

## Chapter 2: The sites

SITE 2 by Gerry Thacker

### Introduction

Site 2 was located near the south-western end of the study area, where the road climbs out of Marston Vale and onto the higher ground to the south-west. At the top of Brogborough Hill the route of the Improvements briefly attains a height of a little over 100m OD, before sloping gradually down to the junction with the M1 c 1km to the south-west. This marked the highest point on the project. This was one

of the areas where the alignment of the Improvements diverged significantly from the line of the existing A421, in this instance passing to the west of Highfield Farm. The excavation area lay on the south-facing slope of Brogborough Hill and extended along a corridor that measured 700m NE-SW and up to 135m wide, located to the north and west of the village of Brogborough (NGR SP 962 384; Fig 2.1). The excavation comprised a total area of 5.5ha and sloped down from the top of Brogborough Hill to a point near the bottom of the slope, which lay at c 85m OD.

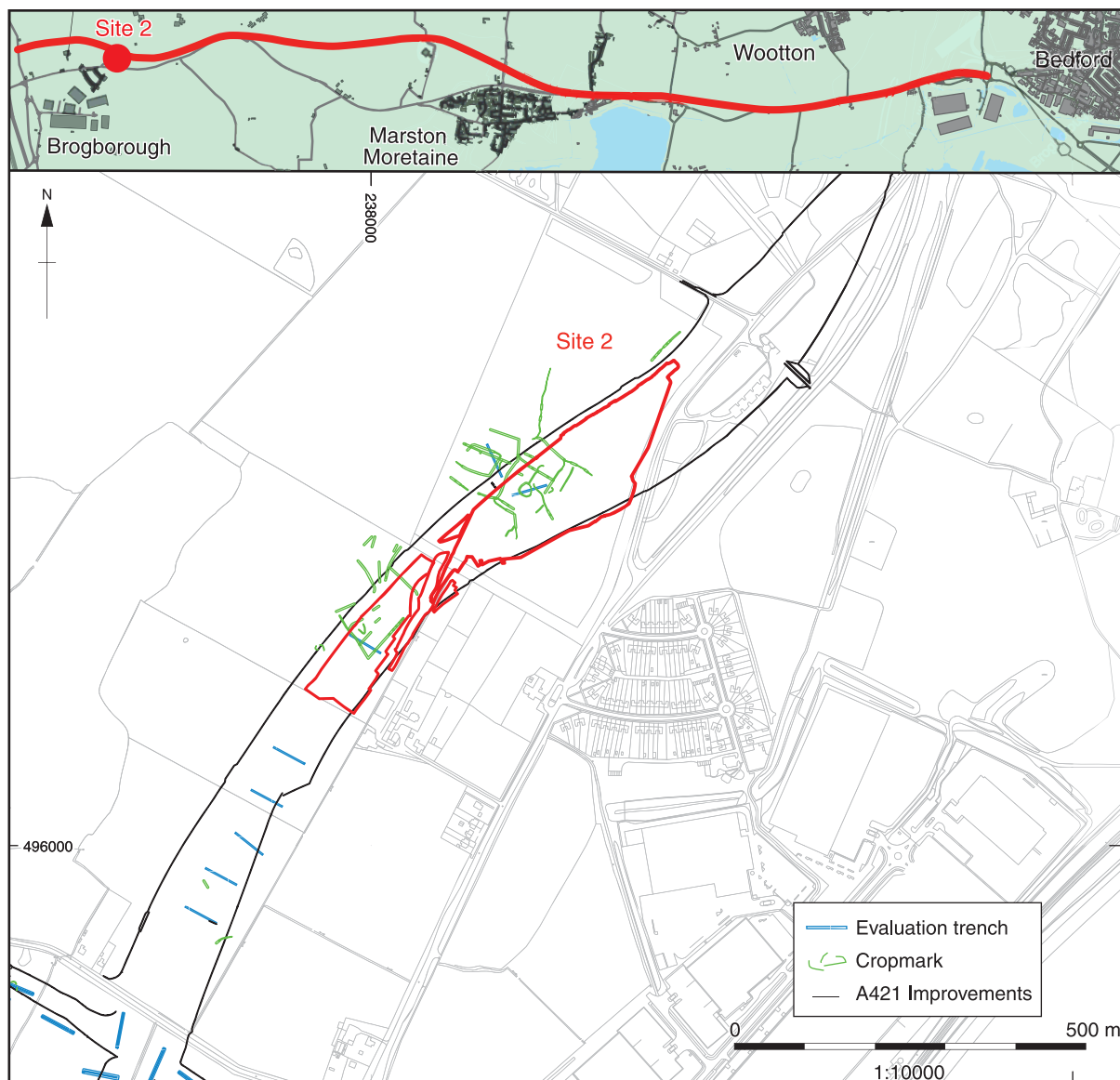


Fig. 2.1 Location of Site 2. (© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence no. 100005569)

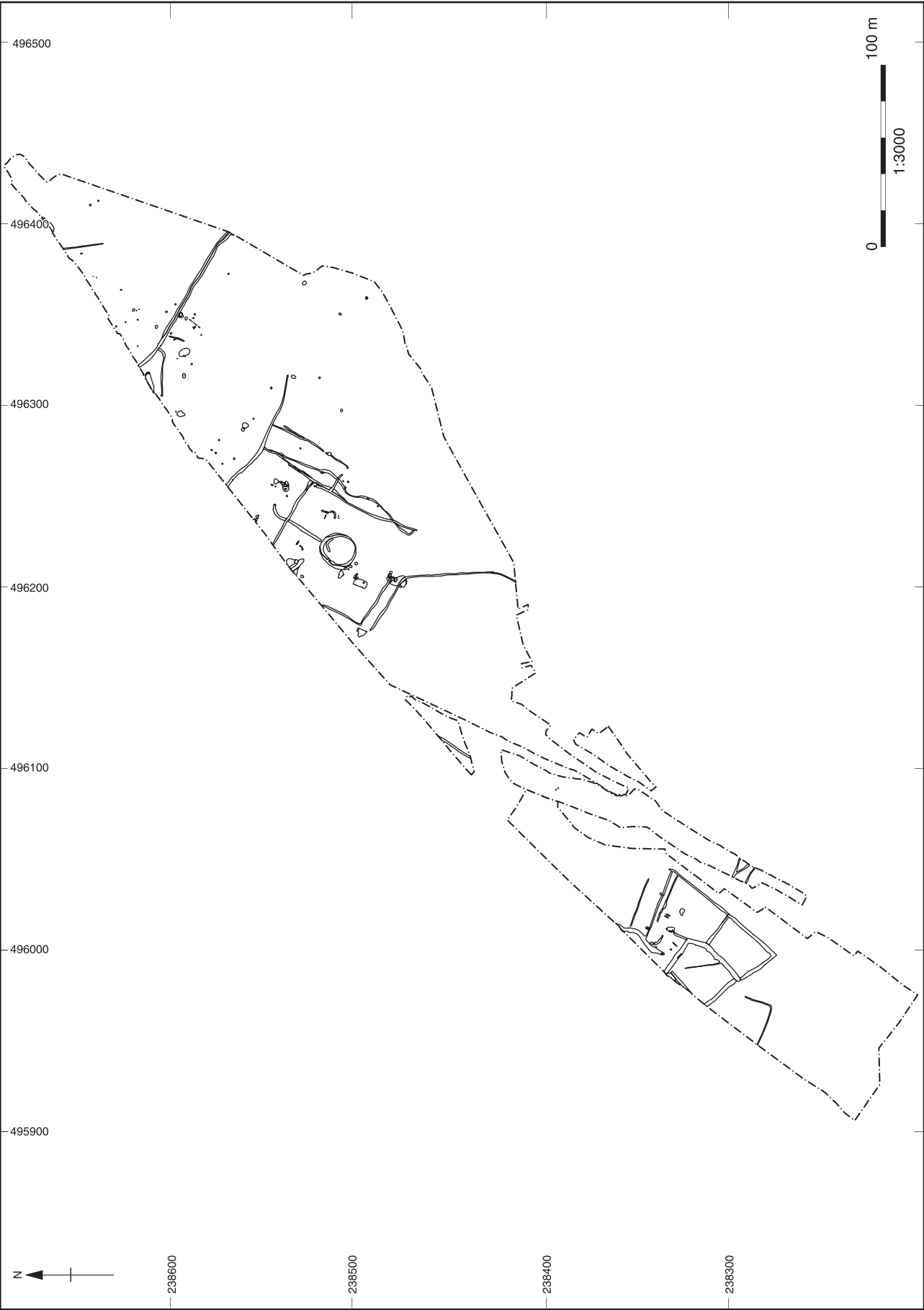


Fig. 2.2 Site 2, plan of all archaeological features

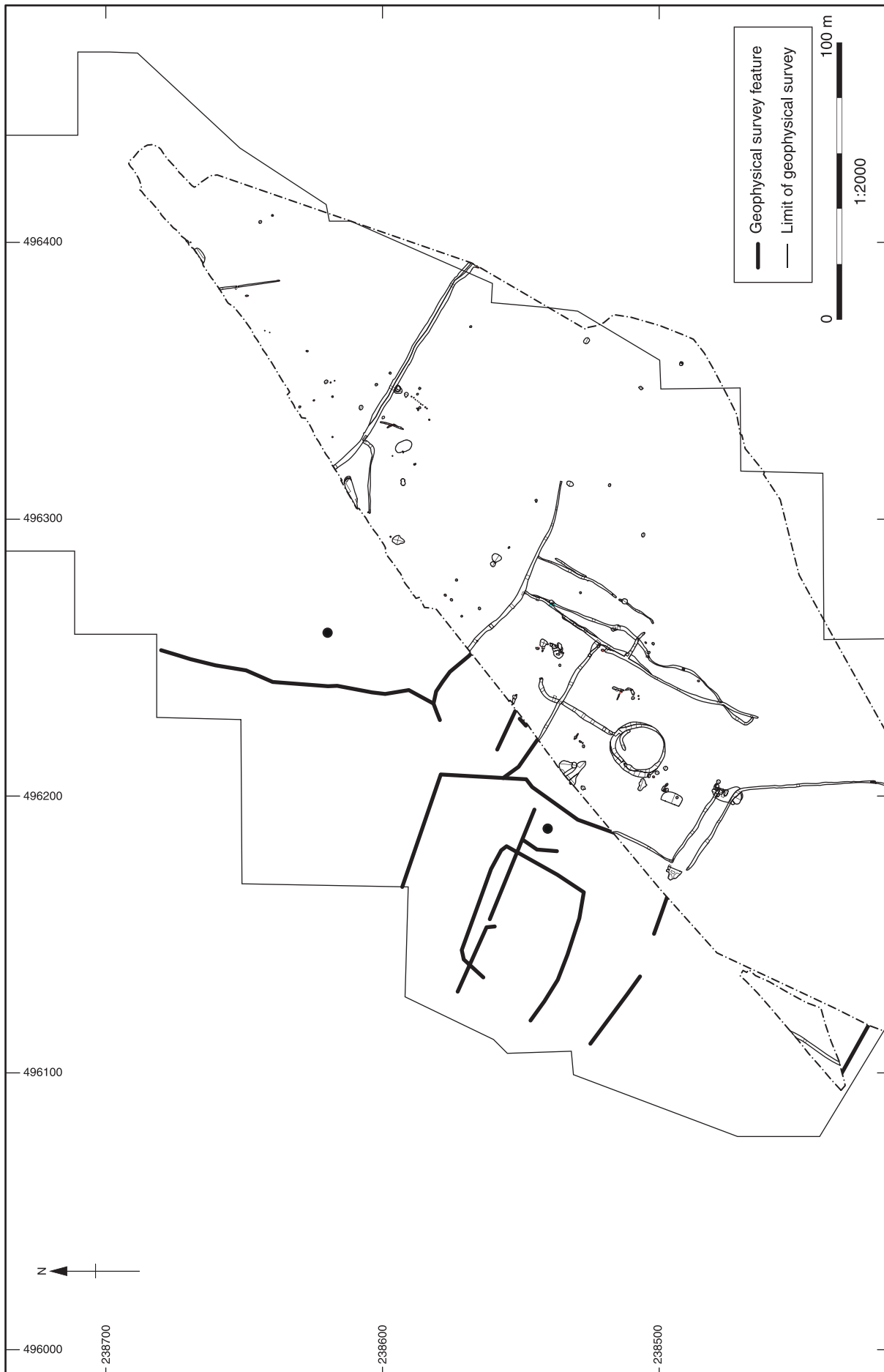


Fig. 2.3 Site 2, north-eastern area and results of the geophysical survey

The excavation area encompassed parts of two complexes of ditched enclosures that had been identified by the geophysical survey (Figs 2.2-3). The two complexes were distinct both spatially and chronologically, comprising an area of late Iron Age and early Roman activity on the upper slopes of Brogborough Hill and a concentration of middle Roman enclosures that lay some 200m to the south-west, where the ground levelled out towards the foot of the hill. In neither instance was the entire complex of features identified by the geophysical survey exposed within the excavation area, which was restricted to the footprint of the Improvements. Approximately half the south-western complex, as identified by the geophysical survey, lay within the excavation area, and a smaller proportion of the north-eastern complex. In both instances the area investigated comprised the eastern part of the complex.

#### **Late Iron Age (early-mid 1st century AD)**

Activity at the site appeared to have commenced toward the end of the Iron Age, during the late 1st century BC or the 1st century AD. The earliest features were situated exclusively in the north-eastern part of the site and formed a rather disparate group, comprising a possible roundhouse gully, a pit complex and numerous discrete pits that were scattered over a distance of more than 200m (Fig. 2.4).

#### ***Roundhouse 2907***

A length of curving ditch (2907) was recorded that may have formed the north-western part of the ring gully of a roundhouse. The gully was 1.4m wide and up to 0.3m deep, but petered out at its north-eastern end. To the south the gully was truncated by early Roman ditch 2476. The gully produced a ceramic assemblage dominated by 'Belgic' wares and may have been open into the early post-conquest period, although it was certainly infilled by about AD 70.

#### ***L-shaped ditch 2710***

A short length of angled ditch (2710) was located 25m south-west of possible roundhouse gully 2907, within the footprint of an early Roman roundhouse (2108/2709). The ditch extended from south-west to north-east for 5m then turned towards the south-east for a similar distance. It measured 1.1m wide and 0.55m deep, and had definite terminals at each end. The latter indicate that it was not the surviving part of a formerly more continuous feature, and so did not represent part of an earlier phase of the roundhouse, as did its angular form, which contrasted with the more regularly curved shape of the later roundhouse gully. The function of the ditch is uncertain; it appeared to be rather isolated from other contemporary features, although it is possible

that such features had been destroyed by later activity in this part of the site. It is possible that it formed part of a small enclosure, with the other parts defined by surface features such as hedgelines that have left no archaeologically detectable trace.

#### ***Quarry pit complex***

A group of intercutting pits was located further down the slope, where they were truncated by the ditches of an early Roman trackway (2765, 2766) and partially overlain by an associated area of metallurgy (Fig. 2.5). The pits encompassed an area of 11m x 6m. The artefactual assemblages from these features were very small, and it is likely that they were dug as clay quarries. The individual pits were generally ovoid in shape and were very variable in size, ranging from 1.0-3.6m wide and 0.2-0.8m deep. The largest feature was pit 2808, which was situated at the southern edge of the group and measured 3.6m x 3.0m and 0.6m deep. Only two sherds of pottery were recovered from the fills, although the pit also contained some small fragments of lava quern. A cluster of sandstone cobbles, some up to 0.5m in diameter, were located at the base of pit 2844. Similar material was encountered in pit 2847. The stones displayed no evidence of deliberate shaping but may have been utilised as building stone.

#### ***Pits at the north-eastern end of the site***

A loose scatter of pits was located toward the north-eastern end of the site. Most of these features were relatively slight, with depths rarely more than 0.3m, and contained little or no artefactual material. A few, however, contained Iron Age pottery and it is possible that all of these features were of this date.

Pits 2045 and 2091 were situated close together and differed from the other pits in this area by virtue of their size and the character of their fills. Pit 2045 (Fig. 2.6) was subcircular in plan and measured 1.68m x 1.40m across and 0.67m deep. The primary fill (2049) was a deposit of clay which was overlain by a thin layer of charcoal-rich soil (2048). Above this lay a sterile layer of redeposited clay (2047) that was very similar to the primary fill. The upper fill (2046) comprised a second deposit of black, charcoal-rich soil that contained three pottery sherds and fragments of animal bone. Pit 2091 (Fig. 2.7, section 2034) cut a shallower pit (2093) and was the most substantial feature in this part of the site, measuring 2.8m x 2.4m across and 0.94m deep. Like pit 2045, it had a substantial primary fill (2092) that was overlain by a dump of charcoal-rich soil (2088) that contained numerous lumps of orange, heat-discoloured clay. These fills were capped by clay deposit 2089, which in turn was sealed by a thin layer of darker clay silt (2090) which contained three small pot sherds of late Iron Age date. Pit 2091 was cut to the north-east by a medieval field boundary ditch (2480).

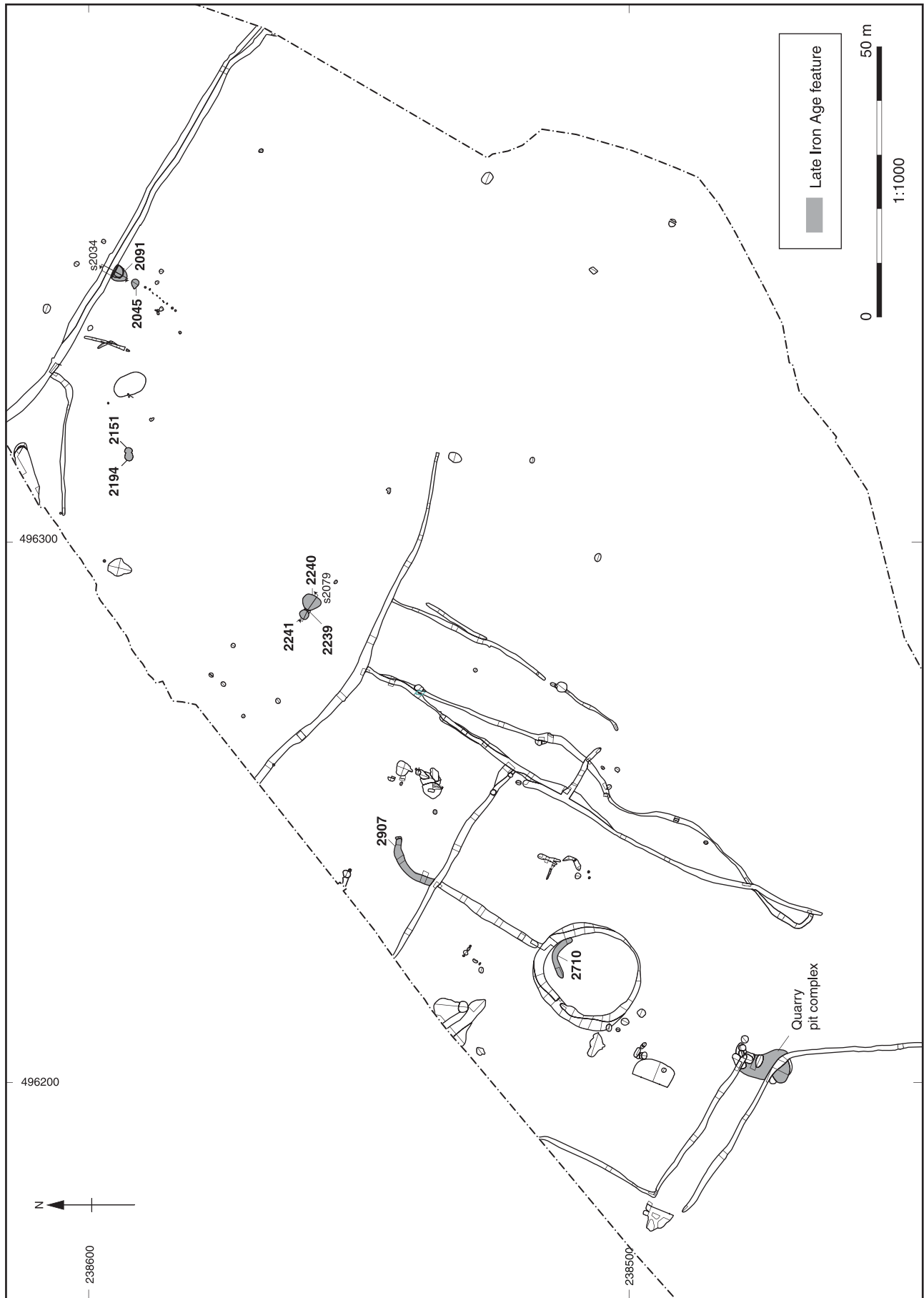


Fig. 2.4 Site 2, plan of late Iron Age features in the north-western part of the site

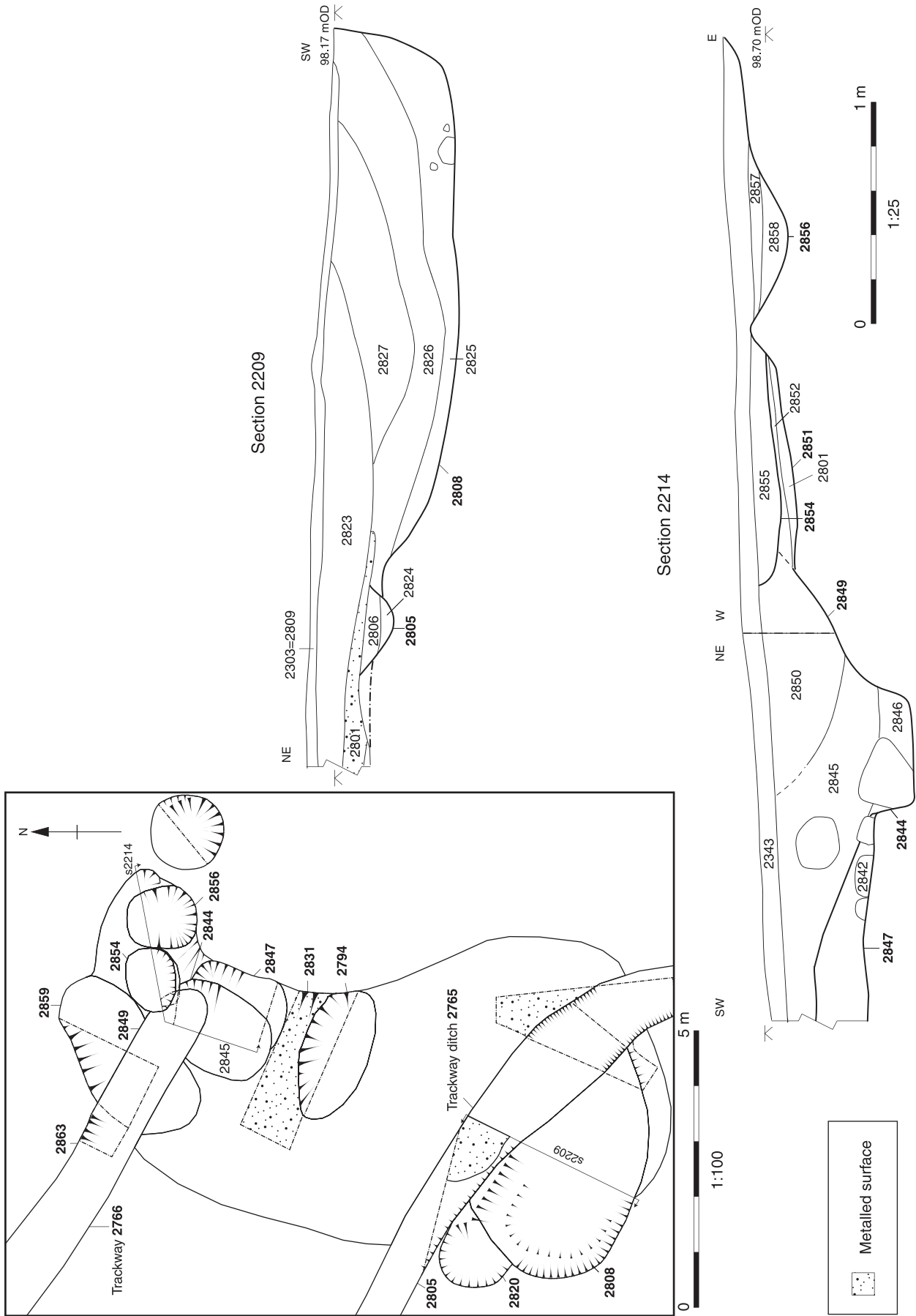


Fig. 2.5 Site 2, plan and sections of late Iron Age pit complex and early Roman trackway ditches and metalling

Pits 2151 and 2194 were situated 30m west of these features. They intersected and both measured c 1.5m in diameter and 0.3m deep. They appeared to have been contemporaneous, as they were filled with similar layers of silty clay. The lower fills contained occasional flecks of charcoal and covered several large rounded river cobbles that had been placed on the base of the cut. The upper layers (2153, 2196) contained frequent charcoal flecks and occasional burnt sandstone fragments. Sherds of curving sided bowls and everted rim jugs in a sandy calcareous fabric were recovered from this upper fill.

Pits 2239, 2240 and 2241 (Fig. 2.7, section 2079) were the southernmost outliers of the scatter of Iron Age pits, lying 45m from the main concentration. Pit 2239 was a shallow feature that contained no artefactual material, and was cut by the other two pits, which were more substantial and did not themselves intersect. Pit 2240, the largest of the three, had gently sloping, slightly irregular sides and a concave base. It measured 3.3m x 2.9m across and had a depth of 1.0m. The primary silting (2260, 2261) was overlain by a deposit (2262) that contained a high proportion of charcoal flecks. Above this lay a sequence of three layers of redeposited clay (2263-5), presumably representing deliberate backfilling, followed by a dump of charcoal-rich soil (2266) that contained several fragments of degraded burnt clay, probably burnt daub. The final fill was a further layer of deliberate backfilling (2267). Pit 2241 had a diameter of 1.6m and a depth of 0.75m. The pit contained three fills, the upper two of which (2271 and 2272) were flecked with charcoal fragments.

### Early Roman period (mid-late 1st century-early 2nd century)

Occupation of the north-eastern part of the site continued into the early Roman period, when a complex of ditched enclosures was established (Fig. 2.8). A roundhouse was situated centrally within Enclosure 2, the largest of the three enclosures that lay within the excavation area. Other features associated with this occupation included pits, soil spreads and a group of pits or hollows that were filled with burnt crop processing debris. This phase of occupation appears to have been relatively short-lived, lasting from shortly after the middle of the 1st century until the early years of the 2nd century.

### Boundary ditch 2475

Ditch 2475 (Figs 2.8-9, section 2069) formed the northern boundary of the enclosure complex. The ditch extended across the slope of Brogborough Hill on a NW-SE alignment, curving eastward towards its south-eastern extent, with the enclosures abutting its south-western side. Where best preserved it had steep sides, dropping to a narrow U-shaped base. The maximum dimensions were 1.8m wide and 0.7m deep, narrowing to 0.41m wide to the extreme south-east before the ditch was entirely truncated away. The sequence of fills comprised cleaner, naturally derived lower fills overlain by darker upper fills that contained a larger quantity of pottery and animal bone. As it silted up the ditch was used as a receptacle for dumping refuse. A discrete deposit of black, charcoal-rich soil (2206) situated in the top of the



Fig. 2.6 Site 2, late Iron Age pit 2045

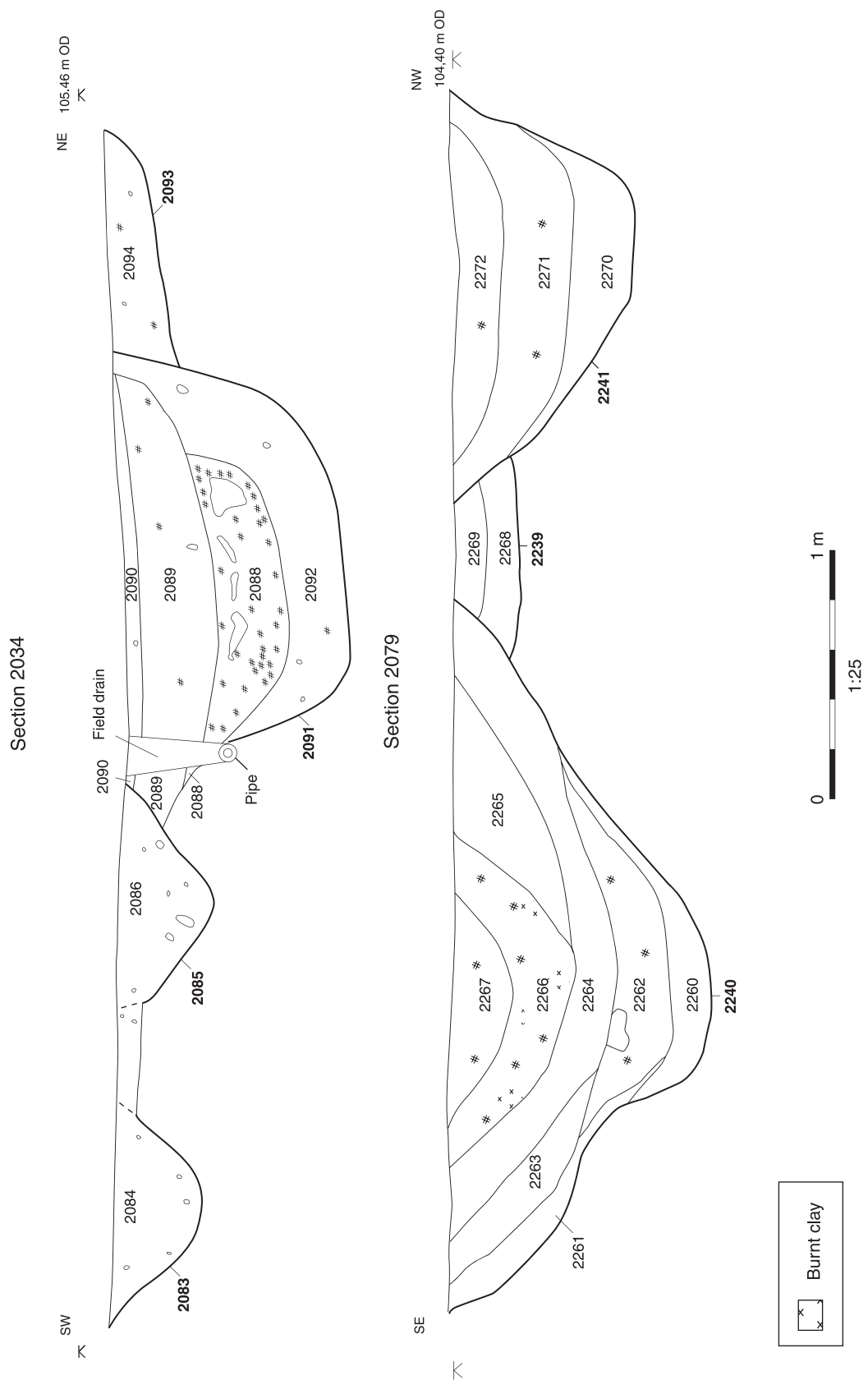


Fig. 2.7 Site 2, sections through late Iron Age pits 2091 and 2093 and medieval ditches 2083 and 2085, and late Iron Age pits 2240, 2239 and 2241



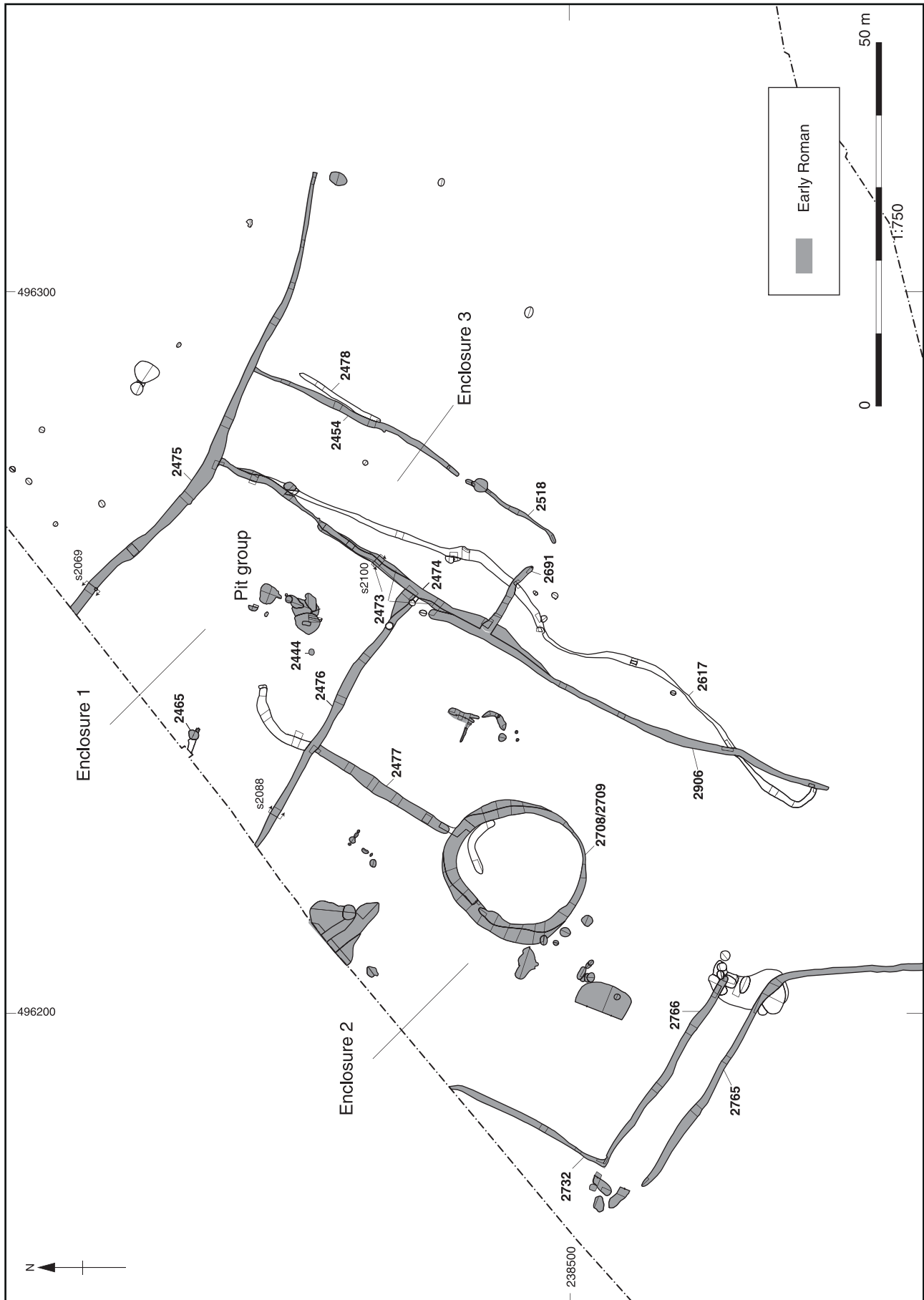


Fig. 2.8 Site 2, plan of early Roman features at the north-eastern end of the site

ditch near the north-western edge of the site contained fragments of smithing hearth bottom and fuel ash slag as well as nearly 0.5kg of pottery. Three enclosures were exposed within the excavation area that abutted the southern side of ditch 2475 (Enclosures 1-3, Fig. 2.8).

### Ditches 2617 and 2478

The earliest phase of boundaries associated with ditch 2475 comprised ditches 2617 and 2478, which both extended towards the south-west on alignments perpendicular to that of the main boundary. Both were cut by ditches that subsequently formed parts of Enclosures 1-3, including ditches that appeared to have been direct replacements for these features. No demonstrably post-conquest pottery was recovered from the ditches and it is possible that they represent an initial phase of the complex that dates from the end of the Iron Age.

Ditch 2617 extended to the south-west from ditch 2475 on a sinuous alignment for a total length of *c* 95m. The ditch varied in width between 1.7m and 0.8m and was 0.55-0.24m deep, becoming shallower down-hill. The profile varied considerably, with some segments exhibiting a V-shape and others with steep sides and a flat, wide base.

Ditch 2478 lay roughly parallel to ditch 2617. It survived for 13m, and was truncated at the south-western end by early Roman ditch 2454. Ditch 2478 had a depth of 0.18m-0.2m, and was 0.7m wide and had a concave profile.

### Enclosure 1

Enclosure 1 was rectilinear in plan and abutted the south-western side of boundary ditch 2475. It measured *c* 35m wide and at least 41m long, extending to the north-west beyond the edge of the site. It was bounded to the south-east and south-west by ditches 2473/2474 and 2476 respectively,

the former appearing to be a direct replacement for late Iron Age boundary ditch 2617. Ditch 2474 (Fig. 2.9, section 2100) defined the earlier phase of the south-eastern side of the enclosure, and comprised a V-profiled ditch 1.35m wide and 0.55m deep. Only a short length of this ditch survived, as it had been largely cut away by the digging of ditch 2473, a recut that replaced it on the same alignment. Ditch 2476 (Fig. 2.9, section 2088) was rather more slight, measuring 1m wide and 0.35m deep.

A group of shallow features (2408, 2426, 2430/2460, 2435 and 2457) located in the south-eastern part of the enclosure had been used for the disposal of burnt crop processing debris (Figs 2.10-11). Pits 2408 and 2430/2460 appeared to have been deliberately dug features, but it was uncertain whether the other features, to the east of pit 2408, were shallow pits or natural hollows, as they were very shallow and irregular. Pit 2430/2460 was a large, somewhat irregular pit that measured 2.5m in diameter and 0.35m deep and lay a short distance north of the other features. It was filled by four layers (2431-4, 2469) of black or dark grey soil that produced more than 1.5kg of pottery, as well as a small quantity of animal bone and some sandstone cobbles measuring up to 0.4m across. Pit 2408 measured 2.5m x 2.0m across and 0.4m deep and was filled by two deposits that were similar to the fills of pit 2430. Similar material also filled the series of irregular hollows and undulations to the east of this pit (2426, 2435, 2457). Soil samples taken from the bottom fill (2461) of pit 2430/2460 and from fills of hollows 2426 and 2435 proved to be rich in charred plant remains, indicating that they had been used for the disposal of burnt crop processing debris. The hollows also contained a substantial assemblage of pottery, amounting to more than 2.5kg, as well as a poorly preserved Hod Hill brooch (SF 2007) and a small quantity of animal bone.

A deposit of pottery had been placed, apparently with some care, in a small pit (2444) that was situated

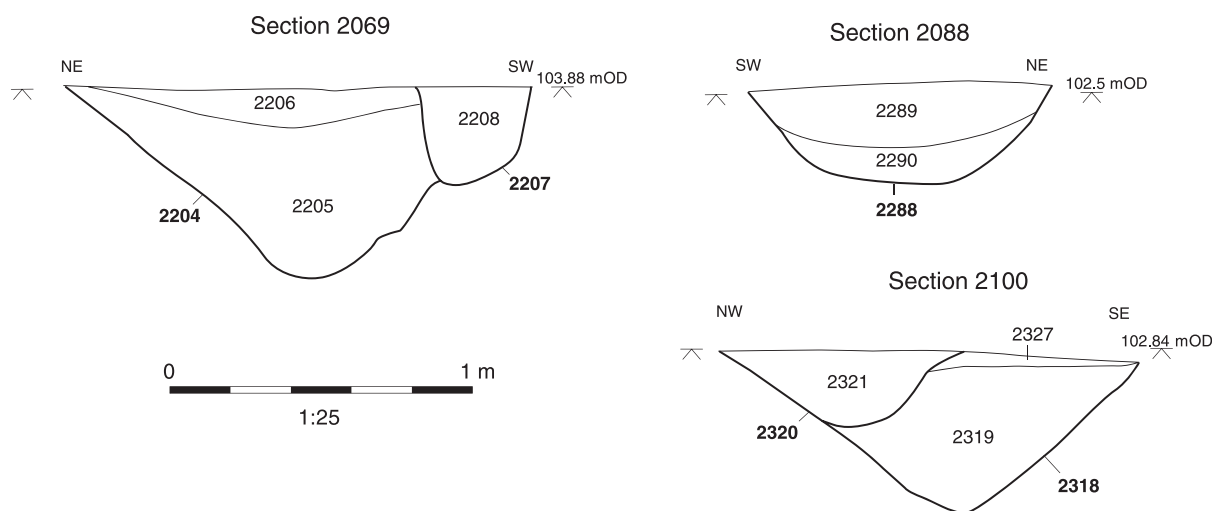


Fig. 2.9 Site 2, sections through selected early Roman boundary ditches

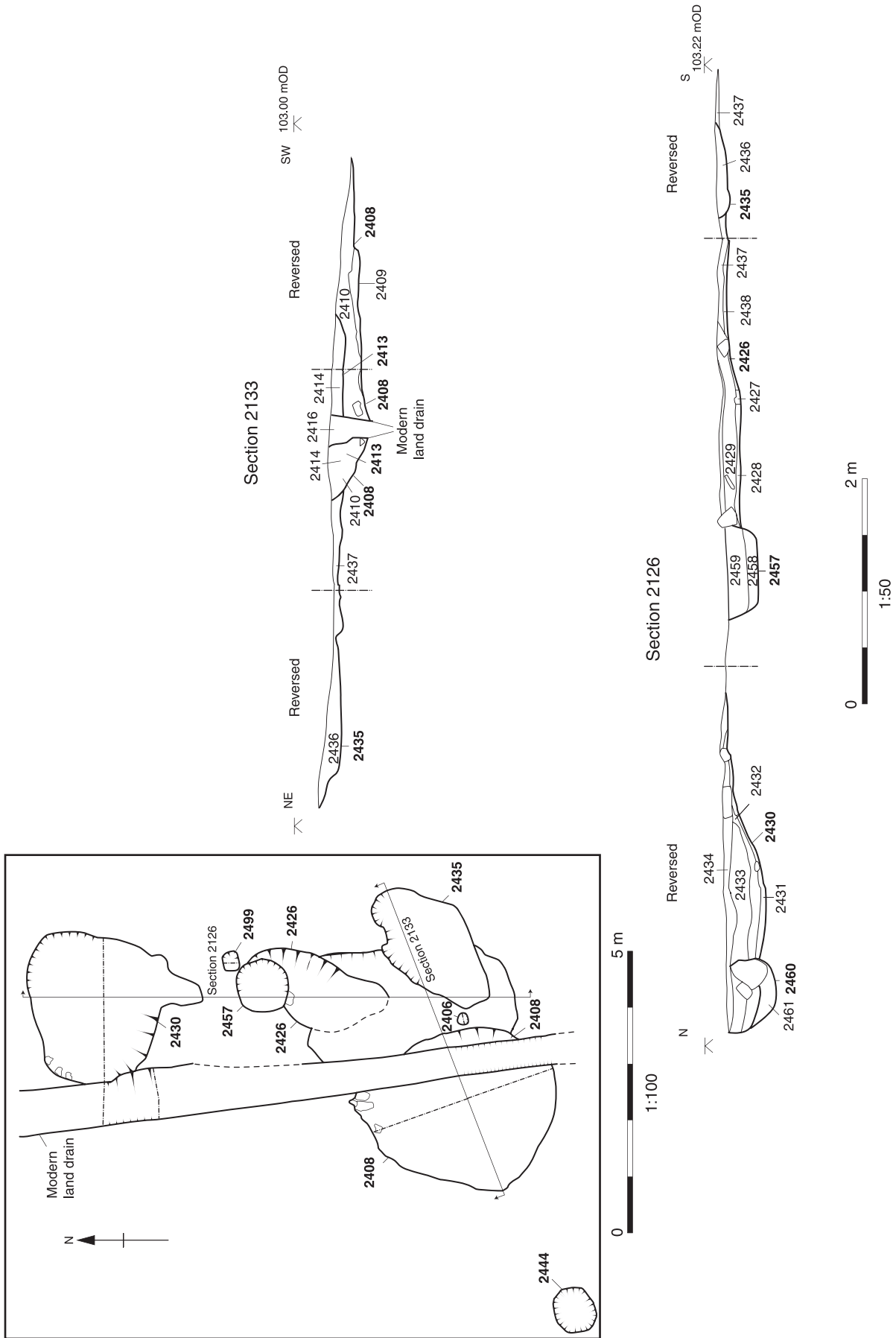


Fig. 2.10 Site 2, detailed plan and sections of pits and hollows within Enclosure 1 with fills rich in charred plant remains



*Fig. 2.11 Site 2, pits and hollows within Enclosure 1 with fills rich in charred plant remains during excavation*



*Fig. 2.12 Site 2, deliberate deposit of pottery in pit 2444: a carinated bowl stacked within a lid-seated jar*

adjacent to these features (Fig. 2.12). The pit itself measured c 0.8m in diameter, and had been quite severely truncated, surviving to a depth of only 0.06m. Nevertheless, a large proportion of a carinated bowl and a lid-seated jar were recovered. They had been placed on the base of the pit with the former apparently stacked inside the latter (Fig 2.12). The base of a shelly-ware jar that had been perforated after firing was also recovered, although its relationship to the other vessels was not recorded. The soil that filled the pit differed markedly from the material filling the adjacent pits and hollows, and comprised sterile brown clay that may represent backfilling of the pits with the spoil from their original excavation.

The only other feature that was identified within Enclosure 1 was pit 2465, which lay in a rather isolated situation near the north-western edge of the site. The pit measured 1.52m by 1.30m across and had a depth of 0.64m. In addition to early Roman pottery and animal bone, the upper two fills (2468, 2467) contained the partial remains of a perinatal infant. Fill 2467 contained the left distal humerus and a right rib fragment and fill 2468 contained a small fragment of cranial vault and a left distal tibia. Although these remains were recovered from two different fills, there are no repeated elements and the age is the same, and they are therefore likely to have come from a single individual.

### Enclosure 2

Because of the truncation of the southern part of ditch 2474, and in particular its intersection with

ditch 2476, it was not possible to be certain whether ditch 2474 originally extended to enclose the south-eastern side of Enclosure 2, or whether Enclosure 2 was a later addition that was not constructed until ditch 2474 was replaced by ditch 2473. In either case, Enclosure 2 certainly existed when the latter ditch (2473) was constructed, as the ditch formed the south-eastern boundary of both this enclosure and Enclosure 1. Enclosure 2 was considerably larger than its northern counterpart, measuring 64m x 55m, and was defined on its north-western and south-western sides by ditch 2732/2766, which extended beyond the edge of the excavation area and, according to the results of the geophysical survey, had a junction with ditch 2476 at the northern corner of the enclosure. The geophysical survey also indicated that the north-western side of Enclosure 2 also formed part of a much larger adjacent enclosure that lay beyond the limits of the excavation area (Fig. 2.3).

Ditch 2473 branched off boundary ditch 2475 and extended for c 55m before it in turn was truncated by ditch 2906. Ditch 2473 measured 0.65-0.95m wide and 0.25-0.7m deep. The ditch contained two fills, both derived from gradual silting, and produced a large fragment of tegula.

Ditch 2732 had a U-shaped profile and varied in width from 0.65m to 1.00m, narrowing to the south-west due to plough-truncation. Where best preserved the ditch had a maximum depth of 0.53m, and contained three episodes of infilling. The lower two fills were the result of gradual silting but the upper fill contained considerably more cultural material.

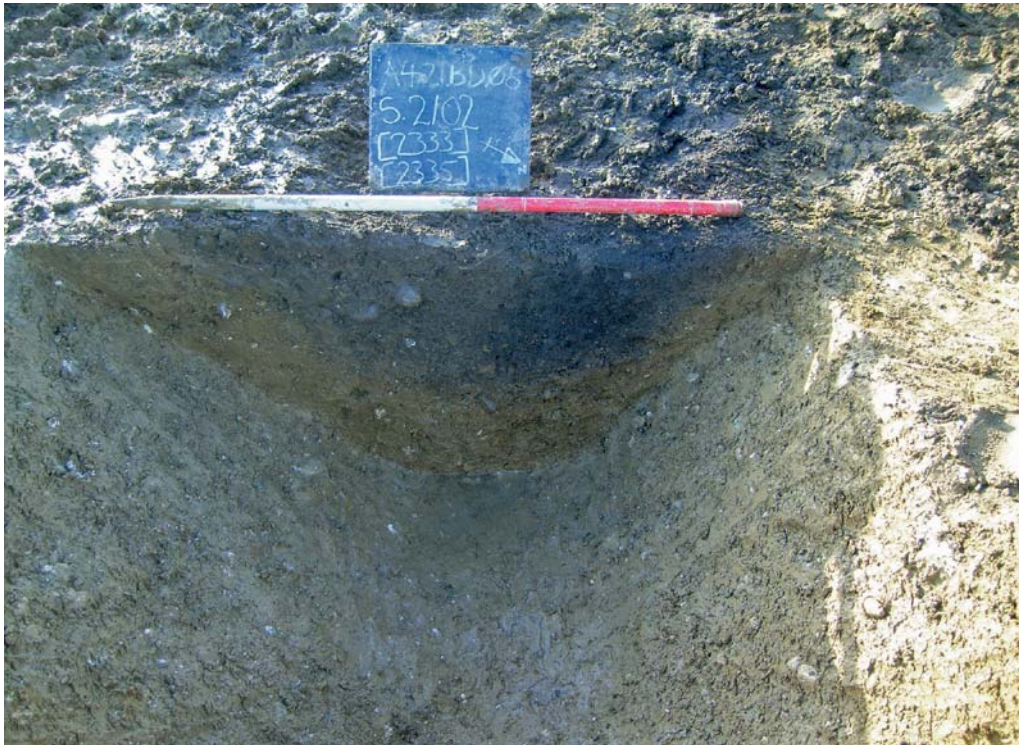


Fig. 2.13 Site 2, deposit of charcoal-rich soil in ditch 2477, possibly refuse from roundhouse 2708/2709

Ditch 2766 was up to 1.2m wide and 0.5m deep, often exhibiting a 'V' shaped profile. From its junction with ditch 2732 it extended south-east for 30m, terminating within the area of intercutting late Iron Age quarry pits (Fig. 2.5). It was not certain whether the ditch had been truncated beyond this point or whether this represented its full original extent. The upper fills contained dumps of pottery and bone. The fill sequence became more complex near the terminal end as the ditch was partially filled by material from the earlier pits.

A possible subsidiary enclosure was situated within the northern quadrant of Enclosure 2, defined by ditches 2477 and 2746. Ditch 2477 branched off ditch 2476 and extended for c 20m toward the centre of the enclosure. It terminated just before it reached roundhouse 2708/2709 (below), suggesting that the features were contemporaneous. The profile was V-shaped and deep, measuring up to 1.9m wide and 0.75m deep. The lower fills were light silty clays which contained few finds; the upper fills darker and richer in cultural material. A discrete deposit (2287=2443=2676) of dark, charcoal-rich soil and artefactual material was situated at the south-western end of the ditch and may have represented domestic refuse from the roundhouse. The deposit extended for c 12m from the south-western terminal and was up to 0.4m thick (Fig. 2.13). Context 2287, which formed part of this deposit, contained a range of pottery, including the substantial remains of a lid-seated jar in shelly ware. The pottery from 2443, like that from 2287, was mixed in terms of fabric, though shelly ware and grog-tempered fabrics dominated. The pottery was reasonably well preserved, with large sherds being recorded (average sherd size was 17g), but no vessels were complete. The pottery from 2676 was of similar condition and composition. At 15g its average sherd size was slightly smaller. The deposit also contained an assemblage of more than 1kg of animal bone, including a fragmented cattle skull. Unfortunately no palaeoenvironmental samples were collected from the deposit. Ditch 2746, which may have formed the south-western side of the subsidiary enclosure, was identified in an intervention excavated through a soil spread (2868, below) beside the north-western edge of the site. The ditch presumably terminated beneath the soil spread, as it did not extend further into the excavation area. It measured 2.5m wide and 1.4m deep, with a steeply V-shaped profile, and yielded a substantial assemblage of 1st-century pottery, as well as a single, fairly large sherd from a 2nd-century necked jar, and some animal bone.

#### *Roundhouse 2708/2709*

A roundhouse was situated centrally within Enclosure 2 (Figs 2.14-16). No floor surfaces or internal structural features survived, and the structure was represented only by its encircling drip gully, evidence for two phases of which survived (2708, 2709). The northern part of the gully was best

preserved; the southern part had been substantially truncated. The roundhouse had internal dimensions of 17m x 15m. It produced the largest group of pottery from the site, amounting to more than 900 sherds. The animal bone assemblage amounted to nearly 5kg and included a fragmented cattle skull that had been placed in the eastern part of gully 2709 and subsequently largely redeposited into gully 2708.

Gully 2709, which formed the earlier of the two phases, measured up to 2.25m wide and had a maximum depth of 0.65m with a slightly irregular profile and a concave base. The ditch did not survive in the south-eastern quadrant. The lowest fills were derived from gradual silting and contained only a small quantity of pottery. The overlying deposits contained some 300 sherds of pottery comprising the remains of lid-seated jars, bead-rimmed jars, necked jars and butt-beakers. The pottery dated from the second half of the 1st century AD, possibly the third quarter of the century. A discrete deposit of sandstone cobbles was uncovered in the south-eastern part of the gully (Fig. 2.16), and a fragmented cattle skull was recovered from the eastern side, much of which had been disturbed and redeposited within the fill of the corresponding part of gully 2708.

The later gully, 2708, was up to 1.5m wide and 0.56m deep (with minimum dimensions of 0.35m wide and 0.17m deep in the south-eastern part of the structure). As with the earlier phase of gully, the lower fills, where present, were caused by natural silting, and the upper fills were mostly deliberately deposited with large quantities of pottery and bone present. The upper fill contained a late Roman coin (SF 2009, dating to AD 270-295), but this is likely to be intrusive given the date of the pottery from this feature. A possible entrance was located on the north-west side, where a 1m break in the ditch was present. Over 600 sherds of pottery were recovered from gully 2708.

#### *Other features within Enclosure 2*

A number of pits and soil spreads were identified within the enclosure that are likely to have been associated with the occupation of the roundhouse (Fig. 2.14).

A group of five pits (2516, 2582, 2595, 2597 and 2604) lay immediately to the south-west of the roundhouse. Pit 2516 cut gully 2709, indicating that the pits were probably contemporary with the later phase of the structure. Pit 2595 was a shallow, concave feature, but the others were more substantial. Pit 2604 was 0.6m deep and had an irregular profile with a diameter of 1.5m, although the upper fill (2607) extended beyond the pit as a thin layer that encompassed an amorphous area measuring 4.6m x 2.8m (Fig. 2.17). The lower fill (2605) of reworked natural clay may have been a trample layer associated with the construction of the pit. The two upper fills (2606 and 2607) contained numerous fragments of animal bone and sherds of early Roman pottery

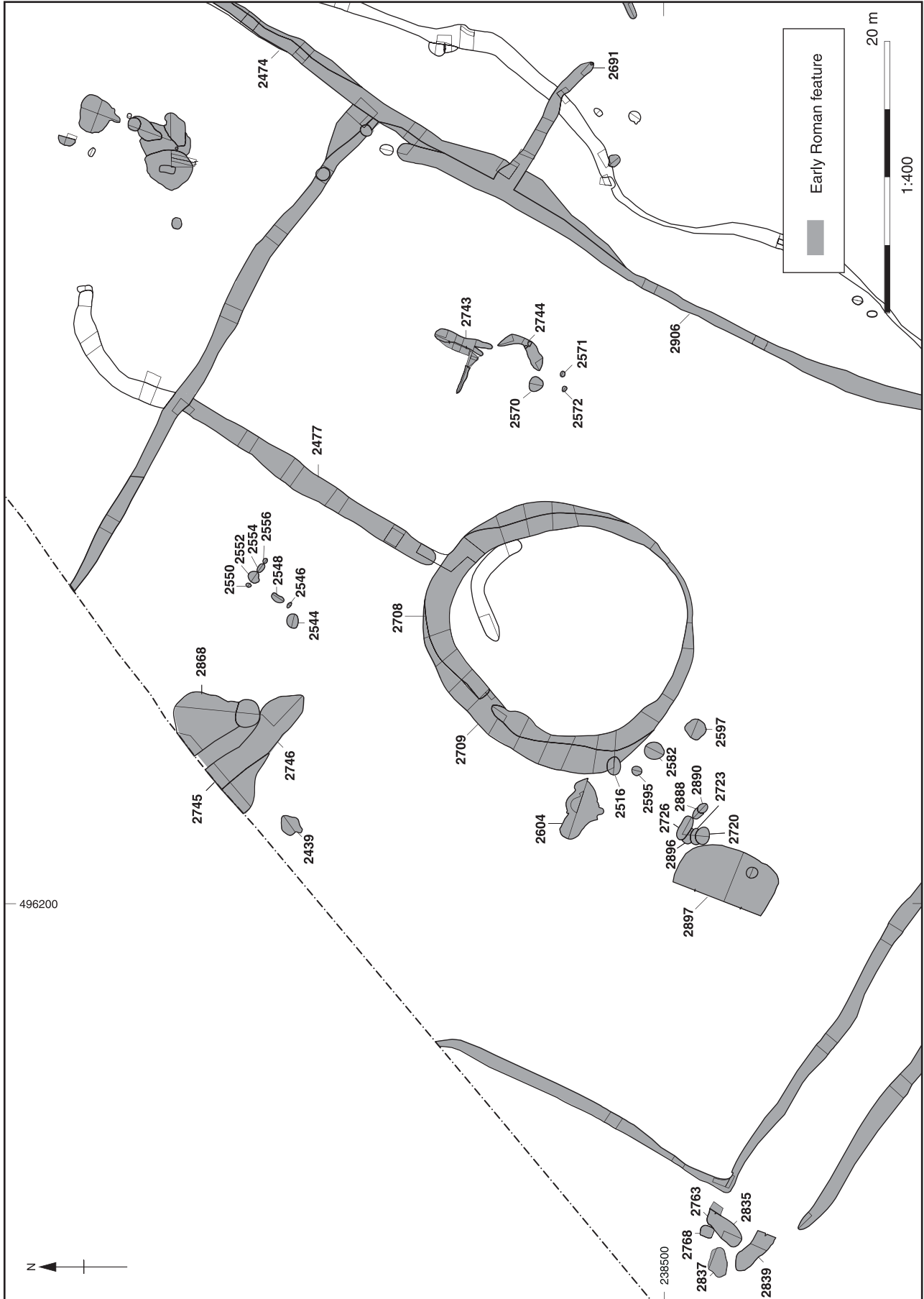


Fig. 2.14 Site 2, detailed plan of early Roman occupation within Enclosure 2

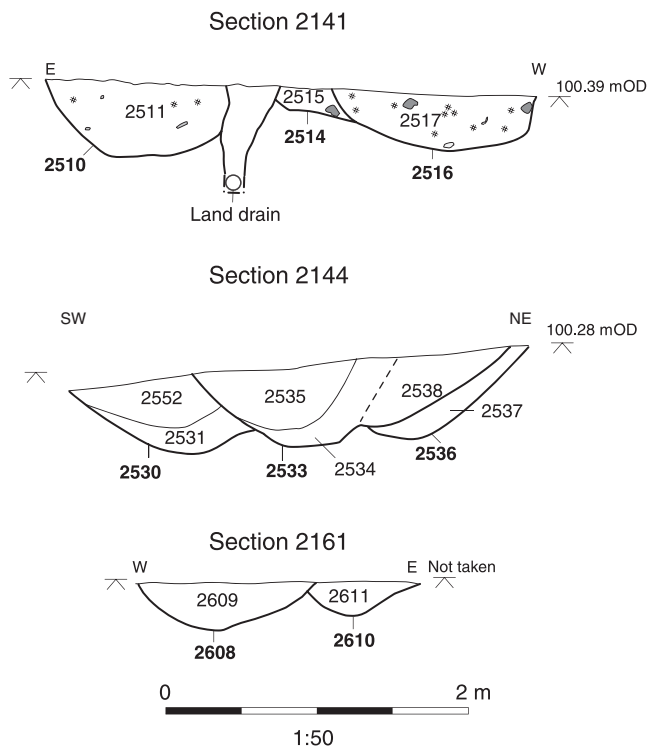
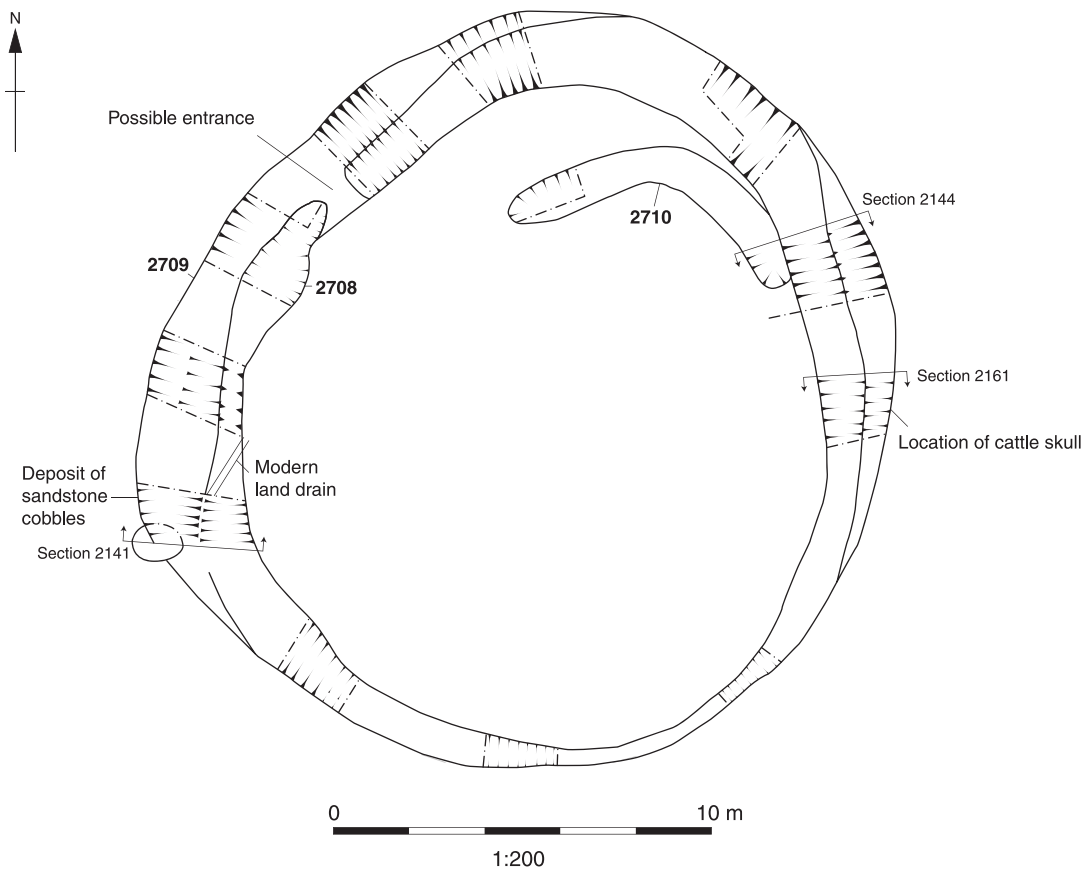


Fig. 2.15 Site 2, plan and sections of early Roman roundhouse 2708/2709





Fig. 2.16 Site 2, the western side of early Roman roundhouse 2708/2709. The sandstone cobbles seen in Fig. 2.15 can be seen at the right of the frame



Fig. 2.17 Site 2, early Roman pit 2604 and associated spread 2607

including samian ware and Verulamium white ware. It seems likely that this pit was a receptacle for waste from the neighbouring roundhouse. Pits 2516 and 2597 were both steep-sided and measured 1.4m in diameter and 0.4m deep, while pit 2582, which had a similar diameter, was a little over 1m deep. All produced assemblages of pottery dating from the second half of the 1st century, as well as smaller quantities of animal bone.

A further group of six pits (2720, 2723, 2726, 2888, 2890, 2896) was situated 5m to the south. These features were generally ovoid in shape and 0.25-0.65m deep. Pit 2896, stratigraphically one of the earliest of the group, contained a poorly preserved one-piece Colchester brooch (SF 2008) of 1st-century date.

Adjacent to this group of pits lay an amorphous soil spread (2897). The layer filled a shallow hollow that measured 7m x 4m and up to 0.25m deep, and was truncated on its north-western side by a medieval plough furrow. Early Roman pottery and animal bone were recovered from the spread.

A similar, though slightly larger, soil spread (2868) was situated in the north-western part of the enclosure. It measured 9m NE-SW and was at least as extensive from north-west to south-east, extending beyond the north-western edge of the site. The layer overlay ditch terminal 2746 (above) and a pit (2745) and yielded an assemblage of more than 1kg of pottery that dated from the second half of the 1st century. A further pit (2439) lay to the south-west of these features.

A group of postholes (2550, 2552, 2554 and 2556) was located 10m east of soil spread 2868. The line of postholes was orientated NW-SE and measured 3m in length. The postholes varied in diameter between 0.35 and 0.85m, with depths of up to 0.14m. The fills were all very similar and consisted of dark grey silty clays with chalk and charcoal inclusions. Immediately to the south-west of these features were a further three pits (2544, 2546 and 2548), all ovoid in shape. Pit 2544 contained both shelly and grog tempered wares with a date range of AD 1-100.

Two extremely irregular and very shallow features (2743 and 2744) were recorded in the eastern part of the enclosure. Feature 2743 was approximately L-shaped in plan, measuring 4.3m N-S and 4.1m E-W, and was no more than 0.15m deep. Its generally irregular shape and shallowness suggested that it was not a cut feature, and it may have been either a soil spread or an area of root disturbance. Feature 2744 may have been a curving gully, but was too shallow for this to be certain. A small pit (2570) and two possible postholes (2571 and 2572) were situated near to these features.

#### *Trackway along the SW side of Enclosure 2*

A trackway 5m wide extended along the south-western side of Enclosure 2, delineated by ditch 2766, which formed the side of the enclosure, and ditch 2265 (Fig. 2.8). It extended for 30m, from the western corner of the enclosure to the south-eastern

end of ditch 2766, where ditch 2765 turned to the south, defining a boundary that ran across the prevailing slope and beyond the southern limit of the excavation area. Ditch 2765 measured up to 1.56m wide and 0.55m deep, generally becoming narrower and more shallow to the south, probably because of greater truncation.

