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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS AT GRANGE ROAD, GOSPORT, 1992

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ABSTRACT

A field evaluation and watching brief at Grange Road, Gosport, Hampshire led to the discovery of a 9th–8th century BC unenclosed settlement site which was subsequently excavated. It is of particular significance due to the lack of similar Late Bronze Age settlements on the coastal plain of Hampshire and West Sussex.

INTRODUCTION

Location and Geology

In January 1992 a field evaluation was carried out by Thames Valley Archaeological Services, followed by a watching brief in February/March of the same year. The area dug, formerly an open recreational space, was roughly rectangular measuring approximately 125 m east–west by 70 m north–south (0.96 ha). The site is located on the coastal plain at Gosport (Fig 1), immediately south of the entrance to the existing Civic Amenities Site and west of Grange Road (SU 45871000) (Fig 2).

The evaluation was carried out as specified by Hampshire County Council Archaeology Section as part of the Waste Disposal Authority's planning application to build a new household waste recycling centre. It lies on a relatively flat, low-lying terrace of the River Alver which is approximately 200 m to the west. The underlying geology consists of Plateau gravel with sand and silt channels. Areas of fertile Brickearth are in close proximity.

Evaluation

The evaluation consisted of a series of 5 machine-assisted trenches varying in length from 25 to 50 m, dug using a JCB with a 1.5 m wide toothless ditching bucket (Fig 3; Hall and Ford 1992).

The trenching removed an average of 0.30 m of topsoil and revealed only two possible archaeological features; a shallow oval scoop (F2, Trench 1) which produced a single flint flake, plus a small posthole (F3, Trench 4) which contained flecks of charcoal, a single small sherd of prehistoric pottery and 4g of burnt flint. The scoop was of doubtful archaeological validity but the small post hole was evidence of the possibility of further archaeological discoveries.

In comparison to the scarcity of archaeological features there was a surprising density of artefacts recovered from the subsoil and spoil-heaps of trenches 1 and 5. This included relatively large quantities of burnt flint (1724 g total), 17 sherds of prehistoric pottery and 60 worked flints (Fig 7; Tables 3 and 4). Both the pottery and flint were thought to be of Bronze Age date.

The paucity of archaeological features posed problems of interpretation and a full scale follow-up excavation did not seem justified. There was, however, sufficient indication of prehistoric activity in the vicinity to warrant further examination prior to construction work. For this reason a watching brief was commissioned by Hampshire County Council with a contingency for further rescue excavation.

Watching Brief

The watching brief consisted of archaeologically supervised topsoil stripping of approximately 7000 m^2 by a 360° excavator and toothless bucket. This revealed a sandy gravel subsoil with silt-filled channels and patches, with predominantly more sand and occasional clay patches in the southern half of the site. Features were generally clearly visible following the topsoil stripping and relatively few areas were hand

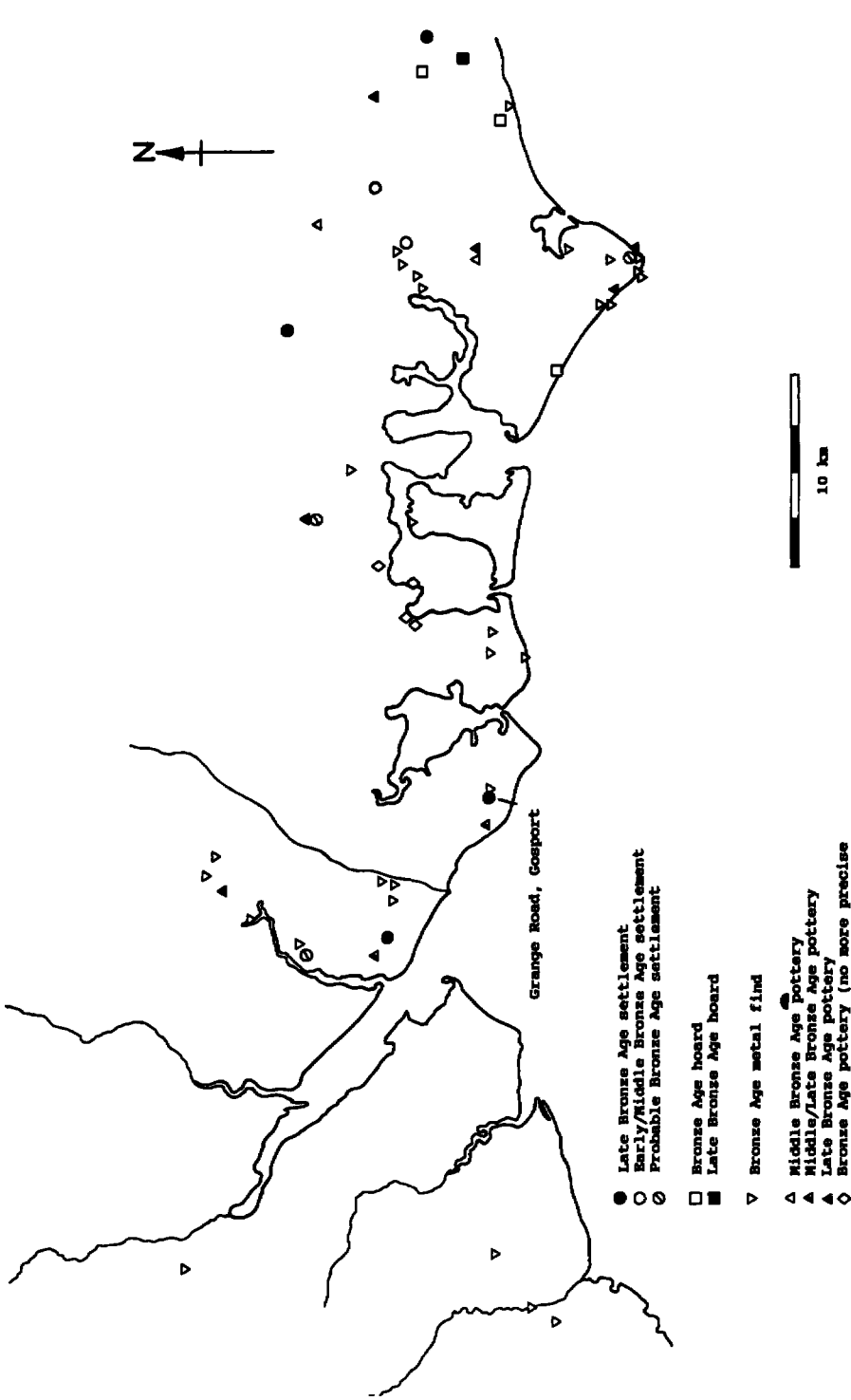

Fig 1. Location of site and surrounding region.

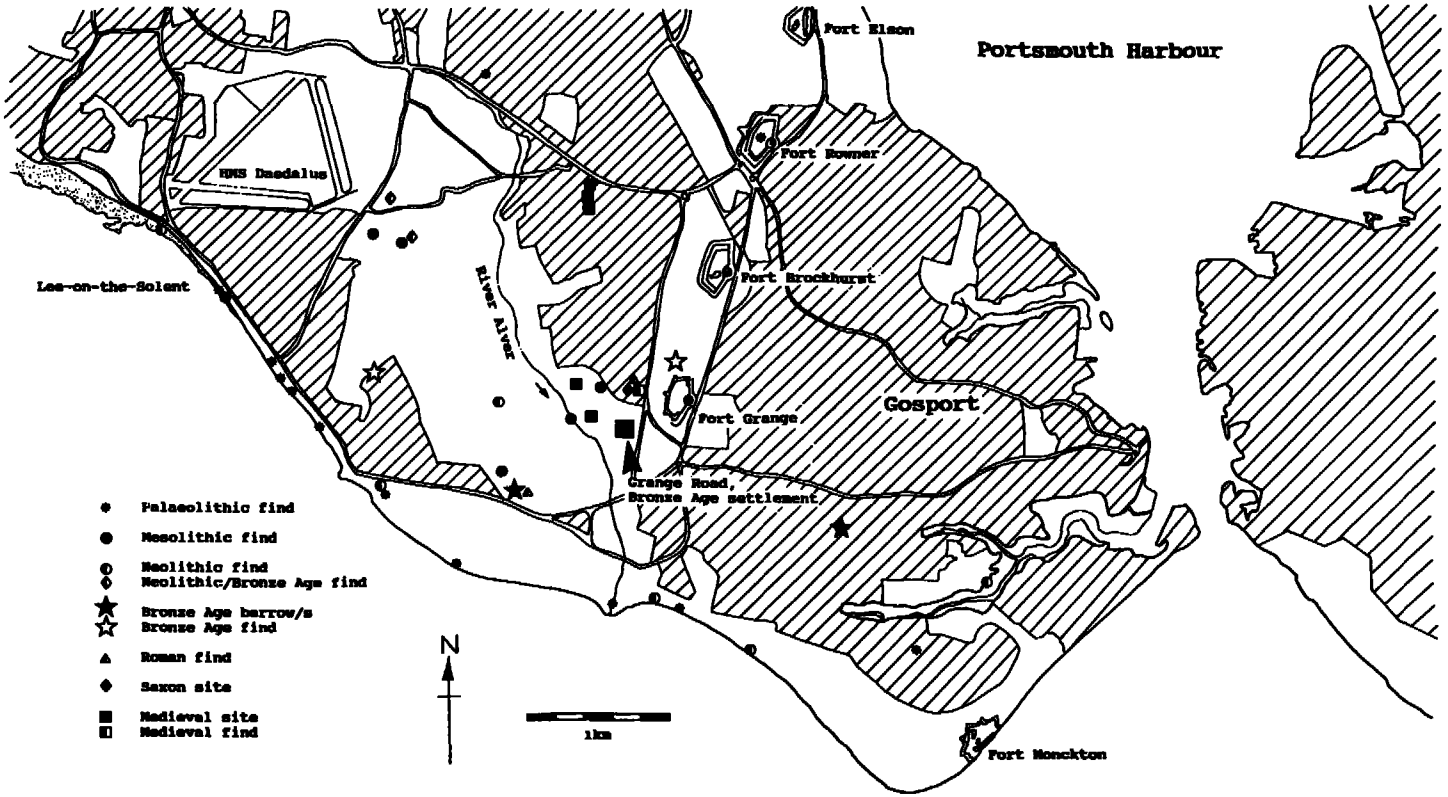

Fig 2. Location of archaeological sites and finds in the Gosport area.

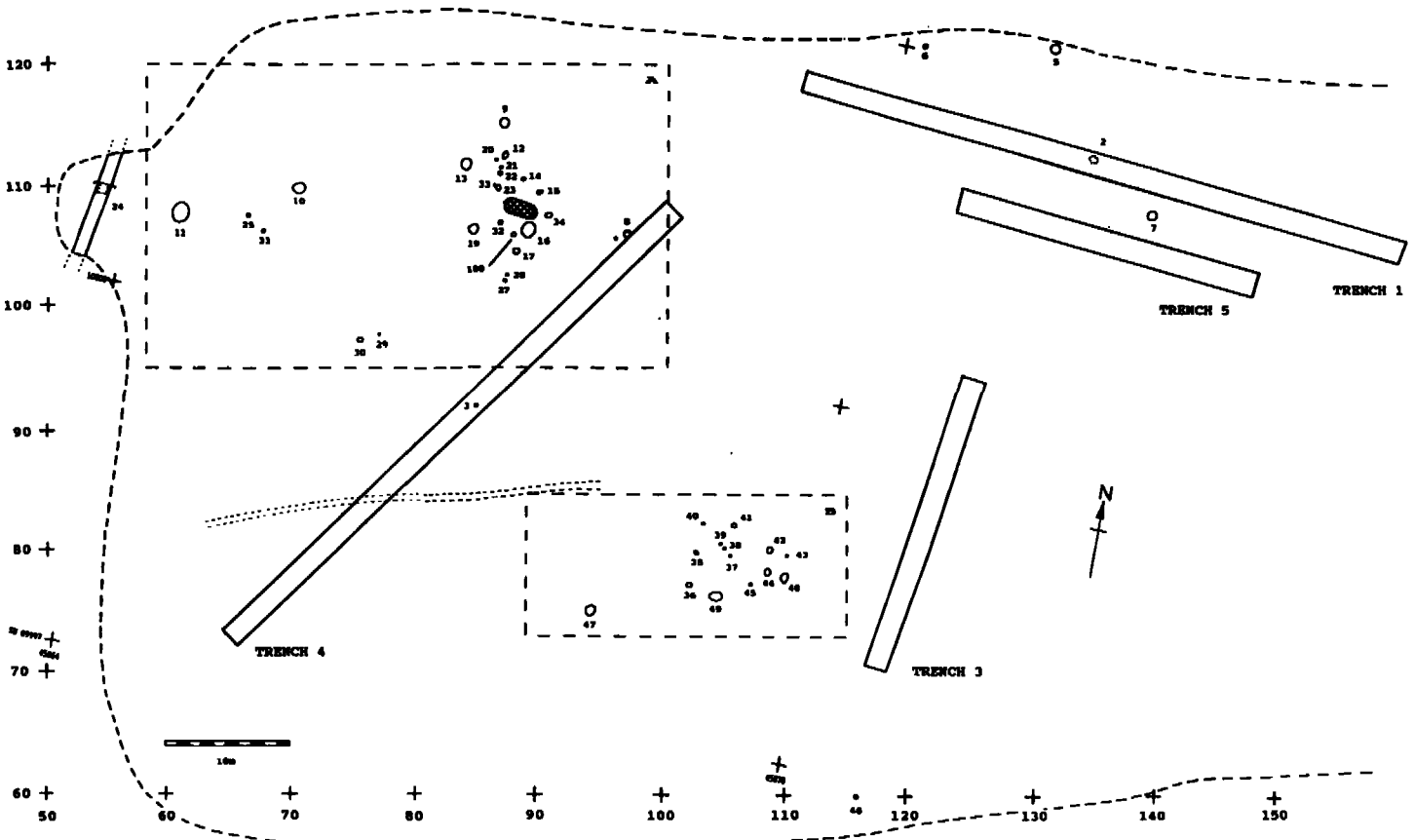

Fig 3. General plan of excavated features and evaluation trenches.

