

Chapter 4: The Roman Settlement and Shrine (Phases 3-5)

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INTRODUCTION

Excavations at Kings Meadow Lane revealed part of a Roman roadside settlement and an adjacent shrine complex (Fig. 4.1). Only the northern part of the settlement was excavated, with the possible core lying further to the south, now beneath a housing estate. It is unlikely therefore that we are seeing the entire sequence of development at the site, although it is demonstrated that occupation in this area at least lasted for well over two centuries, from the early 2nd century to the second half of the 4th century. The following narrative is intended to provide an account of the development of the settlement, shrine and

road through Phases 3 to 5, with finds and environmental evidence incorporated where appropriate.

All Roman period features were cut into a layer of colluvium, which overlay the natural ironstone and sand deposits across the whole of the site. Both prehistoric flintwork and Roman finds were recovered from this layer.

PHASE 3: 2ND CENTURY (Fig. 4.2)

The occupation of the excavated part of the Roman settlement commenced in the earlier 2nd century, and was at first confined to the southern part of the



Fig. 4.1 Plan of all features in Roman settlement, set against geophysics plot



Fig. 4.2 Phase 3: early to late 2nd century

excavated area. There is evidence for three residential units, each represented by a circular building (10910, 10920 and 11340), two of which were served by adjacent stone-lined wells. One of these units was located within the southern part of a rectangular enclosure, the ditches of which were backfilled in the late 2nd century with a deposit rich in pottery and other artefacts. A small cemetery area – comprising three adult cremation burials and an inhumation of a young child – was placed adjacent to the enclosure. Other features associated with the settlement included two large pits or waterholes. The settlement was bounded to the west by a ditch (10680) delimiting the eastern side of the road.

The road

Roadside ditch 10680 ran on a NNE-SSW alignment across most of the length of the site, a distance of c 200 m (Fig. 4.2). In most sections, three successive cuts of the ditch were present (eg 10771, 10773 and 10775, Fig. 4.3 Section 5), although in some places only one or two cuts could be seen (eg 12471, Fig. 4.4 Section 8). The first two cuts (Figs 4.3–4.4, 10771,

10773, 12969, 12416) were up to 0.90 m deep, with U-shaped profiles. They had silty fills that were probably largely deposited through natural processes. In the southern part of the site, close to the area of contemporary settlement, moderate quantities of domestic refuse, including 2nd-century pottery, were recovered from these fills. In the northern part of the site, no datable finds were recovered. The final, most substantial cut of the ditch (Figs 4.3–4.4, 10775, 12948) was up to 1.0 m deep. Pottery from this last phase of the feature shows that it was infilled during the late 2nd to early 3rd centuries (see Phase 4 below).

After the second cut of the ditch had largely silted up, the remnant earthwork hollow was utilised for the construction of two hearths or ovens (12424 and 12439), cut into the western edge of the feature (Fig. 4.2). Hearth 12424 was at least 0.75 m in diameter and 0.16 m deep, with steep sides and a flat base. It had a fill of ash, charcoal and burnt ironstone, producing two sherds of pottery dated to the 2nd century or later. Hearth 12439 (Fig. 4.3 section 4) was a bowl-shaped feature measuring 0.80 m in diameter and 0.30 m deep. Its fill

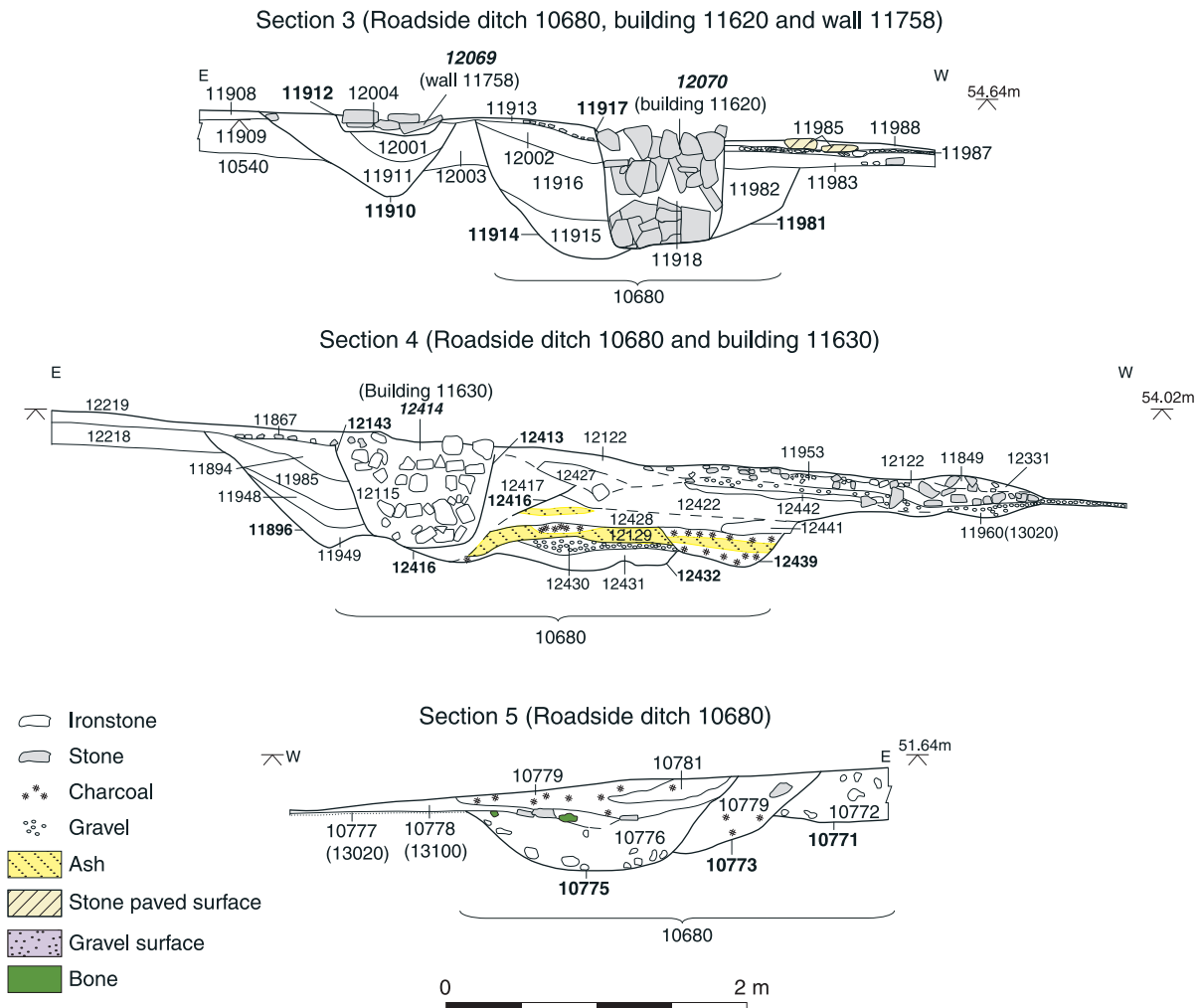


Fig. 4.3 Sections of roadside ditch (3-5)

comprised black charcoal-rich material interleaved with lenses of paler ash, capped with a layer of red scorched sand. No finds were recovered.

Although the road itself is presumed to have been in use at this time, the lack of datable finds means that it is difficult to know which stage of the road sequence belongs to this phase. The stratigraphically earliest surface of the road comprised a layer of ironstone paving (12321/12977) (Fig. 4.5). This only survived along the western edge of the road hollow; the eastern part of the surface had probably been truncated by later episodes of road construction. The ironstone paving was traced in plan for at least 80 m down the length of the site, although its full extent at its southern end is unclear because of masking by later deposits. The paved surface was 0.20 m deep and consisted of compacted ironstone rubble pieces up to 0.20 m across. It had been constructed above a distinct buried soil horizon of dark brown sandy silt (12323/12979). In one section (Fig. 4.5 section 10),

the surface was overlain by a substantial deposit of sandy silt (12634, presumably formed by processes of colluviation and/or *in situ* silting) before a replacement ironstone surface of similar construction was laid down (12975).

The settlement

Enclosure 12310/12880 (Fig. 4.2)

Ditches 12310 and 12880 formed the southern and western sides respectively of a rectangular enclosure measuring at least 45 m NNE-SSW by 25 m WNW-ESE. A broad gap between the terminals of the two ditches at the south-western corner of the enclosure may mark the location of an entrance. Potentially contemporary features within the enclosure include building 10920, well 12340 and pit 11991, while a smaller enclosure 13080 may also have originated in this phase (see Phase 4 below). Ditch 12310 appears to have been routed

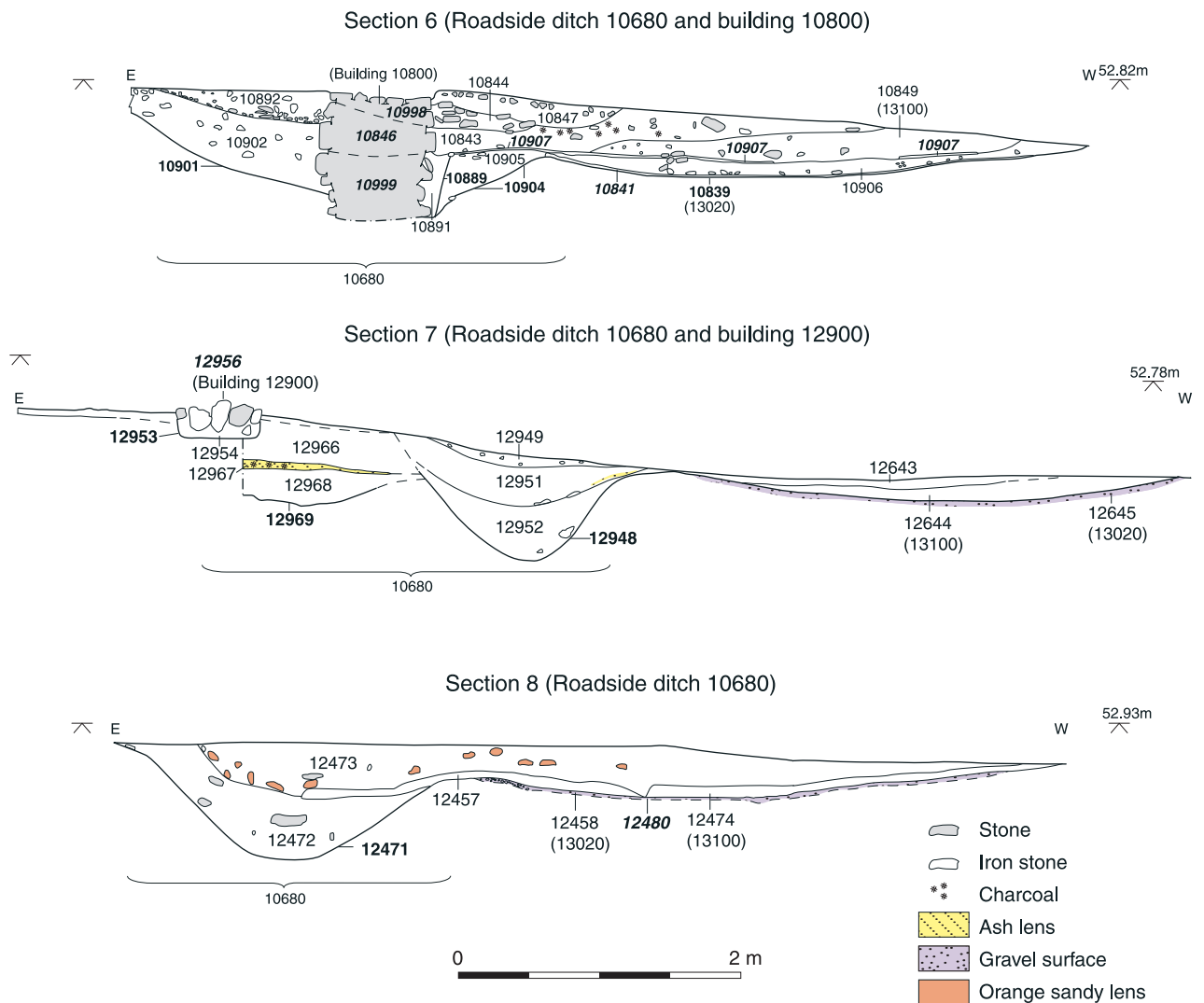
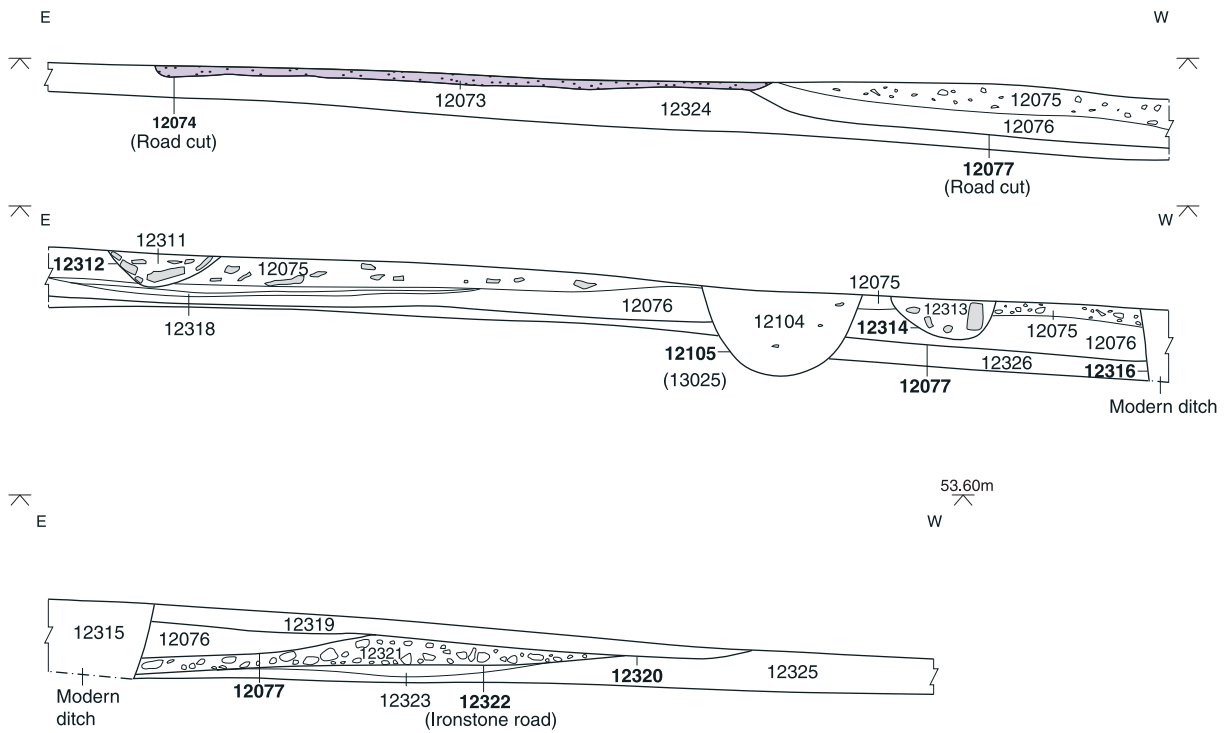


Fig. 4.4 Sections of roadside ditch (6-8)

Section 9



Section 10

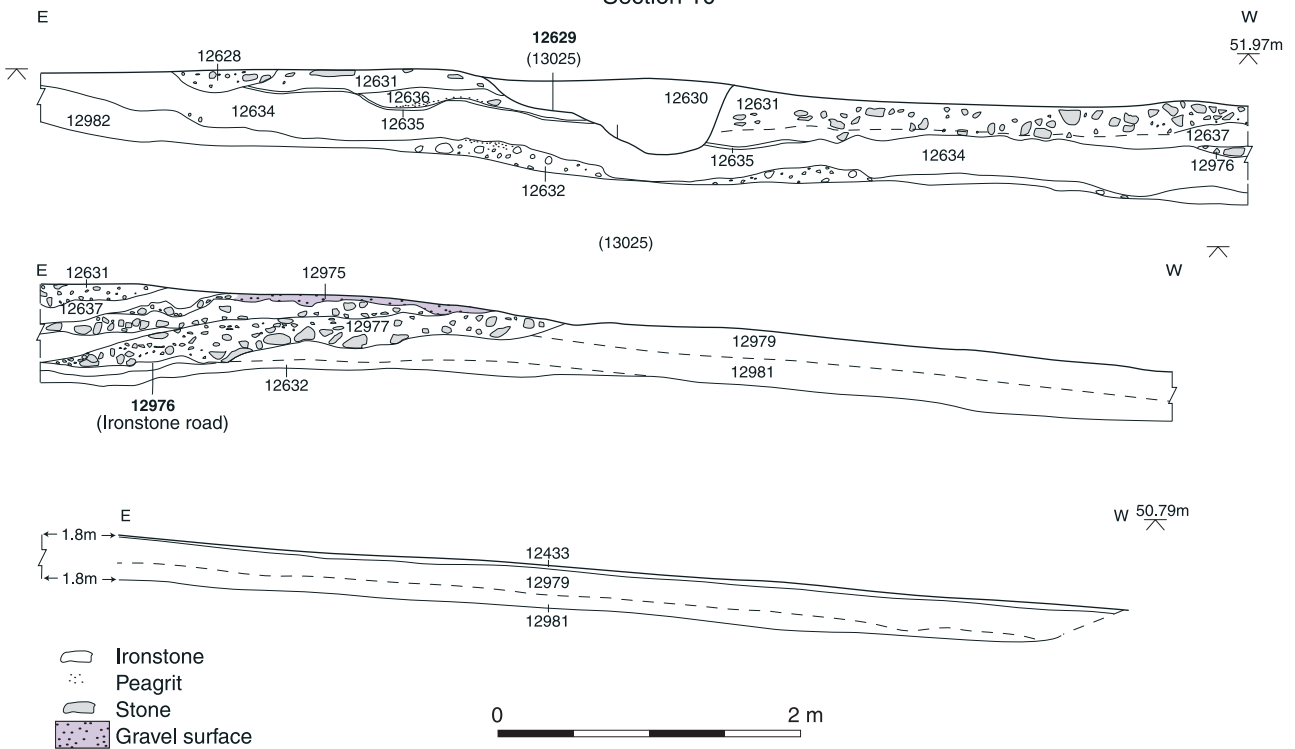


Fig. 4.5 Section through road surfaces (9-10)

around well 12340, suggesting that it was laid out when the well was already in existence. The southern end of ditch 12880 was sealed by Phase 4 building 10890.

Both ditches had relatively shallow U-shaped profiles. Ditch 12310 was up to 0.35 m deep, while ditch 12880 was 0.40 m deep at its southern end, becoming shallower towards the north. In each case, the ditch had been backfilled with a single deposit containing large quantities of finds. Within ditch 12310, the artefacts were mainly concentrated towards the western end of the feature, and included 32.4 kg of pottery dated to the mid to late 2nd century, 5.6 kg of animal bone, a subadult human vertebra, a limestone spindle whorl (SF 2006), and a piece of worked bone, possibly a roughout for a pin (SF 2004). Ditch 12880 produced 17.4 kg of pottery dated to the late 2nd century and 1.8 kg of animal bone, concentrated in the central section of the feature. These may represent 'closure deposits' with a ritual aspect. Following their backfilling, the enclosure ditches appear to have survived as shallow hollows, and they continued to act as a focus for ritual activity in subsequent phases. Several inhumation burials were cut into ditch 12880 (see Phase 5), while a possible 'ritual' pit and infant inhumation were inserted closely adjacent to ditch 12310 (see Phase 4).

Building 10920 and well 12340 (Fig. 4.6)

Building 10920 was located within the southern part of the rectangular enclosure, close to ditch 12310, and was served by nearby well 12340.

Building 10920 (Pl. 4.1)

This was the largest of the circular structures within the settlement and appears to have been slightly unusual in several ways. It was positioned furthest away from the axial alignment of the road, although this may reflect its date and the likelihood that the road was not the primary focus of early activity in this part of the settlement. The building had an external diameter of 12.3 m and an internal area of 90 m². The foundation (12086/12307) was unbroken around its circumference and constructed entirely from ironstone with a primary course overlain by a much more tightly packed and vertically set upper course. These were set into the base of a shallow trench cut through the silty colluvial soil layer (12330) to a depth of 0.15 m above the surface of the ironstone geology below. The foundation was consistently c 0.80 m wide and its upper course provided an even, flat surface. The ironstone pieces used were generally smaller than 0.20 m across and the absence of larger pieces or a definable wall course strongly suggests that this acted as a firm foundation or plinth for an organic superstructure such as wood/daub or – possibly more likely given the width of the foundation – an earthen wall. The wall does not seem to have been truncated, since both internal features and a small area of paving

survived, suggesting that the level encountered was that of the contemporary Roman ground surface. This is consistent with other evidence from across the site, which shows that several of the buildings survived with at least part of their internal contemporary floor levels largely intact.

The floor area of the building was represented by a thin silty layer (10716/12306) distinguished by its darker colour, small limestone inclusions and its confinement within the interior of the building. This was clearly derived from the reworking or trampling of the colluvial soil horizon. There does not appear to have been any other form of substantial stone surface used within the structure. This layer and the underlying soil layer within the building produced 249 sherds of pottery with an average weight just over 11 g, although most were rather smaller, as would be expected from a well-trampled area. These sherds mostly dated to the 2nd century although a few were of 3rd- and 4th-century forms and post-date the use of the building. The small quantity of these in relation to the earlier forms suggests that these are incidental inclusions rather than representing any significant later activity associated with the structure.

The only constructed internal surface was a small area of worn limestone slabs against the north-western inner face of the wall (11623/11645). The slabs were set in a shallow hollow no more than 2.5 m long and 0.75 m wide. The silts sealing the limestone slabs yielded 11 sherds (114 g) of pottery dating to the early to mid 2nd century, consistent with the suggested occupation date provided by material from the larger internal area. The function of the slabs in relation to the building is not clear although there was some evidence of burning on and around the stones (11645). This does not appear to have been intensive, however, and the material may have been redeposited rather than representing an *in situ* fire or hearth. It is possible that the stone slabs represent part of a door threshold, although given that most known doorways within roundhouses faced south-east, this must remain uncertain.

Exactly central within the building was the largest of the internal features. This was a circular pit (11397) with a shallow concave profile 1.5 m in diameter and 0.24 m deep (Fig. 4.6, section 1499). Its primary fill (11398) included lightly scorched clay fragments as well as unburnt pieces of clay. Several quartzite pebbles were grouped together to one side where the clay pieces concentrated, but these, and the surrounding silt (11399) that levelled the pit, also showed little sign of scorching or other evidence of fire. On the basis of its central location it seems probable that this feature was a hearth base, and its construction technique does share some common traits with the central hearth within building 10870, although the latter was of much more permanent appearance. However, the lack of significant scorched deposits and ash does leave some doubt as to function of feature 11397.

Two other small clay-lined pits (11421 and 11424) lay north-east of the central pit. Both were less than 0.10 m deep and circular, with diameters of 0.55 m. A pale cream coloured clay was used to line each pit, although within 11424 this was limited to the sides and did not extend across the base. Within pit 11421 the clay was overlain directly by part of a coarse shell-tempered vessel laid on its side. Each pit was subsequently infilled with silting deposits

(11423 and 11426). The small quantity of pottery recovered from these also dates from the 2nd century and is dominated by vessels in the shell-tempered fabric.

As with the main fabric of the building internal evidence for the superstructure was equally lacking. There were no clear postholes or pads for roof support within the structure, as might be expected with an internal diameter of 10.7 m. A single small

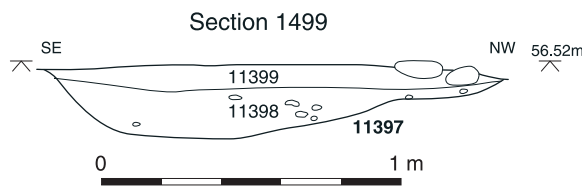
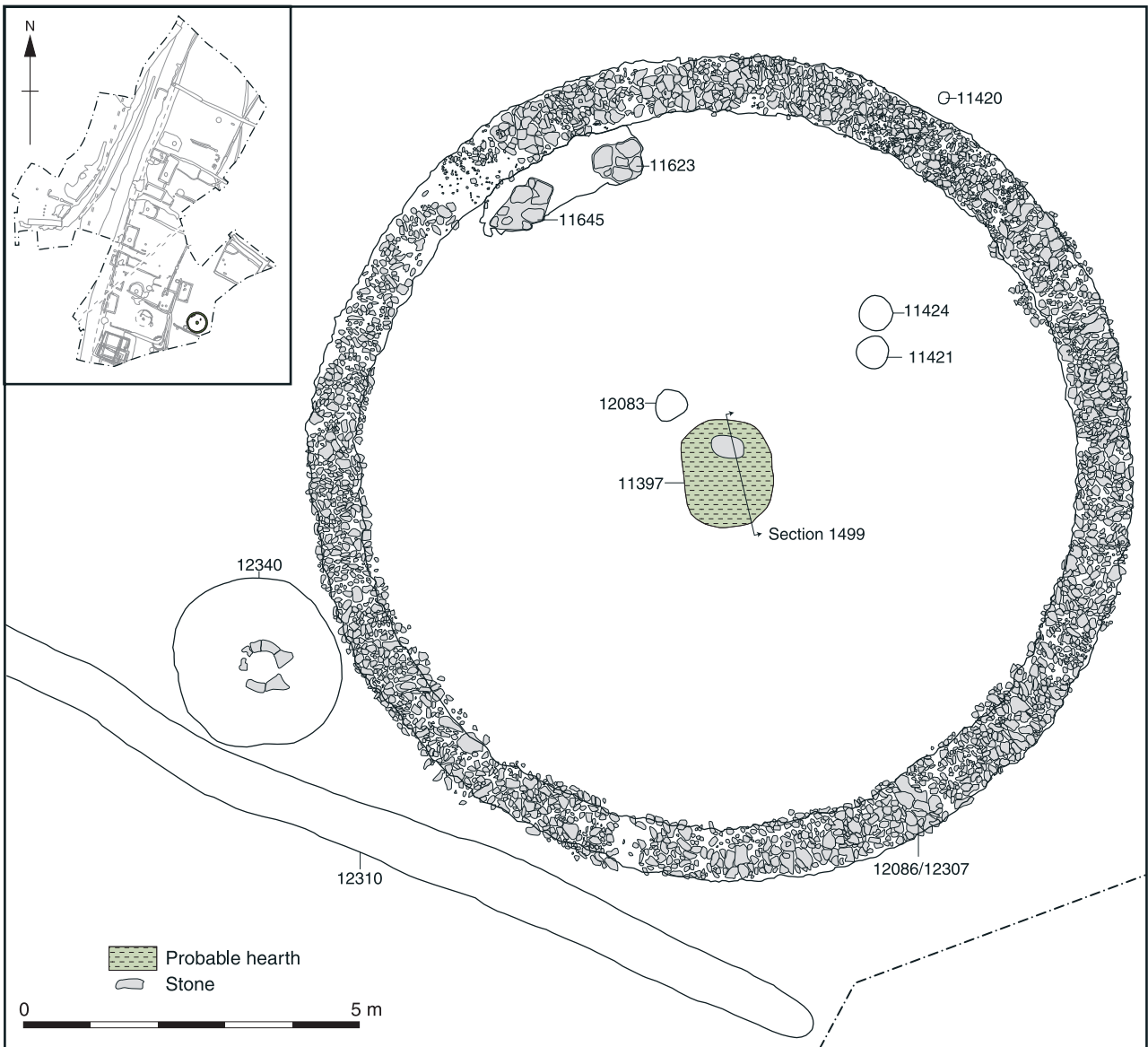


Fig. 4.6 Building 10920 and well 12340



Plate 4.1 Building 10920, facing east. Scale: 2 m

possible posthole (12083) was recorded adjacent to pit 11397 and may have been a structural feature, but its interpretation is uncertain.

There seems little reason not to assume that this building served principally as a domestic dwelling. The provision of a well (12340) is consistent with this and the layout of the building is comparable to that of the other 2nd-century and early 3rd-century circular structures interpreted as domestic units. Its size appears its most striking characteristic, but lies within the range for circular buildings within the region and does little other than provide a contrast to the smaller building 10910 (see below). The association with building 10910 is also interesting, as both seem to have had relatively short life spans. The pottery directly associated with building 10920 points to an origin in the 2nd century whilst the general lack of pottery dated after the 2nd century similarly suggests that it did not extend in use much beyond this period. The backfill of neighbouring enclosure ditch 12310 similarly dates to the mid to late 2nd century (see below). This emphasises the likely association of enclosure 12310/12880 with the occupation and ultimate abandonment of building 10920.

Well 12340

Well 12340 was located immediately south-west of building 10920. It was not excavated, but was probably constructed during this phase, as its position seems to have been respected by ditch 12310. It was set within a construction cut (11639) measuring 2.6 m in diameter. The well shaft (11638)

was narrow, with an internal diameter of only 0.50 m, and was constructed of roughly hewn limestone blocks measuring around 0.2 x 0.1 x 0.1 m in size. The space between the shaft and the construction cut had been packed with an outer layer of clay and an inner layer of limestone rubble. Pottery from the surface of the fill of the shaft suggests that the well was abandoned in the 4th century (see Phase 5).

Building 10910 and well 12890 (Fig. 4.7)

Building 10910 was located 9 m to the south of the rectangular enclosure, and was served by nearby well 12890.

Building 10910

With an internal diameter of only 6.6 m and an external diameter of 8.2 m, this was the smallest of the circular buildings. Its construction method superficially matches that of building 10920 located 15 m to the north-east, although the distinct difference in materials used suggests that these were not constructed as part of a single development. As mentioned above, the lack of limestone in the structure of building 10920 is one of its more striking characteristics, whereas building 10910 utilised both limestone and ironstone in its construction. Even so, these were used in a specific manner with a single course of pitched ironstone and only small amounts of limestone set in a near-vertical arrangement to form the foundation. The shallow foundation trench was 0.15 m – 0.20 m in depth and cut through the colluvial silt soil horizon (12330) to the firm surface

of the underlying ironstone geology. A single horizontally-laid wall course (10942/10943) survived *in situ* around parts of its circumference. This consisted of roughly hewn limestone blocks forming internal and external faces with the core infilled with smaller limestone pieces. Despite its comparatively small size this building still had a wall thickness of 0.8 m, a dimension common to most of the buildings of all periods on the site. This may possibly imply that the walls were raised to eaves level, especially if this was relatively low to accommodate the slope of the roof.

Preservation of the building was very good, as demonstrated by the presence of the first wall course, which indicated the contemporary Roman ground level. However, internal features or associated occupation deposits and finds were largely absent. This was, in part, the result of the truncation of the interior by later boundary ditches aligned upon its centre, effectively removing *c* 50% of the interior area. However, a thin soil with limestone chip inclusions (13018) survived within the southern side of the building, butting up against the wall, and is most likely to have accumulated after or during the demolition of the building. The lack of any other deposits shows that the removal of the superstructure was a thorough and tidy process. The presence of layer 13018 also demonstrates that the absence of internal surfaces is unlikely to be accounted for by removal of a stone surface. Only

two small postholes or post pads (11065 and 11118) possibly associated with the building were present within its interior. These were no more than shallow rounded hollows up to 0.5 m across and 0.1 m deep infilled or packed with limestone pieces. These could have provided a firm base in the soft ground surface for upright posts as part of a central arrangement to support the roof, although any other similar features in this area would have been removed by the later ditches.

There was scant artefactual material directly associated with the interior of the building. However, it was probably contemporary with a closely adjacent well 12890, which was constructed during the 2nd century (see below). The ditches that subsequently cut through the building (11750, 11760 and 12995) unfortunately produced pottery datable no more closely than to the mid/late 2nd century onwards.

The lack of associated floor surfaces and clear use-related deposits makes it very difficult to comment on the function or use of this building. Although it is the smallest building present its size does not preclude it from being a domestic unit. With an internal area of a little over 35 m² it was only 9 m² smaller than the interior of building 10870 which did have a clear domestic layout (see below). The association with well 12890 suggests that this was a domestic dwelling or at least a structure that required a plentiful water supply. Any central hearth or other features, such as those recorded in each of

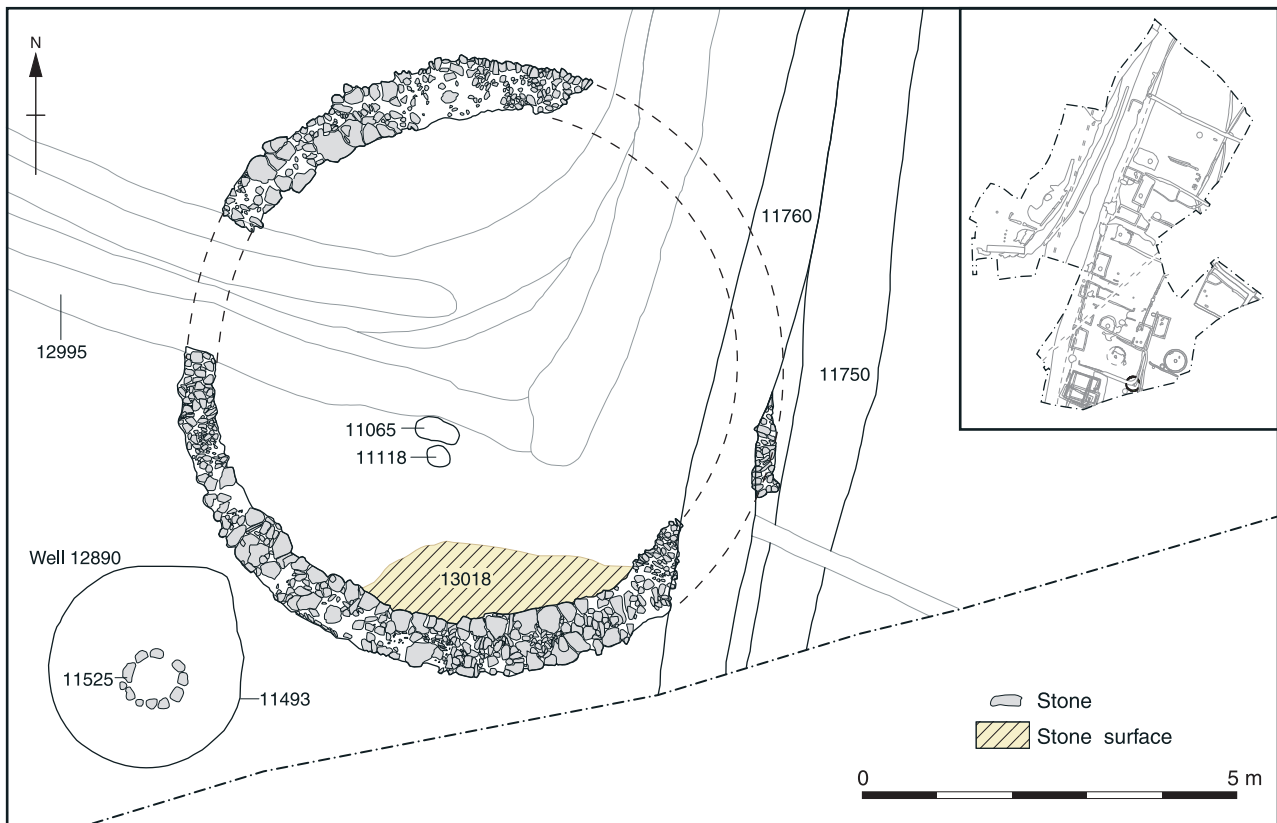


Fig. 4.7 Building 10910 and well 12890

the other circular structures, would have been removed by the later ditch sequence. The building did lack a clearly defined entrance, although if this was aligned to the south-east, in common with buildings 10870 and 11340, then it too would have been removed by ditch 11750/11760.

Well 12890

Well 12890 was placed immediately south-west of building 10910, in a similar relationship to that seen between building 10920 and well 12340. It was set in a steep-sided construction cut (11493) measuring 2.7 m in diameter, which was excavated to a depth of 0.6 m. Within this construction cut, the stone-lined well shaft (11525) had an internal diameter of 1.0 m and was excavated to a depth of 0.8 m. The well lining was constructed of roughly hewn limestone blocks with an average size of 0.25 m x 0.18 m x 0.03 m. The space between the shaft and the construction cut had been backfilled with three dumps of material. The lowest deposit (11526) was a layer of clay which produced four sherds of 2nd-century pottery, a coin dated to AD 69–193 (SF 1660), a copper alloy bracelet fragment (SF 1659, cat. no. 213), and fragments of animal bone. This was overlain by a thin lens of silt (11549) containing pottery dated to the mid 2nd century or later. The uppermost deposit (1494) was a second dump of clay, which produced late 2nd-century pottery and animal bone. The excavated fill within the well shaft itself derives from the backfilling of the feature in the late Roman period (see Phase 5).

Building 11340 (Fig. 4.8)

Building 11340 was located 9 m north-west of building 10910. It is likely to have been constructed in Phase 3, although occupation may have continued into the late 2nd/early 3rd century (Phase 4). In contrast to all but the late Roman building 12900, structure 11340 was defined only by its internal deposits. No outlining wall was preserved and little evidence survived to suggest its form of construction. The remaining internal deposits clearly defined the north-eastern part of this building, and were of a comparable layout to those encountered within the nearby circular structure 10870 (see Phase 4).

Although preservation was limited, significant elements of the layout were present. An arc of horizontal limestone slabs (11557 and 11577) clearly marked the northern and eastern internal perimeter of the building. It covered a broad area some 4 m by 3 m with a tapering 'tail' extending to the south and ending in an irregular patch of dark grey silt and limestone fragments (11396) in a shallow hollow. Its position on the south-eastern edge of the surfaced area undoubtedly marked this as the entrance to the building. The presence of a hearth (11392) also helps to define the extent of this building. Based upon its position in relation to the entrance and surface it is clear that the hearth was centrally positioned. It was

neatly constructed by setting limestone and ironstone pieces in clay in a shallow pit. These features combined define a building with an internal diameter of *c.* 10.0 m, comparable in size to building 10920. A small posthole (11468) within the projected outline of the building to the south-west of the entrance area may also have been related to the structure, although the lack of postholes elsewhere makes this unlikely.

North of the hearth were two pits (11466 and 11482). These were of similar size, sharply defined, 0.35 m deep and up to 1 m across, and roughly circular in plan. Both were positioned 2.5 m from the hearth and were distinctive because of their infills. Pit 11466 was infilled entirely with redeposited ironstone but was otherwise unremarkable. Pit 11482 contained a 'watering can' ceramic vessel with five pre-firing holes in its base, found complete except for its rim, which may have been purposely removed. The vessel was buried under a roughly stacked group of limestone slabs on the eastern side of the pit while the remainder of the feature was backfilled with mixed silts and bands of clay (11527). This deposit probably had a votive or religious significance. A further shallow pit (11576) was positioned between 11466 and 11482. This was set back slightly in relation to the hearth and was more elongated in its surface shape (1.00 m by 0.80 m) but only 0.25 m deep. It was infilled with tightly packed limestone pieces (11575) incorporating several broken fragments from a fired clay perforated oven plate (see Poole Chapter 5). A layer of horizontally laid small limestone slabs (11574) levelled the pit, bringing it up to the interior floor level, although the stones appeared to form a discrete area of hardstanding rather than being part of the floor surface. At the very southern edge of these stones a much larger single slightly worn limestone slab partly sealed both pits 11576 and 11482.

The surfaces were sealed by a thin sequence of silting deposits (11355, 11365, 11376). These appear to represent the final occupation and abandonment or demolition of the structure. Certainly the lack of significant stone inclusions within these deposits suggests either that the removal of the structure was very tidy or that it was not stone built. The latter assumption should be treated with caution, however, given the clear evidence provided by building 10870 (see below), which was both stone-built and dismantled during the Roman occupation of the site; it produced similar silty and mainly stone-free deposits sealing the final occupation levels within the interior. The silt deposit (11376) across the north-western portion of building 11340 did seal a small patch of limestone rubble (11486; not on plan) which did not appear to represent an internal surface although it was at the same physical level. These stones lay largely beyond the projected building outline and seem most likely to have derived from the demolition of the building rather than its occupation.

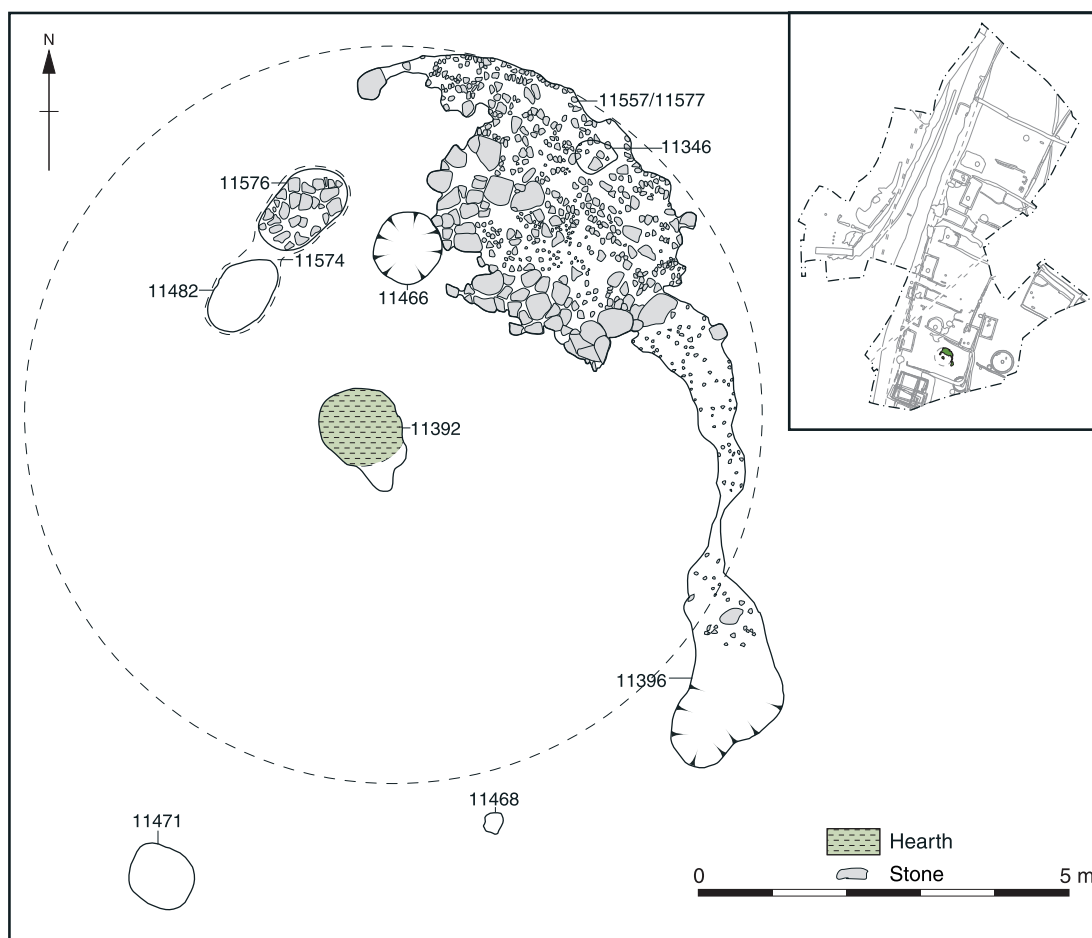


Fig. 4.8 Building 11340

Dating

A substantial pottery assemblage was recovered from the combined deposits within the building. This totalled 658 sherds (10.7 kg), and it is reasonable to consider this as a single group because of the relatively short date range represented, from the earliest horizon within the building to the deposits sealing the occupation levels. The floor surfaces produced a significant assemblage of pottery (59 sherds, 918 g) with a moderate average sherd weight of 15.6 g, despite their provenance in a context where small trampled fragments would be expected. Pit 11482 also produced a small assemblage of 19 sherds (361 g). These suggest an origin in the late 2nd century or slightly earlier. The individually small assemblages from the other features also had dates consistent with this.

The silt deposits sealing the floor levels produced the largest group of pottery (401 sherds, 5.7 kg) again largely consisting of forms dating from the late 2nd century, although a small part of the assemblage also dates from the 3rd century and marks the latest accumulation of deposits associated with the building. This relatively short date range suggests that the building was probably standing for no longer than a single generation. This would be

consistent with the general lack of wear on the upper part of the limestone surface suggesting that the building was comparatively short lived or (perhaps) little used.

Function and appearance

The building shares several distinct characteristics with the better-preserved building 10870 to the north (see Phase 4). Its circular ground plan, limestone slab floor across the north-eastern part of the interior and a neatly constructed central stone-based hearth are common to both and this suggests that they largely functioned in the same manner. Based upon the finds and animal bone assemblages there seems little reason to doubt a primary domestic function in both cases. In terms of the construction and appearance of 11340, evidence for which was sparse, it seems most likely that this was of stone although other construction types cannot be ruled out. Some small fired clay fragments were recovered from the latest levels sealing the floor surfaces, but they did not bear any evidence of wattle impressions that might suggest a wooden superstructure. If the building was a stone construction, as with the three surrounding circular structures, then this must have been built on a shallow or surface level foundation. None of the

circular buildings had shallow foundations that fully penetrated the colluvial soil level into the underlying ironstone geology and the slightly increased level of recent truncation over the area of building 11340 may account for the absence of any foundations or removal of them in this building.

Although the quantity or volume of deposits and features across the building was relatively sparse, these were diverse and provide a glimpse of activities within the household in addition to functional domestic use. The ceramics from the building included a relatively high proportion of samian ware (see Timby, Chapter 5), suggesting some special role or status within the settlement. Tantalisingly an individual object points to religious activity associated with the building, namely a miniature votive shield (SF 1616, cat no. 91), which was found within the entrance area. Although its find location suggests it was a casual loss, a direct association with the building seems possible. It may even have been fastened to the structure or to a household shrine within the building. The modified pot purposely buried within pit 11482 also has votive overtones and the fact that this was partly sealed by a large slab at floor level indicates that this was deposited at the time of construction and may have formed part of an initial foundation rite. The features around pit 11482 are similarly interesting in their appearance. Pit 11466 was unusual, as it had no apparent function. The function of the shallow stone filled pit 11576 may equally be questioned; it formed a firm base, possibly for an upstanding feature, although the role of this is ambiguous. The inclusion of a broken up oven plate in the stone packing seems a little more unusual and is not readily explained by the casual discard of debris. Its close physical and

stratigraphic association with pit 11482 may suggest a similar votive or symbolic role here also, although this can be only a tentative suggestion.

