THAMES VALLEY

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

SERVICES

Chinham Farm Extension, Bowling Green Farm Quarry, Faringdon, Oxfordshire

Archaeological Recording Action (phase 6)

by Maisie Foster and David Sánchez

Site Code: CFF20/148

(SU3155 9475)

Chinham Farm Extension, Bowling Green Farm Quarry Faringdon, Oxfordshire

An Archaeological Recording Action(Phase 6)

For Hills Quarry Products

by Maisie Foster and David Sánchez

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code CFF 20/148

August 2021

Summary

Site name: Chinham Farm Extension, Bowling Green Farm Quarry, Faringdon, Oxfordshire

Grid reference: SU3155 9475

Site activity: Archaeological Recording Action

Date and duration of project: 18th – 29th September 2020

Project Coordinator: Tim Dawson

Site supervisor: Maisie Foster

Site code: CFF 20/148

Area of site: 11360 sq m

Summary of results: The archaeological recording action revealed a low volume of archaeological features. Eight pits formed a small cluster, with one outlier to the south and a notable lack of features in the whole remaining area of the site, with the exception of two small, undated pits by the western limit of the area. The pit cluster contained a surprisingly dense group and range of finds and two radiocarbon dates confirm that it represents a relatively short-lived use of the site in the 8th or 7th century BC. An especially concentrated deposit of pottery vessels in particular suggests the filling of the pits was the result of feasting. As is often observed, there were no associated structural remains to indicate permanent settlement and it may be that some symbolic occasion was being celebrated in a one-off event.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Oxfordshire Museum Service in due course.

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 31.08.21
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Chinham Farm Extension, Bowling Green Farm Quarry, Faringdon, Oxfordshire (Phase 6) An Archaeological Recording Action

by Maisie Foster and David Sánchez

Report 20/148

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological recording action on a parcel of land covering *c*. 1.13 ha at the Chinham Farm Extension of Bowling Green Farm Quarry, Faringdon, Oxfordshire SN7 8HB (SU3155 9475) (Fig. 1).

Planning permission (MW.0124/16) has been granted by Oxforshire County council to extract sand and limestone from a parcel of land of *c.* 19 ha at Bowling Green Farm Quarry, Chinham, Faringdon, Oxfordshire. The consent is subject to a condition requiring a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording prior to extraction. This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012) and Oxfordshire County Council's policies on archaeology.

The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr. Hugh Coddington, formerly of Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service and monitored by Mr. Richard Oram. The fieldwork was supervised by Maisie Foster with the assistance of David Sánchez , Jon Tierney, Aidan Colyer and Camila Carvallo between 18th and 29th September 2020 and the site code is CFF 20/148.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Oxfordshire Museum Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is between the market town of Faringdon and the village of Stanford-in-the-Vale in the south west of Oxfordshire, on the northern side of the A417 (Fig. 1). It is located on the Corallian Ridge which runs east-west and divides the Oxford Clay basin, with the top of the ridge at a height of *c*. 103m above Ordnance Datum sloping gradually down from south to north to the Frogmore Brook at *c*. 95m aOD. The underlying geology at the high point in the south is Stanford (Jurassic) Limestone, with alluvial clay, sand, gravel and sandstone silts filling on the valley edges to the north (BGS 1971). The works described in this report ('phase 6') are immediately to the south of phase 4 and south west of phase 5 undertaken in 2017 and 2019 in what is now the active mineral extraction area of the quarry.

Archaeological background

An archaeological survey of the Corallian Ridge undertaken by Hingley in 1980 consisting of fieldwalking and air photographic survey concluded that the Corallian ridge was just as densely occupied in early periods as the gravels of the Thames Valley. Neolithic flint scatters and Bronze Age sites were recorded in this survey showing a higher volume occupation than originally expected, with twenty-one ring ditches identified and several flint scatters at the eastern of the ridge. Recent work has added considerably to this.

Archaeological investigation immediately to the north of the site revealed a substantial Middle to Late Iron Age and Roman settlement with stone buildings, ovens, kilns and wells, originally considered as a small market town (Chambers 1988; 1989; 1990) though it seems more likely to have been a villa with a temple.

More recent work to the west of Faringdon revealed an area of extensive Early Iron Age and Roman settlement at Coxwell Road. The Iron Age site is especially noteworthy for the large number of grain storage pits, much higher than needed for an individual farmstead site (Weaver and Ford 2005; Cook *et al.* 2005). The site also included evidence of a small Roman shrine and a small scatter of Mesolithic flint. Adjacent to this recent archaeological excavation recorded tow areas of occupation including one post-build rectangular building of Late Neolithic date and two round houses of Early and Middle Iron Age date with simpler associated structures (Sánchez 2021).

Further to the east, the villages of Shellingford and Hatford both have nearby quarries. Publication has already outlined findings of Iron Age and Early Roman enclosure deposits on the opposite side of the Frogmore Brook, north west of Hatford (Booth and Simmonds 2003).

To the west and south of Faringdon the land rises to two hilltops, with a hillfort recorded at the top of each of them: Badbury Hill to the west, and Little Coxwell Camp to the south. Frequent cropmarks recorded in the area surrounding these suggest a series of field systems with isolated finds of Iron Age and Roman date frequently recorded in the area. Other evidence of Roman activity comprised a scatter of Roman pottery recorded on Bury Hill to the west and isolated finds of Roman coins and early Roman pottery in areas of Great Coxwell village.

During the later-medieval and post-medieval periods the site was agricultural land. The Ordnance Survey map of the 1870s shows a quarry on the south-eastern fringes of the site.

Previous archaeological work

Evaluation at the site of the present weighbridge for Bowling Green Farm Quarry revealed Roman ditches, presumably part of the larger outlying field system associated with the settlement to the north, and a likely southern boundary to the settlement (Parsons 1994). Cropmarks representing a double-ditched driveway with adjoining rectangular enclosure were visible on an aerial photograph to the west of the site.

Excavation before mineral extraction in 2007 (Phase 1) *c*.200m to the west of the present site, revealed a small causewayed ring ditch and two ditches of Iron Age and Roman date (Pine and Weale 2019). The ring ditch was radiocarbon dated to 1691–1530 cal BC with re-use of the monument for a crouched inhumation in the backfill of the ditch dated 1413–1290 cal BC, in the Early to Middle Bronze Age. Finds included Early and Middle Bronze Age pottery and a deliberately broken bronze rapier blade. A residual late Mesolithic microlith was also recovered pointing to earlier use of the landscape.

Excavation in 2011 (Phase 3), to the north west of the present area, revealed a range of archaeological finds and deposits of prehistoric and Roman date. The earliest periods were represented by collection of Mesolithic flintwork, though probably residual, and two pits of Bronze Age date. In the early Iron Age, a probable rectangular ditched enclosure was constructed. A series of pits of this date were also present. Final use of this part of the site took place in mid-Roman times and was represented by a rectangular enclosure with both double and triple elements (Pine and Weale 2019).

Excavation in 2014 (Phase 2), uncovered a continuation and a more defined trace of the Iron Age ditch found in the eastern side of Phase 1 works (Elliot 2017, Pine and Weale 2019). A single cremation was also found. This major boundary ditch traversed the width of the Phase 2 extraction area, with a second ditch, parallel to and to the north, containing Roman pottery. This ditch, unlike the other, terminated before it reached the eastern edge of Phase 2.

The works in 2017 (Phases 4a and 4b) uncovered the continuation of the boundary ditch recorded in previous phases traversing the landscape on a slightly wavering course but remained at least 2m in width. A pit located in Phase 4b contained pottery of Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age date (Mundin 2017b). A discrete cluster of pits also contained Iron Age pottery, and the pottery in the boundary ditch is likely Middle Iron Age in date (Mundin 2017a). Parallel aligned pits on the northern side of one portion of the ditch seemed to represent a wooden palisade erected on its northern side for a short length, similar to other examples seen on similar Iron Age features located on the Upper Thames gravels (Lambrick 2009). The sampling of the eastwards track of the

ditch located further Iron Age pottery, and particularly from Phase 4b, found one discrete source of 30 sherds from the same vessel.

The last phase of works prior to those described in this report (phase 5) was undertaken in 2019 and recorded the continuation of the large boundary ditch previously uncovered. A fair quantity of pottery has now been recovered from this ditch as it crosses the landscape, and it is now reliably dated to the Middle-Late Iron Age (Manisse and Mundin 2019).

Objectives and methodology

The general objectives of the project are:

to excavate and record all archaeological deposits and features within the areas threatened by the proposed development;

to produce relative and absolute dating and phasing for deposits and features recorded on the site;

to establish the character of these deposits with an attempt to define functional areas on the site with areas such as industrial, domestic etc.; and

to produce information on the economy and local environment and contrast with these with the results of other excavations in the region.

Specific research objectives were to attempt to answer the following questions:

When was the site first occupied and when as the site abandoned?

What is the layout and organisation of the site?

What activities are taking place on the site?

What is the nature and date of any landscape features encountered? (e.g fields, boundary features or enclosures) and what is their spatial organisation?

What is the palaeoenvironmental setting of the site?

Topsoil was removed under continuous archaeological supervision using a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket to expose the surface of the archaeological horizon directly above the natural geology. Where appropriate and necessary hand cleaning of the stripped surface was to take place to clarify the presence of archaeological features. Isolated, discrete features such as pits and postholes not belonging to structures were to be half sectioned with full excavation to take place where appropriate to enhance finds recovery. Sampling of linear features such as ditches and gullies relating to agricultural activity was to be up to

10% of their length with a minimum of 10m of each ditch being dug in 1-3m long slots. A single context recording system was used. Descriptions of individual deposits and features were recorded on pro-forma context recording sheets and sections drawn at a scale of 1:10. Digital planning was used to produce the plans of the excavation area. Well-defined contexts were bulk sampled for the recovery of carbonized botanical remains. A total of 7 deposits were sampled. Samples were wet-sieved using a 2mm mesh and charred plant remains recovered using flotation and a 0.25mm sieve.

Results (Figs 3, 4 and 5)

The archaeological excavation of phase 6 at the Chinham Farm extension of Bowling Green Quarry covered an area of 11,360 sq m (Fig. 2) which was stripped, as intended, of topsoil and other overburden consisting of typically of 0.20m of topsoil and between 0.15m and 0.22m of subsoil overlying a variable natural geology of mid yellowish brown sand and limestone with frequent clay silt patches. A low volume of archaeological features was uncovered, consisting of two possible pits located by the western limit of the excavation area (700 and 701) and one cluster of nine pits in the north-west quadrant of the site (702 to 710) (Fig. 3).

Pit 700

Pit 700 was a roughly circular feature measuring 0.58m diameter and 0.12m deep with concave base and steep sites to the south and east, and shallow sides to the west and north. It was filled with one deposit of dark reddish brown silty clay with moderate small charcoal fragments and flecks whose excavation returned no finds. Although similar to natural clay patches observed in the area the composition of its fill and charcoal inclusions suggests a feature of archaeological nature rather than a variation of the natural geology.

Pit 701

Pit 701 was located 11m north of pit 700 and was also circular, 1.30m diameter and 0.17m deep. It had a flat base and steep sides filled with one deposit of mid brownish grey sandy clay with frequent small to medium size limestone and occasional charcoal flecks. Its excavation returned only three small fragments of animal bone

Pit 702 (Pl. 1)

Pit 702 was located 7m to the south-east of the main pit cluster, with no other features in its proximity. It was a circular feature with flat base and almost vertical sides filled with three different deposits. Deposit 1154 at its bottom consisted of mid brownish grey sandy clay with occasional small limestone fragments and was overlaid

by a layer (1153) of mid reddish brown sandy clay with frequent charcoal and burnt soil patches. The latest deposit sealing the pit (1152) was similar in colour and composition to the primary fill. Three sherds of Early Iron Age pottery were recovered from its primary fill with no other finds from the later deposits.

