

# East Horton Farm Fair Oak & Horton Heath, Hampshire

Summary of Archaeological Watching Briefs 1989–2000



**Archive report scanned  
from the original document**

**EAST HORTON FARM  
FAIR OAK  
HAMPSHIRE**

**REPORT ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
WATCHING BRIEF**

prepared on behalf of  
**S. Grundon (Ewelme) Ltd**  
**Estates Office**  
**Grange Lane**  
**Beenham**  
**BERKSHIRE**  
**RG7 5PY**

by  
**Wessex Archaeology**  
**Portway House**  
**Old Sarum Park**  
**SALISBURY**  
**SP4 6EB**

Report ref: 31614.2  
**October 2001**

## Summary

Wessex Archaeology has completed an archaeological watching brief on behalf of S. Grundon (Ewelme) Ltd at East Horton Farm, Fair Oak, Hampshire, carried out over a period of fourteen years during a prolonged and intermittent programme of sand extraction. Hampshire County Council granted planning consent for the programme of extraction in 1987, subject to a condition requiring that an archaeological watching brief be carried out during the extraction programme. The watching brief was intended to ensure that archaeological remains revealed during the extraction programme would be observed and recorded.

The presence of a small Roman site at East Horton Farm was first indicated by chance discoveries made in 1963. In May 1987 Wessex Archaeology carried out an evaluation of the Site prior to planning consent for the programme of extraction being granted and confirmed the presence of the Roman site along with some indication of earlier prehistoric activity.

The watching brief, monitoring episodes of soil stripping in advance of extraction, was begun in September 1987 and continued in this way from 1989 until the cessation of soil stripping in August 2000. Monitoring up to 1994 continued to record archaeological remains, including Mesolithic (8,500-4,000 BC) flint-work, Bronze Age pits, and further evidence of the Roman site.

Subsequent to 1994, in visits to the site in 1996, 1998 and finally in August 2000, no further archaeological remains were observed. Following the original discovery of the Roman site in 1963, it would appear that the scope of discoveries made in 1987, 1989 and 1994 incorporated the remaining potential of the Site.

### **Acknowledgements**

Wessex Archaeology is grateful to S. Grundon Ltd for commissioning the watching brief over a considerable period and to their personnel for assisting access to the site.

The advice of the former Hampshire County Archaeologist Michael Hughes and of the current County Archaeology Officer Ian Wykes is gratefully acknowledged.

The final watching brief visit to the site was made by Paul McCulloch, who also prepared this report. The report illustration was prepared by Rob Goller.

**EAST HORTON FARM  
FAIR OAK  
HAMPSHIRE**

**REPORT ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
WATCHING BRIEF**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

**1.1. Project Background**

- 1.1.1. Wessex Archaeology has completed an archaeological watching brief on behalf of S. Grundon (Ewelme) Ltd at East Horton Farm, Fair Oak, Hampshire, (NGR 450500 118300) hereafter the Site (**Figure 1**). The watching brief was carried out over a period of fourteen years during a prolonged and intermittent programme of sand extraction, which has now come to an end.
- 1.1.2. Hampshire County Council granted planning consent for the programme of extraction in 1987, subject to a condition requiring that an archaeological watching brief be carried out during the extraction programme. The watching brief was intended to ensure that archaeological remains revealed during the extraction programme would be observed and recorded. These were expected comprise remains of Roman and prehistoric date.
- 1.1.3. The presence of a small Roman site at East Horton Farm was first indicated by chance discoveries made in 1963 at the site of a sand pit opened in around 1960 (Collis 1974). In May 1987 Wessex Archaeology carried out an evaluation of the Site prior to planning consent for the programme of extraction being granted and confirmed the presence of the Roman site along with some indication of earlier prehistoric activity (Wessex Archaeology 1990).
- 1.1.4. The watching brief, monitoring episodes of soil stripping in advance of extraction, was begun in September 1987 and continued in this way in February, March, and July 1989, November and December 1991, March 1993, July 1994 (Wessex Archaeology 1994), May 1996, June 1997, and October 1998. The watching brief was concluded with a final visit on the cessation of soil stripping in August 2000.
- 1.1.5. Subsequent to the episode of monitoring and recording carried out in 1994, no archaeological remains were observed. Following the original discovery of the Roman site in 1963, it would appear that the scope of discoveries made in 1987, 1989 and 1994, the subject of previous reports cited above, incorporated the remaining potential of the Site.

