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Southampton Archaeology Unit Report 1277

Archaeological Watching Brief at Tanners Brook School, Southampton SOU 1705

Dr AD Russel BA PhD MCIfA
2017

Client: Southampton City Council



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Cover photograph. Trench 6.

Summary Sheet

Site name/address: Tanners Brook School, Elmes Drive, Millbrook, Southampton, SO15 4PF.
SOU site code: SOU 1705
Contractor site code: SOU 1705
HET consultation number: 7618
Grid reference: 438769 113200
Fieldwork dates: 12/02/2016 to 23/3/2016.
Type of fieldwork: Watching brief
Name of contracting unit: Southampton City Council Archaeology Unit
Report author: Dr AD Russel BA PhD MCIfA
Report number: 1277
SCC Accession Number: 2016.20
Name of client: Southampton City Council
<p>Summary:</p> <p>The Archaeology Unit of Southampton City Council carried out a watching brief in February and March 2016 on groundworks for the construction of a new classroom at Tanners Brook School. The work was commissioned by Southampton City Council. The natural river terrace gravels were overlaid by brickearth, but the brickearth had been removed over much of the site. Late 19th century maps show brickfields to the east of the site and it is likely it was quarried away on the site as well. Four features were found cutting into the gravel; three pits and a possible ditch. All contained small amounts of burnt flint, and a prehistoric date is likely. The features were sealed by early modern deposits that included 19th century domestic finds. A few fragments of Anglo-Norman and High Medieval pottery suggest the area was ploughed and manured in the 12th to 14th centuries.</p>

Archaeological Watching Brief at Tanners Brook School, Southampton, SOU 1705

Dr AD Russel BA PhD MCIfA

14/02000/R3CFL

1. Summary

The Archaeology Unit of Southampton City Council carried out a watching brief in February and March 2016 on groundworks for the construction of a new classroom at Tanners Brook School. The work was commissioned by Southampton City Council. The natural river terrace gravels were overlaid by brickearth, but the brickearth had been removed over much of the site. Late 19th century maps show brickfields to the east of the site and it is likely it was quarried away on the site as well. Four features were found cutting into the gravel; three pits and a possible ditch. All contained small amounts of burnt flint, and a prehistoric date is likely. The features were sealed by early modern to modern deposits.

2. Introduction

2.1 Planning permission 14/02000/R3CFL was granted for the construction of a single storey pre-school building at Tanners Brook Primary School (figs 1 & 2) to enable relocation of the existing Tanners Brook Community Association and Pre School within the grounds of Tanners Brook Primary School. In addition a new fence, a cycle store, external stores, drainage, and bitumen surface were to be installed.

2.2 The application was considered by the Historic Environment team of Southampton City Council (the local planning authority). The Historic Environment Record indicated that a number of prehistoric lithic finds had been found in the vicinity of the site, and it was considered that there was a possibility that remains associated with the prehistoric occupation of the city might be disturbed by the proposed development. Two conditions relating to archaeology were placed on the permission.

APPROVAL CONDITION ' Archaeological watching brief (Pre-Commencement Condition)

No development shall take place within the site until the implementation of a programme of archaeological work has been secured in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the archaeological investigation is initiated at an appropriate point in development procedure.

APPROVAL CONDITION ' Archaeological watching brief work programme (Performance Condition)

The developer will secure the completion of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the archaeological investigation is completed.

2.3 The definition of an archaeological watching brief is a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed. The programme will result in the preparation of a report and ordered archive. (ClfA 2015).

