

EXCAVATIONS AT A MULTI-PERIOD SITE NEAR CAMS HILL SCHOOL, FAREHAM, HAMPSHIRE: GERMANIC INFLUENCE ON THE LATE ROMAN HAMPSHIRE COAST?

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ABSTRACT

An excavation was conducted by AOC Archaeology Group on land near Cams Hill School at the corner of Portchester Road and Shearwater Avenue, Fareham. The earliest evidence of activity on the site was a few stray finds of Neolithic worked flint tools and waste flakes. Three small middle Bronze Age pits appear to be the remnants of cremation burials or ritual funerary deposits. In the late Iron Age a series of field boundaries and post-built timber structures were established on the site. This field system appears to have remained with little change until the late Roman period when it was replaced by a much smaller enclosure at the northern end of the site. As well as a number of working hollows, a sunken-featured building of possible 'Germanic-style' was recorded in the late Roman phase. Throughout the late Iron Age and Roman periods the lack of domestic structures on the site suggest the main focus of the settlement was located elsewhere. The presence of demolition debris from some of the features of this date suggests that there may have been a Roman masonry building nearby. The late Roman pottery assemblage included handmade grog-tempered 'wasters', suggesting pottery manufacture on or near the site. Sparse evidence of early Saxon activity was recorded but the focus of activity appears to have shifted away from the site at the end of the Roman period.

INTRODUCTION

This report gives the results of an archaeological excavation by AOC Archaeology Group prior to the redevelopment of land between Fareham and Portchester, just to the east of Cams Hill School, and bounded to the north by Portches-

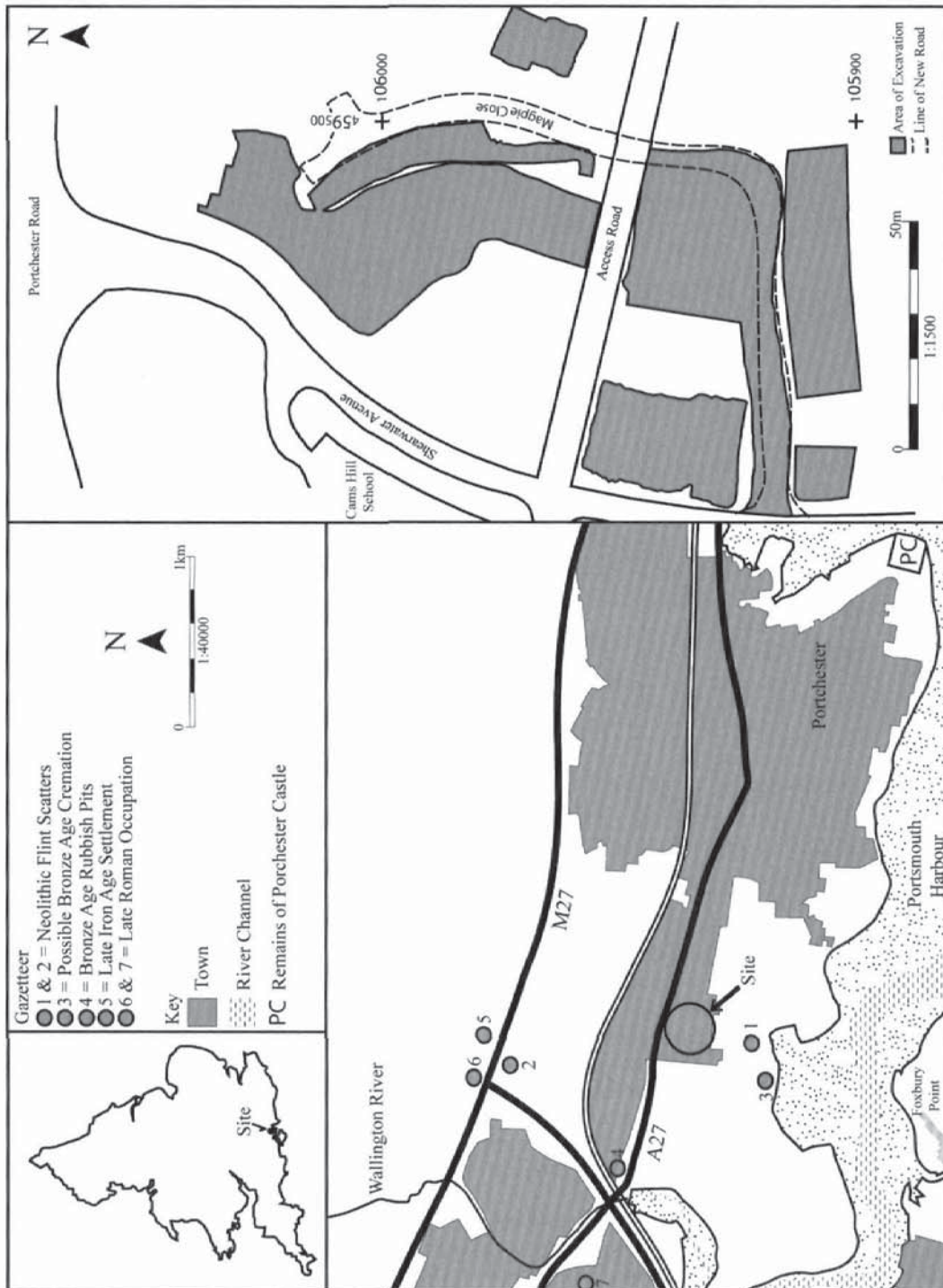
ter Road and to the west by Shearwater Avenue (SU 5947 0596; Fig. 1). The excavations took place intermittently between March 1999 and January 2000. Initially an evaluation consisting of 15 hand excavated test pits was undertaken, while a second stage of works was a watching brief to monitor topsoil stripping and record any archaeological features present. A total of nine areas were investigated during the course of the watching brief (AOC Archaeology 2000), which covered the footprint of the building development as well as work in advance of a new access road. The site is now a housing estate, named Magpie, Goldcrest, Partridge and Peacock Closes. The site code is FSA99, and the archive is deposited with Hampshire Museum and Archives Service as A1999.5.

Geology and topography

The site is located on a roughly level peninsula of the coastal plain, approximately 13 m above Ordnance Datum, and about 0.5 km north of the head of Portsmouth Harbour where it meets the estuary of the Wallington River. It lies on Coombe Deposits with brickearth over terrace gravels, which overlie the Reading Beds formation.

Archaeological sites and findspots in the Cams Hill area

A summary of the principal archaeological sites and findspots in the vicinity of the site is shown on Fig. 1. Neolithic activity in the area is limited to scatters of flints to the north and south of the site. Bronze Age features include a pit containing pottery and burnt flint, possibly



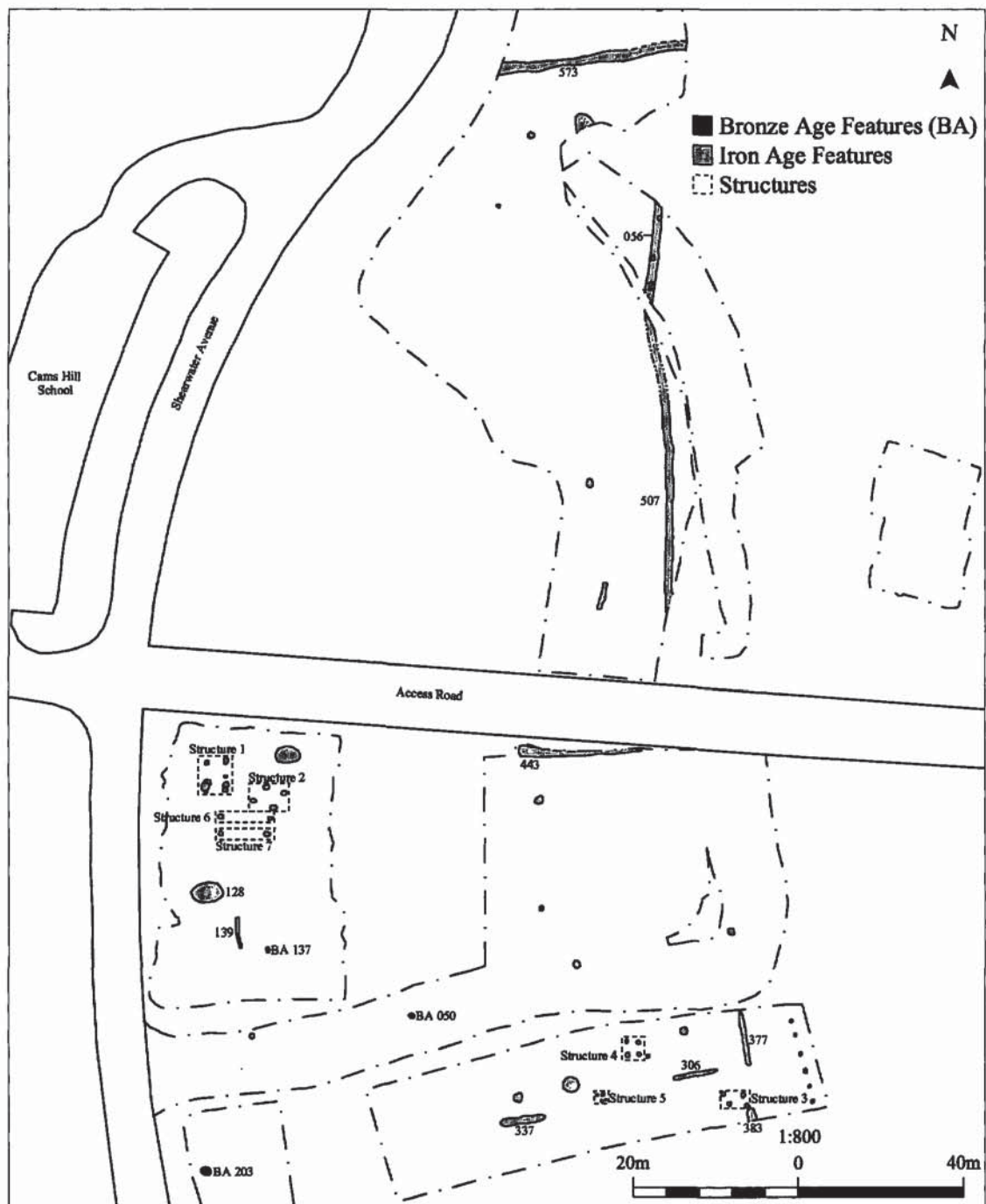


Fig. 2 Plan of Bronze Age and Iron Age features

a cremation, and rubbish pits containing an arrowhead and pottery which may relate to a Bronze Age settlement. Iron Age activity is better represented by a settlement of ditched enclosures and round houses located 1 km to the north of the site (Hughes 1974). Excavations targeted on rectangular crop marks in this area confirmed a late Iron Age date (HCC 1981, 10; HCC 1983, 3).

