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Southampton Archaeology Unit Report 1174

Archaeological Watching Brief at Brunswick House, Brunswick Place, Southampton SOU 1667

AD Russel BA PhD MIfA
2014

Client: CGMS Consulting



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Summary Sheet

Site name/address: Brunswick House, Brunswick Place, Southampton
SOU site code: SOU 1667
Contractor site code: SOU 1667 (Report 1174)
HET consultation number: 7435
Planning application number: 13/00348/FULL
Grid reference of centre of site: NGR 442039 112566
Fieldwork dates: 22 to 23 September 2014
Type of fieldwork: Watching Brief
Name of contracting unit: Southampton City Council Archaeology Unit
Report author: Andrew Russel
Name of client: CGMS Consulting
<p>Non-technical summary</p> <p>The Archaeology Unit of Southampton City Council carried out a watching brief on boreholes and test pits to the rear of Brunswick House. Planning permission has been granted for the refurbishment and extension of the building under reference 13/00348/FUL/2853. The watching brief was commissioned by CGMS Consulting.</p> <p>The natural deposits were brickearth over River Terrace gravel. These were only observed in the boreholes.</p> <p>The three trial pits were all dug close to the rear of the standing building with a view to examining the foundations. All three pits encountered a deep modern feature filled with coarse gravel, probably part of the construction of Brunswick House. The test pits did not reach the base of the feature or the base of the gravel fill.</p> <p>The boreholes passed through 1m of gravel and 19th century brick fragments, before reaching the brickearth, which lay above natural gravel.</p> <p>The watching brief showed that Brunswick House itself sits within a large foundation trench backfilled with coarse gravel. The feature is deep enough to have removed most archaeological features, and only pits deeper than 2.5m or wells are likely to have survived. Further north from Brunswick House, to the rear of the building, the ground level has been built up to about 1m above the top of the natural brickearth. The build-up in the observed locations was all of recent date, suggesting the area was stripped to the surface of the natural during the construction of Brunswick House. Archaeology could survive in this area.</p>

Archaeological Watching Brief at Brunswick House, Brunswick Place, Southampton, SOU 1667

By AD Russel BA PhD MIfA

Report	1174
Site code	SOU 1667
Grid reference	NGR 442039 112566

1. Summary

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The three trial pits were all dug close to the rear of the standing building with a view to examining the foundations. All three pits encountered a deep modern feature filled with coarse gravel, probably part of the construction of Brunswick House. The test pits did not reach the base of the feature or the base of the gravel fill.

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The watching brief showed that Brunswick House itself sits within a large foundation trench backfilled with coarse gravel. The feature is deep enough to have removed most archaeological features, and only pits deeper than 2.5m or wells are likely to have survived. Further north from Brunswick House, to the rear of the building, the ground level has been built up to about 1m above the top of the natural brickearth. The build-up in the observed locations was all of recent date, suggesting the area was stripped to the surface of the natural during the construction of Brunswick House. Archaeology could survive in this area.

2. Introduction

The Archaeology Unit of Southampton City Council carried out a watching brief to the rear of Brunswick House on the 22 and 23 September 2014. The groundworks consisted of three trial pits and two boreholes. The watching brief was commissioned by CGMS Consulting.

The fieldwork was carried out by AD Russel, who wrote the report.

