

PREHISTORIC TO POST-MEDIEVAL OCCUPATION AT DOWD'S FARM, HEDGE END, HAMPSHIRE

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ABSTRACT

Excavation at Dowd's Farm, Hedge End, revealed evidence for Mesolithic to post-medieval activity. Mesolithic and Neolithic activity is attested by a small flint assemblage. A concentration of Bronze Age pits provides the first evidence for permanent occupation and an associated burnt tree-throw hole may suggest that tree clearance was being undertaken. Late Iron Age activity centred on two large ditched enclosures and an associated activity area, together with drainage, boundary and trackway ditches. Early medieval occupation focused on an area to the north of the existing farmhouse. Possible continuation of the field system established in the medieval period into the post-medieval period is suggested. Work on documentary sources has provided further evidence for occupation at Dowd's Farm during the medieval and post-medieval periods.

INTRODUCTION

A large-scale excavation was undertaken by Wessex Archaeology at Dowd's Farm, Hedge End, Hampshire, (NGR 448960 114691, Fig. 1) between April 2006 and June 2007. The excavation followed an archaeological evaluation which had identified significant remains dating from the Neolithic to the post-medieval periods (Wessex Archaeology (WA) 2006). Eight areas (Areas A, B, C, E, G, S, The Paddock, and the Urban Park Area, Fig. 2) were examined, focusing on the results of the evaluation. In addition two trenches were excavated in January 2011 adjacent to the farmhouse (Fig. 2), however no archaeological finds or features were identified (WA 2011).

This report represents an integrated summary of the excavation results. The radio-

carbon dates and quantification of pottery are presented in Tables 1 and 2 and further details can be found in the site archive and on the Wessex Archaeology website (<http://www.wessexarch.co.uk/>).

At the time of the fieldwork, Dowd's Farm was unoccupied and the land under pasture. The site lies at a height of approximately 30m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) at Dowd's farmhouse, gently rising to 36m aOD. The underlying solid geology comprises Eocene Bracklesham Beds, Bagshot Sands and London Clay, locally overlain with Clay-with-Flints (Geological Survey of Great Britain 1973).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prior to the excavations there was no evidence for activity on the site. Prehistoric activity was recorded 1–2 km to the west and south-west, comprising barrows, including Moorgreen Bronze Age bowl barrow, (Archaeology and Historic Buildings Record (AHBR) Site Number: 25965), and an Iron Age hillfort at Hickley Woods (AHBR Site Number: 25941). A Neolithic flint end scraper is known from the same general area. No evidence for Romano-British or Saxon activity was identified within the site or the immediate locality.

The site forms the major part of a medieval and later farming unit known as Dowdesplace or Dowd's Farm, which until 1894 lay within the tithing of Shamblehurst in the ancient Hampshire parish of South Stoneham. Since then it has been located in the civil parishes of West End, and now Hedge End, Eastleigh District. Its identity as a discrete farm can be traced with reasonable confidence from

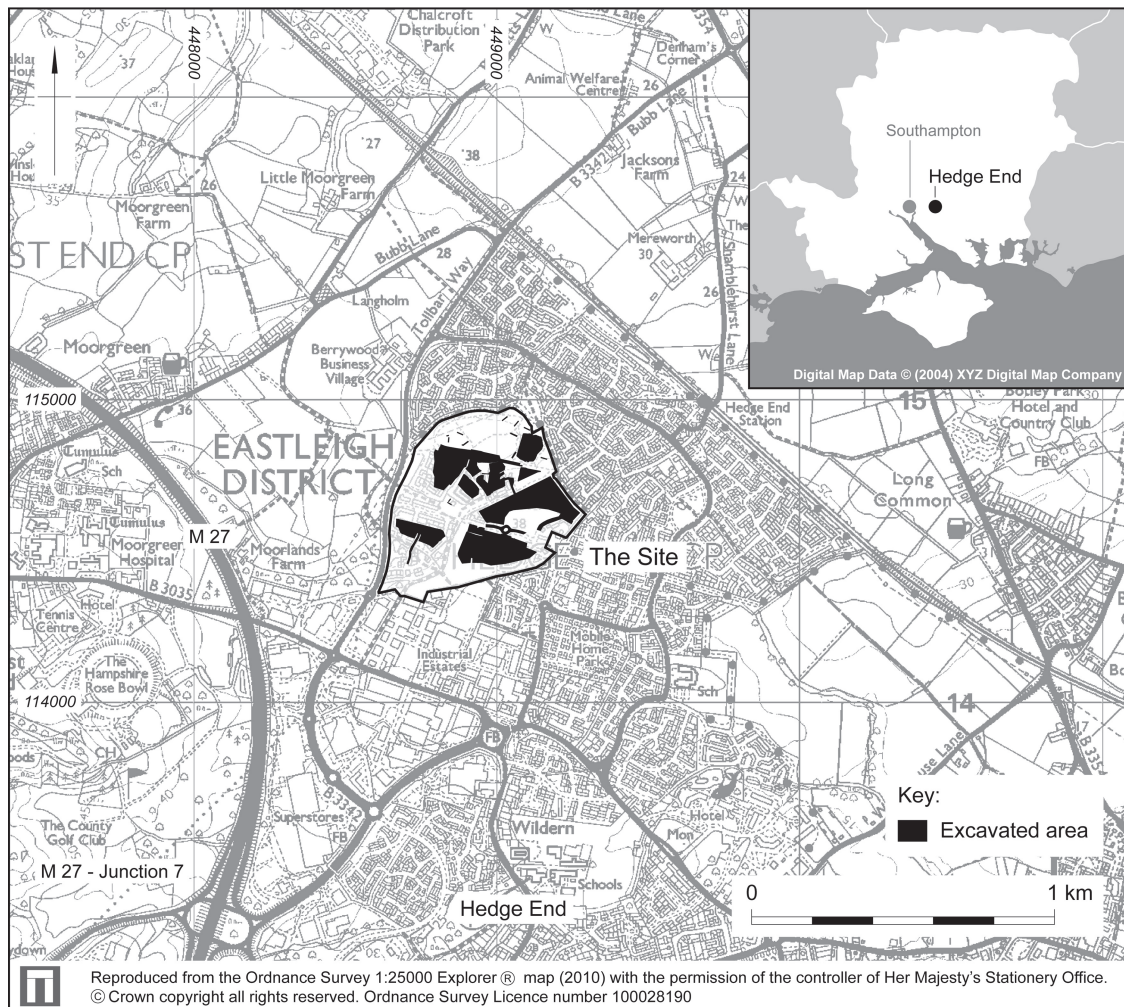


Fig 1 Site location showing excavated areas all archaeology & tree throw holes

the late 12th century, when it was part of the foundation endowment of God's House, Southampton (managed from 1343 by Queens College, Oxford) until 1913, when it was finally sold by the college.

South Stoneham was a *Domesday* possession of the bishops of Winchester, but Shamblhurst (apparently meaning "managed woodland supplying timber suitable for benches and tables") is first recorded in 1174 as a locative surname, Andrew de Schamelherst (Gover 1961, 38; PRS 1897, 197). Shortly after this date,

c.1185, Gervaise of Hampton (later known as le Riche) founded God's House, Southampton, and endowed it with various properties in Hampshire and Dorset, including Hickley in Shamblhurst. The Hickley gift was enhanced between 1195 and 1200 by a further grant to the community by William de Chelegrave (Davies 1883, 450–2; Kaye 1976, xxv, 160–1). What was, or became, Dowd's Farm appears to have been included in one of these grants, as all subsequent land transactions involve tenants of God's House, and later of Queen's



Fig 2 Plan showing all archaeological features and tree-throw holes/disturbance

College, rather than freeholders within the tithing. However, Hickley was never synonymous with Dowd's Farm, and from an early date (by c.1300) it is clear that a number of farms, each with enclosed lands, existed in South Stoneham, and were farmed separately and by different tenants.

The place-name 'Hedge End' was first recorded on maps in 1759 as '*Cutt Hedge End*' and in 1826 as '*HedgeEnds*'. The earlier reference is thought to refer to 'a hedge trained, or laid, as a boundary' (Coates 1989). The site of Botley Grange was shown on maps

dating to 1759 as being located approximately 1.5 km to the south-east of the site. From 1791 onwards, Botley Grange appears to have been associated with an extensive area of woodland.

Dowd's Farm was first noted on the 1845 South Stoneham tithe map. To the south of the farmhouse, Little Bury Wood Farm (*Berrywood* on later maps) also lay within the site, its buildings still visible in 1909/10 but they appear to have been demolished by 1940. With the exception of the loss of Little Berrywood Farm, the landscape and features within the

site appear to remain largely unchanged from the late 19th century through to the present day.

RESULTS

Earlier prehistoric

Early prehistoric activity across the site is scant, though if, as is probable, much of that occupation was of a transient nature it is not likely to have left much tangible evidence. There is also a strong likelihood that ephemeral evidence may have been erased by subsequent natural and/or human activity. The prehistoric activity is represented by a small residual flint assemblage (110 pieces) of mostly gravel flint with a few pieces from the chalk.

The earliest flintwork consists of blades, trimming flakes from blade cores and a number of core platform rejuvenation flakes indicative of Mesolithic industries.

Neolithic activity is represented by an Early Neolithic polished axe (Fig. 3), recovered from a tree-throw hole (10322) in the north of the site (Urban Park Area). This lenticular cross-sectioned axe has probably been made from mined flint. It has been polished on all surfaces, but some of the original flake scars remain. The blade has been damaged, so that very little, if any, of its original edge survives, and it seems that the axe was either re-used, or used as a core with the blade forming the platform. A chisel arrowhead of later Neolithic date is the only other datable piece. Other tools were few in number, and included scrapers, an edge flaked knife, a possible piercer, (spurred type), a notched flake, a rod-like piece and three pieces of miscellaneous retouch. These pieces span the Middle Neolithic to the Early Bronze Age. Debitage of probable later Neolithic or Early Bronze Age date was also found. Undated *in situ* knapping is indicated by five pieces from the same nodule, two of which refit (ditch 13264, Area C).

Limited evidence for Late Bronze Age activity was found predominately towards the western fringes of the site (Area B, Fig. 4) and may represent the first permanent occupation. The features comprised an oval pit (10121,

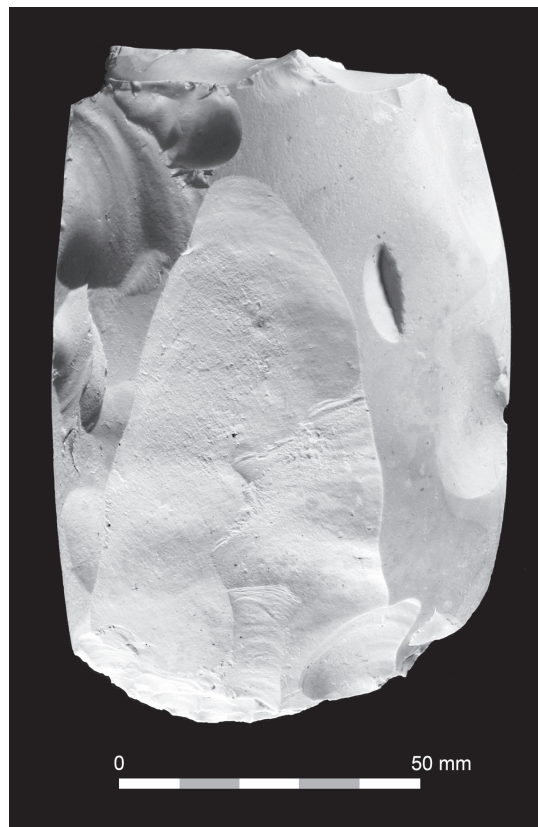


Fig 3 Flint axe

1.65m × 0.95m × 0.65m), from which a Late Bronze Age finger-impressed rim sherd (Fig. 10.1) was recovered within a deposit of hearth debris and burnt flint. Two similar pits (10133 and 10137), and tree-throw hole 10182 also contained dumped hearth debris and burnt flint, as well as undiagnostic abraded flint-tempered pottery which may be contemporary. A dump of charcoal in tree-throw hole 10182 produced a Late Bronze Age date (2821±35 BP, 2σ 1120–890 cal. BC, NZA-32365, see Table 1, Fig. 6). A sherd of Late Bronze Age finger-impressed pottery (Fig. 10.2) was also found in a large tree-throw hole (13590) in the south of the site (Area C). Charcoal probably from the charred roots in tree-throw hole 13323 (c. 9.4m × 6.3m × 0.5m), located at the western edge of Area C, was radiocarbon dated to the Late Bronze Age (2864±25 BP, 2σ 1130–930 cal. BC,

