

# Chapter 3: Junction 8 Northbound and minor sites to the north

*by Dan Stansbie*

## JUNCTION 8 NORTHBOUND

### Site location

The excavation area at Junction 8 Northbound (Junction 8N) was centred on NGR TL 094 072, immediately to the south of Junction 8 of the M1 and to the east of Hemel Hempstead (see Fig. 1.2). It lay west of the motorway and to the south of the Junction 8 slip road and occupied an area of approximately 3ha. The local geology comprises clay-with-flints, overlying Upper Chalk (see Fig. 1.3). The topography of the northern part of the Junction 8N site, and other adjacent areas examined to the north, was relatively flat, with a maximum height of 137m aOD to the north, and c 132m aOD within the Junction 8N area. The southern part of the Junction 8N excavation area sloped down gradually to the south, to a height of 125m aOD.

### Site layout (Fig. 3.1)

Evidence for settlement at Junction 8N may be divided into two broad periods, which also correspond to two geographically distinct parts of the road cutting. The earlier activity, belonging to the late Iron Age-early Roman and middle Roman periods, with scattered later Roman features, consisted of a series of enclosures occupying the south-eastern half of the excavated area. Immediately north-west of the Roman activity, occupying the north-western part of the site, was an area of medieval settlement, dating to the late 12th-13th centuries, and comprising a post-built structure, groups of pits and several enclosure gullies.

### Late Iron Age-early Roman activity (50 BC-AD 70) (Fig. 3.2)

#### Summary

The earliest phase of activity was represented by a substantial WSW-ENE-aligned ditch (7676), with a row of evenly spaced, square postholes, suggesting a fenceline or possible bank revetment on the southern side of the ditch. To the north-west of ditch 7676 was an irregular boundary (7187), aligned roughly north-south and defined by a

series of ditch segments, one of which was cut by early Roman trackway ditch 6365 (see below). The position of these two feature groups suggests a relationship between them, but the significance of 7676, without obviously related enclosure features, is unclear. South of the fenceline was beam-slot 7229 with two postholes (112211 and 112213) to its south-west, suggesting the presence of a building, while approximately 15m north of ditch 7676 was a large pit (6780), which produced late Iron Age-early Roman pottery.

### Ditches

#### Ditch 7187 (Figs 3.2 and 3.4)

Ditch 7187 was a segmented boundary ditch, aligned roughly north-south, that was traced over a length of approximately 80m northwards from a point some 15m north-west of the terminal of ditch 7676. The ditch segments were up to 1m wide and ranged between 0.02m and 0.35m in depth. They were generally flat based with gently sloping sides and filled with silty clay, with frequent inclusions of flint and occasional charcoal flecks.

#### Ditch and post-line 7676 (Fig. 3.3)

Ditch 7676 projected approximately 40m from the eastern edge of the excavated area on an ENE-WSW alignment. The ditch was 1.6m wide and 0.74m deep, had a V-shaped profile, and was filled with a single deposit of silty clay, containing occasional flint inclusions. The ditch ended in a rounded terminal that appeared to be well defined in plan but was not excavated. It had been recut along its south-eastern-facing edge by a U-shaped feature, measuring 1.3m wide and 0.15m deep. A large group of grog-tempered pottery, including two medium-mouthed jars was recovered from the fill of 7676, but the recut was not well dated. Immediately south of and parallel to ditch 7676 was an alignment of 16 square or sub-circular postholes, with side lengths of between 0.33m and 0.58m, and depths of 0.05-0.26m. These were filled with deposits of silty clay with frequent inclusions of flint and occasional charcoal flecks.



*Fig. 3.1 Junction 8N, plan of all features*

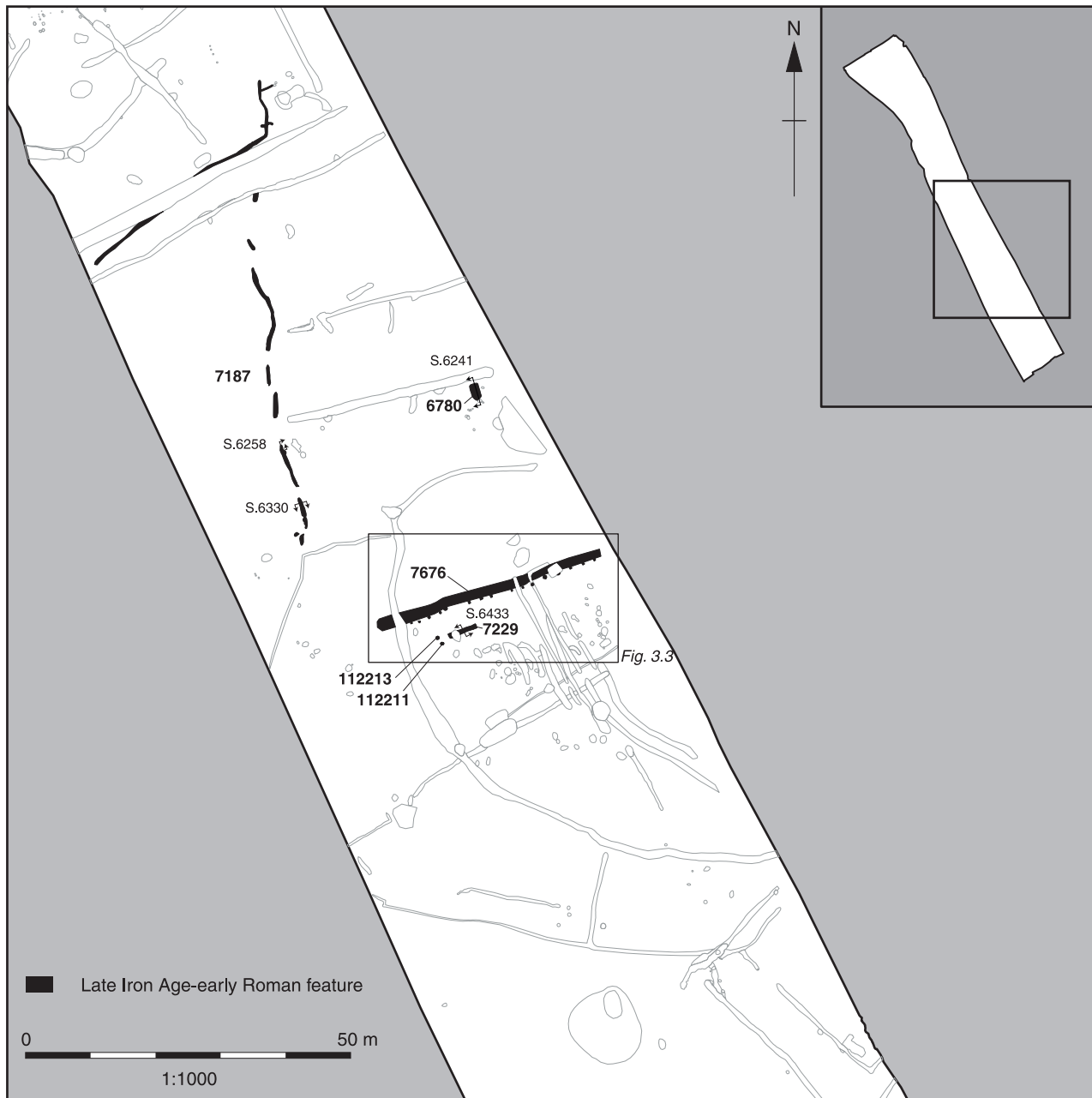


Fig. 3.2 Junction 8N, late Iron Age-early Roman activity

### Structures and pits

#### Structural features (Figs 3.3-4)

Some 4m south of ditch 7676 and parallel to it was a possible beam-slot (7229), which measured 4.5 x 0.68 x 0.28m, and had a flat base with steeply sloping/near-vertical sides. Its primary fill (7231) comprised abundant inclusions of burnt flint and charcoal in a black silty-clay matrix, while the upper fill (7230), an orange-brown clay, also contained much burnt, as well as unburnt, flint. Three sherds of late Iron Age-early Roman pottery were recovered from this feature during the evaluation.

Postholes 112211 and 112213, excavated during the evaluation, had respective diameters of 0.25m and 0.37m, and depths of 0.14m and 0.24m, and lay approximately 1m south-west of beam-slot 7229. Both these features had single fills of silty clay, which did not produce any finds. Despite the lack of dating evidence from these postholes, their position relative to possible beam-slot 7229 suggests that they may have been part of a structure.

#### Pit 6780 (Figs 3.2 and 3.4)

Pit 6780 north of ditch 7676 was sub-rectangular, measuring 2.4 x 1.3 x 0.42m. The pit had a flat base and steeply sloping sides and its fills consisted of silty clay, with occasional inclusions of flint and

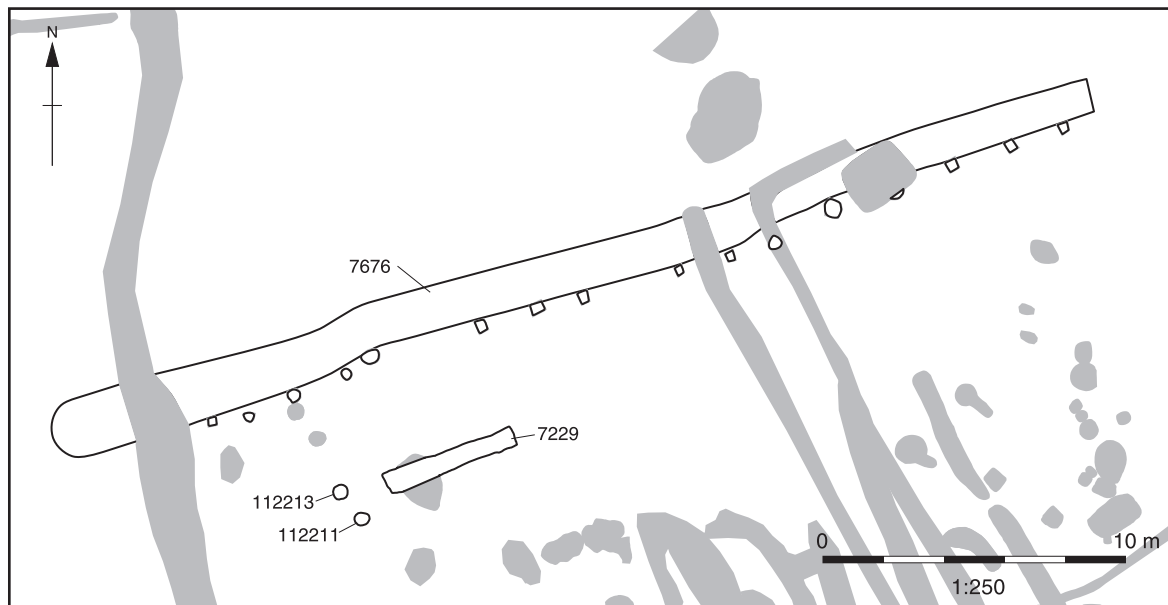


Fig. 3.3 Junction 8N, detail plan of ditch and post-line 7676, postholes 112213 and 112211, and beam-slot 7229

charcoal flecks. The fills produced 66 sherds of late Iron Age-early Roman pottery, representing several grog-tempered vessels, including a high-shouldered jar.

#### Early-middle Roman activity (AD 43-200) (Fig. 3.5)

##### Summary

Early-middle Roman activity at Junction 8N was characterised by a series of irregular-shaped enclosures, along with field boundaries and a trackway. The largest enclosure lay in the central-southern part of the site. Its north, west and south sides were defined by ditch 7700 cutting late Iron Age ditch 7676. The enclosure was subdivided internally by a series of linear and curvilinear ditches (7701) and contained scatters of pits (groups 7107 and 7065), along with two ovens (7259 and (7335) and a large quarry pit (7124), in the north-eastern corner of the enclosure. Abutting enclosure 7700 to the south and west were four smaller, but still substantial, sub-rectangular enclosures (7277, 6624, 6622 and 6150/6104). Cremation burials 6289 and 6293 were found within enclosures 6624 and 6622 respectively though, as these were associated with grog-tempered pottery dated to the late Iron Age-early Roman period, it is possible that they predated the enclosures. To the north-west of enclosure 7700, ditches 6713 and 6768 may have represented field boundaries, or possibly a further rectilinear enclosure. Beyond these ditches to the north-west was an ENE-WSW-aligned trackway (6365).

##### Enclosures

*Enclosure 7700, ditch group 7701 and ditch 7702* (Figs 3.6-7)

Enclosure 7700 was probably oval in plan, though it extended beyond the limit of excavation to the east. It was defined by a curvilinear ditch on its northern, western and southern sides. Within the excavated area the enclosure measured approximately 77m NW-SE by 33m SW-NE and the enclosure ditch ranged from 1-2m in width and 0.35-0.75m in depth. The ditch was V-shaped in profile and its fills comprised silty clay, with frequent inclusions of flint and charcoal flecks. The lower fills of this ditch contained late Iron Age-early Roman pottery, while the middle and upper fills produced early-middle Roman pottery, suggesting that although first established in the late Iron Age-early Roman period the ditch remained in use throughout the early and middle 2nd century, finally going out of use towards the end of that century.

Within the space defined by the enclosure ditch, and separating its south-western half from its north-western half, was a series of at least three curvilinear and linear ditches suggesting an internal subdivision of the enclosure (ditch group 7701). These ditches represented at least three phases of boundary recutting and contained late 2nd-century pottery, indicating that they went out of use at about the same time as ditch 7700, although the absence of grog-tempered material from their fills may suggest that they were established somewhat later. Ditch group 7701 was aligned roughly NW-SE and measured approxi-



