ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD NOTEBOOK 2020/2021

A RECORD OF THE PROJECTS OF THE;

BRIGHTON AND HOVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY FIELD UNIT

Contents

Introduction

The Covid pandemic stopped any field work, and other activities during the whole of 2020. It was a complete lockdown. The Society were able to visit a couple of locations, with safety precautions adhered to, to examine finds collected by people in their gardens, but little else happened.

It was in early 2021 that field work commenced. BHAS received an invitation from John Shepherd at Freshstart Portslade to sink a number of test pits in and around the Portslade Medieval manor house. A good number of the field unit participated in a number of activities including geophysics and excavation. The post excavation team were housed in tents, and provided the visiting public with information about the dig and the finds coming out.

It was in late June that the field unit returned to Rocky Clump. A new area was opened up measuring 15 metres square, with Brighton and Hove City Council providing the machinery to remove a good amount of the top soil. The top soil removal was limited as it was hoped to find evidence for a round house, and any encroachment into any terrace platform would have been detrimental to the recording. The excavations continued until October with a number of interesting features being revealed. The number of people participating in the excavations included a few new younger faces. The Young Archaeologist Clubs (YAC's), both Chailey and Brighton branches, came along to dig with the BHAS team.

During the difficult 2 years a number of miscellaneous items are recorded. Included are reports of collections of flintwork found by members of the public, and a request for a geophysical survey in Patcham, close to the location of recent Saxon and Medieval buildings. BHAS were asked to examine material removed from a mound in Stanmer village, and were sent details of some research focused around Millbank Wood in Stanmer.

BHAS had assisted with some small excavations at Roedean School in 2018. A report on those investigations were sent to BHAS by Richard Chamberlain, a then teacher at Reodean, for publication in the BHAS Field Notebooks.

Post excavation activities have included sorting, washing and the marking of finds, with a number of days schools in various subjects when permissible.

Hard copies of this report will be deposited at The Keep, Barbican House library and The National Monuments Record Office at Swindon. A hard copy will be retained by the BHAS archivist, and the Society's webmaster Mr Martin Devereux will create CD copies for interested parties and members of the BHAS field unit.

John Funnell 6th February 2023

An Interim Report on the Excavations at Rocky Clump, Stanmer Park, Brighton

Site Code: 500300

April – October 2021

Rocky Clump Excavations 2021

(The Personal notes and records of John Funnell)

Introduction

Excavations of the late Iron Age and Romano-British settlement site at Rocky Clump Stanmer were put on hold during the coronavirus pandemic in 2020. A return to site commenced in late June 2021 when the threat of infection and possible death was contained by the programme of inoculation. Despite there still being numerous cases being reported, the site, being outdoors, and large enough to create social distancing was considered to be viable and safe.

In the previous seasons of phase III excavations an enclosure on the south side of the copse at Rocky Clump appears to be an earlier phase of a much larger complex (Fig 1). Phase I of excavations was conducted in the 1950's located within the copse of trees. The investigations revealed a cemetery of 7 individuals, comprising of 5 adults and 2 younger adults (Gorton 1988). From 1993 onwards the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society conducted new excavations within the trees and northwards from the tree for about 45 metres lengthwise. These excavations are called phase II of the investigations at Rocky Clump and the report on that phase is imminent, awaiting a specialist report (Funnell). The site north of the trees appears to contain some elements of the late Iron Age in the form of pottery from a large ditch going northwards. This ditch was covered by a later flint floor surface. The stratigraphy and coin finds from both the early ditch and on the flint floor suggest the small farmstead was active up into the early 4th century AD. The site at Rocky Clump is proving to be quite extensive and having longevity covering nearly 4 centuries (Funnell 1999 – 2018).

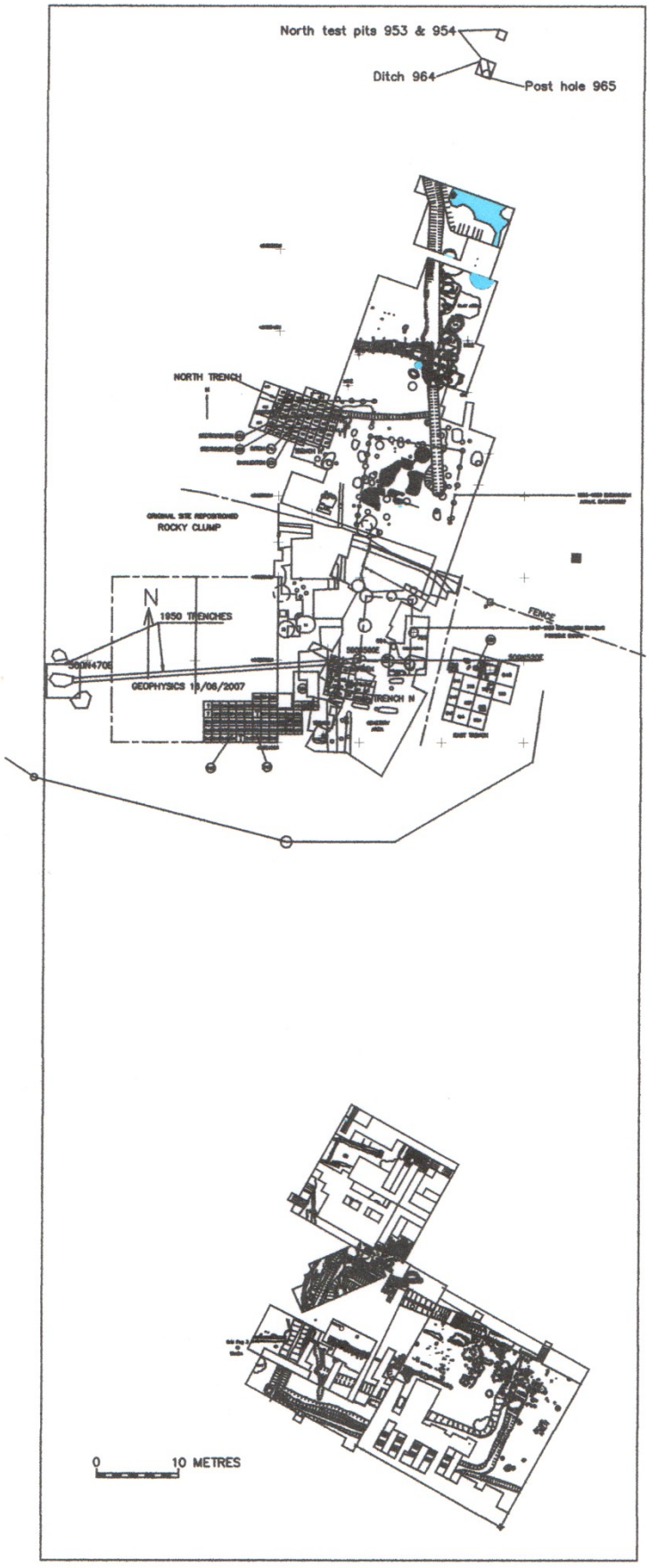


Fig 1. ROCKY CLUMP EXCAVATIONS DETAILS 1947–2021

In 2011 the excavations moved from the north field to the south field (TQ328 100) (Fig 2.) The elevation of the excavations is around the 152 metres OD, and is located on the south facing slope of a South Downland spur.

During the period 2011 to 2019 BHAS have investigated a large enclosure in the south field that had revealed a possible structure, hinted at by linear arrangements but disturbed flint nodules, a 4 posted granary building and an adjacent deep grain storage pit. A number of baby burials have been uncovered in the north boundary ditch, and another baby burial was discovered in a single small pit within the enclosure. (Funnell & Tolhurst 2019).

At the end of 2019 a number of test pits had been sunk in the south field, to investigate other geophysical anomalies. All of the test pits produced archaeology. There have been a number of geophysical surveys in both the north and south fields using resistivity and magnetometry all revealing numerous features which could be either archaeological or geological. The previous examination of the south field revealed numerous instances of pockets of clay with flint, vestiges of tertiary deposits. It is not easy to differentiate from the geophysical images natural geology and prehistoric interventions.

While all of the previous excavations have provided evidence for agricultural activity within a late Iron Age and early Romano-British period, the main missing element of this ‘settlement’ site is the lack of evidence for habitation. The enclosure excavated in 2018 and 2019 located a valuable food storage facility, this must ensure that any Iron Age round houses must be located very close by.

A meeting was held in February 2021 of the BHAS Field Unit leaders. The geophysical images were studied to try and determine where a round house could be located. Close to the north/west corner of the enclosure are a number of circular anomalies, but these features could be either archaeology or geology. The test pits conducted in 2019 tended to suggest archaeology.

A new area measuring 15 metres square was planned which would effectively investigate a number of the interesting anomalies (Fig 3.). In late June a professional GIS archaeologist from Archaeology South East set out the new co-ordinates for the site. ASE had previously set out the co-ordinates for the enclosure investigations.

In late June of 2021 a partial removal of top soil was conducted using a mechanical digger provided by Brighton and Hove City Council. It was decided not venture down to the natural chalk level, as this was ill defined, and it was important not to disturb any colluvial material displaced into the void of any abandoned round house terracing. It was anticipated that a slight terrace would have been created to provide a level surface. BHAS had experience of such terracing when they assisted with the excavations at the Downsview Bronze Age Settlement (Rudling et al 2002). The Downsview site is just south from Rocky

Clump over the adjacent hill. The top soil removal did reveal the natural chalk in a number of small locations.

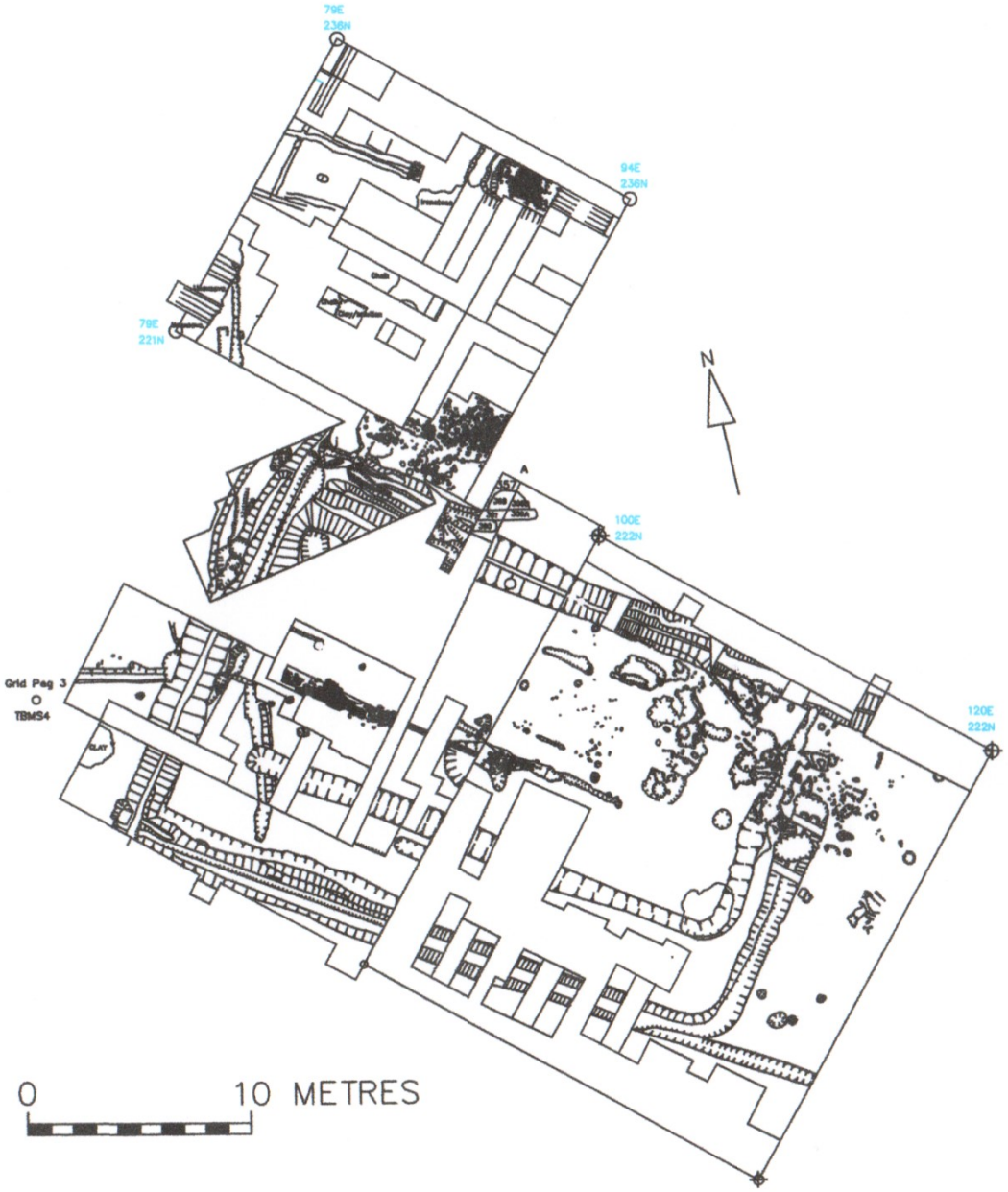


Fig 2. The south field

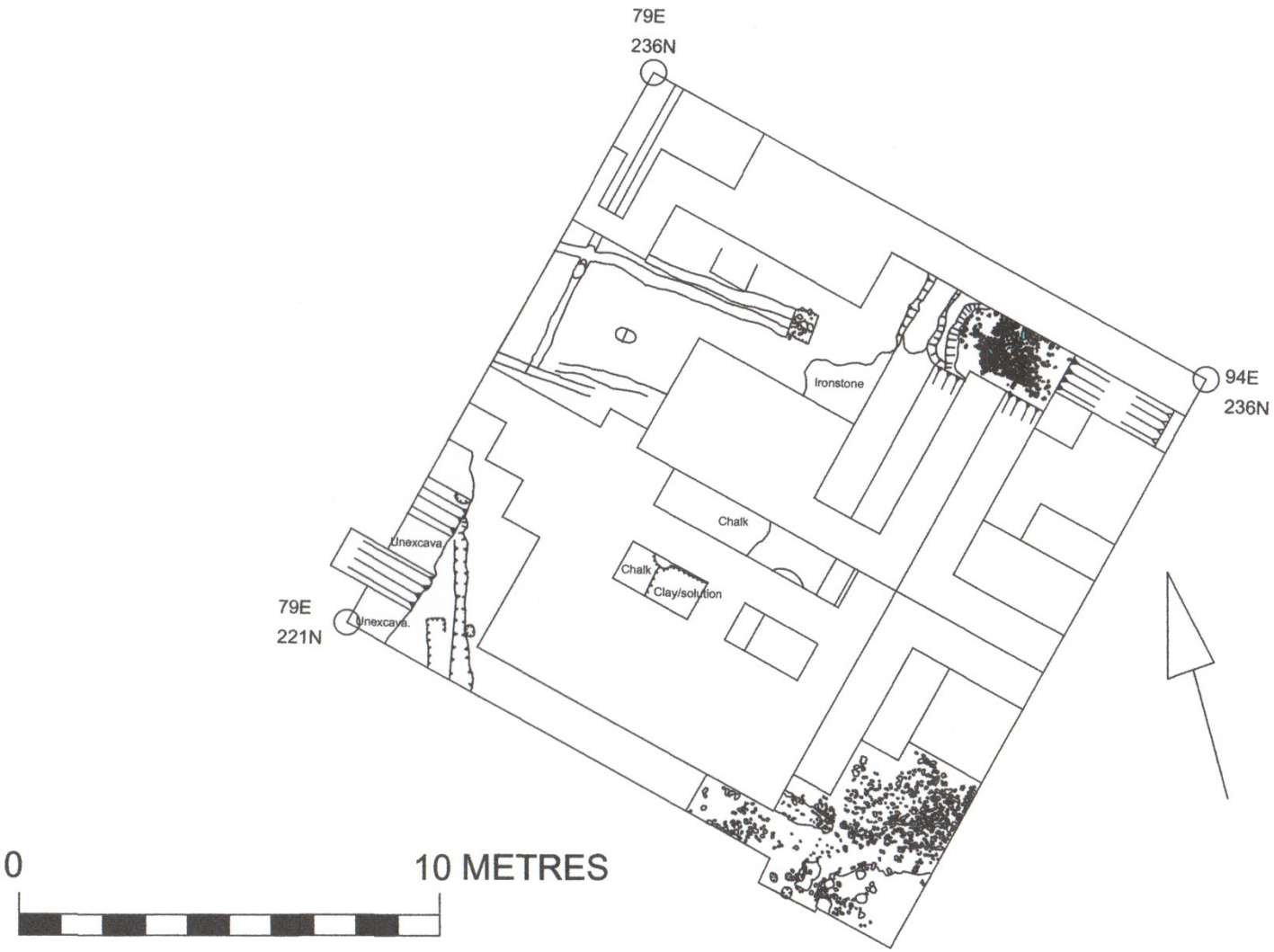


Fig 3. Excavation Area 2021

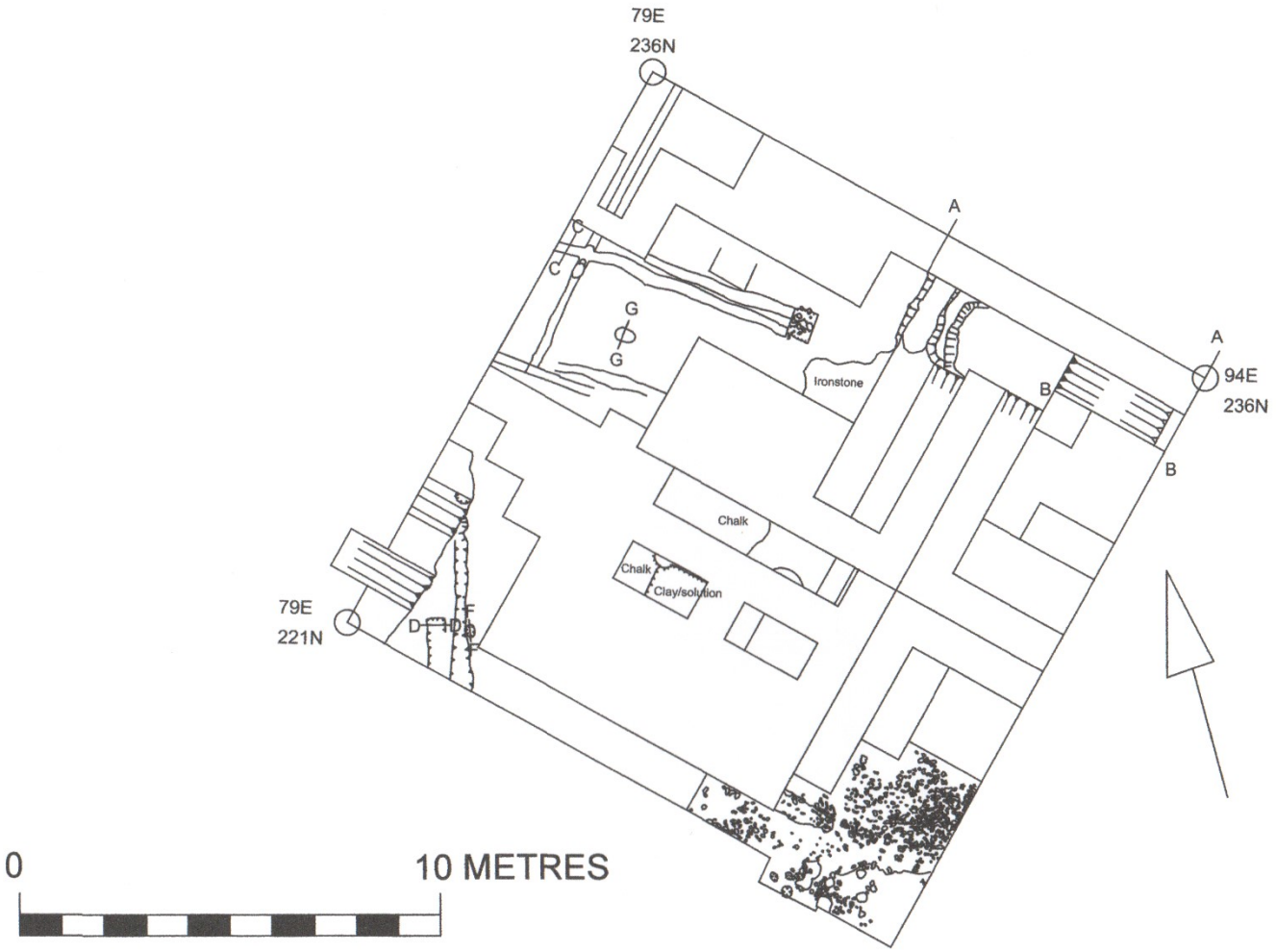
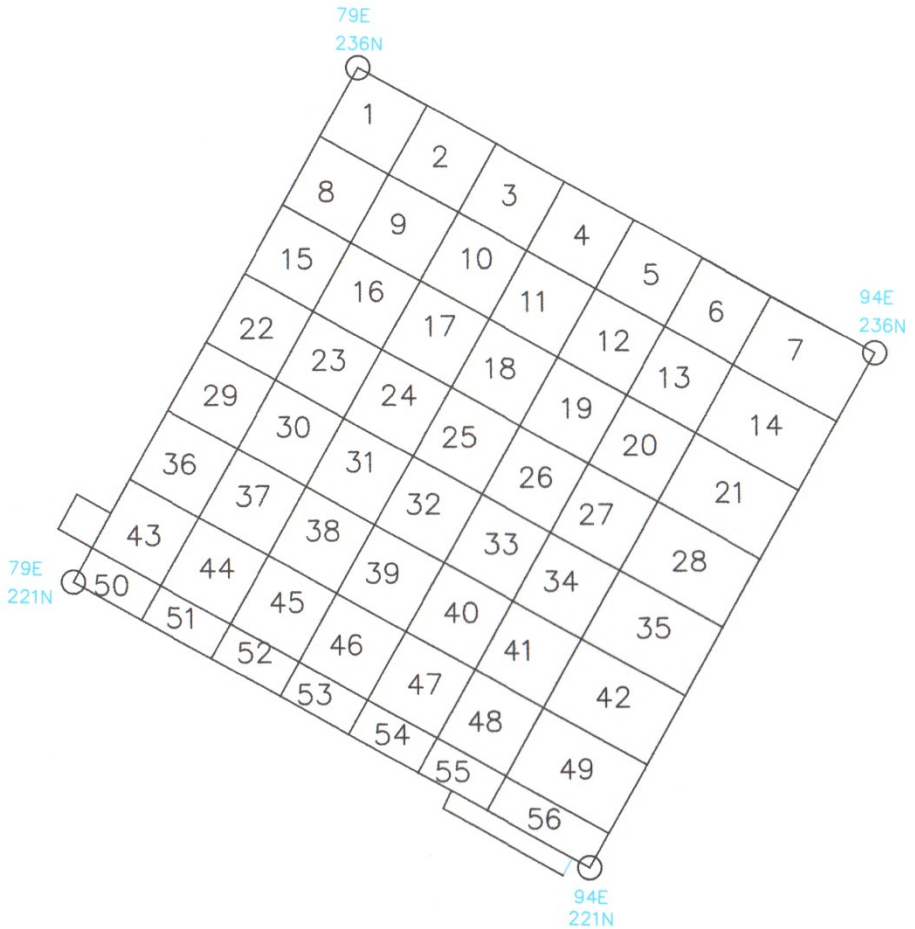


Fig 3a. Excavation Area 2021
(Section locations)



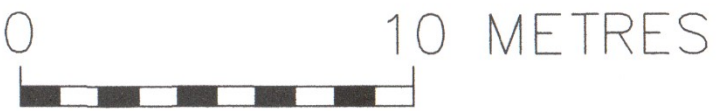


Fig 4. The Grid Numbers 2021

The excavation area was divided into 1 metre square grids and allocated grid numbers (Fig 4.) A number of 1 metre wide test trenches were set out around the site, and these were expanded as the excavation progressed (Fig 5). Within each trench separate context numbers were given to various features and fills and recorded on context sheets and in a drawing (Fig 6.)

