

The Perry Wood Archaeology Project

Summary Report

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Contents

1. The Discovering Perry Wood Project
 - 1.1 The Archaeological Project
2. Perry Wood
 - 2.1 Geology
 - 2.2 Place-name evidence
 - 2.3 Previous descriptions of archaeological sites in Perry Wood
3. Fieldwork for the Archaeological Project
 - 3.1 Walkover survey of the wood
 - 3.2 Targets for further Archaeological Research
 - 3.3 The earthwork survey
 - 3.4 What the earthwork survey shows
 - 3.5 The sample excavations
 - 3.6 What the excavation of the trenches revealed
4. References

Appendices

1. The Finds List
2. The Flints

Figures

1. Location map of the site and previous archaeological discoveries
2. Geological map of the Perry Wood area.
3. Plan of the earthwork survey
4. Plan of the trench locations and trench profiles

Plates

1. Cozen's illustration of the earthworks and signal station on Shottenden Hill. From Gentleman's Magazine 1796.
2. The earthwork's at Shottenden Hill after W. M. Flinders Petrie 1880.
3. Profile of earthwork in Trench 1.
4. Profile of earthwork in Trench 2.
5. Trench 3 with ditch terminal and causeway through earthwork.
6. Profile of earthwork in Trench 4.
7. Profile of earthwork in Trench 5.

1. The Discovering Perry Wood Project

The Discovering Perry Wood project is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and managed as a Countryside Partnership by the Mid Kent Downs Project and Swale Borough Council who own the wood. The project's aim is to help the local community to explore the natural and historic environment of Perry Wood and to develop a better understanding of the value of the area in the Kent Downs landscape (Figure 1).

Another aim of the project is to discover the evidence for past communities in Perry Wood, represented by archaeological sites historical evidence and the memories of people who have lived, worked and relaxed there.

In early 2008 the Trust for Thanet Archaeology joined the Discovering Perry Wood project to help members of the local community to explore the archaeology of Perry Wood.

1.1 The archaeological project

The Discovering Perry Wood Archaeological Project was launched at an event held at Selling Village Hall on a rainy day in October 2008 with an exhibition and presentation based on the maps and documentary evidence gathered in preliminary research by the Trust. This research gave some background information on the records of archaeological sites in Perry Wood and explored how the topography and geology had shaped settlement in Perry Wood and influenced the location of sites.

Volunteers from the local community were encouraged to join a research group to take on further documentary research and field work, with the support of professional archaeologists from the Trust for Thanet Archaeology. The project's aim was for a team of volunteers to investigate an archaeological site using new techniques and skills gained from training given by the Trust and at the same time to develop an appreciation of the value of Perry Wood as an archaeological resource. The first meeting of the research group was held in January 2009 where the volunteers discussed possible avenues of research and finally decided to carry out an earthwork survey on one of the most important sites in the wood, followed by an archaeological excavation.

At the end of the archaeological project in December 2009 another presentation titled 'Perry Wood, a People's Past..' was held at Selling Village Hall to summarise the research carried out by the group and to present the results to an audience from the local area and from the wider archaeological community. Members of the archaeological team were able to explain their role in the process and the skills they had learned from the archaeological project.

The following report describes the progress of the project and summarises the results and conclusions.

2. Perry Wood

2.1 Geology

The present boundary of Perry Wood spans the summits of three distinct hills between Selling and Shottenden, west of Canterbury. The landscape and underlying geology of Perry Wood has influenced the pattern of settlement and industries in the wood. The underlying geology of Perry Wood (Figure 2) is the Upper Chalk beds with a covering of layered ancient sea bed deposits laid down in the Eocene era. The chalk and its mantle of sea bed deposits were thrust upward by tectonic folding to form the 'Wealden dome' whose slopes now form the south and north downs.

The ancient valley that now carries the river Stour formed the main drainage of the north facing slope of the North Downs and is deeply carved into the underlying chalk. Perry Wood is located close to the steep northern bank of this valley, which now forms a linear boundary along the southern edge of the upper reaches of the gently sloping Downs. In the extreme cold toward the end of the last (Devensian) Ice Age, melt water from the limit of the great ice sheet flowed down the frozen soil covering the North Downs slope, carving away the mantle of sea bed deposits and scouring into the underlying chalk. Networks of valleys were formed in characteristic tree like or 'dendritic' patterns.

Along the steep edges of the Stour valley, between the upper branches of the valley networks remnants of the Eocene seabed deposits remained, preserved above the chalk. These remnants now stand as an irregular linear chain of rounded hills following the northern edge of the Stour valley with Perry Wood occupying the highest elevation, at the south western limit of this series of hills.

The geological deposits directly underlying Perry Wood is largely composed of the Thanet Beds sequence, with some small outcrops of the later gravelly Woolwich Beds sequence at the top of the hills. There are also patches of drift gravels ultimately derived from the Woolwich Beds deposit (BGS).

Gravel and clay solifluction deposits, generated by successive periods of freezing and thawing at the limit of the ice sheet, settled into the valleys. The melt-water washed more ancient land surfaces into the valleys. Among the hard natural flints preserved in these deposits, heavy flint handaxes of the Palaeolithic era were also incorporated. Some of these tools have been found close to Perry Wood. In the Tundra conditions prevailing toward the end of the ice age, deposits of windblown loess, composed of sands and fine silts, were blown across the south of England, settling in the valleys over the earlier heavier solifluction deposits.

The geological deposits shown in the local maps, as well as the distinctive landscape that were created in the area, represent a process of landscape change that formed the topography, and structured the settlement patterns that can be traced through archaeology. While many of these geological processes occurred at a time when human habitation was sparse, or even absent, they shaped the landscape that

was occupied by the earliest hunter gatherers that colonised northern Europe after the last glaciation whose tools are some of the earliest artefacts encountered in Perry Wood, and are the first evidence for human settlement after the changes wrought by the Ice Age.

Perry Wood now encompasses the summits and steep slopes of three hills forming a roughly triangular group, entwined with the upper reaches of periglacial valleys. The hill to the north east is irregular, with two distinct summits separated by a shallow saddle. To the south is a long undulating linear spur, indented by valleys on its east and western sides, the summit of this hill is located on the southern tip at an elevation of 150m. The Mount, located on this summit is an observation point formed by an earth mound supporting a timber viewing platform. It has been suggested that The Mount itself might be a barrow mound, perhaps because Hasted (1798) described a very large barrow in the area, planted with Beech trees. However this feature was placed to the north of the Earthwork on Shottenden Hill and the Ordnance survey field inspection of 1963 suggested that the Mount had always been a purely ornamental feature.

The western hill is separated from the southern hill by a deep valley, along which the main road and houses of the village of Perry Wood are located. The summit of this hill is relatively flat and L shaped in plan where a deep valley falls away toward the north west. In late 18th and early 19th century sources and maps (Cozens 1796, Hasted 1798 etc.) this hill is known as Shottenden Hill. Perry Wood was the name given to the eastern side of Shottenden Hill, now within the western side of Perry Wood. A windmill known as Shottenden Mill was located at the summit of the hill until the early 20th century and in later years this hill has been called Windmill Hill. In the later 18th century an Admiralty semaphore signal station was constructed at the summit of Shottenden Hill.

