

## AREA P PHASING

Area P was the most westerly of the excavated 20m strips in Area A2 (Fig.0). Excavation focussed on the structures at the north of the strip, and the ditches at the south. The centre, dominated by large pits or intercut pit complexes, was more selectively investigated. The vast majority of features were cut directly into the natural gravel, making recognition relatively easy (photo). Artefact density is much lower than other areas, however. Only 17 features yielded over 100 sherds of pottery, for example (nearly all of which were late pits). Along with the relative lack of stratigraphy, this means that fewer features can be tightly dated.

In the early phases, Area P represented the eastern part of a single land plot (extending west into Area N), dominated by a long strip building (Building 32) which fronted onto Track 3, with a range of apparently domestic activities attested. Modifications to the land-use involved no more than internal divisions of the plot. During Period IV, however, it appears that the area was reorganized, possibly even no longer occupied, but turned over to open fields as the settlement area contracted westwards. By Periods V-VI, pits were the only features left, although an early Saxon (?re-)occupation may be represented.

### Phasing Summary

| Period     | Period description                         | Sub-period | Date                         |
|------------|--|------------|------------------------------|
| <b>I</b>   | -  |            | MIA/late Iron Age transition |
| <b>II</b>  | Occupation activity in strip plot          | IIA        | late Iron Age & transition   |
|            | New strip building, divisions of land plot | IIB        |                              |
| <b>III</b> | Continued occupation                       |            | Early Roman                  |
| <b>IV</b>  | Decline? and reorganisation                |            | Mid Roman                    |
| <b>V</b>   | Less intense occupation (if any)           |            | Late Roman                   |
| <b>VI</b>  | Traces of LR/Saxon presence                |            | Latest Roman/Saxon           |
| <b>VII</b> | -  |            | Post early Saxon             |

### PERIOD I: (Fig. 1)

One feature possibly of this date has been identified.

#### **Pit 8786 - move to Period IIa**

Pit 8786 contained pottery that **may** be of this period. It had no other finds apart from 8g of animal bone. Nothing else looked to be associated. However, there was a concentration of middle Iron Age pottery presumed residual in later features in Area P. Pit 8786 also displayed possible ritual aspects, with 2 or 3 half complete vessels. **8775 seems to include a very similar assemblage but this is almost certainly a numbering error for ?fill 8785.**

This pit is interesting chiefly for its pottery, an assemblage of over 400 sherds (key pottery group 3). On traditional dating, it should be assigned to the late 1<sup>st</sup> century BC from a Dressel 1 amphora handle, or the early years AD, and probably the 'earlier' handmade pottery would be dismissed as residual. However, their association here, and the forms of the grog-tempered sherds, suggest that this assemblage belongs to a middle Iron Age to late Iron Age transitional group. It is conceivable that the Dressel 1 amphora could have reached the site even earlier, but there is little other evidence pointing to any activity predating the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. If this assemblage, and with it the middle Iron Age to late Iron Age transition, can really be dated to as late as the late 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, then perhaps many more features currently in early subphases of Period II ought to be thought of as Period I. There are features whose pottery may suggest a similar date (in this area, 8525, 8586, 8755, 8839?, 19023, 19115, 19144). This will have important implications for the dating of the

middle to late Iron Age transition, and for the dates both for importation of xxxxx wares and for production of grog-tempered xxxxx forms.

Pit 8786 also contained four loomweight fragments, an iron binding strip and a nail, a flint blade and an amber bead.

#### **Pit 8786**

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| 8786* | Pottery platter <i>Cam 1</i> (TN(M)), jar <i>S</i> (GROG MICW), beaker <i>Cam 113</i> (NGWFS), fabric CGFCS |
|-------|---|

The many handmade forms present are likely to be early in the Late Iron Age sequence, possibly middle/late Iron Age transitional, but the presence of imported fineware indicates a date range of mid to late 1st century BC.

### **PERIOD II (Fig. 1)**

As with many other areas, Phase II can be only partially subdivided. There were features which were clearly pre-conquest (1<sup>st</sup> century BC or early 1<sup>st</sup> AD), and some which are best located in the middle of the 1st century AD (transitional), but much of the dating for features falling into this phase cannot be so closely resolved. Thus there is a Phase IIA, IIB and an undifferentiated Phase II. Much of the undifferentiated activity here might fall in the middle of the phase, between the two clearly defined ends, or, perhaps, towards the earlier end (this suspicion is based on the general lack of finds, however, and must be treated as no more than a hunch). There is little direct stratigraphy within the phase, and although three separate phases of ditching are attested, one falling into IIA, and one into IIB, while the third produced no dating evidence and no stratigraphy better than 'earlier than 2<sup>nd</sup> century', so it could be first, second or third in the relative sequence, or even contemporary with the later.

#### **Sub-Period IIa:**

The separation of Period IIa features from those of general Period II is to some extent artificial in that this only represents the better dated of the late Iron Age features, *i.e.*, those accorded a late 1<sup>st</sup> century BC to early 1<sup>st</sup> century AD date. This subdivision is largely based upon the pottery dating evidence, but is also supported by structural evidence; there was a distinct change with the imposition of a rectilinear system of land division in Sub-period IIB, while IIa had no sign of such a system.

#### **Ditch 25097**

Ditch 25097 was a curving linear feature some 13m long. Its south terminal was clear and its northern one can be postulated to have been located amid a pair of intercut pits of prehistoric date. Its width varied between 1.0-1.8m, being widest at its mid point. With a depth of up to 0.4m this was a significant feature. The function of this ditch is unclear; there are no signs of associated features at either end to suggest a continuation, but its curved line hints at an enclosing or shielding role, perhaps for a structure or activity undertaken to its west. A considerable amount of Roman cbm, derived from a capping/backfill of a slump hollow, need not affect the early date.

#### **Ditch 25097 (8663, 8735, 8772)**

|      |   |
|------|---|
| 8663 | Pottery platter <i>Cam 5</i> (TR), beaker <i>Cam 113</i> (NGWF), flagon <i>Cam 165</i> (CGFCS), fabrics MICW GROG |
|------|---|

Pottery was recovered from only one section of this feature. The latest piece present is the North Gaulish beaker, which provides an early to mid 1st century AD date, supported by the *terra rubra* platter and the Central Gaulish flagon.

