

AN UNUSUAL IRON AGE ENCLOSURE AT FIR HILL, BOSSINGTON AND A ROMANO-BRITISH CEMETERY NEAR BROOK, HAMPSHIRE: THE BROUGHTON TO TIMSBURY PIPELINE, PART 2

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ABSTRACT

Fieldwork in advance of pipeline construction resulted in the excavation of a transect through an unusual triangular enclosure of early-middle Iron Age date (Site C) and the discovery of a previously unknown Romano-British cemetery (Site E). The enclosures were previously recorded from aerial photographs and the investigation provided an opportunity to recover dating and environmental evidence as well as examine a small area of the interior. Other associated ditches and a smaller triple-ditched enclosure were also investigated. There is a hint that the large triangular enclosure had two phases of development, and although the surrounding ditch was 'defensive' in scale it appears not to have been maintained or to have enclosed a substantial permanent settlement, the suggestion being that it may have functioned as a gathering place or stock enclosure. A Roman Road cutting across the enclosure provides clear evidence for its eventual disuse by the mid-late Iron Age. The Romano-British cemetery is of typical rural type and dates from the 2nd to 3rd century up to the later 3rd or 4th century. Most of the bodies were placed in coffins, some were associated with ceramic vessels, one had a more elaborate coffin and another was within a square enclosure. It is possible that the cemetery is related to a possible building found on Site F.

INTRODUCTION

This paper forms the second part of a report on excavations in 2001 by Wessex Archaeology ahead of a 9 km long bulk transfer pipeline constructed by Southern Water. The background to the project is set out in the first part of the report (Mepham and Brown 2007). Of the 10

sites investigated (Fig. 1, A-J), 5 produced no archaeological features (A, B, D, H and I). The earlier report focused on the late Saxon pottery production site at Michelmersh (Site J: *ibid.*). This paper concentrates on a transect excavated across the presumed Iron Age settlement enclosures at Fir Hill, Bossington (Site C) and a previously unknown Romano-British cemetery near Brook (Site E). Two less significant sites – a Romano-British structure (Site F) and a medieval building (Site G) are reported as summaries only.

FIR HILL, BOSSINGTON (SITE C)

The pipeline route crossed the enclosure complex at Fir Hill, south-east of Bossington, a site previously identified and interpreted from aerial photography (Palmer 1984, fig. 7 and 27). The main element is a roughly triangular or 'D-shaped', wide-ditched enclosure with an internal area of c. 2.1 ha. Ancillary enclosures, converging linear ditches, trackways and possible traces of unenclosed settlement surround the central enclosure (Fig. 2). The enclosure lies at around 85 m – 90 m aOD (above Ordnance Datum) and occupies the crest of an east-west ridge, overlooking the valley of the Wallop Brook (a tributary of the River Test) and a wide area to the north. Some 200 m to the east this ridge falls rapidly down into the valley of the Test. Palmer dated the complex to the Iron Age, but offered no topographical reason for its unusual triangular shape (1984, 47). The northern part of the enclosure is crossed by a Roman road running between Winchester and Old Sarum (Margary 1973: RR45).

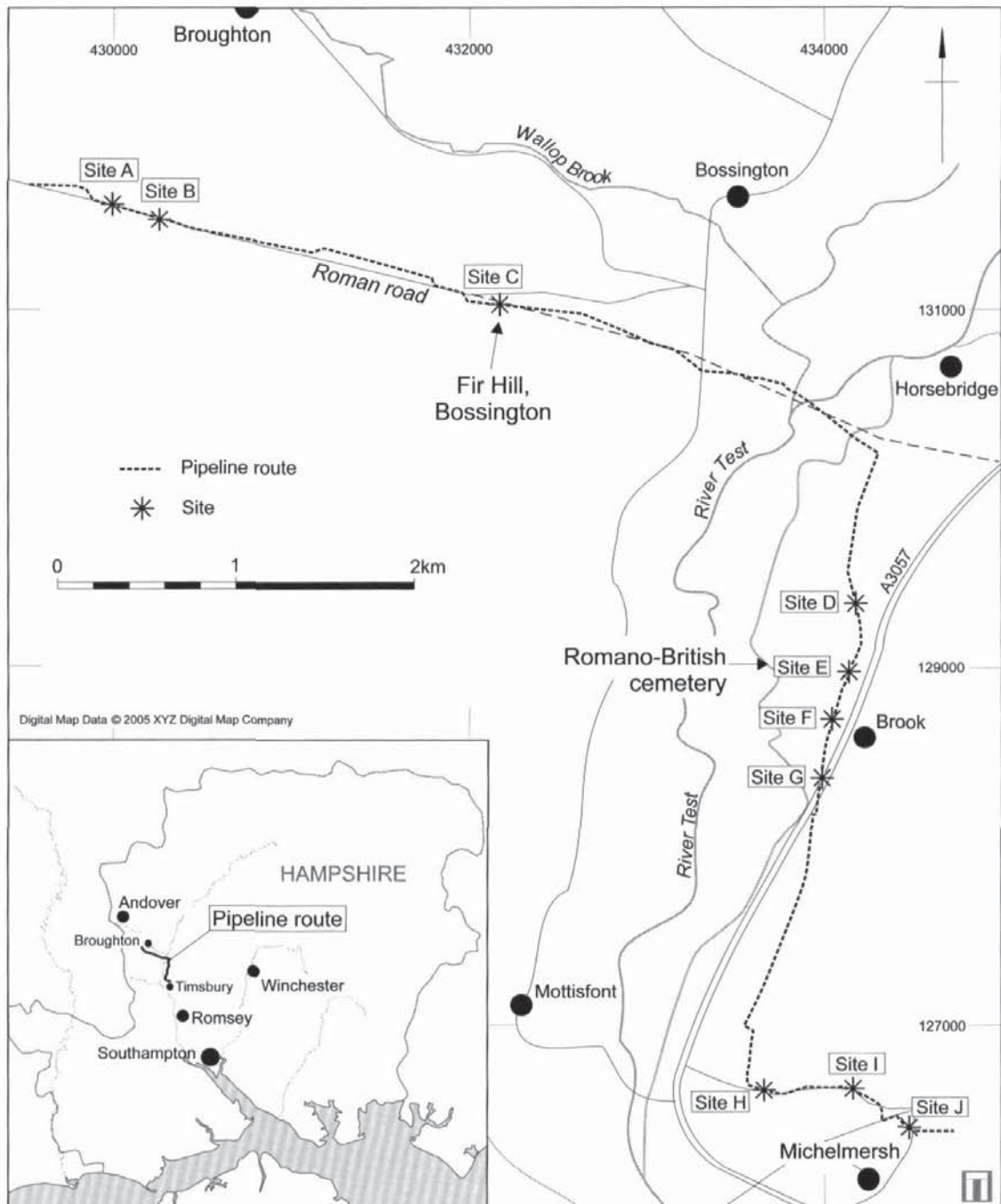


Fig. 1 Location of the Broughton to Timsbury pipeline and sites along its route

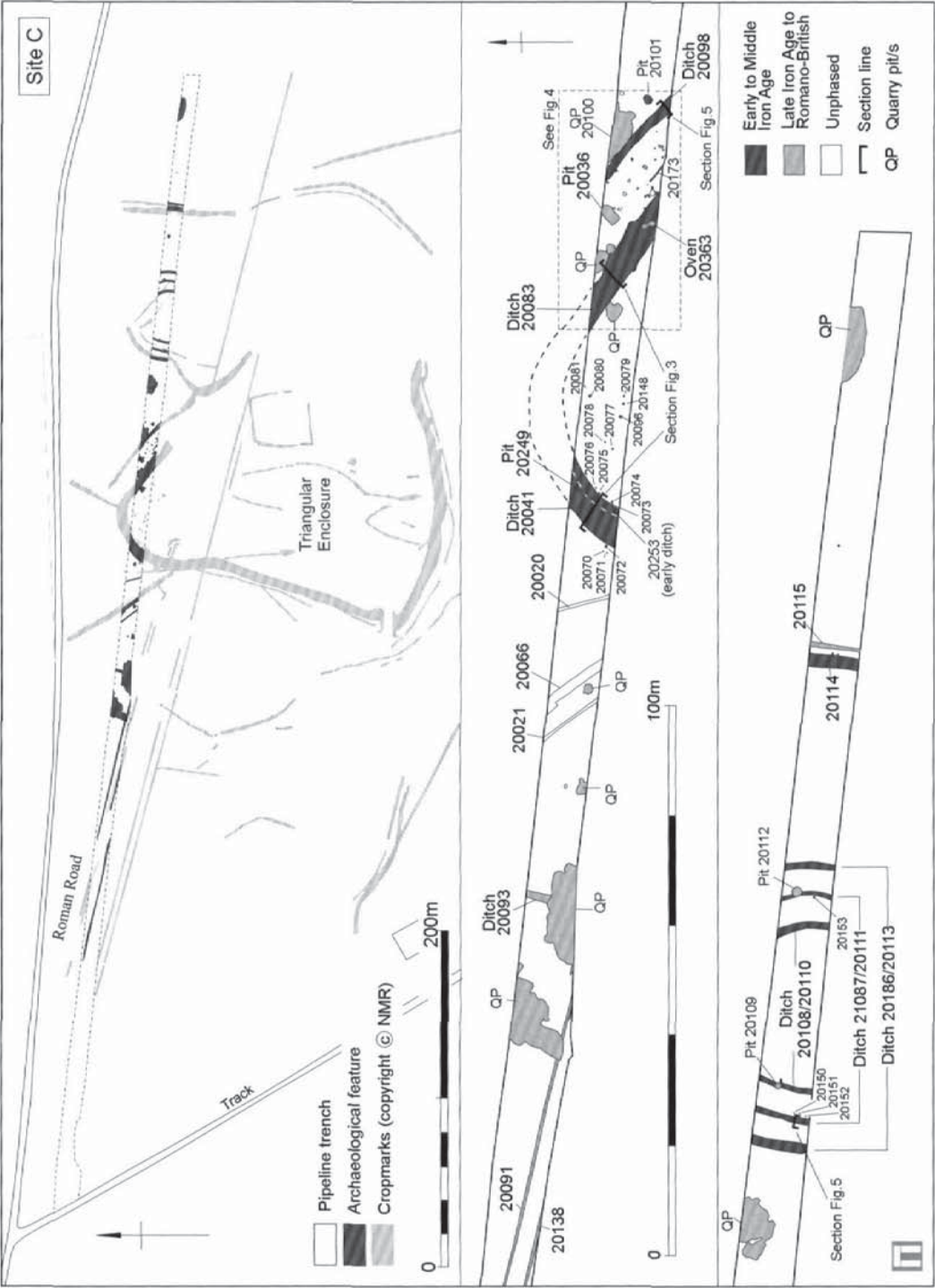


Fig. 2 The enclosure complex at Fir Hill, Bossington, and plan of excavated features (Site C)

Excavation of Site C involved machine stripping of topsoil over a 300 m length of the 15 m-wide pipeline easement (centred on NGR 432350 131010) to expose features cutting the natural clay-with-flints subsoil. These features were then hand excavated following a standard sampling strategy (Wessex Archaeology 2001) which involved targeted interventions to characterise, date and interpret features and deposits and to determine the stratigraphic relationships between them. The pipeline route passed through the northern apex of the triangular enclosure, a possible entrance, and a smaller triple-ditched enclosure to the east. All excavated features are shown in plan on Figures 2 and 4.

The structure of the following chronological narrative is based on surviving stratigraphic relationships and the ceramic phasing (see Every and Mephram below). It should be noted that the use of the term 'early Iron Age' throughout this report includes Ceramic Phase 1, with a potential date range of BC *c.* 800 – 600 (*ibid.*). Attempts to extrapolate the overall development of the enclosure complex are constrained by the restricted extent of the excavation.

Early to middle Iron Age

Origins of the enclosure system

The earliest phase of the enclosure complex appears to date from the early Iron Age (8th to mid 4th centuries BC: Ceramic Phases 1–2 see Every and Mephram below), although its form at this point is unclear. A narrow curvilinear ditch (20253), V-shaped in profile, 1.25 m deep and *c.* 2 m wide, was recorded in section (Fig. 3). A thin primary erosion fill was sealed by deliberate backfill deposits of silty clay with chalk, one of which (20255) contained a sherd from an early Iron Age decorated fineware bowl (Fig. 7, no. 3). This ditch is assumed to have been the forerunner of the main triangular enclosure (below), mostly destroyed by the recutting of the enclosure on a larger scale but similar alignment at a later date (below).

Other ditches produced exclusively early Iron Age pottery in primary contexts, supporting an early origin for the main elements of the

enclosure system. These include 20098 (Figs 2, 4–5), whose primary fill (20025) produced two sherds of re-fired, blistered and distorted pottery, including a slash-decorated rim (Fig. 7, no. 1), 20186, part of a triple-ditched enclosure (Fig. 2) not visible on the previous aerial survey and, probably, a narrow V-shaped ditch 20173 (Figs 2 and 4) which produced only three sand-tempered sherds from its upper fill.

No other features can be assigned to the early Iron Age with any confidence, although residual pottery, such as the finewares from quarry complex 20100 (Fig. 7, nos 6–7; see Every and Mephram below), indicate considerable reworking of such material. It should be noted that the primary fills of a number of major ditches are undated, and are potentially early.

The triangular enclosure

The northern corner of the main triangular enclosure (Figs 2 and 4) was represented by a ditch, 5.1 m to 5.6 m wide and between 2.6 m and 3.4 m deep, excavated in two segments (20041 and 20083). Both contained complex fill sequences of silty clays alternating with deposits of chalk pieces and flint nodules. The latter may have derived from a bank constructed of upcast material, but there was no clear evidence for the location of such a feature. The ditch had steep sides and a V-shaped, though slightly irregular profile with a rounded or flattened base (Fig. 3).

The finds recovered suggest that the ditch filled over a long period of time. Little datable material, in fact few finds of any description, came from the lower fills. These deposits contained sparse quantities of animal bone (mostly cattle and sheep, see Knight below), and three sandy body sherds, broadly dated to the early/middle Iron Age came from two of the lowest fills (20257 and 20247). Fill 20218, relatively high in the sequence, produced a single middle Iron Age flint-tempered bead rim jar fragment.

