

# 1 DESCRIPTIONS OF THE PRINCIPAL FEATURES AND STRATIGRAPHICAL CONTEXTS

## 1.1 The early curvilinear ditched enclosures

**F1116** A616770 Quarries/ditch Phase: Iron Age  
Below L720, L736 Cuts natural

Length: 5 m exposed Width: 3.2 m Depth: 0.76–1.5 m

Description: Mass of intercutting quarry scoops following the line of the Iron Age enclosure ditch, which has been virtually obliterated by this activity. The possible ditch base can be seen in the base aligned NW–SE, though the fill in these deepest scoops appears to be quarry fill, rather than ditch fill, which may indicate quarrying began before the ditch began to silt up or all ditch fill has been entirely removed. The presence of residual Iron Age material may indicate the presence of reworked ditch deposits within the quarry debris. The quarry is made up of circular-oval rounded bowl-shaped scoops, with steeply sloping, vertical or undercutting edges.

Fill: (6) In the base of the deepest hollows were lenses of clean angular eroded chalk, very fine c.10–20 mm in the southern section, but coarser to the north up to 80 mm interleaving with thin lenses of brown clayey soil. [Natural weathering and erosion of quarry walls and soils around the top.]

(5) Loose packed eroded chalk shatter 80–100 mm with little matrix occurred against the basal curving angles of the various scoops. [Natural erosion.]

(4) Subangular-rounded chalk rubble 30–90 mm with fewer flint nodules 40–120 mm in chalk grit and brown clayey soil mix infilled much of the lower half of the quarries. Within the deposit were more soily or more chalky deposits [indicative that it was deposited as a series of tips and dumps, possibly derived from further along the ditch as quarrying progressed laterally].

(3) Within the centre of the excavated cutting was a circular patch (1.5 m diameter) of dark grey fine clayey soil with occupation debris and containing a high density of charcoal, ash and burnt flints 50–100 mm and other occupation material. Although supposedly not extending as far as the section a small lens of ash and charcoal was noted in the western section at the appropriate level [which perhaps suggests the burnt debris was trampled beyond the main concentration and that the hollow with the top of layer 4 forming a dished base may have been used as some sort of working hollow at this stage of the infilling process]. Small finds: 3309 Ceramic spindle whorl. Samples: 4096 Slag.

(2) Dark yellowish-brown clayey soil containing frequent chalk rubble 40–80 mm and flint nodules 150–250 mm. In the south-east section a number of thick horizontal lenses of chalk grit and small lumps may indicate deliberate spreads to form level surfaces within the top of the feature. Samples: 4122 Slag.

(1) Across the top of all the quarry scoops lay a dark yellowish-brown crumbly clayey soil mixed with chalk grit and a low density of subangular chalk up to 80 mm, sparse flints 40–60 mm, burnt flints, scattered charcoal fragments as well as small lenses or tips of ash and charcoal. [This together with diffuse lines of stones suggests the layer was made up of a series of deliberate tips or dumps.]

**F1128** A610985 Quarries/ditch Phase: Iron Age/Roman  
Below L736 Cuts natural

Length: 2.0 m (excavated) Width: 1.9–3.1 m Depth: 0.55–1.1 m

Description: Only the short excavated cutting was exposed, the remainder of this feature lying outside the excavation or masked by layer 736. The original feature here based on the

evidence of the geophysical survey was an Iron Age enclosure ditch. However this feature appears to have been entirely destroyed by subsequent quarrying from the edges of the ditch. This quarrying takes the form of a series of interconnected rounded oval-circular basin-shaped scoops and hollows, cut to varying depths. The individual scoops range in size from 0.8 m to 1.8 m long. The walls of the quarries ranged from steeply sloping through vertical to deeply undercut.

Fill: (7) In the base of the deepest hollow at the east side was a layer of dark brown clayey soil containing a little chalk grit and small angular flints.

(6) Extensive layer of chalk shatter evident in the eastern area excavated. The layer tended to comprise loosely packed angular shattered fragments up to 80 mm closer to the quarry walls sometimes mixed with flint nodules 50–100 mm, but towards the middle was a finer more crumbly deposit of small weathered chalk grit, puddled chalk and clay. In some areas individual lenses of different materials indicate variations in the erosion and weathering process.

(5) A mixed layer comprising dumps of orange-brown clay or clayey soil containing a high density of chalk grit, tips of subangular chalk 10–40 mm and grit in paler brown clayey soil, and concentrations of flint nodules *c.*100 mm. In the eastern section, where this layer infilled the base of the scoops, there were more clearly defined deposits of dark brown clayey soil alternating with tips of small chalk rubble and puddled chalk. [Dumps of quarry waste.]

(4) Overlying 5 in the eastern part of the quarries was a light brown clayey soil mixed with chalk grit, a moderate density of small subangular/subrounded chalk 10–40 mm and scattered broken flints and nodules up to 30–90 mm. Much of the stone formed thin or diffuse tip lines or lenses, especially on the south, where the layer filled all of the southern scoop. Some occupation debris was evident including burnt flints, a couple of large fragments of fired clay and occasional charcoal flecks. [Deliberate dumps of quarry waste, possibly including much residual ditch fill.]

(3) This layer filled a substantial proportion of the western quarry scoops and was made up of a series of individual lenses. {d.} Across the base was a brown clay containing scattered chalk and flint *c.*40 mm with a thin lens of chalk grit within it sloping down into the undercut lobe.

{e.} Above this and filling the lobe was a mixed dump of brown soil with scattered subangular chalk and flints 20–60 mm plus a few large flint nodules *c.*200 mm.

{c.} Overlying d and e was an irregular deposit of subangular chalk up to 50 mm in silty puddled chalk matrix plus occasional small flints [which had the appearance of a series of individual dumps of chalky quarry waste].

{b.} Across the whole width of the quarry followed a lens of brown silty clay soil containing a low density of small rounded chalk *c.*15 mm and grit, which was largely concentrated as thin diffuse lenses [suggesting the layer was composed of a series of individual tips].

{a.} Across the top occurred subangular chalk 10–50 mm plus occasional flint nodules 50–70 mm tightly packed in light brown silty clay soil. The surface of this layer was hard and trampled and had formed an activity surface.

Small finds: 3355 Quern fragment. Samples: Charcoal.

(2) In the eastern area this layer was probably broadly equivalent to layer 3. It was a thick mixed deposit infilling and levelling the hollow formed by (4). The deposit consisted of dark greyish-brown soil containing scattered small chalk and grit and a moderate density of chalk and flint rubble, 50–130 mm often concentrated into distinct lenses. Scattered occupation debris in the form of burnt flints, charcoal, bone and pottery was present.

(1) The shallow hollow formed in top of the quarry appears to have been used for some activity involving hearths or bonfires. {b.} Over the trampled surface of layer 2 accumulated a brown clayey soil containing scattered small chalk and rare flints. This was followed by a

diffuse layer of soft, dark grey clayey soil containing a high density of ash and charcoal with scattered flints and burnt clay fragments. This probably represents the level at which a broken clay hearth c.0.3 x 0.25 m was found during excavation together with an extensive spread of charcoal and burnt flints. Samples: 4072 Soil/ash.

This was sealed by a final dump (1a) of mixed brown silty-clay soil with moderate quantities of chalk 10–50 mm and flint nodules up to 90 mm.