

## Chapter 9: The Beaker period and the early Bronze Age

### Introduction

Activity in the Beaker period and the early Bronze Age (Fig. 9.1) was represented by ring ditches in Areas 6 and 16 and at Marsh Lane East Site 2. The ring ditches at Marsh Lane East Site 2 included a recut of the possibly earlier Neolithic oval barrow, and a second ring ditch. This second ring ditch was associated with a central cremation burial which was originally covered by a Collared Urn. The pit also contained structured deposits of pyre material and, possibly, the remains of a bier. One of the three ring ditches in Area 6 was associated with a central pit with contained Beaker sherds, worked flint and animal bone. The two ring ditches in Area 16 were not clearly associated with any other features. An undated inhumation was found nearby, but the presence of late Bronze Age human remains in the same area raises the possibility that the undated inhumation also post-dated the ring ditch. Like the ring ditches in Area 6 and at Marsh Lane East Site 2, the two ring ditches in Area 16 were associated with few finds, and of the few that were recovered many were residual or intrusive.

Alongside the ring ditches, more exceptional evidence of late Neolithic/early Bronze Age occupation was found in several areas. The most extensive evidence of this kind was found around Gravel Island X. A late Neolithic/early Bronze Age soil horizon on the floodplain to the north of Gravel Island X (Areas Ex1-3) contained pottery, animal bone and *in situ* scatters of flint comprising knapping scatters, deposits of utilised material and activity areas. A number of shallow pits and spreads of burnt flint, charcoal and animal bone and a tree-throw hole were also associated with this layer. More mixed finds including a large proportion of apparently little disturbed late Neolithic/early Bronze material were recovered from the layer above the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age horizon. Further flint scatters and spreads of burnt material, as well as the remains of a hearth, were recovered from a soil horizon on the floodplain to the south-east of Gravel Island X (in Area 11). Traces of activity on the gravel island itself were limited but included finds from a small number of tree-throw holes and a pit. The pottery associated with the activity around Gravel Island X included sherds from both Beakers and Collared Urns.

More limited evidence for late Neolithic/early Bronze Age occupation was found on other sites.

Two flint scatters were found on the edge of the gravel terrace in Area 3. Further flint scatters, as well as a gully and tree-throw holes were found on Taplow Mill Site 2. Small quantities of late Neolithic/early Bronze Age finds, including both Beaker and Collared Urn sherds, were recovered from the fills of the hollows in Areas 6 and 10. Late Neolithic/early Bronze Age flint was also recovered from the fills of a hollow (formed like the hollows in Areas 6 and 10) by the silting up of a palaeochannel at Amerden Lane West. These fills, however, contained material from many periods and had clearly suffered from significant disturbance. Pits and tree-throw holes probably dating from the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age were found in Area 18 and at Marsh Lane East Site 1.

### **Area 6: ring ditches and other late neolithic/early Bronze Age evidence** by Anne Marie Cromarty, Hugo Anderson-Whymark and Tim Allen

#### *Introduction*

Activity in the Beaker period and the early Bronze Age was represented in Area 6 most clearly by three ring ditches, although the evidence for their date is limited, and only one of them was associated with any evidence for burials or other contemporaneous features. The one exception was ring ditch 5169 at the centre of which lay a pit (5201) which contained Beaker pottery. Further evidence for activity in these periods was provided by artefacts from the fills of the hollow associated with the early Neolithic midden deposits.

#### *Ring ditches*

In total, four ring ditches were found in Area 6 (Fig. 9.2). Although the chronological evidence for these features is often unclear, one of them (5361) appear to date from the middle Bronze Age and is thus described in Volume 2. The other three may have been earlier in date and are described here.

#### *Ring ditch 5579*

The north-western ring ditch (5579) lay just north of the hollow (Fig 9.2), and the outer edge of the ditch appeared to cut the edge of either layer 11200 which sealed the hollow or the early Neolithic horizon (11201). Ditch 5579 formed an almost regular circle 20m in diameter (from ditch centre to ditch centre). In diameter this ditch was very similar to ring ditch

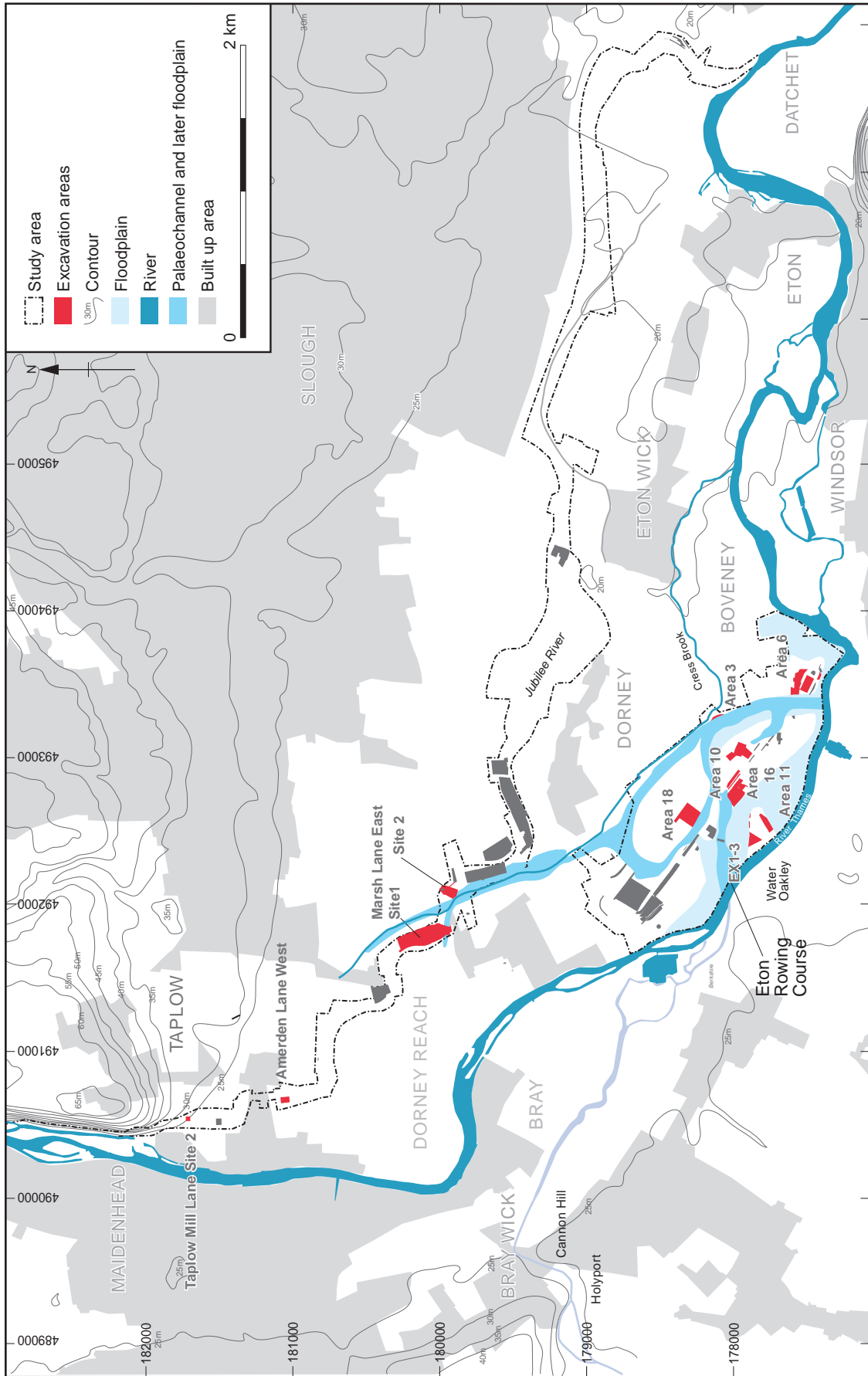


Fig. 9.1 Location of sites discussed in Chapter 9 (Crown copyright 2013 Ordnance Survey 100005569)

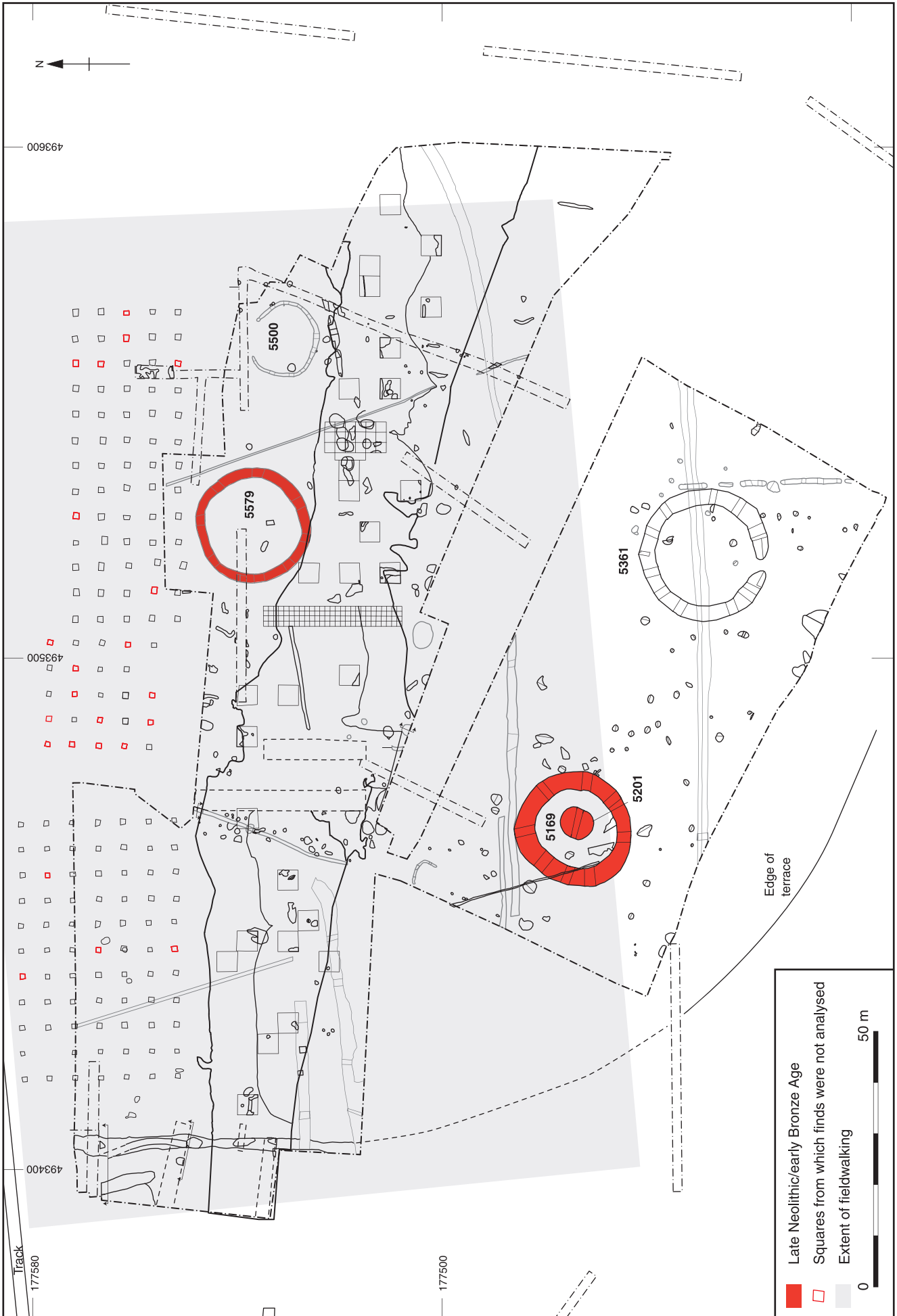


Fig. 9.2 Beaker period and early Bronze Age features in Area 6

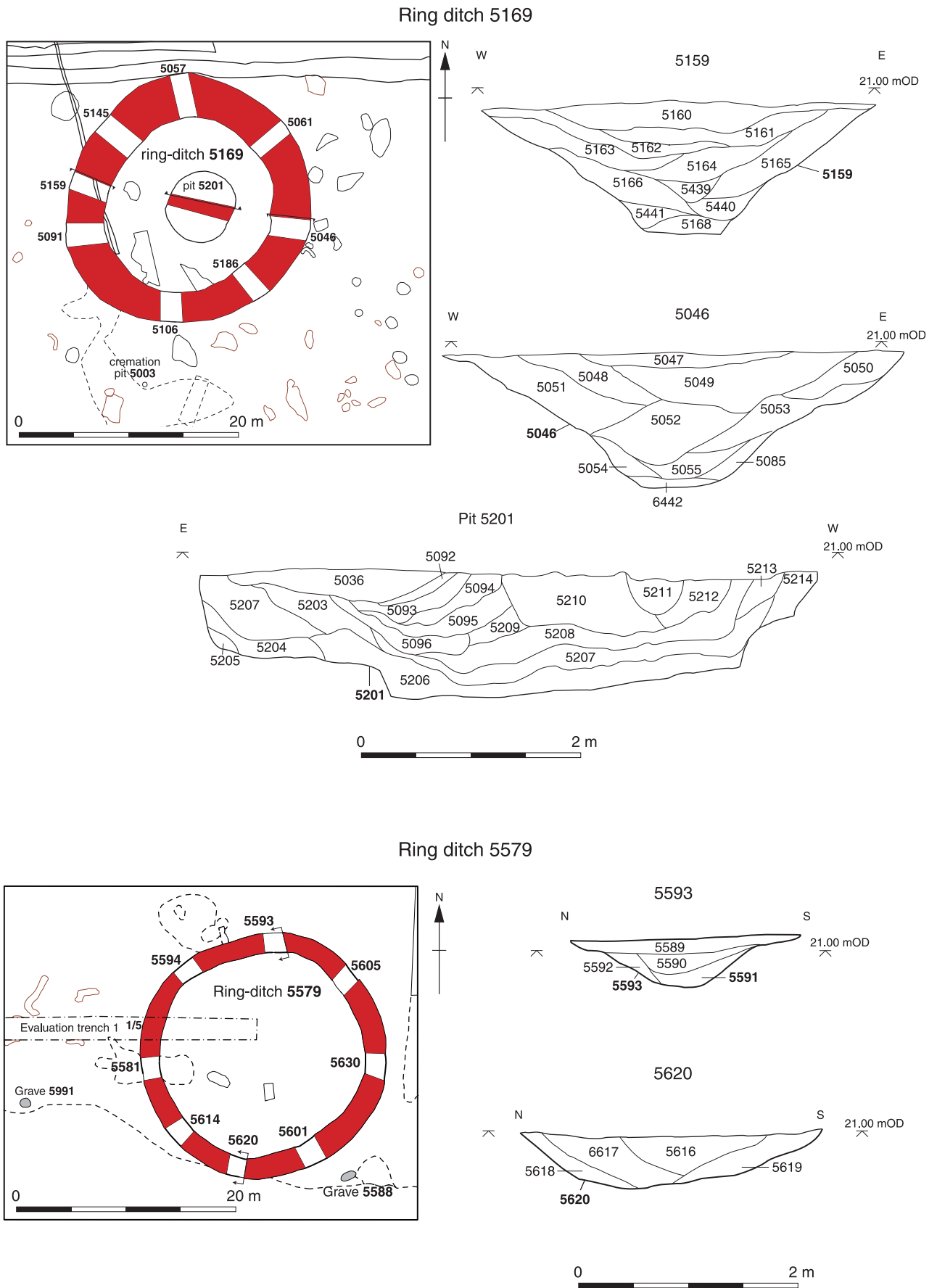


Fig. 9.3 Ring ditches 5169 and 5579



5169 further south-west. Ditch 5579 was on average only 2.12m wide and 0.39m deep and had a bowl-shaped profile. No primary burial or other features associated with the primary use of this barrow survived.

Most of the ditch fills (Fig. 9.3) were friable, light-mid yellow or orange brown, sandy loam or silty sand derived from a mixture of the underlying Pleistocene sand and gravel (5503) and the layer of late Glacial yellow brown silt drift (5504) that overlay the gravel in the vicinity of this feature. Some deposits had a higher proportion of clay, but these too are likely to be derived directly from the local geology, the Pleistocene deposits making up this terrace being generally fairly mixed.

The upper fills of the ditch tended to be darker coloured and had higher proportions of artefacts than the lower fills. A few artefacts were, however, recovered from the primary fills of the ditch, including 17 Neolithic flints, two sherds of early Neolithic pottery (14g) and a single piece of animal bone (from cuts 5581, 5614 and 5620 in the south-eastern quarter of the ring ditch next to the palaeochannel). In total 89 sherds of pottery (569g), 312 flints and 50 pieces of animal bone were recovered from the ditch (including the finds made during the initial cleaning of the feature). Of those that could be dated, the majority were early Neolithic, including five of the worked flints and all the stratified pottery. Only two crumbs of early Bronze Age pottery and five sherds of middle Bronze Age date recovered from the cleaning layer were obviously later in date.

The majority of the stratified early Neolithic pottery was recovered from the sections closest to the edge of the palaeochannel (5581, 5614, 5620 and 5601; Fig. 9.3), though four small sherds were recovered from the top fill (5589) of cut 5593 on the north side of the ring ditch. All of the Neolithic material may therefore be residual. Outside the ring ditch to the south-west and south-east were two graves, 5588 and 5991 (respectively 2m and 11m away) containing crouched burials, both radiocarbon dated to the middle Neolithic (see Chapter 7). The date of the ring ditch should be established by the stratigraphic relationship between the ditch and layer 11200 in the hollow, as this sealing layer contained late Neolithic and Beaker pottery. It is not, however, absolutely certain that it was the sealing layer that was cut by the ring ditch, rather than the early Neolithic land surface below (11201), and the possibility that the ring ditch was Neolithic rather than Bronze Age should not be entirely discounted.

#### *Penannular ring ditch 5500*

Around 20m to the east of ring ditch 5579, near to the northern edge of the hollow but not cutting it, lay a penannular gully which was interpreted before excavation as a further ring ditch. This feature (5500) was much slighter than 5579. The ditch averaged only 0.78m wide and 0.25m deep

and had a bowl-shaped profile. It ran for 36m in a very rough circle about 14m in diameter with a 7m wide gap or entrance to the north (Fig. 9.2).

Twelve sections were excavated through this ditch and revealed that it contained no more than three fills at any point, sometimes being filled by only a single deposit. These deposits almost always consisted of light-mid yellow brown silty clay. Where the ditch cut the Pleistocene sand and gravel directly, the primary fills of the ditch often contained a high percentage of gravel, but otherwise gravel inclusions were sparse. A single sherd of early Neolithic pottery (11g) and one undated flint were recovered from the primary fills of this ditch. Most of the 14 sherds (87g) recovered from this ditch (including those from the initial cleaning) were of this date, most coming from the south-western sector of the ditch closest to the hollow. These Neolithic finds could therefore all have been residual.

The only later sherds recovered from the ditch were a single 5g sherd of early Bronze Age date which was recorded from cut 5528 towards the north-west of the enclosure, and a 6g sherd possibly of late Iron Age date from cleaning over the north-western terminus. A small, undated iron loop was also recovered from cut 5528. No burials were found in association with the feature, nor did any of the artefacts recovered from it provide any clues as to its function.

The date of this feature is uncertain. The date of the latest finds could well be late Iron Age, and the dimensions also invite comparisons with the many other penannular Iron Age enclosures from the Thames Valley, so the late Iron Age sherd could have been contemporaneous with the ring ditch. Alternatively, since there were a number of later ploughmarks crossing Area 6, these finds could have been intrusive, and the feature could date either to the early Bronze age, like the adjacent ring ditch, or to the Neolithic.

#### *Ring ditch 5169 (Figs 9.3-4; Plate 9.1)*

The ditch of the south-western ring ditch (5169) averaged 3.7 wide and 1.35 deep, and formed a roughly circular ring around 18.5m in diameter, from ditch centre to ditch centre. Eight slots were excavated initially around the 62m circumference, and suggested that the ditch was fairly consistent round the whole circuit. This proved to be the case when towards the end of excavation in this area the excavators removed all the remaining fills of this and the other ring ditch. The ring ditch had originally been dug with a fairly steeply sloping U-shaped profile, which became more flared over time as it progressively weathered and infilled.

No primary burial was found associated with the ring ditch, but a large pit (5201) occupied the centre of the ring ditch (Plate 9.1). This pit was almost circular in plan, 5.9m in diameter and 1.32m deep, with a slightly irregular U-shaped profile. It was filled by a series of deposits of loose mid-dark

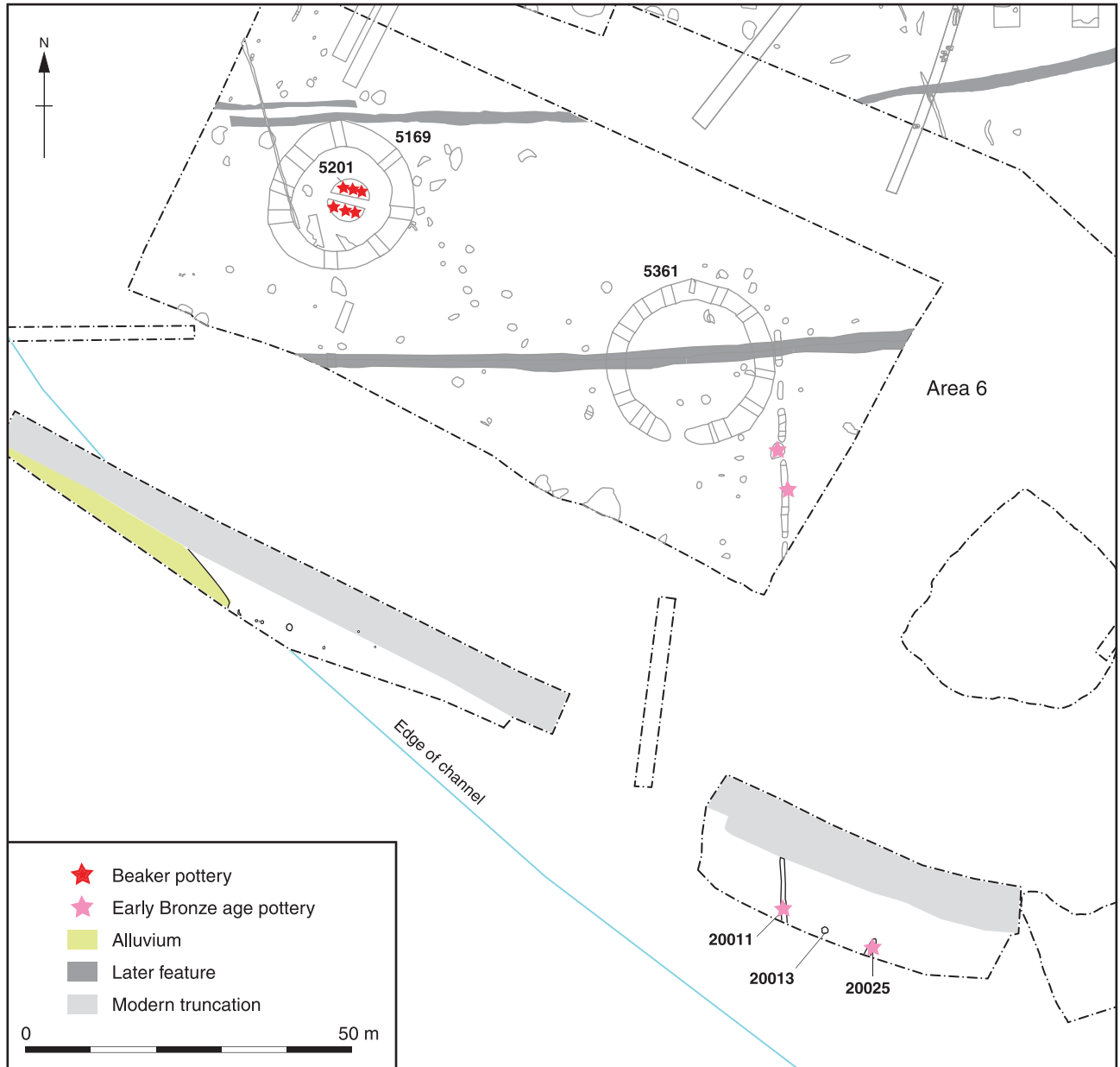


Fig. 9.4 Plan of earlier prehistoric features in Area 6 south phased by pottery or struck flint

brown sandy loam with variable amounts of gravel. Few artefacts were recovered: 41 small sherds of Beaker pottery from the upper two fills (5092 and 5036), and a few worked flints and four animal bones (one cattle, three unidentified mammal; identification by Gillian Jones) from other contexts. The Beaker pottery sherds represented at least three separate vessels and together suggest a date in the latter part of the Beaker period (after 2050 cal BC). This feature might be interpreted as a collapsed tree-throw hole, but its dimensions, the artefact assemblage and central placing within the ring ditch suggest that it was a deliberate centrally dug pit, though whether prehistoric or the result of antiquarian barrow digging is uncertain. The only other feature within

the ring ditch was tree-throw hole 5034, which was filled with grey brown silty sand. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Almost all the fills of the ditch consisted of sandy silt with variable proportions of gravel inclusions (up to 75%). The relative proportions of sand and silt in these soils varied. The primary fill in many of the sections was tenacious, containing more silt, while later fills along the edges of the ditch were often loose or friable, containing more sand. No artefacts were recovered from the primary fills of the ditch, but two undated flints were retrieved from the second fill (5141) in cut 5145. Another flint was recovered from a deposit slightly further up the sequence in the same cut. This flint was dated to the early Neolithic period.



Plate 9.1 Ring ditch 5169 with central pit 5201, from the north-west

All the fills of the lower three-quarters of the ditch were consistent with having been derived from the weathering of the sides of the ditch. It is not certain that any barrow mound existed inside this ring ditch. A few of the sections suggested that the ditch had filled more quickly from the inner side during the early stages of infill. This may indicate the slipping of a newly constructed earthen mound on that side of the ditch, but other sections show a much more even pattern of infill. The only other artefacts recovered from the lower fills of the ditch were three fragments of cattle or large mammal bone from cuts 5057 and 5061.

During excavation it was noticed that the larger flint nodules were generally found along the centre of the ditch. These gravel nodules gave the impression of a central vertical column, which was given separate context numbers and was at first interpreted as a palisade. On closer examination, however, this interpretation was dismissed in favour of a natural origin. Despite the apparent difference in composition from the deposits at the sides, the ditches filled by natural weathering, and natural sorting deposited the larger and heavier gravel nodules furthest downslope at the centre of the ditch. With relatively less momentum, the silt and sand particles came to rest sooner, forming deposits of finer particles along the sides of the ditch.

The only exception was a spread of tenacious black-brown silt and charcoal (50%). This deposit was discovered near to cut 5106 in the south of the ring ditch. It overlay the early silting slips down the inner side of the ditch, and spread over an area measuring 0.6m by 0.5m. This deposit might have been associated with the middle Bronze Age funerary process and cremation 5003 to the south (see Volume 2), but this is not certain. The erosion and deposition of sands and gravels from the sides of the ditch continued for some time after this.

The sides of the ditch and mound achieved a state of relative stability by the time the upper fills accumulated. These fills tended to be darker in colour than the others, perhaps due to the growth of soil over the stabilised earlier fills. Most of the limited number of artefacts recovered from the ditch were located within these fills. Twenty three pottery sherds, 34 worked flints, and 31 fragments of animal bone were recovered from them. The pottery sherds were all fairly small, and twenty two of these dated to the middle Bronze Age. Of the flints, only a later Mesolithic rod microlith from 5074 could be dated. The middle Bronze Age sherds give a *terminus ante quem* for the ring ditch, and are probably associated with the deposition of the adjacent cremations (see Volume 2).

The latest deposit in the top of cut 5106 was very homogenous friable dark brown sandy silt with some gravel, grit and pockets of clay. This soil had clear similarities to the overlying ploughsoil 5001 and is likely to have been part of it.

#### *Late Neolithic/early Bronze Age Beaker pottery from Area 6 by Alistair Barclay*

A total of 73 sherds (236g) of Beaker pottery were recovered from features and layers within the hollow (see Fig. 5.11), while a deposit of Beaker sherds was recovered from the pit within the centre of barrow 5169 (Fig. 9.4 and Table 9.1). A total of five fabrics were identified, all of which contained grog temper along with inclusions of sand and/or flint (AGF2/LNEBA: 2 sherds/6 g; GA1/LNEBA: 3 sherds/8 g; GA2/LNEBA: 4 sherds/24 g; GAF2/LNEBA: 23 sherds, 134 g; GAF3/LNEBA: 38 sherds, 55g).

#### *Forms and decoration*

Nearly all the sherds are relatively small, and there are few refits, although multiple sherds from single



Table 9.1 Beaker pottery from Area 6 summarised by context group and quantified by sherd count (NoSh) and weight (WT)

Context group	Description	Context	Illustrated vessel	NoSh	Wt
5103	IA feature	5103		2	8g
5201	Pit	5036, 5092	P217-9	41	98g
5300	BA ditch	5282		1	1g
5579	MBA cut	5580		2	3g
5788	Layer	5788		1	5g
11200	Sealing layer	5753, 11152, 11365	P220	5	30g
11201	Land surface	5831, 5989, 11059, 11151, 11153, 11159	P221-5	16	74g
11202	Early fill of hollow	11180		1	1g
11301	Midden	11150		1	7g
11428	Trench	5871-2		2	8g
Total				138	448g

vessels were noted. Decoration consists of comb or fingernail impressions. There is a sherd from near the base of a vessel with comb impressed chevrons that is fired to a bright reddish-brown colour. It is probable that this sherd (P22) derives from a Beaker of Clarke's (1970) Wessex/Middle Rhine group. Other sherds (P23-7) from the hollow (context 11151) are less diagnostic. The group of sherds recovered from the pit included examples from a rusticated vessel (P19) and others from finer vessels with comb (P20) or incised (P21) motifs similar to ones found on Clarke's (1970) Southern Beaker styles.

#### Context

With the exception of the 41 sherds from pit 5201, most of the sherds were distributed within the hollow (see Fig. 5.11), while two sherds were recovered from the ditch fills of the north-western barrow (5579).

Within the hollow, Beaker sherds were distributed over an area of at least 80m, although there was a more marked concentration in squares 11218, 11220 and the excavated land surface 5989. It is possible that all these sherds derive from earlier styles of Beaker perhaps belonging to Clarke's Wessex/Middle Rhine group (1970).

Pit 5201 contained sherds of Beaker pottery (SF 33002 and 33009) from at least three separate vessels. Nearly all of the sherds came from a coarse-ware vessel with rusticated decoration consisting of paired finger-nail impressions. Despite the presence of many fragments it is impossible to reconstruct its profile, although the rim is clearly simple, rounded and slightly everted. Sherds from this vessel were present in both fills 5036 and 5092. Other crumbs and small fragments from 5036 could also be from this vessel. A further three sherds from an additional two fineware vessels were recovered from context 5036. One sherd from the belly of a pot has an incised geometric motif, a type of decoration

that is more common on some Southern-style Beakers (Clarke 1970). The remaining sherds are from the body of a vessel and have widely spaced horizontal comb impressions. This type of decoration can be found on many of the styles of Beaker defined by Clarke (1970). Too little of this vessel remains to assign it to any particular form or style.

