

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION: TRING ROAD ALLOTMENTS AYLESBURY BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

NGR: SP 8325 1340

on behalf of Aylesbury Town Council



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January 2010

ASC: 1183/ATC/3



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Site Data

<i>ASC site code:</i>	ATC	<i>Project no:</i>	1183
<i>OASIS ref:</i>	Archaeol2-69162	<i>Event/Accession no:</i>	AYBCM: 2009.264
<i>County:</i>	Buckinghamshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Aylesbury		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Aylesbury ancient parish		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	SP 8325 1340		
<i>Extent of site:</i>	c.1.5 ha		
<i>Present use:</i>	Garden allotments		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Conversion of allotments to cemetery		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	07/03474/APP		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Aylesbury Vale District Council		
<i>Client:</i>	Aylesbury Town Council Town Hall 5 Church Street Aylesbury Buckinghamshire HP20 2QP		
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Internal Quality Check

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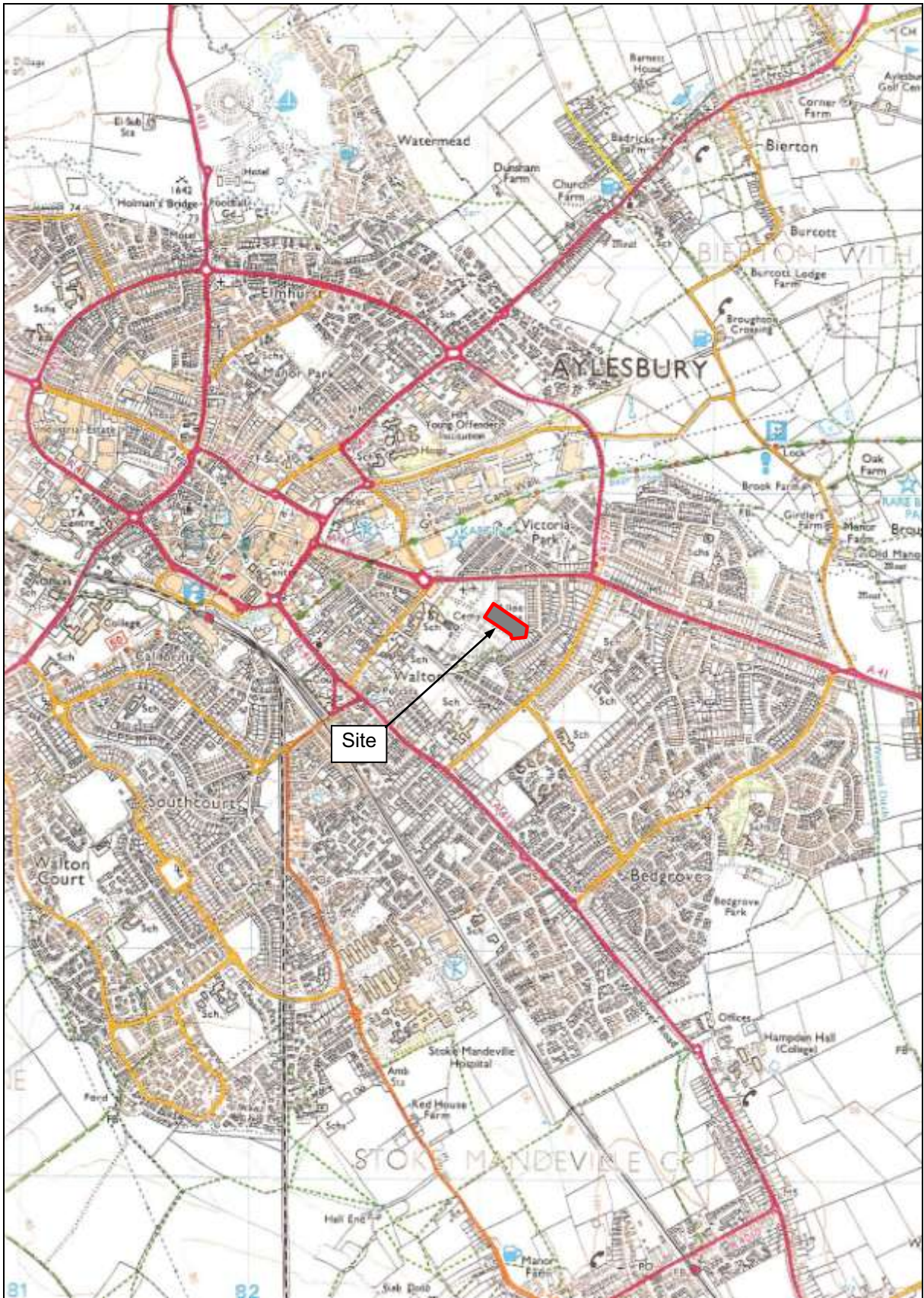


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

In December 2009 Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd undertook evaluation of the southern part of Tring Road Allotments in advance of proposed incorporation of this area into Tring Road Cemetery. The allotments are to be incorporated into the cemetery in at least two phases; this report presents results of the evaluation of the area affected by Phase 1 of the development only. Evaluation was required because previous discoveries within and surrounding the allotments had indicated that the site may contain burials of the Saxon period. The evaluation did not reveal burials of any period and little evidence of activity pre-dating the medieval period was observed. Results illustrate that the area was in use as arable land during the medieval and post-medieval periods; significant truncation and reworking of soils and natural sediments was identified and it is suggested that ploughing and recent use of the site as allotments will have destroyed any shallow archaeological features which may have been present. The results of the evaluation indicate that incorporation of the Phase 1 area into the cemetery is unlikely to have a significant impact on archaeological remains.

1. Introduction

1.1 In December 2009 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out an evaluation at the southern part of Tring Road Allotments, Aylesbury. The project was commissioned by *Aylesbury Town Council*, and was carried out according to a brief (Kidd 2008) prepared on behalf of the local planning authority (LPA), *Aylesbury Vale District Council*, by their archaeological advisor (AA), *Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service*, and a project design prepared by ASC (Hancock 2009). The relevant planning application reference is 07/03474/APP.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This evaluation was required under the terms of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (PPG16), as a condition of planning permission for development of the site.

1.3 *Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd*

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd (ASC) is an independent archaeological practice providing a full range of archaeological services including consultancy, field evaluation, mitigation and post-excavation studies, historic building recording and analysis. ASC is recognised as a *Registered Organisation* by the Institute for Archaeologists, in recognition of its high standards and working practices.

1.4 *The Site*

1.4.1 *Location & Description*

The site was a sub-rectangular parcel of land located *c.*1.2km ESE of the historic core of Aylesbury (Fig. 1). It formed part of a large allotment area bounded by late 19th century terraced houses at the north and 20th century semi-detached houses at the east and southeast. Tring Road Cemetery lay to the west and southwest with its boundary defined by a brick wall at the west and

concrete panel wall at the south (Fig 2). Access to the site was from Tring Road, to the north.

