

SANDFORD HEATH, WAREHAM ST MARTIN - NGR SY 9410 9018

A small excavation was carried out in October 2011 as part of the community-based Sandford Heritage Project and supported by EDAS members, to investigate the origins of a straight trackway through the heath from Sandford to Holton Heath, known locally as the 'Roman Road'. A single trench 1.20m wide by 17m long was cleared by a mechanical excavator. This cut through part of the track as well as through a series of linear banks and ditches on its north side. The trench was then cleaned by hand and the excavated section exposed a typical heathland sequence comprising an upper layer of decaying vegetation overlying bleached sands and iron pan. A small, serrated flint flake and a flint core are evidence of prehistoric activity in this area before the heath developed. There was however, no evidence for any road or track metalling. The banks and ditches are probably part of a tree plantation which was noted on the Tithe map of 1843.

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