The date of this group rests on the following assumptions made about the three identified vessels. First, that vessels with all-over-comb have a long currency and could belong anywhere within the Beaker ceramic tradition and do not automatically indicate an early date. Second, that the incised motif on vessel (P219) is more likely to belong to a Southern style Beaker indicating a later date within the Beaker sequence and third, that the vessel, P217, with rusticated decoration is also more likely to be later. The currency of Beaker pottery is presently thought to span the period 2400-1700 cal BC and overlaps with the end of the Neolithic and the start of the Bronze Age (Needham 1996, fig.2). It is argued here that these vessels are more likely to fall within the latter part of this date range, after 2050 cal BC and within the early Bronze Age.

#### Catalogue of illustrated Beaker pottery (Fig. 9.5)

- P217 5036 and 5092. SF 33039 and 33002. Beaker. Thirty seven sherds (79g), including fragments from the rim, body and base, possibly from a single vessel with a slight everted rim. At least 12 sherds are decorated with pinched finger-tip impressions. Similar rim and decorated body sherds occur in both contexts. Fabric GAF3. Colour varies from reddish-brown throughout to reddish-brown with a grey core. Condition fair.
- P218 5036. SF 33002. Beaker. Two body sherds (6g) with widely spaced horizontal comb impressions. Fabric GAF2. Colour ext. yellowish brown; core grey; int. black. Condition fair.
- P219 5036. SF 33002. Beaker. Sherd (4g) from the belly of a fine Beaker with incised decoration. Enough survives to suggest a geometric motif made up of horizontal and oblique bands. Fabric GA2. Colour

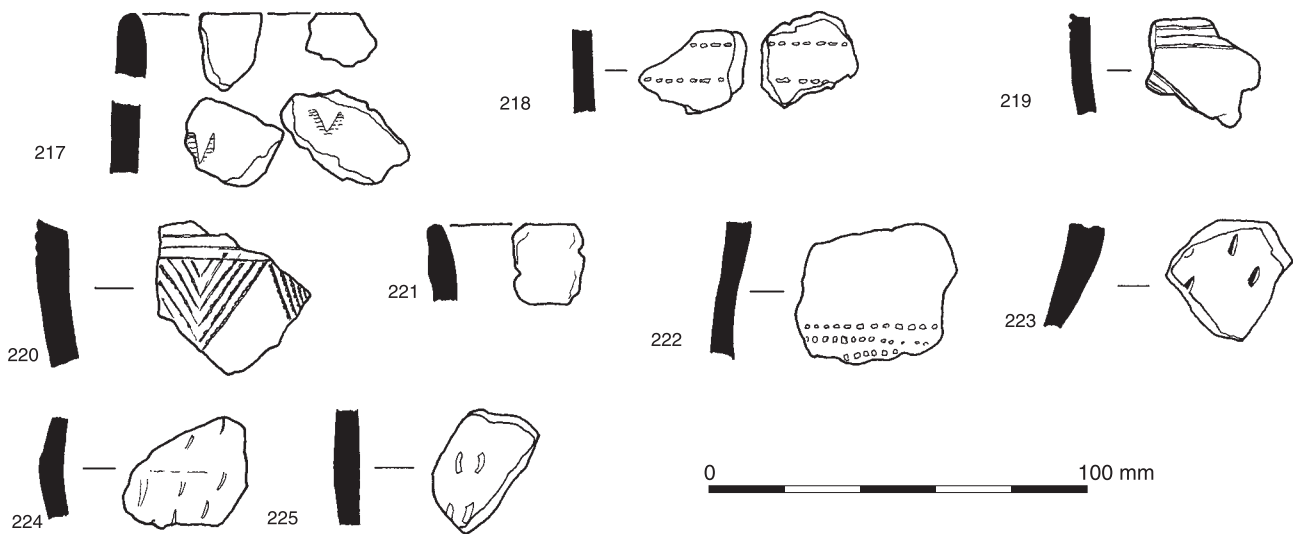


Fig. 9.5 Beaker pottery from Area 6

ext. yellowish brown; core and int. black.  
Condition fair.

- P220 5753. SF 38182. Beaker, ?WMR. Sherd broken just above the base (13g) decorated with ?comb impressed pendant motifs. Fabric GA2/LNEBA. Firing: reddish-brown throughout. Condition average.
- P221 11151. SF 75070. Beaker. Rim sherd (3g). Fabric GAF2/LNEBA. Firing: reddish-brown throughout. Condition average.
- P222 11151. SF 77133. Beaker. Comb impressed body sherd (12g). Fabric GAF2/LNEBA. Firing: ext. reddish-brown; core and int. grey. Condition average.
- P223 11151. SF 72001. Beaker. Neck sherd with stabbed decoration (10g). Fabric GAF3/LNEBA. Firing: ext. reddish-brown; core grey; int. brown. Exterior burnished, interior smoothed. Condition average.
- P224 11151. SF 76164. Beaker. Shoulder sherd with impressed finger-nail decoration (12g). Fabric GAF2/LNEBA. Firing: ext. and core reddish-brown. Condition average.
- P225 11151. SF 78351. Beaker. Body sherd with aplastic finger-nail decoration (5g). Fabric GAF2/LNEBA. Firing: ext. yellowish-brown; core grey; int. brown. Condition average.

#### Early Bronze Age Collared Urn

A total of 35 sherds (396g) of early Bronze Age pottery was recovered from cut 5528 within ring ditch 5500, the hollow (11365) and a Roman pit (5226). This included 32 sherds (380g) from one or more Collared Urns (P228-9), a decorated rim sherd from an urn (P227), possibly a Food Vessel, and a shoulder sherd (P226) from an urn. Of the three fabrics (AG1/EBA, GA2/EBA and GFA3/EBA) identified all contained grog, which is typical for this period.

#### Form and decoration

Three or four vessels (P226-9) are represented by 35 sherds. This includes the shoulder and possible collar fragments from one or more pots. It is uncer-

tain whether P228-9 belong to the same pot, although the sherds are of very similar fabric and appearance. The sherds that make up P228 are decorated with horizontal moulded cordons, and could come from the collar of a small urn, while the shoulder sherds that make up P229 are almost certainly from a Collared Urn. It is possible that the moulded sherds (P228) belong to a large rusticated Beaker of a type found in domestic assemblages (Gibson 1982). The shoulder sherd (P226) and the rim (P227) are also from urns or Food Vessels.

#### Discussion

The relatively small collection of vessels have affinities within the Collared Urn and Food Vessel ceramic traditions of the early Bronze Age. It is likely that this group of pottery is broadly contemporary with at least two of the round barrows in Area 6. It is rare to find this type of pottery in domestic contexts (Longworth 1984), so its occurrence within the Area 6 hollow is of importance and may indicate some small-scale activity. In addition to these finds, two fragmentary vessels were found on the land surface in Area Ex2, sherds from a third vessel came from Area Ex1 and a single shoulder sherd came from Area 16. None of these deposits can be considered to be associated directly with funerary activity.

#### Catalogue of illustrated early Bronze Age pottery (Fig. 9.6)

- P226 5226. EBA. Collared Urn. Shoulder sherd (11g). Fabric GA2/EBA. Firing: ext. reddish-brown; core black; int. brown. Condition average to worn.
- P227 5528. SF 35099. Collared Urn/Food Vessel. Decorated rim (5g). Fabric AG1/EBA. Firing: ext. reddish-brown; core black; int. brown. Condition average.
- P228-9 11200 (511, 763) 3478.5S. Collared Urn. Collar and shoulder sherds possibly from a single, relatively large, vessel (380g). The collar sherds refit and are

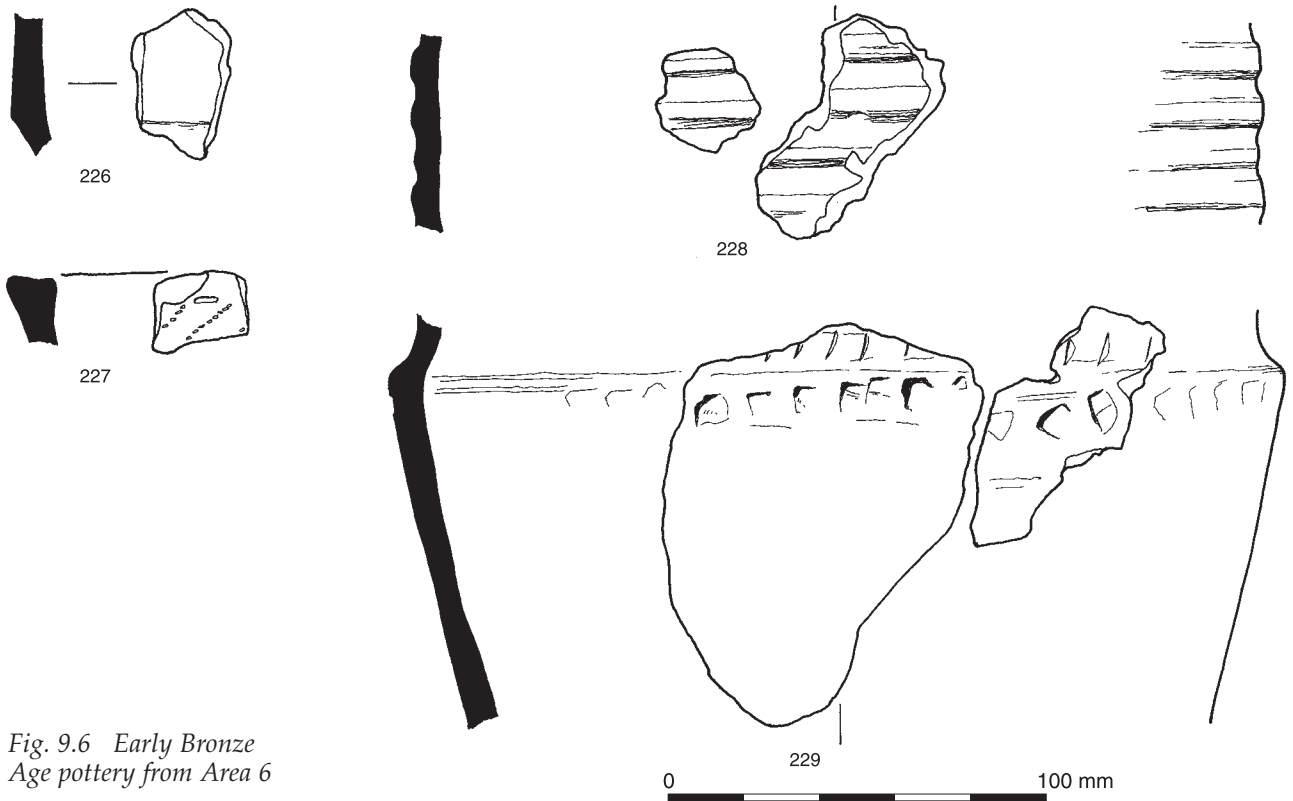


Fig. 9.6 Early Bronze Age pottery from Area 6

decorated with horizontal grooves. The shoulder sherds are impressed and there is finger-tip decoration on the neck. Shoulder dia. 290mm. Fabric GFA/EBA. Firing: reddish-brown throughout. Condition average.

**Early Bronze Age worked flint from Area 6**  
Hugo Anderson-Whymark

A total of 345 flints were recovered either from contexts of early Bronze Age date, or as diagnostic finds in later contexts (Table 9.2). The vast majority came from the northern pair of barrows (5500 and 5579), and appears on technological grounds to be residual Neolithic material. This seems to be particularly so in the case of barrow 5579 which cuts the hollow deposits. Only 4 struck flints were recovered from the central pit (5201) of Beaker date within the south-western barrow.

In addition, two barbed and tanged arrowheads (Plate 9.2) were recovered from the hollow and an

unfinished barbed and tanged arrowhead was found in the topsoil. A barbed and tanged arrowhead found in the topsoil of test pit 5313, 30m north of barrow 5500, exhibits very fine knapping, and given its proximity to the barrows may have originally have been a grave good. Both barbs are now broken.

**Marsh Lane East Site 2: early Bronze Age funerary activity and monuments**  
by Anne Marie Cromarty, David Petts and Alistair Barclay

*Introduction*

Activity in the early Bronze Age and perhaps in the Beaker period at Marsh Lane East Site 2 was evidenced by the remains of the second phase of the possibly earlier Neolithic oval barrow discussed in Chapter 6, and by a second ring ditch which was associated with a central cremation burial of an

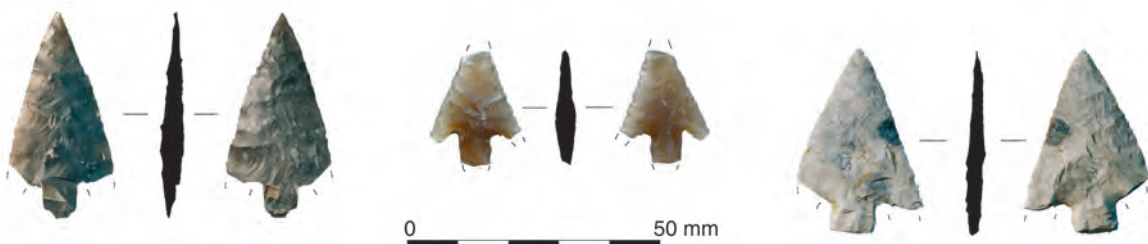


Plate 9.2 Barbed and tanged arrowheads from Area 6



Table 9.2 The flint assemblages from the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age ring ditches and pit 5201

CATEGORY TYPE	5500	5579	Pit 5201	Total
Flake	8	215	2	225
Blade	1	29		30
Bladelet	1	6		7
Blade-like	5	24	1	30
Chip		2		2
Irregular waste		5	1	6
Rejuvenation flake core face/edge				
Rejuvenation flake tablet	1	1		2
Flake from ground implement		1		1
Core single platform blade core		2		2
Bipolar (opposed platform) blade core		2		2
Tested nodule/bashed lump	2	7		9
Single platform flake core	2	1		3
Multiplatform flake core	2	8		10
Core on a flake				
Unclassifiable/fragmentary core	1	2		3
Microlith				
End scraper		1		1
Side scraper		1		1
End and side scraper		1		
Other scraper				
Piercer		2		2
Serrated flake	2	2		4
Notch		3		3
Retouched flake	3	13		16
Hammerstone		2		2
Grand total	28	330	4	362
Burnt unworked flint (g)	125	516	40	681
Burnt no. (%) (exc. chips)	2 (7.1)	10 (3)	0	12 (3.3)
Broken no. (%) (exc. chips)	9 (32.1)	89 (27.1)	2	100 (26)
Retouched no. (%) (exc. chips)	5 (17.9)	23 (7)	0	28 (7.8)
No. flakes per core	2.3	12.8		10.1

adult within a Collared Urn and possibly the remains of a bier.

*The oval ring ditch phase 2 (70146; Figs 9.7-8; Plate 9.3)*

Though the possibly earlier Neolithic phase 1 ring ditch described in Chapter 6 had almost completely filled in the southern section, enough of it, or at least enough memory of it, remained for the ditch to be re-excavated on almost exactly the same line during the early Bronze Age. This second cut was not uniform round the whole circuit. At the southern end of the circuit where clear traces of the first phase ditch remained, the new ditch appeared wider and shallower (at 2.1-2.3m wide by 0.84m deep) than it was elsewhere

with a slightly more rounded profile. The ditch profile was fairly similar along the opposite end of the oval, but much deeper, between 1.00m and 1.74m, with a more U-shaped profile, along the eastern and western sides of the monument. The lowest fills of this ditch in all of the excavated sections were very similar to those of the Phase 1 ditch and may indeed have incorporated some of them where the new cut was not recognised, as well as material eroded from the newly exposed Pleistocene deposits in the sides of the new cut and any new central mound formed from the upcast. As was the case for the Phase 1 ditch, no artefacts were recovered from any of these deposits.

Overlying these primary deposits were further red- or grey-brown clay silt deposits with variable proportions of flint inclusions, forming up to as much as 75% of the deposits. These deposits were also generally derived from the erosion of the sides of the ditch and any upcast bank or mound, but included anthropogenic material indicative of human activity around the monument. This included flint flakes from from cut 70020 in the western part of the ditch, some charcoal from the interface between two contexts, and a few sherds of probably residual early Neolithic pottery from another context cut 70014 in the eastern part, and seven sherds of probably early Bronze Age pottery from low in the sequence in the ditch section excavated within evaluation trench D208 also through the eastern part of the ring ditch. These deposits were in part naturally derived from erosion of the ditch sides and any up cast bank or mound, but the speed of this attrition was almost certainly enhanced by human action, though only one deposit, in cut 70205 at the northern end of the monument, might suggest deliberate dumping of a gravel rich material from the inner side of the ring ditch.

On the basis of the surviving evidence, the presence of a mound associated with this ring ditch is by no means certain. Any mound formed during either phase of the monument had been completely flattened by ploughing long before the archaeological investigation, and though some deposits appeared to have been derived from the inner side as might be expected with a rapidly eroding mound of loose upcast located on that side of the ditch, this was by no means uniformly clear in the sections. Most often infill appeared to have been fairly even from both sides.

The fill of the last hollow left in the top of the almost infilled ditch consisted of mid grey- or red-brown silty clay, generally with lower percentages of gravel inclusions than the earlier fills, suggesting less rapid accumulation. Several more sherds of early Bronze Age pottery were recovered from the top of cut 70020. These deposits may have been associated with ploughing around the monument, and were cut by medieval plough furrows 70080 and 70088.



Plate 9.3 Ring ditch 70146, Marsh Lane East Site 2

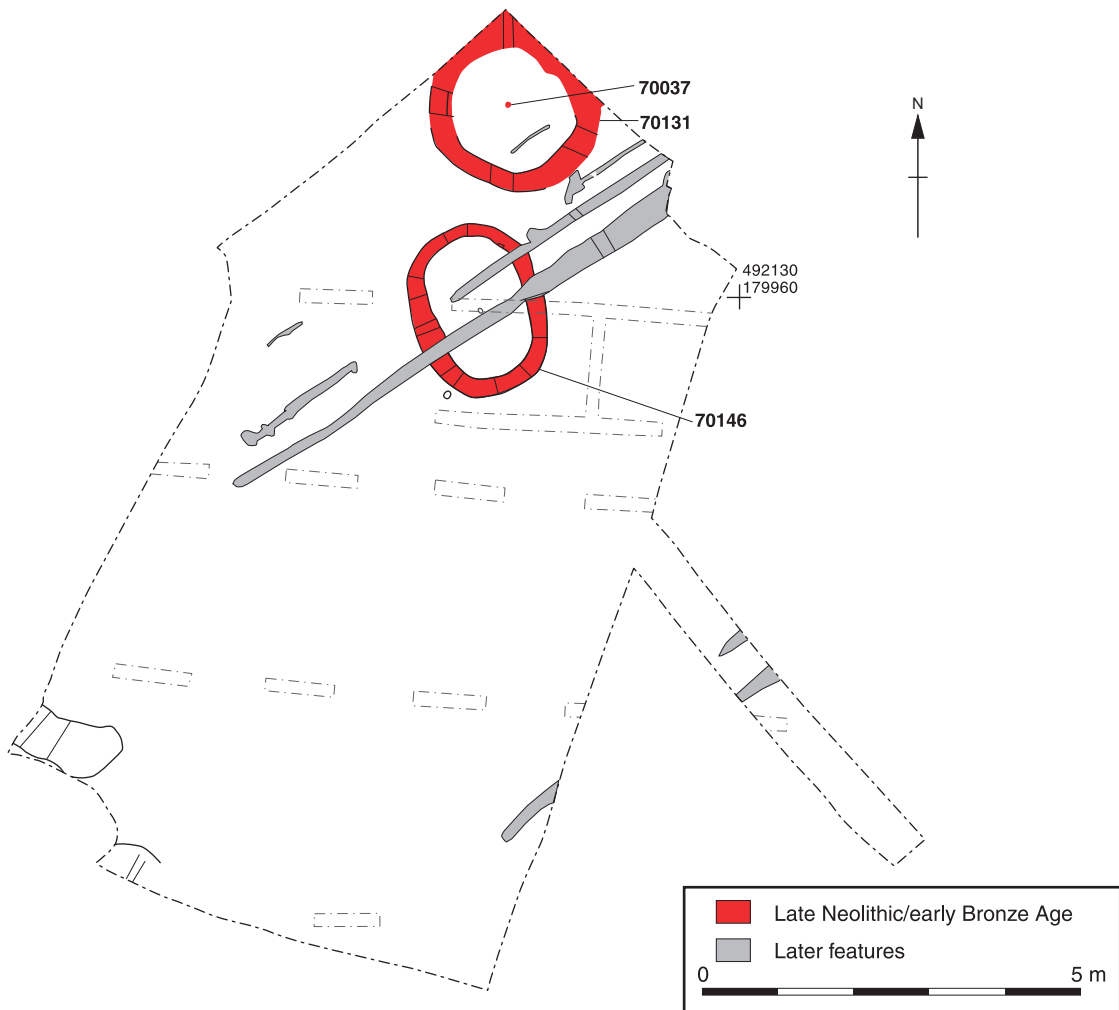


Fig. 9.7 Marsh Lane East Site 2, late Neolithic/early Bronze Age features



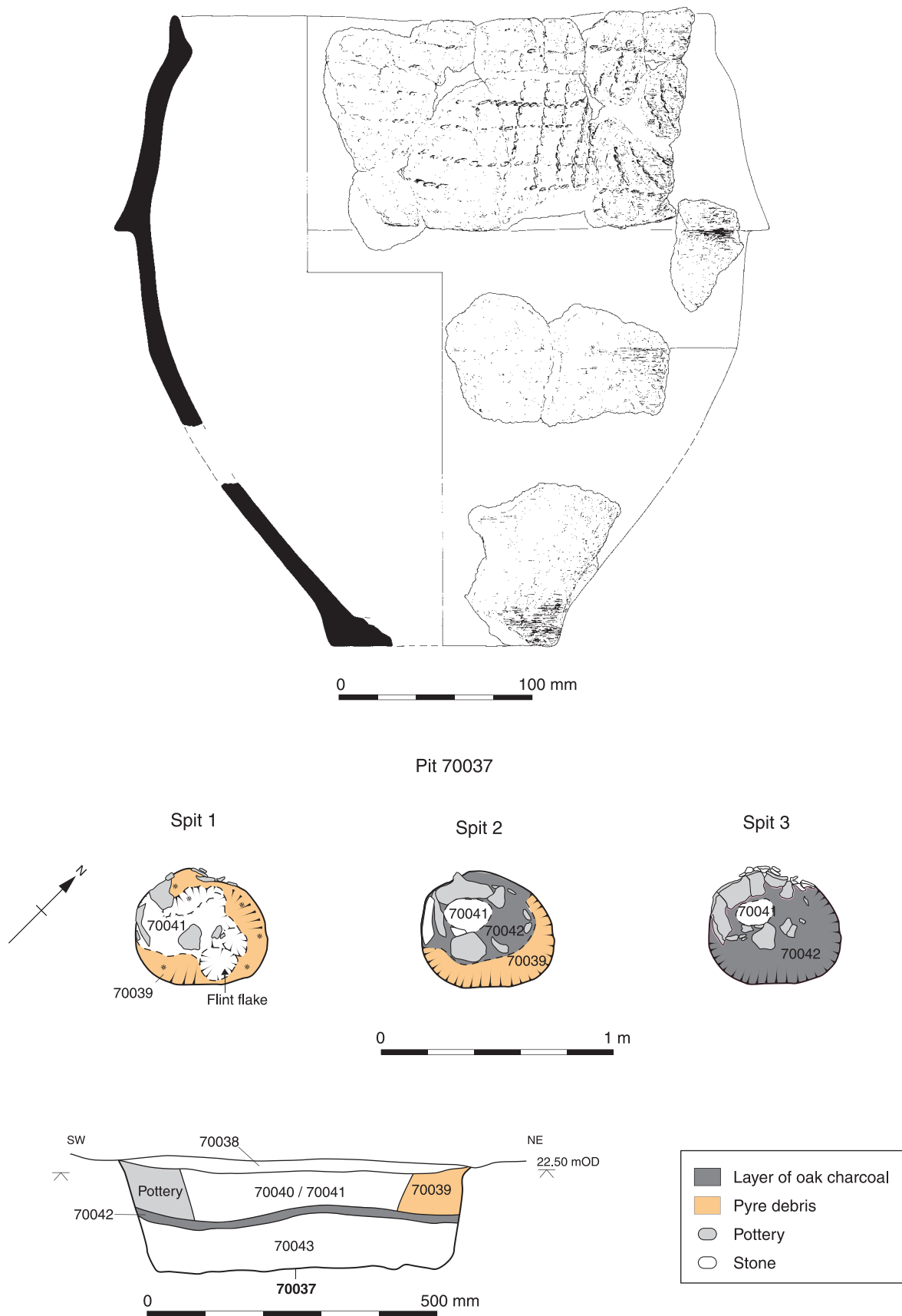


Fig. 9.9 Central cremation deposit 70037, plans, section and reconstruction of Collared Urn, Marsh Lane East Site 2





Plate 9.4 Ring ditch 70131, Marsh Lane East Site 2

*Barrow 70131* (Figs 9.8-9; Plate 9.4)

Almost all of the remains of a probable round barrow were uncovered in the northern corner of the excavated area. No evidence for a central mound or preserved ground surface survived, with the site having been ploughed since at least the medieval period. The ditch (70131) appeared to be continuous and enclosed a central pit (70037) that was associated with an urned cremation deposit, together with evidence of a possible bier. A further pit appeared to have been associated either with this or another cremation deposit. No evidence for *in situ* burning, such as a pyre site, was recorded,

although it should be noted that the original ground surface had been truncated.

*Central cremation pit 70037* (Fig.9.9; Plates 9.5-6)

A single cremation deposited within a small pit (70037) was located at the approximate centre of barrow 70131. This pit was oval in plan, measuring 0.58m by 0.52m, and was 0.2m deep with a steep sides and a flat base. There was no evidence of *in situ* burning. Instead the pit had clearly been carefully and deliberately filled in a structured manner.



Plate 9.5 Pit 70037, upper fills, Marsh Lane East Site 2

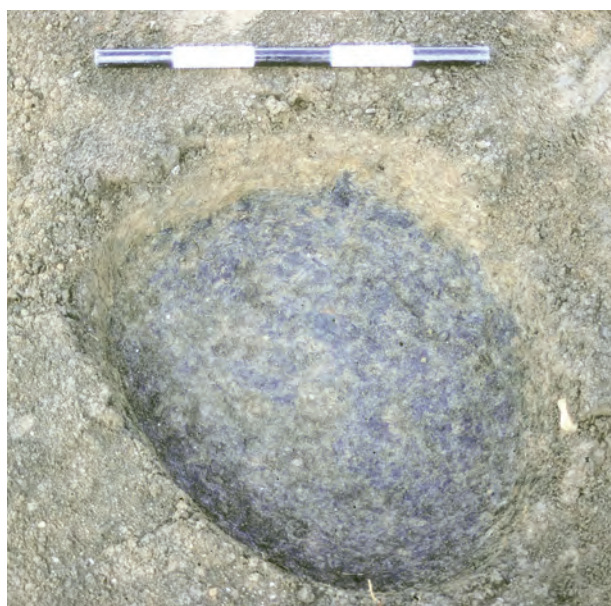


Plate 9.6 Pit 70037, lower fill, Marsh Lane East Site 2

The primary fill (70043) consisted of a 0.1m deep layer of friable grey-brown silty clay with some small gravel and occasional charcoal and charred seeds which covered the whole of the flat bottom of the pit. This was in turn covered by a thin layer (70042), 0.03m deep, of friable black brown silty clay rich in charcoal. This layer was concentrated towards the south and west of the pit. The charred remains within this deposit consisted entirely of oak charcoal. It is possible that this layer represented the remains of a wooden tray or bier on which the cremation had been placed. However, if this interpretation is correct, then the object would perhaps be expected to have more clearly defined edges (cf Radley barrow 12, grave 605: Barclay and Halpin 1999, 107). An alternative explanation would be that the charcoal rich soil was collected from the cremation pyre. It was, however, noted that this deposit was clean of all other debris (other charred remains, cremated bone and burnt clay).

The main cremation deposit (70041), probably of an adult, was contained within an inverted Collared Urn (context 70040). Although fragmentary, almost the entire vessel survived within the pit, and had been carefully placed upright on the charcoal rich layer within the south-western end of the pit. The deposit within it consisted almost entirely of burnt bone with only very small amounts of brown silty clay matrix and minimal amounts of charcoal. This indicated that the bone had been carefully sorted from the charcoal and other associated pyre debris before being placed in the urn. The pyre debris had been gathered and carefully placed adjacent to the urn at the opposite end of the pit (70039). This deposit consisted of loose black-brown silty clay with 70% charcoal and small quantities of pottery, flint and cremated bone. Again the charred plant remains within this deposit consisted almost entirely of oak charcoal.

The whole feature had been truncated by plough activity, and the upper fill (70038) consisted of a mid brown clay silt ploughsoil that had slumped into the top of the earlier feature. Four small fragments of bone, occasional charcoal and burnt flint, perhaps derived from this feature were found within this layer, though the layer is probably considerably later than the feature and the associated ring ditch. Because of this plough truncation no evidence remained of how the pit had been sealed or of any mound that had been built over it. Only cut features, including a heavily truncated possible posthole or small pit and the ring ditch, remained.

#### *Posthole or pit 70061*

A heavily truncated posthole or pit (70061) was also located within the northern ring ditch, around 6m to the west of pit 70037. This small circular feature, 0.25m in diameter and 0.04m deep, was filled by a deposit (70060) of friable black brown silty clay rich in charcoal and charred wood fragments. Like the pyre debris (70039) associated with the cremation, this deposit contained no visible seeds and may

have derived from the same source, though it contained no cremated bone. No evidence of *in situ* burning was found around this feature.

It could be suggested, albeit necessarily tentatively, that the pyre had been located in this area close to the burial pit as has been noted at some other sites (eg Barrett 1994, 121-2), and that ash only survived in the bottom of this feature, all other trace of it having been scattered by plough action.

#### *Barrow ditch 70131 (Fig. 9.8)*

Cremation pit 70037 was encircled by ring ditch 70131. This ring ditch was focussed so exactly on the pit that it seems certain that it was associated with the cremation pit (though it need not have been exactly contemporary with it).

In contrast to the oval ring ditch to the south, this monument was almost circular in plan with a diameter of approximately 20m from ditch centre to ditch centre. It measured 2.2-3.5m wide and 0.8-1.26m deep, the narrower and deeper sections in the south-western part of the monument displaying a sloping U-shaped profile. The profile becoming more rounded and bowl-shaped around the eastern side and shallower to the north where a slight hollow existed in the ground surface.

