LAY WOOD, DEVIZES, WILTSHIRE

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EXCAVATION OF AN EARLY ROMAN SETTLEMENT AT LAY WOOD, DEVIZES, WILTSHIRE, 2016

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Introduction

In 2016 Oxford Archaeology was commissioned by David Wilson Homes South West to undertake a programme of archaeological investigation on land at Lay Wood near Devizes in advance of residential housing development (planning ref. 13/01243/OUT). The main area of excavation revealed a zone of intensive activity dating between the middle of the 1st century AD and the end of the 2nd century AD primarily in the form of field boundaries and enclosures, as well as trackways, a possible circular building and cremation burials.

The varied depths of the Roman features found across the site, many of which were comparatively shallow, suggest that the site had suffered from post-Roman ploughing, and there are clear signs of post-medieval field boundaries within the excavated area. The site lay close to a probable Roman villa building which was partially excavated during an evaluation of the site and was subsequently preserved *in situ*. The possible significance of this structure and its relationship to the area of early Roman activity described here are discussed at the end of this report.

Location

The area of proposed development covers 17.5ha centred at NGR 402692 162666 (Fig. 1). It lies approximately 2.5km north-east of the town of Devizes in Wiltshire, on the periphery of a village/suburb called Northfields. The site is bounded by Horton Road to the north and the Kennet and Avon Canal to the south. Prior to development, the land consisted of agricultural fields and a small, wooded area called Lay Wood.

The topography of the site is relatively flat with a slight slope up to the north and east from the canal. The bedrock geology is Upper Greensand formed of calcareous sandstone and siltstone. The overlying soils were fairly varied across the site, but consisted predominantly of clays and silts.

[Figure 1: Site and trench locations]

Background

Prior to the current excavations, Roman activity in the vicinity of the site was represented by the discovery in 1828 of a group of pewter artefacts found in Lay Wood by labourers during peat-digging (HER MWI8713). In 2013 Wessex Archaeology undertook a trial trench evaluation across the entire 17.5ha site as part of the initial planning application stage (WA 2013). Targeting geophysical anomalies relating to a possible enclosure in the eastern part of the site, structural evidence was unexpectedly discovered in five trenches. This included foundations of several walls constructed of chalk blocks, and a number of robber trenches indicating further wall lines. A few tesserae and the remains of a hypocaust system suggest that the building may have been a villa. The hypocaust consisted of regularly spaced *pedalis* tiles found close to a wall foundation, which would have formed bases for stacked *pilae* supporting a raised floor (ibid., 6). A limited pottery collection dated the occupation of the site between the end of 1st century AD and the beginning of the 4th century AD, but with the emphasis on the early Roman period. The structural remains were not investigated further and were preserved *in situ* in an 'open space/landscaped area' within the development (AMEC 2013b, 2).

Evaluation trenches in the south-western area of the site, some 400m from the masonry building, located a concentration of early Roman activity with some evidence for residual prehistoric remains. Evidence for continuity between the later prehistoric and early Roman period could not be established, nor could the relationship between this area and the possible villa building nearby. It was decided that the south-western part of the site would be subjected to more extensive, open area excavation to further investigate the significance of the remains discovered during the evaluation. The scope of works was set out in a written scheme of investigation prepared by Oxford Archaeology (OA 2016) in line with a specification prepared by the Wiltshire County Council Planning Archaeologist.

Methodology

Initially, three roughly square areas were opened in the south-western field to investigate the early Roman activity. Two measured 1,796m^2 and the third 2,500 m^2. It was immediately apparent that significant archaeological remains were present in all three of

the trenches, and understanding of each area in isolation was going to be difficult. The Local Planning Authority Archaeologist invoked a contingency provision for the excavation of an extra 10,000m^2, which effectively joined the three trenches to form a single excavation area, hereafter Area 1. It was accepted that expansion of the extent of excavation would necessarily result in a reduction in the scale of sampling of individual features and deposits.

A fourth trench covering 3,789m² was opened adjacent to the west side of the area containing the villa building which was preserved *in situ* in the eastern part of the site. This trench was intended to investigate anomalies highlighted by geophysical survey which may have been associated with the villa, and to locate any prehistoric features, since finds of this date were recovered in the area during the evaluation. This trench is here referred to as Area 2.

Topsoil and subsoil layers were stripped by mechanical excavator to the first significant archaeological horizon and the resulting spoil was scanned for artefactual remains, though no metal-detector was used. Excavation of archaeological features followed standard Oxford Archaeology fieldwork methodology guidelines (OA 2016, 11–25). Ten per cent of each non-structural linear feature including ditch terminals and intersections was excavated, while 50 per cent of each non-structural, discrete feature, such as pits and postholes, was excavated. No remains of masonry buildings were encountered in Areas 1 and 2. Cremation burial deposits were excavated as bulk samples and processed as per the methods detailed in the human bone report (see Webb below). A Roman well was excavated in the northern part of the main excavation to a depth of 1.32m before it was considered unsafe to continue, although it was clear that the feature was probably considerably deeper.

It should be noted that the site archive and materials were not subject to a detailed post-excavation assessment prior to analysis and reporting, although some preliminary work was carried out on provisional phasing, and on pottery and environmental remains. With regard to the last, a scan of the residues from samples taken for charred plant remains indicated that these were very heavily dominated by charcoal and that other charred remains were very poorly represented. For this reason, analysis of charred material was focussed exclusively on a number of charcoal samples.

Site phasing

The chronology of the site has been divided into six phases based upon the distribution of local and imported pottery (Table 1). Other than Phase 4 which is only relevant to Area 2, all the pottery relates to activity in Area 1. The ceramics are discussed in more detail below, but can be summarised in relation to the site phasing as follows. The earliest pottery consists of a very few prehistoric, flint-tempered sherds recovered from a single context. This material is undiagnostic, poorly dated and almost certainly residual. The earliest pottery which appears *in situ* within settlement features consists mainly of early Savernake-type wares. 'Romanised' Savernake pottery and other oxidised and reduced coarse wares are also present, suggesting that the site's origins lay in the immediate post-conquest period rather than earlier. Phase 1 is characterised by a spread of shallow field boundaries and other features which generally contain both 'proto' and 'Romanised' Savernake ceramics. The term 'proto' here refers to a few early-dating Savernake fabrics.

[Table 1: Site phasing]

The late 1st or early 2nd century AD saw the appearance of some new vessel forms and an expanded range of fabrics, although Savernake products were still very prominent. These developments broadly coincided with a major reorganisation of the settlement. Phase 2 saw the abandonment of most of the Phase 1 features and witnessed the beginning of an intensive period of ditch-digging which established a series of new field alignments and possible enclosures.

Continued realignment of field boundaries and the establishment of a rectilinear enclosure system in the south-west of the site defined Phase 3. Savernake pottery remained the dominant type. This phase also saw the appearance of Central Gaulish samian and black burnished wares, probably, but not certainly, before the mid-2nd century AD. Phase 3b focusses on the establishment of a large enclosure in the northernmost part of the site, where a localised concentration of Central Gaulish samian and black burnished wares was found. Phase 3 probably continued to the end of the 2nd century, though evidence for 3rd-century occupation in Area 1 is absent, suggesting that the site was abandoned or utilised in a way which left very little archaeological trace.

Phase 4 dates to the late Roman period, probably between the late 3rd and the 4th century AD. However, pottery of this date is restricted to a single feature located in Area 2.

Phase 5 is characterised by several post-medieval field boundaries and land drains which cut across Roman contexts in Area 1. These features produced pottery dating between the 16th and the 19th centuries. One of the field boundaries can be seen on the local enclosure map of 1810 and the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1889 (AMEC 2013a, Appendix D).

Numerous pits produced no finds and had no stratigraphic relationships with other features. These were not phased, but many were probably early Roman.

For the purposes of analysis of the site sequence many features, particularly ditches and sometimes complexes of ditches, were assigned group numbers. These are the main units of description in the site narrative, with only occasional reference to individual cut numbers assigned on site. Original cut numbers for discrete features such as pits and postholes are, however, retained in the narrative.

Site narrative

Prehistoric activity

No features dated prior to the middle of the 1st century AD. However, a considerable number of prehistoric worked flints were recovered from the site, mostly dating to the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age. While this material was recovered from a range of Roman features and subsoil layers across the site, much of it was found in four discrete concentrations. The quantity of flints and their relative lack of post-depositional damage suggests that they had not moved far from their original context, indicating the presence of a prehistoric settlement either at the site or nearby. These flint assemblages are detailed in the specialist report (see Donnelly below) and their significance is discussed further at the end of this article.

Phase 1: mid–late 1st century AD

Phase 1 features were located across Area 1, and mostly consisted of shallow linear features representing field boundaries and possibly small enclosures (Fig. 2). Compared to later phases, there is little evidence for the re-cutting of ditches. Possible structural evidence is indicated by a circular drip gully located in the southern part of the site, while cremation burials were found close to the western boundary of the excavation area.

[Figure 2: Phase 1 site plan]

Trackway and field boundary 6101

In the northernmost part of the site, two gullies were aligned parallel to one another in a north-west–south-east direction. They were evenly spaced *c.*5.5m apart along most of their length and appear to define a trackway. The southern ditch measured *c*.37m in length and included a sharp dog-leg turning over 45° to the south-west, while the straight northern ditch was 17m long. Both gullies were approximately 0.5m in width, though they varied in depth between *c.*0.3m and 0.1m. A separate section of ditch could also be seen to the north-west of these two features. This section was truncated by a later ditch, but was probably part of the trackway since it was in line with the northern ditch, suggesting that it continued north-west beyond the excavated area. The northern ditch produced a single sherd of probably residual, prehistoric pottery. However, its truncation by the later ditch indicates that the trackway was an early feature of the site.

Cremation burials 5065, 5104 and 5396

Ditch 6103 lay about 20m south of trackway 6101. This feature was irregularly aligned and curved east at its northern end. It measured *c*.26m in length, around 0.5–0.6m wide and 0.2m deep, with sloping sides and a roughly flat base.

To the west of ditch 6103, a shallow, sub-rectangular pit (5068) containing a spread of clay with Savernake sherds was cut by a smaller, sub-circular pit (5066) which contained cremation burial 5065 (Fig. 3). Pit 5068 measured 6.25m long, 1.6m wide and 0.15m deep, and had an undulating base. The irregular nature of pit 5068 suggests that it may have been a natural feature, possibly a tree-throw hole. The cremation pit measured 0.9m by 0.7m and was 0.13m deep, with a shallow, flat-based profile. It was filled with charcoal, burnt fragments of human bone and a single Savernake sherd.

On the eastern side of ditch 6103, two small pits (5105 and 5397) were used for cremation burials 5104 and 5396. Both pits were smaller than pit 5066, but had similar profiles. They were filled with a greyish clay with quantities of charcoal throughout. Cremation 5104 included numerous small fragments of human bone, while 5396 included a single bone fragment. Analysis of the human bone suggests that the deposits do not represent whole burials but maybe redeposited pyre debris comprising a mixture of bone and fuel waste (see Webb below). Neither pit produced any datable material and they are

tentatively ascribed to Phase 1 due to their proximity to cremation 5065. A third pit (5048) lay immediately to the south of pits 5105 and 5397, and its position suggests that it may be associated with them. No evidence of charcoal or human bone was found in this feature, though it may represent a cenotaph burial (see *Discussion*).

[Figure 3: Plans and sections of cremations (phase 1)]

Enclosure 6104

Ditch 6104 lay about 35m east of trackway 6101. It was heavily truncated by Phase 3 ditch 6314, though its form suggests that it may have been a small enclosure. The ditch curved with a sharp bend at it southern terminal. Another short section of ditch also truncated by 6314 may represent an eastern end to the feature. Its visible length extended for over 15m, though it may have been double this length if the eastern ditch section is part of the same feature. The ditch was U-shaped in profile and measured 0.45m wide and 0.21m deep. The fill contained a few proto-Savernake and 'Romanised' Savernake sherds, flint and some large chalk nodules.

Field boundaries 6102, 6107, 6110 and 6105

The northern terminal of ditch 6102 lay just to the west of enclosure 6104. The ditch ran southwards in a straight line for nearly 80m. Three sections were excavated at varying intervals along it. In the most northerly section, the ditch was relatively narrow (0.6m wide) and shallow (0.25m deep). Here it had two fills, the lower producing 'Romanised' Savernake pottery and an upper layer containing charcoal. A series of Phase 2 ditches cut across the middle part of ditch 6102, though here it was noticeably wider and deeper. At the southern end, the ditch was truncated on its eastern side by ditch 6215, though it must have been more than 1.0m wide at this point (Fig. 4, Section 151). It is possible that the ditch was dug towards the later part of Phase 1, since it also cut pit 5560 and ditch 6108.

A straight east–west ditch (6107) was aligned roughly perpendicular to the south of ditch 6102. It was about 35m long, *c*.0.65m wide and 0.2m deep, and its fill produced proto-Savernake pottery. Its eastern terminal aligned at a right angle with the northern terminal of ditch 6110 which respected the line of ditch 6107 by way of a short dog-leg. Ditch 6110 stretched south over 50m to the boundary of the excavation trench. It measured 0.4–0.8m

wide and 0.1–0.3m deep (Fig. 4, Section 57), though it was heavily truncated in its mid-section by modern service trenches.

Ditch 6105 was located in the western half of the site, between the north-eastern and south-eastern limits of the excavation trench. It was aligned almost parallel with ditch 6102, which together may have enclosed a rectilinear field nearly 50m across. Ditch 6105 ranged from 0.6m to 1.1m wide and 0.2m to 0.4m deep. The basal fill in its mid-section contained proto-Savernake pottery. Two slightly narrower ditches were obliquely aligned with ditch 6105 and may have divided space within the field. Two pits were located close to the terminal of the southern offshoot. Pit 5412 was 1.0m wide by 0.6m deep and pit 5413 was 0.8m wide by 0.45m deep. Proto-Savernake pottery was recovered from the lower fill of 5413, while 'Romanised' Savernake sherds were recovered from the upper fill of 5412. Both these pits were truncated by Phase 2 and 3 ditches.

[Figure 4: Selected Phase 1 ditch and sections]

Roundhouse gully 6106

A circular gully (6106), at the southern end of ditch 6102, may indicate the presence of a roundhouse. The gully extended 135° in an arc, with one terminal lying next to ditch 6102, while its other end was truncated by ditch 6107. The gully measured *c.*0.3m wide and was between 0.1m and 0.3m deep (Fig. 4, Section 151). The area within the gully measured almost 9.0m in diameter. No evidence for postholes was found, though the feature was truncated through its centre by a Phase 3 ditch (6301). Nonetheless, its size and shape are indicative of a circular building.

Trackway 6109

Two parallel ditches placed *c.*3m apart appear to define a north-south trackway (6109) at the southern end of the site. The ditches were broadly on the same alignment as field boundaries 6102, 6110 and 6105, which suggests that they were contemporary. The eastern ditch was 17m long with steep sides and a concave base. It measured 0.4m in both width and depth. The western ditch stretched for 27m, though it was truncated through its mid-section by modern service trenches. It measured 0.6–0.8m wide and 0.2–0.5m deep, and contained a single fill with 'Romanised' Savernake pottery. A second ditch section,

measuring just under 10m long, aligned with the western ditch and appears to represent a continuation of the trackway. A gap of *c.*3m separated the two sections, though any evidence of an eastern side to the trackway here would have been removed by Phase 3 ditch 6309. At its southern end, the ditch was truncated by five intercutting pits (Fig. 4, Section 170). These varied in size and shape, ranging between 0.5m and 1.0m in diameter and 0.1m and 0.3m deep. Only one—pit 5473—produced 'Romanised' Savernake pottery. The focus of the pits around the southern end of this ditch, and the gap between it and the ditch to the south, may suggest the position of a gate.

Other pits

A group of three pits were located close to the centre of the field bounded by ditches 6102 and 6105. Each of these features were sub-oval in plan, though they had been truncated by Phase 2 and Phase 3 ditches. Pit 5398 may have been the earliest in the group. It measured 2.0m long, 0.6m wide and 0.3m deep. The other two pits intercut each other, though it is uncertain which was earlier. Pit 5400 was 1.4m long, 0.7m wide and 0.42m deep, while 5402 was 1.2m long, 1.0m and 0.3m deep. Pits 5398 and 5400 contained single fills, while 5402 contained two fills, both of which produced 'Romanised' Savernake ware.

Two pits were located to the west of roundhouse gully 6106 and may have been contemporary with it. Pit 5053 was oval with steep sides and a flat base. It measured 1.75m east–west and was just over 0.3m deep. The pit contained two fills, the lower of which was charcoal-rich with quantities of proto-Savernake sherds. Pit 5101 was smaller than 5053 with gently sloping sides and a flat base, 0.1m deep. It also contained proto-Savernake pottery.

A relatively isolated pit—1080—was found in the far eastern part of the site. This feature was sub-circular in plan, 1.8m long and 0.85m deep, though nearly half of it had been truncated by Phase 3 ditch 6307. It contained three fills. The upper fill contained 'Romanised' Savernake pottery, and it is possible that this feature was open in Phase 2.

Phase 2: Late 1st century–early 2nd century AD

Phase 2 marked a general reorganisation of the site (Fig. 5). Around the end of the 1st century AD or the beginning of the 2nd century AD, several Phase 1 features were cut through by a new series of ditches on different alignments, particularly in the central part of

the site. A notable feature of this phase is that the ditches tend to be wider and deeper than Phase 1 features, and they were more often re-cut (or redefined). This period of ditch-digging was so intensive that it is difficult to recognise discrete settlement or landscape features, such as fields and enclosures. It is likely that Phase 2 (and Phase 3) activity represents multiple episodes of land boundary definition.

[Figure 5: Phase 2 site plan]

Field boundaries and possible enclosures

Towards the south-west corner of the site, ditch 6207 ran eastwards from the edge of the excavation trench for about 40m before turning south and continuing for a further 35m. The ditch was notably wider along its east-west section, where it measured 1.8m wide and 0.8m deep, than on its north-south section. The ditch may have formed two sides of an enclosure to the south, though no opposing boundaries were observed. In Phase 3, this area was sub-divided into a system of smaller, rectilinear enclosures (see 6301 below). It is possible that the east–west section of ditch 6207 remained open into this later phase, as its uppermost fill contained sherds of later 2nd-century pottery.

A 25m-long ditch (6215) lay parallel to the north-south section of ditch 6207. The northern part of the ditch clearly cut through the earlier Phase 1 ditch 6102, which had been backfilled by this time. Ditch 6215 consisted of a single cut, V-shaped in profile, 1.4m wide and 0.6m deep. It included three fills of varying combinations of clay, silt and sand, each containing Savernake and other reduced coarse ware sherds. The middle fill was relatively densely packed with pottery and mixed with a concentration of charcoal. Ditch 6215 was cut by an east–west terminal of the Phase 3 enclosure system 6301, while at its southern end the ditch was truncated by modern services.

Ditch 6207 also appears to have formed a southern boundary to another group of Phase 2 features. Two ditches ran north from ditch 6207, both of which were truncated by a large post-medieval field boundary which cut east–west across the whole site. Ditch 6213 continued north for *c*.17m before being cut by Phase 3 ditch 6313. A section just to the south of this point showed that ditch 6207 measured 0.9m wide and 0.25m deep. A short, L-shaped ditch (6204) may have formed part of a small enclosure with ditches 6207 and 6213, though the relationship between these features is uncertain owing to later truncation.

Ditches 6202 and 6203 were located to the north and west of L-shaped ditch 6204, possibly representing modifications to the enclosed area. These two ditches appear to cross each other along their mid-sections, though this segment was not excavated. Ditch 6202 was north-south aligned and *c.*22m long. It had gently sloping sides and a concave base, measuring 0.8m wide by 1.0m deep, and was filled with an orange clay. It appears to have been truncated at its northern and southern ends by later features. Along its mid-section it cut through Phase 1 ditch 6102 and was itself cut by a narrow ditch which may have been a post-medieval field drain. The single fills of ditches 6202 and 6203 contained mixed pottery assemblages in which the fine reduced ware fabric R34 was quite well represented.

To the west, another possible enclosure was delimited to the south by ditch 6207 and to the north by two east-west aligned ditches, 6205 and 6206. There was a gap of *c.*2m between these two ditches, which may have formed an entrance. Ditch 6205 was a single cut measuring 1.2m wide and 0.8m deep along its mid-section, and 0.9m wide by 0.4m deep at its terminus. Ditch 6206 was truncated by Phase 3 ditch 6311 at its eastern end, and its western end continued beyond the excavation trench. The ditch had been recut on its southern side, though this section terminated before reaching the trench edge on the western side.

Ditch 6214 cut both of the possible enclosures in this area at its south-eastern end. From here it continued north-west for over 50m. The exact relationship between this ditch and the adjacent enclosures is uncertain because the adjoining sections were not excavated, though it is clear that it was cut on a different alignment to surrounding features. Excavated sections further along its length show that it was recut on its northern side; at its greatest extent, the ditch measured 1.7m wide. The first ditch cut was 0.5m deep, while the recut section was shallower at 0.3m. Roughly half way along their length, the ditches were cut by several Phase 3 features.

A few metres north of ditches 6202 and 6203 lay two right-angled gullies, aligned north-south and east-west respectively, with a pit positioned adjacent to both terminals (feature group 6201). These features do not appear to be related to the ditches immediately to the south. Only *c.*3m of the east–west ditch was observed and it appears that the feature became truncated by the large Phase 3 ditch 6313. Its terminal was 0.7m wide and 0.2m deep. The north-south ditch was observed for a distance of nearly 18m. It measured 0.6m wide by 0.3m deep along its length, and 0.6m wide and 0.2m deep at its terminus. At the

base of the terminus a small cut measuring 0.2m across by 0.1m deep appears to represent a posthole. The pit, located a metre north of the north–south ditch, was over 1m wide with steep sides and a narrowed, concave base which appears to have supported a post. The dating of these features is problematic. Although they were truncated by Phase 3 ditch 6313, a proportion of the pottery from the north terminal consisted of black-burnished ware dating from the mid-2nd century.

The area to the east of feature group 6201 was bisected by ditch 6208. This feature ran south from the northern edge of the trench, where it was truncated by ditch 6313, before turning south-east and continuing in this direction for about 45m. Much of the northern half of ditch 6208 was later recut by Phase 3 ditch 6306 along its western side. The cut of the later ditch makes it impossible to establish the size of ditch 6208 along this stretch. Its depth was measured to be at least 0.7m at this point.

Towards its southern end, ditch 6208 was crossed by two east–west-aligned ditches—6209 and 6211—though their stratigraphic relationship with 6208 is unknown. However, ditch 6211 was certainly later than 6209 as 6211 could be seen to cut 6209 about 5m to the west where the latter began to turn south. Ditch 6209 was truncated by Phase 3 ditch 6306 just past this point. Ditch 6209 was 1.2m wide and 0.6m deep with steep sloping sides, while ditch 6211 measured 0.7m wide and 0.2m deep. Ditch 6211 appears to have continued eastward past 6208 and was eventually cut by Phase 3 pit 5490.

The area to the south of these features was divided by the possible southerly continuation of ditch 6209, which appears to have been heavily truncated by Phase 3 ditch 6306. On both sides of this truncation, ditch 6209 had similar steep-sloping sides. Both sections contained two fills: a primary silt and an upper sandy fill. Ditch 6209 continued south for 16–17m to a point where the alignment of the Phase 2 features switched to a south-south-east direction, and was subsequently followed by Phase 3 ditch 6313. This change in alignment suggests that ditch 6209 may have been recut at this point. The evidence is not clear, but ditch 6212 is considered to continue the southern line of ditch 6209 (Fig. 7, Section 162).

The southern continuation of ditch 6212 was sectioned in three places along its route. The mid-section of the ditch was exceptionally wide, measuring at least 2.3m wide, owing to a gently declining eastern side (Fig. 7, Section 47). At this point, the ditch had a shallow primary fill which may have derived from weathering of the ditch side. Phase 3 ditch

6304 was also wider here compared to the section further north, where later truncation could have removed more of the upper levels of these ditches. Further south, ditch 6212 had a steeper edge and no primary erosion fill at its base, indicating that the weathering seen further north was not occurring along its full length. Its main fill consisted of a greenish-grey, sandy clay with occasional orange inclusions, which contained a mixed group of pottery including two sherds of black-burnished ware, perhaps intrusive.

Phase 3: 2nd century AD

There is no clear distinction between Phase 2 and Phase 3 activity. As mentioned above, the two phases are best considered as parts of a continuing development of the layout of the site, characterised by the maintenance and redefinition of existing ditches alongside the construction of new ones (Fig. 6). Although Savernake pottery continues to be the most common ceramic type, Phase 3 features tend to include a wider variety of other fabrics and forms and instances of 2nd-century fabrics, such as Central Gaulish samian and black-burnished wares.

[Figure 6: Phase 3 site plan]

Rectilinear enclosure system 6301

A group of rectilinear enclosures (6301) was established in the south-west part of the site during Phase 3. The regular nature of enclosure system 6301 suggests that it was laid out in a single episode. It may also have been bounded to the north by Phase 2 ditch 6207; sherds of a 2nd-century AD white ware ring-necked flagon from that ditch's upper fill suggest that it was probably still open along its east–west section in this phase. Enclosure system 6301 was defined by two east–west-aligned ditches and three north–south-aligned ditches, together forming a group of six or seven co-axial enclosures. The full extent of the area covered by the system is uncertain because it continued to the west and the south beyond the limits of the excavation. It was also truncated in places by modern service trenches. The enclosures were generally of a similar shape, ranging from 9m x 20m to 20m x 30m in area. The ditches were narrow and relatively shallow compared to Phase 3 ditches in other areas of the site.

The northernmost east-west ditch ran for *c.*48m from the western edge of the excavation trench to its eastern terminal, cutting through the Phase 1 roundhouse gully 6106 and the Phase 2 ditch 6215. Its terminal, which measured 1.1m wide and 0.35m deep, had a primary fill with a lens of charcoal overlain by a yellowish-green sand, while a secondary, reddish-brown sandy clay fill contained a mixture of charcoal, pottery and flints. This ditch was intersected by two north-south ditches: one to the west which led north for about 20m before terminating, and one to the east which stretched from ditch 6207 in the north to another east–west enclosure ditch in the south. This latter ditch ran east for nearly 40m to where it was terminated by ditch 6313. Two more ditches associated with the enclosure system were exposed to the south: one extending south from the east-west ditch, and the other (ditch 6303) extending roughly north from the trench edge but not on the same alignment as the other north-south elements of the enclosure system and therefore less certainly related to it. The former had an irregular, undulating profile which differed from those seen elsewhere in the enclosure system. It was notably shallower in its centre and included evidence of plant roots. Ditch 6303 contained a brownish-grey, silty sand, and a range of pottery including Savernake and other reduced coarse wares.

Three pits within the enclosure system may also date to Phase 3. Pit 5103 measured 1.5m in diameter, with sides sloping at 45°–50° and a relatively flat base. It had a single fill of mid–dark grey, silty sand mixed with occasional orange flecks (possibly iron pan). Small lumps of charcoal were dispersed throughout the fill. Pit 2011 was sub-circular in plan, measuring almost 1.0m wide and 0.2m deep. It had a flat base and sloping sides and contained a single fill of dark grey, silty sand with a dense concentration of charcoal. It was notable that the base of this pit was tinged red, suggesting that burning had occurred *in situ*. Two possible postholes were also identified towards the edge of the base of this pit. The feature was only half-sectioned, so it is uncertain whether more postholes were present on the opposite side. Pit 2013 was located less than 2m north of pit 2011. It was irregularly shaped and noticeably shallower than 2011, being slightly wider and only 0.1m deep. Its fill consisted of a soft and fine-grained, dark brown-grey silty sand. It also included charcoal, but in a lower density than found in pit 2011. Evidence for rooting was noticed in the base of the pit and it is possible that this feature was a tree-throw hole. Both pits 2011 and 2013 produced a few sherds of Savernake and other reduced ware pottery and worked flints. A

few other pits were also identified within the area of the enclosure system, though these were generally sterile and undated.

