

Section 3.4.21 Trenches 21A and 21B physical descriptions

Trench 21 was made up of two adjacent segments, trenches 21A and 21B, which were excavated during the 2000 season. These were located so as to investigate the relationship of the western side of the large enclosure ditch and the enclosure ditch surrounding the hillfort. Neither of these ditches was fully excavated to bedrock. Trench 21A was roughly rectangular, c. 2x4.5m in size and located to the south of trench 21B. Trench 21B was also roughly rectangular although larger at c. 7.2x4.5m in size. While the longest side of trench 21A ran approximately east to west, the longest side of 21B was roughly oriented from north to south. Context numbers 21000-21003 refer to trench 21A while context numbers 21100-21117 were used in trench 21B.

Trench	Context Number	Type	Description	Fill of	Phase
21A	21000	layer	topsoil		MODERN
21A	21001	layer	bedrock		UN
21A	21002	fill		21003	?MIA
21A	21003	cut	ditch		?MIA
21B	21100	layer	topsoil		MODERN
21B	21101	layer	bedrock		UN
21B	21102	fill		21109	L1-2
21B	21103	fill		21112	?ROM
21B	21104	layer			ROM+
21B	21105	fill		21111	MIA
21B	21106	fill		21111	MIA
21B	21107	cut	ditch		UN
21B	21108	fill		21107	UN
21B	21109	cut	pit		?ROM
21B	21110	fill		21118	?ROM
21B	21111	cut	ditch		?LBA
21B	21112	cut	ditch		MIA
21B	21113	fill		21111	MIA
21B	21114	fill		21111	?EIA
21B	21115	fill		21111	?LBA-EIA
21B	21116	fill		21112	ROM
21B	21117	layer	subsoil		UN
21B	21118	cut	ditch		UN

Field drawings within the site archive:

Plan 2100: (21001), (21002) and [21003]

Plan 2101: (21100), (21101), (21104), [21107], [21109], [21111], [21112] and (21117)

Section 21.01: (21100), (21101), [21107], [21109], [21111] and (21117)

Section 21.02: (21100), (21101), [21111], [21112] and (21117)

TRENCH 21A

TOPSOIL

Layer (21000) was the topsoil; its physical description was not recorded.

NATURAL

Layer (21001) was the chalk bedrock.

CUT

Cut [21003] (plan 2100, no section) was a partially excavated ditch whose dimensions were not recorded at the time of excavation. It appears on the trench plan to be c. 0.80-1.24m in width and was visible running southeast-northwest across the full width of the trench. A single sheep bone was found in the fill of this feature, context (21002), mid-orangish brown silty clay with 5% chalk inclusions between 5-10mm in size. This was interpreted as the cut of the rampart outer ditch

TRENCH 21B

TOPSOIL

Layer (21100) was the topsoil, a layer of loose blackish brown silty clay that overlay all of trench 21B.

NATURAL

Layer (21101) was the context number assigned to the chalk bedrock natural under the trench.

CUTS

Cut [21107] (plan 2101, section 21.01) was a partially excavated feature with straight, sloping sides cut into the bedrock **layer (21101)** visible on the western edge of the trench. The cut was c. 98cm wide at its top and 40cm wide at its base and had been exposed for a maximum of c. 80cm from the western trench edge. The southern side sloped at c. 60 degrees, the northern side at c. 70 degrees. The maximum depth excavated was c. 35cm. The single **fill (21108)** was light greyish brown silty clay soil with inclusions from 5-40mm in size with a thickness of c. 23cm at its deepest point. This cut was a V-shaped ditch.

Cut [21109] (plan 2101, section 21.01) was a feature in the south western corner of the trench that was not fully excavated. In section, it appeared to have a funnel-shape that was c. 1.50m at the top and c. 68cm in width at c. 32cm in depth. A single fill was present in the feature, **(21102)**, which was friable mid-orangish brown silty clay with 5% chalk inclusions of 5-10mm in size forming a layer c. 5-25cm thick, c. 1.2m wide at its top and 0.25m wide at its bottom. This feature was a pit. This pit cut **ditch [21118]** which is discussed below.

