

THE IRON AGE AND ROMANO-BRITISH ENCLOSURES AT LAMB'S FIELD, WORTING: EXCAVATIONS BY THE BASINGSTOKE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 1992–2008

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ABSTRACT

The excavations at Lamb's Field, Worting, Basingstoke, provided evidence for a small Late Iron Age to Early Romano-British complex of ditches and a rectangular enclosure that flourished between 100 BC and AD 100. The enclosure post-dated two curvilinear ditches and had been modified over time. With no clear evidence of occupational structures within the enclosure, the features are thought to be associated with animal husbandry, with the curvilinear features representing an earlier boundary to an area of occupation to the south.

INTRODUCTION

With the permission of Dr Richenda Power, a series of eleven excavations took place in Lamb's Field, Church Lane, Worting between 1992 and 2008 and, in conjunction with the 1997 excavation, a full fieldwalking survey was undertaken (Fig. 1). The excavations were carried out by members of the Basingstoke Archaeological and Historical Society (BAHS) and directed by Peter Heath (1992), Mary Oliver (1996–98), Dave Score and Marjolein Musslewhite (1999–2004) and Mark Peryer (2007–2008). The aim was to provide archaeological training for members of BAHS. Lamb's Field had been regularly ploughed until 1998 when it entered the Countryside Stewardship Scheme. In 2011 it was designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).

Three distinct features within Lamb's Field were originally identified from an aerial photograph obtained from the Cambridge University Technical Service in 1991. These are: (A) a rectilinear enclosure, (M) the northern curvilinear ditch, and P, the southern curvilinear ditch

(Fig. 2). They were extensively investigated by excavating sixteen trenches. Through analysis of the individual assemblages, with specific focus on the pottery, a chronology for each of the ditch features has been established.

The Site in context

The site located at NGR SU 601523 lies at a height of 120m above Ordnance Datum north-west of the centre of Basingstoke, situated on an area of undulating downland (Fig. 1). The geology is Upper Chalk with localised areas of clay-with-flints covered by a plough soil of greyish-brown silty clay. A band of Reading Beds comprising clays, silt and fine grained sand overlies the Chalk 4.5km to the north-east. Further north the Reading Beds are overlain by London Clay (British Regional Geology 1982). The river Loddon rises 1km to the east providing a permanent water source.

Sloping gently to east and south, the site over-looks the Silchester to Winchester Roman road (0.5km) and in turn is overlooked by the Iron Age hillfort of Winklebury (1.5km) to the north-east. Along the west side of the field is a trackway that runs south into Worting by the church. To the south-west at Scrapp's Hill and to the north, close to Worting Wood and Catterns Crossroads, are areas of prehistoric occupation identified through crop and soil marks. A small excavation conducted at Worting Woods in 1982 by BAHS confirmed a Late Iron Age/Early Romano-British date (Heath unpublished). The recently excavated Iron Age and Romano-British settlement at Old Kempshott Lane (Haslam 2012) lies 0.5km south (Fig. 1) and provides a useful comparator because of its proximity.

The Worting site is one of a significant

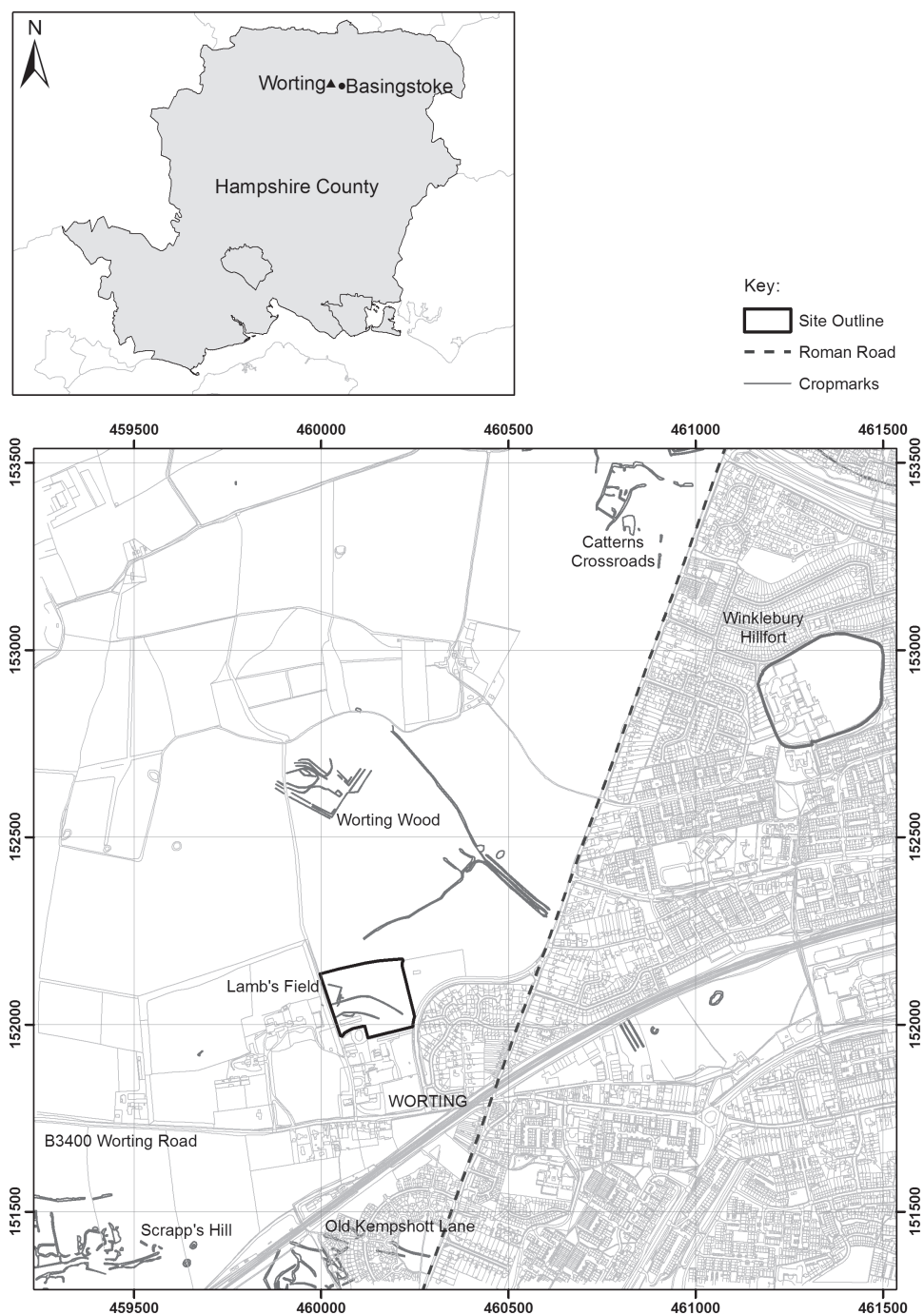


Fig 1 Lamb's Field, Worting; site location and adjacent archaeological sites. (Cropmark data reproduced with kind permission of Hampshire County Council Historic Environment Record)

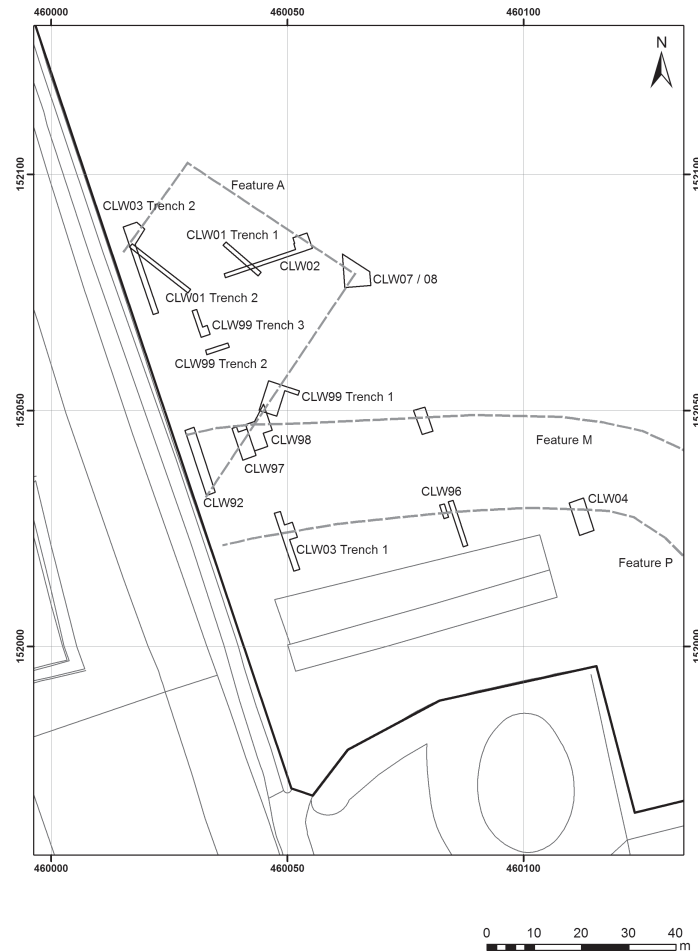


Fig 2 Plan of trench locations, 1992–2008, with schematic outline of cropmarks A, M and P

number of prehistoric and Romano-British settlements that lie within a 20–30km radius of the pre-conquest settlement of Silchester (Fulford & Timby 2000). More importantly, when compared to the wider landscape, it is one of a rich cluster of Iron Age and Romano-British sites in the Basingstoke Loddon valley area (Hampshire Historic Environment Record).