The enclosure system was bounded to the east by two north-south-aligned ditches (6304 and 6313). The terminals of these ditches formed a 2.5m-wide entrance into the southern part of the enclosure system. There was no evidence for postholes around this feature. However, the terminal of ditch 6313 had a very different profile to its southern counterpart. Although the two had similar widths (*c.*1.2m), the terminal of 6313 had much steeper sides which narrowed to a base over 0.6m deep and contained animal bones, slag, quartzite and Savernake ware sherds. Ditch 6304 ranged in depth from 0.4m to 0.6m and measured 1.2–1.6m across. Each section contained a single fill of grey-blue sandy clay mottled with iron pan, though this was more concentrated along its mid-section. It is notable that these fills were different from those in the main part of enclosure system 6301. The whole length of ditch 6304 and the southern part of 6313 cut the western side of Phase 2 ditch 6212. The terminal of 6304 also truncated a shallower feature which may have been another ditch terminal or a pit, which was filled with the same grey-blue sandy clay.

The northern trajectory of ditch 6313 cut through the eastern end of one of the enclosure system ditches, forming a T-junction. At this point, ditch 6313 contained two fills, each of which contained a little pottery, and rather larger quantities of animal bone and charcoal were also recovered from both fills. From here, ditch 6313 ran for about 13m before turning north-west at about 40^{o}, leading to an intersection of four ditches, two of which continued further north for some distance, dividing the central part of the site.

Ditch group 6313 (northern section)

A series of four recut ditches was found near the north-east corner of enclosure system 6301. Each cut the eastern side of the previous ditch. The north-south section of Phase 2 ditch 6207 was the earliest cut in the sequence, which was followed by three similarly-sized cuts, ending with the continued line of ditch 6313. The north and south trajectories of the second recut were unclear and it seems to have petered out in both directions after about 10m–15m. The third recut also tailed off about 15m to the south where it was truncated by modern services, though it continued northwards with a slight curve to the west for at least 65m where it was completely truncated by a series of intercutting ditches which mostly relate to large post-medieval linear features which ran

east–west across the site. The final version of ditch 6313 followed the line of the third recut to the same point. Each of the four ditches had a similar concave profile about a metre wide with depths ranging from 0.3m to 0.5m (Fig. 7, Section 91). Very little pottery was recovered from the fills of the earliest and second cuts (5063 and 5061 respectively), while the fills of the two easternmost ditches—5059 and 5057—contained *inter alia* sherds of a north Wiltshire glazed dish (Fig. 13, No. 29) and in addition an imported mortarium sherd in 5057.

North of the point where 6313 was cut by east–west post-medieval ditch 6501, there were only two detectable cuts of ditch 6313. The cut of the earlier of the two was far more substantial to the north. Approximately 30m north of the four-ditch 'intersection', it had a steep, V-shaped profile 1.2m deep and approximately 1.4m wide. The feature contained three fills: a primary, green-grey, sandy silt; a middle fill of grey sandy clay which included charcoal; and an upper fill of orange-brown silty clay. The ditch was cut on its western side by the later recut, which was shallower and had a U-shaped profile *c.*1.2m wide and 0.62m deep, and contained a single sandy clay fill. Both ditches were picked up again about 18m further north, though here the later U-shaped ditch cut through the V-shaped ditch on its eastern side. Around another 18m further north the ditches were sectioned again. Here, the earlier V-shaped ditch had a very narrow profile, reaching a depth of 0.8m, though it was more heavily truncated by the later U-shaped ditch, which measured 1.2m across and 0.6m deep. In this area, the fills of both ditches were essentially grey sandy silts, containing minor amounts of charcoal. Also at this point a third ditch, even shallower than the first two, cut through the top of the fill of the later ditch. To the north, both 6313 ditches were completely truncated by the post-medieval linear features, though they appeared to deviate westward at this point.

[Figure 7: Selected Phase 2 and 3 ditch sections]

Feature groups 6311 and 6312

A complex sequence of ditches, pits and postholes were located *c*.30m to the west of ditch group 6313. The northern section of this group (6312) consisted of a ditch with poorly defined edges. Its central part was not excavated, though in plan its amorphous shape suggests that it may have been cut by several features. The north terminal of the ditch had steep sides and a flat base, containing a single fill of sandy yellow clay with a little Savernake

and other pottery. The ditch continued south for about 20m before it was cut by a wider ditch on its western side. The earlier ditch had a steep-sloping, U-shaped profile with a primary fill of fine-grained clay which appears to have accumulated from its eastern side. It contained some poorly preserved animal bones and Savernake and other reduced coarse pottery. The upper fill contained a larger quantity of pottery, including a Savernake ware dish (Fig. 13, No. 30) and bead rim jars, and more animal bones, indicating that it had been deliberately backfilled prior to being cut by the adjacent ditch. This feature measured 1.5m across but was less than 0.3m deep. A mixed group of pottery (including an early dish form Fig. 13, No. 31) and animal bones were also recovered from the fill of this ditch. A posthole, 0.3m wide and 0.2m deep had been inserted into its centre. Here, both ditches were cut by a modern land drain.

Around 2m further south, the later ditch was cut on its western side by pit 5075 which was sub-circular with a shallow profile measuring 2.6m by 1.9m across. The base of pit 5075 was cut by two pits or large postholes—5090 and 5086—which occupied a central and northern position within it. The homogeneity of the fills of the pit 5075 and the postholes made it difficult to see whether the latter were cut through the fill of the pit or just its base. The fill of the pit was a soft, fine-grained clay silt, *c.*0.1m thick, containing quantities of later Savernake pottery and animal bones. The two postholes measured 0.5–0.7m wide by 0.2–0.3m deep, and neither produced finds. Two smaller postholes were also found to cut the fill of the ditch adjacent to pit 5075. One of these was sub-rectangular in plan, while the other was sub-circular. It is uncertain whether these were related to the larger postholes found within the base of pit 5075.

Ditch 6312 continued further south for another 5m before being truncated by ditch 6311. This ditch terminated at its northern end just to the west of ditch 6312. North- and south-facing sections suggest that ditch 6311 was considerably deeper to the south and changed from a U-shaped profile to a V-shaped cut with a straight-sided, flat-bottomed profile at its base (Fig. 7, Sections 100 and 101). It seems likely that this ditch was recut at this point. Both ditch sections contained two fills of greenish silty clay, though the upper fills consisted of more orange mottling. After a slight curve in its alignment, ditch 6311 extended south for approximately 18m before turning sharply to the west, where it continued to the edge of the trench.

Eastern field boundaries

In the eastern half of the site, several long ditches formed a series of land boundaries and possibly a large enclosure. The features varied considerably in terms of their direction and alignment, while several intersections show evidence for continual re-cutting and modification, indicating that the features represent multiple episodes of activity.

Ditch 6305 extended over 90m in a NW–SE direction almost parallel to the north-eastern edge of the excavation trench. The north-western end was noticeably narrower than elsewhere and its terminal was oddly bent to the north-east. It is possible that the ditch had been truncated to a greater degree at this end. About 10m from its north-western terminal, ditch 6305 was cut by the Phase 3b enclosure 6314. A section through ditch 6305 to the east of this cut showed that here it was 1.3m wide and 0.5m deep. Its lower fill produced moderate quantities of Savernake and other reduced wares, animal bones and flints. Around 15m south-east of this point, another Phase 3 ditch 6306 joined 6305 from the south, though a substantial post-medieval linear feature completely truncated this junction.

A further 8m south of this point, ditch 6305 cut through the Phase 2 ditch 6208. Here, both the Phase 2 and Phase 3 ditches cut through an earlier feature of similar size and profile to ditch 6305. This feature may have been a ditch or a pit. If it was a ditch it probably represents a previous cut along the route of 6305. Just over 10m further south there is good evidence that ditch 6305 was a recut of an earlier ditch along this line (Fig. 7, Section 128). Here, two ditches cut through the Phase 1 ditch 6105. The earliest was nearly 1.8m wide and 0.6m deep. It contained two fills. The lower fill had clearly been dumped from the south-west side as it contained a considerable amount of charcoal and some pottery, including Savernake and grey wares. This ditch was cut through on its north-eastern side by a narrow ditch with steep, straight sides that reached a depth of 0.7m.

Ditch 6305 continued along this alignment before coming to a point where it cut through two parallel, east–west ditches (6310), forming a T-junction. Ditch 6305 was twice as deep (0.6m) as 6310 at this intersection, though they shared similar sloping and flat-bottomed profiles. The recut section of ditch 6305 was not observed at this point. The relationship between the two 6310 ditches was difficult to discern as there was no clear evidence that one cut the other anywhere along their length. It is possible that the upper parts of the ditches had been lost through truncation, removing any evidence of recutting.

The fills of ditches 6310 were clearly earlier than 6305 in its extant state, though their alignment bears no relation to any Phase 2 features.

From this T-junction, ditch 6305 continued south-east for a further 10m to where it intersected with several ditches. Two sections were cut at this location, revealing a complex sequence of features (Fig. 7, Section 29). The level of modification and re-cutting here suggests that the sequence developed over a prolonged period. Ditch 6305 began to turn south at this point and ditch 6307 joined the intersection from the east. Both ditches were then truncated by a recut of 6305, which clearly extended south. All three of these ditches were fairly substantial with relatively steep sides at this point. The recut of ditch 6305 was nearly 2.0m wide, and along with ditch 6307 was *c.*0.8m deep. It is unlikely that the original cut of ditch 6305 and ditch 6307 were the same feature, since the former appears to have terminated at this point, before being recut, while 6307 appears to have turned south (or was modified to do so at a later point). The fact that these and possibly other ditch cuts in this section represent different episodes of activity is indicated by differences in the fills, which ranged between light grey clays and pale yellow sandy silts.

On the eastern side of the intersection, ditch 6307 continued to the east with a slight northward projection for nearly 20m before turning back towards the south, eventually reaching the edge of the excavation trench. Ditch 6307 was fairly substantial, measuring almost 2m across in one section, and was very unlike the features characteristic of Phase 1.

Returning to the intersection, the recut ditch 6305 was later cut by a smaller, north-south ditch 6308. This feature continued north to the edge of the excavation trench and was certainly the latest feature in the complex sequence found here. It was noticeably slighter than its predecessors, measuring *c.*1.0m wide and 0.4m deep.

Two north-south ditches were revealed *c.*5m to the south of the intersection, both of which were truncated by a post-medieval field boundary. The earlier ditch on the eastern side had steeply sloping sides and a V-shaped base; its depth was 0.9m and it had a noticeably narrower profile than the ditches to the north. It is possible that this was a continuation of the recut section of ditch 6305, though due to the complexity of the intercutting seen at the junction, this ditch is considered as 6309 from here. At this point ditch 6309 was cut by a shallower ditch which was probably the southern continuation of ditch 6308.

Around 8–9m further south, and despite the number of features found to the north, only one ditch was identified in section. Based upon its size and profile, this appears to be the narrow, V-shaped ditch 6309. It contained two similar fills: a primary blue-grey, silty sand and a secondary grey-brown, sandy clay with some charcoal inclusions. Around 6m further south, ditch 6309 curved towards the west, where it appears to have formed the south-east boundary of a large 'pear-shaped' enclosure (delineated by ditch 6305 on its north-eastern side and ditch 6306 on its south-western side). From here, ditch 6309 continued to the west for about 16m to the intersection of three ditches. Ditch 6309 appears to be the latest in the group, cutting Phase 3 ditch 6306 which in turn cut Phase 2 ditch 6208. Ditch 6309 was U-shaped at this point, measuring 0.5m deep and 0.9m across, with a slump of material which had accumulated on its northern side. The lower fill was completely overlain by a second fill of silty sand containing a sizable amount of charcoal mixed with a fairly substantial group of Savernake ware (including Fig. 12, No. 8) and other pottery and animal bones. From here, ditch 6309 turned south and continued for about 28m to where it was truncated by modern services close to the edge of the excavation.

Ditch 6306 was cut by ditch 6309. It contained four fills, the earliest of which was a thin layer containing an abundance of charcoal. The second fill was a slump of yellow-brown silty sand which had accumulated on the north side of the ditch. The third fill was a dark blackish-grey silty sand with frequent charcoal inclusions, and the final fill was a sterile, pale-grey silty sand. Ditch 6306 led west for about 10m before turning north and potentially formed the entire western side of the pear-shaped enclosure. Close to the point where the ditch turned north, several cuts were apparent. The earliest ditch in the sequence formed part of the Phase 2 north-south ditch 6209, which continued to the south (see above). This was truncated by the first cut of ditch 6306 which turned north. Its primary fill contained animal bones and two pottery sherds. The second fill was charcoal-rich, while the upper fill contained sherds of Savernake pottery. This ditch was then cut through on its northern side, but on the same alignment turning to the north. This section contained several lower deposits before being backfilled with a thick upper fill containing animal bones and a small mixed group of pottery.

The northern trajectory of ditch 6306 was cut in two locations by modern service trenches before aligning with Phase 2 ditch 6208, which it cut on its eastern side (Fig. 7, Section 160). Thereafter, ditch 6306 followed the line of 6208, turning very slightly to the

west, before turning back to the north again for another 25m where the ditch re-joined with ditch 6305.

Other pits

In the eastern half of the site, two large pits were dated to Phase 3. Pit 5490 was a sub-circular feature which cut Phase 2 ditch 6211. It was 2.4m wide and just over a metre deep with steep, sloping sides and a shallow curving base. A thin primary layer at the base of the pit contained sherds of fine oxidised and fine reduced coarse wares and a tiny fragment of samian ware, together perhaps dating from the 2nd century AD. The second fill was a dark brown, organic, peaty layer containing five sherds and fragmentary animal bones. The third fill was a blue-grey clayey-sand with flecks of charcoal, but was otherwise absent of finds. The upper fill was similar in colour to that below it, and contained some charcoal and a small, mixed group of pottery. About 10m west, sub-rectangular pit 5267 truncated the north-south Phase 2 ditch 6208. It measured 3.2m long and 2.2m wide, though in contrast to pit 5490 the feature was very shallow, its depth varying between 0.2m and 0.4m. Within the eastern side of the feature were two indentations which appeared to be too shallow to have been postholes, though this should not be ruled out. The pit contained two fills: a primary dark grey/black, sandy silt layer with a dense concentration of charcoal and some pottery and flints, overlain by mid-brown, silty sand with small amounts of flint and charcoal.

In the northern part of the site, three unrelated pits were all assigned to Phase 3. Pit 5390 had an elongated rectangular shape, measuring 1.4m by 0.5m, with sloping sides and a flat base. It contained a single fill of dark grey silty clay with charcoal and a few pottery sherds, including a jar in fabric R34 (Fig. 12, No. 12). Pit 5161 was sub-circular in plan, 1.6m across and 0.1m deep, with shallow sides and a flat base. It single fill of brown clay sand contained 129 sherds of pottery, one of the largest groups from a non-linear feature at the site. A number of vessels in this diverse group are illustrated (Fig. 12, Nos 7, 10, 11, 13, 17 and 22). Pit 5451 was circular feature with a concave profile, 2.1m across and 0.3m deep. It contained three fills of brown silty sand. The small group of pottery from the middle fill include a Central Gaulish samian ware Drag 18/31 dish. Further to the south of pit 5161, the base of pit 5283 was found to contain a large part of a narrow-mouthed jar/flagon (Fig. 12, No. 6).

Just to the east of ditch 6311, two large, irregularly shaped pits with very shallow fills and undulating bases are tentatively dated to this phase, though they could be earlier. Pit 5163 was roughly kidney-shaped in plan, measuring 6.8m long, 4.0m wide and 0.4m deep. Pit 5125 was sub-circular, measuring 2.4m by 2.3m across and 0.1m deep. Both pits contained a few pottery sherds which were not closely dated. Their function is uncertain; their irregular shape and profile suggests that they may have been tree-throw holes.

Well 5176

Well 5176 was excavated in the far north of the site, less than a metre from the edge of the excavation area (Fig. 8). The top of the well measured *c*.3m across and it was excavated to a depth of 1.3m, at a point where the shaft had narrowed to a width of 1.7m (Fig. 9, Section 120). The depth of the well below the excavated level is uncertain. The sides of the well were irregular and may have suffered from some subsidence, but were nonetheless steep in profile. The excavated portion of the well contained five fills. The first, a dark grey silty material (5192), accumulated on the southern side of the feature. While it may have been a slump from the edge of the cut on this side, it contained charcoal and appeared to have been a waterlogged, organic fill. The depth of this layer is uncertain. Overlying the waterlogged fill, a second blue-grey deposit (5191) lay mainly on the northern side and to an extent levelled up the fills to this point. Charcoal and 2nd-century pottery were recovered from this layer. Overlaying this deposit was a 0.3m-thick layer of light–mid grey clay (5190) containing a small quantity of charcoal but otherwise largely devoid of finds. Directly above this layer was a dark grey, silty clay with a mottled orange appearance produced by iron staining (5189). This deposit appears to have accumulated on the south side of the well, where it was 0.6 metres thick and reached the top of the feature. On the north side, however, it was less than 0.1m thick, and here was overlain by an upper 0.5m-thick layer of mid-dark grey clay sand (5188). These top two layers were largely sterile and both were cut by Phase 3b ditch 6314.

[Figure 8: Plan of enclosure 6314 (Phase 3b)]

[Figure 9: Plan and section of well 5176]

Phase 3b: Mid–late 2nd century AD

Phase 3b relates almost exclusively to a large enclosure (6314) and several associated pits excavated in the northernmost part of the site (Fig. 8). This group of features is differentiated from the more broadly defined Phase 3 on the basis of the occurrence of a relatively high proportion of pottery such as Central Gaulish samian and black-burnished wares, which appear towards the end of the ceramic sequence. These fabrics could have appeared as early as *c*.AD 120, but their presence in increased quantities seems likely to date after the middle of the 2nd century. This may suggest that the enclosure was one of the latest features to be constructed and there is some stratigraphic evidence to support this (see below). It is also possible, however, that enclosure 6314 had a different function to other areas of the site which contributed to the different character of the pottery assemblage. Nonetheless, it is unlikely that the mass of Phase 3 features present to the south of the enclosure had been abandoned by the time it came into use.

Northern enclosure 6314

Enclosure 6314 was sub-square in plan with largely straight sides and curving corners. Its boundary ditch is visible on the west, north, and east sides, but appears to have been truncated on the south side by a series of post-medieval ditches, close to where Phase 3 ditch 6313 was also truncated, removing any sign of the relationship between the northern enclosure and this ditch. The enclosure measured approximately 50m east-west and 40m north-south, though the latter is an estimation since the southern boundary was not seen. For most of its perimeter, enclosure 6314 was bounded by a single ditch, except for the north-west corner where several curving ditches indicate a more complicated sequence of activity.

The width of the main enclosure ditch varied considerably, particularly along the east and west sides. In general, the ditch became progressively narrower from west to east. This may have been due to increased post-Roman truncation on this side. No sections were cut across the west side of the ditch, so its depth on this side, where it looks to have been widest, is not known. A section across the north-east corner, however, shows that this was a fairly substantial feature, nearly 2.0m wide and just less than 1.0m deep at this point. The ditch was slightly narrower and shallower 20m to the east along the north side of the enclosure where it measured 1.7m across and 0.5m deep. In the eastern part of this

intervention, the ditch cut through the upper levels of well 5176 (see above). In general, the ditch contained a lower fill, much of which formed on the southern side, suggesting that material was accumulating from within the enclosure, and therefore implying the presence of an internal bank. Small quantities of pottery and charcoal were recovered from the lower and the upper fills in these sections.

The enclosure ditch curved south about 15m east of well 5176. However, in the north-east corner there was a complex intersection of at least six ditches, all of which appear to follow the curve of the enclosure (Fig. 7, Section 81). The outer ditches are considered as a group (6315). Their trajectories show that they extended from terminals along the eastern side of the enclosure to an area north of the excavation trench. Ditches 5015, 5023 and 5031 were the earliest cuts in the sequence. Ditch 5015 was the furthest from the enclosure. It contained a single fill of yellow silty sand with occasional charcoal. Ditch 5023 was almost a metre deep with sloping sides and a concave base. It contained five fills, mostly of green/grey sandy silt. The uppermost fill (5028) contained four sherds, one from a fine oxidised north Wiltshire beaker (Fig. 13, No. 41). Ditch 5031 was shallower than 5023 at *c.*0.5m and contained two fills. Ditches 5015 and 5023 were both truncated by ditch 5017. This ditch was the deepest in the group; it was not bottomed during excavation, but was over a metre deep. It had sloping sides which narrowed to a steep-sided base and it contained four fills. Ditches 5023 and 5031 were cut by a very shallow ditch 5029. This feature had a concave base, 0.2m deep, and a single sandy silt fill. Ditch 5031 was also cut on its south-western side, closest to the inside of the enclosure, by ditch 5034. This ditch continued south, forming the east side of the enclosure, and probably recut 5031 in this respect. Ditch 5034 had convex sides and a flattish base, and contained two fills of green grey silty sand.

The east side of enclosure 6314 continued south for approximately 35m, cutting the north-western end of Phase 3 ditch 6305, before being truncated by the post-medieval field boundary. The ditch on this side of the enclosure contained a fairly large quantity of pottery (177 sherds weighing over 5kg from three interventions) about two-thirds of which was of Savernake fabrics, with single sherds of black burnished and Central Gaulish samian wares, plus a small amount of animal bones and flint.

Features within enclosure 6314

A series of shallow pits and a short, straight gully (6316) were excavated within enclosure 6314 (Fig. 8). A group of four or five intercutting pits were located close to the centre of the enclosure. Two of these—3032 and 3035—were shown in section to be less than 0.2m deep, but almost 3.0m wide with flat bases. The lower fills of both pits produced mid–late 2nd-century pottery (Fig. 10, Section 10).

Pits 3081 and 3083 were located immediately to the east of this group. Pit 3081 measured 2.3m across and 0.3m deep. It produced moderate quantities of pottery and worked flints from a silty sand fill. Pit 3083, considerably smaller and cut by 3081, did not produce any finds.

Seven more pits were located to the south-east of the main cluster. Each was similarly shallow, ranging from to 1.0m to 2.0m wide and 0.1m to 0.3m deep, though their profiles varied slightly (Fig. 10, Sections 64–68, 74). Pits 3053, 3055 and 3060 had wide, flat bases, while 3065 and 3062 were narrower with concave bases.

[Figure 10: Selected sections of pits in enclosure 6314]

The small, mixed group of pottery from pit 3058 included a rim sherd from a straight-sided, black-burnished ware dish, unlikely to date before the later 2nd century at the earliest. Three pits—3058, 3055 and 3053—were aligned, though they did not appear to form a recognisable structure. The grouping of the pits close to each other and the wide-shallow pit group suggests that they were broadly contemporary, though their function is uncertain. The shallow nature of the pit profiles strongly suggests that they were heavily truncated by later activity.

Gully 6316 was straight and narrow, measuring *c.*15m long, and was located close to the enclosure pit. A section across the central part of the gully produced mid–late 2nd-century pottery, including the majority of all sherds in Central Gaulish samian ware and black-burnished ware from features of this phase (and oxidised fabric O20 bowl Fig. 13, No. 42), indicating that it was contemporary with the surrounding pits, though its function is also uncertain.

Pit 3016 was located about 10m east of the enclosure. It had a similar size and profile to the pits within the enclosure and may have been contemporary. It produced a

typical combination of Savernake and other reduced coarse ware pottery, shown in Fig. 13 as Nos 39 and 35 respectively.

Phase 4: 3rd–4th century AD

The only feature assigned to Phase 4 was a single ditch located in Area 2, *c.*270m north-east of the main excavation (Fig. 11). The ditch was traced for about 7m north-south, before it turned east at a right angle and continued beyond the excavated area. The northern part of the ditch was severely truncated by modern activity. Two sections show that the ditch varied considerably in width increasing from 0.6m wide to 1.45m to the south. The fill of the ditch produced a single sherd of mid-3rd–4th-century pottery. It is unlikely that this feature was related to the activity found in Area 1.

[Figure 11: Phase 4 site plan (Area 2)]

Finds reports

Pottery by Paul Booth

Introduction

The excavation produced around 3800 sherds of pottery (*c.*58.7kg), including seven prehistoric sherds (44g), a single medieval fragment (2g) and 18 post-medieval sherds (204g). The post-Roman material is not considered further in this report, nor are a further *c.*150 small fragments recovered from sieved soil samples; a rapid scan suggested that the latter added nothing of significance to the dataset. The pottery was recorded in line with the recent *A standard for pottery studies in archaeology* (PCRG *et al*. 2016) using codes set out in the OA later prehistoric and Roman recording system (Booth 2014). Quantification was by sherd count, weight and rim equivalents (REs) with an additional, more subjective count of vessels based on individual rim sherds. Details of rim, base, handle, spout and decorative types and other characteristics were recorded where present. The full record of the pottery is contained in the project archive on an Excel spreadsheet.

The condition of the pottery assemblage was very variable. The mean sherd weight of the prehistoric and Roman sherds, 15.5g, is reasonably high, though this is boosted by several large Savernake vessel sherds (see below); sherds in other fabrics tended to be heavily fragmented. The surface condition of sherds was also variable. Burnished surfaces

for example, were recorded in some cases, but many sherds had eroded surfaces. In some cases, the erosion was extreme with barely half of the likely original thickness of the sherds surviving.

Fabrics and wares

Prehistoric

Seven handmade sherds (44g) were probably of later prehistoric date, but no diagnostic characteristics other than fabric were represented. These fabrics were usually defined by their two most common inclusion types (in order of importance) and an indicator of fineness on a sliding scale of 1 (very fine) to 5 (very coarse). The identifying letters of the inclusion types present are as follows:

A quartz sand
Ch Chalk
F Flint
G Grog (crushed ceramic)
N None visible
V Vegetable/organic (sometimes voids)

The fabrics present are listed in Table 2 and further details are held in the project archive. All the sherds are likely to have been of later prehistoric date though only two, in fabric FV4, were from a potentially contemporary context (5175)—all the rest occurred in later features.

[Table 2: Quantification of prehistoric pottery fabrics]

Late Iron Age and Roman

Late Iron Age and Roman fabrics were assigned to major ware groups, based upon common characteristics. These groups can be combined to constitute two primary classes of material: fine and specialist wares, and the rest of the coarse wares (e.g. Booth 2004). The fine and specialist ware groups represented in the present assemblage are: samian ware (S), fine wares—colour-coated, lead-glazed, mica-coated, etc.—(F), mortaria (M), white wares—other than mortaria—(W), and white-slipped (Q) wares. The remaining coarse ware groups

are ‘Belgic type’ (*cf*. Thompson 1982, 4–5, though see below), grog-tempered fabrics (E), ‘Romanised’ oxidised coarse wares (O), ‘Romanised’ reduced coarse wares (R), and black-burnished wares (B).

Within these classes are hierarchically arranged subgroups, usually defined by inclusion type, and individual fabrics/wares that are then indicated at a third level of precision—both levels of subdivision being expressed by numeric codes. Thus, R30 is a general code for moderately sandy, reduced coarse wares, while R34 is a specific fabric within this group (see below). For much of the present assemblage, however, fabric identification was at the intermediate level of precision, particularly since specific sources are not known for many of the coarse wares. Only summary fabric descriptions are given here, though more detailed descriptions are held in archive. Where appropriate, these are cross-referenced to codes in the National Roman Fabric Reference Collection (Tomber and Dore 1998), and placed in brackets in bold type. Quantification of the pottery by fabric/ware is set out in Table 3.

[Table 3: Quantification of prehistoric and Roman pottery]

Overall, the assemblage is dominated by material from local or sub-regional sources, principally comprising Savernake or Savernake-type fabrics and sand-tempered (mainly reduced) fabrics. The former group is essentially grog-tempered but with varying amounts of other inclusion types. These consist of fabrics E81, E82, E83 and R95, which together amounted to 45.4 per cent of the total number of sherds and 66 per cent of the assemblage by weight. In contrast, the sandy reduced wares (fabrics R10–R310) totalled 40.1 per cent of the sherd count but only 22.4 per cent by weight. Oxidised fabrics with a similar textural range (O10–034) were probably complementary products from the same sources, but were present in much fewer numbers.

