

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

SCCAS REPORT No. 2009/154

Evaluation Phase 2, Recreation Ground, Whitton Church Lane, Whitton WHI 014

HER Information

Planning Application No: 1362/05/FUL
Date of Fieldwork: 28th April to 5th May 2009
Grid Reference: TM 1450 4804
Funding Body: Merchant Projects
Curatorial Officer: Jess Tipper
Project Officer: Simon Cass
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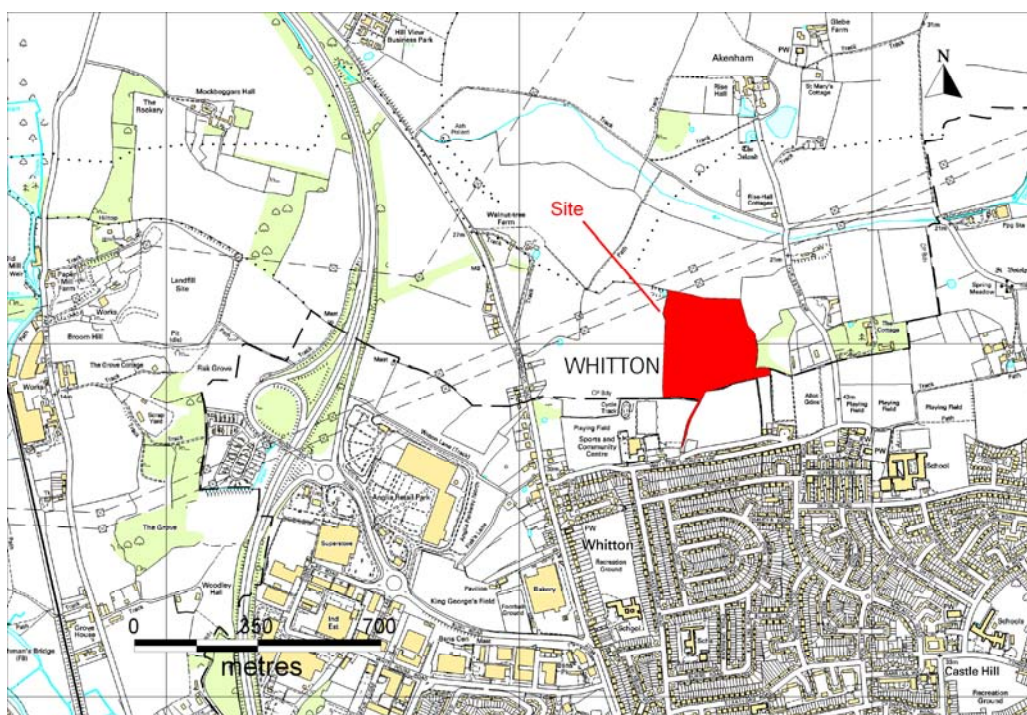
Digital report submitted to Archaeological Data Service:
<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/library/greylit>

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on land at Recreation Ground, Whitton Church Lane, Whitton from the 29th April to the 5th May 2009 as a second phase of evaluation in advance of a proposed development for sports pitches. The trenches excavated in this phase encountered pits and linear ditches generally of Late Iron Age/Early Roman date, similar to those identified previously (SCCAS report 2009/045) and clarified the nature and extent of the features already identified. This report forms a short summary of the works, with a full report anticipated to be integrated within any report of the likely further works.

1. Introduction and methodology

This report concerns the second phase of archaeological evaluation carried out on land to the rear of Whitton Church Lane, Whitton in advance of a prospective planning application to develop the land for sports pitches and ancillary works. The first phase of evaluation (SCCAS report 2009/045) identified a number of features of prehistoric and Roman date, and this second phase was commissioned in an attempt to clarify the nature of some of those features.



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Figure 1. Location map

16 trenches were positioned, with reference to the features found previously, in an attempt to clarify the nature of the archaeological activity noted earlier and better define the bounds within which that activity occurred. Specifically, this phase of trenching was to examine the layout of linear features encountered in the eastern portion of the site; to more accurately define the area of intense activity towards the northern side of the larger field and to examine an area near an existing public footpath which was not evaluated previously.