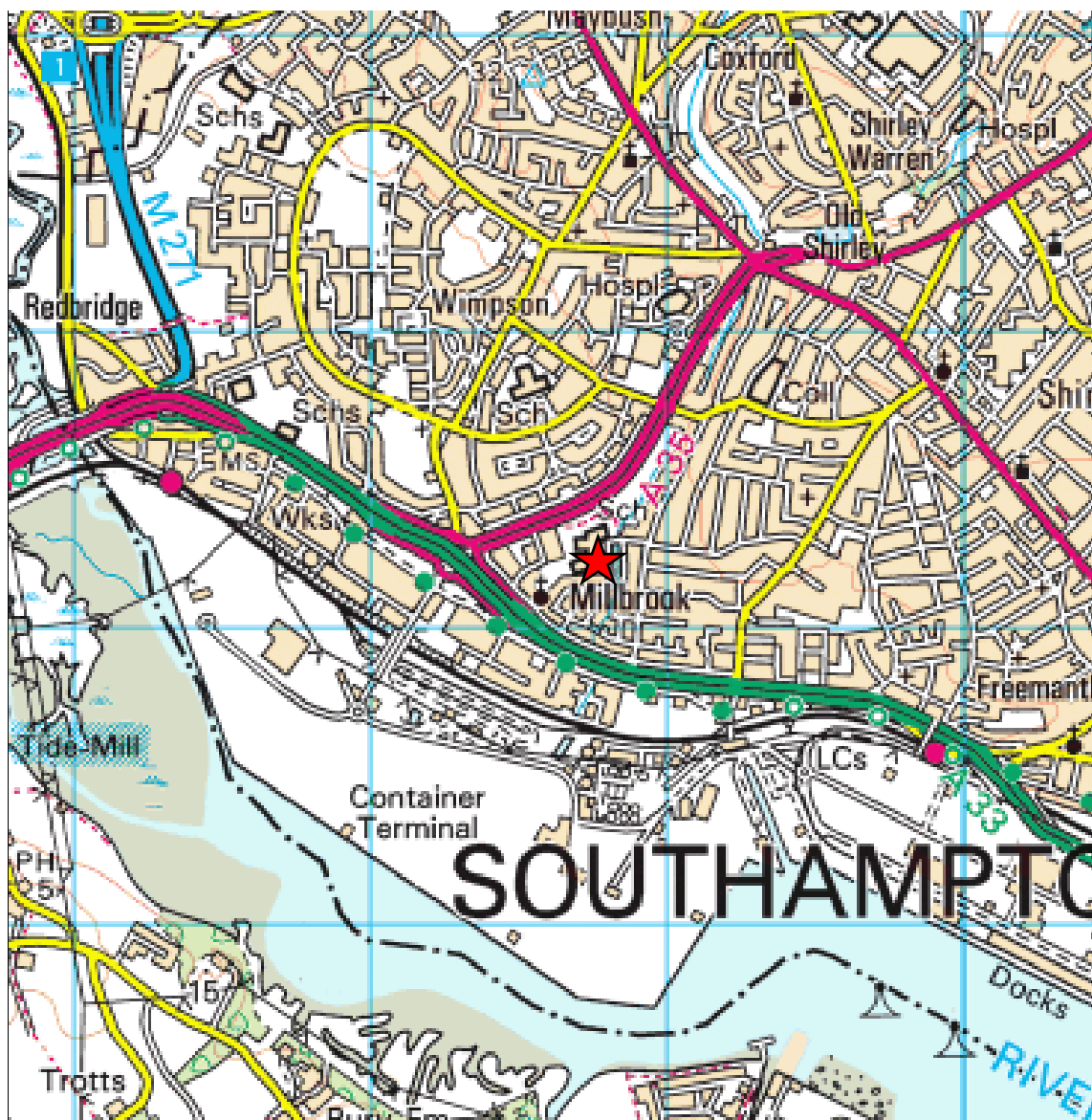


Figure 1. Location of the site, marked with a red star.

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2.4 A written scheme of investigation for an archaeological watching brief was produced by the Southampton City Council Archaeology Unit (Russel 2016). All work was carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*. The watching brief took place between 12/02/2016 and 23/3/2016.

2.5 The observations were made by M Garner BA MCIfA and AK Fedorowicz. The artefacts were identified by Dr AD Russel BA PhD MCIfA and MF Garner. The project was managed by MF Garner, who also edited the report. On completion of the archaeological work the archive will be deposited with Southampton City Council Museums under Accession number 2016.20.



Figure 2. The school site with new building marked by red star.

3. Site Location, description, and geology

3.1 The site is situated on the corner of Elmes Drive and Munro Crescent, to the west of Tanners Brook. The site centre is at 438769 113200.

3.2 The natural topography of the area slopes down to the south-east towards Tanners Brook. There are spot-heights of 7m OD to the northeast and 6.1m OD to the southeast of the site.