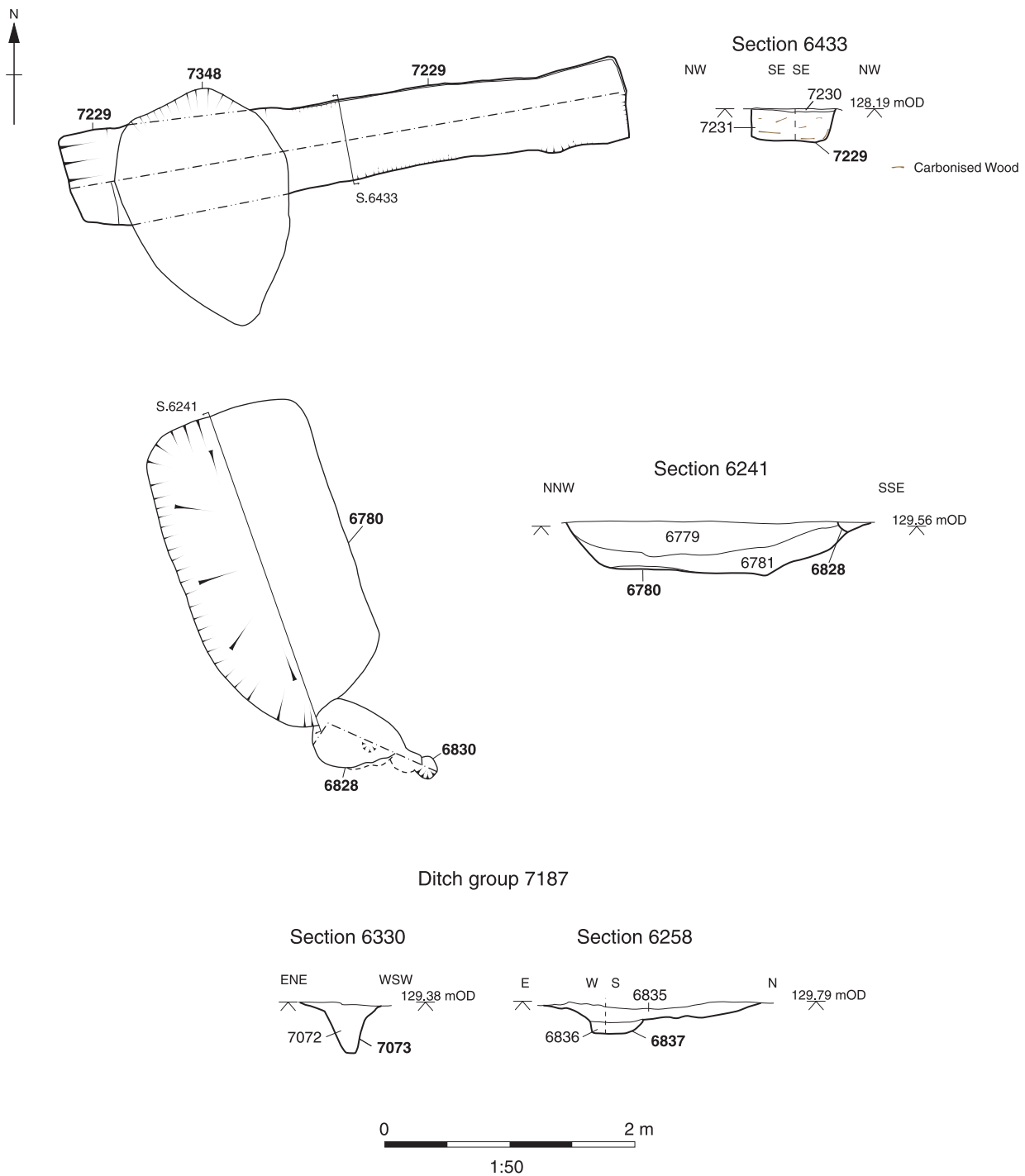
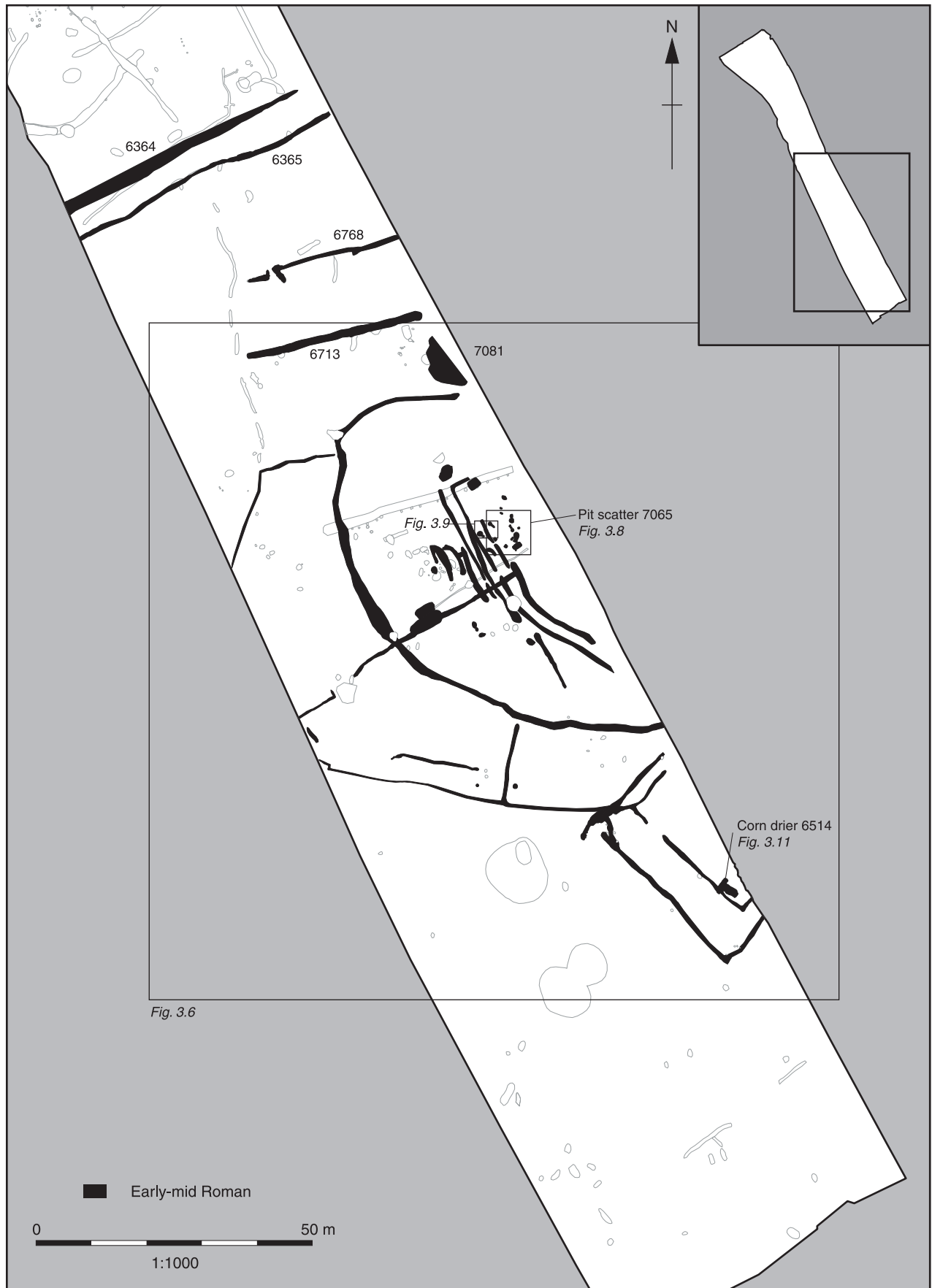


Fig. 3.4 Junction 8N, detail plan and sections of beam-slot 7229 and pit 6780, and sections of ditch 7187

mately 32m in length by 0.8m wide and was between 0.13m and 0.4m deep. The ditches generally had flat bases, with steeply sloping sides and were filled with single deposits of silty clay containing frequent flint inclusions.

Ditch group 7702 cut elements of ditch group 7701, was aligned NE-SW and further subdivided the enclosure formed by ditches 7700 and 7701 into two parts; one to the north-west and one to the

south-east. Ditch 7702 was linear, orientated NE-SW and measured approximately 25.5m in length. It varied very considerably in width, from 0.32-1.1m, and was generally extremely shallow, typically not more than 0.12m deep. The ditch had a flat base with steeply sloping sides and was filled with a single deposit of clay silt with frequent to moderate flint inclusions. Cutting ditch group 7702, ditch group 7703 re-established the NW-SE axis of ditch



*Fig. 3.5 Junction 8N, early-middle Roman activity*

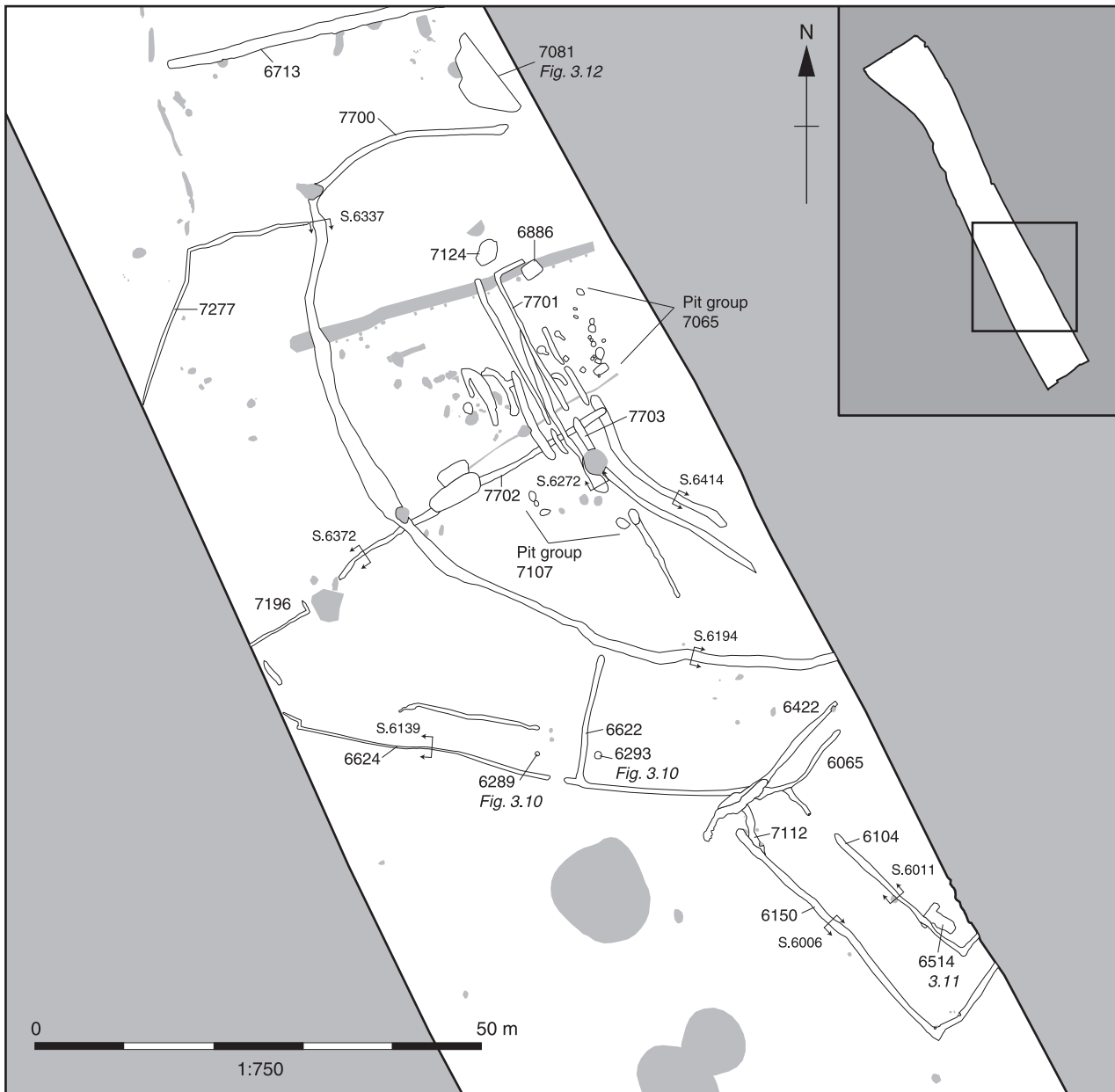


Fig. 3.6 Enclosure complex at the south-eastern end of Junction 8N

group 7701. Ditch group 7703 was linear, measured approximately 37m in length and ranged between 1.23m and 0.62m in width.

#### *Enclosures 7277, 6624 and 6622 (Figs 3.6-7)*

Abutting ditch 7700 to the south-west were three contiguous enclosures (7277, 6624 and 6622) of irregular plan, defined by less substantial boundary ditches. The pottery from the fills of these ditches dates to the late 1st-2nd century, suggesting that they may have been established slightly later than ditch 7700, although they probably silted up at about the same time.

Enclosure 7277, the most northerly, had an irregular polygonal plan and measured 38.5m NW-SE by at least 20m NE-SW. The angle of the north-west

corner of this enclosure was exactly in line with the southern end of the earlier segmented ditch (7187). This might suggest either that the north-west arm of the enclosure ditch superseded and obliterated a southward continuation of ditch 7187, or that ditch 7187 was perhaps, despite the dating evidence contained within it, not earlier than, but rather broadly contemporary with the other features of the early Roman phase, being aligned on the corner of enclosure 7277 rather than preceding it. Either way, the ditch defining enclosure 7277 measured 0.7-1.12m in width by 0.42-0.6m in depth, narrowing to 0.29m in width and 0.17m in depth at its north-eastern end. It was V-shaped in profile, with a single fill of clay silt, with occasional to moderate inclusions of flint.

Ditch 7196 formed the common boundary between the south-east side of this enclosure and the north-western side of enclosure 6624. A 4.9m gap in this ditch-line (filled by later features) presumably allowed access between the two enclosures. Ditch 7196 measured approximately 21m in length and varied in width between 0.3m and 0.82m, with a depth of between 0.04m and 0.12m. The ditch had a flat base with steeply sloping sides and was filled with a silty clay containing frequent inclusions of flint. There may have been an 'external' entrance to enclosure 7277 on its south-western side, which lay beyond the limit of the excavation.

Enclosure 6624 was also irregularly polygonal in form, with dimensions of c 16-23.5m, NNE-SSW, by 25-38+m, WNW-ESE. An offset in the boundary line on its southern side, close to the site baulk, may suggest that there was an entrance at the western end of this enclosure just beyond the limit of excavation. However, there was also reasonably clear evidence for an entrance in the south-eastern corner of this enclosure, where the outer enclosure ditch appeared to terminate c 4.5m from the south-west corner of the adjacent enclosure (6622) to the east. The enclosure ditch/gully was U-shaped in profile and varied from 0.29-0.73m in width and 0.13-0.38m in depth. It contained a single fill of clay

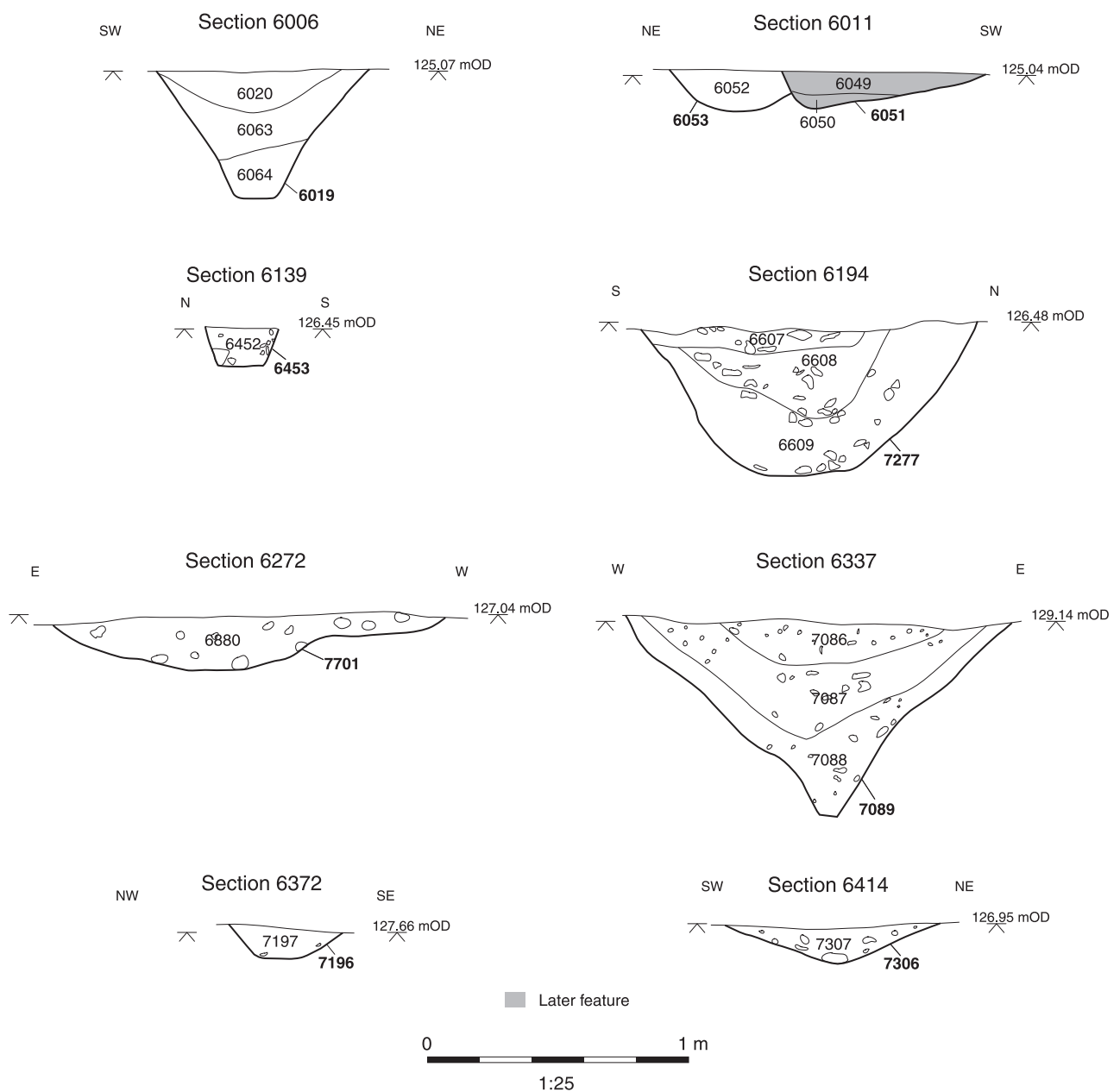


Fig. 3.7 Sections of features associated with the enclosure complex at the south-eastern end of Junction 8N

silt, with inclusions of flint and frequent charcoal flecks.