The Savernake/Savernake type wares derive from several production sites located some 15–20km east of Lay Wood. The fabrics exhibit considerable variety in detail, with varying amounts and degrees of coarseness of grog inclusions, of sand (largely absent in fabric E83, but in variable quantities in E82 and R95) and of flint, and very considerable variation in firing in terms of colour and hardness. No attempt to quantify these variations has been made here. A broad chronological progression has been assumed for the

Savernake wares, with fabrics E81–E83 representing an earlier stage of the industry than the more consistently reduced (characteristically pale grey) and typically, though not invariably, harder-fired fabric R95 (SAV GT). Jars were the most common vessel type made in this fabric, though narrow-necked flask or flagon forms were also present, as well as dishes and lids in fabric E83 (the last were exclusive to this fabric). The use of the 'E ware' designation for components of the Savernake tradition is intended to allow them to be distinguished chronologically, rather than indicating a direct relationship to south-eastern 'Belgic' potting traditions (see e.g. Timby 2001, 82 for related discussion).

The sand-tempered fabrics are broadly in the tradition of the north Wiltshire industry, though only a few (fabrics F24, F67, O33, O34 and R35) are here assigned with varying degrees of confidence to that industry. It is possible that many of the other sand-tempered sherds in the O and R ware groups should also be so assigned. The greatest uncertainty concerns fabric R34. The vessel type repertoire and stratigraphic associations suggest that this fabric was in production around the middle of the 1st century AD or only shortly thereafter, and thus that it predates the generally accepted date for the inception of the north Wiltshire industry. The frequency of the fabric at the present site, and the diversity of its forms, perhaps suggest an even more local source.

Amongst the coarse wares, only Dorset black-burnished ware is certainly non-local in origin, principally contributing 'cooking pot-type' jars, though vessels in this fabric also included a bead and flanged bowl, the only piece in the entire assemblage certainly dated after *c*.AD 200. Fabrics included in the fine and specialist ware group were either relatively local in origin, such as the north Wiltshire products F24 and F67 (though the source of the white wares is unknown), or imported vessels, most commonly samian ware. Both South and Central Gaulish samian was identified, the former represented principally by a Ritterling 12 bowl (as well as dish body sherds and a single, small decorated fragment), and the latter by a single Drag 37 bowl that had been repaired (see below) and Drag 18/31 and 36 dishes, plus some indeterminate fragments. The decorated sherds were almost totally eroded. The other imports were single sherds of central Gaulish fine ware and a mortarium spout in fabric M11, for which a north-east Gaulish source is likely.

Vessel types

Approximately 381 vessels were represented by rim sherds. With a few exceptions, this figure does not take account of possible duplication of parts of the same vessel in different contexts. Rim equivalents (REs), which are a more accurate measure of the relative quantities of vessel types, totalled 34.69. Vessel types were grouped in classes relating to their general shape. The classes are defined by commonly used labels (jar, bowl, dish, etc.) with a perceived relationship to the function of the vessels, although the association should be treated with caution. The class codes used, sequentially ordered from closed narrow forms to wide open ones, are B (flagons and jugs), C (jars), D (jars/bowls), E (beakers), H (bowls), I (bowls/dishes), J (dishes), K (mortaria), L (lids) and Z (unclassified). In cases where a distinction between broad classes is dependent upon the ratio of the vessel height to its rim diameter (Webster 1976, 17–9), intermediate categories have been employed for vessels where there is significant doubt about the likely height:diameter ratio. Class D therefore comprises uncertain jars/bowls, and class I comprises uncertain bowls/dishes. Classes A (amphorae), F (cups), G (tankards/handled beakers) and M (miscellaneous forms) were not represented by rims at all and are therefore omitted from the tables. Most of the major classes in the present system are divided into subclasses, and further definition is provided by a detailed coding system for rim type, while reference was also made to detailed typologies such as those for samian ware (e.g. Webster 1996). This level of detail is not used extensively here, but the data are available in the project archive. The breakdown of broad vessel classes by fabric is shown in Table 4, using RE data.

[Table 4: Vessel class by fabric: quantification by REs]

The assemblage was dominated by jars, which amounted to 70.7 per cent of REs. A wide variety of jar forms was present, but over a third of jars were recorded as of unspecified type, usually because not enough of the profile survived to allow a more precise definition. These vessels apart, the most important subgroup consisted of bead rim jars, which amounted to 31.2 per cent of all jars (22 per cent of the total REs). While occurring predominantly in Savernake fabrics, there were also occasional bead rim jars in sandy reduced fabrics R20 and R30. Vessels of this type also greatly varied in size (e.g. Fig. 12, Nos 2 and 16). Several examples were similar in form, but presumably differed widely in terms of function. Some 14 per cent of all jars were recorded as medium-mouthed, while much

smaller quantities of specifically high-shouldered (e.g. Fig. 13, No. 35) or sharply carinated jars (e.g. Fig. 12, No. 13) were identified. This is a consequence of the degree of fragmentation of much of the material in fabrics such as R34, in which almost two thirds of all vessels were jars or probable jars. Some 5.7 per cent of jar REs were from large 'storage jars' with everted rims, though this label could equally have been applied to some of the largest bead rim vessels. 'Cooking pot-type' jars, essentially the black-burnished ware form but with occasional examples in fabrics R30 and R34 (e.g. Fig. 12, No. 17), totalled just under 5 per cent of all jars. In addition, there was a single example of a handled jar (Gillam 1976, type 15) in black-burnished ware (fabric B11).

Dishes amounted to 8.2 per cent of all site REs, occurring in a wide range of fabrics. Many of the forms may be loosely-derived from the Gallo-Belgic repertoire, a point underlined by the only vessel in the early fabric E30 (Fig. 13, No. 31), while the single lead-glazed vessel (Fig. 13, No. 29) was based on samian ware form 36. Bowls were less common but were found in a fairly wide range of fabrics, although, unlike dishes, they were absent from the early Savernake repertoire. Amongst the other vessel classes only flagons contributed more than 5 per cent of the assemblage, the figure of 7.4 per cent reflects the potential for RE values to be skewed by the presence of a few substantially complete flagon necks, as is the case here; flagons only amounted to 2.4 per cent by rim sherd count. The heterogeneity of this particular class is demonstrated by the fact that the nine vessels occur in eight different fabrics, with only O10 contributing more than a single example. In addition, another flagon/jug source is represented by one substantial black-burnished ware handle.

Like flagons, beakers occurred in a wide range of mainly oxidised and reduced coarse ware fabrics, but these were not numerous. Mortaria and lids were very poorly represented in this assemblage, the former only by a single imported vessel, and cups were completely absent.

Use and reuse

There was limited evidence for use and reuse in the assemblage. The eroded state of some of the sherds (see above) precluded meaningful assessment of wear-related use. Two sherds, one each of fabric R10 and R30 in contexts 5006 and 5054 respectively, were thought to be possible 'seconds' and may indicate relatively local production. However, the

sherds were small and in view of the wide variation in apparent surface condition, this identification is not certain, largely due to their overfired character. Evidence of vessel use was indicated most clearly by the presence of soot and other deposits likely to have been caused by cooking. External soot deposits were noted on 85 sherds representing all the principal fabrics. Sooting was most common on fabric R34 (46 sherds), which also accounted for 9 of the 18 sherds recorded with internal burnt deposits. Where vessel form was noted, sooting occurred on a variety of jars, the only exception being a single dish in fabric R34 which had an internal burnt residue. Limescale was only noted in one instance, on sherds of fabric O20 in context 5530.

Evidence of repair and reuse was more restricted. There were three instances of repair: a lead rivet and rivet holes respectively in two sherds each of Central Gaulish samian ware (a Drag 37 bowl) and black-burnished ware (a 'cooking pot-type' jar), both in context 3008, and a single rivet hole in a Savernake (fabric R95) sherd in context 3029. There were eight instances of modification or reuse of vessels or individual sherds. Single base sherds of fabrics E83 and R95 included drilled, post-firing holes, and a base in fabric R34 had a hole knocked through it. A sherd of fabric E82 had a smoothed edge, indicating its use as an abrasive, while sherds of fabric E83 (2), E82 (1) and O20 (1) had been trimmed and roughly rounded for use as counters or similar items. Each was within a size range of 28–33mm across, and the O20 and E82 pieces were both from context 5203.

Phasing and chronology

As a preliminary aid to site phasing, the prehistoric and early Roman pottery was divided into five ceramic phases: 1, Prehistoric; 2, Late Iron Age/early Roman; 3, Mid-late 1st century; 4, Late 1st-early 2nd century; 5, *c*.AD 120-200. Each ceramic phase was characterised by the dominance of particular fabrics (and in a smaller number of cases by form) or the appearance of such fabrics. There were inevitably overlaps in the definition of these phases. In combination with the stratigraphic evidence, this information was used as the basis for definition of site phases, although inevitable issues of intrusive and residual material mean that assigned ceramic phases/dates did not always correlate with the finalised site sequence (see *Site phasing*). Pottery quantification in terms of the principal components of the latter is set out in Tables 5 and 6 below, presenting data both for sherd

count and weight given the substantial variability in relative representation of some fabrics in terms of these measures.

Variation in the size of some of the principal phase groups means that clearly defined trends in the development of the pottery assemblage are hard to define and only a few key points will be mentioned. The earlier phase groups generally lack fine and specialist wares except for small quantities of white wares. By the time that a wider range of fine and specialist wares appeared in site Phase 3, fabrics such as South Gaulish samian ware should have been completely residual—their initial use on site does not necessarily reflect contemporary deposition. Unsurprisingly, one of the clearest general trends relates to Savernake ware as demonstrated by the weight data for fabrics E81-E83 and R95, which show a gradual decline (except in the particularly small Phase 2/3 group) from a position of substantial dominance of 82.9 per cent of the Phase 1 assemblage to a reduced, but still important 56.9 per cent in Phase 3b. The evolution of the reduced coarse ware group is less easy to judge. Fabric R34 is clearly a significant element from the commencement of activity on site. Its representation fluctuates thereafter, but is at its peak (in both sherd count and weight) in Phase 3 and declines in Phase 3b. Oxidised wares become more important at this time, a trend which might reflect the developing range of the north Wiltshire industry, though this is less clearly seen in the potentially analogous reduced coarse wares such as R35. However, the representation of generic R30 fabrics by weight does increase in Phase 3b. Black-burnished ware is also best represented in this phase, as would be expected.

[Table 5: Quantification of fabrics as percentage of site phase total (sherd count)]
[Table 6: Quantification of fabrics as percentage of site phase total (weight)]

Discussion

The pottery from this site belongs almost exclusively to the first half of the Roman period. A key question concerns the initial date of settlement activity—can any of it be assigned a pre-conquest date? Unfortunately, the pottery does not give a clear answer because it is impossible to determine if the small quantities of 'Romanised' fabrics (such as O10, O30, R10 and R30) were intrusive in the Phase 1 contexts from which they derived (or occurred in the tops of the fills of these features, accumulating rather later than their inception), or should be seen as providing a secure date for Phase 1, in which case a post-

conquest origin is likely (see *Discussion*). The bulk of the material from Phase 1 contexts consisted of wares in the Savernake tradition. Timby (2001) has made a plausible case for the pre-conquest origins of this tradition, in contrast to Swan (1975) who saw it as being related to early Roman military activity. The present assemblage does not shed further light on this question, though the dominance of Savernake pottery is evident and the relative importance of the earlier fabrics of this tradition in Phase 1 is notable.

The status of fabric R34 is more problematic. While potentially related to vessels of the north Wiltshire industry (Anderson 1979), which may have been in production from the later 1st century AD (Seager Smith 2001, 298), the description of this fabric does not seem to be exactly matched in that industry, as represented by examples amongst the fabrics listed for Wanborough (ibid. 235–57). As suggested above, a more local source might be indicated. In any case, the typological range of this fabric includes vessels that could date to the middle of the 1st century AD, leaving aside the question of whether it, like the Savernake tradition, could have originated before the Roman conquest. The principal regional pottery industries—Savernake and the north Wiltshire kilns—lay at some distance from Devizes (*c.*15–20km east and *c.*20km north-east respectively), so there would have been some potential for more locally based potters to provide for local needs. R34 was a fine fabric that would have complemented Savernake products, albeit with some broad overlap in the provision of jars from both sources.

There are few excavated Roman rural settlements near the present site, so there is a lack of comparative data that would shed light on these and other questions. The previous site evaluation produced 565 sherds of Roman pottery consisting largely of Savernake wares (52 per cent by sherd count, 67 per cent by weight) and greyware, though most of this material came from the eastern part of the site not covered by the present excavation (WA 2013, 15). Like the present assemblage, however, the bulk of the evaluation pottery seems to have been of early Roman date, albeit with a few later pieces (ibid. 16). In contrast, a 560-sherd assemblage from a small excavation at Southbroom School in Devizes, roughly 2.5km to the south-west, included a late Iron Age/early Roman component also dominated by Savernake products (Lyne 2013, 72). Here, however, most of the material was of later Roman date, with black-burnished ware being well represented and Oxfordshire and New Forest fine wares present (ibid. 71, table 1). It is interesting that while that site did produce a few amphora sherds, it only produced a single mortarium sherd, while mortaria were

apparently absent from the evaluation of Lay Wood; the scarcity of these vessels at Devizes sites is notable, even allowing for the emphasis on occupation of the early Roman period, when such vessels were typically less common. Perhaps unsurprisingly, however, this pattern is not seen in the relatively large very late Roman assemblage from Wayside Farm, which contained a remarkably high proportion of Oxford products including mortaria. This site presents a very different chronological profile from the others mentioned above, though its assemblage (3,080 sherds, 52,404g; Corney 2002) does include a small component (less than 250 sherds) of later Iron Age to early Roman material, in which Savernake wares are prominent. A tiny assemblage from Brickley Lane, just over 2km SSW of Lay Wood, included material ranging across the Roman period (Timby 2002, 224).

Scarcity of comparative data also limits the use of the pottery evidence in the assessment of site character. Superficially, the present assemblage appears to reflect a low-status rural settlement. While this may be correct, it cannot be substantiated by reference to other local assemblages. The relatively constricted date range of the site is a limiting factor. The fine and specialist ware figure (2.5 per cent of total sherd count, see above) is consistent with values for contemporary lower-status rural settlements in the Upper Thames Valley region (Booth 2004; forthcoming), but there is no certainty that the factors determining assemblage composition in that region were necessarily the same in central Wiltshire. The representation of fine and specialist wares at Southbroom School, 10.5 per cent of sherds for what is mainly a later Roman assemblage does, however, suggest that the trend for a considerably increased baseline representation of such wares across sites of all types, seen in the Upper Thames Valley region, may be reflected here as well. The relatively high percentage of the assemblage formed by jars (70.7 per cent of REs) is also broadly consistent with a lower-status rural assemblage (e.g. Evans 2001; Booth forthcoming), but again there are chronological trends (such as a general decrease in the proportion of jars through time) and other aspects to be considered. In addition, methodological differences mean that there are generally even fewer datasets that can be deployed for comparative analysis than is the case with quantification of fine and specialist wares.

Catalogue of illustrated vessels (Figs. 12–13)

The illustrations show a representative selection of the vessels present as well as pieces of intrinsic interest from the post-Roman Phase 5. No attempt is made to show the

comprehensive range of fabric/form combinations from the site. The vessels are arranged as far as possible by type sequence within ware group by site phase. Each catalogue entry starts with the fabric code and ends with the context and feature number.

[Figure 12: Roman pottery Nos 1–23]

[Figure 13: Roman pottery Nos 24–48]

Phase 1

1. E83, bead rim jar/bowl. 5368, ditch 5367.

Phase 2

2. R95, small bead rim jar. 5203, ditch 5206.
3. R95, storage jar. 5469, ditch 5468.
4. O10, thin-walled beaker. 5201, ditch 5206.

Phase 3

5. O10, ring necked flagon. 5442, ditch 5440.
6. R95, wide mouthed flagon, or narrow mouthed jar. 5282, pit 5283.
7. E83, ?narrow mouthed jar. 5160, pit 5161.
8. E82, narrow mouthed jar. 5309, ditch 5307.
9. R95, narrow mouthed jar with oblique burnished line decoration on shoulder. 2057, ditch 2056.
10. R34, medium mouthed jar. 5160, pit 5161.
11. R34, medium mouthed jar with stepped shoulder. 5160, pit 5161.
12. R34, high shouldered jar. 5389, pit 5390.
13. R34, carinated jar. 5160, ditch 5161.
14. E82, bead rim jar. 2057, pit 2056.
15. R95, bead rim jar. 5342, ditch 5343.
16. O95, large rounded jar with vestigial bead rim. 5417, ditch 5409.
17. R34, ‘cooking pot-type’ jar with burnished lattice decoration. 5160, ditch 5161.
18. O30, butt beaker. 2057, ditch 2056.

19. O20, straight sided bowl. 3050, ditch 3051.

20. R30, carinated bowl. 5042, ditch 5041.

21. R34, bowl. 5080, ditch 5086.

22. R34, curving sided bowl. 5160, pit 5161.

23. R34, curving sided flanged bowl. 5080, ditch 5086.

24. O30, curving sided flanged bowl. 5241, ditch 5243.

25. O30, bowl with curving upper body wall, but perhaps derived from Drag 29. 5295, ditch 5294.

26. R34, straight sided dish. 5045, ditch 5046.

27. O20, dish or bowl. 5444, pit 5443.

28. R34, rounded dish. 5444, pit 5443.

29. F24, dish. 5057, ditch 5058.

30. E83, dish (or possibly large lid). 5081, ditch 5083.

31. E30, dish. 5116, ditch 5117.

32. E83, lid. 5080, ditch 5086.

Phase 3b

33. Q23, ring-necked flagon. 3095, pit 3096.

34. R34, small high-shouldered jar. 3002, pit 3001.

35. R34, high-shouldered jar. 3017, pit 3016.

36. E83, bead rim jar with girth grooves. 3034, pit 3035.

37. R95, bead rim jar with girth grooves. 3002, pit 3001.

38. R95, bead rim jar. 3002, pit 3001.

39. R95, large bead rim jar. 3017, pit 3016.

40. O10, small, thin-walled beaker with fine beaded rim. 3095, pit 3096.

41. O30, beaker with cornice rim. 5028, ditch 5023.

42. O20, rounded bowl. 3008, ditch 3009.

43. R30, dish with deep internal groove below tip of rim. 3034, pit 3035.

44. R34, dish. 3038, pit 3036.

Phase 5

45. E82, medium mouthed jar with pronounced girth grooves. 5143, ditch 5145.

46. R20, small medium mouthed jar. 5140, ditch 5142.

47. R30, small bead rim jar. Context 5148, ditch 3147.

48. E83, dish. 5422, ditch 5210.

Metal small finds by Ian R. Scott

Introduction

The small finds comprise a comparatively small assemblage of 93 objects from 277 fragments (Table 7). The metal finds have been fully recorded onto an Excel spreadsheet and assigned to functional categories. Nails are quantified by head count and fragment count to give minimum and maximum numbers.

Provenance and composition of the assemblage

The metal finds largely consist of nails and hobnails. Numerically, most of the small metal finds come from fill 5104 of Phase 1 pit 5105, and were recovered through sieving of samples. The finds from the pit comprise nails and nail stem fragments (object n=20; frags n=37), hobnails (n=52; frags=52), and numerous small iron fragments (frags=163), the last of which may include bits of nails and hobnails. The finds from this pit are suggestive of a pyre deposit.

[Table 7: Summary quantification of small finds by phase, feature type and functional categories (object count)]

Phase 2 and Phase 3 contexts produced very few finds. There was a single nail stem fragment from Phase 2 ditch 5184, and a single nail from Phase 3 pit 5195.

Phase 3 and 3b contexts produced a few nails and nail fragments. However, part of a brooch was recovered from Phase 3 ditch 5343 (fill 5341) (Cat. No. 1) and a lower bow and catch-plate from another brooch was recovered from ditch 5015 (fill 5016). The catch-plate of the latter is not pierced and could be from a simple, one-piece sprung brooch of mid-1st-century date. The brooch from context 5341 is a strip or Durotrigian brooch of a type related to Langton Down brooches. Its distribution is predominantly in Somerset, Dorset and to a lesser extent Wiltshire, and it dates to the mid-1st century AD (Mackreth 2011, 146–7, plate 101).

The only possible Roman find from later phases is a heavily eroded piece of lead, which appears to have been a mend for a pottery vessel and it has a possible ceramic fragment still attached. This find was recovered from subsoil context 3003.

Otherwise, the few finds from post-medieval contexts (Phase 5) included two horseshoes, a door nail and a worn halfpenny, probably of George I. A spent 0.303-inch rifle cartridge was recovered from subsoil context 2002.

Illustrated find (Fig. 14)

Durotrigian, or strip, brooch with a hinged pin and a low arched bow of flat section which widens to the foot. The bow is plain with a groove defining its edge. The foot is damaged at the edges and little of the catch-plate survives. Cu alloy. L: 42mm; L: 11mm. Context 5341, ditch 5343.

[Figure 14: Durotrigian/strip brooch]

Worked stone by Ruth Shaffrey

Introduction

Sixteen stone objects were recovered during the excavation, comprising seven quern fragments, four processing cobbles, two struck quartzite flakes, one piece of drilled chalk and two whetstones.

The assemblage

The most significant component of the assemblage is the collection of seven quern fragments. One of these is a fragment of Greensand from fill 1032 of ditch 1034, which is only tentatively identified as such because it has part of a pecked surface. The other six fragments are all diagnostic. Five of the quern fragments are made of Lodsworth Greensand. One was recovered from a Phase 3 context (fill 5506 of ditch 5505) and is from a lower stone with rotational wear on the grinding surface (not catalogued). Three other lower stone fragments are from Phase 3 contexts including a fragment with deep spindle socket from ditch 5042 (No. 1), a large fragment of disc type from ditch 5479 (No. 2) and a third fragment also with a deep spindle socket (No. 3, pit 5555). A fifth fragment of Lodsworth Greensand was recovered from a probable post-medieval ditch (No. 5, ditch 5210) and with

its projecting hopper form is probably of Roman date. The only quern fragment not made of Lodsworth Greensand is a flat disc-shaped quern of Millstone Grit found in the southern section of ditch 5184 (No. 4, fill 5185). None of the quern fragments are sufficiently complete for their original dimensions to be ascertained, though there is a slim possibility that the fragment from ditch 5479 (No. 2) is from a millstone as the fragment measures >400mm in diameter without either the whole circumference or the spindle socket being present.

Four quartzite cobbles have been used as processors for rubbing, smoothing and/or polishing. One example has extensive polish on one face and some polish on other faces (No. 6, SF 1) and two other examples are smoothed (No. 7, SF 25) or polished (No. 8, fill 5242). Another example had been used so much that all its edges are double bevelled (No. 9, SF 86); this example was found in the subsoil and cannot be directly related to the early Roman activity on site. Two whetstones were also recovered—one of possible Wealden sandstone from fill 1074 of ditch 1076 (No. 10) and one of grey lias from an unphased pit (1072). The latter is not catalogued here. A single piece of worked chalk has a drilled socket on one side and the very start of one on the other side (No. 11, ditch fill 5082). This seems most likely to be a roughout for a spindle whorl, but it is possible that it was simply used to work the ends of some other tools. The only other worked stones include two flakes of quartzite that appear to be have been struck and may be related to the use of quartzite pebbles and cobbles.

Discussion

The stone tools from Lay Wood are fairly typical of the Roman period in this area, both in terms of the types used and the range of objects represented. Lodsworth Greensand and Millstone Grit are both materials that are found in the region, while chalk and quartzite are naturally occurring in the local landscape. Querns are to be expected in this area, though millstones are less common finds and indicative of centralised/intensified grain processing. If the uncertain fragment is from a millstone, it suggests the existence of a mill nearby during the early Roman period. Most mills date to the 2nd century AD or later, though 1st-century examples are known.

Catalogue of stone objects (Fig. 15)

1. Lower rotary quern fragment. Lodsworth Greensand. Chunk of thick stone with spindle socket measuring 57mm deep and a lip around the socket. Grinding surface pecked and slightly sloped. Base roughly worked. Heavily burnt and blackened. Measures 85mm max thickness at centre x indeterminate diameter but >240mm. Weighs 675g. Ctx 5042, ditch 5042. Phase 3, 2nd century AD.

2. Rotary quern fragment, probably lower. Possible millstone. Lodsworth Greensand. Slightly sloping faces and of disc type. Centre and edges do not survive. Pecked all over. Burnt/blackened on one edge. Measures indeterminate diameter >400mm x 54mm max thickness. Weighs 2114g. SF 99. Ctx 5481, fill of ditch 5479. Phase 3, 2nd century AD.

3. Fragment of thick lower rotary quern. Lodsworth Greensand. Slightly sloping pecked grinding surface now worn into rotational grooves. Edge of spindle socket 65mm deep and slightly conical, approximately 25mm diameter at grinding surface. Circumference does not survive. Measures >400mm diameter x 89mm thick. SF 105. Ctx 5557, fill of pit 5555. Phase 3b, mid–late 2nd century AD.

4. Rotary quern fragment. Millstone Grit. Medium coarse-grained, well sorted, quite porous, highly feldspathic sandstone. Flat disc type. One face is pecked; the other is roughly worked. No edges or centre remain. Measures 47mm thick. Weighs 578g. Ctx 5185.Fill of southern section of ditch 5184. Phase 2, late 1st century–early 2nd century AD.

5. Upper rotary quern fragment. Lodsworth Greensand. Fragment of probable projecting hopper type. There is a flat top with straight-sided projecting hopper. Grinding surface pecked but now with some rotational wear. Heavily burnt and blackened. 26mm from top of quern to top of projecting hopper. Measures indeterminate diameter x 28–38mm thick and 62mm thick on hopper. Weighs 322g. Ctx 5211, fill of large ditch 5210. Phase 5, post-medieval or later.

6. Processor/linen smoother (Fig. 15.1). Quartzite cobble. Complete cobble with extensive polish on one face and some on other faces. Probable use as linen smoother or leather processing stone. Measures 79 x 34–37 x 25–39mm. Weighs 227. SF 1. Ctx 3095. Fill of large pit 3096. Phase 3b, mid–late 2nd century AD.

7. Processor. Fine-grained grey quartz sandstone. Cobble with two rubbed surfaces and several irregular edges also showing signs of wear. Possibly used as a processor or whetstone. Measures 115 x 81 x 24mm thick. Weighs 390g. SF 25. Ctx 2012, fill of pit 2013. Phase 3, 2nd century AD.

8. Polishing cobble. Quartzite. Cobble, not modified but with polish on one face. Measures 110 x 95 x 42mm. Weighs 824g. Ctx 5242, fill of ditch 5243. Phase 3, 2nd century AD.
9. Rubbing stone/processor (Fig. 15.2). Quartzite. Flat-faced cobble that has been extensively used on all edges so that it is double bevelled. Measures 85 x 85 x 28mm. Weighs 86g. SF 86. Ctx 5001, subsoil.
10. Whetstone (Fig. 15.3). Fine-grained grey sandstone with some black/opaque mineral. Possibly Wealden sandstone. Sub-square section with sharp arrises indicating whole of each face was utilised except one face is rough, possibly broken. One end is broken; other end is curved into a two-sided point. Measures >62 x 16-21 x 14-18mm. Weighs 45g. Ctx 1074, fill of ditch 1076. Phase 3, 2nd century AD.
11. Drilled chalk. With drilled socket on both faces, although very small on one. Could be a partially made spindle whorl. Measures 35 x 42 x 16mm. Weighs 10g. Ctx 5082, fill of ditch 5083. Phase 2, late 1st/early 2nd century AD.

[Figure 15: Worked stone]

Ceramic building materials by Ruth Shaffrey

A total of 75 fragments of ceramic building material (CBM) weighing 6.5kg with a mean fragment weight of 87g was recovered from the excavation. Diagnostic fragments were examined and the data were entered into a Microsoft Access database, a copy of which can be found in the site archive in Excel format. The material included 13 fragments of brick, eight fragments of brick/flat tile and ten fragments of flat tile. No markings were present on any fragment and no other forms were recognisable. Most of the CBM is of a silty fabric with no obvious inclusions but poorly mixed and laminated in peach and orange. A few pieces are of a sandier orange fabric but there is no obvious pattern to the use of the different fabrics, with both being used for flat tile and brick.

The assemblage is small and heavily worn but appears to be Roman in date. Most of it (5.6kg) was recovered from Phase 3 and Phase 3b contexts and therefore relates to structures of pre–late 2nd-century date. Such an assemblage, however, is not indicative of a structure on the site, and presumably originated in a building or buildings elsewhere.

