

Southampton Archaeology Unit Report 1188

Archaeological Evaluation of land north of Atherfield Road, Shirley, Southampton SOU 1679

EL Anderson BA MA ACIfA and AD Russel BA PhD MCIfA

2015

Client: Neighbourhoods Division, Southampton City Council



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Summary Sheet

Site name/address: land north of Atherfield Road, Shirley, Southampton						
SOU site code: SOU 1679						
Contractor site code: SOU 1679						
HET consultation number: 7582						
Planning application number: 14/01301/R3CFL						
Grid reference of centre of site: 438190 115050						
Fieldwork dates: 20/01/2015 to 22/01/2015						
Type of fieldwork: Evaluation excavation						
Name of contracting unit: Southampton City Council Archaeology Unit						
Report author: Emma Anderson						
SCC Accession Number: 2015.10						
Name of client: Neighbourhoods Division, Southampton City Council						
Summary:						

Archaeological Evaluation of land north of Atherfield Road, Shirley, Southampton, SOU 1679

By EL Anderson BA MA ACIfA and AD Russel BA PhD MCIfA

1. Summary

The Archaeology Unit of Southampton City Council carried out an evaluation excavation of land north of Atherfield Road, Shirley, Southampton, in January 2015. Neighbourhoods Division, Southampton City Council have permission to construct a car parking area for 26 cars on open amenity land under Application 14/01301/R3CFL. The site lies in an area of scattered prehistoric occupation and activity and an archaeological evaluation was required as a condition of the planning permission. Four trenches were excavated to give a 14% sample of the area to be disturbed.

The natural gravel was observed in all the trenches, and was situated some 0.4m-0.55m below the surface. The gravel was cut by seven features. Six possibly were of prehistoric date, comprising two irregular linear features, two irregular pits, one possible post-hole and one shallow circular pit. With the exception of the possible post-hole all the features contained burnt flint. The shallow circular pit produced abundant charcoal, burnt flint and 14 small possible waste flakes from flint-working.

One modern feature was observed in the northern end of Trench 4, and a series of modern layers were observed above the natural.

2. Introduction

The Archaeology Unit of Southampton City Council carried out an evaluation excavation of land north of Atherfield Road, Shirley, Southampton from the 20th January to the 22nd of January 2015. Neighbourhoods Division, Southampton City Council have permission to construct a car parking area for 26 cars on open amenity land under Application 14/01301/R3CFL. The site lies in an area of scattered prehistoric occupation and activity and an archaeological evaluation was required as a condition of the planning permission.

The project was managed by Dr AD Russel. The artefacts were identified by Dr AD Russel BA PhD MClfA and MF Garner. The report illustrations were prepared by E Anderson MA AClfA and the report was edited by Dr AD Russel.

Further archaeological work may be required. On completion of all archaeological work a final synthesised report will be produced, and the archive will be deposited with Southampton City Council.

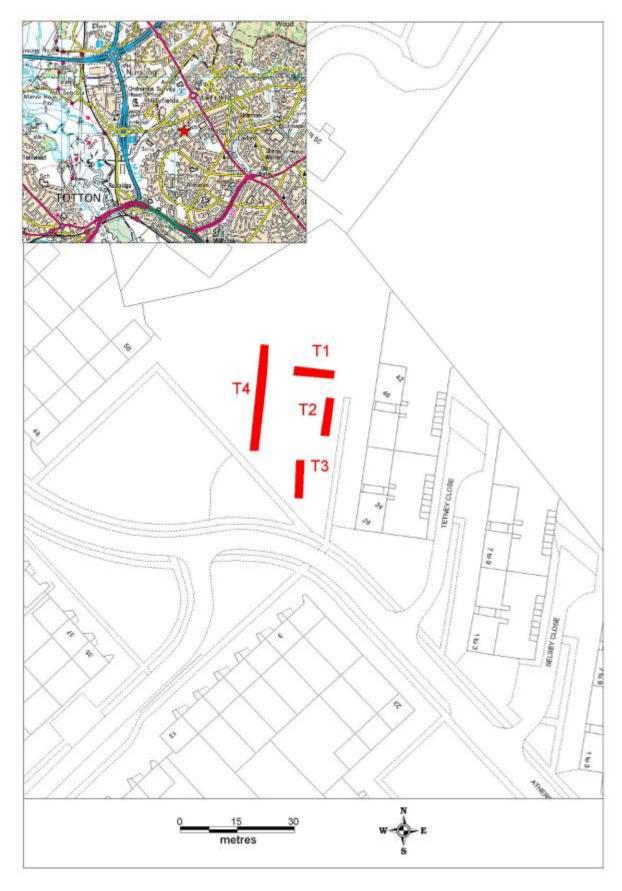


Figure 1. Location of site and evaluation trenches (red).