Pits (Fig. 4.2)

Pits 11991 and 12072 were large features located close to enclosure ditch 12880. Neither contained great quantities of finds, and their function is uncertain, although they could perhaps have served as waterholes. Pit 11991 was oval, measuring 2.0 x 1.5 m in size, and was excavated to a depth of 0.80 m. It had a steep profile on its north-western side and a more gentle profile on the opposite side. It contained two silting deposits which produced six sherds of early to mid 2nd-century pottery. Pit 12072 was sealed beneath Phase 4 building 10890. It was not fully seen in plan but is likely to have been subcircular. It measured at least 2 m across and had an irregular profile. The single fill of silty clay contained 400 g of early to mid 2nd-century pottery.

Further to the west, pit 12012 was a shallow bowl-shaped feature, 1.40 m in diameter and 0.13 m deep. Its fill contained frequent patches of charcoal and burnt clay, but as there was no evidence of *in situ* burning this may represent redeposited hearth or oven waste. Finds included 17 sherds of pottery dating to the early to mid 2nd century.

Burial group 13040 (Fig. 4.9)

This burial group was located immediately to the west of the rectangular enclosure. A tight cluster of four graves was found, comprising three cremation burials (10915, 10935 and 10945) and one infant inhumation burial (10925).

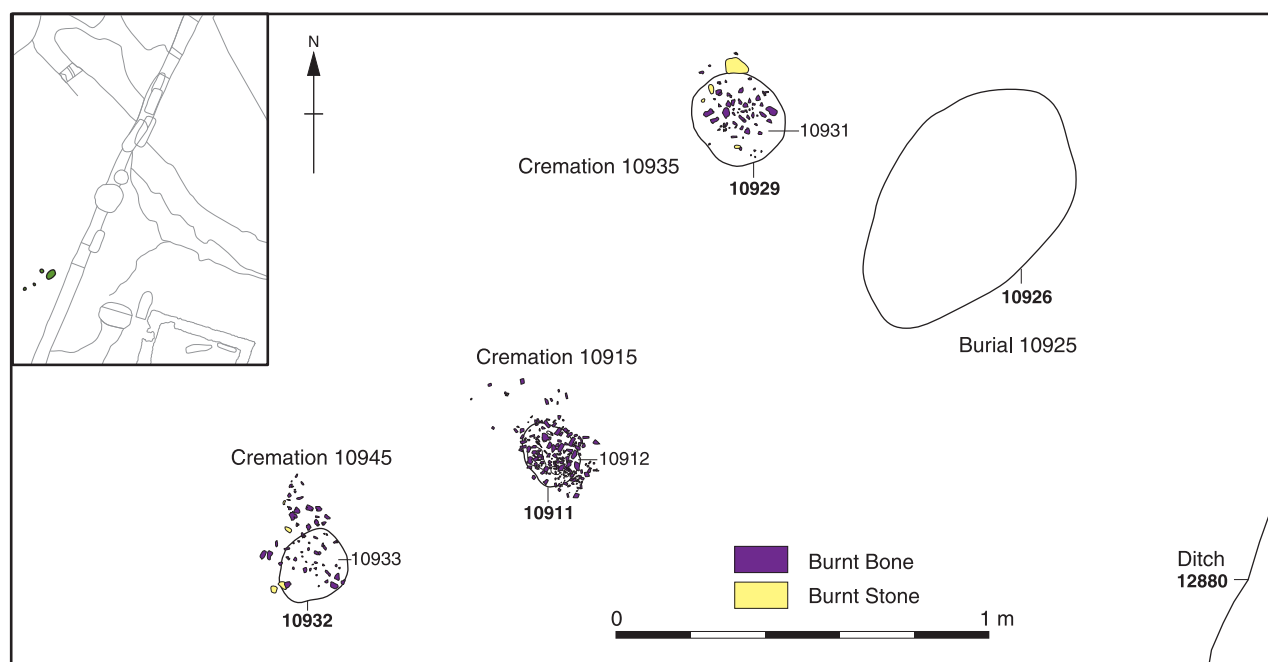


Fig. 4.9 Burial group 13040

The cremation burials were all un-urned, and contained within shallow subcircular pits, 0.19–0.25 m in diameter and no more than 0.05 m deep. In each case, the remains belonged to an adult of undetermined sex. There were no grave goods, although burial 10935 contained a single small sherd of 2nd-century pottery. Radiocarbon determinations were obtained on bone from each of the cremation burials. Burial 10915 has been dated to cal AD 120–330 (SUERC-9649: 1810 ±35 BP), burial 10935 to cal AD 130–390 (SUERC-9650: 1760 ±35 BP), and burial 10945 to cal AD 70–320 (SUERC-9651: 1835 ±35 BP). While these date ranges are fairly broad, the rite of cremation is generally more typical of the earlier than the later Roman period, and so these burials have been assigned to Phase 3 (2nd century).

Inhumation burial 10925 contained the poorly preserved remains of a child aged 2.2–3 years. The burial was contained within a NE-SW-aligned oval grave, 0.65 by 0.45 m in size and 0.11 m deep. The body had been laid out with its head to the north-east, although its posture is otherwise uncertain. The backfill of the grave contained eight sherds of pottery dating to the 2nd century.

PHASE 4: LATE 2ND TO 3RD CENTURIES

(Fig. 4.10)

Significant changes to the layout of the site occurred during this phase. The settlement increased in size, extending further north along the eastern side of the road, with many of the new buildings encroaching on the line of the former roadside ditch. A gravel ‘pavement’ was constructed along the whole length of the roadside frontage of the settlement, representing a major collective or ‘municipal’ project. The northern end of the site remained largely empty, aside from field boundaries and two wells. On the western side of the road, a monumental shrine complex was constructed.

The road

A large-scale construction event took place in this phase with the creation of gravel ‘pavement’ 13020 running the entire length of the roadside frontage of at least this part of the settlement, a distance of 185 m. This was constructed in a distinct terrace around 4.5 m wide, cut into the natural eastward rise of the ground (Figs 4.3, 4.4). The pavement surface consisted of a layer of rounded river gravel no more than 0.02 m thick. At the southern end of the site, some patchy traces of gravel were also seen extending further to the west of the terrace cut, suggesting that there was more extensive surfacing here that had been largely removed by truncation. In most sections the gravel pavement appeared to respect the western edge of roadside ditch 10680 by stopping just short of it, suggesting that the pavement was laid out while the final phase of the roadside ditch was still open (Fig. 4.3, section 4 and 5; Fig. 4.4, section 6). However, in two sections

towards the northern end of the site the gravel pavement clearly overlay the final phase of the roadside ditch (Fig. 4.4, sections 7 and 8).

Following the final infilling of roadside ditch 10680, several buildings were constructed with their western walls cut into the ditch (buildings 10850, 10860, 11620 (Fig. 4.3, section 3) and 11630 (Fig. 4.3, section 4)). It seems likely that many of these buildings would have been in contemporary use with the gravel pavement. In the case of building 11620, the pavement appeared to directly abut the western wall of the structure (Fig. 4.3, section 3).

There is little good dating evidence for these changes. Ceramics from roadside ditch 10680 are generally consistent with infilling in the late 2nd century. Early to mid 3rd-century pottery was, however, recovered from one section (Fig. 4.3, section 5). As the ditch in this section was neither sealed by the gravel pavement nor cut by a building, it is possible that it could have stayed open slightly longer than some other parts of the ditch. No dating evidence was recovered from the gravel pavement itself, but along much of its length the pavement was overlain by a distinctive red sandy deposit (13100), up to 0.30 m thick, which produced 3rd-century pottery. This could have been deposited through natural processes, although it seems more likely to have been a deliberate levelling deposit.

It is tempting to suggest that the construction of roadside gravel pavement 13020 was broadly contemporary with an episode of resurfacing in gravel of the road itself to the west. This gravel surface was most distinct where it overlay the earlier ironstone road surface at the western edge of the road hollow (12075 and 12975; Fig. 4.5). A thin lens of gravel seen at the base of the road hollow may also be related to this phase of resurfacing (12318 and 12635). In Figure 4.5 section 9, a further distinct gravel surface can be seen at the eastern edge of the road hollow (12073), although it is possible that this relates to a later phase of road surfacing (see Phase 5 below). In one section (Figure 4.5 section 9) the gravel surface had been laid over a sandy make-up layer (12076) that contained 22 sherds of mid to late 2nd-century pottery. It is also notable that the western edge of the gravel road surface ran parallel to the precinct wall of shrine 10930, suggesting contemporaneity of the two features. Furthermore, there are indications of a branch road heading south-westwards in front (ie at the south end) of the shrine complex, and possibly continuing on towards the valley floor. However, this road or trackway does not appear to have been as substantial or well maintained as the main north-south road.

At a later stage, the north-south road was resurfaced with a substantial deposit of limestone rubble in a sandy silt matrix (12075/12631), up to 7 m wide and 0.30 m deep (Fig. 4.5). This phase of the road was fairly clear in plan, running the length of the site, although the eastern edge of the limestone rubble surface at the southern end of the road was unclear due to masking by later deposits. It seems



Fig. 4.10 Phase 4: late 2nd to late 3rd centuries



Fig. 4.11 Plot divisions referred to in description and discussion of settlement

that the line of the road was shifted slightly to the east, closer to the settlement. Subsequent attempts to patch up the road surface with limestone rubble were seen in several places (Fig. 4.5, section 9: features 12312 and 12314; section 10: feature 12628).

The settlement

The placement of buildings and boundary ditches in this phase suggests that the settlement can be divided into six similarly sized rectangular units or 'plots' fronting onto the road. These have been labelled Plots A–F from south to north (Fig. 4.11), and are described in turn below. While dividing up the settlement in this way aids discussion, it should not necessarily be assumed that each 'plot' represented a separate 'property' or household unit.

Plot A (Fig. 4.11)

Plot A was defined to the north by ditch 12995 and probably to the east by a continuation of ditch 11750/11760 (see Plot B below). Two successive

rectangular buildings were located on the road frontage of the plot, with building 10860 later replaced by building 11370. An ironstone wall (11410) immediately south of these structures may have belonged to a further building, most of which lay beyond the limit of excavation. East of the buildings, well 12890 continued in use in this period, although no deposits of this period were encountered (see Phase 3 above).

Buildings 10860 and 11370 (Figs 4.12 and 4.13; Pl. 4.2)

Building 10860 was a rectangular structure measuring 14.75 m WNW-ESE by 5.75 m NNE-SSW internally (Fig. 4.12). It faced onto the road frontage, with the west wall of the building cut into former roadside ditch 10680. The west, south and east walls of the building had been largely or entirely robbed out (robber cut 11330: see Phase 5 below), but survival of the north wall (11570) was rather better. Here the wall was 1 m wide, consisting of a single-course pitched limestone foundation overlain by a course of relatively large flat-laid limestone slabs (c 0.40 x 0.30 x 0.10 m). No floor surfaces or internal

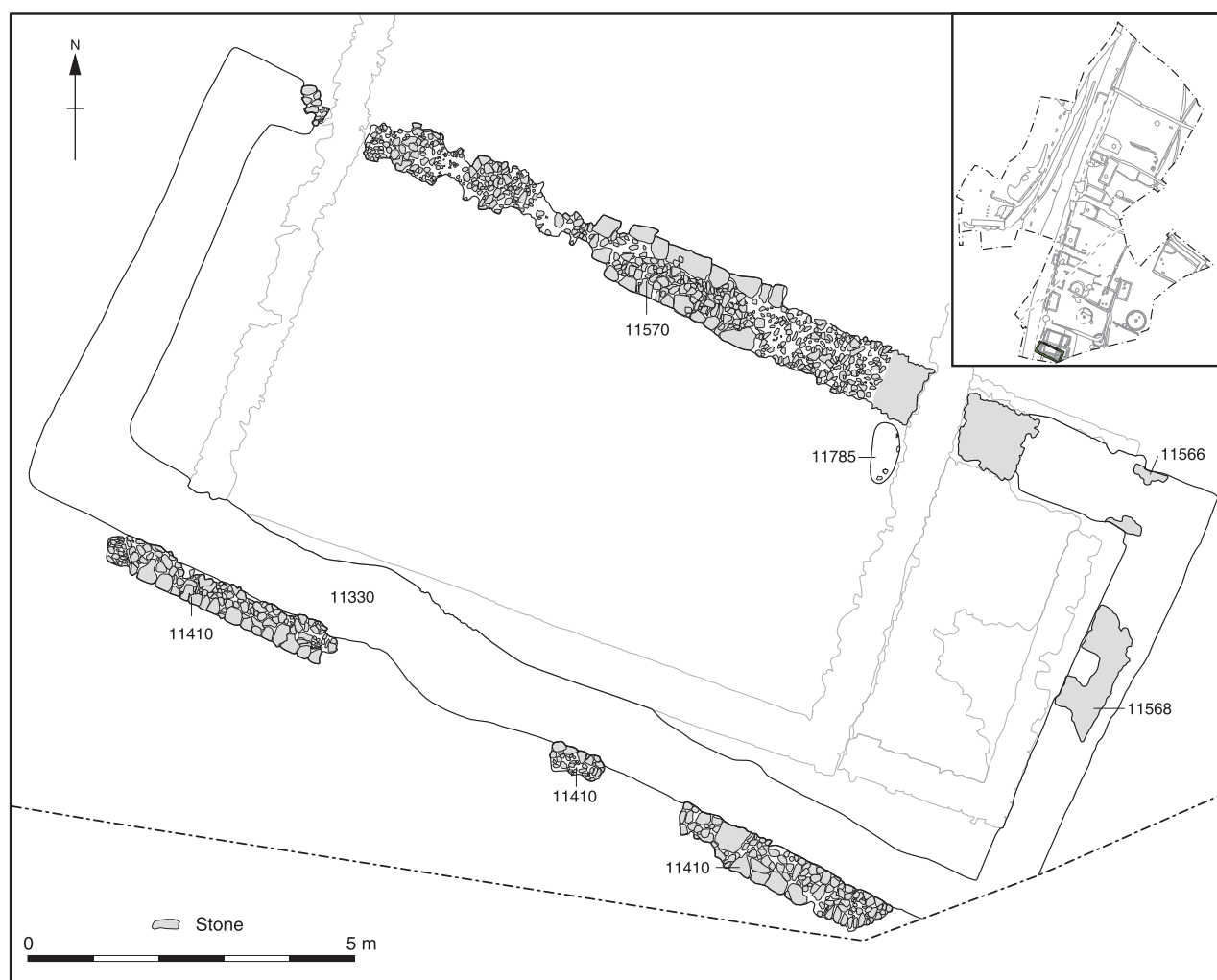


Fig. 4.12 Building 10860 and wall 11410

Table 4.1 Building 11370. Summary of internal features

Feature	Interpretation	Diameter (m)	Depth (m)	Pottery (g)	Animal bone (g)	Other finds
11442	Hearth	1.40	0.16	15	-	
11665 1718)	Posthole	0.40	0.30	16	-	Iron hinge pintle (Sf
11702	Pit	1.00	0.15	111	14	
11724	Pit	0.58	0.11	-	-	
12063	Posthole	0.30	0.18	-	-	

features survived within the building, and no datable finds were recovered.

Building 10860 may have been fairly short-lived, as its replacement by building 11370 (Table 4.1) probably also occurred during this phase, although the latter structure clearly continued to be occupied into the 4th century (see Phase 5 below). The replacement building followed an approximately perpendicular alignment to 10860, and measured 14.5 m NNE-SSW by 9.5 m WNW-ESE internally (Fig. 4.13). The walls of the building survived up to two courses high (11440, 11450, 11660 and 11670). An ironstone rubble foundation course was overlain by a wall course with a facing of flat-laid limestone slabs (up to 0.40 m long) and a core of ironstone and limestone rubble. While building 10860 must have been demolished down to ground level prior to the construction of building 11370, the

relatively good preservation of the north wall 11570 suggests that it might have been retained as a partition within the new building, dividing it into two unequally-sized rooms (Pl. 4.2).

Again, no trace of any floor surface was found within this building other than the natural colluvium into which the building was cut. A few internal features occurred in the northern part of the building, which must have been either earlier than or contemporary with its use, as they were overlain by deposits associated with the destruction of the structure. Centrally placed within the northern end of the building was a bowl-shaped hearth 11442. This was filled with large stones, overlaid by a thin layer of red burnt clay around the southern part of the feature. A single sherd of 2nd-century pottery was recovered. Other features in the vicinity of the hearth included two shallow pits (11702 and 11724)



Plate 4.2 Buildings 10860 and 11370, facing north-east. Scale: 2 m

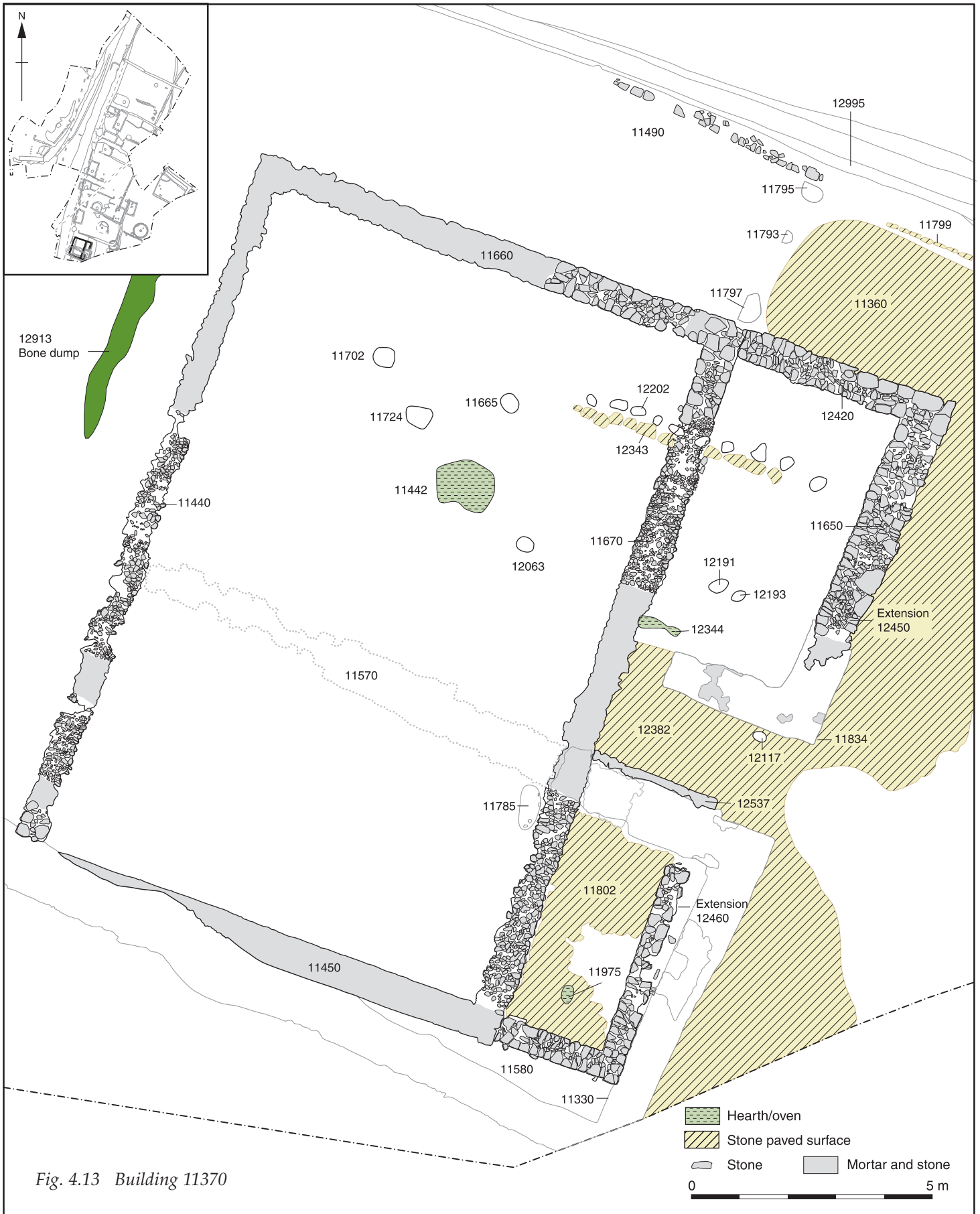


Fig. 4.13 Building 11370

and two postholes (11665 and 12063). Pit 11702 had a charcoal-rich fill that produced six sherds of 1st- to 2nd-century pottery. An iron hinge pintle (SF 1718) and a single sherd of 2nd-century pottery were recovered from posthole 11665.

At some stage during the lifetime of building 11370, two rectangular stone-built extensions (12450 and 12460) were attached to the eastern wall 11670. These are assumed to be later additions, as the masonry of their walls was not keyed in to that of the main structure. The extensions were built with their floor levels set slightly lower than that of the main part of the building, resulting in better preservation of floor surfaces and internal features.

Extension 12460

The more southerly of the two extensions (12460) measured 5.5 m NNE-SSW by 2.1 m WNW-ESE internally. The walls (11580) were constructed of limestone, with up to four courses surviving. Two courses of flat-laid slabs were overlain by a course of pitched stones, which was in turn overlain by a further course of flat-laid slabs. Much of the northern wall had been removed by later stone robbing (see Phase 5 below).

Most of the interior of the extension was floored with a surface of flat limestone slabs (11802), which abutted the east wall of the main building (Pl. 4.3). A small patch of ashy material overlying the paving in the southern part of the extension may have been the remains of a hearth (11975). A sample taken from this

(sample 667) contained oak and Maloideae (hawthorn etc) charcoal. The paved floor and hearth were subsequently overlain by a layer of pale grey clay (11693), 0.52 m thick, possibly a replacement floor layer. This was in turn overlain by two thin layers of silt (11691 and 11692) – possibly make-up layers – before a further layer of yellow clay (11555), 0.56 m thick, was laid down. This overlay part of the eastern wall of the extension, and thus may represent a surface dating to after the extension went out of use. It produced 11.5 kg of 3rd-century pottery along with a small amount of animal bone. The extension was subsequently covered with deposits associated with the destruction of building 11370 during the 4th century (see Phase 5 below).

Extension 12450

The more northerly of the two extensions (12450) measured 6 m NNE-SSW by 3.5 m WNW-ESE internally. Its walls (11650/12420) consisted of two courses of pitched limestone slabs (c 0.25 x 0.20 x 0.06 m) laid in herringbone fashion. Much of the southern wall of the extension had been removed by later stone robbing (robber cut 11834; see below), but it appears that it never extended far enough west to meet the east wall of the main building. There may thus have been an entrance into the extension at this point. Notably, a surface of ironstone cobbles (12382) lay immediately outside this putative entrance. A single posthole (12117) lay just outside the southern wall of the extension, but

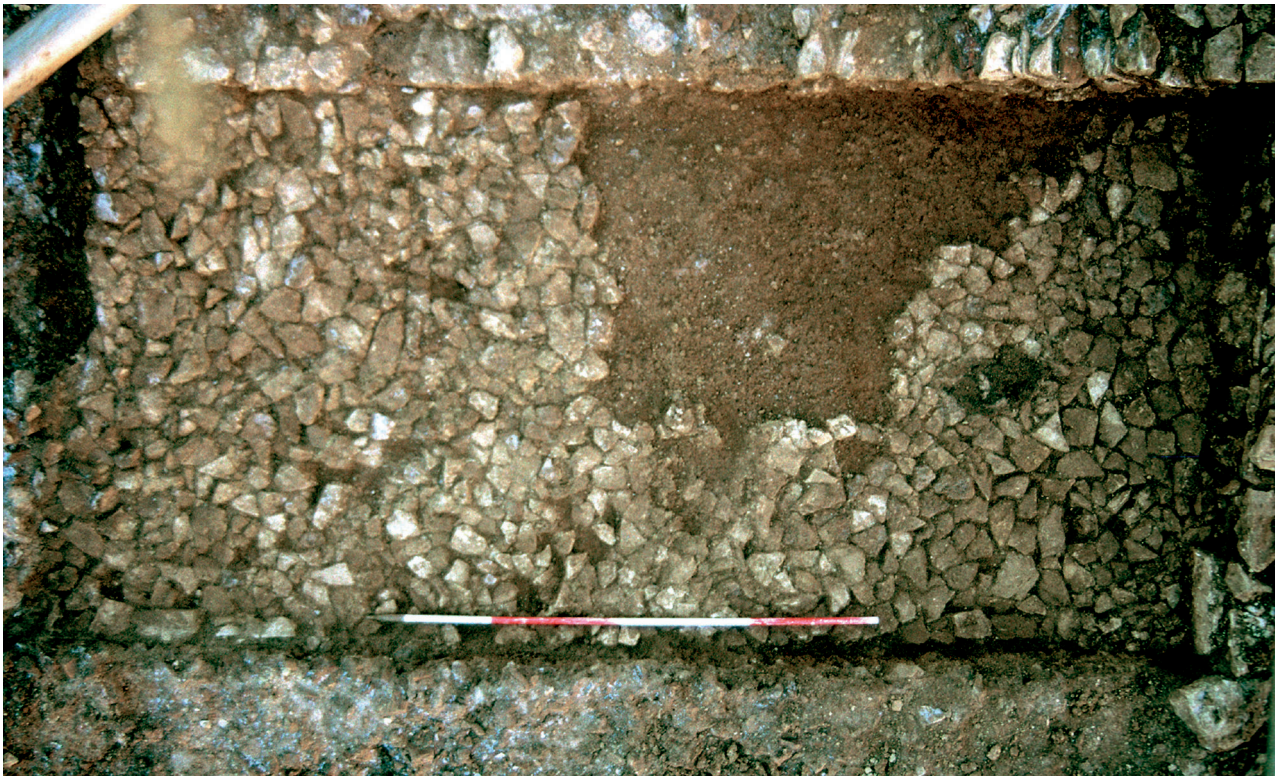


Plate 4.3 Building 11370, paved floor 11802 within extension 12460. Viewed vertically, west at top of photograph. Scale: 2 m

it is unclear what relationship (if any) this had with the building. The posthole was 0.30 m deep and contained post-packing of limestone and ironstone slabs set vertically around its edge.

A possible make-up layer or rough floor (11854) of silty clay containing limestone rubble (up to 0.3 m across) extended across most of interior of the extension. This layer overlay the original east wall (11670) of building 11370, showing that this part of the wall was removed once the extension was added. Some late 2nd to 3rd-century pottery was recovered. An E-W aligned partition within the extension is indicated by posthole row 12202 (Pl. 4.4), which cut into both layer 11854 and former wall 11670. The post row was 5.4 m long, and made up of 11 postholes set *c.* 0.25 m apart. Each posthole was 0.15–0.20 m in diameter and up to 0.25 m deep, and typically contained post-packing of limestone pieces inserted vertically around the edge of the cut. A parallel kerb of seven flat limestone slabs (up to 0.40 m across) lay immediately adjacent to the southern edge of the post row (12343).

Other features within the extension and cutting into layer 11854 comprised a pair of postholes and an oven. Postholes 12191 and 12193 were up to 0.25 m deep; four sherds of 3rd-century pottery were recovered from 12191. Oven 12344 was a dumbbell-shaped feature, 1.55 m long, located directly adjacent to the southern wall of the extension. It was widest and deepest (0.26 m) at its western end, which probably formed the oven chamber itself,

while the shallower eastern end is likely to have been the stoking area. The oven was lined with burnt clay, and was filled with a deposit containing lenses of burnt clay and charcoal. A few fragments of animal bone and undated Roman pottery were recovered. A sample from the fill (sample 673) produced small amounts of charred wheat and some remains of *Allium* (onion/garlic family).

Alterations to extension 12450 subsequently occurred during the late 3rd to 4th centuries. These will be discussed under Phase 5 below.

Burial 11785 (Figs 4.12 and 4.13)

Neonate burial 11785 was located adjacent to the north wall (11570) of building 10860 and the east wall (11670) of building 11370, but had no stratigraphic relationship to either structure. The only surviving remains were scattered, disturbed skull fragments (Sk 11782–4 and 11786) contained within an oval grave cut on a north-south alignment, measuring 0.90 x 0.45 m and 0.10 m deep. There were no associated finds.

Bone dump 12913 (Fig 4.13)

Immediately outside the west wall of building 11370 was a 7 m-long linear spread of animal bone (1.5 kg), mainly comprising sheep/goat remains but with some cattle and horse bone also present. The material was dominated by longbones, many of which had been worked, having been either chopped or split, and included a significant number



Plate 4.4 Building 11370, post row 12202, facing south. Scale to right: 2 m

of fragments that had been split longitudinally into narrow strips, probably rough-outs for the manufacture of bone pins (227 fragments, 563 g). This suggests that bone working was an activity associated with building 11370 (see Scott Chapter 5 and Strid Chapter 6). The deposit also contained three sherds of pottery dated to the 3rd century or later.

Stone yard surface 11360 (Fig. 4.13)

Limestone and ironstone 'yard' surface 11360 abutted the north and east walls of extension 12450, and can be presumed to have been contemporary with this structure. The surface consisted of pitched stones up to 0.40 m long, apparently laid over a make-up layer of crushed limestone. It was bounded to the west by a row of three postholes extending northwards from building 11370 (11793, 11795 and 11797). These postholes were up to 0.45 m deep and produced no finds. The northern boundary of the surface was marked by a 3.3 m long kerb of limestone slabs set on edge (11799), immediately beyond which lay the southern boundary ditch of Plot B (12995). A possible truncated limestone wall (11490) may have continued the line of the kerb westwards.

Wall 11410 (Fig. 4.12)

Wall 11410 was located at the extreme southern edge of the excavated area. It ran for 13 m directly adjacent to the robbed-out south wall of building 10860, and in fact was cut in places by the robber trench (11330). The wall was 0.70 m wide and only a

single foundation course of pitched ironstone blocks (c 0.20 x 0.15 x 0.10 m) survived. There were no associated finds. The purpose of the wall is uncertain, but it may have formed part of a building lying beyond the limit of excavation.

Plot B (Fig. 4.11)

Plot B was demarcated by shallow ditches on its northern, eastern and southern sides (11750, 11760 and 12995). The western frontage of the plot was initially marked by a limestone wall (11758), which was subsequently replaced by building 11620. Within the interior of the plot, pre-existing circular building 11340 seems to have continued in use into the 3rd century (see Phase 3 above). Immediately to the east of the eastern boundary ditch of the plot, well 12340 is also believed to have continued in use through this phase, although no deposits of this date were encountered. Close to this well, a small pit (12826) contained a fill suggestive of 'ritual' deposition.

Boundary ditches (Fig. 4.10)

The earliest phase of the boundary around Plot B was represented by ditch cuts 12995 and 11760, which truncated earlier circular building 10910. Ditch 11760 was later recut as ditch 11750, the western terminus of which appeared to respect an external surface (11481) associated with Phase 4 building 10870 (see below), perhaps suggesting contemporaneity. At a late stage of Phase 4, ditch 11750 (by this time largely silted up) was



Plate 4.5 Building 11620, general view facing east. Scale: 2 m

encroached upon by the construction of building 10890 (see Plot C below).

All of these ditches had U-shaped cuts, up to 0.42 m deep. Their silty fills contained a range of domestic debris, including pottery, ceramic building material and animal bone. More unusual finds comprised single fragments of vessel glass from ditches 12995 (SF 1908) and 11750, and a bone hairpin fragment (SF 1607, cat. no. 298) from ditch 11750. The pottery from the ditches could be dated no more closely than to the mid 2nd century or later.

Wall 11758 (Fig. 4.14; Pl. 4.5)

Wall 11758 overlay earlier roadside ditch 10680, and

was at least 11.8 m long, its northern end having been cut away by a modern pipeline trench. Up to two courses of the wall survived. The outer faces of the wall were formed by flat-laid limestone slabs, with rubble used for the core. The wall could represent part of an early phase of building 11620, but it seems more likely to have been a roadside boundary wall similar to 11010 to the north (Plot D).

Building 11620 (Fig. 4.14; Pls 4.5 and 4.6)

Building 11620 was a trapezoidal structure, measuring 10.4 m NNE-SSW by 6.75 m WNW-ESE internally. The west wall of the building cut through former roadside ditch 10680, while the south wall



Plate 4.6 Building 11620, north wall 11747, facing east. Note the manner in which the outer face of the wall is set back from the outer face of the foundation. Scale: 2 m

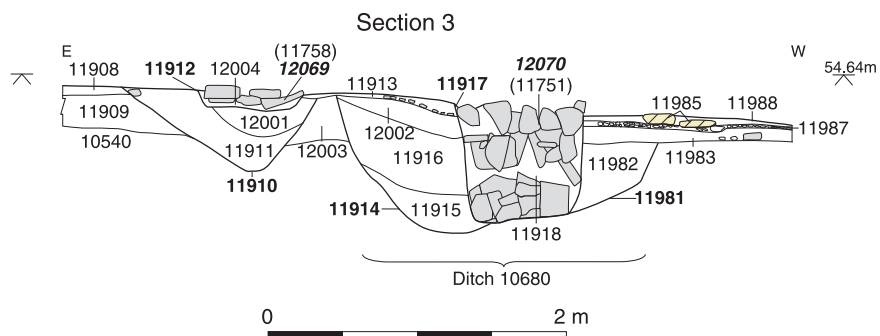


Fig. 4.14 Building 11620 and wall 11758

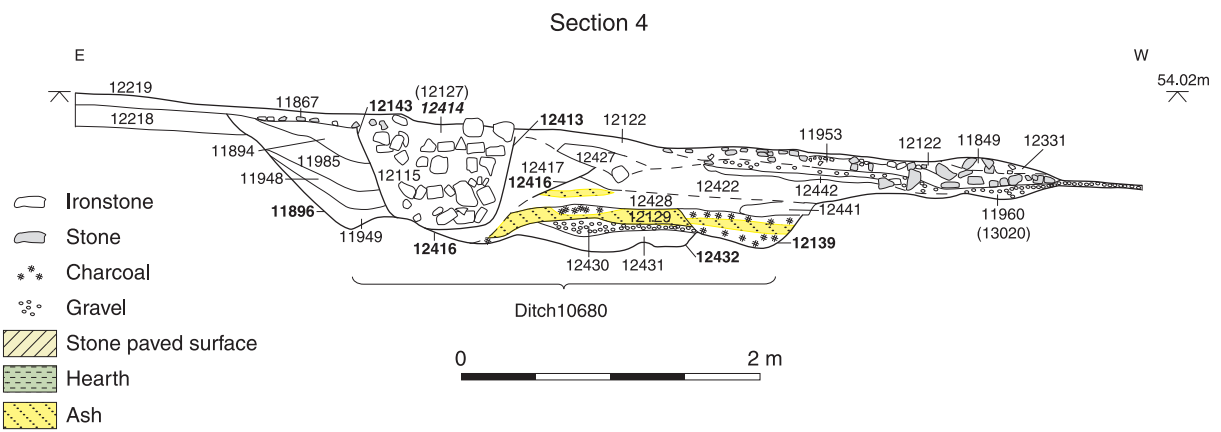


Fig. 4.15 Building 11630

cut through wall 11758. The gravel 'pavement' 13020 abutted the west wall, suggesting contemporaneity of use with the building. Beyond these stratigraphic relationships, the building is poorly dated. It is tentatively suggested that the building was constructed in Phase 4, although occupation probably continued into Phase 5 (see below).

The wall foundations (11747–9 and 11751) were 0.80–1.0 m wide, and generally consisted of two courses of pitched limestone laid in herringbone fashion; three courses were seen in the west wall where this was cut into the earlier roadside ditch. The joins between the wall foundations at the north-east and south-west corners of the building were marked by a 'seam' consisting of a row of vertically-pitched thin slabs. In places, the foundations were overlain by a single course of flat-laid limestone slabs, representing the lower part of the wall itself. The inner face of the wall was set flush with the inner face of the foundation, but the outer face of the wall was set in 0.10–0.15 m from the outer face of the foundation (Pl. 4.6).

The only datable finds directly associated with the construction of the building comprised six sherds of 2nd-century pottery from the construction cut of west wall 11751. However, as this wall was cut into roadside ditch 10680 the pottery may well have been redeposited. No floor surfaces or internal features could be seen within the building.

Paved surface 11633 (Fig 4.10)

Lying 3 m to the south-east of building 11620 were the patchy remains of a paved surface (11633). This measured 5 m across and consisted of flat limestone slabs up to 0.35 m across. The surface was overlain in places by a thin layer of sandy clay containing crushed limestone fragments (11634). The top of the paved surface produced 900 g of pottery dated to the late 2nd to early 3rd century (finds reference 11484).

Pit 12826 and burial 12745 (Fig 4.10)

Pit 12826 was located directly adjacent to Phase 3 ditch 12310 behind the eastern boundary of plot B, although no stratigraphic relationship between the two features could be discerned. The pit was 1.20 m in diameter and 0.75 m deep, with vertical sides and a flat base and contained two distinct fills. The lower fill (12838) was a sandy deposit producing 1.7 kg of animal bone, along with a single sherd of pottery, a bone pin fragment (SF 3084), a glass vessel fragment (SF 3094) and iron nails. The upper fill (12827) contained a remarkable assemblage of 18.5 kg of early 3rd-century pottery, including many large and refitting sherds. Other finds from this fill included 2 kg of animal bone (including worked fragments), glass vessel fragments (SF 3085–93) and two iron nails. A number of slabs of limestone and ironstone were found around the base and sides of the fill, possibly forming a crude lining for the upper part of the pit. The character of the material from the pit is striking, and suggestive of a ritual act.

An infant burial (12745) was located close to, or possibly within the upper fill of, pit 12826 (exact location unclear due to loss of EDM data). The body (Sk 12742) was badly truncated, but seems to have been interred in a supine position with its head to the west. The child was aged 3–6 months at the time of death. There were no associated finds.

Plot C (Fig. 4.11)

No fewer than six buildings appear to have been constructed in Plot C during this phase. Buildings 10850, 10880 and 11630 formed an 'L'-shaped complex running along the northern and western sides of the plot. These buildings produced little dating evidence, but are tentatively interpreted as having been built together as a coherent unit during this phase. A roundhouse (building 10870) and associated well (12885) were constructed in the centre of the plot. At the eastern end of the plot, rectangular building 10900 was built and later augmented or replaced by the markedly similar building 10890.

Building 11630 (Fig. 4.15)

The plan of building 11630 took the form of a parallelogram, measuring 10 m NNE-SSW by 6.5 m WNW-ESE internally. It was located directly adjacent to building 10850 to the north, although it is not clear whether the two structures were physically conjoined. The western side of the building was constructed over former roadside ditch 11680. No dating evidence was recovered from the building itself, and its construction has only tentatively been placed in this phase (for abandonment deposits see Phase 5). Interpretation of the building is also hindered by the fact that part of the structure was truncated by a modern pipeline trench.

The walls of the building were 0.70 m thick, and varied in their construction. Some sections were constructed from limestone, others from ironstone, and others still from a combination of the two. Up to two courses of stone survived. The east wall consisted of two courses of pitched stone, both courses being pitched in the same direction. In contrast, the west wall consisted of a lower course of pitched stone overlaid by an upper course faced with flat-laid limestone slabs (up to 0.45 m long) and infilled with a core of limestone and ironstone rubble. It appears that most of the north wall had been completely robbed out, although no distinct robber cut was apparent.

A thin layer of yellow-brown silt (12219) overlying the natural colluvium across the interior of the building may have been an early floor layer. Set within this layer was a central hearth (12464), consisting of a patch of heat-discoloured soil, burnt stones and burnt clay 0.70 m in diameter. In the north-east corner of the building, part of a floor surface overlying layer 12219 was uncovered. This consisted of flat limestone slabs (12221) on a make-up layer of ironstone chippings (12220). The floor surface may have continued more extensively

across the eastern half of building, but the overlying destruction deposits were not removed from this area. None of these floor layers produced any finds.

Building 10850 (Fig. 4.16)

Building 10850 was approximately rectangular in its initial form, measuring 8.2 m NNE-SSW by 5.6 m WNW-ESE internally. The western side of the building cut former roadside ditch 11680 and the red sandy layer (13100) overlying gravel pavement 13020. This suggests that construction of the building took place in the 3rd century or later. It is tentatively suggested that the building was first constructed in Phase 4, although it was clearly later altered and extended in Phase 5 (see below).

The limestone walls of the building (12677–9) were around 0.75 m wide. The walls had been truncated in places by later stone robbing (robber trenches 12154–6; see Phase 5), with nothing

remaining of the south wall. Where they survived, the walls were faced with flat slabs up to 0.59 m across, with smaller rubble used for the wall core. Generally, only one course of stonework remained, although up to three courses were present on the west side of the building where the wall was set into the earlier roadside ditch.

A whiteware pottery jar (12616) was found set into the natural colluvium within the building, close to the east wall. This vessel is dated to the 2nd century, providing the main evidence for Phase 4 usage of the building. It is uncertain whether the burial of the vessel had 'ritual' connotations or a practical function. Elsewhere within the building, patchy layers of reworked colluvium could represent early floor layers contemporary with this phase (12562, 12603, 12607 and 12660). Between them these layers produced 830 g of pottery dated to the mid 2nd century or later.



Fig. 4.16 Building 10850 (Phase 4)

Pits associated with building 10850 (Fig 4.16)

Bowl-shaped pits 12253 and 12669 lay immediately adjacent to the northern end of building 10850 and may have been contemporary with it. Pit 12253 must post-date the construction of the building, as it cut a thin layer of colluvium that overlay the construction cut for the west wall. The feature was 0.18 m deep, and had a single dumped fill containing much burnt material. A sample from the fill (sample 675) contained moderate amounts of charred wheat and indeterminate cereal grain. Finds included 500 g of pottery dated to the 2nd century, and a copper alloy needle (SF 2359, cat. no. 39). Pit 12669 was 0.40 m deep and had been backfilled with three deposits again containing significant amounts of burnt material, including charcoal and burnt stone. Finds included animal bone and 4.5 kg of pottery dated to the late 2nd century or later.

Building 10880 (Fig 4.17)

Building 10880 was a rectangular structure apparently attached to the east wall of building 10850, measuring 21 m WNW-ESE by 4.5 m NNE-SSW internally. It was divided by partition wall 12392 into two almost equally-sized rooms, the western room measuring 9.5 m long and the eastern 10 m long. The building had been extensively damaged by later stone robbing, and part of the western room had also been truncated by a modern pipeline trench. Once again, there is little direct dating evidence for this structure, which is tentatively suggested to have been constructed during Phase 4 alongside neighbouring buildings 10850 and 11630. There is some evidence that activity in the eastern room continued into the late 3rd to 4th century, although it is possible that this represents post-abandonment use of the ruins of the building (see Phase 5 below).

The walls of the building (12386, 12389, 10881/12391 and 12392) were typically 0.7 m wide, and survived up to three courses high. They were constructed using flat-laid limestone slabs for the wall facing and limestone and ironstone rubble for the core. Generally, the wall proper overlay a single foundation course of pitched ironstone and limestone, although this was absent in the east wall (12386). No trace could be seen of the presumed north wall of the eastern room. While this may simply be the result of stone robbing, it is possible that this side of the eastern room was of wooden construction, or perhaps even left entirely open. An external paved surface (12388) of flat limestone slabs abutted the south wall of building 10880, although the full extent of this was not established. It could have been part of a more extensive paved courtyard around building 10870.

Within the western room, no floor surface could be seen other than a layer of reworked colluvium (11800), which produced five sherds of pottery dating to the mid to late 2nd century. Features cut

into this layer included a central hearth, represented by an oval patch of charcoal, scorched sand and burnt stone (12454; not excavated). Two sub-rectangular features were also present (12236 and 12469), both filled with a deposit of greenish silty sand, possibly cess-like in nature. Excavation of 12236 showed that it was shallow (0.10 m deep), and had a layer of limestone slabs at its base, possibly a deliberate lining. Finds included 360 g of 3rd-century pottery and fragments of animal bone.

The sequence of deposits overlying the reworked colluvial layer 11800 within the eastern room proved difficult to elucidate. Towards the eastern end of the room was a hearth represented by a patch of burnt clay (11934). Abutting the hearth was a small area of flooring (12394), consisting of sections of pitched ironstone alternating with sections of flat limestone slabs. Extending across much of the rest of the room was a layer of silty clay containing frequent limestone fragments (11680/12183). This was regarded in the field as a post-occupation deposit relating to the destruction of the building, and was recorded as extending to the north of the building, sealing well 12140 and pits 12142, 12144 and 12167 (see Phase 5 below). However, it is also possible that this layer at least partly represents a contemporary occupation horizon. Finds from the deposit included some 3rd-century pottery and a coin of AD 270–274 (SF 2133), although given the stratigraphic uncertainties the chronological value of these finds is limited. Two copper alloy votive leaves were also recovered (SF 2005, cat. no. 88 and 2305, cat. no. 89), which are of significant interest in suggesting ritual activity in the vicinity of the building.

Infant burials within building 10880 (Fig 4.17)

Three infant inhumation burials were present within building 10880, all interred in shallow oval cuts located close to the outer walls of the structure (11640, 11690 and 12245). These were recorded as being cut into layer 11680/12183, and hence were believed to post-date the occupation of the building. However, given the stratigraphic difficulties discussed above, it is also possible that the burials were interred while the building was in use. None of the burials contained any finds, aside from nine sherds of pottery from burial 12245, dated to the late 2nd century or later.

Burial 11640 was located close to the south wall of the eastern room. The body (Sk 11642) had been interred in a supine position with the head to the south-west and the arms flexed over the chest. The remains belonged to a perinatal individual aged 38–39 weeks. Burial 11690 was located close to the east wall of the eastern room. The body (Sk 11687) had been placed on its left side with its head to the SSW. The remains belonged to a perinatal individual aged 42 weeks. Burial 12245 was located in the western room, close to partition wall 12392. The body (Sk 12120) had been interred in a supine position with its head to the north. The remains belonged to an individual aged 1.5–2.5 years.

