

Land at Toddington Lane (Phase 1), Littlehampton, West Sussex

**Archaeological Evaluation** 

by Sean Wallis

Site Code: TLL13/26

(TQ 0325 0387)

# Land at Toddington Lane (Phase 1), Littlehampton, West Sussex

An Archaeological Evaluation

for PMC Construction and Development Services Ltd

by Sean Wallis

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code TLL13/23

May 2014

# **Summary**

Site name: Land at Toddington Lane (Phase 1), Littlehampton, West Sussex

Grid reference: TQ 0325 0387

Site activity: Evaluation

**Planning reference :** LU/116/13

Date and duration of project: 14th - 17th April 2014

Project manager: Sean Wallis

Site supervisor: Sean Wallis

Site code: TLL 13/23

Area of site: c. 1.3 ha

**Summary of results:** The evaluation at Toddington Lane successfully investigated those parts of the site which will be most affected by redevelopment. A modest number of archaeological features were recorded, including pits, ditches and a gully dating from the Late Bronze Age or Iron Age and Roman periods. Some of the features recorded in the north-eastern part of the site are indicative of Roman settlement.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Littlehampton Museum in due course.

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 14.05.14
	Steve Preston ✓ 13.05.14

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Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd, 77a Hollingdean Terrace, Brighton, BN1 7HB

# Land at Toddington Lane, Littlehampton, West Sussex An Archaeological Evaluation

by Sean Wallis

# Report 13/23b

# Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Toddington Lane, Littlehampton, West Sussex (TQ 0325 0387) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Tim Guest of PPMC Construction and Development Services Ltd, 106 Queens Road, Portsmouth, PO2 7NE. Planning permission (LU/116/13) has been gained from Arun District Council to redevelop the site for residential housing. The consent is subject to standard conditions (9a and 9b) relating to archaeology, which require the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in advance of groundworks. This report is solely concerned with Phase 1 of the development, which is subject to planning condition 9a.

As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site which may be damaged or destroyed by the proposed redevelopment, a field evaluation was carried out to help formulate a mitigation strategy as necessary.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by West Sussex County Council Environment and Heritage (Archaeology: Mr Mark Taylor), who act as archaeological advisers to the District Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Felicity Howell, Odile Rouard and Sean Wallis between 14th and 17th April 2014, and the site code is TLL 13/23. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Littlehampton Museum in due course.

## Location, topography and geology

The site lies on the south side of Toddington Lane, on the outskirts of Littlehampton, West Sussex, and the Phase 1 development area is centred on TQ 0325 0387. The site is bounded to the north by Toddington Lane, to the south by a railway line and in an area generally dominated by nurseries (Figs 1 and 2). Until recently there were numerous polytunnel structures on the site, demolished prior to the evaluation. The site is relatively flat and lies at a height of approximately 7m above Ordnance Datum. According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology consists of Aeolian Deposits (Brickearth) (BGS 1992), and this was confirmed during the

evaluation as a mid orange brown silty sandy clay, which was recorded in all the trenches. However, chemical processes within the natural geology, due to the ground above being covered with plastic sheeting, had caused some of the Brickearth to turn a greenish grey colour.

# Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a desk-based assessment (Preston 2013). In summary, the Sussex coastal plain is known to be archaeologically rich for most periods. Although no previous archaeological finds or features are recorded on the site itself, there are several within close proximity. These include Bronze Age and Roman finds and features highly suggestive of settlement in the vicinity. Evidence of Saxon settlement has also been found, not much further afield. Recently published excavations at Eden Park revealed a multi-period site chiefly of the Bronze Age and Roman periods (Dinwiddy 2012).

# **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of proposed development.

Specific aims of the project were;

to determine if archaeologically relevant have survived on this site; to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present; to determine if archaeological deposits dating from the prehistoric period are present; to determine if archaeological deposits dating from the Roman period are present; to determine whether any evidence of Saxon occupation is present; and to determine if any archaeological deposits dating from the medieval and early post-medieval periods are present.

Fifteen trenches were to be dug, each measuring 20m in length and either 1.80m or 2m in width, targeting those parts of the site that would be most affected by the development. These were to be dug using a 360° type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. All spoilheaps were monitored for finds.

Where archaeological features were certainly or probably present, the stripped areas were to be cleaned using appropriate hand tools, and sufficient of the features and deposits exposed would be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the project. This work was to be carried out in a manner that would not compromise the integrity of archaeological features or deposits which might better be excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation.