1.4.2 *Geology & Topography*

Use of the site as allotments had extensively modified the natural soil profile. The superficial geology and soils of the site have not been mapped (Soil Survey 1983) but may have been of the *Grove Association* (512d) or the *Denchworth Association* (712d). The solid geology comprised Portland Beds of the Jurassic period (BGS, sheet 238). The site exhibited a slight north – south trending slope descending from c.87m – 83m AOD.

1.4.3 *Proposed Development*

The allotments are to be incorporated into the adjacent municipal burial ground in at least two phases, which will probably extend over a period of at least two decades. The area examined by the evaluation comprised Phase 1 of the development.



Figure 2: Trench location plan (scale 1:1000)

2. Aims & Methods

2.1 *Aims*

As described in the brief (Section 6), the aims of the evaluation were:

- To establish whether evidence of prehistoric, Roman or Saxon activity or settlement existed at the site.
- To establish whether Anglo Saxon burials were present.
- To determine the character, density, extent and condition of the Anglo Saxon cemetery if present.

2.2 *Standards*

The work conformed to the requirements of the brief, to the project design, to relevant sections of the Institute of Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001) and *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000a), to English Heritage guidelines (EH 1991, EH 2006a and 2006b), and to the relevant sections of ASC's *Operations Manual*.

2.3 *Methods*

The work was carried out according to the brief (Section 8), which required:

- A systematic metal detector survey of the site carried out by volunteers under the supervision of an appropriately qualified archaeologist.
- Evaluation trenching of up to 6% of the site. The proposed location of the trenches was agreed with the AA after the results of the metal detector survey were assessed.

2.4 *Constraints*

The site was cleared prior to commencement of the evaluation. However, the surface of the site remained undisturbed and a requirement for volunteer surface collection survey was waived by the AA. The brief also required a volunteer metal detector survey; three quarters of the Phase 1 area was metal detected, but it became apparent that contamination of the site with modern metallic objects was severe and it was agreed with the AA that completion of the survey would not be productive.

3. Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 The following sections provide a summary of the readily available archaeological and historical background to the development site and its environs, as compiled by ASC for a desk-based assessment (Hunn 2009). The site is located within an area of archaeological and historical interest and had the potential to reveal evidence of a range of periods. However, the desk-based assessment suggested that the focus of interest would lie in the Roman and Anglo Saxon periods (Fig. 3).

HER = Historic Environment Record (Fig. 3)

3.2 **Prehistoric** (before 600BC)

Limited evidence of the earlier prehistoric periods has been recovered from the area surrounding the site. For example, an assemblage of Mesolithic and Neolithic flint artefacts is recorded approximately 100m north of the site (HER 2258), and mid/late Bronze Age settlement evidence has been excavated to the south of the site at Walton (Dalwood *et al.* 1989). The earliest monuments that survive in the surrounding area comprise early Bronze Age burial mounds; a number are located south of Aylesbury along the Chiltern escarpment (Holgate 1995, 14). Hillforts began to be constructed during the late Bronze Age and surviving early examples have been investigated at Ivinghoe Beacon and Taplow Court (Kidd 2009). Artefacts or archaeological features of the prehistoric periods are not known from the site.

3.3 **Iron Age** (600BC-AD43)

A small number of sites of this period have been identified in Aylesbury. Evidence of middle Iron Age settlement comprising a gully, two pits and a possible structure has been discovered in the town centre (Allen & Dalwood 1983). A substantial ditch, which probably enclosed a middle Iron Age hillfort, has been identified at a number of locations in the town centre, notably at the Prebendal site (Farley 1986) and at the junction of Bourbon and Temple Streets (Julia Wise *pers comm.*). A single sherd of Iron Age pottery has been recovered from the allotments; the type of activity represented remains unclear.

3.4 **Roman** (AD43-c.450)

During the Roman period settlement and communications were probably dominated by a major road, now known as *Akeman Street*, which linked *Verulamium* (St Albans) with *Corinium* (Cirencester). Tring Road (A41), which is located c.200m north of the site, approximates the route of *Akeman Street* (Copeland 2009, 145). Settlement features have been recorded close to the centre of Aylesbury near the proposed line of *Akeman Street* (Allen 1982). It is unclear whether finds of the period have been recovered from the site, but coins are recorded c.300m to the north (HER 1828 & 1930), pottery has been found c.70m to the northwest (HER 0147) and is also recorded to the south (HER 0042).

3.5 **Anglo Saxon** (c.450-1066)

The early development of Aylesbury is poorly understood, but a settlement was present by AD571, when Aylesbury was recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Swanton 2000, 560-561). A mid Anglo Saxon cemetery estimated to cover c.2.5 hectares has been excavated c.1.5 km to the west of the site at George Street, close to the town centre (Allen & Dalwood 1985, 50-1). By the late Anglo Saxon period Aylesbury was

a *villa regalis*; a royal mint and probable earthen defences were present (Farley 1979, 119). In addition to the annual fair of St Osyth, it is likely that Aylesbury was also the location for a regular market (Reed 1978, 566).

An Anglo Saxon settlement, apparently distinct from the settlement at Aylesbury, was also established c.500m southwest of the site at Walton. Excavation has revealed *Grubenhauser* (sunken buildings), postholes, hearths and pits, dating from the 5th to the 7th centuries (Farley 1976: HER 0311, 5593, 5208).

The site of the Phase 1 cemetery extension was of particular archaeological interest because human remains and artefacts discovered within and around the modern municipal cemetery have suggested the presence of an early Anglo Saxon inhumation or mixed (inhumation/cremation) cemetery, which may be associated with the settlement at Walton. Notable finds have included:

- HER 0042: A 'large number of human bones', a stag head and antlers, an iron spear and ceramics, one of which was an amphora handle. These were found in 1858 'just beyond the new cemetery' in an area of 'burnt ground' located between Wendover Road and Tring Road.
- HER 1944: The skeletal remains of at least six adults, a knife, two loomweights and a spearhead believed to date between c.AD 600-800. This assemblage was found between 1921 and the early 1930s at a depth of 0.6m in the 'recently consecrated portion of the cemetery'.
- HER 2258: An undated skull has been found within the allotments slightly to the north of the site at NGR SP 8310 1346. The degree of wear to the teeth and absence of dental caries indicated a burial of some antiquity (Brett Thorn *pers comm*).

A review of known evidence by Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service (Radford 2007) determined that the Saxon cemetery, if present on the allotments, may be of County or National Importance and identified five possible scenarios:

1. *The Saxon cemetery may be entirely located within the existing cemetery.*
2. *The Saxon cemetery may encroach on the allotments, but be heavily disturbed.*
3. *The Saxon cemetery may consist of small dense clusters, one or more of which may extend onto the allotments.*
4. *The Saxon cemetery may be extensive and dispersed, with isolated burials dotted across part or even most of the allotments.*
5. *In addition to any of the above, other archaeological remains may be present reflecting the site's favourable location and evidence for prehistoric, Roman, Saxon and medieval activity in the Aylesbury/Walton area.*

3.6 **Medieval** (1066-1500)

At the time of the Domesday survey (1086), Aylesbury was one of three royal manors in Buckinghamshire and had the highest value of any holding at £56 per annum (Morris 1978, 143a). Many administrative county functions were transferred to Aylesbury as the strategic importance of Buckingham declined during the Norman period (Taylor-Moore and Dyer 2009).

