

**CHANNEL TUNNEL RAIL LINK
UNION RAILWAYS (SOUTH) LIMITED**

**Archaeological Evaluation at Little Stock Farm
(ARC LSF98), nr Mersham, Kent
Environmental Statement Route Window 34**

FINAL FIELDWORK REPORT

4th November 1999

**Contract no. URS/400/ARC/0001
WA Report no. 45993b**

Wessex Archaeology

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Volume 1 of 1

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Contents

1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
	1.1 Project Background.....	1
	1.2 Site Description, Topography, Geology and Hydrography.....	1
	1.3 Methods.....	2
	1.4 Variations.....	3
2	RESULTS.....	4
	2.1 General.....	4
	2.2 Stratigraphy.....	5
	2.3 Structural Reports.....	6
	2.4 Artefactual Reports.....	14
	2.5 Environmental Reports.....	16
3	CONCLUSIONS.....	19
	3.1 Extent of Archaeological Remains.....	19
	3.2 Nature of the Archaeological Remains.....	19
	3.3 Character of Site.....	20
	3.4 Site Chronology.....	20
4	IMPORTANCE OF REMAINS.....	21
	4.1 Scheduled Monument Criteria.....	21
	4.2 Period.....	21
	4.3 Rarity.....	21
	4.4 Documentation.....	21
	4.5 Group Value.....	21
	4.6 Survival/ Condition.....	22
	4.7 Fragility/ Vulnerability.....	22
	4.8 Diversity.....	22
	4.9 Potential.....	22
	4.10 Discussion.....	23
5	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	24

TABLES

Table 1:	Correlation of plot and trench numbers	3
Table 2:	Summary of archaeological features by trench	4
Table 3:	Post-medieval artefact summary	15
Table 4:	Environmental sample provenance summary.....	16
Table 5:	Quantification of animal bones by species per context	18
Table 6:	Quantification of animal species by period.....	18

APPENDICES

Appendix 1:	Context Inventory.....	25
Appendix 2:	Artefact Quantification	29
Appendix 3:	Ecofact Quantification	30

FIGURES (after Appendices)

Figure 1:	Site location
Figure 2:	Trench layout summarising presence of archaeological remains
Figure 3:	Plans and sections of trenches 3546TT, 3547TT and 3622TT
Figure 4:	Plans and sections of trenches 3551TT and 3552TT
Figure 5:	Plans and sections of trenches 3621TT, 3623TT and 3625TT
Figure 6:	Plan and sections of trench 3627TT

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Executive Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Union Railways (South) Limited to carry out an archaeological evaluation of a site at Little Stock Farm, alongside the Ashford to Folkestone railway, near the village of Mersham (centred on URL grid point 86400 18625; NGR grid point TR 06400 38625). The site is known as Little Stock Farm. An Environmental Assessment (URL 1994), geophysical survey (URL 1995) and fieldwalking (URL 1995) had identified the potential for archaeological remains within the evaluation area. The potential appeared to focus on a diffuse scatter of worked and burnt flint, including an Early Bronze Age barbed and tanged arrowhead, within the eastern portion of the evaluation area. The geophysical survey noted zones of increased response towards the western end of the evaluation area and within the coombe crossing the central portion of the site.

The evaluation has revealed a total of 27 archaeological features, including ditches, pits, post- and stake-holes and other structural remains. These features were grouped together on the south-east brow of a slight promontory overlooking the East Stour River valley to the south, and in particular within one trench (trench 3627TT). Dating evidence suggests that the features in this area represent both Late Bronze Age and Late Iron Age settlement activity, both focussing on what appear to be subrectangular enclosures. Medieval and/or post-medieval activity appears to be concentrated to the west of this prehistoric activity, and may include substantial structural remains.

Colluvial deposits recorded at the site, although extensive, were generally thin and probably of post-medieval origin. The deeper profiles, recorded within a coombe crossing the central portion of the site, produced evidence to suggest phases of deposition broadly contemporaneous with the phases represented by features elsewhere. It is possible that some of the worked flint recovered from the very base of the colluvial sequence may be Mesolithic or Early Neolithic in origin.

FACTUAL STATEMENT

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Union Railways (South) Limited (URS) to carry out an archaeological evaluation of a site at Little Stock Farm, alongside the Ashford to Folkestone railway, near the village of Mersham (centred on URL grid point 86400 18625; NGR grid point TR 06400 38625; **Figure 1**). The site is known as **Little Stock Farm** (site code ARC LSF98: Environmental Statement Route Window 34).
- 1.1.2 The evaluation forms part of a programme of archaeological investigation along the proposed route of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL), and was preceded by an Environmental Assessment (URL 1994), geophysical survey (URL 1995) and fieldwalking (URL 1995).
- 1.1.3 The fieldwalking identified a diffuse scatter of worked and burnt flint, including an Early Bronze Age barbed and tanged arrowhead, within the eastern portion of the evaluation area (Plot 2 – see below). Additional finds from this area included small quantities of prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval pottery.
- 1.1.4 The geophysical survey noted zones of increased response towards the western end of the evaluation area and within the coombe crossing the central portion of the site (see below), but concluded that these effects may be due to pedological variations.
- 1.1.5 The fieldwork was conducted in accordance with a written *Agreement for the Provision of Archaeological Services* (URS 1999), which defined the scope, aims and methods for the project.
- 1.1.6 The fieldwork was carried out between 25th January and 28th January 1999.

1.2 Site Description, Topography, Geology and Hydrography

- 1.2.1 The subrectangular site comprised two adjacent plots, Plot 1 to the west and Plot 2 to the east (**Figure 2**). The evaluation area was defined by the Ashford to Folkestone railway cutting to the south, Station Road to the east, and a farm track from Little Stock farm to the west. The northern boundary to the site comprises the defined limit of evaluation, and does not correspond to existing landscape features (**Figure 2**). At the time of the evaluation Plots 1 and 2 contained a sprouting arable crop.
- 1.2.2 Topographically, the site is draped across the head of an approximately south-facing coombe sloping down into the East Stour River floodplain. The higher ground towards the east and west ends of the site is at *c.* 69 m above

Ordnance Datum (aOD) and c. 65 m aOD respectively, with the base of the coombe within the site limits at c. 60 m aOD.

1.2.3 The underlying solid geology comprises the southernmost fringes of Cretaceous Lower Greensand Hythe Beds, overlying Atherfield Clay of the same geological period. More recent drift deposits in the area include alluvium mapped along the course of the East Stour River to the south (Ordnance Survey 1974).

1.2.4 There are no extant watercourses within the site limits, although the coombe passing through the central section of the site may have previously supported a winterbourne palaeochannel. At the time of the evaluation (late January) natural springs were noticed issuing from the hillside at several points both within and just beyond the site limits. To the south of the site the drainage pattern is dominated by the west-flowing East Stour River, which converges with the Great Stour River at Ashford.

1.3 Methods

1.3.1 As noted above (paragraph 1.1.3), the fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the *Agreement for the Provision of Archaeological Services* (URS 1999), which contains a detailed methodology for all aspects of the evaluation fieldwork. This methodology will not be repeated in full here, although a brief summary is reiterated below:

- *all trenches were located to a horizontal accuracy of ± 0.50 m and elevation accuracy of ± 0.02 m (per kilometre traverse) in relation to trench location plans provided and Ordnance Datum (Newlyn);*
- *all trenches were excavated in discrete 0.10-0.20 m spits using a tracked excavator with a 1.80 m wide toothless ditching bucket under close archaeological supervision, to either 1.20 m depth, the surface of in situ geology, or the surface at which archaeological remains could be identified, whichever was encountered first;*
- *all trenches were cleaned manually, with a sufficient sample of all exposed features investigated, and sampled where appropriate, in order to fulfil the aims of the evaluation; and,*
- *all recording conformed to the standards of current best practice, and included a full graphic and photographic record of all stages of the evaluation.*

1.3.2 The evaluation comprised 17 machine trenches (3545TT – 3552TT inc. and 3619TT – 3627TT inc.), each measuring 30 m by 1.8 m (**Figure 2**).

1.3.3 For ease of reference, the evaluation area was divided into two identifiable fields, or plots (**Figure 2**). Trenches within each plot are tabulated below (**Table 1**).

Table 1: Correlation of plot and trench numbers

Plot number	Trenches
Plot 1	3545TT, 3546TT, 3547TT, 3619TT, 3620TT, 3621TT
Plot 2	3548TT, 3549TT, 3550TT, 3551TT, 3552TT, 3622TT, 3623TT, 3624TT, 3625TT, 3626TT, 3627TT

1.4 Variations

1.4.1 The following variations were agreed during the course of the fieldwork, to minimise the risk of disturbing badger sets.

- *Trench 3545TT was relocated c. 5 m to the north-north-east (parallel to its original location).*
- *Trench 3546TT was relocated c. 5 m to the north-north-east (along its original longitudinal axis).*
- *Trench 3547TT was relocated c. 5 m to the north-north-east (parallel to its original location).*
- *Trench 3548TT was relocated c. 5 m to the north-north-east (along its original longitudinal axis).*
- *Trench 3551TT was relocated c. 5 m to the north-north-east (parallel to its original location).*
- *Trench 3552TT was relocated c. 7 m to the north-north-east (along its original longitudinal axis).*

2 RESULTS

2.1 General

2.1.1 In summary, 17 evaluation trenches were excavated within the two defined plots (**Figure 2**), revealing 27 archaeological deposits and/or features. The archaeological features, including provisional dates where known, are summarised by trench in **Table 2** below. The ‘dates’ attributed to the features in trench 3627TT are based on ceramic evidence, but also consider stratigraphic evidence where appropriate.