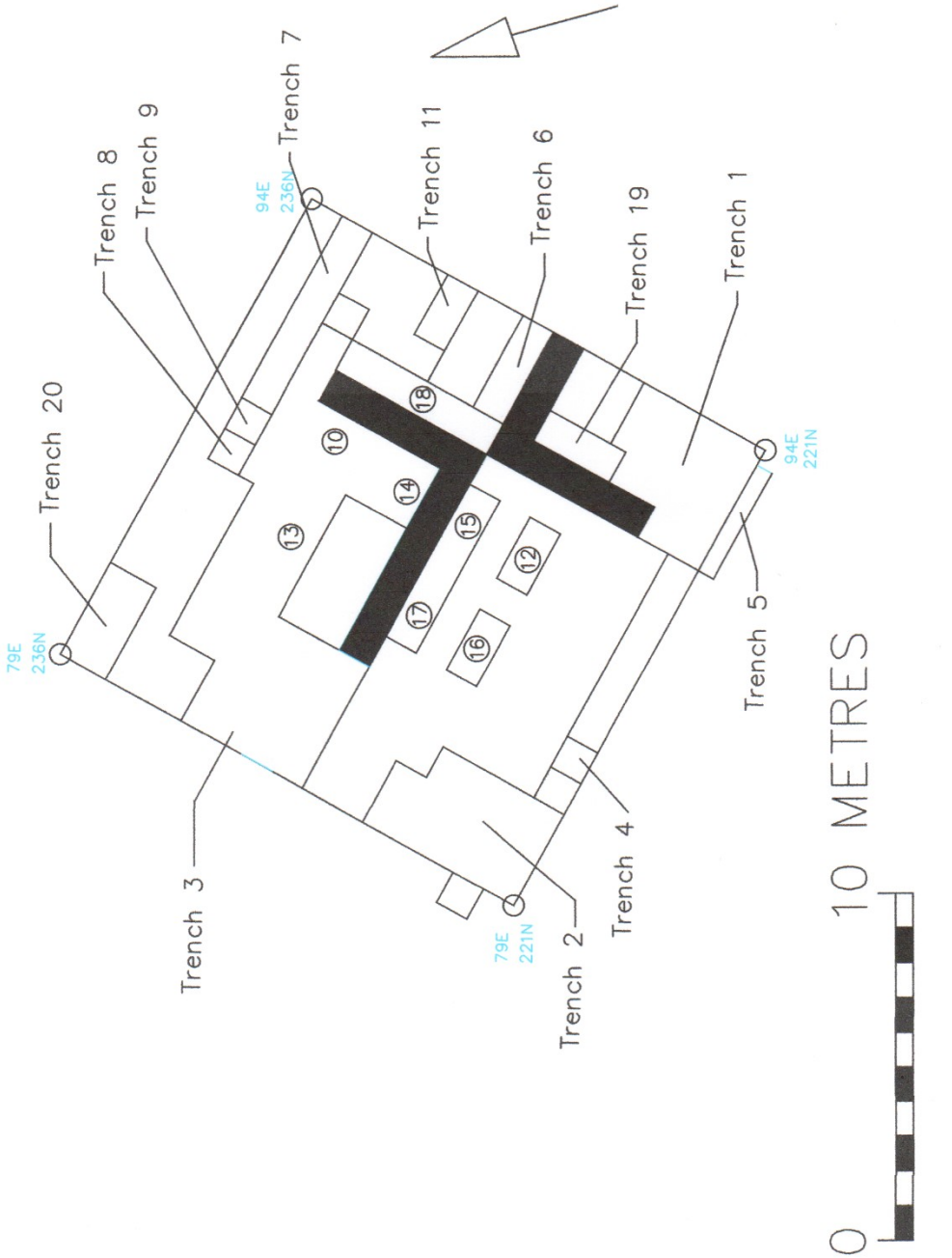


Fig 5. The Trench Numbers

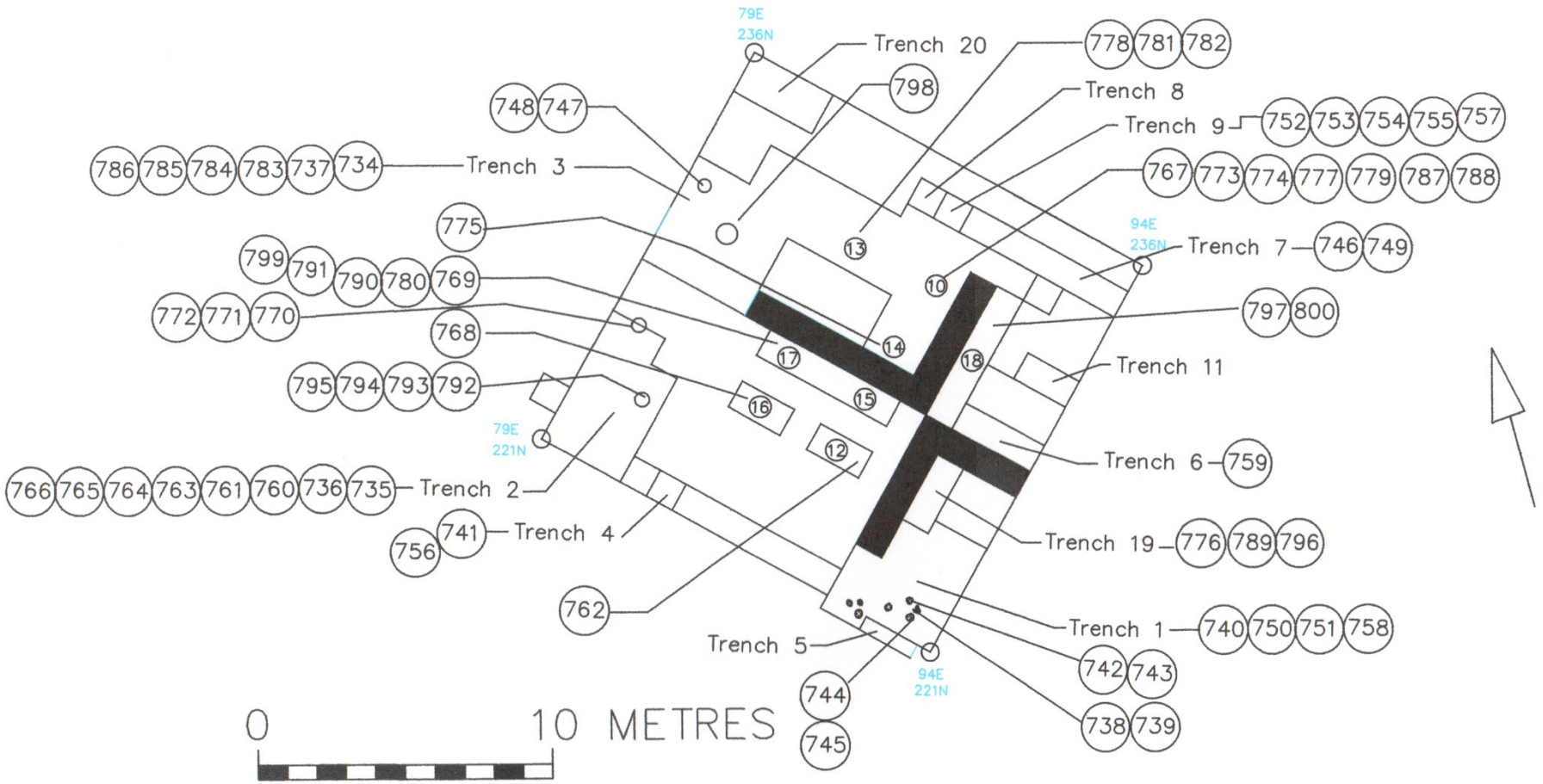


Fig 6. The Context Numbers 2021

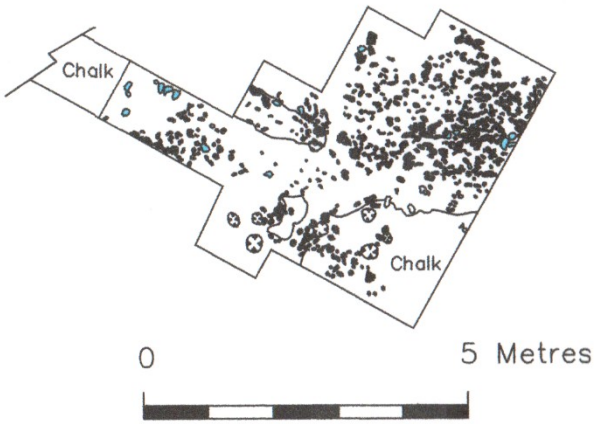
The Excavations

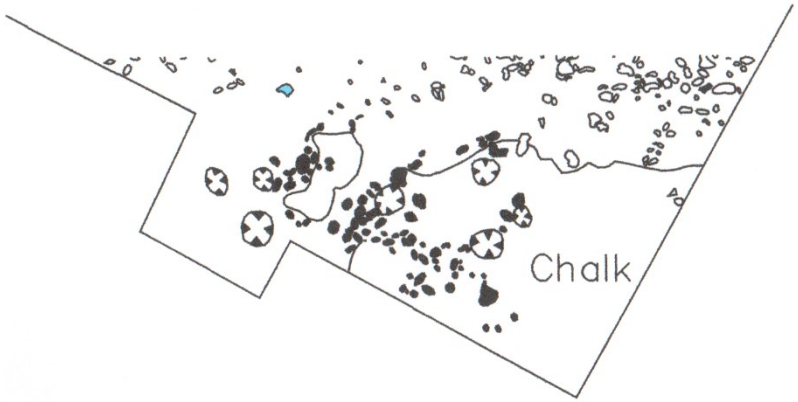
Trench 1 (Fig 7.)

The first trench set out was in the south east corner of the site. The geophysics indicated a very large circular feature. A trench measuring 4 metres long and 1 metre wide was started located 1 metre from the east boundary. The fill proved to be a very clay rich loam, and during dry weather was not easy to trowel. At first it was uncertain as to whether this fill was archaeological or natural, but with soil removal and the collecting of finds of pottery, flintwork and bone it confirmed it was archaeology.

The majority of the finds were small in size with some of the fragments of bone showing signs of burning or scorching. This trench was later extended to the east, to the south and to the west. The final dimensions of the trench, by the end of the season, were 4.5 metres north/south by 3 metres east/west. A trench measuring 1.5 metres by 1 metre was sunk just to the west of trench 1 to seek a number of post holes known from the 2011 investigations. The four post holes were revealed confirming the accuracy of the site plans and that the new excavations were in the correct location.

The fill of clay loam was littered with numerous flint nodules, most natural but some struck. A curved area of flint debris was noted running from the west at the south end of the section and curving up upwards in a north/easterly direction. Natural chalk was encountered at the far south end of this section. Close to the south end of the clay ‘floor’ there were 3 flint packed post holes contexts 738, 742 and 744, and these were sectioned. The depth of the excavation at this location was approximately 0.5 M deep.





Trench 1 – The post holes

0 5 Metres

Fig 7. Trench 1

Trench 2 (Fig 8.)

Trench 2 was located at the south west corner of the excavation. The initial 1 metre wide section was extended both east and west up to the west baulk. The natural chalk was encountered after only a few centimetres. The first feature exposed was a ditch running north./south context 736. This shallow ditch measured 450mm wide with a maximum depth of 150mm. The location tends to suggest that it is part of a possible ‘medieval’ ditch that runs from the corner of Patchway field up the hill, through Rocky Clump copse, before being ploughed away north of the Rocky Clump trees.

At this section in trench 2 there is evidence for a re-cut to the ditch. The ditch contained numerous snail shells, similar to another ditch section revealed in the 2014 excavations, context 364. This ditch linked to another ditch running north/south context 365, but there was no evidence for this earlier ditch running further northwards although it is roughly on a similar alignment as the new feature found in 2021.

On the west side of trench 2 investigations were undertaken into another of the geophysical circular anomalies. After the top soil had been removed the irregular edge of a feature was observed. A pair of sections were sunk, contexts 763 and 764, and revealed a deep pit or possible round house terrace. The chalky loam fill contained numerous struck flint flakes and pottery, possibly Iron Age or earlier in the lower fills. This trench was extended by a 1 metre square section up to the existing fence line and a possible level surface appeared at the bottom of the section.

At the north end of this large pit a post hole was revealed cut by the larger feature, context 770. Another 2 post holes, contexts 792 and 794, were revealed to the east of the ‘medieval’ ditch. The large pit/terrace was sectioned and drawn (Fig 11c.)

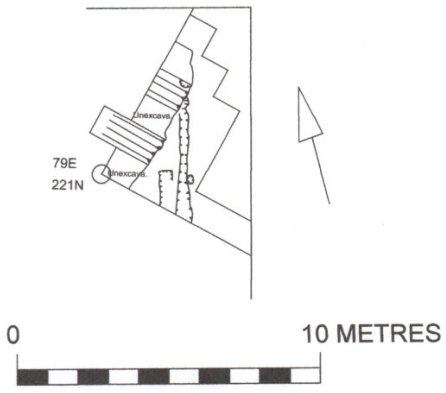


Fig 8. Trench 2

Trench 3 (Fig 9.)

The west side of the excavation area has proven to contain only a shallow surface of chalky loam with natural chalk exposed after a few centimetres. The geophysical anomalies suggested the location of a feature. The trowelling commenced from the western baulk and gradually progressed eastwards. The area contained a number of very shallow ditches or beam slots, only 4-5 centimetres in depth. There were four linear arrangements of beam slots running west to east and a single north/south feature, of the same width and depth as the beam slots. The north/south beam slot had 2 small post holes inside the beam slot. The post hole close to the north junction with an east/west beam slot was context 747. At the end of the season a rapid removal of top soil suggested that the north/south linear feature may continue onwards and up into the field. An area close to these features, and just north of them, trench 20, was excavated by the Brighton Young Archaeologists club and produced several pieces of Iron Age pottery along with a large fragment of cow or sheep horn.

A pit was s exposed on the north side of trench 2 but this was not examined this season. A small section of the beam slot trench was excavated at the east end and produced a number of stake holes. The beam slots appear to terminate before they reach a known larger north/.south ditch in trench 10. A number of post holes were revealed contexts 781 and 783. In the central area between the pairs of beam slots was a large post hoel context 798. This post hole was sectioned and proved to be vertical sided and flat bottomed.

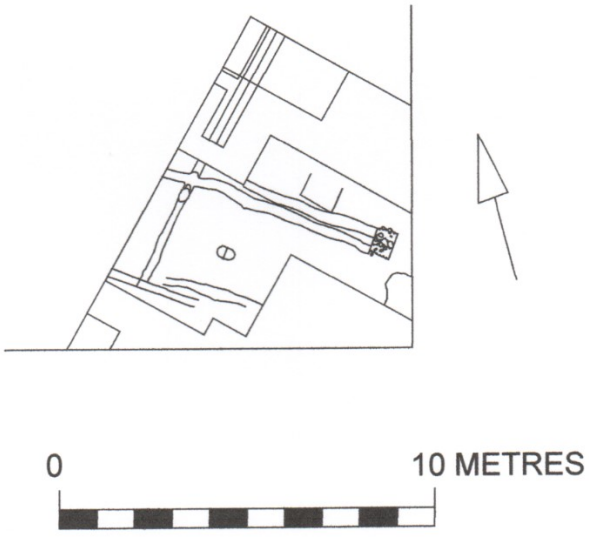


Fig 9. Trench 3

Trench 4 (Fig 6.)

Trench 4 was a 1 metre wide section running the complete length of the south end of the main excavation trench, linking trench 1 and trench 2. A number of features were recorded in the 2011 excavations which could continue northwards including a small ditch curving around to the east. No traces were found of any features, with only natural chalk being encountered.

Trench 5 (Fig 5.)

This small trench was a ½ metre extension to the south of trench 1.

Trench 6 (Fig 5.)

This trench measured 3 metres west to east and was 1 metre wide. It was originally opened for the fist group of YAC's to investigate but later became the north side of the east section of the east/west central baulk. The trench was excavated down in layers and revealed a 'floor' of large flints. The area has not bottomed out completely and will be an area of continuing interest in 2022.

Trench 7, 8 and 9 (Fig 5 & Fig 10.)

This was the first trench to be set out in 2021 and measured 4 metres in length and I metre wide, and was located running east/west 1 metre down from the north boundary. The trench was planned to seek out a ditch very visual on the geophysical images. The fill proved to be of a very sticky and thick clay loam. There appeared to be a number of large flints and sandstone nodules on the north facing side (Fig 11a.), with a smaller number of flint nodules noticeable on the south facing side (Fig 11b.) As the excavation progressed it bottomed out onto natural chalk. The trench contained a central depression, with sloping faces upwards to the west and east. The lower fills contained no finds. A 1 metre section was opened up to the west of trench 7, called trench 8, and this was extended eastward as trench 9 eventually revealing the anticipated ditch section. The ditch was a maximum width of 850 mm and a maximum depth of 550 mm (Fig 11a). The east side of this ditch had been truncated by the later 'pond' like feature. The surface to the west of the 'pond' feature and to the east of the north/south ditch revealed a compressed flint surface, context 767. The west side of the north/side ditch was natural chalk, with the chalk continuing as the natural surface to the west.

Trenches 10 and 14 (Fig 5.)

Trench 10 was created running at right angles to trench 7, and later became the west facing central baulk. Trench 14 was immediately to the west of trench 10. The west trench 14 was seeking evidence for a continuation of the ditch found in trench 9 running southwards. This combination of parallel trenches proved quite

complex, and provided some of the larger pottery finds and fragments of quern stone. The fill of both sections was similar with no evidence visible for the cut of the north/south ditch, other than the gradually appearance of a sloping side on the west side of trench 14. At the north end of trench 14 and on the west side was a solution area of clay, flint and sandstone complicating the already complex arrangement. Further complications were compounded when the south facing edge of trenches 10 and 14 revealed another chalk sloping face. The natural chalk had been cut to form a possible terrace. The area was not bottomed out and will be the subject of continuing investigations in 2022. The fill of both trenches 10 and 14 was a medium chalky loam.

Trench 11 (Fig 5.)

This was a small trench measuring 3 metres in length and 1 metre wide, located on the east side of the site. The upper surface was lightly mattocked in preparation for a visit by the YAC's. It was not used after the YAC visit and remains open with only a few mm of upper fill removed.

Trench 12 (Fig 5.)

This small trench measuring 2 metres in length and 1 metre wide was opened to seek the west edge of the clay solution or possible archaeological feature found in trench 1. The trench was excavated down for about 500 mm and did not reveal chalk. A small section ½ wide was later excavated at the west end of this trench but still did not come down onto natural. This trench will be the subject of further investigations in 2022.

Trench 13 (Fig 5.)

This trench was the area to the east of trench 3, and they later linked up. The area revealed more of the beam slots revealed in trench 3, along with an edge of natural solution consisting of large fragment of sandstone. This feature eroded into the side of the north/south ditch found in trench 14. Most of the trench consisted of natural chalk where it linked up with trench 3.

Trenches 15, 16 and 17 (Fig 5.)

Trenches 15, 16 and 17 were located in the central area of the excavation. They all measured 2 metres in length and 1 metre wide. Trench 15 was on the same alignment as trench 12. The purpose for these trenches was to seek the west edge of the large feature found in trench 1. Trench 16 revealed natural chalk, but there had been a cut made into the natural, as yet unexplained. This area will need to be opened up to understand the reason for this curious cut. Trench 15 and 17 were later merged together to form one long trench. About half way between trench 15 and 17 the natural chalk was revealed. To the east end of this longer trench in area 17 the surface changed to a very bright red clay, either an

indication of burning or a natural phenomena. The east end of this trench revealed a section of the north/south ditch and on the south side of the trench cut into the reddened surface a large pit context 791. The features were planned (Fig 3.) but no incursions were made into either the ditch or pit. These features will be investigated in 2022.

Trench 18 (Fig 5)

This long trench was cut running from trench 7 in the north down to trench 6 running east/west. Trench 6 and trench 18 were later linked up becoming the east facing baulk of the north/south central baulk and the north facing baulk of the central east/west baulk. At the north end of this trench a sloping surface of natural chalk was observed dropping southward form the 'pond' revealed in trench 7, context 800. This trench produced a good number of finds of pottery, bone and other items. Trenches 6 and 18 were both excavated down to the same level by the end of the season, but had not bottomed out onto natural. The current exposed surface in trench 6 contains numerous flint nodules.

Trench 19 (Fig 5)

This trench was located in the north/west corner of trench 1, and is designed to reveal the south and east facing baulks of the central baulk section. The trench did not bottom out and will be further investigated in 2022.

The Finds

The Pottery (Table 1.)

The excavations in the south field at Rocky Clump continues to produce pottery that is quite different to that found in the north field. The 2021 season produced 1565 sherds of pottery weighing in a 7,987 gm. The majority of sherds this season have been quite small in size, and with only 8 sherds having any form of decoration, consisting mostly of single or double lines. The predominant new finds are mainly of a East Sussex Ware grog tempered pot (50%). A number of discernible fabrics can be distinguished. Once again there are a variety of rim shapes indicating a number of different vessels, but there are fewer rims sherd stn in previous seasons.