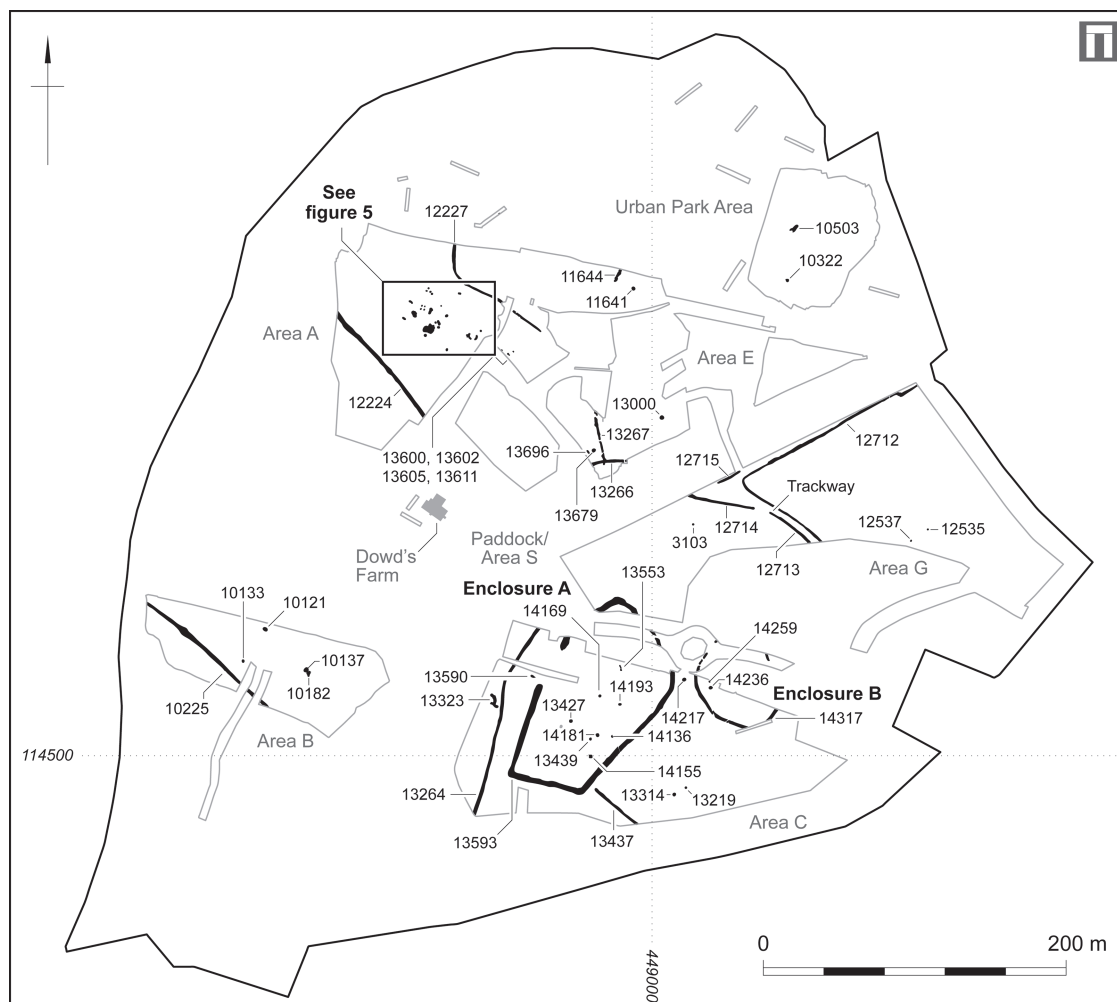


Fig 4 Plan showing all prehistoric activity

NZA-31244; see Table 1, Fig. 6) and may suggest that tree clearance was being undertaken.

The possibility that further late prehistoric pottery remains unidentified amongst the larger flint-tempered assemblage (see below) cannot be ruled out, but no other diagnostic sherds were observed and overall dominance of Late Iron Age material makes this fairly unlikely.

A few pieces of later prehistoric flint were recovered including a core (fill of a tree-throw hole in Area A) that had been re-used after its original surfaces had patinated. The reworking

is of a much poorer quality, with numerous incipient cones of percussion on the platform, traits indicative of Late Bronze or Early Iron Age technologies (e.g. Ford *et al.* 1984; Young & Humphrey 1999).

Iron Age/Romano-British activity

Other than Hickley Wood hillfort, 1.5 km to the south-west of the site, few Iron Age settlements are known in this area and therefore the picture of settlement and occupation revealed on this site provides a valuable body of evidence

Table 1 Radiocarbon determinations

Lab Code	Feature Type	Feature No	Context &/or sample	Comments	Species	Date BP	C13 %	Calibrated Date (2σ range)
NZA-31244	Tree-throw hole	13323	13326	large irregular hollow undated	oak (<i>Quercus</i> sp.)	2864±25	-27.9	1130–930 cal. BC
NZA-32365	tree-throw hole	10182	10183	dump of charcoal in tree-throw hole	oak (<i>Quercus</i> sp.)	2821±35	-23.6	1120–890 cal. BC
NZA-32362	posthole	10878	10800	posthole in 4-post structure	oak (<i>Quercus</i> sp.)	2366±35	-26.4	730–380 cal. BC
NZA-32167	hearth	12023	12025	small undated hearth	ash (<i>Fraxinus</i> sp.)	2248±40	-25.2	400–200 cal. BC
NZA-31242	hearth	13219	13220	undated pit adjacent to 13314	oak (<i>Quercus</i> sp.)	2218±25	-26.3	380–200 cal. BC
NZA-32364	hearth	12102	12164	hearth	apple/hawthorn etc (Pomoideae)	2174±30	-26.3	370–110 cal. BC
NZA-31246	hearth/cooking pit	3103	3104	small hearth/cooking pit	oak (<i>Quercus</i> sp.)	2166±25	-25.6	360–110 cal. BC
NZA-32369	stake	10412	monolith 87	The stake. Wood in natural greensand from monolith 87	willow/poplar (<i>Salix/Populus</i> sp.) water-logged wood	2159±35	-29.6	370–90 cal. BC
NZA-32367	hearth	13314	13316	undated hearth	willow/poplar (<i>Salix/Populus</i> sp.)	2153±30	-26.3	360–90 cal. BC
NZA-32363	pit	10861	10867	intercutting pit group	alder (<i>Alnus</i> sp.)	2142±30	-27.2	360–50 cal. BC
NZA-32366	enclosure terminal	10021	10024	Enclosure A terminal	alder (<i>Alnus</i> sp.)	2108±30	-24.5	210–40 cal. BC
NZA-31243	feature of unknown function	14129	14130	dump within re-cut of sub-rectangular feature	alder (<i>Alnus</i> sp.)	2035±25	-26.4	160 cal. BC – cal. AD 50
NZA-32168	enclosure ditch	14244	14246	Enclosure B ditch	alder/birch (<i>Alnus/Betula</i> sp.)	2033±30	-26.8	160 cal. BC – cal. AD 50
NZA-31247	enclosure ditch	14214	14217	Monolith 201 in Enclosure A ditch (54 cm from top)	non-oak indet or oak (<i>Quercus</i>)	1392±55	-28	cal. AD 540–770
NZA-32368	hearth	13445	13446	undated hearth in top of Enclosure A ditch	apple/hawthorn etc (Pomoideae)	955±30	-27.5	cal. AD 1020–1160

with which to compare the better investigated chalklands around Andover, Danebury, Basingstoke and the M3 corridor (Lambrick 2010).

During the Iron Age, occupation at Dowd's Farm increased with considerable investment in and organisation of the landscape, beginning in the Middle Iron Age and reaching a peak during the Late Iron Age.

There is little evidence to suggest that the environment had changed significantly since the Late Bronze Age. The plateau in the south (Area C) overlooked an undulating landscape of deciduous oak woodland to the south and west with scrub giving way to heathland in the north and east. Following the topography, a smallbourne traced a slightly sinuous route from the centre of the site (Paddock Area) northwards (through the Urban Park Area) and was probably fringed by marsh grasses thriving in the damper ground.

There was limited evidence for the Middle Iron Age occupation but it would appear that at this time the landscape at Dowd's Farm began to be more systematically exploited. A little domestic refuse was recovered indicating some occupation and a number of features were radiocarbon dated to the Middle Iron Age (Table 1, Fig. 6), including a cooking pit (3103, Area G; 2166 ± 25 BP, 2σ 360–110 cal. BC, NZA-31246), a small hearth (12023, Area A; 2248 ± 40 BP, 2σ 400–200 cal. BC, NZA-32167), and two hearths (13219 and 13314, Area C; 2218 ± 25 BP, 2σ 380–200 cal. BC, NZA-31242; 2153 ± 30 BP, 2σ 360–90 cal. BC, NZA-32367) (Figs. 4–5). These features may reflect unenclosed or at least a periodic occupation of the area and the utilisation of woodland resources.

Waterhole 10503 (Urban park Area, Fig. 4) is also contemporary as a possible stake of willow/ aspen, recovered in monolith 87, produced a calibrated radiocarbon date of 370–90 cal. BC (2σ 2159 ± 35 BP, NZA-32369, Table 1, Fig. 6). The stake was not visible during excavation and was sampled in the monolith by chance. The stake survived to a length of 0.23m and penetrated into the underlying greensand. The top of the stake was fragmented and probably rotted away rather than being snapped off. Above the stake was a waterlogged fill containing wood and bark fragments, and organic secondary

fills indicative of wet highly vegetated conditions. Four fine, well-finished, flint-tempered sherds, including rims from a rounded jar and a 'saucepan' pot, both of Middle Iron Age date, came from the primary fill.

Two joining body sherds from posthole 12133 (Area A, Fig. 5) have also been tentatively dated to the Middle Iron Age. This posthole was one of five which appeared to form a north-south fence thought to be associated with Late Iron Age activity within the area. The largest group of pottery dating to the Middle Iron Age comprised 16 flint-tempered sherds found residually in Late Iron Age boundary ditch 10225 in the centre of the site (Area B).

By the Late Iron Age, the local area was dominated by two enclosures (Enclosures A and B, ditches 13593 and 14317) sited on the high ground to the south. Ditched trackways radiated northwards from this plateau, with ditched boundaries dividing the area to the west. On the midslope and base of the dry valley in the north-west (Area A and E), an area of activity was recorded which may have been associated with metal working or the production of charcoal. Modern ploughing which was particularly evident across the higher plateaus in Areas A and C and it is likely that many of internal features within both enclosures have been destroyed. Most of the artefacts recovered during the excavation are of Late Iron Age date, perhaps extending into the conquest period, until around *c.* AD 60 and suggest that the site may have remained unaffected by Roman influences in the first few decades after the invasion.

Enclosures and associated features

Enclosure A

Ditch 13593 formed the larger of the two enclosures, and measured approximately 130m by 70m (0.91 ha) with a 30m wide north-west facing entrance (Figs 2, 4). The profile of the ditch on the eastern side of the enclosure was shallow and flat-based, 2.48m wide and 0.38m deep. The ditch became gradually wider and deeper along the western side towards the entrance, where it was 3.97m wide and 1.5m deep. Evidence for an internal bank was identified in only three sections on the western side

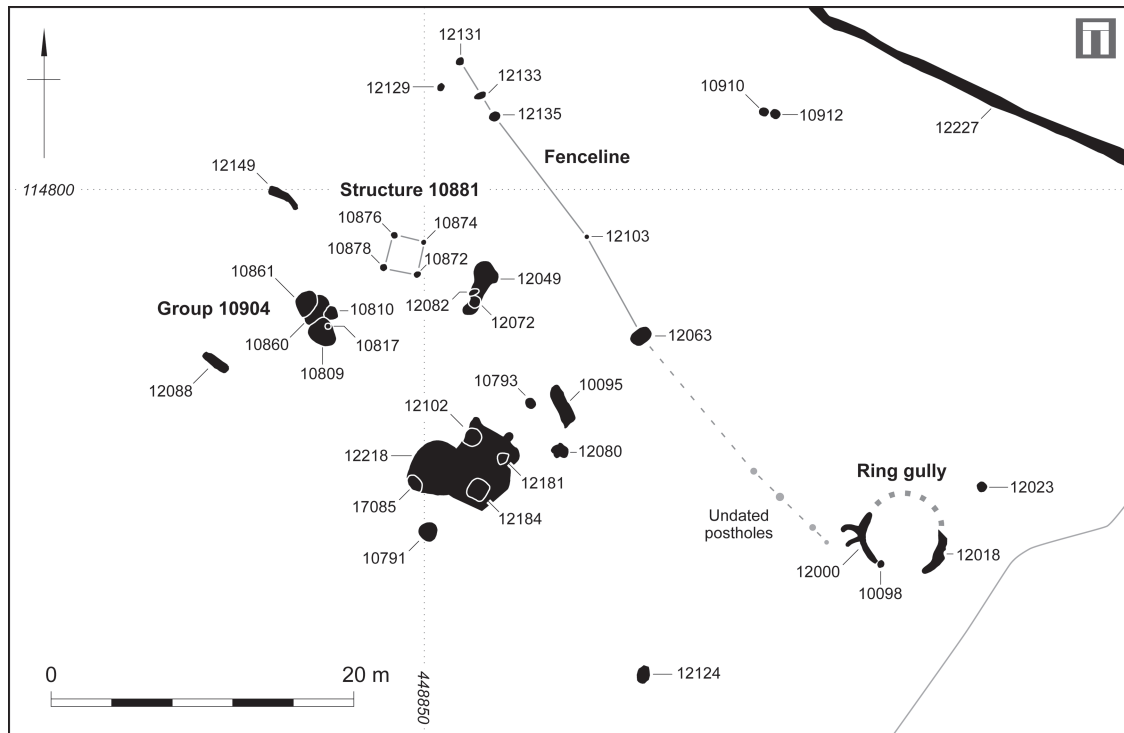


Fig 5 Detailed plan of Iron Age activity in Area A

of the enclosure suggesting it may have been intermittent.