Table 2: Summary of archaeological features by trench

NB: LBA = Late Bronze Age, LIA = Late Iron Age, Med = Medieval, PM = Post-medieval, Mod = Modern

Trench	Features
3546TT	LBA pit 354606
3547TT	Palaeochannel 354706
3549TT	Mod land drain 354904
3551TT	Med ditch 355105, Med foundation trench 355111, Med drain 355116, Med (?) pit 355118
3552TT	Med ditch 355203, Med ditch 355205
3621TT	Palaeochannel 362104
3622TT	Colluvial sequence
3623TT	Post-hole 362304
3625TT	Med pit 362504
3627TT	LIA ditch 362704, LBA post-hole 362706, LBA pit 362708, Med ditch 362712, Med ditch 362714, LBA ditch 362715, PM ditch 362718, LBA ditch 362719, LIA ditch 362721, LBA foundation trench 362723, LBA ditch 362725, hearth pit 362727, post-hole 362730, post-hole 362732

2.1.2 A number of other potential archaeological features were either hand- or machine-investigated during the course of the evaluation. These were demonstrated to be either natural variations in the geology of the area or features of natural origin (i.e. animal burrows, tree throws etc.), and will not be discussed further here.

2.1.3 In addition, colluvial layers were recorded within the site, and in particular within the coombe crossing the central portion of the trench (i.e. trenches 3548TT and 3622TT). Very small quantities of Late Bronze Age, Late Iron Age and medieval pottery, as well as prehistoric worked flint were recovered from the colluvium, broadly reflecting the periods of activity identified elsewhere on the site.

2.1.4 A context inventory (by trench) is provided in **Appendix 1**, whilst deposits and features of note are described below.

2.2 Stratigraphy

2.2.1 The stratigraphic sequence identified within the evaluation area can be broadly summarised as:

- *Modern topsoil*
- *Colluvium*
- *Cretaceous Lower Greensand Hythe Beds*
- *Cretaceous Lower Greensand Atherfield Clay*

Topsoil

2.2.2 Topsoil encountered during the evaluation was on average 0.30 m thick, ranging between 0.21 m (trench 3623TT) and 0.36 m (trench 3625TT). The deposit generally comprised mid to dark brown slightly clayey loam with moderate medium to large subangular fragments of limestone and rare small to medium flint gravel.

Colluvium

2.2.3 Colluvium was predominantly recorded in trenches along the lower south-west side of the evaluation area (trenches 3545TT, 3547TT, 3548TT, 3549TT, 3550TT, 3551TT, 3552TT, 3624TT and 3627TT), as well as within the coombe noted above (trenches 3621TT and 3622TT). Within these 11 trenches the colluvium was on average *c.* 0.5 m thick, ranging between 0.20 m (trench 3551TT) and 1.38 m thickness (trench 3622TT).

2.2.4 The deepest sequence recorded in trench 3622TT (**Figure 3**) was located towards the head of the coombe crossing the site, above a perceptible break-of-slope into a steeper sloped section of the coombe to the south-west. The sequence contained four horizons, above *in situ* Atherfield Clay at the base, comprising the following deposits:

- *Colluvium 362202 – (0.34 m thick) light to mid brown soft sandy clay with rare small subangular fragments of limestone and medieval pottery, overlying*
- *Colluvium 362203 – (0.38 m thick) mid to dark brown firm sandy clay with charcoal and fired clay flecks, animal bone and Late Bronze Age pottery, overlying*
- *Colluvium 362205 – (0.28 m thick) yellowish brown soft clayey silt with occasional small yellow sand lenses, worked flint, Late Bronze Age and Late Iron Age pottery, overlying*
- *Colluvium 362206 – (0.38 m thick) dark yellowish brown clayey silt with moderate small yellow sand lenses and worked flint.*

- 2.2.5 Notwithstanding the likelihood for intrusive and/or residual material, on the basis of the stratigraphic sequence recorded, it is probable that the Late Bronze Age pottery recovered from colluvium 362203 and 362205 is residual, and that colluvium 362205 is formed in the Late Iron Age period or later. The small assemblage of worked flint recovered from colluvium 362206 includes a bladelet core, and may therefore be early prehistoric (i.e. Mesolithic or Early Neolithic). There is no reason to discount the medieval dating evidence recovered from upper colluvium 362202.

Cretaceous Lower Greensand Hythe Beds

- 2.2.6 This was the uppermost *in situ* deposit recorded at the base of all evaluation trenches, with the exception of trenches 3548TT, 3549TT and 3550TT centrally located along the south-west side of the site (see below). The deposit comprised a fractured unstructured deposit of subangular limestone, in a yellowish brown silty clay matrix. The distribution of stone within this deposit varied considerably from almost 100% of the trench base (i.e. trench 3620TT) to very occasional outcrops (i.e. trench 3624TT).

Cretaceous Lower Greensand Atherfield Clay

- 2.2.7 This deposit was only recorded within trenches 3548TT, 3549TT and 3550TT, centrally located along the south-west side of the site, and at the base of the deepest section of colluvium in trench 3622TT. It generally comprised pale olive green sandy clay with ferruginous reddish brown mottles.

2.3 Structural Reports

Trench 3546TT (Figure 3)

- 2.3.1 Pit **354606** comprised a Late Bronze Age subrectangular south to north aligned feature extending beyond the trench limits to the south, measuring at least 1.1 m long, 0.7 m wide and 0.28 m deep with steep sides and a broad flat base. The pit was filled with a primary deposit of dark yellowish brown clayey loam (fill 354603) with frequent small to medium subangular limestone fragments, containing pottery, animal bone, fired clay and worked flint. This was sealed by an upper fill of very dark brown clayey loam (fill 354602) with occasional small to medium subangular limestone fragments, containing pottery, animal bone and fired clay. This feature was cut into the surface of *in situ* natural geology (layer 354605) and sealed directly by topsoil (layer 354601).

Trench 3547TT (Figure 3)

- 2.3.2 Palaeochannel **354706** comprised an undated south to north aligned slightly irregular feature extending beyond the trench limits in both directions, measuring at least *c.* 3.1 m wide (full width not observed) and 0.21 m deep, with moderate very slightly concave sides. This feature was identified as a natural palaeochannel during excavation, and hence was not fully excavated. The stratigraphically earliest fill encountered comprised a ferruginous reddish brown clayey sand (fill 354705) containing one piece of worked flint and banked against the west side of the feature, sealed by an upper fill of pale yellowish green clayey sand (fill 354703). The soil matrices suggest that the material filling this feature may be derived from the Atherfield Clay. This

feature was cut into the surface of *in situ* natural geology (layer 354704) and sealed directly by 0.25 m of colluvium (layer 354702).

Trench 3549TT

- 2.3.3 Land drain **354904** comprised a modern ceramic land drain crossing the north-west end of the trench; the drain segments were located *c.* 0.6 m below modern ground surface.

Trench 3551TT (Figure 4)

- 2.3.4 Ditch **355105** comprised a medieval south-east to north-west aligned slightly meandering linear feature extending beyond the trench in both directions. The feature measured 0.75 m wide and 0.15 m deep with slightly irregular shallow to moderate concave sides and a narrow very slightly rounded base. This was filled with dark brown sandy clay (fill 355104) with occasional small subangular fragments of limestone, ceramic building material, flint and pottery. This feature was recorded cutting into the surface of *in situ* geology (layer 355103) and sealed by 0.2 m of colluvium (layer 355102). It is possible that this ditch continued to the east into trench 3552TT as ditch **355205** (see below) and may also be represented in trench 3627TT further to the east as ditch **362714** (see below).

- 2.3.5 Foundation trench **355111** comprised the south-west corner of a medieval 'L'-shaped linear feature. The north to south aligned west side to this feature continued beyond the trench limits to the north, whilst the east to west aligned south side exhibited a squared east terminal within the trench limits. The feature measured up to 1.4 m wide and at least 0.75 m deep with very steep sides, although it was not fully excavated. The basal fill encountered comprised a dump of large angular blocks of limestone (fill 355110), between 0.2 and 0.3 m in size forming numerous voids between the blocks, sealed by brown sandy clay (fill 355109) with moderate medium angular and subangular limestone fragments and fragments of ceramic building material. The penultimate fill comprised light yellowish brown sandy clay (fill 355107) with frequent small to medium subangular limestone fragments and fragments of ceramic building material and animal bone, sealed by an upper fill of brown firm sandy clay (fill 355106) with occasional small subangular fragments of limestone and medieval pottery. This feature was recorded cutting into the surface of *in situ* geology (layer 355103) and sealed by 0.2 m of colluvium (layer 355102). This feature is considered to be a robbed foundation trench on the basis of its morphology and the nature of the basal (?) fill of limestone rubble. The proximity of the east terminal of this feature to the north-west terminal of drain **355116** (see below) may suggest that the features were in some way related.

