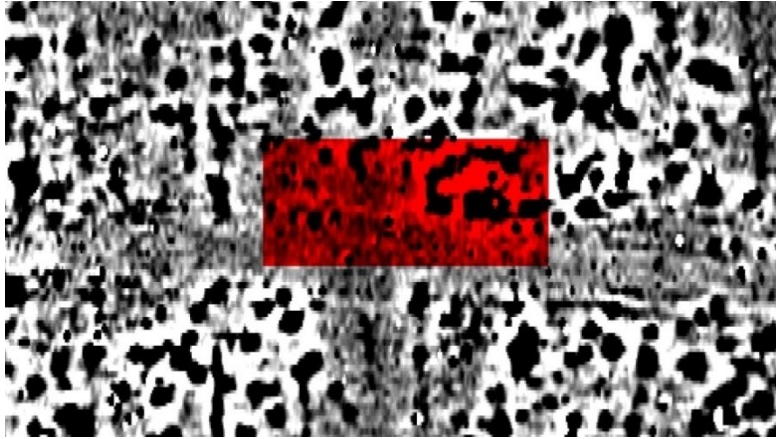


## 8: 2018-2023 Trench 7 over the Centre of the Settlement

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### 8.1 2018: HEADING INTO THE CENTRE

Trench 7 (900 sq m) over the centre of the settlement has been readied for the 2018 season by having 300mm maximum of plough soil removed by mechanical digger. The new trench is



located over the northern half of the central crossroads of the area enclosed by the earthwork defences. The trench includes obvious anomalies as well as more neutral areas in the geophysical image and has been targeted due to its potential importance in the overall plan of the settlement (8.1).

*8.1: Image showing the size and location of Trench 7*

Whilst no immediately obvious features were revealed in the exposed surface during machining, casual collection of some of the artefacts left on the surface of the trench have suggested that an interesting and informative excavation awaits us. The casual finds comprised 47 sherds of general pottery (8.2), 14 sherds of samian ware (8.3), a large sherd of amphora, 4 pieces of cbm and a sandstone quern fragment, so it looks as if the finds unit may well be busy.



*8.2: General pottery and amphora sherds*



*8.3: The samian sherds collected*

### 8.2: BRIDGE FARM 2018-19

The 2018 summer season saw the opening of the seventh trench at the intriguing Romano-British settlement site at Bridge Farm, near Barcombe Mills. **Trench 7** is located in the very centre of the area enclosed by the 2nd century double-ditch defences and it was hoped that this 45 by 20 metre area over a central crossroads would reveal evidence of the formal hub of the settlement.

However, this site represents over 300 years of Roman-period activity and what remains in this area seems once again mainly to feature industrial and/or scavenging activity. This consisted of a collection of very large, deep pits, areas of fired clay, several series of postholes with large flint and chalk packing. Most pits had layers of dark brown sandy silt and burnt clay indicating procedures involving high temperatures. Some of the postholes appear to be in approximate rows but so far lack the parallel line that would signify a rectangular structure.

An area of the road from Pevensey was revealed at only 200mm below the current ground level in the south-eastern corner of the trench. The upper layer of this consisted of pebbles and small nodules of Downland flint which had been disturbed by ploughing. Beneath this was a compressed sandy layer of flint gravels forming the main base



*8.4: The slot through the remains of the road*

structure of the road (8.4). It is remarkable that this had survived at such a shallow depth and not surprising that no trace was found anywhere else along the trench having been presumably ploughed and/or robbed out.

An area of particular interest was an oval deposit of fired clay surrounded by lumps of chalk and fire-cracked flint nodules (8.5). The feature had the appearance of some kind of hearth with the presence of chalk leading us to think that it may be the remains of a simple clamp-type lime kiln. The only previous notable occurrence of chalk at Bridge Farm was in the walls of the well excavated in 2017 in Trench 6 but the structural use of chalk in a fired environment seemed less probable. Our initial thoughts were called into question on discovery of 2 very large postholes adjacent to the 'Pevensey' road which also had large



*8.5: A possible hearth surrounded by chalk*

blocks of chalk used in addition to flint nodules as post packing (8.6). The eastern of these (PH1) also had a large fragment of a German lava quern stone at the base, presumably used as a pad to support the post. Unlike the 13 post building excavated in 2014 these appeared to have had their posts removed rather than left to degrade in-situ.

A black circular area revealed what appeared to be fragments of a burnt clay wall around it as the very dark fill was removed. In 2018 we thought we may have discovered a kiln of some kind but further excavation in 2019 revealed yet another very deep pit below causing more debate. This feature is still at the half-sectioned phase so hopefully more will be gained as further excavation takes place in 2020. The extensive range of large pits is puzzling especially at the centre of the 2nd century enclosure where more formal remains were expected.

From the initial cleaning-back of the trench surface a large and varied assemblage of pottery was collected, totalling over 28,000 sherds in 2018-19, with a greater percentage of fine wares than seen from previous trenches. This included a good quantity of samian, some with embossed decoration (8.7), maker's marks and even graffiti.



8.7: A decorated samian bowl sherd



8.8: An almost complete mortarium

Close to the chalk-lined hearth was a pile of black colour-coated white fineware beaker sherds with a number of samian sherds looking like a definite deposit rather than a random scattering. There were also more mortaria sherds including one almost complete mortarium in a light buff/cream fabric (8.8) and more olive oil amphora sherds, some with maker's stamps.

We found a variety of bronze dress accessories including some fibula brooches (8.9), pins and jewellery fragments. The brooches are quite fine which suggests they come from the earlier phases of occupation. A few coins were recovered giving us some clues as to the phase of activity we are excavating and whereas in Trench 6 at the northeast corner of the settlement a much larger assemblage of coins was dominated by late 3rd century radiates and 4th century House of Constantine issues here the coins seem to date mostly to the 2nd century.

Could this imply a movement away and towards the northeast from this area during the later Roman period? This might suggest that the deep pits were a result of subsequent plundering of materials from this area.



8.9: 3 of several fibula brooches recovered in 2019

In 2020 we will dig further into the features we have revealed and excavate the north-eastern section of Trench 7 from where 850 plain tile tesserae have already been collected. We hope this will provide some clues to the enigma of this area and possibly reveal more large postholes to align with those excavated in 2019.

David Millum, MCIfA, ©CAP December 2019

### 8.3: 'DIGGING FOR BRITAIN' AT BRIDGE FARM

On the last day of the 2019 excavation season things got even more frenetic than usual at Bridge Farm with the arrival of a two-man team from the BBC4 programme 'Digging for Britain'. The project had been contacted prior to the excavation and supplied with a camera with a large fluffy microphone to record events as they happened on site throughout the season. This initial filming was undertaken by Project Director Rob Wallace and Site Supervisor Lindsay Banfield who filmed various volunteers and students extracting artefacts and digging features during the six-week dig (8.10).



8.10: Supervisor Lindsay turns film maker



8.11: The 2-man BBC team filming with Rob

Whilst we felt that our site might lack the wow factor such as human skeletons or gold hoards that usually seem the stuff of TV archaeology, we duly sent our efforts in and were pleasantly surprised when we heard back that a crew from the programme would come down and do some additional filming. We had obviously passed the first hurdle. The two-man crew duly arrived and spent most of the day filming the excavations and artefacts, as well as the general

surroundings, whilst interviewing Rob about various aspects of the dig and his conclusions (8.11). They seemed particularly taken with the very narrow path through the 2m high sweetcorn that led to the site. Over the weeks the excavation had become completely enclosed and invisible from the edge of the field allowing that surprise reveal moment that TV presenters seem to adore.

As with most TV archaeology they were particularly interested in the artefacts recovered and spent a good amount of time in our finds unit. To be fair the archaeology in our current trench is of a fairly ephemeral nature not easy to interpret or explain as I found when trying to give site tours on our open day. Large deep pits, areas of burning, series of postholes and the disrupted base of a road can appear more like just random orange-brown holes and lumps than the important archaeology that it is. Had they come in 2017 we had a deep stone-lined well to exhibit or in 2014 the 13 postholes in an obvious rectangle, each with the water-logged remains of oak post; but 2018 was mainly marked by a series of very big, deep pits for which, unlike some TV archaeological presenters, we had no satisfactory explanation.

Still the crew seemed positive and explained that if the site were chosen for the programme Rob would be contacted in September to go to a studio filming session. This duly took place with Rob, complete with selected artefacts, being interviewed by Alice Roberts. All seemed to go well and after final editing the site was featured in Episode 3, The South, going out on BBC4 on December 4th and then on to i-player.

David Millum MCIfA December 2019

**The excavation planned for 2020 was cancelled due to the Covid pandemic.**

#### **8.4: OPEN AREA EXCAVATION 2021 (BF21)**

On April 1<sup>st</sup> 2021 CAP leased an industrial unit at Bridge Farm to be our lecture hall and finds processing base as well as finds and winter equipment store. This unit also provides an office and Special Finds store. Access also continued to the communal Bridge Farm facilities building for both students and volunteers.

Special Covid Risk Assessment and Safe Working Practice guidance were prepared with auto-hand sanitisers installed at all doors. Face masks were worn in lectures and a twice weekly self-testing regime imposed. Social distancing and ventilation measures were undertaken as practicable. No cases of Covid were reported from anyone attending the site.

The 2021 season started on May 31<sup>st</sup> with students from CCCU and CAP staff and training course facilitators only due to the restrictions in numbers imposed by the government during the planned easing from Covid lockdown. Due to 2020 being cancelled we had to run 2 separate 4-week training courses, the first from May 31<sup>st</sup> to June 25<sup>th</sup> June for the 24, including 5 returnees, for those who should have come last year and the second from June 28<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> July for the 25 due to come in 2021. Three students in the second cohort had to arrive late due to self-isolation due to Covid. To keep the safe working environment during the ongoing pandemic general

volunteers were not allowed on site until after the CCCU students had left. The season was extended to give a 3-week period of the excavation which ended on the 13<sup>th</sup> August.

Project Director, Rob Wallace, directed the excavations with Jade Fennell being appointed as main site supervisor assisted by other CAP personnel as available, including Andy Bradshaw, Richard Best and David Millum; David having stepped down from the role of Deputy Director at the end of 2019. Nancy Wiginton, assisted by Mike Naylor, was in charge of the finds units, with Mike being responsible for Special Finds photography.

The summer proved typically British with periods of hot sunshine followed by heavy rain. One particularly period of heavy rain over the weekend of August 7-9<sup>th</sup> flooded the deeper features and some areas of the campsite, with some students pre-warned having relocated to alternative higher ground adjacent to the Finds Unit. It also flooded the road which was only passable in 4-wheel drive hi-axle vehicles.

During the 2021 season context numbers **7-223 to 7-304** were issued. Site work started with cleaning of the SE end of the trench and clearing slumped soil from the previously excavated features. The works are listed below in Feature order rather than chronologically.

**F36: west roadside ditch to N-S road [7-14, 7-94]** in P4/13/22/31 c.114.7-116E/ 200-220N.

The large evaluation trench 110-120E/212-214N was taken down to 500-600mm deep without any trace of the ditch in the NE and SW sections. A further 350mm deep eval was dug at 112.9-114.3E/214.7-216N to check if the pit [7-143] in F40 was part of the roadside ditch but this too proved negative. **Feature area closed August 2021.**

**F37: E-W road (7-7)** in P8/9 c.133-145E/200-206N. As the road structure had been planned in P8-9 and sectioned in 2019 a further harder clean was undertaken which revealed further areas of more consolidated flints surface in P7-P9 along the NE edge of the road in an approximate continuation of context (7-8) in P8. In P9 clear plough furrows

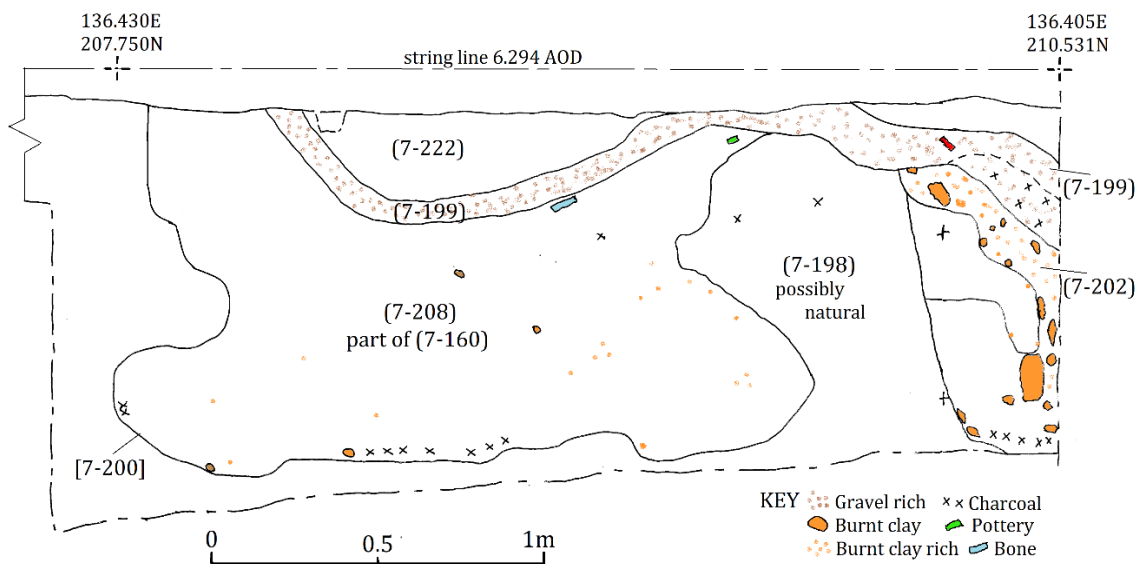


*8.12: Plough damage being exposed on the road F37*

were revealed running NW-SE adjacent to the southwest baulk in areas where the flints were more disturbed (8.12). New plans were drawn of P7-9 showing these discoveries. **Feature area closed August 2021.**

**F38: 2 (?) Large quartered pit/s** in P17/26 centred at 136.4E/210.6N. **New sections and plans were drawn but some contexts require checking and possibly amending in 2022.** Details of each quadrant are listed below.

**F38S:** The **South quadrant** the undercutting face of the pit was excavated to the SE edge but collapsed under wet conditions despite being covered. Work also continued on the NE section where 2 new contexts were issued (7-229/7-230) both of which could be s/a (7-218) with (7-230) being below the clay and sandy lenses (7-207 & 7-217) and resembling the description of (7-218). **Both these new contexts need reassessing in 2022 and the contexts forms filled in fully.**



\$40 (part) SE facing section of south quad of F38 (southern pit - F38S)

**8.13: Photograph and drawing \$40 of the SE facing section of large pit F38S**

**F38W:** Further cleaning of the surface of the West quadrant was undertaken which showed the darker fill (7-208) seen in the NW section in F38S continuing as a rough rectangle for approaching 3m with the paler outer fill (7-198) also continuing (8.13).

