

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS AT RUSTINGTON, WEST SUSSEX, 1986–88

by David R. Rudling

Three watching-briefs and a trial excavation have yielded evidence for activity at Rustington during the Mesolithic, Later Bronze Age, Iron Age, early Roman and medieval periods.

INTRODUCTION

Between 1986 and 1988 several watching briefs and a small trial excavation were undertaken at Rustington on land to the south of New Road (A259) between Windmill Bridge and the roundabout at the junction with Station Road (Fig. 2). The investigated area (Fig. 1) is situated on the West Sussex Coastal Plain brickearth and is about 4–5 metres above the present sea level. At the western end it contains traces of an old stream bed.

For recording purposes the area is considered as three main sites: A, B and C (Fig. 1). Site A (TQ 06160315) is the area to the north west of the Darlington Mushroom Laboratories. Site B (c. TQ 05850310) is the land previously known as Barn Nursery, which has recently been developed for two large retail units. Site C (c. TQ 06450314) is an area of recent development to the south west of the roundabout.

All three sites have been the subject of archaeological watching briefs undertaken by Mr P. Hammond and Mr B. and Mrs M. Taylor on behalf of the Rustington Heritage Association. The writer, on behalf of the Field Archaeology Unit, carried out a small trial excavation at Site A and also undertook to produce a report on the discoveries at all three sites. The finds from the watching briefs and excavation are in the possession of the Rustington Heritage Association and will be stored/displayed at their new 'Exhibition Centre' in Rustington.

SITE A

During 1986 a trench 130 cm. deep and 70 cm. wide was machine excavated along the full length of the north side of the meadow which lies to the west of the Mushroom Laboratories. The aim of this action was to try to deter reoccupation of the meadow by gypsies. The trench cut through a Romano-British ditch which yielded large quantities of 1st/early 2nd-century pottery, much of which was collected by Mr and Mrs Taylor and Mr Hammond. Details of the discovery were conveyed to Mr F. Aldsworth, then Archaeological Officer for West Sussex County Council, and the site was subsequently visited and the ditch recorded by Mr Aldsworth's assistant, Mr J. Kenny.

Mr Hammond also discovered one other archaeological feature cut by the boundary trench. At approximately 24 metres west of the meadow's eastern boundary, the trench cut a pit/occupation floor (Context 22) some 4 metres across. The fill/layer consisted of 'dark soil' and yielded sherds of Iron Age pottery, including a sherd (Catalogue No. 3) dating to the late 1st century B.C./early 1st century A.D.

Since the meadow is due for redevelopment (the proposed building of another large retail unit) the discovery of archaeological features indicated that it would be worth undertaking trial excavations with the aim of obtaining more information about the site. The developers, Store Properties Investment Ltd., were approached

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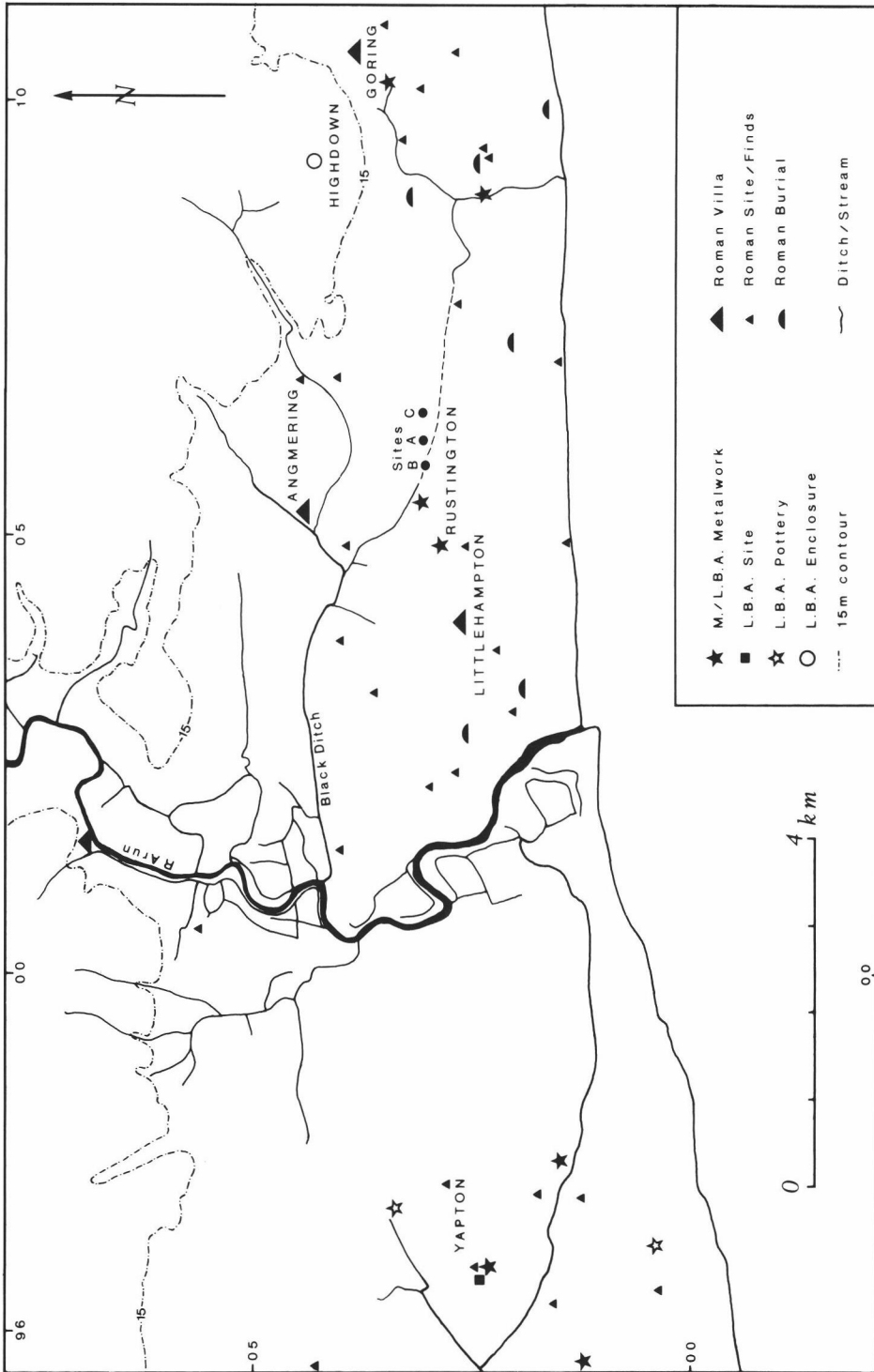
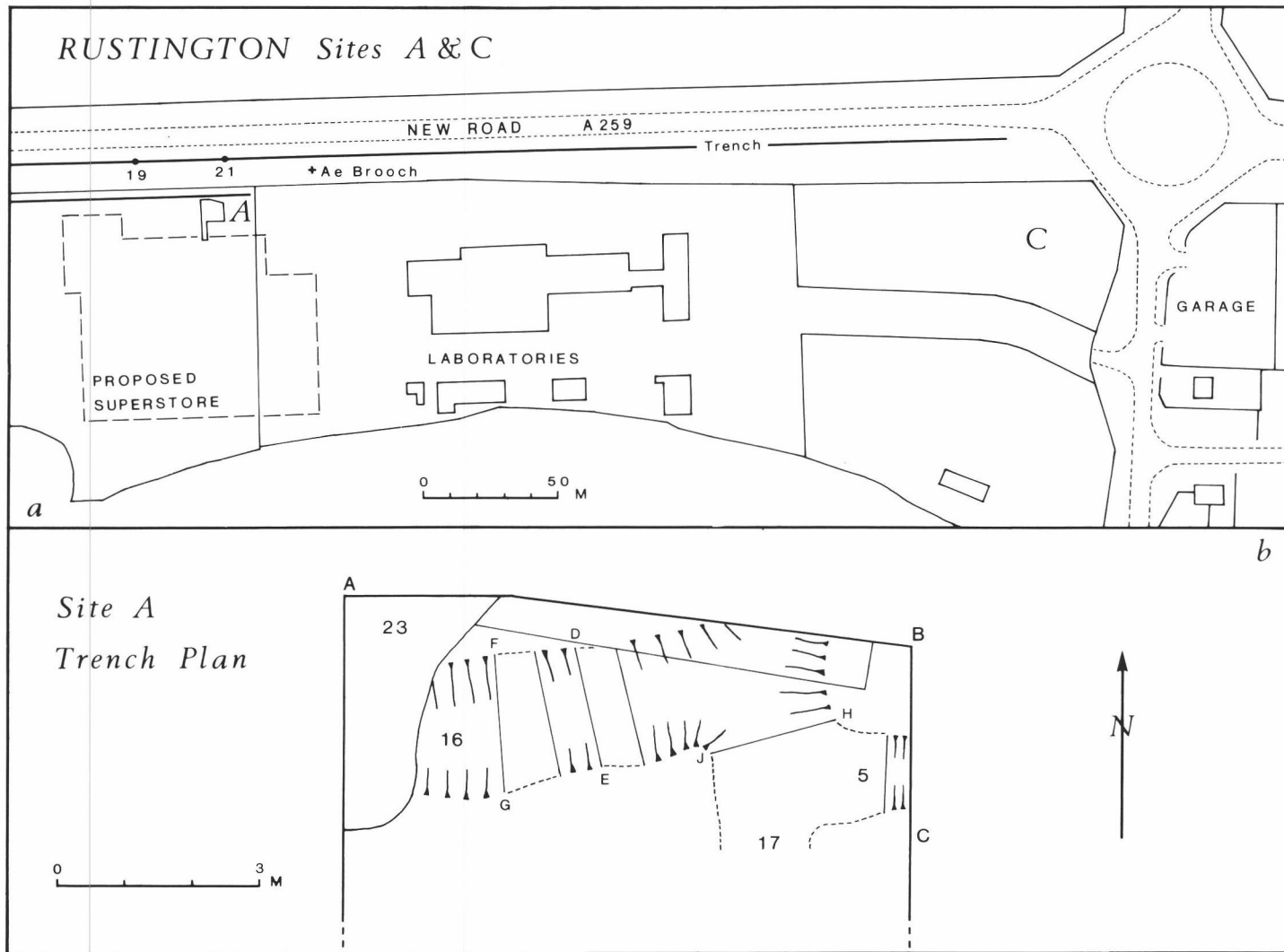


Fig. 1. Site locations.



