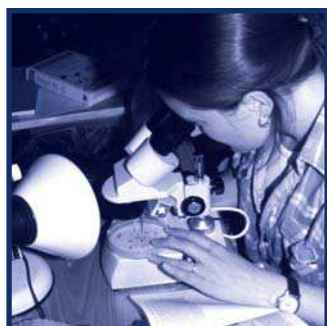


5a Rectory Road
Oakley
Hampshire



Post Excavation Report



June 2007



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SUMMARY

In February 2007 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an excavation at 5a Rectory Road, Oakley NGR (SU 5730 5015) on behalf of Scott Wilson Ltd. The work was in advance of a new housing development by BJ Champion. The work revealed a finds rich middle Iron Age pit and ditch, indicative of a nearby settlement. A late Iron Age ditch and three early Roman ditches were also observed. Several undated postholes were observed in close proximity to an early Roman pit, and were probably contemporary. The late Iron Age ditches were re-cut and backfilled in the 2nd century, after which there was no evidence for further activity on the site. The ditches probably formed field boundaries at the edge of a settlement to the south, which was occupied between the middle Iron Age and 2nd century AD.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 In February 2007 OA carried out an excavation at 5a Rectory Road, Oakley NGR (SU 5730 5015) on behalf of Scott Wilson Ltd. The work was in respect of a planning application for a new housing development by BJ Champion (Planning Application Ref. BDB/63971). Following an archaeological evaluation (AOC 2007) Stephen Appleby, Archaeological Officer for Hampshire County Council (HCC) requested that the central area of the site should be subject to full excavation, and a watching brief carried out on the excavation of associated service trenches. Scott Wilson Ltd produced two Written Schemes of Investigation (WSI - Scott Wilson Ltd 2006b and 2007) outlining how the archaeological requirements for the site would be met.

1.1.2 The development site (Fig. 1) is bounded to the north by a field, to the east and west by detached housing and to the south by Forge Cottage; a late 18th-century Grade II listed building.

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The excavation area measures 0.05 ha and lies at *c* 120 m OD. The underlying geology is Upper Chalk overlain by clay with flints (Scott Wilson Ltd, 2006a).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The archaeological background to the evaluation has been the subject of a separate desk study (Scott Wilson Ltd 2006a), the results of which are summarised below. The site itself has produced limited archaeological evidence. An archaeological evaluation was carried out in November 2006 by AOC Archaeology (AOC 2007). The evaluation revealed evidence for Iron Age activity and the foundations of two late 18th or early 19th century buildings.

1.3.2 The site is located partially within an Area of High Archaeological Potential as defined by Hampshire County Council. There are several known locations with archaeological remains adjacent to the development site.

1.3.3 A single broken Mesolithic blade was found *c* 100 m south of the site, and forty-six sherds of Roman pottery were recovered during an archaeological watching brief at the Old Farmhouse on Hill Road, *c* 100 m south of the site.

1.3.4 A settlement is first referred to at East Oakley in 1236 as 'Eatacle', meaning east of Oak Wood. This was a nucleated settlement located around a village green and pond at the junction of three roads (Oakley Lane, Hill Road and Rectory Road).

1.3.5 The site is located within the parish of Church Oakley, close to the boundary of the parish of Wootton St Lawrence. During the medieval period it is likely that the

settlement of East Oakley was surrounded by agricultural land (woodland or farmland), and it probably remained in this condition for most of the medieval and post medieval periods.

- 1.3.6 The earliest map of the site available is the Tithe map for Church Oakley Parish, dated to c1841. This shows two or three cottages and gardens within the southern boundary of the site. Within the eastern extent of the site is a shop (possibly a workshop) and garden. The remainder of the site is located within a large arable field called 'Crimble Piece', named after William Crimble who was the occupier of the shop and garden at the time.
- 1.3.7 The first edition Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1872 shows outbuildings or workshops on the site. The layout of buildings on the site appears to have remained roughly the same, from the first edition OS map until the mid-20th century when a bungalow was built on the western part of the site, and a number of buildings appear to have been remodelled or entirely demolished and re-built.

1.4 **Acknowledgements**

- 1.4.1 The authors would like to thank Helen Clough, of Scott Wilson Ltd, and BJ Champion who commissioned and funded the project, for their co-operation throughout the work. Stephen Appleby monitored the work on behalf of Hampshire County Council. The report was edited in draft by Paul Booth and the drawings were produced by Markus Dylewski. The finds and archive will be deposited with the Hampshire County Museums Service under the accession code A2007.3.
- 1.4.2 This report will be condensed and published as a note in Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society.

2 EXCAVATION AIMS

2.1.1 Hampshire County Council, who provide archaeological advice to Basingstoke and Deane District Council, do not currently have a Regional Research Agenda for the Historic Environment. The research objectives were based on the results of the evaluation work.

2.1.2 The objectives of the excavation, outlined in the WSI (SW 2006b), were:

- To establish the nature and extent of the Iron Age/Romano-British material identified in the evaluation
- To characterise the nature of any continuity of settlement between the Iron Age and Roman period as identified at other sites in the vicinity of Oakley
- To disseminate the results of the excavation through the deposition of an ordered archive at the appropriate local museum and the deposition of the fieldwork report at the HHER and through suitable publication.

3 EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Scope of fieldwork

3.1.1 The excavation strategy was developed in consultation with Stephen Appleby (HCC). All archaeological works were carried out in accordance with the specification for excavation and the watching brief (Scott Wilson Ltd 2006b and 2007) and a method statement produced by OA (OA 2007).

3.1.2 All work followed Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation prepared by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (2000), the IFA Code of Conduct (2001) and adhered to all current and relevant best practice guidelines.

3.2 Excavation methodology

3.2.1 The topsoil/hardcore overburden and subsoil were removed under archaeological supervision, by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. Excavation ceased at the top of the natural clay.

3.3 Fieldwork methods and recording

3.3.1 The excavation area was cleaned by hand and the revealed features were sampled to determine their extent and nature, and to retrieve finds and environmental samples. All archaeological features were planned and where excavated their sections drawn at scales of 1:20. All features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. Recording followed procedures laid down in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, 1992).

3.4 Watching Brief methodology

3.4.1 Three soakaway trenches were excavated within the southwestern part of site (Fig. 2). The methodology followed that for the excavation (see above).

3.5 Finds

3.5.1 Finds were recovered by hand during the course of the excavation and bagged by context. Finds of special interest were given a unique small find number.

3.6 Palaeo-environmental evidence

3.6.1 Environmental bulk samples were taken from well-dated archaeological features in accordance with EH and OA sampling guidelines.

4 RESULTS: GENERAL

4.1 General

4.1.1 The site is located on clay and the archaeological deposits were generally derived from weathered clay natural or dumped deposits of natural clay mixed with more loamy soils, presumably derived from an earlier topsoil.