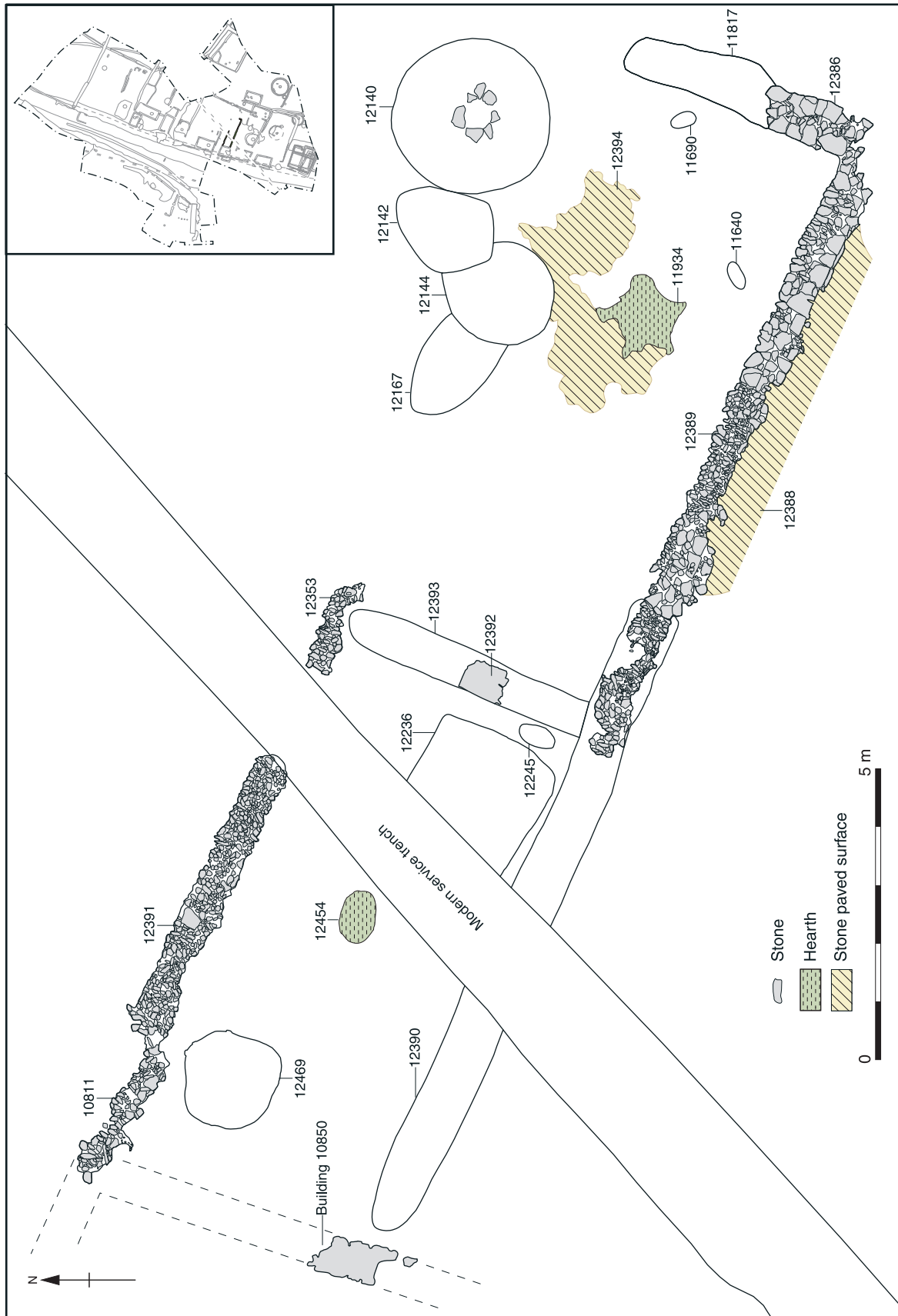


Fig. 4.17 Building 10880 and well 12140



Plate 4.7 Building 10870 and well 12885, facing north. Note radial partitions 11299 and 11678 in the northern part of the building.

11840, 11842, 12665 and 12667) and two larger postholes (11824 and 11826) were located around the inner edge of the wall. Also present in the northern part of the building were two probable hearths (11809 and 11811) and a single pit (11813). The hearths were shallow, bowl-shaped features with charcoal-rich fills. A sample from the fill of hearth 11809 (sample 664) contained oak, hazel, *Maloideae* (hawthorn etc), field maple and ash charcoal. Both hearths produced a few sherds of 2nd-century pottery, while hearth 11811 also contained a copper alloy *ligula* (SF 1822). Pit 11813 was also shallow, and had been backfilled with a deposit containing large amounts of pottery dated to the 3rd century or later.

In the southern half of the building, a layer of 'dirty', reworked colluvium was present (11472). As this was not sealed by any later surfaces, it could potentially represent a floor level maintained throughout the history of the building. The only finds consisted of 400 g of 2nd-century pottery, however. A series of shallow pits or hollows was cut into this layer just inside the putative entrance to the building (11276–9 and 11281). None contained any finds, and they could thus belong to any stage of the occupation of the building. Pit 11277 contained scorched pink clay and may thus have been a hearth.

External features associated with building 10870 (Fig. 4.15)

A limestone and ironstone rubble surface (12028) abutted the west wall of building 10870. The full extent of this surface was not determined, but it appears to have extended for 3.2 m to the west of the building, stopping just short of building 11630, and may have been part of the same area of courtyard paving as layer 12388 to the north. Seven sherds of 2nd-century pottery were found amongst the stones. The surface later became covered with a thin layer of dark silty material (12027), which also produced 2nd-century pottery.

The complete lower part of a truncated shell-tempered vessel (11167) was found set into the ground immediately north-east of building 10870 (Fig. 4.18). The vessel dates to the late 2nd century or later. It is unclear whether this represents a ritual 'offering' or had a practical purpose.

Well 12885 (Figs 4.18-19; Pls 4.7 and 4.8)

Stone-built well 12885 was 4.5 m deep, with an internal diameter of 0.7 m. It was situated within a steep-sided construction cut (11112), 1.56 m in diameter and 4.5 m deep. The earliest backfill of the construction cut (12468) was a deposit of ironstone and limestone rubble in a clay silt matrix, 2.4 m thick. Above this was a thin layer of green-grey clay

(12467). The remainder of the sequence comprised a series of silty backfill deposits (11419, 11357, 11342 and 11341). Pottery from layer 11419 suggests a 3rd-century date for the construction of the well. Overlying the backfill deposits was a metallised surface of small limestone slabs and ironstone

cobbles (11151), extending over an area of *c* 2 m. This may represent an attempt to consolidate the ground surface around the well.

The well shaft itself had a drystone construction of flat, roughly-hewn limestone slabs (average size *c* 0.30 x 0.23 x 0.08 m). The upper part of the well shaft

Table 4.2 Building 10870. Summary of internal features (Phase 4 and unphased)

Feature	Interpretation	Diameter (m)	Depth (m)	Pottery (g)	Animal bone (g)	Other finds
11276	Pit	0.14	0.03	-	-	
11277	Hearth	0.40	0.04	-	-	
11278	Pit	0.38	0.05	-	-	
11279	Pit	0.54	0.06	-	-	
11281	Pit	0.16	0.04	-	-	
11809	Hearth	0.72	0.14	2966	-	
11811	Hearth	0.82	0.08	77	7	Copper alloy ligula (SF 1822)
11813	Pit	1.20	0.08	1235	-	
11824	Posthole	0.35	0.26	-	-	
11826	Posthole	0.30	0.24	-	-	
11829	Stakehole	0.10	0.16	29	-	
11831	Stakehole	0.10	0.17	-	-	
11838	Stakehole	0.11	0.15	-	-	
11840	Stakehole	0.10	0.15	-	-	
11842	Stakehole	0.10	>0.21	-	-	
12665	Stakehole	0.04	Unexcavated	-	-	
12667	Stakehole	0.04	Unexcavated	-	-	



Plate 4.8 Well 12885, facing east. Scale: 0.2 m

had subsided somewhat, resulting in a slight leaning to the north. The base of the well was formed by a single large limestone slab, 1 m in diameter and 0.15 m thick, upon which the walls of the shaft rested. Situated approximately 0.4 m up

from the base of the well on its northern side was a large squared limestone block with tool marks on its face. This block appeared to continue back beyond the main cut. The excavator described it as a natural block that had been cut through when it had been

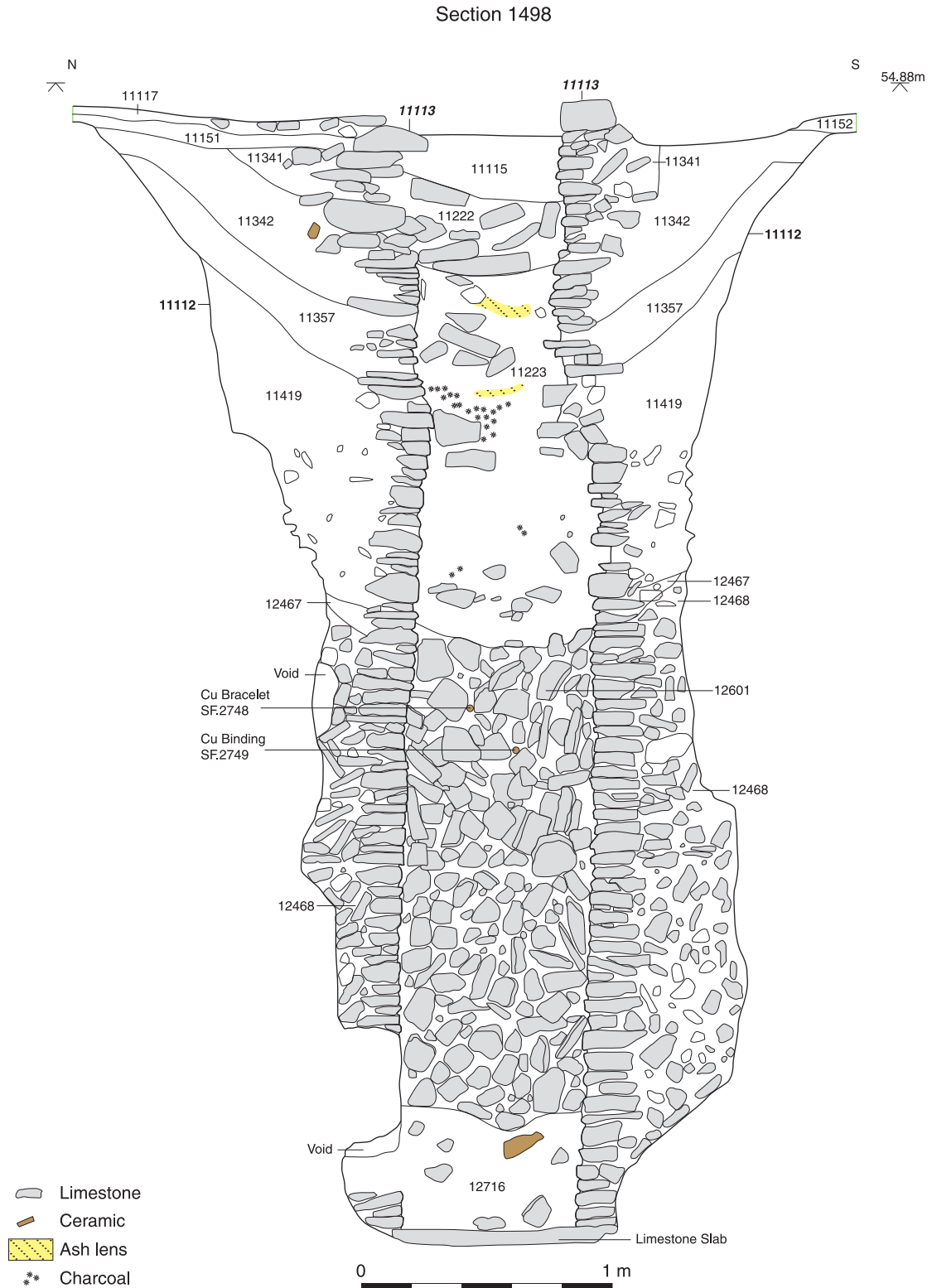


Fig. 4.19 Well 12885 section

encountered. However, a void beneath it and its situation near the base suggest that it may have been deliberately placed to form part of a water inlet, protecting the void beneath from filling with debris to allow the free flow of water into the well. When the well was excavated (in February 2002), the water table was encountered at 3.2 m below the present ground surface, which was 1.2 m from the base of the well at around 51.5 m OD. The fills encountered within the well shaft were associated with the backfilling of the structure during the late 3rd to 4th centuries (see Phase 5 below).

Ditch 12980 (Fig. 4.10)

Ditch 12980 formed the original rear (east) boundary of the plot, later being cut by building 10890 (see below). The southern end of the ditch respected ditch 11750 (see Plot B above), suggesting that these features were broadly contemporary.

Ditch 12980 was 0.20 m deep, with a U-shaped profile. It had a single silty fill that produced 3.3 kg of pottery and 350 g of animal bone. The pottery could only be dated to the late 2nd century or later.

Buildings 10900 and 10890 (Figs 4.20 and 4.21; Pl. 4.9)

Two buildings of near identical construction and appearance and of similar dimensions were positioned in close proximity to each other along either side of ditch 12980. The actual sequence of these is difficult to separate and it appears that both may have stood at the same time. However, the evidence available suggests that building 10900 preceded 10890 and this is discussed in more detail below in relation to the dating suggested by the associated finds. As they were similar in construction and appearance these buildings are described together with relevant individual details highlighted as appropriate.

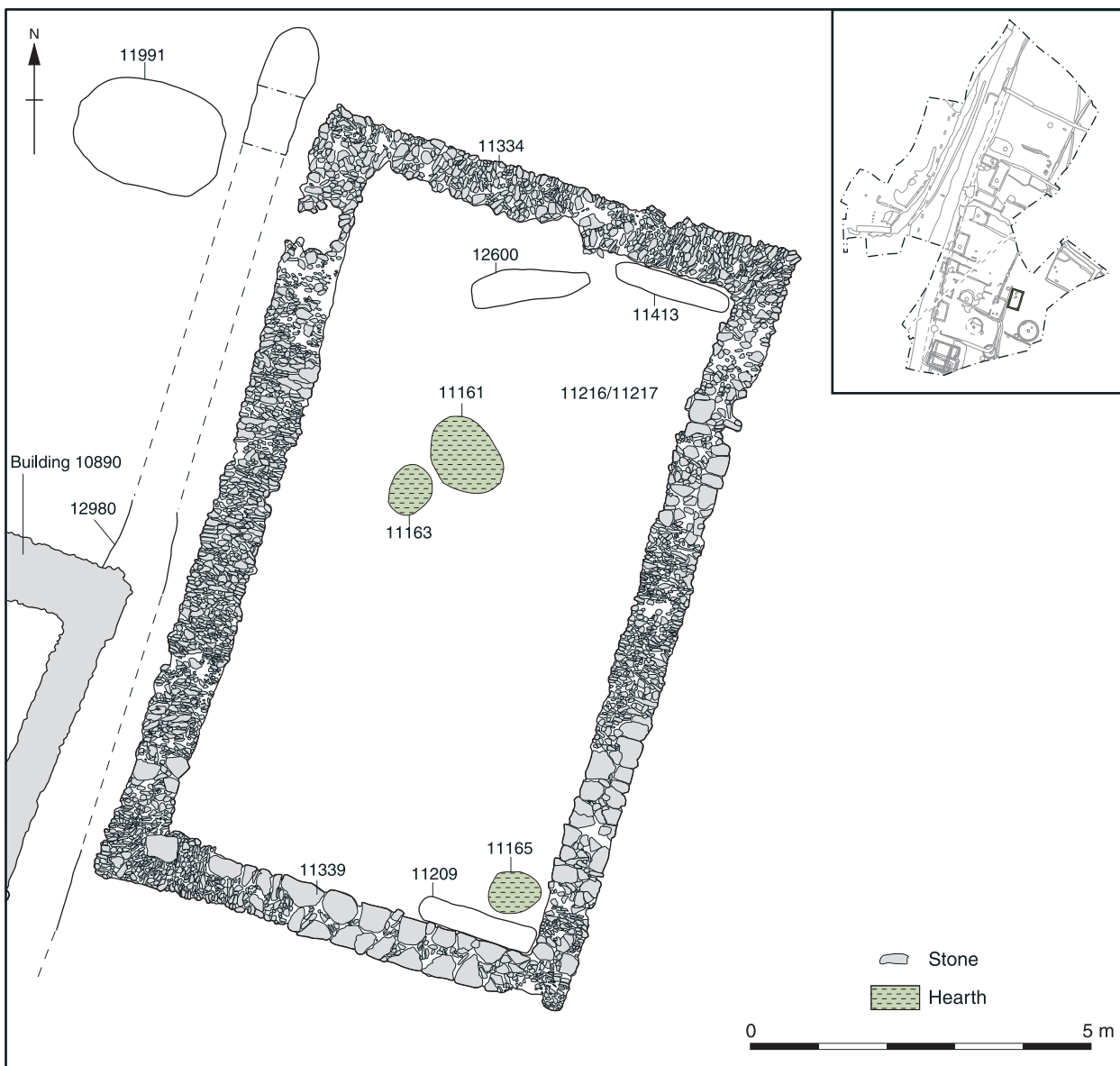


Fig. 4.20 Building 10900

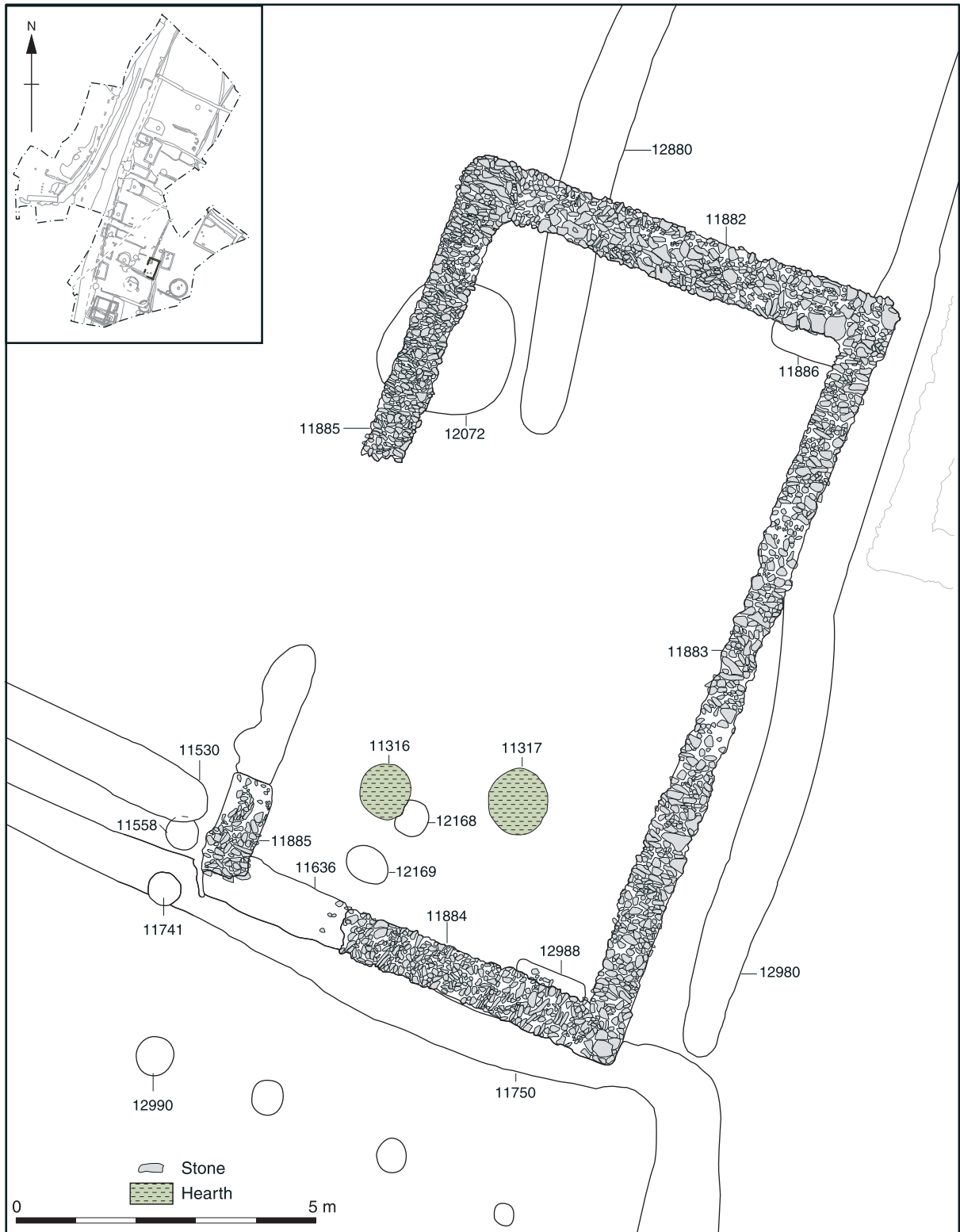


Fig. 4.21 Building 10890

The common axial alignment of NNE to SSW dictated by the road and enclosure layout was adhered to for both of these buildings. They were set over 40 m from the roadside frontage and it is the particular alignment and placing of ditch boundaries 12980 and 11750 that have influenced these specific details. Although only a very slight difference, building 10900 was angled noticeably more to the north than 10890. This appears to have been a result of the influence of the ditch alignments, with building 10900 closely following the edge of ditch 12980 suggesting that this was a contemporary feature, whilst 10890 appears to be aligned off the NW/SW alignment of ditch 11750. Although ditch 11750 was probably a contemporary part of the boundary defined by ditch 12980, building 10890 was clearly later than these ditches as its foundations cut into the infilled upper levels of both. Nonetheless ditches 11750 and 12980 clearly marked a significant boundary and one to which building 10890 related.

The foundation of each building consisted of a single course of near vertically-pitched ironstone and limestone pieces. In common with the pitched foundation technique seen widely across the site these were set in a single direction along each wall and tied in neatly at the corners between the interior and exterior angles. They were set in shallow foundation trenches 0.20 m and 0.30 m deep respectively for 10890 and 10900. The foundation of 10890 was tightly packed into the 0.80 m wide trench whereas building 10900 had the same foundation dimension set in a slightly broader (1.0 m wide)

trench with the primary wall course set partly below the contemporary ground level. In building 10890 all evidence of its overlying courses and a small part of the foundation had been removed through robbing (11636), and modern truncation was also more extensive here. Although building 10900 had also been subject to stone robbing, part of its primary wall course remained *in situ* (especially on the south and east sides: 11338 and 11339). The wall was narrower than the foundation at 0.70 m wide and consisted of moderate sized roughly hewn limestone blocks forming inner and outer faces.

The external face was set flush with the exterior edge of the foundation. The core of the wall was infilled with smaller limestone and ironstone pieces and a distinctive yellow silty clay. The clay seems most likely to have been a bonding material although it is possible that it could also represent the base of an earth wall.

Internal features

The buildings also shared very distinctive internal features that appear to form an integral part of the structure. Situated within the north-east and south-east corners of each building, flush with the end walls, were narrow gully-like features (11886/12988 within 10890 and 11413/11209 within 10900). These were steep-sided and uniformly 0.40 m wide and 0.20 m deep, but 1.25 m long within 10890 and 1.75 m long within 10900. Each was infilled with limestone pieces that appeared to form a packing deposit although clear signs of any posts or beams were lacking. In fact some doubt remains if these



Plate 4.9 Building 10900, facing north.

were actually packing deposits at all as opposed to rubble infills. The profile of each excavated gully was suitably slot-like and it is not impossible that these held ground beams subsequently removed, rather than upright posts

Other internal features within 10890 and 10900 were few, although these also appeared to share common traits. No obvious floor surfaces were identified although the evidence did demonstrate that this was a genuine absence and that the ground level exposed largely formed that of the contemporary Roman interior. This showed little sign of the trampling and reworking encountered in similar circumstances elsewhere, such as within building 10920, which may have implications for the longevity or function of these buildings. Part of the interior of the north-east corner of building 10900 had been raised or levelled with redeposited ironstone and silt at the time of construction (11216), although this only produced four sherds of residual pottery and is not helpful in defining the construction date.

The presence of hearths within each building provides the most compelling evidence that this was the contemporary ground level. Within 10900 these were limited to simple circular areas of scorched underlying silts and ironstone (11161, 11163 and 11165). Within 10890 the hearths were more purposely constructed. Two hearths (11316 and 11317) were constructed in shallow circular pits (1 m across), with tightly packed small limestone and ironstone pieces forming a firm base, levelled with a clay surface. The stones and clay were scorched although no associated ash or charcoal deposits were present, perhaps indicating a small degree of truncation. This type of hearth construction is comparable to that of the more substantial central feature within building 10870 where it was clear that the upper surface of the hearth survived intact, although this too had little associated ash and charcoal over it. It is interesting that in both buildings the arrangement of the hearths appears very similar, being paired and situated off-centre within each building. This characteristic serves to reinforce the similarity between the two structures.

The only features that differed between the buildings were two other pits (12168 and 12169) within 10890. These were of similar size to the hearths but infilled by single silty deposits (12136 and 12170 respectively) containing differing amounts of animal bone. Within pit 12169 the assemblage consisted of 26 small fragments (103 g) of generally unremarkable bone fragments, although two were knife-cut fragments that appear to have been waste or rough outs resulting from bone working. The assemblage within pit 12168 was much larger with 174 pieces recovered (829 g). This was a mixture of 'butchered' and several worked waste items such as small slivers with multiple cut faces and longitudinally split pieces. The items identifiable to species were exclusively from horse, cattle and sheep/goat, suggesting the selection from larger species typical

of bone working. The quantity of longitudinally split bone pieces also indicates that this deposit derives largely from the early stages of pin fabrication; the more complete fragments were 50-100 mm long, reflecting typical pin dimensions from the site. This deposit was partly cut away by the construction of the adjacent hearth (11316) and produced several similar cut pieces almost certainly derived from 12136. From these a crudely manufactured bone pin (SF 1475) may represent an incomplete piece rather than a poorly or roughly finished item.

Post-built extension 12990 (Fig. 4.21)

At the southern end of building 10890 a narrow post-built structure was added. This was poorly defined during the excavation although its general appearance was characterised. Five posthole locations were recorded although others forming a uniformly spaced east-west row were identified. None of these was excavated but they were of moderate size in plan being 0.50 m in diameter with some ironstone packing. They were spaced at approximate 1.50 m intervals. The structure had the appearance of a lean-to style construction that formed a 3 m wide 'corridor' along the exterior of the southern wall of 10890, returning to join the south-west corner of the stone structure. This added a little over 27 m² to the area of the building, although no evidence remained to show if this was purely an external structure or one that was incorporated into the main building. A gravel surface (11682) and limestone rubble deposits were contained within the western part of this extension but did not provide any dating evidence or other clues as to its function and relationship to 10890.

Dating

As mentioned above the relative sequence and dating of these buildings is slightly ambiguous. Neither produced many sizeable secure pottery assemblages. The largest of these was recovered from the general interior area of building 10890 and consisted of 66 sherds (924 g). However, these largely date from the mid to late 2nd century and are most likely to have been residual pieces associated with the similarly dated ditch 12880. This ditch clearly predated the building and terminated beneath the northern end of the structure. Within building 10900 small groups of pottery were recovered from the robber trenches that had removed the walls and from the interior levelling deposits, but these also consisted of residual sherds generally dated to the 2nd century. The pits and hearths within building 10890 did produce some securely stratified assemblages but these were also generally very small and not closely datable. Hearth 11316 produced the largest individual group with 23 sherds weighing 461 g recovered from its construction deposits providing a *terminus post quem* in the late 2nd century.

Owing to the relative dearth of dating evidence from the buildings themselves it is the surrounding

features and deposits that have to be relied upon to provide a more precise date range and sequence. Fortunately the dated stratigraphic sequence of the broader area and the association with contemporary features is relatively clear. The principal relationships are those between the buildings and ditches 11530, 11750, 11940, 12880 and 12980. Ditches 11750 and 12980 were clearly part of an enclosure or boundary arrangement that was in existence during Phase 4. The foundations of building 10890 were cut into the upper fills of both of these ditches, clearly placing its construction after these were infilled. In contrast the foundations of building 10900 did not cut any of the ditches. This building has a clear association with ditch 12980, with its western wall built closely along the eastern edge of the ditch. The ditch almost certainly predates the building, however, since the complete lack of limestone inclusions of any size within its infill strongly suggests that this had accumulated prior to the construction of building 10900. A soil layer (group 13015) that sealed the ditch fill also appears to butt against the top of the foundations of 10900. Although slightly tentative, this association and sequence certainly suggests that building 10900 was constructed within the later date range of ditch 12980 and prior to the construction of 10890.

With such close construction dates it seems most likely that both buildings were in existence at the same time. This may have been for the larger part of the 3rd century or even beyond, although a precise date for the end of occupation or use is lacking both in terms of finds assemblages and stratigraphic relationships. It is associated ditch boundaries that provide the best evidence here, although this is limited to building 10890. Boundaries 11530 and 11940 were aligned off the south-east and south-west corners of the building, replacing the earlier layout of boundary 11750. These ditches produced pottery assemblages dated to the late 3rd century and into the 4th century with two (worn) late 3rd-century Gallic Empire coins (SF 1196 and 1427) also recovered from ditch 11530. It is thus possible that building 10890 remained in existence into the 4th century.

Function and use

There are only limited indications as to the function and use of the buildings because of the relative absence of significant internal features and deposits associated with them. However, the buildings share distinctly similar characteristics in their construction and layout that strongly suggest they had the same or, at the very least, a similar function. The phasing of the buildings shows that 10890 was constructed after 10900 and it is possible that this was as a replacement resulting from the need for a larger version of the same building. Building 10890 had an internal area more than 10 m² larger than 10900, but its location west of the former boundary 12980 may also be significant and could reflect different ownership. It may equally have been the

case that the buildings stood together for some time, although the gap between them was only 0.8 m and the roofs would almost certainly have touched or have been very close. As for the roofing material, in common with the other buildings there was no evidence for a tiled roof and thatch or shingles seem most likely to have been used.

The most conspicuous features of these buildings were the short internal slots or gullies within the eastern corners of each. It is difficult to see how these functioned. If they were settings for internal fittings or supports it is unclear why they were not constructed into the fabric of the walls rather than as separate features.

The only features and artefactual remains to suggest any specific use were the two pits within building 10890 that produced waste fragments from bone pin manufacture. The quantity of waste material was small, however, and the implication that the building could have been a bone workshop seems tenuous given the lack of similar waste elsewhere within it. However, if the building(s) had been subject to a degree of truncation this could have removed any surface level waste deposits. MacGregor (1985, 44) suggests that bone working within the Roman period was largely a small-scale craft, and the quantities of material present within 10890 may reflect the home-based nature of this activity, as opposed to a specialist workshop. Softening by soaking and heating in water may have been the primary treatment undertaken to work the bone (*ibid.* 63-4), and the 'hearths' within 10890 could thus alternatively represent the bases of shallow clay-lined pits for this purpose. However, given the scorched appearance of the stone below the clay within these features, a hearth function seems more probable. Based on these factors it seems unlikely that this building was specifically a bone-working shop.

The only other indication of the function of these buildings is based upon an interpretation of their setting within the settlement. They were positioned on the rear boundary alignment that runs the length of the settlement and marks the boundary between the domestic enclosures fronting the road and the larger field and paddock enclosures extending to the east behind. Based upon this it is not unreasonable to view them as ancillary structures.

Gully 11755 (Fig. 4.10)

Gully 11755 was aligned on the northern wall of building 10890, suggesting that it was dug in the latter part of Phase 4 or in Phase 5. The gully was up to 0.14 m deep, with U-shaped profile, and had a single silty fill. Finds were limited to animal bone and 26 sherds of pottery dated to the 2nd century or later.

Plot D (Fig. 4.11)

Plot D was defined to the north by ditch 12895 (see Plot E below), and to the east by ditch 12880.

Although the latter feature was largely backfilled in the late 2nd century (see Phase 3 above), it probably continued to be visible as an earthwork hollow as it subsequently formed a focus for burial in the late Roman period (see Phase 5 below). The roadside frontage of plot D could have been marked by wall 11010, but this feature has been tentatively attributed to Phase 5 as it seems to respect building 10840, dating to the late 3rd to 4th centuries.

There were few features within the interior of Plot D during this phase, although possible remains of one or more buildings were encountered in the form of two parallel walls, a rubble layer and a hearth (Fig. 4.22). Ironstone wall 12437 ran for 11 m on a WNW-ESE alignment, curving slightly to the north at its eastern end. Up to three courses of the wall survived, with flat-laid slabs (up to 0.30 m long) forming the faces, infilled with a rubble core. Wall 12438 lay 1.25 m to the north, and was only 2.8 m long as a result of truncation at its western end. It was identical in construction to 12437, although only two courses survived. An ironstone rubble layer 12436 butted up to the eastern ends of the two walls, extending over an area of *c* 8 m; but it is unclear whether this was a deliberately laid surface or a destruction layer. The layer produced 700 g of 3rd-century pottery. Immediately north of 12436 was an area of 'dirty', reworked colluvial soil (12620/12766) which produced 1.8 kg of mid to late 2nd-century pottery. A hearth (12641) lay within this soil layer and consisted of a patch of scorched clay, 0.70 m in diameter (not excavated).

While the interpretation of these features is unclear, it is possible that a structure with a special role of some kind stood here. It is notable that fragments of wild boar bone were recovered both from layer 12620 and from silting deposits over

rubble layer 12436. Elsewhere on the site, positively identified wild boar bone was restricted to the interior of shrine 10930.

Plot E (Fig. 4.11)

Plot E was defined by ditch 12895 to the south and ditch 12940 (see Plot F below) to the north. Again, no certain buildings were present in this phase, as buildings 10820 and 10830 are more likely to have originated in Phase 5.

Ditch 12895 was up to 0.50 m deep with a U-shaped profile. Its fills were largely deposited down through natural processes of silting and erosion, although stonier deposits seen towards the western terminus of the ditch may represent deliberate backfills laid down in advance of the construction of building 10830 (see Phase 5 below). The pottery recovered from the ditch is only broadly datable to the late 2nd century onwards.

Plot F (Fig. 4.11)

Plot F was defined by ditch 12940 to the south and ditch 12965 to the north. A single rectangular building (10810) stood in the western part of the plot. Other potentially contemporary features included a large waterhole (12955) and a possible cesspit or latrine (10804).

Enclosure ditches and waterhole 12955 (Fig. 4.10)

Ditches 12940 and 12965 were both shallow features (up to 0.35 m deep) with U-shaped profiles. They contained silty fills that apparently accumulated naturally. Few finds were recovered, although in both cases sherds of 3rd-century pottery were recovered.

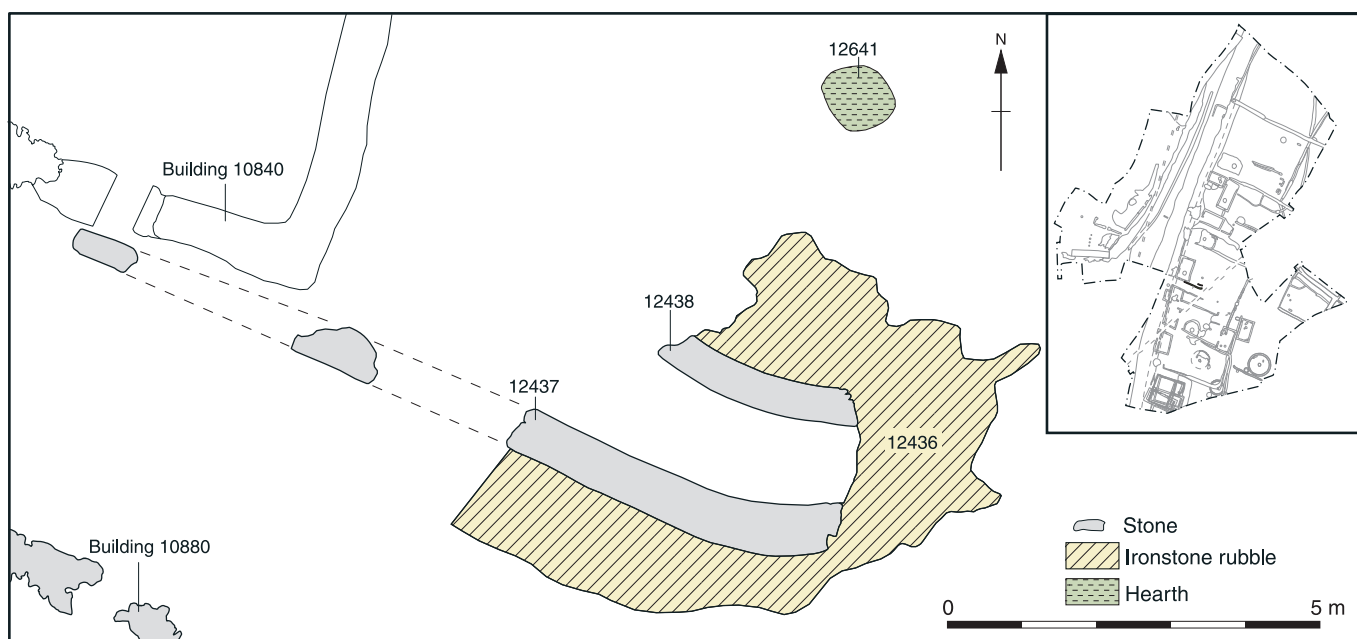


Fig. 4.22 Walls 12437 and 12438, layer 12436 and hearth 12641

Waterhole 12955 was a steep-sided feature, 4.5 m in diameter and more than 1.5 m deep (base not reached). Although the lowest observed fill probably represents an erosion deposit, the bulk of the feature was taken up by a series of deliberate backfill deposits containing occasional bands of stone rubble. Finds included 1.9 kg of pottery dated to the 3rd century and 2.3 kg of animal bone. The excavator suggested that the waterhole cut the western end of ditch 12940, although this relationship is uncertain. As the ditch appeared to become deeper towards the west, it may have been a contemporary feature that drained into the waterhole.

Building 10810 (Fig. 4.23; Pl. 4.10)

Building 10810 was a rectangular structure measuring 11.7 m NNE-SSW by 5.5 m WNW-ESE internally. Little dating evidence was recovered for the construction of the building, although a 2nd-century pottery vessel set into the floor probably relates to its early use. Occupation and alteration of the building continued into the 4th century (see Phase 5 below).

The construction of building 10810 was largely similar to that of 10800 and identical to 10820. Unlike building 10800 the foundations of 10810 did not cross the line of earlier features, and hence were only cut through the contemporary soil horizon to the level of the underlying ironstone. The foundations were built up in a single course of near vertically-pitched stone arranged perpendicular to the

alignment of each wall. Limestone predominated with only incidental uses of ironstone. This was matched in the wall superstructure where only a single large block of ironstone was present. A single wall-course survived around the larger part of the building where it had not been removed by later stone robbing (see below).

In common with 10800 and 10820, internal and external faces were provided by neatly arranged slabs of limestone with the core infilled with smaller pitched fragments. The build was also clearly drystone with no evidence of clay bonding or bedding deposits such as may have existed in building 10800. A single block of limestone (12625) centrally placed along the line of the western wall represented the threshold and defined the entrance to the building. This was recessed slightly from the line of the wall face and had flanking squared blocks to either side to act as pads for the door jambs. The corresponding internal wall/foundation line was built up in small pitched stones (12626) that had been worn very smooth across their upper surfaces. These define a doorway approximately 0.70 m wide. The threshold stone, however, did not show any signs of wear corresponding to that on the pitched stones and the post pads were also unaltered with no signs of chiselled sockets or levelling. It is possible that these were covered by a wooden frame and plank threshold similar to that seen in building VII at Shepton Mallet (Leach and Evans 2001, 64).



Plate 4.10 Buildings 10800 and 10810, facing west. Scale: 2 m

Internally the definition of the entrance area was continued by a small rectangular area of neatly laid limestone pieces (12627) providing a firm surface for the area of heaviest foot wear. This also marked the point of the major division of the internal space with the significant limestone surfaces extending from here to the northern part of the building and

only minor surfacing leading away to the south of the building. This division was reinforced by a small beam slot (12534) which provided a physical partition between these distinct areas. This was only a short segment 1.40 m long centrally positioned across the width of the building with 2.0 m gaps at either side, and may have held nothing more than a

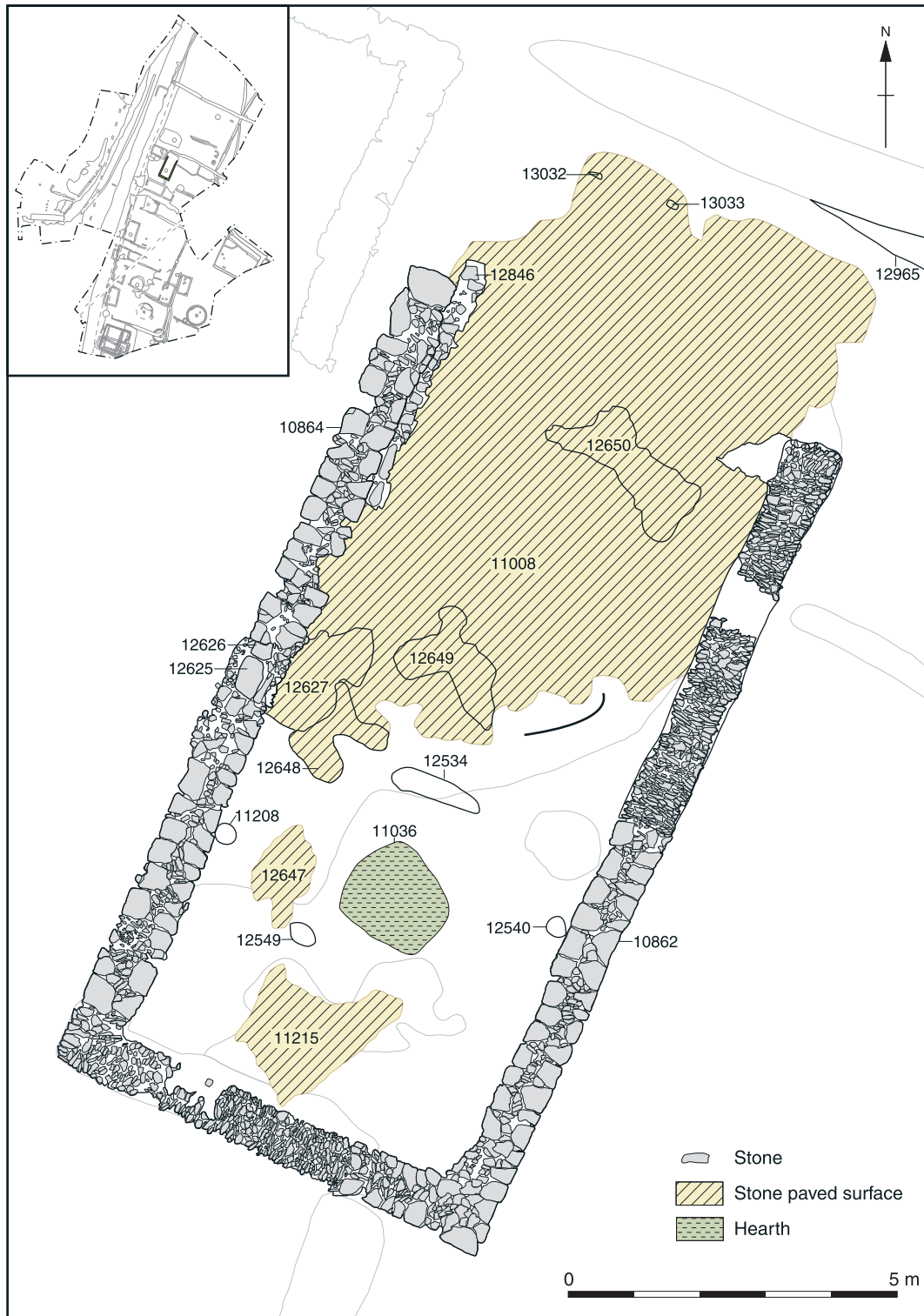


Fig. 4.23 Building 10810 (Phase 4)

small screen set in a beam for stability. The partition split the internal area slightly unevenly, the distance from it to the southern wall being 5.40 m and to the northern wall 6.30 m. This disparity was subsequently exaggerated by the extension of the building to the north (see below). Although only an insignificant amount of pottery was present in the fill of the slot and there were few stratigraphic relationships between it and later deposits, there seems little reason to doubt that the partition was part of the primary internal layout of the building. As with all structures across the site little dating evidence was present in the primary construction deposits, and the date of the building largely relies upon the artefacts recovered from the internal features and floor levels.

South of the internal partition (12534) the focal feature was a large centrally positioned hearth (11036). This was a very simple ground level hearth, lacking any structural components, that had been cut to a maximum depth of 0.30 m through repeated use and clearing of ash. It was infilled with a series of mixed and finely laminated red scorched silts and ash and charcoal layers, that spread over a roughly square 1.60 m surface area. A sample from the hearth fill (sample 618) contained oak, blackthorn, Maloideae (hawthorn etc) and ash charcoal. Patchy remains of surfacing (11215, 12647 and 12648) extended from the entrance area and around the western and southern side of the hearth. These were thin surfaces largely of small ironstone pieces that occurred naturally within the underlying soil horizon, but also including similar sized imported river gravel and limestone pieces. To either side of the hearth up against the interior wall faces were two small pits (11208 and 12540). Although not exactly opposed these features were notable for their similarity of positioning. Pit 11208 lay against the inside of the west wall south of the entrance and contained the base of a coarse ware jar (11207). This was in a grog-tempered grey fabric most typical of the 2nd-century assemblages, although the lack of the upper part of the jar profile makes closer dating impossible. This was probably a jar set slightly into the floor level for use within the building rather than an object buried as a foundation offering. Its likely date within the 2nd century also suggests that this was an original features of the layout and use of the buildings. To the east similarly positioned against the internal face of the wall pit 12540 was less clear in its function. This circular pit was only 0.30 m across and of a similar depth, but its fill was unremarkable, consisting of mixed silts and clay with a few pottery sherds (13 sherds, 642 g). These were only broadly datable to the mid 2nd century or later and could thus belong to any phase of the use of the building. Another small pit (12549) lay south-west of hearth 11036.