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3. Site location, topography and geology

The site, at present forming an area of amenity grassland (fig 1) is located to the north of Atherfield Road where it runs east— west, to the northeast of its junction with Windbury Road, and west of Tetney Close, at OS Grid reference 438190 115050.

The natural topography of the area slopes up towards the northeast. The nearest spot height shown on the OS map is 21.6m OD on Green Lane some 170m to the southeast of the site. The centre of the site was surveyed as 21.2m OD

The British Geological Survey shows the site to lie on the sands, silts and clays of the Wittering Formation (http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html).

4. Historical background

4.1 The site lies in the Wimpson area in the north part of Millbrook parish. The village of Wimpson probably began in the Saxon period. Wimpson (Wynesmannestone) is mentioned in a quit claim in the Winchester Cartulary in 1320: 'by John Wyeld of Wynesmannestone and Aubrey his wife for 20 years from the beginning of AD 1320 to 1340 to Nicholas Braysfield of two quarters of flour and two quarters barley'. A manor roll of Nursling (Nutschullyng) of 1406–23 mentions 'Redbridge (where a chapel is mentioned), Wimpson (Wynmanston) and Millbrook, and it is sometimes stated that the places are in Millbrook or Nursling' (Crawford 1946, 17). In 1422 the Nursling roll mentions includes '1 messuage and 22 acres of land in Wynmanston in Mulbrouk' (Drew 1946, 43).

4.2 In the late 19th century the site was still fields, lying between Brown Hill Road and Green Lane (fig 2). The area was developed for housing in the post-war period.

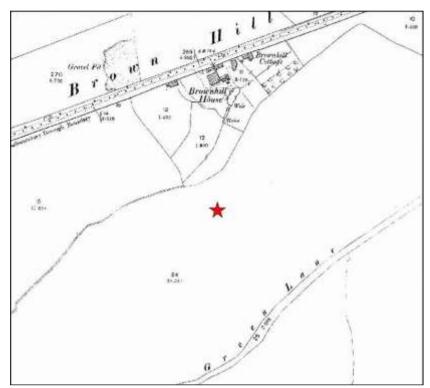


Figure 2. The area around the site, marked as a red star, in the late 19th century, as depicted on the 1896 OS map.

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5. Archaeological background

5.1 The site lies in Area 2 of the Local Areas of Archaeological Potential (LAAP) as defined in the City of Southampton Core Strategy 2010. Area 2 covers **Nursling Plantation and Lower Brownhill Road** and is described as follows:

A series of streams originate in this area, making it a likely area for prehistoric settlement. Neolithic finds have been discovered here, and evidence of small prehistoric settlements of Bronze Age and Iron Age date, notably an Iron Age settlement at Baron's Mead. The area is adjacent to Adanac Park just outside the city boundary, where a Bronze Age settlement and Iron Age barrow/inhumation cemetery have been found, the latter of potential national importance. At Nursling Plantation, at the east end of the area, is the prehistoric earthwork known as Aldermoor Camp and surrounding land. Nearby is part of an 8th century boundary baulk.

5.2 Archaeological sites within 500m of the site as recorded on the Southampton City Council Historic Environment Record are as follows. The locations are shown on Figure 3.

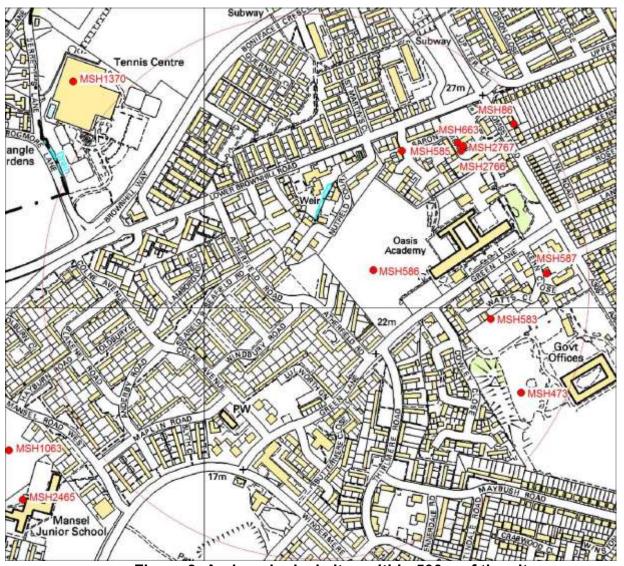


Figure 3. Archaeological sites within 500m of the site.