4.1.2 The site could be broadly phased by the finds and stratigraphic record. These were:

- Phase 1: Middle Iron Age (250 - 100 BC)
- Phase 2: Late Iron Age (100 BC - AD 50)
- Phase 3: Early Roman (AD 50 - 120)
- Phase 4: Middle Roman (AD 120 - 250)

5 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

5.1 Stratigraphic summary

Phase 1: Middle Iron Age (250 - 100 BC)

- 5.1.1 A circular pit (5) was revealed in the southern part of the site (Figs 2 and 3 - Section 2), measuring 1.75 m in width and 0.4 m deep. It had vertical sides and a flat base that was overlain by a 0.01 m thick layer of charcoal (16). The pit had been backfilled with a brown silt clay (6) that contained 91 sherds of middle Iron Age pottery and fragments of at least 11 clay loom weights or pieces of oven furniture. The clay bricks and the pottery, which was very unabraded (see Poole and Brown below), may have been deliberately placed in the pit. Fill 6 was overlain by a dump of orange clay silt (15) that contained no finds. It is likely that the deposit was also a deliberate deposit; a sterile soil sealing the 'offerings' below.

Phase 2: Late Iron Age (100 BC - AD 50)

- 5.1.2 A hollow (19) was revealed in the north of the site and was filled with a dark silty clay, similar in character to the overlying soil horizon (see below). The deposit contained 22 sherds of late Iron Age pottery. The feature may have been the base of a shallow pit, or possibly a natural depression filled by the overlying subsoil.

Phase 3: Early Roman (AD 50 - 120)

- 5.1.3 In the northern part of the site a WNW-ESE aligned ditch (69) was revealed, measuring 1 m wide and up to 0.2 m deep (Fig. 2). It was filled with a grey-brown silty clay (56) that contained 32 sherds of late Iron Age and early Roman pottery. Fill 56 also contained five sherds of 2nd century Central Gaulish samian ware. Although the samian ware was an anomaly within the late Iron Age and early Roman pottery assemblage, it could suggest that the ditch was infilled in the 2nd century AD. However, it is more likely that the pottery was actually from the base of the overlying 2nd century re-cut (59 - see below). The ditch was cut (seen in section - NI) by a parallel ditch (67) of similar dimensions and fill, which contained 195 sherds of late Iron Age and early Roman pottery.
- 5.1.4 Parallel to ditches 69 and 67 were four ditches measuring between 0.5 m and 1 m in width, and up to 0.3 m deep (10, 35, 40 and 60 - Fig. 2). They were filled with grey-brown silty-clays that contained pottery dating from the early Roman period. Ditches 35 and 60 terminated in the eastern part of the site, but evidence for their western extents had been lost to ploughing. The western end of ditch 40 also appeared to have been truncated by later ploughing.
- 5.1.5 An oval pit (54) was located to the east of ditch 35, measuring c 0.5 m in width and 0.35 m deep. It was filled by a grey-brown silty clay that contained 21 sherds of early Roman pottery. A total of 12 postholes, forming a roughly WNW-ESE aligned row, were observed to the northeast of the pit. The postholes measured approximately 0.4

m wide and 0.3 m deep, and were filled with brown silty clays. No finds were recovered during the excavation, although a sherd of pottery tentatively dated as early Iron Age was recovered from a posthole excavated during the evaluation. The postholes' proximity to the late Iron Age/early Roman ditches and early Roman pit suggests that they are probably contemporary, and formed an associated fence line associated with one of the ditches (Fig. 2).

Phase 4: Middle Roman (AD 120 - 250)

- 5.1.6 The easterly parts of ditches 69 and 67, in the north of the site, had been re-cut (58 and 59). It is likely that the western parts of the ditches had also been re-cut although any evidence for this had been lost to ploughing. The re-cut ditches were 1 m wide and between 0.2 m and 0.5 m deep (Figs 2 and 3 - Section 22). They were filled with brown silt clays (18 and 55) that contained pottery dating from the 1st to 2nd centuries AD. A rotary quern fragment was recovered from fill 18.
- 5.1.7 The deposits were overlain by a dark silty clay soil horizon (48), from which 23 sherds of early Roman pottery were recovered. The soil was *c* 0.4 m thick and probably a cultivation soil and the pottery may have been residual, the soil was very similar to that filling hollow 19 (see above). The soil was overlain by a second soil horizon that contained 2 sherds of Roman pottery, one of which was late Roman in date.

Watching brief results

- 5.1.8 No archaeological features were observed within the three soakaway trenches, although the Roman cultivation soils observed within the excavation area (48 and 3) extended into the trenches. In soakaway 2 the soils were cut by a pit (106 - Fig. 2), measuring over 1 m wide and 1 m deep. It was filled by modern dumped deposits containing brick and concrete fragments.

5.2 The Prehistoric and Roman Pottery by Lisa Brown

Introduction

- 5.2.1 A total of 730 sherds (11535 g) of pottery was recovered from 24 contexts representing the fills of two pits (5 and 54), a shallow hollow (19), five ditches and two buried soils (Table 1). Ditches 58 and 59 were the most prolific features, producing 33 % and 26 % respectively of the total assemblage (31% and 24% by weigh. The 91 sherds from pit 5 represent 12 % of the total but belong to only two vessels.
- 5.2.2 Most of the pottery is of late Iron Age/early Roman (*c* 50 BC - AD 50) and early Roman date (*c* AD 43-180), but the assemblage from pit 5 is likely to be somewhat earlier, dating to a late phase of the middle Iron Age (*c* 250-100 BC). A single late Roman sherd was recovered from buried soil 3.

Table 1: proportions of pottery by feature/deposit

Feature/deposit	No. sherds	Wt (g)
Pit 5	91	1432
Pit 54	21	232
Hollow 19	22	634
Ditch 10	73	1555
Ditch 35	37	367
Ditch 40	8	22
Ditch 58	8	96
Ditch 59	138	1949
Ditch 60	22	729
Ditch 67	195	3534
Ditch 69	49	805
Buried soil 3	2	19
Buried soil 48	23	215

Methodology

- 5.2.3 The pottery was quantified by weight and sherd number and characterised by fabric, form, surface treatment, decoration and colour. Fabrics were examined with the aid of a binocular microscope at x 20 magnification and classified by major inclusion type. OA standard codes were used to denote Roman fabrics (Booth 2004), where possible correlated to the National Roman Fabric Reference Collection (Tomber and Dore 1998). PCRG (1995) guidelines were followed in the classification of the later prehistoric fabrics (PCRG Degrees of abrasion and presence and class of residues were also noted).