**A slot through this quadrant needs to be excavated in 2022 to establish profile and seek further information on the purpose/ use of the feature.**

**F38N:** Further excavation was undertaken in the **North quadrant** with 3 new contexts being issued (7-241, 7-286, 7-287) in descending layers, and (7-216) issued in 2019 was now excavated. Context (7-287) was a red highly burnt layer appearing to be *in situ* rather than deposited



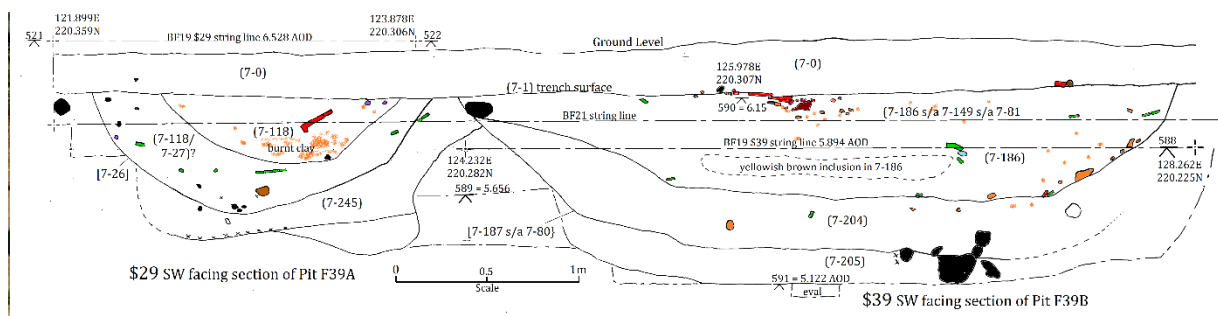
**8.14:** Red burnt fill (7-287) in F38N under (7-286)

suggesting that this pit had experienced high temperature burning (8.14). This quadrant needs to be fully excavated, context forms fully completed and the existing section drawings \$40 & \$42 completed prior to the E & W quarters being excavated possibly leaving a narrow baulk in place until the feature is fully understood.

**F38E:** No works were undertaken on the East quadrant which can only be excavated once the N & S quadrants have been fully excavated and fully recorded.

**F39:** 2 adjacent pits on NE baulk extending into new 2022 extension [F39A: 7-26 & 7-191 / F39B: [7-187] in P 32/33 c.122.1-128.2E/218.4-224+N. The area between the 2 pits was excavated to see how the pits interact with each other (8.15). It was shown that these were separate pits although at the current section it was unclear which cut which or if they just abutted. 2 new contexts were issued for pit F34A (7-245 & 7-251) which were below (7-118) in [7-191]. It was still unclear how the contexts of [7-191] related to those of [7-26] and whether these are excavations of the same pit, 2 phases of the same pit or 2 separate intercutting pits. Baulk section and P32 plan were updated.

Both pits extend into the new area where a hard clean should be undertaken to expose a complete plan of the feature prior to any further excavation.



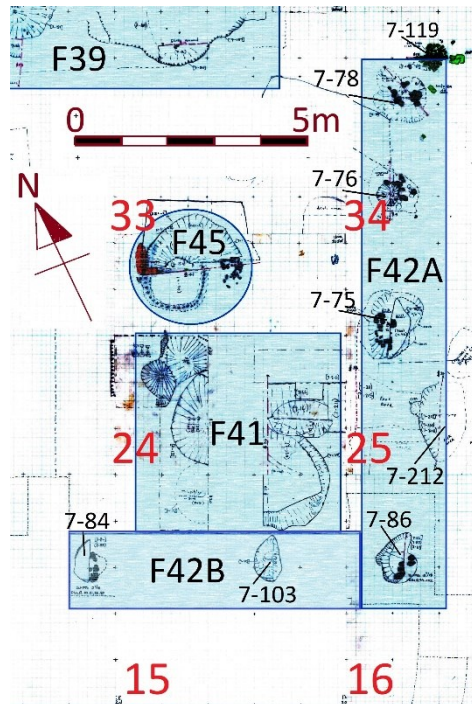
**8.15a:** Photograph of the baulk section of F39 series of pits (August 2021)

**8.15b:** \$29 and \$39 drawings of baulk section of F39 pits





was not clear. Shallow pit B appeared to cut into both Pit A and Gulley G. Definitive interpretation was once more hindered by the nature of the sandy-silt soil and damage to the exposed features by heavy rain and surface water flooding. **This feature should be inspected in 2022 to see if any more definitive information can be gained from further careful excavation of the remaining baulk.**



8.18: Plan showing location of features F39, F41, F42 and F45

**F42A & B: group of 6 postholes [A:7-75, 7-76, 7-78] [A&B:7-111] [B:7-84, 7-103] forming 2 abutting sides of a rectangle in P14/15/16/25/34 c.124-131E/207.6-218.8 (8.18). No additional postholes related to this group were discovered in 2021. **Be vigilant for any possible postholes in this area in 2022 that may relate to this feature.****

**Part of F43: multiple posthole group [7-30, 7-57, 7-101 & 7-112] in P11 centred at 108E/208N (8.19). No work undertaken other than on the group of 3-4 intercutting posthole pits, excavated in half sections in 2018 but not drawn, which was carefully re-excavated. However, the sections had deteriorated in the long delay and it was therefore only possible to re-excavated as a single group feature with 6 profile drawings (\$46, \$47, \$48, \$50, \$51, \$52) being made across the group by David Ladds. Pit [7-30] proved to be very uneven at its base. **Feature area closed August 2021.****



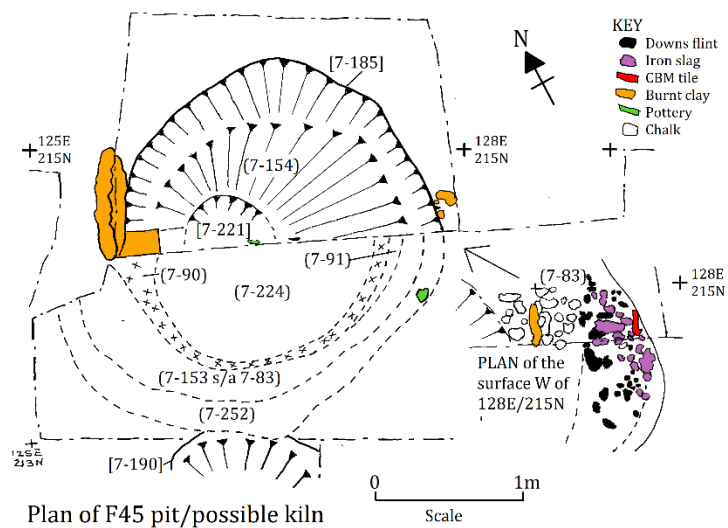
8.19: The multi posthole group in F43 (BF18)

**F44: 2 large [7-180 & 7-181] and 2 smaller [7-169 & 7-192] postholes in line on road edge in P17/18 c.135.5-144E/206-207.3N.** Further excavation revealed the large amount of sizable flint and chalk packing (8.20) which was recorded on continuation sheets to the respective context forms. **Excavation and recording completed.**



8.20: large chalk packing from F44

**F45: hearth/deep pit [7-104 & 7-185] in P24/33 c.125.4-128E/213.5-215.6N.** The baulk to the SE of the existing section was cleaned back to reveal 2 new outer rings (7-255 & 7-252) around existing rings (7-153 & 7-91) and the central fill (7-224) (8.21). These contexts were planned and then partially excavated from the inner to the outer. Excavation was hampered by flooding (8.22).



8.21: Plan of pit F45

**Excavation of the NW end of the NE half needs completing with section \$41 updated before continuing with excavation of the SW half of this feature.**



8.22: Excavation of (7-221 & 7-91) in F45

**F46: ovoid pit [7- 20] in P29/30 centred at 109.6E/218N.** Excavation and recording completed in 2019. No further work undertaken in 2021. **Feature area closed August 2021.**

**F47: deep pit [7-16] in N corner in P28 and P28 NW extension at 99.4-101.8E/218.85-221.65N** This multi-context pit extends beyond both the NE & NW baulks. It had to be abandoned in 2018 as it was extending deeper than the safe limit against the baulk. In 2021 the spoil heap and baulks to the NE & NW were taken down to trench surface level to expose the full plan of the pit. The 2018 section was cleaned back and surface slump removed from the pit which was then extended across its full width. Four new horizontal deposits were added (7-264/5/6 & 7-283) making 15 in

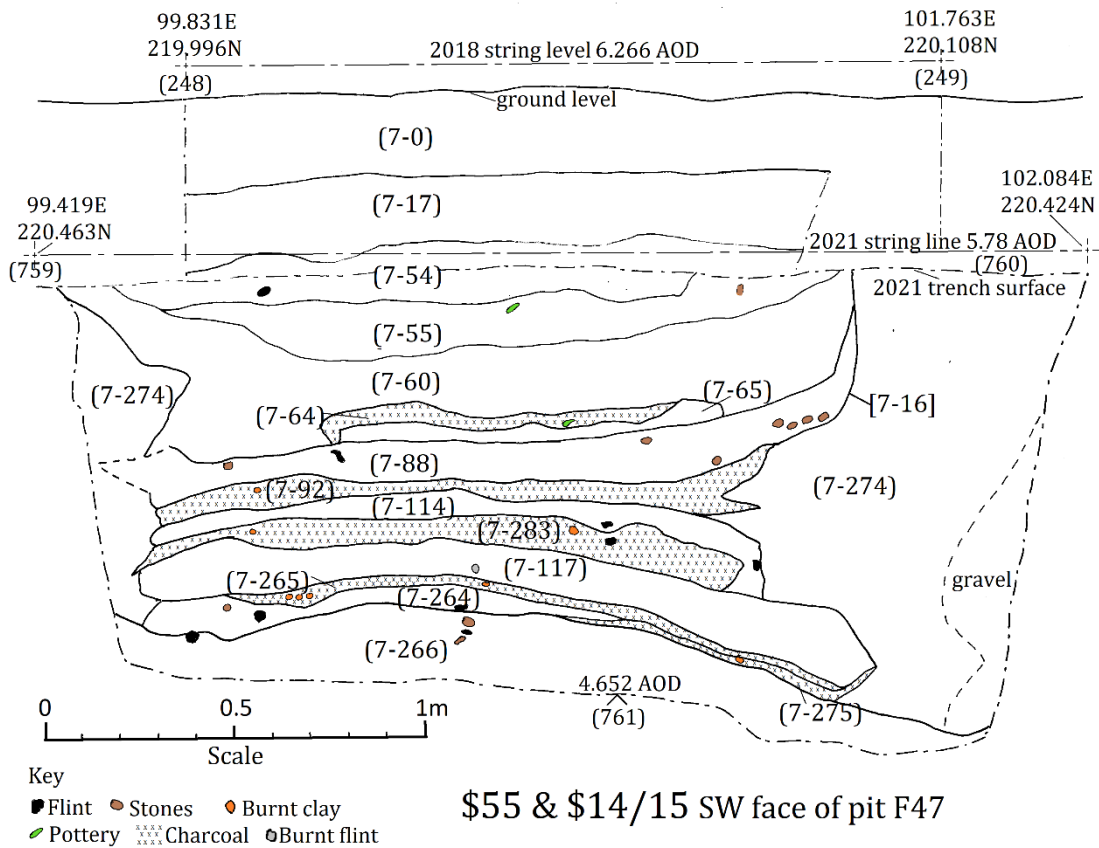
all plus a possible collapsed side fill (7-274). The lower half of the pit was filled with alternate layers of charcoal and gravels suggesting deliberate deposition possibly from a nearby industrial process. The base of the feature was unclear due to the constant ingress of surface water (8.23) and the gravel fill which could have been a natural layer of river terrace deposits. The exposed section was drawn (8.24 & 8.25) and the trench extension planned. **Feature area closed August 2021.**



8.23: F47 flooded at regular intervals



8.24: Section \$55 being drawn



8.25: \$55 drawn of the SW face of P47 by Alison Reep

**F48: deposit of burnt clay (7-11) with chalk surround (7-12) in P34/35 c.135E/ 218N.** Following half sectioning and recording of the burnt clay and chalk deposit (\$42A) (8.21) a further hard clean of the trench surface to the SE revealed a far more extensive feature than previously identified: being 2 abutting large pits designated F48A and F48B as listed below.