cleaned. All likely archaeological features were investigated and eventually 50 features (including those found in the evaluation) were recorded.

DESCRIPTION OF FEATURES

The archaeological features revealed consisted of pits and scoops, postholes, ditches and burnt areas (Table 1; Figs 4 and 5). The majority of these features belonged to two clusters (A and B, Fig 3), although there were several outliers. In general the features were relatively shallow, ranging in depth from 0.03 m to 0.44 m.

The fills were usually a sandy loam or sandy clay loam. They invariably contained a percentage of gravel and several fills also contained charcoal. The features in Area B were located with more difficulty than elsewhere as the fills could be more easily mistaken for darker patches in the natural. This area was subject to hand cleaning.

All pits/scoops and postholes were half-sectioned and all the pits/scoops were subsequently fully excavated. A selection of pits and postholes, 24 in all, were bulk sampled for carbonised remains (Table 9; Carbonised Plant Remains p 31).

Linear Features

Feature 24 was a ditch running roughly north–south, located in a small extension in the north-west corner of the stripped area. Approximately 7.6 m of the ditch was revealed; it was 0.95 m wide with a V-shaped profile 0.28 m deep. There was some evidence of a gravel slump to one side (Fig 6) and it contained a small quantity of burnt flint and a bashed lump. These finds could be residual and the date of the feature is unclear.

Another, much more ephemeral feature, ran approximately east–west across the site. It was not possible to trace this for the whole length of the stripped area under the circumstances of the watching brief. However, a small section was excavated by hand. This feature is of very doubtful archaeological validity but its exact origin is unclear.

A third linear feature (F26) consisted of a ditch,

Table 1 Summary of features

Feature	*Fill*	*Description*	*Width*	*Depth*
2	50	scoop	0.38	*c* 0.04
3	52	post-hole	0.20	0.14
5	53, 54, 57 58, 59	pit	0.82	0.36
6	55	post-hole	0.31	0.22
7	56	scoop	0.55	0.14
8	60	scoop	0.48	0.15
9	76	pit	0.59	0.28
10	69	scoop	0.65	0.18
11	70, 71, 72	pit	1.08	0.44
12	77	scoop	0.44	0.13
13	75	pit	0.76	0.33
14	78	post-hole	0.27	0.13
15	79	post-hole	0.26	0.20
16	61, 63	pit	1.13	0.33
17	62	post-hole	0.40	0.28
19	67	pit	0.81	0.30
20	64	post-hole	0.15	0.07
21	65	post-hole	0.20	0.05
22	66	post-hole	0.22	0.06
C23	87	burnt area (?hearth)		
24	73	ditch	0.96	0.27
25	74	post-hole	0.17	0.12
27	81	post-hole	0.30	0.13
28	82	post-hole	0.27	0.14
29	83	post-hole	0.23	0.24
30	84, 85	pit	0.44	0.24
31	86	post-hole	*c* 0.15	*c* 0.09
32	88	post-hole	0.26	0.14
C33	89	burnt area (?hearth)		
34	90	post-hole	0.35	0.24
35	91	post-hole	0.35	0.15
36	92	post-hole	0.45	0.17
37	93	post-hole	0.24	0.14
38	94	post-hole	0.25	0.14
39	95	post-hole	0.23	0.03
40	96	post-hole	0.17	0.06
41	97	post-hole	0.36	0.17
42	98	post-hole	0.33	0.12
43	99	post-hole	0.30	0.17
44	150	post-hole	0.27	0.17
45	151	post-hole	0.28	0.05
46	152	post-hole	*c* 0.30	*c* 0.09
47	153, 154	scoop	0.66	0.16
48	155	scoop	0.90	0.08
49	156	scoop	0.72	0.20
100	157	post-hole	–	–

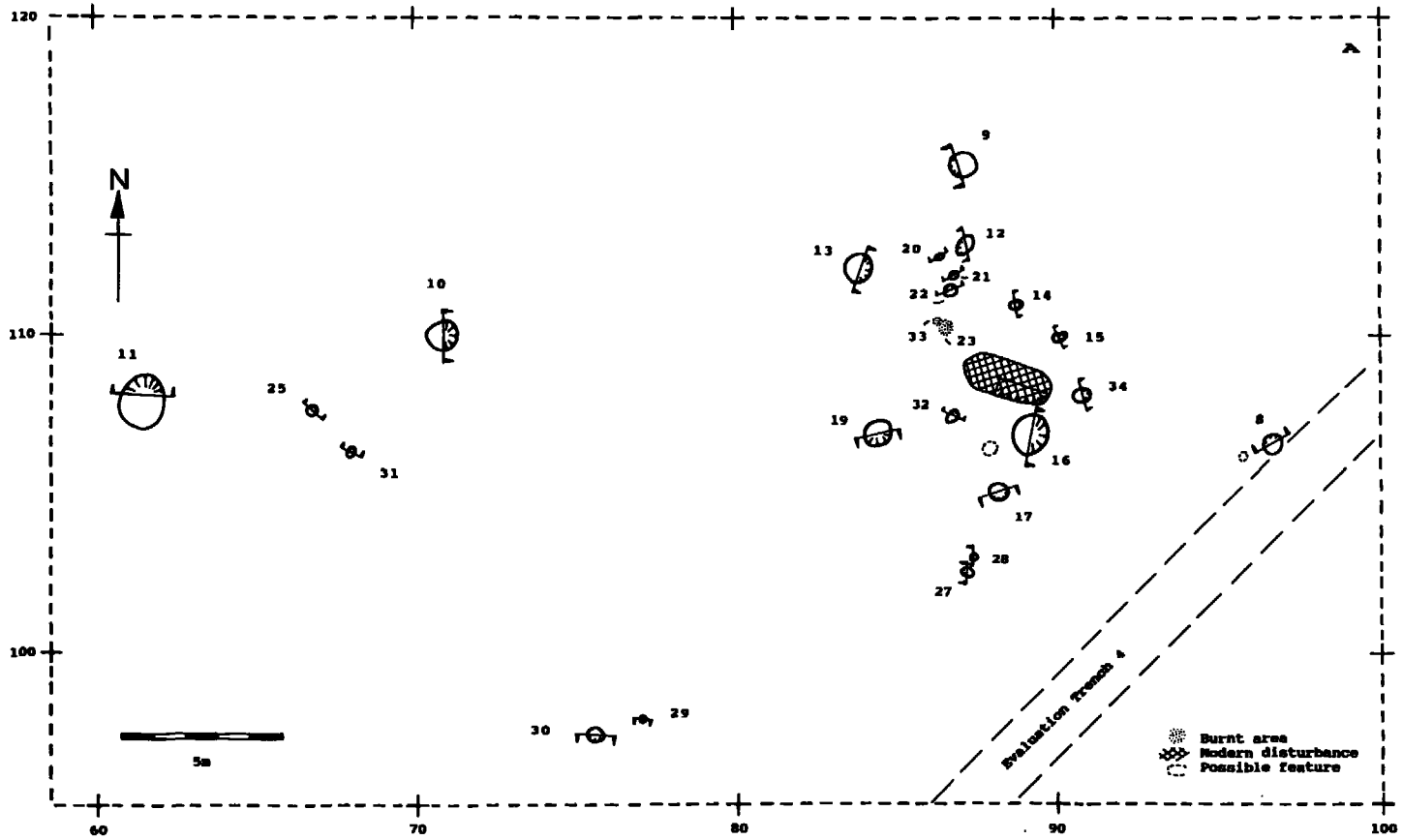

Fig 4. Detailed plan of features in area A.

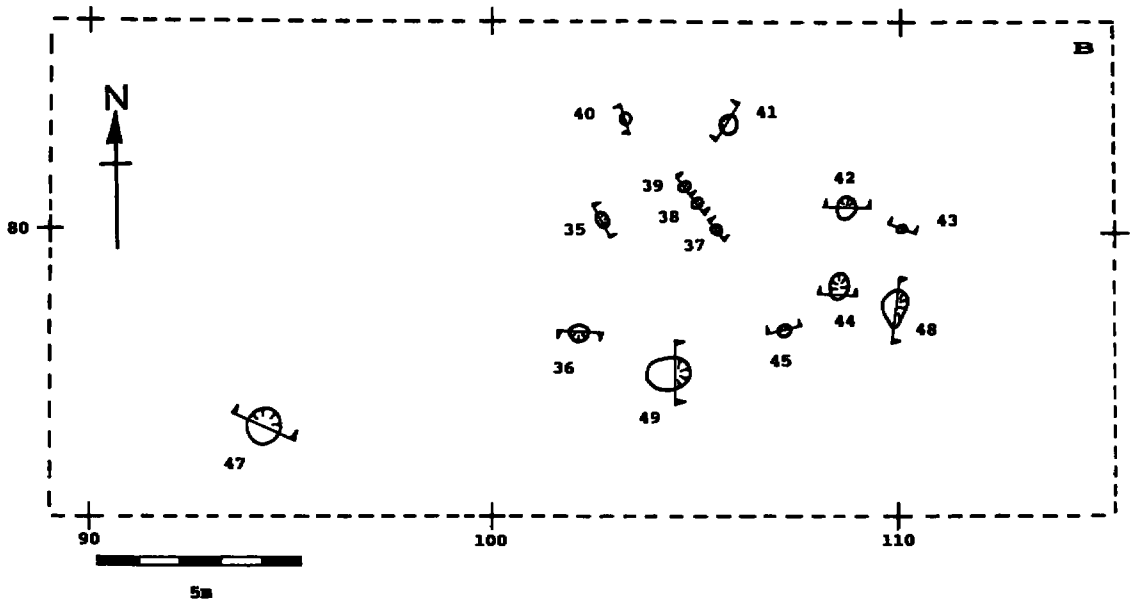

Fig 5. Detailed plan of features in area B.

2.2 m wide, running north–south at the eastern edge of the stripped area (not shown on plans). Excavation of a section of this ditch revealed that it was post-Medieval in date.

Postholes

In total 28 possible postholes were excavated and recorded. 19 were thought to be valid archaeological features (F3, 6, 14, 15, 17, 25, 27, 28, 29, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 41, 42, 43 and 44). A further 5 were of dubious origin (F20, 21, 40, 45 and 46) and the final 4 postholes may be of natural origin (F22, 31, 39 and 100). All postholes have been included in the plan.

They varied in depth from a very shallow 0.03 m to 0.29 m and ranged from 0.15 m to 0.45 m wide. They were generally rounded or oval in plan with flat-bottomed or rounded profiles.