The ditch had filled in a similar way to the southern ring ditch with the initial fills consisting of erosion deposits derived from the sides of the ditch. These were overlain by mottled mid grey- or red-brown silty clays or sandy silts with variable proportions of gravel inclusions and occasional anthropogenic material including flint, pottery, and a dump of 63 fragments of animal bone in deposit 70135 within cut 70132 at the northern side of the monument. The pottery included earlier Neolithic wares and some late Bronze Age material. Most of the anthropogenic material was found within the plough disturbed top fills. This included flint, burnt flint, fired clay and both earlier Neolithic and late Bronze Age pottery.

The date of the cutting of this ditch is little clearer than that of the oval ring ditch. The earlier Neolithic sherds were probably residual, as has been suggested was the case for the fills of the oval barrow, but the later Bronze Age sherds may have reflect the date of later use and infill of the ditch rather than its cutting, appearing as they do so late in the sequence of fills.

#### *Discussion*

Round barrows are generally less numerous on the Middle Thames gravel terraces than elsewhere, and there are no known large barrow cemeteries other than a possible site at East Bedfont near the southern end of the Stanwell cursus where up to nine ring ditches have been identified from cropmark evidence (Longley 1976). Elsewhere, known barrows tend to occur in relatively small number and to be widely dispersed along the gravel terraces of the river Thames and its tributaries. Small clusters of barrows occur at Boveney, Datchet,



possibly north of Maidenhead, and further upriver at Bisham and Shiplake (Gates 1975, maps 16, 25, 27, 29 and 30, and plates 12 and 14).

Round barrows with Collared Urn associated burial deposits are relatively rare in both the Middle and Upper Thames Valley (see Longworth 1984), and in particular where the Collared Urn occurs within the primary burial deposit.

### **The Collared Urn from Marsh Lane East Site 2**

by Tessa Machling and Alistair Barclay

An almost complete Collared Urn was recovered from the central pit (70037) within barrow 70131. The pot had originally been inverted over a deposit of cremated bone and had collapsed at some point during its post-depositional history. Figure 9.9 presents a possible reconstruction of the vessel's profile.

The reconstructed vessel can be placed in Longworth's secondary series (1984). The form of the body is bipartite with a weak shoulder carination (Longworth's form A) and a deep 'hat-like' collar. Its overall form being tripartite – II/IV (Longworth 1984, fig. 31). The vessel can be categorised as having a complex collar form (E), a simple neck, a weak shoulder, a thickened base (form B) and an expanded, everted rim that has a concave internal bevel (form 18/24). Overall the vessel appears to have a globular shape with a wide mouth and relatively narrow base. The form is closed, although the rim diameter is only slightly less than that of the collar, while the latter is almost the same as the shoulder diameter. The vessel height is likely to have been similar to its greatest width.

This vessel is crudely decorated on the collar with impressed cord lines forming cross hatching and triangular motifs (Longworth decorative style H2 or H3). The rim is expanded with an internal concave bevel that is decorated with two parallel horizontal lines of impressed cord (Longworth Rim/Border decoration 2). The rest of the vessel is plain.

The vessel was made in a soft fabric containing moderate to common amounts of medium to very coarse (2mm) grade grog and sparse to moderate amounts of medium grade quartz sand (fabric code GABM3). There is also a sparse amount of fine to medium grade glauconite and rare amounts of very fine mica.

A few sherds in a similar fabric were recovered from Amerden Lane West and Marsh Lane East Site 1. From the two latter sites, however, a few of the sherds represent a finer, thinner walled vessel typical of the Beaker tradition. It is therefore probable that this fabric represents two distinctive traditions, although from macroscopic analysis they are indistinguishable.

Collared Urns are rare in the Middle Thames Valley and the area around the Thames estuary (Longworth 1984). Away from the immediate area of the Jubilee River and the Eton Rowing Course, there are a few find spots from Buckinghamshire,

east Berkshire and Surrey. A greater number of urns have been recovered from the Upper Thames Valley. Not surprisingly, many finds have been found in and around the major barrow cemeteries that occur on the gravel terraces (eg Radley and Stanton Harcourt: Barclay and Halpin 1999; Barclay *et al.* 1995). Longworth (1984) lists seven urns from Buckinghamshire, none from east Berkshire and three from west Surrey.

No radiocarbon date was obtained for the associated cremation deposit as the only available material was the oak charcoal pyre deposit. This sample material was rejected on the grounds that any date would have had an unknown age offset. Collared Urns are thought to belong to the period 2050-1500 cal BC (Needham 1996, 130-2) and their use would have overlapped with the currency of Beaker pottery. Finds of Collared Urn from Taplow Court (Allen *et al.* 2009), and a number of sites on the Eton Rowing Course suggest that the Marsh Lane vessel could have originally had a domestic function, perhaps for storage, before being reused in the cremation ritual. The relatively small number of vessels recovered from occupation deposits on the Eton Rowing Course might hint that pottery had a restricted domestic role.

### *Catalogue of illustrated early Bronze Age pottery*

Fig. 9.9: Early Bronze Age Collared Urn. Very fragmentary when recovered. (count and weight). Tripartite form with impressed twisted cord decoration. Fabric. Colour: ext. reddish-brown; core black; int. brown. Condition poor with pitted surface.

### **Cremated human remains from Marsh Lane East Site 2** by Angela Boyle and Peter Hacking

#### *Introduction*

A single cremation was recovered from the pit located within the centre of the northern ring ditch. The feature had been truncated by plough activity and the upper layer (70038) consisted of a plough-soil which had slumped into the top of the feature. Four small fragments of bone were recovered from this layer. A small quantity of charcoal was also present. Fill 70039 consisted largely of charcoal with small quantities of bone, pottery and flint and has been interpreted as possible pyre debris. This deposit appeared to have been placed adjacent to the pottery vessel (70040) which contained the bulk of the cremated bone (70041). Both the pyre debris and the Collared Urn were placed on a layer (70042) of charcoal. No bone, pottery or flint was recovered from this layer. Underlying (70042) was a layer of silty clay and gravel with charcoal (2%).

A small quantity of burnt flint was recovered from 70041. Four flakes and six chips were recovered from deposit 70038. There is no evidence of burning *in situ*.

The 5-2mm fraction was not sorted and also incorporates charcoal, stone and very small fragments of flint. This fraction was scanned for any

Table 9.3 Summary of cremated human remains from pit 70037

Context	Age	Sex	Degree of burning and distortion	Identifiable bone	Comments
70038	?	?	White and well calcined	Misc. long bone shaft	Presumably related to disturbance during ploughing
70039	?	?	White and well calcined	Skull vault, dentition, upper and lower long bone fragments	
70041	Mature adult	?m	White and well calcined	Occipital, frontal, maxilla, tooth root, atlas, odontoid, cervical vertebra, ?thoracic, body of scapula, rib shaft, humerus, radius, ulna, distal phalange, femur	Degree of suture closure suggests mature adult

recognisable fragments, in particular teeth. Nothing below 2mm was retained for analysis.

The cremated bone was only moderately well preserved and the majority of the fragments lie in the less than 10mm category. Numerous tooth roots were noted in the smaller fractions. The cremated bone derives from three different contexts, the bulk of the material being contained within the pottery vessel. The remains are believed to be representative of an adult, possibly male. A single wormian bone was noted on a fragment of skull vault. Identifiable bone is summarised in Table 9.3.

#### Weight

It is important to identify whether the weight of a deposit of cremated bone has been directly affected by disturbance rather than deliberate selection. The expected weight of a cremation is derived from known weights of adult cremated remains from modern crematoria (using the >2mm fraction to render them comparable with most archaeological cremated material), which have been found to range between 1001.5g and 2422.5g, with an average of 1625.9g (McKinley 1993).

From a sample of c 4000 multiperiod burials, a range of 57-2200g was obtained from undisturbed adult burials (McKinley 1994). The reason for this variation is uncertain. However, it is clear that widely different quantities of bone were included in burials at the time of deposition.

McKinley noted (1997, 142) that primary Bronze Age barrow burials consistently produced high weights of bone (902.3g to 2747g with an average of 1525.7g), while the average weights of bone from contemporaneous cremation cemeteries were much lower (327g to 466g). At Barrow Hills deposits other than the central ones were on the whole very much smaller which may suggest deliberate selection and burial of a token deposit (Barclay and Halpin 1999, 176). Other possible causes of loss need to be considered and these include incomplete recovery, disintegration in the soil and truncation due to ploughing.

The weight of the cremated bone within the urn was 356g which is markedly below the range discussed above. While there is some limited

evidence for disturbance to the upper fill of the feature it would seem that the selection of a relatively small quantity of cremated bone for burial within the urn was deliberate.

#### Pyre technology and ritual

No evidence was present for burning *in situ*, so the body must have been cremated on a pyre elsewhere, with subsequent collection (and transport) of the remains for burial. It is therefore probable that some loss of material occurred during the funerary ritual, although inevitable losses in recovery, and destruction of bone whilst in the soil, would also have played a part (although see selection of body parts below).

#### Pyre debris dumps

Redeposited pyre debris comprises a mix of fuel ash (most frequently charcoal), with (depending on the soil over which the pyre was constructed), burnt flint, burnt stone, burnt clay and fuel ash slag, often incorporating cremated bone and fragments of pyre goods (McKinley 1997, 137). Deposit 70039 is almost certainly a dump of a token amount of pyre debris.

#### Selection of body parts

Experimental cremation has indicated that throughout the process the corpse (sheep and neonatal lamb) remained in position above the wood, and that in the final stages the cremated bone and charred soft tissues were in correct anatomical position on the bed of wood ash. At the end of the cremation the entire skeletal remains were present, clearly visible above the wood ash and easily collectable by hand, although this took about four hours (McKinley 1997, 134). It is, therefore, possible to argue that the choice of particular skeletal elements was deliberate. All skeletal elements of the adult male within deposit 70041 were represented (Table 9.4).

#### Temperature (Table 9.5)

Bone colour may be used as an approximate guide to firing temperature (Shipman 1984). Uniformity of colouration denotes even firing, with no evidence for variation in firing temperature or duration

Table 9.4 breakdown of cremated bone weights (g) by body parts

Context	10 mm						5 mm					2 mm				Total weight				
	Sk.	A	Ul	Ll	Unid.	Total	Sk.	A	Ul	Ll	Unid.	Total	Sk.	A	Ul		Ll	Unid.	Total	
70038									0.5			0.5			0.5		0.5	1		
70039	1					1	8		5	5	10	28	1					29	30	59
70041	84	1	25	24	6	140	27	1	61	60	10	159					66	66	365	

Sk. = skull; A = axial; Ul = upper limb; Ll = lower limb; Unid. = unidentified

Table 9.5 Colours observed after heating of fresh goat bone (Mays 1998, table 11.1)

May's results		Shipman et al.'s 1984 results	
Temperature (°C)	Colour	Temperature (°C)	Colour
185	red/orange	under 285	white or yellow
285	dark brown/black	285-525	red/brown, red/yellow, dark grey/brown or dark grey
360	black		
440	grey/brown	525-645	black, blue or red/yellow
525	grey/brown (lighter than that observed at 440°C)	645-940	white, light grey or light blue/grey
645-1200	white, some pale yellow	940	white, some grey or red/yellow

across different parts of the body. The appearance of the fragments suggests temperatures in excess of 645° C, and probably in excess of 940° C. The cremated bone was almost entirely white in colour which is indicative of full oxidisation (Holden *et al.* 1995a and b; McKinley 2000, 40).

#### Discussion

There is ample evidence to indicate that a distinctive style of cremation burial rite is represented by this deposit. The bone had been placed in a Collared Urn after it had been sorted. In other words, the bone had been separated from all charcoal and other associated pyre debris. The latter material was placed adjacent to the vessel in the same pit. Both pyre debris and vessel may originally have been placed on top of the remains of a wooden tray or bier. This is a practice that can be paralleled at other sites including Barrow Hills, Radley (Barclay and Halpin 1999, 149, 318). The separation of pyre debris from bone and the subsequent burial of both was seen at Barrow Hills (Barclay and Halpin 1999), Stanton Harcourt Site 4 (Harden and Treweeks 1945, 24) and at South Parks Road, Oxford (Parkinson *et al.* 1997).

#### Charcoal from the early Bronze Age cremation burial at Marsh Lane East Site 2 by Dana Challinor

Four samples from the early Bronze Age cremation (70037) were analysed. These were selected from the cremation urn (70041), the charcoal layer beneath the urn (70042), and the redeposited pyre debris adjacent to (70039) and above (70038) the burial. A total of 506 fragments of charcoal were examined, from which oak (*Quercus* sp.) was the only taxon

identified. A number of heartwood fragments were noted in all of the samples. The suggestion that the layer beneath the urn derived from a wooden tray or bier cannot be substantiated since the charcoal was the same as the rest of the pyre debris.

Oak is the fuelwood most consistently used at other funerary sites (including the later Bronze Age cremation burials at the adjacent Jubilee River sites) and it can certainly provide the heat necessary for cremation purposes. The predominance of a single taxon in Bronze Age cremation assemblages has been interpreted as evidence of deliberate ritual selection (eg Thompson 1999; Straker 1988).

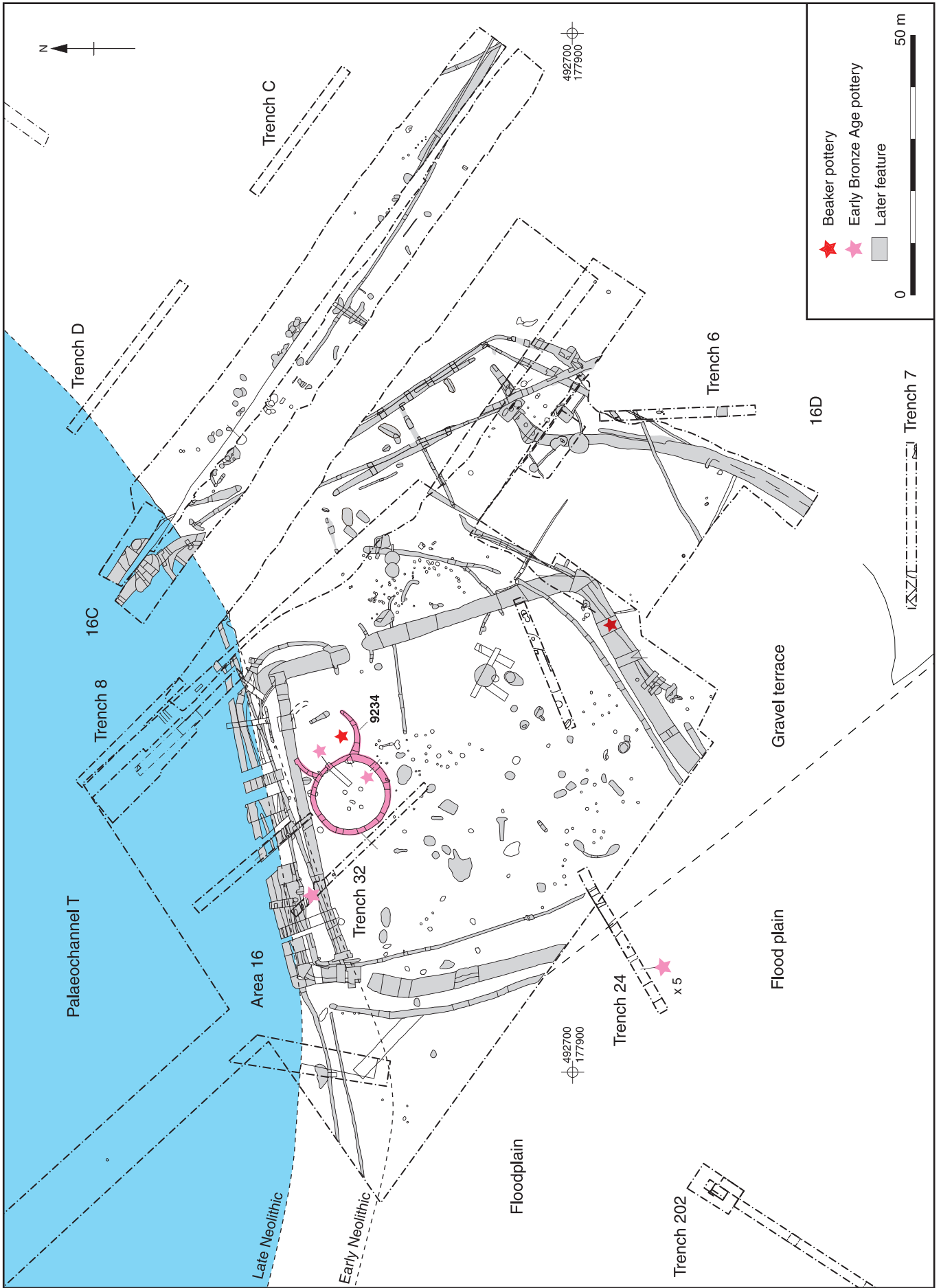
#### Area 16: late Neolithic/early Bronze Age ring ditches and other evidence by Tim Allen, Anne Marie Cromarty, David Petts and Ken Welsh

##### Introduction

Only two sherds of Beaker pottery and four sherds of early Bronze Age pottery were recovered from Area 16 (Fig. 9.10). Few features could be attributed to this phase with confidence, but the two possible ring ditches are likely to have been related to it. An undated inhumation near to the ring ditches may have been contemporary with them, but the presence of later human remains in the same area raises that the possibility that the undated inhumation also post-dates the ring ditch.

##### Ring ditches

Two arcs of curving gully (numbered collectively as 9234; Figs 9.10-12; Plate 9.7) lay close to the edge of the palaeochannel in Area 16. The gullies were around 0.8m wide and up to 0.45m deep. These





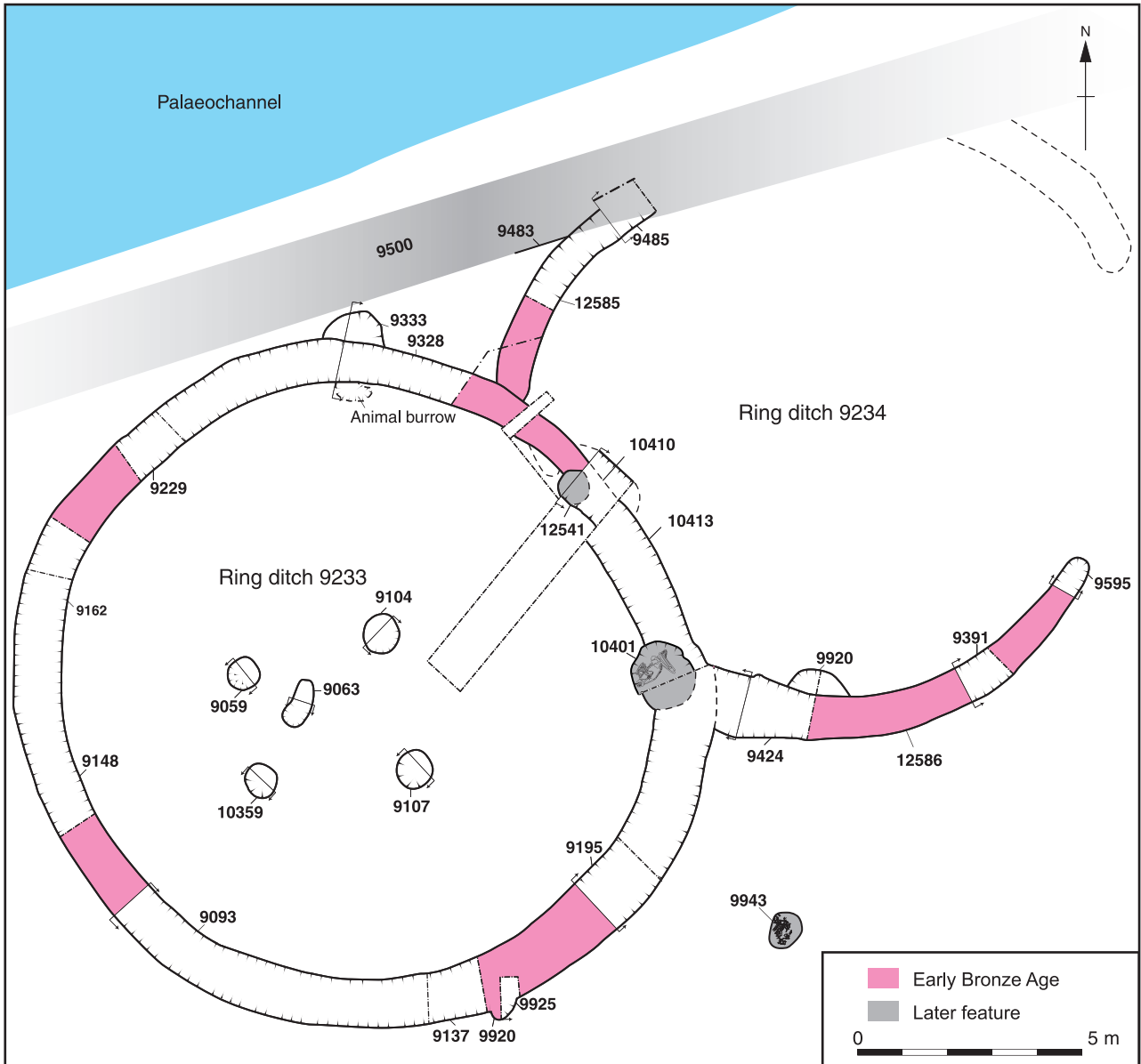


Fig. 9.11 Plan of ring ditch 9233 and partial ring ditch 9234

features defined a semicircle around the south-western half of a putative circle of approximately 13m diameter (measured from the centre of the ditch). On the open north-east side a short straight length of gully of similar dimensions 12520/12523 may also have been associated. The more northerly arc (12585) was cut away to the north by a Roman enclosure ditch (9500). Beyond this a further arc was planned, but on excavation appeared to be very shallow and irregular, and was judged to result from animal burrowing. On the south-west the very end of gully 12585 appears in plan to have been cut by an adjacent ring ditch, 9233, though this relationship was not established with certainty. The terminal of the southern gully (12586) and its inter-

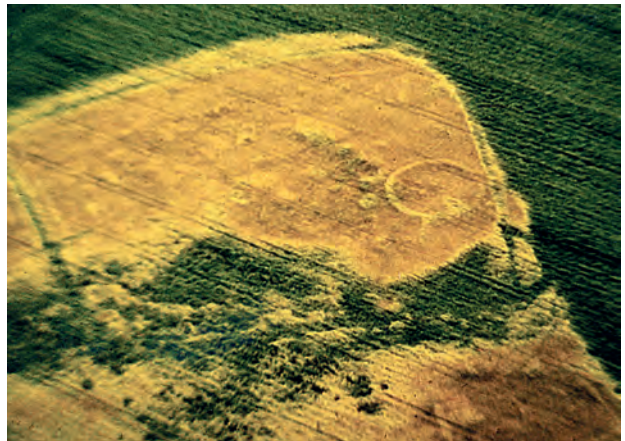


Fig. 9.10 (facing page) Beaker and early Bronze Age features in Area 16

Plate 9.7 Aerial view of Area 16 with ring ditch in foreground, looking west (© C Stanley)



Plate 9.8 Ring ditch 9233 in Area 16, looking north-east

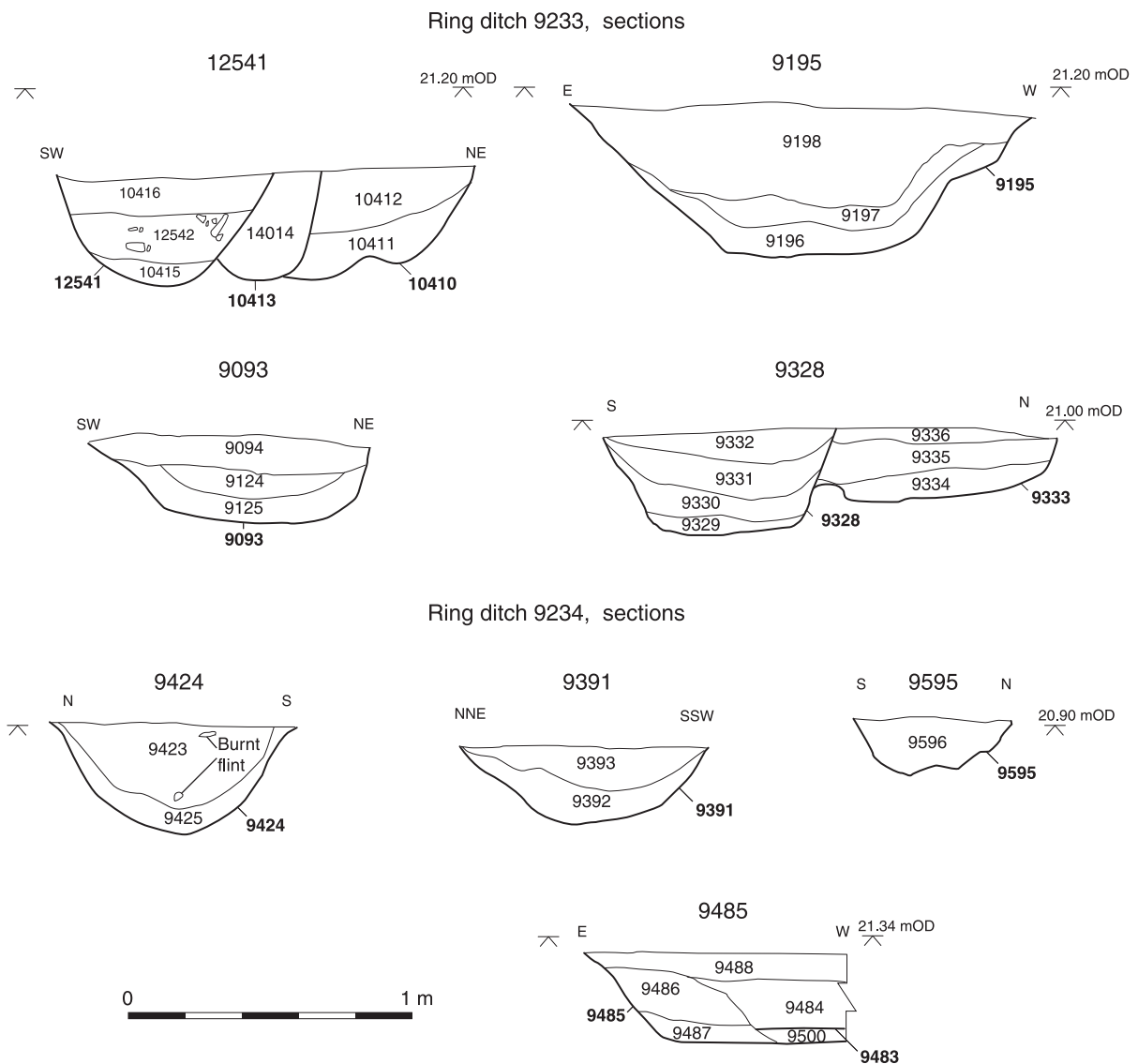


Fig. 9.12 Sections of ring ditches 9233 and 9234



section with ring ditch 9233 were obscured by animal burrowing. Gully 12586 did not, however, cut across grave 10401, which was dug across 9233 at this point, indicating either that 12586 ended before it, or that both were earlier than the grave. Between the arcs of gully on the south-west side was a pit or tree-throw hole 10410 which had been largely obliterated by ring ditch 9233.

The fills of ring ditch 9233 contained one early Neolithic sherd, one small probable Beaker sherd and 15 very small Iron Age or early Roman sherds. The upper fill of 10410 (10412) contained an early Bronze Age sherd.

The later ring ditch, 9233 (Figs 9.11-12; Plate 9.8), measured approximately 13.75m in diameter (ditch centre to ditch centre). The ditch was between 0.9 and 1.4m wide (widest on the south-east) and up to 0.55m deep. It cut two tree-throw holes, 9333 (containing only animal bone) on the north and 10410 (containing one early Bronze Age sherd) on the east. The ditch fills suggest natural silting, and contained seven early Neolithic and four middle Neolithic sherds, plus one large sherd of early Bronze Age date. The ditch also contained six small late Iron Age or early Roman sherds. An iron socket was also found in the uppermost fill.

On the north-eastern side, the ring ditch was cut both by a grave, 10401, which contained a crouched inhumation as well as disarticulated human bone from a neonate, an infant and some adults, and by a circular pit, 12541. The pit contained Roman pottery. The grave fill contained 7 sherds of middle Bronze Age pottery together with 12 residual early Neolithic sherds. Radiocarbon dating of a femur from skeleton 10400 confirmed that the burial was later Bronze Age, dating to 1200-890 cal BC (BM-3174: 2850±50 BP).

On the basis of the clear relationship between ring gully 9233 and the undisturbed burial 10400, the ring gully is believed to be an early Bronze Age funerary monument, the later prehistoric and Roman finds (all of which are small) being intrusive. This part of the site was heavily scored by plough furrows, and evidence of animal burrowing was also seen in several of the excavated sections. No barrow mound, nor any internal inhumations associated with the ring ditch survived, though a fragment of an adult skull and some fragments of a subadult were recovered from the fills of the ring ditch.

A four-post structure (10358) and a single shallow irregular pit of indeterminate function (9063) lay slightly off-centre within ring ditch 9233. The only artefacts to be recovered from any of these features were 6 undiagnostic worked flints and three sherds of pottery (one early Neolithic, two mid-late Iron Age) from one of the postholes. It is therefore possible that the structure was significantly later than the ring ditch (see below) and not an original part of the barrow.

Stratigraphically it would appear that the adjacent gullies making up 9234 were also early

prehistoric, the later finds again being intrusive from later ploughing. There was, however, some doubt concerning the relationship at the northern intersection, and the southern one was also unclear. It is therefore also possible that ring ditch 9234 in fact abutted ring ditch 9233, and is dated by the much later pottery, although the similar diameter and dimensions of the ditches of both features would support a similar prehistoric date for both.

A similar doubt obtains in relation to a second crouched burial located around 11m to the south, outside ring ditch 9233, in grave 9943 (Fig. 9.11). This second skeleton, 9941, was in much poorer condition and had been severely damaged by ploughing, the grave pit surviving to a maximum depth of only 0.2m. The skeleton, identified as an adult male, 40 years of age, was oriented very similarly to skeleton 10400 and was also crouched, though more tightly than 10400. However, 24 sherds of mid-late Iron Age pottery were recovered from the soil around the skeleton. Poor collagen preservation prevented this skeleton from being radiocarbon dated. The burial may therefore be either a Bronze Age inhumation disturbed by later ploughing, or a middle or late Iron Age crouched inhumation placed next to the ring ditch, perhaps because a mound was still visible.