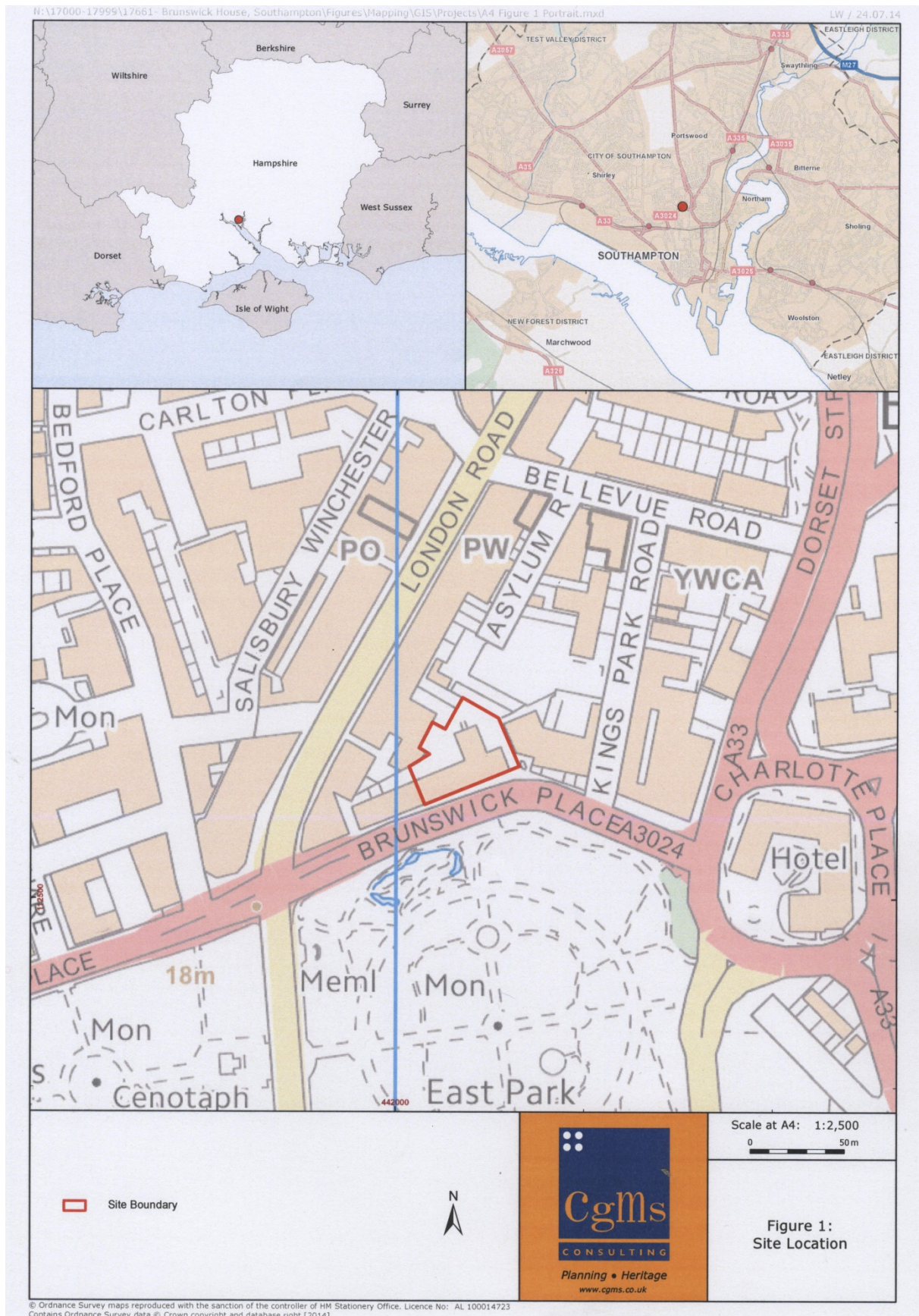


Figure 1. Location of site (red).

3. Site location, topography and geology

The site lies on the north side of Brunswick place at OS grid ref SU 442039112566 (Fig 1).

The geological survey map (BGS Sheet 315, 1987) shows that the site lies on the Wittering Formation, composed of sand, silt, and clay which may be overlain by superficial deposits of River Terrace Deposits (Terrace 3).

The site lies at approximately 20m OD.

4. Historical background

4.1 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 the 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).

4.2 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 south part of the park was developed in the second half of the 19th century.