Pit 703

Pit 703 was again circular in shape with a diameter of 0.70m and a depth of 0.27m. It had concave base and slightly undercutting sides and was with two fills. Its primary fill (1156) consisted of a mid yellowish brown sandy silty deposit overlaid by dark reddish brown sandy silty (1155) with occasional small limestone inclusions. Eleven sherds of Early Iron Age pottery along with 1657g of burnt clay were recovered from the secondary fill with no finds recovered from deposit 1156.

Pit 704

Pit 704 was circular with a diameter of 0.46m and a depth of 0.12m. It had concave base and sides filled with a single deposit of mid yellowish brown sandy silt with frequent small to medium size limestone inclusions. Its excavation returned two sherds of pottery of Early Iron Age date.

Pit 705

Pit 705 was a roughly circular shaped feature measuring 0.50m diameter and 0.15m deep. It had concave base and steep sides filled with one deposit of mid yellowish brown sandy silt with frequent medium to large size limestone inclusions which excavation returned four sherds of pottery of Early Iron Age date.

Pit 706

Pit 706 was circular in shape with a diameter of 0.65m and a depth of 0.17m. Although partially disturbed by a large stone pulled into its western half during the machine excavation of the overburden, its shape and profile were still relatively intact, showing a concave base and steep sides and a single fill of mid yellowish brown sandy silt with small to medium limestone inclusions. Seven sherds of pottery of Early Iron Age date were recovered.

Pits 707 and 709 (Pls 2 and 5)

Pits 707 and 709 were located at the northern area of the pit cluster and though located in close proximity they did not intercut. Both were circular, with pit 709 having a diameter of 0.90m and a depth of 0.27m. It had concave base and sides filled with one deposit of mid orange brown clay silt with occasional limestone

inclusions but no finds. On its western side pit 707 measured 1.25m in diameter and 0.35m deep. It had steep sides and concave base filled with two different deposits, a primary fill (1161) of light yellowish brown clay silt with moderate small size limestone inclusions and a secondary fill (1160) of mid greyish brown clay silt with occasional small to medium size limestone. Although no finds were recovered from the primary deposit of this pit, a struck flint, nine small fragments of animal bone and 12g of burnt clay were recovered from the secondary deposit, along with a substantial group of 343 sherds of Early Iron Age pottery. A radiocarbon date (Appendix 6: UBA-44595) on charcoal from deposit 1160 produced a most probable (57% probability) result of 651-545 cal BC, although it is worth noting that there is a considerable chance (23.9%) of a much earlier date (779–731 cal BC).

Pit 708 (Pls 34)

Pit 708 was located in the centre of the pit cluster and was circular in shape with a diameter of 0.75m and a depth of 0.37m. It had concave base and vertical sides filled with three different deposits, whose excavation returned a total of 454 sherds of pottery of Early Iron Age date along with 590g of fired clay, one ceramic spindle whorl, half of a saddle quern stone and seven small fragments of burnt bone. The primary fill of pit 708 (1164) consisted of dark grey/black clay sand and charcoal with occasional small limestone inclusions and a thickness of 0.18m. It contained a small percentage of the pottery and fired clay recovered from this pit and was overlaid by deposit 1163 which consisted of 0.20m of pottery and fired clay in mid brownish grey clay sand matrix with frequent charcoal inclusions. The latest deposit recorded (1168) was a thin layer (between 0.03 and 0.05m) of dark greyish brown sandy clay covering deposit 1163 and sealing the top of the pit.

Deposit 1163 deserves further consideration as it appears to be built up intentionally with large sherds of pottery and lamps of fired clay placed rather than thrown into the pit. The surface of deposit 1164 was covered with large broken sherds of pottery laid flat which sealed the whole diameter of the pit and then covered with large lumps of fired clay forming a second layer within the deposit, above the first layer of clay and immediately below one last layer of large pottery sherds again laid flat on the whole surface of the pit. Along with the finds pieces of charred bread and charcoal (mostly oak) were recovered from a sieved sample. This intentional deposit was finally sealed with a thin layer of sandy clay (deposit 1168) homogeneously covering all the pottery of the upper layer of 1164 (see ‘Pottery’ below for details on vessels recovered from these deposits). A radiocarbon date on charred food sample from deposit 1163 returned a most probable (52.2%) result of 795-748 cal BC (Appendix 6: UBA-44596). Again, however, the vagaries of the calibration curve throughout the Iron Age allow the non-negligible chance (33%) that this date could be much later (643–556 cal BC).

Pit 710 (Pl. 6)

Pit 710 was the only feature recorded in the pit cluster that was not circular, having an oval shape some 2.10m long, 1.30m wide and 0.45m deep. It had a flat base and almost vertical sides and was filled with three deposits. The primary fill (1167) consisted of mid yellowish brown silty sand with occasional small limestone inclusions overlaid by a second deposit (1166) of dark grey/black sandy clay with frequent charcoal and burnt soil patches. A third deposit (1165) sealed the pit and consisted of dark reddish brown sandy clay with occasional small limestone pieces. Although no finds were recovered from the excavation of the primary fill of this pit, seven sherds of pottery and 14 small fragments of animal bone were recovered from deposit 1166 with a larger group of finds from the latest fill consisting of a fragment of worked antler, 120 small fragments of burnt animal bone, 48g of burnt flint and 151 sherds of Early Iron Age pottery.

Finds

Pottery by Richard Tabor

The prehistoric pottery assemblage comprised a total of 1715 sherds weighing 23,967.5g giving a moderate mean weight of 14g (Appendix 2). The entire assemblage was datable to the Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age transition and the distribution was restricted to a group of eight discrete features. All sherds were allocated to fabric groups based on the material, size and sorting of the principal inclusions. The weights, fabrics and vessel parts of all sherds were recorded. Vessel forms were grouped also by characteristic profiles, where reconstruction was possible, or by rim or other diagnostic features, including surface treatments, in accordance with guidelines for the recording and analysis of prehistoric pottery (PCRG 2010).

Fabrics

The fabrics appear to reflect the local sedimentary geology including beds of Stanford Formation limestone which is characterized by its inclusion of marine fossils and Kingston Formation sandstone (BGS 1971). Sherds including grog have a sandy matrix and may be equally at home. The only exceptions are base sherds from a single oolitic limestone tempered fabric, O1, all of which are from one vessel. The distribution of sherds by fabric is given in Table A2.1 (Appendix 2)

Oolitic

O1 (Medium) Friable grey to buff pink, slightly micaceous, sandy fabric with buff red exterior and dark grey interior surfaces including abundant fine (<1mm) rare to sparse medium (<2mm) ooliths and sparse crushed fine to medium (<1mm) and rare coarse plate (<6mm) shelly limestone.

Sand

S1 (Fine) Moderately soft grey, slightly micaceous sandy fabric with buff red to dark grey exterior and buff red to dark grey surfaces including abundant very fine (<0.2mm) sub-rounded quartz and rare crushed fine (<1mm) shelly limestone. Smoothed exterior.

S2 (Medium) Moderately hard grey, slightly micaceous sandy fabric with buff red to dark grey brown to buff red surfaces including abundant fine (<0.5mm), rare medium (<1mm) to coarse (<1.5mm) sub-rounded quartz and rarely fine (<1mm) iron oxides. Smoothed exterior.

Sand and grog

SG1 (Fine/medium) Moderately hard grey to pink micaceous sandy fabric with buff red to black exterior and grey brown to buff red interior surfaces including abundant very fine (<0.2mm) to rare fine (0.5mm) sub-rounded quartz, well-sorted moderate to common fine (<1mm) to medium coarse (<3mm) mainly sub-rounded rare to sparse coarse (<4mm) grog, rare to sparse crushed fine (<1mm) shelly limestone and rare to sparse fine (<1mm) red iron oxides. Exterior may be slipped.

SG2 (Fine/medium) Moderately hard dark grey to dark brown micaceous sandy fabric with dark grey surfaces including abundant fine (<0.5mm), rare medium (<1mm) to coarse (<1.5mm) sub-rounded quartz, moderate to common fine (<1mm) to medium (<2mm) mainly sub-rounded grog, rare crushed fine (<1mm) shelly limestone and rare to sparse fine (<1mm) red iron oxides. Exterior or both surfaces may be burnished.

Sand and shelly limestone

ShS1 (Medium) Moderately hard grey to pink sandy fabric with reddish pink exterior and grey to reddish pink interior surfaces including abundant very fine (<0.2mm) to very rare fine (<0.5mm) sub-rounded quartz with poorly-sorted sparse to moderate crushed fine (<1mm), medium (<2mm) to sparse medium/coarse (<3mm) and rare to sparse plate (<10mm) shelly limestone.

ShS2 (Medium) Friable pink, iron-rich sandy fabric with reddish pink exterior and grey to reddish pink interior surfaces including abundant very fine (<0.2mm), rare fine (<0.5mm) and medium sub-rounded quartz with common to abundant crushed fine (<1mm), medium (<2mm), sparse to moderate medium/coarse (<3mm) and sparse plate (<10mm) shelly limestone.

The fabric range is narrower but overlaps well with two comparable, broadly contemporary assemblages from Coxwell Road, Faringdon, where fossiliferous limestone occurred in sandy fabrics and, at one of the sites, grog tempered fabrics included limestone (Bryan *et al.* 2005, 224; Timby 2005, 139-40).

Vessel forms

The classification of vessel forms is designed to facilitate correlation with Late Bronze Age / Early Iron Age assemblages elsewhere. The classification of rims is more detailed to enable estimation of the minimum vessel number and is based on the approach devised for Neolithic pottery (Smith 1956). The range of vessel form codes and rim variables are set out in Table A2.2. The rims have been grouped in three basic classes based on the height of impact of their attitudes on upper vessel walls. This allows a high correlation of rim to vessel forms.

The assemblage includes jars, bowls and cups. Most are tripartite and the jars have predominantly angular profiles with medium or high shoulders. Rims vary from upright to sharply everted and in the main are of medium length. None are incurved or inturned, none are long and their diameters are all less than those of the

shoulders or, in the case of globular vessels, the girths. All of the bowls and cups are in finer sandy or grog and sand fabrics whereas all but the smoothed or burnished jars are in the relatively coarse shelly limestone fabrics. The exceptions amongst the jars are a highly decorated type J7 jar in SG1 and a lugged type J8 jar in S2 (Fig. 5.1 and 6.12). A complete base in S2 from pit 710 survives only as a disc hence is indeterminate, but it may be from the J8 jar. The relationship of vessel forms to fabric and their distribution by context is given with individual digital archive entry numbers (prefixed 'E') in Table A2.3. Taphonomy is discussed below. Characteristic sherds for which no vessel types were established are summarised by fabric in Table A2.4, giving a minimum of four vessels to add to the 16 identified to type. Amongst the jars the impressed cordon at the most constricted part of the neck on the J9 type is potentially a telling feature chronologically.

Decoration and surface treatment

There is a very high instance of decoration by techniques of fingertip impression, short, long, geometric organized and continuous horizontal linear incision, and tooled impressions of pin-pricks, wedges and concentric circles. It was applied to 18 of the minimum of 20 vessels and of the two from which it was absent one was lugged and was in a smoothed sandy fabric whilst the other was a smoothed fine cup. A chalk-like white material occurs in a few pin-prick and elongated oval impressions on two bowls (Fig. 5.14 and 5.15). There is very strong differentiation in technique application across vessel classes (Table A2.5). Finger-tipping is exclusive to unsmoothed and unburnished types J9, J11 and J12 jars (Fig. 5.3-5.5, 5.7, 6.11 and 6.13) and the only other technique applied within the range is a single example with short incised lines, vertical on the neck and oblique on the shoulder (Fig. 5.6). Decoration on this range of jars is restricted to the rim top or outer edge, the neck and the shoulder. The only jars which differ are single examples of types J7 and J8. The J7 jar has a red slipped exterior and is incised neatly with a diaper pattern on its upper body interrupted by groups of upright incised lines set between pairs of horizontal lines on the neck and shoulder (Fig. 5.1). In contrast the J8 jar is undecorated but has a pair of substantial looping, as opposed to perforated, lugs fixed with dowels into sockets fully penetrating the vessel wall (Fig. 5.1 and 6.12). All bowls and cups are smoothed or burnished and two of the bowls in fabric S1 are red-slipped. Bowl decoration is either by incised lines (Fig. 5.2 and 5.8) or tooled impressions (Fig. 6.14 and 6.15) but the two techniques are not combined on any vessel. Decoration on the cups is restricted to traces of oblique incisions on the much-abraded outer rim edge of one of them (Fig. 5.9).