Enclosure 6622 was sub-rectangular in shape with approximate maximum dimensions of 28.5m, east-west, by 16m, north-south, although the enclosure may have extended just beyond the limit of excavation to the east, where an entrance may have been present. A gap of c 1m between the

enclosure ditch and enclosure 7700 in the north-western corner of the enclosure may have served as a means of access between enclosure 6622 and enclosure 6624 to the west. The enclosure ditch was U-shaped in profile and measured 0.8m in width by 0.23-0.47m in depth. It contained two fills, a primary fill of clay with frequent inclusions of flint, overlain by a secondary fill of silty clay

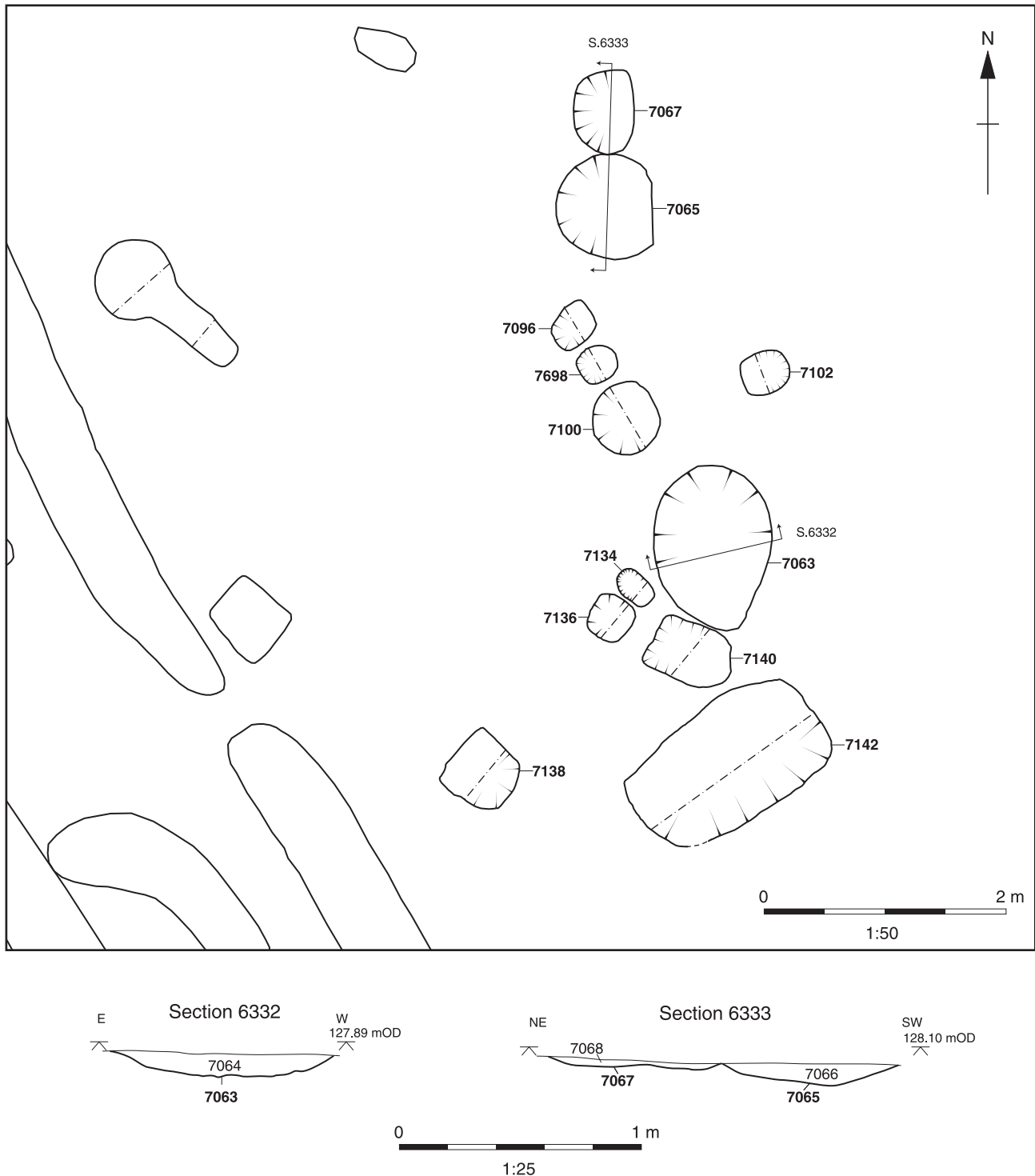


Fig. 3.8 Junction 8N, detailed plan and sections of pit group 7065

with frequent flint inclusions and occasional charcoal flecks. Understanding of the south-eastern side of this enclosure was made difficult due to the apparent superimposition of enclosure 6150 (see below). However, two parallel ditches (6422 and 6065) were present in this area and it is likely that the outer (6065), ending in terminal 6068, which lay 8m south of enclosure 7700, was the main ditch defining the south-eastern side of enclosure 6222.

**Internal features (pits, ovens and cremations)** (Figs 3.6 and 3.8-10)

Lying within the area defined by ditches 7700 and 7701 were a number of discrete features, some of which occurred in groups. These included a group of pits (7065), along with two ovens (7259 and 7335) containing 1st-2nd-century pottery, lying north-east of ditch 7701 in the north-eastern part of the enclosure. A further scatter of four pits (7107), containing pottery of the same date, lay in the south-western part of the enclosure. A large quarry pit (7124) containing 1st-2nd-century pottery and a fragment of human skull lay in the north-eastern part of the enclosure.

Pit 6886 lay to the north of pit scatter 7065 and was sub-rectangular in plan, with a flat base and steeply sloping sides (Fig. 3.6). It was 2.18m long by 1.7m wide and 0.4m deep, and had two fills. These comprised a lower fill of clay, with frequent inclusions of flint and charcoal, and an upper fill of silty clay, with similar inclusions.

Pit Scatter 7065 comprised 11 sub-circular pits and one sub-rectangular pit lying to the north-east of ditch 7701 (Fig. 3.8). In profile, the majority of these pits were flat based with steep sides, and all were fairly shallow. They ranged in diameter from 0.22-1.1m and were between 0.05m and 0.4m in depth. The pit fills comprised silty clay with moderate inclusions of flint and charcoal flecks.

Pit scatter 7107 consisted of four pits, all of which produced pottery of late 1st- or 2nd-century date (Fig. 3.6). The pits were all oval in plan, with either shallow saucer-shaped or irregular profiles, and measured 0.78-1.25m in diameter and between 0.13m and 0.8m in depth. The pits all had single fills of sandy clay with inclusions of flint, chalk fragments and charcoal flecks.

Pit 7124 was irregular in plan, with an undulating base and irregular sides (Fig. 3.6). The pit measured

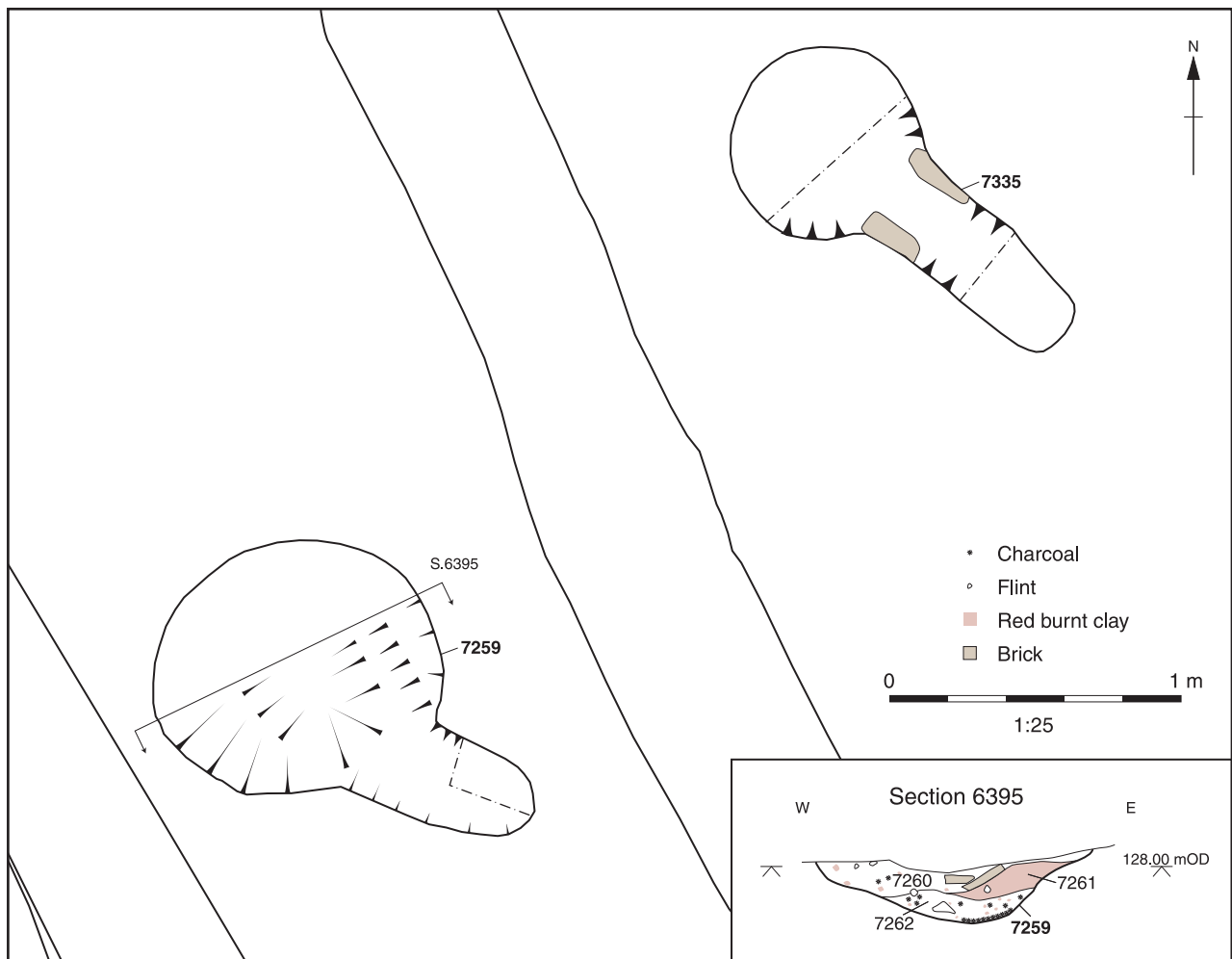


Fig. 3.9 Junction 8N, detail plans of ovens 7259 and 7335, and section of oven 7259



3.1 x 2.4 x 0.75m and had three fills of silty clay, with frequent inclusions of flint. The basal fill of the pit produced 13 sherds of 1st-2nd-century pottery, along with a fragment of quern stone and fragments of human skull. A dump of charcoal at the top of this fill produced a further six sherds of 2nd-century pottery, along with a cattle humerus and mandible, and 75 fragments of other animal bone. Seven sherds of 1st-century pottery came from the secondary fill.

Oven 7259 comprised a sub-circular pit, measuring 1m in diameter by 0.21m in depth, with concave sides and a flat base (Fig. 3.9). The oven was stoked by means of a NW-SE-orientated flue measuring 0.5 x 0.3m, which varied in depth between 0.05m and 0.18m. The base of the flue sloped towards the oven pit and the substrate into which the pit was cut was discoloured through burning. The basal fill of the oven comprised a sterile burnt clay silt with frequent fragments of charcoal. Overlying this, on the eastern side of the oven pit, was a burnt clay silt, with occasional flint inclusions, which did not extend into the flue. The upper fill of the feature extended throughout the oven pit and the flue and comprised a deposit of clay silt, with occasional inclusions of flint, frequent large fragments of brick, which probably derive from the oven structure, and two sherds of Roman greyware.

Oven 7335 consisted of a sub-circular pit 1.4m in diameter by 0.35m in depth, with a 1.25m-long flue aligned NW-SE. This flue had a single brick lining either side of its entrance and measured 0.75m in width by 0.27m in depth (Fig. 3.9). The basal fill of the oven, which extended over the base of the pit and the flue, comprised a 0.15m-thick layer of charcoal-rich silt with no finds. Overlying the basal fill within the oven pit was a clay silt, with frequent inclusions of mortar fragments and moderate charcoal fragments. In the flue the basal fill was overlain by a silty clay with occasional flint inclusions. Neither of these upper fills produced any finds.

Cremation burial 6289 was contained within a shallow sub-circular pit measuring 0.59m in diameter by 0.09m in depth (Figs 3.6 and 3.10). The cremated bones had been placed within a grog-tempered vessel, which unfortunately could not be identified to type as later truncation had removed its rim. Two other similarly damaged grog-tempered ancillary vessels were placed alongside the cremation urn on the base of the pit, but no other finds were recorded from the feature. The pottery vessels were overlain with a deposit of silty clay containing occasional charcoal flecks and fragments of flint, which filled the pit.

Cremation burial 6293 was contained in a shallow, sub-circular pit which measured 0.85m in diameter by 0.07m in depth (Figs 3.6 and 3.10). The cremated bones had been placed on the base of the pit cut, in the northern-central part of the pit. Although these bones were not contained in a cremation urn, it is possible that they may originally have been placed in an organic container such

as a bag or a box. Accompanying the burial, and placed on the base of the pit cut around the cremated bone, were three ancillary vessels comprising a platter and a carinated cup in grog-tempered ware and a beaker in 'Belgic' sandy ware. Overlying the pottery vessels and filling the grave pit was a single deposit of silty clay containing occasional flint inclusions.

#### Enclosure 6150/6104 (Fig. 3.6)

Abutting enclosure 6622, to its south-east, was a partly double-ditched (6150 and 6104) sub-rectangular enclosure, which extended beyond the limit of excavation to the north-east. Pottery from the fills of these ditches was of mid-late 2nd-century date. These sherds suggest that the enclosure went out of use at approximately the same time as those to its north, although the apparent use of part of the

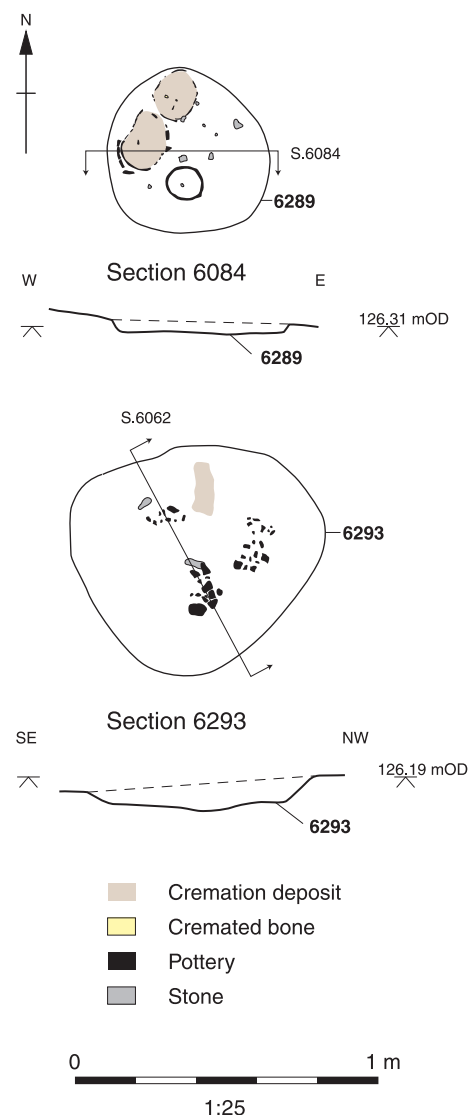


Fig. 3.10 Junction 8N, detail plans and profiles of cremation burials 6289 and 6293

boundary ditch of enclosure 6622 on its north-western side suggests that it may have been established slightly later. Moreover, the fact that a corn drying oven (6514), situated to the south-east of enclosure 6622, was cut by ditch 6104 would seem to support this argument.

