Channel Tunnel Rail Link

London and Continental Railways

Oxford Wessex Archaeology Joint Venture

The Prehistoric Landscape at Eyhorne Street, Hollingbourne, Kent

by Chris Hayden

edited by Alistair Barclay

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ABSTRACT

Oxford Archaeology was commissioned to undertake a Targeted Watching Brief south-east of Eyhorne Street, Hollingbourne, in Kent as part of an extensive programme of archaeological investigation carried out in advance of the construction of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link.

This watching brief revealed artefacts and features dating from at least five phases of activity, the most significant of which date from the Neolithic and the Iron Age. The earliest activities on the site are represented by two residual Mesolithic microliths and by a small number of residual early-middle Neolithic sherds. Probably Neolithic worked flint was found in a group of pits and a tree-throw hole. A quite dense scatter of tree-throw holes was excavated along the western side of the site. This worked flint provides the only dating evidence for these features. They need not, however, all be of the same date. A distinct group of smaller, circular tree holes, perhaps deriving from deliberate clearance of small trees or shrubs, may post-date this phase.

Two pits provide evidence for late Neolithic activity (*c* 2900-2500 cal BC) associated with Grooved Ware. One of these pits was distinguished by an unusual deposit containing decorated Grooved Ware, a decorated clay object, and a charred crab apple.

A pair of small pits containing very small quantities of possibly residual cremated human remains, charred hazelnuts, and Beaker sherds, and another, more distant pit provide evidence for activity between *c* 2300 and 1900 cal BC.

Following this, activity on the site resumed only in the early and middle Iron Age (*c* 600-200 cal BC). The evidence from this phase consists of some very shallow ditches, a sequence of hollows, and eight pits which may have lain at the edge of a more extensive settlement. As well as rich deposits of charred grain and pottery, and a little animal bone, the pits also contained more exceptional material: a bent iron dagger, a small ceramic cup either imported from or imitating pottery from the Champagne region, and a bowl which was neatly cut in half.

Later activity is represented by a post-medieval ditch.

RÉSUMÉ

L'Oxford Archaeology fut chargé d'entreprendre une surveillance archéologique au sud-est d'Eyhorne Street, dans le Kent, dans le cadre d'un programme de recherches archéologiques préventives de grande envergure, exécuté en avance sur la construction de la ligne ferroviaire du Tunnel sous la Manche (Channel Tunnel Rail Link -CTRL-).

Les fouilles révélèrent des artefacts et structures datant d'au moins cinq phases d'activité, la plus significative étant datée du néolithique et de l'âge du Fer.

Les périodes d'activité les plus anciennes sont représentées par deux microlithes mésolithiques hors contexte et par la présence de quelques tessons de céramique hors contexte datés du milieu du néolithique. Des silex taillés, probablement d'époque néolithique, furent également découverts au cours de la fouille d'une série de fosses et d'une cavité d'arbre déraciné. Un groupe plutôt dense de cavités similaires, laissés par des arbres déracinés, fut également fouillé le long du côté ouest du site. L'ensemble de silex taillés représentent le seul indice de datation disponible pour ces structures. Cependant, elles ne sont pas obligatoirement toutes de la même époque. Un groupe distinct de cavités d'arbres déracinés, de forme circulaire et de plus petite taille, qui pourraient être le résultat d'un défrichement délibéré de petits arbres ou de buissons, représentent peut-être une phase postérieure.

Deux fosses ont fourni des indices d'activité de la fin du néolithique (aux alentours de 2900 av. JC à 2500 av. JC en datations calibrées), associés avec de la poterie *Grooved Ware*. Une des fosses se distinguait par la présence d'un dépôt inhabituel de poterie *Grooved Ware* décorée, d'un objet d'argile décoré et d'une pomme sauvage carbonisée.

Des indices d'activité datée d'environ 2300 av. JC à 1900 av. JC (datations calibrées) furent identifiées sous la forme d'une paire de petites fosses contenant une quantité très réduite d'ossements humains incinérés, peut-être résiduels, des noisettes carbonisées et des tessons campaniformes.

A la suite de celles-ci, l'activité sur le site s'acheva seulement vers le début et le milieu de l'âge du Fer (vers 600-200 av. JC en datations calibrées). Les indices pour cette phase consistent de quelques fossés peu profonds, d'une série de creux et de huit fosses qui se situent peut-être à la limite d'un site d'habitation plus étendu. En plus de riches dépôts de graines carbonisées, de poterie et de quelques ossements animaux, les fosses contenaient également du mobilier plus exceptionnel : une dague courbe en fer, une petite coupe en céramique importée ou imitant de la poterie de la région de Champagne, et finalement un bol soigneusement coupé en deux moitiés.

Un seul fossé d'époque moderne représente le seul indice d'activité plus tardive.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Im Rahmen umfangreicher archäologischer Untersuchungen im Vorfeld des Baus der Bahnstrecke durch den Kanaltunnel (Channel Tunnel Rail Link) wurde Oxford Archaeology mit einer gezielten Baustellenbeobachtung südöstlich der Eyhorne Street in Hollingbourne, Kent, beauftragt.

Bei der Baustellenbeobachtung kamen Artefakte und Merkmale aus mindestens fünf Phasen menschlicher Aktivität ans Licht. Die wichtigsten stammten aus der Jungsteinzeit und Eisenzeit. Die frühesten Aktivitäten an der Stätte sind durch zwei Mikrolithe aus der Mittelsteinzeit und eine kleine Zahl an Scherben aus dem frühen Neolithikum belegt. Eine

Gruppe von Gruben und ein Baumwurf enthielten bearbeitete Feuersteine, vermutlich aus der Jungsteinzeit. An der Westseite der Fundstelle wurde eine relativ dichte Ansammlung von Baumwürfen lokalisiert. Die bearbeiteten Feuersteine lieferten die einzigen Datierungshinweise für diese Strukturen. Es ist allerdings möglich, dass nicht alle aus derselben Zeit stammen. Eine abgrenzbare Gruppe kleinerer, kreisförmiger Baumwürfe, die möglicherweise durch die bewusste Entfernung kleinwüchsiger Bäume oder Sträucher entstand, ist womöglich jüngeren Datums.

Zwei Gruben enthielten Belege für mit rillenverzierter Keramik in Verbindung stehende spätneolithische Aktivitäten (ca. 2900–2500 cal BC). In einer dieser Gruben fiel eine ungewöhnliche Fundgruppe ins Auge, zu der rillenverzierte Keramik, ein verziertes Tonobjekt und ein verkohlter Holzapfel gehörten.

Zwei kleine Gruben, die kleinste Reste einer womöglich menschlichen Brandbestattung, verkohlte Haselnüsse und Glockenbecherscherben aufwiesen, lieferten ebenso wie eine weitere, etwas abseits gelegene Grube Hinweise auf menschliche Aktivitäten zwischen ca. 2300 und 1900 cal BC.

Danach wurden Menschen an dieser Stelle erst wieder in der frühen und mittleren Eisenzeit (ca. 600–200 cal BC) aktiv. Zu den Funden aus dieser Phase zählen einige sehr flache Gräben, eine Reihe von Vertiefungen und acht Gruben, die wohl am Rand einer größeren Ansiedlung lagen. Neben zahlreichen im Boden abgelagerten verkohlten Getreide- und Keramikresten und einem kleinen Tierknochen fanden sich in den Gruben auch ungewöhnlichere Dinge: ein geschwungener Eisendolch, ein kleiner Keramikbecher, der entweder aus der Champagne importiert wurde oder die dortige Töpferware nachahmte, und eine sauber in zwei Hälften zerteilte Schale.

Spätere Aktivitäten sind durch einen nachmittelalterlichen Graben ausgewiesen.

ABSTRACTO

Oxford Archaeology fue encargado de realizar un seguimiento de obra al sureste de Eyhome Street en Kent, como parte de un extenso programa arqueológico previo a la construcción del Channel Tunnel Rail Link.

Dicho seguimiento arqueológico reveló artefactos y estructuras con dataciones de al menos cinco fases de actividad, siendo las fechas del Neolítico y la Edad del Hierro las más significativas. Las primeras muestras de ocupación quedan representadas en el yacimiento por dos microlitos residuales mesolíticos y por un número escaso de fragmentos cerámicos Neolítico Inicial y Medio. Sílex trabajado probablemente perteneciente al Neolítico, se encontró en un grupo de fosas y en un hoyo consecuencia del derrumbe de un árbol. A lo largo del lado oeste del yacimiento fueron excavados tres hoyos de derrumbe de árbol. Este sílex trabajado es la única evidencia para la datación de estas estructuras. Sin embargo, no

tienen que ser todas de la misma fecha. Un grupo de hoyos circulares más pequeños, originados probablemente como consecuencia de la limpia de árboles y arbustos, podría post-datar esta fase.

Dos hoyos evidencian ocupación en el Neolítico Tardío (c. 2900-2500 cal BC) asociados con cerámica acanalada, un objeto cerámico decorado y restos de manzana carbonizada.

La ocupación entre c. 2300 y 1900 cal BC queda evidenciada en un par de hoyos pequeños conteniendo un número reducido de restos humanos cremados, avellanas carbonizadas y fragmentos de cerámica Campaniforme, así como en un hoyo algo más alejado.