The area where the trackway crossed the area of late Iron Age quarry pits was consolidated at this stage (Fig. 2.5). The consolidation took the form of a thin gravel surface (2801) sealing the tops of the pits, and at several points spilling over the ditches. Two small sherds from an oval-bodied necked jar dating from the mid 2nd-early 3rd century were recovered from the surface, suggesting that the trackway continued in use into this period. The surface was overlain by a layer of dark brown soil 0.05-0.20m thick which is interpreted as a build-up of soils from the use of the surface.

#### *Recutting of boundary 2473/2473 and construction of Enclosure 3*

Enclosure 3 was a later addition to the complex and was associated with a further recutting of the boundary defined by ditches 2474 and 2473, represented by ditch 2906 (Fig. 2.8). Ditch 2906 defined the boundary to the south of ditch 2476. A gap of 2m was left between the latter feature and the northern terminal of ditch 2906, either as an entrance or because a bank or hedge associated with ditch 2476 was located here. Ditch 2906 extended for 60m in a south-westerly direction. The ditch had a V-shaped profile to the north-east, changing to a U-shape to the south-west and measured 0.7-1.4m wide and 0.25-0.45m deep. The ditch infilled through gradual silting interspersed with occasional dumps of cultural material.

Enclosure 3 abutted the boundaries defined by ditches 2475 and 2473/2474/2906, and was enclosed on its south-western side by ditch 2691, which branched off ditch 2906, and on its south-eastern side by ditch 2478/2518. Ditch 2691 extended for 11m and enclosed most of the south-western edge of the enclosure, leaving an entrance 4.3m wide next to the southern corner. It had a concave profile and measured 0.4-1.2m wide and 0.3-0.56m deep. It had two fills derived from natural silting. The only finds were occasional pottery fragments, except within the south-eastern terminus, which may have been deliberately backfilled, and within which a posthole (2670) was set. Ditch 2454 branched off boundary ditch 2475 and extended towards the south-west for 32m. It generally had a concave profile, the slope of the sides becoming more moderate further to the south-west. The ditch measured up to 1.05m wide and 0.14-0.54m deep. After a break of 2m, its alignment was continued for a further 15m by ditch 2518, which was 0.7m wide and 0.1-0.2m deep. It was not certain whether the break between ditches represented an original entrance into the enclosure or was a product of

subsequent ploughing. Near its north-eastern end, ditch 2518 was cut by pit 2451, the function of which is uncertain.

### *Pits/hollows west of Enclosure 2*

A group of intercutting pits or hollows (2763, 2768, 2835, 2837 and 2839) were situated beyond the western corner of Enclosure 2 (Fig. 2.14). Due to the amorphous and irregular forms of these features it was unclear whether they were anthropogenic, and it is possible that they were tree-throw holes. They were up to 0.4m deep, and yielded a small assemblage of pottery and an assemblage of animal bone amounting to 1.7kg. The latter was a large group by the standards of this site and suggests that, whatever the origins of these features, they were utilised for the disposal of domestic refuse. The presence of the hollows would clearly have impeded the use of the north-western end of the trackway that extended along the south-western side of Enclosure 2, and it is possible that they were deliberately filled in for this reason.

### **2nd-century activity in the north-eastern part of the site**

Occupation within Enclosure 2 had come to an end by the end of the 1st century, by which time the ditches that formed most of the associated enclosures also appear to have fully silted up. The only exception to this was boundary ditch 2475, which had a small quantity of 2nd-century pottery in its upper fills. The only features in this part of the excavation area that were created during the 2nd century were a scatter of pits (2179, 2182, 2185, 2188, 2207, 2211, 2252 and 2802) to the north of this boundary, including one (2207) that cut the ditch (Fig. 2.18). The pits were typically shallow, bowl-shaped features measuring *c* 1m in diameter and up to 0.3m deep. Small quantities of 2nd-century pottery were recovered from pits 2179, 2182 and 2207, and it is likely from their spatial association that the other similar pits are also of this date. A fragment of vitrified hearth lining and some fuel ash slag were recovered from pit 2182 and similar material was recorded from pit 2207, although in this instance it may have been residual, as the pit had been dug through a dump of such material (2206) in the top of ditch 2475.

The only other evidence for activity in this part of the site during the 2nd century were two small sherds of pottery recovered from metallated surface 2801 and a single sherd from the surface of ditch 2765, which may indicate that the trackway that extended along the south-western side of Enclosure 2 was still in use at this time.

### **Middle-late Roman enclosure complex**

Part of a complex of conjoined enclosures that was established during the early or middle part of the

2nd century was exposed in the south-western part of the site, at the bottom of the slope of Brogborough Hill (Fig. 2.19). This may have been a direct replacement for the earlier complex to the north-east, but the dating evidence is not precise enough to be certain. In contrast to the earlier complex these enclosures were entirely agricultural and industrial in character, with no evidence for domestic occupation. The fills of the enclosure ditches had a different character to their counterparts in the north-eastern complex, generally comprising accumulations of clay and silt derived from gradual silting which contained few finds. Industrial activity or processing of agricultural produce was evidenced by the identification of two ovens and a partly paved working hollow, as well as by a substantial pit that may have been used as a waterhole.

Five conjoined, rectilinear enclosures were identified, and the complex extended beyond the north-western edge of the excavation area (Enclosures 4-8, Fig. 2.20). The earliest pottery recovered from the enclosure ditches dated from the first half of the 2nd century, indicating that the complex had been constructed by *c* AD 150 at the latest. The ditches that defined enclosures 3 and 4 were recut during the second half of the 3rd century as quite substantial features, in the process destroying the evidence for the original ditches, but it is likely that the ditches of the earlier phase followed the same alignments.

### *Hollow-way 20237*

The complex was accessed by means of a hollow-way (20237) that entered it from the north and terminated within Enclosure 4 (Figs 2.20-21). The hollow-way was rather sinuous. It was exposed for a total length of 30m, and continued to the north beyond the excavation area. It measured 1.8-3.2m wide and up to 0.4m deep and had been roughly surfaced with a mix of gravel, river cobbles and limestone slabs (20040). Above this the hollow was filled by a layer of dark clay (20065).

### *Enclosure 4*

The north-eastern limit of Enclosure 4 was defined by ditch 20223, which branched off the hollow-way and extended towards the south-east for 40m. The ditch had a concave profile and measured 0.6-1.0m wide and 0.4m deep. It appeared to have been part of the same ditch as ditch 20225, which formed the south-eastern boundary of the complex. Enclosure 4 was divided from the adjacent Enclosure 5 by ditch 20235. The enclosure measured 19m NE-SW and at least 21m NW-SE.

### *Features within Enclosure 4*

A small group of features was recorded within Enclosure 4, south and east of the hollow-way, although none produced any artefactual material and their functions are uncertain.

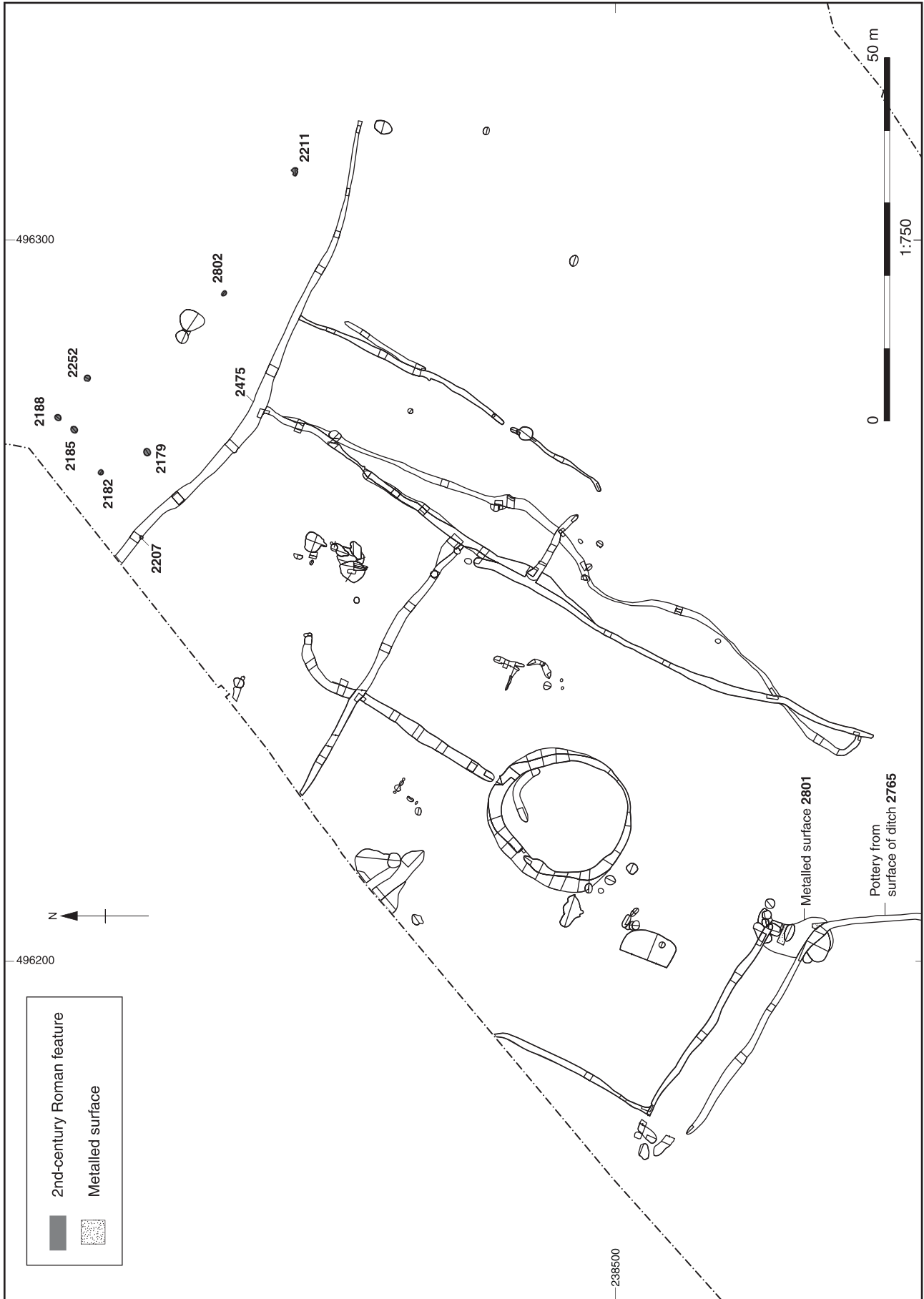


Fig. 2.18 Site 2, early 2nd-century activity in the north-eastern part of the site

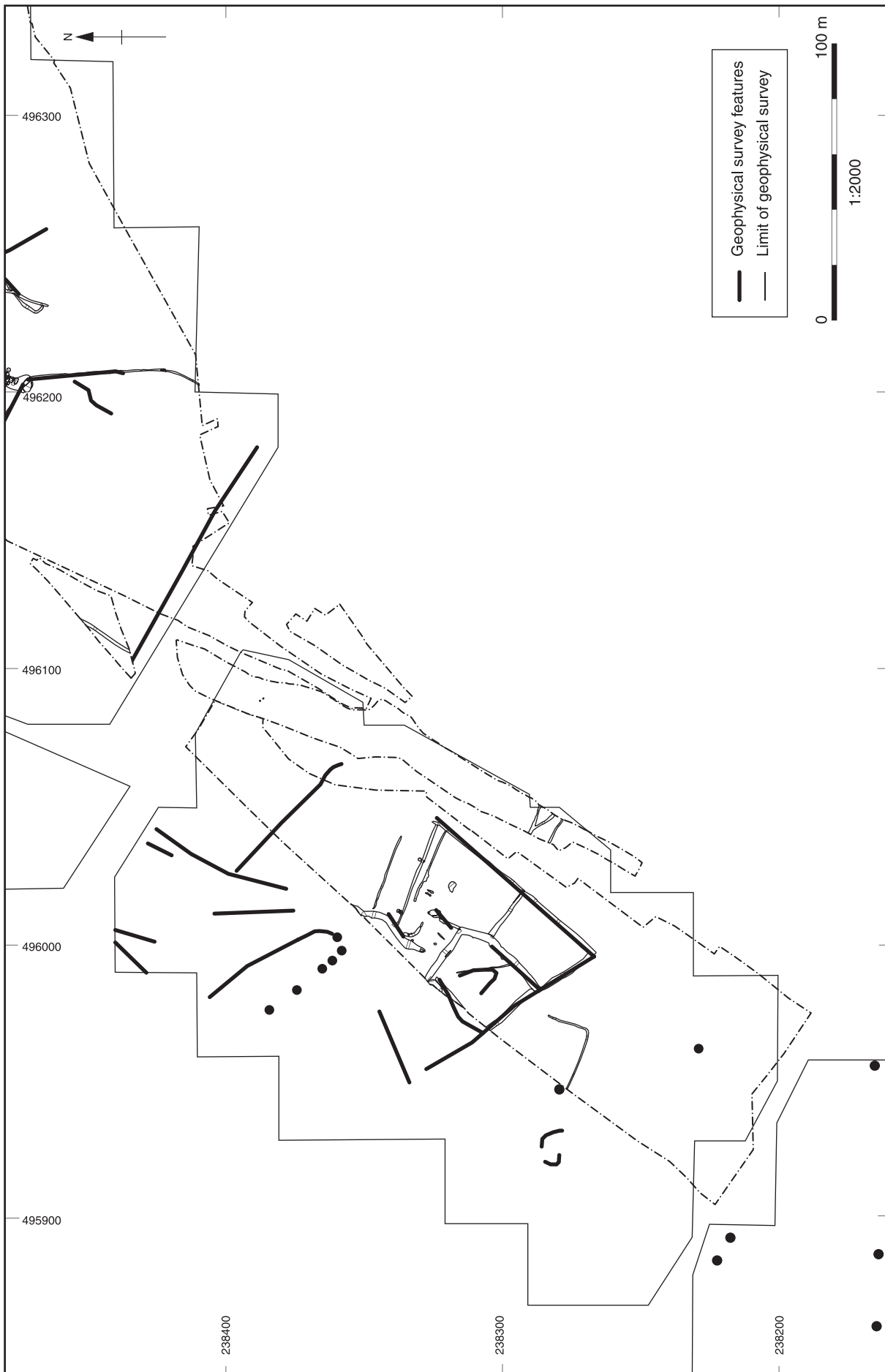


Fig. 2.19 Site 2 south-western area and results of the geophysical survey

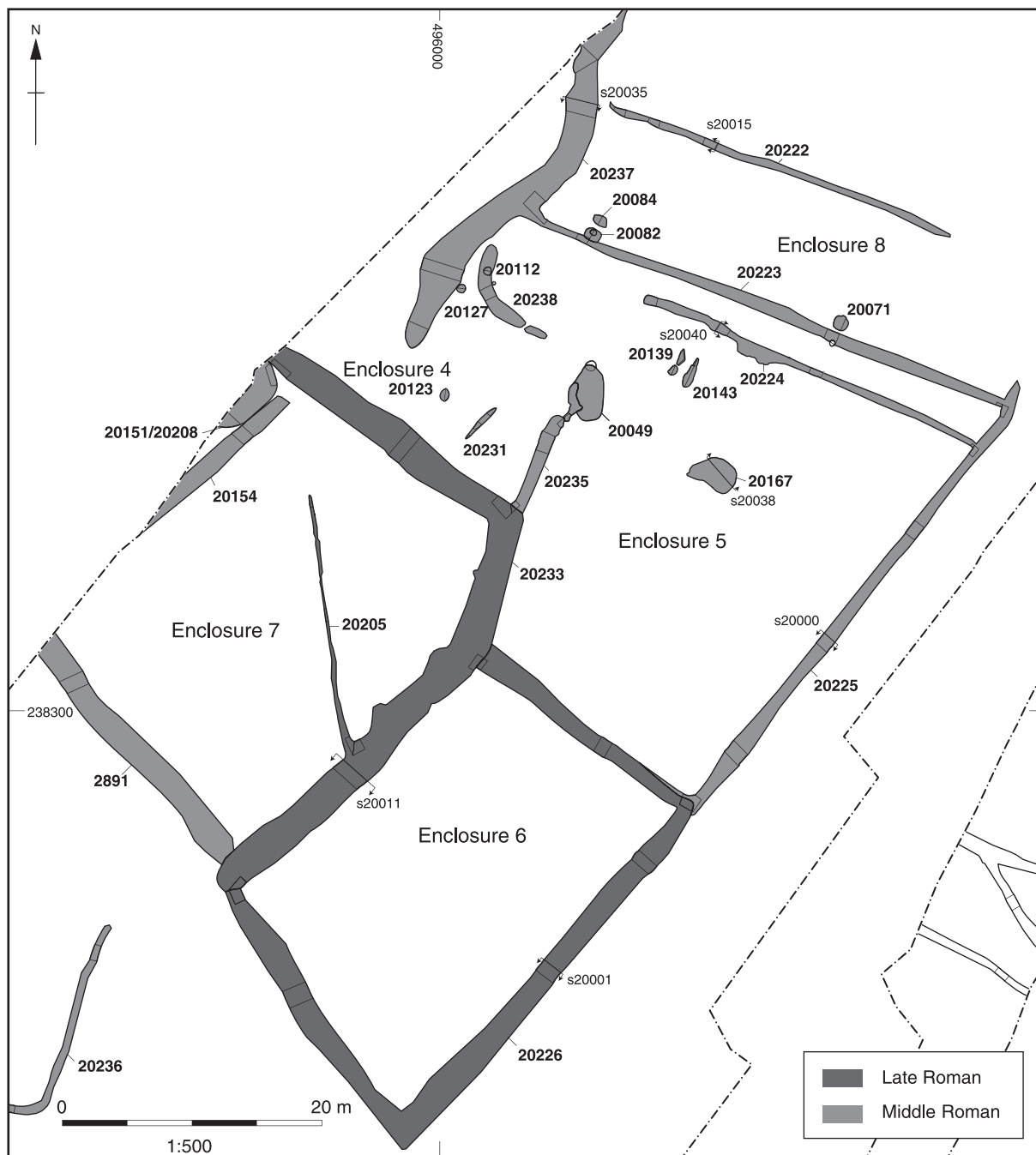


Fig. 2.20 Site 2, plan of the complex of middle and late Roman features in the south-western part of the site

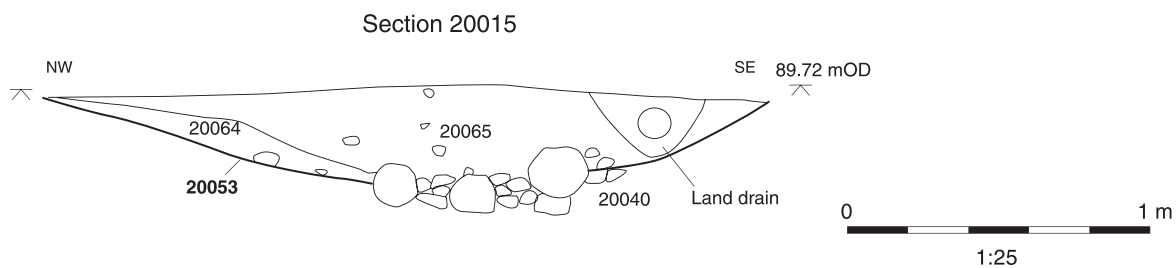


Fig. 2.21 Site 2, section through middle Roman hollow-way 20237

A curvilinear gully (20238) lay adjacent to the hollow-way and may have formed a small subsidiary enclosure. The gully was 8m in length, 0.45-1.00m wide and 0.17-0.45m deep. It was truncated by a small posthole (20112). A second, similar posthole (20127) lay a short distance to the west.

A short segment of ditch was located 8m to the south of gully 20238. This ditch (20231) extended for 4m on a NE-SW alignment and was 0.4m wide and 0.04m deep.

A very shallow pit (20123) was also situated within the enclosure. It was 0.9m in diameter and only 0.06m deep.

### *Enclosure 5*

Enclosure 5 adjoined the eastern side of Enclosure 4, but was somewhat larger, measuring 32m by 25m. Ditch 20223, which formed the north-eastern side of Enclosure 4, continued along the corresponding side of Enclosure 5, but a second ditch (20224; Fig. 2.22, section 20040) also extended along this side of the enclosure, separated from ditch 20223 by only 1.6m. It was not certain whether the two ditches were contemporaneous, although both appeared to have been contemporary with ditch 20225, which formed the south-eastern side of the enclosure. Ditch 20225 had a flat base and measured 0.95-1.5m wide and 0.7m deep (Fig. 2.22, section 20000). It is likely that the ditch originally continued further to the south-west to enclose Enclosure 6, but this part of the feature had been completely truncated by the subsequent digging of ditch 20226 (below). Evidence did survive, however, for a return that divided this enclosure from Enclosure 5, although most of the return had also been dug away. A deposit of charred plant remains that was recovered from the fill of ditch 20224 may have been associated with the adjacent ovens (20139 and 20143, below)

Enclosure 5 may have been an area of industrial activity or agricultural processing, as it contained two ovens (20139 and 20143), a partially paved hollow (20049) and a deep pit that may have been used as a waterhole (20167) (Fig. 2.23). It is not certain whether these features were used in conjunction with each other, but they were certainly situated close together in the north-western part of the enclosure, and the pottery from hollow 20049 and pit 20167 is of similar date. No pottery was recovered from the ovens.

### *Ovens 20139 and 20143*

Ovens 20139 and 20143 were located side-by-side a short distance from ditch 20224, which formed the north-eastern side of Enclosure 5. Both had clearly been truncated by medieval and modern ploughing, but oven 20143 was slightly better preserved than its companion. No ceramic finds were recovered from either feature.

Oven 20143 (Figs 2.23-25) comprised a circular bowl, from which a linear flue projected to the north-east. The bowl measured 1.0m by 0.75m

across and 0.22m deep. The clay substrate beneath the bowl was heat-discoloured, but this was not the case in the flue. The lowest fill within the chamber (20148) was a dark grey-black clay, flecked with heat-discoloured red and orange clay. This was overlain by a layer of burnt limestone slabs (20145) above which lay a second layer of black clay (20168) that contained a rich assemblage of burnt cereal chaff and weed seeds. The flue extended for 1.5m and was 0.5m wide and 0.06m deep, tapering somewhat toward the north-eastern end. It was filled by a single deposit of dark grey clay (20170), which contained a partial domestic fowl skeleton. At the junction of the bowl and the flue, layers 20170 and 20168 were partially overlain by an irregular deposit of redeposited clay (20169) that may have been used to backfill and seal the feature when it ceased to be used.

Oven 20139 (Figs 2.23-25) had a similar subcircular bowl with a flue on the north-eastern side, although in this instance the two elements had become separated by truncation of the intervening part of the feature. The bowl measured 0.8m by 0.55m across and 0.18m deep, and contained a sequence of fills that indicated that it had been used on at least two distinct occasions. The surrounding natural clay had been baked hard and was a red colour. The earliest fill of the bowl was a layer of black soil (20136), which contained comminuted charcoal from the firing of the oven. This was overlain by a layer of redeposited clay (20135), above which were two further layers of black clay (20133 and 20134). The flue was 1.3m long and 0.12m deep and was filled by a deposit of grey soil (20138).

### *Partially paved hollow 20049*

Hollow 20049 (Figs 2.23 and 2.26-27) was situated just inside the entrance into Enclosure 5 from Enclosure 4. The hollow was oval in plan, although the northern end tapered somewhat, and measured 4m by 2.7m across with a maximum depth of 0.2m. A possible posthole (20131) was located at the northern tip of the hollow, but it was not possible to be certain whether this was an integral part of the main hollow or a separate feature. The posthole was extremely shallow, measuring only 0.1m deep, and no other evidence was found for any form of superstructure associated with the hollow. A thin layer of mixed clay (20174) 0.05m thick extended across the base of the hollow and may have been churned up from the base of the feature during its construction or use. In the northern part of the feature this layer was overlain by a localised deposit of black clay soil (20173) that contained a few small sherds of pottery dating from the late 2nd-early 3rd century. Above this the feature had been partially paved. A single large, flat slab of limestone that measured 1.4m by 1.1m across and 0.14m thick covered much of layer 20173, and the northern end of the hollow and the area immediately south of the large slab were paved with a mixture of smaller limestone slabs and sandstone

cobbles. This stone surface was sealed by a thin accumulation of clay (20051) that contained a rich assemblage of charred cereal processing waste (Hunter, below). A similar assemblage of plant remains was also present in the main backfill of the hollow, a single deposit of dark soil (20050) that overlay this layer. The western side of the hollow was disturbed by a shallow, vaguely linear hollow (20178), but this may represent later damage rather than an element of the hollow.

*Pit/waterhole 20167*

Pit 20167 (Figs 2.23 and 2.28) measured 2.9m by 2.4m across and had a depth of 1.1m. It is possible

that the pit was deep enough to have served as a waterhole, although it did not contain the kinds of lower silts that typically characterise such features. Three fills were recorded, all of which appeared to derive from deliberate backfilling and included domestic refuse. The lowest fill (20166) was a yellow clay which contained patches of burnt clay and sand. This was overlain by a series of tips of sands and clays (20165) that was particularly rich in domestic debris, including a significant quantity of burnt crop processing waste. This deposit contained 1kg of animal bone and almost 50 sherds of pottery. Identified forms included a flask, a plain-rimmed dish and a wide-mouthed jar in

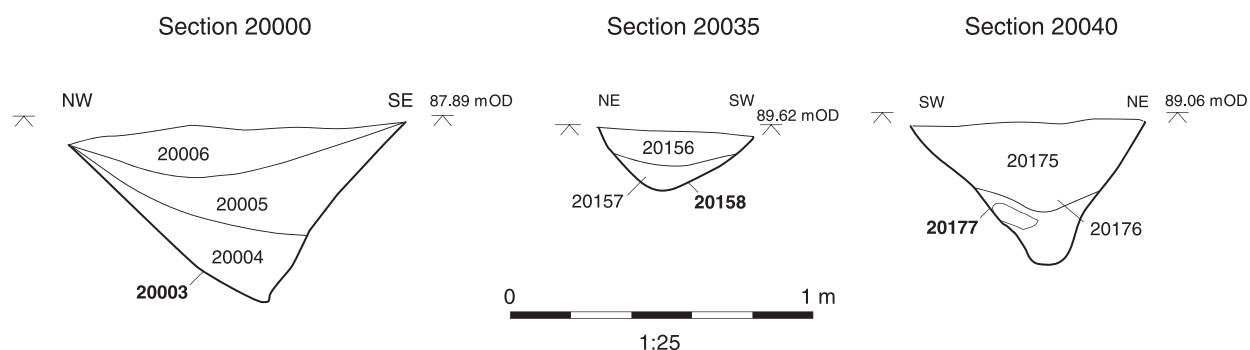


Fig. 2.22 Site 2, sections through middle Roman enclosure ditches

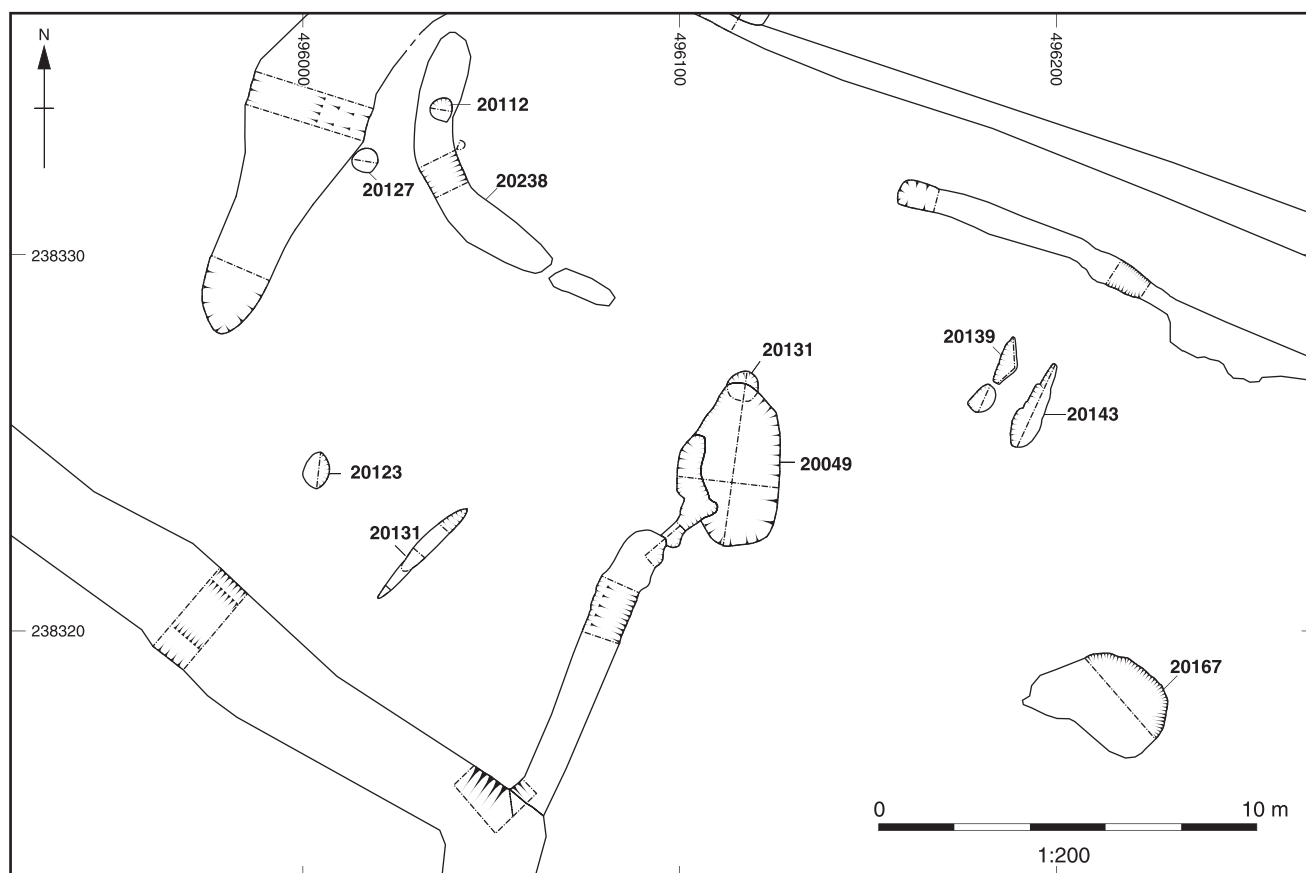


Fig. 2.23 Site 2, detailed plan of features within Enclosures 4 and 5



sandy grey ware, a shelly-ware storage jar, an indented beaker in Nene Valley colour-coated ware, and a dish in East Gaulish samian ware. The group as a whole dates to the late 2nd or early 3rd century AD. The upper fill was a layer of greenish clay (20164) which contained very few finds.

**Enclosure 6**

Enclosure 6 occupied the southern corner of the complex. The ditches that defined this enclosure were entirely redug during the mid-3rd or 4th century, leaving no evidence for the form of its



Fig. 2.24 Site 2, middle Roman corn driers 20139 (foreground) and 20143

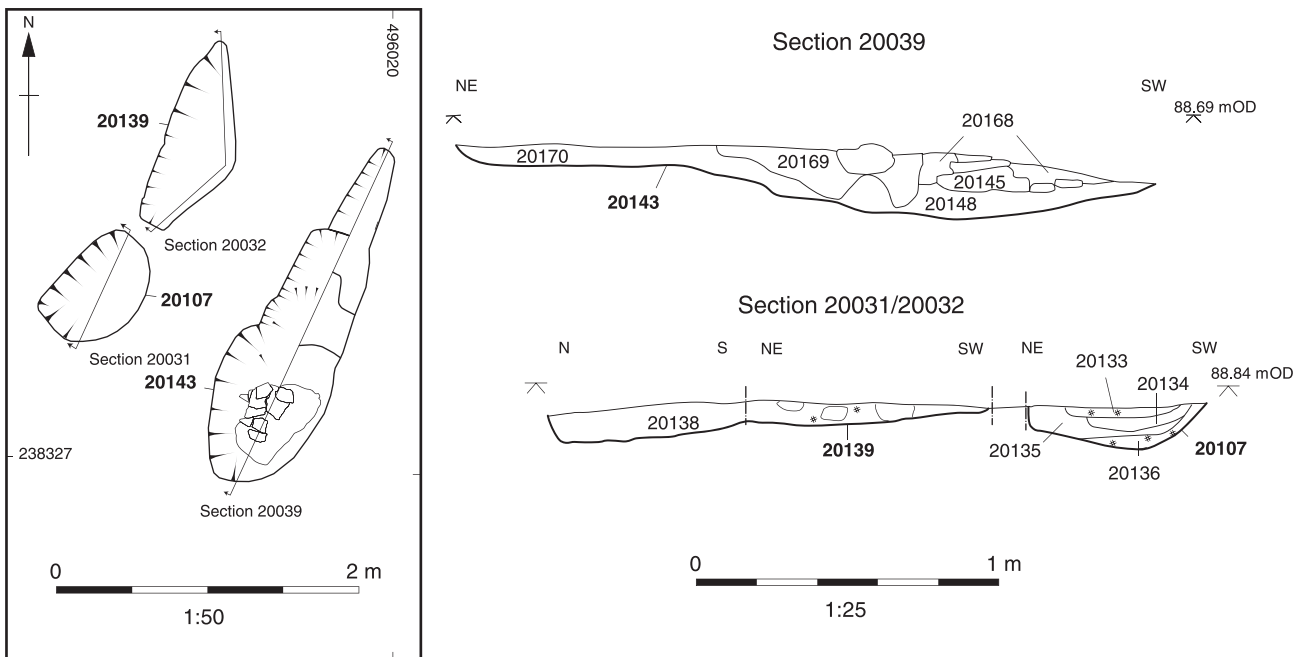


Fig. 2.25 Site 2, plan and sections of middle Roman corn driers 20139 and 20143

original boundaries. Assuming that the later ditches preserved the alignments of the original feature, however, the enclosure measured 28m by 20m. No features were identified within it.

#### *Enclosure 7*

As with the ditch that defined Enclosure 6, evidence for the ditches that originally bounded the north-eastern and south-eastern sides of Enclosure 7 had been destroyed when the boundaries were re-cut during the mid-3rd or 4th century, as ditch 20233 (below). It was uncertain whether ditch 2891, which defined the south-western side, was the original ditch or a re-cut. The latter ditch measured 1.8m wide and 0.7m deep, but no artefactual evidence was recovered from the intervention that was dug through it. The north-western side of the enclosure was defined by ditch 20154, which produced pottery dating from AD 150-240 and so may be attributed to the original phase of the complex. A total length of 14m at the eastern end of the ditch was exposed within the excavation area. The ditch was 1.3m wide and 0.45m deep with a concave profile. At the north-eastern end it terminated 1.3m from ditch 20233, perhaps to provide access between Enclosure 7 and the area to the north-west, beyond the edge of the site. In total, Enclosure 7 measured 30m by 22m.

The only feature that was identified within Enclosure 7 was a ditch (20205) that extended obliquely across the enclosure on a north-south alignment. The ditch extended for 20m and measured 0.25-0.65m wide and 0.1m deep. No artefactual material was recovered, and although it intersected with the south-eastern part of enclosure ditch 20233, the fills of the two features appeared identical and so no stratigraphic relationship could be established. Nevertheless, the anomalous alignment of this ditch raises doubts concerning whether it formed part of the enclosure complex.

#### *Possible enclosure north-west of Enclosure 7*

Ditch 20233 continued beyond ditch 20154, suggesting that a further enclosure was situated in this area. Part of a large circular pit (20151/20208) was situated on the north-western side of ditch 20154. It could only be partly excavated as much of the feature lay beyond the edge of the excavation, but it measured at least 1.5m in diameter and 0.6m deep and produced a single sherd of grey ware that dated from the late 2nd or early 3rd century.

#### *Enclosure 8*

A probable fifth enclosure (Enclosure 8) was situated at the north-eastern edge of the complex,



*Fig. 2.26 Site 2, partially paved hollow 20049*

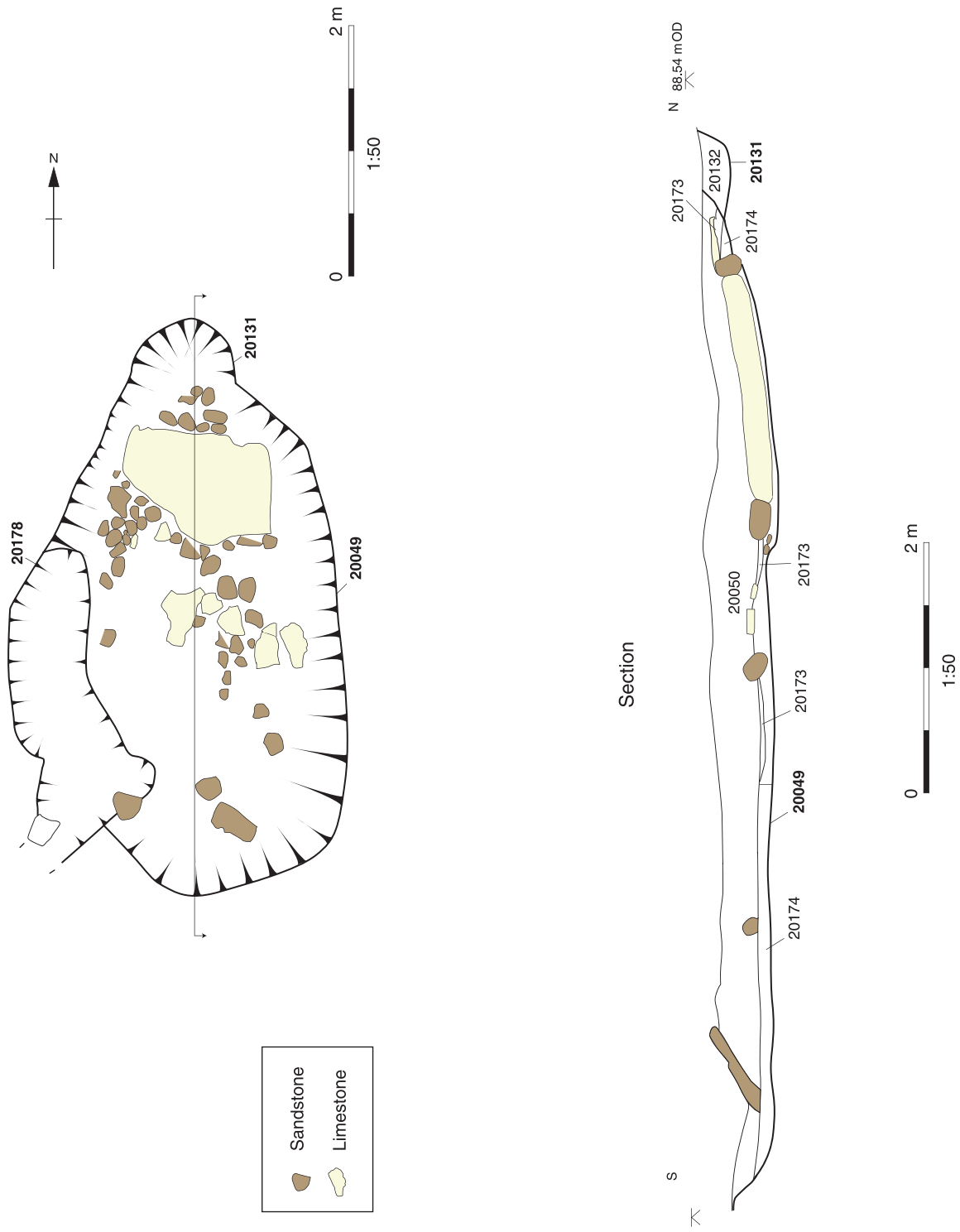


Fig. 2.27 Site 2, plan and section of hollow 20049

abutting Enclosures 4 and 5. This was a long, rectangular enclosure that was enclosed on its north-eastern side by ditch 20222, a relatively insubstantial feature that measured 0.6m wide and 0.2m deep (Fig. 2.22, section 20035). At its south-eastern end the ditch petered out, but the enclosure may have measured as much as 40m long and 10m wide.

*Features within Enclosure 8*

Five small pits were situated beside ditch 20223, which formed the south-western edge of Enclosure 8.

Pit 20071 was a discrete feature with a diameter of 0.9m and a depth of 0.5m. It contained pottery with a date range of AD 150-300.

A group of four intercutting pits (20080, 20082, 20084, 2086) was situated near the north-western end of the enclosure. Pit 20082 cut enclosure ditch 20223. The pit measured 1.25m by 0.9m and had a depth of only 0.15m. This shallow pit was cut by a second pit (20080) that also truncated a subrectangular pit (20086). Pit 20086 was also cut by a final pit (20084). None of these pits contained any datable material.

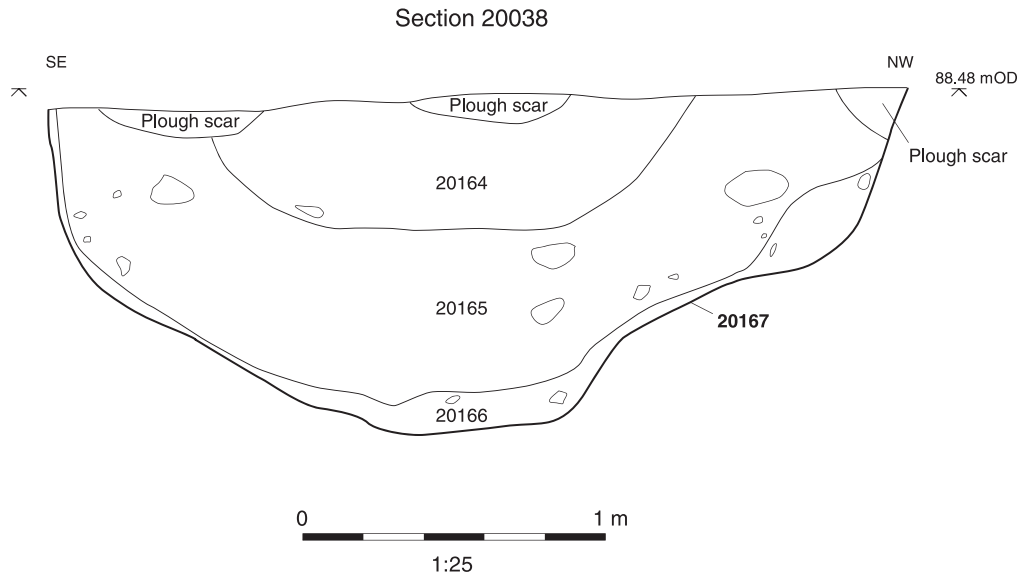


Fig. 2.28 Site 2, section through middle Roman pit/waterhole 20167

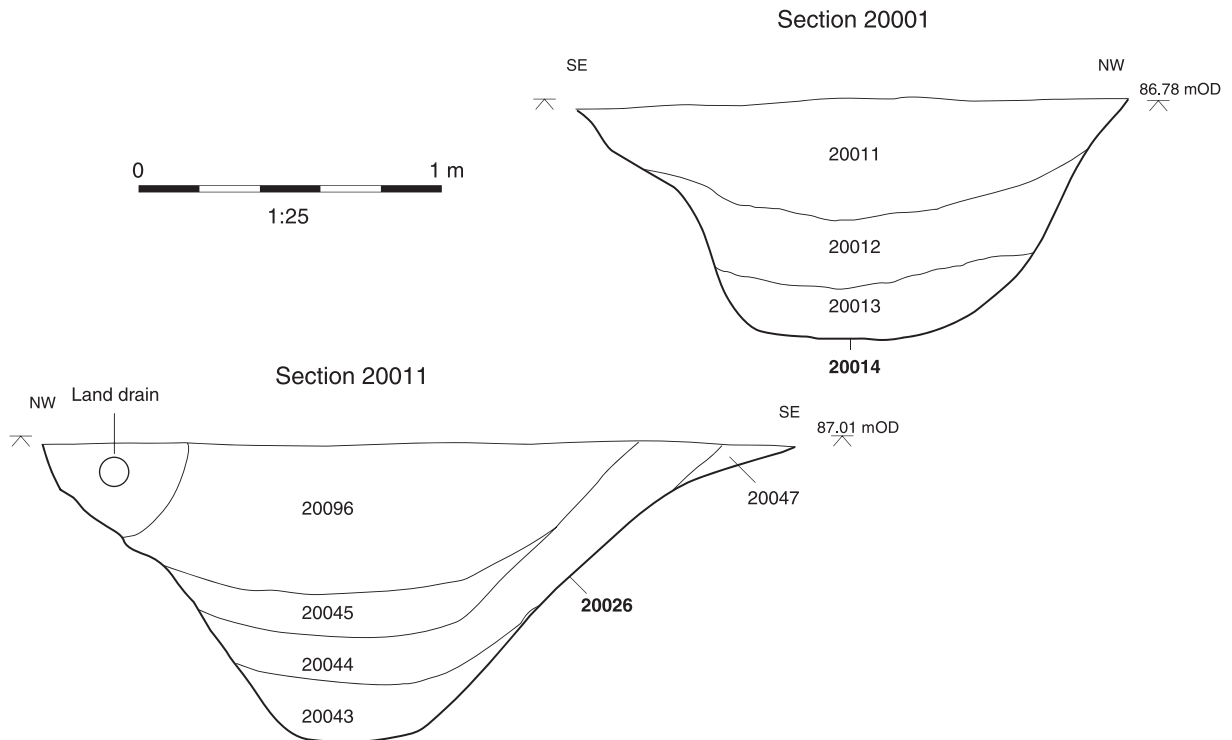


Fig. 2.29 Site 2, sections through late Roman enclosure ditches 20226 and 20233

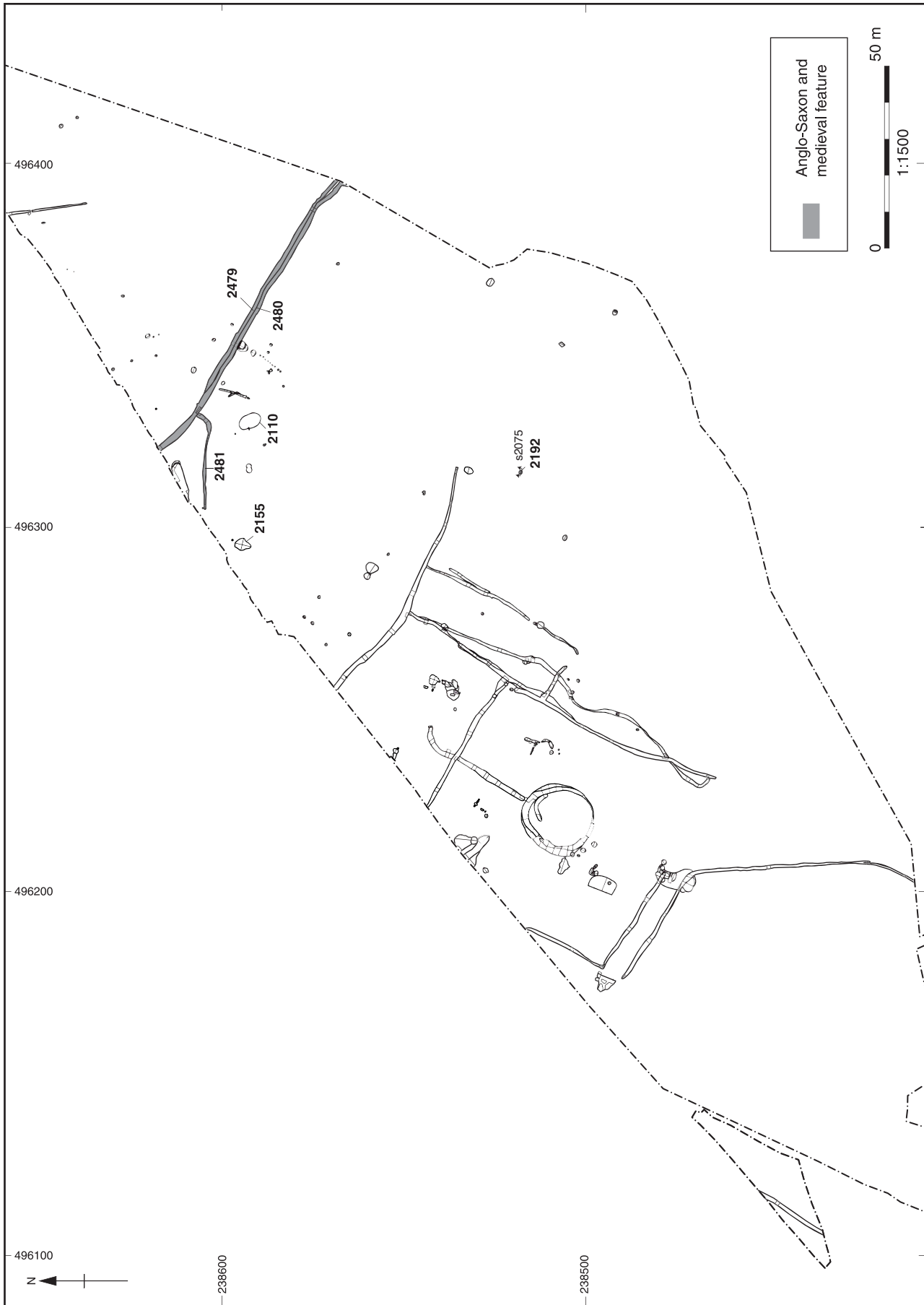


Fig. 2.30 Site 2, plan of Anglo-Saxon, medieval and undated features

### Ditch 20236

An L-shaped ditch (20236) was situated outside the south-western limit of the main complex. It lay on a different alignment from the other boundaries and produced no dating evidence, but if it was contemporary with the rest of the complex it would have formed part of an enclosure against the south-western side of Enclosure 7. The enclosure would have been rather irregular in plan due to the divergent orientation of this ditch, perhaps forming a roughly trapezoid shape, and measured 30m NE-SW, making it comparable in size to Enclosures 5 and 7, the larger enclosures of the main complex. The enclosure ditch was relatively insubstantial, measuring 0.6m wide and 0.01-0.24m deep. The ditch only enclosed part of the south-eastern side of the putative enclosure, the eastern side of which was open for a distance of 9.5m. It is uncertain whether this represented an original entrance or was the result of truncation of this part of the ditch.

### Late Roman re-cutting of Enclosures 6 and 7 (mid 3rd-4th century)

Some time after AD 250 the ditch that defined Enclosure 6 was recut (Figs 2.20 and 2.29, section 20001). The ditch (20226) exhibited a similar profile throughout, with steep sides and a fairly flat base. It measured 1.3-1.8m wide and was 0.6-0.8m deep. The ditch had three episodes of infilling, generally derived from natural silting although a small amount of pottery and animal bone was incorporated within the upper fill.

It is uncertain whether the ditches that defined Enclosure 7 were recut at the same time as those of Enclosure 6, but ditch 20233, an L-shaped ditch that formed the north-eastern and south-eastern sides of Enclosure 7, was certainly recut subsequently, on a substantial scale (Figs 2.20 and 2.29, section 20011). This was the largest ditch on the site, measuring 2.6m wide and 0.7-1.0m deep, and had a U-shaped profile. Fragments of smithing hearth bottom were recovered from the upper fill on the north-eastern side of the enclosure.

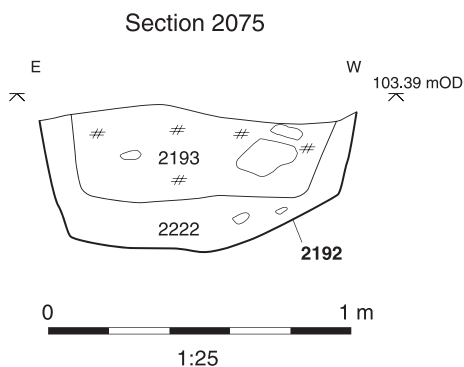


Fig. 2.31 Site 2, section through Anglo-Saxon pit 2192

### Anglo Saxon period (10th-11th century)

Anglo-Saxon activity was represented only by a single pit (2192), which contained an iron prick-spur (SF 2001) dating from the 10th-11th century. The pit measured 1.05 by 0.85m across and had a depth of 0.4m, with near vertical sides and a concave base (Figs 2.30-31). The lower fill (2222) was 0.18m thick and was similar to the underlying natural. The upper half of the pit was filled by a layer of dark brown soil (2193), from which the spur was recovered. No other artefacts were recovered from the pit.

### Medieval boundary ditches (13th-14th century)

A medieval field boundary defined by two phases of ditch (2479 and 2480) extended across the north-eastern part of the site on a NW-SE alignment (Fig. 2.30). The initial phase of the boundary was represented by ditch 2479, which was 0.8-1.1m wide and 0.35-0.4m deep. The ditch had a concave profile and a single fill from which no finds were recovered. Ditch 2479 was cut on its south-western side by the later phase, ditch 2480. Ditch 2480 measured up to 1.5m wide and 0.4m deep. Five small sherds of medieval pottery dating from the 13th-14th century were recovered from it, although residual pottery of early Roman date was also present.

Ditch 2481 branched off ditch 2480 near the north-eastern edge of the site and followed a dog-legged alignment towards the east, perhaps forming part of an enclosure abutting the boundary formed by the latter feature. It was 25m in length, 0.4-1.1m wide and up to 0.4m deep, becoming narrower and shallower to the west where it terminated.

### Undated features

Two shallow oval hollows were recorded in the north-eastern part of the site. Neither contained any artefactual material and it was uncertain whether they were archaeological in origin.

Hollow 2110 was situated within an irregularly shaped shallow spread of mid greyish-brown silty clay (2203) that measured 11m by 9m across and had a maximum depth of 0.08m. The hollow measured 6.3m by 3.8m across and was only 0.3m deep. It had a flat base. It contained three fills, the middle of which (2112) was a thin layer of gravel that may have been deliberately laid down as a gravel surface, although it could alternatively be explained as a naturally occurring stone-line.

Hollow 2155 lay near the north-western edge of the excavation area and was somewhat smaller, measuring 4.6m x 3.5m and only 0.1m deep.

### SITE 3

#### Site location

Site 3 was located in a former arable field north-west of Vale Farm (NGR SP 979 406; Fig. 2.32). It lay

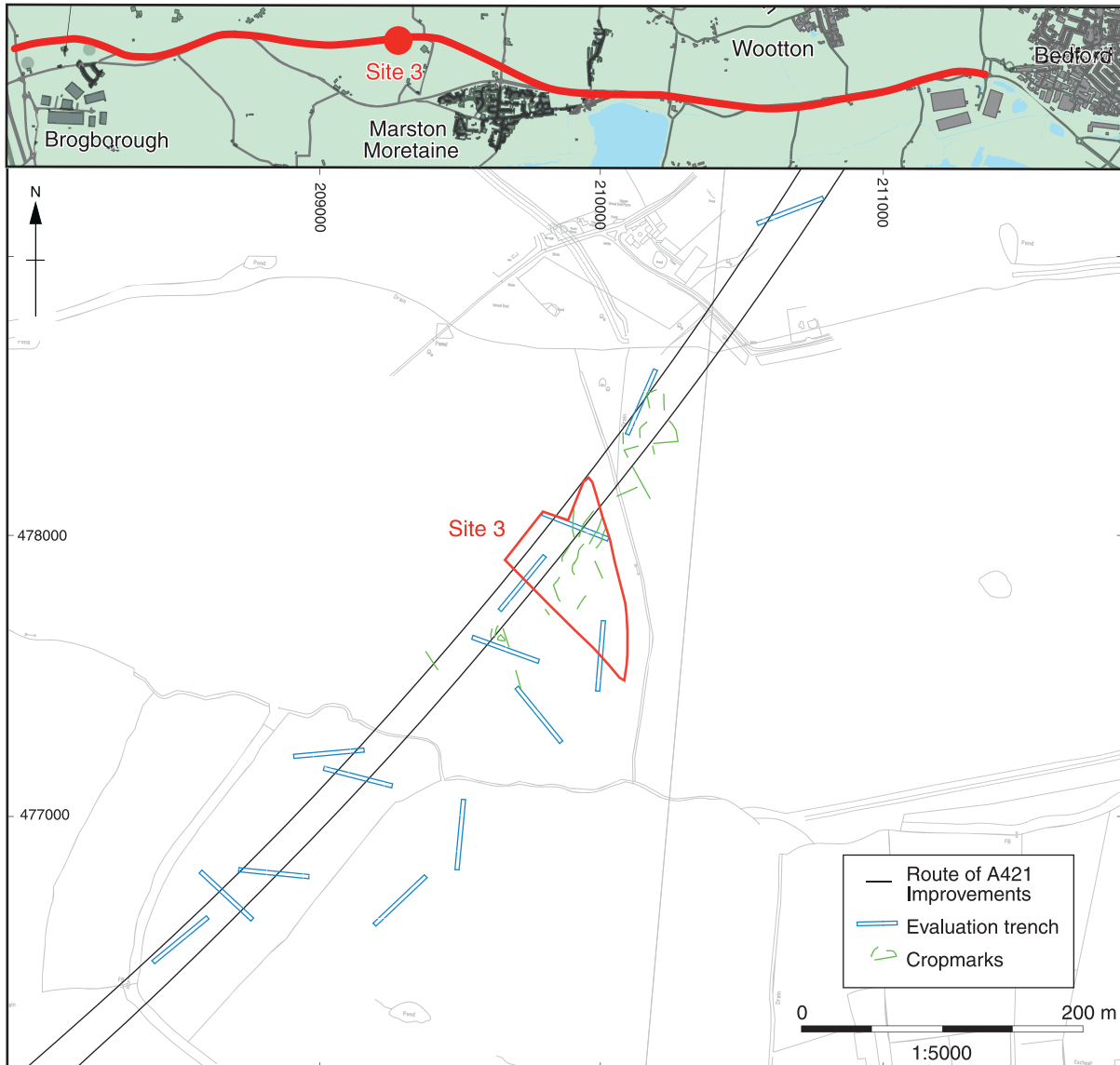


Fig. 2.32 The location of Site 3. (© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence no. 100005569)

on flat ground at *c* 45m OD, overlooked from the north-west by the ridge that formed the edge of Marston Vale. The excavated area encompassed the south-western part of an extensive complex of features that was identified by the geophysical survey and which extended to the north-east into the adjacent field (Fig. 2.33). Evaluation Trench 48 was targeted on these features, and recorded a cremation burial, ditches and discrete features, all of late Iron Age or early Roman date. An approximately triangular area encompassing a total of 6020m<sup>2</sup> was excavated.

#### Late Iron Age enclosure complex

The excavation exposed the south-western edge of a complex of field or enclosure boundaries defined by ditches cut into the natural clay (Figs 2.34-35). The results of the geophysical survey indicated that the

complex extends to the north-east for at least 100m beyond the area of the excavation. The excavation defined the western and southern limits of the complex, which were bounded by a single, somewhat circuitous outer ditch enclosing an area that was subdivided into three enclosures by further, subsidiary boundary ditches. The part of the complex that was exposed within the excavation measured *c* 65m by 50m.

#### The outer boundary ditch

The limits of the enclosure complex were defined by a single continuous ditch. Parts of the ditch had been recut, but this appeared to have been undertaken on a rather piecemeal basis and none of the recuts extended along the entire length of the boundary. The earliest surviving part of the boundary was a section of ditch on the western side of the enclosure complex (3352; Fig. 2.36). The

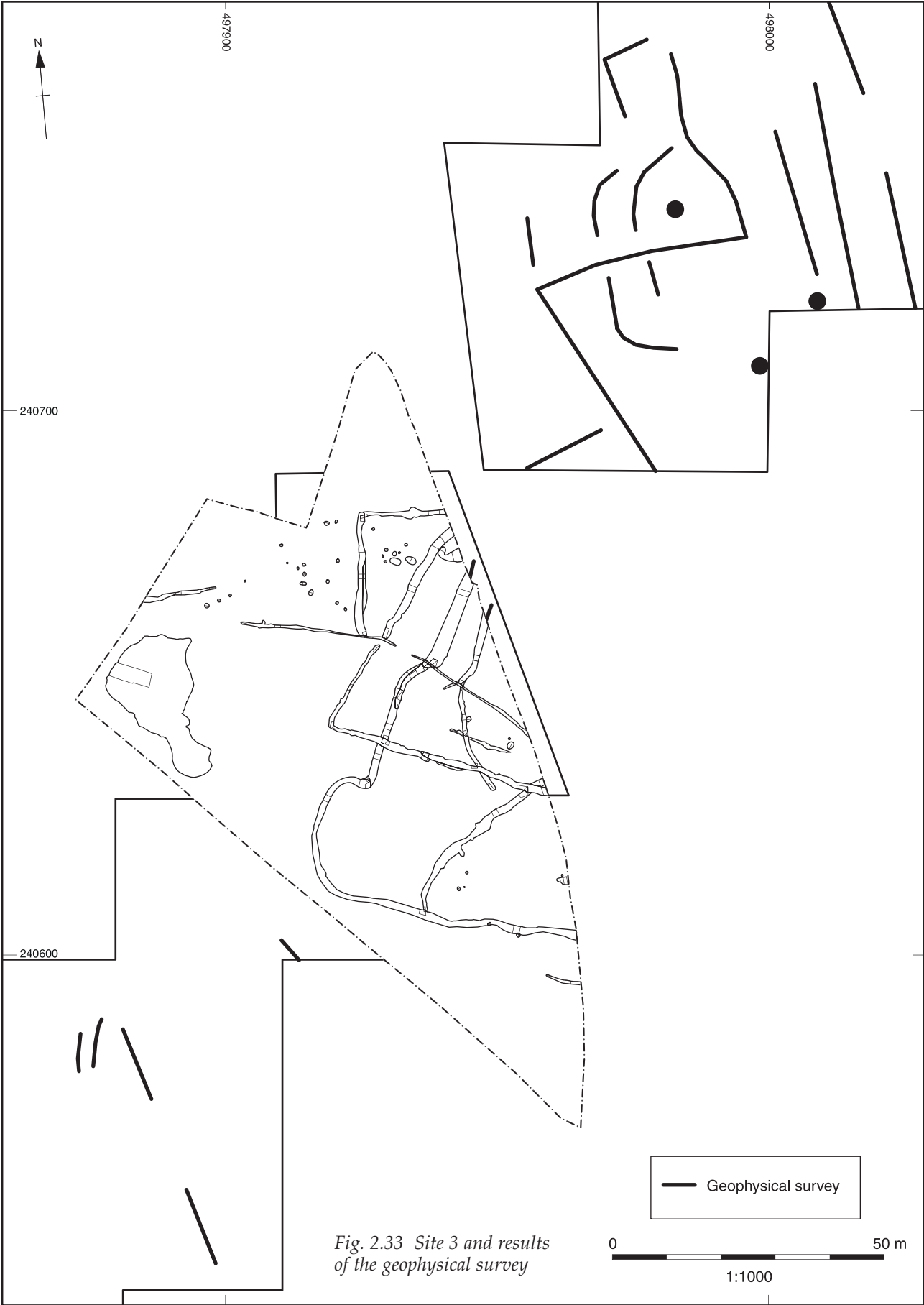


Fig. 2.33 Site 3 and results of the geophysical survey





Fig. 2.34 General view of Site 3 from the south-west

ditch had clearly originally been more extensive, and may have extended for the entire length of the boundary, but it had been truncated to both north and south by the digging of subsequent phases and a total length of only 24m survived. It was quite a substantial feature measuring 1.4m wide and up to 0.74m deep, and had a distinctly V-shaped profile (Fig. 2.37, section 3055; Fig. 2.38). It was oriented approximately NNE-SSW and curved toward the east at the northern end, with a hint of a curve toward the west at the southern end. Its fills comprised a sequence of clay deposits the grey colouration and green dendritic mottling of which were characteristic of formation in anaerobic, waterlogged conditions, although no preserved plant remains were observed. It produced an assemblage of nearly 600g of pottery, most of which comprised 'Belgic'-type wares the date range of which spans the 1st century AD, but which also included sherds from a slack- or S-profiled jar the form of which is reminiscent of middle Iron Age types and suggests a date early in the same century.

The northern part of ditch 3352 was recut as a shallower ditch (3351) with a more open profile (Fig. 2.37, section 3040). This recut extended for c 10m and followed the curving alignment of this part of ditch 3352 quite precisely. At its southern end it appeared to simply terminate, and to the north it was truncated by a more substantial, later phase of the boundary, represented by ditch 3350, which also truncated the northern end of ditch 3352 at this point. Ditch 3351 contained a single fill,

within which had been deposited an almost complete, though fragmented, pedestal jar, with the pedestal broken off and missing (3126, SF 3008), and body and base sherds from a large jar with a perforated base (3127, SF 3009; Figs 2.39-40). It is possible that these vessels derived from a disturbed cremation burial; pedestal jars like vessel 3126 were commonly placed as ancillary vessels and vessel 3127 would have been a suitable size for use as an urn. A very small quantity of burnt human bone, amounting to less than 0.2g, as well as 6g of burnt animal bone, was recovered from a soil sample (3011) taken from the fill of vessel 3127.