#### Results

The fifteen trenches were dug close to their original planned positions, although trenches 7 and 10 were moved slightly to avoid a live water pipe (Fig. 3). All the trenches were 1.80m wide, and measured between 20.0m and 22.6m in length, and between 0.80m and 1.10m in depth. The level of the entire site appears to have been built up when it was occupied by a nursery. The depth of the made ground varied across the site but otherwise the stratigraphy was similar throughout (Pl. 1). The made ground generally consisted of shingle over plastic sheeting, which had been laid directly on the previous land surface, sealing topsoil and subsoil below in all trenches. Stained Brickearth was recorded in a number of the trenches (Pls 2 and 3), which is thought to be the result of chemical changes caused by a lack of oxygen in areas covered by plastic sheeting. Only the trenches which contained archaeological features are detailed below, and a complete list of the trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. Appendix 2 summarizes the excavated features. In addition, four sherds of pottery and a struck flint came from subsoil deposits (51) in Trenches 2, 4 and 7 which contained no cut features.

#### Trench 5 (Figs 4 and 5)

This trench was aligned approximately WNW-ESE, and was 21.50m long, and up to 0.88m deep. Natural geology was observed beneath 0.16m of made ground (52), 0.30m of buried topsoil (50) and 0.40m of subsoil (51). Gully 8 was recorded between 10.50m and 11m from the west end of the trench, and a 1m long slot excavated through it (Pl. 4). The feature was up to 0.45m wide and 0.17m deep, with a single fill of mid greyish brown clayey silt (60) which yielded nine sherds of Roman pottery, burnt flint, struck flint and a small fragment of fired clay.

A sub-circular pit (10) was investigated between 13.40m and 14.30m. The pit was 0.85m in diameter, and up to 0.34m deep (Pl. 5). Half-sectioning revealed that it had a primary fill of dark grey clayey silt (63), which contained a moderate amount of charcoal. Five sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from this deposit, along with several fragments of fired clay. Further fired clay fragments were recovered from the upper fill of mid grey clayey silt (62), along with six sherds of Roman pottery and a piece of burnt flint. Another sub-circular pit (9) was observed between 15.10 and 15.90m. This feature was 0.80m long and 0.70m wide, with a single fill of mid grey clayey silt (61). Two sherds of Roman pottery were found within this deposit, which was up to 0.27m thick, along with eleven fragments of fired clay, and very small fragments of iron slag.

An intercutting pit (7) and ditch (6) were recorded towards the eastern end of the trench, and a hand dug slot to establish their relationship revealed that pit 7 cut the ditch. The pit measured 0.60m in diameter and was up to 0.23m deep. It had a single fill of dark greyish brown clayey silt (59), which contained fragments of

charcoal, burnt flint, burnt bone, fired clay, along with a sherd of pottery dating from the Late Bronze Age or Iron Age. Ditch 6 was up to 0.95m wide and 0.30m deep, with a single fill of mid greyish brown clayey silt (58) which contained charcoal, struck flint and fired clay fragments. Three sherds of Late Bronze Age or Iron Age pottery were recovered from this ditch, along with two sherds of Roman pottery, and fragments of burnt flint and fired clay. However, the abraded nature of the Roman material, in contrast to the fresh appearance of the earlier sherds, suggests that the Roman sherds may be intrusive.

#### Trench 12 (Figs 4 and 5)

Trench 12 was aligned approximately NW-SE, and was 21m long, and up to 1.00m deep. Natural geology was observed beneath 0.40m of made ground (52), 0.30m of buried topsoil (50), and 0.20m of subsoil (51). The natural Brickearth had been stained greenish grey in places. Ditch 5 was recorded between 17.40m and 19m, and a 1m long slot excavated through it. The ditch was up to 0.75m wide and 0.27m deep, with a single fill of mid orange brown clayey silt (57) which contained five sherds of pottery dating from the Late Bronze Age or Iron Age, along with two fragments of burnt flint and a struck flint. It is possible that this ditch is the same as that (4) recorded to the south in Trench 13.

#### Trench 13 (Figs 4 and 5)

This trench was aligned approximately NW-SE, and was 20.30m long and 1.10m deep. Natural geology was revealed beneath 0.35m of made ground (52), 0.35m of buried topsoil (50) and 0.20m of subsoil (51). Two sherds of Late Iron Age pottery were retrieved from the subsoil (51). Patches of discoloured Brickearth were noted along the length of the trench. Ditch 4 was observed at between 4.80m and 6.80m from the north-western end of the trench (Pl. 6). A 1m long slot through this feature established that it was up to 0.85m wide and 0.38m deep, with a single fill of mid orange brown clayey silt (56). Three sherds of Late Bronze Age or Iron Age pottery were recovered from this deposit, along with fragments of burnt flint and struck flint. It is possible that this ditch is the same as that recorded to the north in trench 12 (5).