THE EXCAVATIONS

The three features, A, M and P, all dug into the natural chalk, were investigated in sixteen trenches (Fig. 2). The earlier trenches were

all hand dug but from 2003 the topsoil was machined off. Seven trenches focused on the ditch of the rectilinear enclose A, two of which were extended into the interior while a further five examined the interior alone. Four trenches were placed over feature P, the southern curvilinear. Feature M, the northern curvilinear, was excavated in two trenches with an additional two to investigate the relationship between A and M. As trench numbers were re-used the trenches are referred to by year and trench number.

The southern curvilinear feature P ran concentrically with the northern curvilinear feature M at a distance of $\approx 53\text{m}$ at the south-

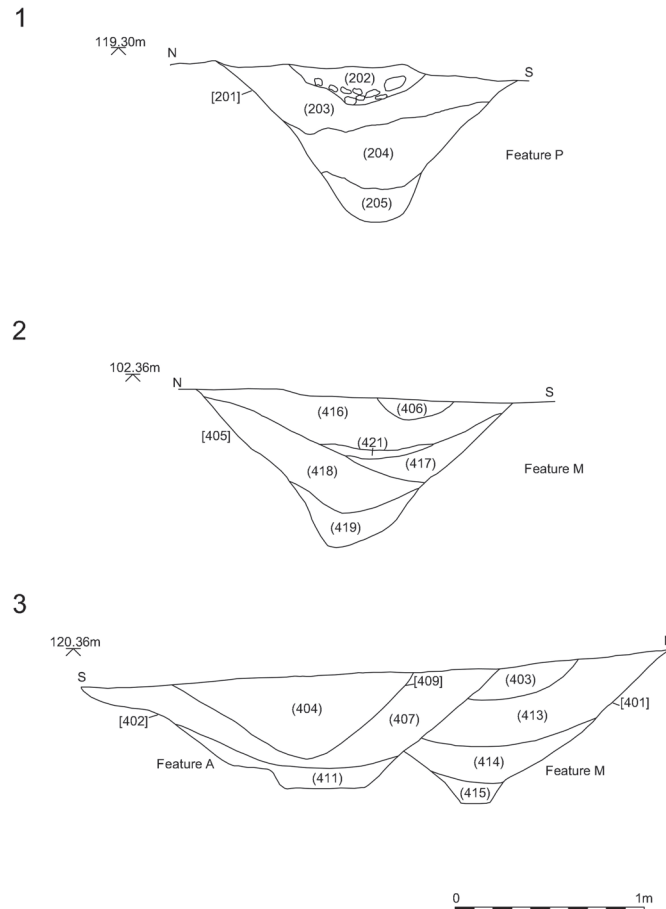


Fig 3 Section drawings of Features P and M, and the intersection of Features A and M

eastern end, narrowing to $\approx 37.5\text{m}$ at the south-western, creating a funnel effect. The rectilinear enclosure (feature A) had rounded corners and was aligned northeast-southwest cutting M to the south of the entrance. Enclosure A could not be traced to the west of Lamb's Field but the full extent is estimated to have been over 57m long by 39m wide. The entrance to the enclosure was positioned on the south-eastern side and, in its early phase estimated to have been 3.65m wide reducing to 2.90m in a later phase.

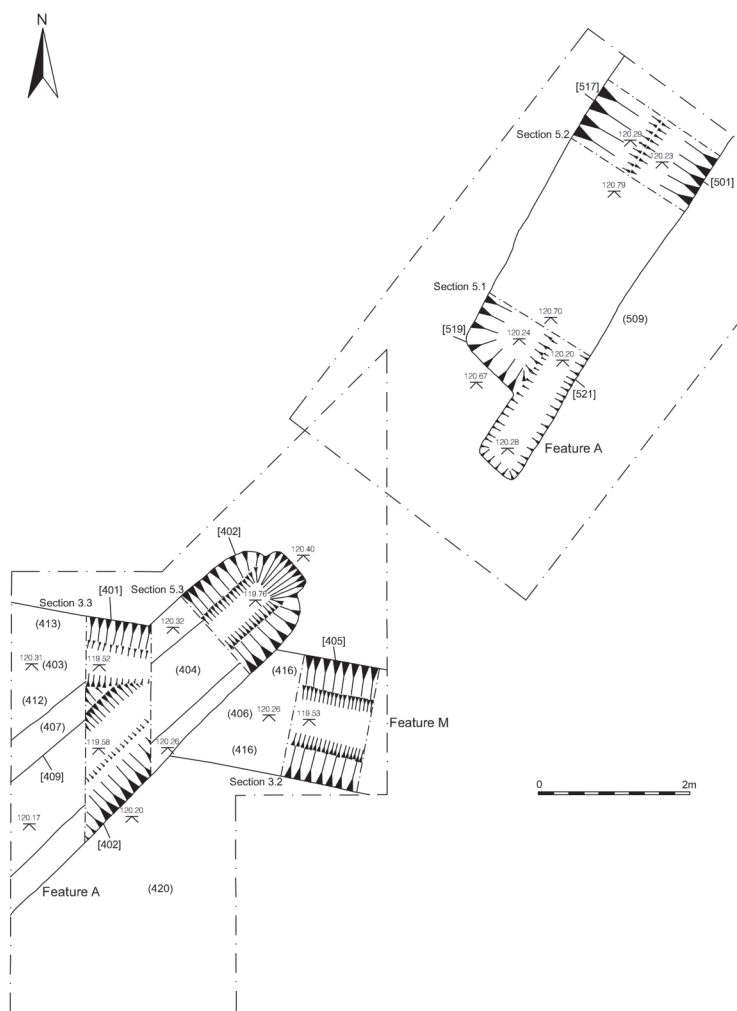
Because the eleven excavations were directed by a number of different people, data from the same feature are not always directly comparable. To aid analysis the individual excavations

have been grouped to provide a comprehensive overview of each feature.

Feature P

Four trenches were placed over the feature with the 2003/T2 at the south-western end near the hedge line, 1996/T1 and T2 $\approx 62.5\text{m}$ east and 2004/T1 at $\approx 75\text{m}$ close to where the ditch curved more abruptly.

The sections from the 1996 (Fig. 3.1) and 2004 excavations are most representative of the feature and show a V-shaped ditch with a flaring top and with no discernible break. It measured $1.87\text{--}2.35\text{m}$ wide at the top narrowing to a concave base $0.25\text{--}0.3\text{m}$ and $0.83\text{--}1\text{m}$ deep.



In the 2004 trench a deeper slot, 0.15m wide, survived in the base of the ditch suggesting an earlier phase partly removed by recutting in this stretch and entirely removed in the other trenches. In the 2003 trench the southern edge of the ditch had been quarried, creating a small pit. The northern edge also appeared to have been eroded and, taken together with the pit, was 2.6m wide. In the base of the quarried area was the remnant of a narrower slot. It was not completely excavated and may represent the remains of the earlier ditch.

