Recent archaeological investigations at Peacehaven, East Sussex

Simon Stevens

With contributions by
Karine Le Hégarat
and Anna Doherty

Large-scale excavations on the edge of Peacehaven, East Sussex, have considerably advanced understanding of this block of downland landscape from the early prehistoric period onwards. Three recent excavations, the findings of which are presented here, are located close by and compliment the published research (Hart 2015), allowing further consideration of the local downland landscape though time. The earliest material consisted of a residual struck flint of palaeolithic date and a background scatter of residual flintwork from the overburden, suggesting hunter/gatherer activity in the mesolithic and early neolithic periods. The first human activity to leave a lasting mark on the landscape was the digging and deliberate backfilling of a series of pits containing small assemblages of neolithic pottery and flintwork. Limited stratigraphic relationships and differing morphology suggest two phases of activity during this broad period. In the Late Bronze Age, ditches forming part of a field system and/or droveway were laid out across the landscape. These were superseded by a series of Middle Iron Age droveways and a small number of pits. A realignment of the droveway gullies, which contained both Middle Iron Age material and small amounts of Romano-British pottery, suggests that this longstanding route across the downland was still in use in the 1st century AD. A small group of pits is thought to be contemporary with the last use of the routeways at that time. After this, the land seems to have reverted to open downland, with little deposition of archaeological material.

INTRODUCTION

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The current report provides the results and interpretation of three sites, all located to the north of Arundel Road, Peacehaven, East Sussex (Fig. 1). Most of the archaeological work on each site was undertaken by Archaeology South-East (UCL Institute of Archaeology).

The investigations consisted of evaluation by trial trenching, followed by open area excavations of varying size, although one site was also the subject of a desk-based assessment (DBA) and a geophysical survey. From west to east the sites were: Farrington Enterprise Estate (Site D: ASE 2015; 2016), Farrington Farm (Site E: Wessex Archaeology 2014; ASE 2014a) and Arundel Road (site F: ASE 2013a; 2013b; 2014b).

The sites all lay at heights of around 38m to 45m, offering extensive views into the valley to the north, now occupied by the Brighton and Hove Wastewater Treatment Works (Hart 2015), and beyond. According to current data from the British Geological Survey, the underlying bedrock at the sites consists of chalk overlain by the Woolwich Formation and Lambeth Group of clays, silts and sands (BGS 2016).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Between 2006 and 2010, Archaeology South-East carried out a series of large-scale excavations in Peacehaven in advance of development (Fig. 2). The excavations at Lower Hoddern Farm, Keymer Avenue and Seaview Avenue, which amounted to a total of 36.2ha, provided an opportunity to examine prehistoric and Romano-British use of the downland landscape on an unprecedented scale (Hart 2015, 1).

Key findings from these major excavations include one of the largest groups of early neolithic pits yet excavated in Sussex, and highly-organised, later neolithic and Early Bronze Age monumental and agricultural landscape, including important new evidence for the emergence of land division in Sussex during the earlier second millennium BC (*ibid.*, 33–56). Later Bronze Age evidence included extensive field systems, a Middle Bronze Age roundhouse-settlement and associated cemetery, and a rare, Late Bronze Age, D-shaped building (*ibid.*, 89–113).

An extremely unusual group of Middle Iron Age rectangular buildings may be related to the seasonal upland pasturing of livestock (*ibid.*, 145–150). These buildings became the core of an

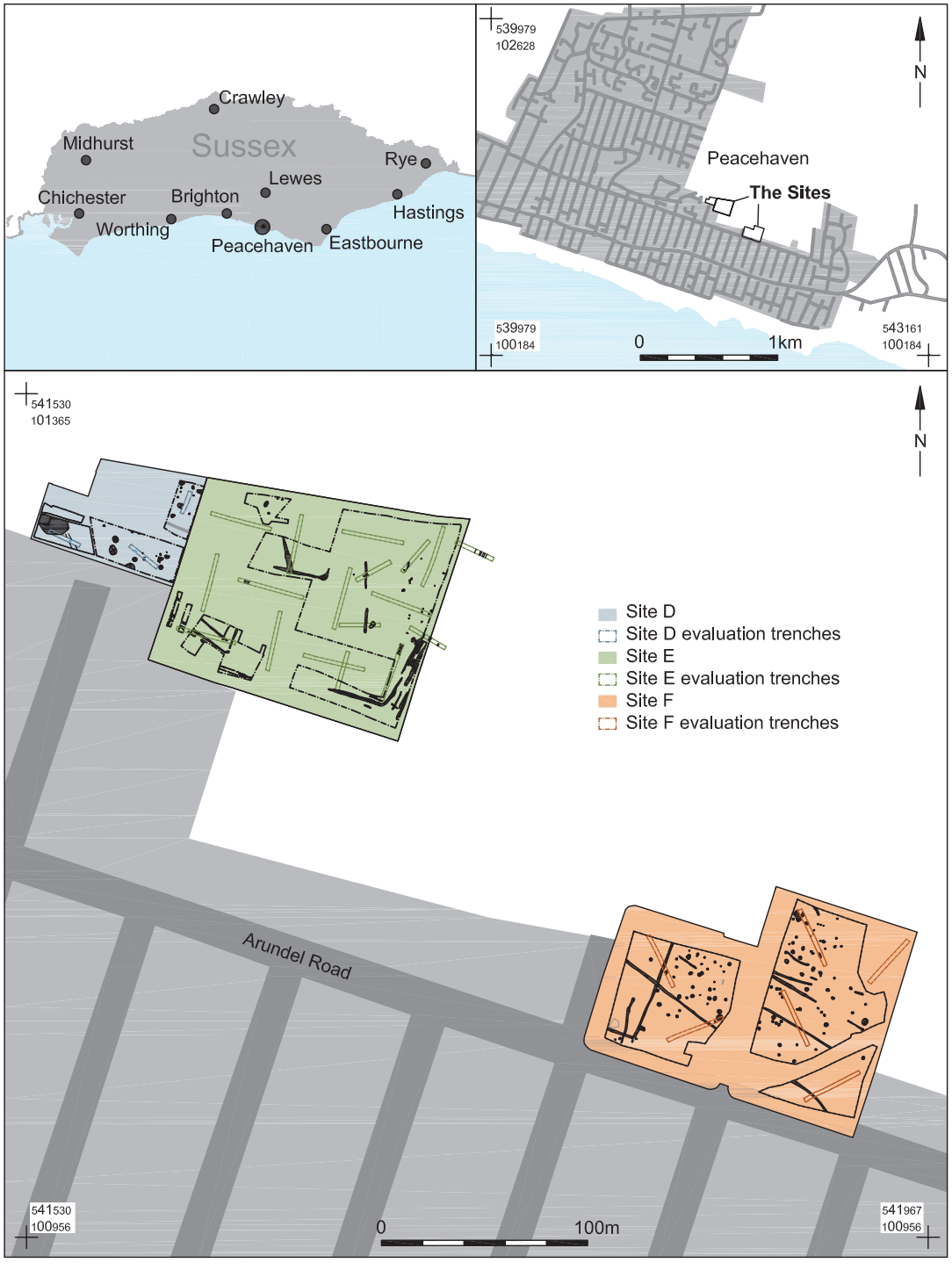

Fig. 1. Site locations.

