Sutton Courtenay Lane, Sutton Courtenay, Oxfordshire

Post-Excavation Assessment and Updated Project Design

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Sutton Courtenay Lane, Sutton Courtenay, Oxfordshire

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Summary

Oxford Archaeology carried out an archaeological excavation in 2019 on land east of Sutton Courtenay Lane to the south of the village of Sutton Courtenay in Oxfordshire. Preceding trial-trench evaluation in 2016 and monitoring work in 2018 of the *c* 10ha development site established the presence of prehistoric and Roman remains, including ditches, gullies, pits, and postholes indicative of a multi-phase settlement site. The excavated area, totalling *c* 1.4ha, was subsequently targeted upon these remains in the north-west of the site.

The recovery of a small quantity of residual worked flint from across the excavated area provides evidence of limited earlier prehistoric activity. The first evidence of settlement features belongs to the Iron Age in the form of a series of curvilinear ditches defining several roundhouses. Numerous Iron Age pits and postholes, some of which formed four-post structures and a larger rectangular building, are indicative of associated activity. The Iron Age settlement developed with the establishment of several large enclosures, possibly for livestock management. Pottery from this phase of activity dates to the latter part of the early Iron Age and throughout the middle Iron Age.

Evidence of activity spanning the Roman period was revealed across the excavated area, predominately composed of enclosure ditches and other land boundaries that underwent several phases of maintenance and modification. No structural remains were identified, and evidence of associated activity was limited to a small number of pits and postholes. Nonetheless, the quantity and variety of finds indicate the deposition of domestic waste from a nearby settlement. Signs of more-deliberate, placed deposits are evident, including a probable coin hoard. A corndryer with charred plant remains is suggestive of a developed arable-farming regime, while the animal-bone assemblage highlights the importance of a mixed agricultural economy.

A small number of inhumation burials were found cutting into Roman ditches. These have been tentatively assigned a Saxon date based on their stratigraphy and a small number of associated finds. It is possible, however, that some of the human remains date to the late Roman period. A small quantity of intrusive medieval/early post-medieval finds indicate some later agricultural activity.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by RPS Group Ltd to undertake an archaeological excavation on land east of Sutton Courtenay Lane, Sutton Courtenay, Oxfordshire (NGR SU 50100 92400; Fig. 1). Planning permission (ref. P14/V1906/O) was granted for the redevelopment of the *c* 10ha site, and several phases of archaeological work have been undertaken on site in accordance with the planning condition.

1.1.2 A desk-based assessment (DBA) highlighted the high potential for archaeological remains to be present within the development site (JMHS 2013). In 2016, a trial-trench evaluation was undertaken, revealing Iron Age, Roman and possible Anglo-Saxon remains (OA 2016a; Fig. 2). A watching brief was subsequently maintained during groundworks for a new warehouse development in 2018, when further Iron Age and Roman remains were revealed (OA 2018). Given the archaeological potential, it was recommended that a subsequent phase of open-area excavation be undertaken. The results of this work are presented in this post-excavation assessment and are used to inform the updated project design for post-excavation analysis and publication.

1.1.3 This assessment has been conducted in accordance with the principles identified in Historic England's guidance documents *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*, specifically *The MoRPHE Project Manager's Guide* (HE 2015) and *PPN3 Archaeological Excavation* (EH 2008).

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The British Geological Survey (BGS 2019) records the solid geology of the site as mudstone belonging to the Gault Formation. This is overlain by superficial deposits of sand and gravel belonging to the Summertown-Radley Sand and Gravel Member.

1.2.2 A ground investigation, comprising the examination of 54 test holes, was undertaken on site in 2015 (Hydrock 2015). It revealed that a made-ground deposit of brown and grey/brown, sandy, gravelly clay and clayey, sandy gravel with modern inclusions covered the majority of the site, 0.30–3.50m below ground level (BGL). River terrace deposits of Summertown-Radley Sand and Gravel Member were found underlying the modern made ground (0.70–4.20m BGL), and Gault clay was encountered underlying the river-terrace deposits (more than 10m BGL). The recorded groundwater levels were generally shallow (1–2m BGL) within the river-terrace deposits and were recorded as having a fast rate of inflow.

1.2.3 The site is roughly flat and between 56–58m aOD. It is bounded to the west by Sutton Courtenay Lane, to the east and south-east by Didcot Power Station, to the south by a distribution centre, and to the north by open fields.

1.3 Archaeological background

1.3.1 The following archaeological and historical background is drawn from previous written schemes of investigation (WSI) and the DBA (CgMs 2016; 2017; JMHS 2013) and based

on data held by the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record, the Oxfordshire Records Office, and other readily available sources. The results of the trial-trench evaluation (OA 2016a) and watching brief (OA 2018) carried out on site are also summarised.

1.3.2 Evidence of Neolithic activity within the vicinity of the site is limited to a small number of recorded findspots.

1.3.3 The site of a scheduled Iron Age settlement (list entry no. 1004853) is located immediately to the west of Sutton Courtenay Lane within Milton Park. Cropmark evidence comprises a dense complex of circular features and linear ditches. Late Iron Age/Roman pottery has been collected from the site by fieldwalking, and a trial-trench evaluation demonstrated that Iron Age/Roman settlement evidence continued southwards outside the scheduled area (CAT 2000).

1.3.4 The north-western part of the development site was found to have a significant number of archaeological features dating from the middle Iron Age to the Roman period (OA 2016a; 2018). These consisted of numerous ditches, gullies, pits, and postholes, together suggestive of a multi-phased settlement site. Cropmarks indicative of a large rectangular enclosure with internal divisions recorded immediately to the north suggest that Roman activity continued beyond the site boundary. Another evaluation in 2016 further to the north revealed additional evidence of Iron Age and Roman activity, including enclosure ditches, pits, and a trackway (CA 2016).

1.3.5 A Roman cemetery comprising five inhumations was found in *c* 1928 during the construction of a railway siding about 315m to the south. The area immediately to the south of the site was investigated prior to development by evaluation and a subsequent strip, map, and sample investigation, which identified a number of linear features forming parts of Roman and later field systems (FA 2008a; 2008b). A late Iron Age/early Roman field system and associated trackway were also identified by excavation 550m north-west of the site (MOLA 2014).

1.3.6 Excavations ahead of the expansion of Didcot Power Station in 1991, 215m south-west of the site, uncovered 17 Saxon inhumation burials dating to the 7th century and two sunken-featured buildings (Boyle *et al*. 1995). Saxon features were identified within the central part of the scheduled area within Milton Park (JMHS 2008) to the west of Sutton Courtenay Lane. Further Saxon features were identified by evaluation in the southern (unscheduled) part of Milton Park (CAT 2000).

1.3.7 John Rocque's 1761 map of Berkshire and the Sutton Courtenay Inclosure map of 1804 indicate the agricultural nature of the site. Subsequent 19th- and 20th-century Ordnance Survey (OS) maps demonstrate the developing use of the landscape, from agricultural fields to gravel extraction and water management, the construction of the Central Ordnance Depot and railway sidings.

1.4 Original research aims and objectives

1.4.1 The primary aim of the open-area excavation, as stated in the WSI (CgMs 2017), was to identify and record the archaeological deposits within the site. To achieve this aim, the excavation sought to meet the following objectives:

- to ascertain the nature and extent of the archaeological remains identified by the trial trenching
- to determine the date, character, function, and significance of any features encountered
- to undertake a programme of post-excavation analysis assessing the potential of the remains to contribute to wider research agendas and the scope for dissemination of the project results to a wider audience
- and, to produce a site archive for deposition with Oxfordshire Museums Service and to provide information for Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record to ensure the long-term survival of the excavated data

1.4.2 With reference to the *Solent-Thames Research Framework for the Historic Environment Resource Assessments and Research Agendas* (Hey and Hind 2014), the excavation aimed address the following research objectives:

i. to understand and compare the nature of activity/occupation during the Iron Age and Roman periods (research agenda themes 10.5.5, 10.5.11, 10.7.4, 10.13, 12.2.1–2)
ii. to understand the apparent shift between the Late Iron Age and Roman period activity, and to investigate when this occurred (themes 10.3.3, 10.13, 12.2.1–2)
iii. to elucidate the nature and function of the extensive recut boundary ditches on site, and to understand the length of time they were utilised for (themes 10.4.5–6, 12.3.1)
iv. to investigate whether any evidence relating to Iron Age weaving is present on the site (themes 10.8.1)
v. and, to assess the role that palaeoenvironmental evidence can play in enhancing our understanding of the activity undertaken on site during both the Iron Age and Roman periods (themes 10.7.4, 12.3.1)

1.5 Fieldwork methodology

1.5.1 The *c* 1.40ha excavation area targeted features identified during the evaluation and watching brief. The work was undertaken in June–August 2019 and was carried out in accordance with the WSI (CgMs 2017). The excavation area was machine-stripped using a mechanical 360^{o} excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under constant archaeological supervision. Topsoil and subsoil layers were removed down to the first archaeological horizon or the surface of the natural geology, whichever was found first. On completion of overburden removal, the resultant surfaces were hand-cleaned as necessary and a digital pre-excavation plan showing revealed features was produced using a GPS.

1.5.2 A sufficient sample of the revealed features was investigated by hand to establish their character and date, where possible. Approximately 10% of the exposed length of linear and curvilinear features and 50% of roundhouse ditches were excavated. Where required, a 50% sample of all discrete features was excavated. All archaeological deposits and features were hand-excavated and recorded on *pro-forma* sheets in accordance with OA's recording system. All excavated features were planned by GPS, with certain areas being hand-planned. All sections were hand-drawn at a scale of 1:10

or 1:20, as appropriate. A full photographic record, illustrating both archaeological features and the works in general, was produced and comprised digital images.

1.5.3 All artefacts from excavated contexts were collected and retained for specialist identification and study, in line with the OA artefact collection policy. Bulk environmental samples were collected from a range of features that exhibited the potential to contain ecofacts. Environmental soil sampling methodology, processing and recording was undertaken in line with current Historic England guidelines (HE 2011). Rebecca Nicholson, Environmental Manager at OA South, was consulted throughout the fieldwork to ensure that an appropriate sampling strategy was implemented.

1.5.4 All work was carried out in accordance with the WSI (CgMs 2017) and in compliance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (CIfA 2014a) and local and national planning policies (DCLG 2012).

1.6 Project scope

1.6.1 This post-excavation assessment (PXA) and updated project design (UPD) summarises the results of the 2019 excavation and outlines the significance of the stratigraphic, finds and environmental datasets and their potential for analysis.

1.6.2 The results of the trial-trench evaluation (OA 2016a) and watching brief (OA 2018) have been fully reported and thus will not be included in this PXA. However, the full results from the watching brief will be incorporated into the excavation report and the final publication. Significant results from the evaluation will also be selected for publication, such as the discovery of two Iron Age bone combs, which will be discussed and illustrated.

1.6.3 This PXA also provides updated research aims using the results of the assessment, and details how the results of the archaeological investigations to date will be disseminated to the widest possible audience.

2 FACTUAL DATA: STRATIGRAPHY

2.1 General

2.1.1 The following records were created during the excavation (Table 1):

Record type	Number
Context sheets	1674
Plan record sheets	1
Plan sheets	23
Section record sheets	12
Section sheets	164
No. of sections	335
Small finds record sheets	2
No. of small finds	59
Photogrammetry photo register	1
Photogrammetry job sheets	13
Environmental sample register sheets	9
No. of samples	77
Digital photos (indexed)	1353

Table 1: Quantification of the excavation stratigraphic records

2.1.2 Archaeological remains were present across the excavated area, with denser concentrations of features located in the central and western parts (Fig. 3). Features comprised roundhouse ditches, linear boundaries and curvilinear enclosure ditches, pits, and postholes, as well as cremation burials and inhumation burials. All recorded archaeological features were found below the subsoil and were cut directly into the natural.

2.1.3 Initial examination of the pottery assemblage recovered on site provided spot-dates. Based on the assessment of the pottery dating and stratigraphic relationships, or where similarities in orientation and/or morphology suggest a relationship, three broad phases of activity that contain datable features (phase 1–3) with two more (phases 0 and 4) for which only finds are present were identified:

- Phase 0: Early prehistoric
- Phase 1: Iron Age
- Phase 2: Roman
- Phase 3: Anglo-Saxon
- Phase 4: Medieval/post-medieval

2.1.4 A number of excavated features were undated/unphased given the lack of diagnostic artefactual evidence and stratigraphic relationships, though many were probably associated with Iron Age or Roman activity.

2.2 Phase 0: Early prehistoric

2.2.1 No archaeological features or deposits of demonstrably pre-Iron Age date were identified within the excavated area. A total of 60 worked flints, mostly found residual in later contexts, point to an early prehistoric activity at the site or close by. While only a broad date could be placed on the flint material, it is thought likely that much of it

focussed on the early Neolithic. It possible, however, that some of the material relates to flint use during the Iron Age and may be contemporary with features present.

2.2.2 The general paucity of earlier prehistoric remains encountered during the excavation corresponds with the limited evidence identified during the evaluation (OA 2016a) and watching brief (OA 2018), which comprised a small quantity of largely undiagnostic worked flint. Nevertheless, this material provides evidence of a limited and perhaps transitory presence in the landscape during early prehistory.

2.3 Phase 1: Iron Age

2.3.1 The first tangible phase evidenced within the excavated area relates to Iron Age activity (Fig. 4). Archaeological remains from this period were predominately roundhouse ditches indicative of settlement occupation, together with large enclosure ditches, pits, and postholes, some of which formed structures. These remains were present across the excavated area, with a notable concentration of roundhouse ditches in the western half.

2.3.2 Ceramic dating suggests that Iron Age activity occurred no earlier than the later part of the early Iron Age (*c* 400 BC) and continued potentially throughout the middle Iron Age. Together with the pottery, other finds assemblages recovered from Phase 1 features, included animal bones, fired clay, and worked stone, demonstrating domestic activity.

Roundhouses

2.3.3 Numerous roundhouse ditches were encountered across the excavated area. There appear to have been situated within an unenclosed landscape with no clear signs of contemporary land division. Many of the roundhouse ditches had been recut, indicating that the buildings were maintained for some time and potentially modified during their lifespan. The inter-cutting nature of many of these features demonstrates a sequential pattern of occupation activity.

2.3.4 At least five inter-cutting roundhouse ditches were found in the south-western part of the excavated area. Possible penannular roundhouse ditch 1676 had a west-facing entrance that was nearly 2m wide and an internal diameter of *c* 11m (N–S), and enclosure ditch 1705 cut its eastern side. The shallow roundhouse ditch appeared to have been recut on its south side, where posthole 327 cut the gully. Roundhouse ditch 1676 cut at least two other possible roundhouse ditches and was itself cut by roundhouse ditch 405. With only its north-western half encountered, roundhouse ditch 405 had a projected internal diameter of *c* 12m and a possible south-west-facing entrance. These roundhouse ditches typically contained one or two fills from which small quantities of Iron Age pottery, animal bones, fired clay and worked flint were retrieved. A small quantity of slag was recovered from roundhouse ditch 405, suggesting small-scale smithing activity somewhere nearby.

2.3.5 In the northern part of this area, roundhouse ditches 1678 and 1679 defined a structure that had been altered. Roundhouse ditch 1678 was *c* 9.50m in diameter and had a probable entrance facing south-west. This was replaced on its inside by roundhouse ditch 1679, which defined a later and presumably smaller structure (Plate

1). Only approximately a quarter of this later structure survived, though its projected diameter measured *c* 8m and a rounded terminal to the north-east, which cut into earlier roundhouse ditch 1678, is suggestive of an entrance. Both contained two fills from which small amounts of Iron Age pottery and animal bone were recovered. Several pits (eg pit 31) were positioned within this structure and may have been contemporary with it. Possible remnants of further roundhouse ditches (1689) were found to the north.

2.3.6 Another roundhouse, situated towards the centre of the excavated area, had undergone at least one alteration. It comprised an earlier, inner roundhouse ditch (1680) that defined a structure *c* 10.3m in diameter, which was replaced by an outer roundhouse ditch (1681), creating a larger internal diameter of *c* 11.3m. Roundhouse ditch 1680 had a southern, rounded terminal suggestive of an entranceway. Finds recovered from these roundhouse ditches consisted of small quantities of Iron Age pottery and animal bones.

2.3.7 Three inter-cutting roundhouse ditches (1684, 1685, 1707), two of which also exhibited recuts, were found further to the east. These gullies appeared to have defined structures ranging from 9.5m to 13.3m in diameter. Located approximately in the centre of these roundhouse ditches was a small sub-circular gully (826) measuring 3.50m long, which was possibly related. Its purpose is unclear, however, and it only produced one sherd of pottery that may have been of Bronze Age or Iron Age date, along with a few fragments of animal bones.

2.3.8 Three more, fairly shallow roundhouse ditches (635, 1288 and 1675) were found in the eastern excavated area and also represent roundhouses of early/middle Iron Age date. A number of other roundhouse ditches were revealed particularly in the area close to 635, 1288 and 1680/1681. Several of these were not excavated or could not be securely dated by artefactual remains, though many appeared to have been inter-cutting, suggesting alterations to the positions of the structures in this area. The extents of their exposed remains were particularly limited, most likely as a result of recent truncation, and so the majority were recorded in plan only. Nevertheless, they are demonstrative of the development of the Iron Age settlement.

2.3.9 Many of the roundhouse ditches encircled internal features (see above). Postholes encountered within these features may be considered to have formed internal structural supports. Unfortunately, very few were datable, and it was difficult to establish spatial patterning to indicate more specific functions, such as entrances.

2.3.10 Internal pits were typically sub-circular or oval in plan, and excavated examples varied in size and profile. Finds recovered from these pits typically comprised small amounts of Iron Age pottery and animal bones. Of particular note is pit 448, which was situated within a probable Iron Age roundhouse ditch in the north-eastern corner of the excavated area. The pit was sub-circular and possibly bell-shaped in section, and it contained a largely complete middle Iron Age jar that appears to have been deliberately placed. A piece of worked flint and a heat-cracked cobble stone were also found in the pit, and these may have been deposited alongside the vessel. A cluster of eight postholes (1686), roughly positioned in two parallel rows on a NE–SW alignment,

were positioned to the west of pit 448, also within the roundhouse ditch, perhaps to divide the roundhouse into separate areas.

Enclosures

2.3.11 In addition to the roundhouses, several large enclosures were established during the Iron Age. Some of these enclosures cut a number of roundhouse ditches indicating a developing/changing pattern of land-use and were probably related to agricultural activities such as livestock management. In contrast to other Iron Age features, a large proportion of the pottery from the enclosure ditches was of middle Iron Age date.

2.3.12 The roughly D-shaped enclosure, 1683, located in the centre of the excavated area, was perhaps the most complete example. Formed of at least two inter-cutting ditches, it measured internally *c* 17m long and 9m wide. Moderate quantities of largely middle Iron Age pottery were recovered from both ditches, as well as animal bones and a piece of worked stone interpreted as a possible floor slab.

2.3.13 Ditch 1691 was located *c* 40 to the east. This formed a roughly U-shaped enclosure, measuring *c* 14m wide. The eastern part of the enclosure ditch was notably wider and had been recut on more than one occasion. A small quantity of Iron Age pottery and animal bones was recovered from this ditch (a single sherd of Roman pottery is considered to be intrusive). The human skeletal remains of a juvenile were recovered from fill 1498 (cut 1496), though it is currently uncertain if this individual was contemporary with the structure or was buried at a later date. A set of narrower, shallower ditches (1434, 1706, 812 and 1682) was located in the area between enclosures 1713 and 1691. These were found to cut each other so may not have been contemporary, though their positioning suggests that they may have been related. Ditch 1682 cut a small ring-gully section, which may have been an earlier roundhouse.

2.3.14 Two similar sets of inter-cutting ditches were recorded in the south-western part of the excavated area. These probably formed Iron Age enclosures that superseded several of the roundhouse ditches recorded in this area. Continuing beyond the limit of the excavated area, enclosure 1690 comprised a sequence of six inter-cutting ditches, indicating that the enclosure was recut on multiple occasions and suggesting that it had been in use for a long time (Plate 2). Phase 2 corndryer 1712 cut into the upper fills of these ditches. Two to three fills were often found within these ditches, with Iron Age pottery and animal bones being recovered. Enclosure 1690 also cut ditch 1677, which may have been an earlier roundhouse gully, on its north-western side.

2.3.15 Immediately to the south-west of enclosure 1690 was enclosure 1705. Cut by several Roman ditches, this feature consisted of six inter-cutting ditches from which broadly Iron Age and middle Iron Age pottery, animal bones, fired clay, an iron hobnail, an iron brooch, and a piece of lead waste were retrieved.

Post-built structures

2.3.16 Several post-built structures of Iron Age date were recorded. Four square structures (451, 1464, 1687, 1688), each comprised of four regularly spaced postholes, *c* 1.50–2.30m apart (eg Plate 3), were located in the central and central-northern parts of the excavated area. Given the locations of other nearby postholes, it is possible that

structures 1687 and 1688 were, in fact, rectangular six-post structures. Finds recorded from these postholes typically comprised small quantities of Iron Age pottery, animal bones and fired clay.

