

Chapter 5: Castle Hill Environs Archaeological Sequence

INTRODUCTION

During the summer of 2003 Time Team opened three small trenches on the top of Round Hill, but did not find any trace of archaeological activity (Wessex Archaeology 2004). They subsequently carried out a magnetometer survey of 8 hectares of the plateau below Round Hill and Castle Hill, and then dug a further seven trenches, one to relocate Rhodes' excavation in the 1940s (Rhodes 1948) and the others to investigate features revealed by the geophysical survey (Wessex Archaeology 2004, Figure 1). Their trenches included three attempting to establish the plan and character of the Roman building indicated by Rhodes' rubble layer, two to section the east and west sides of the enclosure surrounding the Roman building, one to investigate a group of pits to the north, and a final trench to investigate a small square enclosure between Rhodes' excavation and the hillfort.

A summary account of their discoveries, including a preliminary assessment of the finds, has been produced (Wessex Archaeology 2004). No further funding to carry out the post-excavation analysis recommended by this report has been forthcoming from Time Team, so it has not been possible to complete the examination of their findings and incorporate them into this report. The geophysical survey carried out by GSB for Time Team, and the trenches excavated by Time Team in 2003, did however have a significant influence on deciding where to excavate in 2004 (see below).

A total of five trenches (Trenches 13, 14, 15, 18 and 19) were excavated by Oxford Archaeology on the plateau south of the Clumps between Hill Farm and Castle Hill (Figs 5.1 and 5.3). These revealed evidence of occupation from the late Bronze Age, through the early and middle Iron Age and into the Roman period.

TIME TEAM GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY

GSB Prospection Ltd (2003)

Introduction

In 2003, GSB Prospection undertook an extensive magnetometer and resistivity survey on behalf Wessex Archaeology during the three-day Time Team excavation on the summit and lower slopes of Round Hill. The methods and results of the geophysical survey are summarised below from the GSB report (GSB 2003) and the archaeological evaluation report (Wessex Archaeology 2003).

Methodology

The geophysical survey was undertaken in two areas, Areas 1 and 2, which covered a combined total of 7.5 hectares (Fig. 5.2). Area 1, the larger of the two survey areas, lay to the south of Round Hill and extended from the lower western slopes of Castle Hill to the north of Hill Farm. Area 2 lay to the south of Castle Hill.

The two areas were investigated using two Bartington Grad 601-2 instruments, with readings logged at 0.25 m intervals along traverses 1 m apart. Area 1b, a small area measuring *c.* 60 m by 20 m, was surveyed using a Geoscan RM15 with a 0.5 m twin-probe configuration. This survey area targeted the site of a suspected building within a rectangular enclosure, which also coincided with the distribution of Roman building debris recorded by Rhodes (1948).

The results were displayed as X-Y traces, dot density plots and grey-scale images at a scale of 1:500. Interpretation plots were produced at the same scale. The areas covered by the GSB survey, together with the location of Time Team's Trenches, are shown in Figure 5.2.

Results

Area 1

A series of rectilinear anomalies, perhaps part of an enclosure, were revealed by the magnetic survey in the western part of the survey area. These were accompanied by numerous smaller, sub-circular anomalies, some of which lay in clusters of two or more. A comparison with similar, better-defined examples in the eastern part of Area suggest that these features are likely to represent pits.

Numerous larger pits, mostly in isolated positions, were encountered elsewhere in the survey area. These larger features are likely to indicate the distribution of storage and rubbish pits, while others may be associated with burning that occurred in hearths, ovens or during small-scale industrial/workshop activity.

The traces of a rectilinear enclosure with an entrance on the eastern side were clearly visible in the centre of Area 1. A high resistance anomaly, coinciding with the position of the Romano-British building investigated by Rhodes, was also encountered during the resistance survey of Area 1b.

Within and immediately outside the enclosure were a series of smaller, mostly circular anomalies, including three pits in the northwestern corner of the enclosure. The southernmost of this pit group was sampled by the later excavation of Trench 6 (Wessex Archaeology 2003). A possible semi-circular anomaly or interconnecting group of pits was detected immediately north of the enclosure

Two small, sub-rectangular anomalies were encountered in the south-east corner of Area 1. These features, measuring less than 20 m across, both contained internal features. A noticeably strong magnetic anomaly was located between the two enclosures and may represent intercutting pits.

In the north-east of the survey area, two strong parallel anomalies followed the trajectory of a modern track. Immediately to the west of these, three curvilinear features were detected that were thought to relate to the defensive ditches of Castle Hill.

A large area of magnetic response was detected on the higher slopes of Round Hill which, while they may represent ploughed-out defences, were considered to result from the thinner, plough-damaged soils on the upper slopes.

The entire survey area was overlain by a series of parallel anomalies that were attributed to ridge and furrow agriculture

Area 2

Area 2 lay below the ramparts of Castle Hill. The survey detected a dense concentration of probable pits across most of the area, whose distribution observed a clear eastern boundary. Two curvilinear features were also detected. One in the west of uncertain interpretation. The other, in the central part of the area, measured approximately 12 m across with a break on the south-eastern part of the circuit that may be an entrance, and was interpreted as a round house or ploughed-out barrow.

Beyond the main concentration of pits lay two magnetic linear anomalies that were thought to represent outworks to the main defences of the hillfort with a hollow way leading to the entrance.

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY

by A. D. H. Bartlett

Methodology

The greater part of the 2004 magnetometer surveying work was carried out by volunteer fieldworkers using a pair of Geoscan FM256 magnetometers. The survey followed standard procedures, with the magnetometers mounted on a carrying frame, and readings collected (at 0.25 m intervals) along a pair of lines 1 m apart for each transect walked by the operator. Transects were usually 30 m in length, but were shortened in some parts of the survey to 26 m. This allowed the operator to take shorter paces, and so made it easier to match the pacing to the timed sound signal produced by the magnetometer trigger device, particularly on soft ground.

The survey was located by reference to a temporary site grid of 30 m squares set out by surveyors from Oxford Archaeology. Subsequent data processing, as is usually the case with magnetometer data, included treatment to adjust for irregularities in line spacing caused by variations in the instrument zero setting (by fitting a zero mean baseline to each line), and slight linear smoothing. Additional 2D low pass filtering was applied to the grey scale plots to reduce background noise levels. This was done using either the Geoplot package, or in-house software at Bartlett-Clark Consultancy.

Figure 5.1 incorporates additional grey scale plots (in which dark shading represents high readings), as supplied to Oxford Archaeology, showing the results of the 2002 English Heritage survey on Castle Hill (done with Geoscan equipment), and the survey on the southern slope of Round Hill carried out by Geophysical Surveys of Bradford on behalf of the Time Team television programme in 2003; this survey used Bartington magnetometers.

Surveys at Hill Farm

Magnetometer Survey

The first area to be surveyed in 2004 was the field south east of the buildings at Hill Farm (Fig. 5.1). The survey includes an area adjacent to the farm where the 1995 magnetometer survey suggested the presence of linear features and enclosures, in

addition to those indicated by the cropmarks. The survey was extended further to the south in this field in 2005.

The 2004 survey results indicate a complex superimposition of features, some of which are consistent with a continuation into this field of the Roman and Iron Age occupation activity seen in the Time Team survey across the road on the southern slope of Round Hill.

Some of the more conspicuous findings visible in the survey plots include a parallel linear feature probably representing a ditched trackway (labelled A on Fig. 5.1). A curving linear ditch or boundary (B) appears to extend across much of the site.

There appears to be a scatter of small magnetic anomalies probably representing settlement features across much of the field, although these may be more concentrated around Hill Farm, and in the centre of the field, than to the south and east. Various rectilinear enclosures have been detected, in whole or in part (e.g. at C, D, E). These do not appear to have been identified as crop marks. Circular ditched enclosures can be conjectured at a number of locations, but are particularly distinct at F and G, where they were tested by trenching. Trenches 15 and 19 confirmed the presence of the circular ditches and other findings at each location (see Figs 5.6 and 5.10), although a discrepancy in the position of feature G remains unresolved. This part of the site would benefit from further more intensive magnetometer survey, perhaps using Bartington magnetometers with transects at 0.25 m intervals. This would confirm the location of the magnetic anomalies, and would also provide an opportunity to investigate whether a sufficiently detailed magnetometer survey is capable of resolving some of the smaller features seen in the excavation.

The southern extension of the survey coverage in 2005 showed a continuation of the pattern of enclosures and linear markings which is visible in the earlier results across much of the field. There is a small and approximately square enclosure at AA, with a dense and potentially significant cluster of magnetic anomalies to its north and east. Archaeological features may extend further to the south, but appear to diminish towards the south east of the field.

The survey of the adjacent field to the west was less productive. The only cropmark here represents part of a rectilinear enclosure. This was detected at H, some 15 m to the west of the recorded cropmark position. Various linear markings are visible in the field, some of which may be caused by cultivation.

A scatter of magnetic anomalies in the north east corner of the survey (J) could indicate a continuation of the archaeological activity seen in the adjacent fields to the south of Hill Farm. Monitoring of a service trench here has confirmed the presence of pits and ditches.

Detailed interpretation in an area of generally disturbed magnetic response is difficult, but the magnetometer plot appears to show two ditch-like north-south linear features. Stripping in West Field immediately north of the western of these linear features in 2004 revealed a Roman boundary ditch some 2m wide, though this had not been picked up by the geophysical survey. There is also a possible circular outline some 14m in diameter just west of (J).

The survey of West Field produced few findings. A strong linear disturbance (K) in the centre of the field could well be recent (possibly a land drain), and it is difficult to identify any other magnetic anomalies of clear archaeological significance, other than a faint linear marking (I). Further stripping towards the east of this field (near to the buildings at Hill Farm) has confirmed the presence of a number of archaeological features in this area, although the magnetometer survey here is much less responsive than elsewhere around the farm. This variation appears to be due to

the much greater depth of soil covering the archaeological features, which reached 0.9 m just west of Hill Farm, and was still 0.6 m deep as far west as linear (J).