A group of three postholes (20070–2) lay immediately to the west of the triangular enclosure, the largest 0.50 m in diameter and 0.16 m deep. Although undated, these appeared

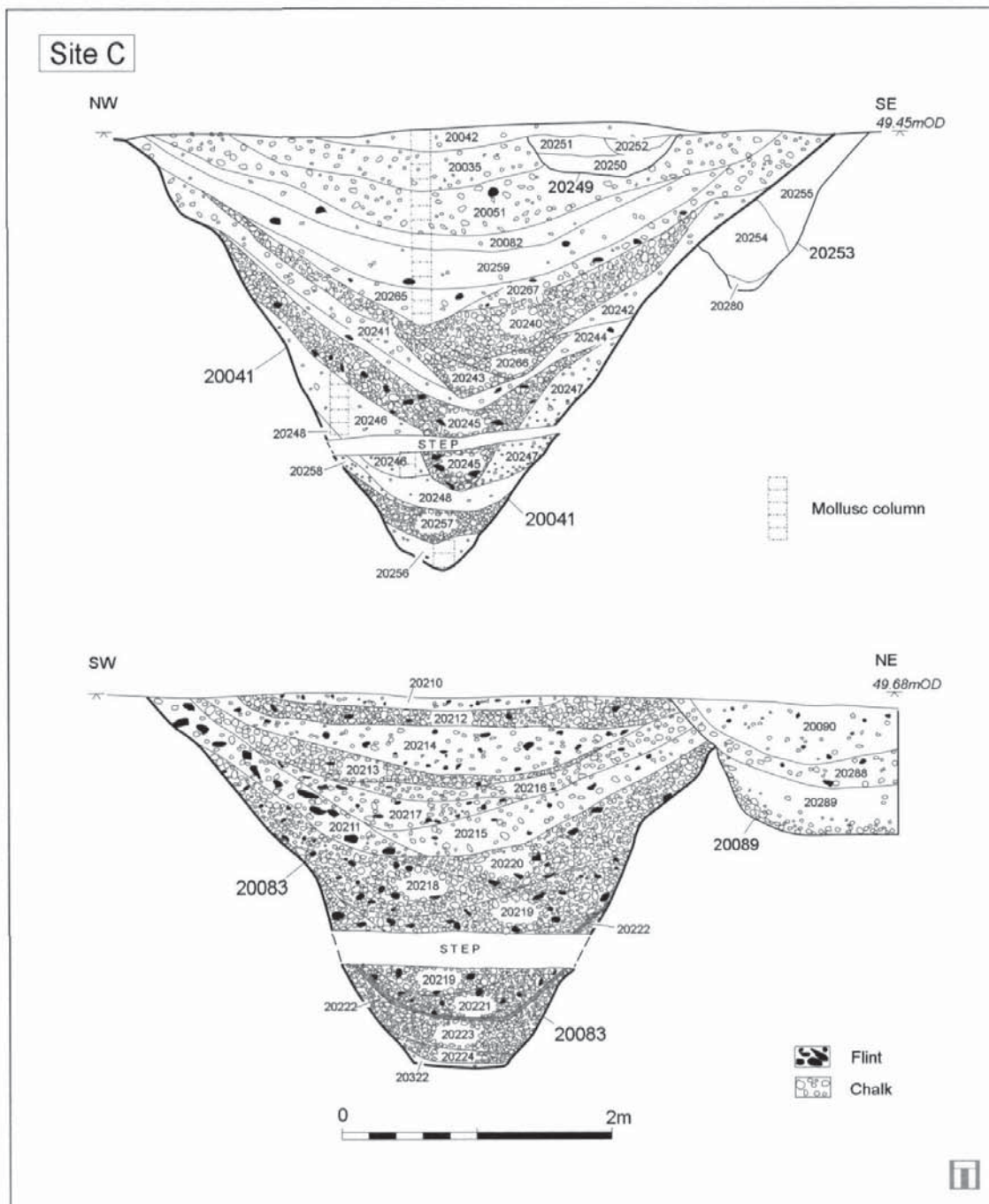


Fig. 3 Sections: the ditch of the triangular enclosure (Site C)

to be aligned along the ditch edge and may have formed part of a palisade or, more likely, a fence preventing stock entering the ditch.

Few internal features were present in the enclosure, and the ephemeral nature of those recorded may be evidence for truncation of the Iron Age ground surface, as well as suggesting that the main focus of settlement, if any lay elsewhere in the enclosure, with this area given over to non-intrusive land-use. Four postholes (20073–20076), were aligned somewhat randomly along the inner edge of the enclosure ditch. They were very poorly preserved, surviving only 0.05–0.06 m deep, ranging in diameter from 0.33 m to 0.41 m; they may have represented an internal palisade, fence, or bank revetment.

A number of other shallow postholes (20077–20081) lay within the main enclosure but no clear structural pattern could be discerned. These features survived no more than 0.07 m deep, and their diameters ranged from 0.18 m to 0.43 m. None produced artefacts. The only other feature was pit 20096, 0.43 m in diameter and 0.10 m deep. It was filled with a dark grey silty soil (20296) with flints, some burnt, oak (*Quercus* sp.) charcoal and a few small fragments of burnt bone, which could not be identified to species.

Possible entranceway/droeway

Ditch 20098 lay 8.2 m east of and parallel to the eastern side of the triangular enclosure (Figs 2 and 4). It had a V-shaped profile (Fig. 5), perhaps suggesting a defensive function, although at 2 m wide and 1.25 m deep, it was not a substantial feature. Its primary fill (20025) of small chalk pieces in loose silty clay, possibly slumped bank material from the western edge of the ditch was overlain by a possible turf line (20024), which produced four body sherds of early to middle Iron Age pottery. The aerial photographic evidence (Fig. 2) indicated that this ditch extended southwards to link with a curvilinear ditch forming part of another enclosure complex that may have included a triple-ditched enclosure to the east (see below). It may have formed an entranceway into the triangular enclosure, or part of a system of droeways associated with it. Ceramic evidence

from the primary fill suggests the feature was cut in the early Iron Age (above).

A number of features lay within the possible entranceway (Fig. 4), in a greater concentration than elsewhere within the excavated area. Ditch 20173, probably an early feature (above), terminated within the excavated area. It was 1.45 m wide and 0.88 m deep with a sharp V-shaped profile, not unlike that of ditch 20098. It may have been an original part of the design of the eastern side of the main enclosure complex, or a sub-division of the entranceway/droeway relating to access or livestock control.

A scatter of undated postholes, surviving only a few centimetres deep was recorded, some with flint or chalk packing. No obvious structures were discernible although five postholes (20121, 20127, 20156, 20130 and 20146) appeared to be aligned along the western edge of ditch 20098. Likewise, five other postholes (20123, 20125, 20128, 20131 and 20133) lay close to the outer edge of ditch 20083. The alignments may be coincidental, but could represent a palisade, fence, or even timber reinforcement for a bank. Other postholes in this area could be part of minor structures such as fences or pens, but given the lack of dating evidence and the presence of a Romano-British oven in this area, at least some of these features may be later. Indeed, the only dated posthole (20139) produced a single sherd of late Iron Age/early Roman coarse greyware.

Triple-ditched enclosure

A group of ditches lay approximately 50 m to the east of the main triangular enclosure (Fig. 2), and may represent a small, triple-ditched enclosure, although its shape in plan is uncertain. They had not been clearly visible on aerial photographs, possibly due to the underlying geology, or because of later modifications not apparent within the excavated area. The ditches displayed a complex sequence of recutting, but few produced datable artefacts from their lower fills. It is suggested that, on balance, the enclosure had an early Iron Age origin, although the three ditches need not have been contemporaneous.

The outer ditch (dug in two segments, 20186



Fig. 4 Plan of the entranceway/droeway area, with detailed plan and section of pit 20036 (Site C)

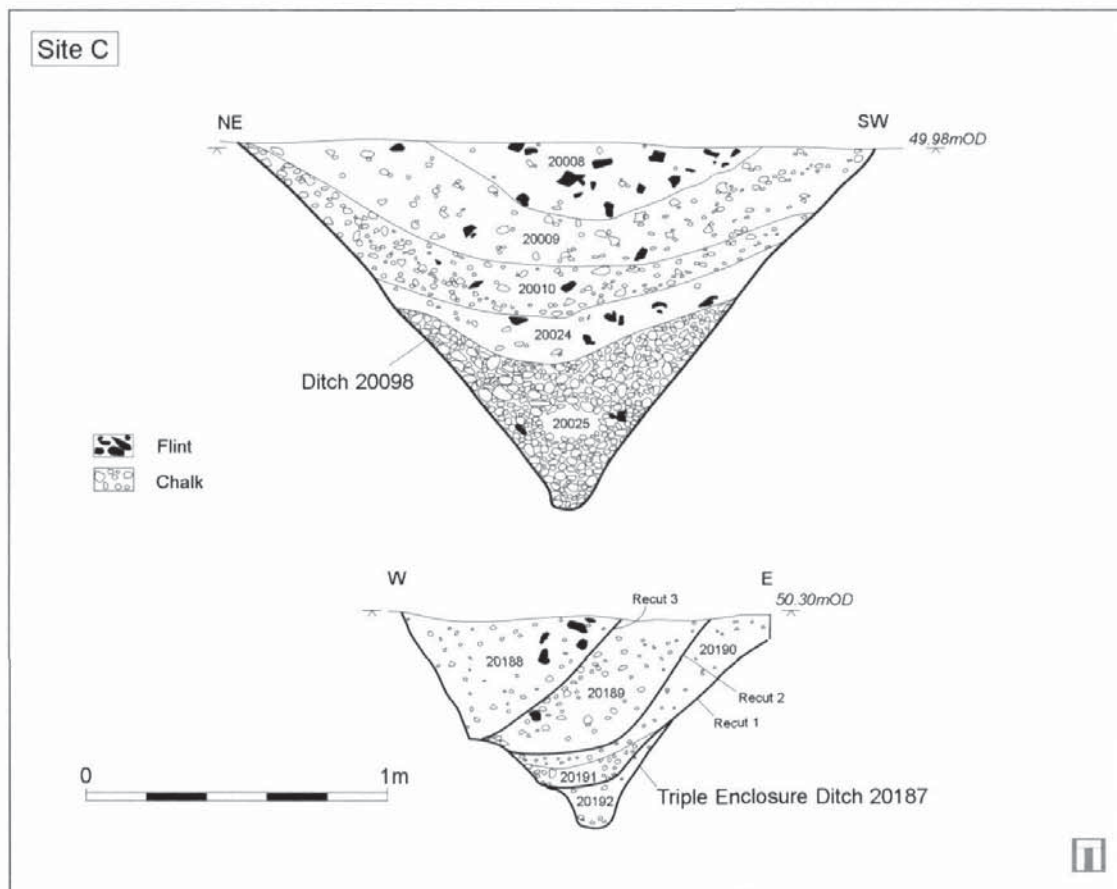


Fig. 5 Sections: the triple-ditched enclosure (Site C)

and 20113) was 2.2 m wide and 0.97 m deep with a V-shaped profile and flat base. It had been recut at least once. The earliest fill (20185), of naturally eroded material, produced burnt flint and 11 body sherds of sand-tempered early Iron Age pottery. The upper fills appeared to be a deliberate backfill of clay silt with flint nodules, producing 23 early Iron Age sherds (20183) including 2 furrowed bowl fragments and 13 sandy sherds of early-middle Iron Age date (20263). The middle ditch (20187 = 20111) was 1.00 m to 1.22 m wide and 0.71 m to 1.07 m deep. The profile, originally V-shaped, had been recut at least three times (Fig. 5). The

ditch was cut through a deposit of clay with flints and this was reflected in the composition of the fills. Only the fills of the final recut produced datable finds, including five body sherds of early-middle Iron Age sandy ware from 20188.

The inner ditch, (20108 = 20110) was 1.8 m to 1.9 m wide and 1.38 m to 1.9 m deep. It produced a single sherd of early-middle Iron Age pottery from a primary fill (20317), which had formed by natural erosion. Another early fill (20318) was a dark grey silty clay with burnt material, including charcoal, possibly oven/hearth debris. The ditch had a V-shaped profile

and had been recut at least once. An upper fill (20230) produced middle Iron Age pottery and a charcoal deposit (?dump from a hearth or fire) rich in blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) stems (Gale 2004). Although this might suggest the use of hedging to define enclosure boundaries, it is just as likely to indicate settlement waste or the clearance of weed growth within the partially silted-up ditches. There was no evidence for features in the interior of the enclosure, although a few badly truncated, undated postholes (20150–53) along the inside edge of the middle ditch, might represent the remnant of a fence, palisade or bank revetment.

Linear ditches

Several linear ditches lay within the excavation trench (Fig. 2). The largest of these was north-south aligned ditch 20114, which lay to the east of the triple-ditched enclosure. It was up to 2.45 m wide and 1.5 m deep. Aerial photography suggests it was an extensive feature and, on the basis of its size, steep-sided profile, narrow base and location, it may have had a defensive function, perhaps closing off access from the Test Valley. Finds from the lower fills included four sherds of flint- and sand-tempered pottery of early-middle Iron Age type from the primary fill (20358). Further Iron Age pottery and scraps of animal bone came from higher fills which had formed through natural processes. The feature remained open and an influence on the division of the landscape into the early Roman period.

Three undated linear features lay to the west of the triangular enclosure. Although they could be early to middle Iron Age, it is equally possible that they were later additions to the enclosure system, or relate to medieval or post-medieval fields. Their alignment makes a Roman date unlikely. A shallow gully (20021), 1.02 m wide and 0.19 m deep lay on a north-west-south-east alignment. Parallel and 5 m to the east of this feature lay a stretch of disturbed chalk (20066) interpreted as a former hedge line, although it appears as a substantial feature on aerial photographs (see Fig. 2). Ditch 20020 was a shallow, roughly U-shaped linear ditch, 0.6 m wide and 0.25 m

deep, set on a slightly different north-west to south-east alignment.

End of use of the enclosure system

Most features dated as either early or early-middle Iron Age appear to have silted up slowly, and would have remained open for a considerable period of time. Estimating when the enclosures went out of use is problematic. Only the inner ditch of the triple-ditched enclosure and the main triangular enclosure ditch produced pottery dated to the middle and later middle Iron Age (Fig. 7 no. 10; Ceramic Phases 3–4, see Every and Mephram below) from contexts identified as silting episodes, which may suggest a period of abandonment, or at least prolonged lack of maintenance.

Late Iron Age to Roman

Very few contexts could be closely dated to the 1st century AD to 1st century AD (Ceramic Phase 5, see Every and Mephram below). These include secondary fills of the triangular enclosure ditch (20041=20083) and the large eastern linear ditch (20114). For example, the main enclosure (segment 20041) produced a single body sherd of wheel thrown grog-tempered ware from fill 20044 (see Fig. 3). No further chronological definition is possible due to the reworking of earlier deposits and problems caused by the continuation of 'indigenous' ceramic traditions. Thus many contexts can only be dated as 1st century BC to 3rd century AD (Ceramic Phases 5–6, see Every and Mephram, below).