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MSH86

Site Name: 5 Upper Brownhill Road - Flint Finds

A layer of flints which included a Neolithic scraper and pot boilers (burnt flints).

NGR: Centred SU 3858 1534 (13m by 13m)

MSH473

Site Name: Maybush - Flint Spearhead Find

A large well-chipped flat oval spearhead in grey flint, probably Bronze Age, was found in the

Maybush area. Exact findspot unknown.

NGR: SU 38582 14840 (point)

MSH583

Site Name: Watts Close - All Deposits/Finds An unstratified sherd of prehistoric pottery. NGR: Centred SU 38522 14986 (178m by 145m)

MSH585

Site Name: Baron's Mead, off Lower Brownhill Road - Boundary Ditch or Stream

Field ditches shown on a 17th century estate map. NGR: Centred SU 38367 15299 (79m by 61m)

MSH586

Site Name: South corner of Romsey Road and Lower Brownhill Road - Medieval/Post-Medieval Field System

Field ditches shown on a 17th century estate map, with documentary evidence of them in the 14th century.

NGR: Centred SU 38316 15074 (548m by 513m)

MSH587

Site Name: Kern Close (South Junction of Green Lane/Romsey Road) - Undated Evidence

Three undated features

NGR: Centred SU 38630 15067 (158m by 151m)

MSH663

Site Name: Baron's Mead, off Lower Brownhill Road - Iron Age, Possible Iron Age and Undated Deposits

Remains of an Iron Age settlement. Some features contained Iron Age pottery dating to the 4th and 2nd centuries BC. Other features are thought to date to the Iron Age, although this was uncertain; these included twelve hearths which could be of Iron Age or later date. The hearths could be domestic hearths or industrial hearths used for iron smithing. No definite remains of structures were found, although some are suggested. Many other features were undated and could date to any time between the Iron Age (or perhaps before) and the early 20th century, some probably being associated with agricultural activity from the medieval period until the mid-20th century (field boundary ditches relating to this activity were found). NGR: Centred SU 38460 15303 (195m by 134m)

MSH1063

Site Name: Mansel Infant and Junior Schools, Porlock Road – Finds

All of the deposits excavated were modern but they contained pre-modern material.

Prehistoric burnt flint and flint flakes, Roman brick, and medieval pottery were present in small quantities. Post-medieval material was a little more numerous. No patterning was obvious in the distribution of the pre-1750 material. The medieval and post-medieval ceramics may have been spread on the fields with organic refuse. Larger quantities of early modern and modern finds were present. A similar range of finds, including building material and domestic equipment, was found in most trenches.

NGR: Centred SU 37647 14743 (218m by 191m)

MSH1370

Site Name: The Matchpoint Tennis Centre in Frogmore Lane - Bronze Age Evidence A small remnant of undisturbed ground that survived in the northern part of the site produced 50 sherds of Bronze Age pottery from a brickearth subsoil, and one sherd from a shallow oval feature containing burnt material that was cut into the subsoil. Environmental samples recovered evidence of former vegetation and land-use patterns.

NGR: SU 37768 15419 (point)

MSH2465

Site Name: Mansel Infant and Junior Schools, Porlock Road - Former Fields Field boundary ditches and a stream shown on 19th century maps were visible as shallow negative features with enhanced vegetation growth NGR: Centred SU 37675 14652 (218m by 191m)

MSH2766

Site Name: Baron's Mead, off Lower Brownhill Road - Boundary Ditch One of two large boundary on land formerly part of Millbrook School, Lower Brownhill Road. The ditch coincides with a field boundary shown on 19th century maps and dating back to at least 1615.

