



Southampton Archaeology Unit

Report 1176

**Archaeological Watching Brief at 5 Bellevue Road,
Southampton**

SOU 1615

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2014

Client: First Wessex Homes



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Report on Archaeological Investigations at 5 Bellevue Road, Southampton, SOU 1615

By Dr AD Russel BA PhD MIfA

Site code	SOU 1615
Archaeology Unit report	1176
Ordnance Survey grid reference	SU 42114 12694
Historic Environment Team Ref	7344

1. Summary

The Archaeology Unit of Southampton City Council carried out an archaeological watching brief on groundworks for a development by First Wessex Homes. The site was to the north of the medieval town of Southampton in an area where scattered finds from the prehistoric to the medieval period have been made.

The natural gravel was overlain by brickearth. A ploughsoil contained medieval and post-medieval finds and points to agricultural use of the area, which in the late 18th century the site became the grounds of Bellevue House.

Running through the site from north-north-east to south-south-west was a linear feature that appeared to have contained a wooden pipe constructed from tree trunks, long since rotted. It is assumed this was constructed to bring water from a point further north, possibly the pond/spring that once lay at the south end of Asylum Green and was known as Padwell Pond. If the pipeline was continued in a straight line southwards it would pass through the East Marlands common fields and head towards the Bargate, although this would entail passing under a number of private properties.

The wooden pipe had been replaced by a pipeline made of tapering, unglazed ceramic pipes laid in a clay-packed trench. An early post-medieval date is indicated for this previously unknown part of the town's water supply. The route of the pipes does not appear on Doswell's early 19th century map of Southampton's water supply system, which does show wooden pipes in some areas, suggesting all memory of it had been lost by the time that map was drawn up.

In the late 19th century Bellevue Road was developed with substantial terraced houses with basements which had destroyed the archaeology in the north part of the site. The foundations of the terrace included much re-used medieval masonry from a source unknown, but some architectural fragments and a predominance of Quarr stone suggest a 12-13th century date. The terrace was bombed and cleared post-war.

2. Introduction

First Wessex constructed a new centre to replace the 1955 Princess Margaret YWCA Hostel under planning consent 12/00471/FUL at 5 Bellevue Road, Southampton (Fig 1). The Archaeology Unit of Southampton City Council carried out a watching brief on removal of obstruction in January 2013, followed by a watching brief on new foundations in September and October 2013. The archaeology project was managed by Dr AD Russel.