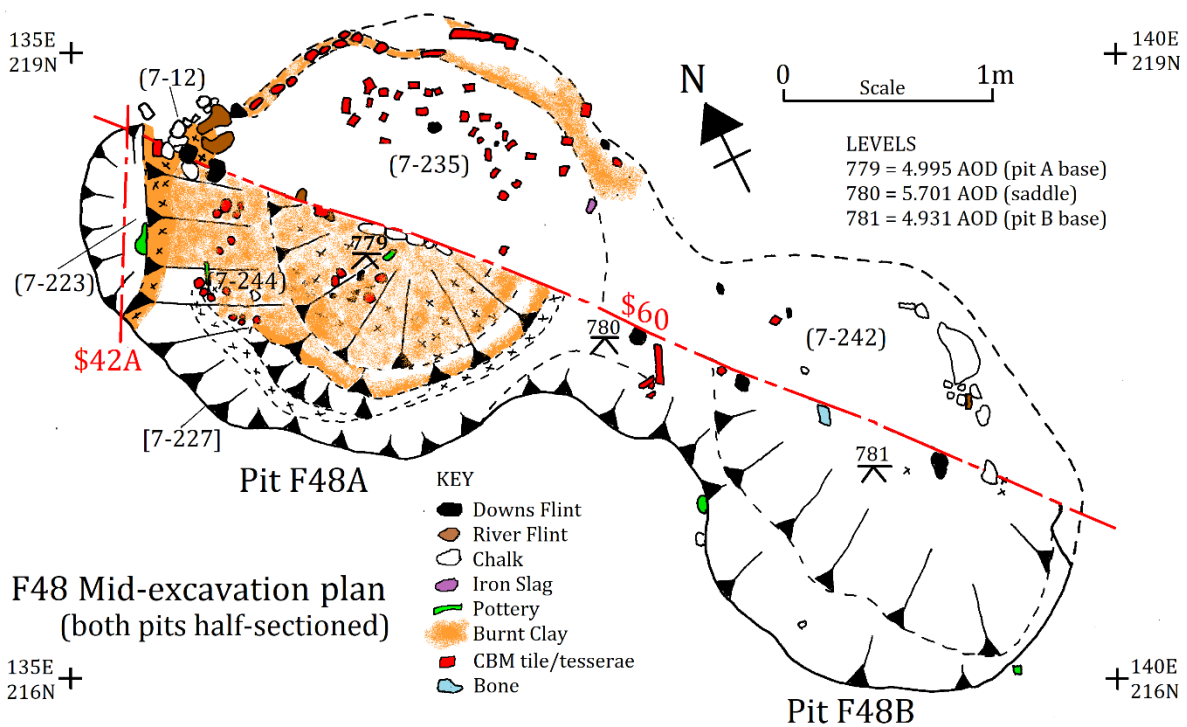
**F48A: a deep multi-fill pit [7-227] below (7-11/7-12) in P35 c. 135-137.6E/217.3-219.1N.**

Eleven new contexts were issued in 2021 in matrix order the fills comprise (7-235, 7-254, 7-273, 7-244, 7-267, 7-250, 7-261, 7-270, 7-292, 7-223) concluding with the main cut [7-227] (8.26 &



8.26: Excavation of one of the lower layers of F48A in progress

8.27). Upper fill (7-235) contained a large number of tesserae suggesting that this feature might be directly linked to their production. It appeared that the lower fills (7-223/7-292) were at the base of this feature with fill (7-250) appearing to continue into the NW edge of F48B. **Check that excavation and recording of half section is complete and complete context forms (7-250, 7-254, 7-267, 7-273, 7-292) BEFORE proceeding to excavate NE half.**



8.27: Plan of F48A & B as half-sectioned at end of BF21

**F48B: a deep multi-fill pit [tbc] abutting/adjoining F48A in P35 c. 137.6-139.9E/216-218N.** Eight new fill contexts were issued in 2021 which in matrix order are (7-279, 7-280, 7-242, 7-276, 7-277, 7-281, 7-259, 7-256). **No cut was issued as excavation incomplete (8.27).** Upper fill (7-242) had a layer of chalk (7-280) at the surface which was planned (P35D) before removal (8.28). A similar chalk deposit (7-279) was observed in fill (7-276) above river gravels at NW edge. There is some indication that this may be 2 features (8.29) with (7-259, 7-256) being from an earlier deep pit

truncated by contexts (7-281 and above) but this needs further careful investigation when the NE half is excavated.



8.28: Katie Greenstreet planning chalk in F48B



8.29: F48B showing indication of 2 features?

**Complete excavation of SW half section and complete recording including updating section drawing \$60 BEFORE excavating NE half. Pay particular attention to the relationship of (7-259) to the contexts above it to determine if this context is in the same feature.**

**F49: surface layer of small flint (7-152) and cbm tesserae (7-147) in P26/27/35/36 c.137-145E/212-220N (8.30).** P26/27/35/36 cleaned back hard to check for features. Tesserae collected as (7-147) and are processed separately from other CBM in the Finds Unit with 2759 being processed during 2018-21 including those from (7-235) in F48A. Cleaning this area revealed 4 small pits that appear unrelated to any feature. These are: (7-232 at 136E/214.6N and [7-240] at 138E/213.5N in P26, with [7-225] at 143.9E/212.2N and [7-247] at 144.2E/214.2N in P27. **This layer is almost certain to continue into the area now opened to the NE so further updates of context records will be needed.**

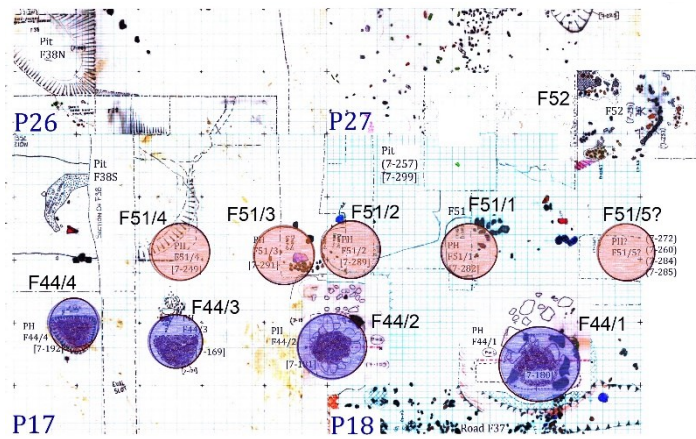


8.30: F49 tesserae (7-147) around 140E/220N

**F50: a dark layer observed on the surface of the trench overlaying various areas and features.** This echoes the layer F21 found over the enclosure ditches in Trench 6 which was interpreted as either a demolition or activity layer. Only one new context (7-228) added in 2021. **Further areas/contexts may well be added to F50 in future years.**

**F51: a row of 4(+) postholes [7-282, 7-289, 7-291, 7-249] running along the 208N grid line in P17/18 c.138.74-145.24E/208.15N just north of F44 posthole row (8.25).** Originally interpreted as a linear feature further excavation revealed a series of 4 large squarish pits/postholes which are in line with the pit at the eastern baulk with fills (7-272, 7-260, 7-284, 7-285) which could be a 5<sup>th</sup> posthole in this series. Group only recognised at end of 2021 season. **Check section drawings \$57/58/59 and plans P17/18 before proceeding. Context forms need completing and (7-272 etc) included or separated from feature group.**

**F52:** a pit with red (7-236) and black (7-237) fills around and below a gritty interior [7-231, 7-233] in P18/27 and extending into the eastern baulk c. 143.4-145.7E/209.6-211N. This feature needs further investigation in 2022 with context sheets needing completion. No section was drawn in 2021 so that it may now only be possible to draw a profile of the cut after complete excavation. No cut issued in 2021.



8.25: Plans P17&18 showing postholes F44 & F51

**F53:** a shallow rectangular pit [7-299] with 2 small pits/postholes [7-301, 7-303] in base in P18/27 c. 140.8E/208.75-211N. This feature abuts posthole [7-289] of F51 (8.26) and appears to truncate 2 small pits/postholes. Careful completion of this feature required in 2022 with check of section and context sheets. The pit and postholes also need to be planned on P18c/27.



8.26: F53 cut by F51 posthole [7-289] with [7-291] behind and [7-282] in front

An Open Day with guided tours of the site (8.27) and an exhibition of finds (8.28) was laid on for Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> August which attracted 120 visitors.

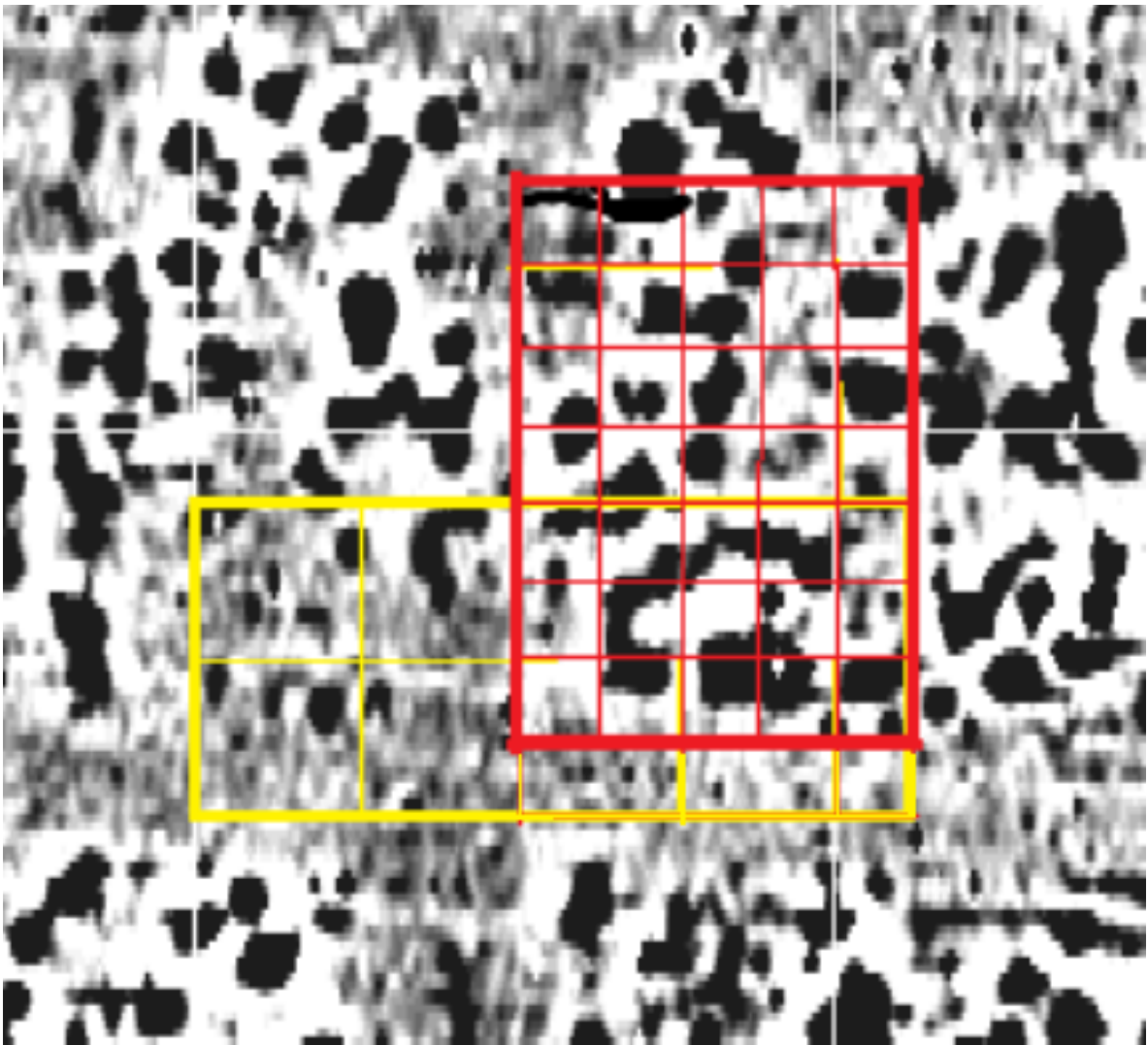


8.27: Director Rob Wallace guides a site tour



8.28: Artefact display laid out in Finds Unit

The western 20m and southern 5m of the trench (yellow 10m grid) were backfilled on 23rd August with an area of 20m to the north of the remaining 25m of the trench being opened on 24-25<sup>th</sup> August giving an 875sq.m open area (red 5m grid) ready for the 2022 season (8.29 & 8.30).



*8.29: Yellow grid showing area closed and red grid the 2022 trench on 2011 geophysics*

The entire trench both existing and new was then covered in plastic sheeting and the newly acquired portable site cabin installed to the east of the excavations (8.31).



*8.30: Removing overburden from the new area*



*8.31: Trench covered and site cabin installed*



## 8.5: 2022 TRENCH 7 EXTENDED (BF22)

The 2022 season started on May 30<sup>th</sup> with students from CCCU and CAP volunteers allowed back on site together as the Covid restrictions of the 2021 season were no longer required. Project Director, Rob Wallace, directed the excavations with Rich Best and Andy Bradshaw being appointed as main site supervisors assisted by Nat Miller. David Millum undertook some of the course tutorials and assisted supervision when on site. Nancy Wiginton oversaw the finds unit with Mike Naylor being responsible for Special Finds photography.



8.32: Rain caused intermittent breaks in proceedings

The summer proved typically British with periods of hot sunshine interspersed with periods of heavy rain (8.32). The trench had been expanded to the NE at the end of the 2021 season with the NW 20m and SE 5m area of the 2018 trench being back filled leaving an area open of 35m x 25m giving a total area of (875m<sup>2</sup>) open for the 2022 season. **Contexts 7-305 to 7-454** were issued in 2022 and four new features declared with **F54, F55, F56** being in the new northern extension and **F57** in the original 2018 trench area.

The following **Environmental samples** were collected: <18> from (7-315), <19> from (7-335), <20> from (7-347), <21> from (7-354), <22> from (7-432) & <23> from (7-431).

**Monday 30<sup>th</sup> May.** The Season started ominously with rain overnight plus some showers throughout the day (and Tuesday/Wednesday). Eleven 1<sup>st</sup> year CCCU students plus six independents, giving 17 in total on the course, started off the day with the Health & Safety talk with David Millum. The first cohort of eight 2<sup>nd</sup> year CCCU students plus volunteers were out on site cleaning out some of last year's features; **F39, F48 A&B, F38, F52** and also started cleaning back around **F51**.

A brief summary of the works carried out during the 2022 season are listed below in Feature (i.e.F number) order. NB: Features **F36, F37, F40, F43, F46 & F47** had been backfilled in 2021.

### FEATURES REVISITED

#### **F38: Large quartered pit/s in P16/17/25/26 centred at 136.4E/210.6N.**

Further excavation was undertaken in the north quadrant and a new SE-NW slot put through the western quadrant with new sections drawn but there remains much to be done in 2023. Details for work in each quadrant (S, W, N & E) are listed below.

**F38 south quadrant:** was left mainly untouched during 2022 with the exception of excavation to SE end which went into features beyond F38 possibly being continuations of F52 i.e. (7-409 s/a 7-258) and (7-410) in cut [7-408] with (7-218) also appearing to be in another feature cutting the SE end of **F38E**.

**F38 west quadrant:** had a slot excavated in a SE-NW direction along the SW edge of the feature to establish the profile of F38S at its western end (8.33). The SW facing section \$78 was drawn by CCCU undergrad Connell Quinn.

**F38N:** Further excavation was undertaken in the **North quadrant** with 15 new contexts being issued (see matrix table below) to include cut 7-434 as the NW edge of the feature became clear in the NE facing section \$88. The main fill of this large ovoid pit was still (7-287) the red highly burnt layer (8.34) although this now appeared to be a deposit of burnt clay with some CBM rather than *in situ* burning as originally thought in 2021.



8.33: The SW face of the SE-NW slot excavated through F38S in the west quadrant



8.34: Red burnt fill (7-287) appearing in F38N above the alternate black and grey layers

The excavation of this complex feature proved problematic especially on the interpretation and division of the lower fills and how these linked across the 2 section faces. These lower fills appear to be thin alternate embers and possible grey 'damping' layers often extending only part way across the section or as a lens within another fill. This led to a reinterpretation of the base layers by the director with new context numbers (7-450-453) substituted on the final section drawing \$87 to further define the original excavated context of (7-335) which has been used for finds from this area and for the context on \$88.