Aylesbury is believed to have had a castle during the medieval period (Reed 1979, 118). Its location is not known, but 'Castle Street' near the town centre could suggest a general location (Page 1925, 1). The church and the royal manor at Kingsbury may have dominated the layout of the town, with the market square becoming the centre of the trading community (*ibid*, 1-14). Two medieval hospitals, respectively dedicated to St Leonard and St John the Baptist, were also present and a Franciscan Friary was situated on Rickfords Hill (Pevsner & Williamson 1994, 149).

The area surrounding the medieval town comprised open fields divided into ridge and furrow cultivation strips. Ridge and furrow cultivation strips have been identified to the north and east and probably extended across the site. No medieval sites or findspots are known from the site.

3.7 **Post-Medieval** (1500-1900)

The earliest readily available map showing the site and the surrounding area in any detail is Jeffreys' Map of Buckinghamshire, which was published in 1770. It was produced at a small scale and does not show the site in any great detail, but does illustrate the extent of Aylesbury in the late 18th century.

Aylesbury started expanding eastward toward the site during the mid 19th century. Development had extended along Tring Road as far as the site by the end of the century. The Aylesbury Burial Board was created in 1855 and the site of the cemetery at Tring Road was "levelled" on April 1st 1858 (King 2007), which may imply that the site retained traces of ridge and furrow. As built in 1858, the cemetery occupied the area northwest of the site. A lodge was constructed by the entrance on Tring Road and two mortuary chapels were present within the cemetery.

The cemetery appears on the Ordnance Survey 1st Edition 25" sheet of 1877, which also shows the site apparently in the process of being laid out as allotments. The Ordnance Survey 2nd Edition 25" sheet of 1898 illustrates that the cemetery had expanded to the south and labels the area incorporating the site as allotments.

3.8 **Modern** (1900-present)

Housing was constructed east and south of the site during the early 20th century. The cemetery had expanded by 1925, incorporating the western part of the allotments and part of a field located immediately to the south of the site. The land remaining as allotments was bought in 1934 to accommodate future expansion of the cemetery. The post-war period saw the cemetery expand to the southeast and the surrounding area become fully urbanised.

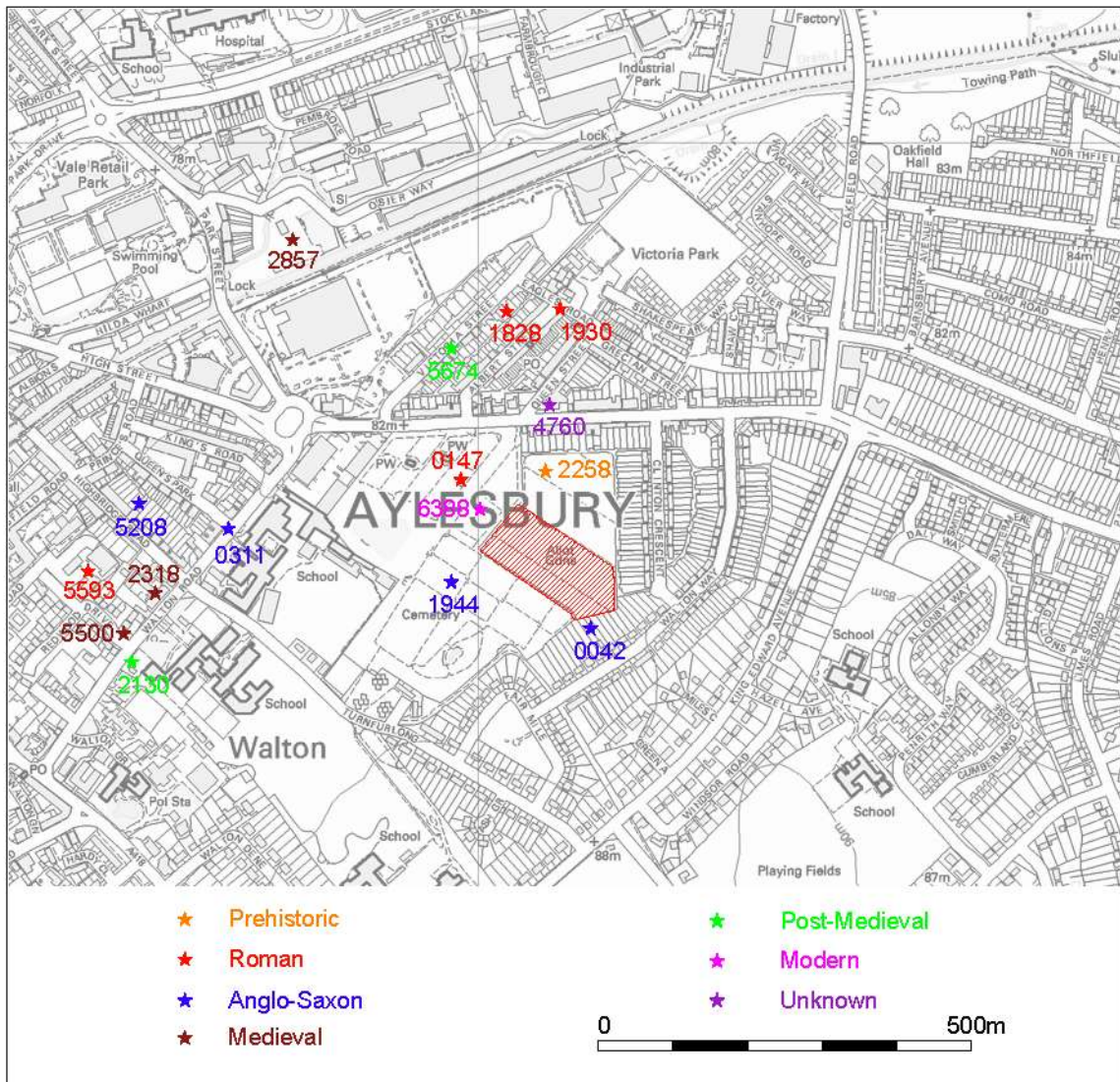


Figure 3: The site and nearby archaeological sites and finds spots recorded in the HER.

4. Results: Metal Detector Survey

4.1 *The Survey*

The Phase 1 area was systematically metal detected by five volunteers along 1m spaced southwest-northeast aligned transects (Plate 1). The survey began at the west of the site and progressed eastward. After three quarters of the site had been examined it became evident that conditions were unsuitable due to a significant quantity of modern metallic detritus which had been incorporated into the topsoil and the survey was discontinued with the agreement of the AA.

4.2 *The Finds*

Retained finds are tabulated below; none predate the post medieval period and all were recovered from the topsoil.