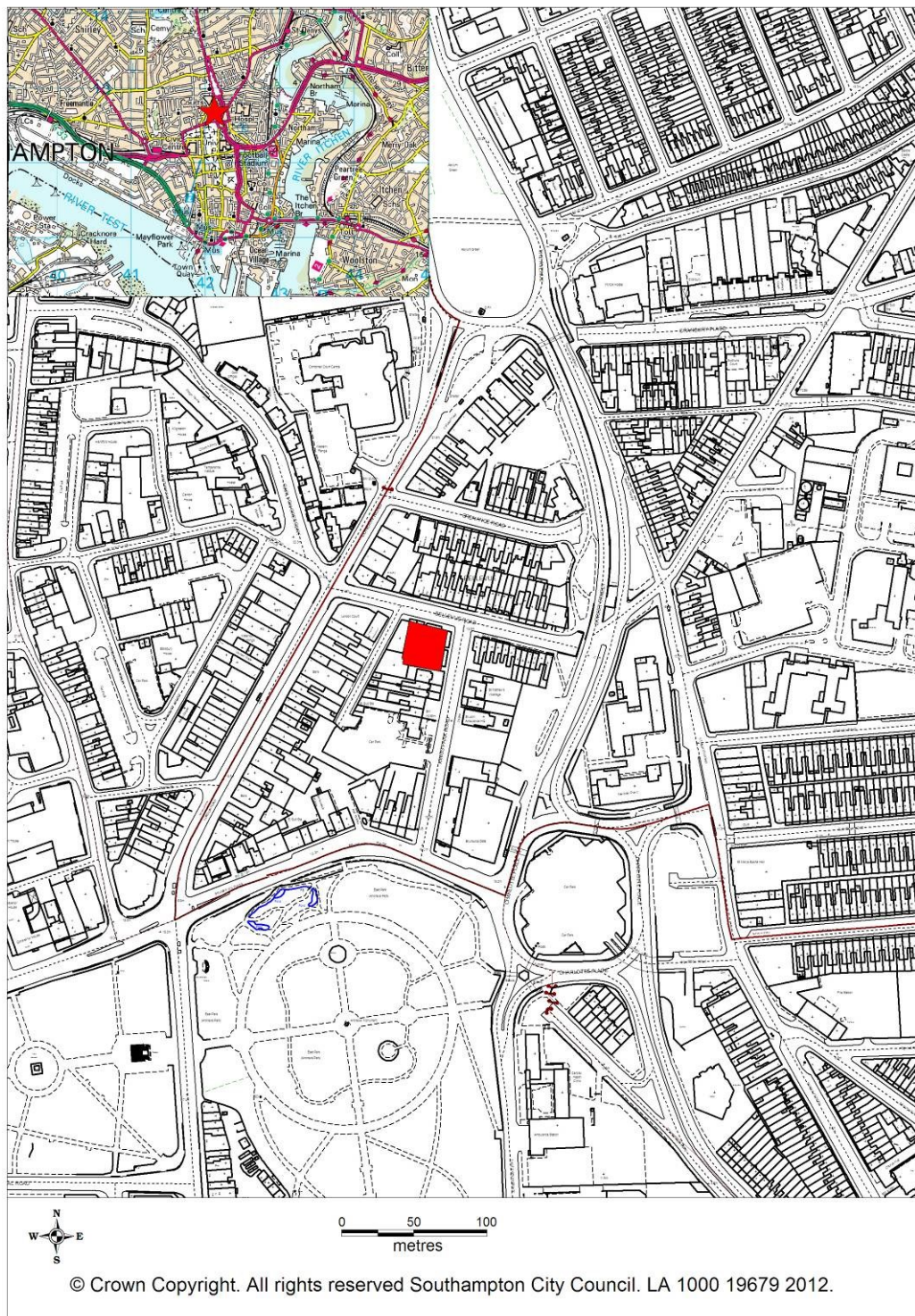


Figure 1: Site location plan

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3. Aims of the Investigation

The aims of the investigation were principally to determine the presence or absence of human use of the area, and the date, type, state of preservation, and extent of that use; to recover associated objects; and to record such evidence as did survive. In addition the nature, dimensions, and relationship of natural deposits were to be noted and recorded (SCCAU 2012).

4. Methodology

The first phase of the watching brief was on the removal of the foundations of the Princess Margaret Hostel in January 2013. A large machine with a toothed bucket was used which hindered observations. Contexts 1-7 were issued. Groundworks that required archaeological observations took place between 30/08/13 and 15/10/13, during which contexts 10 to 29 were issued. The work consisted of foundation trenches excavated with a toothless bucket in good weather which left clean sections. A final stage of watching brief on the gas and water services was planned for April 2014, but comparison of intended levels with known height of surviving archaeology suggested that no damage to the archaeology would occur. Kevin White, Southampton City Council's Historic Environment officer agreed and the watching brief ceased on 2/4/14.

All archaeological records were made using the Southampton City Council archaeological recording system. Context numbers 1–29 were assigned. The colours of deposits were recorded using the Munsell Soil Color Chart and these are used in this report (Munsell Color 2000). Finds were recovered from stratified and unstratified contexts. The archive will be stored by Southampton City Council Museums on completion of the project.

5. Site location, geology and topography

5.1 The site was located on the south of Bellevue Road, on the west side of its junction with King's Park Road, at SU42114 12694 (Figure 1). The Bellevue area consists of a triangle of land with the busy thoroughfare of London Road to the west, the A33 dual carriageway of Dorset Street to the east, and Brunswick Place to the south.

5.2 The geological survey map (Ordnance Survey 1987) shows the site to lie on River Terrace deposits (mainly gravel).

5.3 The natural topography of the site is fairly level but is obscured by urban development. There is a gradual slope down from west to east towards the valley of the Itchen. A spot height of 21.0m is recorded on the Ordnance Survey map at the west end of Bellevue Road, and another of 17.4m in Dorset Street to the east.