It now appears that F38N is a separate ovoid pit which the original quartering has sliced through the SE and SW edges rather than the ideal of a central half section. However, due to the steep

sides of the pit the new section drawings \$87 & \$88 give a very good picture of the stratigraphy of the pit to the limit of BF22 excavation.

It became clear towards the end of the season that the NW end of the north quadrant had encroached into a different feature which was designated **F57** and had its section drawn to the limit of the BF22 excavation in \$89 with its SE edge shown in \$88.

**F38E:** No works were undertaken on the **East quadrant** which can only be excavated once the N & S quadrants have been fully understood and fully recorded.

**F39: A group of 2 or more large pits in P32/33 & P37/38**

**F39A:** [7-26 & 7-191] in P32/37 centred at 133E 220N. The face of the 2021 section was cleaned back by 100mm and a new section drawn \$65 exposing a seemingly wider feature with less clarity to the cut [7-26]. Four new contexts were issued 7-326, 7-363/4 & 7-385. Whilst a fairly clear indication in plan of a darker area c.1m wide by 2m deep was seen heading NE on cleaning back P37 (8.35), further investigation is needed in 2023 to consolidate this newly uncovered anomaly and its relationship with F39A.



8.35: The dark anomaly uncovered in P37 NE of pit F39A (30/06/22)

**F39B:** [7-187] in P33/38 c.124.2-128.2E/218.4-220+N. The face of the 2021 section was cleaned back by 300mm and a new section drawn \$67 with 5 new contexts issued 7-320, 7-322/3 & 7-388/9 (see \$67).

**F39C: in P38:** a dark area NE of the F39B sections appeared to indicate a continuation of F39B well into P38 so the NE quarter from 127.2E/221.6 of the new anomaly was excavated with the upper fill being dug a 7-186 as if it was part of F39B. However, subsequent inspection has suggested that whilst this might be true it



8.36: Packed burnt clay/cbm in of NE corner of F39C

could also be a separate pit and has therefore been designated **F39C** with 2 lower fills **7-425 & 7-430** being issued. The NE corner of the main pit appeared to be a separate pit **[7-426]** with fills **7-419 & 7-425**. Below this an area of packed burnt clay and/or cbm **7-422** was uncovered (**8.36**). A second small pit also appeared in the SE corner **[7-418]** with fills **7-417, 7-423 & 7-427**. Sections \$91 & \$92 were drawn of the quartered area and plans P37/38 were also drawn.

**F41: a group of intercutting pits with ephemeral gully and burnt clay deposit** in P15/24 c.125.5-129.7E/208.8-213N: No work was undertaken on this feature which was considered to have yielded all likely information and backfilling was commenced during the season. F41 was closed during the 2022 season.

**F42A & B: group of 7 postholes [A:7-75, 7-76, 7-78, 7-341] [A&B:7-86] [B:7-84, 7-103]**

Forming 2 abutting sides of a rectangle in P14/15/16/25/34/39 c.124-131E/207.6-220.5. A new posthole **[7-341]** was excavated in 2022 which seems to be in line at the NE end of the F42A row. The pit below the fineware deposit **[7-119]** was extended and another pit **[7-373]** adjacent to the SW side of **[7-341]** was excavated. See sections **\$69 & \$71** plus revised plans P34C&D & P39. Of these **[7-341]** **7-340** which had a covering of flints packing looks the most probable addition to the posthole row F42A.

**F44: 2 large [7-180 & 7-181] and 2 smaller [7-169 & 7-192] postholes in line on road edge** in P17/18 c.135.5-144E/206-207.3N. Excavation in 2022 revealed a small shallow pit **[7-405]** at 137.426-138.042E/207.122N which could be part of small posthole 3 of F44.

**F45: hearth/deep pit [7-104 & 7-185]** in P24/33 c.125.4-128E/213.5-215.6N.

Excavation of this feature was hampered in 2021 by flooding which subsequently led to a collapse of the NW side during the winter despite being covered. In 2022 the collapsed area had to be excavated without context before the final excavation of the SE side could be completed. Whilst contexts were given to the different fills extracted only one (7-316) could be stratigraphically located with any confidence. Four more contexts (7-321, 7-325, 7-348 & 7-351) were issued but could not be definitively related to the contexts in the surface halo seen in 2021 although they must relate to outer and/or lower contexts within the deep pit **[7-185]**. This feature was extended down through four more layers which were deemed to be natural rather than archaeological comprising of very clean sandy silt, river gravels, sand and iron stone gravels. F45 was fully excavated and declared closed at the end of the BF22 season.

**F48: 2 abutting large pits designated F48A and F48B** as listed below.

**F48A: a deep multi-fill pit [7-227] below burnt clay and chalk deposit (7-11/7-12)** in P35 c. 135-137.6E/217.3-219.1N. Four new contexts were issued in 2022 (7-306, 7-307, 7-347, 7-365) plus (7-446) which may continue into the baulk between pit A & B.

**F48B: a deep multi-fill pit [fbc\*] abutting/adjoining F48A** in P35 c. 137.6-139.9E/216-218N. Five new fill contexts were issued in 2022 (7-308, 7-334, 7-338, 7-342, 7-346) plus (7-446) which may extend through the baulk from F48A. No cut has been issued as excavation was not complete. (\*There is some indications that this may be 2 features being an earlier deep pit truncated by

context (7-281) and above but this needs further careful investigation when the NE half is excavated.

**F49: surface layer of small flint (7-152) and cbm tesserae (7-147)** in P26/27/35/36/40/41 c.137-145E/212-225N. P40/41 was given an initial clean back to check for features. Tesserae were collected as 7-147 and processed separately from other CBM in the Finds Unit with a further 1501 being processed during 2022. Out of these 648 were initially assessed as having been made from amphora rather than tile.

**F50: a dark layer observed on the surface of the trench overlaying various areas and features.** Possible demolition or activity layer. Only one new context (7-313) was added in 2022.

**F51: a row of 4(+) postholes [7-282, 7-289, 7-291, 7-249] plus possible 5<sup>th</sup> (7-284/5) running along the 208N grid line** in P17/18 c.138.74-145.24E/208.15N. Further excavation was undertaken on postholes F51/1 & F51/2-3 providing NE facing sections \$85 & \$86.

**F52: a pit/linear with red (7-236) and black (7-237) fills around and below a gritty interior (7-231, 7-233)** in P18/27 c. 143.4-145.7E/209.6-211N with 7 new fills issued in BF22 (7-309/11, 7-317, 7-343/4) and cut [7-345]. F52 now includes the linear that appears to run NW from the original pit possibly extending to 139.5E as (7-409/10) [7-408] in \$94. If truncated by F53 in \$59 & \$82 then fills (7-271) (7-298 7-300 7-302 7-304) and cuts [7-301 7-303] also become part of F52. Sections were drawn at 144E \$66 (8.37), 143.2E \$68, 140.7E \$82 and 139.5E \$94. Interpretation of this feature has become very difficult due to the ephemeral nature of the western linear element, its potential truncation by later features and the excavation of these features prior to the considering this feature as a linear rather than an isolated pit.

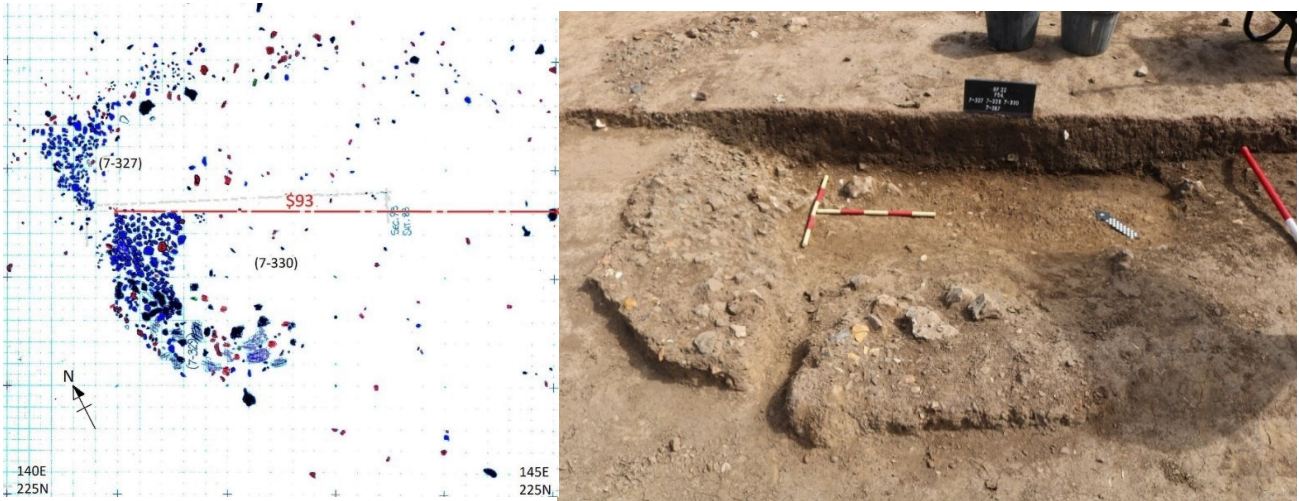


*8.37: NW face of F52 at 144E drawn as \$66*

**F53: a shallow rectangular pit [7-299] potentially truncating part of F52** in P18/27 c. 140.8E/208.75-211N. This feature abuts posthole [7-289] of F51.

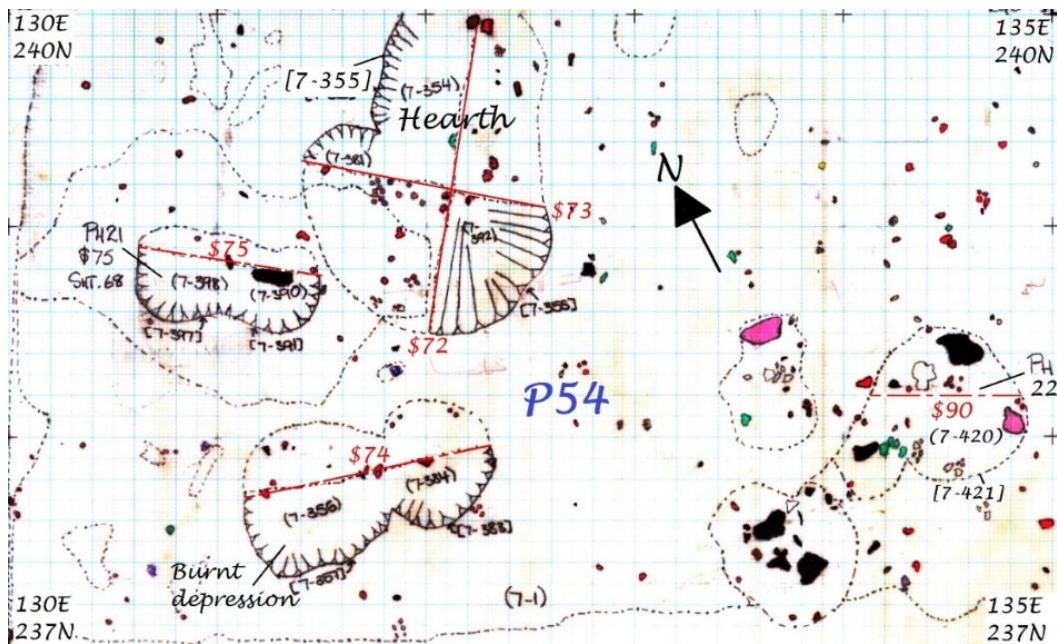
**NEW FEATURES IN 2022**

**F54: 2 abutting pits, larger having slag-rich deposit on surface.** Fill overlying both pits (7-330), 9 further fills given to F54A (7-327, 7-329, 7-387, 7-411/2, 7-428/9, 7-431, 7-436) (no cut issued as still under excavation), 2 fills (7-376 & 7-445) given to F54B plus cut [7-444] (this pit continues into eastern baulk). Section through both pits \$93 drawn and pits plot on P46. This feature stands out in this trench for having a substantial surface deposit of iron slag (8.38).



8.38: Plan and photograph of F54A showing the surface slag deposit (7-327) to NW edge

**F55: small hearth and surrounding small pits/postholes.** The possible hearth [7-355], fills (7-354, 7-366/7, 7-379, 7-392) is cut by [7-382], fills (7-380/1); see \$72/73. Burnt depression [7-357], fills (7-356, 7-386) cuts pit [7-383], fills (7-384, 7-404); fills 7-386 and 7-404 are both charcoal rich. PH21 [7-397], fill (7-398) cuts pit [7-391], fills 7-390, 7-396). PH22 [7-421], fill (7-420). Most elements in this feature were half sectioned and had sections drawn. Plan P54 was also drawn to show extent and locations (8.39). PH21 & 22 are not conclusively postholes.



8.39: Northern part of P54 showing the locations of the F55 features

**F56: large sub-rectangular pit with steep sides in P49.**

4 fills were issued (7-394, 7-432, 7-442, 7-443) within cut [7-393]. Finds rich with occasion charcoal and burnt clay with the top fill containing 8 Special Finds including a 3<sup>rd</sup> century radiate coin. Section \$95 completed to the BF22 limit of excavation.

**F57: separate large pit revealed in at NW end of north quadrant of F38.** Appearing in the NW end of \$88 of F38N this pit seems to be of similar depth to F38N with steep irregular sides. 10 fills were allocated (7-349, 7-413/4, 7-437/8/9, 7-440/1, 7-447/8) within cut [7-435]. The fills included layers of charcoal and burnt clay. Section \$89 shows full stratigraphy but truncated at each end by the BF22 limit of excavation of this box section.

**BF22 excavations and/or sections not assigned to a Feature:**

**\$70: PH19 (7-352) [7-353]** at 140.5E 230.8N in P51.

**\$76 & \$77** NW & NE faces of F38S box section of 2 shallow elements not clearly part of F38 or any other adjacent features and not observed in plan when cleaning back. **(7-403) [7-402]** at 137.8E 207.8N, cutting **(7-401, 7-400) [7-399]** at 138.3E 208.4N in P17.

**\$80 PH20 (7-374, 7-395) [7-375]** at 138E 230.9N in P50.

**\$81 PH16 (7-359) [7-358]** at 139.2E 220.5N in P40.

**\$84 PH17 (7-361) [7-360] & (7-416) [7-415]** at 138E 223-224.5N in P40.

**Section drawings and Plans**

**\$65-96** were completed by mid-July, some being new interpretations of sections drawn in previous years. Existing 5m square grid plans were checked and updated at end of the season with 10 of the 5m squares in the extension also planned.

