Proc. Hampshire Field Club Archaeol. Soc. **66**, *2011, 39–74 (Hampshire Studies 2011)*

EXCAVATION OF A ROMAN ENCLOSURE AT PARK PREWETT HOSPITAL, BASINGSTOKE, HAMPSHIRE

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ABSTRACT

An excavation was carried out on three areas in the grounds of Park Prewett Hospital, Basingstoke in advance of redevelopment. Two adjacent areas revealed one half of a rectangular enclosure, with several internal features including three corn-drying ovens. The enclosure was used in two phases, in middle to later Roman times (late 2nd/3rd, and 4th centuries AD) and was possibly a specialized site, or a specialized sub-division within a larger collection of sites such as a villa estate. A third, smaller, area to the south-east also revealed a few features, including two cremation-related deposits.

INTRODUCTION

An archaeological investigation was undertaken by Thames Valley Archaeological Services at Park Prewett Hospital, Basingstoke, Hampshire (NGR SU 6170 5360). Planning permission had been granted by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council for the redevelopment of the site for mixed residential and retail purposes. The archaeological potential of the site had been demonstrated by two phases of evaluation (Hall 1992a; 1992b) so that the permission was granted subject to a condition which required an archaeological investigation. This follows the guidance in *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990) and the Borough's policies on archaeology. The archaeological work was carried out to a written scheme of investigation approved by Mr Stephen Appleby, then Archaeological Officer at Hampshire County Council, and archaeological adviser to the Borough.

The Park Prewett Hospital complex is located to the north-west of the centre of Basingstoke, and the site itself is located to the south of the main hospital complex (Fig. 1). The site lies at a height of 120m above Ordnance Datum and the underlying geology is Upper Chalk (BGS 1981) which was observed in the majority of the excavation area with localized areas of clay-with-flints in Area C.

Archaeological background

The site is located within an area of high archaeological potential with various sites and finds recorded from the general vicinity. To the south and east, many of the recorded finds came from archaeological reconnaissance during the post-war development of Basingstoke, whereas the areas to north and west have benefited from both casual and systematic field survey, and latterly aerial photography. Early prehistoric evidence from the grounds of the hospital includes a single Neolithic flint axe, various locations where struck flint has been recovered, as well as a Bronze Age round barrow, to the west of the site.

The majority of archaeological finds and deposits recorded in the vicinity, though, are of Iron Age and Roman dates. The most distinctive site is the Iron Age hillfort to the south at Winklebury which was extensively examined prior to development (Smith 1977). Several other Iron Age sites are recorded, with excavations at Rooksdown Hospital just to the west of the current site having recorded an Iron Age enclosure with occupation continuing into the Roman period (Farwell in prep).

For the Roman period, the most distinctive feature is the major Roman road which linked

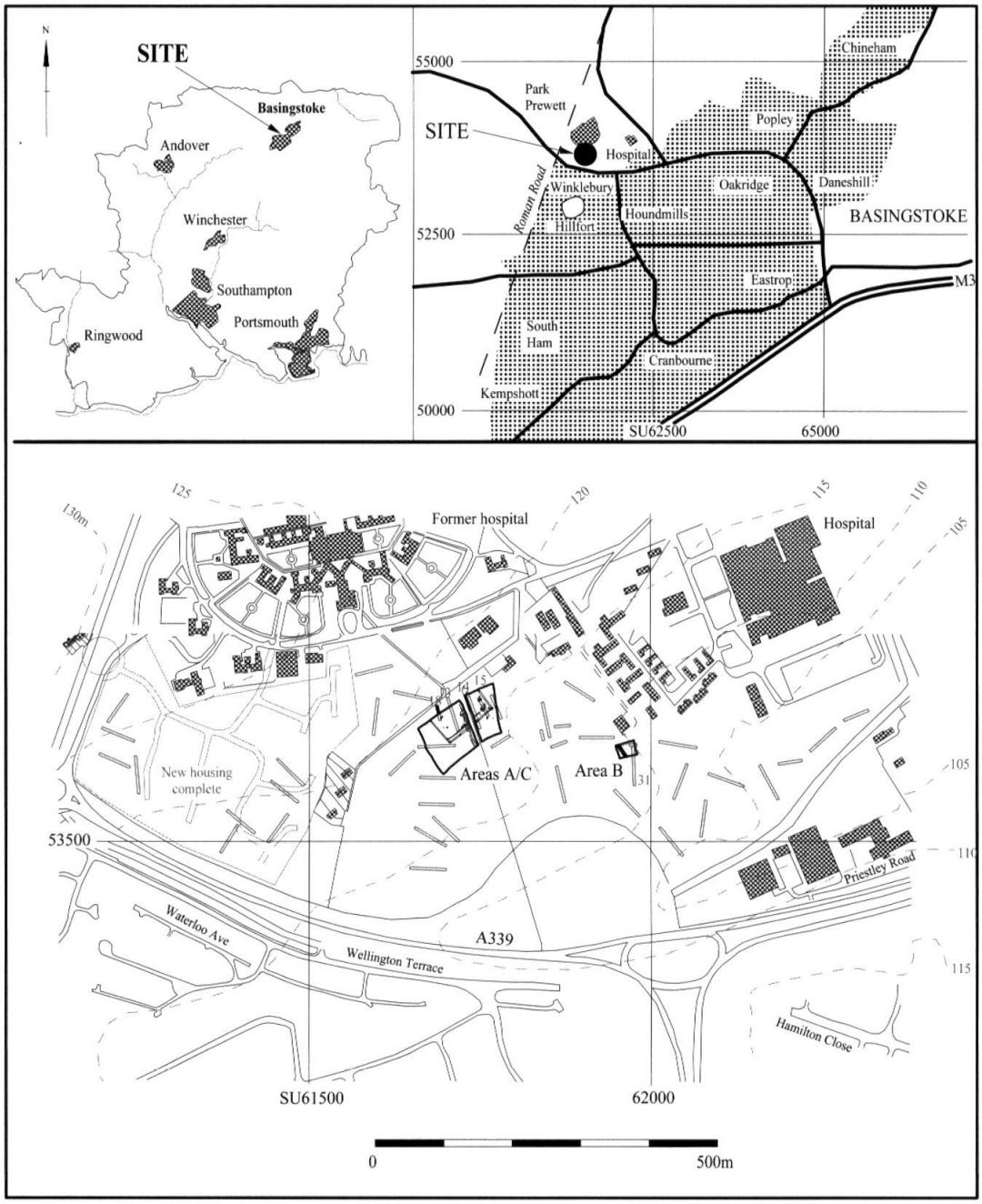

Fig. 1 Site location, showing evaluation trenches in relation to excavation areas

Silchester to Winchester (Margary 1973) which passes to the west of the site. Various certain and probable Roman sites are recorded. A Roman urned cremation burial, with several associated coins, was recorded to the north during construction works at the hospital itself in the early 20th century. To the west, small-scale observations have recorded Roman pits. Several of the Roman settlements recorded are of high status, with two villas strongly suspected to the north-east and north-west as at Monk Sherborne (Teague 2003), along with a bathhouse found during rescue excavations in advance of development at Oakridge to the south (Oliver 1992).

The evaluation

The site was initially evaluated in 1992, in two phases (Hall 1992a; 1992b) which uncovered a number of features. The preliminary phase included fieldwalking which recorded a modest scatter of prehistoric flints and Roman pottery. This was followed by the excavation of 44 trenches (Fig. 1) which revealed ditches, gullies, pits, postholes, possible middens and a cremation burial, largely dating to the later Roman period and suggesting the presence of farmstead. The environs of the site had also been metal detected independently and 81 Roman coins recovered by Mr Nigel Jensen, who kindly loaned them for identification. Approximately half were legible and of later Roman currency (see below). A further phase of evaluation on another part of the hospital only revealed a small number of struck flints (Ford 1994).

THE EXCAVATION

The three excavation areas (A, B, C; Fig. 1) were stripped of topsoil and subsoil mechanically, under constant archaeological supervision.

Areas A and C (Fig. 2)

Area A covered 2563 sq m and Area C, 5075 sq m. Features here consisted of two main phases, mid Roman and late Roman. A small amount of earlier prehistoric activity is also represented along with post-Roman and modern activity.

Phase 1: Prehistoric

Prehistoric (Neolithic or Bronze Age) evidence on the site was restricted to a small collection of struck flints. None of the items is closely datable and they were all recovered as residual finds in Roman features. They indicate a modest level of prehistoric activity in the area, as already recorded from the fieldwalking component of the project (Hall 1992a).

Phase 2: Roman, late 2nd to 3rd century

The earliest Roman activity on the site belongs to the middle centuries of the Roman period. The principal features comprise an incomplete enclosure ditch (1006=1007), corn drier 1005, and three pits (208, 209, 211). Gully 1006 was aligned NE–SW and appears to represent part of an enclosed area that was subsequently enlarged by the phase 3 ditches 1003/1004. At its south-western end it curved north-west onto the line later followed by the Phase 3 enclosure ditch, which wholly recut it (223) (Fig. 6). The gully was typically 1.4m wide but only 0.35m deep and in parts almost ploughed away, and it terminated (226) to the north-east.

Pit 211

This was a shallow oval pit up to 1.22m across and only 0.26m deep. It contained 207 sherds of pottery, animal bone and two nails. Pit 209 cut, and largely removed, pit 208. Pit 208 was 0.8m across and 0.6m deep with a flat base and near-vertical sides. Pit 208 was probably not infilled fully before pit 209 was dug. Pit 209 was oval in plan 2.4m across and 0.5m deep with a bowl-shaped profile. Pit 208 contained only two sherds of pottery and a large slab of upper greensand quern, whereas pit 209 contained 55 sherds, animal bone, one copper alloy and three iron objects and brick/tile.

Post hole 8, and pits 213, 206 and 237 also belong to Phase 2 or Phase 3.

Fig. 2 Plan of Areas A and C showing all features

Layer or spread (494)

This was up to 0.2m thick and seemed to occupy a gentle hollow located near to the centre of the site and may be a natural accumulation of soil (Fig. 2). It was cut by phase 2 gully 1006 but produced some, presumably intrusive, phase 3 pottery. It is also possible that this deposit continued accumulating after it was cut by the gully. A similar spread (381) is assigned to Phase 3.

Corn drier 1005

This structure was 4m long, set within a rectilinear pit between 1.2m and 1.6m wide and 0.4m deep (Fig. 3) The rectilinear drying area at the north end was constructed of chalk blocks (559) and was 1.6m square. The blocks were typically between 0.1m and 0.2m across and the walls were up to 0.35m thick. The flue to the south had an internal width of 0.55m with walls 0.3m wide constructed with well-faced

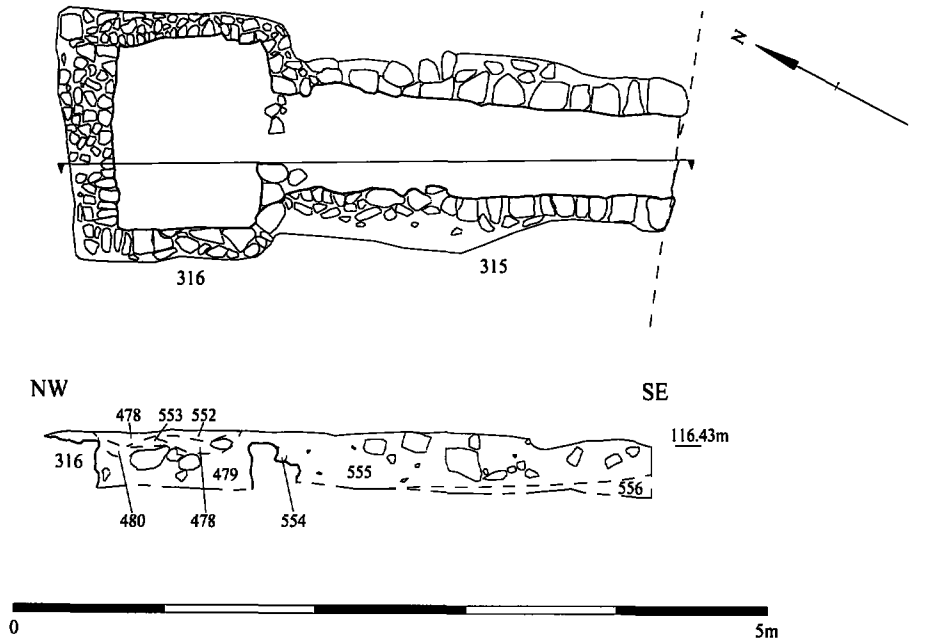

Fig. 3 Detail of corn-drier 1005

unbonded chalk blocks, *c.* 0.2m across. The junction between flue and drying chamber was partly blocked by chalk blocks that butted the walls of the drier though the function of this is unclear. The southern limit of the structure where, presumably, the stoke hole and fireplace would have lain, may have been truncated by construction of the phase 3 enclosure ditch. The floor was the natural chalk. The post-use infill comprised collapsed stone work along with pottery, tile, a quernstone, iron objects and animal bone. Two samples taken for charred plant remains revealed no more than a few cereal and weed seeds.