16 postholes produced no finds but some did contain artefacts: Several features produced only pottery sherds and/or worked flint (F17, 32, 35, 41, 46 and 100); three contained fired clay (F34, 44 and 45); a single posthole (F29) contained a quern fragment and two features (F6 and 36) produced clay weights (Tables 3, 6, 7 and 11 for detail).

Pits and scoops

In total there were 14 pits and scoops found on the site; of which 7 were shallow scoops (F7, 8, 10, 12, 47, 48 and 49) and 7 pits (F5, 9, 11, 13, 16, 19 and 30).

Scoops

Three scoops were located in Area A, (F8, 10 and 12), three in B (F47, 48 and 49) and one was situated between trenches 1 and 5 towards the eastern side of the site (F7).

Of those in Area A, scoops 8 and 12 were small, irregular and contained very few finds. F10 was slightly broader and deeper; it produced 155 potsherds, 2 flakes and some fired clay.

The scoops in Area B were slightly larger than those in the northern half of the site. F47, which may have been overcut, contained several sherds of pottery, worked flints and some fired clay. Features 48 and 49 produced just a few sherds of pottery each.

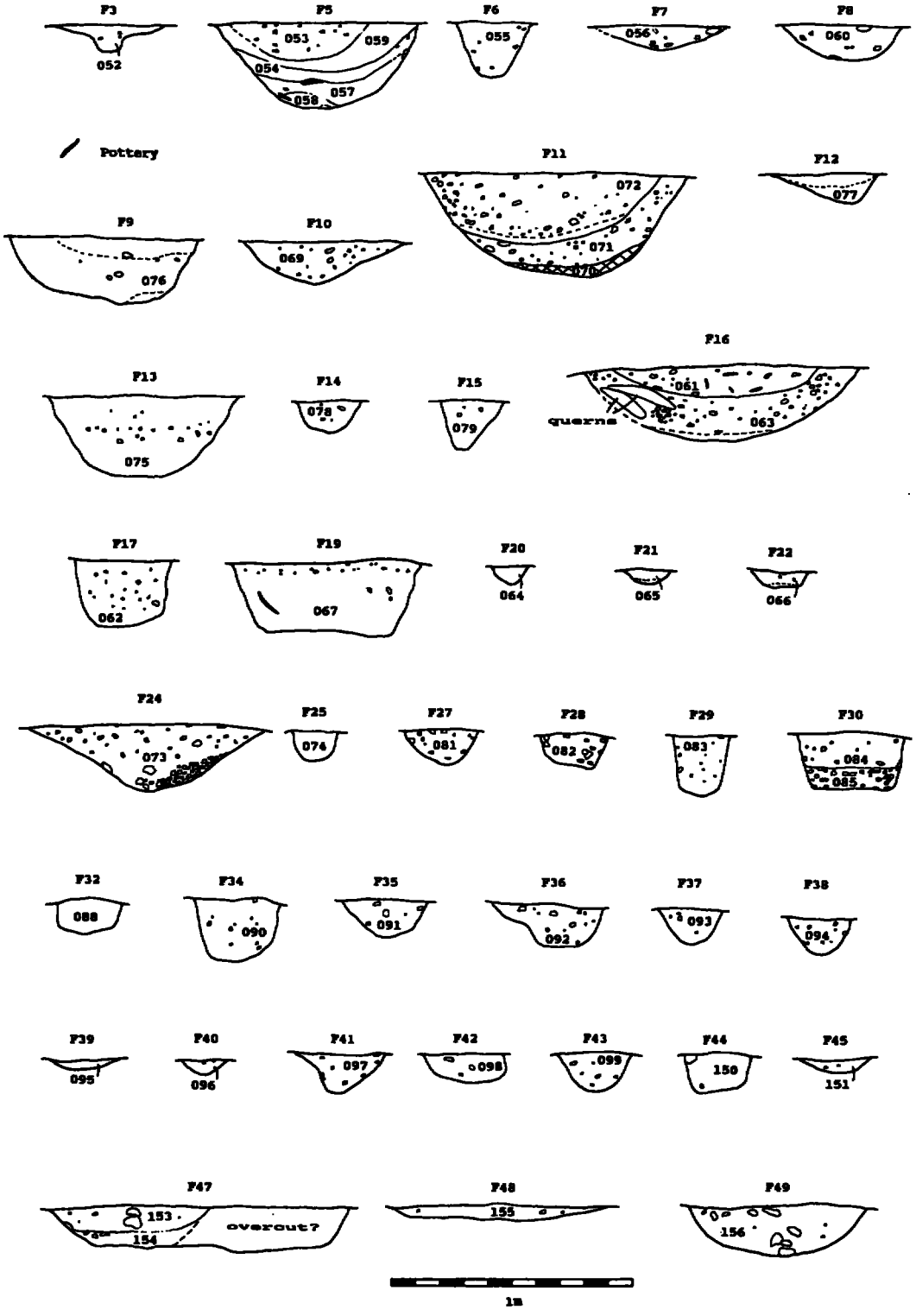

Fig 6. Sections.

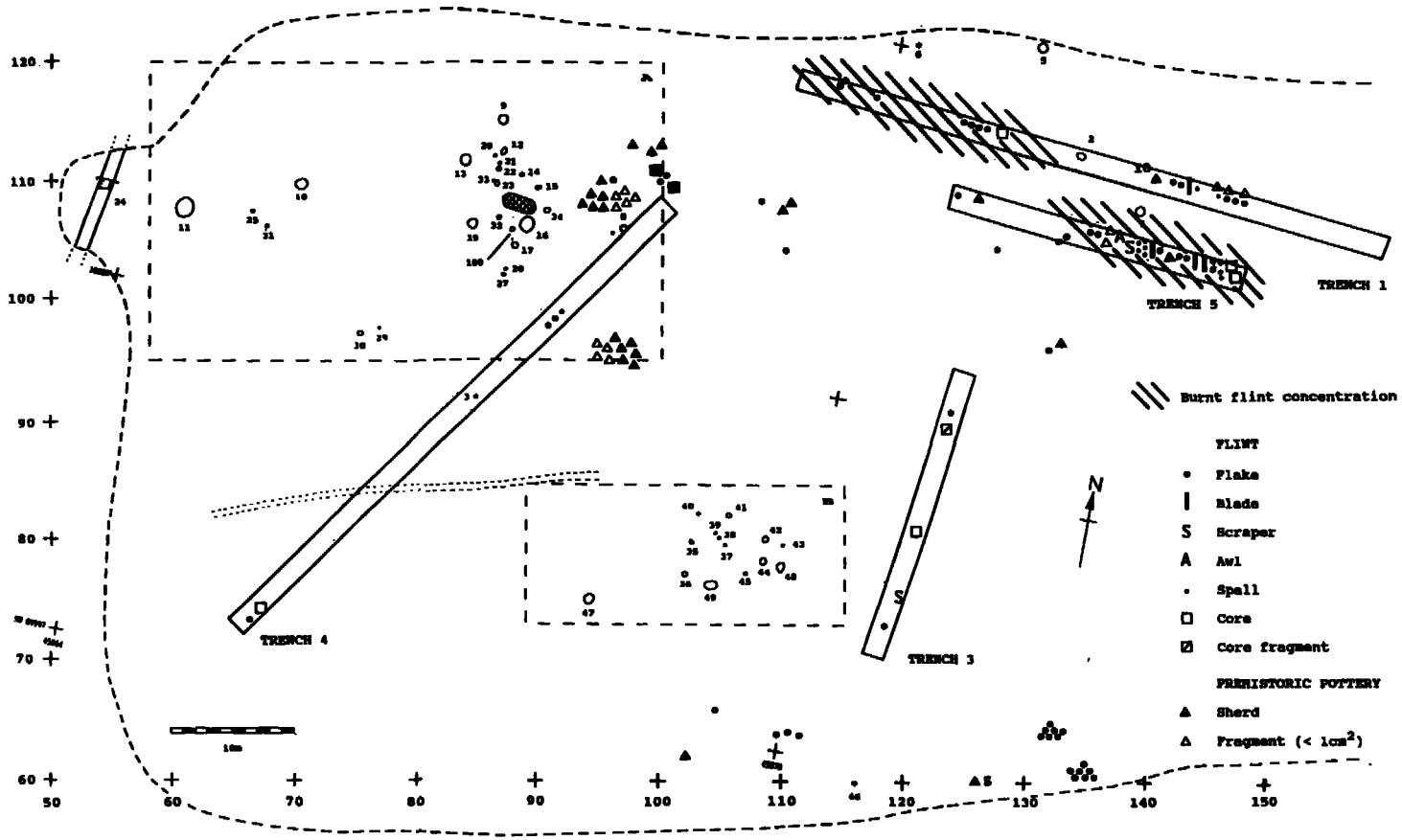

Fig 7. Location of unstratified finds.

Pits

Of the 7 pits, all except one (F5) were located in Area A. These can be split easily into three categories based on size and form:

Firstly, round to oval pits with sloping sides of approximately 0.80 m diameter and between 0.26 m and 0.36 m deep (F5, 9, 13 and 19).

Pit 5 had several fills which proved prolific in pottery (161 sherds), together with a few pieces of worked flint. Some burning was noticed in the eastern half of pit 9 when excavated but the only artefact recovered from this feature was a bashed flint lump (Table 6). Pits 13 and 19 both produced pottery and worked flint, F19 also contained fired clay.

The second category includes slightly larger pits of very similar form but approximately 1.10 m wide and slightly deeper at between 0.33 and 0.44 m deep (F11 and 16).

F11 was a large pit situated near ditch F24 and away from the main group of features in Area A. It produced only 40 sherds of pottery and 6 worked flints but it did contain a large quantity of fired clay and a loom-weight.

By far the most prolific feature was pit 16, a bowl-shaped pit, oval in shape, with two layers of fill. Four complete or almost complete saddle querns in very good condition (Table 7), together with 372 sherds of pottery and 10 pieces of worked flint were recovered from this feature after total excavation.

Lastly, pit F30 forms a category of its own, with almost vertical sides and a flat bottom, it is only 0.44 m wide and 0.24 m deep. Only 1 potsherd and some fired clay came from this feature.

Burnt areas

The first of these (C23) was round, 0.33 m wide and when half-sectioned fire reddening was found to extend approximately 0.20 m deep. C33 was a similar 'feature' situated next to C23, but smaller, at *c* 0.17 m wide and 0.06 m deep. Neither contained artefacts.

Post-built structures

It has already been mentioned that the site consists of two main clusters of features separated by *c* 25 m. It is possible to extrapolate structures within both of these zones, although the evidence is incomplete and interpretations are somewhat tentative.

Area A

In Area A it is possible to surmise either a single oval structure or two semi-circular structures (Fig 11). Within the immediate vicinity are a further three postholes (F17, 27 and 28), a scoop (F12) and three pits (F9, 13 and 19).

Firstly, it is perhaps feasible to reconstruct a post-built structure using the arc of four postholes (F22, 14, 15 and 34) with two further postholes opposite (F32 and 100). If we were to assume that two or more postholes were missing; i.e. one at the southern end between postholes 34 and 100, and one between F32 and the hearth F23/33, then a roughly oval structure 6.5 m by 4.5 m could be reconstructed, with postholes between 1.5 m and 2.25 m apart. This would fall within the known range of variability of Bronze Age houses, e.g. the roughly oval hut 6.5 m by 5 m found at Shearplace Hill, Dorset (Rahtz 1962).

Assuming the hearth is more likely to be placed in the entrance to the structure, this would indicate a north-west facing opening. The two postholes (F20, 21) also situated at this end of the possible structure do not, however, form clear evidence of a porchway. A north-west facing doorway is unusual although there is some evidence at Pingewood, Berkshire of a north facing entrance (Johnston 1985).

Located within the oval post-setting was pit F16. The fill contained four complete or almost complete saddle querns, in very good condition, together with significant amounts of domestic debris. It is not clear whether the querns had been deliberately stored in this position during use of the building. Any further internal features may have been obliterated by a modern pit which disturbed a substantial part of the interior of the structure.