**The Finds Unit**

The Finds Team were kept busy again seeing over 190kg of pottery sherds and 130kg of cbm fragments, the latter equating to 46% of cbm collected in this trench. However, only 14% of burnt clay was collected compared to 2021. Whilst some of these differences may be down to differing assessment of these similar materials it must still indicate a much greater amount of cbm than seen in previous years. The 24 coins also equates to 41% of the total for this trench. The table below gives the initial figures for the materials processed in 2022. Another 1501 tesserae were collected of which 648 appeared to have been made from amphora fragments or a very similar ceramic material.

There were 166 items declared as **Special Finds** including the coins and most other metal objects. These included the usual dress fittings and ornaments as well as an equestrian strap slide **(8.42)** in the shape of horses head. Many finer pottery pieces were also made SFs including decorated samian and a range of colour coated beakers **(8.40/1)** some of which have been partially reconstructed.

4.4 Pottery sherds No	4.1 CBM gms incl tesserae	4.1 Tessera No	4.2 Burnt Clay gms	10.1 Bone No	gms	1.3 PH flints No	
18,744	130,728	1,501	20,999	1,702	7,161	68	
Burnt flint gms	5 Glass No	15.4 Charcoal gm	6.4 Iron No	gms	7.2 Slag gms	6.2 6.5 Cu & Pb No	All coins No
11,236	89	1,861	1,688	23,847	175,164	49	24



8.40: Hunting scene beaker



8.41: Colour-coated beakers



8.42: Horse-head harness slide



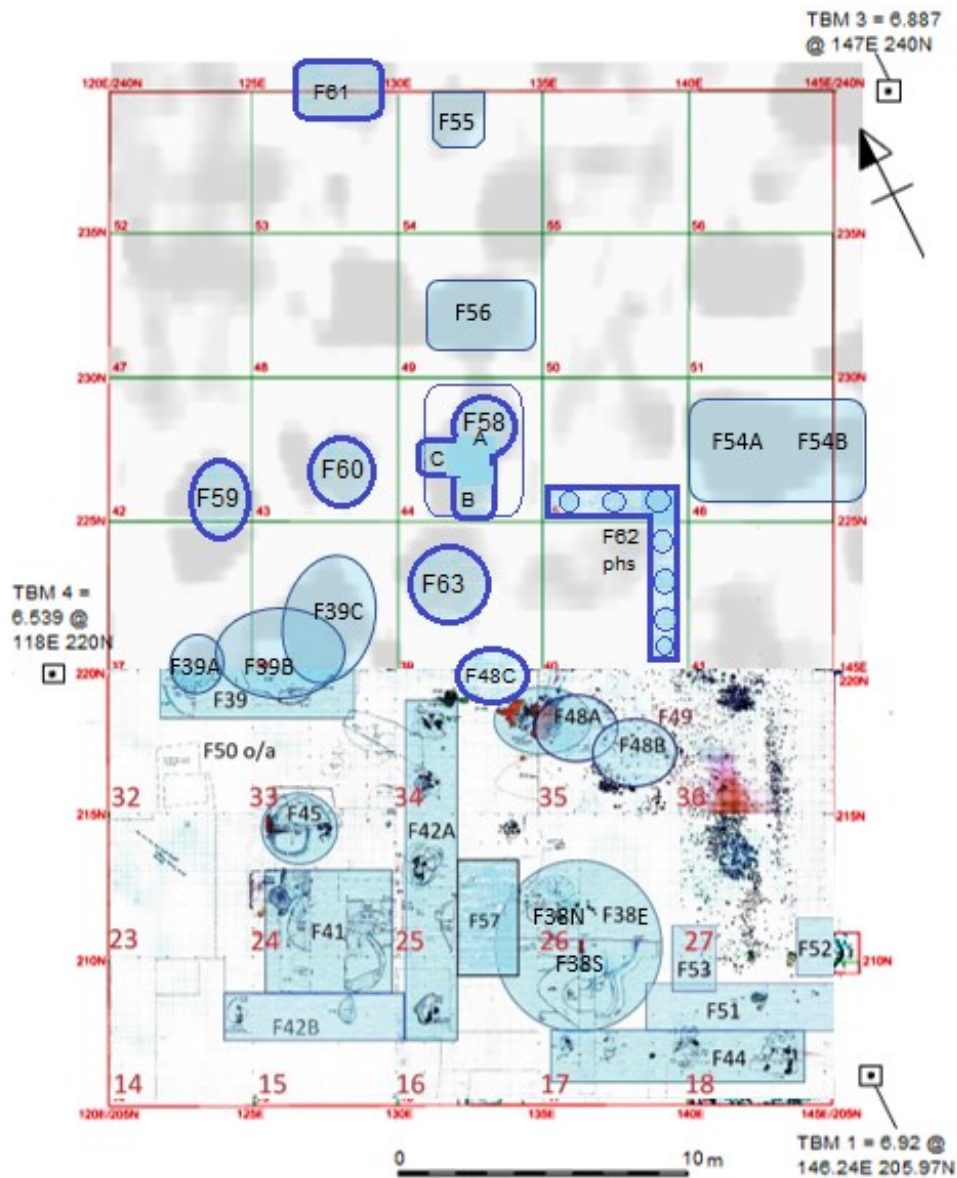
8.43: Rich Best taking his turn on the tours on Open Day

### The Open Day

Held in the morning of Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> July with 3 guided tours of the site by David Millum, Rob Wallace and Rich Best (8.43) and an exhibition of finds laid on by Nancy Wiginton, proved as well attended and as popular as in previous years. The morning only format gave the team ample time to re-box the finds and close the site before departing for the day for a well earned rest/drink.



## 8.6: 2023 TRENCH 7 CONTINUES (BF23)



8.44: Features Plan at end of BF23 season

The 2023 excavation started on 29<sup>th</sup> May with volunteers and CCCU plus independent students, many returning for another year. The open dig was scheduled for 6 weeks, Monday to Friday, 9.30-5.30, with a further week for the CAP team to complete, check and record all features prior to the Open Day on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> July. As usual the final week turned into 2-3 before we were satisfied that everything was as complete as was practicable. Site supervision was once more in the capable hands of Rich Best and Andy Bradshaw assisted by the newly graduated Blake Galloway. Site Direction was by Rob Wallace assisted and deputised at times by David Millum. The Finds Team was coordinated by Nancy Wiginton and Julia Montgomery, with Mike Naylor in charge of finds photography.

Many of the features open in 2022 required further investigation and recording but this still allowed for 6 new features, **F58, F59, F60, F61, F62 & F63** (8.44), to be opened plus several other smaller unrelated excavations. 148 context numbers (7-455 to 7-603) were issued with 30 sections

drawn (Nos.97-127). Details of the finds collected, which including the 155 Special Finds (Nos.437-592) are given below. The winter had been very wet with the site under water from November to January making the water table higher than normal even months later and this hampered initial work in some of the existing deeper features despite the use of a submersible pump, a situation which in some cases continued through the whole 6 weeks.

NB: The details of the works and features that follow should be taken as a personal interpretation by the writer, open to discussion, and not necessarily the final view of the Project Director or CAP Team. Only excavations current in 2023 are listed below.

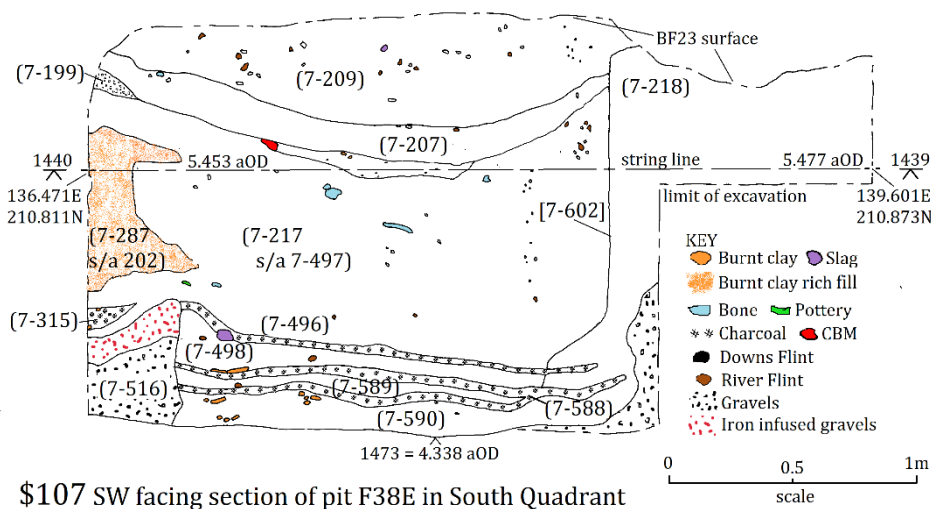
### 8.6.1 FEATURES REVISITED

#### F38: a group of 3 adjacent/intercutting large pits in P25/26

##### F38 south quadrant:

**State at 19/5/23:** SW facing section had some erosion but still redeemable. This quadrant had still not hit natural in the north corner and needed fully excavating in 2023, context forms needed checking and fully completing with the existing section drawing \$62 extended prior to the E & W quarters being considered for excavation.

**BF23 works:** the SE facing section of F38E was cleaned back and taken down to its base. New



\$107 SW facing section of pit F38E in South Quadrant

context numbers were issued, with the main fill (7-497) designated 'same as' (7-217) from an earlier season. The new lower fills are as follows: charcoal and interposed layers (7-496) (7-498) (7-588) (7-589), base fill (7-590), cut [7-602] (8.45).

#### 8.45: 2023 section of F38E

The SE edge was still unclear where truncated by the possible gully from F52 i.e. (7-409 s/a 7-258) and (7-410) in cut [7-408] with (7-218) also appearing not to be of F38E. Towards the base the sides were defined by the **natural hard-packed gravels** that the pit had originally been dug into.

Originally this pit was likely to have had straight vertical sides that have been obscured by merging of contexts from the adjacent pit F38N, such as the reddish fill (7-287), by water induced seepage and bioturbation. The section was redrawn (see \$107 above) and covered at the end of the season. Excavation of the base layers was hampered by the constant inflow of surface waters even during dry conditions.

**Suggested for BF24:** Inspect section and if season particularly dry see if base and east end can be clarified, otherwise this quadrant is considered complete and ready for backfilling.

**F38E in the east quadrant:** The plan of pit F38E needs further clarification which hopefully a hard clean on the surface of the east quadrant should resolve. It is likely that subject to the surface cleaning this quadrant will not need to be excavated.

**F38 west quadrant:**

**State at 19/5/23:** NE face of slot through F38S was in reasonable condition but the SW side had collapsed badly.

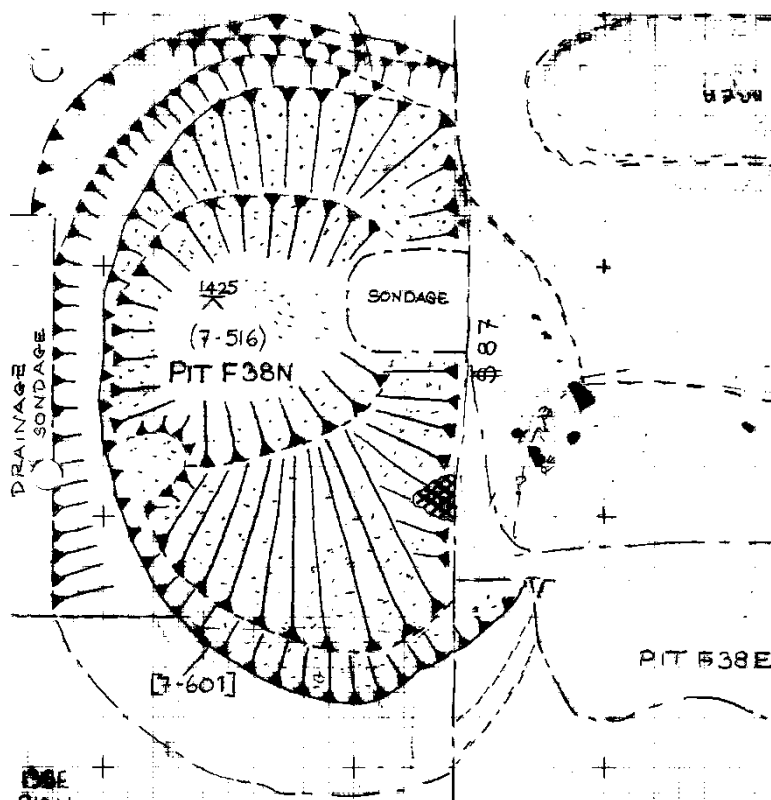
**BF23 works:** Plan P16 had F38S slot planned in as a straight sided slot from P17E.

**Suggested for BF24:** Surface to the north of the slot to be hard cleaned to clarify the cuts of F38S and F57 and any other, as yet unidentified feature.

**F38N north quadrant:**

**State at 19/5/23:** SE face (NW section) was in reasonable condition but the SW face (NE section) had collapsed badly. However, it appeared it may have collapsed mainly along the southern cut line [7-434] of the feature so that careful excavation might define this edge of the pit giving a fair indication of its plan. The strong red of some of the collapsed material might hopefully allow excavation of the collapse in established contexts.

**BF23 works:** Further excavation was undertaken on the NW facing section in the **North quadrant** with 2 new basal fills being issued (7-515) and (7-515). A new cut was issued [7-601] for \$87 s/a cut [7-434] in \$88 (see Matrix below). Careful excavation of the NE facing section (SE edge) helped to define the plan of this pit as ovoid and separate it from F38S. As with F38E the base of the sides of the pit were defined by a ridge of hard natural gravels which was used to define the ovoid shape in redrawing plan P25 (8.46).



8.46: Plan P25 (BF23)

**F38N is a separate ovoid pit** which the original quartering sliced through the SE and SW edges. However, due to the steep sides of the pit the sections \$87 & \$88 do give a good picture of the stratigraphy as at end BF23.