The site was levelled to 19.075m OD during the construction phases. This was some 600mm below the pavement level in Bellevue Road, and level with the road surface in King's Park Road to the east of the site.

6. Historical Background

6.1. Medieval and post-medieval

London Road, to the west of the Bellevue area, was the main route into medieval Southampton from the north. It ran north from the Bargate between the common fields of the town or "Lammas Lands", now the central parks, leading to Southampton Common and beyond to Winchester and London. To the south the

route became Above Bar Street, first mentioned in a document of 1269. The Lammas Lands were known as East and West Marlands Fields in the medieval period, from the presence of the St Mary Magdalene leper hospital (Davies 1883).

6.2. Early Modern

Residential development in the area north of the Marlands began with the laying out of The Polygon, an exclusive housing development and hotel begun in c.1768 to the west of London Road. The Polygon was intended to compare with the new, fashionable buildings of other spa towns like Bath and Tunbridge Wells but the project was never completed. The area to the east of London Road was developed in 1768 by the construction of Bellevue House and its grounds (Vale 1983). The east boundary was the then Love lane, now St Mary's Road/Dorset Street. The house, which lay at the north end of the park, was built for Nathaniel St Andre, the disgraced anatomist to George I. The house was remodelled in the early 19th century and in the mid-19th century it became the Diocesan College. The south part of the park was developed in the second half of the 19th century and Bellevue House itself was demolished in 1886 allowing the total redevelopment of the park area by 1897.

6.3 Cartographic evidence.

There are no maps of the area of sufficient detail to be of use until the late 18th century when Milne's map of 1791 was published. This shows Bellevue House and its park and no sign of other buildings in the area. Baker's map of 1802 shows that development along the south edge of the park had begun with the construction of Cumberland Place (Fig 2). A small building sits within the park to the south west of the main house. The 1846 map shows that the urban development of Southampton had completely enclosed Bellevue House and its grounds, and the south part of the London Road frontage had been sold and St Paul's Church had been built. Fifty years later all sign of Bellevue House and its park had disappeared, beneath Ordnance Road, Bellevue Road, and Park Road, with the carriage drive becoming Dorset Street (Fig 3).



Figure 2. Bellevue House and its grounds in 1802 from Baker's map of Southampton



Figure 3. Ordnance Survey map of Southampton 1897.

7. Archaeological background.

A brief summary is given here of the numerous archaeological findings within a 300m radius of 5 Bellevue Road. A full list of the sites and findspots is contained in the Heritage Statement of 5 Bellevue Road submitted with the planning application (Russel 2013) and the site archive.

7.1 Prehistoric

A number of flint handaxes have been found to the northwest. These were probably unearthed during building works, one certainly was heavily rolled and it is unlikely that they come from in-situ deposits. To the southwest, at SOU 1182, evidence of Iron Age activity has been found in the form of pits and a ditch which points to settlement (Garner 2004), and similar evidence has been found to the southeast, under the Saxon town of Hamwic at SOU 778 (Vincent 1997).

7.2 Roman

Roman activity of the 1st to 4th centuries AD has been found at SOU 678 to the northwest in the area occupied by the 19th century Ordnance Survey Offices to the west of London Road (McDermott 1999). Other Roman finds have been found to the southeast, but these were residual in later deposits and do not point to Roman activity there.

7.3 Saxon

The northern end of the Middle Saxon town of Hamwic lies to the southeast (Morton 1992, Andrews 1997). A number of sites of similar date have been found in a distribution to the northwest of that town suggesting that The Avenue was a route to

and from the north end of Hamwic. The evidence consists mostly of pottery sherds but two probable Saxon pits have been found at 23-27 Bellevue Road (SOU 1051) (Smith 2000). Late Saxon pottery has been found to the west of London Road at SOU 677 (Whitehead 1995), perhaps reflecting the shift from Hamwic to Hampton and the use of the London Road route as a replacement for the St Mary's Road/Love Lane route.