#### **Ditch 25174 (Fig. 2)**

Ditch 25174 was possibly the earliest evidence of the linear land divisions which were an important aspect of Period IIB. It was relatively substantial at 1.2m wide and 0.66m deep and contained earlier late Iron Age pot and some residual prehistoric material. This ditch ran almost on the same alignment as the later divisions, although the 12m of its course uncovered seemed to display a slight curve which straightened out as it continued north. This northern extent was, however, obscured amid unexcavated pits and silt deposits. It remains possible that it originally ran for some distance, perhaps even as far as

Track 3. The curved portion provided a partial counterpart to 25097, suggesting the two were associated. In any case, this ditch showed the first phase of a system of divisions which in its essential elements endured through Periods II and III.

**Ditch 25174** (8508, 8516)

|       |                            |
|-------|----------------------------|
| 8508* | Pottery fabrics GROG MICW  |
| 8516* | Pottery jar \$ (MICW GROG) |

Both ditch segments contained small quantities of grog-tempered pottery, some of which is handmade. The presence also of handmade, sand-tempered forms may indicate a mid to late 1st century BC date.

**Building 14 (Fig. 3)**

Building 14 comprised a semi-circular arrangement of eight post-holes. Assuming that this structure was originally a complete circle, it was truncated by ditch/trench 19115 and, later, overlain by Building 32. With a diameter of 4.35m, it is possible that this structure was a roundhouse with a floor surface of *c.* 15m<sup>2</sup>, which would be rather small, but compares with numerous small circular buildings elsewhere on site. The close proximity of some of the Period II pits may suggest their association and hint at a domestic use for the building. Alternatively, if this was the complete extent of this structure, and it had not lost several posts to truncation, then it may be construed to enclose the eastern end of ditch/trench 19115/19144.

**Ditch/trench 25094** (segs. 19115, 19144) (Fig. 4)

25094 was a very broad feature compared to its width, at 11m long and up to 2.4m wide. It was aligned ENE-WSW and had slightly rounded terminals at either end. Though not bottomed, it was in excess of 0.6m deep, notably deeper than other ditches in this area. Its dimensions therefore set this feature apart and it is difficult to decide whether it was an elongated pit, trench or ditch. It is even possible it was a line of intercut pits. Its form makes it unlikely to have formed part of any of the land division systems.

The two slots excavated across it have revealed two different fill sequences. Pottery retrieved supplies a date of mid-late 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. Both assemblages, however, included a component of handmade late iron age forms in sandy fabrics which are possibly of middle to late Iron Age transitional date (key pottery group 1). The later was accompanied by briquetage, loomweight and a spindle-whorl. This may reinforce the idea of a line of closely intercut pits or else suggest an accumulation over a long period of time, possibly even being associated in its latter stages with Building 32 immediately to its north.

**Ditch 25094** (19115, 19144)

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| 19115* | Pottery jars \$ (MICW), fabric GROG          |
| 19144* | Pottery jar Cam 254 (ESH), fabrics MICW GROG |

Both ditch segments contained small quantities of grog-tempered pottery, some of which is handmade. The presence also of a variety of handmade, sand-tempered forms may indicate a mid to late 1st century BC date (key pottery group 1).

**Pits 8525, 8547, 8586, 8748, 8755, 8889, 19023, 19092, 19097, 19103, 19104, 19159, 19162** (Figs.2, 5)

The Period IIa pits included several with ‘early’ late Iron Age pot, and at least one which must also be early on stratigraphic grounds. There were also several which merely do not appear to be especially late. It is however noticeable that these pits were located either alongside the ditches at the south, or in the vicinity of Building 14 and would seem to have been directly associated with them.

These pits were generally in the region of either 1.3m or 2.5m diameter where they survived truncation by later features, and generally exceeded a depth of 0.5m. Pottery content was variable from feature to feature but mainly no later than first half of 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. Identification as Period IIa features is aided in some cases by stratigraphic relationships below Period IIb features. Other finds

were noticeably rare, amounting to only tiny quantities of briquetage, animal bone and daub or baked clay. Unusually, almost no metalwork was present in the fills of these pits; only 19162 has 1g of hammerscale.

**Pits** 8525, 8547, 8586, 8748, 8755, 8889, 19023, 19092, 19097, 19103, 19104, 19159, 19162

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| 8525   | <b>Amphoras</b> Dr.1 (AITAF) Dr.2-4 (AWINC) <b>Other Pottery</b> jar \$ (MICW), fabrics TN TR GROG   |
| 8586   | <b>Amphora</b> Dr.1 (AITAL) <b>Other Pottery</b> fabrics GROG ESH  |
| 8748   | <b>Pottery</b> fabric GROG   |
| 8755   | <b>Amphora</b> Dr.1/Dr.2-4 (AITAL) <b>Other Pottery</b> platter <i>Cam</i> 1 (TN(M)), beaker <i>Cam</i> 112 (TR), fabrics ESH CGFCS NGWFS GROG |
| 8889   | <b>Pottery</b> flagon <i>Cam</i> 165 (CGFCS), fabrics TN(M) NGWFS MICW GROG  |
| 19023  | <b>Amphora</b> Dr.1 (AITAL) <b>Other Pottery</b> fabric GROG   |
| 19092  | <b>Pottery</b> fabrics TN(M) GROG  |
| 19104* | <b>Amphora</b> Dr.2-4 (ABSAN) <b>Other Pottery</b> platter <i>Cam</i> 1 (TN(M)), beaker <i>Cam</i> 112 (TR), fabrics GROG CGFCS NGWFS MICW     |
| 19159  | <b>Pottery</b> fabric GROG   |
| 19162  | <b>Pottery</b> beaker <i>Cam</i> 113 (NGWF), fabrics ESH GROG  |

These pit fills contained Dressel 1 and Dressel 2-4 amphora sherds, grog- and sand-tempered pottery and a variety of handmade forms indicating a date in the late 1st century BC. The presence of Gaulish imports extends the date range into the early 1st century AD.