3.3 The geology map (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>) shows that the deposits in the area of the site are River Terrace Deposits 1 (sand and gravel superficial deposits formed up to 3 million years ago in the Quaternary Period) above the Wittering Formation (sand, silt and clay sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 40 to 56 million years ago in the Palaeogene Period).

4 Archaeological and Historical Background

4.1 The site lies within Area 16 of the Local Areas of Archaeological Potential (LAAP) as defined in the City of Southampton Core Strategy 2010. The Historic Environment Record indicates that a number of prehistoric lithic finds have been found from the general area, although none of these are precisely located. There was therefore a possibility that remains associated with the prehistoric occupation of the city would be disturbed by the proposed development.

4.2 The site is about 400m northwest of LAAP 4 Millbrook:

'The medieval village of Millbrook was centred on St Nicholas' Church, rebuilt in 1824 and demolished in 1939. The village developed on the main road between Southampton and Redbridge. The area includes the church and cemetery' (SCC 2010).

4.3 The site is about 900m southeast of LAAP 3 Old Shirley:

'The village of Shirley developed at the confluence of Holly Brook and Tanners Brook, probably by the end of the 10th century. The area was an important road junction, where routes across the peninsula met routes between Southampton and Romsey. The area of Old Shirley includes Shirley Mill and the millponds, and the site of Shirley Church' (SCC 2010).

4.4 The 1871 Ordnance Survey map shows the area to be agricultural land with a footpath to the west of the site, and Tanners Brook to the east (fig 3). To the east of Tanners Brook a brickfield is shown. This stretch of Tanners Brook (Burgess Stream 4) was the Mill Brook (grindan broc of the 877AD) Nursling charter) (Burgess 1982, 4). The area remained unchanged until the late 1930s when maps show that Elmes Drive and Munro Crescent were being laid out to the south. The 1938 revision of Hampshire & Isle of Wight sheet LXV.NW shows roads laid out over the site that later became the school, but the 1942 edition of the 25 inch sheet shows these plans were abandoned, probably due to the war, and the site became allotment gardens. The 1953 Ordnance Survey map shows that Tanners Brook School had been built by then, and it appears to have opened in 1954.



Figure 3. The 1871 Ordnance Survey map, surveyed 1866-69, with approximate location of site shown by the red circle.

5. Aims of the watching brief

5.1 The aims of the watching brief were 'to make a record of any archaeology disturbed by the works and to determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality, and date of any archaeological remains encountered, as dictated by current best practice', an additional aim was to identify and record the nature, dimensions, and relationship of natural deposits should they be revealed' (Russel 2016, 2).

6 Archaeological Methodology

6.1 Southampton site code of SOU 1705 was issued by the Historic Environment Team (HET) of Southampton City Council and was used throughout the project to identify the site records and artifacts.

6.2 An archaeologist was meant to be present on site during all groundworks, but the area was stripped and some of the foundation pad holes were excavated and filled



Figure 4. The site at the commencement of the watching brief.