There was a larger number of the later hard, grey fabric pottery, with well fired grey wares attributing for (8%) of the collection. Some sooty grey Wickham Barn sherds may be among the grey wares. No mortaria was found. The samian wares were small in number totaling 29 in number (0.02%) All of the samian were very small pieces, but a number of rims sherds were among the items found. Only 3 sherds of medieval green glazed pottery was recovered. The medieval pottery probably came from the medieval farmstead located further down the hill at Patchway Field (Funnell 2017). Victorian and modern ceramics were quite

small in number totaling only 28 pieces (0.02%) coming from the top soil and upper layers.

There were a number of more exotic fabrics with a number of black colour coated sherds with a fine white fabric. There were also a number of cream ware sherds, possibly of Gallo-Belgic origins.

The pottery has now been washed and marked.

No	Fabric Type	Number of sherds	Wt gms
1	East Sussex Ware	779	
2	East Sussex Ware Burnished Black	14	
3	Flint Tempered	176	
4	Fine Sand Tempered	335	
5	Coarse Sand Tempered	0	
6	Sandy Grey Ware	131	
7	Sandy Grey Ware Wickham Barn	15	
8	Colour Coated Wares	20	
9	Crème Wares (Gallo-Belgic?)	32	
10	Medieval Sand Tempered	0	
11	Green Glazed Wares	2	
12	Post Medieval	30	
13	Samian Ware	31	
	Totals	1565	7,987

Table 1. The Pottery

The Flintwork (Table 2.)

The flintwork collected this season consisted mainly of flint flakes with a number of possible tools and 1 hammerstone. A small number of very crude cores were among the collection. The flintwork is very rough and crude and can probably be considered as a Bronze Age, or later, collection. The flakes totaled 503 in number, with a total of 150 flakews coming from the trench 2 a deep pit or house terrace. Trench 2 accounted for 30% of the flint flakes collected. The patination varied with 23 (0.05%) having a white patination, 6 (0.01%) black and only2 with a brown colour. The majority of flakes were either grey, 379 in number (75%), or 93 with a blue patination (18%). The majority of the flakes were primary strikes, and most retained some vestige of cortex. There was a general distribution of top soil flakes with a slight concentration in trench 10/14 and close to the north terrace.

A number of possible tools were noted including 7 possible notched pieces? Other finds included 4 possible blades and 4 blade fragments. There were 13 quite crude cores. The cores were all very roughly made. Other finds included one hammerstone. The collection contained 7 very crude scrapers. The flint tolls will need to be examined by a flint specialist to confirm the figures

The number of fragments of fire cracked flint was larger in quantity than those found in the enclosure location, and once again were more focused in the trench 10/14 area where 25% of the finds were located. The only other concentration of fire-cracked was in the south west corner of the site associated with the large pit. In this location there were 14 pieces of fire-cracked flint recovered 25% of the collection. The combination of over 100 pieces of struck flint and fire-fractured flint tends to suggest a concentration of prehistoric activity

The collection of flintwork is typical of most downland sites where the top soil finds are included in the data. The workmanship is all quite crude with no subsequent fine working including retouch. Generally this type of flintwork is regarded as belonging to the later Bronze Age period, although it is possible that some material could be worked flint from the Iron Age.

No	Type	Number	Weight gm
1	Flakes	503	7593
2	Notched	7	103
3	Blade/Frags	4	41
4	Blades	4	76
5	Cores	13	2997
6	Scraper	7	152
7	Hammerstone	1	760
Totals		538	11722
8	Fire cracked flint	56	1879

Table 2. The Flintwork

The Animal Bone (Table 4.)

The 2021 excavation season produced a collection of animal bone. The majority of the bone were small fragments with only 4 bones possibly of diagnostic value. The teeth numbered 113 mainly from small creatures sheep/goat/pig. There were 6 large teeth of cow or horse. There were only 2 intact fragments of jaw bone and

4 skull fragments from a larger animal cow/horse. The number of, at present, unidentifiable fragments totals 367. The total weight of the bone collection for the 2021 season was 2001 gm. When a comparison is made with the 2019 collection of bones fou din the enclosure ditches there is a sizeable variation of the types, and size, of animal bone being found. The 20121 collection appears to be debris from diet with the large majority of bones being dumped and deposited in the adjacent ditches after use. There are a number of long bones recorded, but it should be emphasised that all though they are long bones they are only tiny fragments, with only a single almost complete long bone with knuckles in place. Despite sieving only a couple of small bones are recorded. The weight of the bone from the possible round house platform weighs only 2001 gm compared to the 19,000 gm found in the adjacent ditches.

Type	Number	Weight gm
Long Bone	62	
Rib	8	
Vertabra	0	
Phalanges	0	
Scapula	0	
Mandible (Fragments)	2	
Teeth	114	
Ulna	0	
Sacrum	0	
Fragments	368	
Totals	563	2001

Table 4. The Animal Bone

The Marine Shell

The excavations of 2021 produced a number of new finds of marine shell. The finds were all of oyster shell, with only 3 left and 5 right hand almost complete umbros. The collection consisted mainly of 54 small fragments of shell with the total of the marine shell weighing a total of 445 gm. A number of the oyster shells had hoplura and Ciliatus parasites. The majority of finds were of very small fragments and were distributed all over the excavated areas, with no areas of concentrated finds

The Coins

The coins found in 2021 consisted of a pair of very badly corroded barbarous radiates dating to the late 3rd century. There was not enough information on the coins to accurately date them to an individual emperor.

The Iron Metal Work

The iron objects this season included a small collection of nails. Most of the nails are of a square section and quite small in size. There were a total of 46 nails weighing 249 gm. The collection is almost the same as those found in 2019. Most of the nails ranged between 30 and 50mm in length with only 8 nails exceeding this length. The majority of finds were from the top soil. About 26% of the nails came form trench 3, the location of the possible beam slot features, and 15% came from trench 2, located below the beam slot features.

The other iron objects consisted of:-

1) A total of 3 horse shoes
2) A total of 3 ‘T’ shaped pieces, possible horse shoe nails
3) One iron hook
4) Two unidentified metal plates
5) A single metal ingot unidentified

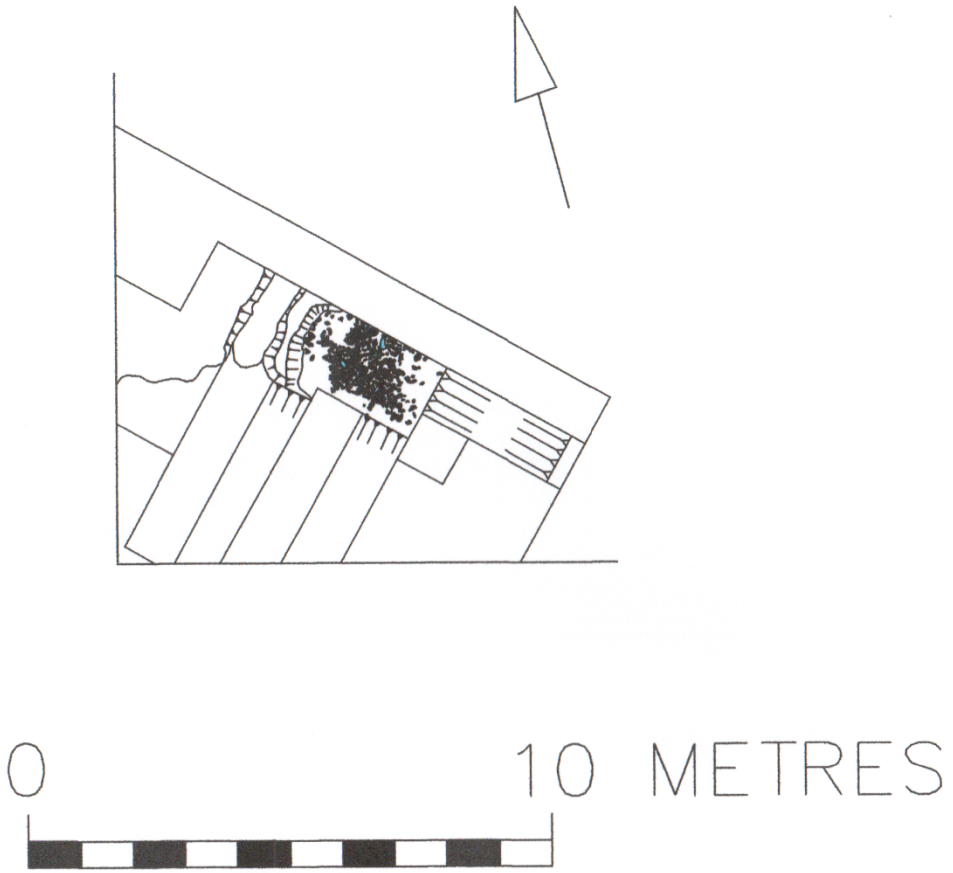


Fig 10. The North East Corner

The Ceramic Building Material (CBM)

The excavations produced 56 fragments of daub or CBM. The total weight was 550 gm. The majority of finds were quite small fragments but there were 4 larger pieces, including 2 fragments that retained evidence of laths. The CBM was fairly evenly distributed across the site. The only notable concentrations of CBM were in the central area trench 15 which produced 14% of the daub. The area is located west of the possible round house. Within contexts 10, 14 and 18, which may be inside any possible structure, produced 25% of the total collection

The Glass

The excavations recovered 21 pieces of glass mainly from the top soil contexts 500 and 502. The total glass collected weighed 116 gm. The glass varied in colour from clear to light and light green, brown and black. Most of the glass came from broken vessels. There were no pieces recognised as being of Roman date. Clear glass accounted for 33% of the collection, being flat and possible window glass. Black fragments accounted for 24% of the collection as did the light green. There were 3 neck fragments identified with 4 pieces having an opaque texture. One single sherd of glass vessel was a distinct gold colour on both its inside and outside surfaces. One glass item had the letter ‘T’ clearly visible, with other obscure adjacent letters barely discernable. One interesting piece of black glass closely resembled a knapped flint and shaped as a possible notched item? It was found in trench 4 close to the large possible ancient pit.

The Stone Finds

A large collection of stone items were recorded. The majority of the collection is small fragments of sarsen stone with 157 pieces weighing 3824 gm. Of that collection 50 pieces show signs of burning or scorching (32%). Among the other stones were small segments of natural tabular flint totalling 76 in number and 6 beach pebbles. A number of the beach pebbles , 3 total are the flattened shape associated with rubbing stones. There were two pieces of dressed sarsen and 1 possible piece which could be another fragment of quernstone. This item was found close to where 2 other quern fragments had been found in 2019.

The distribution of finds reveals a concentration in contexts 7/10/14 and 18 (18%) which is the possible location of a round house. Other areas with noticeable numbers were the south west corner, close to the large pit which produced 19 finds of stone (12%), along the north area of the site west of the dew pond where 14 stones were collected (9%) and immediately west of he possible round house in trench 15/17 which produced 12 finds (8%). It is not possible to understand wqhy there are so many small stone fragments of sarsen, it does erode naturally and may be part of damage caused to the natural boundary on the west side during the creation of the possible house terrace.

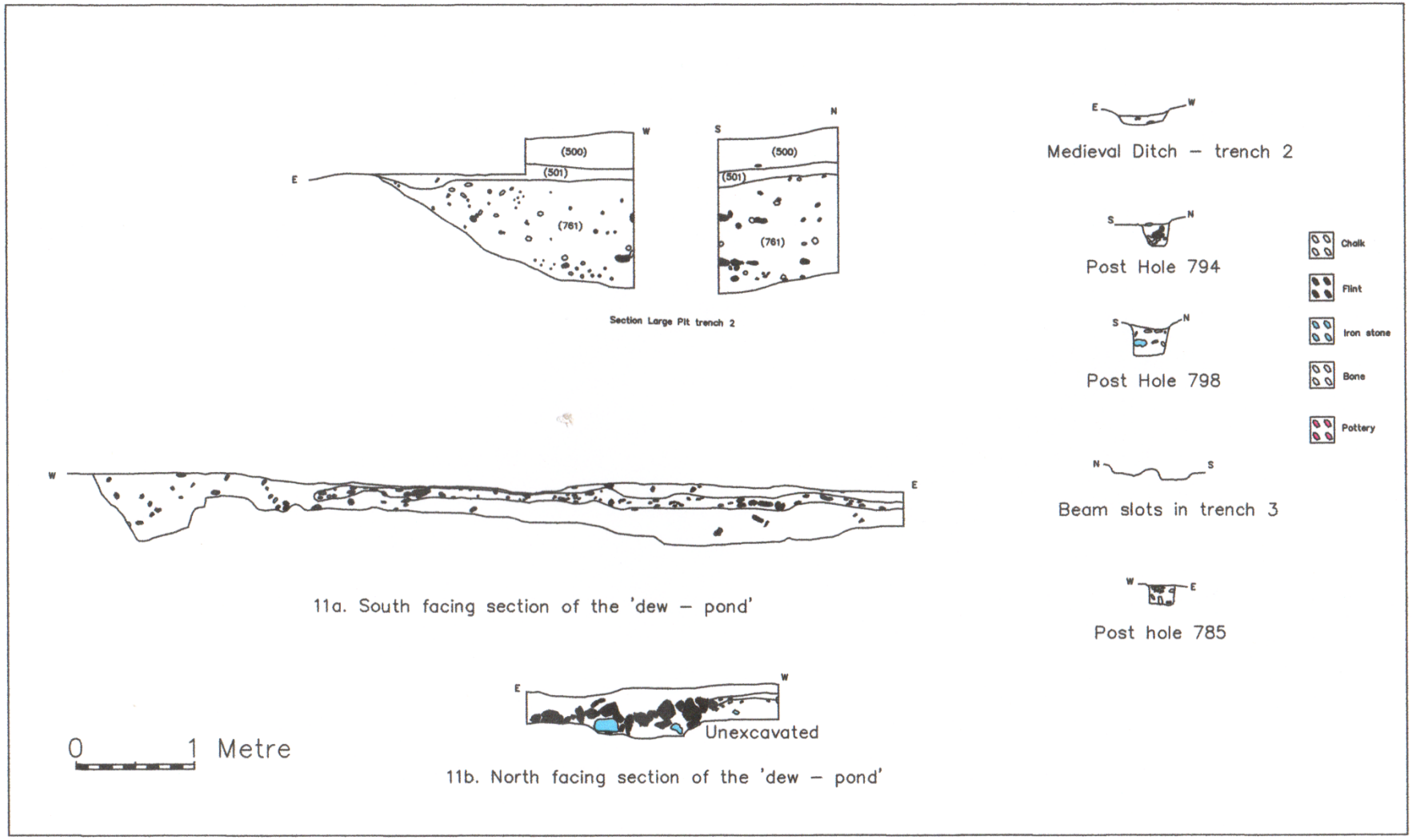


Fig 11. Sections Rocky Clump 2021

Figure 12 – Bone Pin

Whetstone

A single pieced of whetstone was recovered from Context 749 in trench 10. This is a one of the fills of the possible round house. The small fragment measured 33 x 27 x 22mm thick. It had a single fine surface and was very badly battered. It weighed 21 gm.

Slag

A total of 6 pieces of possible slag were found during the excavations weighing 359. The collection was widely dispersed with no areas of concentration. Only a specialist will be able to confirm if it is slag or another type of stone.

The Snail Shells

The land snails collected totalled 125 in number weighing 716 gm. The majority of snail shells (61%) came from the south west corner of the site found in a shallow ditch context 736 in trench 2. The remaining snail shells were randomly distributed, with no notable areas of concentration.

Modern Building Material

A small collection of contemporary or Victorian fragments were recorded. The number was quite small with only 6 pieces of brick weighing 56 gm, 30 fragments of modern tile weighing 196 gm, and 3 tiny pieces of blue roofing slate weighing 33 gm.

Special Finds

SP 1 Coin – copper alloy barbarous radiate
SP 2 – A bone pin from trench 1
SP3 – A hob nail in trench 2 extension
SP4 – A coin (Barbarous radiate) trench 3 extension eastwards
SP5 –Fragment of a shale bracelet in trench 10
SP6 – A small piece of copper alloy trench 18
SP7- A hob nail found in trench 1
SP8 – 2 Quern stone fragments with signs of grinding trench 10 (context 752). Fragment 1 measured 160 x 115 x 80 mm max with some traces of scorching and weighed 1551 gm. Fragment 2 measured 120 x 110 x 63 mm max depth and weighed 1027 gm, this fragment had distinct grinding marks on the base.

Discussion

There was some concern at the beginning of the 2021 season of excavations at Rocky Clump that the digging might end prematurely. The reason for this concern was the confirmation that the circular anomalies imaged in the geophysical survey proved to be geological. This fortunately proved not to be the case, but there were some natural features revealed on the site. The south east corner proved to be the most complex area for digging, with a clay fill proving difficult to remove at times. Concerns about this area being natural were dissipated when a constant, but not too frequent, collection of finds, consisting of pottery, animal bone and flint work were recovered. Among these finds was a splendid bone pin (Fig 12.). The revealing of 3 post holes at the south end of trench 1 further confirmed it was an archaeological feature. These new post holes were planned and once transferred to the Computer Aided Drawing (C.A.D.) were shown to be in an alignment with another group of post holes to the west, excavated in 2011. Between these two groups of 3 post holes was another post hole centrally located between each group. It is possible that these features indicate an entrance way to a round house. However, with so much of the central area remaining untouched, the revealing of any supportive post holes for a roof structure means at present this hypothesis is unconfirmed.

The position of these 7 post holes is problematical in that if they are an entrance to a possible round house they are placed adjacent to a very steep section of the north boundary ditch of the enclosure. It is not possible for features to have been in use at the same time, unless there was a constructed link between these post holes and a large pit in the north/west corner of the adjacent enclosure.

At the south west corner of the excavation in trench 2 there is another complexity of features. The shallow and re-cut ditch running north/south may be aligned with other ditches revealed in the excavations of 2011, which also aligns with a ditch noted in the phase I excavations within the trees at Rocky Clump. A division of land was noted in medieval documents dealing the cessation of some land to the Canons of South Malling (Gorton 1988), but in a later publication these ditch features are considered part of field boundaries (Gilkes 1997). At present their exact purpose is unknown and remain undated.

The large feature in trench 2 has sloping sides and may be the perimeter of another round house, but as yet it is too early to understand whether it is such a feature or simply a large pit. The considerable collection of struck flakes, fire-cracked flint and stones from the feature is interesting, as is the prehistoric pottery found with the flintwork. The pottery will provide dateable evidence for this feature, which could be either Iron Age or an earlier Bronze Age date. A large pit in the copse of trees at Rocky Clump, (context 4) also had pottery dating the late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age (pers. Comm.. M.Lyne). A number of post holes were revealed in trench 2, but at present it is not possible to understand their purpose in the larger landscape

The north/west corner of the site provided evidence for rectangular structures in the form of beam slots. There were 4 slots running east/west and from the evidence it would appear that there were 2 structures, but not standing at the same time. The buildings have the same width measurement and a possible west end. The west end had a pair of small post holes within the bean slot. The method of construction is similar to rectangular structures found at Bishopstone (Bell 1977).

The removal of top soil from the north side of trench 3 may indicate that at least one of the beam slots continues northwards, and there is some evidence that at least one pair of the beam slots continues westwards. The beam slots are not very deep but quite distinct, as is the presence of plough marks across the natural chalk surface. There appear to be no north/south beam slot at the east end of this feature, but it may have been eroded by ploughing, as the soil at this juncture is not very deep. A pit was revealed to the north of the beam slots, but this feature was not investigated in 2021. The excavation was anticipating finding round houses, being the typical type of structure from that period. Round houses were found on the Bronze Age sites, located close by at Downsview (Rudling et al 2002) and Varley Halls (Greig 1993). There is evidence from other sites for rectangular houses from the Iron Age, one example being Park Brow, near Sompting (Wolseley, GR. & Smith, R.A.1927). Round houses are often associated with the earlier phases of Roman villas, as for examples at Beddingham and Barcombe. It is possible that variations in building design are being encountered at Rocky Clump.

The north/east corner of the excavation has been the most complex area to investigate. The first trench cut, trench 7, was to seek evidence for the north/south ditch visible in the geophysical survey. The new section actually revealed a significant depression with a fill of clay like loam, the fill suggested that this feature may have been some form of ancient‘ dew pond’. One of the frequently asked questions on prehistoric sites is ’where did they get their water?’ During wet weather the depression did quickly fill with water. On the west side of this depression was a ‘floor’ surface comprising of compressed flints and small fragments of ironstone. This is a type of surface, used in the past, as peripheral surfacing to ponds restricting damage to drinking facilities by animals. A similar arrangement of flints around a pond was noted at a medieval site at Muddleswood (Butler 1994).

The north/south ditch is located to the west of this pond feature and the east side of the ditch appears cut by it. South of the pond trenches 10 and 18 revealed a steep drop, which could possibly be the north edge of a round house terrace. The colluvial deposits are quite deep here, so any possible post holes are still likely to be covered by fill. The west side of the large circular feature emanating from trench 1 is cut by the north/south ditch, but the lack of any evidence for a ditch cutting suggest that the ditch was an earlier feature.

The central area of possible scorching and the large pit in trenches 15 and 17 indicate that other features are yet to be fully revealed and understood. The only way to fully understand the archaeology will be to remove as much as possible of the remaining fills. A record of the stratigraphy in the central baulks, showing detailed sections both east/west and north/south will be required before removing all of the remaining central section. Exposing the levels down to those of the post holes revealed in the south section of trench 1 will allow a greater appreciation of the archaeology.

In the south/west corner of the excavations only an extension to the site westwards would allow further investigations to confirm whether we have a round house terrace or large pit in that location.

The settlement and agricultural activities of ancient Rocky Clump are only gradually being teased out from the archaeology. There was a simple enclosure and roundhouse at Oving, near Chichester (Bedwin O. & Holgate R. 1985), but Rocky Clump has now a proven longevity of occupation possibly with an earlier enclosure moving later to a more open environment north of the trees (Funnell 1999-2019). This complexity does raise the question about how the settlement is arranged, or are there two distinct different phases of occupation? The north field archaeology comprised field boundaries associated with post holes and ditches, and a possibly butchery site further north. Is this the area of animal activity away from the arable and food processing areas, or are there still later habitations to be found further north in the field?

Despite considerable archaeological investigations Rocky Clump continues to raise issues with regards phasing and dating. The earlier south field phase is producing evidence, from pottery for late Iron Age origins. The south field has produced only a few coins of Roman dating, possibly suggesting limited access to trade and other outside resources. The Iron Age ditches, later floor surfaces and coin finds from north of Rocky Clump tend to suggest a shift of occupation from one side of the hill to the other. The ‘shrine’ building and adjacent large pit have been mentioned before as being possible granaries and grains storage pit. If round or rectangular houses are found in the south field does it raise the prospect of further investigation in the north field to seek later habitation? It is obviously that many questions still remain unanswered.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Brighton and Hove City Council, Mr David Larkin Country Side Manager at City Parks and the tenant farmer Mr David Robinson for allowing access to the land, to Mr Pete Tolhurst for directing the excavations and to Mr John Skelton for his on site support, and to all of the BHAS field unit for their dedicated and continuing support. There is a final thank you to Mr Jim Driver who continued to let us store our tools and equipment in his shed and garden. We are sad to report that Jim Driver passed away in October 2021, both he and his wife Betty were and a long and integral part of the BHAS Field Unit.