Phase 3: Roman, 4th century

The principal activity in Phase 3 comprised the enlargement of the 'enclosed' area formed by phase 2 gully 1006/1007 and the formation of a rectilinear enclosure recorded on three sides within the stripped area. The enclosure had no entrance within the stripped area. The enclosure ditch (1003/4) had a V-shaped profile, typically 0.98m deep and 2.3m across, with several fills but with no evidence of recutting (e.g. 207, Fig. 6). The phase 3 ditch lay parallel to the phase 2 ditch 1006/1007 but 3m further to the south-east, then followed the same line as its predecessor along the west edge, and turned a parallel course along the east edge, to give an internal dimension of 80m across the enclosure, by at least 43m, and extending further north-west. There was no evidence of any associated bank.

Within the enclosure were a small number of features certainly or probably contemporary with the phase 3 ditch. These comprised two further corn driers (1001, 1002) and a well (220). Posthole 8, and pits 213, 206 and 237 could belong to this phase or phase 2. A short length of gully, or perhaps even just an elongated pit (1009) which was 3m long, 1.4m wide and 0.35m deep, cut gully 1006. Layer 381 towards the centre of the site was up to 0.2m deep, apparently infill of a natural hollow. It contained phase 3 pottery.

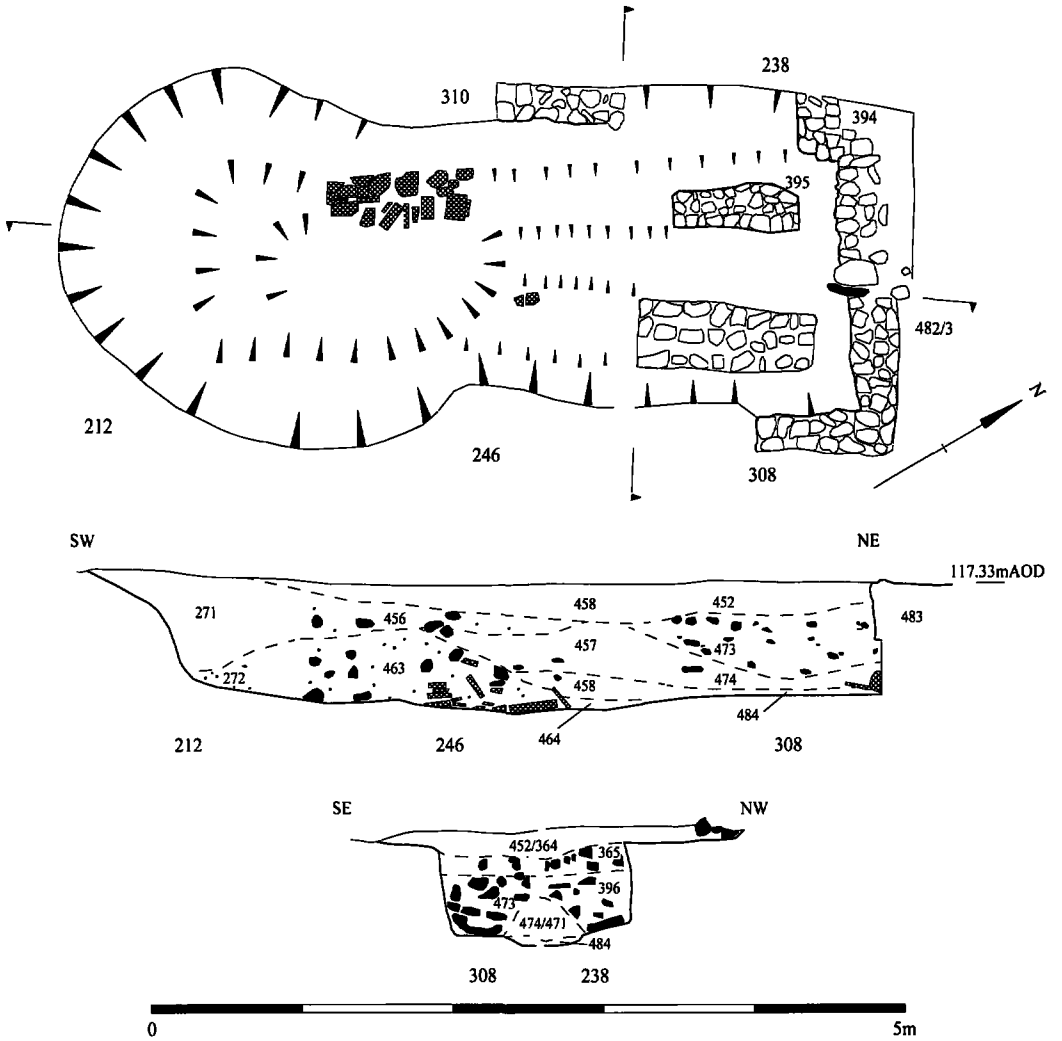

Fig. 4 Detail of corn-drier 1001

Corn drier 1001

This was 5.5m long set within a large pit (308/246/212) which was 2m wide and sloped gently down on the SW-NE axis before dropping steeply to a depth of 0.8m to form a flue (Fig. 4). Excavation revealed that the structure was more complex than the other corn driers on the site possibly representing a phase of re-modelling. In particular the flue lies partly within and partly outside of the drying chamber. The flue was constructed within a cut 0.6m wide and was constructed with chalk blocks and some brick/tile up to 0.2m across with walls 0.2m wide. The drying chamber at the north end was 2.5m square with walls 0.3m thick and constructed of chalk blocks and flint nodules between 0.1m and 0.2m across. Some of the wall seems to have been robbed. Two internal lengths of chalk blockwork on either side of the flue (395) may have allowed hot air

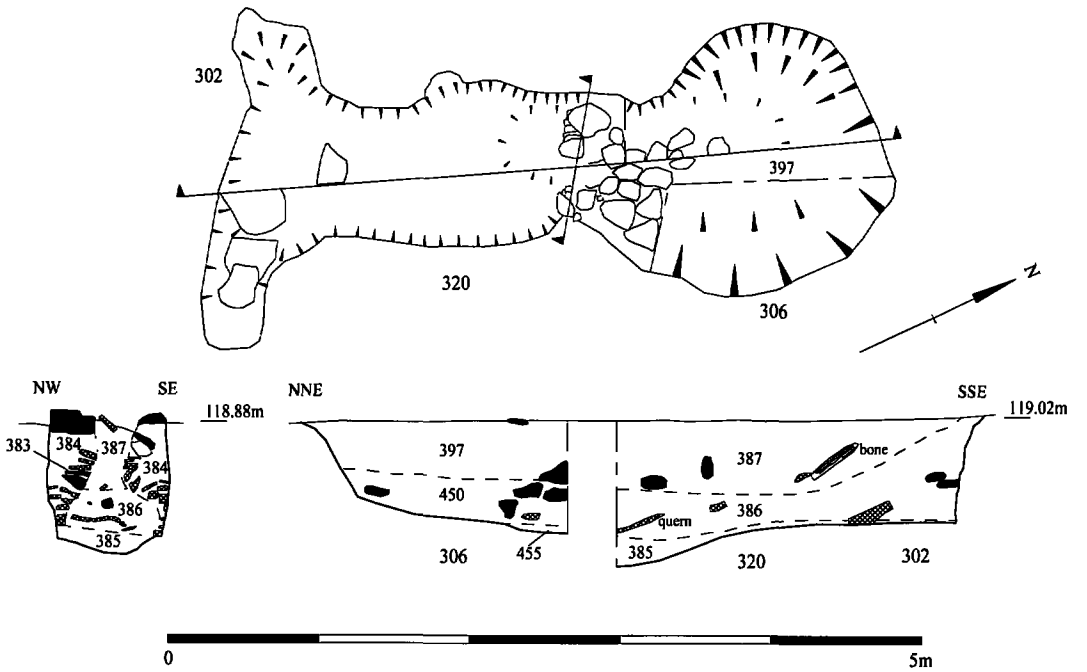

Fig. 5 Detail of corn-drier 1002

to circulate around the chamber. The southern end was occupied by the circular stoke hole and fireplace with the primary infill being one of fire ash (389). Several layers of post-use infill comprised collapsed and tumbled stone work, with tile, pottery, iron objects, two coins, quernstone and animal bone. Charred plant remains again comprised wheat and barley, some weed seeds but this time accompanied by chaff and wood charcoal of oak, hazel and hawthorn.

Corn drier 1002

This was 4.5m long and occupied an irregular shaped pit up to 1m deep with steep sides cut into the chalk (302) (Fig. 5). The south-western end formed a characteristic 'T-shaped' plan typical of many corn driers. The north-east was occupied by the circular stoke hole (306) and was connected to the drying area via the flue which was lined mostly by brick/tile and some flint nodules 0.15m across (Fig. 5). A segment of the flue appeared to be wholly *in situ* showing a beehive shaped profile with tile capping, though it is possible that the wall on the west side was originally vertical and flush with the side of the pit but subsequently began to topple over. The base of the flue (385) was infilled with ash. Several layers of post-use infill were recorded comprising collapsed and tumbled stone work along with tile, pottery, quernstone, iron and copper metalwork and animal bone. One of the eight samples taken produced a large volume of wheat with some barley accompanied by lesser amounts of chaff, weed seeds and wood charcoal of oak, ash and hawthorn.

Well 220

A 2m wide slot was dug across a wide circular feature (220) thought to be a large pit, 5.8m across. The slot was hand dug to a depth of 1.8m and revealed three upper fills (286–288; Fig. 6) containing pottery and animal bone (including intrusive rabbit) but the base was not reached in this excavation, nor subsequent hand augering down to a depth of 4.8m. It was

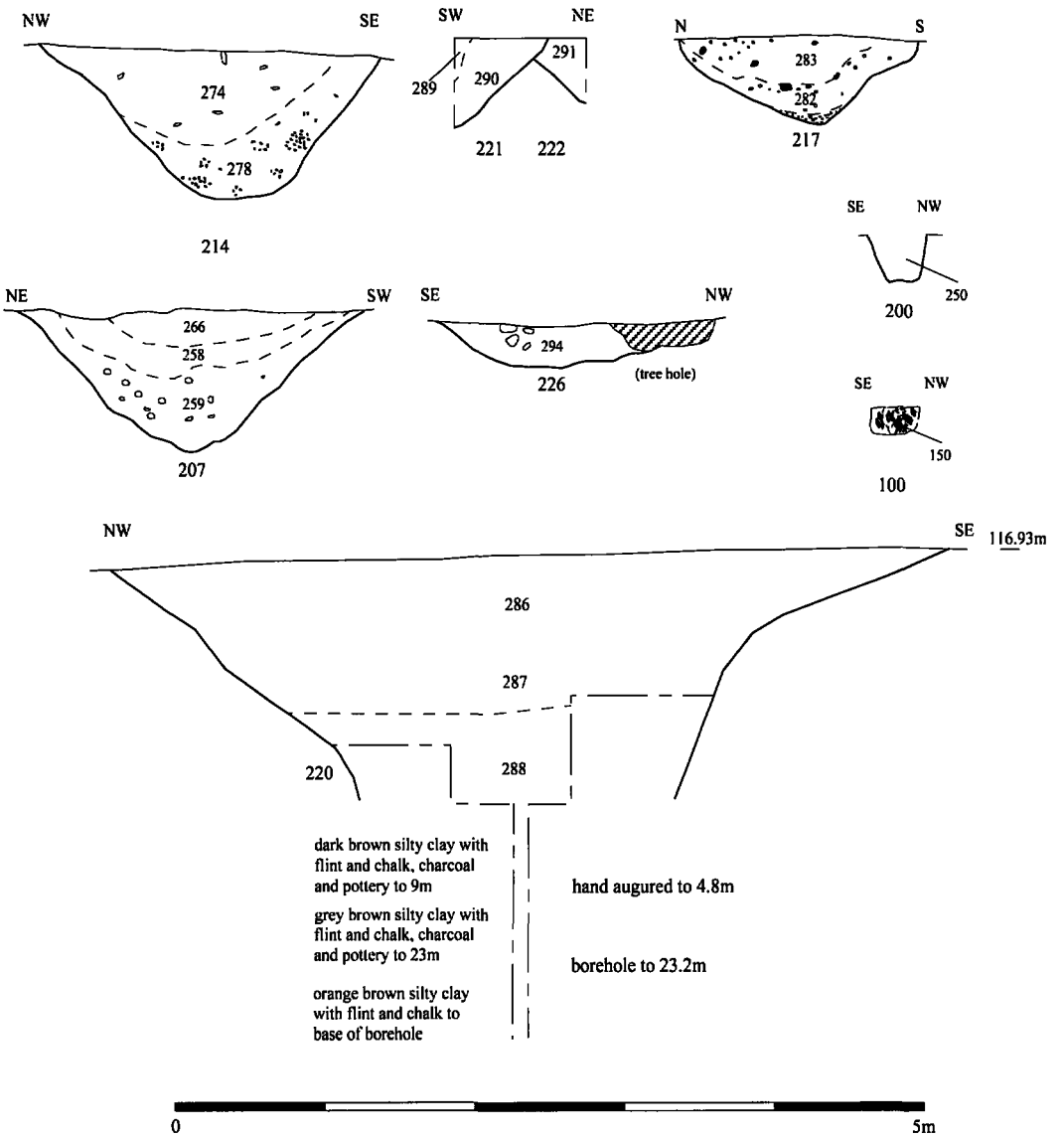

Fig. 6 Selected feature sections

then considered that this feature was either a well or natural solution hollow. A geotechnical borehole was dug to a depth of 23.2m without finding a solid chalk base. The upper fill of the borehole fill, down to 9m, comprised a dark brown/grey silty clay with flint and chalk inclusions, charcoal and pottery sherds. Beneath this the fill became a grey/orange brown colour, down to *c.* 23m, at which point it became a grey brown silty clay with no further charcoal or artefacts observed. No organic preservation by waterlogging, nor the water