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Fig. 2. Rustington 1986-8. a. Locations of Sites A and C. b. Plan of excavation trench.

and kindly agreed to provide some funds and the use of a J.C.B. mechanical excavator for a day.

Given the limited resources available for the trial excavation, it was decided to concentrate on the area containing the Romano-British ditch, especially since this had yielded large quantities of unabraded pottery which might indicate that a settlement had existed in the vicinity. In September 1987 an area (Fig. 2a) was duly machine-excavated to a depth of 65 cm. and revealed further traces of the Roman-British ditch system. At the northern end of the trench (Fig. 2b) the junction of four ditches was discovered. These included the continuation of the ditch revealed in the boundary trench which lies only one metre to the north of the excavation area. Three of the four ditch sections suggest that the ditches had been recut/cleaned out (Fig. 3). Unfortunately, the pottery finds are not sufficiently closely datable to allow identification of the different phases of ditch use. As in the previous year, most of the finds were recovered from the upper grey-brown fills, and in at least two cases sherds found in 1987 belong to the same vessels as sherds found in 1986. Unfortunately the finds recovered in 1987 are very disappointing compared with those of 1986, and in particular the pottery sherds are smaller in terms of average size and quantities found. This situation might suggest that the possible occupation site lies to the north of the areas investigated.

Lack of time prevented a thorough investigation of the southern part of the trench. Thus it was not possible to follow the plan of the ditch (Context 17) which appears to be heading southwards. No other archaeological features were noticed in the southern part of the trench and it is possible that this area should have been machined to a slightly deeper level. For context details from Site A, see Appendix.

During 1987 a service trench approximately 75 cm. deep was machine-dug to the south of, and alongside, New Road. In the area of Site A this service trench yielded two archaeological features and a small quantity of finds. The main

feature (Context 19) was a layer of burnt clay/daub associated with late Iron Age pottery. The other feature (Context 21) was a concentration of burnt flint.

Discussion of Site A

The various archaeological features and finds (see below) discovered at Site A indicate that the area was utilized during the Iron Age and early Roman periods. In particular the discovery for both periods of large, unabraded pottery sherds and quantities of daub/burnt clay suggest that this site was used for habitation, or was very close to such an area. The economy of such settlements is likely to have been based on farming, and the Roman ditches presumably represent part of a drained field system. The lack of later Roman finds suggests that the ditched field system probably went out of use in the early 2nd century.

Evidence for medieval activity on the site is demonstrated by the discovery of fairly large pieces of medieval pottery (see below). These were found following the excavation of the meadow boundary trench and appear to have come from the same area as the bulk of the Roman finds.

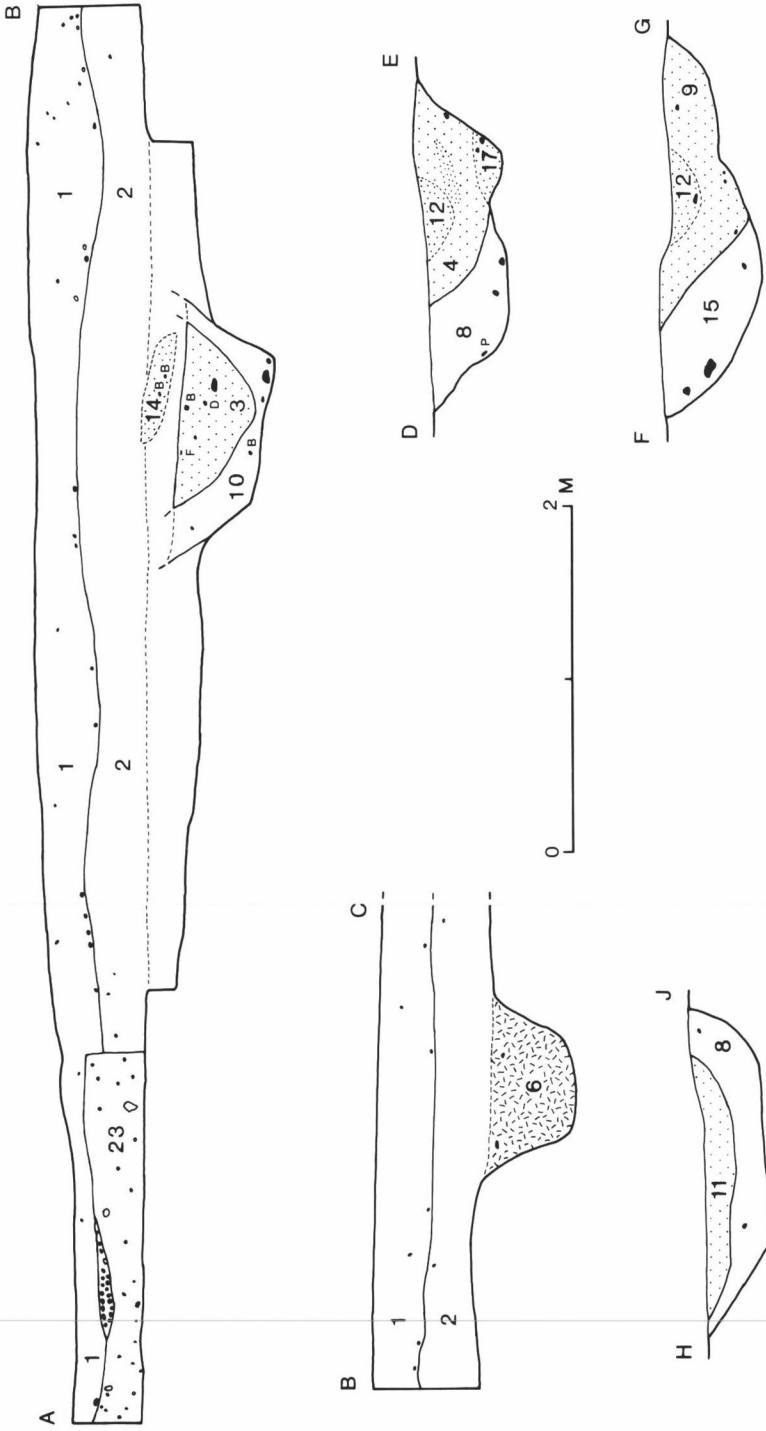
SITE B

During 1987 and 1988 major re-development work was undertaken to the west of Site A and this area is referred to as Site B (Fig. 1). At least 50 cm. of soil was stripped from the surface of Site B and at this depth a large number of archaeological features and finds began to appear. Mr Hammond undertook a watching brief throughout the whole period of soil moving and digging of foundations. He plotted his discoveries on a map of the site and this is the basis for Figure 4. Each major feature/find was given its own area letter code.

List of major features/finds (see Fig. 4 for locations)

A. Mesolithic flint core.

RUSTINGTON Site A Sections



Key ○ Chalk • Flint •_B Burnt Flint -_F Flint Flake *_D Daub -_P Pottery

Fig. 3. Rustington 1987. Site A. Sections.