2.2 Place-name evidence

Place name evidence can often provide clues to the historic origins of an area indicating both landscape characteristics and an echo of the societies that were present. Petrie suggested that the Perry element equated to Bury (from Perry Hill near Cooling) although research by Wallenburg (1934, 305) suggest the name Perry Wood was derived from the Old English *pitige* “pear-tree”, *peru* “pear” and *wudu* “wood”. Wallenburg notes that Perywode is recorded in the Calendar of Inquisitions in 1485 which also (1934, 304) records the parish name of Selling. Selling is recorded as Setlinges in 1086 in the Domesday Book and Selling(e) and Sellyng(e) in 1087 and in 1206 in the Feet of Fines. Wallenburg states that the origin of Selling and Sellindge are no doubt identical from the Old English *Sellingas* “the comrades, companions”, originally those sharing the same *Sele* “hall, house, dwelling”. These, he states, compare with the Old English *gesella* “collection of buildings and *handgesella* “companion” and Old High German *gisell(j)o* “companion” etc.

Perhaps Petrie's derivation might be reconsidered in the context of the exploration of an enclosed earthwork on Shottenden Hill (Windmill Hill), it may reflect a similar derivation from the presence of

a fortified hill top to that of Bigbury which is another earthwork complex located on the same range of hills further to the north east. Perhaps also the idea of the 'companions of the hall' that gave Selling its name to, were an echo or memory of the occupiers of the defensive earthwork located on the hill top.

2.3 Previous descriptions of archaeological sites in Perry Wood

The principal archaeological sites previously published consisted of two sites within Perry Wood where Mesolithic flintwork had been found in quantity and an earthwork enclosure located in the north-west area of the woods on Shottenden Hill (Windmill Hill).

2.3.1 The Mesolithic finds

Flintwork of Mesolithic type has been found around the area between Shottenden and Selling including two tranchet axes which are in the Ashmolean Museum collection. In the autumn of 1964 limited excavations were carried out by the Kent Mesolithic Research Group on two sites within Perry Wood where Mesolithic material was found on the surface close to footpaths. Many characteristic tools that were found along with flintworking debris were published in *Archaeologia Cantiana* in 1976 (Woodcock 1976). The abundant Mesolithic evidence suggests that there is significant potential to research the archaeological material of this period further.

2.3.2 The Earthwork on Shottenden Hill

Edward Hasted's description in his *History of Kent* written earlier in the century (1798, 38-50) is the earliest record of earthworks located on the flat top of Shottenton (*Sic*) Hill, which he suggested had been artificially levelled. At the time of his visit the slopes of the hill were covered in coppiced trees but there was little cover on the top of the hill, with broom, heather and occasional beech thinly spread over it. Springs and water filled pits were common, and he records pits dug to extract the sand from the hilltops. The platform gave a commanding view over Kent, along the English Channel to the south and east as far as the North Foreland at the eastern tip of the Isle of Thanet. To the west and north the Essex coast and the North Sea could be observed. The ditches of the earthwork were plainly visible to Hasted and estimated to cover nearly two acres (0.8ha) of the top of the hill. Although the earthworks varied 'according to the rounding of the hill' the north-east, north west, and south east angles were right angled, while the south western corner was rounded. Two entrances or 'ports' were present, the principal one on the southern side and another on the east.

Hasted suggested that the site was most likely to be the remains of a Roman summer camp or exploratory fort, possibly associated with the remains of a larger, more permanent fort which he had seen as earthworks at Sellingham Wood, two miles to the south-east.

Another lively description and the earliest illustration of the earthwork enclosure at Shottenden Hill is contained in an article by Zechariah Cozens in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1796 (Plate 1; Cozens

1796). Cozens took a ramble up Shottenden Hill inspired by an interest in an Admiralty semaphore signalling station that was built on the platform at top of the hill near the Mill and was soon intrigued by the ditches and banks that surrounded the hill. Cozens description refers to Hasted's description and concurs with his interpretation of the feature as a temporary Roman encampment. Cozens noted that the requirements of military signalling for clear uninterrupted lines of site in all periods linked the choice of the site for both the Romans and more recent signal tower structures.

The earthworks were also described by W. H. Ireland in his history of Kent but this description is derived from the earlier sources of Cozens and Hasted (Ireland 1829). In later years the camp at Shottenden Hill continued to be referred to in works such as King's Handbook for Travellers in Kent and Sussex of 1858. This reference is of particular interest as it notes that:

'a large deposit of silver coins, of the dates of Charles I and II, was found here a few years hence'. It is possible that the earthwork was reused in later times as a defensive site which must be given consideration in the interpretation of the archaeological evidence that was gained by the project. This travellers guide also notes that the site is worth visiting for the wide views over Kent, indicating that the trees had not yet grown to obscure the prospect from the hill.

In 1880 the ditches were surveyed and drawn by William Flinders-Petrie as part of a general survey of earthworks in Kent, a small scale drawing was reproduced in *Archaeologia Cantiana* (Plate 2). Petrie's notes indicate that the north corner was not fully surveyed owing to the thickness of the wood and the drawing does not show any entrances. His plan of the enclosure is trapezoidal, far from the regular rectangular shape described by Hasted.

Later in the early 20th century the earthworks were examined by O.G.S. Crawford for the Ordnance Survey, the windmill was no longer standing at this time (circa 1925). Since 1953 only part of the south eastern corner of the enclosure has been depicted on the O.S. maps. In later years the site became overgrown and today it is obscured by large pine trees and thick undergrowth, and the commanding views described by Hasted are difficult to appreciate.

3. Field work for the Archaeological Project

3.1 Walkover survey of the wood

While the initial documentary research suggested that many discoveries of archaeological significance had been made within Perry Wood, no general archaeological survey of the wood had been carried out to assess whether these were isolated sites, or part of a wider landscape of archaeological interest. Even a brief survey of the records in the area demonstrated that different types of archaeology might be present; earthworks, industrial features and prehistoric flintwork had previously been found in the wood. There were also records of sites contained in the descriptions by Cozens and Hasted (Cozens 1796, Hasted 1798) that could not be immediately identified.

In January 2009, Ges Moody of the Trust for Thanet Archaeology carried out a walkover survey of Perry Wood to assess whether other archaeological sites might exist within the project area. One aim of the survey was to identify a site where the volunteers of the archaeological project might carry out some useful archaeological research, learning archaeological techniques and methods in the process. Inevitably, systematic survey within the wood revealed a rich landscape of features which attest to man's management of the area, possibly over many thousands of years, from which a choice for future exploration had to be made

There were few suitable locations within the woods where the Mesolithic archaeology of the area could be explored further. Although Mesolithic flints have been published from two locations (Figure 1; Woodcock 1966 & 1976) these locations only reflect the choice of the excavators in placing sample trenches, rather than an obvious outcrop or section where a Mesolithic horizon was exposed. It is likely that the Mesolithic flintwork recovered during the earlier investigations represented a sample from a general distribution of flintwork over the upland landscape where Perry Wood is located. The dense woodland undergrowth and humic soils within Perry Wood sealed much of the land surface and it is likely that stray finds, which were reported anecdotally, probably originated in locations where erosion into the subsoils brought these flints out of their resting places.

While the flints that were recorded and published are of great significance in establishing that the area had been occupied in the Mesolithic period; the obvious path for further research would be to establish the extent of the settlement over the wider landscape and to identify any variation in the flintwork recovered from the sites that were sampled. The limited area of Perry Wood and the practical problems of sampling sufficient sites, perhaps by test pitting, suggested that further research into this period was not suitable for the present project.

