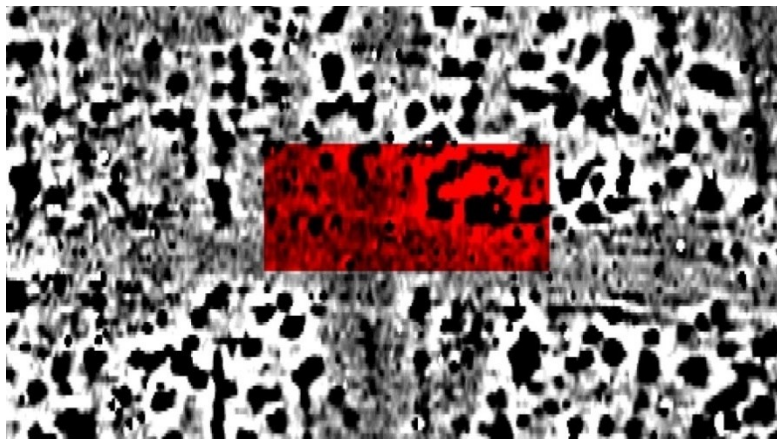


8: 2018-2022 Trench 7 over the Centre of the Settlement

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 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.



8.5: A possible hearth surrounded by chalk

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 1st 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 31st 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 31st to June 25th June for the 24, including 5 returnees, for those who should have come last year and the second from June 28th to 23rd 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 13th 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 7-9th 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



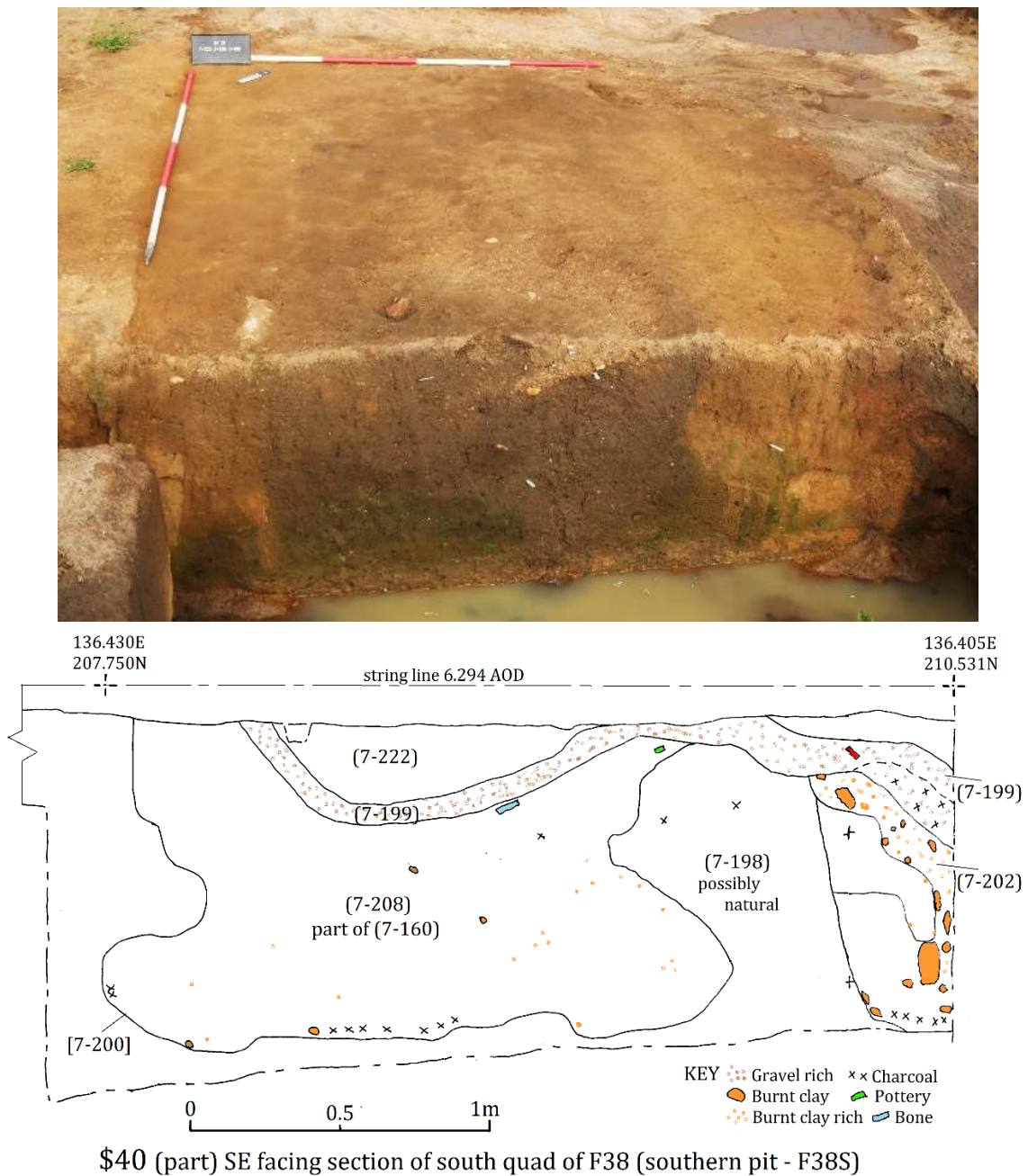
8.12: Plough damage being exposed on the road F37