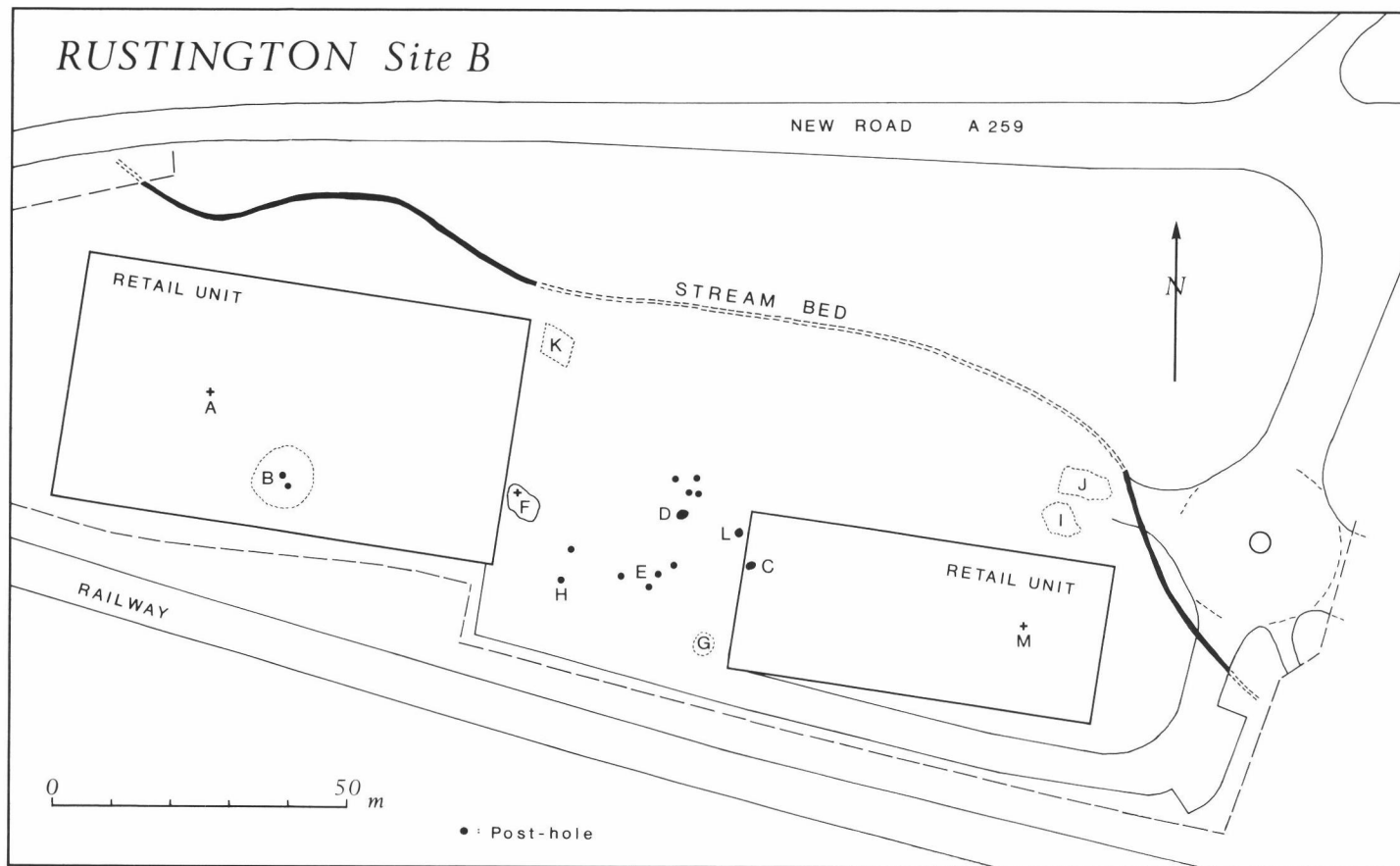


Fig. 4. Rustington 1987-8. Site B. Plan of features/finds.

B. Roughly circular area containing two post-holes and traces of burning and burnt clay. Possibly the remains of a hut. Prehistoric pottery.

C. Pit/depression containing traces of burning, bone, oyster shell, flint, and Bronze Age Pottery (catalogue number 3).

D. Pit/depression containing traces of burning, flintwork, a quern-stone and Bronze Age pottery (catalogue numbers 1–2; 4–7). To the north of the pit were four post-holes (a possible structure?).

E. A group of six post-holes and patches of burnt clay. Probably the remains of a circular hut. No pottery finds, but see 'F'.

F. Part of a bronze socketed axe (Later Bronze Age). Found in spoil taken from area E.

G. Pit/depression containing two large piles of burnt-flint and traces of burning. Flintwork.

H. The most westerly post-hole in the group of post-holes referred to as 'E'.

I. Pit/depression containing traces of burning. Finds include: a flint blade; a piece of bronze and the complete base (80 mm. diameter) of a Romano-British sand tempered grey ware pot.

J. Traces of burnt clay and small post-holes. Possibly the remains of a hut.

K. Occupation level yielding large quantities of early Romano-British pottery (catalogue numbers 32–48). Other finds include: daub; tile and metalwork. Possibly the site of a 1st-century hut.

L. Sherds from a large prehistoric pot (in a pit?).

M. A piece of unidentified bronze (not illustrated). Possibly relatively recent.

Another major feature revealed by the soil moving was the bed of a stream which runs approximately north west/south east across Site B (Fig. 4). This stream can still be traced to the west of the site (Fig. 1) where its course is to the north of the railway line, before joining the 'Black Ditch' which flows into the River Arun. To the east of Sites A and B the stream can be traced eastwards from East Preston.

Discussion of Site B

This previously unknown site has yielded evidence for both Later Bronze Age and early Romano-British settlements.

The Bronze Age settlement appears to have included at least one, and possibly three hut sites as evidenced by post-holes and burnt clay/occupation material. Other features include pits/depressions containing traces of burning and occupation material. The discovery of a quern-stone suggests that food preparation was one function of the site.

In the early Roman period the site was again occupied and area K, and possibly also area J, may represent hut sites. The apparent absence of post-holes at area K may indicate that this building was of timber-framed construction involving the use of wattle and daub.

In both periods the location of the settlements may have been influenced by the presence of the stream.

SITE C

During construction work a watching brief was undertaken by Mr Hammond. The only finds were a small group of flintwork of indeterminate age (see below).

THE FINDS

Flintwork (Christopher Place)

Flint debitage has been recovered from three areas, with associated finds suggesting a possible date range from the Late Bronze Age to the Roman period. However, only the artifacts from Site A were recovered under controlled conditions, and the rest should be considered as unstratified. The collection as a whole is very small and contains no true groups, so statistical or typological comparisons with other sites are not possible in any detail.

The Raw Material

The flint present at Rustington is described as follows:

- i) Light grey, well patinated
- ii) Light brown, pale grey patches, thin buff cortex
- iii) Very dark grey to black, thin yellow-brown cortex
- iv) Dark grey, frequent lighter patches
- v) Iron stained river gravel

Although all types are available on the coastal plain, types ii) and iv) are the most frequently utilized.

The Artifacts

The artifacts present are recorded in Table 1. The scrapers are crude and irregular, and as such have not been classified according to Clark (1960).

TABLE 1

Summary table of prehistoric flintwork from Rustington 1987-88.

<i>Rustington Flintwork</i>			
	Site A	Site B	Site C
Flakes	46	33	5
Blades		6	
Retouched flakes	7	2	1
Notched flakes	2	1	
Cores	2(C)	1(B2)	1(C)
Scrapers	2	1	
Awls/borers	1		

Flakes and Irregular Blades

This apparently non-utilized element of the debitage is very crude. Flakes are always hard-hammer struck, and platform preparation absent. With the exception of the irregular blades the flakes tend towards being short and squat. The irregular blades are so uncommon as to suggest accidental production.

Regular Blades and Bladelets

The only true blades are found at Site B in association with a core which has been used for blade/bladelet removal. The blades are most probably Mesolithic and are narrow rather than broad. One of the blades is soft-hammer struck and shows evidence of platform preparation. One of the platforms on the core, which is very similar to a Mesolithic example from Marsh Farm, Binsted (Pitts 1980, Fig. 2.11 p. 156), also shows evidence of platform preparation. Several flakes also have scars on the dorsal surface, suggestive of blade removal.

Retouched/Utilized Flakes

This group covers a range of artifacts that may be the functional equivalents of more formalized scrapers. Three examples are illustrated from Site A (Fig. 5, Nos. 1-3) and three are illustrated from Site B (Figs. 4-6). These range from flakes with varying degrees of retouch to crude scrapers. Also illustrated is a notched flake (Fig. 5, No. 7).

Awl/Borer

This tool (Fig. 5, No. 8) was found at Site A.

Cores

One core from Site A had three platforms. Another core from the same site had four platforms, weighed 40 g., and was flaked to exhaustion. The Site B core had two oblique platforms which had been used for blade removal, one of which showed evidence of preparation. The Site C core had three platforms. All cores were quite dissimilar, and conclusions cannot be made.

Conclusion

Coastal Plain flint debitage is in general little understood, with the small size of many of the collections suggesting residuality to the author, e.g. Yapton (Place *in Rudling*, 1987), Oving (Roberts *in Bedwin and Holgate*, 1985) and Chidham (Drewett *in Bedwin*, 1980). However, it is not impossible that in some cases the small size of the collection is due to the minor role of flint in later prehistory; thus some of the collections may be crude Later Bronze Age or Iron Age assemblages.

The potential may well exist at Rustington to advance studies of later prehistoric flint, if a suitable site exists with stratified groups.