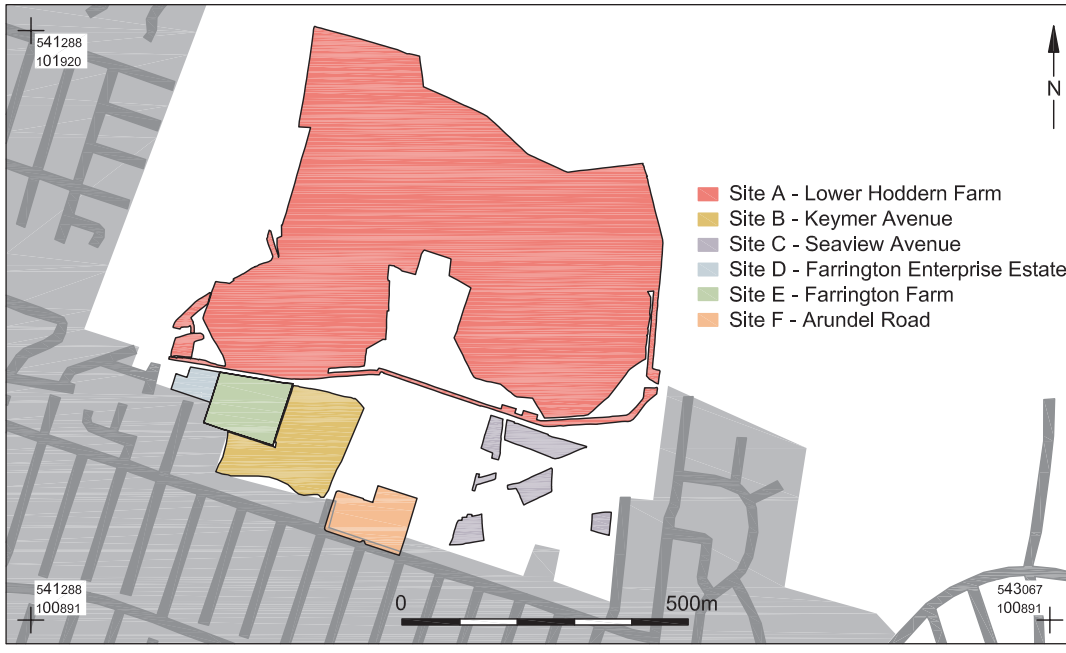

Fig. 2. Current sites in relation to excavated sites published in Hart 2015.

extensive network of enclosures and trackways used for the corralling and management of livestock. Elements of this enclosure system survived into the early Romano-British period, when a small farmstead was established within one of the enclosures (*ibid.*, 166–171). Evidence of later activity was sparse (*ibid.*, 192).

THE SITES

INTRODUCTION

A range of archaeological features was identified across the three sites at both the evaluation and full excavation stages. They were excavated and recorded in line with individual Written Schemes of Investigations, produced at every stage of the investigations. All archaeological deposits and features were excavated according to accepted professional standards in place at the time of the fieldwork (ESCC 2008 and *Standards for Archaeological Work in Sussex* introduced in 2015).

For the purposes of reporting, the sites have been considered together; land use designations such as field system (FS), routeway (R) or open area (OA) have been applied to the landscape as a whole. The current report attempts to integrate the results with those from the extensive Lower Hoddern Farm, Keymer Avenue and Seaview Avenue excavations, published in a single monograph (Hart 2015).

Although relevant features from these adjoining sites are referenced here, readers are directed to the monograph for full details. The monograph gave a site prefix to each individual excavation and this approach is continued here for ease of reference (*ibid.*, 13).

Table 1. ASE excavations in Peacehaven by site prefix.

Site prefix	Site name	Site code
A	Lower Hoddern Farm	BHT09; PWT04
B	Keymer Avenue	SKP06
C	Seaview Avenue	SKP06; SVP10
D	Farrington Enterprise Estate	FPE15
E	Farrington Farm	FFP14
F	Arundel Road	ARN13

Similarly, in order to integrate the archaeological results from the currents sites with the published data, the same period designations have been used (Hart 2015, 13).

Table 2. Chronological framework based on period divisions used in Hart 2015.

Period	Period Name	Date range
1	Early neolithic	*c* 3700–3300 BC
2	Later neolithic	*c* 3500–2250 BC
3	Early Bronze Age	*c* 2250–1500 BC
4	Middle Bronze Age	*c* 1500–1150 BC
5	Late Bronze Age	*c* 1150–800 BC
6	Transitional Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age	*c* 800–400 BC
7	Middle Iron Age	*c* 400–100/50BC
8	Latest Iron Age/early Roman	*c* AD 10–150
9	Post-medieval	AD 1539–1900

EARLIEST EVIDENCE: PALAEOLITHIC AND MESOLITHIC/EARLY NEOLITHIC RESIDUAL FLINTWORK

The earliest artefact from the sites is a probable flint core from the middle palaeolithic period, recovered as a residual find from ditch E, G13, which formed part of a Middle Iron Age droveway (see below). Isolated palaeolithic finds have previously been recorded at Lower Hoddern, where two handaxes have been found (approximately TQ417010; HER reference: MES1827), but overall, they remain uncommon.

Flintwork dating from the mesolithic to the early neolithic periods was recovered from across the sites, again as residual finds in later deposits and never in large assemblages from any single feature.

The assemblage includes bladelets, blades and blade-like flakes, together with cores and core preparation debitage. There was no evidence of the manufacture or use of microliths, although a mesolithic adze and adze/pick were recovered, hinting at the clearance of woodland, a widespread phenomenon in the late mesolithic and early neolithic periods (Drewett 1999, 16).

PERIOD 2: NEOLITHIC PITS AT ARUNDEL ROAD (SITE F)

The first period identified by the survival of archaeological features and associated material culture comprised approximately 100 pits, scattered across the area of excavation. The pits, which were mostly circular or subcircular in plan, varied in size, measuring up to 2.5m in diameter (most were between 1.0m and 1.6m) and between 0.4m and 1.0m in depth, although a few features were deeper and could not be fully excavated.

On the basis of feature morphology and limited stratigraphic relationships, the pits were grouped into those with typically concave sides and rounded bases (F, G1) and those with consistently vertical sides and usually flat bases, where bottomed (F, G2).

Many of the pits from both groups were apparently deliberately and fairly quickly backfilled, as few contained any evidence of primary silting. Homogenous, silty sand fills were most common, occasionally containing pottery and contemporary flintwork.

Rapid backfilling and comparatively little variation in pit backfill is a characteristic noted in the neolithic across southern Britain (Munnery 2013, 20). The exception was a single tree throw, dated on the presence of pottery (F, G3).

A small assemblage of 77 pottery sherds, weighing 384g was recovered from 26 of the pits. As many of the pits contained only one or two fragmented sherds and many pits produced no datable material, the group as a whole is rather uncertainly dated.

Where diagnostic, the pottery is middle neolithic Peterborough ware, which has been taken to date this activity, but also includes probable later prehistoric and Iron Age material, which may be intrusive or indicate that some of the pits relate to later phases of activity (*see* The Early Prehistoric Pottery, ADS supplement).

Only 11 pits produced only diagnostic neolithic sherds or fabrics considered typical of the 4th millennium BC. These features contained very small quantities of pottery but a few large diagnostic sherds are present amongst this material, sometimes in an unabraded condition. The largest group is from pit F [270], containing 14 sherds weighing 122g.

The most interesting flint assemblage came from pit F [289], which contained two diagnostic tools: a finely worked chisel arrowhead (*see* ADS supplement, Fig. 17, 13) and an oblique arrowhead (*see* ADS supplement, Fig. 17, 14). The later displays a broken tip, and it is either unfinished or broken in use.

The remaining flintwork in the pit consisted of an end scraper made on a thick, hard-hammered flake, 16 flakes, two blades and two chips. Although the flint assemblage is small (23 pieces), the material is fresh and likely to be contemporary with the feature.

In terms of environmental evidence, the pits produced mostly oak charcoal (*Quercus* sp.) and