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.



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



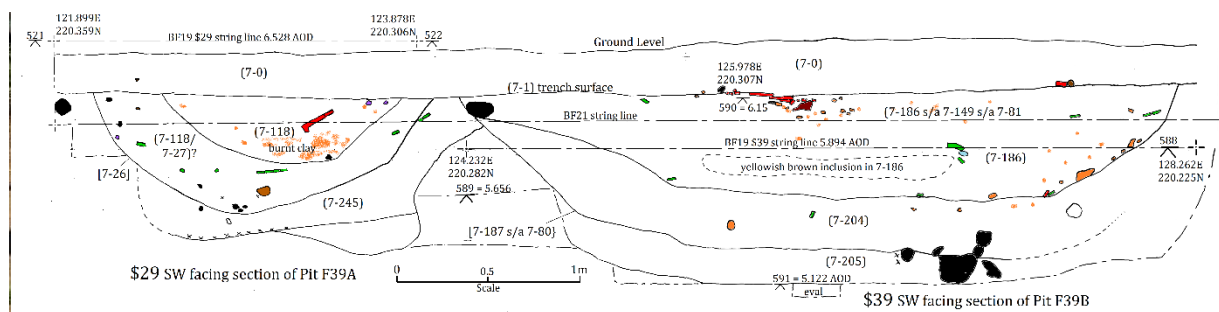
8.14: Red burnt fill (7-287) in F38N under (7-286)

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.

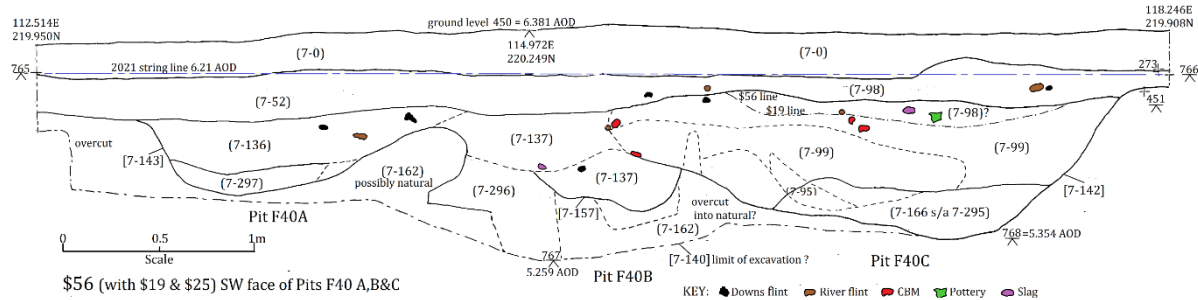
Both pits extend into the new area where a hard clean should be undertaken to expose a complete plan of the feature prior to any further excavation.