NGR: Centred SU 38478 15292 (109m by 55m)

MSH2767

Site Name: Baron's Mead, off Lower Brownhill Road - Prehistoric Flint Finds Prehistoric worked flints were found in stratified deposits and unstratified deposits. Some of the stratified deposits were of Iron Age or possible Iron Age date, others were undated or later. The flints were not closely dated. They include cores, flakes and some tools.

NGR: Centred SU 38460 15303 (195m by 134m)

6. Aims of the evaluation

The aims of the evaluation were 'to determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality, and date of any archaeological remains encountered, as dictated by current best practice.' (Russel 2014, 5).

7. Evaluation methodology

The methodology followed that specified in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Russel 2014).

A total of 4 trenches (Fig 4) was opened by 360 degree, tracked mechanical excavator using a 1m wide toothless bucket. Machining ceased when natural or archaeology deposits were revealed, and further investigation was by hand. The trenches were 10m or 30m long and varied in depth from 400mm to 550mm. The width varied from 1.8m to 2.1m.

All trenches and features were mapped to a grid based on the National Grid and established by Total Station. The Total Station was a Topcon Gpt-7005i with an accuracy with prism to 25m of +/- 3mm.

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 and these are used in this report (Munsell Color 2000). Contexts 1-27 were assigned, finds were recovered, and 40L soil samples taken. The archive will be deposited with Southampton City Council under Accession Number: 2015.10 on completion of the project.

8. 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, Appendix 2 gives finds details and Appendix 3 contained individual plans of each trench with positions of the sections.

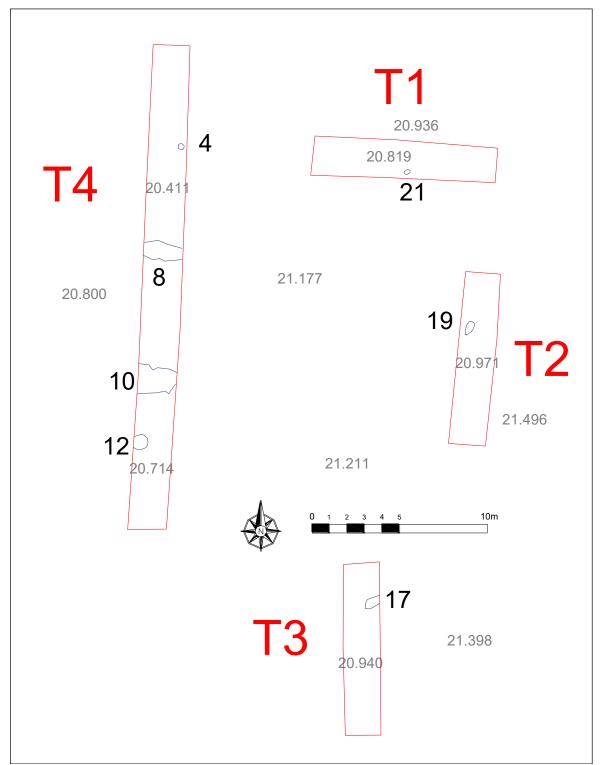


Figure 4. Plan of the evaluation trenches. Trenches in red, features in black, spot heights in grey.

8.1 Natural deposits

Natural gravel 3 was observed in all the trenches and was situated some 300mm-550mm below the surface. It was a brownish yellow (10YR6/6) sandy clay loam and was at least 200mm thick (fig 5).



Figure 5. East-facing section in trench 2, showing layers 1, 2 and 3.

Gravel layer 25 was above layer 3 in Trench 1. It was an area of dark yellowish brown (10YR4/4), sandy clay loam, some 1.7m long, 1.5m wide and 100mm deep. It was investigated and it was though not to be of human origin, and may have been a result of root disturbance.

Gravel layer 24 was above layer 3 in Trench 2. It was an area of dark yellowish brown (10YR4/4), sandy clay loam, some 950mm long, 500mm wide and 100mm deep. It was investigated and it was seen to be a variation in the natural.

8.2 Possible prehistoric and undated features

Gully 8 in Trench 4 was an irregular linear shape in plan, aligned east –west across the middle of the trench (fig 4). The sides were irregular and steep and the base was 'V' shaped, (figs 6 and 7). It was 1.1m wide, 350mm deep and at least 1.8m long. It was filled with a yellowish brown (10YR5/4) sandy clay loam, context 9. The fill consisted of gravel and was not dissimilar to the surrounding natural gravel, but it produced three burnt flints.