Bronze Age Pottery (incorporating comments by Sue Hamilton)

- All the catalogued Bronze Age pottery is from Site B.
1. Bucket urn with large horizontal lug/s. Grey brown ware with abundant coarse calcined flint temper. Patches of oxidisation, as on part of the surface of the lug. Deverel-Rimbury tradition. Area D.
 2. Barrel-shaped vessel with lug/s with two piercings. Light orange-brown flint tempered ware. Deverel-Rimbury/Late Bronze Age. Area D.
 3. Shouldered vessel with pie-crust rim, piercing below the rim, and splayed base. Orange-grey ware. Mainly flint tempered (mostly coarse but also some finer material), together with some small grog inclusions. Parts of the pot are reduced and others are oxidised. The large number of joining sherds from this vessel indicate that it must have been deposited or thrown away in at least a three-quarters complete state. Late Bronze Age. Area C.
 4. Jar with incurving rim. Buff ware with mainly fine-medium, flint temper. Late Bronze Age. Area D.
 - 5-6. Vessels with slightly flattened rims. Grey-brown coarse flint tempered wares. Late Bronze Age. Area D.
 7. Hemispherical bowl. Grey-black coarse flint tempered ware. Late Bronze Age. Area D.

Discussion

Stylistically the pottery suggests the overlap of Deverel-Rimbury (Middle Bronze Age) and Late Bronze Age traditions, as seen for instance at Plumpton Plain B (Holleyman and Curwen 1940). A mixture of Deverel-Rimbury and Late Bronze Age traditions also occurs on other south central British coastal foreland sites, such as Eldon's Seat, Dorset (Cunliffe 1968), and Deverel-Rimbury traditions generally appear to have lingered on longer in Wessex and the south coast. At Rustington the general lack of extensive decoration indicates that this pottery belongs to the earliest Late Bronze Age (c. 1000/900 B.C.). Technologically many comparisons can be made with the pottery from the recently excavated site at Yapton. The reader is referred to the Yapton report for a more detailed discussion of such late Bronze Age pottery in Sussex (Hamilton *in Rudling* 1987).

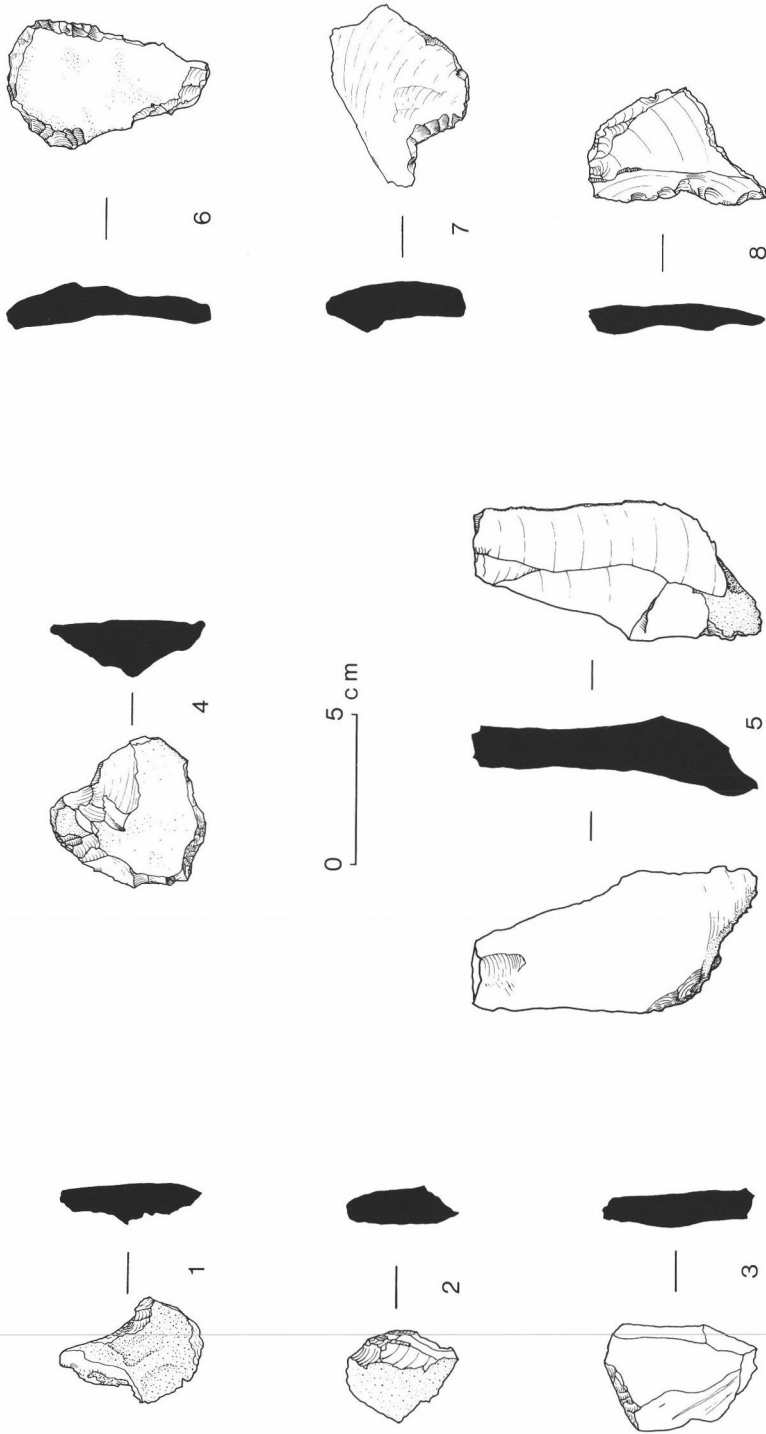


Fig. 5. Rustington 1986-8. Flintwork.

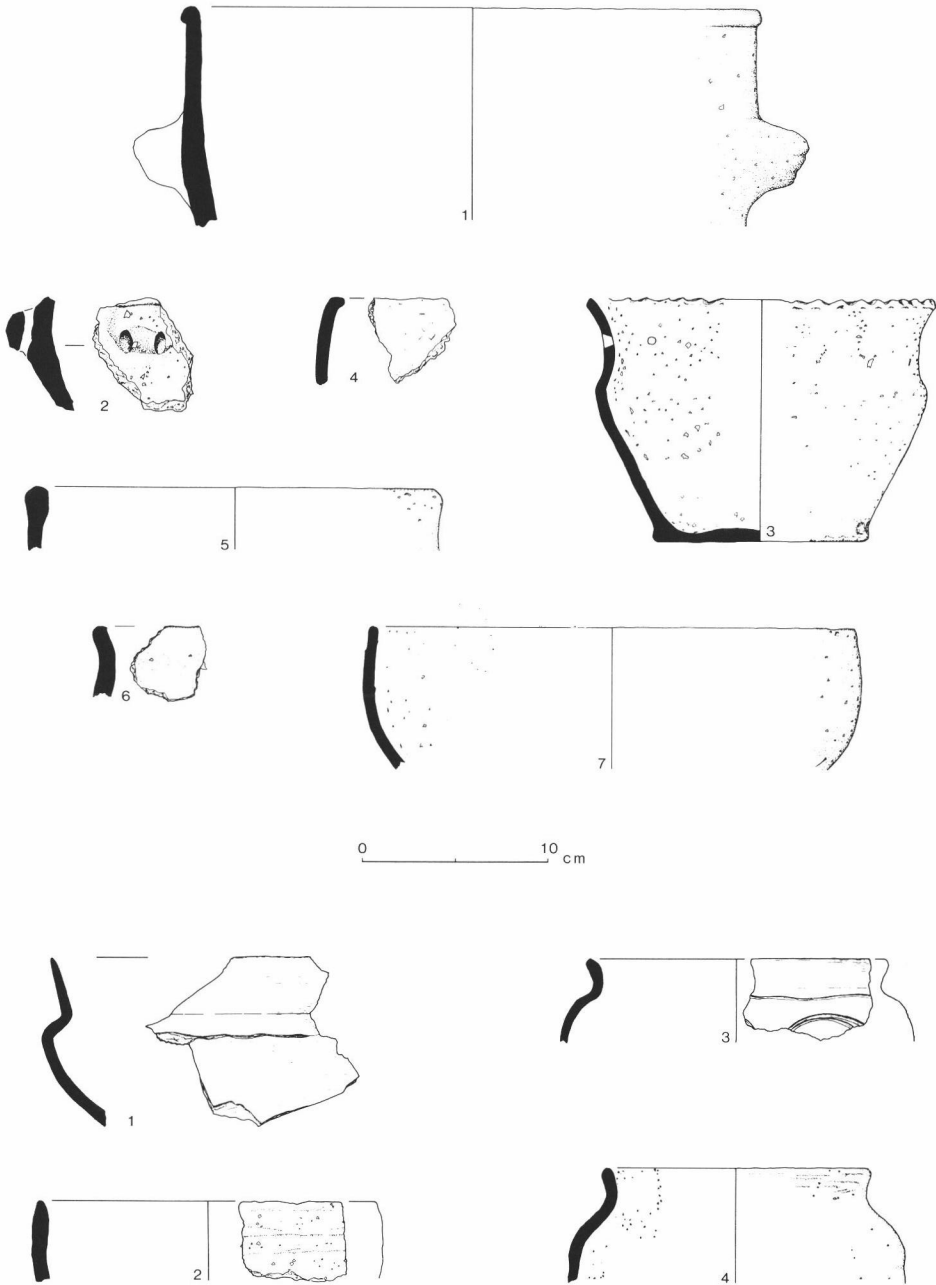


Fig. 6. Rustington 1986-8. Prehistoric Pottery. Sites B and A. 1-7 Bronze Age. 1-4 Iron Age.

