



SOUTH MIDLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY

The Newsletter of the Council for British Archaeology, South Midlands Group
(Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire)

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It should be noted that the reports in this volume refer, in the main, to work carried out in 2005

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to volume 36.

This volume is somewhat slimmer than previous volumes and this is no doubt due to the introduction of page charges. For more details of these please refer to page 83. Publishing articles free was becoming impossible and would soon have bankrupted the Group. Various options were considered by the Committee including publication on the web and on CD. All these methods had their pros and cons but on balance we felt that if possible we should publish on paper because it is the most convenient form to use as it requires no technology whatsoever to access it.

All contributors get at least one page free so there is really no excuse for non-contribution. However, some organisations continue to provide no report of their work in the area. County archaeologists and professional colleagues are asked to apply pressure to these defaulters.

We are grateful to the CBA for a contribution of £250 towards the publication of this volume.

In conclusion I would like to thank all those who sent in reports and ask that they, and anyone else, send in articles for *SMA* 37. Please send a note, however short, of any work carried out in the four counties.

Copy date for *SMA* 37 is 31st March 2007; please refer to Notes for Contributors.

Barry Horne AIFA
Editor

Front cover - Metal working at Wakerley, Northants.
Sponsored by Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd

The cumulative index to volumes 1-35, is available on the website at:

WWW.britarch.ac.uk/smaindex

The index to the CBA Industrial Bulletin Nos 1-16 (1967-71) is available on the website at:

WWW.britarch.ac.uk/smaindustrialindex/index.html

BEDFORDSHIRE**ALBION ARCHAEOLOGY****Kempston, Bedford Western Bypass**

Mike Luke, Ben Barker, Lennard Anderson and Matt Smith

Site 7 (TL 1442 4759): 1.2ha open area excavation which located evidence from a variety of periods. The results can be summarised as follows:

Early-middle Iron Age: a ditch, several small pits and gravel surface were identified. These were dispersed across the excavation area with no obvious focus.

Romano-British: several ditches and a small number of isolated features including pits and an inhumation. These appear to be located on the periphery of the extensive settlement centred on Kempston Church End (Dawson, 2004).

Saxo-Norman: a single ditch of this date was located.

Medieval: a gravel trackway c 3.1m wide was identified and is believed to originate in this period. It was situated in the vicinity of the Saxo-Norman ditch and may therefore have been in use at an earlier date.

Post-medieval: the trackway mentioned above continued to function into this period. In addition, a number of large pits were dug adjacent to it probably to extract gravel.

Site 9 (TL 1862 4649): 1.2ha open area excavation which located a number of ditches and gullies, along with pits and postholes. None of these features produced reliable artefactual dating evidence but they did predate mediæval furrows.

Site 10 (TL 2007 4621): 1.2ha open area excavation which located evidence from a variety of different periods. The results can be summarised as follows:

Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age: a ditch over 160m long, c 2m wide and 0.8m deep was located. With the exception of one deposit it did not contain very much domestic debris. However, it was securely dated by the discovery of a single deposit with over 30 sherds of late Bronze Age/early Iron Age pottery. In the vicinity of this deposit were two large waterpits and a posthole alignment. These, along with a scatter of other small pits and postholes in the vicinity of the ditch are presumed to be contemporary.

Romano-British: eight parallel trenches containing early Romano-British pottery were located. They were regularly spaced at c 5.5m intervals, over c 50m long, c 0.8m wide and ended in square terminals. All the trenches had similar steep-sided profiles with flat bases. Comparable features have been identified at Cranfield, Beds (Albion, 2005). Wollaston, Northants (Meadows, 1996) and Caldecote, Cambs (Kenney, 1996) where they have been interpreted as bedding trenches and at Wollaston it was suggested these were for vines. The nearest known Roman settlement, interpreted as farmsteads, is located c 650m to the south at Marsh Leys (Shotliff, 2002).

Post-medieval: two linear areas of redeposited gravel are interpreted as trackways. Wheel ruts were identified underneath the gravel suggesting that these areas had been routeways before they were metalled. Historical maps suggest that the more major trackway was known as "the portway".

Site 11 (TL 2502 4620): 2.6ha open area excavation, c 450m to the east of Site 10, which located a field system extending over 2ha comprising rectangular fields with an integral trackway. The latter appears to connect the fields to the nearest known Roman settlement at Marsh Leys c 400m to the south. Small pits and occasional postholes occurred in clusters on the periphery of the fields. In addition, one area had been used for gravel quarrying.

Albion, 2005, *Home Farm, Cranfield archaeological field evaluation* (unpub report 05/37)

Dawson, M, 2004 *Archaeology of the Bedford Region*, BAR British Ser. 373, 152-228

Kenney, S, 2001, *Iron Age Settlement and Roman Vineyard on land off Hall Drive, Caldecote: An Archaeological Evaluation*, (unpub AFU report 200)

Meadows, I, 1996, 'Wollaston: The Nene Valley, a British Moselle?', *Current Archaeology* 150

Shotliff D, 2002; Note, *Britannia* 33, 313

Luton, Butterfield Green (TL 1102 2479)

Mike Luke, Tracy Preece and Matt Smith

Excavation was undertaken in two areas: southern area c 0.85ha in extent, centred on TL 1101/2484 and northern area c 0.2ha, centred on TL 1095 2510. The results can be summarised as follows:

Neolithic and early Bronze Age: activity of this period was hinted at by the presence of 25 flint flakes and two end scrapers.

Late Bronze Age/early Iron Age: the northern group of features within the southern area has tentatively been assigned to this period. Evidence includes a boundary

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comprising three ditch lengths, two adjacent waterpits and a few small pits.

Early-middle Iron Age: evidence for a settlement was restricted to the northern area. It comprised a number of rectangular and curvilinear ditched enclosures. The ditches had been redug on a number of occasions indicating that the settlement was occupied for more than a single episode. One of the enclosures to the north contained a roundhouse. This was c 12m in diameter and comprised a narrow circular slot into which the wattle and daub wall of the building would have been set. A gap in the slot demonstrates that the doorway was on the west side, corresponding with two postholes which would have formed part of the entrance structure. The circular nature of the enclosure ditch to the north of this building suggests a second roundhouse may have existed in this space, although no evidence survived.

A number of straight, but short, slots were identified. They were vertical-sided and often located in the vicinity of entrances to the enclosures systems. They may have been dug to hold timber fencing. A number of large, over 2m in diameter and over 1m deep, pits were identified. They are most likely to have served as pits for the retention of water. They were distributed over the whole area and may therefore have served both the human and animal populations of the settlement. It is unlikely that all the waterpits were contemporary. One was dug after the roundhouse had gone out of use, again indicating that the settlement was long-lived. A large number of other settlement-type features were investigated. These mainly comprised small postholes and pits. The distribution and patterning of the postholes did not suggest any specific wooden buildings or structures. The purpose of the majority of the small pits is uncertain, although they may have served as small quarries for clay and/or stones.

Late Iron Age/early Roman: evidence comprised a single boundary ditch, two adjacent waterpits and a small number of small pits. These were concentrated to the south of the southern area.

Medieval: Two sherds of pottery of this period were recovered from a pit in the northern part of the investigation area. However, their small size means they cannot be used as firm dating evidence for this feature.

Salford, Whitsundoles Farm (SP 9220 4005)

Mike Luke and Tracy Preece

Observation and investigation took place in advance of gravel extraction at Whitsundoles Farm adjacent to

investigations previously reported (Luke, Gregson and Preece, 2004). The investigation area comprised c 0.77ha. Evidence from a variety of different periods was identified. The results can be summarised as follows:

Early Iron Age: the major boundary of this period investigated in 2004 was found to continue to the south. It had been redug on a number of occasions and was clearly an important landscape feature. A number of the ditches turned to the west suggesting that they may have enclosed the dispersed settlement located in 2004. A small number of pits were tentatively assigned to this period. However, the small number of features and the absence of domestic debris demonstrate that the settlement identified to the north did not continue into this area.

Romano-British: it is likely the majority of the non-curving ditches are associated with the Roman field system located in previous years' investigations. Of particular interest is a narrow enclosure which is presumed to represent a routeway within the fields or to be associated with stock management.

Modern: the western part of the 2005 area had been destroyed by extensive modern disturbance. This may represent quarrying associated with the construction of Whitsundoles Farm.

Luke M, Gregson R and Preece T, 2004; 'Salford, Whitsundoles Farm', *SMA* 34

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES AND CONSULTANCY LTD

Chicksands, Lodge Farm, Sandy Lane
(TL 1235 4001)

Nigel Wilson

In January an evaluation was undertaken at Lodge Farm, in advance of commercial development. Four trenches were excavated but no finds or significant archaeological deposits were observed. Two irregular pits were interpreted as tree holes and two narrow parallel linear features in the north of the site appeared to be modern deep ploughing furrows. Possible alluvial deposits were also identified.

Colmworth, land adjacent to Colmworth Golf Course (TL 0921 5705)

Teresa Hawtin

An evaluation was carried out on land adjacent to Colmworth Golf Course, adjacent to the deserted

medieval settlement of Smartwick, prior to the construction of a fishing lake and land restoration. Eight trenches were excavated and two medieval or post-medieval drainage ditches were located in the south-western area of the site, along with one undated gully. Two pits were identified to the north, one of which contained a sherd of medieval pottery and the other a small assemblage of animal bone. A substantial ditch or pond containing medieval pottery was identified towards the centre of the site.

Dunstable, 65-75 High Street South (TL 0212 2168)
Jonathan Hunn

A watching brief was carried out in March, during redevelopment of the site. Several pit-like features and pieces of worked Totternhoe clunch stone were present.

Leighton Buzzard, 3 North Street (SP 9217 2515)
Nick Crank

A watching brief was undertaken at 3 North Street, close to the medieval town centre. The excavation of foundations was monitored but no archaeological remains were observed.

Milton Ernest, land to the rear of The Strawberry Tree Restaurant, Radwell Road (TL 0172 5602)
Nigel Wilson

An evaluation was carried out to the rear of The Strawberry Tree Restaurant in advance of residential development. Four trenches were excavated, in one of which was a small stone-lined oven or kiln. Although this feature was fully excavated, its date and function were not determined, though it was probably of medieval or earlier date. An area of burning and a shallow east – west ditch or gully were also revealed.

Tilsworth, Wood Farm Barns, Dickens Lane (SP 9805 2425)
David Fell, Nick Crank and Nigel Wilson

A watching brief was maintained during groundworks for residential development at Wood Farm Barns, close to the centre of Tilsworth. Archaeological remains were not observed.

Wymington, 9a High Street (SP 9553 6429)
Nigel Wilson

A watching brief was carried out during the construction of a house. No archaeological finds or

features were observed, and it is likely that any significant remains which may have been present were removed during the 19th century, when the land was terraced for the construction of a row of cottages.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD UNIT

Luton, land at Butterfield Green (TL 1096 2506)
S Kenney

Evaluation revealed Iron Age and undated features including several ditches, postholes and a pit. All of the stratified pottery recovered dates to the Early to Middle Iron Age. Worked and burnt flint was also found.

Sandy, Land Adjacent to No. 6 Stratford Road (TL 1818 4793)
S Hickling

Evaluation found ribbon development adjacent to the Romano-British road which lies south of Romano-British Sandy, and an inhumation cemetery. The settlement appears to be of 2nd to 4th century date, while the cemetery is attributable to the mid to late 4th century. The burials were all unfurnished inhumations, aligned east to west.

LEIGHTON BUZZARD AND DISTRICT ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Triple Bank Earthwork, Whipsnade Common (TL 0074 1781)
Barry Horne

This 20m wide earthwork runs for some 320m across the Common and was, until recently, covered in



Fig 1. Whipsnade earthwork.

Bedfordshire

bushes. No documentary references have so far been found to this earthwork although it is clearly shown on a 1946 RAF aerial photograph. It does not appear to be part of the wartime defences of the area. Its date and purpose is at present unknown.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY

Compiled by Pat Chapman

Bedford, Cambridge Road (TL 0756 4807)

Simon Carlyle

A multi-period site on the terrace gravels of the River Great Ouse, and lying on the southern edge of Bedford, was excavated prior to the development of a business/industrial park (Fig 2). The excavation was commissioned by John Samuels Archaeological Consultants (JSAC) on behalf of Gazeley Properties Limited.

The henge

To the west, a circular ring ditch, with an internal diameter of 30m – 34m, was situated on a low rise. An original western entrance suggests that this was a Neolithic henge monument in origin, but there was no clear evidence in the ditch fills to indicate the location of a bank. The entrance was lost when the ditch was later recut and a spread of dark soil across the western half of the interior may have been the remains of a central turf mound, perhaps suggesting that the monument was reused as a round barrow. A pit near the original entrance contained a group of three

inhumation burials, comprising two young adults and a child.

The segmented ring ditch or barrow

To the south-west of the henge there was a small segmented ring ditch comprising two C-shaped lengths of ditch, with the narrow, 0.5m wide, breaks in the circuit aligned on the henge. The crouched inhumation of a woman aged between 30-50 years lay at the bottom of a 1.6m deep central grave pit, and the ditch fills suggest that there may have been a mound above the grave (Fig 2).

The triple ditch system

A 220m length of a north-south triple ditch system was investigated, and the system is known to extend southwards to the Elstow Brook and probably to the River Great Ouse (*SMA* 23 (1993), 7). It would have formed the western boundary of a large, triangular block of land between the confluence of the Elstow Brook and the River Great Ouse. The sparse pottery assemblage was poorly preserved but suggests a late Bronze Age/early Iron Age date.

The Iron Age enclosure

This comprised a sub-rectangular enclosure, with an entrance to the south, which was set within a partial outer enclosure. Evidence of domestic settlement in the form of internal cut features was sparse, and the only significant quantity of pottery came from a well pit at the south-east corner of the outer enclosure. This pit was 1.5m deep and contained an assemblage of animal bone, including a horse skull, chips and slivers of wood, probably carpentry waste, and pottery dated to the early Iron Age, belonging to the nationwide shouldered jar tradition.

A clue to at least part of the role of this enclosure system may be indicated by the presence of a square, ditched mortuary enclosure towards the centre of the outer enclosure, which contained the single, disturbed inhumation of an adult male.

Roman settlement (not illustrated)

To the east of the triple ditch system and the Iron Age enclosures, there was the northern fringe of the Romano-British settlement of Eastcotts predominantly dating to the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD, which was partly excavated in the mid 1990s prior to the construction of the A421 Bypass.

Finds from large, waterlogged pits include the remains of a leather shoe, leather scraps, a wooden, double-sided comb and a wooden bobbin. There were a number of smaller pits,

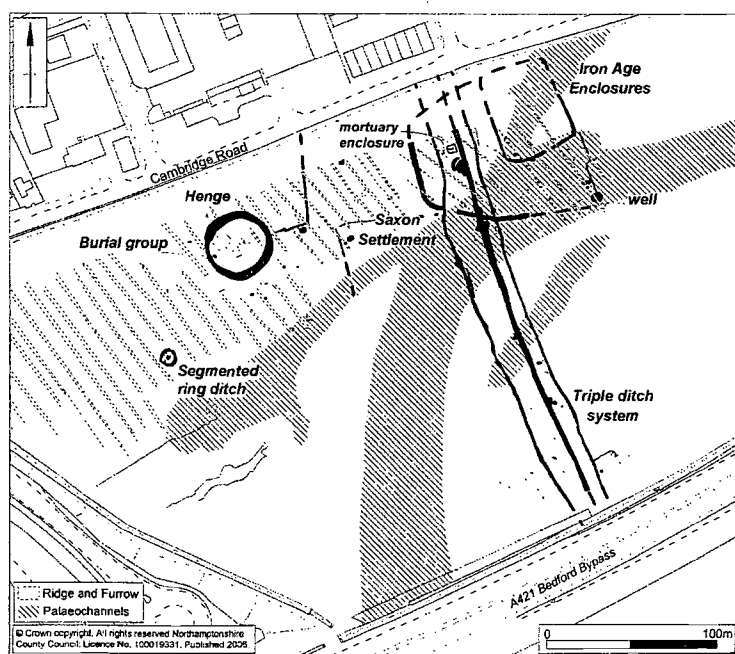


Fig 2. General plan of excavations at Cambridge Road, Bedford.

which produced a large assemblage of Roman pottery dating to the late 2nd to early 3rd century AD, and kiln bars found within this 'backyard' area indicate that there was pottery production in the immediate vicinity. There was no surviving evidence for any buildings or other structures. Features beyond the northern boundary of the settlement included a stone-lined well, a probable watering hole for livestock, various pits, an extended inhumation burial of a strongly-built man of over 40 years of age.

Early Saxon

Anglo Saxon settlement, dated to the 5th and 6th centuries by the pottery assemblage, was fairly dispersed, although the main focus lay between the henge and the Iron Age enclosures. In this area there were three Grubenhaus, or sunken-featured buildings, with a further two to the south and south-east and an isolated pit close to the Roman settlement.

Medieval

Plough furrows, aligned north-west to south-east, were recorded at the western end of the site and in an area near the centre, adjacent to Cambridge Road.

Bletsoe, Castle Barns (TL 0251 5829)

David Leigh

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks connected with the construction of a single garage on land at The Hayloft, Castlebarns. The foundations were excavated to a maximum depth of 4.5m and revealed a hard-standing or driveway of relatively modern date below the present tarmacadam surface, which extended to the base of the foundation trenches. No archaeological deposits were present and no artefacts were recovered.

Kempston, 1 King William Road (TL 0245 4739)

Anthony Maull and Ben Pears

Bounded by residential properties in King William Road and the High Street, a small open area excavation to the rear of 1 King William Road, unexpectedly revealed a large Roman enclosure ditch, dated to the 1st to 2nd centuries AD. No other Roman features were revealed, but it seems likely that there would have been some sort of activity within the enclosed area, lying to the west and south-west of the site.

Late Saxon ditches, seen in previous evaluation work (*SMA* 35 (2005), 10), appeared to have formed part of a plot boundary system. The presence of further gullies, pits and postholes reinforced the suggestion that the area was situated at the rear of tenement plots.

Excavations between 1990 and 1992 had found Roman buildings west of Kempston Church End and a Saxon cemetery of 4th to 7th century date (*SMA* 23 (1993) 13). By the late 10th century Kempston was at the centre of an estate held by Earl Tostig, which was later seized by Edward the Confessor. Excavation at Kempston Manor, to the east of the site, has identified evidence of probable high-status, manorial Saxo-Norman structures.

A number of post-medieval and Victorian features were found which related to backyard activities and included construction trenches for a small building and at least one well. At the eastern extent of the site the metalled surface of the old lane linking Kempston High Street to the corn mill adjacent to the River Great Ouse was seen.

Upper Dean, Rose Cottage (TL 0485 6799)

David Leigh

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks connected with the construction of a single storey extension and the reconstruction of an existing barn and associated service trench. A disturbed stratigraphy was revealed within the groundworks. No archaeological deposits were present and no artefacts were recovered.

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

Arlesey, St John's road (TL 191 359)

Robin Bashford

In September 2005 a field evaluation was carried out on behalf of George Wimpey, South Midlands Ltd. The evaluation revealed a series of large linear features, which are likely to represent quarrying associated with the construction of a nearby railway. No other archaeology was observed.

Great Barford Bypass A421

Richard Brown and Jane Timby

Following on from earlier evaluation and geophysical survey work (*SMA* 32 (2001), 9-10; 34 (2004), 6) nine sites were excavated during 2004-2005 in advance of the construction of the Great Barford Bypass. The work was carried out for Edmund Nuttall Ltd-Capita Symonds acting on behalf of the Highways Agency.

Site 1: Roxton Road West (TL 150 550)

Excavations revealed a small early Roman enclosure system containing a roundhouse. Other features were sparse but included a four-post structure north of the

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enclosure. A trackway of probable post-medieval date was noted along with evidence for ridge-and-furrow cultivation.

Site 2: High Barns Road (TL 143 541)

Extensive later prehistoric settlement remains were uncovered, relating to a known cropmark site (SMR 482). Individual pits evinced sparse activity in the early Neolithic, early Bronze Age and late Bronze Age respectively. A more substantial settlement dates to the middle Iron Age, with roundhouses, pits and a small enclosure. The enclosure ditch had been deliberately back-filled with a remarkable deposit containing a human skeleton, three human cranium fragments, huge quantities of pottery and animal bone, and an iron latch-lifter. The pottery included two semi-complete La Tène decorated bowls, unusual for the area. In the late Iron Age an extensive enclosure system was laid out across the site with evidence of internal occupation in the form of a roundhouse, pits, possible ovens and two further inhumation burials.

Site 3: East End (TL 124 534)

A small 10th to 13th century occupation site set within a rectangular enclosure was located, probably representing part of the deserted hamlet of East End (SMR 9916). A modest post-built structure was investigated which had undergone a number of modifications during its lifetime. Several contemporary domestic refuse pits and drainage ditches were also investigated.

Site 4: Birchfield Road (TL 121 533)

An extensive Iron Age and Romano-British settlement was excavated. The earliest activity dated to the middle Iron Age with a number of enclosures and pits, replaced by a more extensive enclosure system laid out in the late Iron Age. In the early Roman period the focus of occupation shifted and a palisaded enclosure system and trackway was constructed. A small cremation cemetery also dates to this period. The site was apparently abandoned in the later 2nd century but later used for a small late Roman inhumation cemetery, which included one prone and two decapitated burials.

Site 5: Barford Road (TL 114 527)

A small 12th century settlement, comprising a single structure with associated pits, drainage ditches and fence lines possibly defining small stock enclosures, was defined. The latest activity appears to date to the late 13th to 14th century.

Site 6: North of Brewers Hall Farm (TL 112 526)

Early Bronze Age activity was evidenced by a single pit containing Collared Urn pottery. The site was reoccupied in the middle to late Iron Age, with a small settlement comprising two ditched enclosures, a roundhouse and various associated pits and gullies.

Site 7: West of Brewers Hall Farm (TL 110 517)

Ditches and other features were revealed at the western edge of a known cropmark site (SMR 15340). Two successive phases of enclosure were apparent, dating to the middle and late Iron Age respectively.

Site 8: Water End East (TL 106 516)

Excavation revealed a complex multi-period site. The earliest significant activity dated to the 1st century AD, represented by a curvilinear enclosure system, two cremations and two four-post structures. This was overlain by a substantial settlement of the 2nd early 3rd centuries AD, consisting of a series of enclosures placed alongside a pair of trackways. Features associated with the enclosures included roundhouses, probable rectilinear buildings, three pottery kilns, a corn-drier, a cremation cemetery and seven inhumation burials. The enclosure system was realigned and reduced in scale during the late 3rd-4th centuries. Buildings belonging to this later phase may be represented by discrete areas of cobbling containing concentrations of iron nails. Post-Roman activity is evinced by a small quantity of early-middle Saxon pottery and a late Saxon pit, the latter perhaps representing activity peripheral to the settlement at Site 9. The site was subsequently given over to ridge-and-furrow cultivation.

Site 9: Water End West (TL 103 515)

Excavations revealed a settlement dating from the 9th to 12th centuries, comprising five rectangular beam-slot and post-built structures, pits, fence lines and ditches. A line of pits and several lines of postholes, which may be the remains of fenced compounds, or possibly more ephemeral post-built structures, represented traces of earlier activity on a differing alignment dating to the middle Saxon period.

Luton Hoo House, Near Luton (TL 1046 1847)

Mike Sims

Watching briefs were carried out during the excavation of a new car park and work within both Flower Garden Wood and the Garden Wing at Luton Hoo House. The work was undertaken in November 2005 and January 2006 for Cardy Construction (Luton). Evidence for the 2nd World War military encampment within the grounds and ancillary

buildings to the house were observed, but no earlier archaeology.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

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Akeley, The Roses, Chapel Lane (SP 7088 3777)
Alastair Hancock

A 'strip and record' excavation was undertaken at the rear of the Roses, prior to the construction of an access drive for a proposed residential development. The excavation confirmed the presence of 11th century features noted in a prior evaluation not previously reported in SMA. The discovery of two sherds of early/mid Saxon pottery expands the known spatial extent of activity of this date northwards from a single findspot c 250m to the south. No features verifying the presence of 13th to 14th century tenement plots fronting Main Street were revealed.

Aston Clinton, 41 Aylesbury Road (SP 8646 1260)
Nigel Wilson

Two test pits were excavated on this site in July, in advance of the construction of a house extension. The site is close to a medieval moated site, and also to the Roman Akeman Street. Neither test-pit produced any evidence for earlier occupation of the site.

Aston Clinton, land to the rear of 76 Weston Road (SP 8717 1216)
Nigel Wilson

An evaluation was undertaken on land to the rear of 76 Weston Road in advance of a proposed housing development. Eight trenches were opened but no archaeological features were identified.

Astwood, The Bury, Turvey Road (SP 9474 4856)
Bob Zeepvat

A watching brief was carried out during refurbishments and extensions to a row of timber-framed and stone-built cottages at The Bury, which lies close to a medieval moated site. The timber-framed cottages, which were recently recorded by Northamptonshire Archaeology, have been dated to the 17th century, while two stone cottages were added some time before 1881. No archaeological features or deposits were encountered in the watching brief.

Buckinghamshire

Aylesbury, The County Museum, Church Street (SP 8178 1384)
Nick Crank

During March 2005 a watching brief was undertaken at The County Museum, during the excavation of foundations for a garage display unit in the garden to the rear of the museum. This was being constructed to house a car manufactured by Cubitt of Aylesbury in the 1920s. No archaeological remains were observed during the works.

Aylesbury, 10 Kingsbury Square (SP 8189 1382)
Nick Crank

Test-pitting and recording of an existing foundation trench were carried out in advance of extensions to 10 Kingsbury Square, in the historic core of Aylesbury. The test-pit revealed a substantial rammed chalk foundation of probable post-medieval or later date. Examination of the foundation trench revealed a cellar and cess-pit of 19th century or later date, and also an undated ditch or pit and extensive rammed chalk layers that may represent the foundations of earlier buildings. No pre-20th century artefacts were recovered.

Bletchley, Land at Stoke Road (SP 8810 3271)
Alastair Hancock

An evaluation was undertaken at Stoke Road, Water Eaton, in advance of residential development. The site, to the north of an area previously evaluated by ASC (SMA 35, 11), comprised two contiguous fields containing pronounced ridge and furrow cultivation strips, which were surveyed and recorded. A geophysical survey was also carried out. Seventeen trial trenches were later excavated and a number of ditches, pits and postholes were exposed. Potsherds recovered from the features date to the middle Saxon period and suggest settlement activity in a restricted area in the central part of the site. Subsequently, excavation has been undertaken on the site, commencing in December 2005. This will be reported on in the next issue of SMA.

Chesham, 347 Chartridge Lane (SP 9431 0320)
Jonathan Hunn

A watching brief was undertaken during the demolition of the existing house and garage at 347 Chartridge Lane, and the construction of two detached houses on the site. A ditch containing around sixty sherds of 1st century pottery was previously recorded in the garden of 347 Chartridge Lane (CAS2078) and

Buckinghamshire

there was potential for related features to be present. No archaeological remains were observed in the watching brief.

Great Kimble, The Old Grange ((SP 4820 2057)

Alastair Hancock and Jonathan Hunn

A watching brief was carried out at this 15th century Grade II listed house in June and July during reduction of ground levels and excavation of footings and service trenches for extensions and alterations. Brick-set garden features, a brick-set porch and areas of limestone rubble used as a yard surface or levelling/consolidation material were revealed. All these features appeared relatively modern; no pre-modern artefacts were recovered.

Great Missenden, Chapel adjacent to The Old House, Church Street (SP 8972 0120)

Nick Crank, Nigel Wilson and Karin Semmelmann

An historic building survey of the chapel was undertaken in May, prior to it being dismantled and rebuilt for residential use. There is little documentary evidence for the history of this building, which is first recorded on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1877. It is, however, known that the chapel was built for the Primitive Methodists and used for a time as a 'Dames School'. The building consisted of two rooms: the chapel itself, with a small vestry to the rear. During the building's life as a chapel/school, internal alterations had included the replacement of the ceiling and roof. After it ceased to be used as a chapel, the building became a garage/workshop. A double door was crudely inserted into the front (south) elevation, and the interior fixtures and fittings had been removed, including the wooden floor and possibly also wooden wall panelling.

Great Woolstone Fishponds (SP 8763 3857)

Nigel Wilson

In April, a programme of test-pitting was undertaken on one of the scheduled medieval fishponds at Great Woolstone. The aim of the project was to investigate the depth of silting in the base of the pond, to enable a decision to be made regarding the possible reinstatement of the pond as a habitat for displaced amphibians from developments elsewhere in Milton Keynes. Six test-pits excavated around the top of the bank demonstrated that the natural soils were very shallow and no major structural work had been undertaken to form the edges of the pond. Two pits in the base of the pond revealed that there was less than

350mm of silt deposits, above a natural clay base. No finds were recovered.

Little Brickhill, Watling Street Service Station

(SP 8943 3335)

Jonathan Hunn

Archaeological recording was undertaken during the excavation of footing trenches for extensions to the Watling Street Service Station, Little Brickhill. The site falls within the area of extra-mural settlement adjacent to the Roman small town of *Magiovinium*. However, on this occasion no archaeological remains or artefacts were observed.

Long Crendon, 106 High Street (SP 6981 0902)

Jonathan Hunn

An evaluation was undertaken in January. Two trenches were excavated revealing a late post-medieval post-hole and linear feature. A number of 19th century artefacts were present.

Mentmore, Garden Cottage and Stud Cottage, Crafton (SP 8936 1916 & SP 8931 1922)

Jonathan Hunn and Calli Rouse

An evaluation was carried out on two sites adjacent to Crafton Stud Farm in advance of building construction. The trenches at Garden Cottage revealed only a disturbed layer of topsoil on top of the natural clay. At Stud Cottage a modern wall footing was revealed, below very disturbed topsoil and subsoil. No archaeological finds or features were observed at either site.

Mentmore, 2 Crafton (SP 8915 1965)

David Fell, Nicholas Crank and Karin Semmelmann

A watching brief was undertaken prior to the construction of stables, tack-room and a hay-store. Although the site lies within a complex of earthworks relating to the medieval and post-medieval settlement of Crafton, no archaeological features or finds were encountered.

Newport Pagnell, Land at Willen Road

(SP 8750 4230)

Jonathan Hunn

An extensive area bounded by Willen Road, the M1 and the A422 was evaluated in advance of gravel extraction. The earliest feature located was a Bronze Age ring ditch near the south end of the site. Activity

from the late pre-Roman Iron Age to the 4th century AD was concentrated on the west side of the site. It comprised a series of ditched enclosures containing pits, gullies, construction slots, post-holes and a possible pond. At least three potential circular structures were identified, though no occupation horizons or floor surfaces survived. The presence of domestic refuse suggests the presence of a native Romano-British settlement. During the post-Roman period the site was under open-field cultivation and traces of ridge and furrow are present, particularly in the southern part of the site. In the post-medieval period the area was divided into several fields belonging to Caldecote Farm, which lies to the east of Willen Road.

Olney, Court Farm, Yardley Road (SP 8799 5317)
Nick Crank

An historic building assessment at Court Farm was carried out in advance of building conversion. The buildings surveyed comprised a combined cow-house, feed loft, and cart shed of probable mid to late 19th century date; a substantial 3-bay threshing barn of probable 17th-18th century date; and a late 19th century shelter shed and cattle pen with a dovecote half-loft. The buildings represent a fairly typical yet well-preserved segment of a typical 18th-19th century mixed farm. It should be noted that the brick and stone buildings forming the south west arm of the farmyard opposite are constructed in the same style and using the same materials. The westernmost building in the complex, along with the rest of the north-west range, is most likely to be a late 19th century addition to an earlier farmyard wall. The middle building on the site, the threshing barn, represents the nucleus of a post-medieval farm complex, subsequently given a 19th century 'model farm' style makeover.

Olney, 29 Weston Road (SP 8878 5120)
Bob Zeepvat

An historic building survey was carried out in response to proposals to refurbish the building, and to construct a new two-storey extension to the rear. Initial works, mainly comprising removal of wall coverings and ceilings, had been carried out prior to the survey. The earliest part of 29 Weston Road is a three-bay house of three storeys with a cellar, constructed in stone and brick, probably in the early 19th century. To the rear are two brick extensions, both of two storeys. The larger of these, beneath a gable roof at right angles to the main structure, is the earlier, probably built in the mid 19th century. The smaller, in

the angle between the two earlier parts of the building, has a pent roof, and was in place by c 1880. While the frontage of the house appears largely unaltered, the rear has evidently undergone alteration, and all but one of the windows are modern casements. Internally, the few surviving fixtures and fittings (skirtings, doors and stairs) appear to be original.

Ravenstone, The Old Forge (SP 8492 5051)
David Fell

A watching brief was maintained during the groundworks for a new development. A forge is known to have been present on the site during the late 19th century, and a number of 19th century brick and limestone walls and cobbled surfaces were observed. These occupied the approximate position of the forge buildings, and it is likely that they represent the truncated remains of the forge. Examination of census returns yielded information on the owners of the forge in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Shenley Church End, Fortescue Drive
(SP 8348 3696)
Nigel Wilson

An evaluation comprising five trenches was undertaken on this site prior to residential development. The site is close to Loughton, where possible Roman structures were found adjacent to Watling Street, while medieval finds have been recovered from an adjacent development. Two small ditches were identified in the centre of the site and, although no dateable artefacts were found, it is likely that they represent post-medieval agricultural drainage or boundary features. Roman pottery was recovered from a small pit cutting an earlier ditch on the south-east side of the site. Additional trenching revealed the ditch terminal. A large gravel or sand quarry was also uncovered in this area.