The most significant settlement of Roman date in the immediate area is Portchester Castle (Cunliffe 1975). The fort at Portchester was established in the late third century as part of a system of coastal defences, now called the 'Saxon Shore Forts,' intended to protect the country against Saxon raids from the continent. A late Roman settlement was also established in what is now the centre of Fareham. Evidence is limited but 4th century pottery has been identified in pits and ditches on the High Street (Hassall *et al.* 1977, 418) and the Crown Offices site (Holmes 1975) along with other surface finds in the area. Surfaces and hearths of a similar date were also recorded during the construction of the M27 motorway in 1973 (Frere & Tomlin 1991, 288).

The Saxon occupation of Portchester Castle is well documented (Cunliffe 1976). Due to the difficulty of dating early Anglo-Saxon artefacts, it is not possible to say with any certainty whether Portchester Castle was occupied continuously or if it was briefly abandoned at the end of the Roman period.

THE SITE

Following the initial evaluation a watching brief was conducted during the removal of topsoil from the development area. Seven phases were identified, including a phase for undated features.

Phase 1: the Neolithic (4500 – 2300 BC)

Neolithic activity on site was represented solely by residual worked flint. A total of 83 pieces were recovered from various features during the excavation and the abraded nature of much

of this material confirmed the pattern of post depositional disturbance.

Of the retouched forms only one, a chisel arrowhead, is dated to the mid to late Neolithic in terms of typology. The other forms such as serrated and retouched flakes and a large scrapper are, on the whole, consistent with this date, a date supported by the technological traits evident within the rest of the assemblage.

The assemblage is dominated by debitage, with only a handful of retouched forms. Flakes constitute a high proportion of the debitage, two multi-platform cores and one partially prepared discoidal core were recovered from the site. Two further fragments of cores were also recovered, at least one of which is a discoidal type. Overall the assemblage suggests domestic activity occurring on or near to the site in the Neolithic period.

Phase 2: the middle Bronze Age (1600 – 1100BC) (Fig. 2)

Middle Bronze Age pottery was recovered from three pits, all in the southwest area of the site. A late Roman pit contained a single residual Bronze Age base sherd, made from a sandy fabric tempered with flint. The pottery recovered from within the other three cuts all appears to be in-situ, deliberately placed material. The pottery from two of the features is very similar in form, consisting of fragments of the base and lower walls of what appear to be a middle Bronze Age barrel, or more likely, bucket urns.

Pit cut [050] contained a burnt deposit and a large proportion of fire cracked flint. It also contained two large fragments from the lower walls of a relatively large, thick-walled Deverel Rimbury bucket or barrel urn. The pottery was of a coarse, flint-tempered fabric with an oxidised reddish or yellowish brown exterior. The upper portion of the vessel appears to have been truncated, probably by ploughing. However, the absence of the base of the vessel suggests it was deliberately buried with the base already missing. The good condition of the pottery, with little sign of abrasion, is consistent with rapid, deliberate burial of the vessel.

Pit cut [137] contained 54 sherds of identical coarse, flint-tempered pottery. Again the sherds were mostly from the lower walls of a vessel, but included a small proportion of the outer base circumference. Several of the body fragments retained traces of a charred residue on the interior. A single fragment of burnt bone was also recovered from the feature. All the sherds recovered from this pit appear to be from the same vessel, although edge damage precluded cross-context re-fitting. The broken urn was deliberately buried, possibly in two separate events.

Slightly to the south pit [203] contained a Bronze Age pottery assemblage quite different in character to those described above. The assemblage consisted of 52 sherds in variable conditions which are derived from at least seven vessels. These are made from six different fabrics, four of which are represented by featured sherds dating to the end of the middle Bronze Age. The assemblage included a tub-shaped vessel made from a coarse flint and sand tempered fabric with prominent traces of vertical finger-smearing on the exterior. The sherds are in fresh condition or show light abrasion and one of the rim fragments retains traces of charred food residue. A second vessel with a similar profile and surface treatment, but in a finer flint and sand-tempered fabric, is represented by a single rim sherd. Seven additional body and base fragments in an identical fabric were also present. The base profiles indicate that these are derived from at least two different vessels. One of the bases has very common flint grits of up to 2mm in size on the exterior, which is a characteristic more typical of the late Bronze Age. A final vessel is represented by a tiny rim fragment made from a fine sand and flint tempered fabric. The only other diagnostic sherd is made from a sandy fabric tempered with has a pinched-out horizontal cord and charred food residue inside.

Phase 3: late Iron Age (200BC – AD43) (Fig. 2)

A lack of evidence for late Bronze Age or early Iron Age activity suggests an occupational hiatus, with the site unused for half a millen-

nium. By the final quarter of the Iron Age, at some point after 200BC, there is evidence for the establishment of an agricultural enclosure system and associated structures and storage pits.

Northern enclosure

An enclosure was established in the northern half of the site, defined by N-S ditches [507] and [056] and E-W ditches [443] and [573]. The primary fill of ditch [443] contained a fragment of a clay loomweight and a small pottery assemblage. The pottery from these ditches is dated to the first or second centuries BC, indicating that the enclosure was established towards the end of the Iron Age. A single piece of human bone was retrieved from ditch [443]. The bone is residual and its inclusion in the ditch fill appears to be accidental. Human bone was not necessarily regarded with reverence and is commonly found among occupation debris within Iron Age settlements (Cunliffe 1993, 195). As well as a fragment of loomweight, ditch [443] also contained animal bones which show signs of weathering, suggesting that the ditch was open for a considerable period of time. Three postholes cut in to the top of ditch [056] show that it fell out of use and was replaced with a fence line at some point in the late Iron Age.

Southern enclosures

Directly to south of ditch [443], using this ditch as its northern boundary, was a second, less well-defined enclosure. The eastern side of this enclosure appears to have moved slightly through the Iron Age period. Ditches [377] and [383] are orientated N-S and aligned with the eastern edge of the northern enclosure. To the east of these ditches a fence line consisting of six sub-circular postholes had an identical north-south alignment. There is no stratigraphic relationship between the ditches and the fence, and the pottery is of a similar late Iron Age date. However, the fact a fence line replaced the north-south ditch [056] in the northern enclosure suggests that a similar change may have occurred here as well. An incomplete east-west boundary is represented

by gullies [306] and [337], suggesting a third enclosure extended to the south of the investigation area. Gully [137] contained a number of sherds of Iron Age pottery. The only evidence of a western boundary in this area is a shallow, poorly defined, linear feature [139]. It is possible that this represents a hedge line, however extensive truncation by ploughing make interpretation difficult.

Iron Age structures

Several four-post structures are associated with the late Iron Age occupation of the site. These are relatively common features on Iron Age sites and are often interpreted as grain stores, attesting to the agricultural nature of the site. Structures 1 and 2 were located on the western side of the site. The southern side of Structure 1 showed signs of repair or alteration. Structures 3, 4 and 5 were located in the south-eastern corner of the site, and contained pottery of late Iron Age date, contemporary with pottery recovered from Structure 1. Most of the four post structures measured between 2.00m and 3.00m across. Structure 5 was however considerably smaller than the other four, measuring 0.75m by 0.50m, possibly indicating a different function to the other post structures on the site. Directly to the south of Structures 1 and 2 were two pairs of posts with a parallel east-west alignment, recorded as Structures 6 and 7. This type of two-post alignment is another common feature of Iron Age sites and is often interpreted as some form of drying frame.

Other late Iron Age features

To the south of Structures 1 and 2 a clay-lined feature [128] was probably used as a storage pit. This contained fragments of late Iron Age bead-rim jars decorated with a row of impressed dots above a horizontal line. To the north of Structures 1 and 2 a second large pit was filled with a dark ashy silt which contained burnt flint and charcoal. A pit adjacent to Structure 5 was similar in appearance and also contained a charcoal and burnt flint. A smaller fire pit was recorded in the centre of the site. Several other cut features contained late Iron Age pottery, however their function was unclear.

These included three small shallow pits in the southern half of the site, a larger pit at the northern end of the site and small gully in the centre of the site. Several isolated postholes contained pottery dated to the late Iron Age; however the lack of associated postholes or structures makes interpretation problematic.

Phase 4: early Roman (AD43 – 250) (Fig. 3)

Northern enclosure

Following the Roman occupation of Britain the site layout, established in the late Iron Age, appears to have changed little. The northern boundary ditch [573] was re-cut as ditch [576] at some point in the second half of the first century. The re-cut ditch contained three fragments of a very corroded bow brooch with a hinged pin, dated to the mid 1st century AD. Ditch [058] replaced ditch [056] on an identical north-south orientation but 3.00m to the east. Ditch [443] appears to have been maintained throughout the early Roman period, demarking the southern extent of the northern enclosure, as Roman pottery was recovered from the upper fills of the ditch. Boundary ditch [529] defined the western limit of the enclosure for the first time. This ditch contained a number of sherds of residual Iron Age pottery as well as early Roman wares. It is possible that the ditch is in fact a re-cut of an earlier Iron Age feature that it entirely truncated. Two ditches, [703] and [705], to the east of the northern enclosure were dated to the early Roman period by the pottery they contained and may represent a trackway or droveway.