The northern part of the building was quite different from the southern part as a stone surface (11008) was laid across its full width. This consisted mainly of limestone slabs with very smooth worn

upper surfaces consistent with a long period of wear. The largest slabs were up to 0.50 m across and 0.25 m thick. However, this surface was not consistent across the building; its level was very uneven and it showed distinct patches of pitched construction in ironstone and smaller limestone fragments (12649 and 12650). These parts were generally more even and tightly packed and may reflect localised areas that required firmer surfaces within the floor area, although this does not explain the uneven appearance of the slab surface. Where slab or horizontal stone surfaces existed elsewhere across the site (eg within building 10870 and extension 12460), these surfaces remained even as laid. This suggests that post-depositional disturbance is unlikely to have been the cause of the irregularities in building 10810. Comparison to building 10820 (see below) offers a possible solution. Within that building a superficially similar slab surface was patchy with only scattered large worn slabs present. This seems to indicate that the slabs were only placed where required rather than as a single even surface. If so it may have been that floor surface 11008 actually represents a surface accumulated over an extended period, laid as required partly over earlier fragments of lower surfaces.

A single stone (SF 3197) found within the floor is of particular interest. This was a reused item having evidently derived from a piece of relief sculpture (see Davenport, Chapter 5). Its origin is not certain although it is possible that it derived from the large monumental wall associated with the roadside shrine. If so, it is likely to have been incorporated into building 10810 during or after the late 3rd to early 4th century, when the shrine had effectively ceased to function.

A modification and extension to the building northwards was also partly defined by the slab surface (11008). The surface was constructed up to a line 1.0 m from and parallel to the edge of ditch boundaries 12965/12970 laid out from the northern side of building 10800. However, the east (10862) and west (10864) walls of building 10810 clearly did not extend this far because the pitched stone foundation of the east wall turned and ran under the floor. The west wall also had a large quoin stone marking its limit at the corresponding point opposite. The original north wall of the building had been demolished and the surface built over the pitched stone foundation that remained *in situ*. The northern end of the building was replaced in timber, the structure marked by a line of at least two (13032 and 13033) and possibly four postholes with pitched limestone packing along the northern edge of the slab surface. These were only recognised very late in the excavation and were not investigated in detail, although from their surface appearance it appeared that these were square posts up to 0.17 m across. These would have been perfectly adequate to carry the roofline although no other postholes were evident along the projected line of the east and west stone walls. The confinement of the stone

surface within the projected lines of these walls indicates, however, that these lines were continued, rather than that the structure was open-ended. The construction date of the secondary floor was not established from artefact assemblages. The part of the surface beyond the line of the original wall did have a slightly different appearance from that to the south, with no areas of pitched stone present and a generally more patchy construction using larger flat slabs. It is possible that the larger slabs used generally throughout were all later additions to an overall more incomplete surface as discussed briefly above and below in relation to the internal surfacing of building 10820. Certainly some of the large flat worn slabs within the main part of the building also

overlay the areas of more concentrated surfacing which used smaller stones.

A stone-lined drain (12846) constructed against the internal face of the west wall was apparently contemporary with the earliest floor surface of the pre-extension building (Pl. 4.11). The eastern edge of the drain was defined with several upright edging stones, its base was formed of small worn limestone slabs and the internal face of the wall formed its western side.

The drain had a clear point of origin within the building 3.60 m from the original north-west corner with an upright stone across the end. Levels along the base clearly demonstrate that it drained out of the building, dropping 0.06 m along its length with



Plate 4.11 Building 10810, drain 12846, facing north

a large sloped slab used just beyond the wall quoin as an out fall. This drain does not appear to have emptied into a specific feature, although the silty soil was probably sufficiently free-draining. The most striking feature also defining the extent of the drain was a consistent band of lime concretion along the face of the wall/drain stones. This was present along the full length of the drain and its thickness is suggestive of considerable repeated use probably over a long period of time. Given that the drain itself was not watertight and surrounded by a free draining silt soil, then considerable volumes of liquid must have washed along this regularly to have left such a concretion. The fill of the drain (12847), consisting of silt mixed with limestone and ironstone fragments, is likely to have resulted from its backfill rather than its use. Fill 12847 came up to the level of the larger flat slabs within surface 11008 which partly overlay the drain, suggesting that it was not used in the later phases of the life of the

building. Alternatively, it is possible that the slabs merely capped the open drain, although the lime concretion was not evident on them.

The internal division and the associated hearth within this building are all suggestive of a primary domestic function. However, a dual role for such a building should not be excluded as the use of solid surfaces and partitions could also indicate that livestock were kept within it. This may explain the presence of the drain to the north-western corner of the building although its precise role is not clear. The later occupation and alteration of the building will be discussed below (see Phase 5).

Pit 10804 (Figs 4.10 and 4.24)

Pit 10804 was a sub-rectangular feature located east of building 10810 and parallel to ditch 12965. It measured 1.60 m long and 1.10 m deep, with steep sides and a fairly flat base. The pit contained two successive deposits of olive green silty sand (10802

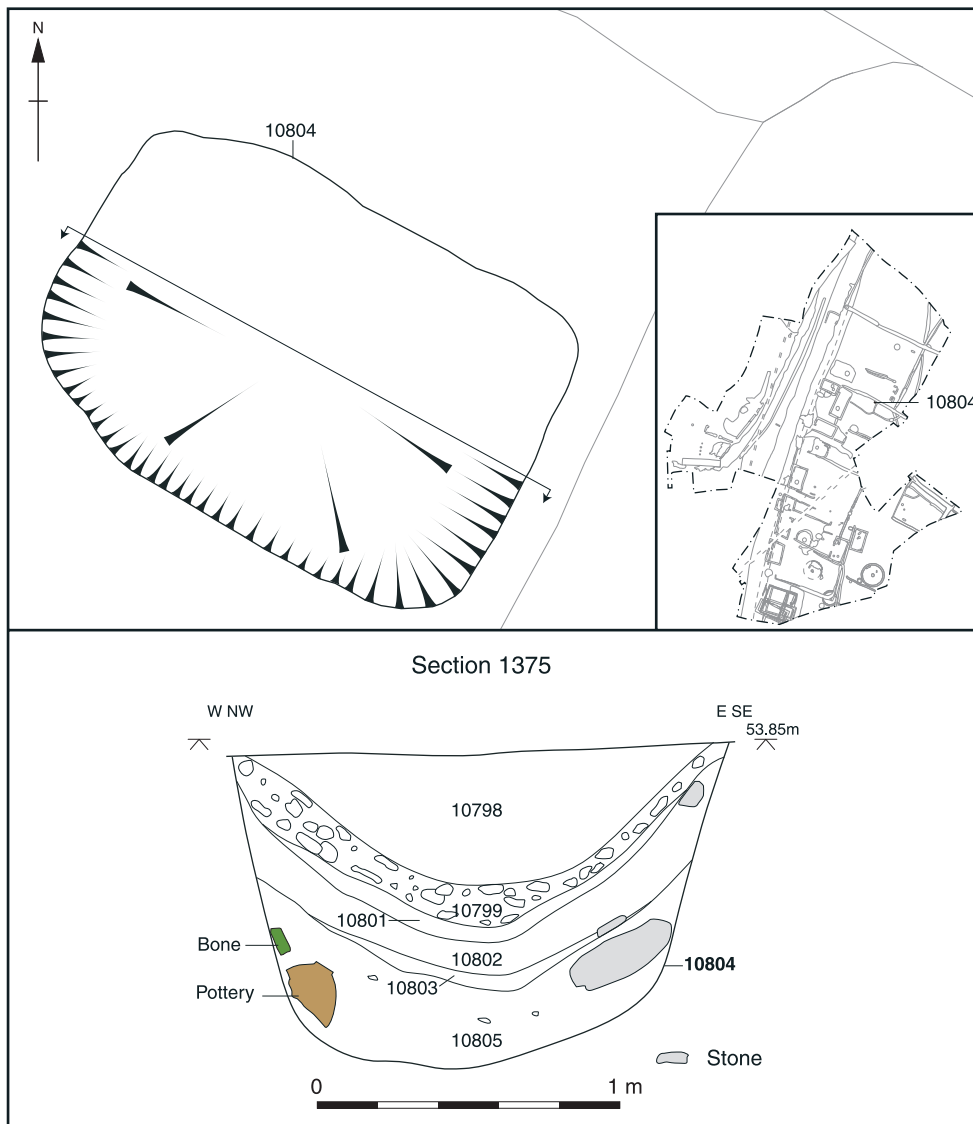


Fig. 4.24 Pit 10804

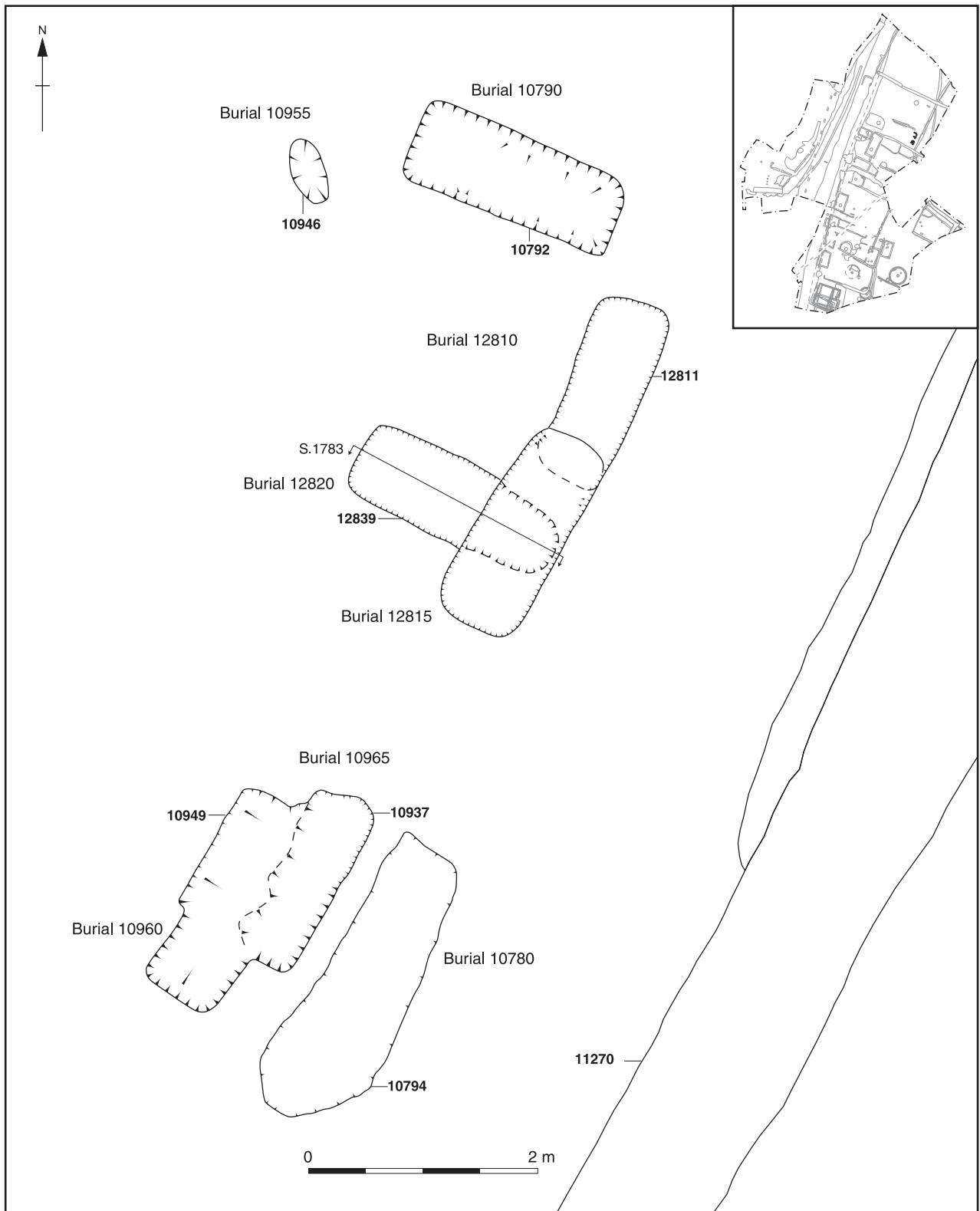


Fig. 4.25 Burial group 13050

and 10805), possibly deriving from use of the pit as a latrine or cesspit, each of which was capped by a lens of charcoal-rich material (10801 and 10803). One sherd of mid 2nd-century pottery was recovered from basal fill 10805. The pit was finally sealed with a layer of ironstone rubble (10799). The uppermost fill of the pit (10798) was a deposit of silty sand which may have been laid down following subsidence of the lower pit fills and downward slumping of the ironstone layer. This final deposit contained larger quantities of finds, including 1 kg of pottery dated to the 3rd century, and 500 g of animal bone.

The northern periphery of the settlement

The area to the north of Plot F was probably used primarily for agricultural purposes during this phase, with a few linear ditches perhaps serving as field boundaries. A small cemetery area (burial group 13050) lay adjacent to one of these ditches. Other features included two wells, one of which was certainly constructed in this phase (8032) while the other (8278) is more poorly dated.

Boundary ditches (Fig. 4.10)

Ditch 10770/11150 ran off from ditch 12965 on a NNE-SSW alignment, probably continuing into Area G as ditch 8162. It was up to 0.35 m deep, with a flat-based profile. The relatively sterile, silty fill produced a few sherds of 2nd- to 3rd-century pottery. A complete polished flint axe (SF 1433) was also recovered (see Chapter 2). This may have simply been accidentally redeposited, although examples are known at some other sites of prehis-

toric axes deliberately placed in meaningful contexts during the Roman period (eg Farley Heath, Surrey; Goodchild 1938, 23).

Lying at the northern edge of the site, ditch 8291 was 0.30 m deep, with a 'U'-shaped profile. The lower fills of the ditch contained 2nd-century pottery. The upper fill of the southern end of the ditch consisted of a rubble backfill laid down in advance of construction of Phase 5 building 8019.

Burial group 13050 (Fig. 4.25)

The interment of inhumation burials alongside ditch 11170 commenced in this phase, continuing into the 4th century (see below). Up to seven of the burials may belong to this phase.

Burial 10740 (Fig. 4.26) contained the remains of a female aged 28–35 years (Sk 10734). The grave was aligned NW-SE, and measured 2.1 m long, 0.88 m wide and 0.12 m deep. The body had been laid supine, with the head to the north-west. A 3rd-century copper alloy finger ring with a blue intaglio (SF 1226) was found by the right hand, though not actually on a finger. A bone hairpin fragment (SF 1227) was found by the right upper arm. Small fragments of animal bone were also recovered from the backfill of the grave.

Burial 10790 contained the remains of a female aged 35–45 years (Sk 10791). The rectangular grave was aligned E-W, and measured 1.9 m long, 0.75 m wide and 0.15 m deep. The body was laid supine, with the head to the east and the arms crossed at the wrists over the pelvis. The presence of a wooden coffin is indicated by 17 iron nails found around the edge of the grave cut, within the upper part of the

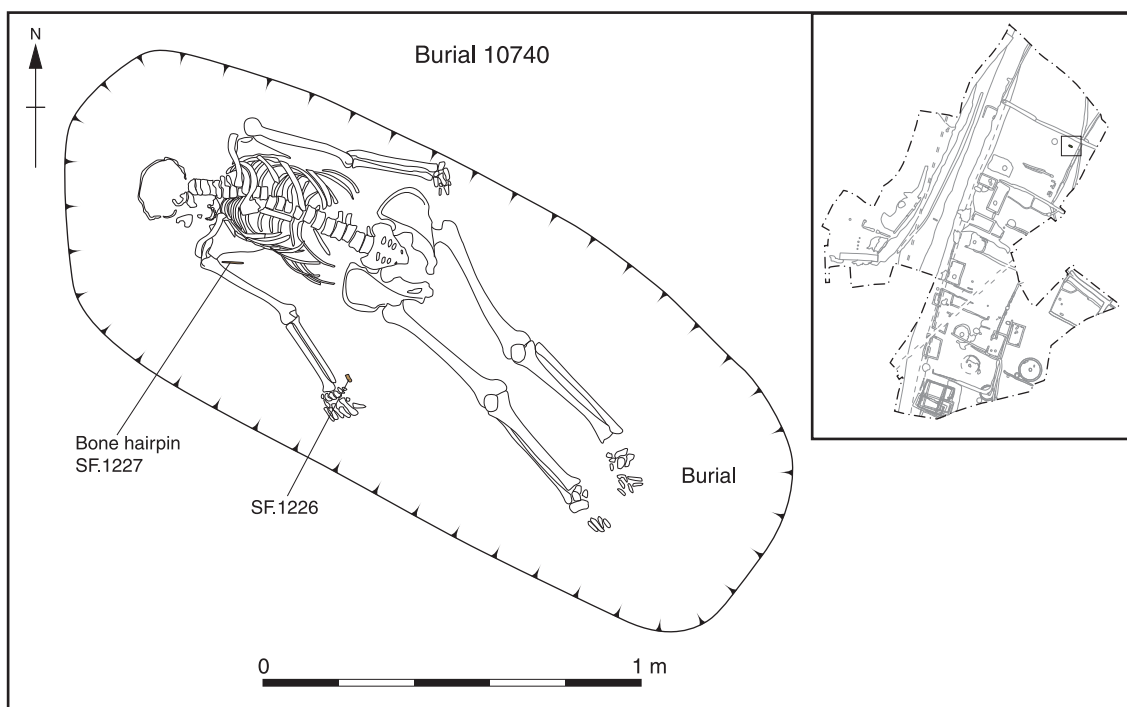


Fig. 4.26 Burial 10740

fill. The backfill of the grave contained a single sherd of pottery dated to the mid to late 2nd century, and small fragments of animal bone.

Burial 10955 contained the remains of a perinatal infant aged 38 weeks (Sk 10947). The oval grave cut was aligned SSE-NNW, and measured 0.60 m long, 0.30 m wide and 0.30 m deep. The body had been placed on its right side with the head at the SSE end of the grave. The skeleton was poorly preserved, the legs being missing. A single small fragment of animal bone was recovered from the backfill of the grave.

Burial 10960 (Fig. 4.27; Pl. 4.12) contained the remains of a male aged over 45 years (Sk 10951). The grave was aligned SSW-NNE, and measured 2.0 m

long, 0.7 m wide and 0.14 m deep. It had been cut by Phase 5 burial 10965, and some bones from the right side of the body had been displaced into the latter feature. The body had been placed supine with the head to the SSW, turned slightly to face east. The backfill of the grave contained 730 g of pottery dated to the mid to late 2nd century, and small fragments of animal bone. A radiocarbon determination of cal AD 135–320 (UB-5217: 1798 ±18 BP) was obtained from the skeleton.

Burial 12810 (Fig. 4.28; Pl. 4.13) contained the remains of an individual of unknown sex aged 30–38 years (Sk 12814). The rectangular grave was aligned NNE-SSW, and measured at least 1.40 m

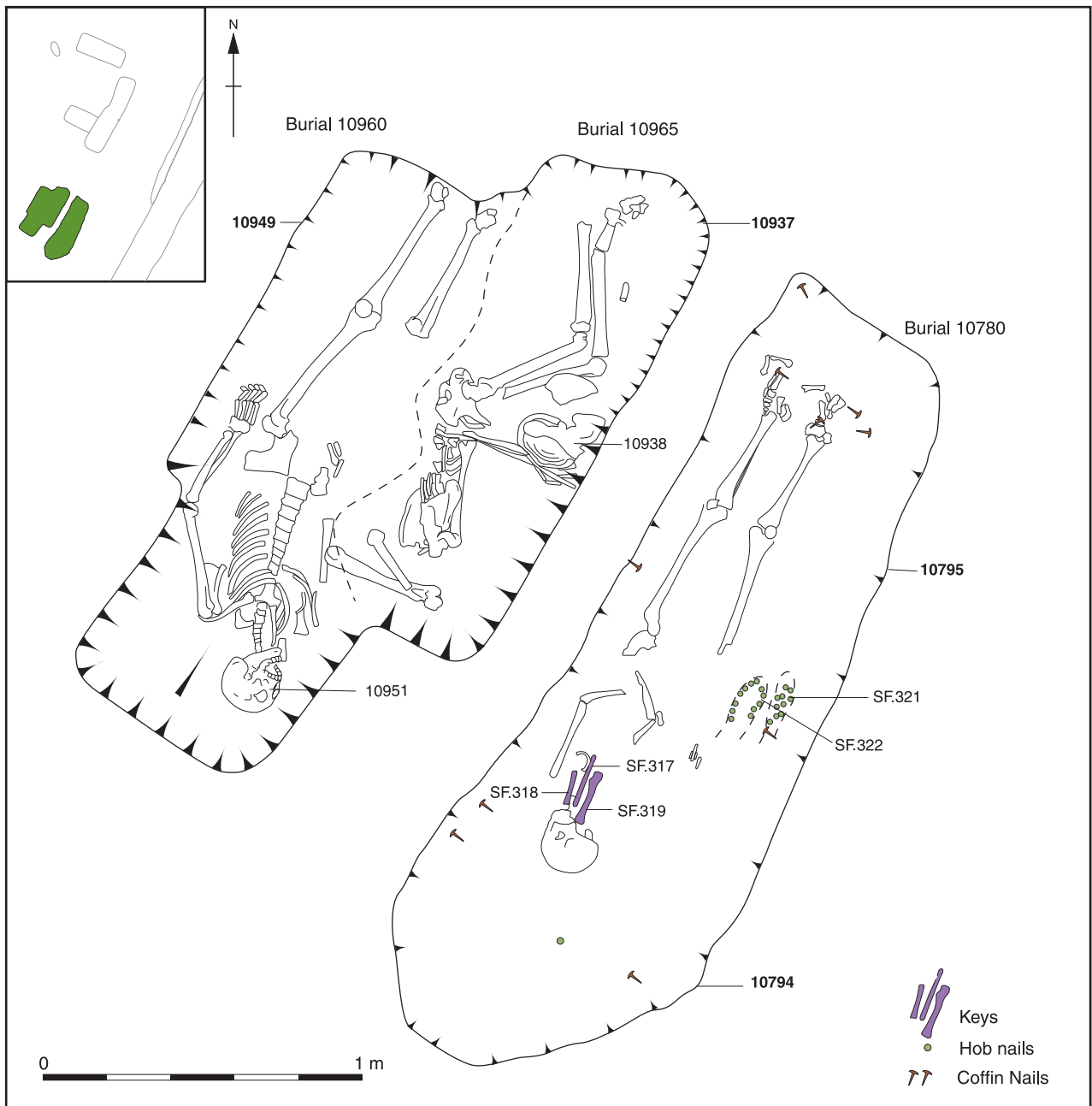


Fig. 4.27 Burials 10960 (Phase 4), 10965 (Phase 5) and 10780 (Phase 5)



Plate 4.12 Burials 10960 (right) and 10965, facing south. Scale: 1 m

long, 0.70 m wide and 0.25 m deep. The body had been placed supine, with the head to the NNE. The lower legs had been truncated by a later grave 12815 (see below). The presence of a wooden coffin is indicated by 31 iron nails from the grave fill. A fragment of colourless vessel glass (SF 3004) was found on the base of grave in the vicinity of the torso. The backfill of the grave also contained two sherds of pottery dated to the 2nd century onwards, and small fragments of animal bone. A radiocarbon determination of cal AD 70–205 (UB-5221: 1885 ± 18 BP) was obtained from the skeleton.

Burial 12815 (Fig. 4.28; Pl. 4.13) contained the remains of a male aged over 40 years (Sk 12816). The rectangular grave was aligned NNE-SSW, and

measured 1.90 m long, 0.80 m wide and 0.40 m deep. It cut the southern end of grave 12810 and the eastern end of grave 12820. The body had been interred supine with the head to the NNE, turned to face east. The right arm was flexed over the abdomen, and the legs were crossed at the ankles. The displaced skull and mandible from grave 12820 (Sk 12837) were found separately at the southern end of grave 12815. The presence of a wooden coffin was indicated by 32 iron nails from the grave fill. The backfill of the grave also contained 25 sherds of pottery dated to the 3rd century, an iron bar or ring fragment (SF 3018), and fragments of animal bone. A radiocarbon determination of cal AD 215–335 (UB-5222: 1774 ± 20 BP) was obtained from the skeleton.

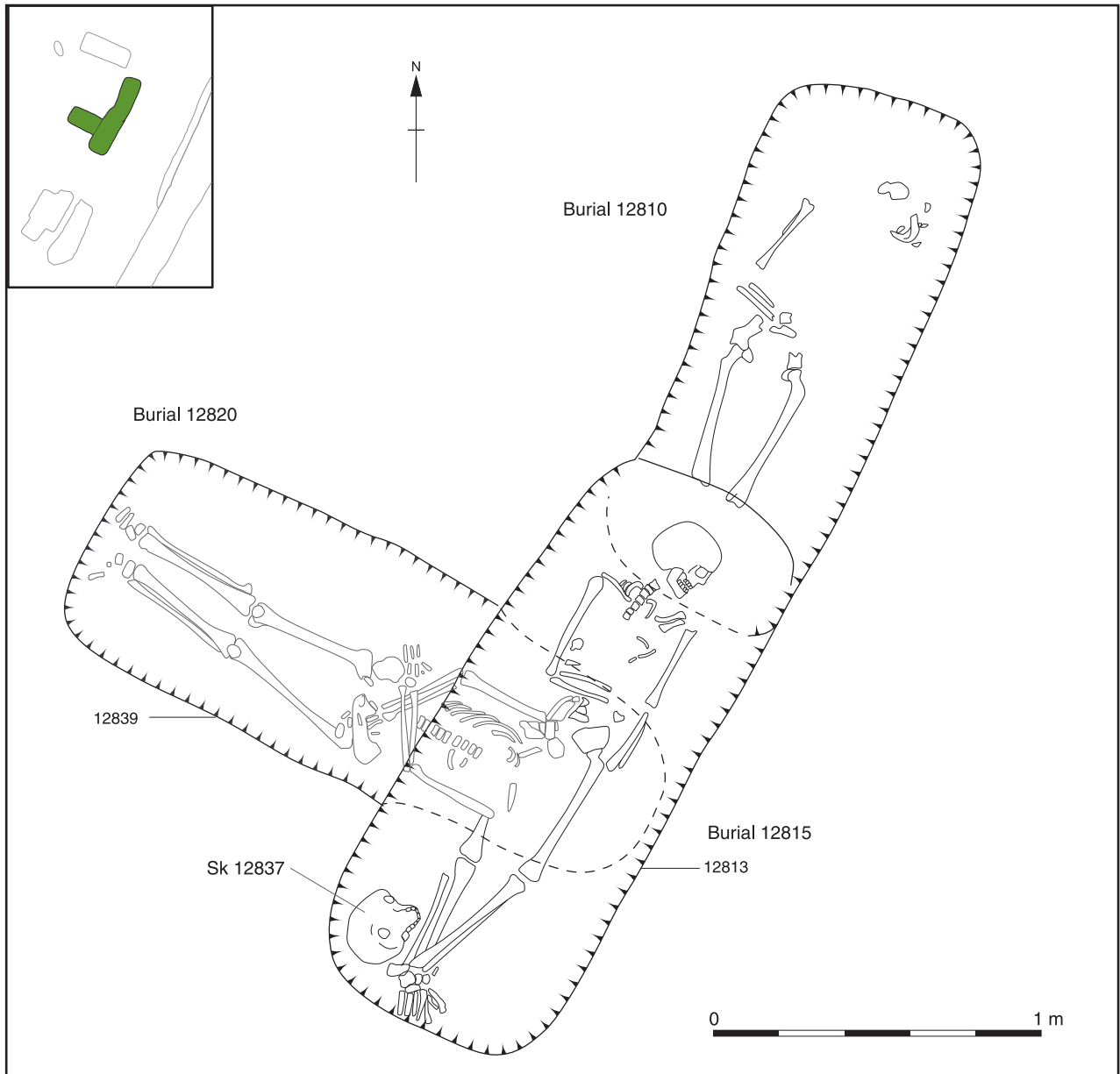


Fig. 4.28 Burials 12810, 12815 and 12820

Burial 12820 (Fig. 4.28) contained the remains of a male aged 25–35 years (Sk 12902). The grave was aligned SE-NW, and measured 1.80 m long, 0.70 m wide and 0.40 m deep. The body had been placed supine, with the head to the south-east and the arms crossed over the pelvis. As noted above, the eastern end of the grave had been cut by grave 12815, resulting in the skull and mandible being displaced into the latter feature. An imitation black burnished ware dish dated to the 3rd century or later was found near the right shoulder, although this could have been intrusive from burial 12815. The backfill of the grave also produced four further pottery sherds and fragments of animal bone. A radio-carbon determination of cal AD 75–225 (UB-5223: 1869 ± 20 BP) was obtained from the skeleton.

Well 8032 (Fig. 4.10)

Well 8032 had a circular shaft 0.45 m in internal diameter and 3.5 m deep. It had a drystone construction of limestone slabs (up to 0.43 m long) and was set within a construction cut 5 m in diameter. This construction cut predated a Phase 5 building 8019, and had an uncertain relationship with Phase 5 ditch 8290. Most of the construction cut had been backfilled with a clay packing deposit (8058) containing large fragments of unfaced limestone, 5.2 kg of pottery dating to the late 2nd to 3rd century, animal bone, iron nails and slag. The uppermost part of the cut was filled with a silty clay deposit (8048) that contained some 4th-century pottery, probably deriving from disturbance associated with the later use of the well. The fills of the



Plate 4.13 Burials 12810 and 12815, facing north-west. Scale: 2 m

well shaft itself were associated with the abandonment of the structure during the 4th century (see Phase 5 below).

Well 8278 (Fig. 4.29)

The shaft of well 8278 differed from all others at the site in being square in plan, measuring 0.4 m by 0.4 m internally. It was constructed of limestone slabs, and was excavated to a depth of 5.2 m before work was abandoned. The well shaft was set within a construction cut (8277) that flared out to a diameter of 3.5 m at the surface. This construction cut had been backfilled with a deposit of clay that contained a few sherds of pottery dated to the late 2nd century or later. The construction cut was later cut at its northern edge by ditch 8292. The fills of the well shaft itself were associated with the abandonment of the structure during Phase 5.

The eastern periphery of the settlement

A rectangular enclosure (13080) measuring 23 m NE-SW by 19 m NW-SE lay at the margins of the settlement, to the east of Plot D (Fig. 4.30). The geophysical survey suggests that this formed part of a larger group of rectilinear enclosures at the eastern periphery of the settlement. The chronology of the enclosure is not clear-cut, but finds of 2nd- and 3rd-century pottery suggest that ditches 11517,

13055, 13060 and 13065 may have been dug during this phase (or even in the latter part of Phase 3), with later alterations occurring during Phase 5 (see below).

The ditches were up to 0.75 m deep with U-shaped cuts. Ditch 13055 had been recut twice. The ditches were characterised by silty fills, probably largely naturally deposited, containing moderate quantities of finds. Aside from pottery and animal bone, finds included a copper alloy armlet fragment (SF 1788, cat no. 216) from ditch 13055. There were no internal features within the enclosure that could be attributed to this phase, although an undated hearth (11502) and posthole (11498) were present. The posthole contained the burnt remains of an *in situ* post, 0.26 m in diameter; a sample taken from this contained exclusively oak charcoal (sample 654).

Pit 10221 lay further to the east, within evaluation Trench 22 (Fig. 4.15). This feature was oval, measuring 1.80 m long and 0.30 m deep, with steep sides and a flat base. The lower fill contained much burnt stone and charcoal, and reddening of the underlying ironstone natural showed that *in situ* burning had taken place. Three sherds of 2nd-century pottery were recovered from this lower fill. The pit was then backfilled with a deposit of sandy silt containing six sherds of pottery dated to the 3rd century.

Between Villa and Town

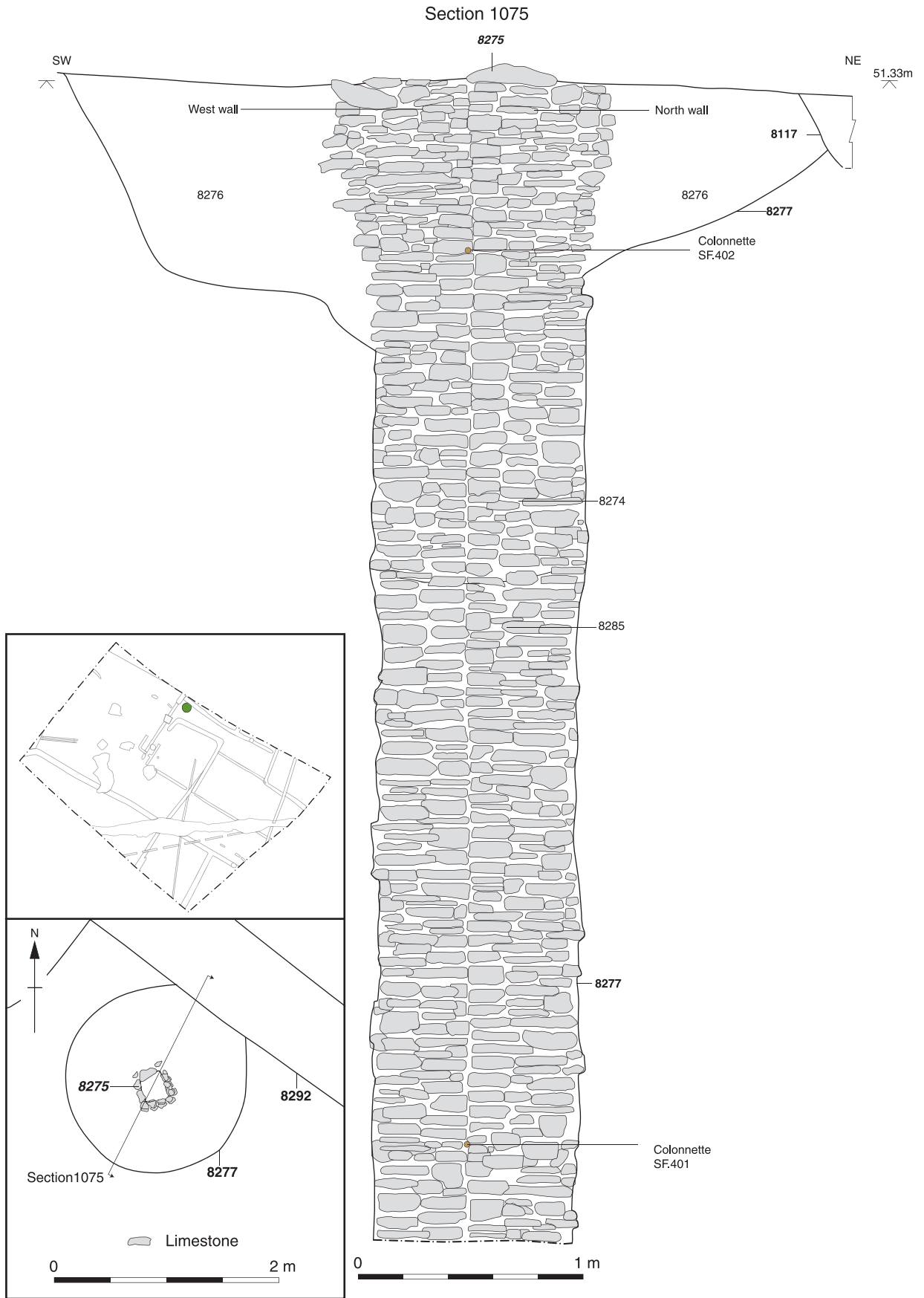


Fig. 4.29 Well 8278

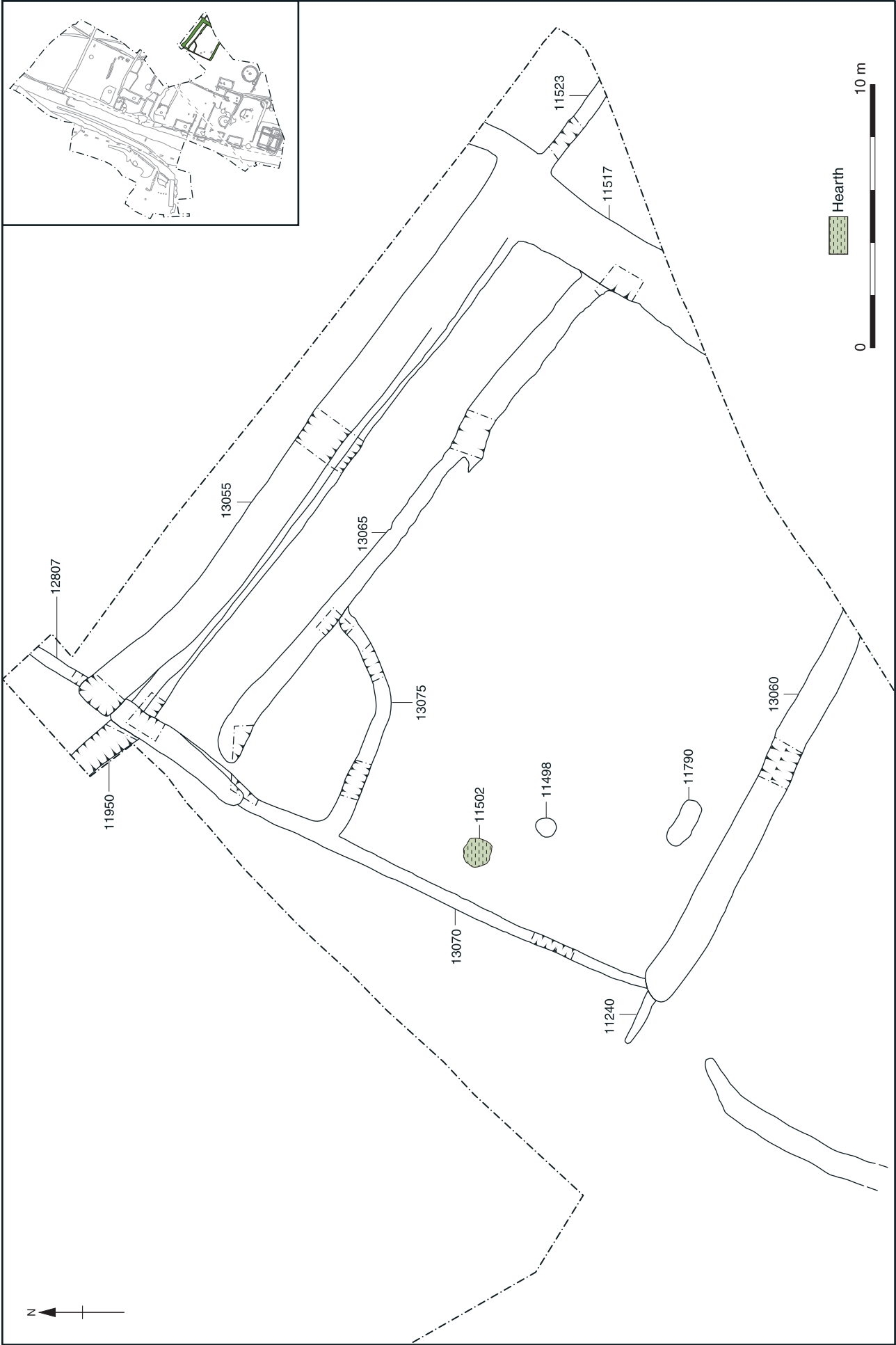


Fig. 4.30 Enclosure 13080

The shrine (Fig. 4.31)

A shrine was established on the western side of the road, opposite the main settlement buildings, apparently parallel to the edge of gravel road surface 12075/12975 (see above). However, it is clear that the structural emphasis of the shrine was not placed on the roadside frontage, but on a monumental facade facing to the south. It is possible that this facade fronted onto a trackway branching off the road and leading down towards the River Nene to the west (see discussion, Chapter 7).

The southern limit of the complex was defined by a massive wall foundation. This comprised a trench some 20.5 m long by 3.6 m wide and 0.8 m deep

(12901) cut down to the top of the underlying ironstone, with a single layer of large closely-pitched and mortared limestone slabs surviving in the base (12899). The remainder of the foundation had been robbed out. Some discrete areas of gravel surfacing abutted the south face of the wall (12853, 13007-8 and 12928). These surfaces produced few finds, although a copper alloy 'T'-shaped brooch dated to the late 1st to 2nd century (SF 3081) was recovered from 12853. Slightly further south and east were larger quantities of finds, which were of similar character to the shrine assemblage (see discussion, Chapter 7).

Between the southern facade wall and the shrine itself was a forecourt area, or outer precinct,

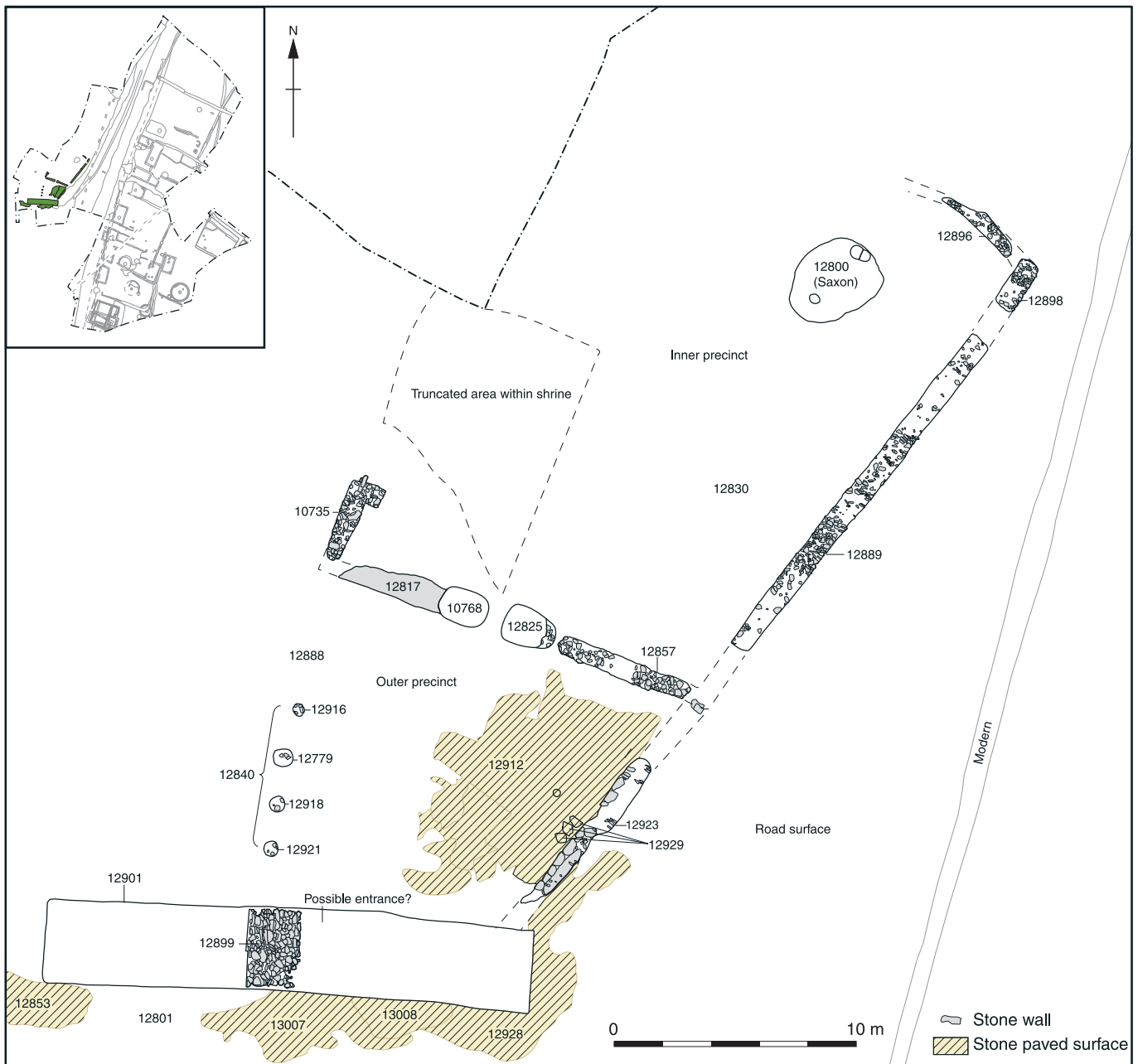


Fig. 4.31 Shrine 10930

bounded to the west by a row of four postholes (12840) and to the east by a stone wall (12923) continuing the shrine roadside boundary alignment (Fig. 4.31). The postholes were up to 0.80 m in diameter, with post sockets up to 0.40 m in diameter defined by the surrounding stone packing. The one excavated posthole (12779) was 0.13 m deep and contained no datable finds. Wall 12923 was 1.0 m thick and consisted of a single course of limestone slabs, laid flat at the west face of the wall and pitched at the east face. A limestone slab ornamented with a relief carving of a naked male (SF 3196) had been incorporated into the western face of the wall, laid face down (see Davenport, Chapter 5).

The eastern half of this forecourt area, adjacent to wall 12923, was surfaced with limestone paving, its full extent being unknown due to later truncation. The paving consisted largely of pitched stones (12912) although there were also areas of flat-laid slabs (12929) close to wall 12923. The surface was sealed by a series of destruction deposits (12924, 12925 and 12931; not shown on plan) comprising limestone rubble, gravel, large fragments of mortar, and two limestone tiles. Layer 12924 also producing a large worked limestone block (SF 3194) and two fragments from the shaft of a limestone colonnette (SF 3198). This material may have derived from the demolition of the shrine precinct to the north

and/or the facade wall to the south. Dating evidence is provided by 3rd-century pottery from destruction layer 12925.

The shrine itself was demarcated by a five-sided walled precinct, measuring 23 m long on its NE-SW axis, and 15.5 m wide at the southern frontage. No evidence for any internal structure was found. Most of the western side of the precinct appears to have been left open, with no archaeologically visible boundary present. The walls had been extensively robbed, with only a single pitched limestone foundation course generally surviving (10735, 12857, 12889 and 12896). The capital from a limestone colonnette (SF 1225) had been reused in wall 10735 (Pl. 4.14). A well-defined entrance was located in the southern side of the enclosure. This was 0.8 m wide and flanked by a pair of large foundation pits, each measuring 2.2 by 1.5 m in size and 0.5 m deep. The western pit (10768) had been entirely robbed out but the eastern pit (12825) was filled with large alternately-pitched limestone courses mortared into place, with substantial bedding layers of mortar between each course. This entrance must have been similarly monumental to the facade wall to the south.