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

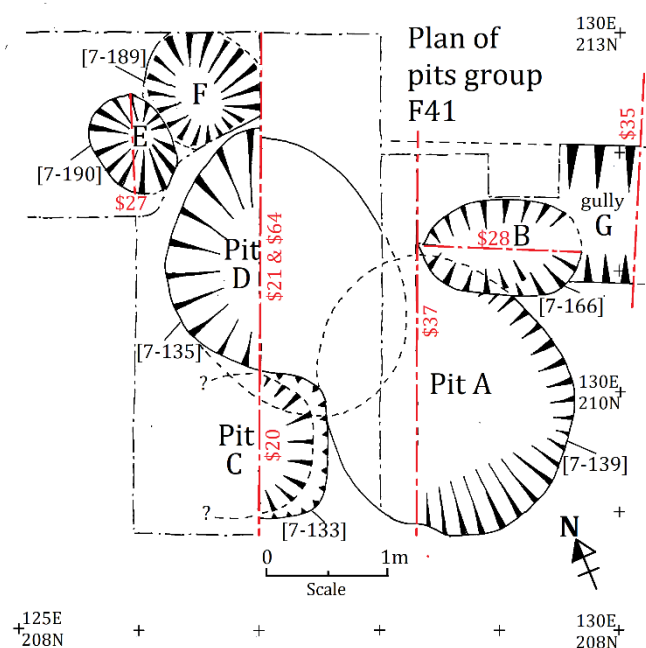
8.15b: \$29 and \$39 drawings of baulk section of F39 pits

F40: group of pits 7-142, 7-140/157, 7-143 & 7-51] in P30/31 c.113-118E/218-220N. The baulk between [7-140/7-157] and [7-143] was excavated which revealed that these were separate pits with [7-157] looking more irregular in section than in previous years suggesting that it might be a tree-throw. The plough and subsoil layers prevented any firm decision on which pit cuts which (8.16). New 2021 section drawing completed. **Feature area closed August 2021.**



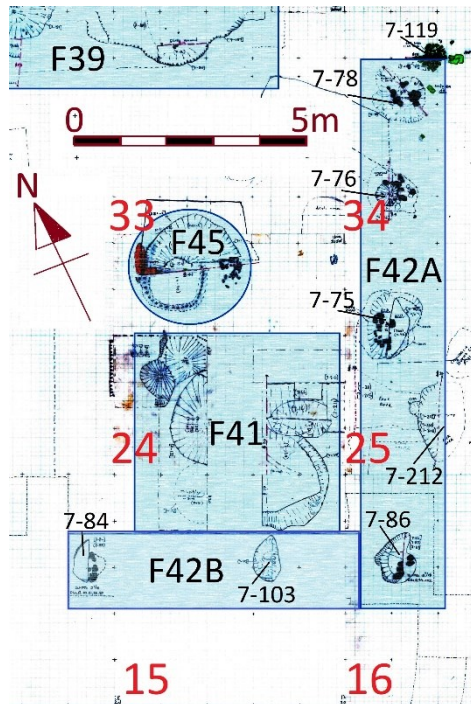
8.16: The baulk section of F40 series of pits (August 2021)

F41: a group of intercutting pits [A:7-139, B:7-166, C:7-133, D:7-135, E:7-190 & F:7-189], with ephemeral gully G [7-215] and burnt clay deposit (7-40) in P15/24 c.125.5-129.7E/208.8-213N (8.17). The main work undertaken here was to excavated Pit C [7-133] into the baulk between it and Pit A 7-139 establishing that these were separate pits. The top of the central baulk between Pits A & D was taken down in spits until the cut of Pit D [7-135] became clear and this was then followed down 100mm to confirm its relationship with the previous excavation of this feature. These works confirmed that Pit D truncated the NW edge of Pit C and probably truncated the northern edge of Pit A although this was less clear and could still possibly be Pit A cutting Pit D. Pits E & F appear to be a separate feature with Pit F possible being cut by gully G although this was not clear. Shallow pit B appeared to cut into both Pit A and Gully G. Definitive