The trenches were all approximately 30m long and were opened with a 360-degree mechanical excavator under constant archaeological supervision. All spoilheaps were examined for finds and sufficient of the features exposed were excavated in order to date and clarify their nature.

2. Results

The majority of features encountered consisted of linear ditches and gullies, with some discrete pits and possible postholes. A spread in the western end of Trench 74 was noted, although no dating evidence was recovered. Many of the linear features appear to be continuations of those identified previously, although in several cases it is not possible to conclusively identify which features are connected as there are multiple possibilities (for example Trenches 3 and 69 or Trenches 42 and 72).

The features encountered on the eastern side of the site appear to comprise the corner of an early Roman field system (in trenches 22, 24, 28, 30, 59 and 60) with elements heading away further to the east. An isolated pit in Trench 59 is possibly a parallel to one found in Trench 24 to the south, both possibly indicative of further discrete features within this ditch system. The terminus found in Trench 65 is possibly part of a droveway or similar feature, with further elements present in trenches 59 and 66.

In the central and western portion of the site while there are more features, their nature is less distinct; the majority being undated and closely situated causing difficulties in linking linear features between trenches. Apart from the density of

archaeological features in this area, points of particular interest consist of prehistoric activity (mostly discrete pits) in Trenches 4, 6, 55 and 68 and a single piece of prehistoric pottery found in Trench 74 which may be residual in a post-medieval feature.

An undated linear ditch in Trench 68 may form part of an entranceway to an enclosure or drip-gully type feature, but no date can be suggested for it as there appear to be similarly aligned features of both undated and post-medieval date nearby.

Finds summary by Cathy Tester

Introduction

Finds were collected from 13 contexts in 7 evaluation trenches, as shown in the table below.

Tr No	Ctxt	Pottery		Burnt flint		Fired clay		Miscellaneous	Spotdate
		No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g		
59	0313	1	82						ERom
59	0315	10	250			1	4	A Bone 6-5g	E/MC1
59	0317	2	16	1	2			Flint 1-8g	E/MC1
60	0321	6	65			7	23		E/MC1, later IA
60	0323	3	14						M/LC1, Preh
65	0330	1	9						Preh
65	0329	2	33						IA?
68	0340	5	303					Slag 1-4g	LIA
67	0346							A Bone 8-45g	
67	0348	3	50	1	2			Burnt chalk 1	Med, Rom
72	0356	4	4						MC1
74	0364			2	127				(preh)
74	0365	1	2						16th-18th
Total		38	828	4	131	8	27		

Table 1. Finds quantities by context.

Pottery

38 sherds of pottery weighing 828g were collected from 11 contexts in 7 evaluation trenches. The assemblage includes hand-made Prehistoric, wheel-made Late Iron Age/Roman, medieval and post-medieval pottery but the majority of it is Late Iron Age/Roman. Quantities by ceramic period and trench are summarised in the table below and the pottery catalogue by context is in Appendix 1.

Trench No	No. of ctxts	No.	Wt/g	Dates
60	2	2		20 Later IA (residual)
65	2	3		42 Later IA
	4	5		62
Total Prehistoric				
59	3	13		348 E/MC1, MC1, ERom
60	2	7		59 E/MC1, MC1, ERom
67	1	2		34 Rom (residual)
68	1	5		303 LIA-ERom
72	1	4		4 MC1
<i>Total LIA / Roman</i>		8	31	748
67	1	1		16 12th-14th C
	1	1		16
<i>Total medieval</i>				
74	1	1		2 16-18th C
	1	1		2
Total post-medieval				
Total			38	828

Table 2. Pottery quantities by ceramic period and trench

Prehistoric pottery

5 sherds of hand-made prehistoric pottery recovered from 4 features in Trenches 60 and 65 were all sand tempered and of probable later IA date (300 BC+)

Late Iron Age and Roman pottery

Pottery dating to the Late Iron age and Roman periods was found in 8 contexts in 5 trenches. All of the pieces were local and regional coarsewares that could belong to the 1st half of the 1st century AD with no definite evidence of any activity later than mid 1st century. The fabrics encountered are very 'romanising.

Post-Roman pottery

One sherd of MCW of 12th-14th century date was found in posthole 0347 (0348) in Tr 67 and a single sherd of glazed red earthenware (GRE) of 16th-18th century date.