Iron Age Pottery

All the catalogued Iron Age pottery is from Site A.

1. Shouldered bowl with burnishing below rim and on shoulder. Sparse fine flint and sand tempered black ware. Park Brow-Caesar's Camp group. *c.* 5th-4th century B.C. Unstratified.
2. Saucepan pot with three very shallow grooves below the rim. Grey-buff fine-medium flint tempered ware, *c.* 3rd-1st century B.C. Context 9.
3. Jar with groove below the rim and grooved curvilinear 'eyebrow' decoration. Burnished black external surface. Grey grog tempered ware. 'Eastern Atrebatian' style. *c.* 1st century B.C./A.D. Context 22.
4. Jar. Calcareous sandstone tempered black ware. Other inclusions are: fine flint, fine quartz and iron pyrites. Late Iron Age. Context 19.
5. Not illustrated. Body sherd of sand and fine flint tempered black ware. Late Iron Age. Context 19.
6. Not illustrated. Body sherds of various grog tempered wares. Some sherds exhibit small voids which presumably represent burnt-out shell or organic matter. Late Iron Age. Context 19.
7. Not illustrated. Body sherd of medium-coarse flint tempered grey ware. Late Bronze Age/Iron Age. Unstratified.
8. Not illustrated. Body sherds of various fine-medium flint tempered wares. Iron Age. Contexts: 1, 6, 8, 9, 11, 19 and 20.

Roman Pottery

There were two main find spots for Romano-British pottery: Site A and Site B, Area K. Site A yielded a large number of sherds and most of these were found by Mr and Mrs Taylor and Mr Hammond after the excavation of the boundary ditch which cut through part of the Roman ditch complex. Since these sherds were not collected with regard to context or stratigraphy they are referred to as unstratified finds, along with other disturbed/surface finds from this site. The circumstances of discovery of most of the pottery from Site A, and all of that from Site B, make a detailed quantification of these finds unnecessary. A selection of the excavated and salvaged pottery is described and illustrated below in order to give some indication as to the date, type and fabric ranges.

A. *Pottery from Site A* (incorporating comments on the Samian Ware by Catherine Johns)

1. Not illustrated. A large part (the complete base and part of the rim) of a form 27 Samian Ware cup. Worn stamp of PATRICIVS. South Gaul. 1st Century. Unstratified.
2. Not illustrated. Sherd from a second South Gaulish form 27 Samian Ware cup. 1st century. Unstratified.
3. Not illustrated. Two sherds from a form 36 Samian Ware dish. South Gaul. 1st century. Context 11 and unstratified.
4. Not illustrated. Body sherd of uncertain form. South Gaulish Samian Ware. 1st century. Context 10.
5. Not illustrated. Four Samian Ware body sherds of uncertain form. ?Central Gaul. ?Flavian-Antonine. Contexts 1 and 11.
6. Not illustrated. Body/neck sherd from a Camulodunum Type 186A amphora. South Spain. *c.* late 1st century B.C. to the early 2nd century A.D. Unstratified.
7. Imitation Samian cup (form 27). Micaceous fine dull red ware with grey surfaces. 1st century. *Cf.* Fishbourne Type 50 (Cunliffe 1971) and Newhaven examples 51 and 62 (Green *in* Bell 1976). Unstratified.
8. Imitation Samian cup (form 27). Sand tempered grey ware. *Cf.* No. 7. 1st century. Unstratified.
9. Butt-beaker. Fine white ware. 1st century. Unstratified.
10. Poppy-head beaker with high lip. Fine grey ware with applied pellet decoration. *Cf.* Fishbourne Type 267. *c.* A.D. 80-140. Unstratified.
11. Beaker. Sand tempered grey ware. Context 11.
12. Flagon base with foot-ring. White sand tempered ware. Unstratified.
13. Platter with partially burnished exterior surface. Sand tempered grey ware. *Cf.* Fishbourne Type 14. 1st century. Unstratified.
14. Carinated bowl. Fine grey ware with some grog tempering. Traces of a darker slip on the exterior surface and two bands of rouletted decoration above the girth of the vessel. Late 1st century. Context 9 and unstratified.
15. Bowl with out-turned rim and rounded shoulders. Sand tempered grey ware with traces under the rim and above the girth of an external orange wash. 1st/early 2nd century. Unstratified.
16. Bowl with out-turned rim and rounded shoulders. Sand tempered grey ware with black exterior surface. Lightly burnished decoration on the lower part of the vessel. Unstratified.
17. Jar with simple bead rim and incised decoration. Sand tempered grey ware. *Cf.* Fishbourne Type 166. 1st century. Unstratified.
18. Necked jar with well-defined shoulders. Sand tempered grey ware. *Cf.* Fishbourne Type 181. 1st century. This is the most common type of jar at Rustington. Context 8.
19. Necked jar. Sand tempered ware with grey surfaces above a dull red layer and a grey core. Unstratified.
20. Necked jar with lightly burnished decoration. Sand tempered grey ware. Unstratified.
21. Necked jar. Sand tempered grey ware. Unstratified.
22. Necked jar with two grooves on the inside of the rim. Grey sand tempered ware. Unstratified.
23. Necked jar. Fine-coarse sand tempered grey ware. Unstratified.
24. Necked jar with rilled surface below the neck. Sand tempered grey ware. Unstratified.
25. Jar with everted rim. Sand tempered grey ware. *Cf.* Fishbourne Type 313. ?2nd century. Unstratified.
26. Narrow-mouthed jar with everted and slightly cupped rim. *Cf.* Fishbourne Type 325. Late 1st to early 2nd century.
27. Body sherd with incised and comb impressed decoration. Sand tempered grey ware with a darker exterior surface above a thin red-brown layer. Context 1.
28. Body sherd from jar with a band of incised decoration. Sand tempered grey ware. Context 9.
29. Lid. Sand tempered grey ware. *Cf.* Fishbourne Type 193. 1st century. Context 3.

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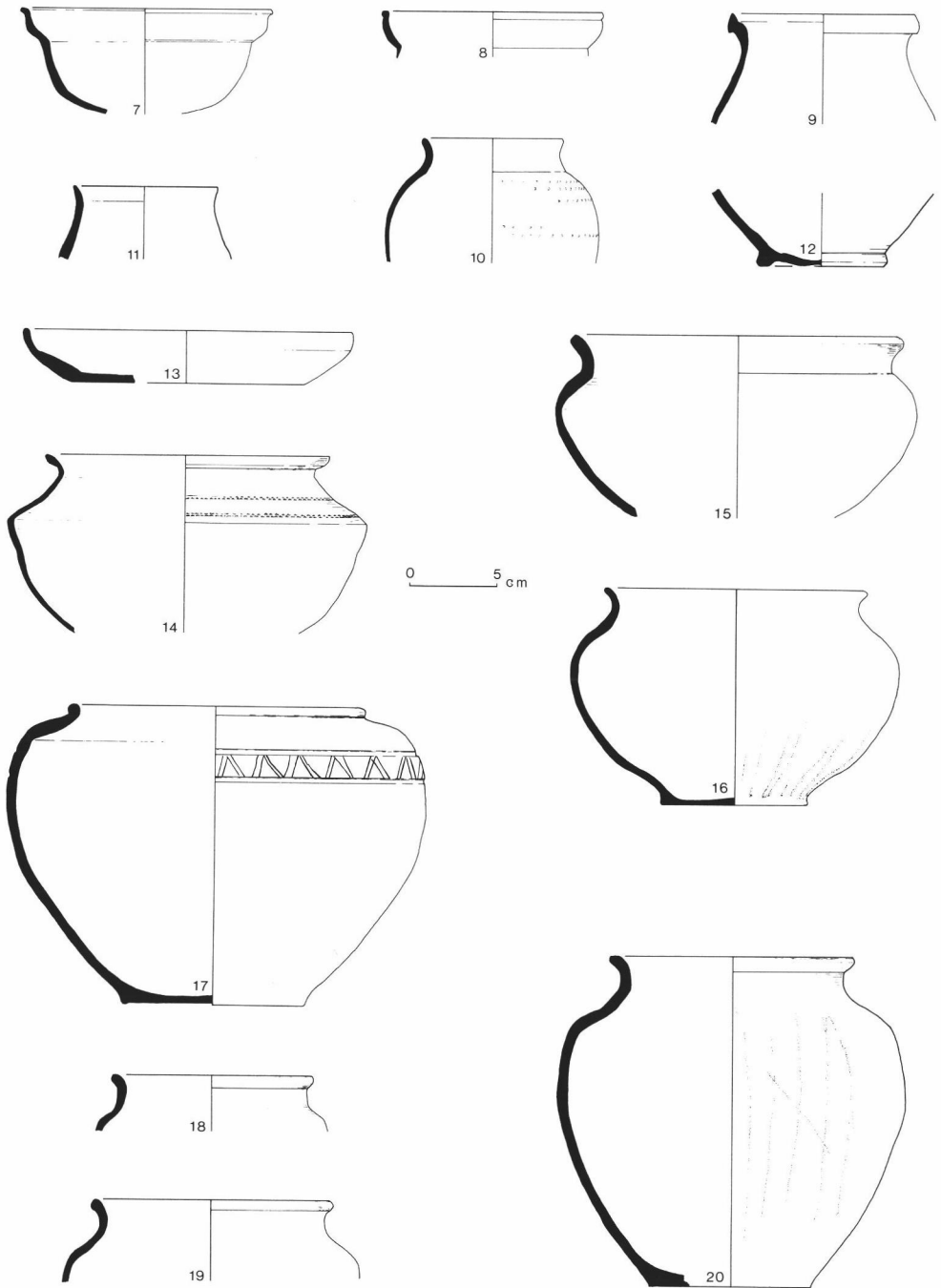


Fig. 7. Rustington 1986-8. Roman Pottery. Site A.

