

Land off Floral Way, Andover, Hampshire

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Hampshire County Council**

by Sarah Coles

Thames Valley Archaeological Services

Site Code FWA00/28

May 2000

Summary

Site name: Land off Floral Way, Andover, Hampshire

Grid reference: SU 3472 4529

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 18th–20th May 2000

Site code: FWA00/28

Area of site: 5 ha.

Summary of results: No archaeological deposits were identified. A few sherds of possible Prehistoric and Roman pottery and several later Neolithic or Bronze Age struck flints were recovered from the spoilheaps.

Monuments identified: None

Location and reference of archive: The archive is currently held by Thames Valley Archaeological Services, 47–49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading, RG1 5NR. It is intended that it will be deposited with Hampshire Museum Service in due course.

Land off Floral Way, Andover, Hampshire, An Archaeological Evaluation

by Sarah Coles

Report 00/28

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out on land off Floral Way, located on the western outskirts of Andover, Hampshire (SU 3472 4529) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr M Milton on behalf of the Property, Business and Regulatory Section of Hampshire County Council, Three Minsters House, 76 High Street, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 8UL. Planning permission (TVN 037 38/1) has been granted by Hampshire County Council for the construction of a new facility to relocate the John Hanson School on the site. The permission includes a condition relating to the archaeological heritage. This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Policy and Planning Guidance Note *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990) and the County Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Ian Wykes of Hampshire County Council's Environment Group, archaeological advisor to the County Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Sarah Coles and Steve Ford, on the 18th–20th May 2000. The site code is FWA00/28 and the archive will be deposited with Hampshire Museum Service.

Location, Topography and Geology

The whole proposal site is trapezoidal in plan and occupies an area of about five hectares at a height of *c.* 75m above Ordnance Datum (Figs 1 and 2). The site lies on the south-western side of modern Andover. It is bounded on the western side by open farmland, with the Andover to Salisbury Railway to the north-west and a small industrial estate to the north. The southern and eastern sides are bounded by modern housing and a school. The northern parts of the site lie on level ground; the result of cut and fill to create a playing field. The southern parts of the site reflect the original topography including either side of a small dry valley, which drains to the south (Fig. 2). According to the British Geological Survey (BGS 1975) the underlying geology is Upper Chalk and this was confirmed during the evaluation.

Archaeological Background

There are no known archaeological sites within the development area recorded on the County Sites and Monuments Records (SMR). However, the surrounding area is rich in evidence of past activity. To the south-east of the site is the Iron Age hillfort of Balksbury Camp, which archaeological excavations have shown to be occupied during the Neolithic, Bronze Age and Roman periods. Further to the south is Bury Ring; another Iron Age hillfort. Research into the hinterlands of such prominent sites elsewhere in Hampshire and beyond has indicated that they are just one component of a densely occupied settlement pattern with field systems and both enclosed and unenclosed occupation sites being present in numbers. Further evidence of Iron Age occupation in the area was found when the Portway Industrial Estate to the north-west of the proposal site was constructed.

Evidence of Roman occupation is commonly found along Roman roads. 'The Portway', which runs to the north of the site, is the Roman road from Silchester to Old Sarum. A Roman cemetery, ten Bronze Age burial mounds, an Iron Age settlement and two Saxon cemeteries were found during excavations at the Portway Industrial estate. Roman occupation is also recorded at nearby Balksbury Camp.

Recent archaeological work to the south-west of the proposed site has identified a number of linear features (Rawlings 1998). These are not well dated but a ditch extending for at least 300m may well be a linear ditch (a landscape boundary feature) of prehistoric, possibly late Bronze Age, date.

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 development. This was to comprise the digging of nine evaluation trenches, each 20m long. The trenches were to be targeted on the footprints of the proposed new structures. Apart from the probability of some truncation of archaeologically relevant levels during the creation of the playing field to the north, this area was largely to be retained as sports pitches.

The topsoil, subsoil (if present) and overburden were removed using a JCB-type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The natural was truncated slightly to clarify and define any archaeological features present. The machining was conducted under direct and continuous archaeological supervision and the spoilheaps were examined for finds. Archaeological and potential archaeological deposits were hand cleaned and a written, drawn and photographic record of the trenches and archaeological deposits was made.