Key to Pottery fabric codes:

Code	Fabric name	Period
BSW	Black-surfaced wares	LIA/ROM
GRE	Glazed red earthenware	PMed
GROG	Grog-tempered wares (Belgic)	LIA/Rom
GX	Miscellaneous sandy grey wares	Rom
HM?	Hand-made wares	Preh
HMS	Hand-made sand tempered	Preh
HMSO	Hand-made sand/organic tempered	Preh
MCW	Medieval coarseware	Med
NVC	Nene Valley colour-coated wares	Rom
RF	Miscellaneous red fineware	Rom

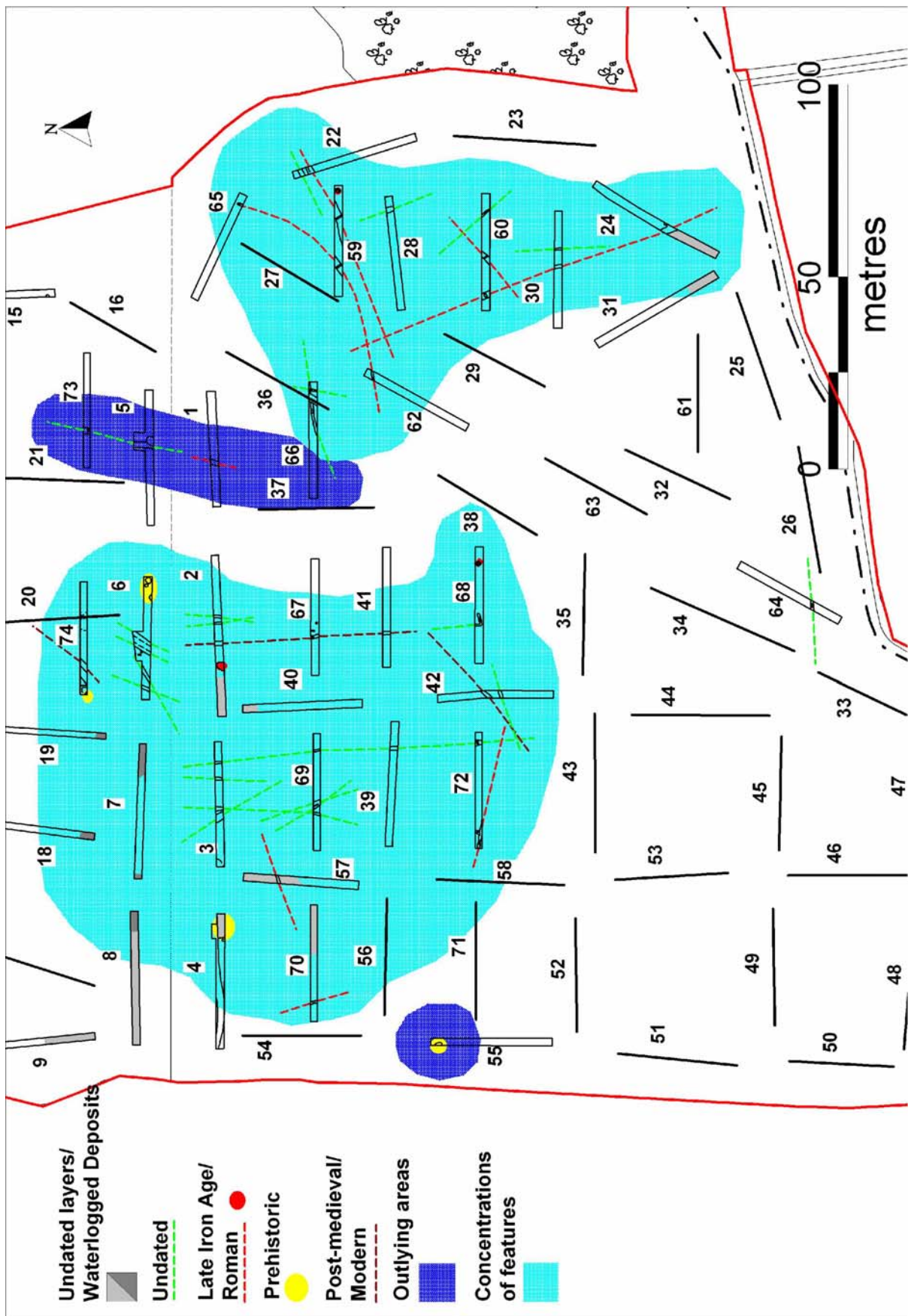
2. Conclusion

A number of new features were encountered, alongside known features that were further confirmed. The spread of features in the eastern portion of the site was discovered to be a part of a more intense field system (possibly more than one) than first thought, while greater resolution was gained with regards to the features along the boundary between the two fields. A plan of the features encountered, compiled with those located in the first phase of evaluation, is shown below (Figure 2) with suggested orientations and areas of likely archaeological interest. It is highly likely that further work will be required for this site, and open-area excavation is recommended for two zones within the site. It may prove necessary to further subdivide the site or conduct any excavation in phases to avoid overweathering of the features and disruption to the footpath crossing the site.

The central area of interest includes the dark organic layer in the vicinity of Trenches 4, 7, 8, 18 and 19, and allows for views of the possible terracing/levelling along the boundary of the two fields where it is most distinct (though care must be taken to avoid disturbance to a water main along the boundary), in addition to covering most of the features identified in this portion of the site and allowing for the potential for diffuse activity near already located pits and postholes such as in Trench 69.

The eastern area covers features as already discussed and could be extended northwards with a narrow corridor through Trenches 1, 5 and 73, to investigate the ditch(es?) located here, identifying if they are one or two ditches, and if any further relationships are present with other unidentified features.