La ocupación en el yacimiento continúa sólo durante el Inicio y Mediados de la Edad del Hierro (c 600-200 cal BC). La evidencia de este período consiste en zanjas poco profundas, una secuencia de concavidades y ocho hoyos que podrían haber estado localizados en el margen de un asentamiento más extenso. Los hoyos, a parte de contener abundantes depósitos de grano y cerámica carbonizados y un hueso pequeño de animal, también contenían material más excepcional: un puñal de hierro doblado, una copa pequeña de cerámica importada o de imitación de la región de la Campaña, y un cuenco perfectamente fraccionado por la mitad.

Una ocupación más tardía queda representada por una zanja post-medieval.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The investigations at Eyhorne Street were undertaken principally by staff from Oxford Archaeology (OA), with support and overall management framework during the post-excavation phase provided by the Oxford Wessex Archaeology Joint Venture (OWA). The work was supervised by an archaeological team from Rail Link Engineering (RLE), on behalf of the employer, London and Continental Railways.

The author would like to thank all those whose efforts contributed to the success of the excavation: The fieldwork was supervised by Paul Murray and managed by Stuart Foreman. Chris Hayden and Alistair Barclay prepared the post-excavation assessment report. The full field team and specialist contributors to the assessment report are credited in the main project acknowledgements in the digital archive (ADS 2006).

The following specialists contributed to this report: Rebecca Devaney (flint), Emily Edwards (earlier prehistoric pottery and fired clay), Grace Jones (later prehistoric pottery), Vanessa Fell (iron dagger), Annsofie Witkin (human bone), Jennifer Kitch (animal bone), Ann Davies (charred plant remains). Illustrations were prepared by Anne Stewardson and Laura Kirby. The abstract was translated by Mercedes Planas (Spanish), Gerlinde Krug (German) and Valerie Diez (French).

The report was edited by Alistair Barclay (early prehistoric team leader) and Andrew Fitzpatrick (later prehistoric team leader) also commented on the draft text. Julie Gardiner was the project senior editor. Paul Garwood and Tim Champion (CTRL monograph co-authors) provided valuable comment and advice throughout the project and their contributions are gratefully acknowledged.

The author is also grateful to those who contributed to management of the CTRL post-excavation project: Leigh Allen (finds manager), Niall Donald (data manager), Liz Stafford (environmental manager), Rob Goller and Anne Stewardson (senior illustrators). OWA senior project managers were Stuart Foreman and Valerie Diez.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

The site near Eyhorne Street, Hollingbourne, Kent (OS NGR TQ 8370 5420) was discovered and excavated during an extensive programme of archaeological investigation carried out in advance of the construction of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL). CTRL was built by London & Continental Railways Limited in association with Railtrack Group plc. The project was authorised by Parliament with the passage of the CTRL Act, 1996. The high-speed line runs for 109 km (68 miles) between St Pancras station in London and the Channel Tunnel and was built in two sections. Section 1 lies entirely within Kent and runs from Fawkham Junction (Gravesham) to Folkestone. The work was project managed by Rail Link Engineering (RLE).

Geophysical surveys carried out by Geophysical Surveys of Bradford (GSB) in the area of the site had revealed few features of archaeological significance. However, following the discovery of remains of uncertain significance during an evaluation by Wessex Archaeology (WA), the site was designated as a Targeted Watching Brief which Oxford Archaeology (OA, formerly the Oxford Archaeological Unit) was commissioned to undertake. The project was managed by Rail Link Engineering (RLE) on behalf of Union Railways (South) Limited (subsequently CTRL UK Limited). The location of the site is shown on Figure 1 and the details of the archaeological work are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Fieldwork Events

Fieldwork event name	Type	Fieldwork event code	Contractor	Dates of fieldwork
South-east of Eyhorne Street	Watching brief significant discovery individual	ARC 420 68+100 - 68+500 99	OA	22/7/99 - 14/12/99
South-east of Eyhorne Street	Evaluation	ARC SEE99	WA	21/5/99 - 28/5/99
West of Eyhorne Street	Geophysical survey	ARC ESTW95	GSB	1995
East of Eyhorne Street	Geophysical survey	ARC ESTE95	GSB	1995

The targeted watching brief covered an irregular, roughly rectangular area, *c* 40 m by 360 m (1.47 ha). A narrow strip running through the centre of the southern part of this area was left undisturbed. The adjacent sections of the CTRL were stripped under varying watching brief conditions during which any significant features should have been identified. The Targeted Watching Brief took place over a period of six months from July to December 1999.

1.2 Geology and Topography

The site lies on a narrow band of the Folkstone Beds, bordered to the north by Gault Clay and to the south by the Hythe Beds, and is covered by silty sand soils (British Geological Survey 1976). It is situated just over 1 km south-west of the North Downs escarpment, in an area of gently undulating land, between *c* 50 - 60 m OD, which descends gradually towards the river Len. A stream flows near the western edge of the site. Prior to work on the CTRL the two fields in which the excavation took place were being used as pasture and for arable cultivation.

1.3 Archaeological and Historical Background

Few finds of archaeological interest have been made in the immediate vicinity of the Eyhorne Street site. The evaluation (URS 1999b) discovered probably Mesolithic worked flint, undated ditches which might have formed part of a late Bronze Age field system, and a tree-throw hole containing late Iron Age-early Roman pottery. Aside from the two Mesolithic microliths discussed below no further finds from these periods were identified during the watching brief. Undated earthworks were also identified during the initial assessment of the archaeological impact of the CTRL (URL 1994, no. 1071). These were not, however, subsequently identified during the evaluation or during the watching brief. Geophysical surveys of the areas to the east and west of Eyhorne Street (URL 1996) revealed very few features of potential archaeological interest. The survey to the west revealed only modern disturbance, and the features suggested by the survey to the east were not subsequently found during the evaluation.

Excavations in advance of the construction of the CTRL have been carried out at two slightly more distant sites: Snarkhurst Wood, *c* 1.5 km to the north-west (Diez 2006), and Holm Hill, just over 1 km to the south-east (URS 1999c). Investigations in these two areas have revealed activity from several phases dating from the Mesolithic to the Roman period. Generally, however, they date from periods when little activity is apparent at Eyhorne Street.

For example, traces of ditches, probably belonging to late Iron Age-early Roman field systems, have been found at Holm Hill (URS 1999c, 8-9) and at Snarkhurst Wood (Diez 2006), and similar features dating probably to the late Bronze Age have also been identified at Holm Hill. A socketed axe, more certainly of late Bronze Age date, was also found near Holm Hill (URL 1994, no. 1071). There is no indication of activity at Eyhorne Street in these phases. Furthermore, features dating from the early and middle Iron Age, when Eyhorne Street may have lain at the edge of a settlement, have not been identified at either Holm Hill or Snarkhurst Wood (URS 1999c and Diez 2006).

It is more difficult to follow this chronological pattern in the Neolithic and early Bronze Age because few of the discoveries in the area around Eyhorne Street can be dated

with any precision. A ditch, perhaps associated with two others, at Holm Hill has been dated to the early or middle Bronze Age (URS 1999c, 8) and an area of ring and linear cropmarks near the same site might date in part from the same broad period (URL 1994, no. 1315). The linear cropmarks and the ditch at Holm Hill are, on the basis of their form, more likely to date from the middle Bronze Age, whilst the ring-shaped cropmarks are more likely to date from the early Bronze Age or late Neolithic. These features cannot, however, be accurately dated. Flint scatters, dated to the late Neolithic-early Bronze Age at Holm Hill, and to the early Bronze Age at Snarkhurst Wood might, however, be roughly contemporary with the Beaker associated pits at Eyhorne Street. Further flint from Snarkhurst Wood could be dated only more broadly to the Neolithic or early Bronze Age. A fragment of a stone axe was found during a surface survey in this area (URL 1994, nos 1342-3 and 1345).

Further flint scatters dating from the Mesolithic have also been recorded at both Holm Hill and Snarkhurst Wood, again contrasting with the scant remains from this period at Eyhorne Street.

2 AIMS

The aim of this report is to present synthesised data at an interpretative level that can be assimilated into complementary studies. This synthetic report is supported by the fieldwork and research archive which is available as a web-based digital archive.

In support of the CTRL Project Monograph (Booth *et a*l. 2007), the Eyhorne Street report integrates key assemblages and stratigraphic data into a site sequence secured on key dating evidence from artefact groups and radiocarbon dates. The report includes a discursive narrative describing the sequence of activity and reasoning evidence (URS 2003, 15-16).

The analysis of the site has been carried out in the light of research aims established for the CTRL as a whole (URS 2003a, 20-1, 28). The most relevant of these for this site relate primarily to the Neolithic activity, and concern the evidence for increasing clearance of woodland, the kinds of evidence that exist for residence and how they are (or are not) preserved, the chronological duration of each phase of activity (whether they were prolonged or brief and episodic), and what possibly structured deposits might tell us about the subsistence economy or ritual and cosmology. The later prehistoric evidence has also been examined in the light of questions concerning continental contacts and the significance of apparently structured deposits.

3 METHODS

All fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (URS 1999a) prepared by the project manager, RLE. Throughout the watching brief all ground works were carefully observed. In the 'targeted watching brief' area the topsoil was stripped by the main contractor using a 360° excavator fitted with a toothless bucket, under the direct control of an archaeologist. Where archaeological features were revealed, they were excavated by hand, pits being half-sectioned and ditches being sectioned at appropriate points. All features were recorded using a single context recording system, were drawn in plan and section, and were photographed. Samples for environmental analysis were taken from appropriate contexts. A daily record of all activity related to the watching brief was maintained.