Shenley Church End, Walnut Tree Special School
(SP 8149 3625)
Nigel Wilson

An evaluation was undertaken on the proposed site for Walnut Tree Special School. The site is adjacent to Hazeley Secondary School, which was the subject of an evaluation and watching brief by ASC in 2004 (*SMA* 35, 2005, 13). Six trenches were excavated, and were all found to be devoid of archaeology.

Buckinghamshire

Sherington, land adjacent to The White Hart, Gun Lane (SP 8912 4679)

Alastair Hancock

In February an evaluation was undertaken on the site in advance of development. A single L-shaped trench was opened, but no archaeological finds, features or deposits were discovered.

Stewkley, land south of Manor Drive

(SP 8540 2560)

Nigel Wilson, Nick Crank and Karin Semmelmann

An earthwork survey and trial trenching were undertaken on land to the south of Manor Drive, in order to investigate surviving ridge and furrow prior to destruction by a residential development. Eight ridges orientated southwest-northeast were recorded, none more than 300mm above the base of the associated furrow. No pottery was found during trenching, and it was thus not possible to date the formation of the ridge and furrow.

Wavendon, Fen Farm (SP 9100 3876)

Bob Zeepvat

An historic building assessment was undertaken as part of a wider archaeological assessment of the surrounding area, in order to inform development proposals. The farmhouse and adjoining farm buildings were constructed in the early 19th century, probably by Sir Henry Hugh Hoare. The original house was brick built with a slate roof, in plan comprising a central corridor on each floor, flanked by four rooms. A two-storey wing was added to the east before 1841: this wing was further extended between 1918 and 1926. It is possible that the present main staircase was installed at this time. A south extension was added in the 1950s, followed by two small single-storey extensions. Subsequent improvements have included installation of modern UPVC double-glazing. Only one room of the original house survives largely unaltered, and few original features survive. The present farm buildings are probably rebuilds of the original early 19th century structures, and have also undergone significant change in recent years.

Wavendon, The Old Farm, 141 Walton End

(SP 9037 3677)

Nick Crank and Nigel Wilson

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in advance of development. The site is located within the extensive Wavendon Gate Iron Age and Roman site,

excavated by the former Milton Keynes Archaeology Unit in 1990 (*SMA* 20, 24-29). The four trial trenches contained linear features, some of which yielded a small amount of probable Romano-British pottery. An irregular linear feature was identified as a possible medieval or later hedge line.

A subsequent watching brief was undertaken during redevelopment of the site. Demolition of the existing bungalow and subsequent clearing of the site had reduced the ground level significantly over much of the site, and little or no archaeology survived.

Weston Underwood, Church Farm (SP 8642 5042)

Nick Crank and Bob Zeepvat

An historic building assessment was carried out to inform proposals for conversion of the farm buildings for residential/office use. Church Farm is a late 18th century mixed farm, with its buildings arranged around two adjacent yards. The buildings include a large double barn, stables and hay/feed loft, granary and a wash-house with gable dovecote. A lambing pen that was probably originally bundle thatched is present at the rear of the site and, although in poor condition with a modern roof and roof structure, represents a relatively rare survival for the region. The farm is typical for the locality and suggested date range. The buildings themselves are quite plain and unadorned, as one would expect for a non-model farm of this status. As the farm buildings have been in continuous use until relatively recently, many fixtures and fittings have been replaced over time, and few original features of note survive.

Whaddon, Lowndes Arms (SP 8058 34250)

Bob Zeepvat

A programme of archaeological works was carried out during structural repairs to the timber-framed, Grade II listed 'Lowndes Arms' public house. The repairs involved replacement of a section of the box frame and its supporting wall at the north end of the street frontage of the building. Drawn and photographic records were compiled of the section of box frame undergoing repair, and a watching brief was carried out during removal of the wall and excavations for new footings. The location of a missing rail in the frame was noted. Some evidence was revealed of the construction and the original wattle and daub infill of the box frame. The watching brief provided a view of the strata underlying the floor in this part of the building, though no dating evidence was revealed. No evidence of any earlier structures or other activity was observed.

Winslow, 25 Horn Street (SP 7672 2751)

Jonathan Hunn and Calli Rouse

In April, trial trenching was undertaken to inform proposals for the construction of three houses on this site, which is in the historic core of Winslow. A pit and two linear features were revealed, one of which contained a small assemblage of animal bone and pottery, one sherd of which was of Roman date.

Wolverton, Church Street (SP 8100 4100)

Nick Crank, David Fell and Nigel Wilson

A watching brief was undertaken at Church Street during the excavation of shafts and trenches for a new flood alleviation sewerage system. The route of the new sewerage system passes to the rear of the former McCorquodale printing works, where a possible Saxon burial was found during building operations in the late 19th century. No archaeological remains were observed during the works.

Wolverton Mill, Heathway, Featherstone Road (SP 8025 4019)

Nigel Wilson

A watching brief was maintained on this site, in advance of the construction of an industrial unit. The site is close to the Wolverton Mill prehistoric and Saxon sites, respectively excavated by the former Milton Keynes Unit and the County Archaeology Service (*SMA* 20, 1992, 20). The excavation of drainage runs was monitored but no archaeological remains were observed.

COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY 2004

Bourne End to Handy Cross Pipeline

(SU 8919 8818 to SU 8569 9059)

Kelly Saunders

A watching brief was undertaken in spring 2004 during groundworks associated with the stripping of the pipe corridor. No archaeological features or deposits, except an undated ditch, were observed, and no artefactual material predating the modern period was recovered.

Denham, The Lea (TQ 0490 8600)

Laurent Coleman, Tim Havard, Mark Collard, Simon Cox and Ed McSloy

Introduction

Following previous work (Coleman 2001, 2002 and 2004) a third phase of area excavation in advance of gravel extraction was carried out by CA on behalf of Harleyford Aggregates Limited. The excavation, covering a total area of c 0.5ha, took place between May and July 2004 and comprised an area located immediately to the north and east of the 2003 excavation areas (Fig 1).

Palaeolithic

A section of mammoth tusk was recovered by the quarry operators during gravel extraction. The tusk was recovered from the base of the gravel, below the current water table, at a depth of c 6m below the modern ground level. The tusk is the midsection of an adult tusk, probably of a male woolly mammoth (*Mammuthus primigenius*). It is probable that the tusk dates to the Middle Devensian (Oxygen Isotope Stage 3, 60-25ka bp), a relatively warm part of the last cold stage when mammoths, woolly rhinos and horses and Neanderthal hominids returned to Britain after a long absence (Danielle Schreve pers comm).

Mid to Late Bronze Age

The double-ditched feature, probably representing a trackway (2), identified during the second phase of excavation was found to continue, as a single ditch to the south-east and defined the south-western boundary of two contemporary rectangular fields extending to the north part of the extensive field system identified in previous work. Small quantities of coarse or fine calcined flint-tempered and organic-tempered pottery were recovered from these ditches. This pottery assemblage was comparable to that recovered from the earlier excavations, and belongs to the same Middle to Late Bronze Age Deverel-Rimbury tradition.

Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age

The pottery from a number of features comprised thin walled sherds in much finer flint- or quartz-tempered fabrics and is probably of a slightly later, Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age, date. A cremation burial contained pottery of this type, as did a pit containing a large quantity of burnt daub with clear wattle impressions in the centre of the site.

Romano-British (3rd and 4th centuries AD)

A further seven bustum burials were identified during this phase of excavation. The bustum burials were all located in a discrete area to the north of the bustum

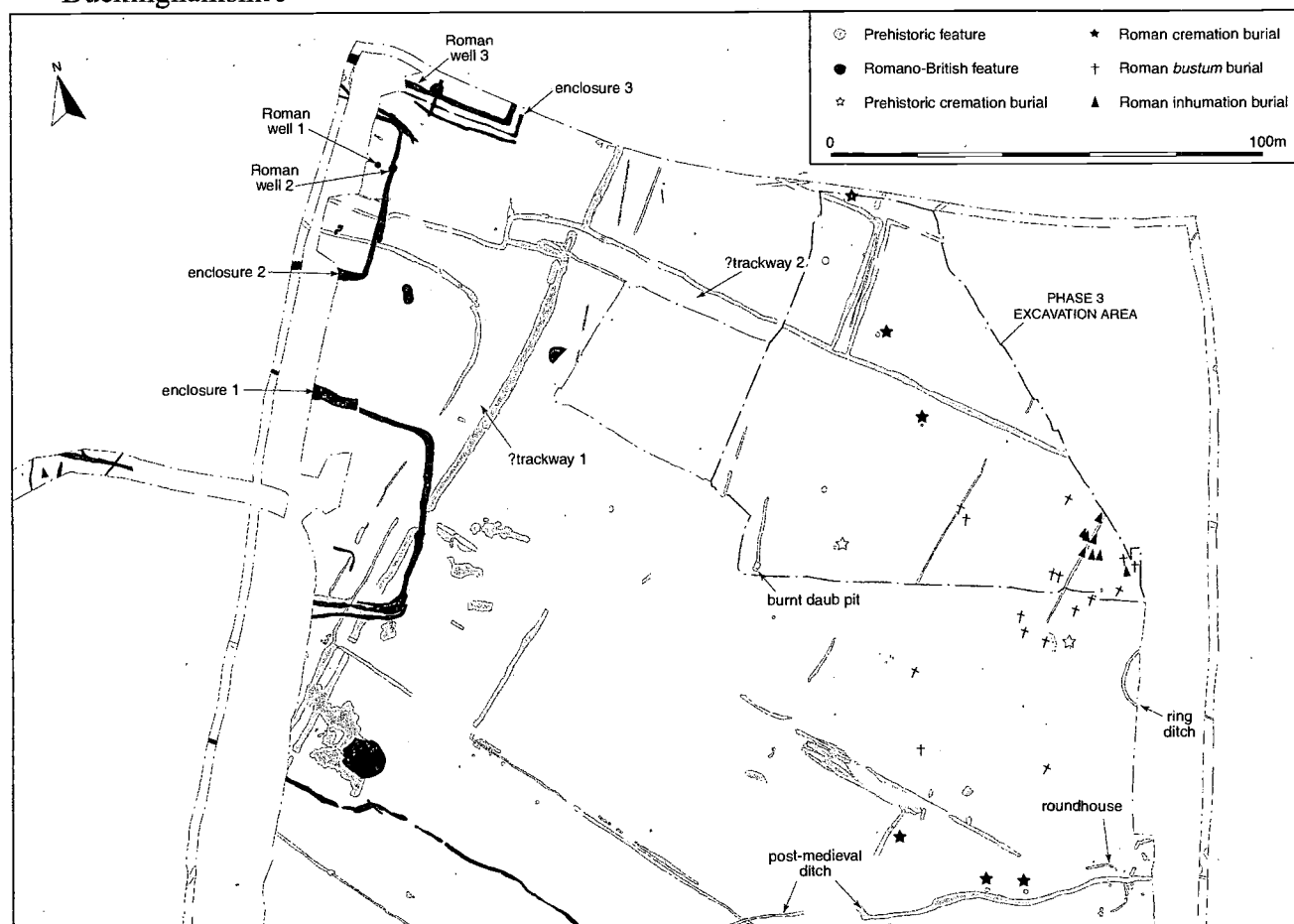


Fig1. The Lea, Denham, Northern part of southern field; all features.

burials identified during the last phase of excavation. The bustum burials were all broadly rectangular, orientated north-east to south-west, exhibited discolouration of the natural clay through heating and contained quantities of charcoal and cremated human bone.

The dimensions of these features were found to be extremely variable. The smallest (bustum burial 16) measured 0.6m in length, 0.3m in width and 0.05m in depth whilst the largest (bustum burial 13) measured 2.72m in length, 1.26m in width and 0.34m in depth. Bustum burial one contained a large number of iron nails and the unburnt upper portion of an Oxfordshire whiteware trefoil-rimmed flagon dating to the mid 3rd to 4th centuries AD. Another Bustum burial contained two nails; a substantially complete pottery jar which had clearly been burnt before deposition was recovered from bustum burial. One of the bustum pits appeared to have been partially backfilled before use.

In addition to the bustum burials, eight graves were identified forming a distinct group slightly to the north of the focus of bustum burials. Although unburnt bone (either animal or human) was previously absent from the site, one of the graves contained a pair of femurs and another contained a largely complete human skeleton. Although the surviving bone was in fairly poor condition, it would appear that both inhumations

were extended and supine with the heads placed to the north-east. Sherds of pottery dating to the late 3rd to 4th centuries AD were recovered from the grave containing the femurs. Further funerary activity in the form of three cremation burials (two containing iron nails) were identified to the north-west of the bustum burials and inhumations.

CAT 2000 The Lea, Denham, Near Uxbridge, Buckinghamshire: Archaeological Assessment CAT Typescript Report 001194

Coleman, L. 2001 'Denham, The Lea', *SMA*. 31, 17

Coleman, L., Havard, T., Collard, M., Cox, S. and McSloy, E. 2002 'Denham, The Lea', *SMA*. 32

Coleman, L., Havard, T., Collard, M., Cox, S. and McSloy, E. 2004 'Denham, The Lea', *SMA*. 34

Taplow, Taplow Source to Hitcham Lane Pipeline Route (SU 9185 8105 to SU 9098 8325)

Laurent Coleman

A programme of archaeological recording was undertaken along the route of a new water pipeline between Taplow Source and Hitcham Lane (a distance of c 2.5km). Following desk based assessment and geophysical survey, archaeological fieldwork was carried out on behalf of Thames Water. The fieldwork took place between December 2003 and May 2004. Site 1 (SU 9142 8255) comprised an area of Late

Bronze Age to Middle Iron Age settlement activity comprising postholes and storage pits enclosed by a large contemporary ditch. The remains of a Romano-British field system were also identified. At site 2 (SU 9115 8135) a more extensive area of largely Romano-British activity comprising a trackway and a number of pits and ditches was found. A small number of very large, steep sided and very deep pits were identified.

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

Aylesbury, Henry Floyd School, Oxford Road
(SP 81131337)
John Moore

An archaeological evaluation was carried out as part of a consideration of a planning application for the construction of a dwelling and garage. A post-medieval ditch was located. Whether this is connected to the windmill known on the site is unknown. The soil sequence suggested that the remnants of a mound survived.

Brill, Adjacent to The Pheasant, Windmill Street
(SP 65321409)
John Moore

An archaeological evaluation was carried out as part of a consideration of a planning application for the construction of a detached house and garage. Extensive remains of the medieval and post-medieval pottery, tile and brick industry are known in close proximity to the proposed development site. The evaluation comprised the excavation of three trenches. There appears to have been some activity on the site in the late medieval or Tudor period with the digging of small pits, which may have been associated with the local pottery or brick and tile industries. These were found close to the road frontage indicating that there was no building on the site at this time. Soon after this period of activity, the majority of the site was quarried for sand presumably for the local brick and tile industry. The quarry was backfilled partly with debris (wasters, and tiles and bricks broken during the firing process) from this manufacturing industry. The bricks are considered to be of late medieval or Tudor date and the pottery found with the debris confirms this date. The quarry may have belonged to the brick and tile works known on the opposite side of the street slightly further to the west.

Brill, Sports and Social Club, northwest of All Saint's Church (SP 65601392)
Dave Gilbert

An excavation over the footprint of a new extension was carried out. The new build partly overlay a ditch associated with an extant bank, which is a Scheduled Monument. The excavation was too restricted both in area and depth to unequivocally date the monument. Archaeological deposits were limited. The upper fill of the ditch was excavated, which produced material of a late 18th century date and earlier residual finds.

High Wycombe, Bridge Reconstruction for U672 Bassetsbury Lane (SU 87749240)
John Moore

A watching brief was conducted during the reconstruction of a bridge. This crosses the River Wye just below a former mill building. Deposits in the stream beds of the two channels suggest raising of the level of the north channel and consolidation of both beds to prevent erosion of the chalk. The 'island' between the two channels has been consolidated and added to over the years. A lack of artefacts from the deposits prevents dating of the various episodes other than one event occurring during the 17th century or later.

Ludgershall, Ludgershall Farm (SP 6641117342)
Dave Gilbert

An evaluation found that archaeological deposits were limited. The only feature located was the 16th century surface of the farmyard. There was also some limited evidence for late medieval pottery production in the area.

Princes Risborough, St Mary's Church, Church Street (SU 80590350)
Graeme Brown & John Moore

An evaluation comprising eight test pits was carried out in St Mary's Church as part of the consideration for a proposed new floor and underfloor heating in the nave. The work did not identify any substantial traces of the medieval church or uncover any burials or vaults likely to be disturbed by the proposed development.

Stewkley, The Old School (SP 8517 2261)

A watching brief was carried out during groundworks associated with the conversion of The Old School into residential property. The site is adjacent to the parish church. No archaeological finds or features were observed.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY

Aylesbury, Hartwell House (SP 79 12)

Joe Prentice

Hartwell House (Listed Grade I) was probably built between 1570 and 1617 by Sir Alexander Hampden around the site of a medieval building. Limited archaeological investigation within an area, tentatively identified as the Flower Garden created by Lady Elizabeth Lee in the late 18th century, revealed evidence of a circuit path, the Bower and the possible location of one of the flower beds. The path was of clinker over a hard-core base comprising broken brick and stone, bordered with pale yellow ceramic tiles with a decorative upper edge. The Bower was not itself identified, though the position was located by default once the splayed path which led to it was established. A single flower bed was tentatively identified, though the evidence was slight, perhaps indicating that the feature was relatively short lived. These results accord with the known history of the ownership of the property and the lifetime of the woman who created the garden.

Hanslope, Park Road (SP 8062 4664)

Ben Pears

Small gullies and ditches with pottery dating from the 12th to 15th centuries were revealed during trial trenching carried out on 0.49ha of land on the edge of the village between a field with remnant medieval ridge and furrow and Park Road. Another small gully was dated to the 18th to 19th centuries. An earthwork feature, which may have been a former pond, was sampled but it had been filled with modern rubbish. The site contained no evidence relating to the medieval and post-medieval expansion of the village. There were more features present than would be expected adjacent to the medieval field system, and they may therefore be associated with the nearby plot with pond-like features and small allotment-type enclosures to the rear.

Milton Keynes, Brooklands East (SP 907 397)

Michael Webster

A scatter of flint tools, possibly suggesting occupation, were detected during a fieldwalking survey. Elsewhere an unexceptional general background level of activity was attested by low levels of finds dating from the prehistoric to the 19th century.

Milton Keynes, Tattenhoe Park (SP 824 332)

Edmund Taylor

Archaeological excavations were carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology, working on behalf of English Partnerships, on land at Tattenhoe Park, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire between April and September 2005. Excavations were targeted on two sites identified by previous geophysical survey and trial trench evaluation in 2004 (*SMA* 35 (2005), 19).

The main site was an open settlement dated to the middle to late Iron Age (Fig 2). This comprised at least 21 roundhouses, while partial arcs suggest the former presence of an even greater number, perhaps approaching 30. The site shows a number of clear zones of activity. A group of larger ring ditches that had been recut several times appear to have formed a principal house group at the centre of the settlement. To the south there were further roundhouses, and several four-post structures and a single six-poster may suggest that this area acted as a central granary. A second smaller group of four-posters lay to the north, and may have become redundant when the partial ditch system was introduced. To the west there was a further group of roundhouses.

At a later date, a system of shallow linear ditches provided a partial enclosure of the settlement, and may have respected existing settlement divisions. A new group of roundhouses to the north post-dated the introduction of this ditch system, and a single section to the east of these produced fragments from several crucibles, indicating that an area set apart from the domestic focus had been a workshop area for casting copper alloy fittings, although no fragments of the moulds had survived.

At the northern end of the settlement there was a much more substantial linear boundary ditch, suggesting that the settlement had been sited adjacent to a major land boundary, something which has been previously seen on settlements further north in both Northamptonshire and Warwickshire.

Another aspect of interest is the presence of several deposits of cremated bone, at least some containing human bone, and with some also apparently located in respect to certain roundhouses. Human burials, either inhumations or cremations, are only occasionally recovered from Iron Age settlement sites.



Fig 2. Iron Age settlement at Tattenhoe Park, Milton Keynes.

This settlement is one of a comparatively small number of middle to late Iron Age settlements that have been almost fully excavated, and it will add to the understanding of the social organisation of Iron Age

settlement in the area by complimenting past work on Iron Age and Roman settlement in Milton Keynes by the former archaeological unit attached to the Milton

Buckinghamshire

Keynes Development Corporation and more recent developer funded work.

At a nearby site, the remains of a post-medieval farmstead comprising part of a small brick-built structure with associated walled yard and two wells, was also excavated.

Mursley, 18 Main Street (SP 4817 2286)

Paul Mason

A pit, close to the street frontage, containing sherds of late Saxon pottery dating to the 10th and 11th centuries in its primary fill, was the only evidence for early activity discovered during trial trenching. Other features may be of post-medieval date and could relate to an historic hedge line or fence.

Newport Pagnell, land adjacent to Rocla Pipeworks (SP 856 431)

Adrian Butler and Steven Morris

The initial stages of an archaeological evaluation were carried out on land adjacent to the former Rocla works. The fieldwalking survey revealed a number of worked flints and a concentration of Romano-British pottery as well as manuring scatters of medieval and post-medieval pottery. Subsequent detailed gradiometer survey on the area of the Romano-British pottery scatter revealed evidence for two ditched enclosures with possible internal features.

Stowe Landscape Gardens (SP 674 383)

Anthony Maull, Joe Prentice

Work has been carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology on behalf of the National Trust, as part of the ongoing programme to restore and repair the monuments and landscape (*SMA* 34 (2004), 25 and (*SMA* 35 (2005), 19).

Corinthian Arch

Further excavation at the Corinthian Arch revealed a succession of earlier road surfaces of gravel and limestone scalplings, formerly the Queen's Drive as shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1881. The stone plinths of the former gates were found still embedded in the road surface. A trench placed centrally to the arch located the former ground surface either side of two 19th century wing walls.

New Inn Farm

A detailed survey involving historical research, and buildings and landscape analysis has been carried out on this Grade II* listed building, as New Inn Farm is

currently in a highly dilapidated condition and requires substantial building works to restore it to its original appearance.

Built in 1717 it served as an inn and accommodation throughout much of the 18th century both for visitors to the gardens and for the workers involved in creating the landscape garden. It continued as an inn until the 1860s when New Inn became a farmhouse. Since 1947 it has been run privately as a mixed arable/pasture farm.

The inn is both brick built and timber-framed with brick infill panels, with the external elevation of the west range partially in ironstone. The roof covering is of ceramic tile. The buildings are arranged around a courtyard with the main entrance located in the centre of the south range, which contained the farmhouse and accommodation, whilst the west range formed the stables, the north range the carriage sheds and the east range the domestic services, including a brewhouse and dairy. Behind the farm lies a detached stable block, which was originally part of the hunt kennels but is now in private ownership.

Waddesdon Manor (SP 7353 1645)

Anthony Maull and Simon Carlyle

In the gardens of Waddesdon Manor, a Grade I listed Renaissance-style chateau constructed between 1874 and 1889 for Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild, geophysical survey and excavation during preliminary ground works associated with the restoration of the site of the 'Frog Fountain' on the Lower Terrace, was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology, commissioned by the National Trust. This followed an evaluation carried out in 2004 (*SMA* 35 (2005), 19).

Geophysical earth resistance survey undertaken in the parterre garden to the north of the Lower Terrace and in adjacent areas to the east and west did not identify any features relating to former phases of this part of the garden. However, excavation in the area of the Lower Terrace uncovered a series of late 19th century concrete-reinforced platforms which were cut into the hill slope and the remains of two probable cascading fountain basins, which were superseded by the present terrace. Other features included two opposing flights of steps flanking the fountain basins; nine evenly spaced brick piers, which once supported a broad flight of steps leading from the terrace to the parkland beyond the formal gardens; and two brick vase bases. It is possible that some of the features revealed by the excavation relate to a series of garden designs put forward by the French architect Gabriel-Hippolyte Destailleur, particularly during the period 1886-8.

Weston Underwood, Weston House (SP 8675 5074)

Anthony Maull and Joe Prentice

An archaeological watching brief during the excavation of foundations at Weston House revealed a series of backfill layers within the former cellars of the Elizabethan house which had formerly stood on the site. The cellar walls and floors had been removed during the demolition of the former house during the 1820s. Earlier evaluation had identified that the present house contains structural elements from the earlier Elizabethan house and located backfilled cellars and foundations relating to the former east wing of the original house on the site of a proposed new garage (*SMA* 34 (2004), 26).

THE NATIONAL TRUST

Gary Marshall

Bradenham Manor (SU82849707)

Bradenham Manor features regularly in South Midlands Archaeology. Nearly every intervention into the gardens or surroundings to the mid 17th century house is likely to encounter buried archaeology. This proved to be the case when a shallow trench measuring 9.5m x 1.8m and up to 0.7m in depth was excavated in order to recreate a flight of grass steps in the west garden forecourt. Previous excavations across the grass slope defining the south side of the forecourt in 2003 had revealed a substantial brick wall footing, running east-west, which was interpreted as being a surviving remnant of the north wall of the manor house built by Andrew, 1st Lord Windsor, in the 1540s. The continuation of this wall footing, which measures 0.8m in width and is laid in English bond brickwork, was revealed in the most recent trench, though the two trenches are separated by a gap of 22m. The most recent excavation also revealed an internal partition wall within this 1540s building, with a chimney breast attached to its north face.

The south wall of the Tudor building was not revealed, though it was partially exposed by excavations conducted in 1998, suggesting that the building measured 12m in width. It was probably demolished in the 1650s, as dendrochronology dating of the roof timbers of the present house suggest that it was substantially rebuilt between 1652 and 1653.

Machine excavations were also undertaken in 2005 for the purpose of identifying the outlines of late Victorian flowerbeds on the lower lawns at Bradenham Manor. Removal of topsoil revealed the outlines of grey soils containing charcoal. These had evidently been laid into cuts into the underlying

natural clay with flint, which is so prominent in this part of the Chilterns. The Trust hopes to restore these beds using this evidence in 2006.

Smalldean Farm Cottage, Bradenham (SU82139890)

An archaeological watching brief was maintained by the National Trust over repairs and re-servicing works to this flint and brick-fronted cottage in the Saunderton Valley. A previous assessment of the building undertaken in 1997 suggested that the building dates from the late 16th century, the flint and brick walls being a late 17th century re-facing of a timber framed building when it was divided into two cottages. The watching brief confirmed that parts of the original timber frame ie the main structural timbers, survives within the later walling. Floorboards were lifted throughout the building and examination of the joists and transverse beams would suggest that most of the building dates from a single phase of construction, rather than the two major phases suggested by the earlier survey.

Cliveden (SU912855)

The former walled gardens at Cliveden currently serve as the car park for visitors to the property. In 2005 a major excavation was undertaken across the width of the car park for installing a sewer pipe leading to a septic tank in the south-west corner of the walled gardens. A watching brief was maintained over this excavation by the National Trust and this revealed in excess of 50 separate brick wall footings indicating the site of former greenhouses and cold frames within the walled gardens. These structures date from c 1895 when the walled gardens were constructed. They survived until the 1980s when they were demolished to make way for the car park. In addition to the brick footings several concretious floors were also revealed, which supported a honeycomb structure of bricks laid on edge with bricks then laid flat over the top. This structure would either have allowed for drainage, or alternatively may have allowed for the passage of hot air beneath the floors of the greenhouses.

Stowe Gardens (SP67503730)

A number of minor excavations and several building recording projects were undertaken in 2005 as part of the National Trust's continuing restoration of the gardens and landscape. The largest excavation measured approximately 500m in length and up to 1.9m in depth, extending from the Chapel Court on the south front of Stowe House to an open drain across the golf course in the former Home Park. An intermittent watching brief was maintained by the National Trust across this excavation, which was undertaken by Stowe School for the purpose of laying a drain. A

Buckinghamshire

gravel path and several dark grey soils, probably former flowerbeds, were identified in Chapel Court, otherwise the excavation revealed surprisingly little of note, although peat beds were encountered at the southernmost end of the trench in Home Park.

Several exploratory trenches were excavated for the purpose of locating paths on the south side of the Eleven Acre Lake and the Octagon Lake in the gardens. A semi-circular gravel path laid on a bed of rubble limestone and flint was discovered close to one of the garden buildings known as 'The Hermitage'. Excavations to complete the restoration of a path between the Pebble Alcove and the Temple of Friendship revealed the surviving gravel of the original 1740s (?) path between these two buildings.

An archaeological watching brief was maintained by the National Trust during the restoration of the two Buckingham Lodges at the Buckingham end of the main drive to Stowe. The lodges date from the first decade of the 19th century. Details revealed during the watching brief included hinge pintles for shutters on the north elevations of the two lodges, and an original paint scheme for a fake sash window within the outline of a 'blind' opening on the north elevation of the east lodge.

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

Beaconsfield, St Mary and All Saints Church

(SU 945 900)

Dan Dodds

A watching brief was commissioned by Acanthus Clew Architects, in advance of conservation of the Edmund Waller tomb. The watching brief revealed that an old walnut tree previously occupying the perimeter of the site had caused some below ground disturbance, but that there had been an attempt to rectify this in the Victorian period.

Marlow Flood Alleviation Scheme, Pound Lane

(SU 842 855)

Clare King

In April 2005 a field evaluation was carried out at Pound Lane in Marlow on behalf of the Environment Agency. Aerial photography and intermittent investigations carried out by the local archaeological society in the adjacent southern field had identified three ring ditches, two irregular enclosures and a concentration of finds along the field boundary shared with the present site. This evaluation was designed to investigate the potential continuation of this archaeological activity and identify the presence of

any previously unknown archaeological remains that may be impacted by the proposed construction of a 280m length of wall or embankment and a flood compensation storage zone covering an area of 3,100m². A total of 28 trenches were opened on the basis of geophysical survey results and the local topography.

Overall the archaeology was fragmented and isolated in nature, but principally of early prehistoric/Neolithic date. Trenches 1, 2, 3, and 4, denote an area at the western limit of the site that potentially indicates the continuation of associated activity defined by previous work to the south. Greater coherence and potential organisation of archaeological features and deposits was present to the north, specifically in Trenches 4, 12, 13, and 17, (including 13b and 13c). The eastern edge of the investigation area in which Trenches 21 (including 21b and 21c), 22, 25, 26, 27 were placed reveals further evidence for isolated activity but with few material remains to support interpretation.

Milton Keynes, Olney Link Road (SP 887 523)

Clare King

In November and December 2005 a field evaluation was carried out at Olney, Milton Keynes on behalf of CgMs Consulting. The evaluation revealed surviving elements of post-medieval ridge and furrow.

Milton Keynes, Land at Olney (SP 8839 5233)

Clare King

In May 2005 a field evaluation was carried out at Land North of Aspreys, Olney, Milton Keynes on behalf of CgMs Consulting Ltd. The proposed evaluation comprised 10 trenches measuring 2m by 40m; one trench was reduced in length due to the presence of various services.

A possible linear stone surface of uncertain date was observed in trenches to the centre of the site (Trenches 2, 3, 7, and 8). The surface was on a southwest-northeast alignment and comprised large slabs of limestone mixed with smaller stones set above natural subsoil sealing the underlying natural limestone bedrock. A track-way or road surface is a possible explanation for this distinctive structure. A smaller localised stone spread or structure was observed to the northwest of the site (Trench 6).

At the southwest corner of the site (Trench 1), a number of square-shaped postholes were situated amongst natural stone outcrops; one of the postholes contained Iron Age pottery. A group of pits at the centre of the site (Trench 7) also contained Iron Age pottery, which in association with a number of postholes here suggests domestic activity of this

period nearby. A number of large undated pits across the site could suggest quarrying activity for the underlying stone. All of the trenches showed evidence of probable medieval ridge and furrow.

Milton Keynes, Oxley Park (SP 8173 3507)

Steve Lawrence

An excavation of middle-late Iron Age settlement and a historical farmhouse was carried out in advance of a housing development at Oxley Park on the south-western outskirts of Milton Keynes between 9th September and 7th November 2005. The work was undertaken for JSAC (John Samuels Archaeological Consultants) acting on behalf of Westbury Homes Ltd. The Iron Age settlement had previously been part excavated by Archaeological Investigations Ltd (Hereford). OA completed AI's excavation and amalgamated the records whilst extending the area to include the full limits of the settlement. This revealed the penannular gully remains of five roundhouses, associated enclosures and boundaries.

The site was primarily arranged on a northeast-southwest linear axis established by a series of intermittent ditches and gullies. These were separated at a mid point by a large penannular enclosure and rectangular double-ditched enclosure both linked by a ditch on the main linear alignment to a drainage sump at the northeast corner of the rectangular enclosure; a feature common amongst similar style enclosures of this period and geographical area. The rectangular enclosure had a crescent-shaped ditched division to one side but otherwise lacked other internal features as did the large penannular enclosure. Both were accessed by clearly defined entrances to the east. The general scarcity of artefacts and internal features associated with the enclosures suggests that these were principally related to livestock corralling and control. Four roundhouses were located on the northeast-southwest linear boundary to the north of the enclosures and a four-post structure and a single roundhouse were located along the axial boundary to the south. An isolated group of pits at this end of the site also produced the largest assemblage of pottery and concentrations of burnt pebbles.

As part of the excavation programme Shenley Common Farm North, a farmhouse demolished in the 1950s, was also excavated. This revealed a surprisingly well-preserved ground plan of the building from which a detailed dated sequence of development and origin was recorded. The appearance of this and a neighbouring farmhouse, Shenley Common Farm South, in the landscape had previously been open to debate. However, the archaeological recording of the building and its

immediate associated features with accompanying finds assemblages demonstrated that it did not predate the 17th century in any form confirming a rather sparse historical record.

Stowe, New Boarding School Site (SP 673 374)

Melanie Pomeroy Kellinger

In October 2005 a field evaluation was carried out at Chapel Car Park, Stowe School, Stowe on behalf of Stowe School. The evaluation revealed no archaeological features or deposits predating or related to the 18th century gardens. The remains of an early 20th century roadway and hard standing from the 1920s school building activities were exposed.