#### *Late Neolithic/early Bronze Age and early Bronze Age pottery from Area 16 by Alistair Barclay*

A total of six sherds (42g) of Neolithic/early Bronze Age or early Bronze Age pottery were recovered from Area 16, including two Beaker sherds (Fig. 9.13: 25-6) and collar fragments from two separate small Collared Urns (Fig. 9.13, 27). The Beaker sherds were manufactured from a principally sand-tempered fabric (AGF2/LNEBA) that also contained small quantities of grog and flint, although a fabric characterised by lenticular voids, possibly reflecting the presence of shell (VA2/LNEBA), was also represented. The Collared Urn sherds were grog-tempered (G2/EBA), though one included quartz (GA2/EBA).

The sherds from Area 16 are similar in appearance to the larger assemblage recovered from Area Ex1-3, for which an early date within the Beaker sequence has been proposed. A complete Collared Urn was recovered from a central burial in one of two barrows excavated at Marsh Lane and further sherds were found with Food Vessel sherds in an occupation deposit at Taplow (Allen *et al.* 2009).

#### *Catalogue of illustrated late Neolithic/early Bronze Age pottery (Fig. 9.13)*

- 25 9392. SF 55326 Beaker. Body sherd with comb impressed decoration, possibly in bands (5g). Fabric AGF2/LNEBA. Firing: reddish-brown throughout. Condition average.
- 26 10315 ?Beaker sherd (1g). Fabric VA2/LNEBA. Firing: light reddish-grey throughout. Condition worn.

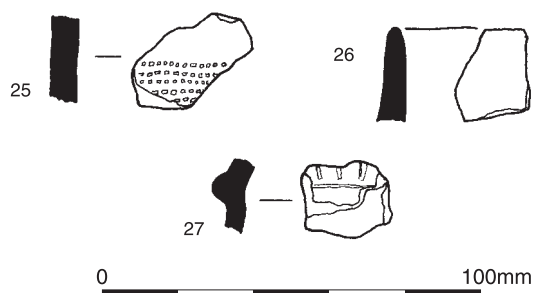


Fig. 9.13 Beaker and early Bronze Age pottery from Area 16

- 27 10412. Collared Urn. Lower part of collar (3g). Fabric G2/EBA. Firing: ext. reddish-brown; core black; int. reddish-brown. Condition average to worn.

**Early Bronze Age flint from Area 16 by Hugo Anderson-Whymark**

The early Bronze Age assemblage from Area 16 was recovered from ring ditch 9233 and from the partial ring ditch 9234 joined to the northern edge of ring ditch 9233 (Table 9.6). Ring ditches 9233 and 9234 are tentatively dated to the early Bronze Age, although some later pottery suggests the possibility of intrusive finds. The assemblage includes a small number of residual finds, such as a microlith and blade cores. However, the majority of the flint originates from a flake-based industry, producing relatively thick flakes in a haphazard manner. Significant numbers of crude flake cores and tested nodules are also present. No clusters, or obvious clusters or refitting pieces were recorded, but it seems likely, from the presence of such a significant number of finds, that pieces were deliberately deposited into this ditch.

**Worked antler from Area 16 by Tim Allen**

A utilised antler point was recovered from a fill of cut 10413 across ring ditch 9233 (Fig. 9.14). The point consists of an antler tine of which 9mm of the tip is worn on one side to a flattened oblique face. It is broken at other end (surviving length 46mm, maximum diameter 12mm).

Antler tools are found occasionally in Beaker ring ditches in the region; there was a discarded antler pick in the second central Beaker inhumation grave at Gravelly Guy, for instance (Barclay *et al.* 1995, 90). The wear on this point does not however fit with use as a pick, and suggests instead repeated rubbing on a flat surface, hence the interpretation as a smoother. It must, however, be remembered that some later pottery was found within the ring ditch, indicating disturbance, probably from later ploughing. The Beaker date of this object must therefore be considered as tentative.

Table 9.6 The flint assemblage from the early Bronze Age phase of Area 16

CATEGORY TYPE	Ring ditch 9233	Ring ditch 9234	Grand total
Flake	146	17	163
Blade	23	1	24
Bladelet	3		3
Blade-like	21	1	22
Irregular waste	1		1
Chip	1		1
Sieved Chips 10-4 mm	13		13
Rejuvenation flake core face/edge	1		1
Rejuvenation flake tablet	1		1
Thinning flake	1		1
Core single platform blade core	2		2
Bipolar (opposed platform) blade core		1	1
Tested nodule/bashed lump	6		6
Single platform flake core			
Multi-platform flake core	4	1	5
Levallois/ other discoidal flake core	1		1
Unclassifiable/ fragmentary core	3		3
Core on a flake	1	1	2
Microlith	1		1
End scraper	2		2
Side scraper			
End and side scraper			
Notch	1		1
Retouched flake	7	3	10
Grand Total	239	25	264
Burnt unworked flint (g)	6,666	215	6,881
Burnt no. (%) (exc. chips)	16 (7.1)	1 (4)	17 (6.8)
Broken no. (%) (exc. chips)	63 (28)	6 (24)	69 (27.6)
Retouched no. (%) (exc. chips)	11 (4.9)	3 (12)	14 (5.6)

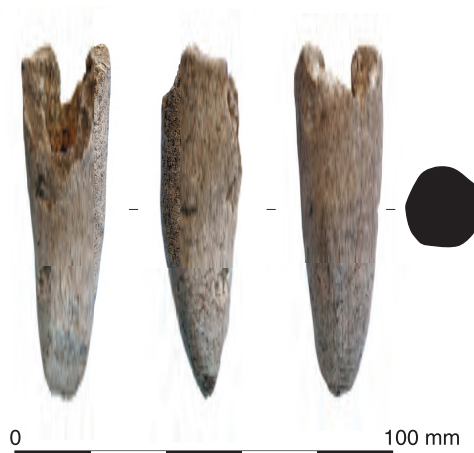


Fig. 9.14 Worked antler from Area 16

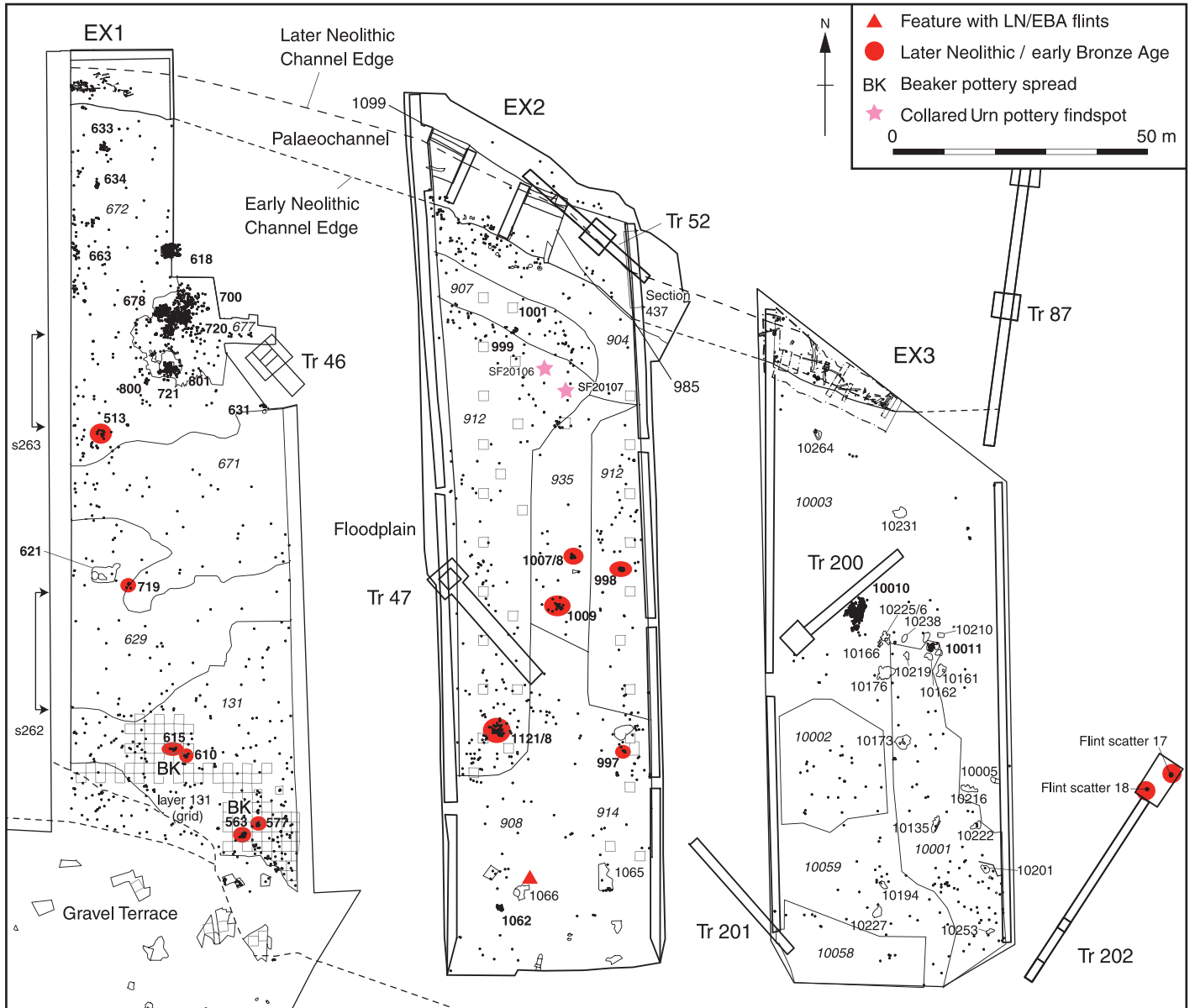


Fig. 9.15 Late Neolithic/early Bronze Age flint scatters on the flood plain north of Gravel Island X (Areas Ex1-3)

Areas Ex1-3, 11 and 1 by Tim Allen, Anne Marie Cromarty and Nick Mitchell

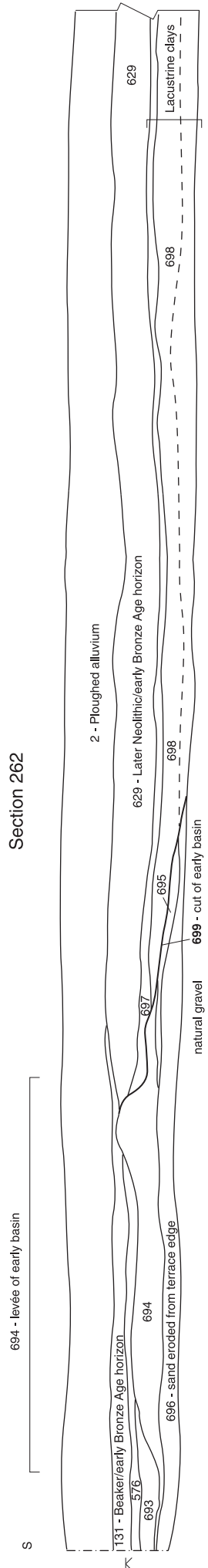
#### Basin R south – the floodplain to the north of Site X (Areas Ex1-3): a late Neolithic/early Bronze Age horizon, artefacts scatters and other evidence

The early Neolithic horizon and flint scatters on the floodplain to the north of Gravel Island X were sealed in the central area of the floodplain by a later soil horizon of alluvial origin dated to the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age on the basis of the artefacts and flint scatters found on and within it. This layer (671=576=584=908=924=10002; Figs 9.15-16) consisted of friable, mid-dark grey-brown silty clay. Various artefacts were recovered from this horizon including 16 potsherds, 134 worked flints,

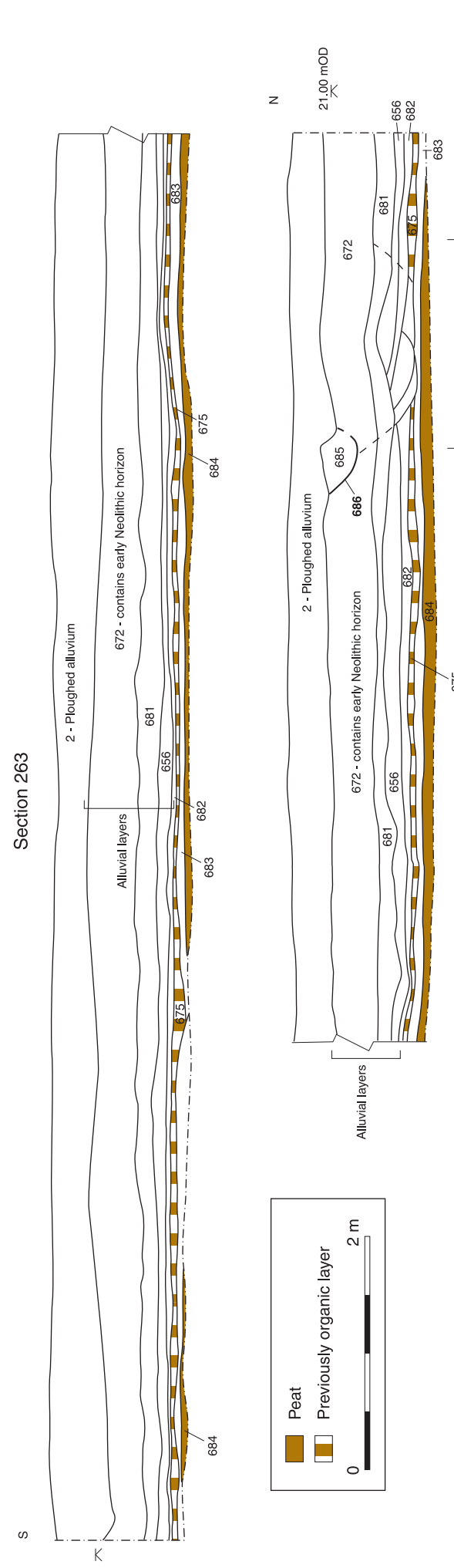
and 64 animal bones. The pottery included six sherds of late Neolithic/early Bronze Age date, nine residual early Neolithic sherds, one of possible middle Bronze Age date and two other indeterminate sherds, at least one of which was of prehistoric date. The horizon was more certainly dated by the *in situ* flint scatters found within it.

This late Neolithic/early Bronze Age horizon was partly overlain by a third soil horizon, 131 (Fig. 9.16; probably equivalent to 907=912=914=917 in Area Ex2). This horizon consisted of friable-tenacious mid brown silty clay, similar to (but overlain by) the subsoil (2=906=915=945=10001). It had within it both flint clusters and a considerable quantity of pottery, but very few clear features, and was divided into 2m squares for finds recovery (Fig. 9.17). The artefacts recovered from this horizon

Section 262



Section 263





include 543 potsherds, 511 worked flints, at least 83 animal bones, four fragments of burnt clay and one chip of stone possibly from a stone axe. The pottery included a mixture of sherds dating from the early Neolithic to the Roman period, the majority of which related to the early or middle Neolithic (250 sherds), though there was also a significant proportion (95 sherds) of late Neolithic or early Bronze Age sherds. The deposit also however yielded 25 mid-late Bronze Age sherds and 37 or 38 Iron Age, 18 late Iron Age/early Roman sherds and 6 or 7 Roman sherds.

The flint clusters within this horizon, which are generally of late Neolithic/early Bronze Age character, demonstrate that the horizon has not been significantly disturbed, or that at least significant areas of it have remained undisturbed. Despite the wide date range of the pottery, a study of its distribution within Area Ex1, from which the vast majority of the pottery came, shows that while the early Neolithic sherds were spread widely, pottery in the other Neolithic and early Bronze Age traditions is much more tightly grouped, as indeed is the later Bronze Age and later pottery (Figure 9.17). This suggests that this horizon was exposed for a very long period in prehistory, although sufficient soil did accumulate to bury and preserve some of the material from successive occupation phases.

In contrast to the widely scattered early Neolithic pottery, the early/middle Neolithic and middle Neolithic sherds were tightly grouped towards the eastern edge of the site. The Beaker sherds occur in two areas: one in a fairly tight cluster towards the east edge of the site, just south-east of two of the flint clusters (563 and 577), and the other forming a wider scatter on the west. One sherd to the west was associated with flint cluster 610. Early Bronze Age sherds were also found in two areas, the larger group on the west (and west of flint cluster 615), the other south of the gridded area in the burnt patches left when the floodplain soils were stripped from the terrace edge. Along much of the strip at the interface between the floodplain and gravel terrace in Area Ex1 the soil was reddened or blackened by burning. This soil was stripped by machine to look for underlying features, except where burnt flint or other finds were present, these areas being left as small islands for hand-investigation. On Figure 9.17 the middle Bronze Age and late Bronze Age/Iron Age pottery is shown as well, to demonstrate that this was not generally found in the same areas as the earlier pottery, having one clear concentration on the east, the remainder being spread along the south-western limits of this area beyond layers 131 and 584.

In Areas Ex2 and Ex3 the spread of pottery was similar to that found in Ex1. Early Neolithic sherds were found in small numbers across the whole of the floodplain, but middle and late Neolithic pottery was absent, while late Neolithic and early Bronze Age pottery was clustered along the boundary between the floodplain and the gravel terrace. There

were, however, also two part-vessels of early Bronze Age date found within 10m of one another on layer 912 closer to the river in Ex2.

#### *Flint scatters*

Seven scatters (615, 610, 577, 563 (Fig. 9.17), 719, 1121/1128 and 997 (Fig. 9.15)) spread across the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age horizon appeared to date to that period technologically. A further four scatters (513, 998, 1007/8, 1009; Fig. 9.15) of this date were located towards the southern edges of the underlying early Neolithic horizon (672 etc, see Chapter 6) where it was not sealed by the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age alluvial layer (671=576=584=908=924=10002). Two further small scatters (17 and 18) were recovered during the evaluation from the north end of Trench 202. Scatter 17 may also have been late Neolithic/early Bronze Age, but scatter 18 was thought to be later Bronze Age due to the crudeness of the material.

Among the eleven scatters from the main excavations, four display the traits of knapping scatters (610, 615, 719 and 1007/8). These were all small, varying in size between 24 and 57 flints, with no retouched pieces and few non-cortical flakes. Two small sherds of early prehistoric pottery, one a 6g sherd of the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age date, also came from scatter 610.

A single dump of 12 used pieces (997; Fig. 9.15) was also identified among this group of scatters. No burnt flint or artefacts of other types were recovered from this dump. Such a small dump of material suggests only a brief period of activity within or around this location, around 25m away from the closest scatters of this date.

The traits of activity areas could be identified in the other six scatters (513, 563, 577, 998, 1009 and 1121/8), which varied in size between 35 and 257 flints, though most consisted of under 100 flints. No other types of artefacts were recovered from any of these scatters. Among the flints themselves there were few retouched pieces though a broad range of use-wear actions was represented among the 45 utilised pieces recovered from these five activity scatters.

#### *Cut features* (Fig. 9.17)

A small number of features – shallow pits or spreads and a tree-throw hole – were associated with horizon 131, either cutting it or lying directly upon it. Many of these features were associated with burnt material.

The first was a shallow circular feature, 1m in diameter and 0.05m deep, with a saucer-shaped profile (597). This feature was filled with a deposit of compact dark brown clay with charcoal throughout. No artefacts were recovered from this deposit, but the fact that it was located within the vicinity of the activity areas represented by scatters 577 and 563 and knapping scatters 610 and 615 make it likely that it forms part of the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age activity in this area.

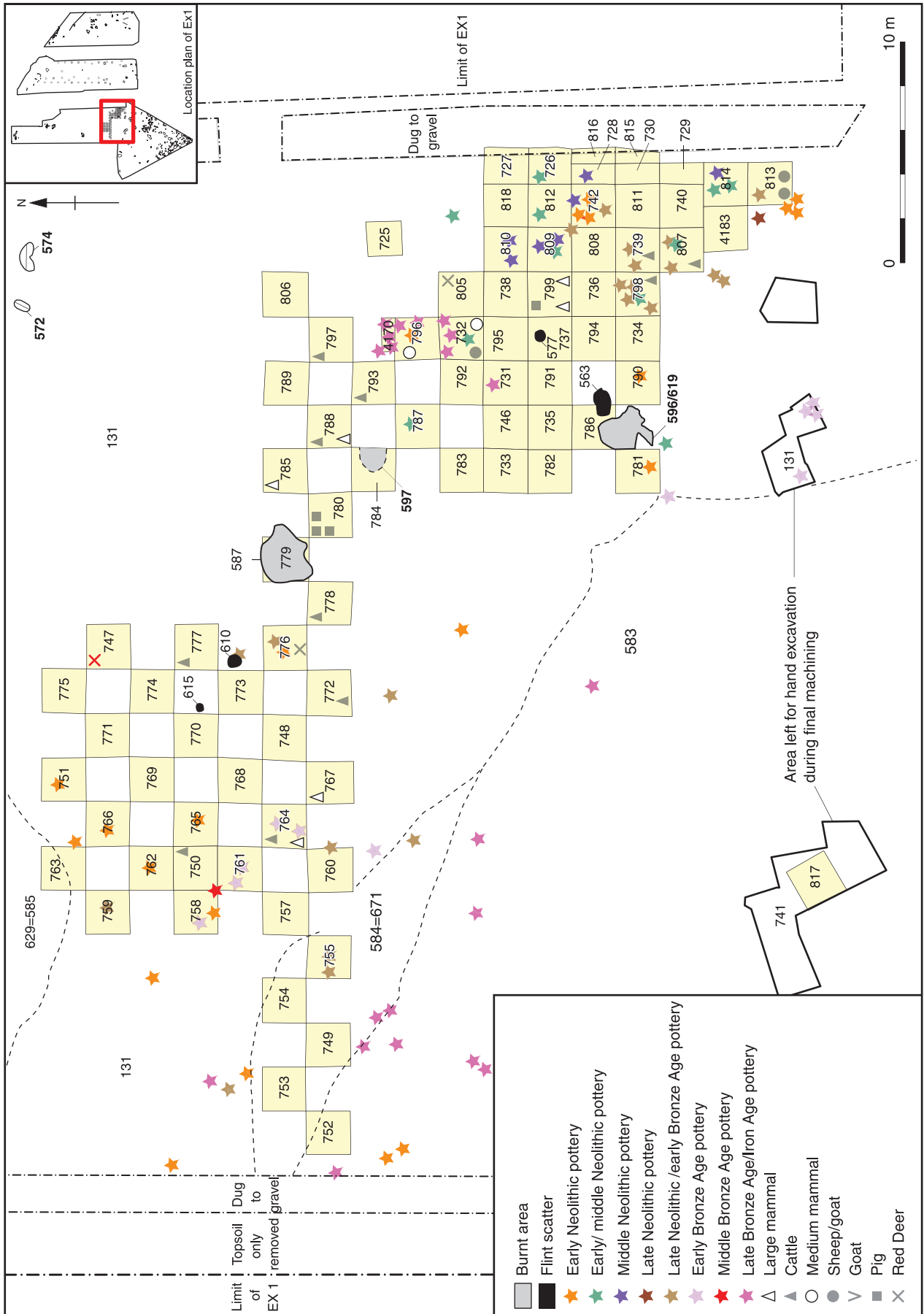


Fig. 9.17 Plan of the area of layer 131 gridded for excavation, showing the archaeological features, the distribution of Neolithic and Bronze Age pottery and of animal bones



Three further features or spreads containing burnt bone were found in the surface of layer 131: 572, 574 and 596. These were all shallow, 572 being oval in plan, measuring 0.7m by 0.45m and 0.12 deep with an irregular profile, while 574 was irregular in plan, 1.3m by 0.6m and only 0.08m deep with a bowl-shaped profile. Feature 572 was filled with a single deposit (573) of tenacious light grey black clay silt with burnt bone and charcoal flecks. Feature 574 was filled by a spread of friable mid grey brown clay with some charcoal and burnt bone (575). The third burnt spread (numbered 596 and 619 in adjacent squares; Fig. 9.17) was larger, but was also very shallow and somewhat irregular. The burnt deposit consisted of compact mid brown to dark grey clay silt with much charcoal and a scatter of burnt bone, and completely filled the feature. All three may have been surface spreads of material rather than dug features.

A further burnt flint spread, 10052, was found on the surface of this horizon in Area Ex3. No difference was observed between the matrix the burnt flint lay upon and the surrounding soil. No other artefacts were found associated with the spread to date it. This spread was sealed only by the modern cultivation soil making it difficult to date with any certainty.

The only other feature recorded as cutting this horizon was a large tree-throw hole (621). This feature was roughly oval in plan, measuring 5m east-west by 3.8m wide and 0.28m deep with a sloping U-shaped profile. It was not excavated in detail, but a machine section cut longitudinally through it showed that the main fill of the feature was the same as the layer (629=585; Fig. 9.16) that overlay the early Neolithic horizon towards the southern end of Area Ex1. This layer consisted of friable light brown clay, and could not be correlated with any certainty to any of the observed deposits in Area Ex2. As well as feature 621 this deposit contained frequent dark soil patches interpreted as belonging to later tree-clearance. These deposits were not generally excavated, but were recorded as they appeared on the surface. All consisted of friable mid-dark orange-brown silty clay, with charcoal. The charcoal content in these deposits varied from 1% to 30%. No artefacts were recovered from any of them.

Numerous other dark patches, some containing charcoal or artefacts, were recorded on this surface further to the south, but time did not allow their excavation in detail. Although several were linear in plan, most were irregular, and all were thought likely to be tree-throw or root holes.

#### **Basin W – the floodplain to the south-east of Site X (Area 11): late Neolithic/early Bronze Age activity**

##### *Late Neolithic/early Bronze Age soils and activity*

Away from the edge of the gravel island, on the floodplain to the south-east of Gravel Island X

(Fig. 9.18), the sequence of deposits filling Basin W included a band of tenacious mid grey silty clay (10505) up to 0.1m deep and around 0.24m wide that had accumulated on the edge of the flood plain and was overlain by a buried soil horizon (10504 (extending across the southern part of the area and with finds reference 10873) = 10506 (remaining as only a patch towards the north-eastern end) = 10530=10685 (extending across the middle of the area and seen in Evaluation Trench 207 as 207/4). This horizon consisted of grey brown silty loam up to 0.3m deep which extended from the edge of the gravel terrace for at least 37m across the flood plain.

Eighteen worked flints were recovered from deposit 10505 including numerous flakes, four tested nodules, a chip and a pieces of irregular waste. None of these pieces could be dated very accurately. The overlying soils yielded many more datable artefacts. The assemblage yielded by 10504=10506=10530 (with finds reference 10873) included 483 flints, 14 potsherds and 59 pieces of animal bone. The pottery ranged from early Neolithic to late Iron Age/early Roman in date but as these sherds were generally small (with the exception of a single early Bronze Age sherds weighing 25g), abraded and worn, the substantial flint assemblage, which dates to the mid-late Neolithic/early Bronze Age, may provide the most accurate date for the context. The later potsherds may have become incorporated in this horizon as a result of later plough disturbance of the surface. This horizon was directly overlain by plough soil or subsoil horizon 10503.

Contexts 10530 and 207/4 in the middle of the area also contained significant quantities of burnt flint. A roughly oval hearth (10899) was cut into its surface (Fig. 9.19; Plate 9.9). This feature had red-brown patches indicative of *in situ* burning scorched into the base and an apparently roughly contemporary stakehole (10928) cut into it towards the eastern end. Both features were filled with a deposit (10700=10701) of friable black silty clay with up to 40% burnt flint fragments and substantial amounts of charcoal. This deposit was up to 0.1m deep and extended beyond the edges of the hearth to the north-west, covering an area at least 3.3m long by 2.1m wide. Charcoal from the deposit was dated by radiocarbon to 2200-1930 cal BC (OxA-10228: 3666±40 BP). This burnt mound-like material also filled and sealed several other stakeholes (10924, 10926, 10957, 10958 and 10959; described in Table 9.7). These features do not form any readily recognised structure.