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Results

Eleven trenches were eventually dug, ranging in length from 4.3m to 32.7m; all were 1.6m wide. The trench plan varied from the original specification in order to avoid buried services. Trenches located across the lower parts of the dry valley (3 and 4) revealed a stratigraphy comprising turf and topsoil 0.20–0.38m thick overlying a flinty clayey subsoil, onto chalk natural, which was striated with clay- and coombe-rock-filled periglacial stripes (Plate 2). Natural, brown clay and flint-filled patches were occasionally encountered. Trenches 5, 6, 9, 10 and 11, on higher ground to the east, were devoid of subsoil and a thin topsoil lay directly over the chalk. Trenches 1, 2, 7 and 8 to the north and west of the site revealed made ground (Plate 1). The deepest made ground was encountered in Trench 1 where, in a test pit at the western end, a shallow topsoil (0.2m) overlay a very compact and homogenous chalk fill to a depth of 1.3m, overlying a clayey subsoil. Natural chalk was not encountered in this test pit. At the eastern end, removal of the topsoil revealed a soil fill overlying a chalk fill, with a deep (0.4m) clayey subsoil beneath, over the natural chalk. The natural chalk at this point was 2m below ground level.

The made ground in Trenches 7 and 8 increased in depth from east to west. At the western end of Trench 8 the chalk fill partly overlay and partly truncated a buried topsoil, which presumably reflects the original pre-levelling ground surface. A similar buried soil was observed in Trench 2 (Plate 2). Although no buried topsoil was observed in other trenches, its presence in Trenches 2 and 8 suggests that truncation was limited to the removal of topsoil in this area, with its replacement after infilling.

No archaeological cut features were observed. A possible feature in Trench 9 was examined and found to contain a few fragments of animal bone, including a cattle vertebrae. However, the brown, clayey and flinty fill was suggestive of a natural feature. This was confirmed by an extension to Trench 9, which revealed that the feature tapered to a point and was clearly natural in origin. A further trench (11) dug nearby had not revealed any more of the feature.

Finds

Pottery by Steve Ford

Three small sherds of pottery were recovered from the spoilheaps of the trenches: one flint-gritted sherd from Trench 10 is of Prehistoric or Roman date; a fine flint-gritted fragment from Trench 4 may be Roman; and a grog-tempered sherd from Trench 9 is also of Roman date.

Flint by Steve Ford

Eighteen struck flints were recovered from the spoilheaps of the trenches (Appendix 2). All of the struck flints were patinated to a greater or lesser extent. All of the flakes are broad in shape, apart from one narrow flake, almost certainly a fortuitous product rather than an example of deliberate blade production. No pieces are chronologically distinctive and only a broad later Neolithic–later Bronze Age date can be suggested. Three pieces of burnt flint (Appendix 3) were also recovered.

Animal bone

A cattle vertebrae and a fragment of long bone were recovered from the investigation of a natural clay patch in Trench 9.

Conclusion

The evaluation has revealed no deposits of archaeological interest. A few Prehistoric struck flints and Prehistoric and Roman pottery from spoilheaps were the only finds of archaeological interest. The northern and western parts of the evaluated area (Trenches 1, 2, 7 and 8) had been disturbed by infilling, presumably in order to level the area for playing fields. However, disturbance of archaeologically relevant levels is likely only to have comprised the removal of topsoil. On the basis of these findings it can be concluded that the site has no archaeological potential.

References

- BGS, 1975, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 283, Soil and Drift Edition, Keyworth
PPG 16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Department of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance Note 16, HMSO
Rawlings, M, 1998, 'Linear ditches in the vicinity of Andover', *Proc Hampshire Field Club and Archaeol Soc* **53**, 222–225

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at south or west end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	4.3	2.00	East; Topsoil/Turf (0.2m) above soil fill (0.4m) above chalk fill (1m) above clayey subsoil (0.4m) , onto chalk. West, test pit; Topsoil/Turf (0.2m) above chalk fill (1.6m) above clayey subsoil, not bottomed.
2	13.0	1.20 W; 0.80 E	Topsoil/Turf above soil fill, and chalk fill onto flinty/clayey subsoil, onto chalk with clay patches. Buried old topsoil at western end. [Plate 1]
3	10.8	0.50	Topsoil/Turf above flinty/clayey subsoil, onto chalk with clay patches coombe rock and periglacial stripes.
4	20.2	0.45	Topsoil/Turf above flinty/clayey subsoil, onto chalk with flinty/clay patches and periglacial stripes. [Plate 2]
5	32.7	0.30	Topsoil/Turf onto chalk with coombe rock and periglacial stripes.
6	27.2	0.35	Topsoil/Turf onto chalk with coombe rock and periglacial stripes.
7	16.7	0.95 W; 0.65 E	West; Topsoil/Turf above chalk fill, onto clayey subsoil, onto chalk. East; Topsoil/Turf above chalk fill, onto chalk with periglacial stripes. Two dirty patches investigated at 5m – irregular, very shallow with coal and late post-Medieval pottery.
8	19.1	0.60 W; 0.40 E	West; Topsoil/Turf above clayey subsoil, onto chalk with periglacial stripes. East; Topsoil/Turf above chalk fill, onto clayey subsoil, onto chalk. Chalk fill partly overlies and partly truncates an old topsoil.
9	29.2	0.45	Topsoil/Turf onto chalk with coombe rock and periglacial stripes. Extension dug at W to examine clay patch 0.45m deep. Clay patch was natural despite bone finds.
10	11.0	0.38	Topsoil/Turf onto chalk with periglacial stripes.
11	5.4	0.35	Topsoil/Turf onto chalk with periglacial stripes. Extra trench dug to search for possible ditch – not found.