Fired clay by Cynthia Poole

Introduction

A modest assemblage of fired clay amounting to 408 fragments and weighing 6,749g was recovered by hand excavation. An additional 207 fragments weighing 222g were recovered from sieved samples, all of which was of indeterminate form. All the material was fragmentary and abrasion was variable. The hand-collected finds had a mean fragment weight (MFW) of 16.5g, in contrast to the sieved MFW of 1g. A MFW over 10–12g is normally indicative of some diagnostic or identifiable items being present. Levels of abrasion varied by feature type: low–moderate in pits and a wider range in ditches and layers, but with a greater emphasis on moderate–highly abraded. This presumably reflects more rapid deposition in pits following disuse, while material reaching ditches probably arrived through a series of activities rather than a single event.

Methodology

The assemblage has been fully recorded on an Excel spreadsheet in accordance with guidelines set out by the Archaeological Ceramic Building Materials Group (ACBMG 2007), which whilst not specifically designed for fired clay, provide appropriate guidance. The dataset includes quantification, fabric type, form, surface finish, organic impressions, dimensions and general description. Fabrics were characterised by macroscopic features with the aid of a x20 hand lens or a binocular microscope at x25.

Fabrics

Almost all the fired clay is made in a similar sandy fabric fired to a range of hues and shades of red, brown, yellow and grey, which can be divided into two broad groups. Fabric group QGL forms the basic fabric made in a fine sandy clay containing a high density of quartz and glauconite sand less than 0.1mm in size in most examples, though occasionally medium and coarse sand may be scattered through it. In some cases, the glauconite element appears to be very low. Occasionally, incidental additions of small chalk or flint grits are also present. Three examples had chaff incorporated within the clay matrix and in sufficient quantity in one case to suggest that this was a deliberate addition. This finer fabric also forms the basic matrix for the second group, which is differentiated by the addition of coarse rounded grits of burnt sandy mudstone or possibly fired clay grog (QGM). It can be difficult to differentiate between amorphous fired clay and burnt sandy mudstone from the

Greensand/Gault Clay interface, since fired clay artefacts and structures were made from the clay weathered from these deposits with little modification. There were also a few fragments from a single feature made in a cream-buff, fine silty clay with no coarser inclusions (Fabric A). A single fragment of white sandy mortar was also speckled with black glauconite sand.

Portable oven/hearth furniture

The assemblage produced a single type of oven/hearth furniture, which accounted for 83 per cent by count and 93 per cent by weight of the assemblage (337 fragments; 6,305g). No substantial pieces survived, though remaining features were sufficient to identify these as flat circular discs or polygonal plates ranging between 15–40mm thick. The largest surviving example was 165mm long. One curved edge corresponded to a diameter in the region of 300mm, and is within the size range encountered elsewhere. The differences in thickness found in the Devizes assemblage suggests that a comparable range of sizes was in use. The plates were made from flat slabs of clay, which frequently tapered to the edge so that one surface would be slightly convex and the other flat. Each plate usually had one smooth and even upper surface and a lower, slightly rougher surface that was frequently covered in chaff/straw impressions. The inclusions were presumably added as a separator to prevent the clay sticking to the mould or work surface. Edge profiles were most commonly flat and vertical with rounded arrises, though some were bevelled, angled to either top or base surfaces. Edges were both curved and straight, including one with two straight edges joining at an angle of 125° (Fig. 16.3), indicating that the assemblage includes circular/oval, polygonal and rectangular forms.

Some examples had clear horizontal planes formed within the clay, along which they had subsequently separated. This suggests the clay was rolled out and folded over, or that several sheets were pressed together. The frequent chaff impressions found on one surface and the form of some edges suggest that some examples were made in a mould, though one with vertical finger marks around the edge suggests that it was hand-moulded and shaped. The use of a mould may indicate the influence of Roman tilers in their manufacture.

Frequently, one surface was burnt grey to varying degrees, sometimes extensively covering the surface, though others were patchy or discontinuous. One had several black patches on the smoother surface, one quite circular measuring 42mm in diameter (Fig.

16.1). Some of these patches may be burnt residue. Another had a circular, black-sooted circle, *c.*110mm in diameter, with the interior of the circle reduced grey (Fig. 16.2), which may have resulted from the pot being stood on the plate.

Apart from the plates/discs, the remaining fired clay was either amorphous or had a single, flat moulded surface. One had a flat moulded surface, lightly undulating with finger-tip depressions, and possibly the start of a second surface at right angles. This example measured over 36mm thick. Although this could be the edge of a plate, the character of the surface differed slightly from the plates/discs and could represent another form, such as a triangular perforated brick.

Discussion

The dominance of these plates/discs at Lay Wood is noteworthy, not least because the site is outside or at the very least on the periphery of their regional distribution, which is centred on the East Midlands. To the knowledge of the author, the form does not occur further south in Wiltshire and Hampshire—no examples were found at any of the Danebury Environs Roman sites in north-west Hampshire (Cunliffe and Poole 2008) and while it has not been possible to search many excavation reports of sites south of Devizes, none of those examined include these objects.

Comparable objects have been identified with increasing frequency in the Thames Valley and Oxfordshire, where circular discs and rectangular or polygonal plates are a regular component of late Iron Age and early Roman fired clay assemblages. The circular discs are more widespread with examples known from Watkins Farm (Allen 1990, 53), Farmoor (Lambrick and Robinson 1979, 53–4) and Alchester (Booth 2001), while the rectangular plates have been found at Castle Hill (Booth 2010, 67). At Devizes, they are present in each phase, though the 2nd-century objects account for two thirds of the assemblage.

The function of these objects has been debated. Possible residue has been noted on an example from Didcot (Poole unpub.), indicating an association with food-preparation. In addition, several examples at Didcot were found with pottery wasters suggesting that they may also have been utilised for pottery production, perhaps serving as spacers to separate layers of pots (Swan 1984, 64–5). The examples from Devizes were not found in contexts

that can further the debate, though the lack of other forms of fired clay, including structural material suggests that they were used alone, possibly in hearths, rather than in ovens.

Catalogue of illustrated fired clay (Fig. 16)

1. Oven plate/disc (Fig. 16.1): seven refitting fragments from a flat plate with even flat upper surface, rougher lower surface and a straight bevelled undercutting edge. A scatter of chaff impressions occurs over the surfaces. Several black patches on the upper surface may be burnt residue; one is quite circular measuring 42mm dia.
No. frags: 14, wt: 395g, thickness: 18-22mm, width: >130mm, length: >140mm; fabric: QGl.
Context: 1010, ditch 6305, Phase 3 (C2); date: LIA–Roman

2. Oven plates: fragments of several different plates with smooth flat moulded surfaces. Two have edges: one incomplete has a rounded thickened edge *c*.36mm thick; the second piece, measuring 21mm thick, is polygonal (Fig. 16.3) with two straight edges at an angle of 125° with a flat bevelled profile. All pieces have one, usually oxidised surface (cerise, red, pinkish shades), whilst the opposite surface may vary from buff to dark grey/black. On one (Fig. 16.2) the oxidised surface has part of a sooted blackened circle *c.*110mm dia. reduced in the interior of the circumference, which suggests a pot or pedestal sat on the plate or supported it.
No. frags: 8 (2 illustrated), wt: 753g, thickness: 21, 27-28mm, length: >120mm; fabric: QGM.
Context: 3031, pit 63032, Phase 3b (M-LC2); date: LIA–Roman

[Figure 16: Fired clay plates]

Worked flint by Mike Donnelly

Introduction

Excavations at Lay Wood produced 301 worked flints and 15 pieces of burnt unworked flint, together weighing 105g (Table 8). The assemblage included a wide range of cores (9.6 per cent) and tools (20.3 per cent) with both these groups being over-represented compared to what would be considered a typical assemblage. The cores and tools suggest that much of the activity here could date to the Neolithic to early Bronze Age.

[Table 8: The flint assemblage]

Provenance

The assemblage was heavily dispersed over numerous contexts. Only one context contained more than ten flints (layer 5037=5199, 31 flints), while nine contexts had between six and ten flints (62 flints) and 128 contexts had five or fewer pieces (208 flints). Many of the contexts with decent-sized assemblages were clearly of a much later date. Context groups that could be genuinely prehistoric were very rare. However, larger assemblages were noted in several areas suggesting that some prehistoric foci might be identifiable. Mapping of features with good assemblages revealed three areas of flint concentrations. One was located in the eastern part of the site; another was located centrally around pit 5230; the third and largest was found in the north-east of the site. A fourth, much smaller concentration was also identified at the north-western edge of the excavation.

Table 9 shows the assemblage recovered from each main feature type. Unsurprisingly, most the flint was recovered from ditch fills (63.5 per cent). Pit fills (11.6 per cent), subsoil horizons (11.3 per cent) and other layers (10.6 per cent) each produced just over 10 per cent of the assemblage, while very few flints were recovered from topsoil and unstratified features.

[Table 9: The flint assemblage by context type]

Raw material and condition

The material tended to be in a good condition (Table 10). Lightly edge-damaged pieces dominated the assemblage, numerous fresh pieces were present and pieces with heavy edge damage were rare. Levels of patination/cortication were also fairly low with a clear concentration of lightly to moderately corticated pieces. These findings suggest that while many of the flints were residual, they have not moved far from their original context. It appears that most of the flints were probably present in subsoil layers that were either truncated by or eroded into later features.

In general, the flint was of good or excellent quality. Cortex type was recorded on 205 examples with 157 displaying chalk (76.6 per cent), 28 had heavily weathered chalk (13.7 per cent), ten had other weathered (4.9 per cent), seven had thermal (3.4 per cent)

and three had rolled beach or river gravel cortex (1.5 per cent). This indicates that most of the flint was recovered from on or near to the chalk. Although most of the flint would have derived from secondary sources, some may have been quarried from outcrops, recovered from cliff falls or even mined. Some of the flint does display more varied cortex types: thermal/re-used surfaces are evident on seven examples and some heavily rolled gravel cortexes have been identified. Some of these removals may relate to a limited, later prehistoric element of the assemblage.

[Table 10: Flint by condition and cortication]

The assemblage

The ratio of blade to flakes in the assemblage gives a moderate figure of 23.5 per cent (n=179) and it is likely that such a residual assemblage would originate from a mixture of numerous smaller assemblages, suggesting some very blade-rich assemblages amongst more common flake-based assemblages.

The tools covered a broad range of dates, but they appear to focus on the Neolithic and Bronze Age. Typically early material is rare; there are no unequivocal Mesolithic tools present, except for one or two core forms. Similarly, early Neolithic artefacts are rare with one possible residual collection from subsoil horizon 2002. Only seven of the 51 non-core tools are blade blanks, while 41 are flake blanks with three indeterminate examples present.

Most the diagnostic tools dated to the late Neolithic or early Bronze Age and included good examples of chisel and barbed-and-tanged arrowheads, thumbnail scrapers and many other short, well-made scrapers that are typical of that date. Retouched flakes were very common with no corresponding blade tool forms. Typically later prehistoric tools and related flake debitage were also rare with just one piercer on a squat hard-hammer flake alongside ten or so similar waste flakes. Ten hammer-stones were recovered, which is an unusually high figure for such an assemblage and the possibility that some of these tools may have served some function in the early Roman period should be considered.

Flint concentrations

Concentration 1

A group of 44 flints was identified towards the eastern edge of Area 1. Like the overall assemblage, this area produced a high proportion of tools and cores. The concentration was notable for its higher levels of blade debitage, suggesting that it may date to earlier than most the flintwork. Two blade cores and some blade tools were also present, reinforcing this assumption. However, the most diagnostic piece from this concentration was an early Bronze Age barbed-and-tanged arrowhead (Fig. 17, No. 5), indicating that some mixing had occurred. Concentration 1 also has the lowest incidence of hard-hammer struck pieces and the highest levels of soft-hammer bulbs, which supports an early date for at least part of this assemblage (Table 11).

[Table 11: Flint assemblage by concentration]

Concentration 2

Concentration 2 consisted of 37 flints recovered from the central part of the site. There were clear zones of low-level flint activity between it and the other concentrations. Many of the flints originated from pits in this area, some of which are undated and potentially contemporary with the flint, though the largest assemblage originated in post-medieval pit 5230 and was obviously residual. The assemblage was very core heavy and there were two hammer-stones related to core reduction. Many of the flakes from this area were related to the initial stages of core preparation (28 per cent versus 14.5 per cent in the overall assemblage). The remaining two tools were a knife and a combination notch/truncation tool. The core and tool assemblage were generally flake-based and the assemblage had very low levels of soft-hammer-struck material, despite containing several blades. These figures strongly suggest a Neolithic-early Bronze Age activity area related to core preparation with limited tool use (Table 12).

[Table 12: Hammer-mode by concentration]

Concentration 3

Concentration 3 represented the largest flint group at Lay Wood. It consisted of two associated spreads in the north-east corner of the site (5037/5199). Several very small ditches in this area had flint assemblages containing between five and ten pieces, suggesting

that the extent of layer 5037/5199 was once far greater and had been the source of these groups. The concentration contained significant amounts of cores and tools, many of which were hammer-stones related to core reduction. Only two of the 12 cores were related to blade production compared to six of 17 from the remainder of the assemblage. This assemblage also had lower levels of blade production and tools on blades than the overall assemblage. Tools from this concentration included numerous scrapers as well as retouched flakes awls/piercers and some more specialised artefacts, such as a microdenticulate and a fine scale-flaked knife (Fig. 17, No. 3). A chisel arrowhead (Fig. 17, No. 1) was undoubtedly late Neolithic in date, but was not in a good condition and may not directly relate to this concentration. Overall, the tool assemblage had a strong later Neolithic or early Bronze Age character that would include the knife, arrowhead, microdenticulate, several well-made, short end scrapers and finally, several thin, regular retouched flakes.

These figures strongly suggest a late Neolithic and/or early Bronze Age activity area where core reduction and tool production and use was exercised. The assemblage was quite fresh, though most if not all the flints were residual. The most likely explanation for such an assemblage is that one of the subsoil horizons had been subsequently truncated or had eroded into later features. Layers 5037/5199 and subsoil layer 3002 may well have represented the truncated remnants of more extensive, buried soil horizons. The flints were most likely buried after deposition as surface deposits, such as middens or other domestic spreads. Late Neolithic and early Bronze Age settlement activity can be difficult to identify and most of the assemblages of these dates relate to either pit clusters, funerary/ritual monuments and disturbed surface scatters. Settlement activity that did not leave deep natural-cutting features, such as pits and postholes, could still have generated quite extensive spreads of domestic waste at the surface.

Concentration 4

This small group of flint was dispersed amongst a cluster of seven ditch interventions. It could be argued that this group formed part of the larger Concentration 3, but there was a genuine gap in the flint spreads. The concentration was quite small so any interpretation of this material is tentative. However, the assemblage was entirely flake-based and contained significant retouch levels, which may suggest a task-related activity area, perhaps associated with hide preparation given the high percentage of scrapers.

[Figure 17: Worked flints]

Discussion

Although the flintwork is largely residual, much of it could relate to a sustained period of activity during the late Neolithic to early Bronze Age, suggesting the presence of a domestic focus. There was also a low-level scattering of flints that probably date to other periods. There were only a few pieces related to early prehistoric core maintenance, such as core tablets or crested pieces and a single core-rejuvenation flake. However, two cores are very typical of the conical, single-platform bladelet cores that strongly feature in late Mesolithic assemblages (e.g. Fig. 17, No. 4) and a small number of soft-hammer struck blades and bladelets which also likely date to this period. Four complex, cubic bladelet cores typical of early Neolithic assemblages were recovered, including two from the subsoil. These, as well as much of the remaining blade debitage and several microdenticulates (e.g. Fig. 17, No. 2), make up a convincing but limited early Neolithic component of the assemblage. The early Neolithic material may relate to some form of limited surface spread or midden deposit. Such deposits are often thought to have formed the focus of domestic waste deposition at early Neolithic sites, with a limited proportion of the surface spread usually making its way into pit deposits (Garrow *et al.* 2005; Anderson-Whymark 2008). Here, it is possible that those pits have been truncated away or they may lie beyond the limits of the excavation area.

The bulk of the assemblage appears to date to the late Neolithic to early Bronze Age. All the diagnostic tools recovered belong in that date range and most of the other tools, core types and flake debitage would also be happily accommodated there. This assemblage was quite fresh and cannot have been subject to much post-depositional disturbance. However, there was a general lack of prehistoric features on site and the flint would appear to have originated from surface spreads similar to those suggested for the early Neolithic material. This is problematic, as fresh but residual assemblages tend to be associated with the truncation of cut features, while material from surface spreads/middens is usually thought of as being in a worse condition than this assemblage. It is possible, given the very selective nature of this assemblage (high core and tool percentages) and the general lack of

flints from environmental sampling, that many pieces of the more heavily rolled, damaged, burnt and broken debitage were not identified from the mass of natural flint on site. This may explain why a largely fresh collection has been recovered from Roman features through erosion, redeposition and other forms of truncation.

The four concentrations of flintwork identified appeared to represent a genuine pattern in flint use on site. The areas included two that contained numerous cores and associated hammer-stones, one that was tool-heavy and a final area that included both. Concentration 1 at the eastern edge of site may well have been the focus of activity during the early prehistoric period, but there were some late Neolithic/early Bronze Age artefacts, including a fine barbed-and-tanged arrowhead. Such pieces are often stray finds associated with hunting/violence-related losses. Further late Neolithic/early Bronze Age flintwork from Concentration 1 was limited and it is possible that this part of the site was marginal to the main activity areas. Concentration 2 was very heavily geared towards core reduction via the use of flint nodule hammer-stones and this process was also prevalent in Concentration 3 in the northern part of the site, although here, tool production and use was also common. Concentration 4 was tool-heavy and appeared to focus on scrapers and their use. Scrapers did have a wider range of functions than is usually assumed (e.g. woodworking). However, use-wear analysis usually highlights hide-preparation as the main activity associated with these tools, and it is probable that this task was a key activity in the area around Concentration 4. While this picture of various activity areas could relate to several unconnected sites, or short-term visits, these concentrations may have been part of a larger domestic site. It was unclear whether the main concentration of domestic waste at Concentration 3 represented the centre of the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age foci, or if this midden/surface spread was peripheral to the site itself. It may be that the more tightly focused activity zones of Concentrations 2 and 4 were closer to the heart of the settlement activity represented here.

Middle Bronze Age and later activity was limited to a few typically squat, hard-hammer struck flakes, and possibly one or two cores and tools including a piercer. It should be said that much of the flake debitage from the site is undiagnostic and the actual proportion of flake debitage related to this activity could be higher. However, the large core and tool assemblage from the site appears to largely predate the later prehistoric period

and it would be unusual for the flake debitage not to be contemporary with the core and tool assemblage.

Regional comparisons

The immediate vicinity of Lay Wood has almost no records of previously discovered prehistoric activity. However, several sites are known within a few kilometres of the excavation, especially towards the eastern fringes of Devizes. Mesolithic activity includes at least 19 find spots from the wider Devizes area (AMEC 2013a), including probable Mesolithic or early Neolithic finds from Nursteed Close in Devizes (OA 2005). Late Neolithic activity is known from Brickley Lane, Devizes where a small, residual assemblage rich in tools and cores was recovered from a site that included a late Neolithic pit (Poore *et al.* 2002). Nursteed Close also contained probable late Neolithic or early Bronze Age flintwork, including several tools (OA 2005), while excavation of a Roman building at Southbroom School in Devizes also yielded a limited flint assemblage of Neolithic or Bronze Age date (Taylor 2013). In addition to this, the countryside of Wiltshire is rich in ritual and funerary monuments, especially on the Downs to the north of Devizes, in and around Avebury and in the environs of Stonehenge (Richards 1990). It is likely that prehistoric settlement in this heavily exploited region would have been quite extensive. Such activity has been difficult to identify. A large-scale settlement has been excavated at Durrington Walls, Wiltshire (Parker-Pearson *et al.* 2008), though many of the structures were quite ephemeral and unlikely to survive heavy ploughing. As such, settlement activity is often implied through scatters of flint tools and occasional pottery, and this may have been the case at Lay Wood.

Glass by Ian R. Scott

There are four pieces of glass recovered from the excavation, all of which are from post-medieval or later contexts. These comprise two body sherds of green glass, probably from 18th/19th-century wine bottles, a sherd from a modern, machine-moulded beer bottle, and a body sherd of green glass from a wine bottle or flask.

Cremated human bone by Helen Webb

Introduction

Two deposits of cremated human bone (5065 and 5104) were recovered during the excavation at Lay Wood. Both deposits were recovered from oval pits, measuring 0.9m by 0.7m (pit 5066, containing 5065) and 0.3m by 0.2m (pit 5105, containing 5104). Both features were very shallow (0.12–0.13m), and were probably truncated by later activity. Frequent charcoal inclusions were noted in the deposits.

Methods

Deposits 5065 and 5104 were subject to whole-earth recovery. It should be noted here that deposit 5104 was truncated during machining. However, the truncated part of the feature was fully recovered and integrated with the rest of the deposit.

Both deposits were processed by wet sieving. The material was then further sieved and sorted into >10mm, 10–4mm and 4–2mm fractions. Once dried, the extraneous material (e.g. stones) from the >10mm and 10–4mm fractions was separated from the cremated bone and discarded. Owing to the size of the 4–2mm fraction from deposit 5104, full sorting was not viable. Instead, a 20g sample was sorted to more reliably estimate the total weight of bone present in this fraction. The estimated weight is included in the results below, but is highlighted as such with 'est.' given after the weight. 2–0.5mm residues were also retained, and a comment was made on the proportion of bone present.

All remains were examined in accordance with the recommendations set out by the CIfA and BABAO (Brickley and McKinley 2004).

Results

A summary of the osteological findings for both cremation deposits is presented in Table 13. The total weights of deposits 5065 and 5104 were 33.6g and 221.6g respectively. Small quantities of bone were present in the unsorted 2–0.5mm residues but these would not have had a significant effect on the overall weights. Most bone fragments in both deposits were white in colour, with 20–30 per cent of the bone comprising grey and black fragments. In deposit 5065, the smaller of the two deposits, over a third of the total bone weight comprised fragments that were >10mm. Fragmentation was notably higher in deposit 5104, perhaps in part due to the machine truncation, with just 10.5 per cent of the bone comprising >10mm fragments, and well over half of the bone weight (56.6 per cent) within the 10–4mm fraction.

Almost half of the total bone weight (46.7 per cent) in deposit 5065 could be identified to element, compared with just 19.1 per cent of deposit 5104, undoubtedly owing to the higher level of fragmentation in the latter. Skull fragments were most abundant amongst the identified bone in both deposits, which probably reflects their easily identifiable morphology, rather than deliberate selection of the skull for burial. Apart from the skull fragments in deposit 5065, lower limb bones (femur and tibia) were also identified. All regions of the skeleton (skull, axial, upper and lower limb) were identified within deposit 5104. A full account of the identified skeletal elements in both deposits is available in the archive.

The minimum number of individuals represented in each deposit was one, and in each case, the morphology and size of the identified bone fragments was in keeping with adolescents or adults. In deposit 5104, the presence of completed permanent tooth root apices also confirmed that the individual was over 13 years of age (AlQahtani 2009). However, it was not possible to estimate sex and no lesions of pathology were observed.

[Table 13: Summary of cremation deposits 5065 and 5104]

Discussion

Each deposit contained the remains of a single individual, both adult or adolescent. Both deposits were well below the expected weight range for a cremated adult, which is 1,000g and 2,400g, with an average of 1,650g (McKinley 2000a, 269). It is impossible to know how much bone may have been lost because of truncation, but low bone weights are a common finding in archaeological cremation deposits, even from undisturbed features. Such deposits might represent cenotaph burials, where only a token amount of bone was deposited (McKinley 2000b, 42–3), or redeposited pyre debris, which generally comprises a mixture of bone fragments and fuel waste. Indeed, frequent charcoal was noted in both 5065 and 5104. Deposits of pyre debris are frequently encountered archaeologically and are not specific to any period (ibid. 41).

In both deposits, bone fragments were predominantly white in colour, indicative of full oxidation and a temperature of over 600^{o}C (McKinley 2004a, 11). Cremation deposits comprising largely white fragments are generally considered to represent an efficient cremation process in terms of heat attained and burning time. However, the presence of

20–30 per cent non-white bone fragments is not unusual, given the early Roman date of the remains. A large minority of black, blue and grey fragments are frequently noted in cremation burials of this date and it has been suggested that full oxidation of the bone may not have occurred (McKinley 2000a, 269; 2000b, 39; 2006, 84).

Animal bones by Martyn Allen

Introduction

The excavation at Lay Wood produced 1,079 animal bone fragments from 96 contexts. Specimens were identified to species and element, where possible, using the reference materials housed at Oxford Archaeology South. Levels of preservation and fragmentation were assessed, while evidence for age-at-death through dental wear and epiphyseal fusion, taphonomy (post-mortem modifications: butchery, burning and carnivore gnawing) and pathologies (pre-mortem modifications: disease and trauma) were also analysed. The methods used for each of these categories are specified in the relevant sections below.

Preservation and fragmentation

The preservation condition of each bone was scored between 1 to 5 based upon criteria set out by Behrensmeyer (1978) to provide an indication of the effects of weathering, prior to deposition, and bone diagenesis in the soil. A score of 1 reflects a specimen which is very well preserved with a fresh and generally unaltered surface, while a score of 5 indicates a specimen which has become extremely friable and has lost much of its outer surface through adverse conditions. The preservation of tooth fragments was not scored due to their different chemical composition in comparison with bone. The full results of this analysis are presented in the archive report. However, preservation levels varied considerably throughout the assemblage: none of the bones were found in a very good condition and around half of the assemblage was scored as either 2 or 3, while the other half was in a comparatively poor and friable state (Score 4 or 5).

The poor levels of preservation contributed to a relatively high degree of fragmentation within the assemblage. Many contexts produced large quantities of very small fragments, not all of which could be counted. Overall, just over two-thirds of the assemblage cannot be identified to species and of the 334 specimens which are identifiable,

214 are loose teeth. The poor levels of preservation appear to have affected material deposited in ditches more than in other context types; almost three-quarters of fragments from ditches were unidentifiable, while 50 per cent of the material from pits was identified to species. Pits seem to have provided much better conditions for bone survival. It is also possible that carcass parts placed in ditches were left exposed for longer periods prior to final deposition. Only two specimens, both cattle bones, were found to have been gnawed by dogs, though gnaw marks were difficult to identify on poorly preserved material.

Species representation

The assemblage consists of remains of cattle, horse, sheep/goat, pig and dog (Table 14). The limited species range is no doubt due to the relatively small assemblage size and poor levels of preservation. No evidence for goats was identified and all the ovicaprid remains are hereafter assumed to be from sheep. Bird bones are also notably absent; these may have suffered from fragmentation more than those of larger mammals.

The majority of the assemblage derives from Phase 3 features, which produced 624 fragments, plus 86 fragments from the Phase 3b northern enclosure. Smaller groups of animal bones were recovered from Phase 1 and Phase 2 features, alongside a few remains from undated and post-medieval contexts. The small sample sizes mean that it is impossible to examine changes in animal exploitation over time.

Cattle are the best-represented species in the assemblage overall, followed by horse and sheep in roughly equal quantities. The relatively high proportion of cattle and horse bones is likely to reflect preservation conditions, which had a detrimental effect on the bones of smaller mammals. There is no evidence for certain species being particularly favoured for deposition in either pits or ditches (Table 15).

Although the cattle assemblage is dominated by skull and tooth fragments, a range of elements from most other body parts is also present (Table 16). Horses, too, are represented by a range of elements, particularly from the hind limbs. As only relatively small sections of ditches were excavated across the site, there may be some bias in terms of element recovery of larger mammals and the pattern is not necessarily due to preferential treatment of certain limbs. Sheep remains are overwhelmingly dominated by tooth fragments, which as mentioned above most likely indicates that their smaller, less robust bones have suffered to a greater degree from fragmentation.

Pigs are only represented by six bones, all of which are mandible and tooth specimens. The single dog specimen pertains to a partial skeleton recovered from ditch fill 5347—this is described in more detail below.

