



Compass Point,
Former Ordnance Survey Premises
Romsey Road, Southampton

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Southampton Code: SOU 1622
WA ref: 89590
April 2013



**Compass Point, Former Ordnance Survey Premises,
Romsey Road, Southampton**

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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**89590
(SOU 1622)**



Quality Assurance

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* I = Internal Draft; E = External Draft; F = Final

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Compass Point, Former Ordnance Survey Premises, Romsey Road, Southampton

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- Figure 1: Location of Site and evaluation trench
Front cover: Location of trench, view from south-west



Compass Point, Former Ordnance Survey Premises, Romsey Road, Southampton

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Summary

Wessex Archaeology were commissioned by CgMs Consulting Limited to open up a single trench at Compass Point, Former Ordnance Survey Premises, Romsey Road, Southampton (NGR 438665, 114964) in lieu of a previously agreed watching brief. Due to constraints on Site only a 4m x 1.9m trench was possible. The work was carried out in April 2013.

No archaeological features or deposits were encountered during this evaluation though the stratigraphic sequence did confirm the idea suggested by previous work that this area of Site had not seen any previous modern truncation or disturbance.



Compass Point, Former Ordnance Survey Premises, Romsey Road, Southampton

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by CgMs Consulting by Rob Bourn. Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank Kevin White (Southampton City Council) for his help and advice.

The evaluation was undertaken by Naomi Brennan. This report was written and compiled by Naomi Brennan with illustrations by Ken Lymer. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Richard Greatorex, who also edited this report.



Compass Point, Former Ordnance Survey Premises, Romsey Road, Southampton

Archaeological Evaluation Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology were commissioned by CgMs Consulting Limited, acting on behalf of their client Taylor Wimpey (Southern Counties) to open up a 10m x 2m trial trench in an area which had been intended for observational mitigation. Due to the proximity of newly constructed flats and trees protected under TPOs the area available for investigation was severely limited. The area has been targeted as a previous evaluation undertaken by MOLAS in October 2006 (site code SOU 1405), identified it as the only part of the wider development where previous groundwork (19th and 20th century) had left underlying deposits undisturbed. The Site is located in the suburb of Maybush, fronting the western side of the Romsey Road, in Southampton. The Site is situated on land that was formerly occupied by the Ordnance Survey and centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 438665, 114964 (see **Figure 1**).

1.1.2 In consultation with Southampton City Council's Historic Environment Team Leader (Kevin White, the archaeological advisor to the Local Planning Authority), in lieu of the previously agreed watching brief, a single trial trench was opened and recorded as located in **Figure 1**. Due to constraints on Site the trench measured only 4m x 1.9m.

1.1.3 The work was carried out on 3rd April 2013.

1.2 The Site

1.2.1 The Site lies within the Maybush suburb of Southampton and is now an almost fully completed housing development. It is bounded by Romsey Road to the east, houses backing onto Watts Close and Kern Close to the north, Cowley Close to the west and Maybush Road to the south.

1.2.2 Modern ground level across the site varies from 27.80m OD, on the south-eastern side, rising gradually to c 28.50m OD on the central eastern side then gently slopes downwards in a north-westerly direction to c 24.80m OD. The north-eastern part of the Site lies at the lower level of 23.89m OD, having been terraced during the 1960s construction works.

1.2.3 The site is located between three stream valleys. To the east the land slopes into the Tanners Brook valley. To the west, the land slopes down to a stream and the Site stands a little to the north of another stream, most of which now runs underground.

1.2.4 The underlying geology is recorded as the Wittering Formation, a combination of sand, silt and clay formed in shallow seas and overlain by river terrace deposits of sand and gravel (British Geological Survey).



- 1.2.5 Evidence from earlier observations on the Site suggests that extensive terracing was undertaken to the south and west of the wider during the construction of the present Ordnance Survey Headquarters. The spoil produced from the terracing was until recently visible in the form of a huge earth bank located along the southern boundary of the wider site. The current focus of observation falls within the footprint of a former orchard, and it was considered likely in 2006, that deposits in this area remained largely undisturbed by 1960s development and might therefore seal and have preserve archaeological deposits below any modern overburden.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 Previous works with regard to the Site include a survey by Southampton City Council, a Rapid Cultural Heritage Risk Appraisal (MoLAS 2006a), an Archaeological Evaluation which located 20th century activity (site code SOU 1405) (MoLAS 2006b) and a Programme of Historic Building Recording (site code SOU 1612) (Wessex Archaeology 2013a).