## **1.2. The Site**

- 1.2.1. East Horton Farm is situated approximately 1.5km east of Fair Oak, Hampshire, in undulating countryside. A small tributary of the river Hamble flows south-west through the farm. The underlying geology is tertiary sand.

## **1.3. Archaeological background**

- 1.3.1. In 1963, two local schoolboys discovered Early Roman (AD 43-150) pottery in a newly opened sand pit at East Horton Farm (Collis 1974). In 1965, sixth-formers from Richard Taunton School, Southampton, conducted an excavation at the Site and revealed a series of ditches. Finds from the ditches were largely Roman and comprised imported finewares including samian ware and sherds of a *terra nigra* platter.
- 1.3.2. In 1987 planning permission for large scale sand extraction was sought from Hampshire County Council by D.K. Symes Associates on behalf of S. Bastion, landowner, East Horton Farm. The County Archaeologist requested that an archaeological evaluation of the Site be carried out prior to planning permission being granted. The evaluation was carried out by Wessex Archaeology and revealed further evidence of Early Roman occupation on the Site in the form of a ditch containing AD 1<sup>st</sup> Century pottery, a post-hole, and a cobbled area (Wessex Archaeology 1990).

## **2. WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS**

### **2.1. Introduction**

- 2.1.1. The watching brief comprised visits over a fourteen-year period. The significant discoveries made in 1987, 1989 and 1994 have been reported previously (Wessex Archaeology 1990 & 1994) and are summarised below and indicated on **Figure 1**.

### **2.2. Summary**

- 2.2.1. Following the granting of planning permission for the extraction of sand at the Site, Wessex Archaeology began to monitor the stripping of soil in a watching brief, as requested by the County Archaeologist. An initial monitoring of 10,000m<sup>2</sup> of soil stripping in 'Field 2' in 1987 led to the discovery of a single sherd of Roman pottery and an indistinct feature from which was recovered 24 pieces of worked flint, including a scraper, a flake tool and several blades (Wessex Archaeology 1990).
- 2.2.2. In 1989 monitoring of 6000m<sup>2</sup> of soil stripping in 'Field 1' led to the excavation and recording of Bronze Age pits and an enclosure and field system of Roman date. The Roman occupation was characterised at that time as perhaps a small farm (Wessex Archaeology 1990).
- 2.2.3. Monitoring in 1994 (Wessex Archaeology 1994) took place to the south-west of and adjacent to 'Field 1'. Ten ovate/crescent-shaped patches of grey/brownish sand containing burnt flint and charcoal were revealed during

stripping by a box scraper. Unfortunately, the prevailing method of stripping was not conducive to controlled archaeological intervention and the features were only briefly observed prior to their eradication. However, the features appeared to form two clusters and were interpreted as hearths. From the area of one cluster 50 worked flint artefacts were recovered from the surface of the exposed subsoil. The technological characteristics of this material suggest it is of Mesolithic (8,500-4,000 BC) date.

- 2.2.4. In the north-west corner of the area an irregular linear feature running south-west to north-east, containing a grey/brownish fill, was recorded. This feature contained worked and burnt flint, bone, and post-medieval pottery. The date of the feature remains uncertain.
- 2.2.5. The discoveries in 1994 were the last. All subsequent visits revealed no archaeological remains. The final visit in August 2000 monitored the last area of the extraction site to be stripped and concluded the watching brief.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