2.3.17 A more unusual rectangular posthole structure was revealed in the western part of the site. Structure 1101 was orientated roughly NNE–SSW, measured *c* 10m long and 3m wide, and potentially comprised as many as 34 postholes forming roughly two parallel lines. The postholes forming the southern half of the structure were inter-cutting, suggesting that the structure had been modified. The postholes each contained one or two fills from which pottery, fired clay, animal bones, marine shell, and residual worked flints were recovered. Nearly half of the postholes contained pottery, the majority of which was Iron Age in date. Three postholes contained small quantities of Roman pottery and it is possible that this material was intrusive, though the dating of this structure will be reconsidered during post-excavation.

Pits/postholes

2.3.18 Pits containing Iron Age pottery were discovered across the excavated area. As mentioned above, many were located close to the roundhouse ditches in the western part of the excavated area and constitute the remains of occupational and agricultural activity associated with the roundhouses and the enclosures. It is probable that numerous undated/unphased pits within the excavated area were also associated with this phase.

2.3.19 Pits 1513 and 79/121 located in the south-west corner of the site were notable for their size and shape. Spaced *c* 21m apart, they were oval in plan and measured 3.5–3.7m wide and up to 0.76m deep (Plate 4). They contained either early or middle Iron Age pottery, fired clay and animal bones. Two postholes adjacent to pit 79/121 were undated but may have been associated.

2.3.20 Pit 82 was found close to several inter-cutting roundhouse ditches (group 1689). It contained six fills of generally dark brownish/grey sandy silt with occasional charcoal inclusions. Intermediate fills 85 and 86 were, however, characteristic of burnt deposits associated with a hearth (Plate 5). Nearly all the fills contained small quantities of Iron Age pottery and animal bones (including some burnt bones), while fragments of fired clay were recovered from burnt deposit 85 and upper fill 90. The original purpose of this pit is unknown, though the character of the fills, together with the recovered finds, indicate that the pit was used for the deposition of domestic waste following its disuse.

2.3.21 A notable cluster of 13 shallow, oval pits (not numbered) with similar morphological characteristics located in the centre of the site, *c* 11m south of enclosure ditch 1683. Nine pits contained artefactual evidence, comprising Iron Age pottery, animal bones, worked flints, fired clay and iron fragments. Two contained a few sherds of possible Roman pottery, though it is probable that this material was intrusive given the similar morphological characteristics of the pits and the nature of subsequent Roman activity.

2.4 Phase 2: Roman

2.4.1 The next substantive period of activity occurred during the Roman period, with the majority of pottery dating to the middle and late Roman periods. Small quantities of

late Iron Age/early Roman and early Roman pottery were also recovered, demonstrating a degree of continued land use from the Iron Age occupation of the site. The majority of Roman remains comprised inter-cutting boundary and enclosure ditches, indicating multiple phases of activity mostly relating to the maintenance or modification of the layout of the boundaries (Fig. 5). Pits and other more discrete features were limited in number and did not appear to form any concentration in activity, and no clear structural evidence was identified.

Boundary/enclosure ditches

2.4.2 The Roman phase consisted of multiple ditches, mostly on WNW–ESE or NNE–SSW alignments, with some perhaps having acted as more significant land/field boundaries, while others created minor sub-divisions or enclosures. Extending across the northern part of the excavated area for at least 115m was WNW–ESE-aligned ditch 1692, which included as many as eight recuts (Plate 6). A similarly aligned ditch 1171 was located in the north-eastern part of the excavated area and may have formed at least one phase of ditch 1692 as it continued to the west. Equally, ditch 1702 may have formed a more southerly continuation of ditch 1692, perhaps relating to a different phase. Residual worked flints and Iron Age pottery, Roman pottery, ceramic building material (CBM), fired clay, animal bones, quern stone, slag, iron nails, Roman coins and copper-alloy dress accessories, comprising a brooch, armlet and bracelet, were retrieved from these ditches. A WNW–ESE-aligned row of six postholes (1107) was cut into the upper fill of one of the earlier phases of ditch 1692 and indicates the presence of a fence or palisade along this side of the boundary. A sherd of pottery dated AD 40–150 was recovered from one of the postholes.

2.4.3 Ditch 1693 was situated no more than 10m to the south of ditch 1692 (Plate 7). This was largely parallel on a WNW–ESE alignment for *c* 79m before it turned and continued in a south-westerly direction. The two boundaries probably formed a trackway for part of their alignment. Boundary 1693 was previously recorded in the trial-trench evaluation (Trench 8; OA 2016a), and as with 1692 also comprised multiple inter-cutting ditches. The south-west continuation of the boundary appears to align with ditch group 1708 in the south-western part of the excavated area, from which small assemblages of Roman pottery, Roman CBM, animal bones, possible Roman glass, iron nails and a Roman copper-alloy ligula were recovered. Parallel to ditches 1708 was a further, possibly associated, Roman ditch (142) that contained small quantities of residual Iron Age pottery and 3rd-century pottery, as well as a coin hoard comprising 25 coins of 4th-century date.

2.4.4 Numerous inter-cutting WNW–ESE aligned ditches (1710) crossed the southern part of the excavated area. Owing to the complex nature of the stratigraphy of these ditches, the sequence of cutting is unclear. Nevertheless, the ditches demonstrate the maintenance and longevity of the feature. Roman and Iron Age pottery, animal bones, CBM, fired clay, worked flints, Roman coins and two intrusive post-medieval copper-alloy objects were recovered.

2.4.5 Ditch 1700 was aligned WNW–ESE and represented the probable western continuation of 1710. In addition, several inter-cutting ditches of boundary ditch 1710 appeared to continue to the east (1699) beyond the excavated area, while others

diverged and continued on an ENE–WSW alignment for *c* 19m before turning to the north-east for a further 70m (1698) where they eventually joined boundary ditch 1692. It seems likely that these blocked the route of the trackway in this area.

2.4.6 Several less substantial Roman appeared to sub-divide the area south of boundary ditch 1693 into rectilinear fields, possibly co-axially aligned to the trackway. NNE–SSW-aligned ditch 1694 was 55m long and had unclear relationships with ditch 1693 to its north and ditch 1698 to its south, though it did not continue beyond either of these boundaries. The ditch produced small quantities of Roman and Iron Age pottery, animal bones, CBM, fired clay and marine shells. Located *c* 41m to the west of, and parallel with ditch 1694 was ditch 1695. It was nearly 24m long, ending to the south in a slightly pointed terminal potentially cutting ditch 1696, but not continuing beyond 1693 to the north. Ditch 1696 extended ESE and was cut by ditch 1694 and terminated by ditch 1698 at its east end. The excavated segments of these two perpendicular ditches contained Roman and Iron Age pottery, animal bones, worked flints, Roman coins, and a Roman brooch. Ditch 1697 extended *c* 41m south from where ditches 1695 and 1696 met before it turned 90° to the WNW. It is currently unclear how this ditch was related to boundary 1710. Roman pottery, CBM and animal bone were recovered from its single fill.

2.4.7 In the western part of the site was WNW–ESE-aligned ditch 1701, which comprised an interrupted ditch with rounded terminals and a gap measuring *c* 2.2m wide. This ditch perhaps formed a subdivision in this area, along with ditch 1703 which was cut by ditch 1701. Ditch 1703 was exposed for *c* 19.5m before it was cut by ditch 1704, though it may have originally continued towards the north-east. Both ditches 1701 and 1703 contained small quantities of Roman pottery and animal bones. L-shaped ditch 1704 may have formed part of another Roman field or enclosure, similar to those to the east (see above). It measured *c* 7.5m (E–W) and 28m (N–S) but extended beyond the excavated area in both directions. The northern part of the ditch had been recut, almost completely removing the original cut. The ditch contained two fills containing a small quantity of Roman pottery, animal bones and a fragment of a possible Roman bracelet.

Corndryer 1712

2.4.8 A rectangular stone-built corndryer (1712), aligned roughly WNW–ESE, was recorded in the western part of the excavated area (Plate 8). Cutting Phase 1 enclosure ditch 1690, the rectangular construction cut for the main chamber and flue measured 3.66m long by 1.3m wide and 0.3m deep. The two surviving walls of the flue comprised a single course of roughly shaped limestone blocks bonded with white/grey mortar. Overlying the base of the flue was a sequence of burnt and charcoal-rich deposits (1176, 1177, 1178) associated with the use of the structure. Fragments of Roman pottery, animal bones, burnt stones and an iron nail were retrieved from these deposits. A heat-affected deposit (1179) encountered in the western end of the corndryer indicated the location of the stokehole.

2.4.9 In the eastern end of the corndryer, a deposit (1175) was suggestive of natural slumping that accumulated following the cessation of the structure but prior to

deliberate backfilling. A final backfill layer (1174) covered the stone structure and its internal deposits. It contained Roman and Iron Age pottery and animal bones.

Pits/postholes

2.4.10 A small number of pits contained Roman pottery, though it is likely that a number of currently undated/unphased discrete features were also associated with Phase 2. Pit 849 was situated within field defined by ditches 1693, 1695, 1696 and 1694. Its single fill contained the remains of a large early Roman (AD 43–150) storage vessel and a small amount of animal bones. Although truncated, the vessel appears to have been deliberately placed.

2.4.11 Two large inter-cutting pits (1115 and 1121) were located in the central-southern part of the excavated area and were found to contain small quantities of Roman pottery, animal bones, burnt stone and fired clay, while residual Iron Age pottery was also recovered from both pits. A similar sub-circular Roman pit (604) located *c* 31m to the WSW contained three fills from which a small quantity of Roman pottery and a moderate amount of animal bones was retrieved, the majority from middle fill 606. Pit 126 was located in the western part of the site. This feature was heavily truncated with only the lower 0.06m surviving. Despite this, a moderate quantity of Roman pottery was recovered from its single fill, together with small amounts of fired clay and slag (Plates 9 and 10). Oval pit 112 was found *c* 1m east of ditch 1704. It contained three fills, one consisting burnt waste material from which a small amount of Roman pottery and animal bones were retrieved.

2.4.12 Cremation burial 1141 (Fig. 5; Plate 11) was located adjacent to Roman boundary ditch 1694 in the eastern part of the excavated area. Positioned approximately in the centre of the pit was a vessel dating to the middle or late Roman period (AD 120–410) that contained a deposit of dark greyish/brown gravelly silt with cremated human bones.

2.5 Phase 3: Late Roman/early Saxon

2.5.1 The extent to which the site continued to be occupied immediately after the Roman period is unclear (Fig. 6). Disarticulated remains and several inhumation burials, some of which had been cut into the upper fills of Roman ditches are likely to be either late Roman or early Saxon. However, no pottery clearly of Saxon date has been identified, though one artefact found in an inhumation burial is thought to be early Saxon (see below). A total of 14 inhumation burials and six deposits of disarticulated remains were encountered. The inhumation burials were located in two loose groups, one in the central-southern part of the excavated area and one in the south-west corner, while one isolated burial was found in the north-western area.

2.5.2 Of the burials recorded, three individuals (Sk 247, Sk 525, and Sk 1570) were placed in shallow grave cuts. A possible early Saxon iron knife and iron nails were found alongside Sk 247 (Plate 12). Where individuals/disarticulated remains had been buried within the upper fills of earlier ditches, no grave cuts were apparent. One inhumation burial, a juvenile (Sk 1498), was found in the fill of Iron Age roundhouse gully, though it was uncertain whether this individual was contemporary with the surrounding feature or was a later intrusion.

2.5.3 The disarticulated remains consisted of four elements (709–712) found on top of a complete inhumation (Sk 707; Plate 13). It is currently uncertain whether these represent an earlier, disturbed inhumation burial or were remains deliberately selected and deposited with Sk 707. Other disarticulated remains include a femur (1535) found in the lower fill of boundary ditch 1708 (cut 150), which also contained broadly dated Roman pottery and residual Iron Age pottery, and a skull (931) recovered from Roman trackway ditch 1692. It is possible that some disarticulated human bones genuinely date to the Roman period (or were perhaps residual from the Iron Age) and further examination of the remains and their stratigraphic context is required.

2.6 Phase 4: Medieval/post-medieval

2.6.1 No later medieval features were discovered. However, a small number of medieval/early post-medieval CBM fragments were recovered from Iron Age features and are considered to have been intrusive within the features, perhaps having derived from the subsoil. This paucity of archaeological remains of medieval and later date is consistent with the results of the 2016 evaluation, which recovered medieval/post-medieval finds from topsoil and subsoil deposits.

3 FACTUAL DATA: ARTEFACTS

3.1 General

3.1.1 The bulk of the finds recovered from the excavation comprise pottery and animal bones. There is also a small amount of CBM and human remains, including some cremated bone. A total of 59 artefacts were assigned small finds numbers. The material has been processed and the pre-assessment quantifications are presented in Table 2. The following sections present the results of the preliminary assessments of each category of finds.

Material	Number	Weight (g)
Animal bone	6699	93,176
Animal bone (sieving)	627	1215
Burnt flint, unworked (sieving)	9	20
Burnt stone	13	255
Ceramic building material (CBM)	103	8939
Copper alloy	91	236
Cremated human bone	375	198
Fired clay	183	8292
Flint	81	552
Flint (sieving)	5	13
Glass	2	7
Human bone	626	271
Human bone (sieving)	942	330
Iron	26	637
Iron (sieving)	14	32
Lead	4	48
Pottery	6232	88,230
Pottery (sieving)	207	1022
Shell	19	275
Slag	26	880
Slag (sieving)	7	8
Stone	52	3498
Wood	1	12
Worked bone	1	31

Table 2: Quantification of finds

3.2 Worked flint

by Mike Donnelly

3.2.1 A total of 60 struck flints, several natural fragments, and 12 fragments of unworked burnt flint weighing 18g were recovered. The flints were widely distributed across site, and many were lightly damaged, suggesting that most were no longer in their primary depositional context. However, the lack of heavily damaged pieces suggests that they had not moved far. Tools were especially common in numbers that suggest either selective recovery or that the site had a strong domestic or industrial function. These tools were largely undiagnostic and poorly dated, though one leaf-shaped arrowhead of early Neolithic date was recovered, as was an end-of-blade borer and a backed knife

of Neolithic or Bronze Age date. There was a limited amount of later prehistoric flake debitage that could be contemporary with some of the Iron Age features, but in numbers that would suggest nothing more than occasional flint use.

The assemblage

3.2.2 The assemblage had a high blade index of 16.27% indicating that some flints are early in date (Table 3). Figures of around 15% are suggested for early Neolithic material (Ford 1987), which is represented by the arrowhead. Both of the cores recovered were undiagnostic and the figure of 3.33% for cores and related debitage was quite low for a residual assemblage. A single bladelet core had more flake scars than bladelets but is still likely to be early but broadly ranging in date, from anywhere between the late Upper Palaeolithic and the end of the Neolithic. The percentage of tools may be due to recovery bias or represents a specialised site. Recovery bias is perhaps unlikely given the low number of cores, which are also usually over-represented. Thus, the high tool figure may be genuine, perhaps reflecting an area of tool use or selected deposition. It is possible that a domestic setting with a processing area lay nearby.

Type	Number
Flake	36
Blade	5
Bladelet	2
Blade index	16.27% (7/43)
Irregular waste	3
Core single platform blades	1
Core fragment	1
Scraper end	1
Arrowhead leaf-shaped	1
Awl	1
Heavy borer	1
Denticulate	1
Fabricator	2
Knife backed	1
Knife other	1
Retouched blade	1
Retouched flake	2
Total	60
Burnt unworked (representative total)	12/18g
No. burnt (%)	4/60 (6.67%)
No. broken (%)	25/60 (41.67%)
No cores and core dressing (%)	2/60 (3.33%).
No. retouched (%)	13/60 (21.67%)

Table 3: Summary of the flint assemblage

3.2.3 It is possible that all the flints could belong within an early Neolithic context. Two broken fabricators are of note (one from the surface of the natural and the other from the upper fill (550) of Roman pit 549) as they are rare items and it is very unlikely that the two were part of the same object. These tools are often associated with the production of other flint tools as they may have been used for retouching. This would

support the view that the high number of tools is the result of specialised production. Two quite finely made retouched flakes, also from the surface of the natural, are likely to be Neolithic date. One heavy boring tool on a blade (Iron Age pit fill 479) is also clearly early, with an early Neolithic date being likely.

Distribution

3.2.4 The flints were spread across many contexts with just under three-quarters being recovered individually or as two flints in any context. Most of the flints came from ditches followed by pits (Table 4). Ten came from postholes, probably aided by recovery bias, including six from fill 479 from four-post structure 1687. Although dating to the Iron Age date, the lithics appear to be earlier, being early Bronze Age at the latest but probably much earlier.

Feature type	No.	%
Ditches	33	55.0
Pits	14	23.3
Postholes	4	6.7
Four-/six-post structure	6	10.0
Natural	3	5.0
Total	60	[100]

Table 4: Worked flints by feature type

Condition

3.2.5 The flints recovered were dominated by lightly damaged pieces that accounted for exactly half of the assemblage (Table 5). Fresh pieces were also common with 18 examples (32.14%) and seven pieces had moderate levels of damage (12.5%), with three plough damaged flints (5.36%). The focus on lightly damaged and fresh pieces suggests an assemblage that is largely no longer in its primary depositional context but one that has also not moved far. Cortication can also be used to identify how mixed an assemblage is and the fact that nearly all the flints have light cortication with the remainder displaying moderate levels could also support the view that the assemblage belongs broadly to one period.

Condition	Total	%	Cortication	Total	%
Fresh	18	32.1	None	0	0
Light	28	50.0	Light	48	85.7
Moderate	7	12.5	Moderate	8	14.3
Heavy	0	0	Heavy	0	0
Plough damaged	3	5.4			

Table 5: Summary of flint condition and cortication

3.3 Prehistoric pottery

by Alex Davies

3.3.1 The excavation recovered 2401 sherds of prehistoric pottery weighing 34,196g, from 306 contexts. All the material dated to the early or middle Iron Age. A few possible Bronze Age elements were noted, though these are likely to be Iron Age as well. Late Iron Age pottery has been recorded with the Roman material (see below), and all

references to 'Iron Age' pottery in this section relates to material dating to the early or middle Iron Age.

Methodology

3.3.2 All the pottery except sherds retrieved from environmental samples was assessed. This involved providing spot-dates for each context. Spot-dating considered form, decoration, and occasionally surface treatment (eg red-finished bowls were spot-dated to the early Iron Age). Fabrics were not used in spot-dating as it is yet be demonstrated that any particular fabric belonged solely to either the early or middle Iron Age. Nonetheless, shell-tempered material was noted in numerous early Iron Age forms and most middle Iron Age forms were in sandy fabrics.

3.3.3 Sherd count and weights were obtained from quantification during the initial finds-processing stage. Information from related contexts, including their phasing, was not considered as part of the spot-dating process. Comments were made on material from interesting features, and basic information regarding carbonised residues were noted given their potential for radiocarbon dating.

Quantification

3.3.4 The sherd counts and weights of pottery discovered in contexts spot-dated to the early Iron Age, middle Iron Age and early/middle Iron Age are presented in Table 6. This approximately indicates the amount of pottery belonging to each phase. In terms of sherd counts, some 14% of the material was recovered from contexts spot-dated to the early Iron Age, 38% from contexts spot-dated to the middle Iron Age, and about 48% from contexts currently spot-dated to the early or middle Iron Age. These figures need to be considered alongside provisional site phasing as about a quarter of the material was residual in later, mostly Roman features (Table 7). Early Iron Age pottery appears to be genuinely residual in Roman contexts, and if confirmed this has implications for the interpretation of Iron Age depositional patterns.

Date	No. sherds	Weight (g)	No. contexts
EIA	324 (14%)	4915 (14%)	40 (13%)
MIA	923 (38%)	14,855 (43%)	45 (15%)
IA	1154 (48%)	14,426 (42%)	221 (72%)
Total	2401	34,196	306

Table 6: Quantification of prehistoric pottery, by context spot-date

Date	Sherds	Weight	No. contexts
EIA	106 (33%)	1927 (39%)	9 (23%)
MIA	295 (32%)	2899 (19%)	14 (31%)
IA	235 (20%)	3234 (22%)	43 (20%)
Total	636 (27%)	8060 (24%)	66 (22%)

Table 7: Quantification of residual material in Roman and post-Roman contexts (percentages calculate the amount of residual pottery from each period)

3.3.5 The Iron Age pottery has a relatively high mean sherd weight (MSW) of 14g, as the MSW of Iron Age assemblages in the region tend to be around 10g (Davies *et al.* in prep.). This indicates that the assemblage is in a very good condition.

Pottery forms, features and dating

3.3.6 Two recurring diagnostic features defined the early Iron Age elements of the assemblage. These were straight-sided vessels with expanded rims, and red-finished vessels. Straight-sided vessels with expanded rims are a common regional form that can be dated to the end of the early Iron Age (Davies 2018, 284–5; Davies *et al.* in prep). This is demonstrated nearby at Great Western Park, *c* 3km to the south of Sutton Courtney Lane (Davies *et al.* in prep). The other early Iron Age vessels at Sutton Courtney Lane, those with red finishing (hematite?), can date throughout the early Iron Age. There were no instances of angular vessels, bipartite bowls, or other types that date only to the earlier part of the early Iron Age. It therefore appears that Iron Age activity at the site probably began no earlier than *c* 400 cal BC. The middle Iron Age assemblage contains the expected range of forms that could span the entirety of this later period.