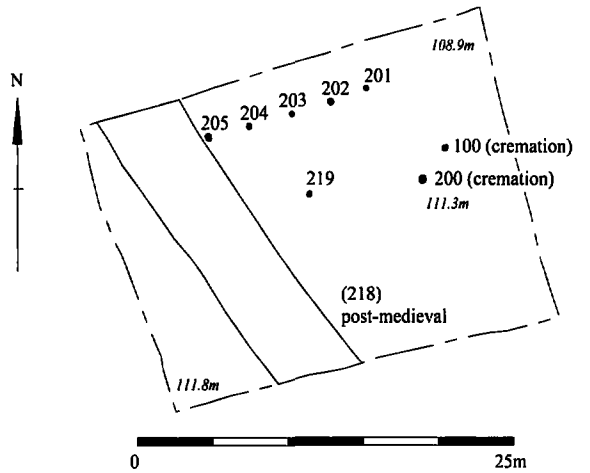

Fig. 7 Plan of Area B showing all features

table were encountered at this depth. Charred plant remains from the upper fills were largely of hawthorn charcoal but, unusually some elm charcoal was present. Some 23 small sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from the borehole column at various depths, with three sherds from below 19m. Six millstone grit quern fragments were recovered at 12–13m.

Despite use of the borehole, it has not been unambiguously determined if this feature is a deep well or a solution hollow into which cultural material has become incorporated, though Roman pottery was recovered from the layers at the bottom of the borehole of similar date to those from the top implying a fairly rapid infill. Such an infill seems more typical of a well than the gradual slumping of a solution hollow. The presence of wells on sites of Roman date is well attested in the Basingstoke area (see below).

Phase 4: Saxon

Evidence for this period was restricted to four small sherds of early/middle Saxon pottery from the upper fill of the phase 3 enclosure ditch 1003; it is assumed these found their way into the ditch after it had passed out of use, rather than indicating continuity, although the ditch would have been open until close to the end of the Roman period.

Area B (Fig. 7)

Area B covered 676 sq m. It contained two cremation burials (100, 200), a single ditch (218) whose fills contained late post-medieval brick and slate, and six undated postholes (201–5, 219). Five of the postholes (201–5) were equally spaced 2.5m apart in a line roughly perpendicular to the ditch. They probably represent a fence. No dating evidence was recovered but they are probably contemporary with the ditch.

Pit 100

This was found during the evaluation and was 0.32m across and 0.19m deep (Fig. 6); it contained 307g of cremated human bone from an adult, possibly female, burial. The deposit also contained charcoal, three fragments of burnt flint, an unburnt flint flake and two spalls. Pit 200 was 0.42m across and 0.26m deep (Fig. 6) containing 572g of cremated human bone, charcoal (hawthorn/apple type), a fragment of burnt flint and a small iron object, possibly a

pin fragment. Given the density of flint in the topsoil, it is unclear if the flints in these features can be used to suggest a prehistoric date: they could as easily be Roman and the flints incorporated simply as part of the soil backfill.

THE POTTERY by Jane Timby

The excavations resulted in the recovery of 2510 sherds of pottery, weighing 26.9kg, mostly dating to the Roman period, but accompanied by a few Saxon and post-medieval pieces. The assemblage was moderately well-preserved although the sherds are quite fragmented with an average sherd weight of 10.7g. Pottery was recorded mainly from three corn driers, an enclosure ditch and various pits and gullies. The assemblage was sorted into fabric groups based on the principal inclusions present in the clay, the frequency and grade of the inclusions and the firing colour. Very small crumbs were counted and weighed only. Named traded wares were coded following the national Roman fabric reference series (Tomber & Dore 1998). The sorted sherds were quantified by count and weight for each recorded context. Rim percentages were measured for estimated vessel equivalence (EVE). Any decoration, or surface finish, such as burnishing, was noted along with evidence for use in the form of sooting, residues or internal calcareous deposits.

Description of fabrics and associated forms (Table 1)

Continental imports

Samian (CGSAM, SGSAM). A total 22 sherds of samian are present, mainly Central Gaulish but with five possible South Gaulish pieces. The sherds are mainly small and scrappy with mostly plain fragments. Forms include Dr 31 and Dr 36 dishes and a Dr 33 cup.

Baetican *amphora* (BAT AM) (Tomber & Dore 1998, 84). A single bodysherd from a Dressel 20 *amphora* was recovered from corn drier 1002.

Regional imports

Dorset black burnished ware (DOR BB1) (Tomber & Dore 1998, 127). A moderately small group of 45 sherds mainly restricted to flanged conical bowls, plain-rim dishes and jars decorated with oblique line lattice indicating a later Roman date. A single South-west black burnished ware sherd (SOW BB1) is also present.

New Forest wares (NFO CC; NFO RS; NFO WH1; NFO WH2) (Tomber & Dore 1998, 140–4). A small group of wares including colour-coated, red-slipped, fine white wares and white wares. Forms include necked and indented beakers (Fig. 8.3) (Fulford 1975, types 30 and 33), shallow bowls (type 59), flanged wall bowls (type 63) beaded rim bowls (type 67/68) (Fig. 8.11) and an internally flanged bowl (type 89).

Oxfordshire wares (OXF PA; OXF RS; OXF WH) (Tomber & Dore 1998, 174). Forms include a single parchment ware bowl (Young 1977, form P24); colour-coated bowls and beakers, (C27, C45, C51, C68, C75, C82, C83), and *mortaria* (C99, C100) (Fig. 8. 4, 5, 7).

Late Roman shelly ware (ROB SH) (Tomber & Dore 1998, 212). A small bodysherd and a single jar rim were recovered from corn driers 1001 and 1002 indicating a date after *c.* AD 370.

Verulamium white ware (VER WH) (Tomber & Dore 1998, 154). A single *mortarium* sherd was recovered from ditch 1003.

Local and unsourced wares

Alice Holt reduced ware (ALH RE) (Tomber & Dore 1998, 138). This ware dominates the assemblage accounting for *c.* 71% by count, 74% by weight. A diverse range of flasks, jars, dishes and bowls and at least one colander are present (cf. Lyne and Jefferies 1979, later corpus, classes (jars) 1, 1A, 1B, 1C, 3A, 3B, 3C, (bowls) 5B, 5C, (dishes) 6A, 6C and cable-rimmed large jars (class 10), cf. Fig. 8. 2, 6, 9, 12, 14 and 16).

Grog-tempered storage jar (GRSJ). A small group of handmade, thick-walled sherds from large storage jars, largely oxidized.

Hampshire grog-tempered wares (HAM GT) (Tomber & Dore 1998, 139). A moderately large, quite diverse group of grog-tempered

Table 1 Pottery quantification by fabric

	WARE	*Name*	*No*	*No%*	*Wt (g)*	*Wt %*	*EVE (×100)*	*EVE%*
Imports	CGSAM	Central Gaulish samian	17	0.7	113	*	24	0.9
	SGSAM	South Gaulish samian	5	*	17	*	–	–
	BAT AM	Baetican amphora	1	*	48	*	–	–
Regional	DOR BB1	Dorset black burnished ware	45	1.8	518	1.9	84	3.2
	NFO CC	New Forest colour-coated ware	27	1.1	184	0.7	69	2.6
	NFO RS	New Forest colour-coated ware	21	0.8	188	0.7	21	0.8
	NFO WH1	New Forest whiteware	2	*	16	*	4	0.2
	NFO WH2	New Forest fine whiteware	11	*	80	*	26	1.0
	OXF PA	Oxfordshire parchment ware	1	*	42	*	10	0.4
	OXF RS	Oxfordshire red-slipped ware	80	3.2	744.5	2.8	111	4.2
	OXF RSM	Oxfordshire red-slipped *mortaria*	22	0.9	224	0.8	36	1.4
	OXF WH	Oxfordshire whiteware	2	*	23	*	–	–
	OXF WHM	Oxfordshire whiteware *mortaria*	2	*	31	*	–	–
	ROB SH	late Roman shelly ware	2	*	13	*	–	–
	SOW BB1	SW black burnished ware	1	*	6	*	–	–
	VER WHM	*Verulamium* whiteware *mortaria*	1	*	88	*	12	0.5
Local	ALH RE	Alice Holt wares	1790	71.3	19974.5	74.1	1851	69.7
	GRSJ	grog-tempered storage jar	40	1.6	1131	4.2	30	1.1
	HAM GT	Hampshire grog-tempered	115	4.6	1586	5.9	208	7.8
	OVY WH	Tilford ware	20	0.8	307.5	1.1	52	2.0
	FL1	coarse flint-tempered ware	12	0.5	364	1.4	23	0.9
	FL2	fine flint-tempered ware	11	*	39	*	–	–
	SAFL	sandy with slint	3	*	34.5	*	24	0.9
Unknown	BUFF	buff sandy ware	1	*	5	*	–	–
	CC	miscellaneous colour-coat	3	*	40	*	5	0.2
	MIC SL	mica slipped oxidized ware	1	*	1	*	–	–
	OXID	miscellaneous oxidized wares	50	2.0	215	0.8	5	0.2
	OXIDF	fine oxidised ware	31	1.2	74.5	*	5	0.2
	OXIDBS	black-slipped oxidized ware	11	*	30	*	–	–
	WSLIP	white slipped wares	3	*	17	*	–	–
	GREY	miscellaneous grey/black wares	77	3.1	632	2.3	20	0.8
	GYF	misc. fine grey wares	18	0.7	101	*	36	1.4
	WW	miscellaneous white ware	1	*	1	*	–	–
	CRUMBS	small crumbs	83	*	52	*	–	–
TOTAL			**2510**		**26941**		**2656**	

* = less than 0.5%

wares accounting for 4.6% by count of the assemblage. Variable firing colour with black, grey and oxidized variants with slight differences in texture from smooth, soapy to slightly sandy. Vessels are largely handmade and include jars, flanged bowls, curved wall and plain-wall dishes. Some vessels are burnished or have burnished line decoration (Fig. 8.1, 8 and 10).

Tilford ware (OVY WH) (Tomber & Dore 1998, 146). A small group accounting for less than 1% of the assemblage and limited to jars with triangular or pendant rims (Fig. 8.13).

Coarse flint-tempered ware (FL1). A small group of 12 sherds of handmade coarse, calcined flint-tempered ware greatly resembling Silchester ware (Timby 2000, 239). Eight of the sherds came from pit 211, the rest appear to be residual in ditches 1003 and 1004.

Fine flint-tempered ware (FL2). A small group of sherds from handmade vessels with a sparse temper of fine flint around 1mm in size. No featured sherds, probably all residual.

Sandy, flint-tempered ware (SAFL). A single, coarse, sandy ware with added flint temper. Oxidized jar with a burnt rim.

Buff sandy ware (BUFF). A single unfeatured sherd, probably flagon.

Miscellaneous oxidized wares (OXID; OXIDF; OXIDBS; WSLIP). A small group of mainly unfeatured oxidized wares. Some of the finer sherds may have originally been colour-coated. Also present are two burnished, black-slipped sherds and three white-slipped sherds of unknown source.

Miscellaneous reduced wares (GREY; GYF). Various grey, black and brown sandy wares of unknown source. The finer wares include a flat-rim bowl with tooled lattice decoration and a poppy head beaker; the coarse wares various jars, bowls and dishes. Of particular note is a jar with a zone of grooved decoration (Fig. 8.15).