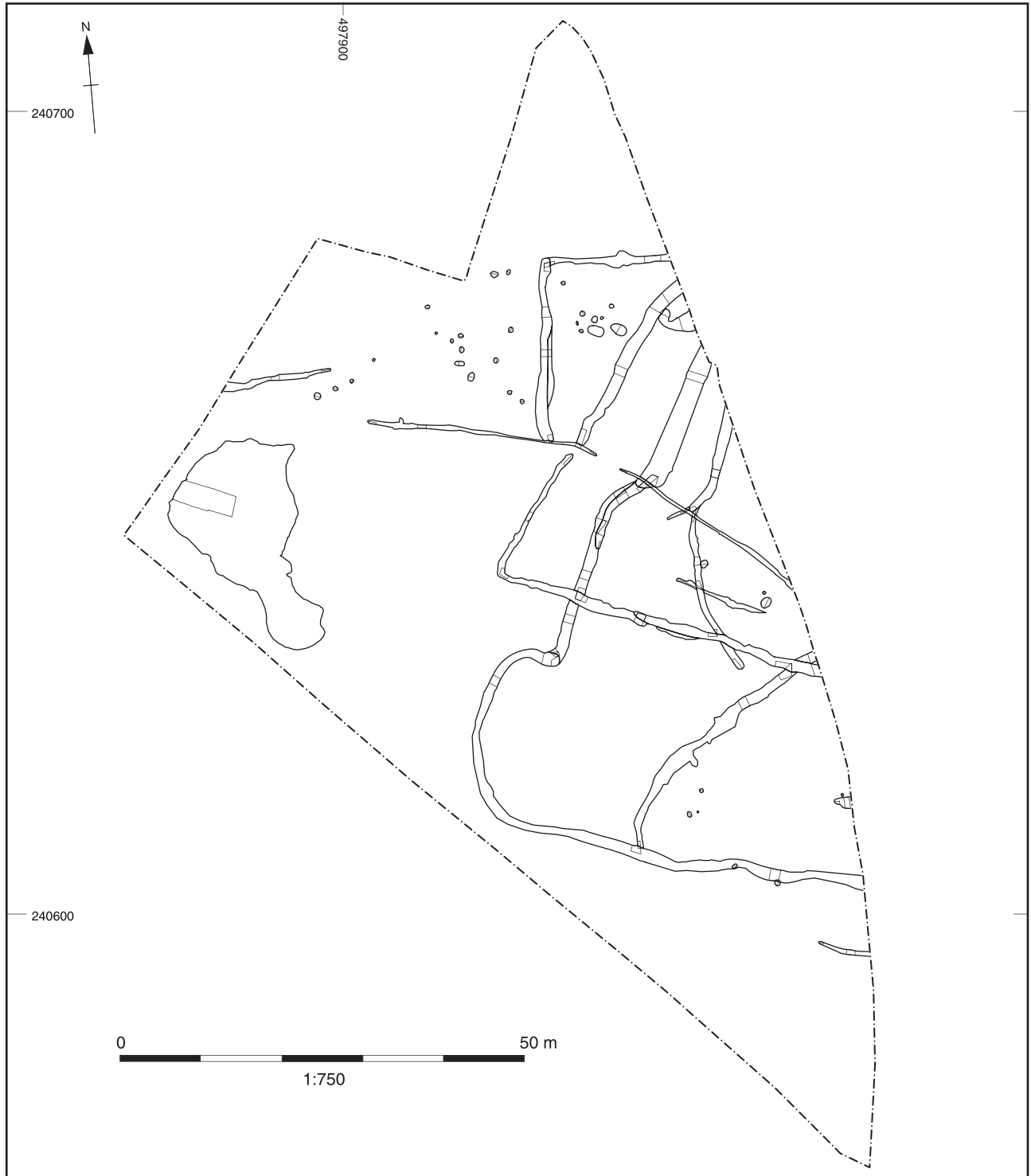
Ditch 3350 represented the recutting of the northern part of the boundary to a quite substantial depth, similar to the depth of ditch 3352 (Fig. 2.37, section 3019). The new ditch was, however, considerably wider, measuring up to 2.55m, and had removed any evidence for the earlier phases in this part of the boundary. This was the straightest section of the boundary, and extended for c 19m before continuing beyond the edge of the excavation area.

The southern end of ditch 3352 was truncated by recut 3359, which described a loop to the west before extending eastward to enclose the southern side of the enclosure complex, continuing beyond the edge of the excavation area. The western part of the ditch was quite deep, measuring up to 0.5m, but was not particularly wide and had a steep, V-shaped profile (Fig. 2.37, section 3058). The ditch became progressively more shallow to the east

and was only 0.24m deep near the eastern edge of the excavation. The character of its fills differed somewhat from those of the ditches defining the other parts of the boundary in being almost sterile. It consisted of material that differed only slightly from the natural substrate and contained only a very small quantity of pottery and animal bone.

*Enclosure 1*

Enclosure 1 was situated within the south-western corner of the complex. Its shape was extremely irregular due to the circuitous alignment of the outer boundary ditch, which defined its western and southern sides, and of the curvilinear ditch that divided it from Enclosure 2,



*Fig. 2.35 Site 3, plan of all archaeological features*

which abutted its eastern side. The boundary with Enclosure 3, which abutted its north-eastern side, may originally have been quite regular but was subsequently altered to adopt a more curvilinear form. Enclosure 1 measured c 43m N-S x 30m E-W, and could be accessed directly from Enclosure 3 and, after the boundary with that

enclosure was altered, via a driveway that extended alongside the western boundary of the complex.

Enclosure 1 was divided from Enclosure 2 by ditch 3362, which branched off ditch 3359 roughly half way along the part of the latter feature that was exposed within the excavation area. Ditch

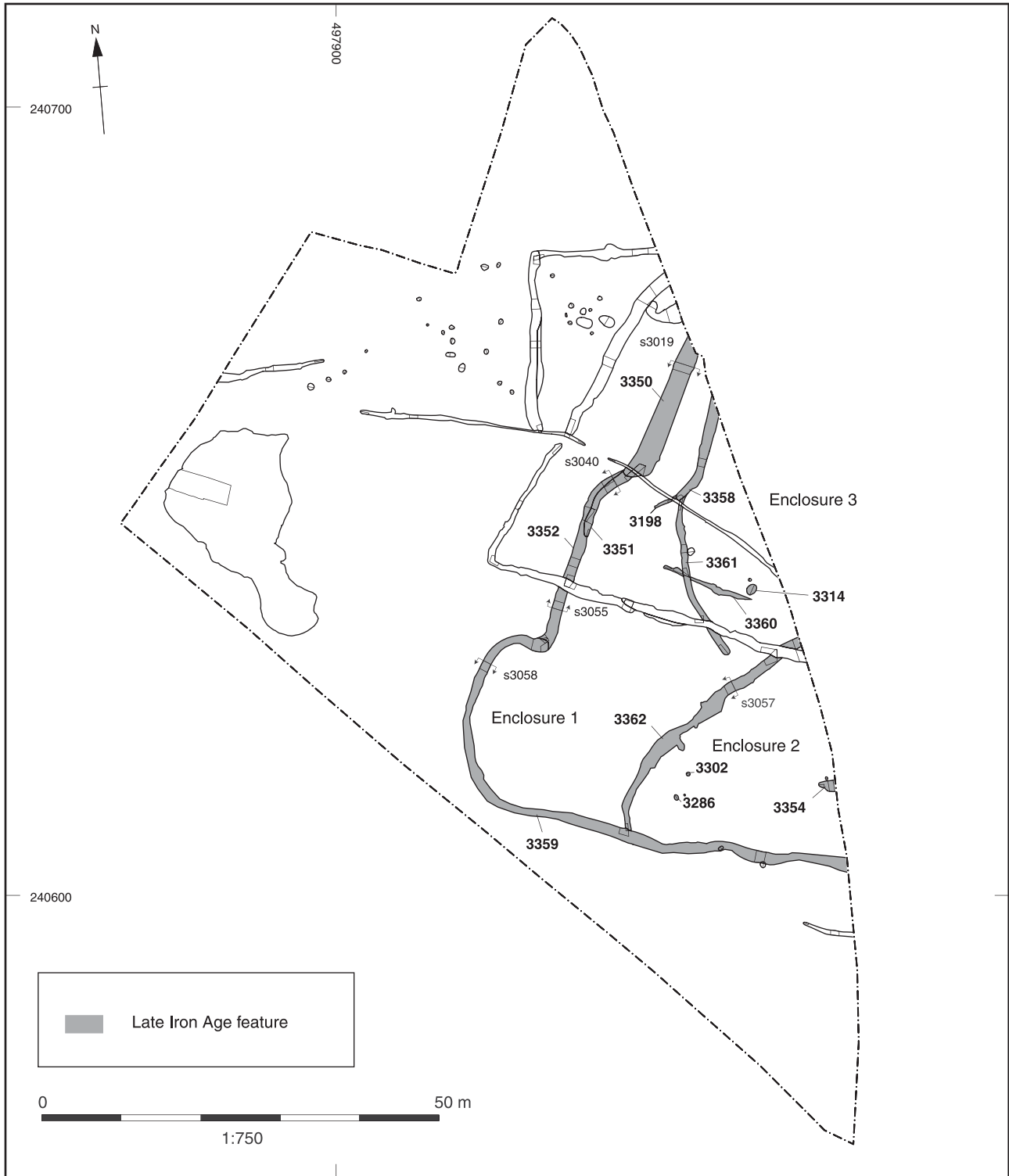


Fig. 2.36 Site 3, plan of late Iron Age features

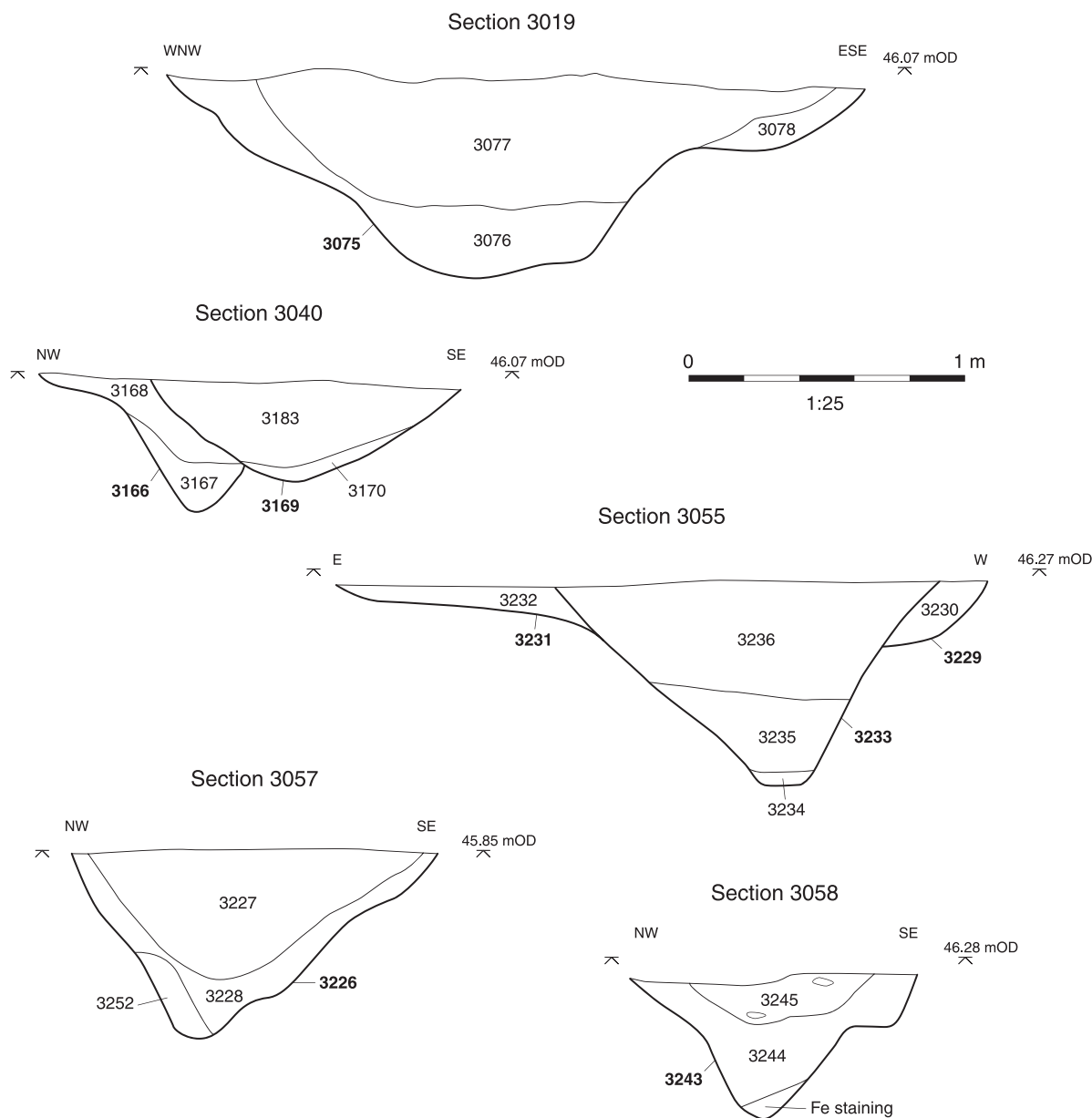


Fig. 2.37 Site 3, sections through late Iron Age boundary ditches



Fig. 2.38 Site 3, section through late Iron Age ditch 3352

3362 curved eastward, extending for *c* 32m before continuing beyond the eastern edge of the excavation. Its fills were distinctly darker and greyer than those of the majority of features on the site, and abundant charcoal fragments that derived from the burning of roundwood for fuel were recovered from its fill. The pottery assemblage recovered from the ditch was not particularly large and was generally late Iron Age in character, but included, from the uppermost fill, three sherds from a necked ovoid jar that is likely to date from the second half of the 1st century AD. A copper alloy bracelet (SF 3010) and four small fragments of ceramic tile were also recovered from this deposit, as well as a small fragment of sandstone with a single worked surface that may be a fragment from a quern.



Fig. 2.39 Site 3, excavation of possible redeposited cremation vessels 3126 and 3127 in ditch 3351

Unlike the boundary with Enclosure 2, which appeared to be of a single phase, the boundary between Enclosure 1 and Enclosure 3 had undergone alterations over time, of which three phases were identified (below). The earliest of these was represented by ditch 3360, a shallow feature no more than 0.2m deep that extended for at least 12m on a straight WNW-ESE alignment. Due to the shallow nature of the feature it was uncertain whether the western end represented an original terminal or whether the ditch simply petered out. Its eastern end was truncated by a medieval plough furrow. The almost complete skeleton of a horse (3188) lay on the base of the ditch near the western end. The head and pelvis were missing, but this may have been due to truncation, as the ditch was very shallow. In order to fit the animal into so small a feature it had been partially dismembered and bent back on itself, with the rear legs lying alongside the torso (Fig. 2.41). A small quantity of other cattle, sheep/goat and pig bones were also recovered from the ditch fill, but these may have been incidental inclusions.

#### Enclosure 2

Enclosure 2 was not completely exposed within the excavation area, its eastern extent lying beyond the limits of the investigation. It was located against the southern boundary of the enclosure complex and was bounded to the west by

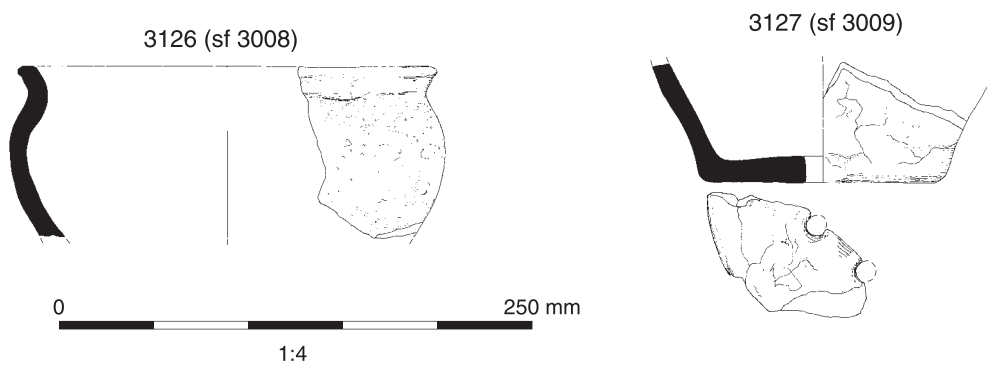
Enclosure 1 and to the north-west by Enclosure 3, the boundary with both these enclosures being defined by the curvilinear ditch 3362. The part of the enclosure within the excavation area measured 26m N-S x 28m E-W. Two possible postholes (3302 and 3286) were identified near the western corner of the enclosure, and a possible ditch terminal (3354) extended into it from the eastern edge of the excavation area.

#### Enclosure 3

Only the south-western part of Enclosure 3 lay within the area of the excavation, and its full shape and extent were consequently not established. The boundary between this enclosure and Enclosure 1 was altered over time (below) with the result that the shape of the enclosure was changed. In its earliest form it may have been fairly regular in plan, with a straight southern boundary defined by ditch 3360. A single pit within the enclosure produced Iron Age pottery. The pit (3314) was a shallow feature that measured c 1.5m in diameter and 0.35m deep, and contained a single fill (3315) that yielded a small assemblage of pottery including part of a bowl with a slack-sided profile indicative of a date in the first half of the 1st century.

#### Alterations to Enclosures 1 and 3

While pottery of late Iron Age type was still current, the boundary between Enclosures 1 and 3 was altered in order to create a droveway that extended alongside the western boundary of the enclosure complex, providing an access to Enclosure 1 that bypassed Enclosure 3. At the same time the boundary between the two enclosures was changed to a NW-SE alignment. The latter boundary was represented by ditch 3361, which was somewhat deeper than ditch 3360, at 0.5m, and had a more curvilinear alignment. At its southern end the ditch terminated 3m from ditch 3362, the intervening causeway presumably serving as a point of access between Enclosure 1 and Enclosure 3. The northern end of the ditch was truncated by ditch 3358, but its alignment suggests that it may originally have converged with ditch 3198. The latter was a shallow ditch 0.4m wide and 0.24m deep that extended for a little over 3m on a ENE-WSW alignment, and at its ENE end was, like ditch 3361, truncated by ditch 3358. It is possible that ditches 3198 and 3361 originally converged and that ditch 3358 was effectively a recut of the northern part of this alignment. That no evidence for such a continuation survived may be attributed to its complete destruction during the digging of the recut, which measured 1m wide and a little over 0.6m deep (Fig. 2.42) and was much more substantial than the earlier ditches. The northern part of ditch 3198/3361 would thus have lain parallel to, and c 4m from, ditch 3350, possibly defining a droveway that passed between Enclosure 3 and the boundary of the enclosure complex, and provided access to Enclosure 1. Part of a leg from a juvenile dog, represented by an articulated tibia



*Fig. 2.40 Site 3, possible redeposited cremation vessels 3126 and 3127 in ditch 3351*



*Fig. 2.41 Site 3, horse burial in ditch 3360*



Fig. 2.42 Site 3, section through ditch 3358

and metapodial, was recovered from the upper fill of ditch 3361 immediately adjacent to the point where it was truncated by ditch 3358. The articulating tibia and metapodial from the dog burial were submitted for radiocarbon dating and returned a determination of 350–40 cal BC (95.4% certainty; SUERC-30625; 2120±35BP).

#### *Early Roman reorganisation of the enclosure complex*

The arrival on the site of pottery made in a Roman tradition coincided with a complete reorganisation of the boundaries defining the part of the enclosure complex exposed within the excavation area. The rather circuitous ditches of the late Iron Age phase were replaced by more strictly linear boundaries, and although the basic orientation of the complex was retained, its southern and western boundaries were moved to the north and west (Fig. 2.43). At about the same time a triangular annex containing a small cremation cemetery was added to the western side of the main complex.

#### *Enclosure 4*

The new western and southern limits of the enclosure complex were defined within the area of the excavation by an L-shaped ditch (3346/3365/3364) that measured at least 42m by 42m and was interrupted by a single entrance located on the western side. The boundary was considerably more substantial to the north of the entrance where it was defined by ditch 3346, which measured as much as 1.7m wide and 0.8m deep (Fig. 2.44, section 3029), than it was to the south. The fill of the ditch was quite dark and grey in character (Fig. 2.45) and contained a

particularly large assemblage of pottery amounting to more than 3kg, as well as a heat-blackened stone with one worked surface that may be a fragment from a quern, and the only coin from the excavation. The latter was a sestertius (SF 2007) that was probably issued during the 1st century, although the degree of wear may indicate that it was deposited during the 2nd. At the northern end of the ditch, where it continued beyond the edge of the excavation area, there was a suggestion of a curve towards the east, but insufficient of this was exposed within the excavation area to be certain whether this represented a return that enclosed the northern side of the enclosure complex or whether it was a more slight deviation in the alignment of the boundary. The base of the ditch rose up towards the terminal that defined the northern side of the entrance through the boundary, where it was only 0.4m deep.

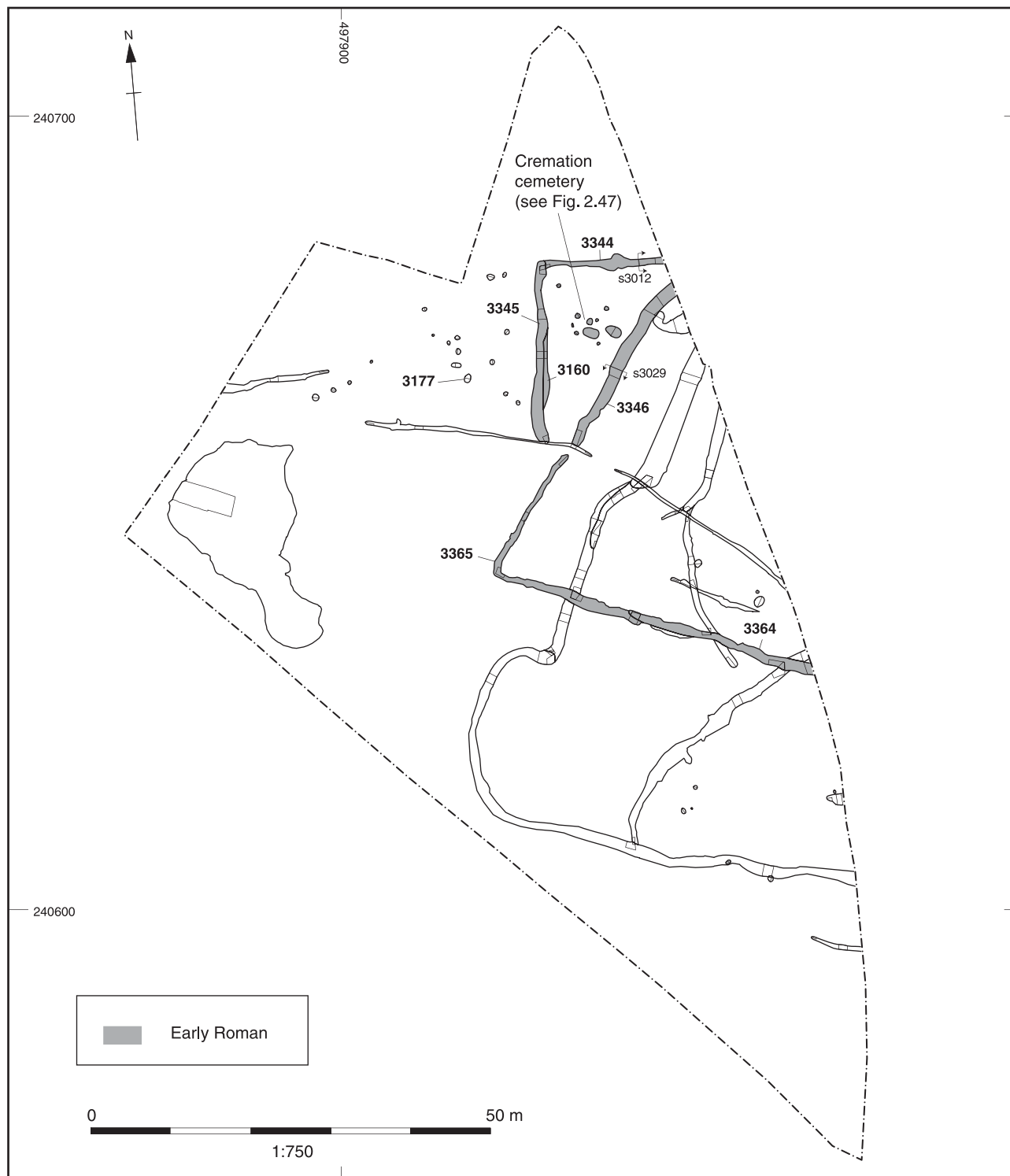
To the south of the entrance the western boundary of the enclosure complex was a much slighter feature (3365), measuring no more than 0.7m wide and 0.2m deep, and was also considerably less productive of artefacts. At its southern end the ditch turned a right angle to the east to enclose the southern side of the enclosure complex, cutting across the boundaries of the late Iron Age complex (Fig. 2.46), and here it became rather more substantial, with a depth of up to 0.7m. Some 20m from the south-western corner of the complex, ditch 3365 was truncated by the western end of ditch 3364, which extended eastward on the same alignment. It was uncertain whether the boundary defined by ditch 3365 had originally terminated at this point, and was subsequently extended by the digging of ditch 3364, or whether ditch 3364 represented the

recutting of part of ditch 3365. Ditch 3364 was of similar proportions to ditch 3365 but yielded a larger assemblage of artefacts, which included an edge fragment from a saddle quern and two large kiln bar fragments (SF 3011). It is possible that the kiln bar pieces represent a substantial proportion of a single bar, but if so the middle part is missing as they did not refit.

***The cremation cemetery***

*The cemetery enclosure*

The cremation cemetery was situated within a triangular annex (Enclosure 5) that was defined by an L-shaped ditch (3160/3344/3345), with the western boundary of the enclosure complex, represented by ditch 3346, serving as the south-eastern side



*Fig. 2.43 Site 3, plan of early Roman features*



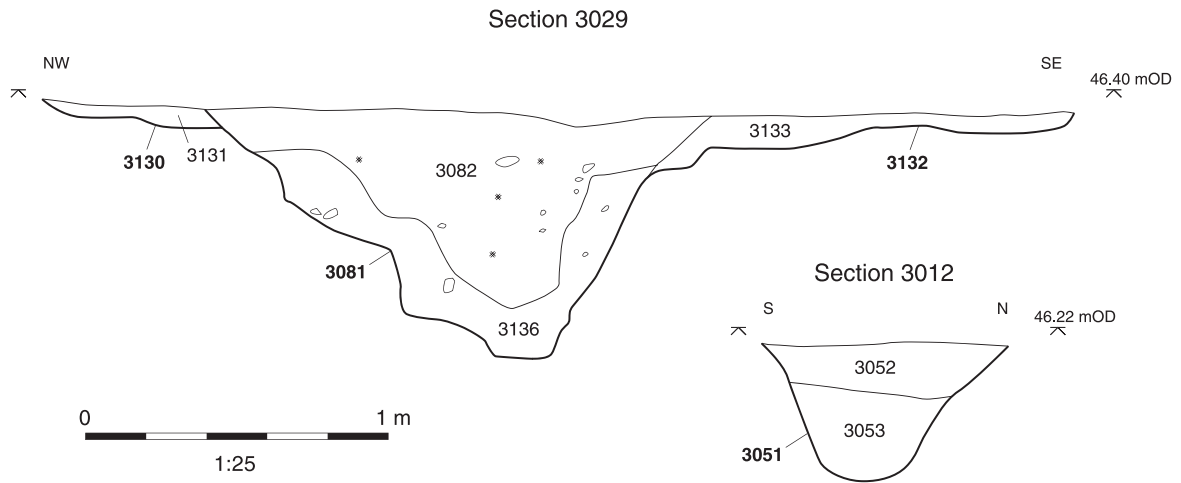


Fig. 2.44 Site 3, sections through early Roman boundary ditches

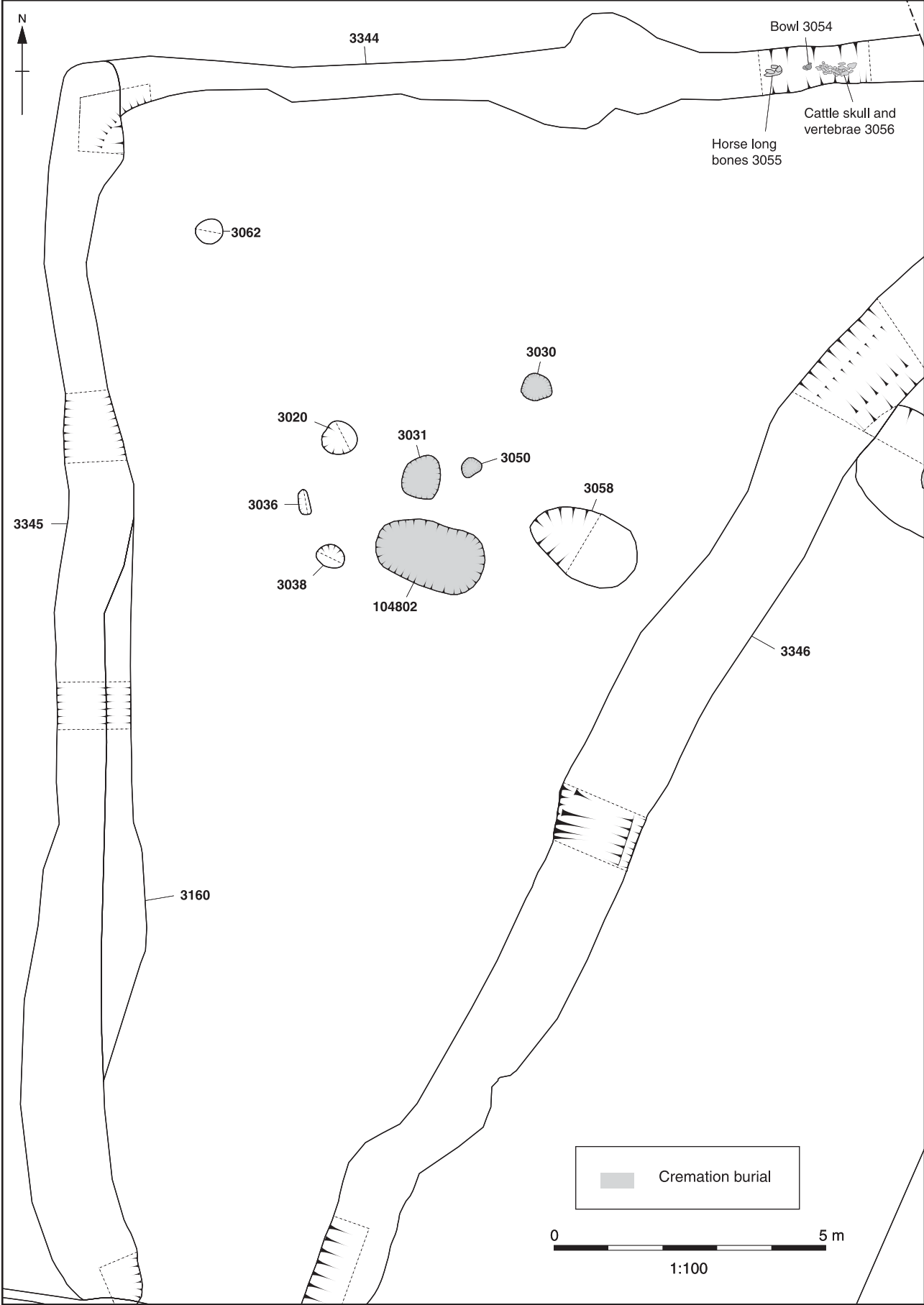


Fig. 2.45 Site 3, section through ditch 3346



Fig. 2.46 Site 3, early Roman ditch 3365 cutting through late Iron Age ditch 3352

The Iron Age and Roman landscape of Marston Vale



(Fig. 2.47). The enclosure measured *c* 22m N-S and at least 16m E-W, although the north-eastern corner, and a possible junction of ditch 3344 with ditch 3346, lay beyond the edge of the excavation area. Access was provided via an entrance at the south-western corner, which was located immediately adjacent to the entrance into the enclosure complex.

The northern side of the boundary enclosing the annex was defined by ditch 3344. This ditch was truncated at its western end by ditch 3345 but it is likely that ditch 3160 was part of the same feature, enclosing the western side of the annex. Ditch 3344 was relatively slight, with steep sides and a depth of 0.44m, but contained an unusual deposit of animal bone and pottery (Figs 2.47-48). After the ditch had silted up slightly, the articulated vertebral column and skull of a cow (3056) had been placed on its base. The vertebral column lay aligned along the ditch with the skull at its eastern end, lying inverted on the upper vertebrae in a position that would not have been possible had the connecting tissue been intact. The bones, although maintaining their original form, were extremely poorly preserved and crumbled when an attempt was made to remove them. A damaged, but substantially complete, hemispherical bowl in a fine sandy oxidised fabric (3054) had been placed upright on the base of the ditch a short distance from the cattle remains. The form of



Fig. 2.48 Site 3, deposit of animal bone and pottery in ditch 3344

Fig. 2.47 (opposite) Site 3, plan of the cremation cemetery

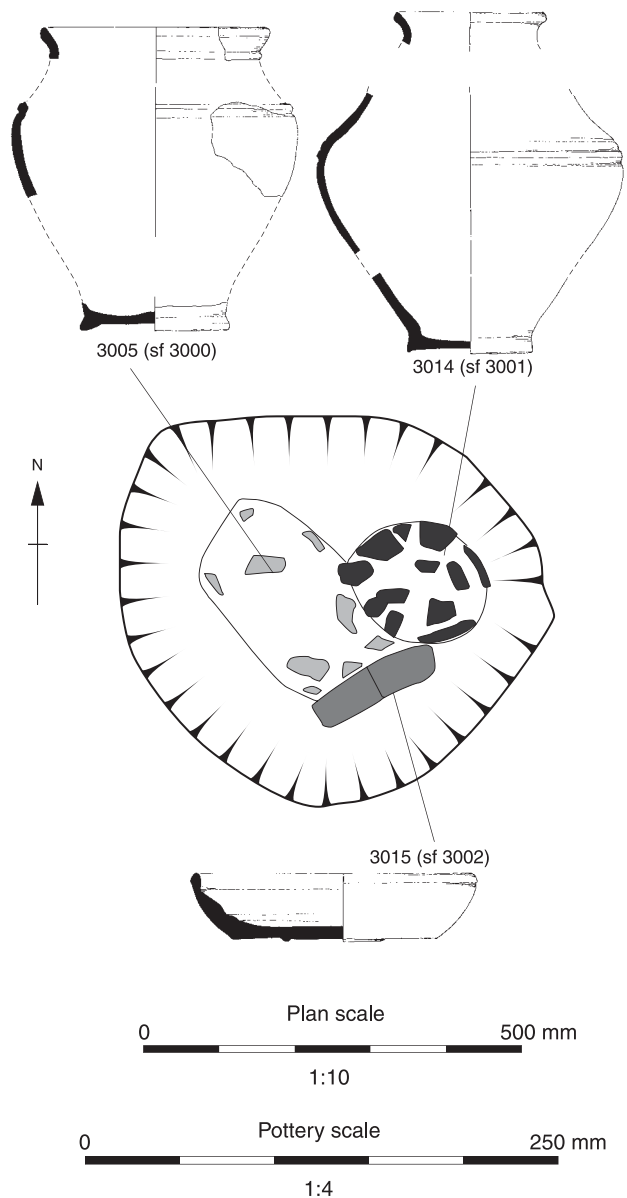


Fig. 2.49 Site 3, cremation burial 3030

the bowl imitated that of samian form Drag. 37, and it was decorated with rouletting and incised decoration. Beyond the bowl lay a group of horse leg bones that were clearly not articulated and appeared to have been placed in a bundle (3055).

The western boundary of the annex had been subsequently recut on a more substantial scale (3345), although this refurbishment did not extend to its other sides. The newly redug ditch measured 0.95m wide and 0.50-0.68m deep and contained very little artefactual material. Four urned cremation burials (3030, 3031, 3050 and 104802) were clustered together in the central part of the annex, including one (104802) that had been excavated during the evaluation stage of the investigation (Fig. 2.47). The burials were not well preserved, having suffered from a combination of plough-truncation and fragmentation of the pottery vessels

due to the weight of overlying soil. Five pits were also scattered around the interior of the annex.

*Cremation burials*

Cremation burial 3030 (Fig. 2.49) comprised a cinerary urn (3005) and two ancillary vessels (3014 and 3015), which had been placed in a shallow subcircular pit (3003) that survived to a depth of 0.16m. All three vessels were highly fragmented. The urn was a sandy grey ware globular jar (3005, SF 3000), which lay on its side. A small sandy grey ware platter (3015, SF 3002) lay propped up on one edge against the side of the urn, and a globular beaker (3014, SF 3001) was situated beside it. The urn contained the remains of a single adult, tentatively identified as a young female (3116).

Cremation burial 3031 (Fig. 2.50) was the shallowest of the group, and had consequently

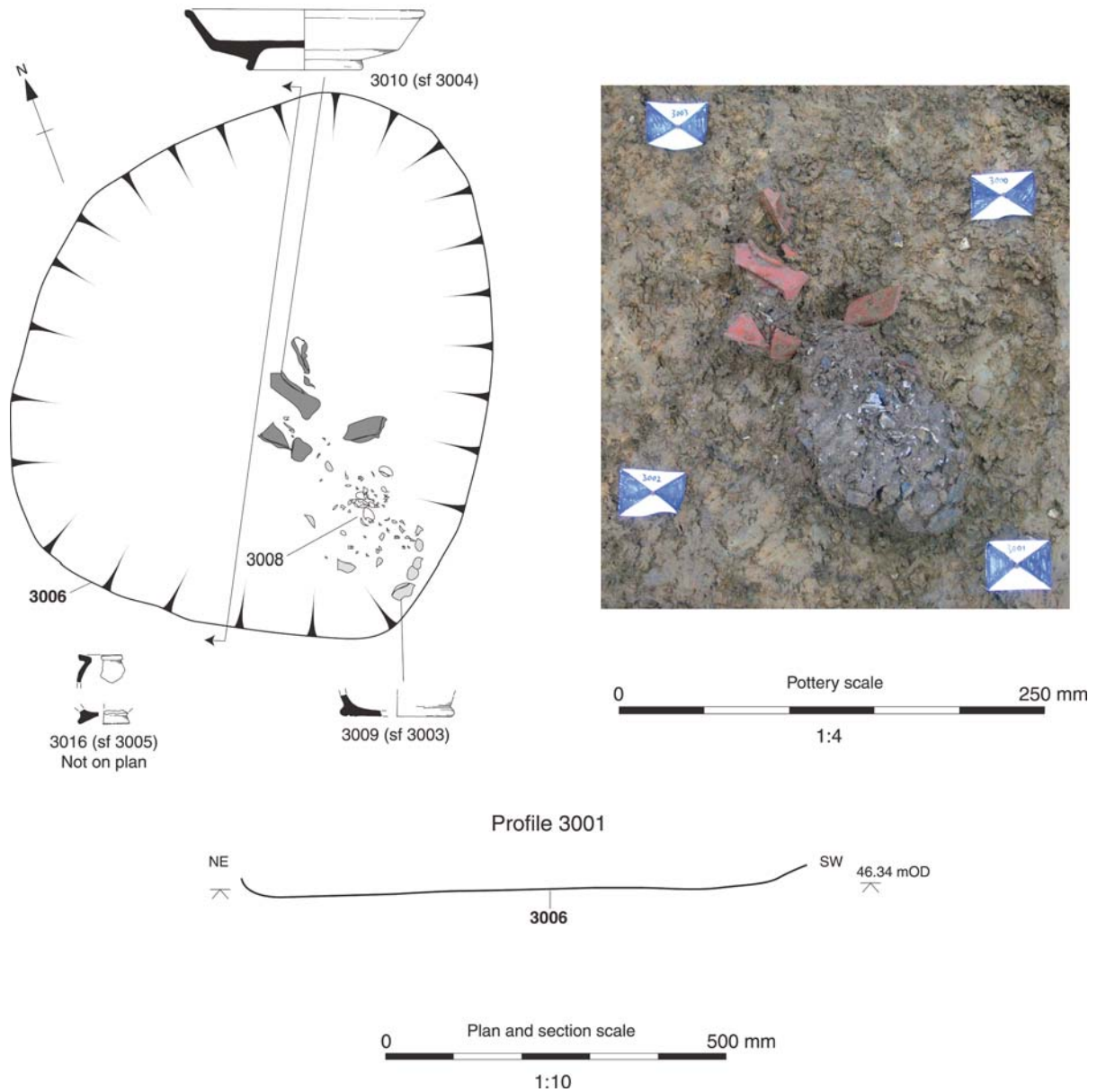


Fig. 2.50 Site 3, cremation burial 3031

been most affected by truncation from subsequent ploughing of the site, as a result of which only the base of the pit (3006) survived. The urn, a large, severely fragmented globular beaker (3009, SF 3003), was represented by a collection of very small sherds and was missing the rim due to truncation, and it is likely that the cremation deposit within it had been similarly reduced as only a little over 0.2kg of bone was recovered (3008), representing the partial remains of an adult of undetermined sex. The burial was accompanied by a South Gaulish samian ware platter (3010, SF 3004) and a fine oxidised globular beaker (3016, SF 3005), each of which was represented by only a few sherds. The beaker was particularly fragmented and the sherds did not appear to be *in situ*.

Cremation burial 3050 (Fig. 2.51) survived in rather better condition, and although a plough furrow had cut through it, this had not caused significant damage to the urn. The pit (3043) in which the burial had been interred was steep-sided and survived to a depth of 0.19, and within it lay the sandy grey ware narrow-necked jar (3045,

SF 3006) that had been used as an urn. The vessel contained a little over 0.3kg of cremated bone (3049), in addition to which further such material (3044) was scattered across the base of the burial pit. It is uncertain whether this had spilled from the urn or represented a discrete, perhaps deliberate, deposit. Unfortunately the urn was badly fragmented and it was not possible to establish whether any of this damage had been sustained at the time of its insertion into the pit, and might therefore have been the source of such a spillage. The vessel had toppled over to the north-west, most likely during backfilling, but this does not appear to have been the cause of the spillage as most of deposit 3044 lay to the south and south-west of the urn. All of the cremated bone from the burial came from an adult of undetermined sex, and is likely to represent the remains of a single individual. No ancillary vessel was recognised during excavation of the feature, but the possible presence of a second vessel was indicated by the recovery from a soil sample of fragments from an unidentified vessel in grog-tempered ware.

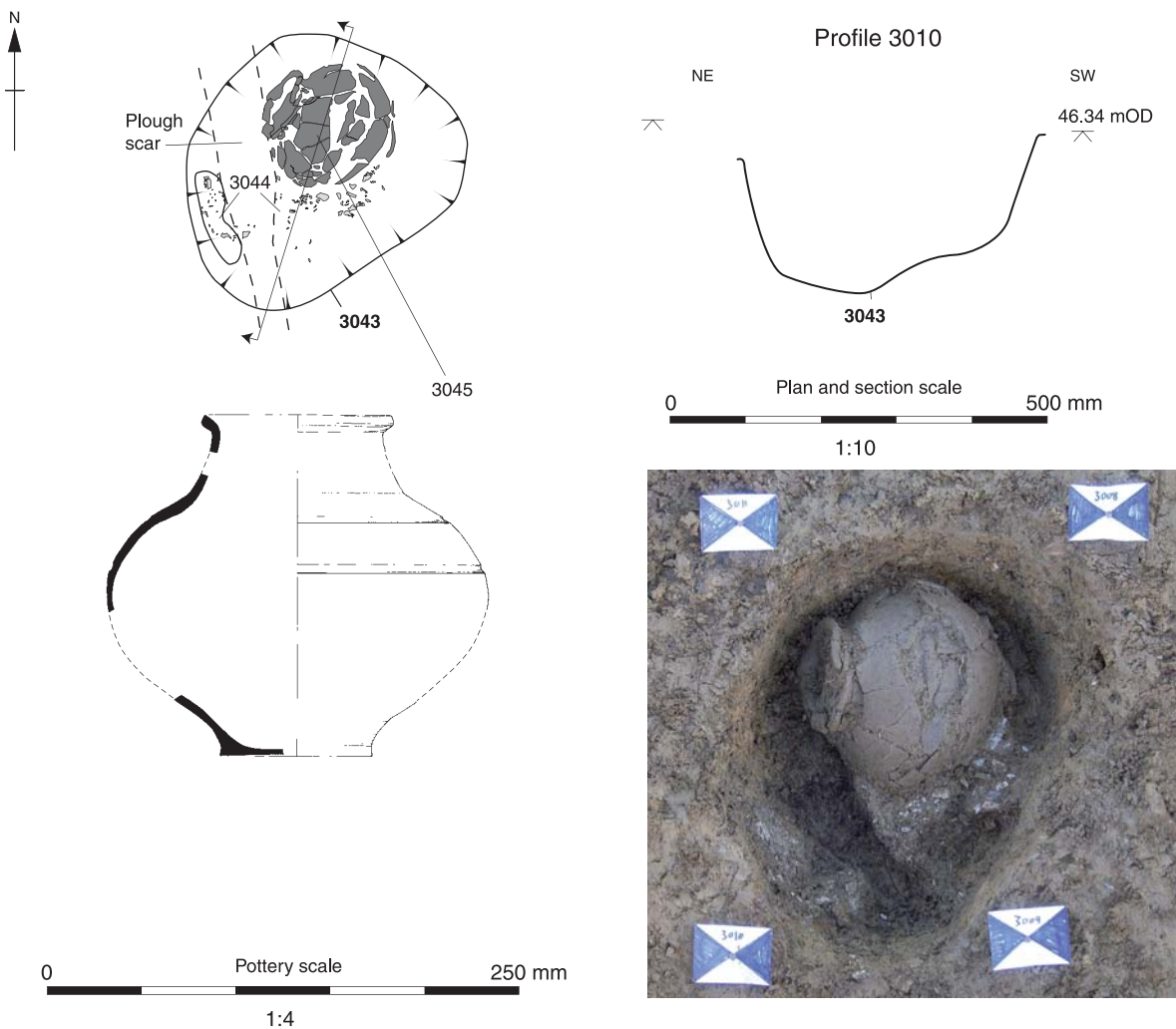


Fig. 2.51 Site 3, cremation burial 3050

The fourth cremation burial in this group (104802; Fig. 2.52) was excavated during the evaluation phase of the investigations. The sides of the pit containing the burial could not be clearly defined as its fill was almost identical to the surrounding natural, but the feature was *c* 0.28m deep. The cremated remains of an adult of undetermined sex (104835) had been placed within a jar-sized poppy-head beaker (104804), and mixed in with them were a carpal or tarsal from a large mammal and a fragment from a medium mammal long bone, both of which had also been burnt. The burial was accompanied by two ancillary vessels, comprising a fine grey ware necked bowl or small jar (104806) and a ring-necked flagon in Verulamium white ware (104805). This group of vessels provides a date range for the burial of AD 70-120.

*Pits within Enclosure 5*

The five pits situated within the annex containing the cremation cemetery comprised three shallow features (3020, 3036 and 3038) located to the west side of the burials, a similar feature (3062) toward the north-western corner of the annex, and a larger pit (3058) situated to the east. The latter feature measured 2.1m by 1.25m across but was relatively shallow, with a depth of 0.24m. It had been partly excavated during the evaluation stage of the investigations, as pit 104819, resulting in the recovery of small, abraded sherds from a samian ware dish in form 18/31. The only other feature in this group of pits that contained artefactual evidence was pit 3020, which yielded four small sherds from a greyware vessel of uncertain form.

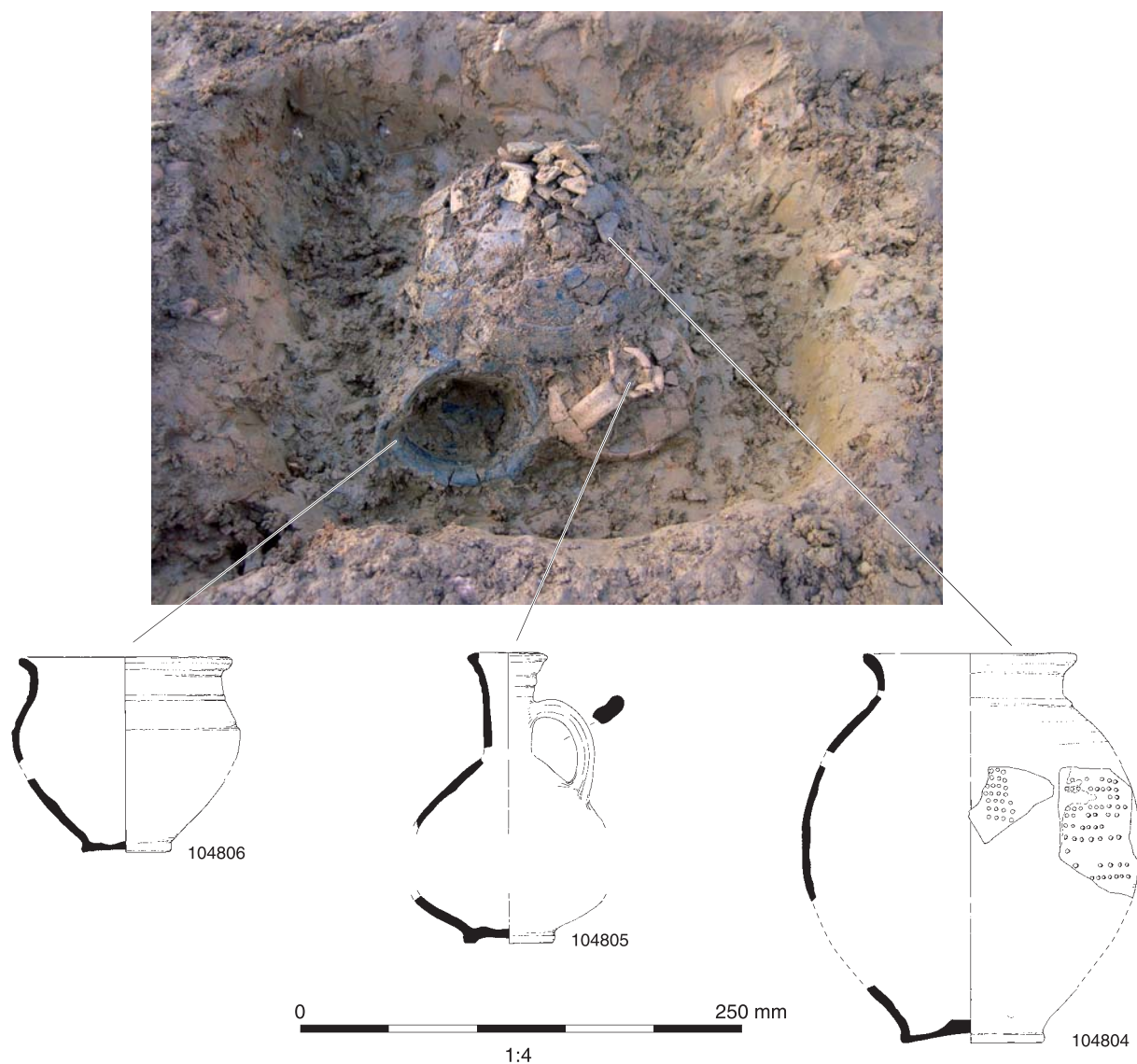
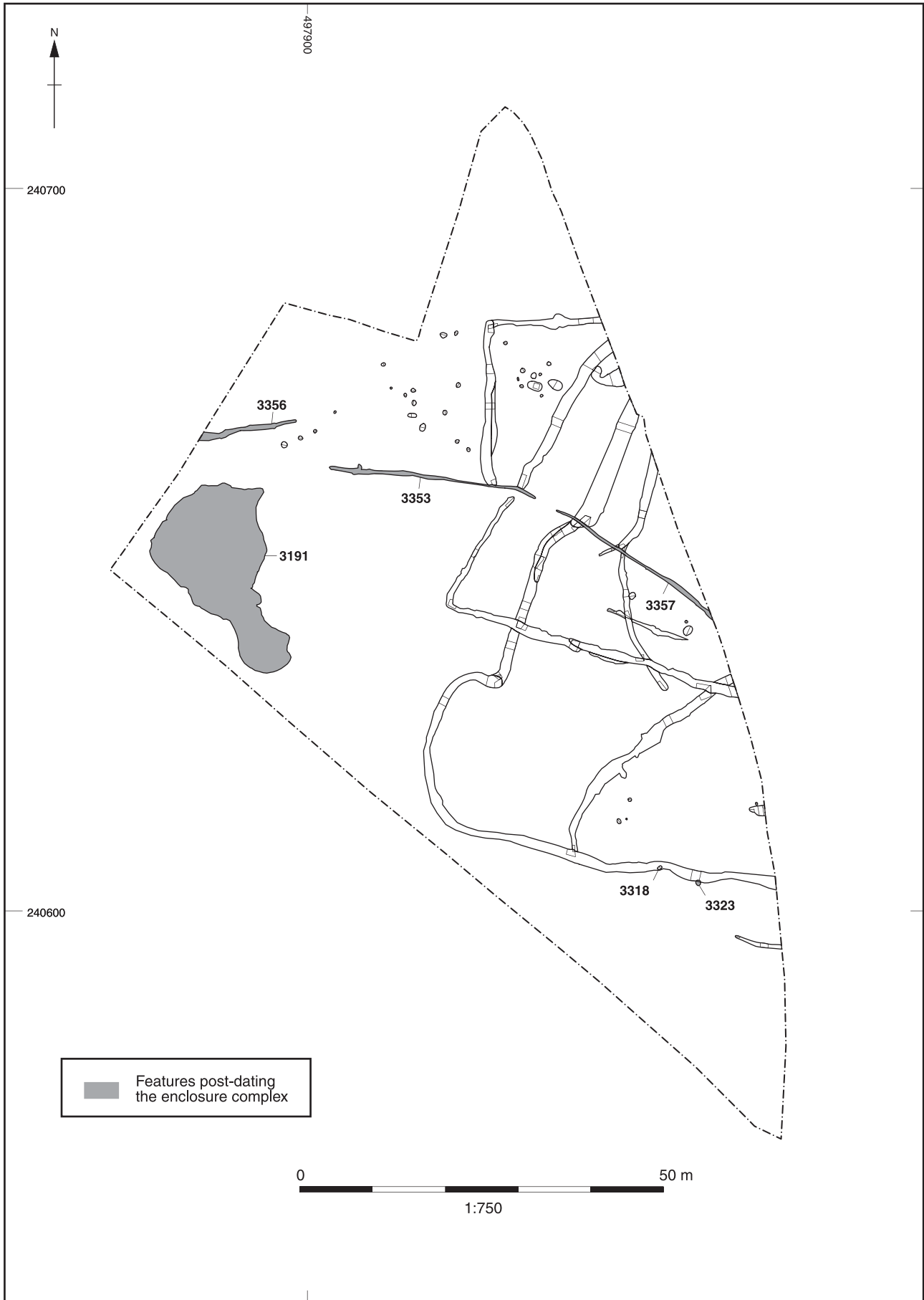


Fig. 2.52 Site 3, cremation burial 104802

Fig. 2.53 (opposite) Features post-dating the enclosure complex



### Pits west of the enclosure complex

A cluster of 17 pits was situated to the west of the enclosure complex, comprising a main group of 13 pits adjacent to the annex containing the cremation cemetery and a further four outlying features that lay 10m further west (Fig. 2.43). The pits were typically small, with only two measuring more than 1m in diameter, and none was more than 0.22m deep. The only artefactual material from these features was recovered from pit 3177 and comprised a pedestal base from a vessel of 1st-century date and some small fragments of animal bone. The location of these features suggests that they were associated with the enclosure complex, but it is not possible to attribute them specifically to either the late Iron Age or Roman phase.

### Features post-dating the enclosure complex

A segmented ditch (3353/3357) extended across the excavation area on an E-W alignment, defining a boundary of unknown date (Fig. 2.53). The feature was rather shallow, with a depth of no more than 0.2m, and the break between the two parts is likely to result from plough truncation rather than representing an original feature of the boundary. Ditch segment 3356, which extended beyond the western limit of the excavation, was also aligned east-west and may have formed a continuation of the same boundary. This ditch was somewhat off-set from the alignment of ditch 5535, so if the two features were contemporary it is likely that an original entrance was situated between them. Only a very small artefactual assemblage was recovered from these ditches, the ceramic element of which comprised pottery of 1st-century date that is likely

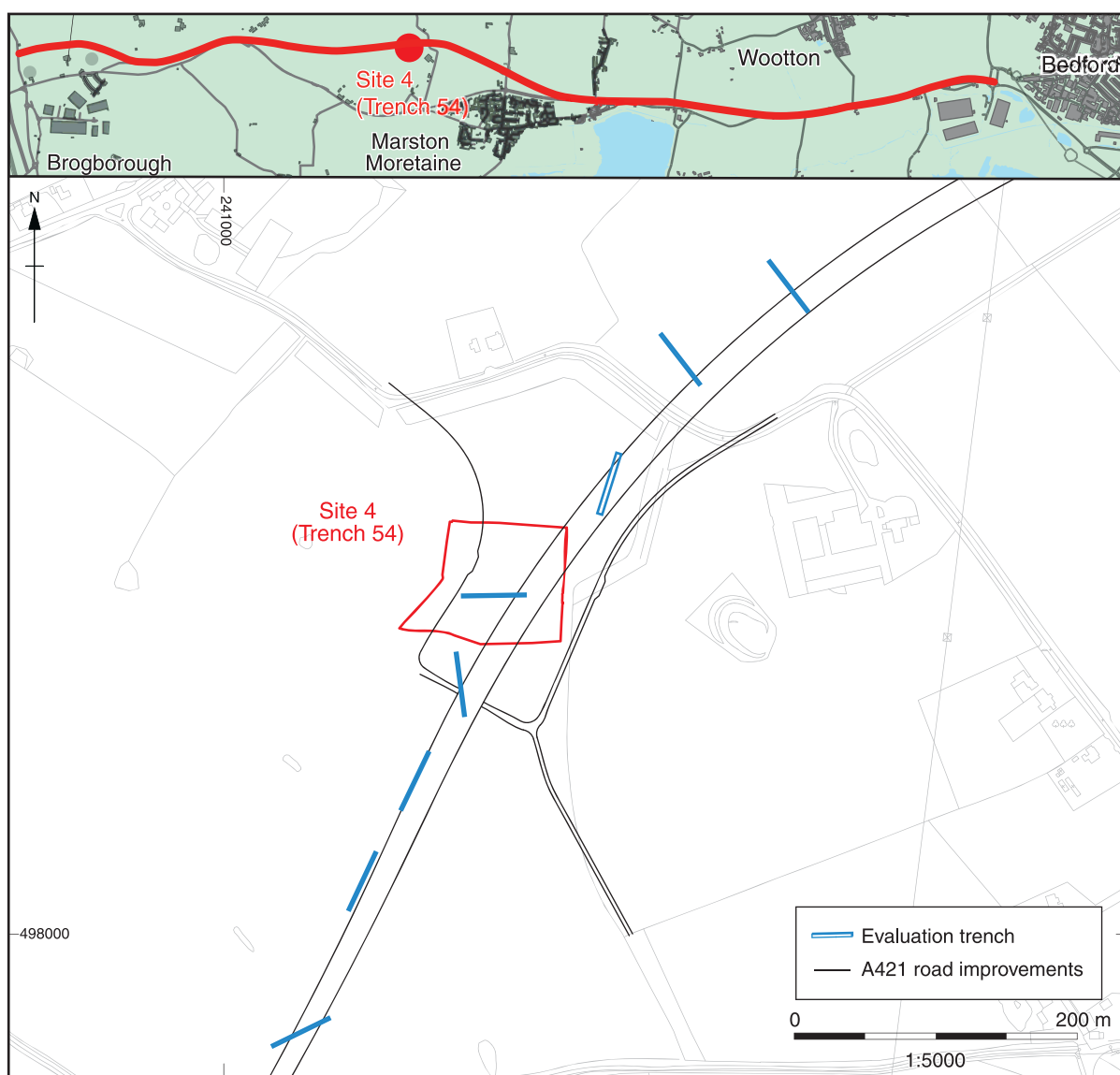


Fig. 2.54 The location of Site 4 (Trench 54). (© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence no. 100005569)



to be residual, and to have derived from activity associated with the earlier enclosure complex.

A large feature (3191) interpreted as a pond was situated near the western edge of the excavation area. A machine-dug sondage 1.2m deep excavated into the western side of the feature revealed a gently sloping profile but did not reach the base. Pieces of brick and tile recovered from the fills of the feature dated from the 17th-19th century.

A pit (3323) that contained the burial of a calf (3332) had been dug into the southern edge of late Iron Age ditch 3359. The relatively large size of the skeleton suggests that the calf is of a late post-medieval or modern date. An adjacent pit (3318) that contained no artefactual material but was similar in size and shape to pit 3323 may have been of similar date.

#### SITE 4 (TRENCH 54)

##### Site location

Site 4 (Trench 54) was located c 500m from the north-western edge of Marston Vale in a former pasture field c 200m west of Moreteyne Farm, to the west of the village of Marston Moretaine (NGR SP 982 412; Fig. 2.54). It was situated on level ground at c 38m OD. An approximately rectangular area with a triangular projection to the west at the south-western corner was excavated, encompassing a total area of 9440m<sup>2</sup>.

##### The middle Iron Age enclosure

The excavation exposed the eastern half of a middle Iron Age enclosure defined by at least three circuits

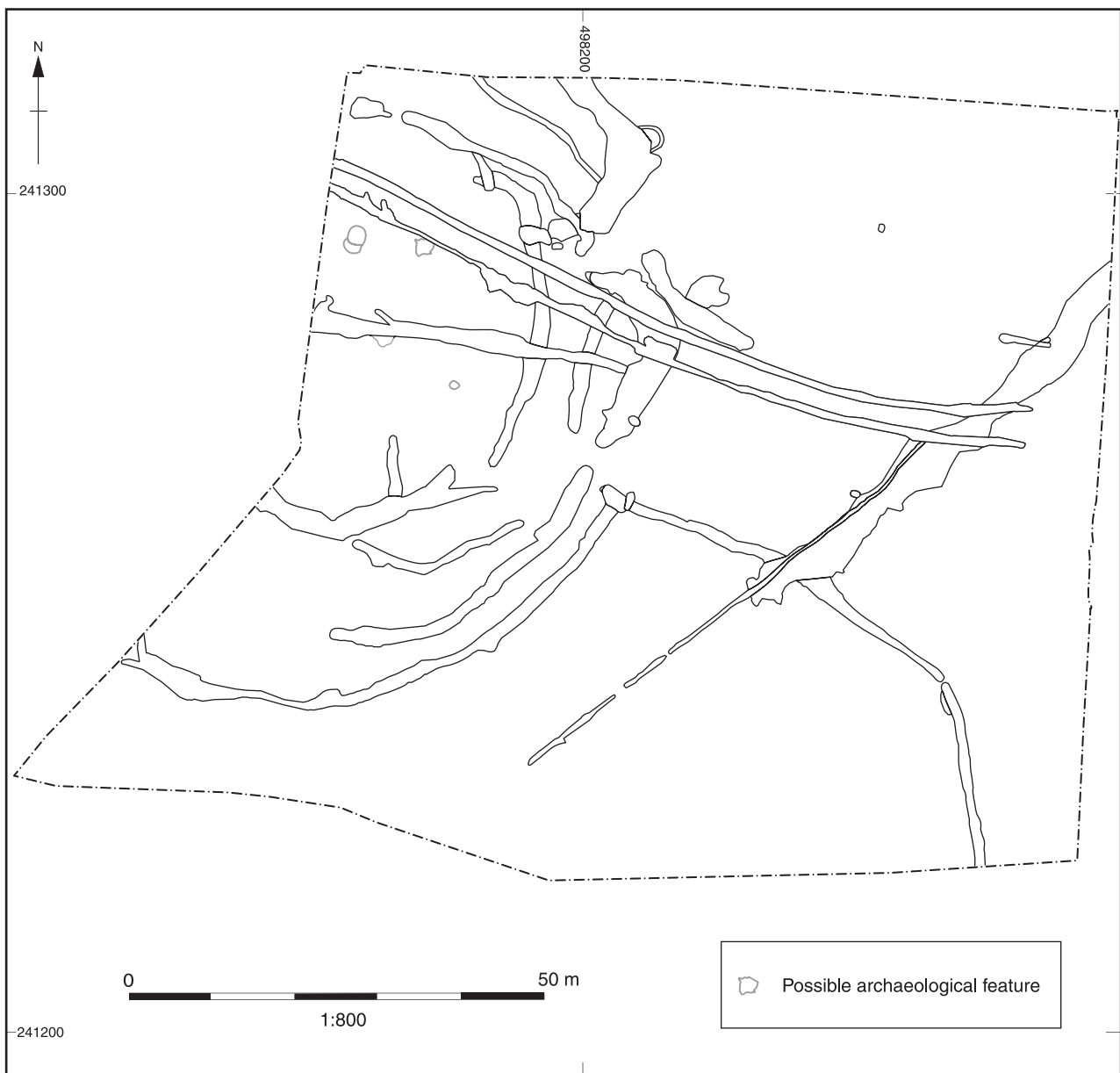


Fig. 2.55 Site 4 (Trench 54), plan of all archaeological features

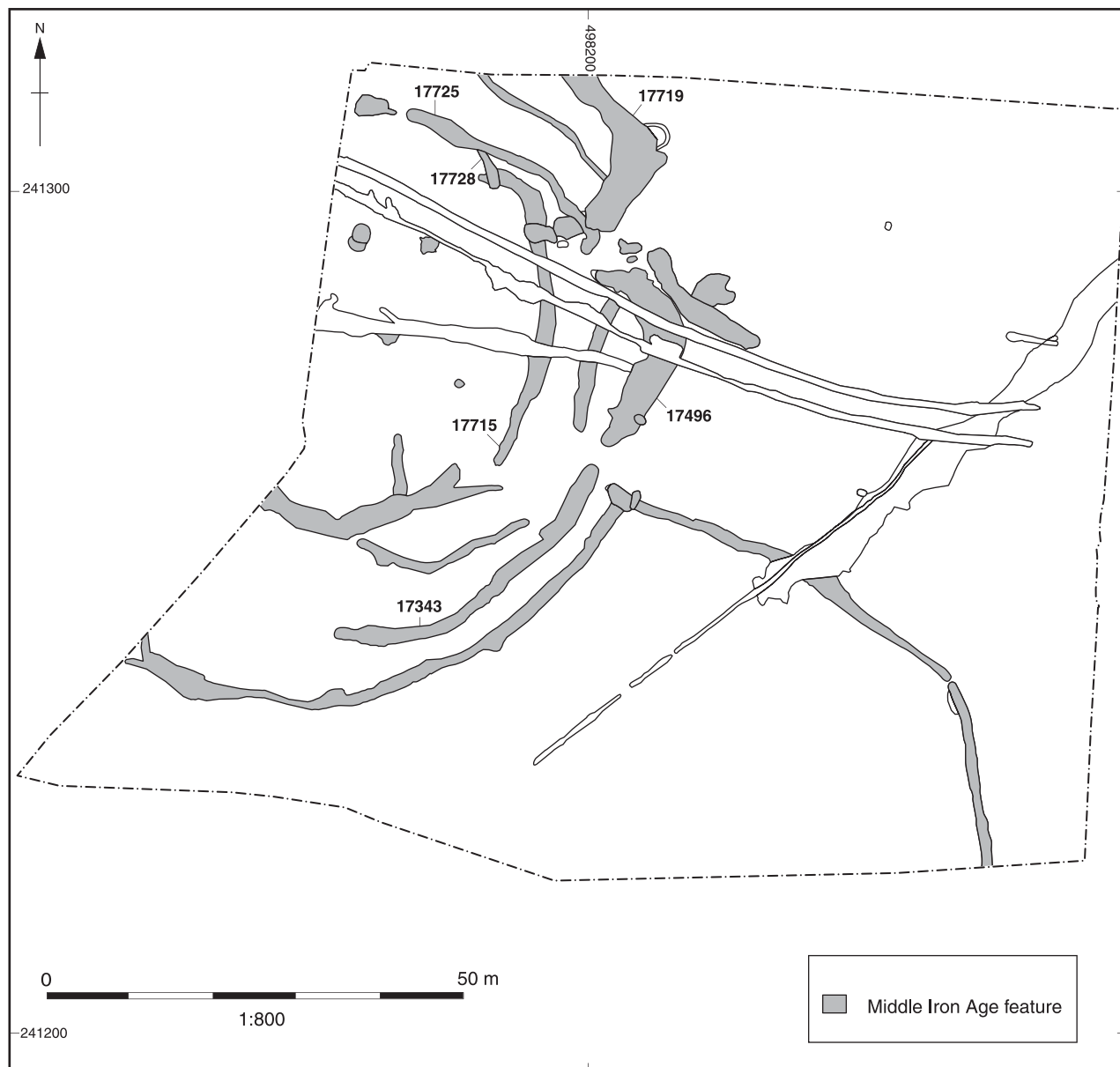


Fig. 2.56 Site 4 (Trench 45), all middle Iron Age features

of ditches (Fig. 2.56). Few definite features and no surfaces survived within the enclosure. The ditch circuits were discontinuous, composed of individual segments separated by causeways that may have served as entrances, although the main entrance appeared to have been located on the south-eastern side of the enclosure, from which an antenna ditch extended. A short gully (17728) that drained into enclosure ditch 17725 cut inner enclosure ditch 17715, suggesting that the ditch circuits may not have all been part of the original layout of the enclosure, and that the initial design may have comprised only the innermost circuit. The outer, possibly secondary ditch circuits were cut by ditches 17719 and 17496, which, along with ditch 17343, appeared to represent a re-instatement of the eastern facade of the enclosure. On the basis of these

relationships the development of the enclosure has been tentatively divided into three phases. Most of the pottery recovered from the enclosure ditches comprised ovoid jars and slack-profiled jars in shelly and sandy fabrics of middle Iron Age date, but there was also a small quantity of late Iron Age material – typified by necked jars and bowls in grog-tempered fabrics – in some of the upper fills that indicate continued or renewed use of the enclosure that may have been contemporaneous with the Phase 3 ditches.