1996 trenches. The basal fill (205) was a fine grey silt and chalk wash representing natural silting. A mixed layer of light orangey-brown silty clay with chalk nodules (204) filled the lower half of the ditch probably representing erosion of the ditch sides combined with natural silting. This yielded Late Iron Age flint tempered pottery and a small quantity of animal bone. The equivalent layers in the 2004 trench contained a much higher quantity of chalk. Overlying this was a mid orange-brown silty clay with sparse chalk lumps (203) representing natural soil accumulation in the

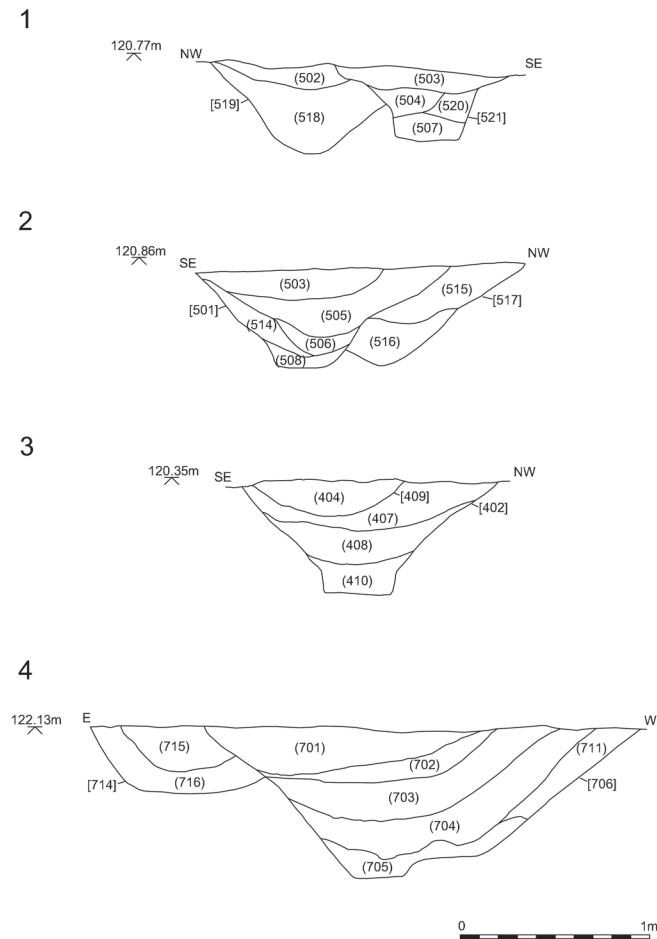


Fig 5 Section drawings of Feature A

upper third of the ditch. A small piece of iron slag, 1.2 kg of burnt flint, a flint blade and some animal bone fragments were recovered. The uppermost fill was a mid greyish-brown, silty clay with rare small flints and small chalk pieces (202) filling the final hollow at the centre of the ditch. A deposit of large flints at the bottom of (202) suggests that the upper part of the ditch had remained open and the localised dump of flints had rolled towards the partly silted central depression. This deposit yielded burnt flint (1.7 kg), small pieces of tufa (commonly used for Roman vaulting), sandstone and iron slag plus a few sherds of Late Iron Age pottery. The uppermost fill contained a quantity of post-medieval finds,

including ceramic building material (CBM) and part of a 16–17th century seal top spoon.

The 2003 excavation revealed a more complex sequence where quarrying along the sides of the ditch had created a small pit on the northern side. Apart from the lowest layer (817) which filled the base of the early ditch the remaining layers were dominated by chalk rubble. This appeared to represent quarry waste interleaved with natural chalk shatter eroded from the sides of P. The ditch fill produced only a fragment of animal bone. Within the main body of the quarry and ditch fill was a small assemblage of fragmented bone, which included a disarticulated human femur, a few sherds of Early Romano-British pottery

and a retouched flint flake. The uppermost fill produced three flint flakes and a few sherds of abraded flint and quartz-tempered wares.

A posthole [822] close to the southern edge of the ditch had a diameter of 0.25m, was 0.35m deep and tapered to a rounded base. The fill (823) contained one sherd of quartz-tempered greyware, two coarse flint-tempered sherds and two fragments of animal skull. This is the only feature that suggested that the ditch enclosed an area of activity.

Feature M

Four trenches focussed on the excavations of the curvilinear feature M. The 1992 trench was opened at the western end while 2007/T1 was positioned c.87.5m east, where the feature curved more sharply. The 1998 section (Fig. 3.2) is most representative of the form and fill of the feature. It had a wide V-shaped profile along its length. The width at the western end ranged from 1.67m to 2.32m narrowing to a concave base of 0.30m at a depth of 0.75m.

Eastwards, it increased in size to a width of 2.75m and a depth of 1.3m. Three vertical tool marks were visible in the side of the ditch in the 1997 trench. The 1997 and 1998 excavations examined the intersection of enclosure A with M (Fig. 3.3) and showed that feature M was cut by feature A (Fig. 4; Fig. 6).

The fill was uniform along the length of the ditch. The primary fill was a dark silty clay with sparse flints and chalk (415, 419) representing a period of natural silting. This was overlain by a similar deposit of mid-brown silty clay with increased quantities of chalk, eroded from the ditch sides (414, 418). In the eastern trench this layer contained a high density of small snail shells in addition to a greater abundance of chalk. A final lens of weathered chalk and pale silt (417) had accumulated against the south side, reaching a point of stabilisation in the filling of the ditch. In the 1997 and 2007 trenches these deposits were overlain by dumped layers of chalk and flint which appeared to represent deliberate deposits possibly resulting from the levelling of a bank on the south side of the



Fig 6 Photograph of the intersection of Features A and M, 1998. See Fig 3.3

ditch. Thereafter, the ditch filled with a series of naturally accumulated deposits commencing with a thin dark humic lens (421) overlain by a thicker deposit of mid-brown silty clay with numerous chalk pieces and sparse charcoal (416). The uppermost hollow was filled with a mid-greyish brown silty clay and chalk pieces (403, 406) occasionally interleaved with darker lenses of silting.

All of the finds came from in the uppermost layers of silting except for a single flint flake in the lowest layer (309) of the 1997 trench. A moderate quantity of burnt flint together with small quantities of animal bone, struck flint flakes, CBM and Late Iron Age pottery were recovered from these upper fills. Fragments of sandstone were also recovered including a quernstone fragment from (112) and a piece with a worn concave surface, probably a saddle quern, from (413). An almost complete Aucissa brooch was recovered from the surrounding plough soil during the 1998 excavation.

Feature A

The result of the excavations over the ditch highlighted only minor differences in profile and fills and clarified the shape and position of the ditch terminals as shown by the 1998 and 1999 plans (Fig. 4). The profiles of all sections suggest that the ditch had been recut and, in some cases, the fills varied. This is best illustrated on the north-eastern side of the entrance where the later ditch had extended 1m south-west and the two ditches had diverged to a greater degree than elsewhere (Figs 5.1, 5.2).

The phase 1 ditch

The original V-shaped ditch [519] measured c.1.1m wide and 0.4m deep. It was filled to a depth of 0.2-0.35m with chalk rubble in a matrix of mid buff-brown silty clay (518), probably a mixture of natural erosion and deliberate fill. Filling the shallow hollow in the top of the ditch was a mid-brown silty clay with flints (502). The few finds came from the upper layer comprised Late Iron Age flint-tempered pottery and some animal bone.

Around the rest of the circuit the ditch was largely recut leaving only the very base as a

deeper cut. This process removed most of the fill and what remained could not be differentiated from the later deposits.

The phase 2 ditch

The phase 2 ditch was shallower (0.59m) than the original with a uniform profile of a splayed top 1.35m wide and flat base of 0.3-0.35m on both sides of the entrance (Figs 5.1, 5.3). Around the rest of the circuit the ditch retained the same wide flat base with wide sloping sides. Around the north and west sides of the enclosure the ditch increased to 2.15m by 0.65m deep at the south-east return and up to 0.8m deep on the north-west side. The irregularity of the upper sides of the ditch in the 1992, 2002 and 2003 excavations may indicate intermittent quarrying of the ditch edges (pers. comm. Cynthia Poole).

The fill to either side of the entrance was similar, composed of eroded sediments, largely chalk (508, 514) from the ditch sides or the fill of the earlier ditch [517] interspersed with more silty lenses of eroded soil (506). On the north-east side of the entrance the upper fill continued to be dominated by chalk in contrast to the south-west where the upper layers (404, 407) were more typically dark-brown silty clay with small flint and chalk pieces. Artefacts were more prolific in both terminals than in the rest of the fill, and increased in density to the top. They included a significant quantity of Late Iron Age and Early Romano-British pottery, bone fragments, large quantities of burnt flint, and a piece of worn sandstone. A small number of struck flint flakes, a flint end-scraper and a retouched flint blade were also recovered. In addition, a Hod Hill type copper alloy fibula (Fig. 8) was picked up close to the trench during fieldwalking in 1997.