The MAP2 assessment report was produced by OA in accordance with the specification produced by RLE (URS 2000). All method statements followed national guidelines and were agreed in consultation with English Heritage and Kent County Council on behalf of the Local Planning Authority.

The post-excavation analysis was carried out, and the report written by, Oxford Wessex Archaeology Joint Venture (OWAJV) following the methodology set out in the Updated Project Design for archaeological analysis and publication (URS 2003a and b). All project design documents are available in the digital archive (ADS 2006).

4 RESULTS

4.1 Phase Summary

Very few of the features on the site were stratigraphically related, and they have, therefore, been dated on the basis of the pottery and other chronologically diagnostic artefacts and ecofacts they contain. Four radiocarbon dates have also been obtained to address specific chronological questions (Table 2). Less certainly, dates have also been suggested for some features on the basis of their spatial proximity with, and similarities in size and shape to, better dated features. The following six phases of activity have been distinguished.

- Mesolithic (9000 BC - 4000 BC): very limited activity in this phase is indicated only by two residual microliths, themselves possibly of very different dates.

- Early and middle Neolithic (4000 BC - 2800 BC): activity on the site in this phase is revealed only by residual sherds in later features. It is possible that a rough alignment of pits and a deposit of knapped flint in a tree-throw hole may also date from this or the subsequent phase. Although one of the many tree-throw holes on the site appears to date from this phase, there is some evidence that others are later.

- Late Neolithic (2900 BC - 2500 BC): two pits associated with Grooved Ware provide evidence for a probably brief episode of activity during this phase. This activity included the deposition of a unique group of finds including a decorated clay object, Grooved Ware, and a charred crab apple.

- Late Neolithic/early Bronze Age (2300 BC - 1900 BC): a pair of small pits, containing very small deposits of possibly residual cremated human remains associated with Beaker and Beaker or urn sherds provide evidence for activity in this phase. Radiocarbon determinations suggest that a further shallow pit, not associated with pottery, dates also from this broad phase.

- Early and middle Iron Age (700 BC - 100 BC): a diffuse scatter of pits, ditches and a sequence of hollows which may have been situated at or beyond the edge of a settlement date from this phase. The deposits within the pits include a bent iron dagger, a small cup imported from or imitating contemporary pottery from the Champagne region, a neatly bisected bowl, and rich deposits of charred grain.

- Post-medieval (1500-1800): two stretches of ditch, perhaps originally parts of the same ditch, date from this phase.

Most of the features were cut into the natural yellow or orange brown sand, which forms the substrate of the site. This was overlain by a sequence of two layers of darker brown grey silty sand colluvium or ploughsoil, which were in turn overlain by the current top- and subsoil. The colluvial or ploughsoil layers covered many of the features dating up to the middle Iron Age. The latest features on the site, however, including a post-medieval ditch (229) were cut through these two layers. The date at which these layers formed cannot, therefore, be fixed with any precision: they post-date the middle Iron Age and had formed before the post-medieval period. It is clear that the site had been quite severely truncated either by ploughing or natural erosion before these layers formed. The prehistoric ditches survived only as partial stretches and few of the other prehistoric features survived to depths of more than 0.30 m.

The fills of the prehistoric features were mostly sandy silts with a consistency similar to the natural. They varied in colour but were mostly light grey brown in colour. Bone was generally poorly preserved within the features of the site, but the presence of one deposit of

animal bone in an early or middle Iron Age pit shows that the paucity of bone in other features cannot be wholly explained in terms of poor preservation.

Table 2: Radiocarbon dates

Archaeological phase	*Feature*	*Context*	*Material*	*Lab. no*	*δC^{13}*	*Uncalibrated result BP*	*Calibrated result BC, 95.4% confidence*
LN-EBA	Pit 60	61, primary fill	charred hazelnut shell (*Corylus avellana)*	NZA-20420	-25.04	3648±35	2140 - 1910
LN-EBA	Pit 23	22, primary fill	charred hazelnut shell (*Corylus avellana)*	NZA-20419	-25.4	3742±40	2280-1970
LN-EBA	Pit 70	71, primary fill	charred cereal grains	NZA-12233		3773±60	2460-2030
LN	Pit 19	18, primary fill	charred crab apple (*Malus sylvestris*)	NZA-20417	-25.5	4044±35	2840 - 2460
LN	Pit 19	18, primary fill	burnt residue on single sherd of PRN 9	NZA-20418	-27.6	4113±40	2880 - 2500

4.2 Hunter-gatherers - Mesolithic (*c* 8999-4000)

Two microliths, one an obliquely blunted point probably of early Mesolithic date and the other a scalene triangle probably of late Mesolithic date, provide the only evidence for Mesolithic activity on the site. It is possible that some of the other, chronologically undiagnostic flint also dates from this period, although there is no evidence to indicate anything more than incidental use of the site during the Mesolithic.

4.3 Early Agriculturalists - The Neolithic and early Bronze Age Landscape (*c* 4000 BC - 1600 BC)

4.3.1 The early and middle Neolithic (c 4000-2800 BC)

Activity which can be clearly dated to the early and middle Neolithic is represented only by a leaf-shaped arrow head found in the topsoil and residual pottery in two features (the upper fill of Beaker pit 23 and the undated ditch or pit 100; Table 4). Although no features can be confidently assigned to these phases, there are a number of other pits, not far from the features which contain the residual pottery, as well as more scattered tree-throw holes, which contain flint broadly dated to the Neolithic, and which may date from these phases or to the next, late Neolithic phase.

Table 3: Summary of early and middle Neolithic pottery

Feature	*Context*	*Vessel part*	*No. sherds*	*Weight (g)*	*Fabric**	*Decoration*	*Date*	*Comments*
23	24	body sherds	3	4	F1		EN-MN	stratified above Beaker pottery
23	22	body sherds	4	18	F2		EN	context contains Beaker pottery
			1	12	FA2			
		rim sherd	1	4	A1	groove		
100	104	body sherds	15	62	F3		EN-MN	stratified above spelt?
			4	5	Fpfe1			
		rim sherd	1	3	F2			
Total			29	108				

*Fabric codes are defined in the report on ceramics in the digital archive

The early or middle Neolithic: probably residual pottery in feature 100

Feature 100 fell only partially within the area of the excavation, the rest of it lying below the narrow unexcavated strip running through the middle of the site. The feature might, therefore, have been either a pit or the end of a short ditch. It may have been associated with ditch 240 which lies less than 0.5 m to the north-east (Fig. 3). Both had slightly stepped sides and were of similar dimensions (240: 1.74 to 2.20 m wide and 0.66 to 0.75 m deep; 100: 1.80 m wide and 0.94 m deep).

Ditch 240 contained a few flint flakes and chips and some charcoal but no more clearly datable artefacts than a core rejuvenation flake (which is consistent with a Neolithic date).

Feature 100 contained 19 plain body sherds (67 g) in flint tempered fabrics, and a small pointed rim sherd (3 g) which could be from an Ebbsfleet ware vessel (Fig. 3, P1) in its upper fill (104; Table 4). Overall this pottery can only be broadly dated to the early or middle Neolithic, although some of it could be contemporary with the pottery from pit 23 some of which is in the same fabric as the rim sherd. It is possible, however, that this pottery was residual. A small quantity of charred grain identified as either spelt or emmer was found in layer 102, below the pottery. If it was cultivated, spelt wheat was at least rare in Britain before the middle Bronze Age (Scaife 1987, 161, 166). Since the identification of this wheat is uncertain it does not provide conclusive evidence that the pottery is residual. However, the fact that the pottery occurred only in the upper fill of feature 100, and that similar pottery was also found in certainly later contexts nearby (pit 23) reinforces that possibility.

A very little charred barley, some more definitely identified emmer, and goosefoot seeds were also found in feature 100.

Neolithic flint and pits

Some at least of a very roughly linear scatter of pits (107, 109, 96, 91 and 126) around 9 m to the south-east of the features which contained the residual earlier Neolithic pottery could also date from the early or middle Neolithic. They were all shallow, between 0.15 and 0. 20 m deep, but varied in width from 0.50 to 0.90 m. They also varied in shape and section, although most were roughly circular and had quite steep sides and more or less flat bases. Feature 107, however, was markedly more irregular than the others and could have been a small tree-throw hole. The only reasons for believing that these features may have been associated is their proximity and general similarity in shape and size.

Although small amounts of unidentified charcoal were found (in pits 91 and 126) and some burnt flint (in pits 96 and 126), only pit 126 (Fig. 3) contained finds - worked flint - which give any indication of date. The most distinctive of these was a single platform flake core (Fig. 3) with some blade-like removals, but two further cores, also with platform edge abrasion, and eleven waste flakes were also found. The features of this small group of flint are characteristic of Neolithic assemblages.

Neolithic flint and tree-throw holes

Many of the features scattered along the south-western side of the site have features characteristic of tree-throw holes (Fig. 6). An attempt to systematically distinguish between natural tree-throw holes and man-made features is described below. Three groups of features were distinguished as a result of this analysis: typical tree-throw holes, small, circular tree holes, and an uncertain group of tree-throw holes or pits. A few of these features (tree-throw holes 183, 207 and 213) contained small numbers of unmodified flint waste flakes and one (188), belonging to the group of typical tree-throw holes (Fig. 6), contained a much larger assemblage of flint consisting of nine flakes, five blades, one core rejuvenation flake, one piece of irregular waste and 87 chips. The large number of chips suggests that flint was knapped directly into the tree-throw hole whilst it was still open. Whilst the flint cannot provide a very precise date, the five blades and the core rejuvenation flakes are consistent with a Neolithic date. This flint provides the only indication of the date of the typical tree-throw holes. They need not, however, all be of the same date, and there is some evidence to suggest that the group of small circular tree-throw holes may be later in date (see below).