The Roman road

The road had been defined from aerial photography as *c.* 15 m wide, with side ditches possibly recut or relocated two or three times (Palmer 1984, 74 and fig. 27). No road surfaces or make-up deposits were identified, but two undated, shallow linear features that crossed the western end of the excavation area on a west-north-east to east-south-east alignment appear to define the edge of the road in two distinct phases (Fig. 2). Ditch 20091 was 0.63 m wide and 0.23 m deep with a splayed U-shaped



Fig. 6 View of Romano-British oven 20363, looking south-east, 1 m scale (Site C)

profile. Its fill contained many weathered flint and chalk lumps, possibly eroded from the road. Gully 20138 lay *c.* 2 m to the south of and parallel to 20091, but only survived 0.25 m wide and 0.03 m deep.

The impact of the Roman conquest is thus uncertain. The cutting of a Roman road across the northern part of the complex implies its disuse, but there is no clear evidence for the contemporary slighting of any earthworks into their associated ditches, and abandonment of any activity or settlement may well have occurred earlier (above). Ditch sections suggest continuing gradual erosion continuing from the Iron Age. It is clear that most of the enclosure complex remained visible for much of the Roman period, as the upper fills of many ditches consisted of phases of accumulations and dumps of 'settlement' waste, dating mostly to the 2nd to 4th century AD

Boundaries

Ditch 20115, 0.8 m wide and only 0.18 m deep may have been laid out with reference to Iron Age ditch 20114, immediately adjacent and on a similar alignment. This could be taken as an indication of the persistence of boundaries despite the construction of the road, although given that the ditches are perpendicular to the line of the road, it could be fortuitous. A similarly aligned ditch (20093), 1 m wide and 0.62 m deep with a U-shaped profile lay towards the western end of the excavation area. Both ditches produced Romano-British pottery in their secondary fills, and they may imply the creation of a rectilinear field system on the north site of the road.

Other features

A number of other Roman features were identified. Some may result from casual use by

road-users, from the extraction of material for minor repairs to the road, or from agricultural activity within a field system, but others may suggest the excavation lies on the edge of a small and previously unidentified rural settlement. All or any of these activities might have exploited the shelter provided by the surviving earthworks of the enclosure system.

In the former entranceway/droeway on the east side of the triangular enclosure lay a sub-rectangular pit (20036), measuring 2.35 m by 3.80 m and 0.65 m deep, orientated north-east to south-west (Fig. 4). The feature had an irregular base, rising towards the south-west. On the base of the pit, along its long axis lay a dump of flint rubble in clay (20050), which led the excavator to interpret the feature as a possible oven or grain drier. No evidence of *in situ* burning was recorded but a few of the flints appeared to have been deliberately faced as if they had originally formed part of a superstructure. Above them was a dark grey, charcoal stained deposit of silty clay with small chalk inclusions (20049). It contained numerous fragments of charcoal including oak, ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), field maple (*Acer campestre*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and blackthorn (Gale 2004), as well as charred remains of spelt wheat (*Triticum spelta*; Stevens, below). An assemblage of over 50 sherds of pottery, included Oxfordshire red-slipped ware and New Forest parchment ware along with animal bone, oyster shells, burnt flints and an iron object (Fig. 8, no.1), possibly given its context an ox-goad rather than a stylus, although the precise identification remains uncertain (see Knight, below).

The upper fills produced no burnt material, but a similar assortment of occupation debris, including featureless fired clay fragments, limestone roof slabs, a piece of iron-working slag, oyster shell, iron nails, an iron blade (Fig. 8, no. 2) and a fragment of lead. A medium sized animal bone assemblage was recovered from these fills (195 fragments, see Knight, below) dominated by sheep and cattle (in the ratio 2:1). Pottery, which included New Forest colour-coated and parchment wares, indicate the feature was back-filled in the 3rd or 4th century.

This feature may have simply been a small quarry, which subsequently filled up with debris from nearby settlement. However its shape and size, and possible association with a small oven could suggest that the feature represents the robbed remains of a 'grain drier'.

Some 6 m to the south-west, a small, dumbbell-shaped oven (20363) had been cut into the almost completely backfilled ditch (20041) of the triangular enclosure. A circular oven, 0.40 m deep and 1.10 m in diameter was lined with clay 0.15 m thick. A short, straight flue, 0.20 m wide, was formed of sandstone slabs set in the same clay lining, and led to an oval stokehole (Fig. 6). A thin layer of charcoal-rich silt (20384) over the base of the oven may relate to the final firing. Although this layer produced a few charred grains of barley (Stevens, below) this is not strong evidence for function. Similar features elsewhere have been interpreted as either ovens or furnaces (e.g. Cunliffe and Poole 2000, 65–72). The feature is dated to the 4th century AD on the presence of sherds of a dropped flange bowl in grog-tempered ware and crude handmade storage jars in sandy fabrics (Every and Mephum, below).

Cut into the top of the enclosure ditch was a small pit (20249) with a charcoal-rich primary fill sealed by a dense deposit of fragmented fired clay and chalk lumps (see Fig. 3). This may have been the disturbed remains of another oven. A Pélichet 47 amphora sherd was recovered from the upper fill.

Three shallow hollows (20135, 20145 and 20106), measuring c. 1 m across and no more than 0.10 m deep lay nearby; they may have been shallow quarry hollows. Feature 20135 produced a late Iron Age/early Roman pottery sherd. More convincing as quarries was a scatter of large irregular features cut into the chalk (labelled as 'quarry' on Figs 2–3). Many were undated, but others were clearly dated to the later Roman period. Several (e.g. 20089, see Fig. 3) were cut outwards from the edges of the partially infilled Iron Age ditches. The features were most probably dug to obtain material for building material and hard core for small-scale repairs to the surface of the adjacent road.

Only four features were identified as refuse

pits (20101, 20109, 20112 and 20290). They were circular or sub-circular in plan, no more than 1.8 m in diameter and up to 0.8 m deep, and produced moderate quantities of animal bone, pottery, charcoal and shell. Pit 20112 produced only late Iron Age to early Roman coarsewares, while the disuse of pits 20101 and 20109 is dated to the 3rd or 4th century, on the presence of Ceramic Phase 7 pottery (see Every and Mephams, below), including Oxfordshire red-slipped ware. Pit 20290 produced a single iron nail.

Later prehistoric and Roman pottery

by Rachel Every and Lorraine Mephams

The Bossington site produced 2275 sherds (24,319 g) of later prehistoric and Roman pottery. The ceramic sequence indicates continuous activity at some level in the area from the early Iron Age through to the end of the Roman period. The condition of the material is generally fair, but a significant proportion of sherds are in an abraded condition. Traces of burnishing, slips and 'red finishing' have survived on some sherds. Mean sherd weight is relatively low at 10.7 g.

Recording and analysis followed standard procedures (Morris 1994; PCRG 1997). The full pottery report is available in the project archive.

Early to middle Iron Age

A total of 394 sherds (3229 g) can be dated to the early to middle Iron Age phase. Three broad fabric groups and 19 separate fabric types were defined, described and quantified in (Table 1).

Calcareous (shelly), flint-tempered and sandy wares could all have been locally produced, but some of the more distinctive wares could have been regionally traded from the early Iron Age onwards. For example, glauconitic fabrics QU1 and QU12 at Bossington may belong within a tradition centred on the Upper Greensand to the south-west of Danebury (Cunliffe 1984, 245–6), while the well-sorted flint-tempered fabrics (FL3 and FL5) have parallels on a number of sites across Hampshire, including Brighton Hill

South (Rees 1995a, 35). It has been suggested that refinement in temper processing at this period could reflect the increasing regionalisation of pottery production (Morris 1995, 28; Rees 1995a, 40). Some of the finer, micaceous sandy wares (QU3, QU6), used for early Iron Age fineware bowls, often 'red finished', may be made from brickearth clay which outcrops in the Nadder and Avon valleys to the north of Salisbury (cf. Cunliffe 1984, 245 and 254).

Six vessel forms were identified for this period and are described below. A form/fabric correlation is presented in Table 2.

Form 1: High-shouldered jar, frequently with finger-tip and nail decoration on the rim and shoulder (Fig. 7, nos 1–2). The form resembles types JB1–2 at Danebury, dated c. 500–450 BC (Cunliffe 1984, figs. 6.27–6.31). This form first appears in late Bronze Age plainware assemblages that date from as early as the 11th century BC, e.g. jar types 31 and 51 at Potterne, dated 10th to 6th centuries BC (Gingell and Morris 2000, figs. 53 and 56–8). It is possible, therefore, that coarser, flint-tempered sherds (two impressed shoulders), could be residual within an early to middle Iron Age assemblage.

Form 2: Convex jar with proto-bead rim (Fig. 7, no. 4) Equivalent to jar type JC2 at Danebury (Cunliffe 1984, fig. 6.40), appearing there first alongside the plain saucepan pots (see Form 5, below), and broadly dated as middle Iron Age (c. 400–100/50 BC). One rim sherd from Bossington, decorated with tooled chevrons in bands. A body sherd with similar tooled decoration (Fig. 7, no. 3) probably derives from a second such vessel.

Form 3: Short-necked furrowed bowl (Fig. 7, no. 6). Fineware furrowed bowls are typical of the early All Cannings Cross ceramic style (Cunliffe 1991, fig. A2; Cunliffe 1923, pl. 40, 1). Similar to bowl type 3.1 at Potterne, dated 8th–7th centuries BC (Gingell and Morris 2000, fig. 48, 18, 19, 22), and also found at Houghton Down, near Danebury and 5 km to the north of Bossington (Brown 2000a, form BE1.1, fig. 6.34, 8). Most examples are 'red finished'.

Table 1 Fabric proportions (Site C)

<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>No. sherds</i>	<i>Weight (g)</i>
	LATE BRONZE AGE TO MIDDLE IRON AGE		
C1	Well finished, moderately coarse calcareous fabric (chalk-/limestone-tempered); moderate, fairly well sorted, calcareous fragments <1 mm; sparse calcined flint and quartz <1 mm.	1	10
C2	Coarse calcareous fabric (shelly); moderate, poorly sorted shell <5 mm; sparse calcined flint and quartz <1 mm; rare iron oxides	6	162
	<i>sub-total calcareous wares</i>	7	172
FL1	Coarse, flint-tempered fabric with sandy matrix; moderate, poorly sorted, calcined flint <3 mm; moderate, subrounded quartz <1 mm; iron oxides.	10	62
FL2	Moderately coarse,, flint-tempered fabric; sparse calcined flint <2 mm; sparse organic voids; frequent fine quartz; iron oxides	10	102
FL3	Flint-tempered fineware fabric; moderate, well sorted, calcined flint <1 mm; rare iron oxides; well finished.	2	16
FL4	Moderately coarse flint-tempered fabric with sandy matrix; sparse, poorly sorted, calcined flint <2 mm; moderate, fairly well sorted, subrounded quartz <0.5 mm; sparse glauconite; sparse iron oxides.	26	177
FL5	Well sorted, flint-tempered fabric; common calcined flint <4 mm (most <2 mm); sparse subrounded quartz <0.5 mm; iron oxides.	11	293
FL6	Coarse flint-tempered fabric; moderate, poorly sorted, calcined flint <5 mm; sparse subrounded quartz <0.5 mm; iron oxides.	10	45
	<i>sub-total flint-tempered wares</i>	69	695
QU1	Moderately coarse sandy fabric with shell; common, fairly well sorted, subangular quartz <0.5 mm; sparse shell <3 mm; iron oxides.	74	511
QU2	As fabric QU1 but without shell; glauconitic sandy.	67	343
QU3	Fineware sandy fabric, slightly micaceous; common, well sorted quartz <0.125 mm; very rare coarse flint; sparse glauconite.	37	367
QU4	Fineware sandy fabric with organic inclusions, slightly micaceous; common, well sorted quartz <0.125 mm; moderate organic voids <4 mm long; iron oxides.	4	26
QU5	Burnt pottery, possibly refired; probably representing one or more of the other fabrics defined.	36	216
QU6	Fineware sandy fabric with prominent iron oxides in silty, slightly micaceous matrix; rare fine quartz.	5	70
QU7	Fineware sandy fabric; common, well sorted, subrounded quartz <0.5 mm; rare iron oxides.	38	401
QU10	Fine sandy fabric with organic inclusions; moderate, well sorted quartz <0.25 mm; sparse organic voids <5 mm long	19	114
QU11	Moderately coarse, glauconitic sandy fabric with flint gravel; common, fairly well sorted, subrounded quartz <0.25 mm; rare patinated flint <4 mm.	17	110
QU12	Moderately coarse, glauconitic sandy fabric; moderate, fairly well sorted, subrounded quartz <0.5 mm; moderate glauconite <1 mm; sparse iron oxides.	10	59

Table 1 (cont.) Fabric proportions (Site C)

<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>No. sherds</i>	<i>Weight (g)</i>
QU13	Well finished, fine sandy fabric; common, well sorted, subrounded quartz <0.25 mm	11	145
	<i>sub-total sandy wares</i>	318	2362
	SUB-TOTAL LBA-MIA	394	3229
	LATE IRON AGE/ROMANO-BRITISH		
FL100	Coarse, flint-tempered fabric; common, poorly sorted, calcined flint <3 mm; rare quartz	7	368
FL101	Moderately coarse sandy fabric with flint; common, well sorted quartz <0.25 mm; rare subangular flint <2 mm; well finished	5	90
	<i>sub-total flint-tempered coarsewares</i>	12	458
GR101	Coarse, grog-tempered fabric, slightly soapy feel; common grog <5 mm; sparse quartz <1 mm; iron oxides	390	5289
GR102	Moderately fine grog-tempered fabric, slightly soapy feel; moderate, well sorted grog <1 mm; rare quartz <0.5 mm; iron oxides	22	159
GR103	Fine grog-tempered fabric, soapy feel; moderate, well sorted grog <0.5 mm; sparse subangular flint <1 mm; iron oxides	15	53
	<i>sub-total grog-tempered coarsewares</i>	427	5501
QU100	Coarse greywares moderate quartz, sub-ang <0.5 mm; moderate Iron oxides <1 mm, sub-ang. Sparse mica and organic (Linear voids)	1038	9385
QU101	Fine greyware Frequent quartz <0.10 mm; sparse Iron oxides <1 mm; sparse mica	16	40
QU102	Coarse oxidised wares	90	556
QU103	Coarse whitewares	4	35
QU104	Poole Harbour Ware: frequent quartz <1 mm, sub-rounded; sparse grog, flint grit and Iron oxides <1 mm Q8	48	958
QU105	Frequent quartz <0.5 mm, sub-angular, rare mica Q9	11	207
E100	BB1 unspecified source	236	1998
E101	BB1 with shale inclusions (Seager Smith 1993)	158	2504
	<i>sub-total sandy coarsewares</i>	1601	15683
E306	Central Gaulish samian (early Lezoux)	1	5
E301	South Gaulish samian	12	50
E304	Central Gaulish samian	21	72
E259	Pelichet 47 amphora	1	26
E160	New Forest parchment ware (Fulford 1975a)	11	213
E161	New Forest red-slipped ware (Fulford 1975a)	27	230
E170	Oxfordshire colour coated ware (Young 1977)	19	80
	<i>sub-total finewares</i>	92	676
	SUB-TOTAL LIA/ROMAN	2132	22318
	OVERALL TOTAL	2526	25547