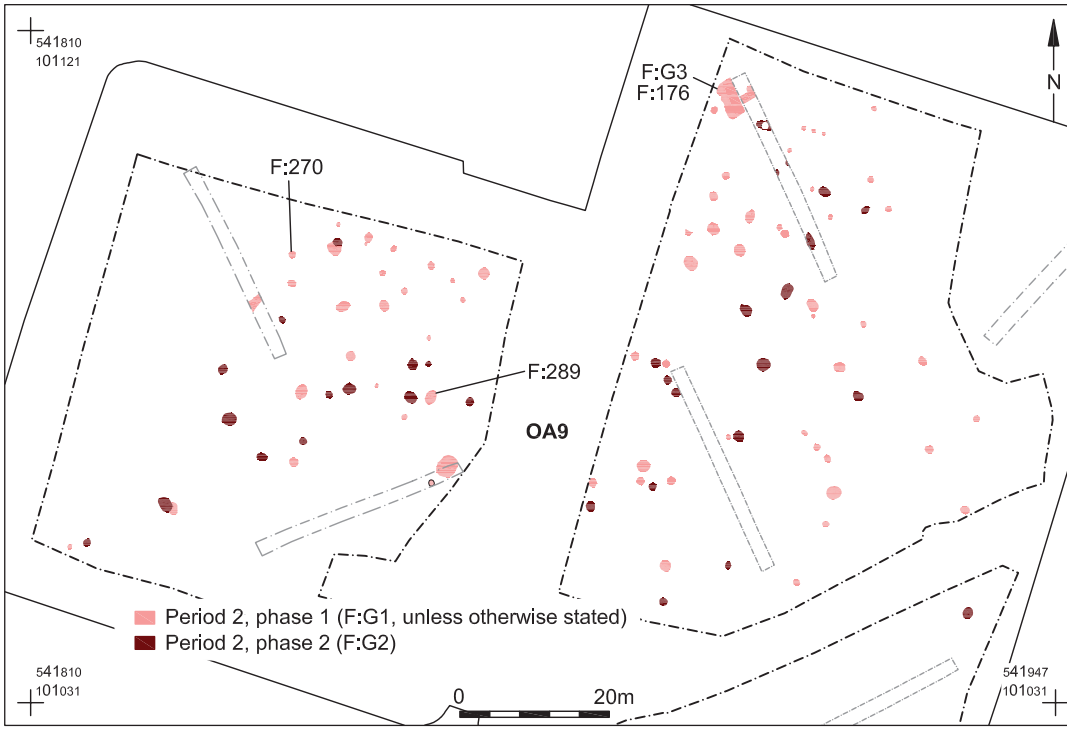

Fig. 3. Plan of period 2 neolithic features (Site F).

small quantities of hazel (*Corylus avellana*), cherry/blackthorn (*Prunus* sp.), elm (*Ulmus* sp.), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and birch (*Betula* sp.), as well as the *Maloideae* subfamily. The latter includes taxa that are indistinguishable on grounds of wood anatomy, such as hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), rowan, service and whitebeam (*Sorbus* sp.), apple (*Malus* sp.) and pear (*Pyrus* sp.). This variety suggested an abundance of material available for fuel (and possibly fruits for consumption).

It should be noted that the geological makeup of the sites at Peacehaven can lead to the formation of sinkholes; a number of the features from F, G2 could not be safely excavated, owing to their depth, and it possible that their origin is geological, with expedient deposition of material. A substantial sinkhole actually opened at Site F during the excavation in early 2014, showing the geological process is still active.

The group of pits, some with diagnostic middle neolithic Peterborough ware, appears to be a continuation of sparse but comparable activity identified at Lower Hoddern Farm (Site A) and Seaview Avenue (Site C) (*ibid*., 41–2). Although the pits at these sites are isolated features, the signature is similar, with small assemblages of Peterborough ware sherds, largely in abraded and fragmentary condition, alongside struck flint.

PERIOD 2/3: NEOLITHIC/EARLY BRONZE AGE ACTIVITY AT THE FARRINGTON ENTERPRISE ESTATE (SITE D)

Other, more loosely dated, prehistoric deposits were encountered at Site D (OA2) and have been assigned to this period based on datable pottery and flintwork (Fig. 4). The features include tree boles, pits and a scatter of flint, some of which was *in situ*, suggesting tree clearance and limited activity.

Where diagnostic, the majority of the pottery and flintwork associated with these features is neolithic–Early Bronze Age in date. The pottery includes grog-tempered fabrics associated with late neolithic/Early Bronze Age ceramics, including Grooved Ware, Beaker and Collared/Biconical Urn traditions. Two examples feature applied cordons which could appear on late neolithic Grooved Ware

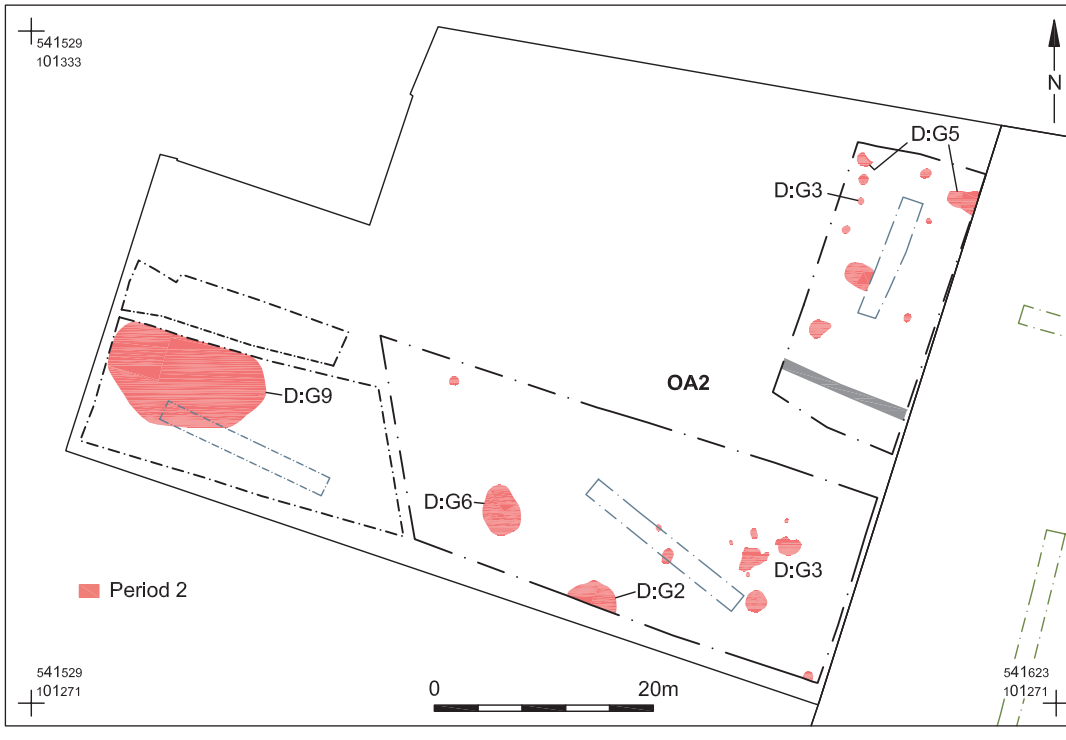

Fig. 4. Plan of period 2 neolithic features (Site D).

or Early Bronze Age urn traditions, but there was nothing conclusively diagnostic.

Possible silted-up waterholes (D, G2; D, G6 and D, G9), which may have originated as sinkholes, perhaps suggest the presence of livestock. Feature D, G6, produced one of the larger flint assemblages, comprising 168 pieces from the two quadrants excavated.

The assemblage consists mainly of debitage products characteristic of neolithic–Early Bronze Age technologies; while flakes dominate, a few blades and blade-like flakes are also present. A mixed hammer mode is represented, but overall the technology appears to aim at a relatively good, controlled production of flakes and blades.

Although only three cores were represented, evidence for flint working is clear, with the presence of numerous chips. The material suggests remains from flint working in or around the feature (*see* ADS supplement).

Some of the features at Site D had been sealed by deposits of colluvium. These layers contained a mixed assemblage of both flintwork and pottery, ranging from the neolithic to the later Bronze Age.

PERIOD 5: LATE BRONZE AGE LAND DIVISION AND ISOLATED PITS

Only a handful of features are tentatively assigned to this period and are limited to two locations with shallow, narrow ditches on Sites E and F and two pits on Site D (Figs 5 and 6). Collectively, the features are poorly dated and relatively isolated, so characterising the activity in this period is difficult, although some compatibility with Late Bronze Age features from Lower Hoddern Farm (Site A) supports their interpretation.

In the eastern half of Site E, two short sections of ditch were identified that shared the same north–south alignment (Fig. 5; E, G2 and E, G4). The ditches were 12m and 13m long respectively, with a 9.76m wide gap between them. These features were on a different alignment to the rest of the features identified on the site but share orientation with a ditch excavated on the other side of the Piddinghoe Valley at Lower Hoddern Farm (Ditch 17; *ibid.*, 108).

Although Ditch 17 is around 37m to the north and lies on the other side of the dry valley, it extended over a distance of at least 144m. The orientation of Ditch 17 did not correspond well with any of the earlier Bronze Age features on the Hoddern Farm excavations, nor did it share an orientation with the later phases of ditches in the wider landscape and was therefore thought to possibly represent a later addition to the Bronze Age agricultural landscape.

A small, abraded, pottery bodysherd was recovered from the excavated sections of ditches E, G2 and E, G4, from the northern end of E, G4, and tentatively dated, on the basis of fabric alone, to the Middle Iron Age; it is considered to be intrusive.