Taplow, Taplow Court (Phase 2), Cliveden Road (SU 907 824)

Tim Allen, Hugo Lamdin-Whymark and Darko Maricevic

A field evaluation was carried out at Taplow Court, Buckinghamshire on behalf of SGI-UK. The site had previously been subject to an archaeological evaluation by Wessex Archaeology in 1998, and to an excavation and subsequent watching brief carried out by OA in 1999 and 2000 in advance of the construction of a Butsuma or chanting hall. This excavation revealed 2 phases of defensive ditch, one late Bronze Age, one Iron Age (Allen and Lamdin-Whymark 2000, 22-28). The latest evaluation was carried out in advance of Phase 2 of the development to investigate two alternative locations for a proposed accommodation block (Fig 3).

The northernmost evaluation trench (just south of Wessex evaluation Trench 5) revealed a third prehistoric defensive ditch east of the previous two (Fig 4). This ditch had a broad 'V'-shaped profile and was in excess of 12m wide and 3.90m deep from the current ground surface (3.35m from the surface of the natural gravels).

The primary fills of the ditch were relatively sterile gravels, producing some worked flints and a single late Bronze Age sherd. A dark charcoal-rich deposit halfway up the ditch profile, but still 1.5m from the ground surface, produced fragments of daub, fired clay, a quern fragment and sherds of early/middle Saxon pottery (c AD 450-850). A sherd of amphora/flagon from the deposit appears to be an imported vessel, possibly from the Eastern Mediterranean (R Tomber pers. comm.).

The deposit was also sampled for environmental remains and produced a varied assemblage of charred cereals and plants including short free-threshing grains of *Triticum* sp. (rivet or bread wheat), hulled

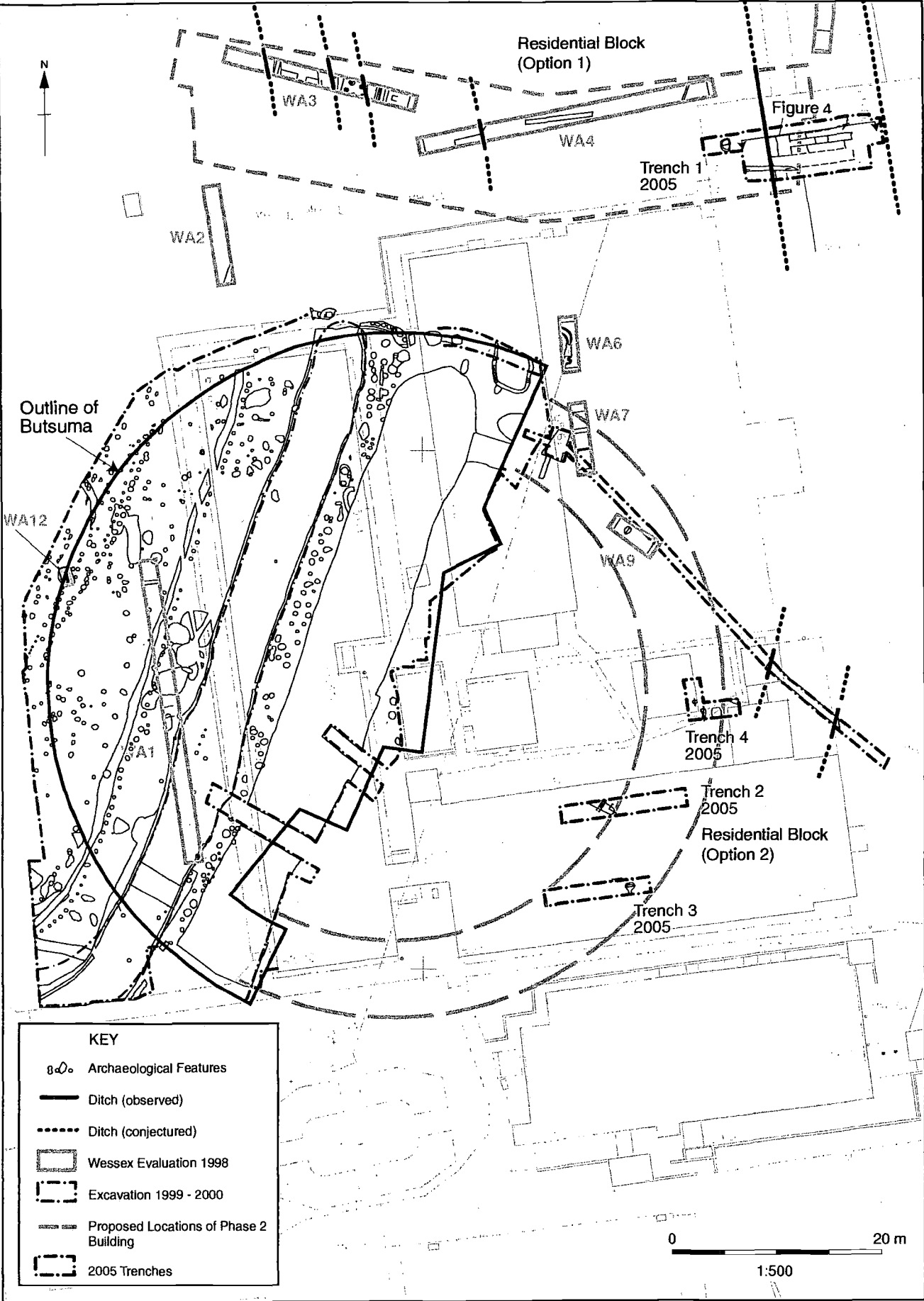


Fig 3. Location of the 2005 trenches in relation to the Butsuma (Chanting Hall) and the earlier archaeological investigations, showing the probable lines of the defensive ditches.

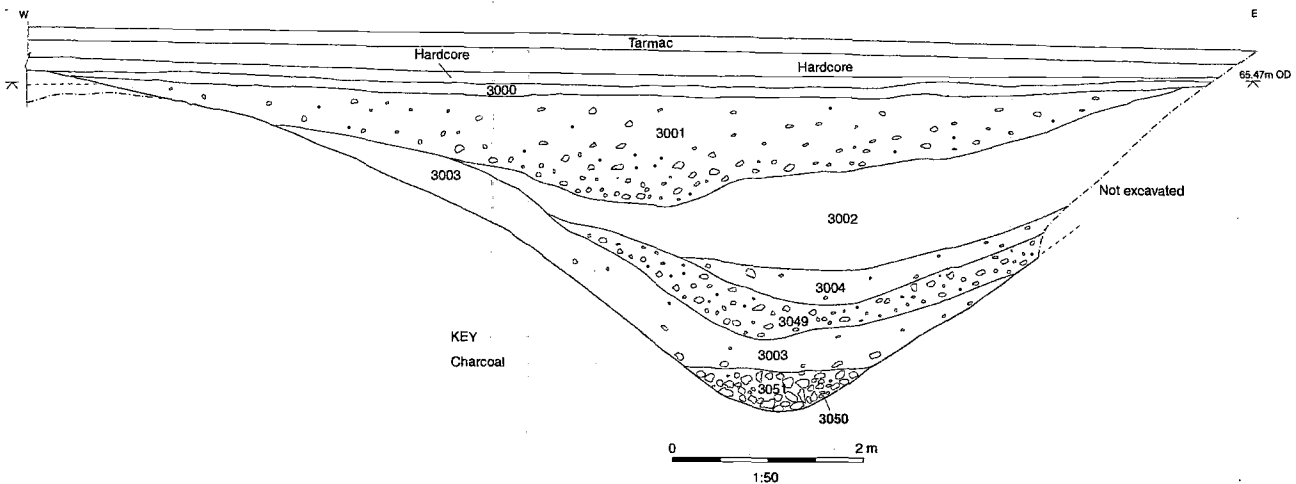


Fig 4. Section across the outer Iron Age defensive ditch in 2005 Trench 1

Hordeum sp. (hulled barley) and *Avena* sp. (oats) along with a small quantity of *Secale cereale* (rye). A date of cal AD 670-70 at 95% confidence (Poz-12532 1255 ± 30 BP) was obtained on a *Triticum* sp. grain. The Saxon domestic refuse deposited at depth within this ditch and the Iron Age hillfort ditch in the previous phase of investigation, demonstrates that this hillfort was multivallate, and that it survived as substantial earthworks into the Saxon period. The Saxon deposits may indicate domestic activity in, or around, these earthworks at a time broadly contemporary with the burial in the Taplow Mound. Moreover, the presence of a sherd of imported amphora/flagon sherd in the deposit tentatively signals high status activity. The upper fills of the ditch attest to the intentional levelling of the earthworks at some point in the medieval or post-medieval periods, possibly related to the landscaping for the grounds of Taplow Court.

The northern trench also revealed a late Bronze Age pit west of the ditch, and a later shallow ditch that cut both the upper fills of the defensive ditch and the pit. Three trenches dug further south contained one possibly Saxon tree-throw hole, but no other archaeological features, possibly due to truncation prior to the construction of industrial units in the 1950s.

Allen, T G and Lamdin-Whymark, H, 2000 The rediscovery of Taplow Hillfort. *SMA* 30, 22-28

Oxford Archaeology 2005 Taplow Court (Phase 2), Taplow, Buckinghamshire: Archaeological Evaluation Report, unpublished client report prepared for SGI-UK

RICHARD IVENS

Lavendon, 7 High Street (SP 91697 53671)

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of foundations for a new extension. No pre-modern archaeological deposits were observed; a single sherd of medieval pottery was recovered from a modern deposit.

North Crawley, 3 Chequers Lane (SP 92775 44660)

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of foundation trenches for a new extension. No pre-modern archaeological deposits or artefacts were identified.

Weston Underwood, Pevers Cottage, Pevers Lane (SP 86440 50425)

An archaeological 'strip and sample' excavation was carried out during removal of topsoil and other groundworks for a new extension and detached garage/parking space. No pre-modern archaeological deposits or artefacts were identified.

STRATASCAN

Aston Clinton, Buckinghamshire (SP 847 135)

David Elks

In April 2005 a geophysical survey was carried out for Buckinghamshire County Council. The survey area was 35ha of flat pasture land. The western area of the

Northamptonshire

site contains numerous earthworks including a scheduled moat, while the eastern end is cluttered with modern debris. The underlying geology is Upper Greensand and Gault from the Lower Cretaceous, this consists of sand and mudstones. The overlying soils are of the Grove association. These are defined as moderately permeable fine loamy calcareous soils over chalky gravel; some fine loamy over clayey soils with slowly permeable subsoil; some slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged clayey soils. Current land use is pasture.

A reconnaissance magnetic susceptibility survey was carried out over 35ha. Detailed magnetic and resistance surveys were then targeted on areas based on these results. While the west of the site provides little evidence of archaeological activity the eastern side contains anomalies that may be of an archaeological origin. These include cut features, bank features, and discrete anomalies possibly representing pits/depressions. There is no evidence of the suspected Roman building.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT SERVICES

Thrapston and Islip, Flood Alleviation Scheme (SP 9909 7853)

Aaron Clements

An watching brief was carried out by A Clements for Jackson Civil Engineering during groundworks for a flood alleviation scheme alongside the River Nene. A lost medieval chapel or hermitage was thought possibly to be located in the vicinity and a hoard of Roman pewter had also been found nearby. However, the investigation only identified a series of modern levelling deposits and landscaping features, overlying a sequence of alluvial layers.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES AND CONSULTANCY LTD

Corby, Land East of Weldon (SP5943 2900)

Alastair Hancock

A geophysical evaluation of sixty-one hectares of land east of Weldon was undertaken in advance of housing development. The survey produced evidence for the presence of iron smelting residues and two linear features, interpreted as former field boundaries.

Daventry, Middlemore, Site 3 (SP 5670 6500)

Alastair Hancock

A watching brief was undertaken during residential development. The site is adjacent to an area of Roman native settlement, excavated by ASC in 2004 (*SMA* 34, 32). No archaeological features or artefacts were observed.

Daventry, Land at Monksmoor Farm (SP 5810 6450)

Alastair Hancock

An evaluation comprising a geophysical survey, fieldwalking and trial trenching was undertaken at Monksmoor Farm, to inform development proposals. The geophysical survey identified the presence of a small settlement, of probable late Iron Age or Romano-British date, northwest of Monksmoor Farm. A light scatter of worked flint was recorded during the fieldwalking, including a concentration southeast of the farm buildings. A small number of Roman, medieval and later pottery sherds was also collected. Trial trenches were excavated in order to investigate the features identified during the geophysical survey and a number of ditches and pits containing Romano-British pottery sherds were revealed.

Duston, British Timken Works, Main Road (SP 725 640)

David Fell

A programme of archaeological works was undertaken in advance of a major redevelopment of the former British Timken works. The programme included extensive historical research, the compilation of a photographic and descriptive record of the factory buildings and their development, and an evaluation of undeveloped parts of the site.

During the 20th century British Timken was the country's principal manufacturer of tapered roller bearings. Until the Second World War production took place at Aston in the West Midlands but, in an effort to avoid bomb damage, a new factory was built on a green-field site at Duston. The new factory was opened in 1942 under the direction of Mr (later Sir) John Pascoe. The factory expanded considerably during the later 20th century as production expanded and new production techniques were introduced. At its peak, over 4000 people were employed in the factory, making it one of the largest employers in the area. Production ceased in 2002. Sir John Pascoe took a great interest in the welfare and social activities of the staff and the annual Timken Show, which first took place in 1946, was an important event in the social life

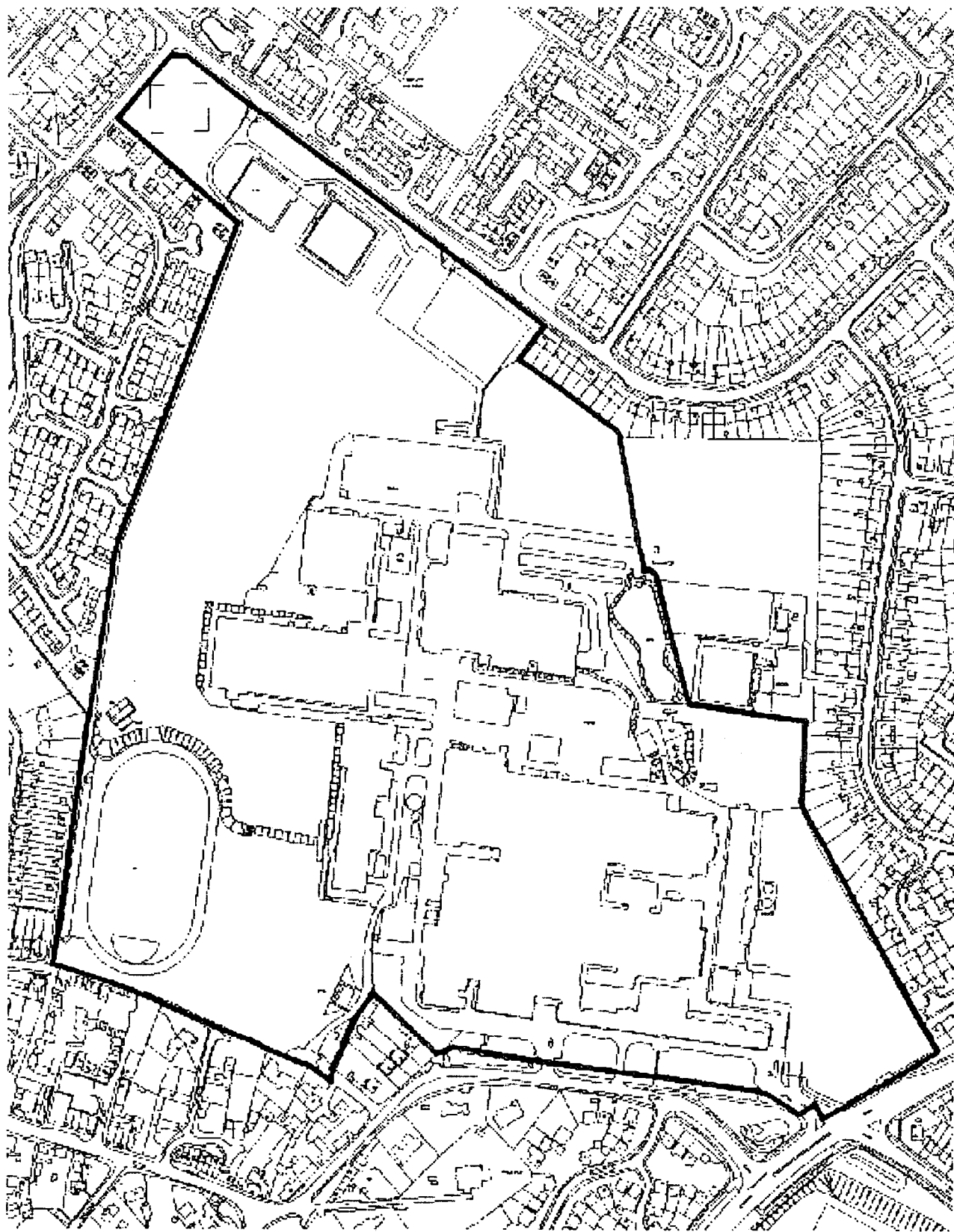


Fig 5. British Timken plant, Duston. plan showing the function of the main buildings.

of the area. The show included sports events and horticultural competitions and participants in the sports events included many of the well-known names of the day, including the show jumper Pat Smythe. The evaluation comprised a geophysical survey and trial trenching was undertaken. The site is adjacent to

an area of known Roman settlement, but no archaeological features were recorded. In some areas it was evident from the historical record that landscaping and terracing of the site had been sufficiently severe to remove any archaeology that

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might have been present. No archaeological features were revealed during trenching.

Earls Barton, former White & Co. Shoe Factory, Station Road (SP 8516 6330)

Bob Zeepvat

An historic building survey was carried out prior to demolition of the former White & Co shoe factory. John White & Co established their Station Road factory in the 1890s, and the first building was a long range set at right-angles to the road. This was subsequently expanded to the south, along the street frontage. Some time after 1958 a new block was constructed to the rear of the original factory, linked to it by a first-floor bridge. The original factory was demolished after 1974, and an extension was added to the rear of the 1950s building. A smaller building to the south-east, also constructed after 1958, was modernised after 1974, including replacement of its roof.

Raunds, former Tannery, Wellington Road (SP 9937 7223)

Nick Crank

A watching brief was undertaken on this site, formerly a gas works, prior to residential redevelopment. Fields adjoining the tannery site, which also form part of the development site, were evaluated in 2004 (*SMA* 35, 2005, 35). The excavation of a number of geotechnical test pits was monitored, revealing extensive hydrocarbon contamination, deep made-up ground and modern features. No archaeological remains were observed.

Towcester, Amen Corner, Moat Lane (SP 6938 4871)

Nigel Wilson and Nick Crank

A watching brief was maintained on the redevelopment of a small plot at the junction of Moat Lane and Chantry Lane, within the historic core of the Roman and later town. Previous archaeological work on the site (*SMA* 33, 2003, 57) had identified the presence of Roman and later features. A number of pits, linear features and the bottom three courses of a limestone wall were identified but no dateable artefacts were recovered.

Wakerley, land at Wakerley (SP 9500 9750)

David Fell and Kevin Wooldridge

Following a programme of fieldwalking (*SMA* 35, 2005, 35) trial trenching was undertaken over a 93ha

site at Wakerley in advance of proposed quarrying. The trenching targeted ironworking residues that had been identified during the fieldwalking, and at least twelve clusters of furnaces and other directly related features have been uncovered across site.

The furnaces are all variations of bloomery shaft furnaces, and would originally have comprised a circular shaft perhaps one metre high with an internal diameter of *c* 0.3-0.5m. The iron never melts, as occurs in modern blast furnaces, but instead remains solid and forms a 'bloom' (thus the term bloomery), which is a spongy mass of iron and slag. This is then gently smithed and compacted while the slag is expelled, resulting in a small bar of iron. The majority of the slag will be molten and sinks to the bottom of the furnace (the bloom forms half way up the shaft in the hottest part of the furnace) and is drained or tapped out into a pit below or beside the furnace. This slag is known as tap slag, and very large amounts of it are often found on these early bloomery sites. (Fig 6)

At least three types of iron-smelting furnaces were found and, although as yet undated, work in the surrounding area suggests that they maybe Iron Age, Roman and possibly Saxon or early medieval in date. Though the tops had been ploughed away, the lower section of some survived because they had been partially cut into the underlying natural limestone brash. They were built of clay and some had been rebuilt with the same material, sometimes just in front of the previous furnace.

Other possible evidence for smelting was found in the form of groups of 'cigar-shaped' pits *c* 3.5m long and 0.3m deep. These had burnt bases and have been provisionally identified as ore roasting pits. The iron ore needs to be roasted on a bonfire to oxidize it, and to remove any impurities, before it is broken into small pieces ready to go into the furnace. No evidence was found for making charcoal, the fuel used for iron production (usually mature oak), although very large quantities of it would have been required. It has been estimated that it takes *c* 60kg of charcoal to make a bar of iron weighing just 0.5kg. (Front cover)

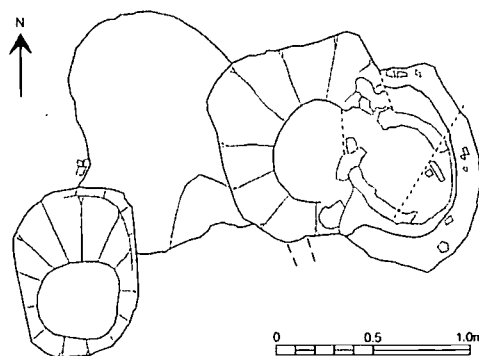


Fig 6. Wakerley: One of the groups of furnaces.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY

Compiled by Pat Chapman

A43 Corby Link Road (SP 861833 to 910872)

Adrian Butler, Ian Fisher and Tim Upson-Smith

An archaeological evaluation comprising a geophysical survey and trial trench excavation was carried out on the line of the proposed A43 Corby Link Road, and revealed a number of scattered archaeological sites. An isolated ring ditch, known from previous aerial photography, is 38m in diameter and the ditch is 0.9m by 4.8m wide. Although no dating evidence was recovered, it is likely to be the ring ditch of a Bronze Age round barrow. A further potential ring ditch was also located, along with an Iron Age ditch and two Roman ditches.

Apethorpe Hall (TL 023 955)

Adrian Butler

An earth resistance survey carried out on behalf of English Heritage at Apethorpe Hall. A putative group of small structures were detected on approximately 1.3ha of the North Lawn, near the site of the medieval village. Possible remains of brick constructions may have been present towards the centre of the Lawn. A pipeline was confirmed as crossing the site.

Barton Seagrave Hall (SP 888 773)

Joe Prentice

Three dormer windows in need of repair were assessed at the Listed Grade II Barton Seagrave Hall, a fine building comprising various phases of construction. The west wing, which contains the three dormer windows, is Georgian, and the dormers sit within the attic storey of the five bay west front, overlooking the garden. Each dormer is of the same configuration: pedimented and containing nine lights set in two casement windows, one of three lights, the other of six. Only the casements are in need of repair, the structure of the dormers is sound and will not be replaced. However, the three dormers all appear to be replacements and are not contemporary with the original 18th century date of the wing in which they sit.

Blatherwyke Hall (SP 975958)

Adrian Butler and Chris Jones

The plan of the south front of the house, the east quadrant and pavilion and a large area of demolition rubble spread over the site of the former Blatherwyke Hall, demolished in 1948, was revealed by integrated geophysical survey including magnetometer and

Northamptonshire

resistance survey. Remains of limestone wall foundations, cellars and floors relating to the former demolished hall and a former tarmac road were revealed along the northern edge of the trial trench evaluation. No evidence for the layout of the former south facing garden or medieval remains was discovered to the south of the house.

Brockhall Park (SP 628 625)

Andy Mudd

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken following the removal of topsoil to create a soil storage bund in connection with dredging part of the infilled lake at Brockhall Park. The subsoil surface was found to be very clean and no features or finds were present.

Cranford, Church of St Andrew (SP 924 773)

David Leigh

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during drainage works at The Church of St Andrew. No archaeological deposits were present and no artefacts were recovered.

Crick, DIRFT Central (SP 567 735)

David Leigh

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks connected with the construction of a new distribution centre at Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal (DIRFT) Central, near Crick. The groundworks comprised the building up of an area of low lying original ground surface, followed by the excavation of foundations and service trenches for the construction of the new distribution centre. The watching brief showed that groundworks were contained within the made ground and did not impact upon the buried ground surface. No archaeological deposits were present and no artefacts were recovered.

Crick, Watling Street (SP 5782 7152)

Chris Jones

Remains of a metalled road surface was revealed on a length of public byway which was part of Watling Street Roman Road, to the west of Crick, during an archaeological recording action carried out on behalf of Northamptonshire County Council's Rights of Way section. No dating evidence was present.

Northamptonshire

Deanshanger, Kingsbrook School (SP 7684 3957)

Jim Brown and Ed Taylor

Archaeological remains to the south-east of a Roman villa that was first identified in 1957 were examined. Excavations in 1972, 1974-5, 1996 (*SMA* 27 (1997), 36) and 2004 (*SMA* 35 (2005), 39) expanded upon the recorded evidence for the site. There were late 1st century to early 2nd century ditch systems in the north-eastern part of the excavated area. In the southern area, where truncation was less severe, there were two enclosures dated to the mid-2nd century. Robbed walls dating to the late 2nd and early 3rd centuries defined the south-east corner of the villa courtyard and were aligned on the earlier enclosure pattern. Two circular stone structures, probably bread ovens, were also found.

Earls Barton quarry, southern extension

(SP 8700 6165)

Chris Jones

An archaeological watching brief was carried out at the southern extension at Earls Barton Quarry on behalf of Hanson Aggregates. The area lay immediately west of the extensive Neolithic and Bronze Age funerary complex at Grendon (Fig **). Iron Age and Roman remains have also been discovered in the same area.

The watching brief located a ring ditch enclosure on a small gravel island between two palaeochannels. It was oval in plan, measuring 10.5m by 9.0m, with the long axis aligned north-east to south-west, broadly comparable to the general alignment of both the adjacent palaeochannels and of the Grendon monument complex. There was a narrow entrance, 0.9m wide, at the southernmost point of the circuit. It is dated to the early Bronze Age by food vessel sherds from the ditch. An undated cremation deposit to the east of the palaeochannel may have been directly related to the adjacent Grendon barrows. A pit excavated in the evaluation may have dated to the Iron Age. A medieval track was also recorded.

The present site makes a further small contribution to the known Grendon complex of Neolithic and Bronze Age funerary monuments (Fig 7). These are of national importance and formed a prehistoric landscape comparable to that investigated in the Raunds Area Project in the 1980s, but the Grendon group is less well known than it should be as a result of its investigation in a succession of episodes in advance of gravel extraction that have now spanned several decades. However, the publication in the *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society*, volume 71 for 2005, of the excavation in the late 1990s of a Neolithic mortuary enclosure at the northern end of the complex, has gone

some way towards putting Grendon on the archaeological map.

Easton-on-the-Hill, Glebe House (TF 0095 0459)

Joe Prentice

A small stone outbuilding in the grounds of Glebe House, Easton-on-the-Hill appears to have been constructed to serve as a bakehouse. It does not appear to be contemporary with the main house but has been added later, probably in the second half of the 18th century. Currently roofless, the walls remain in reasonable condition and retain three original windows, and a single doorway in the south wall. Inside are the remains of a small contemporary bread oven, fireplace and chimney to which has been added a 19th century 'copper' or water heater built of red brick.

Fotheringhay Castle (TL 0622 9297)

Dan McAree

An archaeological watching brief was carried out during excavations for the laying of a low voltage electric cable at Fotheringhay Castle, Fotheringhay (Scheduled Monument: Fotheringhay Motte and Bailey Castle, National Monument No. 13641). Immediately below the modern gatepost, an earlier limestone gate pier was exposed. There were no other archaeological features.

Furtho, Church of St Bartholomew (SP 7734 4309)

David Leigh

A watching brief was undertaken during groundworks connected with excavation of a test pit and the lifting of worn floor slabs in the interior of The Church of St Bartholomew. No archaeological deposits were present and no artefacts were recovered.

Hemington, Ellands Farm (TL 084 846)

Steven Morris

Two main areas of archaeological features were discovered on the site of a proposed group of six wind turbines near Hemington. The area of Iron Age occupation, comprising mostly curvilinear gullies, shallow pits and postholes, was not closely datable but the pottery is characteristic of the middle to late Iron Age. There were also ditches and gullies dated to the Roman period.

The Roman area, largely comprising linear ditches and gullies representing a concentration of enclosures covering c 3ha, was dated to the 1st and 2nd centuries AD. Finds included rotary quern and mortar fragments, charred cereals and animal bones.

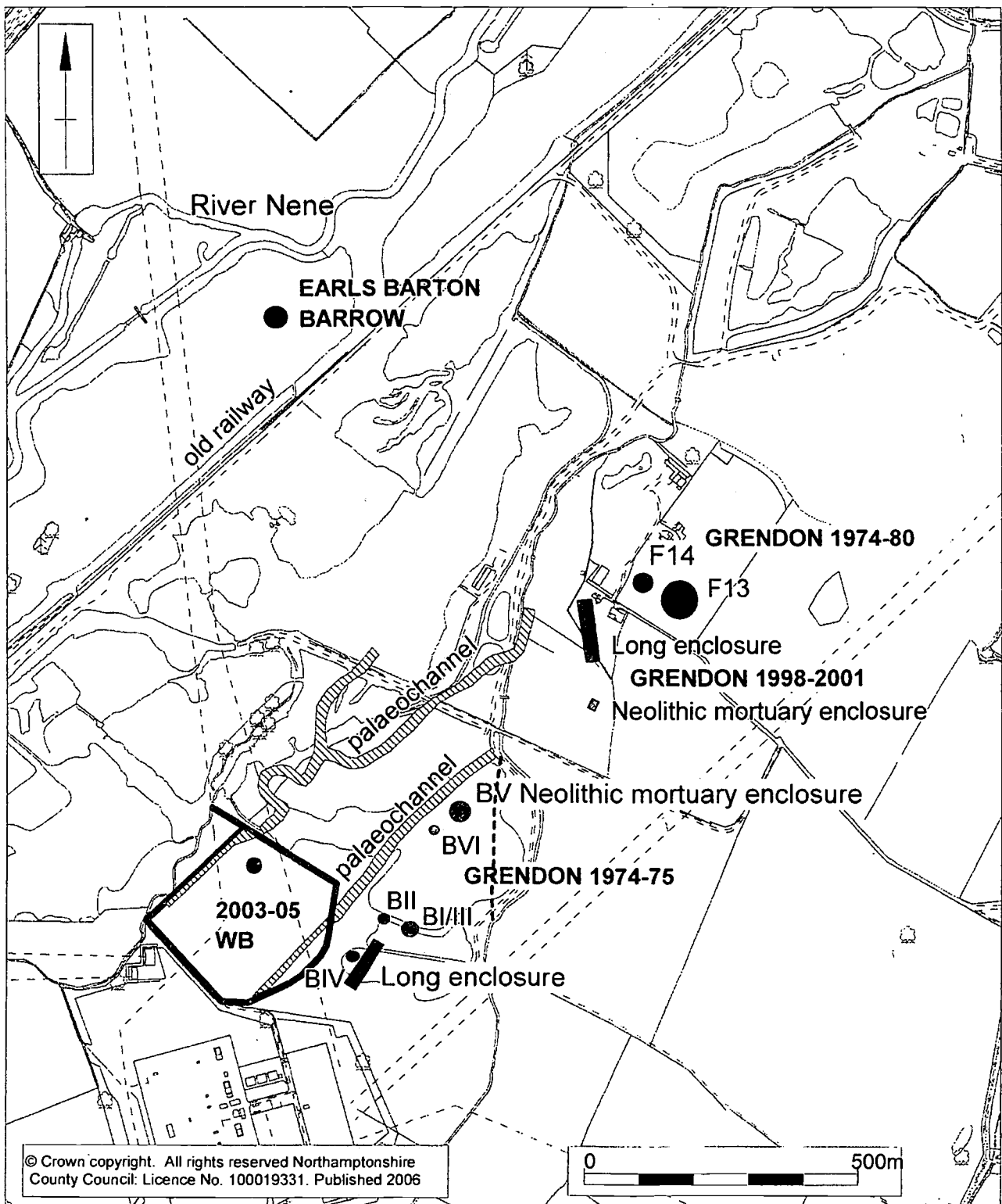


Fig 7. The monument complex at Grendon.

Irchester, Chester House Farm (SP 9178 6672)
Michael Webster and Tim Upson-Smith

An evaluation was carried out on the access road to Chester House Farm. The original road surface does survive in places, between 0.1m to 0.3m below the present road surface, albeit damaged by later surfaces. Three burials were also noted in three of the test pits, and suggest the presence of a previously unknown

cemetery to the east of the walled Roman town of Irchester.

Kettering, land to the west (SP 853784)
Adrian Burrow, Adrian Butler and Paul Mason

Fieldwalking, geophysical and trial trench surveys were conducted on four fields covering 19ha of land west of Kettering. The fieldwalking survey recovered

Northamptonshire

very few surface finds. Reconnaissance geophysical survey identified a few anomalies of interest which were then subjected to detailed survey. These detected subtle variations in the local geology in one field and possible glacial fissuring was identified in another, but a single potential archaeological linear ditch was located. However, trial trenches targeted on these anomalies failed to reveal any features of archaeological interest.