Find ID	Description	Date	NGR
0001a	Contorted copper alloy rectangular strap. Repeated small square indentations along longer sides with stamped circle at the centre.	Late post-med / modern	SP 83020/13480
0001b	Stamped copper alloy decorative (furniture?) fitting. Heart shaped with perforated internal and external acanthus leaf decoration.	Late post-med / modern	SP 83020/13480
0002	Fragment of rectangular copper alloy buckle, tongue missing.	Late post-med / modern	SP 83052/13505
0003	Lunate stamped copper alloy (decorative strap?) fitting.	Late post-med / modern	SP 83037/13491
0004	Copper alloy plate and handle from cabinet draw. Plate is decorated with acanthus leaves and an urn.	Late post-med / modern	SP 83060/13506
0005	Part of stem and the base of the bowl of a clay pipe.	Late post-med	SP 83022/16458
0006	Copper alloy sheet formed into a small cone, now squashed flat. Horticultural object.	Late post-med / modern	SP 83057/13483
0007	Copper alloy buckle, elongated D shape, slightly distorted and tongue missing.	Late post-med / modern	SP 83059/13460
0008	Sub-square copper alloy spacer (?), central perforation, projection (now snapped off) on one side.	Late post-med / modern	SP 83069/13466
0009	Brass button. External surface is convex and embossed with 'Met & LNE'.	Late post-med / modern	SP 83059/13443
0010	Copper alloy buckle, complete. Square with tongue on central bar.	Late post-med / modern	SP 83094/13452
0011	Lead bullet, fired and flattened.	Late post-med / modern	SP 83096/13451
0012	Small copper alloy button. External surface convex and decorated with stamped foliage around circumference.	Late post-med / modern	SP83109/13431
0013	H shaped copper alloy object, square sectioned. Function unknown.	Late post-med / modern	SP 83110/13429

Table 1: Unstratified finds from the metal detector survey.

5. Results: Trenching

5.1 *Précis*

Nineteen trenches were opened under archaeological supervision by a mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.8m wide toothless ditching bucket (Plate 2). The trenches showed that the natural soil profile had been significantly truncated and in places totally removed by ploughing and recent activity at the allotments. Shallow topsoil filled features originating from relatively modern activity at the allotments were present in many trenches but evidence of human activity pre-dating the late post medieval period was scant. The underlying natural geology was extremely heterogeneous and the following sections group the trenches to best illustrate broad site formation processes. Archaeological finds and features pre-dating the modern period (Fig. 4) are also described. Detailed information regarding the trial trenches and their contents appears in Appendix 1.

5.2 *Trenches at the West*

5.2.1 Trenches 1 to 4 exhibited a similar stratigraphic profile (*e.g.* Plate 3), which broadly comprised:

- Topsoil: Dark brown organic (*c.*0-300mm)
- Subsoil: Mid orangeish brown loam (*c.*300-600mm)
- Natural: Mid yellowish brown clayey silt.

The base of Trench 4 and deeper sondages excavated in Trenches 1 and 2 illustrated that the natural mid yellowish brown clayey silt varied in depth and overlay natural calcareous silty sand. An unstratified, retouched flint flake (Find 14: Table 2) was recovered from the base of the subsoil within Trench 1; other archaeological features, deposits or finds predating the late post-medieval period were not observed.

5.2.2 The natural mid yellowish brown clayey silt was absent from Trenches 15 to 19. The subsoil did not have an orange hue and is probably the remnant of a ploughsoil identified in truncated furrows of an open field system present within Trenches 6 and 7 (see 5.3). The sub/plough soil directly overlay the natural calcareous silty sand; except in Trench 18 where it overlay natural orangeish brown clayey silt (Plate 4). The generalised stratigraphic profile at this area broadly comprised:

- Topsoil: Dark brown organic (*c.*0-300mm)
- Sub/Plough soil: Mid brown loam (*c.*300-550mm)
- Natural: Mid brownish yellow silty sand.

A small assemblage of sheep bone and slightly abraded undiagnostic body sherds of undecorated pottery made of a fabric containing small quartz inclusions, consistent with Saxon pottery identified during previous excavations at Walton (Dalwood *et al.* 1989, p160: Fabrics S4 – S6), was recovered from a thin amorphous spread of mid grey calcareous sand (1703), which overlay a homogeneous yellow sandy deposit (1704) that filled a natural feature (Plate 5) identified within Trench 17. A NW-SE aligned ditch [1504] with a v shaped profile was present within Trench 15. The ditch had been cut through the sub/plough soil and into the natural, it contained a dark organic

silty fill and is probably associated with a similarly aligned late post-medieval ditch [1103] identified in Trench 11 (see 5.4). An unstratified post medieval stirrup shaped copper alloy buckle (Find 23: Table 2) was recovered from the subsoil within Trench 18. Other archaeological features, deposits or finds predating the late post-medieval period were not observed.

5.3 *Trenches at the Centre*

Trenches 5 to 7 and Trench 14 (Plate 6) revealed that agricultural activity and subsequent use of the site as allotments had significantly truncated the soil profile at this part of the site; the topsoil directly overlay natural limestone gravel in many places. The generalised stratigraphic profile of this area broadly comprised:

- Topsoil: Dark brown organic (c.0-300mm)
- Sub/Plough soil: Mid brown loam (c.300-500mm: *Absent in many areas*)
- Natural: Yellowish white limestone gravel and sand.

Trench 6 revealed four broad SE-NW aligned furrows of an open field system cut into the natural limestone gravel (Plate 7); one of the furrows continued to the east and ran along the southern side of Trench 7 (Plate 8). Hand excavation of one of the furrows [603] illustrated that it was c.4.5m wide, c.0.20m deep, with a slightly irregular although broadly concave profile. The single homogeneous fill (602) of the furrow comprised a mid brown loam (Plate 9) that was absent over the truncated ridges and was indistinguishable from the subsoil present in nearby Trenches 5, 7, western Trenches 15 to 19 (See 5.2.2) and the trenches to the east (See 5.4). Recovered from the fill of the furrow were four fragments of hard fired earthenware roof tile in an orange sandy fabric and a small, everted rim sherd of a post-medieval bowl in a hard fired pink earthenware fabric with a small area of light brown glaze surviving on the rim. Other archaeological deposits, features or finds pre-dating the late post-medieval period were not observed.

5.4 *Trenches at the East*

Trenches 8 to 13 illustrated that the mid brown loamy sub/plough soil identified in other trenches extended into the east of the site. The generalised stratigraphy of this area broadly comprised:

- Topsoil: Dark brown organic (c.0-300mm)
- Sub/Plough soil: Mid brown loam (c.300-500mm)
- Natural: Mid yellowish brown clayey silt (Trenches 8-9), mid reddish/greyish brown clayey silt (Trenches 12-13) and mid brownish yellow silty sand with limestone gravel (Trenches 10 and 11)

Trench 11 revealed a section of a SE-NW aligned ditch [1103], probably comprising a further segment of similarly aligned ditch [1504] identified to the west in Trench 15 (see 5.2.2). Parts of Trenches 10, 11, 12 and 13 quickly filled with water after they were opened, but hand excavation of the ditch segment within Trench 11 was possible. Excavation showed that the ditch had been cut through the plough soil and exhibited a 0.6m wide and 0.4m deep v shaped profile containing a dark organic silty fill, within which was one small unabraded sherd of late post-medieval willow pattern pottery. A single unstratified, very worn 3rd/ 4th century copper alloy Roman coin was recovered from the base of the topsoil at the eastern side of Trench 11. Other archaeological features, deposits or finds pre-dating the late post-medieval period were not observed.