7.4 Medieval

The medieval evidence consists of layers of agricultural soil with abraded sherds of pottery. These undoubtedly relate to use of the area to the north of the medieval town for agriculture, with the town's refuse being used for fertiliser. No evidence of occupation has been located.

7.5 Post-medieval

The post-medieval evidence again consists of layers of agricultural soil with sherds of domestic refuse and fragments of building material. This probably reflects the continuing use of the area for agriculture, with the town's refuse being used for fertiliser. In the 19th century the area is rapidly developed for housing. Where sites occupied by early 19th century housing have been investigated the remains of the houses have been slight. The later 19th century buildings were more substantial. No buildings associated with Bellevue House have been located.

8. Results

8.1 Introduction

The results are presented in chronological order from the oldest to the most recent. Gravel and stone abundance refer to naturally occurring flint pebbles.

The sequence on the site was divided into Phases as follows:

Phase 0 Natural

Phase 1 Prehistoric to Medieval

Phase 2 Post-medieval 1550-1750

Phase 3 Early modern 1750-1900

Phase 4 Modern 1900-2000

8.2 Natural Deposits (Phase 0)

The natural was gravel with bands of sand, assigned layer 4 (fig 4). It was at least 2m thick and its highest point was 18.075m OD. Above the natural gravel was layer 7, a moderately stony, yellowish brown, sandy clay loam known locally as brickearth. It was up to 500mm thick, but had been removed entirely in the area of the 19th century terraced houses on Bellevue Road.



Figure 4. The top of the natural layer 4, beneath context 1, the modern overburden.