Two small post-holes (E, G33) on either side of ditch E, G4 are included in this phase, due to their proximity and the absence of evidence for other activity in this area. An additional post-hole (E, G32), 5.5m to the west, has also been included, for the same reasons.

Two pits, [182] and [124] (D, G7), were observed on the fringes of the colluvium on site D. The larger pit, [182], had steep sides and the base was not reached. A collection of flintwork was recovered, along with a few sherds of pottery, but its function remains unclear. The 42 pieces of flintwork are chronologically mixed, spanning the middle neolithic period to the Late Bronze Age. The other pit was a shallow feature, [124], dated by a single sherd of broadly dated Late Bronze Age pottery.

The ditches identified on site F (F, G5 and F, G6) are equally poorly dated, with only a single pottery sherd recovered. Dating of gullies assigned to this period was based on the similarity of their orientation to Late Bronze Age gullies at Lower Hoddern Farm (Hart 2015) and the stratigraphic relationship between the ditches and those assigned to period 7 at Site F. They form part of an organised division of the landscape at that time, an acknowledged, widespread and expanding phenomenon in the south-east of England (Yates 2007).

Clearly, Late Bronze Age activity was concentrated to the north, with evidence of settlement and funerary behaviour from this period

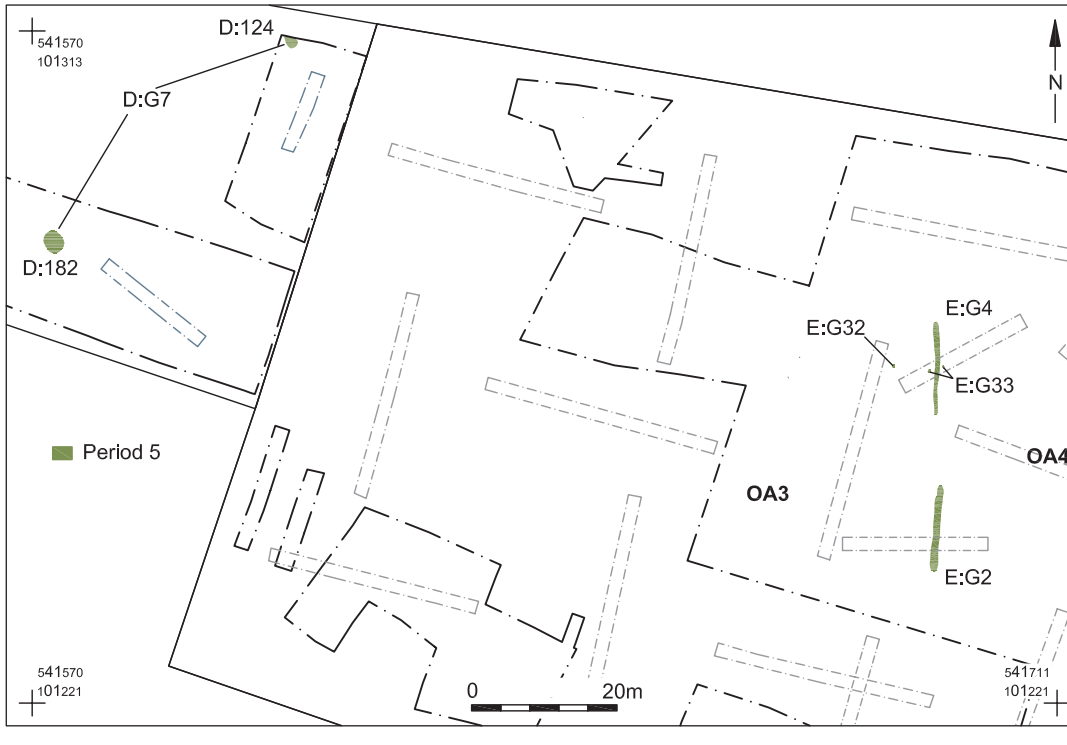

Fig. 5. Plan of period 5 Late Bronze Age features (Sites D and E).

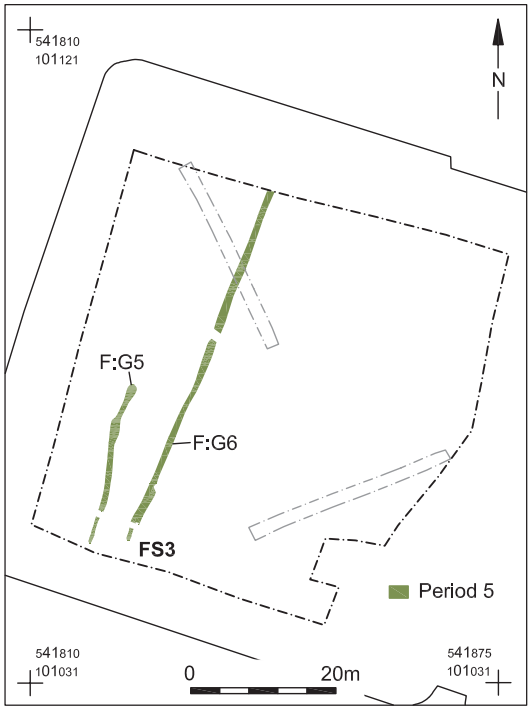

Fig. 6. Plan of period 5 Late Bronze Age features (Site F).

at Lower Hoddern Farm (Hart 2015, 137–43); the poorly dated activity from the current sites appears to be peripheral to the foci settlement to the north.

PERIOD 7: MIDDLE IRON AGE

A busy landscape

A range of linear features dating from this period represented the truncated remains of a series of routeways/droveways running across the high ground overlooking the valley to the north (Figs 7 and 8). The re-establishment of the routes on a number of occasions suggested some longevity of use, as did the location of pits dotted across the landscape. Dating was based on small assemblages of pottery recovered from the silty fills, apparently the result of silting up over time rather than deliberate campaigns of backfilling.

Although the pottery assemblage lacked diagnostic feature sherds, the very diverse range of fabric types, including various combinations of flint, quartz, shell and glauconite, was strongly comparable with material from Middle Iron Age features in adjacent excavations at Peacehaven, and quite dissimilar to fabrics from other periods (Doherty 2015).

As in areas such as Keymer Avenue (Site B) and Seaview Avenue (Site C), the largest individual groups came from the ditches. However, as in the previous excavation areas, this material was of fairly fragmented and abraded character, suggesting that it had been deposited after a long period of circulation, perhaps in above-ground middens (Hart and Doherty 2015, 188).

Despite the problems with close dating, four phases of Middle Iron Age activity were identified, based on stratigraphic and spatial relationships. Although Hart (*op. cit.*) was also able to subdivide the period into phases, it has proved impossible to match those with the evidence from the current sites.

Phase 1: limited evidence of a field system

Only a single, shallow, slightly curving gully (E, G12) could be positively assigned to this phase, based on a clearly different orientation to the other Middle Iron Age features, and its place in the local stratigraphic sequence (Fig. 9). It suggested the presence of a field system (FS1), but little else can be determined.

Phase 2: establishment of a downland routeway

The second phase of Middle Iron Age activity was the establishment of a droveway (R1) surviving in the south-eastern corner of Site E as a right-angled turn, running north-east to south-west before turning to the north-west (Fig. 9). Shallow gullies represented the remains of a routeway leading from the valley to the north, before turning to run along the higher ground. This left open ground to the north (OA5) and to the south (OA6), with no obvious subdivision of these areas throughout the period.

Phase 3: a well-trodden path

At some point the droveway gullies were re-established (R2), maintaining the right-angled turn in the south-eastern corner of Site E. It is suggested that this phase saw an upturn in the use of the routeway, resulting in the creation of a partial hollow way from increased traffic (E, G10). There was no tangible change in the use of OA5 and OA6, with no demonstrable digging of features or deposition of material.