In several locations in Perry Wood earthwork features such as banks, ditches and cuttings were

encountered. In some cases these features originated from the natural landscape, representing the outlets of springs, hollows formed by rising and falling water tables and the seasonal outflow of water. In other cases the hollows may have been man made, like the shafts described by Hasted. Historic maps and records note the presence of sand quarries and other extractive industries which have left their mark on the area. Many of the features were overgrown and covered with generations of organic matter from the surrounding trees. Some of the less substantial linear banks and ditches may represent former field boundaries that were absorbed into the woods as new plantations of trees were made or natural regeneration overwhelmed them. In one location in the northern limit of the wood a distinct rise in the natural valley slope, covered with trees and rhododendron bushes, may be the remnant of the mound capping a Bronze Age round barrow (Figure 1). Most of these minor features were not suitable for the community project in the first instance.

Within the natural rise and fall of the undulating landscape, some very significant earthwork features were encountered at the summit of Shottenden Hill in the area well described by the historic sources. These earthworks represented both ancient features and the remains of more recent industrial activity. With the usual thick covering of bracken reduced by the winter conditions, the scarp slope and banks of the earthworks on Shottenden Hill were striking in their regularity and could be walked relatively easily. The ditches and banks of a rectangular enclosure occupying the summit of the hill could be traced. Further to the north east of the ridge, the large, steep edged, rounded hollows of major quarry workings had obliterated the earthworks of the earlier enclosure and formed a deep irregular basin within the surrounding hill top. Compared with the smaller and less well preserved earthworks elsewhere in Perry Wood, the enclosure on Shottenden Hill stood out as an important and neglected site of considerable archaeological significance where a considerable achievement could be made by defining and measuring the site; the work would also be suitable for the research group.

3.2 Targets for further Archaeological Research

For their first fieldwork project the research group agreed to concentrate on exploring the earthwork and producing an accurate survey of the features. Armed with an accurate plan and earthwork survey of the site the group would be able to prioritise areas for further exploration and to carry out a trial excavation. With a plan and description of the earthworks, the wider Discovering Perry Wood project would be able to formulate a plan for the management of the earthworks in the long term.

In early February 2009 the archaeological project volunteers and members of the wider group joined the Trust in a walkover of the earthworks on Shottenden Hill, exploring the extent of the features. It was clear that the surveying work would need to be carried out before the bracken grew too high.

3.3 The earthwork survey

The next stage of the project got under way at an archaeological survey taster day on 21st February 2009 where Emma Boast and Ges Moody of the Trust gave a hands-on demonstration of archaeological earthwork survey methods. The group were shown how to operate the surveying instrument (a Leica TC600 total station EDM) and to place the prism and staff to record points. The group were shown how to identify the features of the earthworks and to trace them with survey points drawing 'strings' or lines of points along the tops and bottoms of slopes. A handout with examples of surveys of similar earthworks were given out to demonstrate how the surveying and drawing process is used to create an accurate plan of an archaeological earthwork and a target to aim for. In March 2009, with further training and support from the Trust, small groups of volunteers carried out the earthwork survey over several days of careful work.

3.3.1 The survey process

Two permanent survey pegs were placed in a flat clearing on the highest point of the hill within the earthworks, at the top of the deep cut bridleway that climbs the steep hill from the road below. Using the fixed survey stations as a reference, the team set up a series of more convenient temporary survey pegs around the slopes of the earthwork, calibrating the surveying instrument each day by taking reference points on the fixed stations. The permanent stations could be related to an Ordnance Survey coordinate, which in turn located the temporary survey pegs and the whole survey to Ordnance Survey coordinates and an elevation above sea level.

The edges of the ditches and banks were carefully traced on the ground, often in deep cover of undergrowth and with difficult lines of sight to the surveying instrument between trees. Soon the team became proficient in using their feet to feel changes of slope in the soil below and bending tree branches to get their points recorded.

The coordinates were fed into surveying software to produce a base plan showing the lines of survey or 'strings', each point recording an elevation. The strings of survey points were combined to create a plan of the earthwork features; the base plan of survey strings was printed to a scale of 1:250 and laid on a drawing board, overlaid with polyester drawing film. In another session of surveying later in the year, hachure symbols were drawn in pencil over the base plan to represent the slopes of the earthworks and the natural fall of the ground. Later the pencil hachures were traced using a CAD programme and the final illustration of the earthwork was made by adding labels, scales and other details.

3.4 What the earthwork survey shows

The earthwork survey (Figure 3) showed that the summit of the hill had been trimmed into a roughly rectangular shape, defined by a steep inner bank. At the bottom of the bank there was a slight

platform, or in some places a shallow hollow. On the south eastern side of the rectangular platform, a low outer bank was present (Figure 3: A). This bank became more defined toward the southern corner and became very distinct on the south western edge (Figure 3: B). Toward the north western corner, the hollow at the base of the slope became more clearly defined, widening and forming two opposing terminals with a raised causeway between them (Figure 3: C).

At the north western corner the outer bank gradually diminished and was not present along the north western edge of the rectangular platform (Figure 3: D). The inner bank of the north eastern corner of the rectangle was clearly visible but the base of the slope was disturbed and hard to see (Figure 3: E). There was no bank present along the northern half of the south eastern edge (Figure 3: F). Gradually an outer bank became more distinct on the north eastern edge, but it ended in an irregular rounded terminal toward the northern corner of the earthwork (Figure 3: G).

3.4.1 Later damage to the enclosure

The northern corner of the rectangular enclosure had been badly damaged by quarry workings and other later cuttings (Figure 3: H). A large rounded quarry pit cut deeply into the bank of the north western side of the rectangle, there may also have been some landscaping and infill for a modern bridleway that crosses the earthwork from the south eastern side to the north corner. An irregular linear gully in this area may also have been associated with the quarry workings.

In the south western half of the hilltop, beyond the upper edge of the steep slope of the inner bank, the land rose gently toward the relatively flat plateau at the north eastern end (Figure 3: I). On either side of this gentle rise the land fell away more steeply forming two facets (Figure 3: J). The hilltop was covered deeply with undergrowth and organic material and it was difficult to see whether these facets were man made.

At the top of the slope, on the edge of the plateau within the north eastern part of the rectangle, a curving dip was visible (Figure 3: K). This was traced from the point where it met the deep cut of the bridleway, around to where the quarry pit had cut it away. This curving hollow was almost certainly associated with the site of the windmill that once stood at the top of Shottenden Hill. Other more recent features were present such as a linear gully, possibly associated with the tree plantation on the summit of the hill that crossed the plateau to intersect with the inner bank to the north east (Figure 3: L).

3.5 The sample excavations

Much of the north western corner of the rectangular area of the earthwork is covered with a plantation of tall pine trees, many growing on the banks and in the ditches. In the more open areas of the south eastern side of the earthworks occasional trees of mixed types grow and one large oak tree is rooted in the ditch in the southern corner. Most of the earthwork is obscured in the summer months by tall

bracken plants and it is only in winter that the extent of the earthworks as a whole can be appreciated. The survey of the earthworks raised many questions about the survival and underlying structure of the ditches and banks which were difficult to understand within the tree cover and accumulated undergrowth in the late spring and summer months. The only way to appreciate the underlying shape of the features and their profiles would be to remove some of their accumulated material in a series of sample excavations. One aim for this work was to explore whether the outer banks identified by the earthwork survey had been formed by dumping material excavated from a ditch; or whether a ditch had been cut into the natural curving profile of the slope, leaving part of the slope standing on the upper edge.

The base drawing of the earthwork was used to decide where sample excavations should be carried out. In July 2009 the volunteers took part in the excavation of a series of sample trenches, scraping off the deposits covering the slopes of the earthwork. The aim was to remove any overlying vegetation and organic deposits, exposing the surface of the banks and ditches to see if anything could be established about the construction of the features. In addition the team wanted to establish whether the only causeway across the ditches on the western side of the enclosure was part of the original design for the enclosure, or whether it had been created later by filling in the cut for the ditch. It was also hoped that finds from the fill of the ditches might help to date the earthwork.