Fabrics

- 5.2.4 Fifteen fabric groups were identified, of which four (F1, F2, QU1 and QU2) are later prehistoric types. The two flint-tempered wares are precisely paralleled at Danebury and other Iron Age sites in the vicinity, where they are represented on a prolific scale within the middle Iron Age pottery assemblages (Brown 1991). Fabric QU1 has also been recovered in large quantities from Danebury but a Wiltshire source has been identified for this distinctive glauconitic ware (Brown 1991).
- 5.2.5 A number of fabrics are products of recognised Roman and Romano-British production sites, including Dorset Black-burnished wares (B11), Central Gaulish samian wares (S30) and a single sherd of Oxfordshire red-slipped ware (F51). A small fragment of a roughcast vessel with glossy black slip from context 77 (ditch 59) is of uncertain origin. Apart from Black-burnished wares, no attempt has been made to distinguish between the sandy reduced coarse wares (R20), but the range seems limited and much of this group probably originated from only two or three production centres. A very coarse sandy sherd (R90) may be a south-western (Devon) product.

- 5.2.6 Grog-tempered wares were not particularly common. The group of 35 sherds with rare flint temper (G2) may belong to no more than two or three vessels. Fabric G1 was used mostly in the manufacture of large, thick walled storage jars.
- 5.2.7 Only very small numbers of oxidised sherds (Q20 and W20) were present and this group included no diagnostic sherds. Twenty-three fragments of fine orange ware (O20) derived from a single vessel, a globular jar.

Table 2: fabric description and quantification

Fabric group	Fabric description	No	Wt (g)
F1	Sandy clay with coarse, ill-assorted flint 0.5-4mm	328	6636
F2	Fine smooth clay with well-sorted calcined flint <2mm	5	55
G1	Coarse grog-tempered ware, grey grog	16	413
G2	Fine sandy ware with sparse brown grog and rare flint	35	540
G3	Fine, smooth soapy grog tempered ware, black surfaces	3	27
QU1	Wiltshire glauconitic sandy ware (Danebury D15)	3	24
QU2	Other handmade glauconitic sandy ware	5	31
B11 (DOR BB1)	Dorset Black-burnished ware	10	166
F51 (OXFRS)	Oxfordshire red-slipped ware	1	12
R90 reduced coarse	Very coarse grade quartz sand	1	48
R20 sandy grey ware	Romano-British greywares	255	3493
Q20 sandy oxidised	Medium to coarse grade sandy orange ware	20	267
O20 sandy oxidised	Finely sanded, smooth orange ware	23	107
W20 sandy white	Fine to medium sandy white ware	3	9
Misc. slipped ware	Roughcast (clay pellets), glossy black slip	1	2
S30 Central Gaulish samian	Samian ware	23	24

Forms

- 5.2.8 The middle - late Iron Age forms are common types in the Hampshire region, all represented within the Danebury and Environs assemblage (Brown 1991). The Danebury equivalent form code is presented here prefixed by DA. Flint-tempered vessels include S-profile jars (DA JD3), barrel-shaped jars (DA JC2), high-shouldered rounded jars with bead rims (DA JC3), hemispherical bowls with bead rims (DA BC3), and the rim of a very large storage jar with out-curving rim (DA JD5). Basal sherds belonging to very large jars recovered from the fill of hollow 19 and the fills of ditches 67 and 69 probably belonged to similar vessels. A large rim, a relatively uncommon form in this fabric at Danebury, is probably of late 1st century BC date. A bead rim bowl in glauconitic sandy ware QU1 was also present, the only diagnostic sherd in this fabric.

Middle Iron Age Pit 5

- 5.2.9 On the basis of the ceramic evidence, pit 5 appears to date to the later part of the middle Iron Age (Danebury ceramic phase 7; Brown 1991). The pit produced 91 sherds (1432 g) representing a large portion of only two vessels, an S-profile jar (Fig.

4, no. 1) and a barrel-shaped jar (Fig. 4, no. 2). The sherds are in fresh condition and were clearly deliberately placed in the pit.

Hollow 19

- 5.2.10 A high mean sherd weight of 29 g for this small group of 22 sherds (634 g) reflects the presence of two large bases, one in flint-tempered ware F1 and the other in grog-tempered ware G2. A large fragment of a thick walled lid in flint-tempered ware also came from the fill of this feature. The ceramic evidence indicates a late Iron Age, probably pre-conquest date for the filling of this hollow.

Roman forms

- 5.2.11 The majority of Roman forms date to the 1st and 2nd centuries AD. A number of romanised versions of the late Iron Age bead rim jars and bowls were identified in grog-tempered and sandy greyware. These were associated with necked and necked cordoned jars, one with a carinated shoulder, in a range of sandy reduced wares, less commonly in grog-tempered wares. Two examples of Black-burnished ware flat-rimmed bowls, one with acute angular lattice decoration, date to the 2nd century. No other forms in this fabric were present.
- 5.2.12 Four body sherds in sandy orange ware (Q20) with imitation rouletted decoration in the form of vertical striations are probably local copies of butt beakers, dating to before *c* AD 80. A globular jar with crude barbotine dot decoration (Fig. 4, no.3) was recovered in small fragments from ditch 35. A fragment weighing only 2 g appears to belong to a beaker with clay pellet roughcast decoration and glossy black slip, probably a British imitation of a 2nd century continental form. Twenty small, abraded fragments of Central Gaulish samian ware, including the rims of two Drag 18/31 bowls, were recovered from the fills of ditches 10 and 69.

Roman Pit 54

- 5.2.13 This feature produced 21 sherds (232 g) of 1st-early 2nd century AD type, including three grey ware necked jars, one a 1st century AD carinated, cordoned form. A small sandy oxidised sherd with traces of a white slip is perhaps a flagon fragment.

Ditch Groups

- 5.2.14 Ditch 10 produced 73 sherds (1555 g) with a mean sherd weight of 21 g. Most of the recognisable vessels from fill 12 are flint-tempered and bead-rim jars of late Iron Age type, but small scraps of a Central Gaulish samian Drag 18/31 bowl were recovered from fill 18.
- 5.2.15 Ditch 35 contained 37 sherds (367 g) of pottery, including jar No.3, which dates to the second half of the 1st century AD, along with Roman greyware sherds. A small rim fragment from a flint-tempered hemispherical mid-late Iron Age bowl is probably residual.

- 5.2.16 Ditch 40 produced only 8 sherds (22 g), including a late Iron Age hemispherical bowl in glauconitic ware QU2. The ditch appears to have filled during the late Iron Age or early Roman period.
- 5.2.17 Ditch 58 produced only 8 sherds (96 g). The latest identifiable type is a 2nd century AD flat-rimmed bowl in Black burnished ware from fill 18.
- 5.2.18 Ditch 59 produced 53 sherds (743 g) of pottery. Two 2nd century Black burnished flat-rim bowls came from fill 55. The roughcast beaker copy came from fill 77. Fill 64 produced the decorated butt beaker copy mentioned above, along with a grey ware bead-rim bowl.
- 5.2.19 Ditch 60 produced 22 sherds (729 g) , including Black burnished ware and the single possible Devon sherd.
- 5.2.20 Ditch 67 produced the largest assemblage of any feature, 195 sherds (3534 g). Bead-rim and necked jars in sandy grey wares and grog-tempered ware were present. Fill 74 (NI) contained a complete upper portion of a bead-rim bowl and a necked bowl in identical sandy grey wares, clearly from the same production site. The complete base of a large flint tempered storage jar and fragments of a flint-tempered lid, and S-profile jar were also recovered from this fill.
- 5.2.21 Ditch 69 produced 49 sherds (805 g) of pottery. Several sherds (13 g) of Central Gaulish samian ware, including a 2nd century Drag. 18/31 rim, were recovered from fill 56, though these were most likely intrusive.