Saxon organic-tempered ware

In addition to the Roman assemblage four handmade bodysherds with an organic temper were recovered from ditch 1003. The pieces are small with a total weight of just 8g. The fabrics have a slightly sandy feel with a sparse to moderate frequency of blackened organic matter.

Discussion of fabrics and forms (Table 1)

The assemblage is largely composed of later Roman wares with a few redeposited earlier pieces. Products of the Alice Holt industry very much dominate the group accounting for 71.3% by count. The next most frequent fabrics are the grog-tempered wares which collectively account for 6.2%. Oxfordshire products contribute 4.3% compared to 2.4% for New Forest wares. Dorset black burnished wares are moderately rare at just 1.8% and samian also forms a very minor component at 0.9%. Other traded wares are present in very small amounts.

In terms of forms, jars dominate the assemblage accounting for just over half the EVE (53.1%), followed by bowls/ dishes at 32.8%. The remaining 14.1% comprise beakers (4.9%), cups (0.3%), flasks (6.8%), lids (0.2%) and *mortaria* (1.8%).

Site distribution

The pottery broadly divides into two ceramic phases, one dating to the later 2nd–3rd century and the other dating to the 4th century (or later). Four of the pits (206, 208, 213 and 237) produced very small assemblages difficult to date closely.

Later 2nd–3rd century

Features that can placed in this period include pits 209 and 211, corn drier 1005 and gully 1006. Pit 209 produced the rim of a cable-rim jar indicating a date after *c.* AD 180. A significantly larger assemblage of pottery came from pit 211 with 249 sherds weighing 3998g. Sherds are thus moderately well-preserved with an average weight of 16g. The group includes flat-rim bowls, a flint-tempered jar, and a fine, grey-ware bowl and is thus probably one of the earlier features on the site perhaps dating to the mid-late 2nd century.

Corn drier 1005, cut by later ditch 1003, produced a small assemblage with just 29 sherds nearly all of which are Alice Holt reduced wares.

Forms include a storage jar, necked jars and a grooved-rim jar similar to Lyne and Jefferies (1979) class 3A. The character of the material suggests a phase of use in the later 2nd or 3rd centuries.

Gully 1006 also produced a modest assemblage of 35 sherds, in fairly fragmented state. These included several sherds of Alice Holt grey-ware with flat-rim bowls, six sherds of samian, one of which was from a Dr 33 cup, one fragment of white-ware and fine, oxidized ware. None of the assemblage need be later than the mid 2nd century.

4th century

Features allocated to this phase include corn driers 1001 and 1002, enclosure ditch 1003/1004 and 1009 which cut gully 1006. Also within this phase is material from layers 381 and 494.

Substantial quantities of pottery were recovered from the two corn driers, 1001 and 1002. Corn drier 1001 produced a total of 433 sherds weighing *c.* 4.6kg (Fig. 8.1–4). Alice Holt wares account for 73% of this by count accompanied by products from the Dorset black burnished, Oxfordshire and New Forest industries. Two small post-medieval glazed sherds are probably intrusive. Also present is a tiny shell-tempered sherd. Forms present include an Oxfordshire beaker decorated with white-painted floral decoration (Young 1977 type C82), a *mortarium* (C99), and a parchment ware bowl (P24). The New Forest wares include a bowl (Fulford 1975) type 89 and indented beaker (Fig. 8. 3). The pottery would suggest the drier was abandoned some time after *c.* AD 350. The shelly ware would push the date to after *c.* AD 370.

Corn drier 1002 also contained a substantial assemblage of pottery amounting to 533 sherds weighing *c.* 5.3kg (Fig. 8. 5–8). The range of material is very similar to that from 1001 suggesting that they were broadly contemporary. Alice Holt wares account for 72% of the wares accompanied by the only sherd of Dressel 20 *amphora* from the site, grog-tempered wares, Tilford ware, New Forest and Oxfordshire colour-coated wares and a single late Roman shelly jar rim. Oxfordshire products are quite numerous at 7% of the assemblage. Vessels include Young (1977) forms C51, C75 and C100, types current in the period AD 325–400. As with corn drier 1001 the shelly ware jar suggests a date after AD 370 for the abandonment of this feature.

The enclosure ditches (1003 and 1004) produced the greatest amount of pottery, totalling 781 sherds, *c.* 8.5kg, about 31% of the total recovered assemblage (Fig. 8.9–16). The greater quantity of material came from 1003 with 574 sherds, of which 57% were Alice Holt products. Accompanying this were several grog-tempered wares, including flanged bowls and curved-wall dishes, Dorset black burnished ware, a residual sherd of Verulamium *mortarium*, Oxfordshire and New Forest colour-coated wares, all indicative of a 4th-century date. Of particular note however, are four small handmade, organic-tempered wares, all from corner segment 210 (upper fill 268), which are of post-Roman date. These could have entered the ditch after it fell out of use; no other material of this type was recovered from the site.

The western side of the enclosure, ditch 1004, produced substantially less material with 207 sherds in a more fragmented condition, an average sherd weight of 7.5g compared to 12g from the eastern side. A much higher proportion of these were Alice Holt wares, 81.5% with several earlier residual sherds, in particular, six flint-tempered pieces. The latest datable piece is an OXF RS bowl, Young (1977) type C83 decorated with demi-rosettes and diagonally impressed comb, a 4th-century type.

Gully 1009 produced 74 sherds, mainly Alice Holt ware, with small pieces of OXF RS and NFO CC also present, suggesting this again dates to the 4th century.

Further late material was recovered from layer 381, 103 sherds in total with a similar range of material to that from the ditches and also including several late colour-coated wares. Layer 494 produced just three sherds, one of which is probably an abraded sherd of OXF RS.

Well 220 yielded a moderately large group of 178 sherds, but with a weight of 1293g, these

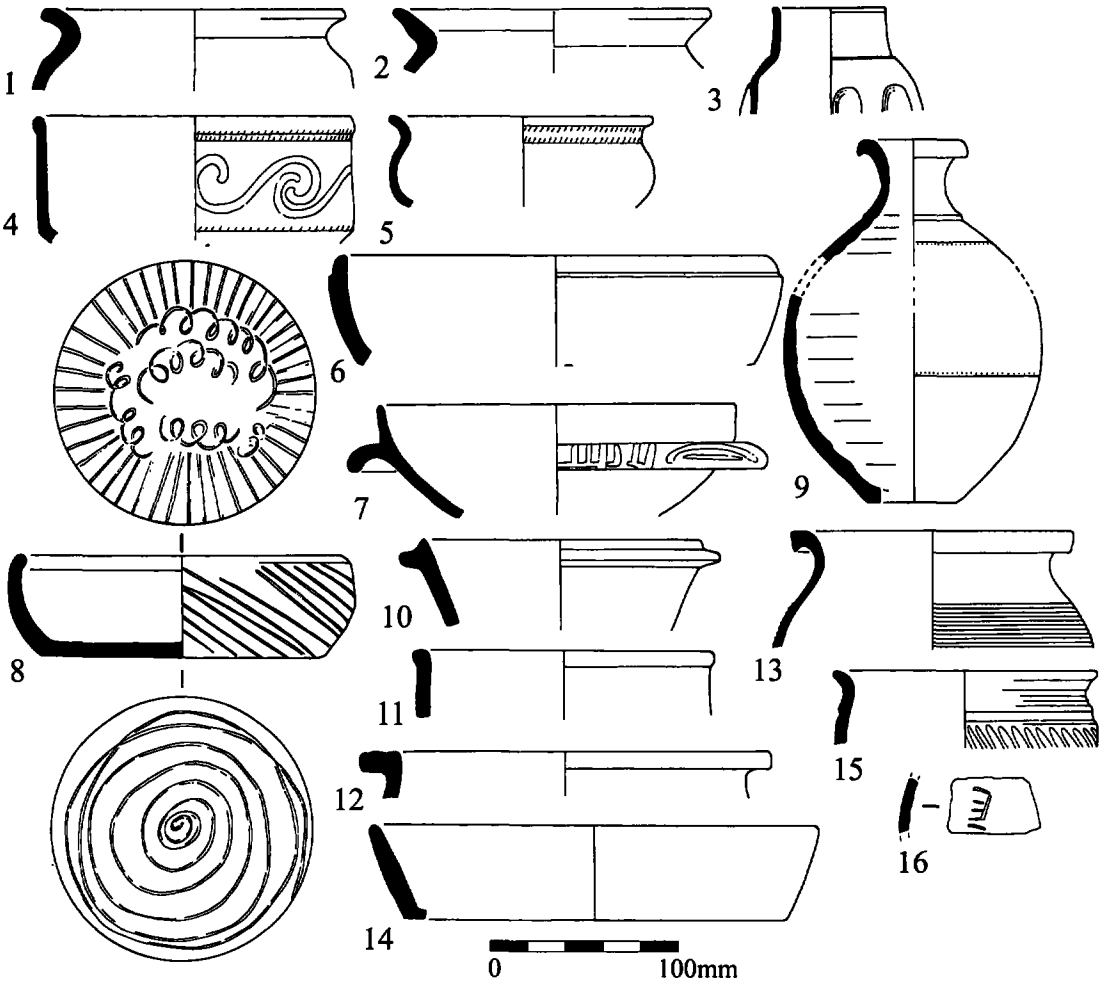

Fig. 8 Selected Pottery (see text for details)

are in a very fragmented state; the average sherd weight being 7.3g. The assemblage contains a number of 4th-century fabrics and forms including New Forest colour-coated bowls and beakers (Fulford 1975, types 67 and 30), Tilford ware and Oxfordshire bowl and *mortaria* (Young 1977, C68 and C100).

Catalogue of illustrated sherds (Fig. 8)

1. Everted rim, handmade jar. Fabric: HAM GT. Corn drier 1001 [246] (373).
2. Everted rim jar with white slip on the inner rim face and outer body. Fabric: ALH RE. Corn drier 1001 [310] (464).
3. Indented beaker. Fabric: NFO WH2. Corn drier 1002 [246] (373).
4. Bowl decorated with white painted scrolls and rouletting. Fabric: OXF RS. Corn drier 1001 [245] (372).
5. Necked bowl decorated with rouletting. Fabric: OXF RS. Corn drier 1002 [306] (397).
6. Dish with a slight external step. Fabric: ALH RE. Corn drier 1002 [302] (387).
7. Flanged bowl with traces of white-painted dec-

oration on the flange. Fabric: OXF RS. Corn drier 1002 [302] (387).

8. Almost complete handmade dish. The interior is decorated with burnished radiating lines and squiggles; the exterior with diagonal roughly applied burnished lines and the underside of the base with a slightly irregular spiral. Fabric: HAM GT. Corn drier 1002 [306] (455).
9. Almost complete, but broken, flask with black slip added to a band around the body and over the rim. Fabric: ALH RE. Ditch 1003 [207] (259).
10. Handmade flanged bowl. Fabric: HAM GT. Ditch 1003 [210] (267).
11. Beaded rim bowl. Fabric: NFO WH2. Ditch 1003 [207] (258).
12. Flat, reeded-rim jar. Fabric: ALH RE. Ditch 1003 [207] (259).
13. Oxidized jar with a rilled exterior. Fabric: OVY WH. Ditch 1003 [207] (258).
14. Plain-sided dish. Fabric: ALH RE. Ditch 1003 [207] (258).
15. Grey-ware jar with an external dark grey slip. Decorated with shallow diagonal grooves. Fabric: GREY. Ditch 1003 [210] (268).
16. Jar bodysherd with faint post-firing graffiti. Fabric: ALH RE. Surface of ditch 1004.

OTHER ARTEFACTS

Fired clay

A modest total of 157 fragments of fired clay weighing 729g was recovered, usually as very small fragments. Two contexts (302 in corn drier 1002 and 320 in corn drier 1001) produced large black fragments which may be from loomweights. All the rest is nondescript.

Brick and tile

Some 757 fragments of ceramic building material (brick and tile) weighing 71kg were also recorded (Table 2). Most of the brick and tile was recovered from the corn driers (45kg from the three combined, although little of this was from 1005) and some 13kg came from the enclosure ditches 1003 and 1004, though most features on the site contained some brick or tile. The material was often quite fragmented; but pieces of roofing tile (*tegulae* and *imbrices*) were frequently recognizable. Two pieces had possible animal footprints, formed before firing when the clay was still wet. One other slab-like piece in a fabric unlike the other brick and tile, may have been self-fired and have formed the floor of one of the corn driers.

Struck flint by Steve Ford

The distribution of struck flint recovered is shown on Figure 9, combining the results of fieldwalking and the evaluation trenching; almost all the flint from the latter was from the spoilheaps, i.e., in essence the same context as the fieldwalked finds from topsoil (Table 3). The only finds from features are discussed separately. There are three factors relevant to the interpretation of the significance of flint finds recovered from fieldwalking, namely homogeneity/date, density and extent of clustering.