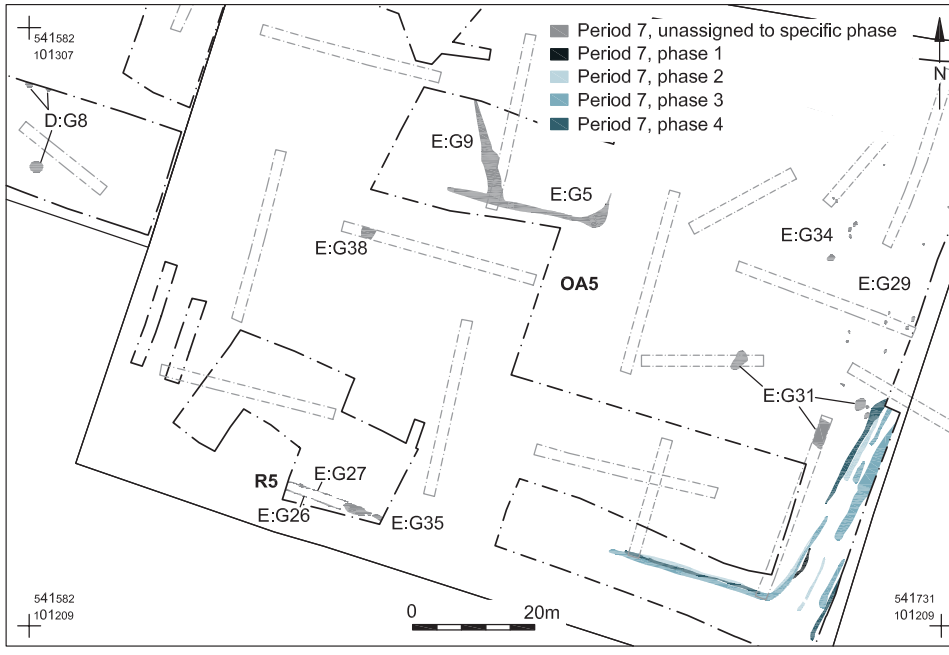

Fig. 7. Plan of period 7 Middle Iron Age features (Sites D and E).

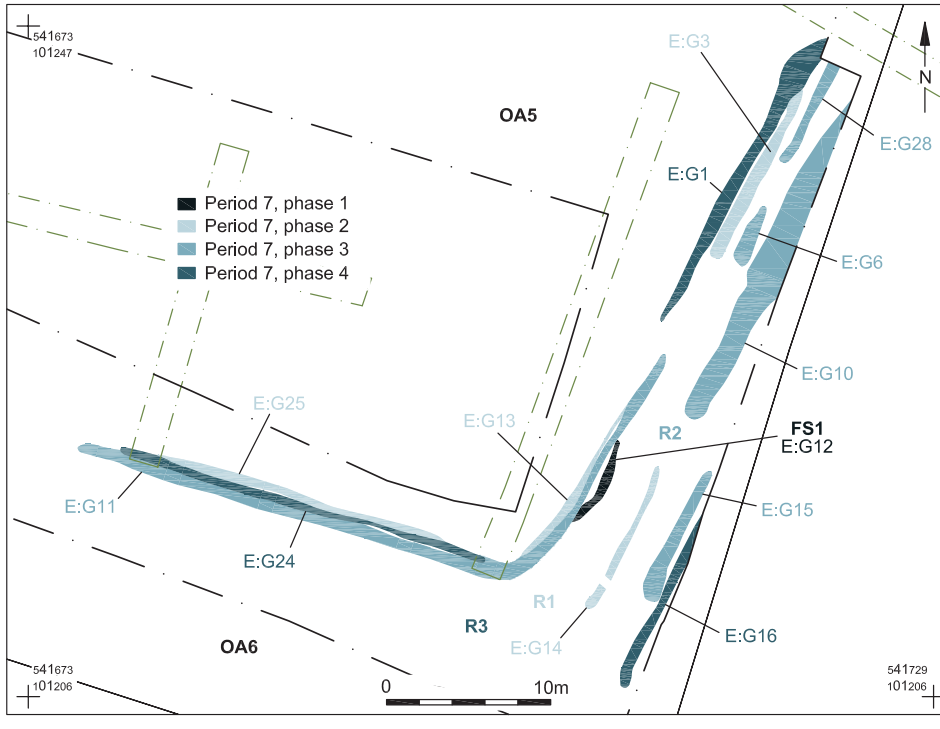

Fig. 8. Plan of period 7 Middle Iron Age features (Site E).

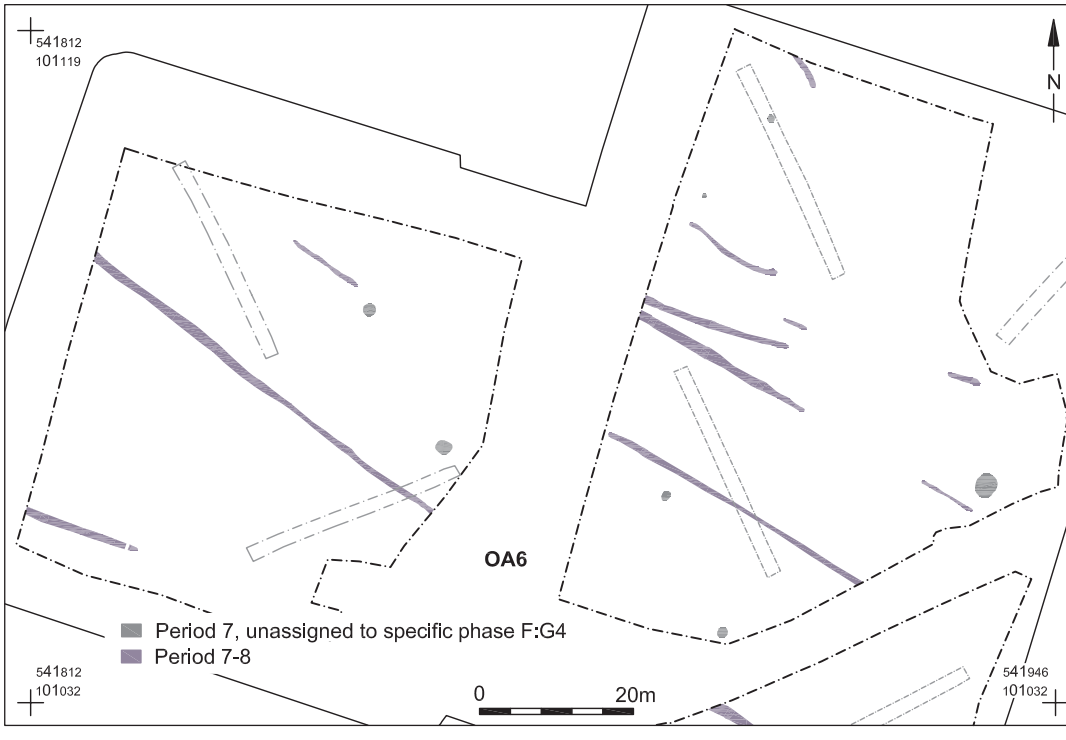

Fig. 9. Detailed plan of period 7 Middle Iron Age droveway (Site E).

Phase 4: continued use and a hint of industry

Another re-excavation of the droveway ditches suggests the need for maintenance of the route (R3), presumably from continued heavy usage (resulting in the continued formation of the hollow way). One of the fills, E [200], (E, G16), contained a briquetage wedge in an untempered fabric, with pink and lavender discolouring.

Such material is a telltale sign of salt production in the locale, and larger quantities were previously recovered at Lower Hoddern Farm (Hart *op. cit.*, 156). However the piece was unique at the current site, suggesting consumption rather than production. Again, there was no conspicuous evidence of the use of OA5 or OA6 during this phase.

Unphased gullies

Gullies demarcating a continuation of droveway/routeways were encountered to the west (Fig. 7; R5). The gullies appeared to mark the northern edge of a droveway, perhaps with evidence of an associated hollow way (E, G35). This strongly suggested that this route was the continuation of the later, apparently more heavily used droveways, either R2 or R3.

Unphased features within Open Area 5

Gullies: a programme of site drainage?

Broad shallow channels were identified in the central area of the site, on the west-facing slope of the spur of land. These were slightly irregular and poorly defined (E, G5 and G9), and one was only seen in an evaluation trench (E, G38; Fig. 7).

They were interpreted as natural run-off channels, draining water downslope from slightly high ground to the east, i.e. away from the droveways. A small assemblage of Middle Iron Age pottery was recovered from the features. Given that only a limited part of this area of the site was stripped and excavated, full understanding of this proposed water management system remains elusive.

Post-holes: structures or fences?