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John Funnell 20th June 2022

Fresh Start Portslade

A report of the project organised by Fresh Start Portslade and the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society at the Old Manor House, Portslade

by

John Shepherd of Fresh Start Portslade and Pete Tolhurst of the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society

for

Ground Penetrating Radar, Resistivity Geophysics and Test Pit Excavations at Old Manor House, Portslade-by-sea, BN41 2GD, East Sussex
(TQ 2554506369)

June 2021

Author: Pete Tolhurst: BHAS Field Unit Director

Contents

Introduction

Portslade Manor ruins are a rare example of a surviving Norman Manor House. Built around 1130, the Manor house has been owned by notable historical figures such as Hubert de Burgh (Justicar of England in the 13th century) and the De La Warr family (of whom the state of Delaware takes its name). The original building consisted of an under croft, with a great hall above.

The Manor House had a west wing added at some point in the Tudor period, which included a two-storey tower. The building is a construction of knapped flints, bonded with lime mortar. The windows, door entrances and wall returns are decorated in Caen stone. The ruins sit within a conservation area, are Grade II listed and a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

The Old Manor house was well surveyed by Packham in 1934 but the interior and surrounding areas have not been investigated by geophysics or excavation. In Arthur Packham's article in the Sussex Archaeological Collection (SAC) 75 he writes that 'Hussey' mentions "below the surface foundations of two walls still exist, running from the old mansion to the north-west and north-east angles of the chancel of the church". Packham was unable to determine whether this was based on actual examination of the area. A trial pit was dug just in front of the south-east angle of the ruins where a block of stone projects from the manor house wall. The examination proved fruitless and no foundations were discovered after reaching a depth of 4 feet (1.2 metres).

Geology

Much of Portslade sits on a mix of chalk and clay. According to The British Geological Survey (2019) the site lies over white chalk sub-group (K6) with chalk and flints. The original basement floor of the manor was hammered chalk. The actual manor house sits within a slight deep in the landscape terrain.

The Old Manor House (TQ 2554506369) lies on the east slope of the valley that runs from The Level at Brighton up to Clayton, north of the South Downs. The route from the Level to Patcham is the source of the Wellesbourne stream, which now runs underground. It is on a similar location to the site of the earlier Roman villa located further south at the south end of Preston Park.

Brief synopsis of the works carried out by BHAS

- A Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) survey of the whole site was carried out by David Staveley, a leading Sussex geophysics expert.

- A resistivity survey of the whole site was undertaken by members of the Brighton & Hove Archaeological Society (BHAS). A Geoscan RM 15 resistivity machine in twin probe configuration was used. One grid: 20 x 20 metres square was laid out with lines spaced 1 metre apart and measurements taken at 1 metre intervals. Measurements were in ohms and the survey measured variations in soil resistance that may have indicated walls/floors (typically high resistance) and pits/ditches (typically low resistance).

- The grid was set out using a Sokkia Total Station with marker pegs/flags only penetrating into the ground so far as necessary, using moderate hand pressure.

- Seven test pits were dug in the areas shown on the aerial photograph and plan (not to scale). These measured 1 metre x 1 metre.

- The areas were all excavated by hand with no mechanical diggers being used.

- All of the features revealed have been recorded.

- The excavation followed standard archaeological practice as described by the Museum of London Archaeological Service Archaeological Site Manual (1994). All work was carried out in accordance with the Sussex Standards for Archaeological Field Work (2019) as well as the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CifA 2014).

  The projects main objectives were:

- to determine if there were any archaeological features/artefacts that will assist with any supplementary dating of the of the site.

- to engage the local community in all aspects of the project.

The Surveys

Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR)

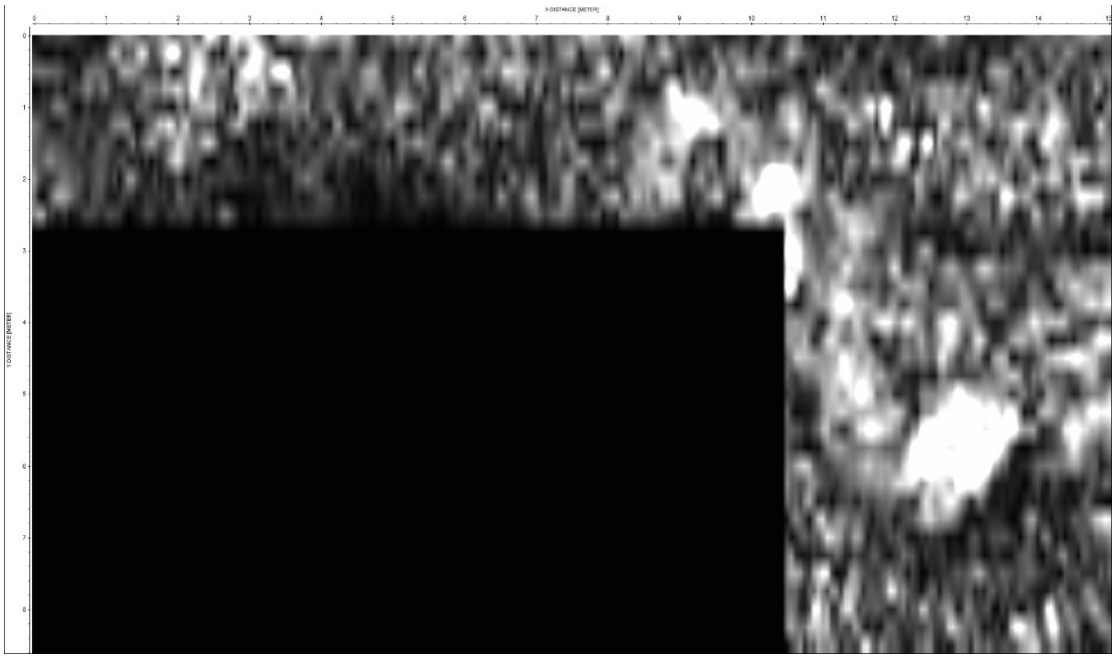


Fig. 1: GPR Image 1. Courtesy David Staveley

Fig. 2: GPR Image 2. Courtesy David Staveley

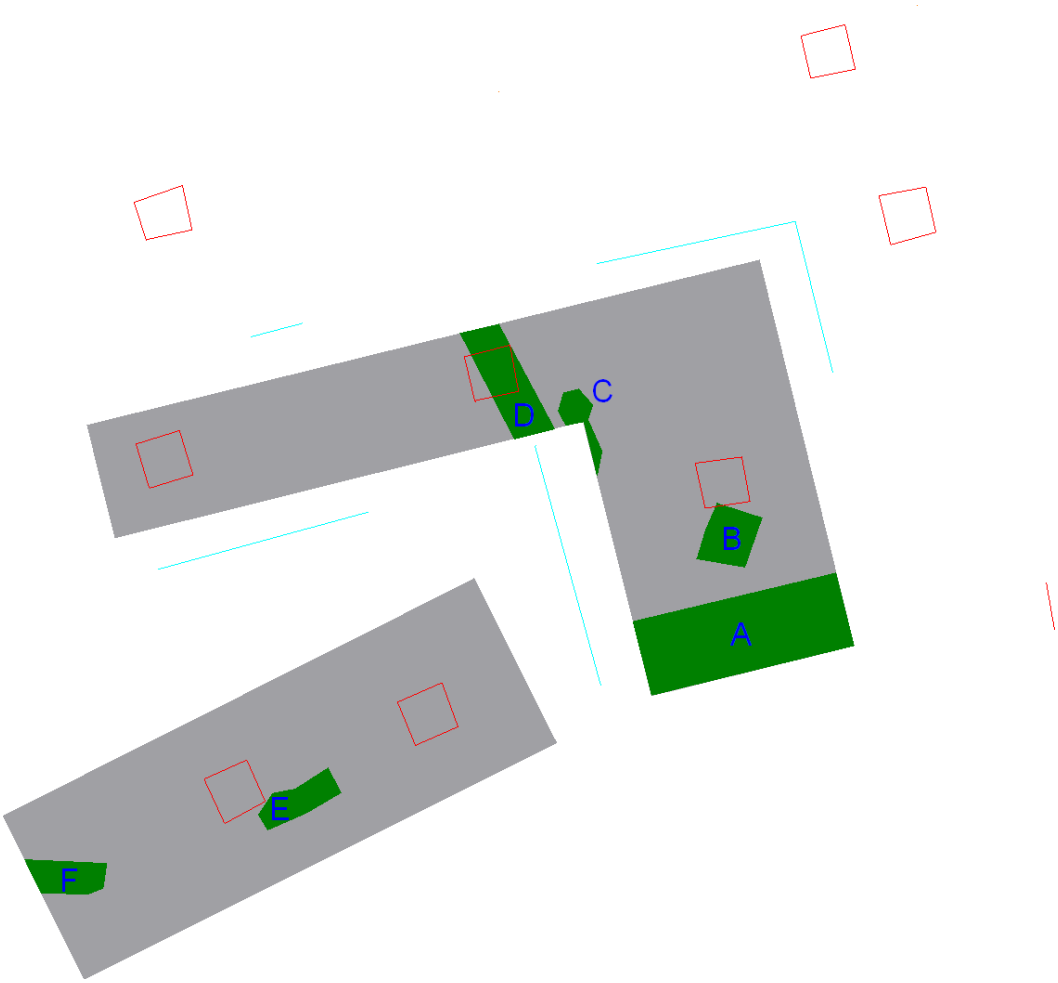


Fig 3: Schematic of GPR areas in relation to the test pits. Plan: courtesy David Staveley.

Fig. 4: Overlay of GPR plan. Courtesy of Google Earth & David Staveley.

GPR methodology:

The survey grids were set up using tapes on an arbitrary grid and recorded using a Javad Triumph-LS net rover. The area was surveyed to a depth of 40ns (north and east) and 60ns (south west) using an Utsi Groundvue 3A GPR with a 400MHz antenna, with lines spaced 25cm apart. The data was processed in ReflexW using dynamic correction, background removal, gain and bandpass filters applied, with the data resampled to 8 readings per metre along the line. Representative time slices are shown to display the most interesting features. Approximate wave velocity was calculated at roughly 0.085m/ns based on curve fitting of point hyperbolae.

Feature descriptions:

A) This seems to be a pile of rubble against the south wall. The profile suggests that the earth fill in the area sloped down towards the wall, and this slope was later filled in with rubble. The rubble layer appears as a feature distinct from the rubble above at a depth of 21ns (~90cm) and continues to a depth of 28ns (~120cm) against the south wall.
B) This solid square feature appears at a depth of around 7ns (~30cm), resolves itself into a hollow square at 12ns (~50cm) and disappears at 15ns (~65cm).
C) This feature may just be rubble, or may be something more solid associated with the attached wall. It appears almost from the surface and disappears around 11ns (~50cm).
D) This weak, wide, linear feature appears at a depth of 10ns (~40cm) and disappears at a depth of 18ns (~75cm).

E) This solid rectangular feature first appears at the east side of the feature at a depth of 9ns (~35cm), with the west side appearing at a depth of 11ns (~45cm). The entire feature disappears around 16ns (~70cm).
F) This semi-solid feature appears at a depth of 9ns (~35cm) and disappears at around 18ns (~75cm).

The two areas have a layer of made ground composed of what appears to be rubble dumped on top.
The north and east survey has layer of rubble that extends to a depth of around 13ns (~55cm) to the west, and 19ns (~80cm) to the east, with feature D marking the distinction between the two.
The area to the south-west has a rubble layer extending to a depth of roughly 11ns (~45cm), with the layer below appearing somewhat cleaner.

Resistivity Survey

The base line was laid out along the side of the north fencing on a grid which measured approximately 20 metres east/west and 14.5 metres north/south
The resistivity survey was carried out within the interior of the house, the area to the east, north and south/west corners of the site. The area to the extreme west, measuring about 4 metres square, was not surveyed as it had a large section of the Tudor building still standing and this proved too difficult to negotiate.

Due to the undulating and restrictive nature of the whole area, it was very difficult to carry out a very detailed survey and many of the readings were inconclusive. The image shown below is 22.4 metres along the north axis and 15.8 metres along the east axis, with an indeterminate image revealed in the middle.
The high resistivity linear image to the north seems to indicate the presence of the original wall of the house, with a feature extending north.

To the north east the two high resistivity areas may indicate the presence of the well feature (B, mentioned in the GPR survey) and the entrance to the under croft.

The high resistivity area south west may be the feature marked E on the GPR survey, which indicates a solid rectangular feature.
There are areas of low resistivity within the image and it is difficult to determine what these could be without further investigation.

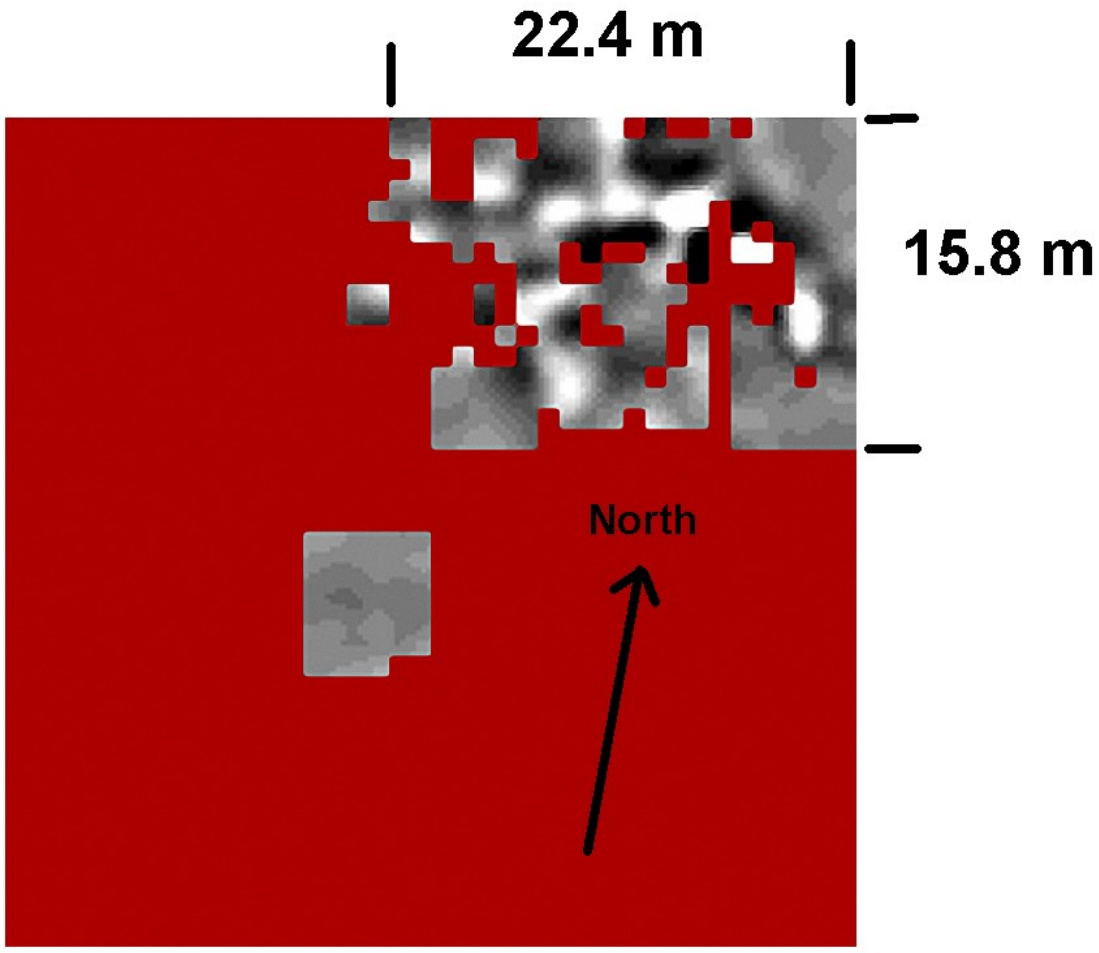


Fig. 5: Resistivity survey image

The test pit excavations Friday 4th June – Saturday 5th June 2021

A total number of seven test pits were excavated and these were numbered: 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 10 (as shown in figures 6 & 7).

Fig. 6: Original placement of test pits. Courtesy Google Earth

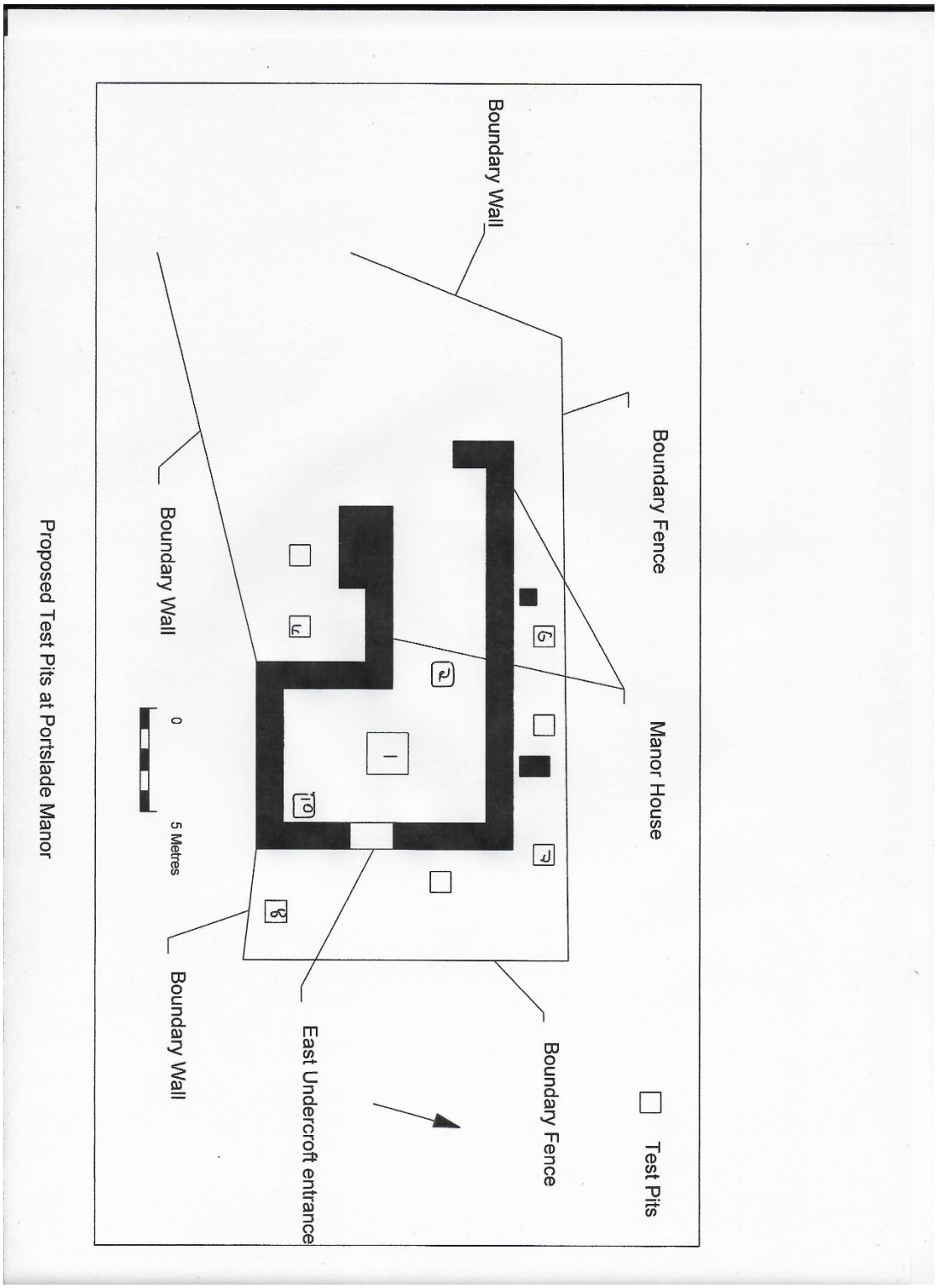


Fig. 7: Numbered plan of test pits.

Test pit 1

This 1m x 1m test pit was located within the manor house walls in the central area of the under croft. It was decided that after the first day, the test pit area be reduced to 1m x 0.5 m to ensure that there was time for the lower contexts to be excavated.
The top soil was removed and the contexts were revealed over the course of the excavation.

Context A: This consisted of a pink granular layer and loam mix which was found to be laying on top of a building membrane. This was located at 5 - 8 cms deep and after making enquiries, it appeared this was laid at several other places around the site in the 1990's when there were substantial renovation works carried out on the manor house.
Context B: After removing the membrane, substantial evidence was found of burning at 10 cms depth and there were glass fragments and flint nodules that appeared to have been subjected to very high temperatures.
Context C: In the south east corner of this pit an area of orange and white rubble was uncovered and a very small glass bead was found.
Context D: This was another heavily burnt layer with charcoal covering the whole layer. A 5-litre sample was taken for flotation on site.
Context E: A chalk edge was revealed along the southwest corner of the pit and this measured 51 cm x 18 cm.
Context F: This context revealed another heavily burnt layer and below that: -
Context G: included what appeared to be a layer of burnt cinders. A sample was taken and after flotation, some of the sample showed magnetic qualities when tested with a magnet.
Context H: A mortar floor diagonally covering approximately half of the pit was discovered, this had a thickness of 2 cms and consisted of sand and charcoal.
Context I: the lowest level reached in this test pit consisted of large flints, dark loam with chalk flecks.

Five small samples were taken from different contexts for analysis.
Measurements were taken at both the floor level and the flint level.
By the end of the excavation this test pit did not get taken down to the natural.

Test pit 2

Test pit 2 was again located within the manor house walls and was positioned over the ruins of the original outer wall.
This test pit was measured out to 1m x 0.5m and after removal of the top soil Came down to the contexts.

Context A: The pink angular stone chips on top of building membrane were uncovered.
Context B: After removing the membrane a dark loam with chalk flecks was revealed.
Context C; This layer included large chalk inclusions appearing together with stone, tile and CBM.
Context D: This was the lowest context reached at 30 cms and a possible feature was revealed which contained large flints with a mortar fill, possibly a wall feature.

Test pit 4

Test pit 4 was located to the south west outside the manor house walls, in what was formerly the kitchen garden. It was measured out as 1m x 1m and reduced to 1m x 0.5m on second day.
After removal of the top soil the contexts were reached.