- 2.3.6 Drain **355116** comprised the north-western terminal of a medieval north-west to south-east aligned stone-lined drain that continued beyond the trench limits to the south-east. The feature measured up to 1.2 m wide and 0.68 m deep with a near vertical south-west side, a very steep to near vertical convex north-east side and a flat base. At the base of this feature was a crudely built stone drain (drain 355115) comprised of low unmortared limestone side walls capped by large limestone capstones. The internal drain 'bore' measured *c.* 0.15 m across and 0.05 m deep. The drain was sealed by a

primary deposit of dark brown clayey loam (fill 355114) with fairly occasional small subangular fragments of limestone, sealed by pale yellowish brown slightly mottled sandy clay (fill 355113) with occasional small to medium subangular fragments of limestone. The upper fill comprised fairly dark brown sandy clay (fill 355112) with occasional small to medium subangular fragments of limestone, pieces of ceramic building material and iron and two small sherds of probably residual Late Bronze Age pottery. This feature had cut the north-east side of pit **355118** (see below), was cut from the surface of *in situ* geology (layer 355103) and sealed by 0.2 m of colluvium (layer 355102). The proximity of the north-west terminal of this feature to the east terminal of foundation trench **355111** (see above) may suggest that the features were in some way related.

- 2.3.7 Hollow **355118** comprised a large elliptical feature of probable medieval date measuring at least 3 m long (south-east to north-west), 0.9 m wide and at the section examined only 0.15 m deep with steep sides and a broad flat base. It is however possible that the feature deepened to the north-west beyond the limit of investigation. The hollow contained a primary cobbled surface of compacted limestone blocks (surface 355119), generally *c.* 0.1 – 0.15 m in size, that appeared to be restricted to the north-western half of the feature. This was sealed by dark brown soft silty clay (fill 355117) with fairly occasional small subangular fragments of limestone, as well as worked flint, animal bone and a mix of Late Bronze Age, Late Iron Age and medieval pottery. This feature was cut on its north-east side by medieval drain **355116** (see above), and it is therefore possible that the small sherd of medieval pottery recovered from this feature may be intrusive.

Trench 3552TT (Figure 4)

- 2.3.8 Ditch **355203** comprised a medieval south-east to north-west aligned linear feature extending beyond the trench in both directions, measuring 1.15 m wide and 0.31 m deep with a steep concave south-west side, a moderate slightly stepped convex north-east side and a broad rounded base. This was filled with brownish grey silty clay (fill 355204) with occasional small subangular fragments of limestone, containing worked flint and pottery. This feature was recorded cutting into the surface of *in situ* geology (layer 355202) and sealed by 0.25 m of colluvium (layer 355207). Ditch **355203** is parallel to, and 2.4 m to the north-east of (centre line to centre line) ditch **355205** (see below).
- 2.3.9 Ditch **355205** comprised a medieval south-east to north-west aligned linear feature extending beyond the trench in both directions, measuring 1.25 m wide and 0.45 m deep with a fairly steep slightly stepped convex sides and a broad rounded base. This was filled with brownish grey silty clay (fill 355206) with occasional small subangular fragments of limestone, containing worked flint and pottery. This feature was recorded cutting into the surface of *in situ* geology (layer 355202) and sealed by 0.25 m of colluvium (layer 355207). Ditch **355205** is parallel to, and 2.4 m to the south-west of (centre line to centre line) ditch **355203** (see above).
- 2.3.10 It is likely that ditches **355203** and **355205** continued to the east into trench 3627TT as ditches **362712** and **362714** respectively (see below), and ditch

355205 may also be represented in trench 3551TT to the west as ditch **355105** (see above).

Trench 3621TT (Figure 5)

- 2.3.11 Palaeochannel **362104** comprised an approximately north-west to south-east aligned feature with an irregular slightly undercut profile and uneven base on the north-east side. The feature measured *c.* 3.5 m wide and 0.28 m deep, and was filled with dark brown stone-free clayey silt loam containing numerous dark reddish brown mottles (fill 362103).

Trench 3623TT (Figure 5)

- 2.3.12 Post-hole **362304** comprised a slightly elliptical subcircular feature measuring 0.28 m long (south-east to north-west), 0.25 m wide and up to 0.13 m deep with a very steep south-east side, moderate north-west side and narrow pointed base. It was filled with mid brown silty clay (fill 362303) with frequent small fragments of subangular limestone.

Trench 3625TT (Figure 5)

- 2.3.13 Pit **362504** comprised a slightly irregular kidney-shaped medieval feature measuring 1.6 m long (north-east to south-west) by 1.4 m wide on the surface, descending into a more regular circular feature measuring *c.* 1 m in diameter towards the base. The feature had irregular slightly stepped sides and a slightly rounded base, and was filled with mid brown silty clay (fill 362503) with occasional small subangular fragments of limestone, as well as fragments of roof tile and animal bone.

Trench 3627TT (Figure 6)

- 2.3.14 Trench 3627TT contained 14 archaeological features, including eight ditches (ditches **362704**, **362712**, **362714**, **362715**, **362718**, **362719**, **362721** and **362725**), two post-holes (**362706** and **362732**), one stake-hole (**362730**), one pit (**362708**), one hearth pit (**362727**) and one possible foundation trench (**362723**). The evidence appears to indicate at least three phases of activity within this trench, dated to the Late Bronze Age, Late Iron Age and medieval periods.
- 2.3.15 Dating evidence recovered from these features suggests that a considerable amount of residual and/or intrusive action has occurred. At least six of the features contain datable artefacts from two or more of the periods identified.
- 2.3.16 Ditch **362704** comprised a north to south aligned Late Iron Age linear feature extending beyond the trench in both directions, measuring 1.3 m wide and 0.56 m deep with moderate convex sides and a narrow rounded base. This was filled with a primary fill of yellowish brown sandy clay (fill 362710) with rare small subangular fragments of limestone, sealed by an upper fill of very dark brown silty clay (fill 362705) with occasional small to medium subangular limestone fragments and rare small subangular flint gravel. Artefacts recovered from the upper fill included animal bone, fired clay, worked flint and predominantly Late Iron Age pottery, although several sherds of Late Bronze Age pottery were also recovered. Although this feature was parallel and *c.* 2.5 m to the west of (centre line to centre line) ditch **362715** (see below), dating evidence would suggest that the ditches are not

contemporaneous. Ditch **362704** was cut from the surface of *in situ* geology (layer 362703) and sealed by up to 0.25 m of colluvium (layer 362702). Although the relationship was uncertain, it is likely that this ditch was cut by ditch **362712** (see below). On the basis of the dating evidence, it is suggested that this ditch forms the west side of the north-west corner of an enclosure, the north side formed by ditch **362721** (see below).

- 2.3.17 Post-hole **362706** comprised an elliptical Late Bronze Age feature measuring 0.4 m long (south-west to north-east), 0.32 m wide and 0.27 m deep with vertical sides and a flat base. It was filled with very dark brown silty clay (fill 362707) with rare small fragments of subangular limestone and flint gravel, two pieces of burnt stone, one very small piece of worked flint and Late Bronze Age pottery. The relatively large assemblage of pottery (21 sherds) probably represents the remains of one vessel. This post-hole was located *c.* 0.8 m to the north (centre to centre) of pit **362708** (see below), and was recorded cutting the surface of *in situ* geology (layer 362703).
- 2.3.18 Pit **362708** comprised a subcircular Late Bronze Age feature measuring 0.52 m in diameter and 0.15 m deep with vertical sides and a flat base. It was filled with dark brown silty clay (fill 362709) with rare small fragments of subangular limestone and flint gravel, and contained fragments of animal bone and pottery. This pit was located *c.* 0.8 m to the south (centre to centre) of post-hole **362708** (see above), and was recorded cutting the surface of *in situ* geology (layer 362703).
- 2.3.19 Ditch **362712** comprised an east-south-east to west-north-west aligned linear feature of indeterminate date extending beyond the trench in both directions, measuring 0.75 m wide and 0.25 m deep with a moderate regular north side, a steep regular south side and a flat base. This was filled with mid greyish brown fine sandy clay (fill 362711) with occasional small subangular fragments of limestone, containing a few very small fragments of burnt flint and possible Late Bronze Age pottery. This feature was recorded cutting into the surface of *in situ* geology (layer 362703) and sealed by up to 0.25 m of colluvium (layer 362702). Ditch **362712** was parallel to, and 1.8 m to the north of (centre line to centre line) ditch **362714** (see below). Although the dating evidence recovered would suggest that this is a Late Bronze Age feature, on morphological grounds it is likely that this feature corresponds with ditch **355203** (see above) in trench 3552TT, which has been dated as medieval. Although the relationship was uncertain, it is likely that this ditch cut ditch **362704** (see above).
- 2.3.20 Ditch **362714** comprised an east-south-east to west-north-west aligned linear feature of indeterminate date extending beyond the trench in both directions, measuring 0.60 m wide and 0.14 m deep with shallow regular sides and a narrow rounded base. This was filled with mid to light greyish brown fine sandy clay (fill 362713) with occasional small subangular fragments of limestone, containing a few very small fragments of possible Late Bronze Age pottery. This feature was recorded cutting into the surface of *in situ* geology (layer 362703) and sealed by up to 0.25 m of colluvium (layer 362702). Ditch **362714** was parallel to, and 1.8 m to the south of (centre line to centre line) ditch **362712** (see above). In addition, this ditch is parallel to,

and c. 3.4 m to the north of (centre line to centre line) ditch **362718** (see below), although stratigraphic relationships in relation to colluvium would suggest that they are not contemporaneous. Although the dating evidence recovered would suggest that this is a Late Bronze Age feature, on morphological grounds it is likely that this feature corresponds with ditch **355205** in trench 3552TT and possibly ditch **355105** (see above) in trench 3551TT, both of which have been dated as medieval.