#### **Site X – the gravel island (Areas Ex1-2 and 11): late Neolithic/early Bronze Age tree-throw holes and a pit**

Of the large number of features cut into the surface of the gravel island beneath the cultivation soils in both Areas Ex1-2 and 11, which are discussed in more detail in Chapter 6, three tree-throw holes (92,

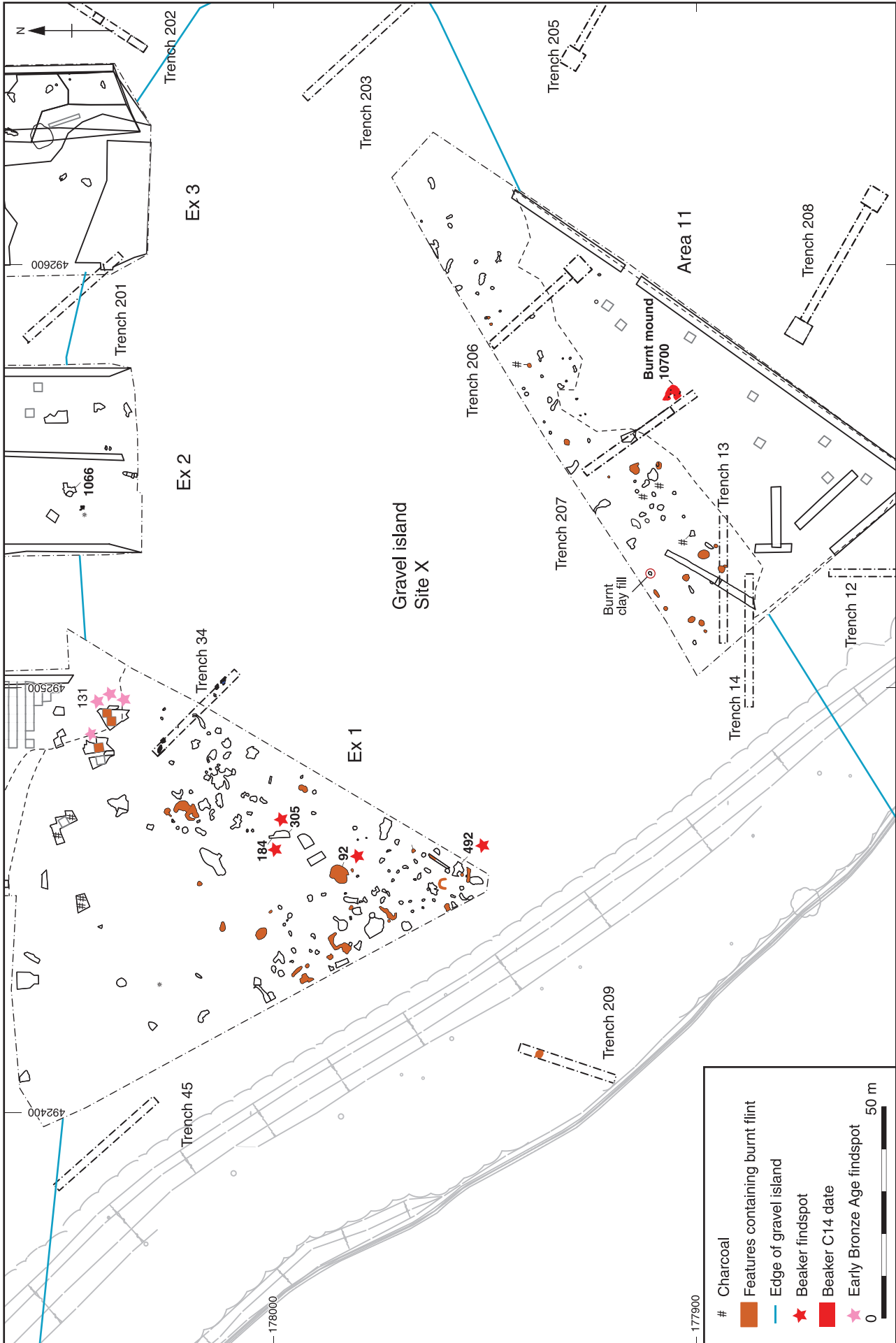


Fig. 9.18 Plan of Ex1 and Area 11 gravel terrace area, showing features with burnt flint

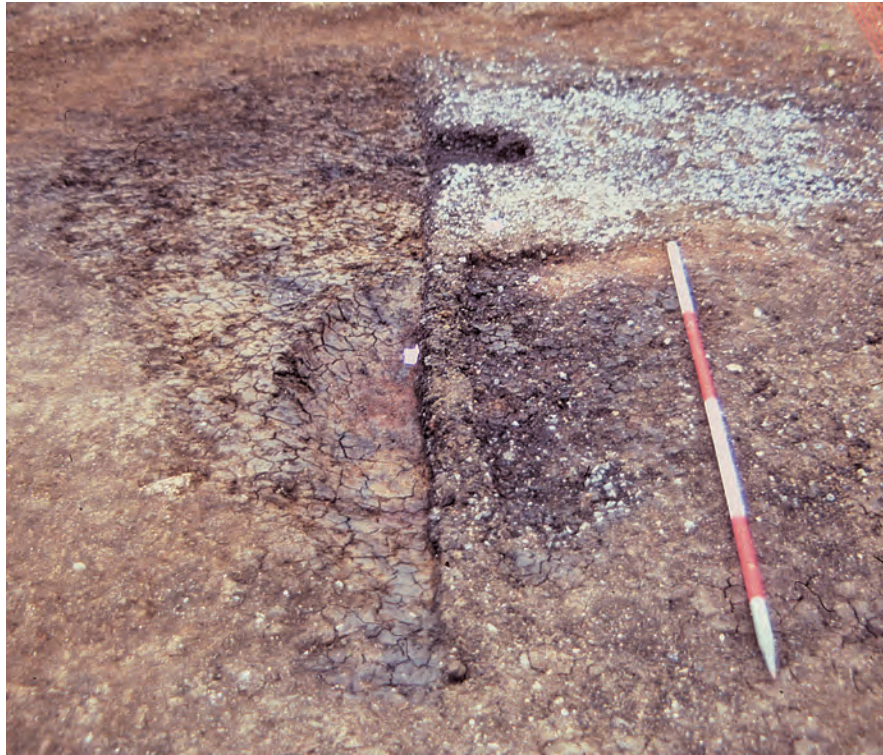


Plate 9.9 Early Bronze Age burnt area in Area 11 on floodplain

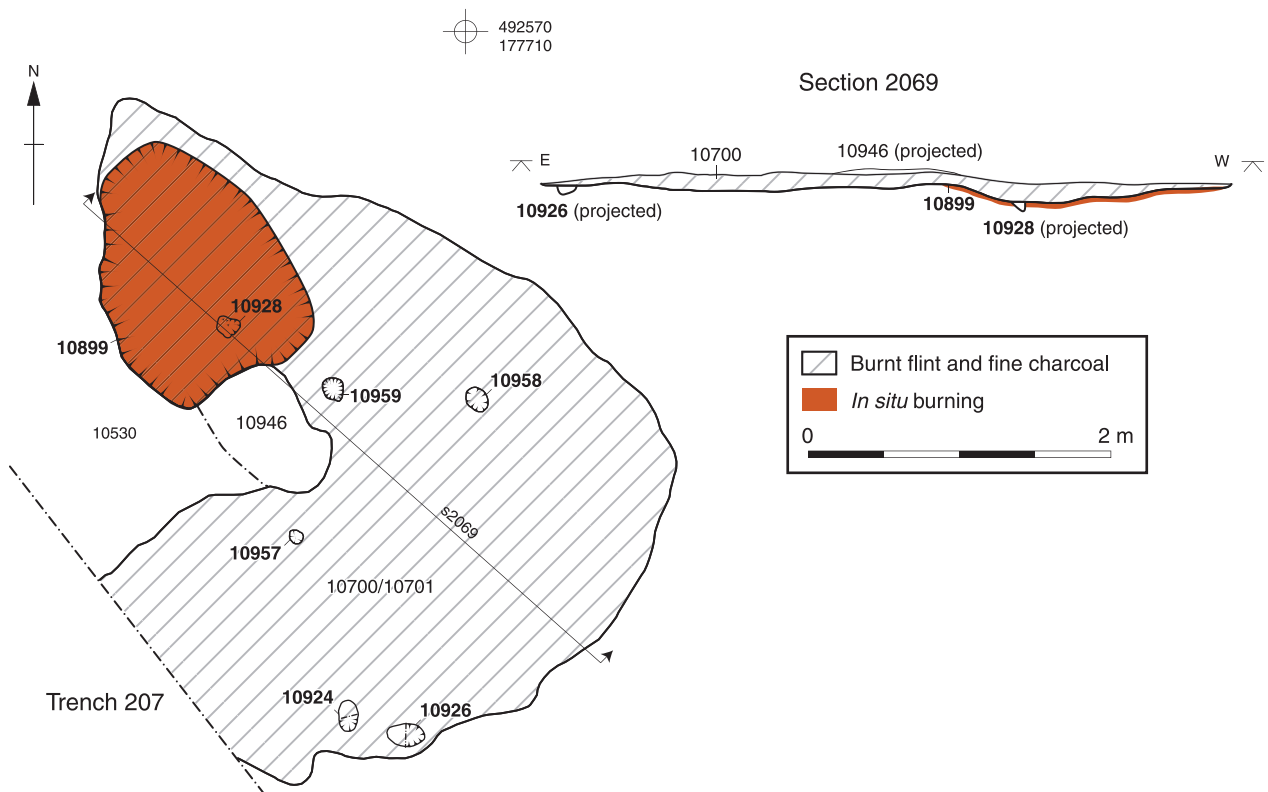


Fig. 9.19 Plan and section of hearth and burnt flint spread 10700 in Area 11



Table 9.7 Catalogue of stakeholes associated with hearth 10899 on the floodplain in Area 11

Cut	Shape in plan	Length (m)	Breadth (m)	Depth (m)	Profile	Fill	Comments
10924	Oval	0.20	0.13	0.04	Bowl-shaped	10925	Fill similar to 10700 though relatively less charcoal and burnt flint
10926	Oval	0.24	0.13	0.06	Bowl-shaped	10927	Fill similar to 10700 though relatively less charcoal and burnt flint; one flint flake
10928	Subcircular	0.11	0.09	0.09	Asymmetrical V-shaped	10929	Within hearth; stake would have sloped east towards edge of hearth; fill similar to 10700
10957	Circular	0.12	0.10	0.09	V-shaped	10700	Similar to 10928
10958	Subcircular	0.19	0.17	0.08	Bowl-shaped	10700	Fill similar to 10925 and 10927
10959	Subcircular	0.18	0.15	0.07	U-shaped	10700	Fill similar to 10925 and 10927

305 and 492) have been dated to the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age on the basis of pottery (Fig. 9.18). A further tree-throw hole in Area Ex-2 (1066) contained flint which suggests a late Neolithic/early Bronze Age date. One pit (184) has also been tentatively dated to the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age on the basis of a sherd of Beaker pottery (Fig. 6.14).

#### *Late Neolithic/early Bronze Age and early Bronze Age pottery from Areas Ex1-3 by Alistair Barclay*

##### *Late Neolithic/early Bronze Age*

Fifty sherds of late Neolithic/early Bronze Age Beaker pottery were recovered from Areas Ex1-3. Most of the pottery came from Area Ex1 (40 sherds, 178g) of which 14 were decorated, mostly with impressed comb. A further three sherds (12g) were recovered from Area Ex2 and seven sherds (34g) were recovered from Area Ex3. The pottery was manufactured from a range of principally grog-tempered fabrics (G2/LNEBA, GA1/LNEBA, GA3/LNEBA, GAF1/LNEBA, GAF2/LNEBA, GAF3/LNEBA).

Unfortunately the assemblage from Areas Ex1-2 is too fragmentary for detailed characterisation. At least eight sherds appear to be from all-over-comb impressed vessels, while four sherds have zonal decoration perhaps more typical of either European or Wessex/middle Rhine-style Beakers (Clarke 1970). One sherd also has internal comb impressed decoration, which is a feature of some European style Beakers (Clarke 1970, 286-89). Other sherds are decorated with finger-nail or tip impressions. Overall the assemblage bears some resemblance to early-middle 'domestic' assemblages typified in the Upper Thames by the pit groups from Rough Ground Farm, Dean Bottom and Duntisbourne Grove (summarised in Barclay 1999, 317). There is relatively little Beaker material from the Middle Thames Valley (Clarke 1970; Gibson 1982) and, therefore, the small assemblages from the Eton sites are important indicators of the presence and scale of habitation during the late 3rd and early 2nd millennia cal BC. The material from Area Ex1 is

particularly significant, as it is remote from any monuments such as barrows, and was associated with flint clusters and burning, suggesting a domestic context. A small assemblage (c 30 sherds) of Beaker material was recovered from Runnymede Bridge some 20km to the east (Needham 2000, 71 and fig 3.5) and only two sherds of Beaker pottery were recovered from the Staines causewayed enclosure (Robertson-Mackay 1987, 90). There is almost no evidence for Beaker burials in the immediate area, although Beakers, as well as flint daggers and, more rarely metalwork have been recovered from the river Thames (Needham 1987).

##### *Catalogue of illustrated Beaker pottery (Fig. 9.20)*

- 10 798 (was 131) SF 10958. Beaker. AOC body sherd (6g). Fabric GAF1/LNEBA. Firing: ext. reddish-brown; core black; int. brown. Condition average.
- 11 131 SF 18182 (138/144). Beaker. AOC shoulder sherd (7g). Fabric GAF1/LNEBA. Firing: ext. reddish-brown; core black; int. brown. Condition worn.
- 12 306 SF 5884. Beaker. Comb decorated body sherd (9g). Fabric GAF1/LNEBA. Firing: ext. reddish-brown; core black; int. reddish-brown. Condition worn.
- 13 742 SF 15198. Beaker. Comb decorated body sherd (2g). Fabric GAF1/LNEBA. Firing: reddish-brown throughout. Condition worn.
- 14 No context number SF 5079. Beaker. Comb decorated body sherd. Complex zoned dec. ?European style vessel (1g). Fabric GAF1/LNEBA. Firing: ext. reddish-brown; core black; int. brown. Condition very worn.
- 15 No context number SF 5078. Beaker. Comb decorated body sherd. Complex decoration (cross-hatched motif) with white inlay Bowl (3g). Fabric GAF1/LNEBA. Firing: reddish-brown throughout. Condition worn.

##### *Early Bronze Age*

A small assemblage of early Bronze Age pottery was recovered from Areas Ex1-2. At least four vessels were represented by rim, body, neck, shoulder and base sherds.

A vessel from Area Ex2 (SF 20107) has a simple rim and a short collar and appears to be of bipartite form. The decoration and motifs can be paralleled



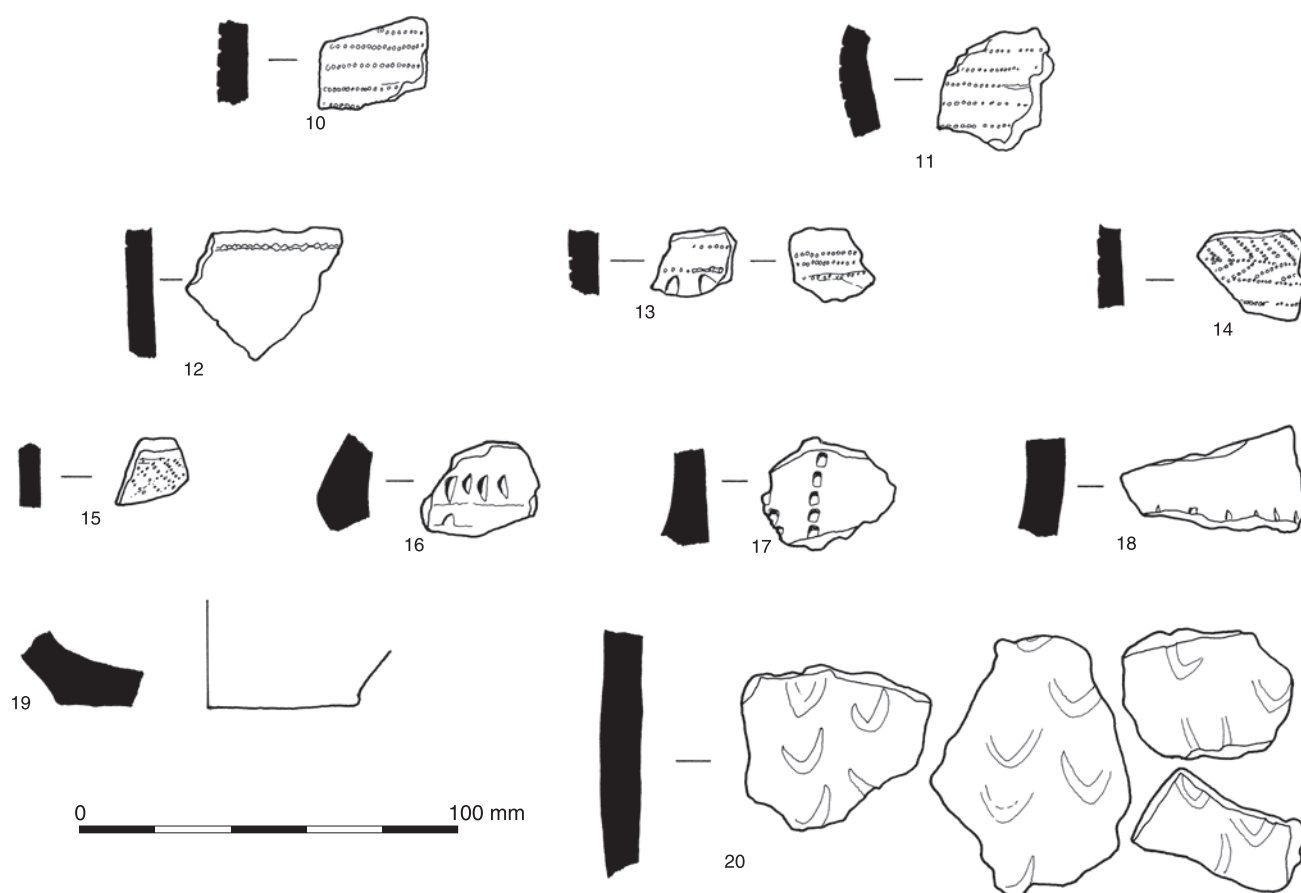


Fig. 9.20 Beaker and early Bronze Age pottery from Areas Ex 1-3

with other urns from Newport Pagnell (Bucks), Cassington (Oxon), Thorndon (Suffolk) and Barnack (Cambs) and the form would approximate with Longworth's South Eastern Style form BII/III (1984, 38 and catalogue nos 59, 1354, 1524 and 65).

Although no other rims are present it is likely that all of the remaining sherds belong to Collared Urns. Horse-shoe motifs are a feature of Collared Urns (Longworth 1984, 12), although they are perhaps more typically executed by impressing twisted cord. The Eton horseshoe motifs were made using a pointed hollow stick or bone. It is not certain as to whether the group of sherds comes from the collar, neck or body of the vessel. Two neck sherds carry impressed decoration. Their concave profiles suggest that they derive from tripartite urns. Similarly a decorated shoulder is also from a tripartite urn.

Collared Urn has been found on a number of sites at Eton (in particular on the floodplain in Trench 159, in Area 6 and Area 16), from a barrow at Marsh Lane, from Taplow (Allen *et al.* 2009) and from Cippenham (Ford *et al.* 2003). Overall these assemblages are important as they confirm Longworth's suggestion that this style of pottery was used on domestic sites (1984, 76-8); the Area Ex1 group of sherds was found in close association with flint clusters and with burning, and the group in Trench

159 with a hearth. The currency of Collared Urn is thought to span the period 2050-1500 cal BC (Needham 1996) and, therefore, there could be some overlap with the use of Beaker pottery (2500-1700 cal BC), as the distribution of sherds in Area Ex1 would also suggest. However, the slight hint that the Beaker material from Areas Ex1-2 could be early (2500-2050 cal BC), would suggest that the use of this pottery predated the use of Collared Urn.

#### Catalogue of illustrated early Bronze Age pottery (Figs 9.20-21)

- |    |  |
|----|--|
| 16 | 764. SF 10625 ?Collared Urn, decorated shoulder (8g). Fabric GF3/EBA. Firing: reddish-brown throughout. Condition average.   |
| 17 | 758 (was 131) SF 10904. Collared Urn neck sherd (9g). Fabric GAF3/EBA. Firing: reddish-brown throughout. Condition average.  |
| 18 | 131 SF 5198. Decorated body sherd (13g). Fabric GA2/EBA. Firing: reddish-brown throughout. Condition worn.   |
| 19 | 131. SF 10720. Base fragment (13g). Fabric GAF3/EBA. Firing: reddish-brown throughout. Condition average.  |
| 20 | 131. Decorated body sherds from a Collared Urn with impressed horseshoe motif (157g). Fabric GAF3/EBA. Firing: ext. reddish-brown; core grey; int. reddish-brown. Condition average. |
| 21 | 912 Ex2 SF 20106. 164 fragments (610g) from the  |

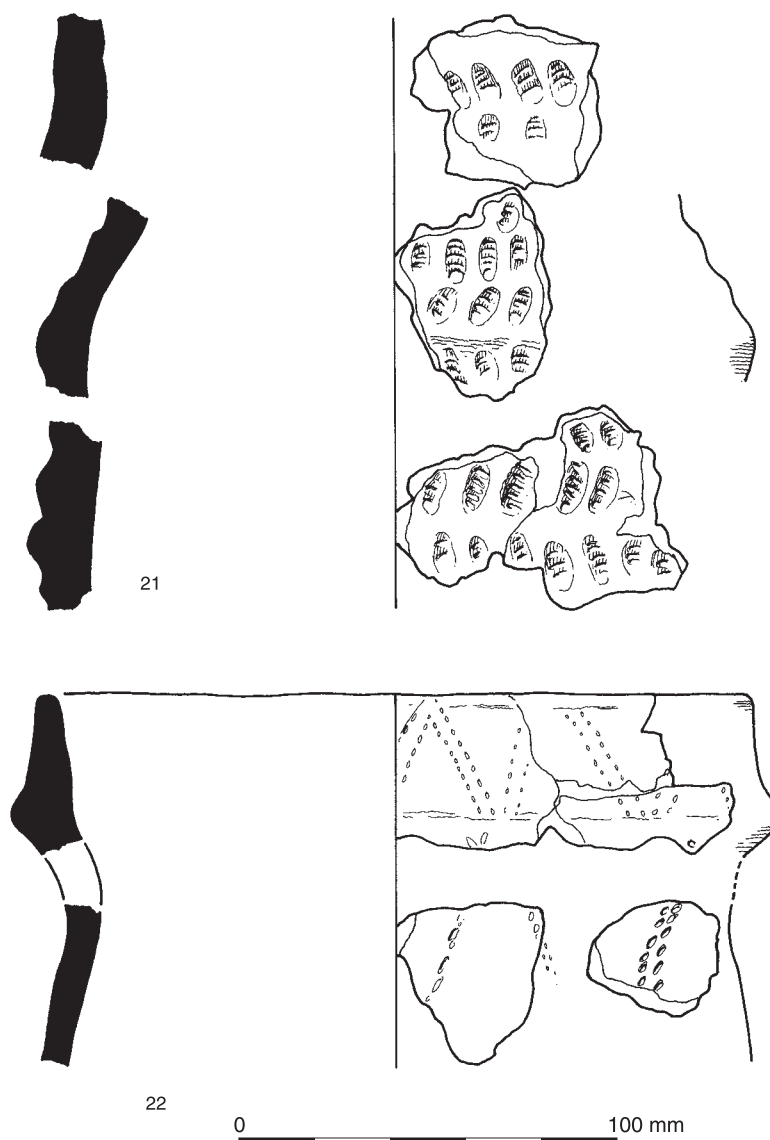


Fig. 9.21 Early Bronze Age pottery from Area Ex2

neck and shoulder of a primary Collared Urn. Fabric GAF3/EBA. Firing: ext. reddish-brown; core and int. black. Condition average.

- 22 912. Ex2 SF 20107. Rim and body sherds from a Collared Urn (36, 104g). Fabric GAQF2/EBA. Firing: ext. reddish-brown; core black; int. grey brown. Condition average.

**Later Neolithic and early Bronze Age struck flint from Areas Ex1-3 by Hugo Anderson-Whymark**

*Pit 184 and tree-throw hole 1066*

A small assemblage of 47 flints was recovered from a tree-throw hole (1066) and Beaker pottery associated pit 184 (Table 9.8). The assemblage consists almost entirely of broad flakes; only a few blade-like flints were present. One discoidal core and a tested nodule were recovered from tree-throw hole 1066.

Table 9.8 The late Neolithic/early Bronze Age assemblages from pit 184 and tree-throw hole 1066

CATEGORY TYPE	Pit 184	Tree-hole 1066	Grand total
Flake	29	12	41
Blade	1		1
Blade-like	2		2
Rejuvenation flake core face/edge	1		1
Tested nodule/bashed lump		1	1
Keeled non-discoidal flake core		1	1
Grand total	33	14	47
Burnt unworked flint (g)	5	0	
Burnt no. (%) (exc. chips)	2 (6)	0	
Broken no. (%) (exc. chips)	9 (27.3)	2 (14.2)	
Retouched no. (%) (exc. chips)	-	-	
No. of flints forming knapping refits & (con-joins)	0	2	2

*Flint scatters and spreads on the floodplain*

A total of 11 discrete scatters and a relatively dense spread of flintwork (131) of a later Neolithic/early Bronze Age date were located on the floodplain. The scatters ranged in size from 12 to 275 flints, and in total amounted to 783 flints (Tables 9.9-10). However, a small area of the largest scatter, 1121/8 (275 flints), was not excavated, implying the upper total was slightly higher than stated. A further 825 flints were recovered from the 324m<sup>2</sup> of layer 131 which were excavated.

*Knapping scatters*

A total of four small knapping scatters were identified, varying in size from 24 to 57 flints (Table 9.9). A number of refits were identified in each scatter, the majority of which were made between cortical and partly cortical flakes. Non-cortical flakes were generally under-represented and appear to have been removed from the scatter. No burnt worked or unworked flints were present in these scatters.

*Deposits of utilised material*

A single deposit of utilised material (997) was located. It consisted of 12 flints and was the smallest scatter recovered (Table 9.10). No refits, retouched pieces or burnt worked or unworked flints were identified. Low-power use-wear analysis identified use-wear on six of the 12 flints; five were used for cutting or whittling and one for scraping against materials of soft and medium hardness.

*Activity areas*

The remaining six scatters have been classified as activity areas. They vary in size from 35 to 257 flints (Table 9.10). Only five retouched flints were recov-

ered from all of the activity areas: two scrapers from Scatter 563 and a scraper and two notches in Scatter 1121/8. This represents 3.3% and 1.2% of the scatters respectively or 0.8% of the total assemblage from activity areas (excluding chips).

A total of 238 flints from Scatters 513, 563, 577, 998 and 1009 were examined for use-wear, of which 45 flints (18.9% of the assemblage) were utilised; use-wear was identified in Scatter 1121/8 at a macroscopic level, but was not microscopically analysed. In Scatters 513, 563, 577, 998 and 1009 all assessable flints were analysed, representing 78.3% of the assemblage, excluding chips. The combined use-wear identified shows a broad pattern of use with a lower overall proportion of soft material worked than in the early to middle Neolithic.

Burnt worked and unworked flint was present in very limited quantities within scatters 1121/8, 615 and 563, amounting to four burnt worked flints and 40g of burnt unworked flint.

The flintwork in Spread 131 mainly dates to the late Neolithic or early Bronze Age, a date which is supported by the presence of two barbed and tanged arrowheads and Beaker pottery, although a small quantity of late Mesolithic and earlier Neolithic flint was also present. Excavation of 324 m<sup>2</sup>, in 2 m<sup>2</sup> squares, revealed considerable differences in the density of flintwork varying from no flint to 11 flints per m<sup>2</sup>/55 flints per m<sup>3</sup>, although on average the density was 2 flints per m<sup>2</sup>/10 flints per m<sup>3</sup>. The character of this assemblage, including the high proportion of retouch (4.9%) and wide variety of tools, combined with relatively high numbers of burnt pieces, could be taken to suggest that the deposit was domestic in origin. This area may therefore represent the location of a settlement or a spread of rubbish (but certainly not a midden deposit).

Table 9.9 *The assemblage of the late Neolithic to early Bronze Age knapping scatters*

CATEGORY TYPE	Scatter				Grand total
	610	615	719	1007/8	
Flake	28	15	55	29	127
Blade			1	1	2
Blade-like	1	1	1	1	4
Irregular waste	2	5	2	6	15
Chip	4	2		1	7
Rejuvenation flake core face/edge	1				1
Tested nodule/bashed lump		1		1	2
Multiplatform flake core				1	1
Single platform flake core				1	1
Unclassifiable/fragmentary core	1				1
Grand total	37	24	59	41	161
Burnt unworked flint (g)	-	5	-	-	5
Burnt no. (%) (exc. chips)	1 (3)	1 (4.5)	-	-	2
Broken no. (%) (exc. chips)	12 (36.4)	7 (31.8)	13 (22)	15 (38.5)	47 (30.5)
Retouched no. (%) (exc. chips)	-	-	-	-	-
No. of flints forming knapping refits & (con-joins)	0	0	0	4	4

Table 9.10 The assemblages of the late Neolithic to early Bronze Age activity areas, dump of utilised material and layer 131

CATEGORY TYPE	Scatters							Scatters total	Layer 131	Grand total
	513	563	577	997	998	1009	1121/8			
Flake	27	50	27	9	96	39	212	460	649	1109
Blade	1	1			4	1	1	8	10	18
Bladelet			1					1		1
Blade-like	1	5	2		11	2	13	34	18	52
Irregular waste	1	1	4		2	6	22	36	26	62
Chip	4	7	2		9	3	18	43	7	50
Sieved chips 10-4 mm		2	4					6		6
Burin spall		1						1		1
Rejuvenation flake core face/edge									4	4
Rejuvenation flake tablet									2	2
Rejuvenation flake other									3	3
Thinning flake						1		1		1
Flake from ground implement									2	2
Core single platform blade core									2	2
Tested nodule/bashed lump			3		4	2	4	13	31	44
Single platform flake core	1			1	1			3	8	11
Multiplatform flake core	1				1	1	2	5	9	14
Levallois/ other discoidal flake core									5	5
Unclassifiable/fragmentary core		1	1	1				3	8	11
Microlith									1	1
Chisel arrowhead									1	1
Barbed and tanged arrowhead									2	2
Unfinished arrowhead/blank									1	1
End scraper		1					1	2	4	6
Side scraper		1						1	1	2
End and side scraper									1	1
Other scraper									4	4
Awl									1	1
Piercer									1	1
Spurred piece				1				1	1	2
Serrated flake			1					1	7	8
Denticulate									3	3
Notch							2	2	3	5
Backed knife									2	2
Retouched flake									5	5
Misc. retouch									2	2
Hammerstone			1					1	1	2
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>1447</b>
Burnt unworked flint (g)	5	30	-	-	-	-	-	35	2735	-
Burnt no. (%) (exc. chips)	1 (3.1)	2 (3.3)	-	-	-	-	1 (0.4)	4 (0.7)	30 (3.7)	-
Broken no. (%) (exc. chips)	9 (28.1)	20 (32.8)	10 (25)	3 (25)	63 (52.9)	11 (21.6)	80 (31.1)	196 (34.2)	197 (24.1)	-
Retouched no. (%) (exc. chips)	-	2 (3.3)	1 (2.5)	1 (8.3)	-	-	3 (1.2)	7 (1.2)	40 (4.9)	-
No. of flints forming knapping refits & (con-joins)	2	2	6	0	14	4	3	31	-	-

*Discussion*

The late Neolithic/early Bronze Age assemblage shows a distinct change in the character and location of the material with respect to earlier

periods. In general, activity moved from the channel edge and onto the edge of the floodplain, alongside the gravel terrace. The flint clusters are smaller in size and slightly fewer were found, although the background density of flint increases



and concentrates in Area Ex1 (131). Far from representing reduced activity in the area, this scatter may represent domestic debris; it was associated with pottery and bone, and there was an increased proportion of burning in the flint assemblage. In Area 11, a further spread of late Neolithic/early Bronze Age flintwork was uncovered on the edge of the floodplain by the gravel terrace. However, this material differed from that in Ex1, and appeared to represent knapping debris, with few retouched flints and low levels of burning. Burnt flint spreads were present in Area 11 and on the edge of the channel in Area 16, although these were not directly associated with struck flint. On the gravel terrace little evidence of late Neolithic/early Bronze Age activity was found; only a few tree-throw holes and one pit containing flint of a later Neolithic/early Bronze Age character were located. However, a Beaker pottery associated pit was found in Ex1 and a Grooved Ware pit in Area 16. The barrow in Area 16 also contained a small assemblage of contemporary flintwork. With the excavation of a small number of flints recovered from Bronze Age features in Area 16, this period is very poorly represented, both on the flood plain and gravel terrace.

A quite clear distinction was observed between the use actions present in the activity areas of the earlier Neolithic and the later Neolithic. Between the combined scatter totals of the earlier Neolithic activity areas (678, 720 and 10010) and the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age activity areas (513, 563, 577, 998 and 1009) the proportion of scraping actions more than doubles, with a related considerable decline in the proportion of cutting and whittling actions against soft materials.

### *Early Bronze Age worked flint from Area 11* by Hugo Anderson-Whymark

#### *Introduction*

A total of 671 flints and 54.7kg of burnt unworked flint was recovered during excavations in Area 11 (Table 9.11). The majority of the flint – 508 pieces – was recovered from soil horizon 10504 (of which 10873 was a part) and related context 10506. These layers, which produced a small quantity of pottery of later prehistoric date, overlay layer 10530, on which an early Bronze Age burnt mound was found. The assemblage was spread relatively evenly across these alluvial surfaces and no discrete clusters were observed. The assemblage recovered forms a coherent group, and as such the technological traits will be discussed together below.

#### *Raw material and general condition*

The raw material used in Area 11 was the locally available flint from the river gravels. The flint is of variable quality and invariably contains some thermal fractures, but in general flakes reasonably well.