Context A: This consisted of a dark loam layer with small chalk inclusions.
Context B: Had dark loam with inclusions of building rubble, gravel and large quantity of greenhouse glass. This was found at a depth of 27 cms.
Context C: Dark loam continuing with mortar rubble inclusions. A small-bore metal pipe, capped at one end, entered pit on the N/W side.
Context D: Lighter loam with small chalk flecks dug down to a final depth of 66cms and didn't reach the natural bed rock by the end of the excavation.

Test pit 6

Test pit 6 was located to the northwest outside the manor house walls. It was measured and cut 1m x 1m remaining at those dimensions for the two-day excavation.
The top soil was removed and the contexts began to be revealed.

Context A: Consisted of a dark loam with much modern building debris.
Context B: Pink angular stone covering a membrane triangular in shape running NE to SE, same material as test pit 1.
Context C: Chalky fill with large/medium/small/flecks of chalk and a chalk edge running from NE to SE of pit.
Context D: Circular anomaly in the west corner. Fill of finer/darker loam, which may indicate the presence of a post hole.
Context E: Less chalky rubble with small pebbles inclusions and darker loam at 26 cms.
Sondage cut into NW corner to determine if the natural could be reached but to no avail.
Context F: Darker loam with small chalk flecks.

Finds of bone, CBM and a large quantity of modern, building rubble.

Test pit 7

Test pit 7 was located north of the entrance to the under croft, outside the manor house walls and up a very steep bank. This was measured and cut 1m x 0.5m. Topsoil was removed and contexts were reached.

Context A: Again, the pink angular stone chips on top of building membrane were found. After removal of the membrane:
Context B: Revealed dark loam with chalk flecks and some large flints (> 20 cms) at 24 cms depth.
Context C: This layer revealed mortar rubble between flints, which may indicate a feature.

There were finds of bone, a Roman pottery sherd and modern building debris.

Test pit 8

Test pit 8 was located southeast of the entrance to the under croft outside the manor house walls. The pit was measured initially as 1m x 1m and reduced to 1m x 0.5m on second day.
After top solid removal the contexts were reached.

Context A: Just below the turf line at 3 cms a dark loam with small chalk flecks was revealed. At 6 cms in the north corner a small piece of modern gold-plated jewellery was found.
Context B: This layer consisted of a layer of dark loam with medium/small chalk nodules > 5cms.
Context C: This area revealed more chalk in the loam horizon and also had inclusions of small animal/rodent bones.
Context D: At 25 cms a chalk, mortar and flint edge appeared along the south side of the pit and into the south corner, which may indicate a wall feature.

Test pit 10

Test pit 10 was located and cut 0.5m x 0.5m within the manor house walls in the south east corner of the main building.
The top soil was removed and the contexts were soon reached,

Context A: Revealed another occurrence of the pink angular stone chips on top of building membrane.
Context B: This layer consisted of dark soil with small flint nodules <5-10 cms.
Context C: At 25 cms depth, an area of packed flint in north corner and tile intruding from SW baulk was revealed. The flints were removed and beneath these was an area of dark loam with medium chalk nodules.
Context D: Consisted of medium/large chalk at the lower levels with a find of dressed stone border or window stone (see fig. 10).

Portslade Manor House-Material Culture

The Finds

Introduction

The test pits sunk both inside and outside of the manor house building produced copious amounts of late Victorian and 20th century brick, tile, flowerpot, broken glass and nails. From the outset of the investigation, it was obvious that the whole area had been used by Nuns, from the adjacent convent, and others are a general rubbish tip. It was decided to only record items of an older or more interesting nature. The test pits did produce some areas of stratification indicating individual layers of refuge. The most ancient objects began to appear at the lower depths of the cuttings. Some finds, especially the prehistoric flintwork, and possible Roman pottery, clearly indicate that they are re-deposited items, brought in from sources unknown.

The Flintwork

All of the flintwork, which totalled 4 pieces, came from either test pit 6 (3x) and a single piece from test pit 4. Both of these areas are outside of the main building on both the south and north sides. All of the struck items had a grey patination with 2 pieces retaining some vestige of cortext. One piece from the test pit: TP4(D) is soft hammered. Among the other 3 pieces of flint, one could be considered as being a notched flake with some traces of re-touch, while another could be a broken blade fragment. The total weight of the flint items was 204 gm. None of the flintwork came from well stratified layers and are considered intrusive.

The Pottery

Roman Pottery

The excavations produced a single sherd of well fired grey ware, possibly originating from the Hardham area. The item consisted of part of a base section, and a large section of the adjacent body. The pot had been wheel thrown and weighed 45 gm. It was found in test pit:TP7(B) located north of the manor house. While this solitary sherd can be classed as intrusive it may be derived from a Roman structure, possibly a villa, located further up East Hill, Portslade. It is possible that the sherd could have washed down the hill from this location.

Winbolt A. E. 1927 ‘A Roman building at Easthill, Portslade’ S.N.Q. Vol I, No 5, Pg 134-136

Medieval Pottery

The excavation produced two pieces of medieval pottery, one from the northwest test pit: TP6(E) and the other from the southwest test pit: TP4(D). Both of these are located outside of the manor structure. They were both of a fine sandy fabric, with one containing small inclusions of mica. It is not possible to ascertain any dateable indications from the small amount of pottery found. Both sherds came from the lower depths of the test pits, but in unstratified archaeological layers.

Ceramics

Among the finds were several pieces of Victorian blue and white decorated fragments of plate or dishes, and single piece of plain white glazed ceramic. The ceramics were individual items from 4 different test pits.

Marine Shell

A considerable amount of oyster shells were recovered totalling 52 pieces and weighing 1577 gm. The shells were almost evenly split between the number of upper and lower sections, the upper sections being 54 in number. There were a small number of shells containing evidence for parasitic infestation with 2 cases (0.04%) of clionne and 4 cases (0.08) having suffered from hoplura. The majority of shells were deposited to the north of the house, 30 in total (58%) in a very complex series of layers, with the oyster being found at the lower depths of the test pit. It was a similar situation in the area to the south deemed the ‘kitchen garden’. In test pit TP6 (D) at the lower depths significant amounts of oyster shell were being recovered in the lower fills. In this test pit the shell totalled 21 which amounted to 42% of the whole collection. A single oyster shell fragment was forthcoming from the lower depths of test put TP10 in the south/east corner in the interior of the house. Only one small fragment of scallop shell was recovered from test pit TP8 (A), located on the outside of the east side of the house. The oyster shells were mainly focused in 2 large dumps both north and south of the house. With both shells, upper and lower, being in the collections it does not suggest food preparation, but perhaps two single events or meal remnants

Clay pipe

The clay pipe finds were distributed in 4 of the test pits and as is usual on sites, consisted mostly of pipe stems. There were 13 pipe stem fragments varying in length and with a varying diameter of between 3 and 9 mm. None of the fragments contained any diagnostic markings. One fragment had a distinctive blue tinge at one end. A total of 5 fragments came from the lower depths of TP4, with similar amounts from test pits 7 and 8. A single fragment was recovered from test pit 6. A complete bowl was founding in test pit 8. It was plain, lacking any decorative features, but the body shape with the larger flat heel pipe tends to suggest that it dates from the late 17th century (Atkinson).

Atkinson D.R. (undated) 'Sussex Clay Tobacco Pipes and the Pipe makers' Crain Services, Eastbourne

Animal Bone

The test pits produced 65 animal bones weighing 617 gm. Among the group were 18 fragments of bone that could not be identified. None of the bones were articulated. Most of the found items are the residue of food debris with the majority of remains being from sheep and a couple of gnawed bones, possibly the remains of pet food, one large cow bone had a clear-cut mark from a butcher's cleaver. There were a number of smaller long bones and a couple of vertebrae, some rib bones and a few sheep teeth. Perhaps the most interesting items are a number of canine teeth and a possible boar tooth from test pit TP8 (Fig. 8)

Fig.8: Canine teeth and a mandible from test pit 8

Glass

All of the test pits produced copious amounts of broken glass, mainly clear, but some with various colours. Most of the shards were either window glass, possibly from windows or allotment frames. None of the glass found had any diagnostic fragments with the exception of a complete Shippam's paste jar from test pit 6. Another complete vessel was a brown colour small jar which still retained its

stopper. These complete vessels date to the 20th century with the Shippam's paste jar from the earlier part of the 20th century dated up to 1930.

Metal

Most of the metal finds consisted of small nails. A number of nails were found in test pit 8 along the west face of a possible chalk 'wall' (Fig.7) The nails were all quite small measuring around 40 mm in length and 4 mm cross section. The only other metal finds were a clamp plate with holes for securing to an adjacent surface and another plate used for securing a bolt or latch on a door, both items date to the 20th century. One unusual find was a small fragment of a gold-plated bracelet measuring 35mm in length and 3 mm across, the item consisted of two strands of twisted material and is clearly modern.

Fig. 9: Test pit 8 where a number of nails were found close to the chalk 'wall'

Miscellaneous metal

Test pit 1 was located in the central inside area of the house. This test pit produced a rich and very dark layer of a deposit of soil or dump of material. This material was wet sieved on site, and produced very few finds except a good number of very small globules of metal fragments. These were identified using a magnet. This material may have been the product of industrial waste material used to create a floor, or maybe as the result of some industrial activity within the area. The morphology and size are indicative of hammer scale.

Stone

The excavation produced 3 pieces of stone. Two of the items were quite small fragments of Horsham stone and these may have been displaced from the roof of the manor house. Alternatively, they may have been part of the roof of the adjacent church of St Nicholas, which still retains Horsham stone on the south side of the church roof. The other piece of stone was a fine carved fragment of possible window frame weighing 266 gm (Fig.8) which was recovered from the lower fill of test pit 10, located inside the manor house.

Fig. 10: Carved stone from test pit 10

Glass Bead

A single glass bead had a central opening and was coloured blue. The bead measured 4.7 mm in diameter and 3.5 mm thick. This artefact came from test pit 1, located in the central section of the house. The find was from the deeper levels.

Interpretation of material culture

The excavation did produce considerable amounts of modern debris and an eclectic collection of other finds synonymous with a rubbish dump. It was only at the lower levels of the various test pits that pottery and oyster shell finds suggest

the presence of older and more secured deposits. It is these lower deposits which could provide any accurate dating for activities. All of the finds came from a complex layer of deposits.

It interesting that such a variety of finds came from both the interior and exterior areas of the manor house. It would appear to indicate that the manor house had been surrounded by an open area which was later used as a dumping ground, along with the interior of the house, once the building went out of use.

Discussion

Portslade-on-sea has a very long history which may date back to 2000 BC. Remains of a wooden henge were discovered close to Mile Oak Farm.
Later development during the Roman period was indicated when Portslade became a major commercial port with the construction of a Roman road stretching from Portslade to London. By 400 AD the historical record of Portslade diminished and it wasn't until after the Norman conquest that Portslade returned to the map.
The area was gifted to William de Warenne by William the Conqueror after the battle of Hastings and one of the first Norman Manor houses was built at Portslade.

The recent surveys and test pit excavations were carried out to try and gather evidence and determine the various phases of occupation at the manor house.

The square feature, as determined by the GPR survey, may indicate a well that was placed within the walls of the manor house. It has been noted that many medieval manor houses comprised of such a feature. It was also noted, from a senior local historian, that whilst playing within the grounds of the manor house, when he was a child, he clearly remembers a well within the vicinity.

The burnt material found in test pit one showed that it had been subjected to very high temperatures. This may indicate some form of industrial process being carried out within the manor house walls.

The area around test pit ten proved very interesting as no direct evidence was discovered regarding the foundations of the manor house walls. Further excavations within this area may give us more concrete conclusions.

Test pit 4 was in an area known to have housed the Tudor kitchen garden. As mentioned, the area contained a wealth of dumped material which was mostly modern, when the grounds were used as a rubbish disposal area for the nunnery. Fresh Start, Portslade will be seeking permission to develop this whole "garden" area and try and restore it to its former glory by the refurbishment and planting traditional Tudor crops.

Conclusions

As discussed above, I feel that these early investigations into the Old Manor House are just the beginning. I hope that further permissions will be granted by Historic England to investigate several areas further.

These I have highlighted as:

- An extension of test pit 1 to the south to determine if the “floor” feature continues and investigation of the well feature.
- Excavate a slot running east to west at the entrance to the under croft.
- Position and excavate a slot running from the site of test pit two into the area of the fireplace.
- Develop and extend the area around test pit 10 to determine further the foundations of the south manor house wall.

The nature of this project inspired a wealth of community involvement and ignited interest within the community about the history of the manor house. I have been reliably informed that we would continue to receive wonderful support locally should we be able to carry out further excavations at a later date.

Acknowledgements

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to Historic England for granting the relevant permissions to allow the BHAS and Fresh Start to be able to complete this project.
My thanks go to the County Archaeologist Neil Griffin for his support and guidance throughout this project.
Without the whole hearted support of Fresh Start, Portslade it would have been difficult to complete this project. My thanks go to John Shepherd and his team for everything they did, including refreshments.
I would also like to thank the mayor, Alan Robins, for his attendance and support.
Many thanks also go to Trevor Povey who attended on the Saturday and gave his support and vast knowledge to members of the community.
Thanks also to Emmaus for allowing us to use some parking spaces and their patience whilst the project was being developed.
I am in debt to David Staveley for his experience and knowledge in carrying out the GPR survey and for producing the report.
Finally, thanks to all of the BHAS field unit for their hard work and determination, the members of the team washing the finds and also the flotation team during the three days.

References

BGS 2019 http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyof Britain/home.html
ClfA 2014, Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Survey

ClfA, Code of Conduct

ESCC/WSCC 2019 Sussex Archaeological Standards

Packham A.B: 1934 ‘Portslade Manor House’ SAC 75 pp 1-18

Hussey: ‘Portslade Manor’ Notes on the churches of Kent, Surrey and Sussex Sussex.

Johnson P.M: ‘Portslade Manor’ Victoria County History

Lower A: ‘Portslade Manor’ History of Sussex

Packham A.B. 1934 ‘Portslade Manor House’ Sussex Arch Colls. 75, pp 1-18

Hussey ‘Portslade Manor’ Notes on the churches of Kent, Surrey and Sussex.

Johnson P.M. ‘Portslade Manor’ Victoria County History

Lower A. ‘Portslade Manor’ History of Sussex

Packham A.B. 1934 ‘Portslade Manor House’ SAC 75 (LXXV), 1-18

Appendices

Appendix A - Written Scheme of Investigation for Resistivity Survey (WSI)

Appendix B - Application for Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC)

Appendix C - Written Scheme of Investigation for Test Pit Excavations (WSI)

Appendix A - Written Scheme of Investigation Resistivity Survey

Old Manor House, Portslade-by-sea, BN41 2GD, East Sussex.

(TQ. 2554506369)

A Project organised by Fresh Start Portslade and the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society

by

John Shepherd of Fresh Start Portslade, Pete Tolhurst and John Funnell of the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society

June 2021

Author: P. Tolhurst April 2021

Contents

Introduction

The Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society (BHAS) have been asked by Fresh Start Portslade to conduct a resistivity survey of the Scheduled Monument: Old Manor House, Portslade-by-sea, BN41 2GD, East Sussex (TQ. 2554506369) as shown in figures 1a and 1b. The survey aims to investigate the area within the remains of the Old Manor House to determine if there are any underlying archaeological features.
As well as providing potentially useful archaeological information the project is to be used for training Fresh Start personnel and volunteers from members of the public in the use of geophysical equipment. The team will also inform and answer any questions forthcoming from any public interest.

Historic and Archaeological background

Portslade Manor ruins are a rare example of a surviving Norman Manor House. Built around 1130, the Manor house has been owned by notable historical figures such as Hubert de Burgh (Justicar of England in the 13th century) and the De La Warr family (of whom the state of Delaware takes its name). The original building consisted of an under croft, with a great hall above.
The Manor House had a west wing added at some point in the Tudor period, which included a two-storey tower. The building is a construction of knapped flints, bonded with lime mortar. The windows, door entrances and wall returns are decorated in Caen stone. The ruins sit within a conservation area, are Grade II listed and a Scheduled Ancient Monument.
The Old Manor house was well surveyed by Packham in 1934 but the interior and surrounding areas have not been investigated by geophysics or excavation.
In Arthur Packham's article in the Sussex Archaeological Collection (SAC) 75 he writes that 'Hussey' mentions "below the surface foundations of two walls still exist, running from the old mansion to the north-west and north-east angles of the chancel of the church". Packham was unable to determine whether this was based on actual examination of the area. A trial pit was dug just in front of the south-east angle of the ruins where a block of stone projects from the manor house wall. The examination proved fruitless and no foundations were discovered after reaching a depth of 4 feet (1.2 metres).

Geology

Much of Portslade sits on a mix of chalk and clay. According to The British Geological Survey (2019) the site lies over White chalk sub-group (K6) with chalk and flints. The original basement floor of the manor was hammered chalk. The actual manor house sits within a slight deep in the landscape terrain.

Aims and Objectives

All work will be carried out in accordance with the Sussex Standards for Archaeological Field work (2019) as well as the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014).
The work is planned to take place in June 2021.
The geophysical survey (Fig 1b.) is designed to investigate the Old Manor House for a better understanding of the potential for archaeological remains/features.
Apart from members of the BHAS the survey will provide an opportunity to engage with members of Fresh Start, Portslade and with local members of the public.

Methodology

The geophysical survey will consist of a resistivity survey in the accessible areas of the manor ruins and this measures approximately 90 square metres.
The survey will use a Geoscan Research RM 15 resistivity meter with a twin probe array. The grid sizes will be 20 x 20 metres square with the lines spaced 2 metres apart and the measurements taken at 1 metre intervals. The measurements will be in Ohms. The resistivity survey will detect variations in electrical resistance through the soil and these may indicate the presence of walls, floors, pits and ditches buried beneath the top soil.
The grids will be set out using a Sokkia SET 630 RK Total Station.
A ground penetrating radar (GPR) survey will also be undertaken by the well-established Sussex archaeological surveyor, David Staveley, to determine if there are any hidden walls or voids below the surface.

Recording and Archive

A report will be produced within one month of the completion of the survey and will include:

a) Introduction (including aims and objectives)
b) Site topography and geology
c) Methodology
d) Survey results
e) Interpretation of results
f) Conclusions
g) Acknowledgements
h) List of sources
i) A summary report consisting of 100 words maximum for the HER.

Copies of the report will be passed to Historic England, the County Archaeology team, BHCC and will be included in the 2021 BHAS Field Notebook, which will be deposited at the East Sussex Record Office at the Keep and Barbican House Library at Lewes.

Health and Safety

Health and Safety will take priority over archaeological requirements. The survey will be carried out in accordance with safe working practises. A risk assessment has been carried out, including the current Covid 19 guidelines. All individuals will have to complete a Covid 19 questionnaire before coming on-site. All of the relevant health and safety regulations will be adhered to.
An area of approximately 90 square metres will be under geophysical survey at any one time and this area will be within the boundary of the manor house. The main risk to anyone entering the area is a trip hazard due to trailing cables and survey lines. The footpaths adjacent to the survey area will remain accessible to the public.

Insurance

The Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society is covered by insurance for Public Liability (£2,000,000), Employers Liability (£10,000,000), Legal Defence Costs (Health and safety at Work) limited indemnity £250,000 and All Risks Owned Property.

Project Management

The survey will be managed by BHAS team leader Pete Tolhurst with support from John Funnell and other members of the BHAS Field Unit.

References

- BGS 2019 http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyof Britain/home.html
- ClfA 2014, Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Survey
- ClfA, Code of Conduct
- ESCC/WSCC 2019 Sussex Archaeological Standards
- Packham A.B: 1934 ‘Portslade Manor House’ SAC 75 pp 1-18
- Hussey: ‘Portslade Manor’ Notes on the churches of Kent, Surrey and Sussex.
- Johnson P.M: ‘Portslade Manor’ Victoria County History
- Lower A: ‘Portslade Manor’ History of Sussex

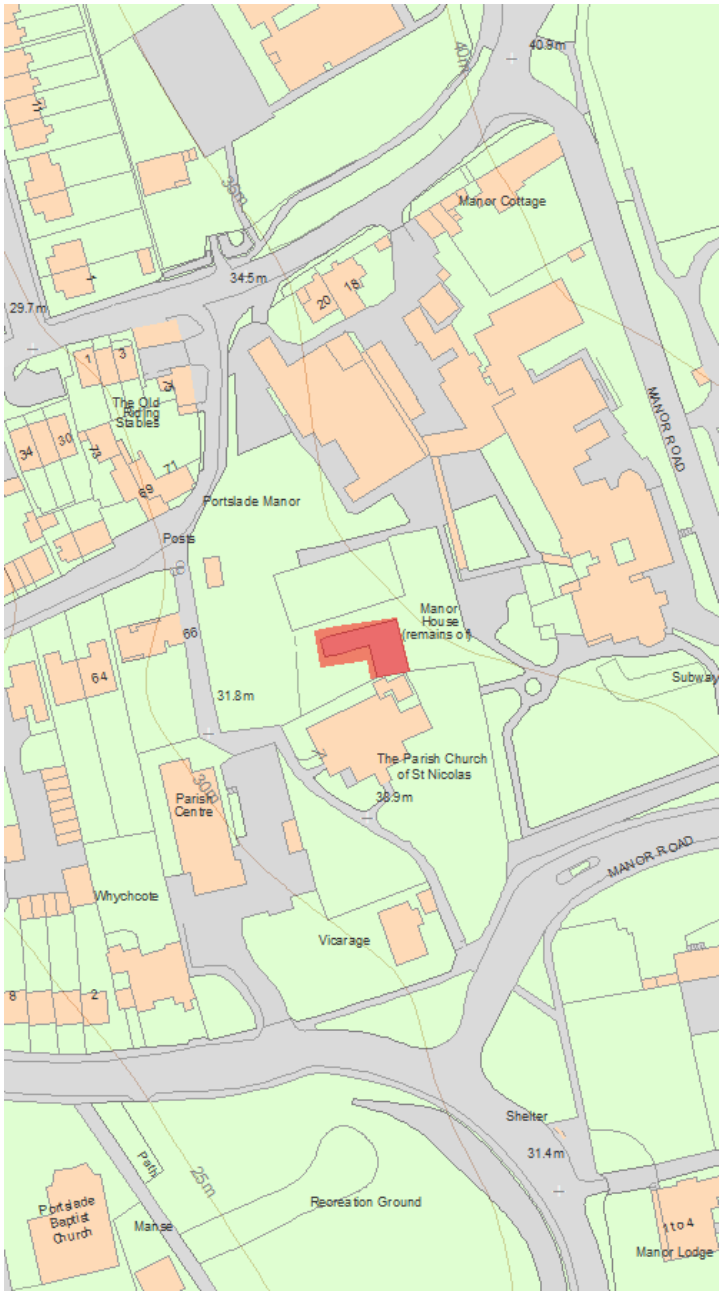


Fig 1a – Location map of Old Manor House, (showing survey area} Portslade by sea.