### **Sub-phase II B: (Fig. 2)**

Area P contained the larger part of one of the strip plots fronting onto Track 3, which passed just beyond the edge of excavation to the north. The plot's lateral boundaries were marked by ditches 25178, and 25089 (in Area N), with a subdivision of the south end marked by ditches 25267 and 25095 (which replaced Period IIa ditch 25174). The north boundary did not quite reach into Area P was well-marked in Area N (ditch 25091). Very few features cut ditch 25178 which is noteworthy considering its fill indicated it was out of use as early as the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. It appears that even when the ditch passed into disuse, its line continued to be marked in some way – perhaps by a hedge. These boundaries delineated a 45m-wide land plot which ran for at least 60m southward from Track 3, and is presumed to have extended to the edge of the gravel terrace (just south of the modern field division between Areas A2 and B). These ditches had already filled in by the end of Period IIb, indicating that this land division system was well established prior to the Roman period, but as mentioned previously, continued to be marked by other forms of boundary such as fences or hedges.

Though the construction date of Building 32, with its potentially Romanizing architecture, is to some extent unclear, it clearly occupied this strip plot. The building's location close to Track 3 indicates that the north end of the building marked the frontage of the strip plot. This position is matched by a similar but somewhat smaller building in Area N (Building 31); the two were probably contemporary.

The pits that were not distinctly early could also fall in this phase along with those that are considered to be mid-1<sup>st</sup> century. Again, these look unremarkable in their artefact contents. The surprising thing about the pits may be that there were so few of them, as one might expect pits at the later end of the Phase to be more readily dated than those earlier, not least because one might expect simply more material culture to be around. Perhaps other disposal methods were used, perhaps the people living and working in this particular plot of land did not enjoy the increased prosperity we assume elsewhere. A third possibility is that all the late iron age and 1<sup>st</sup> century pottery that turned up residual in later features (which was quite a recurrent theme in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century and later pits; for example, see the huge pit 25221) might explain the apparent lack of *in situ* material. It is worth mentioning that a similar balance of numbers of pits (weighted towards II A) was noted in the northern part of Area N, i.e., within this same land plot, so that it does not appear to be a question of the location of pitting within the plot.

### Ditch 25178

A straight, NNW-SSE aligned ditch exposed for a distance of 34m, 25178 is assumed to have continued north as far as Track 3 to join with the projected line of 25091 from Area N, although it was truncated by later pit 25221. Relatively slight, only 0.9-1.2m wide, and 0.28-0.45m deep, it clearly nevertheless represented a major land division. Even so, it seems to have rapidly accumulated its single fill. The finds assemblage was not very varied, comprising largely earlier 1<sup>st</sup> century AD pottery with only a small quantity of tile and a single iron nail, all of which suggests that this feature was already redundant by the mid or later 1<sup>st</sup> century, although, as argued in the Period III description, its line was perpetuated beyond this. A small quantity of earlier pottery was also included in the fills.

#### Ditch 25178 (8704, 8763, 8839, 8881, 19155)

|      |   |
|------|---|
| 8839 | <b>Amphoras</b> Dr.1 (AITAB) Dr.2-4 (AWINC), <i>salazon</i> (ASALA) <b>Other Pottery</b> beaker <i>Cam</i> 102 (CGMIC), fabrics TR NGWFS GROG |
| 8881 | <b>Pottery</b> fabric GROG  |

Pottery was recovered from two ditch segments and the types present indicate a late 1st century BC to early 1st century AD date. The beaker is an early Central Gaulish import and there is a Dressel 1 amphora handle. The other amphora types present continue into the late 1st century AD.

### Ditches 25267 and 25095

Ditches 25267 and 25095 represent two phases of the same boundary, and both date to the mid 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. The earlier, 25267, was largely removed by the later, except where the southern line of 25095 diverges. While no finds were recovered from the earlier ditch, it is interpreted as a direct predecessor of 25095, which contained a small quantity of late Iron Age pottery and was cut by mid to late 1<sup>st</sup> century Roman pits. The more substantial (25095) was 0.7m wide and 0.33m deep, with a couple of silty fills. Its extent was not defined beyond truncating Period V pit 8555. Where 25267 survived, it had similar dimensions to its successor. The boundary the two ditches represented lay 13m to the east of ditch 25178 and was broadly contemporary with it.

In contrast with 25178, this boundary ditch sequence was so heavily truncated, particularly by Period III pits, that it is supposed that its life was not perpetuated beyond the functioning of the features. It is also clear that this line marked a subdivision of only the southern third of the land plot, suggesting a different use for the south as opposed to the north sector.

#### Ditch 25095 (8610, 8659), 25267 (8613, 19178)

|      |                            |
|------|----------------------------|
| 8610 | <b>Pottery</b> fabric GROG |
| 8659 | <b>Pottery</b> fabric GROG |

A small quantity of grog-tempered pottery was recovered from this feature, providing a Late Iron Age date.

### Building 32 (Fig. P3)

A rectilinear structure estimated to be 22m long by 7m wide. It survived as an arrangement of shallow foundation slots and post-holes, some of which were integral to the slots. The slots themselves were fairly substantial, surviving to a depth of up to 0.37m, but slightly irregular. They were filled with gravel mixed with silty sand. The middle of this structure survived best and defined a room some 7.95m long (interior dimensions, or 8.9m externally) and 5.5m wide, with an internal partition into two areas (in a precise 2:1 ratio). To either side were the partial remains of further rooms. The southern room was largely defined by post-holes rather than slots and is conjectured to be approximately 6 metres long. Given the different construction technique, it is possible that this room was an addition. This southern extension of the building was the only, inconclusive, evidence for Building 32 overlying Building 14. The northern room was defined by a continuation of the foundation slots towards the edge of Track 3. They survived only as ephemeral features, largely removed by later pitting, and were best defined on the pre-excavation plans of the area. The north end of the room has not been identified but its location may be conjectured by assuming a similar length to that of the central room. This

would give an overall length of as much as 18m to 21m (over three times the width). This building clearly shared the NNW-SSE alignment of the adjacent plot boundary ditches of this period. Furthermore, it was sited at the ‘front’ of the plot, end on to Track 3.