5.5 Unstratified Finds

The base and sides of the trenches and the upcast spoil were metal detected and a small assemblage of unstratified finds was recovered. All retained unstratified finds recovered from the trenches are tabulated below:

Find ID	Description	Date	NGR
0014	Squat, D shaped greyish brown flint flake. No patination or cortex present. At least five previous flakes have been removed from the dorsal side. Four flakes have been removed from the ventral side to reduce a relatively pronounced bulb of percussion. One lateral margin is retouched and the distal end has a hinged termination. Base of subsoil - trench one.	Prehistoric	SP 83047/13502
0015	Lead musket ball, 12mm diameter. Topsoil - trench two.	Post medieval	SP 83069/13505
0016	Distorted circular copper alloy ring made from a rectangular sheet folded into a cylinder. Decorated with a stamped line spiralling around the cylinder. Cabinet handle? Topsoil- trench two.	Post medieval	SP 83069/13505
0017	Distorted rectangular lead object. Two parallel lines are scored/cast parallel to each of the longer sides. Bottom of topsoil - trench three.	Post medieval / modern	SP 83089/13472
0018	Copper alloy disc with D shaped hole through quarter of face and a projecting stud on one side. Part of rivet? Base of topsoil - trench six.	Unknown	SP 83139/13452
0019	Copper alloy disc, large number of circular perforations through face and recessed line around circumference. Ventilation disc from jacket? Bottom of topsoil-trench seven.	Modern	SP 83149/13435
0020	Very worn 3 rd /4 th century copper alloy Roman coin. Diameter c.20mm. Bottom of topsoil - trench eleven	Roman	SP 83146/13392
0021	Cast copper alloy disc. Three circular eyelets and one rectangular perforated projection are present around the external circumference. Central area has perforated foliate decoration surrounding a central flower. Clothing fastener? Bottom of topsoil - trench fourteen.	Post medieval	SP 83118/13406
0022	Three distorted fragments of thin copper alloy sheet; two fragments have a single crudely punched hole and one of these has a small section of possible curved lip along a section of its edge. Top of subsoil - trench eighteen.	Unknown	SP 83040/13461
0023	Stirrup shaped copper alloy buckle with triangular foliate projection from apex of curve. Corrosion product shows that the missing tongue was made of iron. Subsoil – trench 18.	Post medieval	SP 83040/13461

Table 2: Unstratified finds from the trenches.

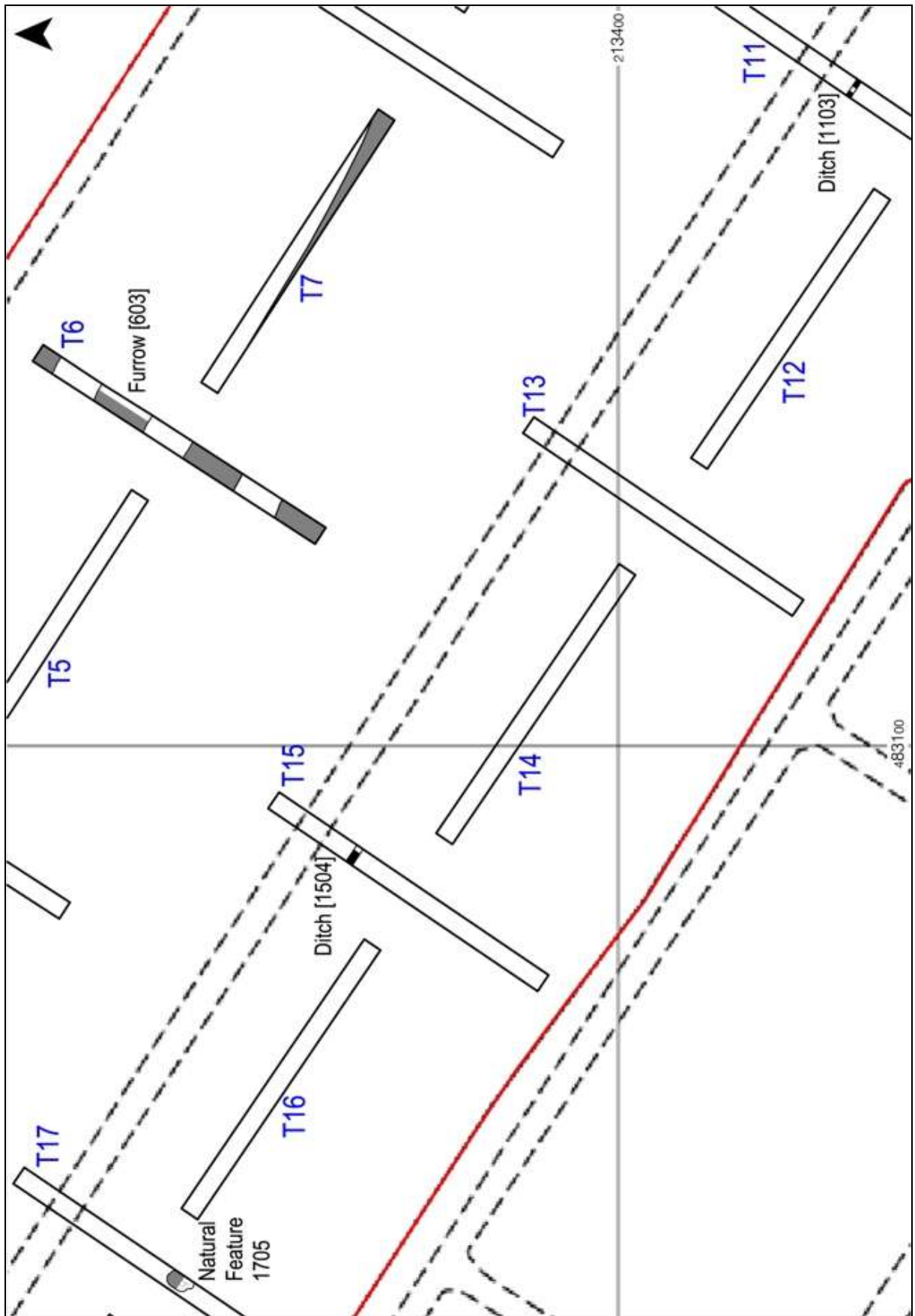


Figure 4: Features predating the modern period (scale 1:500)



Plate 1: Volunteer metal detector survey.



Plate 2: Opening trench 16 under archaeological supervision.



Plate 3: Soil profile; Trench 2.



Plate 4: Soil profile; Trench 18.



Plate 5: Natural feature 1705; Trench 17.



Plate 6: Truncated soil profile; Trench 14.



Plate 7: Furrows of open field system within Trench 6.



Plate 8: Furrow (top right) cutting bands of natural red silty clay within Trench 7.



Plate 9: Soil profile to base of furrow [603].



Plate 10: Late post-medieval ditch [1103].