Away from the terminals the fill sequence was more complex especially on the north-west (Fig. 5.4) where eroded chalk (705) alternated with mixed lenses of chalk and silt (703, 704). Coarse flint and chalk rubble filling the central hollow was most apparent at the north-east return. Upper fills were predominantly silty clay with a low density of chalk. A dark silty layer (702) probably represents the formation of a turf line as the infilling process reached

a period of stability before the final chalky silt (701) filled the remaining hollow. Along the north and east stretches most artefacts lay in the uppermost fills. A substantial amount of flint, grog and quartz tempered pottery came from [1104], as well as significant quantities of burnt flint, a large piece of sandstone and fragments of animal bone. A few similar finds came from elsewhere in the fills.

The interior

Trenches in the interior provided limited evidence of structures. A posthole with concave base 0.15m in diameter and 0.22m deep in 1999/T3 while a circular feature 0.4m in diameter was left unexcavated. Two possible stakeholes c.0.05m in diameter and a posthole were exposed in 2001/T1, while a square, pit-like feature 0.70m wide and over 0.20m deep was found in 2002 but not fully excavated. Regularly spaced plough lines, running north to south across the interior and cutting the chalk natural, attested to recent agricultural activity.

THE FINDS

A full pottery report and more basic reports on the flint and animal bone assemblage are presented here. The finds assemblages and catalogue are held in the excavation archive lodged with the Hampshire County Council Arts and Museum Service.

Pottery

In total 1383 sherds (12.578 kg) of pottery were recovered with a Mean Sherd Weight (MSW) of 9.09g. The degree of abrasion was variable, with sherds recovered from the plough soil or upper fills of the ditches tending to be more abraded than those in the lower fills. Although the number of diagnostic sherds was limited (91 rim sherds) classifiable vessel forms could be accommodated within the known Late Iron Age repertoire recognised at St Catherine's Hill-Worthy Down (Cunliffe 2005: 104), and in the-grog tempered Belgic types and early

Romano-British ware traditions including jars, bowls and beakers. This resembles the phase III pottery recovered at Brighton Hill South (Fasham *et al.* 1995). Apart from one quartz-tempered sherd there were no vessels of Early or Middle Iron Age date.

Classification and recording of the pottery followed the Prehistoric Ceramics Research Group guidelines (2010) and these codes were also used for fabrics of vessels identified as Early Romano-British and later. All analysis was carried out manually and fabrics defined macroscopically and photographs, using a microscope camera (×50), were taken. Assistance in defining the fabrics and forms was provided by Lisa Brown of Oxford Archaeology and Lorraine Mephram of Wessex Archaeology.

Fabrics

The sorting of fabrics involved identifying the main inclusion types of flint, quartz and grog. Where there were mixed inclusions these were assigned to the fabric category with the highest proportion of one of the three tempers. The fabrics were grouped into the final series which is detailed below. Fabrics with nine sherds or fewer are indicated by an asterisk (*). A detailed description of each fabric is available in the archive.

Flint tempered: FL1–FL4

- FL1 Poorly sorted flint temper ranging from very coarse through to fine (0.2–5mm)
- FL2 Coarse flint temper (0.5–3mm) but with obvious clay pellets
- FL3 Fine flint temper (0.5–1mm) in a coarse open sandy fabric
- FL4* Very fine flint temper (0.25–1mm) in a fine closed micaceous sandy matrix.

FL1 included Silchester type wares and initially an attempt was made to distinguish between the coarser flint fabrics. However, when sherds coming from the same vessel were considered the tempering varied dramatically from very fine to coarse within the same vessel. Similarly there were significant differences in the firing to give both reduced and oxidised sherds from the same vessel.

Quartz tempered: QU1–QU8

- QU1 General category of sandy greyware fabrics with quartz grains 0.25–2mm
- QU2 Greyware with moderate quartz 0.25–1mm and a fine flint temper < 1mm.
- QU3 Black Burnished Wares (BB1) from the Poole Harbour area referred to as South-East Dorset Wares
- QU4* Possible Oxfordshire Ware and includes other fine quartz tempered oxidised wares.
- QU5* Coarse tempered fabric with very large quartz grain <2.55mm and micaceous inclusions
- QU6* Fine silty quartz fabric <0.5mm with local inclusions. Equivalent to Danbury Series E – Early to Middle Iron Age as identified by Lisa Brown (Oxford Archaeology)
- QU7* Imported ware – Dressel 1a amphora
- QU8* Fine sandy oxidised fabric, possibly New Forest Fabric 1b

An initial attempt to define the quartz tempered greywares into fine, medium and coarse was abandoned and all were conflated into QU1, which also includes some oxidised fabrics with a grey core. Both wheel and handmade forms and cordoned vessels are included. Most sherds were smooth finished and with no decoration. Many of the rim sherds appear to follow the Alice Holt tradition (Lyne & Jefferies 1979) although, without further detailed analysis, it cannot be confirmed that the vessels came from these kiln sites.

Identification of South-East Dorset Wares (QU3) was confirmed by Lisa Brown. More obviously handmade, the sherds were sometimes lightly burnished but no heavily burnished sherds or examples of lattice designs were found.

Grog tempered GR1–GR6

- GR1 Fine sandy matrix with grog <2mm and iron oxide (1.5mm) temper giving a speckled appearance
- GR2 Fine sandy fabric similar to GR1 with clay pellets <1mm and fine flint inclusions <1mm
- GR3* Fine sandy matrix with pitted appearance, buff grog pellets <2mm
- GR4 Coarse sandy matrix with grog pellets <2mm and fine flint temper (0.25–1mm) and rare

iron oxide. Similar to GR1 but without the speckled appearance

- GR5* Very fine sandy oxidised fabric with buff clay pellets <2mm and sparse flint tempering <3mm
- GR6* Fine sandy fabric with sparse grog pellets <2mm and common iron oxide pellets (0.5–3mm)

The oxidised grog-tempered wares are generally very fine while the reduced wares tend to be more coarse. The vessels, particularly the fine ones, are in the tradition of Belgic grog tempered wares.

Raw materials for all these fabrics could have been sourced locally (Rees 1995, 35). Flint and ironstone are available in the Upper Chalk that surrounds the site, while quartz sand could come from the river gravels of the Loddon or Test. The Reading Beds outcrop would have provided clay for use in the fabrics as well as glauconite inclusions (Smith 1977, 92).

The pottery related to the features

Of the total number of sherds 85.2% (1178 sherds, 11.2 kg) came from ditch A, 5.6% (77sherds, 653g) from ditch M and 8.9% (123 sherds, 664g) from ditch P (see Table 1). An additional five sherds weighing 61g were recovered from a posthole, pit and gravel area. Pottery of contemporary fabric type to the features, recovered from the overlying plough soil, has been included in this analysis.

Feature A

Rectangular enclosure ditch A produced the largest quantity of sherds as well as the greatest variety of fabric and forms (Fig. 7.1–17). The 1997 and 1998 excavations produced the most pottery (769 sherds weighing 6.98kg) with the bulk coming from the top fills (303) and (404).

The majority of the sherds from A were in fabric FL1 (65% by weight) and both oxidised and reduced examples were present. Some sherds were very fine compared to the large coarse tempered Silchester type jars with vessels ranging in rim diameter from c.80–440mm, the larger vessels likely to be storage jars. A large base sherd (Fig. 7.5) with a distinctive foot ring may be from a handmade, flat, dish.