Kettering, Wicksteed Park (SP 8838 7695)

Tim Upson-Smith

Twelve timber-framed, pre-fabricated bungalows on concrete raft foundations at Wicksteed Park formed a group of accommodation built in 1930 for workers at the park. They had been lived in until fairly recently and were subject to building recording as they are to be demolished to make way for new chalet-style holiday accommodation. The buildings survived in fair condition, and while all of them showed at least some degree of modification, many original features survived. The timber frame was covered with cement stucco on the exterior and the windows were steel framed. They perhaps represent an example of experimental low-cost housing. The buildings were arranged in six sets of two semi-detached bungalows, 15m long by 6.7m wide, sharing a central brick chimney stack, and they were set along the western side of a single track metalled road which was provided with cast iron street lamps. The interior accommodation consisted of an entrance hall, pantry, kitchen, living room, two bedrooms and a washroom/toilet.

Northampton, Barnes Meadow (SP 768 595)

Alex Thorne

Test Pits on land between the existing and old courses of the River Nene, excavated on behalf of the Northampton Wildlife Trust ahead of the creation of a wetland habitat, failed to locate any levels associated with the Battle of Northampton in 1460. There was only modern made ground, the underlying alluvial clays and gravel layers and a stream channel that was recorded in historic maps from the 18th to 20th centuries.

Northampton, Hardingstone Allotments

Adrian Butler and Paul Mason

Two irregular linear ditches recorded by geophysical survey were investigated by trial trenching on former allotments in Hardingstone. The ditches contained Iron Age pottery, animal bone, charred remains and

the bottom stone of a rotary quern, suggesting a focus of settlement nearby and they appeared to be a continuation of ditches previously recorded on land to the east in 1969. Early Roman pottery kilns had also been recorded on the school site to the east and a little way to the north-west, but the geophysical survey did not locate any potential kilns within the allotment site, which forms the last substantial open area within this known complex of Iron Age and Roman activity on the Hunsbury ridge to the south of Northampton.

Northampton, Sixfields, Harvey Reeves Road (SP 735 601)

Chris Jones, Carol Simmonds and Tim Upson-Smith

In April 2005 a watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of vent trenches north of the River Nene at Harvey Reeves Road. Various layers of modern make-up and landfill deposits were observed, but there were no archaeological features or artefacts.

Northampton, Kingsthorpe, Good Shepherd Primary School (SP 75237 63080)

Andy Chapman and Pat Chapman

Following the recovery of human remains, building works being carried out in the grounds of the Good Shepherd Primary School were examined at the request of the police. Whilst digging a deep pit to form a sump for a new drainage system, much of a human skeleton was disturbed and recovered by the works contractor. It appears to have lain within a shallow grave cut 0.4m into the soft natural sand, with the head to the east, indicating that it was probably a formal Christian burial. The remains are probably female, perhaps aged between the late 20s to late 30s at death. In 1200 St Andrew's Priory founded a hospital on the site. Following the dissolution in 1570 the buildings passed into private hands, and the hospital building was demolished in 1928. It is therefore most likely that the burial was of medieval to late medieval date as a deceased patient of the former hospital. Other burials may well lie in the surrounding area.

Northampton, Kingswell Street (SP 7532 6033)

Jim Brown

Archaeological excavations were carried out on land at the junction of Kingswell Street, and Woolmonger Street. Both streets are integral to the understanding of the layout and development of the medieval town. The earliest features were late Saxon pits, and a Saxo-Norman timber structure. The majority of the medieval features dated to the 13th to 14th centuries comprising quarry pits, a well pit, a malting oven and a

baking oven, four stone buildings and numerous pits, some of them stone-lined. A few pits contained 15th century pottery.

The 16th to 17th century activity comprised pits at the rear of Woolmonger Street, and a wall and stone-lined latrine pits at the rear of 8-10 Kingswell Street.

Industrial waste products comprising clay pipe bowls, stems and a fragment of saggar were recovered from a pit at the rear of 12 Kingswell Street. Ten wells were identified as having been filled during the 18th and 19th centuries. Other late post-medieval features included two cellars, five of the main boundary walls for the former tenement plots and seven stone-lined pits.

Northampton, St George's School (SP 613753)

Joe Prentice

St. George's School had been built by the Borough of Northampton and was opened in June 1908. Whilst having undergone many superficial changes, the school, which comprises a long range housing junior boys and girls and a separate building for the infants, remains largely as built. Separate covered play areas and a toilet block also survive. The school closed in 1970 and has been used recently by Northampton College. It is to be demolished.

Northampton, Upton, Pineham North

(SP 7134 5850)

Ben Pears

There was extensive evidence of a mostly 1st to 2nd century AD Romano-British occupation site, with a number of construction phases for a mixture of buildings within regular rectilinear enclosures, found during evaluation following identification by previous geophysical and fieldwalking surveys. Evidence of medieval arable farming in the form of ridge and furrow was discovered within nearly all the trenches.

Northampton, Upton, Pineham North

(SP 7134 5850)

Simon Carlisle

A watching brief was carried out during a geotechnical assessment of land at Pineham North, Upton. No archaeological remains or artefacts were encountered in any of the geotechnical test pits.

Northampton, Weston Favell Upper School

(SP 7884 6300)

Adrian Butler

A geophysical survey on land at Weston Favell Upper School, Booth Lane South, revealed the location of a

buried linear pipe. Terracing for the school playing fields had resulted in the loss of the original ground surface over most of the site.

Oundle, Oundle School (TL 0370 8815)

Adrian Burrow

Oundle School is located directly to the north of the historic Saxon and medieval core of the township. An archaeological evaluation comprising trial excavation was carried out in advance of the construction of a new Science Technology Block. Documentary and archaeological evidence had suggested that the area was located towards a focus of early-middle Saxon settlement and there was the potential for the recovery of significant archaeological remains from this period. However, the excavation found only one unequivocal archaeological feature, a pit, from which was recovered a single potsherd with a late Saxon/medieval date range.

Oundle, Parson Latham's Hospital (TL 0432 8832)

David Leigh

A watching brief was undertaken during groundworks connected with the construction of new wheelchair accessible almshouses on land to the rear of Parson Latham's Hospital, Oundle. Previous work had found a range of features of Romano-British, late Saxon and medieval date (*SMA* 33 (2003) 53-54), however, these were deeply buried and as the current development does not penetrate to that depth, no archaeological deposits were disturbed and no artefacts were recovered.

Raunds Area Project

Steve Parry and Andy Chapman

The series of monograph reports detailing the results of those aspects of the Raunds Area Project carried out by the then Northamptonshire Archaeological Unit in the 1980s to early 1990s will finally be appearing over the next year or two. Final editing and the publication of the volumes is being fully funded by English Heritage and the volumes will be published by Oxbow Books.

The report on the results of the Raunds Area Survey, by Steve Parry, detailing the model of prehistoric landscape use and Iron Age, Roman, Saxon and medieval settlement development that has emerged as a result of the systematic field walking of four parishes, as well as complementary documentary analysis and the results of trial trenching and other minor excavations, is currently in press and should be available by the time this note appears in print.

Northamptonshire

In Raunds itself, the excavation of several sites at the northern end of the village revealed much of interest to students of the origin of villages. Dispersed early Saxon occupation gave way to a middle Saxon farm at Langham Road, while the manorial centre at Furnells had its origin in an Anglo-Scandinavian farm of the 9th century that, in the 10th century, following the reconquest by the Saxon kings, was absorbed into a new plot system with the Saxon timber halls later replaced by a stone-built manor house. The report on the associated church and cemetery has previously been published, but this volume will also contain a revised chronology for the overall development of Furnells manor and the nearby settlement. The report, originally prepared by Michel Audouy, has been edited for publication by Andy Chapman and should appear either later in 2006 or in early 2007.

Finally, the extensive excavation of the deserted medieval hamlet of West Cotton, Raunds, on the edge of the river floodplain, revealed the complex and dynamic story of how what appeared in earthwork to be a simple peasant hamlet, had its origin as a late Saxon timber manor. This had an attached watermill, and the manor buildings were rebuilt in stone in the 12th century at a time when catastrophic flooding led to the demise of the watermill and the provision of a protective floodbank to ensure the survival of the hamlet. The manor house was later relocated and enlarged, but shortly afterwards the buildings were sub-divided to form several peasant tenements, who then farmed the former manorial demesne lands until desertion between the early 14th and 15th centuries. The report has been prepared and edited by Andy Chapman and should be available in 2007.

Raunds, Warth Park (SP 989 734)

Danny McAree

Part of a pit alignment, comprising 24 pits, was recorded during a watching brief. These were not excavated, but their dimensions, interval and orientation was recorded. This pit alignment had been originally discovered in 2000, where two pits were found (*SMA* 31 (2001), 37), and in 2004 a single trench revealed a further sixteen pits of which fourteen were excavated (*SMA* 35 (2005), 40). A small pottery assemblage suggests an early Iron Age date.

Salcey Forest (SP 805 515)

Steven Morris, Carol Simmonds, Pat Chapman, Andy Chapman

An earthwork survey and watching brief was undertaken within a 24ha area in the northern part of Salcey Forest, on behalf of the Forestry Commission. The features recorded included a network of

substantial bank and ditch enclosures which appear to pre-date the medieval coppice earthworks, as well as probable later features such as ponds and ditches. Under closer scrutiny was a smaller mitigation area to be used for the canopy walkway. No archaeological remains or artefacts were found during the watching brief conducted when pairs of foundation trenches were excavated for the six steel towers supporting the walkway, which had been located to avoid damage to the nearby earthworks.

Tansor and Cotterstock (TL 0525 9065)

Ailsa Westgarth

A programme of archaeological works was undertaken prior to and during the laying of the Tansor to Cotterstock sewer pipeline. The fieldwalking recovered small amounts of Roman material, while the geophysical survey in the same area revealed a number of potential features to the west of the River Nene associated with cropmarks. Two small gullies and a trackway were uncovered during the watching brief. The gullies lay to the west of Cotterstock church and the trackway to the west of the River Nene.

West Haddon Bypass (SP 6284 7243)

Paul Mason and Anne Foard-Colby

An open area excavation and series of watching briefs took place in advance and during construction of the West Haddon Bypass. Field survey and subsequent trial trenching undertaken in 1997/8 had demonstrated the survival of archaeological remains relating to a Romano-British settlement located to the south-east of Village Farm (*SMA* 29 (1999), 26). The earliest evidence for occupation of the site was a circular ditched enclosure and a larger irregular enclosure defined by a sinuous gully. Both of these undated features predate the establishment of a Romano-British settlement comprising a series of sub-rectangular enclosures set out either side of a ditched trackway. The excavation examined parts of three such enclosures together with associated features and a section of the trackway. The evidence indicates a rural settlement of modest status whose economy was based upon crop cultivation. The Romano-British settlement appears to have been established in the mid-1st century and reached its zenith in the 2nd to 3rd centuries before being abandoned by the late 3rd century.

RICHARD IVENS

Ashton, Church of St Michael and All Angels

(SP 76525 49975)

Two Test Pits (each 1.5 x 1.5m) were hand-excavated at locations on the proposed line of a new service trench on the north side of St Michael's Church, Ashton. Despite several modern disturbances evidence of both Roman and medieval activity was revealed.

Barton Seagrave, Land to rear of 76-82 Polwell Lane (SP 8877 7643)

A continuous watching brief was maintained during the stripping of the footprints of two bungalows and associated driveways, etc, followed by continuous observation of the excavation of the foundation trenches for the two bungalows. No pre-modern deposits or artefacts were observed.

Cranford St John, Church of St John the Baptist (SP 92730 77095)

A Watching Brief was carried out during the replacement of part of the floor of the north aisle. A blocked burial niche was exposed but both niche and floor area proved to have suffered considerable 19th century disturbance. A further watching brief was maintained during the construction of a new path in the churchyard but no pre-modern deposits were disturbed.

Deanshanger, Lodore, 1 The Green (SP 7630 3955)

A continuous watching brief was maintained during the stripping of the footprint of a new block of flats and associated parking areas in the garden of Lodore, 1 The Green, Deanshanger. This work was followed by continuous monitoring of the excavation of the foundation and service trenches for the block of flats. An extensive stone structure was identified at the southwest corner and to the south of the new block of flats. This appeared to be the remains of a modern garden terrace, presumably related to the early 20th century occupation of Lodore.

Several undated pits were recorded during the digging of the foundations for the new block of flats. These are thought likely to be modern garden features, for the planting/removal of bushes small trees, etc.

One (machine shattered) sherd of late medieval Potterspury-type (Northamptonshire Type Series 329) ware was recovered from modern topsoil.

No other pre-modern deposits or artefacts were observed.

East Haddon, Church of St Mary, the Virgin

(SP 6675 6815)

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of a service trench across the West Tower and western part of the churchyard. No pre-modern remains were revealed, aside from the foundations of the West Tower itself.

Easton Neston, Showsley, Showsley Grounds Farmyard (SP 7175 5077)

Five evaluation trenches (87.5m²) were excavated within the yards of Showsley Farmyard in advance of a 'barn conversion' development. No pre-modern deposits or artefacts were discovered during the course of the trial trench evaluation. Every trench showed clear evidence of substantial clearance of the site prior to the laying of the existing, modern, farmyard surfaces. Evidence of numerous service trenches criss-crossing the farmyards was also discovered. A small number of modern features associated with the site's use as a farmyard were recorded. Given the level of modern disturbance and the lack of any pre-modern (20th century) deposits it seems almost certain that no extensive archaeological remains could survive within the Application Site of the medieval nunnery of Sewardsey.

Flore, All Saints Church (SP 64200 59865)

A watching brief was carried out during the mechanical excavation of service trenches across the churchyard. A number of grave cuts were noted and a single sherd of Early – Middle Saxon pottery was recovered from one grave. Some human remains were observed. Minor details of the foundations of the north nave wall were also recorded.

Yardley Gobion, 7 Grafton Road (SP 7663 4491)

A watching brief was carried out during the groundworks for the construction of a new extension. No archaeological features pre-dating the 19th century were observed. Four small, unstratified, sherds of medieval Potterspury/Yardley Gobion pottery were recovered.

OXFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES AND CONSULTANCY LTD.

Watlington, Watlington House Stables, Christmas Common (SU 7056 9253)

Karin Semmelmann and David Fell

Historic building recording was carried out on the stables in advance of refurbishment. A survey of the house and grounds was completed by ASC in 2003 (SMA 34, 2004, 35). The stable block has been quite considerably remodelled since it was built in the early 19th century. The central archway has been blocked to provide accommodation at first-floor level, the tack room has been subdivided and the southernmost bays have been united to form a garage. The hayloft over the stalls has now also been incorporated into the living quarters. The most significant alterations, which include the refitting of the stables and the provision of more first-floor accommodation, appear to have taken place in the late 19th and/or early 20th century.

OXFORDSHIRE BUILDINGS RECORD

Curbridge, The 'Granary', Caswell Farm (SP322083)

David Clark

The OBR recorded this building on 16 April 2005 prior to conversion.

Caswell farm is near three moated sites some 1.2km southwest of Curbridge. The house is described in the Buildings of England (Oxfordshire), p.567 and some of the historical background is given in the Victoria

County History of Oxfordshire Volume 14 *Witney and its Townships* (2004) pp.198-9 and 203-6. The house itself has a south range which seems to date from the late 15th and early 16th century. The farm was let to tenant farmers from the mid 18th century when it was probably reduced in size.

The 'granary', which lies close to and just back from the building line of the house overlooks and at one point rests in the moat, has considerable historical and architectural interest. Its relationship to the house suggests possibilities for its earlier uses.

Description

The walling stone is roughly coursed limestone rubble of various types; some have a reddish tinge associated with exposure to fire. The southeast quoins are dressed and chamfered, the southwest ones are ashlar, sawn but not chamfered, while the other corners are simply squared blocks of rubble. The mortar is generally lime, which in some parts has been buttered and lined. There is some evidence of limewash on the rear (west) elevation. The roof covering is Cotswold stone slates laid in diminishing courses, and there are limestone ridge tiles. Rising from the roof is a chimney stack in ashlar, with a moulded dripstone. The top part of the stack is (modern) brick.

In the east elevation are two wide doorways of different heights, a small window with a lintel of ashlar blocks, and a stairway to a door to an upper room. The left hand doorway relates to splayed channels in the pitched stone. The door is supported by a pair of carriage hinges on pintles, with internal ironwork of upper and lower bolts. The right hand doorway is lower, with a concrete lintel, but also relates to the pitched stone floor of the interior. The window is timber with glazing bars, six panes in each part. One side is fixed, the other is a casement.

Stone steps at the south end are not integral to the structure, and the lowest step is very close to the jamb of the left hand doorway. The steps are rather shallow and are of irregular height. The mortar joints change in width from $\frac{1}{2}$ inch (12mm) in the lower part of the wall to fine jointing in the top 2 feet (61cm).

The northern gable wall extends downwards at the northwest into the moat and has a full-height doorway to the upper floor, with a timber lintel. The west wall is almost

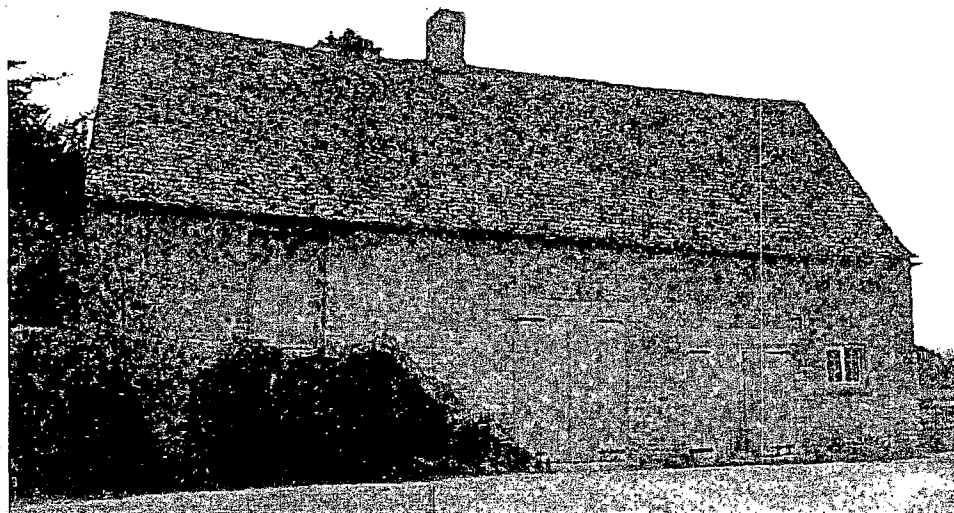


Fig 8. The 'Granary', Caswell Farm.

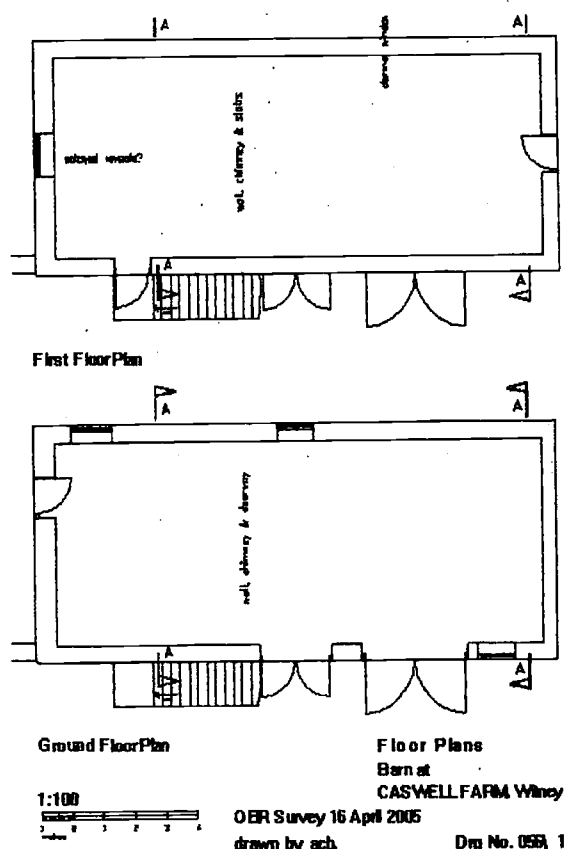


Fig 9. The 'Granary', Caswell Farm. Plans.

To the south on the ground floor is a square basement room entered through a plank door with a Suffolk latch, and a step down on to a limestone flag floor. The doorway has a chamfered reveal to the west, straight to the east. Near the doorway the flags are square but those near the window are heavily worn, while the others between the door and the fireplace are heavily fragmented; towards the eastern part of the room, the flags are irregular in shape and have suffered less damage, although in places there are voids to the earth below.

The central stone wall contains a large fireplace. Across the room are three large beams with deep chamfers and delicate roll-moulded stops, probably 17th century in date. One of these beams is set into the south gable wall, the central one is exposed, and the north is set into the outer wall of the stack, but sections of it have been lost to damp and insects. These beams support 14 ceiling joists of almost square section and narrow chamfers at approx. 12½ inch (32cm) intervals. They fit into the beams with diminished haunch soffit tenons.

The main activity of the room centred on the northern wall, which has a well-preserved group of features connected with domestic service activities. At the left (west) side is an alcove with a stone bench and a large shaped stone lintel above. There is also the sign of a relieving arch in the stonework above the lintel. This space is vented by a flue which joins the main flue at some height (approximately 12ft (3.6m)). The rear (north) wall has brickwork with an arch and infill which suggests a blocked-in oven.

Next to this is the jamb of the great fireplace which supports the end of a charred timber lintel, some 3.5m in length. Within this span are two structures; that to the left in stone is capped, but possibly contains a copper or stove, while to the right a brick copper survives with a stoke-hole (iron hinged cover), ash pit below, and an iron bowl above. Within the flue are metal rods for smoking meat, and to the right is a stone shelf also within the flue and above the copper area which again might have been used for curing or smoking. There are signs that the fireplace had been infilled as openings in the stonework to the rear seem to suggest it was larger at one time.

Above this room and accessed by an external stone staircase is the one portion of the building that was used as a granary. It is entered through a plank door with a wooden lock and is of two bays separated by the principal rafter truss described above. The walls are plastered. At the north end is the huge stack of the fireplace below, rising in stages to the roof. Within the space is a group of three wooden grain bins pegged into supporting timbers and with plank walls. Plank thresholds at one time slotted into the openings. The

inaccessible due to the moat and garden vegetation, but there are timber supporting pieces within the wall, and a dormer in the roof slope. In the centre is a window to the lower floor room, and to the south a timber window to the ground floor room, with a chamfered stone sill.

The s. gable wall has a doorway to a ground floor room with a chamfered timber lintel, a glazed window and evidence of two small blocked windows. There is a straight-joint to one side of the doorway indicating that it was wider at one time. On one of the southeast quoins is a carved "M".

Internally, the building is divided into two by a rubblestone wall most of which contains a chimney stack. At the upper level, five wooden steps permit access from the south to the north spaces but a ground floor opening has been blocked. The roof consists of five bays with two tiers of purlins supported by the three walls and three pegged A-frame trusses. The underside of the roof slates has been torched, there is a thin plank ridge, and the purlins are butted into the principal rafters and fixed together with free tenons. A reused tie-beam has been bolted to the south truss. The only clear assembly marks are on the second truss from the north where the number III has been chiselled on each rafter near the apex. The common rafters rest on the purlins and are not pegged into them; their feet rest on the top of the stone walls.

Oxfordshire

junction of the floor and walls has been provided with a shaped zinc insert to aid the sweeping of grains.

Just inside the doorway the plaster has a number of pencilled marks, some vertical tally marks, others giving quantities and totals of various grains at various dates, for example on the southern jamb totals of oats are given for 1846. On the northern jamb are other graffiti, one relating to a 'roundabout' in July 20th to 22nd 1920, another with names of Harry(?) Smallbone and Martin Bloodsid(?). These are probably the names of farm labourers.

The (north) ground floor space is of three bays and is 37cm higher than the south part. The south bay was recently used as a garage, with an inspection pit covered with wooden planking. It has a stone floor-pattern which suggests use for a wheeled vehicle such as a carriage or trap. The two bays to the north have a pitched stone floor and a drainage channel. Mortices in the surviving timberwork indicate a stable with three loose boxes for carriage or riding horses.

The south jamb of the large double doorway to this end of the building suggests a rebuilding; there is no evidence of a partition between the two parts of the building. The planking of the loose boxes to a height of 150cm is the same as that in the granary, 18 inch (45cm) wide with a moulding on one edge. However, the latter seems to have been made to fit the spaces. Thus, although most of the stable planking has gone, it was probably not reused in the granary. The door of one loose box survives in the north room, with its original bolt and open grille at the top. Semi-circular marks in the limewash show the positions of the mangers in each loose box.

The room above is accessed by five stairs from the granary and is open to the roof. The roof structure divides the room into three bays, but the position of the tie beams at waist height makes access and movement difficult.

Discussion

A number of factors suggest that the original building on this site was the south part: the chamfered and dressed quoins facing the house are quite different from those at the north end of the building, and the fact that the northwest corner sits in the moat suggests a constraint imposed by a pre-existing building rather than an original intent. Internally, the different floor levels also signal a discontinuity. There is no fabric, feature or fitting in the north part datable to before 1800, with the possible exception of the lintel to the downstairs (north) window, which could be 18th century. On the other hand, the massive fireplace and the chamfered beams of the south part could date from the 17th or late 16th century.

We also suggest that the s. part was built to be open to the roof: a number of elements of the wall seem to be

double-skinned – a purpose of the inner stone wall would have been to support the beams for an inserted floor, especially if the beams and joists had come from part of the demolished late medieval house, and did not quite fit the space.

The construction of the north three bays was probably to extend the service provision, possibly for dairying as it is to the north and would have had a good water supply from the stream to the rear. The opening between the two ground floor rooms would have allowed hot water to be taken between the two parts of the building. Blocking this space and creating a coach-house and stable would have been a later phase, perhaps around 1850 (on the stylistic evidence of the stable door and planking). The upper room could then have been used as a hay-loft and storage area, although the dormer window and awkward positions of the tie-beams are difficult to explain. We suspect, however, that the building was totally re-roofed in the late 19th century – the roof structure is similar in both parts and the timbers are roughly hewn, the rafters are unpegged, and the carpentry shows no early features or smoke-blackening.

We suggest that this was a detached kitchen to the Manor House. These would have been fairly common in high status houses of the 15th - 16th century. As a kitchen, the focus of the activity would have been the large fireplace, which would have had some form of hearth, and an oven – which is probably to the left, now blocked in and later replaced by a separate one in the alcove. It is possible that the original entry to the kitchen was by a doorway in the west wall, as the flagstones at this part of the floor are heavily worn, but not cracked. At a later date, probably when the 1st floor was inserted, the doorway was moved to the south. A copper with its firebox was inserted into the large fireplace, and the room was probably used variously for baking, brewing and/or laundry. It is probable that the upper room was created as a granary.

Conclusion

The granary at Caswell is a complex multi-phase structure that still exhibits evidence of a range of domestic and agricultural uses, probably from the 16th century onwards. It could well be a remnant of the medieval dwelling complex of the Wenhams, as detached kitchens would have been found at this social level. It complements a group of agricultural buildings to the south and east. The farmhouse itself has been described in the VCH but more detailed examination might cast further light on the complex of buildings and their development.

COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY 2005**Angelinos Pumping Station to Ardley Reservoir
Mains Reinforcement (SP 4600 1860 to SP 5355
2560)**

Kate Cullen

Evaluation and excavation in Spring-Summer 2005 along the pipeline route revealed two areas of concentrated archaeological features. These included two large ditched enclosures associated with a number of storage pits, all of which were dated to the Iron Age. Several of the pits contained disarticulated human bone, as well as the remains of two neonates.

Bicester, Land North of Gavray Drive

(SP 5941 2249)

Tim Havard

An evaluation was carried out in May and June 2005 on land north of Gavray Drive, Bicester. Ten trenches were excavated across the development area. A pit of possible Iron Age date, two undated gullies and a post-medieval stone spread were identified. The pit and two gullies were heavily truncated by later ploughing which could be seen in the furrows which were encountered in several trenches. No other remains of archaeological significance were identified.

Oxford, Churchill Hospital (SP 4543 0063)

Kate Cullen

An evaluation in the Winter 2005 excavated 13 trenches within the proposed development area. Despite the large degree of modern terracing that has taken place on the hospital site, the western areas of the proposed development area remain little affected, with intact former topsoil horizons visible in many of the trenches. The paucity of archaeological features or deposits, excepting possible Roman ditches within Trench 10, would indicate this to be an area not intensively utilised during the Roman period. The ditches are likely to have been for drainage, and may form part of a field system on the periphery of the pottery production centre to the north-west.

Oxford, Churchill Hospital (SP 4543 0063)

Derek Evans

A programme of archaeological recording was undertaken in April/May 2005. Topsoil was stripped from the partial footprint of a proposed new car park and geophysical and walkover surveys were carried out. Substantial quantities of mid 3rd to 4th century AD

Oxfordshire white mortaria were retrieved, supporting past evidence for Romano-British kilns operating in the immediate vicinity. Two distinct areas of the site yielded especially large amounts of Roman pottery, one of which corresponded in location with a darkened patch of natural substrate interpreted as the possible remnants of a stokehole associated with a now-disappeared kiln.

Comparison of the geophysical survey results with the pottery distribution plan showed some minor correlations between the two data sets, but the many modern services and building foundations present in the subsoil and natural substrate had a negative impact upon the geophysics. A limestone rubble-filled pit, containing Roman material, recorded cutting the subsoil in the north-western corner of the site may represent a dump of material associated with a Romano-British kiln which was disturbed during former construction work at the hospital site.

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES**Abingdon, Thameside School (SU 48999612)**

John Moore

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation for foundations for an extension and during ground reduction for part of the new games court. Nothing of significance was found.

Bampton, Londis Store, Market Square

(SP 31500134)

John Moore

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation for foundations for a new store and office. The investigation revealed numerous pits of early and late medieval and post-medieval date. The site appears possibly to have been occupied during the 11th century and then continuously from the 15th century. It was argued that structural remains of the 11th century were present.

Banbury, Banbury Booster 876F

(SP45363868 to SP 45223490)

Carmen Cuenca

A watching brief was carried out during the stripping of the easement for the construction of approximately 4km of pipeline. An old ploughsoil was observed in most of the fields containing both medieval and post-medieval sherds of pottery.

Oxfordshire

An early Neolithic pit and a further pit dated to the late Neolithic were found close to a known Causewayed Enclosure. Struck flints show further activity in the area in the early Neolithic, and late Neolithic/early Bronze Age periods.

The Early Neolithic Pottery

The earliest assemblage (from Context 17) is composed of 174 sherds, weighing 387g, made from a single shelly fabric. This is soft and coarse with an unevenly fired exterior and an un-oxidised core and interior. The surface colour of the sherds varies from reddish brown (5YR5/3) through various shades of brown (7.5YR4/2 and 6/4) to dark grey (10YR4/1). The shell no longer survives and is represented by very common voids with an uneven distribution (0.5 to 5.0mm.). Moderate amounts of silt-sized to very fine angular quartz sand (<0.06 to 0.12mm.) are also present.

The featured sherds are derived from a minimum of three vessels, but the body sherds cannot be distinguished since all are made from the same fabric and most are of a similar wall thickness (4 to 7mm.). Some of the fractures indicate that at least one of the vessels is coil-built, while the interior surfaces of the sherds are well smoothed with wipe marks visible on some of the fragments. By contrast the exterior of all the sherds is more eroded.

The majority of featured fragments (18 sherds, weighing 71g) are from the rim, neck and shoulder of a carinated bowl (Fig 10, P1). A single closed rim sherd (Fig 10, P2) and a weakly defined shoulder fragment (Fig 10, P3) mark the presence of two additional vessels.

The scarcity of rim and shoulder sherds indicates that the pottery was already broken prior to deposition, while its good condition points to rapid burial. A large number of small sherds were scattered throughout the pit fill (105 sherds, weighing 122g), while three distinct clusters of pottery in the excavated section had been placed so that they appeared to represent larger slabs. These proved to be highly fragmented when lifted, with the majority of sherds measuring 1 to 4cm across. The fractures are clearly of some age suggesting that the fragmentation is at least partly the product of post-depositional attrition. All of the clusters were mainly composed of body sherds, with two including featured fragments from the carinated bowl (Fig 10, P1), and the third incorporating diagnostic pieces from all three vessels (Fig 10, P1 to P3).

Discussion

The profile of the carinated bowl with its simple everted rim (Fig 10, P1) is characteristic of the Grimston form attributed to the early Neolithic (Herne

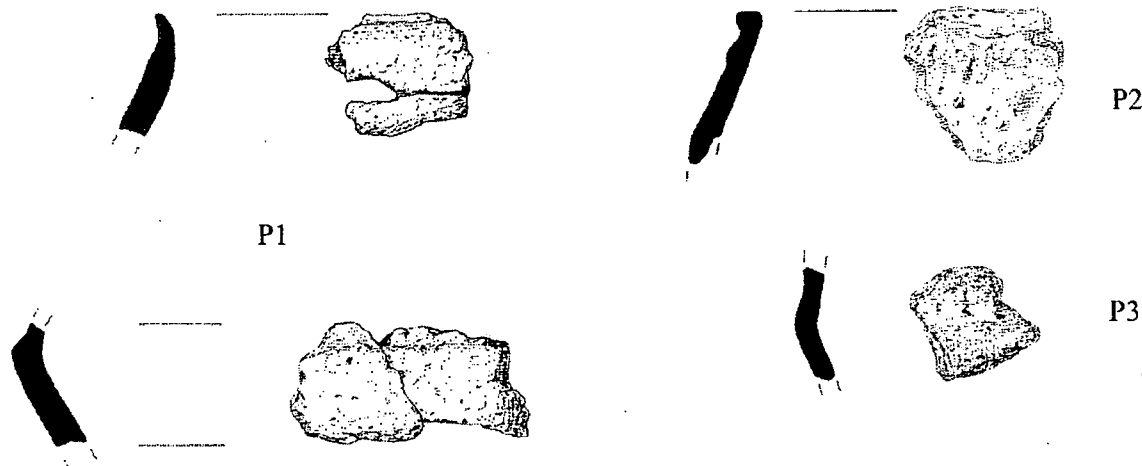
1988, 15). These vessels tend to be finely made which is reflected in this case by the thin walls and carefully smoothed finish of the surviving surface, even if the fabric is somewhat coarse. Although refitting sherds linking the rim with the shoulder are missing, available fragments provide an indication of the length of the neck pointing to a typically low set and sharply defined carination. The presence of this vessel suggests a date during the first half of the fourth millennium cal. BC for the deposit (after Herne 1988). Carinated bowls are relatively rare in south-east England (Herne 1988, 16-17) and the Oxfordshire area is no exception to this pattern. Similar vessels have been recovered from pre-long barrow contexts to the south-west of Banbury in the Cotswolds (Darvill 2004, 66). Further examples to the south in the Upper Thames Valley have been noted at Dorchester, Abingdon and Goring and possibly at Benson (Timby 2004), although the profiles of the published examples from the latter site are more typical of the middle Neolithic.