A group of 17 post-holes (E, G29) was identified, close to the eastern baulk of Site E on a slight spur

Fig. 10. Plan of period 7 features in and around (Site E).

of higher ground (Fig. 7). Five of them contained Middle Iron Age pottery. Post-holes thought to form structures associated with the control or housing of livestock were encountered on the opposite side of the droveway(s) (Hart *op. cit.*, B10 and B11). It is possible that the post-holes identified represent the scant remains of fence lines, pens or ephemeral structures relating to animal husbandry, although no coherent patterns could be traced to prove this hypothesis.

Pits: remains of middens?

A group of shallow pits (E, G34), identified close to the post-holes, contained no datable finds but were interpreted as contemporary on the grounds of that proximity (Fig. 7). However, another group of local features, represented by surviving spreads of cultural material (including Middle Iron Age pottery) in four locations, appear to represent material that collected within surface hollows in the natural geology, and perhaps represent the scant remains of middens (E, G31).

The spread of pits continued to the west; three pits containing Middle Iron Age pottery were recorded at Site D (G8). Their function, the circumstances of digging and the purpose of the deposition of material into them remains unclear.

Pits at Site F, Open Area 6: a hint of agriculture

A scatter of pits was assigned to this period, based on the presence of Middle Iron Age pottery (Fig. 8; F, G4). Most of the pits were noticeably larger in volume than those dating to the neolithic period, some with numerous fills, but again the material culture assemblages were limited.

Although recent research on Middle Iron Age pit deposits has suggested that there is evidence of structured deposition of artefacts at sites of varying character (Hamilton 1998), the poor condition of pottery, mixture of flintwork and absence of other

artefacts suggested that the pits from the current site do not contain examples of structured deposition.

Unfortunately, the environmental evidence recovered from the pits was extremely poor and gives no clues as to their function. A possible charred grain of emmer wheat (*Triticum* cf *dicoccum*), from pit F [441], might indicate the cultivation of glume wheats, but this is tenuous at best.

PERIOD 7/8: MIDDLE IRON AGE TO EARLY ROMANO-BRITISH

A time-honoured route across the downland

After droveway R3 fell out of use, a routeway on a slightly different orientation was established and re-established, apparently on numerous occasions, again marked by shallow silted-up gullies (Fig. 10). They ran across the landscape broadly from east to west, on the high ground overlooking the valley to the north, with OA7 to the north and OA8 to the south. Evidence for the routeways, again in the form of shallow gullies, was recorded at Sites E and F, and in-between at Keymer Avenue (Hart *op. cit.* Site B).

At Site E, the gullies marking the alignment of the new routeway (R6) clearly cut across the earlier silted-up droveways, showing there was no access to the routeway from the north at this point (Fig. 10). Middle Iron Age pottery was recovered from the gullies, but this may be residual.

Most of the base and lower wall of a 1st-century Roman greyware vessel was found in fill [89] of ditch [88], E, G7. A few shoulder sherds suggest a narrow necked cordoned jar (*cf.* Hawkes and Hull 1947, Cam 231; Thompson 1982 B3–8; not illustrated).

This represents the only Roman material from Site E and the completeness of the vessel, in an area where Roman material culture was not generally being deposited, may hint at some form of structured deposition (Anna Doherty *pers. comm.*);

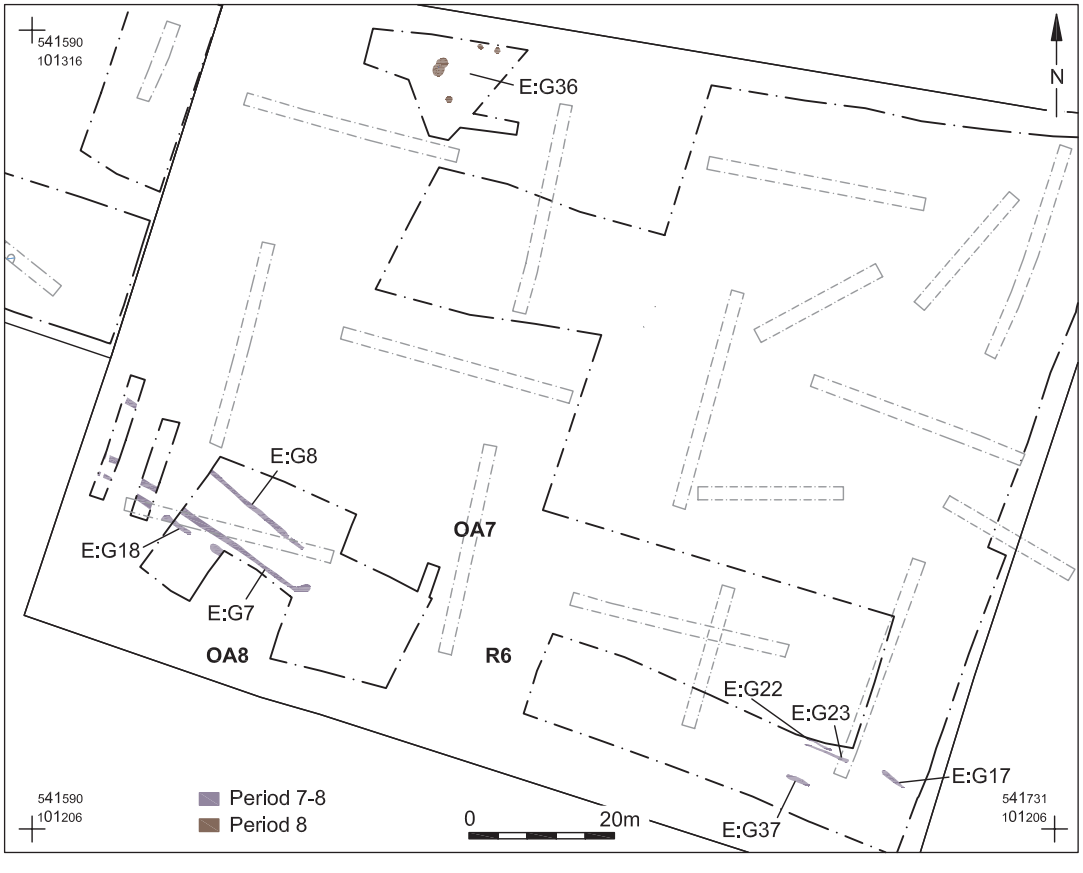

Fig. 11. Plan of periods 7 to 8 Middle Iron Age to early Roman features (Site E).

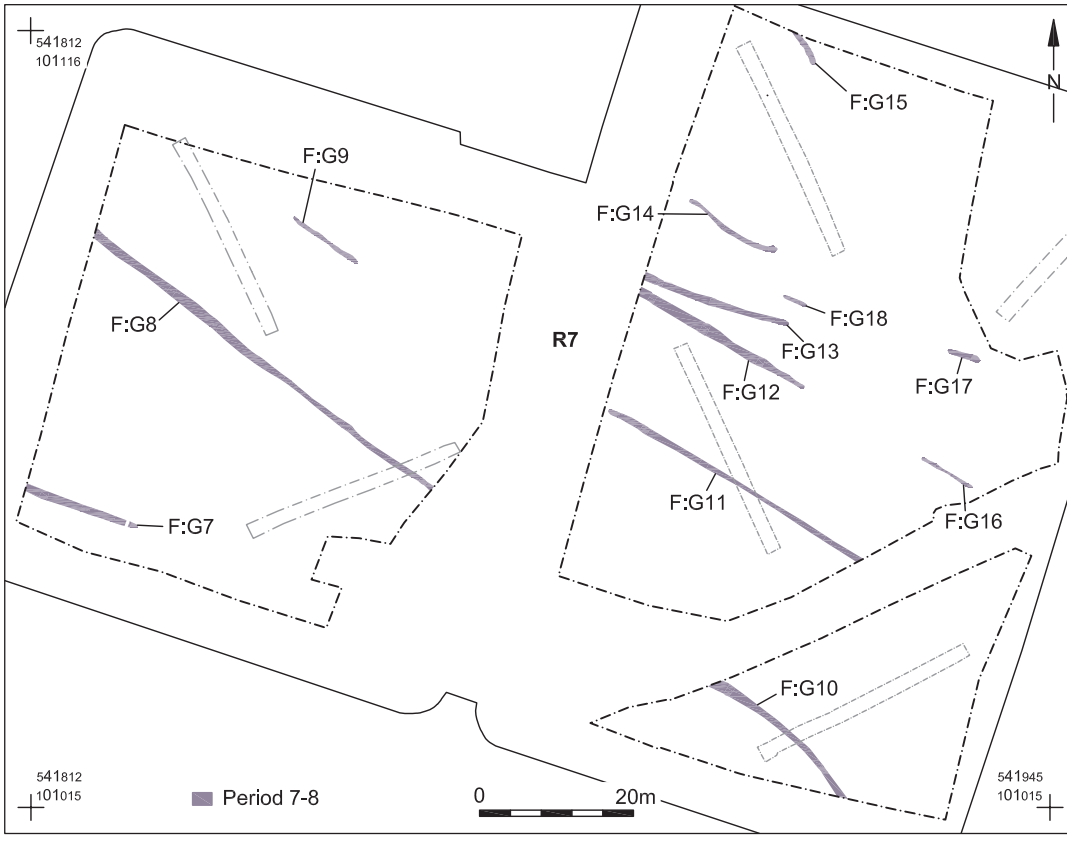

Fig. 12. Plan of periods 7 to 8 Middle Iron Age to early Roman features (Site F).