Five areas were sampled over a period of two weeks, with many volunteers taking part on each day supervised and assisted by Trust staff. Four of the areas cleared were linear transects, measuring approximately 0.8 metres wide and between 10 and 15 metres long (Figure 4: Trenches 1, 2, 4 & 5) placed to expose a profile of the earthwork at key points where the questions raised about the construction of the earthwork could be answered. Trench 3 was a wider area that encompassed the embankment on the south western side of the earthwork, taking in the southern terminal of the ditch and the side of the outer bank.

The standing bracken was cleared from each of the locations by determined hacking with a variety of hand tools. Then, the excavation area was marked out with string and the team began to remove the heavily rooted deposits. In all but one of the excavated areas (Trench 5), the deposit first encountered was a mass of thick bracken roots bound up in a very dark fine soil. In many areas no other deposits were found. Over much of the area sampled, the deposit encountered below the rooty covering was the firm, grey, compact sand holding many rounded pebbles, part of the Woolwich beds deposit which forms the underlying geology of the hill top. Only within the shallow curve at the base of the scarp slope in Trench 1 was a fine grey soil exposed which was not part of the natural geology. In Trench 5 thin bands of looser pebbles and grey sand were compacted into the base of the ditch. In Trench 2 and in the excavated area of the southern terminal tangles of dense fibrous tree roots filled the ditch to the base.

3.5.1 *Trench 1*

Trench Dimensions: 13 metres long by 0.8 metres wide.

The first exploratory trench was excavated across the profile of the bank and ditch on the south eastern edge of the enclosure (Figure 4; Plate 3). The thick covering of bracken roots was removed, exposing the grey sand and pebble geology immediately below. The break of slope of the inner bank was easily distinguished from the slightly sloping upper plateau. The slope of the bank was relatively even and at the bottom there was a slight hollow. On the outer edge of the hollow there was a gentle rise where the earthwork survey had indicated the traces of a bank. Beyond the summit of the rise at the south eastern end of the trench the outer slope of the bank fell away steeply, merging with the natural slope of the hill.

A shallow deposit of dark grey and red sandy soil no more than 20 centimetres deep was the only indication of a fill in the shallow remains of the ditch. At the base of this deposit a small flat piece of iron, probably of modern date was found along with a burnt flint and three worked flints. These flints; two waste flakes and possibly a tool for piercing or scratching (Appendix 2) could date to the Mesolithic period. From the upper levels of the fill a fragment of Post Medieval roof tile (Appendix 1) was recovered. Another three burnt flints were found as the slope of the bank was cleaned, along with part of blade of Mesolithic type and a worked pebble fragment which may have been a specialised scraping tool, apparently used in one direction only. The finds of flintwork gave an interesting background but did not give an indication of the date of the earthworks which are certainly of a much later date.

3.5.2 *Trench 2*

Trench Dimensions: 11.2 metres long by 0.8 metres wide.

The second trench was placed across the more clearly defined slope and outer bank of the south western side of the earthwork (Figure 4; Plate 4). Here the inner slope of the bank was very steep and the outer bank was very clearly defined and stood almost as high as the inner slope, forming a deep ditch. The slope of the outer bank was not quite as steep as the inner, and the crest was gently curved, falling away in a rounded slope which merged with the steep natural fall of the hillside.

The thick deposits of bracken on the banks and a solid tangle of tree roots that filled the base of the ditch were removed, again exposing only the upper surface of the natural geology.

This demonstrated an important answer to one of the questions raised by the earthwork survey, it was clear that the earthwork was formed by cutting the ditch to the geology underlying the natural slope at the crest of the hill. The outer bank is in fact the remains of the original geology rather than new material heaped up on the outer edge of the ditch.

Under the bracken on the outer bank a single sherd of pottery was found (Appendix 1), this was dated to the 12th century. It is not certain that the pottery relates to the earthwork, it may date to the period when the windmill was established at the summit of the hill.

3.5.2 *Trench 3*

Trench Dimensions: 7.5 metres wide by 10 metres long

Part of the rounded, southern, terminal and the edge of the causeway was cleared of bracken and tree roots to examine the causeway that spanned the south western ditch, between the outer bank and the steep face of the inner platform (Figure 4; Plate 5). A single piece of a retouched flint flake was recovered from this area and dates no later than the Early Bronze Age (Appendix 2). In common with the trenches previously described, natural geology was exposed immediately below the organic debris of roots and bracken. The presence of natural geological deposits on the sides and upper surface of the causeway showed that it had been formed by cutting the ditch into the natural slope at the edge of the hill, leaving the causeway as a remnant of the original profile of the land surface. The investigation of the terminal and bank of the causeway proved that it was part of the original design of the enclosure. The position of this entrance makes it unlikely that it was one of the entrances noted by Hasted, which he records as being in the southern and eastern sides. It also suggests we should question Hasted's orientations given in the description he made of the feature.

3.5.4 *Trench 4*

Trench Dimensions: 13.4 metres long by 0.8 metres wide.

The profile of the north western corner of the enclosure was sampled in Trench 4 (Figure 4; Plate 6). This side of the earthwork was heavily wooded with tall, mature pine trees. The inner bank had a distinct break of slope and smooth, steeply sloping edges. At the base of the bank, the profile levelled out before falling away again in a more gentle slope. At the north west end of the trench the edges fell away steeply following the slope of the hill, which may have been made steeper by later quarrying. There was no indication of an outer bank on the north western edge, perhaps because the outer edge of the slope had been cut away by the quarry.

3.5.5 *Trench 5*

Trench Dimensions: 9.34 metres long by 0.8 metres wide.

At the right angle of the south west corner of the enclosure ditch, a path which crossed the inner platform, cutting down through the south west corner forming a wide gap in the outer bank (Figure 4; Plate 7). To excavate Trench 5, the roots and vegetation were removed from the inner bank, at the edge of the path, in the direction of the southern edge of outer bank which was well defined in this area. The outer bank took the form of a wide convex curve, with an abrupt break of slope falling away

steeply and following the natural slope of the hill on the outer edge.

Only part of the inner bank was exposed, but its regular steep slope was similar to where it had been cleared in previous trenches. The base of the slope between the bank and the outer ditch formed a distinct hollow where a series of bands of sand and pebbles had settled. In places the sandy deposits were scorched and contained fine grey ashy material. At the base of the hollow there was clean sand and loose pebbles eroded from the geological deposit below. The ditch was excavated to the horizon of firm geological material, similar to the undisturbed light grey sand and pebbles in the other trenches that were cleared.

3.5.6 Trench 6

In the final day of the excavations on the earthwork a small exploratory trench was excavated in the circular hollow which seems to be part of the platform for the windmill that once stood on the summit of the hill (Figure 4). Although the sides of the sloping bank were revealed at the outer edge of the circular platform, the trench was not explored to any great depth. Pottery found in this narrow trench included red earthenware and stoneware vessels, dating from the 18th to mid 19th century (Appendix 1). Fragments of roof tile were also present and thin fragments of glass found with them were identified as part of the cover for a lantern. As a demonstration that the deposits were still relatively recent and disturbed, a piece of tennis ball was also recovered.

3.6 What the excavation of the trenches revealed

The exposure of natural geology in the profiles of the banks and ditch confirms that earthwork enclosure was created by cutting a rectangular ditch around the edge of the natural slope. In the same way, the causewayed entrance to the enclosure was formed by leaving a gap in the cutting for the boundary ditch, preserving part of the original profile of the hill in place.