Context features and groups

3.3.7 Some 60% of the contexts containing prehistoric pottery have been assigned to wider groups of contexts at assessment stage. The material was found in the following context groups: 20 roundhouse ditches, 10 enclosure ditches, postholes of four four-/six-post structures, one rectangular structure, and one group of postholes possibly belonging to a house. Prehistoric pottery was also found in 14 groups phased to the Roman period (see above).

Key contexts

3.3.8 There were no contexts of particular note that were clearly dated to the early Iron Age.

3.3.9 Middle Iron Age context 449 (pit 448) produced a complete but smashed jar with a thick internal layer of carbonised residue. The pit was excavated within a roundhouse gully and it is possible that this vessel was used and/or deposited for a specialised and deliberate purpose. Further work could include lipid analysis and radiocarbon dating.

3.3.10 Middle Iron Age enclosure ditch 1683 produced 370 sherds weighing 6850g from the fills of several interventions, includes recuts. This large group potentially contains a series of sizable and distinct stratigraphic assemblages that could form a focus for analysis, concentrating on their relative and absolute dating.

3.3.11 Iron Age context 131 (pit 130) produced an unusual rod-like piece of pottery that may have been a tripod leg. A possibly similar example has recently been found at Crab Hill, Wantage (OA 2020). Parallels for this object should be sought and its function discussed.

Carbonised residues

3.3.12 Iron Age pottery is often found residually in later contexts, which presents considerable problems for understanding ceramic chronologies in this period (Davies *et al.* in prep; Lambrick 1984). One implication is that radiocarbon dates taken of material associated with pottery need not be contemporary with the use of the vessels

and, therefore, radiocarbon dating carbonised residue adhering to pottery sherds is a much more effective method of dating pottery types.

3.3.13 Carbonised residue was found on vessels from 11 contexts (Table 8). Most of these were not ideal samples for radiocarbon dating, either because the residues were present in small quantities, located on the external part of the vessel, or found on sherds of indistinct vessel form, or the pottery was recovered from Roman contexts. Several, however, including the probably complete jar from context 449 mentioned above, were suitable for radiocarbon dating and a number should be selected for analysis.

Context	Group	Spot-date	Vessel date	C14 potential	Comment
449	pit 448	MIA	MIA	Yes	Smashed jar
1357	ditch 1705	MIA	MIA	Yes	
1353	ditch 1705	MIA	MIA	Possible	
1338	ditch 1705	IA	IA	Yes	Group date MIA
1355	ditch 1705	IA	IA	Yes	Group date MIA
245	ditch 244	MIA	MIA	Yes	
609	ditch 1677	IA	IA	Yes	
151	ditch 1708	Roman	IA	Possible	Possibly EIA
1314	pit 1313	Roman	IA	Yes	
1342	ditch 1288	MIA	MIA	Possible	External residue
1394	ditch 1691	IA	IA	Possible	
184	ditch 1677	IA	IA	Possible	

Table 8: Contexts producing pottery with carbonised residue

3.4 Roman pottery

by Kate Brady

3.4.1 Some 3831 sherds of pottery weighing 54,034g were recovered from the excavation. The assemblage was quantified by sherd count and weight and rapidly scanned to identify diagnostic forms and fabrics, allowing each context group to be provisionally spot-dated and the potential for further work to be assessed. Fabrics were assigned codes taken from OA's standard recording guidelines (Booth 2016), while forms were briefly described. The data were entered onto an Excel spreadsheet, which is retained in the project archive.

3.4.2 The following fabrics were present (codes in brackets are taken from Tomber and Dore 1998):

A11 South Spanish Amphora (BAT AM 1/ BAT AM 2)
A20 Fine Oxidised Amphora
B11 Dorset black-burnished ware (DOR BB 1)
C10 Shell tempered fabrics
C11 Late Roman shell tempered fabrics incl (HAR SH)
E30 Medium to coarse sand tempered fabrics
E50 Limestone tempered fabrics
E60 Flint tempered fabrics
E80 Late Iron Age/early Roman grog tempered fabric
F01 Miscellaneous fine ware (mica-dusted fine oxidised fabric)

F44 Trier 'Rhenish' colour-coated ware (MOS BA)
F51 Oxfordshire red/brown colour-coated ware (OXF RS)
F52 Nene Valley colour-coated ware (LNV CC)
F54 New Forest colour-coated 'stoneware' fabric (NFO CC)
F57 New Forest colour-coated oxidised fabric (NFO RS2)
F59 Oxfordshire Nuneham Courtenay Lower Farm colour-coated ware
M22 Oxfordshire white ware mortaria (OXF WH)
M31 Oxfordshire oxidised with white slip mortaria (OXF WS)
M41 Oxfordshire colour-coated mortaria (OXF RS)
M50 Oxidised mortaria (source unknown)
O10 Fine oxidised fabric
O20 Sandy oxidised fabric
O24 Sandy oxidised 'Portchester D type' Overwey white ware
O80 Coarse tempered oxidised ware
O81 Pink grogged ware (PNK GT)
Q21 Oxfordshire white slipped ware
R10 Fine reduced ware
R20 Sandy reduced ware
R30 Medium sandy reduced ware
R35 North Wiltshire sandy reduced ware
R39 Alice Holt fine sandy reduced ware
R40 Miscellaneous reduced fabrics
R50 Dark surfaced reduced fabrics
R90 Coarse tempered reduced fabrics
R95 Savernake ware (SAV GT)
S20 South Gaulish samian ware (LGF SA)
S30 Central Gaulish samian ware (LEZ SA 2)
S40 East Gaulish samian ware
W10 'standard' white fabrics
W11 Parchment Oxfordshire parchment ware (OXF PA)
W20 sandy white fabrics
W22 Oxfordshire sandy white ware

3.4.3 The Roman pottery assemblage was recovered from ditches and a corndryer. The assemblage consists of a large range of forms and fabrics and dating spans the entire Roman period. A small amount of material was from features that are currently phased to the Iron Age period, including posthole 1029 of structure 1101 from which a late Roman assemblage was recovered. This appears to be one of a group which otherwise contained only Iron Age pottery (see above). Further analysis may help to clarify this and other occasional anomalies.

Early Roman

3.4.4 Pottery spot-dated to the early Roman period accounted for 6.3% of the assemblage by sherd count and 9.4% by weight. The earliest material consists of E-wares (E30, E50, E60, E80) which can date from the late Iron Age to early Roman period (100 BC–AD 100). In all contexts bar two where these fabrics are present, they are accompanied by 'Romanised' fabrics' that are post-conquest in date. The remaining contexts may date

to the late Iron Age period but given the later date of the other E-wares it is likely that these contexts were also deposited in the post-conquest.

Middle Roman

3.4.5 Pottery spot dated to the middle Roman period (*c* AD 120–240) makes up 21.9% of the assemblage by sherd count and 20.6% by weight. The group includes rims from a range of coarse ware vessels, including several medium mouthed jars, a curving-sided platter and at least two straight-sided flat rim bowls, one with lattice decoration. Another bowl with a flat rim has a rounded body. There is the rim of a bag shaped beaker, and a body sherd with barbotine-dot decoration. Another body sherd shows evidence of graffito. A bowl in sandy oxidised ware has burnished surfaces and an out-turned rim. There were rim and body sherds of storage jars in oxidised (O80) and reduced (R90) coarse tempered fabrics. Finer oxidised sherds (O10) are from a butt beaker, a bag-shaped beaker, a bowl, and a possible lid.

3.4.6 White wares are fairly common in the group and include fine white ware (W10) sherds from a shallow flanged bowl/dish probably from the Oxford industry, a ring-necked flagon also probably from Oxford, and coarser sherds (W20) from a hemispherical bowl with burnt surfaces and long everted rim, and a narrow-mouthed jar blackened around the rim. Two whiteware mortaria from the Oxford kilns were recorded. Both were burnt around the rim and one, which was almost complete, was also burnt on the interior surface.

3.4.7 The site was receiving products from regional industries from *c* AD 120 including a flat-rim bowl and a cooking pot, both with lattice decoration, and a base of a probable dish decorated with a burnished scribble all in Dorset black-burnished ware (B11), and a small group of Savernake ware sherds, among them the rim of a storage jar, from Wiltshire (R95) .

3.4.8 Fine wares from regional industries include a small number of Oxfordshire colour-coated sherds of 2nd-century date (F59), which are very similar to those from the Lower Farm, Nuneham Courtenay, kiln site (Booth *et al*. 1994) and may be this fabric. A foot-ring base in fine oxidised ware is mica-dusted, and its source is currently not known.

3.4.9 Imports were present on the site in this period and include a Central Gaulish samian ware (S30) bowl and cup and small amount of East Gaulish samian ware body sherds. A few small body sherds of Trier ‘Rhenish’ ware (F44) were also recorded.

Late Roman

3.4.10 Pottery spot-dated to the late Roman period amounts to 45% of the assemblage by sherd count and 50% by weight, indicating increased activity in this period. The group was characterised by the appearance of late Roman forms in various local and regional fabrics and colour-coated wares from the Oxford industry.

3.4.11 The coarse ware material recorded includes a large amount of medium sandy greyware (R30). There was an increase in the contribution made by a highly micaceous fabric. This has been attributed to miscellaneous code R40, but the fabric may be consistent with South-west micaceous ware (R85). Forms in the fabric included a wide

flat base with a burnished scribble copying the decoration found on black-burnished ware dishes. There was also a flanged bowl and a carinated bowl with an out-turned rim (Young form R57) and a highly burnished surface in this micaceous greyware. Other coarse ware vessel included coarse storage vessels in reduced fabric R90 and soft pink grogged ware oxidised fabric O81. There were various jars, mainly in fabric R30, but also a few in finer fabric R10. These tended to be small. One R30 jar had a bifid rim and there were also several flagons and flagon/jugs one of which was narrow mouthed with a high shoulder and flanged rim. Several of these forms are characteristic of the late Roman period in the region. The bowls and dishes included vessels in reduced fabrics, such as flanged bowls, carinated bowls with moulded rims, a curving sided necked bowl, a wall-sided bowl, and a plain rimmed dish with a groove under the rim. Another notable form in R30 was a possible large lid There was the occasional oxidised bowl, but these are much less common than the reduced versions.

3.4.12 The late Roman assemblage includes an assortment of white wares, of which a small amount of Overwey white ware (O24) (body sherds and a single everted rim) is chronologically significant, being a late Roman fabric. Three Oxford white ware mortarium (M22) rims were recorded (Young types M14, M17 and M18), all of which are late Roman forms, as was an Oxford fine white ware bowl with a folded flange.

3.4.13 Fabrics from regional industries are also present in the late Roman group. The contribution made by black-burnished ware was smaller than in the middle Roman period, but forms recorded included a plain rim dish with arc decoration and several flanged bowls, a diagnostic late Roman form. A small number of possible Alice Holt greyware sherds and possible sherds of Compton sandy wares were identified and may be confirmed by further analysis. There was a significant assemblage of shell-tempered sherds, which probably came from the South Midlands kilns. A few sherds of greyware from the North Wiltshire industry were recorded but more regional fabrics may be identified during full analysis.

3.4.14 The late Roman fine-ware assemblage was dominated by products from the Oxford industry. The groups included colour-coated mortaria (M41), one of which had a spout decorated with a moulded mouse-head (or a devolved lion-head) and graffito on the base. Another had a folded flange and incised decoration on the rim and was probably 4th century in date. There were several flanged bowls (Young C47), and a hemispherical bowl with a bead rim (Young C55). There was also a smaller flanged bowl. A single beaker in this fabric was recorded and it had a small squared bead rim. Body sherds in the fabric included one with white-painted dot decoration and one with an unusual vertical indented decoration. Small amounts of material from the New Forest industry (F54 and F57) were recorded and included a body sherd with white-paint decoration. There was a white-painted oxidised vessel with a foot-ring base from the Oxford Industry, which also provided a white-slipped mortaria with red-painted decoration. The only imported material in this phase was an East Gaulish samian ware wall-sided bowl/mortarium.

Summary

3.4.15 Overall, the assemblage had a late Roman emphasis with the middle Roman period also being well represented. There was a large range of forms, including fine wares and

imports. Pottery condition was variable but generally reasonable, with a mean sherd weight of 14.1g. Much of the material was slightly to moderately eroded, with variable preservation on surfaces. The mean sherd weight indicates a moderately fragmentary assemblage, possibly a result of some disturbance and re-deposition. However, it may still have been deposited reasonably close to areas of pottery use.

3.5 Worked and burnt stone

by Ruth Shaffrey

3.5.1 A total of 65 pieces of stone were retained and submitted for analysis. These were all scanned for signs of use or modification and worked/used items were recorded with the aid of a x10 magnification hand lens. Burnt stone was weighed and counted by lithology and context. Worked stone was fully recorded and these records entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet.

The assemblage

3.5.2 Burnt stone accounts for 38 fragments weighing 1.7kg, most of which was heat cracked.

3.5.3 A limestone slab found in the backfill (1164) of ditch 1183 appears to be worn on one side, though the wear is not consistent with grinding or sharpening and it is most likely worn through use in a floor surface.

3.5.4 A single quern fragment was found in the primary fill (941) of Roman ditch 940. This is a small fragment of indeterminate morphology, but with a segment of smoothed slightly convex grinding surface. It is of a well-known quern material, Lodsworth stone. A second fragment of a known quern material is a piece of Culham Greensand from the fill (1217) of Roman pit 1214. It does not retain any worked surfaces but was used for the production of saddle querns in the local area.

3.5.5 A single fragment of grey siltstone whetstone was found in the secondary fill (57) of Iron Age posthole 56. It appears to be of slab form, but it is broken across opposing edges so could actually be a fragment of a bar whetstone. It has signs of wear on both faces.

3.6 Fired clay

by Cynthia Poole

3.6.1 A modest assemblage of fired clay amounting to 183 fragments (8292g) was recovered from ditches, pits, postholes, gullies, and miscellaneous features (Table 9). The material comprises broken fragments that have suffered moderate abrasion, but has a high mean fragment weight of 45g, which is well above average for fired clay. The fired clay comprises both Iron Age and Roman forms representing portable oven or hearth furniture, and also some fragments of Anglo-Saxon loom-weights. The assemblage has been scanned and a preliminary intermediate-level record made on an Excel spreadsheet.

3.6.2 Fabrics were characterised on the basis of macroscopic features, supplemented by the use of x20 hand lens for finer constituents. In all periods the fabrics derived from local clay deposits originating from the Gault and Greensand, characterised by quartz, mica,

glauconite and fine sandstone/siltstone grits in varying quantities and proportions. They are very similar in character to fired clay found at sites in Didcot and elsewhere in the region situated on the same geology.

Iron Age fired clay

3.6.3 Fired clay phased to the Iron Age (86 fragments, 2580g) based on pottery dating is dominated by pieces identified with varying degrees of certainty as triangular perforated bricks. These objects usually have a perforation across each corner piercing the side surface at an angle. None survived complete, though thickness was estimated to be 80mm for two examples, which is at the higher end of the standard size. One example was very fragile, and it may be possible to refit to obtain at least a complete thickness. Most perforations measured between 13mm and 19mm in diameter, but one had a very small perforation only 8mm in diameter.

3.6.4 One small object, slightly over half of a cylindrical spindle whorl was recovered from early Iron Age pit 82.

3.6.5 Apart from the triangular bricks, only a small number of oven-structure and indeterminate fragments were found. Fragments initially identified as Roman plates or discs will need to be re-examined to establish whether they are fragments of the Roman form or misidentified triangular bricks.

Roman fired clay

3.6.6 The Roman fired clay (86 fragments, 5563g) comprised almost exclusively discs or baking plates. These take the form of circular or rectangular flat plates or discs of varying thickness and size. Four have evidence of a slight flange, lip or thickening at the edge. Thickness ranged from 16mm to 45mm with flanged edges up to 66mm thick. The largest surviving fragment was 200mm long, but no complete sizes could be estimated.

3.6.7 The edges varied in form from straight vertical to rounded, and flanged edges were triangular in profile. Both circular/oval and rectangular plates were represented. The use of chaff either as a filler in the fabric or as impressions on one surface was a frequent feature. Surfaces were smooth and well finished when not covered with chaff impressions, and one was heavily burnt grey or black.

3.6.8 Other forms are entirely absent, apart from a single, possible oven-structure example.

Anglo-Saxon fired clay

3.6.9 Fragments from Roman ditch 1692 and middle Iron Age roundhouse ditch 1288 were tentatively identified as pieces of Anglo-Saxon bun-shaped loom-weight. One was estimated to have a diameter of *c* 120mm.

3.6.10 An indeterminate fragment with a flat-moulded surface, possibly some form of oven or hearth furniture was found in ditch 427, which was not properly dated but is associated with two late Roman/early Saxon inhumation burials (Sk 428 and Sk 531).

Context	Date	Context phase	Form	Org. impr.	No.	Wt (g)
12	IA–ER	1 - Iron Age	Triangular perforated brick		1	28
12	IA–ER?	1 - Iron Age	Triangular perforated brick?		1	38
85	Preh–med	1 - Iron Age	Oven structure?	Straw/grass	40	170
90	Preh	1 - Iron Age	Spindle Whorl		1	21
124	RB	1 - Iron Age	Disc/oven plate?		1	35
127	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate?	Chaff/straw	1	21
159	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate	Chaff/straw	1	226
173	IA–ER	1 - Iron Age	Triangular perforated brick		4	379
256	Preh–med	Unphased	Structural?		1	6
263	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate flanged		7	489
301	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate?	Chaff	1	34
313	RB	2 - Roman	Indeterminate		1	6
324	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate	Chaff	1	106
331	IA–ER	1 - Iron Age	Triangular perforated brick		1	86
341	IA–ER	1 - Iron Age	Triangular perforated brick		9	585
341	IA–ER	1 - Iron Age	Triangular perforated brick		8	232
361	IA–ER	1 - Iron Age	Triangular perforated brick?		1	53
391	RB	1 - Iron Age	Furniture?		1	209
393	IA–ER	1 - Iron Age	Triangular perforated brick		1	51
429	Preh–med	3 - LR/Saxon	Indeterminate		1	15
458	Preh–med	1 - Iron Age	Indeterminate		1	12
546	IA–ER	1 - Iron Age	Triangular perforated brick		1	161
564	RB	1 - Iron Age	Disc/oven plate		4	126
688	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate?		2	23
699	Preh–med	2 - Roman	Structural?		1	3
800	RB	Unphased	Disc/oven plate?	Chaff	1	44
840	RB	1 - Iron Age	Indeterminate		1	4
882	IA–ER	1 - Iron Age	Triangular perforated brick?		1	80
884	IA–ER	1 - Iron Age	Triangular perforated brick?		2	81
917	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate		5	547
917	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate	Chaff	1	414
920	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate		1	173
943	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate		1	25
945	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate		1	31
947	AS	2 – Rom. or 3 AS	Loom-weight		2	52
947	RB?	2 - Roman	Oven plate?	Chaff/straw	1	42
947	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate	Chaff/straw	1	75
949	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate	Chaff	1	69
949	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate	Chaff/straw	1	19
954	RB	2 - Roman	Indeterminate		1	6
961	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate?		4	83
963	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate	Chaff	2	163
985	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate flanged		1	72
1033	RB	1 - Iron Age	Disc/oven plate?		1	29
1110	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate?		1	6
1117	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate	Chaff	1	31
1124	Ro	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate	Chaff	1	147
1130	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate flanged	Chaff/straw	6	548
1130	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate	Chaff	4	138
1139	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate	Chaff	1	149

Context	Date	Context phase	Form	Org. impr.	No.	Wt (g)
1162	Preh–med	1 - Iron Age	Indeterminate		1	14
1164	IA–ER	1 - Iron Age	Triangular perforated brick?		1	46
1168	Preh–med	1 - Iron Age	Furniture?		1	38
1197	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate	Chaff	2	125
1197	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate	Chaff	1	74
1204	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate		2	149
1206	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate		7	393
1225	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate		3	111
1231	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate	Chaff	1	168
1255	AS?	1 - IA or 3 AS	Loom-weight		7	78
1281	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate?		3	78
1281	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate?		1	66
1281	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate?		3	23
1282	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate?		1	19
1292	RB	1 - Iron Age	Disc/oven plate?		1	44
1316	Preh–med	2 - Roman	Oven?		3	67
1351	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate	Chaff	3	42
1351	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate	Chaff	1	144
1351	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate	Chaff	1	308
1351	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate	Chaff	1	66
1355	IA–ER	1 - Iron Age	Triangular perforated brick		1	52
1474	RB	2 - Roman	Disc/oven plate		2	38
1495	IA–ER	1 - Iron Age	Triangular perforated brick		1	6
				Total	183	8292

Table 9: Summary of fired clay by context

3.7 Ceramic building material

by Cynthia Poole

3.7.1 A small assemblage of ceramic building material (CBM) amounting to 17 fragments (2757g) was recovered from ditches and a pit (Table 10). The material comprises broken fragments but is fresh and unabraded and has a higher than average mean fragment weight of 147g. The CBM is Roman in date, apart from two post-Roman tiles. The assemblage has been recorded on an Excel spreadsheet in accordance with guidelines set out by the Archaeological Ceramic Building Materials Group (ACBMG 2007). Fabrics were characterised on the basis of macroscopic features supplemented by the use of x20 hand lens for finer constituents. The terminology for Roman tile follows Brodribb (1987). The coding for markings, tegula flanges, etc., follows that established by OA for the recording of CBM and tegula cutaway types are linked to those classified by Warry (2006).