Small amounts of pottery were recovered from the precinct walls, the latest consisting of some late 2nd- to 3rd-century material from wall 12857. Two



Plate 4.14 Shrine 10930, detail of wall 10735 showing colonnette fragment SF 1225 in situ, facing south. Scale: 1 m

coins were also recovered from wall 10735 (SF 1251: AD 81–96; SF 1252: AD 69–117). Given the degree of disturbance to the walls, however, these finds cannot be regarded as securely dating the construction of the shrine.

A thin layer of silty soil (12830) extended across most of the interior of the shrine precinct (although this was truncated to the west; see Fig. 4.31). This produced the bulk of the coins and small finds associated with the shrine, along with large amounts of pottery and animal bone. The greatest concentration of finds occurred towards the southern end of the precinct, just within the entrance, although there was a small area (c 3 x 2 m) c 8 m inside the entrance that produced almost no small finds or coins at all, suggesting that some kind of focal feature may have been located here (see Chapter 7, Figs 7.6–7). It appears that this soil was largely a post-use accumulation as quantities of limestone rubble probably deriving from the destruction of the precinct wall were present across the deposit. In some places adjacent to the line of the walls, finds within deposit 12830 were sealed by discrete patches of rubble collapse. Generally the finds were recovered from the lower part of the deposit at the interface with the underlying colluvium surface. A smaller assemblage of finds was recovered from the upper part of the colluvial soil horizon underlying 12830 and immediately to its west (11627/12434). The upper levels of the colluvium had clearly been reworked, with crushed limestone trampled into the deposit, and this probably also worked finds into the soil.

The small finds assemblage from the shrine area comprised 825 objects (discussed by Scott in Chapter 5). These included a number of overtly religious items including a cult spearhead, a possible miniature votive spear, five fragments of votive leaves, and five pieces of rolled lead sheet, one of which carried an indecipherable inscription. Large numbers of personal items were also present, including brooches, bracelets, bangles, rings and hairpins, along with over 200 hobnails. The animal bone assemblage (17.1 kg) showed an emphasis on the smaller domestic species (sheep and pig), and was unusual in including corvid, duck and wild boar remains. A single adult human metacarpal was also found.

The chronological distribution of the coins from the shrine area is discussed in detail by King (Chapter 5), but the salient point is that the main period of deposition probably lay in the later 2nd and 3rd centuries. The 73 coins from layer 12830 and the underlying colluvium surface range in date from AD 69–81 (SF 2462) to AD 388–402 (SF 1529 and 2422), but only eight post-dated the 3rd century. By far the largest group of coins consists of antoniniani dated to between AD 260 or 270 and AD 286 (39 coins), although this mirrors the dominance of later 3rd-century antoniniani within the site assemblage as a whole. The ceramics from layer 12830 (21.9 kg) mirror the coin evidence, in that

most date to the later 2nd and 3rd centuries, though with some late 3rd- to 4th-century material also present.

Structure 12456 (Fig. 4.10)

The truncated foundations of a probable structure lay 35 m north of the shrine. This was represented by a discrete area of pitched limestone slabs and tegula fragments set into the underlying colluvium, measuring 2.3 m N-S. It is possible that this represents the remains of a subsidiary roadside shrine. A minor concentration of metal finds occurred in the vicinity of the structure, including two copper alloy votive leaves (SF 2373 and 2374) found 7 m to its south-west. The wider area of the colluvial surface to the north of the main shrine produced a total of 68 metal small finds, including brooches, finger rings, hobnails and nails (finds reference 12433). Ten coins were also recovered, ranging in date from AD 69–81 (SF 2392) to AD 320–325 (SF 2376), although later 3rd-century issues predominated as in the site assemblage as a whole. The relatively high concentration of finds from this area may indicate its 'special status' (see discussion, Chapter 7).

PHASE 5: LATE 3RD TO 4TH CENTURIES

(Fig. 4.32)

During this phase, the settlement continued to expand, extending further north than before. Discrete areas of stone paving were laid down along the road frontage of the settlement, apparently in piecemeal fashion, contrasting with the coherent gravel pavement seen in the previous phase. As noted above, the shrine to the west of the road probably fell into disuse after the late 3rd century, though some 4th-century deposition of coins did take place. The religious focus may have shifted to building 8019, a small structure at the northern periphery of the settlement, which is suggested to have been a temple.

There is a marked decline in coin deposition at the site from the mid 4th century onwards (see King, Chapter 5), and very little pottery specifically datable to the late 4th century was recovered (see Timby, Chapter 5). This suggests that the settlement (or at least the excavated part of it) was largely abandoned around half a century before the end of the Roman period. The buildings were subjected to stone robbing after they went out of use, a process probably continuing into the post-Roman period. All of the wells were abandoned during the 4th century, the two fully-excavated examples (8032 and 12885) being backfilled with limestone rubble. At the time of the Saxon reoccupation of the site (mid 5th century onwards), many of the late Roman boundary ditches still existed as remnant earthwork hollows. This is shown by the cutting of Saxon pits into ditches 8292 and 8294, and by Saxon pottery recovered from the upper fill of ditch 10690 (see Hardy *et al.* 2007 for more details).



Fig. 4.32 Phase 5: late 3rd to 4th centuries

The road

The final stage of the development of the road was marked by the construction of ditch 13025, cutting the earlier limestone rubble road surface (Fig. 4.32). This ran for at least 95 m, although its southern end was unclear due to masking by later deposits. The ditch probably marked the western boundary of the road in this phase; if so, the line of road had once again shifted to the east, closer to the settlement and further from the now abandoned shrine. The northern terminus of the ditch seems to be aligned with Phase 5 enclosure ditch 10690, and these two features together may have defined the northern 'entrance' to the late Roman settlement. Ditch 13205 was up to 1.60 m wide and 0.60 m deep, with a U-

shaped profile, and contained a single fill of silty sand. There were few finds other than five sherds of pottery dated to the late 2nd century or later. A copper alloy ligula (SF 2134) was also recovered from the surface of the feature.

It is not clear whether the road itself was surfaced at this time, and it may have effectively become a dirt track. However, a patchy band of gravel visible in plan along the eastern edge of the earlier limestone surface (and visible in Fig. 4.5, section 9 as layer 12073) could possibly be the remnants of the road surface from this phase. A distinct pair of gravel-filled wheel ruts (13085) was visible in plan in this area, running north-south along the axis of the road (Fig. 4.33). The ruts were spaced 1.0–1.4 m apart.

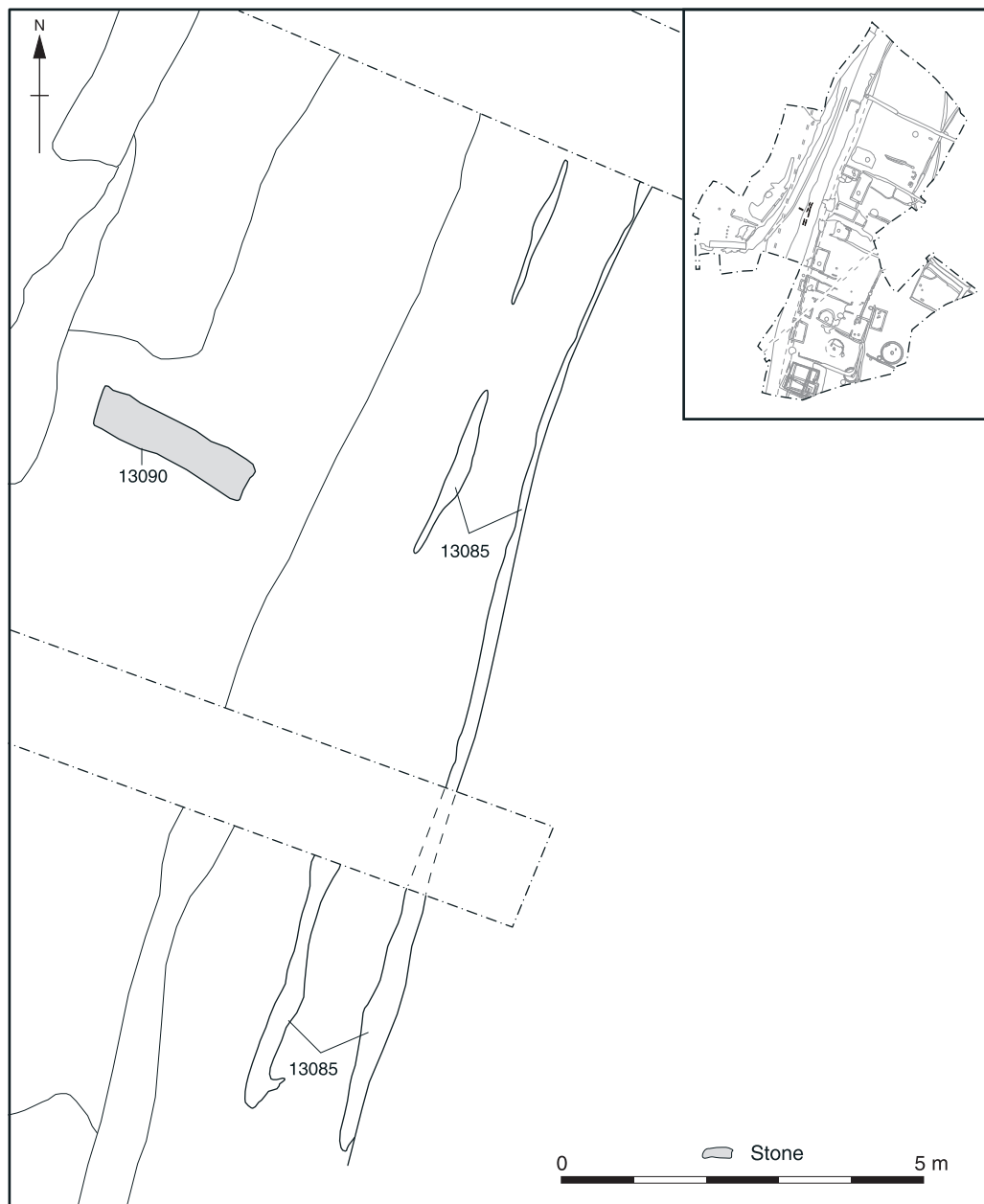


Fig. 4.33 Structure 13090 and wheel ruts 13085

Immediately west of the wheel ruts, pitched limestone foundation 13090 may also belong to this phase, as it appeared to be cut into the earlier limestone rubble road surface. This feature was not excavated, but in plan consisted of a short stretch of wall measuring 2.3 m long and 0.5 m wide (Fig. 4.33). It may have formed part of a structure situated alongside the Phase 5 road, perhaps even a small wayside shrine.

By the late 3rd century, the gravel 'pavement' (13020) running along the roadside frontage of the settlement appears to have gone out of use, being covered by sandy deposit 13100 (see Phase 4 above). Piecemeal resurfacing of the road frontage area occurred during Phase 5, with areas of limestone paving constructed in front of several properties (buildings 11620, 10800, 10820, 10830 and 10850). Silting deposits overlying some of these paved surfaces produced late 3rd- to 4th-century material (eg over surface 10907 in front of building 10800). Details are provided in the descriptions of the relevant buildings.

The settlement

During this phase, Plots A-F underwent further development, and an additional plot (Plot G) was added to the northern end of the settlement. Each plot is discussed in turn below.

Plot A (Fig. 4.11)

Building 11370 underwent internal alterations during this phase. Well 12890 also continued in use, probably being backfilled in the 4th century.

Building 11370

Further alterations to the interior of extension 12450 occurred in this phase (Fig. 4.34). The interior of the extension was resurfaced with a floor layer largely consisting of flat limestone slabs (11856/12146), but also incorporating a band of pitched ironstone fragments (12047). This floor overlay all earlier postholes within the extension, including post row 12202 (see above). Late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery was recovered from 12146. Three postholes (11820, 12082 and 12095) forming a rough north-south row were set into the stone floor. These were 0.24 m – 0.30 m in diameter and 0.12 m – 0.25 m deep, their edges being lined by thin, vertically-set limestone pieces.

A layer of silty sand containing a large proportion of limestone and ironstone fragments (11153) extending across most of building 11370 probably represents a destruction deposit. This layer contained 4th-century pottery. At some point following the abandonment of the building, stone-robbing took place. Robber trench 11330, which was clearly stratigraphically later than building 11370

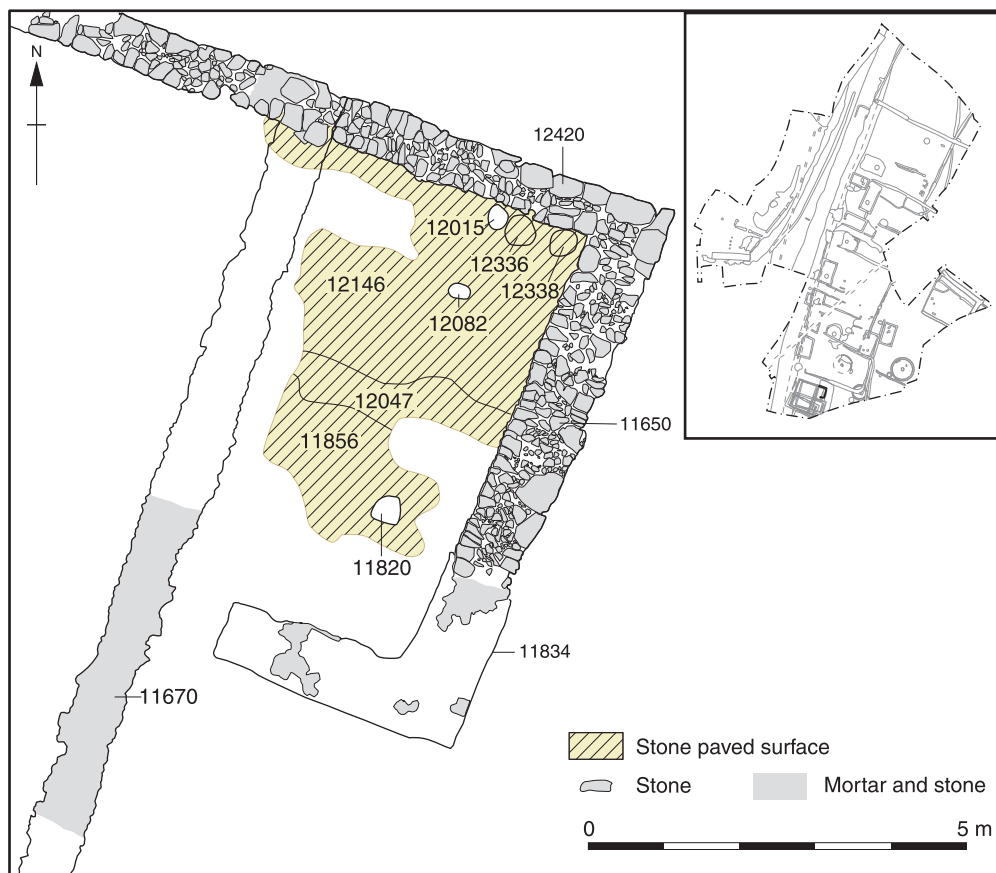


Fig. 4.34 Building 11370, Phase 5 alterations to extension 12450

and ironstone wall 11410, was dug to remove the large limestone slabs forming the foundation of the earlier building 10860. A coin dated to AD 330–348 (SF 1449) was recovered from the upper fill of this robber trench.

Well 12890 (Fig. 4.7)

Only the uppermost 0.80 m of the fill of well 12890 was excavated, consisting of a single deposit of green-grey sandy silt. By analogy with the sequence seen in other wells on the site, this deposit is likely to represent a final silting episode after the shaft was backfilled during the 4th century. Dating evidence is provided by 200 g of late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery.

Plot B (Fig. 4.11)

The boundary around Plot B was redefined in this phase in the form of a rectangular enclosure. Building 11620 may have continued in use into the late 3rd century, although there was no evidence for later occupation. Two smaller structures (13030 and 13035) were built to the east of 11620.

Boundary ditches (Fig. 4.32)

The earlier ditches forming the boundary of Plot B were recut to form a more regular rectangular enclosure. On the southern side of the enclosure the ditch was recut at least twice (ditches 13005 and

13010), while only a single cut could be seen on the eastern side (ditch 11940). The ditches on these sides received pottery into the 4th century. Ditch 11530 on the northern side of the enclosure cut through building 10870, which was abandoned in the late 3rd or 4th century (see Plot C below). It produced late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery, and a coin of AD 270–274 (SF 1427) from the base of the feature.

Building 11620 (Fig. 4.14)

Four late 3rd-century coins found during the machine stripping of the interior of building 11620 hint that occupation of the structure continued into Phase 5 (SF 1146 and 1469: *c* AD 260–286; SF 1467: *c* AD 270–286; SF 1468: AD 270). The construction of an external paved surface (11985) abutting the western wall of the building probably occurred in this phase, by analogy with similar paved areas at the road frontage of other Phase 5 buildings (10800, 10820, 10830 and 10850). This paved surface consisted of flat-laid limestone slabs, set directly over the earlier gravel pavement 13020 (Fig. 4.3, section 3). The paved surface was later overlain by a thin layer of sandy silt (11988) that produced 560 g of late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery.

Following abandonment of the building, parts of the east and west walls were entirely robbed out (robber cuts 11753 and 11756 respectively). These features produced no finds.



Plate 4.15 Structure 13030, drain 11611, facing east. Scale: 0.5 m

Structure 13030 (Fig. 4.35)

Lying 8.5 m to the east of building 11620, 13030 was a rectilinear structure of unknown purpose formed from gullies and a drain, measuring 5.0 m NNE-SSW by 3.0 m WNW-ESE. The most notable feature of the structure was 'box drain' 11611. Limestone slabs had been set on edge to form the sides of this drain, with further slabs laid flat across the top (Pl. 4.15). This feature and a parallel shallow gully 11607/11609 may have drained into deeper gully 11613, which ran on a perpendicular alignment. Two patches of a rubble surface lay closely adjacent to the structure (11585 and 11601), formed from limestone fragments up to 0.20 m across.

The gullies and drain each had an identical fill of dark brown sandy silt. Finds included 560 g of pottery, with some late 3rd- to 4th-century material from gully 11613 suggesting a Phase 5 attribution for the structure. Surface cleaning of the area of the structure produced a further 1.7 kg of late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery (finds reference 11453).

Structure 13035 (Fig. 4.36)

Structure 13035 lay 9 m south-east of building 11620. The overall form of the structure is unclear, but the combination of a stone-paved surface with a row

of postholes suggests a small building of some kind.

The area of the structure was defined by a thin layer of sandy silt and small stone fragments (11583), measuring *c* 3.5 m by 5.5 m. This probably served as the preparation layer for a paved surface (11582) which survived in patches overlying the eastern part of 11583, consisting of flat-laid limestone slabs measuring up to 0.45 m in length. Immediately west of the paved surface, a patch of red scorched material within layer 11583 may have marked the location of a hearth or oven. To the west of this, and cut into layer 11583, was a 4.7-m long row of four postholes on a NNW-SSE alignment (11586, 11589, 11698 and 11700). The postholes were spaced 0.9 m – 1.1 m apart, and were up to 0.60 m in diameter and 0.16 m deep; no post-pipes were apparent. Posthole 11586 contained two coins, both dated to AD 268–271 (SF 1647 and 1648). This provides the only clear dating evidence for the structure, although it is uncertain whether these small items entered the posthole at the point of construction or after the post was removed. Posthole 11589 contained a semi-complete shell-tempered ware pottery jar, which must have been deposited after the post was removed given its central location within the feature. The pot could

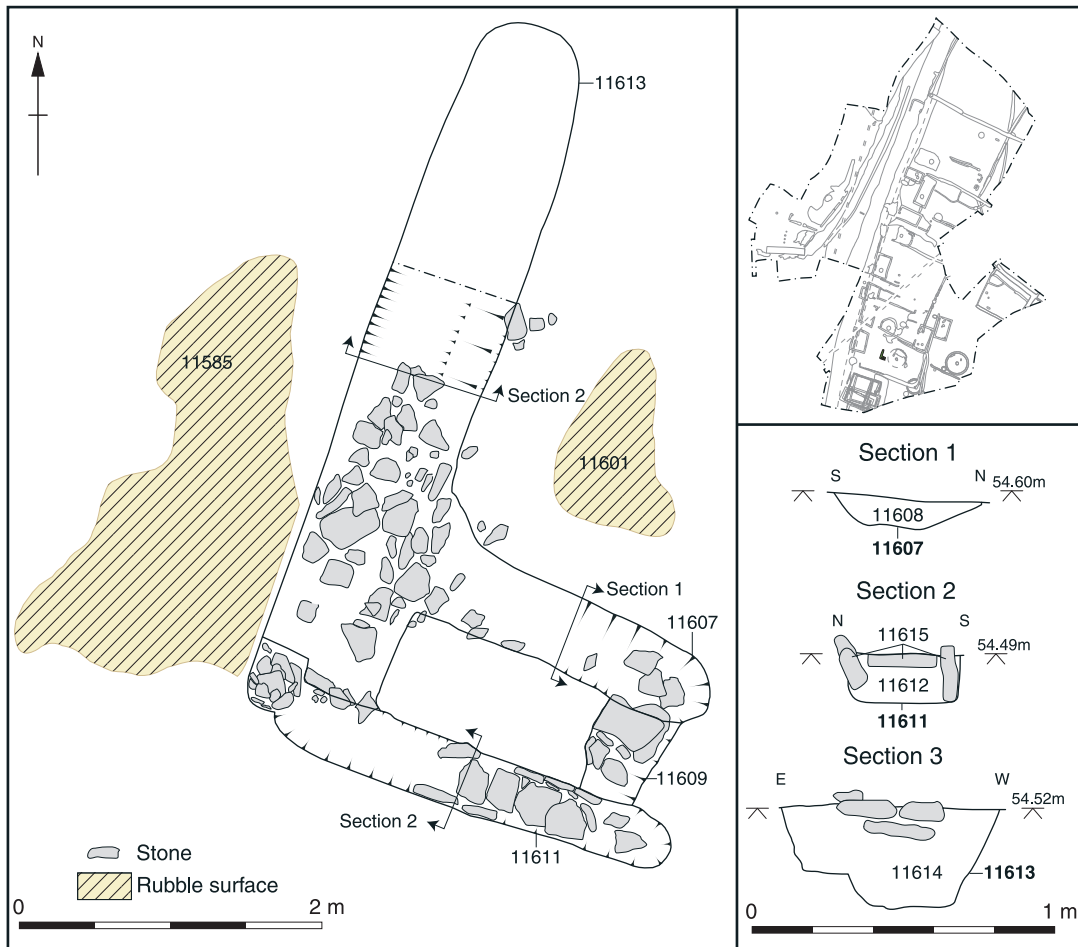


Fig. 4.35 Structure 13030



Fig. 4.36 Structure 13035

perhaps have been a deliberate deposit associated with the abandonment of the structure.

Following abandonment, the structure was overlain by a layer of silty soil (11485). This layer contained a number of finds including 2 kg of pottery, largely dating to the 3rd century, and a T-shaped copper alloy brooch (SF 1650).

Pit 11803 (Fig. 4.32)

Bowl-shaped pit 11803 lay immediately south of building 11620, and was 4.0 m in diameter and 0.80 m deep. The single fill (11803) contained frequent limestone fragments, which produced 850 g of pottery dated to the 4th century, two coins dating to AD 270 (SF 1827 and 1905), a small copper alloy bar (SF 1828), a possible bone handle (SF 1844), 850 g of ceramic building material and 1 kg of animal bone.

Plot C (Fig. 4.11)

The overall layout of Plot C was little changed in this phase. Buildings 10850 and 10870 were remodelled, and there is slighter evidence that buildings 10880 and 11630 continued in use. Building 10890 may also have been occupied into this phase, although certain evidence for this is lacking (see Phase 4 above).

Building 10850 (Fig. 4.37)

Building 10850 underwent extensive alteration during this phase. A rectangular extension (12681) was added to the western side of the building, with the original west wall partially removed and robbed out (robber trench 12499). The extension measured 4.5 m NNE-SSW by 2.1 m WNW-ESE internally, and had a different construction to the rest of the building, with a single foundation course of pitched limestone and ironstone overlain by a course of flat limestone slabs. The interior of the extension was paved with a floor surface of small pieces of

limestone and ironstone (12158), the edge of which was marked by a kerb or threshold of flat-laid limestone slabs (12255) overlying the line of the original west wall of the building. An external paved surface of similar limestone and ironstone construction (12490) abutted the western wall of the extension, overlying the earlier roadside gravel 'pavement' 13020.

Within the main part of the building, a thin, patchy layer of yellow clay (12563/12689) overlay the early occupation horizon of reworked colluvium. This layer, which probably represents the remains of a floor surface, is dated by a coin of AD 284–294 (SF 1667; ctx 12563). The building was subsequently re-floored in stone, an event probably contemporary with the addition of extension 12681. Much of the western part of the building was surfaced with small limestone and ironstone pieces (12373), similar to floor 12158 and similarly abutting kerb 12255. The northern edge of floor layer 12373 was defined by a kerb of three limestone slabs set on edge (12917) and a possible truncated limestone wall (12642). The area to the north of this partition was floored with larger limestone slabs (12256/12680).

Internal features probably contemporary with these late floor surfaces included a hearth, a pit, an oven and three postholes (see Table 4.3). Hearth 12602 was square in plan, and was cut into reworked colluvial layers 12603/12660, with no relationship to the later floor levels. It was filled with burnt stones and sealed with a layer of burnt clay, the latter producing a few sherds of 3rd- to 4th-century pottery.

Pit 12698 was cut through clay floor layer 12563. It was tightly packed with 3 kg of 3rd-century pottery, possibly representing a 'ritual' deposit. The pit was subsequently cut by oven 11625 (Pl. 4.16). This was U-shaped in plan, with a sunken west-facing flue 0.24 m wide and 0.34 m deep. The oven

walls (12662) were built flush with the construction cut and consisted of four courses of limestone slabs (up to 0.28 m long) lined with a thin layer of clay which had baked *in situ*. The oven walls were constructed over a floor of rough limestone slabs up to 0.48 m long. To the west of the oven flue was a bowl-shaped stoking pit (12605). The eastern half of the stoking pit was paved with limestone slabs (12663), similar to the floor of the oven but

constructed at a slightly lower level, with a clay 'ramp' marking the junction between the two. The fills of the oven flue and stoking pit contained patches of burnt clay and charcoal, but the relatively low quantities of these suggest that the feature had been cleaned out before it was backfilled. A few sherds of 3rd-century pottery were recovered from the fill of the flue. The construction of this feature was similar to that of a corndrier.



Section 1644

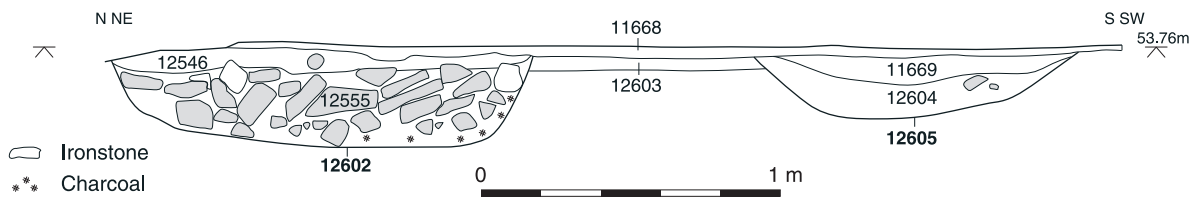


Fig. 4.37 Building 10850 (Phase 5)

Table 4.3 Building 10850. Summary of internal features (Phase 5)

Feature	Interpretation	Diameter (m)	Depth (m)	Pottery (g)	Animal bone (g)	Other finds
11625	Oven	2.95	0.23	228	15	Fired clay, CBM
12507	Posthole	0.16	0.16	-	-	
12509	Posthole	0.14	0.08	-	-	
12602	Hearth	1.28	0.30	170	-	Iron nail, CBM
12608	Posthole	0.50	0.26	-	-	
12698	Pit	0.60	0.05	2987	-	



Plate 4.16 Building 10850, oven 11625 cutting pottery-filled pit 12698, facing east. Scale: 2 m

Postholes 12507 and 12509 were set into stone floor surfaces 12373 and 12256 respectively. Posthole 12608 had no stratigraphic relationship to any of the floor layers within the building, but truncated a buried pottery vessel 12616 ascribed to Phase 4 (see above). Neither of these postholes contained any finds.

Following its abandonment, the building was subjected to stone robbing (robber cuts 12154, 12155, 12156 and 12251). The interior of the building was overlain by a layer of silty soil that contained few finds other than some 3rd-century pottery.

Building 10880 (Fig. 4.17)

The evidence for the use of building 10880 during this phase is difficult to interpret. As noted above (see Phase 4), a coin dated to AD 270–274 (SF 2133) was recovered from the eastern room of the building, but it is unclear whether this derives from an occupation or destruction deposit (ctx 12183). Two fragments of copper alloy votive leaves (SF 2305 and 2005) also came from this deposit. Otherwise, the only evidence for activity in this phase comes from a cluster of three inter-cutting pits (12142, 12144 and 12167), two of which (12142 and 12144) produced late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery. These pits lay across the projected line of the north wall of the eastern room, which may suggest that they date to after the abandonment of the building. However, if, as suggested above, the eastern room was in fact open along its north side, then the pits could have been contemporary with the latter stages of the occupation of the building.

The three pits had bowl-shaped profiles, up to 0.60 m deep, and silty fills. A sequence could be seen whereby 12167 was cut by 12144, which was in turn cut by 12142. In addition to pottery and animal bone, finds included a copper alloy bracelet fragment (SF 2231) from pit 2142.

The robbing of stone from building 10880 following its abandonment was represented by a series of robber trenches (11817, 12390 and 12393). The latest pottery from the backfills of the robber trenches comprised 3rd-century material from 12390. This robber trench also produced a pair of copper alloy tweezers (SF 2235).

Building 11630 (Fig. 4.15)

Building 11630 may have continued in use into this phase, although this cannot be proven given the paucity of dating evidence from the structure. Following the abandonment of the building, its interior was overlain by a layer of silt containing limestone rubble (12222). A coin dated to AD 330–335 (SF 2551) was recovered from this layer.

Building 10870 (Fig. 4.38)

Remodelling of the internal features within the northern half of building 10870 took place during this phase (Table 4.4). Initially, an ironstone rubble floor surface (11327) was laid down (Fig. 4.38 A).

This produced 1.3 kg of 3rd- to 4th-century pottery, eight iron nails, a bone needle (SF 1842, cat no. 43) and fragments of animal bone. The floor surface was later partially overlain by a patchy surface of flat limestone slabs (11326/11767), perhaps an attempt at repair, and a linear band of pitched limestone (11325) was laid over the floor surface around the inner edge of the wall of the building.

A hearth (11712) and two pits (11718 and 11736) were cut into floor surface 11327 and may have been in contemporary use. Hearth 11712 was a bowl-shaped feature with scorched edges and a fill rich in burnt material. An environmental sample from the fill (sample 661) produced moderate amounts of charred barley, indeterminate cereal grain and weed seeds. Pit 11718 was a shallow feature of unknown function. Pit 11736 contained the truncated remains of a pot, which had probably been placed standing upright, flush with the cut. While this could represent a ritual 'offering' it is also possible that the vessel served a practical function as a container set into the floor. The pot was of an unknown form in a handmade shelly ware.

No floor surface was present in the southern half of the building, other than reworked colluvium layer 11472 (see Phase 4 above). Two features cut into this layer are likely to have been contemporary with floor surface 11327 to the north. Located roughly in the centre of the building, hearth 11743 was a shallow feature with a burnt clay fill. Placed between hearths 11712 and 11743, pit 11367 had steep sides and a flat base, and contained a relatively high density of animal bone.

The east-facing entrance of the building associated with this phase of use was represented by a beamslot (11706), 1.28 m long and 0.10 m deep, with a posthole at either end (11476 and 11478). The posthole at the northern end of the beamslot was significantly deeper than that at the southern end (0.32 m compared to 0.12 m). The fills of the beamslot and postholes were stony, and may have derived from backfilling after removal of the timbers, rather than from *in situ* rotting. Dating evidence is provided by a few sherds of late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery from posthole 11476.

At a later stage of Phase 5, a further episode of resurfacing of the northern half of the building took place (Fig. 4.38 B), with a series of stone floor surfaces laid out, respecting a large central hearth (11283). This hearth was an irregularly-shaped feature, measuring 2.8 m across and 0.23 m deep, and overlain the earlier hearth 11743 and pit 11367. It was filled with ironstone rubble in a scorched clay matrix. At the centre of the hearth was a 1 m-diameter circular setting of limestone slabs (11315), set at a 45° angle so as to form a bowl-shaped feature. This was filled with ironstone and clay in the same manner as the rest of the hearth. A small group of flat limestone slabs (11314) had been laid on the upper surface of the hearth, immediately east of the circular setting 11315.

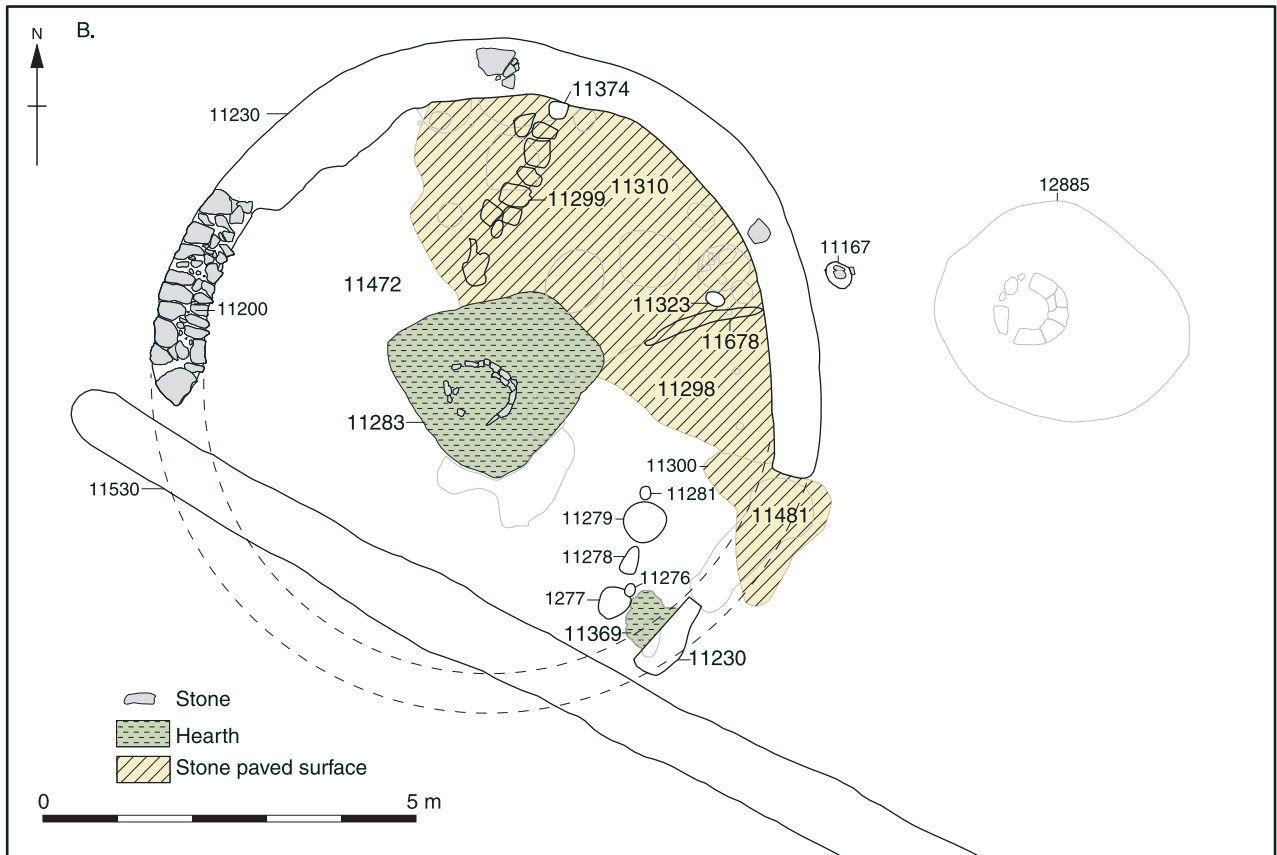
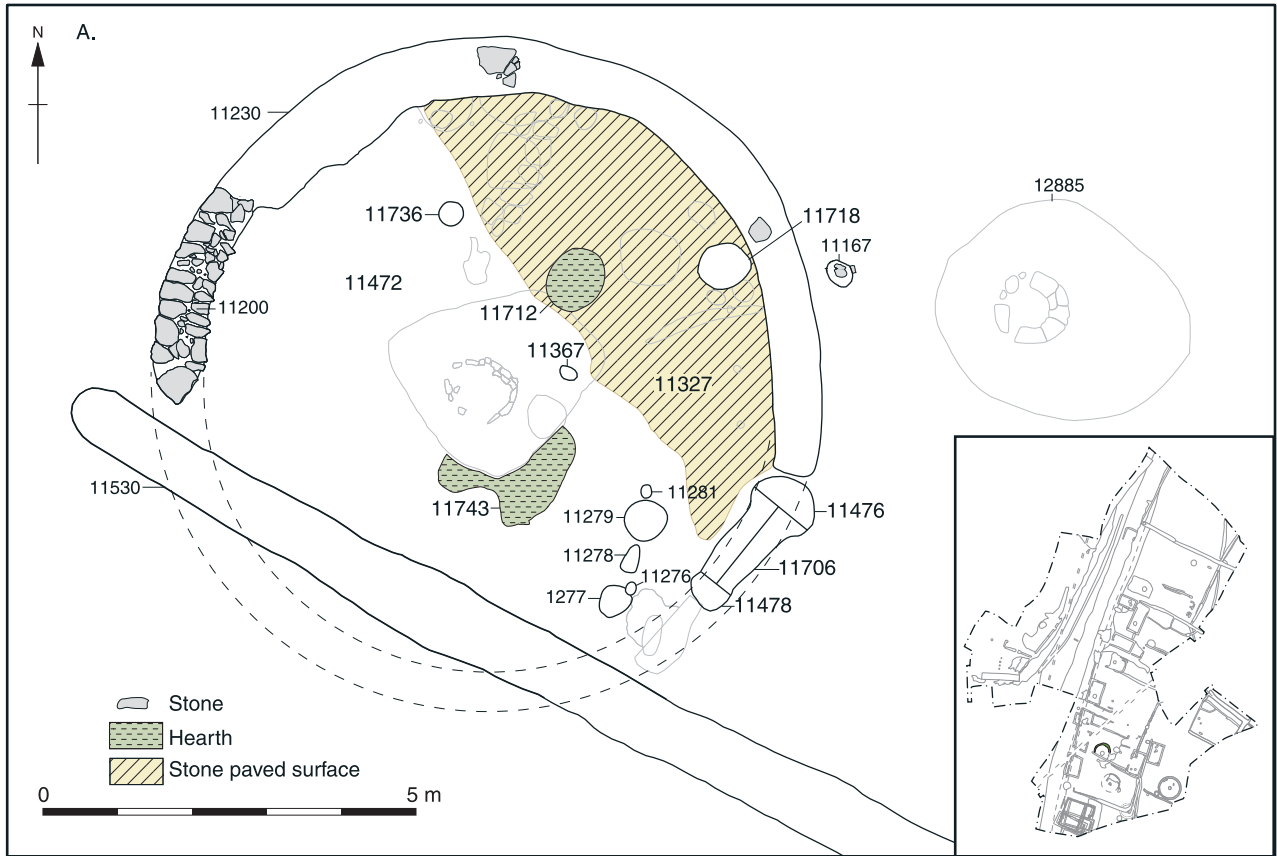


Fig. 4.38 Building 10870 (A: Phase 5 stratigraphically early features; B: Phase 5 stratigraphically late features)

Two distinct floor surfaces abutted the northern edge of the hearth, one constructed of flat ironstone slabs (11298), and the other of ironstone rubble (11310). The junction between the two was marked by a kerb of limestone slabs pitched upright (11678). A linear arrangement of limestone slabs (11299) within ironstone floor surface 11310 also probably marked a partition of some kind. Features 11678 and 11299 together suggest a radial division of space within the building, with partitions arranged like the spokes of a wheel around the focal central hearth (Pl. 4.7). The area just within the entrance, meanwhile, was paved with pitched limestone slabs (11300). Outside the building, an extensive limestone and ironstone surface (11481) was laid down, overlying the earlier beamslot entrance. This may represent a yard area in front of the building. Dating evidence for this stage in the life of the building is provided by 800 g of late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery from floor surface 11310. This floor layer also produced a coin dating to AD 103–235 (SF 1472), a bone tool handle, an iron awl (SF 1473), an iron strip and three iron nails.

Internal features stratigraphically associated with this latest stage of the occupation of the building included two pits cut into ironstone floor surface 11310 (11323 and 11374). Pit 11323 contained a relatively high density of pottery, dated to the late 3rd to 4th century, and a small fragment of a limestone roof tile (perhaps deriving from the abandoned shrine, where more complete examples were found). Pit 11374 had a charcoal-rich fill that contained no finds.

Also probably belonging to the latest history of the building was a small hearth with a burnt clay fill (11369) found to the south of the entrance, cutting burial 11390. Dating evidence was provided by a coin of AD 330–348 (SF 1449).

The building was subsequently overlain by limestone rubble from the demolition or collapse of the structure. Finds from these layers included some 3rd-century pottery and a whetstone (SF 1436). At some stage following its abandonment, the building was truncated by enclosure ditch 11530

(see below). The final event in the history of the building was the robbing of most of limestone wall 11200 down to foundation level. This is represented by robber trench 11230, which cut through the rubble destruction layers, hearth 11369, and ditch 11530. Finds from the robber trench included late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery.

Well 12885 (Figs 4.18 and 4.19)

The infilling of well 12885 occurred in this phase. In the base of the well shaft was a loose black water-logged silt (12716) 0.5 m in thickness which covered the possible water inlet and the lower half of the worked limestone block. A late 3rd-century pottery assemblage (1.9 kg) was retrieved from this layer, and three samples taken from this fill (samples 682–4) yielding coleoptera and a range of water-logged plant remains. Above this primary water-logged fill a deep rubble fill (12601) had been deliberately dumped into the shaft. Finds recovered from this backfill deposit included 200 sherds of late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery and a fragment of copper alloy binding (SF 2749, cat no. 393). Above this, fill 11223 was a mix of silt, limestone rubble and domestic debris including charcoal and ash, probably originating from a hearth. A sample from this fill (sample 648) contained charred wheat grain and weed seeds. Subsequent fill 11222 was a deposit of limestone slabs, deposited during the slumping of the well shaft that resulted in its irregular profile at this point. This fill included 49 sherds (1340 g) of pottery dating to the 4th century. The final fill of the shaft (11115) was a silting deposit, which contained no datable material.

Plot D (Fig. 4.11)

Building 10840 was constructed at the western edge of Plot D during this phase. An ironstone roadside wall (11010) appears to respect this building, and hence can also be attributed to this phase. At the rear of the plot, a series of inhumation burials (burial group 13045) was inserted into the earth-work hollow of earlier ditch 12880.

Table 4.4 Building 10870. Summary of internal features (Phase 5)

<i>Feature</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>Diameter (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Pottery (g)</i>	<i>Animal bone (g)</i>	<i>Other finds</i>
11323	Pit	0.34	0.15	1805	19	
11367	Pit	0.46	0.20	-	410	
11369	Hearth	0.72	0.15	15	-	Coin (SF 1449)
11374	Pit	0.24	0.12	-	-	
11476	Posthole	0.92	0.32	64	71	
11478	Posthole	0.52	0.12	188	-	
11706	Beamslot	1.28	0.10	66	19	
11712	Hearth	0.85	0.30	39	-	Fired clay
11718	Pit	0.70	0.10	18	16	
11736	Pit	0.35	0.20	1126	11	
11743	Hearth	0.64	0.06	-	4	

Building 10840 (Fig. 4.39)

Building 10840 was a rectangular structure fronting onto the roadway and overlying former roadside ditch 10680 (Table 4.5). It measured 11 m NNE-SSW by 6.5 m WNW-ESE internally. Large quantities of finds were recovered from occupation and destruction deposits within the building, including 43 coins. Most of these finds were recovered from the southern half of building, reflecting the fact that the destruction layers overlying the northern half of the building were largely machined away prior to excavation. The dating evidence suggests that the

building originated in the later 3rd century and was abandoned in the mid to late 4th century.

The walls of the building had been completely robbed away in many places, but survived in parts of the north, south and west sides of the structure (12833 and 12834). Preservation was best at the north wall, where up to three courses survived. A foundation course of pitched ironstone was overlain by a course of large, flat-laid limestone slabs. This was in turn overlain by a course consisting of flat-laid limestone slabs at the exterior face of the wall and pitched limestone slabs at the interior face and in the wall core.