Table 1 Comparison of number and weight of sherds by feature and fabric

<i>Linear Fabric</i>	<i>A</i>		<i>M</i>		<i>P</i>		<i>Other</i>		<i>TOTAL</i>		<i>% Total</i>	
	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>
FL1	715	7243	28	279	48	346	5	61	796	7929	57.6	63.0
FL2	53	578	0	0	0	0	0	0	53	578	3.8	4.6
FL3	3	43	0	0	16	71	0	0	19	114	1.4	0.9
FL4*	2	7	0	0	1	6	0	0	3	13	0.2	0.1
GR1	61	475	14	144	27	78	0	0	102	697	7.4	5.5
GR2	57	276	10	57	3	13	0	0	70	346	5.1	2.8
GR3*	9	48	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	48	0.7	0.4
GR4	13	250	0	0	4	42	0	0	17	292	1.2	2.3
GR5*	8	51	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	51	0.6	0.4
GR6*	8	47	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	47	0.6	0.4
QU1	154	1293	4	27	11	48	0	0	169	1368	12.2	10.9
QU2	7	29	3	14	3	13	0	0	13	56	0.9	0.4
QU3	42	356	8	34	0	0	0	0	50	390	3.6	3.1
QU4*	2	5	0	0	1	3	0	0	3	8	0.2	0.1
QU5*	8	200	0	0	1	1	0	0	9	201	0.7	1.6
QU6*	0	0	0	0	1	14	0	0	1	14	0.1	0.1
QU7*	1	86	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	86	0.1	0.7
QU8*	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	0.1	0.0
P-Med	0	0	0	0	2	17	0	0	2	17	0.1	0.1
E-Mod	34	207	10	98	5	12	0	0	49	317	3.5	2.5
Totals	1178	11200	77	653	123	664	5	61	1383	12578	100	100
% Totals	85.2	89.0	5.6	5.2	8.9	5.3	0.4	0.5	100	100		

Another FL1 vessel (Fig. 7.6) was tempered with coarser, sharp flint yet none the less had a thin wall as did a vessel (Fig. 7.7) with a flared rim (diameter *c.*360mm). Decoration was rare but one FL1 sherd from (404) had indentations below the rim and a sherd from (701) had finger impressions at the base with wipe marks clearly visible on the external surface. Two sherds from (803) were burnished and had a black residue to the internal surface. Examples of FL2 fabric (53 sherds weighing 578g) only came from A. The FL3 fabric was represented by three sherds weighing 43g from (404) while two fine beaded rim sherds of FL4 were found in (503).

The grog-tempered wares were represented

by 475g (61 sherds) of GR1, 276g (57 sherds) of GR2 and 250g (13 sherds) of GR4 with nine sherds or fewer of GR3, GR5 and GR6. A round shouldered GR1 vessel and a GR2 vessel with a speckled appearance, due to the high iron oxide content, were recovered from (123). Context (408) contained two large base sherds, possibly from a large butt or girth beaker, in GR4 fabric. Burnished orange/brown it has two deeply scored lines around the base of the belly (Fig. 7.10). Two sherds of GR5 with a scored line decoration were recovered from (503) while 15 conjoining sherds from a fine GR1 cordoned jar (Fig. 7.11) came from (1102). Apart from these examples most sherds had no decoration and although a few were burnished

most were smoothed or wiped. Rim diameters varied between c.80–240mm.

The total quantity of quartz-tempered fabrics amounted to 1.97 kg (215 sherds) with the bulk being in QU1 grey sandyware (1.29 kg, 154 sherds) and QU3, South-East Dorset wares (356g, 42 sherds). The identifiable QU1 vessels were mainly jars ranging in rim size from c.80–260mm and decorated with cordons and in many cases obviously wheel-thrown. One such partly burnished vessel from (303) had a fine beaded rim (Fig. 7.13). A similar vessel (Fig. 7.14) was recovered from (703). A small sherd of QU1 greyware had the blue/grey colouring noted on pottery from the Alice Holt kilns near Farnham as did five others from (1102). This context also produced nine sherds from a wheel-thrown jar with flared rim and rills on the shoulder. Ten conjoining sherds of a QU3 vessel (Fig. 7.17), some showing a vertical burnished pattern near the base, were recovered from (123) and were the only example of decorated sherds in this fabric. A single sherd of oxidised sandy ware without slip (QU4), possibly Oxfordshire ware and a single fragment of fine QU8 (possibly New Forest fabric 1b) with a black slip were found in the topsoil (500). The New Forest fabric may come from a Type 20 jug (Fulford 2000, 95–96) dated to AD 270–350. A single sherd (86g) of Dressel 1a amphora handle (Museum of London 2012) was also recovered from (302).

Feature M

Ditch M produced 653g of pottery, the majority of sherds coming from the top fill. Many of the sherds were small and badly abraded. Fabric FL1, 43% of the total, was the only type of flint tempered pottery recovered from this feature. A large rim sherd of Silchester type storage jar (rim diameter c.440mm) came from (112) and had finger wipe marks over the curve of the rim (Fig. 7.18).

Grog-tempered fabrics were represented by 144g of GR1 (22%) and 57g of GR2 (9%). Two sherds of burnished GR1 with a micaceous sparkle were recovered from the basal fill of the ditch (119) along with a large sherd of GR1 with a pierced hole below the rim suggesting that the vessel may have been suspended (Fig. 7.19). One sherd of black GR1 fabric showed a comb-

stabbing decoration. Context (1003) produced two GR2 pieces from a single vessel with burnishing around the neck and shoulder.

The quartz tempered wares were restricted to three fabrics – QU1 (27g), QU2 (14g) and 34g of South-East Dorset Ware (QU3). One sherd of QU1 has a proto-bead rim (pers. comm. Lisa Brown).

Feature P

The 664g of pottery recovered from ditch P included a wider variety of fabric types than M. Again they tended to come from the upper fill of the ditch. The flint-tempered wares included examples of FL1 (346g, 52% of the total), FL3 (71g) and FL4 (1 sherd of 6g). One sherd of FL1 was decorated with finger impressions. Eight sherds of FL3 fabric came from just above the basal fill (209) and appear to be from the same vessel.

The grog-tempered sherds (133g and 20% of the total) included examples of GR1 (78g), GR2 (13g) and GR4 (42g). This included a fine grog tempered sherd from a vessel with a flared rim. The quartz tempered sherds made up 12% of the assemblage and, like M, were less well represented with a total of only 17 sherds weighing 79g. The bulk comprised QU1 sherds but one small piece of QU4, possibly later Roman Oxfordshire ware, came from (202) and one small sherd of QU6 was possibly Danebury E fabric (Lisa Brown pers. comm.) dated to the Early Iron Age (Cunliffe 1984a, 232; Cunliffe 1995, 18).

Catalogue of illustrated pottery sherds (Fig. 7)

- 1 Silchester type storage jar, FL1 oxidised fabric, handmade, wiped finish, everted rim with fingernail impressions and double line scoring below the rim. Rim diameter c.320mm. Context 302, Feature A, 1997.
- 2 Footring, FL1 oxidised fabric, handmade, wiped finish. Context 302, Feature A, 1997.
- 3 Bead rim jar with bead to the inside, FL1 reduced fabric, handmade, burnished externally. Rim diameter c.20mm. Context 302, Feature A, 1997.
- 4 Pulled bead rim of convex vessel, FL1 variable fabric, handmade, smoothed/burnished externally. Rim diameter c.200mm. Context 302, Feature A, 1997.

- 5 Footring, FL1 reduced fabric, handmade, smoothed surface, tooling around foot ring. Context 404, Feature A, 1998.
- 6 Fine, flattened bead rim, FL1 variable fabric, handmade. Rim diameter *c.*120mm. Context 304, Feature A, 1998.
- 7 Pulled bead rim, FL1 variable fabric, handmade, smoothed. Rim diameter *c.*360mm. Context 407, Feature A, 1998.
- 8 Footring GR2 reduced fabric, finished on turntable, smoothed. Context 302, Feature A, 1997.
- 9 Fine bead rim cordoned jar, GR2 reduced fabric, wheel-thrown, smooth surface. Rim diameter *c.*150mm. Context 302, Feature A, 1997.
- 10 Base of large butt or girth beaker, GR4 oxidised fabric, handmade, burnished, tooled horizontal groove below girth. Context 408, Feature A, 1998.
- 11 Bead rim, necked cordoned jar, GR1 variable fabric, wheel-thrown, horizontal tooled line below shoulder. Rim diameter *c.*220mm. Context 1102, Feature A, 2007.
- 12 Fine bead rim necked cordoned jar, GR2 oxidised fabric, handmade, burnished. Rim diameter *c.*130mm. Context 302, Feature A, 1997.
- 13 Bead rim necked cordoned jar, QU1 reduced fabric, wheel-thrown, burnished. Rim diameter *c.*180mm. Context 302, Feature A, 1997.
- 14 Everted rim of necked, cordoned jar QU5 reduced fabric, handmade, possibly finished on turntable, burnished with tooled horizontal bands and wavy lines. Rim diameter *c.*100mm. Context 302, Feature A, 1997.
- 15 Everted rim jar or beaker, QU1 buff coloured fabric, wheel-thrown, tooled horizontal lines around shoulder. Rim diameter *c.*140mm. Context 302, Feature A, 1997.
- 16 Bead rim vessel, QU1 reduced fabric, handmade, possibly finished on turntable, burnished with burnished wavy line decoration on the shoulder. Rim diameter *c.*180mm. Context 302, Feature A, 1997.
- 17 Base of vessel, QU3 reduced fabric, handmade, burnished finish with vertical tooled decoration, SE Dorset ware. Context 123a, Feature A, 1992.
- 18 Bead rim vessel, F1 reduced fabric, handmade, smoothed finish with finger wiping over thickened rim. Rim diameter *c.*400mm. Context 112, Feature M, 1992.
- 19 Bead rim vessel, GR2 reduced fabric, handmade, burnished finish with comb impressions around

girth and drilled hole below rim. Rim diameter *c.*260mm. Context 119, Feature M, 1992.