*Table 9.11 The flint assemblage from Area 11 by category*

CATEGORY TYPE	10504, 10506, 10530, 10873	Other contexts	Grand total
Flake	382	120	502
Blade	11	4	15
Bladelet	2	3	5
Blade-like	15	9	24
Irregular waste	9	2	11
Chip	19	8	27
Rejuvenation flake core face/edge	1		1
Tested nodule/bashed lump	19	6	25
Single platform flake core	8	1	9
Multiplatform flake core	15	2	17
Levallois/ other discoidal flake core	1		1
Unclassifiable/ fragmentary core	2		2
Core on a flake	3	1	4
Barbed and tanged arrowhead		1	1
Fragmentary arrowhead (tip)	1		1
Side scraper	2		2
End and side scraper	1		1
Other scraper	1	1	2
Awl	2	1	3
Piercer	1	2	3
Serrated flake	1		1
Notch	3	1	4
Other knife	1		1
Retouched flake	7	1	8
Misc. retouch	1		1
Grand total	508	163	671
Burnt unworked flint (g)	115	54,596	54,711
Burnt no. (%) (exc. chips)	6 (1.2)	3 (1.9)	9 (1.4)
Broken no. (%) (exc. chips)	59 (12.1)	27 (17.4)	86 (13.4)
Retouched no. (%) (exc. chips)	21 (4.3)	7 (4.5)	28 (4.4)

The majority of flint is lightly to moderately corticated, with varying levels of calcium carbonate encrustation. The condition of the flint is reasonably fresh, although a small proportion of the flintwork appears to be slightly rolled.

#### *The assemblage*

The assemblage is dominated by relatively broad flakes; narrow, blade and blade-like flakes account for only 8% of the flake material. The flakes were struck using a mixture of hard and soft hammer percussion. The flakes were not particularly carefully removed from the core. There is little evidence of platform edge abrasion and only a single rejuvenation flake was present. The cores were all aimed at flake production, and were generally struck in a haphazard manner; a single crude

discoïdal flake core was recovered. The core to flake ratio is low, at 1:9.5 (including tested nodules), reflecting the presence of a significant proportion of knapping debris; this is also supported by the presence of chips and irregular waste.

The retouched assemblage includes a variety of tools including scrapers, piercers, notches, simple edge retouched flakes and projectile points. Other retouched pieces include a knife, which exhibits invasive retouch on the ventral surface, a crudely serrated flake, a miscellaneous retouched piece and an aborted bifacial tool manufactured on a flake, probably representing an arrowhead. The projectile points represented are a barbed and tanged arrowhead from the topsoil and the tip of a relatively narrow, finely retouched point.

The technological traits of the assemblage and the presence of a barbed and tanged arrowhead indicate that the assemblage dates to the Bronze Age. No obvious Mesolithic or early Neolithic flintwork was observed.

*Discussion*

The flintwork forms a coherent assemblage, and was recovered from soil horizons dating to the early Bronze Age and later. There was a considerable proportion of knapping debris, but no distinct clusters were located, indicating that this material was probably not *in situ*. The presence of late Neolithic/early Bronze Age flintwork on the edge of the gravel terrace/periphery of the floodplain was also observed within Areas Ex1 and Ex2. However, the flintwork in Area Ex1 formed a denser spread and was interspersed with small lithic clusters, whilst in Area Ex2, clusters were present against a very low density background scatter. It is possible that alluviation has dispersed the Area 11 material to a greater extent than the assemblages in Areas Ex1-3. Alternatively, the material in Area 11

may include a proportion of later Bronze Age flintwork, which may have been produced as the result of a different pattern of exploitation of the floodplain.

One difference in the flint assemblage is the lower proportions of burning and breakage in Area 11. This may reflect the presence of less domestic material, although the proportion of retouched artefacts is not significantly lower. It is perhaps significant that, while large quantities of burnt unworked flint were present on the site in the hearths, pits and tree-throw holes, little occurred in association with struck flints. This perhaps reflects the separation of either activities or materials in this area. Indeed, it is possible that the 'hearths' identified during the excavation and evaluation could reflect 'industrial' rather than domestic activities.

**Late Neolithic/early Bronze Age animal bone in Areas Ex1-3 and 11** by Gillian Jones

The proportions of species in late Neolithic and early Bronze Age contexts in Areas Ex1-3 and 11 (Table 9.12) were mainly cattle (56%) and red deer (31%), with low numbers of pig and sheep/goat (10 and 3%). These are fairly similar proportions to the early/middle Neolithic groups, although, as expected for the late Neolithic, pig were more common than sheep/goat. They were from the floodplain and floodplain edge, with a few on the gravel terrace (and just one unidentified piece from the channel).

The character of the bones is similar to the earlier Neolithic group, with many bones eroded and fragmented. A third of the identified pieces were loose teeth. Eight were burnt (mostly calcined). No butchery marks were observed.

The cattle bones included five (of 45 bones)

Table 9.12 Animal bones from late Neolithic to early Bronze Age contexts in Areas Ex1–3 and 11

Area	Description	Phase	Cattle	Sheep/goat	Pig	Deer	Ident	Unid.			Total
								Large	Med	Indeter.	
EX1	Fl. edge	LN-EBA	14	2	4	6 red	26	10	5	4	45
EX1	Floodpl.	LN-EBA	1		1	2 red	4	5	6	3	18
EX1	Terrace	LN-EBA	5			2 red	7	4	7	2	20
EX2	Channel	LN-EBA						1			1
EX2	Floodpl.	LN-EBA	11			3 red	14	20		3	37
EX3	Layer	LN-EBA	4		1	1+5a red	11	3			14
EX1	Fl. edge	pr.LN-EBA							3	4	7
Total		LN-EBA	35	2	6	19 red	62	43	21	16	142
Percent.			56	3	10	31	100				
Area 11	Fl. Edge 1	EBA	9		2	6+3a red,					
	1 cf. red	21	4	6	47						
Area 11	Fl. edge	EBA	1				1	1			2
Area 11	Fl. Edge 2	BA				1 red	1	6	1		8

Abbreviations as above. Pr. – probably. 1 – under or around the burnt flint mound; 2 – layer overlying the burnt flint mound

which were thought probably to be from aurochs because of their large size (none complete enough for any standard measurements). Other bones were of normal domestic size, and include a complete radius, which gives a height estimate of 1.07m.

Nearly all the sheep and pig identified were teeth (both the sheep records, and seven of the eight pig bones). Five of the pig teeth were upper teeth, and indicate sub adults (M2s at 'e', 'f', M3 at 'Un'), with no evidence for very immature pigs.

Red deer bones continued to be more frequent than pig or sheep, and the high proportion of large compared to medium unidentified bones tends to

support this. Antler were quite common (at least eight; they were retrieved individually, but were broken into about 130 fragments). One included part of the skull and antler base, so this individual had been hunted. The long bones included some measurements, indicating quite large red deer.

**Area 3: late Neolithic/early Bronze Age flint scatters** by Anne Marie Cromarty, David Petts and Tim Allen

Activity in the Beaker period and the early Bronze Age in Area 3 was evidenced primarily by two flint

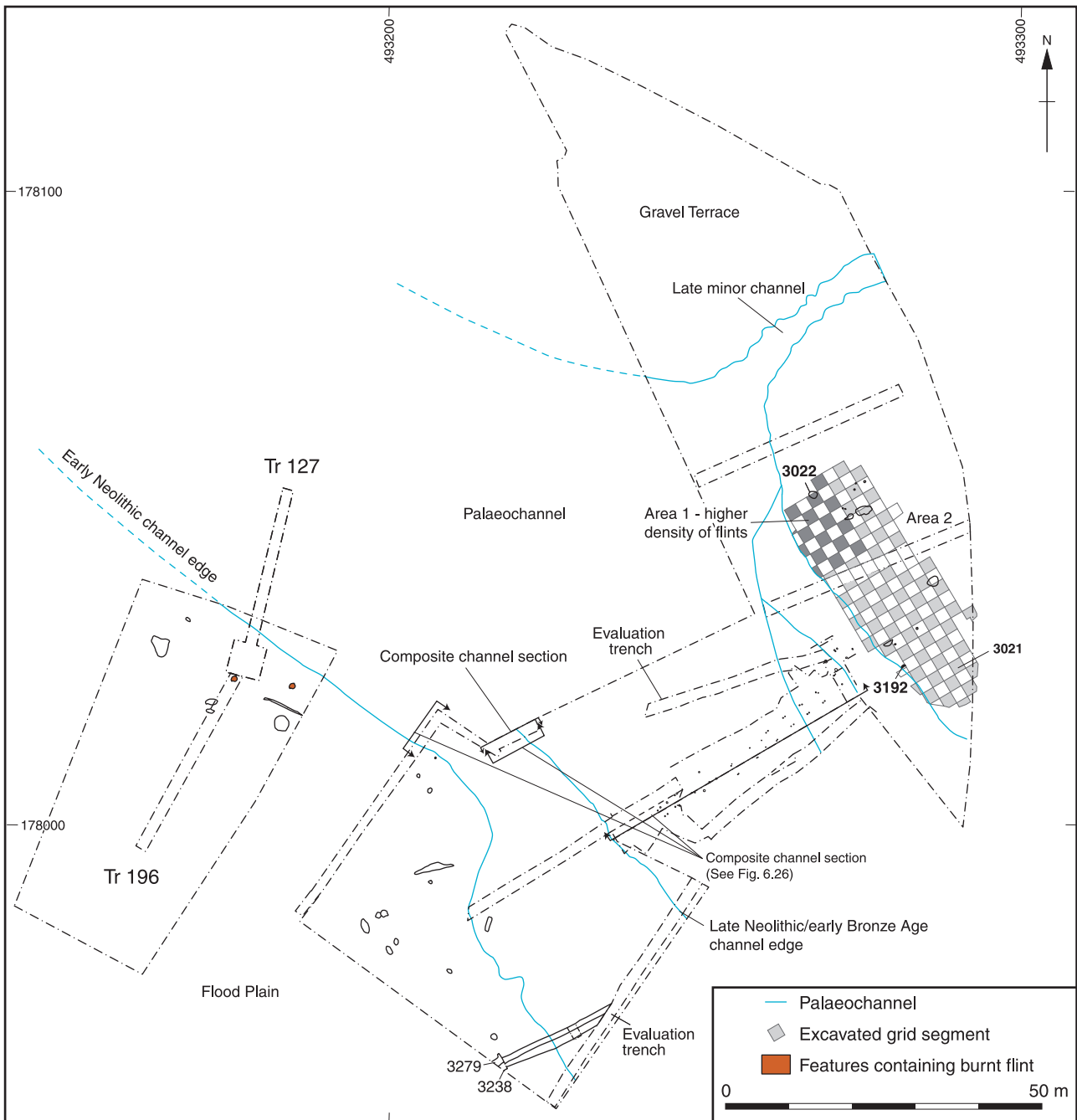


Fig. 9.22 Late Neolithic/early Bronze Age evidence in Area 3

scatters on the edge of the gravel terrace on the northern side of Palaeochannel V. One of these scatters was preserved in a Roman ploughsoil (3021) and, not surprisingly, had been disturbed and contained a number of earlier and later artefacts. The second scatter (3192), lay below the first, at a depth which had not been affected by ploughing.

*Area 3 north of Palaeochannel V: the edge of the gravel terrace*

To the north of Palaeochannel V, the edge of the channel had cut into the gravel terrace. Beneath the ploughsoil, a band of 0.1m deep Roman ploughsoil (3021), 16.0m by 43.0m in area, occupied the higher part of the gravel channel bank. It contained 1128 worked flint fragments (over half the total for Area 3). Due to the high density of flint, this area was excavated in an alternate grid of 2m square boxes (Fig. 9.22). The assemblage contained flints ranging in date from the Mesolithic to the Bronze Age. Based on the variation in the density of flint within the gridded area it appears that an area in the north-west of the gridded area was the focus of the flint scatter. In this area the density of flakes was 8.5 flakes/m<sup>2</sup>, compared to 3.3 flints /m<sup>2</sup> for the rest of the gridded area. The assemblage in this area suggested core preparation implying that the area was a ploughed-out knapping scatter. Despite the presence of earlier flint in the area, the assemblage was probably of late Neolithic or Bronze Age date. As well as containing this worked flint, a large amount of burnt flint was recovered, along with a little pottery of early, middle and late Neolithic or early Bronze Age date. There were, however, also sixteen sherds of Roman pottery and a medieval sherd.

The Roman ploughsoil overlay a mid grey/brown silty clay deposit (3131) containing occasional fragments of burnt and worked flint. The flint from the Roman ploughsoil above was probably originally derived from this layer, but had been reworked by ploughing. A small pit (3022; Fig. 9.22) intruded into this layer. It was 1.16m across and 0.3m deep. It was filled with a mid brown silty sand containing burnt animal bone, an early Neolithic leaf arrowhead and an iron nail, probably derived from the layer above.

Beneath 3131, and below the level of Roman truncation, was a further flint scatter (3192; Figs 9.22-4). This consisted of two concentrations, the larger (to the south) only half a metre across, the smaller, in a tight group just over 0.5m to the north, only 0.2m across (Fig. 9.23-4). Although no diagnostically datable finds were recovered, the composition of the assemblage suggested a later Neolithic or Bronze Age date. Over half of the flints in the scatter could be refitted, and a further third were probably related to these refitted groups. It is possible that the knapper sat in between the groups to work, debris falling to either side.

*The late Neolithic/early Bronze Age flint from Area 3 by Hugo Anderson-Whymark*

*Scatter 3192 (Figs 9.23-4)*

Scatter 3192 (Table 4.11) was preserved below the truncation level of the Roman plough soil (3021). No retouched flints were present to assist in dating. However, it is clear that the scatter is the product of a flake-based industry. The majority of the flakes were struck using hard hammer percussion against cortical surfaces or simple platforms; no platform edge abrasion was present. The scatter may therefore be broadly dated to the later Neolithic and Bronze Age, although a date in the latter period is more likely.

Flint scatter 3192 provided the opportunity to investigate a knapping scatter which contained no apparent specialised activities (such as manufacturing retouched tools, or utilisation within the scatter) for refits. The recording of all the finds in three dimensions allowed for detailed spatial analysis of the refitting pieces.

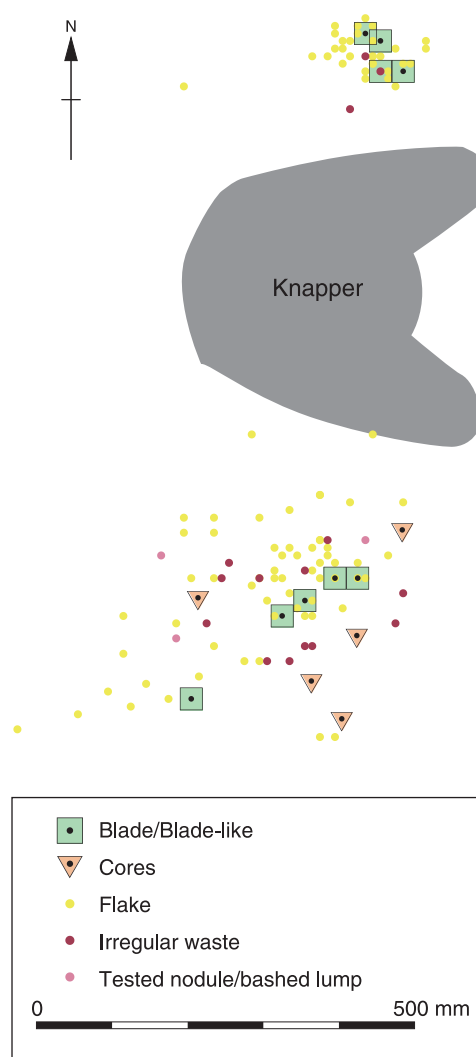


Fig. 9.23 Plot of flint scatter 3192 in Area 3



The refitting exercise proved very successful. Over half of the flints in the scatter (65 flints) refit with one or more others, and a further third of the total (41 flints) were possibly related to a refitting group. The refitting flints formed eight sequences which derived from five cores and one tested nodule. There was no evidence of specialised activities or utilised pieces in the scatter. The complete nature of the scatter allow for the reduction sequences to be described in detail.

*Flint type 59*

A small gravel flint nodule with an abraded grey 'gravel flint' cortex and a brown interior. The refitting exercise produced thirteen refits in two sequences. An additional 16 flints were recorded as possibly deriving from this flint type. The refitting flints show flakes were removed with three rotations through 90°, each time using the face of the core as the new platform. The core was finally abandoned at 25g after a few hinge and step fractures had occurred on the working face. Several flakes from this core were removed from the scatter. The weight of the refitting pieces is 47g, the related

pieces weigh an additional 17g. It is therefore unlikely that the original core weighed over 100g.

*Flint type 60*

A small frost shattered gravel flint nodule with an abraded cortex and translucent mid orange brown interior. A single sequence of 13 refitting flints and eight related flints were recorded. The majority of these refits were flakes struck from a cortical platform. An attempt to rotate the flaking angle through 90°, using the working face as the platform, encountered a thermal fracture, breaking the core and resulting in its abandonment. When abandoned, the core weighed 37g, the refitting flakes increase the weight to 58g. The related flints weigh an additional 22g. Again, the original core is likely to have been under 100g.

*Flint type 61*

A small nodule of local gravel flint with numerous internal thermal fractures. The nodule has a thin abraded white cortex, and a grey brown interior. A single sequence of thirteen refits represents the entire history of the nodule from testing through to abandonment. The initial testing of this nodule resulted in several fractures along internal frost shatters. The largest remaining fragment was then flaked from two angles; one of the platforms was cortical, and the other was on a thermal fracture. Several flakes were removed, although the majority were abandoned in the scatter. The abandoned core weighed 59g, with refitted pieces the weight increased to 140g, and an additional 15g of related pieces were recorded.

*Flint type 62*

A small nodule of local gravel flint with several internal fractures. The interior of the flint was a mid brownish grey with an iron stained cortex. A total of nine refitting flakes was found representing the entire knapping sequence of this core. The initial flake removed from this core resulted in the core breaking into two along a thermal fracture. Several further flakes were removed from this cortical platform before being rotated, using the initial flake scars as a platform for the next few removals before breakage and abandonment. The core weighed 15g when abandoned, and after adding the refitting pieces this increases to 57g. The refitted sequence is complete with the exception of one flake and several chips, so the original weight is unlikely to have exceeded 75g.

*Flint type 63*

A cherty orange/brown gravel flint, with some thermal fractures. Two flakes were found to refit. No other flakes of this material were present in the scatter.

*Flint type 64*

A small nodule of orange brown gravel flint. On testing, this nodule had fractured along internal

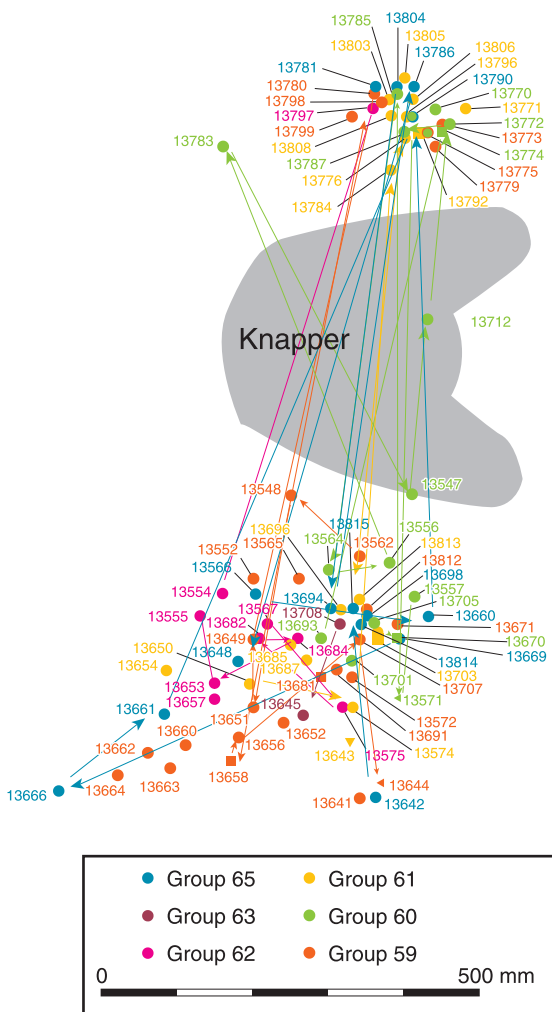


Fig. 9.24 Refits in flint scatter 3192

fractures and was abandoned. Refitted weight 77g (approximately a third is missing).

*Flint type 65*

A small well-rolled gravel flint pebble with a thin white cortex and grey interior. No thermal fractures are apparent. A total of thirteen refits were made to this core, representing a complete sequence from cortical preparation to abandonment, with only a few small chips missing. Initially a number of flakes were removed from a flat cortical surface. The core was then rotated 90° and removals made from the former face of the core. However, after making only four small removals, the core was abandoned. The core weighted 18g when abandoned, and 37g with refits; three related chips weigh 1g.

The struck flint in the assemblage derives from five cores (all with refits) and two tested nodules (only one with refits). Two additional refitting flakes were struck from a core or tested nodule not present in the scatter. In all cases the raw material used was a poor quality locally available gravel flint. The nodules were generally under 100g and contained numerous thermal fractures. No platform preparation seems to have been undertaken, making cortical butts a common trait of the assemblage. After the exhaustion of the original face, the cores were commonly rotated through 90°, using the former face as the new platform. The cores were commonly abandoned when a fault – either natural or as the result of knapping – was reached rather than when the core reached a point where it was deemed too small.

Table 9.13 The flint assemblage from layer 3021 by area

CATEGORY TYPE	Area 1	Area 2	Other	Grand total
Flake	347	351	208	906
Blade	21	14	6	41
Bladelet			1	1
Blade-like	28	16	6	50
Irregular waste	10	5	7	22
Chip			1	1
Rejuvenation flake core face/edge		3	1	4
Rejuvenation flake tablet	1			1
Rejuvenation flake other	2	1		3
Janus flake (= thinning)	1			1
Core single platform blade core			1	1
Other blade core	2	1		3
Tested nodule/bashed lump	7	8	5	20
Single platform flake core	3	6	3	12
Multiplatform flake core	1	1	6	8
Keeled non-discoidal flake core	1		1	2
Unclassifiable/fragmentary core	4	6	3	13
Microolith - scalene microtriangle	1			1
Barbed and tanged arrowhead		1		1
End scraper	1			1
End and side scraper	1			1
Scraper on a non-flake blank	1			1
Other scraper			1	1
Awl		1		1
Piercer	3	3		6
Spurred piece	1	3		4
Serrated flake	1		1	2
Denticulate	1			1
Notch	3	3	1	7
Backed knife	1			1
Retouched flake	4	4	2	10
Other - Burin?		1		1
Grand total	446	428	254	1128
Burnt unworked flint (g)	9985	44092	3821	57898
No. burnt (%) (exc. chips)	13 (3)	4 (0.9)	10 (3.9)	27 (2.4)
No. broken (%) (exc. chips)	132 (29.6)	116 (27.1)	80 (19.1)	328 (29.1)
No. retouched (%) (exc. chips)	18 (4)	16 (3.7)	5 (1.2)	39 (3.6)

*The Roman ploughsoil (3021)*

The Roman ploughsoil, preserved to the north of the Thames channel, contained a total of 1128 flints (Table 9.13). The assemblage contains flint of mixed dates. A microlith of the scalene micro-triangle type provides a late Mesolithic date, along with a possible burin, blades, blade cores and two serrated flakes. Some of the blades, blade-like flakes and serrated flakes may date from the earlier Neolithic. Later Neolithic activity was suggested by the presence of flake cores, including keeled cores and a Levallois-style core. A number of crude cores and bashed lumps would suggest a Bronze Age component, along with a barbed and tanged arrowhead. The presence of numerous cortical and partially

cortical trimming flakes suggests that knapping had taken place somewhere in the vicinity. A spatial analysis was undertaken in order to determine if any concentrations could be defined amongst both the flake and retouched material.

The flint was originally plotted by 2m squares and the density per 1m<sup>2</sup> was calculated. The density of flint in the 2m squares varied between 0.5 flints/m<sup>2</sup> and 17.5 flints/m<sup>2</sup>. The highest densities of material were recorded in the north-west part of the plough soil. On this basis an area of 7 by 16m was defined (Area 1), of which 52 metre squares were excavated, containing 446 flints. The remaining area was some 31 by 16m (Area 2), of which 131 metre squares were excavated. This contained 428 flints (the

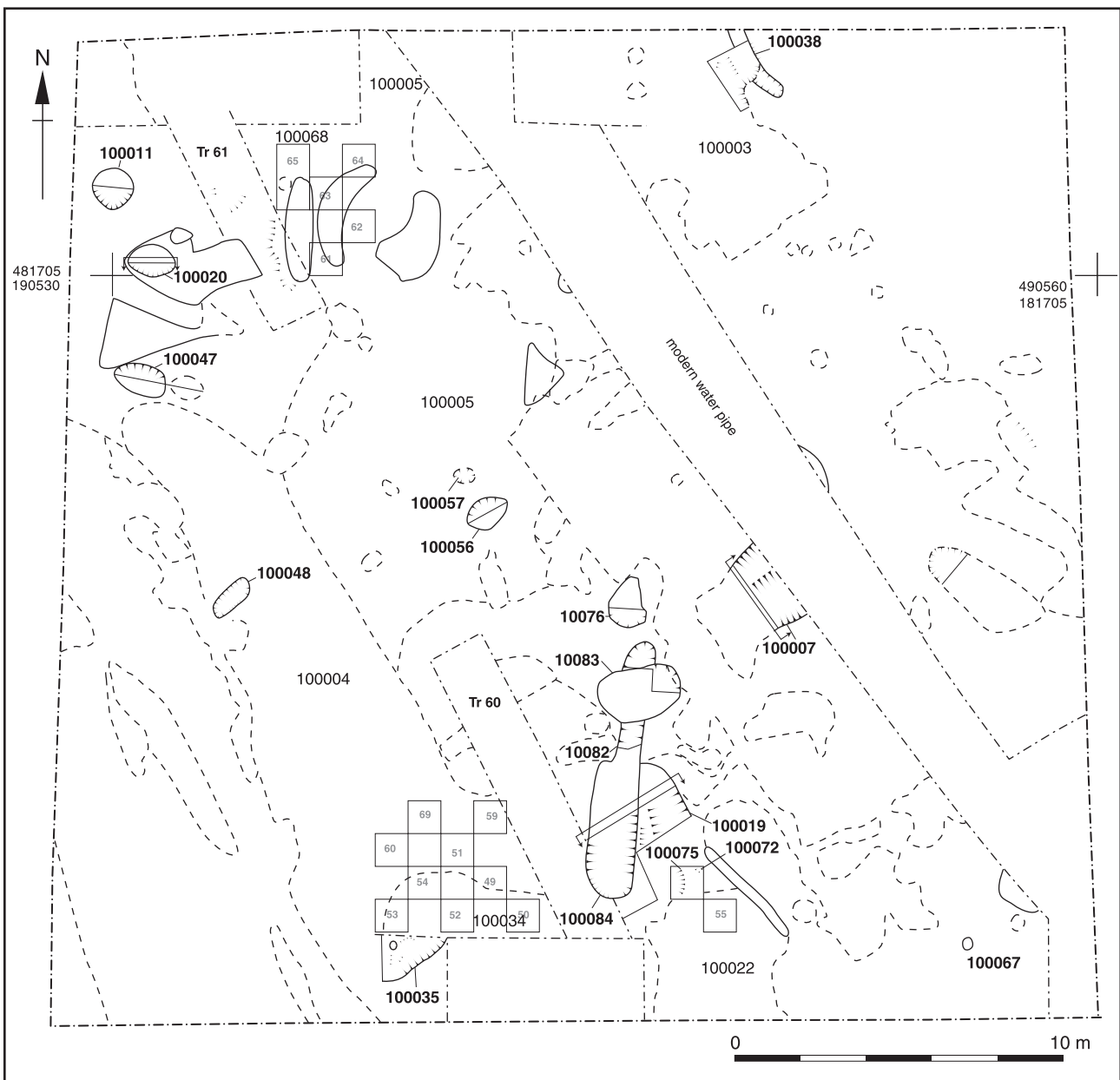


Fig. 9.25 Taplow Mill Site 2, site plan

remaining 254 flints were from surface collection in intervening squares).

The average density of flint varied considerably. Area 1 had an average density of 8.6 flints/m<sup>2</sup>, compared to 3.3 flints/m<sup>2</sup> in Area 2. A total of 12.3% (55 flakes) of the flints in Area 1 were preparation flakes, compared to 7.3% (31 flakes) in Area 2. This would appear to indicate that core preparation was being carried out in Area 1, and the high density would suggest a ploughed out knapping scatter. The dating of the scatter is problematic due to the broad date range of material present in the plough soil. However, the scatter is unlikely to be of Mesolithic or early Neolithic date due to the low blade to flake ratio and the even distribution of blade cores and rejuvenation flakes across both Areas 1 and 2, suggesting a background spread of earlier material. The scatter is therefore probably of late Neolithic or Bronze Age date.

The material in the plough soil appears to have originated through the truncation of the underlying layer (3131). To the south of the plough soil, layer 3131 was less severely truncated and the knapping scatter, 3192, was preserved *in situ* on this layer immediately below the plough soil, which at this point contained only a low density spread.

### Taplow Mill Site 2: late Neolithic/early Bronze Age flint scatters, tree-throw holes and a ditch

by Elizabeth Anderson

#### Introduction

A small number of features at Taplow Mill Site have been tentatively assigned to the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age. These features consist of a gully, tree-throw holes and three flint scatters (Fig. 9.25). All of these features have been attributed to this phase on the basis of the worked flint associated with them, and in all cases their date remains uncertain.

#### Flint scatters

The first flint scatter (100068) was found on the surface of a surface of colluvial layer (100003); the second small scatter (100022) within this colluvial layer, and the third (100034) within another colluvial layer (10004). These layers formed localised deposits in a sequence of Holocene colluvial deposits and soils and cannot be clearly related stratigraphically to each other or to most of the other features on the site.

The scatters were excavated in metre squares, but no clear patterning was evident in the distribution of the flint. The flint consists predominantly of flakes, but chips, a few blades, blade-like flakes and cores, and, in the case of scatter 100034, a residual microlith, were also present. Despite the presence of residual earlier material, the worked flint appears to date predominantly from the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age.