Southern enclosure

The poorly defined southern enclosures of the late Iron Age were replaced in the early Roman period by a single enclosure defined by a series of boundary ditches. The eastern boundary consisted of north-south orientated ditches [030] and [374], the northern extent of ditch [030] had been heavily truncated. The southern part of the ditch was re-cut during this phase as [380], which had a terminus at the northern end. The eastern boundary of the enclosure was defined by ditches [452] and

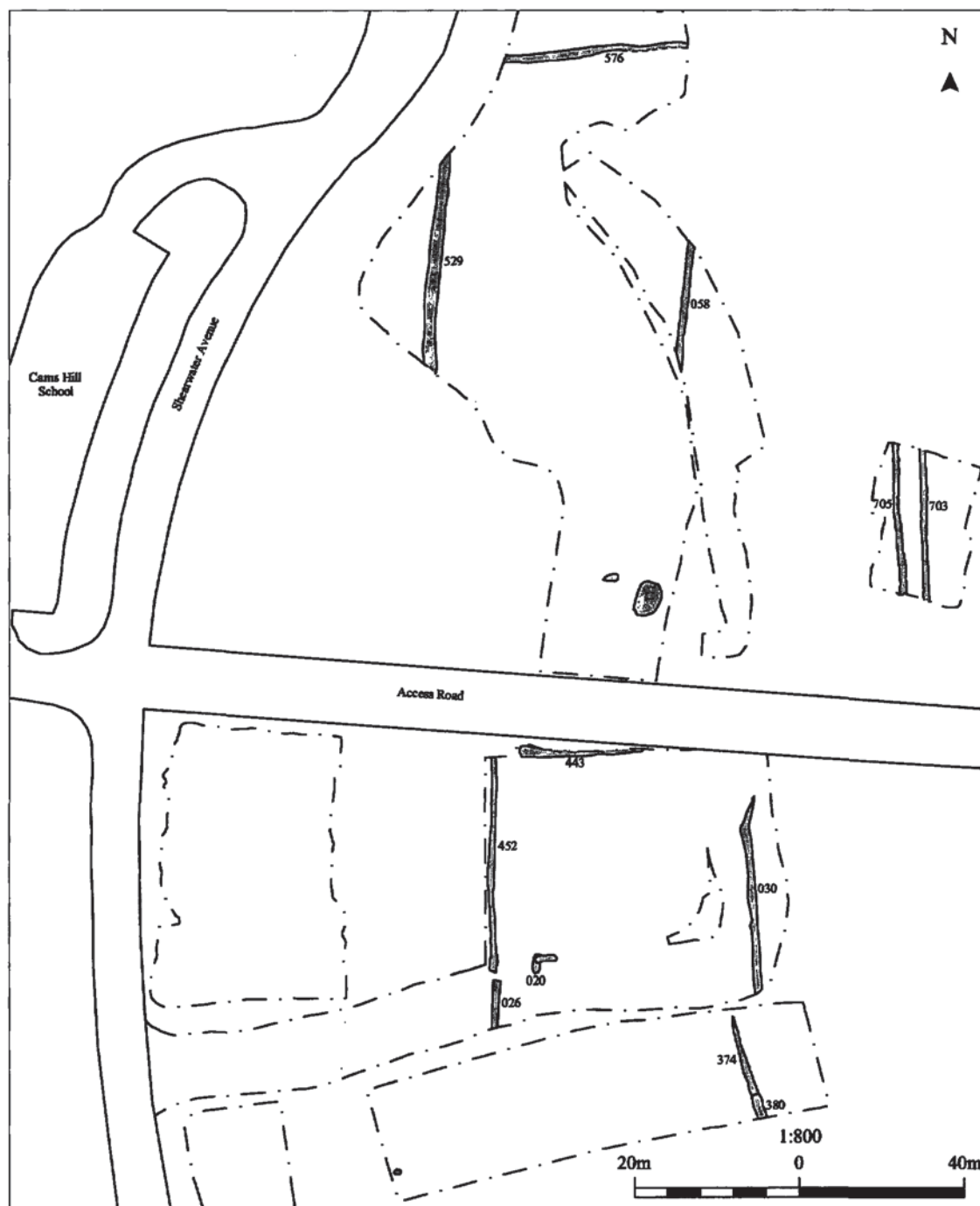


Fig. 3 Plan of early Roman features

[026]. The northerly of these ditches contained two semi-complete vessels; a central Gaulish Samian bowl and a jar in grey Rowlands Castle ware, both indicating a date in the latter half of the 2nd century AD. No southern boundary to the enclosure was recorded, suggesting that it continued to the south beyond the boundaries of the site.

Although the southern enclosure is better defined and enlarged in the early Roman period, the boundary ditches are still less substantial than those to the north. While possibly related to greater truncation to the south, this may represent a different function of the southern enclosure. Two small ditches within the southern enclosure may represent the truncated remains of internal divisions within the southern enclosure. Both ditches contained small quantities of briquetage, normally associated with the salt industry. Salt production is known to have existed along this stretch of coast, however there is no evidence of salt production on the site.

Other early Roman features

A large pit in the centre of the site measured 4.00m by 3.00m. It was cut through the glacial deposits and into the bedrock chalk. The feature was filled with a mixed silt deposit which contained domestic refuse. The size of the feature and the lack of any lining suggest it may have originally been a quarry pit which was reused as a rubbish pit. Two other much smaller pits contained a number of sherds of pottery dating to the early Roman period, however their function was unclear. Pit [020] contained small quantities of briquetage, as did the southern terminus of ditch [452]. A single posthole at the southern end of the site contained second century pottery, however no relationship to other posts or structures could be established.

Phase 5: late Roman (AD250 – 410) (Fig. 4)

Boundary ditches

By the mid 3rd century much of the enclosure system that characterised the preceding Iron Age and early Roman periods appears to have

largely gone out of use, although the western edge of the earlier southern enclosure appears to have been redefined in this period. At the northern end of the site a small rectilinear enclosure was defined by a shallow gully measuring 0.30m across and under 0.20m deep. Extending beyond the limit of excavation this would have enclosed area measuring at least 10.00m by 19.00m. Too small to contain livestock, the function of the enclosure is unclear however it certainly represents a specific activity area.

An antler pick was recovered from ditch [068], consisting of a shed antler the base of which had been sawn and the tip worn. This appears to be contemporary with the late Roman pottery recovered from this feature.

Sunken-featured building (Fig. 5)

A sunken-featured building (Structure 8) represents the most complex structure recorded on the site. This structure is of considerable interest as the pottery associated with it dates to the mid-4th century, giving an unusually early date for this type of building. The initial cut [662] was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 5.00m by 3.00m with a sub-circular depression in the centre. Postholes [664] and [665] were observed in the two opposing corners of the building that were excavated. These were filled with crushed chalk in a light brown silt matrix, which probably represents post packing, and suggest the original posts may have been removed and the building dismantled.

The cut was lined with a coarsely-built flint wall (656) and the space in between the walls and the cut was backfilled with a mixture of crushed chalk and silt (658). Burnt re-deposited gravel (661) within the central depression may represent the remains of a hearth. This was sealed by a deposit of pale brown crushed chalk and silt (654) that formed the makeup for the remains of a thin beaten clay floor (653). At some point after the construction of Structure 8 an additional flint feature (655) was added to the centre of the building. The function of this feature is unclear however it may be a hearth as it was associated with a deposit of burnt flint (657). An additional makeup of crushed chalk