Radiocarbon dating of charcoal from the upper fills produced a Late Saxon-early medieval date (955 ± 30 BP, 2σ cal. AD 1020–1160, NZA-32368), which may reflect sporadic activity (see below).

A substantial group of pottery (379 sherds) came from the southern terminal (13507) of the enclosure ditch (Fig. 10.3–4, 6–7, 9–10, Table 2), as well as a pedestal base and a necked, cordoned jar with possible graffiti (post-firing diagonal incisions) inside the rim. The pottery from the primary fill (13515) is in noticeably poor condition and includes a number of badly spalled sherds which have the appearance of being burnt or possibly overfired. Other finds from the terminal include part of a triangular fired clay object which may be a loomweight or part of an oven brick, (see Cunliffe & Poole 1991 372–82; Poole 2000, 213–4) and a

fragment of rotary quern as well as fired clay and burnt flint. This range of artefacts is typical of subsistence activities associated with settlements of the period.

Excavation of the interior of the enclosure revealed few features, three very similar hearths 13427, 14155 and 14181 (Fig. 4) were identified. These features were sub-square with steep straight sides, a flat base with rounded corners, and measured *c.* 1.4m^2 and survived to a depth of between 0.1m and 0.14m. Hearths 13427 and 14155 contained a sequence of deposits implying successive episodes of use. In each, a thin lining of scorched clay partially covered the base of the feature and was overlain by a dense layer of charcoal. This was sealed by thin layers of clay, charcoal and fired clay debris, with a final clay capping. Only the northern corner of hearth 14181 had survived intact. It was filled with compact charcoal. A single ceramic object, a trimmed disc, made from a body sherd

Table 2 Pottery quantification by period

<i>Fabric</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Wt. (gr)</i>
<i>Prehistoric:</i>		
Late Bronze Age flint-tempered ware	64	275
Middle Iron Age flint-tempered ware	6	25
<i>subtotal:</i>	<i>70</i>	<i>300</i>
<i>Late Iron Age/Early Romano-British:</i>		
Amphora (E250)	7	494
Flint-tempered wares (F100)	2401	39953
Sandy wares (Q100)	721	3976
Grog-tempered wares (G100)	59	573
Romanised greywares (Q101)	44	132
Romanised oxidised wares (Q103)	22	151
Hampshire briquetage (E95)	36	106
<i>subtotal:</i>	<i>3290</i>	<i>45385</i>
<i>Undated:</i>		
Flint-tempered wares (F99)	89	367
Sandy wares (Q99)	19	58
<i>subtotal:</i>	<i>108</i>	<i>425</i>
<i>Middle Saxon:</i>		
Mixed grit-tempered ware (Q400)	9	36
<i>subtotal:</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>Early medieval:</i>		
Early medieval flint-tempered ware (EMFT)	241	2051
Southampton Scratch-mark ware (SMK)	192	1396
<i>subtotal:</i>	<i>433</i>	<i>3447</i>
<i>High medieval:</i>		
Southampton coarseware (STCW)	58	577
Southampton sandy ware (STS)	45	501
Southampton white ware (SWW)	36	422
South Hampshire redware (SHR)	15	711
Local pink sandy ware (LOPS)	4	31
Local whiteware (LOWW)	1	268
Possible import	1	1
<i>subtotal:</i>	<i>160</i>	<i>2511</i>
<i>Post-medieval:</i>		
Plain red earthenwares (E600)	4	59
Verwood-type earthenware (E640)	4	125
Refined whitewares (E740)	1	4
Raeren stoneware (E785)	1	123
<i>subtotal:</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>311</i>
<i>Overall total:</i>	<i>4080</i>	<i>52415</i>

from a coarsely flint-tempered (Fabric F100), thick-walled storage jar was found amongst the pottery from hearth 13427.

In addition, a number of undated hearths and postholes within the enclosure may also relate to its Iron Age occupation.

Enclosure B

A second, smaller, sub-circular enclosure formed by ditch 14317 and measuring approximately 29m in diameter, was located 15m east of Enclosure A (Figs 2, 4). The southern half of Enclosure B covered an area of approximately 60m (north-south) by 47m (east-west) but its full extent was not examined due to a gas main. A probable west-facing entrance was identified.

The profile of the ditch varied from steep-sided with a concave base on the western side of the enclosure, to a V-shaped profile with a convex internal and concave external side on the eastern side. It ranged from 0.5m deep in the west to 0.8m in the east. The western half of the ditch contained deliberately backfilled deposits of charcoal-rich material and dumps of occupation debris including pottery, fired clay and burnt flint, capped by a layer of redeposited natural clay that may have derived from the slighting of a bank. The eastern half of the ditch was extremely difficult to identify in plan. It contained an iron-rich primary fill overlain by small, intermittent dumps of occupation debris. Reworked natural sands and clays within the secondary deposits may also indicate the presence of a bank. The starkly different profile and comparative absence of hearth debris and artefacts within the eastern half of the enclosure ditch in comparison with the western side may reflect an internal division in activities undertaken inside the enclosure. However, it may relate to the portions of the enclosure that were excavated or the deliberate backfilling of Enclosure B with debris derived from activities carried out in Enclosure A. Unfortunately the chronological relationship between the two enclosures could not be clarified through radiocarbon dating or the finds assemblage.

The pottery recovered from enclosure ditch 14317 was predominately derived from storage jars (e.g. Fig 11.11, 14–15, Fig. 12.6, Table 2);

several pieces of briquetage (salt containers) and fragments of fired clay apparently derived from surfaces or edges of unidentifiable objects, were also found.

There were only two contemporary internal features (pit 14236 and posthole 14259) within the area excavated (Fig. 4). Pit 14236 (1.7m × 1.2m × 0.43m), was filled with a mixed dump of organic material, charcoal, fired clay, burnt flint and Late Iron Age pottery, and was sealed by a deposit of up-cast natural. This sequence of deposition, mirroring that of the enclosure ditch, suggests the deliberate decommissioning and levelling of the area. A heavily truncated posthole 14259 (0.3m dia × 0.05m) was located 3m to the north. The flat base of this posthole was almost completely covered by a sherd from a storage jar that had probably been deliberately placed. This was overlain by charcoal-rich silt.

A sub-rectangular feature (14127) was recorded between the two enclosures. It was 4.25m long and up to 1.6m wide. It had straight sides and a concave sloping base. A basal deposit of eroded natural with occasional charcoal inclusions, pottery and fired clay filled most of the western and central part of the feature. A layer of hearth debris overlay this in the central part of the feature, containing a concentration of Late Iron Age pottery and a fired-clay object (loomweight or oven brick) and is likely to represent the final use of the feature. No evidence of an associated super-structure was found and it is unclear what function this feature served, however the 30.8kg of burnt flint recovered from excavated material from the western side of Enclosure B (ditch 14317) may represent waste from an activity associated with this feature. Alder charcoal from a re-cut within this feature produced a calibrated radiocarbon date at 2σ of 160 cal. BC to cal. AD 50 (2035±25 BP, NZA-31243, Table 1, Fig. 6).

Iron Age landscape

A possible field system and associated trackway were probably contemporary with the enclosures (Fig. 4). The trackway was defined by ditches 12712, 12713, 12714 and 12715. A slight kink at its north-eastern end together with considerable bioturbation suggests it may have been a hedge or tree line. Few finds were

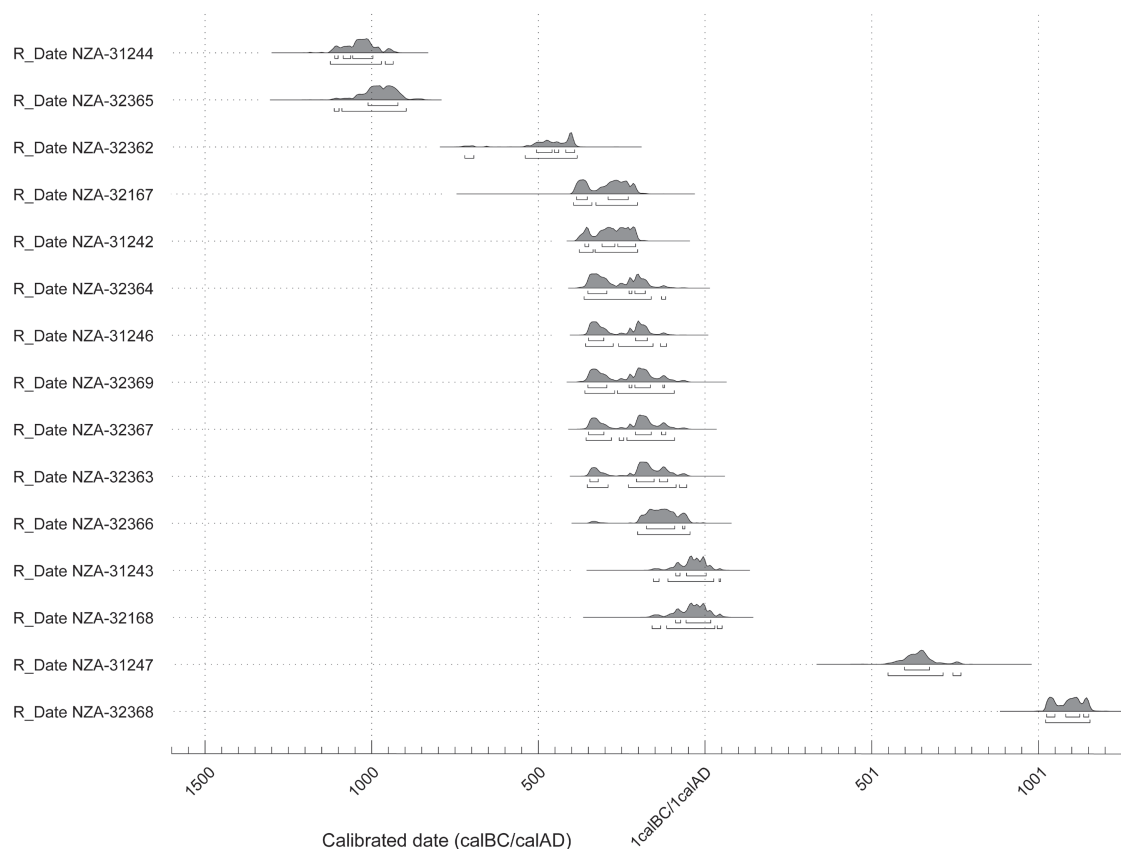


Fig 6 Plot of radiocarbon determinations

recovered from the ditch fills but included some Late Iron Age/early Romano-British pottery. Ditch 13266 (Area E) may represent a continuation of this trackway. Late Iron Age pottery and a few fragments of fired clay were recovered from its secondary fills. A deliberate dump of artefacts including organic debris was found in the eastern end of ditch 13266 and may derive from activity associated with possible kiln 13696 (see below).

Ditches 12224, 12227 and 11644 (Area A), 10225 (Area B), 13264 and 13437 (Area C) and 13267 (Paddock/Area S) may be the remains of a field system. Ditches 10225 (Area B) and 12224 (Area A) were substantial boundaries measuring between 1.05 – 3.5m wide and 0.8m – 1.1m deep. Both contained primary and secondary deposits indicating gradual accumulation within a largely stable environment.

Pottery and fired clay were recovered from the secondary fills in ditch 12224.

Ditches 13264 and 13437 were on average 1.2m wide and 0.4m deep and both showed evidence for intermittent waterlogging. Pottery and burnt flint were mainly recovered from the secondary fills in ditch 13264, and included numerous sherds from the base of a sandy ware jar which may date to the 1st century AD. Pottery storage jar fragments were also recovered from ditch 13437.

Ditches 12227, 11644 and 13267 were more heavily disturbed by later ploughing, and, consequently, the dimensions of these three features varied significantly. The pitted base of ditch 13267 may indicate that there was a hedge along its length. A quartz conglomerate quern stone fragment was found in ditch 12227 and an intrusive sherd of Saxon pottery

(Fig. 12.19) was recovered from its secondary fills at the point of intersection with later ditch 12226. A fragment of greensand quern stone came from ditch 11644. Finds from the fills of ditch 13267 included Middle and Late Iron Age pottery, fired clay and burnt flint. The southern end of ditch 13267 had been cut away by ditch 13266 (see above) suggesting adaptations to the organisation of the landscape throughout the period of Iron Age occupation.

Activity areas

A group of features centred on hearth 12102 located between ditches 12224 and 12227 in Area A provide evidence for small-scale industrial activity (Figs 4–5).

Hearth 12102 (*c.* 1.1m dia $\times$ 0.3m deep) had a flint-lined base over which lay the charcoal-rich fire debris from its final use. Part of a large storage jar (Fig. 12.16), along with sherds from smaller flint- and sand-with-flint-tempered bead rim jars (Fig. 12.17–18) and pieces from other vessels, all of Late Iron Age date, were found placed in the centre of the feature overlying the wood debris. A large quantity (7kg) of burnt flint and a piece of briquetage (salt container) was also recovered from this feature. A radiocarbon date calibrated at 2σ of 370–110 cal. BC (2174 $\pm$ 30 BP, NZA-32364, Table 1, Fig. 6) was obtained on apple/hawthorn charcoal. This would appear to reflect residual Middle Iron Age activity.

