

## Summary

Phase 1 of extensive excavations of a development site SW of Reading has located Neolithic, late Bronze Age and Roman settlement and activity.

The Neolithic activity is characterised by pits, postholes and flintwork, with a notable absence of pottery. The specialised forms of artefacts point to resource-specific activity rather than 'normal' domestic activity. A cattle burial was found, a type of feature common on ceremonial sites.

Two of the four known LBA settlement foci were excavated, revealing the largest number of LBA roundhouses so far discovered in the S of England. Semi-circular segmented buildings, four and six post structures and two post supports were also found. Area 3100 showed a high degree of organisation, with paired houses apparently lineally arranged, a large open space and an activity/storage area. A line of flax retting pits flanked a trackway. Extensive associated field systems have also been partially examined. Reference to further archaeological investigations in the area is made in the discussion section. This work is beginning to demonstrate the density of LBA sites in the Kennet Valley.

For the Roman period the 1st-century enclosures were partially examined, although the principal areas of occupation were not uncovered. Other features of 2nd- to 4th-century date were part of enclosures and linear boundaries which are probably field systems and peripheral activities associated with a site known to exist c 300 m to the W.

## Acknowledgements

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We are very grateful for the patience exhibited by David Hewison, who tried to farm part of the land while we excavated trenches all over it. One of the highlights of the excavation was provided by Jack Bucknell when he produced his reaper to harvest an area for us to assess.

The excavation involved many individuals, too many to mention, but whose efforts in the trenches and on the football field did not go unnoticed. However, I must single out the supervisors, Mark Roberts, Nicky Rogers and Gerry Wait, through whose hard work the excavations were completed on time.

For the publication, I am indebted to David Jennings who took over part of the processing and writing up of the results and provided the stimulus to complete the report after the post-excavation work had paused. As ever, the specialists played an important part in the production of the publication and I thank them, firstly for their hard work and secondly for not exceeding their deadlines immoderately. Thanks are also due to Mick Parsons and Bob Whiteman for their work on the flints.

For work that is not credited in the text, the drawings were completed by Paul Hughes with assistance by Danyon Rey, and the typing was undertaken by Sara Boddington, Georgina Griffiths, Claire Venables and Catherine Rye. The report was edited by David Jennings and Ellen McAdam.

## Location of archive

The archive has been deposited in the Reading Museum and Art Gallery, Blagrove Street, Reading, Berkshire, and may be consulted there.