Catalogue

- 5.2.22 Fig. 4.1 Large S-profile jar with outcurving slightly internally bevelled rim, perhaps a lid seating. Fabric F1, fired to uniform dark grey. Burnished. Shallow-tooled decoration consisting of a band of horizontal lines above nested chevrons and dots. Pit 5, context 6 and 3/007.
- 5.2.23 Fig. 4.2 Barrel-shaped jar with plain rim. Fabric F1, fired to uniform dark grey. Streaky burnish. Pit 5, context 6 and 3/007.
- 5.2.24 Fig. 4.3 Fine globular jar with sharply out-turned rim. Fabric O20. Faint groove at shoulder and crudely applied thin cream coloured barbotine dots. Ditch 35, context 33/37.

5.3 **Flint by Hugo Lamdin-Whymark**

Introduction

- 5.3.1 A total of 35 struck flints and 165 pieces/1.599 kg of burnt unworked flint was recovered from the excavations. The flint assemblage dates from the middle to late Bronze Age, but the condition suggests it has been redeposited in later archaeological features. The assemblage of flint is presented in Table 3 and burnt unworked flint Table 4.

Table 3: The flint assemblage by context and category

CATEGORY TYPE	Context											Total
	3	12	18	39	42	43	47	53	55	56	72	
Flake	1	3	2	1	1	3	1		6	1	1	20
Irregular waste			1			1		1				3
Sieved Chips 10-4mm			5				2				4	11
Retouched flake			1									1
Grand Total	1	3	9	1	1	4	3	1	6	1	5	35

Table 4: Quantification of burnt unworked flint by context

Context	Total
6	13/8 g
12	38/98 g
18	26/29 g
42	2/91 g
43	24/362 g
47	10/39 g
48	2/114 g
55	28/190 g
56	3/ 152 g
64	11/510 g
72	8/6 g
Total	165/1599 g

Methodology

5.3.2 The artefacts were catalogued according to broad artefact/debitage type, general condition was noted and dating attempted where possible. Unworked burnt flint was quantified by weight and number. The assemblage was catalogued directly onto a Microsoft Access database and data manipulated in Microsoft Excel.

Raw material and condition

5.3.3 Flint, probably from a secondary source, was the raw material for the struck stone assemblage. The flint varied in colour mid to light brown to mottled mid grey. A weathered white cortex, up to 10 mm thick, was present on several flints, but others had a thin abraded cortex, perhaps indicating the presence of flint from more than one source.

5.3.4 The majority of the flint assemblage exhibited edge-damage, suggesting it was exposed for a considerable period before deposition, or has been subsequently reworked from its original place of deposition. The flint is uncorticated, but several pieces have small dark speckles from adhering iron deposits.

The assemblage

- 5.3.5 The assemblage consists of twenty flakes, eleven chips from sieved residues, three pieces of irregular waste and one edge-retouched flake. The technological attributes of the assemblage suggest it represents a broadly coherent group; so it will be considered as a whole.
- 5.3.6 The flakes are relatively thick, of squat proportions, and appear to have been struck using a hard hammer percussor, such as stone, without platform-edge preparation. The edge-retouched flake have a small area of abrupt retouch along the proximal right hand edge on the ventral surface. The flake morphology and reduction techniques reflect an unspecialised flake industry typical of the middle to late Bronze Age (cf. Pitts and Jacobi 1979; Ford 1987).

5.4 **The worked stone by Ruth Shaffrey**

- 5.4.1 A single rotary quern fragment of a slightly glauconitic Greensand was recovered from a 2nd century ditch fill (18). This stone type is not unusual for the area, occurring in small numbers at Silchester some 12k m to the north-east (Shaffrey 2003) including some contexts of the same date (Fulford 1984, 119).

5.5 **The fired clay by Cynthia Poole**

- 5.5.1 Fired clay amounting to 57 fragments, weighing 7269 g, was recovered from the excavation. All but two fragments (15 g) were found in a circular pit, partially excavated during the evaluation (Trench 3, pit 006, fill 7) and subsequently completed during the later phase of excavation (pit 5, fill 6). All the pieces from the pit are broken triangular perforated bricks. The individual objects have been fully recorded on an Excel spreadsheet, which forms part of the archive. The two non-diagnostic fragments of fired clay were found in ditches 58 and 59.
- 5.5.2 The majority of the bricks are made in the same fabric equivalent to fabric J at Danebury, Hampshire, whilst one (Fig. 5.1, No. 2) is made in a chalk tempered fabric similar to fabric C at Danebury (Poole 1984). At Oakley both contained coarse stone inclusions of flint/chert or chalk up to 30 mm size. The other fired clay fragments are made in a sandy clay fabric. The clays are probably derived from local deposits and their similarity to fabrics at Danebury reflects the access to similar geological deposits (utilising Tertiary clays or Clay-with-flints deposits) rather than implying that the objects were made at a specific production centre.
- 5.5.3 The triangular bricks were all broken and incomplete, though broadly similar in character and size. A minimum of eleven bricks have been identified. Most were well finished with even surfaces and fairly sharp corners and angles. In most cases the only surviving complete dimension was thickness, which measured 60 mm (Fig. 5.2, No. 3), 60-68 mm (No. 11), 70 mm (Fig. 5.1, No. 2), 70-75 mm (Fig. 5.3, No. 4), 75-80 mm (No. 7) and 80 mm (Fig. 5.4, No. 5) in the better preserved fragments and where estimated fell into the range 70-85 mm. Only one complete side length of *c*

150 mm (Fig. 5.1, No. 2) survived and one height (corner apex to opposite side) of 144 mm (Fig. 5.3, No. 4). In three cases sufficient of the side length survived to suggest an overall length of *c* 180-190 mm (Fig. 5.5, No. 9), 180-200 mm (No. 11) and *c* 205 mm (Fig. 5.6, No. 8). Corners were pieced by lateral perforations *c* 12-15 mm diameter often widening to *c* 17-22 mm at the surface. The bricks made in fabric J were all of a similar size and larger than the single example in fabric C (Fig. 5.1, No. 2).