- 2.3.21 Ditch **362715** comprised a north to south aligned Late Bronze Age linear feature extending beyond the trench in both directions, measuring 2 m wide and 0.52 m deep with an irregular stepped profile and sloping base. This was filled with dark brown clayey sand loam (fill 362716) with rare small to medium subangular limestone fragments, containing animal bone, worked flint and predominantly Late Bronze Age pottery (though including a small Late Iron Age component). Although this feature was parallel and c. 2.5 m to the east of (centre line to centre line) ditch **362704** (see above), dating evidence would suggest that the ditches are not contemporaneous. Ditch **362715** was cut from the surface of *in situ* geology (layer 362703) and sealed by up to 0.25 m of colluvium (layer 362702). On the basis of the dating evidence, it is suggested that this ditch forms the north side of the north-west corner of an enclosure, the west side formed by ditch **362719** (see below).
- 2.3.22 Ditch **362718** comprised the north side of an east-south-east to west-north-west aligned post-medieval linear feature located at the south-west end of trench 3627TT and extending beyond the trench in both directions. The full width of the ditch was not exposed within the trench limits, but was at least 1.65 m wide and 0.77 m deep with moderate regular sides and a shallow rounded base. This was filled with a single massive undifferentiated deposit of mid to dark brown firm fine sandy clay (fill 362717) with occasional small subangular fragments of limestone and rare large subangular limestone pieces. This feature contained several small fragments of Late Bronze Age pottery, a small sherd of Late Iron Age pottery, pieces of post-medieval brick and tile and one small piece of animal bone. This feature was recorded cutting into the surface of the colluvium (layer 362702) and sealed directly by topsoil. Ditch **362718** was parallel to, and c. 3.4 m to the south of (centre line to centre line) ditch **362714** (see above), although stratigraphic relationships in relation to colluvium would suggest that they are not contemporaneous.
- 2.3.23 Ditch **362719** comprised an east to west aligned probable Late Bronze Age linear feature extending beyond the trench in both directions, measuring 1.25 m wide and 0.28 m deep with moderate slightly concave sides and a very slightly rounded base. This was filled with greyish brown silty clay (fill 362720) with occasional small to medium subangular fragments of limestone, containing predominantly Late Bronze Age pottery but including two sherds of Late Iron Age material, as well as a piece of animal bone. This feature was recorded cutting into the surface of *in situ* geology (layer 362703), cut by foundation trench **362723** (see below) and sealed by up to 0.25 m of colluvium (layer 362702). Ditch **362719** was parallel and c. 2 m to the south of (centre line to centre line) ditch **362721** (see below), although

the dating evidence recovered would suggest that these are not contemporaneous. On the basis of the dating evidence, it is suggested that this ditch forms the north side of the north-west corner of an enclosure, the west side formed by ditch **362715** (see above).

- 2.3.24 Ditch **362721** comprised an east to west aligned probable Late Iron Age linear feature extending beyond the trench in both directions, measuring *c.* 1.5 m wide and at least 0.1 m deep, although not fully excavated. The uppermost fill recorded comprised very dark brown silty clay (fill 362722) with rare small subangular fragments of limestone, containing predominantly Late Iron Age pottery but including two sherds of possible Late Bronze Age material, as well as pieces of animal bone. This feature was recorded cutting into the surface of *in situ* geology (layer 362703), cut by both foundation trench **362723** and hearth pit **362727** (see below) and sealed by up to 0.25 m of colluvium (layer 362702). Ditch **362721** was parallel and *c.* 2 m to the north of (centre line to centre line) ditch **362719** (see above), although the dating evidence recovered would suggest that these are not contemporaneous. On the basis of the dating evidence, it is suggested that this ditch forms the north side of the north-west corner of an enclosure, the west side formed by ditch **362704** (see above).
- 2.3.25 Foundation trench **362723** comprised a north-north-east to south-south-west aligned probable Late Bronze Age linear feature extending beyond the trench in both directions, measuring 0.7 m wide and 0.52 m deep with very steep to vertical sides and a flat base. This was filled with a primary fill of mid brown clayey silt (fill 362729) with profuse small to medium subangular fragments of limestone, sealed by dark brown clayey silt (fill 362724) with frequent small to medium subangular fragments of limestone. This feature was sealed by up to 0.25 m of colluvium (layer 362702).
- 2.3.26 Although the upper fill of foundation trench **362723** contained a relatively large assemblage of Late Bronze Age pottery (i.e. 14 sherds), as well as worked flint and animal bone, the feature apparently cuts Late Iron Age ditch **362721** and Late Bronze Age ditch **362719** (see above). The dating evidence must, therefore, be viewed with caution at this stage. This feature intersected with ditch **362725** (also considered to be Late Bronze Age in date - see below) at the northern extent of the evaluation trench, although it was not possible to determine the relationship between these two features. The interpretation of this feature as a foundation trench is primarily based on its morphology (i.e. narrow straight alignment, regular square profile) and the presence of frequent to profuse stone rubble inclusions, particularly within the primary fill.
- 2.3.27 Ditch **362725** comprised an east-south-east to west-north-west aligned probable Late Bronze Age linear feature extending beyond the trench in both directions, measuring 0.95 m wide and 0.49 m deep with moderate very slightly concave sides and a narrow square-profiled slot forming the base (c.f. 'ankle-breaker'). This was filled with very dark brown silty clay (fill 362726) with occasional small subangular fragments of limestone. Artefacts recovered from this feature included relatively large assemblages of animal bone (44 pieces) and Late Bronze Age pottery (12 sherds), as well as burnt

stone, fired clay, worked flint and one sherd of intrusive Late Iron Age pottery. This feature was recorded cutting into the surface of *in situ* geology (layer 362703) and sealed by up to 0.25 m of colluvium (layer 362702). This ditch intersected with foundation trench **362723** (also provisionally dated as Late Bronze Age - see above), although it was not possible to determine the relationship between these two features.

- 2.3.28 Hearth pit **362727** comprised a subcircular undated feature measuring at least 0.6 m in diameter and 0.1 m deep extending beyond the trench limits to the north-west, with moderate concave sides and a broad flat base. The hearth base comprised a heat-affected pad of red compacted burnt clay with a surviving well-defined upper 'crust' (hearth 362728). The hearth pit had cut through the south edge of Late Iron Age ditch **362721** (see above), and was sealed by up to 0.25 m of colluvium (layer 362703).
- 2.3.29 Stake-hole **362730** comprised an undated circular feature measuring 0.19 m in diameter and 0.20 m deep with a steep conical profile, filled with heavily charcoal-flecked light brown sandy clay (fill 362731). This stake-hole was located 1.15 m to the north-west (centre to centre) of post-hole **362732** (see below), and was recorded cutting the surface of *in situ* geology (layer 362703) and sealed by up to 0.25 m of colluvium (layer 362702).
- 2.3.30 Post-hole **362732** comprised an undated elliptical feature measuring 0.51 m long (east to west), 0.26 m wide and 0.05 m deep with a shallow rounded profile, filled with lightly charcoal-flecked light brown sandy clay (fill 362733). This post-hole was located 1.15 m to the south-east (centre to centre) of stake-hole **362730** (see above), and was recorded cutting the surface of *in situ* geology (layer 362703) and sealed by up to 0.25 m of colluvium (layer 362702).

2.4 Artefactual Reports

by Lorraine Mephram

Introduction

- 2.4.1 A small quantity of artefactual material, in a fairly limited range of material types, was recovered from 13 trenches. Finds totals, by material type and by context, and including finds extracted from soil samples, are given in **Appendix 2**.

Pottery

- 2.4.2 The pottery assemblage (183 sherds) includes material of later prehistoric, medieval and post-medieval date; the five post-medieval sherds are not discussed further here (see **Table 2**). The bulk of the assemblage (121 sherds) comprises sherds in flint-tempered and flint-gritted fabrics in varying degrees of coarseness; no diagnostic sherds are present but this material can be dated on fabric grounds to the Late Bronze Age or possibly Early Iron Age (early 1st millennium BC). These sherds were concentrated in one trench (95 sherds; trench 3627TT), but also occurred in smaller quantities in four other trenches (trench 3546TT, 3551TT, 3552TT and 3622TT).
- 2.4.3 A smaller quantity of sherds (47 sherds) are in grog-tempered fabrics, and are dated to the latest pre-Roman Iron Age (1st century BC/1st century AD); the possibility that these post-date the Roman conquest should be considered, but in this instance seems unlikely given the absence of other 'Romanised' wares. Again, these sherds were concentrated in one trench (trench 3627TT), where they occurred in each case associated with Late Bronze Age material. Only two sherds came from other trenches (trenches 3552TT and 3622TT).
- 2.4.4 Ten sherds have been dated as medieval; these include both coarsewares (sandy and flint-gritted fabrics) and finewares (finer sandy, glazed), with a potential date range of late 12th to early 14th century. Sherds were found in three trenches (trenches 3551TT, 3552TT and 3622TT).