**Phase 1: the inner ditch circuit**

The earliest phase of the enclosure comprised the innermost circuit of ditches, consisting of ditch segments 17715 and 17716, with a causeway

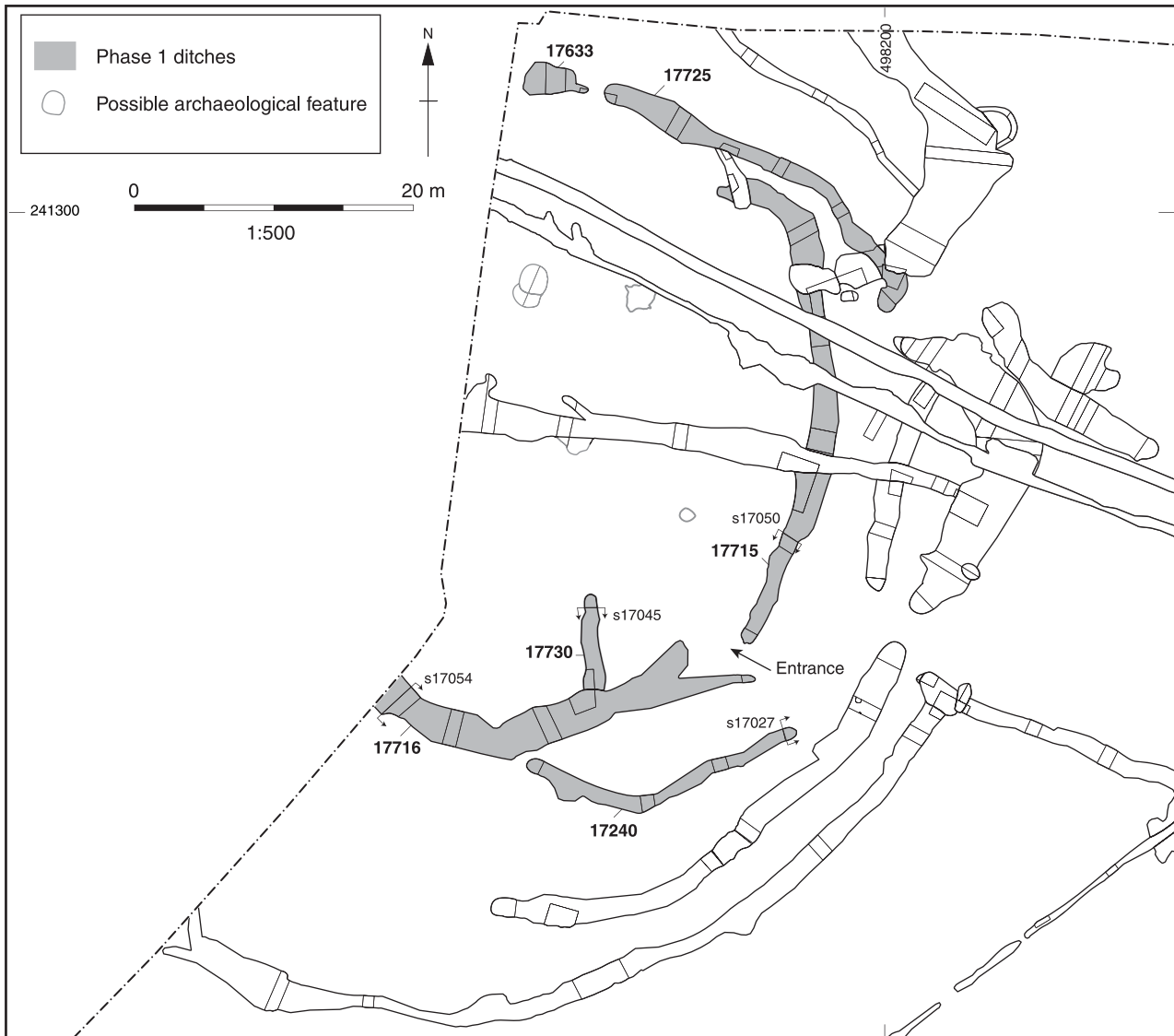


Fig. 2.57 Site 4 (Trench 54), inner ditch circuit of the middle Iron Age enclosure

between them that formed a south-east facing entrance (Figs 2.57-59). Ditch 17725 (Fig. 2.60) appeared to be part of the Phase 2 enclosure, but part of this feature may have been a recut of the alignment of a ditch that enclosed the northern side of the enclosure during Phase 1. An outwork or annex associated with the south-eastern entrance was defined by ditch 17240, and ditch 17730 may have formed part of a subsidiary enclosure within the main compound.

#### Enclosure ditch 17716

Ditch 17716 defined the southern side of the enclosure. It was exposed for a total length of 30m, and continued beyond the western edge of the excavation area. The ditch comprised a substantial boundary, measuring up to 3m wide and 1.08m deep (Fig. 2.58, section 17054). It had relatively steep sides, although the 'lipping out' of the upper part of the sides and the presence of a primary fill of

redeposited natural clay (17182) indicates that the profile had undergone some modification due to erosion and had originally been somewhat steeper. The primary fill was overlain by a sequence of secondary fills that are consistent with natural silting processes (17180-1), but it was not possible to determine conclusively whether the uppermost fill, which comprised dark grey soils containing some gravel and pebbles (17179), was natural in origin or was associated with deliberate infilling. Two samples from secondary fill 17181 were submitted for radiocarbon dating: a charred grain produced a determination of 380-110 cal BC (SUERC-30626; 2180±35 BP) and a fragment of hazelnut shell produced a determination of 400-200 cal BC (SUERC-30627; 2250±35 BP). The ditch yielded an unusually large assemblage of pottery, amounting to almost 7kg (Fig. 2.59). Much of this material came from the upper fills, which contained a number of slack-profiled, barrel-shaped and narrow-necked

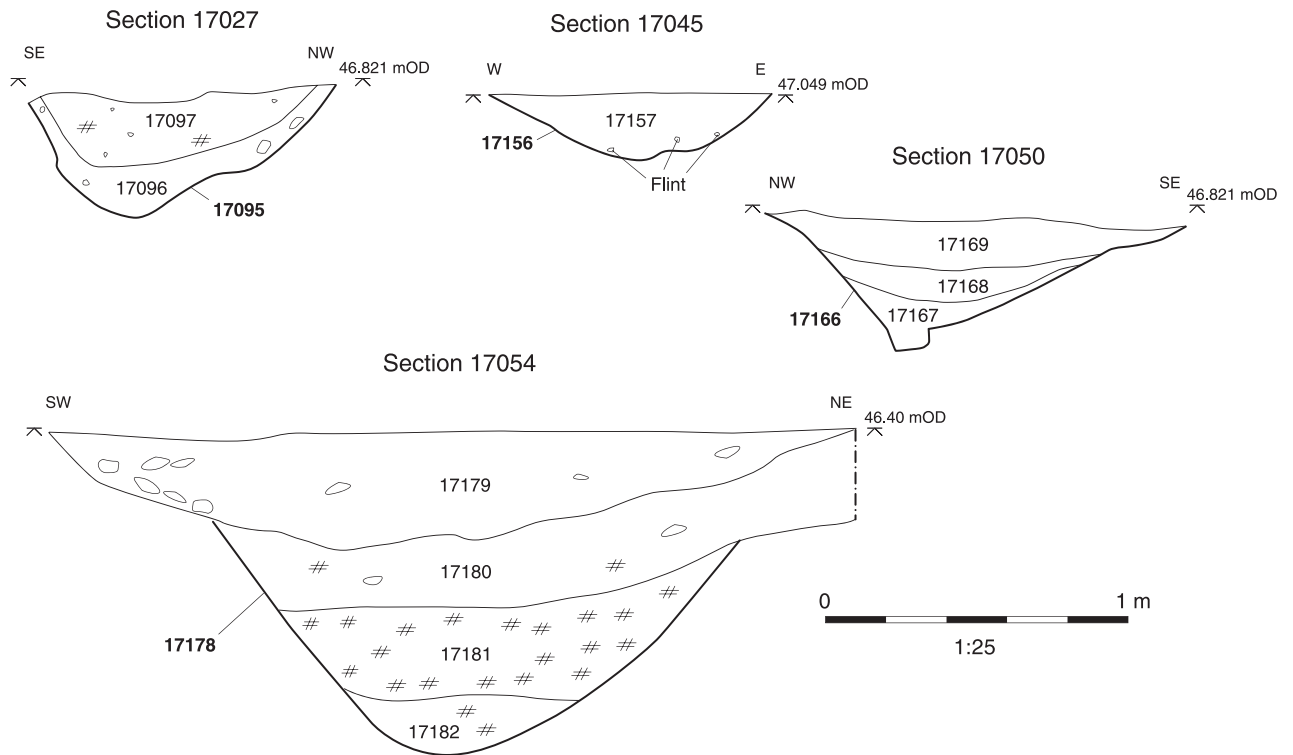


Fig. 2.58 Site 4 (Trench 54), sections through the ditches of innermost circuit of the middle Iron Age enclosure



Fig. 2.59 Site 4 (Trench 54), pottery being exposed during excavation of ditch 17716

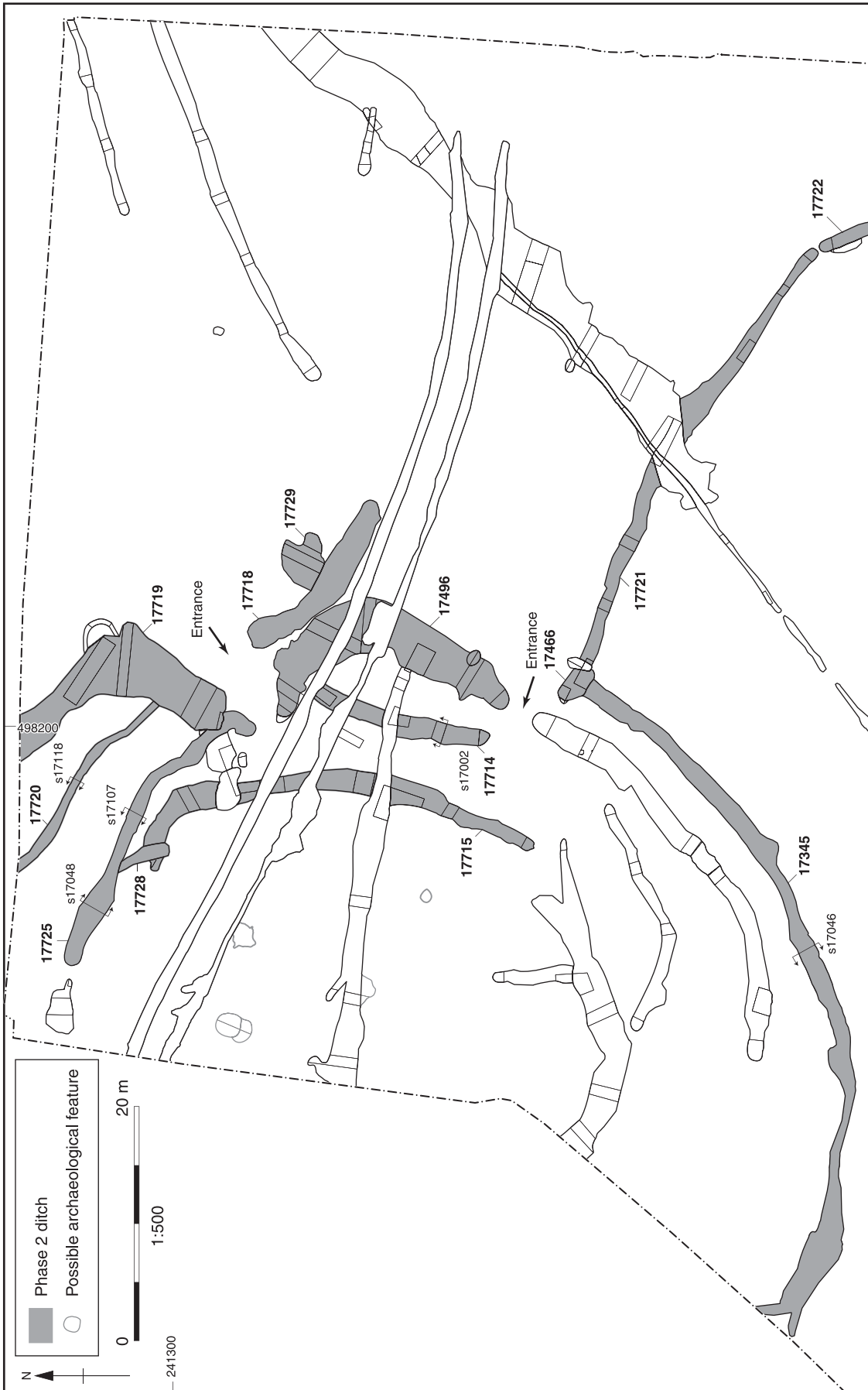


Fig. 2.60 Site 4 (Trench 54), outer ditch circuits of the middle Iron Age enclosure

jars. One of the jars was nearly complete, and another had been perforated in the base after firing, turning the vessel into a strainer. A wheel-thrown necked jar in grog-tempered ware was also recovered from the uppermost fill, perhaps indicating that this deposit continued to accumulate into the late Iron Age. A copper alloy toggle (SF17002) was also recovered. The ditch was rather angular in plan, perhaps indicating that it had been laid out as a series of at least three straight sections. At its eastern end the ditch divided into two terminals: a shallow gully that measured only 0.56m wide and 0.12m deep and a more substantial inner terminal. The latter terminal was not excavated. The relationship between the two terminals was not established, and consequently it is not known whether they represent two contemporaneous elements of the entrance to the enclosure, with the outer gully perhaps forming some sort of outwork, or two successive phases of a simpler entrance.

#### *Enclosure ditch 17715*

Ditch 17715 enclosed the eastern side of the enclosure, and extended for a total length of 35m on a gently curving alignment. The northern end curved somewhat more sharply toward the west immediately before terminating. The ditch was a rather slighter feature than ditch 17716, with a depth of no more than 0.45m in the southern half and *c* 0.6m in the northern half (Fig. 2.58, section 17050). The ceramic assemblage was also more modest than that recovered from ditch 17716, weighing a total of *c* 1.5kg.

#### *Enclosure ditch 17725*

No definite evidence was recorded for a ditch that enclosed the northern side of the enclosure during this initial phase. However, it was noted that the part of enclosure ditch 17725 that lay west of the northern end of ditch 17715, and continued its alignment around the northern part of the circuit, was 0.75-0.8m deep, considerably more substantial than the part to the east of this point. It is possible that this deeper part of ditch 17725 represented a part of the original inner circuit that was recut as part of ditch 17725 when the latter was created, although no conclusive evidence for such recutting was identified during excavation. If this is correct, a second entrance through the ditch circuit was situated between these two ditch segments. A large and slightly amorphous pit (17633) located a short distance beyond the western end of ditch 17725 is also likely to have been part of this inner circuit.

#### *South-eastern entrance*

The main entrance into the enclosure appeared to have been provided by the causeway between ditches 17715 and 17716, located on the south-eastern side of the settlement. The form of the entrance was rather irregular due to the off-set positioning of the terminals of the two ditches and the shape of the terminal of ditch 17716, which

divided into a substantial inner terminal and a smaller outer one. The effect of this may have been to create an entrance between the terminals that was 4m wide, with the smaller outwork designed to constrict access, perhaps to aid the management of livestock using the entrance.

#### *Outwork/annex ditch 17240*

Ditch 17240 may have formed an outwork associated with the south-eastern entrance into the enclosure or defined a small annex against the outside of the main enclosure. The western end of the ditch lay immediately adjacent to enclosure ditch 17716, from which it extended outward towards the south-east before turning east-north-eastwards, roughly parallel to ditch 17716, defining a trapezoidal area that measured *c* 17m by 5.5m. The ditch itself was only 0.4m deep (Fig. 2.58, section 17027) and contained only a few scraps of pottery and animal bone.

#### *Subenclosure ditch 17730*

A subdivision existed within the southern part of the enclosure, defined by ditch 17730. The ditch branched off the inner side of enclosure ditch 17716 and extended for *c* 7.5m on a roughly linear alignment. It was only 0.22m deep and 1.2m wide (Fig. 2.58, section 17045), and appeared to peter out at the north end rather than ending in a deliberate terminal, and may thus originally have been more extensive or have turned to define part of a subenclosure within the main enclosure.

### *Phase 2: the outer ditch circuits*

#### *Northern side of the enclosure: ditches 17220 and 17725*

The precise number of ditch circuits in use on the northern side of the enclosure is difficult to ascertain (Fig. 2.60). The western part of ditch 17725 (Fig. 2.61, section 17048) may have been a redefinition of part of the inner ditch circuit (above), but the eastern part of this ditch (Fig. 2.61, section 17107) extended around the outside of inner ditch 17715. If ditch 17715 or an associated earthwork was still in use then the eastern part of ditch 17725 will have formed a second circuit outside it. An insubstantial ditch (17720; Fig. 2.61, section 17118) located to the north of ditch 17725 and truncated at its eastern end by ditch 17719 may have been part of a further outer circuit. Ditch 17720 was typically 0.6-0.7m wide and 0.2m deep, although near the northern edge of the excavation area, where it was perhaps less truncated, it measured 1.1m wide and 0.5m deep. With the exception of the deeper western part, ditch 17725 was generally quite shallow, with a depth of 0.35-0.50m (Fig. 2.61, section 17107). The upper fill of the western part of the ditch contained a considerable concentration of charcoal, but when sampled the fragments proved to be too small to be identifiable and contained no other charred plant remains.

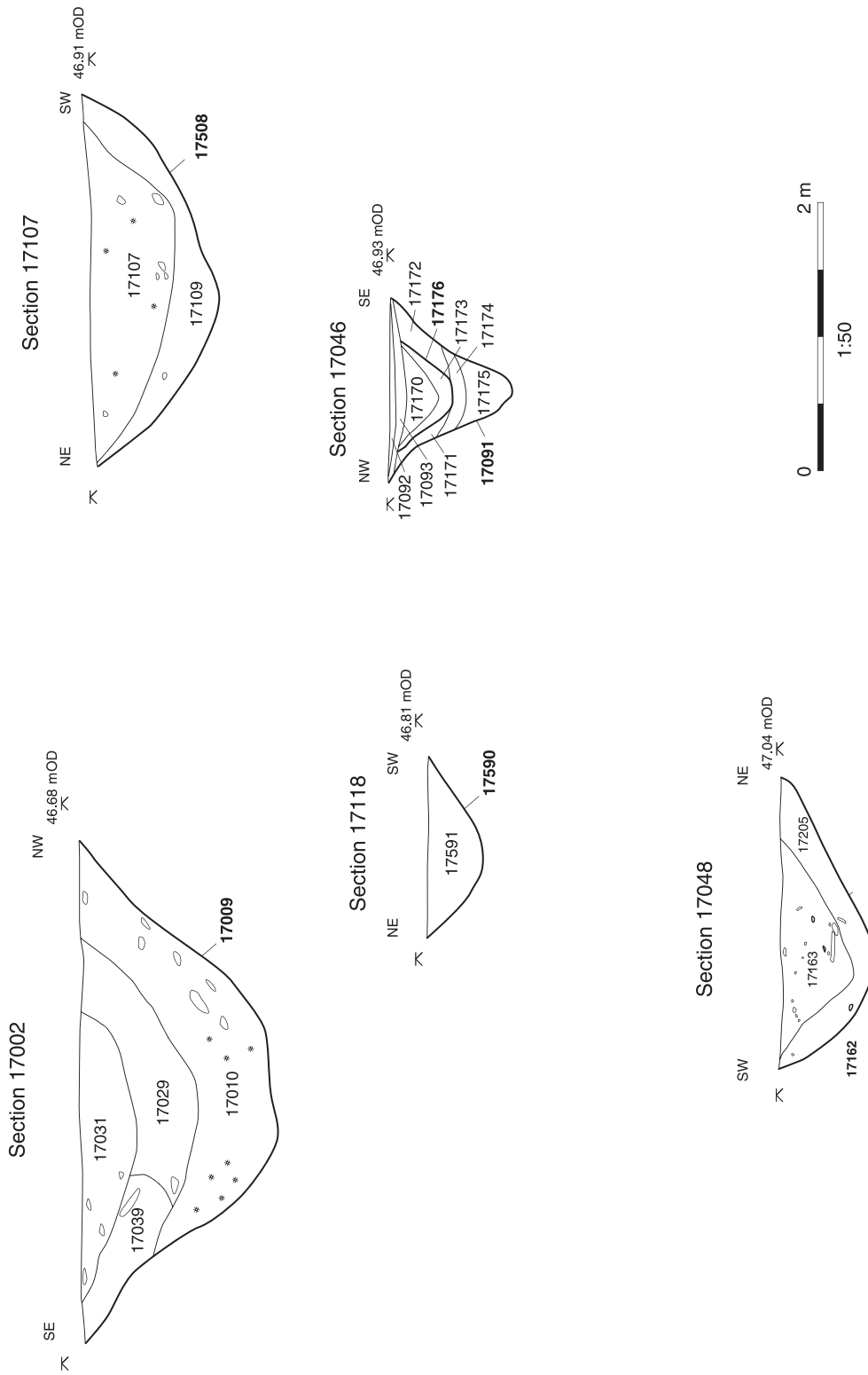


Fig. 2.61 Site 4 (Trench 54), sections through the ditches of the outer circuits of the middle Iron Age enclosure

*Eastern side of the enclosure: ditch 17714*

A single outer circuit, represented by ditch 17714, was present on the eastern side of the enclosure (Fig. 2.61, section 17002). The curvature of the ditch was not concentric to the enclosure but curved in the opposite direction. The ditch extended for *c* 17m, the northern terminal having been destroyed by the subsequent digging of Phase 3 ditch 17496. It was quite steep-sided, measuring 1.4-1.9m wide and 0.6-0.7m deep, and was filled by a sequence of deposits indicative of gradual silting.

*Eastern entrance and ditch 17718*

The eastern entrance into the enclosure lay between ditch 17714 and ditch 17725. It was defined on its northern side by the in-turned southern terminal of the latter ditch, but the form of the corresponding terminal of ditch 17714 is not known as it had been destroyed by the subsequent digging of Phase 3 ditch 17496. For this reason the width of the entrance could not be established with certainty, but it is likely to have been in the range of 5.0-5.5m wide.

Ditch 17718 was attributed to the second phase of the enclosure because it was stratigraphically earlier than the later ditch 17496, which cut its western side, and appeared to be associated with the eastern entrance into the enclosure. Its western terminal lay *c* 7m outside the eastern entrance, and from here the ditch extended obliquely outward from the enclosure for *c* 17m on a slightly dog-legged alignment. In so doing it cut a large, irregular hollow (17729) of uncertain origin. The ditch was quite substantial, with a width of more than 2m and a depth of up to 0.9m. The finds assemblage was not large, but included a highly fragmented cattle skull that was recovered from the secondary fill. It is possible that the ditch was designed to assist in directing livestock into the eastern entrance of the enclosure.

*Southern side of the enclosure: ditch 17345*

Ditch 17345 formed the outer circuit around the southern perimeter of the enclosure, at a distance of up to 20m from the inner enclosure. It measured 1.4-1.75m wide and its depth varied from 0.5m to 1.1m, the deepest measurement occurring at the eastern end, where the basal fill was a layer of slightly gleyed clay that may have been deposited in standing water. This end of the ditch had been truncated by the subsequent digging of pit 17466/17483/17597, which had destroyed the junction with ditch 17721, which extended outward from the enclosure. The coincidence of the ends of these two ditches, however, strongly suggests that they were originally dug as a single feature.

*South-eastern entrance and antenna ditch 17721*

The south-eastern entrance through the outer ditch circuit was located between ditches 17714 and 17345 and comprised a causeway *c* 8.5m wide. It was not aligned concentrically with the corresponding

entrance through the inner circuit, and the off-set alignment of the ditches of the outer circuit had the effect of creating an entrance that was turned toward the inner entrance.

Ditch 17721 extended outward from the southern side of the south-eastern entrance. It was a relatively modest feature with a depth of 0.35-0.40m and extended for *c* 43m on a relatively straight alignment. A separate length of ditch (17722) then continued the boundary on a more southerly orientation, eventually continuing beyond the southern edge of the excavation area. The artefacts recovered from this feature were limited to only a few scraps of pottery and animal bone.

*Phase 3: ditches 17343, 17496 and 17719*

The eastern side of the enclosure was re-instated during the late Iron Age by the digging of three substantial ditches (17343, 17496 and 17719), which cut the outer ditches of the original enclosure (Fig. 2.62). The ditches were substantially larger than those of the original enclosure, both in width and in depth, and enclosed the eastern side of the enclosure but did not appear to extend around the south-western side, perhaps indicating that the earthworks of the original enclosure were still sufficiently well preserved to serve this function

*Ditch 17719*

Ditch 17719 extended into the excavation area from the north-west extending for 16m to the south-east before turning towards the south-west and extending for a further 12m to form the northern side of the in-turned entrance, where it cut pit 17526/17680. Its width varied from *c* 2m near the northern edge of the site to 4.2m near its southern terminal, and it was 1.2m deep (Fig. 2.63, sections 17080 and 17102 and Fig. 2.64). The sides sloped relatively gradually to a concave base. Two phases were identified at the southern end of the ditch. A shallower earlier terminal (17526) projected for *c* 2.6m beyond a more substantial recut terminal. The ditch contained a simple sequence of primary and secondary fills indicating that it had silted up gradually, overlain by an upper layer of darker soil of less certain origin that could represent either a tertiary fill or deliberate infilling of the hollow formed by the partly-silted ditch. The only substantial find from the lower deposits was a near-complete slack-profiled jar or bowl (SF 17023) that was recovered from the primary fill (17275) in an intervention *c* 3m from the later phase of the southern terminal. The upper layer was the source of the majority of the assemblage of nearly 1.5kg of pottery and more than 3.5kg of animal bone that was recovered from the feature, including a cattle skull (17473) that lay in an inverted position near the change in the alignment of the ditch. A group of five cranial vault fragments was also recovered from the upper fill.



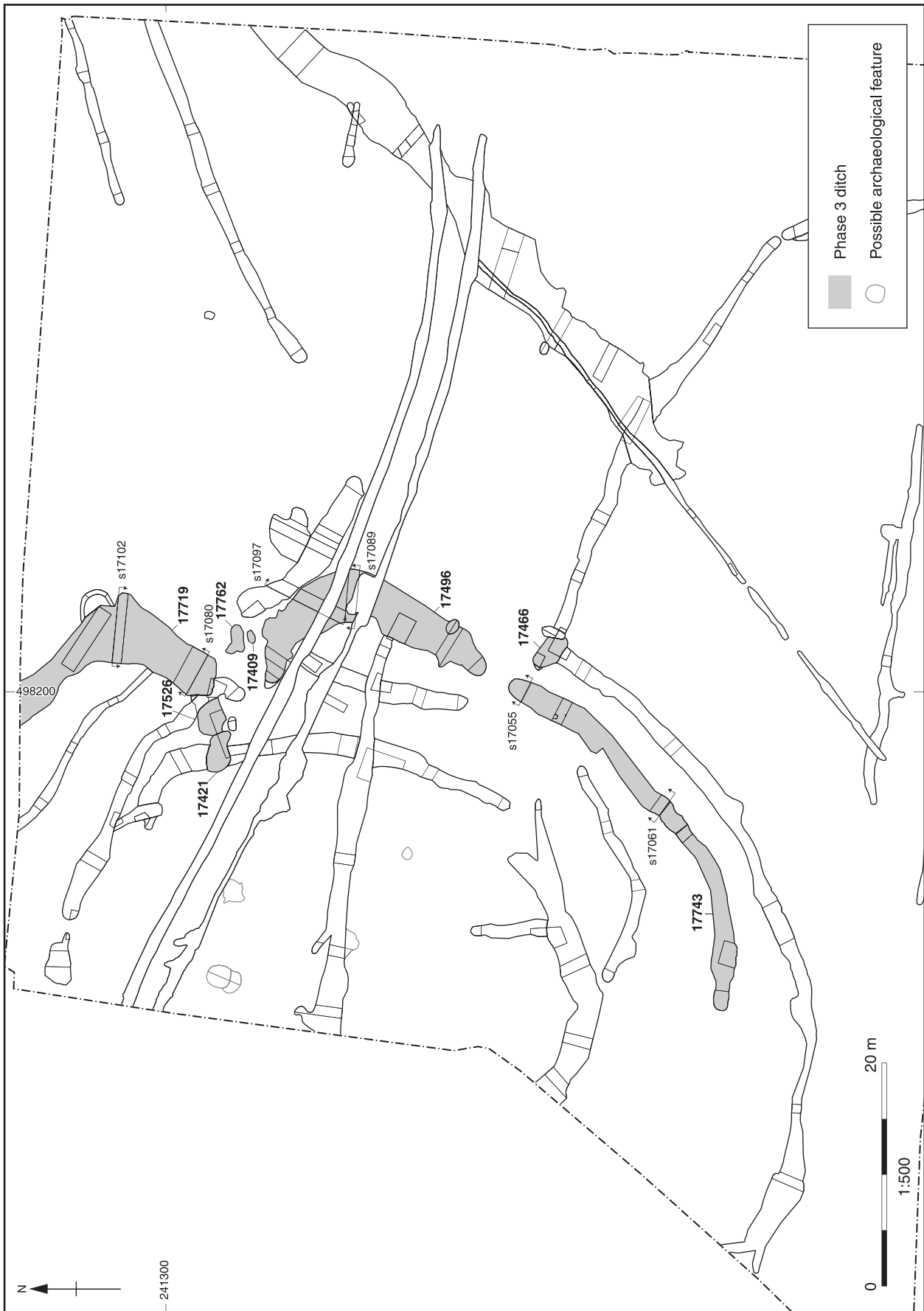


Fig. 2.62 Site 4 (Trench 54), outer ditch circuit of the middle Iron Age enclosure

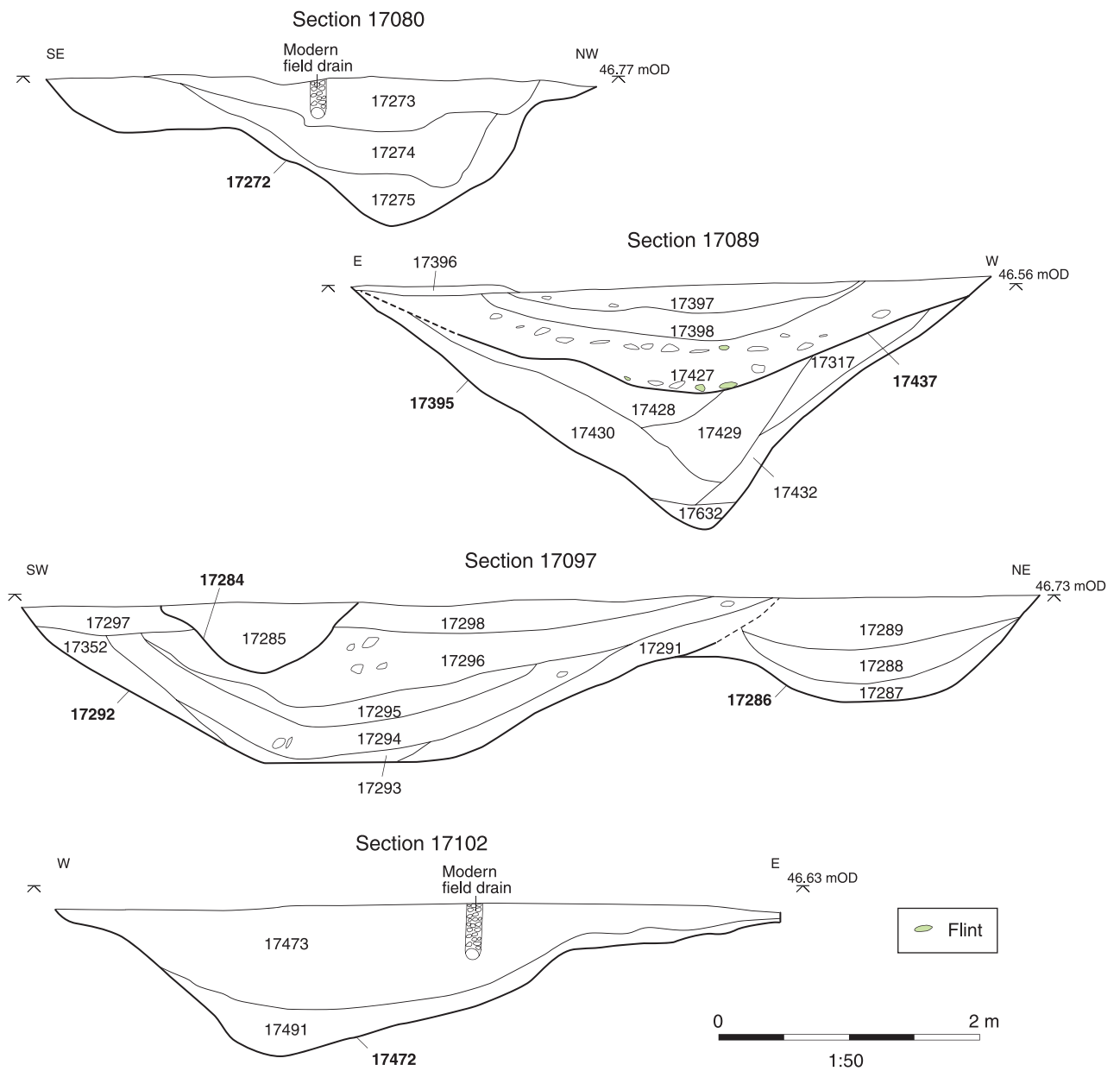


Fig. 2.63 Site 4 (Trench 54), sections through ditches 17496 and 17719



Fig. 2.64 Site 4 (Trench 54), section through ditch 17719



Fig. 2.65 Site 4 (Trench 54), section through ditch 17496, showing layer of sandstone cobbles 17427



Fig. 2.66 Site 4 (Trench 54), horse skull on the base of ditch 17496

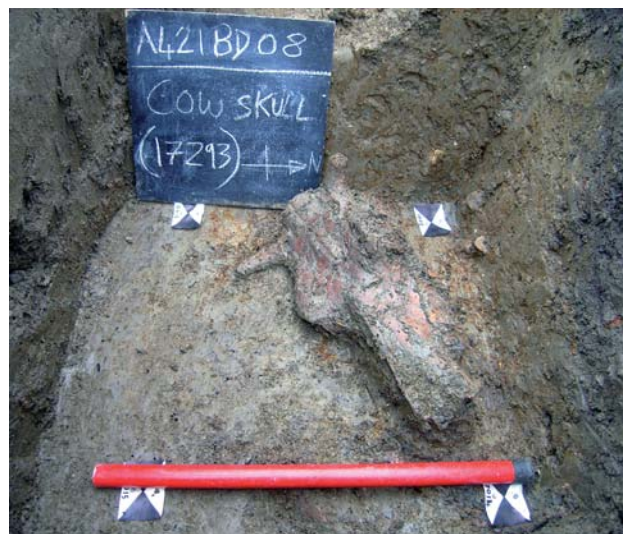


Fig. 2.67 Site 4 (Trench 54), cattle skull on the base of ditch 17496

#### Ditch 17496

Ditch 17496 was dog-legged in plan, enclosing part of the eastern side of the enclosure and turning inward at its northern end to form the southern side of the inturned entrance. It was typically 4.0-4.5m wide and 1.25m deep (Fig. 2.63, sections 17089 and 17097), although it became narrower and shallower toward both terminals. The sequence of fills was similar to that recorded in ditch 17719 and indicated that the ditch had been allowed to silt up for some time. However, a layer of sandstone cobbles (17427) in the lower part of the upper fill clearly did not occur there through natural agency, suggesting that some element of deliberate backfilling may have been involved in the in-filling of the upper part of the feature (Fig. 2.63, section 17089 and Fig. 2.65). The artefactual assemblage from this ditch was quite substantial, comprising more than 4kg of pottery, including a substantial part of an ovoid jar from secondary fill 17027, and more than 7.5kg of animal bone. Two skulls, one horse and one bovine, were located c 0.5m apart on the base of the ditch in the central part of the feature (Figs 2.66-67), where

they may have been placed deliberately. A radio-carbon determination of 200 cal BC-cal AD 10 (SUERC-30619; 2080±35) was obtained for a sample from the horse skull.

A second cattle skull was recovered from the upper fill of the ditch, as were a copper alloy strip incised with a geometric motif (SF 17003), a pin or needle of the same material (SF 17013) and a two-piece Colchester style brooch. The latter item is likely to date from the immediate post-conquest period, in the middle of the 1st century AD. A distinctive element of the assemblage from this feature was a group of 20 nodules of chalk flint, most of which had flake removals and which appeared to represent contemporary working of flint, although the precise use to which the material was put is unknown.

#### Ditch 17343

Ditch 17343 was c 40m long and curved around the south-western quadrant of the enclosure. It was steep-sided and generally V-shaped in profile,

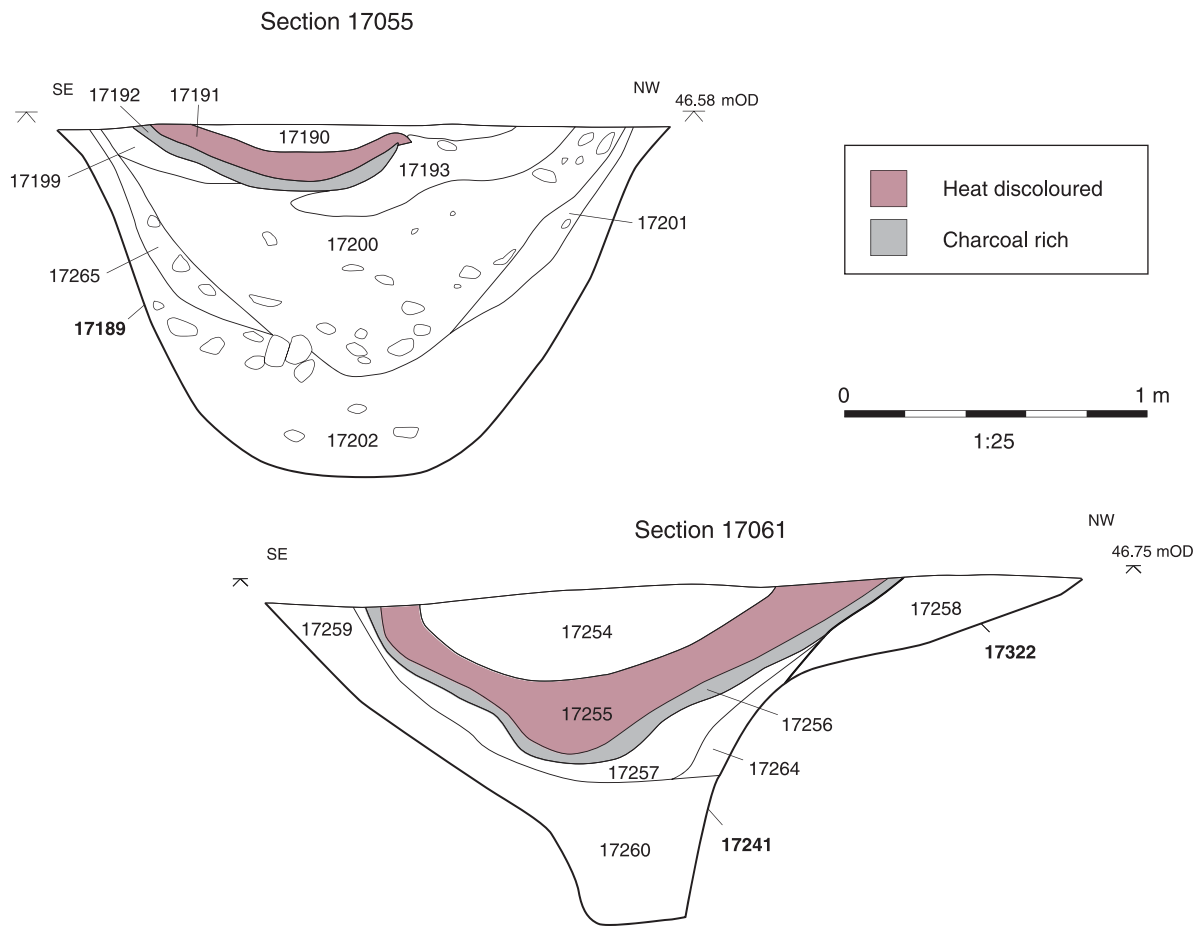


Fig. 2.68 Site 4 (Trench 54), sections through middle Iron Age enclosure ditch 17343



Fig. 2.69 Site 4 (Trench 54), burnt layers exposed in the central part of ditch 17343

although the eastern terminal was more U-shaped. The ditch measured up to 2.2m wide and 0.8-1.1m deep, but became progressively shallower toward the western end, where the terminal was only 0.35m deep. The lower part of the ditch had silted up gradually, during which time a layer of sandstone cobbles accumulated within the lower part of the secondary fill (17200; Fig. 2.68). Samples of charred grain from the latter deposit yielded radiocarbon determinations of 370-90 cal BC (SUERC-30629; 2165±40) and 380-120 cal BC (SUERC-30630; 2185±35). The gradual silting of the ditch was interrupted, however, by the deposition of material derived from a significant episode of burning that had apparently occurred in the vicinity of the ditch. This event was represented by a thin layer of black, charcoal-rich soil (17256) overlain by a more substantial layer of pink, heat-discoloured soil that was up to 0.23m thick (17255; Figs 2.68-69). These layers extended throughout most of the length of the ditch, although they were most clearly defined, and the pink layer was thickest, in the central part. They became less substantial toward the eastern terminal (Fig. 2.70) and were absent from the western terminal. Layer 17256 was relatively insubstantial but clearly resulted from burning *in situ*, and is most likely to have derived from burning of vegetation that was growing within the partly silted ditch. A single sherd of middle Iron Age pottery was recovered. The overlying layer, 17255, appeared to represent burnt material that was deposited in the ditch at some time shortly after the burning event had taken place. It consisted almost entirely of burnt soil, with only a small quantity of minute charcoal particles identified in the four soil samples that were collected, and contained 20 sherds of pottery. This included a barrel-shaped jar in a mixed-tempered fabric, and body and base sherds in sandy, shelly and grog-tempered fabrics. None of the pottery showed obvious signs of burning. The layer produced a total of 29 fragments of animal bone, only seven bones of

which were burnt. Samples of burnt bone from this layer yielded radiocarbon determinations of 380-120 cal BC (SUERC-30620; 2185±35) and 390-160 cal BC (SUERC-30624; 2195±35). The upper part of the ditch was filled by a layer (17254) that contained small quantities of sandstone cobbles.

#### *Eastern entrance*

Although the construction of the Phase 3 ditch circuits entailed the slighting of some of the earlier earthworks, the location of the eastern entrance was retained. The entrance itself, however, was redesigned on a more substantial scale; rather than a simple break in the enclosure ditch, the causeway, which measured 4.8m wide, was emphasised by the in-turned ends of ditches 17719 and 17496.

#### *South-eastern entrance*

The south-eastern entrance, like the eastern entrance, retained the location of its Phase 2 equivalent. Due to the re-alignment of the ditch circuits it was no longer off-set, but comprised a simple causeway across the enclosure ditch, defined by the terminals of ditches 17343 and 17496, measuring 2.65m wide.

#### *Pits*

Two large pits (17421 and 17466) had been dug into the infilled ditches of the earlier phases and so have been attributed to Phase 3 (Fig. 2.62). Pit 17421 had been dug through the infilled ditch 17715, which had formed part of the inner circuit of enclosure ditches, and the pit also intersected slightly with the terminal of the earlier phase of ditch 17719. It was irregular, though approximately oval in shape, and measured 3.6m by 2.0m across and 1.1m deep. The initial fill comprised a layer of orange-mottled grey clay (17518) that may have accumulated through natural silting processes, which was overlain by a sequence of more humic soil layers that may have derived from deliberate backfilling. It is from the latter deposits that the majority of the artefactual assem-



Fig. 2.70 Site 4 (Trench 54), the eastern terminal of ditch 17343

blage was recovered. This comprised a little over 1kg of pottery and a similar quantity of animal bone.

Pit 17466 was situated a short distance outside the south-eastern entrance and had been dug into the junction of outer enclosure ditch 17345 with antenna ditch 17721, a location that is unlikely to have resulted from mere chance. The pit was distinctly irregular in plan, although the same fills extended throughout and so it was clearly dug as a single feature. It was slightly larger than pit 17421, measuring 4m by across 3m, and was steep-sided with a depth of 1.1m. An initial accumulation of soil 0.2m thick (17484/17603) was overlain by a layer of sandstone cobbles (17464) that tipped into the pit at a steep angle from the north side (Fig. 2.71). This layer was overlain by further fills that contained a little over 0.5kg of middle Iron Age pottery and an assemblage of animal bone that included five pieces of red or fallow deer antler, one of which had been sawn.

### *Other middle Iron Age features*

#### *Hollows associated with the eastern entrance*

Two shallow hollows (17262 and 17409; Fig. 2.72) situated within the eastern entrance were both filled by a large quantity of sandstone cobbles that may represent the remains of metallurgy associated with the entrance. The hollows may have originated as discrete potholes within the entrance that were filled in using the cobbles, or the metallurgy may have been a more extensive layer that elsewhere has been destroyed by truncation caused by medieval and modern ploughing. No artefactual or stratigraphic evidence was found to indicate with which phase of the enclosure the metallurgy was contemporaneous.

#### *Pits within the enclosure*

A number of possible features within the enclosure were investigated, but most proved to be extremely shallow and lacking in artefactual material, and are likely to represent natural hollows or tree-throw holes. Only five pits were definitely archaeological in origin (17122, 17282, 17317, 17618, 17622; Figs 2.72-73). It was not possible to attribute these features to a specific phase of the development of the enclosure on either stratigraphic or ceramic grounds. The pits were distributed apparently randomly across the interior of the enclosure. Pits 17618 and 17622 intersected, but the others were isolated discrete features.

Pits 17618 and 17622 both measured *c* 2.2m in diameter. Pit 17618 was the earlier and, at 0.57m deep, slightly the shallower of the two. It yielded only four sherds of pottery, and its northern side was cut by pit 17622. The latter pit was somewhat more substantial, with a depth of 0.8m. The presence within its fill of a small number of cobbles, including one large piece of sandstone measuring *c* 0.25m across, suggests that the pit was deliberately backfilled. Artefactual evidence was scarce, comprising only a small quantity of pottery and animal bone recovered from the uppermost fill (17625).

The deepest pit within the enclosure was pit 17317, which measured 2m in diameter and 0.92m deep and had steep, if somewhat irregular sides (Fig. 2.74). A primary fill of orange mottled clay (17316) was overlain by a thin layer of charcoal-flecked material (17433). The main fill comprised a deliberate back-fill (17434) that contained more than 500g of sherds from at least five vessels including slack-profiled jars and one sherd with characteristic middle Iron Age scored decoration,



Fig. 2.71 Site 4 (Trench 54), pit 17466, with layer of sandstone cobbles tipping in from the north side

as well as a small quantity of animal bone. This deposit also contained a large single-platform core and two non-refitting flakes. Soil samples taken from fills 17433 and 17434 contained abundant charcoal, but the fragments were too comminuted to be identifiable.

Pit 17122 was a slightly irregular, flat-based feature 0.35m deep, the northern half of which had been destroyed by modern ditch 17717, leaving only

the southern part intact (Fig. 2.73, section 17035). No artefactual material was recovered from the pit but it may have been the original source of an assemblage of 948g of pottery that was recovered from the adjacent part of ditch 17717.

Pit 17282 was the least substantial of these features, measuring 1.2m in diameter and only 0.24m deep, and contained a fill of sandstone rubble (17283).

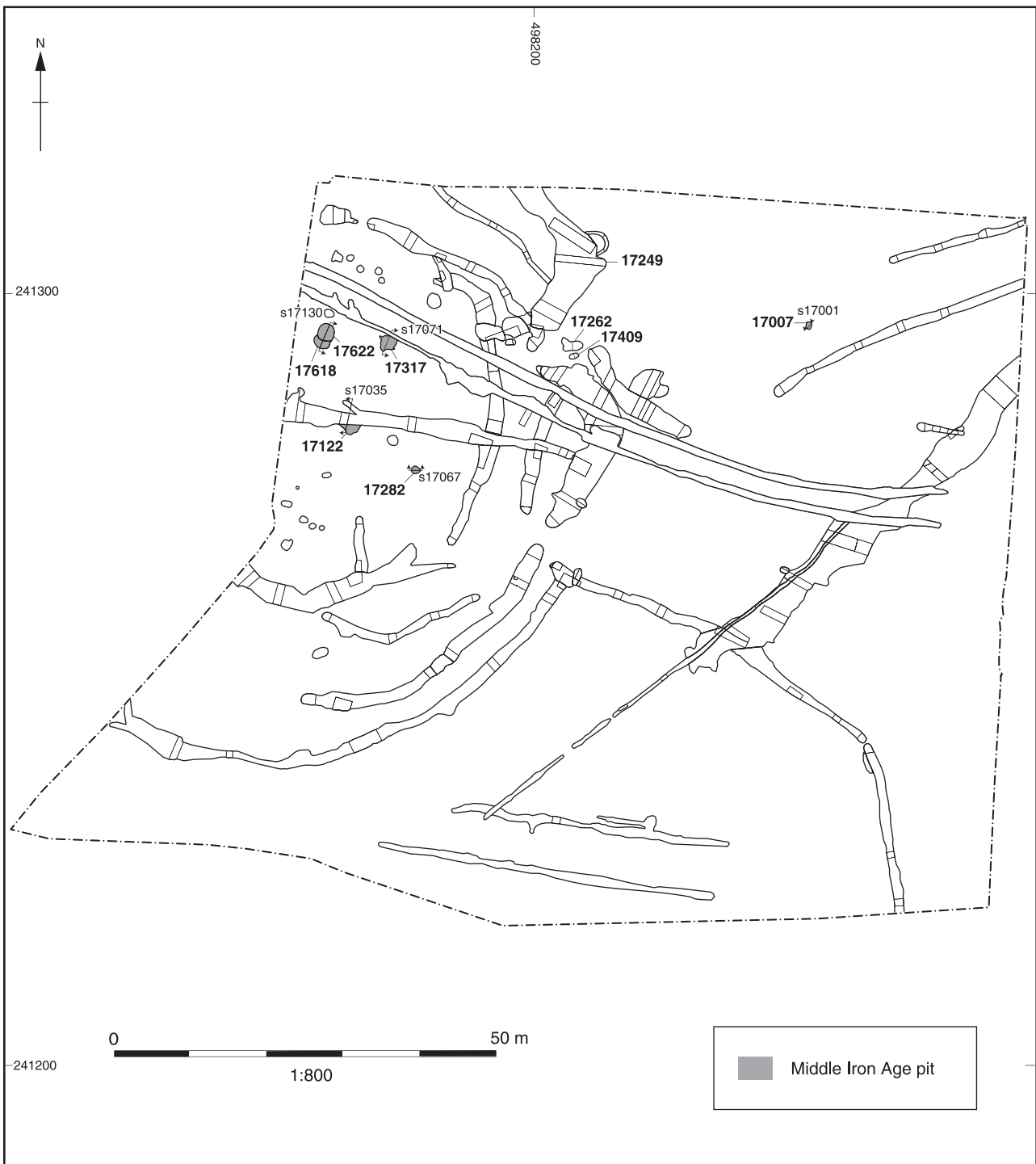


Fig. 2.72 Site 4 (Trench 54), pits associated with the middle Iron Age enclosure

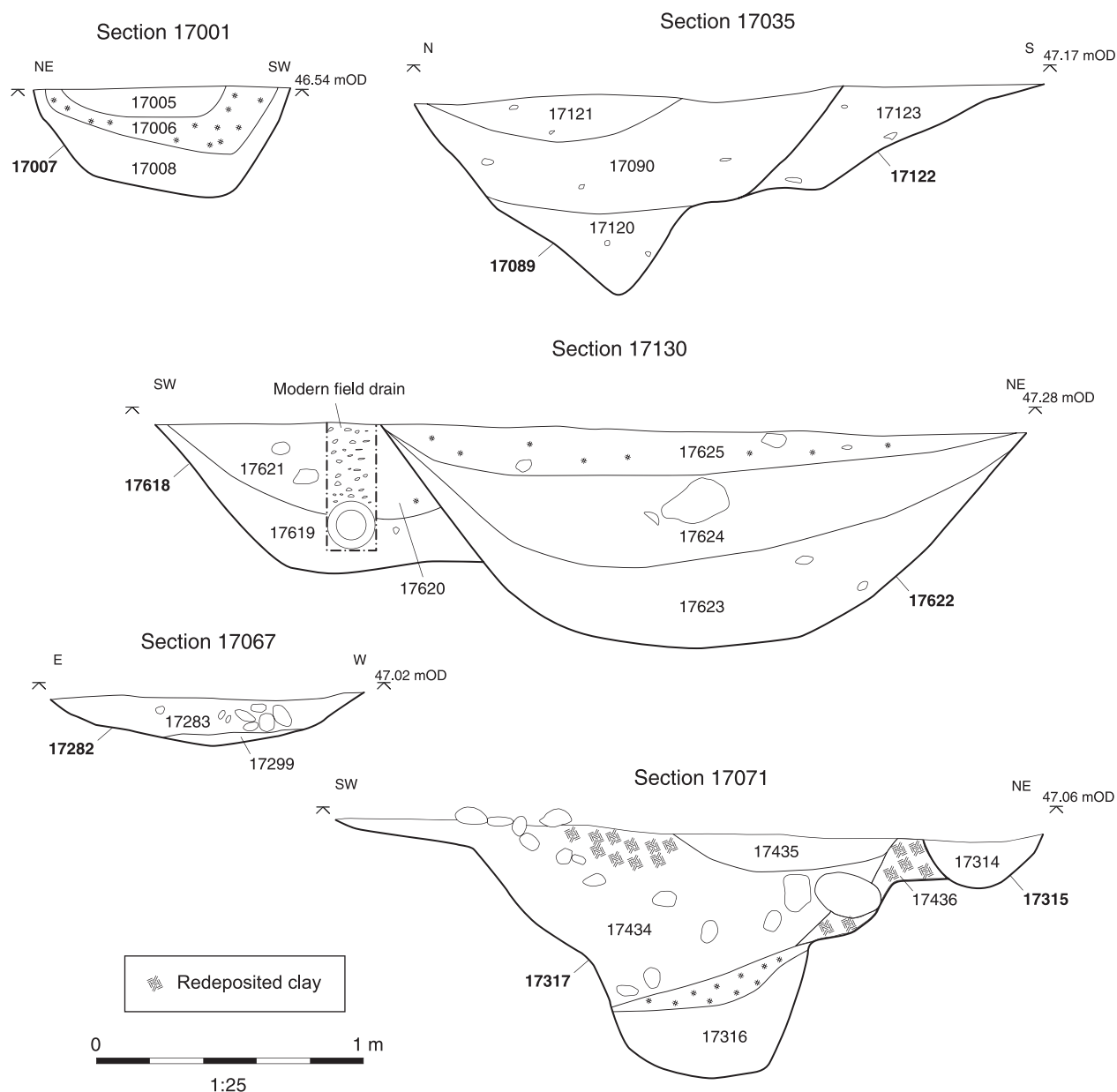


Fig. 2.73 Site 4 (Trench 54), sections through pits within the middle Iron Age enclosure

*Pit 17007*

A single pit (17007) was situated outside the enclosure (Figs 2.72-73, section 17001, and 2.75). This feature lay in an isolated location in the north-eastern part of the excavation area, some 25m from the enclosure. The pit was approximately circular and measured 1.0m in diameter and 0.4m deep. Following the accumulation of a layer of redeposited natural clay 0.2m thick (17008), a dump of soil (17006) that was rich in oak charcoal and included a bowl in a fabric tempered with organic material, most likely shell was deposited in the pit (Fig. 2.75). The bowl itself, however, was not burnt.

*Ring gully 17249*

Part of a curving gully (17249) was identified. It may have been the eastern half of a small ring gully, the western part of which had been destroyed by the digging of ditch 17719. The relationship with the latter ditch suggests that it was associated with the original enclosure. The gully was located outside the enclosure, c 15m north of the eastern entrance, and had a diameter of only c 2.5m. Clearly, it was not substantial enough to represent the remains of a roundhouse gully, but it may have served to enclose some other feature. The gully was 0.7m wide and 0.38m deep, and contained a few sherds of middle Iron Age pottery.





Fig. 2.74 Site 4 (Trench 54), pit 170317



Fig. 2.75 Site 4 (Trench 54), dump of charcoal-rich soil and middle Iron Age bowl exposed in pit 17007

### Post-medieval features

#### *Hollow-way 17712 and ditch 17713*

Hollow-way 17712 extended across the south-eastern part of the excavation area on a NE-SW alignment (Fig. 2.76). It was exposed for a total length of 60m, petering out at the south-western end and extending beyond the edge of the excavation at the north-eastern end. It measured c 4m wide and 0.1-0.3m deep, and cut across the antenna ditch of the middle Iron Age enclosure. No artefactual

evidence was recovered to indicate the date of this feature, the ceramic assemblage comprising only a handful of small, abraded sherds of Iron Age pottery that are likely to have been residual, derived from activity associated with the enclosure. The western side of the hollow-way was cut by a shallow ditch (17713) that lay on the same alignment and presumably defined an associated boundary that persisted after the hollow-way had passed out of use. The ditch extended for c 35m beyond the south-western end of the hollow-way before petering out in the southern part of the excavation area.

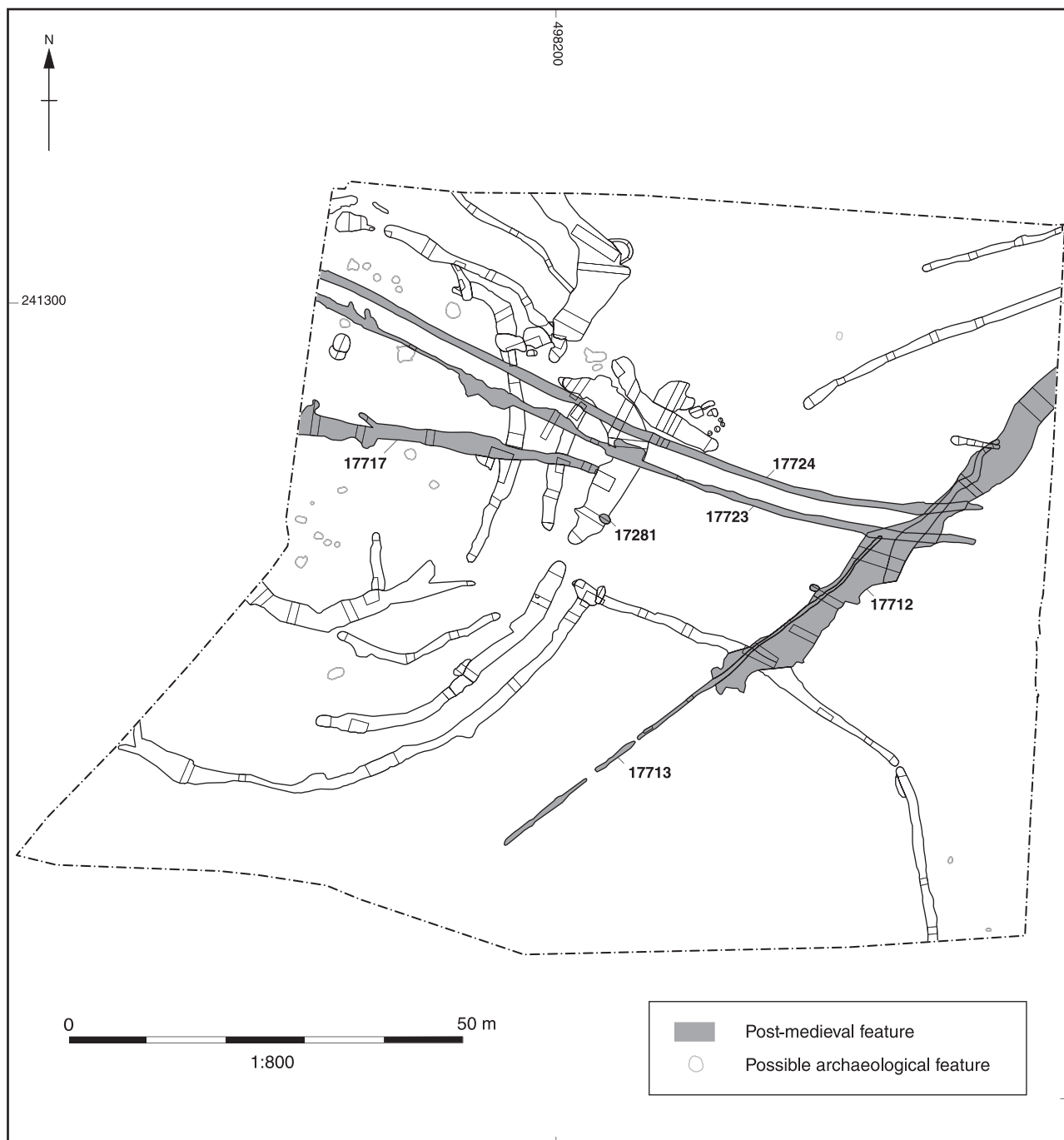


Fig. 2.76 Site 4 (Trench 54), features that post-date the middle Iron Age enclosure

#### Ditches 17723 and 17724

Ditches 17723 and 17724 extended across the excavation area on parallel, slightly curving alignments, and cut across the middle Iron Age enclosure (Fig. 2.76). Ditch 17724 was the more substantial of the two, and was a V-profiled feature up to 0.6m deep, whereas ditch 17723 was no more than 0.25m deep. Five crumbs of 18th-19th-century pottery were recovered from the fill of ditch 17724, and it is likely that the ditches represented a post-medieval field boundary, probably with a bank or hedgerow between them.

#### Ditch 17717

Ditch 17717 extended across the middle Iron Age enclosure on an E-W alignment (Fig. 2.76). It was originally recorded as being cut at its eastern end by ditch 17496, and thus representing a phase of activity between the original occupation of the enclosure and the subsequent re-instatement of its eastern side. However, this relationship was problematic as the character and alignment of the feature is clearly at odds with the other Iron Age features and, although the ditch contained an

assemblage of more than 1.8kg of middle Iron Age pottery, it also yielded a post-medieval dress pin and small, but securely stratified, fragments of Roman brick and tile. Furthermore, a sample of charred grain from fill 17090 that was submitted for radiocarbon dating proved to be modern (SUERC-30628; Griffiths and Naysmith, this volume). It seems likely therefore that the feature is of recent, probably post-medieval origin and that the recording of the relationship with ditch 17496 was erroneous. Approximately half the Iron Age pottery from the ditch came from the intervention dug where it cut through pit 17122, and it is possible that the pit may have been the origin of this material.

**Pit 17281**

Pit 17281 (Fig. 2.76) cut the upper fill of ditch 17496, which formed part of the re-instatement of the eastern side of the middle Iron Age enclosure. It

contained a small assemblage of animal bone but nothing that could assist in assigning a date.

**SITE 4 (TRENCH 61)**

**Site location**

Site 4 (Trench 61) was located north-west of the village of Marston Moretaine, west of the junction of the existing A421 with Beancroft Road (NGR SP 989 417; Fig. 2.77). It was situated on level ground, at c 41m OD. A roughly trapezoidal area of 4253m<sup>2</sup> was excavated (Figs 2.77-78), centred on Evaluation Trench 61, in which two pits, one containing Iron Age pottery, had been recorded.