Within the building were fragments of clay flooring (8722 and 8994) and internal hearths 8746 and 8509. While these were very partial, there is little doubt they belong to this structure.

Finds from the structural features which comprised Building 32 were sparse with only a small assemblage of pottery, vessel glass and daub being recovered. The pottery is mainly late Iron Age fabrics and, judging by the ‘clean’ nature of the fills of the foundation slots, would seem to date the construction. It is postulated from the lack of later features cut into its remains that this building survived into Period III; and perhaps beyond.

**Building 32 construction**

|      |                                      |
|------|--------------------------------------|
| 8677 | <b>Pottery</b> fabric GROG           |
| 8932 | <b>Samian</b> bowl f30 or f37 (CGSW) |

Very little dating evidence was recovered from the contexts associated with the construction of the building. The grog-tempered pottery provides a Late Iron Age date, while the single sherd of samian is intrusive.

**Building 32 occupation**

|      |                                      |
|------|--------------------------------------|
| 8509 | <b>Pottery</b> fabric BSW            |
| 8722 | <b>Pottery</b> fabrics GROG BSW      |
| 8746 | <b>Pottery</b> fabrics TR GROG NGWFS |
| 8994 | <b>Pottery</b> fabrics STOR BSW      |

The contexts associated with the occupation of the building yielded small amounts of pottery. The presence of imported fineware and sherds in Roman fabric provide an early to mid 1st century AD date.

**Pits 8556, 8594, 8725, 8873, 8879, 19089, 19142 (Fig. 6)**

Period II B pits were those with an early-mid (8556, 8725) or mid-1<sup>st</sup> century AD date (the rest), as identified either by pottery or stratigraphy. Though not very numerous, most of these (8873, 8879, 19089, 19142) would seem to be associated with the life of Building 32, with the rest forming a cluster at the southern extreme of the plot.

The pottery assemblages generally comprised late Iron Age grog-tempered wares with either no or little Romanizing greyware content. As with the Period IIa pits, they contained very few other finds, of which briquetage seems the most recurrent. The Roman material in 8725 was certainly introduced during excavation, when it was not initially clearly distinguished from 8748 and 19172.

**Pits 8556, 8725, 8873, 8879, 19089, 19142**

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| 8556  | <b>Pottery</b> fabrics NGWFS GROG   |
| 8594* | <b>Pottery</b> jar <i>Cam</i> 254 (ESH), fabrics GROG MICW  |
| 8725  | <b>Amphora</b> Dr.2-4 (ABSAN) <b>Other pottery</b> bowl <i>Cam</i> 51B (TN), fabrics ESH GROG MICW TR CGFCS BSW GRS |
| 8873  | <b>Pottery</b> fabric GROG  |
| 8879  | <b>Pottery</b> fabrics GROG BSW   |
| 19089 | <b>Samian</b> platter f18 (SGSW) <b>Other Pottery</b> platter A2 (GROG), fabric BSW                                 |
| 19142 | <b>Pottery</b> cauldron L1 (STOR), fabrics GROG NGWF  |

The pottery recovered from these pit fills is in both grog-tempered and Roman fabrics, providing a uniform date in the first half of the 1st century AD.

**Phase II (general)**

Two slighter ditches/gullies (25093 and 25096) are harder to place and could even belong earlier than the late Iron Age, but they run on the alignment of the Phase II B ditches and so may be an earlier version of the same system, or subdivisions/reinforcements of it. The line of 25093 suggests it marked the same boundary as 25178 but whether later, earlier or contemporary is not known. Its only finds (4 sherds vaguely early Roman, scrap of ?cbm) came from the post-hole which seems to mark its terminus and must relate to its disuse. It seems on the whole less likely that these two could be an

early version of the Phase IIB land division, as the enlargement required seems difficult to envisage. Probably 25093 was contemporary with 25178 and 25096 was an internal subdivision, also contemporary with 25176. Together, 25096, 25176 and one of 25095/25267 marked a small rectilinear plot within which no contemporary features were found except a single small pit (8725), indicating a different use for this area compared to the rest of Area P..

Otherwise only a few pits are assigned to this general phase.

### **Gully 25093**

Gully 25093 was a very slight, partially surviving feature which ran parallel to Period IIB ditch 25178 at a distance of only 1m to the west. It was traced for a distance of 23m and was no more than 0.5m wide and 0.3m deep. Its south end was lost amongst unexcavated pits while it appeared to terminate in post-hole 19032 to the north. Excavation of this feature was limited to three small segments, and it is possible that other post-holes along it may not have been identified, and that it may thus have been the foundation slot for a fence, rather than a gully. However, it is postulated that 25093 was contemporary with parallel ditch 25178, and possibly represented the 'bedding trench' for a hedge grown alongside it. The fact that 25093 terminated almost parallel to the extrapolated south end of Building 32 suggests that the two may have been contemporary. The meagre pottery finds can only date the disuse of the feature.

#### **Ditch/gully 25093 (8828, 19033, 19032)**

|       |                         |
|-------|-------------------------|
| 19032 | Pottery fabrics BSW GRS |
|-------|-------------------------|

This pottery is not closely datable within the Roman period.

### **Gully 25096**

Gully 25096 was a linear feature similar in proportion to 25093, and also ran parallel to the major Phase IIB boundary ditches, for a distance of 25m. Indeed, it was almost equidistant from ditches 25095 and 25178 and seemed to be almost aligned on the western wall-line of Building 32. With a terminal at its northern end, gully 25096 may be postulated to have run only the length of the south half of the plot, presumably terminating to the south at the edge of the gravel terrace. It is interpreted as a subdivision within the strip plot. Its single silty gravel fill was similar to that of 25093 and is again suggestive of either a fence or hedgeline, subdividing the plot to the rear of Building 32. It is notable that none of the Period IIB or II (general) pits were sited in the area between this gully and ditch 25095 (although some IIA pits were), so that a real differentiation in land-use can be posited for the areas divided by this line.