A second possible interpretation is that five postholes (F32, 100, 17, 27 and 28) represent a semi-circle of posts with a diameter of 5 m; whilst four postholes (F22, 14, 15 and 34) form another, 5.30 m in diameter. The first of these faces west and the second south-west – with a hearth and

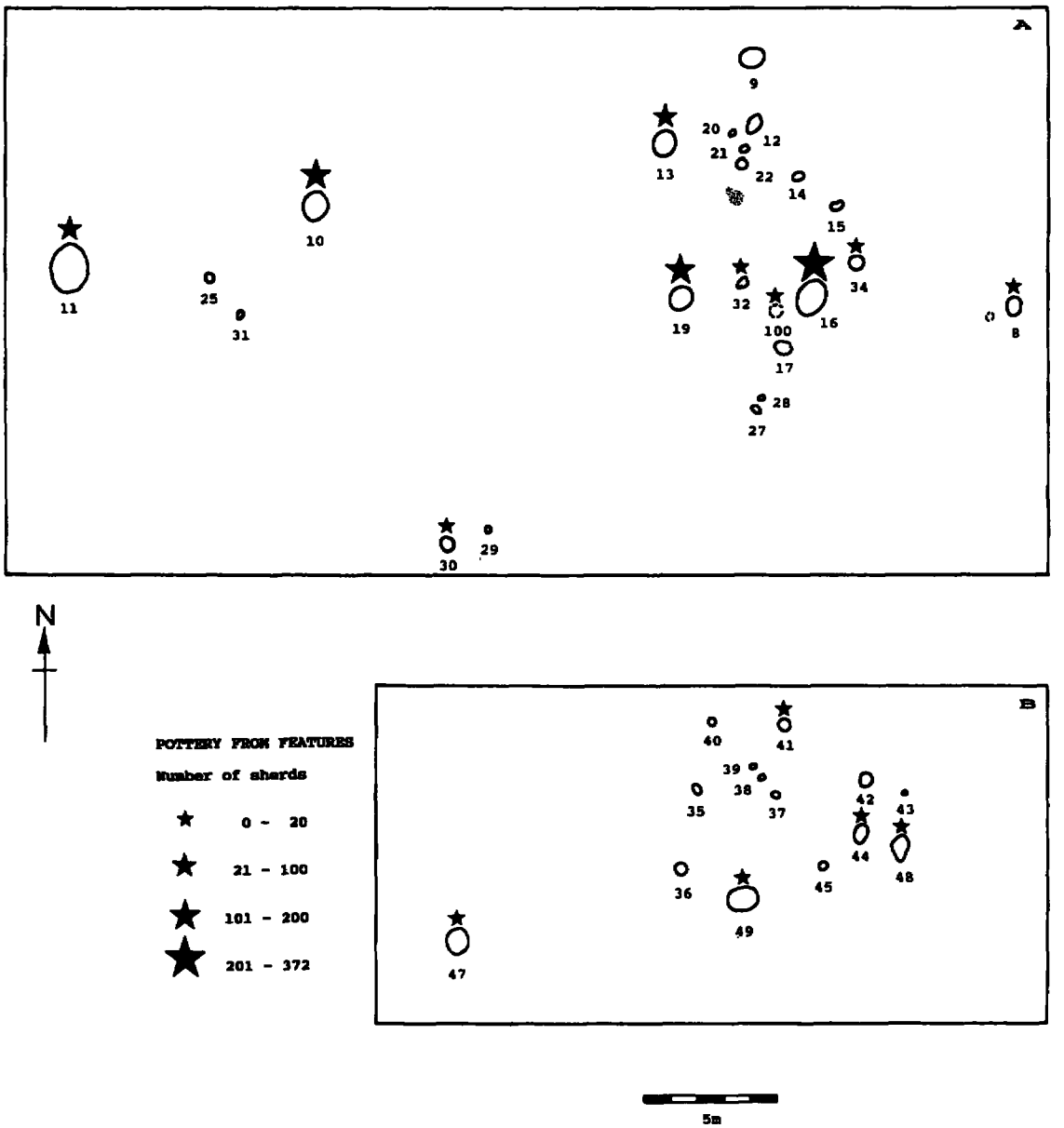

Fig 8. Location of stratified pottery finds for areas A and B.

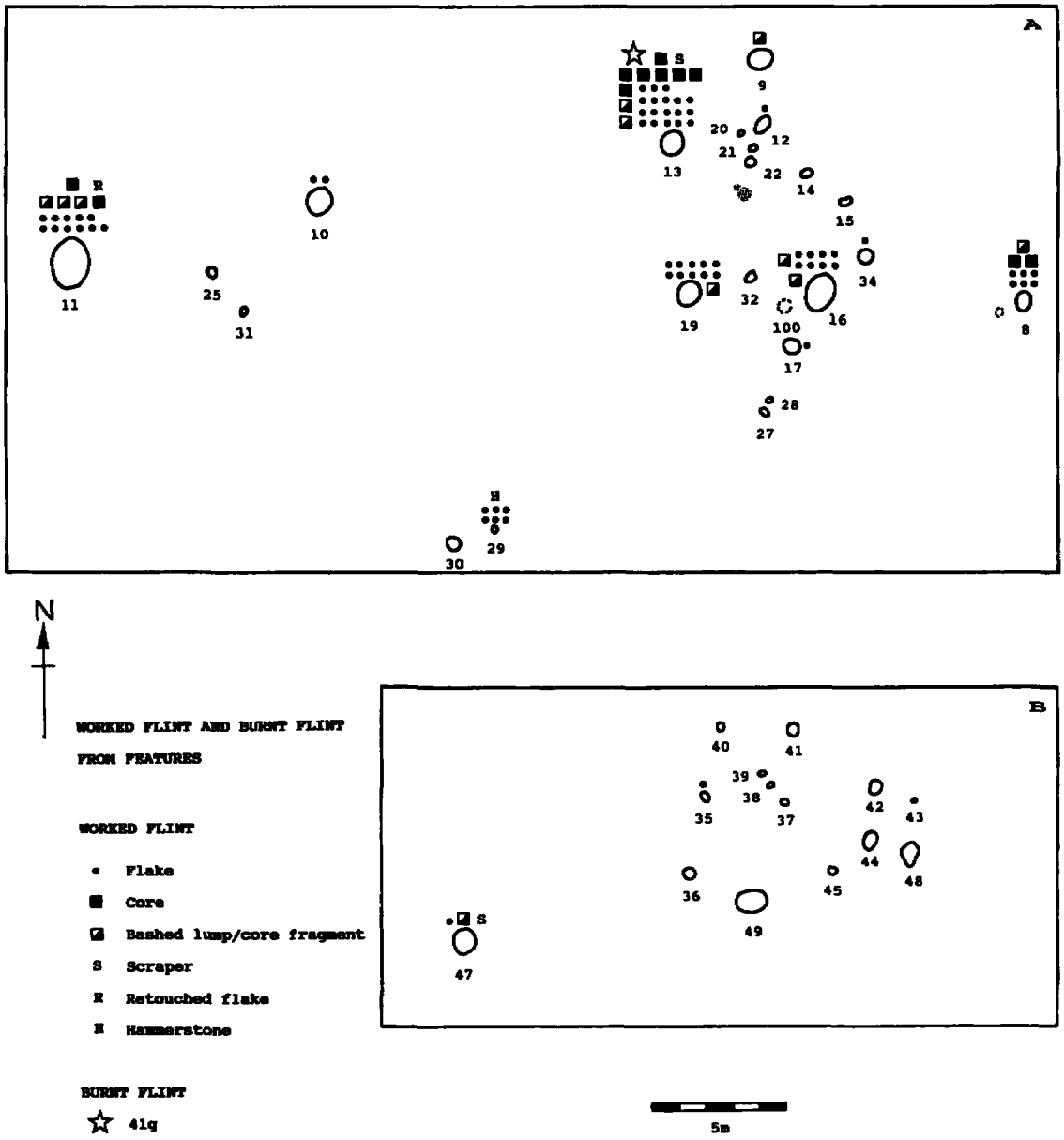

Fig 9. Location of stratified struck and burnt flint for areas A and B.

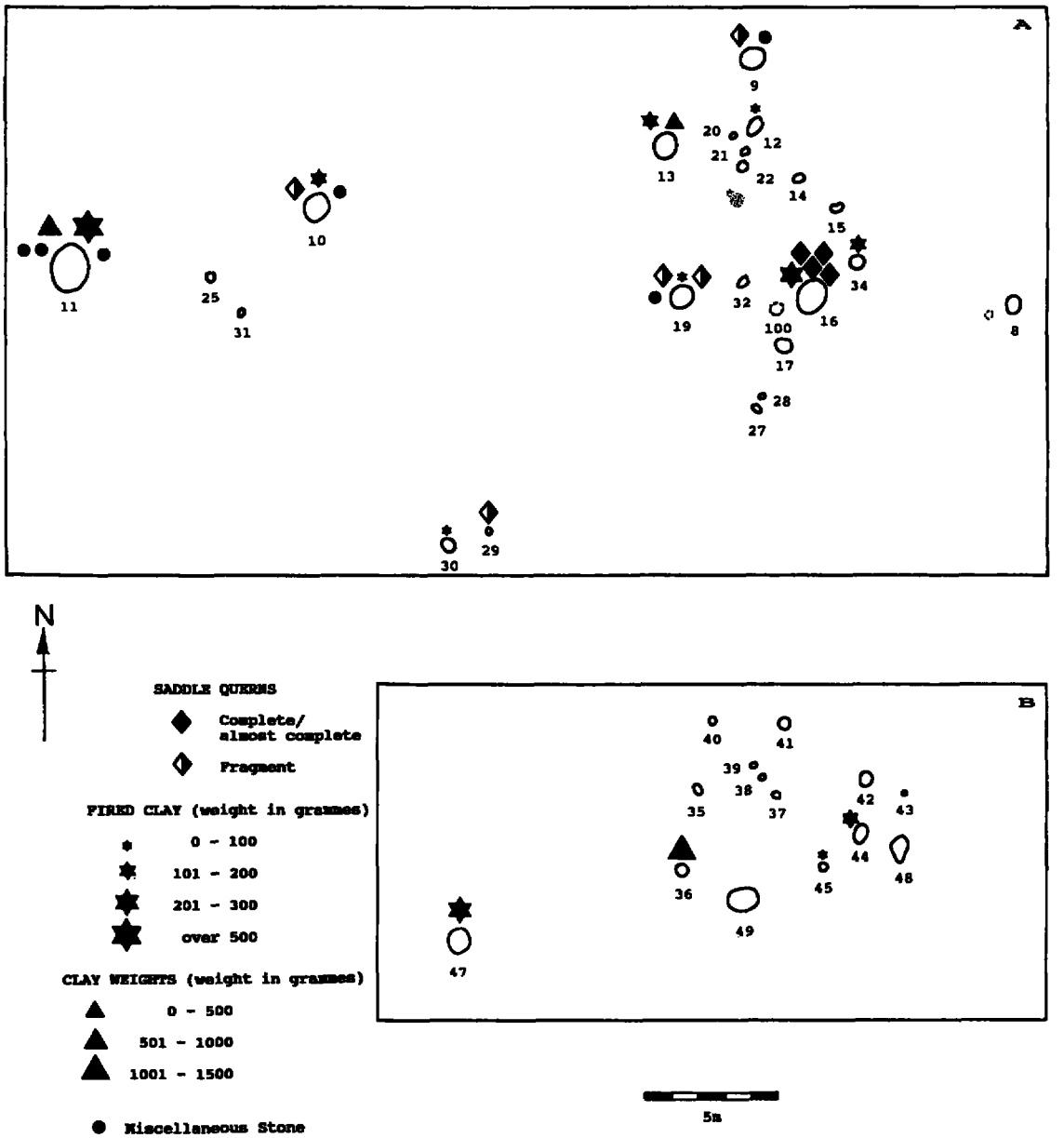

Fig 10. Location of stratified querns, fired clay and clay weights for areas A and B.