A similar range of decorative techniques was noted in the Iron Age assemblages from nearby Coxwell Road (Bryan *et al.* 2005, fig. 26 and to a lesser extent Timby 2004, figs. 10 and 11). The presence of inlaid chalk-like material in two bowls is readily related to the 'white inlay' recorded in Early Iron Age pottery at

Blewburton Hill, Berkshire (Bradford 1942b). A bowl of similarly globular profile to the B33 form had rows of infilled pin-pricks on its shoulder but differed in having a straighter neck (Bradford 1942b, 101, fig. 1, 23). Stabbed in-fill was noted in decorated fine wares from the Early Iron Age assemblage at Crickley Hill in the Gloucestershire Cotswolds and continues to be identified in broadly Early to Middle Iron Age assemblages in south Oxfordshire (Elsdon 1994; McSloy 2012, 237). All the techniques from the three Faringdon sites were present at Blewburton Hill as well as surface treatment by high burnishing, smoothing and 'brick-red haematite'-coating (Bradford 1942b, 104). Haematite-coating was noted to co-occur with 'white (chalk) infill' further south at Potterne, Wiltshire and featured on a concentric circle impressed upper body sherd from Allen's Pit (Gingell and Morris 2000, 155; Bradford 1942a, 39, fig. 11, 7).

Taphonomy

Features 708 and 707 accounted respectively for 73% and 24% by weight of the pottery and a third feature took up much of the remainder. Estimation based on the number of rim forms and fabrics gave a minimum of 20 vessels. Most sherds were in moderate to fresh condition and refitting showed that pieces from some individual vessels were distributed over a minimum of three different features. However, there were instances of significant variation in condition between joining sherds, most notably between the upper and lower deposits in pit 708 where there were a few instances of surface abrasion sometimes with a film of calcareous inclusions (exemplified well in Fig. 5.1) and within the single deposit of 707 where there was no significant surface abrasion but sometimes extensive accretion.

The deposits within pit 708 deserve close attention. Large fragments of pottery immediately above the perceived boundary between 1164 and 1163 appeared to have been laid flat then covered mainly with large lumps of fired clay (Pl. 4). Further large sherds mingled with fired clay were laid over the fired clay layer. The photographic and drawn records are in agreement, giving the impression that vessels were broken prior to deposition and that the deposits were built up in laid layers covering successive surfaces from edge to edge. The material was not merely thrown in. Nearly 91% of the pottery from pit 708 was from 1164 leaving a little over 9% from 1163 (Table A2.3). A minimum of six vessels is represented in the lower deposit 1164, at least six of which are parts from vessels in 1163 which has a minimum of five further vessels giving a minimum 11 for the pit.

All of the pottery from pit 707 is from the upper fill 1160. It included all of the sherds identifiable to particular vessels from at least four vessels, included the only one with oolitic limestone inclusions, and produced much the greatest part of the highly finished bowl type B33 (Fig. 6.14) and especially a J11 jar (Fig.

6.13). A section of rim from the same vessel in pit 708 lacks the fingertip impressions which are present immediately below all the other the rim sherds which are exclusive to pit 707, raising the possibility that it was deliberately separated from the rest of the jar. The manner of sherd placement in pit 707 is less easily determined but the first photographs of pottery in the upper part of 1160 show a large lower wall and base sherd which refits 708's J7 jar and a rim and shoulder sherd from a J12 jar lying over it (Fig. 5.1 and 5.7). The J12 jar is probably exclusive to pit 707 and a later series of photographs shows its base and lower wall inverted. The lower parts of the vessel appear to have collapsed partially whilst *in situ* implying a mode of deposition strongly contrasted to that of the pottery in the upper fill of 708.

It can be shown that small but fresh sherds of bowl type B37 present in the upper deposit 1165 of pit 710 are from the same vessel as that in the upper deposit of pit 708 (Fig. 6.15) and some, but not all, of the other sherds from 1165 may be from vessels in either of pits 707 and 708. The only vessel which can with confidence be regarded as exclusive to the pit is a C54 type cup (Fig. 5.10) from a relatively charcoal-rich deposit filling a local depression in the surface of the primary deposit, 1167. It is possible that all of the small amounts of pottery from pits 702-6 derived from vessels in pits 707 and 708. Only three very small sherds in pit 702's 1154 are from the primary deposit of a pit with multiple fills and those from pits 704-6 are from pits filled with single deposits. On balance, taking into account the evidence from pits 703, 707, 708 and 710 the deposition of pottery in discrete features was not a primary action.

The stylistic context

As noted above the assemblage is characterized exclusively by closed, mainly tripartite vessels with proportionally medium length, near upright or out-turned, unexpanded rims and marked, often high, angular shoulders. In this respect it differs from Iron Age assemblages with similar ranges of decorative techniques and motifs from Coxwell Road, Abingdon and further east in Oxfordshire and west Berkshire which include thickened or expanded rims co-occurring with or exemplifying rims with greater diameters than the shoulders or girths of their vessels which are characteristic of Cunliffe's Early to Early Middle Iron Age Long Wittenham-Allen's Pit group (Timby 2004, fig. 11; DeRoche 1978, fig. 31; McSloy 2012, fig. 14; Savory 1937, fig. 2; Myers 1937, fig. 7; Bradford 1942b and possibly 1942a; Cunliffe 2010, 98, figs. 5.4 and A:11). Chinham Farm also differs from many sites in the region by its lack of short or bead-like rims, which at sites such as Knight's Farm, Burghfield, may be indicative of an earlier date whilst at other sites, including Gravelly Guy, they are from Middle Iron Age assemblages with significant earlier residual elements (Duncan *et al.* 2004, figs 7.10-1). None the less there are vessels from all of these sites which are closely related to some of those from Chinham

Farm. A plain jar in a sandy fabric with a low lug and profile similar to the J8 jar was found at Wittenham Clumps (Hingley 1980, 43, fig. 11, 52). Both jars compare closely with the round-girthed type Jar 20 from Potterne, which was judged to date within the 8th to 6th centuries BC (Gingell and Morris 2000, 151, fig. 52, 49). The J7 form is closely paralleled by a situlate jar from Allen's Pit which also borders incised linear decoration with incised horizontal lines on the neck and shoulder but which differs in adding dimples to the shoulder and having pin-pricks on either side of the neck line (Bradford 1942a, 42, fig. 8, 3).

The closest similarities are to a 'very rich assemblage' from a single pit (F5) later in the sequence from Knight's Farm (Bradley 1980, 270; Lobb *et al.* 1980, figs 34 and 35, nos. 1-51). The pottery from the pit featured impressed cordons at the narrowest point of concave everted and also upright necked jars (Lobb *et al.* 1980, fig. 34, nos. 7u and 15v). Longer everted jar rims were confined mainly to vessels with incised horizontal lines at the narrowest point of the neck which, in at least one instance, mark the upper limit of incised and impressed decoration bound by a horizontal line on the shoulder in a fashion analogous to the J7 jar (Fig. 5.1) (Lobb *et al*. 1980, fig. 35, nos. 35u and 39v). The rims were also similar in lacking thickening or expansion but tended to be proportionally shorter, some very much so (e.g. Lobb *et al*. 1980, fig. 35, nos. 26V, 29u, 30v, 32u, 33y etc). The assemblage also differed by its inclusion of bipartite vessels, especially bowls (Lobb *et al.* 1980, fig. 35, nos. 42u, 43u, 45u 46v 47v). Two radiocarbon assays for Knight's Farm pit F5 yielded dates which now calibrate at 1111-788 cal BC and 922-431 cal BC at 95.4% probability which would favour an 8th to 6th century BC date (Bradley 1980, 270; ORAU 2021).

Overall the three Faringdon assemblages appear to be close to the north-western limit of a regional pottery tradition distributed across sites from Stanton Harcourt, 15km to the north-east, Dorchester, Wittenham and Blewburton Hill, up to 30km further east along the Thames Valley and Burghfield up to 40km to the south-east in the Kennet Valley. There is a stylistic overlap with Kennet sites at Potterne and All Canning Cross up to 50km to the south-west. The tradition is unified by the range of decorative techniques, most clearly distinguished on fine bowls, but development over time is represented by subtle alterations of vessel forms which provide the canvas for ornamental motifs retained into at least the earlier Middle Iron Age. The tradition has been dated variously and problematically as Late Bronze to Early Iron Age and Early to Early Middle Iron Age and, characterized as the Long Wittenham-Allen's Pit style, it has been placed within the 6th to 4th centuries and 5th to 3rd centuries BC in a single volume (Cunliffe 2010, 98 and fig. A:11). In this instance stylistic affinities with the pottery from Knight's Farm pit F5 might favour a range with an earlier start, perhaps with a 7th to 5th century span.

The excellent condition of the assemblage and the closely grouped features across which it is distributed are suggestive of one or more episodes of deposition over a very narrow timespan, thus differing from longer term settlement sites which have provided the bulk of comparative data. As such it affords the opportunity to date with confidence a palimpsest within a long term stylistic repertoire.

In assessing the regional significance of the Chinham Farm assemblage it is necessary to consider to what extent it is representative of the range of pottery in circulation at the time. Clearly it is a snapshot but should it be compared with the full range of vessels which would be in use at a place of long term settlement at that particular moment? The pits from which it was recovered appear to be set apart from any residential area and whilst the particular space may have been re-visited more than once the condition of the pottery and the ease with which sherds have been refitted from different features imply this was over a short period. The pottery must have been covered or infilled soon after deposition although it is notable that some substantial sherds which have accretions on their surfaces join fresh sherds lacking accretions.

The presence of a detached complete base may be of interest in its own right and may be a residue of a specialized socio-cultural practice. Its situation in a pit on the north-west extent of a pit group recalls the more westerly location of a complete base from Romsey, Hampshire, although that differed in being an anachronism in a fabric entirely distinct from the substantial, demonstrably late Bronze Age pottery group accompanying it (Tabor 2021, fig. 12: 3).

Fired clay by Richard Tabor

The fired clay assemblage comprised a total of 791 pieces weighing 12,256g giving a moderately high mean weight of 15.5g (Appendix 3). The material was distributed very unevenly across three discrete features with 87.5% in pit 708 and 12.2% in pit 703, mainly in at least moderately sharp condition. The remainder was made up of small rounded fragments in pit 702. It was judged to be from a single phase, possibly a single episode, and was associated strongly with a highly distinctive group of well-preserved jars, bowls and cups of the earliest Early Iron Age.

The fabric, FC-SL1, may have derived from a single mixing but it was very poorly sorted so there was significant variation of inclusions between and within sherds. There were many fragments with cylindrical voids but there was no evidence that any had formed parts of spherical, rectangular or triangular portable artefacts such as spindlewhorls, loomweights or oven furniture. The perforations varied in diameter from 6mm to 24mm but a much narrower range of 10-12mm predominated. The matrix was generally hard-fired and hence had been

exposed to an intensity of heat commensurate with an oven or kiln structure rather than, for instance, that required for daub on a building framework. This is consistent with the revised interpretation at Danebury that 'very probably all [wall daub] came from the superstructures of ovens' following the observation that structural fired clay co-occurred with oven plates but only rarely with features associated with the walls of buildings (Cunliffe and Poole 1991, 141).

FC-SL1 (Medium/coarse) Friable to hard grey, slightly micaceous sandy fabric including very poorly sorted sparse fine to coarse (<8mm) conglomerate sandstone, sparse fine (<1mm) to very coarse (<20mm) mainly sub-rounded oolitic and shelly limestone and rare fine <1mm) iron oxides.

The curvature of faces surviving on some fragments varied from slightly concave to slightly convex (Pl. 7: 2 and 3), although in some instances there was no perceptible curve. An assumption was made that concave faces were from the inner wall of a superstructure and convex faces were from the outer wall. The fragments were classified accordingly in a scheme set out in Table A3.1 which takes into account also oxidization and reduction due to exposure to heat and the orientation of components in relation to each other. The recorded results are summarized by context in Table A3.2.

