



New Forest National Park Authority Draft Research Strategy: Palaeolithic and Mesolithic

1. Introduction

- 1.1.1 The New Forest National Park is a modern administrative area mainly comprising heathlands, ancient woodland, plantations and coastland between the River Avon to the west and the Solent to the east, and largely surrounded by agricultural land and urban conurbations. Topographically and geographically this area forms part of the Hampshire Basin, a low lying area of central southern Britain south of the Wessex Downs.
- 1.1.2 The Palaeolithic and Mesolithic are conventional sub-divisions of prehistory, spanning the period one million years ago to 4000 BC. The term Holocene is a geological epoch, used to define the current climatically warm period since c. 9,700 BC after the end of the last Pleistocene (Devensian) glaciation.
- 1.1.3 The New Forest National Park also crosses different administrative areas, being mainly situated within Hampshire but with part of the north west of the National Park within Wiltshire.

1.2 Existing Research Agendas

- 1.2.1 Existing relevant research frameworks for these periods include the national Palaeolithic (Pettitt *et al.* 2008) and Mesolithic (Blinkhorn and Milner 2014) Research Agendas, with the New Forest also included as a region within the Solent-Thames Research Agenda (Hey and Hind 2014). However, these make very little mention of the archaeological potential of the New Forest and have potentially underestimated the know resource for these periods. In addition to the archaeology from these periods, an understanding of the environmental history of the area is also of key importance. Regional reviews of the environmental and geoarchaeological record for this period have often only been conducted at an overview level and overlook the New Forest area. The Southern Region Environmental and Geoarchaeological Reviews commissioned by English Heritage (Keeley 1987) are now very out of date

and predate PPG16. A series of updated geoarchaeological and environmental regional reviews for Southern Britain were published at the beginning of the millennium, though with the exception of the marine deposits (Timpany 2002), make little reference to the New Forest. However, not all of the reviews commissioned at this time were ever completed / published (e.g. pollen).

1.2.2 The strategy points summarised in this document derive from presentations and discussions at a round-table seminar held on 1st March 2016 at the New Forest Community Centre, Lyndhurst.

2. Principles

2.1.1 The Research Strategy aims to:

- Identify gaps in archaeological knowledge regarding the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic periods of the New Forest, and suggest ways in which these can be addressed over the next five to ten years.
- Facilitate interactions with the planning process, to maximise opportunities for archaeological investigation offered by development.
- Facilitate interactions with other organisations working in and around the New Forest, to maximise opportunities for archaeological investigation offered by work such as maintenance and reconstruction.
- Provide an over-arching statement of research aims, to help ensure that all organisations carrying out archaeological investigations in the New Forest (for example: contractors, community groups, academic institutions, archaeological societies etc.) work towards common goals and meaningful research.
- Recognise that negative evidence (both historical and archaeological) does not imply that there is no evidence to find. Work specifications should seek to either confirm or overturn earlier assessments, with a presumption in favour of archaeological investigation even in areas where potential has previously been considered low.
- Enable that work specifications need to be reflexive to the aims of the Research Strategy and emerging discoveries even when work is underway.
- Ensure that any archaeological investigation gives value for money, by avoiding research questions that are inappropriate or of low priority for the New Forest, and through the avoidance of investigation techniques that are unlikely to yield useful information.
- Address both problem-oriented and curiosity-driven research.
- Be pragmatic by identifying the most pressing research questions which need to be addressed and which are likely to be achievable either through single projects or by collating the results of multiple smaller projects.

- Deliver a flexible set of research requirements as a living document, which can be dynamic and updated. The Research Strategy should not be viewed as a static set of specifications. This will; be achieved through the New Forest Knowledge Portal, as the portal is developed.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1.1 The structure of the research agenda is based upon the main themes identified by Blinkhorn and Milner (2014) for the Mesolithic which are also applicable to the Palaeolithic.