**Middle Iron Age features**

The Iron Age features at Site 4 (Trench 61) were few in number but may represent the remains of a settle-

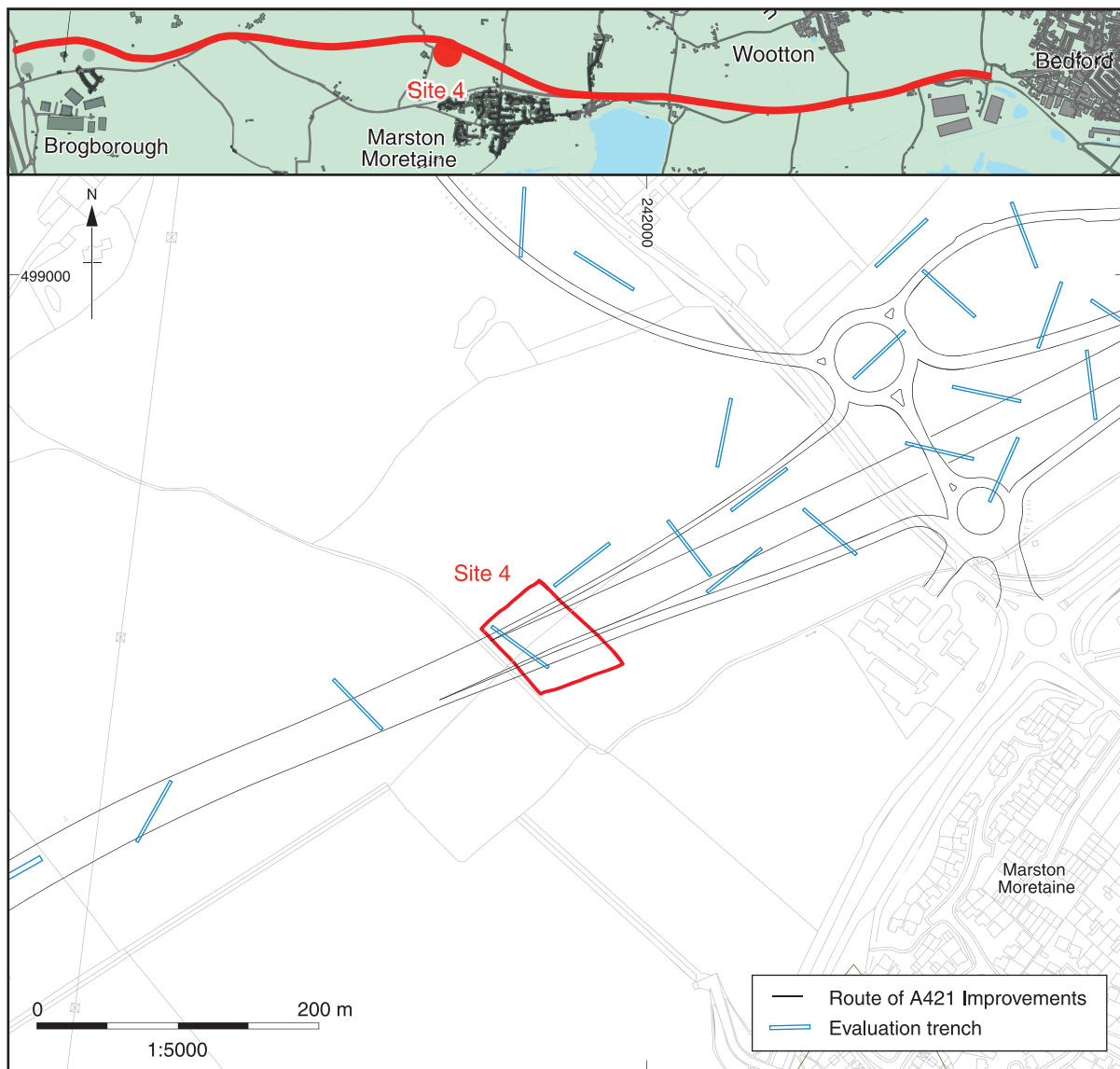


Fig. 2.77 Location of Site 4 (Trench 61). (© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence no. 100005569)



Fig. 2.78 General view of Site 4 (Trench 61)

ment the evidence for which has largely been destroyed by the effects of subsequent agriculture. They comprised part of a ring gully (5092) and six pits (5023, 5030, 5035, 5043, 5044, 5084) of definite or possible Iron Age date. A small quantity of Iron Age pottery also occurred as residual material in later features (Fig. 2.80).

#### *Ring gully 5092*

The ring gully (Figs 2.80-81) was represented by an arc of gully (5092) that delimited its north-eastern quadrant. The gully measured *c* 9m in length and defined a regular curve with a projected diameter of *c* 12m. It was 0.3-0.35m wide, with a slight bulge a short distance from its western end where the width increased to 0.5m, and had a depth of 0.2m. The western end of the gully ended abruptly in a square-ended terminal (Fig. 2.81, section 5021), and although the eastern end sloped more gradually (Fig. 2.81, section 5020) this may also have been an original terminal. A handful of very small sherds of pottery were recovered from its fill, as well as 12 fragments (26 g) of animal bone. No other features were identified that might have formed part of this putative structure.

#### *Iron Age pits*

The pits were quite widely distributed across the area of the excavation, pits 5044 and 5084 being

situated near the southern corner of the site, pit 5043 lying a few metres north-east of the ring gully, and pits 5023, 5030 and 5035 forming a discrete group in the northern part of the excavation (Fig. 2.80). Pits 5043 and 5044 were by far the most substantial of these features, the others being rather ephemeral in character, and these two larger pits also had similar sequences of fills. Pit 5044 (Figs 2.82, section 5017 and Fig. 2.83) had a somewhat irregular shape, both in plan and in profile, and measured 1.3m by 0.86m across and had a depth of 0.38m. Its basal fill was a deposit of black, charcoal-rich soil (5046), although the fragments of charcoal were comminuted and offered no potential for species identification. Small quantities of pottery were recovered from both this and the overlying backfill (5045), including a rimsherd from a slack-profiled shouldered jar from the latter deposit. Pit 5043 (Fig. 2.82, section 5016) was very similar in size to pit 5044, although its shape was more regular and it was slightly deeper, with a depth of 0.45m. It, too, contained a charcoal-rich bottom fill (5042) overlain by backfill (5040, 5041). The uppermost fill (5044) contained six very small fragments of pottery. Pit 5084, which lay a short distance west of pit 5044, was a shallow hollow only 0.1m deep, and similarly contained a small quantity of middle-late Iron Age pottery. The three pits in the northern part of the excavation were all quite small, the most substantial being pit 5030,

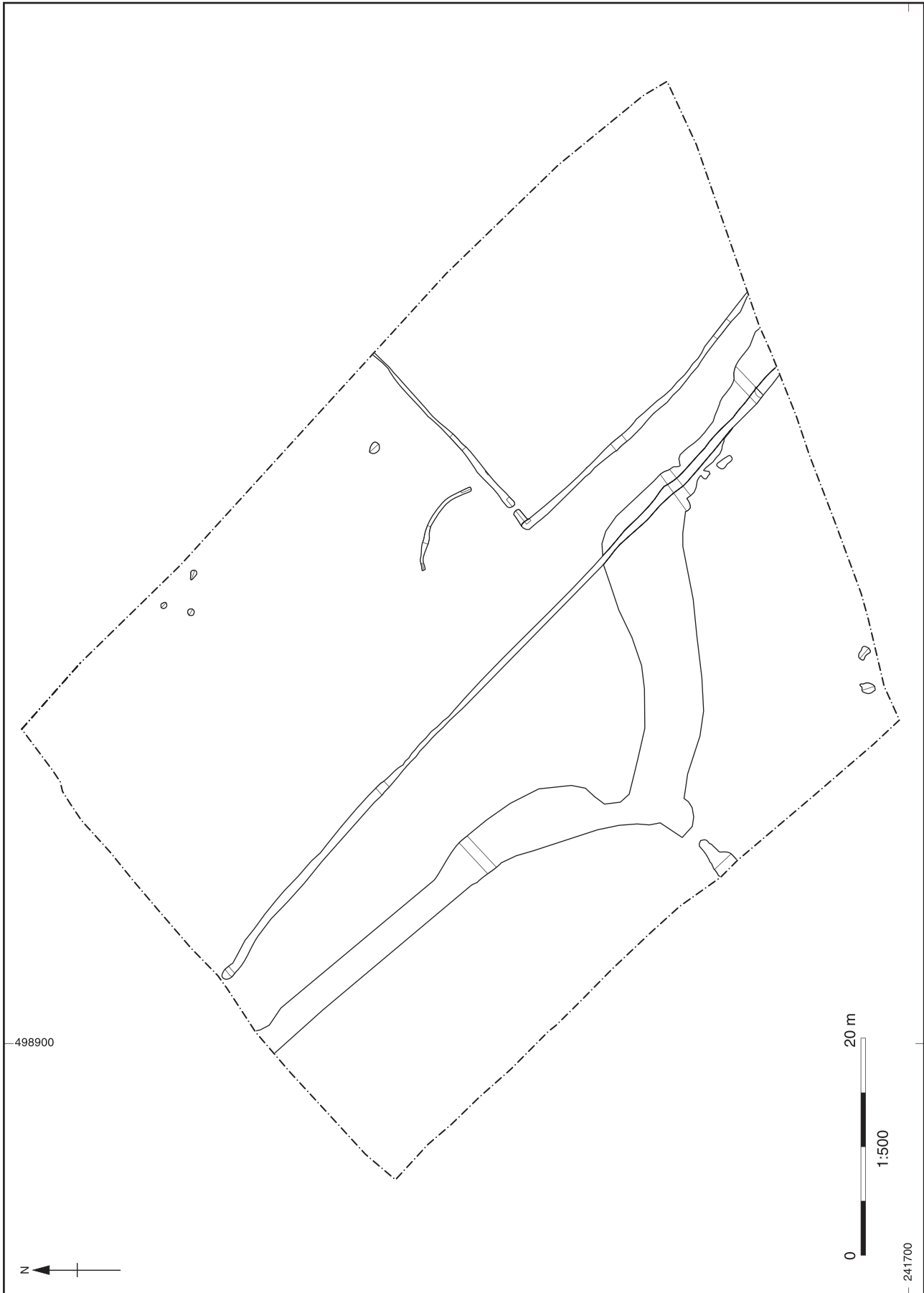


Fig. 2.79 Site 4 (Trench 61), plan of all archaeological features

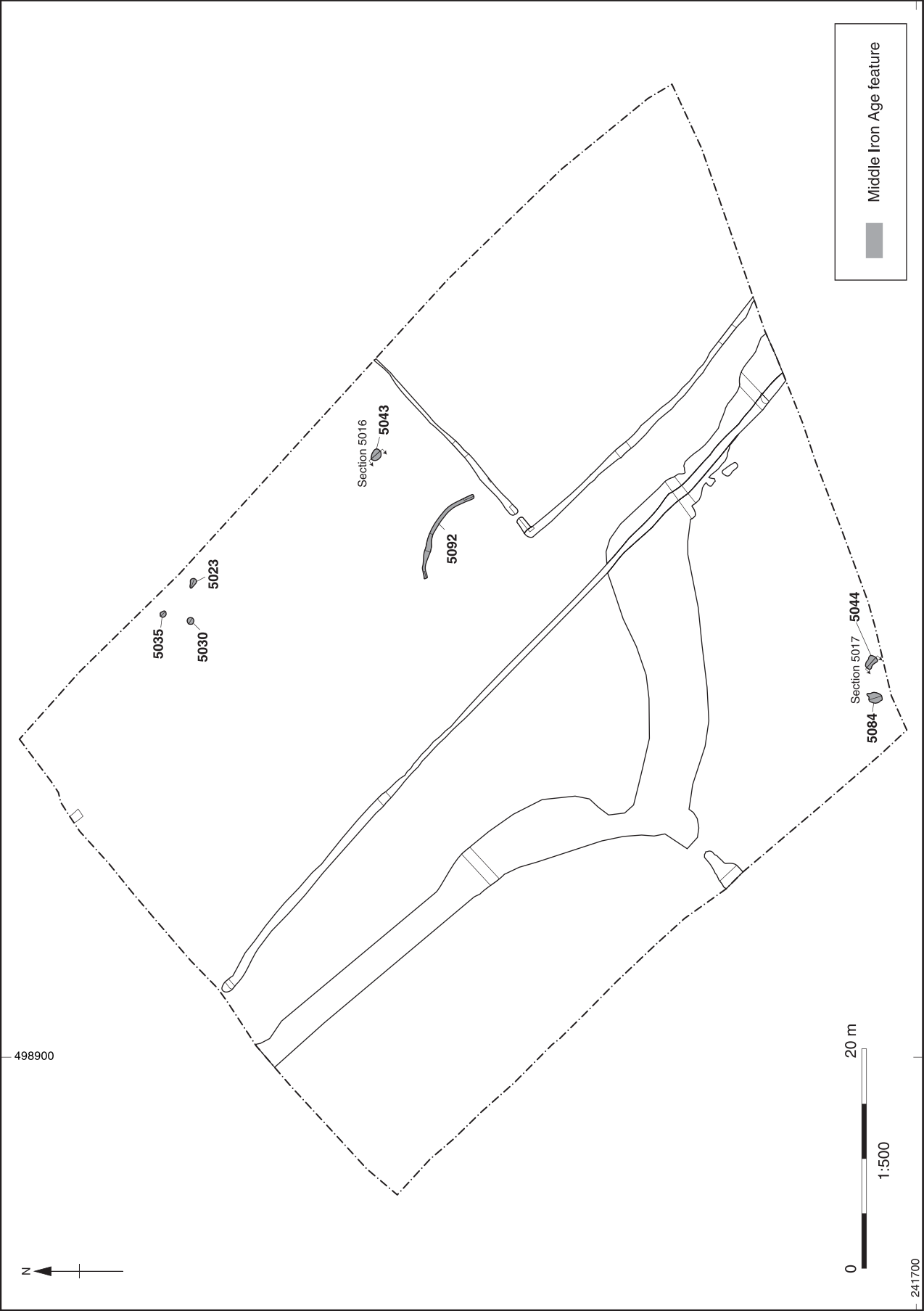


Fig. 2.80 Site 4 (Trench 61), plan of middle Iron Age features

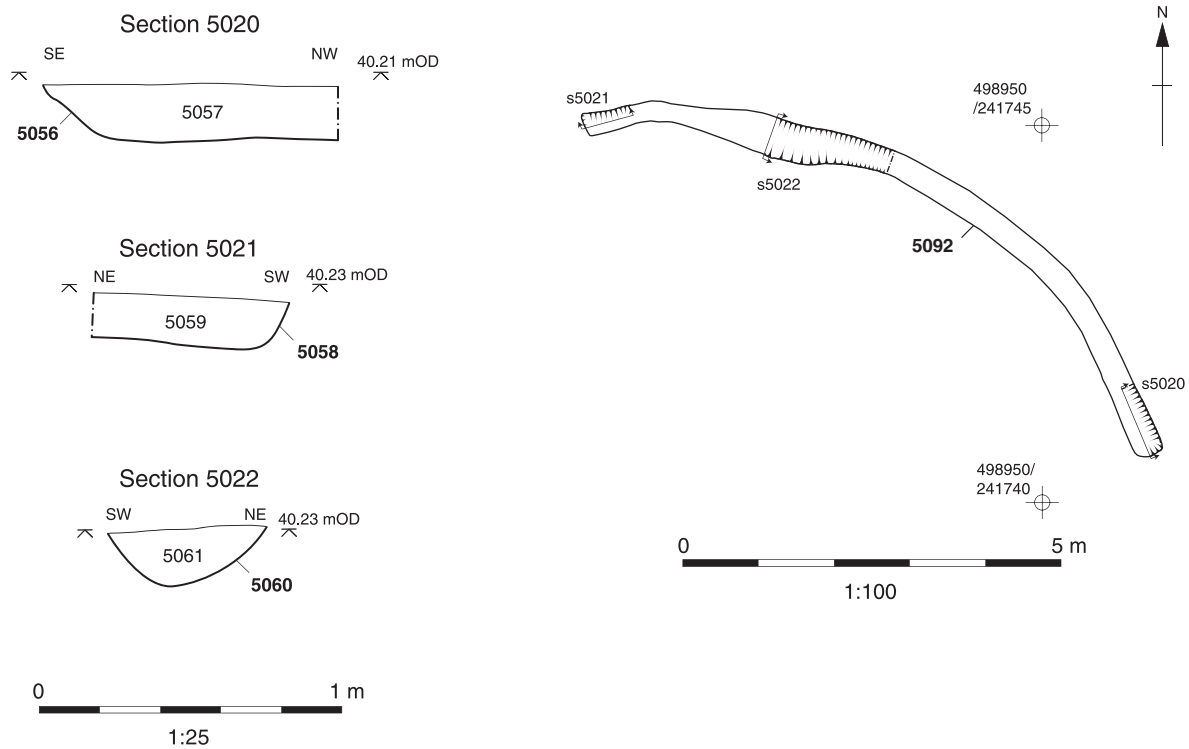


Fig. 2.81 Site 4 (Trench 61), plan and sections of middle Iron Age ring gully 5092

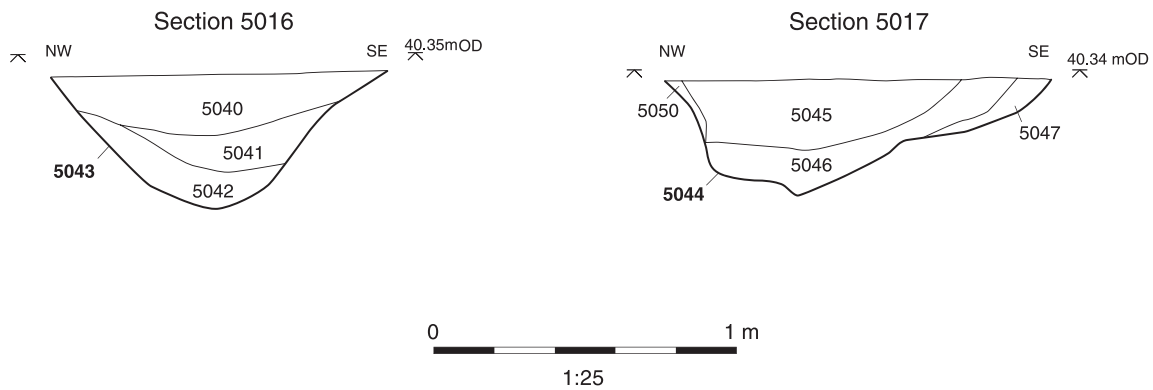


Fig. 2.82 Site 4 (Trench 61), sections through middle Iron Age pits 5043 and 5044



Fig. 2.83 Site 4 (Trench 61), middle Iron Age pit 5044

which was 0.28m deep. The latter feature yielded three small sherds of Iron Age pottery, as well as a single sherd of glazed earthenware of 17th-19th-century date that is probably intrusive. Iron Age pottery was also recovered from pit 5023, and although pit 5035 contained no artefactual material its similarity to the other pits suggests that it was also Iron Age in origin.

### Medieval and post-medieval features

#### *Hollow-way 5099*

A wide, shallow hollow (5099) interpreted as a hollow-way extended across the site on a rather dog-legged NW-SE alignment (Figs 2.84-85). Toward the north-western end of the site the feature

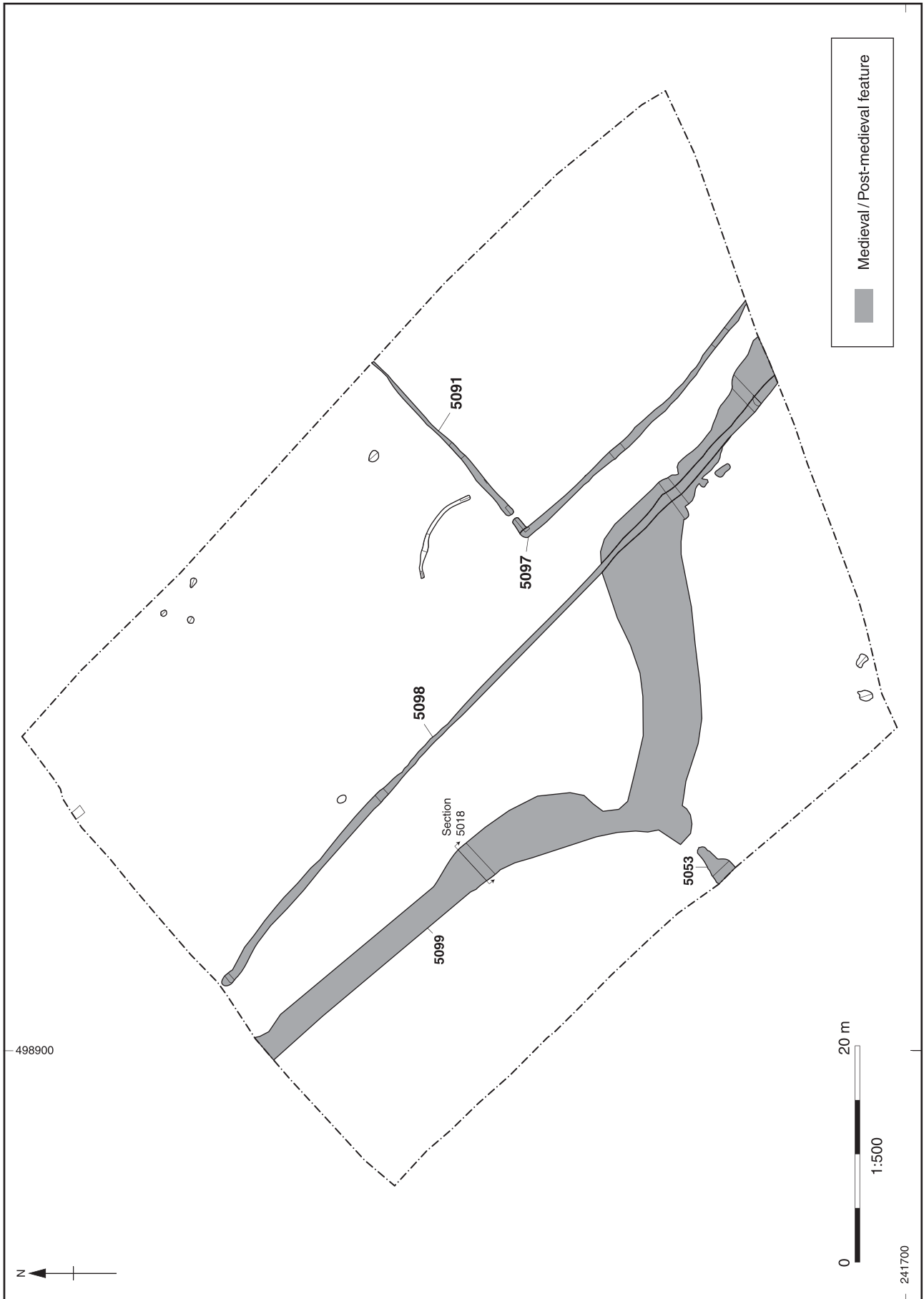


Fig. 2.84 Site 4 (Trench 61), plan of medieval/post-medieval features



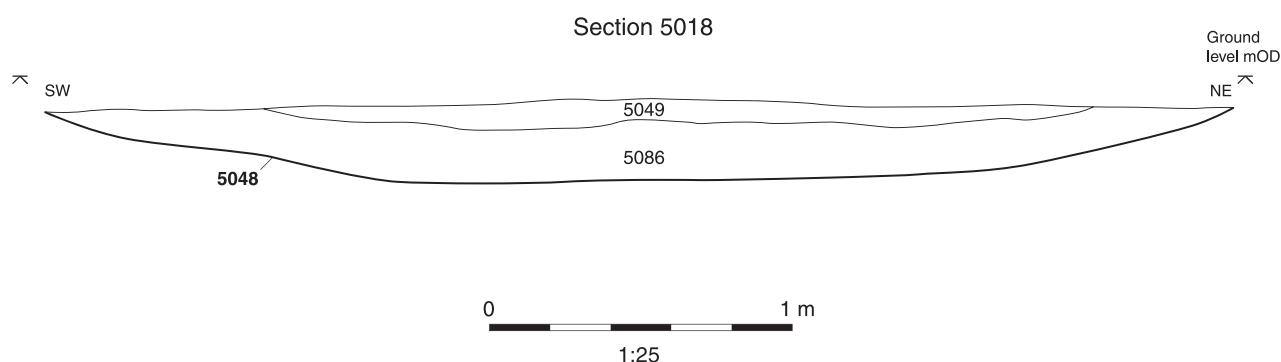


Fig. 2.85 Site 4 (Trench 61), section through hollow-way 5099

was quite straight and measured *c* 2.5m wide, but to the south-east both its alignment and its width were more varied, with the width extending up to a maximum of *c* 7.5m. Throughout its length the hollow-way was shallow and had a wide, flat base with a fairly consistent depth of 0.22-0.26m. It was filled by mottled brown clay soil (5049, 5086). It appeared to be joined from the south-west by a similar, subsidiary hollow (5053) although the junction lay close to the edge of the excavation area and had been partly truncated by more recent ploughing. The irregular alignment of these features may indicate that they were formed by trampling by livestock rather than having been deliberately created features. If so they may have formed adjacent to boundaries that were defined by features for which no other archaeological evidence has survived.

The date of these features was uncertain. The only artefactual evidence recovered from hollow 5099 fills was a small assemblage of Iron Age pottery, amounting only to a little over 50 g, but it is likely that its common alignment with furrows 5051, 5052 and 5026 indicate a medieval or later date. Its southern part was cut by ditch 5098 (below), perhaps indicating that it defined a boundary during the medieval or post-medieval period that was perpetuated in a more straightened form by the alignment of the ditch.

#### *Post-medieval field boundaries*

Field boundaries of probable post-medieval date were represented by a ditch (5098) that extended across the entire length of the excavation on a NW-SE alignment and two ditches that appeared to delimited two sides of a rectilinear field or enclosure that lay on a similar orientation (Fig. 2.84). Although these features did not yield any datable artefacts other than small pieces of Iron Age pottery that are likely to be residual, their orientations are consistent with those of the surrounding modern boundaries, probably indicating that they date from the enclosure of Marston Moretaine in *c* AD 1797.

## SITE 5

### Site location

Site 5 was located *c* 50m north-east of the junction of the A421 with Lower Shelton Road, which extends north-west through the village of Lower Shelton (NGR TL 000 426; Fig. 2.86). It comprised parts of two small adjoining fields that were situated alongside the existing carriageway, in an area that was proposed for landscaping. The site consisted of a rectangular area that was partly bisected by a ditch (Fig. 2.87). The site encompassed a total area of 1867m<sup>2</sup> and lay on level ground at *c* 38m OD.

### Early Iron Age

The only early Iron Age feature identified on Site 5, or indeed on the entire project, was a cremation burial (6067/6070) that was located at the northern end of the site (Fig. 2.88). The burial comprised a shallow, oval pit that measured 0.92m x 0.40m and only 0.14m deep, and which contained a deposit of charcoal-rich soil mixed with a small quantity of cremated bone. The bone was from a single adult of indeterminate sex and yielded a radiocarbon determination of 770-400 cal BC (SUERC-30618; 2406±35 BP). The burial contained a single fragment of pottery that was undiagnostic and could be dated no closer than Iron Age.

### Late Iron Age

The distribution of late Iron Age features was restricted to the southern half of the site and comprised two partial ring gullies (6021 and 6042) and eight pits or postholes, although some of the less certain features (below) may also have been of this date (Fig. 2.89). Ring gully 6021 cut two pits that contained late Iron Age pottery (6052 and 109105), indicating that occupation dating from this period may have lasted for some time.

#### *Pits 6052 and 109105*

Pit 6052 was a very shallow hollow, only 0.1m deep,

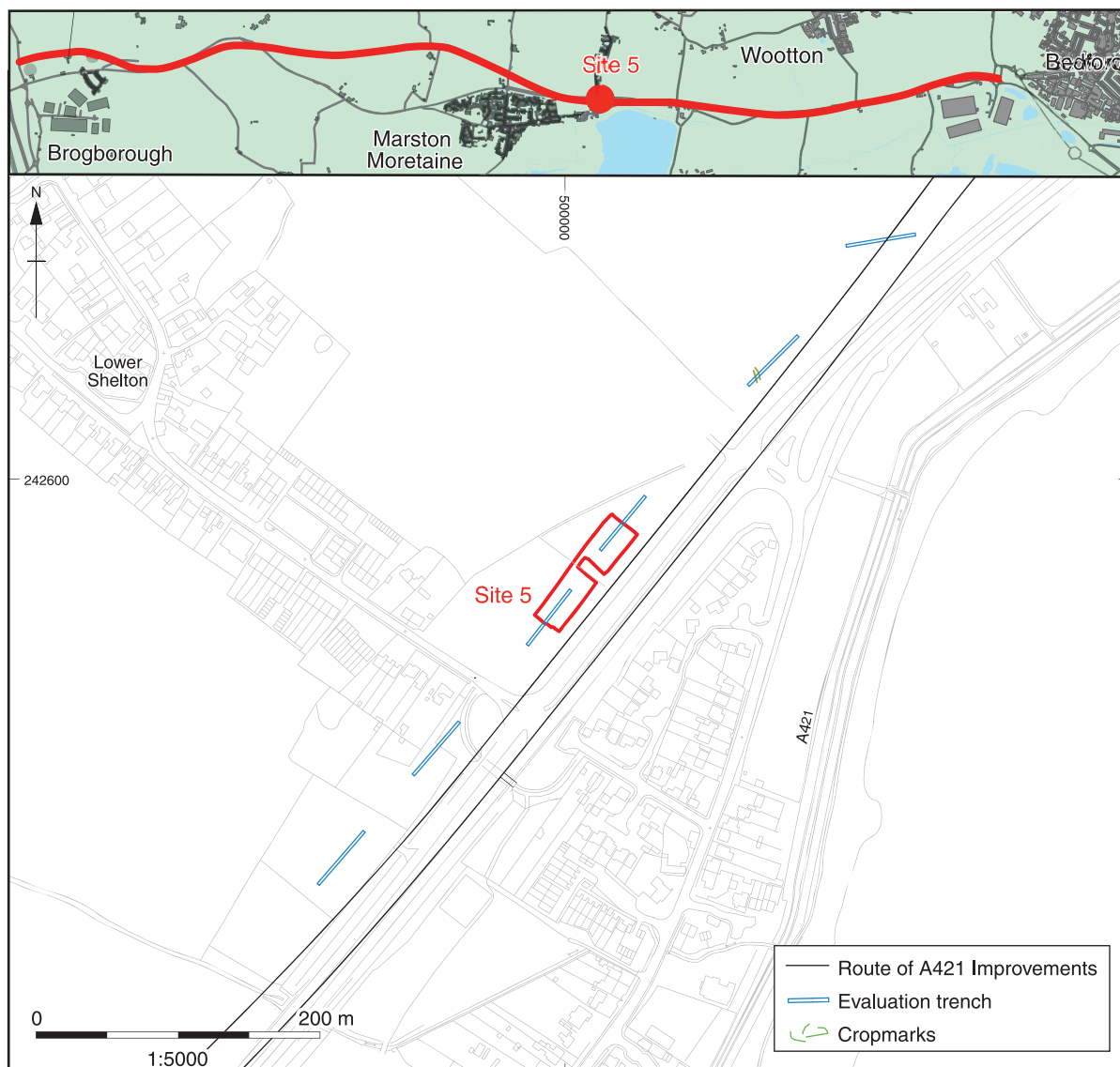


Fig. 2.86 Location of Site 5. (© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence no. 100005569)

from which a small assemblage of 92g of pottery was recovered, but pit 109105 was more substantial. The latter feature was investigated in Evaluation Trench 91. It measured a little over 1.0m in diameter and had steep sides that were slightly undercut on the northern side (Figs 2.89-90). A sequence of four fills was recorded, from which were recovered a small group of pottery sherds, a single piece of animal bone and part of the shaft of an adult human right femur.

#### *Ring gully 6021 and associated features*

Gully 6021 cut the south-western side of pit 109105 (Figs 2.89-90, sections 6000 and 109102). The feature comprised a curving length of gully *c* 4m long, the curvature of which suggested that it represented part of the southern side of a ring gully. The gully had a maximum depth of 0.3m, but petered out at either end. A thin primary fill

was overlain by a main fill of dark, charcoal-flecked soil that contained a small assemblage of late Iron Age pottery in a variety of grog-tempered fabrics, as well as some small fragments of animal bone. It also contained the upper two thirds of a human left femur, although the bone was much smaller and less robust than the piece from pit 109105 and so is unlikely to have come from the same individual.

A group of discrete features was recorded in the vicinity of ring gully 6021 which might have been associated with this structure, although they could equally have pre-dated it, like pits 6052 and 109105 (Figs 2.89). Small quantities of pottery were recovered from pits 6009 and 109103, the latter of which was excavated during the evaluation stage of the investigation. Both features were shallow, concave hollows that had clearly been subject to considerable plough-truncation, with pit 109105, which was

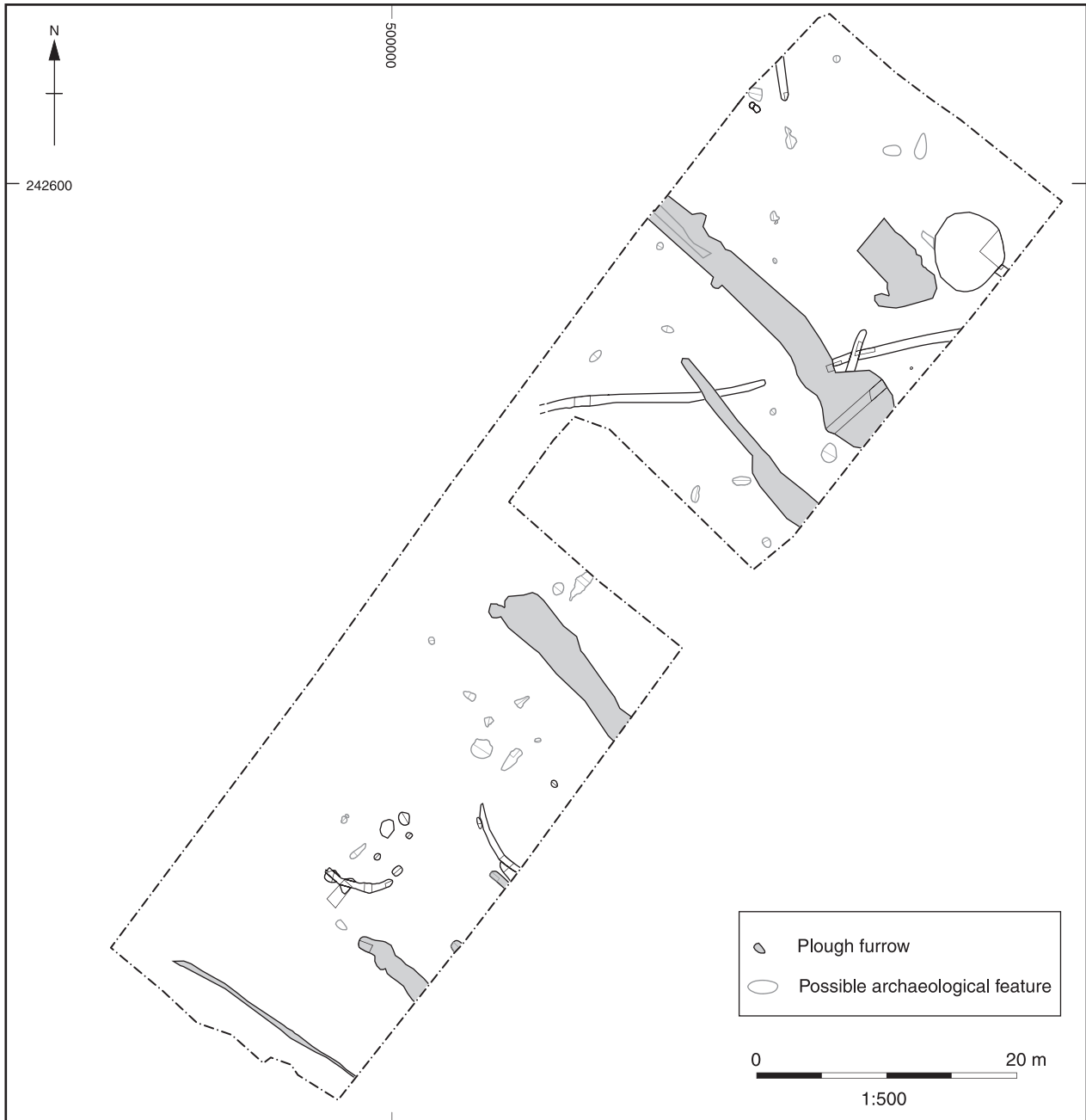


Fig. 2.87 Site 5, plan of all archaeological features

marginally the deeper of the two, measuring only 0.18m deep. Pit 6009 (Fig. 2.91, section 6002 and Fig. 2.92) contained a single fill of dark grey, charcoal-flecked soil that was similar to the main fill of the adjacent ring gully, and pits 6016 (Fig. 2.91, section 6004) and 6025 (Fig. 2.91, section 6006), which were located in the same cluster of features, were also attributed to this phase on the basis of being filled by similar deposits. The latter features were also shallow, with pit 6016 measuring 0.10m deep and pit 6025 surviving to a depth of only 0.03m.

#### Ring gully 6042

A second ring gully (6042; Figs 2.89-90, section 6014)

lay c 8m east of ring gully 6021. Like the latter feature, it was not completely preserved but was represented only by an arc of gully that, in this instance, defined the south-western part of the perimeter. The south-eastern part of the feature lay beyond the limit of the excavation. The part of the gully that lay within the excavation area was exposed for a length of c 6m, and measured 0.5m wide and 0.19m deep. Its northern end was not investigated by excavation but appeared to become narrower and peter out rather than ending in a definite terminal, suggesting that the northern part of the feature had been destroyed by plough-truncation. A single posthole (6037; Fig. 2.91, section 6013)

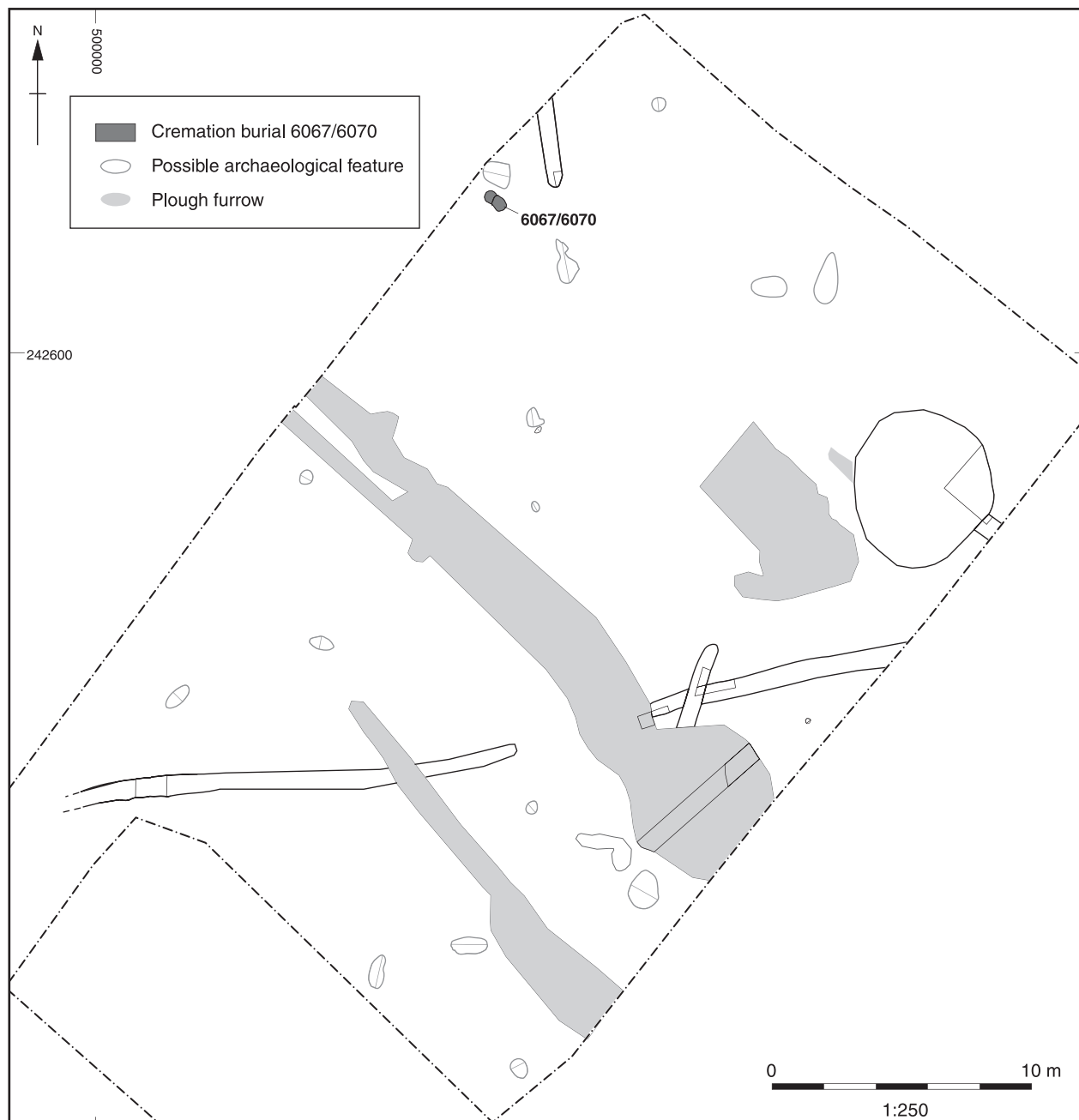


Fig. 2.88 Site 5, location of early Iron Age cremation burial 6067/6070

was identified that may have been associated with this ring gully.

### Early Roman period

Evidence was identified for land division during the early Roman period in the form of two boundary ditches that were exposed in the northern part of the excavation area (6094 and 6137; Figs 2.93-94).

#### Ditch 6137

Ditch 6137 extended across the site on an E-W alignment. It was no more than 0.2m deep, and a break in the middle part of the feature may have been the

result of localised truncation rather than representing an original entrance through it. The western end of the ditch petered out, while to the east the feature continued beyond the edge of the excavation area. A single small body sherd of South Gaulish samian ware dating from the late 1st or early 2nd century was recovered from its fill.

#### Ditch 6094

The southern end of ditch 6094 was exposed at the northern corner of the site. No dating evidence was recovered from this feature, but it was of similar dimensions to ditch 6137 and lay on a N-S alignment, at right angles to that of the latter ditch,

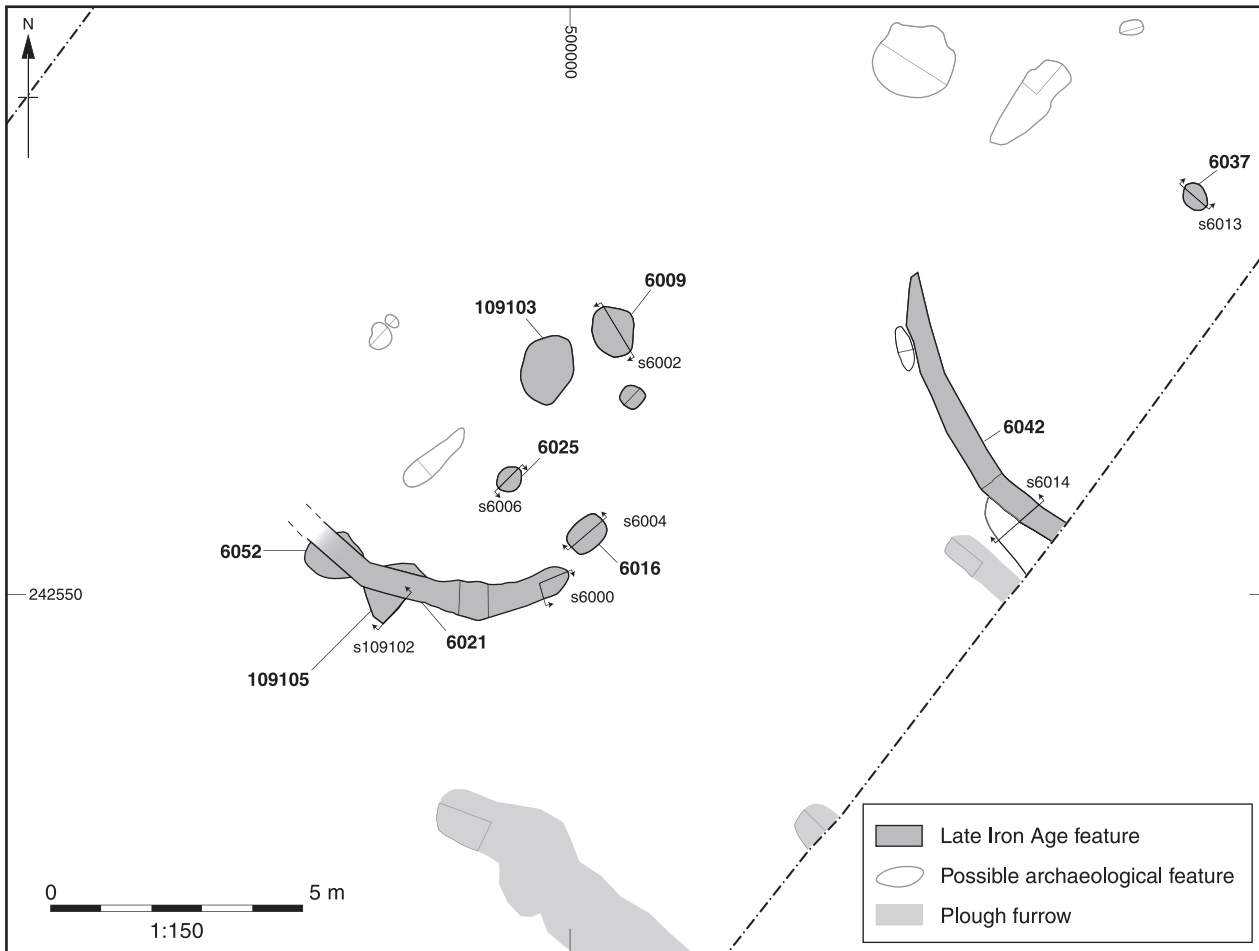


Fig. 2.89 Site 5, late Iron Age features in the southern part of the site

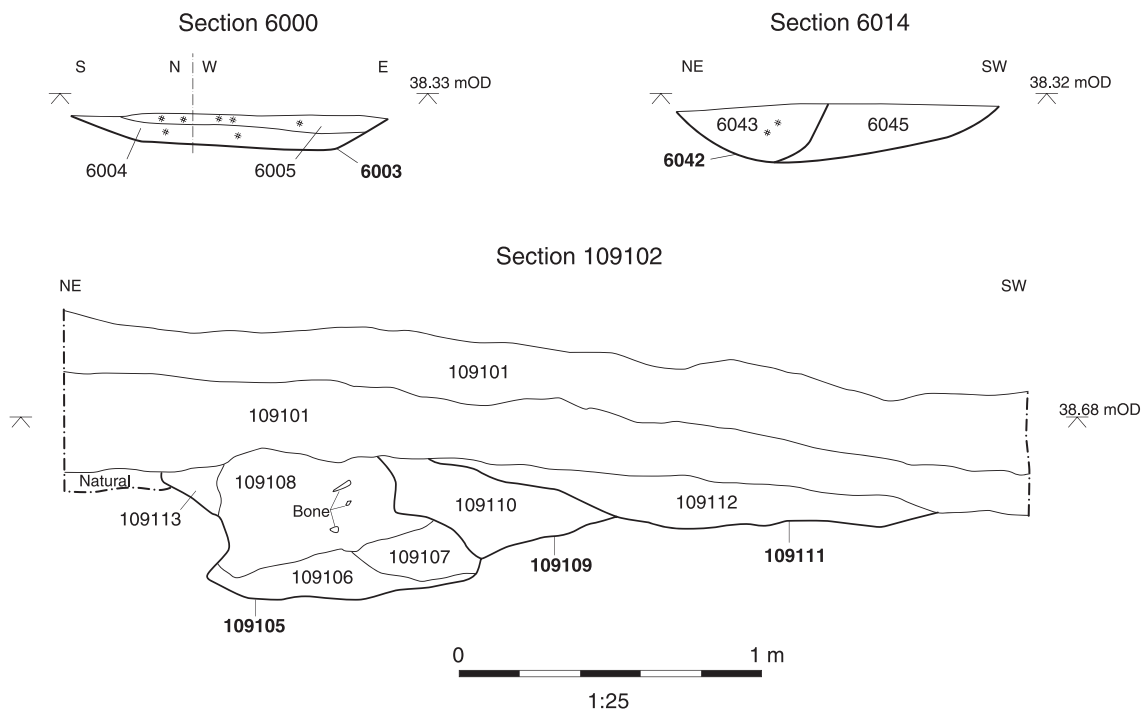


Fig. 2.90 Site 5, sections through late Iron Age ring gullies 6021 and 6042

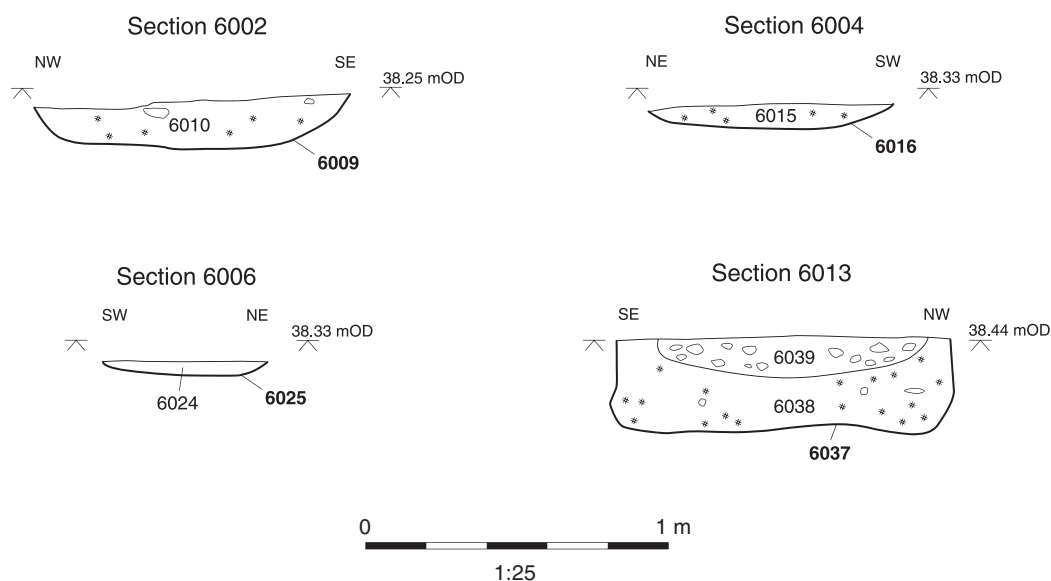


Fig. 2.91 Site 5, sections through late Iron Age pits



Fig. 2.92 Site 5, late Iron Age pit 6009

suggesting that the two ditches defined contemporaneous boundaries.

#### Ditch 6099

Ditch 6099 (Fig. 2.93) was an insubstantial feature, only 0.08m deep, that cut early Roman boundary ditch 6137 and was itself truncated by a medieval furrow. Apart from these stratigraphic relationships, no evidence was found to indicate the date or function of this feature.

#### Medieval

A series of plough furrows extended across the site on parallel NW-SE alignments (Fig. 2.87) and are likely to derive from ridge and furrow cultivation dating from the medieval period.

#### Modern

A large, shallow feature (6119) that was situated

near the north-eastern end of the site was cut through a medieval furrow and so is likely to have been post-medieval or modern in origin (Fig. 2.93). It measured *c* 5.5m in diameter and 0.3m deep. Its shallow profile suggests that it may have been a pond.

#### Other possible archaeological features

In addition to the definite archaeological features, a number of features of less certain origin were also recorded. These comprised shallow hollows of varying shape that were typically filled with light grey clay soil. It is possible that some of these features were the bases of plough-truncated pits, but the irregular shapes of many examples suggested that they were more likely to have been natural hollows or tree-throw holes. One of these features contained two small fragments of Romano-British pottery, and one had a heat-discoloured fill.

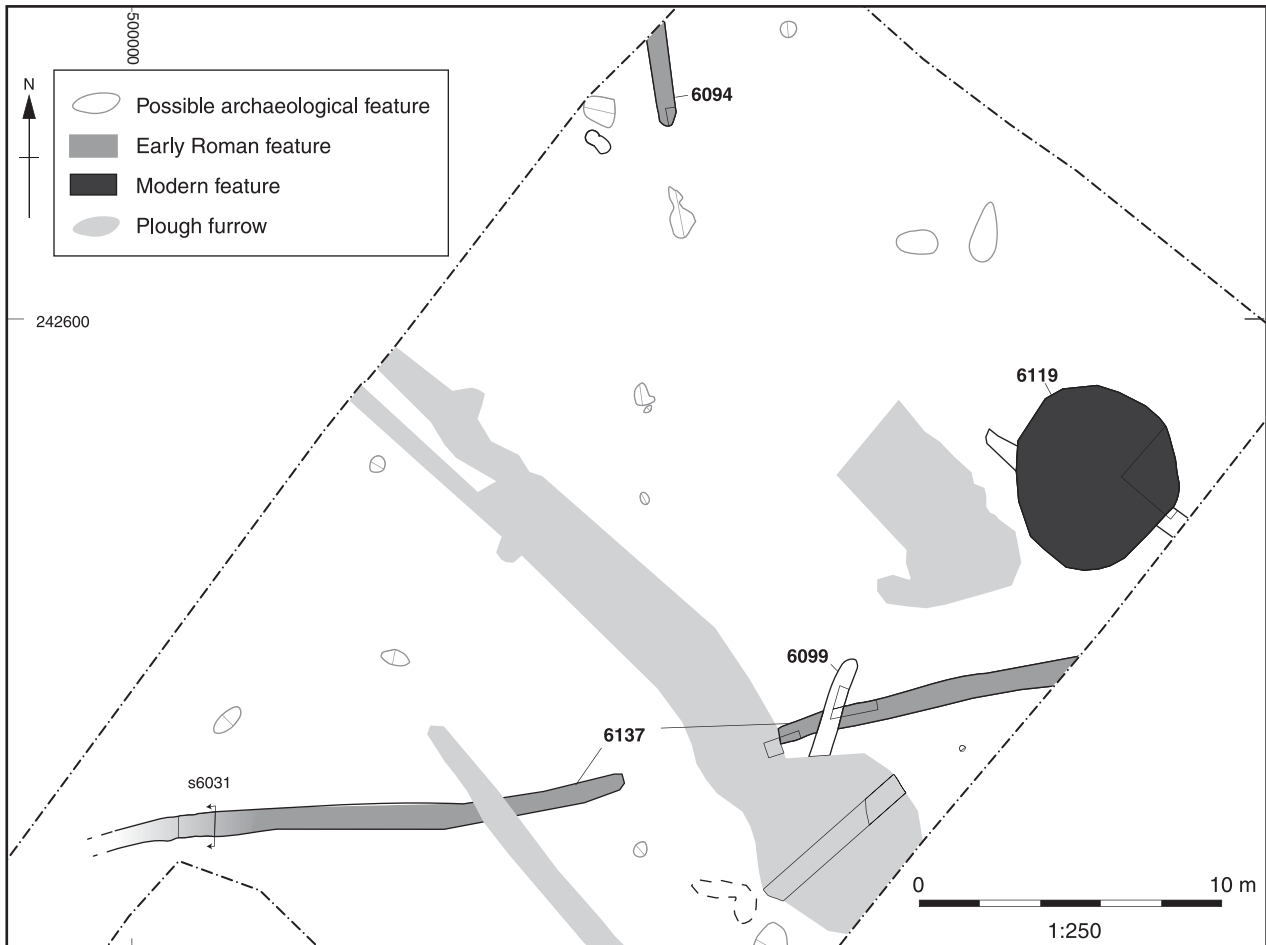


Fig. 2.93 Site 5, early Roman boundary ditches in the northern part of the site

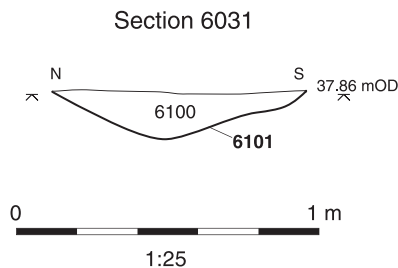


Fig. 2.94 Site 5, section through early Roman ditch 6137

**SITE 6 (TRENCHES 97-99)**

**Site location**

Site 6 (Trenches 97-99) was located beside the junction of the A421 with Hoo Lane (NGR TL 006 432; Figs 2.95-6). It comprised a rectangular area covering 7478m<sup>2</sup>, situated on level ground at c 38m OD.

The excavation area was targeted on the locations of Evaluation Trenches 97, 98 and 99. These trenches had exposed a number of ditches, although no dating evidence had been recovered from the features in Trench 97 and flooding had precluded any detailed investigation of the features in Trenches 98 and 99. The excavation resulted in the

recovery of very little artefactual evidence, but it is likely that all the ditches revealed were post-medieval or modern in origin.

**Boundary ditch 7205/7208**

The earliest feature encountered was a ditch that defined a rather sinuous boundary (7205/7208) that extended for a distance of c 85m on a NE-SW alignment (Fig. 2.97). The ditch was broken in two places, although as the feature was very shallow, typically measuring only 0.12-0.22m deep, this may have been the result of truncation by subsequent ploughing rather than representing the locations of original entrances through the boundary. Similarly, the ends of the ditch may represent the points beyond which it had been truncated rather than its original extent. No artefactual evidence was recovered from the ditch, but it lay on a similar orientation to ditch 7204, which dated from the 18th-19th century, and may have defined an earlier version of the same boundary.

**18th-19th-century boundary ditches**

A group of linear field boundary ditches were recorded that are likely to have formed part of a

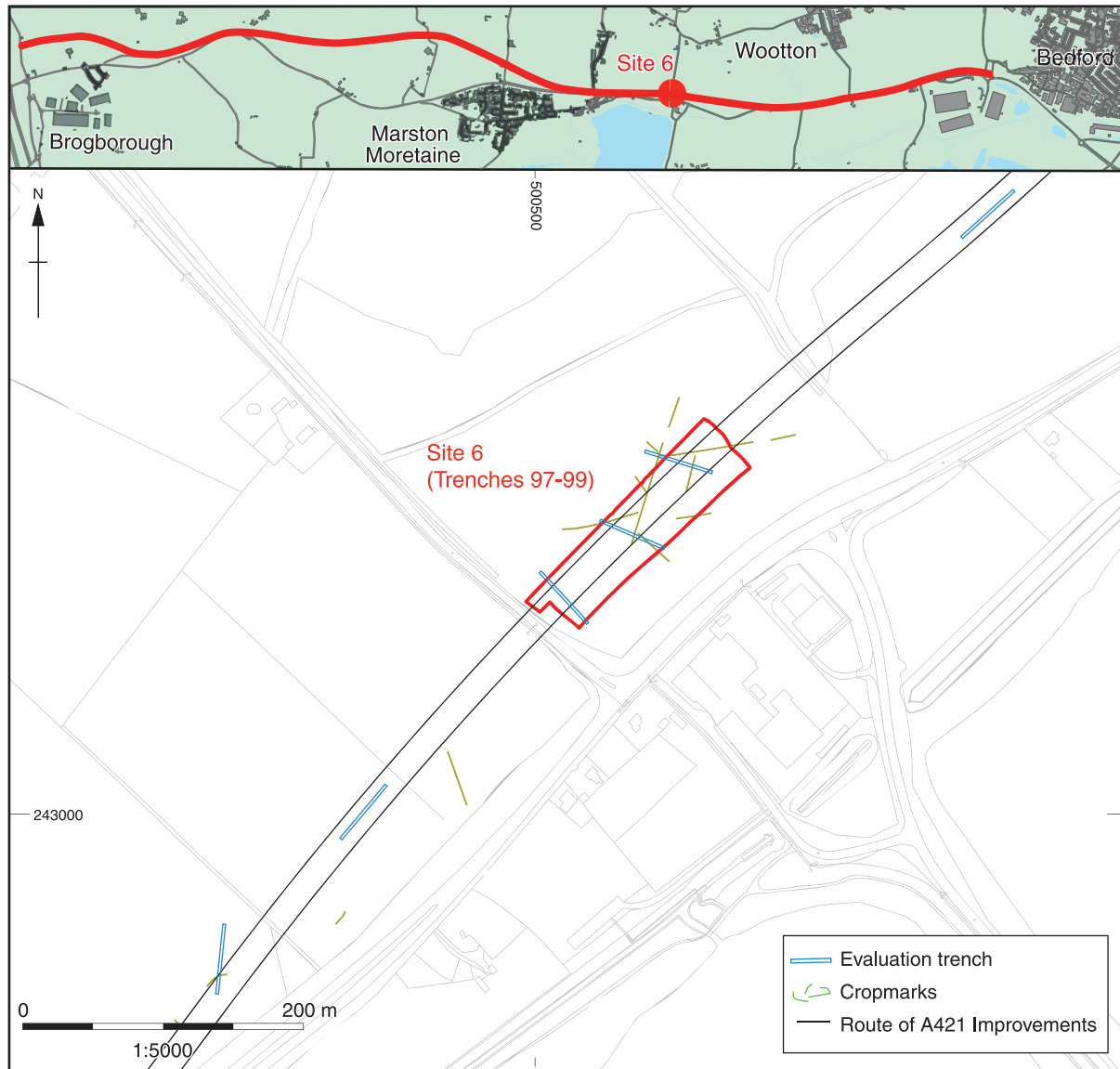


Fig. 2.95 Location of Site 6 (Trenches 97-99). (© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence no. 100005569)

single, integrated complex of boundaries (Fig. 2.97). These features were more substantial than ditch 7204/7208, with depths of 0.3-0.5m. Ditch 7204/7209 extended on a NE-SW alignment for the entire length of the excavation area, and cut ditch 7204/7208. A narrow break in this ditch, measuring only 0.55m wide, was recorded *c* 40m from the northern end of the site. Ditch 7207 branched off the north-western side of this boundary at an oblique angle and extended towards the north, continuing beyond the edge of the excavation area. At the north-eastern end of the site, ditch 7211 extended across the exposed area on a NW-SE alignment, at right angles to ditch 7204/7209, but the relationship between the two features was not established. An L-shaped ditch (7206) at the south-western end of the site may have formed the corner of a rectilinear field or enclosure adjacent to boundary ditch 7204/7208.

Very little artefactual material was recovered from the ditches, but a small sherd of black-glazed earthenware from the fill of ditch 7204/7209 indicated that they dated from the 18th-19th centuries.

#### Other features

The terminals of two ditches (7210 and 7212) each extended a short distance into the site (Fig. 2.97), but insufficient of either feature was exposed within the excavation area to establish their functions.

A number of discrete features were excavated that were interpreted as tree-throw holes on the basis of their irregular morphology (Fig. 2.97). Very small quantities of Iron Age pottery were recovered from two of these features, and four were cut by 18th/19th-century boundary ditches.



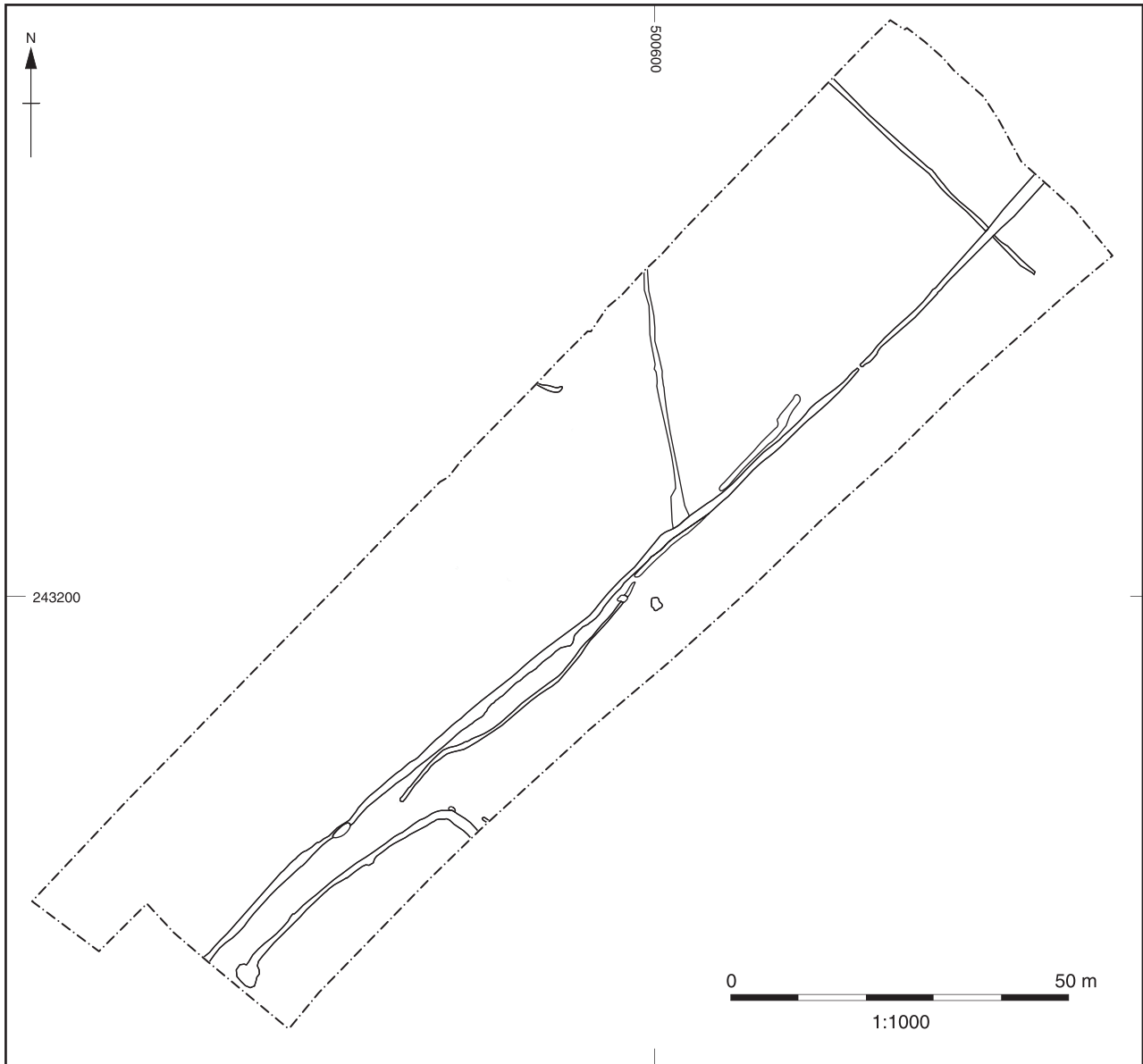


Fig. 2.96 Site 6 (Trenches 97-99), plan of all archaeological features

## SITE 6 (TRENCH 105)

### Site location

Site 6 (Trench 105) was located half way between Hoo Lane and Fields Road, on the north-western side of the existing carriageway (NGR TL 012 438; Fig. 2.98). It lay adjacent to the north-eastern end of the Construction Compound B watching brief area and c 400m east of Berry Farm Borrow Area. The site comprised a rectangular area that was centred on the location of Evaluation Trench 105, in which three pits, two of late Iron Age or Roman date, had been recorded. It encompassed 3048m<sup>2</sup> and was situated on level ground at c 38m OD (Fig. 2.99).