A small collection comprising 18 struck flints, all flakes, was recovered during the course of the excavations. In addition a flake and two spalls were recovered from the cremation burial (100) found during the evaluation in what became Area B. The presence of these finds only tentatively points towards a prehistoric date for this feature, given the density of flint in the topsoil, which would have been available for backfilling the burial pit at any later date.

Chronology

No detailed metrical analysis was undertaken of the flintwork but there are a few pointers to its relative chronology. The main evidence is that very few of the flakes are blades/narrow flakes (2.6% of the site total, assigned by eye) which would be indicative of a Mesolithic or Early Neolithic date. The few blades/narrow flakes that are present could easily be a fortuitous product of flint knapping in later periods. The flakes in general are of later Neolithic through to later Bronze Age character. No cores were recovered.

Consideration of the retouched tool component does not allow much greater refinement of this dating, although the broken

Table 2 Brick and tile catalogue (ditch and corn-drier contexts combined)

Cut	*Deposit*	*Group*	*No*	*Wt (g)*	*Comment*
		1001	275	19984	2 fragments with animal prints, *tegulae, imbrices*
		1002	140	29327	Part of floor surface? fabric like concrete. Flat block fragment; *tegulae, imbrices*
		1003	132	9029	Possible *imbrex* and *tegula* fragments
		1004	47	4123	*Tegula* fragment
		1005	8	1519	1 *tegula* fragment, 1 *imbrex*
		1006	4	200	
		1007	6	416	
209	265		1	156	
211	269		2	10	
213	273		1	1	
216	276		54	2200	
218	284		13	170	
220	286		3	100	
220	287		9	675	
220	288		27	664	
234	357		1	246	
	381		25	625	
301	382		1	49	
305	393		1	830	
319	488		3	453	
321	491	1009	4	381	

polished flint axe and axe roughout are of Neolithic or Early Bronze Age date. The other items are common forms used throughout much of prehistory. There was no suggestion that the majority of the finds were related to any specific use or manufacturing activity. There is also no suggestion of intensive raw material procurement though there is no doubt that for a flint-rich area such as the Upper Chalk this took place on an ad hoc basis.

Density and extent of clustering

The fieldwalking (at an estimated 5% coverage) produced a quantity of struck flint averaging *c.* 270 flints per hectare over the whole area (when scaled to 100% coverage) but with peaks of *c.* 320/ha to the east of Farm Cottages and 340/ha in an area to the west. A similar fieldwalking exercise at Weybrook Farm on the Upper Chalk just to the north of the Park Prewett site (Ford 1991a) produced an average flint density of only 140/ha but with clusters up to 840/ha. At North Waltham, 8km south of Basingstoke and also an Upper Chalk site, an average density of 240/ha was recorded, with peaks of up to 800/ha (Ford 1992).

A dense distribution of struck flint occupying several hectares is typical of prehistoric occu-

Table 3 Quantification of struck flint

	Fieldwalked	*Evaluation spoil heaps*	*From features*	*Site Total*
Flake	125	200	18	343
Blade/Narrow Flake	3	6		9
Spall	6	14	2	22
Retouched flake		1	1	2
Scraper	2			2
Polished Flint Axe	1			1
Roughout Axe	1			1
Hammerstone Flake	1			1
	139	221	21	381

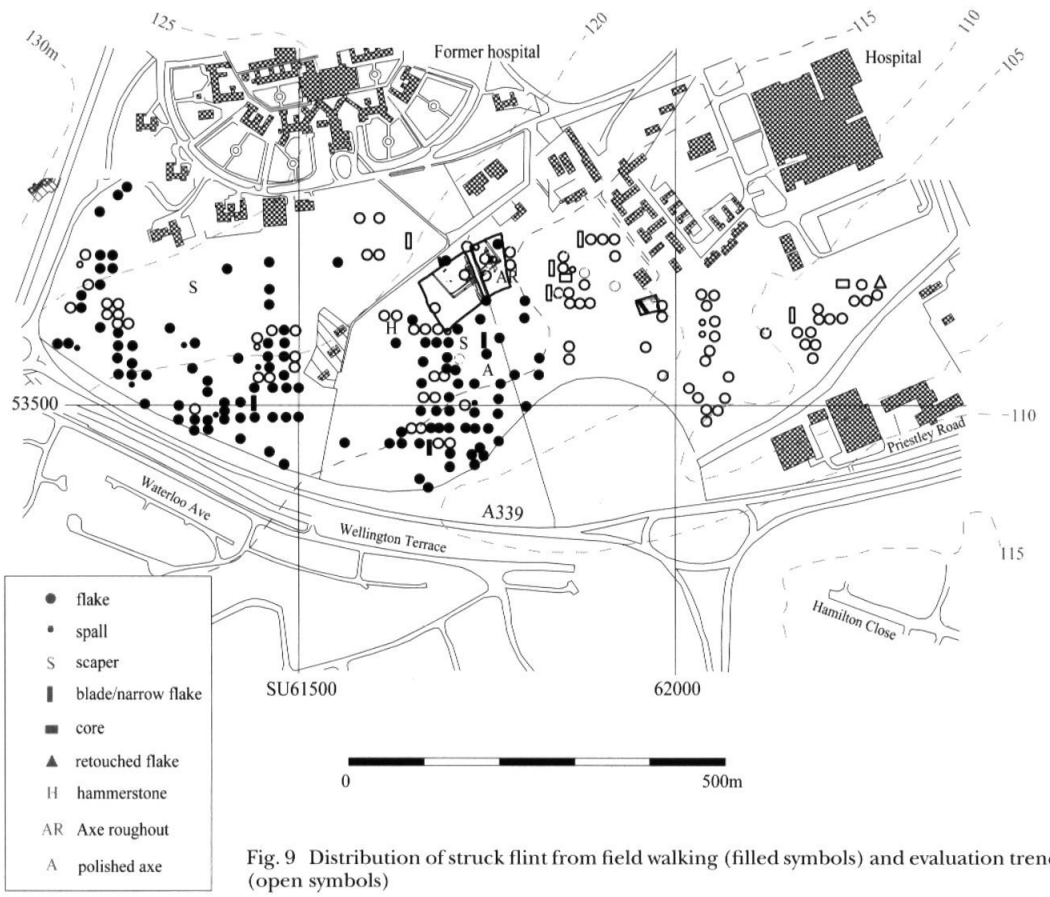

Fig. 9 Distribution of struck flint from field walking (filled symbols) and evaluation trenching (open symbols)

pation of the chalk downlands (e.g. Richards 1990; Gaffney & Tingle 1989). Comparative data from large-scale fieldwalking projects have shown that the Upper Chalk in East Berkshire has produced an average density of 187/ha with 'sites' having a range of densities from 163–1075/ha (Ford 1991b, 215–21).

For Park Prewett the struck flint densities recorded from fieldwalking would appear to be fairly typical or even somewhat lower than recorded elsewhere on the Upper Chalk. However, it was felt that there was some (weak) tendency for the distribution of field-walked finds to cluster and so some evaluation trenches were located to test the significance of this. While the number and type of finds from the trenching was broadly consistent with the density of struck flint from the fieldwalking, no more marked clustering nor indeed any occurrence of contemporary subsoil features were noted during trenching of these areas.

Metalwork by Natasha Bennett

A total of 191 metal finds were recovered including eleven finds from the evaluation trenches.

Iron objects

The assemblage was dominated by 141 complete nails or nail stems, 14 of which are hobnails. The other items recovered generally have few distinctive characteristics but many are likely to be brackets or fastenings for furniture or structures. In summary the assemblage comprises; sheet-like pieces (6), brackets (2), rod-shaped pieces (5), possible brooch pins or springs (6) and miscellaneous lumps (4). The most notable item was the heavily corroded remains of a key from ditch 1003 (207) (identified only from X-ray).

Copper alloy objects

Just four copper alloy items were found. All were poorly preserved and fragmentary. One thin circular piece from corn drier 1002 (302) was decorated with incisions and is a possible brooch fragment. The other two pieces (one from corn drier 1002, one from pit 209) also comprised thin sheet but are unidentified. An unstratified find from evaluation trench 18 comprised a rectilinear-sectioned rod 120mm long which tapers to hooked terminals and with an iron rivet at the centre. It is possibly a handle.

Coins by Paul Cannon

Three Roman coins were recovered from evaluation trenches 14 and 15, across the excavation area, but oddly none from the excavation itself. Two of the coins were recovered from corn drier 1001. All three were of 3rd and 4th century date:

Trench 14 (near posthole 8) Unidentified small AE probably 4th century AD
1001 (212) Unidentified AE antoninianus, late 3rd century AD
1001 (212) Unidentified small AE probably 4th century AD

Two other coins were found in evaluation trenches:

Trench 5 (spoil) an AE3 of Constantine I (DN CONSTANTINI MAX AVG VOTXX), AD 324–7
Trench 13 (spoil) AE antoninianus of Claudius II (CONSECRATIO – eagle type) *c.* AD 270

A further collection of 81 coins had been previously recovered from the environs of the site by Mr Nigel Jensen using a metal detector. He kindly allowed his collection to be examined. Of these coins, 34 were unidentifiable but the remainder, bar one of Commodus, were all of 3rd- to mid-4th-century types (as follows):

AE sestertius, Commodus. Rev: GEN AVG FELIC PM TRP XV IMP VIII COS VI. AD 190.
AR denarius, Severus Alexander. Rev: VIRTVS AVG. AD 221–235.
AE antoninianus, Gallienus. Rev: MARTI PACIFERO. AD 260–268.
AE antoninianus, Gallienus. Rev: PAX AVGVSTI. AD 260–268.
AE antoninianus, Gallienus. Rev: Mars type. AD 260–268.
AE antoninianus, Gallienus? Rev: Aequitas? type – E in field. AD 260–268.

AE antoninianus, Carausius – mm = MLXXI. AD 287–293.
AE antoninianus, Carausius. Rev: PAX AVG. AD 287–293.
AE quinarius, Allectus. Rev: VIRTVS AVG – galley type. mm = QC. AD 293–296.
AE follis. Rev: GENIO POP ROM. *c.* AD 300.
AE follis, Constantine I. Rev: SECVRITAS AVGG. mm = ... TR.. *c.* AD 310.
AE follis, Constantine I. Rev: SOLI INVICTO COMITI. mm = PTR. *c.* AD 313.
AE follis, Constantine I. Rev: SOLI INVICTO COMITI. mm = S ..... *c.* AD 313.
AE follis, Constantine I. Rev: SOLI INVICTO COMITI. *c.* AD 313.
AE3, Constantine I. Rev: VICTORIAE LAETAE PRINC PERP. *c.* AD 318.
AE3, Crispus. Rev: BEATA TRANQVILLITAS VOTIS XX. mm = PLON. *c.* AD 323.
AE3, Constantine II. Rev: BEATA TRANQVILLITAS VOTIS XX. *c.* AD 323 (two examples).
AE3, Crispus. Rev: CAESARVM NOSTRORVM VOT X. *c.* AD 323.
AE3, Constantine II Rev: CAESARVM NOSTRORVM VOT X. *c.* AD323.
AE3, Constantine II. Rev: CAESARVM NOSTRORVM VOT X. mm = STRV. *c.* AD 323 (two examples).
AE3, Constantine II. Rev: CAESARVM NOSTRORVM VOT X. mm = ...TR. *c.* AD 323.
AE3, Constantine I. Rev: SARMATIA DEVICTA or ALAMANNIA DEVICTA. *c.* AD 323–326.
AE3, Constantine II. Rev: PROVIDENTIAE CAESS – camp gate. mm = STR. *c.* AD 325.
AE 3, Crispus. Rev: PROVIDENTIAE CAESS – camp gate. *c.* AD 325.
AE3, Constantine I. Rev: PROVIDENTIAE AVGG – camp gate. mm = PTRV. *c.* AD 325.
AE3, Constantine I. Rev: PROVIDENTIAE AVGG – camp gate. mm = PLG. *c.* AD 325.
AE3/4, Constantine I. Rev: GLORIA EXERCITVS – two standards. mm = TR.S. *c.* AD 330–335.
AE3/4, Constantine I. Rev: GLORIA EXERCITVS – two standards. mm = TRP. *c.* AD 330–335.
AE3/4, Constantine II. Rev: GLORIA EXERCITVS – two standards. mm = VPLG. *c.* AD 330–335.
AE3/4, Constantine II. Rev: GLORIA EXERCITVS – two standards. mm = PLG. *c.* AD 330–335.
AE3/4, Constantine II. Rev: GLORIA EXERCITVS – two standards. *c.* AD 330–335 (two examples).
AE3/4, Constantine I. Obv: VRBS ROMA. mm = SMTSA. *c.* AD 330–335.
AE3/4, Constantine I. Obv: CONSTANTINOPOLIS. mm = TRP. *c.* AD 330–335.
AE3/4, Constantine I. Obv: CONSTANTINOPOLIS. mm = – T – *c.* AD 330–335.
AE3/4, Constantine I. Obv: CONSTANTINOPOLIS. *c.* AD 330–335 (three examples).
AE 4, Constantine I or II. Rev: GLORIA EXERCITVS –one standard. *c.* AD 335–341.
AE 4, Constans. Rev: VICTORIAE DD AVGG Q NN. *c.* AD 341–346.
AE centenionalis, Constantius II or Constans. rev: FEL TEMP REPARATIO – fallen horseman. *c.* AD 346–350.
AE centenionalis, Magnentius. Rev: FELICITAS REIPVBLICE. AD 350–353 (two examples).
AE double centenionalis?, Magnentius, or Decentius. Rev: SALVS DD NN AVG ET CAES. AD 350–353.
AE 3. Rev: GLORIA ROMANORVM? Late 4th century.
34 worn/corroded and unidentified small Roman bronze coins. Late 3rd or 4th century AD
Lead token with abstract design made up of lines and pellets. 17th century.