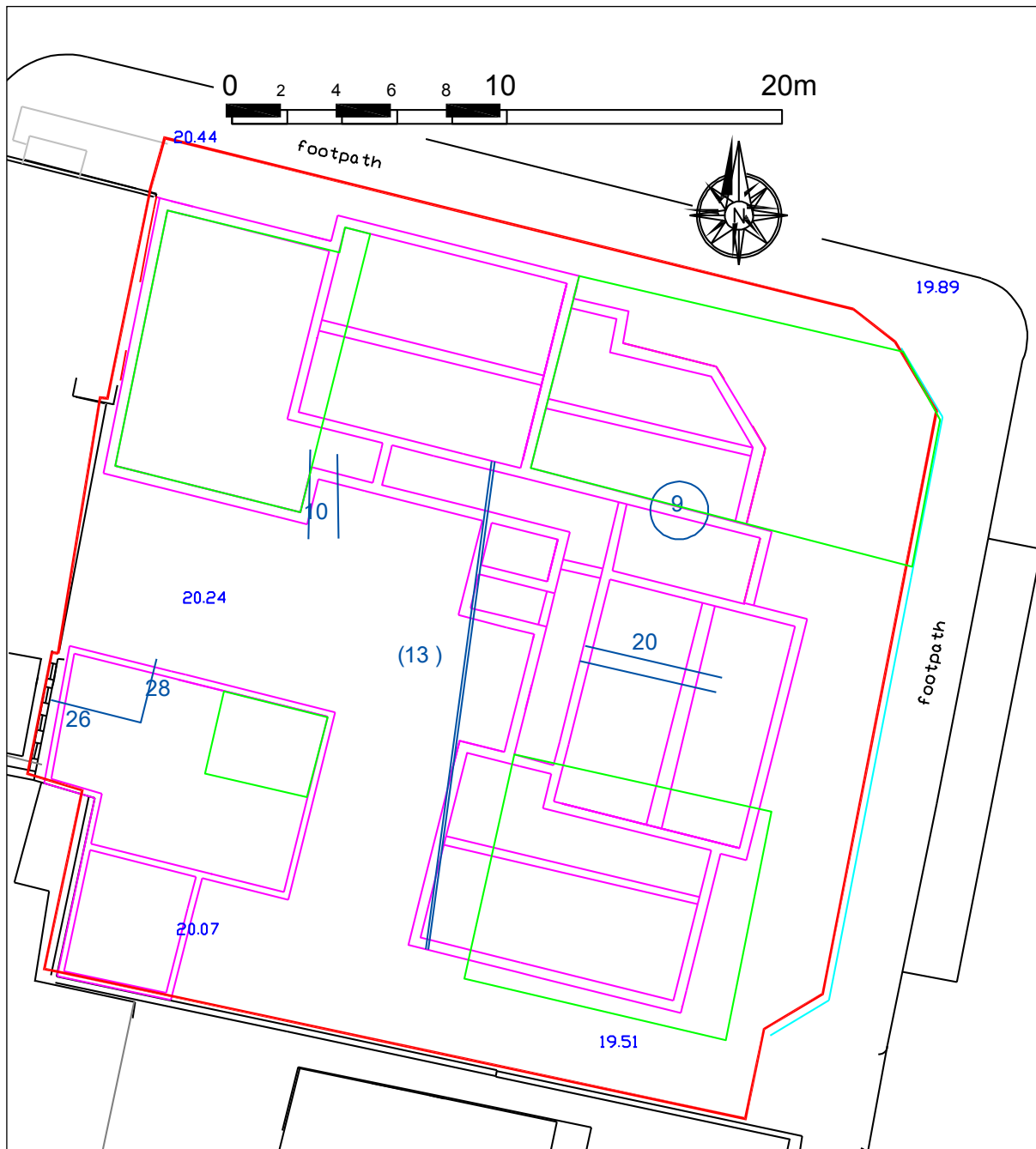


Figure 5. Plan of features as exposed by excavation of the foundations. Green outlined areas are modern disturbances. Heights are metres above Ordnance Datum prior to construction.

8.3 Prehistoric to Medieval (Phase 1)

In the north part of the site a layer of cultivated soil (3) overlay the natural brickearth. It was stony, greyish brown (10YR 5/2) silty clay loam, and was up to 500mm thick. It contained fragments of coke, oyster shell, brick and Welsh slate, all probably intrusive from when the area was developed for housing in the late 19th century. In the south part of the site layer 8 was a similar, 600mm thick deposit of dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/6) compact gravelly soil lying above the brickearth. It contained a sherd of medieval coarseware pottery and fragments of West Country slate. Layers 3 and 8 were probably the result of a long period of agricultural activity.

Ditch 10 (fig 5) was a north-south U-shaped linear feature observed at the north end of the site. The ditch cut 450mm into the natural 4, and was 650mm wide. It was filled by a pale brown soil (10YR 5/3) with flint pebbles and a lump of solidified lime. No finds were recovered.

Ditch 20 (fig 5) was an approximately east-west U-shaped linear feature 0.95m wide and 1m deep with steep sides and a flat base. It cut through natural gravel 4 and partly into a seam of natural sand, also numbered 4, beneath the gravel. It was filled with 21, a silty clay loam soil with fragments of brick and slate in its upper parts.

8.4 Post-medieval 1550-1750 (Phase 2)

Linear feature 12 was a cut for a water pipeline, filled by 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18 (figs 5, 6, and 7). The upper part of the cut had been removed by modern disturbance and only the base of the feature survived. It was a c1.8m wide cut with a shallow sloping base that cut 480mm into the natural gravel. The bottom of the cut was at 18.375m OD.

Within the cut was a U-shaped-in-section linear cut (17), some 180mm deep and 280mm wide containing fine black silty soil 16. It was interpreted as the rotted remains of a run of wooden water pipes manufactured from tree trunks. At the north end of the exposed pipe-run the ghost of the wooden pipe became much wider suggesting this was the junction of two pipes and that the narrow end of the southern pipe was inserted into the wider end of the northern pipe.

Cutting 15, to the west of the wooden pipe run, was a steep-sided trench 30. The east side of this cut was filled with a mix of gravel and clay (22), packed up against the wooden pipe run. The central part and west side were filled by puddled clay 14, in which a second pipe run made of ceramic pipes (13), tapered to fit together had been laid, and packed around with clay (fig 7). The widest part of each pipe was to the north.

Context 18 was assigned to machine disturbed fragments of ceramic water pipes.

Further south linear feature 12 was encountered again, where it was numbered 23 with fill 24. Fill 24 was sandy gravel with stone and iron fragments. The pipe survived to the north and south of the excavation for the foundations, but an earlier disturbance had removed the pipe, leaving an area of gravel and puddled clay 25. The top of the pipe was at 18.345m OD.