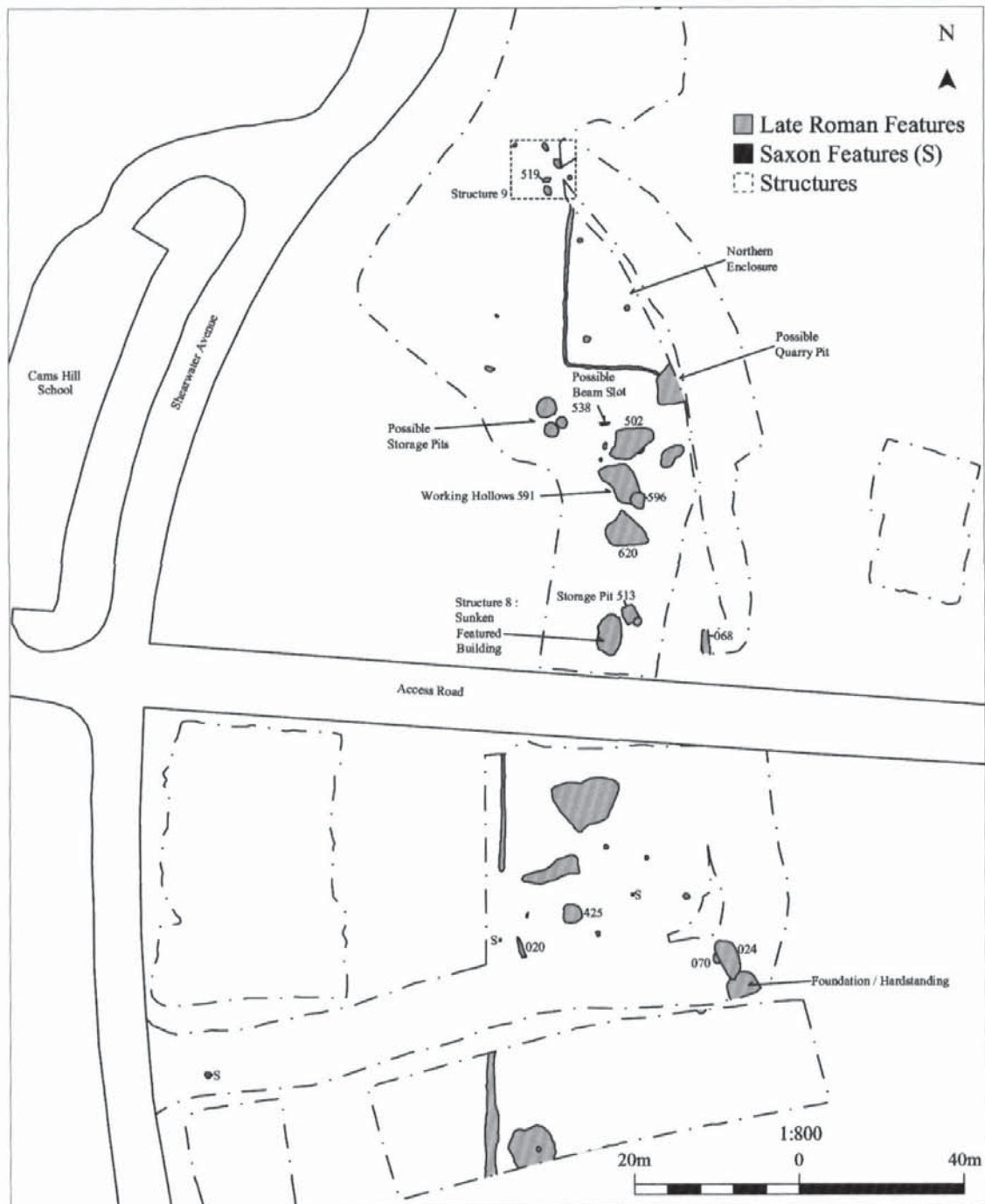


Fig. 4 Plan of late Roman and Saxon features

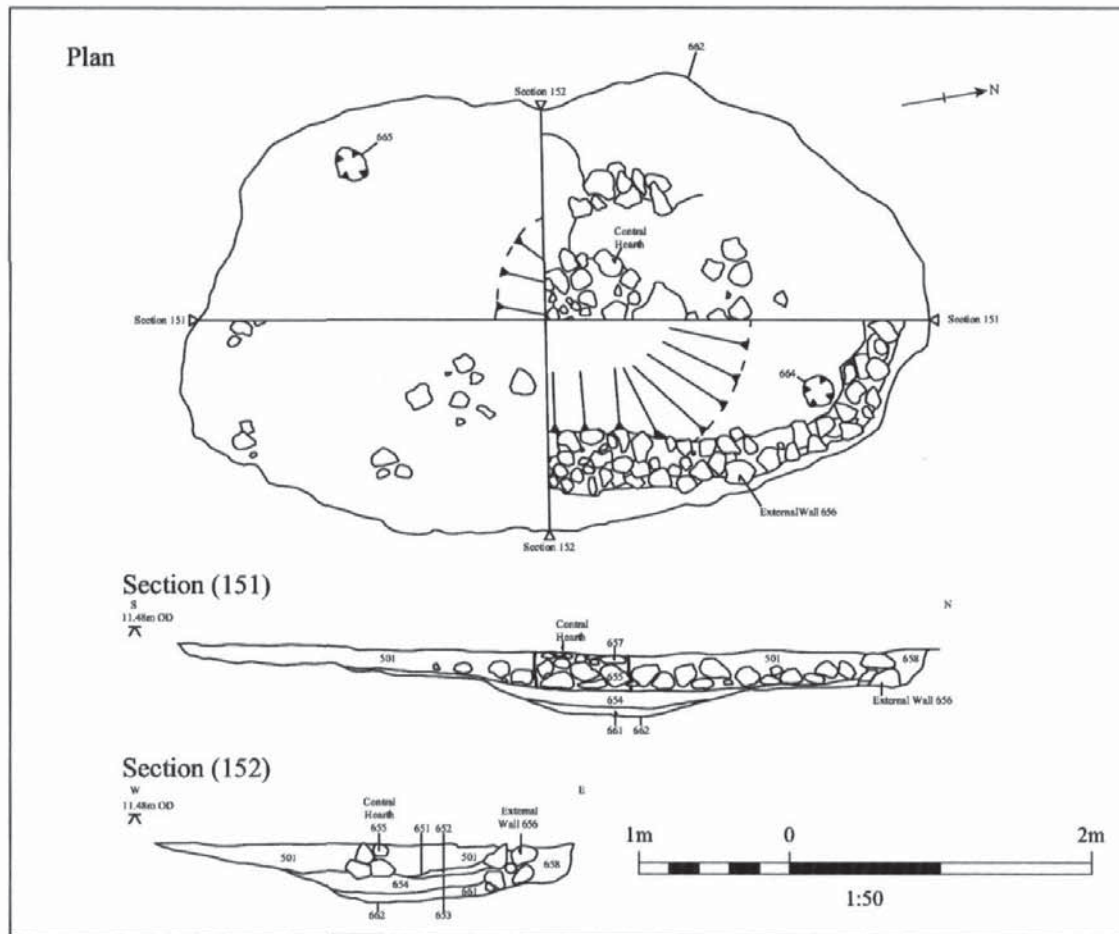


Fig. 5 Plan and sections of sunken-featured building

and silt (652), which contained an iron key, and a second beaten clay floor (651) post-date its construction. The whole structure was sealed by a dark grey accumulation of silts (501).

The fills of Structure 8 contained 4th century pottery and a number of animal bones, predominantly cow, many of which showed signs of butchery. Samples from both the fill of the building and the internal surfaces contained limited quantities of cereal grains.

Other possible structural remains

At the northern end of site a group of flint-packed postholes was associated with a single

post pad to form Structure 9. The shape and function of this structure is not clear, however these postholes contained a number of pottery sherds all dated to the late 3rd and 4th centuries, most of which were of the same New Forest greyware. Fragments of a Roman razor were also recovered from posthole [519] (Fig. 10.5). In the south-east corner of site a sub-rectangular shaped cut was filled with a compact silty clay that contained a high proportion of large flint nodules. It is possible that this feature was some form of foundation or hard standing, possibly intended to act as a working platform. A small gully [538] in the centre of

the site contained late Roman pottery and may be the remnants of a beam slot.

Working hollows

Several working hollows were identified to the north of Structure 8. The most northern of these comprised a shallow irregular cut [502] which measured 3.70m by 2.80m and 0.10m deep. The base of the cut was lined with a compacted mid red brown clayey silt probably intended to act as a working surface. The feature was filled with a dark grey brown silty clay which contained 4th century New Forest pottery, however the majority of the pottery consisted of Hampshire Grog-tempered wares. The fill of the hollow also contained animal bone and a post-medieval iron knife, which is thought to be intrusive. A small cut to the south-east appears to be an addition to the south eastern side of the working hollow. To the south a second larger working hollow consisted of a similar irregular shallow cut [620]. This measured 4.50m by 4.00m and was filled with a dark greyish brown silt containing a similar assemblage of pottery, bone and a whetstone. New Forest Greywares again dominated the pottery assemblage however it also included a significant quantity of similar Hampshire Grog-Tempered wares. A large irregular spread of mid grey brown sandy silt (591) may represent an accumulation of material associated with activity around these working hollows. This layer was cut by a shallow irregular feature [596], this may be a third working hollow, though considerably smaller and less well defined than the two described above.

The exact function of these working hollows is not clear, however they clearly represent activity areas. It is possible that the hollows were associated with lightweight structures that were not archaeologically visible. The pottery assemblages from [502] and [620] includes Hampshire grog-tempered sherds which are grossly over-fired and bloated, some have soil fused, all of which indicate they are 'wasters' not accidentally re-fired sherds. The presence of such wasters indicates the manufacture of this pottery at or near the site.

Storage pits

Directly to the north-east of Structure 8 was a sub-circular, pit [513], lined with a mottled light yellowish grey sandy clay (561) (Fig. 6). Circular depressions in the corners of the cut, surrounded by large flint cobbles, appear to represent corner posts and associated stone packing. In the base of the pit a marked overhang of the clay lining suggests a timber structure was set into the bottom of the pit. This may have taken the form of a floor and boarded sides held in place by vertical corner posts. The pit was filled with a primary fill of dark brownish black silt (512) sealed by dark greyish brown clayey silt (511). Both fills contained a range of Roman pottery dated to the late 3rd and 4th centuries. The feature appears to be a well constructed storage pit, probably intended to store grain, and is probably associated with Structure 8. A small pit truncating the south east corner contained post-packing, including a reused

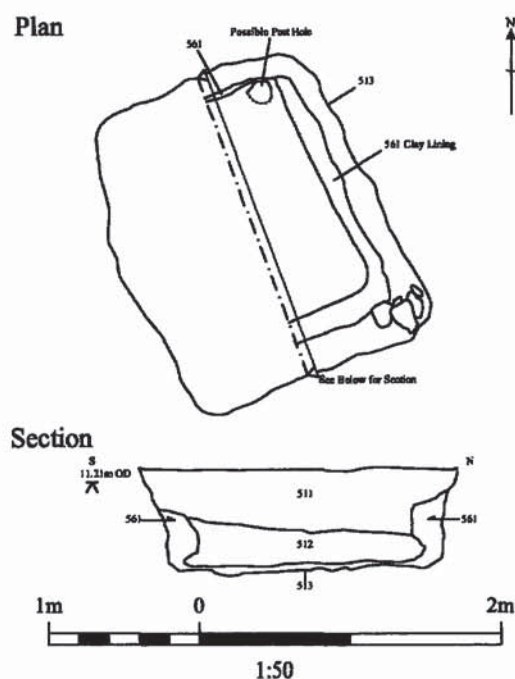


Fig. 6 Plan and section of Roman storage pit (513)

quern stone, and may represent a repair to the internal structure of the pit.

The interpretation of this feature as a grain storage pit is further supported by the analysis of the charred plant remains recovered from its primary fill. The pit contained a relatively large quantity of charred botanical remains with virtually equal quantities of cereal grains and chaff as well as a smaller quantity of weed seeds. The presence of chaff fragments in a storage pit is not unusual because cereals could have been stored in their husks to protect the grains from insect infestation and fungus. The weed seeds consisted mainly of grasses and included the large grass seed brome; this is often found in stored Roman grain deposits because as it is a similar size to cereal grains it is difficult to remove. The assemblage represents the residues from an almost fully processed crop however the presence of smaller weed seeds suggests some mixing of residues from different activities.