Stone

Some 492 fragments of non-local stone weighing 53.4kg were recovered from the excavation areas and corresponding evaluation trenches (14, 15 and 18). These mostly comprised fragments of quernstone but with possible roofing stone and a whetstone present.

Petrology by Kevin Hayward, with additional identifications by David Williams

Eight samples covering the range of stone types present in the assemblage were examined in hand specimen using a hand lens (×10) to determine the geological character. By examining the local geological maps (BGS 1981) and accompanying local (Osborne-White 1909) and regional (Sherlock 1947; Melville & Freshney 1982) memoirs, excavation reports (Fulford & Timby 2000; Hayward 2007a) and related articles on quernstone production (Peacock 1987) as well as comparison with stone samples, it was hoped that a source for each rock type could be determined. The site lies along the northern edge of the Upper Chalk outcrop of Hampshire and within 5km of the younger Tertiary sediments (Reading

Table 4 Stone catalogue

Cut	*Deposit*	*Group*	*Type*	*No*	*Wt (g)*	*COMMENT*
	Tr 14 u/s	=Area C	Pennant Sandstone	1	306	Quernstone?
	Tr 14 u/s	=Area C	Millstone Grit	1	367	
5=212	Tr 15	1001	Shelly limestone	1	86	
5=212	Tr 15	1001	Sarsen	1	324	
9	Tr 18		Mayen lava	54	462	
207	258	1003	Millstone Grit	1	600	Quern
207	258	1003	Greensand, local?, possibly Malmstone	1	1085	Saddle quern or rubber
207	258	1003	Millstone Grit	1	255	Quern (burnt)
207	258	1003	Greensand, local?	1	760	Quern
207	258	1003	Greensand, local?	1	228	
207	258	1003	Greensand, Lodsworth?	1	230	
207	258	1003	Shelly limestone	1	304	Roofing slate?
207	258	1003	Fine-grained calcareous sandstone	2	220	Roofing slate?
207	259	1003	Fine-grained calcareous sandstone	2	186	Roofing slate?
207	259	1003	Millstone grit	1	352	Quern
208	262		Greensand, local?	1	14000	Slab or roofing slate?
210	268	1003	Shelly limestone	1	718	Roofing slate?
212	271/272	1001	Greensand, local?	1	218	Quern
220	borehole	13–13.5m	Millstone grit	3	24	
220	borehole	12–12.5m	Millstone grit	3	240	
235	358	1004	Shelly limestone	1	42	Roofing slate?
238	471	1001	Mayen lava	8	608	
246	372	1001	Millstone Grit	1	20	
246	373	1001	Greensand, Lodsworth	1	670	Quern
246	373	1001	Fine calcareous greensand, ?Kentish Ragstone	1	65	Concave shaped whetstone
246	388	1001	Greensand, local?	1	230	Roofing slate?
246	388	1001	Greensand, local?	1	114	
	381		Mayen lava	6	16	

Table 4 (cont.) Stone catalogue

Cut	*Deposit*	*Group*	*Type*	*No*	*Wt (g)*	*COMMENT*
302	385	1002	Mayen lava	24	332	
302	385	1002	Mayen lava	20	9450	Quern
302	386	1002	Greensand, Lodsworth?	1	5100	Quern, grooved
302	386	1002	Millstone grit, fine grained	1	1195	Quern
302	386	1002	Millstone grit	1	400	Quern, grooved
302	386	1002	Mayen lava	116	2816	
302	386	1002	Greensand, local?	1	156	Quern?
302	387	1002	Mayen lava	18	70	
302	387	1002	Millstone Grit	1	252	Quern
246	388	1001	Greensand, local?	1	222	Roofing slate?
306	397	1002	Mayen lava	19	115	
306	397	1002	Greensand, local?	1	66	
306	398	1002	Mayen lava	100	430	
306	398	1002	Calcareous sandstone	1	36	Roofing slate?
306	454	1002	Mayen lava	42	148	
306	454	1002	Mayen lava	6	4	
308	473	1001	Millstone grit	1	612	Quern, grooved
308	474	1001	Greensand, local?	1	282	
316	479	1005	Greensand, Lodsworth?	1	1768	Quern
320	490	1002	Mayen lava	37	9730	Quern fragments, two large pieces with radial grooves
320	490	1002	Greensand, Lodsworth?	1	11500	Quern, broken with central hole

Beds; London Clay). Apart from Sarsen, none of these local materials have the hard, even-grained coarse texture to be suitable for quernstone use. This means that the material needs to have come from further afield. The nearest suitable materials are the Lower Greensands from the Pulborough-Lodsworth region of West Sussex, 30–40km away.

The samples (Table 4) comprise:

Millstone grit: a variable fine/medium grained grey – red/grey open textured angular quartz sandstone with medium to conglomeratic size grains (5–8mm). The source for this is likely to be the Namurian – Upper Carboniferous outcrops of the Pennines in Derbyshire or South Yorkshire. The hard angular quartz crystals are ideal for grinding grain into coarse flour.

Greensand: a grey-olive-green, hardened fine-grained, glauconitic sandstone with small wisps of

harder black chert. Also present are large burrows 5cm long infilled with lighter sediment. The source for this is likely to be the Lower Greensand outcrops at Lodsworth/Pulborough in West Sussex. The harder black wisps of chert and worm burrows are unique to this part of the Lower Greensand formation of southern England and would have helped grind the corn more effectively.

Greensand: (malmstone): a very fine pale white-light grey hard glauconitic sandstone bound with interlocking calcite crystals. Different from the Ragstone as the calcite content is much greater and the colour a much paler grey/white. The source for this is likely to be the Upper Greensand from West Surrey/ east Hampshire (Selborne).

Ragstone: a very fine light grey hard glauconitic sandstone bound with interlocking calcite crystals. The source for this is likely to be the Lower Greensand such as Kentish Ragstone from Maidstone or a West Sussex equivalent. The fine, hard, even grained surface is ideal for the sharpening of tools and weapons.

Mayen Lava: (dark grey coarse vesicular lava): The source for this is the Mayen and Niedermendig area of the Eifel Hills of Germany. It is a common find in Roman and Saxon Britain (Peacock 1980)

Pennant Sandstone: (dark grey medium-grained sandstone with quartz grains and micaceous grits) The source for this is Bristol or South Wales).

Shelly Limestone: (Jurassic, white) The source for this is possibly from the Isle of Purbeck.

Sarsen: (coarse grained quartzite) The source for this could be local to the site.

The quality and variety of quernstone materials (Millstone Grit; Lodsworth Greensand) may indicate that this site has some status attached to it. Lodsworth Greensand from West Sussex was readily accessible in the Hampshire region via the Roman road network and Peacock's (1987) study on Iron Age and Roman quern production at Lodsworth shows just how widespread quern supply was at this time. However, the quantity of millstone grit identified is very surprising. It is found at Silchester in small quantities (Wooders 2000) but is not apparently present in quernstones at Fishbourne or Chichester (Hayward 2007b). It is comparatively rare in southern England though identical material has recently been identified at two sites in Slough (Ford 2005; Ford 2008).

CREMATED HUMAN REMAINS by Ceri Falys and Jacqueline McKinley

Two features containing cremated human remains were recorded, one from the evaluation phase (100) and the second, nearby, discovered during the excavation in Area B (200). The cremated bone was passed through a stack of sieves of 10mm, 5mm and 2mm mesh size. The weight of bone collected from each sieve and maximum fragment sizes for skull and long bone, illustrate the degree of bone fragmentation. More than half of the bone from deposit 150 was in the 5–10mm size range, with just 30% over 5mm; for deposit 250, 48% of the bone was over 5mm in size. The identifiable bone was then separated for further examination, being divided into the categories of skull, axial, upper and lower limb (McKinley 1989). Full details of all observations recorded are in the archive. The efficiency of a cremation depends on the exposure time and temperature to which the bone is subjected. All of the bone from both contexts was white, indicating completely oxidized bone (Holden *et al.* 1995).

Cremation 100 (deposit 150) by Jacqueline McKinley

This deposit represents a single adult, possibly a female, and the deposit included some burnt flint, charcoal, a flint flake and two spalls. The burnt flint only indicates that the soil over which the pyre was built naturally contained flints, and its incorporation into the pit, along with several large charcoal fragments, is incidental, not an uncommon occurrence in either Bronze Age or Roman cremation burials. It is unclear if the unburnt flake and spalls can be considered to provide dating evidence either, given the quantity of flint in the topsoil of the site. As the burial was disturbed, no worthwhile comment can be made on fragmentation or even the overall quantity of the bone (total weight 307g). Age was assessed from the stage of epiphyseal bone and cranial suture fusion (McMinn and Hutchings 1985; Webb and Suchey 1985). Sex was assessed from the sexually dimorphic traits of the skeleton

Table 5 Inventory of burnt human bone

Cut	*Deposit*	*Spit*	*Depth*	*Wt (g)*	*Max Frag (mm)*	*Elements*
100	150	–	–	307	41	Cranial: Incisor/canine/premolar root fragment. Mandible- ramus fragmen, Right lateral supra-orbit fragment with sharp margin. Petrous temporal fragments. Vault: 83 fragments, upper suture fusing. Axial: Cervical; fragment atlas lateral articular surface. Fragments minimum vertebral body. Upper limb: Humerus; fragments distal articular surfaces. Fragments radius and ulna shafts. Lower limb: Fragments femur, tibia and fibula shafts.
200	250	1	0.00–0.02m	99	52	Cranial: including tooth crown and roots
200	250	2	0.02–0.04m	133	43	Cranial: including tooth crown and roots; Axial: vertebrae; Upper Limb: lunate, humerus shaft, intermediate and distal manal phalanges
200	250	3	0.04–0.06m	126	54	Cranial: including petrous temporal; Axial: vertebrae; Upper Limb: shafts, intermediate and distal phalanges
200	250	4	0.06–0.08m	99	53	Cranial; Axial- dens of 2nd cervical vertebra, other vertebral fragments; Upper Limb: intermediate phalanx
200	250	5	0.08–0.10m	38	37	Axial: vertebrae; Upper Limb: distal phalanx; Lower Limb: femur, proximal phalanx
200	250	6	0.10–0.12m	36	28	Cranial; Axial: vertebrae; Lower Limb: femur
200	250	7	0.12–0.14m	7	23	Upper Limb: phalanx
200	250	8	0.14–0.16m	7	27	Axial: lumbar vertebra
200	250	9	0.16–0.18m	3	18	Lower Limb: proximal phalanx
200	250	10	0.18–0.20m	6	23	Axial: thoracic vertebra
200	250	11	0.20–0.22m	7	18	Cranial
200	250	12	0.22–0.24m	5	22	–
200	250	13	0.24–0.26m	6	14	Cranial; Upper Limb: proximal phalanx

(Bass 1987), including maximum cranial vault thickness 1a (5.05mm) according to Gejvall (1981) (McKinley 1994).

Cremation 200 (deposit 250) by Ceri Falys

Deposit 250 from cut 200 was whole-earth recovered in a series of 13 spits, each 0.02m thick (Table 5). The total amount of burnt human bone from this context was 572g. Although this is lower than the expected cremation weight range (1001.5g to 2442.5g, average 1625.9g based on modern crematoria: McKinley 1993), it is still suggested that this deposit does represent a deliberate cremation burial. It has been noted that a common practice was to deposit only some of the calcined bone from a cremated individual, representing a symbolic/token interment (McKinley 2006).