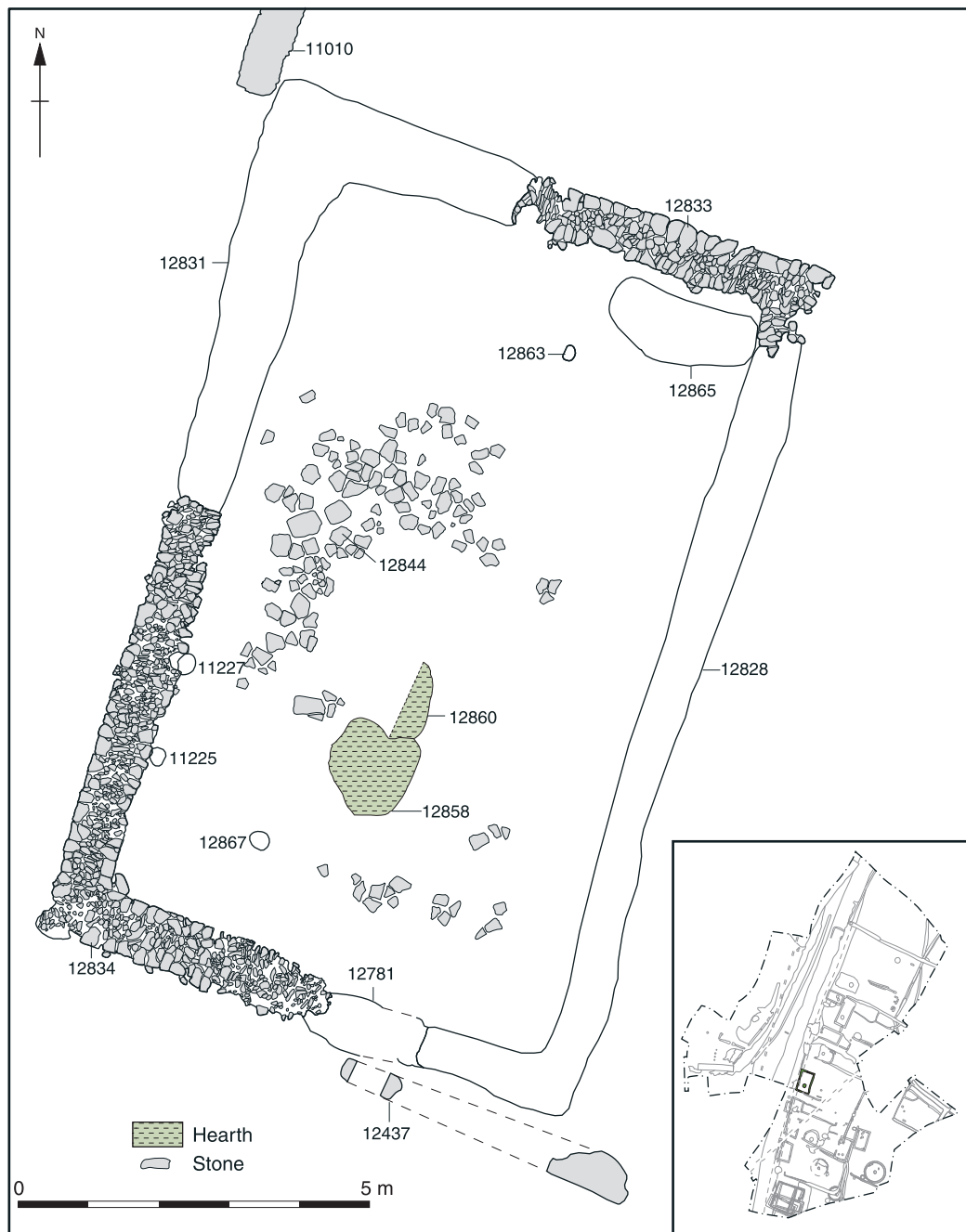


Fig. 4.39 *Building 10840*

Two pottery vessels had been set into the ground within the building, standing upright adjacent to the west wall. One of these (11227) was unfortunately stolen from site. To forestall further theft, the second vessel (11225) – a grog-tempered white ware jar – was rapidly excavated out of stratigraphic sequence (Pl. 4.17). It is thus unclear where the vessels belong in the sequence of occupation of the building, and whether they represent ritual ‘offerings’ or functional containers. While vessel 11225 has been dated to the 2nd century, its fill contained a few sherds from other vessels datable to the late 3rd to 4th century.

Other internal features (Table 4.5)

Stratigraphically early features within the building, cut directly into the underlying colluvium, included a hearth located towards the southern end of the structure (12860) and two postholes (12863 and

12867). The hearth was a bowl-shaped feature, lined with sherds of late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery and a fired clay oven plate (see Poole, Chapter 5); the fill consisted of scorched clay. It is possible that this feature was a domestic cooking structure or a small grain-drying oven. Also directly overlying the colluvium was a paved floor surface of limestone slabs (up to 0.40 m long) in the western part of the building (12844). It is possible that this floor surface related to an entrance in the west wall of the building.

These features were sealed by a probable occupation layer of silty sand (12836) that extended across most of the building. This layer contained seven coins suggesting a later 3rd-century date. Four date to AD 260–286 (SF 3070–1, 3076 and 3104), one to AD 268–270 (SF 3069), one to AD 218–222 (SF 3080) and one to AD 193–211 (SF 3072). Other finds included 3rd-century pottery, a copper alloy

Table 4.5 Building 10840. Summary of internal features

Feature	Interpretation	Diameter (m)	Depth (m)	Pottery (g)	Animal bone (g)	Other finds
12858	Hearth	1.54	0.14	-	2	
12860	Hearth	1.16	0.18	4127	-	Fired clay slab
12863	Posthole	0.16	0.08	-	-	
12865	Pit	2.25	0.28	119	25	
12867	Posthole	0.30	0.14	-	-	

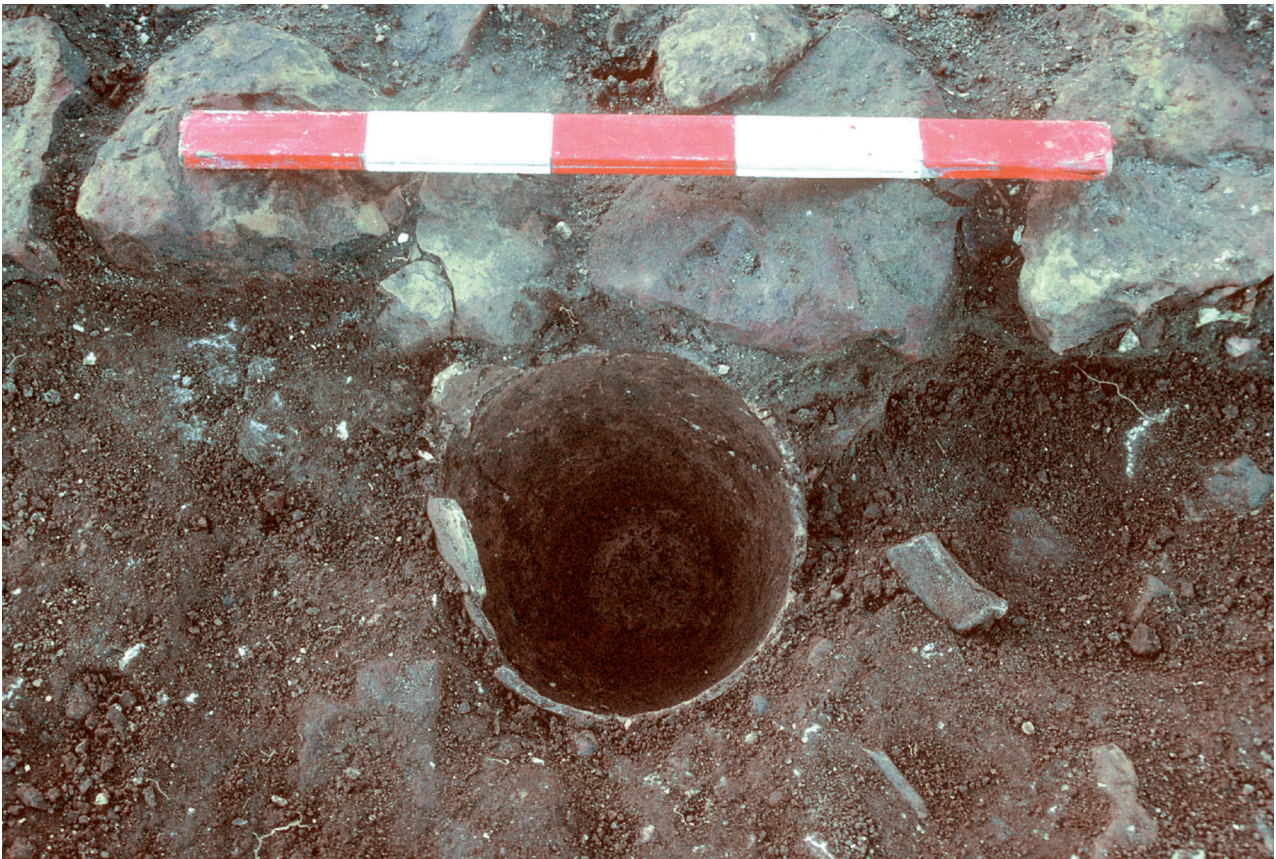


Plate 4.17 Building 10840, buried pottery vessel 11225. Scale: 0.5 m

bracelet (SF 3163, cat. no. 221), a copper alloy finger ring (SF 3077, cat. no. 259) and an iron key (SF 3160, cat. no. 385). A hearth in the southern end of the building (12858), cutting earlier hearth 12860, appears to have been contemporary with this layer. The hearth was a bowl-shaped feature with a fill of scorched silt, overlain by a paving of burnt limestone slabs. A sample from the fill of the hearth (sample 690) contained charred wheat grain and weed seeds. At the northern end of the building, occupation layer 12836 was cut by an oval pit (12865). This had steep sides and a flat base, and was filled with large pieces of limestone and ironstone.

Occupation layer 12836 was subsequently overlain by a deposit of limestone and ironstone rubble in a sandy silt matrix, 0.25 m thick, which extended across much of the southern half of the building (12835). It is conceivable that this represents a late episode of resurfacing, but it seems more likely to be associated with the destruction of the building. It produced 2.2 kg of late 4th-century pottery, and seven coins, one dated to AD 330–360 (SF 3097) and the others to the later 3rd century (SF 3098–3103, 3153 and 3156). Other finds included a copper alloy bracelet fragment (SF 3105, cat. no. 220), an iron ‘mason’s gad’ (SF 3075, cat. no. 7) and four iron nails. Also recovered was a femur from a neonate aged 35–36 weeks, which could derive from an unrecognised infant burial within this layer.

Eight coins found using a metal detector within the southern end of building 10840 prior to its excavation also appear to have come from destruction layer 12835. The coins include two dated to *c* AD 330–348 (SF 1349 and 1354), one to AD 335–341 (SF 1350) and one to AD 312–316 (SF 1353), along with four later 3rd-century issues (SF 1347–8 and 1351–2). These coins may have derived from a hoard (see King, Chapter 5). The numerous other pre-excavation surface and metal-detector finds from within the building (finds reference 10624) lack any stratigraphic information. These finds included 16 further coins, 15 of which date to the later 3rd century, a copper alloy spoon fragment (SF 1157, cat. no. 352) and a copper alloy terminal with enamel decoration (SF 1120, cat. no. 367).

Robbing of the walls after the abandonment of the building was represented by robber trenches 12828 and 12831. Trench 12828 produced two extremely worn coins dating to *c* AD 260–286 (SF 3078 and SF 3079), presumably redeposited from the earlier occupation of the building.

Wall 11010 (Figs 4.32 and 4.39)

Ironstone wall 11010 ran along the road frontage of Plot D for 9 m, overlying the former roadside ditch 10680. The wall was 0.85 m wide, and consisted of two courses of flat slabs (*c* 0.20 m long) overlaid by a third course of pitched stone. No datable finds were recovered, but the southern end of the wall appears to respect building 10840. It is conceivable that the wall defined part of a compound around

building 10840 along with ironstone walls 12437 and 12438 to the south, although these latter features have tentatively been interpreted as elements of an earlier building (see Phase 4 above).

Burial group 13045 (Fig. 4.40)

Burial group 13045 consisted of five adult inhumations cut into the top of ditch 12880 and following its alignment (burials 10950, 10970, 12655, 12685 and 12725). These must post-date the backfilling of the ditch in the late 2nd century (see Phase 3 above). While significant amounts of 2nd-century pottery were recovered from the graves, this material is likely to have been redeposited from the ditch fills and hence does not provide direct dating evidence. A late Roman date for the group seems more likely. It is notable that two prone burials were present (10970 and 12655), this being a rite that only became common during the 4th century (Philpott 1991, 71). Burial 10950 stratigraphically post-dated prone burial 10970 and produced a radiocarbon date of cal AD 345–430 (UB-5215: 1649 ±20). The late Roman dating is supported by another radiocarbon determination of cal AD 255–410 (UB-5219: 1701 ± 21 BP) obtained from prone burial 12655. Radiocarbon determinations from two more of the burials were unfortunately less helpful, producing relatively broad date ranges spanning the 2nd to 4th centuries (burials 10970 and 12685). All the burials from this group are described in turn below.

Burial 10970 (Fig. 4.41) contained the remains of a female aged 30–45 years (Sk 10954). The grave was aligned SW-NE, and measured 1.41 m long, 0.80 m wide and 0.34 m deep. The body was prone with the head at the south-west end of the grave, turned slightly to face east. The right arm was flexed and raised in front of the face. Nine iron nails were recovered, mostly from around the edge of the cut, indicating the presence of a wooden coffin. The backfill of the grave contained 1.4 kg of animal bone and 2.7 kg of pottery dated to the mid 2nd century AD. A radiocarbon determination of cal AD 175–325 (UB-5218: 1784 ±17 BP) was obtained from the skeleton.

Burial 10950 (Fig. 4.41) contained the heavily truncated remains of a male aged over 45 years (Sk 10922). The grave was aligned NNE-SSW, and measured 2.18 m long, 0.68 m wide and 0.18 m deep. It cut prone burial 10970 (see below). The body was supine with its head to the NNE. Five iron nails found scattered through the grave fill may indicate the presence of a wooden coffin. Other finds from the backfill of the grave comprised 400 g of pottery dated to the 2nd century, and small fragments of animal bone. As mentioned above, a radiocarbon determination of cal AD 345–430 (UB-5215: 1649 ±20) was obtained from the skeleton.

Burial 12655 (Fig. 4.42; Pl. 4.18) contained the remains of a female aged over 40 years (Sk 12656). The grave was aligned NNE-SSW, and measured 1.70 m long, 0.50 m wide and 0.45 m deep. It cut burial 12685 (see below). The body was prone, with

its head at the NNE end of the grave and turned to face east. The left arm was flexed and placed beneath body, while the left leg was flexed and placed beneath the right leg. The backfill of the grave contained 1.3 kg of pottery dated to the late 2nd century or later along with fragments of animal bone. A radiocarbon determination of cal AD 255–410 (UB-5219: 1701 ± 21 BP) was obtained from the skeleton.

Burial 12685 (not illustrated) contained the remains of an adult, possibly female (Sk 12686). The grave was aligned SSW-NNE, and measured at least 1.32 m long, at least 0.35 m wide and 0.33 m deep. The body was supine with its head to the SSW, although the whole of the skeleton above the pelvis had been cut away by burial 12655. The backfill of the grave contained 0.5 kg of pottery dated to the late 2nd century onwards, and small fragments of animal bone. A radiocarbon determination of cal AD 135–325 (UB-5220: 1793 ± 20 BP) was obtained from the skeleton.

Burial 12725 (Fig. 4.43) contained the remains of a female aged 45–55 years (Sk 12727). The grave was aligned SSW-NNE, and measured 1.56 m long, 0.60 m wide and 0.47 m deep. The body had been interred on its left side with the head towards the south-south-west end of the grave. The arms were flexed, with the right hand beneath the head and the left hand raised in front of the face. The right leg was flexed, while the left leg was not in its correct anatomical position and had thus presumably been disturbed. A copper alloy bracelet (SF 2934, cat. no. 223) was worn on the left wrist. The backfill of the grave contained 3.2 kg of residual pottery dated to the 2nd century and fragments of animal bone.

Plot E (Fig. 4.11)

Building 10830 was constructed in the southern part of Plot E during this phase, overlying earlier boundary ditch 12895 but maintaining its alignment. To the north of 10830, building 10820 was

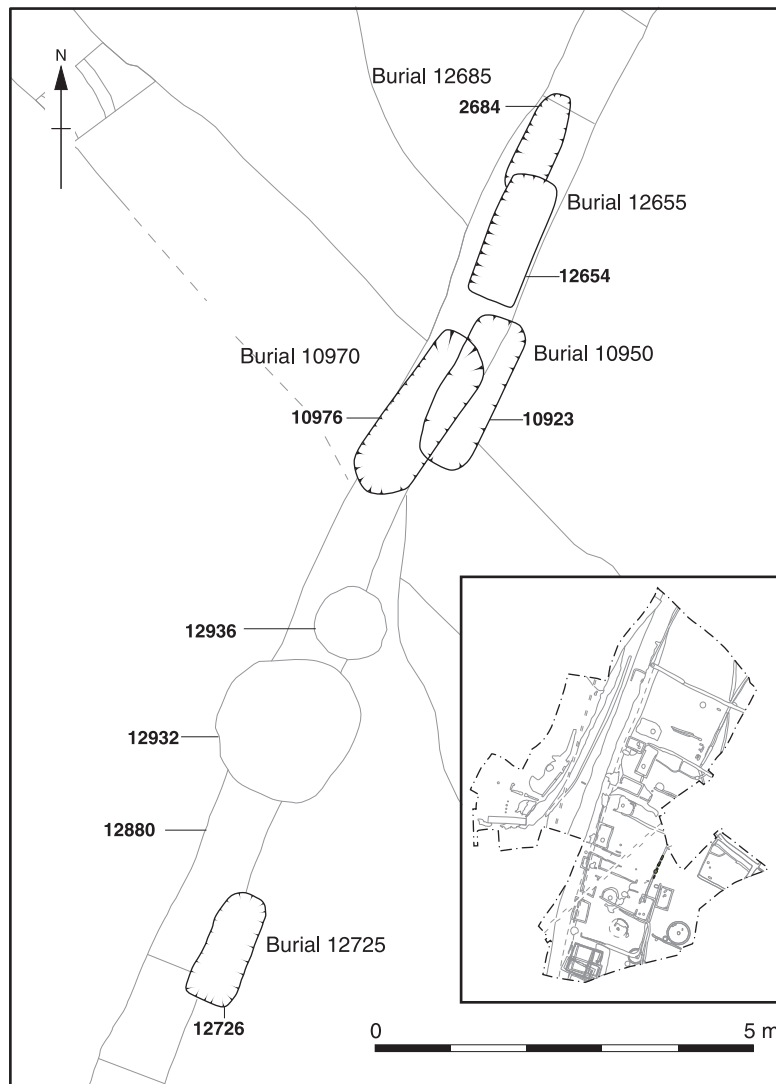


Fig. 4.40 Burial group 13045

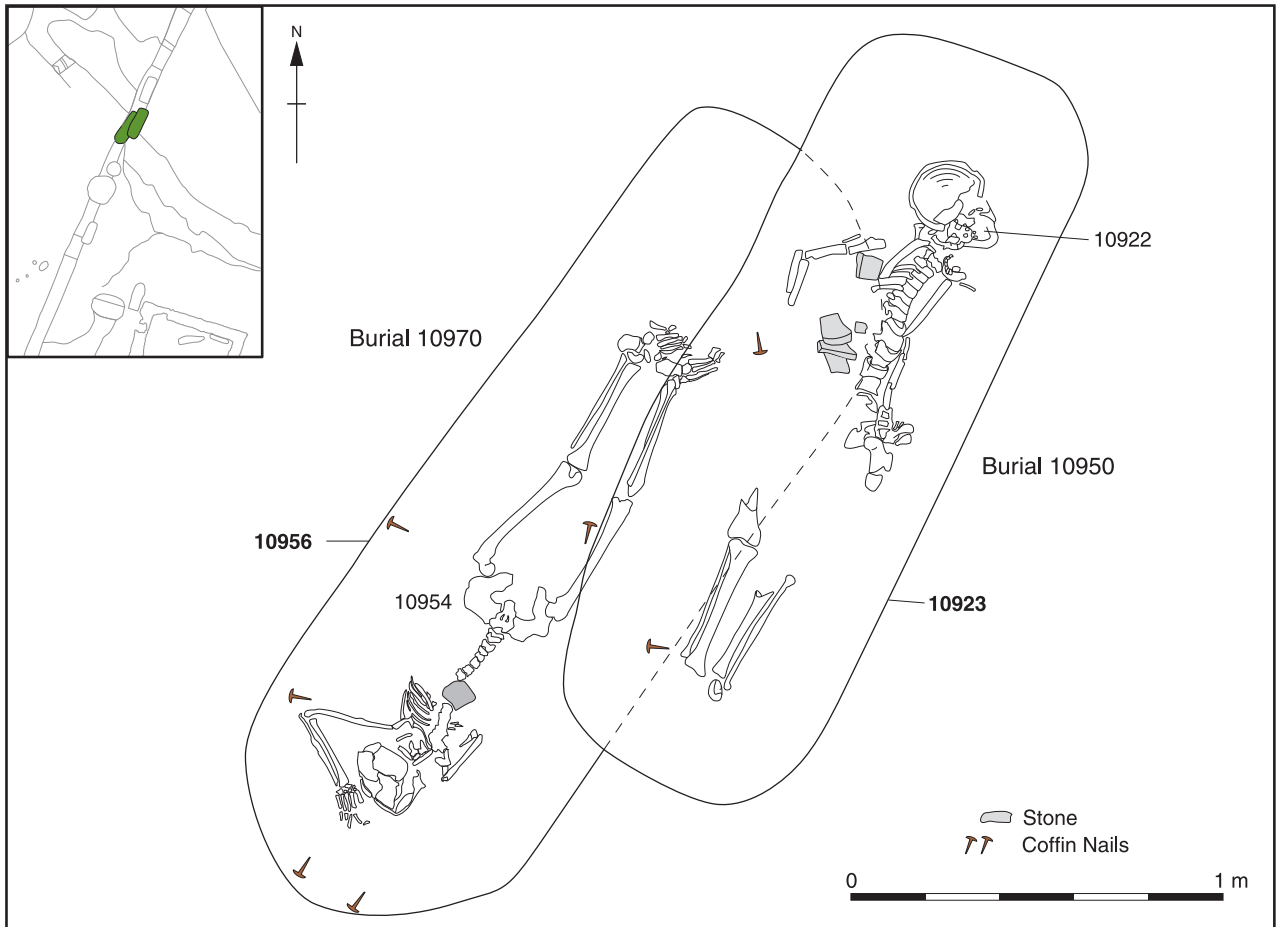


Fig. 4.41 Burials 10950 and 10970

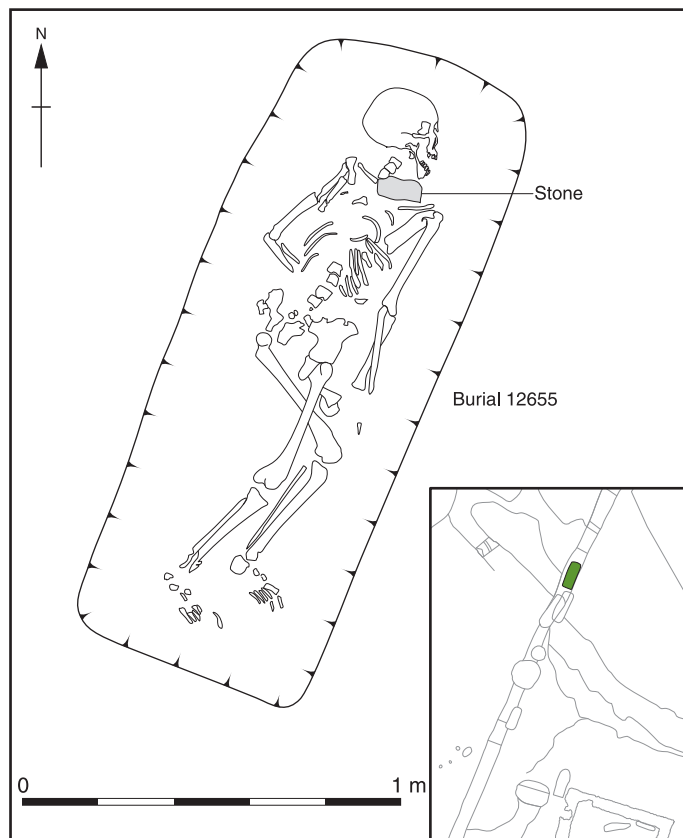


Fig. 4.42 Burial 12655



Plate 4.18 Burial 12655, facing north. Scale: 0.5 m

constructed on a parallel orientation. A surfaced trackway (12920) ran between the two buildings, giving access to the road.

Building 10820 (Fig. 4.44)

Building 10820 was a rectangular structure of two phases measuring 17.5 m WNW-ESE by 6.0 m NNE-SSW internally. While direct evidence for its date of construction is lacking, almost all finds from within the building date from the late 3rd to 4th century.

The position of building 10820 in relation to the road pavement frontage and surrounding boundaries differed from the general pattern seen across the site. It was set to the east of the former flanking

ditch rather than adjacent to the gravel pavement like the buildings to the north and south. It is possible that this was purely to avoid the need for deeper foundations at the frontage if it was to be built within the line of the former ditch as seen with building 10800, but other explanations are also possible. The rear (east) wall of the primary phase of the building was aligned with the east wall of 10810 and also of 10830 to the south. As it appears that 10820 and 10810 were of almost identical dimensions, and assuming that the alignment of their east walls was a significant locational factor, 10820 would have to have been set back from the road frontage as this was further west than the length of the structure.

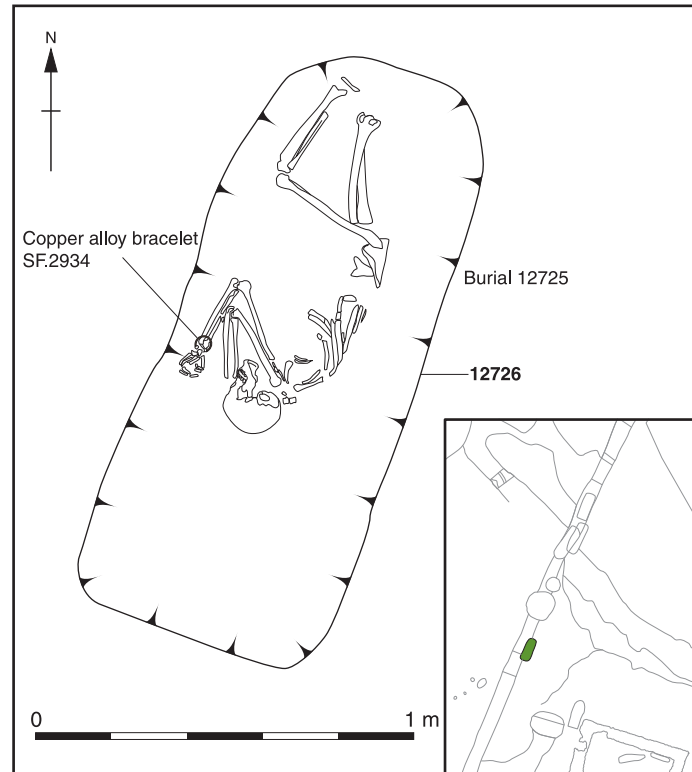


Fig. 4.43 Burial 12725

A single course of tightly packed and pitched limestone formed the foundation of main room of building 10820, cut into the contemporary colluvial soil level. The foundation survived around most of the building but the west wall had suffered greater modern truncation. Here the main entrance was defined by a large limestone threshold slab (12129), 0.80 m wide, set off-centre in the frontage. Larger slabs of limestone were used to form the internal and external faces of the surviving primary wall course with pitched stone infill of the core. Unusually the foundation was slightly narrower than the wall course at various points around the building.

In contrast to the foundation construction of the main body of the building, the walls of the later rear room were constructed without any pitched stone foundations. Laid directly onto the contemporary ground level, the surviving wall course was of similar appearance to that of the main building but used larger slabs requiring less core infill. An exterior entrance was identified in the south-west corner of the room, and a 1 m-wide access between the rooms was identifiable in the eastern wall of the main room. Like the front entrance this was offset from the central axis of the building to the south and was recognised on the basis of the smooth worn upper surfaces of the pitched stone in the foundation at this point.

The area between the road edge and the threshold slab of building 10820 was not investigated in detail beyond the uppermost (and latest)

deposits. Certainly the roadside ditch (10680) and gravel pavement (13020) continued past the frontage and beneath the later levels. After the pavement had substantially silted over a large area of pitched limestone (12035) was set in front of the building. This extended the full width of the building with its southern edge neatly contained and defined by kerb stones aligned on the corresponding wall alignment. The northern limit was a little less well-defined and consisted of further slabs rather than pitched stone. The surface was 8 m by 6 m at its greatest extent and was solidly constructed throughout, although it did not extend fully to the roadside and former pavement edge. Instead a path of limestone slabs (12206) aligned on the main entrance extended from the larger surface to the roadside. Heavy wear was present on both the pitched limestone and slabs, which, combined with the evidence of patches of repair, indicate considerable use. Pottery from the silts that underlay the surface, exposed beyond its limits to the north and south, suggests that the surface was constructed no earlier than the 3rd century and probably towards the end of that century. Likewise a good sized pottery assemblage (266 sherds, 3.28 kg) recovered from the silt sealing the surface is dated to the 4th century but was slightly unusual in that it consisted almost entirely of grey wares and shell-tempered vessels and few finer items. Several coins recovered from the same level have the same date range as those recovered from the adjacent track between buildings 10820 and 10830, with all but one coin of

Constantine I (c AD 325–330) dating to the late 3rd century.

A further area of stone paving abutted the north wall of the building, extending towards building 10810 though stopping just short of it (12591). This surface consisted of flat-laid limestone and ironstone slabs, up to 0.25 m across. Subsequently, the paved surface was cut through by a short length of ditch (12589) that may have served to block

access across the gap between the two buildings. The fill of the ditch contained 1 kg of pottery dated to the 4th century.

The internal arrangement of building 10820 differed considerably from that of 10810. The substantial slab floor seen in 10810 was not present here, although slab surfacing was utilised (12332). This was much sparser and was mostly concentrated to either side of the western room. The slabs

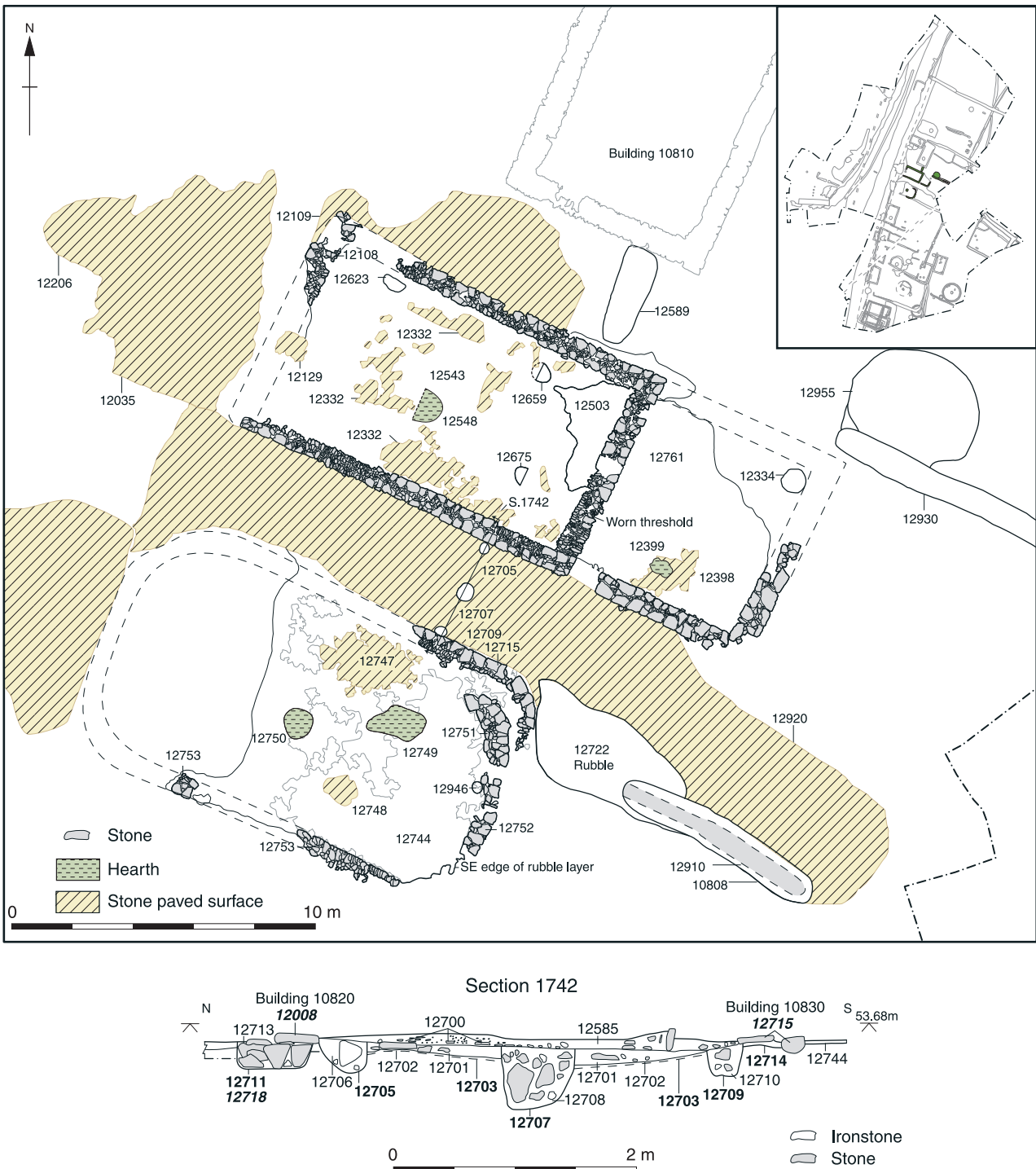


Fig. 4.44 Buildings 10820, 10830 and trackway 12920

were exceptionally worn and were set within the underlying colluvial silt soil horizon (12543) that had become reworked, clearly indicating that this was the occupation level. The silt layer overlay both features and the slabs in places, demonstrating that it had continued to be reworked throughout the life of the building. Finds from the colluvial layer included ten sherds of pottery dated to the 4th century, and seven coins, of which four belong to the 4th century with the latest dating to AD 364–378 (SF 2721). A possible floor surface of yellow clay (12503) also overlay the colluvial horizon at the eastern end of the building. This produced a further seven coins, all dating to the late 3rd or 4th century, the latest dating to AD 330–335 (SF 2537).

Three small pits or postholes (12623, 12659 and 12675) and a single hearth (12548) were scattered across the interior of the main room. The pits were clay filled and lacked finds. The hearth was much smaller than those within the buildings to its north, having a maximum diameter of 1 m and depth of 0.15 m, but was otherwise similar in being a shallow rounded hollow at floor level. It did, however, have a firm base of limestone and ironstone pieces set in clay. These were quite lightly scorched, suggesting only limited use or low-level heat. A small pottery assemblage (127 sherds, 993 g) from a clay deposit sealing the hearth dated from the 3rd to 4th centuries.

Within the east room the interior deposits were of a similar form. A rough limestone surface (12761) was concentrated around the edges of the room with a thin layer of reworked soil at the same level. The floor was much more uneven than within the main room and displayed much less surface wear. Part of this level was defined by an arrangement of larger limestone slabs (12398) approximately 1 m across. These had been burnt red and had an associated deposit of scorched silt and fired clay (12399) overlying them. Of particular interest were several fragments of coal/shale possibly indicating that this was a specialist workshop at the rear of the building. The northern portion of the room was more heavily truncated as mentioned above and no surface level deposits were present here. A single surviving roughly circular pit (12334) was identified in the north-east corner of the room. It was well defined, being steep sided and flat based. Its fill consisted of silt clearly derived from the surrounding colluvial soil while several larger limestone blocks in the upper part may have been floor stones that had sunk into the soft fill. The small amount of pottery (13 sherds, 234 g) and a single imitation coin (SF 2307) of Constantius II dated *c* AD 330–348 provide a clear mid 4th-century date for this pit. The pit also had several pieces of coal/shale included within the fill, either indicating that this material was present throughout the rear room or that it was deliberately incorporated into the fill. More unusual was the variety of metal finds also present within this deposit, including an iron key (SF 2236, cat. no. 381)

and a decorative copper alloy plate (SF 2308, cat. no. 110).

It is notable that with the exception of a single antoninianus of Tetricus II dated *c* AD 270–286 all of the coins located within the rear room are Constantinian, with the earliest dated AD 302–325. This probably indicates that the rear room was added no earlier than the second quarter of the 4th century.

Trackway 12920 (Fig. 4.44 section 1742)

The 3.5 m-wide gap between buildings 10820 and 10830 was utilised as a trackway giving access to the road to the west. The track had a neatly constructed surface of sorted river gravel (12702) set into a shallow hollow. It extended 27 m from the roadside frontage between the buildings before curving slightly to the south-east at the rear of building 10830. Behind the building the southern side of the surface was partly flanked by a short length of ditch (12910) that was replaced with a drystone wall (10808) after it had infilled through silting. The ditch was only a short segment that left a 4 m gap between its western end and the rear of building 10830 whilst the existence of a rubble spread (12722) suggests that the wall may have closed this gap. Both of these features extended to the east as far as the end of the surfaced trackway, 12 m behind the rear (east) wall of building 10830. On its northern side the trackway was apparently accessible from the rear of building 10820, which extended further back than building 10830.

Pottery recovered from the silt deposits (10806 and 12701) that directly sealed the gravel surface could only be broadly dated to the late 2nd century or later. The gravel track was subsequently blocked by a row of three posts (12985) that cut through these silt deposits. Two postholes up to 0.35 m diameter and 0.25 m deep (12705 and 12709) were positioned flush against the wall faces of buildings 10820 and 10830 respectively. A larger posthole (12707), 0.60 m in diameter and 0.50 m deep, was positioned between these in the centre of the track. This arrangement has the appearance of a gateway that provided a gap of 1.30 m to either side of the central post. However, it should be noted that most of this area remained obscured by later deposits and it is possible that the post row was part of a larger structure not uncovered.

The trackway and post row were subsequently sealed by limestone rubble layers possibly associated with the destruction of building 10820 and/or building 10830 (12700 and 12585). An assemblage of 1.4 kg of pottery dated to the late 3rd to 4th century was recovered from these layers.

Building 10830 (Fig. 4.44; Pl. 4.19)

Building 10830 was rectangular in form with unusual rounded corners (see below), measuring at least 10.5 m WNW-ESE by 7 m NNE-SSW internally; its full extent is uncertain owing to truncation at its western end. The building was constructed

over ditch 12895, which was backfilled at some point in the late 2nd century or later (see Phase 4 above). While the exact date of construction of the building is unclear, pottery from within it suggests that occupation extended into the 4th century.

The walls of the building were constructed of limestone, with no more than a single course remaining. The presence of two parallel walls at the north-east corner of the building (12715 and 12751) suggests that this part of the structure was rebuilt at some point, although there were no stratigraphic indications as to which of the walls was earlier. It is notable, however, that wall 12715 shared a similar building technique with the extant eastern and southern walls (12752 and 12753), with flat slabs at the outer face of the wall, pitched slabs at the inner face, and a rubble core. Wall 12751 differed in having flat blocks on both faces and a rubble core. The unusual curved corners of this building can be readily paralleled with a structure revealed in earlier excavations just to the south, which was also dated to the late Roman period (Meadows 1992, 84, fig. 4; see discussion, Chapter 7).

Across most of the interior of the building, the natural colluvium was overlain by a thin layer of sandy silt that probably represents an occupation horizon (12744/12945). This produced significant quantities of finds, including 5 kg of 4th-century pottery, 1.7 kg of animal bone, and various iron

objects including a knife blade and 15 nails. Neonate human cranial fragments were also recovered, which may derive from a truncated or unrecognised burial within the building. Apparently contemporary with this layer were two hearths. Hearth 12749 was irregular in plan, 0.14 m deep, with a fill of ashy sand and burnt stone; hearth 12750 (not excavated) was sub-circular in plan. Also apparently contemporary with layer 12744 were two areas paved with flat limestone slabs, up to 0.45 m long (12747 and 12748).

A discrete area of pitched limestone paving lay immediately west of the building, apparently overlying the earlier gravel roadside pavement. This was not excavated, but is analogous to the stone paving replacing the gravel pavement seen at the roadside frontage of other Phase 5 buildings such as 10820 and 10840.

The destruction of building 10830 was represented by a deposit of limestone rubble overlying the occupation layer (12676). Finds included 850 g of late 4th-century pottery, along with an iron chisel (SF 2776, cat. no. 3) and a fragment from a Millstone Grit rotary quern (SF 3189). The rubble was in turn overlain by a post-destruction layer of sandy silt (12372), which contained late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery and four residual or curated coins dating to the later 3rd century (SF 2326, 2475, 2527 and 2701).



Plate 4.19 Building 10830, facing west. Scale: 2 m

Plot F (Fig. 4.11)

The ditches demarcating the boundary of Plot F were recut during this phase. Building 10810 continued in use, and a smaller building 10800 was constructed alongside it.

Enclosure ditches (Fig. 4.32)

At the southern boundary of the plot, ditch 12930 recut the earlier boundary represented by ditch 12940, and also cut the southern edge of the now

backfilled waterhole 12955. The ditch was up to 0.60 m deep, with a U-shaped profile. Its lower fill produced a coin dating to AD 270–274 (SF 1346) and sherds of late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery.

At the northern boundary of the plot, ditch 12970 recut earlier ditch 12965 for most of length. The western terminus of 12970 seems to have respected buildings 10800 and 10810. At its eastern end, the ditch continued beyond the limit of excavation. It can be traced on the geophysical plot, however, where it meets up with a north-south running rear

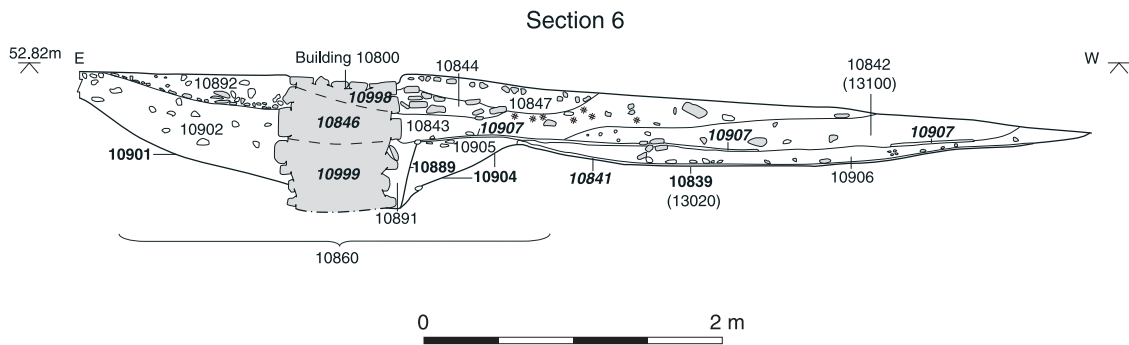
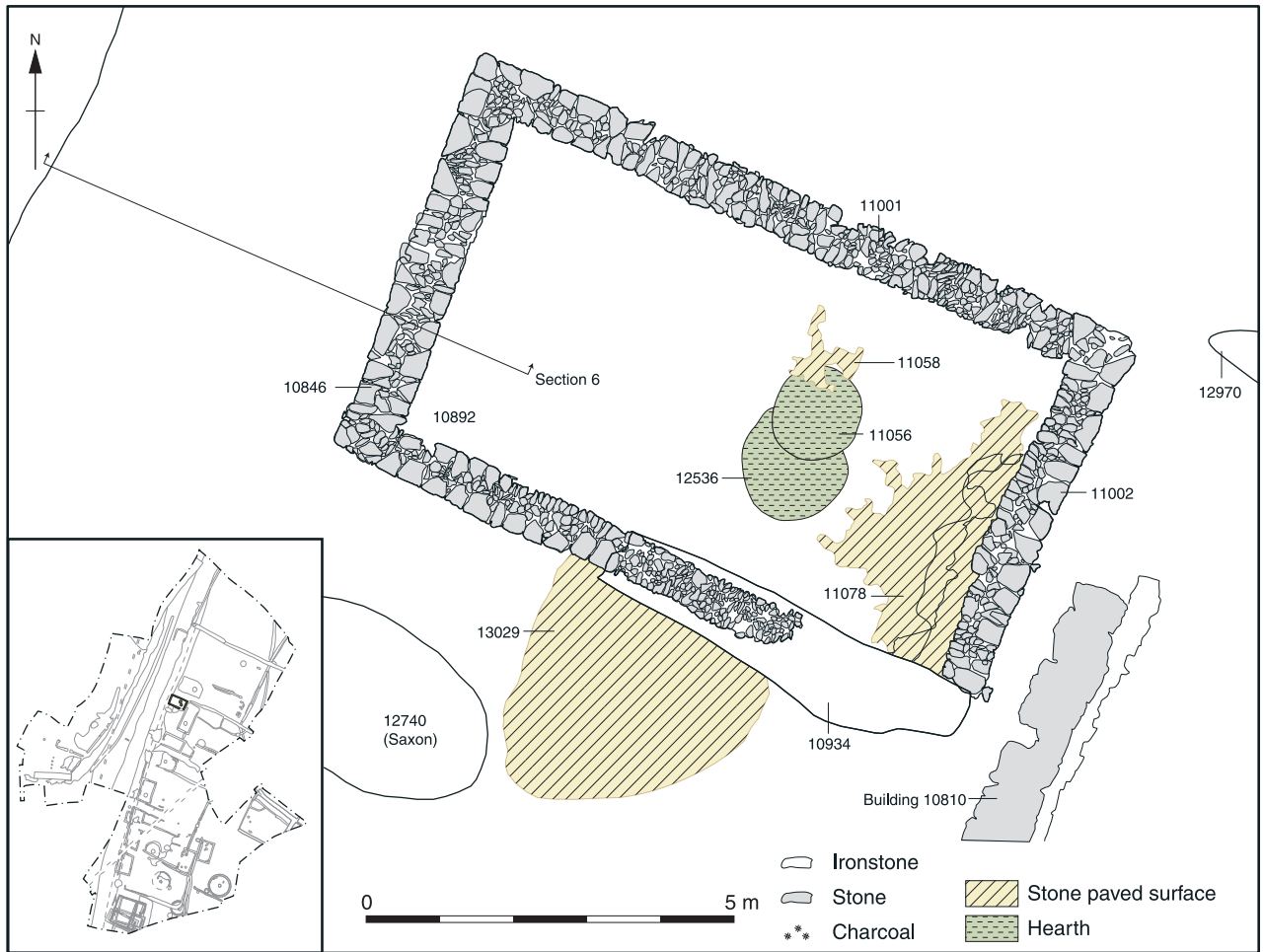


Fig. 4.45 Building 10800

boundary ditch which probably continues as ditch 8294 in Area G (see below). Ditch 12970 was up to 0.45 m deep, with a U-shaped profile. The modest amount of pottery recovered indicates that it was infilled during the late 3rd to 4th century.