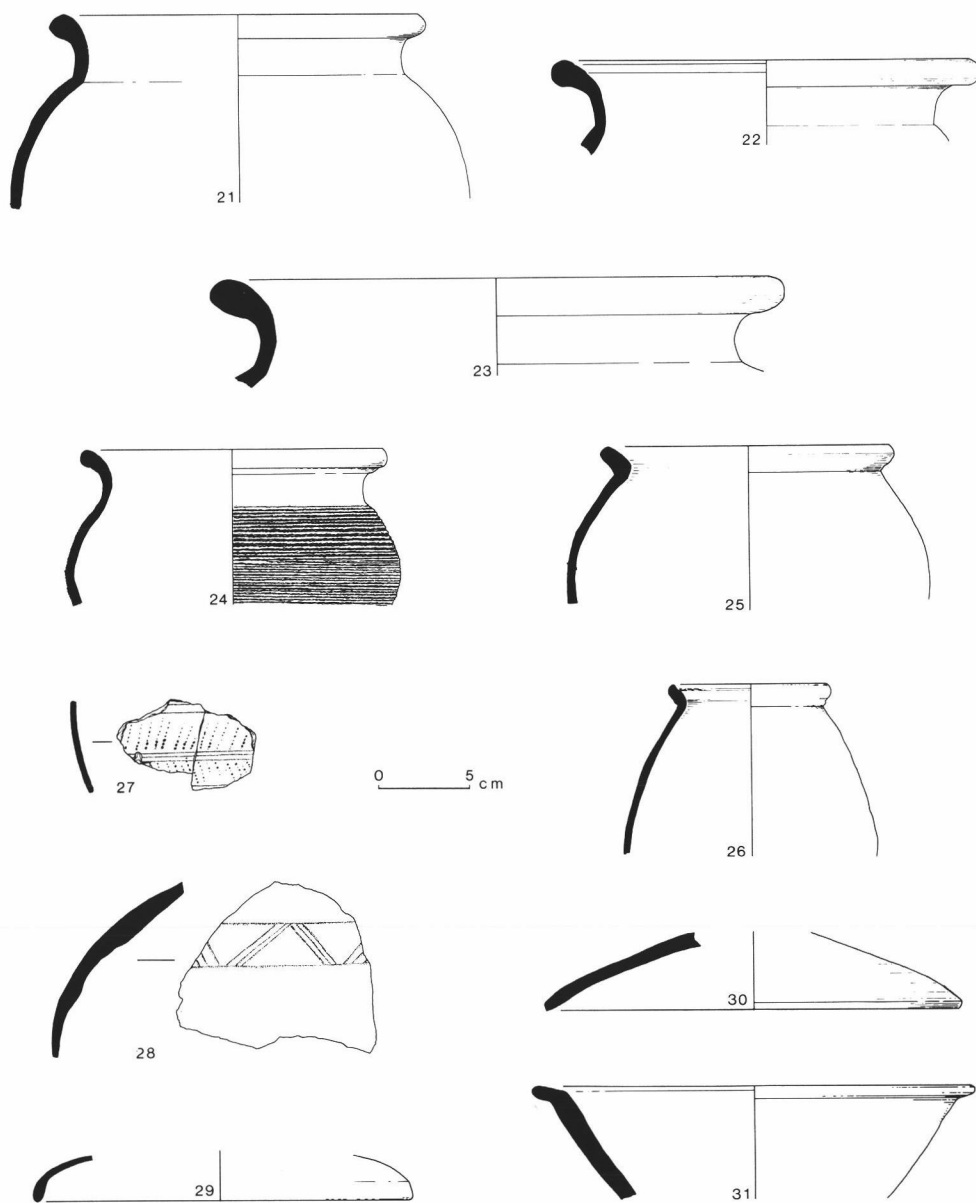


Fig. 8. Rustington 1986-8. Roman Pottery. Site A.

30. Lid with simple lip. Sand tempered grey ware. Cf. Fishbourne Type 193. 1st/2nd century. Unstratified.
31. Bowl with everted rim. Sand tempered grey ware. Cf. Angmering No. 10 (Scott 1938). 1st century. Unstratified.

- B. Pottery from Site B, Area K
32. Not illustrated (lower surface much eroded). Base of Gallo-Belgic platter (Camulodunum Type 8). Fine white-grey fabric with thin black surface. Terra Nigra Ware. Claudian.

FINDS AT RUSTINGTON

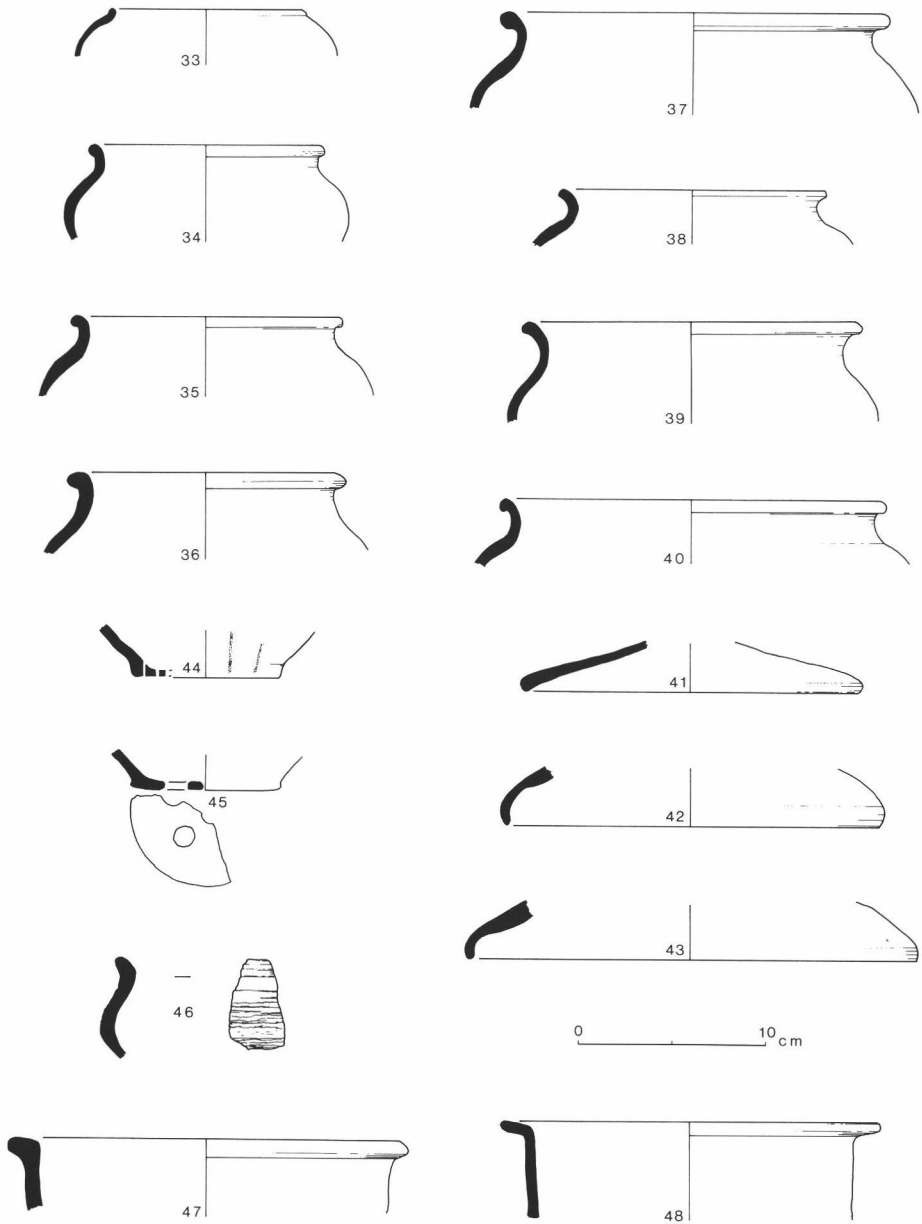


Fig. 9. Rustington 1987-8. Roman Pottery. Site B, Area K.

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|--|---|
| 33. Jar with small bead rim. Sand tempered orange ware. <i>Cf.</i> Fishbourne Type 166. 1st century. | 42. Lid. Sand tempered grey ware. <i>Cf.</i> No. 29. |
| 34. Necked jar/bowl with round shoulders. Sand tempered grey ware. | 43. Lid. Sand tempered orange ware. <i>Cf.</i> No. 42. |
| 35-37. Necked jars. Sand tempered grey wares. <i>Cf.</i> No. 18. | 44. Base of colander with small holes. Lightly burnished decoration. Sand tempered grey ware. |
| 38-40. Necked jars. Sand tempered orange wares. | 45. Base of colander with large holes. Sand tempered grey ware. |
| 41. Lid. Sand tempered grey ware. <i>Cf.</i> No. 30. | 46. Carinated bowl with everted rim and rilled outer |

surface. Sand tempered grey ware with grey-buff surfaces. Cf. Fishbourne Type 83. Late 1st century.