#### Trench 15 (Figs 4 and 5)

Trench 15 was aligned approximately SW-NE and was 21.70m long, and up to 1.10m deep. Natural geology was observed beneath 0.40m of made ground (52), 0.30m of buried topsoil and 0.30m of subsoil (51). A possible feature (2) was investigated at the south-western end of the trench, but was interpreted as being a patch of discoloured Brickearth even though it contained a struck flint. A possible gully (3) was observed running into this area. Feature 3 was up to 0.32m wide and 0.11m deep. No finds were recovered from its fill of mid grey silty clay (55), although two pieces of burnt flint were found in the relationship slot dug through features 2 and 3. A more convincing looking gully (1) was recorded between 5m and 6.50m, which was up to 0.52m wide and 0.27m deep. The gully had a single fill of mid grey silty clay (53), which contained a single struck flint.

# Finds

# Pottery by Malcolm Lyne

The evaluation yielded 43 sherds (329g) of pottery from 11 contexts, ranging in date from the Late Bronze Age until the very early Roman period (Appendix 3). There are very few diagnostic sherds but eight Late Bronze Age urn fragments came from ditch cuts 5 and 6. The three from ditch cut 6 present a problem in that they are very fresh, whereas the Late Iron Age and Early Roman sherds from the same context are abraded. It may be that the later sherds are from later field marling and have found their way into a much older feature, still visible in the landscape.

The bulk of the sherds (27) are of Late Iron Age and earliest Roman date, with no ceramic evidence of any activity after c.AD 60–70.

# Fired Clay by Sean Wallis

Sixty-five pieces of fired clay, weighing 861g, were recovered from six contexts during the evaluation (Appendix 4). The largest assemblage came from pit 9 (61) in trench 5. The only diagnostic fragments were two pieces of broken loomweight from pit 10 (63).

# Struck Flint by Steve Ford

A small collection of nine struck flints was recovered from six contexts and subsoil during the evaluation (Appendix 5). These comprised five flakes and 4 spalls (pieces less than 20x20mm). None of the pieces are closely datable but are likely to be of later Neolithic or Bronze Age date and could be contemporary with the other Bronze Age material on the site.

## Burnt Flint by Sean Wallis

Seventy fragments of burnt flint, weighing 1434g, were recovered from seven contexts during the evaluation (Appendix 6). None of the fragments had been worked, and the largest assemblages came from ditches 4 (56) and 6 (58), both of which are thought to date from the Late Bronze Age or Iron Age.

# Burnt bone by Steve Ford

Five small fragments of unidentified burnt bone (1g) were recovered form pit 7 (59).

### Slag by Steve Ford

Three small fragments of slag (1g) were recovered from pit 9(61).

# Charred plant remains by Joanna Pine

Five soil samples were taken and 10L of soil was floated and wet sieved using a 0.25mm mesh as detailed in Appendix 7. This revealed a very little charcoal, a few weed seeds and a single probable cereal grain.

# Conclusion

The Phase 1 fieldwork successfully addressed the objectives of the project and characteized the nature and extent of the archaeological remains present. A modest amount of archaeological deposits were identified, including ditches which probably date from the Late Bronze Age or Iron Age, and a Roman gully and pits. Several of these features recorded in the north-eastern part of the site, in Trench 5, are indicative of occupation. This reinforces the impression from previous excavations nearby (Dinwiddy 2012) of intensive land use over a long period in the vicinity. The results of this phase of works will be used to inform the mitigation measures required for Phase 2, which will be subject to a further Written Scheme of Investigation to be approved by the District Council as advised by West Sussex County Council Environment and Heritage (Archaeology).