2.2 Prehistoric

- 2.2.1 There are a few Neolithic finds known from this part of Southampton including a flint scraper and many burnt flints from the rear of 5 Upper Brownhill Road and a polished flint axe found in Rosewall Road. Bronze Age material has been uncovered at Matchpoint Tennis Centre (site code SOU 457). In 1991/2 a watching brief in Kern Close along the northern edge of the Site revealed three undated features (HER ref MSH587). In 1997 a watching brief in Watts Close adjacent to the northern edge of the Site, revealed residual prehistoric pottery, burnt flint and clay pipe (HER ref MSH583).
- 2.2.2 A single prehistoric flint spearhead was found by chance within the western part of the wider site in 1916 (HER ref MSH473) but there is no evidence of any primary historic settlement.
- 2.2.3 In 1998, a watching brief at Millbrook Community School, c 200m to the north of the Site revealed evidence of Iron Age occupation (site code SOU 946). Part of an Iron Age settlement site was uncovered when the land was redeveloped for housing. Features included pits, linear features (some perhaps structural), and a post-hole group.

2.3 Romano-British and medieval

- 2.3.1 There are no known remains or sites dating to these periods in the vicinity of the Site.

2.4 19th-20th century

- 2.4.1 An 1896 plan of the Site shows Crabwood House (recently converted) now a Grade-II-listed building. The plan suggests that there may have been some localised landscaping in the immediate vicinity of the house. Other buildings shown on the map are no longer extant. They would have stood just to the north-west of the main entrance to the Site on Romsey Road.
- 2.4.2 A map dated to 1933 indicates development in the 1920s at Maybush Corner. These buildings no longer survive above ground.
- 2.4.3 The post-war redevelopment of the site as the Ordnance Survey headquarters involved substantial cutting into the slope where the buildings now stand and dumping the material as a tall feature on the western boundary.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims and objectives

3.1.1 The aims and objectives of the archaeological evaluation are to;

- *Locate, identify and to investigate and record the presence/absence of archaeological features or deposits,*
- *If significant archaeological features or deposits are located, then the works will establish, where possible, the extent, date, character, relationship, condition and significance of archaeological features, artefacts and deposits within the mitigation area.*

3.2 Methodology

3.2.1 The full detailed methodology of the archaeological works was set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (Wessex Archaeology 2013b), and is summarised below:

3.2.2 A single trench was excavated measuring 4.0m x 1.9m. The position and size of this trench was adjusted from the proposed trench location due to presence of a pedestrian access route. It was numbered Trench 10 to carry on the numbering from the previous evaluation (SOU 1405).

3.2.3 The trench was excavated using a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket, under constant archaeological supervision. Mechanical excavation continued in spits through topsoil and subsoil down to either the uppermost archaeological features or natural deposits, whichever was encountered first. The spoil from the trench was scanned for artefacts. The trench was backfilled with the excavated spoil, topsoil last in order to preserve the soil stratigraphy.

3.2.4 All deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system with a unique numbering system for individual contexts. A representative section was hand-drawn at 1:20, and this was tied in to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The Ordnance Datum (OD) height of the deposits within the trench was calculated.

3.2.5 A digital photographic record was compiled showing the trench and its location within the general context of the Site. Digital images have been subject to a managed quality control and curation process which has embedded appropriate metadata within the image and ensures the long term accessibility of the image set.

3.2.6 The position and height of the trench was calculated using known points and referenced the British National Grid coordinate system.

3.2.7 A unique site code **SOU 1622** was allocated to the Site, and was used on all records and finds.

3.3 Health and Safety

3.3.1 Health and Safety considerations were of paramount importance in conducting all fieldwork. Safe working practices will override archaeological considerations at all times.

3.3.2 All work was carried out in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992, and all other relevant Health and Safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice in force at the time.



3.4 Best practice

- 3.4.1 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with the relevant guidance given in the Institute for Archaeologist's *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

- 4.1.1 Around 0.5m of recent made ground **1001** was found to overlie the former orchard topsoil **1002**. This continued for a depth of around 0.3m overlying around 0.17m of former subsoil **1003**. At approximately 0.95m below current ground level the natural gravels **1004** were encountered (river terrace deposits).

- 4.1.2 No archaeological features or deposits were found.

5 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

- 5.1.1 No finds were located during the evaluation and no environmental samples were taken.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1.1 No archaeological features or deposits were encountered during this evaluation though the stratigraphic sequence did confirm the idea that this area of Site had not been subject to any previous modern truncation or disturbance.