8.17: Plan of the F41 series of pits

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.**



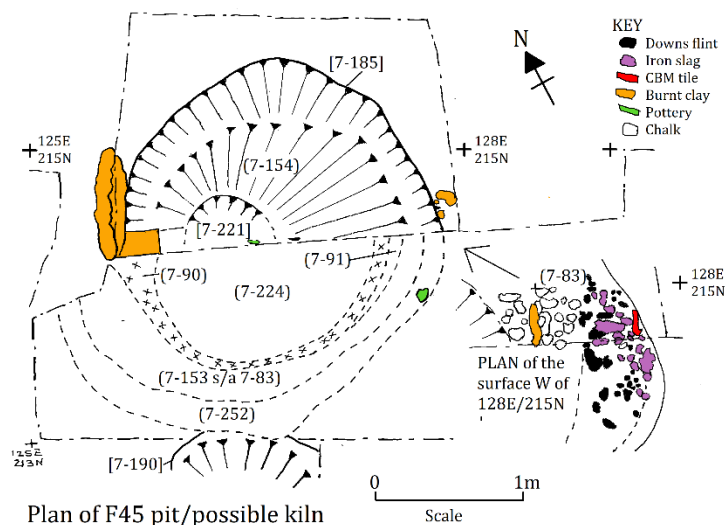
8.19: The multi posthole group in F43 (BF18)

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.

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.**



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

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

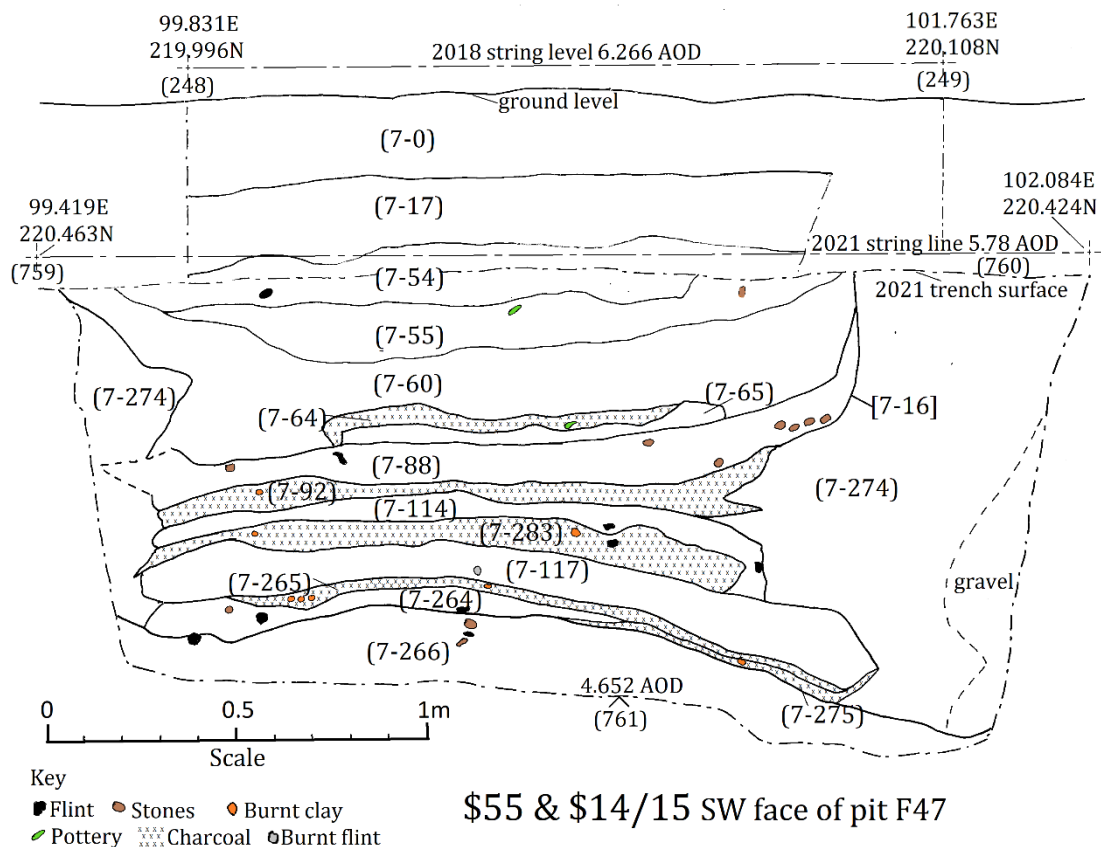
layers of charcoal and gravels suggesting deliberate deposition possibly from a nearby industrial process. The base of the feature was unclear due to the constant ingress of surface water (8.23) and the gravel fill which could have been a natural layer of river terrace deposits. The exposed section was 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.