The bone from deposit 250 was subjected to osteological analysis following the procedures suggested by Brickley and McKinley (2004) and Buikstra and Ubelaker (1994). Human bone fragments were divided into five main areas of the body: cranial, axial, upper limb, lower limb and long bone (not identified to limb), where possible. More detailed identification of fragments to specific skeletal element and side was also made. Fragments of the cranial vault, teeth (roots and crowns), and phalanges (fingers) were the most frequently identifiable. Many long bone shaft fragments were too small to be more closely identifiable.

Age at death was assessed based on a very limited number of observations, resulting in only a very broad age classification. All identified elements had fully fused epiphyses, strongly suggesting the individual present was a fully skeletally mature adult at the time of death. The complete lack of any fusion of cranial sutures, which can only be a rough guide, nonetheless suggests that this individual was a younger adult.

No sexually dimorphic aspects of the skeleton were identified, so it was not possible to assign sex to these remains. Likewise, neither pathological alterations, nor non-metric traits were observed.

Other human bone by Ceri Falys

A total of 14 fragments of disarticulated human bone were recovered from context 226 (294). Ten fragments of ribs (refitting into three left ribs and one right rib) were present. Bones from both a left and a right foot were also identified: a left talus, a right cuboid, the proximal portion of a right fourth metatarsal, and a single (unsided) pedal proximal phalanx. Due to the lack of element duplication, the minimum number of individuals present in this small assemblage was determined to be one. The sex of the individual could not be confidently assessed, due to the lack of sexually dimorphic elements, notably the skull and pelvis. However, all elements were robust, suggesting the individual was possibly male. Age was likewise not confidently estimated, but the remains belonged to an adult, as all epiphyses were completely fused (e.g. the rib heads fuse between the ages of 17 – 25 years). Neither pathological alterations, nor non-metric traits were observed.

ANIMAL BONE by Matilda Holmes

The small animal bone assemblage (1465 fragments but only 290 identifiable bones) all came from Areas A and C. The majority (255 identifiable bones) came from 4th century contexts and very few from earlier features. Only the 4th century assemblage is analysed in detail here, although all bones have been considered in terms of the species represented. Bones came in greatest numbers from corn driers and ditches, but were also recovered from pits and gullies.

Bones were identified using the author's reference collection and further guidelines from Cohen and Serjeantson (1996). Due to anatomical similarities between sheep and goat, bones of this type were assigned to the category 'sheep/goat', unless a definite identification using guidelines from Prummel and Frisch (1986) or Payne (1985) could be made. Bones that could not be identified to species were categorized according to the relative size of the animal represented (small – rodent

Table 6 Animal bone: species representation (fragment count)

	Phase			
Species	*2*	*2–3*	*3*	*%*
Cattle	19	2	112	44
Sheep / goat	11	1	71	29
Sheep			3	
Pig	1		8	3
Horse			27	11
Dog			17*	7
Cat			1	–
Red deer		1		
Roe deer			1	–
Rabbit			10*	2
Badger			1*	–
Human	4			
Chicken			10	4
Total identified	35	4	255	
Unidentified mammal	17	4	304	
Large mammal	51	14	469	
Medium mammal	30	4	276	
Small mammal			6	
Bird			9	
Total	133	26	1310	

* articulated groups counted as 1

/rabbit sized, medium – sheep / pig / dog sized, or large – cattle / horse size). Ribs, skull fragments and vertebrae were not identified to species with the exception of the zygomatic and occipital areas of the skull, 1st and 2nd vertebrae and sacrum. Tooth wear and eruption were noted using guidelines from Grant (1982) and Silver (1969), as were bone fusion (Amorosi 1989; Silver 1969), metrical data (Albarella and Payne 2005; Davis 1992; von den Driesch 1976), anatomy, side, zone (Serjeantson 1996), pathology, butchery (Lauwerier 1988; Sykes 2007), bone working and condition (Lyman 1994). Bones from a number of sieved samples were collected but because of the highly fragmentary nature of such samples a selective process was undertaken, whereby fragments were recorded only if they could be identified to species and / or element, or showed signs of taphonomic processing.

Condition and taphonomy

The surface condition of bones varied from excellent to almost unrecognizable, although

Table 7 Animal bone groups

Cut	*Context*	*Type*	*MNI*	*Species*	*Age*	*n*	*Body parts*
207	259	Ditch	1	Badger	mature	9	fore and hind leg, canine
212	272	Corn drier	4	Rabbit	3× mature; 1× immature	22	fore and hind leg
220	286	Well	3	Rabbit	2× mature; 1× immature	10	hind leg
220	288	Well	3	Rabbit	2× mature; 1× immature	12	fore and hind leg, skull
214	274	Ditch	1	Dog	mature	3	fore and hind leg

most were in fair condition. The proportion of loose teeth to teeth in mandibles was approximately 5:1, which indicates that preservation of the assemblage was poor from some areas. The bones from the corn driers and pits were better preserved (52% rated 1; 2% rated 5), those from ditches exhibiting signs of poor preservation (29% rated 1; 8% rated 5). There were a large number of fresh breaks (26% of phase 3 assemblage), leading to a correspondingly high number of refitted fragments. Again, more complete bones were recovered from corn driers and pits, and more fragmented bones deposited in the ditches. This may suggest that the bones disposed of in ditches were more heavily processed, or more disturbed than those that came from the corn driers and pits, which may have been subject to fewer mechanical or biological factors such as trampling, re-deposition, or weathering. Very few bones exhibited signs of gnawing (13 fragments), which may indicate that the assemblage was not widely accessible to dogs prior to deposition. There were also very few burnt (2), worked (2) or butchered (12) fragments, although the poor preservation of some fragments may have removed any such traces.

Species representation

Cattle, sheep / goat and pig were recovered in both Roman phases (Table 6). From unphased Roman pit 206, came a naturally shed red deer antler, from which the second tine had been removed, and then polished to make a smooth shaft. A greater range of species was recorded from Phase 3, including other domestic species (horse, dog, cat and chicken) as well as wild mammals: roe deer, rabbit and badger. Very few rabbit bones have been securely dated to the Roman period, and it is likely that they only occurred as imported delicacies (Sykes 2007). It is more likely that the rabbit remains on this site are intrusive, as they were very well preserved, included juvenile bones and bore no direct evidence for processing such as cut marks or burning. Mouse, toad and *Turdus* species (e.g. blackbird or thrush) were recovered from the sieved samples. The extent to which some of these species contributed to the diet is debatable, and the badger, cat and dog may not have been eaten. Background species such as mouse and toad, are indicative of the environment of the site, and although mice inhabit most ecological niches in Britain, toads imply a water source nearby.

Cattle were present in greatest numbers, and it is likely that beef provided the mainstay of the diet, although there was evidence for mutton or lamb, and to a lesser extent, pork and chicken. Horse was probably eaten, as butchered horse bones from other Roman sites indicate that there was no taboo on the consumption of horse flesh during this period (Maltby 1994). Sheep remains were positively identified, but no goat, so ovicaprids will all be referred to as sheep for convenience.

A number of animal bone groups were recorded, indicating that partially or fully articulated skeletons were buried (Table 7). The majority of these were rabbit skeletons, both mature and immature, six from well 220, and four from corn drier 212, most likely intrusions from a later period. Only the 4th-century assemblage is discussed.

Fragment representation

The cattle assemblage was the only one to provide enough data to allow a reliable consideration of the frequency of body parts represented (details in archive). All parts of the body were present, indicating that complete animals were butchered on site. Sheep bones also came from all parts of the carcass except for vertebrae, suggesting that sheep were also brought to the site as complete carcasses. Pig bones came from the hind leg, however, the sample size was very small (6), and may not reflect the consumption of specific body parts. Evidence for butchery was scarce: chop marks made by a heavy implement, in areas indicative of the disarticulation of the carcass, were noted on cattle, sheep and horse bones, supporting the suggestion that the assemblage was primarily food waste.

Animal economy

Again, only the cattle sample was large enough to provide enough information to suggest a mortality profile (details in archive). The majority of ageing data came from bone fusion, from which there was no evidence for neonatal or first year deaths, the majority of animals being mature. There was a cull of animals before 24–36 months, and a smaller cull of younger animals that died before reaching 18 months. Tooth wear data also indicated a number of animals over 4 years old (mandible wear stages 42, 43 and 49), as well as one around 30–36 months of age (MWS *c.* 34), but also two very young calves that died before reaching 8 months of age (MWS 3 and 5). This may suggest that animals were bred nearby – the 1st year mortalities either natural deaths or casualties of a dairy industry. The predominance of mature animals indicates that they were used for secondary products such as traction or dairying, although there were also a few animals of prime meat age, suggesting a demand for meat in an economy otherwise reliant on cattle for secondary products.

There were very few sheep or pig bones useable for ageing. The sheep bone fusion shows no evidence for animals over 28 months old. One mandible reflects this, coming from an animal 14–21 months old (MWS *c.* 32), although other tooth wear evidence indicates the presence of animals 36–48 and 48–72 months old (MWS 34, 34 and 39). Such a profile implies that older animals were kept for secondary products such as milk or wool, or as a breeding population, but that a younger population was also valued for their meat, at such an age when they could have given a clip or two of wool.

For the pig assemblage, there was no evidence from either fusion or tooth wear data of animals that lived over 21 months, which is not unusual for pigs, which mature quickly and have little value for secondary products, and is consistent with other data for Hampshire (Coy 1981).

Discussion

A number of contemporary late Roman sites in the area have produced animal bone assemblages suitable for comparison (Table 8). Of those reviewed, two were from urban sites at Silchester (Grant 2000; Ingrem 2006) and Neatham (Done 1986), and others from rural settlements at Manor Farm, Monk Sherbourne (Ingrem & Clark 2005) and Ructstalls Hill, Basingstoke (Gregory 1978). At those sites of a similar nature to Park Prewett (Ructstalls Hill and Manor Farm) the main domestic species were recovered in similar numbers. King (1978; 1999) notes that a decrease in sheep numbers is common in the later Roman period, and that a predominance of cattle is indicative of more 'Romanized' sites (villas, roadside settlements, towns and forts).

The possible use of the site for grain production may have made it reliant on cattle for traction, which may explain the predominance of older animals in the assemblage. Sheep and

Table 8 Species representation from 4th century deposits elsewhere in Hampshire (% NISP)

Site	*Cattle*	*Sheep*	*Pig*	*Chicken*	*n*
Neatham (urban)	61	28	8	3	1762
Silchester a (urban)	24	39	21	15	3768
Silchester b (urban)	67	17	13	3	2183
Manor farm, Monk Sherborne (villa)	48	40	6	6	608
Ructstalls Hill, Basingstoke (rural settlement)	59	41	–	–	189
Park Prewett, Basingstoke (rural settlement)	55	36	4	5	204

pigs were kept for meat, but some older sheep may have been used for wool, milk or breeding purposes.

BURNT PLANT REMAINS by Mark Robinson

Twenty-seven bulk soil samples were floated onto a 0.25mm mesh, dried and sorted under a binocular microscope. Sample 10 from cremation 200, had been divided by depth into a series of sub-samples. Most contained charcoal, all of the same taxon, so the results from these sub-samples have been combined. With the exception of Sample 20 from corn drier 1002, the quantity of remains in the corn driers was low. Therefore the results for each of the three corn driers (excluding Sample 20) have been combined. The results for those samples to contain identifiable seeds and any other charred remains excluding charcoal are given in Table 9. The results for those samples to contain more than a slight trace of charcoal are given in Table 10.

Some of the samples from the corn driers contained light silica ash. There were many silica chaff fragments including awns from a long-awned variety of *Triticum* sp. (wheat) in Sample 20. Such material forms when cereal chaff is burnt under fully oxidizing conditions at a temperature which causes the phytoliths in it to become welded together without melting (Robinson & Straker 1991). In addition, a sequence of samples was taken by corer from the possible well 220. They did not contain any waterlogged plant remains and there was only a slight presence of carbonized plant material.

Cremation 200

The results suggest that wood of Pomoideae (hawthorn, apple etc) was used to effect the cremation.