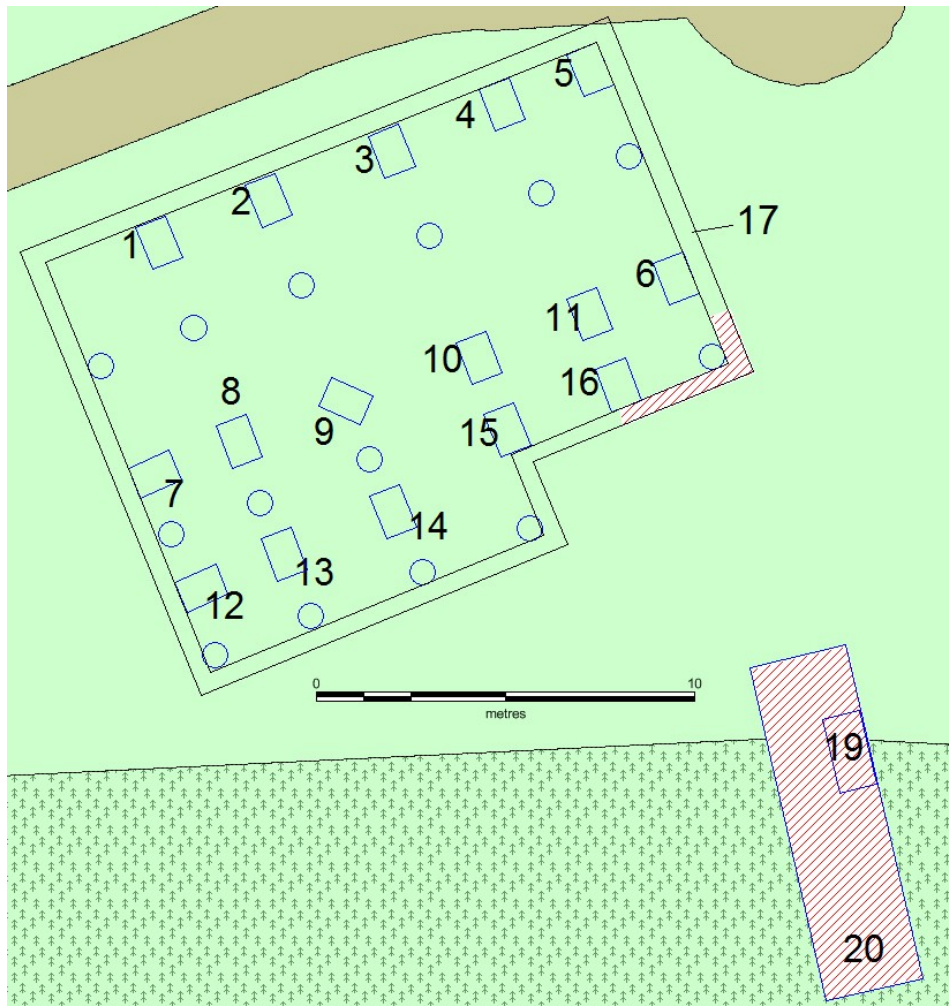


Figure 5 Site plan showing locations of foundation trenches and soakaway. The first phase of trenches, drilled with an auger and marked as circles, were not observed. Trench 18 was a general level reduction of the footprint of the building. Extent of brickearth shown by red hatch.

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with concrete before the Archaeology Unit was informed that the project had started (fig 4). The remaining foundations and soakaway excavations were observed (fig 5). The foundation trenches were dug to the top of the gravel that lay between 0.95m and 1.05m from the ground surface, the soakaway was 1.8m deep. New services were also installed; the trenches for these were mostly too shallow to reach archaeology. The observations took place during very wet weather and the deeper trenches were not safe to enter.

6.3 All trenches and features were plotted onto plans provided by the client. All archaeological records were made using the Southampton City Council archaeological recording system.

6.4 Soils were recorded following the Soil Survey Handbook and colours of deposits were recorded using the Munsell Soil Color Chart and these are used in this report (Munsell Color 2000). Contexts 1–19 were assigned. Finds were recovered.

7. Results

The results are presented in chronological order from the oldest to the most recent. Stone abundance refers to naturally occurring flint pebbles. Appendix 1 lists basic details of the contexts and Appendix 2 lists the finds. The area of groundworks was divided for recording purposes into 20 trenches (fig 5).

7.1 Phase 1 Natural deposits

7.1.1 River Terrace Gravels

Layer 7 was natural gravel. It was encountered at some 1m below ground level in all trenches. It was very stony and compact light yellowish brown (10YR 6/4) gravel, in a matrix of loamy sand. It was at least 1.3m thick (fig 6).



Figure 6. Section showing natural gravel and brickearth deposits in the southeast of the site in soakaway trench 20. Trench is 1.8m deep.

7.1.2 Brickearth

Brickearth layers were exposed across Trenches 19 and 20 and in the south-east corner of Trench 17. Brickearth was absent from the rest of Trench 17 and from the other Trenches 1–16, presumably because it had been quarried away.

Above the gravel were layers 14 and 19. Layer 14 was a layer of silty clay loam in the southeast corner of Trench 17 (fig 5). It was some 0.4m thick and was dark brown in colour (7.5YR 3/4). A bashed pebble fragment with possible flake scars was recovered. Layer 19 was a layer of silty clay loam seen above the gravel in Trenches 19 and 20 (fig 5). It was dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4) in colour and up to 0.45m thick. Above layer 19 was layer 18, a deposit of weathered brickearth, brown (10YR 4/3) in colour and 0.3m thick. It produced two burnt flints, a fragment of early brick or daub, and a fragment of abraded high medieval jug in South Hampshire Redware.