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The results of the geophysical survey formed the basis for the location of later excavations, particularly Trenches 15 and 19, which were situated to investigate circular ditched enclosures that showed up as magnetic anomalies. Trench 14 ran south from the trench excavated by Time Team to reopen Rhodes' 1947 excavation through a Roman rubble spread into a thick early Iron Age deposit that incorporated the corner of a chalk and pebble platform (Rhodes 1948; Wessex Archaeology 2003). Trench 14 exposed a late Bronze Age buried soil containing a spread of contemporary finds. This layer was overlain by an early Iron Age occupation build-up or midden. Partway through this build-up Rhodes' chalk platform was laid, and at much the same horizon the surface of the midden was cut by numerous postholes. This horizon was then buried by further early Iron Age middening, the midden deposit extending some 50 m in diameter and surviving up to 0.75 m deep. Middening activity did not continue into the Middle Iron Age.

Trench 13, which was located north of Hill Farm, examined the relationship between a curving boundary ditch traced for 800 m through the settlement and an enclosure, both found by geophysical survey (GSB 2003). The boundary ditch was shown to date to the middle Iron Age, while the enclosure proved to be Roman.

The excavation of Trenches 15 and 19 to the southwest revealed a series of early and middle Iron Age ring gullies, along with numerous associated pits and postholes. These roundhouses and their enclosures, along with the substantial midden deposit in Trench 14, demonstrate the presence of an extensive Iron Age settlement around the contemporary hillfort. This extramural settlement extended as far as Trench 15, beyond the boundary ditch traced by geophysics around the southern edge of Round Hill and Castle Hill and exposed in Trench 13.

In Trench 15, a small number of late Iron Age/early Roman ditches were revealed. The enclosure ditch in Trench 13 was of three phases, the latest of which contained pottery manufactured in the late 1st or 2nd century AD. Trench 18 was excavated on the upper slopes of Round Hill both to test an indistinct linear found by geophysical survey, and to investigate further the apparent absence of finds on this hilltop. The trench did not reveal any archaeology, except for a shallow feature interpreted as a lynchet.

What follows is a description of the archaeology, organised by trench and by phase, with chronological summaries given at the beginning of each section.

PHASING METHODOLOGY

In situations where clear stratigraphic relationships were absent, deposits were dated according to artefact typology. Given its relative abundance and chronological sensitivity, pottery provided the most suitable dating tool in the majority of cases, although other artefacts were used where appropriate. Individual pottery sherds were spot dated as closely as possible and, in the case of the later prehistoric collection,

using the following broad chronological periods: late Bronze Age/earliest Iron Age, early Iron Age, early/middle Iron Age, middle Iron Age, late Iron Age or undiagnostic Iron Age. An overall date was then assigned to each feature according to the date of the latest significant sherd. This approach assumes that earlier material within a mixed deposit is probably residual, and gives precedence to the date provided by later artefacts where it can reasonably be demonstrated (from their large size, abundance and/or the stratigraphic integrity of the deposit, for example) that intrusive material is unlikely to be present. Thus, a middle Iron Age date would be assigned to an assemblage dominated by undiagnostic or early Iron Age sherds, but containing a significant number of large-sized middle Iron Age sherds (e.g. pit 19055 in Trench 19). The presence or absence of features clearly belonging to earlier periods was also taken into consideration when considering whether residual finds were likely to be present. Assemblage size was also a factor where sherds were small.

In most cases, it was possible to use a combination of stratigraphic relationships and ceramic association to arrive at a date for a feature. In other cases, it was necessary to rely on independent dating methods (e.g. radiocarbon determinations) or on phasing by spatial association. A circular arrangement of postholes, for example, might be grouped as a single structure and dated together on the ceramic evidence only available from one or more of the constituent features (e.g. posthole group 19190 in Trench 19).

STRATIGRAPHIC NARRATIVE

Trench 13

Trench 13 investigated the intersection of a rectangular enclosure ditch (1350) with a curving boundary ditch (1348), and established that the boundary ditch predated the enclosure (Fig. 5.4). Radiocarbon dates show that the boundary ditch was dug in the middle Iron Age; the later ditch appeared to be of Roman origin. The features had been cut into the natural greensand (1305), which was covered in a colluvial clayey silt of varying depth; modern topsoil (1300) and ploughsoil (1301) sealed the features.

Middle Iron Age

Boundary ditch 1348 (numbered 1321 and 1341 south and north of the later enclosure ditch) had a V-shaped profile with sides sloping at c. 45 ° (Fig. 5.4, Section 1301). It was at least 1.25 m wide and was c. 1 m deep. The primary fill consisted of a light yellow-grey sandy chalk, which was overlain by a compact mid yellow-brown silty clay. Two sherds (11 g) of early Iron Age pottery were recovered from the lower fill (1320), while a single sherd (2 g) of Iron Age pottery came from the upper fill (1307). A cattle mandible (SF 1327) from the primary fill 1320 produced a radiocarbon determination of between 400-340 cal BC (Poz-12516: 2275±30BP). In the cut through the boundary ditch north of the enclosure, five deposits were identified. The lowest of these (1339 and 1340) consisted of grey-brown chalky clays, probably resulting from side or bank collapse. Deposits 1337, 1338 and 1339 ranged from light yellow-brown to dark grey-brown silty clays; these fills represent a period of natural silting, following which the ditch was recut.

The recut 1349 (labelled 1317 and 1345 south and north of the enclosure ditch (Fig. 5.4, Section 1301) occurred before the original ditch had fully silted up. It was slightly shallower than the original cut, but diverged towards the south, broadening from 2.2 m to just over 3 m wide. The recut was filled by a series of light to mid yellow- or grey-brown silty clays; the primary fill on the north (1344) had a more chalky consistency and may have derived from erosion of the ditch sides. The ditch had almost fully silted when a group of at least six cattle mandibles, together with several quartzite pebbles, were deposited in layer 1302; two of these had cut marks on the anterior margin of the hinge, indicating that the mandibles had been disarticulated from the skull. Two Iron Age pottery sherds (10 g) were recovered from the ditch, one of which was closely associated with the mandibles. One of the cattle mandibles (SF 1302) was radiocarbon dated to between 330-200 cal BC (Poz-12515: 2235±30BP). One sherd (5 g) of Roman pottery, presumably intrusive from ditch 1350, came from deposit 1309.

The boundary ditch was cut, approximately at right-angles, by a northeast-southwest aligned ditch 1350 (Fig. 5.4, Section 1302) that formed one side of an enclosure visible on the geophysical survey. The original ditch cut (labelled 1325 and 1335 in the east and west interventions) was bowl-shaped in profile, was up to 0.8 m deep and survived up to 1.4 m wide. It had three sterile clay silt fills in varying shades of brown in the western intervention, but only one in the excavated cut further east.

The ditch was recut on two subsequent occasions. The first of these was ditch 1351, which was numbered 1319 and 1312 in the east and west respectively. The lowest fill (1324) contained a large assemblage of cereal chaff with a few cereal grains and a little oak charcoal (OA 2006a, Table 3.14). The recut measured 2.4 m wide and 0.8 m deep, with sloping sides and a flat base. It was filled by two or three deposits, which ranged from a soft yellow-grey clay silt in 1312 to a light to dark brown clay, sand or silt in 1319. A single sherd (7 g) of late Bronze Age or early Iron Age pottery was recovered from the lower fill.

The final recut (1352) had a flat bottom with sloping sides and measured 2.2 m wide. The ditch reached 0.8 m in depth and was filled with two or three clay silts in varying shades of brown. Several sherds of prehistoric pottery were recovered from the upper fill of the intervention (1306), along with five large sherds (227 g) of a Roman oxidised ware vessel dated to the late 1st or 2nd centuries AD. This fill also contained an assemblage of charred cereal chaff with some cereals, a few weed seeds and oak and a little other charcoal (OA 2006a, Table 3.14).

Trench 14

Trench 14 (Figs 5.3 and 5.5, Section 1419) was excavated to investigate the early Iron Age occupation deposit found by Rhodes in 1947 and further investigated by Time Team in 2003 (Rhodes 1948; Wessex Archaeology 2004). Trench 14 originally measured 10 m by 2 m, but was extended at the south-east corner to investigate a concentration of pebbles that it was thought might indicate another pebble and chalk structure similar to that found by Rhodes (Rhodes 1948, Figure 8). The trench overlapped at the north end with the southern edge of the trench excavated by Time Team in 2003 (Wessex Archaeology 2004), which (contra Wessex Archaeology) it was known had not reached natural. Trench 14 was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.2 m.

Once the topsoil and ploughsoil had been removed the trench was divided into a grid of 1 m squares and the underlying deposits were excavated in spits between 0.03 m and 0.05 m deep. All finds within the occupation deposits were individually numbered as small finds and their position was plotted on plan so that spatial distribution across the deposit could be examined in post-excavation. Levels were taken at the base of each spit to allow the vertical distribution of finds to be controlled. All finds were attributed to stratigraphic contexts regardless of spit. When the base of the occupation deposits was reached this strategy was abandoned in favour of bulk excavation by context for the lower deposits in the sequence, although significant finds were still given unique small find numbers and were plotted three-dimensionally.

The natural chalk was not reached in excavation, but the lowest layer in the sequence, deposit 1410, a tenacious, mid yellowish-green clay with small chalk inclusions measuring 0.25 m thick, was probably caused by surface weathering of the chalk. This layer was overlain by 1457 (= 1409), a 0.2 m thick layer of tenacious mottled mid-grey and yellow clay. Although Trench 14 was several metres from the sondages dug by Rhodes, it is likely that 1410 corresponds to Rhodes' chalky clay and 1457 (=1409) to his layer 4, a grey and yellow clay that overlaid it (Rhodes 1948, Fig. 8).