A single three faced fragment with carbon deposits on one face is likely to have formed part of a stoke hole. There was significant disparity in the distribution of inner and outer wall fragments in pit 703 where the former proving markedly dominant. There was a more even distribution in pit 708. Given the freshness of the fragments from both pits is likely that the deposits were made soon after the dismantling or destruction of an oven or kiln whereas the small deposit in 702 appears to have been exposed to the elements prior to deposition. Several outer surface fragments had hemispherical impressions with diameters varying from 130-60mm which on the largest fragment appeared to have been fairly evenly spaced and in at least two rows.

At Danebury ovens were classified in four distinct types. Decoration is a recorded only on what were interpreted as the upper surface of the oven cover on type 4, the largest class distinguished also by its rectangular or square plan (Cunliffe and Poole 1991, 146, fig. 4.94). It was suggested that the type was associated with middle to later Iron Age pottery phases cp 7 or cp 8 but the pottery strongly implies a significantly earlier date at Chinham Farm.

Spindle whorl by Cristina Mateos

A nearly intact spindle whorl was recovered from pit 708 deposit (1163), weighing 18.2g. It has a truncated conical shape, 29mm tall, with a base diameter of 43mm, and at the top a diameter of 35mm. The hole diameter

is 7mm. The fabric is an evenly-fired hard fine clay fabric and a dark brown colour. This kind of artefact is related to the manufacture of woollen fabrics as part of Iron Age domestic crafts (Cunliffe, 2005, 287)

Struck flint by Steve Ford

A small assemblage of struck flint was recovered from a sieved sample from pit 701 (1151). It comprised just six spalls (pieces less than 20x20mm) and all were patinated a blueish grey.

The significance of these flints is unclear. In areas of the country where good flint is easily obtainable, such small pieces are usually regarded as debitage and that is what they are considered to be here. These finds were also recovered from a feature of Early Iron Age date which is a period at which flint tools are finally superceded by ones made of iron (Ford *et al.* 1984). The isolated location of these pits and yet the rich pottery collection as a whole are intriguing and the little collection of flints adds to the puzzlement.

Saddle quern by Cristina Mateos

Half of a saddle quern made from sandstone came from pit 708 deposit (1163), weighting 3585g. The maximum length preserved is 121mm with a maximum thickness of 160mm.

Animal bone by Ceri Falys

A small assemblage of animal bone was recovered from pits 701 (1151) and 707 (1160). Weighing a total of 9.5g, just four fragments of bone were present for analysis (Appendix 4 Table A4.1). The fragments of unburnt animal bone were all found in deposits that also contained varying amounts of burnt bone. The preservation of the bone was poor, as the cortical bone surfaces were significantly eroded and etched, which rendered the bones mottled and striated in appearance. A moderate degree of fragmentation was also noted. The poor preservation hindered element and species identification of the remains. The only identifiable fragments were three pieces of a 'medium-sized' (sheep goat or pig) long bone shaft, from pit 707 (1160). It was not possible to identify the fragment of bone recovered from pit 701 (1151).

Burnt bone by Ceri Falys

Small amounts of burnt bone were recovered from four pits (Appendix 4 Table A4.2). Weighing 113g, a total of 135 fragments of burnt bone were present for analysis. Overall, the bone was well preserved, with generally dense textures. The degree of fragmentation varied between contexts, as did the colour of the bone present. The

maximum post-excavation fragment sizes ranged between 15.3mm (pit 707) and 72.7mm (710), although pieces of bone measuring larger than 20cm in length were uncommon.

The colour of bone differed both within and between deposits, with hues of black, grey and white recorded (Table A4.2). Such variation in colour indicates the bones were subjected to varying temperatures during the heating process, ultimately resulting in different levels of oxidation of the organic components within the bone. Holden *et al.* (1995a and b) found that charred bone (black) resulted from exposure to temperatures up to approximately 300^0C, while grey indicated the incomplete oxidation of the organic components of the bone, by reaching temperatures up to 600^0C. Pieces of bone that were white in colour indicated the bone had been exposed to temperatures in excess of 600^0C, resulting in the complete oxidation the organic components.

Osteological analysis was undertaken for all fragments in attempt to identify the skeletal elements present, as well as the animal species of origin. As employed during analysis of non-burnt bone, fragments were initially allocated to general animal size categories (i.e. large, medium, and small). Wherever possible, subsequent identification of element/side and animal of origin was made using reference to Hillson (1992).

The majority of fragments could not be identified to element or species of origin The exception to this was the larger assemblage of burnt bone from pit 710 (1165), which revealed the presence of a minimum of one cow and one sheep/goat. The cow was represented by two fragments of horn core, and a sheep/goat was indicated by the distal end of a metacarpal. No further information could be retrieved from the small assemblage of burnt bone.

Worked antler by Cristina Mateos

A worked antler was recovered from pit 710 (1165). It is a possible handle of a weaving comb with a rectangular head (maximum length preserved 49mm, weighing 0.9g) with an oval section of 7mm thickness. It is broken on one edge and it has fired marks. One of the sides of the head is broken too. The breakage predated the fire marks. The surfaces are polished.

The pottery recovered from the same deposit provided a date of Early Iron Age. Bone weaving combs are a distinctive Iron Age form (Hodder and Hedges 1977) and very similar combs have been discovered in Danebury Iron Age Hillfort (Cunliffe 2003, 134), Glastonbury Lake Village (Tuohy 2001, 162) or Land at Recreation Way Mildenhall Suffolk (Havard and Holt 2012, 31).

Charred Plant Remains By Elspeth St. John-Brooks

Soil sampling was implemented during this excavation on deposits which were assessed as having a chance of paleoenvironmental preservation such as waterlogged deposits, those at the bottom of features or those with evidence of charring or charred blackened material. In total 10 samples were taken from contexts found in a cluster of pits. In total 7 of these samples produced palaeoenvironmental remains from 6 pits in all (701, 702, 703, 707/709, 708 and 710).

Samples were floated and sieved using standard flotation practices with a 0.25mm flot mesh and the resultant flots air dried. The dry flots were then passed through 50mm, 25mm and 10mm sieves and any charcoal fragments of large enough size were fractured using a blade for species identification. These fractured fragments and any seeds were then examined with a hand lens at x8 magnification and under a lower powered microscope at magnifications between x50 and x1000. Identifications was carried out using various sources (Jacomet 2006; Schweingruber 1990; Stace 2010; Zohary and Hopf 2000) and online resources (http://www.woodanatomy.ch/ and http://www.plantatlas.eu/za.php). Both charcoal and a vesicular carbonised material were identified, the results can be found in Appendix 5.

No individual seeds or associated material (i.e. chaff) were found in any of the samples from the site. The only seeds identified were a few found, in a small cluster, in a large lump of carbonised vesicular material which has been suggested to be 'bread'. This material was found in five fills across 3 pits. The larger lumps have what looks to be a chaff like material along with Barley (*Hordeum sp*.) seeds (at least three) embedded within the matrix from pit 708. These larger lumps are the most convincing material to be a food stuff or 'bread'. If this is 'bread', or food stuff material, the lack of loose individual seeds suggests the material must have been brought in and not prepared at the site. A broken saddle quern stone was also found in pit 708 however there is no evidence currently linking the presence of this quern for the processing grain at this location and therefore if it has any association with the carbonised vesicular material found within these pits. A large number of much smaller carbonised fragments were identified, these had a vesicular structure and were very light weight just like the larger lumps from pit 708. Radiocarbon dating showed this material had a date of 795-748 cal BC.

Similar 'bread' or potential food was identified at the extensive Neolithic and Bronze Age site at Yarnton (located *c.* 35km to the northeast) but there was radiocarbon dated to between 3640-3150 cal BC (Hey *et al.* 2016: 280). Much closer to this site at Bowling Green Farm (located 2.5km to the east) an excavation at Coxwell Road, Faringdon (Weaver and Ford 2005) also identified a 'bread' type material, also containing broken Barley grains, this consisted of one lump from a pit which came from a cluster of pits. The charred remains were poorly

preserved on this site with only seeds found in two samples and very little charcoal. This material was not radiocarbon dated and many of the pits were difficult to date. Coxwell Road was a multiphase site however some pits were found to have a similar date (Early Iron Age) to the carbonised material from Bowling Green Farm.

Charcoal was present in most of the samples taken, the charcoal was primarily Oak (*Quercus*) with a lower percentage of Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) fragments. Some of the fragments are relatively large (<2.5cm) and a number appear to have come from a single piece of wood as the characteristics including raw angle of breakage (along the transversal/tangential/radial section), the part of the tree in which the fragments look to originate from (e.g. pith, core or younger growth such as twigs) and general character suggest this could be refuse from a single event, once this event was finished the pits were then sealed.

This palaeoenvironmental assemblage appears to represent a secondary deposition of charred plant remains that is likely a result of intentional dumping. These pits appear to contain environmental refuse from an isolated event rather than material discarded from domestic continuous living activities that characteristically accumulate over time. As these remains are unlikely to represent a period with extended time depth (as the evidence implies this is more likely a snapshot of burning activity), it is not wise to make conclusions about the surrounding landscape from these remains alone as these will not be meaningful due to the small timescale and sample size. It is possible to express that the population at this time were likely favouring Oak and Ash trees for burning as these are both woods which burn well with Ash burning faster than Oak. Oak is renowned for its burning properties and was/has multiple uses both structural and for fire activities (Edlin 1949; Rossen and Olsen 1985). Both these species are examples of dryland loving trees and their presence indicates an oak-ash woodland close to the site.

Radiocarbon dating

Two samples of material for radiocarbon dating (charcoal from pit 707 and food residues from pit 708) were submitted to the Chrono Centre, Queens University Belfast for radiocarbon dating. Details of methodology and assessment of the reliability of the results are held in archive. The results presented in Appendix 6 were calibrated with (CALIB rev 8.2) used in conjunction with Stuiver and Reimer 1993, with data from IntCal 20 (Reimer *et al.* 2020) The calibrated date probabilities are expressed as the relative area under the curve at 2-sigma range (95.4% probability). The plot of the results presented as Chart 1 used OxCal4.4.4 (Bronk Ramsey 2021): differences between the calibrations are negligible. The statistically most probable dates have been highlighted (in **bold**) in Appendix 6 and this would place the two pits about a century or two apart in date,

although the two ranges overlap for most of their spans. However (see discussion in Conclusion below), archaeologically it is considered more likely that the two events dated were contemporary and it may be that the earlier part of the range for pit 707 is a more acceptable date on these grounds, albeit statistically less likely.

Conclusion

The archaeological recording action of Phase 6 of the Chinham Farm extension at Bowling Green Quarry revealed a low volume of archaeological features. A eight pits formed a small cluster in an area of 6m by 5m, with one outlier to the south and a notable lack of features in the whole remaining area of the site, with the exception of two small, undated pits by the western limit of the area.

The main cluster of pits itself shows some peculiar characteristics that are worthy of further discussion. The tight location of the cluster of pits, but with a lack of inter-cutting features, suggests that all of them were most likely the result of one single episode rather that repeated re-use of the same very specific location over a longer period. This hypothesis is confirmed by the presence of sherds belonging to the same vessels distributed over a minimum of 3 different pits. What is not certain is whether all the pits were dug as one single episode or some of them, if not all, had been dug in advance with the remaining pits open shortly before the intentional filling of central pit 708. Primary deposits recorded in pits 703, 707 and 710 suggest a natural deposition, with yellowish brown sandy or silty clay deposits with limestone inclusions but sterile in terms of finds, predating later intentional deposits relatively rich in finds and most likely related to the intentional filling of pit 708. The location of the pits within the cluster seems also relatively organized with pit 708 occupying a central position, and the remaining features located around it. The connexion between the remaining pits in the cluster and pit 708 as its central element is therefore evident though their nature or significance most likely differed.