Fig 1b – Aerial photograph showing Old Manor House, Portslade and location of resistivity survey (© google earth).

Appendix B - Application for Scheduled Monument Consent

For Portslade Old Manor Ruins, BN41 2LE
November, 2019

Description of proposed works - overview

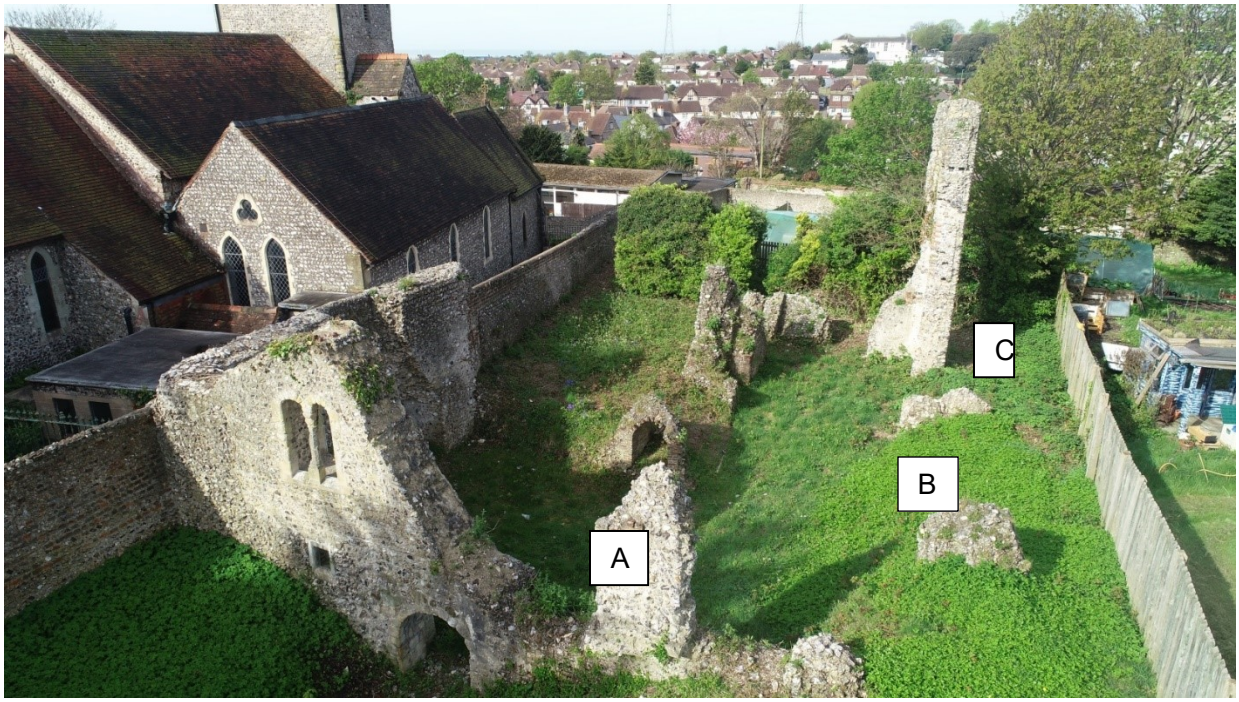
1. Installation of weed membrane to cover the internal space of the footprint of the manor building (i.e., what would have been the Old Manor internal floor). The weed membrane will be covered with Cotswold stone pebbles.
2. Re-instating the original kitchen garden, which is situated just outside the original footprint of the Old Manor building
3. Removing the brambles and general scrub land that surrounds the exterior of the manor, and replace with grass.
4. Removal of the remains of wooden steps, installed circa 1995.

Description of works. Full details.

1. The weed membrane will be installed directly above the ground (i.e., we will not dig out any earth). The membrane will not be pinned, but will rely on the weight of the stone pebbles to keep it in place. The only exception to these will be at point C, which is the main entrance way for visitors. A one metre strip of the membrane will be pinned down by 12 x 15cms metal pegs.

The membrane will cover the original floor area of the manor. These are two rectangles, shown in point A and B. This area is 99 square metres. The weed membrane is made from woven black polypropylene, this weed membrane is UV-resistant and can be used without a cover. Using weed control fabric significantly reduces the need for chemical weed killers, while being safe to use and very easy to install.

The membrane will be covered by Cotswold stone chippings (10mm to 20mm size) and to a depth of around 50mm. It is understood that the original floor would have been constructed of hammered chalk, so the white stones will help replicate this image.



2. The original kitchen garden – shown as point G below – is an area of 5 metres by 10 metres. We wish to recreate a medieval or Tudor kitchen garden. This will involve a small amount (about 25 metres square) of gentle renovating of the ground, to a depth of around 20cms, and adding a top coat of soil to encourage better growth. Please note we do not intend to use raised beds.

3. As can be seen on both the above pictures, the external area of the manor to the perimeter fence is covered by scrub land. We wish to kill off the weeds, brambles etc, and replace with grass. This will be easier to maintain, and be more aesthetically pleasing when viewing the site from both internally and external views.

4. In 1995, wooden steps were installed as a pathway for visitors to use (see picture below). This has created much-misunderstanding about the Manor. Most people asssume that the steps were put in to recreate a doorway to another part of the manor building. The truth is that a solid wall would have run across this point, and the area the steps were leading to was actually a garden.

As can be seen from the picture below, most of these steps have now deteriorated beyond safe use. We would like to remove all traces of these steps. In their place, we would like to place a line of flints we have recovered from around the site. We believe this will help visitors understand the correct line of the manor house and its true size.

Portslade Manor House

Portslade has long had associations with the Roman period with finds from around the area notably the Roman cemetery at Victoria Road. Other notable finds have included a collection of Neolithic axes and a Middle Bronze Age hoard. The church of St Nicholas dates to the 12th century and the adjacent medieval building of Portslade manor probably has a close association. The church and manor house are similar to another complex excavated at Ovingdean, east of Brighton. The house sizes are similar and both houses are close to the church. At Ovingdean there is evidence for barns and out buildings, and possibly earlier Saxon occupation. It is believed that both Portslade and Ovingdean were owned by the Norman Godfrey de Pierpoint, with Portslade

being his main residence and Ovingdean maintained by either a relative or use as a hunting lodge.

The Portslade house has been well surveyed (Packham 1934) but the interior and surrounding areas have not been investigated by excavation or geophysics. There is a short note about a test pit cut outside the house, but other than the depth of the pit (4 feet) there are no further records, and it is believed that nothing was found although they were seeking evidence for walls.

Domesday 12, 22-26 (Morris)

Portslade – Domesday 1086 shows that the lands were held by William of Warenne

Aldrington is held by Godfrey from William (Now William de Braose) 7 hides and 1 virgate. Land for 7 ploughs. The villagers held before 1066.

In the same village Godfrey held 9 hides from William

Oswald holds ½ hide from William, he held it before 1066. It did not pay tax. He could go where he could with land. 1 villager

Albert holds ½ hide in Portslade. It did not pay tax. 1 villager and ½ plough.

Godfrey holds Ovingdean from William.

SAC 75, 1-18

The location is north of the old parish church of St Nicholas, one the walls formed part of the churchyard boundary. Wall foundations were noted in 1934-ish.

There was a small excavation in 1934 to seek walls at the south east angle. They dug down 4 feet (1.2 metres) and found nothing. There are no details about the excavation

Stonework comes from Caen, Quarr Abbey and Binstead on the Isle of Wight.

Features resemble that of the 13th century stonework of the church, but some sections are considered possibly Norman. The longest axis north/south is considered late 12th century. The entrance is believed to be at the north/east angle of the building.

One ach has a stone moulded Norman chevron in its soffit.

There appear to be 17th century and 18th century modifications

One window which dates to about 1280AD, is the east window.

SAC 119, 164 in 1609 Portslade and Atlingworth purchased by Abraham Edwards, jointly with his cousin

Portslade (Name) Porteslage (1086), Prtes Ladda (c.1095), probable meaning crossing place near the harbour. (Mills 1991)

SAC 114, 323-4 Ports Road, an ancient track running from Devils dyke down via Hangleton to Old Portslade and the mouth of the river Adur. Eliot and Cecil Curwen conducted research and believe the names derives from Saxon times as Portes Lad. Margary records the track as a minor Roman road.

SAC 126 – 233-238 Victoria Road recreational field and the old Southdown bus depot produced finds of roman pottery, is there a link to a possible Roman port at Portslade and roman sites on the Downs? Brick makers at Aldrington found numerous Roman finds. A number of cremation burials at Victoria Road

SAC 126 – A roman grave group at Fulking Corner – 4 complete vessels, 2 complete beakers found and some samian. Other pottery revealed during ploughing. Pottery associated with cremation burials.

Brighton and Hove Archaeologist Volume 3 – Port's Road (Curwen E & C. 1926)
The Portslade village sprung up and named after an existing highway which was in existence in Saxon times and was older. Drove Road is probably a very ancient throughfare. A roman road was traced north of Old Shoreham Road up Mile Oak Road

Link to Ovingdean Manor House (Pers Comm. John Davies)

The lord in 'Lord of the manor' refers to Landlord, not an aristocratic title

At Ovingdean the lord of the manor was the same as at Portslade which in 1066 was Godfrey De Pierpoint.,

The Ovingdean house is almost the same as part of Portslade and may have had the same builders.

The Ovingdean house had an under croft and 2 windows facing southwards.

References: -

Gilkes O. 1988 'Roman Burials at Portslade' SAC 126, 233-237

Gilkes O. 1988 ‘A Roman Grave Group from Fulking Corner, Portslade’ SAC 126, 237/238

Mills A.D. 1991 ‘A Dictionary of English Place-names’ Oxford

Morris J. 1976 ‘Domesday Book, Sussex’ Phillimore

Packham A.B. 1934 ‘Portslade Manor House’ SAC 75 (LXXV), 1-18

Appendix C - Written Scheme of Investigation

A project organised by Fresh Start Portslade and the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society

by

John Shepherd of Fresh Start Portslade and Pete Tolhurst of the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society

for

Test Pit Excavations at Old Manor House, Portslade-by-sea, BN41 2GD, East Sussex
(TQ 2554506369)

June 2021

Author: Pete Tolhurst April 2021

Contents

Written Scheme of Investigation for Test Pit Excavations at the Old Manor House, Portslade-by-sea, BN41 2GD, East Sussex.

June 2021

Introduction

This Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) is submitted to Historic England (HE), ESCC and East Sussex County Archaeologist in support of an application to carry out excavations of 8 test pits on the Scheduled monument, Old Manor House, Portslade. Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society (BHAS) will be undertaking the archaeological investigation at the request of Historic England and John Shepherd, Fresh Start Portslade.

All work will be carried out in accordance with the WSI, and the Sussex Archaeological Standards – December 2017 as far as is possible.
(It must be realised that BHAS is a charitable organisation run by volunteers and funded solely by subscriptions, fees and donations. Expenditure must be closely monitored and approved by the BHAS committee. Where compliance with the above standards is compromised by these constraints, reference will be made to the nature of the constraint in the relevant section. If at any time during the project it becomes apparent that the Society cannot maintain these standards the County Archaeologist will be informed.)

Historical and Archaeological background

Portslade Manor ruins are a rare example of a surviving Norman Manor House. Built around 1130, the Manor house has been owned by notable historical figures such as Hubert de Burgh (Justicar of England in the 13th century) and the De La Warr family (of whom the state of Delaware takes its name). The original building consisted of an under croft, with a great hall above.
The Manor House had a west wing added at some point in the Tudor period, which included a two-storey tower. The building is a construction of knapped flints, bonded with lime mortar. The windows, door entrances and wall returns are decorated in Caen stone. The ruins sit within a conservation area, are Grade II listed and a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

The Old Manor house was well surveyed by Packham in 1934 but the interior and surrounding areas have not been investigated by geophysics or excavation. In Arthur Packham's article in the Sussex Archaeological Collection (SAC) 75 he writes that 'Hussey' mentions "below the surface foundations of two walls still exist, running from the old mansion to the north-west and north-east angles of the chancel of the church". Packham was unable to determine whether this was based on actual examination of the area. A trial pit was dug just in front of the south-east angle of the ruins where a block of stone projects from the manor

house wall. The examination proved fruitless and no foundations were discovered after reaching a depth of 4 feet (1.2 metres).

Geology

Much of Portslade sits on a mix of chalk and clay. According to The British Geological Survey (2019) the site lies over white chalk sub-group (K6) with chalk and flints. The original basement floor of the manor was hammered chalk. The actual manor house sits within a slight deep in the landscape terrain.

The Old Manor House (TQ 2554506369) lies on the east slope of the valley that runs from The Level at Brighton up to Clayton, north of the South Downs. The route from the Level to Patcham is the source of the Wellesbourne stream, which now runs underground. It is on a similar location to the site of the earlier Roman villa located further south at the south end of Preston Park.

Archaeology

The total area of the site (i.e., to the fences on the east and north, the church wall on the south, and the tall bushes on the west side) is 180 square metres (12 metres by 15 metres). The actual footprint of the manor ruins measures a total of 90 square metres

BHAS will be carrying out a geophysical survey of the area within and around the Old Manor House just prior to any excavations to determine any archaeological features. The survey will be completed using a Geoscan RM 15 Resistance Meter in twin probe configuration. The grids sizes will be laid out as 20 x 20 metres squares. The traverse lines will be spaced 1 metre apart and the probe measurements were taken at 1 metre intervals. The mobile probes generally penetrate down to two to three centimetres into the surface layer and readings are taken down to approximately10 - 15cm into the soil. The measurements are taken in Ohms and the resistivity survey measures variations in soil resistance that may indicate walls and floors (typically producing high readings) and pits and ditches (typically producing low readings).

The grids will be set out using a Sokkia SET 630 RK total station and will be marked by grid marker pegs and flags.

The readings will be processed through the “Snuffler” software and the results will form the basis for the positioning of the test pit excavations.

Before the excavations commence a ground penetrating radar survey (GPR) will also be undertaken by the well-known Sussex surveyor, David Staveley, to determine if there are any hidden walls and voids below the surface.

Aims

The aims of the project are:

Investigate the area within and around the Old Manor House to obtain a better understanding of any underlying archaeology.

The need for this archaeological investigation is to increase knowledge of the site and immediate surroundings.

To inform and utilise the local community in this project and increase knowledge of the local history of the Old Manor House.

At the conclusion of the excavations BHAS are to provide a written report to Historic England, County Archaeologist, HER and ESCC detailing the findings.

Methodology

It is intended to have eight test pit excavation areas (see figures 2 & 2a). 4 of these will be located within the walls of the house and 4 will be outside the manor walls but in close proximity to them. All of the test pits will be 1 metre x 1 metre square and these will be excavated by hand with no mechanical diggers used. Removal of topsoil will cease at first sign of archaeological horizons or natural geology.

Any features revealed at this stage will be recorded and a plan produced.

Further excavation will be by hand tools and in accordance with standard archaeological practise as described by the Museum of London Archaeological Service Archaeological Site Manual (1994).

Recording and analysis

Plans will be produced at a scale of 1:20 and section drawings at a scale of 1:10. Features and special finds will be measured in a 3-dimensional profile using a Sokkia SET 630 RK total station and referenced to Ordnance Survey data.

Working photographs will be digital colour. Photogrammetry will continue be used to create 3D images.

Any environmental sampling and analysis will be limited by several factors. BHAS find it very difficult to handle larges sample sizes of 40-60 litres, as specified in Historic England Archaeological guidelines “Environmental Archaeology – A Guide to Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-Excavation” (Second Edition, 2011), unless immediately received for analysis by a professional unit. BHAS has no immediate access to

flotation equipment suitable for handling such large samples and in previous years have taken samples of a typical maximum volume of 3-4 litres from selected contexts. It is proposed that this practise continues (sample size 5 litres where possible) unless features are of a particularly important or well-preserved nature when advice will be sought from a professional palaeoenvironmental archaeologist and the County Archaeologist. Samples will be taken to aid identification of feature usage and to provide a mollusc analysis sequence of prominent stratigraphy.

Any finds that fall within the definition of treasure will be reported to the County Archaeologist, Coroner and Finds Liaison Officer and the location of the find recorded.

Treatment of Human remains

If human remains are found excavation will cease and the County Archaeologist will be informed. Current legislative procedures will be complied with.

Treatment of other artefacts and ecofacts

Handling of finds will be in accordance with “Archaeological Finds Procedures Manual”, Museum of London Specialist Services, Museum of London, 2006.

Unless items are fragile or friable the following procedures will apply: -

Flint – washed, dried, marked with site code and stored in plastic bags.

Fire cracked flint, ceramic building materials – identified, washed, dried, weighed and discarded unless of particular interest.

Pottery – Washed (unless it has evidence of adhering original contents), dried, marked with site code and stored in plastic bags.

Bone – washed, dried and stored in plastic bags.

Metal (not nails) – Untreated, stored initially in “Jiffy Foam” in airtight box with desiccant. Post ex: Treated and stored in “Jiffy Foam” in airtight boxes.

Nails – lightly brushed, stored in plastic bags.

Glass (unless unstable) - washed, dried and stored in plastic bags.

Unstable glass – will be stored damp in plastic bags.

Flots (~200-micron filter) and heavy fractions (~750 microns filter) – dried and stored separately in plastic bags/containers.

At this time BHAS has no dedicated storage facilities and all samples, artefacts and ecofacts are stored at members' private residences.

Post excavation and analysis

A post-excavation assessment report (as described in Recommended Standard Conditions for Archaeological Fieldwork, Recording, and Post-Excavation Work (Development Control) in East Sussex (ESCC 2008)). A brief summary report will be submitted to ESCC County Archaeologist within one month of completion.

Electronic copies will be made available to Historic England as necessary. Hard copies will be supplied as required, so long as they are within the financial capabilities of the Society. All documents will be treated by BHAS as within the public domain unless instructed otherwise by ESCC

Archive

Written and paper archives will be held by the project directors and will be undertaken in accordance with The Sussex Museum Group: Selection, and Disposal guidelines November 2015. Final reports and publications will be deposited according to the requirements of Brighton Museum, but due to the current lack of space will be retained by the Society until a suitable repository is found.

Public engagement

BHAS membership is open to everyone but participation in field activities is limited to those who have attained an age of 17 years.
This project will involve members of the local community and they will be fully briefed and closely monitored whilst involved in any on-site activities.
Finds of an exceptional and/or valuable nature will not be communicated to the public before consultation with the County Archaeologist.

Health and Safety

All participating "diggers" are required to be up to date with tetanus inoculations.
All participants are given health and safety training and sign to acknowledge their understanding. A risk assessment has been carried out for the site, which includes the latest Covid 19 guidelines, and anyone participating in on-site activities will be made aware of the hazards and risks and sign to say they have understood these.
All individuals coming on-site will have to complete a Covid questionnaire before commencing work.

Insurance

BHAS is covered by £10,000,000 employer's liability and £2,000,000 public liability insurance.

Project Management

The Site Director will be Pete Tolhurst who is currently the Field Unit Director for BHAS.

A number of individuals will be assisting the Site Director in carrying out supervisory/recording duties.

In general, few members of BHAS are recognised professional archaeologists although a number are members of the Institute of Field Archaeologists. Many members have years of experience as supervised volunteers but some members have no relevant experience and join the Society in order to acquire training in archaeological methods. The BHAS field unit has close links with local professional archaeologists and is always willing to seek and accept advice.

References

Packham A.B. 1934 'Portslade Manor House' Sussex Arch Colls. 75, pp 1-18

Hussey 'Portslade Manor' Notes on the churches of Kent, Surrey and Sussex.

Johnson P.M. 'Portslade Manor' Victoria County History

Lower A. 'Portslade Manor' History of Sussex

Packham A.B. 1934 'Portslade Manor House' SAC 75 (LXXV), 1-18

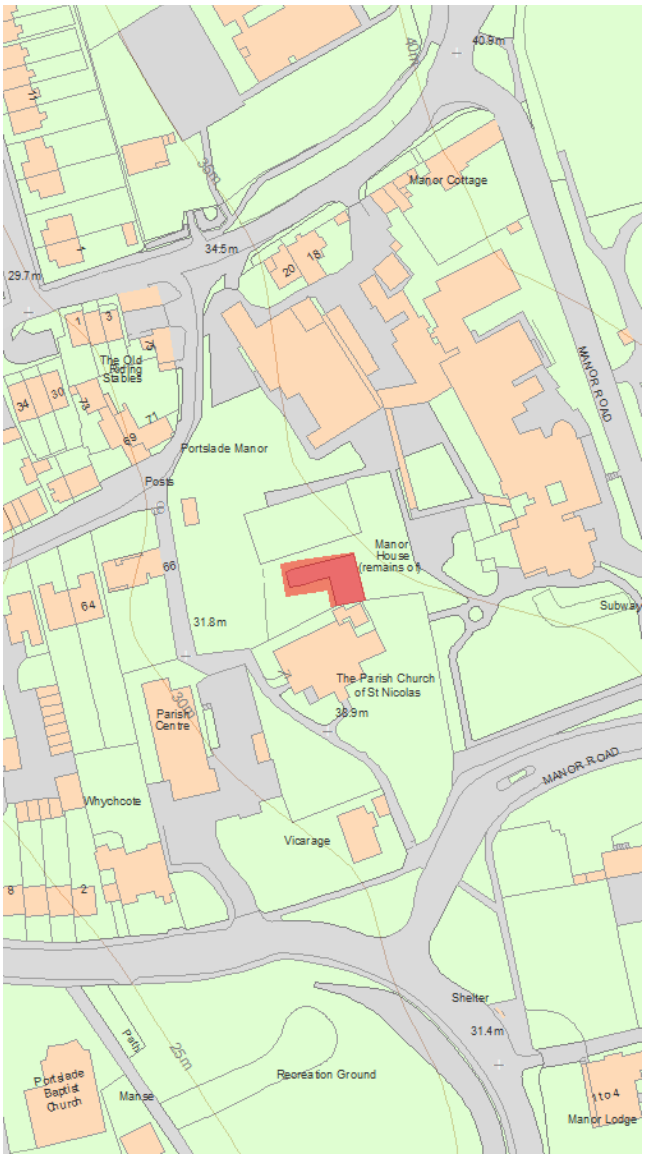


Figure 1: Location of the Old Manor House, Portslade by sea.

Figure 2: The proposed test pits at Old Portslade Manor (Courtesy Google Earth)

Farm Field' Roedean School - Test Pit Archaeology

Author: Richard Chamberlain – Senior Deputy Headteacher

Date of Report: 26th May 2017 and updated in October 2020.