[Table 14: Quantification of animal bones by phase]
[Table 15: Quantification of animal bones by context type]
[Table 16: Number and percentage of elements from identified species]

Age patterns

Where possible, tooth wear patterns were analysed on cattle, sheep and pig remains using Grant's (1982) recording criteria. Most recorded specimens were loose teeth rather than mandibles with molar rows, making it more difficult to establish age-at-death. Evidence for epiphyseal fusion of the long bones was also recorded. It must be noted, however, that the bones of young mammals, particularly neonates, are unlikely to have survived in the soil conditions of the site.

In total, dental wear was recorded on 17 sheep teeth, though ten of these probably derive from four individual mandibles. The data indicate that sheep were generally slaughtered between one and four years of age. One heavily worn first molar may have come an older ram or ewe. There are too few sheep bones in the assemblage to allow examination of epiphyseal fusion patterns. Although the dataset is limited, the pattern of sheep slaughter indicated by the dental specimens is fairly standard for most Romano-British rural settlements (Allen forthcoming). The mixed ages at which sheep were killed indicates that meat, dairy and wool, may all have been exploited.

Unfortunately, only two cattle and two pig specimens were available for age estimation. One cattle deciduous fourth premolar shows no sign of root formation, indicating that it was unerupted when the animal died. This animal perished in the first month of life and may have been perinatal. The presence of such a young animal provides some evidence that the inhabitants were engaged in cattle-breeding. Cattle long bones, however, were generally from skeletally mature animals.

The two pig specimens, a loose third molar and a mandible, were both from animals which were probably slaughtered between 12 and 18 months. In both examples, the third molars were unerupted or in the process of erupting.

All the post-cranial horse specimens were fully fused, and there is no evidence for foals under 18 months. None of the teeth were measured to estimate age, owing to the difficulty in differentiating between loose premolars and molars. While all the molars were worn, they tended to range in length, suggesting that horses of different ages were present at the site; some of the molars may have come from comparatively young animals.

Butchery

Only nine specimens exhibited butchery marks, including seven cattle bones, one sheep, and the partial dog skeleton (see below). All the butchery marks were small cuts made by sharp knives during skinning and dismemberment of the carcass. Butchered cattle bones included a skull fragment, a mandible, two pelves with marks found around the acetabulum, an astragalus and the distal shaft of a tibia. None of the horse bones were found to have butchery marks.

The general lack of butchery evidence is no doubt biased by poor preservation which makes cut marks difficult to see. The style of butchery, however, appears to reflect the careful use of knives rather than cleavers, and it may be that the manner which carcasses were processed left behind little evidence on the bones.

Burning

In total, 30 specimens from 13 contexts had been burnt to some degree. Almost all were small, fragmented pieces of bone which could not be identified to species. A small, fully calcined fragment of a pig mandible was recovered from ditch 5114. Most specimens were recovered from ditch deposits and were generally found with unburnt material, suggesting that much of was mixed prior to final deposition. Twelve specimens were blackened, while 18 were fully calcined and had clearly been exposed to very high temperatures.

The dog skeleton

The remains of a relatively small dog were recovered from the base of a Phase 2 ditch terminal (5346) in the southern part of the site. A range of skeletal elements were identified from most parts of the body (Table 17). Unfortunately, none of the long bones were recovered in a complete state, so a shoulder height estimation could not be

calculated. Although fragmented, the partial skeleton was well preserved in comparison with much of the faunal assemblage found elsewhere on the site. This is probably due to the fact that the body was placed towards the bottom of the ditch and may have become buried fairly rapidly.

The animal was skeletally mature, as the epiphyses of all the long bones were fused. However, dog bones are relatively fast to develop, with most elements fusing before the end of their second year (Silver 1969). The lack of any wear on the upper carnassial teeth perhaps suggests that the animal was comparatively young when it died, perhaps little older than three or four years. None of the bones showed any signs of pathology.

The most interesting aspect of the skeleton is that it had been butchered. Tiny cut marks measuring no more than a few millimetres were found on the anterior surface of the fifth metacarpal and on the medial sides of both tibia shafts, while a larger cut mark was found on the anterior surface of the radius. These butchery marks strongly suggest that the animal had been skinned for its pelt. However, three small cuts on the medial side of distal articulation of the humerus suggest that at least some parts of the carcass were also dismembered. In addition, two or three smaller cuts on the lateral side of the shaft of the humerus and a slice of bone cut away on dorsal surface of the ilium on the pelvis may indicate that flesh was being removed from the skeleton. It is possible, therefore, that the dog was eaten.

[Table 17: Composition of partial dog skeleton from ditch 5346 and evidence for butchery]

Conclusions

The faunal assemblage is of limited value for understanding the animal husbandry the site, due to the poor preservation conditions and high degree of fragmentation. Sheep and other smaller mammals appear to be under-represented, while the ratio of horse to cattle bones is relatively high. Although a larger sample is needed to better understand the exploitation of horses at the site, it possible that they were particularly important.

Evidence for livestock breeding is also limited, though the presence of perinatal/neonatal cattle hints that birthing and rearing of young calves may have occurred in the vicinity. The prevalence of ditches at the site, and the comparative lack of evidence for domestic occupation, perhaps suggests that the area was peripheral to the main focus of

the settlement and may have been primarily used for animal husbandry and livestock control.

The dog skeleton is of some interest. Although it could not be measured, the animal appears to have been relatively small, though perhaps not small enough to be described as a so-called 'lapdog'. The animal was probably around three or four years old when it died and several bones showed signs of careful butchery. The animal had been skinned and may also have been further dismembered, but whether the dog had been eaten is uncertain.

The position of the carcass towards the base of the ditch may be of some significance. It was very well preserved and, considering the general preservation conditions, seems to have been deposited and covered rapidly after skinning. Overlying ditch fills contained 2nd-century AD pottery. Remains of skinned dogs have been found at other Romano-British sites, such as a group of bones placed in a later Roman child grave at Asthall, Oxfordshire (Booth *et al*. 1996). However, whether the Devizes dog was of ritual significance is open to question.

Waterlogged plant remains by Julia Meen

Introduction

Two features from Phase 3, well 5176 and ditch 5526, extended deeper than the current level of the water-table. The deposits below these points may have been permanently waterlogged since they were first laid down, and consequently there was high potential for non-charred organic remains to be preserved. One-litre subsamples were taken from the lowermost-excavated fills of both features and processed by hand-flotation using the 'wash-over' technique to recover waterlogged plant remains. It should be noted that the well was not excavated to its base and the sampled material could relate either to natural silting while the well was in use or to later infilling. Flots and residues for each sample were collected onto 250µm meshes, and stored wet in sealed containers to prevent desiccation of remains. Both samples were then examined using a stereomicroscope at up to x40 magnification. All identifiable plant remains were extracted, identified to taxon using the comparative reference collection held at Oxford Archaeology South, and quantified. Sample 7 from well 5176 was extremely abundant in plant remains. Therefore, the flot was split and only one quarter was fully analysed; 100 per cent of the ditch fill flot was analysed. The taxa count from both samples are given in Table 18. Nomenclature follows Stace (2010).

Results

The flot from well 5176 contained a diverse range of well-preserved plant remains. Wells may contain material from a range of sources, which may include vegetation growing around or within the well, arable crops growing in nearby fields and their associated weeds, and plant material deriving from a range of domestic or agricultural uses disposed of in the well after the feature had gone out of use. These various pathways may account for the fact that the plant taxa recovered from the well comprised a range of ecological groups. Several of the plants inhabit wet or damp environments. Water mint (*Mentha aquatica*), spike-rush (*Eleocharis palustris*), water crowfoot (*Ranunculus* subgenus *Batrachium*) and sedge (*Carex* spp), for example, grow in or alongside pools and watercourses and may have been growing in the damp ground surrounding the mouth of the well, or within the well itself. There are also many grassland plants, including selfheal (*Prunella vulgaris*), fairy flax (*Linum catharticum*), buttercup (*Ranunculus* spp) and eyebright/bartsia (*Euphrasia/Odontites*) as well as abundant grass (Poaceae) caryopses, suggesting that the well was sited in a fairly open landscape. Archaeophyte taxa, which would have been common in arable fields before the advent of large-scale herbicide use, are strongly represented. These include henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*), small nettle (*Urtica urens*), field penny-cress (*Thlaspi arvense*) and poppy (*Papaver* spp). These may derive from material harvested from arable fields brought into the settlement, possibly by-products from the winnowing and sieving of the crop used as fuel, or alternatively arriving alongside straw used for animal bedding/feed or thatch.

The assemblage from the base of ditch 5526 was strongly dominated by seeds of common nettle (*Urtica dioica*). This sample had a relatively low taxa diversity, and the degraded condition of many of the remains, particularly seeds of rush (*Juncus* spp), suggests that the deposit may have suffered partial drying out, possibly due to a fluctuating water-table. This might create a bias in the range of taxa preserved, favouring preservation of woody remains such as elder seeds (*Sambucus nigra*). However, the high abundance of nettle surely reflects the dominant vegetation growing within or alongside the ditch, and the presence of sedges and rushes points to the ditch containing standing water for at least part of the year. There is little evidence of hedgerow or woodland taxa, and the frequent presence of grass caryopses again points to the environment surrounding the ditch being fairly open.

[Table 18: Quantification of water-logged plant remains]

Wood charcoals by Jill Thompson and H.M.E. Lewis

Introduction

The primary aim of the charcoal analysis was to characterise the woods from cremations 5065 and 5104 at Lay Wood, and to compare these with other Phase 1 materials which are likely to represent general debris from domestic and other fires. In addition, changes in wood-use or availability through the later periods of occupation were reviewed by analysing materials from Phases 2, 3 and 3b.

Methods

The material had been recovered by flotation to 0.25mm (flot) and 0.5mm (residue). Flot samples were dry sieved to >10mm, 4–10mm and 2–4mm fractions where this had not already been undertaken. Flot from well fill 5192 was sorted using a Leica Wild M3Z stereomicroscope at x10–x20 to release the charcoal fragments from matted rootlets.

The selection of samples for analysis took into consideration the size distribution of the fragments and their state of preservation. The condition of the charcoal was typically poor and friable, except for the material from well fill 5192 where waterlogging appears to have protected the charcoals. Across most of the assemblage, mineral deposits had accumulated within the charcoal, especially along the vessels. The external surface of each fragment was particularly affected and the contamination made it difficult to produce a clean-fractured surface and reveal the diagnostic anatomy. The core of the largest fragments was least affected by the mineral contamination and samples with these large fragments were consequently prioritised for analysis. The >10mm fraction was examined first, then part of the 4–10mm fraction was analysed to check whether further taxa were recorded. Groups of ten additional fragments from 4–10mm were examined until no new taxa were identified.

Charcoal fragments were prepared using standard procedures (Gale and Cutler 2000). They were split to reveal fresh surfaces of the transverse, tangential longitudinal and radial longitudinal sections. The transverse sections were viewed at low magnification with the initial intention to sort into types according to anatomical features, then to fracture well

preserved fragments from each 'type' to reveal clean surfaces of the tangential and radial longitudinal sections. However, the crumbly condition of the charcoal meant that it was unusually difficult to produce wide views of the transverse sections, and easier to see features in the longitudinal planes. An Olympus BX41 reflected-light microscope was used at magnifications up to x500. Identifications were made with reference to Schweingrüber (1979), Hather (1990) and artificially charred reference collections at the University of Bradford. Where possible identifications were made to genus, although there were also groups such as the Maloideae and *Salix*/*Populus* where it is not possible to distinguish wood anatomy at the genus level. The plant names follow Stace (2010).

The size of roundwood pieces was recorded, including the radius and the number of rings. For material from the cremation deposits, the width of the final growth ring was examined to estimate the season of cutting.

Results

The condition of the charcoal was often poor, as most fragments were mineral-infused. Much of the material from the pits and ditch fills was rounded, with abraded surfaces probably reflecting the fact that they had been dispersed from their point of burning to secondary deposits across the site. The sizes of individual fragments were larger from the cremations than from other types of deposit, with those from 5065 notably the largest. Twig material (<10mm diameter, as defined by Huntley 2010, 58) was noted in all contexts and much of the assemblage was from small stems. The results are tabulated below by fragment count but given the aims of the study, it is more helpful to compare the taxonomic diversity across the assemblage and the frequency/ubiquity across contexts (Table 19).

[Table 19: Charcoal identifications by fragment count]

Conclusions

Most of the charcoal identified from the excavations at Lay Wood was from common, native shrubs and trees, typical today of hedged boundaries around permanent fields and woodland. The range of taxa remained broadly similar across all phases of occupation. Given the vagaries of charcoal fragmentation, differential preservation and

variable sample size, it is generally considered most helpful to quantify charcoal assemblages by frequency or ubiquity. This records the proportion of samples in which a wood type occurs in the assemblage (see the final column in Table 19). At Lay Wood, this shows that Maloideae charcoals were recorded in six of the seven contexts examined. *Prunus, Salix/Populus* and *Quercus* followed, being identified in three of the contexts. Members of the Betulaceae (*Alnus, Betula* and *Corylus*) were represented in fewest contexts, and at lowest frequencies.

This analysis sought to compare the diversity of charcoals recovered from discrete features (cremation pits) which are likely to represent a short use for a specific purpose, with material from pits and ditches which are more likely to represent mixed deposits from multiple fires over a longer timeframe. This type of dispersed assemblage is generally thought to represent the local vegetation and here suggests shrubs bearing wild fruits and nuts (apple, hawthorn, pear, cherry and hazel), plus alder and willow/poplar trees, typically from damp or waterside situations, and birch and oak from drier areas. The cremation deposits had a lower taxonomic diversity than the pits, ditches and well, with cremation 5104 being dominated by oak, and cremation 5065 being dominated by pomaceous fruitwood. Here, the material most closely resembled reference material from wild apple (*Malus sylvestris*), and consisted of branchwood with charcoal diameters up to 80mm, which equates to wood up to *c*.100mm given the shrinkage when wood dries and becomes charred. The final growth ring in the Maloideae-type charcoal from 5065 showed dense latewood, suggesting that the wood had been cut in late autumn/winter. The material in these contexts is thought to be fuel debris from the funeral pyres (see Webb above) and may also have included wooden objects added to the fire.

Fuel for the pyre is likely to have been sourced from locally-available wood, selected according to its burning quality, perhaps taking into consideration cultural significance of the trees and/or the smell of the fire. Applewood emits a distinctive aroma and it is still used to smoke food products. The use of a single taxon for Roman cremation pyres is noted across north-west and central Europe (Deforce and Haneca 2012), and in the British Isles there is a long record of oak and/or pomaceous fruitwood being used for pyres from the Bronze Age onwards (Gale 1997; Thompson 1999; Smith 2002; O'Donnell 2016). At Lay Wood, *Quercus* and Maloideae charcoal were also recorded in the mixed, secondary deposits, suggesting that those types of fuel were not restricted to funerary rites and were

also regularly used for heating and cooking, sourced from trees growing locally in woodland and hedges.

Discussion

Problems and limitations of the evidence

The excavation at Lay Wood has revealed evidence of relatively intensive rural activity dating to the early Roman period extending over nearly two hectares. However, several factors have affected the nature and quality of the evidence, which inhibits our overall understanding of the site.

Topsoil and subsoil layers overlying the site were comparatively thin and a relatively minimal amount of stripping was required to reach the archaeological horizon. Large post-medieval field boundaries cut across the site and it seems certain that agricultural activities associated with them had resulted in truncation of the upper levels of the existing features. Many of the Roman ditches were quite shallow and shallower features may have been lost altogether. There is also considerable disturbance from modern service trenches that have been laid across the site.

An unexpectedly large number of archaeological features was revealed during excavation (see *Introduction*). Consequent time and financial constraints meant that only a minimal proportion were fully excavated. The artefactual and environmental assemblages recovered therefore represent a small proportion of the overall potential. While it is believed that the samples are representative, this cannot be certain and it is therefore difficult to assess how much this bias affects our understanding of the economy and other social aspects of the site.

The indistinct character of many of the fills encountered caused an additional problem. Ditch fills across the site were relatively homogeneous and, in many cases, it was difficult to clearly identify cut relationships, even where it was obvious that re-cutting or modification of ditch alignments had occurred. Very often, fills consisted of a fine, silty clay, which alongside the short chronology of the site suggests that features were silting up quite rapidly and required continual maintenance. This made it difficult to distinguish between features of Phases 2 and 3, and to recognise a coherent plan of the overall site in any one phase.

Despite these problems, several areas of discussion can be expanded, including the residual nature of prehistoric activity in the vicinity, the character of the 1st-century AD settlement, an apparent reorganisation of the settlement around the beginning of the 2nd century, some evidence for the economy of the site, and the eventual abandonment of the settlement.

Prehistoric activity

A sizable assemblage of over 300 worked flints was recovered during the excavation (see Donnelly above). The finds were fairly consistently dated to the later Neolithic and early Bronze Age. The bulk of the material was recovered from early Roman ditches, though this is unsurprising given the ubiquity of linear features across the site. A sizable number of flints were also found in pits, layers and the subsoil, indicating that they were widely distributed. No features of later Neolithic or early Bronze Age date were discovered, and all the flints are likely to be redeposited. Reworking of the agricultural soils throughout later prehistory and beyond no doubt disturbed many of these finds from their original contexts. Nonetheless, the presence of concentrations of material suggests that many of the flints may not have moved far from their original locations. Very few of the flints exhibited heavy wear or undue damage, while levels of cortication were relatively low, which suggests that the material was not exposed for long, nor had it been disturbed to a degree that the re-cortication process had been exacerbated. The frequency of flints and their condition indicates the presence of later Neolithic/early Bronze Age activity on or close to site and may represent a local settlement.

The mid–late 1st-century settlement (Phase 1)

The mid–late 1st-century landscape is characterised by a series of newly laid-out features including field boundaries, small enclosures, two trackways, a possible roundhouse and cremation burials. The dating evidence for this phase is largely based upon the presence of early Savernake-type wares, fabric types that are distinguished from the more 'Romanised' version of this fabric particularly characteristic of the later 1st/early 2nd century AD. It is not known when production of these ceramic types began, but it is likely to have been in the late Iron Age rather than the early Roman period. However, although early Savernake-type sherds dominated assemblages from Phase 1 features they were routinely

accompanied by small numbers of sherds of more 'Romanised' fabrics. Unless that material was intrusive this suggests that occupation at the site did not begin until the post-conquest period. In addition to pottery, a mid-1st-century AD Durotrigian brooch was recovered from a Phase 3 ditch, though this may have been in use for some time before it became buried.

Linear features dating to this phase are noticeably narrower and shallower than many of the Phase 2 and Phase 3 ditches. Phase 1 ditches in the central and southern parts of the site tend to be aligned in a NW–SE direction, though none appear to fully delineate complete fields. Two trackways indicate the direction of access into the central part of the site, one coming from the north-west and the other from the south. A gap in one of the ditches of the southern trackway indicates that access to some areas may have been controlled by gates, since postholes dug into the terminal of one of the sections indicated the presence of a wooden structure.

Two irregular, linear features in the northern part of the site appear to have been small stock enclosures, though one was very close to a group of three cremation burials and may have been related to the burial ground (see below).

Other than the presence of a limited amount of pottery, there is little direct evidence of domestic occupation in Phase 1. Only one probable building was identified from this phase. A circular gully (6106) measuring *c.*9m across may represent the presence of a roundhouse—more probably serving a drainage function than defining the position of the wall. It is notable that this is the only known building from the site. The gully produced mostly sherds of the early Savernake fabric E83 and small sherds of fabric R34 from its fills, this material having a broad mid–late 1st-century date. If the gully defined a circular building, its foundations are no longer observable as no evidence for posts were found. It is possible that such features were truncated by later activity. An alternative explanation is that the building was built in cob, which would leave little archaeological trace (see below). Despite partial truncation by later features, enough of the gully survives to indicate that it was incomplete on its south-east side, a feature that is consistent with the classic alignment of roundhouse entrances (e.g. Oswald 1997).

Burial activity (Phase 1)

Several cremation deposits were found close to the western edge of the excavation trench. One (5066) was placed within a larger, shallow, irregularly shaped pit which may

have been a tree-throw hole. The cremation deposit contained 34g of burnt bone, a single early Savernake sherd, and a quantity of charcoal. The bone material included fragments of skull and lower limbs from an adult or adolescent of unknown sex, and most of the bone was predominantly white, indicating that it had been heated above 600^{o}C (see Webb above). To the east of this burial, three small but similarly sized pits were found in a line a few metres apart. The northernmost pit (5105) contained approximately 222g of bone representing a range of elements from a single skeleton. This was recovered alongside a quantity of charcoal, plus numerous nails and hobnails (see below). As with cremation 5066, much of the bone was white in colour. The middle pit (5397) contained a quantity of charcoal and a single fragment of burnt bone, while the southernmost pit (5048) was empty and produced no evidence for burnt remains.

The quantity of bone recovered from 5066 and 5105 is well below the expected weight usually recovered from Romano-British cremation deposits. It is possible that the upper levels of the pits were truncated by later activity. This may explain their small size, which average around 0.3m across. Nonetheless, the fact that varied amounts of bone were recovered from each pit indicates that only a proportion of the pyre debris was deposited in each. Although no cremated material was found in 5048 this may have been a cenotaph feature, where a pit was dug as a memorial, but for unknown reasons the body was not available for burial. This is a phenomenon which has been recognised in several other Romano-British cemeteries in Britain (McKinley 1997; McKinley 2004b; Boston and Witkin 2006; Simmonds *et al.* 2008, 137–8).

Other than the sherd found, almost certainly incidentally, in cremation 5066, the only evidence for grave goods is the collection of hobnails found in cremation 5105. Sieved samples produced a total of 52 hobnails, which could have derived from a single pair of leather shoes (Burandt 2016). It is possible that the shoes were worn by the cremated individual and that the hobnails were subsequently gathered up in the pyre debris. However, since it is likely that only part of the individual's remains was collected and buried, it is odd that so many hobnails made their way into the grave. The shoes may have been placed on the pyre and burned separately from the body, though again it seems probable that the hobnails would have been dispersed before final burial. A more likely explanation is that the shoes were not on the pyre, but placed in the pit unburnt as a separate grave good.

The dating of the cremation deposits is tentative. The single sherd from cremation pit 5066 suggests that the feature dates to the mid–late 1st century AD. It is reasonable to suggest that the other cremations were broadly contemporary as they were located less than 10m from 5066. The hobnails in 5105 could also be consistent with an early Roman date. It is possible, however, that pits 5105, 5397 and 5048 were later in date.

Settlement reorganisation (Phase 2)

Around the end of the 1st century AD or the beginning of the 2nd century, many of the existing features laid out in the mid-1st century appear to have been abandoned and a new series of ditches was laid out on different alignments. Most of the features assigned to Phase 2 can be seen to cut Phase 1 contexts and have sufficient evidence of being cut by later features. The pottery assemblage from Phase 2 ditches is heavily dominated by Savernake pottery. These features tend to concentrate around the central and the western part of the site. However, the transition from Phase 2 to Phase 3 is less than clear-cut and there was a considerable amount of re-cutting and redefinition of ditches throughout the 2nd century AD, which complicates our understanding of the wider layout of the settlement in Phase 2.

To begin with, it is difficult to see whether the changes witnessed around the turn of the 2nd century AD were specific to the Lay Wood site or were reflective of local or regional changes. The major Roman infrastructure was already in place by this time, as signified by a road running from *Aquae Sulis* (Bath) eastwards to *Cunetio* (Mildenhall). Settlement expansion along this road is noted at Silbury Hill, around 10km north-east of Lay Wood, where a sizable roadside settlement is thought to have been established at the beginning of the 2nd century (Crosby and Hembrey 2013). Few other rural sites are known from the immediate area of the site, though three examples exist to the south-west within Devizes. At Southbroom School, the construction of a ditched enclosure is dated to the early 2nd century. This began to backfill within 100 years and there is some evidence for continued activity in the 3rd century (Taylor 2013). At Brickley Lane, a ditched trackway appears to have been established in the 2nd century AD, just north of a late Iron Age settlement which had been abandoned by this time, and a series of Roman field ditches was also identified (Poore *et al*. 2002). At Wayside Farm, a mid–late Iron Age open settlement went out of use at the end of the 1st century AD, and no evidence for 2nd-century activity was found

(Valentin and Robinson 2002). This evidence suggests that changes in the local rural landscape were occurring around the beginning of the 2nd century, though whether these were directly related to the situation at Lay Wood is uncertain.

An explanation for the settlement reorganisation which occurred at this time (and for the eventual abandonment of the site by the 3rd century AD—see below) somewhat rests on the dating of the potential villa building *c.*400m to the east. The evaluation by Wessex Archaeology across the entire 17.5-hectare site produced a pottery assemblage which was similar to that from the current excavation (WA 2013, 14–6). It amounted to 565 sherds, many of which came from the villa, comprising mainly local Savernake and grey wares, with much smaller numbers of oxidised, flint-tempered, black-burnished, grog-tempered, Central Gaulish samian and north Wiltshire colour-coated ware sherds. Nearly all this material dated consistently to the 2nd century AD (ibid., 5–9).

Only two sherds from the evaluation, both of dropped-flange bowls of late 3rd- or 4th-century date, were certainly late Roman pieces. These were recovered from an evaluation trench located next to the current Area 2 excavation where 3rd–4th-century pottery was recovered. These few finds are fairly insignificant and do not necessarily imply significant occupation of the site at that time.

The ceramic evidence suggests that the settlement reorganisation observed in the main excavation in the south-western part of the site is broadly contemporary with the occupation of the potential villa and may well be related to it.

The 2nd-century settlement (Phases 2 and 3)

The pattern of ditch-digging at Lay Wood indicates that continual modifications to the site were being undertaken over a relatively short period. The difficulties encountered in identifying the relationships between different ditches have been mentioned above. In some areas of the site, the maintenance and re-cutting of ditch sections were quite intensive. The site is relatively low-lying, as signified by the location of the Kennett and Avon Canal around 100m to the south, and it is possible that drainage was an issue in the Roman period.

The co-axial enclosure system 6301 located in the south-western part of the site is perhaps the most obviously arranged set of features. Its identification was aided by the fact that the enclosures were in an area which was relatively free of pre-existing features, and

there were very few subsequent modifications. The regular form of the enclosure system indicates that it was laid out in a single episode. A lack of internal features and evidence for domestic or industrial activity suggests that it was probably used for corralling animals. An entrance to the southern part of the enclosure system is evident from the gap between the eastern boundary ditches, and the internal arrangement of ditches here indicates that livestock could have been funnelled through the system. The enclosure ditches appear to have been quite shallow; none were found to be deeper than 0.3–0.4m, though the upper levels were truncated by later ploughing and it is impossible to know how deep they originally were. Part of the enclosure system may have been defined by hedges, as indicated by cut [2042] where the base of the ditch contained evidence of plant roots.

Well 5176 in the northern part of the site appears to have been a substantial feature, measuring 3m across at the top and 1.7m across the shaft. It is not known when the well was first dug, since it was only excavated to a depth of 1.3m. There was no evidence that the well was lined. Its sides were relatively uneven and parts appear to have subsided. The recovery of two mid-2nd century AD, black-burnished ware sherds from a deposit around a metre down suggests that it had been largely backfilled by this time. Other than the pottery the feature produced very few finds, including two fragments of Roman brick and a sheep's tooth.

The recovery of black-burnished ware pottery from the well's upper fill provides a *terminus post quem* for the northern enclosure 6314, whose construction cannot have been earlier than about the middle of the 2nd century AD, making it one of the latest features to appear at the site. The enclosure was relatively large, bounding an area around 2,000m^2. For the most part, the enclosure was formed by a single ditch on its west, north and east sides, though truncation by a post-medieval ditch means that any southern boundary would have been largely destroyed. The series of parallel, curving ditches on the outside of its north-eastern corner is difficult to explain. The internal ditch which formed the north and east sides of the enclosure was cut by a second ditch that lay immediately to its north-east. This outer ditch ran east along the northern section from the area of the well, respecting the line of the first ditch. However, it did not continue far south along the east side of the enclosure. At least three further ditches to the north-east clearly respect the corner of the enclosure, though these appear to derive from an area to the north of the excavation trench. It was

also evident from the size of the main enclosure ditch that its eastern side had suffered more from later truncation.

The area within the enclosure contained a series of sub-circular, wide shallow pits, including a group of four or five intercutting features close to the centre of the enclosure and around ten more isolated examples. The recovery of mid–late 2nd-century pottery sherds from one of the pits shows that they were probably contemporary with the enclosure, and their proximity to each other suggests that they may have been related in some way. However, their positioning does not form any coherent pattern and their bases were generally wide and flat, indicating that they do not represent a building or some other structure. The depths of the pits varied, but they were generally shallow, which suggests that they had been heavily truncated by later ploughing. Nonetheless, their overall function is very uncertain.