Table 2 Vessel form by fabric and number of sherds (Site C)

<i>IA Form</i>	<i>QU1</i>	<i>QU2</i>	<i>QU3</i>	<i>QU5</i>	<i>QU6</i>	<i>QU7</i>	<i>FL5</i>	<i>C2</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
Form 1	1	1		1					3
Form 2							1		1
Form 3			1						1
Form 3/4		1	1		1	2			5
Form 4						1			1
Form 5								1	1
Form 6							1		1
<i>Total</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Roman Form</i>	<i>GR100</i>	<i>GR101</i>	<i>FL100</i>	<i>E100</i>	<i>E101</i>	<i>QU100</i>	<i>QU104</i>	<i>QU105</i>	
Everted rim jar	6			10	4	27	1	1	49
Necked jar				1	2				3
Storage jar	3					1			4
Bead rim jar		1	1	2	1				5
Beaker		1							1
Bead rim bowl				1		2	2	1	6
'Dog dish'				5		1			6
Flanged bowl				1		2			3
Drop-flange bowl				1					1
Dish								1	1
Platter								1	1
T-rim bowl						1			1
<i>Total</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>81</i>

Form 4: Long-necked furrowed bowl (Fig. 7, no. 5). Typical of the later All Cannings Cross ceramic style and its regional variants (Cunliffe 1991, fig. A6; Cunliff 1923, pl. 28, 1). Resembles bowl type 2 at Potterne, dated late 8th to early 6th centuries BC (Gingell and Morris 2000, fig. 47, 12, 14). Examples have been recovered from Houghton Down, but there associated with short-necked furrowed bowls in 'Earliest Iron Age' (c. 8th century BC) contexts

(Brown 2000a, form BE1.2, fig. 6.34, 6). Most examples are 'red finished'.

Form 3/4: Furrowed bowl, unknown profile. Decorated body sherds could belong to either form 3 or 4. One example also has impressed concentric circles, possibly inlaid with chalk (Fig. 7, no. 7), a decorative technique paralleled within other All Cannings Cross style assemblages, e.g. Potterne (Gingell and Morris 2000, 155).

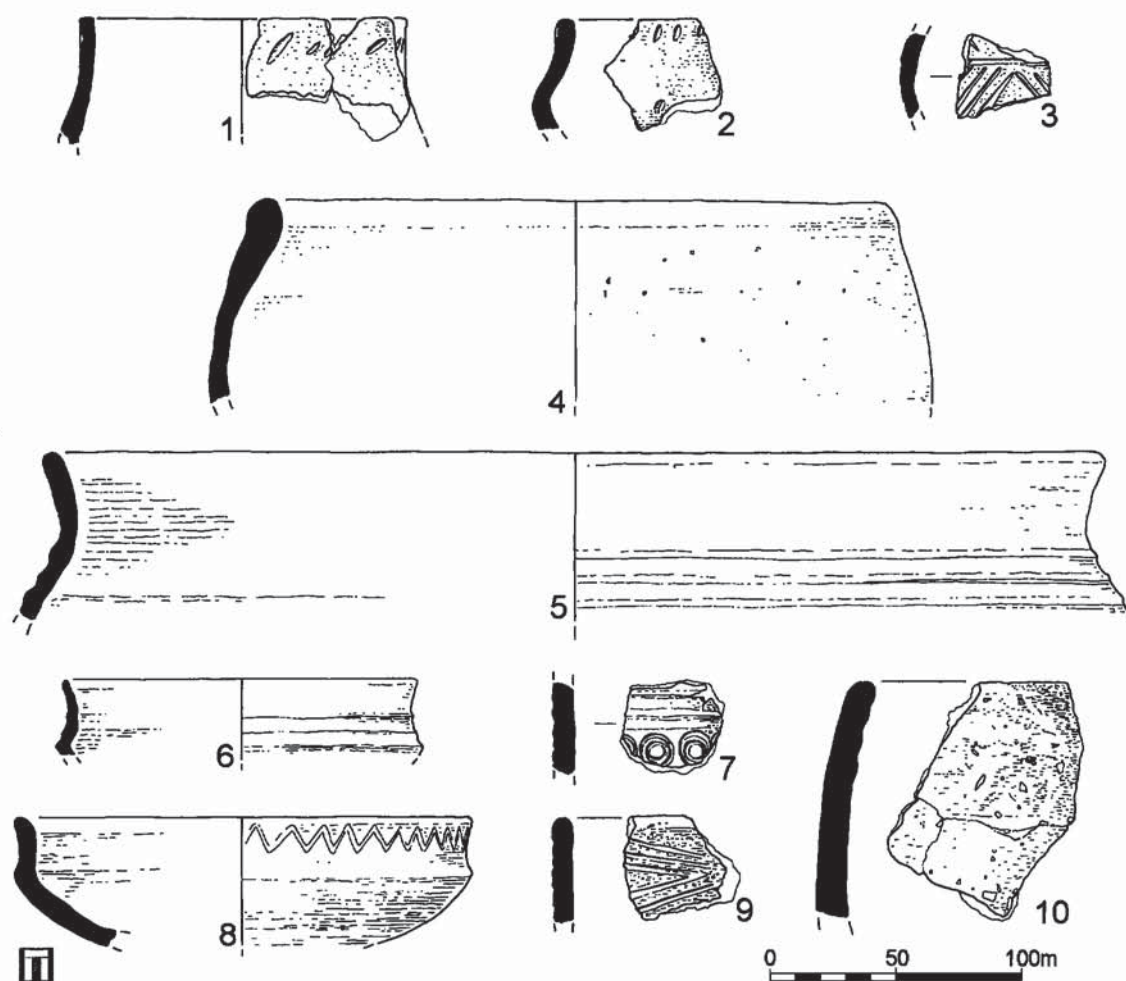


Fig. 7 Iron Age pottery from Site C

Form 5: Plain saucepan pot (Fig. 7, no. 10). Upright or slightly convex walls with undifferentiated, flattened rim. One example only. Equivalent to Danebury type PA2 (Cunliffe 1984, fig. 6.68). At Danebury plain saucepan pots pre-date, but also overlap with distinctive decorated saucepan pots of the Yarnbury-Highfield ceramic style (see Form 6, below), introduced at the end of the early Iron Age. The dating is confirmed at Houghton Down, where the decorated forms are absent (Brown 2000a).

At Balksbury and Old Down Farm they appear to pre-date the decorated forms (Davies 1981, phase 4/5, fig. 24; Rees 1995b, fig. 65).

Form 6: Decorated saucepan pot (Fig. 7, no. 9). One example only, with shallow-tooled decoration below the rim. Corresponds to the St Catharine's Hill-Worthy Down style, equivalent to form PB1 at Danebury, and dated to 400–100/50 BC (Cunliffe 1984, fig. 6.70). The type is widely distributed across Hampshire and

Wiltshire (Cunliffe 1991, fig. A15), including phase 5 at Old Down Farm (Davies 1981, fig. 28).

Eleven sherds (92 g) are blistered and distorted by burning at a very high temperature, and these were recorded as fabric Q5. These were recovered from Iron Age contexts such as posthole 20152 and ditch 2173 as well as a later quarry 20100. Sherds in a similar condition were recovered from postholes associated with circular structures at Houghton Down (Cunliffe and Poole 2000, 25–9), Longbridge Deverill (Notes 1961) and Brighton Hill South (Coe and Newman 1993, 13), where it has been suggested that such sherds were deposited in postholes after the destruction of a structure by fire as a symbolic act (Coe and Newman 1993, 23; Brown 2000, 77). Here they might equally relate to industrial or other settlement activity.

Late Iron Age to early Roman

The remainder of the assemblage dates to the late Iron Age to Roman period. This group includes coarsewares of indigenous Iron Age type – grog-tempered, flint-tempered and sandy – alongside a range of ‘Romanised’ wares, both coarse and fine. Fabric descriptions and quantifications are given in Table 1.

The bulk of the pottery assemblage consists of coarsewares, dominated by sandy wares from several sources, including the Poole Harbour area, the New Forest and Alice Holt kilns. Grog-tempered wares include a few that can be identified as late Roman ‘Wessex Grog Tempered Ware’ (Fulford 1975, 286–92), such as a dropped flange bowl from oven 20363. Small quantities of 3rd to 4th century British finewares were recovered. Imported wares are almost entirely restricted to samian. Central Gaulish products predominate, with a smaller quantity of South Gaulish samian. The only other import is a single sherd from a Pélisset 47 amphora. The late Iron Age to Romano-British pottery is discussed more fully in the project archive, but is considered below in terms of its contribution to dating.

Ceramic sequence and dating

The fabric types, vessel forms and other

attributes such as decorative techniques described above demonstrate a date range for the Bossington assemblage of early Iron Age to late Romano-British, although a continuity of activity on the site throughout that period cannot be conclusively proved. Within that overall range, a number of ceramic phases can be defined, based largely on the sequence from Danebury and other sites in the environs of the hillfort.

Ceramic Phase 1: Vessel forms typical of the early All Cannings Cross ceramic style (Cunliffe 1991, fig. A2): short-necked, furrowed bowls (Fig. 7, no. 6) and shouldered jars, often with impressed decoration (Fig. 7, nos 1–2); ‘red finished’ surface treatment. Fabrics are mainly sandy with some flint-tempered; seen in ‘Earliest Iron Age’ phase at Houghton Down (Brown 2000a). Date range 8th to 7th centuries BC.

Ceramic Phase 2: Vessel forms typical of the later All Cannings Cross ceramic style (Cunliffe 1991, fig. A6). Equivalent to ceramic phases 1–3 at Danebury (Cunliffe 1984, fig. 6.17) and phase 3 at Old Down Farm (Davies 1981, figs. 15–16). Long-necked, furrowed bowls (Fig. 7, no. 5); coarseware shouldered jars; fineware vessels still ‘red finished’. Date range 6th to mid 4th centuries BC.

Ceramic Phase 3: Appearance of middle Iron Age forms; plain saucepan pots (Fig. 7, no. 10) and convex jars with ‘proto-bead’ rims (Fig. 7, no. 4); equivalent to ceramic phases 4–5 at Danebury (Cunliffe 1984, fig. 6.18) and phase 4/5 at Old Down Farm (Davies 1981, fig. 24). Date range mid 4th to 3rd centuries BC.

Ceramic Phase 4: later middle Iron Age forms; decorated saucepan pots (Fig. 7, no. 9), continuation of convex jars; well sorted, flint-tempered fabrics; equivalent to ceramic phases 6–7 at Danebury (Cunliffe 1984, fig. 6.19) and phase 5 at Old Down Farm (Davies 1981, fig. 28). Date range 3rd to 1st centuries BC.

Ceramic Phase 5: Transitional late Iron Age to early Romano-British; ‘indigenous’ tradi-

tions, e.g. flint-tempered and grog-tempered wares, also Poole Harbour wares and early Black Burnished ware (platters (Fig. 7, no. 8), everted rim and bead rim jars), alongside the first 'Romanised' sandy wares (wheel thrown) and samian. Equivalent to phase 6 at Old Down Farm (Davies 1981, fig. 37); date range 1st century BC to 1st century AD.

Ceramic Phase 6: early to mid Romano-British; mostly 'Romanised' wares, with Central Gaulish samian, Black Burnished ware (dog dishes, flanged bowls, everted rim jars); 2nd to 3rd centuries AD.

Ceramic Phase 7: Appearance of later Roman wares and forms; New Forest and Oxfordshire colour coated wares and mortaria; Black Burnished ware (dropped flange bowls), late grog-tempered wares; handmade sandy storage jars with cable rims and perforated body walls; date range 3rd to 4th centuries AD.

Iron Age contexts have proved most difficult to place within this chronological framework, as there are only 13 identifiable vessel forms from the whole site (see Table 2), and evidence of repeated reworking of earlier deposits, resulting in redeposition of earlier pottery. Most early Iron Age contexts are broadly phased as ceramic phase 1–2 on the presence of furrowed bowl body sherds and/or shouldered jars (e.g. the lower fills of ditch 20098; Fig. 7, no. 1). The extent of redeposition is indicated by late Iron Age quarry complex 21000, which produced contexts phased to cps 1 and 2 respectively, including some of the best examples of early Iron Age finewares from the site (e.g. Fig. 7, nos 6–7) and the only positively identified long-necked furrowed bowl (Fig. 7, no. 5). No contexts could be phased to either one of cps 3 or 4, although three contexts are broadly phased as cp3–4 (secondary fills of the triangular enclosure ditch and the triple-ditched enclosure. While pottery was absent from most primary ditch fills, the evidence indicates that most of the ditches excavated were first dug in the early/middle Iron Age, and had largely silted up

before Romano-British activity resulted in the dumping of refuse into the upper fills.

The continuation of indigenous late Iron Age ceramic traditions into the early Roman period means that the isolation of ceramic phase 5 contexts is not straightforward – a number have been thus assigned, but more are broadly phased to cps 5–6. Ceramic phase 7 is easily characterised by the presence of British finewares and distinctive late forms such as the dropped flange bowls and handmade storage jars with perforated body walls (e.g. upper fills of pit 20036 and ditch 20041/20083, oven 20363).

