

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD NOTEBOOK 2014

**A RECORD OF THE PROJECTS OF THE BRIGHTON
AND HOVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY FIELD UNIT**

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And all members of the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society Field Unit

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Introduction

The new season of activities for the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society were predominantly focused on excavations of a medieval manorial complex in Hog Croft, Ovingdean. Our activities on this site included magnetometry and ground penetrating radar surveys by David Staveley to the west of our open excavations. Once again the excavations were supported by a good number of people who were joined on some days by students from Brighton University and a group of students from Wyoming, USA. The Young Archaeologists' Club (YAC) enjoyed their annual visit to our site and contributed with much enthusiastic work. We also had a group of seventeen people visit on Open Heritage Day. They were given a tour of the nearby St. Wulfran's Church as well as our excavations. It was also a privilege to host a visit by an Honorary Member and Past President, Fred Hamblin, shortly after his 100th birthday.

Training in archaeological techniques was a central feature of this year's excavations, with several members of the team being encouraged to use the expertise gained at training courses and during on site "tutorials". It is intended that we create a more formal training regime during the 2015 session to enable members to participate more fully when volunteering for work with other archaeological units.

The Society was involved in only one watching brief this year along the Ditchling Road, Brighton and this represents the last project that will be formally allocated to BHAS. New watching briefs will be passed to professional units only.

We were fortunate in being asked to do a small evaluation trench across Drove Road, Woodingdean, when a new pathway was being laid. The aim being to investigate the structure of this ancient track.

Attendance at our digs has been good. Excluding the attendance of the YAC and the group from Wyoming ninety people have participated contributing nearly 1000 person days of volunteering.

A number of reports of previous projects by BHAS have come to light (two fieldwalking projects at Halcombe Farm, Peacehaven and at Hollingbury, Brighton and the examination of a possible capped well in Portslade. These reports have been included as an appendix.

Post excavation activities have included finds washing, marking and cataloguing at the ASE workshops in Portslade and at the Patcham Community Centre and Patcham Methodist Church Hall. All of these post excavation processes have proved popular with the BHAS field unit. (Once again we thank Archaeology South East (ASE), the local professional Unit, who opened their doors and allowed BHAS members to use their finds washing facilities and to complete the washing of all of the pottery from this season's excavations.)

The BHAS bones team, led by Carol White, continued with the processing of all of the bone material from the excavations, and this is conducted at Carol's home at Newhaven.

The Society is grateful to Maria Gardiner for organising a number of well attended archaeological day schools including Environmental Archaeology (Mike Allen), Study of Human Bones (Paola Ponce) and Flintwork Analysis (Matt Pope).

Hard copies of this report are passed to Ms S. Roberts at Brighton and Hove Planning Department, Casper Johnson, the County Archaeologist, Brighton Museum, Barbican House, the East Sussex Records Office and the National Monuments Records Office at Swindon. CD-Rom copies are produced by the Society's Webmaster Mr Martin Devereux and are made available to the field unit members and others who desire a copy.

John Skelton, 2015

Excavations at Ovingdean 2014 Abstract

Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society have been conducting excavations in Hog Croft, Ovingdean, Sussex since 1999. The site appears to be a medieval manorial complex with a substantial stone manor house with undercroft and evidence for associated buildings in the form of large post holes and ditches contained in an area bounded by earthwork banks. In 2014 evaluation excavations aimed to extend our understanding of these additional buildings and the surrounding earthworks.

During these excavations about 35 additional postholes were discovered ranging from large sub rectangular ones to smaller round ones and some of which formed regular, linear arrays. However, there was insufficient evidence to attribute these to any one building plan. In the occupation layer around the postholes medieval and post medieval artefacts were discovered.

The trench sectioning the earthwork bank showed it to be of chalk construction and covering a buried soil containing Saxon pottery and bone artefacts. A pit (1 m diameter and 60 cm deep), a small gully and several postholes were cut into the chalk below the buried soil.

Near what could be a terminus to the bank a short section of a loosely mortared flint wall with associated flint tumble was discovered.

These findings strongly suggest that the medieval site overlies an earlier Saxon site. It is possible that medieval activity has eroded the Saxon artefacts except where they are protected under the earthworks and that many of the postholes throughout the site are of Saxon origin. Further excavations are to be conducted.

Archaeological Interim Report - Hog Croft, Ovingdean, 2014



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Director	John Skelton
Site Code	500209
Organisation	Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society
Prepared	July 2015

Introduction

A Written Scheme of Investigation for excavations in Hog Croft, Ovingdean was submitted by BHAS to Brighton and Hove City Council in 2014 and it was approved for excavation to start in April that year. This report gives preliminary observations from the excavation. Further excavations have already started in Hog Croft to further develop our understanding of the site based on these observations

Hog Croft is a field situated to the North of St. Wulfran's Church, Ovingdean (Fig. 1) and it is believed to contain the remains of a medieval manorial complex dating from at least 1200 AD. This site has been a frequent subject of geophysical investigation and excavations by the Society between 1986 and 2009 (Ref. 1- 6). The 2014 excavation was designed to build on the previous findings. The objectives of the 2014 evaluation excavation included:-

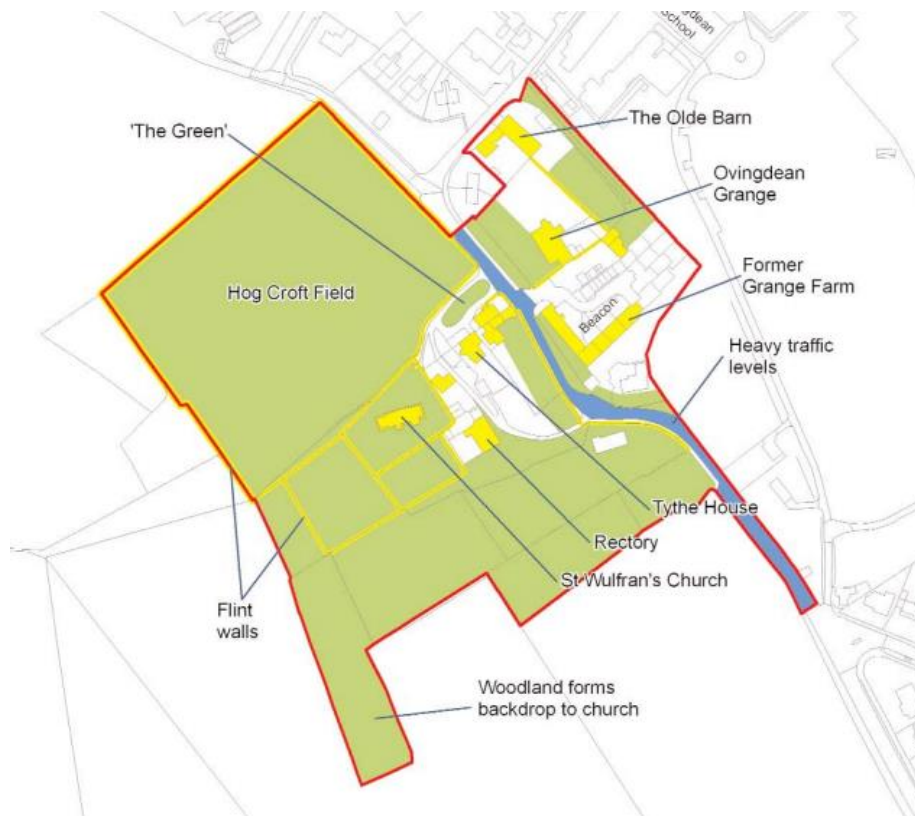
- a) Refine our understanding of the earthwork enclosure by cutting a section through the north side of the rampart to determine the earliest phase of its construction (trench A, Fig 2).
- b) Establish the size and extent of the suspected timber framed building within the complex (trenches B1, B2 , Fig 2).
- c) Confirm the location of a medieval dove-cote suggested in previous excavations (trench C, Fig 2).
- d) Establish the existence of walls in the north-east section of the complex (trench D, Fig 2).
- e) Confirm by test pitting the route and extent of the ditch considered to be the boundary for a detached kitchen (trench E).
- f) Examine the possible west entrance to the enclosure (trench F, Fig 2).
- g) Examine a number of possible rubbish pits, noted in the geophysics, for dating material (test pits G, Fig 2).
- h) To better understand the extent and significance of the archaeology to inform future management and protection of this site.
- i) Provide facilities for public engagement in archaeology by providing training, accommodating site visits and presenting talks to local interested parties.

Location Map

Fig. 1 Site of excavations in Hog Croft, Woodingdean



a. Aerial view



b. Plan view

Archaeological Work Undertaken

All work was undertaken by members of BHAS and short term community volunteers and students under the supervision of John Skelton (Site Director) or John Funnell (Deputy Site Director).

There was some modification of the location of trenches and some extensions were made in order to further explore features being revealed. In particular trench A became a North-westwards linear extension of trench B1 and was renamed trench J. This trench only extended to the midline of the earth bank. A further trench, H, was cut between and perpendicular to trenches B1 and B2 in order to investigate the possibility that this was the location of the end wall of the suspected structure. These changes were made after consultation with the Assistant County Archaeologist.

It transpired that there was insufficient time to start trenches G and F.

The terms of the WSI were otherwise complied with except in two areas. Firstly, it proved impossible to relay turf after backfilling as the turf stacks had become amalgamated due to root growth. The tenant farmer assisted with machine backfilling and was in agreement that these stacks be pushed by machine over the disturbed areas. Secondly, all photographs taken were in digital format (Canon RAW and JPG) due to the difficulty of obtaining black and white film.

Site Plan

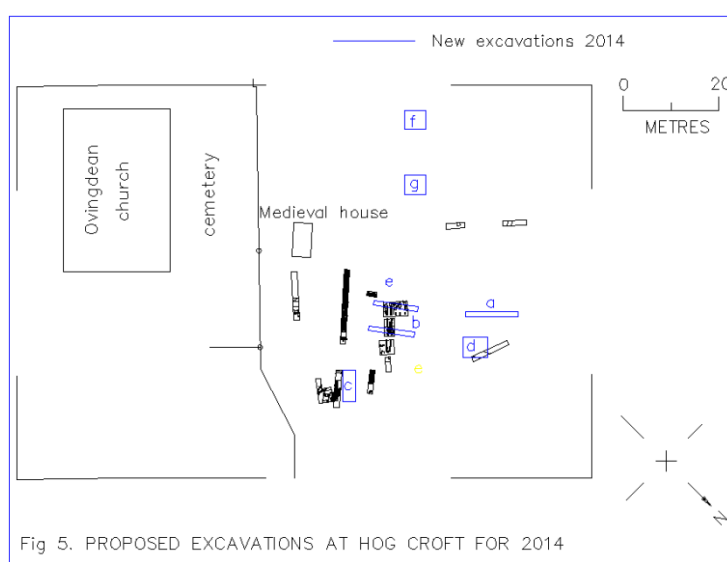


Fig.2 Plan of proposed trenches (2014 trenches in blue, previous trenches in black)

Preliminary Results

A large number of features were recorded during excavation mostly consisting of cuts into the chalk bedrock, but also including cuts into the surrounding earthworks. Fig. 3 shows a simplified plan of cuts into the chalk substratum.

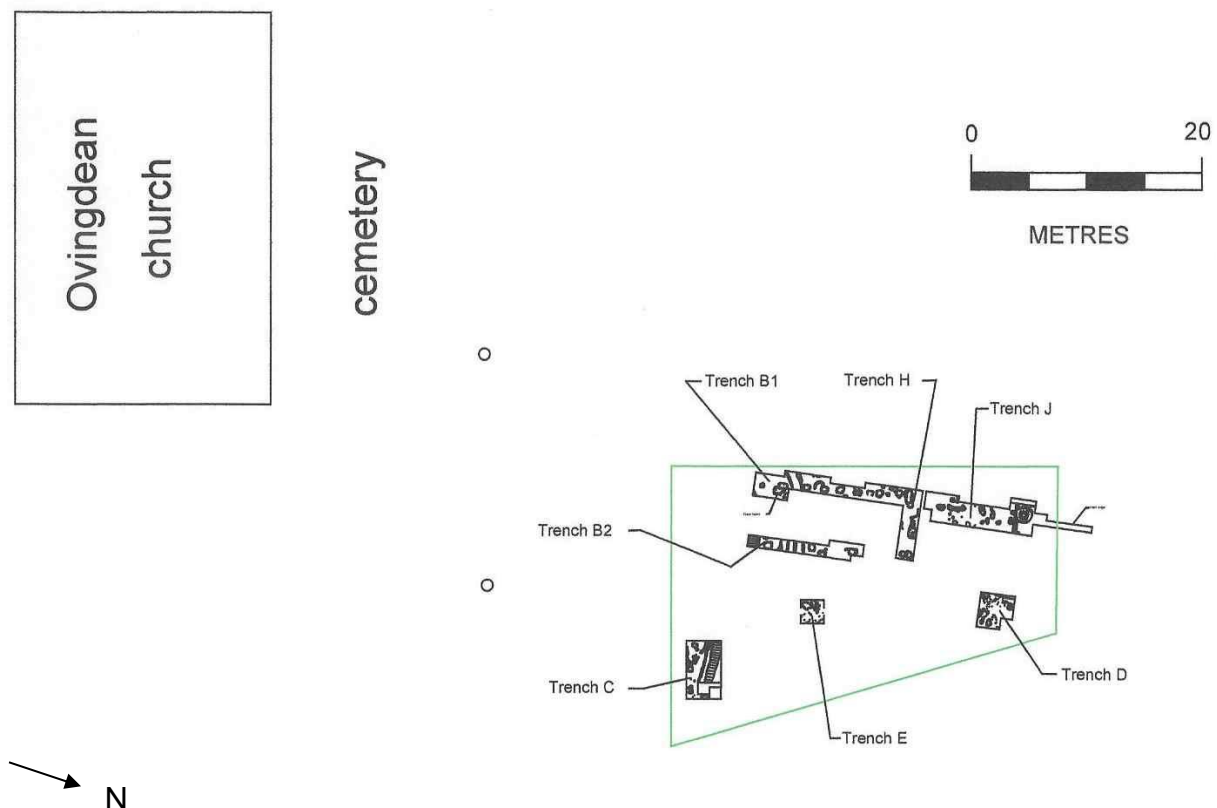


Fig. 3 Simplified feature plan

The overlying strata was typically composed of a silty clay loam topsoil with very few inclusions, under which was a layer of gravel of varying thickness but typically only a few centimetres thick. The gravel was composed of a poorly sorted mixture of well rounded flint pebbles and angular flint stones up to 5 cm in size. Below this was a variable thickness of silty/sandy clay loam with abundant, poorly sorted inclusions of flint (up to about 20 cm in size) and chalk (up to about 10 cm in size). A similar context constituted the fill of most of the cuts into the chalk. There were some exceptions and variations and these will be described and discussed in the final report.

Artefacts recovered from the topsoil were typically “modern” and ranged from a bone handled pocket knife to nails and pieces of roofing tile.

The gravel layer produced mixed finds but included green glazed pottery sherds, beads, copper alloy objects, iron arrow heads, marine shell and small bones. Many of these finds were spot dated as “medieval”.

The chalky, rubble layer produced a similar array of finds to the gravel layer except that large pieces of bone were often found, mainly of pig, sheep and cow.

Very few datable artefacts were recovered from within postholes.

Trench B1 and H (Fig. 4)

The location of trench H was determined from a) the results of a small survey by ground penetrating radar conducted by David Staveley and b) by the calculated position of the next posthole in a North-westwards extension of the sequence of postholes 548, 536 and 547 in trench B.

Trenches B1 and H revealed a number of postholes some of which formed a regular linear array (542, 532, 533, 535, 540 and possibly 545, 608 and 610) (Photo. 1). These postholes were typically about 50 x 60 cm, sub-rectangular with steep sides, top and bottom breaks of slope vertical to sharp, bottoms flat and level and a variable depth between 12 and 32 cm. Some of these postholes (540, 542 and 610) were truncated to lesser or greater extents by small, shallow scoops or pits. Most of these features had a fairly uniform fill of sandy clay loam with abundant chalk rubble inclusions and occasional large flint nodules. This sequence of postholes constitutes a linear array with a period of about 1.8 m.

Posthole 590 was unusually square with very sharp corners. Nearby were a small number of stakeholes again of very square plan section. The fill of 590 included the base of a bottle with a large punt similar to a modern wine or beer bottle.

Ditch 534 (believed to be contiguous with ditch 538 in trench B2) runs Southwest to Northeast. It is 90 to 120 cm wide with a base 60 to 70 cm wide and 32 cm deep sloping gradually down to the Northeast. It is an irregular feature with breaks of slope of top and bottom varying between imperceptible and sharp.

Feature 591 is a cut sloping East and disappearing under the baulks.

Feature 563 is a complex pit with a distinct stratigraphy in the fill and producing finds spot dated to the post medieval period.

Posthole 574 is sub rectangular (about 40 cm x 45 cm) at the predicted location consistent with being an extension of the sequence of postholes in trench B2.

Postholes 582, 599 and 577 are oval to circular in plan with vertical sides. 599 and 577 have adjacent or contiguous smaller, shallower circular cuts to the Northwest. They do not lie on a straight line and are not regularly spaced.