**Matrix table for F38N**

KEY: s/a & x/a = same as & excavated as

\$87 NW facing (site W)		old \$87 by Alex and Evie	\$88 NE facing (site N)
7-45 dk brown 10YR 3/3	s/a 7-197	7-45 dk brown 10YR 3/3	
7-178 Gravel	s/a 7-199	7-178 Gravel	7-178 Gravel
7-216 v.dk brown 10YR 2/2		7-216 v.dk brown 10YR 2/2	7-216 v.dk brown 10YR 2/2
7-241 50% charcl, black 10YR 2/1		7-241 50% charcl, black 10YR 2/1	7-241 50% charcl, black 10YR 2/1
7-286 v.dk brown 7.5YR 2.5/2			
7-287 dk red 10R 3/4	s/a 7-202	7-287	7-287
7-331 black 10YR 2/1		7-331 s/a 7-337?	7-318 dk brown 7.5YR 3/4
7-449 grey layer	s/a 7-454	7-336 charc.rich; brown 7.5YR4/2	
7-315 reddish-black 10YR 2.5/1		7-315 reddish-black 10YR 2.5/1	xxxxxx = charcoal lens
7-450 grey layer	x/a7-355	7-335 black 10YR 2/1; finds rich including SFs like hobnail shoe patterns	7-335 black 10YR 2/1
7-451 charcoal rich	x/a 7-355		xxxxxx = charcoal lens
7-452 grey layer	s/a 7-453?		7-414 grey 5Y 3/1
7-515 7.5YR 5/4 brown,			
[7-601]	s/a [7-434]		[7-434]
7-516 Hard natural gravel			

**F39: A group of 2 or more large pits in P32/33 & P37/38**

**F39A(+F39D?):** [7-26 & 7-191] in P32/37 centred at 133E 220N.

**State at 19/5/23:** some erosion of section face.

**BF23 works:** Surface cleaning gave a clear indication in plan of a tapering darker area c.1m wide by 2m long heading NE in P37. This possible continuation of **F39A** was half sectioned with new contexts (7-471) & [7-487], new NW facing section \$102 drawn and P37 replanned. The section drawing suggests a single tapering fill and site photograph No.357 suggests that the cut might start to rise as it nears the old 220N baulk line. If this is the case it could suggest that pit [7-487]

is not a continuation of **F39A** but a separate later small pit **F39D** cut into **F39A**'s norther edge. This theory is supported by plan P37B where the unexcavated eastern half is shown turning back in towards the section line rather than continuing to link with the other pit (see composite plan of F39 below 8.48).



*8.47: Photograph suggesting F39D as a separate feature*

**Suggested for BF24:** section and plan to be cleaned and checked to establish if [7-487] is part of **F39A** or a smaller pit cutting its northern edge.

**F39B:** [7-187] in P33/38 c.124.2-128.2E/218.4-220+N.

**State at 19/5/23:** some erosion of section face.

**BF23 works:** No works were scheduled for 2023 but in order to try to clarify the relationship between **F39B & C** the eroded face of section \$39 was taken back.

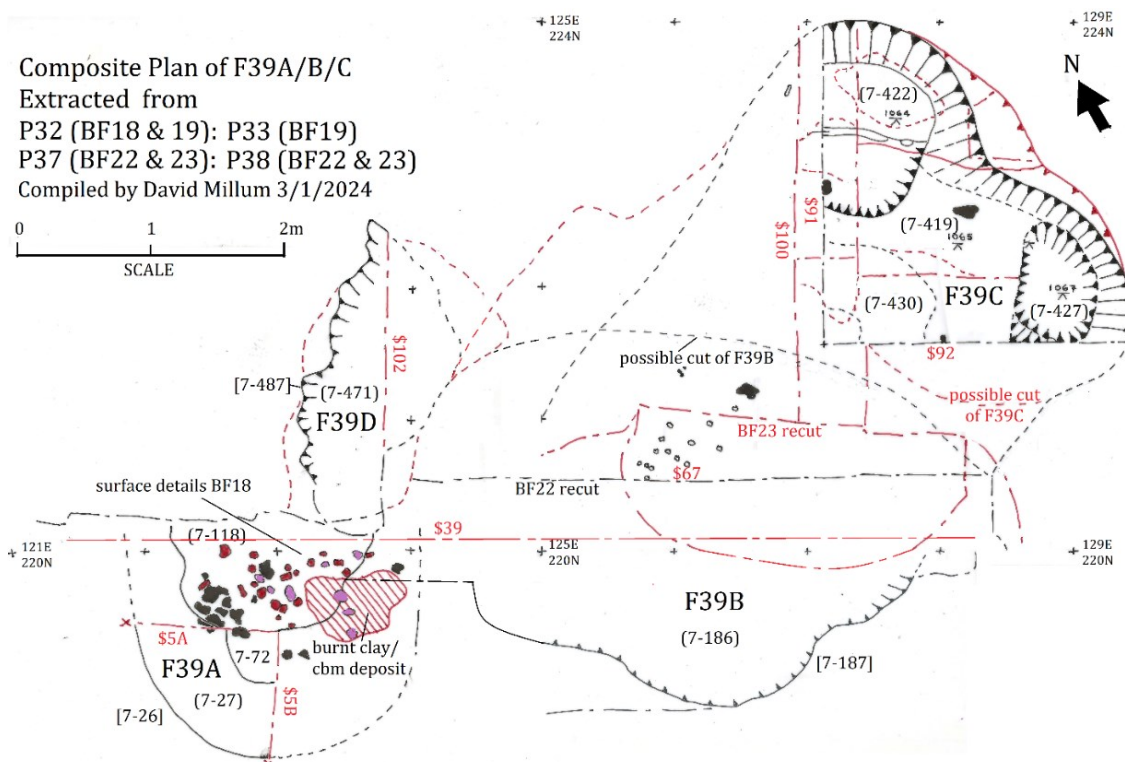
**Suggested for BF24:** Trench surfaces between **F39B, C & D** to be hard cleaned again, possibly by 100mm to finally see if any clear relationship between these pits can be established.

**F39C:** in P38: the NE quarter from 127.2E/221.6

**State at 19/5/23:** some erosion of NW section face but SW face in good order.

**BF23 works:** Surrounding surfaces were hard cleaned and BF23 excavation re-examined with the western side taken back c.100mm from Section \$91 & new section \$100 drawn. 0.5m wide slots were excavated along the inside of both the western and southern sections, with the western slot continued through to join with **F39B**. Five new contexts (7-462) (7-479) (7-480) (7-481) (7-489) were issued for the fills within these slots. The area of compact fired-clay /cbm (7-422) was found to be a small deposit within **F39C** at the base of the N corner.

**Suggested for BF24:** Trench surfaces between **F39B, C & D** to be hard cleaned again, possibly by 100mm to finally see if any clear relationship between these pits can be established.



8.48: Composite plan showing pit F39A, B, C & D

**F42A & B: group of 7 postholes along the 131E & 208N lines.**

**Suggested for BF24:** A lookout should be kept for any postholes discovered in this area in 2023 that may relate to this feature, especially along the 131E line north of 220N. Otherwise this feature is considered closed.

**F48: 3 abutting large pits designated F48A, F48B and F48C** as listed below.

**F48A: a deep multi-fill pit [7-227] below burnt clay and chalk deposit (7-11/7-12)** in P35 c. 135-137.6E/217.3-219.1N.

**State at 19/5/23:** Some erosion of SW face of the cut has left an amount of spoil in the base of both pits

**BF23 works:** An initial attempt was made to clear the backfill but this was hampered by continual flooding and it was decided that further clearing would do more harm than good.

**Suggested for BF24:** If conditions allow, clear any backfill and check that excavation and recording of half section is complete plus adding missing data to existing context forms. It is suggested that the NE half of this feature be left unexcavated.

**F48B: a deep multi-fill pit abutting/adjoining F48A at SE** in P35 c. 137.6-139.9E/216-218N.

No cut has been issued as excavation was not complete. There is some indication that this may be 2 features being an earlier deep pit truncated by context (7-281) but this needs further careful investigation if the NE half is excavated.

**State at 19/5/23:** Some erosion of SW face of the cut has left an amount of spoil in the base.

**BF23 works:** Further work on this deep feature was hampered by flooding mainly from the water table. Use of submersible pump powered from the generator allowed some progress and the discovery of a timber frame (possibly Oxford type) in situ at the base (8.49) with other loose timbers and some leather fragments being recovered and stored in water (SFs 7.568-577). The timber frame continues E & S of the current excavation and also appeared to continue down for some distance into the liquid mud.

**Suggested for BF24:** It seems desirable to try to uncover the total frame, however, to do this safely requires a considerable amount of surrounding ground to be taken down in c.500mm steps to the SE of the current excavation and the N-E section supported with secured planking or similar shuttering. The exposure of this new feature would give access to possible organic and waterlogged Roman artefacts, rarely found in the southeast. If the timber frame can be exposed a decision could then be made on whether the whole or parts can be safely removed for conservation and analysis without damage, especially if possibly having the 60 annual rings needed for dendrodating. Care should be taken to separate and record the newly discovered well pit from any later feature cutting into its upper contexts.

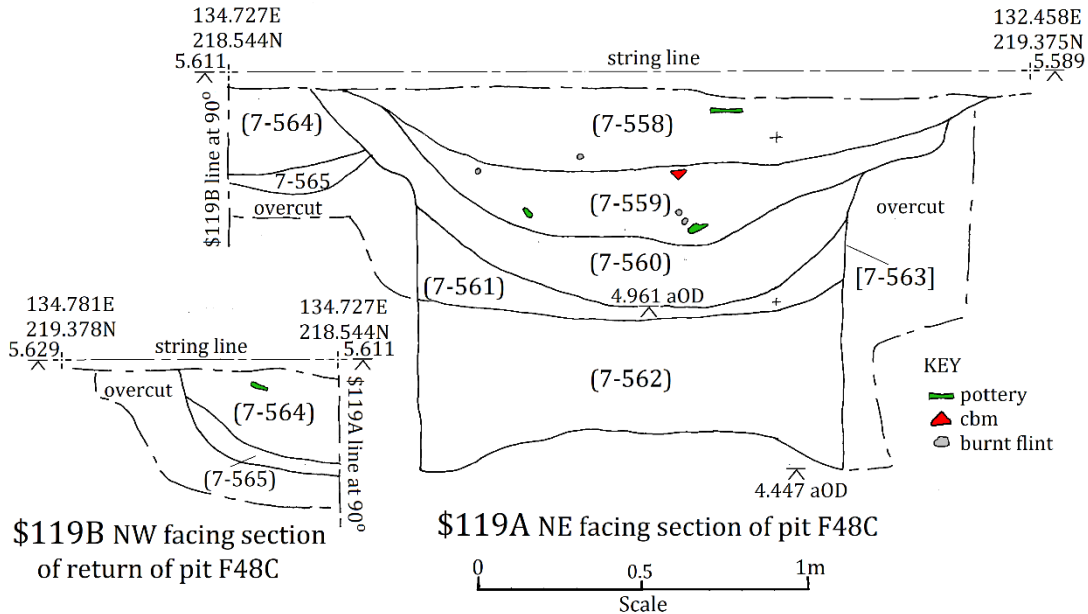


*8.49: Waterlogged timber frame in F48B*

**F48C: ovoid pit with vertical sides abutting F48A to the NE** in P34 at 132.5-134E/218.8N.

**BF23 works:** Taking this area down 100mm revealed another large pit, possibly linked to the pair of pits F48A/B. Four overlays have been issued in this area (7-13) (7-106) (7-512) (7-513) and five

fills given to the main pit (7-558-562) within cut [7-563]. The main section \$119A runs into the extreme NW end of F48A or the small pit below the clay and chalk deposit and a return section \$119B was also drawn at this end (8.50). As the relationship with F48A is unclear contexts (7-520) (7-564) (7-565) & cut [7-566] referring to this intermediate area have been designated F48A/C. **Suggested for BF24:** F48C remaining half of main pit to be left in place with a hard clean of the surface area to the west where ephemeral changes in context were seen in 2023. F48A/C this area to be excavated back to F48A to establish its relationship with that feature.



8.50: Sections of F48C (\$119A) and F48A/C (\$119B)

**F49: surface layer of small flint (7-152) and cbm tesserae (7-147)** in P26/27/35/36/40/41 c.137-145E/212-225N.

**BF23 works:** This layer continued into the new area opened to the NE of Plan squares P40/41 and a further 697 tesserae were collected with 75 being initially assessed as from amphora rather than tile, making a total of all types from T7 of 5605 to date.

**Suggested for BF24:** further tesserae could be found in this area during any clean back or excavation which will mean that updates of context (7-147) and feature F49 records would be needed. The possible use of amphora for making tesserae is interesting and worth further research.

**F50: a dark layer observed on the surface of the trench overlaying various areas and features.**

Possible demolition or activity layer. No new context was added in 2023.

**Suggested for BF24:** Further areas/contextes may well be added to F50 especially in the extended trench area and consideration should also be given to the upper fills of some excavated features.

**F51: a row of 4(+) postholes [7-282, 7-289, 7-291, 7-249] plus possible 5<sup>th</sup> (7-284/5)** running along the 208N grid line in plan squares P17/18 c.138.74-145.24E/208.15N.

**STATE at 19/5/23:** general collapse of upper sides and filling due to flood movement of surface deposits. **BF23 works:** no works recorded.

**Suggested for BF24:** Context forms (7-288-91 & 7-293) need checking and 5<sup>th</sup> possible posthole (7-272 to 7-285) included or separated from this feature group. Check if a new context needs

issuing for pit cut by [7-282] and its relationship to it confirmed. This may require careful re-excavation of these features if still viable.

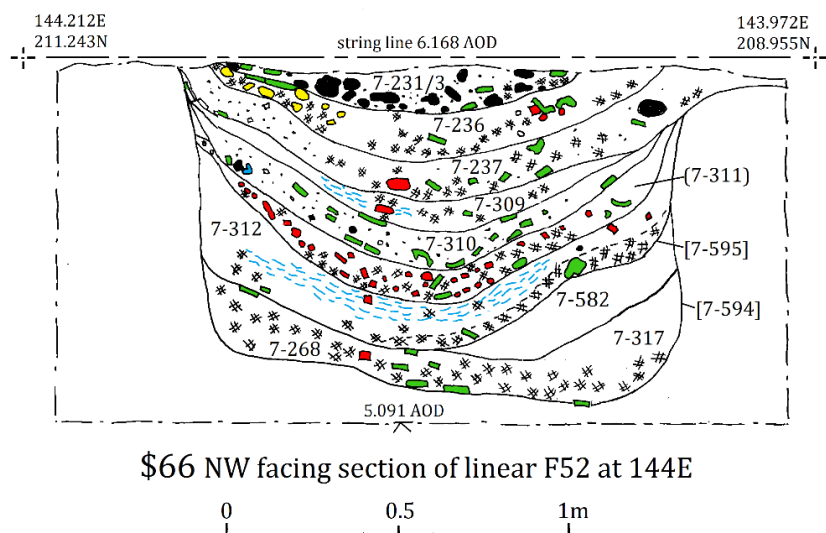
**F52: a pit/linear with red (7-236) and black (7-237) fills** around and below a gritty interior (7-231, 7-233) in squares P18/27 c. 143.4-145.7E/209.6-211N.