Worked Flint

- 2.4.5 The worked flint includes little that is chronologically distinctive. The majority of the assemblage consists of flake and core material, unpatinated or lightly patinated, and varying in condition from fresh to slightly edge-damaged. The raw material is likely to derive from a local gravel source. The flint occurred in small quantities in most trenches, forming a low level background scatter. The fragments recovered from the basal colluvium in trench 3622TT (colluvium 362206), although undiagnostic, would not be out of place in a Mesolithic or Early Neolithic assemblage.

Burnt Flint and Stone

- 2.4.6 Burnt unworked flint and stone was recovered in very small quantities (trenches 3622TT and 3627TT). Both categories are intrinsically undatable; burnt flint is often taken as an indicator of prehistoric activity, which is possible here given the low level background scatter of worked flint, and the burnt stone could be of similar date.

Ceramic Building Material

2.4.7 The ceramic building material recovered includes fragments of roof tile and brick. The bricks and some of the tiles are likely to be of post-medieval date, although 20 more irregular fragments of roof tile in a softer, coarser fabric could be of medieval date; these tiles occurred in seven trenches (trenches 3545TT, 3547TT, 3551TT, 3552TT, 3621TT, 3622TT and 3625TT).

Fired Clay

2.4.8 A few fragments of fired clay were recovered (trenches 3546TT and 3627TT); these are small, featureless and undiagnostic fragments of uncertain date and origin.

Post-medieval and Modern Finds

2.4.9 Apart from the ceramic building material, noted above, these comprise glass, pottery and iron, and are summarised in **Table 3** below:

Table 3: Post-medieval artefact summary

Category	Description
Glass:	One fragment clear bottle/jar; one fragment blue ornamental glass (19th/20th century).
Pottery:	Two sherds fine whiteware, two sherds redware, one sherd stoneware (18th-20th century).
Iron:	One horseshoe fragment; one ?nail shank, not closely datable.

2.5 Environmental Reports

by Mike Allen

Introduction

- 2.5.1 Seventeen bulk samples of 15 litres each (Samples 1 - 17) were taken from a range of feature types within each phase, and processed for the recovery and assessment of charred plant and charcoal remains. The provenance of all samples taken is provided in **Table 4** (see below).

Table 4: Environmental sample provenance summary

NB: LBA = Late Bronze Age, LIA = Late Iron Age, MED = Medieval, PMED = Post-medieval

Sample	Trench	Period	Feature	Context
1	3546TT	LBA	Pit 354606	Upper fill 354602
2	3546TT	LBA	Pit 354606	Primary fill 354603
3	3627TT	LBA	Ditch 362712	Fill 362711
4	3627TT	LBA	Ditch 362714	Fill 362713
5	3627TT	LIA	Ditch 362704	Fill 362705
6	3627TT	LBA	Post-hole 362706	Fill 362707
7	3627TT	LBA	Pit 362708	Fill 362709
8	3627TT	LBA	Ditch 362715	Fill 362716
9	3552TT	MED	Ditch 355203	Fill 355204
10	3552TT	MED	Ditch 355205	Fill 355206
11	3627TT	PMED	Ditch 362718	Fill 362717
12	3627TT	LIA	Ditch 362721	Fill 362722
13	3627TT	LBA	Ditch 362725	Fill 362726
14	3625TT	MED	Pit 362504	Fill 362503
15	3551TT	MED	Drain 355116	Upper fill 355112
16	3551TT	MED	Pit 355118	Upper fill 355117
17	3551TT	MED	Foundation trench 355111	Upper fill 355107

- 2.5.2 The bulk samples were processed by standard flotation methods; the flot retained on a 0.5 mm mesh and the residues fractionated into 5.6 mm, 2 mm and 1 mm fractions and dried. The coarse fractions (>5.6 mm) were sorted, weighed and discarded. The flots were scanned under a x10 - x30 stereobinocular microscope and the presence of plant macrofossils quantified by sample and grouped by period (**Appendix 3**), in order to present data to record the preservation and nature of the charred plant and charcoal remains.

Charred Plant Remains

- 2.5.3 The flots were generally small (average flot size for a 10 litre sample is 60 millilitres) with between 5 and 90% rooty material and varying quantities of uncharred weed seeds, both of which can be indicative of the degree of stratigraphic movement that the context has encountered following deposition.
- 2.5.4 All the flots from Late Bronze Age features contained moderate to high numbers of charred grain fragments. A few charred chaff fragments were also observed in three flots (pit **354606**, ditch **362712** and ditch **362715**), as were small quantities of charred pea/bean fragments (ditch **362712**, ditch **362715** and ditch **362725**). Low numbers of charred weed seeds were recorded in three samples (pit **354606**, ditch **362714** and ditch **362715**).

- 2.5.5 Both of the flots from Late Iron Age ditches **362704** and **362721** contained charred grain fragments, with an exceptional quantity recovered from ditch **362721**, in association with a few charred chaff pieces, small quantities of charred weed seeds and low numbers of charred pea/bean fragments.
- 2.5.6 All but one of the medieval samples (pit **355118**) contained charred grain fragments, with the flot from ditch **355203** containing high numbers of charred grain fragments. One sample (drain **355116**) also containing a few charred chaff fragments. Although pit **355118** did not contain charred grain or chaff, it was the only feature attributed to this period to contain charred weed seeds and the only feature from any period to contain hazelnuts. The flot from the post-medieval feature sampled (ditch **362718**) only contained sparse amounts of charred grain fragments.

Charcoal

- 2.5.7 Charcoal was noted from the flots of the bulk samples and is recorded in **Appendix 3**. Charcoal fragments of greater than 5.6mm were only retrieved in small quantities from four of the Late Bronze Age features (pit **362708**, ditches **362712**, **362715** and **362725**) and from both of the Late Iron Age ditches **362704** and **362721**. The charcoal predominantly comprised large wood fragments.

Mollusca

- 2.5.8 During the processing of bulk soil samples for the recovery of charred plant remains and charcoals, snails were noted, and recorded (**Appendix 3**) in nine of the flots, comprising one of the Late Bronze Age features (pit **354606** - both samples) and all of the medieval and post-medieval features.

Animal Bones

- 2.5.9 A total of 104 animal bone fragments were recovered and quantified (**Tables 5** and **6**), including small mammal bone fragments recovered during the processing of 14 of the bulk soil samples (**Appendix 3**) for the recovery of charred plant remains and charcoals.
- 2.5.10 Only 28 (*c.* 27%) of the animal bone fragments were identifiable to species, predominantly comprising cow, dog and horse, but including sheep/goat and pig. Of these, the sheep/goat and dog bones were only recovered from Late Bronze Age features (pits **354606** and **362708**, ditch **362719**). Pig and horse bones were predominantly restricted to Late Iron Age features (colluvium **362203**, ditches **362705** and **362721**), with one example of a horse bone from medieval pit **355117**. Post-medieval ditch **362718** only contained one unidentifiable bone fragment.
- 2.5.11 The general condition of the animal bone was good, the surfaces sufficiently intact to observe cut marks and carnivore damage where present.

Table 5: Quantification of animal bones by species per context

NB: LBA = Late Bronze Age, LIA = Late Iron Age, MED = Medieval, PMED = Post-medieval

Period	Trench	Feature	Context	Horse	Cow	Sheep/ Goat	Pig	Dog	Unid.	Totals
LBA	3546TT	Pit 354606	354602			1			3	4
LBA	3546TT	Pit 354606	354603						2	2
LBA	3627TT	Pit 362708	362709			1			3	4
LBA	3627TT	Ditch 362715	362716					7	8	15
LBA	3627TT	Ditch 362719	362720			1				1
LBA	3627TT	Foundation trench 362723	362724		3				1	4
LBA	3627TT	Ditch 362726	362726		1				32	33
LIA	3622TT	Colluvium	362203		1		1			2
LIA	3627TT	Ditch 362704	362705	2	1				15	18
LIA	3627TT	Ditch 362721	362722	2	2				8	12
MED	3551TT	Foundation trench 355111	355107		4				2	6
MED	3551TT	Pit 355118	355117	1						1
MED	3625TT	Pit 362504	362503						1	1
PMED	3627TT	Ditch 362718	362717						1	1
			Totals	5	12	3	1	7	76	104

Table 6: Quantification of animal species by period

Period	Horse	Cow	Sheep/ Goat	Pig	Dog	Unid.	Totals
Late Bronze Age	0	4	3	0	7	49	63
Late Iron Age	4	4	0	1	0	23	32
Medieval	1	4	0	0	0	3	8
Post-medieval	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Totals	5	12	3	1	7	76	104

STATEMENT OF IMPORTANCE

3 CONCLUSIONS

3.1 Extent of Archaeological Remains

3.1.1 The archaeological features were concentrated at the south-east end of Plot 2, and in particular in trench 3627TT. Topographically, this area represents the south-east brow of a spur of land overlooking the East Stour River valley to the south. Isolated features were recorded elsewhere within the evaluation area, including a Late Bronze Age pit containing domestic refuse on the higher ground within Plot 1.