Two small curvilinear enclosures (collectively 12950) defined by ditches up to 0.40 m deep were attached to the southern side of ditch 12970. The western enclosure ran up to the northern end of building 10810. If this part of the building was used as a byre (see above), then it is possible that the enclosure was used to pen livestock. Potentially contemporary features within the western enclosure included an irregular pit (10823), 0.20 m deep, which contained 490 g of 4th-century pottery. The ditch of the eastern enclosure produced a coin of AD 341–348 (SF 986) from the surface of its fill, and was cut by bowl-shaped pit 10725 (0.30 m deep), which contained a significant amount of domestic debris including late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery.

Building 10800 (Fig. 4.45; Pls 4.10 and 4.20)

Building 10800 was a rectangular structure measuring 8.0 m WNW-ESE by 4.5 m NNE-SSW internally. It was located at the roadside frontage of the plot, and was cut into former roadside ditch 10680. Its position – closely adjacent to the larger building 10810 – and the paucity of associated finds could suggest that it served an ancillary role of some kind. Chronologically, the building could

have been constructed in Phase 4, but the few datable finds relate to occupation during the late 3rd to 4th centuries.

The west wall of the building (10846) was built upon substantial foundations set in a trench cut into the silting fill and to the base of earlier roadside ditch 10680 (Pl. 4.20). This was to ensure that the foundations were built directly onto the more stable ironstone natural. The other foundations were cut through the colluvial soil layer (generally 0.25 m to 0.30 m thick) to encounter the underlying ironstone. Roughly hewn slab-like pieces of limestone were used for the construction of the frontage foundation and were set pitched in alternate courses and directions to form a herringbone style construction. This was three courses deep along the outer (west) side of the frontage bringing the foundation and primary wall course to the level of gravel pavement 13020 or, more likely, the re-laid surface 10907. It is possible that the earlier surface may have silted over by this time and that 10907 was laid at a similar time as the construction of the building. As the building was built upslope of the terraced pavement the levels between the frontage interior and exterior differed considerably. The internal side of the foundation was built up higher to five courses of pitched stone before a single horizontal course of limestone slabs defined the start of the wall and, presumably, the floor level. A layer of limestone chips and silty colluvial soil (10892) levelled the



Plate 4.20 *Building 10800, wall 10846, facing west. Scale: 2 m*

internal slope butting against the surviving wall course. On the exterior, three or four horizontal wall courses survived rising up to 0.45 m above the contemporary pavement level. The core of the wall was packed with smaller ironstone pieces.

The western frontage wall courses were continuous, suggesting that there was no direct access from the building onto the road. There was no clearly defined access point elsewhere around the wall line, but access may have been in the south wall, removed by robbing (10934). A possible limestone surface (13029) lay against the mid point of the outer face of the south wall and probably marks the entrance. It would also have provided direct access to the centre of the 'courtyard' area framed by buildings 10800, 10810 and 10820.

Elsewhere the foundations of the building were slightly less substantial with the north and south walls constructed upon two courses of pitched foundation. Although ironstone was used in the primary course the upper level was exclusively of limestone. Generally, larger slabs were used for the internal pitched face course than within the foundation construction and these were also clearly of a neater, more careful build. This indicates that these were actually intended as the primary wall course proper rather than simply being an exposed foundation level. This combination is also clear in the east wall. Here a single course of pitched limestone slabs (12516) formed the foundation and was distinguished from the wall course by a distinctive silty sand deposit (12517). This acted to help secure the subsequent wall courses (12518) in place. The external face consisted of two horizontal courses of limestone with the internal face built up in a pitched course with smaller limestone as core infill. The pitched course was clearly at the internal floor level as shown by the presence of surface 11078 (see below) and had a single horizontally laid slab at either end at the internal wall angles.

Although the edges of the foundation trenches were generally difficult or impossible to distinguish across the site in the homogenous brown soils, the inner side of the rear wall trench did have an unusual cut edge (12519). This was not tight against the foundation as would be expected but rather a broad shallow hollow up to 0.70 m wide along the full length of the inner wall face. This also penetrated the existing colluvial soil to the level of the underlying ironstone and the base of the foundation. Its precise function is unclear but it was backfilled with limestone and ironstone rubble and roughly coursed limestone slabs (12520) up against the foundation and wall face. This could have been a post-construction attempt to support the wall that showed signs of bowing inward. Indeed a small group of late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery (14 sherds, 378 g) was recovered from the backfill of 12519 suggesting a relatively late date, although intrusion or mixing of finds from the floor level cannot be ruled out.

No dating evidence for the wall itself was recovered, although as the building was cut into the former roadside ditch (10680) it can have been constructed no earlier than the late 2nd/early 3rd century. The construction cut for the western wall of the building also appeared to cut through an external stone surface (10907) which overlay the orange sand layer (13100) sealing the roadside gravel pavement (13020). This stone surface consisted of limestone and ironstone rubble pieces up to 0.15 m diameter, and extended for 3.8 m to the west of the building. A silting deposit (10843) which built up over this stone surface and up against the west wall of the building – prior to the destruction of the building as represented by rubble layer 10844 – produced late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery and a coin of AD 312–316 (SF 1340).

Features and deposits within the building clearly relating to its use were limited. The backfill of the internal trench was partly overlain by a patchy limestone slab floor surface (11078). This was only 2 m by 4 m at its maximum extent and present only at the rear of the building. However, the slabs had very worn upper surfaces indicating prolonged and heavy use. A thin layer of silt (11004) sealed this floor against the rear wall and produced a small assemblage of pottery (15 sherds 194 g) dating to the late 3rd to 4th centuries.

A sequence of hearths, or rather ash deposits indicating the location of hearths (11056 and 12536), was positioned slightly to the rear of the building. Ash deposit 12536 was not excavated but was circular in plan, 1.5 m across and of the same appearance as 11057 that infilled a shallow circular hearth 11056. These were of the same character as other simple ground level hearths encountered within the adjacent buildings 10810 and 12900. The shallow 'cut' depth of the hearths are most likely to have resulted from the regular clearing of ash deposits from the same location rather than representing any real attempt at purposeful hearth construction. The only slight hint of the presence of a constructed element was an area of small limestone slabs (11058) around the northern edge of 11056. These do not appear to have been a surviving part of a larger floor surface, the general absence of which across the interior area seems to be genuine. It is most likely that 11058 formed a firm surface to be used in conjunction with the hearth, perhaps as a heat retentive base adjacent to the fire. Certainly the presence of scorched slabs where the ash from the hearth overlapped the surface suggest a direct association between them. A similar, albeit much better constructed, example of this is clearly seen with the central hearth of building 10870. A small assemblage of 3rd- to 4th-century pottery was recovered from the fill (11057) of hearth 11056.

A striking feature of this building and the associated internal deposits is the general lack of finds. Although superficially the building has the appearance of an average domestic dwelling with a central hearth area and stone surfacing, its relatively small

size does suggest it was probably not a principal residential structure. This appears to be confirmed by the small finds assemblages. Only 141 sherds (1907 g) of pottery and a negligible 20 fragments (108 g) of animal bone were recovered from all contexts associated with the building (excluding the robber trench infill). No other finds were present. This conspicuous absence is not satisfactorily explained by truncation, as the building was no more affected by this than other parts of the site. If the building was not primarily a dwelling it may have been for storage, or perhaps a shop as it did open out onto a courtyard adjacent to the main road.

Building 10810 (Fig. 4.46; Pl. 4.10)

Continuation of the occupation of building 10810 into Phase 5 is shown by material recovered from a dark grey-brown silt layer (11007) overlying the earlier limestone floor 11008. A pottery assemblage of 226 sherds (5.0 kg) indicates that this deposit accumulated in the 4th century, and was dominated by coarse shell-tempered jars and Nene Valley grey ware jars and bowls. The silt layer also produced 76% (3.5 kg) of all the animal bone (4.6 kg) associated with the building, an iron key with copper alloy chain (SF 1411, cat. no. 387), part of a bridle bit (SF 1413, cat. no. 68), and 20 hobnails (SF 1414) – more than any other building on site. A similar silt layer (11195) sealing surface 11215 to the south of

hearth 11036 only produced a negligible amount of pottery although this was consistent with a 3rd- to 4th-century date range. Further confirmation of the date range was provided by the recovery of five coins from these silt layers. These were typical of the coin assemblage as a whole from the site (see King, Chapter 5) comprising late 3rd- and first half of the 4th-century issues (AD 270–340). A few personal items were also recovered; fragments from at least four bone pins and a single bronze pin suggest domestic occupation. The iron key (SF 1411) on a bronze chain also indicates a security requirement. An iron jointed mouth bar from a bridle bit probably indicates no more than the storage of harness and related equipment.

A surface of large limestone slabs (11148) and pitched limestone and ironstone (11069 and 11077; not on plan) overlay deposit 11007, clearly demonstrating that the building remained in use after the accumulation of the silt layers. The large slabs incorporated in this surface were not as worn as those of the earlier surface 11008, however. Surface 11148 had a slightly unusual hearth or oven (11147) built into its northern edge (Pl. 4.21). This was constructed from tegulae with a base tile (11198) set face up below the floor level. A second tegula (11197) was placed directly over this face down so that its flanges rested upon those of the lower tile. The surface of the upper tile was at floor level. Further tegulae (11199) were used to enclose three



Plate 4.21 *Building 10810, tile hearth 11147 facing south. Scale: 0.2 m*

sides of this construction while the limestone of the surrounding floor formed the southern side. The space between the two flat tegulae was infilled with fine clay silt (11196) that had been scorched red where it was in contact with the underside of the upper tile. Clearly this deposit was an integral part of the feature from its construction rather than a silt

accumulation formed in the void between the tiles after it had gone out of use. It was never intended to create an air cavity between the tiles. There were clear burning and soot marks on the upper surface of tile 11197 whilst the buried base tile 11198 displayed no sign of burning. There were no other deposits associated with the use of this hearth. The

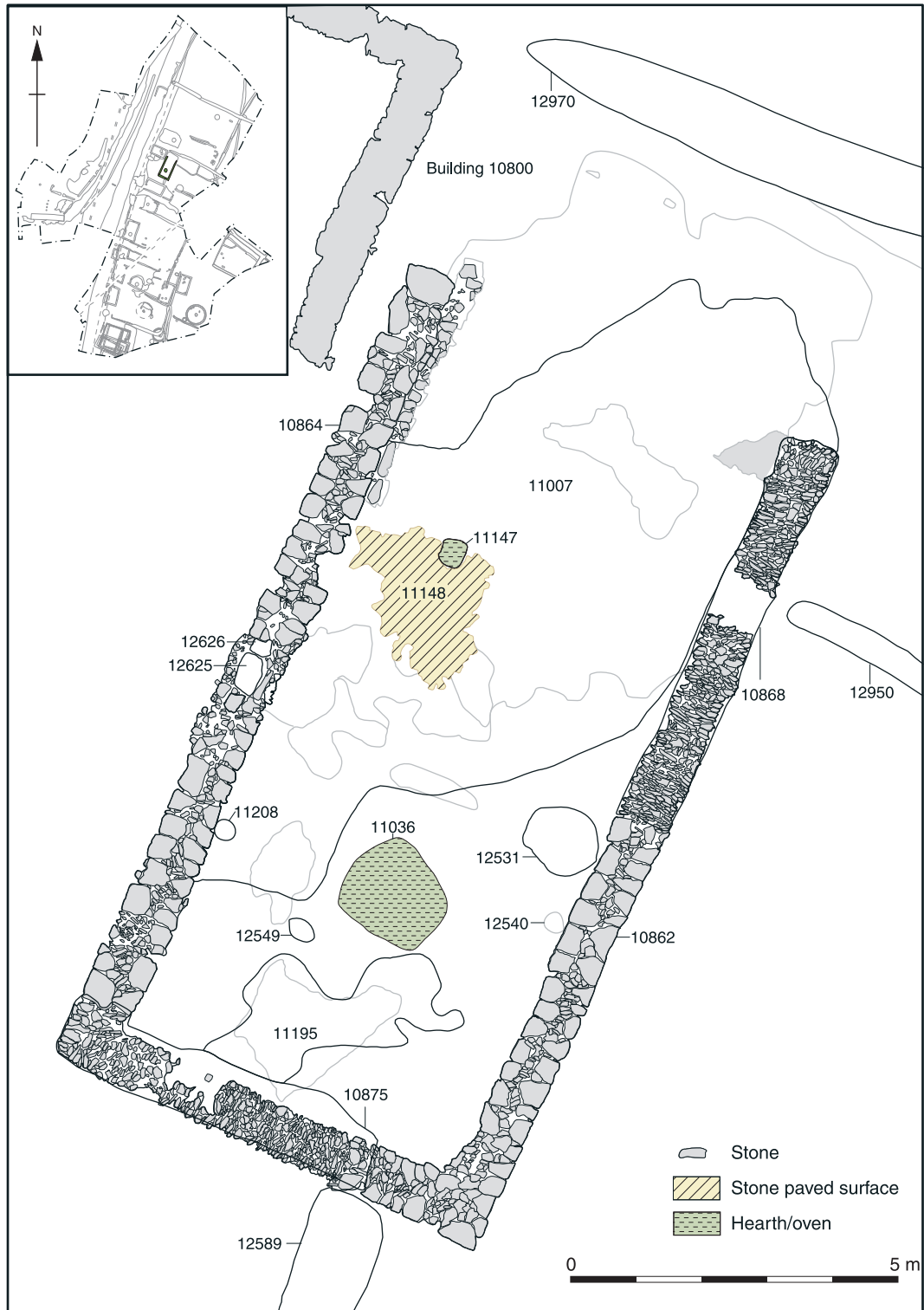


Fig. 4.46 Building 10810 (Phase 5)

reasons for this are probably twofold; first it appears that its surroundings were kept very clean as no traces of ash rake out were found between the stones of the surrounding floor surface. Secondly, the feature lay at the very base of the modern ploughsoil, so any ash or charcoal deposits associated with its final use would have been removed.

The way in which the tile setting functioned is slightly problematic. It is unusual primarily because of the use of the two tiles to create the base; this deliberate feature was presumably related to its function, as a single tile would normally have been sufficient to create a firm and level base. Therefore it seems unlikely that this was merely an open hearth and it is probable that this was in fact the basal remains of an enclosed oven. If the three sides constructed of tegulae were originally of their full dimensions (width) and topped by a similar complete tegula, these would have created a small, enclosed void. The southern side bounded by the floor would have provided access and the limestone here was scorched along its edge in contact with the tiles. A small fire could have heated the chamber effectively and the thickened base could have functioned as a heat sink to maintain a cooking temperature once the fire had been reduced to embers and a door was placed across the access. To be more effective such an oven would also have required additional insulation around its exterior although there was no evidence of this. It is also entirely possible that this was a multi-functional oven with its roof (if not insulated) being able to be used for processes such as small-scale drying.

One further feature that can be specifically related to the later periods of use of the building is pit 12531, although its stratigraphic relationship to silt layer 11007 and the later stone surfaces is unclear. The pit was relatively regular at the probable contemporary surface level, being circular in plan and 1.20 m across, but upon excavation it had a very uneven profile and a maximum depth of 0.40 m at its centre. Its function remains unclear although its position along the line of the partition and against the inside of the east wall may have been significant. Its primary fill was a sterile silt suggesting that it had remained open for a while, though without accumulating cultural material. The upper fill was of limestone blocks and charcoal levelling the central portion of the pit. This also contained few finds; only 13 sherds (642 g) of pottery and 7 fragments (76 g) of animal bone, all of sheep/goat or medium sized mammals, were recovered. The pottery was of 4th-century date, placing the final infilling of this feature in the later period of the use of the building.

In common with several of the buildings, parts of the walls were removed to foundation level at the end of the life of the structure (robber trenches 10868 and 10875). The latest silting and localised rubble patches across the interior only produced small assemblages of 3rd- and 4th-century pottery. Similarly the backfill of the robber trenches also

produced a small assemblage of 3rd- and 4th-century pottery, probably largely comprising residual material.

Plot G (Fig. 4.11)

Plot G was bounded to the south by ditch 12970 (see above), to the east by ditch 11270 (see below), and to the north by ditch 10835/10845/10855. A single rectangular building (12900) lay at the roadside frontage of the plot. To the rear of the plot, the interment of burials within group 13050 continued into this phase.

Boundary ditches (Fig. 4.32)

The northern boundary of the plot was initially demarcated by ditch 10855, which appears to have been aligned on the north wall of building 12900. The ditch was recut twice (10835 and 10845), although there was no stratigraphic relationship between these recuts. The various phases of this northern boundary were up to 0.25 m deep, with silty fills containing moderate amounts of pottery and bone, mainly concentrated towards the eastern end. A late date for the boundary is indicated by late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery recovered from ditch 10855.

Pit 10885 (Fig. 4.47)

Pit 10885 cut the eastern terminus of ditch 10855. This was an oval feature, 0.95 m deep, with vertical sides and a flat base and could perhaps originally have been used as a storage pit. It contained a series of sterile silty fills, probably deposited through natural processes, interleaved with two dumped layers containing significant numbers of finds (10595 and 10597). These contained 1 kg of animal bone, a worked bone hairpin (SF 1024) and an iron nail, but notably no pottery.

Building 12900 (Fig. 4.48)

Building 12900 was positioned on the pavement frontage but east of the former roadside ditch 10680. The structural remains of this building were very limited, possibly reflecting a different style or method of construction from that seen in the majority of buildings to the south; in fact the footprint of building 12900 was largely defined by the internal occupation deposits. These revealed a comparatively large structure 9 m wide at the pavement frontage and extending back nearly 13 m, giving an internal area in excess of 100 m² and making this structure second in size only to building 11370.

Of the building shell only a small angle of wall foundation (12956) remained at the south-west corner. This shared the construction traits of the buildings to the south, being set in a shallow foundation trench and consisting of a single course of pitched limestone and ironstone, although this was conspicuously narrow at only 0.6 m wide. Three horizontally-laid small limestone slabs also

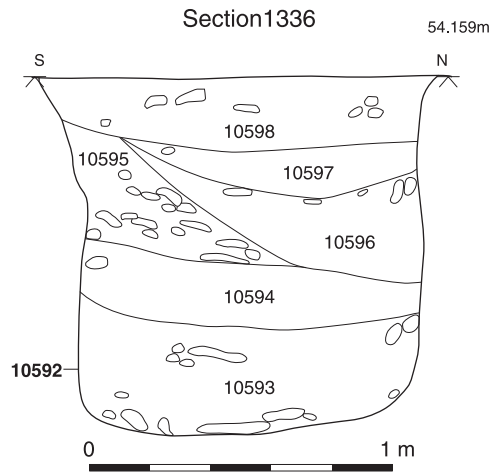
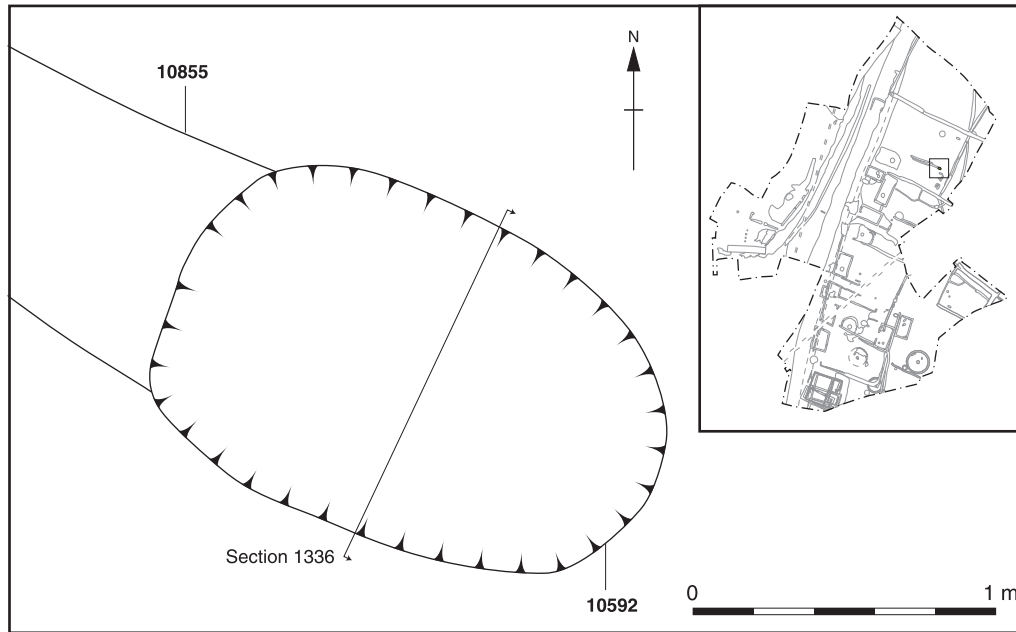


Fig. 4.47 Pit 10885

clearly formed part of the south side wall although these appeared to be laid directly into a very shallow foundation trench or the contemporary ground surface rather than on pitched stones as for the frontage. The full detail of this wall was mostly obscured by an overlying rubble layer (13028), which is most likely to have derived from the collapse or removal of the upstanding wall here. Despite this the pitched and laid stone within this context did define lengths of wall approximately 3.0 m and 2.5 m long at the corner. The absence of similar evidence for the remainder of the structure is not satisfactorily explained by differential truncation levels as the physical level of deposit survival was consistent across the building.

The apparent absence of walls could be explained if the construction of the building differed significantly from that seen elsewhere. Within the building there was a distinct arrangement of four postholes (12973, 13021, 13023 and 13026). Postholes 12973 and 13021 were placed 3.25 m apart, a similar

distance either side of the axis of the building and just within the line of the building frontage. Postholes 13023 and 13026 were similarly arranged and spaced (3.85 m) in respect to each other but were not so precisely equidistant from the central axis of the building. They were positioned some 1.75 m within the line of the rear wall of the building as defined by rubble spreads. Each of the postholes had limestone packing surrounding posts with diameters of 0.20 m. Although the building was not excavated in detail the postholes showed clearly at the investigated level and it is reasonable to believe that no other significant additions to the post plan existed. Despite the lack of intervening posts it is likely that the two paired post sets did form a significant part of the structure, especially at the frontage where 12973 and 13021 may have framed a large entrance. If so, however, this would have been over 3.0 m wide, with implications for the use and function of the structure. This is discussed further below.

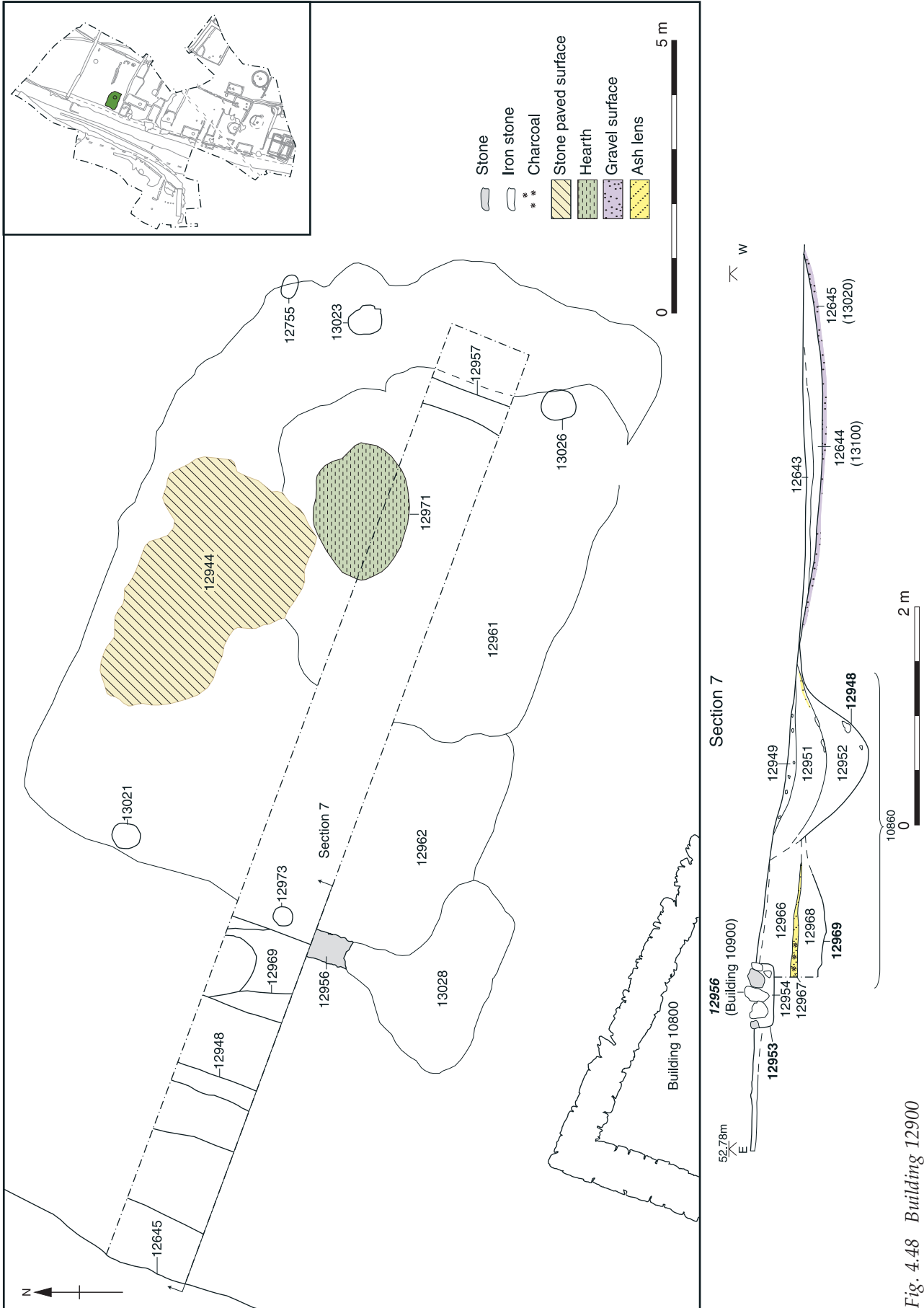


Fig. 4.48 Building 12900

One metre west of the alignment of postholes 13023 and 13026 at the eastern end of the building was a short ditch-like feature (12957). This was cut through the colluvial soil horizon overlaid by the deposits within the building and was 0.30 m deep with steeply sloping sides and a flat base. It seems unlikely that this was a beamslot forming part of a structure with the posts. The occupation horizons within the building continued east the line of the postholes and possible slot 12957, regardless of any structure that may have been formed by these features. It is more likely that 12957 was simply an internal drain or at least a barrier to water running into the building. The ground falls 0.40 m from the rear of the building to the frontage and continues on this gradient to the front of the building (see Fig. 4.48, Section 7). Surface water may have been able to run from the rear of the structure into feature 12957, especially if the east wall was of a construction not as solid as seen elsewhere on the site. However, the ditch did not extend beyond the walls to either side to expel water as would be expected if it was indeed a drain. It may have served as a simple trap for water rather than a proper drain.

The internal deposits that defined the outline of the building were largely derived from the underlying silty colluvial soil level (12964). This had been trampled and reworked into a thin greyish layer (12961 and 12962) with occasional yellow clay and ash lenses across the central part of the building. The ash inclusions probably derived from a large roughly circular hearth (12971) placed on the central axis of the building slightly towards the east end of the building, a position comparable to that of the similar hearths within building 10800. The hearth was no more than a shallow scoop into the contemporary ground level, undoubtedly created through continual use and cleaning rather than design, and was infilled with fine ash. Similar simple hearths were also the main heat source within buildings 10800, 10810 and 10830. The only constructed surface that was evident was an area of limestone slabs 3 m by 5 m in extent (12944). This was mostly a rough limestone rubble surface but it did have an arrangement of larger worn slabs at its western edge. The clustering of the slabs in one part may indicate that this was an area of most intense use within the building, such as near or at an entrance, or that an area of hardstanding was required to support an object or fixture within the building. Either way it is clear that most of the interior of the building area had no other paved surface and that the floor consisted of the soil surface or possibly some organic covering that may have contributed to the reworking and discoloration of the colluvial silt soil.

The majority of the dating evidence for the building derives from the occupation deposits or those that accumulated after occupation had ceased. No finds were recovered from the wall or postholes to suggest a construction date. An assemblage of 399 sherds (5580 g) of pottery was recovered from

all deposits within the building. The sherds had an average weight of 14 g which, considering the nature of the floor, suggests good preservation and that they probably reflect a true date for the building rather than being residual in nature. The sherds recovered from the main internal layer (12961/12962) predominately date to the late 3rd and 4th century. A thin silty deposit (12943) sealing the limestone surface produced 4th-century material. Three worn late 3rd-century coins (SF 951, 1013 and 1374) recovered from the machined surface of the building (finds reference 10511) are also consistent with the late 3rd- to 4th-century date range. Closer dating, particularly for the end of the use of the only other internal feature related to the building was a burial (12755) of a full term neonate placed in a shallow scoop north of posthole 13023. The skull was just visible at the point where the occupation silts had been largely truncated down to the natural or undisturbed colluvial silt level. As a result it was not clear if the burial could be considered as a foundation offering at the point of construction or marked the termination of the use of the buildings. Interestingly, of the four sherds present in the backfill one (15 g) was in an externally burnished sandy fabric that has more in common with Saxon pottery than Romano-British. It could be that this burial therefore marks the termination of use in the post-Roman period, although this is perhaps unlikely given the character of the late 3rd- and 4th-century Roman pottery assemblage, which seems to lack very late material.

Function, use and appearance

As discussed above building 12900 appears to have been constructed in a different manner to the majority of the buildings to the south. Some stone wall elements existed and it is likely that the outer wall was largely of a stone wall construction, albeit on very shallow or non-existent foundations. However, the evidence of a partial post structure is unusual for the site. In spite of detailed excavation and good preservation within the majority of the structures, there is little evidence for the use of posts either as a main element of the building or as a support for roofs, although posts may have been used in this way in the larger buildings. The positioning of the western post pair central to the building and on the external wall line also shows that these were an integral part of the western end of the building, supported by the fact that the stone foundation (12956) ending before reaching post 12973. Whether this wall arrangement was repeated the other side of posthole 13021 or not remains unclear but seems a reasonable assumption. If the posts defined the entrance to the building, however, its width of over 3 m suggests that this was more barn-like than domestic. Alternatively the limestone surface in the northern part of the building could indicate an entrance opening out into the enclosure to the north. If this was the case it might suggest

that although the larger enclosure was subdivided at this time this represented nothing more than an internal rearrangement rather than a fundamental reorganisation of plot layouts at this time.

The quantity and relatively good preservation of the pottery within the building make it unlikely that this was a barn structure or one that held livestock. Its street frontage location also makes such functions unlikely (though not impossible). The uniformity of the thin reworked silt layer encountered within the building, the presence of the hearth and the pottery assemblage rather point to this being a domestic structure. In this case the interpretation of the construction of the west facade of the building may need to be reconsidered.

Burial group 13050 (Fig. 4.25)

The practise of burial alongside the rear boundary ditch of the plot continued into Phase 5, with at least two inhumation burials belonging to this phase. One of these burials was decapitated, a rite most common during the 4th century.

Burial 10780 (Fig. 4.27) contained the remains of a male aged 20–25 years (Sk 10794). The grave was aligned SW-NE, and measured 2.54 m long, 0.72 m wide and 0.25 m deep. The body was supine, with the head to the south-west. The arms were crossed over the pelvis. Thirteen iron nails found around the edge of the grave cut indicate the presence of a wooden coffin. Three iron keys (SF 1317–19, cat. nos 375-6, 380) had been placed over the throat. At least 170 hobnails were found in two tight clusters at the base of the grave cut, to the right of the pelvis, showing the location of a pair of shoes. The backfill of the grave also produced 13 sherds of pottery dated to the late 3rd to 4th century, and small fragments of animal bone.

Burial 10965 (Fig. 4.27; Pl. 4.12) contained the remains of a male aged over 40 years (Sk 10938). The grave was aligned SSW-NNE, and measured 1.9 m long, 0.60 m wide and 0.24 m deep and cut Phase 4 burial 10960. The decapitated body had been laid on its right side, facing east, with the upper part of the body at the SSW end of the grave and the legs slightly flexed. The head had been placed in front of the pelvis. A cluster of 21 hobnails located close to the feet indicated the presence of shoes. The backfill of the grave contained four sherds of pottery dated to the mid 2nd century onwards and small fragments of animal bone. A radiocarbon determination of cal AD 250–395 (UB-5216: 1719 ± 20 BP) was obtained from the skeleton.

The northern periphery of the settlement (Fig. 4.32)

An extensive rectilinear enclosure system lay north of the settlement core. A stratigraphically early element of this system was ditch 10980/11170/8288, recutting earlier boundary ditch 10770/11150. Dating evidence from this feature comprised sherds of 4th-century pottery from a middle fill, and a coin of AD 268–270 (SF 1409) from an upper fill. The

southern end of this ditch seems to have been maintained throughout Phase 5, being recut as ditch 11130/11270. A notably late coin of AD 364–378 (SF 955) was recovered from the surface of ditch 11130. In contrast, the northern part of ditch 10980/11170/8288 appears to have gone out of use during the course of the phase. It was cut by a large square enclosure measuring 69 m NNE-SSW by 69 m WNW-ESE, formed by ditches 8042, 8294, 10670 and 10690. The ditches of this enclosure were generally 0.70–1.0 m deep, but along the western road frontage the ditch was only 0.40 m deep. A recut (10700) was present at the western end of the southern enclosure ditch. Ceramic evidence indicates that the ditches of the square enclosure were infilled during the 4th century, the evidence being particularly clear from ditches 8042 and 8294 where 4th-century pottery was recovered from lower fills. In addition, a coin of c AD 317–330 (SF 670) was recovered from the lower fill of ditch 8042, and one of AD 330–335 (SF 661) from the upper fill of the same ditch. The enclosure was clearly integrated with further boundary ditches continuing on same alignment to the east of the excavated area. The line of ditch 10690 can clearly be seen on the geophysical survey plot extending for c 60 m to the east of the eastern side of the square enclosure. Similarly, ditch 8294 continued for at least 30 m to the east, as it was encountered in evaluation Trench 9.

A bowl-shaped pit (11000) was cut into the western terminus of recut 10700, after this had silted up. The pit was 1.6 m in diameter and 0.45 m deep. The lower fill (10643) contained ash and charcoal patches, and produced late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery. A sample from this fill (sample 619) contained abundant charred wheat grains and chaff, along with barley grains and weed seeds. The upper fill of the pit consisted of sterile grey ash.

The interior of the square enclosure appears to have been empty of features, although part of it (between the main excavation area and Area G) was not excavated. Adjacent to the southern side of the enclosure was a large waterhole (10589), 3.1 m in diameter and 2.1 m deep, with moderately sloping sides in the upper part of the profile, becoming near-vertical in the lower part (Fig. 4.49). For safety reasons, only the upper 1.8 m of the feature was excavated by hand, with the remainder excavated by machine, rapidly recorded and immediately backfilled. The lower fills within the hand-excavated part of the feature consisted of a series of silt and clay deposits (10585–8), probably largely laid down through natural processes. Dating evidence is provided by 500 g of 3rd-century pottery from layer 10587, and a single sherd of late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery from layer 10585. These layers were overlain by a series of backfill deposits (10577–10584), consisting of dumps of silty sand (10577, 10578, 10580 and 10582) interleaved with lenses of burnt material (10579, 10581, 10583 and 10584). Samples taken from layers 1078, 10581 and 10584 (samples 605, 606 and 607 respectively) all

produced charred wheat grains, wheat glume bases and weed seeds. These backfill deposits contained large quantities of finds, including 2.1 kg of pottery and 1.4 kg of animal bone. The uppermost layer (10577) produced pottery specifically datable to the 4th century, and two coins, the later dating to *c* AD 348–360 (SF 1022). A further five coins recovered during the machine excavation of the waterhole cannot be attributed to a specific layer; these comprise one issue of AD 193–260 (SF 2964) and four late 3rd-century antoniniani (SF 2960–3).

To the north of the large square enclosure, a series of smaller rectilinear enclosures was present (defined by ditches 8102, 8289, 8290, 8292, 8293 and 8295–7). Ditches 8290 and 8295 seemed to form a

three-sided enclosure measuring 18.5 m NNE-SSW by 17.5 m WNW-ESE, cutting ditch 8288. This respected building 8019 (see below), which was placed at the open western side of the enclosure. The ditches in this area were 0.25–0.70 m deep, with silty fills generally containing only modest quantities of finds. The ceramic evidence suggests that the ditches were infilled in the late 3rd to 4th century and two coins from the upper fill of ditch 8295 dated to AD 312–317 (SF 658) and AD 325–330 (SF 659).

Building 8019 (Fig. 4.50)

Building 8019 was a rectilinear limestone structure overlying Phase 4 ditch 8291. The building was heavily truncated, with much of the northern part

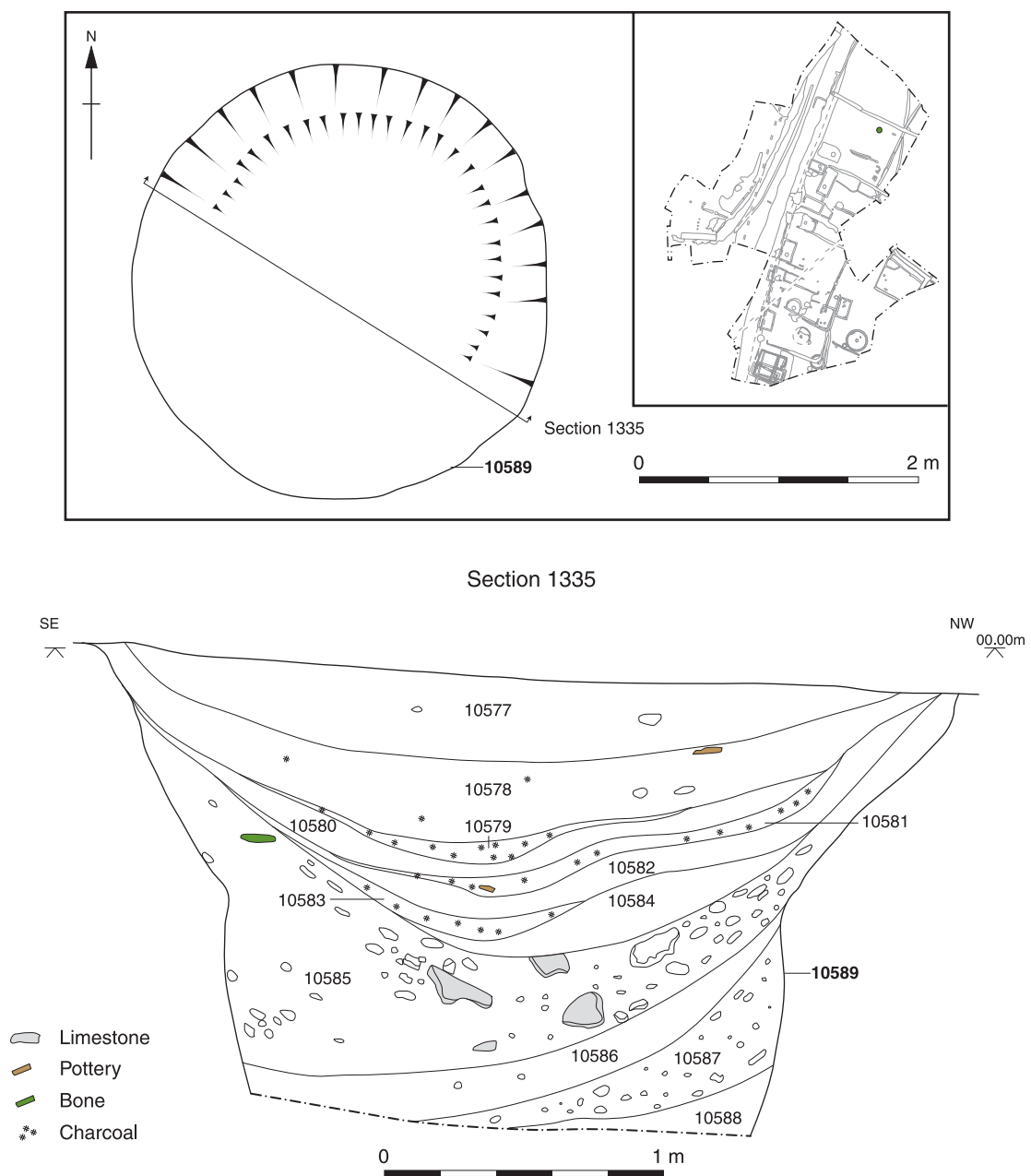
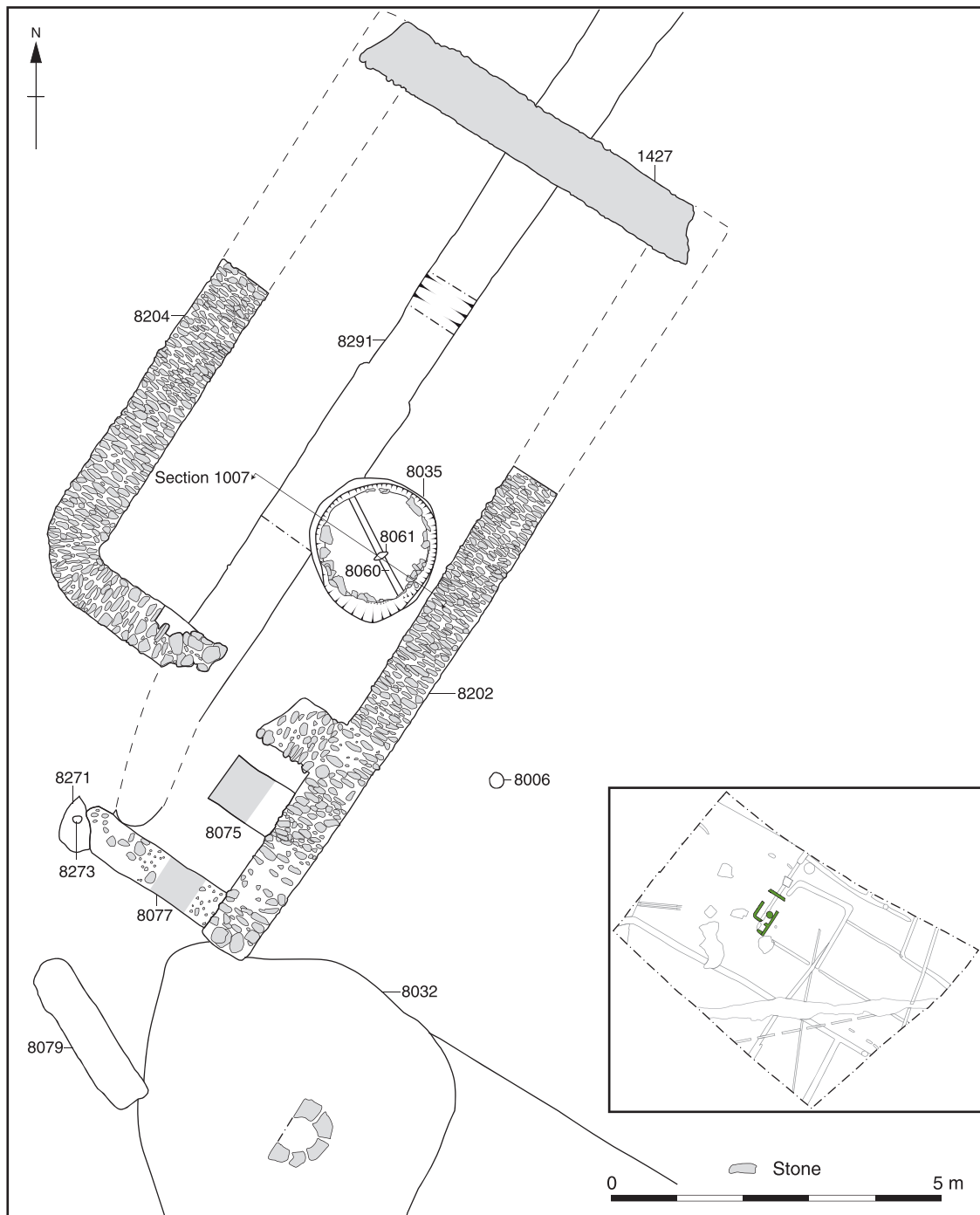


Fig. 4.49 Waterhole 10589



Section 1007

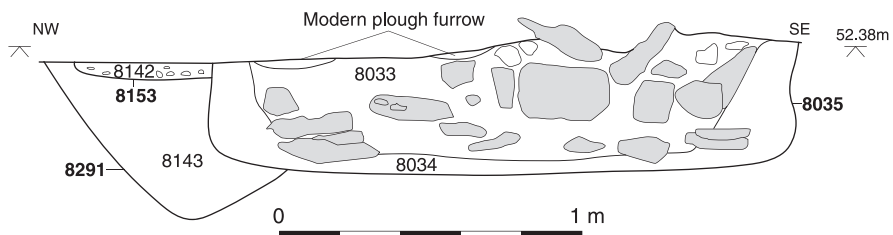


Fig. 4.50 'Temple' 8019

of the structure entirely removed. However, it appears to have taken the form of a rectangle measuring 4.5 m NW-SE by 8.5 m NE-SW internally, with a small 'annexe' or antechamber attached to its south-western side. The wall foundations of the main part of the structure (1427, 8202 and 8204) were *c* 0.7 m wide and consisted of no more than a single surviving course of pitched limestone blocks, which typically measured *c* 0.2 x 0.1 m in size. The blocks were larger and more deeply set, however, where the walls crossed the line of Phase 4 ditch 8291. This suggests that ditch 8291 still existed as a shallow hollow at the time of the construction of building 8019; indeed, a rubble layer forming the uppermost fill of the southern end of the ditch may have been deposited in order to level the ground when the building was constructed.

The 'annexe' of the building was formed by the south-west end of wall foundation 8202, along with two short linear features (8075 and 8077) running off at right-angles from this wall. These features were up to 0.1 m deep and filled with limestone rubble. They may represent further wall foundations of more irregular construction. Alternatively, they may simply have been gullies that were subsequently filled with limestone debris. The western end of linear feature 8077 cut a posthole (8271) which may have formed part of the building. The posthole contained a clear post-pipe

(8273), 0.18 m in diameter and 0.23 m deep. Immediately south of the 'annexe' lay a short length of shallow gully (8079), which seems unlikely to have formed an integral structural element of the building as it followed a differing alignment.