The western area could be extended to cover the area around a prehistoric feature located in the northern part of Trench 55, where there may well be further diffuse activity.



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Figure 2. Potential alignments and areas of interest

S. Cass
June 2009

Appendix 1. Pottery catalogue

Tr No.	Ctxt	Feat	Fabric	Sherd	No	Wt/g	Form	Notes	Spotdate
59	0313	0312	BSW	r	1	82	4SJar	Rim 8 (280mm, 12%) Romanising fabric – w abundant grey grog. Abraded	ERom
	0315	0314	BSW	b	4	190	jar	Jar, sv oxy core, pocked surface	ERom
			BSW	b	1	23	jar	Jar shoulder with bead cordon at top (Cam 221b) oxy core, abraded	MC1
			BSW	b	1	19	jar	V. 'romanising' fabric, abundant grog. single groove, burnished, oxy margins	ERom
			GROG	b	3	16	Cam 218	SV Cam 218 cordoned shoulder	MC1
0317	0316	BSW	b	1	4		Fine, thin vessel, neck and shoulder. oxy core, 'romanising' fabric	MC1	
		BSW	b	1	12	jar	Jar, 'romanising' fabric	E/MC1	
60	0321	0320	BSW	b	1	10	jar	Necked jar, rim 9/13 (180mm,7%). 'romanising' fabricjar	E/MC1
			GROG	b	1	17	SJar	Vertical combing. Abraded. Black surf	ERom
			GROG	b	2	16	jar	Fine, thin. SV. GROG/BSW?	E/MC1
			GX	b	1	11	jar	High-shouldered jar with bead at base of neck(Cam 221b) GX or worn BSW?	E/MC1
			HMSO	b	1	11		V abr, worn surf. Lght orange surface & grey core. Later IA?	later IA
0323	0322	RF	b	2	5		Fine sandy, abraded. Wherstead prod? (MC1?)	MC1	
		HMS	b	1	9		Buff ext, orange int, coarse quartz sand. abraded (NCD)	preh	
65	0329	0328	HMSO	b	2	33		Buff/brown ext surf, dark grey/black core. Battered, abr (prob. IA)	preh
	0330	0328	HM?	b	1	9		Thick orange w buff clay pellets. (is it hm or wm - preh?)	preh
68	0340	0339	GROG	bba	5	303	SJar	Large sjar base & b/s w vert comb dec.Abraded. LIA	LIA-ERom
67	0348	0347	MCW	b	1	16		Ext surf flaked off	12-14thC
			GX	b	1	6		Abr.	Rom
			NVC	r	1	28	1 flagon	abr flagon square rim and handle. (60mm,46%) v abr. slag inc	Rom
72	0356	0353	BSW	r	4	4	3.7	Globular beaker, (120mm,8%)	MC1
74	0365	0365	GRE	b	1	2		Abr b/s	16-18th C