The enclosure measured *c* 32m NW-SE by at least 15m SW-NE. Part of the south-eastern boundary of enclosure 6622 seems to have been utilised as the putative inner ditch of enclosure 6150/6104 on its north-western side. The south-eastern and south-western boundaries of the enclosure were defined by two L-shaped ditches, set *c* 6-7m apart on the south-west side but only 3m apart on the south-east side. The inner ditch (6104) had an extant length of *c* 30m, including a 3.5m-wide gap for an entrance towards its north-western end. In profile, the ditch was bowl-shaped and measured 0.5-0.78m in width by 0.07-0.31m in depth. The single ditch fill comprised silty clay with occasional flint inclusions. The outer ditch (6150) measured 43.5m in length

with no breaks, but it terminated some 1.8m south of the southern boundary ditch of enclosure 6622, suggesting the presence of a narrow entrance in the north-west corner of 6150/6104. Ditch 6422, which cut across the boundary of enclosure 6622, slightly reducing that enclosure in size on its south-east side, seems to have formed the outer boundary on the north-west side of enclosure 6150/6104. The complex sequence of features located at the north-west corner of the enclosure is not entirely clear. The north-western 'entrance' of enclosure 6150/6104 (see above) seems to have been blocked by a short length of slightly curving ditch (7112). However, this ditch was itself cut by ditch 6150 and may have belonged to an early version of the enclosure, superseded by the more rectilinear form suggested by ditches 6150 and 6422, and incorporating the north-west corner entrance. Ditch 6150 differed from ditch 6104, being V-shaped in profile and measuring 0.58-1m in width by 0.4-0.58m in depth. The ditch had three fills, the lowest of which comprised a clay silt,

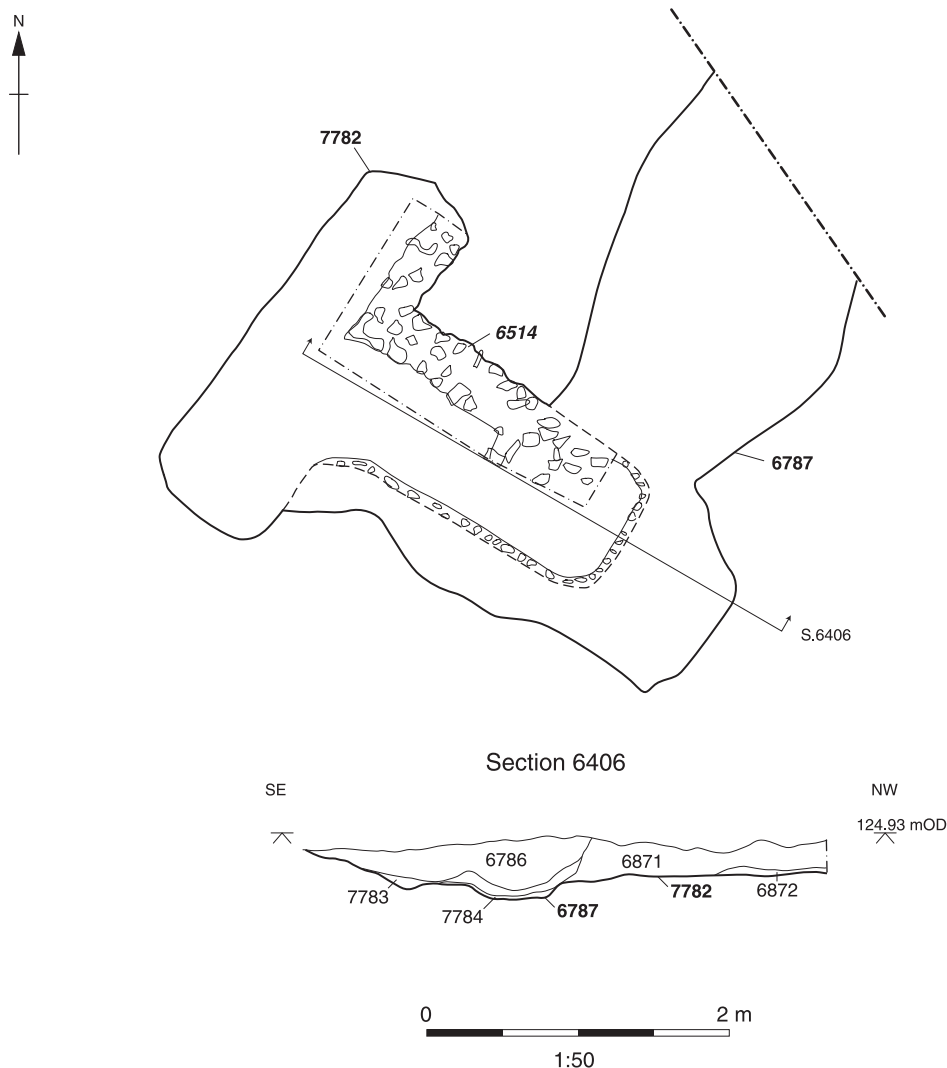


Fig. 3.11 Junction 8N, detail plan and section of corn dryer 6514

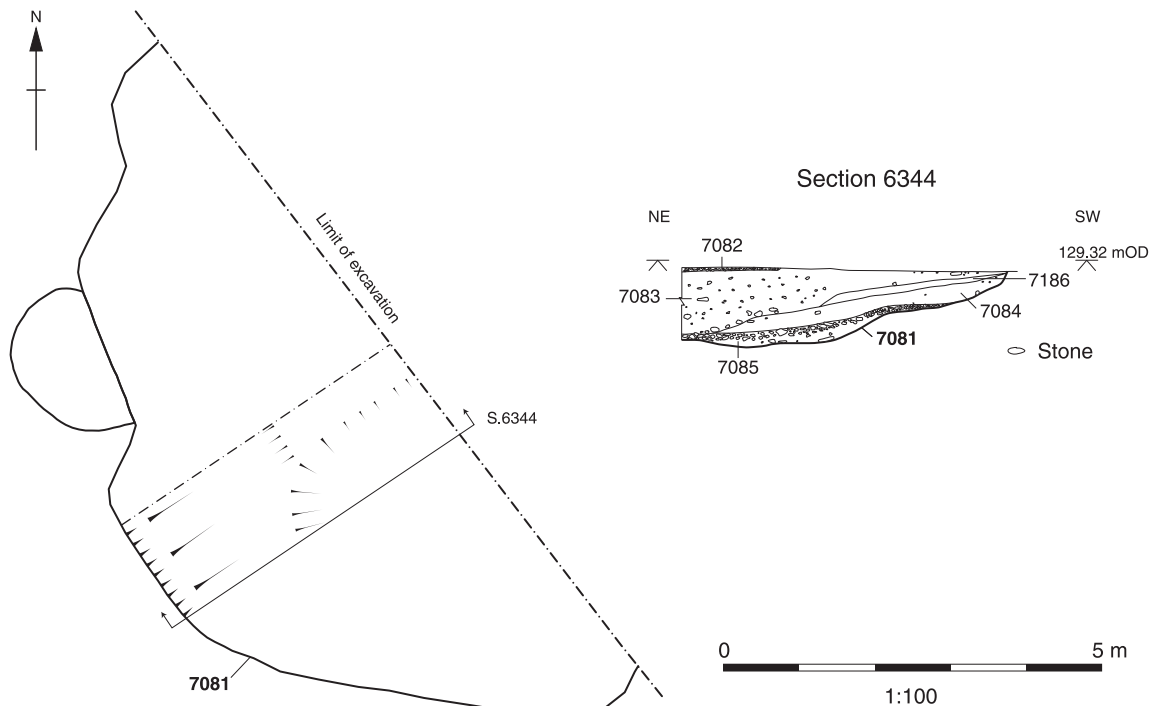


Fig. 3.12 Junction 8N, detail plan and section of quarry pit 7081

with occasional flint inclusions, while the upper two consisted of silty clay, with more frequent flint and occasional charcoal.

#### *Internal features: corn dryer 6514 (Fig. 3.11)*

The only other significant feature in the area occupied by enclosure 6150/6104 was a corn drying oven (6514). This was situated towards the south-west corner of the inner enclosure and was cut by its ditch (6104). The corn dryer may therefore have predated the enclosure altogether, although this assumes that the inner and outer ditches (6150 and 6104) were contemporary which, while likely, is not certain.

The oven was T-shaped in plan and aligned NW-SE but, in addition to the damage caused by the cutting of ditch 6104, it was poorly preserved at its south-eastern end. The structure, of flint nodules (averaging 0.14m in length) bound with a mixture of chalk and clay, with occasional tile elements, was set in a NW-SE-aligned pit measuring *c.* 3.7m long and 0.4m deep. The main flue was *c.* 2.25m long, 0.6-0.65m wide and 0.25m deep, while the cross bar of the 'T' was 0.2-0.25m wide and, if reconstructed symmetrically about the central axis of the main flue, would have been *c.* 2.6m long. A layer of charcoal mixed with clay silt lay over the base of the structure at its north-eastern end, within the cross bar of the T-shaped structure. Overlying this was a mixture of silty clay, chalk and ash which filled the cross bar and the flue. Curiously, the stokehole seems to have been an irregular pit (6787), measuring 2.1 x 1.6 x 0.37m,

set on the north-east side of the flue at its south-eastern end. The stokehole was filled with three layers of silty clay and charcoal containing inclusions of flint gravel and chalk.

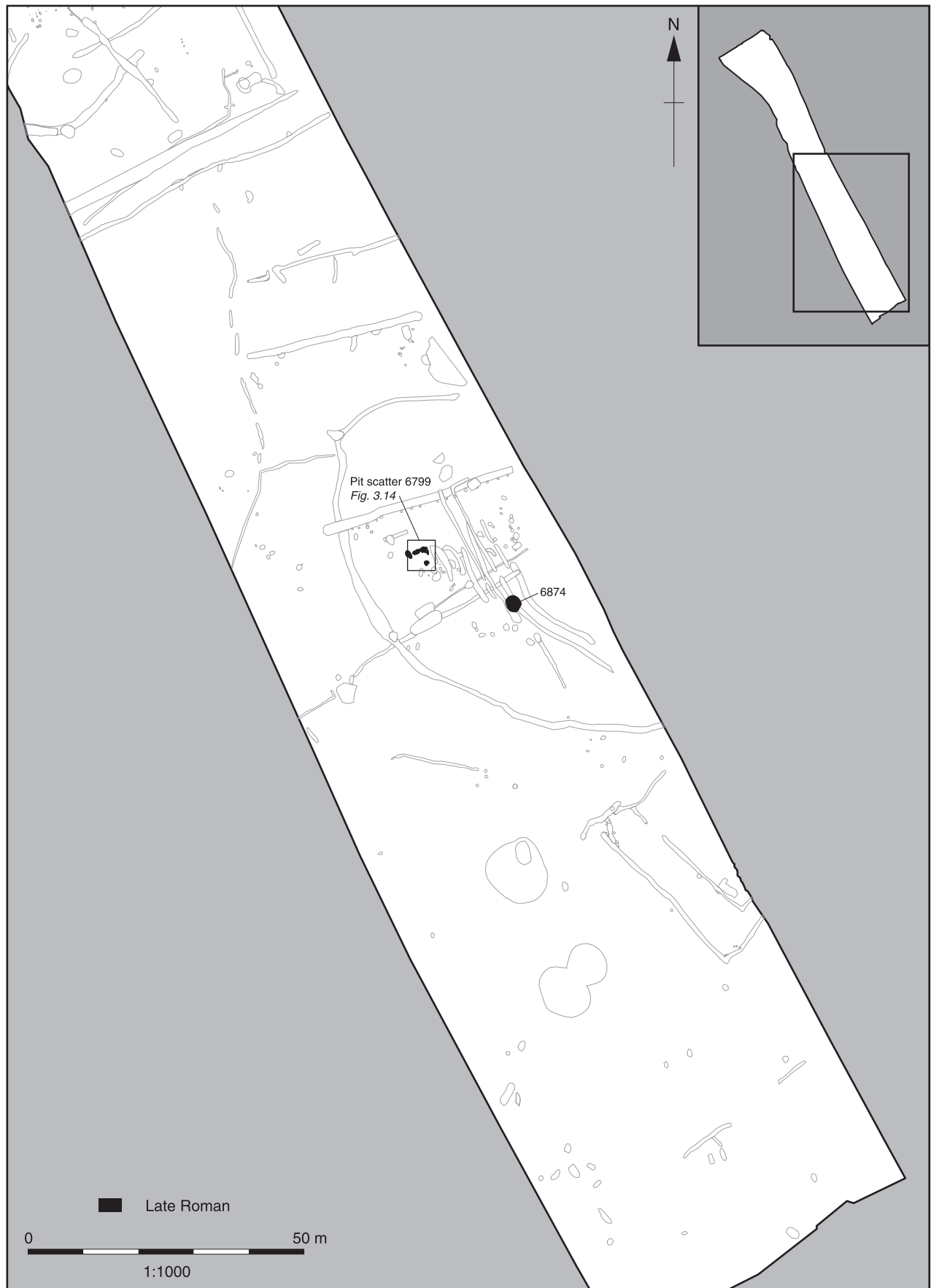
#### *Features north of enclosure 7700*

##### *Quarry pit 7081 (Figs 3.5 and 3.12)*

Situated immediately to the north of enclosure 7700, quarry pit 7081 extended beyond the limit of excavation to the north-east and contained late 1st-2nd-century pottery. Within the excavated area it was sub-circular in plan, measuring at least 4.4 x 2.75m, and was up to 1.16m deep with an irregular profile. The pit had a primary fill of silty clay and angular flint pebbles, overlain by three deposits of silty clay with flint inclusions.

##### *Ditches 6713 and 6768 (Fig. 3.5)*

Ditches 6713 and 6768 were situated to the north-west of enclosure 7700 and were approximately 14m apart with 6713, the more southerly of the two, a further 13m distant from enclosure 7700. Pottery dating indicates that they went out of use in the early 2nd century, although they were probably established at the same time as the enclosures to their south. The ditches respected the line of late Iron Age-early Roman ditch 7187 to their west, suggesting that this feature survived as a boundary marker, if not an open ditch into the early Roman period. Ditch 6713 was orientated ENE-WSW and



*Fig. 3.13 Junction 8N, late Roman activity*

projected 32m from the eastern site baulk. It was 1.2m wide and 0.35–0.44m deep with a U-shaped profile. Its fills comprised silty clay, with frequent to occasional flint inclusions. Ditch 6768 was also orientated ENE-WSW and projected in total some 28m from the eastern site baulk. It was less regular in plan than ditch 6713, having a short south-eastward return towards its western end, at a point where there was a small break in the principal alignment which was then resumed for a further 4.5m. The ditch therefore incorporated several compo-

nents which were probably not all exactly contemporary. It was up to 1.1m wide and ranged from 0.37–0.55m in depth. In profile, the ditch was flat based with steeply sloping sides and its fills comprised silty clay with frequent inclusions of flint and moderate charcoal flecks.