its presence suggests that the routeways were still a tangible part of the landscape at this time, whatever the reasons for the deposition of the pottery.

At Site F, there were numerous gullies on this alignment, suggesting regular re-establishment of the routeway (R7), spreading out across OA7 and OA8 (Fig. 11). Whether there was a seasonal element to this arrangement is impossible to gauge, but undoubtedly the routeways across the landscape were in use over a long period of time.

Again, the presence of a sherd of 1st-century pottery from context [425], F, G17, strongly suggested this longevity, and the presence of a sherd of intrusive greyware in one feature from the middle neolithic period at site F implies at least some Romano-British activity in the landscape. Environmental evidence was extremely limited; a possible charred spelt glume base (*Triticum* cf *spelta*) from F, G8, suggested cultivation of wheat.

There was also slightly more tangible evidence of Late Iron Age/Romano-British occupation at Site E (Fig. 10), where a cluster of five pits (E, G36) were assigned to this period on the basis of their spatial relationship with a collection of features (including cremations) associated with partially excavated ditched enclosures immediately to the north (Hart *op. cit.*, 167–170). Survival of environmental material was poor and gave no clues as to the function of the pits or the nature of local activity during this final phase of intense activity at the site(s).

PERIOD 9: POST-MEDIEVAL

Medieval material was limited to a single sherd of pottery, recovered from the overburden at Site F. This strongly suggested that the area was laid predominantly to pasture during the medieval period, as little or no manuring seems to have taken place at any of the three sites.

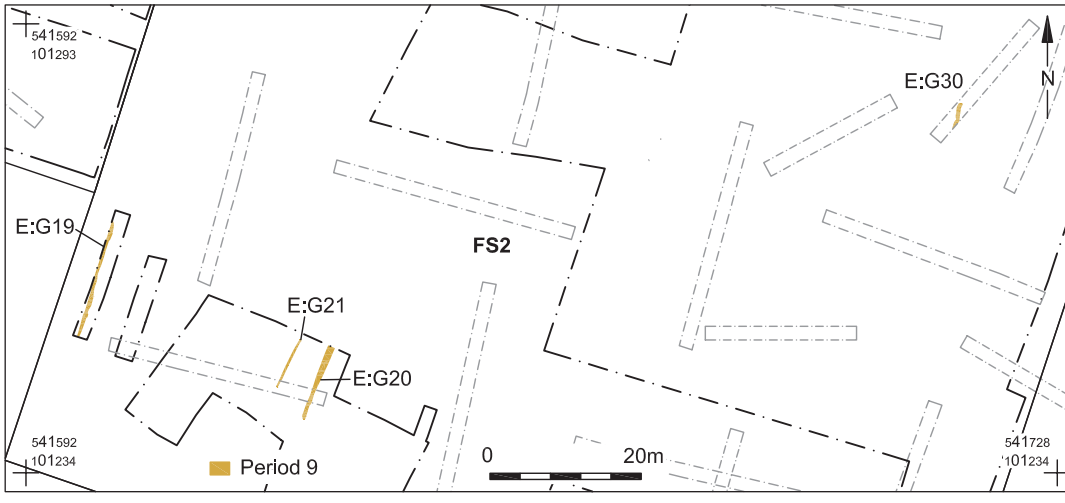

Fig. 13. Plan of period 9 post-medieval features (Site E).

Similarly, there was an extremely limited spread of post-medieval material in the overburden across the three sites. However there was limited evidence of land division, in the form of gullies on a generally north to south alignment (FS2), mostly at Site E (Fig. 13). Again, this paucity of cultural material and features suggests the area was still open downland.

DISCUSSION

Clearly, the current sites are much more limited in terms of the scale and range of the archaeological deposits recovered than the surrounding sites at Lower Hoddern Farm, Keymer Avenue and Seaview Avenue. Although the results presented here may be supplemental to the more extensive landscape study published by Hart (2015), there are pertinent research issues which can be addressed using the data from the three current sites.

The spread of mesolithic, neolithic and later flintwork at the sites confirms the previously known longevity of human activity on the local downland, but the palaeolithic flint pushes this chronology back much further.

It has been noted that Peacehaven offers a unique landscape in Sussex, that of a flat hilltop, capped with Tertiary geological deposits (Pope *et al.* 2015, 18), offering the possibility of the survival of palaeolithic deposits or artefacts. Research suggests that many downland finds may have been recovered close to where they were deposited in antiquity where Tertiary deposits survive in the locale (*cf.* Halliwell and Parfitt 1993; Garland and Anderson-Whymark 2016, 5).

The Peacehaven flint joins a corpus of palaeolithic flintwork found in the wider landscape, with handaxes forming the most numerous finds owing to their relatively easily recognised shape (Pope and Brown, 2016, 23–24), although this visibility may have led to the curation and deposition in later deposits (e.g. a middle palaeolithic axe recently recovered from a Romano-British context in Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex; Stevens forthcoming).

There was a relative abundance of later flintwork, ranging in date from the mesolithic through to the Early Bronze Age. Nearly 2,000 struck flints were recovered from the three sites, mostly debitage but with a number of implements and projectile points. Although there were no microliths, mesolithic activity was represented by an adze and an adze/pick and waste material from tool manufacture.

Two polished axes and a fine, leaf-shaped arrowhead were perhaps the highlights of the early neolithic assemblage, as were a chisel arrowhead and an oblique arrowhead in the later neolithic collection. These arrowheads were of particular interest, especially given the association with datable pottery and the implications for dating of the neolithic pits at Site F (see below). Later material was mostly debitage, spread across the landscape as at the surrounding sites (Hart *op. cit.*),

In terms of *in-situ* archaeological deposits, clearly the spread of neolithic pits across Site F offers the most potential for improved understanding of past behaviour. Although it was unfortunate that the vast majority of the pit features could not be dated from pottery or flintwork assemblages, and can only be presumed to be broadly contemporary, those with pottery assemblages offer more certainty of a date range, placing them in the middle neolithic period.

The deposition of Plain Bowls and Mortlake-style Peterborough ware in the pit at Arundel Road (Site F) is obviously of significance. Previously seen at Seaview Avenue (Site C) and Lower Hoddern Farm (site A) (Doherty and Marshall 2015), this close juxtaposition of the wares may suggest previously unsuspected contemporaneity.

It is unfortunate that none of the pits at Arundel Road produced material suitable for C14 dating, given the obvious complication of the inclusion of earlier material (both pottery and flintwork) in the pit assemblages, either by accident or design, or because the material had first accrued in a 'pre-pit context' such as a midden (Hart *op. cit.*, 62).

However, it is suggested, with some trepidation, that the pits at Arundel Road, and some of those at Seaview Avenue and Lower Hoddern Farm, are contemporary, with deposition of material in the middle neolithic period, although the exact reasons for the digging and infilling of the pits, whatever their date, especially the 'artefactually poor pits' (Munnery 2013, 63), remain obscure, with a mixture of seemingly deliberate placing and accidental deposition apparent in the assemblages. The poor survival of environmental evidence also hampers fuller interpretation.