Late Bronze Age and earliest Iron Age

Six small, shallow features (1439, 1444, 1446, 1448, 1450 and 1452), tentatively interpreted as postholes, were cut into layer 1457 and sealed by layer 1456 (= 1438, 1431 and 1407) (Fig. 5.5, Section 1419). Posthole 1444 measured 0.2 m in diameter and 0.2 m deep, and contained a friable, dark brown silty clay (1445). A single sherd (13 g) of early Iron Age pottery was recovered from its fill, plus a fragment of human skull (see Chapter 7). It lay around 0.5 m from posthole 1452, which was of similar size and had a V-shaped profile. It contained a single deposit of a dark grey-brown silty clay (1453). Some 3 m to the southwest lay posthole 1448. This feature measured 0.23 m in diameter and was filled by a friable, dark yellow-brown silty clay (1449) to a depth of 0.28 m.

Postholes 1446 and 1450 were located at the southwestern end of the trench at a distance of nearly 2 m from each other. Both were of a similar depth and diameter, each ranging from 0.2 m to 0.28 m, and both contained a sheep or goat astragalus. While their presence in the postholes may be fortuitous, astragali are historically known to have been curated for a variety of purposes, including divining and gaming (e.g. Wells 1973), and may therefore represent deliberately placed deposits. Posthole 1446 was filled by a tenacious brown clay silt containing 20 % charcoal (1447), while posthole 1450 was filled by a friable mid yellow-brown silty sand (1451). Three sherds (13 g) of late Bronze Age pottery were recovered from the fill. Posthole 1439 measured 0.18 m in diameter and 0.14 deep. It was filled by a grey-yellow clayey deposit containing up to 20 % charcoal and four calcined indeterminate fragments of bone. It is possible that this was a token cremation deposit rather than a structural feature (Fig. 5.5).

These features were mostly sealed by layer 1456 (= 1438, 1431 and 1407), a tenacious, mid greyish-brown, silty clay containing a large number of bunter pebbles with numerous chalk and charcoal flecks (Fig. 5.5, Section 1419). It is possible that some of the features identified after the removal of layer 1456 had been cut through it,

as 1456 was similar in colour to the fills of several of these features. The deposit was 0.13 m thick at the northern of the trench, where there was a particularly dense concentration of pebbles (1407), but thinned towards the southern end, except in the southeastern corner of the trench where a second deposit of pebbles (1456) was identified. A single sherd (3 g) of late Bronze Age pottery was recovered from this deposit, and an iron swan's neck pin and piece of copper alloy wire came from another part of the same layer numbered 1431. The swan's neck pin is a very early Iron Age type associated with Hallstatt material, only a small number of which have been found in Britain (see Chapter 6, Metalwork report). An assemblage of 47 fragments of bone including cattle, sheep or goat and large and medium mammal bone were recovered from the layer.

Layer 1456 was overlain by layer 1455 (=1406, 1432 and 1435), a 0.12 m thick layer of tenacious, mid grey-brown silty clay containing occasional charcoal flecks (Fig. 5.5, Section 1419). A large pottery assemblage (89 sherds weighing 844 g) came from 1435 and 1406. Most of the pottery from this deposit consisted of plain body fragments, a significant proportion of which (42 sherds weighing 542 g) was dated to the late Bronze Age on grounds of fabric, but there were also two small rim sherds, one fingertip decorated sherd and one sherd decorated with incised lines that are diagnostically early Iron Age.

The animal bone assemblage consisted of 336 fragments, representing cattle, horse, pig, sheep, goat, and including a canid radius from a domestic dog and a wolf calcaneum. The wolf bone gave a radiocarbon date of 900-790 cal BC (Poz-12517: 2680±35BP).

Layer 1407 contained a significant number of quartzite pebbles, most likely derived from the Plateau gravels at the top of Round Hill, and so may have been a colluvial deposit. The overlying layer 1406 was a cleaner silt, but it is possible that both layers together may represent a worm-sorted colluvial soil. Together these layers appear likely to correspond to Rhodes' layer 3, a grey clay deposit.

Early Iron Age

The clay layers of the lower sequence (1455 and 1456) were overlain by a light white-brown layer of friable silt, up to 0.22 m thick in places (1454 = 1405 and 1413) (Fig. 5.5, Section 1419). The upper spits in this layer contained numerous artefacts including early Iron Age pottery, animal bone and burnt stone; some of the pottery clustered in distinct groups clearly deriving from a single vessel. The artefactual content of this deposit suggests the presence of a 'midden'. Most of the pottery occurred in 1413 (= 1405 and 1454), which contained 162 sherds (1928 g) of early Iron Age pottery and a further 429 sherds (3836 g) of undifferentiated early/middle Iron Age pottery. A reasonable quantity (18 pieces/ 144 g) of late Bronze Age/early Iron Age pottery was also recovered, along with two sherds (20 g) of diagnostically late Bronze Age pottery. Nine refitting sherds from a Chinnor-Wandlebury style bowl (P56) were recovered from different locations within layer 1413, and a fragment of a red-coated, globular bowl (P59) was found in the same context. A bone awl made from a length of cattle ulna, an object of worked red deer antler (Sf. 4754) and two bone points (Sf. 5199 and 5726) were also retrieved from the same layer. Two additional fragments of red deer antler had been sawn and chopped. The animal bone included a collection of foetal or neo-natal pig remains, along with a small number of dog bones and teeth.

Towards the south of the trench, layer 1454 was overlain by a darker clayey silt (1462 = 1428) (Fig. 5.5, Section 1419), and by clay lenses 1420, 1422 and 1424. Layer 1462 was uneven, between 0.03 m and 0.15 m deep, and often patchy. No pottery was recovered from the layer. Clay lens 1420 extended for 1.2 m along the east edge of the trench, and was 0.08 m deep; this deposit contained one diagnostically early Iron Age sherd (15 g), and 15 undiagnostic sherds (94 g). Clay lens (1424) lay some 0.6 m southwest of 1420 and contained a single sherd (9 g) of Iron Age pottery. The third clay lens (1422), a tenacious mid yellow-brown sandy clay 0.03 m deep, extended across an area 0.6 m in length and 0.25 m in width.

Layers 1454 and 1462 were cut by four pits (1460, 1465, 1469 and 1470), a fifth possible pit (1414), eight postholes and stakeholes (1416, 1419, 1424, 1436, 1433, 1460, 1463, 1473) and five shallow 'scoops' (1429, 1475, 1477, 1479, 1481).

All of the pits lay at the southern end of the trench, and mostly on the western side. Pit 1460 was 0.4 m in diameter and 0.46 m deep. It contained friable, mid grey-brown silty clay, which produced three sherds (7 g) of Iron Age pottery. Pit 1465 measured 0.6 m in diameter and was filled by a friable, dark black-brown clayey silt (1466) only 0.04 m deep overlain by a 0.08 m thick, mid brown clayey silt (1467). Pits 1469 and 1470 were only recognised in section at the end of the excavation, so their extents are unknown. Both contained similar friable mid to dark brown clay silt, and neither contained any pottery. An iron nail, clearly intrusive, was recovered from the fill (1468) of posthole 1469.

Sub-circular feature 1414 (possibly a pit) contained three fills. The lower and middle fills were discrete lumps of grey-brown silty clay, perhaps the remains of two clay balls, while the upper fill was a firm, dark brown silt clay. The clay balls may have been stored as raw clay for making pottery objects or for repairing daub walls (Smith 1977, 48-50; Lambrick and Allen 2004, 115). The feature also contained a one sherd (6 g) of late Bronze Age pottery, seven sherds (90 g) of early Iron Age pottery and 13 sherds of undiagnostic Iron Age pottery.

The postholes and stakeholes, with some variation, consisted of small circular or sub-circular features with U-shaped profiles and straight sides. Possible posthole 1416 measured 0.5 m in diameter and 0.25 m deep. It contained a tenacious, dark brown silty clay with no finds. Posthole 1419 was 0.36 m in diameter and 0.17 m deep, and contained a dark, grey-black silty clay with two large sherds (21 g) of late Bronze Age/early Iron Age pottery, three sherds (22 g) of early Iron Age pottery and five sherds (40 g) of undiagnostic Iron Age pottery.

Postholes 1436 and 1433 lay on the eastern side of the trench towards the northern end. Posthole 1436 was 0.47 m in diameter and 0.13 m deep. It contained a friable, mid yellow-brown sandy clay overlain by a loose, dark brown-black silty clay (1437) containing eight sherds (295 g) of early Iron Age pottery and nine sherds (193 g) of Iron Age pottery. A small, modern, machine-rolled object also came from 1437; this is considered to be intrusive. Posthole 1433 measured 0.18 m in diameter and 0.7 m deep. It contained a single fill of loose, dark yellow-brown sandy clay. Posthole 1463 was of similar dimensions, measuring 0.14 m in diameter but, at 0.18 m deep, was much shallower than posthole 1433. It was filled by a tenacious mid grey-brown silty clay. A possible stakehole (1473) was recognised in section below feature 1470 following excavation; this feature contained a friable mid brown silty clay but no datable finds were recovered.

The level from which these features were cut correlates with the stratigraphic position and level of Rhodes' chalk platform. Layer 1454 therefore corresponds stratigraphically to Rhodes' layer 2, and the clay patches, pebble and chalk platforms

and spreads and the pits and postholes to a phase of concentrated construction and activity.

The features were overlain by a uniform dark black-brown, charcoal rich, clay silt (1458 = 1412, 1401, 1404 and 1408), which was 0.12 m thick (Fig. 5.5, Section 1419). This deposit corresponds to Rhodes' layer 1. The deposit contained numerous sherds of early Iron Age pottery (including clusters of refitting sherds), animal bone, worked bone artefacts, spindle-whorls, quernstone fragments and a metal pin (see Chapter 6). A bone gouge (Sf. 1400), manufactured on the end of a sheep/goat metatarsal, was recovered from the layer, along with a broken bone needle (Sf. 2387). There was also a concentration of flintwork in this layer (see Chapter 6). Two fragments of human bone were also recovered from the upper spits, a skull fragment and the head of a femur. The animal bone assemblage included rabbit and foetal pig remains, along with dog bones and teeth. A total of six bird long bones and one indeterminate fragment were also recovered, none of which could be identified to species. Five fish bones were retrieved from the same layer, while some microfaunal remains, including vole, were also present (see Chapter 7). At the south-east end of the trench a concentration of burnt pebbles and other stones, less than 1 m across, was found towards the top of the deposit. The trench was extended at this corner to see if this represented another pebble platform, but no further stones were found.