F52 now includes the linear that appears to run NW from the original pit possibly extending to 139.5E as (7-409/10) [7-408] in \$94. If truncated by F53 in \$59 & \$82 then fills (7-271) (7-298 7-300 7-302 7-304) and cuts [7-301 7-303] also become part of F52.

Interpretation of this feature has become very difficult due to the ephemeral nature of the western linear element, its potential truncation by later features and the excavation of these features prior to the considering this feature as a linear rather than an isolated pit.

**BF23 works:** The face of \$66 at 144E/209-211N was cleaned back and the section drawing amended (8.51).

**Suggested for BF24:** Check that all context sheets have been completed. The relationship of the contexts below the rectangular pit F53 [7-301&3] needs clarifying as does the possible continuation to grid location 139.5E. Excavation of this feature to the east is still an option if resources allow.



\$66 NW facing section of linear F52 at 144E

8.51: Section of F52 as updated in 2023

**F53: a shallow rectangular pit [7-299]**

Potentially truncates part of F52 in P18/27 c. 140.8E/208.75-211N.

**State at 19/5/23:** general collapse of upper sides and filling due to flood movement of surface deposits.

**Suggested for BF24:** Check that context sheets are complete. See if the relationship between F53 and F52 can be resolved before this feature is closed. Check if outline is included on plans P18c/27 and clearly notated.

**F54: 2 abutting pits, larger having slag-rich deposit on surface.**

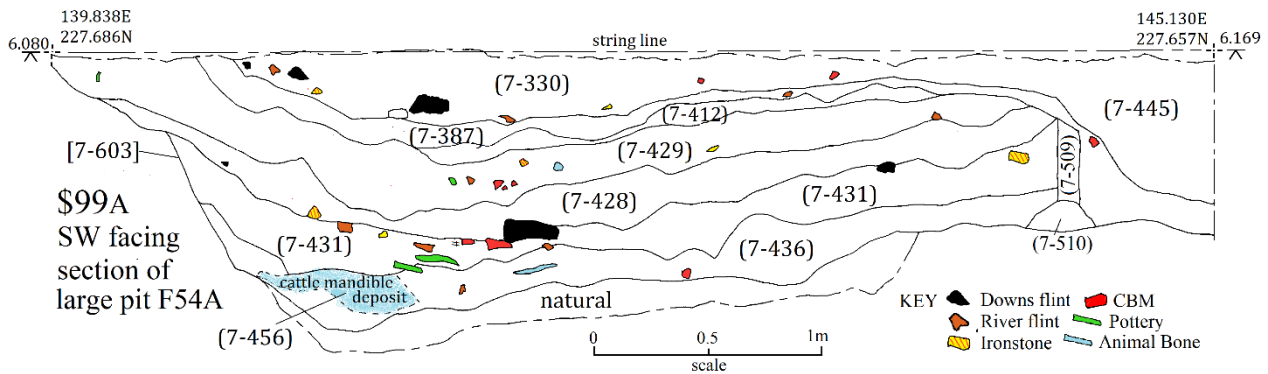
**State at 19/5/23:** NE face looks in good order but some collapse of surface material into the base needs to be removed.

**BF23 works:** Further excavation of the western pit F54A with new contexts (7-461)(7-465/6) and cut [7-603] being issued. A deposit of eight fragmenting cattle mandibles was found in context (7-465) which were given SF numbers, SF 7.465-7.472, before being carefully removed. Half sectioning F54A was completed and drawn \$99A (8.52).



Pit **F54B** was also revisited with the section being extended southwards along the eastern trench edge baulk. 3 new contexts were issued (**7-501**) (**7-509**) (**7-510**). The east trench edge section was drawn as **\$99B**.

**Suggested for BF24:** Some re-examination of **F54B** may be worthwhile prior to closing. There seems little merit in excavating the northern half of these pits.



8.52: SW facing section of F54A & B as exposed in 2023

**F55: small hearth and surrounding small pits/postholes.**

**State at 19/5/23:** Features have been generally backfilled by surface material due to flooding.

**BF23 works:** No works were undertaken of this feature.

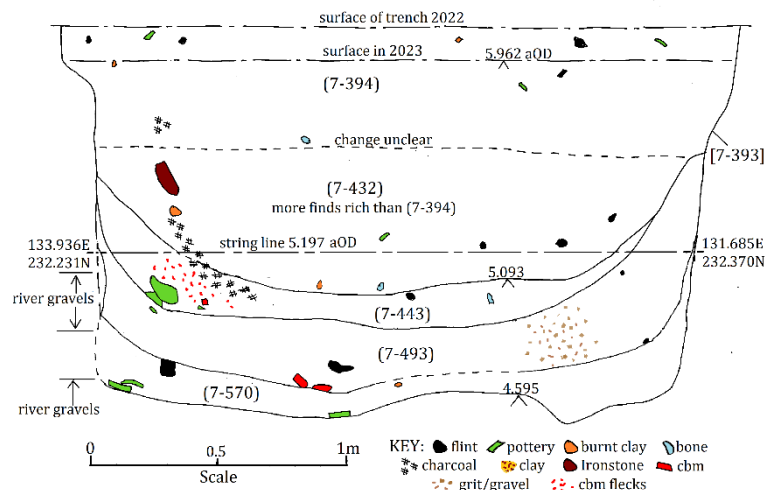
**Suggested for BF24:** Check for dimensions missing on some contexts. Clean back surface to check for other contexts that will require excavation/recording. Consider the relationship between **F55** and **F61**.

**F56: large sub-rectangular pit with steep sides in P49.**

**State at 19/5/23:** SE face looking good but some surface material has washed in to the base.

**BF23 works:** Half section excavation completed and section drawing **\$95** updated. 2 extra basal fills were issued (**7-493**, **7-570**).

**Suggested for BF24:** There seems little merit in excavating the southern half of this pit and it can probably be closed subject to Director's (RW's) discretion.



\$95 NE facing section of large pit F56 in P49

8.53: Section \$95 of F56 as updated in 2023

**F57: separate large pit revealed at the NW end of north quadrant of F38.**

**State at 19/5/23:** NW face looked generally good but has some isolated areas of collapse in section already recorded.

**BF23 works:** A clean back of the area to the west of section **\$89** was undertaken to establish the extent of the feature.

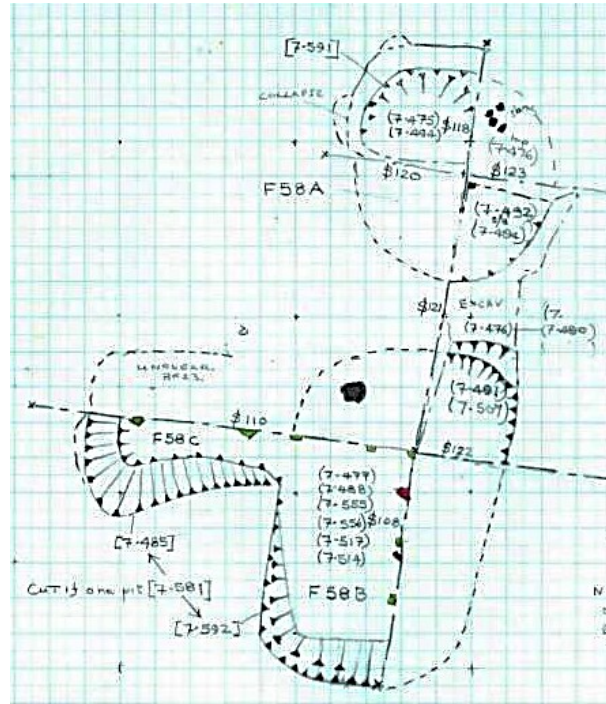
**Suggested for BF24:** The NW section \$89 needs taking back by 500mm and extending both NE and SW (possibly into the F38S slot) in a slot to establish the full width of the pit on that axis prior to a possible slot at right angles to this across the centre of the revealed pit to establish its width and length.

### 8.6.2 NEW FEATURES IN 2022 (F58-63)

#### F58: A group of 2-3 pits forming a 'T' shape in plan square P44

**BF23 works:** Cleaning back of P44 revealed a dark T-shaped feature (8.54). In order to try to separate and stratify the possible intercutting pits it was decided to quarter the feature with a long section SW-NE (\$108/118/121) and 2 cross section NW-SE (\$110/122 & \$120/123) (see plan). The pits proved to be over a metre deep making full depth excavation in the confined quarters very difficult and in the case of F54A impossible.

**NB:** This excavation has reinforced our opinion that quartering relatively small features should not be undertaken at Bridge Farm where many pits exceed 1m in depth.



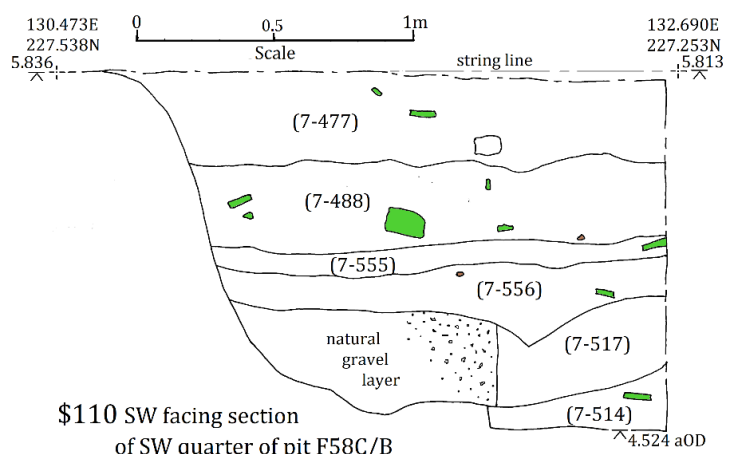
8.54: Plan of the F58 group of pits

**F58A: a sub-circular pit** at ctr.133E/229N with straight almost vertical sides, not excavated to full depth. Fills (7-457, 7-475, 7-476, 7-492, 7-494) cuts [7-484 s/a 7-493 s/a 7-593]. Excavation has established that this pit is separate from F58B/C. 4 sections were drawn: \$118, \$120, \$121, \$123

**Suggested for BF24:** excavate the W quarter from the already excavated N quarter and extend the section drawing \$118 to give a half section using \$121 reversed to give the removed upper fills. When recorded excavate the remaining E quarter.

**F58B/C:** Due to the uncertainty in the early stages of excavation and the lack of change in the fills, the same context numbers were used for the stratigraphically related fills in both areas B & C. It has still to be established beyond doubt whether we are dealing with 2 intercutting pits or a single, stepped, L-shaped feature (8.55).

**F54B: a sub-rectangular pit** at ctr.132.7E/225.7-227N with steep sides curving to flat base that cuts through the upper gravel layer. Fills (7-456, 7-477, 7-488 s/a 7-491, 7-555, 7-556, 7-507, 7-517, 7-



8.55: Section \$110 showing step between F58C & B

526, 7-514) cuts [7-527 s/a 7-592]. Initial interpretation is that **F58B** cuts **F58C** at the northern corner. See sections: \$108, \$110, \$121, \$122.

**F58C: a sub-rectangular pit truncated by F58B** at 130.8-132E/ctr.227.4N. Steep sided curving to wavy base that is on the upper gravel layer. The difference in depth in section \$110 (see above) is the main evidence for **F58B** truncating **F58C**. A significant deposit of pottery including some complete vessels (**SFs 7.502 BB1 dish & 7.530 E.Sussex Ware jar** see 8.56) was found within fill (7-488) in the area of **F58C**.

**Suggested for BF24:** This may prove tricky to resolve and any excavation should be proceeded by careful inspection and discussion with the Director. It may be best to try to carefully excavate the N quarter of **F58B** if it is possible to follow the edge of the gravel step around the suggested truncation of **F58C** (8.55). It should then be possible to excavate the NE half of **F58C** using new context numbers but referring them to the previous joint numbers used so that separate dating may be possible for this pit if designated as separate from **F58B**. It might even be possible to reassign any 3D located SFs to the new contexts, but this should be done with caution and only if there is no doubt of their location within **F58C**.



8.56: SF7.530 a ESW cooking pot

**F59: Deep straight-sided ovoid pit with deposit of flint in P37/42:** located at 122.4-124.5E/224.4-226.5N

**BF23 works:** Being approximately 2m diameter and excavated to 1.4m deep this pit had a large deposit of medium sized Downland flints towards the bottom of the excavation in (7-524).

**Suggested for BF24:** The excavator (George Morris) suggested that this pit may continue down beyond the **BF23** limit of excavation. This should be checked with a sondage and if found correct excavated to the true base and the section \$124 amended to include the new basal contexts.



8.57: Photograph showing the flint deposit in F59

**F60: 2 pits in P43, one shallow and one 1.8m deep**

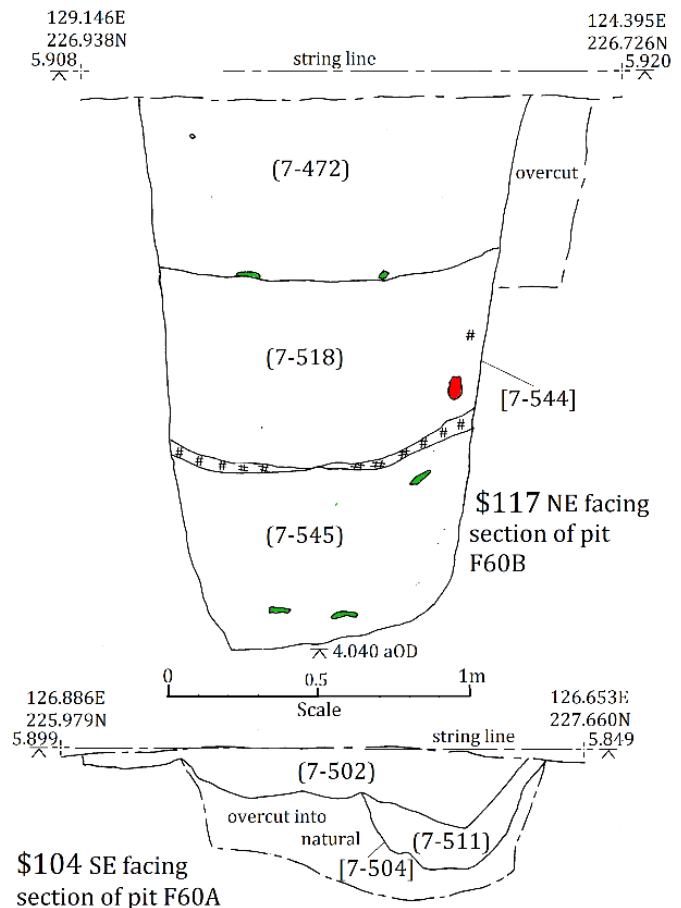
**BF23 works:** Trench surface clean back revealed 2 adjacent anomalies which were half-sectioned

**F60A: small irregular pit only 0.4m deep** at 126.2-127.5E/2226.4-227.6N. 2 fills were issued (7-502), (7-511) with cut [7-504]. The pit had to be overcut into the natural before the cut became clear (see 8.58 section \$104).