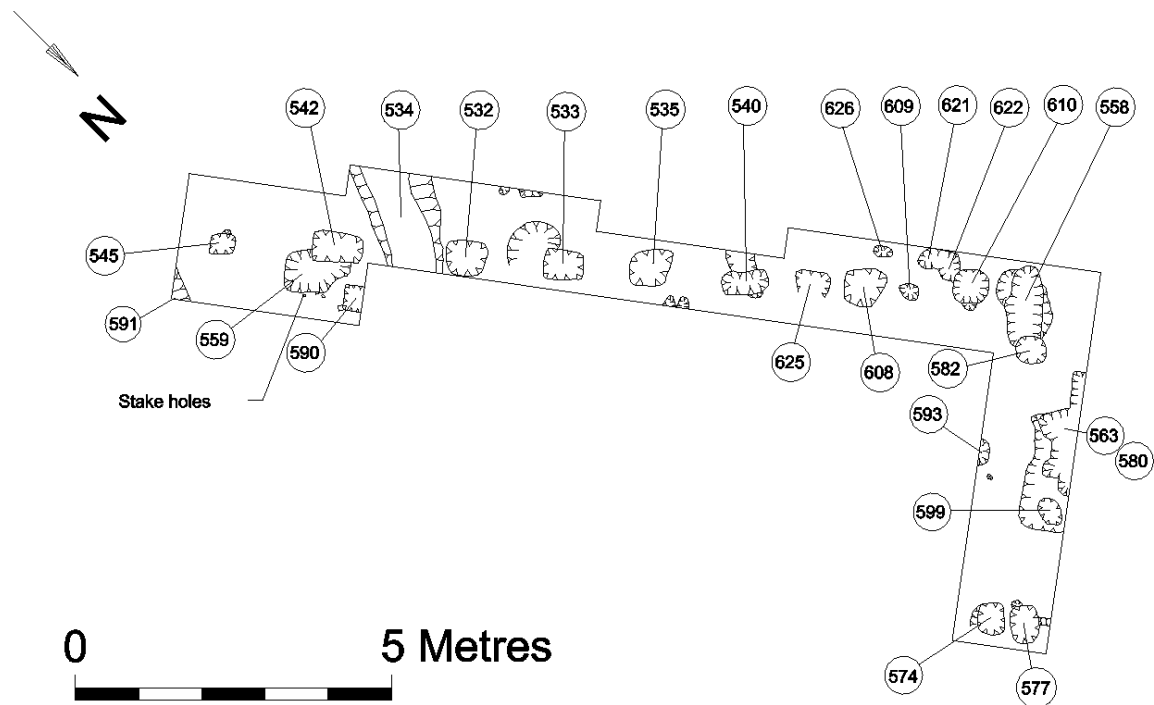


Fig. 4 Trench B1 and H



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Photo. 1 Postholes 542, 532, 533, 535, 540 and ditch 534. Southwest is to the top

Trench B2 (Fig. 5)

Ditch 538 is a continuation of ditch 534 in trench B1, but is more regular in this section being 90 cm wide at the top and 45 cm at the base which is 42 cm deep, flat and sloping slightly to the Northeast.

Ditch 544 runs parallel to 538 about 1.25 m to the Southeast. It is cut by a shallow gully entering from the East making a determination of its surface width difficult. It is slightly deeper than 538 at 55 cm and the rising Northeast end appears to be the start of the terminus. A deposit of baked daub was found in the bottom of this ditch (Photo. 2).

Feature 560 appears to be the Northwest face of another ditch running Southwest to Northeast, however, it is considerably deeper at 80 cm.

Postholes 548, 536 and 547 constitute a linear array in association with 574 (Trench H) with a period of about 4 m. The postholes are typically about 50 x 60 cm, sub rectangular with steep sides, top and bottom breaks of slope vertical to sharp, bottoms flat and level and a variable depth between 26 and 40 cm.

Feature 546 is a shallow scoop or base of a pit.

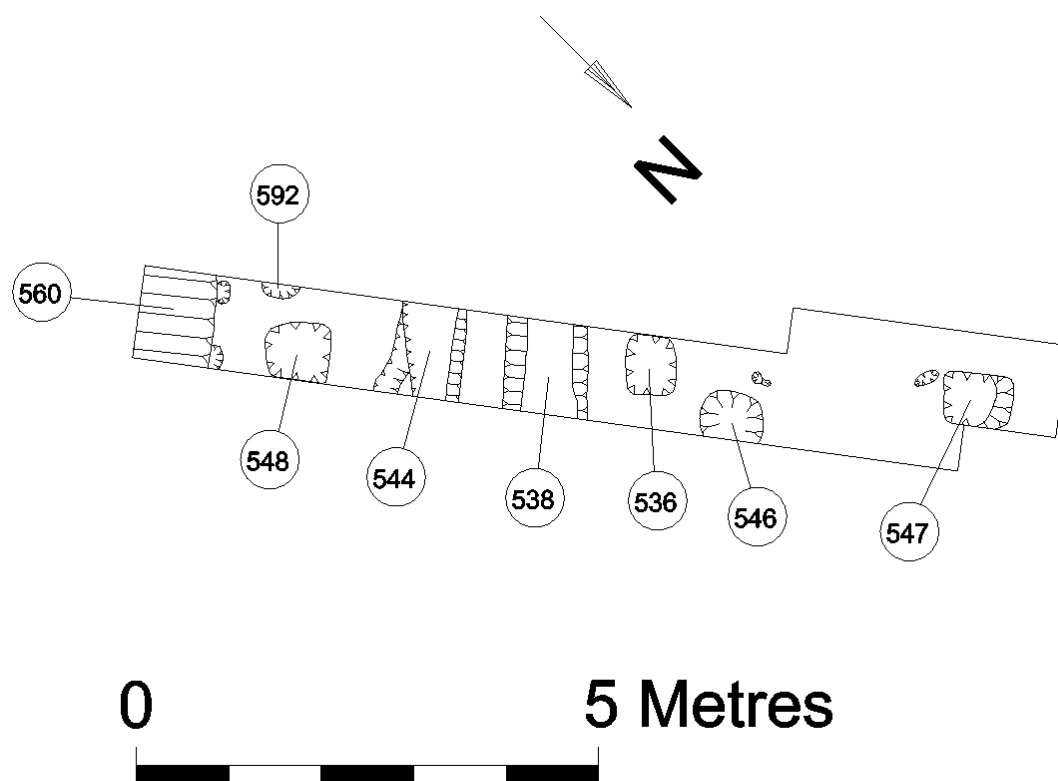
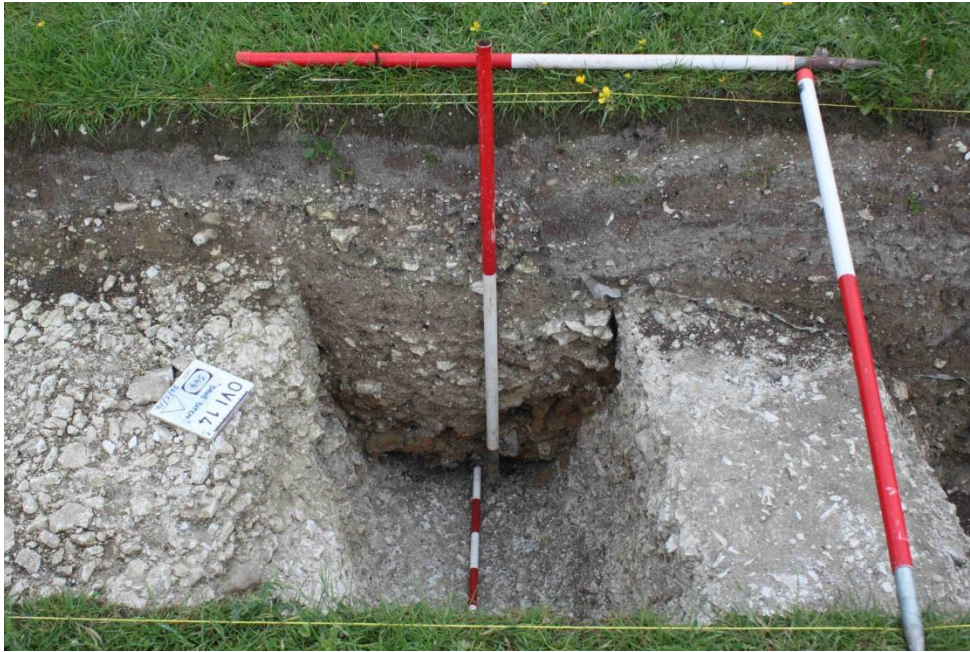


Fig. 5 Trench B2



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Photo. 2 Ditch with daub deposit.

Trench C (Fig. 6)

Just below the topsoil in trench C was an irregular layer of large flint nodules. No discernible pattern was observed in the distribution of these flints and they did not appear to correspond spatially to any features cut into the chalk.

A very complex chalk surface was revealed in Trench C. The dominant feature is a Northwest facing slope, 630, dropping down 43 cm. Running parallel and to the Southeast of this are a number of shallow (10 -12 cm) gullies, 12 -14 cm wide with a shallow slope to the Northeast (624, 631 and 629).

623 is a curved edge dipping slightly to the Southeast.

Posthole 598 is very sharp and rectangular in plan with vertical sides and 32 cm deep. It is reminiscent of posthole 590.

Postholes 710 and 711 are sub circular in plan, about 27 cm in diameter and both have a shallow (6 cm) truncating, sub rectangular cut to the Southeast side. 710 is 18 cm deep and 711 is 29 cm deep. Both have abrupt breaks of slope top and bottom and near vertical sides.

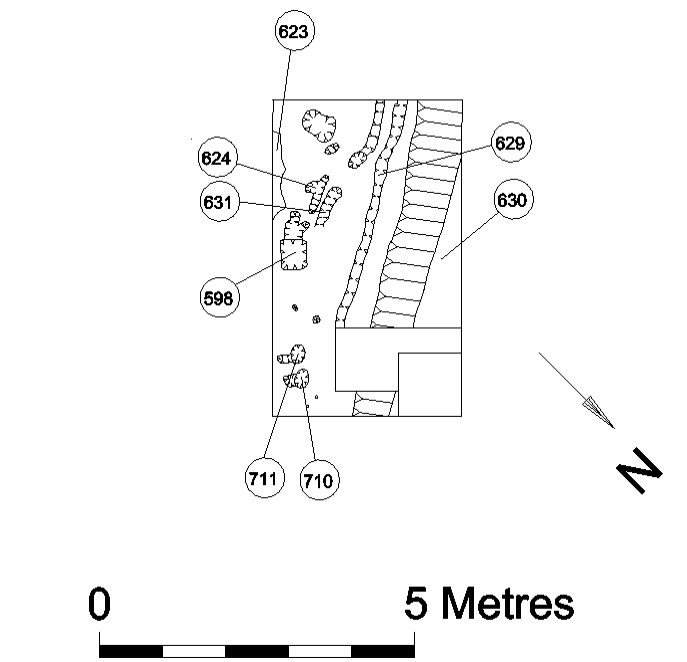


Fig. 6 Trench C

Trench D (Fig. 7)

The upper layers of trench D revealed a mass of flint nodules apparently having tumbled to the Northeast from a loosely mortared structure resembling a poorly built wall. The flints were removed carefully in stages confirming the initial interpretation. The flints were poorly ordered in the top layers of the wall but the lower two layers were laid like cobbled surfaces with a layer of loam between them. The lowest layer of flints was on top of a loam layer several centimetres thick laying over the chalk bedrock (Photo. 4). There were a large number of features cut into the chalk, mainly stake holes and shallow scoops. some of the stake holes formed a linear feature running beneath the North-eastern edge of the wall (Photo. 5).

Posthole 647 was sub-circular with a diameter 22 - 27 cm and a depth of 16 cm with an uneven base. The top break of slope was vertical to abrupt and bottom break of slope abrupt to gradual.

Features 663 and 664 were a pair of sub-circular, intersecting post holes of about 30 cm diameter with 664 being to the southwest of 663 and extending under the wall of the trench. The top break of slope was vertical to abrupt and the bottom break of slope abrupt to gradual in both cases. The depth of both was 25 cm.

Posthole 666 was sub rectangular with very rounded corners about 43 cm SE to NW and 50 cm SW to NE. Top and bottom breaks of slope varied greatly around the

feature and the depth varied between 18 and 20 cm with a very irregular base. It had possibly been re-cut several times.

Feature 709 was only partially revealed as it disappeared under the baulk. It was also heavily truncated by a shallow scoop to the West. It was square (as revealed) with sides 19 cm and depth of 17 cm with an irregular base. Top break of slope was vertical to abrupt and bottom break of slope abrupt.

Running directly along the Southwestern edge of the trench was a shallow gully (714) running from the North and terminating in what may be a small posthole (715) after about 1.75 meters. (These features were under the cobbled layers of flints). 714 was 15 cm wide and had a variable depth of about 5 cm with an irregular base sloping gently to the Northwest. The top and bottom breaks of slope varied considerably from abrupt to gradual across the length of the feature.

The terminal posthole was sub circular with an approximate diameter of 23 cm and a depth of 24 cm.

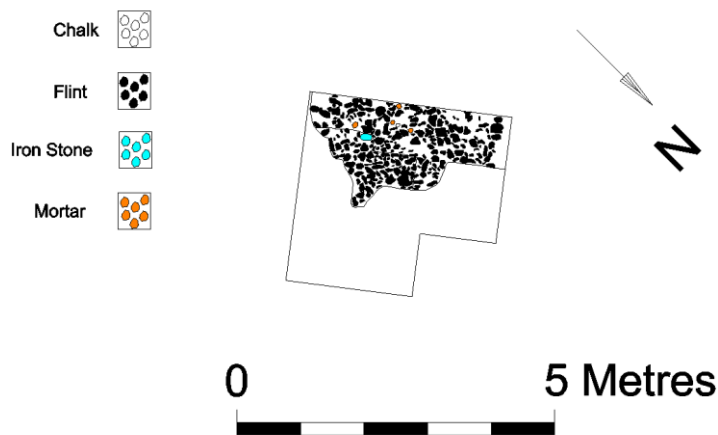


Fig. 7a Trench D upper features



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Photo. 4 A "cobbled" surface in trench D.

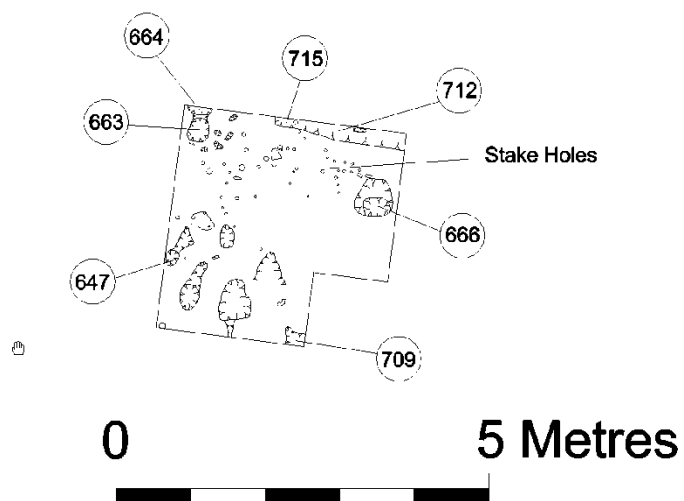


Fig. 7b Trench D lower features (*erratum* 712 should be 714)



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Photo. 5 Trench D. Southwest is to the top

Trench E (Fig. 8)

The site of this 3 m x 3 m trench was relocated to the North of trench B2 and revealed two large scoops and a large number of stakeholes of various sizes and depths. No pattern was discernible in the layout of the stake holes but a few did form short lengths of a linear nature. The two scoops or shallow pits, 628 and 632, are irregular with an irregular base no more than 30 cm deep. The sides are irregular with top and bottom breaks of slope from gradual to abrupt.

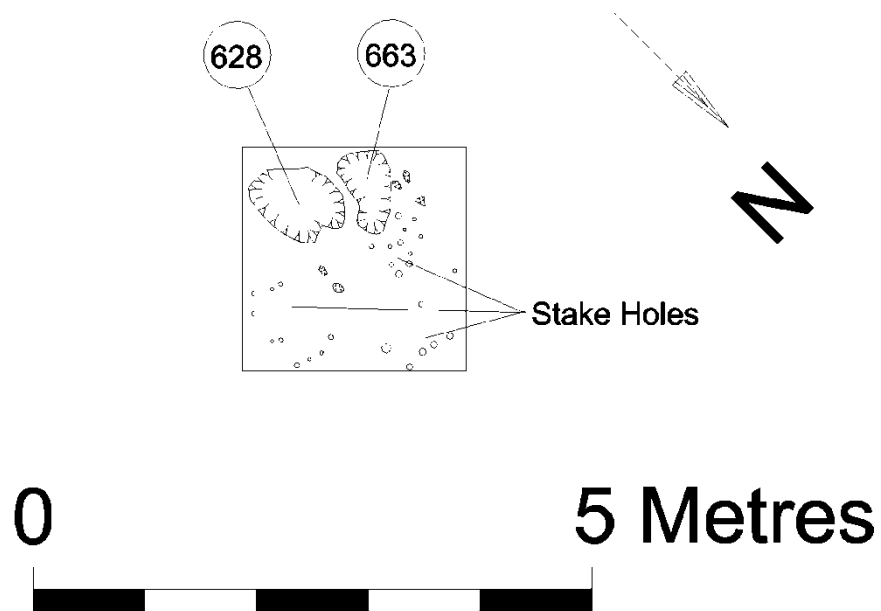


Fig. 8 Trench E *Erratum* 663 should read 632

Trench J (Fig. 9)

Trench J was the most interesting trench as it cut the inner half of the enclosing earthworks. A number of features were found that required extensions to this trench producing an irregular shape.

At the highest point of the earthwork there was a covering of top soil and gravel over a chalk bank made of large irregular chalk lumps. These were not laid in courses but appeared to have been "dumped". About a third of the way down the inner side of the bank this chalk dump was overlaid by a single layer of closely spaced, large, flint nodules which extended some 5 m Southeast to the base of the bank. These flint nodules were covered with topsoil and gravel. In places to the northeast side of the trench some of these flints were mortared together and were several nodules deep but they covered an area of less than 1 m² and did not form any recognisable structural element. Cuts 604 (a posthole) and 605 (a pit or terminus of a ditch or gully) intruded into the earthwork but did not penetrate for more than about 20 cm.