- 5.5.4 These objects have traditionally been interpreted as loom weights, though firm evidence for such a function has yet to be demonstrated. Wear on the perforations from suspension (of the sort clearly visible on chalk weights) is not present: the flaring character of the perforations reflects their manufacture and is a pre-firing feature. The variation in intensity of firing of this type of object is more typical of oven or kiln furniture. Burning often occurring on one side only may reflect their use as oven lining, kerbs or floors and may account for their incomplete preservation.
- 5.5.5 At Danebury an association of the triangular bricks and fired clay from ovens was noted and it was suggested the triangular bricks may be some type of oven furniture (Poole 1995). Similar associations were also noted in the fired clay assemblage from Cadbury Castle, Somerset (Poole 2000). In support of such a theory is a note of these objects used as the lining of an early Iron Age oven at Guildford, Surrey (Lowther 1935); unfortunately the structure was demolished by workmen before any archaeological record could be made.
- 5.5.6 The type of deposits the bricks are found in may also be relevant. As at Oakley the best preserved groups are usually found in pits and may have formed special deposits deliberately placed in the pit, of the sort more commonly identified for pottery and articulated animal bone. Two partial pots from the same pit as the bricks have been identified potentially as a special deposit.
- 5.5.7 The group of triangular bricks is typical of material found throughout the Iron Age in southern Britain and in terms of function probably represents the presence in the settlement of oven type structures for domestic cooking or grain drying. Their subsequent placing in the pit may have been a deliberate act related to belief systems and structured deposition within pits, rather than casual disposal of rubbish.

Catalogue

- 5.5.8 Fig. 5.1 - No. 2: about half surviving including one complete corner and perforation 12x15 mm. *c*150 mm L, 70mm W
- 5.5.9 Fig. 5.2 - No. 3: about half surviving including one complete and three perforations, 14 and 15 mm diam. >130 mm L, 60mm W
- 5.5.10 Fig. 5.3 - No. 4: about half surviving, including one corner and three perforations, 10, 11 and 14 mm diameter; >140 mm L; 144 mm H, 70-75 mm W

- 5.5.11 Fig. 5.4 - No. 5: c. 45% surviving, including one corner and two perforations, 17 and 18 mm diam.; >130 mm L, 80mm W
- 5.5.12 Fig. 5.5 - No. 9: about a third surviving including one corner and two perforations 15 mm diam; >145 mm L, >60mm W
- 5.5.13 Fig. 5.6 - No. 8: about a third surviving including two perforations 13-18 mm diam; >180 mm L, >63mm W
- 5.5.14 Fig. 5.7 - No. 1: part of central body with two perforations 12 and 13 mm diameter surviving; >120 mm L, >137 mm H, >63mm W
- 5.5.15 Fig. 5.8 - No. 6: about a quarter surviving, including one corner and one perforation 16 mm diam; >115 mm L, >50mm W

5.6 Ceramic building material by Cynthia Poole

- 5.6.1 Five fragments (215 g) of ceramic building material were recovered from the excavation. Most pieces were modern brick and roof tile fragments, all from a buried soil layer (48). One piece of overfired Roman brick from a fill of ditch 35 may indicate reuse as part of a hearth or oven structure.

5.7 The animal bones by Lena Strid

Introduction

- 5.7.1 The animal bone assemblage can be divided into two chronological phases: Iron Age and Roman. The animal bone was recovered through hand collection during excavation and from wet sieved bulk samples (processed using 500 µm residue mesh and 250 µm flot mesh). 78.7% of the bones derive from hand-retrieved contexts, and 21.3% from sieved contexts.

Methodology

- 5.7.2 The entire bone assemblage was identified at Oxford Archaeology using a comparative skeletal reference collection, as well as published osteological books and articles. Where possible, sheep and goat were identified to species, using Boessneck *et al.* (1964) and Prummel and Frisch (1986). They were otherwise classified as 'sheep/goat'. Ribs and vertebrae, with the exception for atlas and axis, were classified by size: 'large mammal' representing cattle, horse and deer, 'medium mammal' representing sheep/goat, pig and large dog, and 'small mammal' representing small dog, cat and hare.
- 5.7.3 Modern breaks were disregarded when calculating the total number of fragments. The weight of bone fragments has been recorded in order to give an idea of their size and to facilitate an alternative means of quantification.

- 5.7.4 The condition of the bone was graded using criteria stipulated by Lyman (1996). Grade 0 being very well preserved bone and grade 5 indicating that the bone had suffered such structural and attritional damage as to make it unrecognisable.
- 5.7.5 For ageing, tooth wear was recorded using Grant's tooth wear stages (Grant 1982), and correlated with the wear rate of the mandibular M3 (Benecke 1988, in Vretemark 1997), in order to estimate an age for the animal/s.

Assemblage

- 5.7.6 The assemblage consisted of 61 fragments, of which 21 (34.4%) could be determined to species. The species present included cattle and sheep/goat. Additionally, a horse tooth was recovered from a late Iron Age/early Roman ditch. Four fragments were totally indeterminable. The rest of the indeterminable fragments consist of ribs, vertebrae and long bones, assigned to medium-sized and large mammal respectively. The bones were mainly in a fair to poor condition. One bone from the middle Iron Age assemblage showed traces of burning. The absence of butchery marks and gnaw marks is likely to be attributable to the overall rather poor condition of the bones, particularly for the late Iron Age - early Roman assemblage. Bones affected by pathological conditions were also absent, but this may just as likely be due to their relative rarity in archaeological assemblages.
- 5.7.7 Due to the small number of identifiable bones, little can be discerned regarding animal husbandry strategies at the site.

Table 5: Number of bones of all species and phases

	Middle Iron Age	Late Iron Age - Early Roman	Roman	Total	Weight
Cattle		16	4	20	142
Sheep/goat	1			1	5
Medium mammal	2			2	4
Large mammal		27	3	30	39
Indeterminate	1		3	4	1
Total	4	43	10	61	
Weight (g)	9	42	140		191

The middle Iron Age assemblage

- 5.7.8 The bone assemblage from the Middle Iron Age assemblage consisted of four bones, of which one bone, a sheep/goat metatarsal, could be determined to species.

The late Iron Age - early Roman assemblage

- 5.7.9 The bone assemblage from the late Iron Age - early Roman phase consisted of 43 bones, of which 27 cattle tooth fragments (62.8%) could be determined to species.

The fragments represented at least three teeth, which derive from sub-adult or adult individual/s.

The Roman assemblage

5.7.10 The Roman phase assemblage consisted of 10 bones. Cattle was the only species certainly identified. The single cattle remains that could be aged, derive from an adult individual.

5.8 Charred plant remains by Rachel Scales and Wendy Smith

5.8.1 Seven bulk soil samples were collected for charred plant remains from secure and well-dated archaeological features.

5.8.2 Bulk soil sampling for charred plant remains was carried out in order to establish:

- if charred plant remains (CPR) are present and of interpretable value
- if CPR are present, do they provide any information/ patterns for the way burnt material was disposed of on site
- if CPR are present, do they provide information on agricultural activities and/or the site's diet or economy
- if CPR are present, do they provide information on the surrounding environment
- if charcoal is abundant, would this provide information on fuel selection, building materials, etc.

