topsoil	Seals 357704 and 357706	Burnt flint CBM Pottery	1 3 1	Med ? IA
3577TT	357704	Upper ditch fill	Sealed by 357701 Seals 357708 Fill of 357703	Burnt flint Worked flint Pottery Stone	3 29 76 2	1 scraper MBA Saddle quernstone
3577TT	357708	Primary ditch fill	Sealed by 357704 Fill of 357703	Worked flint Pottery	1 2	MBA/LBA
3577TT	357703	SE/NW aligned ditch	Filled with 357704 and 357708 Cuts 357702			
3577TT	357706	Upper tree throw fill	Sealed by 357701 Seals 357707 Fill of 357705	Worked flint Pottery	8 13	1 microdentate 12 MNEO, 1 IA
3577TT	357707	Primary tree throw fill	Sealed by 357706 Fill of 357705			
3577TT	357705	SSW/NNE aligned tree throw	Filled with 357706 and 357707 Cuts 357702			
3577TT	357702	Natural gravelly sand	Cut by 357703 and 357705			
3578TT	357801	Topsoil	Seals 357802			
3578TT	357802	Colluvium	Sealed by 357801 Seals 357803			
3578TT	357803	Natural sandy gravel	Sealed by 357802			
3579TT	357901	Topsoil	Seals 357902	CBM Worked flint Glass Pottery	7 3 1 1	Med ? Pmed Pmed
3579TT	357902	Colluvium	Sealed by 357901 Seals by 357903	CBM Worked flint Pottery	1 4 1	MBA/LBA
3579TT	357903	Natural sand	Sealed by 357902			
3580TT	358001	Topsoil	Seals 358002	CBM Pottery	1 1	Med ? Pmed
3580TT	358002	Colluvium	Sealed by 358001 Seals 358002			
3580TT	358003	Colluvium	Sealed by 358002 Seals 358004			
3580TT	358004	Natural sand	Sealed by 358003			

Trench	Context	Type	Associations	Finds	No.	Date etc.
3581TT	358101	Topsoil	Seals 358102			
3581TT	358102	Colluvium	Sealed by 358101 Seals 358103	Worked flint	13	1 scraper
3581TT	358103	Natural gravely sand	Sealed by 358102			
3632TT	363201	Topsoil	Seals 363202			
3632TT	363202	Colluvium	Sealed by 363201 Seals 363203 and 363207			
3632TT	363203	Hearth fill	Sealed by 363202 Fill of 363204			
3632TT	363204	Hearth	Filled with 363203 Cuts 363205			
3632TT	363207	Pit fill	Sealed by 363202 Fill of 363208	Worked flint Pottery	5 3	2 LBA, 1 IA
3632TT	363208	Pit	Filled with 363207 Cuts 363205			
3632TT	363205	Natural sandy gravel	Cut by 363204 and 363208 Seals 363206 and 363209			
3632TT	363209	Natural gravel lens	Sealed by 363205 Equivalent to 363206			
3632TT	363206	Natural sand	Sealed by 363205 Equivalent to 363209			

Appendix 2: Artefact Quantification

Quantities are presented by number/weight in grams

Trench	Context	CBM	Flint	Burnt Flint	MNEO Pottery	MBA/LBA Pottery	IA Pottery	Pmed Pottery	Stone	Glass
3575TT	357501		2/10					1/18		
3575TT	357502						1/5			
3577TT	357701	3/26		1/10			1/12			
3577TT	357704		29/397	3/21		76/542			2/3350	
3577TT	357706		8/29		12/72		1/7			
3577TT	357708		1/10			2/4				
3579TT	357901	7/43	3/76					1/1		1/2
3579TT	357902	1/1	4/12			1/1				
3581TT	358101	1/5						1/60		
3581TT	358102		13/222							
3632TT	363203			2/6						
3632TT	363207		5/22			2/1	1/2			
	TOTAL	12/75	65/778	6/37	12/72	81/548	4/26	3/79	2/3350	1/2

Appendix 3: Ecofact Quantification

Feature	Context	Sample	Size	Flot								Residue
				Flot Size	Roots (ml)	Grain	Chaff	Weed seeds		Charcoal >5.6mm	Other	Charcoal >5.6mm
								Unburnt	Burnt			
Tree throw 357705	357706	1	15 litres	50 ml	7.5	-	-	A	C	B	-	2
Ditch 357703	357704	2	15 litres	25 ml	17.5	-	-	A	B	C	-	-
Hearth 363204	363203	3	15 litres	1 litre	150	-	-	C	C	A*	-	-

Key: A** = exceptional, A* = 30+ items, A = ≥10 items, B = 9 - 5 items, C = < 5 items