Summary of test pit exploration:

In May 2017 Roedean ran an archaeological discovery day for prep-school children from Homewood House School. Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society supported the event by leading an artefact handling session and helping the pupils to dig four 1m square test pits. The test pits were all 20-30cm deep and were deemed complete when the white chalk natural was visible at the bottom of the pit.

Digging test pits in 2017 with pupils from Homewood House Prep School.

In October 2020 two pupils who were applying to Oxford University to study archaeology took part in digging a single test pit. The purpose of the exercise was to teach both pupils the basics of archaeological excavation ahead of their interview. The single 1m square test pit was dug to a depth of 23cm until the white chalk natural was visible.

Test Pit Records for 2017

Test Pit 1

10 cm layer (spit)	Description of soil (deposit)	Finds (artefacts)
1	Rich, dark sandy topsoil with fragments of natural chalk.	Clay pipe, willow pattern plate and modern pottery. Small sherd of Roman pottery.
2	Sandy sub-soil containing fragments of natural chalk, stones and gravel.	Clay pipe, willow pattern plate, glass, tile and modern pottery. Black, burnt charcoal?
3	Sandy sub-soil containing fragments of natural chalk, stones and gravel. Solid white chalk at the base of the pit.	Roman pottery sherds. Single oyster shell.

Test Pit 2

10 cm layer (spit)	Description of soil (deposit)	Finds (artefacts)
1	Rich, dark sandy topsoil with fragments of natural chalk.	Clay pipe, willow pattern plate and modern pottery.
2	Sandy sub-soil containing fragments of natural chalk, stones and gravel.	Clay pipe, willow pattern plate, glass, tile, modern pottery, Oyster shell and a piece of fire-cracked flint. Two small sherds of Roman pottery.
3	Sandy sub-soil containing fragments of natural chalk, stones and gravel. Solid white chalk at the base of the pit.	Single Roman pottery sherd and a small piece of folded lead. Possible sherd of Iron-Age pottery.

Test Pit 3

10 cm layer (spit)	Description of soil (deposit)	Finds (artefacts)
1	Rich, dark sandy topsoil with fragments of natural chalk.	Clay pipe, willow pattern plate and modern pottery.
2	Sandy sub-soil containing fragments of natural chalk, stones and gravel.	Clay pipe, willow pattern plate, glass, tile and modern pottery. Black burnt charcoal.
3	Sandy sub-soil containing fragments of natural chalk, stones and gravel. Solid white chalk at the base of the pit.	Roman pottery sherds. Single oyster shell. Possible Iron—Age sherd.

Test Pit 4

10 cm layer (spit)	Description of soil (deposit)	Finds (artefacts)
1	Rich, dark sandy topsoil with fragments of natural chalk.	Willow pattern plate, blue glass and modern pottery.
2	Sandy sub-soil containing fragments of natural chalk, stones and gravel.	Clay pipe, willow pattern plate, glass, tile and modern pottery.
3	Sandy sub-soil containing fragments of natural chalk, stones and gravel. Solid white chalk at the base of the pit.	Burnt black material.

Test Pit 5

10 cm layer (spit)	Description of soil (deposit)	Finds (artefacts)
1	Rich, dark sandy topsoil with fragments of natural chalk.	Clay pipe, willow pattern plate, green glazed tile and modern pottery.
2	Dark topsoil with fragments of natural chalk, stones and gravel.	Clay pipe, willow pattern plate, glass, glazed tile and modern pottery. Small Roman pottery sherds.
3	Sandy sub-soil containing fragments of natural chalk, stones and gravel. Solid white chalk at the base of the pit.	Oyster shell.

Test Pit 6 (2020)

10 cm layer (spit)	Description of soil (deposit)	Finds (artefacts)
1	Rich, dark sandy topsoil with fragments of natural chalk.	Clay pipe, willow pattern plate, green glazed tile, button and modern pottery.
2	Dark topsoil with fragments of natural chalk, stones and gravel.	Clay pipe, willow pattern plate, sherds of Roman pottery.
3	Sandy sub-soil containing fragments of natural chalk, stones and gravel. Solid white chalk at the base of the pit.	Oyster shell and sherds of Roman pottery. Two rim sherds and the base of a pot.

Photographs of Pottery Sherds:

Test Pit 1

Test Pit 2

Test Pit 3

Test Pit 5

Test Pit 6 (2020)

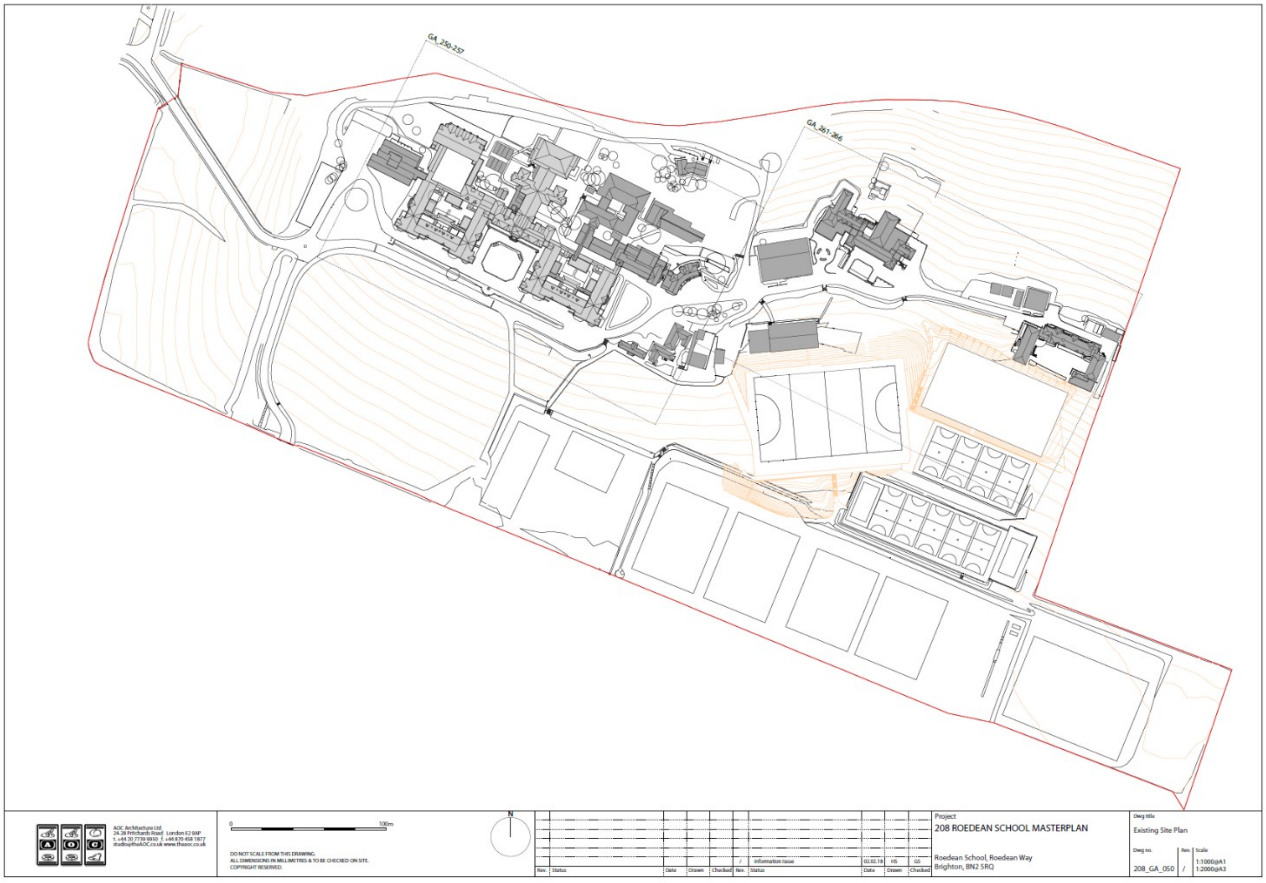
Map of Test Pits

The map below ***(Editor's Note, the location of the pits was lost in transcription, so the plan does not show the location of the pits***) shows the location of the test pits on the Roedean site. All test pits were dug in the 'Farm Field'. The blue test pits were dug in 2017 and the single red test pit was dug in 2020. The map used was the most appropriate site map for capturing the boundaries of the 'Farm field'.

It should also be noted that hidden behind nettles in the 'Farm Field' was the entrance to a suspected WW2 air raid shelter or underground bunker.

Other notable finds on the Roedean site:

During the building of the Astroturf pitches in 2017, Bronze Age pits and a fragment of pottery was located. The excavations were carried out by Archaeology South East.



Test pits dug in May 2017 Single test pit dug in 2020

(Editor's Note, the location of the pits was lost in transcription, so the plan does not show the location of the pits)

Woodingdean Lawn Memorial Site – A Footnote

In 2004 BHAS conducted some excavations at the south end of the field now the Woodingdean Lawn Memorial cemetery. One of the features investigated was a curving, solid and flat area that had extremely high resistance. A small section was cut that revealed a compact and solid floor constructed of modern building materials including breeze blocks. Under this 'road' was buried a motorcycle. BHAS could find no evidence for any World War II activity in the field.

During a meeting of the newly formed Woodingdean Wilderness nature group an aerial photograph dated to about 1946 was presented showing a possible road leading down from Warren Road (Fig 1.). The road is curving round near the bottom of the field and continues to a circular feature at the east end of the field, associated with a military attachment. After recent heavy rainfall a section of a possible road has been exposed on the edge of the wooded or plantation area to the south/west of the old excavations. This is believed to be associated with Second World War military activity. This short note and a copy of the photograph has been added to the archive. BHAS will visit the site to examine the possible road once the coronavirus lockdown has been lifted.

John Funnell 26th February 2021

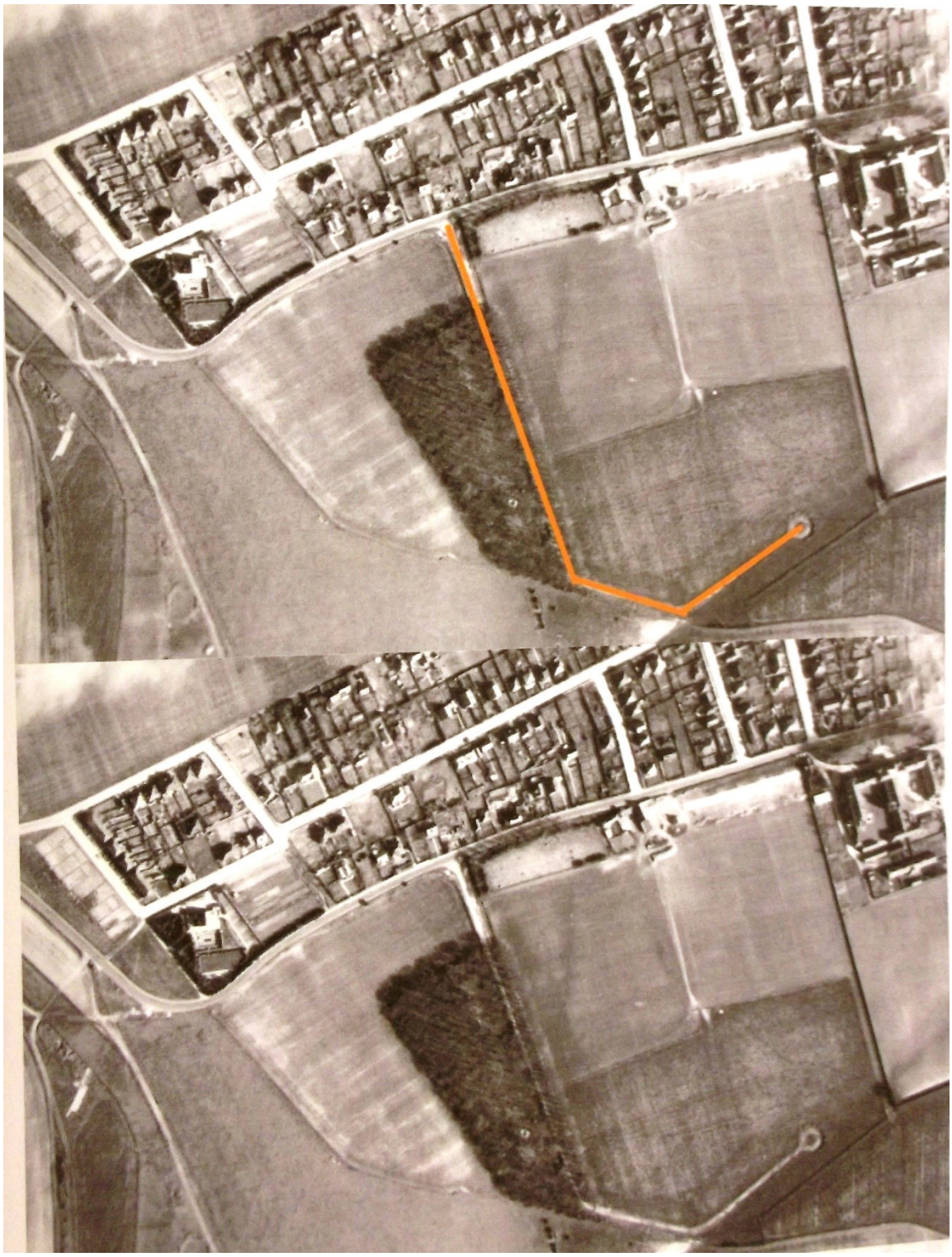


Fig 1. The Aerial Photograph (C/O The Woodingdean Wilderness Group)

Flint Finds from 28 The Avenue, Bevendean

On Tuesday 12th October 2020 BHAS were invited to visit 28 The Avenue as the owner had been finding fiintwork in his garden. An examination was made of the various items.

I. A Neolithic Hand axe roughout — This item has been examined by Andy Maxted at Brighton Museum and he has confirmed that is of Neolithic date.

2. A possible flint spindle whorl. This is a flat rounded piece of flint with a central area pierced. The piercing does not look natural and so may be a spindle whorl. It is not possible to date this piece without supportive evidence.

3. A brown patinated flint flake. This was quite a small flake but had a distinct platform and bulge. The patination suggests a Wealden source?

4. A large round pebble stone was examined and considered to be a possible hammerstone. There are a few nibbles to the surface on one of the flatter surfaces, but difficult to suggest it was used in ancient times. The stone is a curious brown colour but has a number of darker areas. These dark areas are quite artistic with one section appearing to look like a seated man, and another to the left of this possibly being the head and antlers of a stag? The patination tends to suggest that these are natural, as a painted additional surface is not visible. Is it an ancient painting? It could be in the eye of the beholder. It has been suggested that they take the object to the Booth Museum for John Cooper to examine.

5. Three other flint pieces proved to be natural flint.

The author would like to thank Mr Ted Tull for inviting BHAS along to view the objects. He will be in touch with the Society if he finds anymore.

Curious Wooden Staves at Medina Villas, Hove

Introduction

It was between 2000 and 2010 that the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society received a letter, possibly from a member, about an article in the local newspaper. The item had a photograph of a collection of wooden staves exposed during a storm off Medina Villas Hove (Fig I.). It was around the same time that the Seahenge was exposed by the sea in Norfolk. This article prompted the question as to whether Hove had its own seahenge? The exposed timbers were later covered back up again by another storm.

The contents of the Letter

Dear Mr Funnel',
Please find contained a photo of some interesting timbers exposed at Hove, and a photograph. Because of the condition of the breakwater, I estimate the photographs being between 1945 and 1949. A person inspecting the logs appears to be wearing a policeman's helmet and wearing leather leggings, perhaps he was a member of the mounted section. On his right shoulder and halfway up the left side of his cape appears to be a short log which his body is screening. During the storms and the exceptionally high tides of the 1950's many tons of shingle were lost from the beaches. Whereas the timber circle is shown partly in shingle, when I saw it in 1951 it was completely surrounded by sand. My viewpoint was from the area of the promenade north of the Medina Groyne, and I was looking towards the south east. The shape of the circle appeared to be more open than the ellipse shown in the photograph. I cannot recollect any stumps showing to the east of the circle, although some are shown in the photograph. I would draw attention of the fact that shown to the east of the circle there appears to be a small part of the western end of another circle, comprising of 5 timbers or possibly 6.

Comments

The photograph does show a good number of timbers sticking out of the shingle beach. There is also a line of timbers running into the sea, probably part of earlier timber groyne.
The first effective groynes were built of wood in the 1720's, after the old town of Brighton was washed away in 1705 during a great storm. Many groynes were built during the 19th century (Carder 1990).
It would be interesting to conduct some dendrochronological investigations of the timbers in the 'circles' to possibly date them. However, the staves or pylons appear to manufactured and worked material, and not wild uprooted trees that were revealed at Seahenge. Further research at The Keep on groyne construction could provide more detailed information relating to such structures,

and any other seaside possibilities such as small jetty's or landing stages for small boats.

A recent view of the Medina Groyne, via Google earth, shows that the current groyne is a large concrete edifice, so the date for the photographs could be older than suggested.

John Funnell 26th January 2021 (Copied from an undated letter)

Carder T. 1990 'The Encyclopaedia of Brighton' East Sussex County Libraries

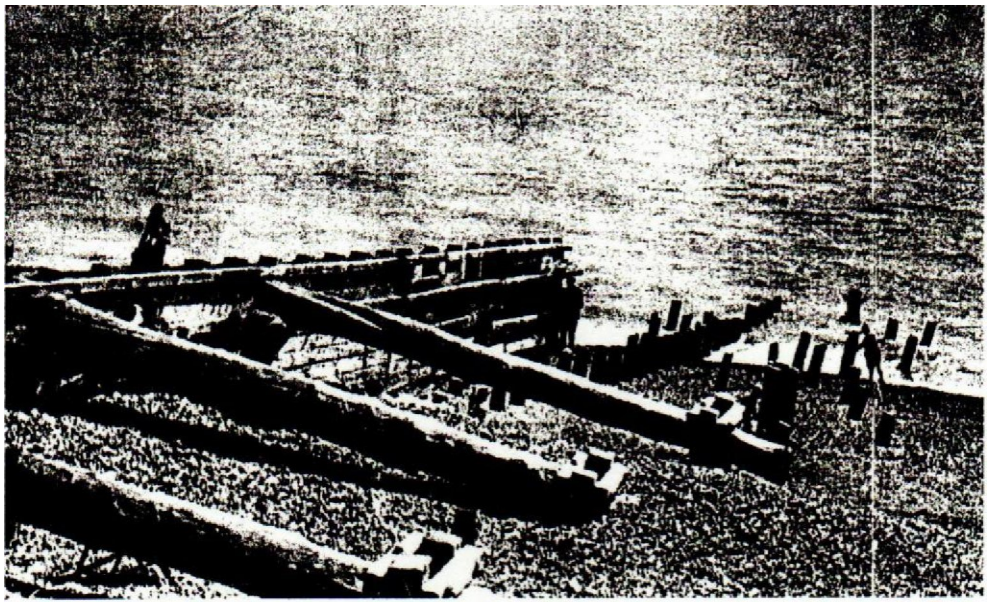


Fig 1. A photograph of wooden pylons off of the Medina Groyne, Hove

A Neolithic Axe from Falmer

During January local celebrated author Dave Bangs (Whitehawk Hill and The Brighton Line) was walking around Falmer Hill. Dave is often conducting casual field walking and has found a Palaeolithic bi-face in the past at Barcombe. On this occasion he found some Neolithic flint work. There was a large flint flakes, a scraper and what looks like the rough out of a Neolithic Axe. BRAS have looked at photographs and it does look like one, but broken. It is similar to other Neolithic axes we have found at Rocky Clump and from field walking at Ovingdean where John Skelton recovered another broken one.

It was found on 30th Jan 2021 on Falmer Hill, west of Falmer Road & north of the north bridle path (TQ 3525 0768). It is Falmer Court Farm land, now within Upper Bevendean Farm's tenancy.

The axe/adze is 12.5cm x 7.3cm and weighs 10.2 oz. It is in good condition, but you will see that the back end is abrupt, and must have been broken off, and the front edge is crushed a bit...presumably from use. A large flake was also found - 12cm & 5oz and a large scraper nearby. Dave Bangs has retained the items.

Millbank Woods Mill site

an update from Justin Brice of the Sussex Mills Group

Justin Brice has been researching Sussex mills for many years now and have now amassed notes on over 700 windmills that have stood in the county at one time or another.

Regarding Stanmer Mill I have taken the liberty of incorporating your findings into my notes on the mill...

H.E.S. Simmons: *“Although this locality is named Millbank Wood on the 6” Ordnance Survey map of 1873, I have not been able to ascertain that a windmill existed there. The position however is 500ft above sea level with surrounding ground of a much lower level, and it seems probable that it was a wind driven mill from which the name is derived”.*

British History Online reports she was a smock mill and stood where Mill-bank Wood is now, 3 furlongs *(600 metres)* north east of the church. Said to have been built in 1617 by the ancestors of Richard Dumbrell, who tenanted her at that time (*www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=56955*).

Like the windmills at Rottingdean and West Blatchington she’s believed to have links with smuggling industry. Apparently a cavern was dug nearby as a hiding-place large enough to hold 100 tubs of spirits. It was covered with planks and strewn over with mould and remained undiscovered for years.

The mill reputedly burned down some time after 1724 which is the last time she appeared on maps.

In the 2004 Brighton & Hove Archaeological Society Field Unit Notebook, John Funnell in his article *“Millbank Wood Surveying”* wrote: *“In 1995 a group from Northampton noted earthworks in Millbank Wood, Stanmer and reported to the County Archaeologist Dr Andrew Woodcock that the hill may the location of previously unknown Iron Age hill-fort (TQ 3390 1050). In 1996 the BHAS Field unit visited Millbank Wood to examine the earthworks. The earthworks consist of a large plateau with a ditch to the south west.*

The east side of this plateau has a drop onto a track way. The drop is variable in nature being both gradual and steep in places. There is no sign of a ditch on either the east or north sides of the plateau. The southern edge of the plateau becomes an open paddock containing a circular feature, noted in the 1995 sketch. The mound may be the location of a possible tumuli or barrow. However,

its known that bombs fell in this paddock during WW2 and were subsequently filled in again, so the feature may be of more recent construction.

A flint 'metalled' road is known to be in the south east of Millbank Wood (TQ 3420 1025) running down the hill in the direction of Falmer village. (pers. Comm. Jim Driver). The metalled road, although now covered by grass, has a distinct agger on both sides.

Heather Warne produced a study of Stanmer (1989 'Stanmer: A Restructured Settlement' Sussex Archaelogical Collections, 127, 189-210) focused around 1608 which mentions that a windmill had been recently erected, presumably at Millbank, but the miller appears to have lived in the village.