Appendix 2 Catalogue of struck flint
0m south or west

Trench 2

0-5m Intact flake

5-10m Intact flake

Trench 4

0-5m Intact narrow flake; Intact flake

10-15m 2 Intact flakes

15-20m Intact flake

Trench 5

0-5m Intact flake

5-10m 2 Intact flakes

Trench 6

0-5m Broken flake

5-10m Intact flake; Broken flake

10-15m Intact flake

15-20m Intact flake

20-25m Intact flake; Broken flake

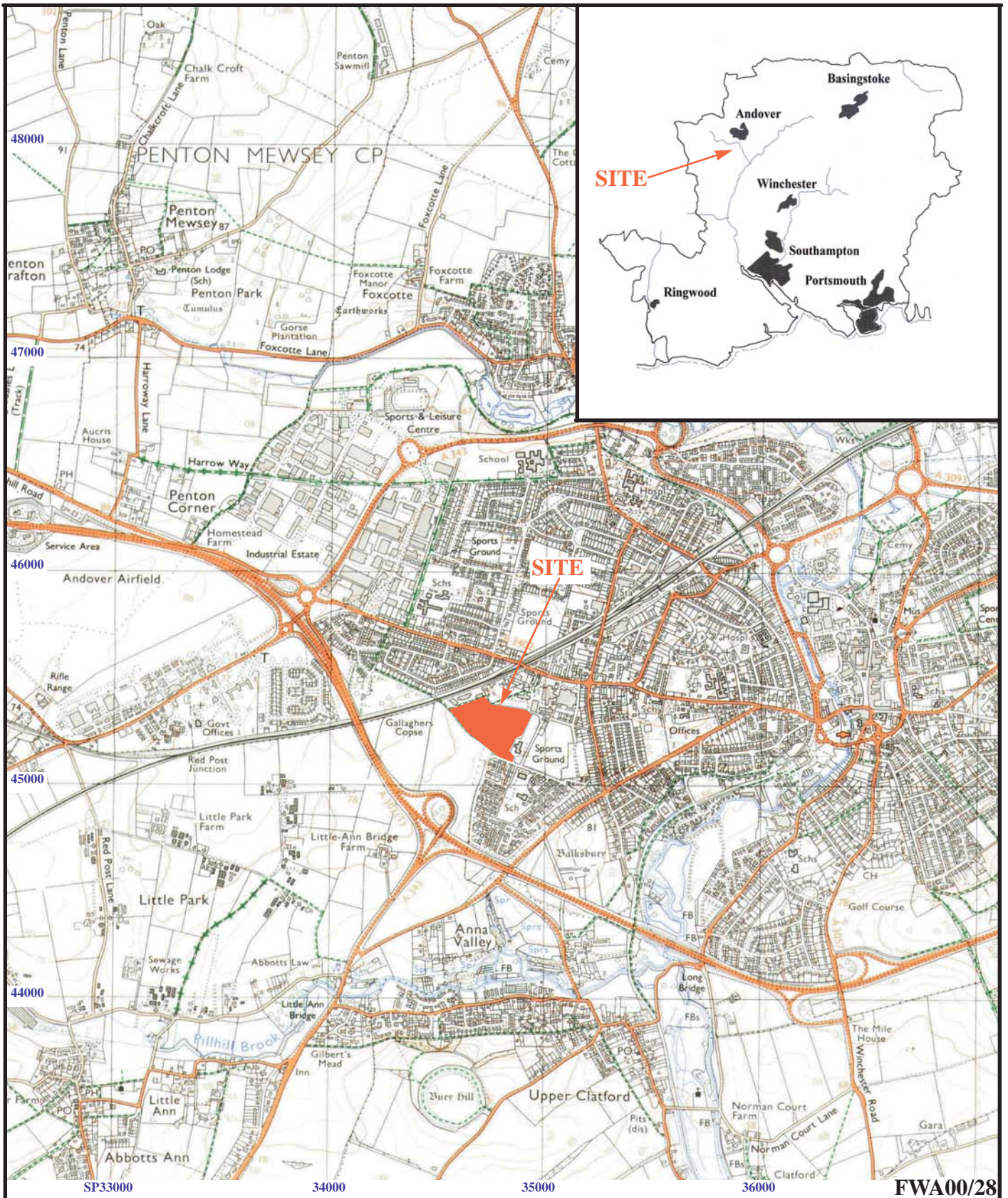
Trench 10

5-10m Intact flake

Appendix 3 Catalogue of burnt flint
0m south or west

Trench 5
25-30m 34gm

Trench 9
5-10m 26gm



Floral Way, Andover, Hampshire, 2000

Figure 1. Location of site within Andover and Hampshire.