5. Archaeological evidence.

A brief summary is given here of archaeological finds in the vicinity of the site (fig 2). A full list of the sites and find spots is given in Appendix 1.

9.1 Prehistoric

A number of flint handaxes have been found in the area. These were probably unearthed during building works, one certainly was heavily rolled and it is unlikely that they come from in-situ deposits. To west 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 later Saxon town of Hamwic (Vincent 1997). To the north, south, and east flint tools, including a Mesolithic tranche axe, point to activity over millennia, with a possible settlement of the Iron Age date to the southeast.

9.2 Roman

Roman activity of the 1st to 4th centuries AD has been found 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.

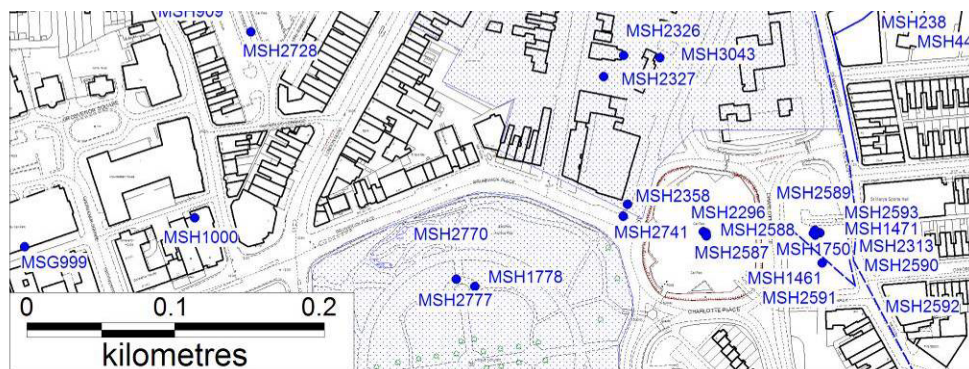


Figure 2. Location of sites and find spots mentioned in the text.

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9.3 Saxon

The northern end of the Middle Saxon town of Hamwic lies to the southeast (Morton 1992, Andrews 1997). The evidence consists mostly of pottery sherds but two probable Saxon pits have been found to the north at 23-27 Bellevue Road (Smith 2000b). Late Saxon pottery has been found to the west of London Road (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.

9.4 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.

9.5 Post-medieval

The post-medieval evidence again consists of layers of agricultural soil with sherds of domestic refuse and fragments of building material. This is 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 was 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.

6. Aims of the watching brief

The main aim of the fieldwork was 'to record and excavate any features encountered during the course of ground investigation, and determine the character, quality and date of each feature or group of features (CGMS 2014).

7. Fieldwork methodology

The methodology followed that specified in the Written Scheme of Investigation (CGMS 2014) but the position of some trenches was altered due to the presence of obstructions. Eight trial pits (TP A-H), two boreholes (HB 1-2), and four cores (C3-6) were to be undertaken.

In the event only the two boreholes, and three of the trial pits were carried out. The boreholes were drilled in their intended locations. Trial pit A was dug in its intended location, but could not reach its full depth. Trail pit B was excavated in its intended position but a gas pipe meant excavation had to cease, and it was moved to the

approximate position of Trial pit C, but was still called Trial pit B. The second position encountered two concrete encased drains and excavation ceased.

The boreholes were drilled by percussion auger, and to lubricate the bore the hole was kept filled with water during the drilling. This reduced the deposits to a thin slurry, so the descriptions of layers given below may be inaccurate.

All archaeological records were made using the Southampton City Council archaeological recording system. The colours of deposits were recorded using the Munsell Soil Color Chart (Munsell Color 2000). Contexts 1–7 were assigned. No finds were recovered. The archive will be deposited with Southampton City Council on completion of the project.

8. Results

The results are presented in chronological order from the oldest to the most recent. Stone abundance and gravel refer to naturally occurring flint pebbles. Appendix 2 lists details of the contexts.