### **Gully 25176**

ENE-WSW aligned gully 25176 was a slightly more substantial feature at 1.25m wide though it was still only 0.24m deep. It ran roughly at right angles between ditch 25095 and gully 25096, and may mark a further subdivision of the strip-plot. It is presumed to have terminated at its east end where truncated by later pit 8966, creating a 3m- to 4m-wide access between it and 25095. The greater width of this feature compared to the other gullies is probably not indicative of a differing function and, like 25093 and 25096 it was probably the remains of a fence or hedgeline.

### **Pits 8528, 8542, 8841, 8907 (Figs. 5, 6, 10)**

Similar to the Period IIA and IIB pits, those which cannot be so closely dated were either circular features of c.1.3m diameter, or ovals in excess of 2m x 1m.. Depths varied between 0.3m and 0.6m. They contained few finds; other than pottery, there were very small quantities of baked clay, briquetage and animal bone. There was no particular spatial distribution evident from such a small group of pits, though it is noted that, along with the Period IIB pits, they tended to occur alongside the various boundary features. This possibly indicates that the majority were contemporary with the second phase of Late Iron Age activity and with the occupation of Building 32.

**Pits 8528, 8542, 8594, 8841, 8907**

|      |   |
|------|---|
| 8542 | <b>Pottery</b> fabric GROG  |
| 8841 | <b>Amphora</b> Dr.2-4 (AITAL) <b>Other Pottery</b> cup <i>Cam 57</i> (GROG), fabric CGFCS |
| 8907 | <b>Pottery</b> fabric GROG  |

These pit fills produced mainly grog-tempered pottery, but the other types present indicate a mid 1st century AD date.



### PERIOD III: (Fig. 7)

The later 1<sup>st</sup> century to early 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD did not see a great deal of ‘new’ activity. No new ditches or boundaries were established. Much of the basic Period IIB infrastructure of plot boundaries and subdivisions may have remained in place. As previously noted, the ditches themselves are unlikely to have functioned by this time but the lines they marked may have been perpetuated by hedges or fencelines. Period III pits continued either to avoid or to flank old boundary features such as 25093 and 25096. In addition, Building 32 is likely to have survived through most of this period. The continued digging of pits within this plot is a further sign of continuity.

Closer scrutiny of the Period III features, particularly a possible wet-storage pit 8540 and well 8989, confirms the continuity of occupation. The pits now contained a diverse range of artefacts which may be expected of domestic waste of the early Roman period, together with a slight metalworking waste component. The most enigmatic of the pits was elongated feature 25221 which apparently followed the line of Period II plot boundary ditch 25178. Though its function remains unknown, it may have been contemporary with the strip-building and have contained rubbish derived from its occupation, though it clearly continued to accumulate material over a very much longer period of time than the use of the building.

### Clay-lined pit 8540 (Fig. 8)

Pit 8540 was a small, 1.5m square, pit with near-vertical sides and flat base. It contained a lining of clean clay in which vestiges of a wooden structure were visible. Four stakeholes, each located in a corner, mark the positions of uprights which once supported an inner lining of planks which had decayed. Nails, used in its construction, survived more or less *in situ* where they had been driven into the clay outer lining through the uprights. The clay also retained impressions of grooves or steps both near the bottom to support a wooden base and at the top of the feature to accommodate a collar or perhaps even a lid. Surviving to a depth of 0.5m, 8540 was cut into the fills of earlier pit 8524. This may have been deliberate, perhaps for ease of excavation or to exploit the damper, cooler, insulated conditions afforded by the silt fills as opposed to the surrounding natural gravel.

A deposit of find-free fine silt lay below the level of the lower groove and presumably accumulated while the wooden base was in place. The remainder of the clay-lined pit was backfilled with rubbishy silts which contained pottery, small amounts of animal bone and tile, and a single (residual?) loomweight fragment. There was thus no clear evidence of function, though it is likely the structure was intended to retain water. A use as a live fish or shellfish store is possible. A very similar feature, differing only in being twice as long to the same width, at Gorhambury (Structure 44; Neal *et al.*, 1990, 68-9, figs 93-4) was interpreted as a two-person privy, and this would also be possible, the Elms Farm example being a single-seater version. Quite why this would require such an elaborate lining, surely *preventing* effective drainage, is unknown.

#### Pit 8540

|      |   |
|------|---|
| 8563 | Pottery fabrics COLC BSW GRF  |
| 8570 | Samian beaker f67 (SGSW) Other pottery fabrics COLC NKG BSW GRS         |
| 8646 | Amphora Dr.20 (ABAET) Other Pottery flagon J3.2 (COLB), fabrics GRS BSW |

The pottery dates the construction of the timber lining of this feature to the second half of the 1st century AD. Very little dating evidence was recovered from the fills, but the absence of later pottery suggests the pit was infilled by the end of the 2nd century.

### Structure 34 (25175, 8653, 8673, 8682, 8684, 8686, 8695) (Fig. 9)

Structure 34 was a sub-rectangular construction comprising a length of gully and five post-holes. Only its eastern part survived with the western side removed by pits. Structure 34 probably constituted part of the foundation of a building 5m wide. Its length is unknown, being obscured by intercutting features to the west. The 2.2m gap between gully 8653 and post-hole 8684 probably constituted an entrance

into the structure. Only gully 8653 contained artefactual material, nine small sherds of ?early Roman pottery, and this was cut by 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD pit 8515.

The cluster of small pits just to its south may be associated, along with ‘storage’ pit 8540 positioned just 2m to its east and very convenient to the entrance.

**Structure 34 (25175 (8653), 8673, 8682, 8684, 8686, 8695)**

|      |                                 |
|------|---------------------------------|
| 8653 | <b>Pottery</b> fabrics BSW GROG |
|------|---------------------------------|

Very little pottery was recovered from the contexts associated with this building and is only datable to the early Roman period.