Catalogue of illustrated sherds (Fig. 6)

1. Shouldered jar with diagonal slashes below the rim; fabric QU5. Context 20025; ditch 20098.
2. Bi-partite bowl with impressed rim and shoulder; fabric QU2. Context 20168; quarry pit 20166.
3. Decorated body sherd; tooled chevrons in bands; fabric QU3. Context 20255; ditch 20253
4. Convex jar with bead rim; fabric FL5. Context 20218; ditch 20083.
5. Long-necked furrowed bowl; fabric QU7. Context 20352, pit 20344.
6. Short-necked furrowed bowl; fabric QU4. Context 20168, quarry pit 20166.
7. Decorated body sherd from furrowed bowl, with repeated impressed motif of concentric circles, possibly originally white inlaid; fabric QU6. Context 20168; quarry pit 20166.
8. Imitation Gallo-Belgic type shallow bowl/platter; tooled decoration around neck; fabric QU105. Context 20084; ditch 20083
9. Saucepan pot with tooled decoration below rim; fabric FL5. Context 20298; quarry pit 20092.
10. Plain saucepan pot; fabric C2. Context 20204, ditch 20083.

Metalwork by Stephanie Knight

An iron object (Fig. 8, no. 1), from a secondary fill (20049) of pit 20036, could be either a type of ox goad or a stylus, both of which are known from other Romano-British sites in England (Manning 1985, 142). It is identical to objects from Vindolanda, which had clearly been used as pens – attached to a wooden shank, one

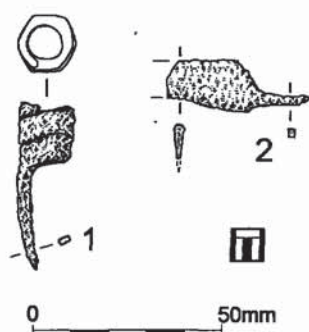


Fig. 8 Iron objects from Site C

bearing ink at the foot of the shaft, others with a hole bored down the shaft, to create a fountain pen (Birley 2002, 35, fig. 26). However, on balance given the type of site and the context, it is more likely to be an ox goad.

A small iron knife fragment (Fig. 8, no. 2) from the final filling (20046) of the same feature is of a type common on Iron Age and Romano-British sites in the region (Sellwood 1984; Manning 1985). Other finds (nails, lead scrap, and a perforated copper-alloy disk) did not indicate any specialised activity or industry on the site.

Animal bone by Stephanie Knight

Of the 1439 fragments of animal bone at Bossington, 86% came from ditches, with the remainder from 12 pits (9%), gullies, quarries, hearths and an oven. Over two-thirds of the assemblage came from deposits producing mixed ceramic dating. Thus many of the bones are also likely to be residual. Full details are available in the project archive (Knight 2003) and only the more significant aspects are reported here.

Animal bone was recorded using standard methods, following von den Driesch (1976), Grant (1982), Silver (1969) and von den Driesch and Boessneck (1974). Following an assessment of the effects of post-depositional disturbance on bone from the mixed contexts (based on element size and fracture type; Knight 2003, archive tables AB1–2) it was concluded that

they were unlikely to contain bone that reflects use in specific periods, and all such bones were excluded from subsequent analysis.

Bones from unmixed deposits number 469, and of these, 204 (44%) could be identified to species. 16% had been gnawed by dogs, indicating surface deposition of some bones while still carrying flesh or containing marrow, but despite this the condition of the majority of bones was good with less than 1% in poor condition and 12% in fair condition. Some more fragile elements may therefore be under-represented and butchery marks may be obscured.

Early to middle Iron Age

One hundred and seven bones were recovered from this phase, of which 42% were identified. Cattle and sheep/goat (no positive goat) were the most common (Table 3), with at least one mature male pig and an equid also represented. One individual over four years at death, and another not yet this old were indicated from the fusion stages of cattle proximal tibiae. One unfused distal sheep/goat metatarsal suggests an individual of less than 28 months.

Butchery practice included fine knife cuts for disarticulation, a technique typical of the Iron Age (Grant 1987). One sheep/goat-sized long bone with a sliver sheared off perhaps resulted from defleshing activity or crude bone working. No biases in bone element representation were found that could indicate off-site trade in particular meat parts or bones, characterise the assemblage as butchery or consumption waste or signify definite taphonomic effects such as canine destruction. The sample is too small to investigate further the possibility of differential deposition or survival by feature type, and no withers heights could be estimated.

Late Iron Age to Romano-British

Forty-five percent of the 325 bone fragments were identified (Table 4).

Sheep/goat: One foetal sheep/goat and another over 30 months of age were represented. However, large numbers of radius and tibia shafts indicate the presence of at least four individuals, and one skull was from a horned

Table 3 Early-Middle Iron Age – representation of species, with absolute numbers in brackets (Site C)

<i>Species</i>	<i>NISP</i>		<i>MNE</i>		<i>MNI</i>	
Cattle	44%	(20)	39%	(11)	33%	(2)
Sheep/goat	27%	(12)	32%	(9)	33%	(2)
Pig	24%	(11)	21%	(6)	17%	(1)
Equid	4%	(2)	7%	(2)	17%	(1)
Unidentified	(62)					
Total	(107)					

NISP = number of identified specimens

MNE = minimum number of skeletal elements

MNI = minimum number of individuals

Table 4 Late Iron Age to Romano-British – representation of species, with absolute numbers in brackets (Site C)

<i>Species</i>	<i>NISP</i>		<i>MNE</i>		<i>MNI</i>	
Cattle	30%	(44)	23%	(15)	13%	(2)
Sheep/goat	42%	(61)	40%	(26)	27%	(4)
Pig	16%	(23)	17%	(11)	20%	(3)
Horse	9%	(13)	12%	(8)	7%	(1)
Dog	1%	(1)	2%	(1)	7%	(1)
Hare	1%	(1)	2%	(1)	7%	(1)
Fowl	1%	(2)	3%	(2)	13%	(2)
Corvid	1%	(1)	2%	(1)	7%	(1)
Unidentified	(179)					
Total	(325)					

breed. Epiphyses are few (a probable product of canine gnawing) and no withers heights could be calculated, but the bones were small and slender, typical of the Iron Age. A mandible showed slight extra bone growth on the ventral margin in the area of the fourth premolar root. Periodontal disease was relatively common at Danebury, suggested by Grant (1984) to be

from overgrazing, which may also be the case here.

Most of the butchery marks were from rough chopping or fracturing the bone typical of the Romano-British period (Dobney *et al.* 1996), although finer knife cuts on bone from an upper fill 20193 of the triangular enclosure ditch are more typical of the careful butchery

technique practised at other Iron Age sites (above), and these bones may be residual.

Cattle. At least one animal of over three years and another of under three years were represented. No withers heights could be estimated due to the very few complete epiphyses, but the size of the bone metaphyses indicate that the cattle were relatively small. Bones were fractured across shafts, presumably to extract marrow, and some were chopped through to roughly portion the carcass. No deposits rich in cattle horn cores, which might suggest tanning or horn processing activity, were noted at Bossington, although some were suggested for Brighton Hill South (Maltby 1995b, 56).

Pig. One pig of under a year of age, another of around three years and a foetal individual were noted. A canine tooth indicated one mature male was present. Butchery marks for portioning the pelvic bone and splitting a humerus for marrow were noted.

Horse. At least one medium sized horse of over three years at death was present. No butchery marks were noted, but this does not necessarily mean that horses were not eaten, and as the bones were found in a range of contexts, the animal was probably disarticulated before deposition.

Other animals. Only one dog bone was recovered, the radius of a small animal aged over one year. Relatively few remains from wild species were recovered, and include a hare scapula from the silting of the triangular enclosure ditch and an antler tine.

The bird species represented include both wild and domestic individuals. Two small-sized fowl, one of which was immature, indicate the consumption of young animals or breeding on/near site, as would be expected in a rural area. Fowl have also been recovered from Iron Age layers at nearby Houghton Down, Danebury and other sites (Hamilton 2000; Grant 1984), although they are more frequently found in Romano-British contexts.

A corvid (rook or crow) ulna was found in a

secondary fill of ditch 20144 and another was recovered from a mixed upper fill of the triangular enclosure). The bones of corvids are not unusual in the Iron Age and are found, for example, in ditches at nearby Houghton Down (Hamilton 2000, 139). There are no butchery marks to suggest consumption but butchery need not mark the skeleton (Grant 1987) and corvids can be eaten. Alternatively, they may be the remains of deliberately killed pests, or symbolic deposits, either as a whole skeleton (Grant 1984, 540), or as a body part (Hill 1995, 48). Sample size and incomplete excavation limit further interpretation.

The only fish bone was the haemal vertebra of a flatfish similar in morphology to a flounder, from a Romano-British context. Flounders can travel upstream out of spawning season (February-May), but it is perhaps more likely to have been caught at sea, which would indicate some travel or trade between Bossington and coastal areas.

Charred plant remains by Chris J Stevens

Charred plant remains were recovered from a small number of late Iron Age to Romano-British contexts and an undated, but probably early to middle Iron Age pit (Table 5). Only the two samples from pit 20036, possibly a badly disturbed/robbed grain drier, produced any quantity of chaff and seeds of wild species. The results may therefore be unrepresentative of the site as a whole.

The main cereals represented were hulled wheats. From the identification of glume bases only spelt wheat (*Triticum spelta*) was seen to be present. Barley (*Hordeum* sp.) while represented by the occasional grains was relatively scarce. A single grain still within its hull demonstrated the presence of the hulled rather than the cultivated variety. The presence of such low numbers of cereal remains in oven 20363 is not unusual as such features tended to be kept clean. There is no strong reason to link the barley to the use of the oven.

Seeds of wild species as stated above were commonest in those samples from pit 20036. That such seeds are thought to come from

Table 5 Charred plant remains (Site C)

Period	?Early/ Middle Iron Age		Iron Age/Romano British		
Feature	Pit	Pits		Hearth/ Oven	
Feature No.	20096	20036		20112	20363
Context	20296	20049	20049	20369	20384
Sample	23006	23000	23002	23011	23060
Sample Volume. litres	8	10	9	9	1.5
Flot Volume. ml	40	40	40	50	5
Roots	10	10	12	5	0.5
CEREALS					
<i>Hordeum</i> sp. (grains)	1	1	2	2	10+cf.1
<i>Hordeum</i> sp. (hulled grains)	1	–	–	–	–
<i>Triticum</i> sp. (grains)	–	–	–	–	–
<i>Triticum</i> sp. (rachis fragments)	–	1	–	–	–
<i>Triticum dicoccum/spelta</i> (grains)	1	1	11	1	1
<i>Triticum spelta</i> (glumes)	–	2	16	–	–
<i>Triticum dicoccum/spelta</i> (spikelet fork)	–	4	1	–	–
<i>Triticum dicoccum/spelta</i> (glumes)	2	46	60	–	–
<i>Triticum dicoccum/spelta</i> (rachis frag)	–	3	1	–	–
<i>Triticum aestivum</i> sl (grains)	–	–	–	–	–
Cereal indet. (grain)	1	2	–	2	2
Cereal indet. (grain fragments)	–	14	6	4	2
Cereal indet. (culm node)	–	–	2	–	–
SPECIES					
<i>Crateagus monogyna</i>	–	1 stone	–	1 thorn	–
<i>Corylus avellana</i> (frags)	–	–	3	–	–
Chenopodiaceae indet.	–	–	–	1	–
<i>Chenopodium album</i>	1	–	–	–	–
<i>Atriplex</i> sp.	–	1	2	–	–
<i>Persicaria</i> sp.	–	1	–	–	–
Polygonaceae indet.	–	–	3	–	–

Table 5 Charred plant remains (Site C)

<i>Period</i>	<i>?Early/ Middle Iron Age</i>	<i>Iron Age/Romano British</i>			
<i>Feature</i>	<i>Pit</i>	<i>Pits</i>			<i>Hearth/ Oven</i>
<i>Feature No.</i>	<i>20096</i>	<i>20036</i>	<i>20112</i>	<i>20363</i>	
<i>Context</i>	<i>20296</i>	<i>20049</i>	<i>20049</i>	<i>20369</i>	<i>20384</i>
<i>Sample</i>	<i>23006</i>	<i>23000</i>	<i>23002</i>	<i>23011</i>	<i>23060</i>
<i>Sample Volume. litres</i>	8	10	9	9	1.5
<i>Flot Volume. ml</i>	40	40	40	50	5
<i>Roots</i>	10	10	12	5	0.5
<i>Rumex sp.</i>	–	2	1	–	–
<i>Mentha/Stachys sp.</i>	–	1	–	–	–
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	–	1	–	–	–
<i>Trifolium sp.</i>	–	15	12	–	–
<i>Medicago sp.</i>	–	–	2	–	–
<i>Lathyrus/Vicia sp.</i>	–	2	8	1	–
<i>Odonities vernus</i>	–	–	2	–	–
<i>Hyoscyamus niger</i>	–	1	1	–	–
<i>Galium aparine</i>	1	–	–	1	–
<i>Tripleurospermum inodorum</i>	cf.1	–	–	–	–
<i>Cyperaceae indet.</i>	2	–	1	–	–
<i>Carex sp.</i>	1	–	–	–	–
<i>Poaceae indet. (Avena/Lolium/Elymus)</i>	–	4	1	–	1
<i>Lolium sp.</i>	–	1	–	1	–
<i>Poa sp.</i>	–	–	1	–	–
<i>Poa/Phleum sp.</i>	–	13	3	–	–
<i>Avena sp. (grain)</i>	–	–	2	–	–
<i>Avena sp. (awn)</i>	–	1	–	–	–
<i>Avena sp. (floret base)</i>	–	1	6	–	–
<i>Seed indet.</i>	–	3	–	–	–
<i>Tree buds indet.</i>	–	–	–	1	–
<i>Fish bone (eel)</i>	–	1	1	–	–

species growing as weeds within ancient fields such an association is to be expected. The main species represented were clover (*Trifolium* sp.) along with grasses (*Poa/Phleum* sp.). Other species represented such as vetch/wild pea (*Vicia/Latyrus* sp.), rye grass (*Lolium* sp.), cleavers (*Galium* sp.), dock (*Rumex* sp.), orache (*Atriplex* sp.) and oats (*Avena* sp.)

Crop husbandry

Glume bases and small weed seeds dominate the two samples, while there is relatively little grain present. Similar assemblages have been interpreted as representative of waste from the processing of crops taken from their storage in a relatively unclean state. It may have been the case that after harvest only threshing and winnowing were conducted. This is in some contrast with other later Iron Age and early Roman sites in the region. For example Dairy Lane, Nursling (Southampton) had very relatively few weed seeds and mainly those of larger seed species (Hinton 1997). Those from Figheldean, Wiltshire perhaps had slightly greater similarity, with more seeds of grasses, clovers and medick present, while seeds of wetlands were relatively absent. In terms of the proportions of grains, large and small weeds the samples from Figheldean were quite variable. Those from Figheldean I (Ede 1993) being dominated to a much greater extent by smaller weed seeds than what was found at Figheldean II (Hinton 1999).