A group of three sub-circular clay-lined pits located in the northern half of the site may also have originally been storage pits which were re-used as rubbish pits once abandoned.

Other late Roman features

Two pits were cut into the fill of the Iron Age enclosure ditch. The most northern of these was a large irregular steep-sided cut possibly dug as a quarry pit. This pit also truncated the small rectilinear enclosure, indicating that the enclosure had fallen out of use at some point during this phase of occupation. The original function of an irregularly-shaped pit directly to the south is unclear, however it appears to have been used as a rubbish pit.

In the south-east corner of site a small truncated sub-circular pit [070] contained fragments of a hooked bladed knife with of socketed handle, possibly a pruning knife (Fig. 10.6). A large oval pit [024], perhaps originally a quarry pit, cut this feature. This pit was filled with a number of deposits including dumps of demolition debris derived from a masonry structure. It contained 4th century pottery as well as a number of iron objects including door fittings and an iron jacketed lead weight (Fig.

10.1–4), all of which may have been collected during the demolition of a Roman building, possibly to be recycled. The pit also contained Roman roof tile and fragments of worked stone door threshold. The quantity of demolition debris contained within the pit suggests there may have been a Roman building to the south or east of the site, demolished towards the end of the Roman period.

A shallow circular feature [425] contained late Roman pottery including a strainer in a black grog tempered fabric. Several other shallow pits and a number of postholes were spread across the site with no clear pattern, most contained late Roman pottery. In addition a coin dated to the reign of Magnentius (AD 350–351), a radiate from the mid to late 3rd century and a poorly preserved coin dated the 1st to 3rd centuries were recovered from the postholes.

Phase 6: early Saxon (410 – 600) (Fig. 4)

Early Saxon activity on the site was sparse and consisted of three sub-circular postholes in the southern half of the site. The postholes are on an east west alignment and may represent a single fence line. The posts contained low quantities of Saxon pottery.

Phase 7: undated archaeological features

A number of features encountered during the excavation could not be phased as a result of either a lack of reliable dating evidence. These mainly consisted of a number of postholes which were distributed across the site with no discernable pattern. In addition several small pit cuts, all of indeterminate function, remain undated. Several limited areas of burning may represent the truncated remains of fire pits or hearths.

THE FINDS

The Bronze Age pottery by Frances Raymond

A small assemblage of Bronze Age pottery comprising 109 sherds, weighing 1561 grams, was

recovered from the site. With the exception of a single sherd from (053) the Bronze Age pottery was derived from three pits in the south-western part of the site (050, 137, and 203). Two of the features (050 and 137) contained the remains of large Deverel Rimbury urns, likely to represent funerary deposits, while the third (203) incorporated fragments from at least seven vessels.

The fabrics

Eight middle Bronze Age fabrics were identified, all apart from the ware from 053 which is hard fabric (FS/6). A restricted range of inclusions comprising crushed burnt flint, mica, sand and iron minerals are represented, all of which would have been available locally. The iron minerals and mica are almost certainly natural components of the clay being exploited, but it is not possible to determine whether the sand was a deliberate addition. By contrast, the crushed burnt flint would have been added as tempering and, as is typical of the period, occurs in moderate to abundant amounts.

The majority of inclusions in each of the wares are evenly distributed apart from the flint in FfeS/1, FS/2, FS/4 and FS/5 which has a tendency to cluster. The proportions and size ranges of the inclusions in each of the wares is presented in Table 1.

Iron Age, Roman and Saxon pottery by Malcolm Lyne

The site yielded 2526 sherds of post-Bronze Age pottery, ranging in date from the middle Iron Age to Saxon period, with an emphasis on the late Iron Age and Roman periods. The assemblages from selected features are described below.

Structure 8 (sunken-featured building)

This contained 53 sherds of fourth century pottery including rim sherds from a New Forest purple-colour-coated beaker of Fulford (1975a) Type 30 (c. AD 325–400) and an Alice Holt dish of Lyne and Jefferies (1979) Type 6A.13 (c. 370–400), as well as a fragment from a jar in buff Overwey/Portchester D fabric (c. 330–400+).

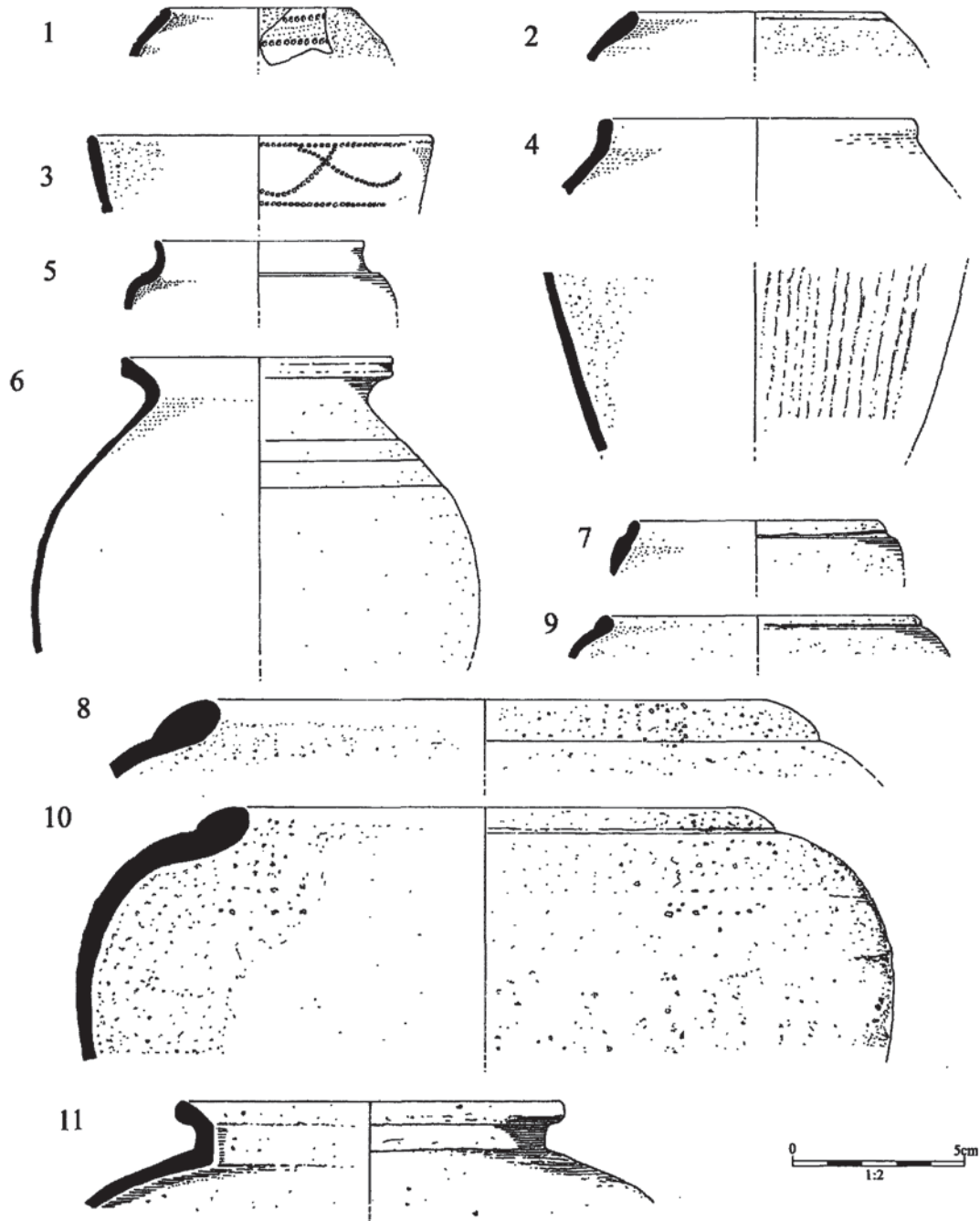
The presence of a large Vectis ware jar sherd from one of the last products of that industry (c. 270–330) and sherds from two New Forest red-colour-coated dishes of Fulford (1975a) Type 67 (c. 300–370) suggests that this occupation may have commenced somewhat nearer AD 300. More than half of the sherds (58%) are from New Forest products and most of the rest (34%) from Hampshire Grog-Tempered ware vessels.

Working hollow 502

The 78 sherds of pottery from this feature suggest an early 4th century date and are dominated by Hampshire Grog-tempered ware (67%). Some of this material comes from a grossly-bloated waster, indicating production of these wares in the immediate vicinity. These sherds also include 14 oxidised fragments from an everted-rim storage-jar of Lyne (1994) Type 6A.27 (c. 250–370). The New Forest material makes up a further 32% of the assemblage and included a developed beaded-and-flanged greyware bowl of Portchester (Fulford 1975b) Type 85.3 with internal black slip (Fig. 9.19) dated 270–400, a jar of Portchester (Fulford 1975b) Type 133.1 in New Forest Greyware (Fig. 9.20), and a New Forest Purple Colour-coat beaker of Fulford (1975a) Type 27.14 (Fig. 9.21) dated 270–340.