4. Improving public engagement and education

- 4.1.1 Encouraging the wider archaeological sector and the public to engage with the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic will aid in the progression of research within the Forest, especially as local groups may hold important archives of locally sourced finds. The Palaeolithic and Mesolithic are conspicuous by their relatively low profile in the popular history of the New Forest area even when sites such as Nea Farm and Woodgreen exist within their boundaries, or sites such as Stone Point, Lepe, contain important Pleistocene interglacial deposits. The Mesolithic has even less visibility to the public and academic sectors, it having been stated in the Solent-Thames Research Agenda that “one area that seems so far to be largely devoid of Mesolithic flintwork is the eastern part of the New Forest, though this may reflect land use and the absence of collectors” (Hey 2009, 73).
- 4.1.2 Promotion of responsible reporting of archaeological finds attributable to these periods, through schemes such as the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) and Marine Antiquities Scheme (MAS), could ensure that when chance finds are made they are properly reported and investigated if necessary. Opportunities to engage the public with the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic of the New Forest should be sought through displays, interactive events and accessible literature aimed at the public.
- 4.1.3 Opportunities to promote the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic archaeology of the region within local museums and through the NFNP should be encouraged: currently this is very minimal and, in some outlets, completely absent from the public-facing archaeological histories presented for the New Forest.
- 4.1.4 Engagement with local communities is essential to engender a spirit of shared ownership in decision-making about how land is managed and the means by which archaeology is accessed and preserved. Working with local societies and raising awareness among relevant people about at-risk zones, such as eroding coastlines, could facilitate monitoring and research.
- 4.1.5 The Palaeolithic and Mesolithic archaeology of the region could be used to actively engage schools who now teach prehistory as part of the national curriculum, through the NFNPA officers. Opportunities to enhance the use of the New Forest for teaching prehistory (and Quaternary Science) at undergraduate and graduate levels, including

attracting PhD research, should be sought out especially with neighbouring universities hosting large archaeology, geography and geology departments.

5. Enhancing approaches to fieldwork and survey

- 5.1.1 Palaeolithic and Mesolithic archaeology is notoriously difficult to locate because the remains tend to be ephemeral and deeply buried and consequently further research is needed to develop robust strategies for prospection. Most of the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic resource of the region relates to find spots rather than discoveries that have benefitted from modern excavation techniques. Intensive field walking has been successful in the Avon Valley to significantly increase the number of Mesolithic finds, but this has not been applied to other areas of the Forest, particularly those not subject to ploughing or other ground-disturbance activities. Where flint scatters are encountered, particularly in the plough soil, these should not be viewed as of little value as this material may be the only record of such activity in that location.
- 5.1.2 Developer-led archaeology needs to provide sufficient resources for dealing with Palaeolithic and Mesolithic archaeology through thorough assessment and the development of deposit models before evidence is encountered on-site, especially to identify the potential stratigraphic context of any potential finds. There is always the risk that in multi-period sites these early prehistoric finds will be overlooked due to their low abundance or that evaluation approaches, including trenching, strip-map-record or plough-zone investigations, could lead to low sampling intervals that do not account for relatively intact yet discrete scatters of material. Where archaeological investigations are required to accompany aggregate extraction in the area, adequate consideration should be given to the potential of Palaeolithic archaeology and Pleistocene sedimentary sequences within the gravel and sand deposits, rather than a focus solely on younger archaeology present above these Pleistocene deposits.
- 5.1.3 Much archaeological work in the New Forest was completed without the benefit of modern techniques and assistance from other disciplines, including geoarchaeological techniques. Finds were often from single find locations or derived from 18th / 19th century gravel exposures within quarries, and consequently have poor provenances. Where modern archaeological approaches have been conducted, the most notable example being Nea Farm, Somerley, significant information has been obtained about the Late Upper Palaeolithic period and large finds assemblages have been recovered. Other detailed investigations of interglacial deposits have revealed new palaeoenvironmental information and age constraints for important Pleistocene deposits.
- 5.1.4 Opportunities for investigating archaeology within the marine zone should be sought wherever possible to better understand the development of the Solent River and potential for submerged archaeological sites. For example, at Stone Point and Pennington investigations of the interglacial deposits have not descended below the intertidal zone but it is known that these deposits will extend into the sub-tidal zone. Where submerged archaeology is expected / identified, if recovery is required then this should use techniques that create the least disturbance and could identify the context of the find (e.g. diver excavations rather than controlled dredging). The rich

archaeology recovered from Bouldnor Cliff on the Isle of Wight demonstrates the high potential for submerged Mesolithic sites to be identified on the New Forest coastline.