8.5 Early modern 1750-1900 (Phase 3)

Feature 26 was a brickearth quarry in the southwest corner of the site (figs 5 and 8). It cut 720mm into the natural brickearth and had vertical sides and a flat base. It was filled with 27, a deposit of silty clay loamy soil that produced a sherd of medieval pottery.

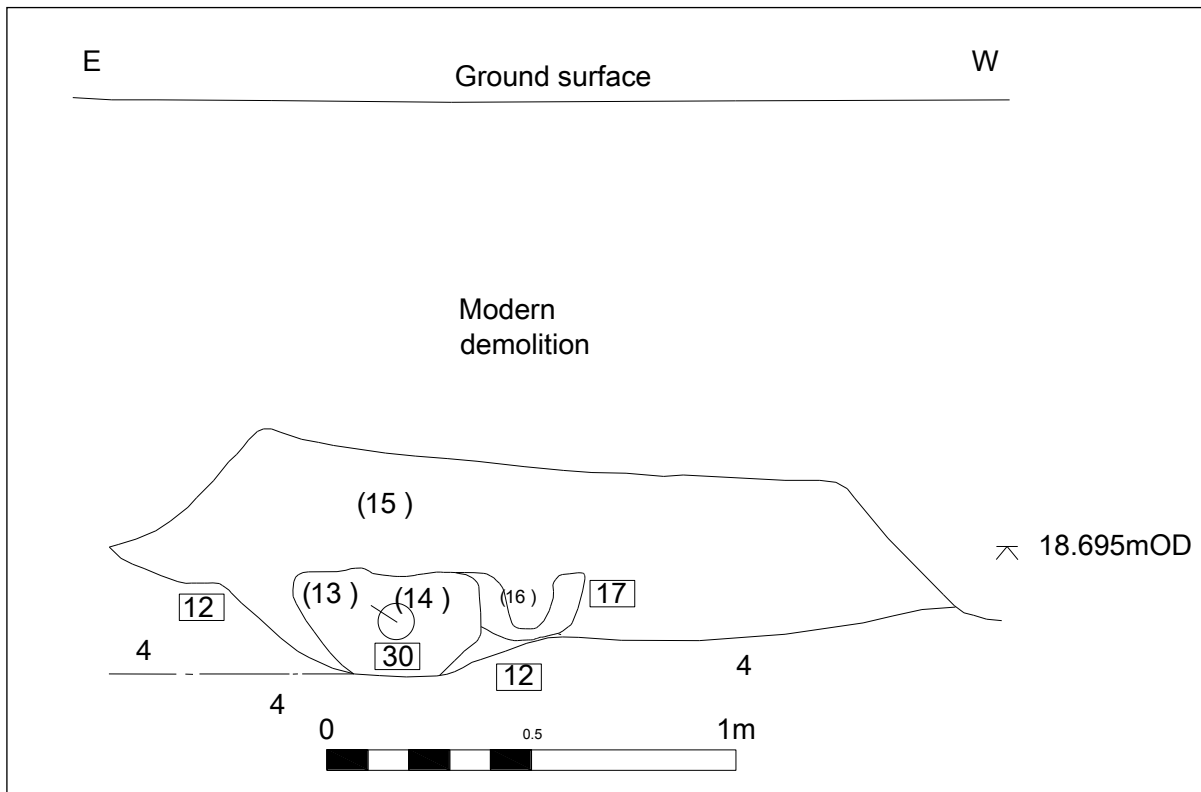


Figure 6. The ceramic water pipe, 13, in the puddled clay 14, with the dark remains of the wooden pipe 16, to the west.



Figure 7. The ceramic water pipe, 13, in the puddled clay 14, with the dark remains of the wooden pipe 16, to the west.



Figure 8. The area of brickearth quarries in the southwest corner of the site. Feature 26, fill 27, to the left.

Feature 28 was another brickearth quarry in the southwest corner of the site, north of 26 (fig 5). It cut 900mm into the natural brickearth and had vertical sides and a flat base. It was filled with 29, a deposit of redeposited silty clay loamy soil 8, with lenses of mottled clay and sand. No finds were recovered.