#### Trackway 6364/6365 (Fig. 3.5)

To the north of ditch 6768 two ditches (6364 and 6365) defining a 3–4m-wide trackway ran some 46m across the full width of the site from ENE to WSW,

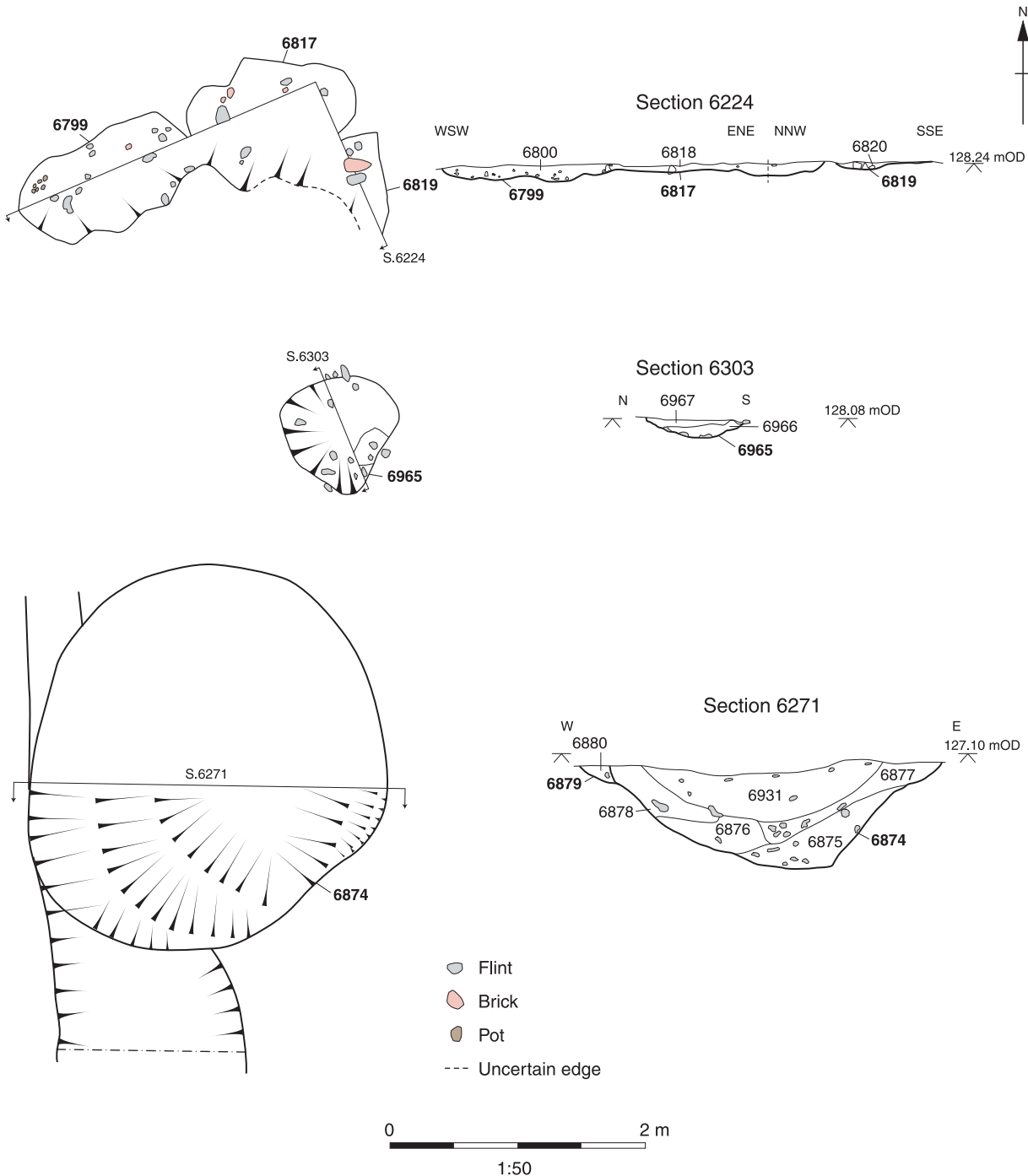


Fig. 3.14 Junction 8N, detail plans and sections of pit scatter 6799 and pit 6864

roughly parallel to the line of ditches 6713 and 6768, and some 20m distant from the latter. Pottery from the fills of ditch 6364 suggests that the feature went out of use at the end of the 2nd century, at the same time as the enclosures to its south-east. The northern boundary ditch (6364) varied in width between 0.76m and 1.8m and was 0.54-0.58m in depth, whilst the southern boundary (ditch 6365) was 0.65-0.86m wide and 0.26-0.36m deep. The ditches had bowl-shaped profiles and their fills comprised silty clays, with inclusions of flint and charcoal flecks.

#### **Late Roman activity (AD 250-410) (Figs 3.13-14)**

Very few features were assigned to the late Roman period on the basis of associated finds. The activity comprised a pit scatter (6799) along with a large quarry hollow or pit (6874), all situated in the south-eastern part of the site, within the area of early-middle Roman enclosure 7700.

Pit scatter 6799 (Fig. 3.14) consisted of four shallow sub-circular pits (6799, 6817, 6819 and 6965) and/or postholes, with bowl-shaped profiles. These features ranged from 0.25-1.19m in diameter and were between 0.06m and 0.13m deep. They were filled with deposits of silty clay, with frequent inclusions of flint.

Pit 6874 (Fig. 3.13) measured 3m in diameter and was 0.8m deep. It was filled with a mixture of silty clay and flint nodules and produced substantial amounts of late Roman pottery, brick and tile.

#### **Medieval activity (late 12th-13th centuries) (Fig. 3.15)**

##### **Summary**

The medieval activity, most if not all of which dated to the late 12th-13th centuries, occupied the part of the site to the north of the early Roman trackway. It is divisible into two broad stratigraphic phases. Features assigned to the first phase comprised two east-west-aligned boundary ditches (6095 and 6449), set approximately 26m apart, and a small oven or kiln (6585). These features produced no secure dating evidence, but are believed to be medieval in date on the basis of their spatial relationship with the medieval settlement.

The first phase boundary ditches were superseded by an L-shaped ditch (6119), running NNW from Roman trackway ditch 6364, which it respected, before cutting ditch 6095 and kiln 6585, and returning to the WSW where it ran beyond the limit of excavation. Ditch 6109 defined an enclosure



*Fig. 3.15 Junction 8N, medieval activity*



measuring 67-72m NNW-SSE, aligned on the route of the Roman trackway, which may therefore have marked the line of a track or boundary that was still in use in the medieval period. Lying within the enclosure, defined by ditch 6119, was a substantial rectangular post-built structure (6961). The building was surrounded by several pits (6030, 6054, 6188, 6363, 6406 and 6497) and was flanked by a number of probable drainage gullies (6300, 6402, 6403, 7006 and 7704) to the south-east. Evaluation trench 1126 which lay to the south-west of the medieval settlement, produced evidence of several SW-NE-orientated gullies and a layer, which produced 13th-century pottery, suggesting that occupation continued beyond the limit of excavation to the south-west. To the north-west of structure 6961 a group of three narrow linear gullies (6515, 6524 and 6538) may have represented palisade slots dividing up yards or working areas.

#### *Phase 1 (?late 12th-13th centuries) (Fig. 3.16)*

##### *Ditches 6095 and 6449*

These east-west-aligned ditches were parallel to each other some 25-26m apart and extended the entire width of the excavated area (c 50m). Ditch

6095 varied from c 0.5-1m in width and 0.2-0.3m in depth. It had a flat base and steeply sloping sides and was filled with a single deposit of silty clay, with occasional flint inclusions. Ditch 6449 was also variable in width. Where it was best preserved, adjacent to the west baulk of the site, it was 1.3m wide and 0.42m deep with a shallow V-shaped profile. The ditch fill contained a single deposit of sandy silt with occasional inclusions of flint.

##### *Oven/kiln 6585 (Fig. 3.17)*

Oven/kiln 6585 lay 2m south of ditch 6449 towards the eastern edge of the site and directly beneath the north-east corner of the later enclosure defined by ditch 6119. It was sub-circular in plan, with a south-east-aligned flue (6174), which had been partially cut away by ditch 6169. There was no evidence for a stokehole, which may have been completely cut away by the same ditch. The kiln measured 1.88m in length by 1.5m wide and was 0.6m deep, and was lined with irregularly laid flint nodules in a crushed chalk 'mortar'. The flints ranged from 0.1-0.5m in size and the junction of the chamber with the flue was marked by a very large piece of flint on each side. The flue measured between 1.05m and 0.85m in depth and was lined with identical materials to the oven. The backfill of the kiln comprised flint nodules, chalk

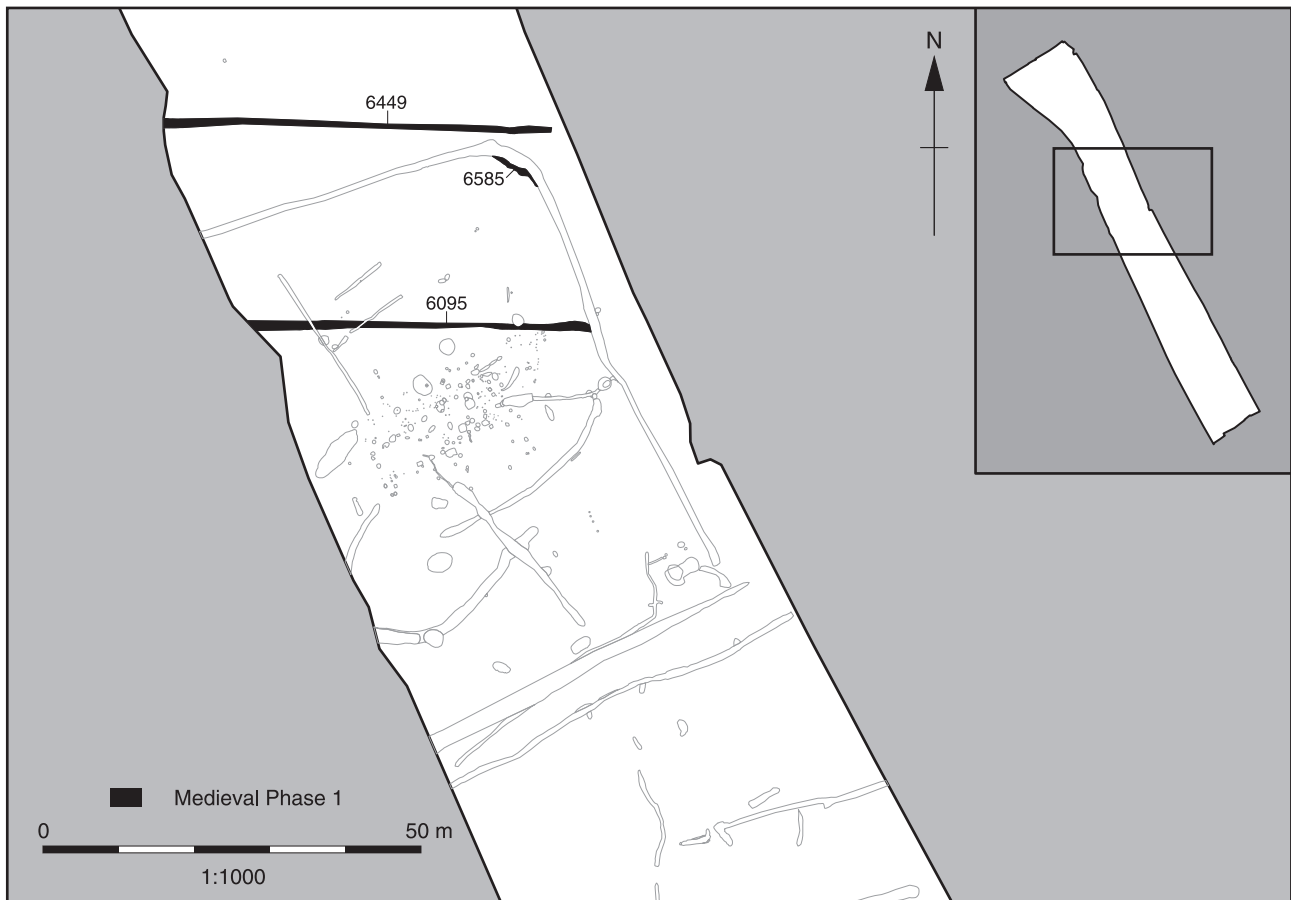
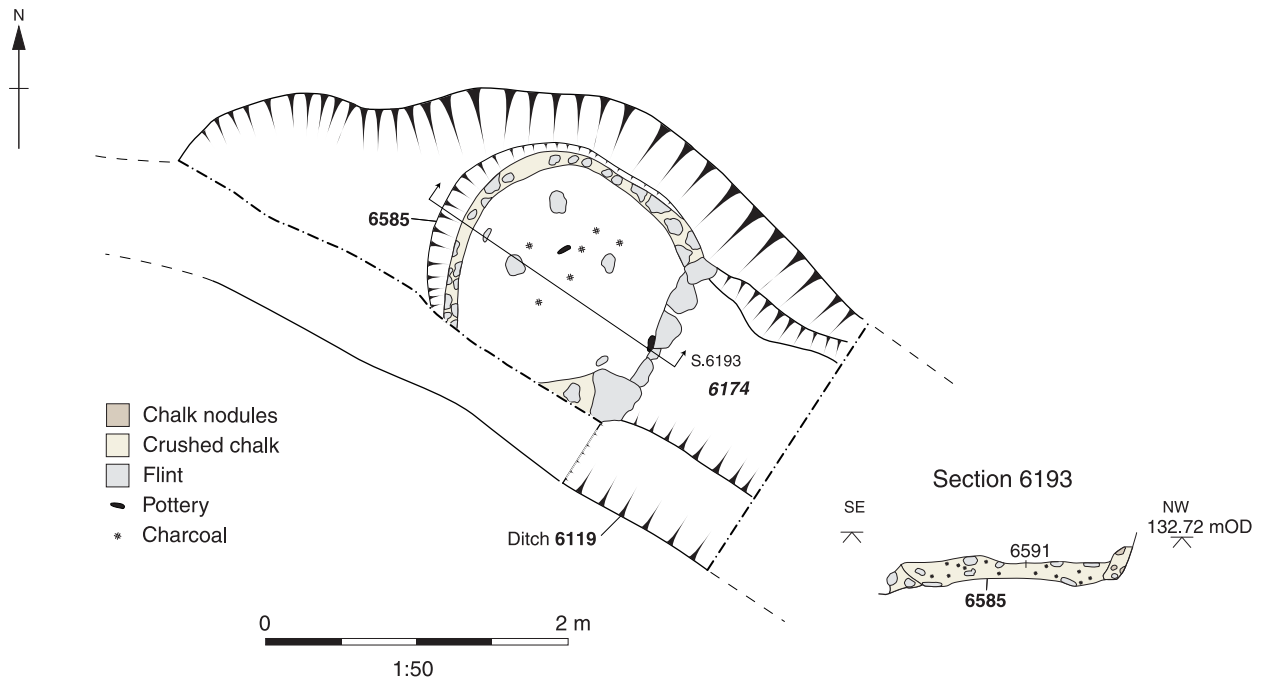
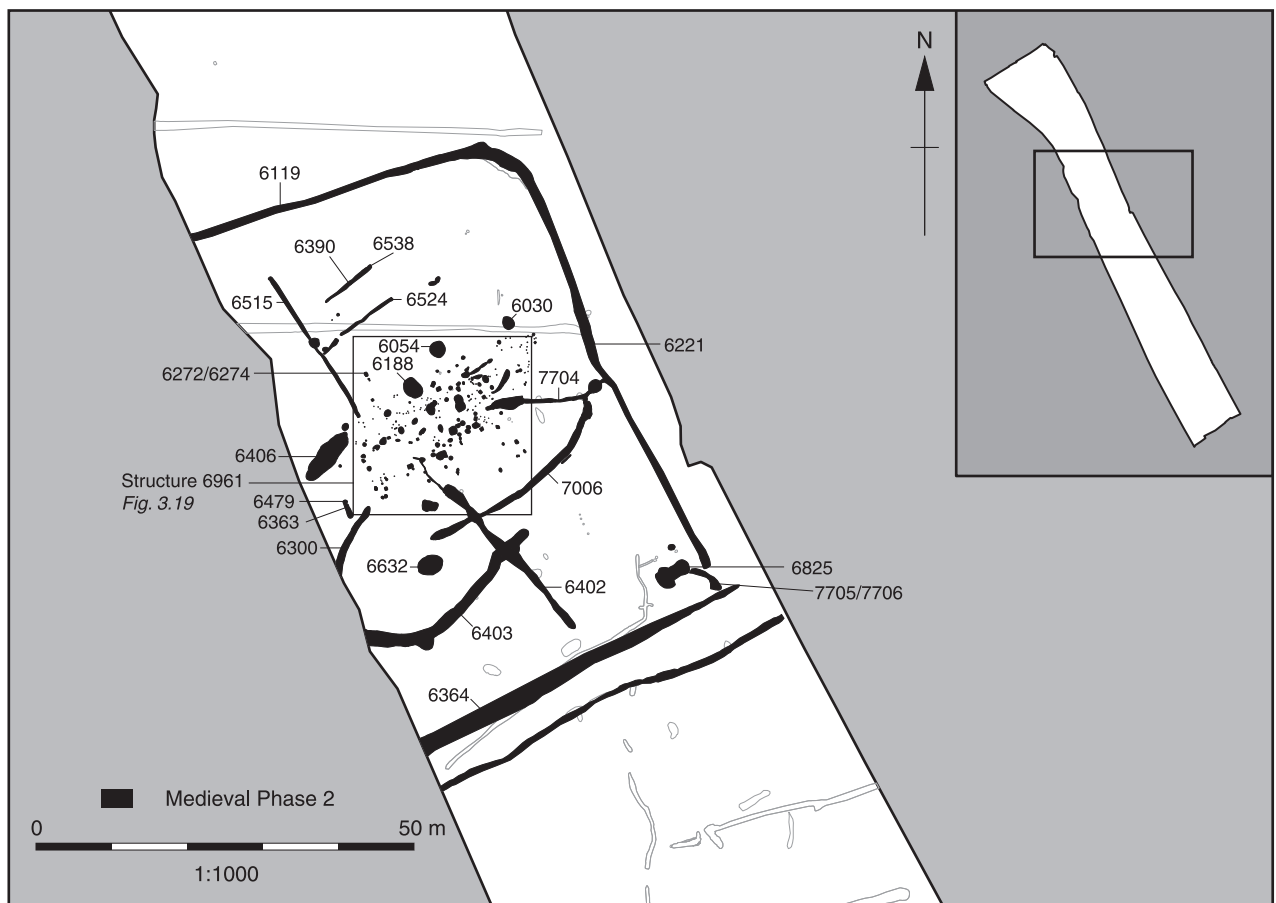


Fig. 3.16 Junction 8N, medieval phase 1 plan of all features



*Fig. 3.17 Junction 8N, detail plan and section of oven/kiln 6585*



*Fig. 3.18 Junction 8N, medieval phase 2 plan of all features*

and silty clay and contained a moderate quantity of Roman ceramic building material, possibly originally incorporated into the structure. It also produced a little medieval pottery as well as charred cereal remains and charcoal (see Chapter 8). The backfill of the flue was identical to that of the kiln, although it appeared to have accumulated in several layers and did not contain charred plant remains.