5.2 Prospection methods

- 5.2.1 Broader use of fieldwalking, test-pitting and other low-impact techniques is needed, especially within developer-led contexts. Prospection methods should be conducted at a sampling density appropriate to the scale of the archaeology that is anticipated. Due to the sometimes small and discrete nature of Palaeolithic and Mesolithic scatters, many will not be found using conventional methods: however, understanding the structure and content of such scatters is of considerable value in researching single-scale events and identifying what activities might have been occurring in the New Forest at that time. Onshore geophysical techniques, such as electromagnetic ground penetrating radar and resistivity surveys, could be used to better understand the composition and thickness of key Pleistocene terrace deposits, identifying areas where site investigations might recover sedimentary sequences with the highest potential for dating and / or the presence of in situ archaeological deposits. Where intrusive prospection techniques are undertaken such as coring or small test pits these need to involve and ensure that an experienced geoarchaeologist is available when Pleistocene deposits are likely to be encountered. During activities such as gravel extraction, improved engagement of site contractors with the potential archaeology of the site, including the sedimentary sequences, could result in improved reporting of finds as and allow geoarchaeologists earlier access to sites of interest that are located when watching briefs have been deemed as unnecessary.
- 5.2.2 Marine geophysical techniques, including new approaches to analysis of Existing datasets, should be routinely used to investigate and interpret submerged landscapes, including the position of the palaeo-Solent river channel and its tributaries. Existing high-resolution marine geophysical datasets should be utilised wherever possible to provide a robust baseline information prior to any offshore developments. However, there are significant gaps in the availability of high-resolution bathymetric survey data, with no swath datasets covering the subtidal area immediately adjacent to the New Forest's southern boundary and any datasets from Southampton Water not available through the Bathymetry Data Archive Centre (DAC). Access to this data could help better understand the stability of the subtidal deposits and highlight areas of erosion that might be revealing prehistoric archaeology. While bathymetric data is important for understanding modern exposure of subtidal deposits, there is a need for increased seismic and geoarchaeological datasets to understand the composition and thickness of these deposits and allow prospection for potential archaeological sites that might match those found at Bouldnor Cliff opposite. Large datasets such as those derived from site investigations associated with the Navitus Bay Offshore Windfarm proposal have great potential for understanding the Quaternary development of the palaeo-Solent within the Christchurch Bay area.
- 5.2.3 Opportunities provided by planning requirements linked to development proposals will allow the Pleistocene sequences to be recorded, sampled, and studied, and should contain a deposit-modelling centred approach. Datasets suitable for deposit modelling are often unevenly distributed as they tend to focus in areas of increased

developments such as settlements and associated with infrastructure developments. Any deposit modelling approach should not attempt to focus solely on the New Forest but also take advantage of more extensive datasets associated with the bordering urban conurbations where the sedimentary sequences, particular in the major valleys, could be used to strongly infer archaeological potential for similar areas with sparse data coverage lying within the New Forest boundary. Wherever possible deposit modelling should attempt to use Existing chrono-stratigraphic data (e.g. radiocarbon dated peats or OSL dated terrace sequences). Existing mapping of the Quaternary deposits within the region is known to be imprecise, and should therefore not form the sole basis for determining archaeological potential (especially for Palaeolithic archaeology). Unmapped deposits could be thin and fragmentary but nonetheless contain rich Palaeolithic evidence. The Palaeolithic can be further complicated by a variety of depositional processes occurring leading to biases in the preservation of faunal and other remains that lead to changes in artefact distribution. Current mapping also shows inconsistencies in the mapping of Late Pleistocene and Holocene deposits, especially areas of peat that are often mapped as either alluvium or Head deposits; the latter used as a ‘catch-all’ description which should be used extremely cautiously for any interpretation of archaeological potential or deposit type / origin.