One explanation for the pits is that they might have been dug to extract earth for cob construction. There is no evidence for buildings in Phase 2 or 3, though domestic activity is indicated by the quantity of pottery, animal bones and quern stones recovered from several pits and ditches. It is possible, though not demonstrable, that cob was used for walling. Cob is made from clay subsoil mixed with water and a fibrous organic material such as straw to provide stability. It does not require specially made and potentially costly building materials like brick and tile, or the addition of mortar or nails. The nature of its construction also means that cob walls are unlikely to be easily identifiable in archaeological contexts.

The local economy

Fairly sizeable environmental and artefactual assemblages were recovered from the site, though the character of the local economy is difficult to comment upon owing to the varying nature of the preservation of different categories, particularly organic materials. The pottery assemblage essentially paints a picture of local production and use. There is a clear dominance of Savernake wares which were produced less than 20km from the site in the early Roman period. However, some of the pottery fabrics found in fairly large quantities, particularly R34, are difficult to pin down to a specific source, and this may have been more local than either the Savernake kilns or the north Wiltshire kilns, only a few kilometres more distant. The dominance of Savernake pottery continued into the 2nd century AD after the

reorganisation of the site, though other ceramic types become more frequent around this time. The appearance of South and Central Gaulish samian and Dorset black-burnished wares suggests some interaction with emerging market centres within the region, but at levels which are unremarkable.

In terms of local agriculture, cattle and horses were the most common domestic livestock represented in the faunal assemblage. Preservation conditions were variable and much of the assemblage was quite heavily fragmented, as signified by the high proportion of loose teeth. This factor is likely to bias survival in favour of the remains of larger mammals whose bones tend to be more robust. However, pig remains were very rare; goats were not identified at all, although this is not unusual. It seems likely that the livestock economy was fundamentally based upon the husbandry of cattle and sheep, with horse-keeping also being of some importance. Cattle and sheep would have been important for secondary products including traction, milk and wool, while there appears to have been a preference for the meat from young sheep (though this is not unusual for the Roman period). Unlike the bones of cattle and sheep, none of the horse remains exhibited butchery marks and although the sample size is small, there is no evidence that horse meat was eaten. Instead, horses were probably important for transport and perhaps as mounts in managing other livestock.

The importance of arable agriculture is open to question. Although several environmental samples were taken from a range of features, the recovery of charred cereal remains was notably poor. Their occurrence in waterlogged deposits was also negligible (see Meen above). However, the identification amongst the waterlogged material of plant types common in arable fields is clearly suggestive of cereal cultivation in the vicinity. These may represent by-products from winnowing or perhaps the use of straw for animal bedding and/or fodder. Cereals were being processed at the site, as evidenced by the recovery of fragments from five rotary querns, all of which fit a late 1st/2nd-century AD date range (see Shaffrey above). Charred cereal remains were, however, much better represented in samples taken during the evaluation of the villa site, *c.*400m to the east. Here, relatively high numbers of cereal items were examined from three deposits. These included grain, glume base and spikelet fork fragments from hulled wheat and barley (WA 2015, 18). If the villa site and Area 1 were components of the same establishment, the difference between the charred cereal assemblages from the two sites may be explained by variation in the

spatial organisation of specific activities across the settlement complex. It is possible that Area 1 was a peripheral area, perhaps primarily involved in livestock management, with other activities being undertaken elsewhere.

Ritual activity

In general, there is very little evidence for ritual activity at the site. As discussed above, the cremation group found in the western part of the site may have represented a small cemetery/burial ground. This is tentatively dated to the 1st century AD.

Other possible ritual deposits include a large part of a narrow-mouthed jar/flagon (Fig. 12, No. 6) placed on the base of Phase 3 pit 5283. In the southern part of the site, a small dog had been placed at the base of a Phase 3 pit or ditch terminal (5437). Interestingly, the dog had been butchered prior to burial. The skeleton included cut marks on its foot bones, its lower and upper leg bones, and its pelvis. Such a butchery pattern suggests that the animal had been skinned and may also have been partially dismembered. It is uncertain, however, whether any part of it had been eaten. Its placement at the base of the terminal indicates that it was buried soon after the digging of the ditch.

Site abandonment

The circumstances of the eventual abandonment of the site are enigmatic. Ceramic evidence strongly suggests that the site did not continue into the 3rd century and may have been abandoned by the last quarter of the 2nd century AD. This indicates that occupation of the site began and ended within about 150 years.

As discussed above, the date of occupation of the potential villa building *c.*400m to the east is broadly contemporary. The sherds of late 3rd- or 4th-century AD date are not necessarily evidence for continued use of the villa in the late Roman period and may be stray finds from later local activity. If the villa was in use after AD 200, more late Roman material would be expected. This suggests that the abandonment of the villa coincided broadly with the cessation of activity in the south-western area. Why the site was abandoned at this point is unclear, though it may reflect local changes in land tenure.

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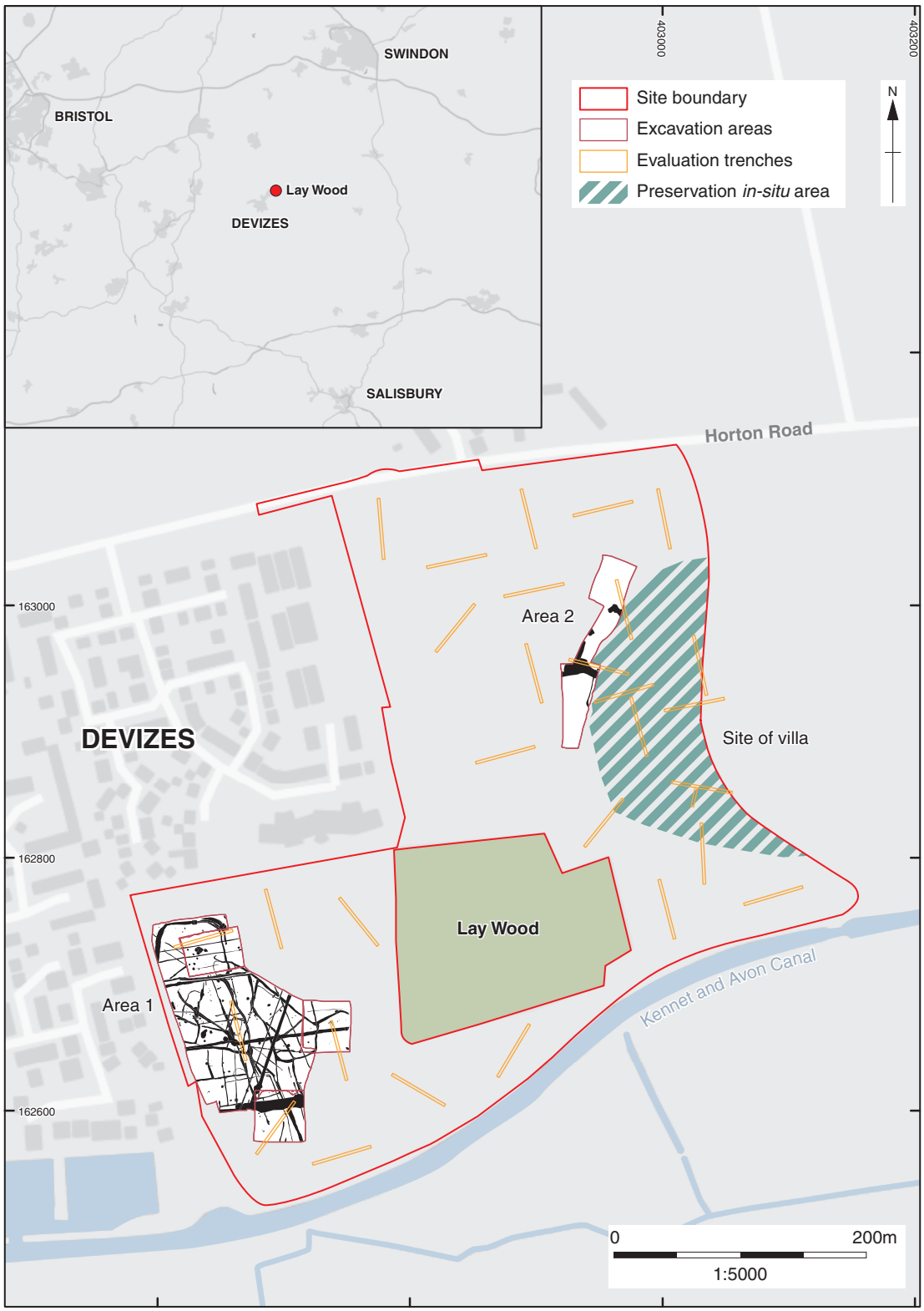

Figure 1: Site and trench locations

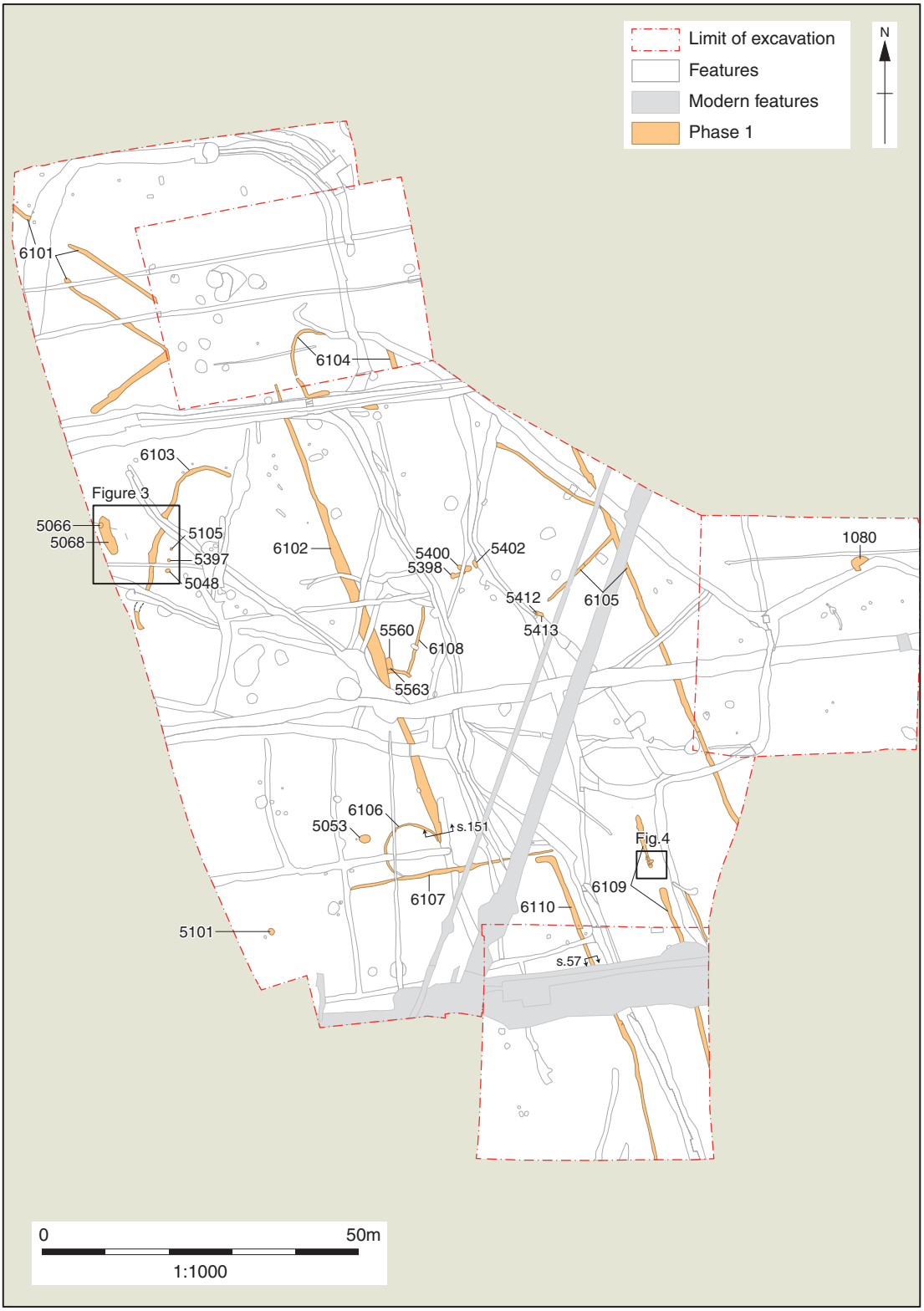

Figure 2: Phase 1 site plan

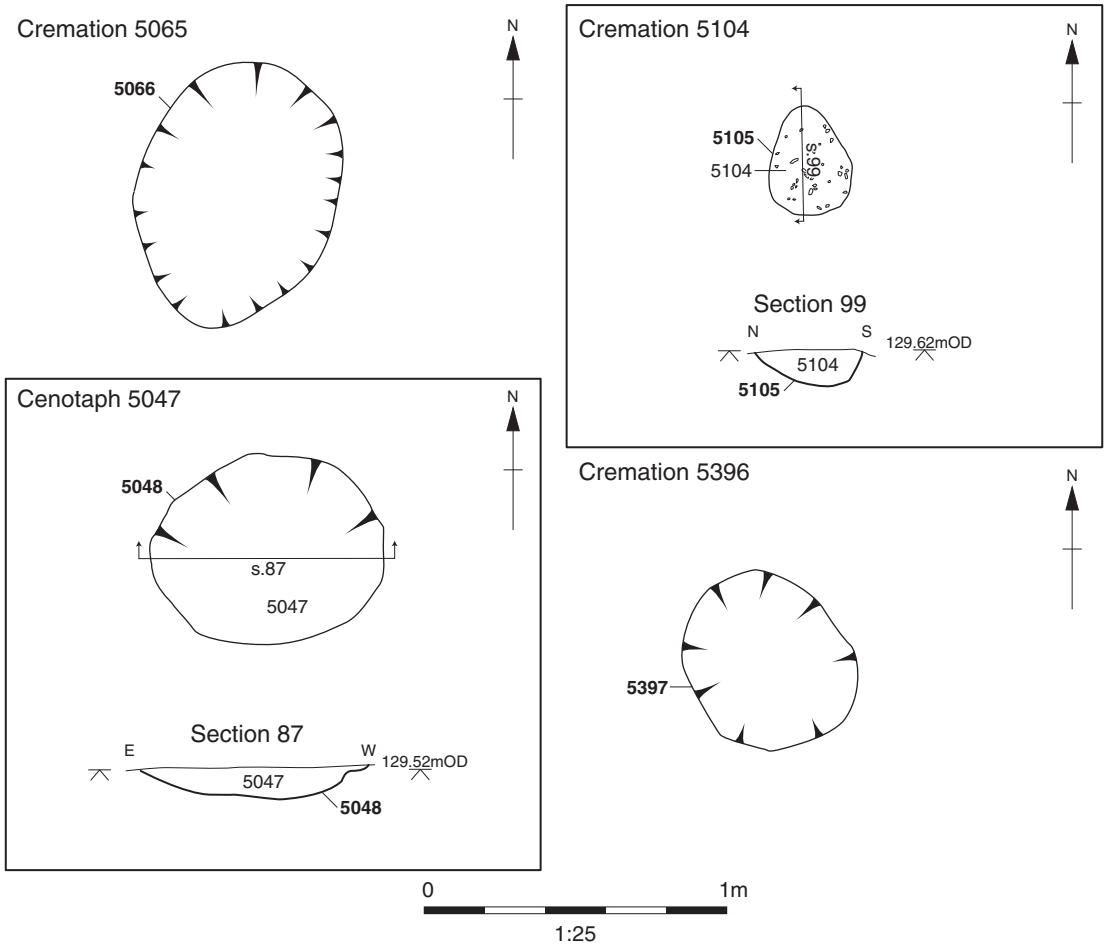

Figure 3: Plans and sections of cremations (phase 1)