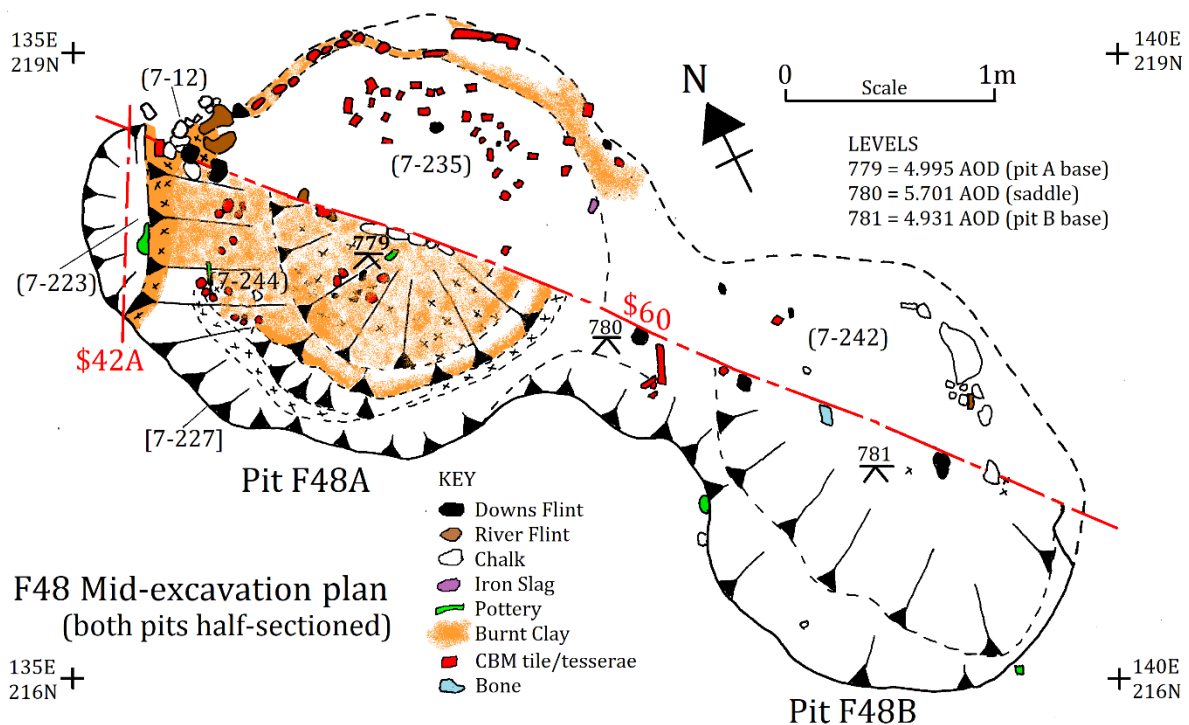
F48A: a deep multi-fill pit [7-227] below (7-11/7-12) in P35 c. 135-137.6E/217.3-219.1N.

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.