Working hollow 620

The 64 sherds of pottery from this feature have a marked predominance of New Forest Greywares (67%) but no colour-coat wares from the same source. The greywares include a developed-beaded-and-flanged bowl of Portchester (Fulford 1975b) Type 85.4 with black surface slip (c. 260–400), a similarly slipped straight-sided dish and a jar of Type 137 with smooth surfaces (c. 260–325). The presence of four fragments from BB1 vessels, a sherd from a Rowlands Castle carinated-bowl (c. 100–200) and three fragments from Central Gaulish Samian vessels (c. 120–200), coupled with the poor showing of Hampshire Grog-Tempered wares (12%), indicates a probable late-third-century date. The BB1 sherds include fragments from a straight-sided



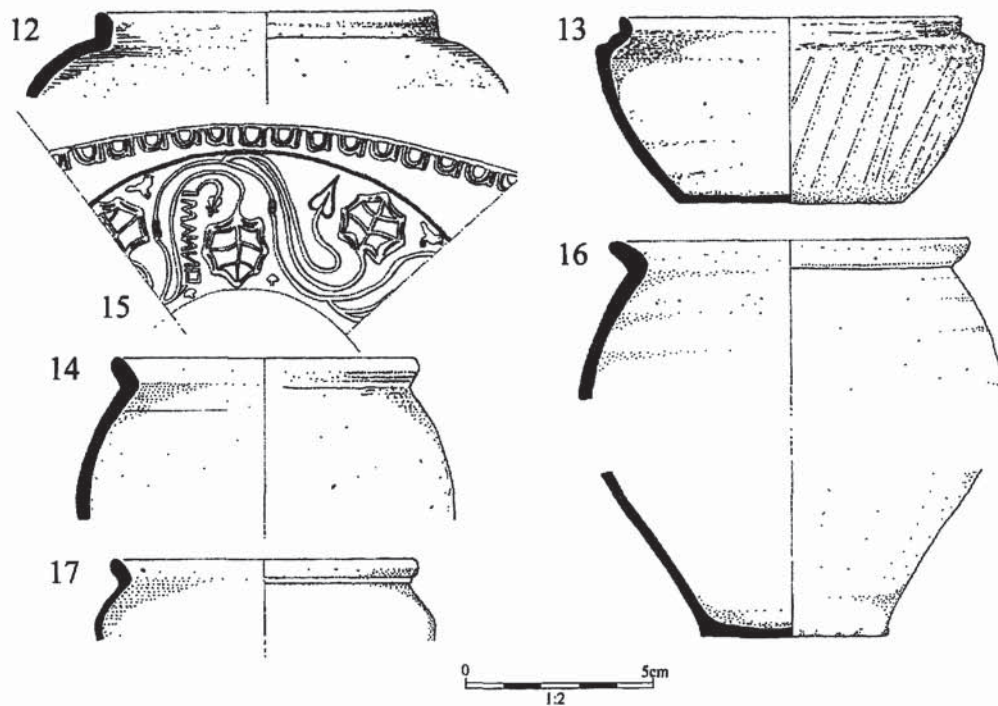


Fig. 8 (above) Pottery from early Roman features

Ditch Cut 529: 12: Bead-rim jar in polished soot-soaked patchy brown black fabric IAR.3. 13: Carinated bead-rim bowl of Fishbourne type 221 in tournetted Rowlands Castle greyware fabric IAR.15a. 14: Jar with stubby everted rim in Rowlands Castle greyware fabric fired grey.

Ditch Cut 452: 15: Central Gaulish Samian Dr. 37 bowl with retrograde CINNAMIS stamp within decoration. 16: Jar with stubby everted rim in polished grey Rowlands Castle fabric IAR.15a. 17: Pear shaped jar with semi-carinated shoulder in Rowlands Castle fabric IAR.15a.

Fig. 7 (left) Pottery from Iron Age features

Pit 128: 1: Bead-rim jar in polished grey-black fabric decorated with a row of impressed dots above horizontal lines MIA.1. 2: Bead-rim jar in soapy black fabric MIA.3

Ditch Cut 443: 3: Saucepan pot in soot-soaked fabric with overall polish and impressed dot decoration MIA.1

Ditch Cut 507: 4: Slack-profiled bead-rim jar in polished black fabric and vertical rippling on the body MIA.1.

Gully 337: 5: Necked and cordoned bowl in polished buff/black fabric IAR.4b.

Fills of 380: 6: Everted rim jar in patchy black/grey Rowlands Castle fabric IAR.15c. 7: Small bead-rim jar in friable grey fabric IAR.4b. 8: Bead-rim storage jar in handmade reddish-brown fabric IAR.2.

Gully 377: 9: Bead rim jar in friable soot-soaked fabric with polished exterior IAR.4a. 10: Bead-rim storage jar in patchy brown/grey fabric IAR.11. 11: Bead-rim storage jar in patchy brown/grey fabric IAR.11.

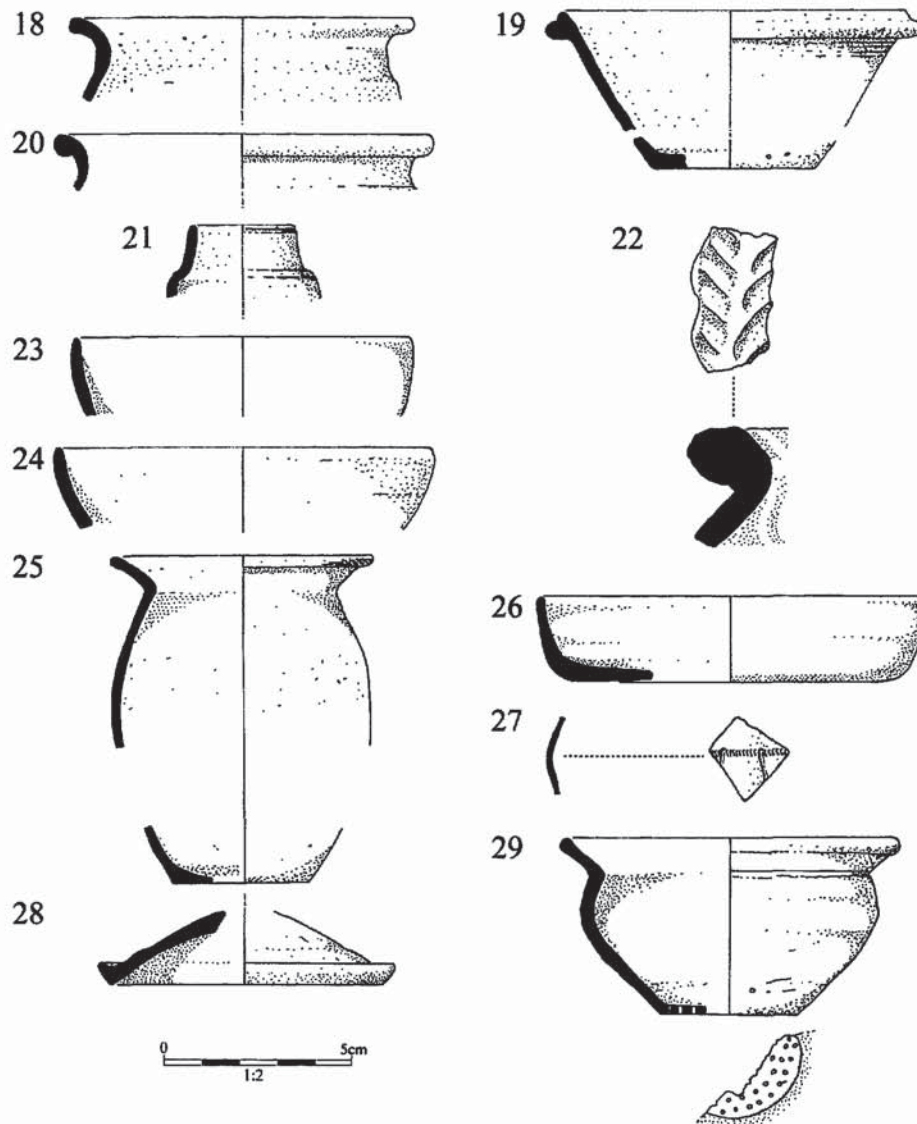


Fig. 9 Pottery from late Roman features

Fill of Working Hollow 620: 18: Slack-profiled jar with everted rim in grey fabric IAR.19b.

Fill of Working Hollow 502: 19: Developed beaded-and-flanged greyware bowl of Portchester type 85.3 with internal black slip. 20: Jar of Portchester type 133.1 in New Forest greyware. 21: New Forest purple colour-coat beaker of Fulford type 27.14.

Fill of Structure 8: 22: Storage jar in oxidised grog-tempered fabric with finger-impressed rim. 23: Straight-sided dish in black grog-tempered fabric. 24: Convex-sided dish in black grog-tempered fabric.

Fill of Cully 538: 25: Imitation BB1 cooking pot in patchy brown-black fabric. 26: Straight-sided dish in fired rough grey fabric. 27: Fragments from a thin-walled Moselkeramik beaker with slit indentations. 28: Lid of Fulford type 23.2 (1975A) in grey New Forest fabric.

Fill of Pit 425: 29: Strainer in polished black grog-tempered ware fabric.

Table 1 The proportions and size ranges of the inclusions in the middle Bronze Age wares

<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Flint</i>		<i>Iron Minerals</i>		<i>Mica</i>		<i>Sand</i>	
	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Size (mm)</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Size (mm)</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Size (mm)</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Size (mm)</i>
Ffe/1	abundant	up to 4	sparse	<0.1–1.0	–	–	–	–
FfeS/1	moderate	up to 3	moderate	<0.1–0.3	rare	<0.1	common	<0.1–0.25
FS/1	abundant	up to 10	rare	<0.1	rare	<0.1	sparse	<0.1
FS/2	moderate	up to 7	rare	<0.1	–	–	common	0.25–1.0
FS/3	moderate	up to 2	–	–	–	–	abundant	0.25–0.5
FS/4	common	up to 4	–	–	rare	<0.1	common	<0.1
FS/5	common	up to 4	–	–	rare	<0.1	common	<0.1
FS/6	moderate	up to 4	–	–	–	–	common	0.25–1.0

dish (c. 220–350+), a developed-beaded-and-flanged bowl (c. 270–350), an everted-rim cooking-pot (c. 180–270) and a slack-profiled jar with everted rim in grey fabric fired yellow-grey (Fig. 9.18).

The worked flint by Philippa Bradley

Eighty-three pieces of worked flint were recovered from various contexts from the excavation. Diagnostic retouched forms indicate a mid-late Neolithic date for at least some of the material, and the general technological traits of the remainder would confirm this dating.

The flint was generally quite worn and abraded with later edge damage suggesting that much of it was not recovered from primary contexts. Very little of the material was burnt but many pieces were broken, again indicating post-depositional disturbance.