7 STORAGE AND CURATION

- 7.1.1 It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the fieldwork be deposited with Southampton Museum under the accession code **SOU 1622**. The Museum has agreed in principle to accept the project archive on completion of the project.

- 7.1.2 The complete site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records and graphics, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Southampton Museum (Southampton City Council 2007), and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (Walker 1990; SMA 1995; Richards and Robinson 2000; Brown 2007).

- 7.1.3 An OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/projects/oasis/> will be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators Forms. All appropriate parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to the HER. This will include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy will also be included with the archive).

7.2 Copyright

- 7.2.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the Site will be retained by Wessex Archaeology Ltd under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved. The recipient museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-profitmaking, and conforms with the Copyright and Related Rights regulations 2003.

- 7.2.2 This report may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g. Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which we are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of

our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferrable by Wessex Archaeology. You are reminded that you remain bound by the conditions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of the report.

7.3 Security Copy

- 7.3.1 In line with current best practice, on completion of the project a security copy of the paper records will be prepared, in the form of microfilm. The master jackets and one diazo copy of the microfilm will be submitted to the National Archaeological Record (English Heritage), a second diazo copy will be deposited with the paper records, and a third diazo copy will be retained by Wessex Archaeology. Alternatively, the security copy may be in the form of a pdf file.

8 REFERENCES

8.1 Bibliography

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<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/data/services/digmap50wms.html>

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9 APPENDIX 1: STRATIGRAPHIC SUMMARY

bgl = below ground level

TRENCH 10			
Dimensions: 4.00x1.9m		Max. depth: 0.97m	Ground level: 25.40-25.90m aOD
Easting: 438589		Northing: 114988	
Context	Description		Depth (m)
1001	<i>Overburden</i>	Made ground. Mid brown silty sand. 40% gravel, sub-angular – sub-rounded, <1-8cm. Occasional CBM fragments. Slightly mixed. Some bioturbation. Compact. Sharp interface with 1002. Overlies 1002.	0.00-0.50 bgl
1002	<i>Layer</i>	Former topsoil. Dark grey-brown sandy silt loam. 2% gravel, sub-rounded, <1-3cm. rare CBM and charcoal flecks. Homogeneous. Fairly compact. Bioturbated. Diffuse interface with 1003. Overlies 1003.	0.50-0.80 bgl
1003	<i>Layer</i>	Former subsoil. Mid orange-brown sandy silt loam. 1% gravel, sub-rounded, <1-3cm. Homogeneous. Compact. Bioturbated. Clear interface with 1004. Overlies 1004.	0.80-0.97 bgl
1003	<i>Natural</i>	Natural geology. Mid orange sandy clay with 30% sub-rounded – sub-angular gravel, <1-4cm. Some bioturbation compact.	0.95+ bgl



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Location of Site and evaluation trench

Figure 1



10 APPENDIX 2: OASIS FORM

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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Printable version

OASIS ID: wessexar1-148172

Project details

Project name	Compass Point, Former Ordnance Survey Premises
Short description of the project	Wessex Archaeology were commissioned by CgMs Consulting Limited to open up a single trench at Compass Point, Former Ordnance Survey Premises, Romsey Road, Southampton (NGR 438665, 114964) in lieu of a previously agreed watching brief. Due to constraints on Site only a 4m x 1.9m trench was possible. The work was carried out in April 2013. No archaeological features or deposits were encountered during this evaluation though the stratigraphic sequence did confirm the idea suggested by previous work that this area of Site had not seen any previous modern truncation or disturbance.
Project dates	Start: 03-04-2013 End: 03-04-2013
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	SOU 1622 - Museum accession ID
Any associated project reference codes	89590 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Housing estate
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	HAMPSHIRE SOUTHAMPTON SOUTHAMPTON Compass Point, Former Ordnance Survey Premises
Postcode	SO16 4GR

Study area 7.60 Square metres
 Site coordinates SU 386 149 50 -1 50 55 54 N 001 27 02 W Point
 Height OD / Depth Min: 24.00m Max: 25.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Wessex Archaeology
 Project brief originator Consultant
 Project design originator Wessex Archaeology
 Project director/manager R Groatorex
 Project supervisor Naomi Brennan
 Type of sponsor/funding body Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No
 Digital Archive recipient Southampton Museum
 Digital Contents "other"
 Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography"
 Paper Archive recipient Southampton Museum
 Paper Contents "other"
 Paper Media available "Diary", "Notebook - Excavation", ' Research', ' General Notes', "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
 Title Compass Point, Former Ordnance Survey Premises, Romsey Road, Southampton. Archaeological Evaluation Report
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