### *Phase 2 (late 12th-13th centuries) (Fig. 3.18)*

#### *Enclosures and ditches*

Ditch 6119 was L-shaped in plan, aligned SSE-NNW and then returning to the WSW from its northern end, and was traced for a total length of *c* 102m. The eastern arm of the ditch appeared to terminate *c* 3.5m north of the earlier trackway ditch (6364), which formed the south boundary of the medieval settlement complex, but at this point the ditch was only 0.07m deep and it is possible that this was not its real terminus. The ditch varied from 0.95-1.65m in width and was up to 0.6m deep. Generally, it had steeply sloping sides, giving a V-shaped or slightly wider, flat-bottomed profile. Its typical single fill comprised silty clay, with moderate to frequent inclusions of flint and occasional charcoal flecks.

At the point of intersection with east-west ditch 6095, assigned to the previous phase (see above), there was evidence of an earlier cut (6221) on the same alignment as 6119. This earlier cut did not extend south of ditch 6095 and seems therefore to have terminated at the intersection, though it is clear that 6221 was the later of the two features. Ditch 6221 was at least 1.4m wide with sides sloping gently in the upper part of the profile and then steepening above the flat base of the feature, which was 0.56m deep and filled with a single deposit of yellow-brown clay silt. The ditch could not be traced more than *c* 4m north of the point of intersection with 6095, so its significance is uncertain. If it marked an earlier phase of enclosure 6119 this must have been smaller than in the form represented by ditch 6119 itself.

#### *Post-built structure 6961 (Figs 3.19-21)*

Some 63 postholes were interpreted as components of a NE-SW-aligned post-built structure (6961). This structure lay at the centre of the exposed portion of the enclosure, perpendicular to the eastern arm of the enclosure ditch. The postholes were generally sub-circular in plan, with flat bases and vertical sides, ranging between 0.25m and 0.85m in diameter and 0.05-0.48m deep (Table 3.1). The shallow nature of some of these postholes suggests considerable truncation. The posthole fills comprised silty clay with occasional to moderate inclusions of flint, chalk and charcoal flecks. Only four postholes contained more than a single fill and one post-pipe was observed (in 6999), although it is possible that some were missed because of the homogeneous nature of the posthole fills.

Due to the number of features within the footprint of the building, its layout was ambiguous and there was clearly some rebuilding or repair, including possible rearrangement of the internal features, or an earlier/later phase of activity. There are two main possibilities: first that the postholes represent one large building; and second that two smaller structures are represented. If the postholes do represent a single structure then the building measured 24.3m long by 5.5-6m wide, with a possible 3m-wide entrance, approximately half way along the building's length, on its north-western side. This possible entrance was defined by postholes 7542 and 7022, both of which measured approximately 0.5m in diameter and were 0.2m deep. The north-western wall of the putative structure comprised a single continuous, but irregularly spaced line of postholes, with a beam-slot (6942/6944) at the north-eastern end and little evidence of any rebuilding, although posthole 6433 may have replaced posthole 6435. The north-eastern end of the structure was defined by two groups of two postholes (7167/7170 and 6342/6540), with postholes 6342 and 6540 representing the south-eastern corner of the building. Outlying posthole 7534 may have been the north-eastern corner post. The south-eastern wall of the structure was similar in construction to the north-western one, but had fewer and less substantial postholes (possibly due to greater levels of truncation at this point) and more evidence of rebuilding. On the south-eastern side posthole 7045 may have been replaced by posthole 7175, or posthole 7043, and the line of the wall altered at some point to incorporate postholes 6327 and 7562. The south-western end of the putative structure was more clearly defined, with six postholes, including two closely spaced postholes (6361/6527 and 7558/7051) at each corner. A gap of 4m in the south-western wall at the south-western end of the building may have provided an alternative entrance.

The second option, incorporating two putative structures rather than one, is in many ways the more convincing scenario. In this case a larger structure, measuring 15.75 x 5.5m was accompanied by a smaller structure measuring 6 x 6m immediately to its north-east. The larger structure would have been similar in construction to the putative large structure discussed above, although in this case postholes 7542 and 7175 would have marked the corners of the north-eastern wall-line of the building. The smaller building would have incorporated many of the postholes from the north-eastern end of the larger structure discussed above and included beam-slot 6942/6944. In this case, however, postholes 6948, 6439, 7180 and 6623 would have marked the line of the south-western wall of the smaller structure, with postholes 6494 and 6496 possibly serving as extra support for its roof.

There were a number of features, including pits and postholes, within the footprint of the structure, but few of them could be related to the structure/

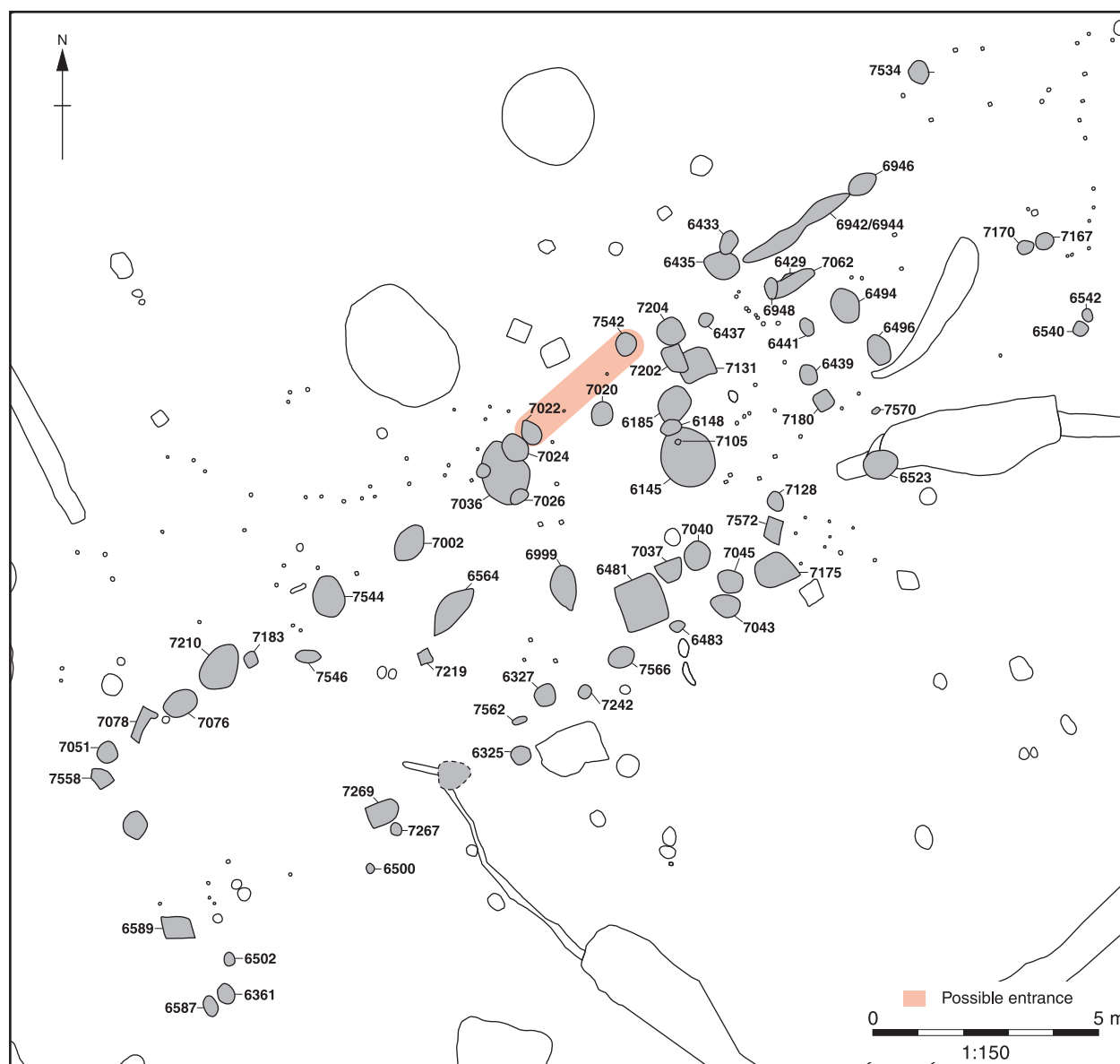


Fig. 3.19 Junction 8N, detail plan of structure 6961

structures or its/their use and not all of them were necessarily contemporary. Oval feature 6999, which measured 0.85m long and 0.19m deep, showed clear evidence of a post-pipe and may have been a posthole supporting the roof of the structure. Square posthole 7219 may have fulfilled a similar function. Large pit 6145, which was sub-circular in plan and measured up to 1.45m across by 0.5m in depth, had been backfilled with at least three deposits of silty clay and gravel, containing high concentrations of charcoal and ceramic building material, which may relate to the demolition of the building(s). The remaining internal features comprised randomly placed pits/postholes varying from sub-rectangular to sub-circular in plan. These features were up to 1.2m long, ranged between 1.04m and 0.45m in diameter, and were all between 0.06m and 0.37m deep.

Finds from the structure/structures were restricted in scope, comprising small groups of fairly abraded late 12th-13th-century pottery. The largest individual assemblage was a group of 25 sherds, weighing 55g, from posthole 7175. However, this material provides relatively little information about the detailed chronology and function(s) of the building(s).

#### *Pits 6030, 6054, 6188, 6363, 6406 and 6632 (Fig. 3.18)*

This group of pits was scattered around post-built structure 6961, with pits 6030, 6054, 6188 and 6406 located close to its north-west side, pit 6363 positioned outside and parallel to the south-west end of the structure, and pit 6632 located some distance to the south. Pits 6030, 6054, 6188 and 6632 were sub-circular to oval in plan, pit 6406 was much larger and more elongated, whilst pit 6363, also

Table 3.1: Details of structure 6961

Feature	Diameter or length/ width (m)	Depth (m)	Dating
6145	1.45	0.5	None
6148	0.2	0.16	Late 12th-13th-century pottery
6185	0.9	0.19	None
6327	0.59	0.09	None
6429	0.4	0.37	Late 12th-13th-century pottery
6433	0.43	0.11	None
6435	0.98	0.05	None
6437	0.4	0.06	None
6439	0.52	0.03	None
6441	0.47	0.06	Late 12th-13th-century pottery
6481	0.98	0.16	Late 12th-13th-century pottery
6494	0.96	0.12	none
6496	0.53	0.06	Late 12th-13th-century pottery
6498	0.28	0.04	Late 12th-13th-century pottery
6523	0.75	0.8	Late 12th-13th-century pottery and metalwork
6564	1.22	0.3	Late 12th-13th-century pottery
6589	0.67	0.06	None
6942	1.71	0.14	Late 12th-13th-century pottery and metalwork
6944	1.63	0.07	Late 12th-13th-century pottery
6946	0.78	0.48	Late 12th-13th-century pottery
6948	0.5	0.5	Late 12th-13th-century pottery
6999	0.85	0.19	None
7002	0.85	0.19	Late 12th-13th-century pottery
7020	0.55	0.5	None
7022	0.21	0.2	None
7024	0.55	0.21	None
7026	0.28	0.21	None
7035	1.6	0.26	None
7037	0.45	0.24	None
7040	0.62	0.28	Late 12th-13th-century pottery
7045	0.48	0.22	None

Table 3.1: Details of structure 6961 - continued

Feature	Diameter or length/ width (m)	Depth (m)	Dating
7046	0.8	0.22	None
7051	0.56	0.1	Late 12th-13th-century pottery
7062	1.2	0.27	Late 12th-13th-century pottery
	x 0.69		
7076	0.84	0.17	None
7128	0.5	0.29	None
7175	0.8	0.14	None
7177	0.48	0.06	None
7180	0.48	0.1	None
7183	0.42	0.3	None
7210	1.06	0.52	None
7215	0.25	N/A	None
7217	0.18	N/A	None
7219	0.3	0.09	None
7221	0.29	0.25	None
7223	0.24	0.07	None
7242	0.36	0.1	Late 12th-13th-century pottery
7246	0.6	0.03	None
7248	0.38	0.12	None
7267	0.25	0.05	None
7269	0.53	0.1	None
7277	0.57	0.11	Late 12th-13th-century pottery and metalwork
7512			None
7516			None
7542	0.5	N/A	None
7544	0.9	N/A	None
7546	0.5	N/A	None
7558	0.5	N/A	None
7560	0.2	N/A	None
7562	0.35	N/A	None
7566	0.6	N/A	None
7572	0.55	N/A	None
7590	N/A	N/A	None

elongated, might perhaps have been an irregular slot, rather than a pit, and incorporated a posthole (6479) at its north-west end. The four ovoid pits ranged from 1.7-3.5m in length and were between 0.07m and 0.85m deep. With the exception of pit 6054, which had an irregular profile, they all had flat bases and steep sides. Pit 6406, measured 8.2 x 2.96m in plan and was up to 0.68m deep, while the linear 'pit' 6363 was 2.4m long and 0.7m wide and had a maximum depth of 0.29m. This pit also had an irregular profile, steep sided on the south-west side and sloping on the north-east, with a slight longitudinal step in its base.

The pit fills varied, though most comprised clay silt, with variable inclusions of flint, chalk and charcoal flecks. Pit 6406 had a sequence of five fills, including a layer of burnt material, which appeared to represent discrete episodes of deliberate back-filling/dumping. The generally regular profiles of these pits suggest that they were dug as rubbish

pits, rather than being infilled quarry pits. The pit fills contained assemblages of late 12th-13th-century pottery.

#### *Drainage ditches 6300, 7704, 7006, 6403 and 6402 (Fig. 3.18)*

Curvilinear ditches 7704, 7006, 6300 and 6403, were all contemporaneous and aligned broadly NE-SW. Judging from their scale they probably served to drain surface water, with ditches 7704 and 6300 perhaps draining water away from the corners of structure 6961. However, along with enclosure boundary ditch 6119 they divided the south-east corner of the enclosure into two sub-rectangular enclosures, measuring 21m NW-SE by 20m WSW-ENE, and 24m WSW-ENE by 13m NW-SE respectively. These may have been used for corralling animals and/or other agricultural activities and, with the addition of a gate between ditches 7006 and 6403, would have served to keep animals away



from structure 6961. At some point, after the silting up of ditches 7006 and 6403, they were replaced by NW-SE-aligned linear ditch 6402, which was dug at a right angle to structure 6961 and may have served a more straightforward function draining water away from the building.