Method

5.8.3 The volume of soil samples collected for charred plant remains was between 20–40 l. These were processed using water flotation and the resulting flot (the material that floats) was sieved to 250µm and the heavy residue (the material that does not float) was sieved to 500µm. Sample flots and heavy residues for charred plant remains were dried in a heated room at approximately 30°C. The dried heavy residues were sorted by eye for charred plant remains, along with other ecofacts (e.g. animal bone, charcoal, molluscs, etc.) and artefacts. Small quantities of CPR were noted from five of the residues (samples 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6). Animal bones, burnt clay, slag, glass, burnt flint and flint debitage were also recovered from the residues. However, this report is based entirely on the flots.

5.8.4 The samples were taken from a series of pit and ditch fills (Table 6) of Iron Age and Roman date. The authors rapidly scanned a portion of the flots for charred plant remains using a low-power binocular microscope at x15 magnification. Identifications were made during rapid scanning, without direct comparison with modern reference material and, therefore, should be seen as provisional. Nomenclature for the plant remains follows Stace (1997).

Results

5.8.5 Table 6 summarises the results for the recovery of charred plant remains. Charcoal was present in all seven samples, but was typically very small-sized (<2 mm²) and

frequently poorly preserved. The charcoal recovered does not appear to be of sufficient size to be identifiable to species level in most cases.

- 5.8.6 In general, the charred plant remains (e.g. weed seeds, cereal grains etc.) were limited. The samples were all quite similar, containing small quantities of glume wheat grains, chaff and small weed seeds (eg. *Galium* spp., *Chenopodium* spp., *Chenopodium* spp./ *Atriplex* spp. and *Rumex* spp.). The preservation of the cereal grain and chaff was particularly poor, but the presence of spelt (*Triticum spelta* L.) grain and glume bases was noted in Samples 4, 5 and 6.

Report

Table 6: Incidence of charred plant remains

Sample	Ctxt	Feature Type	Sample Volume (l.)	Date/Phase	Flot vol (ml)	Grain	chaff	weeds	Charcoal	Molluscs	Comments on CPR	CPR Potential
1	6	pit fill/ with daub	20	Middle Iron Age	10	++	+	+	+++	+	Poor seed preservation and very few seeds present. One possible cleaver (<i>Galium</i> sp.) seed, one indeterminate glume wheat (<i>Triticum dicoccum</i> Schübl./ <i>spelta</i> L.) grain and several indeterminate cereal grains observed. Weed/ wild taxa present include goosefoot (<i>Chenopodium</i> sp.) and plantain (<i>Plantago lanceolata</i> L./ <i>media</i> L.). Primarily small-sized (i.e. <i>c</i> 2mm ² or less) charcoal present.	C
2	43	ditch fill/ with animal bone	40	IA/ Roman	14	+	+	+	+++	-	Poor seed preservation. Only a few goosefoot/ orache (<i>Chenopodium</i> spp./ <i>Atriplex</i> spp.) seeds present and poorly preserved, indeterminate cereal grain and chaff. Primarily small-sized charcoal present.	C
3	12	burnt lens in ditch fill	20	IA/ Roman	15	+	-	++	+++	-	A few poorly preserved cereal grains were observed. Weed/ wild taxa included goosefoot/ orache (<i>Chenopodium</i> spp./ <i>Atriplex</i> spp.), dock (<i>Rumex</i> spp.) and small-seeded grass (POACEAE) caryopses. Primarily small-sized charcoal present.	C
4	47	ditch fill	40	Roman	11	+	++	++	+++	-	Spelt grain and chaff present, but poorly preserved. Weed/ wild taxa present include goosefoot/ orache (<i>Chenopodium</i> spp./ <i>Atriplex</i> spp.), dock (<i>Rumex</i> spp.) and small-seeded grass (POACEAE) caryopses. An unidentified thorn was also observed. Primarily small-sized charcoal present.	C
5	18	ditch fill	40	Roman	18	++	++	++	++++	-	Spelt (<i>Triticum spelta</i> L.) grain and chaff present, but poorly preserved. Several small-sized grass (POACEAE) seed present. An unidentified thorn observed. Weed/ wild taxa include goosefoot/ orache (<i>Chenopodium</i> spp./ <i>Atriplex</i> spp.), dock (<i>Rumex</i> spp.) common/ slender spike-rush (<i>Eleocharis palustris</i> (L.) Roem. & Schult./ <i>uniglumis</i> (Link) Schult.) and oat/ brome grass (<i>Avena</i> spp./ <i>Bromus</i> spp.). Small-sized	C/B

Report

Sample	Ctxt	Feature Type	Sample Volume (l.)	Date/Phase	Flot vol (ml)	Grain	chaff	weeds	Charcoal	Molluscs	Comments on CPR	CPR Potential
											charcoal present.	
6	55	ditch fill	30	Roman	10	+	++	++	+++		Spelt (<i>Triticum spelta</i> L.) grain and chaff present. Small-sized grass (POACEAE) caryopses and an eyebright/ bartsia (<i>Euphrasia</i> spp./ <i>Odontites</i> spp.) seed observed. Primarily small-sized charcoal present.	C
7	72	ditch fill	30	Roman	11	+	+	++	+++	-	Poorly preserved cereal grain and indeterminate wheat (<i>Triticum</i> sp.) chaff present. A few goosefoot/ orache (<i>Chenopodium</i> spp./ <i>Atriplex</i> spp.) seeds observed. Primarily small-sized charcoal present.	C

Key: + = < 10 items, ++ = 10 – 50 items, +++ = 50 – 100 items, ++++ > 100 items. CPR Potential scores: A** = extremely rich sample with > 1000 identifications, A* = rich sample with > 500 identifications, A = rich sample with 300 – 500 items, B = sample with between 100 to 300 identifiable items, usually closer to 100 and C = sample with < 50 items. Y = yes, N = No and ? indicates doubt. Shaded rows indicate those samples selected for full analysis or potentially for full analysis.

Potential

- 5.8.7 The majority of assemblages have only produced a small quantity of charred plant remains (<50 identifiable items in most cases) and an extremely limited range of taxa. Van der Veen and Fieller (1982) have strongly argued that assemblages of <100 identifications are unlikely to be of interpretable value. The limited range of charred plant remains recovered from Rectory Road seem unlikely to contribute further to our understanding of plant use at Iron Age/ Roman sites in this relatively well-studied region of southern England.

