

HARTING BEACON (West Sussex)

SU 808 183

Harting Beacon is an Early Iron Age univallate hillfort that encloses upwards of 25 acres and lies in West Sussex (Bedwin 1978, 225). The hillfort rests on Beacon Hill on Upper Chalk that overlies very flinty soil within the northern edge of the South Downs (Bedwin 1978, 225). Only three sides of the hillfort's enclosures survive, although it may be unfinished (Bedwin 1978, 225). Due to severe plough damage, rescue excavations at Harting Beacon ran from 1976 to 1977 at the west entrance and the interior southeast corner of the site (Bedwin 1978; 1979). The interior of the hillfort lacks features apart from a small round barrow containing a single inhumation dating to the Early Bronze Age (Bedwin 1978, 229). The excavations returned a significant amount of animal bone that lead the investigator to interpret the hillfort as a possible livestock enclosure (Bedwin 1978, 230). In addition, excavators recovered four human remain occurrences that date to the Iron Age from the Harting Beacon and all are disarticulated bones. Each of the bones were set near the hillfort's entrance and the contextual evidence suggests the deposit coincides with the dismantling of the entrance at the time of the site's abandonment (Bedwin 19779, 29).