It is possible that loose upcast material was used to raise the outer banks when it was first built, but if this was the case then the material has eroded away over the years. An outer bank may once have existed on the north western edge of the earthwork but this seems to have been destroyed when the slope was cut away on this side, possibly to make the edges easier to plant with trees.

Hasted clearly described the shapes of four corners of the enclosure and two distinct entrances on the south and east sides. The north eastern corner certainly appears to have been lost to the later quarry and there is no sign of either of the entrances. This description of the site in the later 18th century emphasises the open landscape prevailing at the time, the encroachment of undergrowth and trees are traced in the later descriptions. The regularity in plan of the enclosure described by Hasted is no longer obvious and in places only major excavations would demonstrate where the true edges of the enclosure are in relation to later damage. Nevertheless the area of the enclosure as planned is around

0.64 hectares, close to the 2 acres estimated by Hasted.

The trenches that were cleared in the small trial excavation represent a very small sample of some of the best preserved areas of the earthwork. Although the results answer some basic questions about the structure of the earthwork there are many more areas that could be explored in the future. It has proved difficult to date the enclosure because there was little accumulated material within the ditches and hollows at the foot of the inner bank.

Further sampling of the interior of the main platform might encounter other structural features that would give better dating evidence for the earthwork. Geophysical survey of the platform may be possible, however the growth of mature trees on the site would make it difficult to survey more than a few patches of the platform. The less well preserved north eastern and south eastern areas of the earthwork might need some more careful excavation to identify how later quarrying and forestry has altered the earlier ditches and banks.

The work carried out in the project has established that a significant part of the enclosure remains preserved within the wood. For the moment the date of construction is unclear, Hasted was quick to assign a Roman date but this may reflect the particular circumstances of scholarship at the time of writing. In later years it became popular to assign such defended enclosures to the Danes of the ninth and tenth centuries. Until recently, little was known about the extent and sophistication of the Iron Age communities of East Kent and there are parallels with defended enclosures of this period. The survey established the relatively rectangular plan of the enclosure, which has obvious affinities with the earthworks of Roman marching camps and forts and would fit well with the idea of a signal station placed in such a key location. Hasted and Cozens both saw the site on Shottenden Hill as having an association with the more developed earthworks at Sellingham Wood, which Hasted interpreted as a more permanent settlement site. To date very little is known of the site at Sellingham, which seems to have been lost in the intervening period. It may be that a survey of the archaeology of the wider landscape would help to place the earthworks at Shottenden hill in context, and help to suggest a date in the absence of further archaeological material from the site itself.

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Appendix 1

The Finds List

<i>Contexts</i>	<i>Find type</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Weight (g)</i>
Trench 1 Bank	Flint	2	11
	Burnt flint	3	14
	Tufa	1	154
Trench 1 Ditch	Post Medieval roof Tile	1	62
Trench 1 Ditch Base	Flint	3	4
	Burnt flint	1	1
	Fe object	1	69
Trench 2	Pottery	2	8
Trench 3	Flint	1	4
Trench 6	Pottery	3	101
	Glass	1	1
	Tennis ball fragment	1	15
U/s	Charcoal	21	6

Notes on the finds by Nigel Macpherson Grant

The tile from Trench 1 Ditch is a piece of Post Medieval roof-tile dating to the 17th and 18th century. The pottery sherd from Trench 2 is a sherd of Potter's Corner, Ashford ware. It is Medieval in date; no later than 1200-1250 AD and no earlier than 1175 AD. The pottery from Trench 6 consists of 1 sherd of Post Medieval red earthenware dating to 17th to mid 18th century; 1 sherd of Late Post Medieval yellow ware-type pottery dating to 1825/1850 – 1900 AD and 1 sherd of Late Post Medieval English Stoneware dating from 1800 AD onwards. The glass fragment from Trench 6 is a clear, thin fragment of vessel glass likely of 19th or 20th century date and unlikely to be earlier. The flint has been dealt with elsewhere.

Appendix 2

The Flint Report

Paul Hart

The worked flint

Six pieces of worked flint weighing 19g were recovered during the archaeological excavations at Perry Woods (PWE09). They have been quantified in Table 1 and discussed in date order further below.

Two different types of raw material appear to have been utilised: small, poor quality pebble flint and larger, better quality chalk-derived nodular flint; both are available locally. The four flakes of pebble flint lack dateable characteristics, while the two flakes of chalk flint show skilled flintknapping techniques and should date no later than the Early Bronze Age. A Mesolithic date for at least one of these pieces, a blunted backed blade segment, seems likely.

Table 1: Quantification of the worked flint from PWE09

Worked flint type	Hammer type	Prep	Flake type	Amount	Weight (g)
<i>Trench 1 Bank (unpatinated flintwork)</i>					
Retouched					
Blunted backed blade segments	Hard stone?	Y	Longer	1	4
Combined straight/notched scrapers	(Natural)	-	-	1	7
Total				2	11
<i>Trench 1 Ditch Base (unpatinated flintwork)</i>					
Waste					
Waste flakes	Hard stone?	N	Squat	1	1
	Unknown	-	Longer	1	2
Retouched					
Miscellaneous retouched flakes	Hard stone?	N	Longer	1	1
Total				3	4
<i>Trench 3 Terminal (unpatinated flintwork)</i>					
Retouched					
Miscellaneous retouched flakes	Hard stone?	Y	Longer	1	4
Total				1	4
Combined total				6	19

Mesolithic?

A blunted backed blade segment (Plate 1) from Trench 1 Bank may be Mesolithic in date. This was a tertiary flake (lacking cortex) 20mm wide, 34mm long and 6mm thick, of mottled grey and black flint. It showed platform preparation and may have been hard hammer struck. It featured a break at the distal end of the flake that truncated what may have originally been a flake blank of true blade proportions. One lateral margin showed a small area of oblique, inverse, abrupt retouching by this break that could suggest that the microburin technique had been used to control the position of the break. This may have been done so that the flake could have been hafted as a segment within a composite tool, probably a knife and would help to suggest a Mesolithic date for this piece.

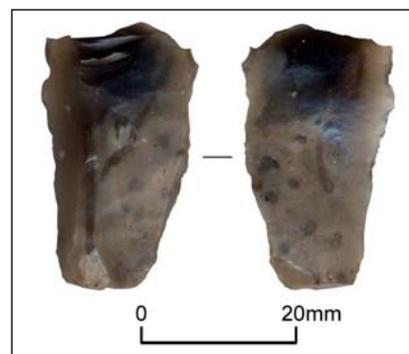


Plate 1. Blunted backed blade segment from Trench 1

One lateral margin of the flake was much steeper than the other and featured an area of direct, abrupt retouch, while the edge overall appeared to be abraded. This could represent blunting associated with the hafting of the flake lengthwise into a slotted handle. The opposite lateral edge showed some bifacial marginal scarring, possibly use-wear. Given a combination of the flake characteristics, potential function and the presence of known Mesolithic finds from the vicinity, a Mesolithic date for this piece is a distinct possibility. It should probably date no later than the Earlier Neolithic.

Early Bronze Age and earlier flintwork

A miscellaneous retouched flake from Trench 3 Terminal should date no later than the Early Bronze Age. Of similar raw material to the blunted backed blade from Trench 1 Bank, this was also a tertiary flake showing platform preparation and possibly hard hammer-struck. The margins of the flake showed small, intermittent areas of direct and inverse, abrupt and semi-abrupt, fine retouch.