The chalk bank itself was about 60 cm deep at the Northwest end of the trench. (Photo. 6) The chalk rubble and blocks overlaid a soil about 10 - 20 cm thick and within this soil pottery sherds were found that were spot dated as mid to late Saxon. Also within this context was a bone disc decorated with circle and dot motives and again spot dated to the Saxon period.

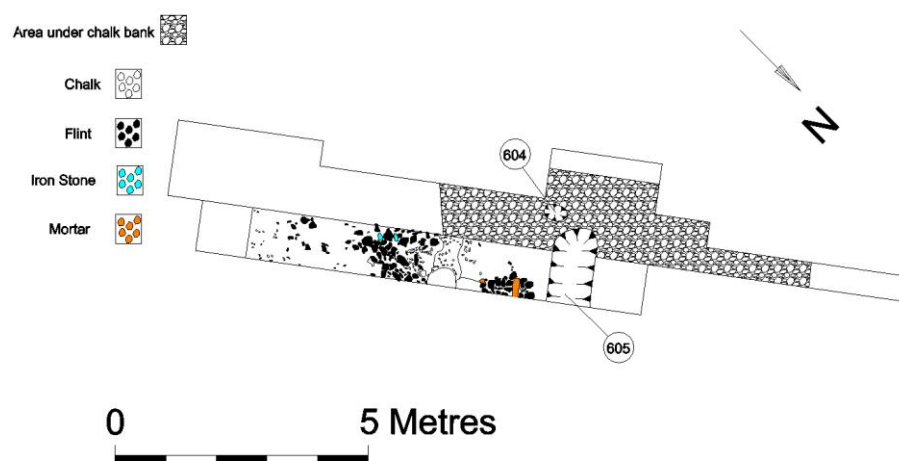


Fig. 9a Trench J upper contexts

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Photo. 6 Southeast facing section of the earthworks showing chalk block nature of the construction and the buried soil.



© BHAS/John Skelton

Photo. 7 Posthole 634, a complex cut.

All contexts overlaying the chalk were removed from most of this trench and this revealed a large number of features cut into the chalk many of them underneath the bank itself. In comparison to many of the postholes found in other trenches the post holes in trench J tended to be smaller and more irregular with many being double/triple or complex postholes (596, 612, 614, 634, 645, 699, 701) (Photo. 7). Several of the features were relatively shallow with depths less than 10 cm (606, 611, 613, 633).

Feature 646 was a particularly well defined posthole, circular with almost vertical breaks of slope, top and bottom.

Posthole 645 was one of the few postholes to contain flint packing.

Postholes 699 and 614 and 607, to the extent that it was excavated, appear to form a small but precise linear group with equal spacing.

The most interesting feature in this area was a large pit, 649. (Photo. 8) This sub oval feature was about 1 m x 0.8 m and 0.52 to 0.55 m deep and resembled a storage pit. A small amount of bone was found in the bottom fill of the pit. There was evidence that the fill had been cut into by a smaller pit or posthole and within this cut a larger quantity of bone was found. The pit was truncated by a shallow gully, 672, 30 cm wide and 10 cm deep, running approximately SW to NE across the entire width of the trench.

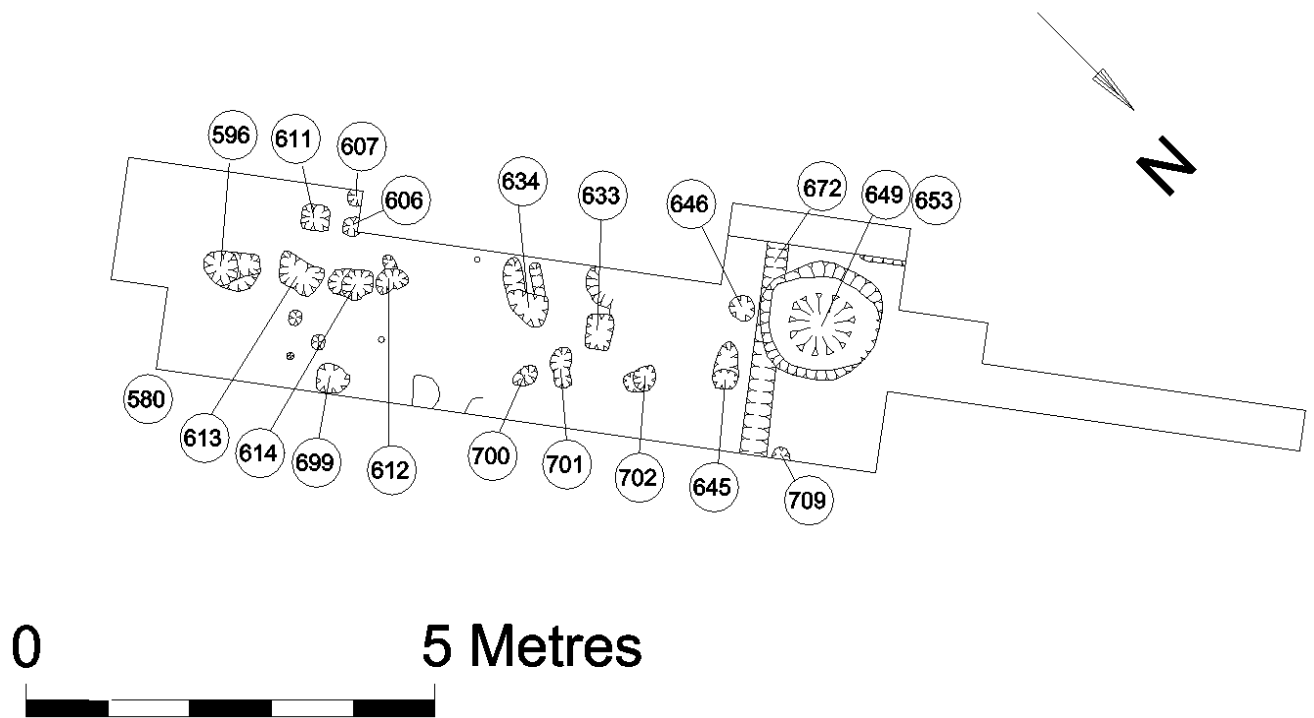


Fig. 9b Trench J base



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Photo. 8 Pit 649 and post hole 646 looking vertically. Northeast is to the top.

Registered Finds

Twenty five registered finds were made including a bodkin type arrowhead, several buckles, several crude beads, a small copper alloy decorative stud, a broken purse bar, several flint loom weights, a whetstone and a crude bone disc thought to be a gaming piece (Photos. 9a - 9e, selected items).

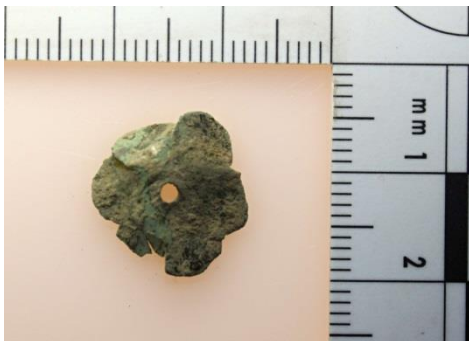
Photos 9a - 9e (© BHAS/John Skelton)



a. Arrowhead.



b. Buckle.



c. Decorative button or stud.



d. Bead.



e. Decorated bone disc (Crude Saxon gaming piece?)

Preliminary Conclusions

There are a large number of archaeological features that are cut into the chalk that have survived remarkably well despite the relatively shallow depth of the overlying burden. This is presumably because of the absence of ploughing in Hog Croft within recorded history. There is also a variety of features including ditches, postholes, stakeholes and pits of various forms. In particular the postholes show a wide variety of shape, depth and morphological complexity. There is, however, a paucity of artefacts within these cut features making dating them difficult. The exceptions were a feature cut into trench H which produced post medieval artefacts and the buried soil beneath the chalk earthworks which produced Saxon pottery. Also, the presence of features cut into the chalk below the buried soil strongly suggests that these are also of Saxon origin. It would appear that the medieval settlement has occurred at the site of previous Saxon settlement.

There appears to be a change in morphology of the postholes as one moves from the Southeast of the excavation to the Northwest. In the Southeast the postholes tend to be large and rectangular but in the Northwest they are smaller and round or complex. It cannot be ruled out that this reflects different phases of activity with medieval features to the Southeast and Saxon features to the Northwest.

The nature of this evaluation excavation makes it difficult to assign any of the features to a ground plan of a particular structure or building. The presence of some mortar amongst some of the flints overlaying the bank and the regular laying of flints in trench D does suggest the presence of structures within the areas explored even if they are only crudely built walls. However, the large number of postholes revealed suggest either a few larger buildings or a greater number of smaller buildings. In either case they are a good indication of substantial settlement activity. There is no convincing evidence that there is a dovecote in the vicinity of trench C or that the "kitchen" ditch is associated with a kitchen.

The registered finds support the findings of settlement activity made by previous excavations. The presence of a possible bone gaming piece amongst Saxon pottery suggests domestic and leisure activity, whilst arrowheads, a whetstone, loom weights and buckles amongst the medieval finds suggest a mixed economy, defended settlement. Obviously, these are tentative suggestions at this stage. The lack of Saxon artefacts outside of the buried soil may be explained by the shallow soil in this area. If any Saxon artefacts remained on the future medieval site they would have been eroded away by occupation activity on the thin soil rather than being buried, except where the earthworks were laid down. It remains a possibility that, if medieval building activity was confined to the manorial complex Saxon artefacts may still be found outside of the earthworks.

Further Work Required for Preparation of Final Report

All registered and bulk finds have still to be analysed and reported upon by relevant experts. There are ninety evaluation soil samples to be analysed by flotation and sieving and there is at least one bone sample (from pit 649) suitable for radiocarbon dating analysis. Further excavations are currently underway exploring the earthwork terminus and any structures associated with it. It is anticipated that it will be several years before a final report is submitted which will incorporate all previous excavations by BHAS.

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Acknowledgements

With thanks to all members of the field unit who have shown considerable patience and perseverance with my first excursion into excavation directing.

Particular thanks are due to John Funnell and Mark Gillingham for their expert guidance and encouragement.

All plans and section drawings are reproduced by John Funnell.

All mistakes are by John Skelton.

Appendix

Plans and section drawings from the Ovingdean excavations 2014 with section drawing locations highlighted in red.

- Fig 4. Trenches B1 and H
- Fig 5. Trench B2
- Fig 6. Trench C
- Fig 7. Trench D
- Fig 8. Trench E
- Fig 9. Trench J (Upper level features)
- Fig 9B. Trench J (Lower levels)
- Fig 10. Trench J section drawings
- Fig11. Trench D section drawings
- Fig 12. Ditch and pit section drawings
- Fig 13. Post hole section drawings and profiles
- Fig 14. Post holes and gully section drawings and profiles
- Fig 15. Profile of ditch and post holes in trenches B1 and B2