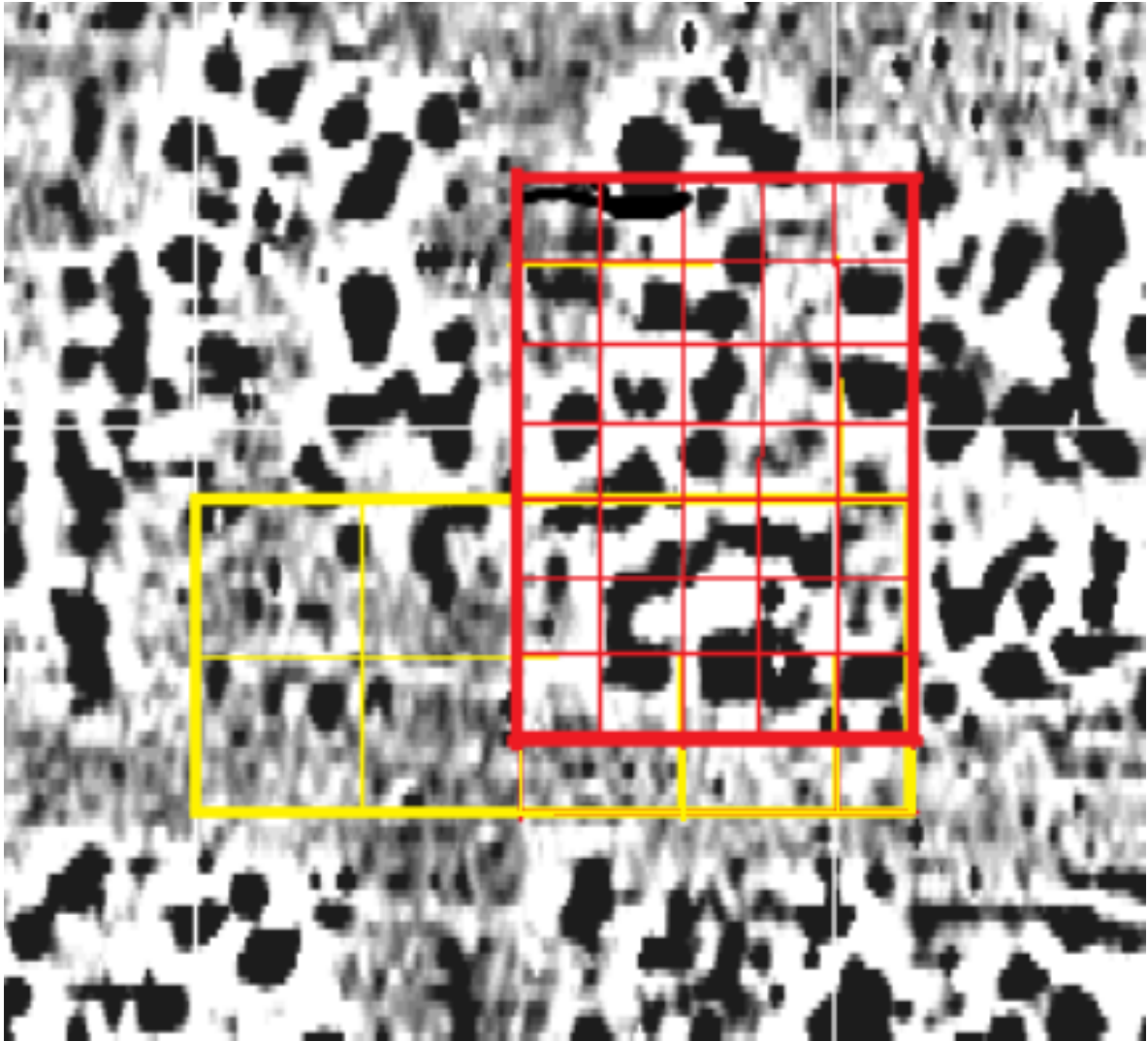
F51: a row of 4(+) postholes [7-282, 7-289, 7-291, 7-249] running along the 208N grid line in P17/18 c.138.74-145.24E/208.15N just north of F44 posthole row (8.25). Originally interpreted as a linear feature further excavation revealed a series of 4 large squarish pits/postholes which are in line with the pit at the eastern baulk with fills (7-272, 7-260, 7-284, 7-285) which could be a 5th 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.

The figure displays a complex genetic map of the F37 chromosome. Key features include:

- P16**: Located at the top left, associated with the *F38N* gene.
- P17**: Located at the bottom left, associated with the *F44A* gene.
- P18**: Located at the bottom center, associated with the *F44B* gene.
- P26**: Located on the left side, associated with the *F38S* gene.
- P27**: Located in the upper middle, associated with the *F51/2* gene.
- F51/4**, **F51/3**, **F51/2**, **F51/1**, and **F51/5**: A series of genes located along the top right, each associated with specific genomic coordinates (e.g., F51/4: 17-299, F51/5: 17-285).
- F44/4**, **F44/3**, **F44/2**, and **F44/1**: A series of genes located along the bottom, each associated with specific genomic coordinates (e.g., F44/4: 17-192, F44/1: 17-180).
- F52**: Located on the far right, associated with the *F53* gene.
- CEN** and **TEL**: Labels indicating the centromere and telomere regions, respectively.

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.

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 24-25th 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