5.3 Lithic scatters

- 5.3.1 Flint and stone artefacts, including numbers of Palaeolithic and Mesolithic axes, have been recovered from the New Forest area, sometimes in significant numbers, and recorded to various levels of detail. These range from recent finds reported to modern standards, through PAS, and reports extracted from antiquarian or ad hoc sources which may contain very little detail. The whereabouts of many reported artefacts is not known, but others with good provenance should be highlighted including if the material can be located in an archive repository or local private collection. It is believed that private collections of worked flints of Palaeolithic and Mesolithic date exist in and around the Forest and these need to be identified and catalogued. Non-flint stone axes need to have their raw materials sourced. Flint artefacts should also be reviewed to ensure that their technology has been correctly identified.
- 5.3.2 A comprehensive review and updated catalogue would enable a coherent understanding of the range of Palaeolithic and Mesolithic material from the New Forest area, enhancing our ability to identify gaps in our current understanding and also identify potential sites from which antiquarian finds were derived. The nature and distribution of these artefacts will contribute to the identification of human activity, how that might vary across the New Forest, and in turn any contrast with areas outside the New Forest.

5.4 Excavation

- 5.4.1 Specifications of work (Written Schemes for Investigation) should be flexible and reflexive rather than advocating a rigid standard approach to archaeological investigation that cannot be changed once agreed. Where work is likely to impact upon features of key interest to the Palaeolithic archaeology of the Forest, notably the terrace gravel sequences, provision for geoarchaeological investigations (including opportunities for dating and sieving for small artefact retrieval) should be made. Desk based assessments of the resource, used to inform the WSI, should ensure that

adequate searches of the available resources for the area have been completed, rather than solely relying upon the HERs, to ensure any potential for Palaeolithic or Mesolithic archaeology has been adequately identified prior to any site investigations commencing.

- 5.4.2 Controlled and professional excavations of Palaeolithic archaeological sites within the New Forest is exceedingly rare – the only notably example being Nea Farm where the total finds exceed c. 10,000 pieces of flint. Where Palaeolithic and Mesolithic assemblages are encountered during excavations these could provide significant opportunities for advancing our understanding of prehistoric activities within the region. Sites where organic preservation are identified, especially submerged sites within river valleys or the subtidal area, would be especially important and may contain organic finds in addition to flints, as well as providing important environmental data to accompany the archaeology. Where sites are exposed by erosion, notably within the coastal zone, these should be highlighted for archaeological attention.

6. Scientific methods

- 6.1.1 There is enormous potential for a range of scientific techniques, both established and new, to be applied to Palaeolithic and Mesolithic datasets. There is also the potential for re-examining curated material currently held in archives in addition to any newly excavated samples. Such dating approaches may focus on archaeological material, environmental sequences and the gravel terraces themselves. The organic preservation from sites such as Stone Point and Pennington is known to be very good and these can provide rich palaeoenvironmental datasets that can help reconstruct the environment, including the palaeoclimate and past sea-level elevations.

6.2 Dating

- 6.2.1 Attempts to refine the chronostratigraphy of the Pleistocene Solent River terraces have used approaches including the presence of Palaeolithic archaeology or biostratigraphic markers, terrace elevation and uplift modelling, and / or scientific dating techniques. Dating of the lowermost Pleistocene Solent River terraces have been achieved using Luminescence dating, predominantly Optically Stimulated Luminescence (OSL). Recent work in the Avon Valley (Egberts 2017) has provided a new suite of OSL dates, using both quartz and feldspar sources, providing a much needed chronological constraint on the age of Avon valley terraces, including important Palaeolithic archaeological sites such as Woodgreen. However, the absolute age of many of the other upper terraces in the region still remains poorly understood. Luminescence dating techniques, to determine ages for both archaeological sites and terrace chronostratigraphy, have sometimes yielded erroneous/inconsistent results (including differences in age estimated derived from quartz and feldspar sources), resulting in some disputes over the absolute age of certain deposits from within the region. Opportunities to resolve the age of these terrace deposits should be sought out, particularly those that predate Marine Isotope Stage 7, in order to identify the terrace sequences of highest archaeological potential. Scientific dating techniques such as Amino Acid Racemization (AAR), Electron Spin Resonance (ESR) and Cosmogenic

dating hold great potential for further refining the age of the Pleistocene deposits in the area, as well as providing opportunities to test / resolve the existent OSL-derived chronology for the region. For offshore deposits, beyond the known intertidal interglacial deposits, there is a poor understanding of the age of the features visible through marine geophysical surveys, such as remnant channel systems, that could be resolved through targeted sampling and the application of suitable dating techniques.