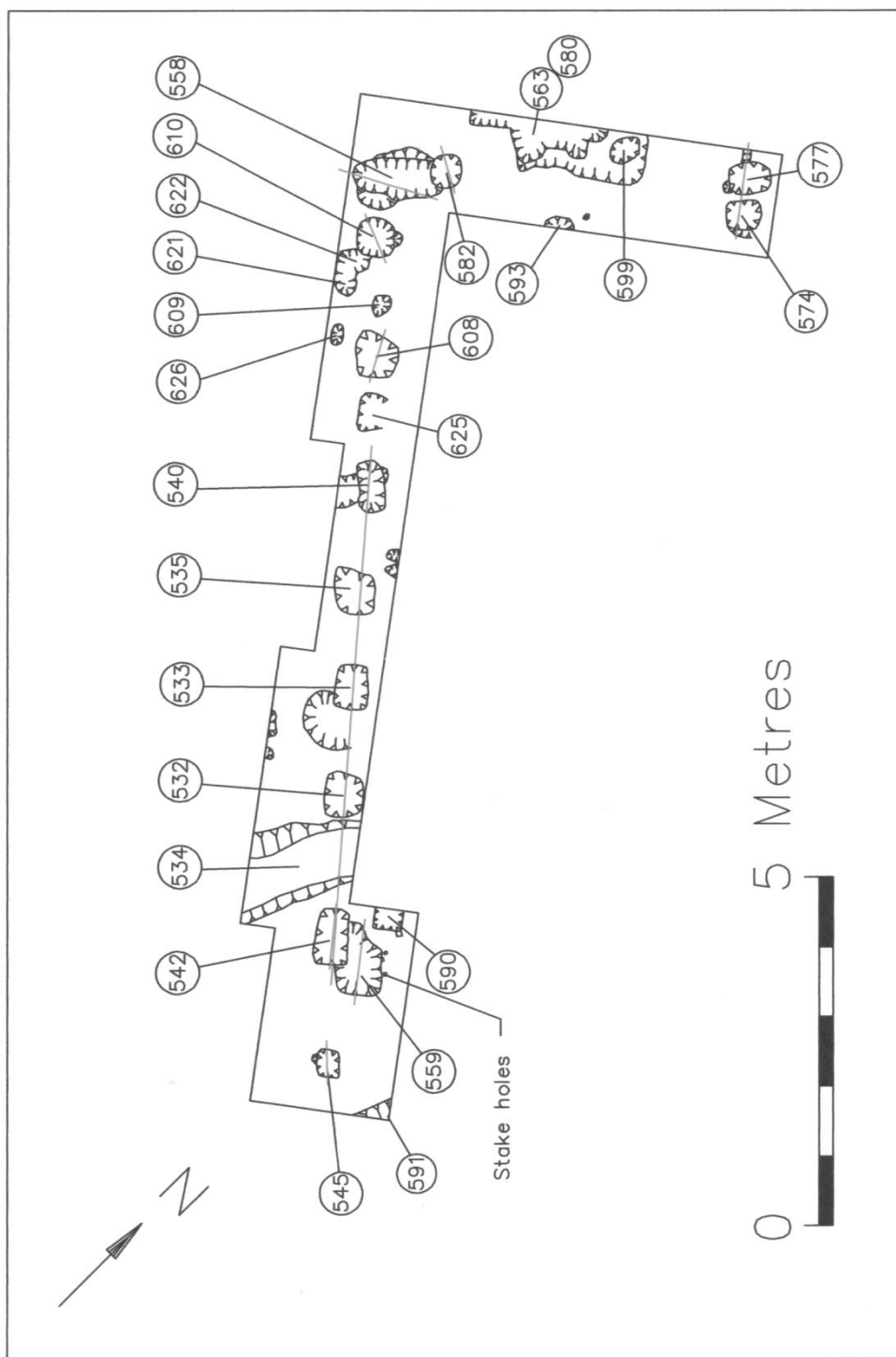


Fig 4. Trenches B1 and H

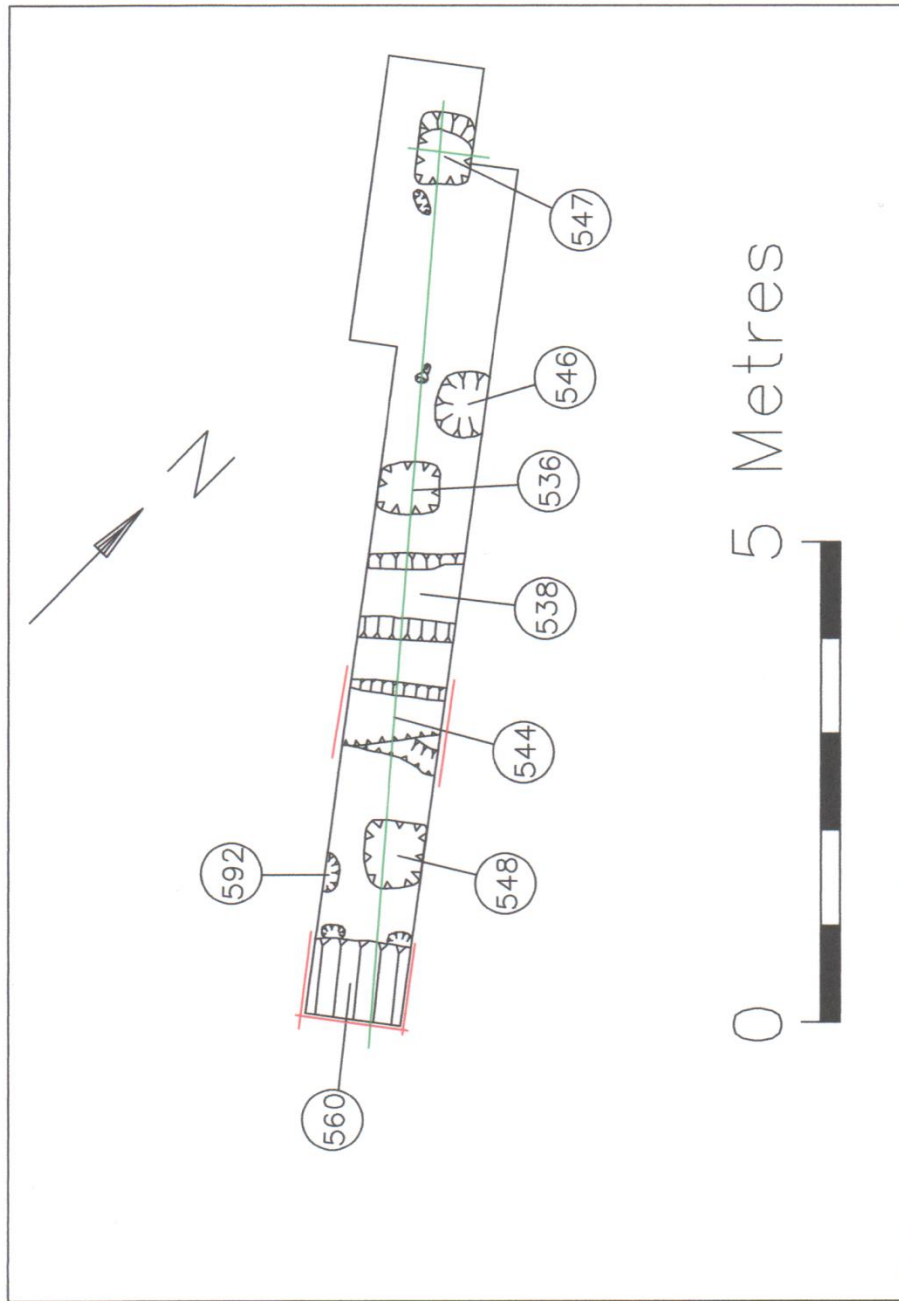


Fig 5. Trench B2

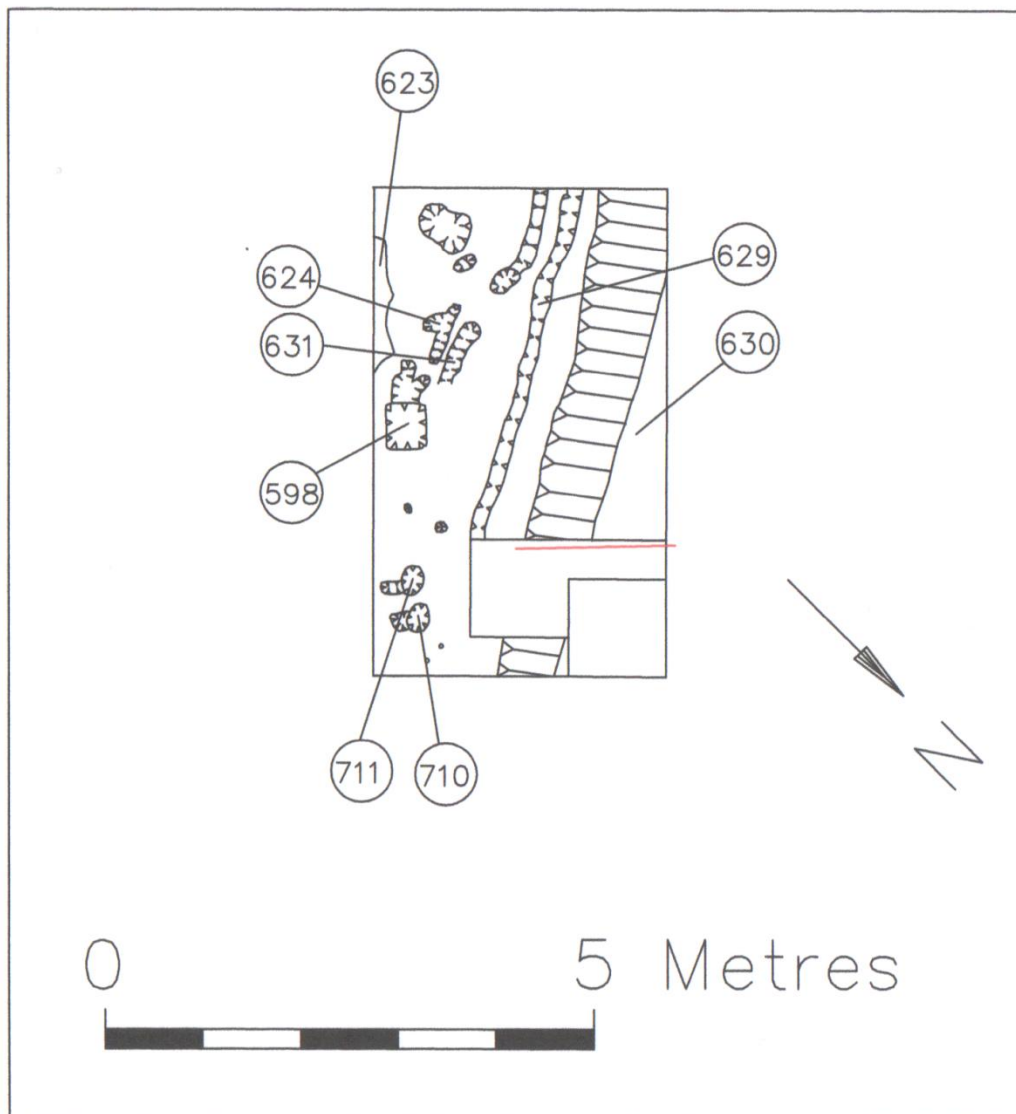


Fig 6. Trench C

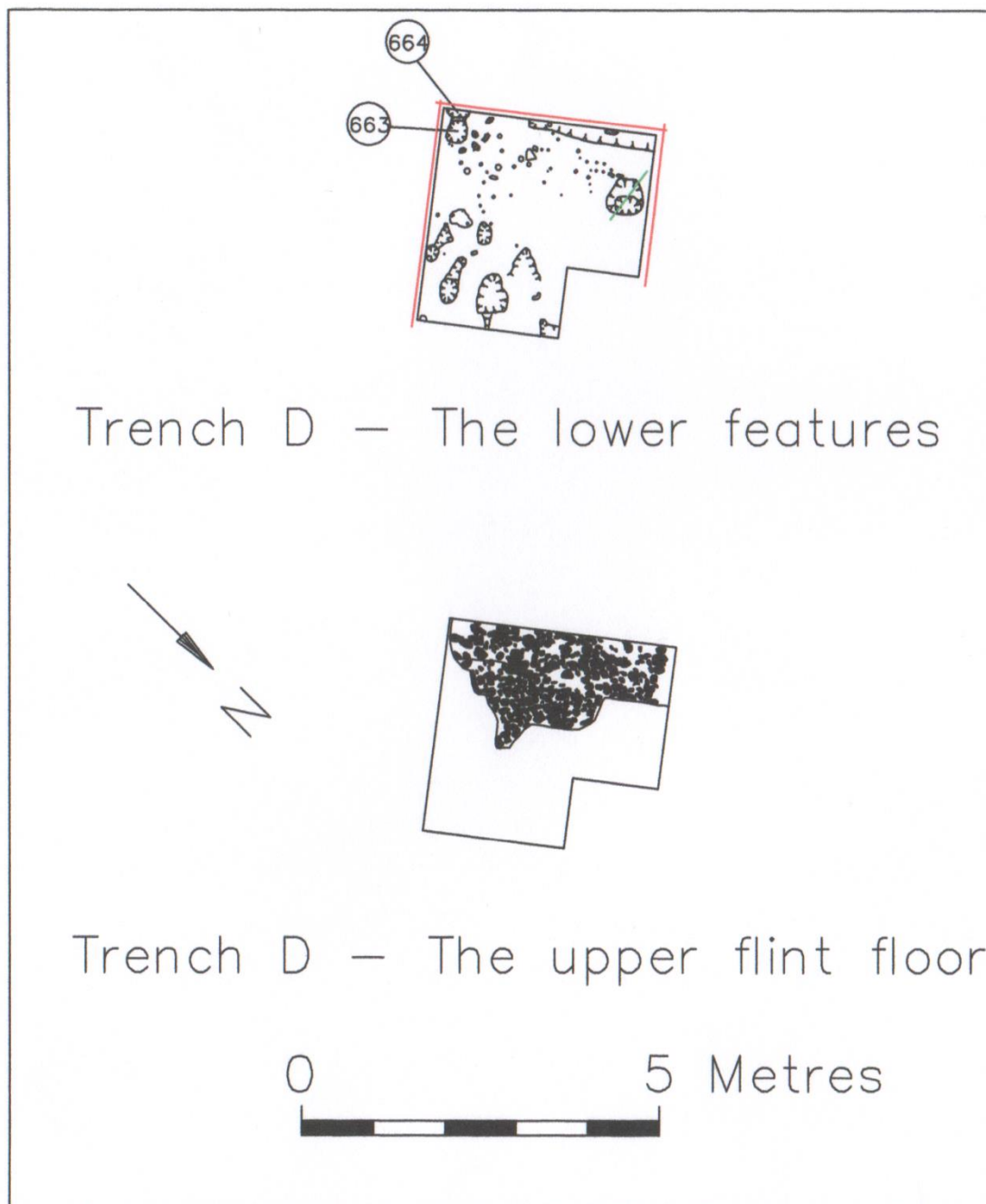


Fig 7. Trench D

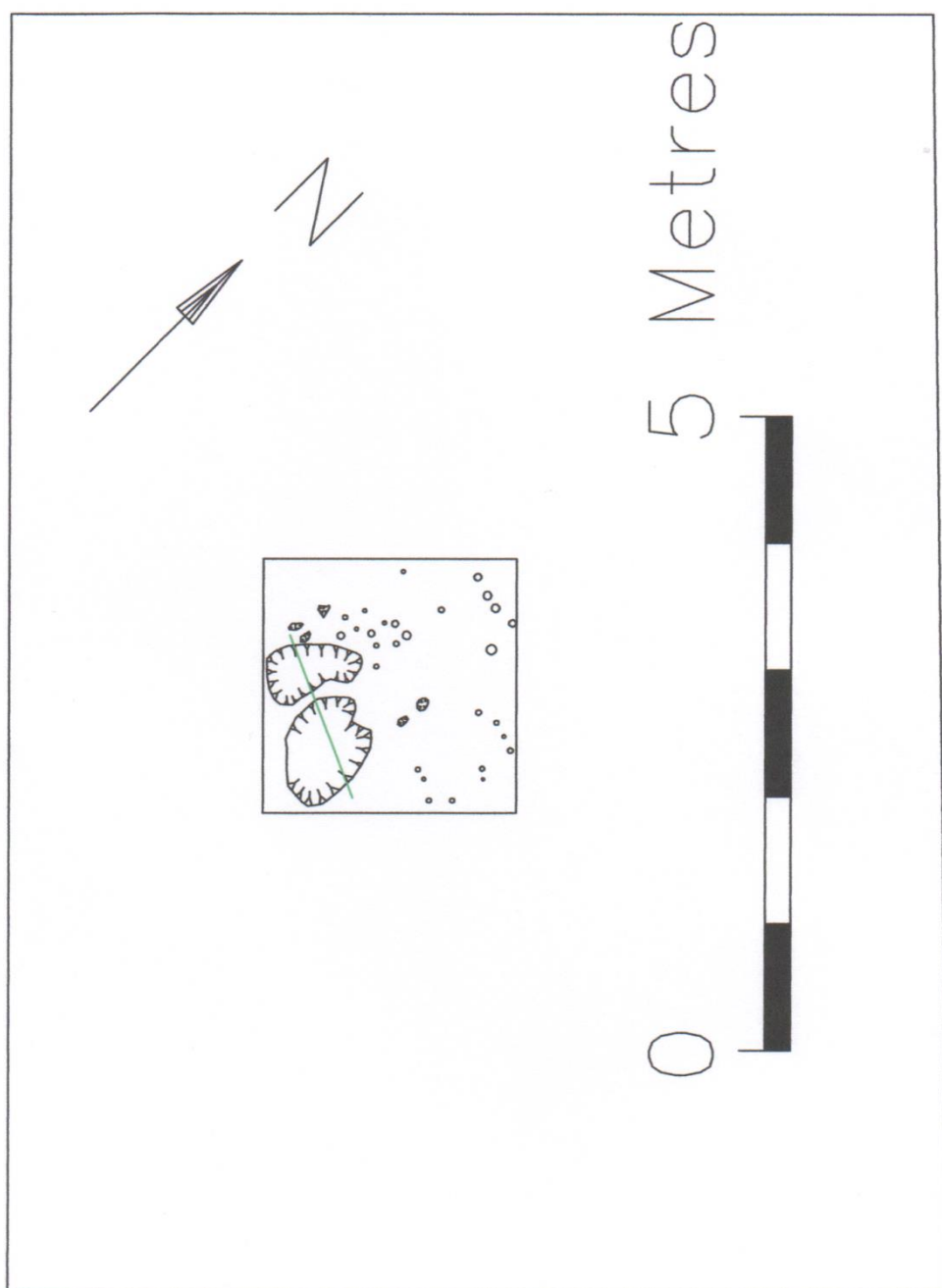


Fig 8. Trench E

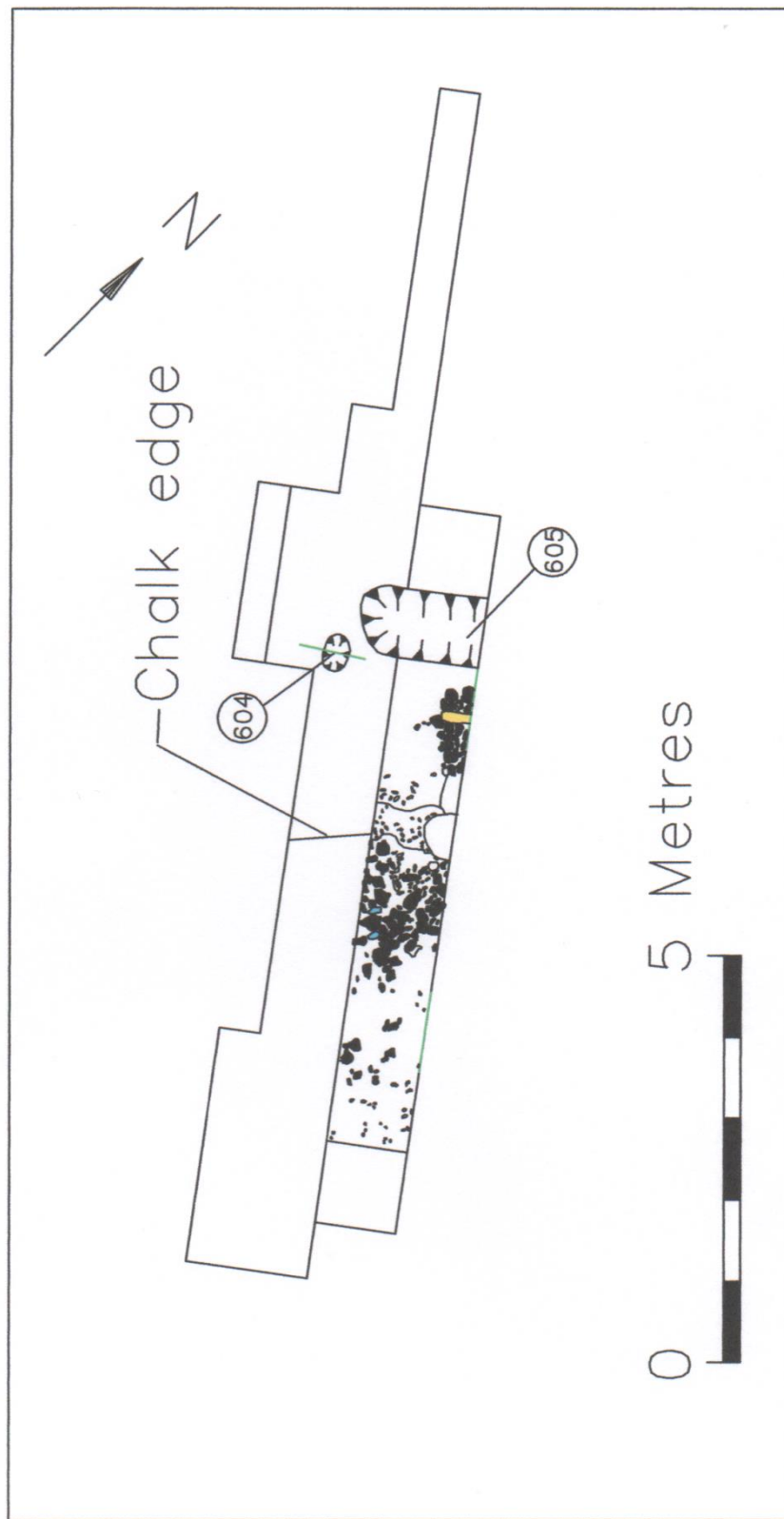


Fig 9. Trench J (Upper level features)