**Pits 8511, 8515, 8524, 8599, 8654, 8716, 8750, 8866=8700, 19138, 19149 (Fig. 10)**

The Period III pits comprised three very large irregular pits, in excess of 4m diameter (8866=8700, 19149 and 8524) and several smaller ones between 1.3 and 1.8m diameter. Almost all the small pits clustered towards the south end of Area P, in the vicinity of Structure 34. All had early-to-mid 2<sup>nd</sup> century pottery assemblages. The larger pits formed an apparent line running north-south. These, together with ‘big pit’ 25221, might be taken to mark an eastern limit of activity in this period, but it is just as likely that this ‘line’ was no more than an illusion created by the excavation strategy. Pits 8524 and 19149 had very varied pottery assemblages which range from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD, their apparently homogenous fills masking a number of episodes of accumulation and/or recutting. Finds assemblages in all these pits look like normal domestic rubbish disposal and, though slightly more numerous than in the Period IIb pits, other artefact types are not particularly plentiful. However, tile and iron nails now became recurrent components of these assemblages.

**Pits 8511, 8515, 8524, 8599, 8654, 8716, 8750, 8866, 8700, 19138, 19149**

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| 8511   | <b>Pottery</b> dish B1 (BSW), jar G11 (BSW), fabric GRS  |
| 8515   | <b>Pottery</b> dish B2 (GRF), fabrics GRS BSW  |
| 8524   | <b>Amphora</b> Dr.2-4 (AITAL) <b>Other pottery</b> platter A2.5 (BSW), dishes B4.2 (BB2) B7.1 (GRS), jars G5.2 (GRS) G19 (BSW GRS), fabrics VRW COLC HAR NKG |
| 8599   | <b>Pottery</b> fabric BSW  |
| 8654   | <b>Samian</b> cup f33 (CGSW) <b>Other pottery</b> dishes B2 B4 (GRS), fabrics GRF BSW  |
| 8716   | <b>Pottery</b> fabric GRS  |
| 8750   | <b>Samian</b> mortarium f45 (EGSW) <b>Other pottery</b> dish B2/B4 (BB2), fabrics BSW GRS HAWO GRF   |
| 19149* | <b>Samian</b> disg f31R (EGSW) <b>Other pottery</b> dishes B1 (MIC) B2/B4 (GRF) B5.1 (GRS), jar G34 (GRS)  |

These pits contained variable amounts of pottery, most dating to the mid 2nd century, or thereabouts. Pit 8524 is an exception; context and dating information is inconclusive and a 2nd century date is not reliable

**Big ‘pit’ 25221 (Fig. 10)**

Feature 25221 was a very large, sub-rectangular, cut on the northern edge of Area P. As exposed, it was 12m long by 6m wide and would seem to be a single pit some 0.8m deep. Its edges and sides were fairly irregular and of variable slope and contained a sequence of gravelly silt fills which displayed at least two episodes of recutting or partial cleaning. These yielded relatively large assemblages of pottery and tile, though perhaps not when considered in proportion to their volumes. The various phases of this feature spanned the late 1<sup>st</sup> to 3rd centuries AD.

Interpretation as a gravel quarry is unconvincing, as is its use purely as a rubbish pit, in the absence of widely varied artefactual assemblages and in particular animal bone which should have survived well in such a large feature if present. The positioning of this feature on top of Period IIb plot boundary ditch 25178 was surely significant. Regardless of its specific function, ‘pit’ 25221 seems to have been placed upon and to perpetuate this boundary. In this respect, as well as in dimensions, it was reminiscent of 25212 in Area E, although 25212 dated to Period V.

**25221 (8912, 19176, 19177)**

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| 8912   | <b>Pottery</b> fabrics GROG NGWFS<br><b>Brooch</b> Colchester BB (SF 6305)                                   |
| 19176* | <b>Samian</b> dish f18/31 (CGSW), bowl f30 (CGSW), cup f33 (EGSW) <b>Amphora</b> Dr.2-4 (AITAL) <b>Other</b> |

|       |  |
|-------|--|
|       | <b>pottery</b> platters A2.4 A4.4 (BSW), dishes B1 B2 B4 B5 B7 B10.1 (BSW) B6 (GRS), bowl-jar E2 (GRS), jars G3 (BSW) G9 (GRS), beakers H1 (GRF) H7 (BSW), fabrics BB1 EGRHN |
| 19177 | <b>Samian</b> dish f18/31 (CGSW) <b>Other pottery</b> fabrics GROG BSW   |

This is a very large feature and the pottery appears to show a chronological progression from the bottom upwards. The pottery from 8912 and 19177 is of a consistent Late Iron Age/early Roman date, and the brooch is dated AD65-80. The pottery from 19176 dates from the late 1st to the mid 2nd century with the top fills containing mid/late 3rd century pieces and much residual material. The feature would appear to date to the early Roman period, but carried on collecting rubbish for a lengthy period of time judging by the fragmentary and abraded nature of the pottery.

### Well 8989 (Fig. 11)

8989 was a large, subcircular, cut of 3m diameter. Its steeply sloped sides led to a sub-square central shaft 1.1m by 1.1m. Both cone and shaft contained clay lining courses. This feature was not excavated below the modern watertable but it clearly continued to greater depth. No evidence of a wooden lining was encountered. The well was constructed in the late 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> century judging by the pottery in the construction cut backfill. It probably continued in use until at least the late 2<sup>nd</sup> century, during which time a number of repairs were carried out to the clay lining, following collapse and rebuilding of the upper part of the well.

The location of this well, immediately to the south of Building 32, might suggest that the building still stood in this phase, though this would place it rather close to the base of the wall. However, perhaps the south room need not have existed by this time.

The backfill deposits, dating to Period IV, contained finds no different from rubbish pits of that period. If there were any 'structured' closure deposits, they must have been deeper within the shaft. There is nothing unusual in what was recovered.

#### Well 8989 construction

|      |   |
|------|---|
| 8989 | <b>Samian</b> bowls f37 (CGSW) f38 (CGSW), cup f33 (CGSW) <b>Other pottery</b> jars G19 G20 (GRS), fabrics NKG COLB BSW |
|------|---|

The construction phase of the well produced a small quantity of pottery dating to the late 1st to early 2nd centuries. **The samian wants to be mid 2nd century.**

### PERIOD IV: (Fig. P12)

The mid Roman period saw a change of land division patterns in this part of site, as denoted by the imposition of ditch 25177 which ran at variance to the alignments of all previous divisions. Cutting across the major boundary previously marked by ditch 25178 and fence/hedge 25093, and across the interior of the strip plot to their west, 25177 showed that the old system was completely abandoned on the eastern settlement peripheries.