The deposit also contained seven middle Iron Age sherds, and it is therefore possible that deposition lasted into the middle Iron Age, although the low level of middle Iron Age activity in previous investigations and in the immediate vicinity makes it more likely that these sherds were simply deposited later, and were mixed in by ploughing. A number of Roman sherds and other finds were also found in the upper part of the midden, probably incorporated from Roman activity above by later ploughing or surface mixing. The deposit falls broadly into the category of 'middens', although this term may disguise the complexity of its formation, depositional history and social significance.

The midden deposit 1458 was directly overlain by a ploughsoil layer 0.26 m thick (1459 = 1411 and 1400) (Fig. 5.5, Section 1419). The Roman rubble spread encountered by Rhodes between the topsoil and midden (1948) did not extend further south into Trench 14, although a number of Roman finds were recovered from the ploughsoil.

The auger survey

An auger survey was carried out during the excavation of Trench 14 out by a small group of the volunteers, supervised by one of the OA professional team, Wayne Perkins. The survey was undertaken in an attempt to establish the overall extent of the Iron Age deposits, and particularly the 'midden deposits'. The survey was based upon the grid point at the north end of the grid line running south down the centre of Trench 14, and extended north, west and east from this for 30 m, and south as far as the hedges and the road would allow, sampling the stratigraphic sequence at 3 m intervals (see Fig. 5.5). The survey was thus able to compare the deposit sequence recovered with that exposed within the trench.

The auger survey was not able to identify all of the layers identified in the section of the trench, but did establish that dark occupation deposits of similar depth to the midden deposits continued west, north and east for at least 30 m (the limits of the survey), and south for at least 5 m beyond the trench, though thinning in all directions.

Sections of the simplified stratigraphic profiles extrapolated from the auger profiles are held in the archive.

Trench 15

Trench 15, some 50 m south of Hill Farm, targeted a penannular enclosure and annexe identified during the geophysical survey (Figs 5.1 and Fig. 5.3). The excavation revealed elements of three early Iron Age circular gullies, cut by parallel ditches, and a number of storage pits predating and post-dating both the gullies and ditches. The early Iron Age archaeology was cut by a middle Iron Age enclosure accompanied by a series of pits, which was superseded by two late Iron Age/early Roman ditches (Fig. 5.6).

Late Bronze Age

There was tentative evidence for late Bronze Age activity in the form of two gullies (15038 and 15335), both located at the northern end of the trench (Fig. 5.6). Gully 15335 was oriented northwest-southeast, was 0.5 m wide and 0.14 m deep, and ended 3 m into the trench where it was cut by an early Iron Age pit (15003). The gully was filled by two friable grey-yellow or grey-brown clay silts, only one of which was present in the terminus cut (15040). The terminus contained a cattle mandibular premolar, while one sherd (9 g) of late Bronze Age pottery was recovered from intervention 15001.

Just to the east lay gully 15038 (Fig. 5.6), which was aligned east-west and was 0.35 m wide and 0.1 m deep, with a single loose grey-brown silt fill. It was cut at the western end by pit 15003 and at the eastern end by pit 15036. No datable finds were recovered from the gully, but its stratigraphic position - along with similarities in form and fill to gully 15335 - implies an early date, possibly late Bronze Age.

Although unstratified, a well-preserved bag-shaped sword chape dating to the late Bronze Age came from the topsoil on Trench 15 (context 15000). The chape is an imported type that is diagnostic of the late Bronze Age Carp's tongue sword complex (see Chapter 6, Metalwork report).

Early Iron Age

There are at least three phases of early Iron Age activity in Trench 15, represented by a pit, ring gully and ditch sequence, but due to the limited area covered by the trench, it is not possible to characterise these phases in any detail. The earliest features are a north-south aligned gully (15331) and a pit (15231), both of which are cut by circular gully 15330, pit 15213 cut by curving gully 15333, and possibly another north-south gully 15111 (Fig. 5.6).

Gully 15331 ran north for 3 m into the trench before terminating, and was between 0.33 m and 0.7 m wide and up to 0.34 m deep. One or two fills were present in each intervention, and varied from dark brown-black sandy clays to light yellow-grey clay silts. The gully contained eight sherds (67 g) of Iron Age pottery, including three early Iron Age sherds (13 g). Ninety fragments of animal bone were also recovered from the gully, including cattle, sheep or goat, pig, frog or toad; none had been butchered. Gully 15331 was truncated by gully 15330 and ditch 15341.

Another short length of gully on a south-north alignment (15111) was exposed 2 m to the west in the south-west corner of the trench. Like 15331 it was cut by ditch 15340/15341. It measured 0.5 m wide and 0.08 m deep, and was filled by a compact, grey-brown clay silt. In section, it had a U-shaped profile with gently sloping sides. There were no finds.

Pit 15231 (Figs 5.6 and 5.7, Section 15034), which lay some 10 m to the north-east of gully 15331, measured 1.51 m in diameter and 0.36 m deep. It had steep sides that graded onto a slightly concave base and contained three fills. These ranged from mid brown-yellow silty sands to dark brown silty clays. The middle (15251) and upper (15232) fills contained animal bones and Iron Age pottery, including 15 sherds (159 g) of early Iron Age pottery and three sherds (18 g) of middle Iron Age pottery, the latter possibly intrusive. This pit was also truncated by gully 15330 (15233).

Cut by gully 15333 was a shallow, oval pit (15213), which measured 0.5 m wide by at least 0.5 m long and was 0.1 m deep. It contained a single fill of dark grey silt, which produced ten sherds (71 g) of undiagnostic Iron Age pottery along with one late Bronze Age sherd (16 g) and one early Iron Age sherd (8 g).

The second phase consisted of a penannular gully 15330 and two phases of part of another curving enclosure to the south. Gully 15330 (Figs 5.6 and 5.7, Sections 15034 and 15039) consisted of two arcs of gully on the north and south side of what is interpreted as one nearly circular penannular enclosure. Both arcs were very similar in dimensions, and were cut across by later ditches 15078 and sinuous enclosure ditch 15341; the northern arc was also cut by pit 15036, and the southern by ditch 15342. The likely terminus of the southern arc was found in the east, with two small postholes (15030 and 15031) continuing its trajectory (Fig. 5.6). Although undated, these postholes are likely to belong with the penannular enclosure. Both arcs appear to lie upon or very close to a common circle some 13 m in diameter, although the southern arc diverges slightly at the west edge of the trench.

The gullies were *c.* 0.45 m wide and *c.* 0.25 m deep, and the enclosure was *c.* 13 m in diameter. There were one or two fills in each of the nine interventions (15024, 15053, 15174, 15189, 15220, 15233, 15319, 15326 and 15328), mostly silty clays ranging in colour through yellows, greys and browns. Some 28 sherds of Iron Age pottery weighing 202 g was found in the gullies. A fragment of cattle mandible with abrasion down one edge was recovered from the fill (15173) of intervention 15174. A further 43 fragments of animal bone were recovered from the feature, including cattle, sheep or goat, large and medium mammal bone. Some of the bone displays cut marks, while two fragments have been charred.

Two postholes (15052 and 15091) and several pits were present within the area defined by the gully arcs, but these may not have been contemporary. The postholes measured 0.39 m and 0.25 m in diameter and 0.19 m and 0.3 m deep; both contained similar single deposits of light brown silty clays.

About 1 m south of gully 15330, two arcs of curvilinear gully were identified (15332 and 15333) (Figs 5.6 and 5.7, Section 15039). These may belong to another roundhouse, perhaps contemporary with the structure represented by ring gully 15330. More than half of the length of these gullies was excavated.

The inner gully (15332) measured between 0.38 m and 0.7 m in width, with a depth of up to 0.67 m. It was filled with between one and three silt or silty clay deposits, ranging from yellow-browns to grey-browns. The gully contained 27 sherds of Iron Age pottery weighing 250 g, most of it undiagnostic but including one or two early Iron Age sherds, and 240 fragments of animal bone, more than any other gully

in Trench 15. Species represented included cattle, horse, sheep or goat and pig. Some foetal, or possibly neo-natal, pig was recovered from the fill (15183).

Gully 15332 was cut by the outer gully (15333) (Figs 5.6 and 5.7, Section 15039), which also cut pit 15213. Gully 15333 was between 0.09 m and 0.7 m wide and between 0.2 m and 0.4 m deep. It was filled by one or two silts, usually yellow-grey or grey- or yellow-brown. Some 26 sherds (38 g) of pottery were recovered, mostly undiagnostic but including one or two early Iron Age sherds, and twelve fragments of animal bone. Both gullies were cut by pit 15176, and the inner gully also by pit 15069. In the west, both gullies were obliterated by middle Iron Age ditch 15340/15341, and any relationship between 15333 and gullies 15331 or 15111 was destroyed. In the east, the gullies were cut through by early Iron Age ditch 15334, and reappeared briefly beyond it before being obliterated again by Roman ditch 15336 (Fig. 5.8, Section 15017).

A third phase of early Iron Age activity was represented by ditches on an east-south-east and north-north-east alignment. Ditch (15342) ran across the centre of the trench from northwest to southeast, and was examined in four interventions (15043, 15128, 15140 and 15324); it cut the terminus of early Iron Age penannular enclosure 15330, but was in turn cut by north-north-east ditch 15334 and enclosure ditch 15340/15341. Ditch 15342 varied from 0.35 m to 0.72 m wide and was between 0.12 m and 0.34 m deep with a generally flat base. Fills were one or two brown or grey silty sands or clays. The pottery assemblage consisted of 63 sherds (516 g) of mostly undiagnostic Iron Age pottery, although thirteen sherds (76 g) were from distinctively early Iron Age types. A single sherd (7 g) of late Bronze Age pottery was also present. A total of 107 animal bone fragments were recovered from the ditch. Species represented include cattle, horse, pig, sheep or goat and a large bird long bone fragment.