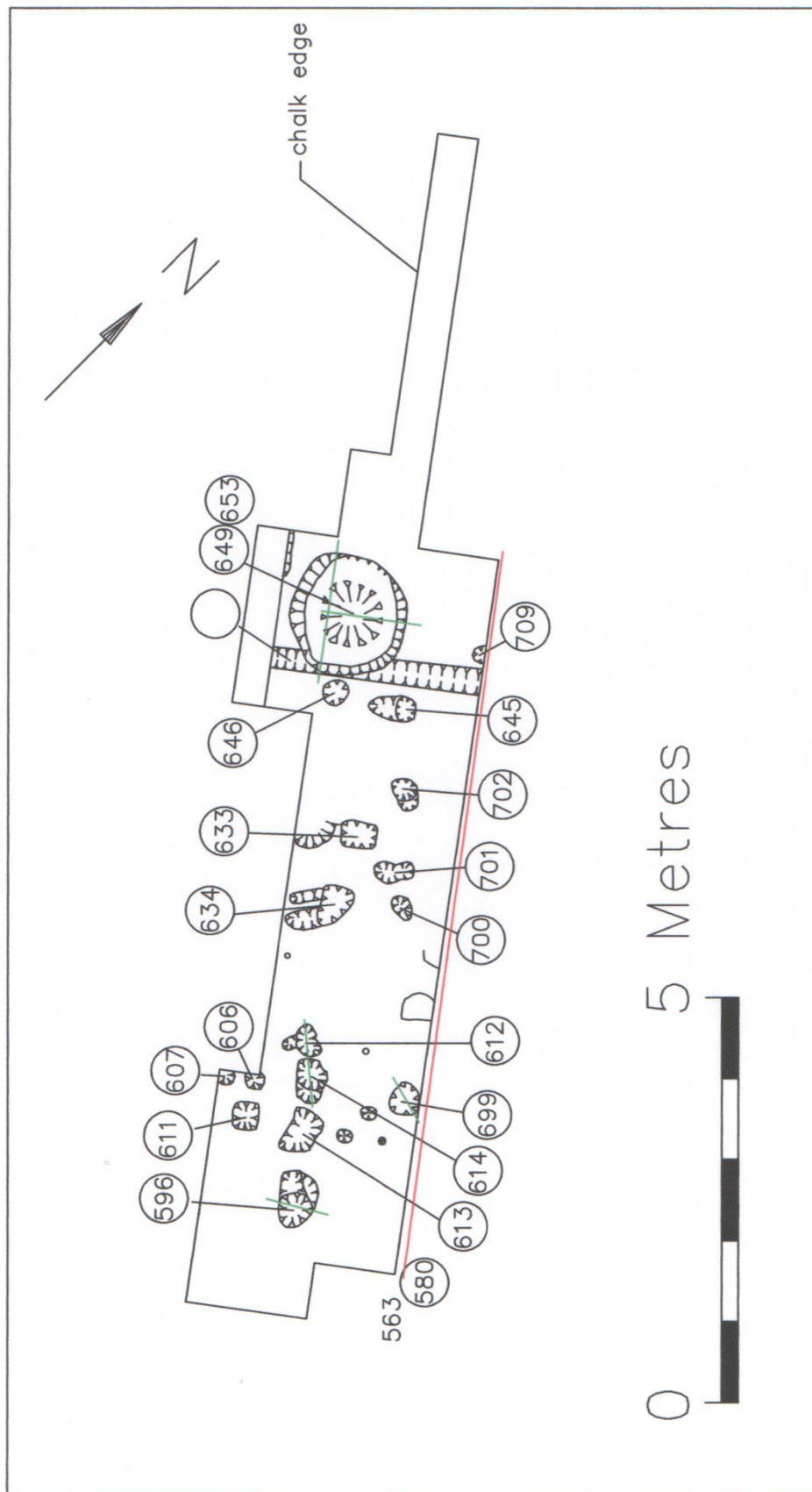


Fig 9B. Trench J

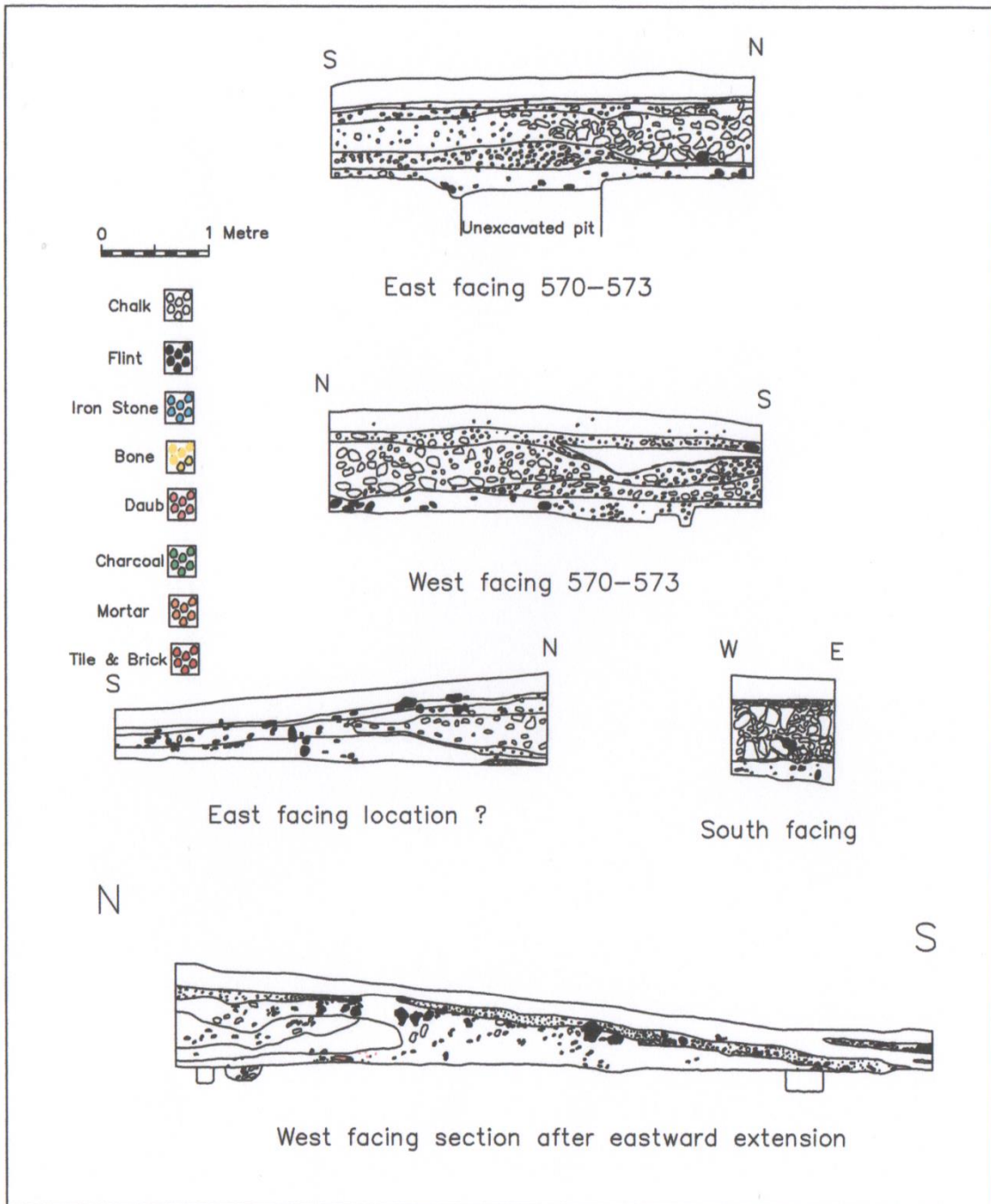


Fig 10. Trench J sections drawings

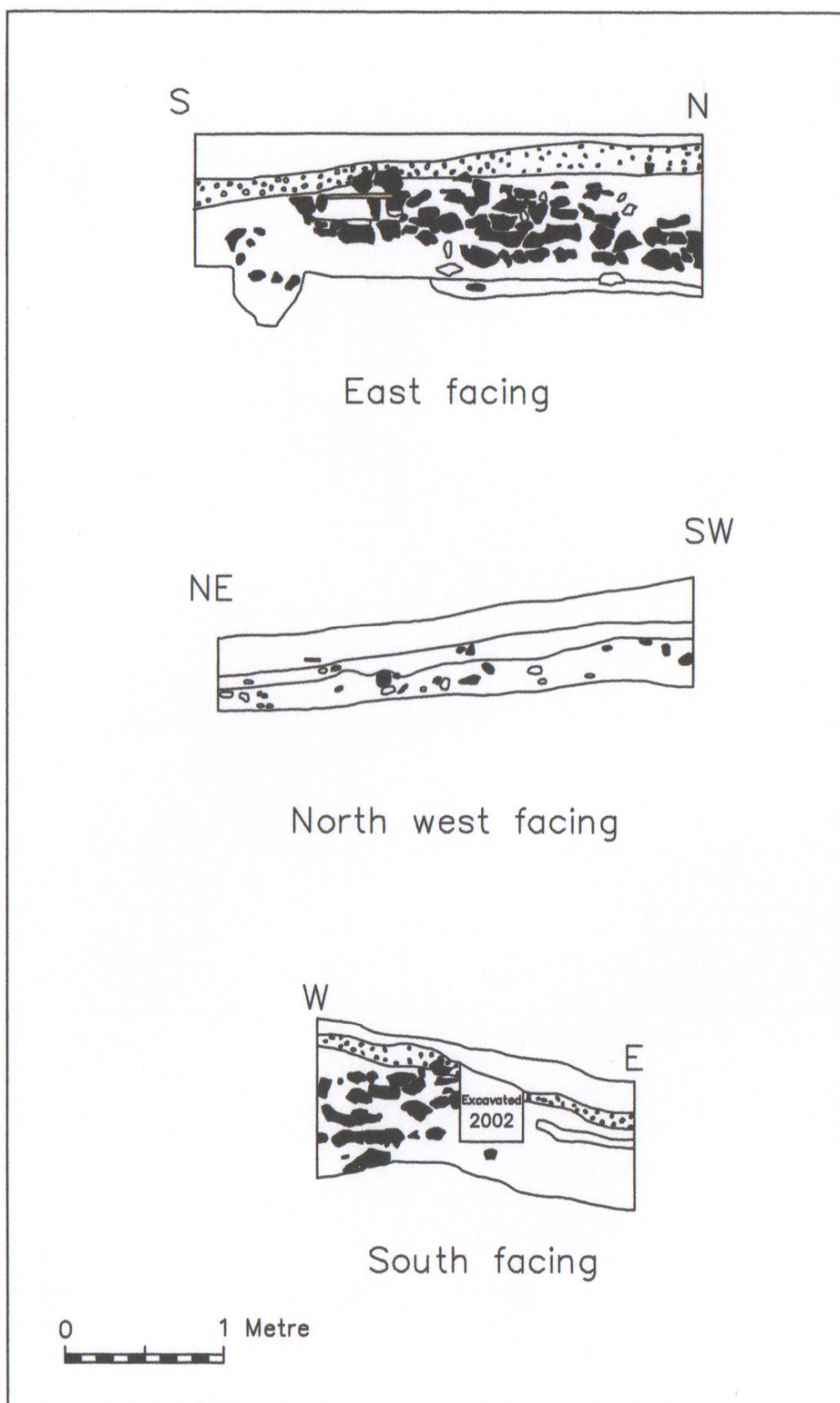


Fig 11. Trench D Section drawings

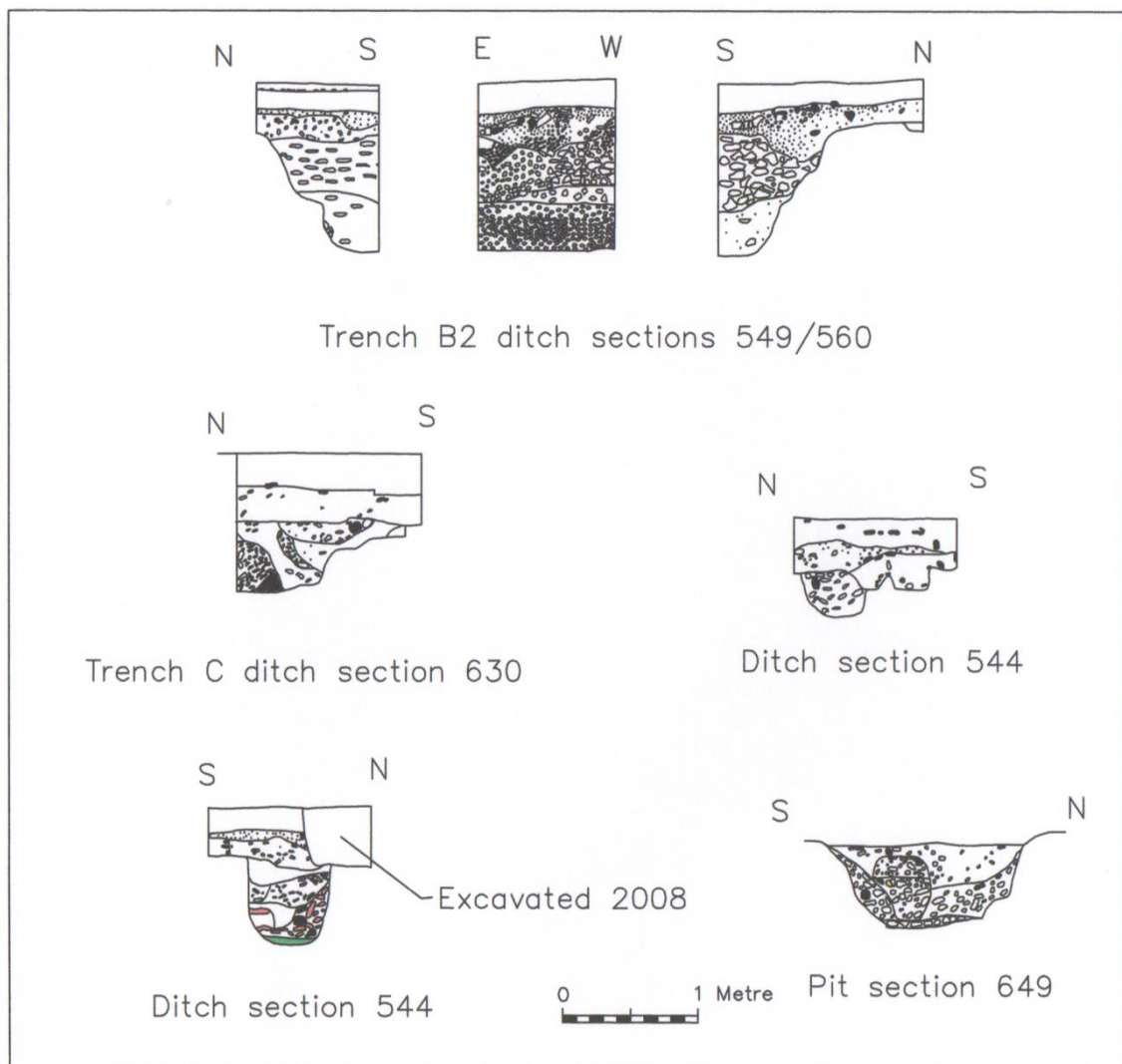


Fig 12. Ditch and pit section drawings

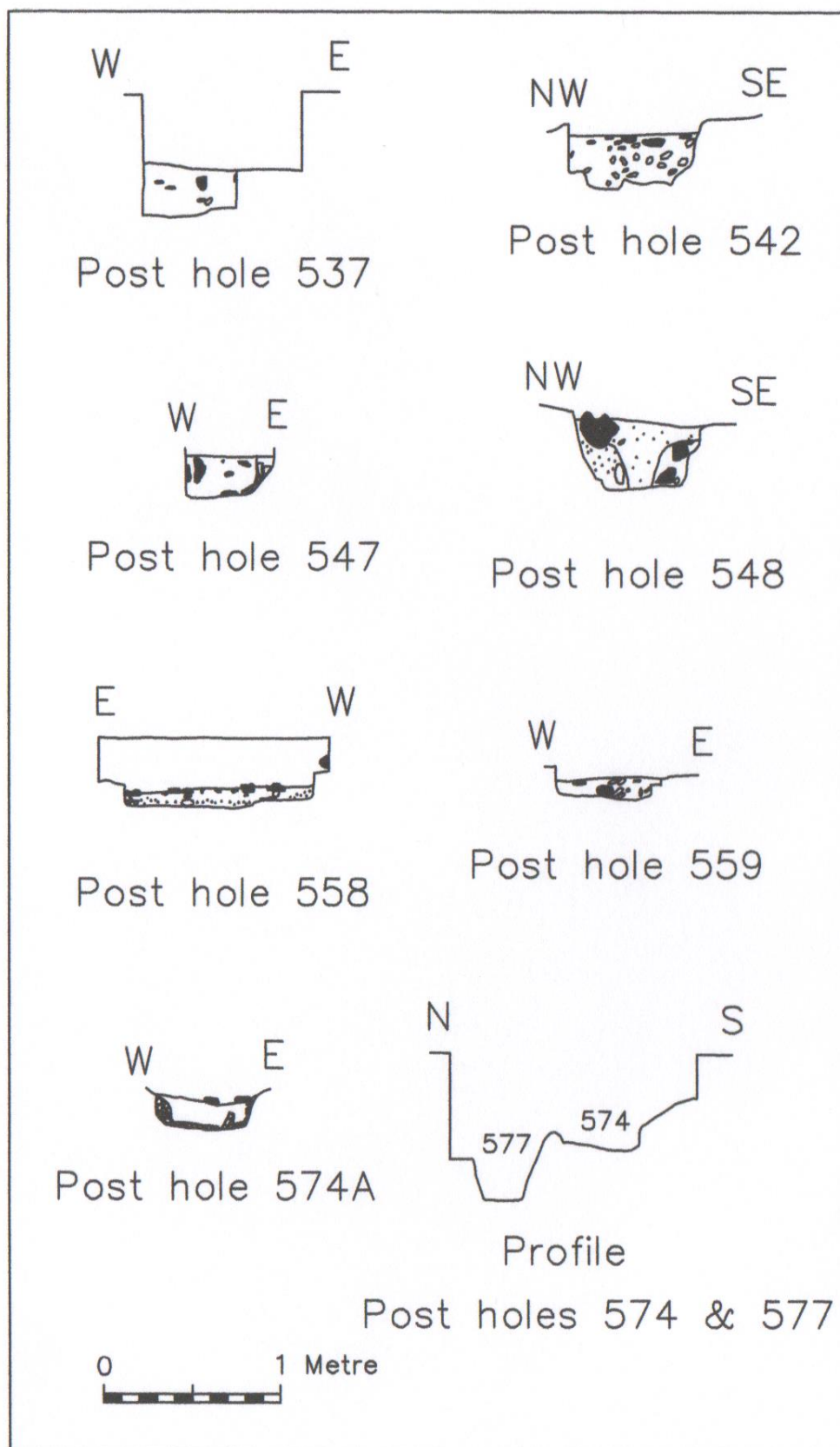


Fig 13. Post holes

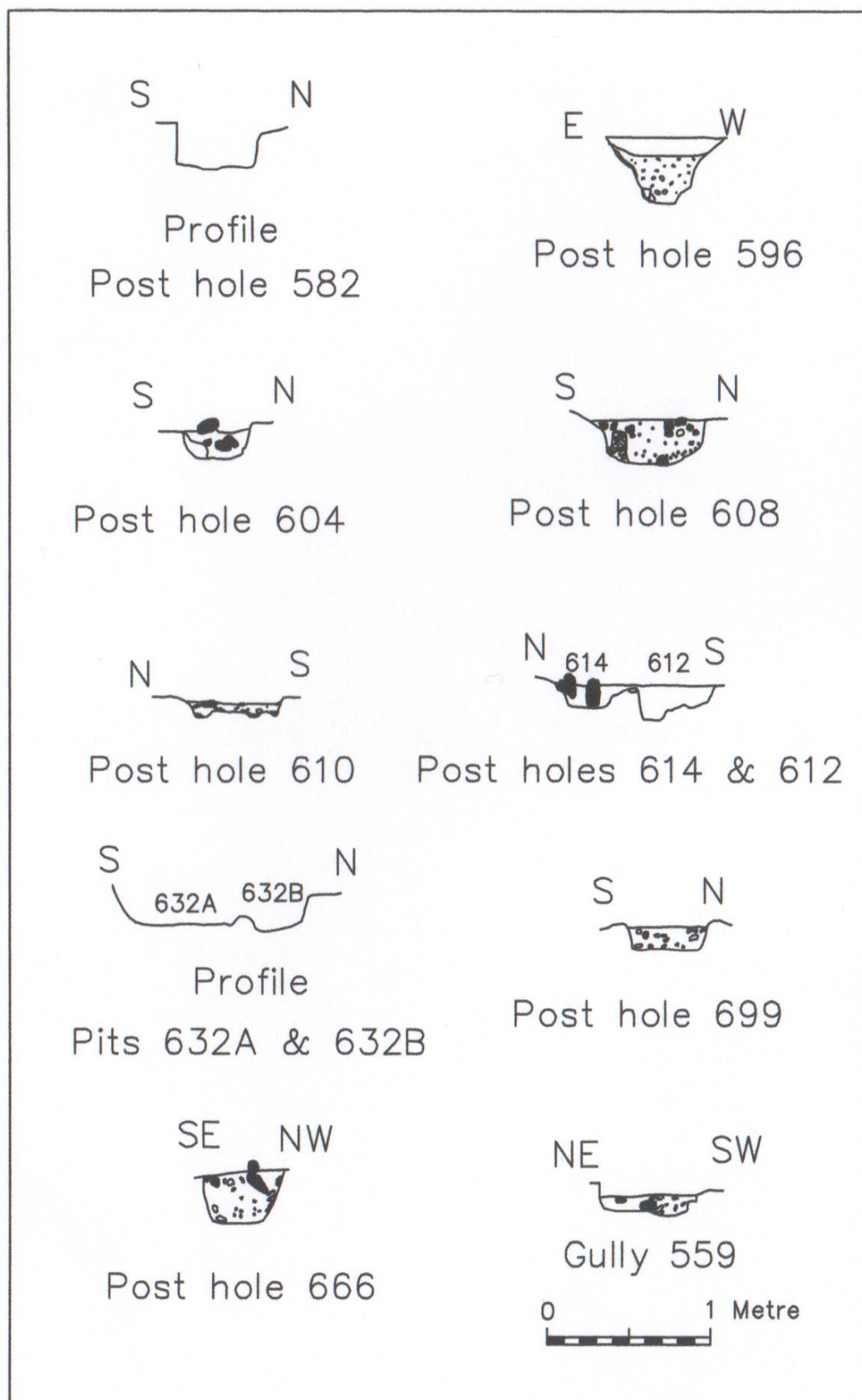


Fig 14. Post holes and gully

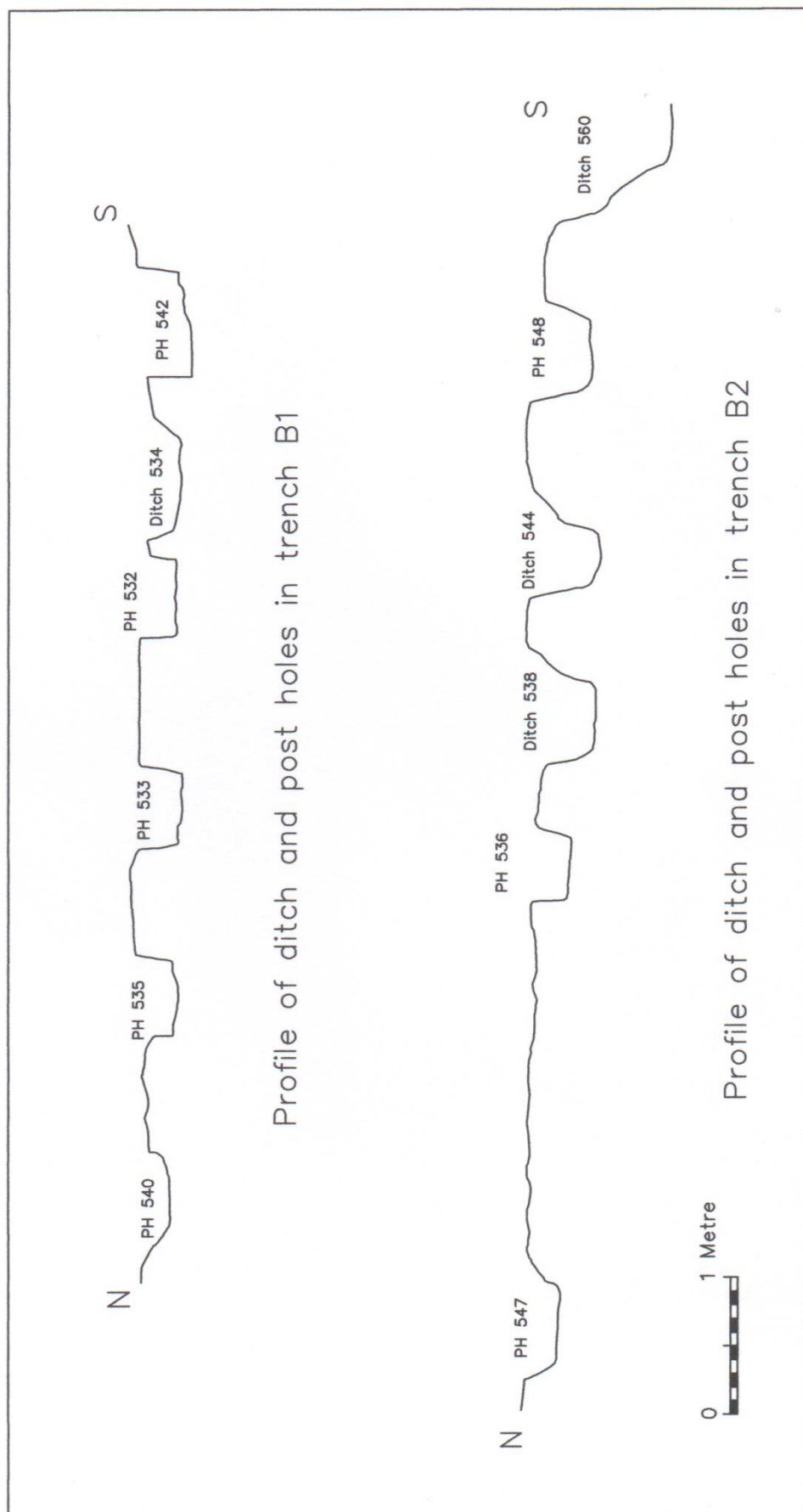


Fig 15. Profile of ditch and post holes in trenches B1 and B2

A Community Project at Whitehawk Hill Neolithic Enclosure 2014

Introduction

In early 2014 a community project focused around the Neolithic causewayed enclosure at Whitehawk won a Heritage Lottery grant of about £99,000. The project consisted of Archaeology South East (ASE), a part of UCL, and based at Portslade, Brighton Museum and the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society. Several meetings had been held with regards the project during the previous two years, with ASE being the leading partner in the scheme.

The winning of the award meant that a project based on Whitehawk Hill could commence. It was to consist of several enterprises centred around the known archaeology and a research and study of the lands around the Scheduled Ancient Monument. The project started in May of 2014.

The Community Project

The Geophysical Survey

In May a team consisting of members of ASE and volunteers from BHAS conducted a major magnetometry survey at Whitehawk Hill. Training in the use of magnetometry equipment and experience in the downloading of the data was also given by ASE. A total of 6 members of BHAS participated in the event. The lands surveyed included all of the accessible lands north of the Manor Hill road and part of the actual Brighton race course. Large sections of lands to the south of the Manor hill road were also surveyed, including accessible section of the Ancient Scheduled monument and the run off area at the south end of the race course.

A training session was held at Portslade at the ASE offices and the results confirmed that there was excessive metal interference from the surrounding area, but a number of potential Anomalies were identified.

The Museum Finds Sessions

During the summer members of the Brighton public along with volunteers from BHAS attended numerous sessions at Brighton museum. The team guided by Richard Le Saux and Andrew Maxted examined the finds from the original 1930's Curwen excavations and began to repackage the finds into modern containers. The team also pack the original finds bags as they are now in themselves archaeological artefacts. It also gave people the opportunity to handle and see the items now stored away in the museum vaults.

The Whitehawk Hill Excavations

In August 2014 a major series of excavations were undertaken at Whitehawk Hill. The main trench was located immediately south and west of the television mast (Fig 1.). The west facing trench was a considerable size and it became clear that the public volunteers were not going to have too much impact over the two week span of the excavation. Several sections were cut across the site in various locations to try and seek Neolithic features. Unfortunately the digging revealed only geological features. Finds from the dig included a few struck flint flakes, a number of pieces of fire-cracked flint, some oysters and lots of 19th century debris probably associated with rubbish tipping.

Several other trenches were also cut on the other side of the hill, to the west and north of the television mast, but again found only geological features and very few finds of prehistoric date (Fig 2.)



Fig 1. The west facing trench.

A pair of trenches were cut on the north side of the Manor Hill road and close to the side of the race course. A number of linear features had been observed in the geophysics but these proved to be either geological or modern features.

The Conclusions and Legacy of the Project

The excavations while not revealing new Neolithic activities did prove that additional ditches and banks suspected at by earlier works were not in the area excavated. The geophysics was sadly affected by the environment and time and financial restrictions did not allow for additional investigations. However, on the positive side members of the BHAS did manage to handle and repack all of the finds from the original excavations. It was an extremely useful exercise with BHAS involved and encouraging other members of the Brighton public to become involved in archaeology. It is hoped that a result of the project will be an increase in BHAS membership.



Fig 2. Diggers on one of the east facing sites

Other aspects of the project included a number of talks by Jon Sygrave of ASE at various locations. BHAS also presented a number of talks and made visits to local community groups, museums and schools. The highlight of the project was an open day held in late August on Whitehawk Hill and organised by Hilary Orange of ASE. Groups from around the area presented displays on archaeology, nature and other local activities including allotments and orchards. Dr Matt Pope even brought up a road kill deer and skinned and butchered the carcass using only flint tools. Other environmental projects were organised by Paul Gorringer, a countryside ranger from Brighton and Hove City Council.

One final positive action was the installation on Whitehawk Hill of a notice board illustrating the archaeology and ecology of Whitehawk Hill. This is something that the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society has lobbied for over many years. It is now

a reality and the people of the area and Brighton are now aware of what a nationally important site they have in their lands.

A full report on the project is being prepared by Jon Sygrave at ASE.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Jon Sygrave and Hilary Orange and the services of ASE for applying for the HLF grant and organising the event, to Brighton Museum and especially Richard Le Saux and Andy Maxted for opening the doors of Brighton Museum, and to those members of the BHAS committee, field unit and membership for supporting the project.

John Funnell 26th August 2015.

BRIGHTON AND HOVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Test Trench

ADDRESS:- Drove Road, Woodingdean

DATES OF EXCAVATION:- 4 May 2015

BHAS OFFICERS CONDUCTING EXCAVATION:- J.Skelton, J.Funnell, Paula Cohen, David Cuthbertson.

RESULTS OF EXAMINATION

Site Location – (Approx TQ 34614 05808)

Historical Background – Drove Road, Woodingdean is part of Juggs Road, a pre 1770 route from Brighton to Lewes which was used predominantly to transport fisherman's catch. The route may have its origins in prehistoric times as a ridgeway and the discovery of a small horde of Roman coins nearby at Newmarket Hill (Shields, 2005) has led to the suggestion that it may have been a Roman Road.