### Middle-late Iron Age pits 7507/7510/7512 and 7525

Two features of definite archaeological origin were

identified. Pit 7507/7510/7512 (Figs 2.99 and 2.100, section 7502) was somewhat irregular in plan, as a result of which it was initially interpreted as being a group of intercutting pits. It was a shallow, flat-bottomed feature and measured 2.0m by 1.7m across and 0.2m deep. The fill comprised a single deposit of dark grey soil from which were recovered 14 sherds of Iron Age pottery, weighing 98 g. The feature had previously been investigated during the evaluation, when it was recorded as feature 110505, and a single very small fragment of pottery was recovered.

Pit 7525 (Figs 2.99-100, section 7509, and Fig. 2.101) was very similar to pit 7507/7510/7512, although it was slightly less substantial, measuring 1.60m by 1.05m across and 0.18m deep. The dark grey colour of the fill suggested that it included a significant quantity of comminuted

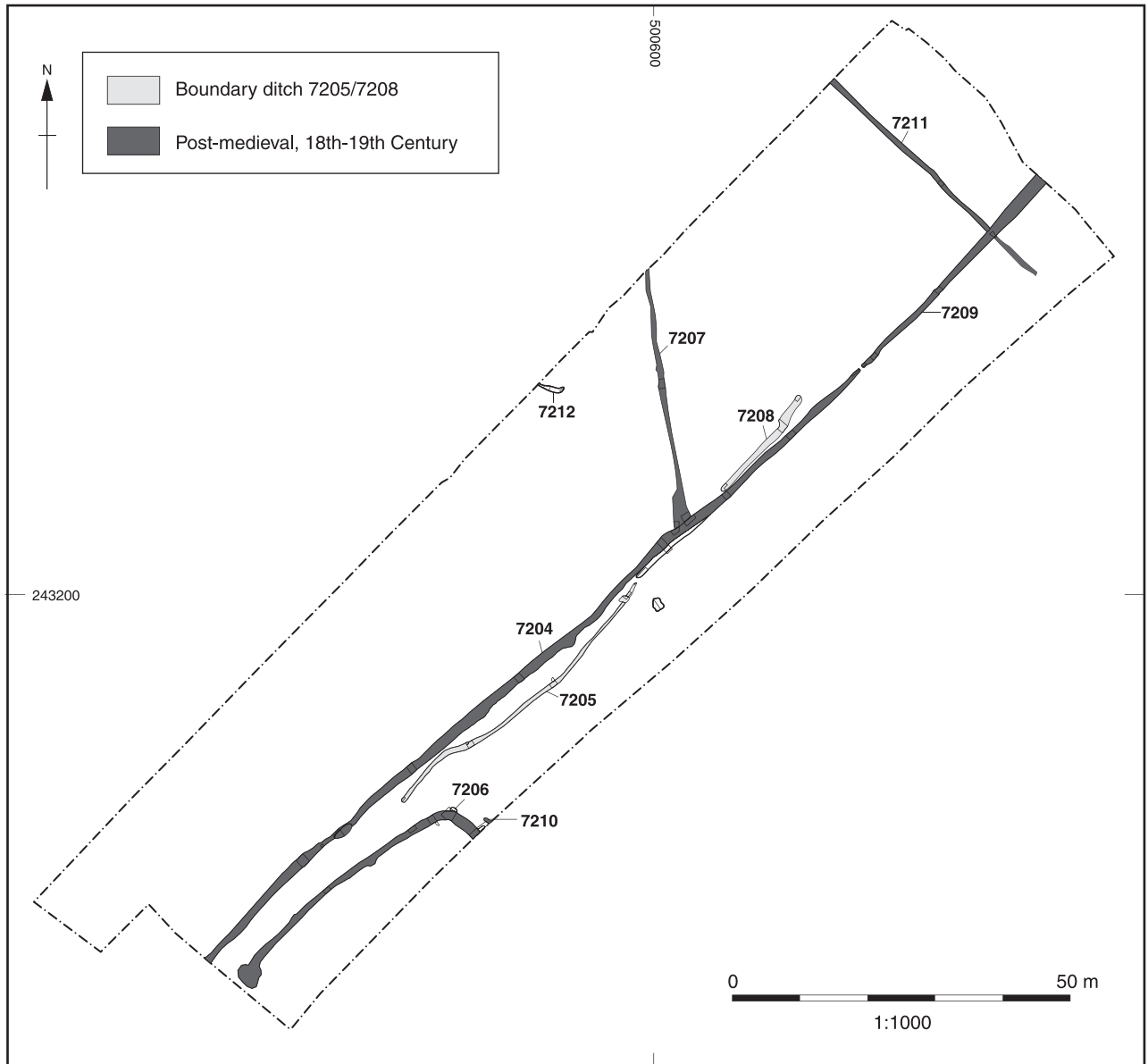


Fig. 2.97 Site 6 (Trenches 97-99), ditch 7205/7208

charcoal. It contained an assemblage of 112g of pottery and a fragmented cattle tooth as well as gravel, some of which was burnt. The composition of this deposit is consistent with the disposal of domestic waste.

#### Ditch terminal 7517

Possible ditch terminal 7517 was rather insubstantial, measuring 0.9m wide and only 0.1m deep (Fig. 2.99). It extended into the excavation for a distance of 1.5m from the south-eastern edge of the excavation area and ended in a square terminal. No artefactual evidence was recovered.

#### Other possible archaeological features

In addition to pits 7507/7510/7512 and 7525, a

further 26 discrete features were excavated (Fig. 2.99). These features were concentrated in the south-western half of the site and appeared to be distributed randomly. They were uniformly shallow, typically measuring 0.1-0.3m in depth, and all had flat bases. Each was filled by a deposit of homogenous grey clay that lacked the dark colour and charcoal inclusions that characterised pits 7507/7510/7512 and 7525, and generally contained no artefactual material. The only exceptions to this were pits 7506 and 7547, which contained fragments of Iron Age pottery, and pit 7530, from which part of a cattle tooth was recovered, but these items were very small and may have been intrusive. It is uncertain whether these features were archaeological in origin or whether they should be interpreted as tree-throw holes or other natural hollows.

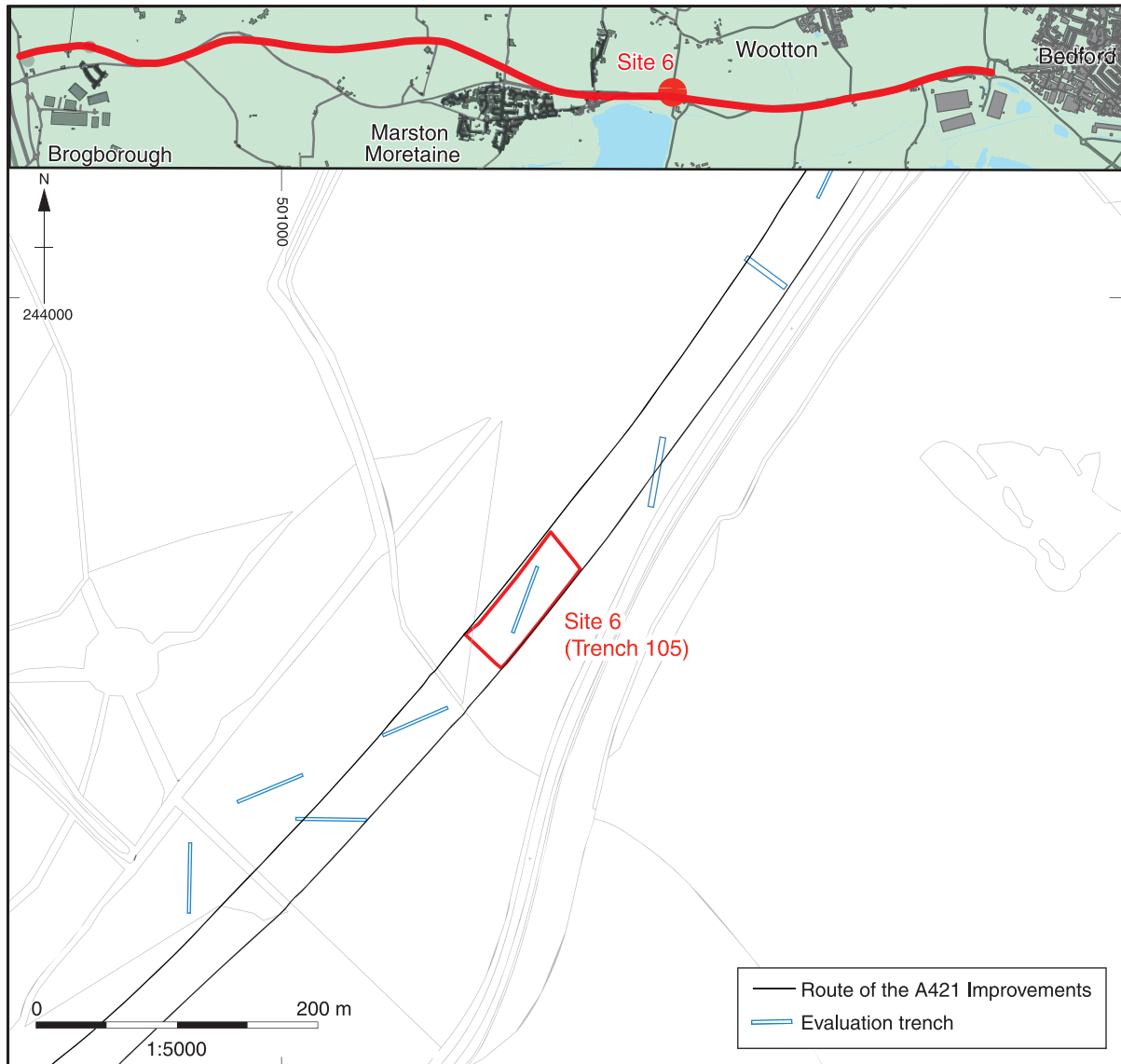


Fig. 2.98 Location of Site 6 (Trench 105). (© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence no. 100005569)

## SITE 7

### Introduction

Site 7 was located between the villages of Wootton and Kempston Hardwick, in two former arable fields to the east of the existing A421 carriageway (NGR TL 020 448; Fig. 2.102). It encompassed the footprint of a new junction comprising two new roundabouts and a realignment of Fields Road. The geophysical survey had identified a complex of linear anomalies in the southern part of this area, with two large discrete features to the north, and the evaluation had confirmed that these features were Roman in date. The excavation area was approximately triangular in plan and encompassed a total area of 21,356m<sup>2</sup> (Figs 2.103-104). It was situated on ground that lay between 30-35m OD and sloped gently towards the south-east, where the Elstow Brook passed within 270m of the site.

### Middle Roman enclosure complex (mid-late 2nd century)

The site comprised a complex of rectilinear enclosures that were established during the third quarter of the 2nd century on a site that did not appear to have been previously occupied (Fig. 2.105). The complex lay parallel to the adjacent Elstow Brook and encompassed an area of at least 100m by 80m. It was bounded to the north-west by ditch 15986 and to the north-east by ditch 15750. It is uncertain whether ditch 15358, at the south-western end of the excavation area, represented the limit of the complex in this direction or whether a feature that had extended beyond this point had been destroyed by medieval and modern ploughing. No definite south-eastern limit was identified within the limits of the excavation.

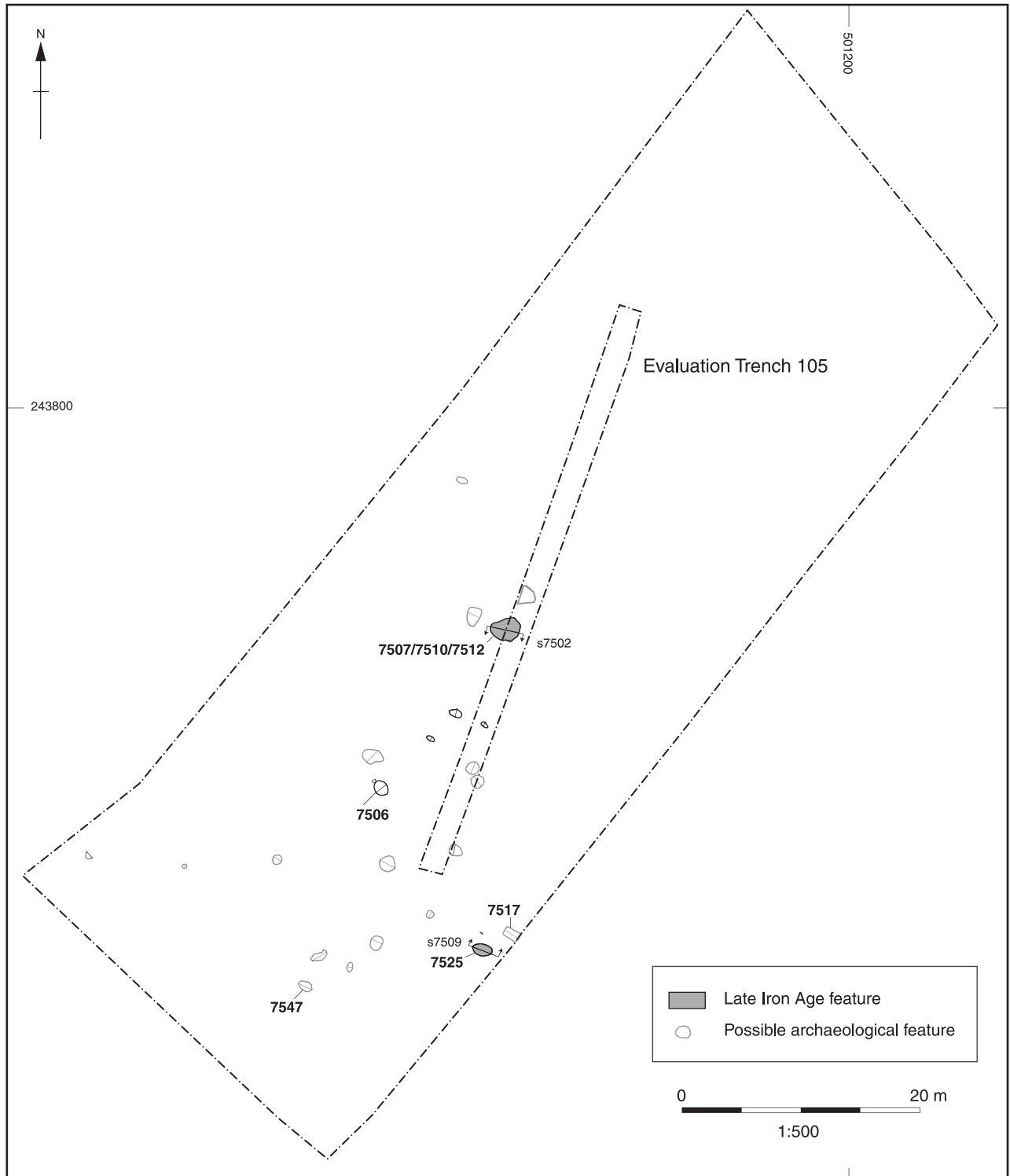


Fig. 2.99 Site 6 (Trench 105), plan of all archaeological features

**Boundary ditches 15750 and 15986**

The north-western limit of the enclosure complex was bounded by ditch 15986 (Figs 2.105-107), which extended for at least 80m, and it is likely that ditch 15350, which lay on the same alignment a short distance to the south-west, was originally part of the

same boundary, increasing its overall surviving length to c 95m. Both the gap between ditches 15986 and 15350 and the south-western end of the latter feature appeared to be the result of truncation by later ploughing rather than representing original elements of the ditch, and so the boundary may originally have extended further to the south-west.

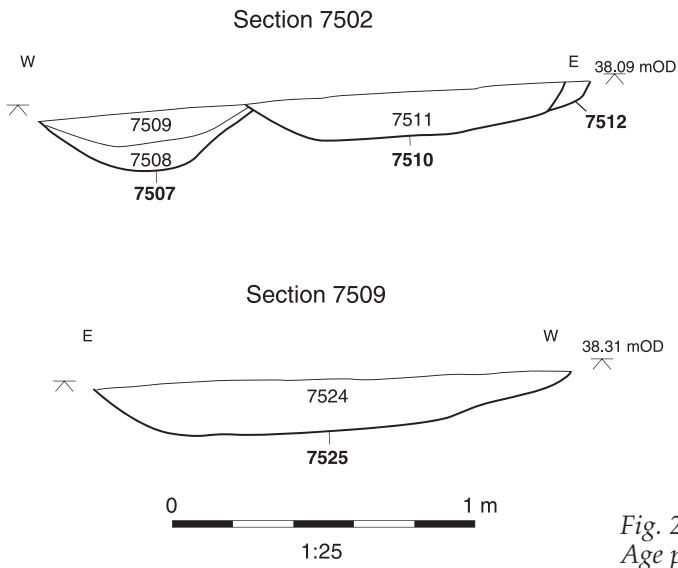


Fig. 2.101 Site 6 (Trench 105), late Iron Age pit 7525

Fig. 2.100 (left) Site 6 (Trench 105), sections through late Iron Age pits 7507/7510/7512 and 7525

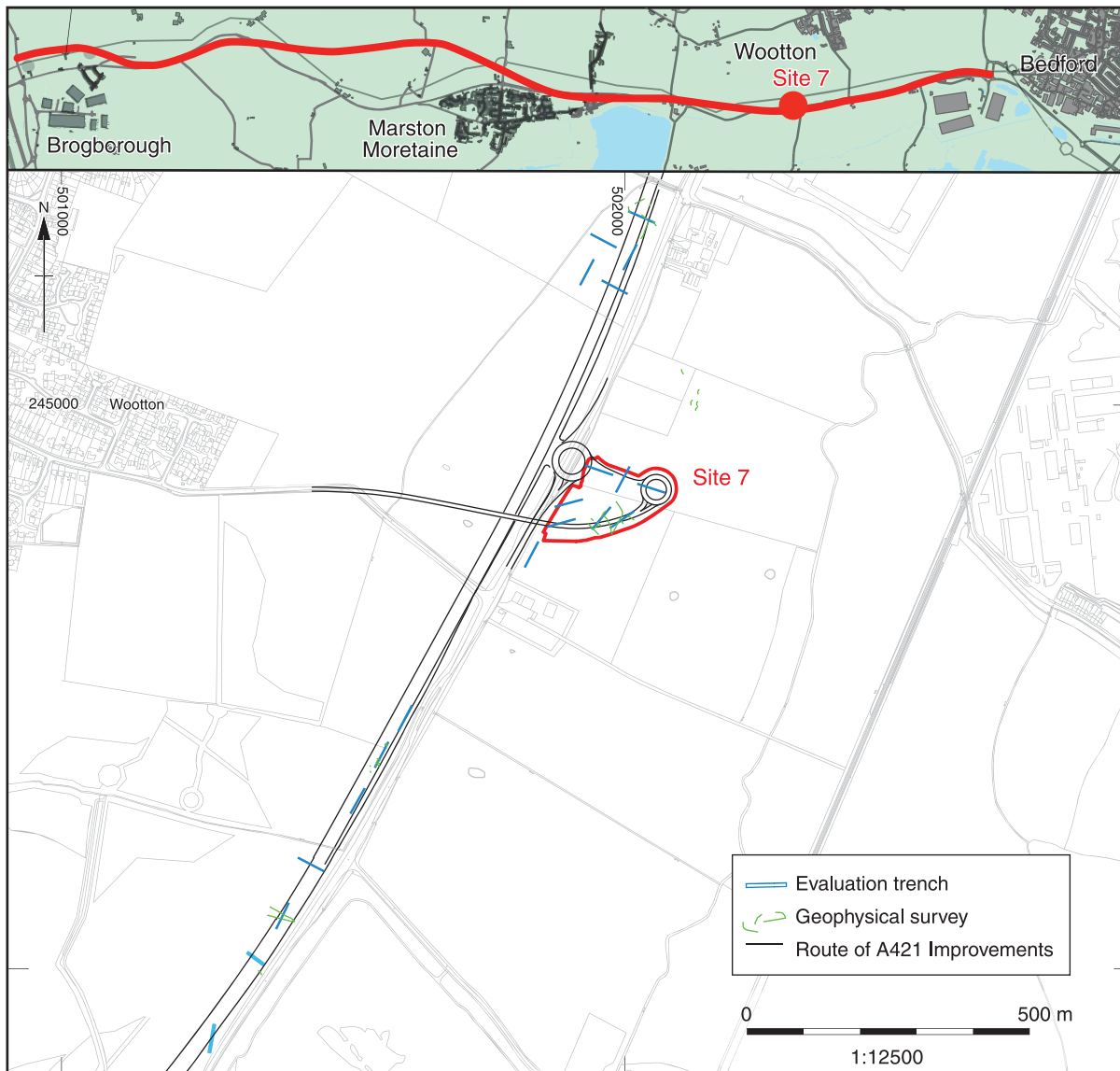


Fig. 2.102 Location of Site 7. (© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence no. 100005569)

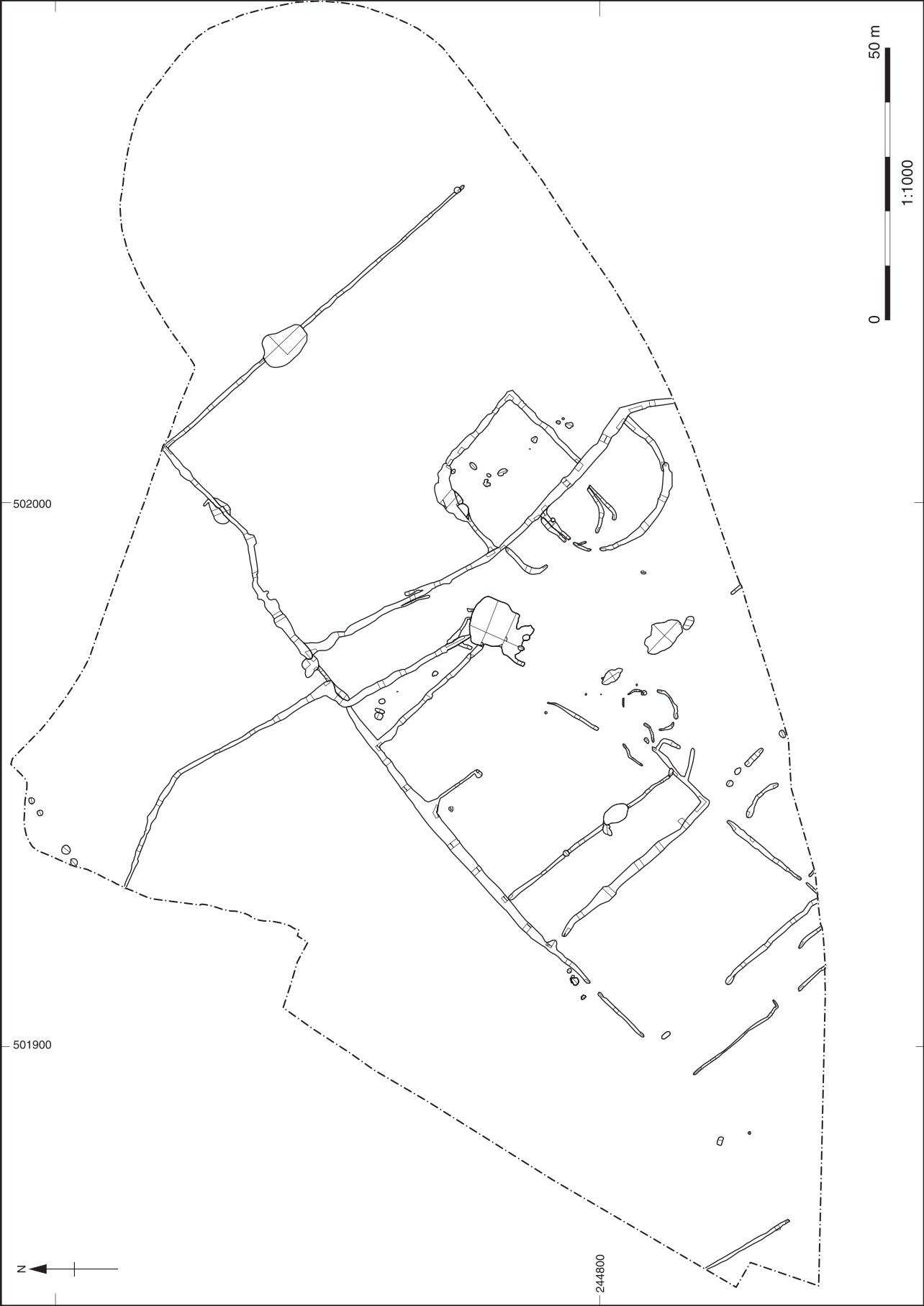


Fig. 2.104 Site 7, plan of all archaeological features



Fig. 2.103 Site 7, view toward south-west across the southern part of the excavation

The north-eastern end of the ditch had been destroyed when the boundary was subsequently extended by the addition of ditch 15987, resulting in the loss of the stratigraphic relationship between this feature and ditch 15750, but it is likely that they were originally of a single construction. Most of the interventions excavated through ditch 15986 revealed evidence for two phases of ditch (Fig. 2.107, section 15018), although toward the south-western end, where the feature began to peter out, only one cut could be identified. The two phases of the ditch were very consistent in form, measuring *c* 1.5m wide and 0.3m deep with a very open, concave profile.

From its inferred junction with the north-eastern end of ditch 15986, ditch 15750 extended in a south-easterly direction for at least 81m, eventually continuing beyond the southern edge of the excavation. Enclosures 7 and 8 adjoined opposing sides of the south-eastern part of the ditch. The ditch followed a slightly irregular alignment that comprised three straight segments demarcated by changes of alignment immediately north of Enclosure 7 and immediately south of Enclosure 8. There was no indication that these segments were not contemporaneous, and this irregular shape may have resulted from construction by separate gangs of workers. Like ditch 15986, ditch 15750 exhibited evidence for two phases of construction in the form of two cuts identified in interventions toward the south-eastern end of the feature (Fig. 2.107, section 15214). In the northern part of the ditch only a single phase was identified (Fig. 2.107, section 15247), but two possible ditch terminals were recorded that diverged slightly from the main alignment approximately half way between Enclosure 7 and the north-western end of the ditch. Ditch 15750 was similar in form to ditch 15986, being quite shallow in relation to its width. It

measured 0.8-1.2m wide and up to 0.4m deep. Two of the three coins that were recovered during the excavation came from the latest fill of ditch 15750. These comprised a sestertius (SF 15006) and the core of a plated denarius (SF 15005), both of mid-2nd-century date, and both were recovered from parts of the ditch that lay adjacent to Enclosures 7 and 8 (below). The skeleton of a dog was also recovered from the fill of this ditch, from a point roughly half way between Enclosure 7 and the junction with ditch 15986. The leg of a horse was recovered from the ditch a short distance south-east of Enclosure 8.

#### *Pit/posthole row parallel to ditches 15986 and 15987*

A row of four pits or postholes (15925, 15937, 15939 and 15945) was identified at the north-western limit of the excavation area which may have formed part of a fenceline that lay on an alignment parallel to the boundary defined by ditches 15986 and 15987. The features were arranged in two pairs, each *c* 2.75m apart, with a gap between the pairs that measured *c* 8m, perhaps indicating the location of an entrance through the fenceline. The individual pits measured 1.10-1.45m in diameter and 0.24-0.6m deep, had concave, bowl-shaped profiles, and were each filled by a single deposit of grey soil. None contained any artefactual material.

#### *Conjoined rectilinear enclosures abutting ditch 15986*

A series of four conjoined rectilinear enclosures abutted the south-eastern side of boundary ditch 15986 (Enclosures 1-4; Fig. 2.105). With the exception of ditch 15362, which survived to a depth of up

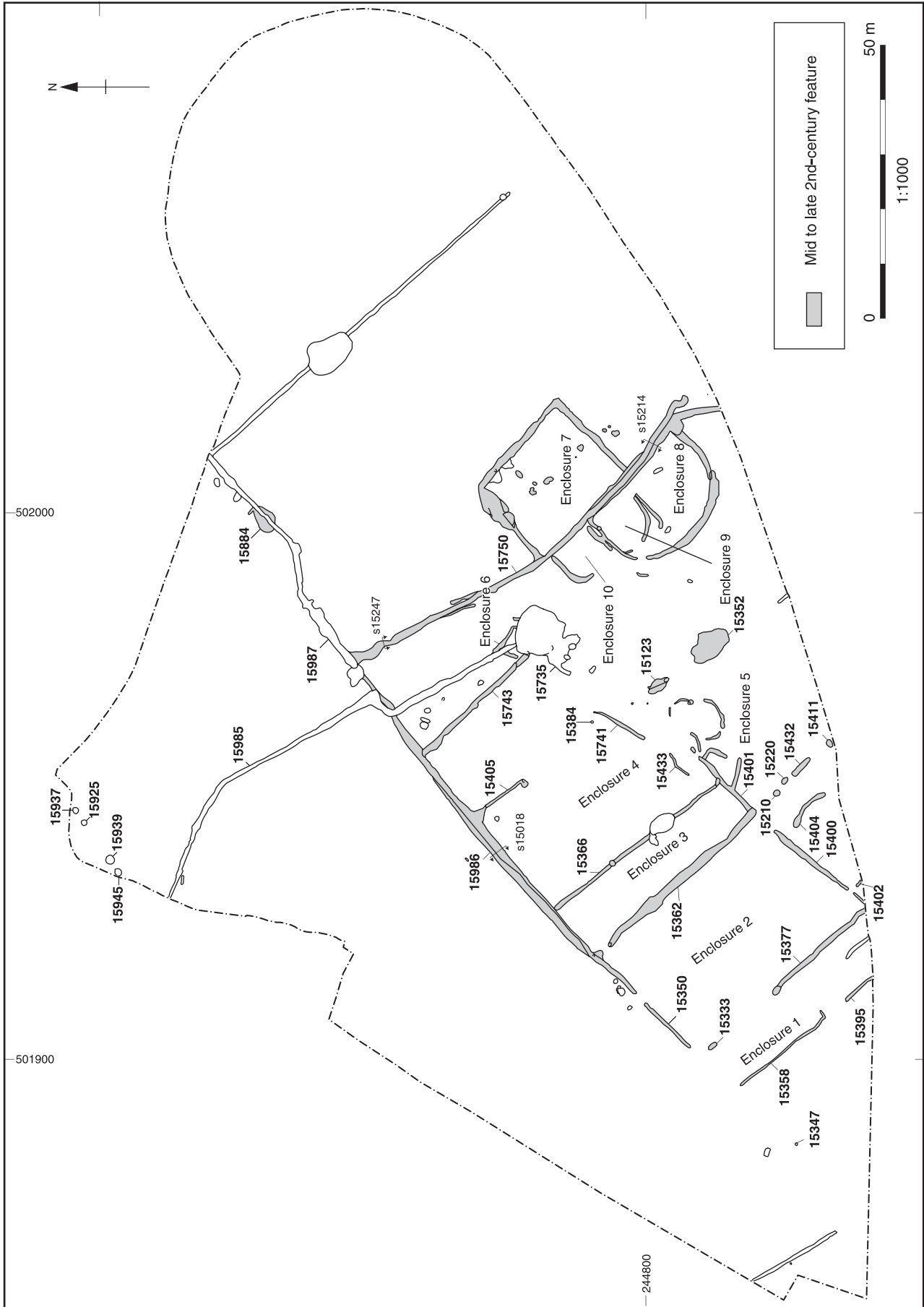


Fig. 2.105 Site 7, plan of mid-late 2nd-century features





Fig. 2.106 Site 7, view toward south-west along mid-late 2nd-century ditch 15986

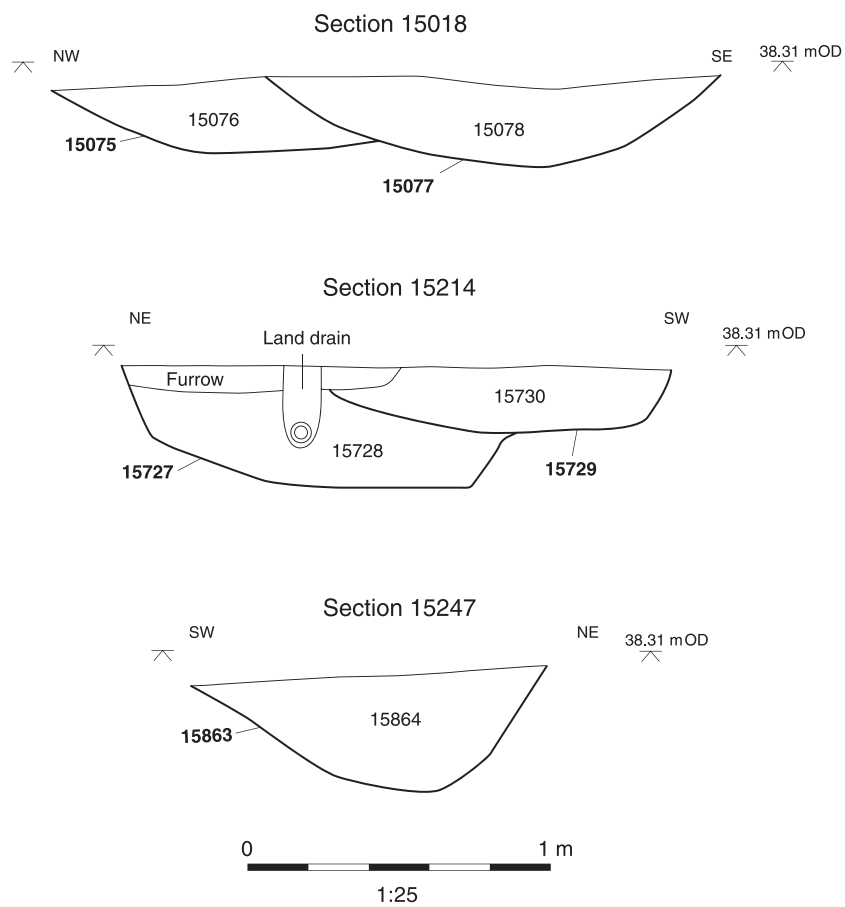


Fig. 2.107 Site 7, sections through mid-late 2nd-century boundary ditches 15986 and 15750



Fig. 2.108 Site 7, section through ditch 15362

to 0.5m (Fig. 2.108), the ditches that defined the enclosures were all very insubstantial, having been severely affected by truncation by medieval and modern ploughing. It is therefore likely that some of the ditches were originally more extensive, and that some or all of the breaks in these boundaries are the result of such truncation rather than evidence for original entrances into the enclosures. Few stratigraphic relationships between these features survived, but there was no reason to think that they did not represent a single, integrated complex.

Enclosures 1-4, situated in the south-western part of the complex, were bounded to the south-east by ditches 15400 and 15401, which defined a boundary that extended approximately parallel to boundary ditch 15986. The full extent of the boundary defined by these two ditches is uncertain, as the north-eastern end of ditch 15401 simply petered out, probably due to plough truncation; it is possible that it originally continued as far as ditch 15750, which defined the north-eastern limit of the enclosure complex. The enclosures that were situated between ditches 15986 and 15400/15401 each measured *c* 40m NW-SE and appeared to comprise two narrow enclosures (1 and 3) alternating with two rather larger and wider examples (2 and 4). None of these enclosures contained contemporaneous features.

#### *Enclosure 1*

Enclosure 1 was a long, narrow enclosure located at the south-western limit of the enclosure complex. It was defined by two parallel ditches (15358/15395 and 15377) which formed its north-eastern and south-western sides. Ditch 15377 only extended for a little more than half the length of the enclosure, its north-western part having presumably been destroyed by medieval and modern ploughing. A similar fate had befallen the north-western end of the enclosure, which may originally have been defined by ditch 15350/15986. The south-eastern end of the enclosure lay beyond the southern edge of the excavation area, but the alignment of ditch

15400 suggests that it probably defined this end of the enclosure, giving it dimensions of 40.0m by 9.5m.

An oval pit (15333) measuring 1.80m by 0.85m across and 0.5m deep that lay on the alignment of ditch 15377 near the north-western end of the enclosure contained a quite large assemblage of pottery dating from the late 2nd-3rd century. The lower two thirds of the feature were filled by a sequence of artefactually sterile layers, which were overlain by a layer of darker grey soil (15338) which contained an assemblage of more than 1kg of pottery including three nearly complete vessels, as well as some small fragments of sheep/goat bone.

#### *Enclosure 2*

Enclosure 2 measured 40m by 25m and abutted the north-eastern side of Enclosure 1. In addition to the truncated part of ditch 15377, breaks in the ditches defining the enclosure that may have represented original entrances were identified in the north-western and south-eastern sides and at the northern corner, the latter providing access between his enclosure and Enclosure 3. Only the latter break was demonstrably an original element however, the north-western end of ditch 15362 ending in a definite terminal, whereas the other breaks may have resulted from plough truncation. A corresponding terminal that projected from the south-eastern side of ditch 15986 restricted the entrance to a width of 1.6m.

#### *Enclosure 3*

The second narrow enclosure, Enclosure 3, was similar to Enclosure 1. It measured 40m NW-SE and 9.5m wide at its north-western end but tapered somewhat to a width of 7.5m at its south-eastern end. It was the only one of the group whose component ditches survived unbroken, and was accessed by means of the entrance that communicated with Enclosure 2 (above).

#### *Enclosure 4*

Enclosure 4 abutted the north-eastern side of Enclosure 3 and was bounded to the north-west by ditch 15986. Its remaining sides were partly defined by ditches 15401 and 15405, although neither of these feature was very extensive and consequently much of the eastern part of the enclosure was not enclosed. It is possible that ditches 15401 and 15405 originally extended to complete the enclosure, in which case its projected dimensions would have been 40m by 25m, identical to those of Enclosure 2. Alternatively, ditch 15741 may have formed part of the south-eastern side, giving the enclosure a more trapezoidal shape.

#### *The area between Enclosure 4 and boundary ditch 15750*

It was uncertain whether the area between Enclosure 4 and boundary ditch 15750 was enclosed, perhaps by a continuation of ditch 15401, or remained open on its south-eastern side. The area

was bisected by a single ditch (15743) that branched off boundary ditch 15986. The south-eastern end of the ditch was truncated by a 3rd-4th-century water-hole (15735) and it is uncertain how far the ditch originally extended.

#### *Enclosure 5*

A small trapezoidal enclosure (Enclosure 5) abutted ditch 15401, adjacent to Enclosures 3 and 4. The enclosure was quite small, measuring *c* 7.0m by 3.5m, and may have possessed an entrance on its south-eastern side, although the break in the ditch could also have been caused by later ploughing. The ditch that defined the enclosure was very slight, measuring only 0.15m deep. No features were identified within the enclosure

#### *Enclosure 6*

Enclosure 6 was very similar in form to Enclosure 5 and abutted ditch 15743. It was defined by a shallow ditch with a depth of 0.15m. The enclosure was *c* 4m wide, NE-SW, but its length could not be established due to the destruction of its south-eastern end by later features. Late 2nd-early 3rd-century boundary ditch 15985 cut across the middle of the enclosure, and the southern half had been destroyed by the digging of 3rd-4th-century water-hole 15735. No internal features were identified.

#### *Discrete enclosures abutting boundary ditch 15750*

The south-eastern part of ditch 15750 was abutted on either side by discrete enclosures. Rectangular Enclosure 7 adjoined its north-eastern side and D-shaped Enclosure 8 adjoined its south-western side. The latter may have been superseded by the smaller D-shaped Enclosure 9 (Figs 2.109-110).

#### *Enclosure 7*

Enclosure 7 adjoined the north-eastern side of boundary ditch 15750. The enclosure was rectangular in plan and measured 21m by 17m. It was defined by a single ditch (15753) that measured up to 1.4m wide. The depth of the ditch was quite variable, ranging from 0.26m to 0.60m, and abrupt changes in depth at the corners suggested that they had been dug as separate elements (Fig. 2.110, section 15167 and Fig. 2.111). A significant quantity of charred plant remains had been deposited in the eastern part of the enclosure ditch (15604, 15605, 15606; Fig 2.110 section 15167). This material extended along the adjacent part of the ditch defining the south-eastern side of the enclosure for a distance of at least 8.5m but was less extensive to the north-west and did not extend as far as the adjacent intervention, which was located less than 3m from the corner of the enclosure (Figs 2.110-111). The fill above this layer (15408, 15604), although less black in hue, was nevertheless similarly rich in charred material, and was more extensive, extending approximately half way along the north-eastern side of the enclosure. These deposits appear to have

represented a gradual accumulation of material that was deposited within the ditch over an extended period of time rather than a single dump of material, and are likely to indicate that waste material from crop processing was being burnt nearby, probably within the enclosure, and the remains disposed of in the ditch. In contrast to these dumped deposits, the fills encountered throughout the rest of the enclosure ditch consisted of material derived from natural silting processes. A group of eight fragments of burnt human bone, mostly from the cranial vault, was recovered from the upper fill of the northern-western arm of the enclosure ditch close to the junction with boundary ditch 15750. Near the northern corner of the enclosure, part of the enclosing ditch was subsequently affected by quarrying (below).

The only features identified within the enclosure were six pits (15557, 15559, 15566, 15567, 15569 and 15718). These were generally shallow hollows that measured 1.2-2.0m across and 0.1-0.2m deep, although pit 15566 was rather more well defined than the others, had steep sides, and was a little deeper, measuring 0.32m. Pits 15557, 15567, 15569 and 15718 produced small quantities of Roman pottery but these were the only artefacts recovered from this group of features.

A small group of three shallow pits (15631, 15633 and 15635) were located beyond the south-eastern side of the enclosure. All three features were very insubstantial, measuring no more than 0.18m deep, and it is possible that they were tree-throw holes or natural hollows rather than features of archaeological origin, although a single small sherd of Roman pottery was recovered from the fill of pit 15631.

#### *Enclosure 8*

Enclosure 8 adjoined the south-western side of boundary ditch 15750, and was off-set somewhat in relation to Enclosure 7 (Fig. 2.109). In contrast to the rectangular shape of the latter structure, Enclosure 8 was D-shaped in plan and had overall dimensions of 22m by 14m. The boundary ditch formed the straight, north-eastern side and the rest of the enclosure was defined by three shallow ditch segments (15746, 15747 and 15749). There was some evidence that the ditch segments had not all been dug in a single event, as the eastern end of the segment that defined the curving south-western side of the enclosure (15746) appeared to cut the terminal of the segment that formed the south-eastern side (15747). Both these ditch segments measured 0.3-0.4m in depth, and ditch segment 15749, which formed the north-western side of the enclosure, was even less substantial, measuring no more than 0.2m deep. It is likely that both the shallowness of these ditches and the two discontinuities between segments result from truncation by medieval and later ploughing. A denarius of Septimius Severus (SF 15013), minted in AD 200-201, was recovered from the upper fill of the enclosure ditch, near to the northern junction with boundary ditch 15750.

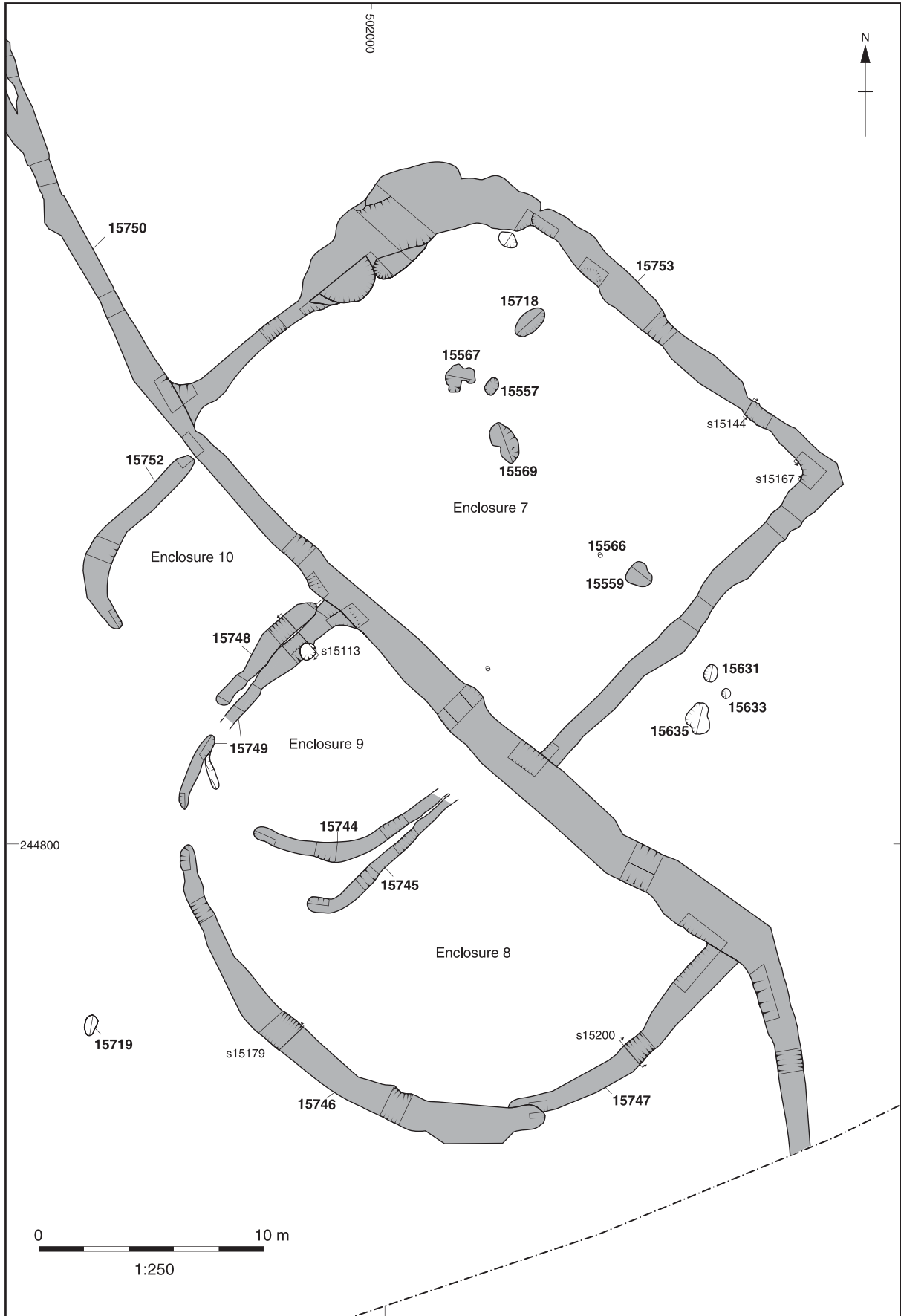


Fig. 2.109 Site 7, plan of mid-late 2nd-century Enclosures 7 and 8 and associated features

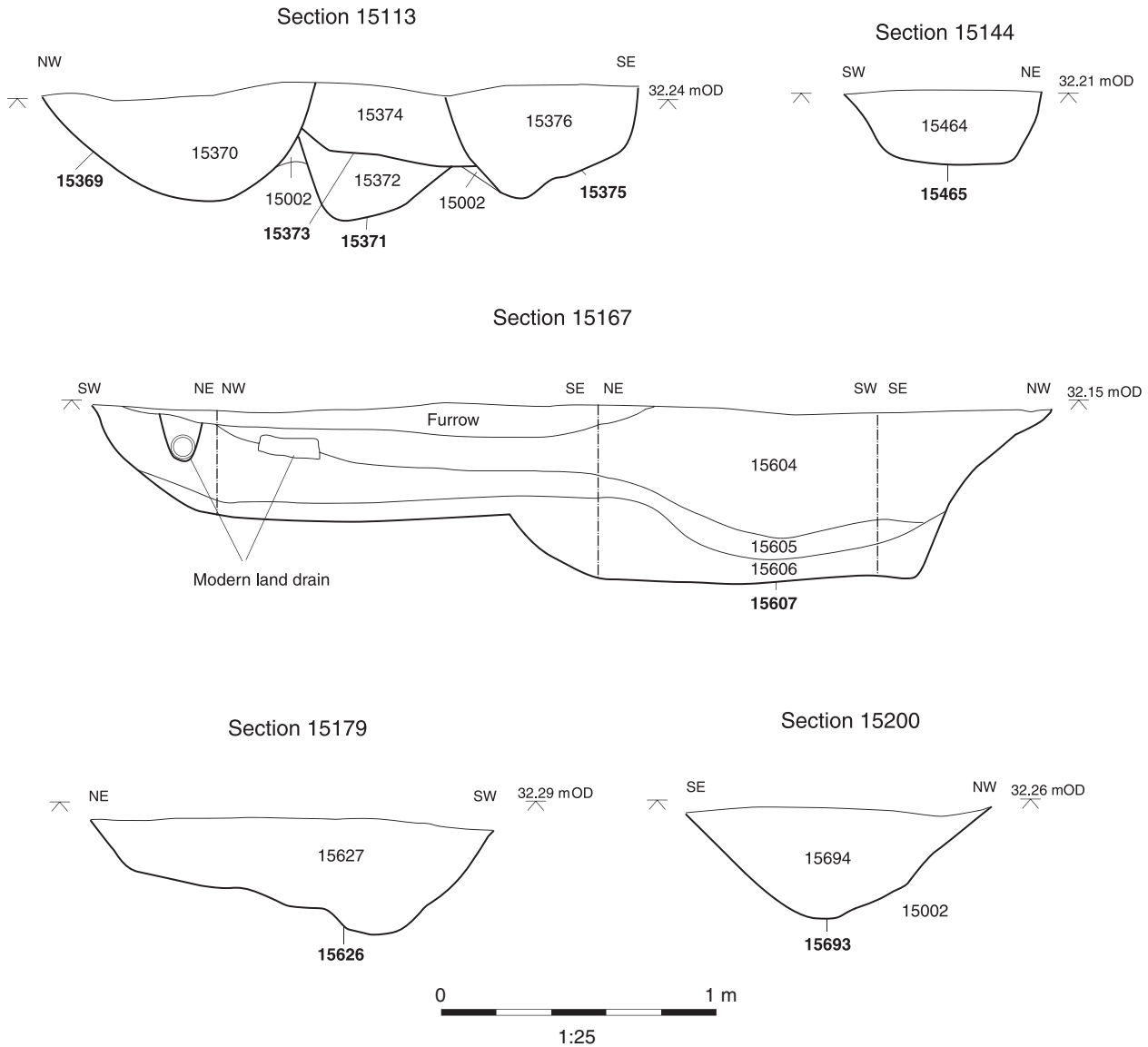


Fig. 2.110 Site 7, sections through the ditches of Enclosures 7 and 8



Fig. 2.111 Site 7, the eastern corner of mid-late 2nd-century enclosure ditch 15753

The enclosure may have been subdivided internally by ditch 15745. This feature probably branched off boundary ditch 15750, although the junction with this ditch had been destroyed by a medieval plough furrow, and extended towards the south-west for c 10m. Its south-western end curved slightly towards the west before petering out, perhaps indicating that it formed part of a subsidiary enclosure against the north-western side of Enclosure 8.

#### Enclosure 9

When Enclosure 8 passed out of use, a smaller, though similarly D-shaped enclosure was constructed in its place (Enclosure 9; Fig. 2.109). The ditch that defined the enclosure was again very slight, measuring no more than 0.4m deep. The new enclosure, like its predecessor, abutted boundary ditch 15750, although the junction of its south-

eastern side with the boundary had been destroyed by a medieval plough furrow. The same furrow was responsible for the break in the western part of ditch. A break measuring 2.5m wide was situated at the centre of the curving south-western side of the enclosure, but it was not possible to be certain whether this was an original entrance or the result of truncation as the enclosure ditch was very slight at this point. The enclosure measured 9.3m by 9.3m and occupied the same space as, and may therefore have been a direct replacement for, the putative subsidiary enclosure within the north-western part of Enclosure 8. The pottery recovered from this feature was generally of 2nd-century date, but two very small sherds of Hadham oxidised ware were also recovered, perhaps suggesting that the enclosure persisted into the 3rd century.

#### *Enclosure 10*

Ditch 15752 was L-shaped in plan and appeared to define the north-western side and part of the south-western side of a rectangular enclosure that abutted either Enclosure 8 or Enclosure 9, although the stratigraphic and artefactual dating evidence was not sufficient to establish with which of these enclosures it was contemporary (Fig. 2.109). Its north-eastern end respected the line of boundary ditch 15750, from which it extended south-westward for *c* 8m before turning toward south-east and ending in a clearly defined terminal. The enclosure thus defined was approximately square, measuring 8m by 8m. No evidence was identified for a feature that enclosed the remainder of the south-western side of the enclosure, which was presumably closed by means of a hedge or hurdles, if it was not left open.

#### *Features at the southern edge of the excavation area*

A number of features were identified near the southern edge of the excavation area which indicate that features associated with the enclosure complex continued beyond the edge of the investigation (Fig. 2.105).

Three pits (15210, 15220 and 15411) and a short length of ditch (15432) appeared to define a boundary that continued the alignment of ditch 15362 in a south-eastern direction beyond the boundary defined by ditches 15400/15401. The pits were circular and measured 1.2-1.5m in diameter. They were generally shallow, concave features. Small quantities of 2nd-century pottery were recovered from pits 15220 and 15410, and the former also contained some fragments of animal bone and a bone point (SF 15002). Ditch segment 15432 was 4.4m long and 0.35m deep. It yielded some small sherds of 2nd-century pottery as well as a single large piece from an Oxford white ware mortarium dating from the mid 3rd-4th century, although the latter was recovered from its surface and so it was uncertain how confidently it could be attributed to the ditch.

A short distance west of the boundary defined by the ditch and pits lay a length of curvilinear gully (15404). The gully extended for a little over 8m and was 0.3-0.4m deep with steep sides and sharply defined terminals. Pottery recovered from the ditch indicated that it dated from the 2nd century, but its function was uncertain. It may have formed part of an enclosure abutting the boundary defined by ditch 15400, with the gap between the two features serving as an entrance, but it is also possible that it was part of a discrete enclosure similar to oval Enclosure 11 (below). The relatively narrow, steep-sided profile may indicate that the feature was a foundation trench for a palisade rather than an open gully.

Ditch terminal 15402 was only 0.1m deep and extended into the excavation area for a distance of 1.5m from its southern edge. It may have been the north-western end of a ditch that lay on an alignment parallel to that of the boundary defined by ditch 15432 and the associated pits, or it may have been associated with gully 15404, defining the opposing side of an enclosure.

#### *Oval enclosures 11 and 12*

Two oval enclosures (Enclosures 11 and 12) that were situated at the south-eastern edge of the complex of conjoined enclosures that abutted boundary ditch 15986 (Fig. 2.112). Both structures had been substantially truncated by ploughing and survived only as very slight and incomplete ditch circuits.

#### *Oval enclosure 11*

The better preserved of these enclosures, was Enclosure 11, which was represented by a shallow discontinuous ditch (15742) which defined its southern and eastern sides and part of the northern side (Fig 2.112). The north-western part of the enclosure was not preserved, having presumably been completely truncated by medieval and modern ploughing. The enclosure was oval or subrectangular in shape, aligned NNE-SSW, and measured *c* 10m by 7m. At its deepest, the enclosure ditch survived to a depth of 0.36m, but it was generally much less substantial than this and in some places became so shallow that it simply petered out. It is likely therefore that some of the breaks in the ditch result from the complete truncation of shallower sections and do not represent original elements of the enclosure. This certainly appeared to be the case for the break at the north-eastern corner, and for the western end of the northern ditch segment. The deepest part of the ditch was the eastern end of the south-eastern segment, which, although partly truncated by a modern land drain, appeared to be a clearly defined terminal, as did the western end of this ditch segment, which was 0.23m deep. This raises the possibility that the adjacent breaks, on the eastern and southern sides of the enclosure respectively, were original entrances. In both cases, however, the opposing ditch terminal was too slight

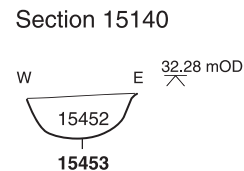
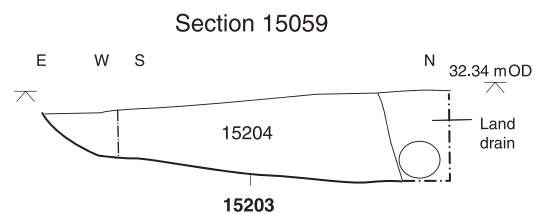
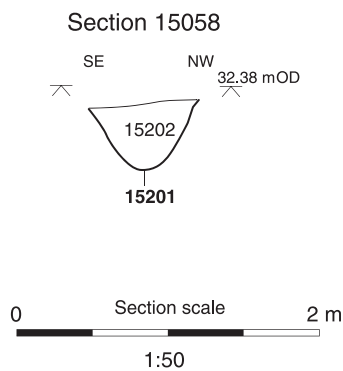
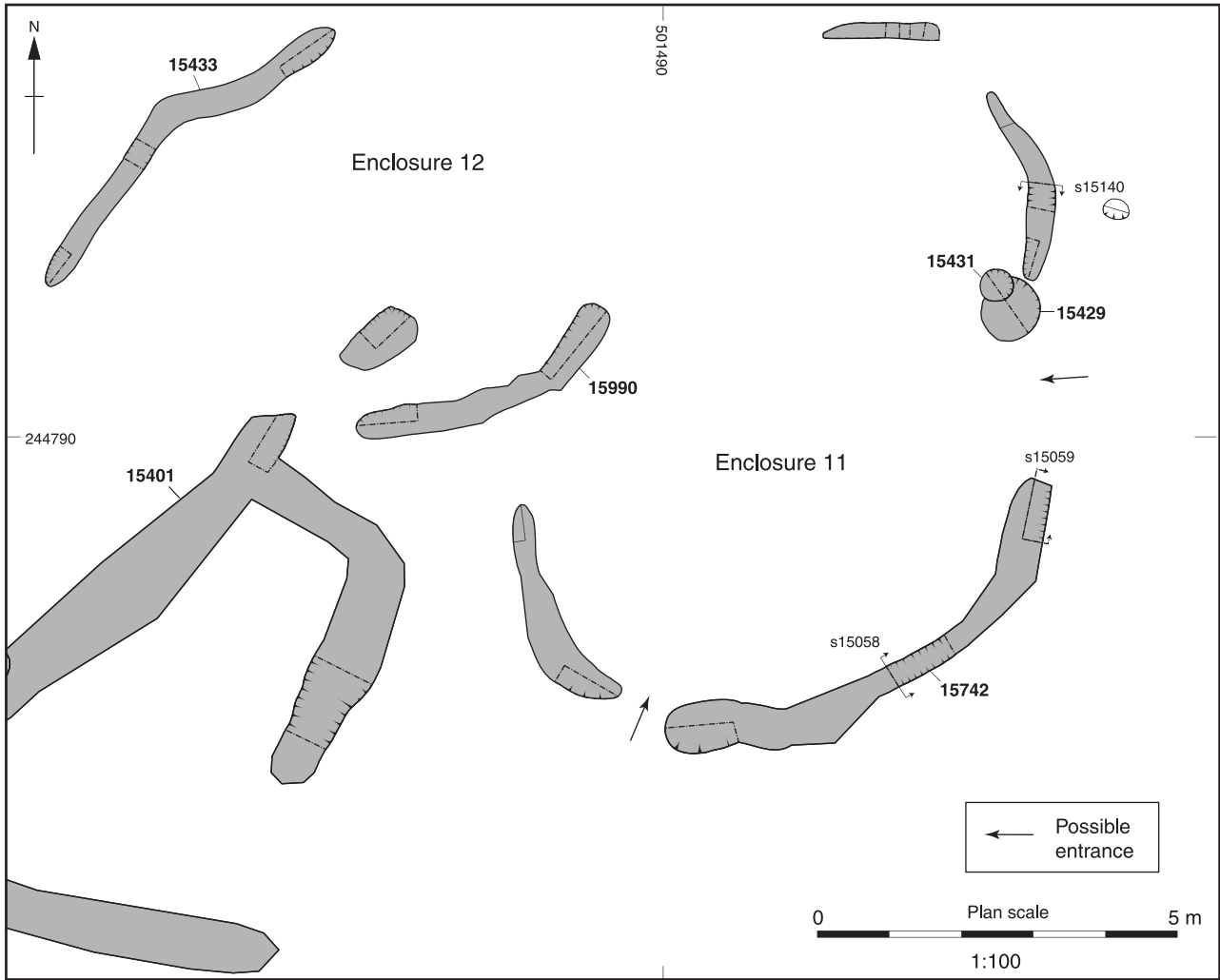


Fig. 2.112 Site 7, plan and sections of structures 15742 and 15433

to definitely ascertain whether it represented a deliberate terminal. Where the ditch survived to a sufficient depth to enable its profile to be established it was steep-sided. The feature was too insubstantial to have formed a practical barrier and it is perhaps more likely that it was a foundation trench rather than an open gully, though insufficient evidence survived to indicate whether it was a building or a palisaded enclosure.

Two intercutting pits (15429 and 15431) were situated just inside the enclosure's putative eastern entrance, and this juxtaposition suggests that they were associated with the use of the structure. The earlier of the two was pit 15429, which was quite shallow, measuring 0.8m in diameter and 0.3m deep. It was cut on its north-western side by pit 15431, which measured 0.5m in diameter and 0.35m deep and had been backfilled with a deposit of

burnt material including charcoal and heat-discoloured soil. It is possible that this material derived from activities that took place within the enclosure.

#### Enclosure 12

Immediately adjacent to Enclosure 11 were two ditch segments (15433 and 15990) that may have formed part of a similar, though less well-preserved, enclosure (Enclosure 12; Fig 2.112). If this is correct, the putative enclosure would have lain on a NE-SW alignment and measured *c* 5m wide, although no evidence survived to indicate its length. Ditch 15433, which defined the north-western side and had a slightly dog-legged alignment, was very slight, surviving to a depth of no more than 0.08m. The south-eastern side was represented by a rather more curved ditch segment (15990) which was 0.45m wide and up to 0.22m deep. The eastern end of this segment appeared to form a definite terminal, but the western end was much shallower and simply petered out.

The projected alignment of boundary ditch 15401 would have cut through this enclosure, which also intersected with the projected line of the truncated north-western part of Enclosure 11. This suggests that these features were not contemporaneous but were in use successively. Unfortunately the surviving parts of them did not intersect and so it was impossible to determine which was the earlier.

#### Clay quarries

Quarrying of the Oxford Clay on which the settlement was situated was recorded at several locations. The exposure of this material in the sides of the ditch of Enclosure 7 appeared to have been exploited (Fig. 2.109), and two quarry pits (15123 and 15352) were dug in the southern part of the excavation, as well as a further possible example (15884) further north (Fig. 2.105). The ceramic and stratigraphic dating evidence indicates that all four quarries were backfilled during the latter part of the 2nd century.

#### Quarrying of ditch of Enclosure 7

The quarrying associated with Enclosure 7 extended for a total distance of 10m along the ditch that defined the north-western side of the enclosure (Fig. 2.109). It was rather irregular in shape and depth and had the appearance of a series of small-scale *ad hoc*, opportunistic excavations rather than a single episode. The central part of the quarrying had been dug to a depth of 1.4m and at its widest point it measured 3.5m wide, although it became both less extensive and less deep towards either end. A modest assemblage of *c* 1kg of pottery was recovered from its fills, as well as a slightly larger quantity of animal bone that included the skeleton of a dog. The ceramic evidence indicated that the quarrying occurred during the late 2nd-early 3rd century.



Fig. 2.113 Site 7, the south-eastern part of quarry 15352

#### Quarry pits

The largest area of quarrying was represented by a substantial, rather amorphous quarry (15352) which was situated in the southern part of the excavation area (Fig. 2.113). The quarry measured 8m by 5m and had mostly been dug to a depth of *c* 0.9m, but some individual areas had been dug to a greater depth of up to *c* 1.2m. The most notable of these irregularities was a crescent-shaped trench *c* 0.65m deep that had been dug around the south-eastern end of the feature, separated from the main hollow by a baulk of undisturbed clay. The irregular character of the quarry is likely to indicate that the feature was the result of episodic and *ad hoc* excavation, with the exposure of the natural clay by the initial quarrying being exploited by subsequent excavators. That the hollow was left open between these excavations and was not a palimpsest of discrete intercutting pits was demonstrated by its fills, which were consistent throughout the feature. The water-lain clay that characterised the late Roman waterholes (below) was notably absent from this feature, which presumably therefore did not contain standing water. The feature appeared to have been left open, and material eroded from the sides had accumulated in its base, before it was backfilled with a single large deposit of dark grey gravelly soil (15516). The backfill included domestic debris, including the bones of cattle, sheep/goat, pigs and horse, a small fragment from a tegula, and a lead weight (SF 15009). The ceramic assemblage from this deposit amounted to nearly 3kg and was generally well preserved, with a relatively large mean sherd weight of 24g. The chronologically diagnostic material all points to a date for the backfilling toward the end of the 2nd century.