The rest of the pottery is less chronologically sensitive. The use of simple rims (Fig 10, P1 and P2) contrasts with the predominant vessel types of the middle Neolithic decorated styles, exemplified in Oxfordshire by the Abingdon ceramics (Avery 1982, 26-35). In the Cotswolds and surrounding areas this trait characterises the early Neolithic assemblages (Darvill 2004, 64-66), but is not necessarily restricted to these groups. There is no direct and simple equation between the absence of diagnostic middle Neolithic forms and an early origin. At Abingdon, for example, 20% of the rims are simple (Avery 1982, Table 3), while middle Neolithic vessels with weak shoulders similar to P3 (Avery 1982, 29) and closed forms reminiscent of P2 (Avery 1982, Fig 17, 32) are also represented.

In a similar manner, the lack of decoration is of little help in phasing the pottery. The proportion of decorated vessels within many middle Neolithic assemblages is relatively low (cf. Avery 1982, 29). Furthermore, much of the pottery of this period to the south-west of Banbury is plain (Darvill 2004, 167).

The vesicular shelly fabric used for all three vessels is similar to wares occurring on a number of earlier Neolithic sites in Oxfordshire and the surrounding areas. It is most probably of fossil origin, but since none of the calcareous inclusions survive this is difficult to demonstrate. Shelly wares are represented in north Oxfordshire at Rollright (Darvill 1988, 90) and are common in the Cotswolds (Darvill 1988, 92). In Buckinghamshire they account for over 50% of the Whiteleaf assemblage (Smith 1954, 224) and in south Oxfordshire at Abingdon 95% of the pottery is made from fabrics tempered with fossil shell (Avery 1982, 27; Williams 1982, 35, Group One). In the same

PIT 17



PIT 19

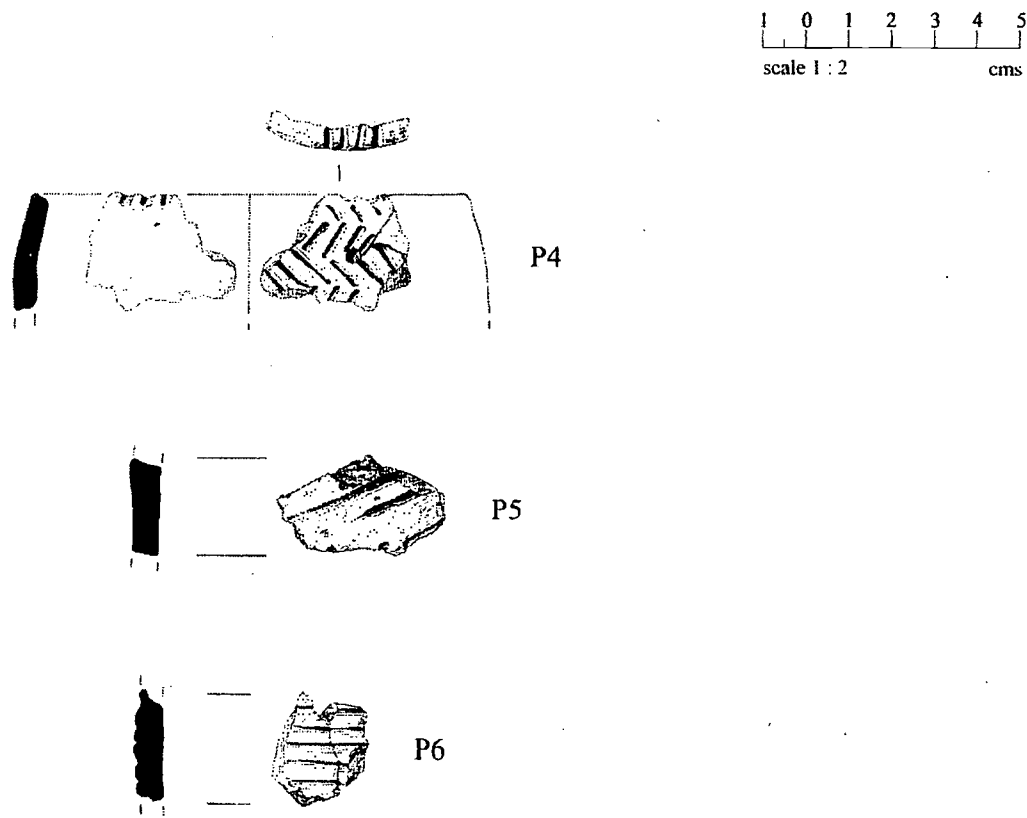


Fig 10. Neolithic Pottery. Banbury, Banbury Booster 876F

Oxfordshire

general area wares of this type are also represented at Barrow Hills, Radley (Cleal 1999, 196) and Benson (Timby 2004, 145).

The Late Neolithic Pottery

The late Neolithic assemblage (from Context 19) consists of 36 sherds of Grooved Ware, weighing 57g, derived from at least two different vessels in contrasting grog tempered fabrics. Only one is represented by a rim sherd with deep diagonal impressions on the internal bevel (Fig 10, P4). The vessel has a closed tub-shaped profile and the exterior is decorated with a herringbone motif composed of a series of short line grooves. This is interrupted by a single deep oval impression which is probably a decorative device, although it is also possible that it might represent an eroded organic or calcareous inclusion. The interior is well smoothed and has clearly been wiped, while both surfaces are dark grey (10YR4/1). The fabric is soft, unoxidised and contains sparse quantities of fine grog (up to 1.0mm.), moderate amounts of very fine to fine angular to rounded quartz sand (0.1 to 0.25mm.) and rare mica (<0.06mm.).

The rest of the pottery (35 sherds, weighing 52g) is made from a similar but slightly coarser ware. This is also soft and has an unevenly fired exterior and an un-oxidised core and interior. It is tempered with moderate quantities both of grog (up to 2.0mm) and rounded to angular quartz sand (0.1 to 0.5mm.). Rare water worn flint (up to 4.0mm.), glauconite (0.1 to 0.2mm.) and mica (<0.06mm.) are also present. The sherds are relatively thin-walled (6 to 8 mm.), small (1 to 4 cm. across) and exhibit signs of light to moderate abrasion. The exterior surface colour varies from red (2.5YR5/6) to dark brown (7.5YR4/3) and dark grey (10YR4/1). All of the sherds are featureless apart from three decorated wall fragments. The largest carries part of a pinched up cordon and two parallel grooves which seem to be set on a diagonal axis (Fig 10, P5), although the sherd is too small for this orientation to be certain. Traces of two additional grooves survive on the edge of the fragment. A second much smaller sherd is embellished with a single groove of a similar width parallel to the broken edge of a cordon (not illustrated). The other decorated fragment has a contrasting motif comprising six parallel grooves (Fig 10, P6), but again the orientation is unclear.

Discussion

A recent review of the radiocarbon chronology for Grooved Ware in southern Britain indicates that most of the reliable dates span the third millennium cal. BC, with a predicted range between 2900 and 2100 cal. BC (Garwood 1999, 152). At present there is little indication of any regional chronological variation

(Garwood 1999, 152-154). The earliest dates tend to be from isolated pits or pit groups with a temporal range spanning the currency of Grooved Ware (Garwood 1999, 154-155). In the Upper Thames region all of the Grooved Ware is from contexts of this type (Barclay 1999, 20).

With this particular assemblage, limited information means that it is difficult to assign the pottery to a particular sub-group with any degree of certainty, although the evidence is weighted towards the Durrington Walls style. The closed mouth of one of the vessels (Fig 10, P4) is most reminiscent of forms with Durrington Walls affinities. The grooved herringbone motif occurs on Durrington Walls vessels, while incised herringbone is highly characteristic of the Woodlands sub-style (Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 239). The widespread application of this decorative device is illustrated by a Durrington Walls vessel carrying a herringbone motif from Fyfield and Tubney (Barclay 1994, 22-23 and Fig 12, P1), and a similarly decorated Woodlands style rim from Pit 5 at Cassington (Case 1982, 124-125 and Figure 69, 5). The slashes on the rim bevel recall two unassigned Grooved Ware vessels from Barrow Hills, Radley (Cleal 1999, 200 and Figure 4.32, P34 and P36), and recur on a Woodlands style vessel from the same site (Cleal 1999, 198 and Fig 4.32, P38). Similar motifs also appear occasionally on vessel rims of the Durrington Walls sub-style (Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 240).

Undecorated horizontal or angled cordons and bands of horizontal or angled grooving (Fig 10, P5 and P6) are common features of both the Clacton and Woodlands sub-styles (Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 237 and 239), occurring for example at Sutton Courtney (Case 1982, 124-125 and Fig 69, 11 and 13; Leeds 1934, Plate 29). Unfortunately, in this instance (Fig 10, P5 and P6) the orientation of the sherds is uncertain and the motifs are very incomplete. The combination of ridges and grooves (eg. Fig 10, P5) is more typical of Durrington Walls vessels, but the cordons within this sub-style tend to be massive (Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 240) which is not the case with P5.

The thin walls of both vessels and the slight raised ridges on two of the sherds (eg. Fig 10, P5) are most reminiscent of the Woodlands sub-style (Wainwright and Longworth 1971, 238). Similar Woodlands/Clacton parallels are suggested by the small size of the assemblage (cf. Cleal 1999, 202; Garwood 1999, 159).

However, once again contradictory affinities with the Durrington Walls sub-style are suggested by the character of the fabrics. In the Upper Thames region grog tempered fabrics are used mostly for Durrington Walls vessels, while Clacton and Woodlands Grooved

Ware is generally characterised by shelly fabrics (Barclay 1999, 12). Most of the Durrington Walls style pottery from Yarnton is grog tempered (Barclay 1999, 16) and this is also the case with the sherd from Fyfield and Tubney (Barclay 1994, 22-23 and Fig 12, P1). Similar traditions beyond the Upper Thames region are indicated by the use of grog tempered wares for the Durrington Walls assemblage from Stacey Bushes near Milton Keynes to the east of Banbury (Green and Sofranoff 1985, 25-26) and for the vessels belonging to this sub-style from Wasperton in Warwickshire to the north-west (Longworth and Cleal 1999, 197, 312).

Bicester, Land to Western End of Wesley Lane
(SP 58322262)

John Moore

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of a length of foundation trench. The earliest feature found was a ditch thought to date to the late 11th-12th centuries. The amount of pottery found within the very small part excavated indicates occupation close by. Following a period of cultivation that may have been associated with a nearby property a building was constructed in the area of the investigation. This may have been built in the 13th-14th centuries or soon after. Later the area was used for further cultivation before becoming gardens for properties on Wesley Lane.

Bicester, Transco Depot, Launton Road
(SP 59102250)

John Moore

An evaluation was carried out as part of a consideration of a planning application for residential development. Mechanical trenching found an undated feature pre-dating 13th century. In addition sherds of pottery from the medieval and post-medieval periods indicate that the site had been used for agricultural purposes.

Bicester, Vine Cottages, Causeway (SP 58412226)
John Moore

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation for foundations and drainage associated with the new build for development of the area. The watching brief has produced some more valuable information of the use and development of this part of Bicester and complements previous work in the local area.

A late 11th century pit was found under the south part of Vine Cottages and probably indicates the eastern

limit of the medieval settlement of King's End. This area was subsequently cultivated in the 12th to early/mid 13th century. A large ditch was subsequently dug in the later 13th century and continued in use no later than mid 14th century. The east-west range of Vine Cottages respects this former boundary which can be traced further west. Slightly further north the limit of properties fronting Causeway on the west of the site was discovered. This was marked firstly by a change in cultivation type and then by a wall. This wall also marked the east side of a plot which in turn was respected by the northwest-southeast range of vine Cottages.

Material raising the level of the land adjacent to Causeway is thought to date to the 17th century. The foundations for the recently demolished cottage on this frontage were founded on this material. No earlier buildings were present.

Burford, The Old Bank house, 82 High Street
(SP 25111222)

John Moore

A watching brief was carried out during the refurbishment of 82 High Street, Burford. Two old wall foundations, a pit, a well and a cistern were found. In addition a former floor surface was present. No dating evidence was forthcoming for any of these remains.

Charlbury, Offline Sewer FWFAS PAS 36FJ/G3
(SP 35621918)

Dave Gilbert

Two sherds of Romano-British pottery and three of early medieval date found in a watching brief suggest cultivation in these periods..

Deddington, Castle Dene, Castle Street
(SP 46953169)

John Moore

A watching brief was carried out during the excavation for a new indoor swimming pool. Nothing of significance was found.

Eynsham. The Shrubbery, 26 High Street
(SP 43420923)

John Moore

A further watching brief was conducted during the excavation of foundation trenches for the construction of a replacement garage (*see previous SMA*). Two undated pits were exposed.

Oxfordshire

Kirtlington, Gossway Fields (SP 4985 1970)

Dave Gilbert

An evaluation revealed two early-middle Saxon sunken featured buildings were recorded on the edge of the site and may be the edge of a settlement centred further east. Pre-dating these, a series of Romano-British field boundary ditches were located, which may be associated with a settlement adjacent to the Roman road running from Akeman Street to north Oxford.

Launton, Sherwood Close (SP 60602265 centred)

John Moore

A watching brief was carried out during groundworks for new residential housing at Sherwood Close. A pit of earlier medieval date was found along with remains of ridge and furrow cultivation.

Littlemore, Speedwell First School, Sandford Road (SP 5365 0255)

John Moore

A second stage archaeological field evaluation was carried out as a condition of planning permission granted for residential development. A pair of gullies dating to the post-medieval period was found. A further sherd of Roman pottery confirms the agricultural use of the site during the Roman period.

Moulsford, Well Barn House, Well Barn Estate (SU 57808255)

Dave Gilbert

An evaluation comprising geophysical survey and trenching revealed two negative lynchets.

North Leigh, Wilcote Grange Farm, Wilcote (SP 37091522)

Graeme Brown

A small watching brief failed to find anything of significance.

Oxford, 62-64 Banbury Road & 7-11 Bradmore Road (SP 51180756 centred)

Carmen Cuenca

A watching brief was maintained during the excavation of pits for a soil investigation. An early Bronze Age grave was found.

Oxford, Bonn Square (SP 5118 0615)

Mick Parsons

Further evaluation located the north wall of the later church of St Peter le Bailey and further remains of its associated cemetery.

Oxford, Christ Church, Staircases 3 and 4 Peckwater Quad (SP 5152 0614)

John Moore

An excavation was carried out in advance of laying concrete floors. The full depth of archaeological deposits was not excavated.

From the number of Roman sherds recovered from this investigation coupled with other finds in the area it is speculated that the site of a Roman building/settlement lay in the area between Peckwater Quad and All Saints Church and that the gravel terrace further south was used for agriculture. This occupation would lie at the end of the Second Gravel Terrace with the First Gravel Terrace to the south and west.

The site was in occupation during the late Saxon period with at least one pit dating to this period. Other pottery of this date in residual contexts covering the whole length of the excavation suggests that the occupation levels have been extensively disturbed by later activity as have been deposits of the early-middle 11th century. The following phase of mid-late 11th century-12th century is characterised by several pits. It is unknown whether this was part of the localised retraction of settlement seen elsewhere and the land was only used for pit digging for cess and rubbish disposal. It is possible that there were buildings between the pit clusters whose foundations have not survived later activity and the excavation of the present basement. One pit of this period with the probable associated masonry foundation was similar to late 11-12th century feature seen at Codrington Library, All Souls College and also to one in a later phase at Peckwater Quad.

In the western part of the excavation the pit digging continued into the early 13th century before the construction of a cellared building. Surprisingly this building appears to have had a short life. The cellar was infilled early in its use, and the presence of the successive drains indicates the use of this room, fronting what was Little Jury Lane, was a shop. No artefacts survived to indicate what activity was carried out here. The building must have occupied the west side of what was later known as Soler Hall with the ditch on its west side being on the boundary between that and a corner plot on Little Jury Lane and St Edward Street or Vine Hall Lane. The eastern part of the room just inside the entrance from the east had a heavier duty floor. Externally there was a very

compact yard surface laid after the cellar had been infilled.

Concentrations of pits show that the whole street frontage was not built up during the 12th and 13th centuries and yards existed adjacent to the street. A stone foundation was probably associated with a minor structure possibly for industrial/craft activity. Little can be said for later activity on this street frontage as the basements have destroyed all but deep pits. The lack of pits would seem to indicate that most of the frontage was occupied by buildings.

A linear cut may have been a robber trench for a late medieval Peckwater Inn building with a later cut the remains of a robber trench for the building pre-dating the existing one. These, plus the 13th century building, show that the road alignment has remained practically the same since at least the 13th century.

Oxford, Christ Church, Tom Quad (SP 51470559)
John Moore & Mick Parsons

A watching brief conducted during the replacement of services has revealed remains of medieval buildings cleared for Cardinal Wolsey's foundation of Cardinal College in 1525. How he acquired the land is unknown but it seems (from the new evidence) that he gave the landowners the opportunity to dismantle their dwellings and shops and salvage building material. Some landowners just cleared the properties to ground level while others dug out the stone foundations. Few deposits associated with these buildings have been found as numerous modern services have damaged upper levels within the trenches. Below these, other deposits apparently belonging to 13th-14th centuries have been recorded as well as the occasional deposit of late 11th-12th century date. Pottery possibly from the 11th century has also been recovered; whether this is residual material or otherwise has not been determined yet. No earlier material has been forthcoming.

A well-preserved cobbled section of St Frideswides Lane has been discovered. The lane was narrow and later surfacing has widened it considerably. While this widening is undated it is speculated that this may have been by Wolsey for transporting building materials to the eastern side of the construction site.

The precinct wall of the Augustinian St Frideswide's has been located under the southern terrace. To the west burials associated with the church of St Michael at the Southgate have been found.

The work is ongoing.

Oxford, Donnington Middle School, Cornwallis Road (SP 53250440)

Dave Gilbert & John Moore

An evaluation carried out revealed a post-medieval ditch.

Oxford, Windmill First School, Margaret Road, Headington (SP 54850677)

Dave Gilbert

The results of an evaluation suggested that the area had been under cultivation in the Romano-British period and then again in the post-medieval period.

Oxford, Worcester Place (SP 50790668)

Dave Gilbert

Nothing of significance was found during an evaluation of this site.

Shipton-under-Wychwood, rear of Cost Cutters, High Street (SP 27871794)

Carment Cuenca

A watching brief during new residential development failed to find anything of significance.

Somerton, New Sewer Pipe, Church Street (SP 49582865)

Dave Gilbert

The investigation revealed numerous modern service trenches along Church Street. Within the boundaries of the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Somerton Village Earthworks an undated track-way surface and dry stone wall were revealed.

Wallingford, Riverside Park, Crowmarsh Gifford (SU6111689531)

John Moore

A watching brief was carried out during refurbishment of the Riverside Park. Nothing of apparent significance was found.

Woodcote, Chiltern Queens Coach Depot, Long Toll (SU 64588106)

Carmen Cuenca & John Moore

A watching brief was carried out during the groundworks for the construction of a salt store barn at the former Chiltern Queens coach depot. At least one pond associated with the brick works and parts of

Oxfordshire

probable clay pits were found in the south-western part of the site. Part of a building shown as a 'ruin' on the 1963 Ordnance Survey map was recorded.

Woolstone, Manor Farm (SU 29398756)

John Moore

A watching brief was conducted during ground reduction for an outdoor riding arena. A large ditch and associated bank have been tentatively dated to the prehistoric period. Three sherds of Roman pottery indicate the area was being cultivated during this period. Three phases of medieval activity spanning the 11th to early 13th centuries are shown by several ditches forming enclosures or paddocks.

THE NATIONAL TRUST

Gary Marshall

Coleshill Mill (SU23479341)

Coleshill mill is a fine surviving example of a small estate watermill on the east bank of the River Cole in Oxfordshire. It dates from the 18th century but as with so many mills is on the site of an earlier mill, in this case shown on a plan of the 1660s. The mill machinery dates from the 18th century with adaptations made in the 19th century, including the introduction of a cast iron low pitched-back waterwheel by Philips and Son of Reading.

The mill had probably not operated since the 1960s and was therefore in urgent need of restoration to bring it back into working order. The National Trust therefore commissioned millwright Martin Watts to carry out restoration works in 2005, involving the rebuilding of the floats to the waterwheel and realignment of gearing. During the works an archaeological watching brief was undertaken by the National Trust and this focussed particularly on the wheel pit. Clearance of rubble and silt within the wheel pit exposed the original flagstone floor of the pit, plus a later concrete floor forming the continuation of the tail race. Lines of nails set within the concrete provided evidence of a timber plank floor within the tail race, though none of the actual planks survived.

As part of the restoration works a brick bridge over the tail race had to be reconstructed. The bridge is built in two sections and the outermost section was found to incorporate a channel 0.8m wide and 0.5m in depth with a floor laid in brick. The channel connects with the head race just above the waterwheel and then skirts around the wheel pit before continuing to the north of the mill for a distance of at least 30m. The purpose of this channel is uncertain, though it is shown on maps

dating from 1871 and an earlier undated map. It could have formed an elaborate eel trap, or it could have served as an irrigation channel for flooded water meadows which lie along the banks of the River Cole. The channel has been partially restored and can now be seen by visitors to the mill, who for the first time in more than 40 years will be able to see corn being ground in the mill.

NORTH OXON ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP

Edward Shawyer

This year work was resumed on the villa site in Swalcliffe Lea, the objective being to investigate the eastern half of the north range and its relationship with the east wing. We hoped to further examine Room 16, a small section of which had been exposed in 2003 and which wasn't very revealing. Also it was intended to see what the oddly aligned wall abutting the north wall of Room 16 was doing. As excavation progressed it became clear that Room 16 was a large, rectangular reception room, which had a main door opening out onto a cobbled courtyard that extended for at least 6m. Our trench also exposed parts of Rooms 1, 6 and 12 and these sections revealed extra evidence of their floor sequences and wall plastering. There was a lot of archaeology and despite our larger workforce we only had time for two small sections into the earlier levels. Overall the dig was a success and more information was gathered regarding the development of the late villa and also something about the prior 2nd-3rd century building.

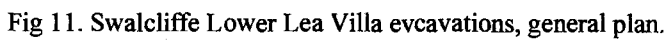
The only other archaeological activity this year was a fieldwalk at Swalcliffe Grange Farm, where aerial photography had shown enclosures and circles, these we were able to confirm were prehistoric and possibly Iron Age.

Excavations

Swalcliffe Lea villa site (SP39133838)

Phase 3c (c AD 375)

The whole of Room 16 and the sections of Rooms 1, 6 and 12 were covered by a stone surface, which varied in its nature in different locations. Rooms 1, 6 and 12 had earlier yielded floors of well-laid stone slabs but in these sections the slabs faded into well-packed smaller stones which filled the robber trench of the big 3rd-4th century wall. The depth of this trench showed that the earlier 3rd century wall had been replaced in this section by a wall with deeper footings in the early 4th century, when the north range was added. Directly north of this wall was a metre-wide band of large



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building stones which gave way to a 4m band of small stones, which lay directly on top of the earlier clay floor and this small stone band faded into a light scattering on the natural soil. The north wall of Room 16 had been robbed to its lower subsurface courses and filled in with mortary soil and light stones. It is clear that the metre wide band of large stone represented a late wall erected parallel to the earlier one which was robbed out and levelled over. It is now apparent that the 3rd-4th century villa was deliberately demolished, robbed for its stone and built up a bit and levelled to make way for a new metalworking/agricultural building. Earlier it was thought the late 4th century phase was just a ramshackle structure built within the ruins of the villa but now it is clear it was a substantial, well-built construction.

Phase 3bb (AD 330-40)

In Room 16 two clay floors were found, one superimposed upon the other, which seem to be contemporary with the mortar and mosaic floors discovered in the adjoining rooms. On top of and also within these floors we found quite a few small metal objects, including bracelets, brooches and an ornamental box. In Rooms 6 and 12 more evidence was found for mortar floors or bases and yellow painted plaster was detected on the west wall of Room 12. All the rooms seemed to have been plastered since we found plenty of it in the robber trenches and on the floors as well.

Phase 3ba (c 300AD)

In Room 16 sizeable sections of an opus signinum floor were found, which was the original floor of this room. An intact doorway was revealed opening out to the east and since this seems to have been the only room with a mortar floor at the time it is possible that it was intended to be a reception/dining room. The fine, white limestone dressed slabs in the doorway appear to belong to phase 3bb though.

Phase 3a (AD270)

An exploratory trench across the east wing only revealed 6m of weathered stone cobbling, so this shows that the east wing terminated at the northern wall of Room 12 and the two buildings lay at right angles to one another.

Phase 1d (c 180-270)

The robber trench of the north wall of Room 16 revealed an earlier wall and clay floor in section. The other end of this wall was detected in section in the robber trench of the south wall. The wall ran in a northwest/southeast direction. A small section dug in the southwest corner of Room 16 found another wall

beneath the opus signinum floor which ran at right angles to the other early wall; in the dirt covering this wall was a late 3rd century coin. This now shows that occupation on this site was continuous during the entire Roman period. Beneath this level a clay floor was found in both sections and this seems to belong to Phase 1a.

Fieldwalking

Swalcliffe Grange Farm (SP 371369)

Aerial photography originally revealed a number of sub-rectangular enclosures and two hut circles. One expert thought they were probably Iron Age in date. In 2001 the area west of the grange was levelled for a horse paddock and John Moore detected nothing of significance during their watching brief. Our fieldwalk examined the entire field. Nothing of Roman or medieval date was found, which ruled out any connection with the medieval Grange in the field to the west. All that was found was post-medieval pottery and significantly a number of worked flints which were found in the immediate vicinity of the hut circles. The flints could be Neolithic/Bronze Age, but the site has definitely been identified as being prehistoric in date.

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

Barford St Michael, The Potteries, The High Street (SP 436 325)

Mike Sims

In June 2005 a watching brief, commissioned by Catling and Catling Ltd, was carried out in advance of the construction of four new dwellings. The watching brief on the northern half of the site revealed evidence of extensive post-medieval truncation caused by the demolition of workshops which previously occupied the site but no evidence for earlier archaeology (work still ongoing).

Bicester, Telford Road (SP 598 229)

Guy Cockin

In April 2005 a field evaluation was carried out at Telford Road, Bicester, on behalf of Coleman Hicks Partnerships in respect of a planning application for the erection of four buildings, associated new and modified parking, hard standing and cycle storage. A total of 10 trenches were excavated. The evaluation revealed no evidence for archaeological remains.

OA, 2005 Telford Road, Bicester: Archaeological Evaluation report. Unpublished report.

**Cassington, Cassington West Extension,
Cassington Pit (SP 461 107)**

Gill Hey, Granville Laws and Chris Hayden

In 2005 an excavation (1.6ha) and a watching brief (10ha) were carried out for Hanson Aggregates Ltd in advance of gravel extraction in an extension to the Cassington Pit. The area had previously been subject to evaluation, fieldwalking and geophysical survey as part of the Yarnton-Cassington project. The site lies on the Second Gravel Terrace and floodplain gravels of the Thames.

The excavation revealed extensive remains of a late Bronze Age settlement. Preliminary analysis of the pottery suggests that at least two late Bronze Age phases can be distinguished, and that it will be possible to follow the shift in settlement over time. Both phases were characterised by dispersed groups of roundhouses and D-shaped structures, and by clusters of four-post structures and shallow pits. In the earlier phase the eastern edge of the settlement was defined by a row of waterholes within which wooden artefacts, including a bucket and log ladders, were found. In the later phase the northern edge of the settlement was defined by ditches which were recut several times. A number of small deposits of cremated human remains were found in the area of the settlement, but their chronological relationship with the settlement is so far unclear. The finds from the settlement include a substantial assemblage of largely plain late Bronze Age pottery, spindle whorls, loomweights, a pin and an awl in copper alloy, part of a mould for casting rings, animal bone and charred plant remains.

Mesolithic and Neolithic flint was found scattered across the site, although no features can be dated to these phases. Small quantities of early Bronze Age pottery, including Collared Urn, were, however, found in a small number of pits, one of which also contained pieces of fired clay in which lumps of charcoal and fragments of cremated bone were embedded.

In the watching brief and excavation areas, systems of field boundaries defined by ditches dating from both the Roman and medieval periods were found, as well as the remains of medieval ridge and furrow.

The Neolithic and Bronze Age material will be published alongside the other results relating to those periods from the Yarnton-Cassington Project (Hey in prep.).

Hey, G, in prep, Yarnton: Neolithic and Bronze Age settlement and landscape, Thames Valley Landscapes Monograph

Charlbury, Walcot Farm, Burford Road

(SP 346 198)

Mike Sims

In 2005 a watching brief was carried out in advance of construction of a new staff annexe, refurbishment works to an existing barn and granary building and a new tennis court. The watching brief revealed the truncated foundations and cellar of the old manor to the north of the present building and evidence for a dressed stone terrace wall around the north-west and north-east sides of the present raised garden.

Charlbury, New garden, Walcot Farm, Burford Road (SP 245 198)

Dan Dodds

In May 2005 a watching brief was carried out during the implementation of a series of new garden designs within the grounds of the old manor house, which with its gardens forms part of a Scheduled Ancient Monument. This watching brief pertains specifically to a cluster of new tree planting to the south of the farm's barns near the old bowling green. The watching brief revealed no archaeological deposits associated with the 18th century garden design.

Cumnor, Cumnor Parish Cemetery Extension

(SP 459 041)

Alan Hardy

In October 2005 a field evaluation was carried out on land adjacent to the existing graveyard of St Michael's Church, Cumnor. The work was carried out on behalf of Cumnor Parish Council and Edward Impey, to assess the suitability of the site for an extension to the churchyard. Structural remains were found relating to both the early medieval grange belonging to Abingdon Abbey, and its later medieval replacement, known as Cumnor Place.

Cumnor Parish Cemetery Extension, Cumnor, Oxfordshire, Archaeological Evaluation report January 2006, unpublished OA report

Frilford, New Barn, North of Hamfield Barn

(SU 4224 9739)

Dan Bashford

A watching brief was carried out on the proposed site of a new barn, in advance of the excavation of pit foundations. The watching brief encountered no evidence for archaeological remains or activity predating 20th century agricultural use of the site.

Iffley, Church of St Mary the Virgin (SP 5206 0304)
Jim Mumford

A watching brief was conducted for the Church PCC during the lowering and improvement of the existing perimeter drain. No significant archaeology was exposed during the work.

Little Wittenham, Hill Farm (SU 56300 92600)
Tim Allen and Hugo Lamdin-Whymark

A watching brief and excavations was carried out at Hill Farm, Little Wittenham between December 2004 and December 2005. The work was commissioned by the Northmoor Trust, who own the site, in advance of the redevelopment of Hill Farm as a visitor and education centre for the Wittenham Clumps and construction of a new Office building.

Excavations were undertaken in the area of the ponds, Visitors Car Park and footprint of the Boiler House and new Office building in the west part of Hill Farm (Fig 12). A plan of exposed archaeology was obtained in the Staff Car Park on the east side of Hill Farm. A watching brief was also undertaken on drainage works, service trenches, construction of a new farm access road and concrete removal within and around Hill Farm. Earlier work around and on the site is reported in *SMA 35* (Allen and Lamdin-Whymark, 2005).

The excavations revealed archaeology of several periods. An early Neolithic pit with an associated scatter of flintwork was found in the Visitors Car Park. A scatter of Middle Bronze Age pottery was retrieved from later features, suggesting some occupation in the area of Hill Farm.