Hillman (1981) has used the height of species whose seeds are recovered from archaeobotanical assemblages as indicative of harvesting height. The presence of low growing species such as clover (*Trifolium* sp.) can then be interpreted as representing the reaping of cereals relatively low down on the culm.

Land snail evidence by Michael J Allen

The triangular enclosure ditch was extensively sampled for land snails in two locations (segments 20041 and 20083). A column of 23 samples was taken through the majority of the infill sequence in segment 20041, with a spot sample from the primary fill of segment

20083), but some of the coarse chalk rubbles were excluded (see Fig. 3). A fuller analytical report is available in the project archive (Allen 2004). The results of analysis are summarised in Table 6, while the main findings are summarised here and contribute to the discussion (below).

Primary fills (mollusc zone 1)

The nine samples from the coarse primary chalk fill (20256) and the fine chalky soil wash (20246) produced a relatively consistent series of assemblages that are dominated by open country species, and indicate an enclosure ditch cut into a pre-existing and established open chalk downland in the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age, from which any primary deciduous woodland had been long cleared, if indeed it ever existed (cf. Allen 2002; French *et al.* 2003). The significant presence of shade loving species (18%), including *Aegopinella* and *Discus*, within these assemblages tends to suggest leaf litter and possibly tall unkempt grass of open hawthorn sere (Evans 1972, 190), with some bushes and shady vegetation in the vicinity to provide a refuge for the shade-loving species. Towards the top of the primary fills the presence of *Punctum* and *Vitrina* of Evans' *Punctum* Group (Evans 1972, 195–6) tends to indicate the inception of some stabilisation and vegetation establishment in the ditch. This, therefore, indicates the nature of the ditch and surrounding environment at the time of construction and for at least 30–50 years following that (cf. Bell *et al.* 1996), probably far longer, contemporary with the use of the main enclosure, as contexts in this zone produced pottery dating from Ceramic Phases 1 to 4 (8th–1st centuries BC).

Lower secondary fills (mollusc zones 2 and 3)

At the base of the calcareous silty clay secondary fill (context 20265), the assemblage suggests that the surrounding area in the late Iron Age to early Roman period was an open, lightly-grazed downland. The lack of very dry open country species or of species typical of trampled grassland (cf. Chappell *et al.* 1971) tend to indicate that any intensively farmed downland with tilled or heavily grazed fields

did not encroach on the enclosure, at least at the sampling point on the (north-west) side.

A significant change is seen in the mollusc assemblage from the upper part of context 20265 (mollusc zone 3), in terms of species composition, shell numbers and species diversity. Shade-loving species decline and the sharp rise in *Vallonia costata*, and *Pupilla* tend to suggest an inwash of sediment (cf. Bell *et al.* 1996) from dry short grassland or possibly tilled land surrounding the ditch. All diversity indices drop, suggesting a more uniform habitat around the enclosure. Perhaps this inwash reflects arable or pasture field encroaching on the enclosure.

The bulk of the pottery from contexts in mollusc zones 2–3 date to the late Iron Age to early Roman period. The three sherds of Ceramic Phase 7 (later Roman) from (20242) should perhaps be regarded as intrusive.

Secondary fills (mollusc zone 4)

The mollusc assemblages from the main secondary fill (mollusc zone 4a; context 20259) show a number of changes. The assemblages progressively reflect more mesic and shady environments despite the fills making the ditch shallower (less than 1 m). A steady increase in the Zonitidae, *Carychium* and *Discus* suggest a return to and re-establishment of long grassy vegetation within the ditch, and possibly over the adjacent bank too. The nature of the wider environment cannot be determined due to the 'swamping' effect of the rich local (ditch and bank) mollusc community.

At the top of the secondary fill, a second clear buried soil (mollusc zone 4b; context 20082) developed, and is shown in a rise in shell numbers to nearly 1700 per kilogram. The establishment of a more continuous long grassy sward is seen in the rise in *Carychium*, and the increase in *Cochlicopa lubricella* might indicate a change in the nature of local landuse. The context produced a mixed assemblage of pottery dating from Ceramic Phases 5–6. The shallow ditch profile would be less shady and conducive to grazing by sheep and goats. The landscape was more uniform, and the ditch and bank which were almost completely vegetated.

Tertiary fills (mollusc zone 5)

The main tertiary fills (mollusc zone 5a; contexts 20051 and 20235) are clearly finer and contain more soil-derived material (cf. Evans 1972, 321–8). These fills span the Roman period. Apart from an increase in open country loving taxa, no significant change can be seen in the local land-use, although the excavated features (above) might suggest more intensive use of the site in the 3rd and 4th century.

The upper tertiary fills (mollusc zone 5b; context 20042) show an increase in shade-loving species, probably representing the abandonment of the site and grass covering the infilled ditch and a shallow bank. Although dated to the late Roman-British period (Ceramic Phase 7), the presence of a relatively significant proportion of the introduced Helicellids suggests a medieval or later date for this upper fill.

DISCUSSION

The excavation offered an opportunity to investigate the previously unexcavated enclosures at Fir Hill, Bossington, a site only known from aerial photography (Palmer 1984, figs 7 and 27). The relatively small and narrow extent of the excavation trench (Fig. 2) limits the scope of the interpretation offered, although a number of significant aspects may be mentioned.

Based on the results of Palmer's (1984) survey, Cunliffe placed Fir Hill within a group of enclosed settlements, which he saw as forming a potentially near-complete Iron Age settlement pattern in the Test Valley/Wallop Brook area to the south of Danebury (1984, 552, fig. 10.2). The known sites lie roughly equidistant from each other, c. 1 km from a river, on sloping ground at around 50–100 m aOD. If contemporary and discrete, each site potentially commanded some 200 ha of river valley, arable and downland (*ibid.*).

At c. 2.1 ha, the main triangular enclosure (Fig. 2) is unlike small enclosed farmsteads elsewhere in Hampshire. These tend to be on a much smaller scale, such as those excavated at Brighton Hill South (Fasham and Keevill 1995). The scale of the ditches alone suggests

Phase		Early Iron Age to Middle Iron Age (CP1 – 4)										Iron Age – Roman (CP 5– 6)										Later Romano– British (CP7)									
Feature		ditch 20041																													
20083																															
Fill		Iry		primary				secondary				tertiary																			
Context		20208	20256	20246				20265				20259				20082		20051		20235		20042									
mollusc zone		I						2				3		4a		4b		5a		5b											
Sample		23042	23009	23010	23013	23014	23015	23016	23017	23018	23019	23021	23022	23023	23024	23025	23026	23027	23028	23029	23030	23031	23032	23033	23034						
<i>Vireo contracta</i> (Westerlund)		2	-	-	2	5	5	12	3	15	19	69	28	7	1	8	10	17	11	2	1	9	3	2	2						
<i>Nesovireo hammonis</i> (Ström)		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-							
<i>Agropinella pura</i> (Alder)		-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	-	-	2	16	3	1	-	-	-	1	-							
<i>Agropinella nitidula</i> (Draparnaud)		4	5	2	5	4	9	9	4	10	6	28	37	9	11	34	93	149	16	-	2	8	5	11							
<i>Oxychilus cellarius</i> (Müller)		-	3	3	4	16	9	4	7	11	9	60	30	7	3	13	47	61	6	-	-	5	2	3							
Limacidae		-	4	1	-	3	2	2	1	12	20	29	22	26	27	31	69	154	20	1	5	29	46	14							
<i>Cecliooides acicula</i> (Müller)		-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	15	21	46	188	127	136							
<i>Ochrodina laminata</i> (Montagu)		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	+	-	-	1								
<i>Clausilia bidentata</i> (Ström)		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	6	10	8	1	1	3	6	13	5	-	-	3	1	1							
<i>Candidula intersecta</i> (Poirer)		-	-	-	-	1	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	1	-								
<i>Ceruella virgata</i> (da Costa)		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1								
<i>Helicella itala</i> (Linnaeus)		3	1	-	2	1	3	3	2	6	6	2	10	15	13	20	24	17	5	1	1	8	8								
<i>Trichia hispida</i> (Linnaeus)		4	19	15	27	35	39	49	30	35	47	113	152	104	77	76	83	168	28	2	5	43	42								
<i>Helicogona lapicida</i> (Linnaeus)		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	1	-	+	-								
<i>Cepaea hortensis</i> (Müller)		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1								
<i>Cepaea</i> spp.		-	+	1	1	2	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	8	-	+	-	3	-								
<i>Cepaea/Ariantia</i> spp.		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	7	12	+	1	-	-	17	3	-	1	-	2								
TOTAL		38	112	92	99	148	174	220	191	245	357	1085	1059	754	231	406	830	265	18	52	315	324	187								
Taxa		8	12	11	13	16	15	15	13	17	16	18	19	17	15	20	20	21	22	8	13	20	22								
Shannon Index		1.84	1.93	1.89	1.92	2.17	2.03	2.09	1.87	2.27	2.22	2.16	2.29	2.04	2.11	2.49	2.48	2.48	2.64	1.88	2.10	2.21	2.18								
Brillouin Index		1.58	1.77	1.72	1.75	2.01	1.90	1.97	1.76	2.15	2.13	2.12	2.25	1.99	2.00	2.40	2.43	2.44	2.50	1.44	1.80	2.10	2.01								
Shannon Index – Brillouin Index		0.27	0.16	0.17	0.18	0.16	0.13	0.12	0.11	0.12	0.09	0.04	0.04	0.05	0.11	0.09	0.05	0.04	0.14	0.44	0.30	0.10									
Index																															
Delta 2		0.81	0.81	0.80	0.81	0.84	0.82	0.83	0.78	0.85	0.85	0.84	0.87	0.83	0.83	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.91	0.82	0.83	0.84	0.84								
Delta 4		4.81	4.33	4.25	4.48	5.63	4.55	4.95	3.68	5.72	5.69	5.32	6.58	4.75	5.09	9.00	8.77	8.71	10.3	6.25	5.70	5.46	5.42								

the effort of more than one extended family. Indeed, the excavation has confirmed what was already clear from the aerial photographs – that it is only part of a complex system of enclosures and possible unenclosed settlement – extending over at least 10.7 ha (Palmer 1984, 52). That additional features, such as the triple-ditched enclosure not seen on aerial photographs, were recorded even in the narrow excavated transect should caution against making general statements about the form and development of the enclosure based on the cropmark evidence alone. Similarly it might be anticipated that other sites located on clay-with-flints subsoil may only be partially visible as cropmarks.

The ceramic evidence (above) suggests a late Bronze Age to early Iron Age (cf. the 'Earliest Iron Age' at Houghton Down, Cunliffe and Poole 2000, 17) origin to the enclosure complex, but no close dating is available, and it is not possible to determine the duration of use or occupation within the later 1st millennium BC. However, there is tentative evidence for a two phase development of the triangular enclosure. Substantial amounts of chalk eroding into the ditch fills, as well as the snail evidence, suggests the presence of associated banks, and the 'V'-shaped profile of many of the ditches indicates an initial defensive intent, although once the main triangular enclosure ditch was created, it appears to have been allowed to silt up naturally and was never recut. By contrast other parts of the complex (such as the triple-ditched enclosure) appear to have been scoured out on a number of occasions.

Apart from the pottery there was little strong evidence for Iron Age settlement within the enclosure. To some extent this might be explained by truncation of the ground surface by later agriculture, but the absence of other settlement finds – such as the iron, worked bone, stone and fired clay typical at other sites in the area such as Danebury or Houghton Down must be significant. It remains probable that Iron Age settlement was focussed to the south of the area investigated, but the possibility that the enclosures had another function, perhaps as a refuge, gathering place, or stock-

enclosure should not be excluded. From the limited evidence it is not possible to discuss continuity of activity between the late Iron Age and Romano-British periods, although the creation of the road is a strong indication of the disuse of the enclosure or at least the need for a ditch. Dated Romano-British features, including one or more ovens and a possible grain drier, are more indicative of settlement on the site itself – although presumably associated with the newly built road.

Environment and economy

It is not possible to relate the observed patterns within the land snail assemblages (above) to the wider landscape history in any detail because of the lack of detailed chronology from the ditch profiles to which the molluscan assemblages are directly related. This problem has been discussed elsewhere (see Allen 1997). The evidence is tightly focussed on the micro-environment of the main enclosure ditch (above). In general terms, the early Iron Age enclosure was inserted into an open scrubby downland. Woodland and shrubs existed locally, providing woodland for browsing animals, and possibly some of the timber requirements for the site. As grass became established over the earthworks, the enclosure survived in open downland, with episodes of short grazed grassland and tillage. The wider landscape (the 'Danebury environs' to the north) seems to have remained as open rolling downland, predominantly of pasture and fields, with managed copses and woods. Much of the higher occupied downs seem to have been grazed or tilled. This pattern may have persisted into the medieval period.

Charcoal analysis suggests that by the Romano-British period, small stands of woodland remained on the poorer soils or those less suited to agriculture. These would have been essential for the provision of resources such as timber, fuel, tanbark and fodder. Woodland species including oak, ash and field maple were identified from the pit 20036. Hazel may have grown as understorey, perhaps coppiced, amongst other woodland trees (Gale 2004).

The paucity of recovered plant remains limits any discussion of the economic basis of the site. Spelt wheat dominates the few sampled contexts, which were predominantly of late Iron Age–early Romano-British date. Animal bone analysis suggests that most contexts at Bossington contain the refuse of a subsistence economy with possible small-scale craft or industrial activity. There was no evidence of articulated (partial) skeletons or placed skulls, Grant's (1984) 'special deposits' which are recorded in many Iron Age settlements in Southern Britain, although this could simply be a reflection of the limited fieldwork.

The range of bone elements indicates that whole animals were bred or brought onto site, and neonatal/foetal remains of various species suggest breeding at or near the ditch system. The predominance of sheep/goat corresponds to Houghton Down (Hamilton 2000, 175), Danebury (Grant 1984), Balksbury (Maltby 1995a), and other Iron Age sites (Wilson 1978, 136), but too few ageable bones are present to determine whether animals were kept for meat, milk or wool. A mixture of all three is most likely and no seasonal cull is in evidence. Sheep may have been overgrazed. Domestic animals were small, similar in size to other Iron Age sites in Southern Britain (Maltby 1994). However, comparisons with other sites are limited by the relatively small sample of datable material at Bossington.