The geophysics team conducted a major survey within the paddock to the south east of Millbank Wood and investigated he possible barrow feature. The survey of the earthworks revealed quite conclusively that this part of Millbank Wood was not an Iron Age hill-fort. The major resistivity survey within the paddock area produced a number of linear and circular anomalies which indicate the location of a number of features of archaeological interest. A circular feature may indeed prove to be the location of the mill from Millbank.

A ditch deemed initially to be the defensive depths of a hill-fort are more than likely to be ancient track way, and the metalled track on the steep sided hill would allow greater traction for vehicles ascending or descending the hill. It is possible that Millbank Wood was indeed the location of a Tudor mill, and that the earthworks are the avenues leading to the mill. It should be noted that Lawrence Stevens, an authority on mills, is concerned that there are so few finds of millstones and grinding stones and associated buildings.

Research through Historical Documents - The main area of investigation was Millbank Wood and the search for the Mill site. It's mentioned in Heather Warne's paper that a Survey was undertaken in 1608 by Thomas Marshall, Surveyor of the King's Possessions, in order to assess the Crown assets at Stanmer. Sady it was just a written survey with no map.

The area known as Mill Banks, today's Millbank Wood, was recorded in 1839 at the time of the Tithe survey. To quote Heather "this name refers back to the windmill which the 1608 survey tells us was erected on land allocated out of Chisselden Laine. The former mill thus indicates the general area of Chisselden Laine". It is therefore highly probable that the land recorded as Mill Banks refers to the site of a mill.

In Table 1 of this survey, Henry Lucas is listed as being the tenant of 3 acres in Chisselden Laine and 2 acres in Middle Laine, with 9 sheep on the down and one beast in pasture together with a house and barn. At that time a barn could be anything from a large barn, to a shed or a granary store set on staddle stones. It

is likely if located near to the mill that it was the latter. He's listed in table 5, a list of cottagers, as having 2 acres of arable land and a croft, which is a piece of enclosed ground for tillage or pasture, usually an arable area near a house, of one rood, roughly a quarter of an acre. Strangely, a cottager is interpreted as a house with no arable land and no pasturage rights. Therefore on the face of it there would appear to be some anomalies in the 1608 Survey. In Table 2 of the Survey, which is the Parish Register Information re: 1608 landholders, Henry Lucas is listed as having a Windmill only and a house.

I attended the East Sussex Records Office in an attempt to discover more about Henry Lucas. Both he and his wife are listed in the burial register for Stanmer as having died in 1616. From other sources it was found that the predominant illnesses in this country in 1616 were typhus and typhoid. Intriguingly, no other persons by the name of Lucas were listed in Birth, Marriage or Burial Registers for Stanmer. I then checked the lists of Wills and Inventories held at ESRO. There listed was a Will for a John Webb, Miller of Stanmer, which was made in 1622. From this Will it would appear that the Mill was left to his Son.

There appears to be a family link to Falmer, this is mentioned in the Will. This needs to be investigated further and it may well be that the Mill we are looking for was at some time after December 1631 (John Webb, Junior's date of death) moved and relocated to Falmer.
Carol then extracted the following info from the Stanmer Parish Register which relates to the surname of Webb. John Webb (Miller) was married to Katherine and the records show they had a daughter Mary who was buried on the 6th May 1631, another daughter Elizabeth was baptised on the 7th March 1624 and was buried on the 5th December 1631, that same month John was buried on the 24th December. Their daughter Alice, was buried on the 9th January 1632. Their son Richard was baptised on the 9th August 1629. A James Webb and his wife Elizabeth, had a son also named James and he was baptised on the 5th October 1634. They also had a daughter named Elizabeth, who was buried on 13th May 1633. On 11th January 1641 Elizabeth, James' wife was buried. James Webb and his wife Ann, had a son named Matthew who was baptised on 5th October 1643. A son named Edward was baptised on the 8th September 1644 and another son named John was baptised on the 3rd August 1648. An Edward Webb is noted as Churchwarden at Falmer in c1639, he's recorded as having three daughters - Anne, Mary and Marie.

The records also note Robert Edwards who died in 1611 was listed as 'miller'".

The mill had long gone by 1838, but the tithe apportionment dated 15th May, names Plot 65 as*"Mill Bank"* and Plot 66 as *"Part of Mill Bank"*, both owned by Lord Henry Thomas and occupied by William Moon.

Flintwork from Sackville Gardens

During 2019 a collection of flint items collected at Sackville Gardens were examined by the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society. There was no detailed provenance given for the finds.

This collection comprises seven pieces of struck flint all either grey or grey/black.

The largest piece is possibly an end scraper, albeit a rather crude one, as the distal end has evidence of retouch. It has two sides missing and, if one or both of the missing sides had also been worked, would have been regarded as an end and side scraper.

The second largest piece appears to be the distal end of a flake. As the patination of the broken edge is the same colour as the rest of the flake, it is quite possible that it was broken when the flake was knapped.

There is a circular flake which could possibly be a “thumbnail scraper” as it is of that shape and has some retouch on at least one edge.

There are two probable broken blades. One, which has light grey/black patination, has lost both its ends but, from what remains, it is closer to a “true” blade with its two ridges. The other broken blade has also lost both its ends but is wider and appears less like a “true” blade as it only has one ridge.

The remaining two flakes are both small and could be soft hammer struck. The longer of the two has evidence of retouch on one side and could possibly be a broken notched flake.

The size of thre assemblage is too small to form a definite opinion but it seems likely that this assemblage comes from the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age period.

Mark Gillingham 5th April 2019

Investigations at Stanmer

On Tuesday 21st December 2021 a meeting was held with Mr Rob Dumbrill the Stanmer Estates manager. Workmen had apparently removed a bund of soil from a location where a pair of elm trees used to stand. The location of this small mound was opposite the cow milking sheds in Stanmer village, and almost opposite the Stanmer café (TQ 3365 0860). The location is close to, and south of, the Scheduled Ancient Monument area of the Deserted Medieval village of Stanmer. The medieval location of Stanmer is mentioned in an article in the Sussex Archaeological Collections (Warne 1989)

A visit was first made to the re-deposited material removed from the bund. An examination showed it to consist of a very rich organic material, with one or two large flint nodules among the debris, along with several pieces of modern concrete. A number of finds were observed, and were notably modern glass, ceramics and some contemporary roofing tile. There were no finds suggesting ancient activity.

The site of the mound was then visited and a walk over survey confirmed that the area consisted of a rich organic material similar to that found at the re-deposited area. An examination of the area revealed more modern glass, roofing tile and modern ceramics, along with red and white tape fragments, and discarded pill cases. There were no medieval finds despite the location being only a few metres from the scheduled area.

Rob Dumbrill made incursions with a shovel into the re-deposited bund and the mound area, and disturbed only more modern items. However, it was noted that at the actual mound location, at some depth, a crunching noise indicated a possible change of geology below the organic layer.

The Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society would be wiling to investigate the lower depths of the mound, if future developments justified this requirement. Any such investigations would have to be at the request of both Rob Dumbrill and the County Archaeologist.

Acknowledgements

BHAS would like to thank Mr Rob Dumbrill and the County Archaeologist Mr Neil Griffin for inviting the Society to investigate the ground disturbance.

Reference

Warne H. 1989 ‘Stanmer: A Restructured Settlement’ SAC Vol **127**, 189-210

Flintwork from West Hoathly

During 2019 a collection of flint items collected at West Hoathly were examined by the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society. There was no detailed provenance given for the finds.

The collection comprises six pieces of flint all retaining their original black colour without any patination indicating that they are from a free chalk location.

The assemblage consists of:-

One blade core which has been partially worked with approximately 50% of cortex remaining.

One flake which can be probably regarded as a “blade” as its length is twice its width although it is not a “true blade” as it does not have parallel ridges or sides.

The largest of the remaining flakes may possibly have been struck off from a bladed core but had clearly been struck with a heavy blow in view of the very prominent ripple.

There were three other flakes, the smallest having lots its striking platform.

The assemblage it too small to give a definitive indication of the likely period. However, it may date to the early Neolithic due to the presence of the blade core and the possible core fragment.

Mark Gillingham 5th April 2019

Investigations at Hollingbury, close to the Iron Age hill-fort.

During early December the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society were informed that the Hollingbury Golf Club had been digging holes close to the site of the Scheduled Ancient Monument hill-fort. The location was to the west of the number 11 green. The Society were notified by Mr David Larkin the Conservation Manager at Brighton and Hove City Council.

A visit was made to the location on Saturday 18th December 2021. The disturbed area (TQ 3225 0770) measured about 22 metres in diameter and the photograph sent to BHAS appeared to show a depression, possibly the creation of a new bunker? Fig 1.

Fig 1. The Ground disturbance at Hollingbury

When the visit was made there was no sign on any depression, it appearing to have been filled in. The area was still very disturbed. An examination was made of the area and no archaeological features were noted. Despite a close inspection of the soils there were no finds of pottery or the ubiquitous flintwork generally associated with ground interventions on the South Downs.

A note was sent to the county archaeologist raising concerns about digging large holes close to Scheduled Monuments and requesting that the golf club management be informed of their responsibility to protect our heritage.

BHAS would like to thank Mr David Larkin for making the Society aware of this concerning occurrence.

Report on the Watching Briefs at Beacon Hill, Rottingdean, East Sussex

Conducted on the 1st and 6th of September 2021

Author: J. Funnell

Introduction

It was early in 2021 that the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society was contacted about conducting watching briefs at Beacon Hill while post holes were dug to construct a pair of new notice boards, supplying information about the flora, fauna, birds and archaeology that constitute the variety of interests on Beacon Hill. The supports for the new display boards were 4 in number at each location and each post measured 30 cm square. The display boards are located on the east side of the hill close to the Rottingdean windmill (TQ 3655 0242) (Fig 1.) and on the west side of the hill just above the Blind veterans building, and close to the footpath that runs up from the Road called Greenways up to the top of the hill (TQ 3625 0280) (Fig 2.).

Fig 1. The Location on the East side of the hill – The red dot (Google Earth)

Fig 2. The location behind Blind Veterans – The red dot (Google Earth)

The History of Beacon Hill

Old maps of Beacon Hill show that the hill has not been ploughed during the past century or longer. A map of 1873/1874 shows a pastoral landscape and subsequent maps throughout the 20th century show no change to this environment. However, Beacon Hill does contain a number of archaeological features. The old maps show the location of an earthwork scheduled as a Neolithic long barrow. They also show a large dew pond and an enigmatic mound to the north located just east of the top of Beacon Hill. There are no historical records for this mound and it appears never to have been investigated. This feature is also shown on old maps and is shown on the HER as a possible bowl barrow.

In the past few years a second Neolithic long barrow was found from aerial photographs, and located in what was part of the old pitch and putt golf course. This feature has now been scheduled and is located to the south of the BHAS excavation of 2018.

When the Rottingdean windmill was constructed in 1802 the skeleton of a ‘warrior’ was found, bearing a sword. This is almost certainly a Saxon burial. In 1862 during work to the Rottingdean cricket pitch, which was located on Beacon Hill at that time, a further 4 skeletons and an urn were found. The pitch and putt course was opened in 1938 (Carder 1990). There are no archaeological finds noted during the course construction.

During the past two decades sheep grazing has been part of keeping the Beacon Hill grass under control. On a number of occasions after sheep grazing, earthwork anomalies have been revealed. In 2005, 2006 and 2009 the BHAS were on Beacon Hill conducting resistivity surveys around the earthworks. The resulting images have suggested that Beacon Hill has a good amount of archaeology hidden beneath its slopes.

The resistivity survey of 2005 was close to the location of the new beacon site, and this survey revealed a number of features including a large ditch and a circular shape which could possibly be the location of an old windmill (Funnell 2005). (Fig 3.)

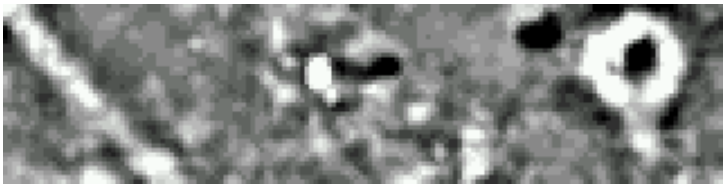


Fig 3. Geophysical images on Beacon Hill 2005

Beacon Hill has been the site of a number of beacons, located just south/west of the windmill. The beacons included a warning of the approach of the Spanish Armada in 1588, and several of Queen Victoria’s jubilees.

In 2018 the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society cut a number of test pits in the same location as the beacons prior to the erection of yet another Beacon bonfire. There was some concern about possible damage to archaeology beneath the proposed area. A totals of 5 test pits were dug, each measuring 1 metre square. A number of features were noted and quantities of finds from the prehistoric and later periods (Funnell & Tolhurst 2018)

The Geology

Beacon Hill is the southern section of a spur of the South Downs that runs down from Warren Road to the cliffs and the sea between Rottingdean and Ovingdean. The central section has been built upon at Ovingdean, while the most prominent location of the spur is at Mount Pleasant, just north of Ovingdean. The southern section has an undulating topography rising up from the southern end of Ovingdean to a higher location west of the 'Blind Veterans' complex. The hill then drops back down towards the cliffs and sea. On the east side of Beacon hill is located the village of Rottingdean, while the west slopes dramatically down to Greenways Road. This is the road leading to Ovingdean church and the old village.

The British Geological survey of this area (Sheet 318/333) shows the geology to be predominantly upper and middle chalk on the hill, with head deposits in the adjacent valleys.

The Excavations on the East Side of the hill

The four post holes were excavated by hand down to the natural chalk. The top soil was of a medium brown chalky loam with a few small natural flints in the fill. The soil depth was 27 cm max. in all four post holes. There were no visible signs of any incursions into the natural chalk suggesting possible post holes or other archaeological features.

The Finds

1. A struck flake measuring 48mm wide, 30mm long and 9mm thick. It had a grey patination and retained 80% of the cortex, indicating a primary flake. IT was a crude item with no signs of retouch. It weighed 25 gm
2. A struck flake measuring 25mm long, 22mm wide and 5mm thick. It had a white patination and retained no cortex so is a secondary flake. It weighed 3 gm
3. A fragment of Victorian or 20th century roofing tile measuring 40 x 40 x 14mm thick and weighing 31 gm.
4. There were 3 fragments of modern glass, 2 shards coloured light brown possibly from the same vessel, and a single fragment of black glass.

The Excavations on the West Side of the hill

The four post holes were excavated by hand down to the natural chalk. The top soil was of a medium brown chalky loam with a few small flints in the fill. The soil depth was 30 cm max. in all four post holes. There were no visible signs of any incursions into the natural chalk suggesting possible post holes or other archaeological features.

The Finds

5. 1. A struck and notched flake, measuring 32mm wide, 40mm long and 6mm thick. It had a blue/grey patination and retained 70% of the cortex, indicating a primary flake, but with some retouch creating a notch on one side of the object. The artefact weighed 7 gm
6. A struck flake measuring 21mm wide, 24 mm long and 3mm thick. It had a grey patination and retained 10% of the cortex, indicating a primary flake. IT was a crude item with no signs of retouch. It weighed 3 gm
7. A sand tempered sherd of Roman pottery with a small numberof small inclusions (0.8mm) of quartz.
8. A sand tempered sherd of roman pottery with no inclusions.
9. A tiny fragment of Roman samian pottery, with a single lined decoration
10. A Single sherd of a glazed vessel dating from the Victorian period or 20th century. The item had a cream glaze on one face and a medium brown glaze on the opposite side.

Discussion

Beacon Hill has long been regarded as having great archaeological potential. A combination of Neolithic long barrows and Saxon burials make any ground intervention requiring investigation and recording. The various geophysical surveys conducted by BHAS over the past decade, revealing additional images of possible ancient features, has only enhanced the importance of Beacon Hill as a site of immense importance.

The whole area of Ovingdean and Rottingdean is rich in archaeology. Field walking in the valley to the west of Beacon Hill produced numerous finds from the Neolithic to the medieval periods (Funnell 2000), and it is well known that metal detectorists have frequently been observed digging on Beacon Hill in the past.

The very small postholes excavated to provide the supports for the post for the display boards were really not expected to reveal too much archaeology, and all of the post holes came down onto natural chalk, as anticipated. However, a number of previous surveys and excavations on Beacon Hill had produced additional finds and features indicating ancient activity on the hill. The holes dug on the east side of the hill produced only the ubiquitous flakes frequently found all over the South Downs.

The Blind Veterans post holes did, however, produce a more interesting collection of finds. Notably in one small area of a very large hill there were 3 sherds of Roman pottery and a pair of flint flakes, one item possibly notched. The field walking in 2000 clearly indicated a multi-period area of activity in the St Dunstan's field (Funnell 2000). In the field opposite, and west of, Blind Veterans a Google Earth photograph has revealed the location of a double enclosure, with numerous finds of Roman coins. The Roman finds from this exercise tends to suggest that the Roman influence appears to have extended up onto the hill to the east of Beacon Hill. It is possible that some of the geophysical anomalies also apply to this period.

The Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society are planning a resistivity and magnetometry survey of the field opposite to Blind Veterans, with the Roman finds from these watching briefs adding some impetus for the survey to be given some priority.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Neil Griffin, the County Archaeologist, David Larkin and Nick Lane of City Parks for allowing access to Beacon Hill, to Jason Fisher and the friends of Beacon Hill and the Countryside Rangers Nick Lane, Will Furze, Paul Gorringe and Andy for actually carrying out the excavations during a very hot spell of weather. A copy of this report will be passed to County Hall and the Friends of Beacon Hill. A copy of the report will be published in the BHAS Field Notebook for 2021 with copies being deposited at The Keep, Barbican House Library and Historic England at Swindon.

Author John Funnell (10th September 2021)

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Fig 4. Paul Gorringe and Jason Fisher digging the post holes on the west side

Fig 5. The finished display board on the east side

Sussex Archaeology Forum Field Notes

40 Cranleigh Avenue - During July 2019 ASE monitored the removal of an existing patio and the excavation of foundation trenches to which were approximately 0.50m deep. Chalk geology was observed at around 69.50m AOD overlain by made ground and topsoil. A small section of trenching in the south-east appeared undisturbed but contained no artefacts. No significant archaeological finds or features were observed during the watching brief.

45 The Cliff, Roedean - No archaeological finds or features were recorded when the rear garden of the property was stripped down to the natural chalk in advance of a new extension being built.

The Mount 11 Roedean Way - No archaeological finds or features were recorded when a small area was stripped down to the natural chalk in advance of a new swimming pool being built.

Buckley Close, Hove - No archaeological finds or features were recorded when an area which had previously had a row of garages on it was stripped in advance of a housing development.

Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society Field Unit 2021 Attendance Record Dated 31/12/2021

John Funnell	44 Days	Brighton
Sue Batey	2 Days	Brighton
Clive Bean	22 Days	Portslade
Judith Billingham (G)	2 Days	Brighton
Dylan Boucher	1 Day	Rottingdean
Fran Briscoe	20 Days	Shoreham
Margaret Carey	14 Days	Brighton
Duncan Cameron	7 Days	Brighton
Delia Cattell (Lindsey)	12 Days	Seaford
Chris Coates	31 Days	Burgess Hill
Richard Desousa	13 Days	Brighton
Gumhur Ertuzun	1 Day	Turkey
Andrew Fanning	21 Days	Hove
Ronny Fox	3 Days	Shoreham
Stefanie Freiling	16 Days	Southwick
Mary Funnell	1 Days	Brighton
Maria Gardiner	2 Days	Hove
Quintin Gee	1 Days	Southampton
Mark Gillingham (Assist.Direct.)	34 Days	Hove
Xavier ‘Gillingham’	6 Days	Hove
Barbara Groat	20 Days	East Grinstead
Lesley Haines	3 Days	Burgess Hill
Luci Hammond	7 Days	Brighton
Heath Harrison	11 Days	Brighton
Maia Hobbs	4 Day	Rottingdean
Alan Hodge	1 Day	Croydon
Andrew Housam	6 Days	Scaynes Hill
Cathy Lovell	3 Days	Patcham
Henrik Larson	10 Days	Hangleton (Norway)
David Ludwig	24 Days	Rustington
Joan MacGregor	1 Days	Brighton
Mark Melvin	1 Days	Worthing
Jo Miller	13 Days	Ringmer
Julia Montgomery	3 Days	Brighton
George Morris	1 Day	Canterbury
Bethany O’Neill	15 Days	Brighton
Mark Peck	5 Days	Harpenden
Neil Richardson	3 Days	Eastbourne
Linda Robinson	15 Days	Hove
Lucas Robinson	2 Days	London

Alison Sanders	1 Day	Rotherham
Daniel Schavemaker	5 Days	Hove
Amber Shepherd	2 Days	Portslade
Claire Shepherd	2 Days	Portslade
John Skelton(Assist. Director)	46 Days	Hove
Kate Skelton	1 Days	Hove
David Staveley	2 Days	Eastbourne
Kate Springett	2 Days	Eastbourne
Andrew Symonds	9 Days	Lewes
Pete Tolhurst (Director)	45 Days	Crowborough
Gizem Tunc	1 Day	Turkey
Valerie Williamson	13 Days	Brighton
Janis Winkworth	13 Days	Brighton
Michael Winkworth	1 Day	Brighton

Total Attendance

Number of people 53 Total Days 542 (Low due to pandemic)

No of Males 27 No of Females 26

Male Days 345(65%) Female Days 182(35%)

Acknowledgments

The Archaeological Co-ordinator of the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society Field Unit would like to express appreciation to those who assisted with the Society's field projects during 2020 and 2021

Brighton and Hove City Council

Ms L.Johnson, Senior Planner, Brighton & Hove City Council

Mr David Robinson (Farmer at Northease Farm) & Tenant at Stanmer

Mr David Rudling, Chairman of BHAS

Mr P.Tolhurst – BHAS Director of the Rocky Clump excavations

Mr J.Skelton - BHAS Assistant Director of the BHAS Field Unit

Mr M.Gillingham – BHAS Assistant Director of the BHAS Field Unit

Mr Neil Griffin –The East Sussex County Archaeologist

Mr Rob Wallace and Mr David Millum for the use of their facilities in post ex. At their premises at Bridge Farm.

Mr David Larkin, Acting Manager City Parks, Brighton and Hove City Council

Mr John Shepherd - Director of the Freshstart Portslade Project

Mr Jim and Mrs Betty Driver

And all members of the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society Field Unit

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Note that the dates shown (1993-2021) are an indicator of when the work was carried out, and not the date of publication.

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Hard copies of the above reports and Field Notebooks were deposited at Barbican House Library, East Sussex County Council, Brighton and Hove City Council Planning Department and Brighton Museum. A number of copies were deposited at Brighton Library, the National Monuments Records Office, Swindon and at the East Sussex Records Office.

John Funnell 3rd February 2022.