Dating evidence for the construction of the building is scarce. Stratigraphically, it clearly post-dated ditch 8291 (dated to the 2nd century) and the construction cut for well 8032. Three sherds of 2nd-century pottery were recovered from wall foundation 8145 (part of 8204), and 30 sherds of late 2nd- to 3rd-century pottery from wall foundation or gully 8075. However, in both cases this material derived from parts of the structure probably set into ditch 8291 (the limit of 8075 is unclear), and redeposition is thus possible. The building appears to have been respected by ditch 8295, which produced pottery and coins showing that it was infilled during the late 3rd to 4th century.

The only feature within building 8019 was an unusual clay-lined pit of uncertain function (8035) (Pl. 4.22). This had no stratigraphic relationship to the building, though like the foundation trench it cut ditch 8291. The pit was 2.0 m in diameter and 0.40 m deep, with vertical sides and a flat base. The lining of blue-grey clay (8034) was up to 0.2 m thick, and had slabs of limestone set into it around the sides of the pit. Identified across the clay lining at the base of the pit was a dark



Plate 4.22 Building 8019, pit 8035, facing north-east. Scale: 1 m

grey/brown linear stain (8060) containing four iron nails, spaced 0.40–0.60 m apart and all found point-down. This would appear to represent a wooden beam nailed into the pit base or a reused timber incorporating nails. The main fill of the pit (8033) consisted of a dump of dark soil containing 16.5 kg of ceramic building material (including tegulae, imbrices and brick) and large quantities of burnt and unburnt limestone slabs. Other finds from this fill included 2.5 kg of 4th-century pottery, fragments of animal bone, and two coins dating to AD 330–348 (SF 668) and AD 341–348 (SF 669). This deposit may thus be associated with the demolition or collapse of the building in the mid 4th century.

The base of a heavily truncated pot in generic Roman shelly ware (8006) was found set into the natural colluvium immediately east of building 8019. Its function is unclear. There is no evidence that it was a cremation burial, as a bulk sample of what little remained of the vessel fill produced no bone.

While there is little evidence to directly attest the function of building 8019, the fact that it was set apart from the main settlement – with an apparently empty enclosure immediately to its south – does suggest a ‘special’ role of some kind. It could perhaps have been a religious structure such as a small temple. The presence of large amounts of tile may support this suggestion, as the only other structure on the site to produce significant quantities of tile was the main shrine. The placing of the building close to well 8278 (see below, which produced limestone colonnette fragments and human bone, also seems compatible with a religious function.

Limestone surfaces (Fig. 4.32)

To the west and south-west of building 8019, four discrete spreads of limestone were present. Spreads 8009 and 8095 simply consisted of layers of limestone rubble, layer 8095 perhaps representing demolition or collapse material from building 8019. Finds included 100 g of 4th-century pottery from 8009, and 900 g of late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery from 8095. In contrast, spreads 8158 and 8194/8230 seemed to represent laid surfaces, at least in part. These could perhaps have served as yard areas or as hardstanding for buildings. Surface 8194/8230 extended over ditch 8294, occupying its uppermost fill, indicating that it dates to the 4th century or later. Where it overlay the ditch, it appeared to consist of flat-laid slabs with worn upper surfaces. Finds included 600 g of late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery, and two coins, one dating to AD 335–341 (SF 699) and one to AD 341–348 (SF 697). A single sherd of Saxon pottery was also recovered. Surface 8158 consisted largely of irregular rubble, although in places the stones appeared to be deliberately laid flat or pitched. Finds included 900 g of 3rd-century pottery.

Well 8032 (Fig. 4.32)

Well 8032 continued in use into Phase 5, before finally being abandoned during the 4th century. The lower fill of the well shaft (8279) was a dark brown organic sediment, 1.54 m deep. An environmental sample from this fill (sample 412) produced coleoptera and a variety of waterlogged plant remains, including weed seeds, bracken fronds, flax capsules and abundant spelt wheat glume bases. Finds included 2.5 kg of pottery dated to the 4th century, animal bone, and part of a leather shoe (see Mould, Chapter 5). Overlying 8279 was a deliberate backfill deposit of limestone rubble (8217), 0.7 m deep, containing few finds. A void above this layer was probably created as the rubble fill sank down, as a result of settling and contraction of the basal fill of the well. The upper part of the shaft was filled with a dumped deposit of dark brown silty clay and limestone rubble that yielded 479 sherds (8068 g) of pottery dating to the late 3rd century onwards and a copper alloy pin (SF 660, cat. no. 279). Another thin levelling layer (8046) overlay the top of the feature, consisting of clay and limestone rubble and including 18 sherds (294 g) of late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery. This was most likely laid to re-level the surface after further sinking of the well fill.

Well 8278 (Fig. 4.29)

The lowest fill encountered within the shaft of well 8278 (see Phase 4) was a black silty loam deposit (8285), at least 3 m in depth, containing visible organic remains including branches and twigs. A sample from this fill (sample 413) produced coleoptera and a range of waterlogged plant remains, including weed seeds, bracken fronds and spelt wheat glume bases. The fill was dated by 1.4 kg of pottery of late 3rd- to 4th-century date. Other finds included part of a leather shoe, a fragment of a limestone colonnette (SF 401), and five human bones, comprising three femurs, a fibula and a humerus. All of these objects suggest a ritual element to the deposition of this lower fill. The remaining 2.2 m of the shaft was backfilled with a deposit of limestone rubble (8278) which contained a further limestone colonnette fragment (SF 402).

Burial group 13105 (Figs 4.32 and 4.51)

This group consisted of three inhumation burials on a NW-SE alignment, placed parallel to ditch 8294. At least one of these burials (8132) was of 4th-century date, with the others more broadly dated.

Burial 8010 (Pl. 4.23) contained the remains of a male aged over 40 years (Sk 8012). The grave measured 1.80 m long, 0.54 m wide and 0.14 m deep. The body was supine with the head at the north-west end of the grave, turned to face north-east. A Hadham oxidised ware vessel had been placed close to the head, and 50 further sherds of pottery were recovered from the backfill of the grave. Together, these ceramics provide a date of the



Plate 4.23 Burial 8010, facing north-west. Scale: 2 m

late 2nd century onwards. An iron nail was also found close to the head.

Burial 8123 contained the remains of a male aged over 40 years (Sk 8128). The grave measured 1.9 m long, 0.65 m wide and 0.23 m deep. The body was supine, with the head at the south-east end of the grave, turned to face north-east. The head had been placed on a large ceramic tile (SF 677), and the feet similarly rested on a large tegula (SF 678). A ceramic flask in a fine oxidised ware (SF 676) had been placed near the head. An iron nail was found near the head and another in the area of the chest. The backfill of the grave also contained 16 further sherds of pottery and small fragments of animal bone. The ceramics date the burial to the late 2nd century or later.

Burial 8132 contained the remains of a female aged over 40 years (Sk 8131). The grave measured 1.85 m long, 0.60 m wide and 0.20 m deep. The decapitated body lay supine, with the upper body at the north-west end of the grave, and the skull placed between the lower legs. A coin dated *c* AD 330–348 (SF 686) was found close to the skull. The presence of a wooden coffin was indicated by eleven iron nails found around the edge of the south-eastern end of the grave. The backfill of the grave contained 14 sherds of pottery dated to the late 2nd century or later, and small fragments of animal bone.

Burial group 13110 (Figs 4.32 and 4.52)

This group consisted of a cluster of three inhumation burials to the north-west of building 8019. One of the burials (8154) dates to the late 3rd century or later, while the others are more tentatively dated to this phase by association.

Burial 8016 contained the remains of a male aged over 40 years (Sk 8018). The truncated grave was aligned NW-SE, and measured 1.30 m long, 0.55 m wide and 0.12 m deep. The body was supine with the head to the south-east. The skeleton was heavily truncated, with the legs and much of the right side of the body missing. The backfill of the grave produced two sherds of pottery dated to the late 2nd century or later. Small fragments of animal bone were also recovered, including a pig tooth found in the vicinity of the left shoulder.

Burial 8154 contained the remains of a female aged over 40 years (Sk 8155). The grave was aligned NW-SE, and measured 2.1 m long, 1.0 m wide and 0.45 m deep, with a slightly irregular profile. The body was supine, with the head at the north-western end of the grave, turned to face north-east. The backfill of the grave produced a coin dated to *c* AD 260–286 (SF 691), a bone pin (SF 692), an iron nail, 350 g of pottery dated to the 3rd century, and small fragments of animal bone.

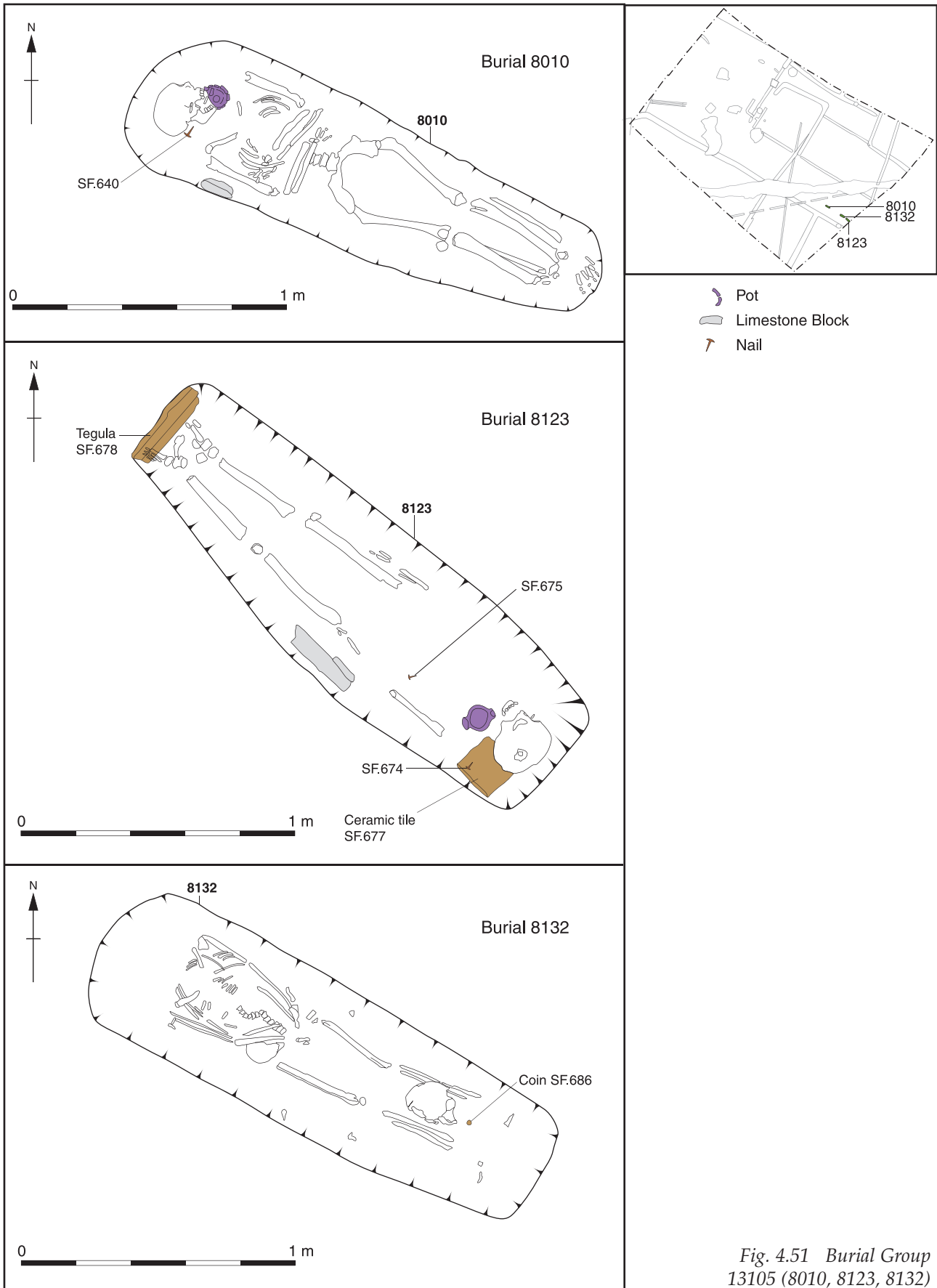


Fig. 4.51 Burial Group 13105 (8010, 8123, 8132)

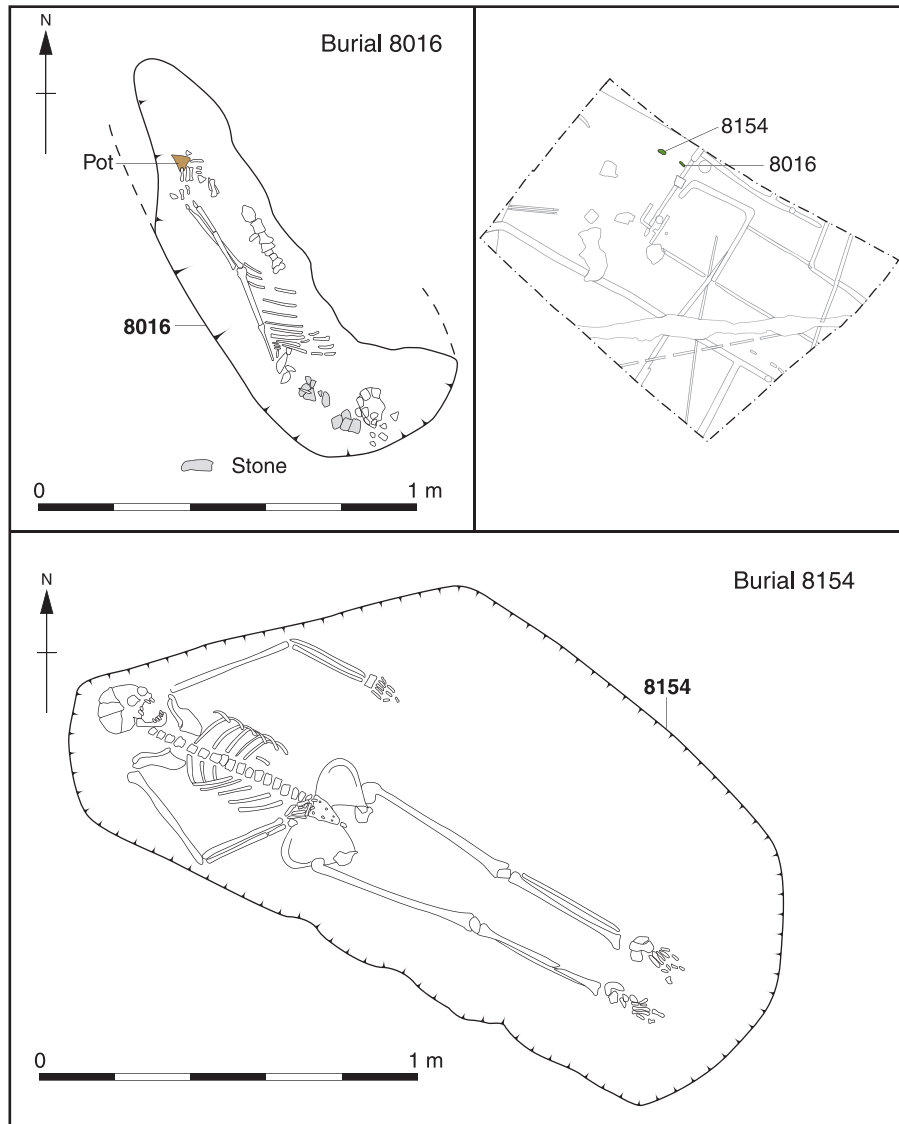
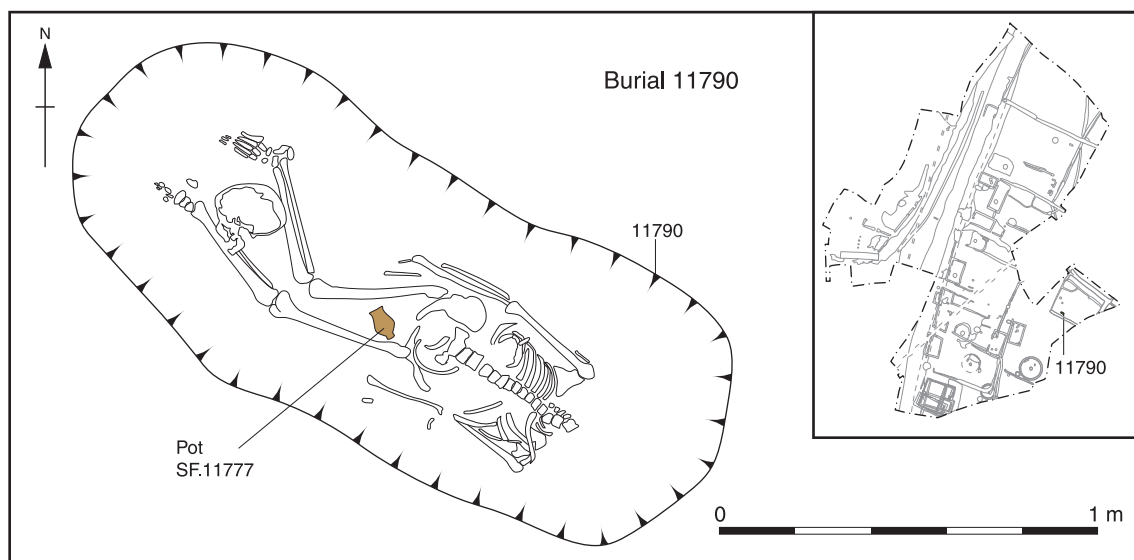


Fig. 4.52 (above) Burial group 13110 (8016, 8154)

Fig. 4.53 (below) Burial 11790



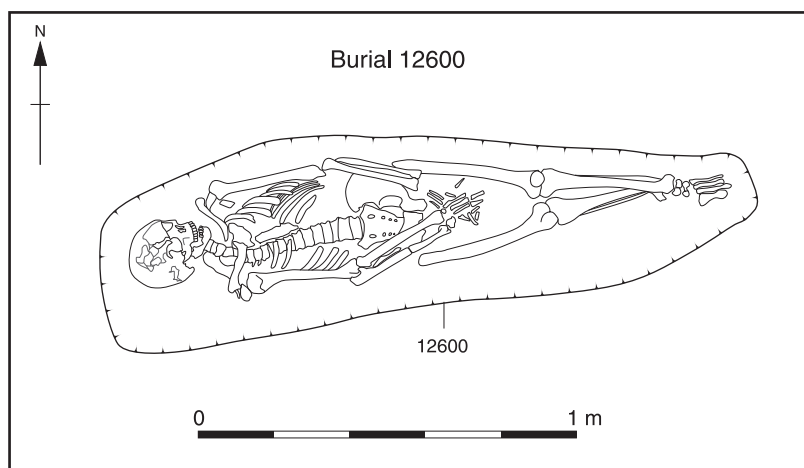
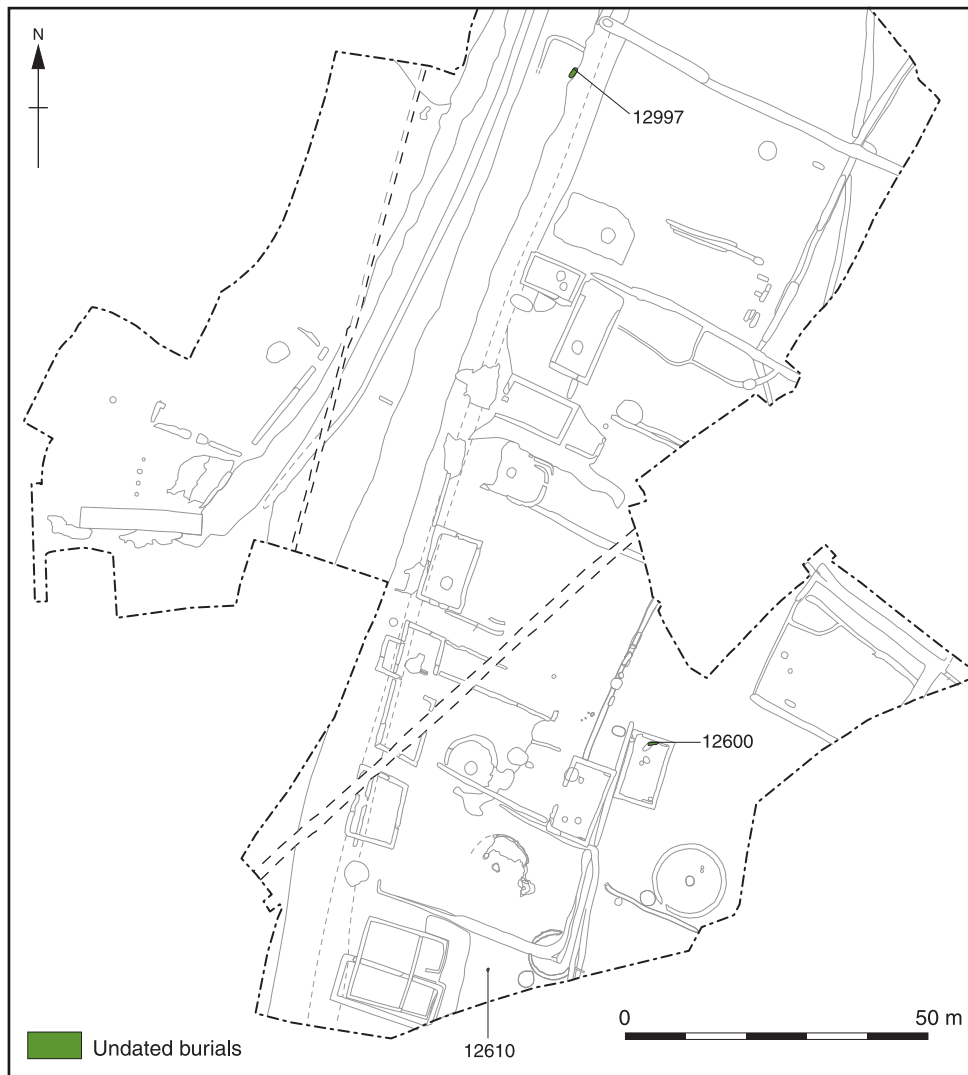


Fig. 4.54 Unphased burials

Burial 8301 contained the heavily truncated remains of an adult of unknown sex (Sk 8261; not illustrated). The body position and alignment are unknown, and there were no associated finds.

The eastern periphery of the settlement

Rectangular enclosure 13080 was modified in this phase (Fig. 4.30). Ditch 13060 was recut and gully 13070 (up to 0.42 m deep) was added to close off the previously open western side of the enclosure. These features had naturally-deposited silty fills and are dated by finds of late 3rd- to 4th-century pottery. Ditches 11517 and 13055 may have continued in use during this phase to form the remaining two sides of the enclosure.

Decapitated inhumation burial 11790 was interred alongside ditch 13060 during this phase (Fig. 4.53). The grave cut was 1.9 m long, 0.70 m wide and 0.24 m deep, and contained the remains of a woman aged over 50 years (Sk 11775). The body was supine, with its upper part at the south-eastern end of the grave, and the skull placed between the ankles. The legs were slightly flexed. Eight iron nails, recovered from both ends of the grave, may indicate the presence of a wooden coffin. A complete Nene Valley colour-coated ware beaker, dated to the 4th century, had been placed between the legs just below the pelvis. Thirteen further sherds of pottery and small fragments of animal bone were also recovered from the backfill of the grave.

East of enclosure 13080, a large irregular quarry pit (10203) was present in evaluation Trench 22. This was not fully exposed, but measured at least 14.5 m across and 1.30 m deep. It cut through a natural ironstone layer into the underlying clay, and hence may have been used for clay extraction. Following an initial silting episode, the feature was backfilled with three successive deposits, comprising a layer of clay and ironstone rubble (10216), a discrete dump of limestone rubble (10215), and a layer of sandy silt containing many ironstone fragments. A total of 2.8 kg of animal bone and 1.0 kg of pottery was recovered from the feature. Pottery from layer 10216 indicates a late 3rd- to 4th-century date for the backfilling of the quarry.

UNPHASED BURIALS

Three burials scattered across the site produced no good dating evidence, and hence can only be broadly assigned to the Roman period (Fig. 4.54). These comprised two adult inhumations and one infant burial.

Burial 12600 was located within building 10900, but had no stratigraphic relationship to the structure, other than the fact that it was cut into reworked colluvium layer 11221. The fact that the burial was on a different alignment to the building may indicate that it was not contemporary. The grave contained the remains of a male aged 35–48 years (Sk 12599). The grave was aligned WSW-ENE,

and measured 1.68 m long, 0.30 m wide and 0.25 m deep. The body was supine, with the head at the WSW end of the grave. The hands were crossed at the wrist below the pelvis, and the legs were crossed at the ankles. A number of limestone slabs up to 0.15 m across were found laid flat within the upper part of the backfill of the grave. One sherd of pottery dated to the mid 2nd century onwards, and small fragments of animal bone were also recovered.

Burial 12610 (not illustrated) was located between building 10860/11370 and building 10910. It contained the remains of a neonatal infant aged 38–39 weeks (Sk 12613). The grave cut was aligned SSW-NNE, and measured 0.48 m long, 0.30 m wide and 0.04 m deep. The skeleton was severely disturbed, and the posture of the body is uncertain, although the head lay at the SSW end of the grave. The backfill of the grave contained three sherds of pottery dated to the mid 2nd century or later.

Burial 12997 (not illustrated) was discovered and excavated by volunteer metal detectorists after the formal completion of the project. The burial appears to have been located adjacent to the western edge of gravel pavement 13020. However, the position of the burial was recorded only with a GPS unit accurate to c 1 m, and hence its relationship to other features is uncertain. The grave was oriented NNE-SSW, parallel to the road and gravel pavement, and may have been enclosed by a small 'L'-shaped ditch on the same alignment (13095; 0.40 m deep). It measured 1.90 m long, 0.40 m wide and 0.30 m deep. The body was of a male aged 35–45 years (Sk 12999), laid supine with the head at the NNE end of the grave and the arms crossed over the abdomen.

THE RADIOCARBON RESULTS

by W Derek Hamilton, Peter Marshall, Christopher Bronk Ramsey, Gordon Cook, and Gerry McCormac

Twelve samples were submitted for radiocarbon dating to the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre, East Kilbride (SUERC), and the Queen's University, Belfast. Sub-samples of material sent to Belfast were also sent to the Rafter Radiocarbon Laboratory for stable isotope measurements.

The three cremated bone samples submitted to SUERC were prepared following Lanting *et al.* (2001), and measured by Accelerator Mass Spectrometry as described by Xu *et al.* (2004).

Human bone from nine inhumations was submitted to Belfast for high-precision radiocarbon measurements. These samples were processed according to methods outlined in Longin (1971), Pearson (1984), and McCormac (1992). Carbon and nitrogen stable isotope measurements on these samples were carried out at the Rafter Radiocarbon Laboratory, New Zealand, as described by Beavan Athfield *et al.* (2001).

Both laboratories maintain continual programmes of quality assurance procedures, in addition to participation in international inter-comparisons

(Scott 2003). These tests indicate no laboratory offsets and demonstrate the validity of the measurements quoted.

Results

The results are conventional radiocarbon ages (Stuiver and Polach 1977), and are quoted in accordance with the international standard known as the Trondheim convention (Stuiver and Kra 1986).

The calibrations of these results, which relate the radiocarbon measurements directly to the calendrical time scale, are given in Table 4.6 and in Figure 4.55. All have been calculated using the datasets published by Reimer *et al.* (2004) and the computer program OxCal (v3.10) (Bronk Ramsey 1995, 1998, 2001). The calibrated date ranges cited within the text are those for 95% confidence. They are quoted in the form recommended by Mook (1986), with the end points rounded outward to 10 years for errors greater than 25 years, and to 5 years when errors quoted are less than 25 years. The ranges in Table 4.6 have been calculated according to the maximum intercept method (Stuiver and Reimer 1986); all other ranges are derived from the probability method (Stuiver and Reimer 1993). Those ranges printed in italics in the text and tables are *posterior density estimates*, derived from the mathematical modelling.

Stable Isotopes

The ^{13}C and ^{15}N values from this site (Fig. 4.56) suggest a very small marine component in the diet, which is not likely to affect the radiocarbon dating significantly (Chisholm *et al.* 1982; Schoeninger *et al.* 1983). The C:N ratios suggests that bone preservation was sufficiently good to permit confidence in the radiocarbon determinations (Table 4.6; Masters 1987; Tuross *et al.* 1988).

General approach

The Bayesian approach to the interpretation of archaeological chronologies has been described by Buck *et al.* (1992). It is based on the principle that although the calibrated age ranges of radiocarbon measurements accurately estimate the calendar ages of the samples themselves, it is the dates of archaeological events associated with those samples that are important. Bayesian techniques can provide realistic estimates of the dates of such events by combining absolute dating evidence, such as radiocarbon results, with relative dating evidence, such as stratigraphic relationships between radiocarbon samples. These 'posterior density estimates', (which, by convention, are always expressed in italics) are not absolute. They are interpretative

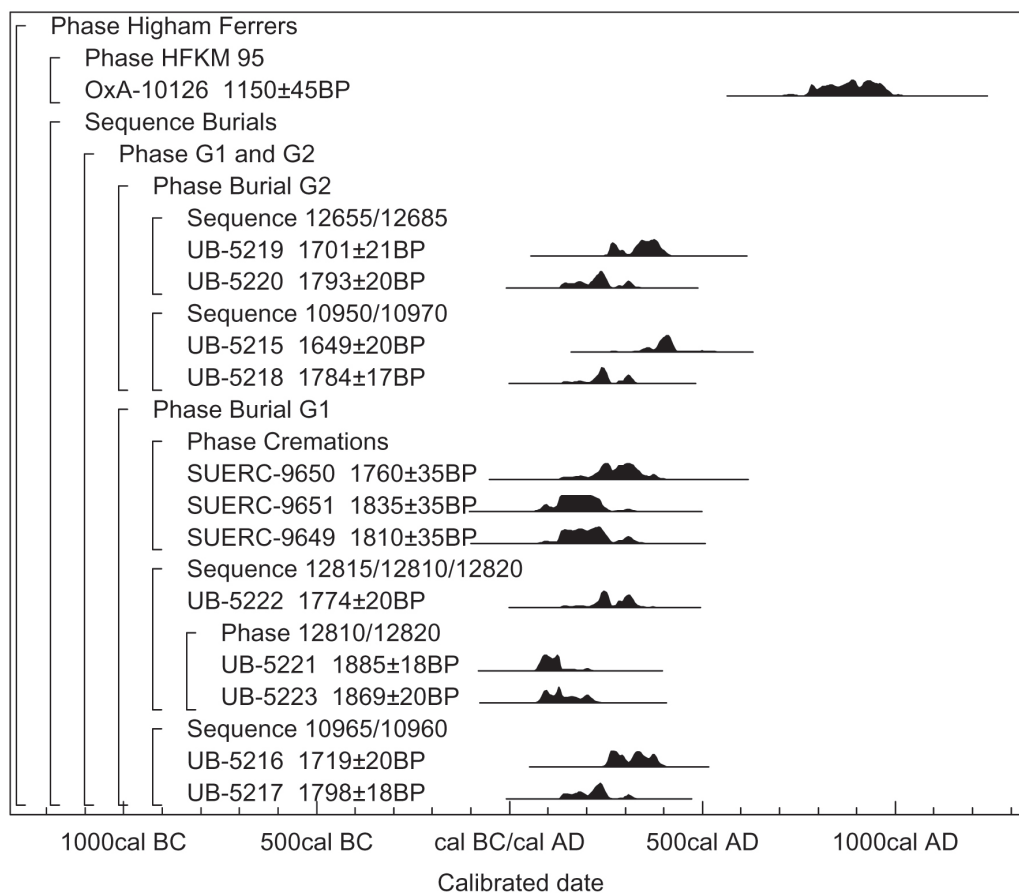


Fig. 4.55 Calibrated radiocarbon dates using the probability method of Stuiver and Reimer (1993)

estimates, which will change as additional data become available or as the existing data are modelled from different perspectives.

The technique used is a form of Markov Chain Monte Carlo sampling, applied using the program OxCal (v3.10) (<http://units.ox.ac.uk/departments/rlaha/>), which uses a mixture of the Metropolis-

Hastings algorithm and the more specific Gibbs sampler (Gilks *et al.* 1996; Gelfand and Smith 1990). Details of the algorithms employed by this program are available from the on-line manual or in Bronk Ramsey (1995; 1998; 2001). The algorithms used in the models described below can be derived from the structure shown in Figure 4.57.

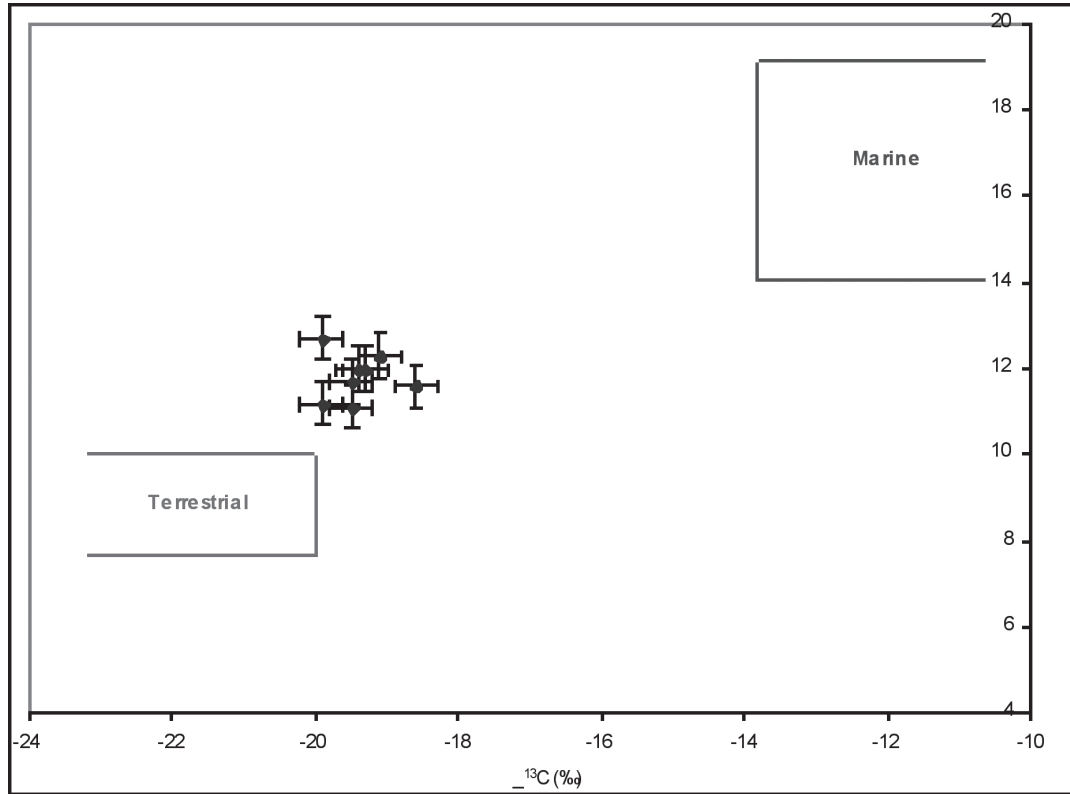


Fig. 4.56 Human bone isotope data

Table 4.6 Radiocarbon dates

Lab ID	Sample ID	Grave Group	Material	^{13}C (‰)	^{15}N (‰)
SUERC-9649	HFKML 02 crem 10912	10915	cremated human bone	-17.8	
SUERC-9650	HFKML 02 crem 10931	10935	cremated human bone	-15.6	
SUERC-9651	HFKML 02 crem 10933	10945	cremated human bone	-20.1	
UB-5215	HFKML 02 sk 10922	10950	human bone, right femur, ulna, humerus, and radius and left fibula	-19.5	11.7
UB-5216	HFKML 02 sk 10938	10965	human bone, right tibia and fibula	-19.9	11.2
UB-5217	HFKML 02 sk 10951	10960	human bone, left femur and right ulna	-19.1	12.3
UB-5218	HFKML 02 sk 10954	10970	human bone, left humerus and tibia and right fibula	-19.4	12.0
UB-5219	HFKML 02 sk 12656	12655	human bone, left femur and right tibia	-19.5	11.1
UB-5220	HFKML 02 sk 12686	12685	human bone, left and right fibula and right tibia	-19.3	12.0
UB-5221	HFKML 02 sk 12814	12810	human bone, right femur	-19.9	12.7
UB-5222	HFKML 02 sk 12816	12815	human bone, left femur	-18.6	11.6
UB-5223	HFKML 02 sk 12902	12820	human bone, right tibia and humerus	-18.7	11.9

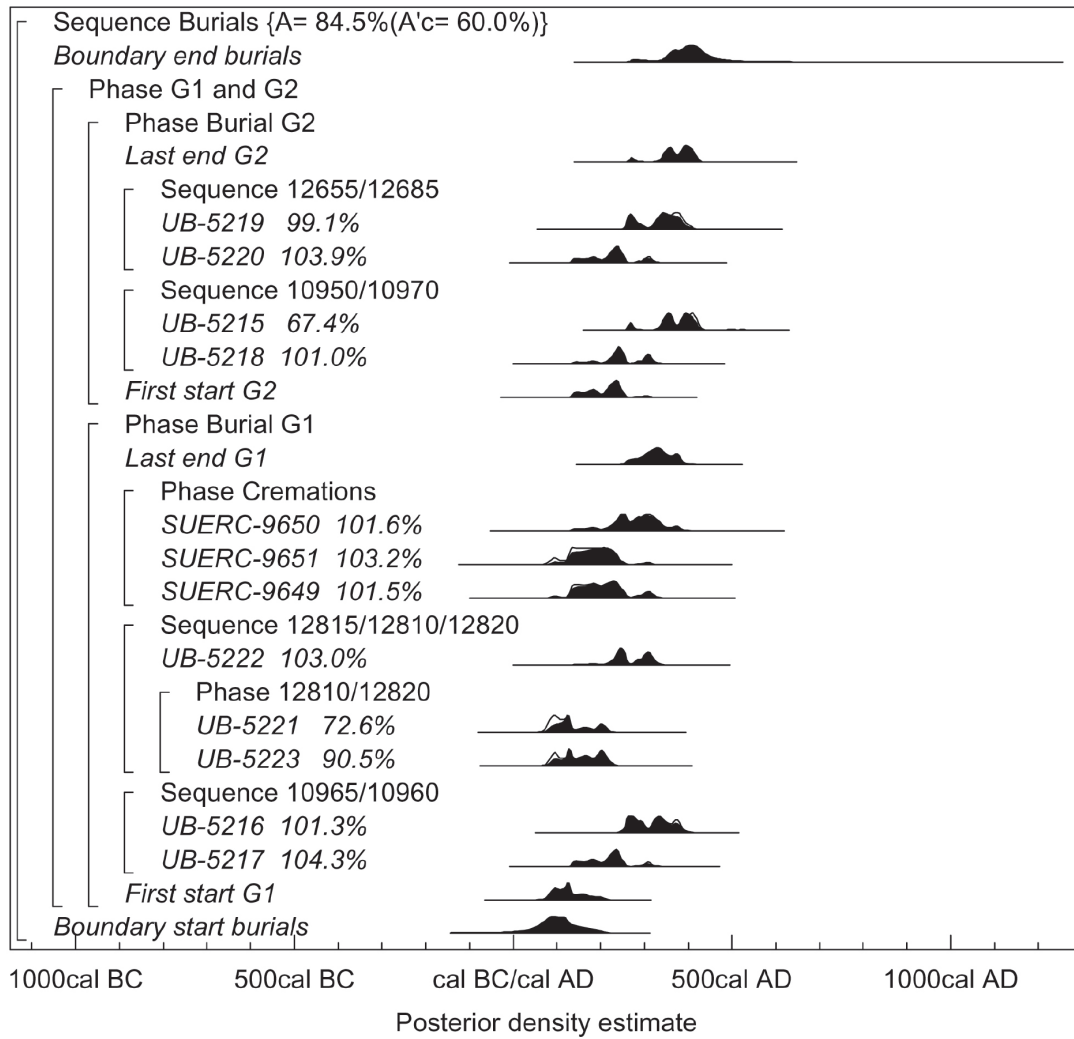


Fig. 4.57 Probability distributions of radiocarbon results from burial groups 1 and 2

C:N	Radiocarbon Age (BP)	Calibrated Date (95% confidence)	Posterior density estimate (95% probability)
	1810 ±35	cal AD 120–330	cal AD 125–265 (86%) or cal AD 280–325 (9%)
	1760 ±35	cal AD 130–390	cal AD 160–200 (5%) or cal AD 205–385 (90%)
	1835 ±35	cal AD 70–320	cal AD 90–255
3.3	1649 ±20	cal AD 345–430	cal AD 260–280 (6%) or cal AD 335–425 (89%)
3.2	1719 ±20	cal AD 250–395	cal AD 250–385
3.2	1798 ±18	cal AD 135–320	cal AD 135–260 (94%) or cal AD 305–315 (1%)
3.2	1784 ±17	cal AD 175–325	cal AD 140–200 (11%) or cal AD 205–265 (60%) or cal AD 280–330 (24%)
3.2	1701 ±21	cal AD 255–410	cal AD 255–305 (29%) or cal AD 315–400 (66%)
3.2	1793 ±20	cal AD 135–325	cal AD 130–260 (87%) or cal AD 295–320 (8%)
3.2	1885 ±18	cal AD 70–205	cal AD 80–220
3.2	1774 ±20	cal AD 215–335	cal AD 210–340
3.2	1869 ±20	cal AD 75–225	cal AD 85–225

Objectives

The overall objective of the dating programme was to provide a chronological framework that could be used to understand and interpret the burial record against the background of the phased site development. This included providing dates for individual burials and estimating the start and end dates of burial activity at the locations of the two spatially distinct burial groups.

Analysis and interpretation

Figure 4.57 provides the structure for, and shows the results of, the Bayesian model. The archaeological relationships between the samples in each burial group are discussed in greater detail below.

Burial Group 1

The material submitted for dating from burial group 1 consisted of three cremations and five inhumations. There was no stratigraphic relationship between the three cremations (crem 10912, 10931, and 10933; SUERC-9649, -9650, and -9651, respectively) or between the cremations and inhumations. There were, however, two stratigraphic sequences of cutting graves amongst the inhumations. The first sequence simply has grave 10965 cutting grave 10960 (UB-5216 and -5217, respectively). The second sequence has grave 12815 cutting both graves 12810 and 12820 (UB-5222, -5221, and -5223, respectively), although graves 12810 and 12820 are not stratigraphically related themselves.

Burial Group 2

The material from burial group 2 came from four contexts that formed two separate intercutting sequences that themselves were not stratigraphically related. The first sequence is grave 12655 cutting grave 12685 (UB-5219 and -5220, respectively). The second sequence is grave 10950 cutting grave 10970 (UB-5215 and -5218, respectively).

Results from Burial Groups 1 and 2

The model shown in Figure 4.57 is in good agreement ($A_{\text{overall}}=84.5\%$; $A'=60.0\%$). The dates of individual burials are estimated in Table 4.6 under the heading "Posterior density estimate (95% probability)". Activity within burial group 1 is estimated to have begun in 10 cal BC-cal AD 210 (95% probability; Fig. 4.57; *start_burial group 1*) and probably cal AD 40-150 (68% probability) and ended in cal AD 250-440 (95% probability; Fig. 4.57; *end_burial group 1*) and probably cal AD 260-360 (68% probability). The overall span of burial activity in burial group 1 is estimated at 60-400 years (95% probability; Fig. 4.58; *span burial group 1*) and probably 150-310 years (68% probability).

Activity within burial group 2 is estimated to have begun in 10 cal BC-cal AD 320 (95% probability; Fig. 4.57; *start_burial group 2*) and probably cal AD 100-250 (68% probability) and ended in cal AD 350-570 (90% probability; Fig.4.57; *end_burial group 2*) and probably cal AD 380-490 (68% probability). The overall span of burial activity in group 2 is estimated at 80-500 years (95% probability; Fig. 4.58; *span burial group 2*) and probably 160-370 years (68%

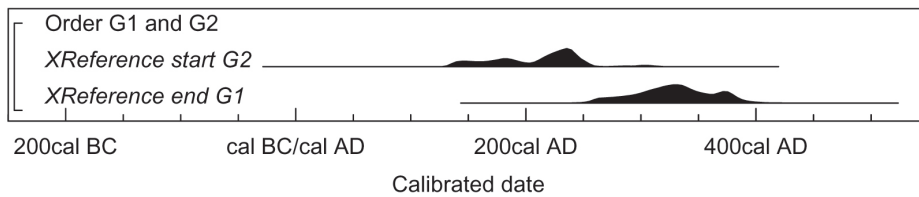


Fig. 4.58 Ordering of the end probability distribution for burial group 1 and the start of burial group 2.

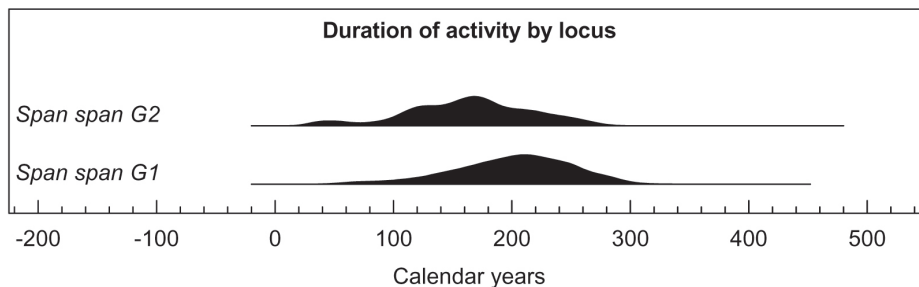


Fig. 4.59 Estimated duration of burial activity within burial groups 1 and 2

probability). The overall duration of burial activity within the two loci is estimated at 210–540 years (95% *probability*; Fig. 4.59) and probably 270–440 years (68% *probability*).

Although burial groups 1 and 2 were spatially distinct, further analysis shows that there is a 98%

probability that activity associated with burial in group 2 preceded the cessation of activity in group 1. Furthermore there is a 69% probability that the order of events is *start_burial group 1, start_burial group 2, end_burial group 1, end_burial group 2*.