3.1.2 There was a background scatter of prehistoric worked flint from topsoil contexts throughout the evaluation area, with a small concentration apparently centred on the coombe marking the boundary between Plots 1 and 2. Smaller quantities of worked flint and pottery of all periods were recovered from the colluvial deposits recorded within the coombe. Although the pottery broadly represents the periods represented by archaeological features elsewhere on the site, the worked flint may be potentially Mesolithic or Early Neolithic in date.

3.2 Nature of the Archaeological Remains

3.2.1 Most archaeological features survive as cuts into the upper surface of the *in situ* geology (Hythe Beds and/or Atherfield Clay) and either sealed by colluvium if present, or directly by topsoil. Post-medieval remains were in general cut from the surface of colluvium if present, and sealed directly by topsoil. Inter-relationships between features were observed in trenches 3551TT and 3627TT, demonstrating the likelihood that features may contain intrusive and/or residual material (i.e. foundation trench **362723** contains only Late Bronze Age pottery, yet cuts across ditch **362721** containing Late Iron Age pottery).

3.2.2 The colluvial sequence, where recorded, was generally shallow, and probably represents intensification of land use from the late medieval/ post-medieval period onwards. However, finds evidence recovered from colluvium at the base of the deepest recorded sequence, at the head of the coombe crossing the central portion of the site, indicates a general prehistoric date for its origin. Colluvial deposition is therefore probably contemporaneous, or possibly even predating, the archaeological features that appear to originate in the Late Bronze Age. Limited dating evidence recovered from the remainder of this colluvial sequence generally reflects the broad periods identified from the excavated features elsewhere.

3.3 Character of Site

- 3.3.1 The evidence appears to suggest the presence of a Late Bronze Age settlement located on the south-east facing brow of the higher ground in Plot 2, with secondary evidence for commensurate activity recorded on the higher ground in Plot 1 also noted. The evidence from trench 3627TT appears to indicate the north-west corner of a ditched enclosure, with a pit and post-hole recorded within the circuit of such a ditch. This enclosure appears to be cut by a later broadly contemporaneous square-profiled feature that is interpreted as a foundation trench. This later feature may be contemporary with another ditch to the north of the original enclosure. The range and quantity of finds recovered from these features, and as residual finds in later features, suggests that evaluation trench 3627TT is located in close proximity to an occupation centre.
- 3.3.2 The Late Bronze Age settlement appears to be overlain by a Late Iron Age (i.e. 1st century BC – 1st century AD) settlement. Although there is no direct evidence to indicate continuity of settlement between the two periods, there are marked similarities between the layout of features between the two periods. The Late Iron Age remains also appear to centre on the north-west corner of a ditched enclosure, located outside the line of the previous Late Bronze Age enclosure. No other features were identified that can be confidently attributed to this period, although as with the Late Bronze Age period, Late Iron Age pottery was recovered from almost all features examined in this trench. As such, it is considered likely that trench 3627TT is also located close to a Late Iron Age occupation centre.
- 3.3.3 The medieval evidence similarly appears to indicate settlement remains, apparently focussed on trench 3551TT, and comprising the south-west corner of a stone-built building with associated drainage feature. A double-ditched field boundary appears to cross the site, recorded in trenches 3551TT, 3552TT and 3627TT, with evidence from trench 3627TT to suggest replacement with a larger single post-medieval ditch to the south.

3.4 Site Chronology

- 3.4.1 Secure chronological indicators demonstrate Late Bronze Age, Late Iron Age, medieval and post-medieval activity at the site. It is also possible that some of the examples of worked flint recovered from colluvial deposits may be Mesolithic or Early Neolithic in origin, although insufficient quantities were recovered to be certain. The prehistoric periods in particular are well-represented, and these and the medieval evidence probable all represent settlement activity.

4 IMPORTANCE OF REMAINS

4.1 Scheduled Monument Criteria

4.1.1 The Secretary of State's criteria for scheduling monuments has been addressed. The remains recorded during this evaluation do not appear to satisfy any of the criteria as defined.

4.2 Period

4.2.1 The nature of prehistoric settlement patterns in the immediate area is poorly understood. As such, the Late Bronze Age features are certainly of local importance, and given their apparent association with a settlement site, may be considered of regional importance.

4.2.2 Moreover, the multi-period nature of the site, with potentially Late Bronze Age, Late Iron Age and medieval/post-medieval settlement all occurring in the immediate area further enhances the importance of the site.

4.3 Rarity

4.3.1 Although generally the archaeological features recorded during the evaluation are unremarkable, the presence of significant quantities of datable artefacts associated with these features is of note. If, as anticipated, this indicates the proximity of Late Bronze Age, Late Iron Age and medieval/post-medieval occupation sites, such evidence is comparatively rare in the area.

4.3.2 The quantity and range of dated feature types recorded within a single evaluation trench (trench 3627TT) is also of note.

4.4 Documentation

4.4.1 Little has been previously documented regarding the archaeological resource of the site or surrounding area. The Environmental Assessment (URL 1994) identified ridge and furrow earthworks and associated field boundaries that may represent the remnants of a medieval field system, located to the south of Little Stock Farm cottage (itself dated as 16th or 17th century in origin) and west of the evaluation area.

4.5 Group Value

4.5.1 As a collection of features and/or deposits that represent perhaps at least 3,500 years of human activity at the site, albeit not as a continuous presence, it may be valid to suggest that the remains do possess some significance as a group. However, given the relative absence of supplementary data regarding the archaeological development of the wider area, insufficient evidence exists to place these results into a wider landscape to enhance that group value.

4.6 Survival/ Condition

- 4.6.1 Archaeological features recorded during the evaluation predominantly survive as cuts in the surface of natural geology and are sealed by colluvial subsoil and/or topsoil. The subsoil will serve to protect some of these features from present-day ploughing, although it is very likely that all have suffered varying degrees of truncation in the past.

4.7 Fragility/ Vulnerability

- 4.7.1 The concentration of archaeological remains at the east end of Plot 2 are already sealed by a colluvial deposit below topsoil (with the exception of a large post-medieval ditch), and are therefore protected from further truncation through ploughing to a normal depth. Elsewhere, the overlying mantle of colluvial deposits is either very thin, or absent, and it is therefore possible that these features may be gradually truncated through further ploughing, as ploughed material moves downslope. All features will be impacted by the construction of the CTRL.

4.8 Diversity

- 4.8.1 The remains recorded during the course of the evaluation combine to represent a relatively diverse range of activities/functions/events etc. These include both settlement enclosure ditches and field boundaries and features traditionally associated with settlement such as pits, post-holes, stake-holes and a hearth. In addition, relatively substantial structural remains and stone-lined drains have also been revealed, as well as colluvial deposits that presumably indicate intensification of land-use associated with these remains.

4.9 Potential

Structural

- 4.9.1 The archaeological features recorded offer a considerable potential for contributing to the understanding of the nature of Late Bronze Age, Late Iron Age and medieval/ post-medieval settlement and agricultural activity in the area. The evaluation results as they stand are limited by few stratigraphic relationships to clearly define phases of activity, residual and/or intrusive dating evidence in most features examined, and a feature ground plan that is too restricted to determine phases using distinctive morphologies (i.e. round-houses, ladder enclosures, sheepfolds etc.).

Artefactual

- 4.9.2 The small prehistoric pottery and flint assemblage is useful as an indicator of activity in the Late Bronze Age and latest pre-Roman Iron Age, but is otherwise of limited significance, and there is little potential for further analysis. The same applies to the small quantity of medieval pottery and possible medieval tile.

Environmental

- 4.9.3 Environmental samples have produced evidence typical of settlement activity both within the area of the main concentrations of features, and from relatively isolated features. Samples from Late Bronze Age features have produced grain, peas/beans, chaff and weed seeds and have the potential to provide information about the nature of the changing local resources, farming economy, crop-processing practices and the function of some features. The range of items listed above is high and the presence of peas/beans as early as the Late Bronze Age is relatively unusual.
- 4.9.4 Charcoal is less ubiquitous, being generally present only in prehistoric (i.e. Late Bronze Age and Late Iron Age) contexts, and the potential therefore remains to identify the nature of local woodland resources and whether selectivity for fuel sources was practised. Although not specifically sampled for, the presence of land snail in the bulk samples indicates their preservation occurs on deposits derived from the local geology.