Roman CBM

3.7.2 The Roman tile (13 fragments, 2725g) comprised all the standard forms, including *tegula* and *imbrex* roofing tile, plain flat tile (probably the central sections of *tegulae*), flue tile and brick.

3.7.3 The *tegulae* (3 fragments, 392g) and flat tile (2 fragments, 261g) measured 21–26mm thick with one notably thicker example of 28–33mm. Two examples of *tegulae* flanges survived, both with rounded profiles similar to examples illustrated by Brodribb (1987,

figs 5.2 and 5.4). One was a fragment of flange top measuring 33mm wide, and a second measured 31mm wide and 53mm high with a narrow finger groove along its base angle. No lower or upper cutaways survived. One of the plain fragments had part of a signature mark of two finger grooves forming an arc, which is one of the most common varieties. Three of the tiles had been burnt or were heat discoloured to varying degrees resulting in grey and black surfaces or edges.

3.7.4 A single example of an imbrex (187g) was found. It had a rougher finish than the *tegulae*, a rounded profile and measured 22mm thick.

3.7.5 Bricks (four fragments, 1624g) had an even, regular finish and measured 34–45mm thick. One example had a narrow, indented border, 7mm wide, alongside the edge on the upper surface. Such features are rare on Roman bricks, but have been noted at Maylands, Hemel Hempstead (Poole forthcoming), where it was suggested they resulted from stacking the bricks for drying. One had chaff impressions as well as moulding sand across the base and could be a fired-clay hearth plate, but otherwise firing and surface-finish suggest this was a brick, not a fired clay artefact.

3.7.6 Three box-flue tiles or *tubuli* (261g) had neat regular finishes and appear to fall into two sizes, one thin example measuring 13mm thick and two of 19mm and 22mm thick. One had a heat-discoloured surface and lightly burnt edge. Two of the fragments came from the plain, unkeyed side surface, one of which had part of a circular vent, *c* 60mm in diameter, cut through it. Only one exhibited combed keying, which consisted of two bands of combing, one aligned vertically and the second intersecting at a diagonal, possibly forming part of a saltire pattern. The comb had eight or more teeth and measured over 35mm wide, and had sharp, V-shaped contiguous teeth.

3.7.7 The tile was made in a small number of sandy fabrics, all fired red/orange in colour. The most common was fabric C, which contained a sparse to moderate density of medium quartz sand. Fabric D was a hard, dense, fine sandy clay. Fabric E was a mixed, sandy, laminated, slightly micaceous clay with cream streaks, clay pellets and red ferruginous grits. Fabric G contained a high-density, rounded to sub-rounded, fine to medium quartz sand. The fabrics are similar to those found generally in area around Oxford and probably represent regional products, though no definite kiln sites have been identified.

Post-Roman CBM

3.7.8 Two features produced roof tile (four fragments, 32g) of flat rectangular type, probably peg tile, made in a red sandy fabric akin to Oxford fabric type IIIB (Robinson 1980). The tile measured 15mm thick but retained no other features. It is probably medieval or early post-medieval in date.

3.7.9 The tile was found in a roundhouse ditch assigned to the Iron Age phase and a ditch of 3rd–4th century date. The tile must either be intrusive or has settled in the top of the features as the sediments compacted and subsided, and it is likely to relate to agricultural activity.

Context	Date	Fabric	Class	Comment	No.	Wt (g)
74	RB	D	Flat tile		1	203
313	RB	G	Brick RB		1	301
842	Med?	OX IIIB?	Flat roof tile		1	4
920	RB	E	Brick RB	Indented border	1	778
943	RB	C	Tegula	Flange type D	1	33
943	RB	C	Box flue		1	120
947	RB	E	Brick RB		1	213
966	RB	E	Tegula	Flange type E	1	177
991	RB	C	Flat tile		1	58
991	Med?	OX IIIB?	Flat roof tile		3	28
1110	RB	C	Imbrex		1	187
1111	RB	D	Box flue	Cut circular vent 60mm dia.	1	28
1130	RB	C	Brick RB		1	332
1220	RB	E	Tegula	Signature mark	1	182
1557	RB	C/E	Box flue	Combed keying	1	113

Table 10: Summary of CBM by context

3.8 Metalwork

by Ian R Scott

3.8.1 There are 43 metal finds comprising 13 copper-alloy objects, 24 iron objects and four pieces of lead (Table 11).

3.8.2 The copper-alloy finds include seven, possibly eight, objects of Roman date. These include two ligulae, a plain armlet or bracelet with sliding catch, one (possibly two) fragments from late Roman strip bracelets, two bow brooches (one a fragment), and a plate brooch with enamel decoration.

3.8.3 Later finds include a late medieval or early post-medieval pin with spherical head, a decorative hook (probably post-medieval), a dress pin with a crimped head, and a shank button probably of 19th-century date.

3.8.4 The iron objects include a simple, iron bow brooch with four coil springs, two whittle-tang knives, one possibly Saxon in date, a large socketed spud that could be Roman or later, a small number of nails, and some miscellaneous pieces of iron bar and rod. There are also four hobnails.

3.8.5 The lead finds include a lead pistol shot, a lead offcut and two pieces of melted lead waste.

Phase	Feature	Context	Arms	Tool	Personal	Footwear	Household	Nails	Misc.	Unidentified	Waste	Total
1 Iron Age	668	669							1			1
	798	800		1								1
	801	803			1							1
	891	895				1						1
	1331	1355			1						1	2
sub-total					*2*	*1*			*1*		*1*	*5*
2 Roman	142	143				1			1			2
	686	689				1						1
	706	708						1				1
	857	858								1		1
	926	928									1	1
	929	930			2							2
	946	947			1							1
	948	949								1		1
	974	975						1				1
	984	1047							1			1
	1108	1112							1			1
	1127	1130			1			1	1			3
	1156	1176						1				1
		1172							1			1
	1171	1173									1	1
	1214	1217							1			1
	1246	1247			2							2
	1250	1281						1			2	3
		1348			1							1
	1347	1349			1							1
sub-total					*8*	*2*		*5*	*6*	*2*	*4*	*27*
3 LR/ES	246	248					1	2				3
	1569	1571								2		2
sub-total							*1*	*2*		*2*		*5*
Unphased	835	836						1				1
	1113	1114			1							1
	1533	1534	1									1
	1564	1564						1				1
	1673	1673					1					1
sub-total			*1*		*1*		*1*	*2*				*5*
total			1	1	11	3	2	9	7	4	5	43

Table 11: Count of metal finds by phase and feature

3.9 Coins

by Ian R Scott

3.9.1 There are 47 Roman coins (Table 12). Twenty-five of the coins were recovered from ditch 142, comprising 23 from primary fill 143 and two from secondary fill 144, all

probably from a single hoard. All the coins from ditch 142 are small 4th-century issues. They have been reported for treasure purposes.

3.9.2 The remaining 22 coins are mainly small copper issues, but there are three radiates, two from pit 1108 and one from ditch 1695 (cut 1347).

Phase	context	feature type	Total
2 Roman	947	ditch	2
	975	ditch	1
	1600	ditch	2
	918	ditch	2
	519	ditch	1
	1309	ditch	1
	1348	ditch	1
	1579	ditch	1
	398	ditch	1
	1245	ditch	1
	143	ditch	23
	144	ditch	2
	1109	pit	1
	1112	pit	1
	1564	pit	1
unphased	365	layer	5
		unstratified	1
		total	47

Table 12: Number of coins by phase and feature

A note on the coin hoard

by Paul Booth

3.9.3 The hoard, recovered during the processing of soil sample 74 from context 143, consists of 19 copper-alloy coins which have been rapidly scanned. The coins are in variable condition. A few are clearly legible, but many are encrusted to varying degrees and will require cleaning to facilitate specific identifications (which even then may not be possible in every case). A number of the coins are incomplete, having suffered some edge damage, and a couple consist only of a large fragment. The smallest coin in the hoard is broken in two. Despite these problems, there is no doubt about the general character of the hoard, which is dominated by coins probably or certainly struck in the period AD 388–402 (Reece period 21).

3.9.4 The small coin mentioned above may be the earliest piece in the hoard. While it is possible that it is of the same date as the majority of the coins, its size (8mm) is of a module more commonly encountered in the irregular issues (eg imitation *Fel Temp Reparatio*) of the period *c* AD 350–364. The earliest certainly identified coin is an AE3 of Valentinian (AD 364–375) with a SECVRITAS REPVBLICAE reverse. A second, incomplete coin might perhaps be another issue of the House of Valentinian, but this is uncertain. A VOT XV MVLT XX issue of an uncertain emperor is dated AD 383–387. The remaining coins, all AE4 pieces with a size range of 11–13mm, are all most probably (13 of the 15 fairly certainly) of the following issue period (AD 388–402).

Three obverse legends, one of Theodosius and two of Arcadius, are (partly) legible. One of the Arcadius coins has the reverse VICTORIA AVGGG. Three more coins, one a Trier issue, have this reverse type, and there is a single example of *Salus Reipublicae*. Six of the remaining eight coins appear to have reverse figures of victory (the other two are encrusted) but the present condition of the coins does not permit distinction between these two common reverse types.

3.9.5 The hoard is dominated by coins of Reece's period 21, the last significant period of coin use in Roman Britain. Such hoards are fairly common in south-eastern Britain, and a distinct concentration of very late Roman activity, reflected in hoards of this type and also in notable representations of coins of this period in occupation site assemblages such as that from Didcot Great Western Park, is a feature of the area around Dorchester-on-Thames, where period 21 issues form a remarkable proportion of recorded coins. The present hoard, while small, constitutes a useful addition to this picture, the more important for coming from an archaeologically recorded rural-settlement context.

3.10 Glass

by Ian R Scott

3.10.1 There are just two fragments of vessel glass. A small sherd from a cylindrical vessel or bottle in blue glass from secondary fill (917) of Roman ditch 1693 (cut 915). The piece could be Roman, but it has no diagnostic features. A small, thin-walled body sherd in very pale green glass with iridescent weathering with no diagnostic features was also recovered from ditch 1693 (tertiary fill 1130, cut 1127).

3.11 Worked bone

by Leigh Allen

3.11.1 A single worked-bone object was recovered from the secondary fill of Iron Age enclosure ditch 1683 and is probably early or middle Iron Age in date. The object is a fragment of a rib bone from a large mammal (L: 142mm). It is rounded at one end and broken at the other. The long edges are decorated with closely spaced, incised, and angled notches on the upper and lower faces, so that the edges resemble a saw blade although the teeth are rounded and smooth. There is no sign of wear at the tip or along the edges.

3.11.2 The decorated rib is not a robust object and it is unlikely that it was utilized in any way, as any pressure exerted on the object would have broken it, while the notches are not deep enough to hold thread or fibre. The object is decorated on both faces and was therefore designed to be seen from both sides. It vaguely resembles a leaf or frond and is reminiscent of Roman leaf-shaped ornamentation such as those recovered from the Butt Road bone-working industry in Colchester (Crummy 1983, 152–6, fig. 159).

3.12 Industrial debris

by David Dungworth

3.12.1 All the industrial-waste material submitted was examined visually, recorded, and weighed following standard guidance (HE 2015). Five types of debris were identified,

including slag cake (SC), non-diagnostic ironworking slag (NDFe), hammerscale (SS), vitrified ceramic lining (VCL) and vitrified fuel ash (VFA). Full definitions of these types are variously presented in McDonnell (1991), Dungworth and Wilkes (2009) and HE (2015).

3.12.2 Just over 0.8kg of material was examined (Table 13). Most of this material (64%) was recovered from Iron Age contexts, and it is possible that the debris from later contexts is residual. The waste includes ironworking slags, including a smithing slag cake and a hammerscale sphere, as well as some non-diagnostic ironworking slag. The nature of the slags is consistent with small-scale iron smithing. The quantity of smithing debris recovered could have been generated in just a few days.

Context	Sample	Phase	Type	Comment	Weight
127		Roman?	UID	Geology - breccia?	148
134		Roman	VCL		17.7
143	74	Roman	NDFe		0.73
248		Saxon?	VFA	Black	0.15
250	69	Iron Age	NDFe		2.7
354		Iron Age	SC	some slightly magnetic	390
359		Iron Age	UID	NDFe?	8.5
401		Iron Age	UID	Stone covered in slag film	6.1
401		Iron Age	UID	Mauve ceramic, bloated—zinc/brass?	10.6
808		Iron Age	VFA		26.5
871		Iron Age	NDFe		57.4
964		Roman	UID	Vitrified building debris?	88.8
1144	54	Roman	UID		0.39
1276		Iron Age	NDFe		14.4
1446		Roman	NDFe		32.8
1542		Iron Age	SS		0.11
				total	804.88

Table 13: Summary of the industrial debris

4 FACTUAL DATA: OSTEOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

4.1 Human skeletal remains

by Mark Gibson

4.1.1 A total of 14 inhumation burials, six deposits of disarticulated bone, and two burnt bone deposits from one Roman cremation burial were submitted for osteological assessment. Assessment was undertaken to evaluate the potential of the excavated material to contribute to archaeological knowledge, identify what further analysis is necessary and make recommendations for additional work.

4.1.2 Most of the human remains are not well dated. Many of the inhumation burials are cut into the upper fills of Roman ditches and thus are likely to be late Roman or early Saxon in date; few were recorded within a specific grave cut (Fig. 6). The only inhumation burial with dating evidence was skeleton 247, located in an isolated area in the north-western part of the excavated area, which was buried with a possible early Saxon knife. One juvenile (1498) was, however, recovered from the fill of an Iron Age ring ditch and may be contemporary with this feature.

4.1.3 Disarticulated human bones were recovered from the fills of Roman ditches, though it is currently unclear whether these represent disturbed burials or co-mingled disarticulated remains and their true date is currently uncertain. Bones 709, 710, 711 and 712 were found placed on top of skeleton 707 in grave 706. Again, it is uncertain if these were from a disturbed burial or were remains deliberately placed with grave 706.

Methods

4.1.4 Assessment was conducted in accordance with national guidance (Mays *et al*. 2002; Brickley and McKinley 2004; Mitchell and Brickley 2017). The articulated skeletons were rapidly examined and recorded. The information recorded included skeletal completeness, preservation, and potential for estimation of age and sex, metric and non-metric data and ancestry assessment. The presence/absence of dentitions, and dental and skeletal palaeopathological information were also considered.

4.1.5 Potential for isotope analyses was explored by observing whether certain teeth and bones typically used in isotopic studies of archaeological populations had survived and were sufficiently preserved (see APABE 2013, 10; Sealey *et al*. 1995; Slovak and Paytan 2012, 747). Potential for aDNA was explored by observing whether a petrous bone from the skull had survived (see Pinhasi *et al*. 2015).

4.1.6 Disarticulated human bones were identified to skeletal element and the potential for biological information, such as sex, age, and stature, was recorded. Notes were also made of any obvious pathological or anthropogenic changes to the bone.

4.1.7 During the excavation of cremation burial 1141, deposit 1144 was block-lifted along with urn 1143 while deposit 1142 was 100% sampled in the field. Deposit 1144 was excavated in 20mm spits under laboratory conditions and fully sampled. Samples were then processed by flotation, using a 250µ mesh, and wet sieving. Floated material >0.25mm was retained. Sieved material >0.5mm was also retained and separated into

>10mm, 10–4mm, 4–2mm and 2–0.5mm fractions. The >10mm and 10–4mm fractions were sorted by hand, cremated bone fragments being separated from any extraneous material such as stones. The 4–2mm and 2–0.5mm fractions were not sorted but were weighed and visually assessed in terms of proportion of bone present. This was scored as low, medium, or high.

4.1.8 The sorted deposits were assessed in accordance with nationally accepted guidelines (Brickley and McKinley 2004; Mays *et al*. 2002). This involved considering the colour, weight and size of fragments as well as identifying the species present (ie whether human or animal). The presence of identifiable bone elements and the presence of pyre and grave goods and pyre debris (by spit and fraction where present) were noted. The potential for estimating the minimum number of individuals (MNI) present and sex and age were also explored with reference to relevant criteria (Buikstra and Ubelaker 1994; Scheuer and Black 2000).

Articulated skeletons

4.1.9 Half of the skeletons were more than 50% complete (7 out of 14) of which six were more than 75% complete, while three were 0–25% complete (Table 14). Overall preservation was assessed based upon bone-surface condition and the level of fragmentation of each skeleton. Nine were judged to be in a fair condition, while five skeletons were in good condition. Bones had suffered minimal surface erosion (grades 1 and 2 after McKinley 2004, 16), but the majority of skeletons (nine) were highly fragmented. Only two skeletons showed levels of fragmentation judged to be 'low'.

4.1.10 Nine skeletons were adults and five were juveniles aged less than 18 years. There was potential for adult age at death to be estimated using dental occlusal wear (Miles 1962; 2001; Brothwell 1981, 69) degeneration of the auricular surface (Buckberry and Chamberlain 2002), pubic symphysis of the pelvis (Brookes and Suchey 1990), and epiphyseal fusion of the medial clavicle (Scheuer and Black 2000). Only one of the juveniles had the potential for age at death to be estimated using dental eruption and development (Moorees *et al.* 1963; WEA 1980), but all of them had the potential to be aged using methods based on epiphyseal fusion and long bone lengths (Scheuer and Black 2000). Only one of the skeletons (SK450) had no surviving age indicators, so cannot be more precisely aged than 'adult' (ie >18 years).

4.1.11 Potential for sex estimation, using cranial and/or pelvic traits, was observed in eight of the nine adult skeletons. No indicators survived that would allow the sex of skeleton 450 to be estimated. Sex estimation was not explored in the juveniles (Brickley 2004, 23).

4.1.12 All the adult skeletons have potential for non-metrical analysis. Non-metric traits are normal variants in skeletal anatomy that may have a genetic or mechanical aetiology (Brothwell and Zakrzewski 2004). Skeletons were deemed to have potential for non-metrical analysis if cranial and/or post-cranial skeletal elements that may exhibit such traits were present (Berry and Berry 1967; Finnegan 1978; Brothwell and Zakrzewski 2004).

4.1.13 Due to the high level of fragmentation only five adult skeletons had sufficiently intact long bones for stature estimation. Despite this, seven of the adults had femora and/or

tibiae which were complete enough to undertake metrical analysis for calculating the platymeric and/or platycnemic indices. The platymeric index refers to the ratio of the anterio-posterior diameter of the femur to its lateral diameter. The platycnemic index is the tibial equivalent of this. Variation in these indices has been explored in the context of various physical activities as well as pathological changes in the bones (Brothwell 1981, 88–91). Only one of the skeletons (Sk 364) had a sufficiently intact cranium for metrical analysis (ie calculating the cranial index) or facial reconstruction.

4.1.14 Eight skeletons, including two juveniles (Sks 271 and 1105) had surviving dentitions, in the form of either teeth and/or sockets (Table 15). Dental pathology and/or anomalies were observed in six skeletons and included dental calculus, caries, periodontitis, ante-mortem tooth loss, enamel hypoplasia, periapical cavities, and ante-mortem tooth chipping.

4.1.15 Skeletal pathology was observed in eight skeletons, seven adults and one juvenile (Sk 223). This included evidence for osteoarthritis, Schmorl's nodes, marginal osteophytes (spinal and extra-spinal), possible scurvy, healed ante mortem fractures including a large well healed depressed fracture to left parietal and frontal bone of skeleton 426, cribra orbitalia and osteochondritis non-dissecans. Additional, subtler pathological lesions may be observed during further analysis. Possible peri-mortem, blunt-force trauma was observed on the left temporal arch and left mandibular ramus of skeleton 364. In addition, multiple, peri-mortem, sharp-force trauma lesions were observed on the ribs (both left and right), spine, left arm and hand of skeleton 1570. Skeleton 364 was buried in an upper fill of ditch 269 and skeleton 1570, in a discrete grave (1569), but were located within a few metres of each other.

4.1.16 Five skeletons (all adults) had either second molars or premolars that could be sampled for the analysis of strontium and oxygen isotopes. All the adult skeletons and three of the juvenile skeletons had fragments of rib and/or long bone that could be sampled for the analysis of carbon and nitrogen isotopes. Six skeletons had an intact petrous bone and are thus suitable for ancient DNA analysis.