Assuming it is not redeposited, the occurrence of flint knapping debris in a tree-throw hole is of some interest. The significance of tree-throw holes in this period has been well discussed by Evans, Pollard and Knight (1999). The flint here does not appear to be a special deposit, and may be within the tree-throw hole simply because it was a convenient place to sit and knap. Its significance lies in the fact that it suggests the exploitation of resources in a

recently cleared area of woodland. Whether this activity was related to the residual earlier Neolithic pottery and other flint is unclear.

4.3.2 The late Neolithic (c 2900-2500 BC)

The next phase of activity was associated with Grooved Ware, and occurred early in the period in which that style of pottery was in use, *c* 2900-2500 cal BC.

There is evidence for only limited activity, probably of rather short duration, in this phase. It was represented by just two shallow pits, 19 and 21, just over 2 m apart, near the middle of the site. The character of the activity associated with these features is uncertain, but one of them contained a unique deposit including a decorated fired clay object, some unusual Grooved Ware, and a charred crab apple.

Two further pits of similar size (70 and 63), and one rather smaller example (67) were found near to these Grooved Ware pits. It is possible that two of these (63 and 67) were contemporary with the Grooved Ware pits (19 and 21). Radiocarbon dating, however, suggests that pit 70 belongs to the late Neolithic-early Bronze Age phase discussed below. The other two pits (63 and 67) contained no datable material nor any other artefacts, and could be related chronologically to the Grooved Ware or the Beaker phase, or, indeed, another phase of activity.

The features and finds

The two Grooved Ware pits were very similar in both size and shape, both being shallow scoops measuring 0.55 m wide and 0.18 m deep, although pit 21 was rather more markedly ovate than pit 19 (Fig 4.).

Pit 21 contained a smaller group of finds than pit 19, consisting of 11 sherds (29 g) of Grooved Ware and 6 pieces of worked flint. The pottery (Fig. 4) is all in the same grog-tempered fabric as the sherds from pit 19, and includes five sherds (28 g) which may have derived from the same jar (P6) as some of the sherds in pit 19, discussed below. These sherds suggest that there cannot have been a very long period between these two pits being cut. The flint from this pit consisted of a very worn, lightly burnt end and side scraper which is broken, perhaps as the result of a thermal fracture, a blade, two flakes and two irregular waste flakes. One of the flakes and one of the waste flakes were also burnt.

Table 4: Summary of size and contents of late Neolithic pits and nearby undated pits (fills in stratigraphic order, primary fill at bottom)

Posthole	*width (m)*	*depth (m)*	*fills*	*Pot (no. sherds/ weight g)*	*Flint*	*Burnt flint*	*charred plant remains & charcoal*	*other finds and comments*
Late Neolithic pits								
19	0.55	0.18	18	22/181	16	3	crab apple	decorated clay object 24 g fired clay
21	0.55	0.18	20	11/29	6	-	-	
Total				33/210	22	3		
Undated pits								
63	0.5	0.16	65	-	-	-	-	
			64	-	-	-	-	
67	0.45	0.13	69	-	-	-	-	
			68	-	1	-	-	

Pit 19 contained a larger and more interesting group of finds (Table 4). The pottery consists of 22 sherds of Grooved Ware (181 g), representing at least 5 vessels, displaying elements of both Durrington Walls-style form and Clacton-style decoration (Fig. 4). The sherds include a substantial part of a tall, straight sided or splayed jar, decorated with horizontal bands of grooved lines and fingertip impressions (Fig 4, P6). Much of the outer surface of this vessel was covered with charred residue some of which (from one sherd) was used to obtain a radiocarbon date (NZA-20418, 4113±40 BP: 2880 to 2580 cal BC). Further sherds which may derive from the same vessel were found in pit 21. Charred residue also occurred on a number of other sherds from pit 19. The pottery also includes a sherd decorated with what may have been a simplified 'Greek key-like' motif which is set within a herringbone background (Fig. 4, P3). Such motifs are rare on Grooved Ware, but a design with some resemblance is known from Marden (Wainwright 1971, 210, fig. 15, P39), and another is scratched onto the larger of the two chalk plaques from Amesbury (Harding 1988, fig. 2, plate 20).

This pit also contained an almost complete charred crab apple (from which the second of the radiocarbon dates was obtained: NZA-20417, 4044±35: 2840-2460 cal BC), three fragments of amorphous fired clay, nine pieces (110 g) of burnt flint and 19 of worked flint. The worked flint included a blade-like flake, seven flakes, seven irregular waste flakes and a chip, most of which was burnt and some of which was broken. This flint could be stray waste, suggesting that some flint working took place on the site, and that it was not deliberately

selected for deposition. No environmental samples were taken from the contexts associated with these pits. The crab apple was retrieved by hand.

The most unusual artefact from this feature, however, was a fragment of a small (27 mm diameter, 9 g) decorated object made from an untempered, well-fired clay (Fig. 4, Plate 1; Edwards, Fell and Hayden 2006, fired clay report). Its original form is uncertain, although it may have been spherical, and it may have been perforated. The surface of the object has suffered numerous scratches, and a large flake appears to have spalled off from it lower edge. Nonetheless, two incised motifs and other marks can be clearly seen on its smoothed surface as well as traces of at least one more.

The interpretation of this object is problematical. It could simply be part of a vessel, perhaps part of a rotund lug or boss, or some other kind of plastic decoration (knot), a fragment of a perforated object such as a spindlewhorl or bead, or a clay version of the more usually stone balls which occur widely, if not in very great numbers, throughout the British Isles in the late Neolithic (a detailed discussion of which can be found in Edwards, Fell and Hayden 2006, fired clay report).

Discussion

The finds from these two pits are open to quite contrary interpretations. On the one hand, they could be seen as consisting of nothing more than broken sherds - some from cooking pots - an unexceptional group of flint tools and waste, and a little accidentally charred fruit. None of this need be more than everyday domestic waste, swept unceremoniously into a small pit. Only the clay object seems exceptional, but this too was broken, and since its use is unknown, it cannot form definitive contrary evidence. On the other hand, the pottery includes, even in the context of Grooved Ware assemblages, some striking decoration (and cooking is as much a part of rituals as it is of everyday life), the crab apple is an isolated find, perhaps deliberately selected rather than being part of a more miscellaneous group of charred waste, and the clay object is unique. The finds from pit 19 do, therefore, stand out as a special group, suggesting that they may have been used in activities which were similarly distinct, and perhaps constitute a deliberate deposit of material deriving from a 'special' activity.

Radiocarbon dating

Two radiocarbon dates were obtained for this phase of activity, one from burnt residue on the outside of a Grooved Ware sherd (part of P4) and the other from the charred crab apple, both from pit 19. The results (Table 2) are very similar, and suggest that both date from *c* 2900-2500 cal BC. The rather wide range of 400 years results from the shape of the calibration curve in this period.

Garwood's (1999, 152) evaluation of radiocarbon dates associated with Grooved Ware suggested that it was in use in southern England from *c* 2900 cal BC to *c* 2100 cal BC with the Clacton substyle generally falling in the earlier half of this period and the Woodlands substyle falling in the later half, whilst the Durrington Walls substyle spans the entire period. The results from Eyhorne Street (Table 2), including the date on the residue, which is clearly securely associated with the use of the pot, place the pottery from pit 19 firmly in the earlier half of the period, in the same range as most of the dates for the Clacton substyle, as some elements of the pottery would lead us to expect.

4.3.3 The late Neolithic-early Bronze Age (c 2300-1900 BC)

Three small pits are the only features that can be dated to this phase. Two of these (23 and 60) lie just over 1.5 m apart, towards the south-eastern end of the site. Both contained extremely small quantities of possibly residual cremated human remains, along with a small range of artefacts, including Beaker and Beaker or Urn sherds (Fig. 5). The third pit (70) lies over 100 m away, near the Grooved Ware pits discussed above, but is assigned to this phase on the basis of a radiocarbon date on some of the charred cereal it contained. It is possible that the other two pits in this area (63 and 67; Fig. 4) belong also in this phase, but they cannot be dated. Beaker sherds were also found in a tree-throw hole in which they may, however, be residual.

Pits 23 and 60

The two pits were rather different in shape (Fig. 5). Pit 60 was a simple circular pit, with vertical sides and a nearly flat base; pit 23, in contrast, was oval, and had undercut sides, widening from 0.70 m at the top to 1.20 m at the base, and had an irregular sloping base.

The largest groups of finds in both were found in the primary fill (Table 5), and since there is no indication that the sides of the pits had time to erode before this material was deposited, they appear to have been filled shortly after being cut. Indeed, the undercutting of pit 23 would have made the sides susceptible to collapse if it had been left open and unfilled for any length of time.

The finds from the pits, however, are very mixed, and certainly include a proportion of residual material. This is clearest in the case of the earlier Neolithic pottery in pit 23 which was found both in the upper fill (24), stratified above the Beaker pottery, and in the primary fill (22) with the Beaker pottery. The pits may have been filled with material obtained from elsewhere, incidentally (or deliberately) incorporating the Neolithic pottery, rather than simply having been backfilled with the soil excavated from the pit itself.