4.10 Discussion

- 4.10.1 The evaluation has revealed a significant number of archaeological features grouped together on the south-east brow of a slight promontory overlooking the East Stour River valley to the south, and in particular within one trench (trench 3627TT).
- 4.10.2 Dating evidence suggests that these features represent both Late Bronze Age and Late Iron Age settlement activity, although the possible presence of residual and intrusive material cannot be completely discounted. Both phases appear to focus on subrectangular (?) enclosures located at the east end of the evaluation area, with the centre for later medieval and/or post-medieval activity apparently shifted slightly to the west of the earlier enclosures.
- 4.10.3 Colluvial deposits recorded at the site, although extensive, were generally thin and probably of post-medieval origin. The deeper profiles, recorded within the coombe crossing the central portion of the site, produced evidence to suggest phases of deposition broadly contemporaneous with the prehistoric and later activity represented by features elsewhere. It is possible that some of the worked flint recovered from the very base of the colluvial sequence may be Mesolithic or Early Neolithic in origin.

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Appendix 1: Context Inventory

NB: Context inventories per trench are provided in stratigraphic order where possible
Associations are generally restricted to direct stratigraphic relationships
 CBM = Ceramic Building Material; LBA = Late Bronze Age; LIA = Iron Age; ERB = Early Romano-British; Med = Medieval; Pmed = Post-medieval; Mod = Modern
 Finds quantification and details in (parenthesis) denotes material recovered from environmental samples

Trench	Context	Type	Associations	Finds	No.	Date etc.
3545TT	354501	Topsoil	Seals 354502	CBM Worked Flint Pottery	2 2 1	Med/Pmed Mod
3545TT	354502	Colluvium	Sealed by 354501 Seals 354503			
3545TT	354503	Colluvium	Sealed by 354502 Seals 354504			
3545TT	354504	Natural (Hythe Beds)	Sealed by 354503			
3546TT	354601	Topsoil	Seals 354602 and 354602 Equivalent to 354604			
3546TT	354604	Remnant topsoil	Sealed by 354601 Seals 354605			
3546TT	354602	Upper pit fill	Sealed by 354601 Seals 354603 Fill of 354606	Animal Bone Fired Clay Pottery	3 (1) 5 6 (7)	LBA
3546TT	354603	Primary pit fill	fill of 354606 sealed by 354602	Animal Bone Fired Clay Worked Flint Pottery	1 (5) 2 (3) 2 (4)	LBA
3546TT	354606	Pit	Filled with 354602 and 354603 Cuts 354605			
3546TT	354605	Natural (Hythe Beds)	Sealed by 354604 Cut by 354606			
3547TT	354701	Topsoil	Seals 354702	CBM Worked Flint Pottery	1 1 3	Med/Pmed Pmed
3547TT	354702	Colluvium	Sealed by 354701 Seals 354703			
3547TT	354703	Upper palaeochannel fill	Sealed by 354702 Seals 354704 Fill of 354706			
3547TT	354705	Primary palaeochannel fill	Sealed by 354703 Fill of 354706	Worked Flint	1	
3547TT	354706	Palaeochannel	Filled with 354703 and 354705 Cuts 354704			
3547TT	354704	Natural (Hythe Beds)	Sealed by 354702 Cut by 354706			
3548TT	354801	Topsoil	Seals 354802	Worked Flint Glass	6 1	Mod
3548TT	354802	Upper colluvium	Sealed by 354801 Seals 354803	CBM Iron	9 1	Pmed Horseshoe
3548TT	354803	Primary colluvium	Sealed by 354802 Seals 354804			
3548TT	354804	Natural (Atherfield Clay)	Sealed by 354803			
3549TT	354901	Topsoil	Seals 354902 and 354904	Worked Flint	1	
3549TT	354904	Land drain	Sealed by 354901 Cuts 354902			
3549TT	354902	Colluvium	Sealed by 354901 Cut by 354904 Seals 354903			
3549TT	354903	Natural (Atherfield Clay)	Sealed by 354902			
3550TT	355001	Topsoil	Seals 355002			
3550TT	355002	Colluvium	Sealed by 355001 Seals 355003			
3550TT	355003	Natural (Atherfield Clay)	Sealed by 355002			

Trench	Context	Type	Associations	Finds	No.	Date etc.
3551TT	355101	Topsoil	Seals 355102	CBM Worked Flint Pottery	1 1 1	Med/Pmed ?LBA
3551TT	355102	Colluvium	Sealed by 355101 Seals 355104, 355106, 355112 and 355117			
3551TT	355104	Ditch fill	Sealed by 355102 Fill of 355105	CBM Worked Flint Pottery	4 1 1	Med/Pmed Med
3551TT	355105	Ditch	Filled with 355104 Cuts 355103			
3551TT	355106	Upper foundation trench fill	Sealed by 355102 Seals 355107 Fill of 355111	Pottery	2	Med
3551TT	355107	Tertiary foundation trench fill	Sealed by 355106 Seals 355109 Fill of 355111	Animal Bone CBM Worked Flint	8 2 (1)	?
3551TT	355109	Secondary foundation trench fill	Sealed by 355107 Seals 355110 Fill of 355111	CBM	1	Med/Pmed
3551TT	355110	Primary foundation trench fill	Sealed by 355109 fill of 355111			
3551TT	355111	Foundation trench	Filled with 355106, 355107, 355109 and 355110 Cuts 355103			
3551TT	355112	Upper drain cut fill	Sealed with 355102 Seals 355113 Fill of 355116	CBM Pottery Iron	7 (2) 1	? LBA ?Nail shank
3551TT	355113	Secondary drain cut fill	Sealed by 355112 Seals 355114 Fill of 355116			
3551TT	355114	Primary drain cut fill	Sealed by 355113 Seals 355115 Fill of 355116			
3551TT	355115	Stone drain	Sealed by 355114 Fill of 355116			
3551TT	355116	Drain cut	Filled with 355112, 355113, 355114 and 355115 Cuts 355117			
3551TT	355117	Upper pit fill	Cut by 355116 Seals 355119 Fill of 355118	Animal Bone Burnt Flint Pottery	(1) (1) 1 (2)	?LBA (LIA/ERB; Med)
3551TT	355119	Primary pit fill	Sealed by 355117 Fill of 355118			
3551TT	355118	Pit	Filled with 355119 and 355117 Cuts 355103			
3551TT	355103	Natural (Hythe Beds)	Sealed by 355102 Cut by 355105, 355111 and 355118			
3552TT	355201	Topsoil	Seals 352207			
3552TT	355207	Colluvium	Sealed by 355201 Seals 355204, 355206 and 355202			
3552TT	355204	Ditch fill	Sealed by 355207 Fill of 355203	Worked Flint Pottery	1 5 (1)	Med (LBA)
3552TT	355203	Ditch	Filled with 355204 Cuts 355202			
3552TT	355206	Ditch fill	Sealed by 355207 Fill of 355205	CBM	4	Med/Pmed
3552TT	355205	Ditch	Filled with 355206 Cuts 355202			
3552TT	355202	Natural (Hythe Beds)	Sealed by 355207 Cut by 355203 and 355205			
3619TT	361901	Topsoil	Seals 361902	Worked Flint	1	
3619TT	361902	Natural (Hythe Beds)	Sealed by 361901			

Trench	Context	Type	Associations	Finds	No.	Date etc.
3620TT	362001	Topsoil	Seals 362002	Worked Flint	1	
3620TT	362002	Natural (Hythe Beds)	Sealed by 362001			
3621TT	362101	Topsoil	Seals 362102	CBM Worked Flint	4 4	Med/Pmed
3621TT	362102	Colluvium	Sealed by 362101 Seals 362103 and 362105			
3621TT	362103	Palaeochannel fill	Sealed by 362102 Fill of 362104			
3621TT	362104	Palaeochannel	Filled with 362103 Cuts 362105			
3621TT	362105	Natural clay	Cut by 362104 Sealed by 362102			
3622TT	362201	Topsoil	Seals 362202	Burnt Flint CBM Worked Flint Glass Pottery	1 2 4 1 1	Med/Pmed Mod Pmed
3622TT	362202	Upper colluvium	Sealed by 362201 Seals 362203	Pottery	1	?Med
3622TT	362203	Tertiary colluvium	Sealed by 362202 Seals 362205 and 362204	Animal Bone Pottery	3 1	?LBA
3622TT	362205	Secondary colluvium	Sealed by 362203 Seals 362206	Worked Flint Pottery	1 2	LBA; LIA/ERB
3622TT	362206	Primary colluvium	Sealed by 362205 Seals 362207	Worked Flint	3	
3622TT	362204	Natural (Hythe Beds)	Sealed by 362203 Seals 362207			
3622TT	362207	Natural (Atherfield Clay)	Sealed by 362206 and 362204			
3623TT	362301	Topsoil	Seals 362302 and 362303			
3623TT	362303	Post-hole fill	Sealed by 362302 Fill of 362304			
3623TT	362304	Post-hole	Filled with 362303 Cuts 362302			
3623TT	362302	Natural (Hythe Beds)	Sealed by 362301 Cut by 362304			
3624TT	362401	Topsoil	Seals 362403			
3624TT	362403	Colluvium	Sealed by 362401 Seals 362402			
3624TT	362402	Natural (Hythe Beds)	Sealed by 362403			
3625TT	362501	Topsoil	Seals 362501 and 362503			
3625TT	362503	Pit fill	Sealed by 362501 Fill of 362504	Animal Bone CBM	(1) (1)	
3625TT	362504	Pit	Filled with 362503 Cuts 362502			
3625TT	362502	Natural (Hythe Beds)	Sealed by 362501 Cut by 362504			
3626TT	362601	Topsoil	Seals 362602			
3626TT	362602	Natural (Hythe Beds)	Sealed by 362601			
3627TT	362701	Topsoil	Seals 362702 and 362717	Worked Flint	1	
3627TT	362717	Ditch fill	Sealed by 362701 Fill of 362718	Animal Bone CBM Pottery	(1) 2 1 (6)	Pmed ?LIA/ERB (LBA)
3627TT	362718	Ditch	Filled with 362717 Cuts 362702			
3627TT	362702	Colluvium	Sealed by 362701 Cut by 362718 Seals 362703, 362705, 362707, 362709, 362711, 362713, 362716, 362724, 362726, 362728, 362731 and 362733			
3627TT	362705	Upper ditch fill	Sealed by 362702 Seals 362710 Fill of 362704	Animal Bone Fired Clay Worked Flint Pottery	49 (3) 3 (14) 1 9 (12)	4 LBA; 5 ?LIA (LIA/ERB)
3627TT	362710	Primary ditch fill	Sealed by 362705 Fill of 362704			