Gully 6300 was curvilinear, measuring approximately 7m long by 0.7m wide and 0.17-0.3m deep. The gully was orientated SW-NE running beyond the limit of the excavation to the south-west and terminating close to the south-western corner of building 6961. It was flat based, with steeply

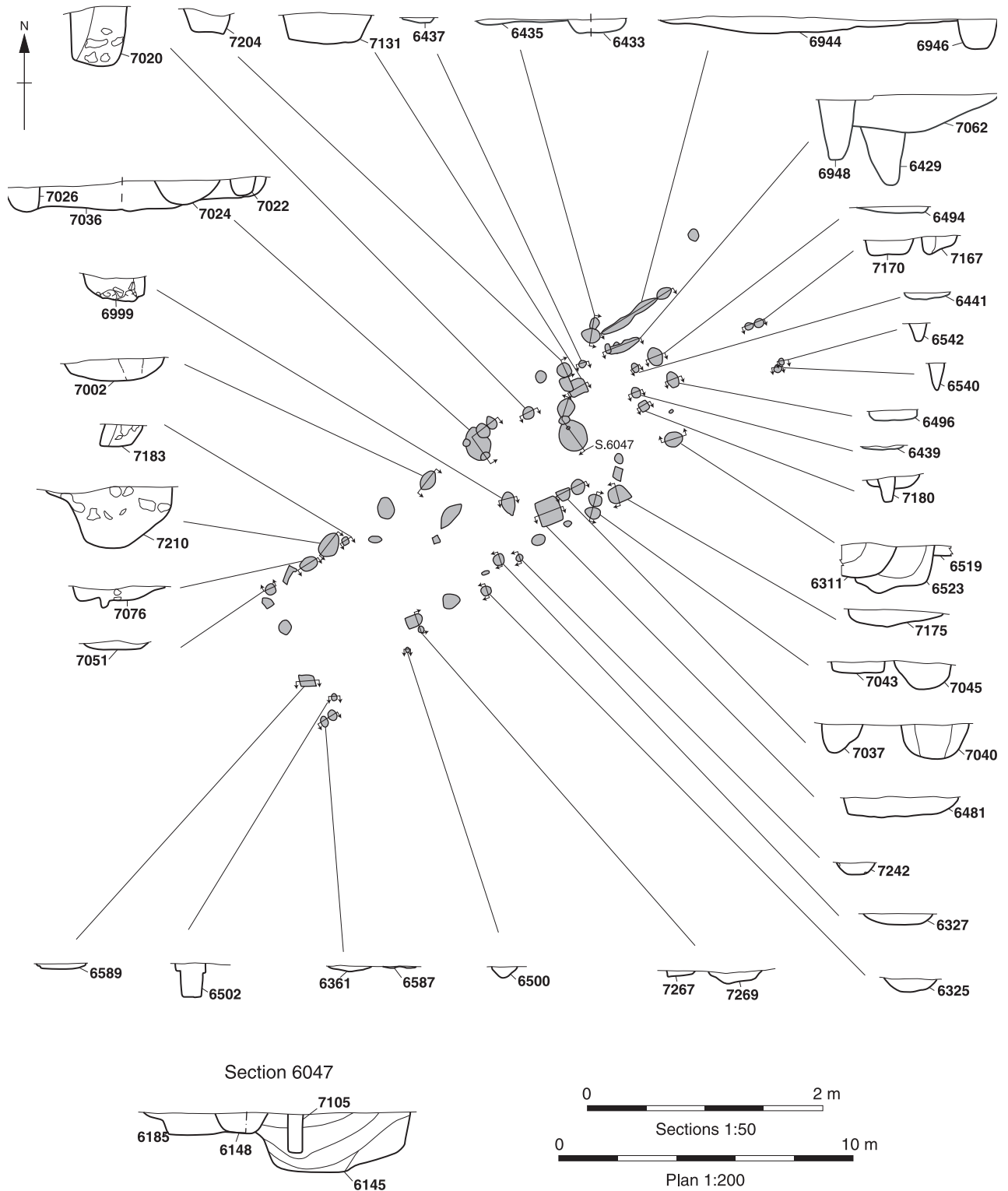


Fig. 3.20 Junction 8N, sections of features forming structure 6961





Fig. 3.21 Junction 8N, post-built structure 6961, looking north-east

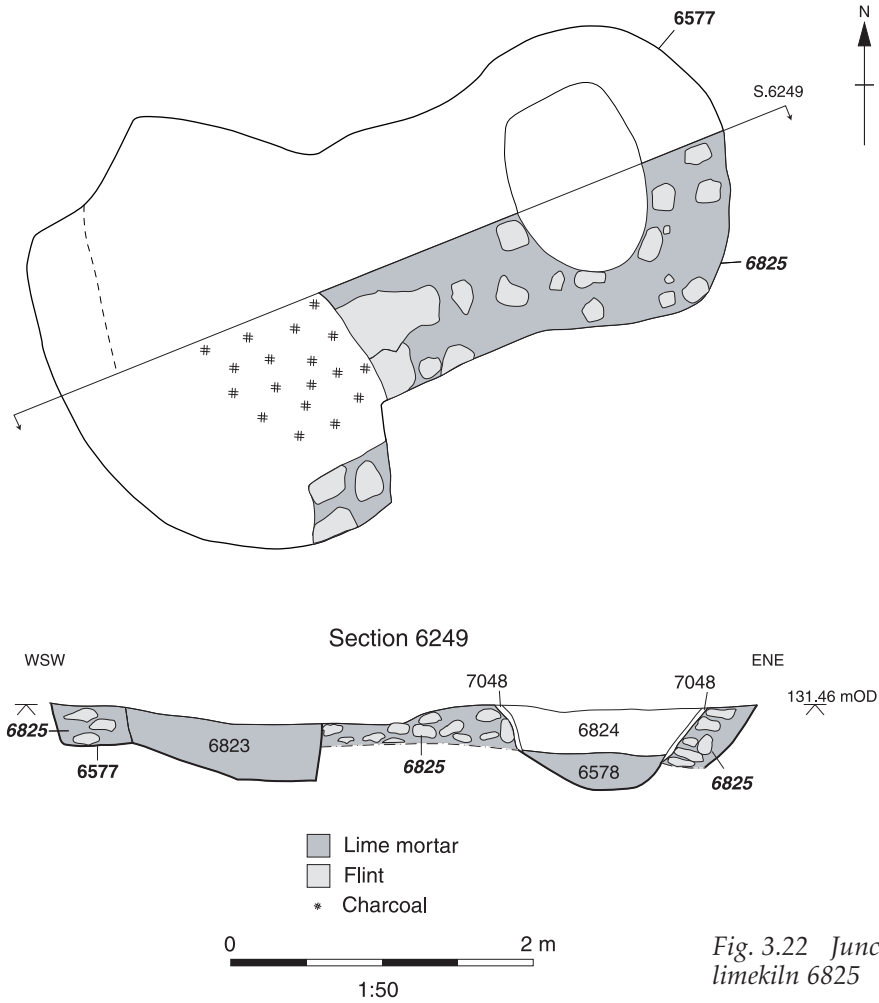
sloping sides and had two fills comprising silty clay, with frequent flint inclusions. Gully 7704 was linear, orientated SE-NW, with a terminus at the south-eastern corner of building 6961, and measured approximately 13m long, 0.5m wide and 0.14m deep. In profile, the gully had a flat base and steep sides and its fill comprised silty clay with frequent flint inclusions. Gullies 7006 and 6403 were slightly curved, but aligned broadly NE-SW. Gully 7006 had a flat base, with steeply sloping sides and measured approximately 23.5m long, 0.6m wide and 0.12-0.44m deep. The gully fills comprised silty clay, with moderate to frequent inclusions of flint, charcoal and chalk. Gully 6403, measuring 12m long, 0.7m wide and 0.58-0.68m deep, had a flat base with steep sides and its fills comprised silty clay, with frequent inclusions of flint and occasional charcoal flecks. Gully 112609, in evaluation trench 1126, may have been a south-western continuation of gully 6403. Gullies 7006 and 6403 were later filled in and replaced by a NW-SE-aligned gully (6402), which also cut them. This gully was 25.3m long, 0.8m wide and 0.32-0.54m deep, and had an irregular profile. Its fills comprised silty clay, with frequent inclusions of flint and occasional charcoal.

*Gullies/beam-slots north-west of the building (Fig. 3.18)*

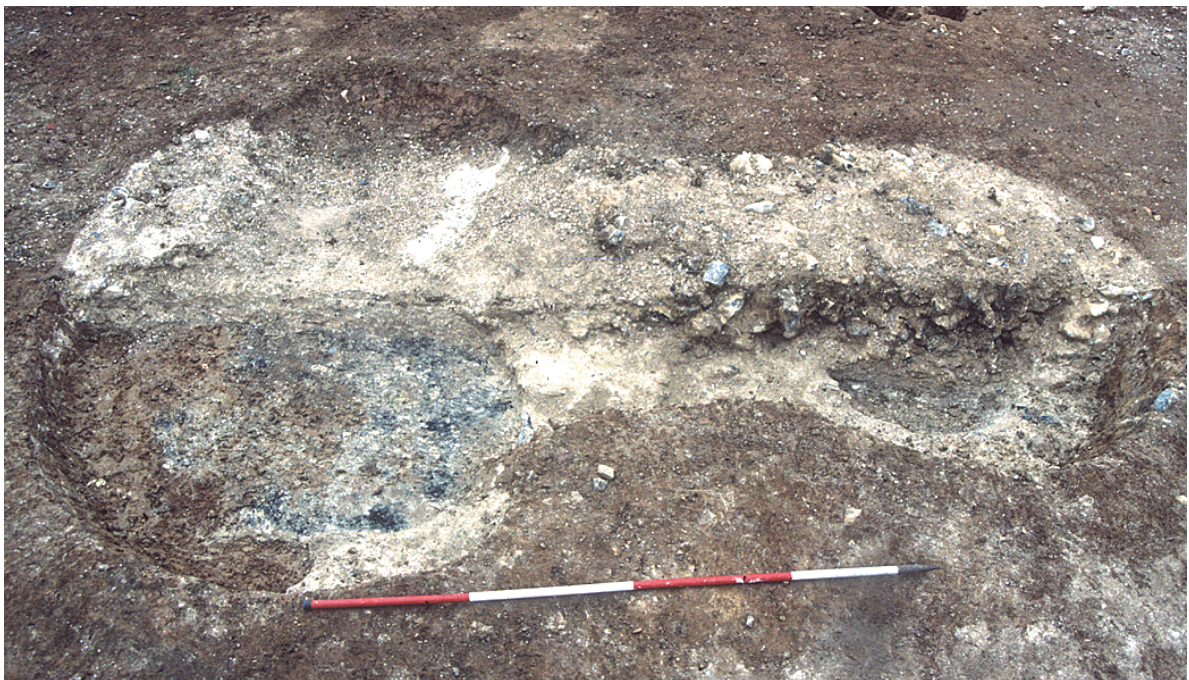
A group of three linear gullies lay immediately to the north-east of building 6961. Gully 6515 was aligned NW-SE at a right angle to the building, while gullies 6524 and 6538 were aligned NE-SW, parallel to the

building. Gully 6538 was cut by sub-circular posthole 6398, about halfway down its length. These gullies, although open to the north-east, may have been palisade slots, dividing up working areas, or animal pens. Together gullies 6515, 6524 and the north-western wall of structure 6961 may have defined a rectangular yard measuring 13.5m NW-SE by 12.5m NE-SW. A further NW-SE-aligned gully (6272/6274), approximately 1m in length, lay in the middle of this area and may have been associated with it. To the north-west of this yard, gullies 6515, 6538 and 6524 may have defined a second but smaller sub-rectangular yard measuring 12m NE-SW by 4.4m NW-SE. Gully 6515 was 17.5m long, 0.4m wide and 0.08-0.15m deep, and had a flat base, with steeply sloping sides. It contained a single deposit of silty clay, with occasional flint inclusions and frequent charcoal flecks. Gully 6524 was 11m long, 0.8m wide and 0.08m deep. It had a flat base and vertical sides and was filled with a single deposit of sandy silt, with inclusions of flint and charcoal flecks. Gully 6538 was 8m long by 0.5m wide and 0.1-0.27m deep. It too had a flat base and near vertical sides, and was filled with a single deposit of sandy silt, with occasional inclusions of flint and occasional charcoal flecks. The gully was cut by a sub-circular posthole, measuring 0.18m wide and 0.28m deep, about halfway down its length. Short linear gully 6272/6274 was 0.36-0.22m wide and 0.1-0.05m deep, and had a single fill of silty clay with occasional flint inclusions.





*Fig. 3.22 Junction 8N, detail plan and section of limekiln 6825*



*Fig. 3.23 Junction 8N, limekiln 6825, looking south-west*

*Other structures (Figs 3.22-3)*

In the south-east corner of the enclosure, close to ditch 6109 and to Roman trackway ditch 6364 was a limekiln (6825). The kiln was keyhole shaped and measured 4.46 x 3.02m. The firing chamber was set in a sub-circular pit (6577), 2m in diameter and 0.52m deep, and was lined with flint nodules bonded with lime mortar. The maximum size of the flint nodules used was 0.4 x 0.45m and the smallest measured 0.04 x 0.02m. The east-west-oriented flue, which extended from the western side of the firing chamber, was 1.5m long, 1.6m wide and 0.52m deep. The flue appears to have been lined with identical materials to the firing chamber, although this had been extensively robbed, more so on the southern side of the structure. The stokehole, at the western end of the structure, comprised a sub-circular pit 2.9m in diameter and 0.38m in depth, which was partially lined with the same materials as the rest of the structure, though these had been even more comprehensively robbed. The firing chamber had a 0.24m-thick basal fill consisting entirely of lime mortar and the entire inside wall of the chamber was lined with a layer of lime mortar up to 0.05m thick. Overlying the basal fill was a demolition layer comprising silty clay with large flint nodules. The stokehole was filled entirely by a deposit of lime mortar. The limekiln was associated with two shallow gullies (7705 and 7706) to its south-east, measuring respectively 3m long by 0.5m wide, and 5.5m long by 0.5m wide.

**BUNCEFIELD DEPOT WATCHING BRIEF**

(Fig. 3.24)

**Site location**

This site, centred on NGR TL091 081, covered an area of approximately 12.1ha immediately east of Buncefield Depot, north of the Junction 8 compound and to the west of the M1. The local geology comprises clay-with-flints, overlying Upper Chalk. The area was relatively level in the southern part of the site, but sloped down to the north, with an overall drop from c 137m aOD to c 125m aOD.

**Summary**

Evidence of activity at Buncefield depot was restricted to a thin scatter of pits and linear features over a very substantial area. Four pits (510, 516, 521 and 532) and a short stretch of ditch (506) were dispersed across the site, and contained late Bronze Age-early Iron Age pottery. A number of other small pits and ditches were observed during the watching brief, but none of them had clear spatial relationships with dated features, or contained any dating evidence, and therefore they are not described further.

**Pits 510, 516, 521 and 532**

Pit 510 was an isolated feature roughly in the centre of the site. Pits 516 and 521 were adjacent to each other, some 200m further to the NNW, and pit 532 lay another 40m distant. These features were generally sub-circular in plan, with shallow bowl-shaped profiles and varied from 1.56-2.8m in diameter and were 0.2-0.53m deep. The pit fills comprised clay silt, with moderate to frequent inclusions of flint and charcoal flecks. The fills of pit 510 only produced a single sherd of prehistoric pottery, but the other features contained late Bronze Age-early Iron Age assemblages.