7.2 Phase 2 Probable prehistoric features

Four probable prehistoric features were observed (fig 6). All were cut into the natural gravel 7.

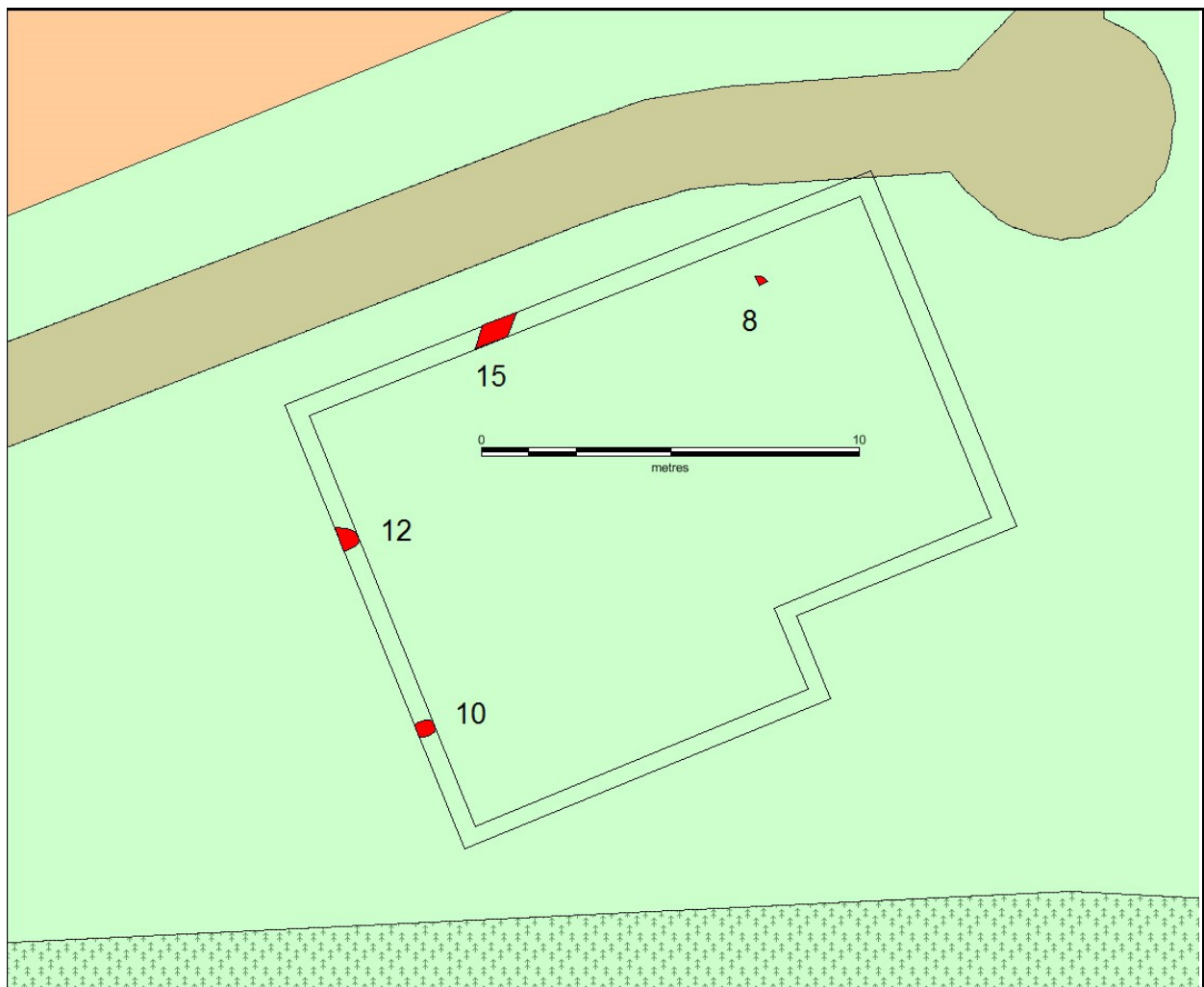


Figure 6. Site plan showing locations of prehistoric features.