Hearth (12102) lay within feature 12218, a sub-square sunken hollow (*c.* 5m by 4m and 0.2m deep) cut into the top of tree-throw 12162. Two shallow pits, 12181 and 12184 had been cut into the base of this hollow. Both were filled with sterile silts devoid of artefacts, and their function is unclear. Surrounding the hollow was a number of pits and a four-post structure. The pits contained deliberately-back-filled hearth debris, including burnt flint which presumably derived from the repeated use of the hearth. A significant quantity of burnt flint (just over one-third of the total (*c.* 40kg) from the site as a whole) came from contexts in Area A, including 21.7kg from tree hollow 12162, which pre-dated hearth 12102. An abandonment layer (12214) which sealed hearth 12102 and extended beyond the edges of sunken

hollow 12218 had been heavily disturbed by modern ploughing.

There were a number of pits located around hearth 12102 (Fig. 5). These features were up to 2.5m in diameter and 0.4m deep. Deposits of hearth debris, Late Iron Age pottery, fired clay and burnt flint were recovered from them. Hearth debris containing a little ironworking slag, including a possible smithing hearth bottom, was found in pits 12072 and 12082.

Group 10904 consisted of a number of pits and a substantial posthole (Fig. 5). They may originally have been dug to extract sand or clay were subsequently backfilled with hearth debris. Well-defined circular lenses of fired clay were recorded on the surface of pits 10809, 10810 and 10860 which may indicate their later reuse as hearths.

A four-post structure (10881) was located 5m north of hearth 12102 (Fig. 5). It comprised postholes 10872, 10874, 10876 and 10878, each measuring 0.4m in diameter and 0.22m deep. Slag was found in two of the postholes (10874 and 10878). A deliberate dump of burnt material (10880) including high quality charcoal and charred grain was also recovered from posthole 10878. A radiocarbon date, calibrated to 2σ of 730–380 cal. BC was obtained on charcoal from posthole 10878 (2366 $\pm$ 35 BP, NZA-32362, Table 1, Fig. 6). Two sherds of Late Iron Age pottery was recovered from primary fill (10877) of posthole 10876 and a substantial fragment of flint-tempered pottery was found in posthole 10872 during the evaluation (deposit 1007). The date was obtained on oak charcoal and should therefore be treated with some caution. It is probable that the ceramic evidence, although only limited, is a more reliable indicator of date.

A fenceline, comprising four postholes (12131, 12133, 12135 and 12103) lay approximately 9m north-east of the four-post structure (10881). The postholes were spaced between 1.5m and 2m apart, were approximately 0.5m in diameter and between 0.1m and 0.2m deep. The posts had been removed prior to infilling. Posthole 12129 at the northern end of the fenceline may have been associated with it. A possible continuation of the same fence was investigated adjacent to a ring-gully (12018/12000), although the features

here were less convincing. A pair of adjacent postholes 10910 and 10912 (0.6m dia $\times$ 0.2m deep) lay 15m north-east of the fenceline; Late Iron Age flint-tempered pottery was recovered from their fills.

The remains of a small ring-gully (ditches 12000 and 12018) was located 25m south-east of hearth 12102 (Fig. 5). It had an internal diameter of 4.5m. Posthole 10098 (0.5m dia $\times$ 0.21m deep) was located between the ditch segments and may have been associated. These features may represent the remains of a small roundhouse.

A number of other contemporary features were recorded in the centre of the site (11641, 12992/13000, 13679, 13696). Feature 13696 and pit 13679 were located towards the south-eastern edge of Area E. Feature 13696 had a flat base and vertical sides (2.2m by 0.4m) and was 0.28m deep. No *in situ* burning was evident though there were dumps of charcoal. Burnt flint and Late Iron Age pottery, including bead- and everted-rimmed jars, were recovered. The function of this feature is unclear.

Pit 13679 (2m $\times$ 1.08m $\times$ 0.73m) had a layer of clay at its base, the result of standing water rather than a deliberate lining. Burnt flint, a fired clay object (loomweight or oven brick) and eight abraded pieces from a large necked jar in a very coarse flint-tempered fabric were recovered from secondary deposits. A fragment of glazed medieval pottery from a levelling layer suggests that this was associated with the construction of the extensive medieval field system (see below).

Pit 13000 (Area E, 1.1m dia $\times$ 0.85m deep) contained evidence for prolonged periods of waterlogging and it appears that the pit was left open to fill naturally. Part of a grog-tempered jar with shallow horizontal tooled decoration was recovered from the primary fill, while a Dressel 1 amphora sherd and flint-tempered coarse body sherds of Late Iron Age date came from the secondary fills. A deliberately-placed layer of redeposited natural clay sealed the pit and formed a base for the deepest part of a larger scoop or sunken working area (12888, 2.2m $\times$ 2m $\times$ 0.58m). A hearth (12992) was located over the centre of the pit 13000. The hearth deposit contained only very small and abraded pottery fragments, charcoal, slag and

burnt flint and was sealed by a topsoil-derived tertiary fill. Residual Late Iron Age pottery came from the adjacent field ditches, and may have come from activity associated with this hearth. Grog- and flint-tempered Iron Age pottery and seeds of wild oat/brome grass came from hearth 11641.

Elsewhere, other features likely to be of later prehistoric/Iron Age date included four postholes of similar dimensions (13600, 13602, 13605 and 13611, c. 0.2–0.3m dia $\times$ 0.08m deep) in the north-west of Area S. No definite structural layout was discernable. Five small and abraded sherds were found in posthole 13611, although likely to be of later prehistoric date, they could not be assigned to a specific ceramic tradition.

Towards the eastern side of Area G there were two well-defined postholes (12535 – 0.45m dia $\times$ 0.15m; 12537 – 1m $\times$ 0.58m $\times$ 0.35m). Late Iron Age flint-tempered pottery and eight flint flakes and a core were recovered from these features.

Artefact summary

The range of Late Iron Age material culture was relatively restricted, with only pottery occurring in any quantity. Small amounts of fired clay, briquetage, three quern fragments and a little metalworking debris, however, provide some indication of the range of other activities carried out in the vicinity. Overall, most artefacts came from areas in the south and north-west of the site (Areas A and C); elsewhere the distribution was sparse with very little material from the south-west.

The Late Iron Age pottery was dominated by flint-tempered fabrics, generally coarse but including some finer, sandy variants. These fabrics accounted for 73% of the Late Iron Age sherds and were used exclusively for handmade jars, with beaded or everted rims in a wide variety of sizes. The sandy wares (22% by sherd count) include small to medium sized bead-rimmed and necked, cordoned jars, at least one jar with a pedestal base and an imitation Gallo-Belgic platter. Some of these vessels may have been wheelthrown but in general the condition of the sherds was too poor to be certain. The grog-tempered wares were not common at this site (only c. 2% of the sherds) but included

bead-rimmed jars and a lid; most were probably hand-made. The amphora sherds from the terminals of Enclosure A and pit 13000 were the only non-local imports. Even though their fabrics are atypical, all probably belonged to Dressel 1B vessels and locally, atypical Dressel 1 fabrics are also known from Micheldever Wood (Hawkes 1987, 33). These vessels date to *c.* 50–0 BC or shortly after, and carried Italian wine (*c.* 20–30 litres each), although some may have contained foodstuffs such as olives (Fitzpatrick & Timby 2002, 162), highlighting the possibility of wine and/or exotic foods reaching the site.

The three coarseware fabrics form part of the indigenous Late Iron Age ceramic tradition found widely over central southern England. This tradition survived into the Early Romano-British period and the date range of these wares is generally considered to span the 1st century BC to 1st century AD. Within this range, it is difficult to establish the start date of the assemblage although a date somewhere in the region of *c.* 50 BC seems most likely. Radiocarbon dating of deposits assigned to the Late Iron Age occupation of deposits from Enclosure A and B and pit group 10904 provide calibrated 2 σ date ranges for the Middle Iron Age to Early Romano-British period, although the bulk of the range falls between the Middle and Late Iron Age (see Fig. 6): 210–40 cal. BC (2108 $\pm$ 30 BP, NZA-32366); 160 BC–50 cal AD (2033 $\pm$ 30 BP, NZA-32168) and 360–50 cal BC (2142 $\pm$ 30 BP, NZA-32363) respectively. Comparable assemblages have been recorded from, for example, Twyford Down near Winchester (Seager Smith 2000), and at Bitterne (*Clausentum*) (Cotton & Gathercole 1958). However, the absence of samian and other imports (e.g. Terra Nigra, other Gallo-Belgic wares, fine whiteware flagons and mortaria), all present in the earliest stratified groups at *Clausentum* (*c.* AD 70–85; *ibid.*, 55, fig. 16, 3, figs 19 and 20; Rogers & Laing 1966, 5, fig. 1, 1, 2, 4), suggest that this assemblage was closed before them, perhaps around AD 60. The high proportion of flint-gritted wares may also highlight the more Iron Age character of the assemblage, although a similar reliance on flint-gritted wares on rural sites to the north of Southampton (Hawkes 1985, 69–76; 1987, 27–33; 1989,

94–96; Neal 1980, 135–139; Stuart & Birkbeck 1936; WA 1989; Seager Smith 2000, 74; 2003, 14) in contrast to the dominance of grog-tempered wares on sites such as Dairy Lane, Nursling (Seager Smith 1997, 35) to the west, may point to differing cultural or geographic affinities.

Coupled with the structural evidence, the burnt flint, fired clay and small quantities of iron slag point to a range of industrial activities being carried out in and around Enclosures A and B, the working area (Area A) and on the fringes of Areas A and E. The exact nature of these activities remains unclear but the small amount of ironworking slag from hearth 12888 (Area E), part of a possible hearth bottom from pit 12082 and a scrap of iron recovered from hearth 12102, both in Area A, suggests that they include iron smithing, at least on a very limited scale. The burnt or overfired pottery sherds recovered from the southern terminal of Enclosure A highlights the possibility of production in the vicinity. The presence of the perforated triangular objects in pits 10785, 14129, 13679 and the terminal (13507) of Enclosure A, associated with dumps of charcoal and other hearth debris may also be of particular relevance. Although traditionally interpreted as loomweights used in the production of cloth, it is now considered possible that these items functioned as oven bricks (Cunliffe & Poole 1991, 372–82; Poole 2000, 213–4).

Further evidence for craft activity comes from the perforated ceramic disc (hearth 13427) which may have been used as a spindlewhorl. However, it conforms to only one (perforation a minimum of 5 mm in diameter) of Crummy's (1983, 67) four defining criteria for objects of this type, while its relatively high weight (70 gr. *cf.* Øe 1988, 41; Barber 1991, 52) suggests that it would only be suitable for spinning heavy wool or flax. Other possible uses include a gaming piece, counter (Crummy 1983, 94–5) or a weight.

Although a mixed farming economy is likely, the soils of the area were not conducive to the preservation of animal bone, and no fragments were found in any of the Iron Age contexts. The three quernstones indicate that limited crop processing activities were undertaken in this general area, while part of a whetstone,

probably used for sharpening tools, came from the subsoil in Area S.

Environmental overview

The nature of the landscape

The Late Bronze Age and Iron Age activity took place in close proximity to woodland. The settlement appears to have been sufficiently close to woodland edge for the pollen assemblage from section 14214 (monolith 201), Enclosure A to show clear spatial variation in the woodland composition to that from section 14317 (monolith 213), Enclosure B (Fig. 4). A more open environment is suggested by the pollen from monolith 213 – supporting birch (*Betula*) and grasses with a local scrub vegetation and heath present in some areas. The local woodland during this period is oak-hazel (*Quercus-Corylus avellana*) dominated. Pollen from later features in the northern, low lying part of the site also suggests a presence of alder-willow (*Alnus glutinosa*-*Salix* sp.) woodland. While this pollen relates to later activity, any temporal differences here are likely to be misleading and the alder-willow signature is perhaps characteristic of the lower lying, wetter areas of the site rather than indicative of any increase in alder over time (Grant 2011). This is supported by the charcoal assemblage where both alder and willow/aspen (*Salix/Populus* sp.) types are well represented during the prehistoric and medieval periods. Thus oak woodland with a hazel understory is likely to have been dominant on the drier ground, while alder-willow woodland prevailed on the low-lying, more waterlogged areas of the site, predominantly to the north.

While oak is dominant in both the pollen and the charcoal assemblages, and is likely to have formed the main canopy in the woodland around the site, other large trees appear to have been present. Occasional ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and elm (*Ulmus* sp.) were also present although they appear to have formed only a minor component of the canopy locally as they were only intermittently present in the pollen assemblages, yet dominated the charcoal from hearth 12023 (Area A), suggesting their deliberate selection. In addition to hazel, both charcoal and pollen indicate that holly (*Ilex*

aquifolium) also formed part of the understorey and woodland margin and would have included some mature trees. Pomoideae type fruit species, a group which includes apple (*Malus*), pear (*Pyrus*), hawthorn (*Crataegus*) and whitebeam (*Sorbus*), as well as blackthorn or cherry types (*Prunus* sp.) also occurred as scrub or woodland edge species, both types represented by occasional charcoal. Field maple (*Acer campestre*) and birch were also present in the local area, with small heath patches are likely to have formed a component of the local vegetation mosaic from at least this period. Both heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) and heath (*Erica tetralix*) occurred in the earlier and later pollen assemblages. There was no evidence within the charred plant remains or the charcoal for exploitation of the heathland resources however, possibly a reflection of the abundance of wood for burning. Continued exploitation of the woodland may have led to subsequent soil deterioration which, when coupled with the local Tertiary soils, led to podzolisation and heath development.