Ditch 15342 was cut across at right angles by early Iron Age ditch 15334 (Figs 5.6 and 5.8, Section 15017). This ditch had a somewhat irregular course, kinking as it ran for 20 m along the eastern side of the trench. Six slots were cut across it (15078, 15121, 15152, 15210, 15238 and 15320). The ditch varied between 0.9 m and 0.35 m wide, and was up to 0.81 m deep in places. It contained up to three fills, which were usually variations of grey- or yellow-brown silty clays and sands. Some 32 fragments of animal bone came from the ditch, with species including cattle and sheep or goat. At its southern end, this ditch cut pit 15125 and was itself cut by Roman ditch 15336, which ran alongside it. A large quantity of pottery (108 sherds/ 1242 g) was recovered from four of the five slots (15078, 15152, 15210 and 15238). While the majority was of undiagnostic Iron Age date, seven large sherds (107 g) of early Iron Age pottery came from 15152 and 15210, while a single sherd (11 g) of late Bronze Age/earliest Iron Age pottery was found in 15078. A concentration of middle Iron Age pottery in 15238 may derive from enclosure ditch 15340/15341 that cuts it.

Several of the pits in the area probably related to the use of these early Iron Age gullies or ditches, but many were without clear stratigraphic relationships. It seems that pits, as a feature type, were among the earliest features to appear on the site (e.g. pit 15231, which is cut by gully 15330) and their construction may have persisted into the Roman period (e.g. pit 15176, which contained an assemblage of Roman pottery). Pits that may reasonably be dated to the early Iron Age period on stratigraphic or artefactual evidence include: 15018, 15010, 15003, 15155, 15012, 15298, 15301, 15105, 15091, 15025, 15069, 15309, 15301, 15021 and 15305 (Table 5.1). These varied in diameter from *c.* 0.5 m to over 2 m, but tended to cluster in two distinct groups: pits measuring between 1 m and 2 m and those measuring around 0.5

m in diameter. The number and complexity of the fills tended to increase in line with size, so that the smaller pits tended to be filled by a single fill (e.g. pit 15213) while their larger counterparts contained as many as 15 distinct fills (e.g. pit 15021). The depth of a pit was often, but not always, proportionate to diameter; the effects of truncation may have had some influence here.

At the northern end of the trench, pit 15021 cut pit 15018 (=15060) (Figs 5.6 and 5.7, Section 15018). The earlier and smaller of the pair (15018) measured 0.6 m in diameter and had a depth of 0.36 m. It was filled by a single deposit of firm, mid brown silty clay (15019). The pit contained a deposit of burnt quartzite pebbles in the centre, which overlay a large refitting fragment of a T-rim jar (P62) and part of a black burnished rounded bowl with a long flared rim (P63). The bowl had tooled decoration, creating a lattice motif on the belly of the vessel. This deposit reflects the association between T-rim jar and burnished bowl also recorded in pit 3006 at Castle Hill, where the T-rim jars were dated to the latter half of the Early Iron Age. The feature also contained some plain body sherds and a refitting pedestal base.

Pit 15021 cut the western edge of pit 15018 (Figs 5.6 and 5.7, Section 15018). It measured 2.1 m in diameter and 0.6 m deep. The feature contained a series of fifteen deposits, most of which were small dumps of material that did not completely cover the area of the pit. Most of the deposits consisted of dark brown silty sands or clays, although the material was occasionally more yellowish in colour. Context 15022 produced a substantial assemblage of cereal grains and chaff, and also some hazelnuts, weed seeds and charcoal (see Chapter 7). Context 15079, the uppermost fill, contained a short tapering iron spike. The animal bone from this feature included cattle, horse, sheep, goat, pig and rabbit; an unidentifiable bird bone was also recovered. Some of the sheep bones belonged to an adult individual that had survived a broken hind limb. It seems that neighbouring pit 15018 had not fully silted before pit 15021 was filled, with the upper layer in the latter filling the depression in the top of the former.

Pit 15010 lay 3 m to the south-east of these pits, cutting early Iron Age ditch 15334 (Figs 5.6 and 5.8, Section 15012). This feature was circular in plan and measured 1.5 m in diameter. It had a flat base at a depth of 0.6 m and a sloping U-shaped profile. The pit was filled by a series of six deposits, mostly grey-brown silty clays. Layer 15088 contained a rich assemblage of cereal chaff and some cereal grains, weed seeds and charcoal (see Chapter 7). The uppermost layer (15011) was the thickest (up to 0.35 m), and contained two horse lower mandibles. Additional horse bones, four of which display butchery marks, were found elsewhere in the pit, along with cattle, horse, sheep, sheep or goat, pig and rodent bones. The pottery assemblage, a total of 103 sherds (1026 g), included two sherds (12 g) of late Bronze Age pottery and 51 sherds of early Iron Age pottery. The remainder was largely of undifferentiated Iron Age date.

Pit 15003 lay between the termini of gullies 15335 and 15038, cutting both features (Fig. 5.6). The pit was approximately circular in plan, measuring between 1.2 m and 1.3 m in diameter. It had steep sides and a flat base at a depth of 0.23 m. The lower fill, a mid grey-brown clay silt 0.15 m deep, contained the crouched skeleton of a young adult male (SK 15005; Fig. 5.9). Cut into the western edge of this fill and the surrounding natural was a smaller pit (15155). This second pit was 0.42 m by 0.37 m and contained the skeleton of a new-born baby (SK 15131; Fig. 5.9) within a 0.16 m thick deposit of mid brown silty clay. The skeletons were both buried in crouched positions lying on their left hand side, facing north. The top of both pits was filled with a layer of greyish-brown silty clay (15004). The animal bone assemblage

included 225 fragments of bone, including cattle, horse, sheep, sheep or goat, pig and frog or toad. The composition of the animal bone assemblage suggests that it was incorporated in the pit as general refuse, rather than deliberately placed as grave goods.

Pit 15012, less than 1 m to the southeast of pit 15003 (Figs 5.6 and 5.8, Section 15008), was 1.2 m in diameter and was 0.5 m deep. It contained three fills (15013, 15116 and 15117). The primary fill was a mid grey-brown silt containing rubble and cobbles (*c.* 15 %), which was overlain by a yellow-brown and a grey silt. These fills produced a large assemblage of Iron Age pottery, consisting of 92 sherds (564 g), nine (84 g) of which represent distinctively early Iron Age types. Two large sherds (125 g) of middle Iron Age pottery came from the upper fill, suggesting that the pit had not fully silted by this time. A small strip of copper alloy was recovered from context 15013, the upper fill. The animal bone assemblage from the pit included cattle, horse, sheep or goat and pig; several medium mammal long bones had been broken while fresh, probably to obtain the marrow. Both this pit and pits 15298, 15309, 15305 and 15105 were truncated by the large, middle Iron Age enclosure ditch (15340/15341).

Pit 15298 measured 1.42 m wide and contained three fills with a combined depth of 0.82 m. Fill 15297 contained an assemblage of charred cereal grains, which (unusually) included oats, chaff, weed seeds and charcoal (see Chapter 7). It cut pit 15309, which was smaller (0.54 m in diameter) and shallower (0.5 m deep). South of, and cut by, ditch 15340/15341 was pit 15305 (Fig. 5.6). This feature measured at least 1 m in diameter and contained a single fill of dark, yellow-brown clay silt to a depth of 0.4 m. The pit contained a possibly articulated duck wing (probably mallard), providing evidence for the hunting of wild birds in the early Iron Age.

At the southern end of the trench lay pits 15125 and 15069 (Fig. 5.6). Pit 15125 was partially truncated by ditch 15334 and measured 1.3 m wide and at least 0.7 m long before it disappeared below ditch 15334 (Fig. 5.8, Section 15017). The surviving part of the pit suggests that it was originally an oval-shaped feature. It contained two fills, a mid yellow-brown silty sand at the base and a dark brown sandy silt upper fill. Two sherds (2 g) of diagnostically early Iron Age pottery were recovered from the upper fill, along with two sherds (17 g) of undiagnostic Iron Age pottery. This fill also contained an assemblage of cereal grains, chaff and a little charcoal (see Chapter 7).

Pit 15069, which cut ring gully 15332, contained two grey/yellow-brown silty clay fills and an assemblage of Iron Age and diagnostically early Iron Age pottery. The pit was sub-circular in shape, measuring 1.3 m long and 0.9 m wide, with a depth of 0.46 m. A complete saddle quern was found sitting upon the primary fill. Along the western edge of the trench and extending beyond the excavated area was pit 15301, at least 1 m long and containing two fills with a depth of 0.45 m. The upper fill (15300) had a layer of charred cereals, weed seeds and charcoal at its base (see Chapter 7). The same layer also contained an almost-complete freshwater mussel shell and a very small, tapering strip of iron; the latter may well be intrusive on account of its small size. Pit 15105, situated around 1 m from pit 15301, contained a dense deposit (*c.* 0.2 m thick) of fuel ash slag, a whitish-grey charcoal material that may be generated by the burning of thatch.

Middle Iron Age

Occupation continued into the Middle Iron Age with the construction of a large curving ditch and several further pits. The curving ditch is believed to correspond to part of the west side of the double curved enclosure visible on the geophysical survey plot, which the trench was laid out to include. There was no direct evidence of middle Iron Age house structures, which might suggest that, by this time, the area was no longer a focus for habitation but used for other purposes instead. However, it is possible that the ephemeral remains of a middle Iron Age stake-walled dwelling did not survive ploughing and, as such, this apparent absence of habitation must be treated cautiously.