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 A small assemblage of pre-medieval archaeological finds was recovered; an unstratified late prehistoric flint tool; an unstratified worn 3rd / 4th century Roman coin; and a few Saxon pot sherds recovered from a diffuse natural sandy deposit. The paucity of finds could suggest that use of the area during these periods was occasional or restricted to types of activity that left little physical evidence. The significance of a skull discovered within the allotments slightly to the north of the evaluated area remains unclear; it may belong to an isolated burial of the medieval or earlier periods.
- 5.2 Remnants of ridge and furrow earthworks were identified at the centre of the site and illustrate that this area was incorporated within the open field system of Walton during the medieval period. The medieval ploughing probably truncated the pre-existing soil profile and may have totally removed it over a relatively shallow band of natural limestone gravel located at the centre of the site.
- 5.3 The truncation of the soil profile as a consequence of medieval agricultural activity may have disturbed or destroyed shallow archaeological features of earlier periods. However, the partial flooding of evaluation trenches located at the southeastern part of the site shows that the water table at this location is only c.0.6m below the modern ground surface and suggests that this area is unlikely to have been suitable for settlement or other types of intensive use during earlier periods if the current level of the water table accurately reflects past conditions
- 5.4 Post medieval objects were recovered by metal detector survey from a plough soil identified at many areas of the site, their presence suggests that the area remained in arable use after the medieval period. The medieval plough soil was probably extensively reworked, and the earthworks of the medieval open field system gradually eroded by the post-medieval ploughing. Any denuded remnants of the medieval ridge and furrow were probably levelled during the 19th century as the area was converted to allotments.
- 5.5 Use of the site as allotments during the 19th and 20th centuries also contributed to the truncation or reworking of pre-existing deposits. For example, the modern cultivated organic soil lay directly over natural limestone gravel at many parts of the centre of the site. A late post medieval ditch was identified at the south of the site but it is uncertain whether it is associated with subdivision of the allotments or locates a slightly earlier field boundary.
- 5.6 The existence of individual isolated archaeological features away from the trenches cannot be excluded, but results indicate that it is unlikely that large numbers of archaeological features are present. The archaeological potential of the area is interpreted as low and incorporation of the Phase 1 area into the municipal cemetery is unlikely to have a significant impact on archaeological remains.
- 5.7 The evaluation was carried out during good weather and with full cooperation from all involved. Site conditions adversely affected the metal detector survey, but the trenching showed that the strata present were easily distinguished. The results of the evaluation are believed to accurately define the archaeological potential of the Phase 1 area and are attributed a high confidence rating.

6. Acknowledgements

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The project was managed for ASC by Alastair Hancock BSc PgDip MIFA. Fieldwork was carried out by Alastair Hancock, Martin Cuthbert BA PIFA, Carina Summerfield-Hill BA MA, Jonathan Hunn BA MA PhD MIFA and David Kaye BA AIFA. The report was prepared by Martin Cuthbert and edited by Alastair Hancock.

7. Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Brief
2. Project Design
3. Initial Report
4. Clients site plans
5. Site records
6. Finds records
7. Finds
8. Site record drawings
9. List of photographs
10. B/W prints & negatives
11. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with Buckinghamshire County Museum.

8. References

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Appendix 1: Trench Summary Tables


Trench 1						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	16m	Width	1.8m	Depth	0.5m
	Levels					
	Trench top SE			83.50 m OD		
	Trench base SE			82.71 m OD		
	Trench top NW			83.26 m OD		
	Trench base NW			82.94 m OD		
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	SE	483053 213509		NW	483040 213517	
	Orientation			Southeast-Northwest		
Reason for Trench						
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation		Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL: mm)
0101	Layer	Dark brown organic topsoil.		-	250	0
0102	Layer	Mid orangeish brown loamy subsoil.		-	250	250
0103	Layer	Mid yellowish brown clayey silt natural becoming lighter and sandy with depth in sondage excavated at eastern end.		-	-	500


Trench 2						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	30.8m	Width	1.8m	Depth	0.55m
	Levels					
	Trench top NE			83.20 m OD		
	Trench base NE			83.68 m OD		
	Trench top SW			83.38 m OD		
	Trench base SW			82.76 m OD		
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	NE	483066 213518		SW	483049 213493.	
	Orientation			Northeast-Southwest		
Reason for Trench						
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation		Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL: mm)
0201	Layer	Dark brown organic topsoil.		-	250	0
0202	Layer	Mid orangeish brown sandy loam subsoil.		-	300	250
0203	Layer	Mid brownish-yellow clayey silt natural.		-	-	550
0204	Layer	Light greyish yellow silty sand natural. Exposed in sondage at SW end.				


Trench 3						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	31m	Width	1.8m	Depth	0.5m
	Levels					
	Trench top SE			83.70 m OD		
	Trench base SE			83.20 m OD		
	Trench top NW			83.62 m OD		
	Trench base NW			83.16 m OD		
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	SE	483088 213486		NW	483063 213502	
	Orientation			Southeast-Northwest		
Reason for Trench						
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL: mm)	
0301	Layer	Dark brown organic topsoil.	-	300	0	
0302	Layer	Mid orangeish brown loamy subsoil	-	200	300	
0303	Layer	Mid yellowish brown clayey silt natural	-	-	500	


Trench 4						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	29.4m	Width	1.8m	Depth	0.5m
	Levels					
	Trench top NE			83.84 m OD		
	Trench base NE			83.38 m OD		
	Trench top SW			83.50 m OD		
	Trench base SW			83.02 m OD		
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	NE	483101 213496		SW	483085 213470	
	Orientation			Northeast-Southwest		
Reason for Trench						
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL: mm)	
0401	Layer	Dark brown organic topsoil.	-	300	0	
0402	Layer	Mid orangeish brown loamy subsoil.	-	200	300	
0403	Layer	Light brownish yellow silty sand natural.	-	-	500	


Trench 5						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	29.2m	Width	1.8m	Depth	0.55m
	Levels					
	Trench top SE			83.45 m OD		
	Trench base SE			83.21 m OD		
	Trench top NW			83.74 m OD		
	Trench base NW			83.25 m OD		
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	SE	483123 213463		NW	483098 213480	
	Orientation			Southeast-Northwest		
Reason for Trench						
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL: mm)	
0501	Layer	Dark brown organic topsoil (whole trench).	-	300	0	
0502	Layer	Mid brown loamy ploughsoil (only present at the final 6m of the NW of the trench; possibly fill of a furrow as Trench 6).	-	200	300	
0503	Layer	Light brownish yellow silty sand with frequent limestone gravel natural. Variable – less limestone gravel for final 6m at NW of the trench.	-	-	300 - 500	


Trench 6						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	31m	Width	1.8m	Depth	0.3m - 0.5m
	Levels					
	Trench top NE			83.43 m OD		
	Trench base NE			83.02 m OD		
	Trench top SW			83.23 m OD		
	Trench base SW			82.79 m OD		
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	NE	483136 213473		SW	483120 213448	
	Orientation			Northeast-Southwest		
Reason for Trench						
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL: mm)	
0601	Layer	Dark brown organic topsoil.	-	300	0	
0602	Fill	Mid brown loamy ploughsoil. Fill of furrows including [0603].	5-7m NE-SW	200	300	
0603	Cut	Furrow (one investigated of four) of open field system. Slightly irregular shallow concave profile. Base at 82.91 AOD.	-	-	300 - 500	
0604	Layer	Light yellowish white limestone gravel natural.	-	-	300 - 500	