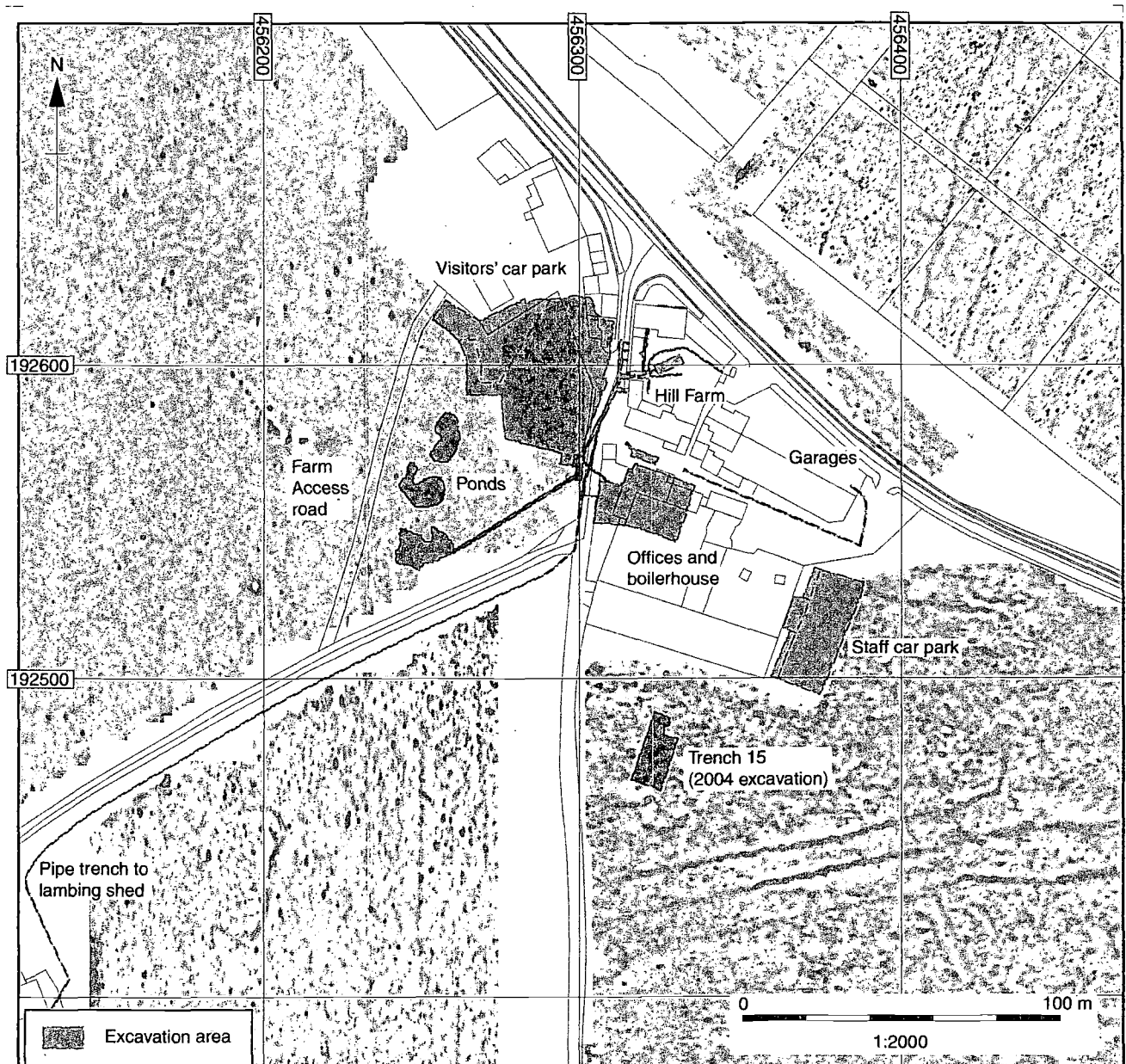


Fig 12. Hill Farm showing location of excavation and watching brief works and surrounding geophysical survey.

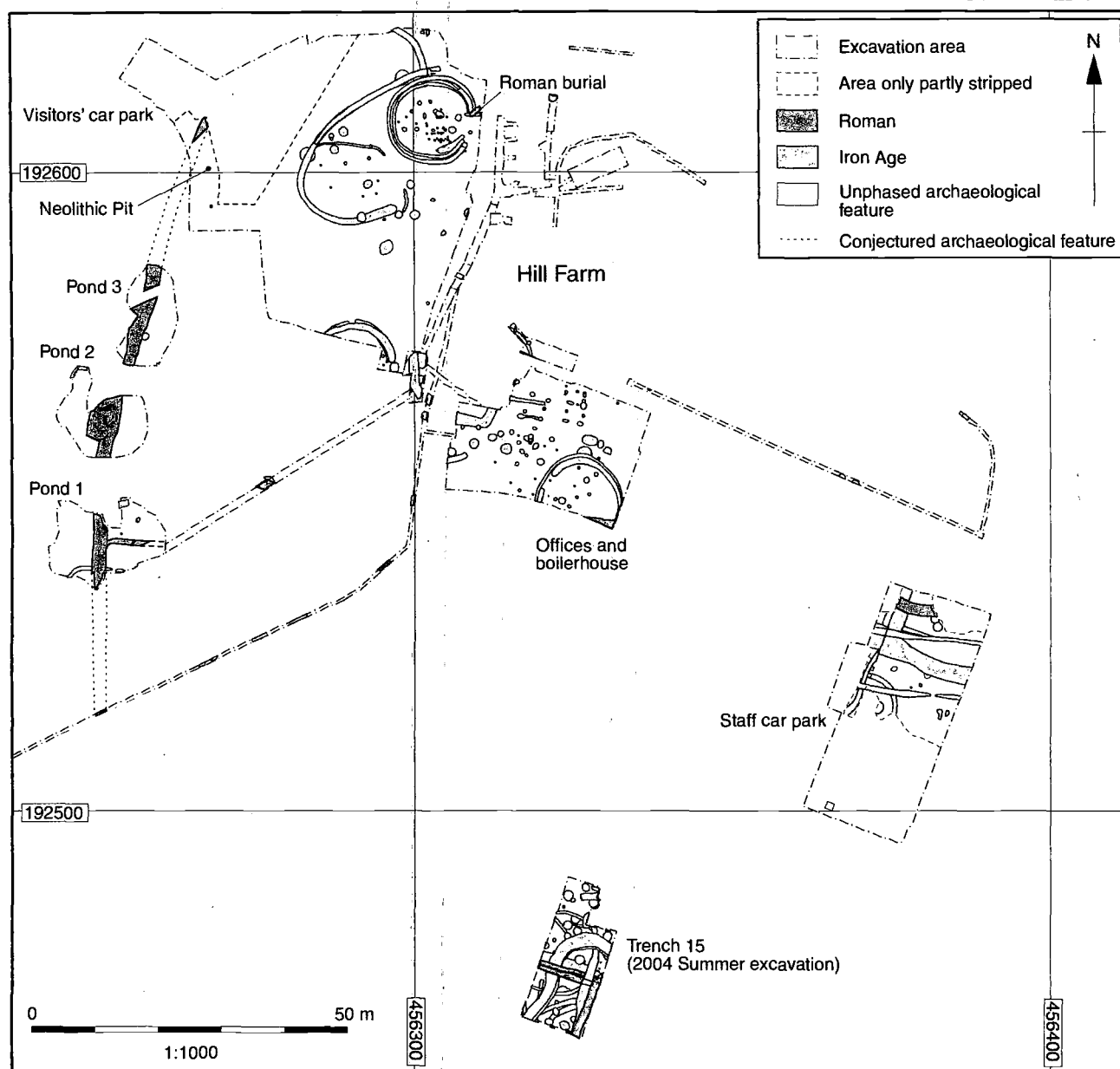


Fig 13. Archaeology revealed in the excavations.

Early Iron Age features were relatively few, but included pits in the Offices area, gullies and pits possibly relating to a roundhouse in the Visitors Car Park and a penannular gully in the Staff Car Park. The vast majority of the archaeology revealed relates to a settlement of middle Iron Age date. Several penannular gullies were revealed, some surrounding the postholes of roundhouses. The majority of the gullies exhibited two or three episodes of recutting indicating that the settlement persisted for a reasonable duration. The roundhouses were associated with various ditched enclosures, pits and four-post structures (Fig 13).

Roman ditches were also revealed in the Ponds, Staff Car Park and Offices and various drainage works. Many of these features can be related to ditches visible on the geophysical survey. An extended burial on its

side in the Visitors Car Park is most probably of late Roman date.

Allen, T, and Lamdin-Whymark, H, 2005 Little Wittenham, Excavations at and around Castle Hill, *SMA* 35, 69-82

Oxford Archaeology 2006 Hill Farm, Little Wittenham, Oxfordshire. Post-excavation Assessment and Updated Project Design, unpublished client report prepared for the Northmoor Trust and the HLF

Marcham Bypass, A415 (SU 440 970 to SU 461 966)
Guy Cockin

A field evaluation was carried out along the proposed route of the A415 Marcham Bypass, on behalf of Jacobs Babbie in May 2005. The work comprised 20 trenches targeting cropmark evidence and anomalies highlighted by a fluxgate gradiometer survey of the

Oxfordshire

route, carried out in 2004 by Pre-Construct Geophysics.

A first focus of activity, dated to the early to mid Saxon period was identified in Field 1 in the form of a field system and a pit. To the south, across the A338, in Field 2, another field boundary along with a large pit, both dating to the late 11th century were discovered. A Romano-British ditch was recorded in Trench 3. In both Field 1 and Field 2 a certain quantity of residual Romano-British pottery was also encountered.

A second focus of activity dating to the late Bronze Age or early Iron Age was recorded in Trenches 14 and 15, in Field 6, possibly representing settlement-related occupation. Field 6 also revealed evidence of extensive field systems, probably of Romano-British, Saxon and medieval date.

Another possible focus of prehistoric activity, although undated, was excavated in Trenches 22 and 24.

Further linear features were identified in Fields 8, 10, and 11. Although many of these are undated, the presence of burnt stone in a number of features might suggest a prehistoric date.

OA, 2005 A415 Marcham Bypass, Oxfordshire: Archaeological Evaluation report. Unpublished report.

North Hinksey, Dene House, Yarnells Hill

(SU4880 0497)

Mike Sims

In September 2005 a watching brief, commissioned by J A Pye Estates, was carried out in advance of the demolition of an existing building and the construction of four new dwellings. The watching brief revealed that the area had been truncated to undisturbed natural during the construction of the original building and that no archaeological potential remained.

Oxford, The Classics Centre 65-67 St Giles

(SP 5116 0662)

Andy Norton

Between September and October 2005 an excavation and watching brief was carried out on land to the rear of 65-67 St. Giles, which is the Centre for Classical and Byzantine Studies in Oxford. The work was commissioned by Mace Plus Limited in advance of the construction of a four-floor building with basements, and refurbishment of existing structures on the site. The fieldwork comprised two open area excavations to the rear of the existing buildings. St Giles once formed the main road into the medieval

town of Oxford, the northern walls of which once lay c 200m to the south.

The earliest archaeological evidence revealed by the investigations was five 11th- 13th century pits. To the west of the site the pits were sealed by a layer of disturbed brickearth which may have represented cultivation of the yard areas. From the 13th to the 15th century an increased level of activity was observed. Structures were observed that included a cellar floor immediately to the rear of the existing properties, a well and a soakaway. A stone foundation pad was also revealed to the west of the area. It is possible that the feature was associated with Beaumont Palace to the west, although it is more likely it was associated with early tenements fronting St Giles. A higher density of pitting was also revealed, there were c 25 pits that included gravel extraction pits, cess pits and rubbish pits. A garden soil overlay the features. Similar activity was observed from the 16th to the 18th centuries. A series of walls representing the rear of properties fronting St Giles were revealed and c 35 pits of apparently similar function to the earlier pits.

The more recent features on the site comprised the footings of a 19th century cottage in the backyard of the existing properties, two soakaways and a number of drains were also dug during this phase. Surrounding the cottage were two garden walls and deposits of garden soil.

Oxford, The Pitt Rivers Museum (SP 5152 0693)

Andy Norton

Between August 2005 and November 2005 a watching brief was carried out on land adjacent to the Pitt Rivers Museum Oxford on behalf of Sir Robert McAlpine Construction Ltd. The watching brief revealed seven north-south aligned ditches that were probably Roman in date. A large defensive ditch, probably dating to the Civil War, and two post-medieval quarry pits were also revealed. No evidence for prehistoric activity was found, although much of the site had been disturbed by the previous development of the site.

Oxford, Oxford Castle (SP 5098 0613)

Andy Norton

Our excavation at Oxford Castle was completed in November 2004. Since that time the site has been subject to an ongoing watching brief. The work has been carried out on behalf of Oxford Castle Ltd and Oxford Preservation Trust. The most recent work has involved further excavation of a 13th or 14th century cellar within the castle bailey. The structure was the only medieval building revealed during the works and probably lay beneath a large hall. Elsewhere OA has

monitored general ground reduction within the prisoners' graveyard.

Oxford, e-Science Centre, Keble Road Triangle
(SP 5126 0707)

Andy Norton

In May 2005 a watching brief was carried out at the e-Science Centre, Keble Road Triangle, Oxford. The work was commissioned by Sir Robert McAlpine Ltd on behalf of the Oxford University Estates Directorate, in advance of the excavation of a service trench and associated manholes. The watching brief revealed a succession of 19th and 20th century mixed deposits containing factory-made domestic pottery and glass bottles. A possible mid to late 19th century brick built well was observed in the service trench and may be a structure from the 1850-1870 redevelopment of the area. No evidence for any period other than the post-medieval was observed during the watching brief.

Oxford, Paradise Street (SP 5095 0609)

Andy Norton

Following on from an earlier phase of excavation a watching brief was carried out at the of the former business centre on Paradise Street, Oxford in July 2005. The work was on behalf of Ambrosden Court Ltd, acting on behalf of St Peter's College. The work was in advance of the construction of student accommodation on the site. The fieldwork revealed an outer part of Oxford Castle's bailey ditch. The section of ditch was to the south of the bailey and was excavated to a depth of c 4.5m below ground level. The ditch was revetted with a limestone wall in the early medieval period. At the point where the ditch emptied into the Castle Mill Stream subsequent stone and wood revetting was revealed. A limestone ford or weir was observed and at a point prior to the 15th century the ditch was seen to be remodelled. The ditch had been divided into two channels, one of which may have diverted water into the Castle Mill Stream. From the 15th century onwards the ditch had been allowed to silt up. Two stone channels supported by wooden piers were set into the silt deposits and may have related to activity on Paradise St. In the 18th century the ditch was infilled to allow for the construction of the prison and utilised as yard space by properties on Paradise St.

Oxfordshire

Oxford, The Clarendon Building (SP 5156 0626)

Jim Mumford

In April 2005 a watching brief, commissioned by Oxford University, was carried out in advance of the excavation of a new ducting trench in the basement of the building. The watching brief revealed the upper most fill of the Civil War ditch of Oxford City and construction levels associated with the Clarendon Building.

Oxford, Exeter College kitchen basement

(SP 5145 0635)

Byran Mathews

In April 2005 a watching brief, commissioned by Montgomery Architects, was carried out in respect of a general reduction of the basement floors and the excavation of two lift shafts. 11th to 13th century walls and subsequent phases of rebuilding were uncovered within one of the lift shafts, and the other revealed the top of a stone built well. The remains of a brick archway and disturbed floor levels were also found.

Oxford, East Oxford Health Centre, Manzil Way

(SP 5320 0575)

Mike Sims

A field evaluation and watching brief was carried out at the site of the new health centre on behalf of Mowlem. The evaluation revealed extensive truncation of deposits within the north and west of the site and buried post-medieval soil horizons within the remainder. During the watching brief on groundwork within the footprint of the new building a 19th/20th century rubbish pit and brick culvert were observed.

Oxford, The Memorial Garden, Rothermere Library, South Parks Road (SP 516 067)

Mike Sims

Between 2nd and 11th August 2005 a watching brief, commissioned by Anthony Stiff Associates, was carried out in advance of developments to the extension of the Rothermere Library. The watching brief revealed the presence of a Romano-British boundary ditch and the continuation of the English Civil War defensive ditch.

Oxford, Oxford Former Morris Motors Sports and Social Club Phase I, Barracks Lane (SP 547 058)

Guy Cockin

In April 2005 a field evaluation was carried out at the Morris Motors Sports and Social Club, Barracks Lane,

Oxfordshire

Oxford on behalf of H N Edwards and Partners Ltd. Phase 1 of the proposed development consists of the construction of a new Sports Centre site fronting Barracks Lane. Two 10m trenches were excavated but no evidence for archaeological remains was uncovered.

OA, 2005 Morris Motors Sports and Social Club, Barracks Lane: Archaeological Evaluation report. Unpublished report.

Oxford, Oxford Former Morris Motors Sports and Social Club Phase II, Barracks Lane (SP 547 058) Rob Tannahill

In September 2005 a second phase of field evaluation was carried out at the Morris Motors Sports and Social Club, Barracks Lane, Oxford on behalf of H N Edwards and Partners Ltd. The second phase of evaluation took place to the west of Phase 1, at the location of a proposed housing area, comprising a block of flats and 6 houses with associated access road. Four trenches were excavated and revealed evidence for Iron Age and early medieval quarrying activity at the site.

OA, 2005 Barracks Lane Morris Motors Sports and Social Club Phase II: Archaeological Evaluation report. Unpublished report.

Tubney Wood (SP 447 007) Andy Norton

In January and February of 2005 a strip map and sample was carried out at Tubney Wood Quarry. The work followed a phase of evaluation and test pitting and was carried out in advance of sand quarrying on behalf of Hills Aggregates Ltd. Two Romano-British human burials were revealed to the west of the site, one being a decapitation burial, the head being placed at the feet of the skeleton. No direct settlement of Roman date is known at the settlement, though the road leading south to Frilford is Roman in origin. Also uncovered in the course of the work were undated ditches, probably field boundaries, and a small scatter of struck and worked flint of Mesolithic date. To the east of the burials were tree-throw holes and a linear scatter of struck flints.

Uffington, Uffington White Horse (SU 30 86) Matt Bradley, Alan Ford and Tom Evans

The National Trust (Thames and Solent Region) commissioned Oxford Archaeology to undertake a comprehensive Archaeological Landscape Survey, character analysis and creation of a digital SMR and associated mapping for their estate at White Horse Hill, West Oxfordshire. The area comprised the land

held by the National Trust on White Horse Hill, including the White Horse, Dragon Hill, the Manger and Uffington Castle, and the parcel of land at Further Field, which lies at the foot of the Berkshire Down Scarp and within the Vale of White Horse.

In addition to known archaeology the survey identified a large number of ring ditches and probable round barrows on White Horse Hill as well as a rectangular enclosure. A possible dew pond, widespread quarrying and ridge and furrow systems, as well as an extensive and possibly superimposed network of lynchets, tracks and banks have also been identified on the hill top and on the margins of and within the Manger.

Bradley, M, Ford, A, and Evans, T L, 2005 White Horse Hill, Oxfordshire, An Archaeological Landscape Survey, National Trust (Thames and Solent Region). OA unpublished client report

Witney, 99b High Street (SP 3570 1014) Guy Cockin

In June 2005 a watching brief was carried out in advance of the construction of 90m² of office space with undercroft car parking and nine residential dwellings. The work was undertaken for Glenbreck Developments Ltd. The watching brief revealed evidence of post-medieval structures, pits and an undated ditch.

SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP

Gatehampton Roman Villa, Goring (SU 60797985)

Compiled by Janet Sharpe from site reports by Geoff Deakin, Steve Gibson, Cynthia Graham Kerr, Janet Sharpe and Hazel Williams

Introduction

The discovery of a Roman corn-drier or malting floor in 1987, together with evidence for a boundary ditch, trackway, enclosure system and a probable Roman ploughsoil during excavations by the then Oxford Archaeological Unit on the line of the Thames Water pipeline at Gatehampton, Goring (Allen, 1995) led to speculation that there may have been a Roman villa on the north side of the Thames at Gatehampton. This is on the opposite side of the river to the site of the Roman villa at Lower Basildon, Berkshire, that was so spectacularly destroyed by Brunel's Great Western Railway line in 1839.

In 1991 a field-walking exercise by SOAG at Gatehampton Farm revealed a widespread scatter of Roman pottery, including Castor (Nene Valley) and

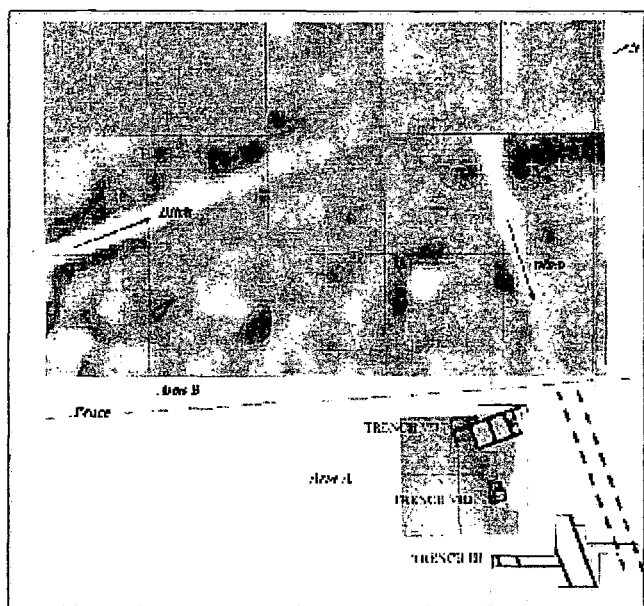


Fig 14. Resistivity survey. Gatehampton villa and its boundary ditch.

Samian ware, and numerous fragments of Roman tile. Aerial photographs indicate the existence of linear ditches in this area, marking a possible field system. With the permission of the landowner, Robin Cloke, a trench (Trench 3) was opened in 1993 in an area of dense tile scatter where ploughing had brought up large lumps of flint and dowsing indicated the presence of a linear feature. The trench cut across a Roman boundary ditch filled with lenses of demolition rubble. The southwards extension of this trench revealed the flint foundations of a wall which ran parallel to the ditch and subsequently led to the discovery of part of a substantial Roman building. Since then excavations have been carried out each year by SOAG and interim reports are published annually in the *SOAG Bulletin*.

Geophysical surveys

Part of the field-walked area at Gatehampton Farm was subjected to a resistivity survey by Joep Orbons (RAAP, Amsterdam) in 1992, which revealed a linear feature on a similar alignment to the cropmarks. A trial trench across this feature (Trench 1) confirmed that it was a substantial ditch that contained much debris (animal bones, tile, pottery sherds) dating to the Roman period.

A ground radar survey of a 30 x 30m area extending west and south of the wall exposed in Trench 3, following transects parallel to the wall, was conducted by Derek Vaughan (SOAG) in 1993. This showed an area of considerable disturbance towards the west end of the survey area and Trench 7 was opened in 1996 to reveal a hypocaust system and a possible bath house. In 2003 Geoff Deakin (SOAG) completed a resistivity survey of the land immediately surrounding the villa and part of the adjacent field (Fig 14). This survey

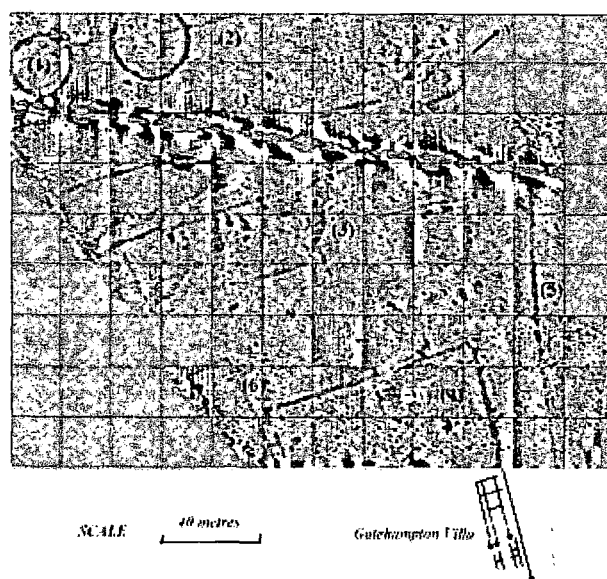


Fig 15. Magnetometry survey. The area west of Gatehampton villa showing Bronze Age ring ditches (top left) and linear ditches, possibly part of a Roman field system.

suggested that the excavations to date had reached the southern boundary of the villa building. The extension of the boundary ditch was clearly shown in the field, where it turns at 90 degrees to define the western edge of the villa enclosure. The considerable width of the ditch as indicated by the survey suggests that it was recut over time. The area enclosed by the ditch contains some intriguing anomalies that still await investigation. A subsequent magnetometry survey over a wider area by Geoff Deakin (Fig 15) revealed a complex multi-layered landscape with features ranging from Bronze Age barrows to Roman tracks and ditches. Some of these correspond to known cropmarks, but many are new. The survey area is divided by a modern pipeline running southwest to northeast; west of this two Bronze Age barrow ditches are clearly shown. Most of the linear features are on the same alignment as the villa building and its enclosure.

Two further surveys were conducted by Geoff Deakin in 2005. A resistivity survey of the villa building was carried out to indicate the position of additional walls to facilitate the planning of further excavation trenches. A more extensive survey was made of the area to the west of the previous field survey and immediately to the east of the railway line, in an attempt to locate features in the area between the villa enclosure and the corn-drier which lies to the west of the railway line. Although both resistivity and magnetometry were used, the results in this area have so far been inconclusive.

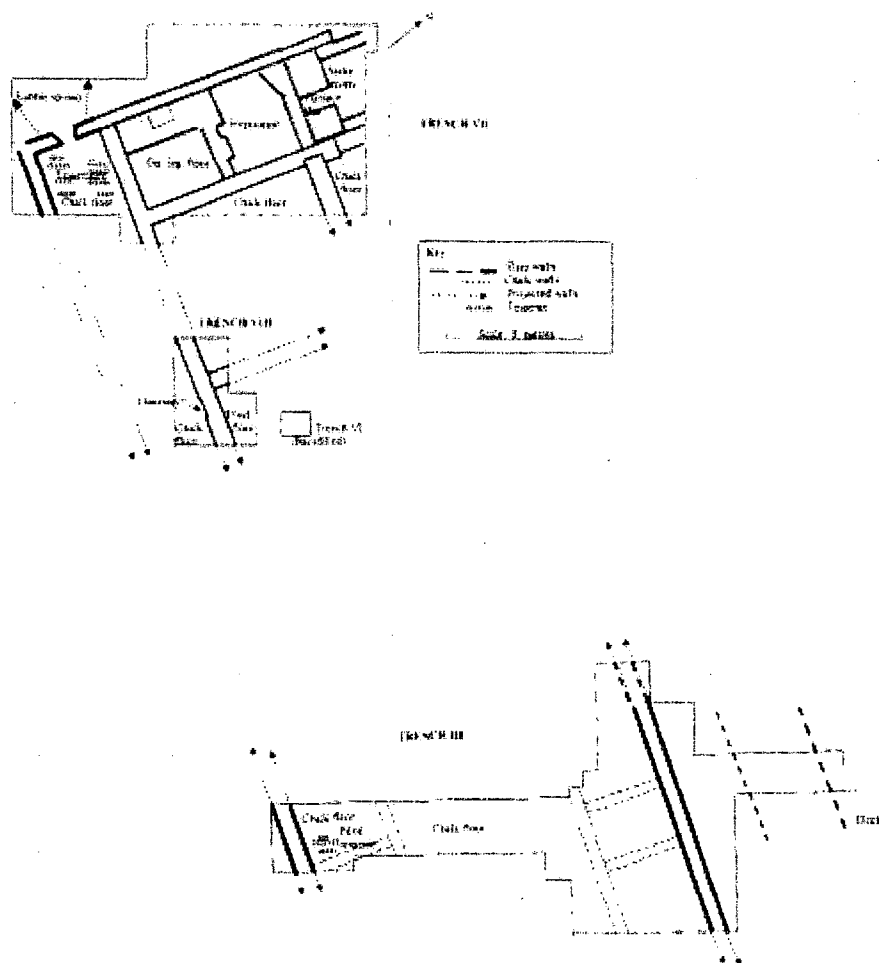


Fig 16. Gatehampton villa. Site plan.

Trench 3

The rubble fill of the boundary ditch in Trench 3 included many fragments of painted wall plaster in at least six colours, suggesting that we had located the site of a relatively prosperous Romano-British farmhouse. This was confirmed by the presence of Samian and other high-quality pottery, a 3rd century small bronze ring with a green glass bezel, two bone hair pins and scraps of window glass.

Trench 3 was extended to the southwest to reveal a series of walls and floors and associated features, and was in-filled in 2003. The wall adjacent to the boundary ditch was about 0.5m thick and consisted of flint with a chalk and mortar filling. A second, parallel flint wall was found at the opposite end of the trench (Fig 16) and may mark the southwestern limit of the villa building. Two further parallel walls and some cross walls had been constructed of chalk or clunch. A deposit of mussel and oyster shells and numerous cattle bones together with the base of a large hearth or oven at the eastern end of the trench close to the northern flint wall suggested that this had once been a kitchen area. A large and complete iron ladle, with a distinctive twisted handle, was found nearby where it

had apparently been secreted beneath a large flint, perhaps at the end of the occupation phase.

Several hearths and small furnaces, one with evidence of metalworking (hammerscale), were found in this part of the villa, and may represent a late period of activity. An interesting later feature, which overlay part of the foundations of the north wall, was a drain consisting of a row of *tegulae* laid end to end which extended for at least 6m. The soil beneath one of the *tegulae* was examined by Peter Gooch (SOAG) and found to contain the eggs of parasitic worms. At least three superimposed floors were found in Trench 3, indicating more than one phase of settlement. A pile of *tesserae*, which appeared to have been cut from tiles, was found at the south end of the trench in an area which corresponded with the corridor in Trench 7, where laid *tesserae* were uncovered in situ (see below).

Trench 7

Trench 7 was opened in 1996 and subsequently extended to expose a rubble-filled hypocaust system with a virtually intact flue arch leading to an adjacent stoke room to the northeast (Fig 17). Some large lumps of tufa were found which may represent part of a bath house ceiling. Some box tiles and the bases of *pilae* were found in situ. The walls were aligned with those found in Trench 3 and together appear to represent the partial floor plan of a modest corridor villa at least 35m long.

Numerous pieces of painted wall plaster, some quite large, were found among the box tile fragments in the rubble above the *pilae* bases. Some of the pieces showed evidence of the original patterning: the background colour is white with wide (approximately 3cm) parallel bands of bright yellow, dark red and orange red, then thinner bands in green and black with dots, curls and leaf motifs. It may be possible to reconstruct the pattern by piecing these jigsaw pieces together.



Fig 17. Trench 7 looking east. The stoke room and hypocaust.

A cooler room, with only two box tiles evident along the wall on the eastern side and an *opus signinum* concrete floor with raised edges, was found to the south of the hypocaust room and a wall or partition divides the floor area from a small rectangular 'footbath' or tank approximately 1m long on the west side. There was no trace of a hypocaust flue leading from the heated room into this second room but a substantial tile and cement structure had been built below floor level between the two rooms at the point where a second flue might be expected. Beneath the *opus signinum* floor there was a deposit of painted wall plaster and cement rendering, suggesting that the under-floor hypocaust cavities in both these rooms at the western end of the villa had been deliberately in-filled and new floors laid above them.

To the south of the second room there was an area of heavy-duty tessellated pavement in situ (Fig 18) bounded by a flint wall which apparently forms the south-facing side of the villa and aligns with the southernmost wall in Trench 3, where a pile of similar *tesserae* was found. This 3m wide area is interpreted as the villa corridor.

The 'bath house' so far appears to represent the western extremity of the villa building. The extreme southwest corner has been destroyed by ploughing but a substantial spread of building rubble outside the west wall contained much internal debris, including wall plaster, *opus signinum* cement, pottery, and, tantalisingly, some small black and white *tesserae* which indicate that somewhere the building had once sported a figurative mosaic. The rubble also yielded the remains of a human neonate, which appears to have been rather casually disposed of in this area.

Trenches 8 and 9

In 2003 Trench 8 was opened to the east of Trench 7 and this demonstrated the continuity of the corridor along the southern side of the villa (Fig 15). A large room with a chalk floor was partially exposed and here a great quantity of small mammal bones was recovered. These were identified as owl pellets and are of interest in that they show that this area was roofed and remained substantially intact, perhaps in use as an agricultural building, for a considerable period after the villa building went out of domestic use. The presence of water shrew remains may indicate the existence of water-filled drainage ditches and/or small tributary streams, and rather more aquatic vegetation than is seen today in and around the

river Thames. A thin concrete surface was exposed on the other side of the east wall of this 6m square room, and may represent yet another room or perhaps an internal courtyard.

A trench was opened to the north of the stoke room in 2004 (Trench 9) to confirm that the boundary ditch excavated in Trench 3 did indeed extend the length of the villa on its north side.

The 2005 season

Trench 7 was extended on the northeast side to examine the stoke room more thoroughly. Immediately to the east of this part of an adjacent room or corridor was exposed. This is 3m wide, as is the corridor on the south side, and it is bounded by the substantial flint and mortar north wall of the building. A similar corridor or series of small rooms, which may be a continuation of this, was demonstrated in Trench 3 (Fig 15). At the western end of the villa this area appears to have had a chalk floor and the walls were covered with a thin layer of plaster painted dark pink and decorated with black and white spots. The floor of the stoke room itself is almost 1m below that of the corridor, on the same level as the under-floor heating system. The fill consisted mostly of soil with some building rubble and large quantities of pottery and animal bone, suggesting that this area was used for dumping domestic rubbish after the hypocaust system fell out of use. This contrasts with the fill of the hypocaust and the boundary ditch, which both appear to have been deliberately in-filled with building rubble.



Fig 18. Trench 7. The tessellated pavement.

An intact 2nd century bronze head-stud type bow brooch was found in the area just outside the north wall of the villa (Fig 18). One link of the chain which would have connected this brooch with its pair was still attached. This brooch probably represents an heirloom, as it was found associated with a building dating to the mid 3rd to late 4th centuries.

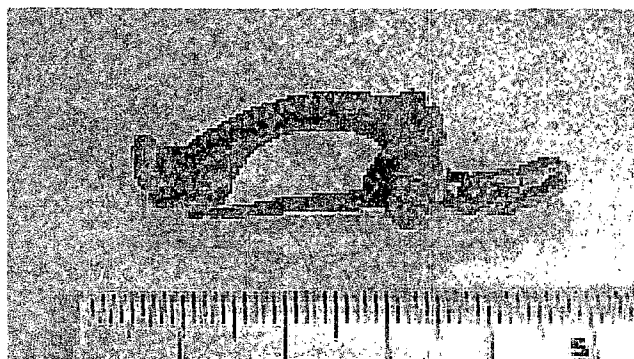


Fig 19. Head-stud brooch from Trench 7.