**F60B: a squarish pit 1.8m deep with very steep straight sides (8.58)** at 127.8-129E/226-227.7N. It had 3 main fills (7-472) (7-518) (7-545) plus a thin charcoal layer (7-544) and cut [7-503]. The excavator thought this had the shape of a cess pit or shallow well. It had a significant pottery deposit in its primary fill (7-545) which could prove useful for dating when the pit ceased its original function.

**Suggested for BF24:** F60A was fully excavated after recording and so can be considered closed.

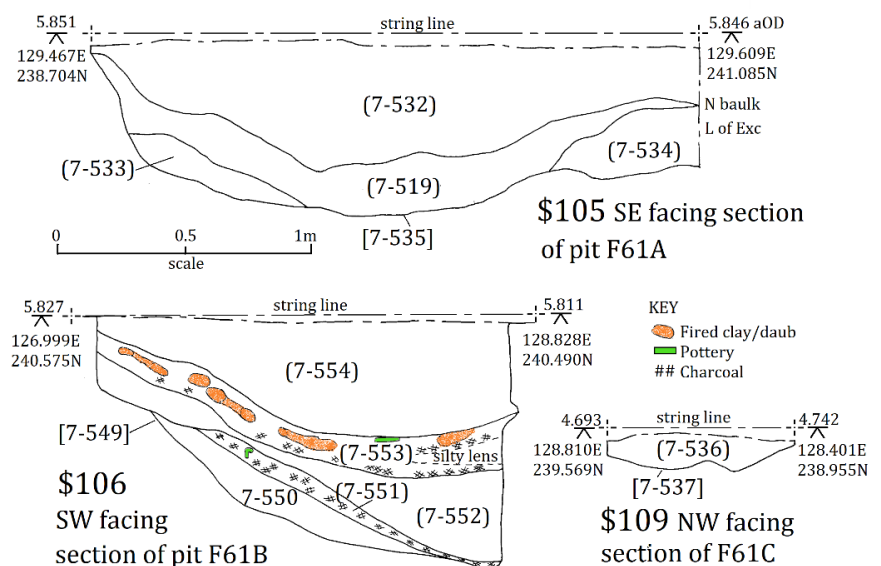
**F60B:** To be left to the Director's decision as to whether the potential of recovering further pottery from (7-545) merits full excavation, otherwise the northern half should be left in situ and this entire feature considered closed.



8.58: Sections of F60B & A

**F61: 2 pits and other features at the northern baulk in P53**

**BF23 works:** surface cleaning revealed 2 large pits **F61A&B**, truncated by the north edge of the trench, plus another adjacent smaller pit **F61C (8.59)**. Another pit [7-469] 2m to the south has not to date been assigned to this feature (see below). The trench was extended north by 1.1m into P58 to try to uncover the full extent of the pits but **F61A** continues beyond this area.



8.59: Sections of F61A, B & C

**F61A: an elongated trenchlike pit**, 700mm deep, with straight parallel sides, half-sectioned **\$105** along the 129.6E grid line from 238.7-241.1N. 4 fills were issued **(7-532)(7-519)(7-533)(7-534)** within cut **[7-535]**.

**F61B: a ovoid pit**, with a sloping base between 0.3 and 1m deep, half sectioned **\$106** along the 240.5N grid line between 127-128.83E, with 5 fills **(7-550-554)** within cut **[7-549]** including 2 charcoal rich layers **(7-551)** and **(7-553)** which also had deposits of fired clay/daub.

**F61C: a very shallow small pit/depression**, half sectioned **\$109** at 128.8-128.4E/239.6-239N. Comprising 1 fill **(7-536)** in cut **[7-537]**.

**Suggested for BF24:** assess if pit **F61A** needs extending to the north (this would require some substantial work to remove part of the northern spoil heap). Look closely at **F61B** to see if half section is fully excavated to check if the steeply sloping base to a nearly vertical east side wall is correct. Clean back surface to establish whole plan. Northern half may be considered not worth excavating at this time. **F61C** can probably be closed without full excavation.

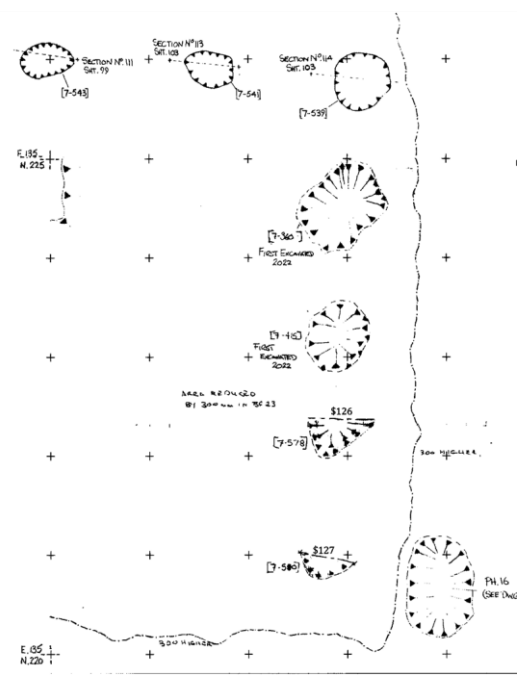
**F62: a group of 7(+) postholes forming a right angle in P40/45**

**BF23 works:** Surface clean back revealed 2 lines of shallow postholes at 90° which included the 2 posts **F62.4 (7-361)[7-360]** & **F62.5 (7-416)[7-415]** excavated in 2022 and drawn in section **\$84**.

The pits appeared to form the eastern corner of a rectangular structure **(8.60)** at 134.5-138.1E/220.5-226.2N, but no indication was seen of a NW or SW line, although another small posthole **[7-525]** was excavated at 133.7E/224.9N. The distance between the centres of the post pits varied from 1m to 1.6m with the E-W line phs **F62.1 (7-538)[7-539]**, **F62.2 (7-540)[7-541]** and **F62.3 (7-542)[7-543]** being at 1.6m. Phs **F62.6 (7-577)[7-578]** & **F62.7 (7-579)[7-580]** at the southern end were the most shallow with **F62.7** being only a slight depression due to the slope of the trench surface.

NB: Postholes **[7-360]** & **[7-415]** section **\$84** at 138E 223-224.5N in P40, previous listed as PH17 in 2023, were declared **phs 4 & 5 of F62** as in line with **phs 3, 6, & 7**.

**Suggested for BF24:** Possible harder clean to area to west of the feature to see if other lines of posts can be found.



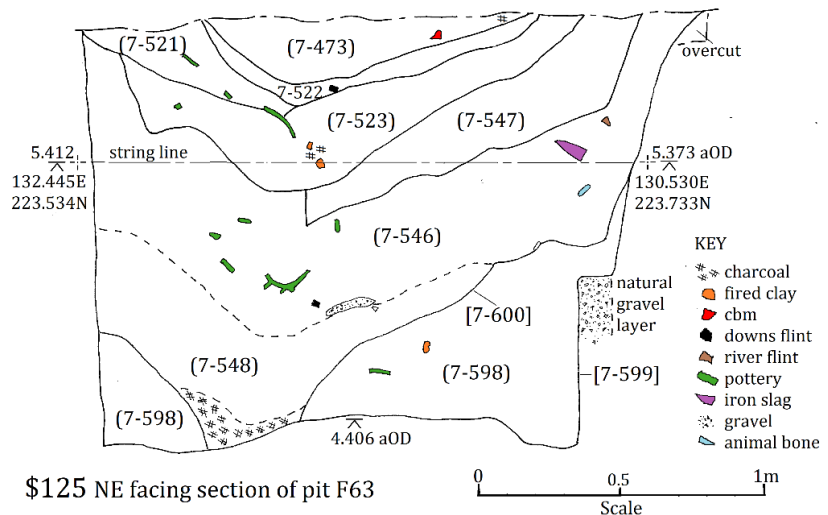
**8.60: Plan of posthole group F62**

**F63: Steep sided ovoid pit in P39**

**BF23 works:** Surface cleaning revealed an ovoid pit at 130.3 -132.6E/224.4-224.8N. A pit 1.5m deep with almost vertical sides and a level flattish base at 4.406 aOD. 6 fills **(7-473 s/a 7-521) (7-521/2/3) (7-546/7/8)** were designated within recut **[7-600]** above **(7-598)** in **[7-599]**. Context **(7-548)**, the primary fill of **[7-600]**, proved finds-rich. Section **\$125** drawn **(8.61)** by Rich Best after he had completed the unfinished excavation.

**Suggested for BF24:**  
Excavation and records to be inspected and if all in order a decision made by the Project Director whether full excavation is needed or if this feature can be designated closed.

**8.61: Section of pit F63**



**8.6.4: BF23 excavations and/or sections not assigned to a feature**

**Chalk-lined-posthole [7-464], (7-463) in P42** adjacent to pit [7-499]. Section \$97 at 122.918-122.951E 228.494-229.301N.

**Suggested for BF24:** Check for other pits and postholes in area which might constitute a Feature.

**Shallow pit [7-499] (7-467) in P42** adjacent to posthole [7-464]. Section \$101 at 121.793-121.878E 228.225-229.714N.

**Suggested for BF24:** Check for other pits and postholes in area which might constitute a Feature.

**Small posthole close to F62 posthole rows & F63 pit [7-525] (7-478) in P44.** Section \$103 at 133.618-132.839E 224.880-224.923N. Fill contained possible Downland flint packing.

**Suggested for BF24:** Consider if posthole is closely related and/or part of either F62 or F63.

**Small posthole adjacent to F56 [7-583] (7-584) in P49.** Section \$115 at 131.199-130.600E 233.708-233.640N. **Suggested for BF24:** Consider if posthole is closely related and therefore part of F56.

**Gulley [7-585] (7-586) (5-596) in P47/48.** Section \$116 at 125.389-125.073E 234.136-233.298N

**Suggested for BF24:** Hard clean of E corner of P47 and SW side of P52 to trace the extent of this gulley. Possible further slot to be excavated across it if continues for a reasonable length, in which case it should be issued with a Feature number.

**8.6.5: In general**

**Section drawings \$97-127** were completed by mid-July, some being new interpretations of sections drawn in previous years.

**Existing 5m grid plans** were checked and updated at end of the 2023 season. P52, P55 & P56 were not drawn as no work has yet been undertaken in these squares other than initial clearing of top soil.

### 8.6.6: General and Special Finds

2023 proved to be another busy year in the finds unit as can be seen from the table of general finds below which gives the 2023 figures and the totals for Trench 7 at the end of 2023.

Year	4.4 Pottery		4.1 CBM gms incl tesserae*	4.2 Burnt Clay gms	10.1 Animal Bone		1.3 Worked Flint		Burnt Flint gms
	No	gms			No	gms	No	gms	
2023	13,818	104,584	68,937	7,446	2,053	7,675	179	2,063	7,481
T7 totals	73,141	526,000	356,293	225,718	9,477	42,046	468	8,380	31,298

\*In 2023 697 tesserae were found of which 75 were made from amphora. Of the 5605 total tesserae found in T7 to date, 723 were made from amphorae.

Year	5 Glass No	15.4 Charcoal gms	1 & 1.2 Stone gms	6.4 Iron		7.2 Slag gms	6.2 6.5 Cu/lead No	6.3 6.6 Gold & silver No	All coins No
				No	gms				
2023	64	1,266	12,643	1,577	17,496	35,061	36	2	17
T7 totals	336	3,994	334,514	5,650	73,775	852,384	182	2	75

155 artefacts were made Special Finds most being designated on site and 3D located using the Total Station with some designated after cleaning by the Finds Team.

Within the pottery assemblage the season produced several complete and nearly complete vessels (8.62) from various contexts including SF7.527 a 180mm diameter cream fabric flask from fill (7-473) in pit F63;

also from F63 were seven sherds of a brown base perforated with 6 holes (SF7.567) possibly from a cheese press; SF7.554 from fill (7-492) in pit F58A

a nearly complete, 136.62mm tall, poppy head beaker in a grey marbled fabric; and SF7.591 a 200mm high grey jar with barbotine dot decoration (possibly from the Alice Holt kilns?) was extracted from the general finds for context (7-492) from pit F58A and reconstructed by the Finds Team.



BF23 SF527

8.62: Jar SF7.591, beaker SF7.554 (above) & flask SF7.527

There were also some interesting additions to the range of decorated Samian that trench 7 has provided including SF7.581 (8.63) from the lower fill (7-548) of pit F63, comprising seven

conjoining sherds of a beaded rim D37 bowl with a band of ovolo above the main design of a big cat leaping over a boar, in turn leaping over a prostrate man, flanked by vertical panels with figures standing on columns with globe held aloft (Atlas?).

A small sherd SF7.455 from fill (7-428) in F54A showing two figures in a close embrace revealed the explicitly erotic nature of a some Samian designs.



8.63: Decorated Samian SF7.581

A nearly complete D36 dish **SF7.504 (8.64)** with barbotine leaf design around the rim was found in fill (7-494) in pit **F58A** and **SF7.557 (8.65)**, a sherd of a beaker or small jar with a very distinctive cut glass style design, from the upper fill (7-473) of pit **F63**, was designated by the Finds Team. Ten Samian base sherds with maker's marks were also found

**8.64:** *SF7.504 a D36 dish*

**8.65:** *SF7.557 a distinctive cut-glass style sherd*



**8.66:** *SF7.588 a green glass intaglio*

The star among the 13 glass Special Finds declared was **SF7.588 (8.66)**, a green glass intaglio from the lower fill (7-548) of pit **F63**; measuring 13.44 x 9.94mm with an incised trophy of arms design comprising a corselet with a helmet on a shield to the right and a spear and greaves to the left. The design was identified by Revd. Prof. Martin Henig who suggested a possible date of early 1<sup>st</sup> century with potential military associations.



Identifiable metal finds were also Special Found including copper alloy items including bow and trumpet brooch parts, a cosmetic spatula and 17 coins. Other SFs include jet hair pins (**8.67**), a large jet gaming piece, worked bone items and the organic finds from the possible well in **F48B** comprising prepared timbers (**8.68**) **Sfs7.568-572 & 7.579** and strips of leather possibly from a shoe **SFs7.573/579/580**.



**8.67:** *SF7.496 jet pin*



**8.68:** *SF7.571 waterlogged prepared timber from F48B*