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7.2.1 Feature 8 was partly exposed in the southwest corner of Trench 4 (figs 6 & 8). Its total size and function are uncertain; the part exposed was 0.4m by 0.3m and it was at least 0.25m deep. It was curved in plan and in section. It was filled with 9, a deposit of stone-free, dark brown (7.5YR 3/4) silty clay loam that produced a burnt flint.



Figure 8. Feature 8 in base of Trench 4.

7.2.2 Feature 10 was partly exposed in the base of Trench 17. It was probably oval in shape, maximum width 0.6m from north to south and 0.5m from east to west (fig 9). It had steeply sloping sides and a concave base. Excavation of a slot through it showed it to be 0.2m deep. It was filled with 11, a deposit of stony dark brown (7.5YR 3/4) silty clay loam that produced a burnt flint.

7.2.3 Feature 12 was partly exposed in Trench 17. Its total size and function are uncertain; the part exposed was 0.8m by 0.5m and it was at least 0.1m deep (figs 6 & 10). It was slightly curved in plan. It was filled with 13, a deposit of stony dark brown (7.5YR 3/4) silty clay loam that produced a burnt flint and a sherd of Anglo-Norman flint-tempered pottery. The pottery came from the top of the fill at the interface with context 6 and was probably intrusive.



Figure 9. Feature 10 visible in base of Trench 17.



Figure 10. Feature 12 visible in base of Trench 17.

7.2.4 Feature 15 was a probable ditch exposed in Trench 17. It was aligned roughly north-south and was 0.95m wide, and 0.35m deep, with a V-shaped profile, but only 0.45m of its length was exposed so it could have been an elongated pit. It was filled with 16, a deposit of stony dark brown (7.5YR 3/4) silty clay loam that produced two burnt flints.

7.3 Phase 3 Medieval: agriculture

7.3.1 Finds of West Country roof slate, Anglo-Norman flint-tempered ware, and South Hampshire redware were probably brought to the site as manure.

7.4 Phase 4 Early Modern to Modern: probable brick works

7.4.1 The absence of the brickearth layer over most of the site suggests it had been removed to make bricks. The soil above the brickearth had been placed back after quarrying. This layer was allocated context 6. Context 6 was seen across the entire site. It was a brownish black (10YR 3/2) silty clay loam, and was generally 0.3m thick, but was 0.4m thick in Trench 6. It was homogenous and stony throughout. In trenches 1 to 16 it lay directly on the natural gravel. It was marked by flecks of red ceramic, probably brick, and produced Welsh slate fragments and pieces of 19th century tobacco pipe stem. Layer 17 lay above layer 6 in Trenches 19 and 20. It was a 0.1m thick layer of cinders and ash, black in colour (10YR 2/1). It was not continuous in Trench 20, where it may have been a series of discrete dumps. Above layer 17 was makeup layer 5. It was present across the entire site. It consisted of a brownish black (10YR 3/2) silty clay loam, up to 0.4m thick, with much gravel, brick fragments and pockets of orange clay.

7.5 Phase 5 Modern: allotment gardens and school

7.5.1 Above layer 5 was soil 4. It was brownish black (10YR 3/2) silty clay loam some 0.2m thick, and contained fragments of modern brick. Above layer 4 was modern topsoil and turf context 2, a brownish black (10YR 3/2) silty clay loam some 0.1m thick, and on the west side of the site there were concrete paving slabs bedded on limestone scalplings, context 3.

7.6 Unstratified finds

7.6.1 Context 1 was allocated to unstratified finds collected from spoil. They consisted of 20 burnt flints, one possible flint flake, a slate pencil, 12 19th century clay tobacco pipe stems and bowls, 1 sherd of 19th century Staffordshire pottery, 1 sherd of 19th century European porcelain, 12 sherds of 19th century china, 2 sherds of 19th century English stoneware, one sherd of 19th century Fareham redware, 6 sherds of Verwood pottery, 1 fragment of medieval/post-medieval West Country roof slate, 3 sherds of 19th century bottle glass, green and blue, and a fragment of clinker.