The deposits within pit 708 were deliberately placed with a charcoal-rich (but lacking in charred seeds) deposit carefully covered by layers of placed pottery and fired clay and finally sealed by a thin soil deposit at its top. This carefully built up filling process is not recorded in any of the remaining pits of the cluster where the pottery sherds, even those belonging to the same vessels as in pit 708, seem to have fallen in or accidentally been pulled in along with the soil used to fill the pits. This difference in the filling process between pit 708 and the rest of the cluster may suggest a scenario in which a minimum of 20 pottery vessels were intentionally smashed in the proximity of the pits and used to build up the secondary deposit of the central pit of the cluster along with half a saddle quern, one spindle whorl and one fragment of an antler comb, following the deposition of a charcoal-rich deposit most likely result of cleaning of a fire pit or similar structure dedicated to cooking food.

After completion of this process and with pit 708 sealed, the rest of the cluster would have been backfilled though without the care and meaning dedicated to the former, and spare fragments of the smashed vessels pulled into the pits along with the sediment.

The meaning behind this process is not easy to assess, though it obviously represents something more symbolic than simply clearance of domestic refuse. Similar deposits have been recorded in two sites of slightly earlier date in Hampshire. At Roke Manor Farm Quarry in Romsey (Attard *et al.* 2021) one pit similar to pit 708 here was filled with four different deposits of which the bottom fill consisted of burnt silt and charcoal and the third deposit was a layer of intentionally placed pottery sherds and fired clay from a minimum of 18 vessels. A second parallel is provided by the excavation at Adanac Park near Southampton (Leivers and Gibson 2011) where one pit contained large chunks of pottery flat on its base and against the sides, as being used as lining. As in pit 708 a large quern, complete in this case, was placed within the deposit which also contained traces of burnt animal bone and cereals. Radiocarbon dates for these deposits provided a date of 1125-969 cal BC for Roke Manor and 1050-800 cal BC and 1270-1040 cal BC for Adanac Park, both of them markedly earlier than the radiocarbon date obtained from pit 708 (795-748 cal BC) which along with the radiocarbon date of 651-545 cal BC (or earlier) obtained from pit 707 suggest a date within the very early stages of the Early Iron Age for the pits at Bowling Green Quarry. If we are correct in seeing the pit cluster as a single episode (or very nearly so) then the earlier date for UBA44595 (pit 707) may be preferred, although it carries only half the probability of the later date (Appendix 6). If we take it as established that the pits were all filled within a year or two of one another, this event could have been in the narrow range 779–748 cal BC, but in fact the probabilistic nature of radiocarbon dating and the difficulties with the calibration for this period equally allows the event to fall almost anywhere within the much wider range of 779–566 cal BC.

Davies (2018, 63) regards these deposits as associated with the abandonment of houses on the deaths of the inhabitants. Although this interpretation can explain the deposits from sites such as Roke Manor or Adanac Park which were located within Late Bronze Age settlements, the lack of any other evidence of an occupation site in the vicinity of the pit cluster from Bowling Green (or anywhere within the 13ha of the quarry opened so far) hardly allows such a hypothesis here. Previous phase of work in the quarry have revealed just two pits further pits with small quantities of Iron Age pottery (one of those was part of a small cluster, whose other pits were undated) but nothing resembling an occupation site, nor resembling the nature of the cluster here.

Isolated clusters of a small number of features are relatively common in earlier prehistory and are usually considered the only remaining evidence of temporary dwellings of mobile communities, but they become rare

towards the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age. A parallel of these small isolated clusters of pits can be found in the excavation at Moulsford Preparatory School in Oxfordshire (Ford *in press*) where a small cluster of inter-cutting pits was recorded with no other occupation related deposits nearby. A radiocarbon assay from one of these pits returned a date of 770-533 cal BC similar to those from the pits at Bowling Green, though differed from those and the parallels mentioned above in the lack of intentionally built up pottery deposits which represent the central element of the activity recorded here.

Perhaps a hypothesis for the reason behind the significance of the deposits in pit 708 can be extracted from the combination of finds recovered during the excavation. Although in general these represent the typical assemblage from occupation sites resulting from the clearance of domestic structures, the intentional deposition of the different fills of pit 708 can hardly been explained in such terms, nor the large number of vessels deposited within the pit. The nature of the vessels is significant too - jars, bowls and cups, all intended for drinking/eating. Intentional charcoal rich deposits along with traces of burnt and unburnt animal bones (and here, exceptionally bread), intentionally dumped within pits which were later intentionally sealed have been considered at Iron Age occupation sites such as Codford Circle on Salisbury Plain (Allen and Gardiner 2006) as evidence of feasting which implied a deliberate sequence of events that included the digging of at least one pit, the dumping of food related waste and its deliberate sealing. Whether this activity was part of normal settlement activities or represents more symbolic and ceremonial feasting events is uncertain.

Again the main difference between Codford Circle and the deposits recorded in Bowling Green is the lack of evidence for a settlement in the site which may suggest a more symbolic reason here. A purpose for this can be suggested by the combination of charred bread, half quern stone and the oven wall fragments which seem to evidence the symbolic deposit within the pit of tokens representing the different stages in the production of staple food, in this case bread, as part of a small symbolic ceremony or sequence of ceremonies whose full meaning and symbolism remain beyond our understanding.

The importance of feasting in prehistory has generally been discussed in relation to the later Iron Age, on which there is now a substantial literature (Fitzpatrick 2007; Hayden 2009; Murray 1995; Ralph 2007). In part this may be because sites from the end of the period are more susceptible to precise dating, and produce more material culture, than those earlier n prehistory. This discussion tends to focus on the meat content of feasts, and wine for the very end of the period (Carver 2001), rather than cereal (whether consumed as bread or as beer, or both), but this may reflect differential preservation of the evidence. The tiny quantity of animal bones here does not allow us to posit a meat component to any feast (and the identifiable bones were in any case non-meat-

bearing, a horn core and foot bones). A re-examination of evidence from Danebury, however, suggests that we tend to over-estimate Iron Age meat consumption (Jones 2007 based on Grant 1984; 2002) even at supposed 'central places' like hillforts, and this site might provide an antidote with its apparent emphasis on the importance of the daily bread and perhaps a more domestic scale of feast. It is perhaps not too fanciful to envisage the deliberate filling of pit 708 as a main part of a feasting event, and the surrounding pits representing clearing away of the debris (the morning after?).

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APPENDIX 1: Feature details.

Cut	*Fill (s)*	*Type*	*Date*	*Dating evidence*
700	1150	Pit	Undated	-
701	1151	Pit	Undated	-
702	1152, 1153, 1154	Pit	Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age	Pottery
703	1155, 1156	Pit	Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age	Pottery
704	1157	Pit	Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age	Pottery
705	1158	Pit	Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age	Pottery
706	1159	Pit	Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age	Pottery
707	1160, 1161	Pit	Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age	Pottery and C14
708	1163, 1164	Pit	Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age	Pottery and C14
709	1162	Pit	Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age	Stratigraphy
710	1165, 1166, 1167	Pit	Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age	Pottery

APPENDIX 2: Pottery

Table A2.1. Pottery catalogue by fabric (wt in g).

		O1		S1		S2		SG1		SG2		ShS1		ShS2		Total		
Cut	*Deposit*	*no*	*wt*	*no*	*wt*	*no*	*wt*	*no*	*wt*	*no*	*wt*	*no*	*wt*	*no*	*wt*	*no*	*wt*	*Mean*
702	1154					3	5.0									3	5.0	1.7
703	1155					1	6.0	5	22.0	5	8.0			1	66.0	12	102.0	8.5
704	1157							2	17.0							2	17.0	8.5
705	1158							4	14.0							4	14.0	3.5
706	1159											6	20.5			6	20.5	3.4
707	1160	17	115.0	24	64.0	6	51.0	16	400.0	37	488.0	247	3211.0	53	1414.0	400	5743.0	14.4
708	1163			143	522.0	62	1454.0	81	2378.0	6	16.0	709	11516.0			1001	15886.0	15.9
	1164			23	153.0	3	10.0	23	520.0	15	43.0	66	875.0	1	34.0	131	1635.0	12.5
710	1165			30	19.0	1	128.0	2	54.0			115	325.0			148	526.0	3.6
	1166									5	17.0	3	2.0			8	19.0	2.4
Total		17	115.0	220	758.0	76	1654.0	133	3405.0	68	572.0	1146	15949.5	55	1514.0	1715	23967.5	14.0

Table A2.2. Vessel forms, rim variables and base forms

Vessel forms	
J7 Jar. High round-shouldered with everted rim. **J8** Jar. Rounded girth. May have lug/handle. **J9** Jar. Angular shoulder, neck cordon **J11** Jar. High angular shoulder, upright or near upright rim **J12** Jar. High angular shoulder with everted rim	**B33** Bowl. Globular **B37** Bowl. Tripartite, high angular shoulder, upright or near upright rim **B38** Bowl. Tripartite, flared/everted rim, -high, angular shoulder **B40** Bowl. Tripartite, upright or near upright rim, medium height, angular shoulder **C54** Cup. Tripartite

Rim variables			
Attitude	Form	Finish	Neck
1 Upright/near upright	A simple	1 Rounded	a None
2 Low outward curve	B Outwardly rolled	2 Flattened	b Constricted
3 Low inward curve	C Inwardly rolled	3 Tapered, point	c Short, concave
4 Low outward turn	D In/outwardly rolled	4 Tapered, round	d Short, upright straight
5 Low inward turn	E Outwardly extruded	5 Tapered, flat	e Medium, concave
6 High outward curve	F Inwardly extruded	6 Internal bevel, straight	f Medium, upright straight
7 High inward curve	G In/outwardly extruded	7 Internal bevel, convex	g Long, concave
8 High outward turn	H Outwardly expanded	8 Internal bevel, concave	h Long, upright straight
9 High inward turn	I Inwardly expanded	9 External bevel, straight	z Absent
0 Absent	J In/outwardly expanded	10 External bevel, convex	
	K Thickened	11 External bevel, concave	
	Z Absent	0 Absent	

Shoulder forms and decoration	
S4 Angular, finger-tipped S7 Angular, impressed S8 Rounded, finger-tipped S11 Rounded, tool impressed	S12 Plain, round S13 Plain, angular S14 Rounded, incised horizontal line(s) S15 Angular, incised horizontal line(s)

Base forms	
BS5.1 Simple, sharp angle	BS5.5a Expanded, rounded
BS5.4 Simple, splayed	BS5.5b Expanded, tapering
BS5.5 Expanded, undetermined	BS7 Concave lower wall above base angle

Table A2.3. Distribution of weight percentages of sherds identified to vessel by context

				Vessel part form				*707*	*708*		*710*	
Illus	*Entry*	*Fabric*	*Type*	*Rim*	*Shoulder*	*Base*	*Total wt (g)*	*1160*	*1163*	*1164*	*1165*	*1166*
1	2, 15, 24	SG1	J7	8A1j	S14	BS5.1	3298	12	72	16		
2	5, 18, 25	S2	J8	1A4e	S12		1515	3	96	1		
3	6, 17	ShS1	J9	8A2j	S4		3677		99	1		
4	7	ShS1	J11	1A12f	S4		495		100			
5	1, 14	ShS1	J12	8A1j	S4	BS5.1	5416		87	13		
6	10	ShS1	J12	8A1j	S4		1867		100			
7	11	ShS1	J12	8D1j	S4		228		100			
8	12, 21, 23	SG2	B33	6A1e	S11	B5.4	264	78	6	16		
9	4, 47	S1	B37	1A1f	S7		237		92		8	
10	3, 16	S1	B40	1A1f	S7	BS5.4	457		67	33		
11	27	ShS2	J11	1J2f	S4		1491	95	5			
	28	ShS1	J11	1B1f	S4		1593	100				
12	26	ShS2	J12	8A1e	S4	BS5.1	1414	100				
13	34	S1	B38	8A4j	S15		18	100				
14	33	SG2	C54	8A4c	S13		19	100				
15	53	SG2	C54	8A4c	S13		17					100