# References

BGS, 1996, British Geological Survey, 1:50000 Sheet 317/332, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth

- Dinwiddy, M, 2012, 'A multi-period site at Eden Park (former Toddington Nurseries), Littlehampton, West Sussex', Sussex Archaeol Collect 150
- NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Department of Communities and Local Government, London (TSO)

Preston, S, 2013, 'Land at Toddington Lane, Littlehampton, West Sussex: a desk-based heritage assessment', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpubl rep 13/23, Brighton

# **APPENDIX 1:** Trench details

Trench	Length (m)	Breadth (m)	Depth (m)	Comment
1	20.00	1.80	1.10	0-0.40m made ground (52); 0.40-0.70m buried topsoil (50); 0.70- 1.00m subsoil (51); 1.00-1.10m+ natural geology (Brickearth). Large modern pit at northern end.
2	20.70	1.80	0.90	0-0.30m made ground (52); 0.30-0.60m buried topsoil (50); 0.60- 0.80m subsoil (51); 0.80-0.90m+ natural geology (Brickearth).
3	20.00	1.80	0.80	0-0.20m made ground (52); 0.20-0.50m buried topsoil (50); 0.50- 0.70m subsoil (51); 0.70-0.80m+ natural geology (Brickearth).
4	20.30	1.80	1.00	0-0.20m made ground (52); 0.20-0.50m buried topsoil (50); 0.50-0.80m subsoil (51); 0.80-1.00m+ natural geology (Brickearth). [Pl. 1]
5	21.50	1.80	0.88	0-0.16m made ground (52); 0.16-0.46m buried topsoil (50); 0.46-0.86m subsoil (51); 0.86-0.88m+ natural geology (Brickearth). Ditch 6, gully 8, pits 7, 9 and 10. <b>[Pls 4 and 5]</b>
6	20.60	1.80	0.90	0-0.20m made ground (52); 0.20-0.50m buried topsoil (50); 0.50- 0.75m subsoil (51); 0.75-0.90m+ natural geology (Brickearth).
7	20.80	1.80	0.97	0-0.25m made ground (52); 0.25-0.55m buried topsoil (50); 0.55- 0.85m subsoil (51); 0.85-0.97m+ natural geology (Brickearth).
8	21.00	1.80	0.94	0-0.18m made ground (52); 0.18-0.43m buried topsoil (50); 0.43- 0.73m subsoil (51); 0.73-0.94m+ natural geology (Brickearth).
9	20.50	1.80	1.02	0-0.18m made ground (52); 0.18-0.48m buried topsoil (50); 0.48- 0.83m subsoil (51); 0.83-1.02m+ natural geology (Brickearth).
10	20.30	1.80	1.10	0-0.10m made ground (52); 0.10-0.35m buried topsoil (50); 0.35- 0.65m subsoil (51); 0.65-1.10m+ natural geology (Brickearth).
11	21.00	1.80	0.90	0-0.15m made ground (52); 0.15-0.45m buried topsoil (50); 0.45- 0.75m subsoil (51); 0.75-0.90m+ natural geology (Brickearth).
12	21.00	1.80	1.00	0-0.40m made ground (52); 0.40-0.70m buried topsoil (50); 0.70- 0.90m subsoil (51); 0.90-1.00m+ natural geology (Brickearth). Ditch 5. <b>[Pl. 2]</b>
13	20.30	1.80	1.10	0-0.35m made ground (52); 0.35-0.70m buried topsoil (50); 0.70- 0.90m subsoil (51); 0.90-1.10m+ natural geology (Brickearth). Ditch 4. <b>[Pl. 6]</b>
14	22.60	1.80	0.95	0-0.20m made ground (52); 0.20-0.45m buried topsoil (50); 0.45- 0.75m subsoil (51); 0.75-0.95m+ natural geology (Brickearth).
15	21.70	1.80	1.10	0-0.40m made ground (52); 0.40-0.70m buried topsoil (50); 0.70-1.00m subsoil (51); 1.00-1.10m+ natural geology (Brickearth). Gullies 1 and 3, feature 2. <b>[Pl. 3]</b>

# **APPENDIX 2**: Feature details

Trench	Cut	Fill (s)	Туре	Date	Dating evidence
15	1	53	Gully	Undated	-
15	2	54	Natural feature	Undated	-
15	3	55	Gully	Undated	-
13	4	56	Ditch	Iron Age	Pottery
12	5	57	Ditch	Late Bronze Age – Iron Age	Pottery
5	6	58	Ditch	Late Bronze Age - Iron Age ? or Roman	Pottery
5	7	59	Pit	Late Bronze Age – Iron Age (or later)	Pottery (stratigraphy)
5	8	60	Gully	Early Roman	Pottery
5	9	61	Pit	Early Roman	Pottery
5	10	62, 63	Pit	Early Roman	Pottery