47. Bowl with thick flange. Sand tempered black ware.
48. Straight-sided bowl with flanged rim. Sand tempered orange ware.

Medieval Pottery

All of the catalogued medieval pottery is unstratified and comes from the area of the Roman ditch complex, Site A.

1. Rim of cooking pot. Medium flint tempered grey-brown ware with blackened external surface. ?12th/13th century.
2. Not illustrated. Base sherd from a cooking pot with a sagging base. Fine-medium flint tempered grey ware with orange-buff external surface. Traces of burnt ?food residue on the inside of the vessel.
3. Rim of cooking pot. Fine sand tempered cream ware with grey core.
4. Not illustrated. Base/body sherd from a cooking pot with a sagging base. Sand tempered grey ware with orange-buff external surface.
5. Rim and handle from a jug or pitcher. Fine orange ware with off-white surfaces and occasional spots of orange-brown glaze. Late 13th/14th century.
6. Slashed strap handle from a jug or pitcher. Fine sand tempered orange ware with off-white/light buff surfaces and an area of mottled green glaze.
7. Stabbed rod handle from a jug or pitcher. Fine sand tempered cream ware with areas of mottled green glaze.
8. Stabbed rod handle from a jug or pitcher. Fine sand tempered cream ware with patches of mottled green glaze.
9. Not illustrated. Body sherd from a jug. Fine sand tempered orange ware with cream surfaces. Decorated with bands of white paint on the exterior. ?15th century.
10. Dish. Fine flint tempered orange-brown ware with grey core.
11. Cooking pot. Sand tempered buff-grey ware.

Bronze Age Metalwork

1. Cutting edge fragment of a bronze socketed axe. Socketed axes belong to the Later Bronze Age, c. 1,000–600 B.C. Found by Mr P. Harwood. Site B, Area F. (Fig. 11, No. 1)
2. Find made by Mr. A. Weightman from the path outside No. 14, Brookside Avenue, Rustington (TQ 05420315). A looped bronze palstave axe with mid-rib. c. 1,400–900 B.C. (Fig. 11, No. 2)

Romano-British Metalwork

1. One piece copper-alloy brooch with simple solid catchplate. Nauheim derivative (La Tène III), c. mid 1st century B.C. to the third quarter of the 1st century A.D. Found by Mr Hammond approximately 20 metres to the north east of Site A, alongside New Road. (Fig. 11, No. 3)
2. Small strip of copper-alloy 10 mm. wide; 1.5 mm. thick and in excess of 22 mm. long (surviving length). Site B, Area I. (Not illustrated)

3. Lead ring with transverse grooves. Triangular cross-section. Site B, Area K. (Fig. 11, No. 4)
4. Lead spindle-whorl. Site B, Area K. (Fig. 11, No. 5)
5. Two small pieces of lead. Site A. Unstratified. (Not illustrated)
6. Small piece of lead. Site B, Area K. (Not illustrated)
7. Iron ?knife blade. Very corroded. Site A, Context 11. (Not illustrated)
8. Iron nails/nail fragments. Site A, Contexts 3 and 6. Site B, Area K. (Not illustrated)

Roman Glass

1. The complete rim and part of the handle of a pale bluish-green glass cylindrical flask. Late 1st/2nd century. Site A, unstratified. (Fig. 11, No. 6)

Roman Tile/Daub

1. Fragment of a box-flue tile with combed decoration. Sand tempered buff fabric; 2 cm. thick. Decoration applied with a seven-toothed comb. Site A, unstratified.
2. Fragment of ?tegula tile. Sand and grog tempered orange fabric with buff upper surface; 2.6 cm. thick. Site B, Area K.
3. Fragment of flat tile, 3.2 cm. thick. Sand tempered fabric. Site B, Area K.
4. Fragments of burnt clay/daub were found at Site A, Contexts 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 19 and 20, and at Site B, Area K.

Animal Bones

The excavations at Site A yielded only two small pieces of animal bone: a phalange (Context 3) and part of a long-bone (Context 9), both sheep (*ovis*). It is possible that the acidic nature of the brickearth soil was not favourable for the preservation of animal bone. Other bones (not examined) were found at Site B, Area C.

Marine Molluscs

At Site A the modern ditch next to the New Road yielded one top and two bottom valves of oyster (*Ostrea edulis*). Other oyster shells are recorded as having been found at Site B, Area C.

Charcoal (by Caroline Cartwright)

Fragments weighing a total of 18 g. of twig-sized and slightly larger roundwood charcoal were recovered from five contexts (4, 6, 7, 8 and 9) during the excavations at Site A. The wood types include *Quercus* sp. (oak), *Corylus* sp. (hazel) and *Fraxinus* sp. (ash).

Burnt (Fire-Cracked) Flint

The excavations at Site A yielded a total of 311 pieces of burnt flint. Of these 138 came from the topsoil and the remainder from Romano-British ditch fills (Context 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11). Site B also produced large quantities of burnt flint, especially Area G.

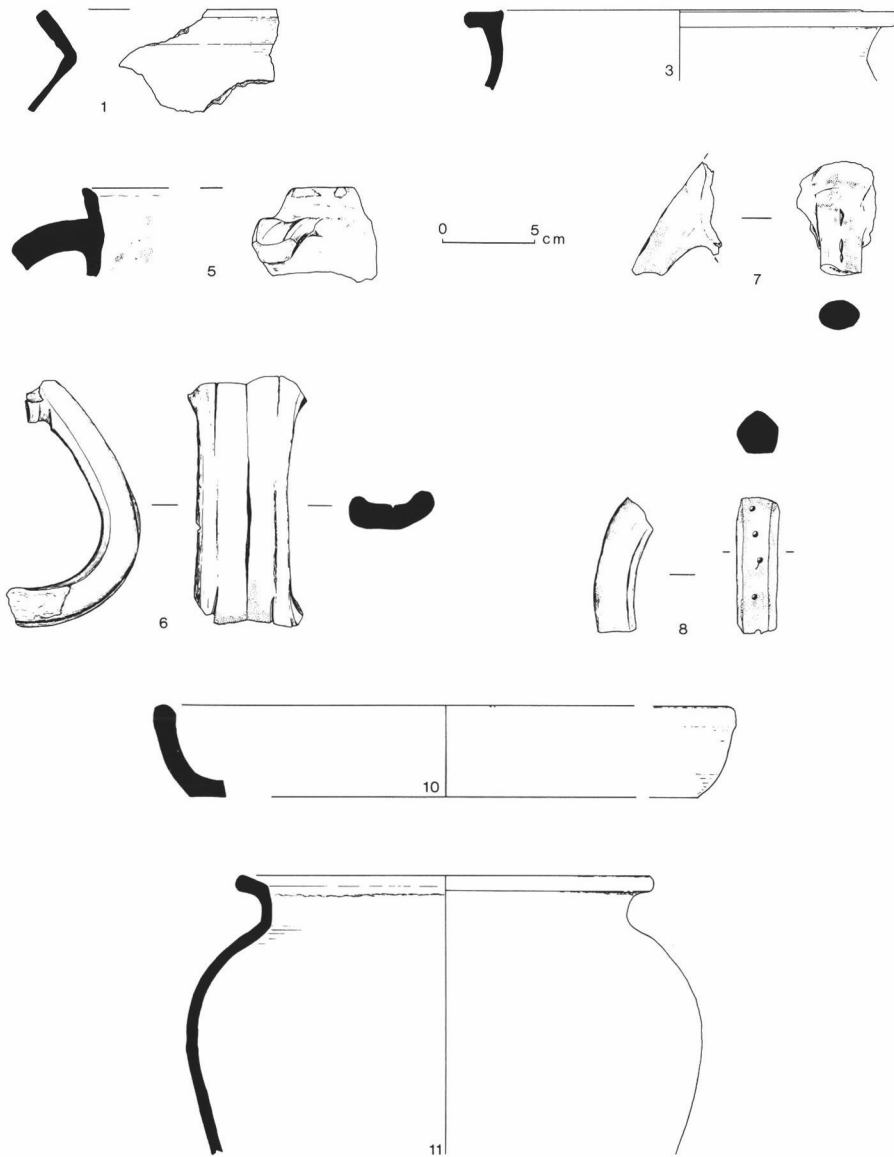


Fig. 10. Rustington 1986. Medieval Pottery. Site A.

Geological Material (by Caroline Cartwright)

Site A

1. Part of the lower stone of a greensand rotary quern. This stone is possibly from the Lodsworth area. Context 11.
2. Fragment of greensand quernstone and two other small fragments of greensand. Context 10.
3. Fragment of greensand, possibly part of a quernstone. Context 4.