Table A2.4. Association of fabrics with part forms not identified to vessel type

	ShS1	ShS2	SG1	SG2	S1	S2	O1
1A1f	1						
1B2f	1	1					
8A2j	1						
8A4j				1			
BS5.1	2						
BS5.4			1			1	
BS5.5							1
S8	1						
S13			1				
S15					1		

Table A2.5. Decoration identified to vessel

			Rim			Neck						Neck/shoulder				Shoulder					Girth
			top	outer edge			incised line (s)		Impressions		cordon	incised lines		impressed				incised line (s)	incisions	Impressions	Impressions
Illus	Form	Finish	f/t or cable	f/t	oblique incisions	f/t	horizontal	vertical	oblique	pin	f/t	diaper	diamonds	upright	circles	looped lug	f/t	horizontal	oblique	wedge	oblique
1	J7	S					1					1		1				1			
2	J8	B														1					
3	J9			1							1						1				
4	J11			1													1				
11	J11		1			1											1				
N/A	J11					1											1				
5	J12					1											1				
6	J12					1											1				
7	J12							1											1		
12	J12					1											1				
8	B33	B							1												1
9	B37	B								1					1					1	
13	B38	B					1											1			
10	B40	S					1						1						1		
14	C54	S			1																
15	C54	S																			

B = Burnished. S = Smoothed

Catalogue of illustrated sherds (Figs 5 and 6; Pl. 7))

1/E2 [708] (1163) SG1. Jar J7. Rim 8A1j, radius 125mm. Base BS5.1, radius 60mm. Wall thickness: 8mm. High rounded shoulder. Alternating blank and incised vertically arranged diaper pattern broken by four or more incised spacer lines bounded by two horizontal incised lines on neck and two to three incised lines on shoulder. Red-slipped exterior. (**V2**)

2/E1 [708] (1163) ShS1. Jar J12. Rim 8A1j, radius 123mm. Wall thickness: 11mm. High angular shoulder. Single rows of fingertip impressions below rim and on shoulder. (**V1**)

3/E26 [707] (1160) ShS2. Jar J12. Rim 8A1e, radius 87mm. Base 5.1, radius 50mm. Wall thickness: 10mm. Single rows of fingertip impressions immediately below rim and on shoulder.

4/E7 [708] (1163) ShS1. Jar J11. Rim 1A12f, radius 90mm. Wall thickness: 7-10mm. High angular shoulder. Single rows of fingertip impressions on outer rim and on shoulder.

5/E11 [708] (1163) ShS1. Jar J12. Rim 8D1j. Wall thickness: 10mm. High angular shoulder. Single rows of near upright incisions on neck and oblique incisions shoulder.

6/E10 [708] (1163) ShS1. Jar J12. Rim 8A1j, radius 70mm. Base 5.1, radius 52mm. Wall thickness: 8mm. High angular shoulder. Single rows of closely fingertip impressions at neck base and on shoulder.

7/E23 [707] (1160) SG2. Bowl B33. Rim 6A1e, radius 57mm. Base 5.4, radius 30 mm. Wall thickness: 7mm. Two very neatly executed rows of slanting elongated oval stabs at base of neck and on girth. Traces of white matter in some impressions. Varying preservation of high burnish.

8/E33 [707] (1160) SG2. Cup C54. Rim 8A4c, radius 35mm. Wall thickness: 7mm. Plain, angular shoulder.

9/E53 [710] (1166) SG2. Cup C54. Rim 8A4c, radius 35mm. Wall thickness: 6mm. Plain, angular shoulder.

10/E34 [707] (1160) S1. Bowl B38. Rim 8A4j. Wall thickness: 5mm. Pairs of incised horizontal lines at base of neck and on upper shoulder.

11/E6 [708] (1163) ShS1. Jar J9. Rim 8A1j, radius 150mm. Wall thickness: 10mm. Angular shoulder. Single rows of fingertip impressions on outer rim, shoulder and narrow neck cordon.

12/E5 [708] (1163) S2. Jar J8. Rim 1A4e, radius 86mm. Wall thickness: 9mm. Medium shoulder. Lug/handle attached by dowels on and below shoulder. Smoothed or burnished exterior. (**V5**)

13/E27 [707] (1160) ShS2. Jar J11. Rim 1J2f, radius 170mm. Wall thickness: 9mm. Irregular oblique impressions on rim top giving cabled effect and single rows of fingertip impressions immediately below rim and on shoulder.

14/E3 [708] (1163) (1164) S1. Bowl B40. Rim 1A1f, radius 87mm. Base BS5.4, radius 35.5mm. Wall thickness: 7mm. Medium shoulder. Single contiguous row of oblique incised line-filled diamonds bound by single incised horizontal line at the neck base and a row of opposed oblique short linear impressions, possibly fingernail, on the shoulder. (**V3**)

15/E4 [708] (1163) S1. Bowl B37. Rim 1A1f. Wall thickness: 5mm. High angular shoulder. Single close-set rows of 1mm diameter slanting circular stabs on neck and fine wedges on shoulder forming limits of a row concentric double circles on upper wall. Burnished exterior. (**V4**)

APPENDIX 3: Fired clay

Table A3.1. Classified fired clay morphology

Functional genus				
1 – Structural		2 – Portable (not used)		
A	B	C	D	
Outer wall	Inner wall	Mid-wall	Mixed	
a	b	c	d	
Oxidised	Reduced	Oxidised & reduced	Undetermined	
Relationships: Face to face				
1	2	3	4	5
Parallel	Rightangle	Acute	Oblique	Multiple
Relationships: Perforation to face				
4	4	4	4	
Oblique	Oblique	Oblique	Oblique	

Table A3.2. Summary of fragments by weight (g) structural components

		Outer wall		Inner wall			Mid-wall			Mixed/indet		Percentages			
		1Aa	1Ac	1Ba	1Bb	1Bc	1Ca	1Cb	1Cc	1Dc	1Dd	Outer	Inner	Mid	Indet
702	1154	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
703	1155	16.0	57.0	196	-	423.0	153.0	113.0	537.0	-	-	4.9	41.4	53.7	0.0
708	1163	305.0	540.0	294.0	11.0	739.0	393.0	-	1700	267.0	6477.0	13.0	9.7	19.5	62.9

APPENDIX 4: Animal bone

Table A4.1: Inventory of animal bone excluding burnt bone.

Cut	*Deposit*	*No frags*	*Wt (g)*	*Medium*	*Unidentified*	
701	1151	1	0.5	-	1	poor preservation
707	1160	3	9.0	3	-	"medium" long bone shaft fragments

Table A4.2: Inventory of burnt bone.

Cut	*Deposit*	*No frags*	*Wt (g)*	*Colour*	*Max frag size (mm)*	
701	1151	2	1	charred black	29.2	non-descript fragments
707	1160	6	2	white	15.3	small, non-descript fragments
708	1163	7	6	white	35.2	-
710	1165	106	99	charred black, grey, white	72.7	"large" rib shafts, cow horn core(s), "medium" proximal phalanx, distal metacarpal (sheep/goat)
710	1166	14	5	charred black, white	29.2	long bone shaft fragments

APPENDIX 5: Environmental

Table 1. Plant Macrofossils: Charcoal

Cut	701	702	703	707	710	710	710
Deposit	1100	1154	1153	1160	1165	1166	1166
Sample	1100	1101	1102	1103	1105	1106	1107
Feature Type	Pit	Pit	Pit	Pit	Pit	Pit	Pit
No. frags.	4	24	13	25	100+	100+	100+
Fraxinus excelsior/Ash						9	18
Quercus/Oak	2	18	3	20	100	91	82
Indeterminate	2	6	10	5			

Table 2. Carbonised Organic Material: Possible 'Bread'

Cut .	707	708	708	710	710	710
Deposit	1160	1163	1164	1165	1166	1168
Sample	1103	1105	1104	1105	1106	1107
Feature Type	Pit	Pit	Pit	Pit	Pit	Pit
Weight (g)	2	6	3	<1	2	<1

APPENDIX 6: Radiocarbon dating (all given at 2-sigma, most probable date(s) highlighted.

Lab ID	*Feature*	*Context*	*Material*	*F14C*	*Radiocarbon Age (BP)*	*Calibrated Age (BC)*	*Probability (%)*
UBA-44595	Pit 707	1160	Charcoal	0.7311±0.0022	2516±24	779-731 705-703 697-663 **651-545**	0.239 0.001 0.190 **0.570**
UBA-44596	Pit 708	1163	Burnt food	0.7285±0.0021	2545±23	**795-748** 688-665 643-566	**0.522** 0.148 0.330

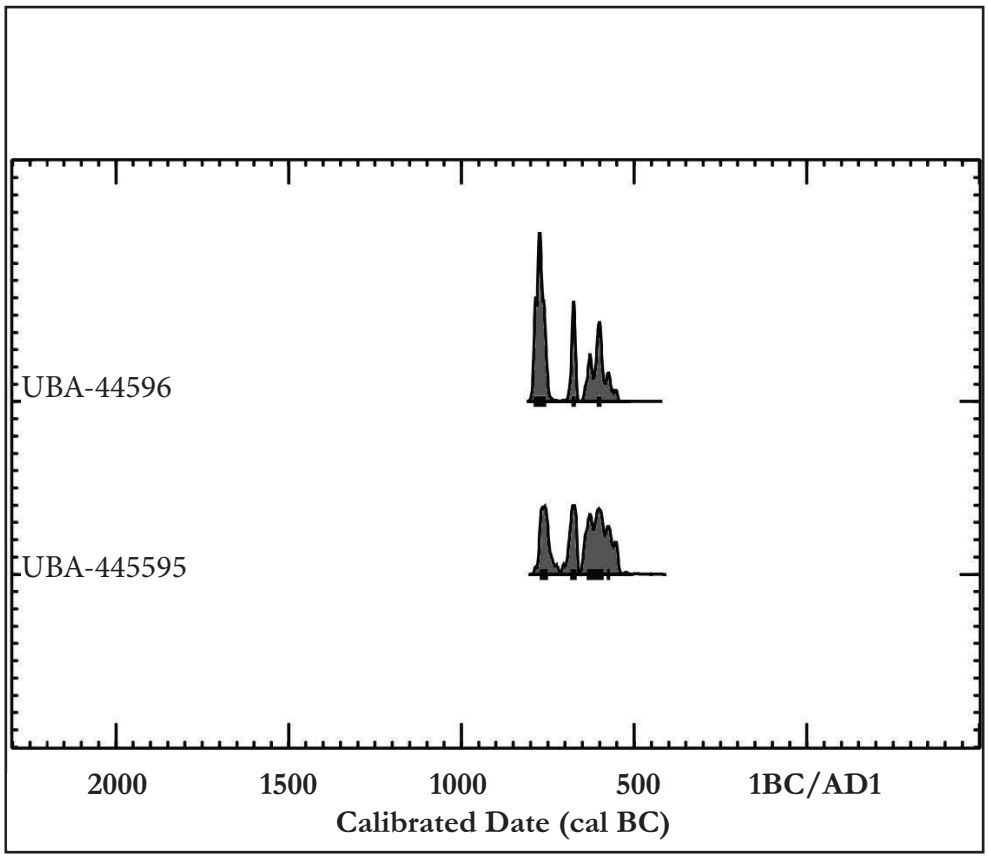

Chart 1. Plots of radiocarbon calibrations using OxCal 4.4.4 (Bronk Ramsey 2021) (data from Appendix 6)