Discussion

Although there were no complete vessels recovered the assemblage is clearly dominated by quartz-tempered cordoned jars and possibly bowls, large flint-tempered storage jars and some finer Belgic wares in grog-tempered fabrics.

Comparing the three ditches all yielded similar fabrics and forms with flint-tempered fabrics dominating (68% A, 56% P, 41% M). The quantity of grey sandywares (QU1) is higher in A (13%) than P (9%) and M (6%) with more wheel thrown examples. Ditch M, however, contained a greater proportion of QU2 and QU3 (South-East Dorset Wares) and less variety of grog-tempered wares than both A and P. This may suggest that, while M was closed prior to the construction of the enclosure (A), ditch P remained open to some degree.

The predominance of flint-tempered sherds is indicative of an Iron Age influence, and taken with the contemporaneous grog-tempered fabrics and forms this suggests a Late Iron Age, pre-Roman date (100 BC-AD 43). The variety of wheel thrown sandy wares indicates an Early Romano-British date up to *c.*AD 100. Evidence for early occupation is extremely limited with a single sherd of fine quartz tempered fabric (QU6) tenuously classified to the Early Iron Age.

The Late Iron Age/Early Romano-British date range is supported by the Dressel 1a amphora handle of *c.*130–50 BC (Cox & Hearne 1991, 119). Amphora sherds of Dressel 1, 2–4 type were found at Brighton Hill South (Rees 1995, 39) while Old Kempshott Lane (Gerrard 2012, 107) produced sherds from Spanish amphorae indicative of the trading network that was centred on Hengistbury Head at the time (Cunliffe 2013, 361). The recovery of South-East Dorset Wares is also a result of this trading network. Pottery from the Wareham-Poole Harbour area was initially produced for local use by the Durotriges during the Early to Middle Iron Age but from the Late Iron Age onwards pottery was being traded out of Purbeck. Poole Harbour was part of a trading network centred on Hengistbury Head and

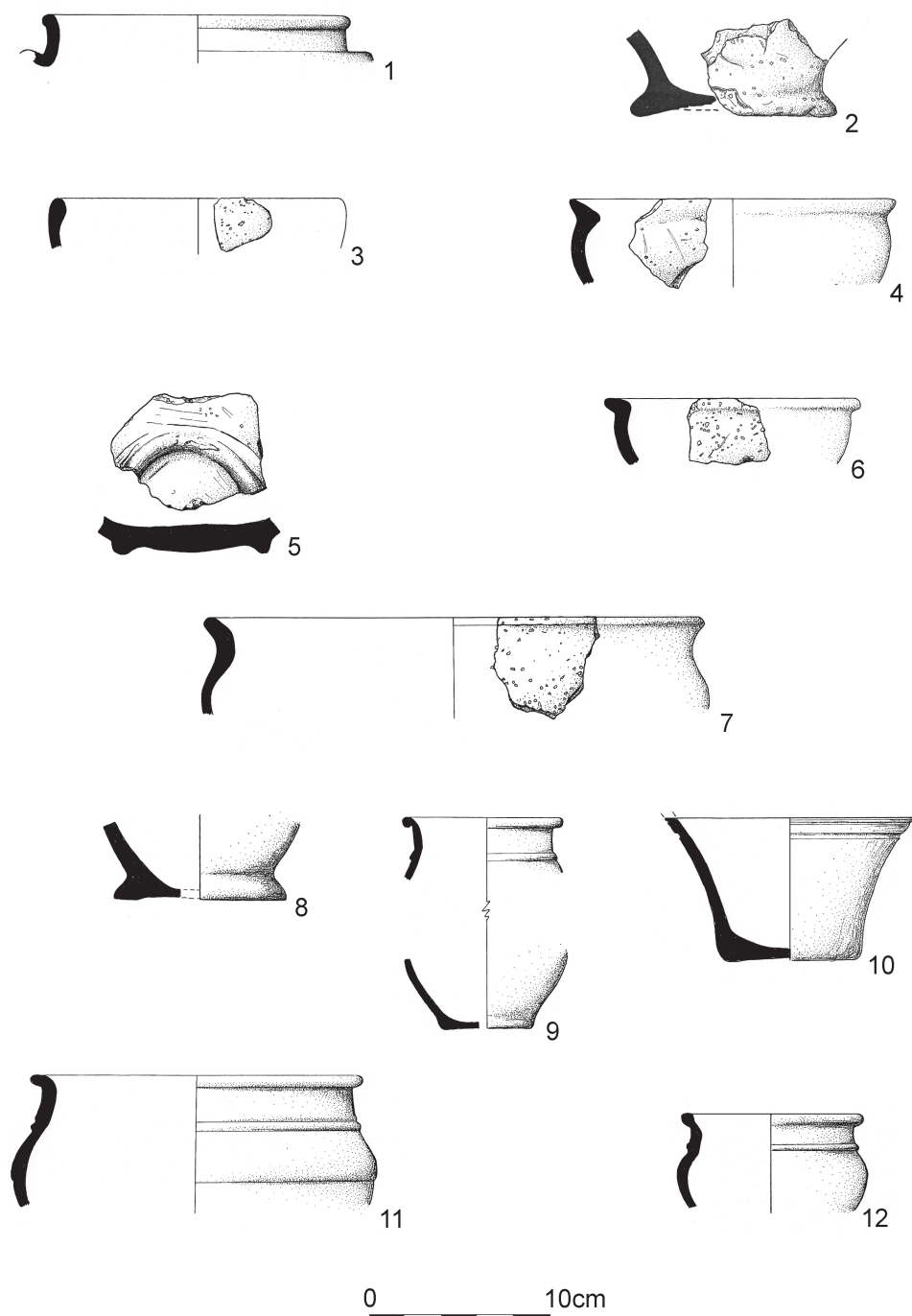


Fig 7 Late Iron Age – Early Romano-British Pottery

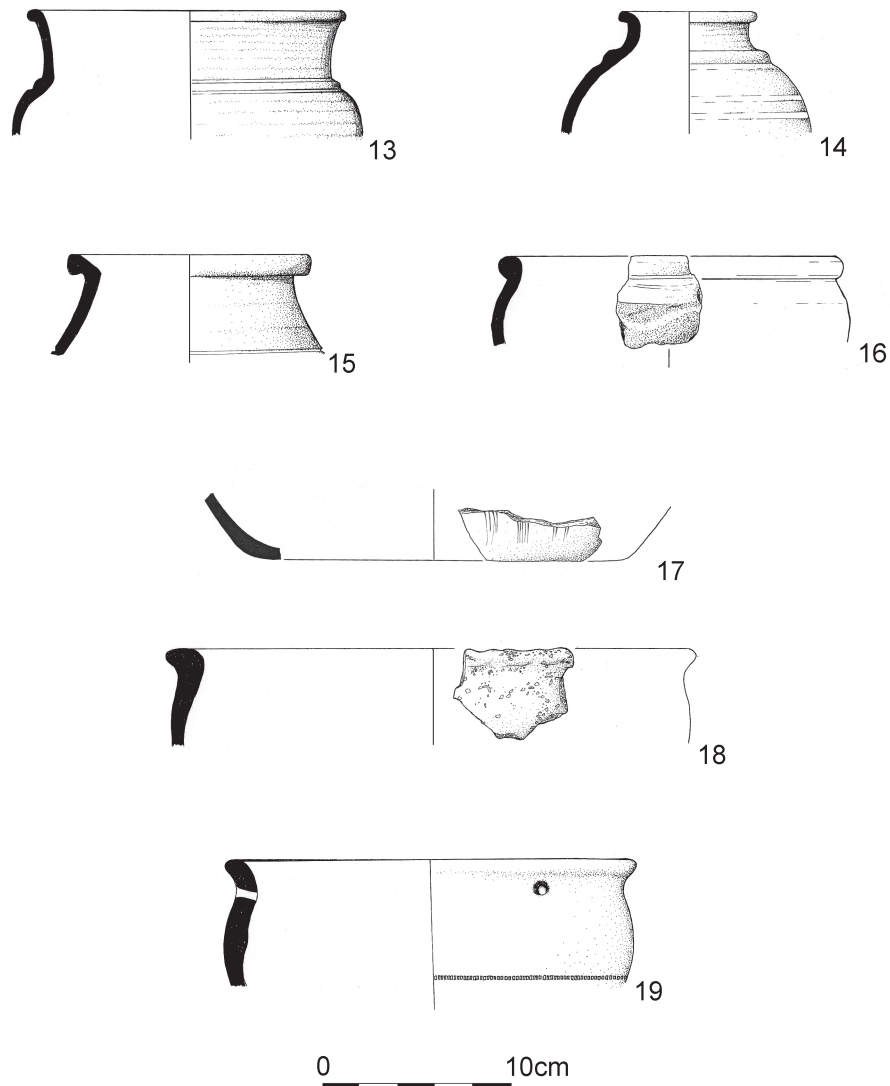


Fig 7 (cont.) Late Iron Age – Early Romano-British Pottery

after the Roman conquest the pottery trade grew rapidly with military and civilian markets driving expanded production (Sunter & Woodward 1987, 6).