A smaller hollow (15123) which was located a short distance north-west of quarry 15352 was also probably a quarry. The feature measured *c* 3.5m by 2m across and 0.95m deep and had a similarly irregular shape. The presence of a primary fill (15124) indicated that, like quarry 15352, it was left open for



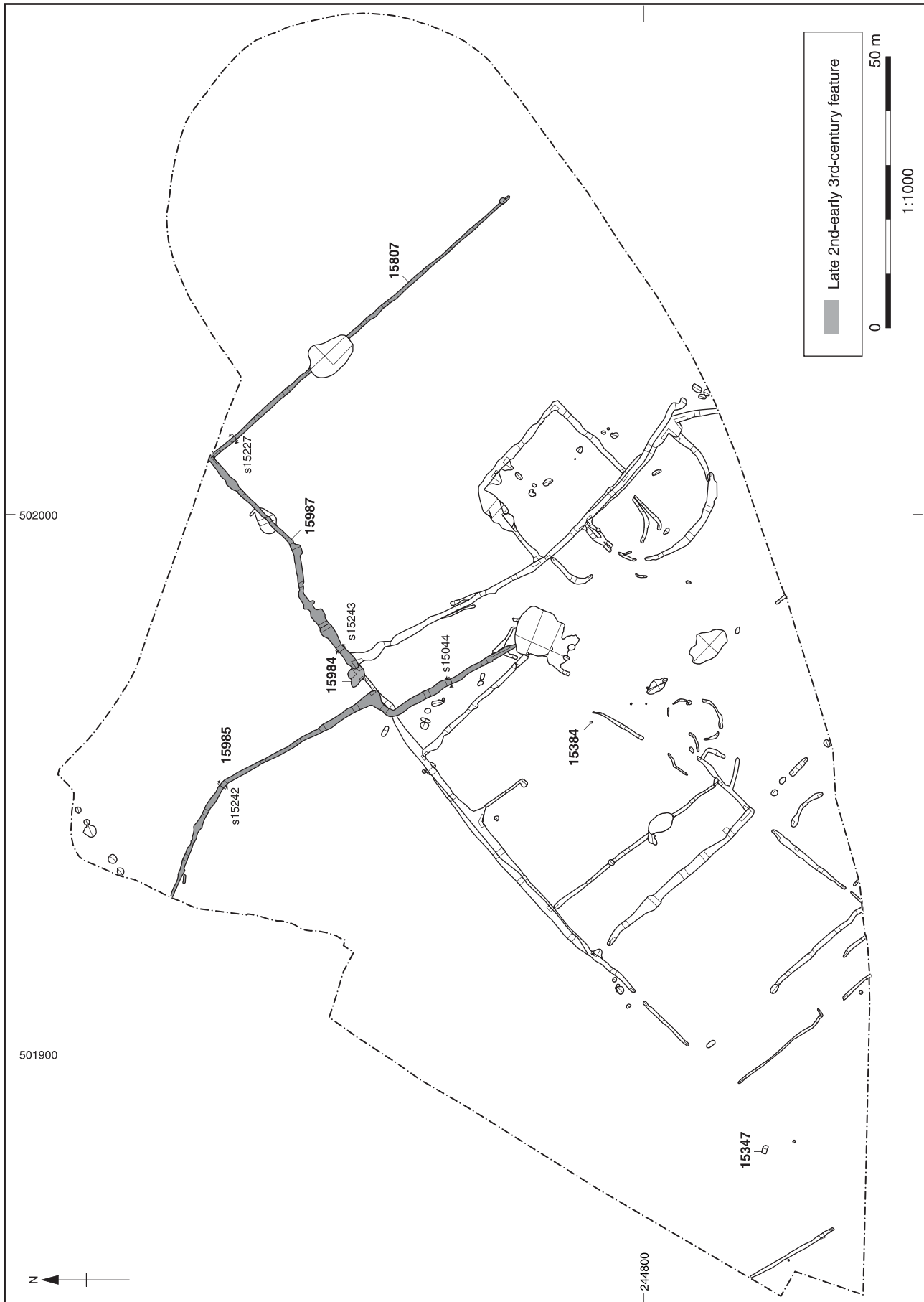


Fig. 2.114 Site 7, plan of late 2nd-early 3rd-century features

some time before it was ultimately backfilled with a single deposit of grey soil (15125) that contained a small quantity of late 2nd-century pottery.

Pit 15884, which may also have been a quarry hollow, was situated in an isolated location c 25m beyond the north-eastern limit of the original layout of the enclosure complex. It had been backfilled by the time the complex was extended by the construction of ditches 15807 and 15987 (below), as the latter ditch cut across it. The quarry comprised a substantial oval pit measuring 5.6m by 3.3m across, with a flat base and a depth of 0.45m. The only artefactual evidence recovered from its single fill (15883) was part of a lid-seated jar, which had been fragmented into six sherds.

#### Alterations to the north-eastern end of the enclosure complex (late 2nd–early 3rd century)

The north-eastern end of the complex of enclosures was subsequently extended and altered by the digging of ditches 15807, 15985 and 15987 to create a large, rectilinear enclosure (Figs 2.114–115). The dating of this reorganisation is uncertain. Very little artefactual material was recovered from the ditch fills, and the pottery that was present was not chronologically distinct from the material that had been recovered from the original enclosure ditches. It is possible that most, if not all of this material was residual in origin. However, the features were unquestionably later than the original establishment of the enclosure complex during the 2nd century, and ditches 15807 and 15985 were both cut by waterholes that dated from no earlier than the middle of the 3rd century, indicating that the reorganisation occurred during the late 2nd century or the first half of the 3rd century. It is not possible to be certain how much of the existing complex remained in use following these alterations, or indeed which other features may have been contemporary with them, due to the wide date ranges attributed to the associated ceramic material. It may, however, be relevant in this respect that the alignment of the southern part of ditch 15985 lay parallel to the corresponding part of ditch 15750 but rather obliquely to ditch 15743, perhaps suggesting that the former was still a significant feature of the immediate landscape whereas the latter was no longer extant.

Ditch 15987 (Figs 2.114–115, section 15243) was a north-eastward extension of the boundary that was originally defined by ditch 15986. Ditch 15807 was aligned at right angles to this, and was parallel to ditch 15750 (which had formerly defined the north-eastern limit of the enclosure complex). Because the junction of the two ditches was situated at the edge of the site it was not possible to be certain whether they represented a single, L-shaped feature, or whether ditch 15987 continued further to the north-east, with ditch 15807 defining a subsidiary boundary that branched off its south-eastern side. The stratigraphic relationship between the two

ditches had been destroyed by a medieval plough furrow, but their alignments suggest that they related and may have been constructed as part of a single design.

Ditch 15987 followed a slightly irregular alignment that cut across earlier pit 15884 and extended for at least 47m, as far as the northern edge of the

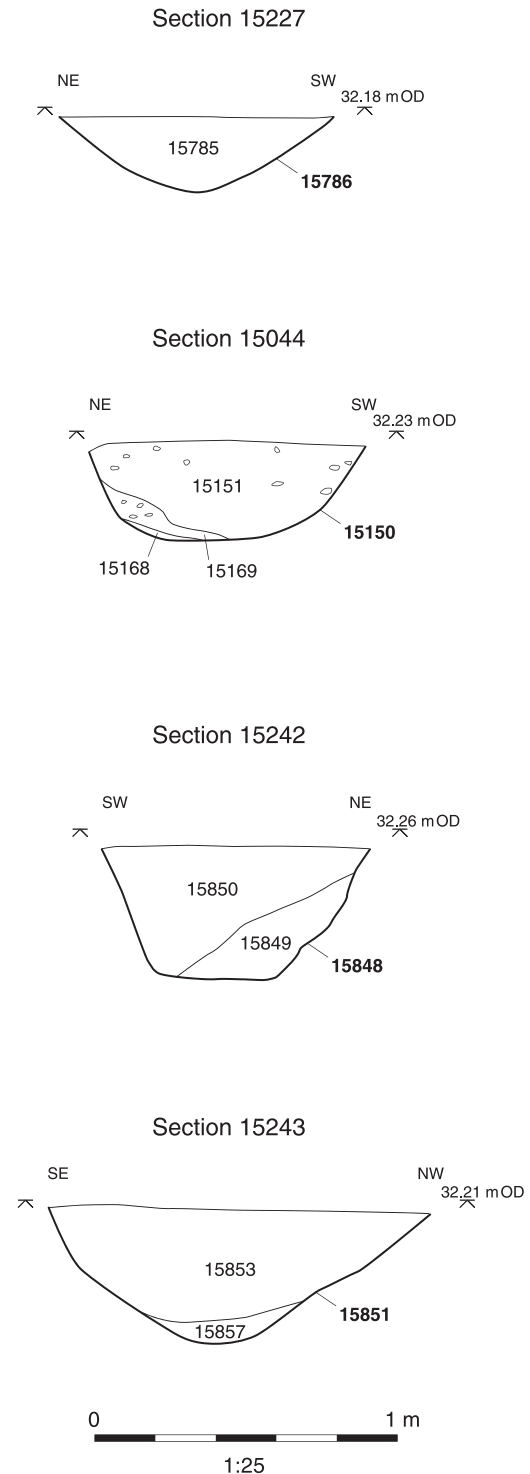


Fig. 2.115 Site 7, sections through late 2nd–early 3rd-century boundary ditches 15987, 15807 and 15985

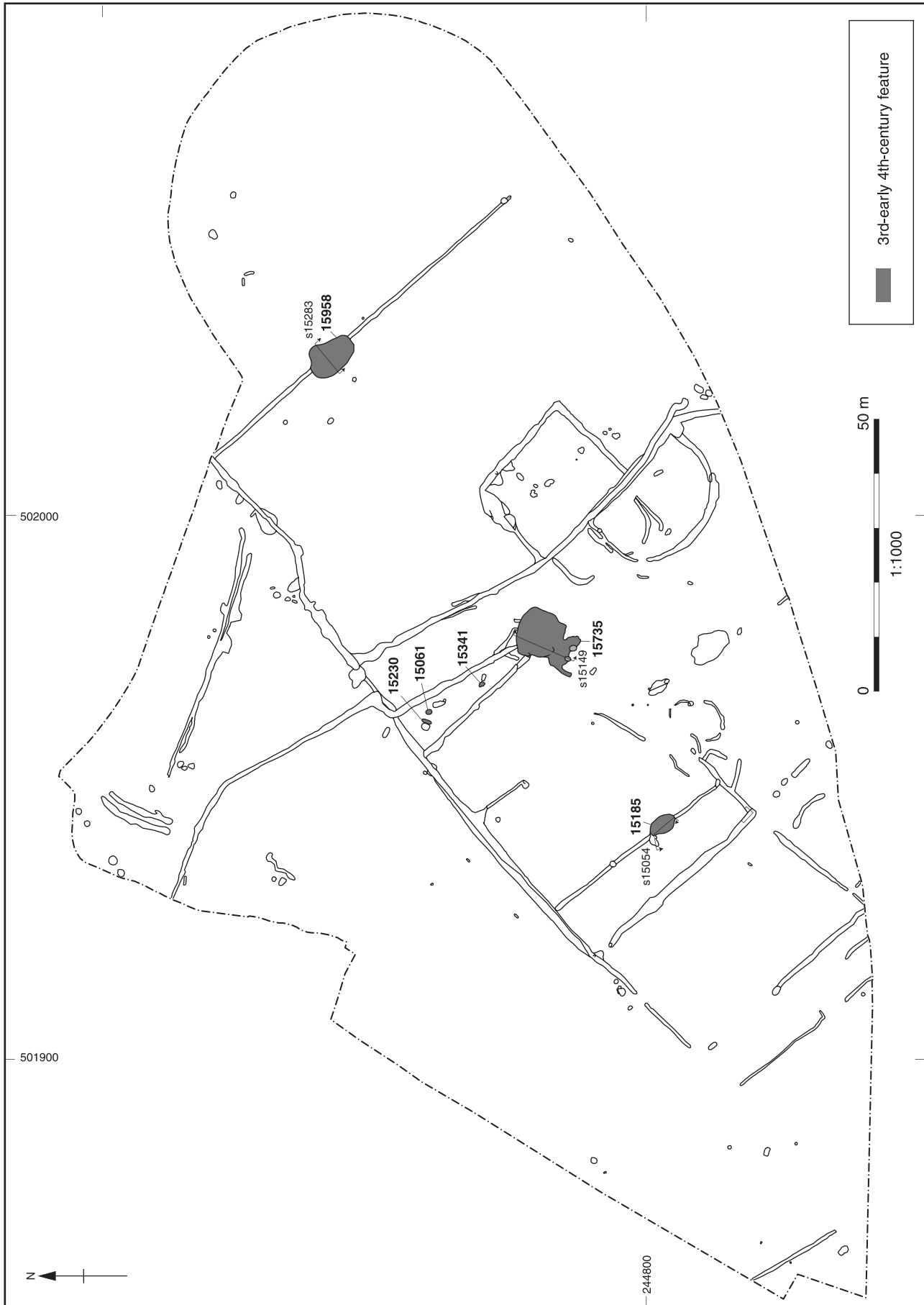


Fig. 2.116 Site 7, plan of 3rd-early 4th-century features

excavation area. It had moderately sloping sides and a rounded base, and generally measured 0.8-1.3m wide and 0.40-0.55m deep, although where it had been dug through the soft fill of pit 15884 it was somewhat deeper, with a depth of 0.72m.

Ditch 15807 (Figs 2.114-115, section 15227) was rather less substantial, measuring only *c* 0.25m deep. It extended in a south-easterly direction for *c* 70m before becoming shallower and petering out. It was unclear whether this represented the original end of the ditch or whether this was merely the point beyond which it had been completely truncated away by ploughing.

Ditches 15987 and 15807 defined two sides of a large rectilinear enclosure, the south-western side of which was bounded by ditch 15985. The enclosure measured *c* 60m NE-SW, but no measurement could be established for its NW-SE extent as the south-eastern side was not identified. From its south-eastern end, which was truncated by a later waterhole, ditch 15985 (Figs 2.114-2.115, sections 15044 and 15242) extended towards the north-west for *c* 25m on an alignment that was approximately parallel to that of ditch 15807 before turning sharply towards the north-east to form the western corner of the enclosure. After extending for a further 5m it turned sharply again to resume its former orientation, and between this dog-leg and the south-western terminal of ditch 15987 lay an entrance 5.2m wide. An amorphous hollow (15984) within the entrance may have been the result of disturbance caused by human or animal traffic passing through it. Ditch 15985 continued towards the north-west beyond the enclosure, defining a boundary that extended beyond the edge of the excavation area.

### **Late Roman period (3rd-early 4th century)**

During the 3rd-4th century three large waterholes (15185, 15735 and 15958) were dug and three inhumation burials were interred. The waterholes were dug through boundary ditches 15366, 15807 and 15985, at distances of 25-30m from the boundary defined by ditch 15986 (Fig. 2.116). The ditches had clearly silted up by this time, but the consistent positioning of the waterholes on these boundaries suggests that they were still of some significance. Precise dating of the waterholes was hampered by the uncertain, but potentially long, lifespan of such features and by the long date ranges of the pottery from many of the context groups. They were clearly stratigraphically later than the enclosure ditches, and pottery from waterholes 15185 and 15958 suggests that they were infilled during the early-mid 3rd century, with the latter not fully filled until the end of that century or the early part of the 4th century. Waterhole 15958 produced a smaller and less diagnostic assemblage, but its similarity to the other waterholes suggests that it was of a similar date.

### **Waterholes**

#### *Waterhole 15735*

Waterhole 15735 was located near the centre of the excavation area and had been dug through 2nd-early 3rd-century boundary ditch 15985, the southern end of which it truncated (Figs 2.116-117). The waterhole was extremely large and rather irregular in plan, measuring *c* 10.5m by 8.5m across, but with depth it became more circular, with



*Fig. 2.117 Site 7, view toward south across the southern part of the excavation, with 3rd-early 4th-century waterhole 15735 in the centre of shot and ditch 15750 to the left*

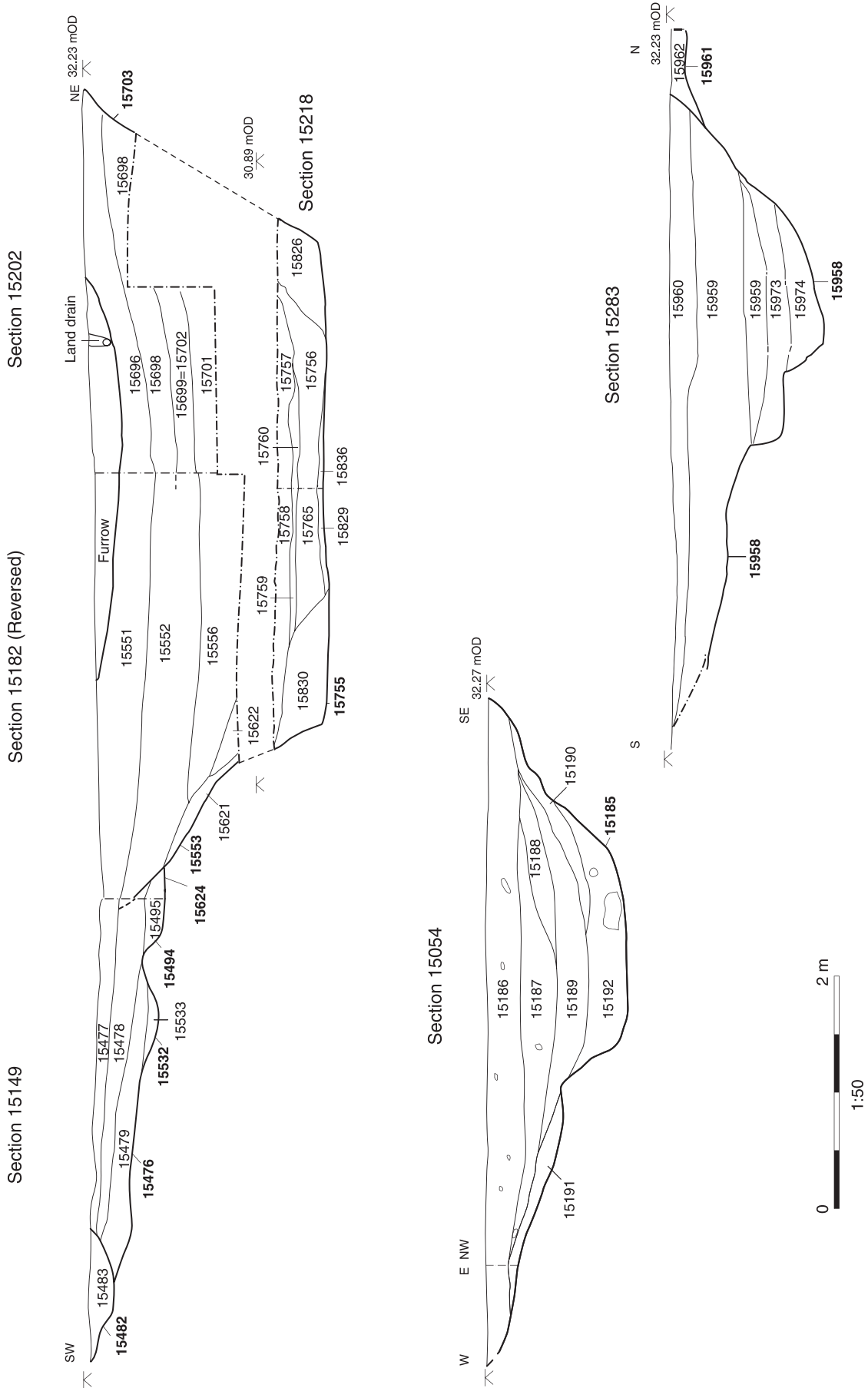


Fig. 2.118 Site 7, sections through 3rd-early 4th-century waterholes



Fig. 2.119 Site 7, excavation of the lower part of 3rd-early 4th-century waterhole 15735 in progress following machine excavation of the upper part of the feature



Fig. 2.120 Site 7, excavation of the lower silts of 3rd-early 4th-century waterhole 15735

a diameter of c 5.5m (Fig. 2.118, sections 15149, 15182, 15202 and 15218). Much of its extent on the south-western side comprised a shallow step that had been dug to a depth of 0.5m, presumably to facilitate access when collecting water. A short length of curving gully (15731) extended into this part of the feature, and although its precise function and relationship with the waterhole were unclear, the pottery assemblage was consistent with that recovered from the feature's backfill deposits, indicating that the two were contemporaneous. The shaft of the waterhole had near vertical sides and a flat base and was 1.8m deep. The feature penetrated the modern water table, and organic remains were preserved in the lower fills in the form of both flecks of plant material and larger items. Following an initial accumulation at the edges of the feature of a primary fill (15830), a sequence of layers began to build up that were composed of grey silty clay characteristic of deposition within standing water (15821=15836, 15756=15765, 15759-15760, 15757=15758; Figs 2.119-120). The assemblages of waterlogged plant and insect remains recovered from these layers indicated that the feature contained standing water more or less permanently at this stage, although there were probably seasonal fluctuations in water level. From an early stage these layers contained a large quantity of refuse, mostly comprising an assemblage of nearly 5kg of pottery but also including smaller quantities of animal bone and



Fig. 2.121 Site 7, worked wood preserved by waterlogging within the lower silts of 3rd-early 4th-century waterhole 15735

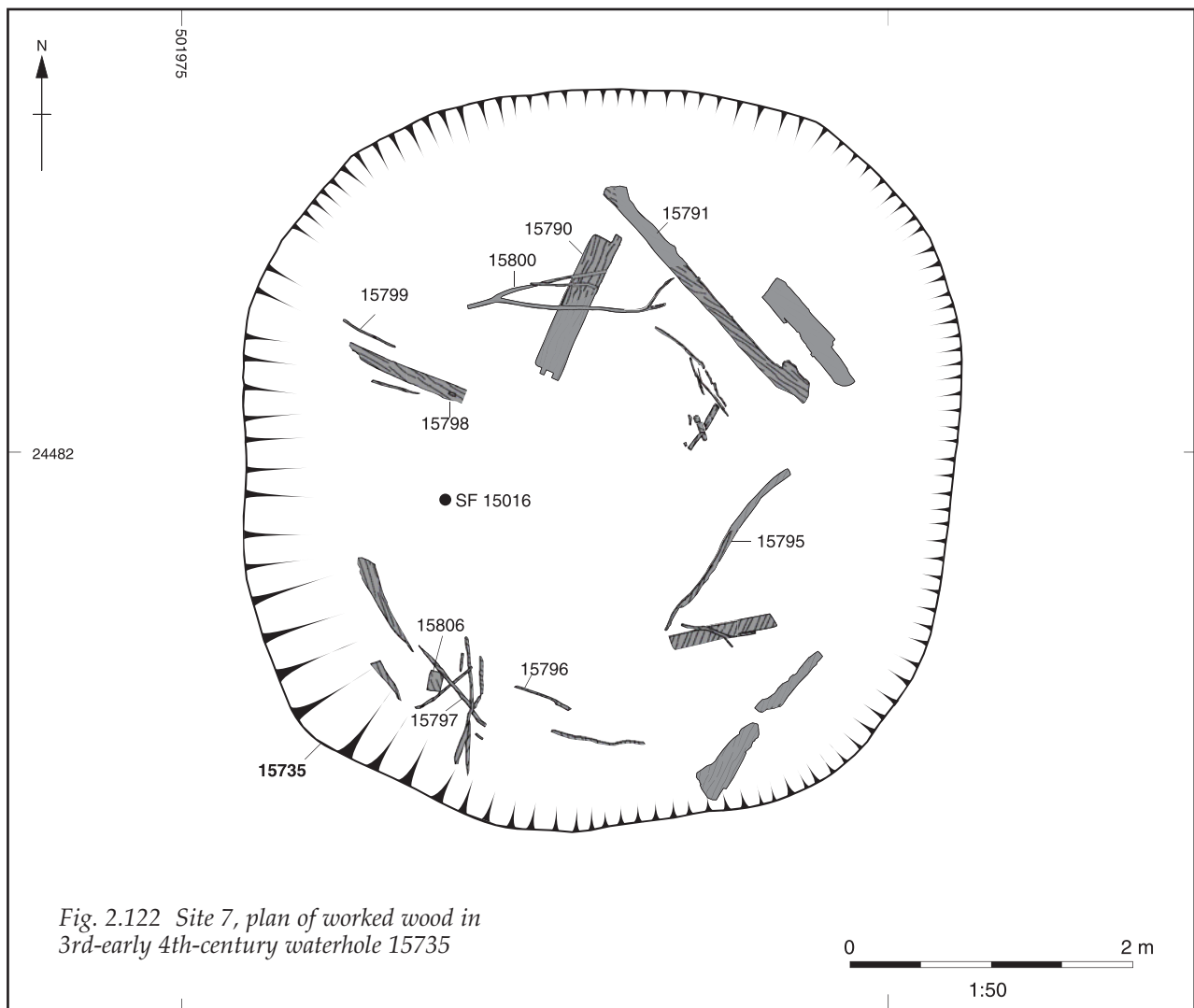


Fig. 2.122 Site 7, plan of worked wood in 3rd-early 4th-century waterhole 15735

oyster shell and a small fragment from a rotary quern. The pottery generally dated from the late 2nd-early 3rd century but also included sherds from a funnel-necked beaker that should date from the late 3rd-early 4th century, although a slightly earlier date for this piece is possible. In addition to this material, the skeleton of a dog was recovered from fill 15765 and a collection of worked timbers from fill 15759=15760. The timbers included a group of fence pales, a plank and a trimmed log, as well as other off-cuts and several small clusters of roundwood (Figs 2.121-122). A rake head (SF 15016) comprising part of an antler with two tines and a neatly cut rectangular hole to accommodate the handle also lay among these pieces (Fig. 2.123). The dumping of the timbers appeared to signal the end of the use of the feature as a water source, and following the accumulation of a little more silt (15757=15758) the rest of the feature was filled by more substantial layers that are likely to result from deliberate backfilling, and which contained a very large quantity of dumped domestic refuse. The



*Fig. 2.123 Site 7, antler rake SF 15016 exposed within the lower silts of 3rd-early 4th-century waterhole 15735*

lower part of the backfill lay within the zone of waterlogging in the lower part of the feature, which facilitated the preservation of the highly fragmentary remains of a leather shoe and a piece of waste leather deriving from the cutting out of pattern pieces during the leather working process. A cluster of 25 hobnails recovered from higher up, in fill 15699=15702, is likely to indicate that at least one further shoe was deposited in this feature but was not preserved.

#### *Waterhole 15185*

Waterhole 15185 lay in the south-western part of the excavation area and had been dug through boundary ditch 15366 (Fig. 2.116). It measured 8.3m by 3.2m across with its long axis lying on the same NW-SE alignment as the ditch. The feature was 1.2m deep, with a flat base and steep sides that lipped out somewhat toward the top. It was accessed by means of a step located on the north-western side (Fig. 2.118, section 15054 and Fig. 2.124). The slightly irregular profile of the step may indicate that it was originally two steps, dug to depths of 0.25m and 0.6m, which have merged together as a result of erosion during the course of their use. A layer of bluish grey clay (15192) that was 0.3-0.35m thick had accumulated in the base of the feature. The feature also appeared to have been used for the disposal of domestic refuse, as this deposit contained a substantial artefactual assemblage. The pottery from this layer was indicative of a deposition date during the early 3rd century, and included two near-complete vessels: a folded beaker (SF 15007) and a beaker-sized necked jar (SF 15008). The deposit also contained an assemblage of animal bone that weighed nearly 3.5kg and included a highly fragmented cattle skull. A single large piece of unworked limestone that may have been used as building stone had also been dumped into the feature. The necked jar lay on the base of the waterhole, along with a cattle skull and mandible (Fig. 2.125). It is possible that these items were deliberately placed, although the quantity of other material in this deposit could also be taken to



*Fig. 2.124 Site 7, 3rd-early 4th-century waterhole 15185*





Fig. 2.125 Site 7, possible placed deposit of a cattle skull and mandible and beaker-sized necked jar (SF 15008) on the base of waterhole 15185

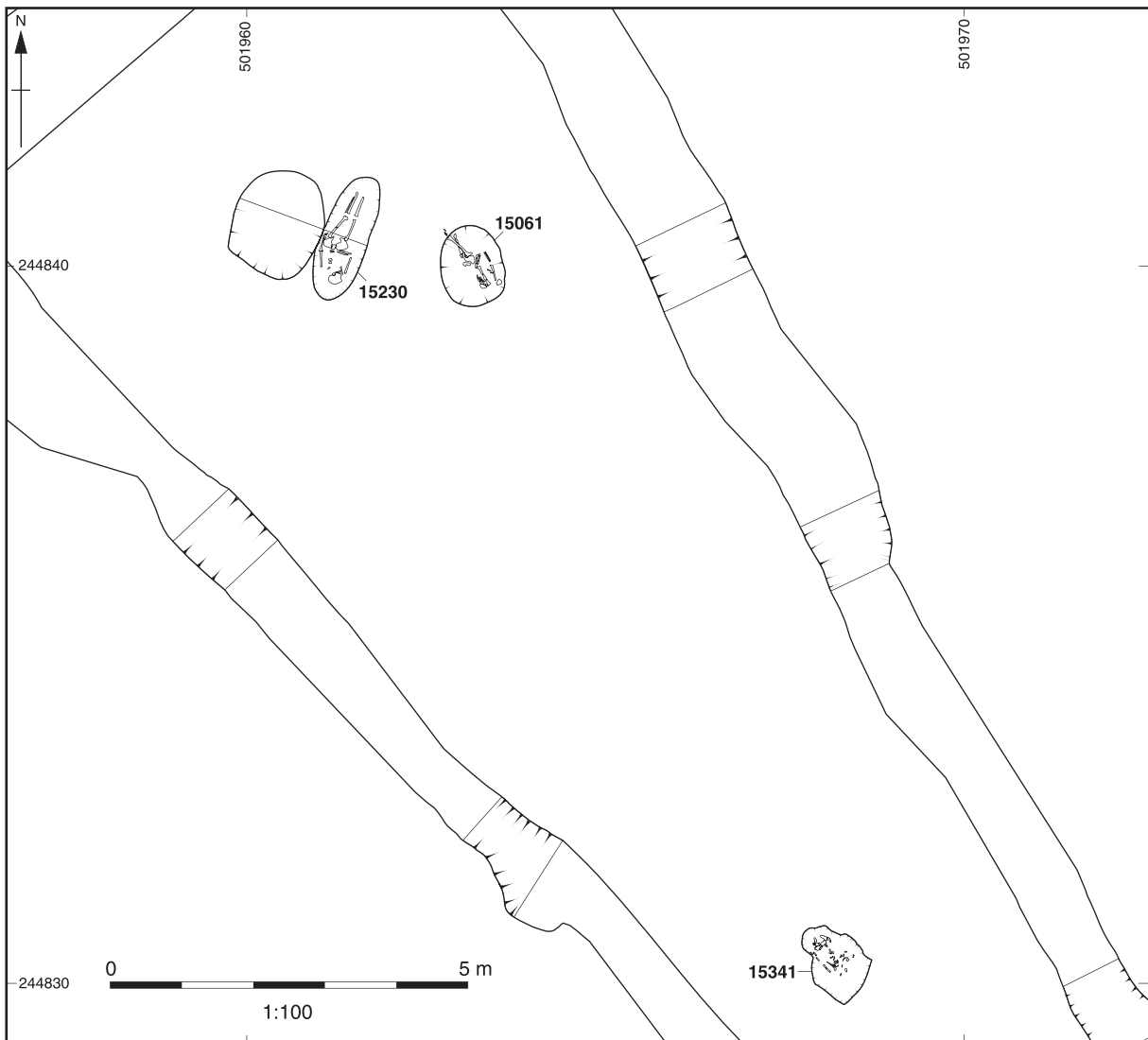


Fig. 2.126 Site 7, 3rd-early 4th-century burials 15061, 15230 and 15341

suggest that they were refuse and that their position on the base of the feature was coincidental. The rest of the waterhole had been backfilled with a sequence of layers of gravelly soil (15186-15191) that similarly contained a large quantity of domestic refuse.

*Waterhole 15958*

Waterhole 15958 (Figs 2.116 and 2.118, section 15283) was dug through ditch 15807, which defined the north-eastern limit of the complex of enclosures that had been established during the 2nd and early 3rd centuries (Fig. 2.116). The waterhole was roughly oval in plan, measuring c 9.2m by 6.5m across, but much of the length was accounted for by a ramp on the south-eastern side by means of which the feature was accessed (Fig. 2.118, section 15283). The ramp sloped gently down to a depth of 0.7m, below which the waterhole comprised a

circular and steep-sided shaft with a diameter of c 3.6m. The shaft had a rather concave base and was 2.05m deep, easily penetrating the modern water table. The lower part of the feature was filled by an accumulation of bluish grey silty clay (15974, 15973) that had been deposited in standing water. These deposits were flecked with small pieces of preserved vegetable matter, including small twigs. Most of the feature was backfilled with a substantial layer of gravelly clay (15959), which was overlain by a deposit (15960) that had accumulated in the hollow that was formed as the underlying deposits settled.

The artefactual assemblage recovered from this feature was much smaller than that from waterholes 15735 and 15185 and came almost exclusively from the two upper fills (15959 and 15960). It is likely that this represents material that was incorporated incidentally during infilling in contrast to the delib-

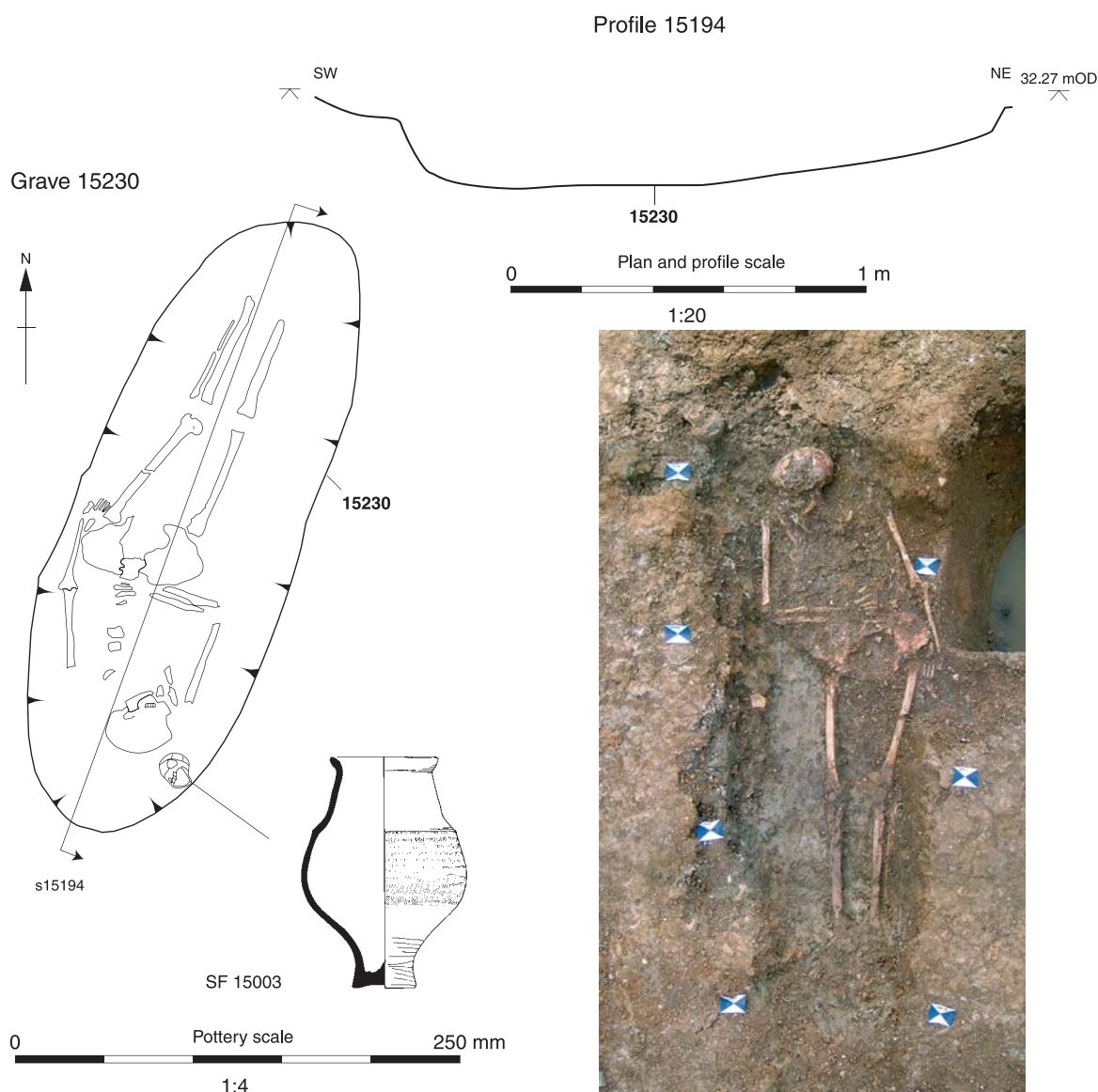


Fig. 2.127 Inhumation burial 15230

erate dumping of domestic refuse that took place in the other waterholes. The pottery comprised a total of a little less than 0.5kg and consisted of groups with long date ranges that indicated only that the feature was infilled some time after the late 2nd century. Two fragmented cattle skulls were recovered from fill 15960, but otherwise the animal bone assemblage comprised only a few small fragments.

**Inhumation graves**

A group of three graves (15061, 15230 and 15341) was situated a short distance north-west of waterhole 15735, and may have been associated with the southern part of boundary ditch 15985 (Figs 2.116 and 2.126). Grave 15230 contained by a Nene Valley colour-coated ware beaker (SF 15003) that dates from the late 3rd-early 4th century, and the spatial proximity of the other burials suggests that they should be of a similar date. The graves were very

shallow and all three had been significantly truncated by medieval and modern ploughing, with none surviving to a depth of more than 0.2m.

**Grave 15230**

The best preserved of the burials was grave 15230 (Fig. 2.127), which lay a little over 3m from boundary ditch 15986. The grave was aligned SW-NE and cut the edge of an earlier pit (15288). It contained the burial of a probable male aged at least 18 years who lay in an extended, supine posture. The grave became progressively shallower toward its north-eastern end, and this had resulted in the truncation of the individual's feet. The left arm was extended beside the body and the right arm was flexed across the stomach. A pentice-moulded beaker (SF 15003) in Nene Valley colour-coated ware had been placed to the right of the head. The beaker indicates a date for the burial in the late 3rd-early 4th century.

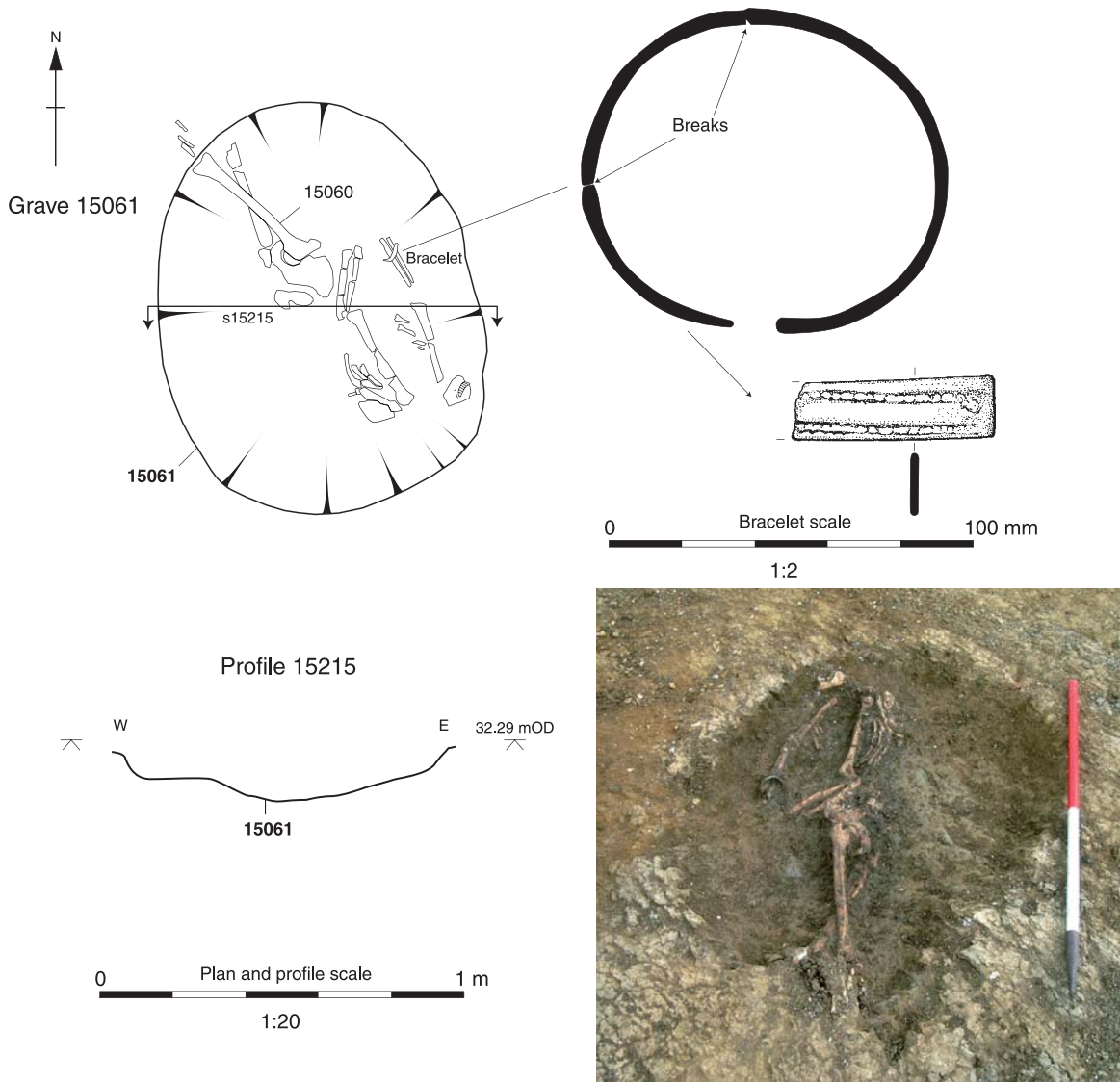


Fig. 2.128 Inhumation burial 15061

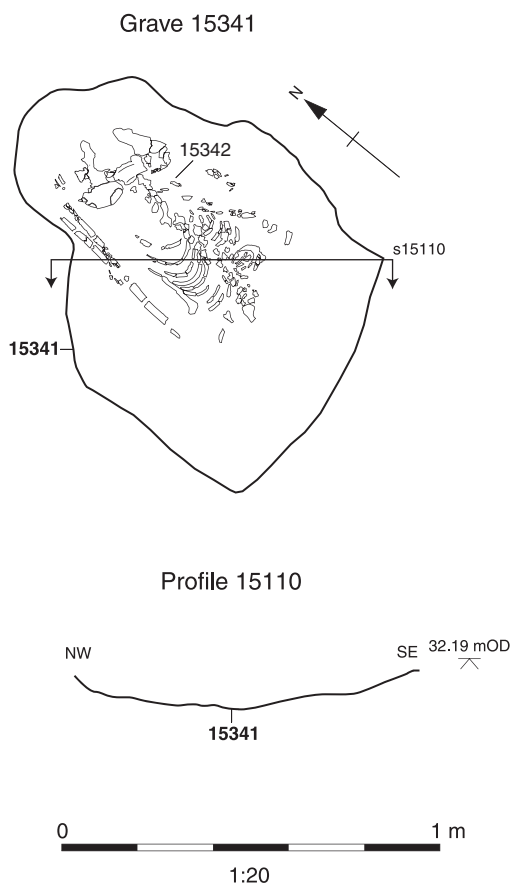
Grave 15061

Grave 15061 was the burial of a probable female aged 30-40 years which lay immediately east of grave 15230, separated from it by a distance of only 1m (Fig. 2.128). The burial had been interred in a large, subcircular pit rather than a more conventionally shaped grave. The posture was also somewhat unusual, the body lying extended on her right side. Both arms were extended in front of the body. The head and the lower parts of the legs had

lain slightly higher than the rest of the body, against opposite ends of the pit, and had consequently been truncated by ploughing, although the mandible survived *in situ*. A copper alloy bracelet or armband (SF 15001) was worn on the right arm and had caused some staining on the bones of the lower arm and wrist.

Grave 15341

This grave was located c 10m from graves 15061 and 15230. This burial had suffered more truncation than the other graves, resulting in the complete loss of the skull and legs, as well as much of the right arm (Fig. 2.129). The individual, a possible female aged 40-44 years, had been buried in an extended, supine posture with the left arm extended beside the torso. Although the skull was absent seven loose teeth were recovered. The position of the right arm was uncertain as only the humerus survived, although this lay beside the torso and so the position may have been similar to that of the left arm.



Other features

A number of small pits and postholes were identified, scattered widely across the site, which produced little or no artefactual material and so could not be attributed to a specific phase but are nevertheless likely to have been Roman in date and associated with the enclosure complex. None were of any great depth, and the distinction between pits and postholes was not clear-cut. Of particular note were posthole 15347, located in the western part of the site, which was the only example that exhibited a post-pipe, and posthole 15384, which was more centrally situated and had a flat piece of limestone placed as a post pad at its base.

SITE 9

Introduction

The site was located toward the north-eastern end of the Improvements, on the opposite side of the existing carriageway from Marsh Leys Industrial Estate (NGR TL 022 457; Fig. 2.130). It extended alongside the carriageway for a total distance of 480m and encompassed a total area of 19,688m<sup>2</sup>, which was divided into two areas by a modern drainage ditch. It was situated on level ground at c 30m OD on a geology of stiff, bluish grey Oxford Clay. A prevalence of periglacial features in-filled with orange-brown gravels, sand and clay contrasted with this and gave the surface of the site a mottled appearance. The site was targeted for investigation because anomalies interpreted as possible enclosure or field boundary ditches had been identified by the geophysical survey. The excavation confirmed the presence of such a complex, although it could not be assigned a definite date as the only artefact recovered was a single small fragment of clay pipe stem.



Fig. 2.129 Inhumation burial 15341

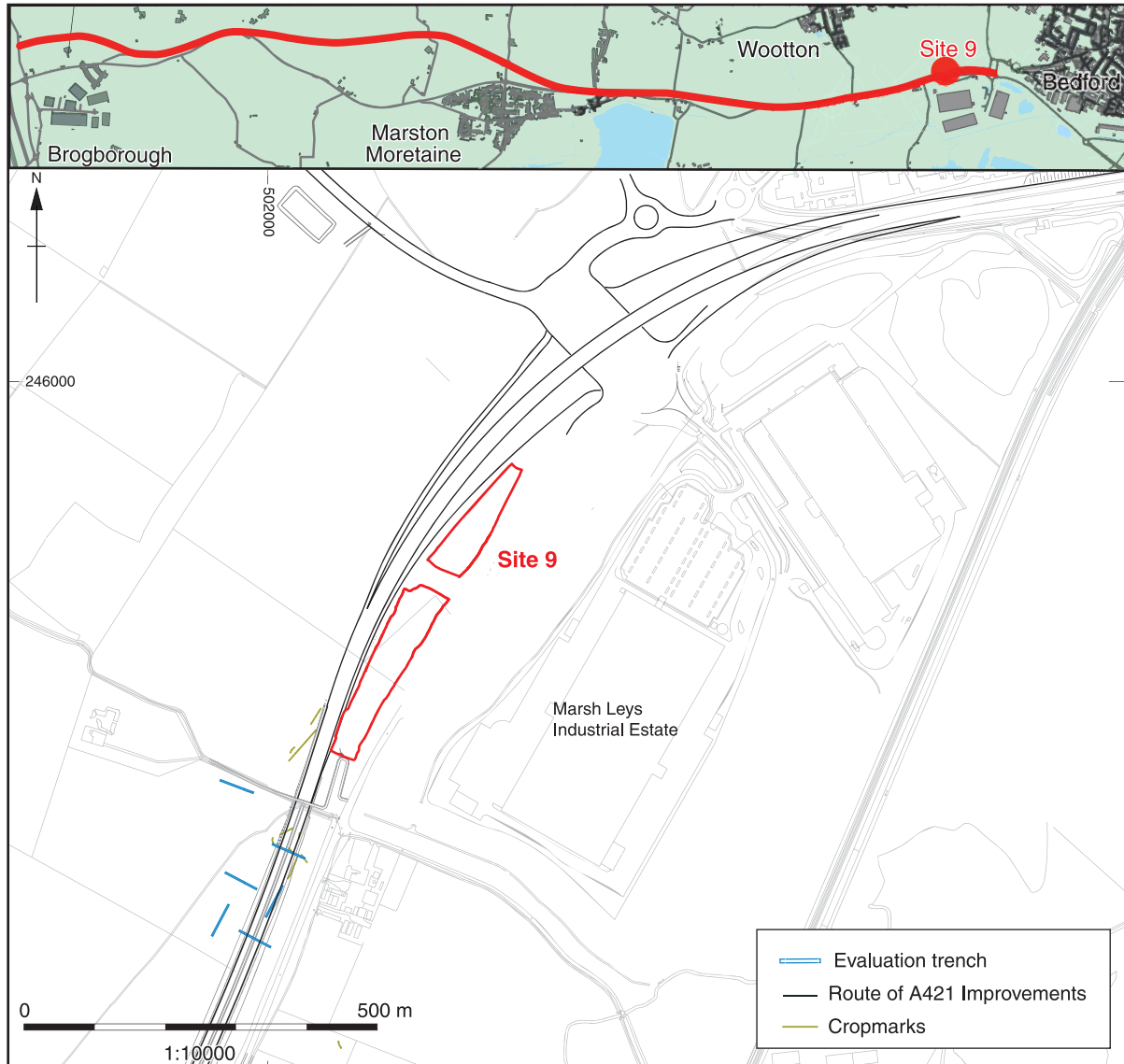


Fig. 2.130 Location of Site 9. (© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence no. 100005569)

### The enclosure complex

The excavation revealed a series of ditches that defined the boundaries of part of a complex of rectilinear fields (Fig. 2.131). Most of the features were located in Area 1, but two boundaries were also identified in Area 2. The ditches were generally quite shallow, with depths typically in the range of 0.2-0.3m, and had clearly been truncated by more recent ploughing. They were filled by homogenous deposits of greyish brown clay that was derived from the surrounding geology, and appeared to have silted up naturally.

#### Features in Area 1

The principle axis of the field system was established by three ditched boundaries (19107/19108, 19085 and 19101) that extended across the south-western part of Area 1 at 30m intervals on parallel

NNW-SSE orientations (Fig. 2.132). Ditches 19085 and 19101 were very slight, measuring no more than 0.15m and 0.23m deep respectively. The former ditch extended for only 26m from the southern edge of the excavation area, but may have been shortened by truncation.

The boundary represented by ditches 19107 and 19108 (Figs 2.132-134) appeared to be of particular significance, as it was the only boundary that had definitely been recut, and these two ditches were by some margin the most substantial ditches on the site. Ditch 19107, the earlier of the two, measured 1.2-1.6m wide and up to 0.68m deep. The lower part of the ditch had a steep profile that probably retained the original shape of the ditch, whereas the upper part had been more subject to erosion while the feature was open and so sloped more gradually. After ditch 19107 had silted up the boundary was redefined by the digging of ditch 19108, which was of similar proportions and had a similar profile. A

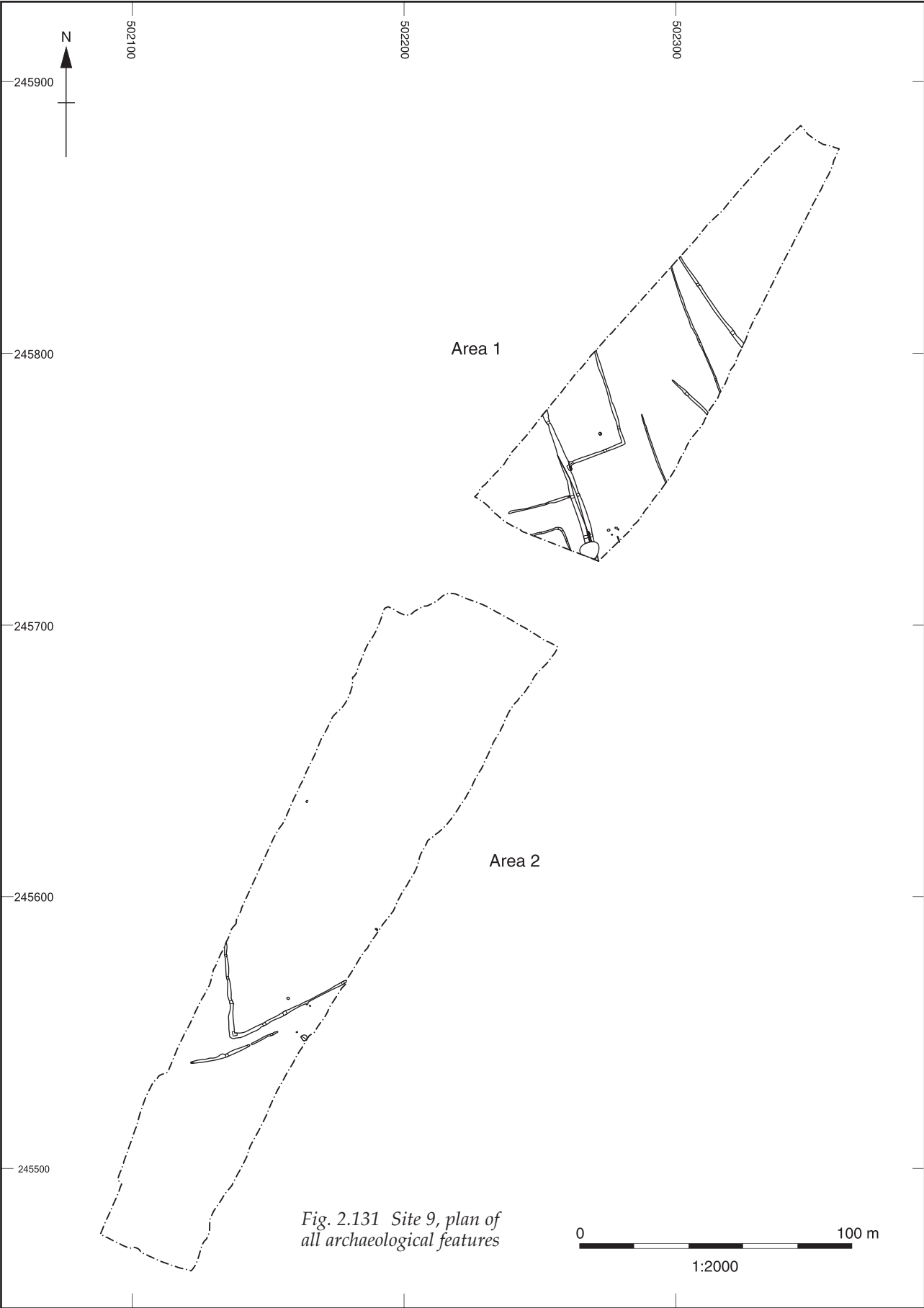


Fig. 2.131 Site 9, plan of all archaeological features

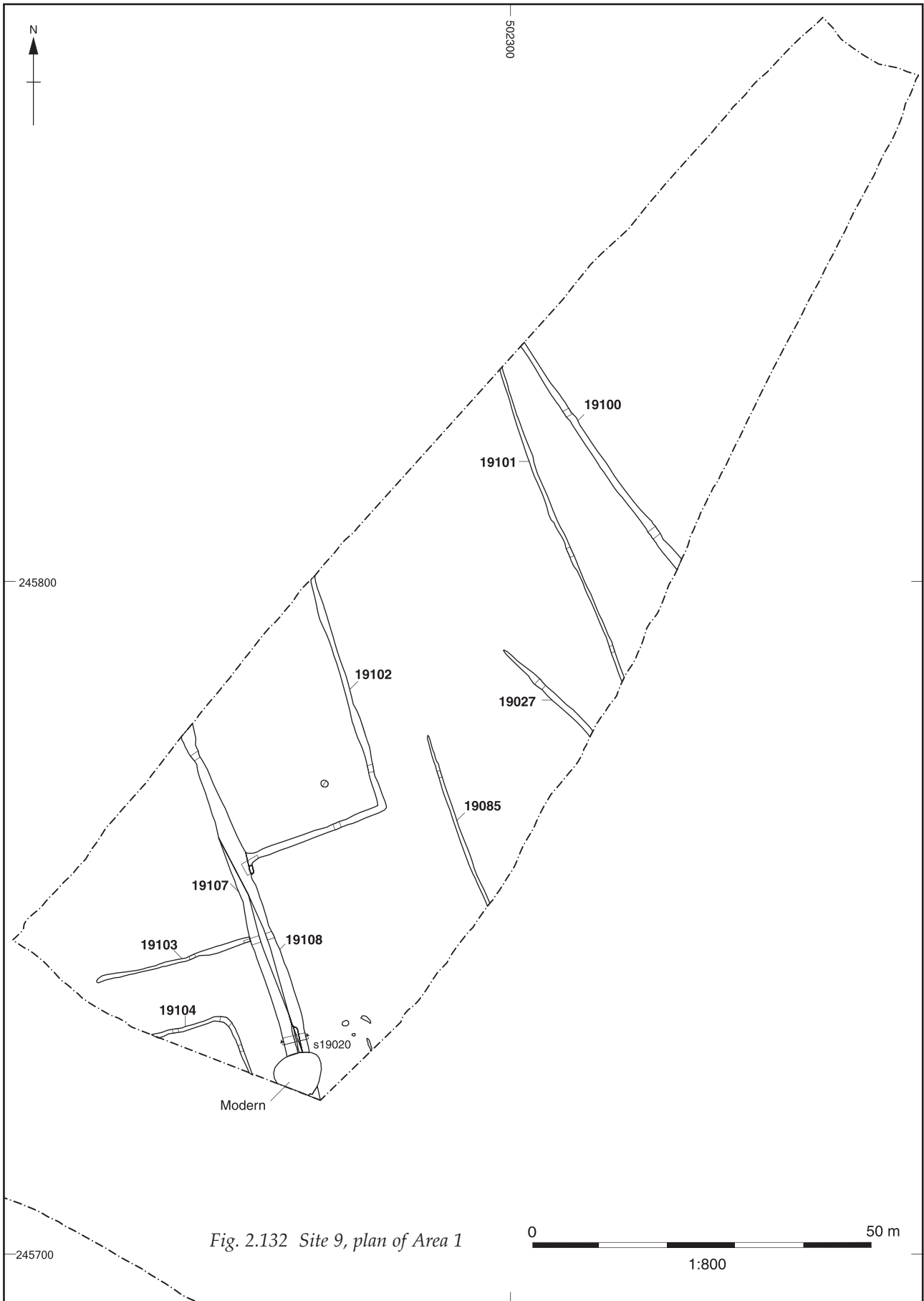


Fig. 2.132 Site 9, plan of Area 1



Fig. 2.133 Site 9, view along ditches 19107 and 19108 during excavation

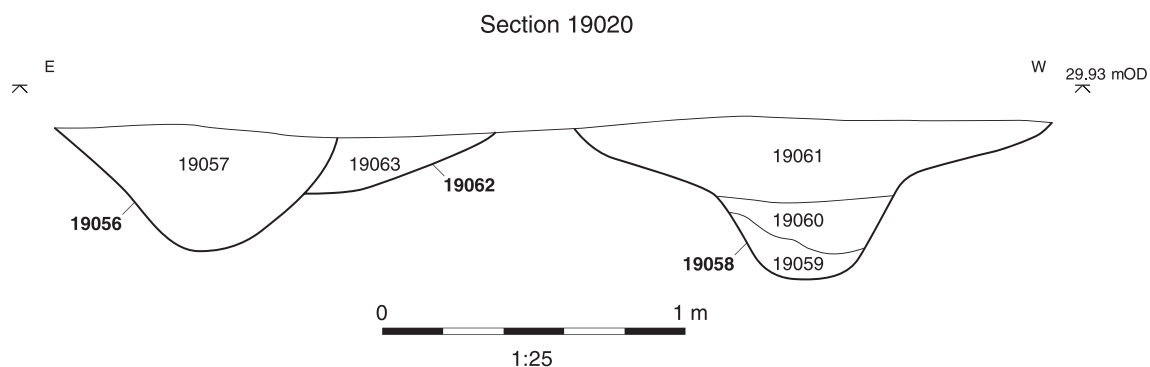


Fig. 2.134 Site 9, section through ditches 19107 and 19108

single small fragment of clay pipe stem was recovered from its primary fill. The pipe had a bore diameter of 2.5mm, which suggests an 18th-century date. At the southern tip of Area 1 both ditches were truncated by a large modern pit.

Smaller rectilinear fields were situated on either side of the boundary defined by ditches 19107 and 19108. A rectangular field was situated against the eastern side of ditch 19108. It was bounded on its south-eastern and north-eastern sides by ditch 19102, which branched off ditch 19108. The north-western end, however, lay beyond the edge of the excavation area. The field measured c 22m wide and was at least 35m long. No entrances into the field

were identified, and no features were present within it. A slightly larger field may have lain adjacent to this one, on its south-eastern side, bounded to the south-west by ditch 19108 and to the north-east by ditch 19085. Ditch 19103 branched off the western side of ditch 19107 and extended for c 25m, presumably dividing two fields that abutted the boundary. Part of an L-shaped ditch (19104) was exposed at the south-western edge of Area 1. It may have been the north-eastern corner of a rectilinear field which had sides that lay parallel to ditches 19103 and 19107.

Ditches 19027 and 19100 lay on parallel, NW-SE alignments at the north-eastern end of the distribution of ditches. Their alignment differed from that of



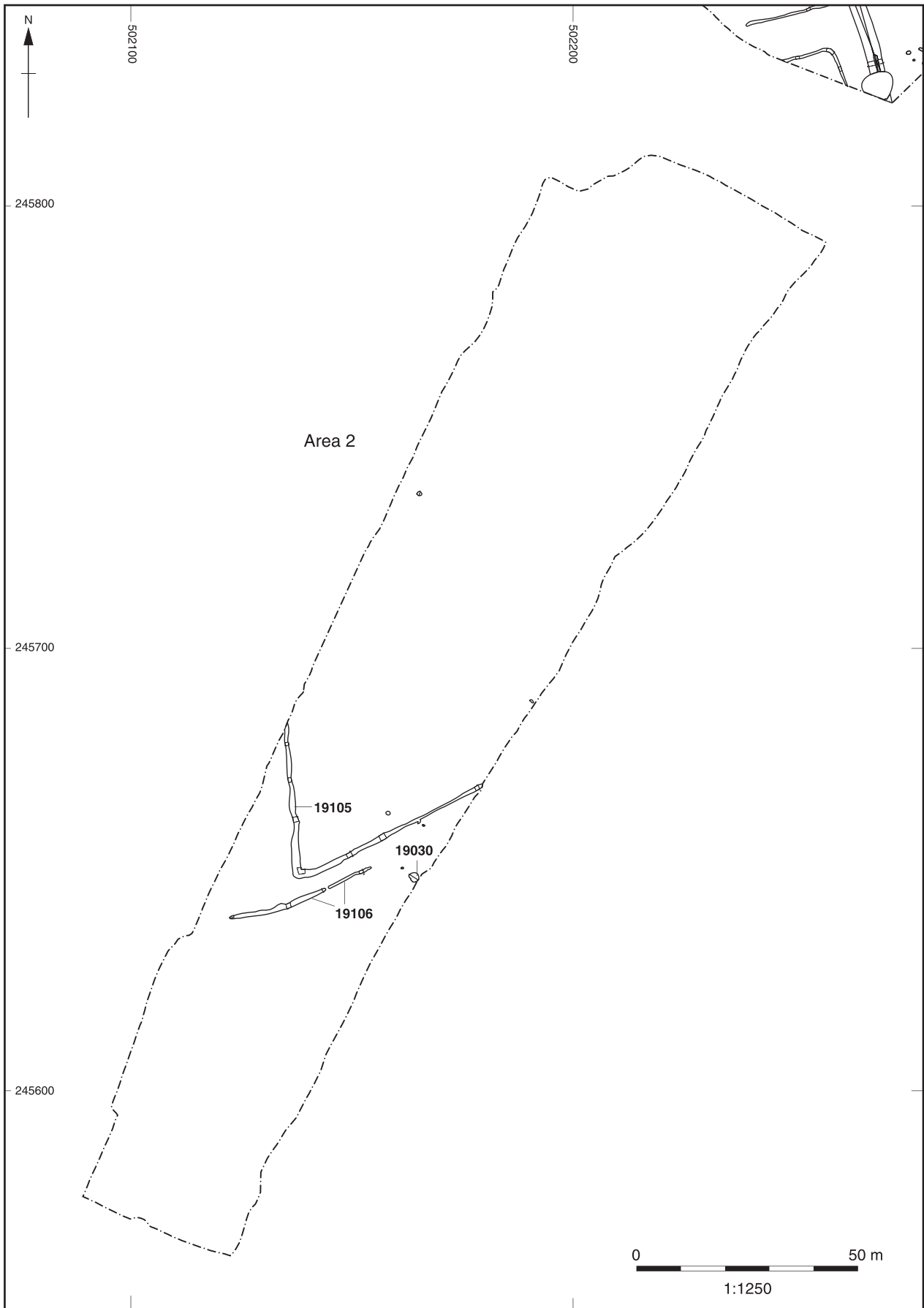


Fig. 2.135 Site 9, plan of Area 2

the rest of the boundaries and would have caused them both to converge with ditch 19101, although in both instances the points of convergence lay beyond the limits of the excavation area. In the absence of either stratigraphic relationships or artefactual dating evidence it was not possible to be certain whether they formed part of the same field system as the rest of the boundaries, although their dimensions and the character of their fills were consistent with those of the other ditches.

#### Features in Area 2

Two boundary ditches (19105 and 19106) were identified in Area 2 (Fig. 2.135). Although they lay some 180m from the ditches in Area 1, the similarity of their alignments suggested that they were likely to have formed part of the same system of land division. The

part of ditch 19105 that was exposed within the excavation area was L-shaped in plan and appeared to define the south-western corner of a rectilinear field. The ditch survived to a depth of only 0.2-0.34m, and it is possible that evidence for the opposite side of the field had been completely destroyed by truncation caused by subsequent ploughing.

Ditch 19106 extended for c 35m on a NNE-SSW alignment, parallel to the adjacent part of ditch 19105. The two ditches may have defined the limits a trackway that measured 3.5m wide, but the destination of the trackway could not be established as ditch 19106 petered at both ends, probably having been truncated by ploughing, which was also responsible for a break in the ditch.