The Beaker pottery itself is also very mixed. Pit 60 contained 25 sherds (195 g) from six different Beakers: two were from thin-walled, impressed comb decorated Beakers with flint and grog tempered fabrics, three others were from finger-nail rusticated beakers in varied fabrics, and the last was represented by a single small sherd. Pit 23 in contrast contained only a single base sherd which could be from a Beaker or an early Bronze Age urn. None of this pottery showed any signs of having been burnt. The late Neolithic-early Bronze Age pottery in both pits was found in the primary fills.

Just as the pots are incomplete, so the deposits of cremated remains, consisting of just 2 g of bone in each pit, constitute only a minute fraction of a complete cremation deposit (the complete cremated remains of an adult weighing between 1000 g and 2400 g (McKinley 1997, 68)). Sufficient bone survives, however, to confirm that it is human. The cremated remains from both pits were white in colour, indicating full oxidation (Holden *et al.* 1995a, 1995b; McKinley 2000, 40), and highly fragmented, perhaps partly because they had been redeposited (McKinley 1994). These very small deposits of cremated human remains may, then, derive either from disturbance of a cremation burial elsewhere in the vicinity, or from stray pyre material.

It is possible that some of the other material also derives from cremation or pyre deposits elsewhere. However, both pits contained large quantities of charred plant remains and charcoal, and it seems more likely that most of this was deliberately deposited with the Beaker and Beaker or urn sherds. Charred hazel nut shells (from which the radiocarbon dates discussed below were obtained) and charcoal (which could not be identified more precisely) occurred in large quantities in both pits (Table 5). Other charred plant remains occurred in much smaller quantities. They included grass seeds, seeds of fumitory, goosefoot, knotgrass and *Labiatae* (mint family), and (largely unidentified) cereal grains, including emmer in pit 23 and barley in both pits. The pits also contained a possible Celtic or horsebean and a vetch, tare or vetchling seed.

Table 5: Summary of size and contents of late Neolithic-early Bronze Age pits (fills in stratigraphic order, primary fill at bottom)

Pit	*width (m)*	*depth (m)*	*fills*	*pot (no sherds/ weight g)**	*flint (no pieces)*	*burnt flint (no. pieces/ weight g)*	*plant remains*[+]	*cremated remains*
23	0.7 at top, 1.2 at bottom	0.36 - 0.56	24	3/4 EN/PW	5	-	hazel nut shell ++ emmer + barley + charcoal ++++	residue
			22	25/195 BKR 6/34 EN	129	85/1198	hazel nut shell +++ grass + fumitory + wheat + charcoal ++++	2 g
60	0.7	0.26	62	-	6	58/610	hazel nut shell + bean + barley + charcoal ++++	2 g
			61	1/54 BKR/URN	15	9/37	hazel nut shell ++ mint + knotgrass + goosefoot + *vicia/lathyrus* + barley + charcoal ++++	residue
70	0.6 x 0.55	0.2	73	-	-	-	grain +	-
			72	-	-	-	grain + charcoal +	-
			71	-		-	grain + charcoal +	-
Total				35/287	155	152/1845		4 g

* EN = early Neolithic; PW = Peterborough Ware; BKR = Beaker; URN = early Bronze Age urn

[+] + = 1-10 specimens; ++ = 11-50 specimens; +++ = 51-250 specimens; ++++ over 250 specimens

Most of the other material may also have been unrelated to the small quantities of cremated remains. Very little of the flint, for example, was burnt. Pit 60 contained just a single blade and one blade-like flake, nine flakes and ten small chips. Of this flint, only a single chip showed any traces of burning. The assemblage from pit 23 was more striking, containing a multiplatform flake core, five scrapers and six blades and bladelets. It also,

however, contained twenty chips, 39 flakes and a tested nodule or bashed lump of flint. Although this group perhaps initially appears to contain a more deliberate selection of tools and flintworking material, it also contains an appreciable proportion of waste. Of this flint only two flakes and two chips were burnt. In both pits most of the flint was in the primary fill, and the upper fills contained mainly chips.

Both pits also, however, contained appreciable quantities of burnt, unworked flint: 85 pieces (1198 g) from the primary fill of pit 23, and 67 pieces (647 g) from pit 60, mostly from the upper fill.

Pit 70

Pit 70, situated over 100 m from the pits 23 and 60, was quite different in form and contents (Fig. 4, Table 5). It was a shallow scoop, 0.6 by 0.55 m wide and 0. 2 m deep, and contained no finds other than charcoal and charred grain (from which the radiocarbon date, NZA-12233, 3773±60 BP: 2460-2030 cal BC, discussed below was obtained).

Radiocarbon dates

Radiocarbon results were obtained on charred hazel nut shells from the primary fills of pit 23 and pit 60, and on charred grain (not more closely identified) from the primary fill of pit 70 (Table 2).

The date from pit 70 was taken to determine whether this pit was contemporary with the nearby Grooved Ware pits. It clearly shows that they were not contemporary, and that pit 70 dates, instead, from the late Neolithic-early Bronze Age phase.

The presence of residual early Neolithic pottery in pit 23, and of possibly residual cremated remains in both pits 23 and 60, means that we cannot be certain that the hazelnut shells from which the determinations were obtained were directly associated with the Beaker/early Bronze Age pottery in these pits. However, there was no definitely residual material in pit 60, and the hazel nut shells occurred in large numbers in both pits, suggesting that they were not residual. It thus seem likely that the hazelnut shell was deposited with the Beaker/early Bronze Age pottery.

Because of the large error of ± 60 years associated with determination NZ-12233, and the shape of the calibration curve, the date for pit 70 is considerably less precise than the other two dates. The period it spans at two standard deviations - 2460-2030 cal BC - almost covers the first five hundred years of the period (*c* 2500-1700 cal BC; Kinnes *et al*. 1991) in which Beakers were in use.

The other two dates, from pits 23 and 60, both fall in the period between 2300 and 1900 cal BC. They thus fall within the middle of the period within which Beakers were in use.

Late Neolithic-early Bronze Age sherds in a tree hole, and other residual finds

Two further sherds of pottery probably dating from this phase, and some other possibly contemporaneous finds, were found thinly scattered across the site. One small sherd (3 g) was found in one of the small circular tree holes or pits (89) discussed below. It could be residual, having been redeposited after the tree fell or was cleared, and thus suggests only that the tree hole dates from the Beaker period or later. The significance of this find is discussed further below.

It is perhaps worth noting also that charred hazel nut shells, the only well dated examples of which are in the Beaker pits, were also found in pit 112 and ditch 140. Both of these features may, in fact, date from the early or middle Iron Age, and, although hazelnuts were still exploited in that period, it is possible that the hazelnut shell in these features is residual. There are no other finds from ditch 140, but, arguably, it is most plausibly assigned to the early or middle Iron Age on the grounds of its proximity to the dated ditches nearby (eg 241). Pit 112 contained some fired clay of a kind which occurs also in early or middle Iron Age features. The hazelnut shell here may, then, also be residual. A further sherd of possibly early Bronze Age pottery was also found in ditch 241 where it is more clearly residual (see below).

4.3.4 Sorting the trees from the pits

Whilst many of the features scattered along the south-western side of the site (Fig. 6) have characteristics diagnostic of tree-throw holes (Moore and Jennings 1992, fig. 6; Lambrick 2003, 245-6), in the case of others, the question of whether they were tree-throw holes or man-made pits is less easily answered. Since almost all of these features were sectioned and fully excavated, an attempt was made to assess systematically their origins by examining their shape and size in plan and section, and, albeit with less success, the direction in which the trees fell. (Because all of the features are truncated, and in all but one case contain only single layers of fill (and the one exception just two), the pattern of fills in section could not be used in this exercise.) Despite the use of quantitative criteria, the interpretation of these features remains to some extent a matter of judgement.

As a result of this analysis (Table 6; Fig. 7) three groups of features have been distinguished. The first group are interpreted as typical tree-throw holes: elongated (oval or reniform) features, asymmetrical in section with widths usually at least five times greater than their depths (Fig. 6, 200 and 206; Fig. 7). The only indication of the date of these tree-throw holes is the Neolithic flint in tree-throw hole 188. The nature of this assemblage suggests that it is more likely to have derived from an episode of knapping into the tree-throw hole whilst it was still open, rather than being residual material which had been disturbed and redeposited

by the tree falling. It thus suggests that at least one of the tree-throw holes was formed in the Neolithic.

The other typical tree-throw holes may, however, be of very different dates. Insofar as any conclusions were possible, there seemed to be little consistency in the direction in which they fell, suggesting that they fell on several - perhaps numerous - different occasions.

The second group of features is distinguished from the typical tree-throw holes by being smaller in width and by being more circular in plan (Fig. 6, 89 and 213). Almost all of them also contain charcoal flecks, in contrast to the scarcity of charcoal in the typical tree-throw holes (Table 6). Rather than being true tree-throw holes, they may derive from a deliberate attempt to clear smaller trees or shrubs from the south-western side of the site. The charcoal from these features was not analysed in detail, but seems insufficient in quantity to indicate that it derives from an attempt to burn the remaining roots.

The only indication of the date of these features is the single small late Neolithic-early Bronze Age sherd (3 g) from tree-hole 89 (Fig. 6). It is impossible to determine whether this sherd was residual, was deposited into the open tree hole, or, although perhaps less likely, was intrusive. It can, therefore, provide only a hint that this feature dates from the late Neolithic-early Bronze Age or later.