The site at Lamb's field has little evidence of occupation past the end of the 1st century AD. A fragment of handle from a possible New Forest

ware closed vessel and two very small, badly abraded sherd of possible Oxfordshire ware were the only evidence of later dates. These may result from activity associated with later Roman sites that have been identified to the north of Lamb's Field at Park Prewett (Coles *et al.* 2011) and Monk Sherborne (Teague 2005). Examples

of fine and 'traded' wares such as Samian and South Gaulish pieces have been found at the Roman enclosure at Park Prewett (Timby 2011, 48) while Brighton Hill South (Rees 1995, 39) produced Gaulish white ware. Later Roman activity was also recorded at the Oakridge VII site (Oliver 1992, 55) but generally this is unusual in the rural settlement sites of Basingstoke (Fulford & Timby 2000, 310).

Bone

In total 678 pieces of bone weighing 6.1 kg were recovered from the three ditches with an additional 14 fragments (40g) from pits and postholes. All the bone was animal, with the exception of one human femur from feature P. The condition of the bone was generally poor, much was fragmentary and unidentifiable

and all were affected to some degree by root etching. No evidence of cut marks or working was observed but seven fragments were burnt. The distribution of the bone is shown in Table 2.

Feature A yielded the most bone (390 fragments, 3.8 kg) with the majority of the identifiable bone coming from close to the terminals. This included a mixture of long bones, metacarpals, metatarsals, mandibles, some vertebrae and a horn core. There were few rib, skull or scapular fragments recovered. Most of the bone fragments were from sheep/goat (75 weighing 1.1 kg) and cattle (36 weighing 1.1 kg). Both young and mature animals were represented as identified through tooth eruption and epiphyses fusion. There were only a few fragments of pig (24) and horse (3).

Table 2 Type and quantity of bone from each feature

		<i>A</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Pit</i>	<i>PH</i>	<i>US</i>	<i>Total</i>
Human	No			5				5
	Wt (g)			236				236
Sheep/Goat	No	75	11	20	4		9	119
	Wt (g)	1066	295	131	11		23	1526
Cattle	No	36	38	3			4	81
	Wt (g)	1080	194	267			70	1611
Horse	No	2		1				3
	Wt (g)	55		50				105
Pig	No	11	13		1			25
	Wt (g)	409	173		2			584
Bird	No			1				1
	Wt (g)			1				1
Medium Mammal	No						3	3
	Wt (g)						31	31
Small Mammal	No	3	1	3	1			8
	Wt (g)	18	6	10	10			44
Indeterminate	No	263	75	117	1	7	29	492
	Wt (g)	1183	476	437	1	16	97	2210
Totals	No	390	138	150	7	7	45	737
	Wt (g)	3811	1144	1132	24	16	221	6348

Feature M produced 138 fragments of bone (1.1 kg) including cattle, pig and sheep/goat. Feature P yielded a similar amount of bone (150 fragments, 1.1 kg) including both young and mature sheep/goat and a tibia from a young cow. The human left femur had been damaged during excavation but with fully fused epiphyses and early signs of arthritic changes (pers. comm. Katie Tucker) it would have come from an older individual.

Clear conclusions cannot easily be drawn from this small and fragmentary assemblage, however, sites such as Brighton Hill South and Old Kempshott Lane produced similar mixed assemblages. These two sites included few pig bones and it appears that more cattle were introduced in the Roman period overtaking the prevalence of sheep/goats. There is some indication that horse had been butchered for meat during the Iron Age at Worting (Haslam 2012, 115). In the absence of articulated bone it is probable that this assemblage mostly represents discarded food waste.

The disarticulated human femur is consistent with Iron Age burial practices that involve the deposition of limbs and other bones in pits and enclosure ditches, possibly for ritual purposes (Hill 1995, 80–83).

Flint

Burnt flint

The collection and recording of burnt flint from the different excavations was variable so it was not possible to make direct comparisons between the features. In total 11.62 kg of burnt flint was recorded with 3.25 kg from A, 3.92 kg from M and 4.45 kg from P. The majority of burnt flint was recovered from the topsoil and the top fills of the ditches although some was found at lower levels of A, implying that this heating activity had been ongoing during the time that the ditch was open.

The retained material from A and M show it had been deliberately heated with some pieces fired to a white or pale grey. The cortical surfaces were crazed while others were fractured suggesting thermal shock, possibly by quenching in cold water. The pieces varied in size between 0–10mm up to 80–90mm with the majority from A being between 30–40mm and

50–60mm. The burnt flints from M showed a full range of sizes, including very small fragments less than 10mm.

The deliberate heating of large quantities of flint is a common feature of pre-historic sites, especially associated with Bronze Age burnt mounds. The use of heated stones in the Iron Age may represent hearth use or industrial processes such as pottery production, drying corn, bending wood or manufacturing leather (Haslam 2012, 125). Personal hygiene is another option if the stones were used to create steam in a sweat-house (Wilkins 2011, 35). The hypothesis that they were used as 'pot boilers' for cooking has been challenged (Seager Thomas 2010, 361) as the resulting liquids would be too caustic to be palatable but roasting meat buried in hot flint may be more plausible. Whatever the purpose burnt flint is indicative of occupation.

Struck flint

Some 35 struck flakes were recovered, of which 20 were associated with A, four with M and 11 with P. This report incorporates comments by Phil Harding of Wessex Archaeology however the content remains the author's responsibility. The condition of the flakes was variable with some heavily damaged as a result of movement within the plough soil, while others were in a fresh condition with sharp edges.

Four worked pieces were identified. These included: a worn blade from (208) which had been struck from a carefully prepared core; a retouched scraper or knife with an abraded butt from (813); a retouched piece, possibly a scraper or knife from (302) and an end scraper on a flake from (500). The flakes provided evidence of initial core preparation, platform rejuvenation and possible axe manufacture. The assemblage was tentatively dated to the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age period and provides evidence of human activity prior to the construction of the enclosures.

Comparing the Lamb's Field site to others in Basingstoke, the recovery of flint flakes and tools is relatively unusual with some sites such as Brighton Hill South producing none. There was limited evidence of Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age flint working activity at Viabes Farm (Millett & Russell 1984, 59),

and Cowdery's Down produced an ovate bi-face handaxe (Millett & James 1983, 159). Ructstalls Hill, however, had been previously identified as a Neolithic flint working site and produced nine end scrapers, 12 blade scrapers and 15 struck flints (Oliver & Applin 1978, 46). At Marnel Park 76 flint flakes were recovered from one pit along with three scrapers and the wider site yielded scrapers, knives, serrated flakes and piercers. These were dated to the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age (Wright *et al.* 2009, 4). Danebury Road (Howell & Durden 2005, 58) and Park Prewett (Coles *et al.* 2011, 53) each produced 18 struck flints, dated to the Mesolithic or earlier Neolithic. The adjacent site of Old Kempshott Lane, however, has produced the most struck flint (170) indicating Mesolithic or earlier Neolithic activity (Bishop 2012, 117).

Small finds

The only significant small finds were two fibulae, both recovered from the adjacent plough soil during the excavations of 1997 and 1998. The 1997 find was a highly decorated copper alloy Hod Hill type fibula with a perforated bow

(Fig. 8a). It is worn, with the rolled over head broken and the pin missing, although the clasp is intact. The fibula is 62mm long with three horizontal mouldings above the main triangular shaped panel. Prominent perforated wings project from either side. One wing is broken but has a fine moulding attached to the top of the panel. The lower bow has two main cross mouldings below the panel and two across the foot knob. There is evidence of tinning or silvering on the lower bow. This type appeared immediately after the invasion of AD 43, is common on southern British sites until AD 60 (Fasham *et al.* 1995, 33) and passed out of use by c.AD 70 (Sunter & Woodward.1987, 97).