The only discrete feature identified on Site 9 was a circular pit (19030) which was situated at the edge of the excavation area, to the south of the two

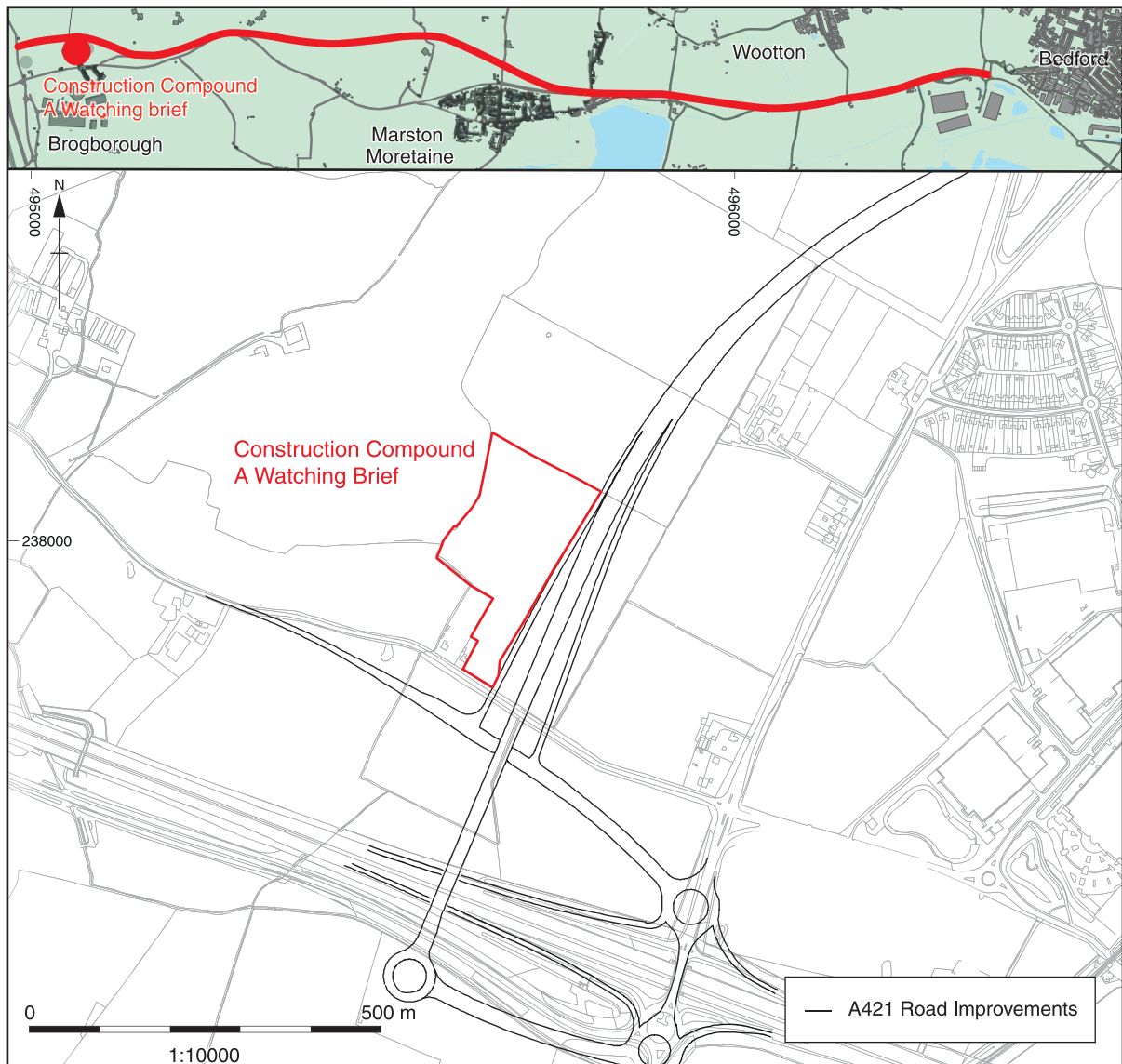


Fig. 2.136 Construction Compound A watching brief, location plan. (© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence no. 100005569)

ditches. The pit measured 2.3m in diameter, its sides sloping quite gradually to a concave base at a depth of 0.7m. The lower part and eastern side of the feature were filled by deposits that contained a moderate quantity of charcoal, but no finds.

## WATCHING BRIEFS

### Construction Compound A

A watching brief was carried out during machine-stripping of topsoil prior to the surfacing of Construction Compound A. The site was located at the south-western end of the project, and comprised part of a former arable field adjoining the northern side of Salford Road (NGR SP 957 380; Fig. 2.136). A

total area of 38,967m<sup>2</sup> was stripped, exposing the surface of the underlying subsoil, but no archaeological features or artefacts were observed.

### Construction Compound B

A watching brief was also carried out during machine-stripping of topsoil prior to the surfacing of Construction Compound B and during the excavation of associated service trenches. The site comprised an area of 82,247m<sup>2</sup> that extended for a distance of c 1 km between Site 6 (Trenches 97-99) and Site 6 (Trench 105), adjacent to the northern side of the existing carriageway, a short distance north of Stewartby Lake (NGR TL 010 435; Fig. 2.137). The topsoil stripping exposed the surface of the subsoil,

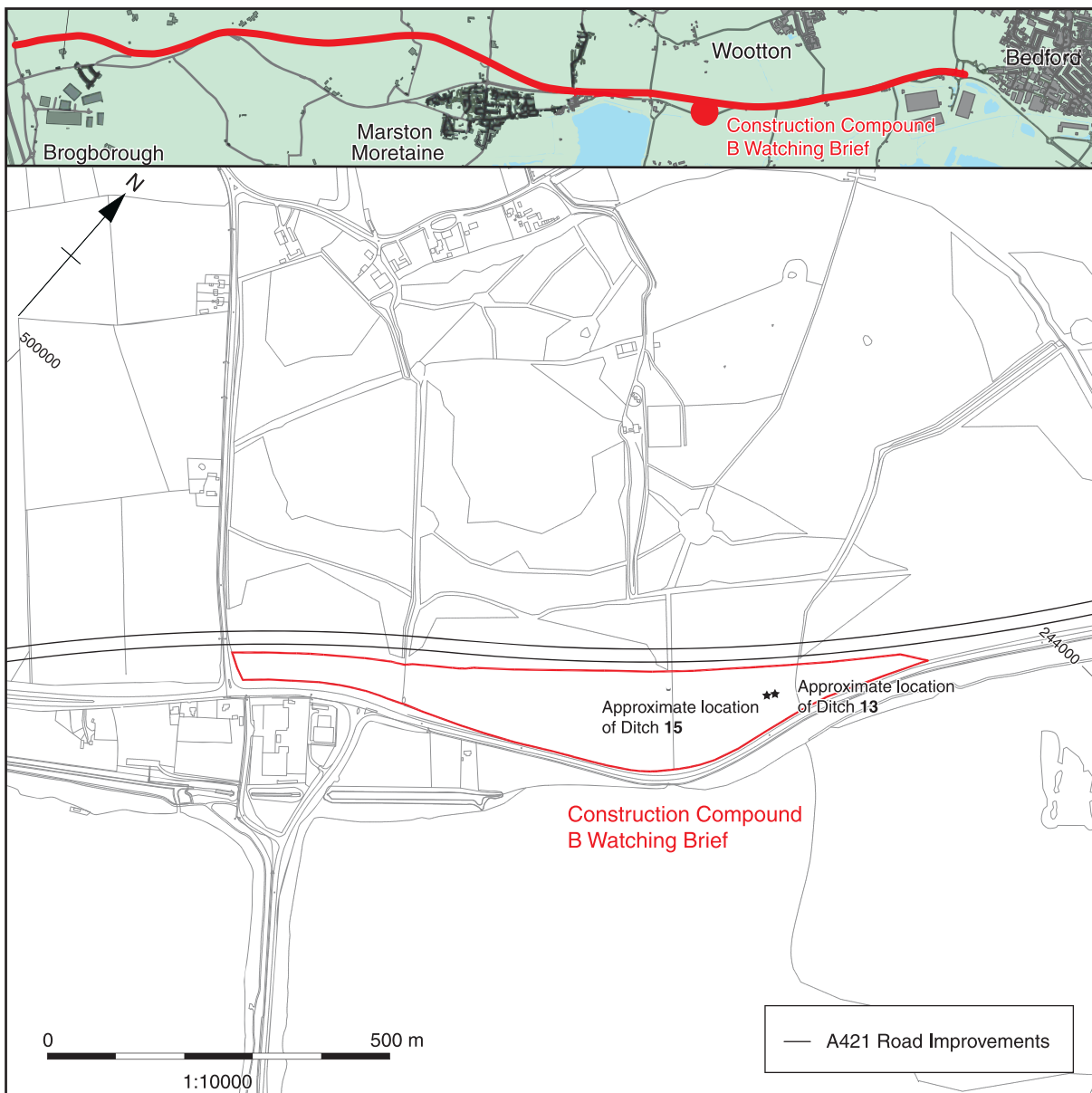


Fig. 2.137 Construction Compound B watching brief, location plan. (© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence no. 100005569)

through which patches of the underlying natural clay occasionally outcropped. No archaeological features were seen in plan, but two ditches were exposed during excavation of a drainage trench along the south-western edge of the area. Ditch 13 measured 0.8m wide and 0.1m deep, and ditch 15 measured 2.65m wide and 0.24m deep. The wide, shallow profile of the latter feature suggested that it may have been a furrow rather than a ditch. Neither feature contained any artefactual material.

### Wootton Pond Borrow Pit

A watching brief was carried out during machine-stripping of topsoil and subsoil in advance of the excavation of a borrow pit a short distance east of the village of Wootton, toward the north-eastern

end of the project (TL 020 455; Fig. 2.138). The borrow pit was located adjacent to the western side of the carriageway, in a former arable field next to Wootton Sewage Treatment Works. It measured c 165m by 110m and encompassed a total area of 17467m<sup>2</sup>. A single ditch (21005) was recorded in the north-eastern part of the watching brief area, where it extended for c 36m on a NNW-SSE alignment. The ditch was not particularly substantial, measuring 1.2m wide and 0.4m deep, and contained two fills, the upper of which (21003) contained four sherds of pottery dated to the 2nd or early 3rd century AD.

### Cowbridge Junction

A watching brief was carried out during machine-stripping of topsoil in advance of carriageway

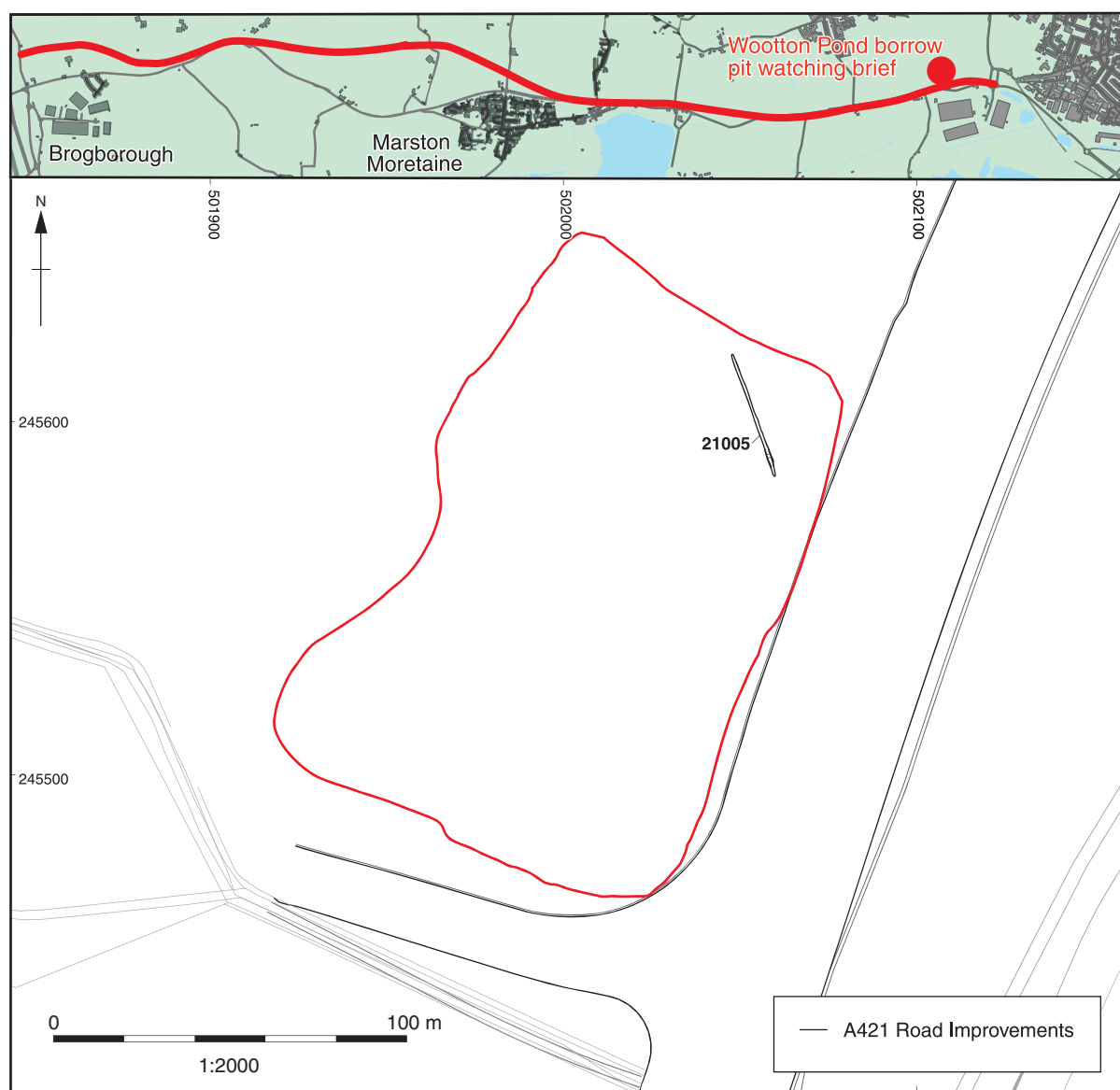


Fig. 2.138 Wootton Pond Borrow Pit watching brief, location plan. (© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence no. 100005569)

widening of and improvements to the A6 between Progress Park Junction and Cowbridge Junction, and adjacent parts of the A15134 Ampthill Road (TL 044 470; Fig. 2.139). The stripping exposed only deposits of made ground associated with the construction of the existing carriageways. No archaeological remains were revealed.

## BERRY FARM BORROW AREA EVALUATION

by Hefin Meara

### Site location

Berry Farm Borrow Area was located between the existing carriageway of the A421 and Cranfield Road, immediately west of Berry Farm (NGR TL 006 436; Fig. 2.140). It lay on level ground at *c* 42m OD, from which the topography rose gradually to the north-west toward the edge of Marston Vale.

### Geophysical survey

A geophysical survey of the Borrow Area carried out by Stratascan Ltd (2008) identified parts of two complexes of ditched enclosures, located *c* 100m apart at the north-eastern and southern edges of the survey area (Fig. 2.141). Few anomalies were detected in the intervening area other than a network of linear features that are likely to represent modern land drains. The northern complex appeared to comprise a main enclosure with a possible annex on its western side and a linear boundary parallel to its south-western side. The latter boundary may have been part of a second enclosure. The western part of the southern complex appeared to consist of a rather irregular arrangement of enclosures with a more rectilinear group to the east.

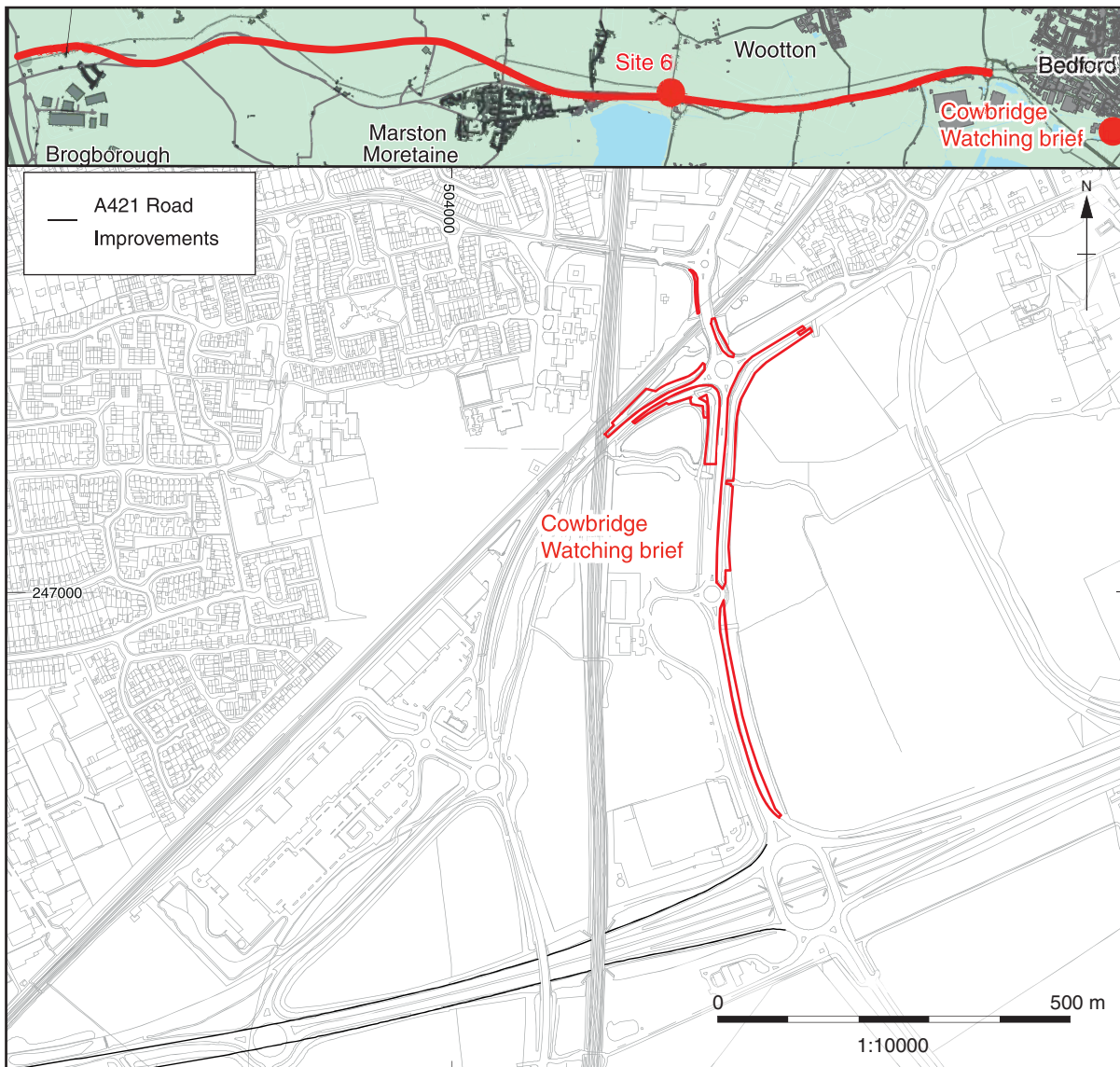


Fig. 2.139 Cowbridge watching brief, location plan. (© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence no. 100005569)

### Evaluation trenches

A total of 10 trenches each measuring 50m by 2m were excavated and recorded (Fig. 2.141). Seven of the trenches were located so as to evaluate the anomalies that had been identified by the geophysical survey. The remaining three trenches were located in the central part of the site to investigate the area that appeared blank in the geophysical survey.

The soil profile was generally consistent across the site. The trenches had an average depth of 0.4 m, but the depth of overburden was noticeably shallower towards the south of the site. Overburden consisted of a homogeneous topsoil layer overlying a thin buried ploughsoil. The buried ploughsoil was thinner towards the south of the site, and became patchy and intermittent in the southernmost trenches.

Due to heavy rainfall in the week prior to the evaluation the level of the water table was high throughout the evaluation area, and groundwater flooded all of the trenches to some extent. This prevented hand excavation of more than a sample of the features exposed in the trenches. However, it was possible to record the unexcavated features in plan and to collect artefactual material that was exposed on their surfaces. Thus, although full excavation of all features was not possible, it was nevertheless possible to broadly characterise and date the archaeological remains and to establish their distribution and their correlation with the results of the geophysical survey.

### The northern complex (Trenches 141 and 142)

Trenches 141 and 142 were arranged to form an off-set T-shape in order to investigate the southern and

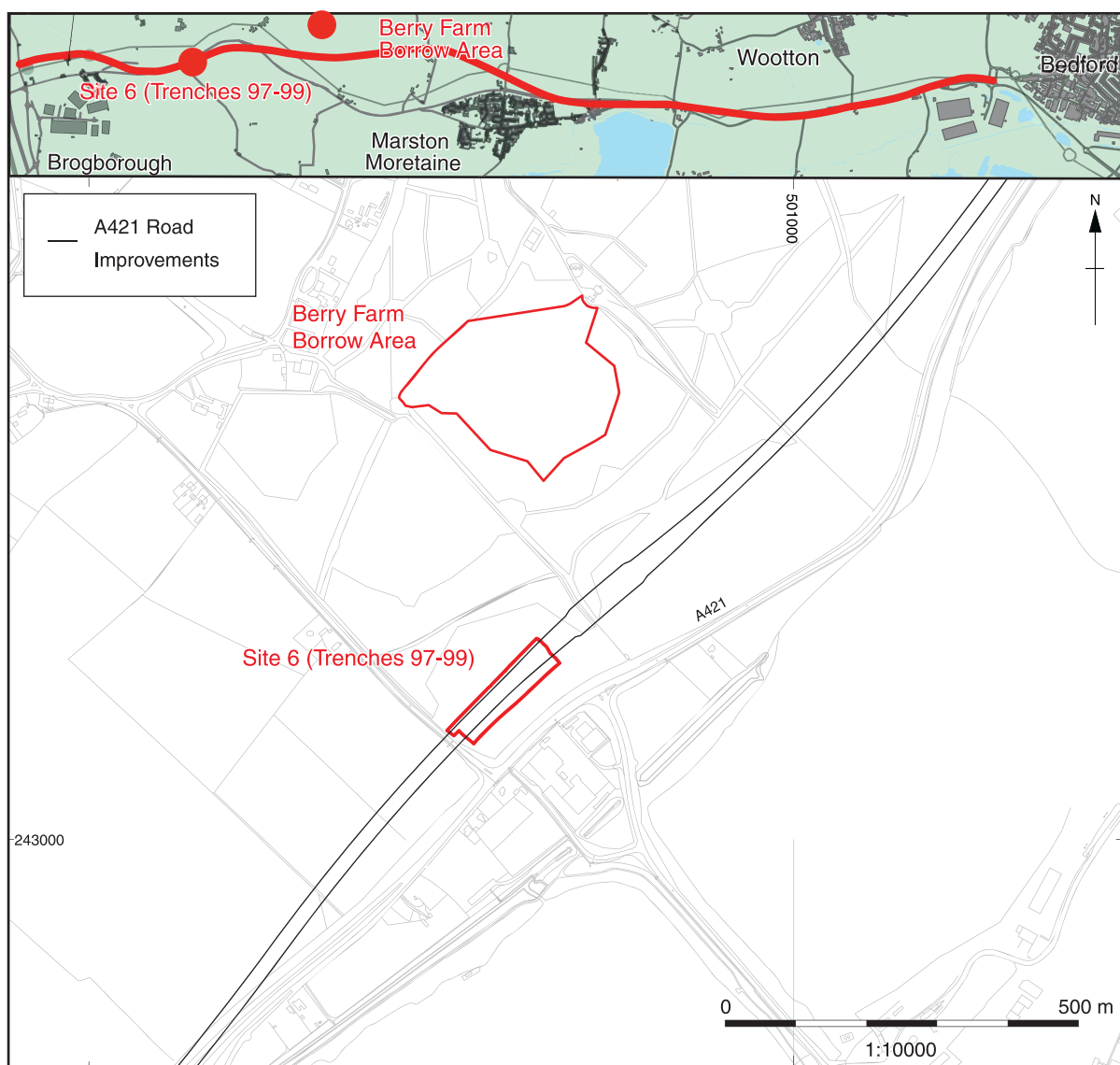


Fig. 2.140 Berry Farm Borrow Area, site location. (© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence no. 100005569)

western sides of the main enclosure and annex and a sample of its interior (Figs 2.142-143). Trench 141 revealed six ditches, a pit and a modern land drain, and Trench 142 contained ten ditches, five pits and one amorphous feature.

#### *Trench 141 (Figs 2.142-143)*

Two ditches (141012 and 141014) were identified which lay on parallel NNE-SSW alignments and defined either successive phases of the western boundary of the enclosure or the boundary of the enclosure and that of an annex that abutted its western side. The more westerly of these boundaries was defined by ditch 141014, which was a substantial feature that measured *c* 3.5m wide. The ditch was not excavated, but late Iron Age pottery was recovered from the upper surface. Ditch 141012 (Fig. 2.143, section 141002) was located *c* 10m east of ditch 141014 and measured 1.4m wide and 0.54m deep, and had a U-shaped profile and was filled by

a deposit of dark, charcoal rich soil (141013) from which a single sherd of late Iron Age pottery was recovered. A third substantial ditch (141006) was recorded that lay on a similar NNE-SSW alignment and may have defined a subdivision within the enclosure. Ditch 141006 measured *c* 4m wide and was not excavated, but three separate fills (141007, 141017 and 141016) were visible at its surface, possibly indicating that it had several phases. A sherd of pottery of late Iron Age-early Roman date was recovered from the surface of fill 141007.

Four other features were exposed in this trench within the interior of the enclosure. Two small ditches were recorded (141010 and 141018), although their precise functions were uncertain. Ditch 141010 (Fig. 2.143, section 141001) extended across the trench on a NE-SW orientation and measured 1m wide and 0.2m deep, and ditch 141018 was orientated N-S and measured 0.7m wide. The latter feature was not excavated and no finds were

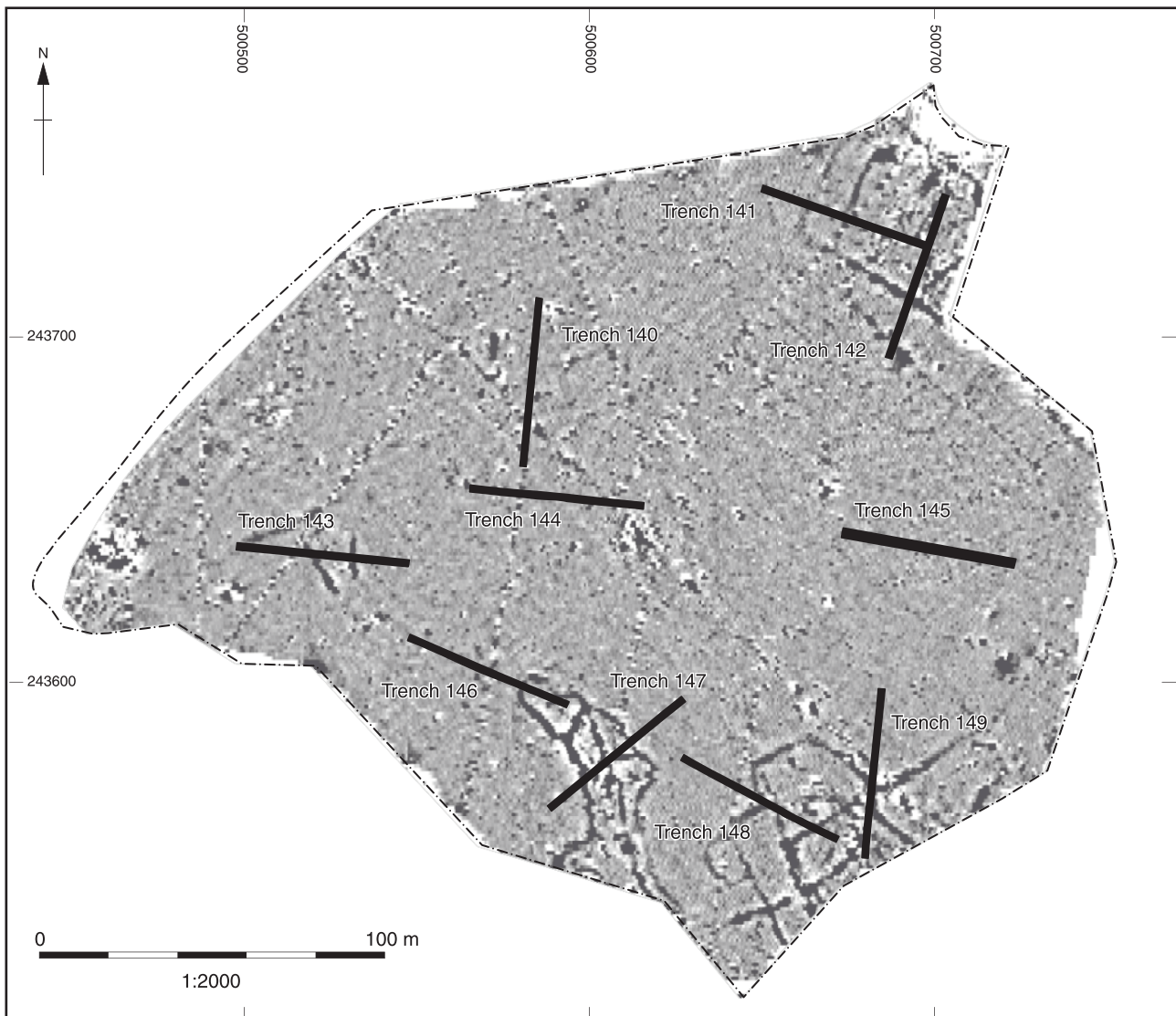


Fig. 2.141 Berry Farm Borrow Area, geophysical survey results and evaluation trench locations

recovered from either ditch. Pit 141008, which was not excavated, measured c 1m in diameter. The fill of the pit (141009) was a dark brown-grey silty clay, with charcoal inclusions, and may have been the result of a deliberate dump of domestic waste. Seventeen sherds of pottery dating from the Romano-British period were recovered from its surface.

Feature 141004 may have been a ditch terminal or a large pit. It measured at least 4m NW-SE and 1.5m wide. The feature was not excavated but late Iron Age-early Roman pottery was recovered from the surface.

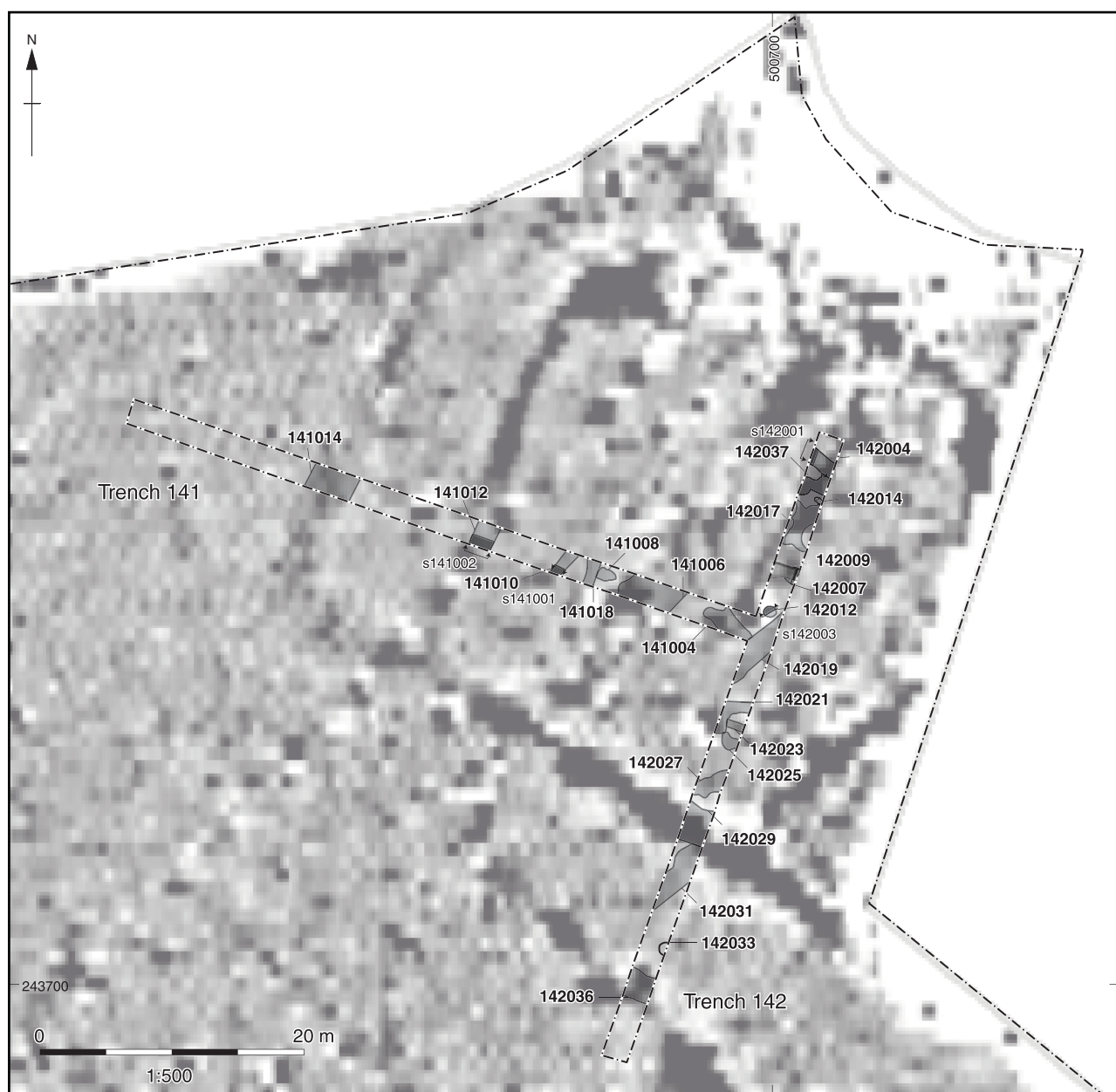
*Trench 142 (Figs 2.142-143)*

Trench 142 exposed the southern boundary of the

enclosure and a large number of features within the interior.

Ditch 142031 may have been the earliest feature, as it was cut by ditch 142029, which defined the southern boundary of the enclosure, and appeared to correspond with a feature identified by the geophysical survey that extended obliquely across the enclosure. The ditch was 2.4m wide but was not excavated, and no artefactual evidence was exposed on its surface.

The southern boundary of the enclosure was represented by ditch 142029, which was located in the southern part of the trench. The ditch was orientated NW-SE, and measured c 3m wide. It was not excavated, but pottery of Roman date was recovered from the surface.



*Fig. 2.142 Berry Farm Borrow Area, plan of the northern feature complex (Trenches 141 and 142)*



Ditch 142036 was situated outside the enclosure and lay on an alignment that was approximately parallel with that of ditch 142029 and c 10m further south. It measured c 2.3m wide. It was not excavated but a large sherd of Roman pottery was recovered from its surface. Pit 142033 was also located outside the enclosure. The pit measured 1.1m in diameter and contained a dark brown silty clay fill. The feature was not excavated and no finds were recovered from its surface.

A large number of features were exposed within the interior of the enclosure, but their interpretation was hampered by the limited confines of the evaluation trench. Indeed, pit 142012 (Fig. 2.143, section 142003) was the only feature that was completely exposed within the trench. The pit was circular, with a flat base and near vertical sides. It measured 0.68m in diameter and 0.18m deep. A small quantity of animal bone and Roman pottery was recovered from the fill of the pit. A soil sample from the pit produced an assemblage of wheat grains that is likely to be associated with crop processing or storage.

The majority of the features exposed within the trench were ditches or other linear features which extended beyond the limits of the trench.

Ditches 142037 and 142004, which were located at the northern end of the trench, intersected but the relationship between them was not investigated. Ditch 142004 (Fig. 2.143, section 142001) was orien-

tated NW-SE and measured 1.02m wide and 0.27m deep. It had an irregular profile. It contained two distinct fills, a natural silting layer (142005) overlain by a deliberate backfill of blackish-grey charcoal-rich clay (142006). The latter deposit contained animal bone as well as late Iron Age-early Roman pottery. Ditch 142037 was orientated E-W, and measured 1.5m wide. The feature was not excavated.

Ditch 142014 had an irregular profile and measured 0.57m wide and 0.1m deep. It extended into the trench for 0.75m before terminating. It contained two fills, a grey clay layer (142015) overlain by a dark grey-black silty clay (142016). The upper fill contained a single fragment of fired clay that may be a fragment of oven plate.

Feature 142017 may have been either a large, amorphous feature or a group of intercutting features. It was not excavated but late Iron Age-early Roman pottery was recovered from its surface, along with a single fragment of fired clay that may be a piece of oven furniture. This fragment, along with the piece recovered from feature 142014, suggests that there may have been an oven in the immediate vicinity of the trench.

Pit 142007 was an insubstantial feature that measured 0.5m in diameter and 0.07m deep. It was cut by ditch 142009, which extended across the trench on a NW-SE alignment. The ditch had a U-shaped profile and measured 0.5m wide and 0.39m deep. It contained two distinct fills: a natural silting

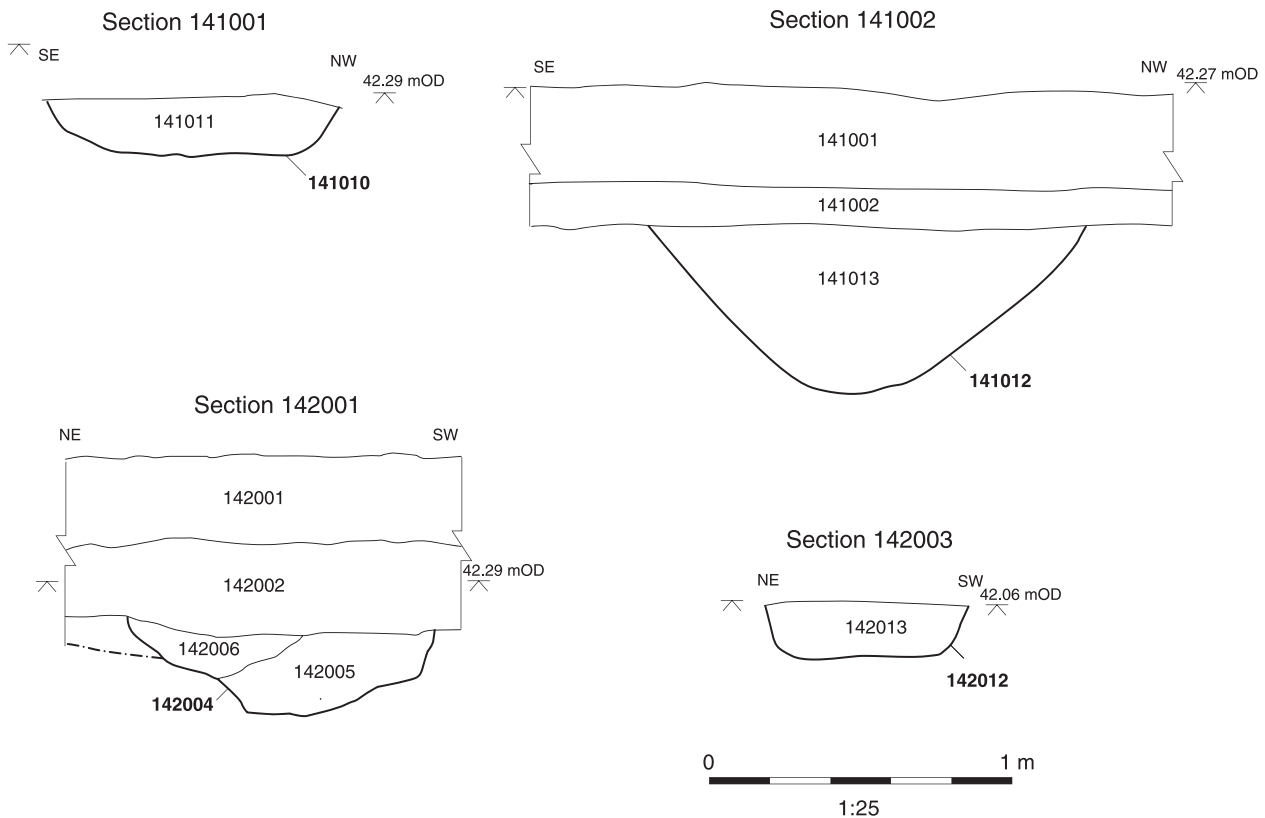


Fig. 2.143 Berry Farm Borrow Area, sections through features in the northern feature complex

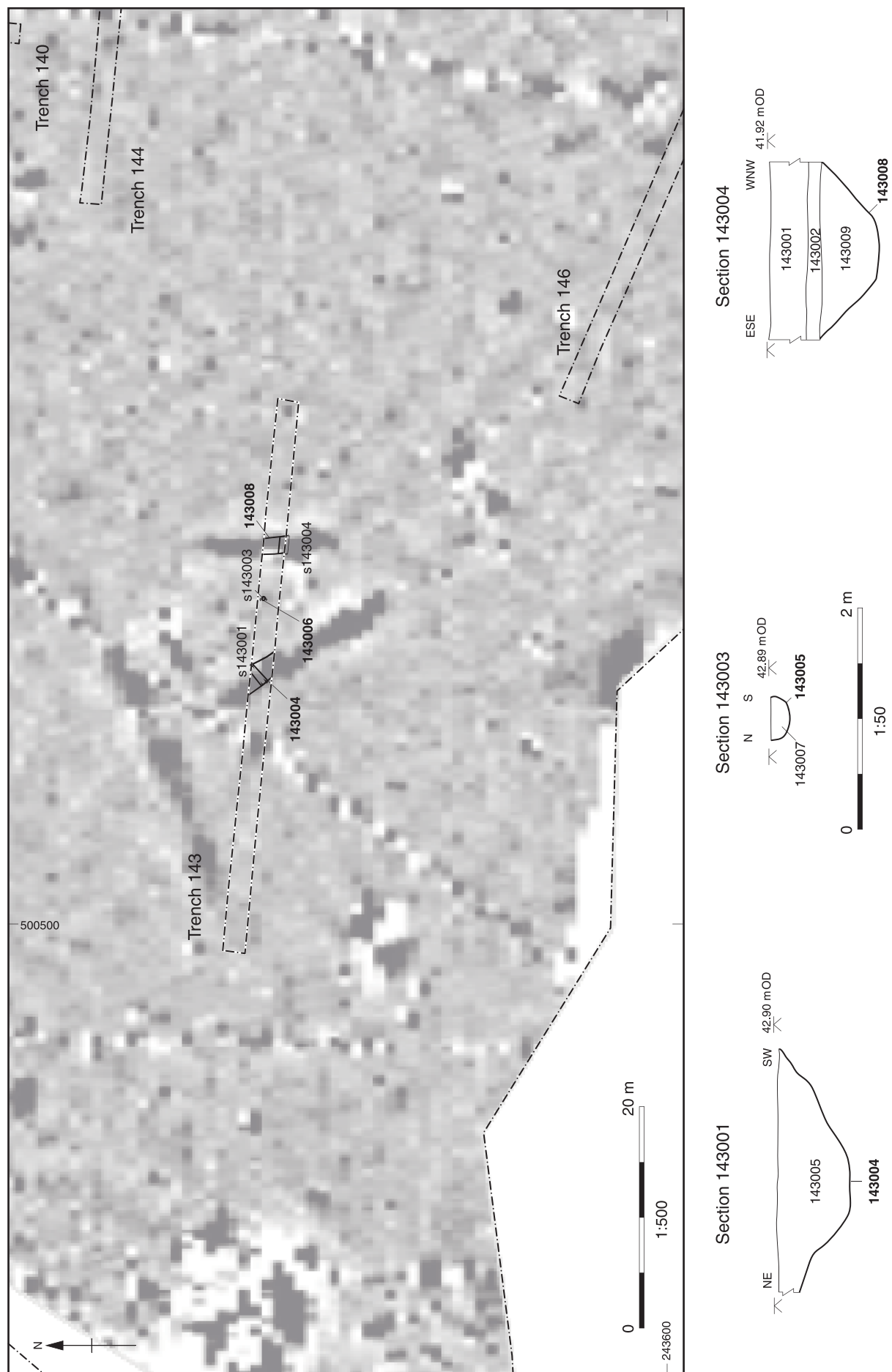


Fig. 2.144 Berry Farm Borrow Area, plan and sections of features in the western part of the site (Trench 143)

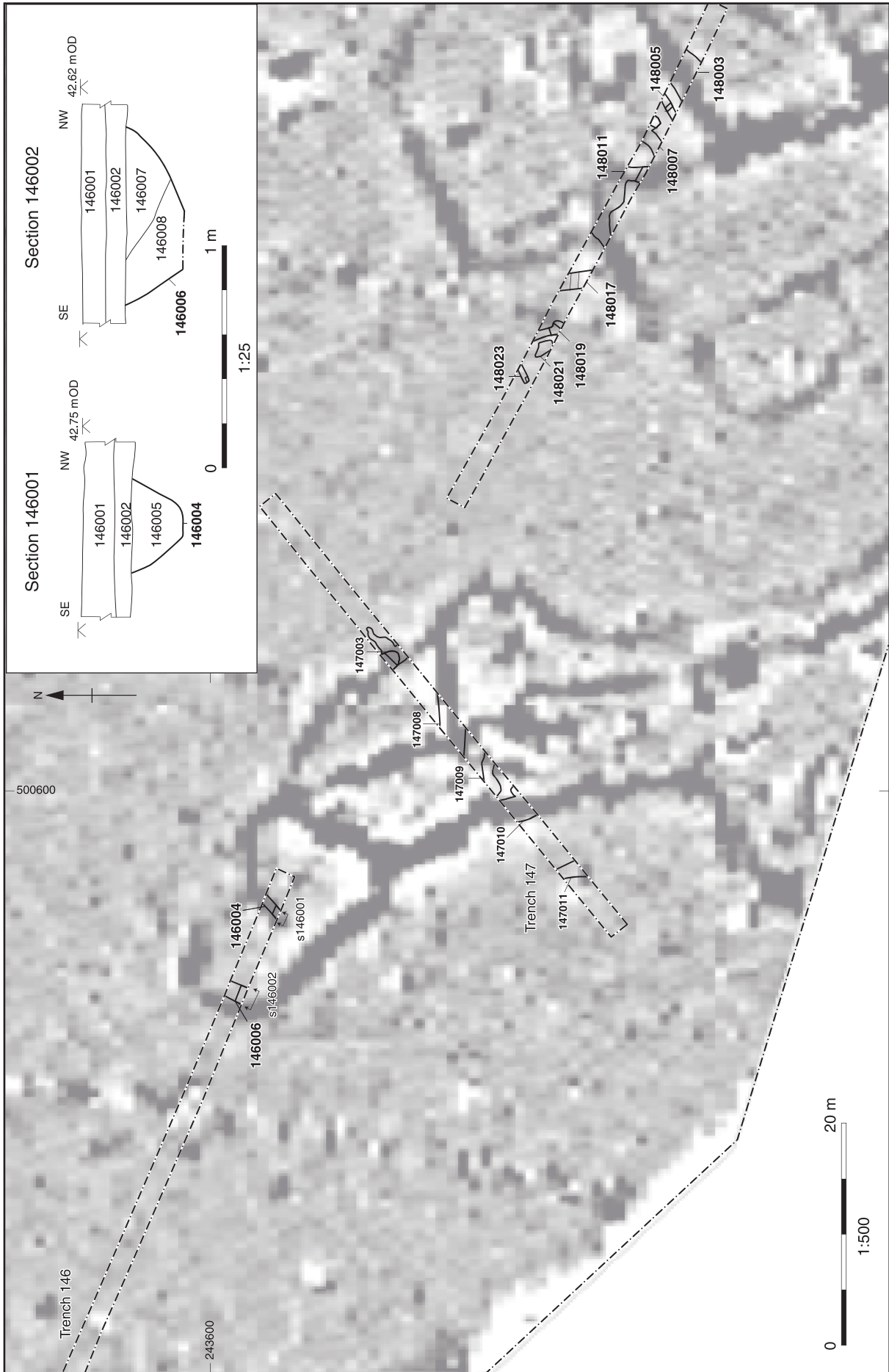


Fig. 2.145 Berry Farm Borrow Area, plan and sections of features in the western part of the southern complex (Trenches 146 and 147)

layer (142010) overlain by a deliberate dump deposit (142011). A small quantity of undated pottery was recovered from the lower fill.

Ditch 142019 was a quite substantial feature that measured 1.9m wide and extended across the trench on a NE-SW orientation. It was not excavated and no artefactual material was exposed on its surface.

Ditch 142023 was 0.88m wide and extended across the trench on a NW-SE alignment. It was cut by ditch 142021, which was rather irregular in plan and had an unclear relationship with pit 142025. None of these features was excavated, and no finds were exposed on their surfaces.

Ditch 142027 was rather irregular, with a width of up to 2.1 m. It was not excavated and no artefactual material was exposed on its surface.

#### *The central area (Trenches 140, 144 and 145)*

Trenches 140, 144 and 145 were located in the central part of the site, where the geophysical survey had identified only features interpreted as modern field boundaries (Fig. 2.141). This interpretation was confirmed by the results from the trenches. The only feature exposed was a single ditch that extended across Trenches 140 and 144. The ditch was not excavated, but was also exposed in Trench 149, where it was recorded as ditch 149004 and a modern brick was recovered from its fill. The ditch is therefore likely to be a field boundary of modern origin. No features were exposed in Trench 145.

#### *The western area (Trench 143)*

Trench 143 was positioned to investigate two linear anomalies that had been identified by the geophysical survey in the western part of the site (Fig. 2.144). In addition to these two features, the trench also exposed a posthole. Ditch 143004 was orientated NW-SE. It had a U-shaped profile and measured *c* 2m wide and 0.66m deep. It was filled by a deposit of dark brown-grey silty clay (143005) from which no artefactual material was recovered. Ditch 143008 lay on a more N-S alignment. It also had a U-shaped profile, and measured 1.6m wide and 0.6m deep. Its fill was a dark grey, charcoal-rich silty clay (143009) from which two sherds of Roman pottery were recovered. Posthole 143006 measured 0.4m in diameter and 0.18m deep. It was filled by a deposit of dark grey, charcoal-rich silty clay (142007). No finds were recovered from this feature.

#### *The southern complex (Trenches 146-9)*

Trenches 146-149 were located to investigate an area of possible ditched enclosures that had been identified in the southern part of the site by the geophysical survey (Figs 2.145-146). Trenches 146 and 147 were targeted on a rather irregular group of conjoined features on the western side of this area, and Trenches 148 and 149 were excavated across part of an apparently more regular arrangement of

enclosures in the eastern part of the complex.

#### *Trench 146 (Fig. 2.145)*

Trench 146 exposed two ditches. Ditch 146006 corresponded with a feature identified by the geophysical survey that defined an enclosure at the western edge of the complex. The ditch extended across the trench on a NNE-SSW orientation and measured 1.6m wide. It was excavated to a depth of 0.52m (Fig. 2.145, section 146002), beyond which further excavation was impossible due to flooding. The ditch contained two fills, comprising a layer of dark grey silty clay (146008) resulting from natural silting that was overlain by a deliberate dump of redeposited clay (146007). No finds were recovered from either of these fills. Ditch 146004 (Fig. 2.145, section 146001) was located at the SE end of the trench, within the enclosure defined by ditch 146006. It measured 0.92m wide and 0.48m deep and was filled with a deposit of dark grey, charcoal-rich silty clay (146005) which contained late Iron Age pottery.

#### *Trench 147 (Fig. 2.145)*

The trench contained four ditches and an irregularly shaped feature that was interpreted as a tree-throw hole. The ditches could not be excavated due to flooding of the trench. No artefactual material was exposed on the surfaces of any of these features.

Ditch 147010 corresponded with a feature identified by the geophysical survey that defined the western limit of the enclosure complex. It extended across the trench on a NW-SE orientation and measured 2.5m wide. Ditch 147008 was also quite substantial, measuring 2.4m wide. It was oriented E-W and formed a significant subdivision within the complex. Ditch 147009 was located within the enclosure complex and was rather irregular in plan. It was orientated E-W and measured 1.1m wide. Ditch 147011 was located *c* 5m west of ditch 147010, and thus apparently lay outside the complex. No corresponding feature was identified by the geophysical survey. The ditch was orientated NNW-SSE and measured 1.25m wide.

Tree-throw hole 147003 measured 1.7m wide and 0.54m deep. No finds were recovered from its fills.

#### *Trench 148 (Figs 2.146-147)*

A total of eight ditches and two pits were exposed in Trench 148. Some of these ditches corresponded clearly with enclosure boundaries that had been identified by the geophysical survey, but additional features were also revealed both within and outside the enclosures.

Ditches 148011 and 148015 were oriented N-S and E-W respectively and met at a right angle which the results of the geophysical survey indicated defined the north-eastern corner of a substantial rectilinear enclosure. Ditch 148011 was excavated but ditch 148015 was not. Ditch 148011 (Fig. 2.147, section 148006) had steep, slightly irregular sides and a flat base and measured 2m wide and 0.5m deep. It

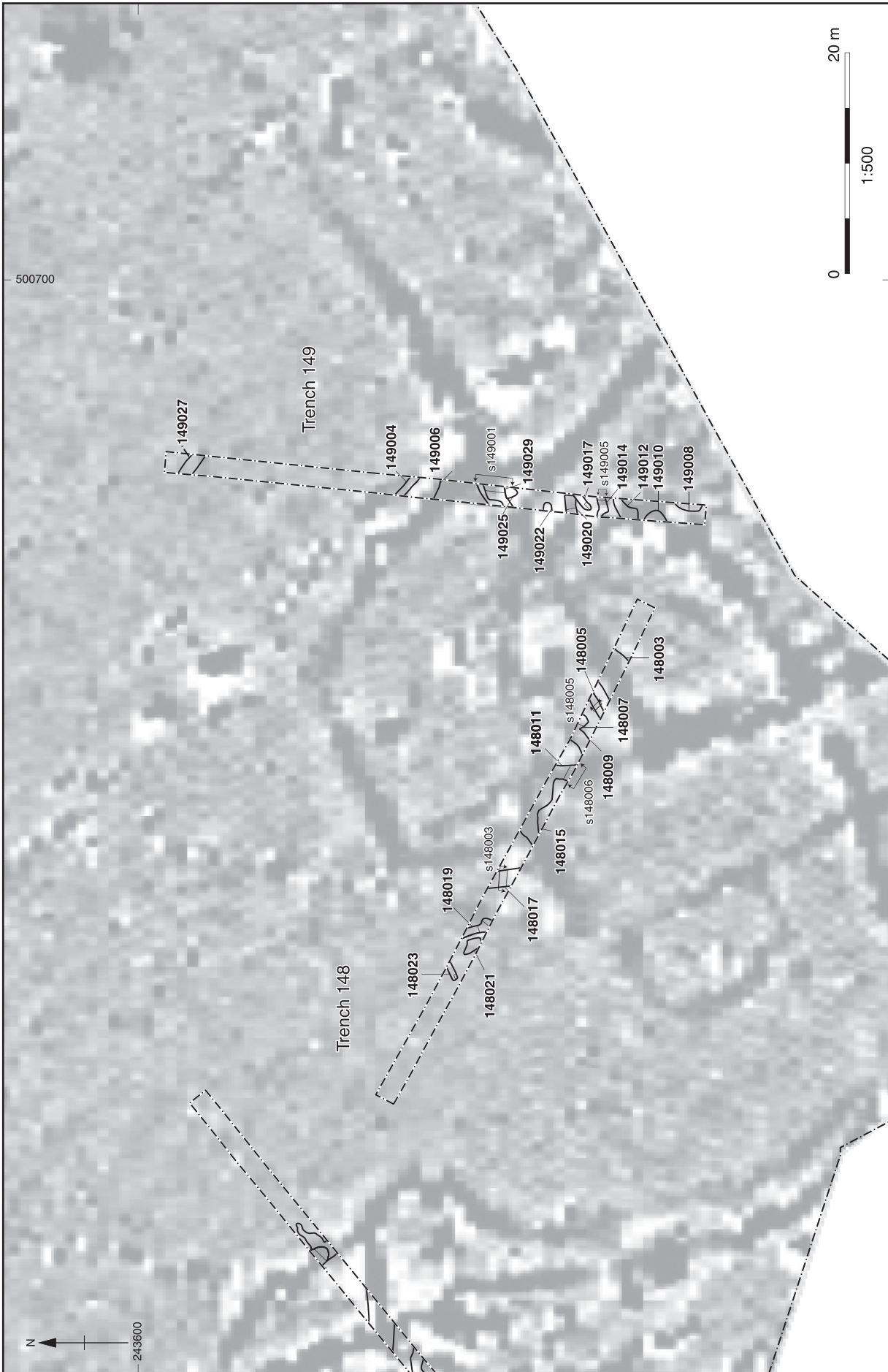


Fig. 2.146 Berry Farm Borrow Area, plan of features in the eastern part of the southern complex (Trenches 148 and 149)

contained three fills, comprising an initial layer of natural silting (148025), a layer of dark grey soil (148026) which may have been a deliberate infill, and an uppermost fill of grey silty clay (148012). Two sherds of late Iron Age-early Roman pottery were recovered from fill 148026 and pottery dating from the late 1st-early 2nd century was recovered from fill 148012. Ditch 148015 was 1.5m wide and a

sherd of late Iron Age-early Roman pottery was recovered from its surface.

Ditch 148003 was extremely substantial, measuring 4m wide, and corresponded with a feature identified by the geophysical survey as the south-eastern side of a trapezoidal enclosure that abutted the enclosure represented by ditches 148011 and 148015. The ditch was not excavated, but a

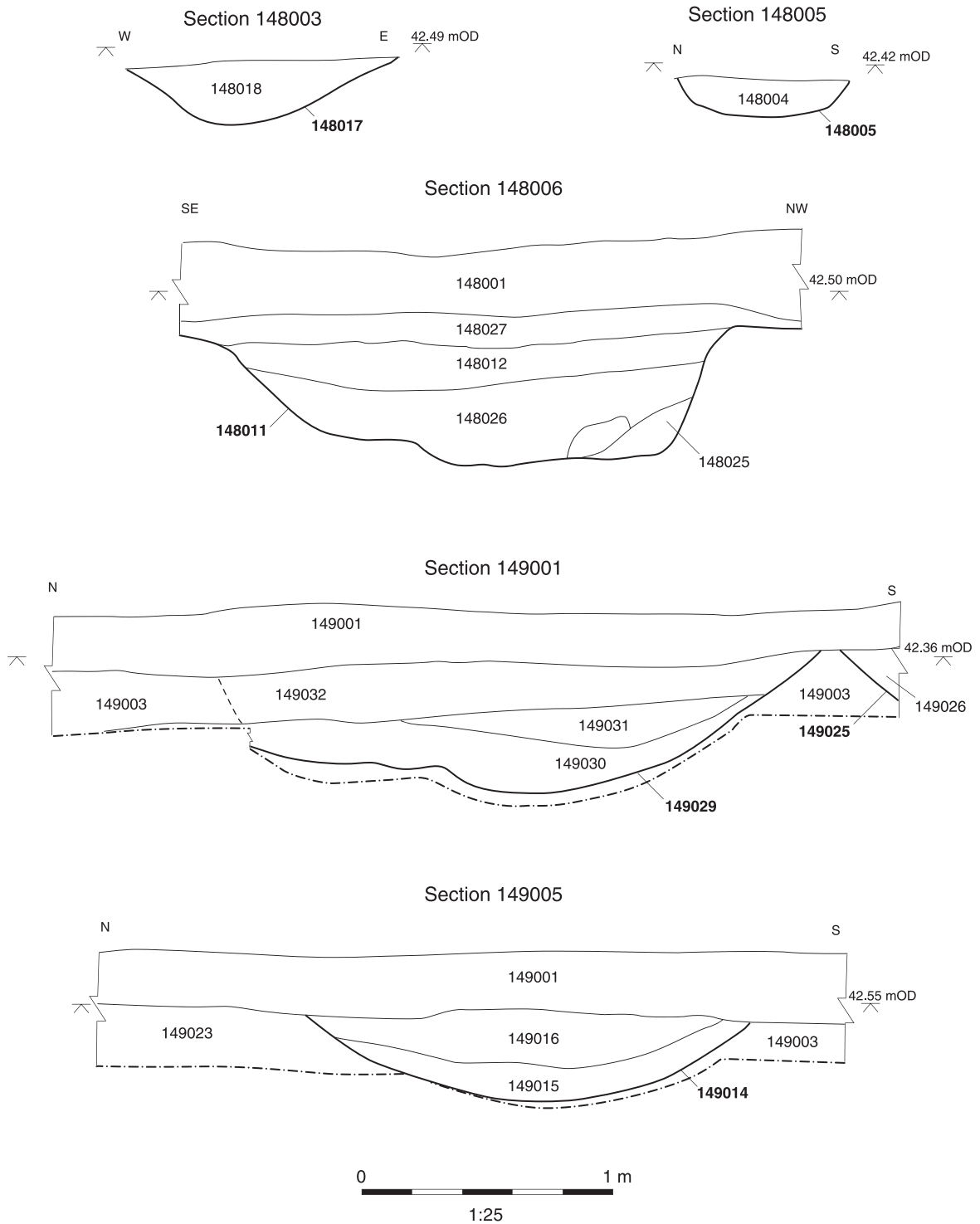


Fig. 2.147 Berry Farm Borrow Area, sections through features in the southern feature complex

sherd of late Iron Age-early Roman pottery was recovered from its surface. Ditch 148017 is likely to have defined the western side of the same enclosure, although its correlation with the relevant feature from the geophysical survey is not exact. Ditch 148017 had a U-shaped profile and measured 1.1m wide and 0.26m deep (Fig. 2.147, section 148003). It contained a single fill (148018) from which was recovered a sherd of late Iron Age-early Roman pottery.

Two less substantial ditches (148005 and 148009) and a small pit (148007) were exposed within the trapezoidal enclosure. None of these features corresponded with features that were identified by the geophysical survey. Ditch 148005 (Fig. 2.147, section 148005) was orientated NE-SW, parallel to the adjacent ditch 148003. It had a U-shaped profile and measured 0.6m wide and 0.25m deep. The fill was a blackish-grey silty clay (148004) from which late Iron Age-early Roman pottery was recovered. Ditch 148009 lay on a similar orientation but had a slightly curvilinear alignment and was 1m wide. It was not excavated and no finds were recovered from its surface. It intersected with pit 148007, but the relationship between the two features was not established. Pit 148007 measured 1.6m in diameter and 0.25m deep. It was filled by a deposit of dark blue-grey silty clay (148008) from which no finds were recovered.

A small group of features were identified to the west of ditch 148017, in an area that lay outside the enclosure complex and where no features had been indicated by the geophysical survey. Ditch 148019 was oriented NNW-SSE, and ditch 148023 lay at a right angle to it. Both measured 0.6m wide and were shallow, flat-based features with depths of 0.1m and 0.13m respectively. A small fragment of Roman pottery was recovered from ditch 148019. It is possible that these features defined two sides of a small rectilinear enclosure or structure. An irregularly-shaped pit or tree-throw hole (148021) was located within the area defined by these two ditches. It measured *c* 2m by 1m across and was filled by a deposit of dark brown-grey clay. The feature was not excavated and no finds were exposed on its surface.

#### *Trench 149* (Figs 2.146-147)

The trench contained nine ditches and three pits.

Ditch 149006 was an extremely substantial feature that was 5.1m wide at the western edge of the trench but tapered to the east and was only 3.2m wide at the eastern edge. It corresponded with a feature identified by the geophysical survey as being the south-eastern corner of the large enclosure the southern and western sides of which were exposed in Trench 148 as ditches 148003 and 148017. The ditch was not excavated in Trench 149, and no finds were recovered from its surface.

Two intersecting ditches (149025 and 149029) which were exposed immediately south of ditch 149006 corresponded with features identified in

the geophysical survey that defined the boundaries of adjacent enclosures. Ditch 149029 (Fig. 2.147, section 149001) was the only one of these features that was excavated. It was orientated NE-SW and was slightly irregular both in plan and in profile. The ditch was 2m wide at its widest point and 0.34m deep. The feature contained three distinct fills. The lower fill was a deposit of dark grey silty clay with a high charcoal content (149030) which contained a small assemblage of Roman pottery, along with a few fragments of animal bone. A soil sample taken from this fill contained a few charcoal fragments and a single charred seed of the cabbage family. The second fill was a layer of mid blueish grey silty clay (149031). Sherds of late Iron Age-early Roman pottery were recovered from this deposit. The upper fill (149032) contained only a single sherd of late Iron Age-early Roman pottery. Ditch 149029 intersected with ditch 149025, which was aligned approximately at a right angle to it, on a NW-SE orientation. Ditch 149025 was 1.5m wide and had a curving alignment. It corresponded with a feature identified by the geophysical survey as the north-eastern corner of an enclosure that abutted the enclosure represented by ditches 148003, 148017 and 149006. It was not excavated and no artefacts were recovered from its surface.

A further seven features were identified in the southern part of the trench, none of which corresponded precisely with features identified by the geophysical survey, although the survey did indicate that at least two ditches intersected in this area. Two ditches (149014 and 149020) extended across the trench on E-W alignments. Ditch 149014 (Fig. 2.147, section 149005) was the more substantial feature, measuring 1.7m wide and 0.36m deep with a rounded profile. The feature contained two fills. The first was a deposit of mid grey-black silty clay (149015) and the second was a grey-brown silty clay (149016) that contained pottery sherds of late Iron Age-early Roman pottery. Ditch 149020 measured 0.92m wide and only 0.12m deep. It contained a single fill of dark brown clay silt (149021) from which no finds were recovered. This feature was cut by ditch 149017, which lay on a NE-SW alignment and terminated within the trench. The ditch was 0.6m wide and 0.12m deep and contained an earlier fill of dirty orange-yellow-grey mottled silty clay (149018), overlain by an upper fill of grey-brown silty clay (149019). Neither of these deposits contained any finds. Ditch 149012 had a rather irregular shape in plan and may have corresponded with a curving feature that was identified by the geophysical survey. It crossed the trench on a NE-SW alignment and measured 1.55m wide. It was not excavated, but three sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from its surface.

Three features (149008, 149010 and 149022) which were partly exposed within the trench were interpreted as pits. Pits 149008 and 149010 were fairly large features that each measured more than 2m

across. Neither feature was excavated, but a sherd of early-middle Iron Age pottery was recovered from the surface of pit 149010. Pit 149022 was rather smaller. It was subcircular in plan with steep sides, and measured 0.8m in diameter and 0.3 m deep. No finds were recovered from it.

Ditch 149004 crossed the middle of the trench on a NW-SE orientation and measured 0.65m wide. The geophysical survey indicated that this was the same feature as the ditch that extended through

Trenches 140 and 144. It was not excavated but a large fragment of modern brick was recovered from the surface.

Ditch 149027 was located at the northern end of the trench, some 18m from the other features in an area where no features were indicated by the geophysical survey. It extended across the trench on a NW-SE orientation and measured 1.15m wide. It was filled by a mixed deposit of orange-brown and yellow-grey silty clay and was not excavated.