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Pathfinder 1222 SU24/34 1:25000
 Ordnance Survey Licence AL52324A0001

THAMES VALLEY
 ARCHAEOLOGICAL
 SERVICES

Floral Way, Andover, Hampshire, 2000

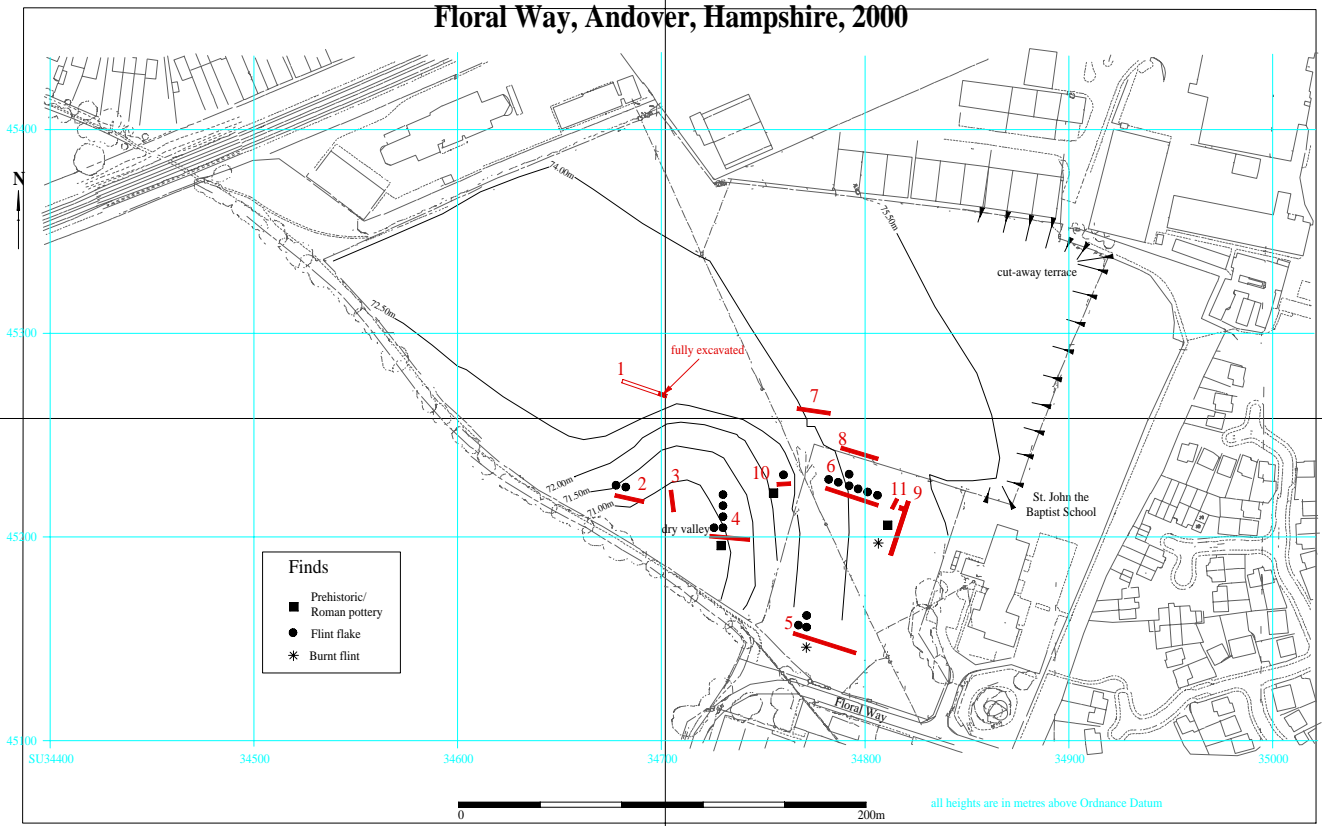


Figure 2. Location of trenches.



Plate 1. Trench 2 looking west, Scales: 1m and 2m..



Plate 2. Trench 4 looking west, scales: 1m and 2m.