Bird, marine fish and, perhaps, hare bone indicate some variety in the diet, especially in the Romano-British period; the fish bone is from a context with no Iron Age pottery. However, the lack of freshwater molluscs (Table 6 and Allen 2004) may tentatively indicate that there was little exploitation of local riverine and wetland resources in contrast to other Iron Age hill top sites (although again this could simply be a factor of the small sample size). No definite chronological differences could be established due to the very small numbers of bones from the early to middle Iron Age. A wider range of species and more sheep/goat were found in the later period, but the former at least is probably due to larger sample size.

A ROMANO-BRITISH CEMETERY NEAR BROOK (SITE E)

A previously unidentified Romano-British cemetery was recorded near Brook (Figs 1 and 9, Site E), after contractors reported a discovery of human remains. Machine stripping of topsoil exposed a total of 76 features cut into weathered natural chalk, including ditches and pits as well as possible inhumation and cremation graves. The site lay just above the eastern edge of the floodplain of the River Test, at 30–35 m aOD, and the excavated area was centred on NGR 434140 129000.

The cemetery lay on a north-south axis approximately along the centre of the proposed pipeline route (Fig. 10). The adopted mitigation strategy involved a modification of the pipeline route at the north end of the site to avoid the majority of features. Most features were left unexcavated and recorded in plan only. The exceptions were a group of six inhumation graves, some intercutting, at the north end of the site, which could not be avoided by the pipeline route, and a further group of five intercutting inhumation graves at the south end of the site, excavated in order to provide further information on the date and character of the burials. No cremation graves were excavated. An outline of the development of the cemetery can be determined from the recorded plan, although it must be viewed as conjectural only.

Cemetery development

Two shallow, intercutting ditches (70021 and 70023) may represent the eastern boundary of the cemetery (Fig. 10). They were aligned north-south, parallel with the earliest phase of burials. Towards the south of the site two unexcavated ditches (70119 and 70121) suggest that the cemetery was subdivided into a number of enclosures. There was no evidence to indicate whether it grew up within an existing field-system or was laid out anew; the ditch fills contained small quantities of 3rd- and 4th-century pottery, including Oxfordshire red-slipped, as well as earlier material.

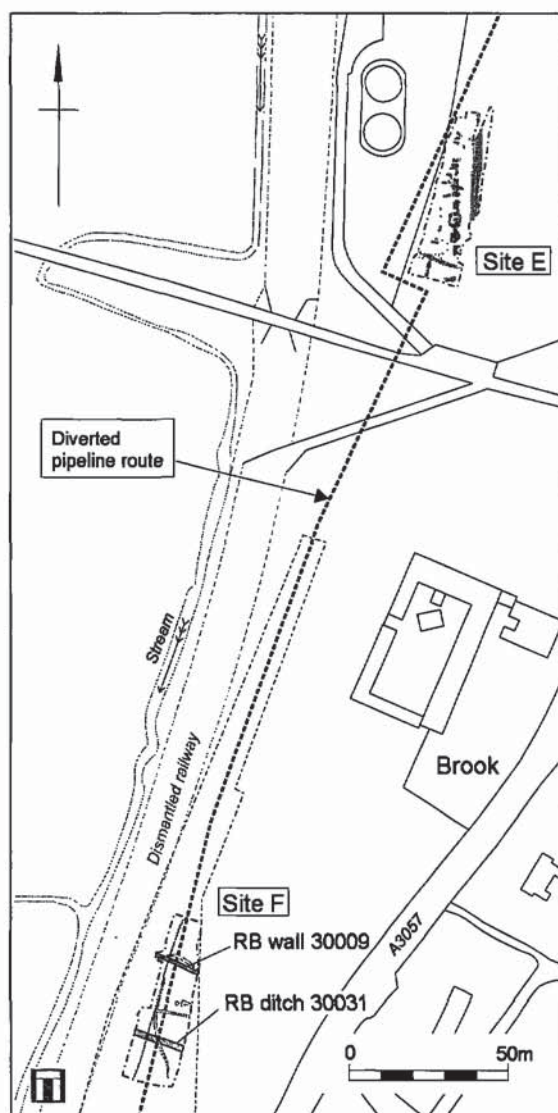


Fig. 9 Location of sites near Brook (Sites E and F)

The earliest phase was represented by a group of four large unexcavated probable inhumation graves, aligned on a north-south axis, and the square cut of a probable cremation grave (70097) surrounded by a ditched enclosure (70095). A second square-cut grave, immediately to the south of the enclosure, may be

contemporary. Surface collection of pottery from the fill of grave (70097) produced sherds of a flagon or bottle and a convex 'dog dish' in a fine-grained greyware fabric, of mid 2nd to 3rd century date, which may have been grave or pyre goods. Sherds from one, possibly two, flanged bowls, a dog dish and a lid in a similar fabric came from the upper fill of one of the north-south graves (70115).

A later phase of funerary activity, which included all the excavated burials (below), may, on the basis of the coffin fittings in grave 70002, extend into the 3rd or 4th century. At least some of these graves had been dug through features of the earlier phase. The unexcavated graves in this phase produced no dating evidence.

No attempt has been made to phase another series of unexcavated features of varying shape – circular, square and rectangular – which may include inhumation and cremation graves, as well as small pits and postholes. None of these features produced dating evidence.

Catalogue of excavated burials

70002 (Fig. 10) dimensions: 2.28 m × 0.85 m × 0.95 m deep. Cuts the interment (70012) in underlying grave 70006; the disturbed lower limbs of this burial were carefully placed at the east end of 7002. A further individual is represented by redeposited skull fragments only. Coffined inhumation burial of a young adult female aged c. 18–22 years (70011). The head was to the east, the body supine with arms flexed and hands on pelvis. Nail positions indicate a coffin 0.42 m wide and more than 1.80 m long. Sixteen hobnails were recovered from around the feet, indicating footwear.

Elaborately decorated iron fittings (Obj. Nos 72000–72009, Fig. 11, nos 1–12) recovered from fill (70003), appear to relate to the long edges and corners of the coffin (see Fig. 10). The fittings consist of elaborate straps or brackets with triangular, round or bulb-shaped terminals, 'corner' fittings with inset roundels, decorated plates with studs for attachment and crescent / circular decorative moulds. The most elaborate fittings were recovered from what seems to be the centre of a long edge of the coffin, perhaps

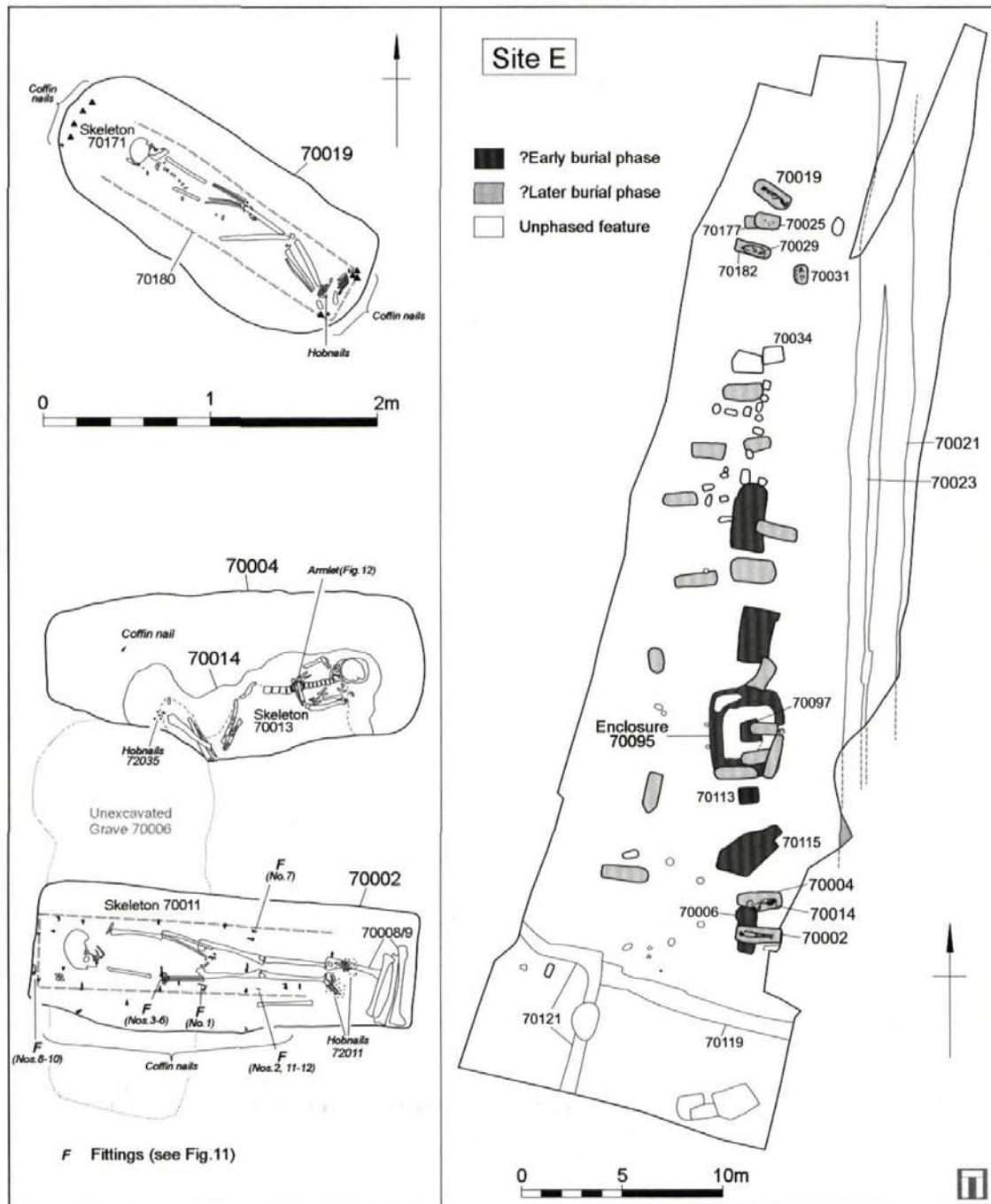


Fig. 10 Plan of the Romano-British cemetery, with selected grave plans (Site E)

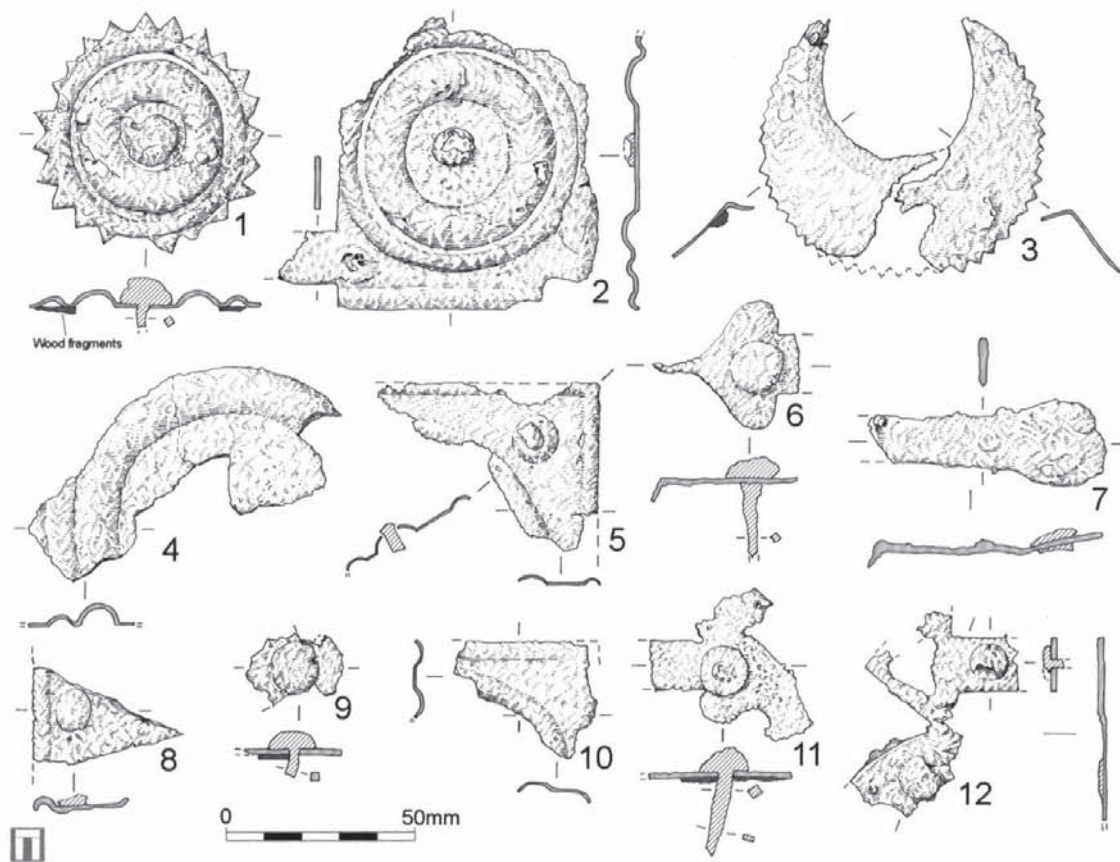


Fig. 11 Iron coffin fittings from grave 70002 (Site E)

indicating an elaborate lid. At the 3rd–4th century Romano-British cemetery of Lankhills, Winchester, coffin fittings in the form of plain rectangular brackets were recovered (Clarke 1979, 340), while more elaborate bulb-shaped terminals on brackets were found at late Roman Poundbury (Mills 1993b, 124). The roundels have a loose parallel in a casket from a grave at the Roman cemetery near Aquincum, Pannonia (Topál 2000, 202), and may suggest links with the continent. However the roundels from Aquincum are less elaborate, made in bronze and more heavily designed, so any connection will have been indirect. Even the less elaborate coffin brackets from Lankhills and Poundbury

were thought to indicate high status, due to their rarity (Clarke 1979, 336).