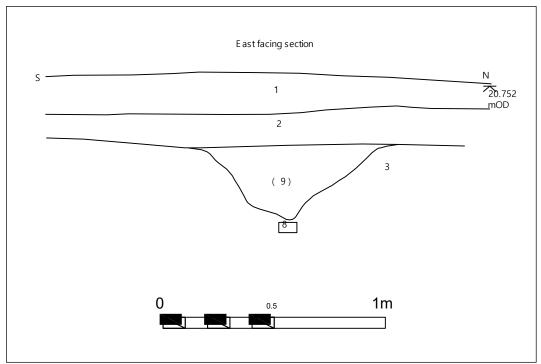


Figure 6. East-facing section of feature 8.



Figure 7. East-facing section of feature 8.

Feature 10 ran roughly northwest-southeast across the southern end of Trench 4 (fig 4). It had an irregular linear shape in plan, and the sides and base were extremely irregular. It may have been a tree disturbance. It was 1.8m wide, 400mm deep and at least 2.1m long (figs 8 and 9). It was filled with a dark brown (10YR3/3) silty clay loam, context 11. The fill consisted of compact gravel and was very similar to the surrounding natural gravel. Two burnt flints were recovered from the fill.

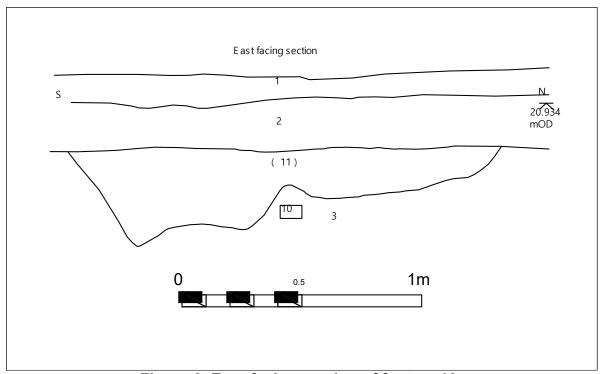


Figure 8. East-facing section of feature 10.



Figure 9. East-facing section of feature 10.

Pit 12 was situated in the southern end of Trench 4 (fig 4). It was roughly circular in plan, had gently sloping sides and a concave base (figs 10 and 11). It was 400mm long, 380mm wide and 140mm deep. There were two fills, 13 and 14. Context 14 was the lower fill. It was a black (10YR2/1), silty clay loam some 70mm thick, that contained abundant charcoal, burnt flint and 14 small flint flakes, possibly waste from flint-working. Above it was fill 13, a dark greyish brown (10YR4/2) sandy clay loam, that produced three burnt flints.

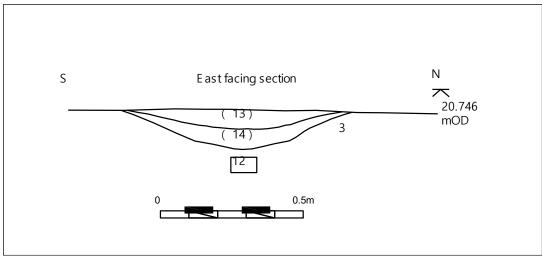


Figure 10. East-facing section of feature 12.



Figure 11. East-facing section of feature 12.

Shallow pit 17 was situated in the northern end of Trench 3 (fig 4). The sides were steep and the base was 'V' shaped (figs 12 and 13). Its eastern side went beyond the trench edge but the exposed part was 550mm wide, 200mm deep and 950mm long. It was filled with a dark brown (10YR3/3), sandy clay loam, context 18, from which four fragments of burnt flint and two flint flakes were recovered.

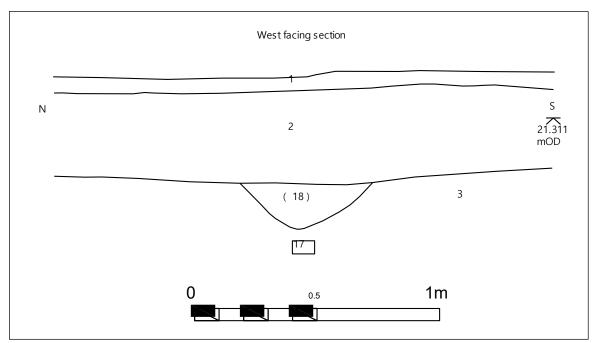


Figure 12. West-facing section of feature 17.