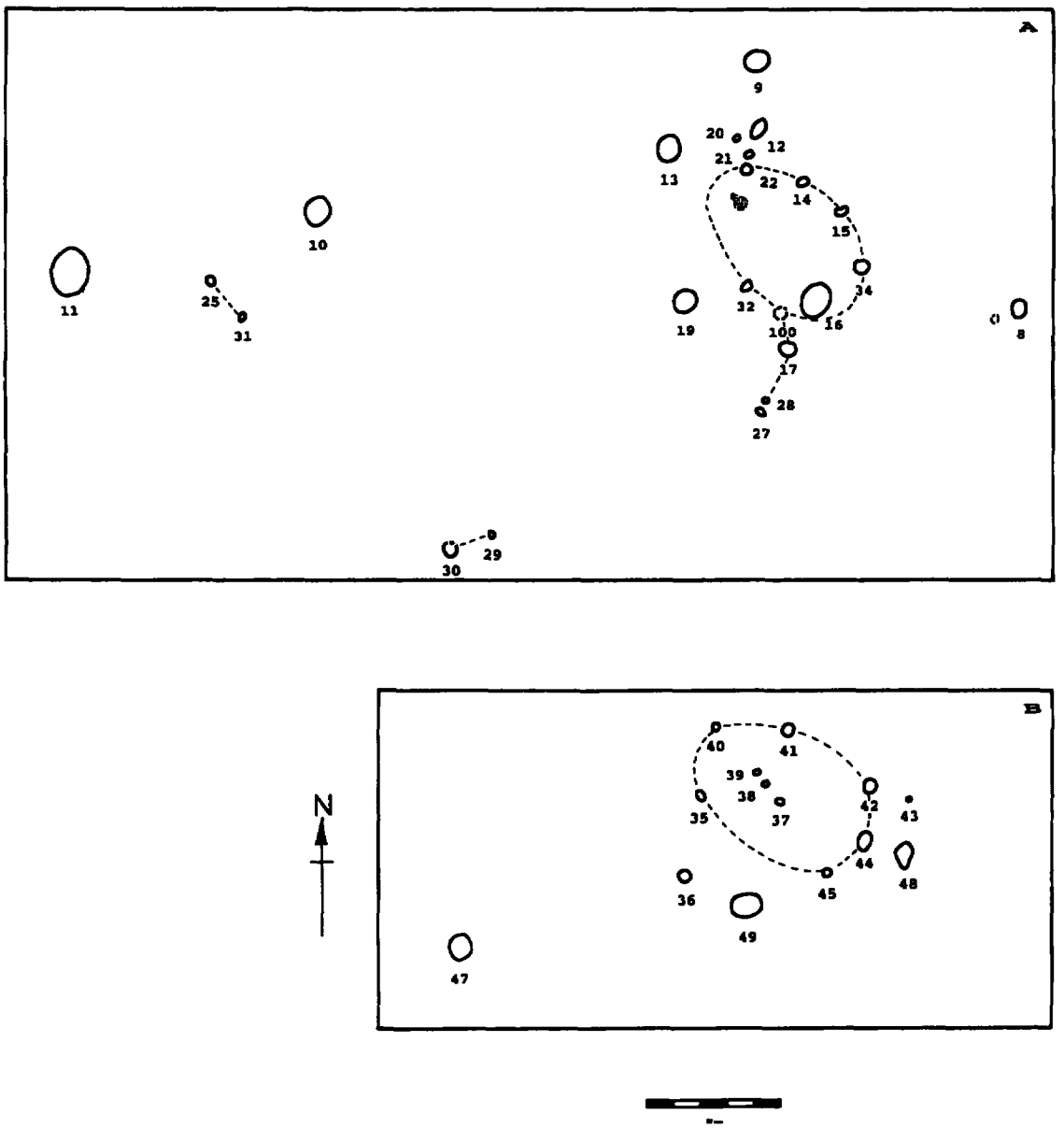

Fig 11. Suggested structures for areas A and B.

two pits on what would be the leeward side. An Iron Age example of this type of structure has been interpreted at Twywell, Northamptonshire (Jackson 1975) where a south-west facing arc had traces of hearths, a possible two-post drying rack and even clay and cobbled flooring on its supposed leeward side. Similar semi-circular structures have been found at Chalton, Hampshire (Cunliffe 1970) and Pingewood, Berks (Johnston 1985).

However, as Lambrick and Robinson (1979) point out, despite growing evidence for this type of building, caution must be exercised when interpreting these structures unless the excavator can be sure that further posts did not exist. At Gosport several of the postholes were particularly shallow: In Area A F20, F21 and F22 were 0.07 m, 0.05 m and 0.06 m deep respectively; in Area B F39, F40 and F45 were only 0.03 m, 0.06 m and 0.05 m deep. It is possible that other, shallower, post holes may have been destroyed by ploughing or in the removal of overburden.

Area B

This area also has evidence of a post-built structure. Six postholes (F35, 40, 41, 42, 44 and 45) form an almost complete oval, with between 1.75 m and 3.5 m spacing between posts; the majority being 2.5 m spaced. The oval measures 6.75 m in length by *c* 4.5 m wide and is thus very similar in size to the oval structure described for Area A. Again it would seem that a posthole may be missing between F45 and F35.

There was no evidence of a hearth in this area, nor any obvious entrance to the structure, although the possibility that F43 and F48 may represent a porch cannot be ruled out if we assume the scoop (F48) had subsequently cut a posthole. If this were an entrance-way the structure would have faced the south-east; i.e. the opposite direction to the possible oval structure in Area A.

Within the oval is a row of three postholes (F37, 38 and 39) which produced no artefacts but may form some sort of internal division or structure. Alternatively they may represent part of a fence line – not contemporary with the building.

Just outside the structure are two groups comprising a posthole and scoop each, F48 and 43 (already mentioned as a possible porch) and F36 and 49. No pits were found in this area.

None of the postholes produced evidence of post packing or post-pipes; nor was there indication that the posts had been removed or replaced. The evidence would suggest the structures were of one phase of construction. No evidence was found for outer wall supports lying outside the posthole rings as proposed by Drewett (1982) for the structures at Black Patch, East Sussex; although if they had existed little trace may now remain.

Other post structures

Three/possibly four pairs of posts were noted (F25 and 31 – 1.75 m apart; F29 and 30 – 1.5 m; F17 and 27 – 2 m and/or F27 and 28 – 0.50 m). There was no indication of the function of these pairs of posts although they have had various interpretations, e.g. drying racks or upright looms (Ellison and Drewett 1971). Examples exist at other Bronze Age sites including Black Patch, East Sussex (Drewett 1982), Aldermaston Wharf (Bradley et al 1980), Pingewood (Johnston 1985) and Furze Platt, Berkshire (Lobb 1980).

THE FINDS

It was notable that despite proximity to the sea no artefacts or debris of marine origin were found on the site. However, as faunal remains were also absent, this could perhaps be explained by the effects of acidic soil conditions on susceptible materials.

THE POTTERY by Jane Timby

Introduction

Field work at Grange Road resulted in the recovery of *c* 1000 sherds of prehistoric pottery (9000 gms). The bulk of the material was recovered from a series of cut features with a smaller amount deriving from the subsoil. Particularly large groups were recovered from

Table 2 Pottery fabric descriptions

Fabric PF1: The commonest fabric to be present accounting for 67% by weight of the total assemblage (71% by number). The pastes were characterised by the presence of coarse angular calcined flint ranging up to 6 mm in size. The frequency of inclusions tended to vary from sparse to common. The wares were moderately hard and the clay matrix of a fine sandy texture. Surface colour was generally even and usually in the orange/red-brown to darker brown range. The sherds have a harsh feel and a hackley fracture.

Fabric PF2: A finer fabric accounting for 13.5% by weight of the assemblage but only 7% by sherd count. A bias is probably introduced for these figures by the presence of a substantial part of one vessel in this fabric (cf Fig 12.9). The calcined flint temper tends to be sparser and finer compared to fabric PF1 with less surface projecting fragments.

Fabric PF3: A moderately hard, dark red-brown fabric with a smooth feel. The paste contains rare rounded quartz and angular calcined flint up to 4 mm in size. The fabric accounts for only 1% by weight (1.5% by number) of the assemblage.

Fabric PF4: A hard dark brown fabric with a relatively smooth feel. The paste contains a fine sparse temper of calcined flint, occasionally up to 3 mm in size but generally finer. Slightly laminated fracture. Distinguished from fabric PF2 by a sparser, generally finer temper. Not a common variant accounting for less than 1% of the group.

Fabric PF5: A dark brown, fairly hard ware with a moderate temper. This appears to be a mixture of rounded and angular quartz and rounded, sub-angular and angular flint gravel mainly dark in colour. Inclusions are of variable size with rare pieces up to 5 mm across but generally finer. Sparse rounded iron and dark grey clay pellets are also present. This fabric only occurs in feature F5 and is associated with the angular bowl (Fig 12.21).

Fabric PF6: A distinctive fabric with a very vesicular appearance. The sherds are quite hard but have a high size to weight ratio due to the voids. The voids are mainly sub-angular in shape and of variable size up to 5 mm across. They occur throughout the sherds and are probably left by the leaching of some calcareous material, possibly chalk. In addition there is a rare to sparse number of calcined flint fragments up to 3–4 mm in size. This fabric accounts for 13% by weight (17% by number) of the assemblage. Its presence was limited to just two features on the site: F16 and F19.

Fabric PF7: A similar fabric to PF1 but with additional deliberately added organic material occurring alongside the flint temper. The organic material appears to be quite coarse in nature particularly on the vessel surfaces. In one instance an impression resembling part of a bracken frond is visible. The flint temper ranges from fine up to 7 mm in size. This fabric was not a common one, accounting for less than 1%. It only occurred in contexts F5 and F11.

Fabric PF8: A moderately hard, dark brown ware with a sparse temper of fine calcined flint up to 1 mm in size. Distinguished by a moderate frequency of flat, irregular-shaped, angular, surface voids up to 5 mm across. These are probably left from broken shell fragments since leached out. Internal voids in the fabric show traces of a stained orange-brown calcareous lining. An uncommon fabric accounting for less than 1% of the group and only found in context F5.

features F5, F10 and F19. The pottery presents a relatively homogeneous assemblage likely to be of broadly contemporary date. The assemblage is a particularly important one as it dates to the post Deverel–Rimbury period (later Bronze Age plain ware tradition), for which there are few comparable groups in Southern England generally and none from the immediate locality. Most of the wares were plain and their association with a number of loomweight fragments and a quantity of fired clay would imply a domestic context. The sherds were recovered in relatively unabraded condition with a number of pieces likely to derive from the same vessels.

The material was sorted into broad fabric categories and quantified by weight and count for each excavated context. The following report describes the fabrics and forms, followed by a discussion of the group.

The Fabrics

All the sherds were flint tempered to a lesser or greater degree but within this a number of distinctive wares could be identified (Table 2). Most of the sherds had been coated in PVA prior to examination possibly obscuring some of the finer distinctions of clay type. No attempt was

made to try and refine fabrics on the types of clay but rather on the basis of the main temper used. In many cases incidental inclusions of organic matter, clay pellets or naturally occurring iron were present. None of the inclusions or tempering agents identified suggested a non-local source for the pottery.

Forms and manufacture

All the vessels were handmade and with two exceptions from contexts F5 and F7, undecorated. Many of the vessels, particularly in fabric PF1, and to a lesser extent PF2, showed evidence of vertical finger smearing on the exterior surface. The use of finger-squeezing to form and finish shapes is also evident on many vessels. This is particularly clear on the bowl from contexts F19/F47 (Fig 12.9) where the rim has been pinched regularly around its circumference to form a fluted finish. The decorated vessel from F5 has a line of single or double finger-nail impressions immediately below the rim (Fig 12.16). A rimsherd from F7 has finger-tip impressions on the upper surface (Fig 12.26).

Several of the basesherds in fabrics PF1 and PF2 show heavy flint gritting on the undersides where the vessels had been stood in crushed flint possibly to prevent them sticking to the ground surface during drying. Some vessels appear to have been finished off by wiping with grass or similar material. This is particularly clear on the interior of the bowl (Fig 12.9) from F47/F19. A small number of vessels have some rudimentary burnishing or smoothed surface finish but this does not appear to have been a prime consideration perhaps emphasising the domestic nature of this material.

Evidence of use was visible on some sherds with burnt blackened residue on the interior surface and a small number of sherds with sooting on the exterior.

A moderately wide range of forms are present which can be summarised as follows:

(i) Large plain jars with fairly straight or slightly curved walls and undifferentiated rims (Fig 12.1, 8, 10, 13). The bases appear to be flat, with the vessel walls occasionally flaring out to meet the base (eg Fig 12.2). The vessel walls tend to be quite thick in the larger vessels, in the region of 8–10 mm. Smaller versions of the same form also occur usually in the finer fabrics (PF2) (Fig 12.11). The larger vessels occur in fabrics PF1 and PF6. Examples of this vessel type occur in contexts F19 and F47. The vessel from F19 showed sooting on the exterior surface.

Similar vessel types have been identified at Reading Business Park, Berkshire (Bradley and Hall 1992, type 7), Knights Farm, Berkshire (Bradley et al 1980, fig 33) and Yapton, West Sussex (Hamilton 1987, fig 5.12).