SK	Context	Completeness	Preservation	Fragmentation	Condition	Age	Age est.?	Sex est.?	Stature?	Post-cranial indices?	Non-metric traits?
223	posthole 222	0–25%	1	High	Fair	Juvenile	yes	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
247	grave 246	26–50%	2	High	Fair	Adult	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
271	ditch 269	76–100%	1	Medium	Good	Juvenile	yes	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
364	ditch 269	76–100%	1	Low	Good	Adult	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
426	ditch 424	26–50%	1	High	Fair	Adult	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
428	ditch 427	76–100%	1	High	Fair	Adult	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
450	ditch 424	0–25%	1	High	Fair	Adult	no	no	no	no	yes
525	grave 254	26–50%	1	High	Fair	Adult	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
531	ditch 427	76–100%	1	Low	Good	Adult	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
707	grave 706	76–100%	1	High	Fair	Adult	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
997	ditch 995	26–50%	1	High	Fair	Juvenile	yes	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1105	ditch 1104	51–75%	2	High	Fair	Juvenile	yes	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1498	roundhouse ditch 1496	0–25%	1	Medium	Good	Juvenile	yes	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1570	grave 1569	76–100%	1	Medium	Good	Adult	yes	yes	no	yes	yes

Table 14: Inhumation burials, osteological summary

SK	Dental pathology	Skeletal pathology	C & N isotopes?	Sr & O isotopes?	aDNA analysis?
223	no	yes - endocranial lesions, porosity in supraspinous fossa - ?scurvy	no	no	yes
247	no	no	yes	no	no
271	no	no	yes	no	yes
364	yes - calculus, DEH, large chip from mand L M2, impacted mand R M3	yes - possible perimortem fractures to L mandible and L temporal bone, OND	yes	yes	yes
426	yes - calculus, caries	yes - well-healed depressed fracture to L parietal/frontal bone	yes	yes	no
428	yes - calculus	yes - SN	yes	yes	no
450	no	no	yes	no	no
525	no	yes - Spinal OA, VBOP, SN, OP	yes	no	no
531	yes - calculus, caries, AMTL, periodontitis	yes - SN, VBOP, CO, OP	yes	yes	yes
707	yes - calculus, caries, AMTL, periapical cavity, DEH	yes - SN, VBOP	yes	no	yes
997	no	no	yes	no	no
1105	no	no	yes	no	no
1498	no	no	yes	no	no
1570	yes - calculus, caries	yes - perimortem trauma to R and L ribs, TV5, L humerus, radius, and hand phalanx, healed trauma to L MC2, x2 TV cleft neural arches, spondylolysis LV5, partial lumbarisation SV1	yes	yes	yes

Table 15: Summary human skeletal pathologies and potential for isotope and aDNA analyses

Unburnt disarticulated bones

4.1.17 All the disarticulated bones have completely fused epiphyses, indicating that growth had ceased (Table 16). In addition to their overall size and thickness, they are likely to represent adults. A more specific age at death may be possible for 931, an almost complete skull with teeth which have potential for age estimation using dental attrition (Miles 1963; 2001; Brothwell 1981, 69). Innominate bone 709 included a pubic symphysis which would also allow a more specific age at death to be estimated (Brookes and Suchey 1990).

4.1.18 There is the potential for estimating the sex of bones 31 and 709 with reference to cranial traits and pelvic traits, respectively. In addition, metrical assessment of left femur 710 and right scapula 711 may be employed to explore the sex of these bones. Skull 931 is tentatively identified as a male, whilst 709, 710 and 712 are tentatively female.

4.1.19 Pathology was observed in the form of marginal osteophytes on 710 and 712, and endocranial lesions and ectocranial porosity on skull 931. Dental pathology (enamel hypoplasia) was also observed on the dentition of skull 931.

4.1.20 Disarticulated bones 709, 710, 711 and 712 and are likely to represent one discrete inhumation which was disturbed by the later burial of skeleton 707 on top. There are no repeated skeletal elements, the bones were all gracile and appeared to be female.

Burnt bones

4.1.21 The sorted bone weights for deposits 1142 and 1144 (all three spits) was 0.6g and 187.5g, respectively (Table 17). The total unsorted weights (excluding the 2–0.5mm fraction) were 101.5g and 241.5g, respectively. All three spits from 1144 contained fragments that were >10mm in size, but only 10–4mm and 4–2mm fragments were present in deposit 1142. In the second and third spits from 1144, the >10mm fractions made up over half of the total weights (73.7g and 41.9g). In the first spit, the >10mm fraction made up over a quarter of the total weight (125.9g).

4.1.22 Bone was predominately a buff-white colour and exhibited warping and fissures that are consistent with the burning of fresh bone. Elements from the skull, hand, pelvis, and lower limb were present in 1144, but no identifiable elements were found in 1142.

4.1.23 The deposits are likely to have contained the remains of adults/older adolescents. A partial auricular surface was present in spit 2 which would allow for a more specific age at death estimate to be made. No indicators for estimating sex were observed.

4.1.24 The deposits were provisionally estimated to represent at least one individual each. However, 1142 was probably originally part of urned cremation 1144, having been incorporated into the surrounding fill when the urn was truncated, also suggested by the low bone weight of 1142. Thus, it is more likely that the two deposits represent the remains of a single person.

Specimen	Feature	Context phase	Elements	Comments
1535	Ditch 1708 (cut 150)	2: Roman	x1 right femoral shaft	Adult
931	Ditch 1692 (cut 929)	2: Roman	Near complete skull (no mandible) highly fragmented	Adult, Endocranial lesions, ectocranial porosity, Severe DEH on L max M3 (enamel only on occlusal surface 9-10.9yr +)
709	Grave 706 (Sk 707)	3: Late Roman/ Early Saxon	Partial right innominate (ilium, ischium, and pubis)	Adult - possibly same individual as 710, 711, 712
710	Grave 706 (Sk 707)	3: Late Roman/ Early Saxon	Left femur	Adult - possibly same individual as 709, 711, 712
711	Grave 706 (Sk 707)	3: Late Roman/ Early Saxon	Right scapula	Adult, osteophytes - possibly same individual as 709, 710, 712
712	Grave 706 (Sk 707)	3: Late Roman/ Early Saxon	Right ulna	Adult, osteophytes - possibly same individual as 709, 710, 711

Table 16: Unburnt disarticulated bone, osteological summary

Context	Sample	Sorted weight (g)	Unsorted weight (g)	Total weight (g)	Elements present?	Colour
1142 (fill of pit 1141)	56	0.6	100.9	101.5	no	White
1144 (fill of pot 1142, spit 1)	53	98.1	27.8	125.9	Skull, hand, pelvis, lower limb	White
1144 (fill of pot 1142, spit 2)	54	59.6	14.1	73.7	Skull, pelvis, long bone	White
1144 (fill of pot 1142, spit 3)	55	29.8	12.1	41.9	lower limb	White
total		187.5	54	241.5		

Table 17: Burnt bone, osteological summary (note: 4–2mm fraction requires sorting)

4.2 Animal bones

by Lee G Broderick

4.2.1 A total of 6850 animal bone specimens were recovered from phased contexts, mostly by hand. Environmental samples were taken during the excavations, and were sieved at 10mm, 4mm, 2mm and 0.5mm fractions. From these, only identifiable fragments from dated contexts were counted, producing an assemblage of 428 sieved specimens.

4.2.1 The assemblage was assessed on a context-level basis in line with current guidelines (Baker and Worley 2014), and no material has yet been recorded in full. Each bag of hand-collected material was counted and assigned a condition value (Behrensmeyer 1978) that was characteristic of most of the material in that bag. The number of specimens potentially identifiable to each of the domesticated mammals and birds as well as the principal wild mammals was also counted and recorded on the same record, along with sub-totals for those that could provide biometric, sex, age or pathology data. Material from environmental samples was only recorded when it could be identified. Taxonomy follows Wilson and Reeder (2005) for mammals and Gill and Donsker (2019) for birds.

Results

4.2.2 With a few exceptions from Phase 3 features, the material all came from features dated to the Iron Age (Phase 1) or Roman (Phase 2) periods (Table 18). The condition of the hand-collected specimens recovered from the site is moderate, with Behrnesmeyer's weathering-stage 3 being characteristic of 94.18% of the bags of material.

4.2.3 All the domestic mammals commonly found at British sites were present, including cattle, sheep/goat, pig, horse, and dog. Cattle were the most common species by NISP (fragment count), followed by sheep/goats. The articulated remains of a dog were recovered from the subsoil with several Roman pottery sherds; this may be a disturbed Roman dog burial or a more recent burial that came to be associated with some residual pottery. There is a fairly large proportion of horse bones, particularly in the Roman period with specimens constituting 9.67% of the identified material in this phase. A red deer antler burr was present in the Iron Age assemblage, while bones of hare, duck and chicken were present in the Roman group.

4.2.4 Environmental samples include a large number of mouse, vole, and frog/toad bones, as well as a large number of sheep/goat specimens, suggestive of recovery bias.

4.2.5 At least 117 bags out of 498 (23.5%) contained material with evidence for canid gnawing, which is a relatively high proportion. This is in stark contrast to the proportion of specimens with butchery marks, which is very low (Table 19). The potential for ageing of specimens, including epiphyseal fusion and mandible wear stages, is good, and it should be possible to analyse herd structure for cattle and sheep/goats.

Taxa	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Unphased
cattle	105 (11)	232	11	
sheep/goat	79 (26)	131 (8)	7 (2)	
pig	20 (5)	37	(1)	
horse	11	50	1	
dog	4	13		49*
red deer	1			
hare		2		
small rodent	(16)	(229)		
harvest mouse		(57)		
water vole	(1)			
vole species	(1)	(21)		
bird		(1)		
duck		1		
domestic fowl		2		
frog/toad		(47)	(2)	
common toad			1	
unidentified	2458	3113	94	
Total	2678 (60)	3630 (363)	114 (5)	

Table 18: Total number of animal bone specimens by phase (sieved counted in parentheses; * = associated bone group)

Taxa	Butchery marks	Ageing	Biometric data	Sex
domestic cattle	4	201	35	
caprine	2	111	14	
pig	1	34	5	2
horse	2	36	8	4
dog			8	
other	1			
total	10	382	70	6

Table 19: Total number of specimens with potential for butchery, ageing, measurement, and sex data

4.3 Charred and waterlogged plant remains

by Sharon Cook

4.3.1 Seventy-six samples were taken from deposits during the excavation, of which, 29 bulk samples were assessed for charred plant remains (CPR) and two for waterlogged plant remains (WPR). The remaining samples were taken from burials for the retrieval of human bone and do not form a part of this assessment.

4.3.2 The assessment aims to identify the presence, abundance and condition of plant remains recovered from the samples and their potential to provide palaeo-environmental and/or palaeo-economic evidence.

Methodology

4.3.3 For CPR, the bulk samples were processed in their entirety using a modified Siraf-type water flotation machine to 250µm (flot) and 500µm mesh (residue). The residue fractions were sorted by eye and all bone and artefacts removed and passed to the relevant specialists while the flot material was scanned using a low power (x10) binocular microscope and an abundance score was assigned for the presence of charred seeds, charcoal of potentially identifiable condition, molluscs and nut or fruit stones. All identifications are provisional. Nomenclature of plant material follows Stace (2010).

4.3.4 For each sample, 100ml of the flot was scanned (or 100% if the flot was less than 100ml in volume) and the abundance of charred cereal grain, chaff, weed seeds and fruit and nut stones was assigned a score based on the following scale:

+ 1–5 items; ++ 6–24 items; +++ 25–49 items; ++++ 50–99 items; +++++ 100+ items

4.3.5 Brief notes were made on the general character of the flot, including provisional identifications of the dominant plant taxa when possible and any items of particular interest.

4.3.6 The number of charcoal fragments >2mm from the flot was also broadly quantified with a brief description of external condition and presence or absence of roundwood. No further identification of wood charcoal has been undertaken at this stage.

4.3.7 For the WPR samples, 1L subsamples were processed by hand flotation using the 'wash-over' technique, and both flots and residues were collected onto 0.25mm mesh and retained wet to facilitate preservation.

4.3.8 A representative subsample of each waterlogged flot was scanned and, as with the CPR samples, an abundance score was assigned for the presence of insect remains, waterlogged seeds, presence of fruit or nut stones, and for the presence of molluscs.

4.3.9 As both waterlogged contexts were bulk sampled, 30 litres of each was processed and 9 litres of each has been retained to provide further material if required.

Results

4.3.10 Tables 20 and 21 give quantifications of material types and approximate abundance. Samples have been scored as:

A – High potential on archaeobotanical grounds, ie rare or interesting plant taxa and range of materials, or exceptional preservation; or high potential of archaeological grounds due to scarcity of information from this type of material or deposit and period.

B – Good potential due to the quantity and range of material present and its reasonable preservation, ie the assemblage can provide a useful amount of information.

C – Some identifiable plant material but in low concentrations or very poorly preserved.

D – No identifiable material or so little that this is unlikely to assist in the further characterisation of the site.

The charred samples

4.3.11 The condition of the CPR is mixed with the charred portion of the flots being often highly fragmented with most of the charcoal <2mm in the majority of flots. Almost all the flots contain large quantities of fine uncharred roots with some samples including larger, woody root fragments, all modern in origin. Uncharred seeds and insects are also common and likely to be intrusive, with delicate parts such as hairs and fine wings present on insects and exterior parts of seeds such as the perianth, pappus and hair tufts surviving. Occasional wasps are largely intact. In addition, *Cecilioides acicula*—a burrowing snail—is very common in all samples. All these elements indicate that bioturbation has occurred on site.

4.3.12 The CPR contain a mixture of grain types, mostly wheat (*Triticum* sp.) with occasional barley (*Hordeum* sp.) and oat/brome (*Avena/Bromus*). Most flots include cereal chaff in mixed condition. Some glume bases are well-preserved while others appear to be very fragmented; some show prominent minor veins, wide-angled keel and wide bases associated with spelt wheat (*Triticum spelta*) but the majority are too fragmented to identify beyond glume wheat (probably spelt or emmer (*Triticum dicoccum*)). Occasional oat awn fragments are also present.

4.3.13 Legumes are rare and all those observed are vetches (*Vicia/Lathyrus*), measuring <4mm, which are likely to be arable weeds. Few charred seeds from uncultivated plants are present overall.

The waterlogged samples

4.3.14 The two samples taken for WPR produced moderate-sized flots with a variety of uncharred seeds present in very mixed condition. As both samples have a dried bulk flot in addition to the wet sub-sample, these were both examined. There are some differences in taxonomic composition between the dried and wet flots, which are largely a reflection of their different volumes. Insects are common and sample 50 includes potentially identifiable fragments of wood.

4.4 Marine shell

by Rebecca Nicholson

4.4.1 The shells from each context have been visually scanned and quantified, with notes made on their general condition following Winder (2011). The data have been recorded in an Excel spreadsheet which will be available in the archive.

4.4.2 With the exception of an indeterminate clam-shell fragment and fragments of fossil shell, the entire collection comprised valves of European flat oyster (*Ostrea edulis*), typically in fair or poor condition, and with no context containing more than one or two shells.

4.4.3 There is some evidence of epipont infestation comprising a small number of valves exhibiting the distinctive tunnels caused by the polychaete worm *Polydora ciliata* Johnstone and a single example of probable tunnelling by *Polydora hoplura* Claparède on a large valve from context 1474. This worm causes internal mud blisters to form in the shells but has no effect on the meat. Several valves have evidence of predatory gastropod boreholes and the shell from 1474 has small holes possibly caused by a sponge (eg *Cliona celata* Grant).

5 STATEMENT OF POTENTIAL

5.1 Stratigraphy

5.1.1 The stratigraphic dataset has so far undergone a general analysis, in conjunction with the initial assessment of the finds and environmental datasets, to provide a broad phasing of the site. The data require further examination to elucidate the sequence of change and the relationships between different features across the different phases of activity on site. More detailed analysis of the dating evidence, notably the pottery but also other finds, may help to clarify the contemporaneity and/or sequence of activity during the Iron Age, Roman and (possibly) Saxon periods.

Phase 1: Iron Age

5.1.2 This area of the landscape had been utilised for settlement during the Iron Age, with numerous curvilinear ditches defining roundhouse structures, many of which were concentrated in the western half of the excavated area perhaps indicating a focus of settlement. The identification of recuts and the inter-cutting nature of several of the roundhouse ditches provides evidence for the maintenance and modification of the structures, as well as a sequential pattern of occupation. In addition to the four- to six-post structures encountered on site, which are often found on Iron Age occupation sites, the large rectangular post-built structure recorded provides evidence of a rare form of structure. A similar, albeit smaller, rectangular post-built structure, was excavated at Yarnton, Oxfordshire (Hey *et al*. 2011, 54–5). However, the presence of late Roman pottery in one of the postholes calls the phasing of this building into question and it therefore requires further work to establish the date of the structure and its function (eg an isled building?). The establishment of several large enclosures, the majority of which superseded many of the roundhouses, is suggestive of a shift towards more intensive pastoral agriculture with some of the enclosures perhaps having been used for livestock management.

5.1.3 The relative abundance and types of finds assemblages recovered from the Iron Age features provide clear evidence of domestic activity. This material includes moderate quantities of pottery dating to the latter part of the early Iron Age (*c* 400 BC) and the middle Iron Age, as well as animal bones (some with evidence of carnivore gnawing and butchery), a whetstone and copper-alloy and iron objects. The nature of the pottery assemblage is generally indicative of the deposition of domestic waste, though the recovery of a near-complete vessel from a possible roundhouse pit is suggestive of a placed deposit.

5.1.4 The remains of Iron Age settlement and agricultural land-use at the site have much potential for further study, particularly to inform on the nature and type of settlements within the region and how settlement patterns changed throughout the period, particularly in relation to potential changes in material evidence (Lambrick 2014, 150–1). The evidence also adds to the growing body of archaeological evidence for Iron Age settlement within both the local landscape and wider region, with nearby comparable sites including several along Sutton Courtenay Lane/Harwell Lane (FA 2008a; 2008b; CAT 2000; CA 2016), as well as Drayton Lane (Hamerow *et al*. 2007) and Milton Park (Scheduled Monument No. 1004853; CAT 2000), also in Sutton Courtenay, Great

Western Park subsites in Didcot (Davies *et al.* in prep; Hayden *et al.* forthcoming) and Castle Hill/Wittenham Clumps in Little Wittenham/Long Wittenham (Allen *et al*. 2010).

Phase 2: Roman

5.1.5 The Phase 2 remains provide evidence for agricultural land-use with no evidence suggestive of buildings/structures encountered on site. The multi-phase Roman remains predominately comprised various field and enclosure boundaries indicating that a number of changes in land-use occurred throughout this period of occupation. The small number of discrete features occupying the defined areas provide further evidence of the agricultural nature of activity on site. The pottery and animal bone assemblages are considered to represent typical discard from a Roman rural site, with the recovery of a probable coin hoard and a near-complete vessel perhaps indicative of more-deliberate depositional practices and the recovery of a burnt quernstone fragment suggestive of nearby occupation activity.

5.1.6 The Roman remains encountered are of local significance. The complexity of the recuts and inter-cutting nature of the boundary ditches, and the often mixed/broad dating of the Roman pottery recovered, limits the potential of the excavation results to understand the chronology of the different phases of the boundaries. Nevertheless, the remains provide evidence of land management, adding to known sites within the vicinity, including several along Sutton Courtenay Lane/Harwell Road (CAT 2000; FA 2008a; 2008b; CA 2016), Milton Park (Scheduled Monument No. 1004853; CAT 2000) and the Great Western Park sites (Davies *et al*. in prep; Hayden *et al*. forthcoming). The change/reorganisation of land-use between the Iron Age and Roman periods at Sutton Courtenay Lane can also be compared to occupation at other regional sites, such as at Crab Hill, Wantage (OA 2020), in order to investigate potential continuity in settlement and agricultural practices (Fulford 2014, 179). The apparent low density of Roman features recorded to occupy the various defined areas of land also limits the potential of the excavation results to inform more specifically on the nature of agricultural regimes on site. The remains of the corndryer, together with its associated artefactual and environmental evidence, however, have the potential for further analysis, possibly providing an insight into the dating of the structure and the nature of its use (ibid., 180). Furthermore, the human remains that potentially date to the Roman period may inform on rural, non-cemetery burial practices (ibid.), though radiocarbon dating is required to establish these.

Phase 3: Late Roman/early Saxon

5.1.7 The excavation revealed 14 inhumation burials that have been tentatively dated to either the late Roman and/or early Saxon period (though one—Sk 1498—is potentially Iron Age). No features of clearly Saxon date were identified, partly due to the clear lack of contemporary finds, though the burials have been phased based on stratigraphic relationships and the recovery of a knife found with Sk 247 that potentially, but not certainly dates to the 5th/6th century. The shallow nature of many of the burials means that it is difficult to tell whether they were placed within specifically dug graves that cut earlier features or whether the bodies were deliberately placed in the largely

filled-up ditches and represent a final backfilling and abandonment of these features. The similarity in burial rite, however, suggests that many were broadly contemporary.