A substantial, sinuous ditch (15340) extended across the site on an approximately northwest-southeast trajectory (Figs 5.6 and 5.8, Section 15008). This ditch probably formed an enclosure ditch, and was recut on one occasion (15341). The initial cut was 0.88 m deep and up to 2.64 m wide. The recut was more substantial, measuring 1 m deep and up to 3.14 m wide; both ditches had a U-shaped profile. The majority of interventions contained multiple fills, five or six in most cases. These deposits generally consisted of yellow- or grey-brown silty sands in the original cut. A total of 87 sherds (582 g) of Iron Age pottery was recovered from four of the interventions (15014, 15133, 15229 and 15315). Small quantities of early Iron Age pottery were present (four sherds/ 42 g), but the collection dated overwhelmingly to the middle Iron Age (46 sherds/ 388 g). The animal bone assemblage from the original cut included a weasel femur, a goose humerus and a fish cranial fragment. The recut (15342) contained a higher frequency of dark brown silty clays and the occasional blackened layer, perhaps resulting from burning. The composition of the deposits in both the original ditch cut and the recut suggest periods of slow natural silting interleaved with small deposits of occupation material, mainly in the upper fills. Layer 15015 contained a small assemblage of charred cereals, weed seeds and charcoal, and a fragment of human bone came from layer 15272, a middle fill on the north side of the enclosure (see Chapter 7). A length of iron wire came from the upper fill (15144) of one of the interventions (15185) through the recut, while a mole radius and rat mandible were recovered from the upper fill (15015) of the other recut intervention (15016); both of these bones may both be intrusive. Two bird long bones were also recovered from ditch 15341, but neither could be identified to species.

On the northern edge of the trench, and outside the area enclosed by ditch 15340/15341, lay a sub-circular pit 15006, which was 1.2 m by 1.1 m across and 0.5 m deep (Fig. 5.6). It was filled by a complex series of deposits. The lowest deposit (15067) appeared to have been dumped in the centre of the pit, followed by a series of deposits tipped in from either side; the uppermost fill (15007) sealed all underlying deposits. Most of the deposits consisted of mid or dark brown silty sands and silty clays. Fill 15067 contained a rich assemblage of cereal chaff and some cereal grains, weed seeds and charcoal (see Chapter 7). Residual later Bronze Age and early Iron Age sherds were recovered from the lowest fill, but five large sherds (45 g) of diagnostic middle Iron Age pottery came from one of the middle fills (15023).

A sub-circular pit (15266) lay in the centre of the trench, within the enclosure ditch (Fig. 5.6). This feature measured 1.7 m in diameter and 0.4 m deep. It was filled with three deposits, all of which consisted of dark grey-brown silty clays. A single sherd (10 g) of undiagnostic Iron Age pottery was recovered from deposit 15269. Towards the southern edge of the trench but also within the enclosure ditch was pit 15254. This feature, which was slightly oval shaped, measured 1.8 m by 1.3 m and was 0.7 m deep. It was filled by six deposits, most of which were light to mid yellow-brown silty clays or sandy silts. One of these, layer 15270, contained a sparse

assemblage of charred cereals, weed seeds and charcoal (see Chapter 7). The uppermost fill (15252) was markedly different in colour, consisting of a dark grey-black silty clay. This deposit also contained most of the pottery from the pit, which implies that later occupation material either accumulated or was dumped in the slumped top of the largely infilled pit. Along with an assemblage of undiagnostic Iron Age pottery, the pit contained two sherds (75 g) of diagnostically middle Iron Age pottery.

Late Iron Age and early Roman

A late Iron Age/early Roman ditch (15337) ran west-north-west to east-south-east across the trench (Fig. 5.6). The ditch measured 1.12 m wide and 0.88 m deep. It was examined in two slots (15103 and 15137), both of which were filled by two deposits of mid grey-brown or yellow-grey silts. The ditch slots contained a large assemblage of Iron Age pottery, along with 15 sherds (145 g) of Roman pottery including six sherds from a butt beaker (see Chapter 7). An assemblage of 112 fragments of animal bone, including cattle, pig, sheep or goat and horse, was also recovered. Butchery marks were noted on a few of the bones, and other fragments had been broken while fresh.

The ditch was later recut in the Roman period twice. Three slots (15099, 15135 and 15154) were dug into the first recut (15339), which lay to the south of ditch 15337 and measured 1.1 m wide and 0.53 m deep. The recut contained brown or grey-brown silts; two deposits were noted in 15154, but only a single fill was present elsewhere. The pottery assemblage included some 50 sherds (458 g) of Iron Age pottery and a further 19 sherds (377 g) of Roman pottery. The animal bone assemblage recovered from the ditches included cattle, sheep, sheep or goat, pig, horse, dog, and large or medium mammal bone.

The first recut was then cut by ditch 15336, which ran alongside the eastern edge of the trench at right angles to ditch 15339 (Figs 5.6 and 5.8, Section 15017). The ditch was investigated in three places (15076, 15143 and 15322), and was broad and shallow, 1.38 m wide and 0.27 m deep. Two deposits were recorded in 15121, while 15143 and 15322 each contained a single fill; these generally consisted of brown or grey-brown silty sands. The ditch ended or cornered just north of the junction with ditch 15338.

The east-west ditch was then recut a second time (15338), along the northern edge of ditch 15339, and was extended through the terminus of Roman ditch 15336. The cut measured 0.83 m wide and 0.48 m deep. The excavated slots (15101 and 15171) each contained a single fill, a dark grey-brown clay silt in 15101 and a dark brown silty sand in 15171. No pottery was recovered. It seems that the ditches and their recuts formed one corner of a rectilinear enclosure and may have marked the same boundaries originally followed by the early Iron Age ditch 15342.

Cutting early Iron Age ring gully 15332 was pit (15176) (Fig. 5.6), which contained an assemblage of 15 sherds (111 g) of Roman pottery, along with four sherds (30 g) of early Iron Age pottery. The pit was oval-shaped, measuring 1.3 m long, 0.9 m wide and 0.35 m deep. It was filled by two deposits, a dark grey silt and a light grey-yellow silt; the pottery came solely from the upper fill (15175). A sheep or goat first phalanx and a medium-sized mammal rib fragment were recovered from the pit.

In addition to these discrete features, a residual scatter of Roman material was recovered from later features and redeposited layers. Two tile tessera were recovered from a shallow agricultural cut (15008) near pit 15010, while a scatter of Roman pottery was found in the topsoil (15000). These finds may be indicative of a nearby dwelling or settlement, perhaps a villa or farmstead that belonged to the wider system of field boundaries.

Undated

Pit 15236, an elongated feature measuring *c.* 2.5 m long and *c.* 1.5 m wide, was situated less than 1 m from the large enclosure ditch 15340/15341 (Fig. 5.6). Its longer axis was oriented approximately northeast-southwest. The pit was 0.47 m deep and contained a single fill (15237) of a firm, mid brown silty clay. The feature cut early Iron Age gully 15330, but its relationship with ditch 15334 lies outside the trench. No datable finds were recovered from the feature.

Trench 18

Trench 18 was excavated on the south-eastern edge of Round Hill, towards the top of the slope (Fig. 5.3). It was located not only to confirm the apparent absence of archaeological features on the hilltop, but also to investigate an area of erratic geophysical readings that suggested a possible change in the underlying geology.

The trench found weathered chalk bedrock (1804 and 1805) beneath 0.26 m of topsoil (1800) and colluvium (1801). The only archaeological feature was a broad, shallow hollow (1806) running across the trench, measuring 8.5 m wide and 0.3 m deep. The cut was filled with a friable, light greenish-grey deposit (1802) containing a thin lens of charcoal (1803). The feature probably represented a medieval agricultural headland or negative lynchet. A single iron nail was recovered from the colluvium sealing the fill. Otherwise, no datable finds were retrieved from the site.

While archaeologically barren, the negative evidence provided by this trench supports the Time Team evidence suggesting an absence of significant prehistoric settlement activity on the hilltop (Wessex Archaeology 2004, Trenches 1-3).

Trench 19

Trench 19, located some 300 m south-west of Castle Hill, was positioned to examine a circular ditch, thought possibly to represent a barrow, revealed by geophysical survey, and to test whether the curving Iron Age boundary examined in Trench 13 (see above) stopped short of the circle as the survey suggested (Fig. 5.1).

The area originally stripped only clipped the circular enclosure in the very south-east corner, and so was extended south-eastwards to reveal sufficient of the enclosure to determine its date and likely function.

The excavation revealed a sequence of early and middle Iron Age settlement activity (Fig. 5.10), with some residual late Bronze Age material. In the early Iron Age several small semi-circular gullies were dug, at least two of which had postholes in the interior. In one case three sizeable postholes suggested that there had formerly been a square four-post structure, the last posthole of which had been obliterated by a

later furrow. An arc of postholes possibly belonging to a building was revealed in the north of the site, and a larger arc between two of the semi-circular gullies on the south. Several of the scattered pits probably had early Iron Age origins; these tended to be slightly smaller than their later counterparts.

The early Iron Age features were overlain by two middle Iron Age gullies, the southern of which corresponds to the circular enclosure revealed by geophysical survey. This enclosure was of two phases, with an entrance on the west in the first phase, later blocked. It surrounded a series of pits and postholes, some of which may have belonged to a building inside. The northern enclosure (faintly visible on the geophysical survey) surrounded a narrow concentric slot, possibly a wall-slot. Three large pits were found to the west.

With the exception of a post-medieval plough furrow (19105), no features post-dating the Iron Age period were identified. Archaeological features were cut into the natural (19001), a mixed silty clay containing chalk and malmstone rubble, and sealed by *c.* 0.3 m of ploughsoil (19000).

Early Iron Age

Probably the earliest feature was 19038, a large shallow scoop in the central part of the trench, which survived 6 m long north to south, 0.4 m deep and 3.35 m wide. This pit (or possible hollow) was truncated on its eastern side by medieval furrow 19105, and may originally have been wider. It contained a single deposit of a yellowish-brown sandy clay, which produced an assemblage of 28 sherds (239 g) of Iron Age pottery, including six sherds (50 g) of diagnostic late Bronze Age/early Iron Age pottery. Thirty-one fragments of animal bone, including cattle bones and a sheep or goat horn core, were recovered from the fill. This feature was cut across by curving gully 19183, itself early Iron Age.