The material is dominated by debitage with a few retouched forms, a chisel arrowhead is the only datable piece in terms of typology. The other retouched forms, serrated and retouched flakes, scarpers and a rod/fabricator are all generally consistent with the mid to late Neolithic date that the arrowhead provides.

Cores from the site consist of two multi-

platform examples, a partially prepared discoidal core and two core fragments, one of which is from a discoidal core. Discoidal cores tend to be more common in later Neolithic assemblages.

The coins by Kim Stabler

Three Roman coins were recovered, all from stratified deposits. Only coin 1 was in a sufficient state of preservation to allow for confident identification, the two others being too poorly preserved to allow for precise dating.

Coin 1 (context 403) dates to the reign of Magnentius, AD 350–351.

Coin 2 (context 540) is probably a radiate from the mid to late 3rd century.

Coin 3 (context 564) is of a size and weight that could place it from the 1st to 3rd centuries, and given the extreme state of wear, may be residual.

The metalwork by Angela Wardle

A small assemblage of metal objects was recovered from the site. The only copper-alloy object was a residual hinged bow brooch dated to the middle part of the 1st century AD.

The iron is comparatively well preserved,

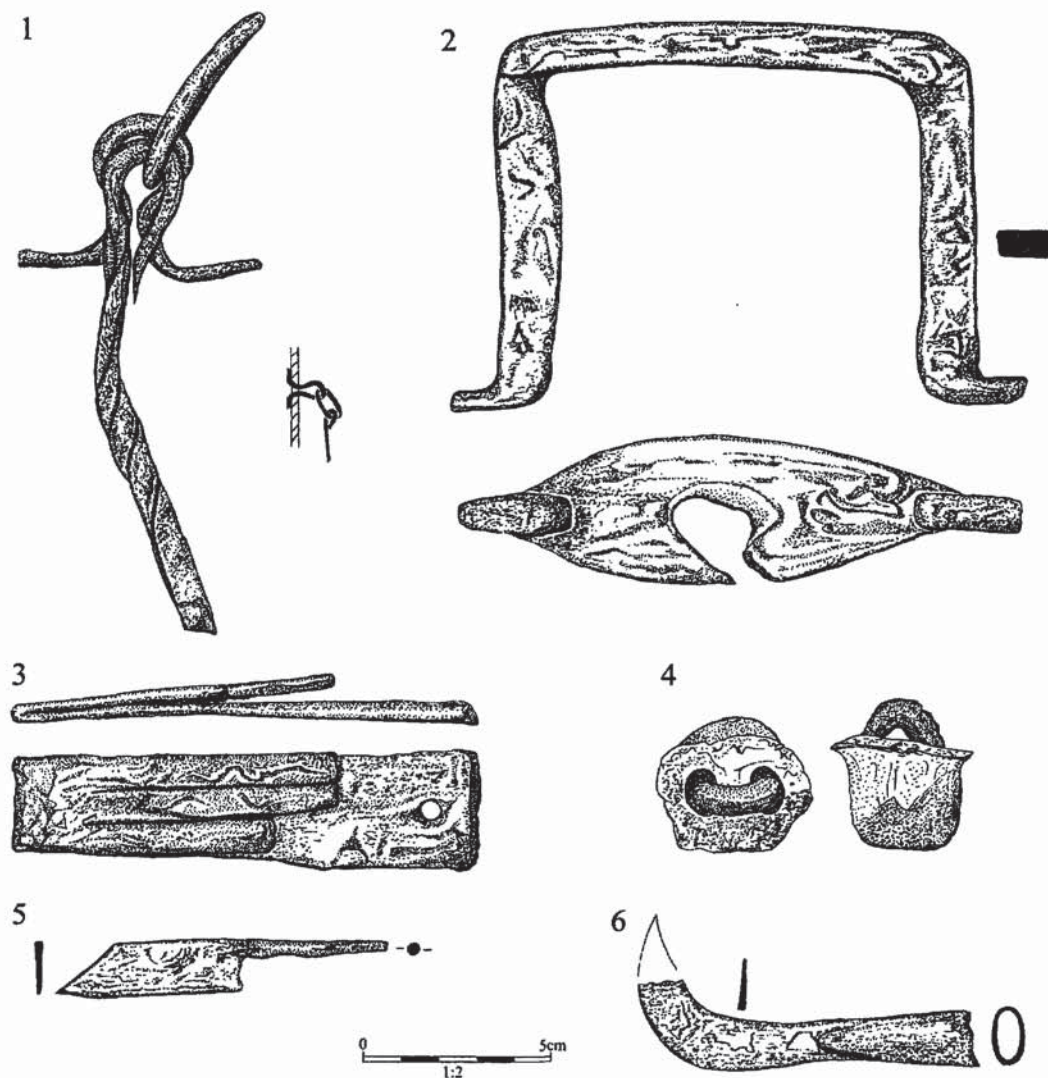


Fig. 10 Late Roman metalwork

Fill of Pit 024: 1: Iron Fitting. Complex fitting comprising an oval iron ring to which is attached a double spiked loop.

2: Iron Fitting. Stout oval plate with a rectangular sectioned arm rising from each end. 3: Iron Lock Bolt. Rectangular plate with three springs on one face and a circular perforation at the upper end. 4: Iron and Lead Weight. Crudely-made, roughly cylindrical lump of lead with an irregular flange at the top and a loop of iron inserted into the upper surface.

Fill of Posthole 519: 5: Iron Knife. Two joining fragments of a parallel-sided knife or razor, with straight cutting edge.

Fill of Pit 070: 6: Iron Knife: Fragment of curved blade with trace of socketed handle.

particularly the iron fittings, lock and weight recovered from pit [076] (Fig. 10.1–4). All appear to be from a demolished building in the vicinity. The function of two of the fittings is uncertain, although one was clearly affixed to a wooden object, perhaps a beam or plank and could be part of a hook arrangement. A sprung lock bolt is a type used on large chests. Nails and strapping were also found. The group may be from a single building but it is also possible that the ironwork was collected for future recycling.

Three iron knives were recovered from the site. One has a hooked blade and may be a small pruning knife (Fig. 10.6). One is a Roman type (Fig. 10.5) and one post-medieval. A very corroded fragment of Roman key was recovered from the floor make up with in the sunken-featured building (structure 8).

The botanical remains by John Giorgi

Cereals were well represented in the Roman period by grains, chaff fragments and cereal coleoptiles. The overwhelming majority of the identifiable grains belonged to wheat with a significantly smaller amount of barley and oats. Spelt wheat appears to be the main wheat grain used during the Roman period on rural and urban sites throughout the country (Grieg 1991). The low quantities of barley found on the site are less typical. Oat grains are usually only found in low numbers in Romano-British deposits and probably represent cereal weeds rather than crops on the site. In the Roman period documentary evidence suggests that oats were better known in their wild form. The cereal grains may have been used for bread, porridge, gruel and cakes. Spelt wheat, the main cereal on the site, was used for a gruel, known as *puls* or *pulmentus*, which was roasted, pounded, and cooked in water to make a porridge, similar to Italian polenta. Free-threshing wheat may have been used for making light leavened Roman bread known as *artophites*.

The presence of small weed seeds, from the earlier stages of crop processing, suggests that the site was a farmstead cultivating its own crops. Wheat was probably used exclusively for human food while barley would have been the

favoured grain for brewing. The low quantities of barley on site, and the fact no sprouted cereal grains were recovered, suggests brewing was not occurring on site. Barley was also used for animal fodder, particularly for horses, and the lack of barley may indicate arable based agriculture.

DISCUSSION

Phase 1: the Neolithic (4500 – 2300 BC)

No Neolithic features were identified on the site but a small assemblage of residual lithic material of this date was recovered. The few dateable artefacts indicate a mid to late Neolithic date and it is likely the entire assemblage dates to this period. This nature of the worked flint assemblage suggests domestic activity. It is likely a range of activities were being carried out on, or close to, the site. These would have included hide and food preparation and knapping. There is no obvious clustering of lithic finds that would suggest specific activity areas.

The Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) records two similar scatters of Neolithic flints to the north and south of the site (Fig. 1). Evidence of Neolithic occupation in Hampshire is sparse and flint concentrations such as this are often the only indication of Neolithic activity.

Phase 2: the Bronze Age (2300–700BC)

The three features identified as of Bronze Age date all appear to be of a ritual nature, probably relating to funerary activity. Two of the Bronze Age features appear to have contained deliberately broken vessels, possibly with parts of the same vessels buried at different times. The final pit contained a relatively large number of sherds derived from at least seven vessels.

The placement of incomplete vessels or sherds as part of the funerary ritual is reminiscent of similar practices elsewhere in southern England (Barrett, Bradley & Green 1991, 174, 216–219). In Hampshire, this mode of deposition seems to have taken place during the middle Bronze Age at Daneshill, Basingstoke

(Millett & Schadla-Hall 1991, 91), but is illustrated most clearly at Kimpton near Andover, where slabs of pottery, not necessarily accompanying a cremation, were placed below flint cairns (Dacre & Ellison 1981, 159–165). The absence of all but the outer circumference of the base of the vessel or vessels is also paralleled at Kimpton, where most of the early middle Bronze Age urns lacked bases (*ibid.*, 159–162). It was suggested that this may have occurred during funerary practices involving the removal of hot pyre material into other urns selected for burial (*ibid.*, 162).

The presence of Bronze Age funerary activity on the site suggests a Bronze Age settlement in the vicinity. A Bronze Age pit containing pottery and burnt flint 0.5 km to the south-west of the site suggests that the burial activity continues in this direction. It has been suggested that downland cemeteries of this period are normally situated close to occupation sites (Bradley 1981). Therefore rubbish pits containing a Bronze Age arrowhead and pottery less than 1 km to the west may relate to a contemporary settlement.

Phase 3: late Iron Age (200BC – AD43)

In the late Iron Age period, a field system was established that remained little changed throughout the next four centuries. A well-defined northern enclosure is delineated by a series of ditches. A less well-defined southern enclosure consists of smaller ditches and a fence line. A series of two and four post structures may be interpreted as granaries or drying racks. While there is no evidence that the site was occupied these types of features suggest that there was a settlement close to the site.