Other flintwork

Three small, irregular flakes struck from small flint pebbles were recovered from the Trench 1 Ditch Base. Two were waste flakes. The third flake, a miscellaneous retouched piece, featured a burin-like scar that originated from the distal tip and ran a short distance down one uncortixed lateral margin. This burin-like facet featured a couple of small, direct scars, while fine, direct semi-abrupt retouching was present along the remainder of the same margin beyond the termination of the burin-like scar. A small chip was also present at the distal tip on the cortixed lateral margin, which created a short, sharp point. The burin-like facet, which might otherwise suggest a potential Mesolithic date for this piece, was not certainly the product of intentional retouch. Likewise the chip at the distal tip may also have been accidental. The one lateral edge of the flake that showed definite retouching appeared little used and the flake was very difficult to hold to enable this edge to be utilised. A piercing or graving function for this tool may seem more likely, but is uncertain.

Another piece of worked pebble flint was recovered from Trench 1 Bank. This appeared to be a naturally shattered fragment where two margins had seen small areas of semi-invasive, semi-abrupt retouch that created two working edges, one straight and one hollow. This could have functioned as a combined straight and notched/hollow scraper. Use-wear appeared to be unifacial and confined to the retouched face, suggesting use in one direction only.

The expedient use of natural and readily available raw material, gathered a little or no expense, is a feature of Later Prehistoric flintknapping industries. This scraper, as well as the other flakes of pebble flint, could be of Bronze Age date perhaps but this is by no means certain.

The burnt flint

Four small fragments of burnt flint weighing 15g were recovered during the archaeological excavations at Perry Woods (PWE09). All of these came from Trench 1. Three were found in the bank deposit and were fragments from a small pebble, possibly heated for use as a potboiler. Another small fragment of burnt flint, this time lacking any indicative cortex, was discovered in the ditch base.

Discussion

This small assemblage can be broadly divided into two different types of flintwork that have utilised two different types of raw material, namely small, poor quality pebble flint and larger, better quality chalk-derived nodules. Both of these are available locally and it could be suggested that both represent different periods of activity.

A blunted backed blade segment recovered from the Trench 1 Bank and a miscellaneous retouched piece from the Trench 3 Terminal are well struck flakes that have utilised bigger and better quality raw material probably derived from chalk deposits nearby. Both these two flakes exhibit platform preparation, a characteristic of skilled flake production and both should date no later than the Early Bronze Age. The blunted backed blade segment (Trench 1 Bank) may have been part of a composite knife tool and could be Mesolithic or Earlier Neolithic in date. The flake retained the striking platform but the distal end had been broken, possibly truncated using the microburin technique. Given this and

the presence of a significant number of finds of Mesolithic flintwork locally, a Mesolithic date for this piece is a distinct possibility. The miscellaneous retouched piece was less diagnostic but as it had been made of the same raw material and showed similar flintknapping traits to the blade flake a similar date is possible, though any connection is highly speculative.

Two waste flakes and a miscellaneous retouched flake retrieved from the Trench 1 Ditch Base and a combined straight and notched/hollow scraper recovered from the Trench 1 Bank were all smaller and somewhat irregular pieces and appeared to have been hard hammer-struck from small flint pebbles. None had typological characteristics that could offer a reliable indicator of their date. The miscellaneous retouched flake featured a burin-like facet that could suggest a Mesolithic date, however the facet may have been accidental and the choice of raw material perhaps particularly argues against it. The fine retouching of one lateral margin might preclude too late a date however. The nature of the scraper suggested the expedient use of easily available raw material gathered at little or no expense. This is a feature of Later Prehistoric industries and while a Bronze Age date for this scraper and the pebble flint material in general might be thought reasonable, circumstances may have enforced the use of this raw material upon earlier occupants of Perry Woods.

In his report on the Mesolithic flintwork discovered at two sites in Perry Woods, A.G. Woodcock noted that as far as raw material sources were concerned, little use had been made of the plentiful gravel and pebble flint and that both sites were within half a mile of readily accessible flint bearing chalk deposits. He also noted that a fine Neolithic leaf shaped arrowhead had been collected from the surface at one Mesolithic site (Woodcock 1975). Given the fact that the two most diagnostic pieces of flintwork from the current excavation had utilised good quality raw material, this makes a Mesolithic/Earlier Neolithic date for the two quality flakes recovered from Trench 1 Bank and Trench 3 Terminal even more likely. The lack of pebble flint recovered from the Mesolithic assemblages also makes it possible to suggest that, despite the undiagnostic nature of the flakes of pebble flint from this current excavation, this material is much less likely to be of such an early date, particularly given the presumed availability of better quality raw material close by.

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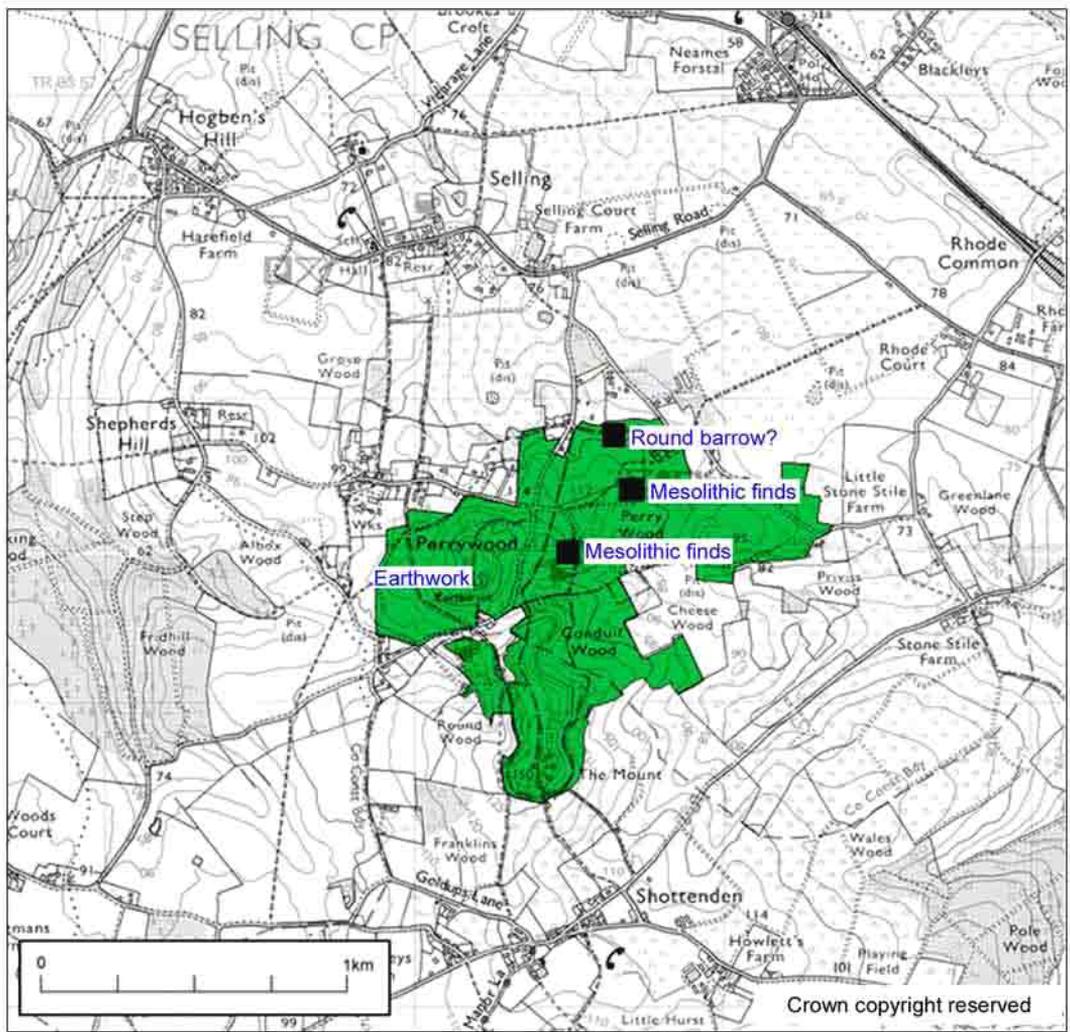


Figure 1. Location map of the site and previous archaeological discoveries.