#### **3.1. Monitoring**

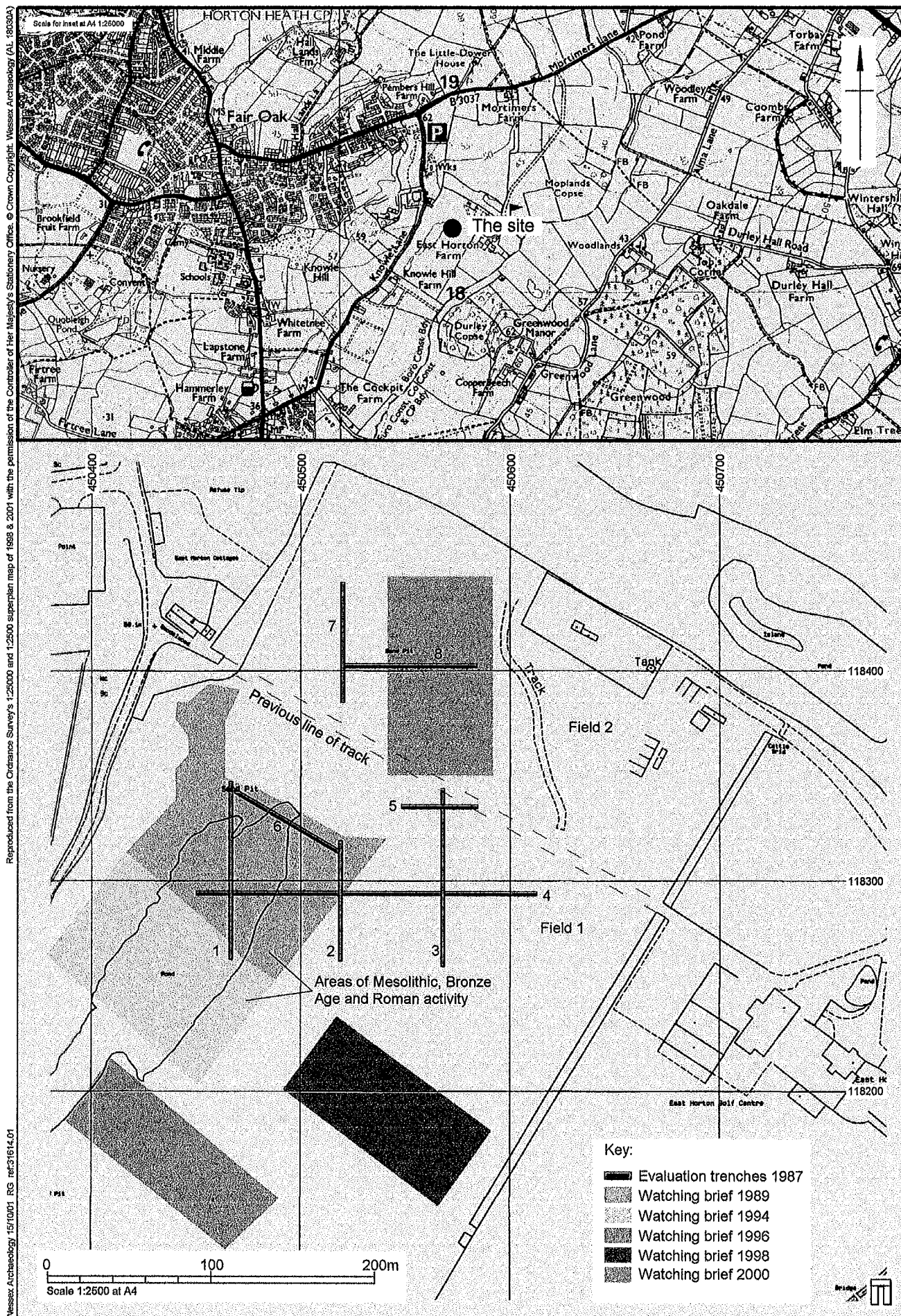
- 3.1.1. The watching brief was maintained over a period of thirteen years. Over this period, the ownership of the quarry changed and the personnel charged with carrying out the watching brief changed also. It is likely that some areas of topsoil stripping and haul road construction will have been carried out without archaeological monitoring. However, a good level of continuity in the records of the watching brief was achieved and it appears that the initial discoveries, and the subsequent evaluation and watching brief located and characterised the significant archaeological elements of the Site.

### **4. REFERENCES**

Collis, J. R., 1974, 'Pottery from Fair Oak, Hampshire' in Rescue Archaeology in Hampshire – 1974, 97-8.

Wessex Archaeology, 1990, East Horton Farm, Hampshire: Report on Archaeological Watching Brief, W188.

Wessex Archaeology, 1994, East Horton Farm, Hampshire: Report on Archaeological Watching Brief, 31614



Site location plan showing evaluation trenches and approximate areas of watching brief

Figure 1





Wessex Archaeology Ltd. registered office Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire, UK SP4 6EB  
Tel.: 01722 326867 info@wessexarch.co.uk www.wessexarch.co.uk

Wessex Archaeology Ltd is a company limited by guarantee registered in England, company number 1712772. It is also a Charity registered in England and Wales, number 287786; and in Scotland, Scottish Charity number SC042630. Our registered office is at Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire, UK SP4 6EB.