Context 9 was a deep area of disturbance at the rear of the late 19th century cellared area (fig 5), filled with modern material, but including many limestone blocks. Originally it was interpreted as a possible well because the disturbance penetrated the water table at 1.8m from the ground surface, and contained numerous limestone blocks, but similar blocks were later found across most of the north end of the site, so the original interpretation is probably incorrect.

The limestone blocks were collected under context 19 (fig 9). They were mostly Bembridge limestone, with some Quarr and Caen. Most were roughly dressed to a rectangular shape, but four pieces had chamfers or mouldings, suggesting they came from door or window openings. One chamfered piece had traces of red paint. Most of the stones bore traces of medieval gritty lime mortar, together with traces of grey coal-ash mortar typical of late 18th and early 19th century mortar, showing they had been re-used.



Figure 9. The collection of limestone blocks 19, recovered during excavation of the foundation trenches.

8.6 Modern 1900-2000 (Phase 4)

Context 5 was allocated to the foundation trench for the footings of the 1955 YWCA building, filled with brick walls on concrete footings 6. Context 2 was a 0.3m thick layer of redeposited natural gravel butting 5. Context 1 was a deposit of soil with concrete and brick rubble resulting from demolition of YWCA, also including redeposited material from the demolition of the late 19th century houses. It included 19th century red bricks, Staffordshire stable-blocks, Purbeck stone slabs, and blocks of Quarr and Bembridge limestone.

9. Conclusions

The natural gravel was overlain by brickearth as expected. Above the brickearth was a thick layer of ploughsoil/garden soil which contained medieval and post-medieval finds. This points to a long period of agricultural use of the area, which in the late 18th century the site became the grounds of Bellevue House.

Running through the site from north-north-east to south-south-west was a linear feature that appeared to have contained a wooden pipe constructed from tree trunks, long since rotted. It is assumed this was constructed to bring water from a point further north, possibly the pond/spring that once lay at the south end of Asylum Green and was known as Padwell Pond. If the pipeline was continued in a straight line southwards it would pass through the East Marlands common fields and head

towards the Bargate, although this would entail passing under a number of private properties.

The wooden pipe had been replaced by a pipeline made of tapering, unglazed, ceramic pipes laid in a clay-packed trench. An early post-medieval date is indicated for this previously unknown part of the town's water supply. The route of the pipes does not appear on Doswell's early 19th century map of Southampton's water supply system, which does show wooden pipes in some areas, suggesting all memory of it had been lost by the time that map was drawn up.

Projecting the line of the pipes to the north would reach Asylum Green where there are references to a pond and a spring in the past. Projecting the line to the south would reach the Bargate, where it is known other parts of the town's water supply entered the walled area.

In the late 19th century Bellevue Road was developed with substantial terraced houses with basements which had destroyed the archaeology in the north part of the site. The foundations of the terrace included much re-used medieval masonry from a source unknown, but some architectural fragments and a predominance of Quarr stone suggest a 12-13th century date. The terrace was bombed and cleared post-war.

Acknowledgements

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Appendix 1 Context information

Context	Category	Keyword	Munsell page	Munsell hue	Description	Fill of	Filled by
1	LAYER	SITE LAYER	10YR	5/4	Recent demolition and grubbing out of footings		
2	LAYER	SITE LAYER	10YR	6/6	Redeposited gravel		
3	LAYER	SITE LAYER	10YR	5/2			
4	LAYER	SITE LAYER	10YR	6/6	Natural clay with sandy patches		
5	FEATURE	FOUNDATION			1950s foundation trenches		6
6	FILL	FOUNDATION			Concrete base with brick walls		5
7	LAYER	SITE LAYER	10YR	5/6			
8	LAYER	SITE LAYER	10YR	4/6	Compact gravelly soil to S of 19th cent cellared area on Bellevue Rd. Med pot sherd and WC slate recovered.		
9	FEATURE	WELL?			Disturbed area with many stone blocks, reaching water table 1.8m from surface. Possibly well or soakaway. Many blocks of re-used limestone, but more found across rest of site so probably not well-lining.		
10	FEATURE	DITCH			U shaped ditch west of Foundation base 4. Concrete poured before proper recording.		11
11	FILL	DITCH	10YR	5/3	Pale fill with flint pebbles and one lump of chalk/lime.		10
12	FEATURE	TRENCH			Wide cut, backfilled with grey sandy gravel		16, 17