Figure 13. West-facing section of feature 17.

Pit 19 was situated in the northern end of Trench 2 (fig 4). It was oval in plan, the sides were irregular and the base was concave (figs 14 and 15). It was 780mm long, 430mm wide and 270mm deep. It contained a silty clay loam fill, context 20, that was dark brown (10YR3/3) in colour with patches of black (10YR2/1). It had abundant charcoal and burnt flint inclusions.

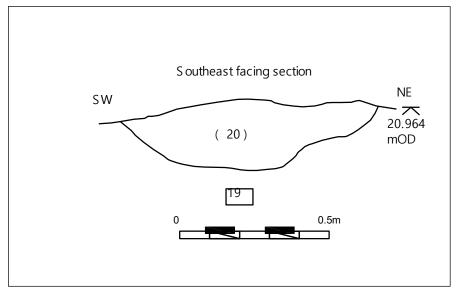


Figure 14. Southeast-facing section of feature 19.



Figure 15. Southeast-facing section of feature 19.

Possible post-hole 21 was situated in the south of Trench 1 (fig 4). It was sub-circular in plan and had irregular sides and a concave base (figs 16 and 17). It was 270mm long, 220mm wide and 100mm deep. It was filled with a very dark brown (10YR2/2) silty clay loam, context 22, that contained some flecks of charcoal.

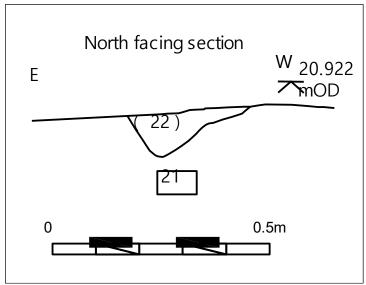


Figure 16. North-facing section of feature 21.



Figure 17. North-facing section of feature 21.

8.3 Modern deposits and features

Subsoil 2 was observed in all trenches (fig 5). It was a dark greyish brown (10YR4/2) silty clay loam some 200mm thick and situated 200mm below the surface. It contained fragments of modern pottery and some flint flakes, possibly waste from flint-working.

Small pit 4 was found at the northern end of Trench 4. It was circular in plan with steep sides and a concave base. It was 360mm long, 300mm wide and 150mm deep. It was filled with a very dark brown (10YR2/2) sandy clay loam, context 5. The fill was very disturbed by roots and it contained fragments of modern finds.

A series of possible plough marks were observed running parallel to each other in a north west - south easterly direction in Trench 4. They were some 50-100mm wide and 50mm thick and they seemed to cut subsoil 2. They were filled with a dark greyish brown (10YR4/2) sandy clay loam, context 7. No finds were observed.

Layer 16 was observed in the south of Trench 3. It was a dark greyish brown (10YR4/2), sandy clay loam some 200-300mm thick. It contained some burnt flint, concrete fragments and abundant tarmac fragments.

Top soil 1 was situated in all the trenches. It was a dark greyish brown (10YR4/2) silty clay loam some 200mm thick. It contained fragments of concrete and plastic.

9. Impact of the development

The construction methodology for the new car park involves excavation to a depth of 345mm, although the fall and gradient of the excavation will be need to be agreed on site with the engineer to minimise excavation. This depth of excavation will probably cut slightly into the natural gravel and may involve removal of the top of archaeological features. Larger archaeological features may be considered to be soft spots and might have to be emptied and filled with Type 1 to form a suitable bearing layer for the Grassgrid concrete geoblocks and the kerbs. The movement of machinery across the excavation is likely to further damage any archaeology that remains in-situ.

10. Conclusions

The natural gravel was observed in all the trenches and was situated some 3300mm to 550mm below the surface.

A total of six possible prehistoric features were observed. One gully, one irregular linear features two irregular pits, one post-hole and one shallow circular pit. All the features contained burnt flint except for the possible post-hole. The shallow pit produced the most finds on the site with abundant charcoal, burnt flint and 14 small flint flakes possibly from flint-working. Other flint flakes were recovered from the topsoil and subsoil.

One modern feature was observed in the northern end of Trench 4. A series of modern layers were observed above the natural.

The construction of the car park will have an impact on the remaining archaeology and a watching brief on the initial stripping of the site may be required in order to make a record of any archaeology destroyed by the construction.