8.1 Natural deposits

The oldest deposit exposed was natural grey clay (layer 7), found in the bottom of the boreholes. Above the clay was hard yellow (10YR 5/6) gravel, in places with clay lenses (layer 6). The top of the gravel was 1.5m below the surface in BH1 and BH2.

Natural brickearth (layer 5) overlay the natural gravel and was below layers 3 and 4. It was stone-free, yellowish brown, silty clay loam and was some 500mm thick. The upper surface of the brickearth in BH 2 had a reddish hue due to numerous tiny fragments of crushed brick, possibly indicating 19th century brickmaking or 20th century crushing of hardcore.

8.2 20th century deposits

Brunswick House was found to sit within a large foundation trench (feature 2) backfilled with coarse gravel with fragments of brick (fill 3) (figs 3 & 4). The fill was very loose and difficult for the machine to dig through cleanly. The base of the feature was not reached, but it was at least 2.5m deep. It was encountered in TP A and TP B. The coarse gravel fill also occurred outside the feature and was found in the upper part of BH1 and BH 2.

The top 1m in BH1 and BH 2 consisted of the coarse gravel (context 3 in BH1, context 4 in BH2) mixed with brick fragments and ceramic drain pipe fragments. In BH 1 the brick fragments were identical to those used to build Brunswick House, in BH 2 the brick fragments were soft red brick, probably 19th century in date, and probably derived from the demolition of the buildings that preceded Brunswick House.

The top layer in all the investigation positions was tarmac (layer 1).



Figure 3. Trial pit A showing foundations of Brunswick House and the gravel fill
3.



Figure 4. Trial pit B, initial location.

9. Conclusions

The natural deposits were brickearth over River Terrace gravel. The large feature in which Brunswick House was built is deep enough to have removed most archaeological features, and only pits deeper than 2.5m or wells are likely to have survived. Further away from the building the ground level has been built up to about 1m above the top of the natural brickearth. The build-up in the observed locations was all of recent date, suggesting the area was stripped to the surface of the natural during the construction of Brunswick House. Archaeology could survive in this area.



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Appendix 1. HER data.

This appendix lists records on the Southampton City Council Historic Environment Record of archaeological find spots in the vicinity of the site.

Prehistoric

Monument Record MSH2313

60 - 66b St Mary's Road - Prehistoric Evidence

A series of three archaeological investigations took place at 60 - 66b St Mary's Road between 1988 to 2001 (SOU 379, SOU 964 and SOU 1112). The site is often referred to as the Old Co-op Site, after a shop demolished in the 1980s. In 2006 the site was derelict. Prehistoric evidence consisted of a few, mainly residual, finds and early features and layers. Several contexts of uncertain date may have been prehistoric. The finds included a Mesolithic tranche axe, but most of the evidence suggests activity in the later prehistoric period.

Monument Record MSH2587

Charlotte Place Roundabout - Prehistoric Evidence

Archaeological investigations took place at the Charlotte Place Car Park (since redeveloped) in 1999 (SOU 965) and 2003/2004 (SOU 1281). Prehistoric finds consisted of two worked flints, fragments of possibly prehistoric burnt flint, a sherd of possibly prehistoric pottery and a loomweight of possibly Iron Age date. Some of the undated features may have been prehistoric.

Roman

Monument Record MSH1750

60 - 66b St Mary's Road - Roman Evidence

Three archaeological investigations took place at 60 - 66b St Mary's Road between 1988 to 2001 (SOU 379, SOU 964 and SOU 1112). Roman brick and tile fragments, pottery sherds and a damaged copper-alloy binding from a Roman shield were found in later deposits across the site. Several contexts of uncertain date may have been Roman.

Monument Record MSH2770

East Park - Possible Romano-British Evidence

Two sherds of Iron Age or Romano-British pottery were found.