The suggestion that the villa building may once have extended further to the west, as indicated by the discovery of a narrow wall during the 2004 season, was given further credence when a semicircular chalk surface with a raised concrete edge was revealed on the west side of the heated rooms. Many finds were made in this area, including three late 3rd century bronze coins, some delicate fragments of copper alloy jewellery and several black and white tesserae.

The area between Trenches 7 and 8 was opened up to confirm the continuation of the south corridor, and further excavation of the boundary ditch in Trench 9 revealed at least two recuts and a collection of 23 shoe studs which represented the outline of the complete shoe although all traces of the leather sole had gone.

Dating and phasing

The first Romano-British farmstead at Gatehampton was probably established in the 2nd century although no evidence for a farmhouse or villa of this period has yet been found. The boundary ditch excavated by the Oxford Archaeological Unit contained some sherds of 2nd century pottery, and repeated recutting suggested that this ditch had a long period of use. The earliest Roman evidence was the rim of a late 1st or early 2nd century jar in another ditch. An exposed ploughsoil was also dated to the 2nd century on the evidence of the abraded pottery sherds

found within it. Other enclosure ditches contained pottery dating to the late 3rd to mid-4th centuries.

Second-century sherds among the ash and charcoal found in the corn-drier provide a terminus post quem for its construction; but sherds of early Saxon pottery at the bottom of the sequence of destruction layers suggest that the corn-drier did not actually collapse until the 5th century (Allen, 1995).

Coin and pottery evidence date the existing villa building to the 3rd-4th centuries. Several phases can be discerned within the building. The single-storey heated rooms, which probably represent a bath house, appear less well-built and may have been added as an extension to a modest two-storeyed corridor villa. After a while the hypocaust went out of use and was deliberately in-filled, and a new opus signinum floor was laid in one of the rooms. The tessellated floor in the corridor had begun to disintegrate and was patched with chalk. The internal chalk walls exposed in Trench 3 and the associated chalk floors represent at least two different phases at the eastern end of the villa.

Later there is evidence of industrial and/or 'squatter' activity in the south corridor and at the eastern end of the villa where numerous hearths and some small furnaces have been found. The owl pellet evidence suggests that at least part of the building remained standing for some time after it was finally abandoned for domestic use.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to the landowner, Robin Cloke, for allowing SOAG to excavate on his land for many years and for providing us with space for storage and shelter during inclement weather, to Tim Allen of Oxford Archaeology for his unstinting advice and encouragement throughout the project, and to all the

volunteers who have so willingly given their time and energy.

Allen, T G 1995; *Lithics and landscape: archaeological discoveries on the Thames Water pipeline at Gatehampton Farm, Goring, Oxfordshire 1985-92*, Thames Valley Landscape Monograph 7, 39-45.

The SOAG excavations at Gatehampton villa are co-directed by Hazel Williams and Cynthia Graham Kerr. For more details and further updates, please visit the SOAG website at www.soagarch.org.uk/projects.

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

The Vale and Ridgeway Project: Excavations at Marcham/Frilford 2005: interim report

Lock, G. and Gosden, C. (with contributions by Patrick Daly, David Bukach, Zena Kemash, Paula Levick, Jędrzej Majewski, Sheila Raven, Lisa Bendall, Jane Harrison, Helen Lewis, Ezekiel Otiende, Victor Iminjili and Steve Yeates)

Introduction to the Vale and Ridgeway Project

The background to the project and site has been detailed in the previous four interim reports in South Midlands Archaeology (Lock and Gosden 2002; Lock and Gosden 2003; Lock *et al* 2004, Gosden and Lock 2005), as well as on the project web site http://www.arch.ox.ac.uk/research/research_projects/marcham

As in previous years the excavation acts as a training excavation for Oxford University students, and is committed to education in the widest sense. Education Officers were on-site throughout the month of excavation and gave tours to many visitors including groups from local schools and community organizations. Various activities were organized for National Archaeology Day when c 1,000 people visited the site despite torrential rain for most of the day. Talks are given throughout the year to local societies and community groups. This was the first of two seasons partly funded by a Lottery (Local Heritage Initiative) grant that enabled local people to participate in the excavation. In the first week of excavation the site was featured on Time Team's Big Roman Dig.

The 2005 excavation season

The 2005 excavations had four main goals:

1) further investigating the large circular structure (the possible amphitheatre) which involved extending existing Trenches 1, 9 and 17;

2) further investigating the northern structure in Trench 18 and extending it eastwards, Trench 25;

3) locating the entrance through the temple *temenos* wall, Trench 15; and

4) exploring the relationship between the large building previously excavated in Trench 2 and the rear of the arena bank, Trench 24. As part of this, work resumed in a number of existing trenches, with extensions made to facilitate our research goals, as well as in several new trenches. In all areas, the initial stripping of turf and/or removal of backfill was assisted by machine shovel, with work continuing by hand once archaeological deposits were reached. The 2005 field season focused largely upon the Romano-British components of the site, and little if any prehistoric material was encountered. The location of all trenches is shown in Fig 20.

The Temple Precinct and Associated Structures (Trenches 15, 18 and 25)

The presence of the Romano-British Temple in the garden of the Noah's Ark pub has long been established (Bradford and Goodchild 1939). However, until our excavations little has been known about the wider temple precinct and immediate environs. Geophysical survey and excavations in previous seasons have demonstrated the presence of a number of Romano-British structures lying in close proximity to the east of the temple, as well as locating several segments of the *temenos* wall which demarcates the area of the temple compound. Investigations in this area during the 2004 and 2005 seasons have focused upon further understanding the nature of the structures around the temple, establishing their relationship with the temple, and finding the formal entrance to the temple complex.

In 2003, geophysical survey work was carried out along and around the eastern edge of the *temenos* enclosure to establish the location of the east wall of the temple precinct. The northern boundary wall had been detected in two places during the 2002 excavations (Trenches 6 and 16 - Lock and Gosden 2003). The survey showed a number of anomalies which were considered worth investigating. To do so, three small trenches were opened in 2004. Trench 19 produced no evidence of archaeological activity to explain the anomalies on the survey; Trenches 15 and 22 were more productive, the former being continued in 2005.

Trench 15

This work focussed on the possible gate complex of the temple precinct, extending the 2004 excavated area mainly to the north to produce a trench 18m by 20m, Fig 21. To the west the walls of the rooms around the gateway were found to extend further into the

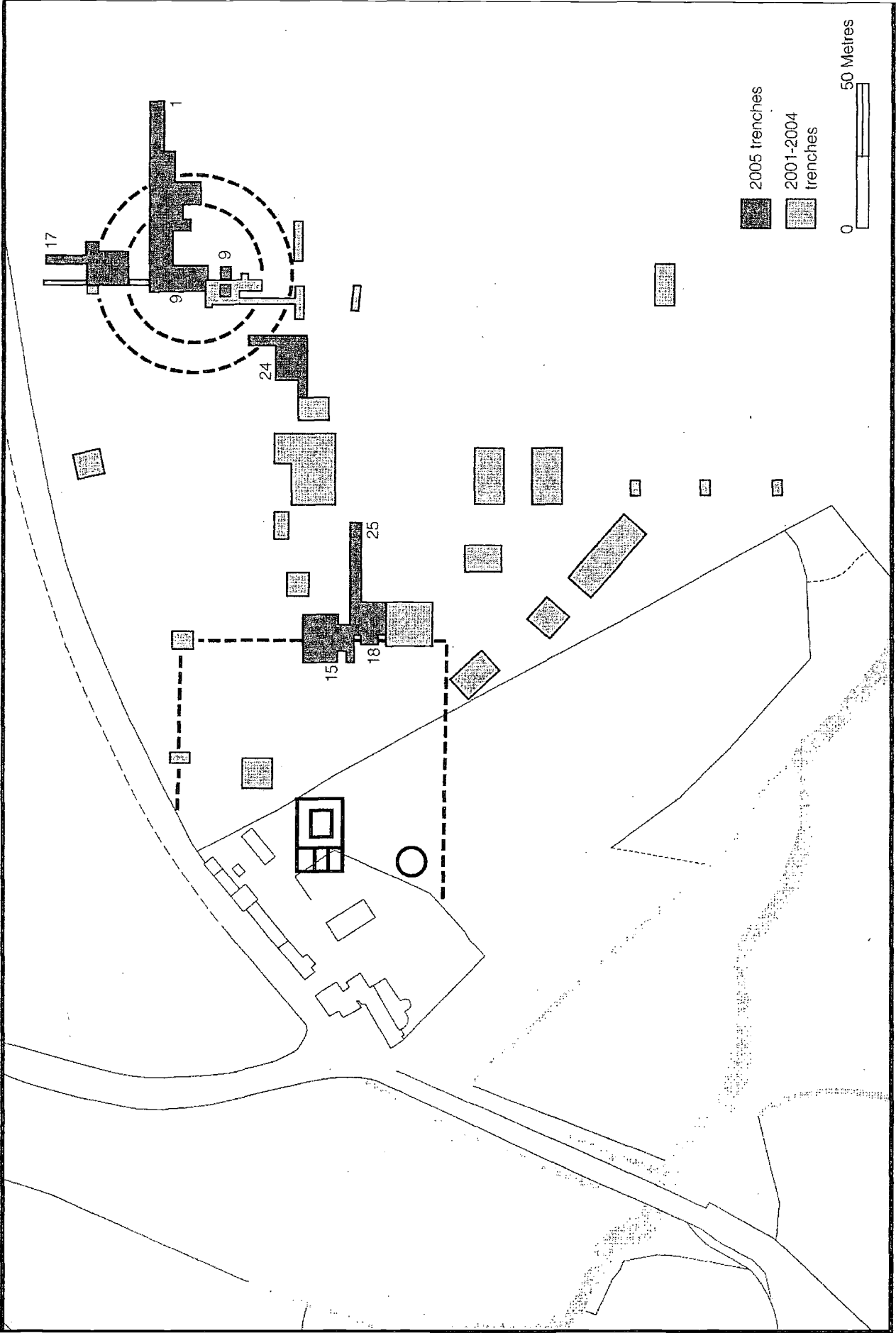


Fig 20. Excavation trenches at Marcham/Frilford from 2001 to 2005. The 2005 trenches are indicated as are the Romano-British temple excavated in 1937-8 with its suggested *temenos* wall.

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enclosure and formed the remains of a second room. The walls of this were mostly robbed out surviving only in three places [15033, 15036, 15059 and 15087]. In some parts of the surviving foundation the stones were in a mortar mix, in other areas they were rammed together and had a sandy loam fill. In the second room there were the remains of a square foundation cut [15089], but again there was no evidence of what this was for as the feature had been totally robbed.

The extension of the trench to the north was designed to ascertain the dimensions of the gateway although what it actually confirmed was that the *temenos* wall continued in a robbed out state, and that the rooms uncovered in 2004 were actually on the north side of the entrance. It seems that the foundation for the *temenos* ran the whole length of the trench and that there was a foundation cut even across the entrance [15041 and 15040]. Part of the south range of rooms inside the entrance were uncovered in Trench 18, with two walls [15052 and 18306] extending out from the *temenos* boundary wall either side of the entrance. Two post settings (15070 with the other in the baulk of Trench 18) could have supported an external porch. To the east an area of cobbling [15161] extended to the gateway, and there was also evidence of a gravel surface which ran through the entrance and extended inside the temple precinct [15006 and 15009].

In the north of the trench the remains of the robbed out *temenos* wall [15041] formed a distinct division between the inside of the enclosure possibly with evidence of a portico in the form of mortar spreads and poorly preserved postholes in a foundation cut [15021], and the outside with the remains of a building backing onto the wall. This was poorly preserved and difficult to define but it could have matched the two excavated to the south of the entrance in trench 18 although it appears to have been smaller. It contained the remains of a well built stone hearth [15121] and finds from the third and fourth centuries.

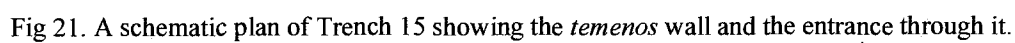
Trench 18

The northern half of Trench 18 was re-opened during the 2005 field season, Fig 22, with a 4m by 8m extension to the west. As demonstrated in previous field seasons, this area contained the remains of at least one substantial structure (the 'north building'), with well preserved interior floor surfaces, suggestions of industrial activity, and multiple layers of well laid stone cobble surfaces on the outside of the structure to the east. The north building was explored in detail in 2005 to determine dating, phasing, and function, with four main objectives: 1) defining the entire floor plan of the structure; 2) understanding the sequence of deposits within the interior of the structure; 3) establishing the relationship between the north building and the temple *temenos* boundary; and

4) determining the extent of the stone cobbling to the east of the building, see also Trench 25 below. All of these objectives were met successfully:

North Building Interior: The excavations in 2005 revealed the entire floor plan of the north building, running east/west, the same alignment as the 'south building' reported in the 2004 interim report. It consists of two parallel walls roughly 8m in length and a little over 3m apart [18199 and 18217]. While extensively damaged, the walls survive as up to three courses of mortared limestone blocks on top of pitched stones in a foundation trench, capped by a layer of flat stones. There is a smaller wall [18065] which runs north/south and divides the building into two sections. This wall is built into [18217], but ends about 15cm from [18199]. Like the southern building, there is no wall at the eastern side, suggesting that it was an open-fronted structure, possibly originally with a wooden screen or wall although no evidence survives for this in either building. Of particular interest is a small wall segment [18306] built parallel to, and actually overlapping slightly [18199/18305]. This is constructed with well packed pitched stones, and is rounded at both the northern and southern ends. The main walls of the north building seem to run back to the *temenos* wall, and there is evidence for a mortar and gravel 'filler' within the small gap between the walls and the *temenos*.

Limited excavation on the north building in previous seasons uncovered at least one compacted floor surface [18050] which detailed micro-morphological analysis revealed consist of sediments with significant ash and charcoal content. Furthermore, limited clearance of the destruction layer above this in 2004 exposed the remains of a hearth or small furnace which was explored further in 2005, [18200] which was cut all the way to bedrock and constructed of very solid and regularly shaped limestone blocks. The pink discolouration of the stone suggests they were subjected to very high temperatures. It is directly associated with floor [18050] and is probably the source of most of the burnt material in and on it. Also in 2005, several large pits or postholes were uncovered, for example [18314, 18320, 18340, 18354, 18355], some of which were cut into the pre Roman layers below the main floor surface, see Fig 23. The original purpose of these pits or postholes is unknown, some of them are nearly 2m deep and appear to have been re-cut and all were eventually filled with material containing Roman artefacts and tightly packed limestone blocks. The stratigraphic relationship between the pits/postholes and the walls of the northern building as well as circumstantial evidence suggest that the pits were filled in with stones in order



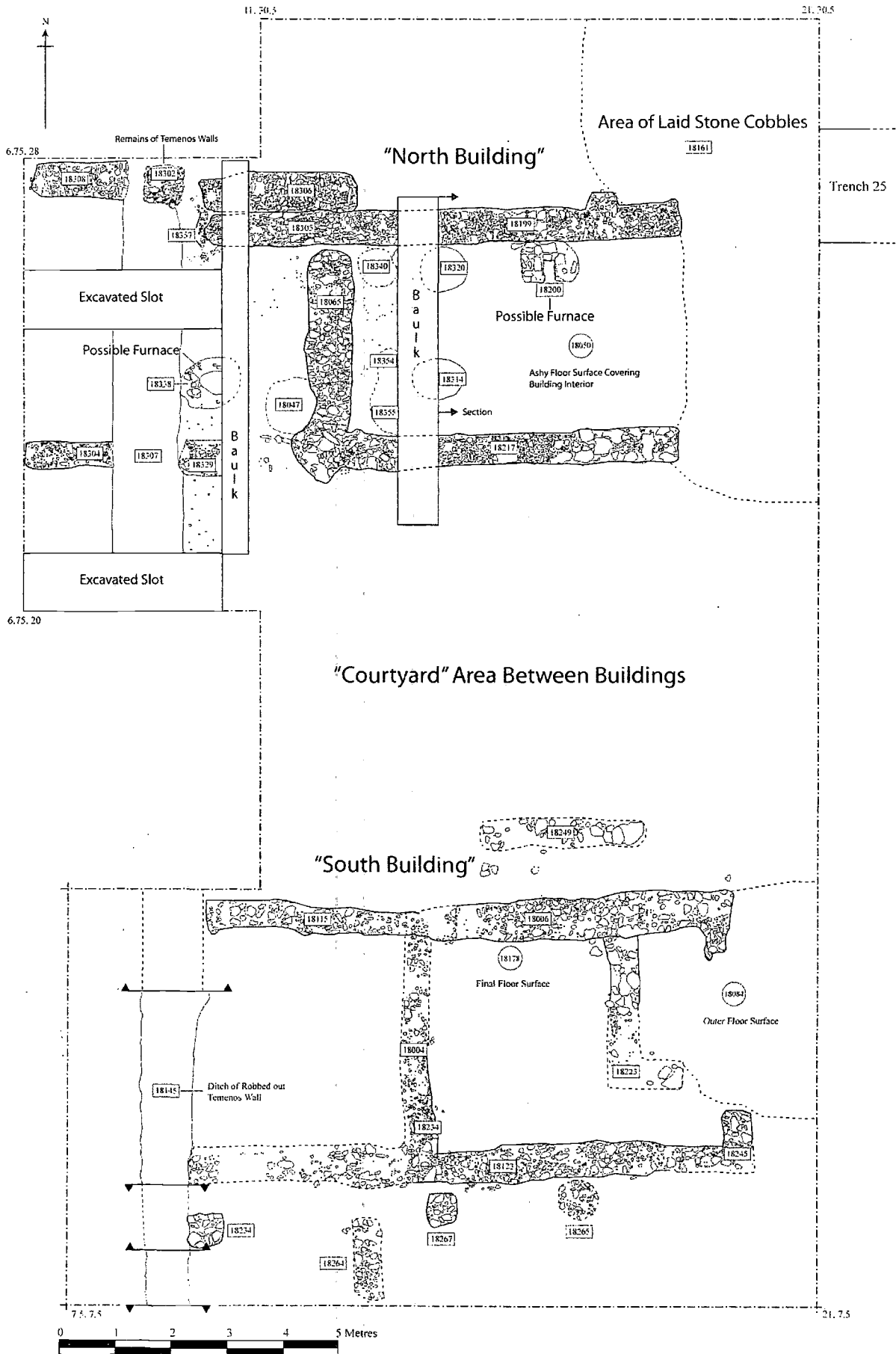
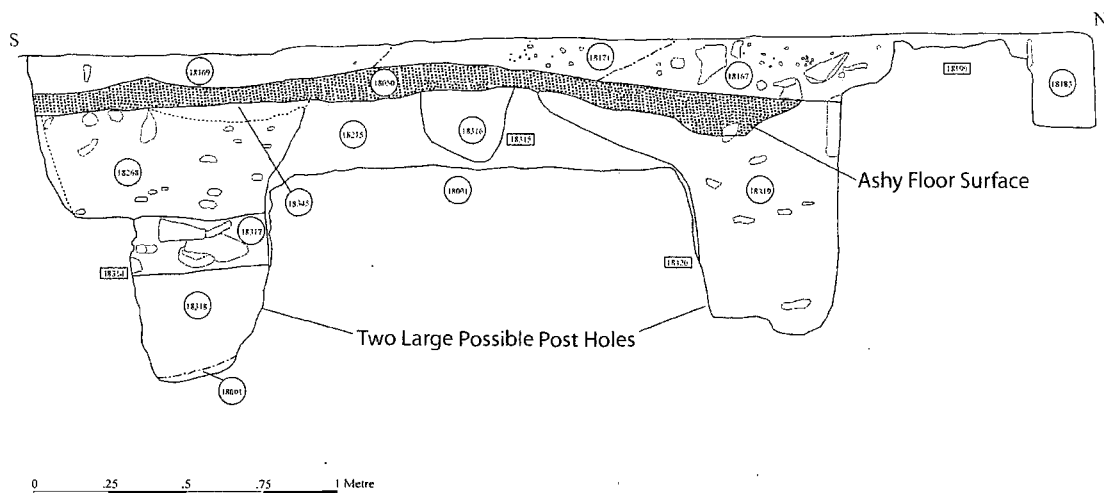


Fig 22. The plan of Trench 18 showing the two buildings built on the outside of the *temenos* wall south of the entrance.



to consolidate the ground for the construction of the building itself.

Temenos Wall: The 2005 western extension revealed the remains of the temenos wall. As elsewhere, it is largely robbed out [18307] with some traces of rubble in the back fill. While containing Romano-British material, there is a good chance that this occurred after the Romano-British period. Fortunately a small section of the original wall was discovered [18302], which consists of large and well formed limestone blocks mortared together. It is unclear why this small section of the wall was not robbed out. As mentioned above, the walls of the north building seem to have butted up against the temenos wall – however, the robber trench has truncated the point of physical contact, and so it can only be stated on the basis of circumstantial evidence. Interestingly, the remains of two additional walls [18308 and 18304] were found running from the temenos wall inside the temple precinct. These walls are closely aligned with the main walls of the north building, and [18308] had evidence of a mortar ‘filler’ between it and the temenos wall. The deposits on the inside of the temenos wall contained relatively little material culture in comparison with those on the outside, with the exception of a very well preserved late 1st century coin.

The evidence from the 2005 excavations has shown three phases of activity in the space associated with the northern building. The first is characterised by a number of pre ‘stone structure’ features, survived by cuts into the bedrock. There are clearly several pits,

and while no cohesive floor plan has been found, also several possible large postholes. There is evidence that their filling was not just to fill in the holes but to deliberately create a stable surface upon which the north building was built. This can be seen in Fig 4 where the deposits have slumped into a posthole [18320] that has a less well packed stone fill. There seem to have been two distinctive phases of use following the construction of the north building. The earlier consisted of several small hearths/possibly industrial features. These were not well built, but clearly were in use inside the building, and produced both some ashy surfaces and dumps of ashy material. One, and possibly two of the well built furnaces were constructed as part of the second phase of the building. These produced the deep charcoal and ash-rich floor surface that covered most of the inside of the building. The destruction material from the building was resting right on top of this floor surface, with no indications at all of accumulated sediments or other indications of hiatus. Thus it seems most likely that the building came down onto the floor surface, either immediately after its use ended, or even causing the end of activity there. This is significant as the destruction level neatly sealed in the lower deposits protecting their integrity. Over the four seasons Trench 18 produced a great deal of worked copper alloy artefacts, ranging from coins to medical implements and jewellery. Furthermore, when samples from the interior floor surfaces were analysed, small fragments of copper were recovered from the heavy residue. One possible hypothesis is that the north building, at least in its final phase, was used in part for the production and manufacture of small copper votive objects. This remains to be tested in post-excavation although it is worth noting that

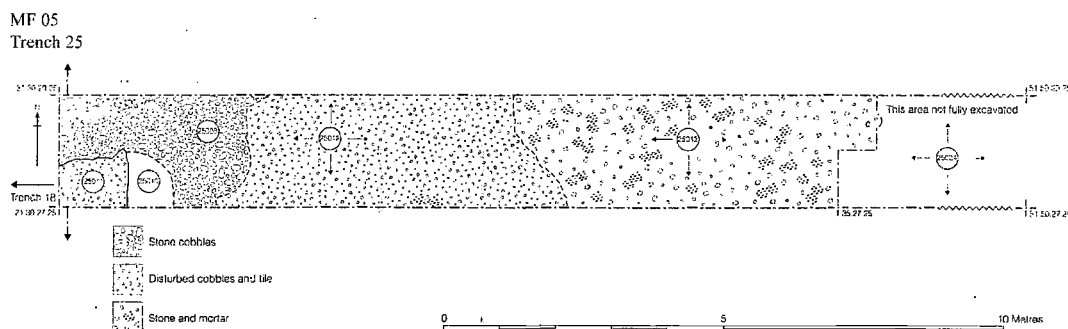


Fig 24. Trench 25, an eastern continuation of Trench 18 to explore the cobbled surface.

while there are certainly similarities between the south and the north building in Trench 18, such as lay out, alignment, dating, open eastern fronts, and connection with the temenos wall, there are also clear differences in the functions of the two structures. The north building almost certainly has some sort of industrial function, most likely involving copper-alloy working, whereas the evidence from the southern building was characterised by fine ware glass and ceramic vessels, and faunal remains. Whatever questions are left to resolve in post-excavation, these excavations have shown that there was some sort of formalised area for activity directly associated with the temple, which involved a number of different types of structures ('shops/workshops') as well as a range of constructed floor surfaces.

Trench 25

Trench 25, opened at the beginning of the 2005 season, is adjacent to the eastern edge of trench 18, 2m wide and 30m long, with the long axis on an east-west alignment, Fig 24. The focus of this trench was to investigate a cobbled area to the east of Trench 18, which was first discovered in 2004, and to establish the function of the cobbling (eg street or courtyard) and its relationship to the workshops west of it.

Continuing east from Trench 18 [18161] the cobbles [25008] were well laid for three metres and then disturbed, probably by ploughing, for another seven metres or so [25012]. This cobbling seems to be aligned with the gate through the *temenos* wall, discovered late in the season, and could, therefore, be a roadway or path leading from it. Beyond the cobbling an area of mortar and tile was uncovered [25013], initially interpreted as the remains of a building but probably a path running north-south across Trench 25. The path consisted of several layers of different materials laid on top of each other which seem to represent two stages, each consisting of a layer of cobbling covered with a mortar surface. It seems that the cobbled path leading from the *temenos* entrance reached a T-junction here offering different routes into the rest of the complex.

East of this junction little more was found, a loose soil [25004] with some Romano-British artefacts, but no structural remains. Towards the eastern end of the trench there was an increase in the density of artefacts recovered, a range of material with much oyster shell, although it is likely that this is associated with the large structure excavated previously in Trench 2 just to the east.

To the east of the large rectilinear building (Trench 24) Extensive excavations during the previous three seasons have almost completely exposed the layout and floor plan of a large rectilinear building in Trench 2. The function of this structure remains unclear although there is considerable evidence that at least one phase of its use was late in the site's history, late 4th century. A well laid cobbled surface extended from the eastern end of this building and this was partially explored in 2004 with the trench being extended in 2005. One focus of interest here is the relationship between the large building and the rear of the bank of the circular structure which lies just to the east, the two possibly being connected by the cobbled surface. The area of excavation was extended in 2005 to create Trench 24 which goes from the cobbled surface adjacent to the large building in Trench 2 across to the edge of the 'amphitheatre' bank, and includes structures associated with a well-made wall [23001/24011] found in 2004 (Trench 23), Fig 25.

The excavations revealed more of the cobbled surface next to the Trench 2 structure (24003), found the edge of the amphitheatre bank (24004) with an adjacent finely cobbled surface (24006), and began to expose the larger structure associated with the well-made wall uncovered in 2004 [23001/24011]. The cobbled surface next to the Trench 2 structure (24003) overlay an earlier layer of finer cobbling (24013), and both layers respected a pit feature [24015]. The two finely cobbled surfaces at opposite ends of the trench (24013 and 24006) were similar in appearance and possibly part of the same original surface, though this remains uncertain.

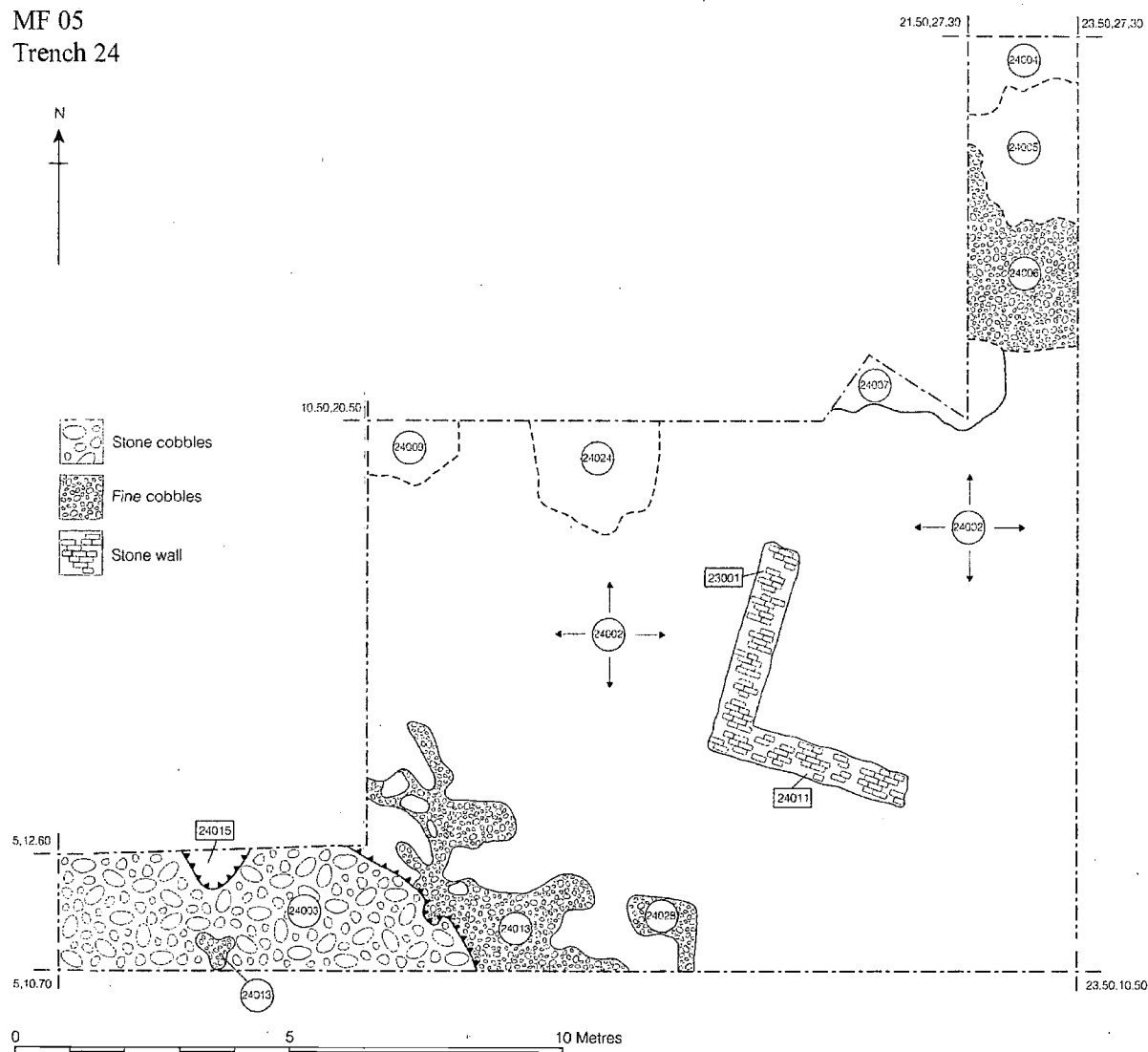
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Trench 24

Fig 25. A schematic plan of Trench 24, the cobbled area linking the eastern end of the large rectangular building with the rear of the bank around the circular structure.

Further excavation will be necessary to determine stratigraphic relationships between the various buildings and laid surfaces, and thus we cannot yet discuss use or function of this part of the site in any particular phase. However, it is clear that the area contained formalised open space during the phase(s) when the 'amphitheatre' and the large Trench 2 building were in use. In between these two large structures, there was at least one further well made formal structure [23001/24011], the date of which is unclear. It is possible that the structure was robbed for building materials for other structures on the site, or that it was open-fronted. In addition to this building, there is evidence for less well-built wooden or pillar-supported structures, eg in the areas of [24024] and [24009].

All parts of the trench, but particularly around the central building and the amphitheatre, contained many 'votive' small finds, including coins and jewellery, as well as several significant faunal remains, suggesting offering/eating in the area. There is an impression that the 'votives' cluster around structures [23001/24011], [24024] and [24009] which suggests the possibility, given the proximity of the large circular structure's bank, that these were small shrines or iconostases; this possibility will be investigated further in 2006. Coins from the topsoil and contexts across the trench have seen preliminary identification, and show a range from AD 69-79 through to AD 388-402, although the majority date from the late 3rd century and the 4th century (Iain Leins, pers comm).

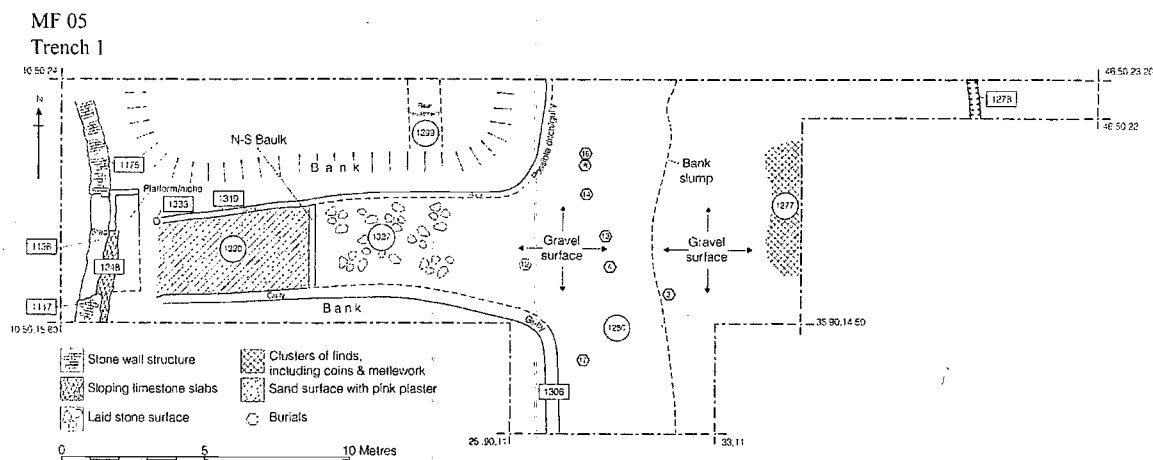


Fig 26. A schematic interpretative plan of Trench 1, the eastern cardinal point area of the circular structure.