Bibliography

BGS British Geological Survey, 1987, Geological Survey of Great Britain; Southampton Drift, Sheet 315, 1:50000, Ordnance Survey.

Crawford, OGS, 1946, A Short History of Nursling, Southampton.

Drew, JS, 1946, The Manor of Nursling, Hants; notes on a document in the Herriard Collection (1405–1423), in Crawford 1946.

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

Russel AD 2014. Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation of land at Atherfield Road, Millbrook, Southampton.

Appendix 1. Context list

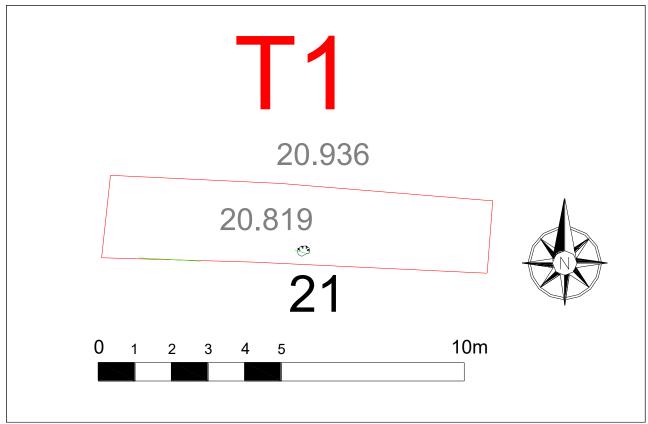
FULL CONTEXT SHEET RECORDING FORM										
CONTEXT	SUBDIV	CATEGORY	POSITIVE	MUNSEL PAGE	COL	TEXTURE	STONEABUND	FILLOF	FILLED BY	PERIOD
0		Blank for	DO NO DELETE							
1		LAYER	Topsoil	10YR	4/2	SILT LOAM	2			Mod
2	0	LAYER	Subsoil	10YR	4/2		4			e-mod - mod
3	0	LAYER	natural gravel	10YR	6/6	SANDY CLAY LOAM	4			Nat
4	4	FEATURE	PIT						5	Mod
5	4	FILL	fill	10YR	2/1	SANDY CLAY LOAM	3	4		Mod
6	4	FEATURE	plough marks						7	Mod
7	4	FILL		10YR	4/2	SANDY CLAY LOAM	3	6		Mod
8	4	FEATURE	possibly natural						91	Nat / prehist
9	4	FILL	NATURAL	10YR	5/4	SANDY CLAY LOAM	4	8		Nat / prehit
10	4	FEATURE	ditch						11	Nat / prehist
11	4	FILL	fill	10YR	3/3	SILTY CLAY LOAM	3	10		Nat / prehist
12	4	FEATURE	PIT						13, 14	Prehist?
13	4	FILL	PIT	10YR	4/2	SANDY CLAY LOAM	4	12		Prehist?
14	4	FILL	PIT	10YR	2/1	SILT LOAM	3	12		Prehist?
15	3	CANCELED								
16	3	LAYER		10YR	4/2	SANDY CLAY LOAM	3			Mod
17	3	FEATURE	PIT						18	Prehist?
18	3	FILL	PIT	10YR	3/3	SANDY CLAY LOAM	3	17		Prehist?
19	2	FEATURE	PIT						20	Prehist?
20	2	FILL	fill of pit	10YR	3/3	SILTY CLAY LOAM	3	19		Prehist?
21	1	FEATURE	POSTHOLE						22	Prehist?
22	1	FILL	fill	10YR	2/2	SANDY CLAY LOAM	3	21		Nat / prehist
23	1	FINDS	UNSTRAT							
24	2	LAYER	natural variation	10YR	4/4	SILTY CLAY LOAM	3			Nat
25	1	LAYER	NATURAL	10YR	4/2	SANDY CLAY LOAM	4			Nat
26	4	FINDS	UNSTRAT							
27	2	FINDS	UNSTRAT							

Appendix 2. Finds

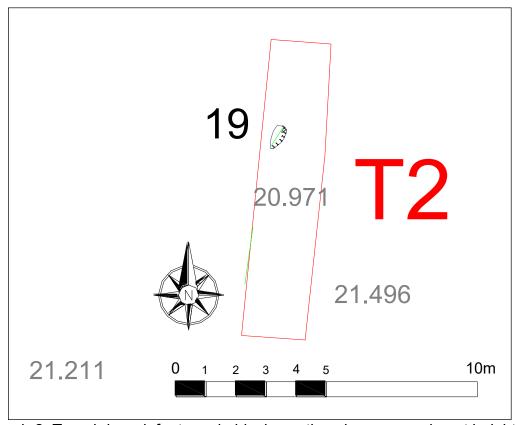
All finds from the evaluation except unstratified modern finds.