Some larger Period III features stayed open long enough to continue to accumulate material during this period. Well 8989 and big 'pit' 25221 contained 3<sup>rd</sup> century artefacts in their upper fills.

Other than ditch 25177, the only new features created were a small number of pits, the majority of which clustered at 25177's western terminal. This significant reduction in the number and type of features probably indicates a real reduction in the intensity of occupation in this area. Had more features of this period existed, they would have been readily datable. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that the Area was no longer occupied but had reverted to open land.

### Ditch 25177

Ditch 25177 was the only purely Period IV feature in Area P. This 1m wide, 0.6 m deep cut was clearly a major feature which extended from its terminal in the middle of Area P eastwards for 45m to the easternmost limit of Area A2. Its roughly east-west alignment took it across the south part of the Period IIb and III strip plot and its boundaries. Its western terminal was marked by pit 19136, which was the only feature in this Area to post-date this ditch. The finds assemblages from the single ditch fill are limited to pottery and relatively large quantities of tile.

**Ditch 25177** (8692, 8696, 19157)

|      |   |
|------|---|
| 8692 | <b>Pottery</b> mortarium D11.1 (COLBM), fabrics BSW GRS |
| 8696 | <b>Pottery</b> fabrics BSW GRS GRF                      |

Very little diagnostic pottery was recovered from these ditch fills. The mortarium provides a date of late 2nd to early 3rd century. There were residual pieces present.

*The only other features which ran on alignments similar to 25177 were one, perhaps two, unnumbered ditches in the unexcavated Area A3, immediately north of Area P. It is possible that a new land plot (or even field boundary) system was created in this area at this period, with land previously occupied now being opened to farm. This idea may gain some support from the lack of activity in Area Q (further east) after Period III, and it may suggest that the influence of the Tracks on land division was negated by this stage, at least in the eastern extremes.*

**Well 8989 (Fig. 11)**

The backfills mainly dated to the late 2<sup>nd</sup> to early 3<sup>rd</sup> century and clearly showed that the well had ceased to function as a water source. Instead, this convenient hole was used for rubbish disposal; its finds assemblage being of similar composition to those of the contemporary pits to its south.

**Well 8989 backfill**

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| 8989* | <b>Samian</b> bowls f38 (EGSW) Curle 21 (CGSW), mortarium f45 (EGSW) <b>Other Pottery</b> dishes B1 (BB1) B6.3 (BB1) B5.1 B6.2 (GRF), mortarium D5 cf. Young 1977, fig.20, type M10 (OXWM), bowl-jars E2.2 E5.4 (GRS), jars G28 (BSW) G9.3 G24 G34 G38 (GRS), beakers H32 H41 (NVC) H34 (BSW) |
|-------|---|

The upper fills of the well contained fabrics and forms of consistent 3rd century date, although in fragmentary and abraded condition. The pottery forms from the overlying layer continue into the 4th century. The well was probably out of use by the late 3rd century. There was a large quantity of residual material (but some samian may not be).

**Pits 8581, 8970, 19006**

Period IV pitting was represented by only a small number of excavated features. Though of widely varying size they were all intercutting with one another and with Period V pits, and all were located around the end of ditch 25177. Understandably, a peripheral location seems to have been preferred for the location of rubbish disposal. The finds assemblages from these pits are dominated by pottery and tile.

**Pits 8581, 8970, 19006**

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| 8581  | <b>Pottery</b> dish B1 (BSW), fabric NVC  |
| 8970  | <b>Pottery</b> dishes B4 (GRS) B5 (BSW), mortarium D11 (BUFM), bowl-jar E3.4 (GRF), fabrics NVC HAR   |
| 19006 | <b>Samian Other pottery</b> dish B5.1 (GRS), jar G5.5 (GRS), beakers H34/5 (GRF), fabrics HAR HAX NVC |

These pits contained variable amounts of pottery, but a date in the first half of the 3rd century is indicated. The samian (not yet identified) may not be residual.

**PERIOD V: (Fig. 13)**

The trend of a reduced number and variety of features continued from the mid Roman period into the late. The Period IV east-to-west boundary ditch 25177 seems to have had a short life and to have passed out of use by the mid to late 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. This period is solely represented by a cluster of pits. However, their location either alongside or close to the terminal of the defunct ditch may indicate that its line may again have been perpetuated by a hedge or at least been visible as a slight earthwork on the land surface. It is difficult not to see this reduction in activity as evidence of abandonment of this eastern periphery of the settlement, the result of a westward shift of occupation.

The only other evidence of late activity is in the form of accumulations of artefacts in the slump hollows of such features as well 8989, though it is possible that big ‘pit’ 25221 still functioned as a rubbish disposal feature.

**Pits 8555, 8639, 8726=8727, 8745, 8956, 8966, 8972, 19136 (Fig. 10)**

The late Roman pits clustered in a distinct band across the middle of Area P. Like the middle Roman pits, they seem to have been located either alongside or at the end of Period IV ditch 25177, suggesting that this line was still visible, even if the ditch had been filled in long before. Apart from sharing their locations with these earlier pits, they may indicate simple continuity of activity between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD. However, these were mainly large pits, where the Period IV examples were more varied.

Their finds assemblages also differed, with much larger quantities of tile, along with fairly usual domestic rubbish assemblages of pottery and bone. Perhaps significantly, metalwork, even such as iron nails, was conspicuously absent. This might **chime with the idea** of the Area no longer being occupied, if nails are thought to have derived principally from demolition of wooden structures. Pit 8555 is notable in containing 10 coins in its top fill. All date to the 330s-40s and could possibly have been the remains of a hoard or an otherwise structured deposit.