Saxon

Monument Record MSH1000

23 - 24 Cumberland Place - Deposits and Finds

A watching brief took place during redevelopment at 23 - 24 Cumberland Place in 1995 (SOU 677). In the northwest part of the site, a possible ploughsoil, a feature and 12 sherds of pottery, all of late Saxon date, were found. Most of the site had been heavily disturbed during 19th century redevelopment.

Monument Record MSH1471

60 - 66b St Mary's Road - Middle Saxon Evidence

Three archaeological investigations took place at 60 - 66b St Mary's Road between 1988 to 2001 (SOU 379, SOU 964 and SOU 1112). Middle Saxon features were found across the site, except where there was deep modern disturbance. The main feature was a hollow-way, probably the Middle Saxon precursor of St Mary's Road (see MSH2590). Evidence was found for a metal side street running SE-NW across the site (see MSH2591). Stakeholes and postholes in the base of the hollow-way may have been the remains of fences used to mark the edge of the street. No buildings were identified. Other features were a well and pits; the latter may have been dug as quarry pits and later used for rubbish disposal. Evidence for iron working, possible copper-alloy casting and textile production was found. The evidence suggests that the site was marginal to the Middle Saxon settlement, or of a rural nature, and occupied mainly from the mid 8th to the mid 9th century.

Monument Record MSH2296

Charlotte Place Roundabout - Middle Saxon Evidence

Archaeological investigations took place at the Charlotte Place Car Park (since redeveloped) in 1999 (SOU 965) and 2003/2004 (SOU 1281). Middle Saxon pits were found. One of these had gravel upper fills, which may have been the remains of former gravel surfaces slumped into the feature. Some of the undated features found on the site were probably Saxon; these included more pits, a few post holes and a linear feature.

Monument Record MSH2590

60 - 66b St Mary's Road - Middle Saxon Hollow-Way and Street

Archaeological fieldwork took place at 60 to 64 St Mary's Road in 1988 (SOU 379, the Old Co-op Site). Evidence of Middle Saxon occupation was found. Along the eastern edge of the site, a hollow-way with

gravel layers and wheel ruts was partially exposed. This is thought to be the Middle Saxon precursor of St Mary's Road. Layers of uncertain date overlay the fills of the hollow-way.

Monument Record MSH2592

St Mary's Road and its Middle Saxon precursor

A map of about 1560 shows one road named "St maries strete" linking St Mary's Church and Padwell Cross -- the roads now called St Mary Street (MSH4721) and St Mary's Road. In the 13th century the entire street was known as Broadway. The first surviving written evidence for St Mary's Road part dates to the mid 13th century. However, archaeological investigations at Six Dials and at 60-64 St Mary's Road has shown that the road has Middle Saxon origins (see MSH1562). The road seems to have continued in use since Saxon times, albeit with minor divergences in line. In the late 18th and as late as 1846 the road was known as Love Lane, becoming St Mary's Road by 1870.

Monument Record MSH2777

East Park - Saxon Evidence

A watching brief took place on groundworks for the Central Parks Lottery Scheme at the north end of East Park in 1999/2000 (SOU 976, Trenches 124 and 126). A rubbish pit, post holes and beam slot of probably Middle Saxon date were found. Some of the features may have been Late Saxon. This was perhaps an isolated Middle Saxon farmstead or other agricultural activity, which continued into the Late Saxon period.

Medieval

Monument Record MSH2741

Charlotte Place - Medieval Finds

A few medieval finds were found in later deposits during a watching brief on groundworks at the north-west corner of Charlotte Place, part of a new road scheme, in 2002 (SOU 1229, Trenches 21, 39 and 45).

Post-medieval

Monument Record MSH1778

East Park – Finds

A casual watching brief took place on four tree holes at the north end of East Park in 1999 (SOU 974). Finds present included 16th to 19th century pottery and ceramic building material.

Monument Record MSH2326

16 - 17 King's Park Road - Residual Finds

A small amount of early post-medieval pottery was recovered during an archaeological evaluation excavation at 16 - 17 King's Park Road in 2001 (SOU 1142).

