

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF  
THE PROPOSED MULTI-USE GAMES AREA  
DEVELOPMENT AT  
SOUTH FARNHAM SCHOOL, FARNHAM,  
SURREY**



### *Summary*

Two evaluation trial trenches were excavated on the site of proposed development at South Farnham School, Farnham, Surrey. No features of potential archaeological interest were identified and no archaeological finds were recovered from the evaluation. It is recommended that no further archaeological involvement during the development work is required.

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Planning Background**

South Farnham School submitted an outline planning application to Waverley Borough Council for future development of its grounds on Menin Road, Farnham (figures 1 and 2). Tony Howe of Surrey County Council's Heritage Conservation Team requested that an archaeological desktop assessment was undertaken. South Farnham School then commissioned Surrey County Archaeological Unit to prepare this archaeological assessment.

### **1.2 Desktop Assessment**

In order to assess the effects of the proposed scheme, existing archaeological information within a one kilometre radius of the site was examined in detail (Munnery 2009). This assessment concluded that the 'evidence suggest[ed] that the proposed development site at South Farnham School lies in close proximity to prehistoric and Romano-British activity, but it is uncertain whether any archaeology will lie within the site boundaries'. The report recommended that the site be subject to an archaeological investigation consisting of a trial trench evaluation.

**1.3** South Farnham School subsequently commissioned the Surrey County Archaeological Unit to undertake the evaluation that took place on 26th January 2010.

### **1.4 Evaluation Methodology**

1.4.1 The evaluation aimed to gather sufficient information to establish the presence or absence, extent, character, quality and date of any threatened deposits within the site in order to allow definition of an appropriate mitigation strategy.

1.4.2 The site was sampled by examination of 2 trenches (figure 3), each approximately 25m long and 1.5m wide, which equated to a *c.*5% sample of the area where the works will have a potential impact on archaeology (*c.*25x55m).

1.4.3 The excavation of the trenches was carried out under the direct supervision of an archaeological field officer and archaeological assistant, with the use of a JCB excavator equipped with a 1m wide ditching bucket. A 1.5m ditching bucket was requested, but did not arrive with the excavator. Despite this, it is not thought that this caused any problems for an understanding of the site.

1.4.4 The second phase of the work was to be hand excavation following on from the machine opening of trenches. However, no features were revealed within the evaluation so hand excavation was not necessary.

## **2 RESULTS**

### **2.1 Stratigraphy**

Stratigraphy across the site was uniform comprising a layer of topsoil *c.*20cm thick. Beneath this was a layer of gravel mixed within a mid brown silty loam *c.*25cm thick. This stratum appears to be the deposition of gravel and excavated material from previous groundworks within the school. Beneath this lay a *c.*25-30cm thick subsoil of mid to light brown silty clay which contained some gravel pebbles. The presence of this thick subsoil below the layer of redeposited gravel suggests that the modern activity had not significantly truncated earlier levels. Below the subsoil was the orange brown brickearth with gravel pebbles. The only variation in the natural was an area of orange brown sand at the south of trench 2.

## **2.2 Trenches**

Trench 1 was excavated to a depth of c70cm and trench 2 to c80cm. Neither trench contained any finds of archaeological interest, yielding only half a dozen fragments of post-medieval tile. There were no features within either of the trenches.

## **3 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**3.1** It is believed that the trenches formed a good sample of the proposed development area. No archaeological finds or features were encountered.

**3.2** The absence of both artefactual evidence and features on the site indicate that, despite the proximity to previously recorded archaeological activity, very little settlement related activity has occurred on this site.

**3.3** It is recommended that there is no need for further archaeological involvement in relation to this development area.

Fig 1: South Farnham School, Farnham, Surrey  
Plan showing location of site

Fig 2: South Farnham School, Farnham, Surrey  
Proposed plan of Location of Multi-use Games Area

Fig 3: South Farnham School, Farnham, Surrey  
Trench Locations of Archaeological Evaluation

## **References**

Munnery, T, 2009 *A Preliminary Archaeological Assessment of the Proposed Multi-Use Games Area Development at South Farnham School, Farnham, Surrey*, Client report prepared by Surrey County Archaeological Unit