Iron fittings from grave 70002 (Fig. 11)

1. Decorative roundel. Obj. No. 72008
2. Corner fitting with inset roundel. Obj. No. 72009
3. Decorative crescent-shaped fitting. Obj. No. 72006
4. Plate or corner fitting with inset roundel. Obj. No. 72006
5. Corner fitting, possibly with inset roundel. Obj. No. 72006

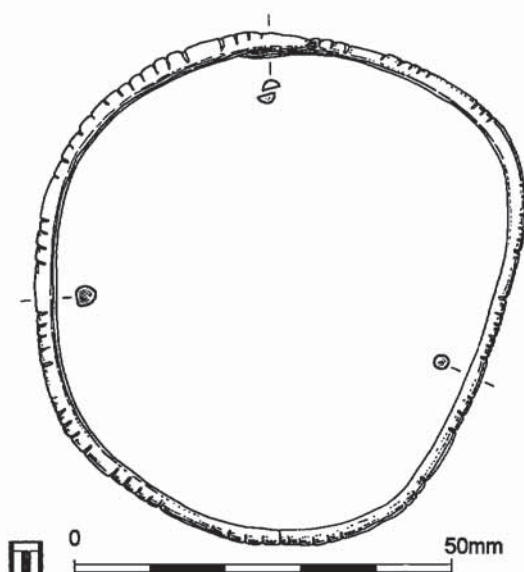


Fig. 12 Copper alloy bracelet from grave 70014 (Site E)

6. Strap fitting with bulb-shaped terminal, rivet in situ. Obj. No. 72006
7. Strap fitting with expanded rounded terminal. Obj. No. 72007
8. Edge or corner fitting, rivet in situ. Obj. No. 72000
9. Plate fragment with rivet in situ. Obj. No. 72000
10. Corner fitting, possibly with inset roundel. Obj. No. 72000
11. Part of decorative strap fitting? Obj. No. 72009
12. Part of plate or strap fitting? Obj. No. 72009

70004 (Fig. 10): dimensions: 2.20 m × 1.00 m, depth not fully excavated. Cut by grave 70014; relationship with unexcavated grave 70006 unclear. Fill 7005 not fully excavated and no human bone listed.

70006 (Fig. 10): dimensions: 2.22 m × 0.90 m, unexcavated inhumation burial observed in section where cut by grave 70002. At the north end, relationship with graves 70004 and 70014 was uncertain. The lower limbs of an adult c. 20–35 ?female found at the west end of grave 70002 are assumed to have come from the inhumation burial (70012) made in grave 70006.

70014 (Fig. 10): dimensions: 1.60 m × 0.60 m × 0.13 m deep. Small grave cut into top of grave 70004;

relationship with unexcavated grave 70006 unclear. Contains the poorly preserved bone remains (62%) of an elderly adult, probably female, aged over 50 years (70013). The body lay supine with head to the east, legs flexed and left arm flexed across the chest. A group of seven hobnails were recovered from around the feet, indicating footwear.

A late Romano-British type copper alloy armlet with lap joint and simple, slightly irregular incised decoration (Obj. No. 72034, Fig. 12) encircled the lower part of the left arm. It is similar to, although less precisely made than, one from a late Romano-British context at Colchester (Crummy 1983, 42), and less elaborate than the examples from Lankhills (Clarke 1979, 308) and Poundbury.

70019 (Fig. 10): dimensions: 2.07 m × 0.84 m × 1.3 m deep. A coffined burial containing the poorly preserved skeleton (52%) of a 30–40 year old adult male (70171), lying slightly flexed on its left side, head at west end. A group of 104 hobnails recovered with the foot bones suggests footwear. Coffin nails and timber stains (70180), suggested a coffin length of 1.8 m.

70025: dimensions: 1.25 m × 0.55 m × 0.53 m deep. A disturbed and truncated coffined inhumation burial containing the remains (c. 5%) of an infant, aged c. 3–4 years (70172). At least two coffin nails were recovered from the fill (70176). A timber stain indicated a coffin 0.90 m long and approximately 0.40 m wide. This grave cuts an earlier burial (70177), and two hobnails found in the fill may have derived from that burial.

70029: dimensions: 1.80 m × 0.60 m × 0.90 m deep. Cut by smaller grave (70182). Coffined inhumation burial containing the remains (35%) of a subadult aged c. 13–15 years (70184), supine with head facing west. Coffin nails were recovered at both ends of the grave cut, although the coffin outline was unclear. A group of 63 hobnails lay near the eastern end of the grave.

70031: dimensions: 0.94 m × 0.68 m × 0.24 m deep. Grave contains the coffined inhumation burial (c. 15%) of an infant, aged c. 9–15 months (70161). Supine. Coffin dimensions 0.94 m × 0.44 m based on soil stains (70163) and nails.

70177: dimensions: 1.35 m × 0.75 m × 0.73 m deep. A coffined inhumation burial of an infant, aged c. 2–3 years (70179) cut and badly disturbed by a later infant burial (70025). About 30% of the skeleton is represented. A timber stain

and a number of coffin nails suggested a coffin approximately 1.07 m long. The head probably faced west and a group of 12 hobnails was found roughly in the central part of the coffin fill (70174), perhaps from an unworn item of footwear, although this is unclear.

70182: dimensions: 1.10 m × 0.45 m, depth indistinct as cut into earlier burial (70029). Size and shape suggest a secondary infant burial cut into the upper fill of grave 70029. However, the fill (70183) produced no human bone.

Human bone by Jacqueline I. McKinley

Human bone was recovered from the remains of seven *in situ* inhumation burials, with a further two individuals represented as redeposited material in a grave (70002) backfill. The full human bone report (McKinley 2004) is available in the project archive and only a summary has been published here.

Disturbance and condition

Surviving grave depths varied widely from 0.13 m (70014) to 1.30 m (70019), averaging 0.69 m. There was limited ancient disturbance, with few inter-cutting graves. Bone survival was generally poor, much being eroded and root marked with only occasional exceptions such as the lower limb bones of 70011, perhaps resulting from a variation in the burial micro-environment within that grave. All but one of the burials had been made confined, but in contrast with the others, the compact body position of 70011 suggests it was also shrouded.

Demography

The remains of a minimum of nine individuals were recovered. A broad age range and individuals of both sexes are represented within the assemblage indicating a 'normal' domestic group. The females were all recovered from the south end of the site, and the immature individuals and male from the north end. Whilst there may be some significance in this spatial division, it cannot be tested since only c. 27% of the visible part of the cemetery was subject to excavation. Consequently, the demographic make-up of the group or their distribution

may not be representative of the cemetery as a whole.

Skeletal indices

Stature was estimated for two adult females, 70011 at 1.73 m (5ft. 7¾ in.) and 70012 at 1.61 m (5ft. 3¼ in.); these fall in the upper range of female heights recorded from the London's Eastern cemetery (mean 1.58 m; Conheaney 2000, 280), Poundbury (mean 1.61 m; Molleson 1993, 168), Alington Avenue (mean 1.57 m; Waldron 2002, table 28) and Cirencester (mean 1.58 m; Wells 1982, table 50).

Pathology

Moderate-heavy dental calculus (calcified plaque/tartar; Brothwell 1972, fig. 58b) was observed on tooth crowns within 2:4 of surviving permanent dentitions. The greatest severity was observed in the anterior teeth of 70013 supporting the usual age-related link for the condition. The overall rate of *ante mortem* tooth loss (erupted permanent dentitions) is 18% (10:52); higher than the 14.1% overall rate for the period (Roberts and Cox 2003, table 3.12) but all losses were from one adult female dentition (70013). Dental caries were seen in two adult dentitions with an overall rate of 4%, slightly less than the overall rate for the period of 7.5% (*ibid.* table 3.10). The overall rate for dental abscesses is 7.4%, slightly higher than the overall rate for the period of 3.9% (*ibid.* table 3.13). Dental hypoplasia, in the form of strong linear and pitting defects, was seen in 38% of the subadult dentition (70184), particularly in the anterior tooth crowns. The extent and location of the lesions suggests this individual suffered repeated periods of severe illness or malnutrition throughout their childhood (Hillson 1979). The overall rate of 10.2% is similar to the 9.1% rate for the period (Roberts and Cox 2003, table 3.16).

Slight cribotic *cribra orbitalia* – believed to be connected with childhood iron deficiency anaemia (Molleson 1993; Robledo *et al.* 1995) – was noted the orbits of one young adult female (2:3 orbits). Direct evidence of trauma was indicated in the remains of the older adult

female 70013, including a well-healed fracture to the left 1st rib, probably as a result of direct force. Most of the other pathological lesions observed were seen in the older adult female 70013 – degenerative disc disease (12.5%), a Schmorl's node (a destructive lesion resulting from a rupture of the intervertebral disc – 3.1%), osteoarthritis, possible psoriatic or pyogenic arthritis, and osteophytes (irregular growths of new bone along joint margins, of varied aetiology).

Discussion by Lisa Brown, Stephanie Knight, Jacqueline I. McKinley and Lorraine Mephram

Context

The small linear cemetery was unknown until the construction of this pipeline. Brook was known to be a shrunken medieval hamlet, but only the record in the Hampshire Archaeology and Historic Buildings Record (AHBR) of a scatter of Roman pottery and tile, late Saxon and 12th- to 14th-century pottery in the vicinity of the disused chalk pit to the south of Brook hinted at earlier origins or activity. The cemetery appears relatively small, but it should be noted that many of the features were not investigated, including all the possible cremation burials and, although a possible eastern boundary has been defined, its extent remains unknown. The stripped area alone might contain upwards of 60 graves, of which only ten were investigated.

The cemetery population appears to be a normal 'domestic' group and the range of funerary rites observed is typical of a small Romano-British rural settlement. Brook, sited at the end of a small dry valley and on the edge of the Test floodplain, some 1.4 km south of the Winchester-Old Sarum road, may have been a natural location for such a community. The Test Valley has been an important north-south routeway from an early date, and the apparent linear character of the cemetery may suggest that it was laid out in relation to an unrecorded road or trackway. The discovery of a single masonry wall footing of presumed Roman date on Site F (see Fig. 9 and below) may provide a context for the cemetery and an

indication of the existence of building of some status or pretension – presumably a farmstead or villa.

Phasing

The alignment of large north-south aligned (presumed) inhumation burials and (presumed) cremation burials, one surrounded by a square ditched enclosure, appears significant. Limited available dating suggests the north-south graves may date to the 2nd to 3rd century (pottery), while at least some of the east-west graves are likely to date from the later 3rd or 4th century. Whether the two alignments truly constitute a distinct phase would only be answered by further excavation.

Burial and funerary rites

The observed rites are summarised here but, given the small sample, no comment is possible regarding the cemetery as a whole. In the absence of any excavation of the smaller square or circular features or any recovery of cremated human bone, the presence of the cremation rite is a hypothesis based on feature morphology alone.

Objects buried with the dead can be tentatively divided into three groups: grave goods (ceramic vessels), coffin fittings and nails, personal items (hobnails, and a bracelet). Two graves (70097 and 70115) may have contained ceramic vessels. Most of the excavated inhumation burials were in coffins. Two types of construction were recognised: nails all the way round, and nails at either end. Farwell and Molleson (1993, 36) suggest that clusters of nails in the corners may have been from carrying handles, although these could just be to join the coffin sides. The number of nails in each grave varies from 1 to 132 – although whether the number of nails per grave in Romano-British cemeteries correlates with status or the quality of the carpentry is not clear. Deliberate selection of Type 1 nails (Manning 1985, 131) with a flat head and square shank for coffins is suggested, since small numbers of other nail types (4, 6 and 7) were found in non-funerary contexts at Sites C and F. Type 1 nails were also the most common forms in the Poundbury

cemetery (Mills 1993b, 117). One individual (70011) was buried in a coffin with many nails, with elaborate decoration similar to that seen on the continent and this individual may have been of higher status.

Most excavated burials contained hobnailed footwear. Where the relative positions of foot bones and hobnails can be ascertained, the shoes seem to have been worn when buried, although post-depositional movement makes such identification uncertain. The only exception was grave (70177) where a shoe may have been placed over an infant's body. At Lankhills, Winchester, boots seemed to be more often worn in the later than the earlier 4th-century burials (Clarke 1979, 370). Two graves contained just over 100 dome-headed, square-shanked hobnails, indicating maybe that upwards of 50 were used for each boot. At Poundbury, the number of hobnails per shoe ranged from ten or 20 to 50, with each possibly representing a particular type of shoe (Mills 1993a, 99), although the number per boot can vary even within a pair.

The contributing population

Any overall comment with regards to the health and possible social profile of the community in general is severely limited by the small size of the skeletal assemblage, the small size of the sample, and the potential skewing of the rates by extensive lesions recorded for one individual (70013). That a high level of care was extended to the sick and the elderly within the community is, however, implied by the indicated infirmity of the elderly female 70013 and the repeated periods of childhood illness suffered by the subadult 70184.

Very few potential indicators of status are present. The elaborate coffin in grave 70002 may be one, while another grave 70097 stands out because of its square enclosure and appears to have attracted a clustering of later graves around and over it.

The excavation of Site E has made an important contribution to understanding of Romano-British settlement in the Test Valley. Its significance is limited only by the small scale of the excavation.

SUMMARY OF OTHER SITES ON THE ROUTE

Two other sites on the route produced notable remains. Full details of these are available in the project archive, but limited space precludes their inclusion in this report.

Site F produced a substantial mortared flint wall foundation (30009), 1.2m wide (see Fig. 9), although the lack of associated surfaces makes its function (building, boundary, etc) uncertain. A demolition layer associated with the footing produced 3rd to 4th century AD New Forest and Oxfordshire colour-coated wares. On the same alignment as the wall and 25 m to the south, a 'U'-shaped ditch 1.8 m wide and 0.5 m deep ditch produced late Romano-British grog-tempered wares. Residual, fragmentary flue tiles, *imbrices*, *tegulae* and *tesserae*, limestone floor or roofing slabs, and a fragment of *opus signinum* contribute to the impression that a relatively affluent Romano-British building lay in the area, although the condition of much of the material suggests reuse. The site provides a possible indication of the location of the settlement contributing to the cemetery population of Site E.

Site G (see Fig. 1 for location) produced the only substantial later medieval remains from the pipeline route. The poorly preserved footings of a rectangular, single-celled building (not illustrated), 10 m long and 5 m wide with chalk and mortar foundations and earth floors, was extended by the addition of a 3 m x 5 m room at its northern end. The later phase was built predominantly in flint. A pitched tile hearth lay at the north end of the main room.

Pottery from the floor and occupation deposits, particularly Laverstock-type wares, is indicative of a 13th- to early 14th-century date for the structure. Much of the ceramic building material recovered appeared to have been brought to the site for use as hardcore rather than for use in floors and roofs. A barrel-shaped padlock from a post-medieval context is comparable to 13th- to 14th-century examples from London (Egan 1998, 97). It suggests the presence of at least one moderately prosperous household in the area. Two whetstone

fragments (probably Norwegian schist) and a blunt ended blade, possibly from a scythe or sickle, could not be dated. The animal bone assemblage suggests a small, relatively affluent country residence, but one with a predominantly subsistence-based economy. Animals were slaughtered on site and small-scale wool production may have been practised. Of the main species represented, the emphasis was on those animals with useful secondary products, sheep and cattle, rather than animals exploited primarily for meat.

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