8. Conclusions

8.1 The natural river terrace gravels were overlaid by brickearth, but the brickearth had been removed over much of the site. It is likely that the brickearth was quarried away and the quarry reinstated with layer 6. The few finds from context 6 and the unstratified finds from the spoil heaps suggest this took place in the 19th century, before the area was mapped. Late 19th century maps show brickfields to the east of the site.

8.2 Four features were found cutting into the gravel, three pits and a possible ditch. All contained small amounts of burnt flint, and a prehistoric date is likely.

8.3 A few medieval finds probably relate to manuring in the 12th to 14th century.

8.4 The prehistoric features were sealed by early modern deposits, related to the brickworks, and modern layers above that related to the school construction.

Bibliography

Burgess, L, 1982 Streams and Watercourses of Southampton. Friends of Old Southampton, revised edition.

Munsell Color, 2000, *Munsell Soil Color Charts*, New Windsor.

Russel, AD, 2016, *Written Scheme of Investigation for a watching brief at Tanners Brook Primary School, Southampton*. Southampton City Council Archaeology Unit. 2016

Appendix 1. Context list

Context	Category	Description	Length	Width	Depth	Munsell Hue	Value/ Chroma	Texture	SA	Fill of	Filled by
1	UNSTRAT	From spoil heaps									
2	LAYER	Topsoil & grass			100	10YR	3/2	Silty clay loam	1		
3	LAYER	Concrete slabs			200	N/A	N/A	N/A			
4	LAYER	Soil			200	10YR	3/2	Silty clay loam	1		
5	LAYER	Make up			400	10YR	3/2	Silty clay loam	1-4		
6	LAYER	Soil			300	10YR	3/2	Silty clay loam	2		
7	LAYER	Natural gravel			1300	10YR	6/4	loamy sand	5		
8	FEATURE	Pit	400	300	250						9
9	FILL	Pit	400	300	250	7.5YR	3/4	Silty clay loam	0	8	
10	FEATURE	Pit	600	500	200						11
11	FILL	Pit	600	500	200	7.5YR	3/4	Silty clay loam	2-3	10	
12	FEATURE	Pit	800	500	100						13
13	FILL	Pit	800	500	100	7.5YR	3/4	Silty clay loam	2	12	
14	LAYER	Brickearth	3000	1500	400	7.5YR	3/4	Silty clay loam	1		
15	FEATURE	Ditch	500	950	350						16
16	FILL	Ditch	500	950	350	7.5YR	3/4	Silty clay loam	1-2	15	
17	LAYER	Ash & cinders	9000	2700	100	10YR	2/1	N/A	1		
18	LAYER	Weathered brickearth	1400	1000	300	10YR	4/3	Silty clay loam	1-2		
19	LAYER	Brickearth	1400	1000	450	10YR	4/4	Silty clay loam	0		

Appendix 2. Finds list

Context no	Mat Type	Find Type	Wgt(gm)	No of frag	Description
1	FLNT	BURN	200	20	
1	FLNT	FLKE	4	1	Possible flake, no platform present.
1	SLAT	PNCL	1	1	19 th century
1	PCLY	TPIP	27	12	19th. Bowls and stems
1	POT	FRAG	10	1	19th century Staffordshire.
1	POT	FRAG	22	1	Porcelain, European. 19th
1	POT	FRAG	67	12	China, various. 19th
1	POT	FRAG	6	2	English stoneware. 19th
1	POT	JAR	83	1	Red e'ware. Fareham? 19th.
1	POT	JAR	74	6	Verwood 19th.
1	SLAT	TILR	13	1	West Country roof slate. Med-Pmed
1	GLAS	BOTL	94	3	19th century, green + blue frags
1	MINW	CLNK	11	1	Partially burnt coal
6	SLAT	TILR	15	1	Welsh roof slate.
6	PCLY	TPIP	3	2	Stems 19 th .
9	FLNT	BURN	15	1	
11	FLNT	BURN	11	1	
13	FLNT	BURN	56	1	
13	POT	CPOT	26	1	Anglo-Norman Flint-tempered. Sooted.
14	FLNT	FRAG	28	1	Bashed pebble fragment, possible flake scars.
16	FLNT	BURN	16	2	
18	FLNT	BURN	34	2	
18	CRMC	FRAG	15	1	Early brick or daub?
18	POT	JUG	1	1	Hmed -South Hants Redware. Abraded glaze.