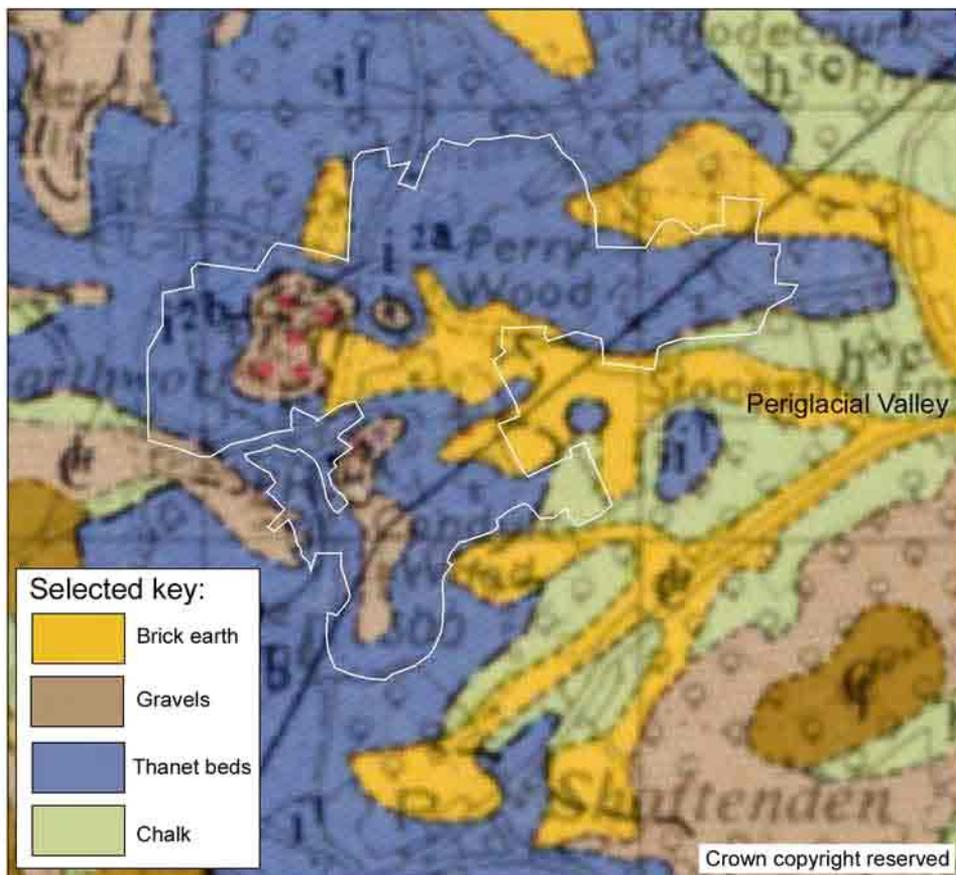


Figure 2. Geological map of Perry Wood

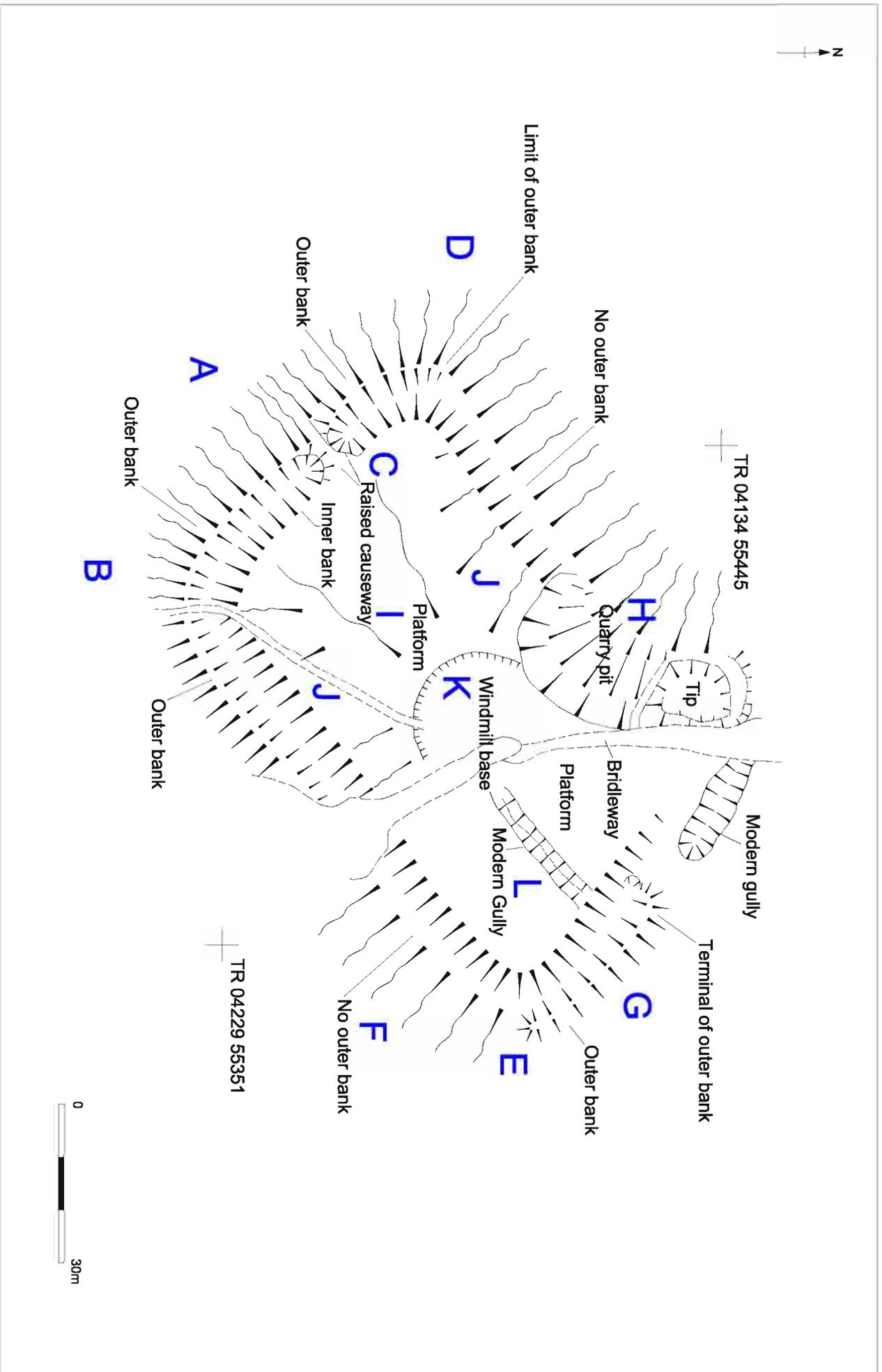
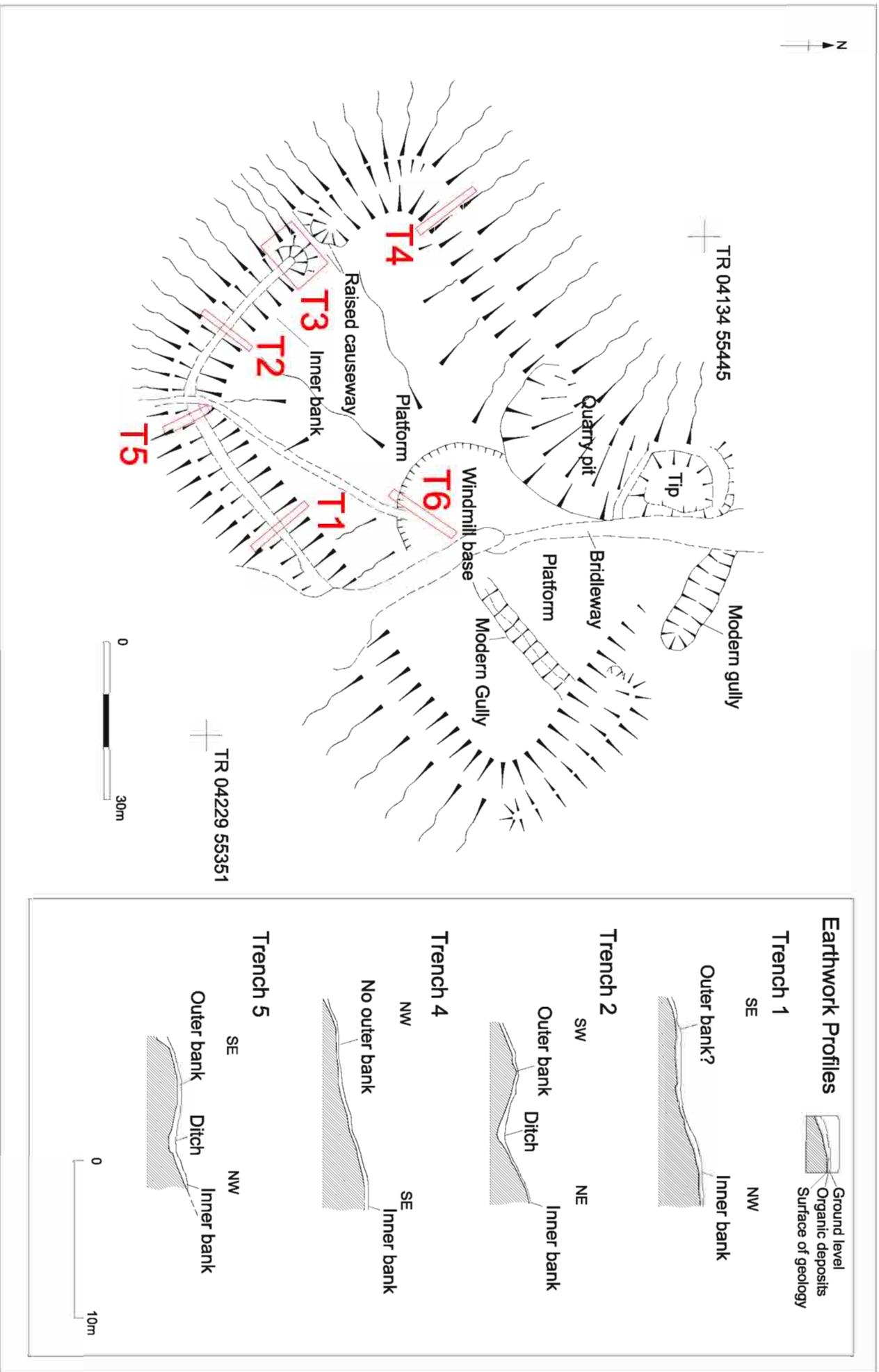