Roman corn driers 1001, 1002 and 1005

All the corn driers contained cereal remains, particularly of *Triticum spelta* (spelt wheat) and weeds from plants which commonly grew as arable weeds. Remains were sparse in the two samples from corn drier 1005, and chaff was absent. Rather more remains were found in the seven samples from corn drier 1001 including chaff but the concentration of remains was again low. Almost all the chaff items were glumes of *T. spelta* or *T.* cf. *spelta.*

Sample 20 from corn drier 1002, however, contained a high concentration of remains. Grain outnumbered chaff and weed seeds. Most of the identified grain was *T. spelta* or *T.* cf. *spelta* although there was also a presence of hulled *Hordeum vulgare* (six-row hulled barley). As in corn drier 1001, the chaff mostly comprised *T. spelta*-type glumes. The most numerous weed seeds were of *Lithospermum arvense* (corn gromwell) and *Bromus* cf. *secalinus* (rye-brome). However, carbonized items in Sample 20 were greatly outnumbered by silica fragments of chaff. The seeds of *L. arvense* have a high silica content in their coat (hence their

Table 9 Carbonized Plant Remains (excluding charcoal)

	Phase	*2*	*2*	*2*	*3*	*3*	*3*
	Feature type	*pit*	*ditch*		*corn driers*		
	Group		*1007*	*1005*	*1001*	*1002*	*1002*
	Feature	*211*	*226*			*302*	
	Sample (number of samples)	*11*	*15*	*(2s)*	*(7s)*	*20*	*(7s)*
CEREAL GRAIN							
Triticum spelta L.	spelt wheat	3	6	2	5	8	16
T. dicoccum Schübel or *spelta* L.	emmer or spelt	7	13	2	14	45	31
Hordeum vulgare L. - hulled lateral	hulled six-row barley	–	–	–	–	1	–
Hordeum sp. - hulled	hulled barley	2	–	1	1	9	5
cereal indet.		11	4	2	16	127	39
Total cereal grain		23	23	7	36	190	91
CEREAL CHAFF							
Triticum spelta L. - glume	spelt wheat	5	8	–	7	19	11
T. dicoccum Schübel or *spelta* L. - glume	emmer or spelt	8	9	–	29	41	14
Secale or *Hordeum* sp. - rachis node	rye or barley	–	–	–	1	–	–
Total chaff items		13	17	0	37	60	25
WEED SEEDS							
Papaver cf. *somniferum* L.	opium poppy	–	–	–	–	3	–
cf. *Trifolium* sp.	clover	1	–	–	–	–	–
Rumex sp.	dock	2	1	–	–	–	1
Lithospermum arvense L.	corn gromwell	1	–	2	–	38	1
Anthemis cf. *arvensis* L.	corn chamomile	–	–	–	–	1	–
A. cotula L.	stinking mayweed	–	–	–	–	–	3
Carex sp.	sedge	–	–	1	–	–	–
Bromus cf. *secalinus* L.	rye-brome	–	–	–	3	22	3
Gramineae indet.	grass	–	–	1	3	–	1
weed indet.		2	–	4	–	–	2
Total weed seeds		6	1	8	6	64	11

generic name which translates as 'stone seed') and are less easily burnt away under oxidizing conditions. The material that became carbonized can only have been a small fraction of what was burnt in the corn drier, most being fully oxidized to leave silica ash. It is possible that chaff was the major component of the herbaceous material amongst the fuel. The other samples from corn drier 1002 contained much lower concentrations of grain, chaff and weed

Table 10 Charcoal

	Phase		*3*	*3*	
	Feature type	*cremation*	*pit*	*corn driers*	
	Group			*1001*	*1002*
	Feature	*200*	*220*		
	Sample (Number of Samples)	*10*	*12*	*(7s)*	*(7s)*
Pomoideae indet.	hawthorn, apple etc	+++	++	+	++
Corylus avellana L.	hazel	–	+	+	–
Ulmus sp.	elm	–	+	–	–
Quercus sp.	oak	–	–	+++	+++
Fraxinus excelsior L.	ash	–	–	–	+

– none
+ present (under 10)
++ some (10-100)
+++ many (over 100)

seeds. Some silica ash was present although without recognizable chaff fragments.

In addition to the cereal remains and weed seeds, corn driers 1001 and 1002 contained much charcoal particularly *Quercus* sp. (oak). Some Pomoideae (hawthorn, apple etc) charcoal was also present in both of them while corn drier 1001 contained a little charcoal of *Corylus avellana* (hazel) and corn drier 1002 contained a little charcoal of *Fraxinus excelsior* (ash).

One of the corn driers, 1005, belonged to the late 2nd/3rd century AD, the other two belonged to the 4th century AD, but it is likely that they all had a similar function of parching spelt wheat so that it could be de-husked. In addition to the burning of wood in corn driers 1001 and 1002, they seem to have been fuelled on the chaff and weed seeds separated from the grain following de-husking. However, chaff is much more vulnerable to complete combustion than any cereal grains present amongst the de-husking waste, so the ratio between carbonized chaff and carbonized grain would have been very different from their ratio in the unburnt material. In the absence of the silica remains it would not have been obvious that much chaff had been burnt in the corn driers.

Facilitating the de-husking of spelt wheat was one of the main uses of corn driers in Roman Britain. Another function was drying sprouted grain as part of the malting process. However, none of the grains showed signs of germination and carbonized cereal embryos rubbed from sprouted grains were absent.

Pits and ditches

Pit 211 and ditch 226, both from Phase 2, contained low concentrations of similar ranges of grain, chaff and weed seeds to those found in the corn driers. It is likely that the material derived from the corn driers. The upper fill of possible well 220 contained some charcoal, mostly of Pomoideae but interestingly a fragment of *Ulmus* sp. (elm) was also present.

DISCUSSION

The excavation, following an initial evaluation by fieldwalking and trenching, has revealed an area of archaeological deposits mainly of the late 2nd/3rd and 4th centuries AD. A few prehistoric flint flakes, a few sherds of Saxon pottery, a few undated features and a few late post-medieval features complete the inventory of periods represented. Little more can be said of these periods other than that they indicate a low level use of the landscape over a long period.

The earlier phase of Roman activity might conceptually be a part of an enclosure but cannot be described thus from the physical evidence. A length of small ditch with a rectangular bend is both partly recut by, and partly respected by a later enclosure ditch. Yet features contemporary with this small ditch lie either side of and beyond the terminal of the ditch.

For the later Roman phase, the excavations have revealed a portion of a ditched enclosure with a rectangular or square plan. No gaps in the ditch for an entrance were recorded in the area examined. Whilst the evidence for use of the site is for a chronology of perhaps one or two centuries and does involve some remodelling, these alterations cannot be described as radical and the emphasis is one of continuity.

The enclosure would appear to be free standing, in that no additional ditches or gullies are attached to the enclosure ditch, at least for this excavated part of the enclosure. The evaluation trenching in a broad spread to the south of the excavation did not reveal any contemporary boundary features. Yet several comparable sites excavated in the Basingstoke area have additional ditches such as at Viables Farm (Millett & Russell 1984) and Daneshill (Millett & Schadla-Hall 1991) where a droveway was connected. No obvious internal structures are recorded representing the sites of houses, though the moderate volume of pottery, animal bone, and metalwork present is surely indicative of domestic occupation on the site or very close by. Below ground survival of Roman houses in a rural, non-villa setting is surprisingly uncommon, with non-earthfast foundations susceptible to being removed by later ploughing (cf. Booth *et al.* 2007, 289) yet the site at Ruckstalls Hill, on the south-east margins of Basingstoke, did record one of these rare structures with a rectangular plan of postholes (Oliver & Applin 1978).

The expansion of Basingstoke in the later 20th century led to the discovery and investigation (usually under 'rescue' conditions) of a relatively large number of sites which provides a range of local sites for comparison. Most of the sites where ground plans are partially or wholly recovered comprise rectilinear enclosures which act as a marked contrast to the circular or oval enclosures of later Iron Age times, often to be found in the same locations. At Ruckstalls Hill, a complex sequence of development noted that two conjoining square enclosures dated from the early Roman into late Roman times (3rd/4th century) overlay oval Iron Age enclosures (Oliver & Applin 1978). Similarly at Oakridge II/VI a double square enclosure of late 2nd century date lay adjacent to an Iron Age enclosure (Oliver 1992). Another rectilinear enclosure to the west (Oakridge VII) was of 3rd century date, close to the site of a bath house complex.

The sub-rectangular enclosure at Viables Farm was of early Roman date but continued into the 4th century (Millett & Russell 1984). Less complex and shorter lived sites were recorded at Brighton Hill South, where an apparently simple rectangular enclosure is of late 3rd/4th century date (Coe & Newman 1992) and at Daneshill where the rectangular enclosure with droveway was of 3rd century date (Millett & Schadla-Hall 1991). At Cowdery's Down, a Late Iron Age enclosure of uncertain but probably rectangular form was replaced by a Roman rectangular enclosure used only briefly in the 1st century AD (Millett & James 1983). Two sites are recorded relatively close to the site to the west. At Rooksdown, part of an Iron Age enclosure continued in use into early Roman times (Farwell in prep) and at Catern Crossroads a rectangular double-ditched enclosure of Iron Age date examined

by evaluation also contained later Roman deposits (Tempus 1993).

For the Roman phases of use on the above sites, the interiors are relatively lightly used, at least in terms of cut features leaving traces in the natural geology. Most of the enclosures reveal small numbers of pits or postholes, some reveal wells, burials and structures that are certain or probably buildings. It seems probable that pit 220 here was a well in excess of 23m deep. Certain and probable wells on the investigated Roman sites around Basingstoke are not uncommon. Examples have been partially excavated at Daneshill (Millett & Schadla-Hall 1991), at Viables Farm (Millett & Russell 1984) and at Wellfield Farm, Popley (WA 2005; Wright *et al.* 2008). At Oakridge II/VI a well was excavated to its full depth of 26.7m. It was dug in the 2nd century but after going out of use was still partially open to receive artefacts in the 4th century AD

The most distinctive and contrasting aspect of the Park Prewett site is the presence of structures usually termed corn driers in the literature (though actual demonstration of this use is often elusive (Morris 1979)). Both phases contain such structures with three recorded in total. The corn driers were the main features on the site which produced charred plant remains with spelt wheat and some barley being represented in modest amounts. However, it seems that chaff formed part of the fuel for the driers to supplement the predominantly oakwood source. This would therefore indicate the processing of grain on the site, though the evidence does not necessarily support the notion that this was a substantial or specialized activity here. There is no evidence here that these structures relate to malt production, as often suggested elsewhere.

Other features on the site are recorded only in modest numbers. In particular there is no evidence for specific features to indicate storage such as big, deep pits or four-post structures, nor any domestic buildings. Presumably the latter, and possibly the former existed, but not in earth-fast form. In fact the paucity of other features is such that these three corn driers form a significant portion of the features present. There is some time depth to the use of these structures with one certainly having gone out of use before the main enclosure ditch was dug. The Hampshire Historic Environment Record notes the presence of a site to the south-west at Catern Crossroads where a corn drier of 3rd-century date was found during an evaluation (Tempus 1993).

The durable artefacts recovered include a wide range of quernstones. With no suitable local stone immediately available, all of the querns were necessarily imported from some distance, but the catalogue here surprisingly includes some from several sources at great distance, such as Millstone Grit from the Pennines, Lodsworth greensand from West Sussex and Mayen lava from the Rhineland. Querns are to be found on most sites of Roman date and it is hard to gauge whether the numbers recovered here are excessive, thus representing a degree of specialized flour production related to the corn driers, but certainly the range of sources is unusual. Other excavated sites in the Basingstoke area have not reported such a wide inventory and in some instances, no imported stone is recorded at all. The site at Ruckstalls Hill revealed querns and other items made from non-local greensand, sarsen, tufa, and Jurassic limestone (Oliver & Applin 1978) and at Oakridge II/VI the few querns recorded were made from glauconitic and ferruginous sandstone (Oliver 1992). Curiously, neither the distinctive Millstone Grit nor the relatively common Mayen lava were recorded there.

The pottery assemblage, by contrast, shows a more limited imported component, and no hint of any great wealth.

The moderate volume of animal bone recovered has revealed a typical range of domesticated species with cattle dominant. An unusually high proportion of mature cattle was observed, indicative either of dairying, or use for traction.

To conclude, the excavations have revealed another component of the later Roman rural settlement for a region already densely settled in Roman times. The site is possibly a small self-contained farmstead, but several strands of evidence might, when taken together, be indic-

ative that the site has a more specialist, grain processing function. Certainly the presence of three corn driers on a site largely devoid of other features is noteworthy, and perhaps the large number of quernstones and mature cattle used for traction can support this notion. If so the site may be viewed as a small component of a larger settlement complex, perhaps a part of an estate belonging to one of the several villas recorded for the region.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank Roger Evans formerly of Taylor Wimpey for commissioning the work, Steve Appleby formerly of Hampshire County Council for advice and comments during the project, Alex Godden of Hampshire County Council for providing Historic Environment Records information, and Natasha Bennett, Simon Cass, Mary O'Donoghue, Chris Gibson, Danielle Milbank, Jenny Ryder and Paul Sanderson for the hard work on site. We are also grateful to David Hopkins of Hampshire County Council, whose comments on an earlier draft have helped improve the report. The illustrations are by Andrew Mundin and Steve Ford, except the pottery illustration which is by Jane Timby. The excavation archive will be deposited with Hampshire County Museums Service, with accession code A2006.93. The evaluation archive has already been deposited (A1996.14).

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