Cut [21111] (plan 2101, sections 21.01 and 21.02) the dimensions of this feature were not recorded at the time of excavation, so size estimates provided here are based upon drawings. This cut into the bedrock **layer (21101)** was visible on both the northern and western edges of trench 21B, exposed for a c. 050m distance from the trench edge in each instance, indicating a curve existed in the cut. It was cut by **cut [21112]** which is discussed

below. Cut [21111] was c. 1.6-2.1m in width at its base and c. 2.2-2.7m wide at its top with a depth of c. 60-65cm. Five **fills** were identified in the feature: **(21105)**, **(21106)**, **(21113)**, **(21114)** and **(21115)** and all but (21114) were visible on both the north and west section drawings of the cut. **Fill (21115)**, a layer of loose blocky chalk was the primary fill of the cut and extended across the full exposed base of the feature in both section drawings, varying in thickness from 15-55cm. It was overlain by fills (21114) and (21106) and was cut by **[21112]**. Secondary **fill (21114)**, dense chalk rubble 5-45cm thick and 0.75-1.65m wide was only visible on the south side of the feature where it overlay fill (21115) and was overlain by fill (21106) and **layer (21117)**. **Fill (21106)** overlay fills (21114) and (21115) and is overlain by fill (21105). It was 5-16cm thick and 1.05-1.20m in width and lay to the north of fill (21114). **Fill (21105)** was firm mid-orangish brown silty clay with 5% 2-6cm chalk inclusions, the layer varying in thickness from 2-16cm in the northern half of the cut. It overlay fill (21106), was overlain by fill (21113) and was also only visible in the northern portion of the feature. The upper **fill** of the feature was **(21113)**, a brown soil matrix mixed with small chalk rubble layer c. 10-13cm thick and 0.70-1.0m wide overlaying fill (21105) and overlain by **subsoil (21117)** visible at the northwest corner of the trench. This cut was interpreted as being a large, flat bottomed linear ditch forming part of the western edge of the large enclosure, which was cut by the main rampart ditch.

Cut [21112] (no plan, section 21.02) was a feature cut into bedrock **layer (21101)** cutting **ditch [21111]** that was partially visible on the northern edge of trench 21B. As shown on the section drawing, the ditch was at least 3.5m wide at its top, 1.45m wide at its base and c. 0.55m at its deepest visible point. Two **fills** were noted: **(21103)** and **(21116)**. Primary **fill (21103)** was a firm, dark orangish brown silty clay overlain by **subsoil (21117)** and fill (21116) which extended across the full visible width of the feature. Its thickness varied from c. 5-55cm. Secondary **fill (21116)** was the uppermost visible fill in this feature, overlain by layer (21117), and was located near the centre of the cut. It was made up of small to medium chalk blocks in a brown soil matrix. The fill had a maximum thickness of c. 18cm and was visible for c. 1.05m. This was the cut of the main hillfort rampart enclosure ditch.

Cut [21118] (plan 2101, section 21.01) was a context number assigned during post-excavation work to identify a second V-shaped ditch cut into **natural (21101)** parallel to, and south of, **ditch [21107]** which is described above. This ditch was cut by **pit [21109]**, also discussed above. This cut was visible in trench drawings and photographs, but was not given a number in the field. **Fill (21110)** was a 7-50cm thick layer, with a maximum width of 1.3m, of very compact light whitish brown silty clay with 70% chalk inclusions from 5-30mm in size that did not contain any artefacts.

LAYERS

Layer (21104) (plan 2101, no section) was composed of friable dark blackish brown silty clay with 80% 25-50cm sarsen blocks. This layer of stones in a soil matrix was probably created from rampart tumble.

Layer (21117) (plan 2101, sections 21.01 and 21.02) was a context number assigned during post-excavation work to identify the brownish yellow subsoil layer visible in trench photographs which was overlain by **topsoil (21100)** and overlying **bedrock (21101)**.