6 DISCUSSION

- 6.1.1 The evaluation demonstrated that the northern part of the development site had been truncated by ploughing. It is possible, therefore, that evidence for structures, such as postholes or shallow gullies, had been removed within this area. However, the evidence revealed within the excavation area suggests that it is more likely that any settlement focus lay to the south.
- 6.1.2 The excavation revealed a middle Iron Age finds rich pit. The pit contained 91 sherds of pottery, largely from two vessels, and at least 11 loom weights or pieces of oven furniture. The finds appeared to have been deliberately deposited and were sealed by a sterile deposit of redeposited natural. 'Special' deposits placed at the bottoms of pits may have formed spiritual or religious offerings, to bless and support everyday activities, or to propitiate the gods when things went wrong; the deposits may have been laid as part of a private act or on behalf of the whole community (Lambrick and Allen 2004, 488-489). Large quantities of possible loom weights were also recovered from Brighton Hill South (Rees in Fasham and Keevill 1995, 47) and from Park Farm, Binfield (Roberts 1995, 122). However, it is also possible that the fired clay bricks formed part of an oven (see Poole above).
- 6.1.3 Six boundary ditches were observed within the site, representing the redefinition of a boundary dating from the late Iron Age or the early Roman period, to the 3rd century AD. The ditches may have defined a boundary between a settlement to the south and east, and a field system to the north. The unusually finds rich fills of the ditches and pits suggest that an associated settlement, possibly a farmstead, lay very close by. The settlement may have extended to the Old Farmhouse on Hill Road, *c* 100 m to the south, where a large amount of Roman pottery was recovered during an archaeological watching brief at the site (Scott Wilson 2006a).
- 6.1.4 Small mixed-economy farmsteads are common in the south-east of England and any settlement associated with the boundary ditches and pits may have resembled the settlements seen within the Danebury Environs Programme, such as Suddern Farm, Middle Wallop where the early Roman enclosure ditches also appeared to be fence lined (Cunliffe and Poole 2000a, 202). Nettlebank Copse, Wherwell (Cunliffe and Poole 2000b) and Houghton Down, Stockbridge (Cunliffe and Poole 2000c); or those sites seen at Brighton Hill South (Coe and Newman 1992; Fasham and Keevill, 1995) or Park Farm, Binfield (Roberts 1995).
- 6.1.5 The cultivation soils overlying the features indicate that the site would have had an agricultural function in the late Roman period, following the possible abandonment of the settlement.
- 6.1.6 The site lies close to the medieval centre of East Oakley (Scott Wilson Ltd), and the lack of evidence for medieval settlement from the site is surprising. The site is shown to lie within a field on the 1st edition OS map (1872), and it is likely that this was true in the medieval period. Any activity associated with properties would have been

located further to the south-east, fronting the centre of the village. The lack of medieval finds within the cultivation soils indicates that the field may have been used for pasture at this time.

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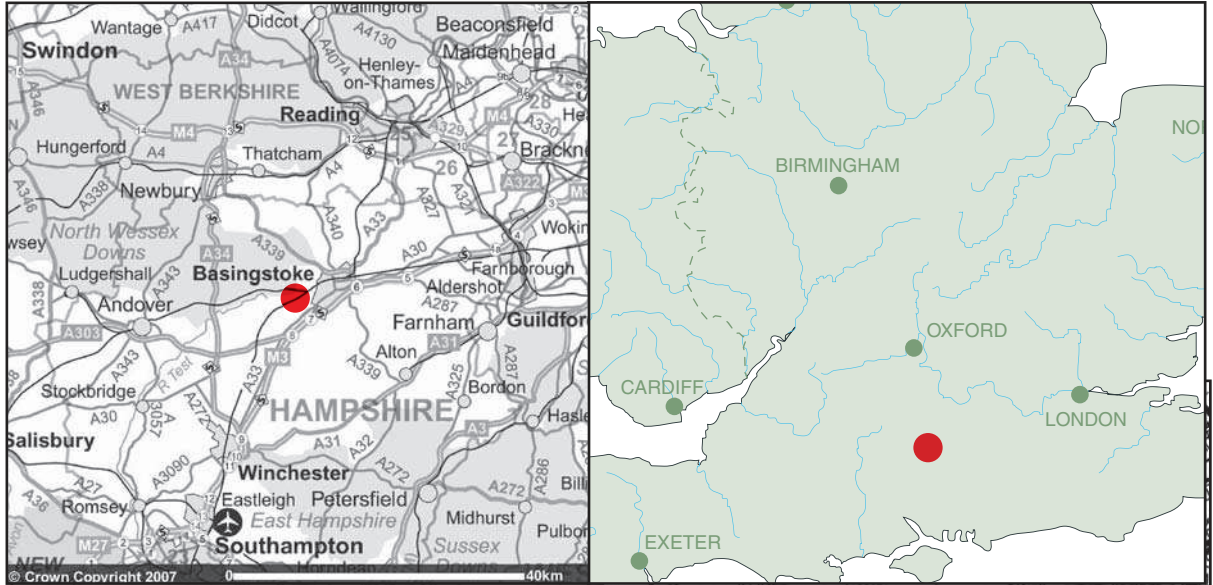
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Figure 1: Site location