Geology – The geology of the area is predominantly a bedrock of upper [chalk](#), partially overlain by [clay-with-flints](#).

The Test Trench – A small test trench, 0.95m x 1.6m, was dug down to chalk bedrock along the track 0.4m from the North edge. At this point the track is 2.8m wide. It was not possible cut through the edge of the track as the edging boards had already been laid by the contractors. The trench was dug by machine under archaeological supervision and then finished by hand trowelling ready for recording (Photo 1). The machined spoil was searched for artefacts.

The depth of soil at this point was about 30 cm and had frequent inclusions of large flint and chalk nodules, moderate large brick fragments and occasional small slate fragments. The inclusions were well mixed through the entire depth except that there was some suggestion of a more dense layer of brick about 20cm above the chalk surface (Photo 2 and 3).

The Finds – There was no evidence that any of the finds were anything but "modern".

There were six nails, one possible knife blade, four fragments of tile, six pottery sherds, three glass fragments, one shell fragment, one slate fragment and one "souvenir" spoon (Photo 4).

Conclusions.

There was no evidence of a pre-modern constructed surface over the chalk bedrock and no artefacts of pre-modern age.

Photo 1 Test trench



Photo 2 East facing section



Photo 3 Detail East facing section



Photo 4 The finds



References

Shields, Glen. ["The Roman roads of the Portslade/ Aldrington area in relation to a possible Roman port at Copperas Gap"](#) (PDF). *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 143 (2005), 135 – 49.

Watching Brief along the Ditchling Road 2014

Introduction

In early 2014 Brighton and Hove City Council decided to create a new cycle/walking lane along the north section of Ditchling Road. The track ran from east of the Woodbourne garage up to Old Boat corner, which is the junction with Coldean Lane. The route had been the subject of a desk top survey by Chris Butler and the CBAS group and a report had been submitted to Brighton and Hove City Council Planning Department. Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society became aware of the project on their way to a Local Access Forum meeting and had raised the issue with BHCC representatives at that meeting. It appeared that the work had commenced without any recourse for archaeological investigation. As the work was already underway BHAS were asked by County Hall to step in and conduct a watching brief along the complete length of the route. The cycle and walkway was about 2 metres in width and was cut along the whole length of the road, running parallel to the main road. The walkway was created by removing the top soil with a machine digger, but the maximum cut into the surface was only 150mm in depth.

History

The Ditchling Road has quite an interesting archaeological profile and a number of finds have been revealed along the route taken by the path. Field walking of the fields at the north end of the route, close to the location of the bridge that goes over the A27, produced Neolithic and Bronze Age flint work, but nothing of any great concentration (Funnell 2001). However, Bronze Age settlements have been found a short distance east and west of the Ditchling Road at Downsview and Patcham Fawcett School (Rudling). The site of a Bronze Age barrow was excavated in the 1950's on the east side of the Ditchling Road in Ditchling Field (Holleyman & Yeates), and during the creation of bunding opposite the Woodbourne garage a possible Iron Age round house was recorded (Funnell 2002).

The Ditchling Road has produced a number of Roman finds including a corn drying oven and pottery, but any settlement is still awaiting detection. A series of trenches were cut along a field to the east of the Ditchling Road in 1991 looking for the site, but nothing was found. It is possible that this Roman site was destroyed when the Ditchling Road was re-routed in the 1920's. Geophysics conducted in the 1990's by BHAS on the open lands to the east of the Woodbourne garage highlighted a number of features which may be Iron Age (Funnell). The Ditchling Road is highly likely to be an ancient trackway leading from Brighton, to the hill-forts at Hollingbury and Ditchling Beacon and an Iron Age landscape was recorded in the early part of the 20th century (Toms).

The Watching brief account has been recorded in a diary of the visits to the development over a period of several months.

The Ditchling Road Watching Brief Diary

Thursday 27th February 2014 – John Skelton and the author met with Abbey Hone of Brighton and Hove City Council and the contractors on site at Ditchling Road. The visit included a short survey of the area already uncovered and it found plenty of modern materials, glass, tile and brick lying in the bunding already created. The ground was waterlogged and very smeary. There were lots of cinder fragments about suggesting that there was an earlier pathway beneath the grass. The contractors were only digging to a depth of about 150mm maximum (Fig 1.)



Fig 1. The South section being removed

Monday 3rd March 2014 – The contractors were creating a bank on the west side of the pathway and a small bund to the east. They had not extended the area as yet. A survey of the length of excavated soil noted more of the cinder surface, smears of chalk, but no really distinct features. The road bank on the east drops down onto the road and then there is a dramatic drop down to the hill to the west. It does look at this point as if the road has been raised and levelled. The contractors mentioned about an earlier cinder pathway that had been built in the 1920's (Fig 2). Plenty of finds of contemporary materials glass, tile and brick and a complete Shippam's paste jar. Nothing has been found from antiquity as yet.



Fig 2. The Cinder Path

Sunday 9th March 2014 – The contractors had now moved northwards up to and about 80 metres beyond the sign post for the sharp left bend. The ground now has a linear division with a darker layer to the west and more chalk to the east. There were a couple of pockets containing stone wares and broken glass fragments which are probably small Victorian rubbish dumps. The contractors had dug some drainage ditches, but had backfilled them with rubble before BHAS arrived, so it was too late to record any depth. The shallow excavation is revealing some potential pits, but in most cases these were only smears which when excavated were not to any great depth.