The third group contains four ambiguous features which are more regular in shape than the typical tree-throw holes but which are not clearly pits. Two of them contain a little charcoal, and one (216) a single blade-like flint flake.

Table 6: Summary of the size, shape and contents of tree-throw holes and similar features

Feature	*plan*	*section*	*estimated direction of fall*	*sides*	*base*	*width (m.)*	*depth (m.)*	*comments*
Typical tree-throw holes								
188	oval	symmetrical	N/S	shallow	irregular	2.30 x 0.62	0.12	many flint chips etc indicate knapping into hole; occasional charcoal flecks and charred grain
183	irregular oval	asymmetrical	S/N	irregular, steep	flat	2.90 x 1.20	0.32	flint
207	irregular	asymmetrical	NW/SE	irregular, shallow	irregular	2.90 x 1.80	0.24	flint
185	irregular circular	symmetrical	SW?	shallow irregular	irregular	1.70 x 1.60	0.20	
187	irregular ovate	asymmetrical	SW	steep one side, shallow other	irregular	1.80 x 1.10	0.25	
191	irregular reniform	asymmetrical	S	shallow	irregular, pock-marked	2.50 x 1.00	0.20	
195	irregular ovate	asymmetrical	SW	irregular; steep one side, shallow other	irregular V-shaped	2.45 x 1.30	0.30	
200	ovate	asymmetrical	S	steep one side, shallow other	flatish	2.60 x 1.20	0.32	
212	ovate	asymmetrical	SW	shallow	flat	2.00 x 0.95	0.20	
234	ovate	irregular	N/E?	shallow, irregular	irregular	1.70 x 1.0	0.22	
145	irreg	irregular	NW	irregular, steep, stepped	irregular	1.61	0.44	
206	oval	asymmetrical	NE	asymmetrical, steep one side, shallow other	irregular	2.60 x 1.90	0.82	charcoal and charred grain
Small, circular tree-throw holes or pits								
89	circular	asymmetrical	?	shallow, irregular	irregular	1.10	0.20	1 sherd (3 g) Beaker; occasional charcoal flecks
197	circular	too shallow	?	shallow	rounded	0.90	0.12	occasional charcoal flecks
230	circular	irregular	?	shallow, irregular	irregular	0.90	0.10	occasional charcoal flecks
237	circular	symmetrical	?	shallow	concave	1.00	0.18	occasional charcoal flecks
213	oval	asymmetrical	SE	straight	shallow V	1.10 x 0.70	0.21	occasional charcoal flecks
209	oval	asymmetrical	SW	straight	shallow V	1.05 x 0.60	0.18	charcoal
198	irregular, circular	slightly asymmetrical	S?	steep	flat	0.7 x 0.65	0.22	
Uncertain pit or tree-throw holes								
216	oval	symmetrical, but v. shallow	?	shallow	flat	1.7 x 1.00	0.18	flint; charcoal
203	oval	symmetrical, but shallow	?	shallow, curved	flatish	0.80 x 0.65	0.13	
193	oval	symmetrical	?	shallow, curved	flat	1.45 x 0.85	?	
239	ovate	symmetrical	?	shallow	concave	1.20 x 0.75	0.10	occasional charcoal flecks

4.4 Farming Communities - The early and middle Iron Age Landscape (*c* 600 BC - *c* 200 BC)

Following the late-Neolithic-early Bronze Age, there is no evidence for activity on the site until the early Iron Age, a gap in activity of 1300 years or more. The features belonging to the next phase of activity - early and middle Iron Age pits, hollows and gullies scattered across the north-western half of the site - do not form an obviously coherent plan. A comparison of the features here, however, with the more extensive remains of similar date at White Horse Stone (Hayden 2006) suggests that these features may have lain at the edge of a settlement. The deposition of a bent iron dagger in one pit and of a neatly bisected footring bowl and a small conical cup - either imported from the Champagne region or imitating the La Tène I style of that region - in another suggests that the deposits in some of the pits were more than just everyday rubbish.

Pottery and dating

Apart from the two exceptional vessels just mentioned, the pottery from this phase was dominated by proto-saucepan pots and ovoid jars (Fig. 8, 3-4) in a variety of sand tempered fabrics to which varying proportions of glauconite and flint tempering were added to produce more or less fine fabrics. The assemblage includes rusticated and occasional haematite-coated sherds as well as more simply finished burnished and smoothed pottery. The raw materials used to make the pottery would all have been available from local sources within 10 km of the site. The assemblage cannot be closely dated, but these features suggest it dates from the early and middle Iron Age, from the 6th to the 3rd century BC, with the main period of activity perhaps lying in the middle of this period from the 5th to the 4th century BC. A radiocarbon date, obtained on charred grains of barley from a large dump in the upper fill (223) of pit 226 gave a result of 410-210 cal BC (NZA-22594, 2295±30 BP), which is consistent with this chronology. No meaningful chronological distinctions could be made within this phase on the basis of the pottery, and the activity represented by the associated features is thus regarded as belonging to a single phase.

Ditches

Just two stretches of ditch can be dated to this phase on the basis of the pottery they contain: 241 and 97. Neither of these ditches contained large quantities of pottery: ditch 241 just 12 sherds (32 g) and ditch 97 only one sherd (1 g). It seems possible, therefore, that a number of the other ditches which contained no datable artefacts may also date from this phase.

Ditch 94, for example, contained no pottery. However, its location - cutting ditch 241 within the Iron Age hollows described below - suggests that it belongs to this phase, although stratigraphically, it is later than both ditch 241 and all of the hollows.

Some support for the conclusion that one of the other ditches - 168 - which did not contain datable artefacts belongs to this phase is perhaps provided by the very faint hints of order in the alignment of the ditches. Ditch 168, towards the north-eastern end of the site, runs roughly parallel to ditch 241, and both of these ditches are roughly perpendicular to the line of ditch 97. These ditches are, however, very far apart and could just as well be unrelated.

All of the ditches on the site have suffered from a more or less severe degree of truncation. With the exception of ditch 240 discussed above none of the ditches was preserved to a depth greater than 0.5 m, and almost all to a depth of 0.35 m or less. The apparent differences in size between them may be due as much to the differing degrees of truncation they have suffered as to differences in their original size. One consequence of this truncation is that long stretches of the ditches may have been entirely removed so that it is now extremely difficult to perceive a coherent plan.

What survives of these ditches and of the curved ditches discussed below nevertheless suggests that they may originally have been quite substantial: most are still over 1 m wide, and only ditches 94 and 97 are appreciably less.

Ditch 94 is the shortest of three curved stretches of ditch preserved on the site (the other two being ditches 50 and 140). It is perhaps tempting to think that these ditches may have formed gullies around round houses. However, none of them appears likely to have been originally very circular, and no postholes survive to support this idea. An attempt to extrapolate the size of these possible buildings suggests that ditch 140 would have defined a rather large house, 15 m in diameter; the others rather smaller structures.

Aside from the pottery described above and a few residual pieces of flint, there were very few finds in the ditches. One exception, however, was a large deposit of charred grain mixed with a fair proportion of chaff and weed seeds (none more closely identified) from the primary fill of ditch 241 (in section 135 which was approximately half way along the length of this ditch exposed within the excavation). This deposit was not selected for detailed analysis, but the presence of chaff and weed seeds within this deposit appears to contrast with the relatively pure deposits of grain from pit 161 which were analysed in detail (see below). It seems then that this deposit consisted of grain which had been less thoroughly or less completely processed than those in pit 161, although the different methods used to quantify this material make comparison difficult. The quantity of charred grain in the ditch, however, is sufficient to suggest that it was a deliberate deposit, and thus shows that such deposits were not made only in pits. Since the ditches were only sectioned at selected points rather than being fully excavated it is impossible to be certain of how common such deposits might have

been. How such deposits became charred is a matter for debate. They may have been either deliberately charred for ritual reasons or accidentally charred perhaps during drying. Either way this material suggests that crops were being processed nearby and thus lends weight to the suggestion that the scant features belonging to this phase were related in some way to a settlement.

The sequence of hollows

Ditch 241 cut the latest in a series of hollows (subgroup 92). These were very shallow (albeit now truncated) and ultimately quite wide scoops cut in a sequence more or less on top of each other. They generally became wider but not deeper over time (Table 7).

Table 7: Dimensions of the early-middle Iron Age hollows (subgroup 92)

Features in stratigraphic order	*width (m)*	*depth (m)*	*Pot (no. sherds /weight (g) - mean sherd weight (g)*	*Grain*	*Comments*
74 - latest	6.4	0.2	35/51 - 2	Rich spelt	pot very abraded
33	4.8	0.22	28/94 - 3		pot very abraded
124	0.7	0.15	-		
118	2.8	0.2	47/100 - 2		
125 - earliest	?	0.12	8/33 - 4		
Total			118/278 - 2		

The hollows contained a rather limited range of finds including residual flint, a little charcoal (unidentified) and early-middle Iron Age pot in quantities appreciably larger than the ditches, but rather less than the pits (Table 7). The pottery in the latest two hollows (33 and 74) was very abraded and is likely, therefore, to have been redeposited. The mean sherd weight in these hollows was not, however, very different from that of the others. The uppermost fill (76) of the latest hollow (74) also contained a rich deposit of grain, some identified as *Triticum spelta*, associated with a small amount of chaff and some weed seeds. As a whole the deposit seems comparable to that in ditch 241. It is perhaps worth noting that although in different kinds of features, ditch 241 cuts hollow 74, and the deposit within ditch 241 is in its primary fill. Stratigraphically, then, the ditch deposit lies just above the deposit in the hollow.