6.2.2 While some of the mires of the New Forest now have robust radiocarbon chronologies covering the early Holocene, many are still undated (utilising pollen zones to infer age) or have older bulk sediment radiocarbon dates with large associated errors. Re-dating of some sequences using AMS radiocarbon dating on identifiable short-lived plant material has highlighted that some older bulk radiocarbon dates should be used cautiously. Human activity within the New Forest has resulted in many of the peat sequences being disturbed from activities such as drainage and peat cutting. As a result robust chronologies are required to identify the presence of hiatuses / disturbance within sedimentary sequences that might be otherwise misinterpreted. Dating of intertidal peat deposits have often been limited to single dates, placing limitations on our ability to fully understand factors such as rates of sea-level and environmental changes. Approaches to dating sedimentary sequences should consider multiple dates, and Bayesian modelling approaches, to improve our understanding of the age of sediment deposition and any identified indications of human activity. Within submerged environments the potential for dendrochronology should be considered if wood is encountered, especially submerged forests that might exist buried within the subtidal zone.

6.2.3 A maintained database containing details of where scientific dating has been undertaken within the New Forest, including details of the dates themselves, would be of benefit to researchers working within the area and could be used to inform the planning process.

6.3 [Climate and environment](#)

6.3.1 The Palaeolithic and Mesolithic are prolonged periods within which extensive landscape change occurred, including deposition of gravel terraces, uplift and downcutting of major river valleys, and periods of high and low sea level stands. As a consequence there is a requirement to better link the terrestrial and marine landscapes, and in particular the intertidal strip where Pleistocene and Mesolithic deposits are known to reside. This area is particularly important as post-glacial sea levels mean that the preservation of archaeological material might be excellent, as demonstrated in the Solent at Bouldnor Cliff.

6.3.2 Many palaeoenvironmental studies have been associated with the Forest peatlands, predominantly utilising pollen and plant macrofossil remains. However, within the coastal peat sequences, pollen, mollusc, diatom and foraminifera studies have been instrumental in establishing a Holocene sea-level record. Other deposits have also been shown to contain important palaeoenvironmental data, such as organic lenses within alluvial riverine sites, organic Pleistocene interglacial deposits from Stone Point and Pennington areas and potential interglacial deposits from within / below the

valley gravels, such as at Ibsley. Within Church Moor a thin organic lens associated with the late glacial interstadial (Windermere interstadial) provides a rare insight into climate at this time. Other similar organic deposits might be found within the New Forest where late glacial solifluction has led to their burial and preservation.

- 6.3.3 The natural structure of Mid-Holocene woodlands in north-west Britain has been a topic of extensive debate in recent years, focusing on the role of herbivores in maintaining the structure and openness of woodlands. The New Forest peatlands provide opportunities to investigate if insect and non-pollen palynomorphs could be used to provide key insights into the natural structure of the New Forest woodland, to complement the pollen data, and provide important insights into how Mesolithic people might have moved around and interacted with this environment. Macro-charcoal is often poorly preserved in areas of the New Forest, but when encountered should be investigated to provide further insights into past woodland composition.
- 6.3.4 Well-dated palaeoenvironmental studies should continue to be undertaken to further develop understanding of the temporal and spatial scales of human interaction with the environment. These should include palaeoenvironmental dating work to synchronise our chronological, environmental and archaeological records, with targeted high-resolution work at coincident palaeoenvironmental and archaeological sites essential when encountered. The differing underlying soil conditions across the New Forest results in differential preservation of ecofacts. For instance on Palaeogene geologies the acidic soils are good for certain types of organic preservation (such as pollen) whereas the chalk geology in the north will better preserve calcareous material such as molluscs and bone. Where palaeoenvironmental studies are undertaken it is important that their results are disseminated to practitioners within the New Forest and any generated datasets are made available in open access repositories.
- 6.3.5 While the Mesolithic archaeology within the area may be sparse, palaeoenvironmental studies have identified periods of increased burning within the New Forest during the early Holocene. Although these appear to coincide with climatic conditions that are more conducive to natural phases of burning, the role of human agency in the use of fire at these times is poorly understood. Consequently there is a need to understand patterns of wildfire occurrence and their relationship to climatic episodes favourable for burning to help better understand if an environmental signal for Mesolithic activity is present within the New Forest environmental record.