Finds recording form							
Context	Mat grp	MATERIAL GROUP	Mat Type	Find Type	No of frag	Wgt(gm)	Description
2	3	3	POT	PLAT	8	1	White glazed plate. Modern
2	3	3	POT	FPOT	1	34	Modern flowerpot
2	8	8	BONE	SHEP	1	12	
2	3	3	POT	FRAG	1	2	Transfer print. China
2	1	1	FLNT	FLKE	3	19	Flakes
5	4	4	GLAS	FRAG	1	1	Clear glass. Burnt. Modern
5	4	4	GLAS	FRAG	2	7	Modern. Milk bottle
9	1	1	FLNT	BURN	3	54	
11	1	1	FLNT	BURN	2	28	
13	1	1	FLNT	BURN	3	39	
14	1	1	FLNT	FLKE	14	2	Debitage
14	10	10	CHAR	FRAG	7	2	
14	10	10	CHAR	FRAG	200	45	
14	1	1	FLNT	BURN	172	537	
14	1	1	FLNT	BURN	77	105	
14	1	1	FLNT	BURN	5	26	
14	10	10	CHAR	FRAG	100	9	
18	1	1	FLNT	BURN	3	52	
18	1	1	FLNT	FLKE	2	10	
18	1	1	FLNT	BURN	1	2	
20	1	1	FLNT	BURN	38	859	
23	3	3	POT	CUP	1	12	Late 19th/20thc. Moulded mug/jug
23	3	3	POT	PLAT	1	4	Transfer print. Late 19th/20thc.
23	1	1	FLNT	BURN	1	4	
26	1	1	FLNT	FLKE	1	45	Broad, edge damage, tertiary
26	1	1	FLNT	BURN	3	69	
27	1	1	FLNT	BURN	1	29	T2 unstrat

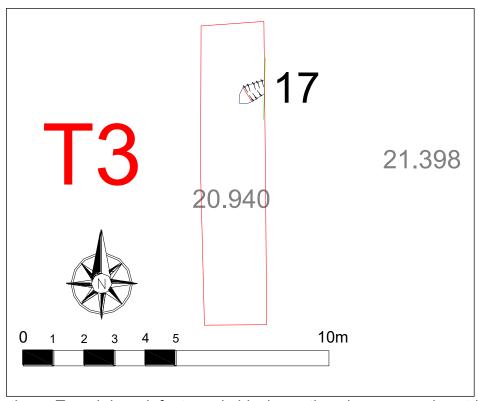
Appendix 3. Trench plans



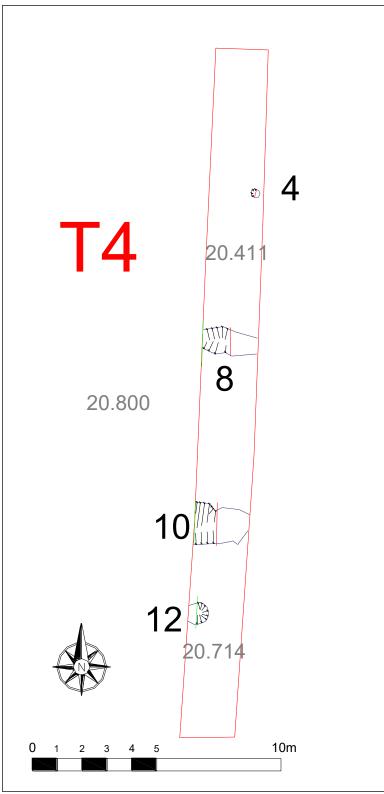
Plan of Trench 1. Trench in red, features in black, sections in green and spot heights in grey



Plan of Trench 2. Trench in red, features in black, sections in green and spot heights in grey



Plan of trench three. Trench in red, features in black, sections in green and spot heights in grey



Plan of trench four. Trench in red, features in black, sections in green and spot heights in grey