Woodland management

While it is assumed that coppice management was practiced in parts of Britain during the Late Iron Age/early Romano-British period (eg, Rackham 1986, 74–75), it is difficult to demonstrate this from charcoal. Clues to coppicing cycles may, however, be gained from examining similarly aged roundwood charcoal. The charcoal from Dowd's Farm included a number of roundwood pieces recovered from features of both late prehistoric period and Saxon/medieval date. There appears to have been a particular focus on the selection of alder roundwood in the late prehistoric, while roundwood of hazel and possible willow/aspen was also identified. The age range of roundwood tended to be between three and nine years, the typical age-range of underwood of these species used during a coppicing cycle. Given the large quantity of oak in the area, its continued exploitation would have permitted an expansion of the underwood and scrub-type taxa represented by both pollen and charcoal. The herb taxa represented within the medieval pollen profiles further supports the suggestion of

local coppice management in this later period and it is possible that some sort of management was occurring during the Iron Age.

The dominance of alder charcoal including large numbers of pieces of alder roundwood in a small number of samples suggests that it has been deliberately selected for some specific purpose. Alder is generally considered to be a poor fuel, although does make good charcoal (Gale & Cutler 2000, 34). Charcoal production is difficult to recognise as distinct to generally burning, although the good preservation here and the limited number of vitrified fragments are consistent with relatively controlled burning. Given the apparent availability of oak, it is unlikely the alder was selected in the absence of alternative fuel types, which further supports the possibility that it was deliberately selected for charcoal production, or that alder charcoal was brought into this part of the site for burning. The use of alder charcoal has been suggested elsewhere in the county, for example for Roman period Houghton Down, Hampshire, where it is associated with metal working (Campbell 2008, 71). Thus a deliberate targeting of alder roundwood would be consistent with some management such as coppicing.

Arable landscape

Some cereal-based agriculture was taking place within the more open areas of the landscape during the late prehistoric period. Three cereals were cultivated including barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) and two species of wheat: spelt wheat (*Triticum spelta*) and emmer (*T. dicoccum*), suggesting that unlike the areas around Danebury on the Hampshire chalklands to the north, spelt wheat had not fully replaced emmer wheat locally (Campbell 2000; Jones & Nye 1991). It is likely that the continued cultivation of emmer at sites of this period is related to a range of factors including soil types, climate and socio-political factors. A limited weed flora was represented, with only grasses (particularly *Bromus* sp.) occurring in any number. This paucity of weeds is also reflected in the paucity of cereal chaff which suggests only limited cereal processing. It is therefore possible that the cereals were not cultivated locally, although this may simply be a matter of representation.

Romano-British activity

No archaeological features dating to the Romano-British period were identified. However, the ceramic assemblage included a few sherds of more Romanised fabrics – wheel-thrown, grey and oxidised (all white, buff and orange fabrics) sandy wares – 2% of the sherds overall. These wares had a low mean sherd weight (c. 4 gr.) and were much abraded; recognisable vessel forms were confined to a cornice-rim beaker, an everted rim jar and a small jar or beaker and only a generalised Romano-British date could be assigned to them. A few pieces of Romano-British brick/tile also occurred residually in medieval field ditches recorded in evaluation trenches 15 and 16 within the Paddock/Area S. Most of these artefacts appear to be derived from activity focused beyond the limits of the present excavations, perhaps spread by manuring or other agricultural activities, and indicates the presence of a hitherto unidentified Romano-British site beyond the limits of the current excavations.

Saxon activity

Though no direct evidence for Saxon settlement was identified, the area was not abandoned during this period and was possibly used as grazing land. Evidence from Enclosure A (Area C) suggests the enclosing ditch was still a visible landmark; a Saxon sherd (Fig. 12.19) occurred among others of a Late Iron Age date in the primary fill of the terminal (13507) and may hint at the recutting or redefinition of this ditch. Radiocarbon dating of material from within ditch section 14214 supports this idea. A radiocarbon determination on wood charcoal from 0.54m below the top of the monolith (top of context 14217) gives a calibrated 2 σ date range of cal. AD 540–770 (1392 $\pm$ 55 BP, NZA-31247, Table 1, Fig. 6), the Early to Middle Saxon period. Above the primary ditch fills the gleyed secondary fill became increasingly organic through the soil profile, indicating a wet, well-vegetated ditch environment. A stasis horizon formed in the top of this layer and contained occasional charcoal fragments (one of which was dated, see above) (Table 1). This

palaeosol was sealed by a poorly-sorted, relatively rapidly-deposited fill over which was a charcoal-rich deposit.

Three shallow hearths were recorded within this stasis horizon and may be related to this Saxon phase of activity. Two intrusive sherds of Saxon pottery were also recovered from the upper fills a Late Iron Age ditch (12227) in Area A, again suggesting that some earlier features may still have been visible at this time.

Both the fabric and form of the nine Saxon sherds, (seven from ditch 13593, and two from ditch 12227, see above) place them within the Middle Saxon ceramic tradition of the area, as seen, for example, at a number of sites within Hamwic. The pottery occurred in a 'mixed grit' fabric (Q400), containing inclusions of flint, quartz and possibly chalk (the latter have entirely leached out, leaving voids). Some mixed grit wares survived into the Late Saxon period (Timby 1988, 114) and it is possible, therefore, that there may be some chronological overlap with the Anglo-Norman wares found.

Medieval activity

During the late 11th century, there seems to have been a move to an extensively ordered agricultural landscape centred on the present farmhouse which is likely to post-date an earlier building (Fig. 7). Rectangular/trapezoidal fields were recorded across the site. An increase in field size, away from the apparent centre of medieval occupation (Paddock-Area S), was recorded in Areas A, C, E and G (Fig. 7).

Evidence for possible structures within the Paddock/Area S indicates the likelihood of this being the central focus of activity during this period. Five postholes, (14088) formed a 5.3m wide south-west facing arc and may represent some form of structure or wind break. The postholes were not uniform in size due to modern disturbance but measured an average 0.6m in diameter and were 0.26m deep. Four of the postholes contained a post-pipe and pottery dated to the late 11th to mid-13th century was recovered from one of the posthole fills.

Parallel linear features 14040 may represent the base of timber beamslots. These features

measured 6m long, 0.4m wide and only 0.03m deep. Similarly, shallow right-angled features (13827 and 13935) may also be the remains of beamslots, perhaps evidence for shelters or pens. Postholes of varying dimensions found within the centre of the Paddock/Area S are thought to relate to this period of occupation though no discernable structural patterns could be identified.

Ditches 14112, 14113, (Paddock/Area S) and 13016, 13018, 13020, 13021 (Area E) formed the main part of the medieval field system, creating a series of small fields or paddocks that extending north-eastwards. Field/paddock sizes ranged from 0.03 acres (0.014 ha) to 0.3 acres (0.12 ha). Oats dominated the charred plant assemblage, being a crop suitable for the damp and sandy soils within this part of the site.

Ditch 10489/10495 (Area E/ Urban Park) followed a drainage contour along which ground water collected and flowed northwards beyond the limit of the excavations and from this central ditch, further ditches (12806, 14087, 10490 and 10491) extend the field system to the north and south. North-west of the farmhouse, fields were created by ditches 11625, 12029, 12225, 11581 (Area A) and 14319 (Area S). Though the complete fields divisions are not present, the surviving ditches formed plots of at least 0.4 acres (0.17 ha). The ditches in Area A were located across the lower slopes and base of the dry valley. Only the base of these ditches survived and finds recovered consisted mainly of burnt flint, though a sherd of mid-13th to mid-14th century pottery was recovered from ditch 12225, together with a residual sherd of Roman-British oxidised ware.

To the south in Area C, larger fields of approximately 1.3 acres (0.54 ha) were formed by ditches 10030, 14117, 14118, 14119 and 14185 (Fig. 7).

A possible latrine pit (12699, Area G) measuring 1.8m in diameter and over *c.* 3m deep may indicate further activity located beyond the limits of excavation. The pit contained at least two significant slumping episodes (12706 and 12710). The latest pit fills contained animal bone, mid-13th to mid-14th century pottery (including jug rims) and iron artefacts (including nails, strap ends and



Fig 7 Saxon and medieval activity

a horseshoe fragment). Post-medieval roof and floor tile and small fragments of coal were also found within these deposits.

Artefact summary

Finds from field system 14113 (Paddock/Area S), dominated the medieval ceramic assemblage. It included jars, bowls, roof, floor and hearth tiles dating from the late 11th to mid-14th centuries, indicating that occupation spanned the medieval period.

The pottery assemblage from this period falls into two chronological subdivisions, based on

the known ceramic sequence from Southampton (Brown 2002, 3): Anglo-Norman (late 11th to mid-13th century; Fig. 13.20–25, Table 2) and High Medieval (mid-13th to mid-14th century; Fig. 14.26–29, Table 2) periods, although there was considerable mixing of these two groups, even within the same features.

The Anglo-Norman wares comprised coarse, sandy/flint-tempered fabrics, which include types defined in Southampton as Scratch-marked ware (Brown 2002, 9; SMK) and early medieval Flint-tempered ware (EMFT), both fabrics were locally produced and handmade.

Vessel forms consisted largely of jars (with simple or slightly thickened everted rims, baggy or slightly rounded bodies and bases) but there was at least one bowl. Sooty deposits on the exterior surface of sherds, on the shoulder or trapped around the neck were noted on at least three groups of jar sherds indicating the use of these vessels for cooking.

High Medieval wares were also largely sandy/flint-tempered although generally less gritty than the earlier Anglo-Norman types; these consisted of Southampton Coarseware (STCW), Southampton sandy ware (STS) and finer sandy wares, including Southampton Whiteware (SWW), Local Pink Sandy ware (LOPS), South Hampshire redware (SHR) and Local whiteware (LOWW). Vessel forms included coarseware jars and finer sandy jugs, some partially glazed (although there are apparently no decorated examples). All were of relatively local manufacture with the exception of one tiny green-glazed whiteware sherd (pit 13876) which has been provisionally identified as an imported ware, possibly North French. With this one exception, none of the regional (for example Tudor Green) or Continental imports commonly found in medieval Southampton (Brown 2002) were reaching the site. This 'poverty of imported vessels' in the hinterland of the medieval city was also observed in Swaythling (Mephram 1996, 37) although there are hints, from the single, possible North French imports at both sites, of at least limited access to the urban markets, whether through sale or barter.

Three groups of High Medieval sherds (plain bodies of South Hampshire redware, Southampton sandy ware and a Southampton Coarseware jar rim) were sooted. This demonstrates these vessels were used for cooking and provides further evidence for continuity during the medieval period of domestic practices. As might be expected the majority of the medieval pottery assemblage came from the Paddock/Area S, adjacent to the existing farmhouse. Based on the inclusion of several jug sherds within the later chronological assemblage it is suggested that the settlement had at least some pretensions to status. It is unusual for rural sites of this time to have had jugs and the assemblage from Wessex Lane, Swaythling

for example (Mephram 1996, 36) contained no glazed wares at all.

The poorly-preserved animal bone dating to this period included pig bones from an undated pit in Area G and a butchered tibia possibly from a wild boar, from the subsoil in Area C. Elsewhere all the major domesticated species (horse, cattle, sheep/goat and pig) were represented (pit 12699, Area G and field system 14113, Paddock/Area S) but the poor condition and small quantities prevented any considerations of husbandry or consumption practices, or population structures during this period.

Environmental overview: Saxon/Medieval vegetation

Woodland composition and use

Much of the woodland flora appears to have remained consistent into the Saxon and medieval period. A mosaic of open oak-hazel woodland, scrub, heath, grassland and small arable holdings, with alder and willow persisting on low-lying wet areas of the site is indicated by the pollen record. Other tree taxa and shrubs include birch (*Betula* sp.), field maple, holly and Pomoideae-types. Ivy (*Hedera helix*) and honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*) are also both present and likely to be local in origin. The range of taxa within the pollen record is therefore comparable to that seen in the New Forest area today where a shifting mosaic of heath patches within the woodland is typical. The range of tree taxa represented by charcoal was more limited than in the Late Iron Age/Romano-British deposits with oak dominating, and small quantities of hazel, alder, *Prunus* type and Pomoideae and a single fragment of willow/poplar the only other taxa identified. Nevertheless, a similar woodland composition is suggested by the combination of both pollen and charcoal. Patches of heath are again likely to have occurred within the main woodland mosaic with both heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) and heath (*Erica tetralix*) represented in the pollen assemblages. Areas of bracken may also have occurred within more open woodland or over-grazed patches of heath, particularly following large tree falls or the removal of high canopy woodland through the selective felling

of oak which is well-represented in the charcoal assemblage.