The purpose of these hollows remains obscure.

The pits

Eight early and middle Iron Age pits were found (Fig. 8) scattered, sometimes in pairs, across the north-western end of the site.

Of these features, pits 14 and 17 stand out as distinctly different. They were noticeably smaller than the other pits (Table 8, Fig. 9), and were the only pits which cut a subsoil layer (11) which covered all of the other pits. They thus appear to belong to a clearly later phase than the other pits. Pit 17 nevertheless contained an appreciable quantity of early-middle Iron Age pottery (20 sherds, 494 g; Fig. 10). Pit 14 contained no finds.

The remaining pits were more comparable in shape and size (Table 8). They were all more or less circular or oval in plan (226 and 217 being notably more oval than the others), and generally have vertical or near vertical sides and flat bases (Fig. 9). The sides of pit 161, however, were undercut, perhaps as a result of natural erosion from the pit's side since the lower layers of fill are sterile. Their widths generally measured between 1.3 m and 1.8 m, and their depths between 0.3 m and 0.6 m (Figs 7 and 9). Pit 226, however, was noticeably larger (2.80 m wide by 0.93 m deep).

Table 8: Summary of the size and shape of early-middle Iron Age pits

Pit	*plan*	*sides*	*base*	*width (m.)*	*depth (m.)*
175	oval	steep	flat	1.33 x 0.8	0.32
170	circular	vertical	flat	1.76	0.44
153	oval	vertical	flat	1.55 x 0.98	0.47
161	circular	undercut	flat	1.78	0.54
226	oval	steep	flat	2.8 x 2	0.93
217	oval	steep	flat	1.7 x 1.29	0.56
14	circular	steep	flat	0.6	0.15
17	circular	steep	flat	0.6	0.18

There was little indication that the pits have been recut, except perhaps in the cases of pit 175 (between layers 176/179 and 177/178) and pit 161 (between 163/162 and 164/165 in particular; Fig. 9). However, no recuts were identified in the field and it is possible that the impression of recuts in the drawn sections was produced by the decay of organic material causing later layers above to slump downwards. A similar process might account for the irregular shape of the junction between layers 157 and 158 in pit 153.

Another feature shared by most of the remaining pits was that there were very few or no finds in the lowest levels of fill which were usually similar in composition to the substrate into which the pits were cut (Fig. 10). It seems likely, therefore, the pits were left open for some time before they were filled. This may be an indication that they have been re-used. In some of them there were also further more or less sterile layers between those which contain substantial groups of finds. Most of the finds from the pits, consisting mostly of pottery and charred grain, were found in the upper layers of fill (although not necessarily the uppermost). The one notable exception to this is again the exceptionally large pit 226 which contained substantial deposits, mostly of pottery but including also small amounts of charred grain, in all of its three layers of fill, including the primary fill.

In addition to these shared features, a number of the pits contained more exceptional finds which are discussed below.

Pit 226: pottery

The pottery from this pit included two exceptional vessels (Fig. 8, 1-2). Both were found in the primary fill (225). The first is an S-shaped necked bowl with everted, rounded rim, rounded shoulder and footring base (form R1). It is the only vessel on the site made from fabric Q3: a soft, soapy fabric tempered with quartz grains. Its form is paralleled at other sites in Kent and Essex. What makes this vessel peculiar is that it has been very cleanly bisected vertically - rather than simply broken - leaving a clean straight edge. How this was achieved is unclear, but it must have been a rather difficult, and hence deliberate, operation.

The second vessel worthy of note is a thin walled conical cup with a solid pedestal base. It was made of a fine, soft, soapy grog, quartz and iron oxide tempered fabric (GQ1) which again was unique to this vessel. No parallels for this cup have so far been found in Britain, but it does find parallels in finds from La Tène I cemeteries in the Champagne region (Rozoy 1987, 109).The other pottery from this pit does not appear to be clearly distinct from that on the rest of the site. A radiocarbon date (NZA-22594, 2295±30) was obtained on barley from the upper fill (223) of this pit in order to clarify the date of this pottery. The barley formed part of a larger dump, and, although strictly, providing a *terminus ante quem* for the pottery, is likely to have been deposited soon after the pottery. The date suggested, 410-210 (and most likely 410-350 (64% chance) is consistent with the proposed chronology for this pottery (La Tène I, *c* 510-210 cal BC (Bretz-Mahler 1971), roughly equivalent to La Tène Ancienne (*c* 480-230 cal BC) of Hatt and Roualet (1977), see Evans 2004, Appendix A).

Pit 175: the iron dagger

Pit 175 contained the fragmentary remains of an iron dagger in its upper fill (178; Fig. 8). The blade is incomplete and survives as seven fragments. The main piece is 110 mm long

and the cross-section shows that the blade is double edged and has a slight mid-rib on both sides. The reduction in width along this fragment, from 40 to 23 mm, suggests that it is part of a dagger rather than a sword. Another fragment, reconstructed from five pieces, is 60 mm long and on the basis of its width would have joined between the main surviving piece of blade and the tang. The tang survives as one fragment, 50 mm long, from the original end to a recent break. It has a rectangular cross-section, 8 mm by 4 mm, but tapers towards its tip to *c* 6 mm by 4 mm. The tip is burred over a retaining washer (*c* 9 mm wide) for the handle. All of the fragments are thickly accreted and severely corroded. No clear evidence survives for either a handle or a sheath, although the accretions immediately adjacent to the iron have a different texture - with numerous small pores - from those further away which could be an indication of decayed organic material in close proximity to the iron blade.

Despite the damage which the dagger has suffered during excavation (most of it having been recovered from an environmental sample), it is worth noting that it was already bent before being deposited in the pit. The reconstructed piece of the blade is bent almost to a right angle whereas the single fragment of blade has a more gentle curve along its length. Although the recent fractures makes it uncertain whether this weapon was still complete when it was deposited it was clearly a deliberately bent and damaged weapon.

Associated with the dagger was a deposit of pottery (99 sherds, 706 g) much larger than those in the layers below (19 sherds, 253 g and 5 sherds, 143 g), and a small deposit of charred grain similar in composition to that in the pit 170. It also contained a shark's tooth. It is unclear whether this is fossilised, but if so it may be an incidentally incorporated naturally occurring object rather than having been deliberately deposited.

Loomweights

The layer containing the dagger in pit 175 also contained two fragments of amorphous fired clay (56 g), the larger of which (52 g) may be a fragment of a triangular loomweight. Numerous other fragments of similar loomweights were found in the subsoil layer (11) which covered some of the Iron Age features (94 fragments, 362 g). One of these, although otherwise similar to the other loomweights, was distinguished by grooves (in addition to perforations) running through its lower corners. A much more complete loomweight (946) was also found in the middle fill (172) of pit 170.

Animal bone and other finds in pit 170

The only large deposit of animal bone on the site was found in pit 170 (Table 9). The deposit consists of a mixed group of cattle, horse, pig, sheep and small mammal bones. A large proportion of the bones could only be identified as belonging to large mammals, and it is therefore likely that most of the deposit consisted of cattle or horse bones, smaller

mammals (pig, sheep/goat and unidentified small mammal) being represented by very small quantities of bone. The large mammal bones of both species perhaps fall into two groups: one consisting of vertebrae (including one cattle atlas) and ribs, the other of long bones (including one horse tibia) and a horse astragalus. It is possible then that the deposit originally consisted of bones from the neck and chest of a cow, and the hind limb of a horse. These groups of bone do not derive from meaty joints, but may have been discarded following butchering aimed at removing other parts of the animal. The sheep bone and some of the unidentified fragments, perhaps also of sheep, were burnt, in contrast to the larger mammal bones.

The other pits, in contrast, contained only very small quantities of animal bone: single cattle teeth in pits 217 and 226 and unidentified fragments in pits 175 (2 fragments, 2 g, burnt) and 153 (14 fragments, 3 g).

Charred plant remains

Most of the pits contained charred plant remains, especially in their upper fills (Fig. 10). Particularly large deposits of charred plant remains, containing thousands of cereal grains, were found in pits 170 and 161. Wheat (emmer and possibly spelt) predominated in pit 170. It also, however, contained barley and a wide range of other species represented in very small quantities: oats, *Brassica* sp., gold of pleasure, St John's wort, fat hen, pea, dock and grasses. There was a notable quantity of brome grass in one sample. Barley predominated in the samples from pit 161, although emmer and spelt were also present. This pit contained some of the cleanest samples of grain with very few chaff fragments or weed seeds.

Table 9: Summary of animal bone in early-middle Iron Age pit 170 (no. fragments/weight g)

	Skull - zygomatic arch	*Tooth*	*Vertebra - atlas*	*Vertebra - cervical*	*Vertebra*	*Rib*	*Radius*	*Tibia*	*Long Bone*	*Astragalus*	*Unidentified*	*Total*
Cattle			1/17									1/17
Equid								1/59		1/28		2/87
Large Mammal				1/15	7/75	5/19			37/41		1/24	51/174
Pig	1/9											1/9
Sheep/goat		1/3					1/3			1/4		3/10
Small mammal						1/0						1/0
Unidentified											471/161	471/161

There appears to be a negative correlation between the quantities of pottery and charred plant remains in these pits. The pits which were rich in charred grain (170 and 161) contained little pottery. In contrast, pits 217 and 175 contained much smaller quantities of charred grain (mostly barley) but larger deposits of pottery, again concentrated in the upper layers of fill (Fig. 10). The deposits in pit 226 contained similarly small quantities of charred grain (mostly barley) associated with larger deposits of pottery. In this pit, however, they occurred in the primary as well as the upper fill.

