

## SOIL REPORT FOR CONEYBURY HENGE, WILTSHIRE

By Helen C M Keeley

During the summer of 1980 excavations were carried out by Mr J Richards (Wessex Archaeological Unit) at Coneybury, near Stonehenge. A significant feature of the site was the ditch (Plates 1 and 2), the bank having disappeared, and samples were taken from the section shown in Plate 2 and Figure 1 by Dr M Bell for molluscan analysis. The ditch fill is described below:-

The modern topsoil was dark brown (10YR 3/3) friable clay loam with moderate medium subangular blocky structure, containing 10% stones (gravel to medium) half of which were medium-sized flints.

30 to 40 cms (base of subsoil) was dark yellowish brown (10YR 3/4) friable clay loam with moderate medium subangular blocky structure, containing 25% gravel to medium stones (about 40% of which were medium-sized flints).

70 to 78 cms (base of tertiary fill) was dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4) friable (silty) clay loam with moderate medium subangular blocky structure, containing about 20% chalk (gravel size) and 15% small flint.

89 to 92 cms. (top of stabilisation layer) was dark brown (10YR 3/3) friable clay loam with moderate medium granular structure, containing few stones (rare chalk fragments and occasional flints).

92 to 97 cms. (middle of stabilisation Phase) was similar to the layer above with slightly more gravel to small chalk fragments and some redeposition of calcium carbonate.

97 to 100 cms. (base of stabilisation layer) was similar to the rest of the layer (above) but contained 20% gravel to small stones (mainly flint) and some re-deposited calcium carbonate.

Coneybury Henge, Wilts.

Area H Ditch, Drawing No. 69.