Trench record contd. overleaf

Trench	Context	Type	Associations	Finds	No.	Date etc.
3627TT	362704	Ditch	Filled with 362705 and 362710 Cuts 362703			
3627TT	362707	Post-hole fill	Sealed by 362702 Fill of 362706	Burnt Stone Worked Flint Pottery	2 (1) 15 (6)	?LBA (LBA)
3627TT	362706	Post-hole	Filled with 362707 Cuts 362703			
3627TT	362709	Pit fill	Sealed by 362702 Fill of 362708	Animal Bone Pottery	(4) 3 (3)	?LBA (LBA)
3627TT	362708	Pit	Filled with 362709 Cuts 362703			
3627TT	362711	Ditch fill	Sealed by 362702 Fill of 362712	Burnt Flint Pottery	(1) 1 (1)	?LBA (LBA)
3627TT	362712	Ditch	Filled with 362711 Cuts 362703			
3627TT	362713	Ditch fill	Sealed by 362702 Fill of 362714	Pottery	(3)	LBA
3627TT	362714	Ditch	Filled with 362713 Cuts 362703			
3627TT	362716	Ditch fill	Sealed by 362702 Fill of 362715	Animal Bone Worked Flint Pottery	12 (8) 1 23 (8)	18 LBA; 5 LIA (LIA/ERB)
3627TT	362715	Ditch	Filled with 362716 Cuts 362703			
3627TT	362724	Upper foundation trench fill	Sealed by 362702 Seals 362729 Fill of 362723	Animal Bone Worked Flint Pottery	6 2 14	LBA
3627TT	362729	Primary foundation trench fill	Sealed by 362724 Fill of 362723			
3627TT	362723	Foundation trench	Filled with 362724 and 362729 Cuts 362720 and 362722			
3627TT	362720	Ditch fill	Sealed by 362702 Cut by 362723 Fill of 362719	Animal Bone Pottery	1 9	7 LBA; 2 LIA
3627TT	362719	Ditch	Filled with 362720 Cuts 362703			
3627TT	362728	Hearth pad	Sealed by 362702 Fill of 362727			
3627TT	362727	Hearth pit	Filled with 362728 Cuts 362722			
3627TT	362722	Ditch fill	Sealed by 362702 Cut by 362727 and 362723 Fill of 362721	Animal Bone Pottery	6 (7) 8 (5)	2 ?LBA; 6 (5) LIA/ERB
3627TT	362721	Ditch	Filled with 362722 Cuts 362703			
3627TT	362726	Ditch fill	Sealed by 362702 Fill of 362725	Animal Bone Burnt Stone Fired Clay Worked Flint Pottery	24 (20) 2 4 1 12 (1)	11 (1) LBA; 1 LIA/ERB
3627TT	362725	Ditch	Filled with 362726 Cuts 362703			
3627TT	362731	Stake-hole fill	Sealed by 362702 Fill of 362730			
3627TT	362730	Stake-hole	Filled with 362731 Cuts 362703			
3627TT	362733	Post-hole fill	Sealed by 362702 Fill of 362732			
3627TT	362732	Post-hole	Filled with 362733 Cuts 362703			
3627TT	362703	Natural (Hythe Beds)	Sealed by 362702 Cut by 362704, 362706, 362708, 362712, 362714, 362715, 362719, 362721, 362725, 362730 and 362732			

Appendix 2: Artefact Quantification

NB: Quantities are presented by number/weight in grams
 LBA = Late Bronze Age; LIA = Late Iron Age; ERB = Early Romano-British; Med = medieval

Trench	Context	CBM	Fired Clay	Flint	Burnt Flint	Burnt Stone	LBA Pottery	LIA/ERB Pottery	Med Pottery
3545TT	354501	2/63		2/6					
3546TT	354602		5/52				13/86		
3546TT	354603		2/9	3/4			6/24		
3547TT	354701	1/60		1/1					
3547TT	354705			1/1					
3548TT	354801			6/90					
3548TT	354802	9/2473							
3549TT	354901			1/5					
3551TT	355101	1/37		1/4			1/5		
3551TT	355104	4/28		1/1					1/5
3551TT	355106								2/3
3551TT	355107	2/3		1/1					
3551TT	355109	1/6							
3551TT	355112	7/13					2/14		
3551TT	355117			1/6			1/8	1/2	1/2
3552TT	355204			1/10			1/8		5/17
3552TT	355206	4/56							
3619TT	361901			1/4					
3620TT	362001			1/19					
3621TT	362101	4/49		4/84					
3622TT	362201	2/47		4/45	1/6				
3622TT	362202								1/8
3622TT	362203						1/5		
3622TT	362205			1/1			1/3	1/3	
3622TT	362206			3/18					
3625TT	362503	1/62							
3627TT	362701			1/3					
3627TT	362705		17/114	1/8			4/50	17/46	
3627TT	362707			1/1		2/102	21/179		
3627TT	362709						6/33		
3627TT	362711				1/3		2/3		
3627TT	362713						3/1		
3627TT	362716			1/4			18/164	13/54	
3627TT	362717	2/200					6/8	1/3	
3627TT	362720						7/70	2/21	
3627TT	362722						2/40	11/132	
3627TT	362724			2/28			14/92		
3627TT	362726		4/10	1/1			12/54	1/4	
TOTALS		40/3097	28/185	40/345	2/9	2/102	121/847	47/265	10/35

Appendix 3: Ecofact Quantification

NB: Sample details presented by period and feature no. order; **Uncharred Weed Seeds** in lower case to differentiate from **Charred Weed Seeds**
A* = 30+ items, A = 10-29 items, B = 9-5 items, C = 1-4 items, - = not present
LBA = Late Bronze Age, LIA = Late Iron Age, Med = medieval, Pmed = Post-medieval; (h) = hazelnuts, Smb = small mammal bones, ps/bns = peas/ beans

Sample Details				Flot Details							Residue	
Provenance	Context No.	Sample No.	Size (litres)	Size (ml)	Roots (ml)	Grain	Chaff	Weed Seeds		Charcoal >5.6mm	Other	Charcoal >5.6mm
								Uncharred	Charred			
LBA pit 354606	354602	1	15	150	¹³⁵	B	C	a	-	-	Mollusc (A) Smb (C)	-
LBA pit 354606	354603	2	15	125	^{112.5}	B	-	b	C	-	Mollusc (A) Smb (C)	-
LBA post-hole 362706	362707	6	15	10	¹	B	-	b	-	-	-	-
LBA pit 362708	362709	7	15	20	²	A	-	b	-	C	Smb (C)	-
LBA ditch 362715	362716	8	15	25	^{2.5}	A	C	b	C	C	Smb (C) ps/bns (C)	-
LBA ditch 362725	362726	13	15	5	¹	B	-	c	-	C	ps/bns (C)	-
LIA ditch 362704	362705	5	15	30	³	C	-	c	-	C	Smb (C)	-
LIA ditch 362721	362722	12	15	10	³	A*	C	b	C	C	Smb (C) ps/bns (C)	-
Med foundation trench 355111	355107	17	15	20	²	C	-	a	-	-	Mollusc (A) Smb (C)	-
Med drain 355116	355112	15	15	10	¹	C	C	a	-	-	Mollusc (C) Smb (C)	-
Med pit 355118	355117	16	15	5	^{1.5}	-	-	a	C(h)	-	Mollusc (C) Smb (C)	-
Med ditch 355203	355204	9	15	20	¹	A	-	c	-	-	Mollusc (A) Smb (C)	-
Med ditch 355205	355206	10	15	30	^{1.5}	B	-	b	-	-	Mollusc (A) Smb (C)	-
Med pit 362504	362503	14	15	5	⁴	C	-	a	-	-	Mollusc (A)	-
Med ditch 362712	362711	3	15	15	⁶	A	C	a	-	C	Smb (A) ps/bns (C)	-
Med ditch 362714	362713	4	15	20	¹⁴	B	-	b	C	-	Smb (C)	-
Pmed ditch 362718	362717	11	15	10	⁵	C	-	a	-	-	Mollusc (C) Smb (C)	-