Monument Record MSH2358

Charlotte Place - Buried Soil Layer

An undated soil layer was seen in the base of a trench in Charlotte Place, during an archaeological watching brief on groundworks for a new road scheme in 2002 (SOU 1229 Trench 31). The soil was probably a ploughsoil that developed in the post-medieval period.

Monument Record MSH2588

Charlotte Place Roundabout - 19th and 20th Century Evidence

Archaeological investigations took place in the Charlotte Place Car Park (since redeveloped) in 2003/4 (SOU 1281). 19th and 20th century service were found, including latrines, wells and a stone-lined cesspit or soakaway. No foundations or evidence of the 19th century terraced housing had survived.

Monument Record MSH2589

60 - 66b St Mary's Road - Post-Medieval Evidence

A series of three archaeological investigations took place at 60 - 66b St Mary's Road between 1988 to 2001 (SOU 379, SOU 964 and SOU 1112, the Old Co-op Site). Layers of uncertain date overlay the gravel metallings of the Middle Saxon precursor of St Mary's Road, exposed along the eastern edge of the site. Other post-medieval contexts identified were an 18th century pit and 18th/19th century post-hole. Suburban development of the area began in the 1820s.

Monument Record MSH2593

60 - 66b St Mary's Road - 19th and 20th Century Evidence

A series of three archaeological investigations took place at 60 - 66b St Mary's Road between 1988 to 2001 (SOU 379, SOU 964 and SOU 1112, the Old Co-op Site). The area around the site was subject to suburban development in the 1820s when three east-west streets of terraced houses were built between what became St Mary's Road and East Park Terrace; the southernmost of these was Compton Walk. The remains of the 19th century Antelope Inn were found. The Wholesale Cooperative Society building stood in the south-east part of the site from the 1930s to the 1980s.

Monument Record MSH2738

Dorset Street, Bellevue Terrace and St Mary's Road - Below- Ground Evidence

Undated soil layers were seen in the base of trenches between Dorset Street and Bellevue Terrace/St Mary's Road, during an archaeological watching brief on groundworks for a new road scheme in 2002 (SOU 1229 Trenches 12 and 30). These were probably ploughsoils that developed in the post-medieval period. In Trench 12, an undated brickearth layer overlay the soil layer. (The trenches were on the line of a new link road.)

Monument Record MSH2741

Charlotte Place - Medieval and Post-Medieval Finds

A few medieval and post-medieval finds were found in later deposits during a watching brief on groundworks at the north-west corner of Charlotte Place, part of a new road scheme, in 2002 (SOU 1229, Trenches 21, 39 and 45).

Monument Record MSH3043

Former BP Filling Station, Dorset Street - Below Ground Evidence

An undated, east-west aligned ditch was found during an archaeological evaluation excavation at the former BP Filling Station, Dorset Street in 2005 (SOU 1358). This was possibly a medieval field boundary. SOU 1358 (evaluation excavation at the former BP Filling Station, Dorset Street in 2005):

Undated

Monument Record MSH999

Grosvenor Square Car Park - Below-Ground Deposit

A small, undated patch of burnt deposit was observed below the Grosvenor Square Car Park during a watching brief in 1987 (SOU 290). The burning overlying the natural brickearth.

Appendix 2. Context list

Context no	Category	Keyword	Munsell Page	Munsell No	Texture	Stone abund	Fill of	Filled by	Period
1	Layer	Tarmac				5			MOD
2	Feature	Brunswick House construction trench						3	
3	Fill	Dark soil	10YR	4/2.5	Silty clay loam	1	2		19th C
4	Layer	Make-up				4			MOD
5	Layer	Natural brickearth	10YR	5/4	Silty clay loam			6, 7	
6	Layer	Natural gravelly clay					5		
7	Layer	Natural Grey clay					5		