Later periods were more poorly represented in terms of deposits and finds, with predominantly linear features mirroring those previously recorded in the Peacehaven area, with environmental evidence uniformly meagre. However, they do illustrate the extent and complexity of the division of the local downland in the Late Bronze Age, perhaps on the periphery of the foci of agricultural/domestic activity to the north.

Evidently this was a highly-organised landscape during this period, cleared of woodland even at some distance from the agricultural structures seen at Lower Hoddern Farm (Hart *op. cit.*, 106–113). A recent study has highlighted that this wholesale woodland clearance in prehistory (and the subsequent archaeologically-visible division of the land) created 'the downlands as we see them today' (Allen 2016, 12).

During the Middle Iron Age, there appears to have been an upturn in agricultural production, signalling the need for a new droveway/routeway between the valley to the north and the higher ground occupied by the current sites. This routeway turned at a right-angle within Site D, and was re-established on at least three occasions, either seasonally or more likely over a longer period of time. The formation of a hollow way within the route marked by the gullies suggested some longevity and recurrence of use of this well-trodden way across the downland.

Stratigraphic relationships and a new orientation of the gullies in Site D demonstrated a wholesale reordering of the local routeway, now blocked from entry from the north at this point. Both the numerous gullies which were recorded running across Sites, B, E and F, and the recovery of pottery dating from the 1st century AD, highlight the durability of the routeway.

Undoubtedly, a conspicuous part of the scenery for a long period, the route would have offered extensive views across the enclosures and structures to the north, and over greater distances in that direction during a period of extensive exploitation of that downland landscape.

In keeping with evidence from that local backdrop, the routeway fell out of use during the Romano-British period and the sites seem to have reverted to open downland, with little evidence of arable farming and only limited indications of land division.

This 'relatively static agricultural landscape' (Hart *op. cit.*, 192) would remain largely unchanged until the early 20th century, when the entrepreneur Charles Neville began the development which would eventually become the town of Peacehaven (Pope *et al.* 2015,18; Harris 2004, 13).

The following supplementary reports can be found on the ADS website at http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/sac/:
The Flintwork by Karine Le Hégarat
The Early Prehistoric Pottery by Anna Doherty.

Acknowledgements

The input at all stages of the project of Casper Johnson, County Archaeologist, and Greg Chuter, Assistant County Archaeologist, East Sussex County Council, is gratefully acknowledged. Thanks are also due to those who worked at the site, especially to Tom Munnery and Dylan Hopkinson who supervised the work at Farrington Enterprise Estate and Farrington Farm respectively, and to all the specialists whose work has been integrated into the text or included as specialist reports, namely Karine Le Hégarat, Anna Doherty, Elke Raeman, Luke Barber and Mariangela Vitolo. The illustrations were prepared by Justin Russell, Fiona Griffin and Lauren Gibson and the projects were managed by Darryl Palmer, Neil Griffin and Paul Mason. The post-excavation process was managed by Jim Stevenson and Dan Swift. This article was edited for publication by Louise Rayner.

The archaeological work at the Farrington Enterprise Park was commissioned and funded by Clifford Dann LLP, that at Farrington Farm by CgMs on behalf of their client, and that at Arundel Road by Bovis Homes (Southern) Ltd. Full descriptions of the archaeological features and specialist finds reports (including detailed methodologies) are housed with the site archives (which includes ASE 2016; 2014a and 2014b). The project archives are currently held with ASE, ahead of deposition with a suitable repository.

Author: c/o Archaeology South-East, Units 1 and 2, 2 Chapel Place, Portslade, BN41 1DR. simon.stevens@ucl.ac.uk

REFERENCES

Allen, M. 2016. Holocene geoarchaeology and palaeo-environment; setting the scene, in D. Moore, M. Allen and D. Rudling (eds.), *Archaeology of the Ouse Valley, Sussex, to AD 1500*, 5–20. Oxford: Archaeopress.

Archaeology South-East (ASE) 2013a. Land off Arundel Road, Peacehaven: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment. Unpublished report 2013129-6160.

— — 2013b. Magnetometer Survey (Stage 1) and Archaeological Evaluation (Stage 2) at land off Arundel Road, Peacehaven, East Sussex. Unpublished report 2013325-6287.

— — 2014a. Land at Farrington Farm, Keymer Avenue, Peacehaven, East Sussex. Post-Excavation Assessment and Updated Project Design. Project number 2014261-6023.

— — 2014b. Land North of Arundel Road, Peacehaven, East Sussex. Post Excavation Assessment and Updated Project Design. Unpublished report 2014302-6500.

— — 2015. Archaeological Evaluation Report, Farrington Enterprise Estate, Hoyle Road Peacehaven, East Sussex. Unpublished report 2015302-7607.

— — 2016. Archaeological Excavations at Farrington Enterprise Estate, Peacehaven. Post Excavation Assessment and Updated Project Design. Unpublished report 2016325-7815.

British Geological Survey 2016. Geology of Britain Viewer, http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html, [accessed 10.11.2016].

Doherty, A. 2015. The prehistoric and Roman pottery, in D. Hart, *Around the Ancient Track: Archaeological Excavations for the Brighton and Hove Waste Water Treatment Works and adjacent housing at Peacehaven, East Sussex*, 213–235. Spoilheap Publications.

Doherty, A. and **Marshall, P.** 2015. Chronology, in D. Hart, 71–72.

Drewett, P. 1999. First Farming Communities and Communal Monuments, in K. Leslie and B. Short, *An Historic Atlas of Sussex, 16 –17.* Chichester: Phillimore.

ESCC 2008. *Recommended Standard Conditions for Archaeological Fieldwork, Recording, and Post-Excavation Work (Development Control) in East Sussex*. Lewes: East Sussex County Council.

— — 2015. *Standards for Archaeological Work in Sussex*. Lewes: East Sussex County Council.

Garland, N. and **Anderson-Whymark, H.** 2016. Mesolithic and late Neolithic/Bronze Age activity on the site of the American Express Community Stadium, Falmer, East Sussex, *Sussex Archaeological Collections* (hereafter *SAC*) **154**, 1–44.

Halliwell, G. and **Parfitt, K.** 1993. Non-river gravel Lower and Middle Palaeolithic discoveries in East Kent, *Kent Archaeological Review* **114**, 80–3.

Hamilton, S. 1998. Using elderly data bases: Iron Age pit deposits at the Caburn, East Sussex, and related sites, *SAC* **136**, 23–40.

Harris, R. 2004. *Peacehaven Historic Character Assessment Report.* Sussex Extensive Urban Survey (EUS).

Hart, D. 2015. *Around the Ancient Track: Archaeological Excavations for the Brighton and Hove Waste Water Treatment Works and adjacent housing at Peacehaven, East Sussex*. Spoilheap Publications.

Hart, D. and **Doherty, A**. 2015. Deposition in pits and ditches, in D. Hart, 188–190.

Hawkes, C.F.C. and **Hull, M.R.** 1947. *Camulodunum: first report on the excavations at Colchester, 1930–1939*. Society of Antiquities Research Report XIV. Oxford.

Moore, D. Allen M. and **Rudling D.** (eds.) 2016. *Archaeology of the Ouse Valley, Sussex, to AD 1500.* Oxford: Archaeopress.

Munnery, T. 2013. A study of Neolithic pits in south-east England – shifts in deposition, farming and self-perception. Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Leicester.

Pope, M. Young, D. Green C. and **White, T**. 2015. The Geoarchaeological and Palaeolandscape Context of the Study Area, in D. Hart, 15–31.

Pope, M. and **Brown, J.** 2016. Palaeolithic record of the Sussex Ouse Valley, in D. Moore, M. Allen and D. Rudling (eds.), *Archaeology of the Ouse Valley, Sussex, to AD 1500,* 21–26. Oxford: Archaeopress.

Stevens, S. forthcoming. A Late Iron Age/Romano-British enclosure and other remains at Chalkers Lane, Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex.

Thompson, I. 1982. *Grog-tempered 'Belgic' pottery of south-eastern England*. BAR Brit. Ser. 108. Oxford.

Wessex Archaeology 2014. Keymer Avenue, Peacehaven. Archaeological Evaluation Report. Unpublished report 102790.03.

Yates, D. 2007. *Land, Power and Prestige; Bronze Age Field Systems in Southern England.* Oxford: Oxbow.