Wednesday 12th March 2014 – A BHAS watching brief team consisting of J.Funnell, J.Skelton, J.MacGregor, F.Briscoe, M.Funnell, S.Preferment and B.Collins visited the work at Ditchling Road on the above date.

The new members were given a brief insight into the watching brief process, with particular reference to health and safety matters and working alongside heavy machinery. The safe working distance from any working machinery was emphasised as was the wearing of steel toecap boots and high visibility vests.

The team checked along the already created shared path examining the new bunding created and looking for finds. The majority of finds was porcelain and china, possibly associated with Victorian dumping or fly tipping. Two struck flint flakes were recovered and they both had a grey patination.

At the end of the current section being worked the topography of the roadway was explained to members of the watching brief team, along with the potential for Bronze Age and Roman remains as the pathway moved northwards.

Week beginning 16th March - Members of the BHAS team conducted various visits to the site, a few flint flakes were found and some contemporary finds but nothing ancient.

Tuesday 1st April 2014 – BHAS members J.Funnell, J.Skelton, K.Skelton and M.Gardiner visited the site. Nothing of any significance was found.

This section is on the north facing slope and on the west side of the road opposite the small car park. An examination of the cleared areas noted a number of possible features. John Skelton excavated one feature down to chalk and found a mixture of contemporary finds including several nails and a copper alloy object, but nothing of antiquity. Another area was investigated and also came down to chalk after only a few centimetres. It appeared to be a feature created by tree roots, as a tree lay immediately west of the feature.

A number of flint flakes were collected from the disturbed soil, including one nice Neolithic item with a white patination.

Thursday 3rd April – Fran Brisoe and J.Funnell visited the site, but the new section had already been covered over, so it was just a quick look among the soil lumps. Finds included a pair of flint cores.

Thursday 10th April – John Skelton and Suzanne Preferment visited the site and recovered 3 pieces of Iron Age pottery

Thursday 24th April – J.Funnell visited the site which is now in the valley bottom. They were digging a drain through into the field to the west. There was quite a complex stratigraphy but all very disturbed and from the finds in the layers they are quite modern, possibly Second World War? There was a loamy soil, with lots of red tile and then a dark layer of ash and burning. Under this was a thin layer of compact chalk, before coming down onto a lower loamy layer. The bottom surface had a possible ditch running north/south but with plenty of surface finds of modern material including glass. The contractors had also cut through a wall adjacent to the road, which appears to be modern with breeze block construction. An examination of the very mixed removed soil produced one single struck flake, some blue and white modern ceramics and single sherd of East Sussex Ware pottery.

April and Early May 2014 - During the period of late April and early May the construction team at Ditchling Road were creating the drains in the valley bottom and then opening up the next section working northwards, up the hill towards the A27. BHAS did miss monitoring this section as they were away working on a community project at Whitehawk Hill.

Thursday 22nd May – A visit was made to site and an area of about 50 metres was inspected of a section that climbed the hill towards Old Boat corner. Sadly the area

was being used by a dumper truck to transport materials, it was very compacted. There were no signs of features and an inspection of the bunds recovered no finds.

A new section of about 100 metres going over the hill and down towards Old Boat corner had been cleared and this was examined. There were a number of features but the large amount of clay and large flints clearly indicated that these features were solution hollows, geological features. Despite this there was an examination of the features. The finds from the day included a single piece of fire-cracked flint, 2 struck flint flakes with a grey patination, some oyster and scallop shell and a single sherd of East Sussex Ware pottery. Other finds included Victorian ceramics and flower pot (Fig 3.)



Fig 3. Shallow features in the north Section

Friday 30th May – A visit was made to the site after it was noted that slabs had been removed close to the bridge over the A27. However, by the time of the visit the exposed area had already been covered with the pathway material. A examination of the surface showed that the natural chalk was visible in some places, but no features were observed on these still exposed sections. An examination of the bunding along the side of the road produced the normal collection of contemporary finds including brick, tile, slate, glazed ceramics. A broken glass vessel was also found which included the neck of a vessel and a piece of 19th century stoneware pottery. It has proved very difficult to be on site when the soil was being removed.

Friday 6th June – A visit was made to the site today as the top soil and grass had been removed on the final section up to the bridge. There were a number of areas containing large flint nodules and clay, and these certainly looked like solution hollows (Fig 4.). A couple of slightly darker features were examined with a trowel but only produced finds of unstruck flint and a lighter clay. The only other finds from this section were a struck flake with grey patination some pieces of clear glass, including a bottle neck and couple of pieces of modern flower pot.



Fig 4. The north section

The contractors were asked about the final stretch up to Old Boat Corner, but apparently this is still being discussed and no final decision has been made.

The stages of development varied in time, with considerable gaps between each extension. The contractors were very helpful when the team were on site, but did not contact BHAS at any time to advise on how the work was progressing or to suggest an appropriate time to visit.

The Features

Several features were observed after the shallow top soil had been removed, but nothing of antiquity was uncovered. Most were associated with tree or shrub roots or were clay solution hollows consisting of natural geology. The only exception was in the valley section where a modern wall was revealed, and this is most likely to be associated with the re-routing of the roads in the 1920's.

The Finds

The Flintwork

A total of 13 struck flakes were recovered most were of a grey or black patination. Three flakes had a white patination and another, single flake, had a blue patination. A pair of cores were found in the south section, both with a grey patination. A single, large piece of fire-fractured flint was found in the north section weighing 79g.

The Pottery

Iron Age pottery – A total of 3 sherds were found from the same location on the south side of the development.

East Sussex Ware – 2 sherds of East Sussex Wares were found, one in the south section of the development and the other in the north section.

Ceramics – The bunding had numerous pieces of Victorian and later ceramics eroding from the sections. A total of 28 pieces were collected as samples. The items were mainly white, and included a delicate base. There was a single piece of brown coloured and 10 decorated pieces varying in colour and decoration. There were 3 grey striped pieces obviously from the same vessel and a blue and white decorated item.

Glass – Numerous pieces of window glass and some vessels were collected. The main pieces were clear glass with two items of coloured glass. Among the collection was a complete Shippam's paste jar and several bottle necks.

Stonewares – A number of fragments of stoneware were found, and among the collection was an almost complete brown coloured vessel.

Marine Mollusc – A total of 3 pieces of mollusc were recovered which consisted of two medium fragments of oyster shell and a single piece of scallop. These were found in the north section of the development.

Metalwork – Several pieces of metalwork were observed, most of the items were extremely rusty and corroded. A large metal modern clamp was noted and a total of 5 nails collected, all being of a modern date.

Bone – The only piece of bone recovered was a rib bone, possibly from a cat, dog or rabbit.

Brick and Tile – Numerous pieces of contemporary brick and tile were observed in the bunding along the roadside, but nothing was collected.

Conclusions

The watching brief noted that there was a distinct division on the south section of a cinder layer and solid chalk to the east. This must be associated with the re-routing of the Ditchling road and clearly indicates that on the south 'down hill' section and the north 'up hill' section that severe terracing had been undertaken. It is highly likely that any archaeology was removed during this development. The central lower valley section also had large scale developments with the creation of walls and drains, again this may have removed any archaeological deposits.

There were a number of scatters of Victorian debris at various locations along the path, in very small shallow scoops, but these produced nothing of any significance. It is almost certain that the surfaces adjacent to the road have been severely truncated or built up, but it is also possible that vestiges of Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman activity may still remain in those areas untouched by the road works.

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Discoveries in the Coldean Area

Introduction

Over the past century investigations in the area around Coldean have produced a number of indications of Romano- British settlement. Apart from the valuable rescue work done in the 1950's by N.E.Norris, Ken Goodchild, and C.W. Yeates, none of these discoveries have been recorded in a more than cursory fashion. In view of the proposed developments for this area, and the expected construction of the A27 Brighton by pass immediately to the east, it seems desirable that the evidence for settlement in this area be published in an accessible form and could perhaps be regarded as a preliminary to further fieldwork in the area.

19th Century Discoveries

Note: Brighton Museum accession numbers are given for extant finds where applicable.

The first major discovery at Coldean was a grave group. This was found by workmen whilst digging for flints between the Brighton to Lewes Road, and the mouth of Moulsecombe pit at approximately (TQ 332079). The exact date of the discovery is uncertain, (Griffith 1912) estimates 1892 while a short note on the discovery in the Sussex Daily News for July 9th 1887 suggests that the find had been fairly recent. However, the Brighton Museum register records information, supplied by Councillor W.W. Savage in 1910, that the finds had been made about 1876.

The grave group had been found at a depth of about 4 feet (1.2M) and consisted of 3 jars, two beakers and a large jug.

Group 1.

Items 1, 2 and 3 details lost.

4. 250108, Ae 478. – A large double cordoned jar with a single neck cordon, the rim is broken. The mottled buff/black fabric has crude all over burnish; the unequal cordon arrangement seems to be deliberate. This vessel held cremated bone.
5. 250109, Ae 478a – A small bag shaped beaker with cornice rim and body groove below the neck. The fabric is hard, fine and light grey in colour. Panels of barbotine dots have been applied to the upper body, and diagonal lines run below the girth. A similar example although in a different fabric is known from Fishbourne (Cunliffe 1971, type 268) and is dated to the early second century.
6. 250110, Ae 479 – A large jug with a strap handle in a hard gritty dark grey fabric with ironstone and quartz inclusions. Lightly burnished vertical streaks are on the neck and shoulder, and a single horizontal band of burnishing runs around the base of the neck. A similar type appears at Fishbourne (Cunliffe

1971, type 131) probably a Rowlands Castle product, production of which seems to start in the first and continue into the second centuries. The fabric and finish in this example is coarser, and the form does not correspond particularly well as the Fishbourne examples, these features may mark this example out as one of the later more localised types postulated by Cunliffe. This vessel held cremated bone and this is reported on below.

7. 250152, R 1313 – Hanging lamp made in blue green glass with tree looped handles, the glass contains numerous air bubbles. This lamp was found inside one of the larger jars (numbers 2 or 4 above) with cremated bone, and its inclusion was presumably intended to light the dead person's way to the afterlife. The provision of a hanging rather than a portable lamp may suggest that in common with some other burials the lamp was intended to provide illumination within the grave rather than in the afterlife (Black 1986, p. 220).

Another cremation burial of an infant, contained within a jar with a lid is recorded as having been found about 1880 (O.S. record card for TQ 30 NW 4). However, this does not seem to be represented in the extant finds in Brighton Museum, and its present whereabouts is unknown.

Finds of Uncertain Date

The following vessels which seem to be representative of at least two cremation groups all appear to have been found in the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. Some doubts exist over their exact provenance within Coldean. The Brighton Museum register and index records the find spot as either between Ditchling and Lewes roads or near the junction of Lewes and Ditchling roads. The two most likely spots are where the Coldean Lane joins either the Ditchling Road (TQ3232094) or the Lewes Road (TQ337082), with the latter (which is closer to the find spot of the first group) being the most likely.

Group 2.

8. 250006, Ae 8a. – A jar in East Sussex Ware with an everted rim and shoulder cordon, grey buff in colour. The inclusions are not especially coarse suggesting that this vessel probably should be placed in Green's (1980) A.D. 70-250 category. The vessel held cremated bone which is reported on below.
9. 250006, Ae 8b. - Iron Knife. This knife seems to have been found with Ae 8a, although it is not recorded in the museums records.
10. 250006 Ae 8c. - A large cordoned jar with a neck cordon, in a hard, dark grey fabric, burnished all over the body and on the outside of the rim.

Group 3.

- 11.** 250007 Ae 9. – A small cordoned jar in a coarse mottled buff black micaceous fabric. The single cordon is only faintly delineated, and the neck cordon is vestigial. The vessel seems to have been hand built in imitation of the cordoned jars of the Brighton area. Brighton Museum's index records that this jar was originally found with a fibula and samian ware. However, these no longer seem to be extant in the museum's collection.

Finds Made since 1950 (Fig 1.)

During 1950 Mr C.W.Yeates, N.E.S.Norris and Ken Goodchild, following up the excavation of a Bronze Age barrow in Ditchling field carried out some rescue work on sites uncovered during the building of the housing estate in Cold Dean. A sequence of occupation stretching from the middle Iron Age to the fourth century A.D. was recorded in somewhat adverse conditions.



Fig 1. Finds at Coldean in 1950

The earliest evidence for activity in the area was the fore part of a ground and polished Neolithic flint axe (number 12 below) found in Wolseley Rad (TQ 327086 approx.). The site of an Iron Age hut floor found in a garden in Nanson Road (TQ 328086) produced pottery dating to the period 200-100 B.C. Immediately to the south in the next garden a ditch running approximately east west produced late Iron Age pottery. This was superseded by a palisade trench which contained pottery probably dateable to the first century A.D. To the east along Ingham Drive (TQ 329086) a series of ditches and occupation sites were dated by pottery, including colour coated stamped wares and a small coin, to the third and fourth centuries. Other evidence for late occupation was also found in Wolseley Road at (TQ 328085). Here a late third to fourth century cremation burial was disturbed, and although the cinery urn (number 13 below) was recovered, the cremation which it contained was unfortunately lost (Yeates 1951, 1986 & Goodchild, K, pers comm.)

12. Fore part of a ground and polished flint axe. The flint has a fine white patination which covers the entire surface indicating that it was broken in antiquity. Areas of pecking around the break indicate that the axe has a secondary use as a hammer. It was found at approx. (TQ 327086). The axe is in the possession of Mr K. Good child.
13. R 5594. – A large jar with a reeded rim and raised indented cordon running below the rim. The fabric is hard, fine and light grey in colour, with a black slip over the rim and upper body. This is an Alice Holt product of Lyne and Jeffereis (1978) type 5E2/5E3, dated A.D. 270-350. It was found at approx (TQ328085) in fragments and without the originally enclosed cremation.

In 1978 two Roman coins were found in the back garden of 137 Hawkhurst Road (TQ 327092) These were unfortunately inadequately recorded at the time, but consisted of an Aes or Dupondis of Nero with a reverse with the temple of Janus closed; and an Aes of Faustina the elder with the reverse of a figure standing left apparently sacrificing over an altar. Other Roman remains are known from Ditchling Field which lies between Hawkhurst and Ditchling roads (O.S. record card TQ 30 NW 45) and this probably associated with the occupation under the estate to the south east.

Discussion

The occupation at Coldean seems to represent a peasant settlement, probably enclosed by a ditch, and associated field system similar to those discovered at Thundersbarrow Hill and Park Brow. The evidence available points to occupation being continuous from the middle Iron Age (200 B.C.) until probably into the fourth century. The relationship of this settlement and the nearby hill fort at Hollingbury, dated to the 6th century B.C. by the latest excavations (Holmes 1984), is interesting. It is possible that this represents the form settlements took on the hill fort's abandonment, although it must be pointed out that the date that this occurred is not known. Similarly the eventual fate of settlement in this area is also a matter of interest.

Rocky Clump (TQ 326102) - in Stanmer Park excavations in the 1950's revealed a possible Romano Celtic shrine of third to fourth century date (Gorton 1987) to the south of which were a series of east west orientated burials without grave goods. These burials were certainly pre-A.D. 765 (Gorton 1988, p.10) and the orientation and lack of grave goods might suggest that they were Christian, although the dangers of this line of argument have been pointed out elsewhere (Rhatz). This small cemetery could either be sub Roman or Saxon with the latter being the most probable, the rise of sacred sites as burials places by the Saxons is well attested, and the place name evidence seems to suggest that a memory of Rocky Clump's previous function remained. In either case this would suggest the continued existence of settlement in this area, probably on a similar pattern to that which had previously existed, at least until the late Saxon period. The boundary ditch of the estate granted by King Aedwulf to the canon and monks of St Michael, South Malling by Lewes in A.D. 765 was laid out apparently without the knowledge of the burial ground at Rocky Clump, which might suggest that any associate settlement had been abandoned some time before this date.

Author O.Gilkes 42 The Green, Southwick, Sussex BN4 4FR

References:-

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- Yeates C. 1950** ' Prehistoric Man in the Cold Dean Area' Sussex County Magazine Volume 25 Number 8, 337-380

A Field Walking Project at Hollingbury, Brighton 1991 – Additional Notes

Introduction

A report is filed in the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society field notebook 2000 about field walking conducted at Hollingbury in 1991. However, some of the data was missing from that report and has recently been found in a search of the BHAS archives. This new document is an appendix to the earlier article.

The field is to the south east of the Hollingbury hill fort and is a large horseshoe shaped field (TQ324074).

Methodology

The field was divided into lines spaced 20 metres apart and these lines were divided into 20 metre transects. Finds were collected from each transect. The later lines 'V' to 'C'C' were walked after the field had been harrowed and with the assistance of the Young Archaeologists Club (YAC). The field was walked north to south. The dot density diagrams can be observed in the 2001 field notebook.

The Finds

The Flint Assemblage

Debitage	Number of Pieces
Flakes	610
Blades	9
Cores	5

Implements

Scrapers	22
Notched pieces	8
Fire-cracked Flint	193
Total	847

The flint collected was of typical down land material consisting of either black/grey with a white cortex attached or with a white patination.

The Pottery

Only 3 sherds of ancient pottery were collected, all were badly abraded. The majority of finds consisted of glazed ceramics dating to the 19th and 20th centuries.

Fabrics

East Sussex Ware	1 sherd
Grey sandy Ware	1 sherd
Sandy ware (medieval)	1 sherd
19 th /20 th Century	117 sherds
Total	120 sherds

Clay Pipes

Fragments of 18 clay pipe stems were found but no bowls. The stems varied in diameter from 5.6mm to 7.9mm. The narrow bores of the pipes would tend to date them from X1720-1900+ (Atkinson).