Figure 3. Plan of the earthwork survey



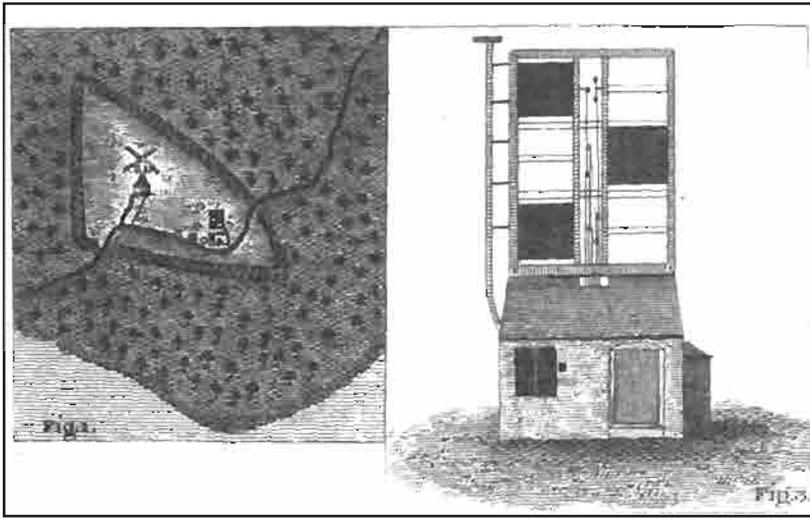


Plate 1
Cozen's illustration of the
earthworks and signal station
on Shottenden Hill.
From Gentleman's Magazine 1796

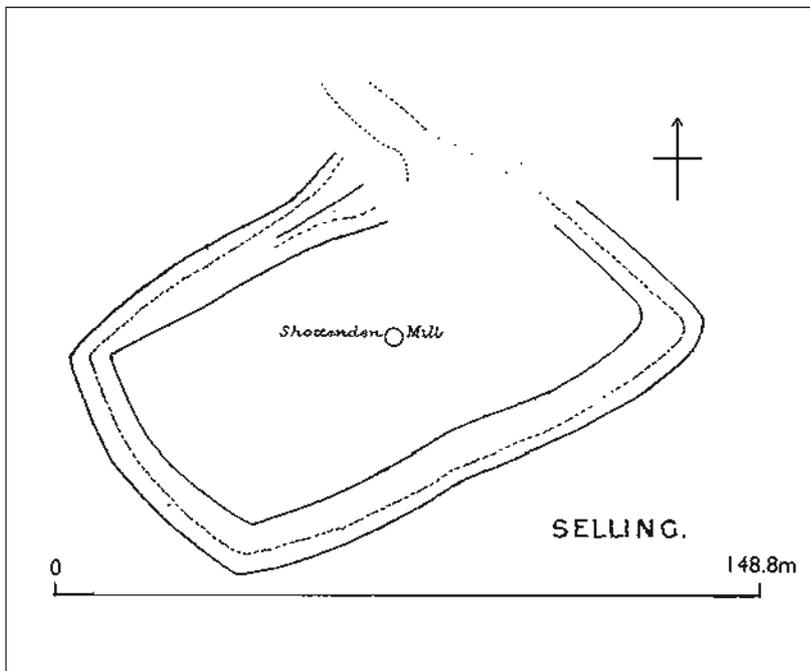


Plate 2
The Earthworks at Shottenden Hill
after W. M. Flinders Petrie 1880.



Plate 3
Profile of earthwork in Trench 1
View facing north west



Plate 4
Profile of earthwork in Trench 2
View facing north east

Plate 5
Trench 3 with ditch terminal
(bottom left) and causeway
through earthwork (top right)
View facing north west



Plate 6
Profile of earthwork in Trench 4
View facing south east

Plate 7
Profile of earthwork in Trench 5
View facing north west