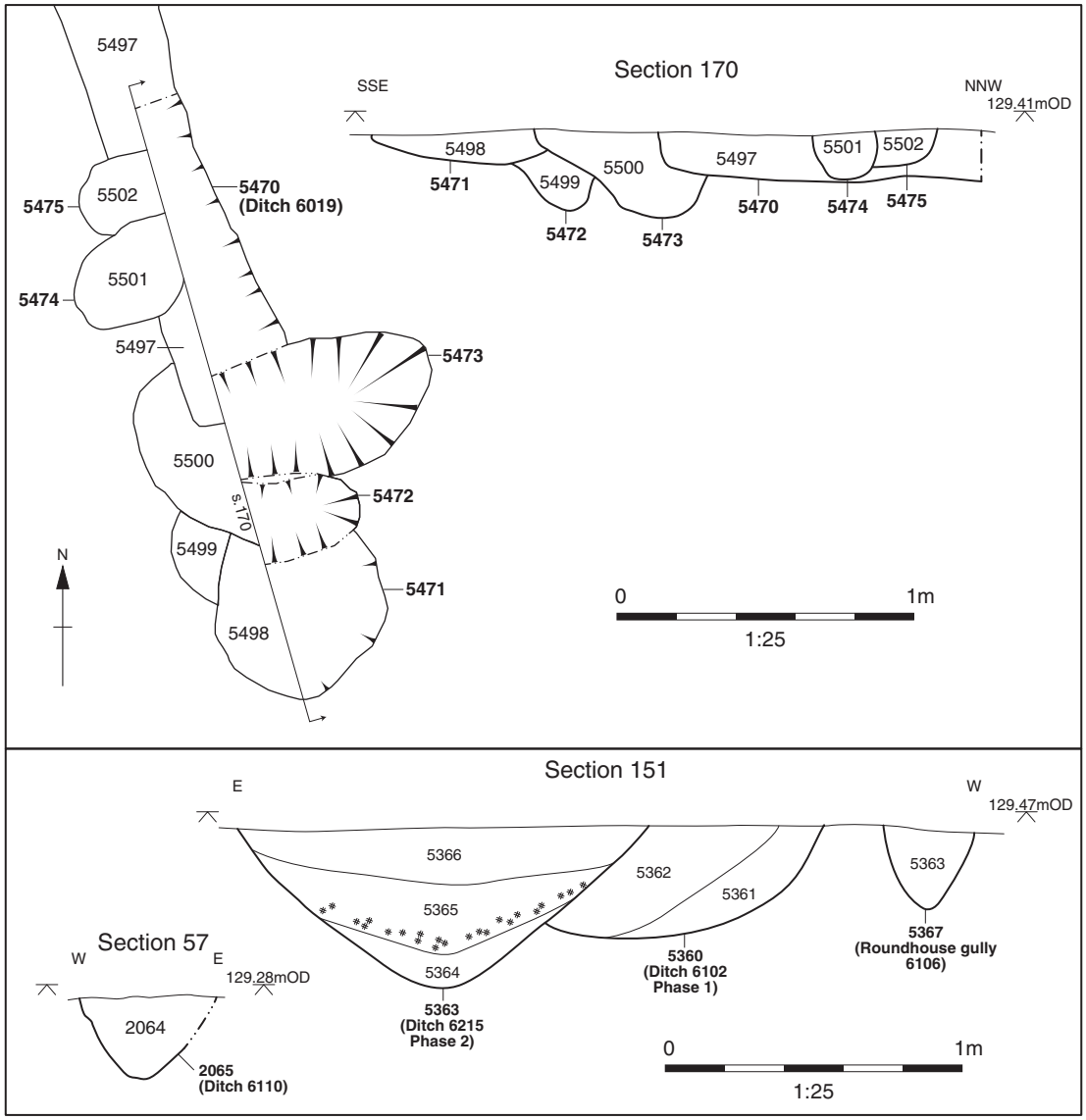

Figure 4: Selected Phase 1 ditch and sections

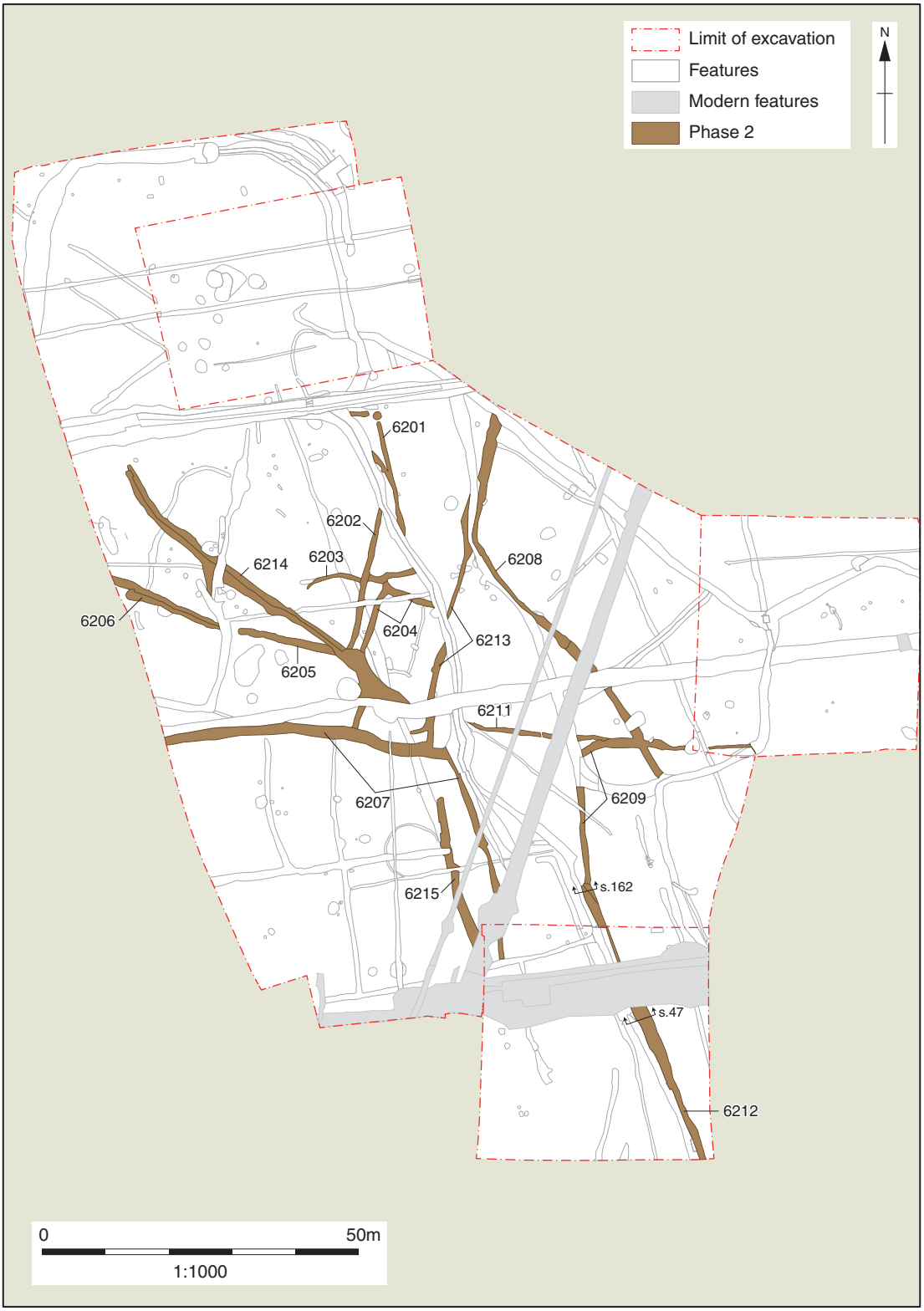

Figure 5: Phase 2 site plan

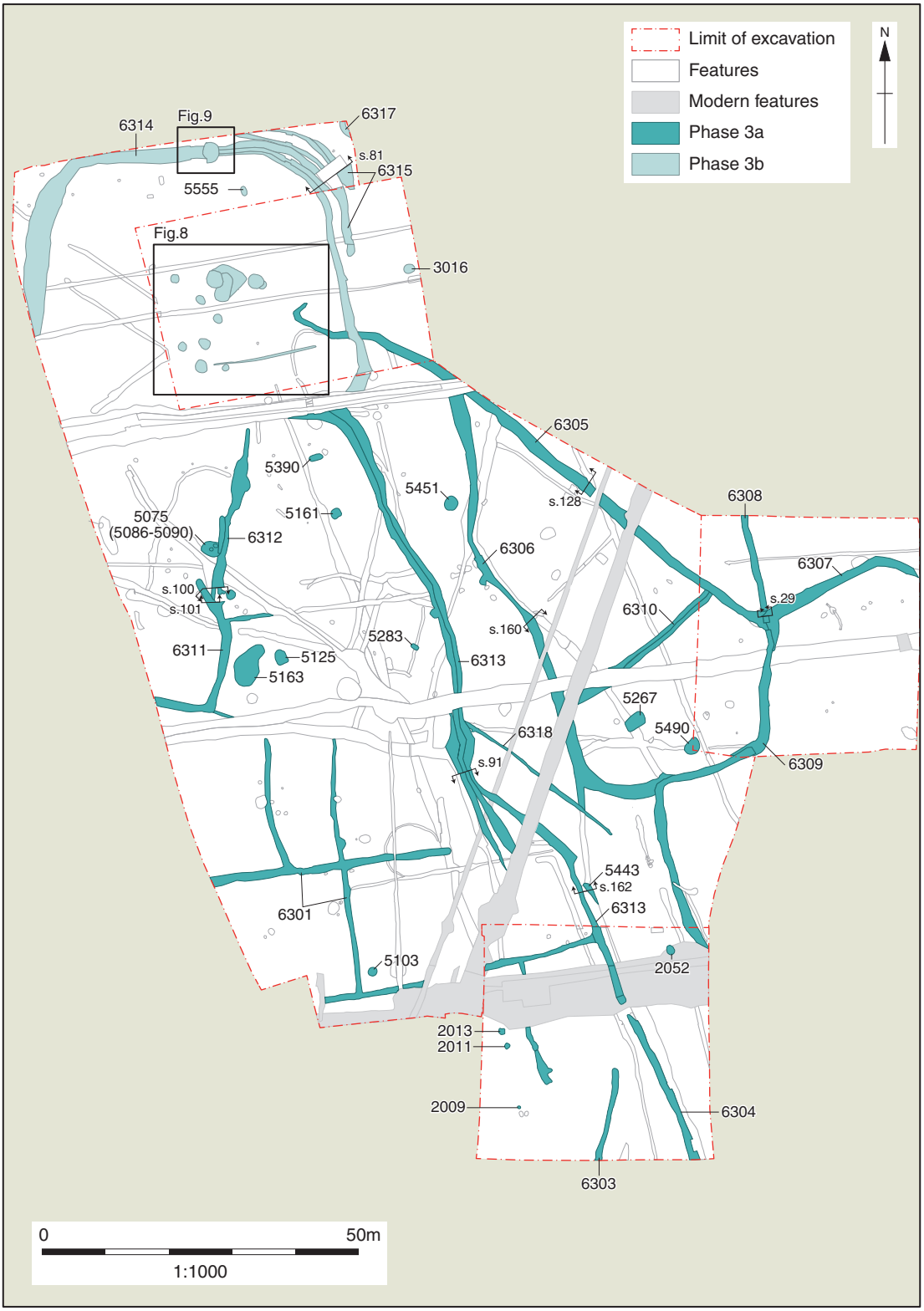

Figure 6: Phase 3 site plan

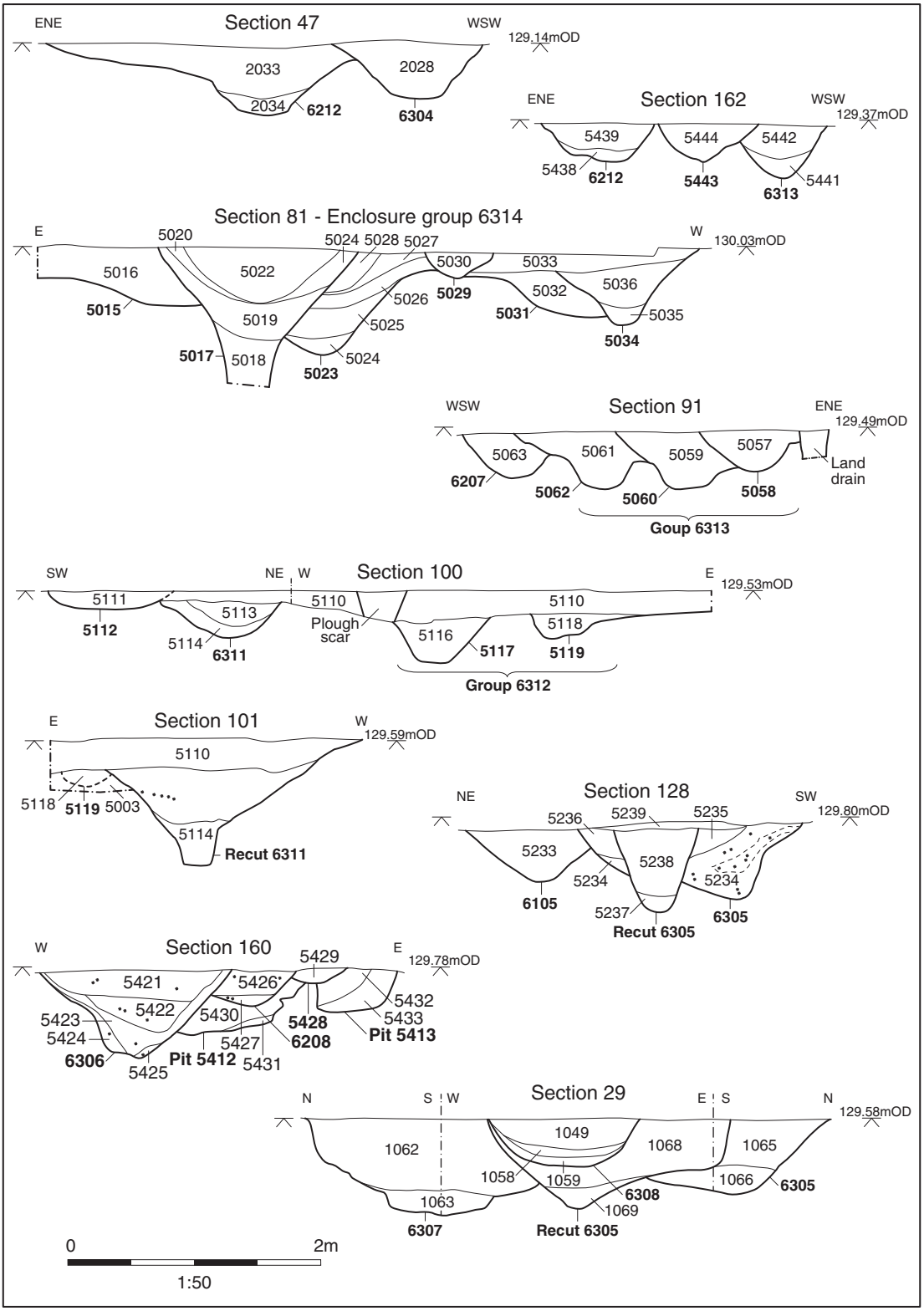

Figure 7: Selected Phase 2 and 3 ditch sections

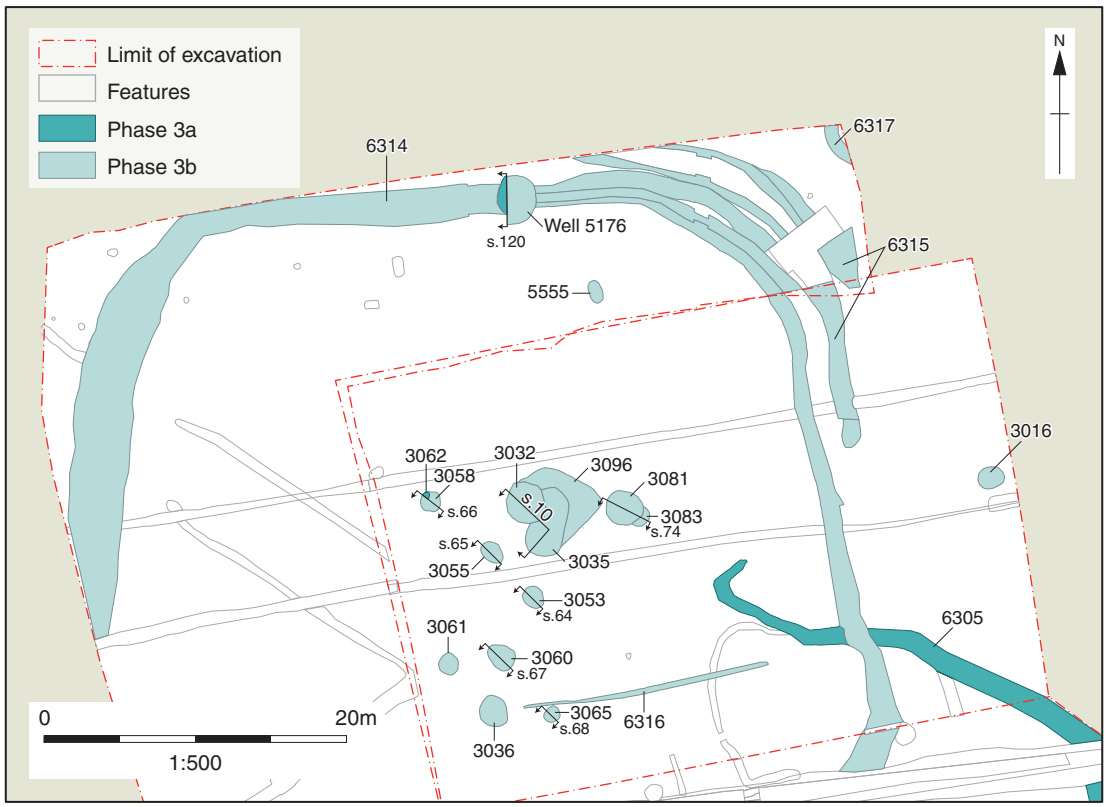

Figure 8: Plan of enclosure 6314 (Phase 3b)

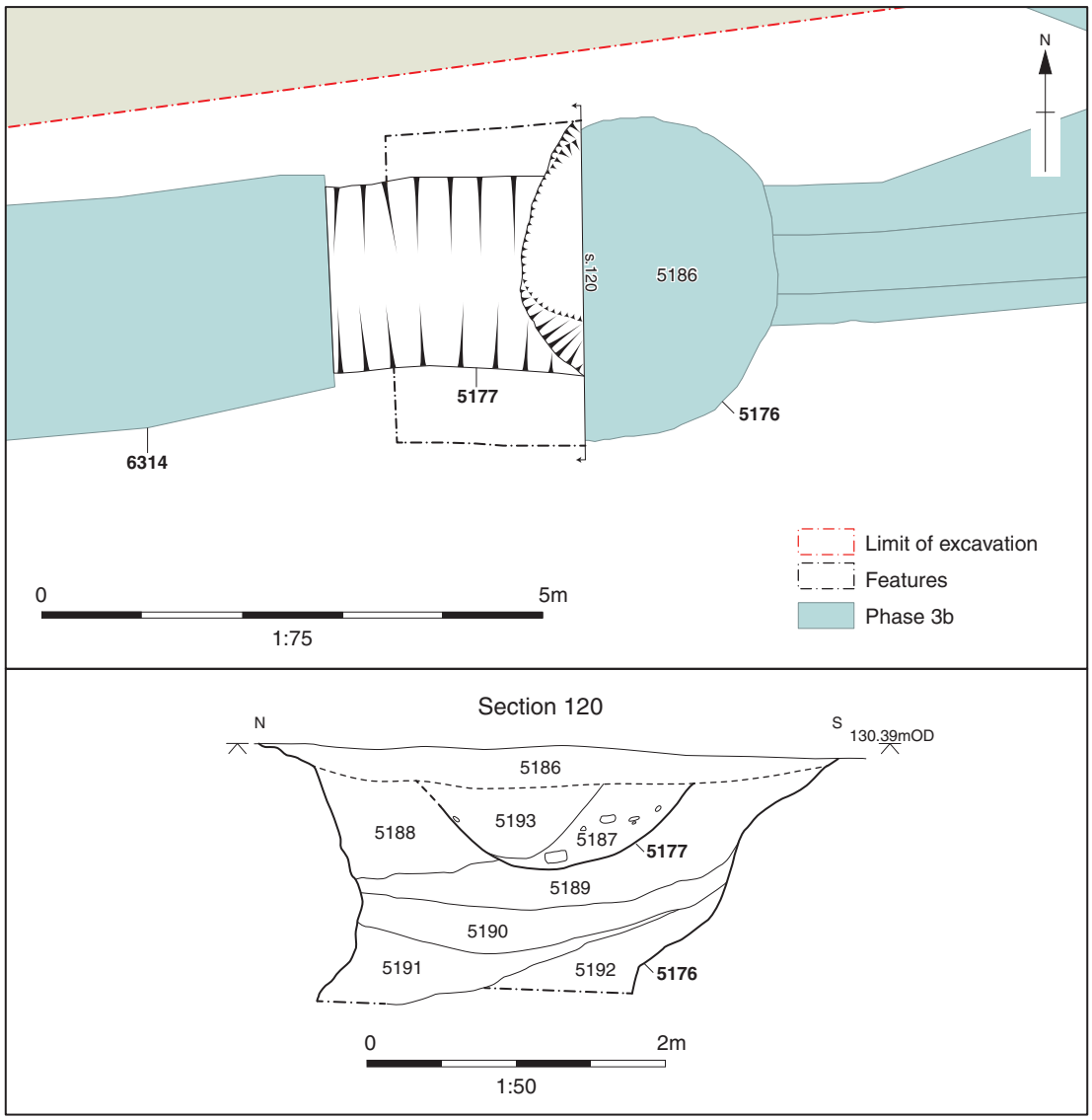

Figure 9: Plan and section of well 5176

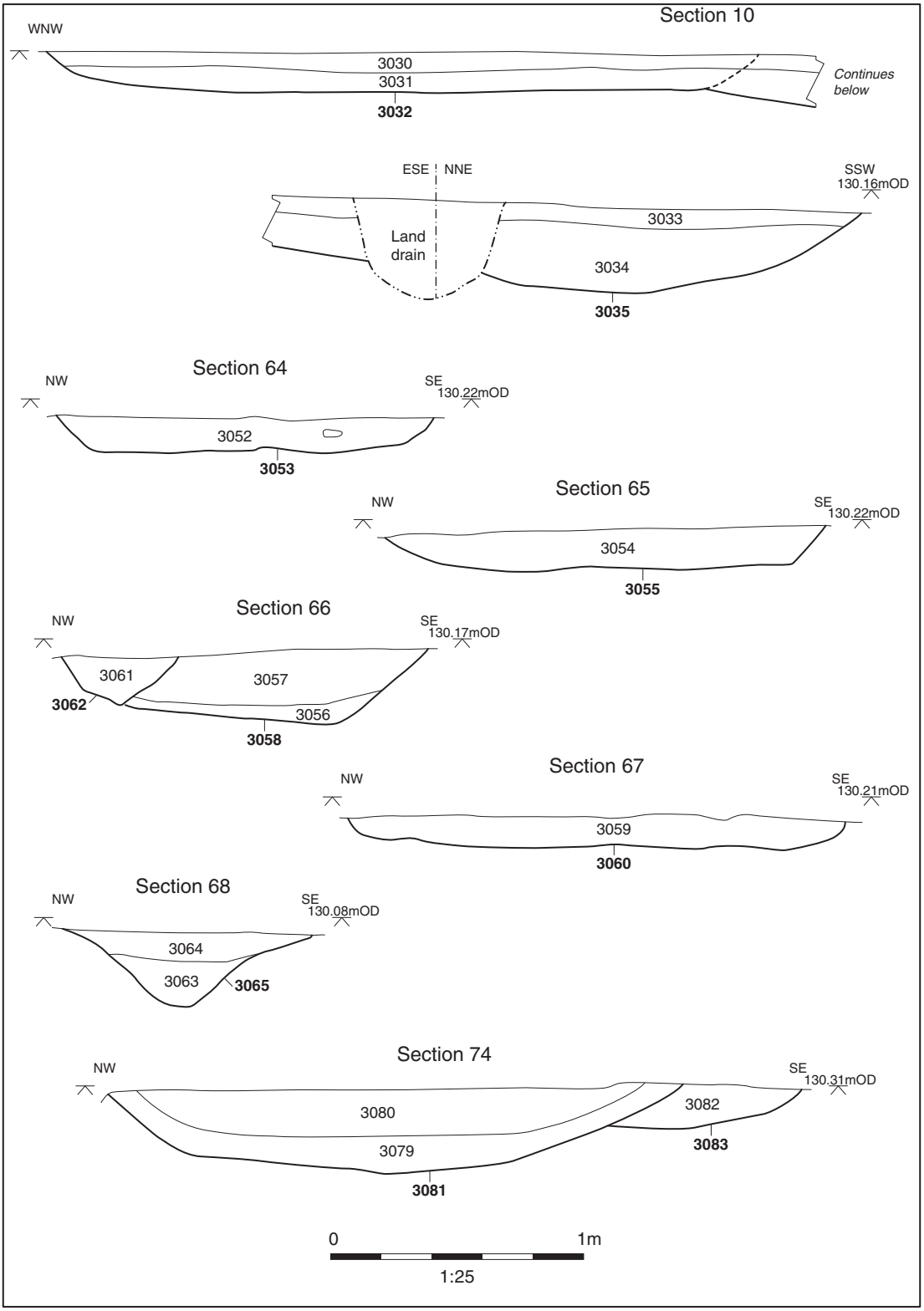

Figure 10: Selected sections of pits in enclosure 6314

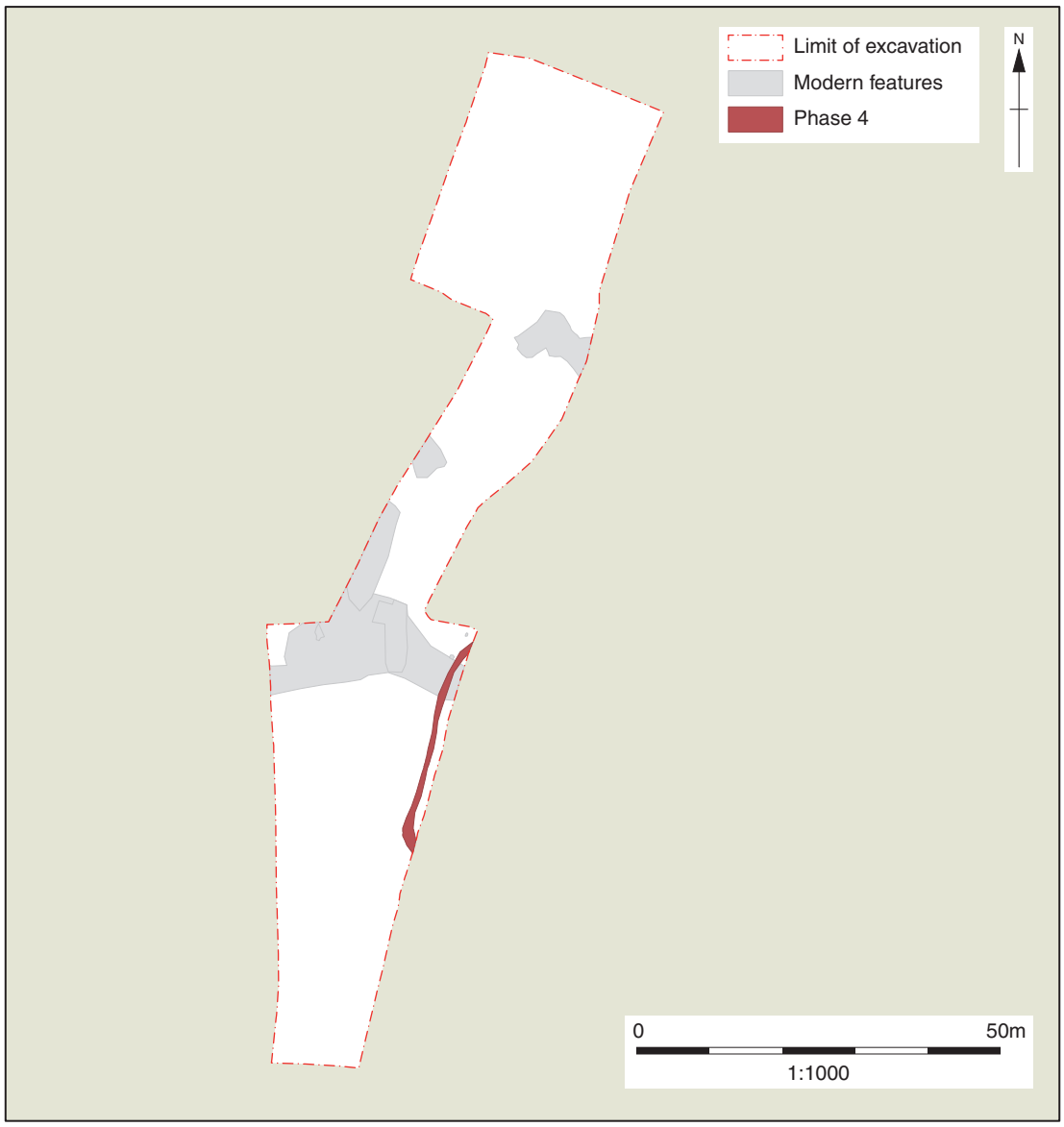

Figure 11: Phase 4 site plan (Area 2)