13 FILL	PIPE			Hand-thrown clay pipe in sections tapered to fit together, packed around by clay 14. Aligned 13 degrees E of north.	30
14 FILL		7.5YR	6/8	Sticky puddled orange clay with grey streaks, packed around pipe 13.	30
15 FILL				Sandy gravel packed into east side of 12.	12
16 FILL	TRENCH	7.5YR	3/0	Fine black silt to W of 14. Soft sticky soil with fine white grit. In lift shaft dig this can be seen as a U shaped area of fill. Decayed wood? Cut inside 12 to W of 14. Mostly removed by machine but marked by black smear on base of trench where fill 16 was dragged across clay 14.	17
17 FEATURE	TRENCH			Soil stain possibly shows outline of wooden pipes. Displaced fragments of water pipe 13 collected from trench 12 and spoil heap.	16
18 UNSTRAT	FINDS			Roughly dressed limestone blocks, 1 chamfered, collected from 19th century demolition and 2012 grubbing out. Mostly Bembridge but some Quarr and Caen. Battered and traces of white gritty and ash grey mortar, from re-use in 18th-19th century.	12
19 FINDS	FINDS			Ditch with flat base and near vertical sides, cutting from below the 1955 demolition level	21
20 FEATURE	TRENCH				
21 FILL	DITCH	10YR	4/1	Dark soil with brick and slate fragments	20
22 FILL	TRENCH			Mix of sandy gravel 15 and puddled clay 14 to west of cut 17.	12

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23 FEATURE	TRENCH			Area of sandy gravel towards S of site	24
24 FILL	TRENCH			Sandy gravel with stone and iron frags.	23
25 FILL	TRENCH			Clay gravel mix, disturbed in antiquity. Clay water pipe frags in-situ at either end. Top of pipe 1.330m below top of foundation level.	23
26 FEATURE	TRENCH			Large feature on W side of site in bin store footing area. Base flat, N side undercut. Cuts through area of mottled clay to N possibly an earlier feature. Continues to the E where there is a greater depth of soil 8.	27
27 FILL	TRENCH	10YR	4/1	Soil fill of 26, most likely layer 8 redeposited into brickearth pit. Medieval pot sherd recovered.	26
28 FEATURE	TRENCH			Area of intercutting features to N of 26 in NW corner of bin store area. Difficult to define edges and base.	29
29 FILL	TRENCH	10YR	4/1	Group of layers/fills of redeposited 8 and redeposited natural in feature 28. Tip lines slope down to N.	28
30 FEATURE	TRENCH			Recut of 12 to lay pipe 13	13, 14

Appendix 2 Finds information

Finds recording form						
Context no	Mat Type	Find Type	No of frag	No kept	Wgt(gm)	Description
3	STON	CLNK	1	0	11	Partially burnt coke
3	CRMC	BRIC	2	0	24	Pmed/Emod
3	SLAT	TILW	1	0	22	Welsh slate cladding from rear wall of 19th cent house
3	SHEL	OYST	1	0	62	large and robust, 19th century?
8	POT	CPOT	1	1	6	Medieval coarseware
8	SLAT	TILR	1	0	3	West Country slate
13	CRMC	WPIP	4	4	1588	Middle pipe
13	CRMC	WPIP	6	6	1474	North pipe
13	CRMC	WPIP	18	0	796	loose fragments
13	CRMC	WPIP	7	0	1122	South pipe
15	POT	FRAG	3	3	37	Tudor glazed?, or water pipe glazed
18	CRMC	WPIP	14	0	286	loose fragments
22	CRMC	WPIP	3	0	63	loose fragments
25	CRMC	WPIP	14	0	287	loose fragments
27	POT	CPOT	1	1	0	Medieval coarseware