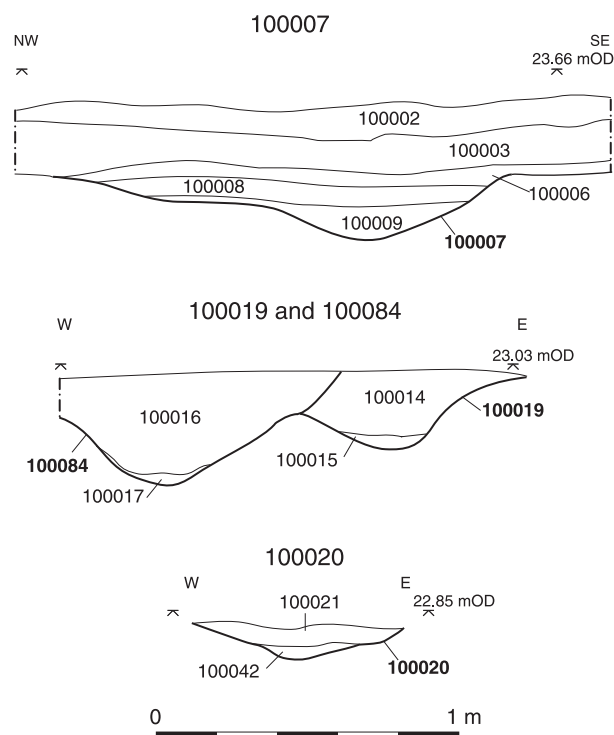


Fig. 9.26 Sections, Taplow Mill Site 2

#### Gully 100084

The most clearly anthropogenic feature on the site was a gully (100084) which extended roughly north-south in a straight line for 8m. It had a bowl-shaped profile and was up to 0.75m deep (Fig. 9.26). It was filled with dark red brown silty loams and mid to light brown silty clays, which were similar to the fills of many of the other features. A total of 74 pieces of worked flint, which may date from the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age, as well as a 164g of burnt, unworked flint, were recovered from it. The worked flint consisted almost entirely of flakes, although a few blades and blade-like flakes and a pair of cores were also recovered. A few fragments of cattle bone and some charcoal (mostly hazel (*Corylus*) and hawthorn (*Crataegus*)) were also recovered.

#### The other features: tree-throw holes, hollows and pits

The other features consist of smaller circular, oval or often irregular features. These features are summarised in Table 9.14 (Fig. 9.26). Although few had features which allowed them to be unambiguously identified as tree-throw holes, almost all of them were irregular in plan and profile, and were certainly natural and are probably best interpreted as tree-throw holes. The tree-throw holes varied considerably in size, from 0.3m to 3.0m wide and from 0.1m to 0.5m deep. They contained very varied numbers of artefacts which, in all but one case, consist entirely of worked flint. The only large assemblage of flint was recovered from tree-throw hole 100007 (Fig.



Table 9.14 Summary of features at Taplow Mill Site 2

Feature	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Plan	Profile	Fills	No. pieces of flint	Other finds	Covered/ cut by	Cuts
<b>Late features</b>									
Pit? 100067	0.2	0.2	circular	bowl-shaped	dark brownish grey clay silt			100002	100003
Hollow 100056	1.2	0.1	-	-	mid orange brown clay silt	5		100002	100003
Hollow 100048	1.6	0.1	oval	bowl	mid orange-brown clay silt	180		100002	100004
<b>Indeterminate features</b>									
Pit 100011	1.3	0.4	circular	bowl-shaped	mid red-brown silty clay	196 (MN/LN)	burnt flint; 1 charred grain	100002	100046
Hollow 100057	0.5	0.1	-	-	mid orange brown clay silt			100002	100005
TTH 100020	1.4	0.2	irreg.	irreg.	dark grey brown clay silt	131		100003	100046
TTH 100047	1.3	0.1	irreg.	bowl-shaped	dark grey brown clay silt	61		100003	100046
TTH 100038	1.5	0.4	irreg.	irreg.	mid orange-brown sandy silt	3		100003	100010
TTH 100007	3.0	0.4	irreg.	irreg.	reddish mid-brown silty clay	315 (EN)		100003	100010
<b>Early features</b>									
TTH 100019	1.4	0.5	irreg.	irreg.	mid greenish grey clay silt and mid reddish brown silty clay	33	cattle bone, red deer antler	100084	100010
TTH 100076	1.2	-	circular	irreg.	dark red-brown silt			100022	100010
TTH 100075	2	0.4	irreg.	irreg.	mid brown silty clay	3		100022	100072
TTH 100072	0.4	0.1	irreg.	irreg.	mid red-brown silty clay			100075	100010
TTH 100083	1.5	-	irreg./ oval	-	dark red-brown silt			100022	100084
TTH 100035	0.3	0.3	irreg.	irreg.	mid red-brown silty loam and a mid yellow-brown silty clay	28		100004	100005

9.26) and probably dates from the early Neolithic (see Chapter 6). Smaller groups of worked flint were recovered from most of the other tree-throw holes. In all cases, although other types were present, the assemblages were dominated by flakes, and they have been tentatively dated to the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age. The only other finds were some fragments of cattle bone and red deer antler from tree-throw hole 100019 (Fig. 9.26).

#### Conclusion

Perhaps the most intriguing feature on this site is the length of ditch. The associated flint suggests, albeit tentatively, that this feature dates from the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age. There are, however, no obvious parallels for a straight segment of ditch from this period. Since both the associated artefacts and the feature itself are insufficient to give a clear clue as to the nature of the associated activity, its interpretation must, however, remain open.

#### Struck flint from Taplow Mill Site 2

by Theresa Durden and Hugo Anderson-Whymark

#### Introduction

A total of 1457 pieces of flint and 446 pieces/3,912g of burnt unworked flint was recovered from the excavation at Taplow Mill Site 2. In addition, 52 and 94 flints were recovered from Evaluation Trenches 60 and 61 respectively. This flintwork is of a similar character to the material from the main excavation and with the exception of flint from Trench 60, F11, from which a diagnostic artefact was recovered (Tables 9.15-19), these pieces have not been reassessed. The flint was collected from a variety of contexts; one pit, nine tree-throw holes or hollows, a linear feature and as dense spreads in layers 100003 and 100004. The majority of flintwork was of a later Neolithic/earlier Bronze Age date, although tree-throw hole 100007 contained early Neolithic flint and pit 100011 middle to late Neolithic flint (the features with late Neolithic/early Bronze Age flintwork are: 100019, 100020, 100035, 100038, 100047, 100048, 100056, 100075 and 100084). A small number

Table 9.15 The flint assemblage from Taplow Mill Site 2 by category and phase

CATEGORY TYPE	Phase					Grand total
	EN (TTH 100007)	M-LN (Pit 100011)	LN/EBA features	LN/EBA 100003/4	Unphased	
Flake	206	146	406	266	20	1044
Blade	28	5	17	15	6	71
Bladelet			1	1		2
Blade-like	39	20	40	35	5	139
Irregular waste	4	2	13	13		32
Chip	8	15	14	52		89
Rejuvenation flake core face/edge	3		1			4
Rejuvenation flake tablet	3			1		4
Rejuvenation flake other			1	1	1	3
Core single platform blade core	4					4
Other blade core		1				1
Tested nodule/bashed lump	3		2			5
Single platform flake core			1	2		3
Multiplatform flake core	4	1	10	3	1	19
Unclassifiable/fragmentary core	9	2	4			15
Core on a flake			1			1
Microlith			2	1	1	4
End scraper			1			1
Awl		1				1
Serrated flake		2			1	3
Notch			1		1	2
Retouched flake	4	1	3	1	1	10
Grand total	315	196	518	391	37	1457
Burnt unworked flint (g)	1145	482	1460	825	337	3912
No. burnt (%) (exc. chips)	33 (10.8)	44 (24.3)	78 (15.5)	66 (19.5)	4 (8.3)	221 (16.2)
No. broken (%) (exc. chips)	78 (25.4)	79 (43.7)	170 (33.7)	151 (44.5)	19 (39.6)	488 (35.7)
No. retouched (%) (exc. chips)	4 (1.3)	4 (2.2)	7 (1.4)	2 (0.6)	4 (8.3)	21 (1.5)
Percentage blades vs. flakes	24.5	14.6	12.5	16.1	14.2	16.9
Core to flake ratio	13.7	42.8	25.8	63.4	31	26.2

of both early and late Mesolithic flints were found across the site. These pieces were most numerous in colluvial layer 100002.

#### Raw material

The flint used appears to be mostly gravel flint which is available locally. This flint varies in colour and translucency and ranges from pale beige and grey to dark brown and grey/black. The cortex is generally thin and worn and pale brown or grey in colour. A small amount of chalk flint was present, recognisable by its dark grey colour and thicker, chalky white cortex. A few flakes of Bullhead flint were also present in scatters 100034 and 100022 (layer 100003). This is a distinctive flint recognisable by a thin orange band present under a dark grey or greenish cortex. This flint is often found in the London area, north Surrey and Kent, but it also occurs at the base of the Reading Beds (Dewey and Bromehead 1915, 2) which outcrop approximately 1.5km away from the site. It may also occur in a derived state in the river gravels of the Thames. All

material was all in a fresh condition and light speckled cortication was present on some pieces. Much of the flint from pit 100011 and tree-throw hole 100020 bore a grey/white cortication, and that from hollow 100047 was also heavily corticated.

#### The assemblage

Broad flakes formed the bulk of the assemblage, with blade-like flakes and blades occurring in far smaller numbers. A mixture of hard and soft hammer percussors were used, and plain or unprepared butts dominated. These characteristics were common to material from most contexts, although very slight differences in the character of the flake material may be identified in a few contexts. Blade-like material and soft hammer flaking were slightly better represented in tree-throw hole 100007, which also contained two pairs of refitting flints, one of blades and one of flakes. Tree-throw hole 100020 was dominated by wide-butted broad flakes, many of which were thick and irregular; hard hammer flaking was most common.

Chapter 9

Table 9.16 The flint assemblage from late Neolithic/early Bronze Age features at Taplow Mill Site 2 by category

CATEGORY TYPE	Late Neolithic/ early Bronze Age features										Grand total
	Ditch 100084	Natural Hollows				Tree-throw holes					
		100047	100048	100056	100019	100020	100035	100038	100075		
Flake	54	44	144	5	25	107	21	3	3	34	440
Blade	2	3	7		3	2				5	22
Bladelet			1								1
Blade-like	12	5	5		3	10	5			1	41
Chip		2	12							7	21
Irregular waste	3	2	4			4					13
Rejuvenation flake core face/edge						1					1
Rejuvenation flake other					1						1
Tested nodule/bashed lump	1	1									2
Single platform flake core		1									1
Multiplatform flake core	1	1	4		1	3					10
Unclassifiable/fragmentary core	1	1	1			1					4
Core on a flake						1					1
Barbed and tanged arrowhead										1	1
Microlith			1			1					2
End scraper							1				1
Notch			1								1
Retouched flake		1				1	1				3
Grand total	74	61	180	5	33	131	28	3	3	48	566
Burnt unworked flint (g)	164	576	228	26	33	327	34	311	-	-	1699
No. burnt (%) (exc. chips)	3 (4.1)	10 (17)	36 (21.4)	1 (20)	5 (15.2)	16 (12.2)	4 (14.3)	2 (66.6)	1 (33.3)	2 (4.9)	80 (15.9)
No. broken (%) (exc. chips)	18 (24.3)	26 (44.1)	66 (39.3)	4 (80)	8 (29)	34 (26)	9 (39)	3 (100)	2(66.6)	8 (19.5)	178 (35.3)
No. retouched (%) (exc. chips)	-	1 (1.7)	2 (1.2)	-	-	2 (1.5)	2 (7.1)	-	-	1 (2.4)	8 (1.6)
Core to flake ratio	22.7	13.0	31.4	-	31.0	29.8	-	-	-	-	29.6

Table 9.17 The flint assemblage from late Neolithic/early Bronze Age spreads by category

CATEGORY TYPE	Late Neolithic/ early Bronze Age layers 100003/4			Grand total
	100034	100068	100022	
Flake	139	100	27	266
Blade	11	2	2	15
Bladelet		1		1
Blade-like	19	14	2	35
Irregular waste	6	6	1	13
Chip	45	7		52
Rejuvenation flake tablet	1			1
Rejuvenation flake other	1			1
Single platform flake core	1	1		2
Multiplatform flake core	1	2		3
Microlith	1			1
Retouched flake			1	1
Grand total	225	133	33	391
Burnt unworked flint (g)	409	349	67	825
No. burnt (%) (exc. chips)	32 (17.8)	21 (16.7)	13 (39.4)	66 (19.5)
No. broken (%) (exc. chips)	83 (46.1)	52 (41.3)	16 (48.5)	151 (44.5)
No. retouched (%) (exc. chips)	1 (0.6)	-	1 (3)	2 (0.6)
Core to flake ratio	84.5	39.0		63.4

Table 9.18 The flint assemblage from scatter 100034 by 1m square (part of layer 100003/4)

CATEGORY TYPE	Scatter 100034										Grand total
	100049	100050	100051	100052	100053	100054	100058	100059	100060	100069	
Flake	19	41	5	8	27	11	13	3	6	6	139
Blade		2	1	1	4		1	1	1		11
Blade-like	4	5		1	3	2	4				19
Irregular waste	1	2				1	1		1		6
Chip	4	16			1	4	6	4	4	6	45
Rejuvenation flake tablet					1						1
Rejuvenation flake other					1						1
Single platform flake core		1									1
Multi-platform flake core					1						1
Microolith						1					1
Grand total	28	67	6	10	38	19	25	8	12	12	225
Burnt unworked flint (g)	294	115	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	409
No. burnt (%) (exc. chips)	4 (16.7)	12 (23.5)		1	4 (10.8)	3 (20)	4 (21.1)	2	2		32 (17.8)
No. broken (%) (exc. chips)	6 (25)	26 (51)	1	4	20 (54.1)	7 (46.7)	8 (22.2)	3	3	5	83 (46.1)
No. retouched (%) (exc. chips)	-	-	-	-	-	1 (6.7)	-	-	-	-	1 (0.6)

Table 9.19 The flint assemblage from scatters 100022 and 100068 by 1m square (part of layer 100003/4)

CATEGORY TYPE	Scatter 100022		100022 total	Scatter 100068				100068 total	Grand total	
	100055	100070		100061	100062	100063	100064			100065
Flake	9	18	27	29	4	21	6	40	100	127
Blade		2	2	1			1		2	4
Bladelet								1	1	1
Blade-like		2	2	1		3	2	8	14	16
Irregular waste		1	1	1		1	2	2	6	7
Chip								7	7	7
Single platform flake core				1					1	1
Multi-platform flake core						1		1	2	2
Retouched flake		1	1							1
Grand total	9	24	33	33	4	26	11	59	133	166
	9	24	33	33	4	26	11	52	126	159
Burnt unworked flint (g)	11	56	67	57	11	152	91	38	349	416
No. burnt (%) (exc. chips)	1	12 (50)	13 (39.4)	11 (33.3)	-	1 (3.9)		9 (17.3)	21 (16.7)	34 (21.4)
No. broken (%) (exc. chips)	3	13 (54.2)	16 (48.5)	17 (51.5)	1	8 (30.8)	1	25 (48.1)	52 (41.3)	68 (42.8)
No. retouched (%) (exc. chips)	-	1(4.2)	1 (3)	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 (0.6)

A total of 11 core rejuvenation flakes were recovered, from tree-throw holes 100007, 100019 and 100020, pit 100011 and scatter 100034. An unstratified example was also found. Of particular note were the core tablets, of which three out of a total of four came from tree-throw hole 100007. Core face/edge rejuvenations were also recovered from this feature.

A variety of core types were recovered, ranging in weight from 30g to 140g. These were collected from a wide number of features, tree-throw hole 100007 containing blade and flake cores as well as struck nodules and core fragments. Generally the

most common core types were broad flake cores, in particular the multi-platform variety, although some of these cores also bore a few blade-like removals. Many of these cores seem to be the result of uncontrolled knapping, the cores often being irregular in shape and poorly maintained. A thick flake used as a core was recovered from tree-throw hole 100020. The core to flake ratio on site differs considerably, the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age spreads contain a ratio of 1:30, whilst within the contemporary tree-throw holes a ratio of 1:63 was recorded. This perhaps reflects patterns of disposal or differing activities.



Retouched pieces were relatively infrequent and dominated by simple edge-retouched flakes from a variety of contexts. Only one scraper was recovered from the site. Two poor examples of serrated flakes were found in pit 100011 and a further unstratified example was collected. Four microliths were recovered (one unstratified, the others from features 100020, 100048 and 100034). Both earlier and later Mesolithic examples were represented (obliquely blunted points and broken rod forms). The microliths clearly do not belong to the flake based assemblages with which they are associated and are therefore residual.

#### Discussion

The assemblages recovered from the site present several problems in both dating and interpretation. No diagnostic artefacts were recovered from the site, bar a late Neolithic to early Bronze Age barbed and tanged arrowhead from the evaluation. Indeed, few retouched artefacts were recovered from the site overall. The technological traits identified assist in dating tree-throw hole 100007 to the early Neolithic and pit 100011 to the mid-late Neolithic on the basis of the reduction strategies employed and the proportion of blades. The remaining features are more difficult to date. These assemblages contain 12-14% blade like material, but in general are flake based. The presence of Mesolithic flintwork has been discussed above, and indeed the proportions of blades present in these assemblages indicate that an element of earlier material is present across many of the contexts. The effect of the mixing of flintwork of different dates will change the characteristics of an assemblage and affect interpretation and dating (eg Ford 1987a). Therefore, only a broad late Neolithic to early Bronze Age date can be suggested for these assemblages. Little variation can be observed in flint assemblages with stratigraphic relationships (eg hollow 100048 cut into layer 100004). The presence of numerous features containing lithics of broadly late Neolithic to early Bronze Age date, often sealed by layers 100003 and 100004, which in turn contained significant quantities of comparable material, allows the possibility that these features and spreads were contemporaneous. Alternatively, the flintwork in the tree-throw holes may be residual if upon the fall of the tree, flints became incorporated from layers 100003 and 100004.

The nature of the activities performed at this location are still unclear. The quantities of struck flint, burnt worked and unworked flint indicate that this area witnessed considerable prehistoric activity. However, the low percentage of retouched material in the struck flint assemblage (1.4%) fall well below Wainwright's (1972) suggested proportion of 4-5% as representing a domestic assemblage and, in addition, pottery, burnt stone and fired clay is absent. Several concentrations of large unworked nodules of flint were observed during excavation which may have been collected for working.

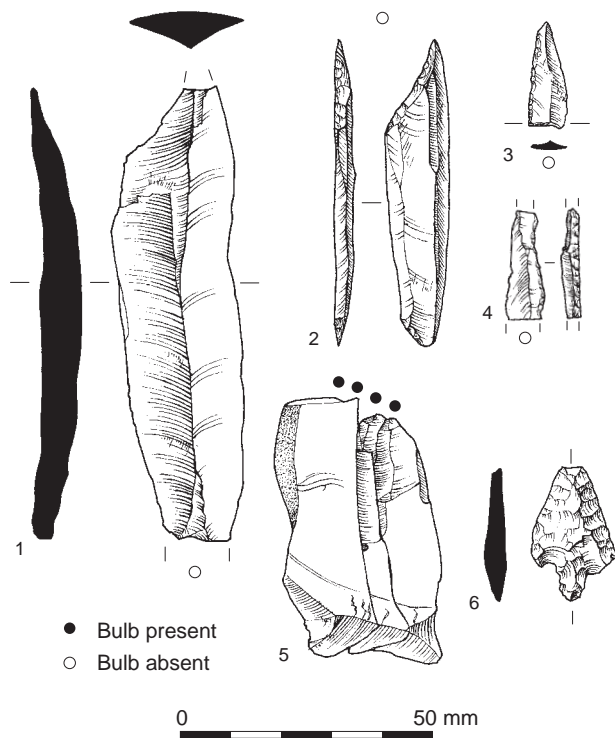


Fig. 9.27 Worked flint, Taplow Mill Site 2

However, the assemblage does not contain a disproportionately high proportion of cortical trimming flakes, implying core preparation, or the debitage associated with a specialist workshop.

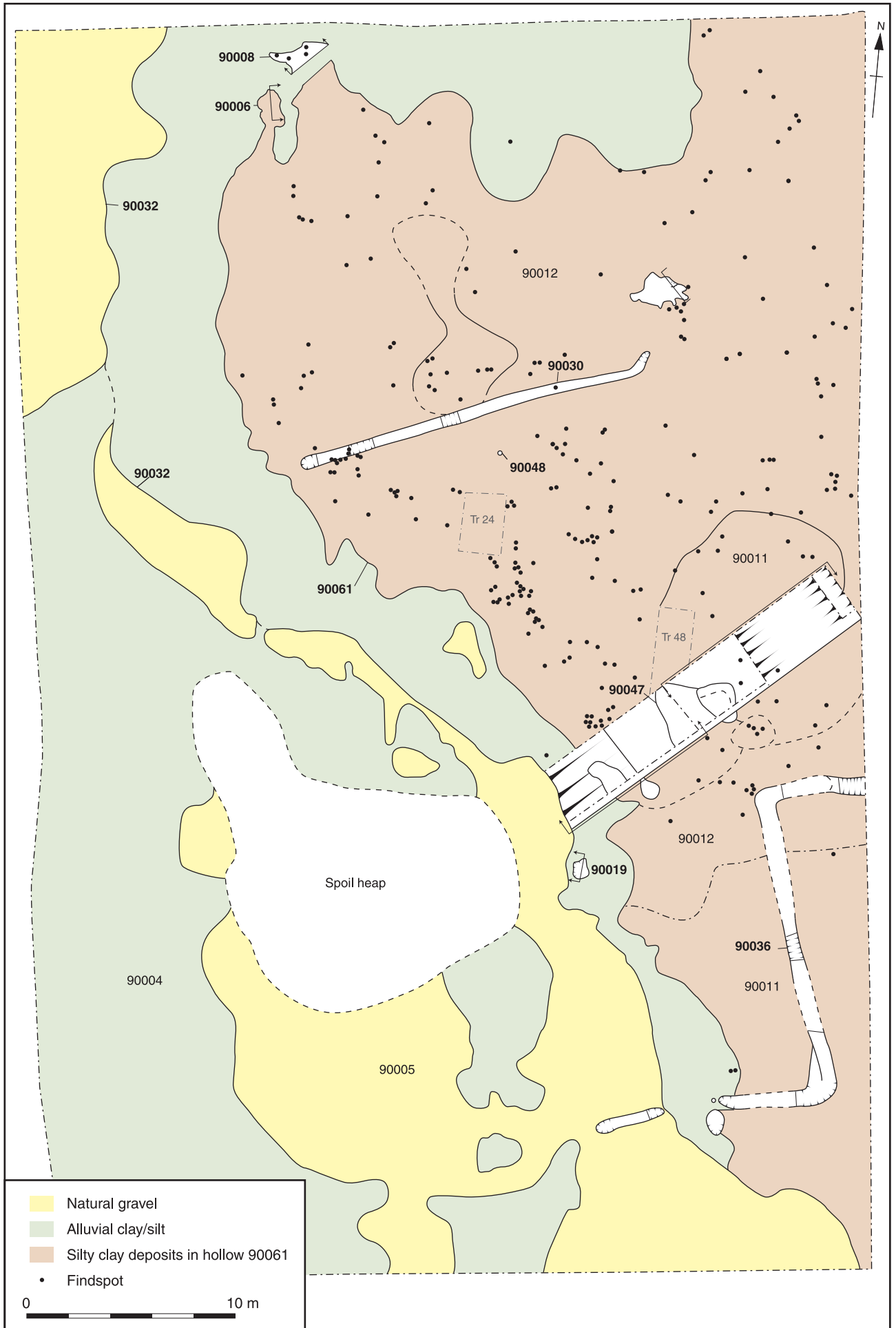
#### Catalogue of illustrated flint (Fig. 9.27)

- 1 Colluvium 100002. Mesolithic blade.
- 2 Unstratified, SF 100001. Microlith, obliquely blunted point.
- 3 Grouped layer 100034, layer 100054. Microlith.
- 4 Tree-throw hole 100020, fill 100021. Microlith, broken rod form.
- 5 Tree-throw hole 100007, fill 100006. Refitted group of flakes.
- 6 Evaluation Trench 60, fill 57. Barbed and tanged arrowhead.

#### Amerden Lane West: late Neolithic/early Bronze Age and other artefacts from a silted palaeochannel by Elizabeth Anderson

##### Introduction

At Amerden Lane West artefacts ranging in date from the Mesolithic to the late Bronze Age were recovered from deposits which had accumulated in a hollow formed as a palaeochannel silted up (Fig. 9.28). The scatters of flint within this hollow often appeared to have been *in situ*, and appear to date predominantly from the later Neolithic or early Bronze Age. However, the presence of pottery dating from the early Neolithic, the middle Neolithic and the late Bronze Age, as well as



Mesolithic flint, in the same layers (not in the expected stratigraphic order) indicates that the deposits had suffered from significant disturbance.

*Neolithic and Bronze Age finds: the palaeochannel and hollow 90061 (Fig. 9.29)*

The palaeochannel (90032) was cut into natural gravel (90005). The first layer of fill within the palaeochannel (90004=90013) consisted of an alluvial deposit of light brown yellow to grey clay silt mottled by manganese and iron. A number of tree-throw holes (90006, 90008 and 90019; Figs 9.28 and 9.30), one of which (90019) was burnt, were cut into the initial fill (90004) of the palaeochannel. These features lay at the edge of the channel, where the upper layers of fill within the channel had been truncated away (Figs 9.28-29), and their chronological relationship with the alluvial deposits nearer the centre of the channel is thus unclear.

A sequence of deposits (Fig. 9.29; 90012, 90037, 90014 and 90011, the upper part of which was recorded as 90003) accumulated in the hollow (90061) which was left in the surface of the initial palaeochannel fill (90004=90013). These layers consisted of silty clay deposits, which varied in colour from grey or greenish brown to light grey. Most of these deposits were stained by manganese and iron.

Large numbers of pieces of worked flint, as well as pottery and a small quantity of animal bone were recovered from these layers (Fig. 9.28). Roe deer was

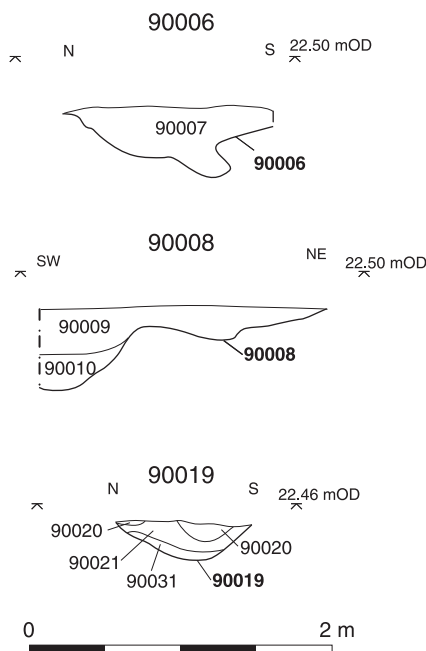


Fig. 9.30 Sections of tree-throw holes, Amerden Lane West

Fig. 9.28 (facing page) Amerden Lane West, site plan, showing distribution of artefacts

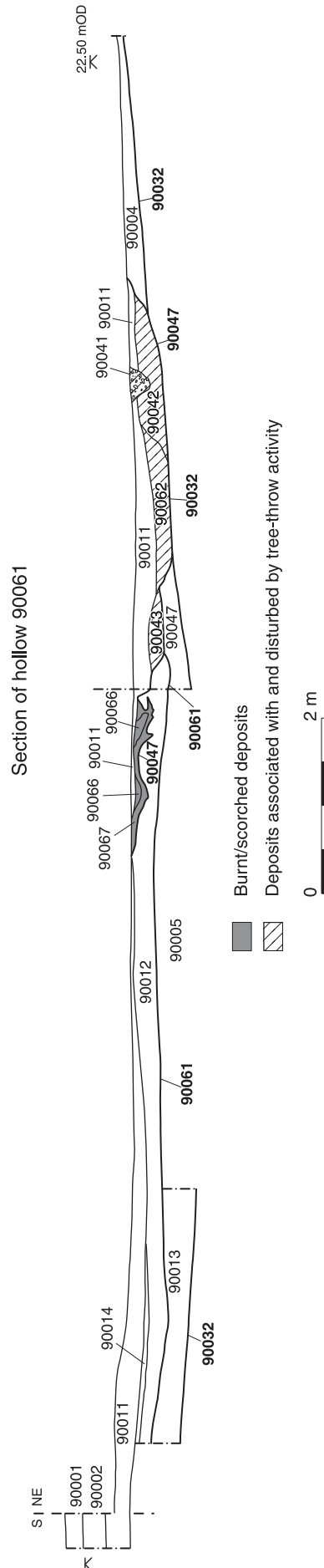


Fig. 9.29 Hollow 90061, section, showing burnt and scorched deposits and areas disturbed by tree-throw holes, Amerden Lane West

Table 9.20 Summary of pottery from hollow 90061 by fabric (no. sherds/weight period)

	F1	F2	F3	F3MN	FA1	FA2	FA3	AF1	AV1	G1	G2	GAF2	Total
90002		2/11g MBA?											2/11 g
90003	1/2 g MBA?	3/6 g EN	6/65 g EN		2/3 g EN?	6/23 g E-MN	4/32 g EN	1/2 g LN/EBA	1/12 g Later Prehist.		1/1 LN/EBA		26/152 g
90011		1/6 g EN								1/1 LN/EBA		1/16 g LN/EBA	3/23 g
90012				1/73 MN		1/6 EN?	2/10 EN						4/89 g

represented by a metatarsal which carried a haematoma indicating that the hind foot had received a blow on its anterior surface (identification by N Sykes). Sheep/goat was also represented by a single specimen, and cattle by 7, but most of the bone (115 fragments) could not be identified.

Although much of the flint probably dates from the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age, and appeared to occur as *in situ* scatters, the layers also contained early Neolithic and late Bronze Age pottery, indicating either that the flint is residual or that these deposits have suffered from significant disturbance.

A small number of features were cut into the fills of the hollow. A ditch (90030), a posthole (90048), and a tree-throw hole (90047; Fig. 9.29) were cut into lower of the hollow fills (90012) and were sealed by the upper fill (900011). A second ditch (90036) was cut into the upper fill (90011). The date of these

features is uncertain, but given the presence of late Bronze Age pottery, it is likely that they date from that period.

All of these features were sealed by a ploughsoil (90002) and the topsoil (90001).

*Neolithic and early Bronze Age Pottery from Amerden Lane West by Alistair Barclay and Tessa Machling*

The fragmentary pottery from layers 90002, 90003, 90011 and 90012 is a mixture of Neolithic and Bronze Age pottery (Table 9.20). Plain Bowl sherds were identified in layer 90003. The pottery from layer 90012 included an unabraded decorated collar of fabric F3/MN from a probable Fengate Ware vessel. A grog-tempered sherd probably from a Beaker or early Bronze Age urn was identified in layer 900011.