Semi-circular gully 19183

This gully, which cut feature 19038, described just over half of a circle with an internal diameter of 7.5 m, and was open on the south-western side with a gap of *c.* 6 m between the terminals. On the north, the gully was truncated by a medieval plough furrow for *c.* 1.25 m. Six slots were cut across the gully (19009, 19027, 19037, 19115, 19123 and 19125), two of which targeted the termini (Fig. 5.10). The gully had a U-shaped profile and varied between 0.4 m and 0.5 m wide and up to 0.18 m deep. It was filled with a dark grey-brown or grey-black silty clay throughout, except at the terminals. These contained a mid yellow-grey silty clay (19122) and a dark blue-brown silty clay (19125), possibly reflecting the effects of silt being washed down the gully and settling out at the terminals. The gully contained an assemblage of 39 sherds (142 g) of Iron Age pottery, two (4 g) of which could be dated to the late Bronze Age or earliest Iron Age period. A total of 325 fragments of animal bone were recovered from the feature, of which only 15 could be assigned to species. These included cattle, sheep or goat, pig, dog and vole.

Posthole (19057), measuring 0.42 m in diameter and 0.28 m deep, was cut by the western terminus of the gully (Fig. 5.10). It had two fills, the upper of which produced eight sherds (9 g) of undiagnostic Iron Age pottery. A further eight postholes (19002, 19095, 19128, 19130, 19132, 19134, 19136 and 19138) lay within the area defined by gully 19183 (Fig. 5.10). These postholes appear to form two sides

of a square structure with one side aligned with the gully terminals. Posthole 19134 was situated at the centre of the semi-circle formed by the gully, and at the centre of the postulated square structure. This posthole was 0.42 m in diameter and 0.18 m deep, and contained a single deposit of a dark grey sandy/silty clay (19135) without any datable finds.

Surrounding the central posthole were three large postholes or pits (19002, 19128 and 19095), the first two in line with the gully terminals and nearly equidistant from them. The three postholes formed two sides of an approximate square *c.* 2.75 m by 2.75 m, and a fourth posthole making a four-post structure was probably obliterated by medieval furrow 19105 (Fig. 5.10). The surviving postholes were broad oval-shaped or sub-rectangular features, and ranged in depth from 0.2 m to 0.3 m. The largest measured 0.93 m long and may have represented two intercutting features. Each posthole had a single fill, which ranged from a dark grey to a mid yellow clay, which was sometimes slightly silty or sandy in composition. Sixteen sherds (36 g) of Iron Age pottery came from posthole 19095, while postholes 19002 and 19128 each produced small quantities of late Bronze Age or early Iron Age pottery. Fourteen fragments of animal bone came from posthole 19002, including a sheep or goat astragalus. A further two fragments came from posthole 19128.

Two pairs of small postholes were situated midway between the three larger postholes. Postholes 19136 and 19138 lay on the northwestern side on the structure, and measured between 0.24 m and 0.25 m in diameter with depths reaching 0.22 m. Each contained only one fill, and posthole 19138 also produced a single sherd (6 g) of Iron Age pottery. Postholes 19130 and 19132 lay on the southwestern edge of the structure. These features were 0.2 m and 0.34 m in diameter and up to 0.13 m deep. Each contained a single fill, but neither feature produced any datable finds.

Penannular gully 19184

Gully 19184 lay immediately adjacent to gully 19183 on the south-east side (Fig. 5.10). Both gullies were cut by middle Iron Age pit 19055 at their closest point, but their arcs suggest that they did not intercut, and may have been contemporary.

Only the western part of this gully lay within the excavated area, and it was cut by middle Iron Age enclosure ditches 19185 on the north and 19187/8 on the south. The circle described by the inner edge of the gully arc was *c.* 7.5 m in diameter, very similar to that of gully 19183. The gully did not form a complete circle, as there was no trace of it east of the later middle Iron Age enclosure ditch 19187/8. There was presumably an entrance on the south at least 1.5 m wide. The gully was deepest in the west, where it was 0.78 m wide and 0.17 m deep, with two fills; elsewhere the gully had only one fill, a dark greyish-brown silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks; the second fill was a mid yellowish-brown silty clay. The only pottery assemblage from the feature came from this slot, a total of 26 sherds (139 g) mostly undiagnostic Iron Age sherds. Seven sherds (47 g) are however demonstrably early Iron Age or late Bronze Age in date. Four medium mammal long bone fragments and 30 indeterminate fragments were recovered from the gully.

Two postholes (19086 and 19013) and a pit (19004) were identified within the area defined by the gully close to the edge of the excavation (Fig. 5.10). The two postholes (19086 and 19013) were of similar size, being respectively 0.41 m and up to 0.43 m across and 0.3 m and 0.18 m deep. Posthole 19086 had two fills, a grey-yellow clay primary fill overlain by a dark grey-brown clay, and six sherds (10 g) of Iron Age pottery; 19013 had a single mid yellow-grey clay fill containing four sherds (38 g) of

Iron Age pottery and 20 fragments of animal bone. The similarity of these postholes may indicate that they belonged to a common structure.

Feature 19004 was a shallow, oval-shaped pit that lay within the ring gully to the west of posthole 19013. It measured 0.72 m long, 0.53 m wide and 0.2 m deep, and contained a single fill of mid yellow-grey silty clay. One small sherd (1 g) of Iron Age pottery was recovered.

Curving gully 19189

An arc of gully was found extending beyond the southern boundary of the excavated area (Fig. 5.10). Two slots were dug across it. The gully was 0.36 m wide and 0.19 m deep, and contained a single fill of dark brown silty clay, which yielded one sherd (120 g) of early Iron Age pottery and 14 sherds (24 g) of undiagnostic Iron Age pottery. A further 55 fragments of animal bone, including a horse radius, were recovered from the feature.

Only about 100° of arc is present, but the extrapolated circle would be of very similar diameter to those of gullies 19183 and 19184, around 7.5 m. This enclosure may therefore belong to the same phase of occupation as gullies 19183 and 19184. The only feature exposed within the gully was an irregular natural hollow (19158) of unknown date.

Posthole group 19190 and gully 19011

A cluster of ten postholes (19041, 19042, 19045, 19047, 19077, 19079, 19083, 19085, 19093 and 19097) was exposed at the northern end of the trench (Fig. 5.10). A curvilinear alignment, perhaps the eastern wall of a lightly-built circular structure, could be traced through postholes 19041, 19042, 19045, 19079, 19077 and 19083. The postholes ranged from 0.17 m to 0.39 m in diameter and from 0.12 m to 0.36 m deep. The largest (19047) lay towards the centre of the area surrounded by the posthole arc. Most of the postholes were filled by a single deposit of a brown or bluish-brown clay silt; posthole 19079 also contained a second deposit of mid yellow-brown silty clay. Only one posthole (19097) showed evidence of having been recut (as 19081) during its lifetime. Iron Age pottery was recovered from five of the eastern postholes (19041, 19042, 19045, 19047 and 19077). The assemblage, a total of 20 sherds (153 g), includes a small number of residual late Bronze Age sherds along with a larger quantity of early Iron Age and undiagnostic Iron Age sherds. Fragments of animal bone were recovered from several of the postholes, including cattle, sheep or goat and pig. None were burnt.

The terminal (c. 1 m) of gully 19011 was exposed in the west edge of the excavation south of the posthole cluster and north-west of semi-circular gully 19183 (Fig. 5.10). This measured 0.29 m wide and 0.12 m deep, and was filled with a single deposit of dark grey silty clay. It was not possible to determine whether the gully was straight or curving, like the adjacent gully 19183. A shallow depression 0.03 m deep (19035) was found at the base of the very end of the gully after the main fill had been removed. The end of the gully was also slightly expanded (0.4 m wide), and this may possibly indicate a posthole removed before the gully was filled, though the gully terminal may simply have been slightly enlarged.

Sherds of Iron Age pottery and a small number of late Bronze Age sherds came both from the gully and the fill of depression 19035. An almost complete horse skull was found in the gully (SF 19001) with a large pottery base sherd placed on top

(SF 19000), while a sizeable fired clay object, possibly a cylindrical loomweight (SF 19002), was found in 19035. The unusual association and purposeful arrangement of these artefacts suggest that they were deliberately and perhaps formally placed in the ditch terminus.

Other features

A second possible arc of postholes was recorded between gullies 19184 and 19189, cut across by the middle Iron Age enclosure 19187 (Fig. 5.10). A total of eight postholes formed a semicircular arc some 7.2 m in diameter; further postholes in the south are likely to have been truncated by enclosure 19187/8, and the eastern part of the circle lay beyond the excavated area. Three of the postholes (19140, 19146 and 19171) were excavated. The postholes ranged in diameter from 0.23 m to 0.4 m and in depth from 0.08 to 0.26 m. Feature 19146 was much shallower and more irregular than the other two postholes, and may represent a natural feature. No datable finds were recovered from the postholes, but the diameter of the circle, along with its location between gullies 19184 and 19189, suggest that the postholes belonged to an early Iron Age phase of occupation. Posthole 19177, which lay within the area enclosed by the arc, contained one large sherd (10 g) of early Iron Age pottery and may be contemporary.