(ii) Curved-wall bowls with plain undifferentiated rims. The walls show a much greater degree of curvature compared with (i), the vessel aperture being of smaller diameter than the maximum diameter of the vessel (Fig 12.3, 4, 6). These vessels occur in fabric PF1 with examples from contexts F11, F16 and F19. An example from F10 showed traces of two perforations on the fractures evidently made when the clay was still wet (Fig 12.17). Comparable examples again occur at Reading Business Park (Bradley and Hall 1992, type 8) and Yapton (Hamilton 1987, fig 4.5).

(iii) Open hemispherical bowls (Fig 12.9). Several sherds from a single example with a finger-pinched rim were recovered from feature F19 with joining sherds from F47. This vessel was a 'fineware' type in fabric PF2. Comparable forms occur at Kingston Buci, Sussex (Barrett 1980, fig 5.10), Runneymede Bridge, Surrey (Longley 1980, type 7) and Yapton (Hamilton 1987, fig 6.17).

(iv) Slack-sided or curved-wall vessels with small vertical or slightly developed rims (Fig 12.14, 16, 18). A single example in this group has finger-nail decoration. Vessels occur in fabric PF1 with examples from contexts F10 and F13.

(v) Vertical rim with finger-tipping. A single rim with finger-tipping was recovered from F7 (Fig 12.26) in fabric PF1. This is quite a common practice and can be paralleled at Runneymede Bridge (Longley 1980, 70), Reading Business Park (Bradley and Hall 1992) and with material from Selsey Bill, West Sussex (White 1934, fig 2).

(vi) Simple rim carinated bowl. A single example of this vessel type was recovered from context F5 in fabric PF5. The only example of an omphalos base from the site also occurred in this fabric from the same feature and may relate to this or a similar vessel.

(vii) Beaded rim bowl. A single example of a beaded rim vessel was recovered from F5 in fabric PF1. Slight beading is evident on some of the vessels from Plumpton Plain B, Sussex (Hawkes 1935, fig 10).

(viii) Plain slightly everted rim vessels (Fig 12.19, 20, 25). These vessel forms were only associated with F5 and occurred in fabrics PF1 and PF2. Similar forms occur at Aldermaston Wharf (Bradley et al 1980, type 10), Rams Hill, Oxfordshire (Bradley and Ellison 1976, fig 3.5.22), and Plumpton Plain B (Hawkes 1935, fig 13). Such rim forms also seem common at Runneymede Bridge (Longley 1980, types 11, 13, 14, 17).

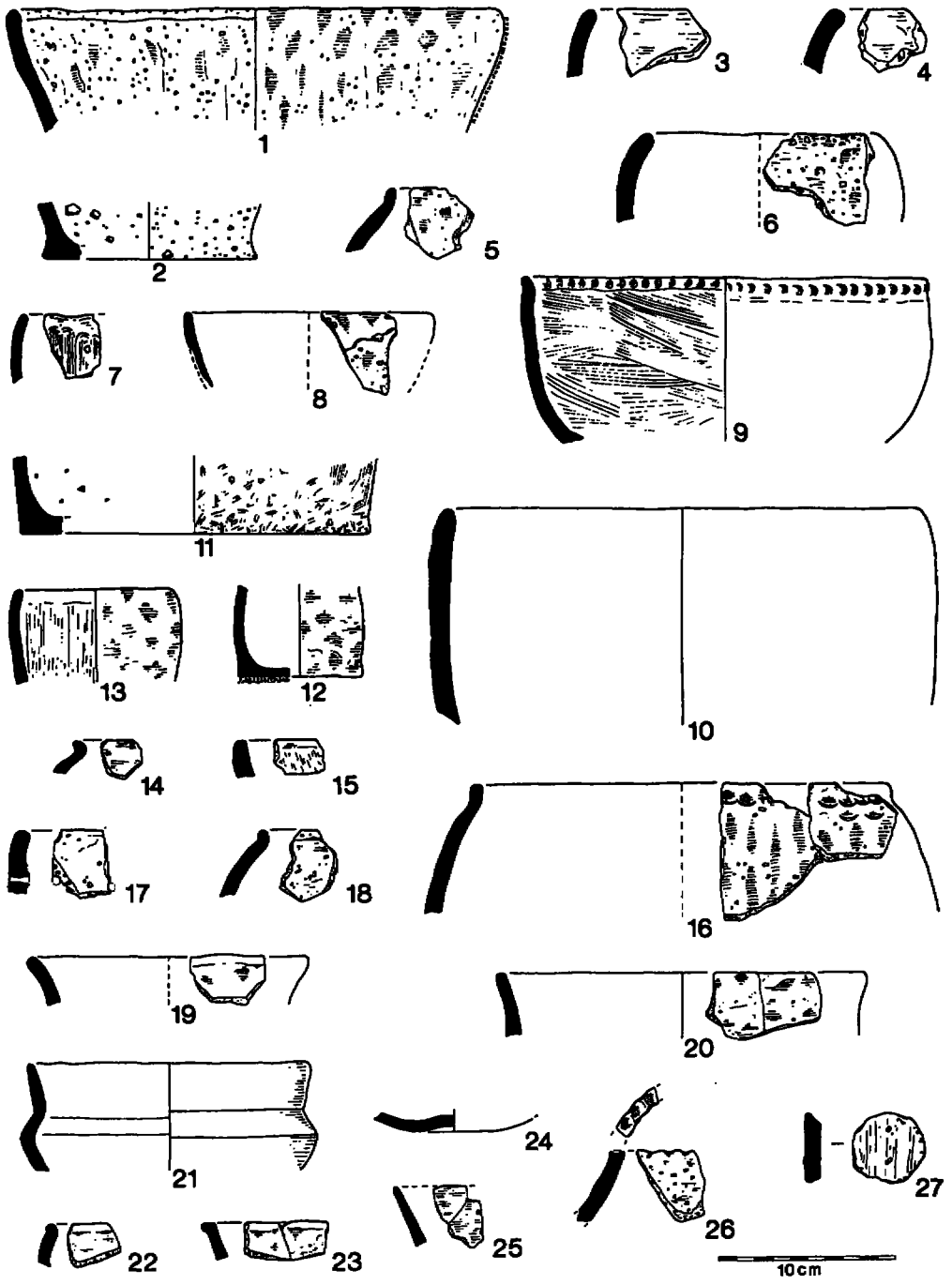

Fig 12. The pottery (see text for descriptions).

(ix) Bowl with straight flaring upper wall and thickened rim (Fig 12.23). Fabric PF1, feature 5. A similar type may occur at Aldermaston Wharf (Bradley et al 1980, type 4).

Several rim fragments were too small to identify specifically to the vessel types identified above. Most of these are probably types (i) or (ii).

Discussion

The assemblage from Grange Road is characteristic of a post-Deverel–Rimbury repertoire where plain wares still predominate (Barrett 1980, 302–4). Innovations in form and technology which characterise such groups of material include the introduction of bowl forms, the use of slab-building and surface smearing.

Pottery was recovered from 19 excavated features. Most of these fell within Area A with a smaller number from Area B and from three outliers; F5, F6 and F7 (Fig 12; Table 3). The material from the two concentrations of features in areas A and B is very similar in nature. In particular, pottery from pits F16 and F19 may include material from the same vessels and a clear join can be made between pit F19 and F47 suggesting that the material used to fill these features came from a common centralised source, perhaps a midden. Material from surrounding features was of very similar character. A possible distinction can perhaps be made for features 5 and 7 set some way off in the north-eastern corner of the site. Pit 5 produced a particularly large assemblage which, whilst containing much material comparable to that from the other features, also included two different fabrics not present elsewhere and a number of different rim types, including the carinated bowl and beaded rim vessel possibly suggestive of a slightly later date. The finger-tipped vessel from F7 may be contemporary with the material from pit F5.

There are no published contemporary assemblages from the Hampshire coastal plain with which to compare the Grange Road material. A late Bronze Age refuse pit with loomweights (see below) and associated bronze palstaves was investigated at Swanwick but yielded no pottery (Fox 1928). Comparable sites either lie inland, for example in the Thames Valley, with sites such as Knights Farm (Bradley et al 1980), Reading Business Park (Bradley and Hall 1992) and Runneymede Bridge (Longley 1980) or to the east in Sussex with coastal sites such as Yapton (Rudling 1987), Bishopstone (Bell 1977), Kingston Buci (Curwen and Hawkes 1931) and possibly Selsey Bill (White 1934). Inland Sussex sites include Plumpton Plain B (Hawkes 1935).

The similarity of much of the straight-sided and plain curved wall bowls with the Yapton material suggests that the Grange Road site may be closely contemporary. A date in the 9th–8th century BC is proposed for the Yapton finds on the basis of stylistic and technological comparison with other assemblages from Sussex (Hamilton 1987, 62). The Grange Road assemblage shows less hooked rims more characteristic of the Yapton material which may be a regional characteristic. The angular bowl is a form thought to exist from the 8th century BC (Barrett 1980, 311). The same period also saw the increased use of decoration, a feature largely absent from the Grange Road assemblage suggesting that on the basis of the material recovered it is unlikely to date later than the 8th century BC.

Illustrated Sherds

1. Rimsherd in fabric PF6. Light orange-brown ware with a vertically ridged exterior surface. Rim slightly thickened on the interior and smoothed whilst wet. The voids in the fabric are denser on the interior surface. Diameter 280 mm. Context F16 61/63.

2. Basesherd slightly splayed at the bottom. Fabric PF6. Diameter 120 mm. Content F19 67.

3. Rimsherd, fabric PF1. Context F16, 61.

4. Rimsherd, fabric PF1. Context F16, 61.

5. Rimsherd, fabric PF1. Context F16, 61/63.

6. Rimsherd, fabric PF1. Diameter 130 mm. Context F16, 61/63.

7. Rimsherd, fabric PF1. Vertical finger smearing on the exterior. Context F16, 61/63.

8. Rimsherd from a thin-walled vessel. Fabric PF1. Diameter 140 mm. Context F47, 154.

9. Several sherds from an open hemispherical bowl with a finger pinched rim. Diameter 230 mm, 60% present. Dark brownish-black fabric PF2. The interior has been wiped with grass or similar material, and the exterior smoothed. Context F47 154 and F16 61/63.

10. Rimsherd, fabric PF1. Diameter 270 mm. Red-brown exterior with a grey core. Context F47, 154.

Table 3 Pottery – distribution of fabric weight in grams by feature, plus number of sherds in ( )

Features	*Fabrics* *PF1*	*PF2*	*PF3*	*PF4*	*PF5*	*PF6*	*PF7*	*PF8*	*Total*
F5	1059	6	–	–	184	–	21	104	1374
	(140)	(3)	–	–	(7)	–	(1)	(10)	(161)
F6	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2
	(1)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	(1)
F7	28	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	28
	(6)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	(6)
F8	17	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	19
	(2)	(1)	–	–	–	–	–	–	(3)
F10	1070	62	–	83	–	–	–	–	1215
	(141)	(7)	–	(7)	–	–	–	–	(155)
F11	270	16	–	–	–	–	90	–	376
	(29)	(5)	–	–	–	–	(6)	–	(40)
F13	540	14	69	–	–	–	–	–	623
	(65)	(2)	(6)	–	–	–	–	–	(73)
F16	2305	690	–	–	–	507	–	–	3502
	(251)	(77)	–	–	–	(44)	–	–	(372)
F19	135	73	–	–	–	687	–	–	895
	(18)	(7)	–	–	–	(95)	–	–	(120)
F26	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	4
	(1)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	(1)
F30	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2
	(1)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	(1)
F32	5	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	5
	(1)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	(1)
F34	99	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	99
	(8)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	(8)
F41	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	4
	(3)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	(3)
F44	34	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	34
	(2)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	(2)
F47	360	335	–	–	–	–	–	–	695
	(12)	(5)	–	–	–	–	–	–	(17)
F48	19	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	19
	(2)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	(2)
F49	21	34	–	–	–	–	–	–	55
	(4)	(1)	–	–	–	–	–	–	(5)
F100	16	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	16
	(3)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	(3)
Total	5990	1232	69	83	184	1194	111	104	8967
	(690)	(108)	(6)	(7)	(7)	(139)	(7)	(10)	(974)

Table 3 (cont)
Pottery from the evaluation

(All Bronze Age unless otherwise stated)