The evidence for woodland management in the form of coppice is implied by pollen as well as the presence of roundwood charcoal. The range of woodland herb taxa, including primrose (*Primula veris*-type), bramble/raspberry etc (*Rubus* type), squill/bluebell types (*Scilla*-type) and dog's mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*), is indicative of open woodland typically associated with coppice management. Hazel is particularly well-represented in the pollen signature and is known to have been extensively coppiced during the medieval period for a range of purposes including charcoal production and use as poles. The occurrence of open woodland taxa in association with hazel, *Sorbus* types and field maple, all of which are commonly associated with coppiced woodland, indicates some managed woodland in close proximity to the site (Grant 2011). Conversely, hazel charcoal was poorly represented although it is possibly of note that the few fragments of roundwood in the medieval deposits did consist of hazel. It is possible that if coppice management of hazel was taking place, it was being used for other purposes including the wholesale of underwood.

Wetter areas of the site to the north and the east, supported alder-willow woodland. A limited wetland flora was identified in the pollen spectrum suggesting that a dense canopy of alder and/or willow was formed with the increased waterlogging sufficient to prevent the encroachment of other deciduous woodland types (Grant 2011). The damp ground flora represented within the pollen spectrum includes marsh vervain (*Valeriana dioica*), meadow-rue (*Thalictrum*) and meadowsweet (*Filipendula*).

Arable and pastoral activity

The arable activity represented by the charred plant remains during the medieval period of occupation appears to involve cultivated oats (*Avena sativa*), an abundance of which was recovered from ditch 14113 (Paddock/Area S). Rye (*Secale cereale*), barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) and free-threshing wheat (*Triticum aestivum/turgidum*) were represented by occasional grain

only. Seeds of corn marigold (*Chrysanthemum segetum*), an invasive and once troublesome weed of cereal crops, very much characterise the weed flora and were presumably unavoidably harvested with the oats. While it is not possible to speculate on the relative importance of the other cereals, it appears that activity utilising oats occurred in Area S. Oats form a hardy crop, better suited to acid, sandy soils of the locality than either wheat or barley, and it is possible therefore that oats were a significant crop at this site.

It is, however, difficult to establish the location of arable fields or pastoral activity. The woodland and woodland edge/scrub flora would provide a range of grazing opportunities and leaf fodder, while the presence of grazing livestock would in turn limit the encroachment of woodland onto open heath or arable land. Bracken and plantains are often associated with pastoral activity, although both are equally associated with human activity and disturbance. Although large Poaceae pollen grains typical of cereals were identified, there is considerable overlap between the pollen of many wild grasses and those from cultivated cereals. However, the presence of a range of other arable indicators such as poppy (*Papaver rhoeas* type), knotgrasses (*Polygonum* sp.) and corn buttercup (*Ranunculus arvensis*) within the pollen record provides a more reliable link with local cereal cultivation.

Post-medieval activity

The post-medieval landscape was one apparently dominated by larger field enclosures than those recorded during the medieval period, with the area around the existing Dowd's farmhouse remaining the focus of the settlement (Fig. 8). Adjacent to Dowd's farmhouse, enclosure ditch 14111 was filled with charcoal-rich domestic debris similar to material found in a number of gullies on its eastern side. A predominance of residual, High Medieval pottery was recovered from ditch 14111 although several sherds of coarse redwares may indicate an early post-medieval date.

The increase in field size recorded during this period is likely to represent changes in agricultural technology and tradition. It is also

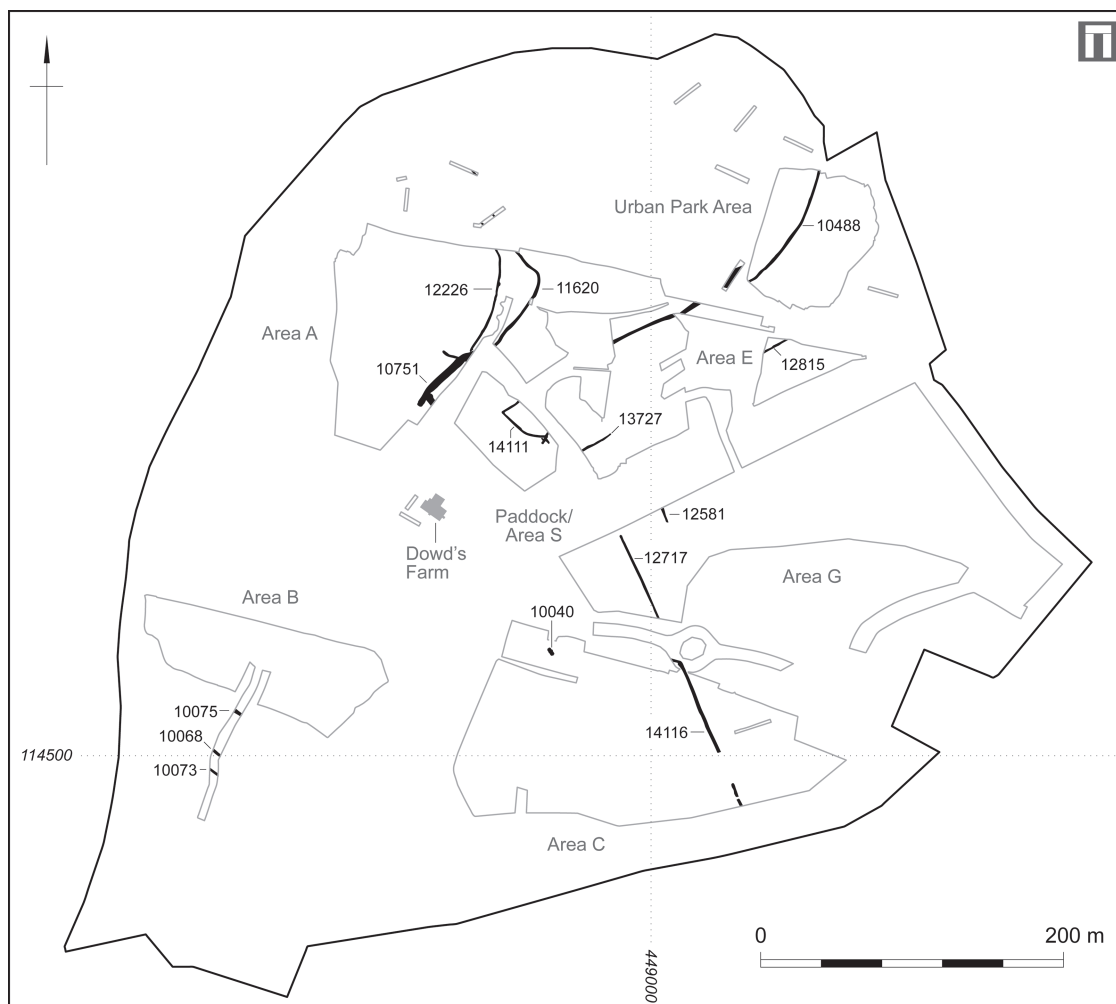


Fig 8 Post-medieval – modern activity

likely that many of the extant modern field boundaries (Fig. 8) had their origins in the post-medieval period. Post-medieval pottery is limited to a few sherds of coarse redwares, Verwood-type earthenwares from east Dorset, one sherd of Raeren stoneware, and one piece of modern refined whiteware. The quantities involved (10 sherds) are too small to suggest anything other than domestic debris spread during night-soil manuring or other agricultural practices. This corresponds to the type of archaeological features recorded which exclu-

sively relate to the continued use of the area for farming.

Ditch 10751 (Area A) was a substantial field boundary (50m × 4.6m × 0.92m) which is thought to be associated with the extant field drainage boundary around the Paddock-Area S. A limited range of residual artefacts was recovered from secondary deposits including prehistoric flint flakes, Late Iron Age/early Romano-British pottery, Romano-British and medieval roof tiles and occasional fragments of burnt flint.

A possible trackway, formed by ditches 11620 and 12226 (Fig. 8), led away from the northern corner of boundary ditch 10751 which coincided with the existing entrance into the Paddock. The ditches measured between 0.6–1m wide and 0.2–0.4m deep, approximately 10m wide, widening to 25m. Only a few sherds of late 11th to mid-14th century pottery were recovered from each ditch, as well as a quantity of burnt flint and abraded, residual Late Iron Age pottery.

The similarity in profile and alignment between the two sets of ditches 12717/14116 (Fig. 8) and 14117/14118/14119 (Fig. 7) suggest a degree of continuity through the medieval and post-medieval period in terms of field organisation and drainage patterns. This continuity is emphasised by the insertion of ceramic land drains into the base of existing field boundary ditches, a practice recorded in ditch 14088 which followed the slight curve of the valley base through the Urban Park and Area E, ditch 12717 (Areas C and G) ditch 12581 (Area G) and gully 13727/12815 (Area S) (Fig. 8).

In Area B three post-medieval to modern field boundary ditches (10068, 10073 and 10075) were also probably part of this agricultural landscape.

Modern

A large rectangular feature 10040 in Area C, incorporated four postholes, several charred beams and intense *in situ* burning. A notable quantity of charcoal, residual pottery, metalwork (including barbed wire and nails) and animal bone (over half the site assemblage) were recovered from backfill deposits. Located on this high plateau within reasonable proximity to Southampton and its dockyards, it has been interpreted as a possible World War II bombing decoy.

Artefact summary

A small quantity of metalwork was recovered and comprised objects of copper alloy (1), iron (68) and lead (1). The majority of these artefacts were recovered from modern feature 10040 (Area C). The copper alloy object is a small sheet fragment of unknown date and

function. The iron consists largely of nails and other structural items, with two horseshoe fragments. The lead object is a piece of waste. None is closely datable, although the horseshoes are probably late medieval or later. A small iron lid, perhaps from a large tea-pot or kettle, was recovered during the additional evaluation in the Urban Park Area (basal fill of ditch 9303) (Fig. 8). Other finds comprise a few fragments of clay tobacco pipe and vessel glass, all of a post-medieval date.

DISCUSSION

The site at Dowd's Farm, located between the chalkland to the north and the coastal plains of the south coast, appears to have persisted within a largely woodland environment until the medieval period with these resources frequently utilised. Evidence for early prehistoric activity is limited to a small flint assemblage suggesting transitory exploitation of these local resources. A small cluster of Bronze Age features suggest an increase and perhaps more permanent presence, with parts of the woodland being exploited at this time. Isolated features, typically hearths, recorded across the site imply that by the Middle Iron Age, occupation was unenclosed or periodic.

The excavations provide a particularly valuable view of Late Iron Age occupation on land away from the more heavily investigated chalk uplands. The structured landscape identified here, comprising both circular and trapezoidal ditched enclosures with associated, unenclosed activity and field systems, appears to indicate specialised, non-settlement occupation of Late Iron Age date for which there is a recognised scarcity of comparative evidence (Howell & Durden 2005: 61; Coe *et al.* 1995).

The ditched track and boundary ditches to the west and south of Enclosure A indicate well-defined access into the enclosures from the surrounding heath and woodland. Environmental remains and artefacts suggest that a chronological overlap is likely in the use of the two enclosures and as such, the presence of multiple-ditched enclosures complements the later 1st century BC patterns of rural landscape organisation known from sites such as Gussage

All Saints (Wainwright 1979) and Worthy Down (Cunliffe 1984a, 34).

Determining the function of the enclosures is problematic. Within the larger trapezoidal enclosure (Enclosure A), structural features such as ring-gullies, postholes or stakeholes were largely absent, as ploughing on this plateau may have eradicated all but the deepest features. Nevertheless some postholes (mainly undated), were recognised, but no structures could be defined. It is also possible that, as at Hatch Warren (Howell & Durden 2005, 60), any structures were temporary or non-earthfast. For the size of the enclosure and the portion of both the ditch and internal features excavated, there is a relatively limited domestic assemblage and the absence of both pits and houses implies it is unlikely to have enclosed a settlement and is perhaps more likely to have served a specialised function.

A less certain conclusion can be drawn for the smaller, circular enclosure (Enclosure B) as not all of it was exposed within the excavation area. It is possible it may have enclosed a settlement although the evidence is slight. The single posthole identified within the interior of the enclosure, though shallow, appeared to have a vessel fragment deliberately placed on its base but as it lay adjacent to the edge of the excavation area it is not possible to determine its function.

Evidence derived from the pollen record, tentatively supported by analysis of the charcoal, suggests that coppicing of the surrounding woodland was undertaken. Woodland management during the Iron Age has been argued for Danebury Hillfort (Poole 1984a, 482), Runnymede, Middlesex (Gale 1991a, 233) and Wytch Farm, Dorset (Gale 1991b) and it may be that the principal function of the site was the management of the woodland resource from which several small-scale industries were supported with each perhaps only producing sufficient to meet the needs of the immediate community.

The seven sub-square hearths or fire pits identified within the interior of the larger enclosure and the sub-rectangular feature sited between the two enclosures appear to have been the focus of activity on the plateau. None was located within identifiable structures and,

with the exception of burnt flint and charcoal, little waste material was recovered from associated dumps within the enclosure ditches to definitely determine their function. A number of burnt or overfired pottery sherds, some badly spalled, from the ditch of Enclosure A highlight the possibility of pottery production in the vicinity, although the small quantities imply that this could not have been more than very small-scale. However given the poor survival of features within the enclosures due to later ploughing and the very slight nature of the evidence from the overfired ceramics, there is little more that can be deduced. Perforated triangular fired clay objects were found associated with hearth debris in four contexts, a pit adjacent to the hearth in the central activity area, the large pit with clay at its base, the larger enclosure ditch and the possible drier may have function as oven bricks (Cunliffe & Poole 1991, 372–82; Poole 2000, 213–4).