The copper alloy Aucissa brooch (Fig. 8b) has a highly arched D-profiled bow, with a hinged, tapering pin of 26mm length, which has remained intact. The triangular catch-plate is in place but has lost the rolled catch ledge. At 31mm in length this brooch is significantly smaller than the Hod Hill type. The bow is 5.5mm wide and thin (6mm) while the height of the D-profile measured 18mm. The decoration is very worn with slight longitudinal mouldings to both edges of the bow plus a central rib. The head (22mm in width) is

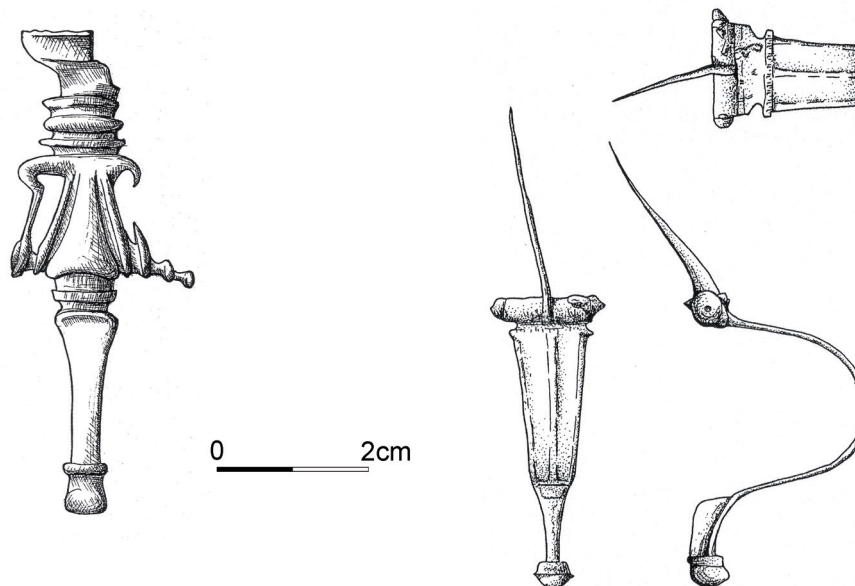


Fig 8 a (left) Hod Hill type fibula; b (right) Aucissa type fibula

corroded but has traces of incised marks above and below the notched edge. There are no 'eyes' but the prominent foot knob is a typical feature of this type of brooch (Hattatt 1982, 83). Aucissa brooches pre-date the Hod Hill type but have a similar life span of AD 43 to 80. They are usually found on military sites where they were introduced during the Roman conquest (Hattatt 1982, 84).

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The site at Lamb's Field is contemporary with a high density of Iron Age and Romano-British sites in the Basingstoke area that reached apogee between the Late Iron Age and the Early Roman period (c.100 BC–AD 100). The Lamb's Field pottery assemblage and the fibulae are consistent with this date. There is nothing to suggest that the site was occupied in the Early or Middle Iron Age or that it survived into the 2nd Century AD. The recovery of struck flints indicates some level of Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age activity probably representing movement of people through the landscape rather than settlement in the immediate vicinity.

The features encountered at the site resemble those seen at other sites in the area with Romano-British rectangular enclosures, irregular ditched enclosures and possible trackways, some of which have Middle Iron Age predecessors. The evidence suggests that the two curvilinear ditches M and P were in use before the rectilinear enclosure ditch was dug as M had completely filled by the time A was cut. The distribution of pottery between the ditches suggests that P may have been open while A was in use and, considering the post-medieval finds, it is possible that this boundary remained visible until the post-medieval period. New boundaries were commonly established during the Late Iron Age/Early Romano-British period (Bradley & Yates 2007, 94) and infilling of M and creation of A would fit with this practice.

The function of the two curvilinears is not conclusive. Although they may have been drove ways for animal husbandry or delineated irregular paddock areas it is possible that they

represent a much larger sub-circular boundary for an area of occupation to the south. This pattern of double ditches surrounding a sub-circular, settlement enclosure was excavated at Oakridge (Oliver 1992, 58) and similar complexes are evident at Battledown Farm and Scrapp's Hill. The substantial amount of pottery, animal bone and quern fragments, especially concentrated near the entrance of the rectangular enclosure, are indicative of a settlement close by. Whether the rectangular enclosure contained an occupation area or not is unclear as the limited excavation of the interior only revealed two possible stake holes and a post hole. These could not be confirmed as remains of buildings rather than racks or fences associated with a stock pen or area of other agricultural activity.

Evidence of settlements in rectangular enclosures is limited. At Marnel Park (Wright *et al.* 2009, 24) a possible four post structure lay within the rectangular enclosure and at Cowdery's Down (Millett & James 1983) no Iron Age or Roman structures were identified. At Ructalls Hill the kite-shaped enclosure, dated to the Middle-Late Iron Age, produced evidence of five possible round houses. The later three-phase rectangular enclosure, dated c.AD 45–100, showed no evidence of settlement structures but a series of pits and a line of post holes for a fence suggested that the enclosure was primarily for stock (Oliver & Applin 1978, 53).

Considering the comparison of Basingstoke sites of the Iron Age and Early Romano-British period in Fasham *et al.* (1995, 68) the Cowdery's Down enclosure mostly closely resembles that at Lamb's Field. Both are laid out as regular rectangular shapes with entrances at the south-eastern corner and both were modified between the Late Iron Age and Early Roman period. The ditch at Lamb's Field showed clear evidence of recutting, but along the south-east length the recut diverged slightly from the original line. This suggests the presence of an internal feature, possibly and overgrown hedge, that had to be avoided during recutting. At the same time the entrance was reduced by 0.75m. It is noteworthy that where the ditch at the entrance might be expected to be deeper and more imposing it was in fact smaller than that

along the north and west stretches. A similar pattern was recorded at Marnel Park where the western edge, close to the enclosure entrance, was narrower than the other parts of the ditch (Wright *et al.* 2009, 24).

Like many of the sites in Basingstoke the site at Lamb's Field appears to have flourished during the Late Iron Age and first two decades of the Roman period with a decline in activity during the Later Roman period. The site most likely to have influenced the development of settlements in the Basingstoke area is Winklebury hillfort (Smith 1977). The early phase of the fort began in the Earliest Iron Age around 6th/5th centuries BC, with structural remains of well-built houses in the interior. This was followed by a phase of activity dating to the period 3rd–1st centuries BC, with an apparent period of abandonment in the interval. In common with many other sites in southern Britain (Cunliffe 1984, 25) it was reoccupied towards the end of the Middle Iron Age. This could explain why there is little clear evidence of occupation at Lamb's Field prior to the Late Iron Age.

During the 1st century BC the organisation of rural settlements changed, with large ditched enclosures giving way to settlements comprising a series of small ditched units resembling 'farmsteads' (Cunliffe 1984, 34). This would have coincided with the arrival of the Belgae in the Hampshire area during the late 2nd or early 1st century BC, who made their capital at Winchester (Cunliffe 2013, 334). The emergence of *oppida* would have had the greatest influence on Winklebury hillfort and the adjacent farm complexes during the decades before the Roman Conquest. By 100 BC Winchester (Oram's Arbour) was surrounded by a bank and ditch enclosing an area of some 20 hectares (Biddle 2012, 1) and in 50 BC a new centre, Silchester, was established by Commius, a refugee from Caesar's campaign in Belgic Gaul (Cunliffe 2013, 334).

Following the Roman invasion these *oppida* were connected by a Roman road which is not straight but diverts eastwards to pass through the Basingstoke Loddon valley. This suggests that this was a destination in its own right and that the density of settlement in the area, including Lamb's Field, exerted some influence (pers. comm. David Hopkins). This route between

the two settlements may have encouraged the area to flourish but over a period of time it is possible that some communities would have been drawn towards these larger settlements leading to the abandonment of their own.

In the first two centuries of the post-Conquest era, social and economic changes would have accelerated, especially with the redistribution of land associated with villa complexes such as Monk Sherborne and Park Prewett, to the north of Lamb's Field. Those settlements that do continue into mid-late 4th century like Marnel Park, Merton Rise and Oakridge appear to have remained largely self-sufficient (Wright *et al.* 2009, 36) with little evidence of Romanised trappings.

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