Marine Molluscs

Although the field is some 3 kilometres from the sea evidence of marine molluscs was found in the south section of the field.

Oyster	16 Fragments
Scallop	4 Fragments

Conclusions

Flintwork from the field at Hollingbury was of a general dispersal with no concentration of any finds. The southwest section of the field contained the greatest number of flint tools, but the quantity was still small and widespread. The clay pipe and molluscs lay in the southeast part of the field and close to the location of Harrington Farm (TQ315071), now built over by the Hollingdean estate.

A large white circular feature noted during the field walking contained 20th century material eroding out of the centre, comprising modern brick, sand and tile. A depression noted in the northwest section of the field produced no finds of any interest, but this feature lies close to the location of Hollingbury Barn, now demolished.

The field walking produced very little evidence from the Iron Age. The paucity of finds would tend to suggest that this part of Hollingbury was used for pasture during the pre and post Roman periods.

Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank the tenant farmer Mr David West for allowing access to his lands, to Mr Chris Butler for examining the flintwork and Mr L. Gaston, Mss Delia Lindsay and members of the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society and the Mid-Sussex Field Archaeological Team for their assistance during the field walking.

References

Atkinson D.R. 'Sussex Clay Tobacco Pipes and Pipemakers' Crain Services. Eastbourne.

Author John Funnell 18 Reeves Hill, Coldean, Brighton, Sussex. BN1 9AS

Fieldwalking at Halcombe Farm, Peacehaven

Introduction

Halcombe Farm lies in a narrow valley of the South Downs. It is located east of Telscombe village and west of Piddinghoe in the Ouse valley (TQ422030). The small field under investigation lies immediately to the east of the farm buildings. The Peacehaven local history group possesses possible records indicating that the location of a farm dating from the time of Henry VIII may lie in this vicinity. Another field located immediately behind Poplett's Garden Centre (TQ416015) has been identified as an area of potential interest with flint material being found dating to the Neolithic period. Peter Drewett of the Institute of Archaeology, University of London, has suggested that the field may be an industrial centre of manufacture for artefacts and tools. He believes that the artefacts are made from flint collected from bands located among the chalk layers along the cliffs at Peacehaven (Gilkes pers. Comm.). A field walking exercise to examine this field earlier this decade was abandoned after the farmer sowed the field before walking could commence.

The President of the Peacehaven local history group has a number of finds of flint that he had collected from this field, and the long thin soft hammered blades suggest an earlier presence at Peacehaven, dating to the Mesolithic period. A number of monuments are known from Telscombe and Peacehaven and metal detectorists regularly visit sites close to Rodmell, but no record of their finds is available. The fields to the north of Halcombe Farm show trackways and features indicative of human disturbance, however, further investigation would need to be undertaken to evaluate any dating for these features.

In October 1997 the Peacehaven Local History Society proposed a joint fieldwalking project with the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society Field Unit. The object was to determine how much of a proliferation of material lay in the field to the east of the farm and to search for traces of the lost Tudor farm. The field to be walked was to be ploughed the following day and heavy rainfall from lunch time onwards seriously restricted the investigations. The bad weather also appeared to affect the number of walkers turning out.

Methodology

The field was set out in lines spaced 20 metres apart. Each line was divided into transects spaced at 20 metres apart and archaeological material collected from each transect. A total of 6 lines were walked from north to south.

The Finds

The majority of flint pieces collected from the small area examined total 78, of which the majority are hard hammer struck waste flakes. Fire-cracked flint was also found.

Item	Number of Pieces
Flint Flakes	43
Tools	
Core	1
Blades	1
Scrapers	1
Piercer	1
Total	47
Fire-cracked Flint	31
Total	78

Pottery

The pottery collected from the lines walked was quite small with only a single piece of Roman wares being found, 5 sherds of a possible medieval fabric and 10 pieces of a contemporary nature. The total pieces of pottery collected was 16.

Marine Molluscs

Only 2 pieces of oyster shell were found and this was close to the farm buildings.

Contemporary Materials

Among the other finds collected were pieces of modern roofing tile, some glass and pebbles. The metal work consisted of a single nail and a horse shoe.

Conclusions

The extremely limited extent of the field walking conducted at Halcombe Farm makes it impossible to create any detailed picture of the landscape or possible areas of archaeological sensitivity. However, the small collection of flintwork is quite interesting while the pottery is possibly intrusive and brought in by tractor wheels from other locations. The finds were transferred to dot density diagrams (Fig 1.)

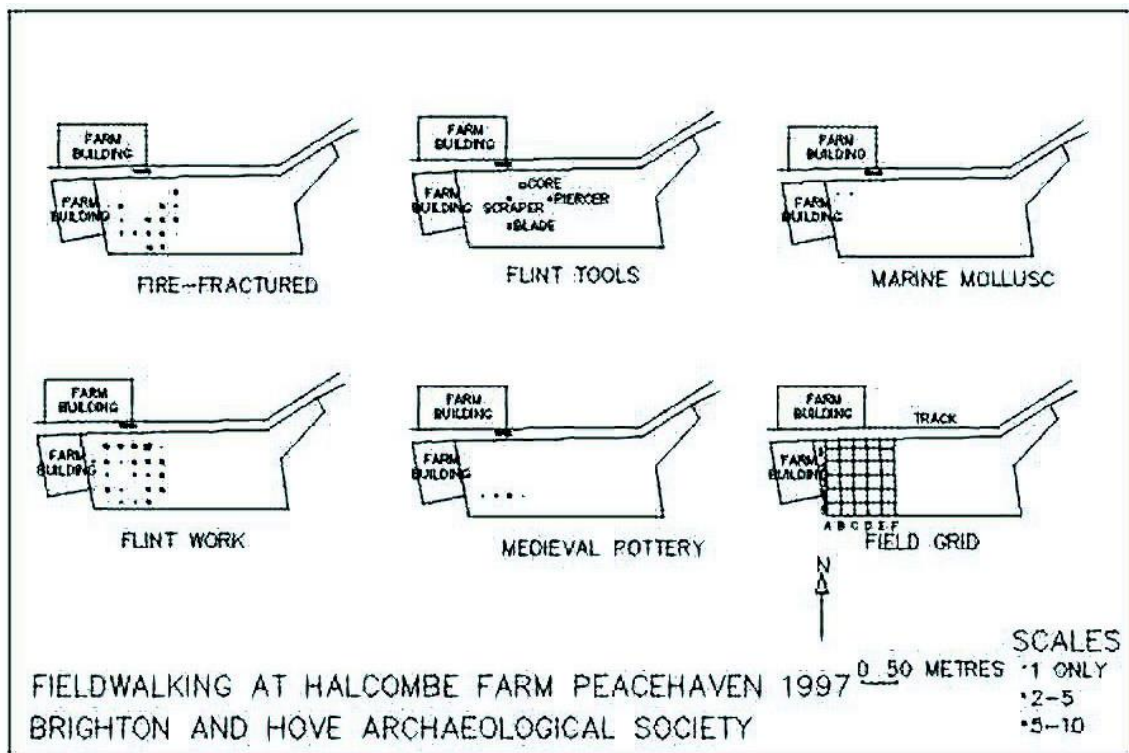
The flintwork found by local historian Mr Tony Paine certainly shows that there was some Mesolithic activity in this area, but no new finds of this date were found during the field walking and most of the flintwork found is probably late Neolithic to early Bronze Age in date.

Halcombe Farm and the surrounding area certainly has the potential for further research through further fieldwalking and surveying. Hopefully new endeavours will produce more finds from the Mesolithic onwards and perhaps even reveal the location of the lost Tudor Farm.

Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank the farmer Mr Carr for allowing access to the fields, Mr Tony Paine for inviting us along and to those members of the Peacehaven Local History Society and Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society that conducted the field walking and post processing.

John Funnell 14th July 1997



An Underground Chamber at 16 Gardner Street, Portslade

The Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society were asked to examine features found in the rear garden of 16 Gardener Street, Portslade. A hole had appeared in the garden and it was considered to be the location of a possible well. The garden produce 3 distinct features (Fig 1.) A semi-circular depression is noticeable on the east side of the garden close to the house, an 'opposite' side to this feature is obscured by the east garden wall running above it, the configuration may prove to be the location of a soakaway.

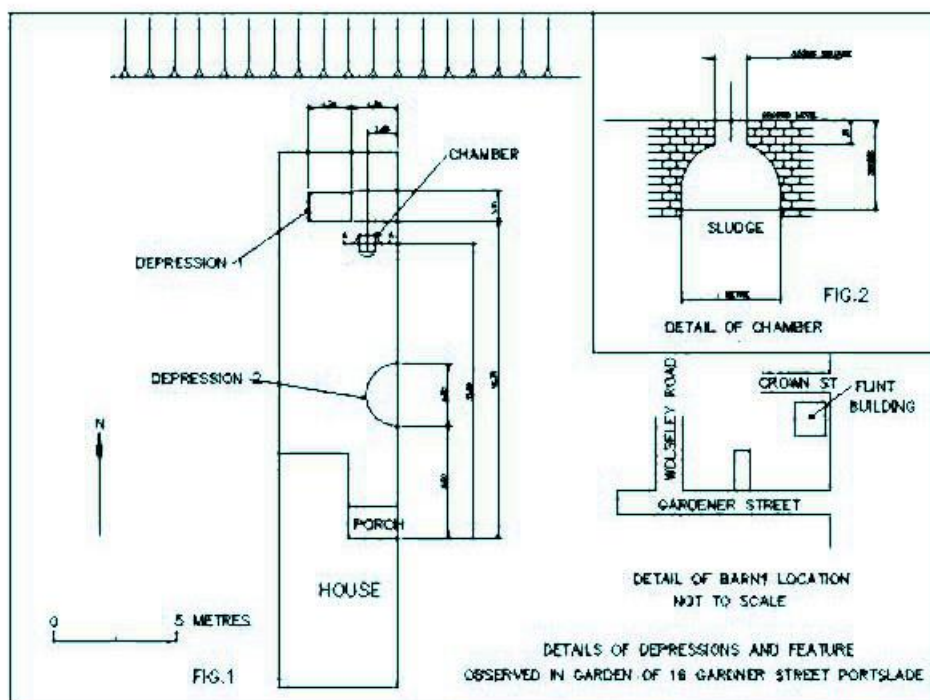
A rectangular feature lies in the north section of the garden close to the north garden wall. This may be the location of a possible drain covered by grass. The lands to the north of the north garden wall drop dramatically where the ground has been terraced away and removed, perhaps to secure footings for apartments built there. The houses in the whole of Gardner Street have been the subject of some form of subsidence, causing problems with house walls (Pers.comm. resident)

The most significant feature was the large chamber found within the north east section of the garden. The feature (Fig 2.) was examined and dimensions recorded approximately where not accessible. The hole in the ground proved to be the entrance to a subterranean chamber. The opening measured 32cm square and proved to be the depth of 3 house bricks. The interior of the chamber was constructed of header bricks, but forming a smooth domed interior culminating with the square aperture at its zenith. A drop of 90cms was measured down to a sludge deposit lying below. The chamber measured 1 metre in diameter and had straight sides disappearing below the sludge deposits. Rods had been pushed into the sludge indicating that the feature continued for some depth.

Conclusions

The feature may prove to be a capped well, but the reason for not completing the structure with a solid stone cap is unknown. It is possible that the chamber is a section of some part of a sewage system. Only an examination of old utility documents may provide evidence for this. A further suggestion is that the areas may be some part of an ancient industrial environment. An old barn building lies close by in Crown Street, to the north of Gardener Street.

John Funnell 8th September 1998



BHAS Field Unit 2014 Attendance Record

John Funnell (Director)	82 Days	Brighton
Leila Abdalla	3 Days	Brighton (student)
Hestor Adams	8 Days	Brighton (Cardiff)
Jon Baczkowski	4 Days	Barcombe
Mike Bayley	12 Days	Woodingdean
Clive Bean	60 Days	Portslade
Ben Belkacem	1 Day	Brighton
Jennifer Bennett	7 Days	Hove
Judith Billingham (G)	33 Days	Brighton
Sue Birks	2 Days	Horsham
Janie Brashill	2 Days	Brighton
Fran Briscoe	39 Days	Brighton
Margaret Burrows	3 Days	Hurstpierpoint
Margaret Carey	17 Days	Brighton
Martina Carsella	1 Day	London
Maureen Cauhalin	1 Day	Brighton
Kay Chaffer	2 Day	Shoreham
Beth Clements	12 Days	Brighton
Brenda Collins (G)(W)	11 Days	Lancing
Paul Collins (W)(M)	7 Days	Lancing
Penny Cooper	1 Day	Brighton
Eva Corbett	6 Days	Eastbourne
Steve Corbett	6 Days	Eastbourne
Kirsty Craig	6 Days	Brighton
Bob Crowhurst (F)	2 Days	Brighton
David Cuthbertson	1 Day	Brighton
Elaine Evans	2 Days	Hove
Kiera Funnell	1 Day	Plymouth
Mary Funnell	18 Days	Brighton
Maria Gardiner(E)(SP)(G)(W)	12 Days	Hove
Emma Gause	1 Day	Vermont (UCL)
Quintin Gee	2 Days	Southampton
Cherry Gillingham	1 Day	Hove
Mark Gillingham (Director)(W)	63 Days	Hove
David Gray-Hammond	1 Day	Brighton
Marion Green	1 Day	Brighton
Christine Grimes	2 Days	Brighton
Justin Gwynn	1 Day	Brighton (Norway)
Lesley Haines	27 Days	Burgess Hill
Sean Harris (TVAS)	2 Day	Brighton
Hayley Hayflick	1 Day	California (UCL)

Glynis Jones (MacCloud)	13 Days	Lancing
Kamila	1 Day	Worthing (Poland)
Janet Lamont	1 Day	East Grinstead
David Lea	5 Days	Hove
David Ludwig	32 Days	Rustington
Malcolm Lyons	1 Day	Brighton
Dot McBrien (S)(SP)(G)(W)	4 Days	Sompting
Joan MacGregor (G)	41 Days	Brighton
Nicky Matthews	10 Days	Newhaven
Christine Melvin	2 Days	Worthing
Mark Melvin	2 Days	Worthing
Nadia Khalili-Nayer	13 Days	Shoreham
Jan Oldham	1 Day	Brighton
Emily Miller	2 Days	Melbourne (Australia)
Sylvia Newman	8 Days	Brighton
Alexis Becker	2 Days	Burgess Hill
Dieter Becker	1 Day	Burgess Hill
Owen O'Donnell	18 Days	Brighton
Alison Partridge	16 Days	Newhaven
Franz Plachy	18 Days	Hove
Margaret Plachy	1 Day	Hove
Suzanne Preferment	7 Days	Brighton
Donald Richardson	3 Days	Lewes
Linda Robinson	17 Days	Brighton
Derek Russell	4 Days	Brighton
Innes Russell	2 Days	Brighton
Jane Russell	8 Days	Brighton
Alison Sanders	1 Day	Rotherham
Bill Santer (G)(Q)(M)(W)	2 Days	Saltdean
John Skelton	86 Days	Hove
Kate Skelton	37 Days	Hove
Paul Smith	1 Day	Brighton
Emoke Soprin	2 Days	Redhill (Hungary)
John Spiller	32 Days	Portslade
Ed Start	4 Days	Brighton
David Staveley	3 Days	Eastbourne
(Director)(P)(S)(L)(G)		
Chelsea Sweeney	8 Days	Lewes (Canada)
Gill Taylor	2 Day	Brighton
Steven Todd	4 Days	Oxted(Surrey)
Pete Tolhurst	52 Days	Crowborough
Olivia Tredwin	1 Day	London
A.Tubis	2 Days	Worthing (Poland)

Jeremy 'Jim' Webster	5 Days	Hove
Carol White (SP)(Director)	26 Days	Newhaven
Oliver Wigham	9 Days	Brighton
Janis Winkworth	14 Days	Brighton
Sue Worth	1 Days	Brighton
Linda Wright	2 Days	Southwick
Alex York	1 Day	Southwick

Total Attendance

Total Days 984 (Male Days 463 46%) (Female Days 521 54%)

Total Number of Participants 90 People, not including the Young Archaeologists Club (YAC) and group from Wyoming.

Dated 31st December 2014

Codes

(P) Planning

(S) Section drawing

(G) Geophysics

(L) Surveying & levelling

(E) Educational Officers

(Q) Quarter master

(F) Finds processing (Although finds processing carried out by much of the team, those with (F) process considerable amounts of site material)

© Conservator

(SP) Specialist Field

(MD) Metal Detectorist).

Whitehawk Attendance

J.Funnell	8 Days
J.Skelton	11 Days
C.Bean	2 Days
S.Birks	2 Days
F.Briscoe	10 Days
E.Corbett	4 Days
S.Corbett	4 Days
K.Craig	3 Days
M.Funnell	5 Days
M.Gillingham	5 Days
G.Jones	2 Days
D.Lea	5 Days
J.MacGregor	7 Days
O.O'Donnell	17 Days
F.Plachy	5 Days
S.Preferment	4 Days
J.Spiller	2 Days
P.Tolhurst	12 Days
J.Winkworth	3 Days

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Note that the dates shown (1993-2014) are an indicator of when the work was carried out, and not the date of publication.

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Hard copies of the above reports and Field Notebooks were deposited at Barbican House Library, East Sussex County Council, Brighton and Hove City Council Planning Department and Brighton Museum. A number of copies were deposited at Brighton Library, the National Monuments Records Office, Swindon and at the East Sussex Records Office.

John Funnell 21st May 2012