Similarly, the slag and fired clay provides evidence of limited iron smithing, perhaps focused in the activity area on the valley bottom. Working hollows are not uncommon on Iron Age sites and are recorded at Gussage All Saints for example, where one of the larger hollows was interpreted as a bronze workshop (Wainwright & Spratling 1973, 113). Although considerably smaller in scale, it is possible the sunken hollow and associated hearth identified here, served as a small iron-workshop. The adjacent four-post structure, conforming to Danebury E type (Poole 1984b, 87), is likely to have supported a single storey. Its use is speculative but slag and charred grain from its postholes may indicate its use as a store, holding tools, manufactured goods or firewood (Poole 1984, 93–94).

The ring-gully also found within this activity area was comparable in size to the Danebury CS13 type (Cunliffe 1984b, 72), though no stakeholes defining a timber/wattle structure were evident. Only a single posthole on the western side of the entrance defines a probable doorway. Circular drainage gullies, while usually interpreted as evidence for roundhouses, may also be indicative of fodder storage areas or animal pens (Lambrick and Robinson 1979; Allen *et al.* 1984, 91).

Another industrial process which may have



Fig 9 Selected post-medieval features in relation to the 1808 map (Queens 2D62), reproduced by kind permission of the Provost and fellows and of The Queens College, Oxford

been undertaken at this site was the production of charcoal. Though an important industry, almost no artefactual evidence for charcoal production is likely to survive in the archaeological record making it difficult to conclusively identify sites, especially as charcoal burners' equipment would be largely indistinguishable from wood working or agricultural implements (DeRoche 1997, 22). A large quantity of generally well-preserved charcoal was recovered with oak and (in one hearth (12023)) ash dominating; both

of which provide good fuel of high thermal capacity. However samples from Enclosure A and the possible drier (14127) were dominated by alder, which seems to have been deliberately selected. Charcoal production is difficult to recognise, although the good preservation and limited number of vitrified fragments are consistent with relatively controlled burning. Alder charcoal seems to have been used in the Romano-British period, at Houghton Down, Hampshire, for example, where it is associated

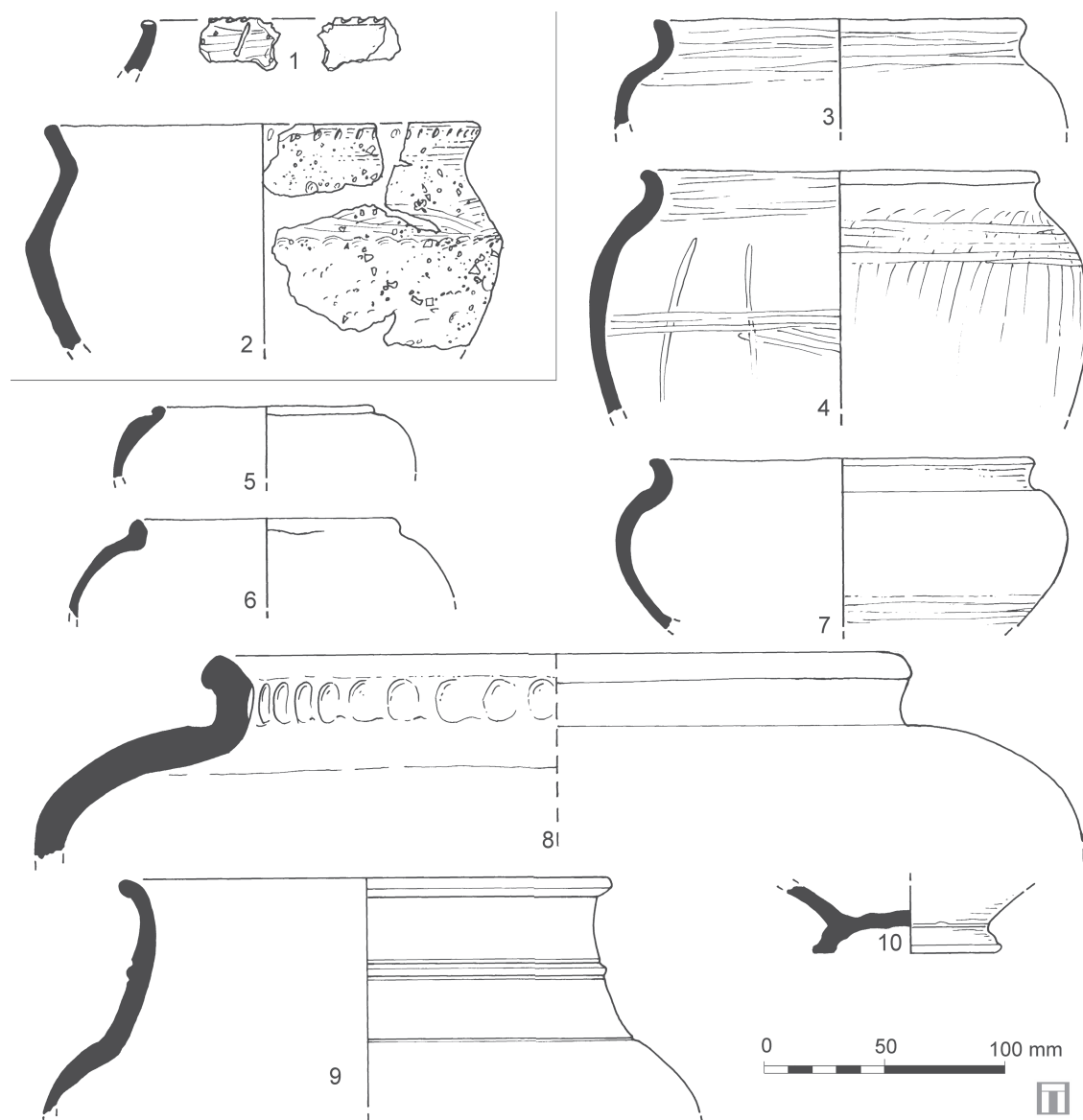


Fig 10 Pottery: Late Bronze Age (1 and 2); Late Iron Age/early Romano-British, Enclosure A, (3–10).

1. Thin-walled jar with an upright, finger-impressed rim; Flint-tempered ware. Pit 10121 (10115), PRN 126
2. Shouldered jar, with a flared, finger-impressed rim; Flint-tempered ware. Tree throw 13590 (13591), PRN 267
3. Upright-necked jar, high-shouldered jar; Sandy ware. Enclosure A (13515), PRN 242
4. Upright-necked jar; Flint-tempered ware. Enclosure A (13515), PRN 244
5. Bead-rimmed jar; Sandy ware. Enclosure A (13467), PRN 223
6. Small bead-rimmed jar; Sandy ware. Enclosure A (13511), PRN 240
7. Round-shouldered bowl with short, upright rim; Flint-tempered ware. Enclosure A (13509), PRN 230
8. Large storage jar with upright neck, thumb-impressions on interior (diameter 320mm); Flint-tempered ware. Enclosure A (13456), PRN 220
9. Fine, thin-walled jar with high, rounded shoulder and an upright, cordoned neck; Sandy ware. Enclosure A (13509, 13511 and 13514), PRN's 227, 232 and 259
10. Footring base, probably from a bowl; Sandy ware. Enclosure A (13514), PRN 264

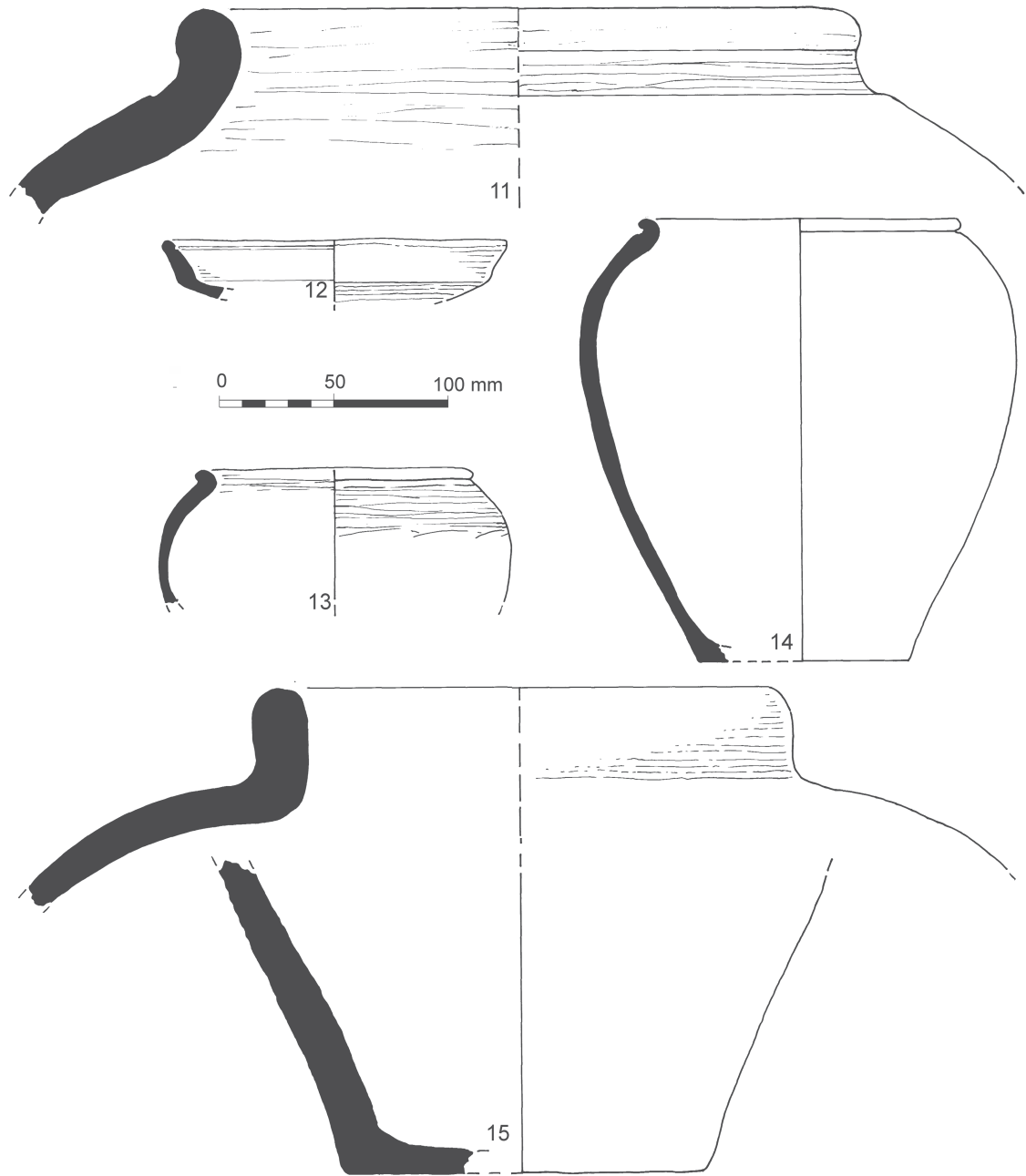


Fig. 11 Pottery: Late Iron Age/early Romano-British, Enclosure B

- 11. Large storage jar with upright, beaded rim (diameter 400mm); Flint-tempered ware. Enclosure B (14246), PRN 324
- 12. Imitation Gallo-Belgic platter; Sandy ware. Enclosure B (05802), PRN's 463 and 509
- 13. Bead-rimmed jar; Sandy ware. Enclosure B (05802), PRN's 462 and 510
- 14. Bead-rimmed jar, central part of base missing, perhaps deliberately so; Flint-tempered ware. Enclosure B (05802), PRN 461
- 15. Large, high-shouldered, storage jar with upright rim (diameter 400mm) and a flat base; Flint-tempered ware. Enclosure B (05802), PRN 467