Trench/Feature	*Type*
F3 (051)	Sherd
1 30–40 m	6 Sherds
1 33–34 m	Sherd
1 34–35 m	3 Fragments
1 35–36 m	Sherd
1 36–37 m	Sherd
1 37 m in burrow in west side of test pit	Large Sherd
4 40–50 m	Sherd (Medieval/post-Medieval)
5 0–5 m	Sherd
5 18–19 m	2 Fragments
5 20–21 m	Sherd

11. Basesherd, fabric PF7. Diameter 200 mm. Context F11 70.
12. Basesherd with a crushed flint underside. Small closed vessel in fabric PF2. Diameter 70 mm. Context F47, 154.
13. Rimsherd from a small vessel, fabric PF2. Diameter 90 mm. Vertical smoothing on the interior, horizontal on the exterior. Context F47, 154.
14. Small rimsherd from a jar/bowl. Fabric PF2. Context F11 72.
15. Rimsherd with a lightly burnished exterior. Fabric PF3. Context F13 75.
16. Rimsherd with finger-nail decoration. Diameter c 240 mm. Fabric PF1. Context F13 75.
17. Rimsherd with at least two perforations. Fabric PF1. Context F10 69.
18. Rimsherd from bowl with short vertical rim. Fabric PF1. Context F10 69.
19. Rimsherd from flared rim vessel. Diameter 160 mm. Fabric PF1. Contest F5 53.
20. Rimsherd from a squared top, slightly flared wall vessel. Diameter 210 mm. Context F5 53.
21. Carinated bowl. Diameter 160 mm. Fabric PF5. Context F5 57.
22. Beaded rim bowl, fabric PF1. Context F5 53.
23. Rimsherd from a bowl. Fabric PF1. Context F5 53.
24. Basesherd with a slight omphalos. Diameter 44 mm. Fabric PF5. Context F5 58.
25. Rimsherd from a thin-walled vessel. Fabric PF2. Context F5 54/59.
26. Rimsherd with finger-tipped upper surface. Fabric PF1. Context F7 56.
27. Roughly shaped disc in fabric PF1. Diameter 40 mm. Context F8 60.

CLAY WEIGHTS

Fragments of cylindrical clay weights were recovered from F6, F11 (Fig 13.1), F13 and F36 (Fig 13.2) (Table 4). At least two distinct types were present, a smaller bun-shaped version from F6, F11 and F13 and a much larger, heavier type from F36. The latter disintegrated on removal but was recorded on site as 160 mm in diameter and 130 mm in width with a central hole 35–40 mm diameter. It weighed 1036 gms and was made from a poorly fired dark red-brown fabric with very large rounded quartz and flint pebbles up to 20 mm in size. The example from F11 measured 80 mm in diameter and 48 mm wide and was made from a similar fabric. It is possible that the latter was used as a loomweight whilst the larger heavier example may have been used as a thatch weight.

In the region of 20 weights of a similar type were recovered from a pit at Swanwick (Fox 1928, pl XLVIII) which fell into four different sizes. Other later Bronze Age sites with similar weights include Knights Farm (Bradley et al

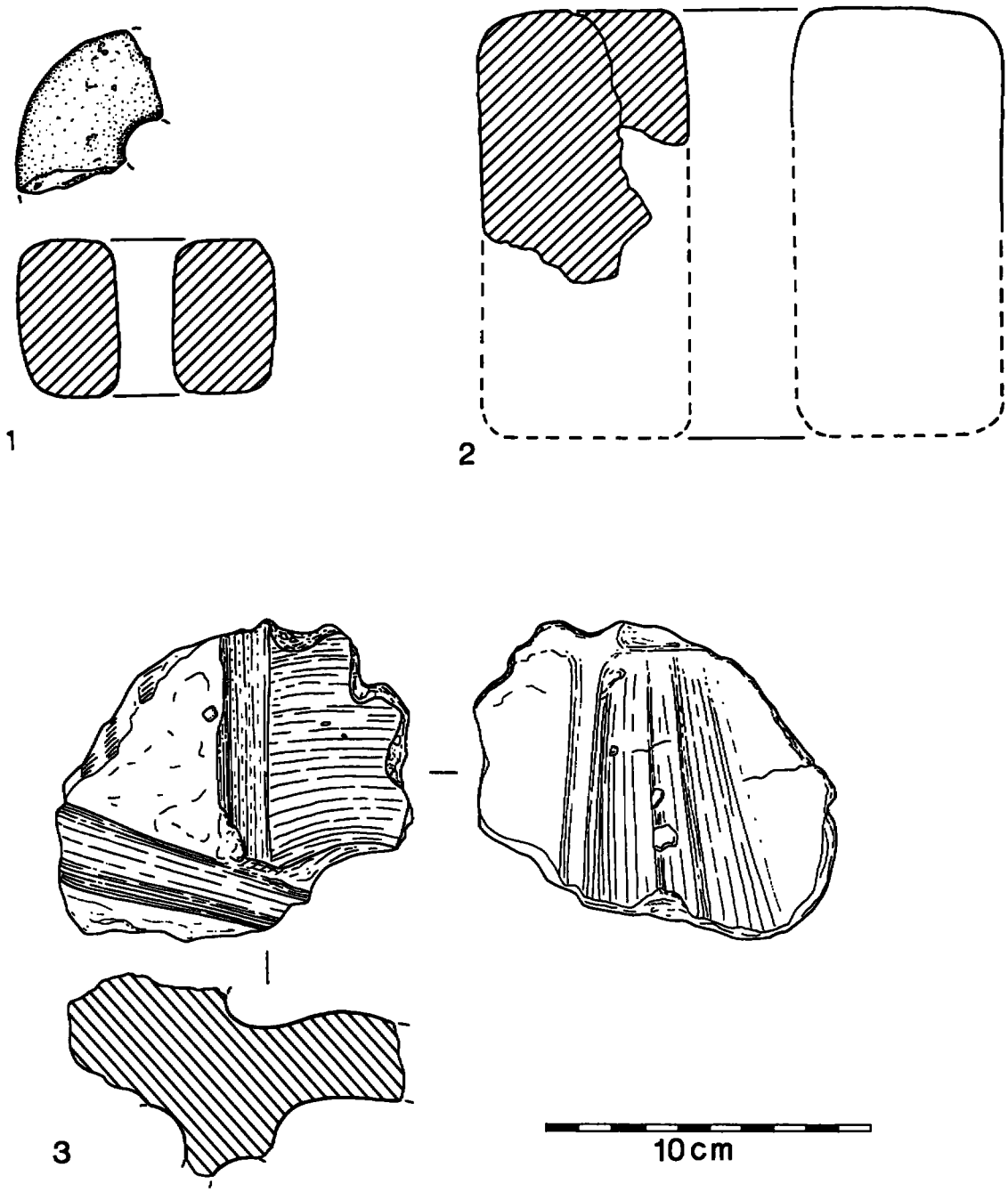

Fig 13. Clay weights and daub. 1 Bun-shaped loomweight from F11 (071); 2 F36 (092) possible thatch weight; 3 Daub showing stick and other impressions from F11 (071).

1980, 275), Plumpton Plain B (Holleyman and Curwen 1935, 38), Itford Hill (Burstow and Holleyman 1957, fig 25) and Chalton (Cunliffe 1970, fig 5.1).

FIRED CLAY

Pieces of fired clay were recovered from 12 contexts: F10–13, F16, F19, F30, F34, F44–45, F47 (Table 4). In total this amounted to 2630 gms in weight with the greatest quantity coming from F11. In most cases the pieces were of rounded irregular amorphous shape. Two exceptions from F11 showed stick and other impressions (Fig 13.3). The clay was in most cases of fine sandy texture with occasional rounded flint pebbles of variable size.

Table 4 Loomweights and Fired Clay

Feature	*Fill*	*Weight gms*	*Number of Fragments*
Loomweights			
6	055	53	7 (=6)
11	071	137	2
13	075	86	2
36	092	1036	44 (=1)
Total		1312	55 (=11)
Fired Clay			
10	069	148	21
11	070	78	5
11	071	526	19
11	072	562	31
12	077	42	8
13	075	382	16
16	061/063	265	9
19	067	52	3
30	085	10	3
34	090	129	12
44	150	132	16
45	151	32	4
47	153	262	21
Total		2620	168

THE FLINT by Steve Ford

A small amount of struck flint was recovered from the two phases of fieldwork, totalling 174 items (excluding dubious and rolled pieces) as detailed in Table 5. Of these, 109 were from stratified deposits of Bronze Age date (Table 7).

The flint is in a fresh condition with the exception of one worn and patinated scraper made on a natural flake. On the basis of remaining cortex, the majority of the struck flint is made using material from a gravel source. One or two items, with a thick, unworn cortex, appear to have been procured directly from a chalk source. The material used appears to be adequate for flint manufacture, with some large flakes occurring and relatively few flaws present.

Chronology

Apart from one or two possible blades/narrow flakes, which may be of Mesolithic/earlier

Table 5 Summary totals of all struck flint recovered from evaluation and excavation

	All	*Features only*
Flakes	110	71
Blades/narrow flakes	4	1
Cores	21	13
Retouched	9	5
Spalls	17	6
Bashed lumps/core fragments	13	13
Total	174	109

Table 6 Retouched flint types

	All	*Features only*
Scraper	6	3
Awl	1	
Irregularly retouched flake	1	1
Hammerstone (flint)	1	1
Total	9	5

Table 6 Struck flint from features

Feature/ context	*Flake/ blade*	*Core*	*Core fragment /bashed lump*	*Spall*	*Scraper*	*Other retouched*
2 (050)	1					
5 (053)	4	1				
5 (059)	2			1		
8 (060)	5	2	1	1		
9 (061)			1			
10 (062)	1					
10 (069)	2					
11 (070)	3					
11 (071)	3	1	1			
11 (072)	4	1	2	1		Retouched flake
12 (066)	1					
13 (075)	18	7	2		1	
16 (061)	3		1			
16 (61/63)	2		1	1		
16 (63/64)	2					
19 (067)	9		1	1		
24 (073)			1			
26 (080)	2	1		1	1	
29 (083)	6					Hammerstone
34 (090)	1					
35 (091)	1					
46 (152)	1					
46 (156)		1				
47 (154)			1		1	
47 (157)	1					

Neolithic date, the struck flint contains few highly diagnostic elements. Even these few blades may be the result of accidental production. All of the flakes appear to have been made using a hard hammer.

Despite the small numbers, the flintwork is entirely consistent with the Late Bronze Age date of the pottery. There are three measures of the flint assemblage which provide an independent indication of date:

The small sample of 37 intact flakes produced just 2.7% with a Length:Breadth ratio of greater than 2:1 (Saville 1980). When these are combined with a count of broken flake types (as in Ford 1987) an even lower figure of 1.4% is produced. This is clearly a characteristic of assemblages of later Bronze Age date (Ford 1987) despite the caution required in using such small samples.

Similarly, for the 13 cores, none could be suggested as being for blade/narrow flake manufacture. This is also a characteristic of late assemblages.

The few retouched pieces in the assemblage comprise the commonest forms (scrapers, retouched flakes; see Table 6). While the numbers hardly constitute a statistically reliable sample, this does not contradict the suggestion of a later Bronze Age date (Ford et al 1984).

Discussion

It is only over the last decade that it has been fully recognised that struck flint is a small but significant component of surviving later Bronze Age material culture. For example, the site at Yapton, West Sussex, of broadly similar date to Gosport, produced only 25 stratified pieces out of a total of 64 (Place, in Rudling 1987). Mike Pitts, writing in 1978, could only identify five published assemblages of later Bronze Age date to include in his analysis (Pitts 1978). Since then more attention has been paid to 'residual' flints on later Bronze Age sites.

The continued use of struck flint up to the end of the Bronze Age, despite Bronze technology, is demonstrated at sites such as Lofts Farm, Essex (Holgate in Brown, 1988) and Runnymede Bridge, Surrey (Needham 1991). At the latter site there is both the manufacture of, and plentiful access to, Bronze tools, etc. yet this accompanies a prodigious contemporary flint assemblage.

Here, as elsewhere, later Bronze Age assemblages are simple, but competently made. They usually use immediately locally available flint and produce mostly flakes together with a range of retouched types restricted to the most common forms, namely scrapers, awls and retouched flakes. These are made with a hard hammer with little platform preparation. It is not until well into the Iron Age that flint usage becomes no more than an *ad hoc* activity (Saville, 1981). Presumably the main characteristic of flint that enables its continued use despite bronze technology is its sharpness. Perhaps not until iron tools are developed is flint superseded in this activity.