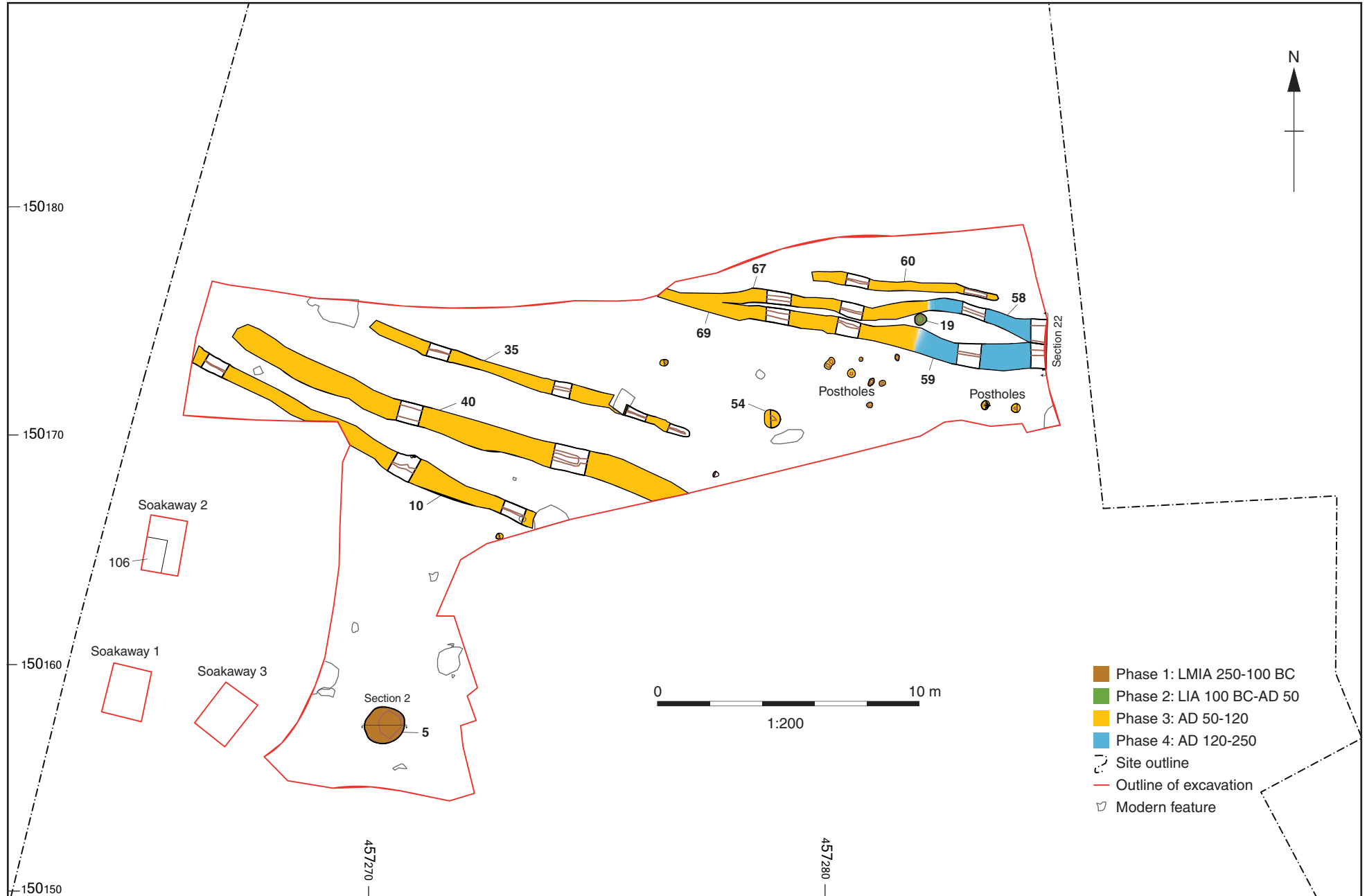
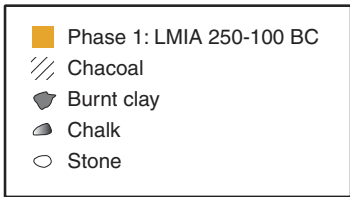
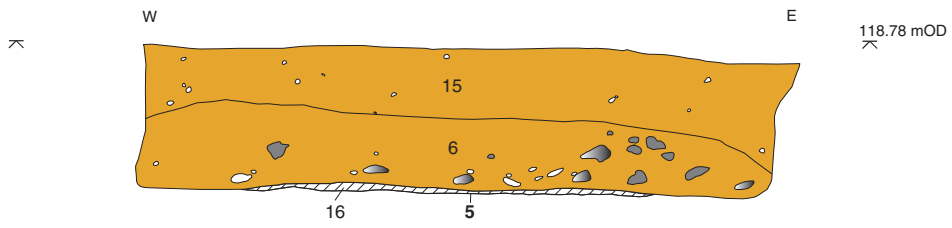


Figure 2: Site plan

Section 2



Section 22

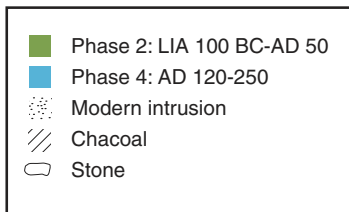
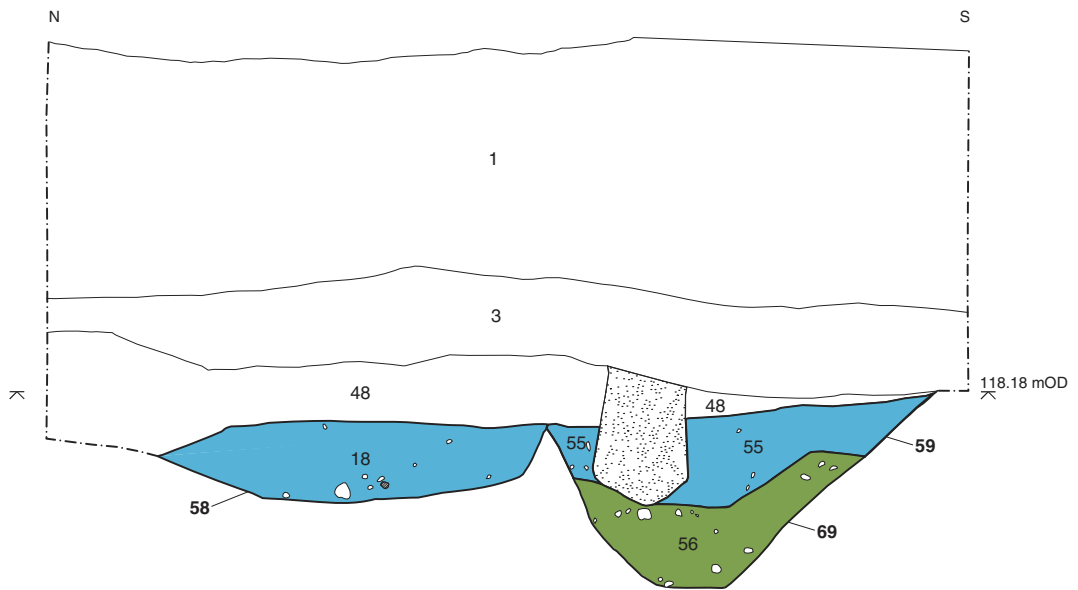


Figure 3: Sections

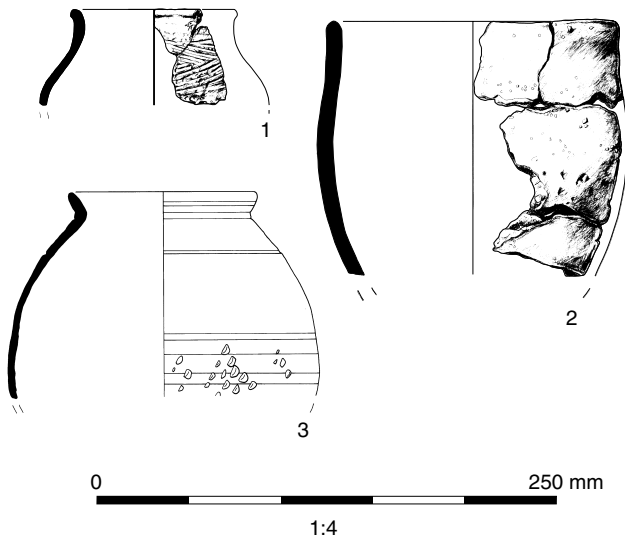


Fig 4: Pottery



5.1
no 2



5.2
no 3



5.3
no 4



5.4
no 5



5.5
no 9



5.6
no 8



5.7
no 1



5.8
no 6



Figure 5: Triangular perforated bricks from pit 5