**Ditch 506**

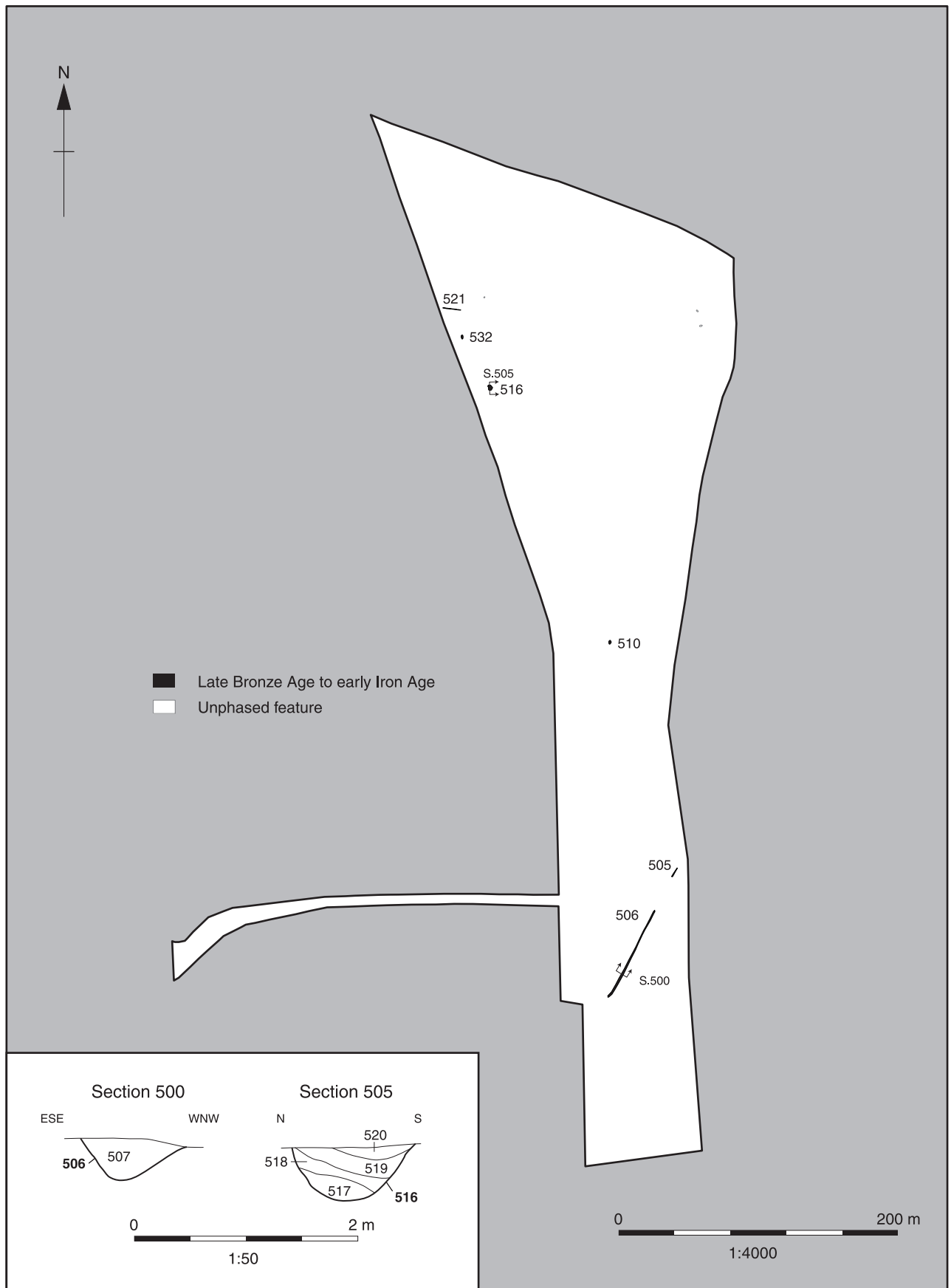
Towards the southern end of the site, ditch 506 was aligned NNE-SSW and was traced for a distance of approximately 70m. Neither end of the feature was clearly defined (probably owing to truncation) and it is likely to have extended further in both directions, perhaps turning slightly more to the south-west at its southern end. To the north, a further length of ditch (505) is almost certain to have been a continuation of the line of 506 giving a minimum length of at least 105m. The ditch was up to 1.5m wide, but only 0.3m deep, and had a rounded base with steeply sloping sides. The fill comprised silty clay with occasional inclusions of flint and chalk, and produced a single sherd of later prehistoric pottery.

**JUNCTION 8 COMPOUND (Fig. 3.25)****Site Location**

The Junction 8 compound was located at NGR TL 092 079, immediately to the north of Junction 8 of the M1. The small excavation area lay to the west of the motorway and the Junction 8S excavation area, and encompassed an area of approximately 320m<sup>2</sup>. The local geology comprises clay-with-flints, overlying Upper Chalk, and the area has a relatively flat topography, with a maximum height of 136m aOD.

**Summary**

The features at the Junction 8 Compound comprised a ditch (5513) and a group of pits and postholes (5550). Ditch (5513) bisected the site, running approximately north-south. The pits and postholes (5509, 5514, 5516, 5518, 5520, 5522, 5524, 5526, 5528 and 5532) were largely concentrated to the west of the ditch, although pit 5509 cut the ditch and pit 5514 lay to its east. In addition to the pits, there was a single tree-throw hole (5530). None of the features produced much dating evidence, although 11th-13th-century pottery from the fills of pits 5514 and 5520 suggests that the whole complex may have been medieval in date.



*Fig. 3.24 Buncefield Depot Watching Brief, late Bronze Age-early Iron Age features, with sections*

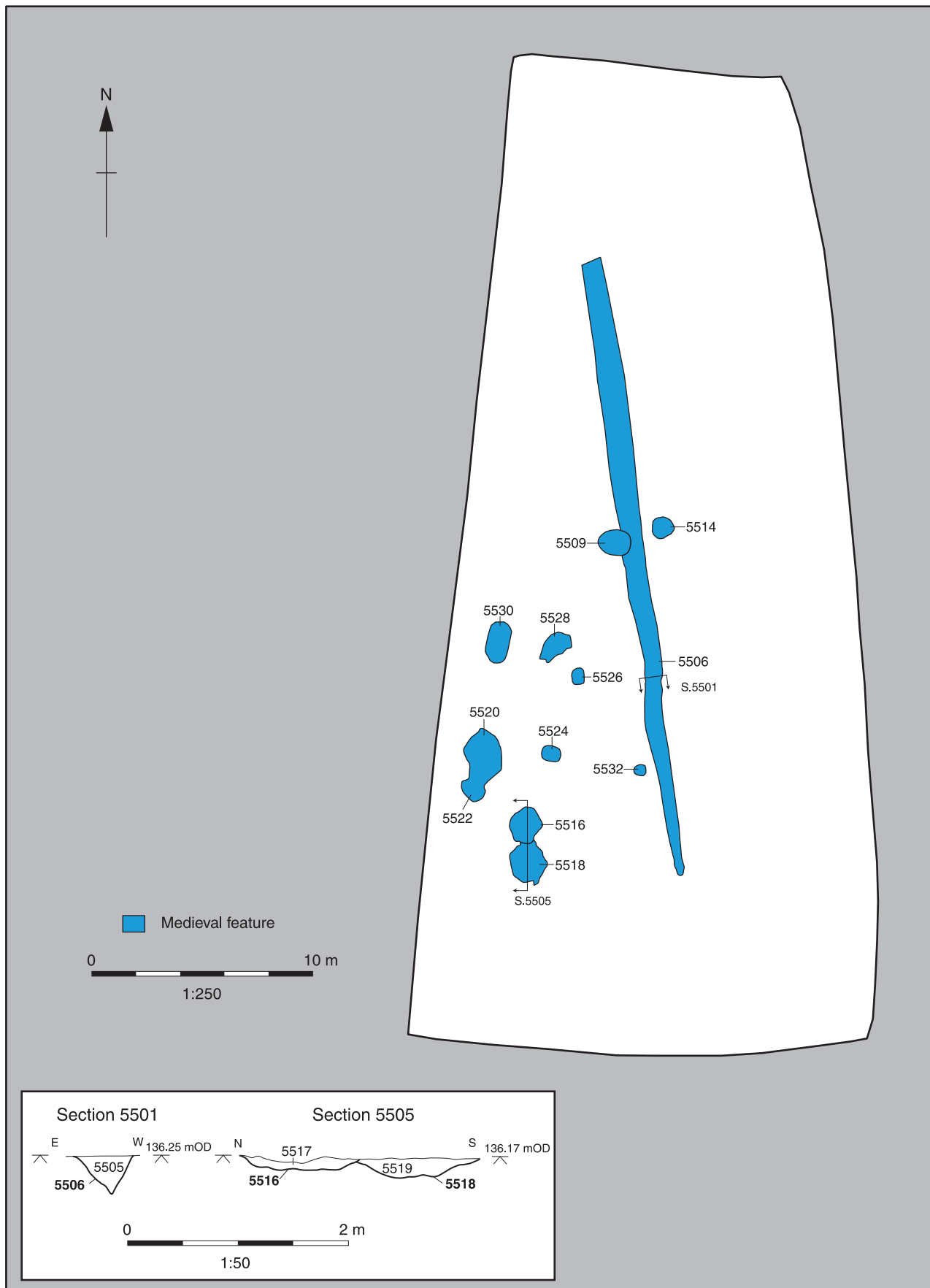


Fig. 3.25 Junction 8 Compound, medieval features, with sections

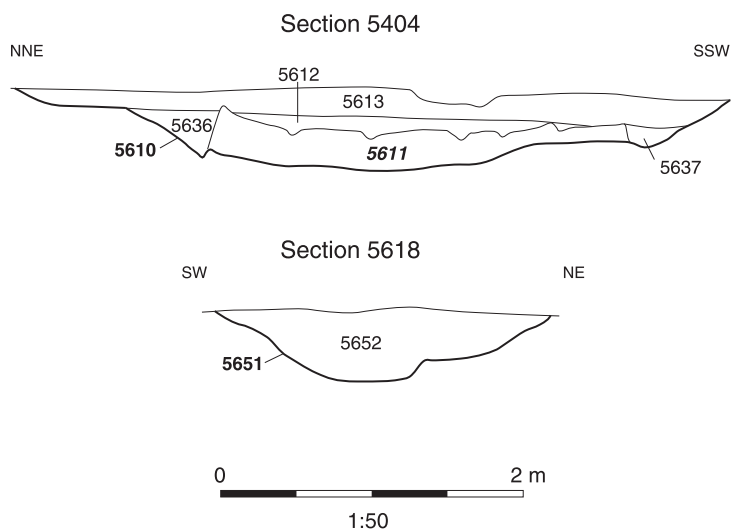
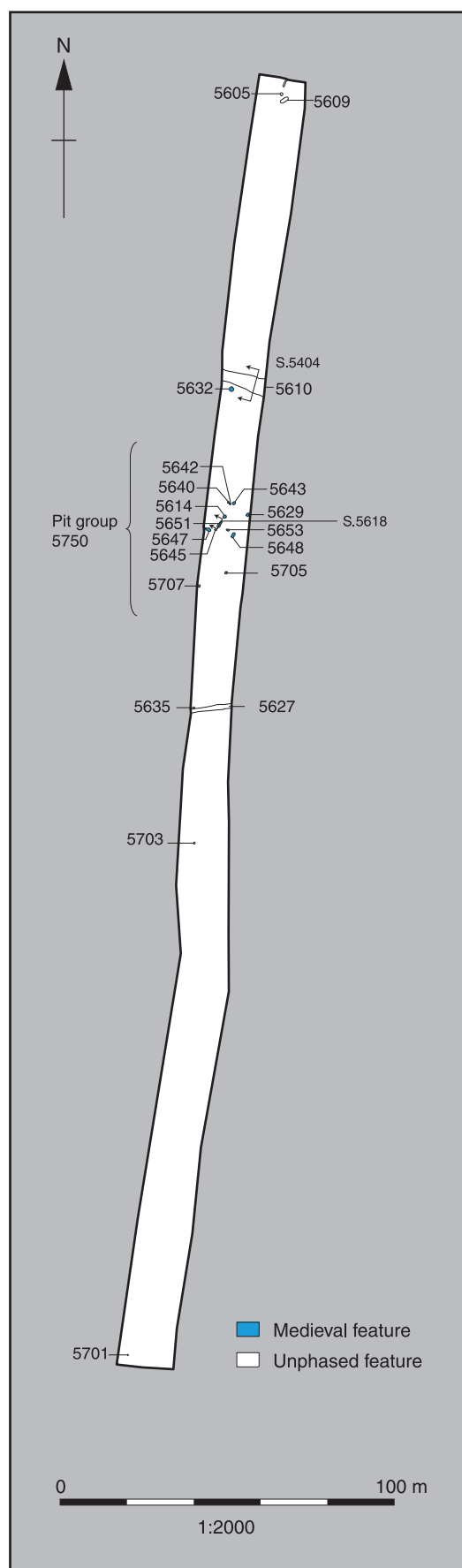


Fig. 3.26 (left and above) Junction 8 targeted watching brief, Roman and medieval activity, with sections

### Ditch 5513

Ditch 5513 was a linear feature aligned approximately north-south. It was traced for a length of almost 18m south from the point where it was obscured by a modern feature and it appeared to fade out at its southern end. The ditch was V-shaped in profile and varied from 0.25-0.82m wide and 0.25-0.36m deep. The single ditch fill comprised silty clay, with moderate flint inclusions and occasional charcoal flecks.

### Pit group 5550

Pit group 5550 comprised a scatter of ten very shallow pits and postholes, sub-circular or irregular in plan, with bowl-shaped or irregular profiles. All the features were 0.08-0.18m deep and all contained single fills of clay silt, with occasional to moderate inclusions of flint and charcoal flecks. Their other dimensions suggest at least two slightly different types of feature. Pits 5509, 5516, 5520 and 5528 were all similar in size, measuring 0.94-1.05m across, while 5514, 5522, 5524 and 5526 had 0.56-0.69m diameters. It is not possible to determine if these features were pits or postholes. Feature 5532, noticeably smaller than the others with a 0.32m diameter, may well have been a posthole rather than a pit, but neither this nor any of the other features had evidence for a post-pipe or any indication of materials used as post-packing. The disposition of the features, however, perhaps suggests an L-shaped 'structure', possibly a fenceline, formed by features 5514, 5526, 5524 and 5532, with all the other features lying to the west and south.

### Tree-throw hole 5530

Tree-throw hole 5530 was irregular in plan with a bowl-shaped profile, measuring 0.9 x 0.5 x 0.13m. It was filled



with a single deposit of clay silt, containing very occasional flint inclusions.

## **JUNCTION 8 TARGETED WATCHING BRIEF** (Fig. 3.26)

### **Site Location**

A watching brief was carried out on a long narrow area (approximately 0.6ha) to the north-west of Junction 8, centred on NGR TL 092 081. The area lay immediately to the west of the M1 and to the east of the Buncefield Depot watching brief area. The underlying geology comprises clay-with-flints, overlying Upper Chalk, and the area has a generally flat topography with a maximum height of 134m aOD.

### **Summary**

A watching brief carried out to the north-east of the compound area revealed scatters of pits or postholes, a linear ditch and a possible sunken trackway or hollow-way. The remaining features were isolated and produced no dating evidence and are therefore not described further.

### **Pit Group 5750**

Pit group 5750 comprised a scatter of ten pits/postholes (5614, 5629, 5640, 5645, 5647, 5648, 5651, 5654, 5705 and 5707) concentrated within a small area in the northern half of the site, measuring c 25m north-south. These features were generally sub-circular or sub-rectangular in plan with flat bases and steeply sloping or concave sides. One pit (5651) measured 2 x 0.8 x 0.48m, while the remaining features were between 0.37m and 0.78m in diameter and 0.1-0.64m deep. The pits were filled with silty clay containing moderate to frequent flint

inclusions and moderate to frequent charcoal flecks. Very little dating evidence was recovered from any of these features, with only four sherds of Roman pottery recovered from the entire area. Three of the sherds (dating to the mid-late 1st century) came from the upper fill of pit or posthole 5629. During excavation six of these features (5629, 5648, 5663, 5661, 5614 and 5643) were thought to represent postholes and a beam-slot, belonging to a rectangular building, perhaps c 5.5m wide, 8-9m long and aligned approximately NE-SW. However, the individual features seem quite large for such a building and their profiles are more like those of pits than postholes. If they do indeed represent a building then it seems likely to have been medieval in date, given the similarity in construction and close proximity to the 12th-century building from the main Junction 8N excavation area.

### **Hollow-way 5610**

Approximately 33m to the north of the pit scatter/building, hollow-way 5610 was aligned WNW-ESE and ran across the width of the site (here only 13m), continuing beyond the limits of excavation at both ends. The excavated section of the hollow-way was 4.76m wide and 0.56m deep, with an uneven base which contained a cobbled surface (5611), measuring 2.7m wide and consisting of flint nodules ranging in size from 0.1-0.36m. Flanking the cobbled surface were two shallow ditches. The more northerly of these (5636) measured 0.2m in depth, whilst that to the south (5637) measured 0.14m deep. Both the cobbled surface and the ditches were overlain by deposits of clay silt containing moderate inclusions of small flint fragments. Like the pit scatter/building to its south-west, this feature may have been medieval rather than Roman in date.