5.1.8 The burial evidence has the potential for further study, with radiocarbon analysis being of particular importance for establishing the date and chronology of the remains. This would be more widely significant for providing information on the nature of unaccompanied Saxon burials within the region (Dodd and Crawford 2014, 231). These results can also be considered in relation to nearby sites. For example, archaeological investigations of the nearby scheduled cropmark complex at Milton Park (Scheduled Monument No. 1004853) revealed evidence of Saxon occupation (CAT 2000; JMHS 2008). Although archaeological evidence within the Solent-Thames region has been an important resource in understanding Saxon burial practices, notably the cemeteries at Berinsfield and Didcot (Boyle *et al.* 1995), the burial remains encountered on site have the potential to inform on the significance and cultural context for the re-use of earlier sites for burial (Dodd 2014, 211; Dodd and Crawford 2014, 231).

5.2 Worked and burnt flint

5.2.1 The flint assemblage represents low levels of prehistoric activity. However, the quality of the material is good and there is a clear focus on tools, which requires more detailed consideration. The surrounding area has seen a great deal of development in recent decades and Neolithic flints have been identified at many of these locations, as at Great Western Park, Didcot (Donnelly forthcoming), where a considerable early Neolithic assemblage was recovered from numerous pits, some of which yielded large assemblages rich in tools forms. Neolithic material was rarer at the South of Wantage Road site, Didcot, though tools and debitage were still present in sizable numbers (Donnelly in prep.).

5.2.2 A number of the flakes and some of the undiagnostic debitage recovered could be contemporary with Iron Age activity on site. Iron Age flint work remains a controversial subject (cf Saville 1981; Humphrey and Young; McLaren 2008), though there is good evidence for early Iron Age flints from South of Wantage Road, Didcot (Donnelly in prep.). If flints were in use during the Iron Age at Sutton Courtenay Lane, this is likely to have been on a fairly minimal scale.

5.3 Prehistoric pottery

5.3.1 The assemblage is reasonably large and in good condition, spanning the latter part of the early Iron Age and probably the entirety of the middle Iron Age. Establishing an accurate ceramic chronology for this period is a recognised aim in the regional research framework (Lambrick 2014, 149). The assemblage has potential to expand current knowledge of pottery dating in the region, both in terms of transitions between ceramic periods and changes there within. The assemblage is also large enough for statistical analysis comparing feature types and phases, and this will provide further information about depositional practices that inform about the chronological validity of associated groups. There is at least one good stratified assemblage available for more targeted analysis, and there are at least three forms that have adhering carbonised residue that could be radiocarbon dated.

5.3.2 The assemblage can be readily compared to other large Iron Age groups in the locality, many of which have been recently excavated. These include the numerous Great Western Park subsites (Davies *et al*. in prep; Hayden *et al*. forthcoming), as well as, for example, Grove Road (Thompson 2018), Castle Hill/Wittenham Clumps (Allen *et al*. 2010), Appleford (Hinchliffe and Thomas 1980), Wigbalds Farm (Savory 1937), Allens Pit (Bradford 1942), and West of All Saints Church (Chambers 1993). The sites at Great Western Park are of particular interest as they have good sets of associated radiocarbon dates, some of which were somewhat later than their expected ranges. Any dating evidence from Sutton Courtney Lane should be compared and contrasted with the results from Great Western Park and other sites. Together, these sites have the potential to advance understanding of regional pottery chronologies.

5.3.3 Most of the material was recovered from contexts belonging to wider groups of identifiable features. This includes a significant number of houses and a large rectangular structure that is very rare for the British Iron Age (if it proves to be of this date). Analysis of the distribution of material will provide information on how different features and areas of the site were used.

5.3.4 The vessel in context 449 stands out owing to its completeness and the presence of thick carbonised residue. It is possible that the vessel had a specialised purpose and was deposited in a manner that differed from the majority of the material. Scientific analysis of this vessel and further consideration of the vessel as part of the wider assemblage has the potential to elucidate specialised and possible ritual practices. Statistical analysis of the assemblage as a whole has the potential to identify further examples of unusual deposition that might relate to specialised or ritual practices.

5.4 Roman pottery

5.4.1 Detailed recording of the late Iron Age and Roman pottery will allow the dating of context groups and the site sequence to be refined and finalised. Comparison of forms and fabrics with those from other sites will allow the assemblage to be located within its cotemporary cultural context. The assemblage will make a further contribution to the understanding of ceramic supply and use in the region. Comparative data will be sought from a range of local and regional sites, including Appleford Sidings (Booth 2009) and the many recent and on-going excavations that have taken place in the vicinity, including at Great Western Park, Didcot (Davies *et al*. in prep; Hayden *et al*. forthcoming), and Bridge Farm, Sutton Courtenay (OA 2016b).

5.4.2 Particular attention will be given to the material currently dated as late Iron Age/early Roman and the more-discrete groups of 3rd century and 4th century date. When was these groups introduced? How long did the Roman activity last? What are its cultural affinities? Further consideration will be given to the whole assemblage. Did the character or status of the settlement change? How does it compare to other sites in the area?

5.4.3 The pottery will contribute to questions of site status and function. Key measures include the ratio of dishes and bowls against jars (Evans 2001) and the relative proportions of fine and specialist wares (Booth 2004). Use-wear analysis will also examine signs of abrasion and burning that address questions of vessel usage.

5.4.4 The assemblage has good potential to reveal patterns of deposition. Quantities and the typological composition of the pottery by feature type and phase will be examined. Analysis of mean sherd weights across the site may identify core and peripheral areas of activity within the site and point to modes of waste dispersal. It has been noted that the condition of the assemblage is mixed, with both very fragmented and relatively well-preserved pottery being present, suggesting that the assemblage was subject to a range of processes and this will be considered during analysis.

5.5 Worked and burnt stone

5.5.1 The worked stone assemblage is small but provides information about the general nature of activity at the site. The querns also contribute to a developing picture of quern use in the region.

5.6 Fired clay

5.6.1 The fired clay assemblage divides into two separate Iron Age and Roman groups, comprising distinctly different forms, though both probably relate to domestic heating and cooking. The change from triangular perforated bricks in the Iron Age to discs and plates in the Roman period produces a distinct contrast that is not usually so clear cut. This may represent a break between the settlements and a lack of continuity, as elsewhere triangular bricks are found in Roman deposits and the discs and plates may commence in use in the late Iron Age. The very clear-cut differences between the periods suggest that significant changes in cooking methods occurred between the two phases. The distribution pattern on site may show distinct areas of habitation or activity at different periods.

5.7 Ceramic building material

5.7.1 The Roman CBM assemblage consists of a small group of material recovered from a scatter of features. The quantity of material is small relative to the area of the excavation and is not indicative of any masonry structure in the immediate vicinity of the site. The combination of materials suggest it has derived from a higher-status settlement, such as a villa with a tiled roof and heated rooms located elsewhere. However, the freshness of the tile indicates it has not travelled very far. A possible source for the material could be the Dropshot villa at Drayton, lying 1.4km NNW of the site, which produced a similar range of tiles in fabrics (WA 2014) also found at Sutton Courtenay Lane. Where tile has been recovered at lower-status sites, the general pattern is for reuse in corndryers, ovens or hearths, as a suitable, ready-made, fireproof material. Evidence of burning occurs on several tiles, suggesting that at least some were utilised in this manner. Tile placed within the core of a structure protected from direct heat by clay lining would exhibit little or no heat discolouration, so burning should not be expected on all tiles.

5.8 Small finds

5.8.1 The metals assemblage is quite small but does include 10 or 11 identifiable Roman objects of both copper alloy and iron. These should be published as part of the site report and a selection should be illustrated.

5.8.2 The coins, including the hoard from ditch 142, form an important group that should be examined and published in full separate from the other metal finds. The coins are mostly in good condition.

5.8.3 The two small pieces of vessel glass and the worked-bone object have no further analytical potential.

5.9 Industrial waste

5.9.1 The industrial waste has no potential for further work and a summary of the information presented here should be edited for the final excavation report.

5.10 Human skeletal remains

5.10.1 Overall, the articulated and disarticulated skeletons are relatively complete and in a good or fair state of preservation. This will allow a high level of osteological information to be obtained from full analysis of the material in respect of demography, stature, post-cranial indices, normal anatomical variation, dental and skeletal pathology, and evidence for anthropogenic modification. It should also be possible to explore further the provenance and contexts of the disarticulated bones, particularly those in grave 706 (709, 710, 711 and 712) and skull 931.

5.10.2 Of particular note is the evidence for trauma on some of the skeletons. The wounds require detailed analysis, though interpretations may range from examples of inter-personal violence or perhaps the presence of low-status rural workers, such as slaves or bonded labourers (cf Redfern 2018). These observations are compelling, considering the non-normative burial context of the skeletons (ie many in upper ditch fills and/or in unconventional positions).

5.10.3 More detailed analysis of the burnt-bone deposits from the cremation burial should confirm whether one or more individuals were present, as well as establishing sex and age. There is also the potential to explore funerary rite and pyre technology, by further detailed analysis of colour, weight, and fragmentation. Colour variation between bone fragments refers to different temperatures achieved during cremation. This information may be employed to explore factors such as the position of the corpse on the pyre and whether there was any selection of particular bones for burial.

5.10.4 There is good potential for radiocarbon dating throughout the assemblage as this should be taken advantage of given the otherwise poor dating evidence. All the unburnt remains contained at least 5g of cortical bone, which is the optimum weight required for obtaining dates using radiocarbon analysis. Secure dating of a sample of the remains will allow for a burial chronology to be established, which can then be further analysed in a regional context. Radiocarbon dating of the burnt remains will not be necessary given the good dating evidence from the pottery urn.

5.10.5 There is high potential for stable isotope analysis to be undertaken. Analysis of isotope ratios sampled from the cortical long bone/trabecular rib bone (carbon and nitrogen isotopes) and tooth enamel (strontium and oxygen isotopes) will provide information on dietary composition, dietary variation (according to factors such as sex, age, socio-economic disparity), and geographic origin/mobility and population diversity. There is also moderate potential for analysis of ancient DNA. Analysis of an appropriate sample

of petrous bones may yield information on juvenile sex (which currently cannot be reliably determined osteologically), ancestry, and patterns of kinship within the assemblage.

5.11 Animal bones

5.11.1 Given the evidence for activity dating to the Iron Age and Roman periods, there are several research questions to which the animal bone assemblage may contribute information, including some identified in the regional research framework (Hey and Hind 2014). Most notably, farming practices in the region need further investigation. There appears to be a high degree of continuity between the late Iron Age and the Roman periods in the region, but further evidence would help to substantiate this. The Roman phase assemblage from Sutton Courtenay Lane derives principally from an agricultural landscape (ie field boundaries, pits, and a corndryer), while the preceding Iron Age phase is a settlement complex of roundhouses and enclosures. Sites with faunal remains that transcend both periods are crucial in understanding particular changes to husbandry strategies, such as species proportions, livestock sizes, and culling patterns.

5.11.2 For wider synthetic analysis, the assemblage here could be usefully examined to compare and contrast with other regional animal bone data. There have been several archaeological excavations at Didcot in recent years, including several phases at Great Western Park (Strid forthcoming), while other useful assemblages include those from the Ashville Trading Estate (Wilson *et al*. 1978), Farmoor (Wilson and Bramwell 1979), Gill Mill (Strid 2018), and Castle Hill (Worley *et al*. 2010).

5.12 Charred and waterlogged plant remains

5.12.1 The assessment has shown that the main method of preservation of plant material on the site is charring, but the quantity of identifiable material varies between samples and many samples show evidence of bioturbation. The samples taken for the recovery of WPR all come from pits and these contain well-preserved remains and have good potential for local landscape reconstruction. Many of the CPR samples have indicators of potential waterlogging such as faint vivianite staining on the charcoal, but most of these samples do not contain seeds or other plant remains that can be identified as definitely anaerobically preserved.

Charred plant remains (Phase 1: Iron Age)

5.12.2 The 13 Iron Age samples are not rich in charred material. Grain is limited in quantity across most of the sampled features and is fragmented. Assemblages of cereal chaff are generally larger, but in many samples are highly fragmented and often obscured by numerous roots. Wild plant taxa are mainly crop contaminants, such as vetches (*Vicia/Lathyrus*), cleavers (*Galium aparine*) and grass seeds, and species that prefer damp conditions such as rushes (*Juncus* sp.) and sedges (*Carex* sp.).

5.12.3 Samples 1 (pit 82) and 66 (enclosure ditch 1691) have the best potential of samples from this period to add to the narrative regarding agricultural regime and land types being exploited. These samples are the richest both in terms of quantity of charred

material, especially chaff, and wild plant taxa, although the condition and quantity of cereal grain is variable.

5.12.4 Samples 11 (enclosure ditch 1683), 65 (enclosure ditch 812), 69 (pit 249), 71 (pit 130), 72 (enclosure ditch 1677), 73 (roundhouse ditch 405) and 75 (roundhouse ditch 1707) have all been scored as B/C. While the flots contain limited charred assemblages, they are large and fairly varied and have some potential to add to the interpretation of the site.

5.12.5 Samples 43 (roundhouse ditch 648) and 44 (pit 749) have no potential for further work on the CPR, although the charcoal from sample 44 is relatively abundant. Samples 10 (roundhouse ditch 1676) and 70 (roundhouse ditch 1679) include small quantities of cereal grain mostly in poor condition, fragmented chaff and few wild plant taxa, and the data these may provide is limited in scope. Sample 10 contains reasonable quantities of charcoal which could derive from a hearth within the structure, but other than this no further analysis of these samples would be worthwhile.

Charred plant remains (Phase 2: Roman)

5.12.6 Fourteen samples have been dated to the Roman period (Table 20). These came from a number of feature types including a corndryer (1712), cremation burial 1141, and several pits and ditches. Four of the corndryer samples are generally grain-rich, although this is in mixed condition. The samples also include chaff and the seeds of wild plants are reasonably represented. As the samples are fairly similar, full analysis of all four may not be necessary, depending on the spatial location of the samples within the feature, but the presence of sprouted grain is worthy of further investigation.

5.12.7 Sample 42 from enclosure ditch 1709 produced a rich-grain assemblage with some evidence of sprouting, perhaps representative of malting/brewing. Coleoptiles are present as well as quantities of cereal chaff and wild-plant seeds. Sample 76 from ditch 1698 produced a range of charred material including grain, chaff, and seeds of wild plant taxa. These two samples are the only ones from the Roman phase that contain enough charcoal to be considered for analysis by a charcoal specialist. As a tertiary ditch fill, however, the origin of the charcoal is uncertain, so further identification will provide only background-level information pertaining to local woodland.

5.12.8 Sample 74 from the fill of ditch 142 has been scored as B/C. As with those with a similar score from the Iron Age phase, the charred assemblage is limited but is quite large and fairly varied and could be included in the selection for analysis to provide greater spatial coverage of the site. Samples 53–56 from cremation 1141, sample 45 from pot 35, and sample 50 from pit 1108 and are almost devoid of charred remains and can be discarded.

Waterlogged plant remains

5.12.9 Samples 49 (pit 1118) and 50 (pit 1108) were taken for the recovery of WPR. Sample 49 is currently unphased, but it has a good range of uncharred seeds (Table 21) and, if it could be dated, would be worth full analysis as the plants are likely to derive from the immediate environment.

5.12.10 Roman sample 50 lacks CPR (see above) but it is very rich in waterlogged wood and seeds. The bulk floated portion of the sample contained a good quantity of roundwood and could be identified to species. The seed assemblage is abundant and generally in good condition. The plants identified during the scan differ from those in sample 49, and the sample is worth full recording for the same reason. It is recommended that the dried bulk-sample flots from both samples (if sample 49 is dated) should be examined in tandem with the waterlogged sub-samples in order to identify additional taxa.

5.12.11 The two samples both contain some insect remains. Sample 49 contains a smaller quantity with a greater level of fragmentation but sample 50 contains ample insect remains in potentially identifiable condition. Although insect remains have been shown to be common in samples from across the site, with the majority being clearly modern, the presence of both ostracods and Daphnia ephippia within the flot indicates a high likelihood that the material within this flot originates from a time when the feature was open and water-filled. It is recommended that material from this context is assessed by an insect specialist.

5.13 Marine shell

5.13.1 The presence of oyster shell in phased contexts is worth noting in the final report, but all have been sufficiently recorded at this stage and no further work is required. There are no contexts with sufficient numbers of relatively intact shells to merit biometrical analysis. Oysters are commonly found on Roman sites even as far inland as Oxfordshire, which demonstrates effective transport links with the coast. However, in this case, the abundance of shells in each context is extremely low, which precludes any meaningful discussions of oyster procurement.

5.14 Overall potential of the site

5.14.1 In general, the excavation results have the potential to inform on the nature of late prehistoric, Roman and Saxon activity in this local landscape, expanding in particular on the results of archaeological excavations within the Sutton Courtenay area (CAT 2000; Hamerow *et al*. 2007; FA 2008b; JMHS 2008; CA 2016), as well as those in the wider landscape (Davies *et al*. in prep; Hayden *et al*. forthcoming; OA 2020).

6 UPDATED PROJECT DESIGN

6.1 Revised research aims

6.1.1 The assessment of the excavated features and finds presented here has revealed new and substantial archaeological evidence relating to the Iron Age, Romano-British and, potentially, the early Anglo-Saxon period. This includes the remains of a sizable early–middle Iron Age settlement, characterised by roundhouses, smaller post-built structures, and enclosures. Following abandonment of the Iron Age settlement (after an unspecified time), the site became extensively reorganised in the Roman period as part of a seemingly much-wider agricultural landscape, here composed of a trackway, large fields or enclosures, and a masonry-built corndryer. This landscape appears to have been relatively long-lived, perhaps being maintained through much of the Roman period before falling into dis-use. After this phase, either in the late Roman or early Saxon period, parts of the site become used for inhumation burials. The lack of dating evidence makes it difficult to pinpoint these, though several of the burials were either placed within the upper parts of the Roman ditches or were dug into the final fills, while another was buried with a knife that is thought to be early Saxon in origin. This suggests that many, if not all the burials could date to the post-Roman period.

6.1.2 In light of the discoveries made so far, several of the original research aims have been achieved during the excavation and post-excavation assessment, particularly those stated above in section 1.4.1. The research aims presented in section 1.4.2 were closely focussed on questions that referred to the Solent Thames Research Agenda and these have been partially addressed to varying degrees. For example, the nature of activity/occupation during the Iron Age and Roman periods is now better understood, while, in contrast, more attention can be placed on characterising the nature of Iron Age weaving, and textile processing generally. With this in mind, the original research aims of the project can be revised to maximise the potential of the information generated through post-excavation analysis. The aims presented below have been further informed by the period-based Solent Thames Research Agenda (Lambrick 2014; Fulford 2014; Dodd and Crawford 2014) and seek to develop understanding of the archaeology within its wider social, economic, and geographic context.

Iron Age

Can the chronology and sub-phasing of the Iron Age settlement be more firmly established?

6.1.3 The Iron Age settlement is currently thought to have been founded around the end of the early Iron Age and occupation continued through much of the middle Iron Age. Absolute dating of this period, however, is very poorly understood. The date of establishment is key for looking more widely at settlement density in this region and how intensively managed the agricultural landscape might have been. Far more-detailed analysis of the Iron Age stratigraphy is required to refine the phasing of the settlement in order to understand its development, extent, and eventual decline. Equally, the ending of the settlement needs to be better understood to see whether there was a sudden abandonment or a gradual reduction in activity and perhaps a

degree of continuity into the later Iron Age; indeed, how does the Iron Age activity relate to the later Roman-period reorganisation?

6.1.4 The prehistoric pottery needs to be examined in much greater detail to identify potential changes in vessel-form use over time. This will be compared with other known assemblages in the region (see above), and a small number of samples with carbonised residue adhering to the insides of the pots will be sent for radiocarbon analysis (see below) in order to more accurately locate certain vessels within absolute date ranges.

How was agriculture practised at the Iron Age settlement, how intensive were farming practices, and how did the pattern of farming relate to other settlements in the region?

6.1.5 The archaeobotanical (both CPR and WPR) and zooarchaeological assemblages will be analysed in greater detail, with the better environmental samples being selected to enhance the information available. These will inform patterns of arable cultivation, such as crop choice, processing activity, and the character of wider land-use, and pastoral management, in particular livestock husbandry practices in terms of culling patterns, the exploitation of secondary products, and carcass processing.

6.1.6 More detailed examination of site features that may relate to agricultural practices is also imperative. Some features may be associated with arable storage, such as pits and post-built structures, and need to be better understood in terms of their character, locations within the settlement, and their dating. Also, the settlement is thought to have been relatively open with little sign of land division. The form of the landscape is likely to relate to the type of agriculture practiced, while the presence of several large enclosures may relate to livestock management and/or perhaps arable processing, and more attention should be given to these features.

How does the Iron Age architectural pattern develop over time and how does it relate to other settlements in the region?

6.1.7 There is ample evidence of buildings in the form of numerous Iron Age roundhouse ditches. Recent work at Crab Hill, nearby in Wantage, has shown good evidence for a shift from relatively large, post-built houses of the early Iron Age to more archaeologically visible houses represented by gullies in the middle Iron Age (OA 2020). Such differences are likely to reflect differences/changes in construction techniques and materials. In addition, the size and character of the houses there suggested cultural links initially focussed on the Wessex chalk to the south and a later northward re-orientation towards the Upper Thames Valley. Further attention could be given to the possibility of post-built roundhouses at Sutton Courtenay Lane and, with better dating information, the structural evidence could be very usefully compared with that found at contemporary settlements in the region.