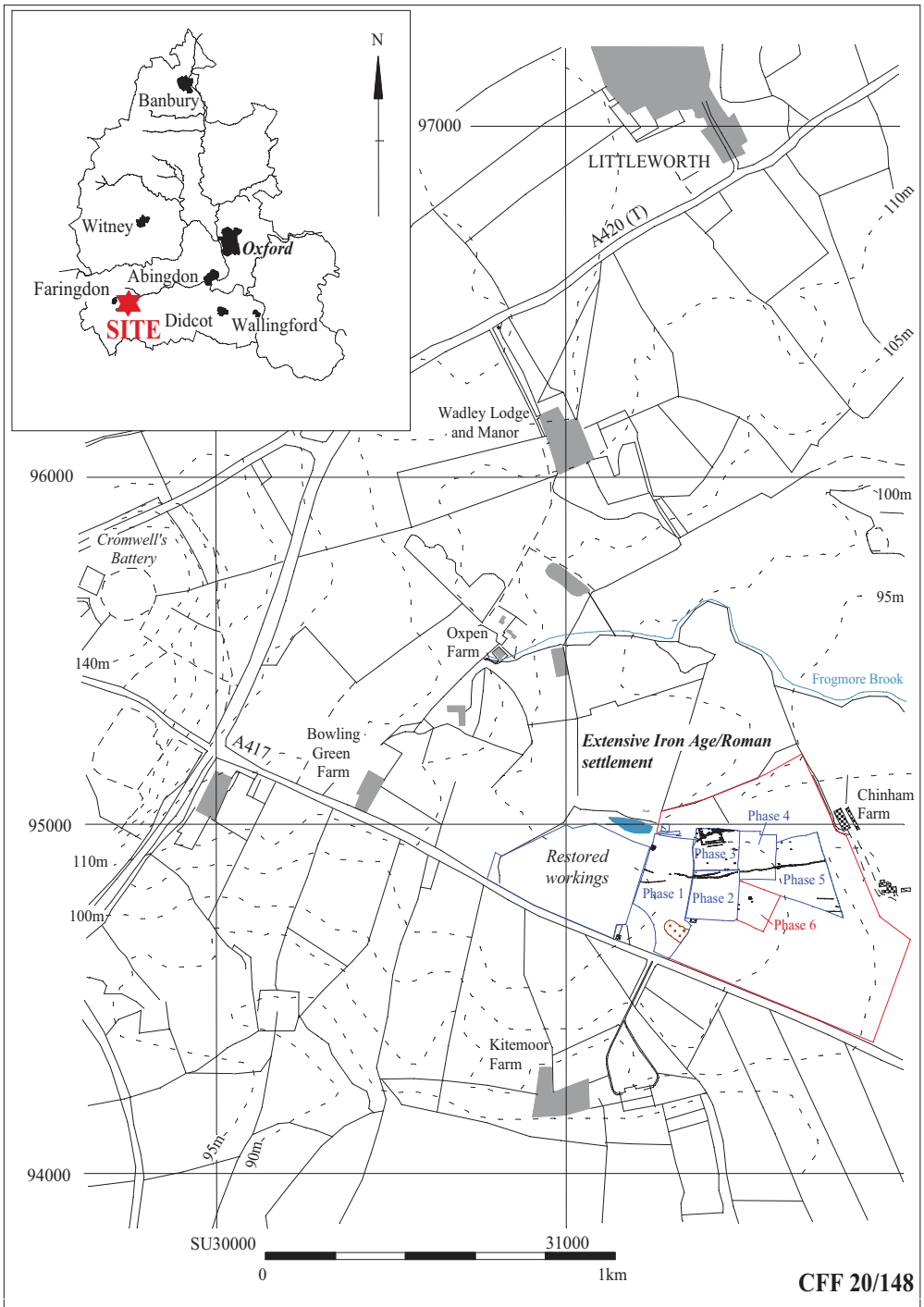

Figure 1. Location of Bowling Green Quarry showing previous and current phase.

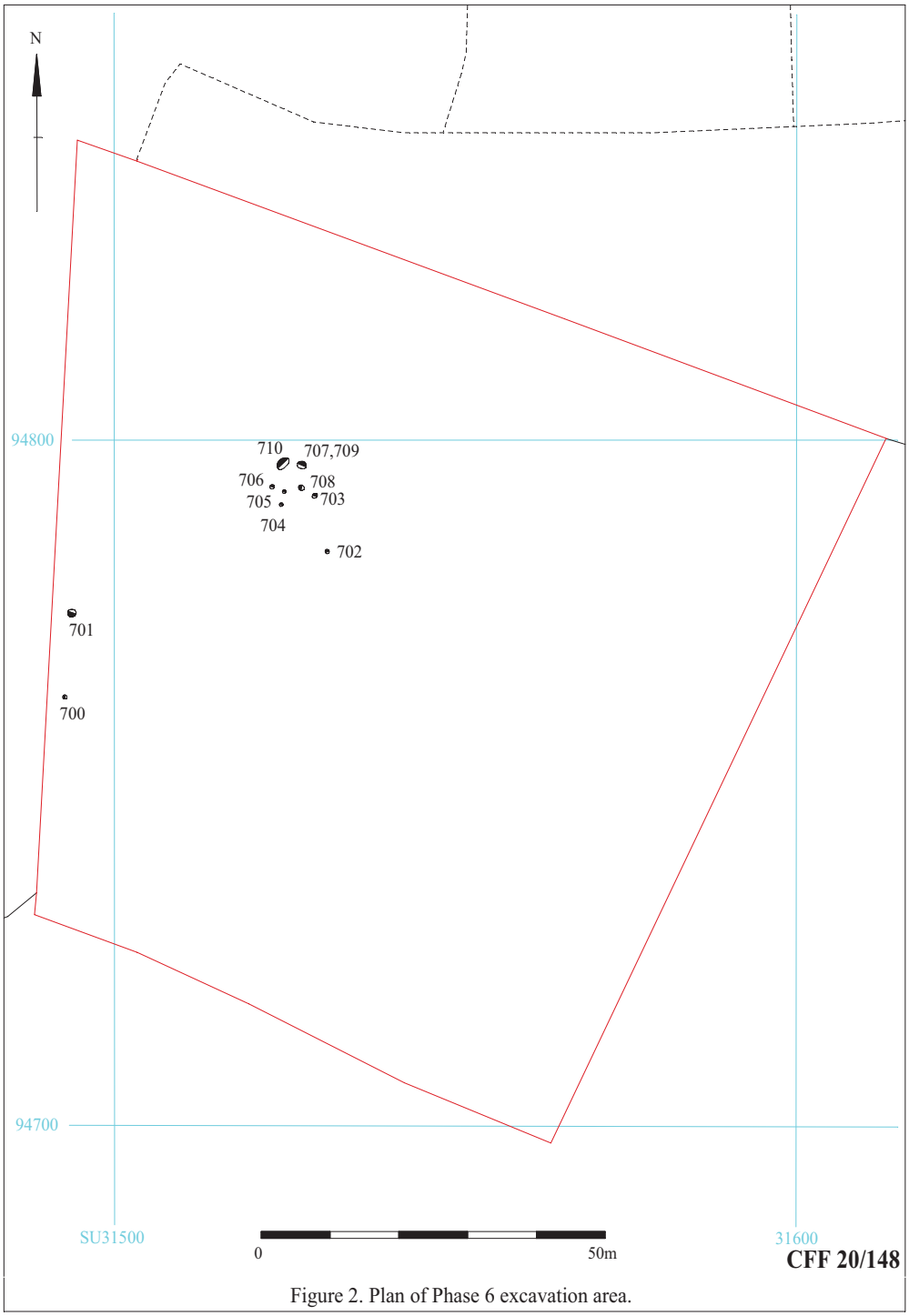

Figure 2. Plan of Phase 6 excavation area.

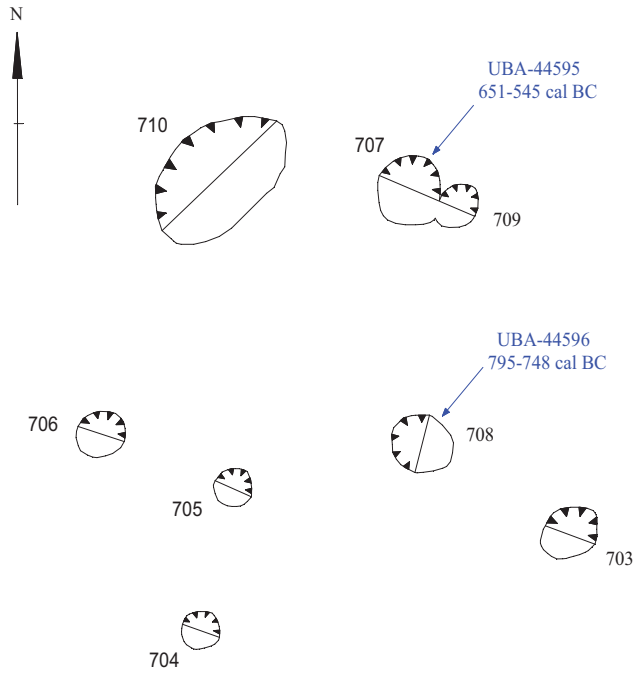

Figure 3. Detail plan of pit cluster.

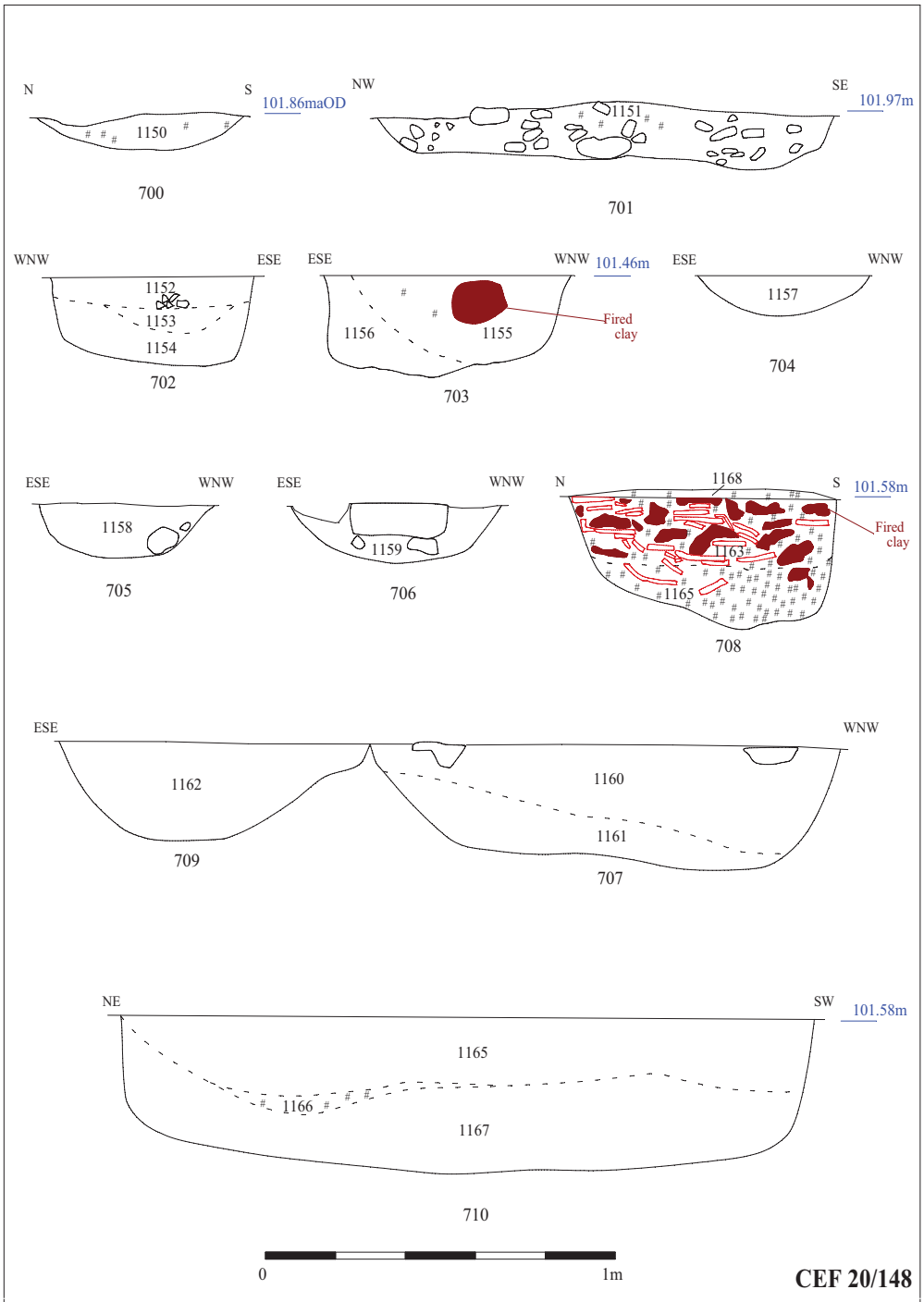

Figure 4. Sections.