7. Curation and conservation

- 7.1.1 There is a huge amount of data that has previously been obtained but which needs further collation, investigation, publication and archiving. This includes analysis of artefacts and ecofacts stored in museums (and sometimes private collections) and unpublished data and reports from research, commercial and amateur excavations.

7.2 Data

- 7.2.1 The New Forest Historic Environment Record is dispersed over multiple HER's and archive datasets, some of which are not easily accessible. Existing archive datasets pertaining to the local area (e.g. TERPS (Mephram 2009) and PaMELA (Leivers

2009)) often contain more sites than are recorded in the relevant HER's. This has led to some previous assessments concluding that there is an absence of evidence for Palaeolithic and Mesolithic activity within parts of the New Forest. There also needs to be a greater appreciation of the unique planning status and low level of development within the New Forest, compared to its bordering urban conurbations, when considering factors such as finds densities and any biases in distributions for these periods in regional resource assessment for this period. An assessment of whether these patterns reflect biases in data collection or a real feature of activity within the wider area could be very constructive for informing the planning process.

7.2.2 Opportunities should be sought to incorporate such existing dataset into HERs at the earliest opportunity to improve representation of these archaeological periods within the historic environment records. Failing this, a standalone database could be established for the region containing all of the information from HERs and PAS and supplemented by full resource assessments of all literature sources and lodged within the New Forest Knowledge Portal. This could then be drawn upon and as new data is added and could be checked and extracted by the local HERs. The proliferation of multiple separate databases is generally not a desirable way forward and those often created in an academic context, not easily if at all available can lead to the duplication of records often resulting in misleading information resulting from the different recording methodologies used. How the Marine HER overlaps with the terrestrial HER records should also be carefully considered to ensure that archaeological discoveries, particularly within the intertidal and subtidal zone, are properly represented. Local groups should be strongly encouraged to share details of any unreported finds and sites which could make significant contributions to our knowledge of these periods. This is demonstrated by the Michael White collection (Wessex Archaeology 2008) from the Solent which has provided significant new insights into the abundance and distribution of Palaeolithic and Mesolithic finds, including Pleistocene animal assemblages, within the western Solent.

7.2.3 Much of the archaeological work in the New Forest was completed without the benefit of modern techniques and assistance from other disciplines. A comprehensive review of available excavation records and archives should be undertaken in order to compile an overview of past work. This could include identifying where material may exist in museum archives, highlighting opportunities for re-evaluation and identification of finds to help constrain their technology type and likely age. This review could also be used to identify opportunities where reopening previous excavation could be productive for gathering new evidence, including opportunities for dating and geoarchaeological investigations. A review of these records could also help identify if any significant collections can be associated with identifiable geographical location, especially abandoned / partially worked 18th-19th century gravel pits. This could be particularly productive with the large collection of Palaeolithic tools associated with Paultons Park (see cover illustration) that is thought to be derived from quarry sites within the lower Test Valley. It might also be possible to identify sites where surface finds have been made over successive years that might indicate a coherent site subject to gradual erosion. Many of the recorded find spots do not contain any information about the concentration of finds, although some

descriptions imply ‘clusters’ of material were recovered that could indicate possible occupation sites which could warrant further investigations.