Although not fully understood, Iron Age society in Hampshire appears to have undergone radical changes in the centuries leading up to the Roman invasion. Changes to society are seen in the restructuring of other hillforts, with a number falling out of use (Cunliffe 1996, 29). Around 100BC further dislocation occurs with the old hillfort-centred settlement pattern giving way to new defended settlements, and at this time complex systems of ditched enclosures are also established

(*ibid.*). The creation of the field system on this site may therefore be seen against a backdrop of change across the region.

A series of four and two post structures (Structures 1–5) were identified associated with the late Iron Age field system. These are traditionally identified as granaries, however as P J Fasham (1985, 127) points out at Winnall Down ‘this most utilitarian pattern of postholes... could easily be used as a chicken coop, an animal pen, a small shed or a support for logs.’ Whatever the purpose of these structures their function was probably linked to the agricultural nature of the site.

Structures 6 and 7 consisted of a thin rectangular area defined by two pairs of posts on a parallel east-west alignment. These have been interpreted as drying frames, however with little supporting evidence or clear parallels this interpretation remains tentative. A number of pits of Iron Age date were identified including a clay-lined storage pit, possible fire pits as well as several other pits of unclear function.

The late Iron Age remains are part of a well-developed agricultural landscape, utilising the lowland gravel terraces of the Wallington River. The fertile soils of the coastal plain are favoured for settlements in this period. Such locations were well-suited to an economy based on wheat and barley and provided rough grassland and woodland for the grazing of cattle, sheep and pigs (Pile 1989, 113). Approximately 1 km to the north of the site, at Wallington Military Road on Portsdown, is a mid-late Iron Age settlement, with at least three round houses, pits and enclosure ditches (Hughes 1974). This would fit with the established model of a well populated Iron Age landscape, dominated by small nucleated groups of round houses surrounded by farmland. It is likely that there could have been similar round houses close to the Cams Hill site. The location of the site under 1 km from Portsmouth Harbour may also be significant, with the potential for trade that the Channel offered and the presence of imported ‘Belgic’ wares can be seen as precursor for later contact with the continent.

Excavations of an Iron Age enclosure at Danebury Road, Basingstoke (Howell & Durden 2005) identified a number of enclosure ditches, pits and postholes not dissimilar to the features recorded at Cams Hill. A late Iron Age field system was established on both sites, although neither contained direct evidence of occupation. At Danebury Road the presence of slag and loom weights suggest a more specialised use of the enclosures, beyond stock control. There is little evidence of such specialisation in the late Iron Age at Cams Hill, however changes in the later Roman period may indicate a more varied use of the site.

Phase 4: early Roman (AD43 – 250)

Continuity of use can be seen through the late Iron Age and early Roman Periods and the field system established at the end of the Iron Age continues to be used. Superficially at least, the beginning of the Roman period made little difference to the inhabitants of this site.

A similar sequence from the Iron Age into the Roman period is common in the region's rural sites, e.g. Winnall Down, Hampshire (Fasham 1985) and Gussage All Saints, Dorset (Cunliffe 1993). This pattern is clearly seen at Cams Hill with some of the field boundaries containing late Iron Age pottery in their primary fills and early Roman pottery in the later fills.

The presence of small quantities of briquetage in the termini of two early Roman ditches, [452] and [020], pit [074] and a single posthole may suggest salt production was occurring near the site. Salt production is known to have taken place on the Hampshire coast from prehistoric times and trade in salt is well known (Bradley 1975). The limited quantities of briquetage recovered suggest the use of salt, possibly in food preparation or preservation, as opposed to salt production on site.

There is little change to the site in the early Roman period, suggesting limited changes to the local economy. The lack of a sizeable settlement or villa in the vicinity of the Cams Hill site, except perhaps for the possible 'small town' at Wickham to the north of Portsdown Hill, may mean there was a limited market available, and the site continued to be predom-

inantly oriented towards subsistence rather than surplus production.

Phase 5: late Roman (AD250 – 410)

The late Roman period sees a dramatic change to the site. Much of field system fell out of use and was replaced by a much smaller enclosure at the northern end of the site. A number of feature types were recorded in this phase of activity, suggesting a wider range of activities were being undertaken on site.

The changes seen on site in this period appear to coincide with the introduction of a system of coastal defences in the 3rd century. The construction of Portchester Castle would have had a huge impact on the economy of the area, creating a demand for a wide range goods and services. The expansion of Roman influence in the area, along with a presumed increase in population, can also be seen by the establishment of a Roman settlement in the centre of Fareham (Holmes 1975).

Perhaps the most interesting structure on the Cams Hill site was a sunken-featured building of possible Germanic style (Structure 8) dated by its pottery to between AD330 and AD370. This building consisted of a pit measuring 5.00m by 3.00m with a sub-circular depression in the centre. Vertical corner posts would have supported a sub-structure with the bases of the walls constructed on flint foundations. The size of the structure and the arrangement of internal posts is not inconsistent with Anglo-Saxon sunken-featured buildings (Tipper 2004: 1, 64). Four-posted Anglo-Saxon sunken-features, while not common, are known from West Stow (West 1985), Pennyland (Williams 1993) and West Heslerton (Powlesland 1998). The remains of a wall foundation on the eastern side of the structure is not a feature normally associated with this tradition of Anglo-Saxon buildings. Pottery recovered from the occupation layers of the building included a high proportion of Hampshire grog-tempered ware, possibly an indication of external influences. Occupation layers within the building also contained butchered bone and cereal grains. The function of this structure is not immediately clear. If

intended as domestic dwelling the diminutive size of the structure and level of occupation debris suggests temporary or seasonal occupation. The presence of a contemporary storage pit containing semi-processed cereal grains directly to the north appears to support this interpretation. However, it is also possible the structure was used for craft or production activities, possibly associated with the working hollows to the north, with the focus of occupation close by rather than on the site.

The likelihood of a late Roman masonry structure nearby is indicated by the large quantities of demolition debris recovered from some of the pits of this period. A group of stone packed potholes at the northern end of the site may represent timber building. Further evidence of domestic occupation near the site was provided by clay lined storage pits and domestic waste filling a number of pit cuts. Evidence of on-site production is shown by the presence of a number of working hollows dated to this period. An increasing Roman presence in the area may be in part responsible for a change in site use, which is in turn reflected by a change in site layout.

Germanic cultural influences are known in the late Roman period on the Hampshire coast. Germanic *laeti* were employed as mercenaries during the last century of the Roman occupation of Britain. The idea of a Roman force swelled by 'barbarians' is supported by finds of 'Germanic-style' military metal work at Roman sites in Wessex (Hawkes and Dunning 1961). The mid 4th century saw a period of change in nearby Portchester. As well as repairs to the fort, sunken-featured buildings and a shoe made in a distinctive Germanic manner are recorded (Cunliffe 1975, 430), however their precise date is still the subject of debate. If a non-Roman garrison of mercenary troops was established at Portchester in this period this may well coincide with the establishment of the command of the *Comes Litoris Saxonici*, later recorded in the *Notitia Dignitatum*. The phrase *Saxon Shore* has usually been interpreted as a shore attacked by Saxons, however Cunliffe (1975, 429) has suggested, in light of his excavations

at Portchester, that the phrase may equally refer to a shore defended by Saxons.

The presence of Hampshire grog-tempered ware 'wasters' in the sunken-featured building at Cams Hill may be an indication of increasing poverty, due to Roman taxation, and a need for cheaper utilitarian vessels. However the introduction of grog-tempered pottery on site appears to coincide with an expansion of range of activities seen on the site, which does not suggest economic hardship. Another explanation of the change may be a preference for handmade vessels by immigrant groups, as it was superficially similar to pottery they were familiar with. It is worth noting that East Kent, East Sussex and the Hampshire coast, the areas where the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records the earliest settlement by the Jutes and Saxons, are also the areas of production and use of grog tempered wares.

A limited number of buildings with sunken floors have been recorded on sites of Roman date in England. Sunken-featured structures recorded at Godshill, Dalton Parlours Welton Wold were considerably larger than Structure 8, lacked internal posts, and utilised roughly faced stone (Tipper 2004: 8–9). Many of these structures are thought to be specialist structures associated with corn drying, both the Dalton Parlours Welton Wold buildings are associated with villa complexes (ibid). Recent excavations at Monkton, Kent have revealed a multi period site, occupied from the Bronze Age into the medieval period (Bennet 1996). The Roman settlement is of particular interest as it included two dozen sunken featured buildings. Large quantities of local and imported Roman pottery were found throughout the settlement, and the finds suggest agricultural and domestic activities. The sunken featured buildings would have originally consisted of turf walls, capped by a simple roof. These buildings appear similar in design to those at Cams Hill, and the comparable coastal setting is of interest. While this may suggest a functional similarity, for example to shelter from coastal winds, it could suggest a 'Germanic' presence extending along the coastline of Hampshire and Kent, and implies further sites may exist along the Sussex coast.

Phase 6: early Saxon

Activity in the early Saxon period on the site is limited to a few postholes. Excavations at Portchester Castle have shown the site was occupied extensively by the Saxons from 5th the century probably due to security provided by its substantial defences (Cunliffe 1976). The Cams Hill site however appears to be abandoned shortly after the end of the Roman phase of occupation at Portchester. This is possibly due to a reduced population in the area, combined with a need to move within, or closer to Portchester Castle as defence against maritime raiders. The depopulation and abandonment of settlements at the beginning of the 5th century is found across southern England.

The 'sunken-featured' building recorded in the late Roman period suggests early Saxon influences, possibly as a result of foreign troops stationed at Portchester Castle. The fact that the

Saxons may have settled coastal Hampshire, in small numbers, as early as the late 3rd century may suggest a continuity of settlement after Roman influence is withdrawn. However the fact the Cams Hill site is abandoned at the beginning of the Saxon period suggests a population contraction if not a total abandonment of the peninsula in this period.

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