How does the use and deposition of artefacts relate to everyday practices, and can we better identify ritualised activities?

6.1.8 Understanding patterns of everyday activity is a central tenet of most Iron Age research agenda (eg Champion *et al.* 2001; Lambrick 2014). The finds evidence is not that extensive, though spatial and contextual patterns of deposition will be examined in more detail. The complete, smashed jar found in roundhouse pit 448 could

represent a placed deposit. This will provide one opportunity to examine depositional praxis at the site. The vessel will be selected for radiocarbon analysis to provide a more accurate date for use of this object. Its deposition within the roundhouse may have been important, as has been identified at other contemporary sites as possible ritualised evidence of domestic activity and the structuring of space (Pope 2007) or of the abandonment of buildings (Webley 2007). Pits located in other roundhouses, such as 1678/1679, 1677, and 1680/1681, also contained possible internal pits and these may require further examination.

6.1.9 Discussion of the two bone weaving combs found during the evaluation (OA 2016, 8) will be incorporated into the publication alongside the spindle whorl from Iron Age pit 82 to further consider the importance of textile processing during this period. Two bun-shaped loom-weights are considered above to be of Anglo-Saxon date (see below), though this needs to be clarified as they may be Iron Age. Further attention will also be given to the triangular fired-clay bricks, which are here considered to be oven furniture, though some may represent loom-weights.

Roman

The Roman phase of activity indicates that a major reorganisation of the occupational and agricultural landscape occurred, perhaps relating to settlement elsewhere; when did this occur and how does it relate to contemporary changes in the landscape found elsewhere?

6.1.10 While late Iron Age/early Roman pottery has been identified from the site, it is not clear whether this relates to latent activity preceding the major restructuring that took place or was deposited during its initial phases. More detailed examination of the Romano-British features and their structural sequence, along with better integration of the ceramic series, is required to establish when these changes occurred. Certainly, the pottery assemblage, along with other finds and environmental classes of material, suggests that settlement was either present on site (though not visible through structural remains) or very close by. Closer attention should be given to this issue, primarily through finds analyses, but it could also be supplemented through examination of aerial photographs and LiDAR.

6.1.11 Major developments have been seen at other sites across the Thames Valley, in the form of extensive rectilinear field systems and associated trackways, that point to implantations of more complex settlements and a significant upscaling of agricultural activity in the late 1st century and the early 2nd century AD (Booth 2011; Smith 2016, 155–7, 177–83). Once the stratigraphic narrative of the Roman archaeology at Sutton Courtenay Lane has been refined, it is imperative that it is compared with contemporary evidence at other local sites, such as at Appleford Sidings (Booth and Simmonds (2009), Crab Hill, Wantage (OA 2020), and Great Western Park, Didcot (Davies *et al*. forthcoming).

The changing pattern of land-use that occurred in the Roman period is suggestive of a more-integrated agricultural landscape; is there evidence to identify what the agricultural basis was for this change?

6.1.12 Closer attention will be given to the environmental and zooarchaeological assemblages to identify clearer patterns of farming practice. This will focus on remains from the corndryer to identify its character and date of function. Evidence from weed seeds will also be examined to detect any potential changes in the extent and type of arable farming, particularly in relation to an extension of the existing areas under cultivation and expansion onto poorer soils (Lodwick 2017).

Late Roman/early Saxon

A total of 14 inhumation burials may all date to the period when the Roman landscape was in decline or following its abandonment; can a more accurate chronology be established for these burials, do they all relate to the same period of activity, and what does their character tell us about burial activity in this period more widely?

6.1.13 The dating evidence for the inhumation burials is poor, largely based on the stratigraphic relationship of some with Roman ditches and the presence of a possible early Saxon knife found with one. This is not helped by the incoherent and apparently haphazard spatial distribution of the burials. Radiocarbon dating will be employed on selected burials from different locations at the site to enable better understanding of their dating and chronology. Once established, further work can focus on the character of the burials: do they relate to a specific burial ground *per se* and what evidence is there in the wider landscape for contemporary settlement activity? There is possible evidence of early Saxon loom-weights, which may point to domestic activity, and this requires further examination. As Dodd and Crawford (2014, 231) point out unaccompanied burials are a particular problem for our understanding of this period, as is the significance and cultural context for the re-use of earlier sites for burial.

6.2 Interfaces

6.2.1 The work at Sutton Courtenay Lane was undertaken in an area that has witnessed a relatively large amount of excavation, much occurring in recent years, the results of which will provide a baseline for comparison at a number of levels. These include trial-trenching and excavation near the scheduled Iron Age/Roman settlement at Milton Park, which has also produced evidence of Saxon activity (CAT 2000; JMHS 2008), large-scale excavations at Great Western Park, Didcot (Hayden *et al*. forthcoming; Davies *et al*. in prep.), plus work at Didcot Power Station (Boyle *et al*. 1995), Sutton Courtenay Lane/Harwell Road (FA 2008b; CA 2016), and Drayton Lane (Hamerow *et al*. 2007). Other relevant excavations in the local area include work at Castle Hill/Wittenham Clumps (Allen *et al*. 2010) Appleford (Hinchliffe and Thomas 1980), Appleford Sidings (Booth and Simmonds 2009), and Wigbalds Farm, Long Wittenham (Savory 1937). A considerable amount of excavation has also recently occurred to the west of Sutton Courtenay in the Wantage/Grove area, perhaps the most relevant of which is that at Crab Hill, Wantage (OA 2020), where a very similar Iron Age settlement has been discovered on land that was later reorganised as part of the Roman agricultural landscape.

6.3 Methods statement

Stratigraphy

6.3.1 The stratigraphy of the excavated features has, so far, only undergone a very basic and summary assessment. The data require more thorough examination in order to more firmly establish as many features as possible as either Iron Age or Roman in date. The high degree of recutting and modification of many ditches and gullies, also need to be analysed in greater detail to refine the chronology of the site, alongside improved ceramic dating supplemented by radiocarbon dates, allowing for sub-phases within the Iron Age and Roman periods to be understood.

6.3.2 The inhumation burials require further work to better understand the relationships between the grave contexts and, in many cases, the surrounding features. This will be partly addressed by radiocarbon dating.

Worked flint

6.3.3 The flint assemblage is fully recorded. An edited version of the assessment report will feature in the final excavation report.

Prehistoric pottery

6.3.4 The prehistoric pottery should be fully recorded following PCRG standards (PCRG 2010; PCRG, SGRP, MPRG 2016), and a report will be produced that describes and discusses the material. Analysis should focus on what the assemblage can tell us about the chronological development of regional ceramic series, depositional practices, and site activity.

6.3.5 Three vessels of identifiable form have adhering carbonised residue and it is recommended that these are radiocarbon dated. These include sherds form contexts 449, 609 and 1357 (see Table 8, and 6.3.22 below for details).

Roman pottery

6.3.6 The pottery will be fully recorded in accordance with Study Group for Roman Pottery standard (PCRG, SGRP, MPRG 2016). Each context-group will be sorted into coherent elements and quantified by sherd count, weight, rim count and estimated vessel equivalents (EVE). A note will also be made of decoration and aspects of use, such as burning, use-wear, and modification. A spot-date will be assigned to each context group based on the dating of individual records. A selection of pottery showing the chronological and typological range of the assemblage will be illustrated. Pottery of intrinsic interest will also be selected, and it is estimated that 15–20 drawings will be required.

Worked and burnt stone

6.3.7 The stone has been fully recorded at assessment stage and no further analysis is required. A report will be written that summarises the worked stone in the light of final phasing from the site and compares the finds with those from other local sites. No items require illustrating.

Fired clay

6.3.8 The fired-clay assemblage has been quantified and basic identifications made, but it should be fully recorded in accordance with ACBMG (2007) guidelines for building materials, which are also appropriate for structural fired clay. The assemblage is sufficiently large to benefit from any further analysis. A report should be produced describing the assemblage and discussing it in relation to the site and compared to other relevant local and regional sites. A small number of pieces should be illustrated. If there are other finds related to spinning and weaving in other materials such as stone spindle whorls, it would be more appropriate for the small objects to be reported with these, rather than the fired clay.

Ceramic building material

6.3.9 The assemblage has been fully recorded in accordance with ACBMG (2007) guidelines. The quality of the data would not benefit from any further in-depth analysis beyond that considered in the assessment. The present report may be edited and incorporated into any final report. Five items could be illustrated (tegula flange profiles, a signature mark, a flue tile with keying, and a flue tile with vent).

Metal finds and coins

6.3.10 The metal finds should be fully recorded, measured and phasing data should be added when available. The identified Roman finds should be catalogued for publication and selection of the finds should be illustrated. The coins should be fully catalogued and published as part of the site report.

Glass

6.3.11 No further work is required of the glass material and the information presented here can be included in the excavation report.

Worked bone

6.3.12 No further work is required of the worked-bone object and the information presented here can be included in the excavation report. Details of the two bone weaving combs found during the evaluation (OA 2016, 8) will be illustrated and included in the publication.

Industrial waste

6.3.13 No further work is required of the industrial waste and the information presented here can be included in the excavation report.

Human skeletal remains

6.3.14 All unburnt, articulated skeletons, disarticulated and cremated human bone will undergo full osteological analysis, following published guidelines (Brickley and McKinley 2004; Mitchell and Brickley 2017). For all unburnt bone, this will include an inventory of elements for each skeleton/context containing disarticulated bone, estimation of age, sex and stature (where possible), calculation of post-cranial indices, identification of any non-metric traits, and identification of any dental and skeletal

pathology and peri-mortem or post-mortem human or animal modification. Trauma patterns will be analysed.

6.3.15 The context records for deposit 931 will be reviewed to determine if this was from a disturbed burial or a deliberately placed, disarticulated skull.

6.3.16 Full analysis of all burnt bone deposits will include a record of the colour, weight, and level of fragmentation. The 4–2mm fractions will be fully sorted enable the total bone weight to be accurately recorded. In addition, the 2–0.5mm residues will be visually assessed to look for identifiable fragments, and the approximate proportion of cremated bone and charcoal recorded.

6.3.17 The findings of the analysis will be compared and discussed in the context of other contemporary burial assemblages from the wider region and beyond.

Animal bones

6.3.18 The assemblage will be recorded with the aid of the Oxford Archaeology reference collection and standard identification guides and using the diagnostic zones described by Serjeantson (1996) for mammals and Cohen and Serjeantson (1996) for birds. Ageing data, biometrics and taphonomic aspects of the assemblage will all be fully recorded in line with standard guidelines (eg Baker and Worley 2014).

6.3.19 Bones from sieved samples have been sufficiently assessed and no further work is required of this material. Also, the number of measurable bones throughout the assemblage is minimal, so biometric data will not be collected.

Charred and waterlogged plant remains

6.3.20 A total of nine CPR flots have been selected for further analysis, including all those scoring B and a selection that scored B/C. Five Iron Age samples have been selected from a pit, enclosure ditch and roundhouse ditch features to provide a range of evidence for the deposition of charred plant material, and four Roman samples consist two from the corndryer and one each from two ditches. In addition, sample 50 from Roman pit 1108 will be sorted and analysed for waterlogged plant remains. No charcoal samples will be analysed.

6.3.21 The samples will be sorted and examined using a low-power binocular microscope at x10–x40 magnification. Identifications will be made by comparison to seeds held in the Oxford Archaeology's reference collection and published guides (eg Cappers *et al*. 2006). Nomenclature for the plant remains will follow Stace (2010).

Radiocarbon dating

6.3.22 Three Iron Age pottery sherds with well-preserved carbonised residue will be selected for radiocarbon dating. These include specimens from contexts 449, 609 and 1357, all three of which derive from diagnostically recognisable vessel forms (see Table 8). The largely complete but smashed jar found in roundhouse pit 448 (context 449) is of intrinsic interest as it probably relates to a placed deposit. The sherd from context 609 derives from roundhouse/enclosure ditch 1677, which was cut by roundhouse ditch 1678 and enclosure ditch group 1690, and thus is stratigraphically important, while the

sherd from context 1357 derives from ditch 1333 which was once of the intercutting features within group 1705, notable for cutting roundhouse ditches 327 and 1676 and was cut by Roman ditches 1708. Early–middle Iron Age pottery forms are often poorly understood in terms of their dating in this region and the analysis of these specimens will improve our understanding of the site chronology in relation to contemporary settlements nearby.

6.3.23 The other four radiocarbon samples will focus on the inhumation burials, which are currently thought to be either late Roman or early Saxon. One burial will be selected from each main spatial group. These will include Sk 1570 in the south-western part of the site, Sk 707 in the south-eastern part of the site, Sk 1498 which was found in the fill of an Iron Age roundhouse ditch, and Sk 247 which was found with the putative early Saxon knife. These samples will help provide a broad chronology for the inhumation burials at the site and will allow for more-informed discussion of their wider social and geographic contexts.

6.4 Publication and dissemination of results

6.4.1 The final excavation report will be disseminated as a layered publication consisting of a full grey literature report that will include the finer details of the stratigraphy and the specialist' analysis of the finds and the environmental remains, along with the associated datasets. This will be uploaded as an open-access pdf to the OA Library (https://library.thehumanjourney.net/) and all other forms of data (context, finds, and environmental archival data) will be disseminated via the Archaeology Data Service (ADS), University of York. A copy of the full report will also be lodged with Oxfordshire HER.

6.4.2 A summarised version of the full excavation report will be published with the county journal, *Oxonisensia*. This will include the salient elements of the project, including the more important data, and a full interpretation of the site presenting its significance within its wider regional context. The journal article will be fully cross-referenced with the online report.

6.5 Retention and disposal of finds and environmental evidence

6.5.1 All the pottery has the potential for future research purposes and should all be retained. All the metal objects and the coins should be retained, but the glass can be discarded. The worked-bone object should be retained for possible identification in the future. The industrial waste can be discarded.

6.5.2 The fired clay has intrinsic interest and potential for wider research in particular the origins and production of the oven plates and the potential of specialised production associated with Roman tile or pottery production. The assemblage should therefore be retained as part of the archive, except for non-diagnostic material that may be discarded as indicated in the archive record. The CBM has limited intrinsic interest but could have potential for any wider research and analysis considering the relationship between villas and lower status settlements and should therefore be retained. The post-Roman tile may be discarded.

6.5.3 The flints should be retained until deposited at a suitable museum or other facility. Natural flint fragments may be discarded. The burnt and unworked stone can be discarded, except for the burnt cobble from context 449 which may have been included in a placed deposit. The worked stone objects should be retained as they have the potential for further analysis, either petrographic or use-wear.

6.5.4 The human skeletal remains are generally well preserved with very good potential for further analysis and it is recommended that the remains are retained for future research. The assemblage is currently held at Oxford Archaeology under Ministry of Justice burial licence 19-0162. This licence is valid until the 4th of July 2024. It should be deferred by application to the Ministry of Justice, stating retention in the local receiving museum.

6.5.5 The animal bone assemblage is one of the largest in the region and should retained. The marine shells are of limited value for further work but can be retained alongside the animal bones for completeness of the zooarchaeological remains.

6.5.6 The assessed CPR and WPR flots should be retained until the end of the project when a more informed decision can be made about retention in the archive. Samples which have not been recommended for further work may have potential for radiocarbon dating should that be required. Any extracted and identified material should be retained in the archive together with any unsorted flots that have been assessed as containing interpretable material. CPR flots scored D for potential of both CPR and Charcoal could be discarded at the end of the project. Waterlogged material is difficult to store long-term and retention in the archive is not recommended.

6.6 Ownership and archive

6.6.1 OA will retain copyright of all reports and the documentary and digital archive produced in this project. OA will maintain the archive to the standards recommended by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014b), the Archaeological Archives Forum (Brown 2011), and Oxfordshire County Museums Service. The documentary archive has been security copied. The finds and documentary archive will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museums Service under the accession code OXCMS:2018.83. The digital archive will be deposited with Archaeology Data Service (ADS). The landowner's permission to donate the finds to this repository has been sought.

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APPENDIX: ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLE TABLES

Sample No	Context	Cut	Feature	Group	Phase	Sample volume (L.)	Flot volume (ml)	Charc >2mm	Grain	Chaff	Seed	Other	Molluscs	Comments	Potential (CPR)	Potential (Charcoal)
1	85	82	Secondary Fill of Pit		1	10	25	7 >4mm, 25+ 4-2mm	++	+++	+++		+	Rich in fine uncharred roots. Charcoal small, includes knotty fragments. Grain largely indeterminate but barley and wheat present. Oat/brome. Small fragments of glume base and rachis. Charred seeds include Vicia/Lathyrus, cf Medicago types, Galium aparine, Rumex sp., Chenopodium sp. and silicified Lithospermum arvense. Seeds have badly damaged exteriors. Rare terrestrial snails. Rich in Cecilioides acicula.	B	C
10	331	329	Secondary Fill of Roundhouse ditch	1676	1	40	100	25 >4mm, 100+ 4-2mm	++	++	+		+	Volume mainly uncharred roots. Charcoal has slight external encrustation. Includes knotty fragments. Grain largely indeterminate. Glume base fragments. Seeds include Chenopodium sp., and Vicia/Lathyrus. Seeds are in damaged condition. Rare terrestrial snails. Rich in Cecilioides acicula.	C	B/C
11	336	334	Secondary Fill of Enclosure Ditch	1683	1	40	50	1 >4mm, 7 4-2mm	++	++	++		+	Volume is almost entirely uncharred roots. Charcoal scarce and small in size. Grain in poor condition, includes barley and wheat with some cf oat/brome fragments. Few seeds include Solanaceae, Rumex sp., Chenopodium sp., and Galium aparine. Occasional small glume base fragments. Rare terrestrial snails. Rich in Cecilioides acicula	B/C	D
42	689	686	Tertiary Fill of Boundary/Enclosure Ditch	1709	2	40	100	13 >4mm, 25+ 4-2mm	++++	++++	++		+	Volume is largely uncharred roots. Charcoal is generally but not exclusively thin, includes bark and knotty fragments. Grain common, condition is mixed but appears to be mainly wheat. Some grains show evidence of sprouting. Glume base fragments present some in good condition, appear to be spelt wheat. Coleoptiles present. Seeds include Vicia/Lathyrus, Carex sp., Chenopodium sp., grass seeds and Medicago types. Many are missing exteriors. Rare snails. Rich in Cecilioides acicula.	B	B/C
43	649	648	Secondary Fill of Roundhouse ditch	635	1	20	50	0 >4mm, 24 4-2mm	+	+	+			Volume is almost entirely uncharred roots. Charcoal is small, includes knotty fragments. Cereal grains are indeterminate. Rare small glume base fragments. Vicia/Lathyrus and Carex sp. present. Cecilioides acicula present.	D	C
44	751	749	Backfill of Pit		1	7	100	25+ >4mm,	+		+		+	Uncharred roots present but in smaller quantities than other samples. Charcoal fragments are very thin. Rare twiggy roundwood. Single wheat grain. Vicia/Lathyrus and Stellaria sp. present. Rare snails. Rich in Cecilioides acicula.	D	B/C

Sample No	Context	Cut	Feature	Group	Phase	Sample volume (L.)	Flot volume (ml)	Charc >2mm	Grain	Chaff	Seed	Other	Molluscs	Comments	Potential (CPR)	Potential (Charcoal)
								100+ 4-2mm								
45	851		Fill of Pot 35		2	5	20	0 >4mm, 9 4-2mm	+	+				Volume is largely uncharred roots. All charcoal is small in size. Single indeterminate grain fragment. Rare small fragments of glume base. Rich in Cecilioides acicula.	D	D
49	1120	1118	Secondary Fill of Pit		U/D	30	25	8 >4mm, c.50 4-2mm	++				++	Also see WPR table. Rich in fibrous WPR. Charred grain generally damaged but appears to be largely wheat. Uncharred seeds are very common and include Urtica dioica, cf Leonurus cardiaca, Lamium sp., Silene alba, Solanum sp., cf Brassicaceae, Aethusa cynapium, Sambucus sp. and Onopordum acanthium. Snails appear to be terrestrial varieties.	C	C
50	1160	1108	Secondary Fill of Pit		2	30	500	2 >4mm, 8 4-2mm	+					Part scanned only. Also see WPR table. Rich in fibrous WPR and woody fragments including thorns. Uncharred twigs present. Almost no charred material. Single indet charred cereal fragment. Uncharred seeds include Onopordum acanthium, Sambucus sp., Rubus fruticosus, Lamium sp., Stellaria media, Urtica dioica, Ranunculus sub genus Batrachium, Silene alba, Cirsium/Carduus, cf Artemisia sp. and Solanaceae. Insect remains common but fragmentary.	D	D
51	1176	1156	Fill of Corndryer	1712	2	10	30	0 >4mm, 4 4-2mm	+++	+++	+++			Uncharred roots common. CPR is almost totally charred grain in mixed condition, appears to be mainly wheat. Oat/brome present. Coleoptiles and glume base fragments present. Charred seeds include Vicia/Lathyrus, Rumex sp. and Medicago types. Rich in Cecilioides acicula. Occasional uncharred seeds.	B	D
52	1157	1156	Fill of Corndryer	1712	2	10	20	0 >4mm, 13 4-2mm	+++	++++	++		+	Uncharred roots common. CPR is almost totally charred grain in mixed condition, appears to be mainly wheat. Oat/brome. Glume base fragments and coleoptiles present. Charred seeds include Medicago types, Vicia/Lathyrus, Rumex sp., grass seeds and Stellaria media. Rare land snails. Rich in Cecilioides acicula. Occasional uncharred seeds.	B	D
53	1144	1143	Spit 1 of Cremation		2	0.4	1	0 >4mm, 0 4-2mm						Small flot. Volume is largely uncharred roots. All charcoal <2mm. Rich in Cecilioides acicula. Occasional uncharred seeds.	D	D
54	1144	1143	Spit 2 of Cremation		2	0.2	1	0 >4mm, 0 4-2mm						Small flot. Volume is largely uncharred roots. All charcoal <2mm. Rich in Cecilioides acicula.	D	D
55	1144	1143	Spit 3 of Cremation		2	0.1	1	0 >4mm, 0 4-2mm						Small flot. Volume is largely uncharred roots. All charcoal <2mm. Rich in Cecilioides acicula.	D	D