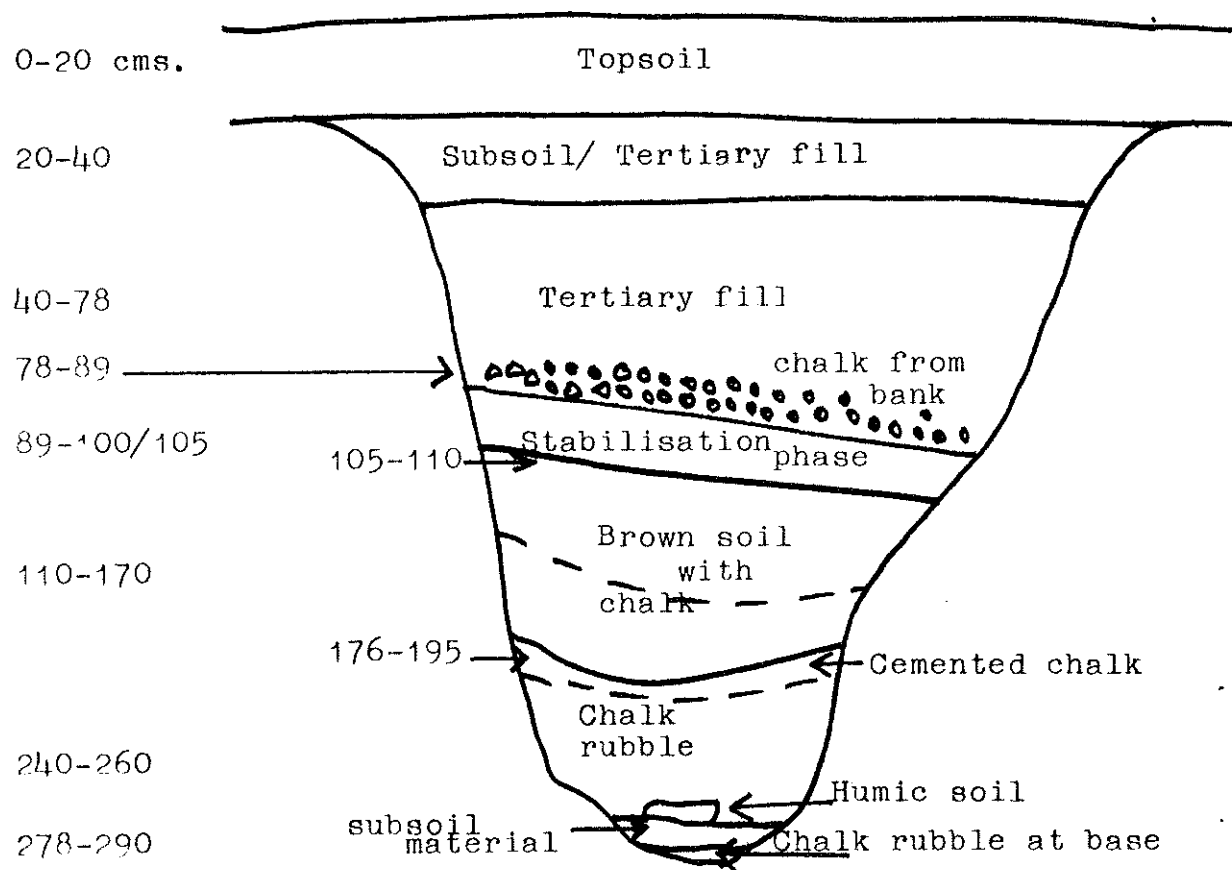


Figure 1.

Plate 1.

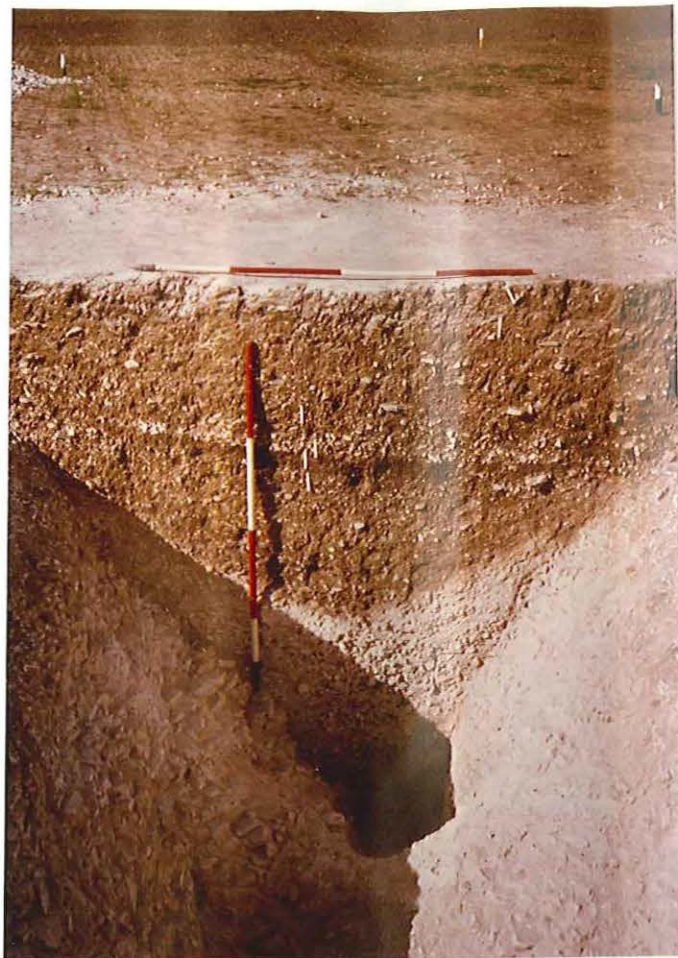


Plate 2.



105 to 110 cms was the top of a relatively thick layer of chalk with brown soil and consisted of dark yellowish brown (10YR 3/4) friable (silty) clay loam, with weak medium subangular blocky structure, containing 20. chalk and 10% flint (gravel to medium), with a trace of redeposited calcium carbonate.

150 to 160 cms was brown (10YR 5/3) friable clay loam with weak medium subangular blocky structure containing 20. chalk and 20% flint (gravel to medium), with much redeposited calcium carbonate.