Trench 7						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	30m	Width	1.8m	Depth	0.48m
	Levels					
	Trench top SE			83.04 m OD		
	Trench base SE			82.62 m OD		
	Trench top NW			83.45 m OD		
	Trench base NW			82.92 m OD		
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	SE	483158 213441		NW	483133 213457	
	Orientation			Southeast-Northwest		
Reason for Trench						
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL: mm)	
0701	Layer	Dark brown organic topsoil.	-	400	0	
0702	Layer	Mid brown loamy subsoil with occasional limestone.	-	80	400	
0703	Fill	Mid brown loamy ploughsoil (indistinguishable from subsoil 0702). Fill of furrow.	unknown	unknown	400	
0704	Cut	Furrow, open field system (not excavated).	-	-	unknown	
0705	Layer	Light yellowish white limestone sand and gravel natural.	-	-	480	


Trench 8						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	30.6m	Width	1.8m	Depth	0.58m
	Levels					
	Trench top NE			83.26 m OD		
	Trench base NE			82.83 m OD		
	Trench top SW			82.93 m OD		
	Trench base SW			82.35 m OD		
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	NE	483171 213450		SW	483155 213425	
	Orientation			Northeast-Southwest		
Reason for Trench						
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL: mm)	
0801	Layer	Dark brown organic topsoil.	-	350	0	
0802	Layer	Mid brown loamy subsoil.	-	230	350	
0803	Layer	Mid yellowish brown clayey silt with limestone gravel natural.	-	-	580	


Trench 9						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	18.6m	Width	1.8m	Depth	0.6m
	Levels					
	Trench top SE			83.15 m OD		
	Trench base SE			82.69 m OD		
	Trench top NW			82.90 m OD		
	Trench base NW			82.50 m OD		
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	SE	483185 213423		NW	483168 213434	
	Orientation			Southeast-Northwest		
Reason for Trench						
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL: mm)	
0901	Layer	Dark brown organic topsoil.	n/a	300	0	
0902	Layer	Mid brown loamy subsoil.	n/a	300	300	
0903	Layer	Mid yellowish brown clayey silt with limestone gravel natural.	-	-	600	


Trench 10						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	15m	Width	1.8m	Depth	0.6m
	Levels					
	Trench top SE			83.31 m OD		
	Trench base SE			82.78 m OD		
	Trench top NW			82.79 m OD		
	Trench base NW			82.35 m OD		
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	SE	483185 213395		NW	483172 213403	
	Orientation			Southeast-Northwest		
Reason for Trench						
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL: mm)	
1001	Layer	Dark brown organic topsoil.	n/a	300	0	
1002	Layer	Mid brown loamy subsoil.	n/a	300	300	
1003	Layer	Mid brownish yellow silty sand with limestone gravel natural.	-	-	600	


Trench 11						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	29m	Width	1.8m	Depth	0.5m
	Levels					
	Trench top NE			82.99 m OD		
	Trench base NE			82.62 m OD		
	Trench top SW			82.82 m OD		
	Trench base SW			82.48 m OD		
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	NE	483169 213410		SW	483152 213386	
	Orientation			Northeast-Southwest		
Reason for Trench						
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL: mm)	
1101	Layer	Dark brown organic topsoil.	n/a	300	0	
1102	Fill	Dark brown organic clayey silt with occasional limestone. 1 small sherd post-med willow pattern pottery recovered (not retained).	-	300	300	
1103	Cut	Steep NE side and shallow SW v shaped profile. Late post-medieval ditch.	-	-	300 - 600	
1104	Layer	Mid brown loamy subsoil.	n/a	200	300	
1105	Layer	Mid brownish yellow silty sand with limestone gravel natural.	-	-	500	


Trench 12						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	31m	Width	1.8m	Depth	0.5m
	Levels					
	Trench top SE			82.78 m OD		
	Trench base SE			82.44 m OD		
	Trench top NW			82.53 m OD		
	Trench base NW			82.05 m OD		
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	SE	483151 213395		NW	483126 213412	
	Orientation			Southeast-Northwest		
Reason for Trench						
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL: mm)	
1201	Layer	Dark brown organic topsoil.	n/a	300	0	
1202	Layer	Mid orangeish brown loamy subsoil.	n/a	200	300	
1203	Layer	Mid reddish brown clayey silt with occasional limestone gravel natural.	-	-	500	


Trench 13						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	28.6m	Width	1.8m	Depth	0.6m
	Levels					
	Trench top NE		82.75 m OD			
	Trench base NE		92.17 m OD			
	Trench top SW		82.57 m OD			
	Trench base SW		82.06 m OD			
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	NE	483129 213428	SW	483112 213403		
	Orientation		Northeast-Southwest			
Reason for Trench						
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL: mm)	
1301	Layer	Dark brown organic topsoil.	n/a	350	0	
1302	Layer	Mid brown loamy subsoil.	n/a	250	350	
1303	Layer	Mid greyish brown clayey silt with occasional limestone gravel natural.	-	-	600	

Trench 14						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	29.7m	Width	1.8m	Depth	0.38m
	Levels					
	Trench top SE		82.77 m OD			
	Trench base SE		82.32 m OD			
	Trench top NW		83.05 m OD			
	Trench base NW		82.51 m OD			
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	SE	483116 213419	NW	483091 213435		
	Orientation		Southeast-Northwest			
Reason for Trench						
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL: mm)	
1401	Layer	Dark brown organic topsoil.	n/a	380	0	
1402	Layer	Light brownish yellow silty sand natural (only in the last 10m at NW end).	-	-	380	
1403	Layer	Greyish white limestone gravel and sand natural (at SE of trench for 19.7m).	-	-	380	

Trench 15						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	32m	Width	1.8m	Depth	0.48
	Levels					
	Trench top NE			83.29 m OD		
	Trench base NE			82.85 m OD		
	Trench top SW			82.66 m OD		
	Trench base SW			82.25 m OD		
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	NE	483095 213451		SW	483078 213426	
	Orientation			Northeast-Southwest		
Reason for Trench						
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL: mm)	
1501	Layer	Dark brown organic topsoil.	n/a	300	0	
1502	Layer	Mid brown loamy subsoil.	n/a	100	300	
1503	Fill	Dark brown organic silt. No finds.	-	80	400	
1504	Cut	Steep NE and shallow SW v shaped profile. Late post-medieval ditch? (Same as [1103]?).	-	-	400 - 480	
1505	Layer	Light brownish yellow silty sand natural.	-	-	400	