Sample No	Context	Cut	Feature	Group	Phase	Sample volume (L.)	Flot volume (ml)	Charc >2mm	Grain	Chaff	Seed	Other	Molluscs	Comments	Potential (CPR)	Potential (Charcoal)
56	1143		Exterior Deposit of Cremation urn		2	1	2	0 >4mm, 0 4-2mm	+					Small flot. Volume is largely uncharred roots. All charcoal <2mm. Single oat/brome. Rich in Cecilioides acicula. Occasional uncharred seeds.	D	D
57	1176	1156	Fill of Corndryer	1712	2	40	50	0 >4mm, 15 4-2mm	+++	+++	+++		++	Uncharred roots common. Grain is common in mixed condition, appears to be generally wheat. Some grains show signs of sprouting – one still has coleoptile attached. Tail grains present. Oat/Brome. Glume bases appear to be mainly spelt. Coleoptile fragments present. Seeds include Medicago sp., Vicia/Lathyrus, Rumex sp., Carex sp., Galium aparine, Lithospermum arvense and grass seeds. Rare uncharred seeds. Occasional land snails. Rich in Cecilioides acicula.	B	C
58	1178	1156	Fill of Corndryer	1712	2	40	20	0 >4mm, 16 4-2mm	++	+++	++		++	Uncharred roots common. Indeterminate clinkered material present. Charcoal small with some external encrustation. Grain is fragmentary but appears to be mainly wheat. Some evidence of sprouting. Glume bases are mainly fragmentary. Fuel ash slag. Seeds are fragmentary but include Medicago types, Rumex sp. and grass seeds. Land snails present. Cecilioides acicula also present.	B	C
65	726	723	Secondary Fill of Enclosure Ditch	812	1	35	50	3 >4mm, 25+ 4-2mm	++	+++	++		++	Volume is largely uncharred roots. Occasional indeterminate clinkered material. Charcoal is small with some encrustation, includes knotty fragments. Grain is fragmented and clinkered, appears to be mainly wheat. Oat/Brome present. Oat awns present. Glume bases are fragmentary. Seeds include Galium aparine, Vicia/Lathyrus, grass seeds, Juncus sp., cf Tripleurospermum sp., Rumex sp. and small Fabaceae. Land snails present. Rich in Cecilioides acicula. Possible slight waterlogging, uncharred seeds appear modern.	B/C	C
66	1542	1541	Secondary Fill of Enclosure Ditch	1691	1	40	30	3 >4mm, 25+ 4-2mm	++	+++	+++		++	Volume is largely uncharred roots. Charcoal includes knotty fragments, bark, and a possible tree gall. Oat/brome. Oat awns. Grain is fragmentary, mainly wheat but at least one barley grain present. Glume bases are mainly spelt. Vicia/Lathyrus, Juncus sp., Lithospermum arvense, cf Lamium sp., small Fabaceae, Rumex sp. and grass seeds. Land snails present. Rich in Cecilioides acicula.	B	C
67	975	974	Primary Fill of Boundary Ditch	1692	2	36	60	2 >4mm, 25+ 4-2mm	+	++	+		+	Volume is almost entirely uncharred roots. Charcoal includes some very thin fragments. Occasional wheat grains. Rare glume base fragments. Vicia/Lathyrus present. Rare land snails. Rich in Cecilioides acicula. Possible slight waterlogging but all uncharred seeds appear modern.	C	C
68	1172	1171	Primary Fill of Boundary Ditch	1171	2	40	75	0 >4mm, 7 4-2mm	+	++	++		+	Volume is almost entirely uncharred roots. Grain is fragmentary but appears to be mainly wheat. Glume base fragments generally small, larger pieces	C	D

Sample No	Context	Cut	Feature	Group	Phase	Sample volume (L.)	Flot volume (ml)	Charc >2mm	Grain	Chaff	Seed	Other	Molluscs	Comments	Potential (CPR)	Potential (Charcoal)
														appear to be spelt. Seeds include Vicia/Lathyrus, grass seeds, Asteraceae (Leucanthemum type), Centaurea sp. and Anthemis cotula. Rare land snails. Cecilioides acicula common.		
69	250	249	Primary Fill of Pit		1	40	50	1 >4mm, 25+ 4-2mm	++	++	++		+	Volume is almost entirely uncharred roots. Charcoal is small and includes knotty fragments and a single twig. Grain is damaged but appears to be mainly wheat. Glume bases fragmentary. Oat awns. Seeds include Vicia/Lathyrus, grass seeds, Asteraceae (Leucanthemum type), Stellaria media, Medicago types and Rumex sp. Rare land snails. Cecilioides acicula common.	B/C	C
70	24	25	Secondary Fill of Roundhouse ditch	1679	1	40	125	7 >4mm, 25+ 4-2mm	++	++			+	Part scanned only. Volume is almost entirely uncharred roots including large numbers of woody root fragments. Charcoal is small in size. Grain has a very clinkered appearance. Appears mainly wheat although one grain may be barley. Occasional glume base fragments, generally small in size. No charred seeds in scanned portion. Possible slight waterlogging but all uncharred seeds appear modern. Rare land snails. Rich in Cecilioides acicula.	C	C
71	131	130	Secondary Fill of Pit		1	40	150	2 >4mm, 25+ 4-2mm	++	++	++		+	Part scanned only. Volume is almost entirely uncharred roots including large numbers of woody root fragments. Charcoal is small in size. Grain is largely indeterminate but appears to include wheat, possible barley, and oat. Glume bases appear to be mainly spelt. Seeds include Vicia/Lathyrus, grass seeds, Tripleurospermum sp. and Medicago sp. Possible slight waterlogging but all uncharred seeds appear modern. Rare land snails. Cecilioides acicula common.	B/C	C
72	732	731	Primary Fill of Enclosure/ Roundhouse Ditch	1677	1	40	125	13 >4mm, 25 + 4-2mm	++	+++	++		+	Part scanned only. Volume is almost entirely uncharred roots including large numbers of woody root fragments. Charcoal is small in size. Grain is largely indeterminate but appears to include wheat and barley. Glume bases appear to be mainly spelt. Seeds include Vicia/Lathyrus, Lithospermum arvense, grass seeds, Galium aparine and Juncus sp. Rare land snails. Cecilioides acicula common.	B/C	C
73	213	211	Secondary Fill of Roundhouse ditch	405	1	40	150	11 >4mm, 25+ 4-2mm	++	+++	++		+	Part scanned only. Volume is almost entirely uncharred roots including large numbers of woody root fragments. Charcoal includes knotty fragments. Occasional anthracite and indeterminate clinkered material. Grain is largely indeterminate but appears to include wheat and barley. Glume bases appear to be mainly spelt. Seeds include Vicia/Lathyrus, Galium aparine, Juncus sp., Carex sp. and grass seeds. Rare land snails. Cecilioides acicula common. Rich in modern insect material and root nodules.	B/C	C

Sample No	Context	Cut	Feature	Group	Phase	Sample volume (L.)	Flot volume (ml)	Charc >2mm	Grain	Chaff	Seed	Other	Molluscs	Comments	Potential (CPR)	Potential (Charcoal)
74	143	142	Primary Fill of Ditch		2	40	50	2 >4mm, 12 4-2mm	++	++	++		+++	Charcoal is rare and small, one small fragment of roundwood is present. Grain is in mixed condition but appears to be largely wheat. Oat/brome also present. Glume base fragments generally small but some larger are spelt. Vicia/Lathyrus, grass seeds, Medicago sp., Juncus sp. and small Fabaceae present. Molluscs common, mainly terrestrial species. Cecilioides acicula common.	B/C	D
75	1529	1528	Fill of Roundhouse ditch	1707	1	20	20	3 >4mm, 25+ 4-2mm	++	++	++		+	Fine uncharred roots common. Charcoal includes knotty fragments. Occasional anthracite and indeterminate clinkered material. Grain has a clinkered appearance and is mainly wheat but one grain cf. barley. Oat/brome also present. Glume base fragments generally small but some larger are spelt. Rachis fragments present. Vicia/Lathyrus, Medicago sp., various small seeds not identified. Rare terrestrial snails. Cecilioides acicula present.	B/C	C/D
76	1284	1251	Primary Fill of Boundary Ditch	1698	2	40	35	21 >4mm, 50+ 4-2mm	+++	+++	+++	+		Small quantity of roots only. Richer in CPR than most other samples. Vivianite staining common on charcoal. Grain is in mixed condition, both wheat and barley present. Oat/Brome. Glume bases present. Small fragment of rachis. Seeds include Vicia/Lathyrus, Carex sp., grass seeds, Medicago types, Sheradia arvensis, Galium aparine, Rumex sp. and occasional small seeds. Small fragment of hazelnut. Rare Cecilioides acicula.	B	B/C
+ = present (up to 5 items), ++ = frequent (5-24), +++ = common (25-49), ++++ = abundant (50-99), +++++superabundant (100+)																

Table 20: Summary of charred plant remains

Sample No.	Context No.	Feature Type	Date	Sample Vol (L)	Vol. (ml)	Vol Scanned	Wood	Insect	Fruit/Nut	Seeds	Mineralised	Charred	Mollusc	Notes	WPR
49	1120	Secondary Fill of Pit [1118]	U/D	1	30	50%		++		++++		+++	+	Fine fibrous plant material. Small charcoal fragments common, mainly <2mm. Uncharred seeds common, but in mixed condition. *Nasturtium microphyllum*, *Chenopodium* sp., *and Urtica dioica* very common. *Leonurus cardiaca*, *Lamium* sp., *Rumex* sp., *Silene alba*. cf *Aethusa cynapium* and *Cirsium/Carduus* are in fragmented condition. Occasional land snails present. Fewer large seeds than are present within the CPR flot. Rare Ostracods.	B/C
50	1160	Secondary Fill of Pit [1108]	Roman	N/A	N/A		+++							Large quantity of wood >10mm extracted from CPR flot includes roundwood	B
50	1160	Secondary Fill of Pit [1108]	Roman	1	90	25%	++++	++++		+++		+		Rich in small woody fragments and thorns. Occasional small twigs. Ostracods and Daphnia epiphera common. Insect remains common, largely fragmentary but intact heads and occasional beetle elytra present, body segments and occasional pupae cases. Rare small charcoal fragments. Uncharred seeds in mixed condition include *Chenopodium* sp., *Stellaria media*, *Sambucus* sp., *Rubus fruticosus*, *Lamium* sp., *Potamotagen* sp., *Ranunculus acris/repens/bulbosus, Urtica dioica* and *Anthriscus/Chaerophyllum*.	B
+ = present (up to 5 items), ++ = frequent (5-25), +++ = common (25-49), ++++ = abundant (50-99), +++++superabundant (100+)															

Table 21: Summary of waterlogged plant remains

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Figure 1: Site location

X:\s\Sutton Courtenay Lane Oxfordshire\010Geomatics\03 GIS Projects\Sutton_Courtney_lane_WSI_Figure1_18-08-01.mxd*matt.bradley*03/08/2018

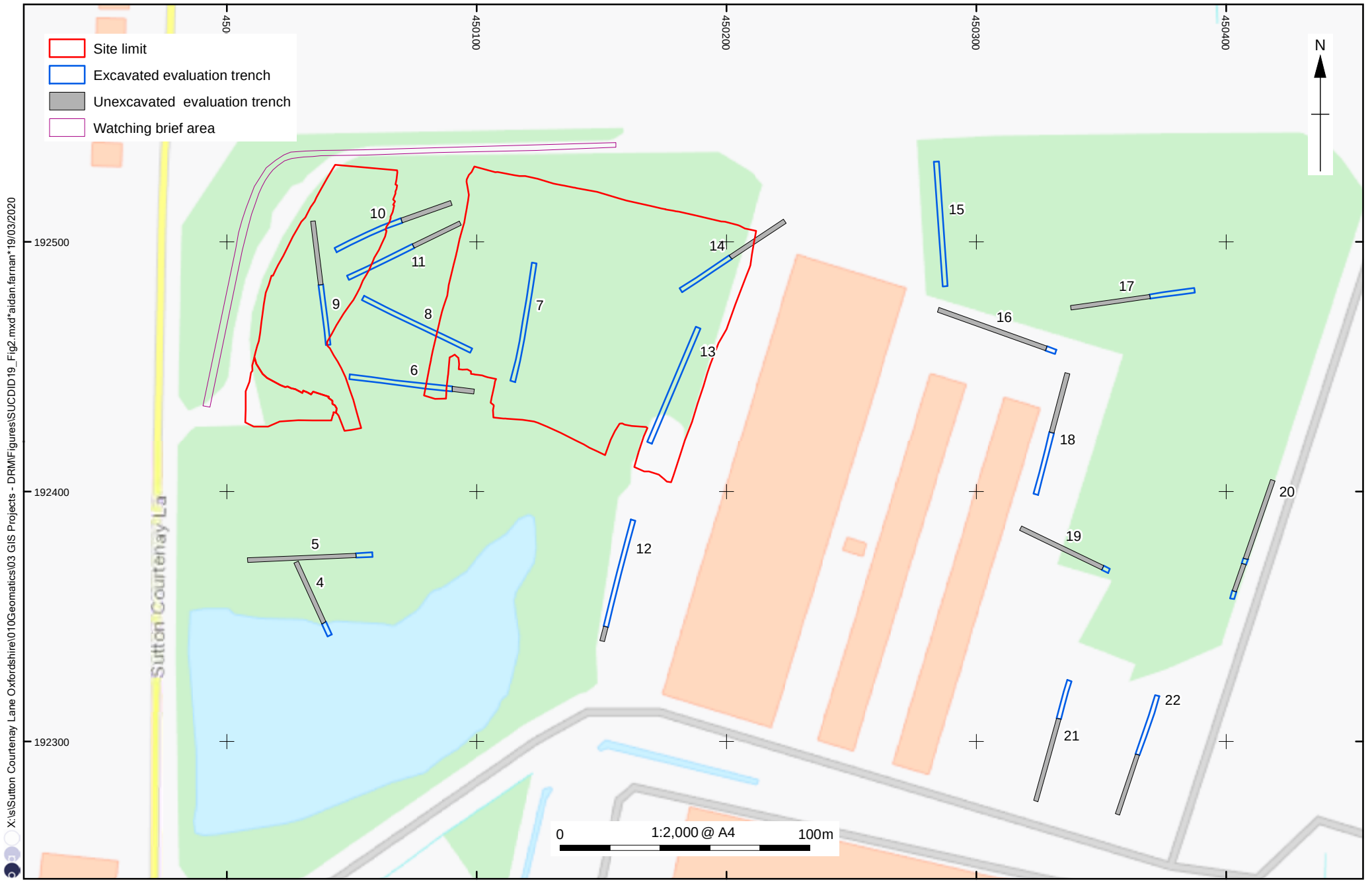

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Figure 2: Excavation area location plan with previous evaluation trenches and watching brief areas

Figure 3: Excavation area plan; all features

Figure 4: Phase 1 plan

Figure 5: Phase 2 plan

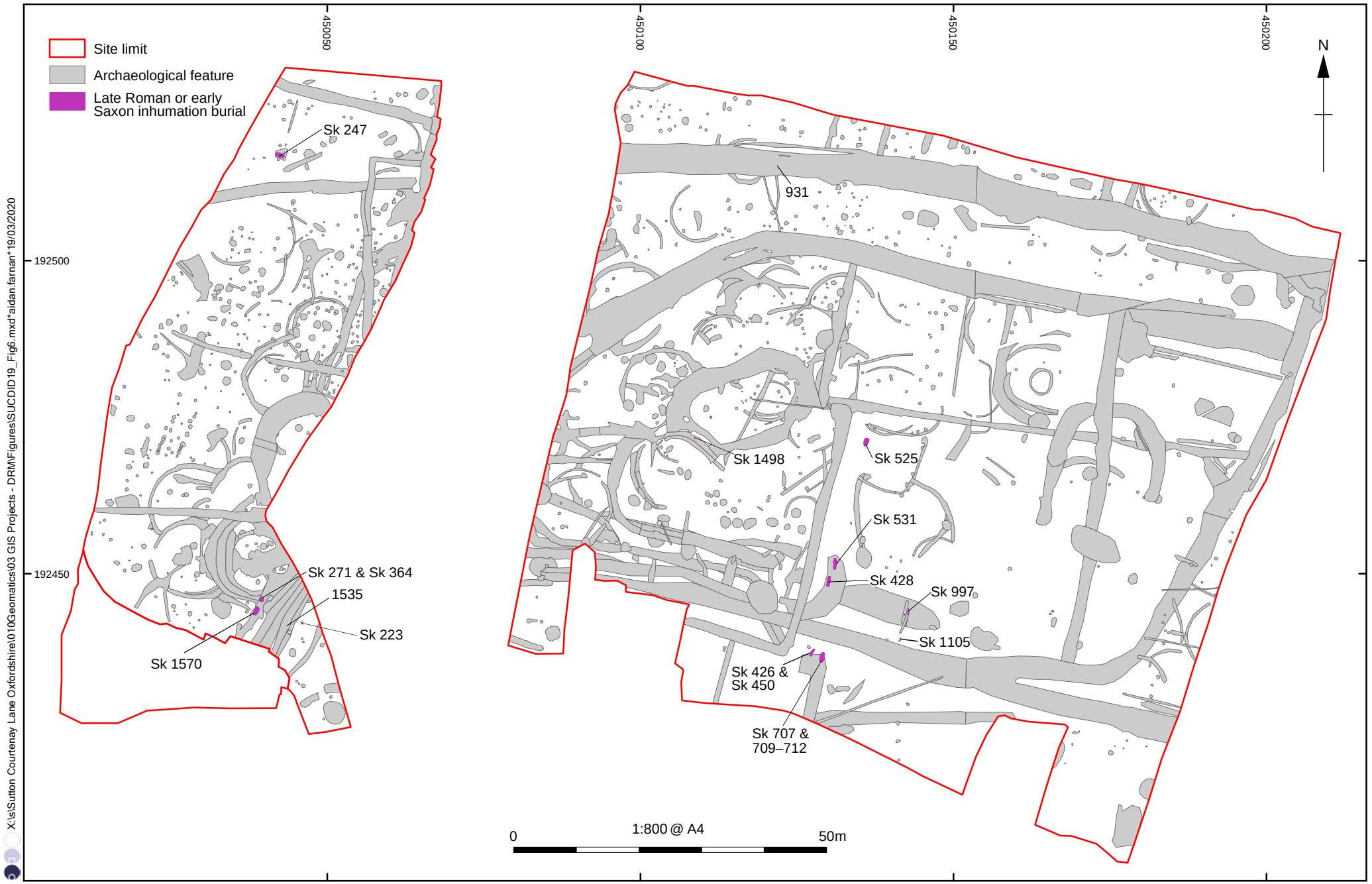

Figure 6: Phase 3 plan

(Nos without 'Sk' mark location of disarticulated human remains)

oxford archaeology P:\S_codes\SUCDIDPA*Land east of Sutton Courtenay Lane, Sutton Courtenay, Oxfordshire*CAR*17.03.20

Plate 1: Pit 31 and roundhouse ditches 1679 and 1678, looking south-west (scales: 0.5m (l), 0.3m (m), and 0.2m (r))

Plate 2: Enclosure ditches 1677 and 1690, looking north (scale: 1.0m)

Plate 3: Four-post structure 1464, looking north-north-west (scales: 1.0m)

Plate 4: Pit 79/121, looking north-west (scales: 1.0m)

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Plate 5: Pit 82, looking east
(scale: 2.0m)

Plate 6: Enclosure ditch 1692, looking north-west
(scale: 2.0m)

Plate 7: Enclosure ditch 1693
(scales: 1m and 2m)

Plate 8: Corndryer 1712, looking west
(scales: 1m and 2m)

Plate 9: Pit 126 pottery *in situ* (scale: 0.2m)

Plate 10: Pit 126, looking north-west (scale: 1.0m)

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Plate 11: Cremation burial 1141 (scale: 0.3m)

Plate 12: Sk 247, cut 246, looking north-west (scale: 1.0m)

Plate 13: Sk 707 and disarticulated bones 709–712, looking north-east (scale: 1.0m)

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