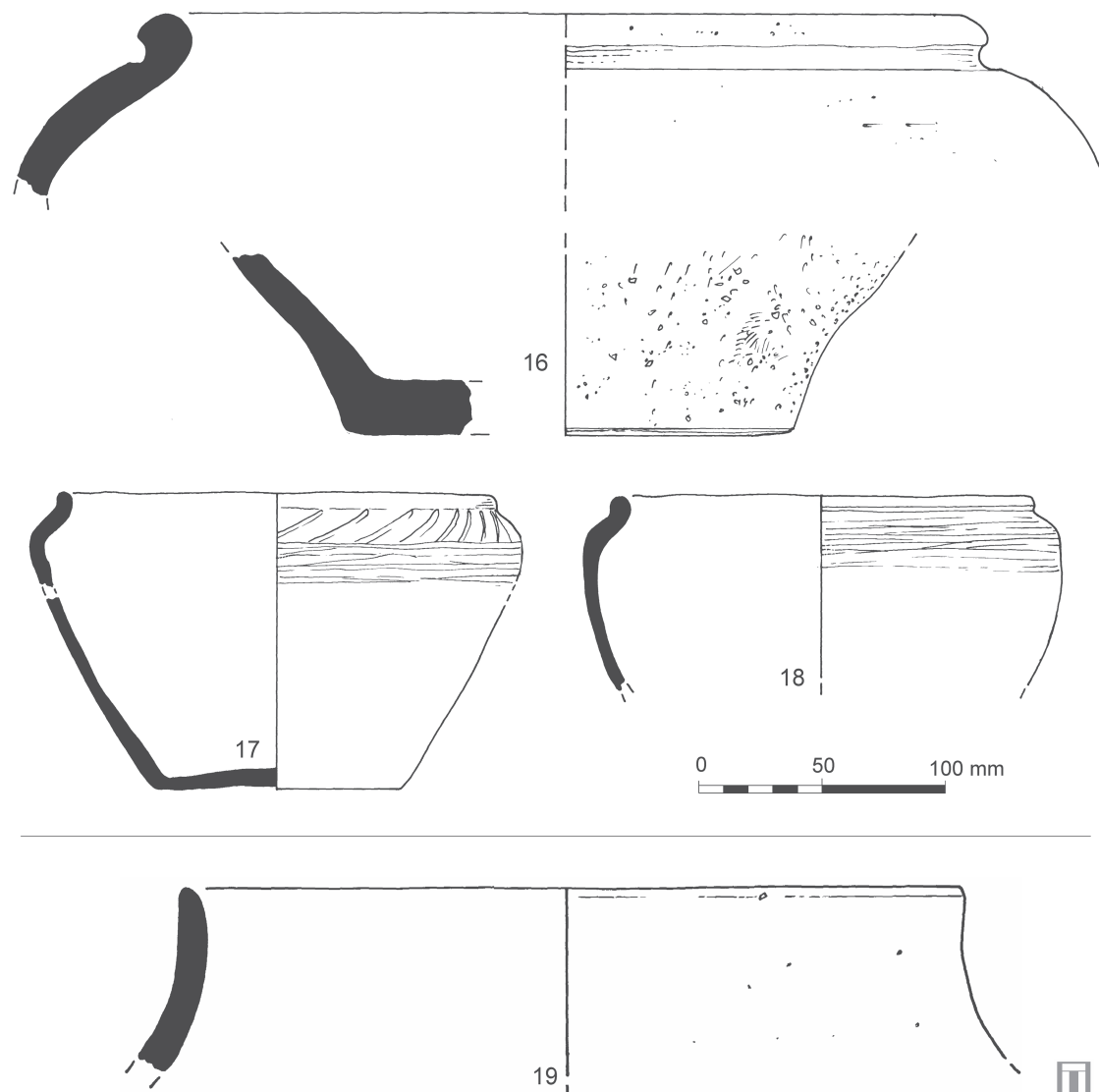


Fig. 12 Pottery: Late Iron Age/early Romano-British (16–18); Saxon (19)

16. Large storage jar with upright, beaded rim (diameter 400mm) and slightly wedge-shaped base; Flint-tempered ware. Hearth 12102 (12087), PRN's 170 and 171

17. Bead rimmed bowl; Flint-tempered ware. Hearth 12102 (12087), PRN 173

18. Bead rimmed jar; Sand and flint-tempered ware. Hearth 12102 (12087), PRN 175

19. Jar with a simple rim and a curved neck; mixed grit-tempered ware. Enclosure A (13515), PRN 343

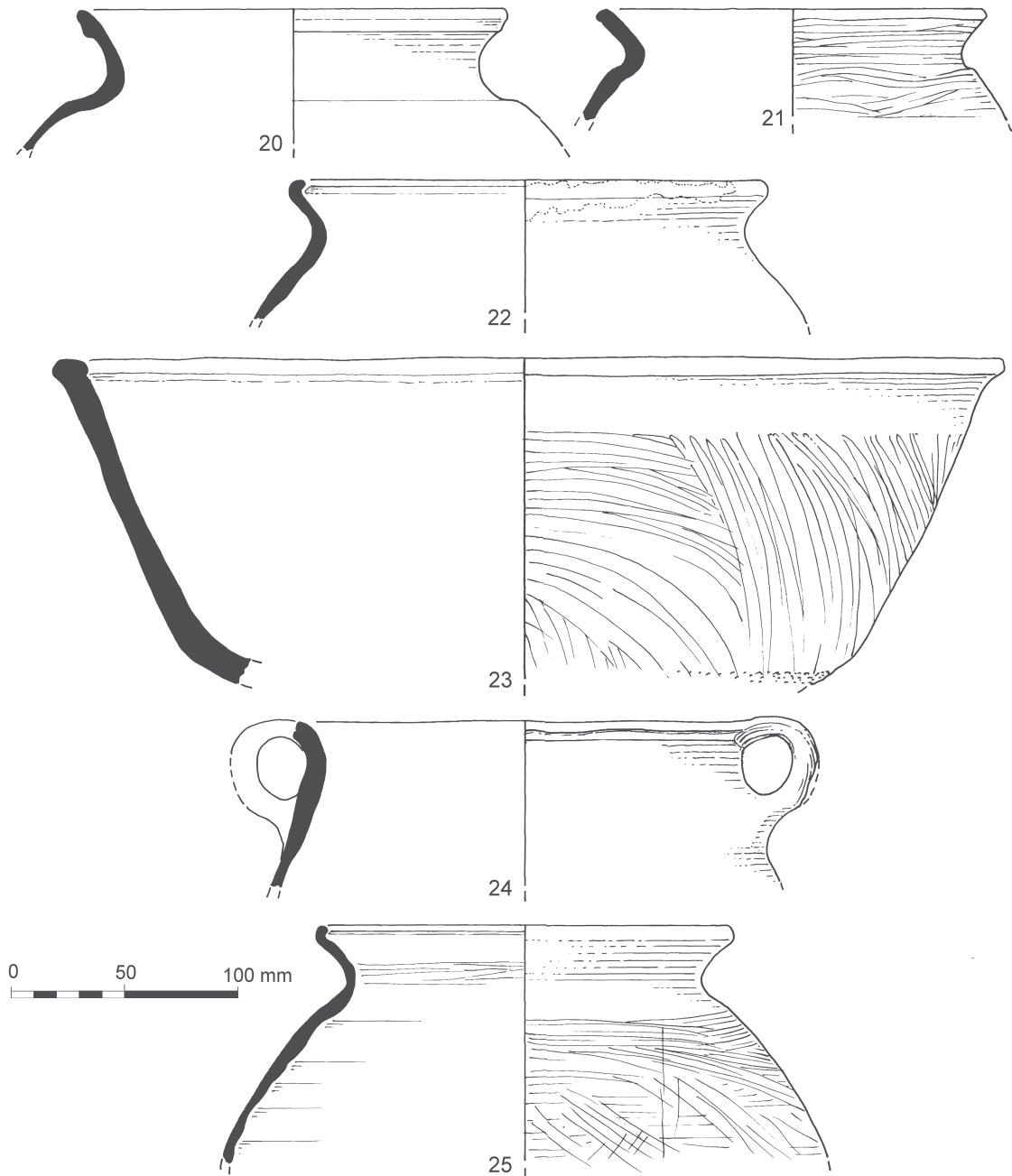


Fig. 13 Pottery: Anglo-Norman wares

20. Jar with an everted rim; Early-medieval flint-tempered ware. Ditch 14113 (13791), PRN 381

21. Jar with an everted rim; Early-medieval flint-tempered ware. Ditch 14113 (13791), PRN 382

22. Jar with an everted, internally lipped rim; Early-medieval flint-tempered ware. Ditch 14113 (13797), PRN 386

23. Deep bowl with an internally bevelled rim; Ditch 14113 (13791), PRN 380

24. Jar with an everted rim; Early-medieval flint-tempered ware. Ditch 10489 (10376), PRN 346

25. Jar with an everted, internally lipped rim; Southampton Scratch-mark ware. Ditch 10489 (10376), PRN 345

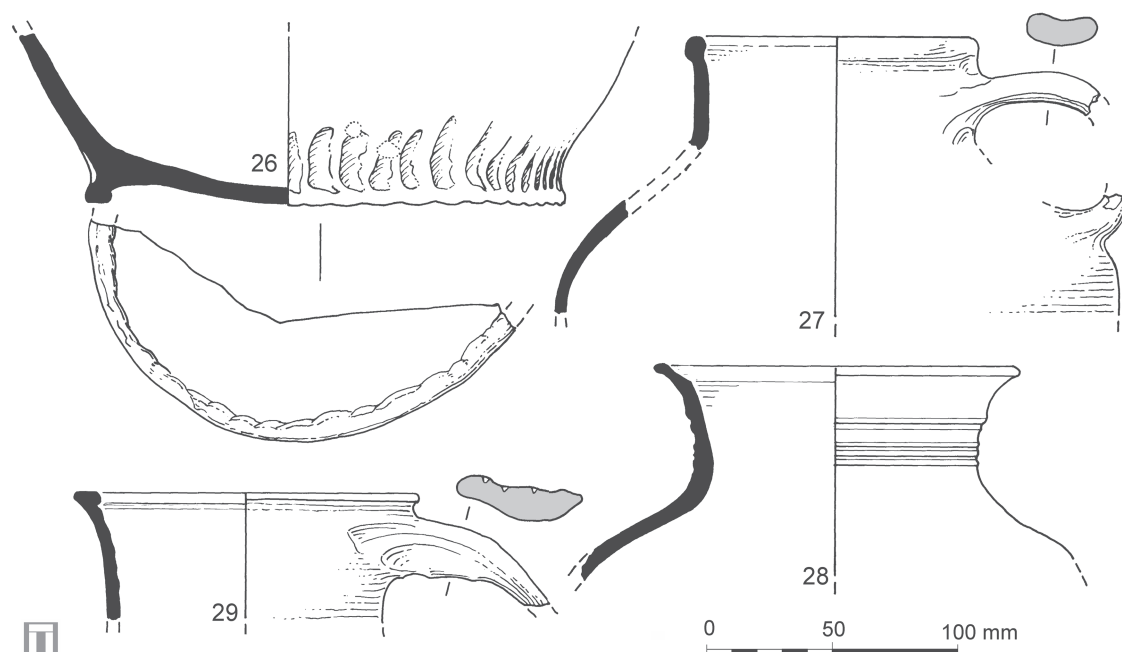


Fig. 14 Pottery: High medieval wares

26. Slightly sagging, thumbled jug base; Local whiteware. Ditch 14112 (13774), PRN 378

27. Jug with plain strap handle; South Hampshire Redware. Ditch 14112 (13774), PRN 374

28. High-shouldered, upright-necked jar with a flat-topped rim; South Hampshire Redware. Enclosure 14111 (13900), PRN 423

29. Jug with a scored strap handle; Southampton sandy ware. Pit 01608 (01609), PRN 484

with metal-working (Campbell 2008, 71), and was later used extensively in the gunpowder industry within the New Forest (Pasmore 1964).

Arable activities were poorly represented and though three fragments of quern were found, there is little supporting environmental evidence to suggest crop processing or storage on any sort of scale. However, two plant-rich deposits from a posthole in the four-post structure and a hearth in the north-west of the site comprise deliberately-discarded deposits of processing waste. In both cases the glume bases and spikelet forks (one spikelet fork consists of two glume bases) formed the greatest component of the assemblage. Given that grain survives charring better than chaff, it is reasonable to suggest that this domination by chaff has not been affected by preservation conditions, and the deposits therefore are likely to represent the by-product of de-husking

hulled wheat (the removal of the glumes or hulls). Such chaff waste is frequently used as a source of fuel (Campbell 2008, 71) and its presence in both deposits may well relate to such a practice. Both samples had a negligible weed component suggesting these had been removed at an earlier stage and the chaff may have been brought to the site for kindling.

It is likely that animals were grazed on the heathland adjacent to the site, but no animal bone was recovered from Iron Age contexts due to soil conditions.

Evidence for Saxon occupation was limited to a few sherds of Saxon pottery, some of which was residual. An Early to Middle Saxon radiocarbon date on wood charcoal from Enclosure A indicates the reuse of the presumably still visible ditch. The enclosure ditch may have been recut or redefined perhaps to provide a paddock.

During the medieval period, a small-scale

farmstead was established exploiting the grassland habitat on the valley base for pasture and fodder. Some of the smaller fields may have been used for cereal crops. The cultivation and use of oats seems to have been of particular significance here. Pollen, structural remains and documentary sources suggest that the woodland areas were still of importance to the economy of the farm whose acreage extended beyond the limits of the site.

The site remained as one of limited economic influence being something of a backwater. From the early medieval period onwards, the site formed part of a small rather impoverished farm. Indeed, by 1815 the 'poor state of the farmhouse and buildings, which beggared description and was not habitable' (Queens 2D 69–71) was being commented on. Again in 1911 'the farm was said to be in a deplorable and poverty-stricken state. The only crop showing was a few poor roots, not thinned, and smothered with weeds' (Queens FM/265).

As these documentary sources record, Dowd's Farm was tenanted throughout the post-medieval period, a picture that is complemented by the excavated remains. Continuity of land-use and field organisation through the medieval and post-medieval periods can be demonstrated in the alignment of the field systems (Fig. 9), with increased field size and the introduction of ceramic field drains into existing ditched boundaries reflecting changes in the development of agricultural technology. The present farmhouse, parts of which are known to date to at least the 17th century, may post-date an earlier building. Similarly, many of the extant field boundaries are likely to date from at least the post-medieval period.

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