**Pits 8555, 8639, 8726, 8727, 8745, 8956, 8966, 8972, 19136**

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| 8555  | <b>Pottery</b> dish B1 (HAB), jar G35 (GRF), fabrics NVC RET<br><b>Coins</b> AE3 Constans (SF 6021) 347-348, AE2 Licinius I (SF 6022) 321-324  |
| 8639  | <b>Pottery</b> fabrics BSW GRS GRF   |
| 8745* | <b>Pottery</b> dishes B1 (BSW) B6 (BB1), bowl C8 (HAR), bowl-jar E5.4 (GRF), jar G9, as Gillam 1976, no.13 (BB1), fabrics NVC HAWO HAX RET   |
| 8956  | <b>Pottery</b> dishes B1 (BB1) B6.2 (BSW) B6.3 (BB1), jar G24 (GRS), lid K7 (NVC)  |
| 8966  | <b>Pottery</b> dishes B1 (BB2 BB1) B5.1 (GRS) B6 (GRF) B6.3 (BB1), bowl-jar E2 (GRS GRF), jars G24 (GRS) G40 Monaghan 1987, 77, class 3A3 (NKG), beakers H32 (NVC) H34 (BSW), fabrics HAWO HAR RET |
| 19136 | <b>Pottery</b> dishes B1 (BSW) B6 (GRS) B5/B6 (GRF) B6.3 (BB1), bowl-jar E2 (BSW), jars G24 G42 (GRS), fabrics NVC HAR   |

These pit fills have a date range of late 3rd to mid 4th century, and nine coins in 8555 have an early to mid 4th century date range. Late 4th century+ forms and fabrics are absent. There is a quantity of residual material.

**PERIOD VI: (Fig. 13)**

The latest Roman/early Saxon period was present but not well represented in Area P. There were only a small cluster of post-holes, a handful latest Roman pits and a single Saxon pit. The pits were generally quite large, and fairly well spaced out. The very presence of a Saxon occupation potentially reinforces the idea that this really was a peripheral or even fully abandoned area of the Roman site. It should be noted that the early Saxon dating is based on very small quantities of pottery, and in reality the features concerned need not derive from activity any different from the latest Roman.

**Pits 8513, 8633, 8635, 8637, 8736, 8788, 8793, 8801, 19047, 19172 (Fig. 5, 6)**

The latest Roman/Saxon transitional period pits were slightly irregular in shape but typically c.3m diameter, with depths generally in excess of 0.5m (to over 0.8m). Unlike the pits of preceding periods, they were dispersed fairly evenly throughout Area P.

They contained fairly prolific finds assemblages, generally comprising in excess of 10kg of tile, and a variety of other finds including pottery, animal bone, glass, small copper alloy items (pin, ring, stud, etc.) and unworked stone rubble. Unlike the Period V pits, ironwork, principally nails, was present, along with small amounts of slag and lead artefacts and waste. Strangely, briquetage (normally an inclusion in late Iron Age/earliest Roman features) made a reappearance in these late pits. In addition, the numbers of worked flints is perhaps surprising. Both of these may have resulted

from a higher than expected incidence of background residual material, presumably dug up out of older features and redeposited. Pits 8736 and 8788 were the only features containing identifiably early Saxon pottery, all the rest have late 4<sup>th</sup> century material.

**Pits** 8513, 8633, 8635, 8637, 8736, 8788, 8801, 19047, 19172

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| 8513  | <b>Pottery</b> dish B6.2 (BSW), bowl C Young 1977 figs.61-4, type C73-9 (OXRC), jars G24 (RET) G27 (LSH) G35 (GRS), fabric NVC                                    |
| 8633  | <b>Pottery</b> dishes B1 (NVC BBI) B6.2 (HAB), bowl C8.4 (OXRC), jar G27 (LSH)  |
| 8635  | <b>Pottery</b> dishes B1 B6 (GRF), bowl-jar E3 (GRF), jar G42 (GRS), fabrics NVC OXRC LSH RET BB1<br><b>Coin</b> AE2, Magnentius (SF 6290), 351-353               |
| 8637  | <b>Pottery</b> dishes B1 (BSW GRF) B6.3 (BB1), bowl-jar E3 (HAB), fabrics LSH OXRC NVC  |
| 8736  | <b>Pottery</b> dishes B1 (BB1) B5.3 (LSH) B6.1 (GRS) B6.3 (BB1), bowl C (OXRC), mortaria D12 (OXRCM) D6 (OXWM), jars G24 (GRS) G27 (LSH), fabric ALH <b>Saxon</b> |
| 8788  | <b>Pottery</b> dish B6.1 (GRF), jar G27 (LSH), fabrics NVC OXWM OXRC <b>Saxon</b>   |
| 8801  | <b>Pottery</b> dish B1 (HAB GRS), mortarium D12 (OXRCM), fabric NVC   |
| 19047 | <b>Pottery</b> dishes B1 (BSW) B1.4 (BB1), jar G32 (GRS), fabrics LSH ALH   |
| 19172 | <b>Pottery</b> dishes B1 (BSW) B6 (GRS), fabrics PORD LSH RET   |

These pit fills contained pottery mainly dating to the late 4th century+, with much residual material.

### **Structure 57: Post-holes 8566, 8567, 19015, 19027, 19041, 19053, 19058, 19064, 19068, 19122, 19124 (Fig. 14)**

This was a distinct cluster of a dozen post-holes, some of which contained a sherd or two of Saxon pottery. They were of similar proportion to one another but formed no clear structural pattern. It is likely that further examples remained unexcavated to the west.

**Post-holes** 8566, 8567, 19015, 19027, 19041, 19053, 19058, 19064, 19068, 19122, 19124

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| 8566  | <b>Pottery</b> fabric GROGC                  |
| 8567  | <b>Pottery</b> fabrics GROG GRS <b>Saxon</b> |
| 19015 | <b>Pottery</b> fabric GRS <b>Saxon</b>       |
| 19027 | <b>Pottery</b> <b>Saxon</b>                  |
| 19068 | <b>Pottery</b> fabrics NVC HAX BSW           |

These post-holes are assigned a Saxon date although only three have Saxon pottery. The remaining pottery is not particularly late.

## **PERIOD VII**

No features of this date have been identified.