Trench 16						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	30.6m	Width	1.8m	Depth	0.6m
	Levels					
	Trench top SE			83.13 m OD		
	Trench base SE			82.71 m OD		
	Trench top NW			83.22 m OD		
	Trench base NW			82.82 m OD		
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	SE	483081 213442		NW	483057 213459	
	Orientation			Southeast-Northwest		
Reason for Trench						
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL: mm)	
1601	Layer	Dark brown organic topsoil.	-	300	0	
1602	Layer	Mid brown loamy subsoil.	-	280	300	
1603	Layer	Mid brownish yellow silty sand natural.	-	-	580	

Trench 17						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	29.3m	Width	1.8m	Depth	0.58m
	Levels					
	Trench top NE			83.57 m OD		
	Trench base NE			83.13 m OD		
	Trench top SW			83.05 m OD		
	Trench base SW			82.68 m OD		
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	NE	483060 213475		SW	483043 213450	
	Orientation			Northeast-Southwest		
Reason for Trench						
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL: mm)	
1701	Layer	Dark brown organic topsoil.	-	300	0	
1702	Layer	Mid brown loamy subsoil.	-	270	300	
1703	Deposit	Mid greyish brown silty sand containing occasional Saxon pot sherds and fragments of sheep bone	3000	50	570	
1704	Deposit	Light yellow silty sand. Fills 1704.	2000	>400	630	
1705	Interface	Irregular in plan and profile. Bioturbation.	2000	-	570 - 970	
1706	Layer	Mid brownish yellow silty sand natural.	-	-	570	

Trench 18						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	29.6m	Width	1.8m	Depth	0.45m
	Levels					
	Trench top SE			83.37 m OD		
	Trench base SE			82.90 m OD		
	Trench top NW			82.92 m OD		
	Trench base NW			82.42 m OD		
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	SE	483047 213465		NW	483022 213482	
	Orientation			Southeast-Northwest		
Reason for Trench						
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL: mm)	
1801	Layer	Dark brown organic topsoil.	-	180	0	
1802	Layer	Mid brown loam subsoil.	-	270	180	
1803	Layer	Mid orangeish brown clayey silt natural.	-	-	450	

Trench 19						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	30m	Width	1.8m	Depth	0.55m
	Levels					
	Trench top NE			83.08 m OD		
	Trench base NE			82.44 m OD		
	Trench top SW			82.63m OD		
	Trench base SW			82.21m OD		
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	NE	483026 213498		SW	483009 213473	
	Orientation			Northeast-Southwest		
Reason for Trench						
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation		Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL: mm)
1901	Layer	Dark brown organic topsoil.		-	300	0
1902	Layer	Mid brown loamy subsoil.		-	250	300
1903	Layer	Light yellowish brown silty sand natural containing patches of orangeish red gravelly clay.		-	-	550

Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAME: Tring Road Allotments, Aylesbury, Bucks			SITE NO/CODE: 1183/ATC/3
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1	✓	✓	Trench one general shot, looking southeast
2	✓	✓	Trench two general shot, looking southwest
3	✓	✓	Trench two section, looking southeast
4	✓	✓	Trench three general shot, looking northwest
5	✓	✓	Trench four general shot, looking northeast
6	✓	✓	Trench five general shot, looking northwest
7	✓	✓	Trench five section, looking northeast
8	✓	✓	Trench eleven general shot, looking northeast
9	✓	✓	Trench twelve general shot, looking northwest
10	✓	✓	Trench thirteen general shot, looking southwest
11	✓	✓	Trench six general shot, looking northeast
12	✓	✓	Trench six furrow section, looking northwest
13	✓	✓	Trench seven general shot, looking southeast
14	✓	✓	Trench eight general shot, looking southwest
15	✓	✓	Trench nine general shot, looking southeast
16	✓	✓	Trench ten general shot, looking southeast
17	✓	✓	Trench eleven general shot, looking southwest
18	✓	✓	Trench fourteen general shot, looking northwest
19	✓	✓	Trench fifteen general shot, looking southwest
20	✓	✓	Trench sixteen general shot, looking southeast
21	✓	✓	Trench seventeen general shot, looking southwest
22	✓	✓	Trench eighteen general shot, looking northwest
23	✓	✓	Trench nineteen general shot, looking southwest
24	✓	✓	Trench eighteen section, looking southwest
25	✓	✓	Trench sixteen section, looking southwest
26	✓	✓	Section though ditch [1103], looking southeast
27	✓	✓	Section though ditch [1103], looking southeast
28	✓	✓	Trench fourteen section, looking southwest
29	✓	✓	Trench eleven section, looking southwest
30	✓	✓	Trench seven section, looking northeast
31	✓	✓	Section though ditch [1504], looking northwest
32	✓	✓	Section though ditch [1504], looking northwest
33	✓		General working shot evaluation
34	✓		General working shot evaluation
35	✓		General working shot evaluation
36	✓		General working shot evaluation
37	✓		General working shot evaluation
38	✓		General working shot evaluation
39	✓		General working shot evaluation
40	✓		General working shot evaluation
41	✓		Section through natural feature [1705], looking northeast

Appendix 3: Finds Concordance

Context	Pottery		Bone		Flint (no)	Shell (g)	Stone (no)	Other Finds	
	(no)	(g)	(no)	(g)				Type	(no)
602	1	5						Roof tile	4 (135g)
1703	10	194	16	170					

Appendix 4: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	Tring Road Allotments, Aylesbury		
Short Description:	<i>In December 2009 Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd undertook evaluation of the southern part of Tring Road Allotments in advance of proposed incorporation of this area of land into Tring Road Cemetery. Evaluation of the site was required because previous discoveries within and surrounding the allotments had indicated that it may contain burials of the Saxon period. The evaluation did not reveal burials of any period and little evidence of activity pre-dating the medieval period was present. The area was in use as arable land during the medieval and post-medieval periods; significant truncation and reworking of soils and natural sediments was observed and it is suggested that ploughing and recent use of the site as allotments will have destroyed any shallow archaeological features that may have been present. The results of the evaluation indicate that incorporation of the southern part of the allotments into the cemetery is unlikely to have a significant impact on archaeological remains.</i>		
Project Type: (indicate all that apply)	Metal Detecting and Trial Trenching		
Site status: (eg. none, SAM, Listed)	None	Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	N/a
Current land use:	Garden allotments (mostly disused)	Future work: (yes / no / unknown)	unknown
Monument type:	None	Monument period:	None
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Buckinghamshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)	SP 8325 1340
Site address:	Tring Road Allotments, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire		
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	c. 1.5ha	Height OD: (metres)	c.84m
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	Sandy Kidd- 2008	Project design originator:	A Hancock- 2009
Project Manager:	Alastair Hancock	Director/Supervisor:	Martin Cuthbert
Sponsor / funding body:	Aylesbury Town Council		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	26-11-2009	End date:	01-12-2009
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	Buckinghamshire County Museum Service. Accession no: AYBCM: 2009.264	B&W prints and negatives	
Paper:		Site records, report, site plans	
Digital:		Images, report	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Archaeological Evaluation: Tring Road Allotments, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire		
Serial title & volume:	ASC Ltd Report ref. 1183/ATC/3		
Author(s):	Martin Cuthbert BA (Hons) PIFA and Alastair Hancock BSc PgDip MIFA		
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