Middle Iron Age

Pit 19055

Pit 19055 was the largest pit excavated on the site and lay to the west of the middle Iron Age circular enclosures, truncating two early Iron Age curving gullies (19183 and 19184) (Fig. 5.10). The pit was oval, measuring 2.72 m long and 2.2 m wide, with vertical sides and a flat base. It had survived to a depth of 1 m and was filled by two deposits. The primary fill consisted of a yellow-brown clay, which was overlain by a deposit of dark brown silty clay. The pit contained a substantial pottery assemblage, comprising 245 sherds weighing 1900 g. The lower fill (19114) contained 189 sherds (446 g) and the upper fill (19056) contained 56 sherds (577 g). The pottery included residual late Bronze Age and early Iron Age sherds, but the majority of closely datable pieces belong to the middle Iron Age (27 sherds/ 446 g). The collection of early Iron Age sherds (27 pieces/ 146 g) probably derived from the truncation of the two ring gullies. An assemblage of charred cereals, chaff, weed seeds and charcoal came from the lower fill (see Chapter 7), and a bone gouge tip was recovered from the upper fill (19056).

Pits 19019 and 19050

Two substantial pits (19019 and 19050) lay to the west of pit 19055 on the very western edge of the trench. Pit 19019 (Figs 5.10 and 5.11, Section 19012) was sub-rectangular, 0.8 m north-south and at least 0.85 m east-west, and was 0.85 m deep with vertical sides and a flat base. The feature had a similar fill sequence to pit 19055, comprising a primary deposit (19021) of yellowish-grey clay followed by a homogenous dark greyish-brown clay silt (19020). Numerous large stones, pieces of animal bone and pottery sherds had been placed on the upper surface of the primary

fill. The upper fill contained a sparse assemblage of cereal seeds and chaff, weed seeds and oak charcoal (see Chapter 7). The pottery assemblage included one sherd (6 g) of diagnostically middle Iron Age pottery, along with 18 sherds of undiagnostic Iron Age pottery. Two small sherds (7 g) of early Iron Age pottery are assumed to be residual.

Pit 19050 (Figs 5.10 and 5.11, Section 19017) lay 2 m south of pit 19019. This feature was oval in plan, measuring 0.8 m by at least 0.69 m and with a depth of 0.48 m. Unlike its neighbour, the pit contained a complex series of seven distinct fills. These were mostly composed of sandy clays, which ranged in colour from mid yellow-brown to brown- and grey-black. A large assemblage of 36 sherds (175 g) of pottery were recovered from the feature. This collection included a small amount of residual late Bronze Age and early Iron Age pottery, but was mostly composed of undifferentiated Iron Age pottery. Two large sherds (20 g) of distinctively middle Iron Age pottery were, however, recovered from deposit 19052.

Curving ditch 19185

A short section of this ditch was exposed at the northeastern corner of the trench (Fig. 5.10). Two slots were dug across it (19022 and 19068), which established that it had steep sides and a flat base; it measured up to 0.85 m wide and ranged in depth from 0.27 m to 0.33 m. Although only a short length of the circumference was present within the trench, the internal diameter of the circle suggested by the arc of ditch was estimated to be around 13.5 m. Both slots contained two fills: a primary fill (19070) of yellow-brown or pale brown silty clay and an upper fill (19069) of brown or grey-brown silty clay with charcoal flecking and occasional burnt stones and pottery sherds. There were 101 pottery sherds (570 g), most of which were recovered from the upper fill. The majority of the pottery was undiagnostic Iron Age sherds, although several diagnostic late Bronze Age and early Iron Age sherds were also present. The stratigraphic position of the ditch, however, suggests that these earlier sherds were residual inclusions and that the ditch belonged to a later phase of occupation. A fragment of rabbit or hare cranium was recovered from the primary fill, and in the absence of any evidence for animal burrowing is most likely to be hare (see Chapter 7).

Within the area surrounded by the gully, and parallel to it, was a narrow and shallow, flat-bottomed slot (19186) (Fig. 5.10). This was between 0.22 m and 0.26 m wide and survived to a depth of only 0.06 m. It had a silty clay fill that varied from a dark brown-grey to a mid grey-yellow colour. The slot, like the surrounding gully, was not circular but consisted of nearly straight lengths joined at obtuse angles. It is interpreted as a possible wall slot. Although only three small sherds (7 g) of Iron Age pottery were recovered from the wall slot, its close spatial association with the adjacent gully strongly suggests that they were two elements of a contemporary structure.

No stakeholes were revealed at the base of the wall slot, but four stakeholes (19029, 19031, 19033, 19073) were recorded in a group straddling the slot (Fig. 5.10). These measured between 0.12 m and 0.26 m in diameter, and between 0.04 m and 0.14 m in depth. Three of them were filled by a dark grey-brown or brown-grey silty clay, while stakehole 19073 contained an additional primary deposit of mid grey-yellow silty clay. Only stakehole 19029 produced any pottery, two Iron Age sherds weighing 19 g. The stakeholes may have belonged to the structure represented by ring

gully 19185 and wall slot 19186, but at least one of the stakeholes (19031) appeared to cut the wall slot.

Circular ditched enclosure 19187, recut 19188 and associated features

The southern extension of Trench 19 exposed the western edge of a circular ditch already detected during the geophysical survey (Fig. 5.10). The excavation revealed that the ditch originally had an entrance on the west, which was blocked when the ditch was recut and the enclosure slightly enlarged. Only one slot was cut right across the enclosure, on the northwest side.

The first phase ditch (19188) (Figs 5.10 and 5.11, Section 19033) had an internal diameter of *c.* 12.5 m, enclosing an area of *c.* 125 m². This ditch was at least 1.48 m wide and 0.7 m deep. The entrance faced due west and was nearly 3 m wide. The ditch contained a sequence of eight deposits, mostly grey sandy clays. These produced a total of 90 sherds (517 g) of pottery, the majority of which are undiagnostic Iron Age sherds. A small irregular triangular block of iron and a foetal pig humerus came from the fill of this intervention, along with a single cat mandibular canine. This tooth represents the only evidence for cats from the site (see Chapter 7).

The recut (19187) (Figs 5.10 and 5.11, Section 19033) had an internal diameter of *c.* 13.6 m, thus increasing the enclosed area from *c.* 125 m² to *c.* 145 m². This ditch was continuous, cutting across the western entrance of the original ditch. The ditch was investigated on the north west and south-west (cuts 19015 and 19151 respectively). It measured 1.24 m wide and 0.67 m deep. Where completely excavated, it contained eight fills. The fills were distinct in colour and variable in composition, ranging from clay silts to sandy clays. A large pottery assemblage, consisting of 38 sherds (234 g), was recovered from the recut. These were mostly generic early/middle Iron Age pieces, but included two large sherds (13 g) of distinctively middle Iron Age pottery from 19015. A small quantity of residual pottery, dating from the late Bronze Age and early Iron Age, was also present. Finds reference layer 19164 described the provenance of finds gathered from an investigative section into the surface of the ditch.

A large storage pit (19154) was situated within the area enclosed by the enclosure ditches (Fig. 5.10). This feature measured 1.5 m in diameter and 0.78 m deep with a flat base and vertical sides, and contained three deposits of silty clay. A total of 41 sherds (198 g) of pottery was recovered from all three deposits, although mostly from the middle and uppermost fills. While much of the ceramic assemblage cannot be closely dated within the Iron Age, a single sherd (5 g) of middle Iron Age pottery came from the primary fill.

Oval pit 19148 lay just outside ditch 19188 at the southwestern end of the trench. It cut feature 19146 and was partially truncated by the ditch 19187 (Fig. 5.10). The feature measured 1 m by 0.6 m and had a U-shaped profile with gradually sloping sides. It was 0.2 m deep and filled by two grey-brown chalky clays. There were no datable finds in the fills. Its position in the stratigraphic sequence suggests a date late in the early Iron Age or early in the middle Iron Age.

Postholes 19165 and 19167 overlaid the edge of the original ditch 19188, close to the northern terminus (Fig. 5.10). These features measured between 0.14 m and 0.18 m in diameter and had a U-shaped base at a depth of between 0.14 m and 0.19 m. Both were filled by a single deposit of mid grey silty clay, but neither produced any datable finds. They are most likely to belong with the secondary phase of the enclosure, although it is possible that they are still later.

Early/middle Iron Age

Several features, particularly those that did not share stratigraphic relationships or produce closely datable finds, could have belonged to either the early or middle phase of Iron Age occupation. These features included several additional postholes and stakeholes (19101, 19121, 19142, 19144, 19162, 19175, 19180 and 19182) that were exposed within the two middle Iron Age enclosure ditches (Fig. 5.10). No clear structure could be traced in their arrangement and none could be closely dated. The majority were relatively small and shallow, measuring around 0.25 m in diameter; the largest was 0.66 m across. Depths ranged from 0.04 m to 0.37 m. All the postholes contained a single deposit, usually consisting of a dark brown or grey silty clay; none produced any pottery. The postholes were found to cluster slightly within the western entrance, which might suggest some sort of entrance structure contemporary with the first phase of the middle Iron Age enclosure ditch 19188. Given their location within and around the probable early Iron Age circular post-built structure (comprising excavated postholes 19140, 19146 and 19171), it is also possible that the postholes belonged to this phase of activity.

Three pits (19089, 19160 and 19173) were also recorded within the area enclosed by the middle Iron Age enclosure ditches (Fig. 5.10). These varied in diameter between 0.5 m and 0.83 m and between 0.13 m and 0.35 m in depth. All had flat bases and contained a single fill, usually a dark grey or grey-brown clay. Pits 19160 and 19173 both had curved sides, while pit 19089 was steeply sided. The pit fills yielded small quantities of undiagnostic Iron Age pottery. One sherd (1 g) of diagnostically early Iron Age pottery, probably residual, came from pit 19089.

A single small pit 19169 lay west of ditch 19187 and the western edge of the trench (Fig. 5.10). This pit was oval, 0.29 m long and 0.20 m wide, and was 0.24 m deep. It contained a single deposit of dark grey clay, which produced one sherd (4 g) of Iron Age pottery.

Medieval

A Medieval plough furrow (19105) was exposed running through the centre of the trench on a north to south trajectory. The feature, which was removed by machine and not fully recorded, measured nearly 4 m wide in places and truncated areas of the underlying archaeology, including curving gully 19183 and one of the postholes from a possible four-post structure (comprising surviving postholes 19002, 19095 and 19128).