Discussion

The small scatter of early and middle Iron Age features do not form an obviously coherent pattern. At the much more extensively excavated settlement at White Horse Stone, however, almost all of the relatively small number of pits lay near and beyond the edges of the settlement (Hayden 2006). The pits there were similar in form and size to the pits at Eyhorne Street, and contained a generally similar range of deposits of pottery, charred grain and animal bone. A case can be made, therefore, for seeing the pits at Eyhorne Street as having lain at the edge of a more extensive settlement.

Although the pits at White Horse Stone do not contain anything comparable to the bent iron dagger or the unusual ceramics at Eyhorne Street, they do contain other finds - notably human bone - which suggest that, like the pits at Eyhorne Street, they were more than simple rubbish pits.

The finds from the pits at Eyhorne Street seem, rather like the Grooved Ware pits discussed above, to contain material which could be interpreted in two apparently contradictory ways: one - the disposal of rubbish - relating to everyday activity of perhaps rather low status; the other to higher status activity hinting at martial symbolism, feasting (or at least drinking) and continental connections.

The pits themselves do not appear to have been cut to contain these deposits, but rather have been re-used. It is, of course, possible that this reuse was closely related to the pits' primary use. It has, for example, been suggested that deposits of grain might be placed as offerings into disused seed-grain pits (Cunliffe 1992). This argument is more plausible, however, where such deposits have been placed in the primary fills of the pits, whereas at Eyhorne Street the primary fills of the pits often contain few artefacts, the richest deposits more often occurring in the upper fills. The context of the finds does not, therefore, suggest that the deposits were of great significance.

Furthermore most of the finds from these pits - charred grain and pottery - are quite unexceptional in these contexts. Nor, in this case, are the animal bones suggestive of ritual deposition: they appear, rather, to be the less meaty parts which may have been discarded after the better joints had been removed. The significance of the rich deposits of charred grain

in the pits is open to question. They could, on the one hand, be nothing more than grain accidentally charred during drying; on the other, they could be deliberate offerings, as the purity of the deposit in pit 170 perhaps suggests. Overall, however, there is little that is exceptional in this material. This is not to say that the deposits are not structured. Clearly material has been selected for deposition, but most of that material could have derived from everyday activities on the site.

The bent dagger, the possibly imported cup and the bisected bowl, however, suggest quite different connections. Although it is not unusual to find iron implements in Iron Age pits, weapons seem to be unusual in such contexts. They were more often deposited in rivers (Jope 1961; Fitzpatrick 1984). Amongst the other finds which occur in watery places, Bradley (1990, 166-7) has drawn attention to finds of cauldrons, bowls and tankards associated with serving food and drink. Although the finds from Eyhorne Street are no doubt less spectacular, it is nonetheless striking that as well as the dagger, the pits there also contained the possibly imported small cup, which would have been well suited to the consumption of wine. The dagger, cup, and perhaps the bisected bowl, thus seem to evoke, albeit perhaps rather dimly, material usually deposited in watery places rather than the material usually deposited in domestic pit contexts.

4.5 The post-medieval Landscape (*c* AD 1500 to the modern day)

Two stretches of ditch (85 and 229; Fig. 11), separated by the unexcavated strip running through the middle of the site, have been dated to the post-medieval period by fragments of brick and peg tile found in the upper fill (87) of one of them (85). They may once have formed a single ditch (although curiously they are not aligned on each other across the unexcavated strip). Both were, however, similar in section, having curved sides and rounded bases, and were similar in width (0.95 m and 1.2 m), although the western ditch was rather shallower (229: 0.4 m deep) than the eastern (85: 0.93 m deep). Two small sherds of early or middle Iron Age pottery were found in the upper fill (227) of the western section of the ditch (229).

4.6 Unphased features

There are a small number of features on the site for which there is no direct dating evidence (Fig. 11). Because of the distribution of features of very different dates across the site, no particularly plausible spatial arguments can be used to associate them with more securely dated features. The most potentially significant of these are listed below with brief comments.

Group of stakeholes 47 and posthole 25

Near the centre of the site was a small group of stakeholes (47), and near that a posthole (25). There is no obvious pattern in their spatial distribution. Many of them seem to have been burnt *in situ*. The only finds recovered from them are burnt unworked flint. Perhaps, given their location, they are most plausibly regarded as early or middle Iron Age.

Group of postholes 80, 82 and 84

Not far from the stakeholes was a group of three postholes containing no finds.

Pits and stakehole at the south-eastern end of the site: 110, 119 and 121

Two pits and a stakehole at the south-eastern end of the site contained no finds. Two were recorded in the field as having been modern, but the basis for this interpretation is unclear.

Posthole 233

A further posthole, containing charcoal but no other finds, was located near the south-eastern end of the scatter of tree-throw holes.

5 GUIDE TO THE ARCHIVE

The following tables include details of the various archive components.

The site has been analysed and published as part of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link Section 1 Post-excavation Project. This Integrated Site Report is one of 20 publication level site reports available to download from the Archaeology Data Service website: **http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/projArch/ctrl/index.cfm**. These present synthesised data from key site sequences at an interpretative level that can be assimilated into complementary studies. The ADS site also includes five schemewide specialist reports, which provide synthetic overviews of the specialist data from CTRL Section 1 in its regional context. Underpinning the site reports and overviews, is a comprehensive archive of individual specialist reports and databases, which are also available to download. The CTRL reports and data can be accessed through the 'Project Archives' section of the ADS website.

Hard copy publication of the CTRL Section 1 results comprises a single volume synthetic overview of the excavated results in their regional context, which includes a complete site gazetteer and guide to the digital archive (Booth et al 2007).

Table 10 below details all available digital data for the Eyhorne Street group of sites. The post-excavation assessment report is included in the digital archive, but assessment databases have only been included for categories of material that were not subsequently subject to full analysis. All reports and accompanying figures are presented as downloadable, print-ready Adobe Acrobat files (.pdf). ADS also maintain higher resolution archive versions of report image pages (.tiff). The report text and databases are available as text files (.rtf and .csv respectively). The digitised site plan is available as an Arcview shapefile (.shp) and in drawing exchange format (.dxf).

Table 10 Digital archive

Description	Filename root	Principal authors and organisation
Integrated site report		
Integrated site report	EYH_ISR	Hayden C (OWA JV)
Integrated site report figures	EYH_ISR	Hayden C (OWA JV)
Site research database		
Site database	EYH	Hayden C (OWA JV)
CAD/ GIS drawings		
CAD drawing	EYH_CAD	
ESRI ArcMAP GIS project	EYH_GIS	
GIS limit of excavation shapefile	EYH_GIS	
GIS feature plan	EYH_GIS	
Specialist research reports		
Ceramics (early prehistoric)	CER_EPR_EYH	Edwards E (OWA JV)
Ceramics (later prehistoric)	CER_LPR_EYH	Jones GP (OWA JV)
Lithics	FLI_EYH	Devaney R (OWA JV)
Small finds	SFS_EYH	Edwards E (OWA JV) and Fell V (English Heritage)
Faunal remains	ENV_Fauna_EYH	Kitch J (OWA JV)
Charred plant remains	ENV_Charredplants_EYH	Davies A (MoLSS)
Human remains	HUM_EYH	Witkin A (OWA JV)
Radiocarbon dating	DAT_EYH	Allen MJ (OWA JV), Hayden C (OWA JV) and Brady K (OWA JV)
Specialist datasets		
Ceramics (early prehistoric)	CER_EPR_EYH	Edwards E (OWA JV)
Ceramics (later prehistoric)	CER_LPR_EYH	Jones GP (OWA JV)
Lithics	FLI_EYH	Devaney R (OWA JV)
Small finds	SFS_EYH	Edwards E (OWA JV) and Fell V (English Heritage)
Faunal remains	ENV_Fauna_EYH	Kitch J (OWA JV)
Charred plant remains	ENV_Charredplants_EYH	Davies A (MoLSS)
Human remains	HUM_EYH	Witkin A (OWA JV)
Post-excavation assessment		
Post-excavation Assessment	EYH_PXA	OWA JV

Table 11: Paper and finds archive quantification table

Item	Number of Items or boxes or other	Number of fragments or litres
Context records	239	
A1 plans	8	
A4 plans	1	
A4 sections	89	
Small finds		
Films (monochrome)	23	
Films (colour)	43	
Flint	2 size 3	753
Pottery	1 size 1	684
Fired Clay	2 size 4	134
CBM	Misc	6
Metalwork	Misc	8
Animal Bone	1 size 2	372
Misc	1 size 3	
Soil samples (bulk)	82	820

Key to box sizes

Cardboard boxes

Size 2 = Half box	391mm x 238mm x 100mm	0.01 m^3
Size 3 = Quarter box	386mm x 108mm x 100mm	0.004 m^3
Size 4 = Eighth box	213 mm x 102 mm x 80 mm	0.002 m^3

Plastic boxes

Size 4 = Small	213 mm x 102 mm x 80 mm	0.002 m^3

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