170 to 176 cms was a ? stabilisation layer (disturbed) above the chalk rubble and consisted of brown/dark brown (10YR 4/3) friable clay loam with 15% chalk and 10% flint (gravel to medium) weak medium granular structure and much redeposited calcium carbonate.

273 to 278 cms was ? turf at the base of the ditch, ie very dark greyish brown (10YR 3/2) friable humose clay loam with weak medium granular structure, containing 10% chalk and much redeposited calcium carbonate.

278 to 28/cms was subsoil material immediately under-lying the humic soil, ie brownish yellow (10YR 6/6) friable silty clay loam with weak medium subangular blocky structure. There were 60% angular chalk fragments (medium, 10% flint and some redeposited calcium carbonate. Charcoal fragments were present.

There was chalk rubble at the base of the ditch.

Dr M Bell's samples were as follows:-

- |                  |                      |
|------------------|----------------------|
| 1. 290 - 300 cms | Primary chalk rubble |
| 2. 278 - 290 cms | Chalk rubble         |
| 3. 278 - 281 cms | ? Subsoil below turf |
| 4. 273 - 278 cms | Turf or topsoil lens |

5.	260 - 273 cms	)	
6.	240 - 260 cms	)	Very loose chalk rubble
7.	215 - 240 cms	)	
8.	195 - 215 cms		Loose chalk with some calcium carbonate cement
9.	176 - 195 cms		Cemented chalk
10.	170 - 176 cms		? Stabilisation Layer (disturbed)
11.	160 - 170 cms	)	
12.	150 - 160 cms	)	
13.	140 - 150 cms	)	
14.	130 - 140 cms	)	Brown soil with chalk
15.	120 - 130 cms	)	
16.	115 - 120 cms	)	
17.	110 - 115 cms	)	
18.	105 - 110 cms	)	
19.	105 - 110 cms		Brown soil with small chalk
20.	97 - 100 cms	)	
21.	94 - 97 cms	)	Stabilisation Layer
22.	92 - 94 cms	)	
23.	89 - 92 cms	)	Stabilisation Layer
24.	78 - 89 cms		Chalk from bank (?)
25.	70 - 78 cms	)	
26.	60 70 cms	)	
27.	50 - 60 cms	)	Tertiary fill
28.	40 - 50 cms	)	
29.	30 - 40 cms	)	
30.	20 - 30 cms	)	Subsoil/Tertiary fill
31.	15 - 20 cms	)	
32.	10 - 15 cms	)	Topsoil
33.	0 - 10 cms	)	

Plate 3.





The soil in the general area of the site was also examined. The bank which should have been associated with the ditch had obviously disappeared but it was not clear where the material had gone to. It may have been incorporated into plough soil which was subsequently eroded away. In the area inside the ditch, the chalk surface was lower than outside and the remains of an old plough soil was preserved beneath the modern Ap horizon (Plate 3).

Soil depth in the field generally varied from about 15 to 25 cms over the chalk. Where the soil was shallow, the texture was clay loam; where it was deeper the top 7 to 10 cms was silty clay loam, overlying clay loam, ie 0 - 7/10 cms friable dark brown (10YR 3/3) silty clay loam with moderate medium subangular blocky structure. Roots abundant, medium to fine fibrous; stones 20%, gravel to medium (flints and chalk fragments).

7/10 cms to 25 cms dark yellowish brown (10YR 3/6) friable clay loam with weak medium subangular blocky structure, overlying chalk. Roots common fine fibrous; stones 60%, gravel to large.

The old plough soil preserved in the centre of the monument was as follows:

0 to 20 cms. dark brown (10YR 3/3) friable clay loam with moderate medium subangular blocky structure overlying chalk. Roots common, medium to fine fibrous; stones 10% gravel to medium (mainly flint, very little chalk). The lack of chalk fragments suggested that bank material was not incorporated into this soil.

#### Comments

The depth of the ditch suggested that a substantial bank must have been associated with it but, apart from a small amount of chalk in the ditch below the tertiary fill, no trace of this could be found. The modern topsoil is generally shallow and considerable soil erosion must have occurred from the site - presumably the bank material has been removed by this process.