The Circular Structure/Arena (Trenches 1, 9 and 17)

This large and enigmatic feature was first discovered by aerial photography in 1976 and claimed to be an amphitheatre by Hingley (1985) based on a small excavation. Each season since 2001 we have been excavating various parts of this structure which consists of an 'arena' wall c 40m diameter with surrounding low earthen bank. The wall itself survives in remarkably good condition, to its original height of c 1.75m, well mortared with plaster and painting on its inner surface. At each of the cardinal points is some kind of feature, obvious from the aerial photography and later geophysical survey. Trench 9 includes the box-like feature to the south, Trench 1 the gap through the bank to the east and Trench 17 the wall and plinth to the north. Excavation continued on all of these in 2005 together with a large L-shaped trench in the interior of the arena joining the southern and eastern cardinal points. Interpretation of this structure remains problematic (Gosden and Lock 2003) and is discussed in more detail below.

Trench 1

Trench 1 is located on the eastern cardinal point of the arena, extending eastward behind a lowered 'step' in the arena wall to beyond the back of the bank. Fig 26 is a schematic interpretative plan of this area. Work in 2001 to 2004 focused on the area around the 'step' [1136] including the northern bank. Investigation of the character of the bank continued in 2004; the search for evidence of any activity behind the bank was delayed by the discovery of six near complete skeletons. Much of Trench 1 was reopened in 2005. The season's aims included: finishing excavation of the easternmost sector of the original 2004 trench and driving a slot east to confirm that the limit of bank-related activity had been reached. The trench was also extended south to determine whether the

burials were a discrete group. Further work was carried out in the original trench: at the front of the bank to explore the relationship between the banks and an access passageway, to pursue evidence for timber revetment and to link the banks with possible surfaces; and at the back of the bank to investigate hints of rear ditches and gullies revealed in long east-west slots opened in 2004.

The furthest eastern 5m of the main trench were excavated down to an undisturbed clayey B horizon above bedrock, removing a deep layer of sandy silt. Stratigraphical relationships and phasing were difficult to unravel. Cuts and negative features, even buried surfaces, survive poorly in the biologically active sandy context. At the rear of the bank the movement of soil down-slope from the east, and the gradual levelling of the land by ploughing, has further obscured relationships. Finds were concentrated in the eastern part of the area and included nearly thirty Late Roman coins (some in mint condition and some temple 'forgeries'), sherds of Roman pottery, animal bones, vessel glass, hair pins, rings, and decorative metal studs and fittings. In the less disturbed lower spits of the sand [1277] there was a definite clustering of finds, as if they had been buried together in small pits, their cuts subsequently obscured by soil processes. For example: a hair pin was grouped with white stones, pottery sherds and animal bones in an otherwise find-free area. All the datable finds were Late Roman, but cannot confidently be linked to any phasing of the bank as neither tumble associated with eroded bank, nor the patchy gravel surface, had any clear stratigraphical relationship with the clustering of finds. The principal activity in this area was, therefore, the placing of votive offerings in small pits in the Late Roman period, similar to that discovered south of the arena in 2003. The scattered offerings suggest relatively informal religious activity; perhaps as part of a later form of ceremonial.

The Eastern extension: A small ditch [1278] was discovered running north-south across the 1.5m (north-south) by 10m slot at c 6m east. The ditch seemed to curve to reflect the arena's shape. Snails and Roman pottery were found in its fill, and a layer of hill-wash came to an end above the ditch suggesting it had supported a palisade. Neither bank material nor the depositional activity described above continued further east.

The Southern extension: three north-south slots were cut down to bedrock in this 7m by 4m extension: two to confirm that the lower B horizon was undisturbed and a third to investigate a ditch revealed in the north-facing section of a 2004 section. The v-shaped ditch was found to extend south behind the rear of the bank [1306]. East of the ditch re-deposited natural sandy soil and eroded bank material were found above a patchy gravel surface. Two disturbed burials, SK 17 and 18, were discovered.

The gravel surface [1280] marks an important horizon. Below it no Roman finds were made and in 2004 only one or two possible Iron Age pottery sherds. Where it has been found, behind the banks and in the fan-shaped approach to the slight break in the banks, this 'surface' is patchy and thin (c 1-2cm), suggesting a short-lived use. As all datable activity at the back of the bank is Late Roman, the long dip slope of the bank may have been part of a remodelling of the arena. Perhaps the gravel was laid to create a working surface during bank alteration? The quantity of brown sandy context found above patches of gravel in this area, and between the two bank tails in 2004, suggests deliberate infilling including the blocking of the break.

Excavation confirmed that, in its widened form, the southern bank was defined by a ditch, and probably a timber revetment, at least at its corner with the access-way. There were hints, in 2004 north-south sections, of a gully behind the northern bank but these were not substantiated in 2005. This area was particularly disturbed by ploughing, rabbits and burials. The MF04 graves had been dug into both eroded bank material and passageway infill; similarly, after the southern ditch had filled, and the bank eroded slightly across it, skeleton 17's grave was dug partly into ditch-fill and partly into the slump of turf, sand and clay bank material.

Re-examination of main north-south baulk: a well-laid if patchy limestone surface was discovered immediately east of the baulk between the banks [1327]. An intermittent gravel surface, found further east, seemed very similar to other patches between and beyond the banks, but the areas could not be linked.

The shallow break between the banks, clearly visible in the baulk section, may have been original or created later for access; either way the limestone surface was part of the final look of the passageway before it was in-filled. The section hinted at a west-east gully [1319], filled with slumped bank material, paralleling a southern west-east gully found in 2001; small north-south sections from 2003 in disturbed areas further east also suggested a west-east gully. The hypothesis that a later configuration of the eastern area included timber revetment along the west portion of the 'access-way', and behind the bank terminals in the east, was supported by the observation that two fans of sand surface and collapsed pink plaster were clearly concentrated in the areas between these proposed revetments [1320]. In 2003 it was noted that the gravel surface was conspicuous in its absence west of the main north-south baulk. Final works around the wall break may have cut away this layer, perhaps after the infilling of part of the passageway, to replace it by a sand surface over natural soil re-deposited as infill material. The pink plaster covered the revetment then collapsed into the sand at the end of the arena's use.

Northern bank behind the wall and access-way: a distinct gully had been noticed in a small section west of the baulk near the northern bank front. Two small north-south slots were put through the remains of access-way material and into the bank to see whether there was a northern east-west gully to match the southern one found in 2001. A gully for a timber revetment was found cut into the lower more clayey natural sandy soil to the south of the northern bank [1319], ending in a post-hole [1333] cut into bedrock behind the steep approach to the 'step'. The posthole could have been a terminal post for the plaster-covered revetment.

Overall, this is a difficult trench to phase and date as apart from in the area of votive deposition diagnostic finds have been frustratingly few. The earliest phases - particularly near the 'step' - have been destroyed by later rebuilding; and the sandy context, forming the majority of the non-structural deposits, has failed to preserve evidence of cuts and negative features. However, the evidence does suggest the eastern cardinal point was reworked and that the activities associated with it changed over time. The wall break was probably at its lowest in an earlier phase, perhaps when the break between the clay and limestone front banks was paved with limestone. In the later stages the eastern break in the wall was built up, the wall ends monumentalised and a 'niche' created behind the wall. The access through the banks was no longer needed and may have been partially blocked, and at around this phase plastered timber revetments were added at the rear and front of the banks. The votive deposits -

and perhaps the burials - represent the final phase of Romano-British religious activity associated with the arena.

Trench 9

Excavations in the interior of the arena during 2005 had two major aims: to elucidate the role of the drainage systems and to understand further the constructional phases and chronology.

The drainage systems

Excavation of the drain systems focused on the north-south leg of Trench 9, note that drain [9353] was excavated in 2004. At the far southern end of the trench c 0.5m in front of the arena wall the capstones of a feeder drain from the west [9385] were revealed, Fig 27. Initially it was thought that this may be part of a drain that ran around the perimeter of the arena, but further excavation to the east of the main drain in front of the southern arena wall showed that this was not the case. Unfortunately due to heavy rain and flooding in Trench 9 in the last week of excavation it was not possible to excavate inside the drain to find out whether the base was made of stone or not. If the bottom of the drain was not stone, it is possible that the drain was designed to deal with the fluctuating water table. Working out how the drain system functioned will be a priority for excavation in 2006.

Chronology

The work this season suggests three main phases of construction, remodelling and disuse. The initial phase of construction saw the insertion of the arena walls and central drain [9342]. Targeted excavation of the area where the drain exits through the southern cardinal point of the arena wall in front of the built box structure has proved that the drain was part of the primary construction; contrary to earlier hypotheses, the rebuild in the arena wall (see below) was not connected with the insertion of the central drain, Fig 28. Excavation inside the drain network in 2006 should help clarify whether the whole network was part of this primary phase of construction. In the east-west 'leg' of the trench it would appear that the natural land surface was consolidated by deliberate deposits of limestone rubble [9348]. An inverted stake [SF 1075] was found in the clay deposit underlying these rubble deposits. A c 0.2m thick deposit of sand overlay the drain network and rubble deposits. The sand probably formed the arena surface; it was a very clean deposit and must have been replaced on a regular basis. The sand did not extend into the central area of the arena; the reason for this omission is not clear and will be explored in 2006.

A secondary phase of use in the amphitheatre, which may be associated with the remodelling of the arena walls (the blocking [9418] in Fig 28) was identified to the south of the central area in the north-south leg. Here two postholes [9402 and 9400] and an east-west aligned linear feature, possibly a beam slot [9390] were excavated. These features post-date the arena sand floor and pre-date the 4th century clay layers which are the final activity within the arena. This suggests a secondary phase of activity inside the arena before it went out of use completely in the 4th century AD. These features may be contemporary with pit [9318] and natural gullies [9329], [9336] and [9334]. This phase of activity may also have seen the floor levels raised directly inside the arena walls with gravel-rich deposits, as excavated in 2002/3.

The area around the southern box structure: excavations continued to the south of the box-like structure along the line of the main drainage channel out of the circular structure with the goal of better establishing the chronological relationships between the drain, bank and the stone-built box. Two extensions were made, consisting of 2m x 2m squares to the east and west of the drain as it extends south. This created a long, east-west section extending across the drain and bank, and provides the basis for the interpretation outlined here.

To the west of the drain, a cut was identified through one, and possibly both phases of bank material identified indicating that the construction of the drain post-dates the construction of the bank. No cut was found which corresponds to the box structure, and given that the drain underlies this it is likely that both were laid down at the same time. This may suggest that the box was part of the drainage system, possibly a cistern to handle overflow from the drain. No clear cut was found in the bank in the eastern extension, however, and the character of material is quite different from that found to the west of the bank. Unlike the western section, which appears to contain alternating clay and soil deposits consistent with bank material found throughout previous excavation in Trench 9, deposits near the surface to the eastern side of the drain contain much larger deposits of clay, in some cases in deposits over 30cm thick. Given the lower soils around the drain itself consist of similar material, it seems likely that the large deposits of clay to the east of the drain represent redeposited material from its construction. The slope of the drain cut at lower levels also appears shallower on the eastern side, and it is possible that the extent of the cut has not yet been found. A key issue, however, is why the material on either side of the drain should differ so considerably from one another, and this may suggest that the character of the bank extending southeast of the

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Trench 9

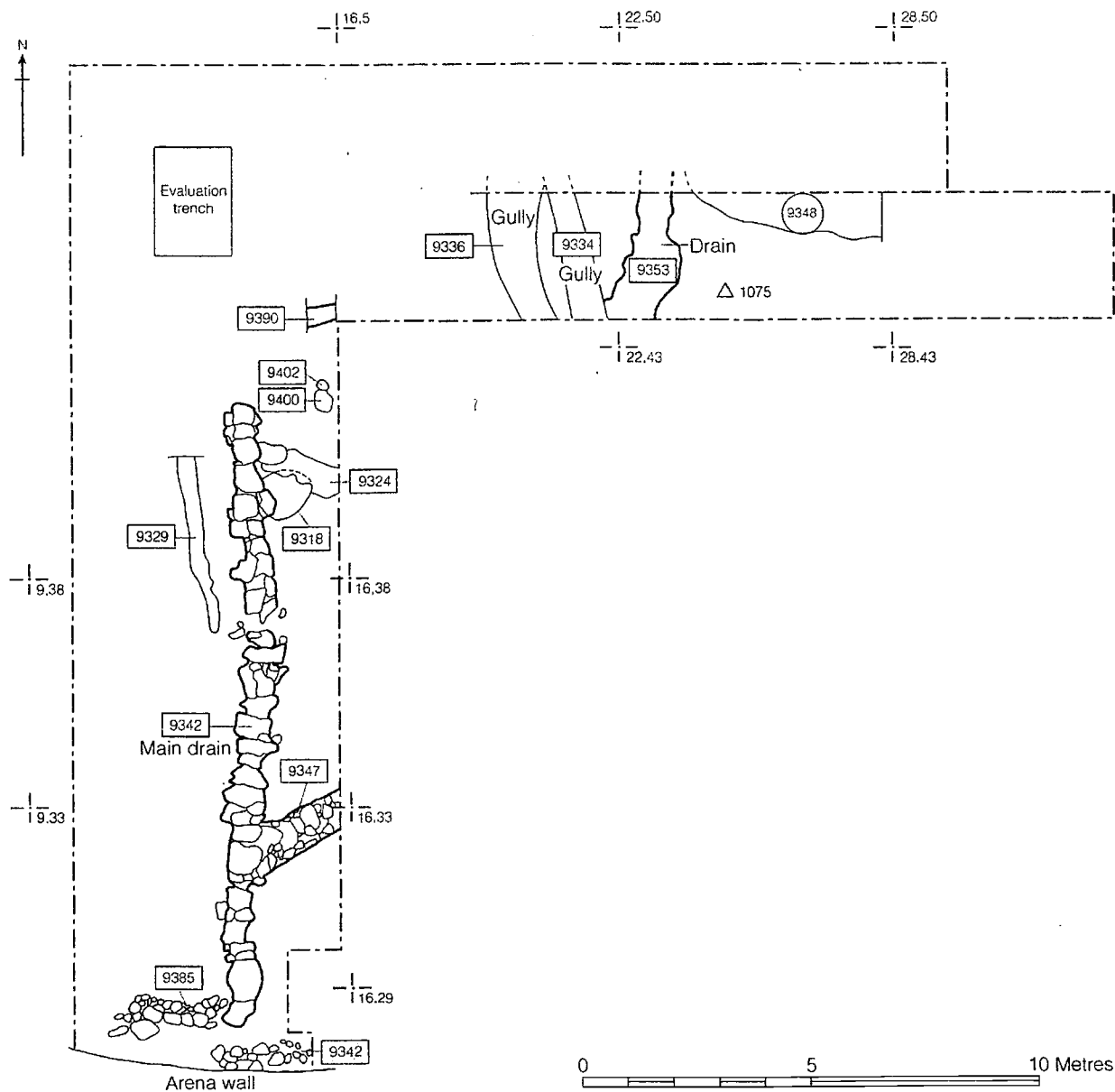


Fig 27. A schematic plan of the interior of the arena showing part of the drainage system, Trench 9.

circular structure is quite different from the classic profile from Trench 9.

Trench 17

Trench 17 is located on the northern cardinal point of the arena within the area of the bank. It was started in 2004 and extended in 2005 with the goal of establishing the function of the structural remains uncovered in the first year. These were a length of wall foundation [17005] and a square post-pad like feature [17014/17004]. The trench was extended eastward in a square of approximately 6m with a 2m wide exploratory trench extending 15m northwards of the main trench. This was to establish the presence of any

bank material and to determine whether the pebble surface found in 2004 extends further east. Fig 29 is a schematic plan of the main features.

The length of straight wall was found to extend east for a distance of approximately 8m. Construction was similar along the length of the wall, consisting of a dry-stone foundation of angular stones laid in familiar herring-bone pattern. A single course of facing stones, placed along both wall facings, still remains above the foundation stones. These have been placed with mortar, while the interior of the wall is packed with a mixture of smaller stones and mortar. It appears that nearly all of the wall above this point has been lost to ploughing.

MF 05
Trench 9

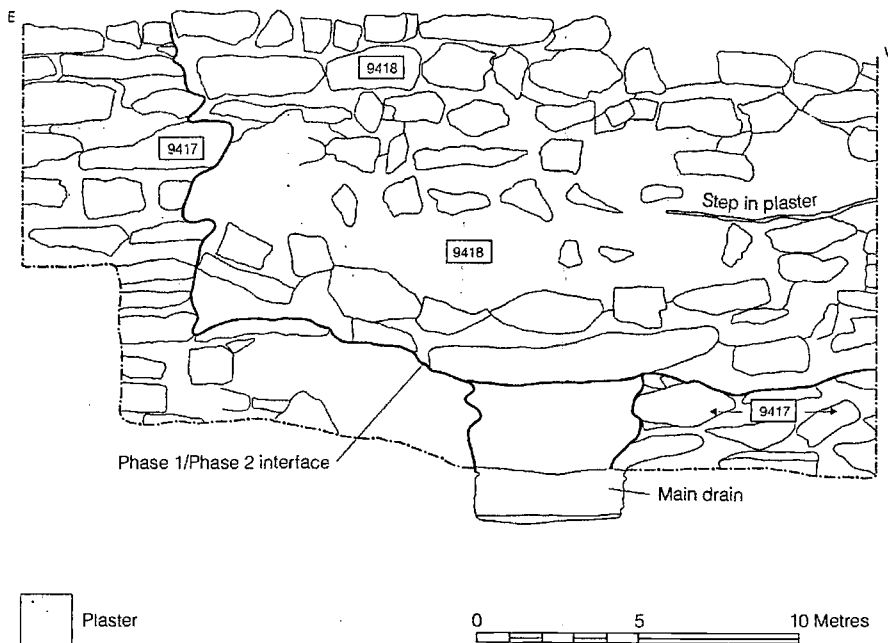


Fig 28. A section showing part of the internal face of the arena wall at the southern cardinal point, note the main north-south drain and the Phase 2 blocking

A further two post-pad like structures were discovered [17042 and 17046], which when considered alongside that from the 2004 trench, appear to represent three evenly spaced and in a line parallel to the wall and starting about 1m in front of it. Both structures uncovered in 2005 consist of small angular stones placed vertically into the ground, arranged in the form of a 1m x 1m (approximate) square. On the whole, both are poorly made in relation to the western-most example from 2004, in particular the eastern-most one which appears to be partially destroyed. Found extending south from the wall and abutting the two newly discovered structures is a patchy surface consisting of a mixture of small pebbles and flecks of chalk [17058/17066]. The surface extends southward, sloping downwards as it approaches the arena wall. Laid down on top of the eastern half of the straight wall, the pebble surface and the eastern-most pad-like structure is a deposit of greenish yellow clay-soil mixture [17043] extending along the length of the northern side of the wall, where it contains larger rubble and bits of mortar [17075]. A small extension was made beyond the eastern end of the wall, which uncovered thin patches of mixed clay and soil just below the ploughsoil [17056]. Finally, the long northern extension successfully uncovered the remains of a pebble surface [17064] similar to that

from 2004, containing a mix of pebbles, occasional pottery and considerable amounts of red mortar.

The large area approach to excavation undertaken this season has provided considerable insight into activity on the northern side of the circular structure. The wall and post pads would appear to represent either: (1) the foundations of a wooden platform or collonade, or (2) a formalised area for the display of statuary, pillars or other objects. Given the presence of the prepared pebble and chalk surface, the latter may be more appropriate, the post pads representing flat surfaces on which larger objects could have been placed. There are almost no finds in association with these features, which suggests that this area was not frequented

by those using the circular structure but instead intentionally left as a display area. The sloping pebble and chalk surface may indicate that whatever was constructed in this area was intended for viewing from both the interior and the bank around the circular structure. Much of the area then appears to have been covered in a clay surface which may represent the end of use of this part of the circular structure. Finally, the clay surfaces found east of the end of the back wall may in fact be the beginnings of the bank, which seems to begin again beyond the eastern end of the formal display area.

Discussion and the 2006 season

In 1985 Richard Hingley suggested that this Romano-British site was a rural religious complex based around a large temple with an associated amphitheatre and other public buildings. Our work over the last five seasons has provided a wealth of detail to fill out this interpretation which, generally speaking, we would support, although we would question labelling the circular structure 'amphitheatre' as being too simplistic. We are beginning to piece together this large and complex site both spatially and chronologically, but also in terms of how people during the first four centuries AD used and experienced this important religious place.

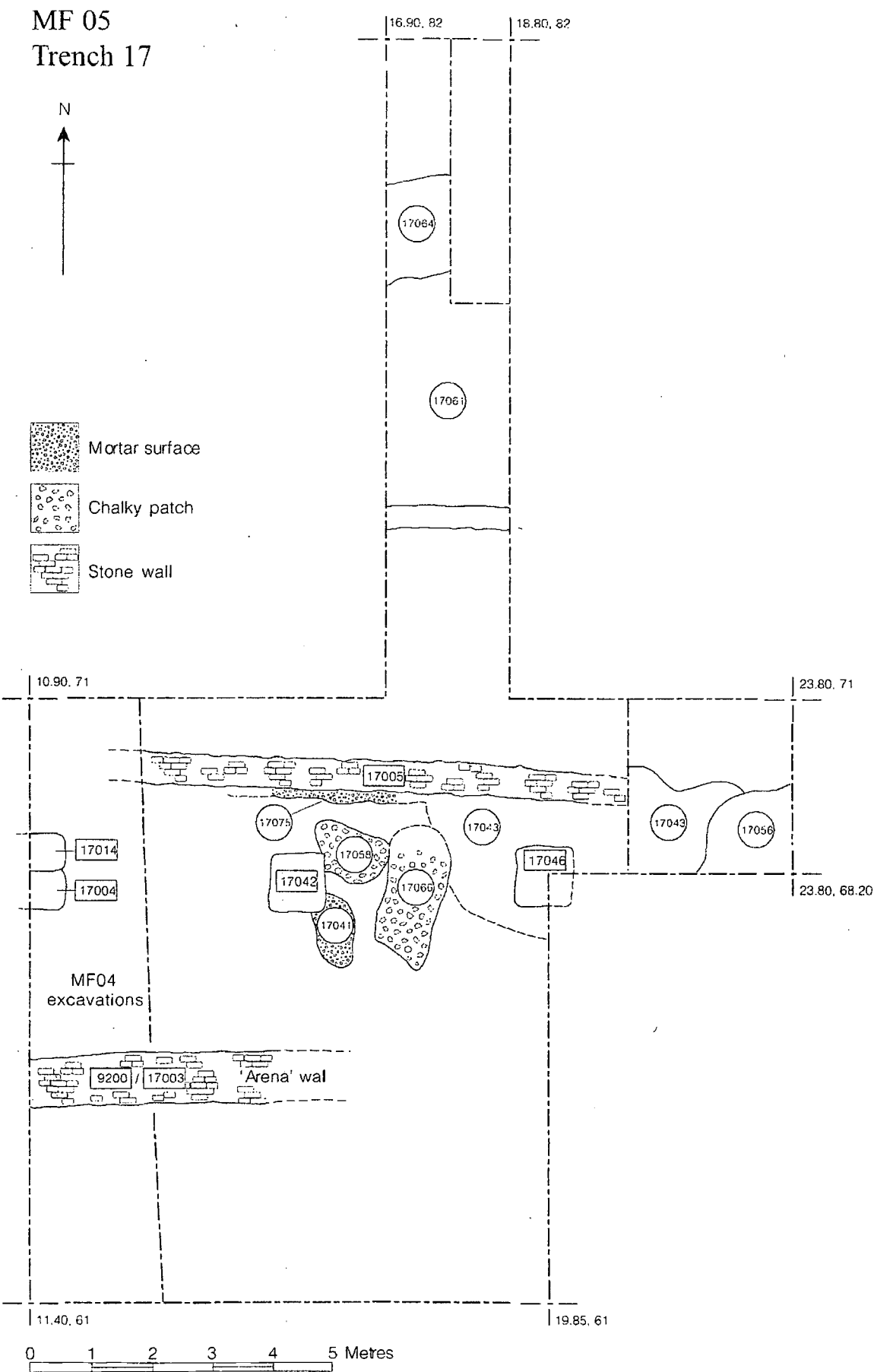


Fig 29. A schematic plan of Trench 17, at the northern cardinal point of the arena.

This season was successful in helping the understanding of the area around the entrance to the temple through the *temenos* wall. The entrance itself seems to be surprisingly small although it is elaborated by a range of rooms either side on the inside area of the *temenos* and, perhaps, a portico running around the inside of the wall. A distinctive gravel path leads through the entrance into the sacred area and towards the temple matching the description of the path leaving the eastern entrance of the temple as described by Bradford and Goodchild (1939). In one of our earlier trenches we found evidence for landscape gardening within the sacred precinct and in 2006 we will explore this area further to see whether there are structures such as shrines. We also need to establish the south eastern corner of the *temenos* wall to match the north eastern corner excavated in 2002 which will confirm that the overall size of this temple possibly makes it one of the biggest in Roman Britain. Outside the entrance are the two structures to the south which are now fully excavated. To call these a pair of shops/workshops is an interpretation which suggests the level of engagement that people would have had with the temple during a visit. While the experience as a whole was probably deeply religious, and we can image the peace, tranquillity and reverence within the inner sanctum of the *temenos* and the temple itself, outside the entrance was a busy cobbled courtyard offering a variety of opportunities. There could have been a whole range of trading activities but what we have evidence for is eating and drinking in and around the southern building and the production of a variety of copper-alloy trinkets and tokens from the other building, some (or even all) of which were for depositing as offerings to the deities in other parts of the site. The other side of the entrance, to the north, there are more buildings, at least one with a well-built hearth, although we don't know the function of these yet. The other side of the cobbled piazza a wide pathway leads away from the temple towards the other main feature of the site, the so-called amphitheatre. Evidence from this year points towards there being a network of pathways around the site, intriguing because it suggests that people had choice in moving around the site and that other buildings and structures could have been attracting them, perhaps in locations that we haven't explored yet.

It is clear that for people leaving the temple and moving into the rest of the site, the arena within the circular structure, and any activities therein, would not have been visible. In fact, the whole structure may not have looked very impressive from this point and the low the earthen bank that surrounds the arena is quite different to the high, steep impressive banks of amphitheatres such as Silchester which are designed to draw people into positions of viewing the

performances within the arena. It is possible that something may have been visible at the northern point perhaps positioned on the plinths excavated there this year, and, of course, we have yet to excavate the western point which is directly facing the temple itself. Three-dimensional soil resistivity tomography carried out there this year suggests considerable structures and this area will be a main focus of excavation in 2006.

The excavation of this western point will also provide an opportunity to explore another aspect of the religious practices carried out here in more detail, the votive deposition of a variety of objects in and around the rear of the circular structure's bank. We already have considerable evidence for this from the southern and south-western areas, and the eastern cardinal point, that have been excavated, with many hundreds of artefacts being found. This year there was also evidence for what could have been simple shrines or altars, settings of stones with artefacts around them together with a more substantial well-built wall foundation, all close to the rear of the bank. The objects themselves display a wide variation with most being copper-alloy although other materials such as bone pins are also present. Some of them were probably made within the nearby workshop, fairly crude tokens or coin copies, while others seem to be individual items brought from afar by people to be deposited here, very nice brooches for example. This range of material in terms of value and quality suggests that it was the act of deposition that was important and people gave what they could depending on their personal circumstances. Within this accepted form of religious practice the details were not strictly prescribed and also, probably not carried out within the public sphere but as a personal and private act of devotion.

It is interesting to think of the circular structure here as a banked enclosure, perhaps establishing links with a prehistoric past still represented within its design and use. The circular structure was constructed using techniques of creating banks of long antiquity within the British Isles and certainly key to the construction of hillforts. It is interesting in this regard that the amphitheatre at Maumbury Rings in Dorchester was constructed using a Neolithic henge. The henge itself was of a unique type, with a single entrance, that was remodelled early in the Roman period, possibly straight after the invasion through the construction of a wooden amphitheatre with a deeply excavated floor and a massive bridge over the original Neolithic entrance, as well as the construction of three rooms cut into the chalk (Bradley 1975). It was disused by the early 2nd century AD and re-used again in the later Roman period. Bradley was working with the results of an excavation carried out between 1908-13 and his feeling was that the earliest Roman structure was a

Oxfordshire

military one. If this is true it would not have been the local inhabitants re-using a site important for its antiquity, but the Roman army making convenient use of an existing structure. This maybe true but does not also explain the further use between AD 250-350. We would like to raise the possibility that both the amphitheatre at Maumbury Rings and the structure at Marcham/Frilford drew on either older structures or older traditions of construction, which maintained some significance in the then present. There has been a lot of discussion for prehistoric periods of the importance of past monuments (Bradley 2002, Gosden and Lock 1998). What we are looking at in the Romano-British period is something more complicated, with people embracing new forms of construction and action, but doing so within older idioms of building. This is a structure of fusion where new techniques such as plastered and painted stone walls are incorporated into long established traditions of artefact deposition and the significance and importance of watery places and banked enclosures.

While we don't have any evidence yet of prehistoric activity within the circular structure (although there is much more excavation to do, especially in the centre), there is the Iron Age settlement beneath the nearby temple and the middle Bronze Age antecedents excavated by us in 2001. Beneath the circular structure, soil resistivity tomography has shown a sub-surface circular wet area that goes several metres deeper than the stone arena wall although it is approximately the same size and shape. This suggests that the whole structure 'enclosed' an existing natural feature so that in the early Romano-British period by using newly introduced building techniques the place was in some way formalised and incorporated into the newly emerging religious practices that blended the old with the new. A large part of these changes can be seen as the formalisation of religious places, the move from a focus on natural locations to temples and other built structures. Alongside this change went the transformation of deities so that they no longer resided within rivers, bogs, woods and mountains but were accessible within prescribed and dedicated buildings. Of course this simplification needs to incorporate considerable flexibility as people could have personal alters and conduct individual worship in a variety of situations but Roman temples, and certainly large religious complexes such as Marcham/Frilford, do demonstrate a massive change in the whole process of worshipping within a relatively short period of time.

Through this process of formalisation the focus for individuals at Marcham/Frilford seems to have partially settled on the rear of the bank. As yet we don't know what events took place inside the arena but there is a strong feeling of the bank area being for personal acts of worship and perhaps the arena itself

being for more formal public events such as ceremonies, services and plays possibly conducted by the priests associated with the nearby temple. It may be that the pre-structure focus for all forms of worship was the boggy area itself but this then became split by the formal activities monopolising the central area, not least by building the wall around it, while the deposition around the outside represents the continuation of individual worship but now marginalised and, perhaps even subversive. Excavation in 2006 will continue within the arena, including the central area, to explore the drain systems and try and establish what sorts of activities could have taken place within there.

This season has also begun to clarify the chronology of the site although much detailed work is still to be done in this area. There seems little reason to argue with the accepted range of the temple from late 1st/early 2nd century AD to late 4th century and the buildings associated with the *temenos* wall are contemporary with this. Beneath the northern-most of the two shop/workshops, however, was evidence of a pre-building structure and although this has yet to be dated it could represent late prehistoric activity. The arena wall and the complex archaeology of the eastern and southern cardinal points have provided evidence for the phasing of this structure. At least the main internal drain is contemporary with the initial building of the arena wall and this may have cut through an existing bank to the south. Two original breaks in the wall, to the east and south, were filled in a later phase suggesting a change in the spatial configuration of the arena and the possibility that its use, and what went on inside it, was not constant throughout its lifetime of three centuries or so.

The late 4th century is becoming increasingly interesting, not least because it marks the demise of the temple and the possibility of the introduction of Christianity at the site. There is evidence for a considerable increase in the deposition of artefacts at this time and the human burials within the bank at the eastern point are probably of this date. This could be interpreted as a reaction to a religion under stress, increased worship and offerings to ensure existing practices and beliefs with the burials being the ultimate expression of this. Alternatively, if the burials are Christian, and we have no way of knowing this, they could represent the 'closing' of a pagan monument at its point of abandonment. At this same time it appears that the arena is falling into disrepair with material accumulating on the arena floor and the bank beginning to erode into it. Nearby, the large rectangular building excavated in 2001-4, shows a great deal of activity within it at this time and although it is a building of unusual size and proportions, as yet without a parallel, we should not rule out the

possibility that it was an early church in its last phase even if that was not its original purpose. What happened in the immediate post-Roman period we have little or no evidence for although we must bear in mind the nearby cemetery with Saxon burials and that the field is called 'trendles', Saxon for circle or circular, indicating that in some form the memory of this structure lived on.

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3. One purpose of *SMA* is to act as a record of the work carried out in the area; this does not mean that it need be dull. Contributors are asked to be as interesting as possible for the many members of CBA South Midlands who are not archaeologists but who have a lively interest in the past.

4. If, during an investigation, nothing was found, don't be afraid to say so in simple terms.

5. When the article is submitted please ensure that all text (including captions) and pictures are included and clearly labelled.

6. The preferred method for receiving text is as a Rich Text File (rtf extension) on a 3.5" IBM format disk or CD. Text may be sent by email to bhorne@globalnet.co.uk with a subject of "SMA contribution". Please do not email large files such as pictures and documents with embedded pictures. If you are unable to comply with the above please contact the Editor. (Barry Horne - 01525 221219 or at the above email address)

7. Pictures and diagrams should be of the highest possible quality; the printed version can be no better than that submitted. Illustrations which are supplied ready to use should be no more than 173mm x 255mm.

8. Proofs will not be sent to contributors.

9. Contributors are responsible for the accuracy of their data.

10. Please note that charges are as follows: Professional/commercial - 1 free page, remainder charged at £15/page; Amateur group - 2 free pages, remainder charged at £15/page. The submission of an article will be taken as an agreement to pay the charge. Invoices will be sent out during the summer and payment is expected prior to publication in the autumn.

BJH

29th January 2006