7.3 Analysis and publication

- 7.3.1 Work on known collections held privately or by museums should be championed; many of these might form suitable projects for university students or ‘indoor’ components of community archaeological projects.
- 7.3.2 Synthesis of unpublished material from various urban and rural investigations could be achieved without the necessity to publish individual collections or projects. This might elevate the perception of frequent ‘residual’ or ‘background’ Palaeolithic and Mesolithic archaeology, highlight the problems with site-based synthesis, and encourage the continued detailed recording of Palaeolithic and Mesolithic archaeology by demonstrating value through publication.

Investigations of the Mesolithic and, in particular the Palaeolithic, are often undertaken by university researchers or local groups rather than the commercial archaeological sector. As a result the results are rarely submitted through the OASIS system but may appear in scientific journal articles or ephemeral publications which are not easily accessible. It is essential that all archaeological investigations, including those focused on the environmental aspects of the Palaeolithic period, are properly reported to HERs to increase their visibility within the record and provide signposting to any published accounts of the work, as well as depositing copies with the New Forest Centre, Christopher Tower Library and the New Forest Knowledge Portal (<https://nfknowledge.org/>) to help promote local knowledge of the findings. Reports submitted to OASIS for inclusion in HERs should take care to ensure that Palaeolithic and Mesolithic information, along with any palaeoenvironmental data, is highlighted even where its recovery was incidental to the original aims of the investigation. Submissions made through OASIS should be encouraged to make sure that reports are made available through the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) by selecting the open access option. It is also important that all specialist archive reports are made available through this process.

- 7.3.3 Archaeological work in the New Forest should not be viewed in isolation, as discrete projects, but rather must be seen as part of a broad continuum of ongoing research aligned to this Research Strategy encompassing the wider Hampshire Basin area. Each investigation should contribute to an updating of the combined knowledge of the regions archaeological record. Projects which do not achieve this should be recognised and refocused at the planning stage.

7.4 Communications

- 7.4.1 The potential impact of changes in land-use and development on Palaeolithic and Mesolithic archaeology, as part of the planning process or otherwise, needs to be recognised at an early stage. There is a need to realise that Palaeolithic and Mesolithic deposits are important and are more prevalent than is sometimes imagined.
- 7.4.2 Strong connections between the university, museum and commercial sectors are necessary to promote sharing of both interpretative and methodological findings and developments. The New Forest Knowledge project is making significant inroads into fostering such connections, especially through their annual knowledge transfer conferences.

- 7.4.3 Protocols for reporting of finds, and the success and public benefit of finds reporting should be promoted within the New Forest. These protocols should also be promoted to tourists visiting the region to reduce loss of and lack of artefact reporting. Events to highlight these protocols, along with ongoing public engagement projects within the Forest, are yielding positive results and funding to support these initiatives should be maintained wherever possible.
- 7.4.4 The study of the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic periods can make important contributions to other agencies working within the New Forest, such as those researching or managing resources pertinent to climate, palaeoenvironments and geomorphology, by providing baseline information on natural system responses to factors such as climate change, sea level rise, pathogens and disease in trees, and coastal processes. Opportunities for acquiring funding where datasets could be mutually beneficial to different groups should be identified. For example, marine geophysical surveying of the New Forest coastline could provide important information for Coastal Monitoring Programmes as well as providing archaeologists with important information about the morphology of the coastline and its potential for encountering submerged Prehistoric archaeology.

8. References

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Appendix 1: Seminar participants

Name	Organisation
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Jonathan Last	Historic England
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James Brown	New Forest National Park Authority
Lawrence Shaw	New Forest National Park Authority
Becky Briant	Queen Mary's University London
Marcus Hatch	Queen Mary's University London
Laura Basell	Queen's University Belfast
Matt Pope	UCL Institute of Archaeology; ASE
Ella Egberts	Bournemouth University
Francis Wenban-Smith	University of Southampton
Fraser Sturt	University of Southampton
Justin Dix	University of Southampton
Keith Barber	University of Southampton
Michael Grant	University of Southampton
Tony Brown	University of Southampton
Martin Bates	University of Wales Trinity Saint David
Jack Russell	Wessex Archaeology

Representatives of the following organisations were also invited: British Museum, Maritime Archaeology Trust, University of Oxford, University of Reading.