SADDLE QUERNS by David F. Williams

Five lower stones of saddle querns are represented here (Table 8; Fig 14), with the worked surface in each case exhibiting much abrasion. All of the stones are in a dark grey medium coarse glauconitic sandstone. Thin sectioning and study under the petrological microscope shows well-sorted subangular grains of quartz, with some quartzite, and green glauconite scattered throughout. In both the hand-specimen and thin section, this greensand is identical to quern material recovered from the recently discovered quarries located at

Table 8 Catalogue of Saddle Querns and other stone

1. F16 (063) (Figure 14): Probably most of a saddle quern with an irregular shaped under surface and a flattish upper surface. 285 mm length, 183 mm width, 54 mm thickness, 3 kg weight.

2. F16 (063) (Figure 14): Complete and very fine example of a saddle quern with a well-rounded shaped under surface and a concave shaped upper surface. 312 mm length, 192 mm width, 58 mm thickness and 4.3 kg weight.

3. F16 (063) (Figure 14): Probably most of a saddle quern with a roughly flattish under surface and a slightly concave upper surface. 290 mm length, 178 mm width, 51 mm thickness and 2.2 kg weight.

4. F16 (063) (Figure 14): Roughly half of saddle quern with rounded under surface, less obviously shaped than no (1), and a slightly concave upper surface. 198 mm length, 195 mm width, 64 mm thickness and 2.9 kg weight.

5. F29 (083) (Not illustrated): Fragment of saddle quern with irregular shaped under surface and slightly concave upper surface. 298 mm length, 130 mm width, 119 mm thickness and 2.3 kg weight.

6. Evaluation trench 5. (Not illustrated): Lodsworth greensand fragment 123 g.

7. F9 (061) (Not illustrated): Sandstone fragment, with polished concave surface (160 g); Lodsworth quern fragment (56 g).

8. F10 (069) (Not illustrated): Lodsworth quern fragment (140 g); Lodsworth greensand fragment (277 g).

9. F11 (063) (Not illustrated): Lodsworth greensand fragment (81 g).

10. F11 (071) (Not illustrated): Chert cobble fragment (1061 g); Sandstone fragment, burnt (311 g).

11. F19 (067) (Not illustrated): 2 Lodsworth quern fragments (74 g, 169 g); Lodsworth fragment (123 g).

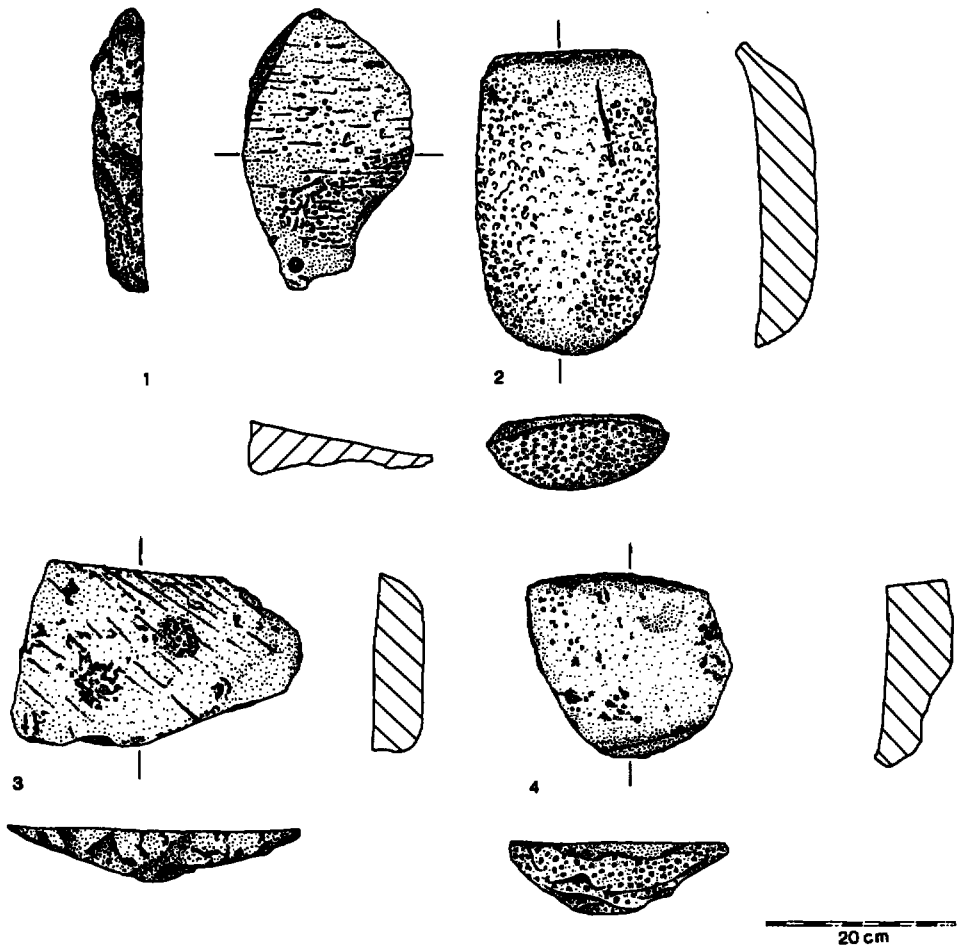

Fig 14. Querns from F16 (063).

Lodsworth, West Sussex, where the local Lower Greensand Hythe Beds were utilised for quern making from the Late Bronze Age to the Roman period (Peacock 1987). The association here with Bronze Age pottery of the 9th–8th century BC appears to represent one of the earliest known examples of Lodsworth quernstones (ibid, 67). Similar material has also been identified from Late Bronze Age contexts at Runneymede Bridge in the Thames Valley (Freestone 1991, 138–9).

CARBONISED PLANT REMAINS
by John B. Letts

Five of the samples taken contained a sprinkling of poorly preserved plant remains (Tables 9 and 10). Barley is typical of the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age, but unfortunately the grains were not well-enough preserved to determine whether they came from the 6 or 2 rowed species, or from a hulled or naked variety (although 6-row hulled barley would be expected). Spelt begins to

supplant emmer wheat in the Middle Iron Age, so the presence of spelt in a Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age context is interesting. Little can be said with regard to the two weed seeds; most sedges (*Carex sp.*) are semi-aquatic, but many also grow as crop weeds, and spurrey *Spergula sp.* is a fairly ubiquitous weed.

Table 9 Samples taken for carbonised plant remains

Sample	*Context*	*Volume (Litres)*	*Charcoal*	*Other*
F5	053,059	7.5	X	–
F5	053	10	X	–
F5	054	14	X	X
F8	060	15	X	–
F11	071,072	14	X	–
F11	070	7	X	–
F12	077	6	X	–
F13	075	16	X	X
F16	061	12	X	–
F17	062	10	–	X
F19	067	14	X	–
F20	064	1	X	–
F21	065	5	X	–
F22	066	1	X	–
F23	087	7	–	–
F24	073	7	X	X
F25	074	2	X	–
F27	081	12	X	–
F28	082	6	–	–
F29	083	9	X	–
F30	085	5	X	–
F30	084	10	X	–
F31	086	3	X	X
F32	088	3	X	X

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The evidence would appear to represent a small unenclosed settlement of *c* 9th–8th century BC, with a single phase of construction and relatively short usage (although precise details of its use cannot easily be determined). Differences in artefact density and distribution between areas A and B (Figs 8, 9 and 10) may be suggestive of functional variation between the two proposed structures. However, the shallowness of features suggests truncation (perhaps by ploughing), which, when combined with post-depositional disturbances, makes comparisons of this nature problematical.

Pits F5 and F7, in the north east corner of the site, are perhaps distinct: Pit 5 contained two fabrics not found elsewhere on the site and a number of different rim types, which may suggest a later date; pit 7 produced a finger-tipped vessel possibly contemporary with the material from pit 7. This scant evidence could indicate another later phase of activity north of the occupation area already identified.

Very little information was found with regard to the economy of the site. The presence of loomweights, together with a few cereal grains and several saddle querns does not provide sufficient evidence for interpretation, especially when coupled with the lack of faunal data.

Table 10 Charred seeds:

Species	*Common name*	*F5 054*	*F13 067*	*F17 062*	*F24 073*	*F31 086*	*F32 088*
Spergula sp.	spurrey	1					
Carex sp.	sedge					1	
Triticum spelta (glume base)	spelt wheat			1			
Hordeum vulgare	barley		1	1			
cf. Hordeum vulgare	barley		1				
cereal indet.						1	
charred tissue indet.		1			1		1
Totals (10)		2	2	2	1	2	1

Little evidence of Bronze Age activity has yet been discovered in the Gosport area (Fig 2 summarises all archaeological finds in the immediate vicinity). Three severely damaged earlier Bronze Age bowl barrows are situated within 1.5 km of the Grange Road site; fragments of a Middle/Late Bronze Age bucket urn were found *c* 2 km to the west and a hoard of 19 Middle Bronze Age palstaves and one bracelet 600 m north east of Grange Road (just north of Fort Grange) (Hampshire SMR).

The paucity of evidence for Bronze Age activity in the Gosport area is matched by a lack of information regarding Bronze Age settlement on the coastal plain of both Hampshire and West Sussex, where evidence is dependent mainly upon the chance discovery of metalwork and pottery (Fig 1).

The majority of finds in West Sussex are located between the Rivers Arun and Adur (Ellison 1978; 1980), west of the River Arun Bronze Age activity is attested largely by finds of bronze artefacts, with very little indication of settlement (Ellison 1978). Excavations at Yapton revealed pits dating to the 9th century BC (Rudling 1987), the pottery from which is probably closely contemporary with that found at Gosport (see pottery report p 19). This, together with the late Bronze Age settlement at Kingley Vale, near Chichester (Curwen 1934), constitutes the only clear evidence of later Bronze Age settlement in this region.

Likewise, in Hampshire, conclusive evidence of Bronze Age settlement is scarce. The distribution of presumed Bronze Age barrows is thought to give some indication of the density and distribution of Bronze Age settlement (Fasham and Schadla-Hall 1981), concentrations of which occur on the chalk downs and the heathlands of the New Forest. This would appear to imply little activity on the coastal plain itself, although differential preservation of monuments and the pace of urbanisation may have distorted this view. A glance at Figure 1 illustrates the paucity of evidence in this area. Indeed, the scarcity of Bronze Age settlement on both the Hampshire and West Sussex coastal plains may best be explained by the difficulties encountered in locating Bronze Age sites in this region, except by accident. A problem exacerbated by the unenclosed nature of many Bronze Age sites (eg Grange Road; Chalton, Cunliffe 1970; Winnall Down, Fasham 1989) making them difficult to locate from the air. Also, prehistoric pottery soon disintegrates once brought to the surface, and, where it is found, it is usually so abraded as to be recognisable by fabric only (Bedwin 1978).

It has been argued that the effects of climatic deterioration in the Late Bronze Age would have been felt more strongly in lower-lying areas and on the lower coastal plain, resulting in fewer settlements in this region in the Late Bronze Age than in the Middle Bronze Age (Bedwin 1983). Ellison has suggested, to the contrary, that the distribution of finds indicates a substantial shift of settlement from the chalk downs to the fertile coastal plain in the Late Bronze Age (1980). It would seem that more recent evidence, including that from Grange Road, supports the view (Rudling 1984) that the perceived lack of evidence for Late Bronze Age settlement may have more to do with the difficulties encountered in finding such sites than with any real pattern.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Abbreviations used in bibliography:

Antiq J	*Antiquaries Journal*
Berkshire Archaeol J	*Berkshire Archaeological Journal*
British Archaeol Rep	British Archaeological Report
Bull Inst Archaeol Univ London	*Bulletin of the Institute of Archaeology University of London*
Counc Brit Archaeol Res Rep	Council for British Archaeology Research Report
Hampshire Field Club Archaeol Soc Monogr	Hampshire Field Club Archaeological Society Monograph
Northamptonshire Archaeol	*Northamptonshire Archaeology*
Oxford J Archaeol	*Oxford Journal of Archaeology*
Proc Prehist Soc	*Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society*
Surrey Archaeol Soc Res Vol	Surrey Archaeological Society Research Volume
Sussex Archaeol Collect	*Sussex Archaeological Collections*

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