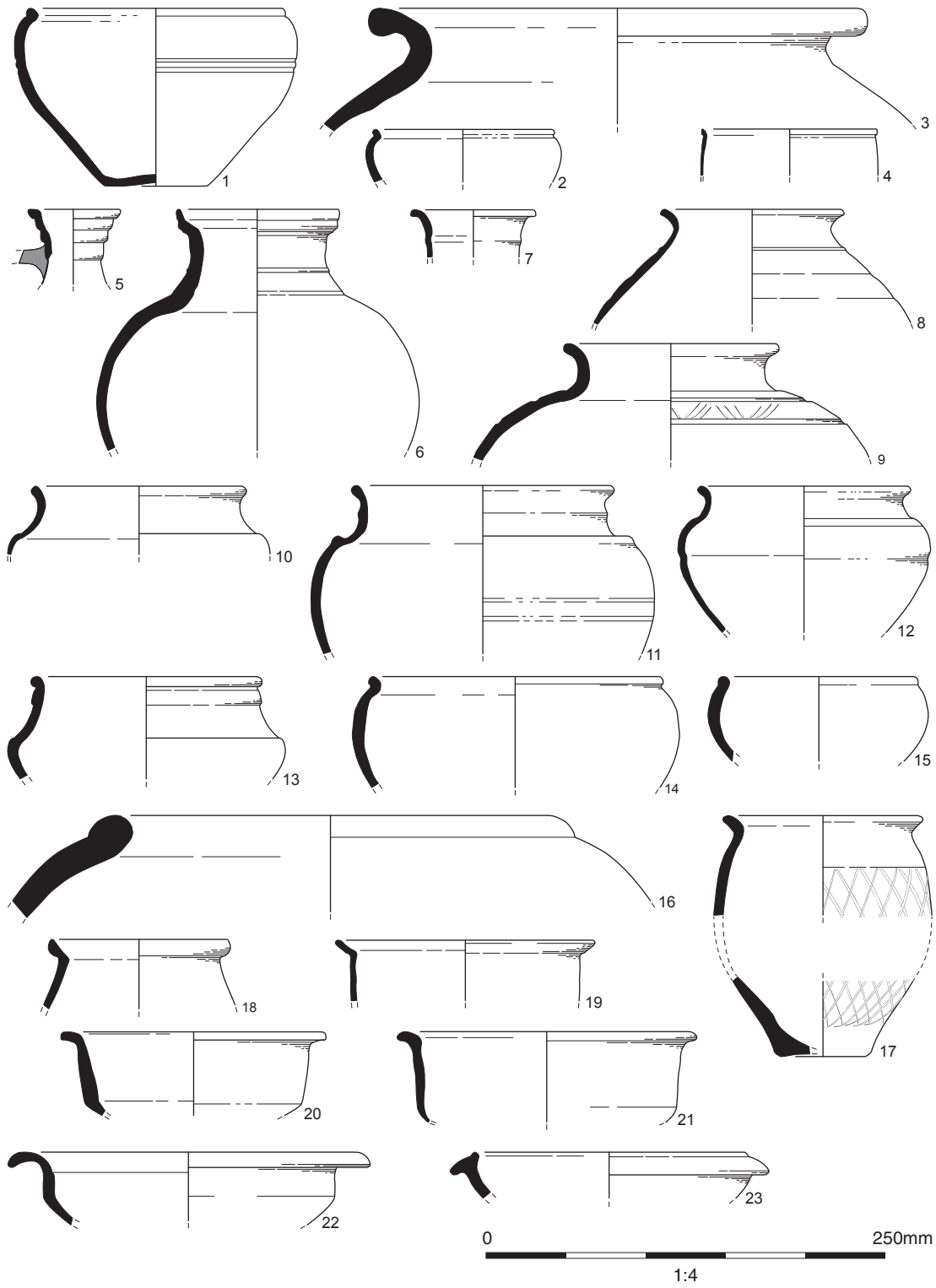

Figure 12: Pottery sequence 1 - 23

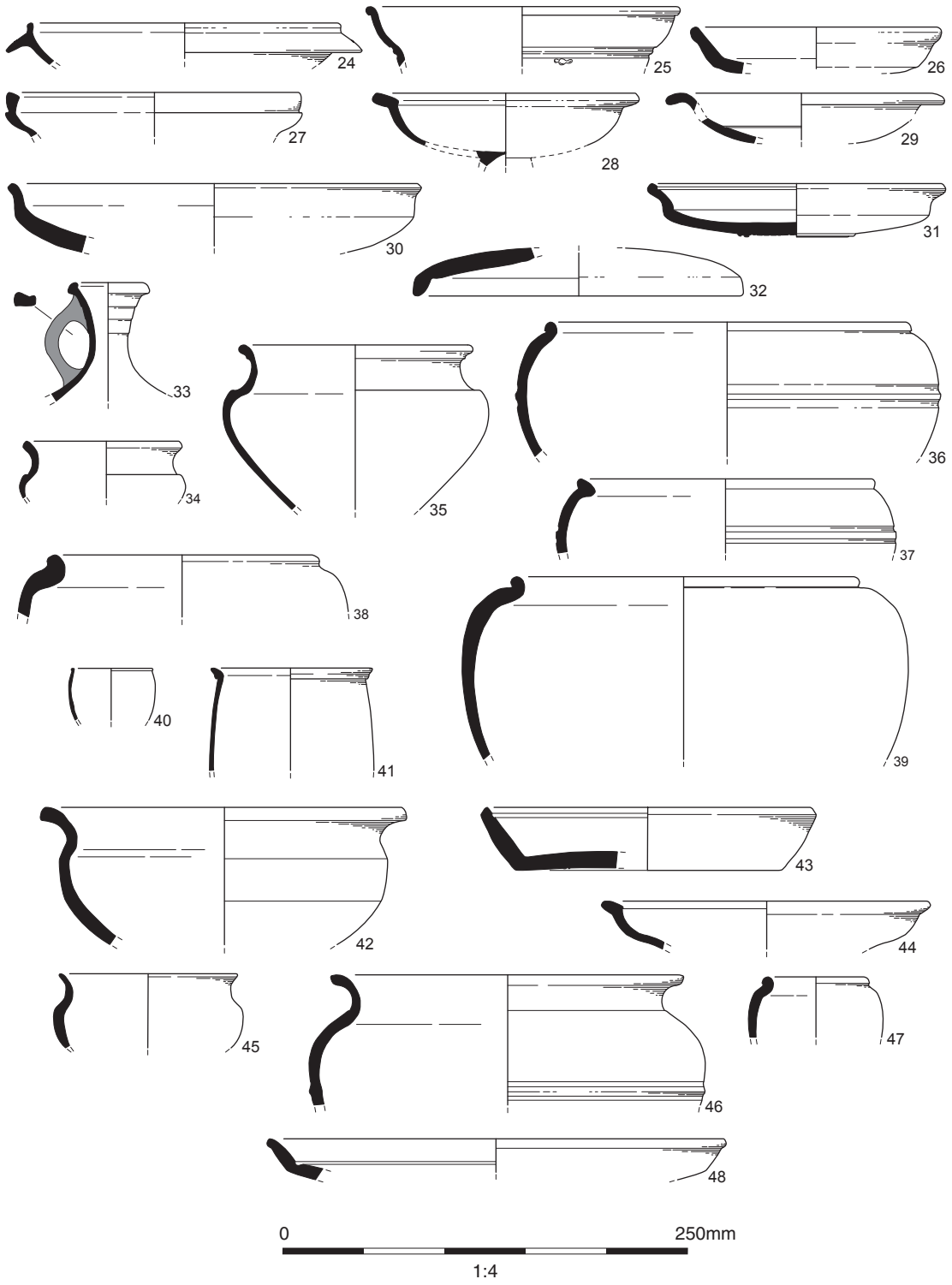

Figure 13: Pottery sequence 24 - 48

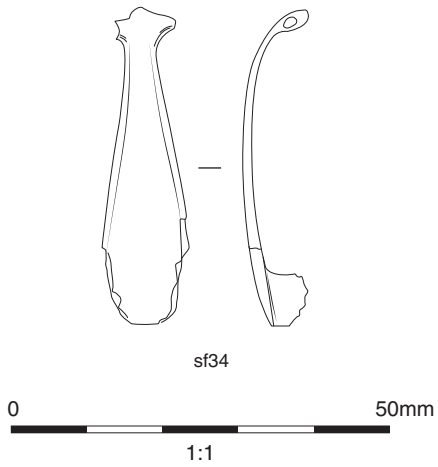

Figure 14: Durotrigian strip brooch

Figure 15: Worked stone

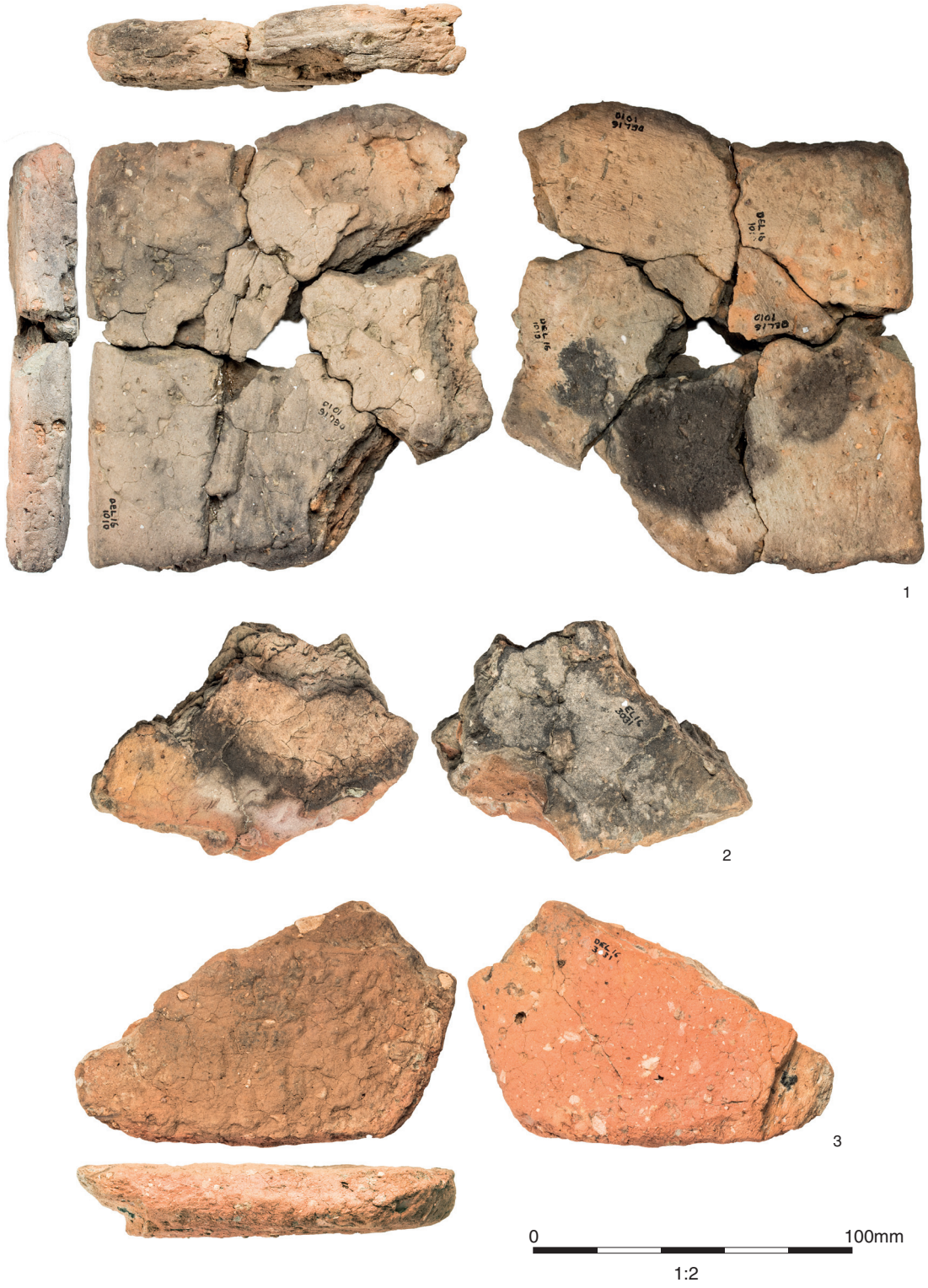

Figure 16: Fired clay plates

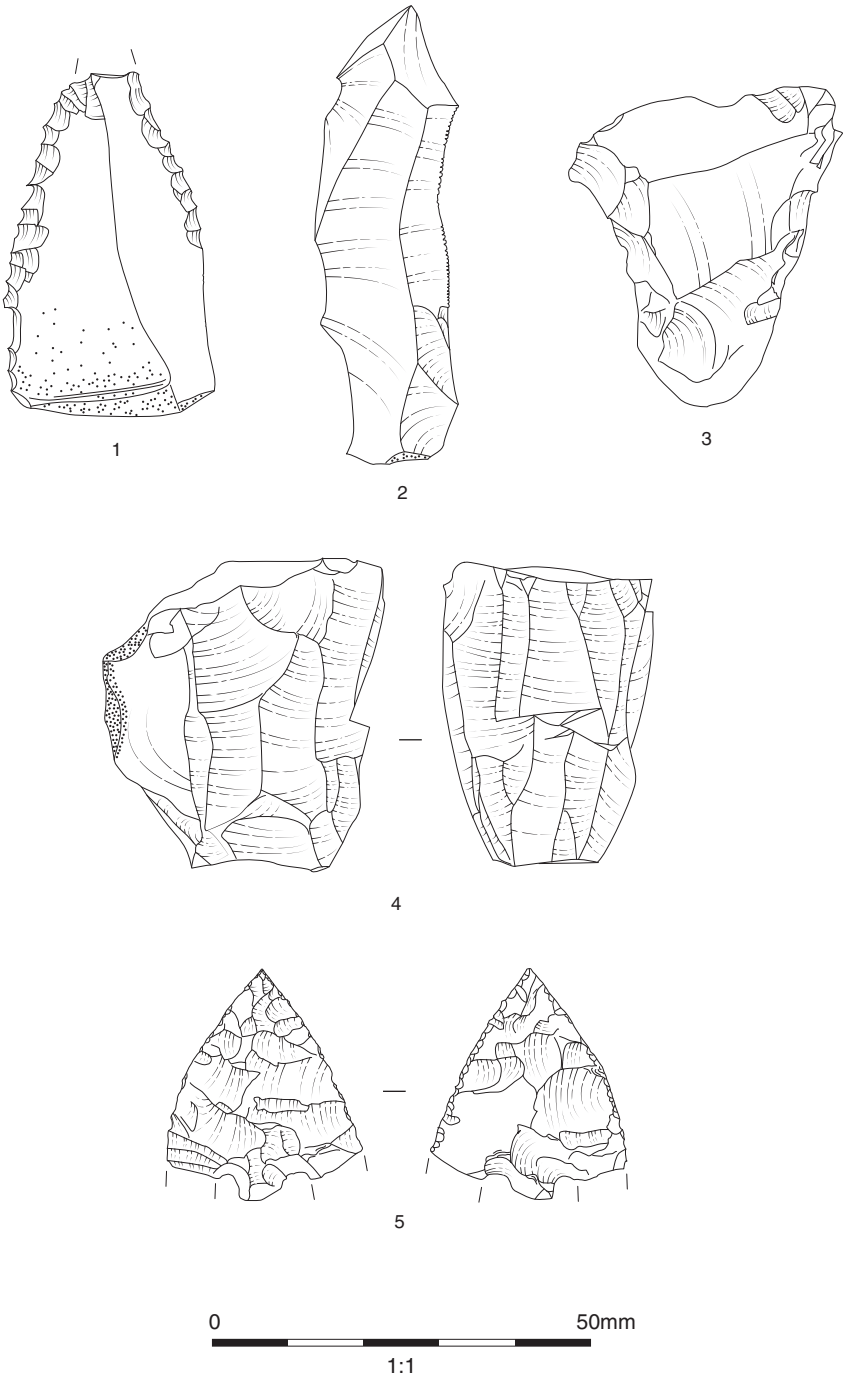

Figure 17: Worked flint

TABLES

Phase	Date	Ceramic dating	Summary of features
1	Mid–late first century A.D.	Contexts dominated by early Savernake-type pottery	Scatter of narrow field boundaries, small cemetery, possible circular structure and two trackways
2	Late first century–early second century A.D.	Contexts contain mostly Savernake pottery, but a wider range of fabrics and with the appearance of some newer forms	Reorganisation of Phase 1 features with new field boundary layout
3a	Second century A.D.	Savernake fabrics still frequent, but with a higher proportion of new forms and the appearance of Central Gaulish samian and black burnished wares	Continued development of Phase 2 layout with new enclosure system in south
3b	Mid–late second century A.D.	Savernake fabrics still frequent, but with a localised concentration of Central Gaulish samian and black burnished wares	Focussed in the northern part of the site in the form of a single large enclosure containing numerous large pits
4	Third–fourth century A.D.	Very small quantity of late 3rd/4th century AD pottery	Small area to the north-east of the main excavation, possibly associated with the 'villa'
5	Post-medieval /modern features	Some 16th- to 19th-century pottery	Later field boundaries

Table 1: Site phasing

Fabric	No. sherds	Wt (g)
ChA4	1	7
FA5	1	12
FAG4/5	2	13
FN4	1	1
FV4	2	11

Table 2: Quantification of prehistoric pottery fabrics

Fabric	Summary description	Nosh	% Nosh	Wt g	% Wt	REs	% REs
Preh		7	0.2	44	0.1		
S	Samian ware, source uncertain	1	+	1	+		
S20	South Gaulish samian ware (incl **LGF SA**)	8	0.2	108	0.2	0.14	0.4
S30	Central Gaulish samian ware (incl **LEZ SA**)	24	0.6	518	0.9	0.38	1.1
S sub		*33*	*0.9*	*627*	*1.1*	*0.52*	*1.5*
F24	Fine oxidised glazed fabric, ?local	10	0.3	34	0.1	0.17	0.5
F43	Central Gaulish fine ware (**CNG BS**)	2	0.1	2	+		

F67	North Wiltshire colour-coated ware	1	+	1	+		
F sub		*13*	*0.3*	*37*	*0.1*	*0.17*	*0.5*
M11	*?N Gaulish mortarium (**NOG WH 4**)*	*1*	*+*	*371*	*0.6*	*0.20*	*0.6*
W10	Fine (including fine sandy) white fabrics	27	0.7	134	0.2	0.88	2.5
W20	Moderate-coarse sandy white fabrics	16	0.4	182	0.3	0.20	0.6
W sub		*43*	*1.1*	*316*	*0.5*	*1.08*	*3.1*
Q20	Oxidised white-slipped fabrics	1	+	2	+		
Q23	?N Wiltshire sandy white-slipped fabric	3	0.1	77	0.1	0.90	2.6
Q40	Coarse tempered white-slipped fabrics	1	+	1	+		
Q sub		*5*	*0.1*	*80*	*0.1*	*0.90*	*2.6*
F&S sub		***95***	***2.5***	***1431***	***2.4***	***2.87***	***8.3***
E30	Medium-coarse sand-tempered early fabrics	9	0.2	821	1.4	0.50	1.4
E60	Flint-tempered early fabrics	2	0.1	9	+		
E82	Sandy early Savernake type ware	205	5.4	3703	6.3	1.79	5.2
E81/E83	Early Savernake type ware	1135	30.0	23820	40.7	8.69	25.1
E sub		*1351*	*35.7*	*28353*	*48.5*	*10.98*	*31.7*
O10	Fine (including fine sandy) oxidised fabrics	56	1.5	218	0.4	0.67	1.9
O20	Moderate-coarse sandy oxidised fabrics	69	1.8	740	1.3	0.68	1.9
O30	Medium sandy oxidised fabrics	138	3.6	1169	2.0	0.74	2.1
O33	As O30, sparse, fairly coarse sand grains	1	+	1	+		
O34	As O30	10	0.3	163	0.3		
O95	Coarse flint-tempered oxidised fabric	28	0.7	1254	2.1	0.10	0.3
O sub		*302*	*8.0*	*3545*	*6.1*	*2.19*	*6.3*
R10	Fine (occasionally fine sandy) reduced fabrics	57	1.5	594	1.0	0.69	2.0
R20	Coarse abundantly sandy reduced fabrics	73	1.9	964	1.6	1.63	4.7
R30	Medium sandy reduced fabrics	271	7.2	4064	6.9	2.53	7.3
R34	Fine-medium densely sandy fabric, often with black surfaces and core	1168	30.9	7168	12.3	7.48	21.6
R35	As R30, ?North Wiltshire	12	0.3	178	0.3		
R310	Cf R34 but finer and with ?grog inclusions	8	0.2	121	0.2	0.05	0.1
R60	Organic-tempered reduced fabrics	3	0.1	84	0.1		
R79	Fairly coarse flint and sand-tempered fabric	3	0.1	122	0.2		
R95	Reduced Savernake ware (**SAV GT**)	377	10.0	11075	18.9	5.15	14.8
R sub		*1972*	*52.2*	*24370*	*41.7*	*17.53*	*50.5*
B11	*Black-burnished ware (**DOR BB 1**)*	*54*	*1.4*	*755*	*1.3*	*1.12*	*3.2*
TOTAL		**3781**		**58,498**		**34.69**	

Table 3: Quantification of prehistoric and Roman pottery

	Vessel class											
Fabric	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**H**	**I**	**J**	**K**	**L**	**Z**	**REs**	**% REs**
S20					0.14						0.14	0.4
S30					0.21	0.04	0.13				0.38	1.1
F24							0.17				0.17	0.5
M11								0.20			0.20	0.6
W10	0.70		0.02	0.16							0.88	2.5
W20	0.12	0.08									0.20	0.6
Q23	0.90										0.90	2.6
F&S sub	***1.72***	***0.08***	***0.02***	***0.16***	***0.35***	***0.04***	***0.30***	***0.20***			***2.87***	***8.3***
E30							0.50				0.50	1.4
E82	0.02	1.66							0.07	0.04	1.79	5.2
E83	0.06	7.97	0.08				0.26		0.32		8.69	25.1
O10	0.45			0.21						0.01	0.67	1.9
O20	0.04	0.11		0.05	0.32	0.16					0.68	1.9
O30		0.18	0.12	0.25	0.17		0.02				0.74	2.1
O95		0.10									0.10	0.3
R10	0.48			0.12			0.09				0.69	2.0
R20		1.55					0.08				1.63	4.7
R30		1.67	0.04	0.14	0.29	0.12	0.27				2.53	7.3
R34		4.84	0.34	0.15	0.57	0.27	1.32				7.48	21.6
R310		0.05									0.05	0.1
R95	0.26	4.87			0.02						5.15	14.8
B11		0.96			0.09	0.06	0.01				1.12	3.2
TOTAL	**2.55**	**24.52**	**0.60**	**1.08**	**1.81**	**0.64**	**2.85**	**0.20**	**0.39**	**0.05**	**34.69**	
%	7.4	70.7	1.7	3.1	5.2	1.8	8.2	0.6	1.1	0.1		

Table 4: Vessel class by fabric: quantification by Res

	Site Phase					
Fabric	**1**	**2**	**2/3**	**3**	**3b**	**Total***
Preh	1.0	0.2		0.2		0.2
S				0.1		+
S20				0.4	0.1	0.2
S30				0.1	2.6	0.6
S sub				*0.6*	*2.7*	*0.9*
F24				0.6		0.3
F43					0.2	0.1
F67				0.1		+
F sub				*0.7*	*0.2*	*0.3*
M11				*0.1*		*+*
W10		0.8	1.3	0.7	0.5	0.7
W20		0.2	2.5	0.4	0.4	0.4
W sub		*1.0*	*3.8*	*1.2*	*0.8*	*1.1*
Q20					0.1	+
Q23					0.4	0.1
Q40					0.1	+
Q sub					*0.6*	*0.1*
F&S sub		***1.0***	***3.8***	***2.5***	***4.4***	***2.5***
E30				0.5	0.1	0.2
E60				0.1	0.1	0.1
E82	16.3	5.6	5.7	3.6	5.7	5.4
E81/E83	46.5	33.3	42.7	25.7	28.1	30.0
E sub	*62.8*	*38.9*	*48.4*	*29.8*	*34.0*	*35.7*
O10	0.6	0.3	1.3	0.9	3.7	1.5
O20		0.7		1.1	5.5	1.8
O30	0.6	0.8	3.8	5.1	3.7	3.6
O33				0.1		+
O34					0.7	0.3
O95		1.5		0.7	0.8	0.7
O sub	*1.3*	*3.4*	*5.1*	*7.9*	*14.4*	*8.0*
R10	1.0	1.2		1.3	1.9	1.5
R20	1.0	3.0	1.3	1.3	2.6	1.9
R30	5.1	7.6	4.5	6.6	6.8	7.2
R34	22.8	34.0	25.5	37.5	20.6	30.9
R35				0.2	0.6	0.3
R310				0.4	0.2	0.2
R60		0.3		0.1		0.1
R79		0.2		0.1	0.1	0.1
R95	5.1	9.6	11.5	12.1	8.9	10.0
R sub	*34.9*	*56.0*	*68.2*	*59.2*	*41.8*	*52.2*
B11		*0.5*		*0.2*	*5.3*	*1.4*
Post-RB				0.1	0.1	
TOTAL	**312**	**591**	**157**	**1615**	**843**	**3800**

Table 5: Quantification of fabrics as percentage of site phase total (sherd count) *Total includes all phases and also unphased and post-Roman pottery

	Site Phase					
Fabric	**1**	**2**	**2/3**	**3**	**3b**	**Total***
Preh	0.5	+		0.1		0.1
S				+		+
S20				0.4	+	0.2
S30				0.3	2.8	0.9
S sub				*0.8*	*2.8*	*1.1*
F24				0.1		0.1
F43					+	+
F67				+		+
F sub				*0.1*	*+*	*0.1*
M11				*1.6*		*0.6*
W10		0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2
W20		+	5.3	0.1	0.2	0.3
W sub		*0.3*	*5.4*	*0.3*	*0.5*	*0.5*
Q20					+	+
Q23					0.5	0.1
Q40					+	+
Q sub					*0.5*	*0.1*
F&S sub		***0.3***	***5.4***	***2.8***	***3.8***	***2.4***
E30				1.8	2.3	1.4
E60				+	+	+
E82	14.6	6.3	8.8	5.5	5.1	6.3
E81/E83	59.4	43.4	52.5	36.0	38.2	40.7
E sub	*74.0*	*49.6*	*61.3*	*43.4*	*45.7*	*48.5*
O10	0.2	+	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.4
O20		0.2		0.4	3.7	1.3
O30	0.4	1.0	1.5	3.1	1.6	2.0
O33				+		+
O34					0.1	0.3
O95		2.5		2.8	2.3	2.1
O sub	*0.5*	*3.6*	*1.7*	*6.9*	*8.3*	*6.1*
R10	0.2	0.2		0.6	1.5	1.0
R20	2.8	1.4	0.7	1.7	1.6	1.6
R30	4.2	3.8	1.4	3.8	13.7	6.9
R34	8.8	12.4	9.8	16.9	7.2	12.3
R35				0.5	0.3	0.3
R310				0.2	0.4	0.2
R60		0.2		0.3		0.1
R79		0.2		0.1	0.5	0.2
R95	8.9	26.9	19.7	22.4	13.6	18.9
R sub	*25.0*	*45.1*	*31.6*	*46.5*	*38.7*	*41.7*
B11		*1.4*		*0.2*	*3.5*	*1.3*
Post-RB				+	+	
TOTAL	**3724**	**8588**	**1835**	**23,469**	**16,023**	**58,704**

Table 6: Quantification of fabrics as percentage of site phase total (weight) *Total includes all phases, unphased, and post-Roman pottery

Phase	Feature	feature	fill	Function										Totals
				Arms	Coin	Transport	Personal	Footwear	Security	Nails	Misc	Query	Waste	
1	**pit**	5105	5104					52		20		*		72
2	**ditch**	5184	5185							*				*
2/3	**pit**	5195	5195							1				1
3	**Ditches**	2029	2028							*				*
		2063	2062										1	1
		5096	5080							1				1
		5115	5113							1				1
		5343	5341				1							1
		5409	5417								1			1
	pits	2011	2010							*				*
		5161	5160										1	1
3b	**ditch**	5015	5016				1							1
	pits	3096	3095							3				3
5	**ditches**	1021	1019			1								1
		5227	5229			1			1					2
		5312	5313								1			1
	pit	5230	5231			1								1
	posthole	5005	5004								1			1
	uncertain	2044	2043		1									1
u/s	**subsoil**	2002	2002	1										1
		3003	3003								1	1		2
			Total	1	1	3	2	52	1	21	4	1	2	93

Table 7: Summary quantification of small finds by phase, feature type and functional categories (object count) *Nail stem frag(s) not quantified as objects.

Category Type	No.
Flake	137
Blade	29
Bladelet	13
Blade index	23.46% (42/179)
Irregular waste	31
Core rejuvenation flake	1
Core single platform blades	2
Core other blades	4
Core single platform flakes	3
Core multi-platform flake	9
Core keeled flakes	1
Core levallois flake	3
Core on a flake	1
Core tested nodule	1
Core fragment	5
Scraper end	10
Scraper side(s)	3
Scraper side & end	3
Scraper thumbnail	1
Scraper other	1
Arrowhead chisel	1
Arrowhead barbed & tanged	1
Awl	2
Piercer	3
Spurred piece	1
Microdenticulate	4
Denticulate	4
Knife backed	3
Knife scale-flaked	1
Knife other	1
Hammerstone	10
Retouched flake	8
Retouch misc	1
Retouch other	3
Total	301
No. burnt (%)	29/301 (9.63%)
No. broken (%)	72/301 (23.92%)
No. retouched (%)	61/301 (20.26%)

Table 8: The flint assemblage

Category Type	Total	%
ditches	191	63.46
pits	35	11.63
subsoil	34	11.30
layers	32	10.63
misc. features	5	1.66
topsoil	2	0.66
unstratified	2	0.66
Total	301	100

Table 9: The flint assemblage by context type

Condition	Total	%	Cortication	Total	%
Fresh	87	30.31%	None	13	5.02%
Light	161	56.10%	Light	134	51.73%
Moderate	35	12.19%	Moderate	103	39.77%
Heavy	3	1.05%	Heavy	8	3.09%
Rolled	1	0.35%	Iron	1	0.39%
Total	287		Total	259	

Table 10: Flint by condition and cortication

Category Type	Concentration 1	Concentration 2	Concentration 3	Concentration 4
Flake	20	17	51	5
Blade	5	6	5	1
Bladelet	6		2	
Blade index	35.48% (11/31)	26.09% (6/23)	12.07% (7/58)	16.67% (1/6)
Irregular waste	3	5	7	
Core single platform blades	1	1		
Core other blades			1	
Core single platform flakes		1	1	
Core multi-platform flake	1	1	5	
Core keeled flakes			1	
Core levallois flake			2	
Core on a flake	1			
Core-tested nodule	1			
Core fragment		2	2	
Scraper end			4	3
Scraper side(s)			1	
Scraper side and end			2	
Scraper other			1	
Arrowhead chisel			1	
Arrowhead barbed and tanged	1			
Awl			1	
Piercer	1		1	
Spurred piece	1			
Microdenticulate	1		1	
Denticulate			2	
Knife backed		1		
Knife scale-flaked			1	
Knife other	1			
Hammerstone	1	2	6	
Retouched flake			3	1
Retouch misc			1	
Retouch other		1		
Total	44	37	102	10
No. burnt (%)	6/44 (13.64%)	2/37 (5.40%)	8/102 (7.84%)	0/10
No. broken (%)	11/44 (25%)	13/37 (35.14%)	23/102 (22.55%)	0/10
No. retouched (%)	6/44 (13.64%)	4/37 (10.81%)	25/102 (24.51%)	4/10 (40%)

Table 11: Flint assemblage by concentration

Hammer mode	Concentration 1	Concentration 2	Concentration 3	Concentration 4
Hard	63.33%	68.42	68.25	82.82%
Indeterminate	20.0%	26.32	19.05	18.18%
Soft	16.67%	5.26	12.70	0
No.	30	19	63	9

Table 12: Hammer-mode by concentration

Deposit	Total weight	>10mm	10-4mm	4-2mm	Colour	MNI	Age	Sex
5065	33.6g	11.7g	6.4g	15.5g	70% white 20% grey 10% black	1	Adult/ adolescent	?
5104	221.6g (inc. est)	23.3g	125.4g	72.9g (est.)	80% white 15% grey 5% black	1	Adult/ adolescent	?

Table 13: Summary of cremation deposits 5065 and 5104

taxa	Phase							total
	0	1	2	2/3	3	3b	5	
cattle		3	11	14	133	21	21	203
horse		7	1	3	52	1	2	66
sheep/goat		3	11	8	32	12	2	68
pig					6			6
dog			1					1
cattle-size		45	37	7	78	18	12	197
sheep-size	8	6	48	6	28	4	4	104
unidentified			41	40	295	30	28	434
total	8	64	150	78	624	86	69	1079

Table 14: Quantification of animal bones by phase

taxa	ditches	pits	well	uncertain	total
cattle	142	61			203
horse	58	7		1	66
sheep/goat	56	11	1		68
pig	6				6
dog	1				1
cattle-size	146	51			197
sheep-size	83	21			104
unidentifiable	424	10			434
total	916	161	1	1	1079

Table 15: Quantification of animal bones by context type

element	cattle	horse	sheep/goat	pig	total	%NISP
tooth	123	38	56	2	219	65.6
skull	40				40	12.0
horncore	4				4	1.2
mandible	7	5	5	4	21	6.3
scapula	4				4	1.2
humerus		1	2		3	0.9
radius	3	1			4	1.2
ulna	2				2	0.6
metacarpal	1		2		3	0.9
carpal	1	3			4	1.2
pelvis	4	3			7	2.1
femur		1			1	0.3
tibia	5	7	2		14	4.2
calcaneus		1			1	0.3
astragalus	2	1	1		4	1.2
metatarsal	4	2			6	1.8
metapodial	2	2			4	1.2
1st phalanx		1			1	0.3
total	202	66	68	6	342	100

Table 16: Number and percentage of elements from identified species

element	side	butchery
maxilla		
axis		
vertebrae		
ribs		
scapula	left	
humerus	right	yes
radius	right	yes
third metacarpal	right	
4th metacarpal	right	
fifth metacarpal	right	yes
pelvis	left	yes
femur	right	
tibia	left and right	yes
calcaneus	right	

Table 17: Composition of partial dog skeleton from ditch 5346 and evidence for butchery

Taxa		Sample No	7	15
		Context No	5192	5527
		Feature	Well	Ditch Fill
		Date	2nd C.	2nd C.
		Flot volume	75ml	30ml
Cultivated/waste ground	**Common name**	**Vol. analysed**	**25%**	**100%**
Papaver rhoeas L.	Common poppy	Seed	6	1
Papaver argemone L.	Prickly poppy	Seed	31	2
Aphanes sp.	Parsley-piert	Seed	4	
Urtica urens L.	Small nettle	Seed	12	
Thlaspi arvense L.	Field penny-cress	Seed	1	
Persicaria cf *lapathifolia* (L.) Delarbre	Pale persicaria	Seed	3	
Stellaria media (L.) Vill	Common chickweed	Seed	22	
Chenopodium type	Goosefoots	Seed	31	9
Hyoscyamus niger L.	Henbane	Seed	1	2
Plantago major L.	Greater plantain	Seed	2	
Sonchus asper (L.) Hill	Prickly sowthistle	Seed	3	
cf *Anthemis cotula* L.	Stinking chamomile	Seed	1	
Tripleurospermum inodorum (L.) Sch. Bip	Scentless mayweed	Seed	33	
cf *Aethusa cynapium* L.	Fool's parsley	Seed	1	2
Grassland				
Ranunculus acris/repens/bulbosus	Meadow/creeping/ bulbous buttercup	Seed	15	
Linum cf *catharticum* L.	Fairy flax	Seed	13	
Polygonum aviculare L.	Knotgrass	Seed	11	
Stellaria cf *graminea* L.	Lesser stichwort	Seed	2	1
Prunella vulgaris L.	Selfheal	Seed	4	
Euphrasia/Odontites	Eyebright/Bartsia	Seed	47	
Leontodon sp.	Hawkbit	Seed	1	
Wet/damp				
Ranunculus subgenus *Batrachium*	Crowfoot	Seed	6	
Filipendula ulmaria (L.) Maxim.	Meadowsweet	Seed	31	1
Silene flos-cuculi (L.) Clairv.	Ragged-Robin	Seed	3	
Montia fontana L.	Blinks	Seed	1	
Mentha cf *aquatica* L.	Water mint	Seed	1	
Apium sp.	Marshwort	Seed	1	
Juncus spp	Rush	Seed	>500	>100
Eleocharis cf *palustris* (L.) Roem. & Schult	Common spike-rush	Seed	1	
Carex spp	Sedge	Seed	12	9
Woodland				
Corylus avellana L.	Hazel	Nutshell frag.	2	
Mixed habitat				
Rubus sp.	Bramble	Seed		1
Urtica dioica L.	Common nettle	Seed	32	820
cf Brassicaceae	Cabbage family (small)	Seed	1	2
Hypericum sp.	St John's-wort	Seed	1	
Caryophyllaceae	Pinks (<0.5mm)	Seed	9	
Rumex spp	Docks	Seed	28	
Rumex spp	Docks	Perianth	10	

Cirsium/Carduus sp.	Thistle	Seed	2	
Sambucus nigra L.	Elder	Seed	4	8
Poaceae	Grass (medium)	Seed	106	82
indet.		Seed	11	8

Table 18: Quantification of water-logged plant remains

Phase		**1**					**2**	**3**	**3b**	**Total number of fragments identified**	**Frequency across all contexts analysed %**
Date		mid-late 1st century AD					Late 1st – early 2nd century AD	2nd century AD	Mid-late 2nd century AD		
Feature type		Cremation			Ditch	Pit	Ditch	Well	Pit		
Context number		5065	5104		5129	5559	5415	5192	5557		
Sample number		1	4	5	6	16	10	7	17		
Number of fragments from >10mm fraction		29					20		17		
Number of fragments from 4-10mm fraction		10	27	26	43	12	10	8	10		
Percentage of 4-10mm fraction examined		<10	100	100	80	100	20	100	10		
Alnus sp.	alder				12		1			13	29
Betula sp.	birch					1				1	14
Corylus sp.	hazel							1	6	7	29
Maloideae	hawthorn, pear, apple	37	4		14	5	7	4		68	86
Prunus sp.	cherry				11	1	14			26	43
Quercus sp.	oak		21	26				2	17	66	43
Quercus/*Castanea*	oak/sweet chestnut						2		1	3	29
Salix/*Populus*	willow/poplar				5		3		2	10	43
	Indeterminate	2	2		2	5	2		1	14	86
Total number of fragments examined		39	27	26	42	12	30	8	27		
Number of taxa identified		1	2	1	4	3	4 (or 5)	3	3 (or 4)		

Table 19: Charcoal identifications by fragment count

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