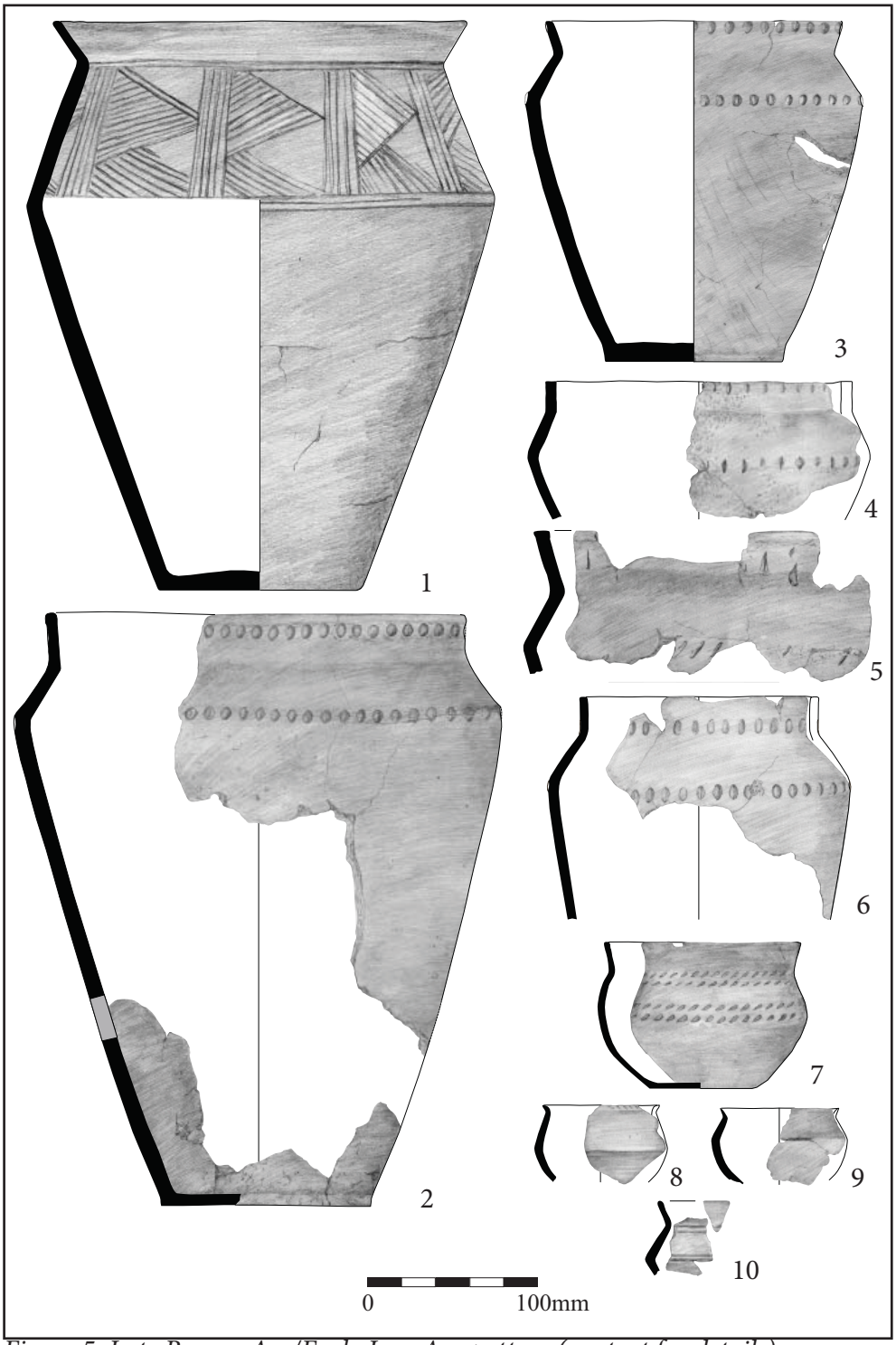

Figure 5. Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age pottery (see text for details).

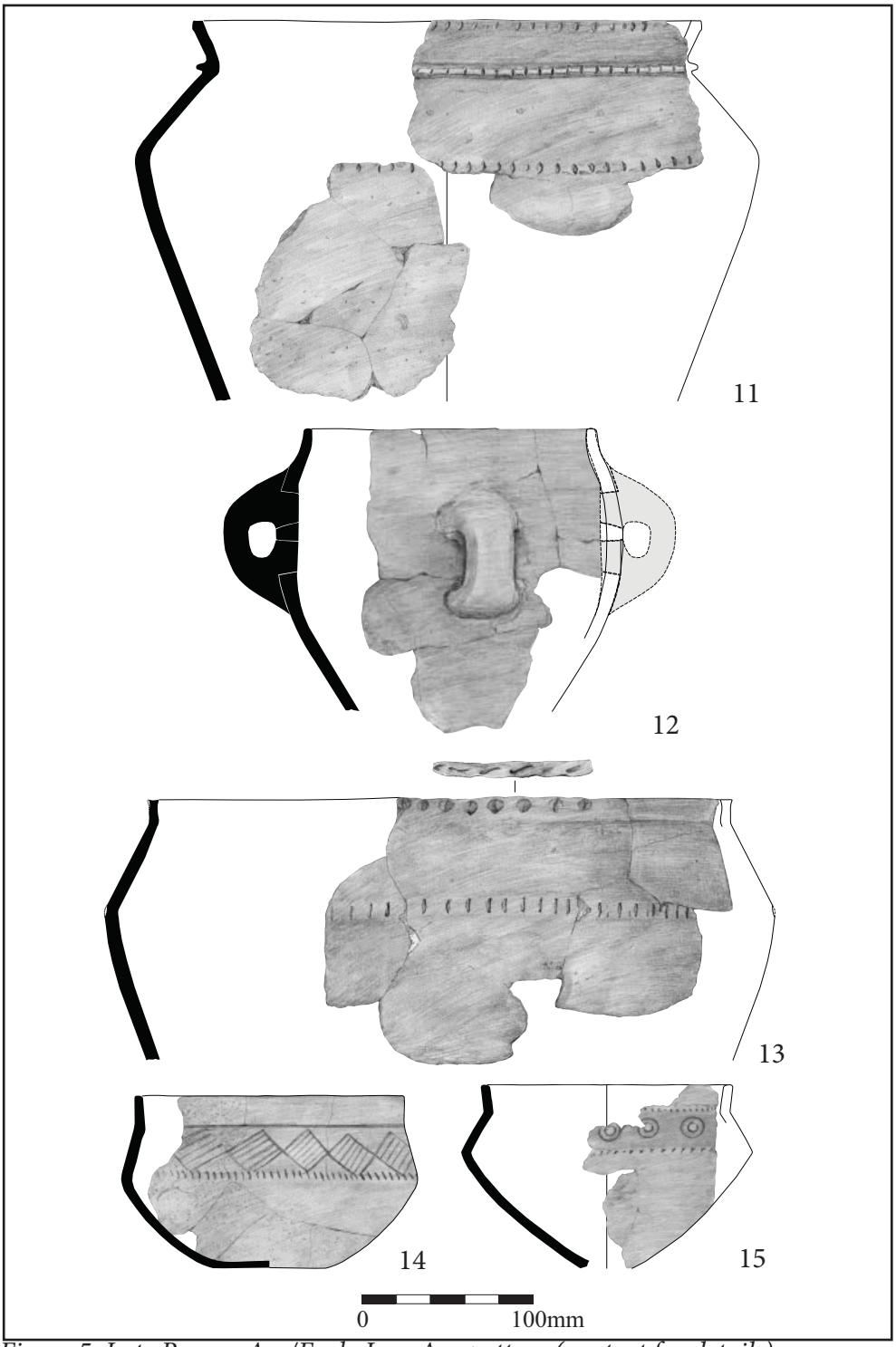

Figure 5. Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age pottery (see text for details).

Plate 1. Pit 702, looking south east, Scales: 0.5m and 1m.

Plate 2. Pits 707 and 709, looking sout west, Scales: 2m, 0.3m and 1m.

Plate 3. Pit 708, looking east, Scales: 0.5m and 0.3m.

Plate 4. Pit 708 after excavation of deposit 1168, looking east,
Scales: 0.5m and 1m.

Plate 5. Pit 707, pottery in situ during excavation,
Scales: 0.1m.

Plate 6. Pit 710, layering of fills in section, looking south-east;
Scales: 0.5m, 0.3m.

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Chinham Farm Extension, Bowling Green Farm Quarry
Faringdon, Oxfordshire, 2021
Archaeological Recording Action
Plates 5 and 6.

THAMES VALLEY
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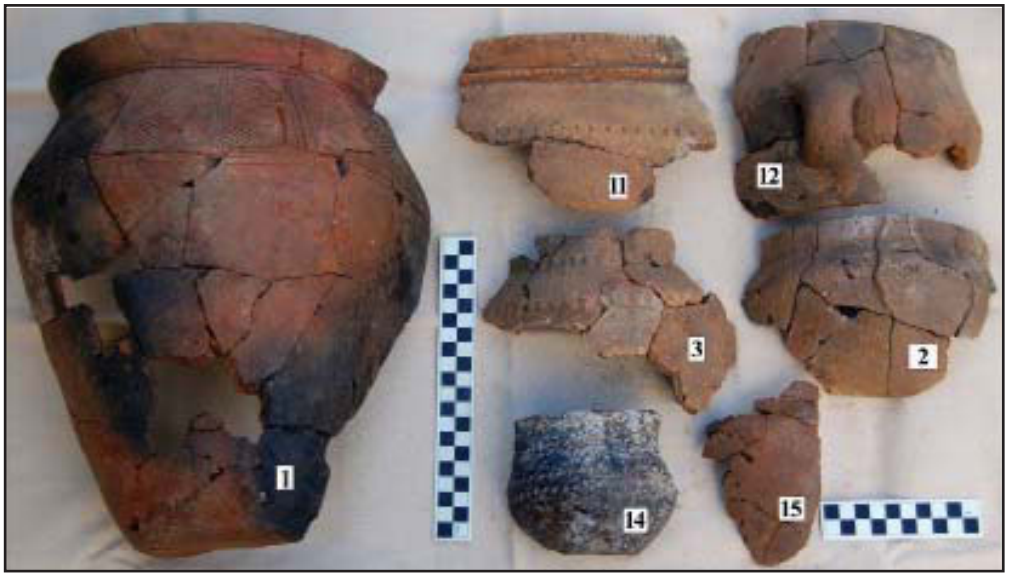

Plate 7. Selection of pottery and fired clay (see text for details), Scales: 0.2m and 0.1m (pottery); 0.1m and 0.05m (fired clay).

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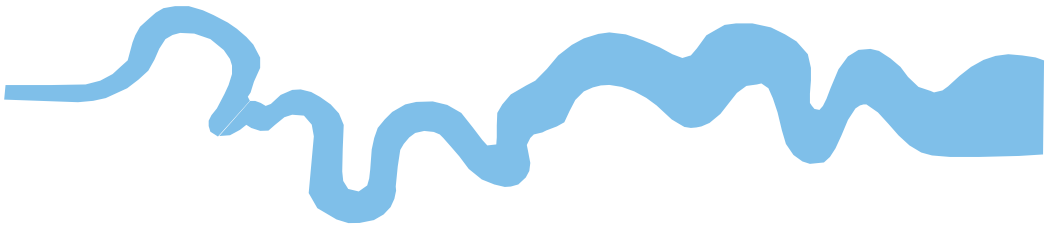
Faringdon, Oxfordshire, 2021
Archaeological Recording Action
Plate 7.

THAMES VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern	AD 1901
Victorian	AD 1837
Post Medieval	AD 1500
Medieval	AD 1066
Saxon	AD 410
Roman	AD 43
	AD 0 BC
Iron Age	750 BC
Bronze Age: Late	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower	2,000,000 BC



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