# **APPENDIX 3:** Catalogue of pottery

Trench	Cut	Deposit	Fabric	Form	Date-range	No. sherds	Wt (g)	Comments
4		51	P3		1000-500BC	3	5	Fresh
7		51	LIA1		50BC-AD50	1	34	Slightly abraded
13		51	LIA1	Necked jar	AD1-50	2	10	Fresh
13	4	56	P4		600-200BC	3	5	Abraded
12	5	57	P.1.	Urn	1500-500BC	5	16	Fresh
5	6	58	P.2	Urn	1500-500BC	3	14	Fresh
			LIA1	Jar base	50BC-AD50	1	10	Abraded
			C2	Jar	AD43-70	1	9	Abraded
5	7	59	P.3		1000-50BC	1	2	Fresh
			MISC			1	1	
5	8	60	C1	Closed	AD43-60	9	135	
5	9	61	C2	Closed	AD43-100	2	6	Fresh
5	10	62	C2		AD43-70	1	47	Fresh
			F1	Butt beaker	AD30-70	5	6	Fresh
5	10	63	LIA1		50BC-AD60	2	16	Fresh
			C2	Jar	AD43-70	3	13	Fresh

(a small number of small sherds from sieved samples are not included in this table)

# Fabrics

## Late Bronze Age/Iron Age

P.1. Handmade lumpy brown-black with profuse ill-sorted 0.50<2.00 mm. calcined-flint filler.

P.2. Similar but with additional glauconitic sand.

P.3. Handmade black with profuse <3.00 mm. calcined-flint filler. Polished internally and externally

P.4. Silty carbon-soaked black with moderate <1.00 mm. calcined-flint filler.

## Late Iron Age

LIA.1. Polished carbon-soaked black with profuse ill-sorted 0.20<1.00 mm. multi-coloured quartz-sand filler.

## Roman

Coarsewares

C1. Handmade Arun Valley greyware with profuse  ${<}1.00$  mm. multi-coloured quartz-sand filler.

C2. Similar but with finer  ${<}0.50$  mm. multi-coloured quartz-sand filler.

*Finewares* F1. Gallo-Belgic Whiteware

# **APPENDIX 4:** Catalogue of fired clay

Trench	Cut	Fill (s)	No. frags	Wt (g)	Comments
5	6	58	2	39	
5	7	59	19	84	
5	8	60	1	19	
5	9	61	33	517	
5	10	62	3	48	
5	10	63	7	154	Two fragments of loomweight

# APPENDIX 5: Catalogue of struck flint

	Trench	Cut	Fill (s)	Type
1	15	1	53	Flake
	15	2	54	Flake
	13	4	56	Flake; Spall
	12	5	57	Spall
	5	6	58	Flake, Spall
	5	8	60	Spall
	2	-	51	Flake

# **APPENDIX 6:** Catalogue of burnt flint

Trench	Cut	Fill (s)	No. frags	Wt (g)
15	2	54	2	74
13	4	56	21	369
12	5	57	2	35
5	6	58	15	511
5	7	59	2	18
5	8	60	3	72
5	10	62	25	355

# **APPENDIX 7:** Charred plant remains

Trench	Cut	Fill (s)	Volume (L)	Comment
5	6	58	10L	1 small charcoal fragment
5	7	59	10L	Rare minute flecks of charcoal
5	8	60	10L	None
5	9	61	10L	One indeterminate cereal, some weed seeds; 1small piece and several minute flecks of charcoal
5	10	62	10L	Rare weed seeds; minute flecks of charcoal













Plate 1. Trench 4, looking north, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 2. Trench 12, looking south east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



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Plates 1 - 2.



Plate 3. Trench 15, looking north east, Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 4. Trench 5, gully 8, looking north, Scales: 0.3m and 0.1m.

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Plate 5. Trench 5, pit 10, looking south, Scales: 0.5m and 0.1m.



Plate 6. Trench 13, ditch 4, looking north west, Scales: 0.5m and 0.3m.

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Land at Toddington Lane, (Phase 1), Littlehampton, West Sussex, 2014 Archaeological Evaluation Plates 5 - 6.



# TIME CHART

# **Calendar Years**

Modern	AD 1901
Victorian	AD 1837
Post Medieval	AD 1500
Medieval	AD 1066
Saxon	AD 410
Roman Iron Age	AD 43 BC/AD 750 BC
Drenze A set Lete	1200 DC
Bronze Age: Late	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower	2,000,000 BC ↓





TVAS (South) 77a Hollingdean Terrace, Brighton Sussex, BN1 7HB

> Tel: 01273 554198 Fax: 01273 564043 Email: south@tvas.co.uk Web: www.tvas.co.uk