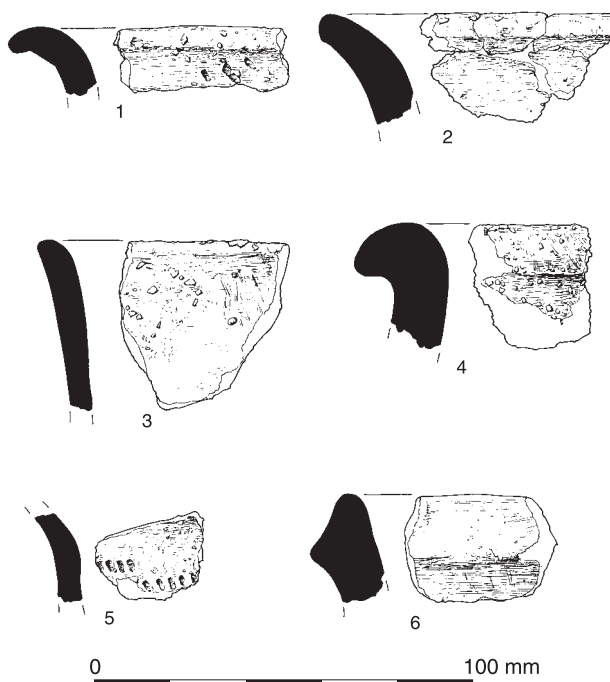


Fig. 9.31 Pottery, Amerden Lane West

*Catalogue of illustrated pottery (Fig. 9.31)*

- Context 90003. Early Neolithic, Plain Bowl. SF 20137. Everted rim (type 2) (21g). Fabric FA2/EN. Firing: greyish-brown to dark grey throughout. Condition worn.
- Context 90003. Early Neolithic, Plain Bowl. SF 20148. Semi-rolled rim (type 4) (14g). Fabric FA2/EN. Firing: reddish-brown throughout. Condition good.
- Context 90025. Early Neolithic, Plain Bowl. Pointed rim (type 3) (18g). Fabric FA2/EN. Firing: ext. reddish-brown; core grey; int. reddish-brown. Condition average but worn around the rim possibly from use. Smoothed surfaces.
- Context 90063. Early Neolithic, Plain Bowl. SF 20147. Heavy rolled rim (type 4) (19g). Fabric F2/EN. Firing: greyish-brown throughout. Condition good.
- Context 90003. Early-mid Neolithic, ?Ebbsfleet ware. SF 20044. Neck sherd (4g) decorated with rows of impressions ?whipped cord. Fabric FA2/EMN. Firing: ext. greyish-black; core black; int. greyish-black. Condition worn.
- Context 90011. Late Neolithic/early Bronze Age, ?Beaker/Urn. SF 20168. Rim sherd with moulded cordon (16g). Fabric GFA2/LNEBA. Firing: ext. reddish-brown; core greyish-brown; int. dark reddish-brown. Condition average-worn.



Table 9.21 The site assemblage by feature

Phase CATEGORY TYPE	LN/EBA (Hollow 90061)				Grand total
	Layer 90012	Layer 90011	Layer 90003	TTH 90008	
Flake	67	17	108	11	203
Blade	2	1	2	3	8
Bladelet	1		1	1	3
Blade-like	12	4	9	2	27
Irregular waste	1	5	3		9
Chip			4	1	5
Rejuvenation flake core face/edge		1			1
Rejuvenation flake tablet				2	2
Rejuvenation flake other		1			1
Tested nodule/bashed lump	1	2			3
Single platform flake core	1	1	1		3
Multiplatform flake core	1		1		2
Unclassifiable/fragmentary core		2	3	1	6
Microlith (mis-shaped rod)				1	1
End scraper	2		5		7
Side scraper	1				1
End and side scraper			2		2
Serrated flake	1		2		3
Notch	1	1			2
Backed knife			1		1
Retouched flake		2	2		4
Grand total	91	37	144	22	294
Burnt unworked flint (g)	174	-	36	15	225
No. burnt (%) (exc. chips)	1 (1.1)	-	5 (3.6)	4 (19.1)	10 (3.5)
No. broken (%) (exc. chips)	34 (37.4)	4 (10.8)	40 (28.6)	6 (28.6)	84 (29.1)
No. retouched (%) (exc. chips)	5 (5.5)	3 (8.1)	12 (8.6)	1 (4.8)	21 (7.3)
Flake to core ratio	27.3	4.4	24	17	-

### **Struck flint from Amerden Lane West** by Theresa Durden and Hugo Anderson-Whymark

#### *Introduction*

A total of 416 flints and 38 pieces (489g) of burnt unworked flint were recovered from Amerden Lane West (Table 9.21). The majority of the flintwork from the site was recovered as discrete, apparently *in situ* scatters in layers 90012, 90011 and 90003 within hollow 90061. Flint was also recovered from cut features, several of which cut layer 90003 and therefore probably contained residual material derived from this layer, in addition to a small quantity of late Bronze Age flintwork which is discussed in Volume 2.

#### *Raw material*

The flint appears to be mostly gravel flint which is available locally. It varies in colour and translucency, and ranges from pale beige and grey to dark brown and grey/black. The cortex is generally thin and worn and pale brown or grey in colour. A small amount of chalk flint was present, recognisable by its dark grey colour and thicker, chalky white cortex. Two flakes of Bullhead Bed flint were recovered

from layer 90003. All the lithic material was in fresh condition, and light speckled white cortication was present on some pieces. Occasional creamy brown cortication was also noted, but there appeared to be no relationship between its occurrence and the context.

#### *The assemblage*

Broad flakes formed the bulk of this assemblage, with blade-like flakes and blades occurring in far smaller numbers. A mixture of hard and soft hammer percussion was used and plain or unprepared butts dominate. The assemblage in tree-throw hole 90047 was relatively small, but clearly contained blade-like material along with two core rejuvenation tablets. Rejuvenation flakes in the form of a large crested flake, and two core face rejuvenations were noted from hollow 90061. Hollow 90061 also contained a large nodule with some thick refitting flakes in fill 90011. The nodule had, when struck, partly fractured along thermal faults. Several flakes were haphazardly removed, before the nodule was abandoned.

Nine cores and three tested nodules were recovered from hollow 90061. The cores include three single platform and two multi-platform flake cores,

with two fragmentary forms. Complete cores ranged in weight from 51g to 332g. No blade cores were recovered, though a few of the cores and core fragments from hollow 90061 bore some blade-like flake scars. In the hollow relatively low core to flake ratios of 1:27 and 1:24 were recorded in layers 90012 and 90003 respectively. These ratios indicate that the flint was not worked with great efficiency and the high weights of the cores indicate that they were abandoned before they were exhausted.

The bulk of retouched material shown in Table 9.21 came from hollow 90061, including nine scrapers, three serrated flakes and two notches. In addition, a poorly-shaped possible rod microlith was recovered from tree-throw hole 90047.

*Discussion*

The lithic assemblage recovered from the site indicates prolonged human activity on and around this site. Two large blades recovered from layer 90003 are probably Mesolithic, possibly early Mesolithic, and although these pieces were residual, they indicate some early activity in the area. A small quantity of probable late Mesolithic flintwork was recovered from tree-throw hole 90047 as is indicated by the presence of blades, blade-like flakes, core tablets and a possible microlith as well as broader flakes; given its stratigraphic position, the flintwork in this feature must have been residual. Indeed, if the relatively high proportion of blades and blade-like flakes across the site generally (almost 15%) is considered, it is likely that additional residual Mesolithic flintwork is also present.

The flint recovered from the layers in hollow 90061 is consistent with a broad later Neolithic/

early Bronze Age date, comprising both broad and narrow flakes, rejuvenation flakes and a serrated flake. The flint recovered from these layers forms a distinct spread with discrete clusters which suggests that it was largely *in situ*. Indeed, in context 90011 a large nodule with refitting flakes was found in a discrete group (SF 90208). The high proportion of retouched artefacts recovered suggests that these scatters represent areas of *in situ* activity, or deposits of utilised material. One small cluster of five flints in 90003 consisted of a flake, two blade-like flakes and two scrapers, as if left where they were used. The scatter closely resembles those examined on the floodplain on the Eton Rowing Course in Areas Ex1-3.

However, the presence of late Bronze Age pottery in layers 90012, 90011 and 90003 suggests that much of the flint was residual, or had at least suffered from disturbance. Such disturbance was clearest in the upper layer, 90003, which was directly overlain by modern subsoil, but may have affected the lower fills during earlier phases of activity (probably in the late Bronze Age). Examination of the remaining flintwork for refits was unsuccessful; the discrete scatters are therefore not knapping scatters.

*Catalogue of illustrated flint (Fig. 9.32)*

- 1 Tree-throw hole 90008, fill 90010. Misshapen microlith.
- 2 Tree-throw hole 90008, fill 90009. Rejuvenation tablet.
- 3 Natural hollow 90003, layer 90055. Side scraper.
- 4 Natural hollow 90003, layer 90074. Serrated flake.
- 5 Tree-throw hole 90063, SF 90099. Backed knife exhibiting an intentional break.

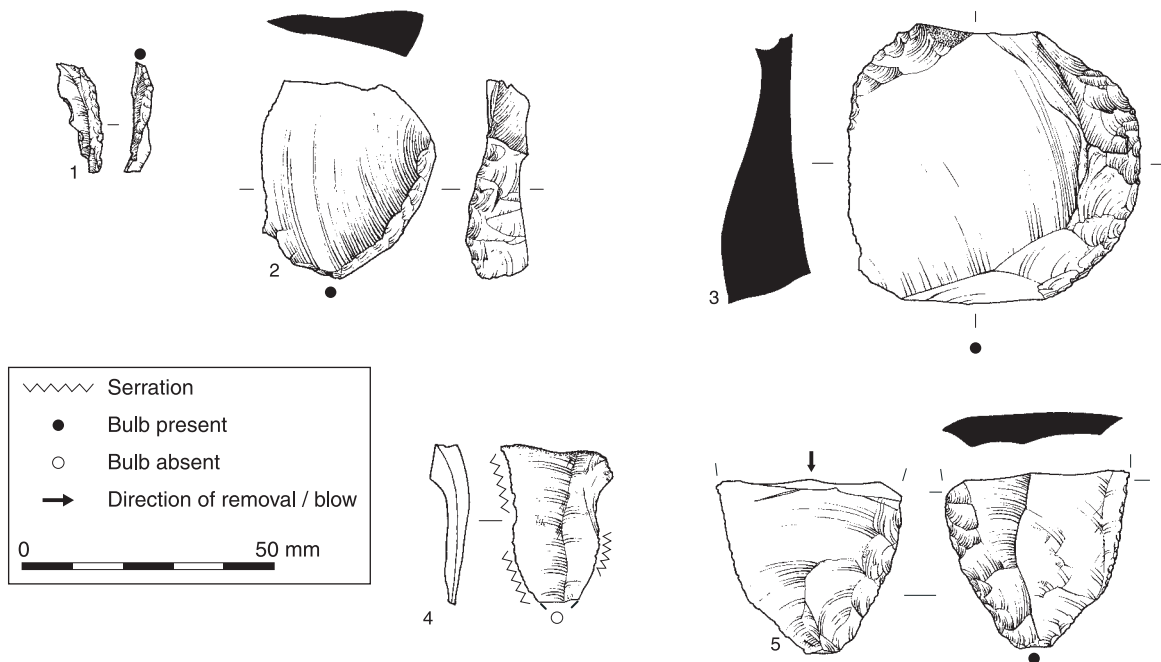


Fig. 9.32 Worked flint, Amerden Lane West

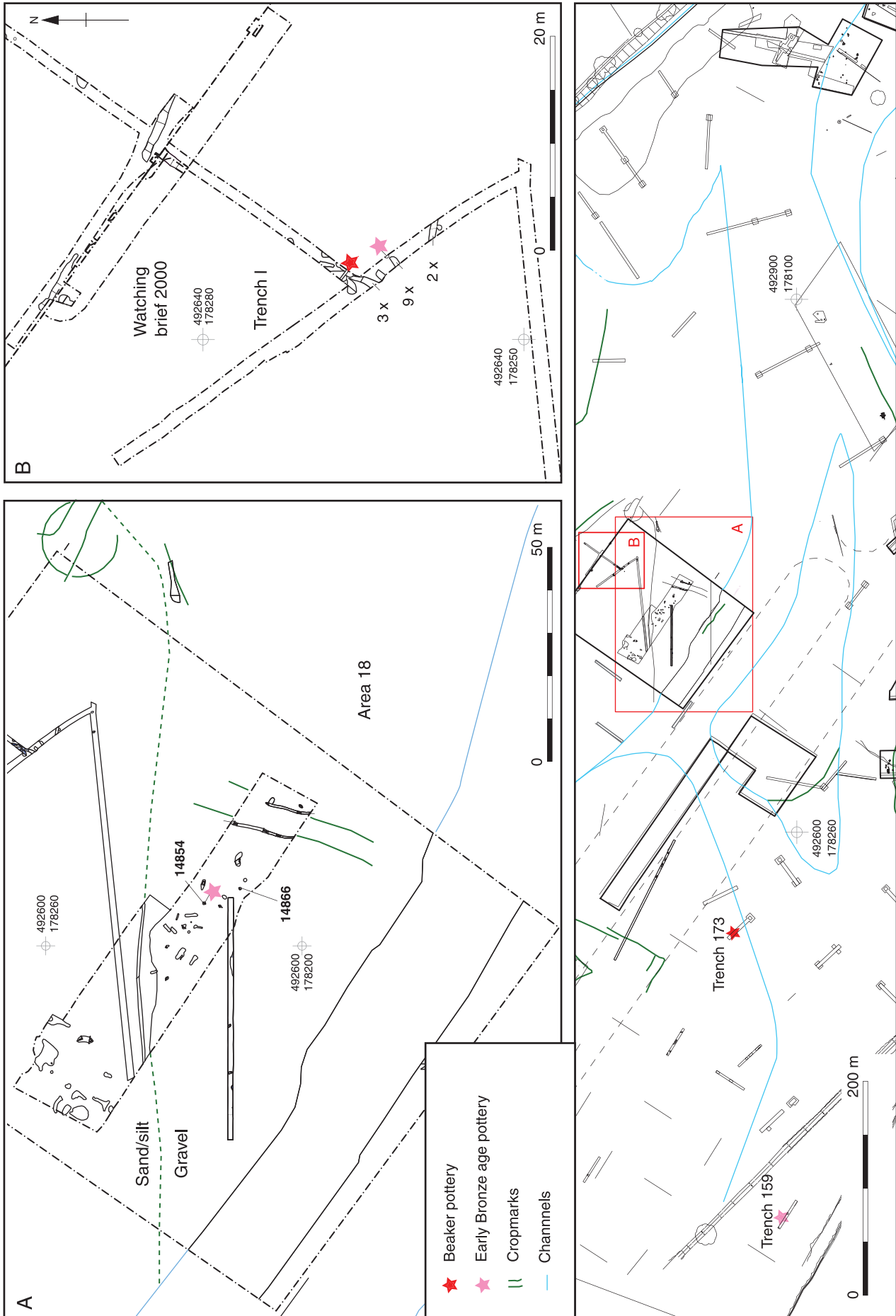


Fig. 9.33 Plan of Site F East with late Neolithic/early bronze Age pottery and insets of Area 18 and Trenches H-J

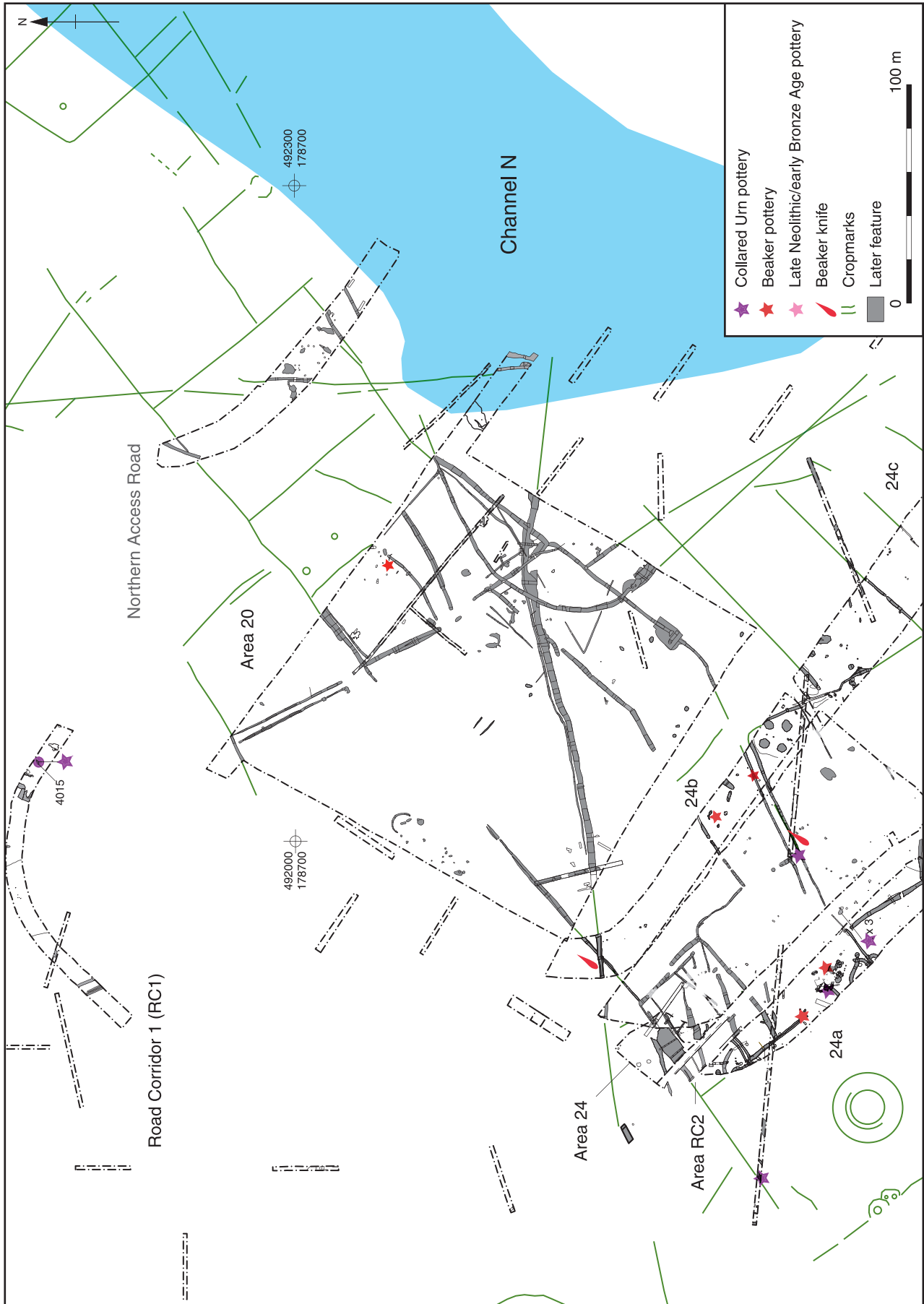


Fig. 9.34 Plan of Areas 20, 24, RC1 and 2 and NAR



**Area 18 and Site F East: late Neolithic/early Bronze Age pits** by Tim Allen and Anne Marie Cromarty

*Pits*

Two of the ten discrete features which were sampled in Area 18 were interpreted as pits. These features (14854 and 14866) were located 9m apart towards the north-western end of the excavation area (Fig. 9.33). The former was roughly oval in plan, measuring 0.64m by 0.54m and was 0.28m deep with a bowl-shaped profile. It contained a single deposit of friable, dark black-brown clay silt with gravel and some charcoal. This deposit yielded 8 struck flints, the technology of which suggests a late Neolithic or Bronze Age date, a fragment of worked bone, and three pieces of burnt flint. The second pit (14866) was slightly larger, measuring 0.67m by 0.6m across but shallower at only 0.09m deep and had a saucer-shaped profile. The fill of this feature was similar to that of 14854 though slightly paler, with a higher percentage of gravel inclusions and less charcoal and burnt flint. Two struck flints were recovered from this feature, one a very rolled blade.

**Late Neolithic/early Bronze Age pottery from Area 18, Site F East, Areas 20, 24, 24a, NAR RC1-2, 18, the watching brief in Area 14 and from evaluation west of the former Thames channel** by Alistair Barclay

Six sherds including two bases recovered from a middle Bronze Age ditch in Area 20 and from Area 18 Trench I/8 are probably Beaker in date (Figs 9.33-34). The base from Area 20 is in a grog tempered fabric (GAF1/LNEBA), whilst the base from Trench I/8 was grog and flint tempered (GF2), and was also residual. Two sherds from a natural hollow and a middle Bronze Age ditch in Area 24a and one from another middle Bronze Age ditch in Area 24b were also in a grog-tempered fabric (G2/LNEBA), while a single grog-tempered plain sherd was also recovered from further east in Evaluation Trench 173/2.

Some 18 small sherds or crumbs in a grog-tempered fabric were recovered from a burnt area



Fig. 9.35 Early Bronze Age pottery from Trench 159

or hearth in Trench 159 on the floodplain. Most of the sherds belonged to a single vessel, and consisted of part of the rim and shoulder of an early Bronze Age Collared Urn. The bevelled rim and exterior were decorated with impressed twisted cord decoration. Another grog and flint tempered sherd (GF2) whose wall thickness suggests it may come from a Collared Urn came from Trench I/10/1, Site F East.

*Catalogue of illustrated early Bronze Age pottery* (Fig. 9.35)

- 6 Trench 159 layers 3 and 4. Early Bronze Age Collared Urn. Decorated rim and collar sherds with band of diagonal twisted cord lines and horizontal lines below. Plain body sherd (not illustrated). Fabric GA2. Colour red on exterior, with black core. Condition fair.

*Discussion*

The Beaker base from Area 20 is remote from any known focus of Beaker activity, but the sherds from Area 24a are close to the triple cropmark ring ditch and in an area containing both late Neolithic and Beaker period pits. The presence of both Beaker and early Bronze Age sherds on Site F East may relate to a possible barrow seen from cropmarks in this area.

The early Bronze Age vessel from Trench 159 was found on the floodplain, as were parts of two Collared Urn vessels in Area Ex2 on the opposite side of the palaeochannel. Unlike these others, however, the vessel from Trench 159 was from a burnt area or hearth, suggesting a possibly domestic context.

**Marsh Lane East Site 1: a late Neolithic/early Bronze Age tree-throw hole** by A Barclay, A Cromarty and D Petts

A single tree-throw hole at Marsh Lane East Site 1 has been tentatively dated to the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age on the basis of the associated flint (Figs. 9.36-37). This tree-throw hole, 80010, was a large (2.58m wide and 0.75m deep) circular, pit-like feature with a flat base and steep, unbroken sides. The fills ranged from light yellow grey silty clay to mid brown orange clay loam, and contained some worked flint. A central gravel-rich deposit within a layer of loam (80029) contained worked flint (see

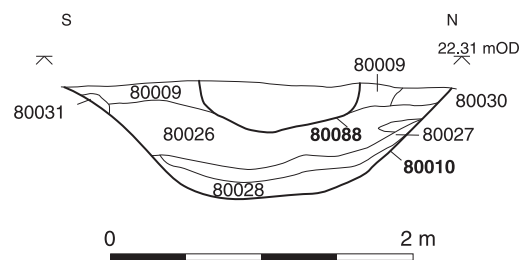


Fig. 9.37 Section of tree-throw hole 80010, Marsh Lane East Site 1

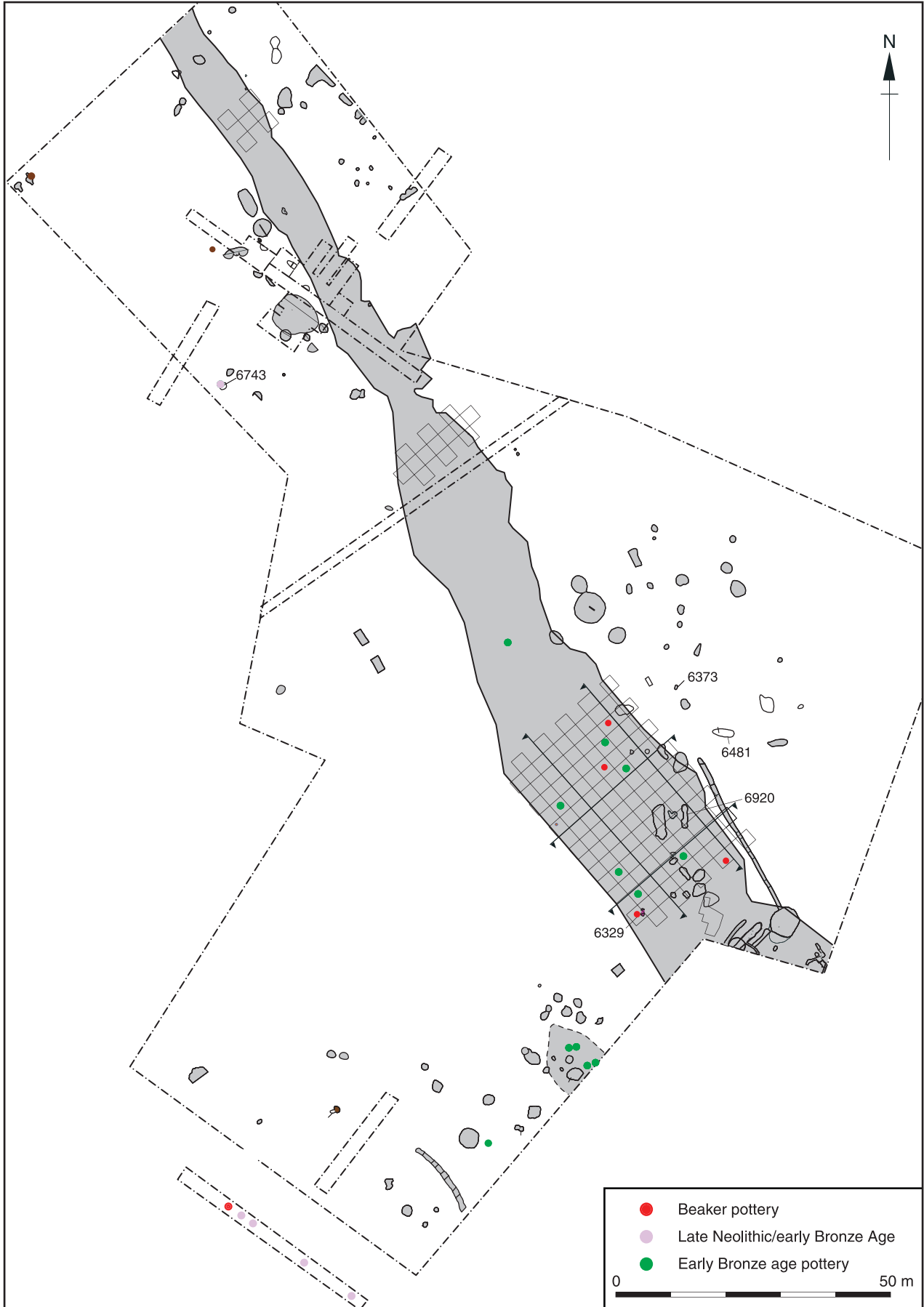


Fig. 9.36 Marsh Lane East Site 1, location of late Neolithic/early Bronze Age tree-throw hole

Table 9.22 A summary quantification by context of all late Neolithic/early Bronze Age pottery from Area 10

Context	Feature	Small find no.	Fabric	NoSh	WT	Comment
6236	MBA Pit		G2	1	5g	
6246	Hollow	31077	GAF2	1	3g	
6249	Hollow	31842	GA2	1	3g	
6331	Layer	40751	GAF2	1	4g	
6331	Layer	40652	GAF3	1	14g	Base sherd
6366	MBA Waterhole 6367		GA2	1	8g	
6414	MIA Working hollow		GA2	1	3g	
6422	MIA Ditch 6405		FG?2	1	3g	
6425	LIAER Pit 6424		G2	1	11g	Neck sherd imp. Dec
6437	MIA Working hollow 6405		GA2	1	1g	
6440	MIA Working hollow 6405		G2	1	1g	
6444	LIAER Pit 6443		AFG2	1	10g	P113. Base sherd with imp. comb dec.
6566	Hollow	32518	GA2	1	4g	Twisted cord dec
6611	Hollow	42434	AGF2	1	3g	
6613	Hollow	31567	GA2	1	4g	
6642, spit 1	Hollow	32092	AG2	1	6g	
6648, spit 1	Hollow	32169	A1	1	2g	Comb dec
6651, spit 1	Hollow	32021	G2	1	3g	
6656, spit 2	Hollow	42035	GA2	1	5g	
6659, spit 2	Hollow	42443	GA2	1	10g	Base sherd
6741	LNEBA Pit 6743		GA2	1	1g	
Tr. 88/2	Layer in evaluation trench	7778		1		Beaker
Tr. 88/2	Layer in evaluation trench			4		LNEBA
Total				26	104g	

Fig. 9.38 (facing page) Late Neolithic/early Bronze Age activity in Area 10



Chapter 6) and animal bone consisting of 2 cattle bones, 2 sheep/goat bones as well as 3 sheep-sized bones and 1 unidentified fragment (identifications by N Sykes). Gravel lenses were recorded at the edges of the pit. The central fill was bulk sampled and analysed for charred plant remains but produced a negative result.

**Area 10: A late Neolithic/early Bronze Age pit and tree-throw holes** by Tim Allen, Anne Marie Cromarty and Ken Welsh

A total of 26 sherds of late Neolithic/early Bronze Age date were found in Area 10, but most were residual in later contexts (Fig. 9.38). Pit 6743 contained a single Beaker sherd and pits 6329 and 6373 (Table 5.35) and tree-throw holes 6481 and 6920 (Table 5.36) may be tentatively attributable to this period on the basis of struck flint and the lack of later dating evidence.

**Late Neolithic-early Bronze Age pottery from Area 10** by Alistair Barclay

In total 26 sherds (104g) from Area 10 were recorded as being of late Neolithic/early Bronze Age date, of which 8 were confidently identified as Beaker. Diagnostic sherds included a rim, a neck, two decorated body sherds and three base fragments (Table 9.22). Fabrics were mostly grog-tempered (G2/LNEBA; GA2/LNEBA; GAF2/LNEBA; GAF3/LNEBA), although a few were principally sand-tempered (A1/LNEBA; AG2/LNEBA; AGF2/

LNEBA) and one was flint tempered (FG2/LNEBA).

Just over half the sherds came from layers within the hollow, while only one small sherd (weighing 1g) came from a pit of possibly contemporaneous date. Twelve sherds were recovered as residual material from layers or later features of middle Bronze Age, Iron Age and early Roman date, showing that late Neolithic/early Bronze Age activity extended across much of the site. The decorated base, P113, was recovered from a late Iron Age/early Roman pit.

Beaker pottery is found in small quantities on many of the Rowing Course sites. As with the Peterborough Ware this is likely to indicate small-scale activity, perhaps on an episodic basis, in and around the Area 10 hollow.

*Catalogue of illustrated Beaker pottery* (Fig. 9.39)

- 113 6444. Beaker base with short lengths of comb impressed decoration (10g). Fabric AFG2/LNEBA. Firing: ext. yellowish-brown; core grey; int. yellowish-brown. Condition worn.



Fig. 9.39 Beaker pottery from Area 10