4. Two fragments of greensand. Contexts 7 and 9.

5. Fragment of very eroded Cornish granite. Context 6.

Site B

1. Fragment of fine-grained quartzitic sandstone quern or grinding stone with extremely highly-polished upper surface—almost 'glassy' in texture through utilization. Area D.

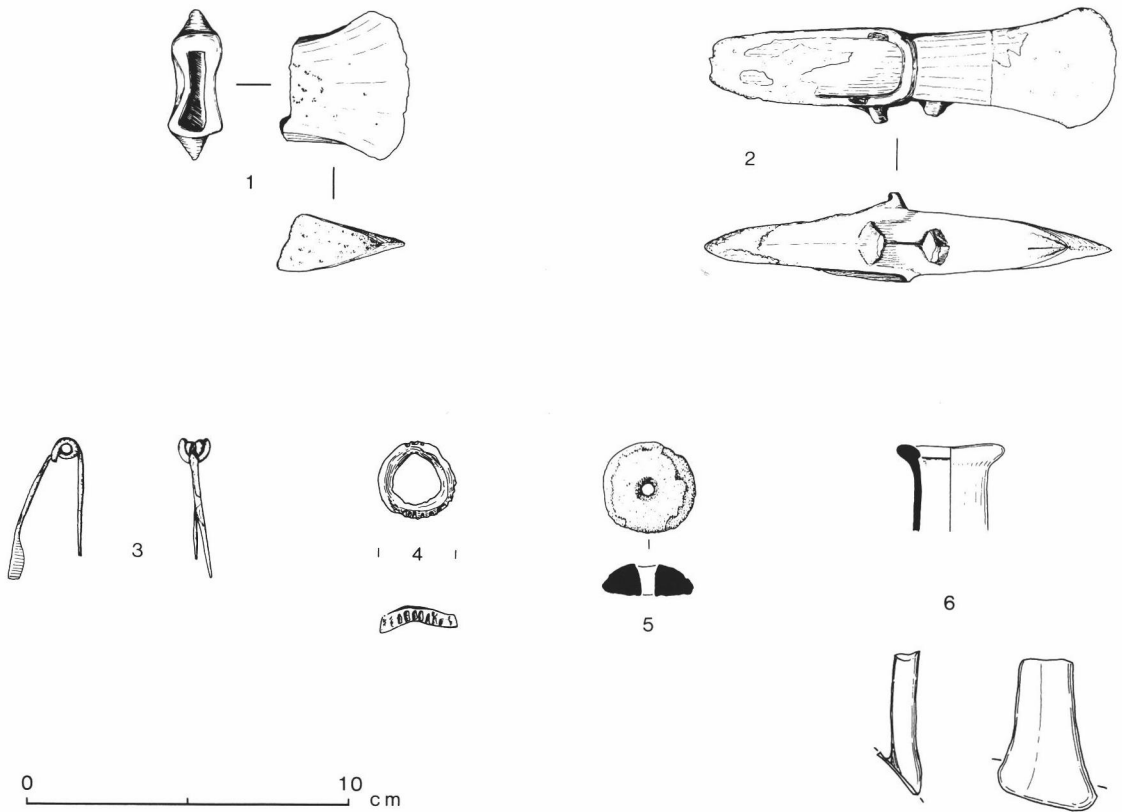


Fig. 11. Rustington 1986-8. Miscellaneous small finds. 1 and 2: Bronze Age axes. 3: late Iron Age/early Roman copper-alloy fibula. 4: Roman lead ring. 5: Roman lead spindle-whorl. 6: Roman glass flask.

2. One hand-sized rubber or polisher (originally a beach pebble naturally rounded by wave action, exhibiting the typical batter marks associated with rolled beach material) of nodular flint. The lower surface has been flattened through heavy use as a rubber, perhaps in conjunction with the above quartzitic sandstone quern or grinding stone fragment. The natural wave-action batter marks on this lower surface have almost been obliterated by utilization as a rubber. Area D.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Of the three sites examined, Sites A and B both revealed traces of previously unrecorded archaeological features. Between them these two sites also produced artifactual evidence for the Mesolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age, early Roman and later medieval periods.

The Later Bronze Age discoveries at Site B are particularly important since little is known about settlement during this period on the West Sussex Coastal Plain. Most of the previous evidence for Later Bronze Age activity on the coastal plain consists of chance finds of metalwork and pottery, the majority of which have been found in the region between the rivers Adur and Arun (Ellison 1978 and 1980). Ann Ellison (1980, 34) has suggested that the distribution maps of such finds indicate a substantial shift of settlement from the chalk Downs to the fertile coastal plain in the Late Bronze Age. In contrast Owen Bedwin (1983) has suggested that during the Late Bronze Age there was a *reduction* in settlement on the coastal

plain 'due to the poorer climate' of this period. Testing these contrasting theories is difficult due to various problems regarding the locating of prehistoric settlement sites on the coastal plain (Bedwin 1978, 48) and sites are likely to be mainly discovered by chance. In addition to Site B at Rustington, another recently discovered Later Bronze Age settlement site on the coastal plain is one at Yapton which has been partly excavated (Rudling 1987). So far Site B at Rustington is the only coastal plain Bronze Age site to have produced evidence of structures. It is thus especially unfortunate that it was not possible to excavate the site.

Other recent discoveries of Bronze Age metalwork in the vicinity of Rustington include a looped Palstave from Brookside Avenue, Rustington (see above) and a small Late Bronze Age hoard found in 1983 at Ferring (TQ 08920240) (F. Aldsworth pers. comm.).

The Romano-British discoveries at Sites A and B are evidence for occupation at both sites during the First and possibly early-Second century. At Site A there is also evidence for occupation during the late Iron Age and continuity of settlement from the Iron Age to the Roman period is thus possible. After the Conquest the area investigated at Site A became part of a ditch complex, which may represent the field system of a settlement site located immediately to the north of the modern meadow boundary. A similar situation of settlement continuity and extensive ditch systems has recently been investigated by the author at the Roman villa site, Northbrook College, Goring. Site B at Rustington revealed one, possibly two, hut sites and a pit. Here there is less strong evidence for continuity of settlement from the

late Iron Age, but the finds did include a sherd of Terra Nigra Ware (catalogue number 32) which is probably Claudian in date.

Other than pottery finds, neither Site A nor Site B has yielded many indications of Romanization. Tile fragments, for example, are rare at both sites. The discovery however of a flue-tile fragment (catalogue number 1) from site A suggests that there was a Romanised building in the locality.

It is uncertain why both Romano-British sites at Rustington appear to have gone out of use in the second century. It would be interesting to investigate other early Romano-British non-villa settlements in this area and to see whether or not they continued into and beyond the second century. Was this perhaps a time of changes in the settlement pattern, possibly linked to the emergence and development of 'villa' type settlements? The area around Rustington contains a number of 'villa' settlements, examples including Angmering, Goring and Littlehampton.

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APPENDIX

Site A: List of Contexts

1. Topsoil.
2. Yellow-brown Brickearth.
3. Fill of ditch at northern section of trench. Grey-brown clay. Below 2 and 14; above 10.
4. Upper fill of Section 1 across ditch (16). Grey-brown clay. Same as 3, 7, 9 and 11. Below 12; above 8.
5. Stretch of ditch heading eastwards. Contains 6. Below 2.
6. Fill of 5. Yellow-grey clay.
7. Upper fill of Section 2 across ditch (16). Grey-brown clay. Same as 3, 4 and 9. Above 8.
8. Lower fills of Sections 1 and 2 across ditch (16). Light brown clay. Same as 15. Below 4.
9. Upper fill of Section 3 across ditch (16). Light brown clay. Same as 3, 4, 7 and 11. Below 12; above 15.
10. Lowest fill of ditch at northern section of trench. Orange-brown clay. Below 3. Similar to 8, 15 and 18.
11. Fill of ditch/s between Section 2, the northern section of the trench and ditch 17. Same as 3, 4, 7 and 9. Above 8.
12. Uppermost fill of ditch (16) seen in Sections 1 and 3. Grey humic clay. Above 4 and 9.
13. Fill of Section 1 across ditch (16). Dark grey sandy clay. Below 4.
14. Area of grey soil in northern section of trench. Below 2; above 3.
15. Fill of Section 3 across ditch (16). Light brown clay. Same as 8. Below 9.
16. Stretch of ditch heading westwards. Contains 4, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 13.
17. Stretch of ditch heading southwards. Contains 11 and 18.
18. Fill of ditch (17). Yellow brown clay. Below 11. Similar to 8 and 10.
19. Layer of burnt clay/daub stretching for 2 m. along the floor of the service trench flanking New Road. Beneath 75 cm. of topsoil and Brickearth. Associated pottery finds indicate that this is a late Iron Age feature. Between 45 and 43 m. west of the north east corner of the meadow.
20. General finds from the service trench flanking New Road.
21. Concentration of burnt flint in the north side of the service trench flanking New Road. Approximately 11 m. west of the north east corner of the meadow.
22. A pit/occupation floor cut by the modern trench inside the northern boundary of the meadow. Found by Mr Hammond at a distance of approximately 24 m. west of the north east corner of the meadow. Associated pottery finds indicate that this is a late Iron Age feature.
23. Fill of modern trench. Sand and chalk fragments.
24. Yellow-brown Brickearth.

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