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**IRON AGE AND ROMANO-  
BRITISH SETTLEMENTS AT  
LITTLE PAXTON QUARRY,  
DIDDINGTON,  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

**FOURTH INTERIM REPORT**

**FIELD 2 EXCAVATIONS 1997-8**

*B.U.F.A.U.*



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QUARRY, DIDDINGTON, CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

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FIELD 2 EXCAVATIONS 1997-8**

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# IRON AGE AND ROMANO-BRITISH SETTLEMENTS AT LITTLE PAXTON QUARRY, DIDDINGTON, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

## FOURTH INTERIM REPORT

### FIELD 2 EXCAVATIONS 1997-8

#### 1.0: SUMMARY

This report presents an interim summary of the fourth stage of an on-going programme of archaeological investigations at Little Paxton Quarry, Diddington, Cambridgeshire (centred on NGR TL 20356565; Figs. 1A-B), undertaken by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (BUFAU) on behalf of Bardon Aggregates Limited. Investigations over a total area of approximately 5ha. in 1997-8 identified evidence of five phases of activity, dating from the Neolithic/Bronze Age to the medieval period.

The earliest, Phase 1 activity, dating to the Neolithic-Bronze Age, was represented by scattered pits and ploughsoil scatters of flint artifacts. The earliest Middle Iron Age (Phase 2) features comprised a total of 15 circular ditches, interpreted as eaves-drip gullies surrounding circular huts. Later Middle Iron Age activity was represented by a cluster of ditched farmsteads. The earliest Late Iron Age (Phase 3) features comprised a group of ditched enclosures scattered more widely across the excavated area. A possible change in site economy later in this phase is suggested by the cutting of groups of adjoining rectilinear ditched enclosures, interpreted as cattle-pens. In the fourth and final phase of occupation, dated to the early Romano-British period (late 1st-early-2nd-century), further ditched cattle-pens, ditched boundaries, and large ditched enclosures were dug. The site was abandoned no later than the mid-2nd-century, possibly because of a rising water-table. Later Romano-British settlement was located on a slightly raised plateau, to the south of the area excavated. The latest activity recognised (Phase 5) dated to the medieval period and comprised the cutting of numerous parallel ditches, draining the site, which formed pasture on the northern fringe of the open fields adjoining the deserted medieval village of Broughton, located to the south of the quarry concession.

The excavations followed trial-trenching (Jones 1992), fieldwalking and test-pitting (Bevan and Dingwall 1997, Bevan 1997).

#### 2.0: INTRODUCTION

##### 2.1: Previous work

Previous fieldwork within the quarry has investigated settlement and activity dating from the Neolithic to the late Roman periods. The results of fieldwork up to 1996 have been presented in three interim reports (Jones and Ferris 1994; Jones 1995; Jones 1998), and have been synthesised (Jones forthcoming). Neolithic activity is

represented by clusters of small pits, some possibly forming pit-circles (Fig. 1C, Area B: Jones 1995), and, more widely, by flint artifacts found within the topsoil. The excavated features of Bronze Age date include two roughly-circular hut caves-drip gullies, also located in Area B, measuring 8m and 15m in diameter, and by scattered pits. The Middle Iron Age is represented by evidence of unenclosed settlement (Area B, Jones 1995) and by ditched farmstead enclosures. The main features of Late Iron Age date comprise a group of ditched farmstead enclosures (Area B). A square barrow (Area D, Fig. 1C) also belong to this period (Jones 1998). Late Romano-British activity was focused within a 'ladder' enclosure and other associated enclosures, located towards the southern end of the quarry concession (Area A, Jones and Ferris 1994). This feature group, mainly dating to the 3rd-4th centuries, contained timber-framed buildings, wells and a possible animal 'drinking trough'.

## **2.2: 1997-8 excavations**

This fourth interim report describes the results of excavations, undertaken in two stages during 1997-8, of a mainly Iron Age-Romano-British settlement area (Fig. 1C, Field 2). The work described in this report forms part of a programme of excavation and research within the quarry concession which is intended to determine the changing function and economy of the area, in particular focusing upon the potential for future detailed comparison of the structural and economic data from the discrete Iron Age and Romano-British settlement foci. Integrated analysis of settlement patterning is also intended to contribute towards a broader, multi-period, landscape-based study of changes in settlement in the Ouse Valley and in other river valley environments.

The area for investigation was not selected arbitrarily. Instead, it comprised an 'island' of gravel surrounded by stream-courses on four sides, mapped either by aerial photography (Air Photo Services 1992), trial-trenching (Jones 1992) or excavation. These stream-courses may be dated to the early prehistoric period. A broad band of alluvium, deposited on the eastern bank of the stream forming the western boundary of the excavation, was sampled by six additional trial-trenches (1-6), dug during the excavation, but no earlier features or datable material could be found within it. The relationships observed at evaluation and excavation between this deposit and the excavated features suggest the alluvium was a pre-Middle Iron Age formation. Further observations to the south (Area A, Fig. 1C) indicate that the stream-channel was open throughout the Romano-British period.

## **2.3: Aims**

The detailed aims of the 1997-8 excavations were as follows:

- 1) To define the nature of the pre-Iron Age exploitation of the site.
- 2) To define the sequence of Iron Age activity represented.
- 3) To consider the significance of the discovery of 'high status' pottery on the site during evaluation.
- 4) To examine the evidence for the Iron Age-Romano-British transition.

- 5) To consider the evidence for the abandonment of the site, and to place the site within the context of other adjoining excavated rural settlement complexes of similar date.
- 6) To consider the evidence for the Iron Age-Romano-British economy.

### **3.0: METHODOLOGY**

The excavations were undertaken in two stages; the southernmost third of Field 2 was dug in summer 1997, and the remainder of the field was dug in Spring-Autumn 1998 (Fig. 1C). Ploughsoil was removed by motor scraper, and later by 360 excavator, both working under archaeological supervision. Ditches and other negative features were sampled as widely as possible to identify their form and fill sequence. Where several cuttings were excavated across a single feature, the fill sequences in each cutting were separately recorded to allow for reconstruction of the spatial patterning in artifact distribution, and artifact types. Feature intersections were dug to establish the stratigraphic sequence, and further discrete lengths of linear features were also dug. Pits and post-holes were half-sectioned. All datable features were sampled objectively to recover charred plant remains and small bones. Twenty litre general biological samples were flotted on-site to allow for selective re-sampling on an informed, but judgemental basis.

### **4.0: RESULTS**

#### **4.1: Phasing**

For simplicity the results of the evaluation (1992) and the two phases of excavation (1997 and 1998) have been conflated in the following account. A provisional sequence of five main phases of activity was defined by preliminary spot-dating of the finds, as follows:

Phase 1: Neolithic and Bronze Age.

Phase 2: Middle Iron Age.

Phase 3: Late Iron Age.

Phase 4: Early Romano-British.

Phase 5: Medieval.

For simplicity, only the main features are described and numbered on the plan. The enclosures are numbered numerically, in phase order (E1-E41). The Phase 1-5 features were cut into the subsoil and into the backfilled features belonging to the preceding phases. It was often difficult to recover full, coherent, plans of some of the ditched enclosures because of disturbance by later re-cutting.

#### **4.2: Phase 1. Neolithic and Bronze Age (Fig. 2)**

The earliest features investigated were of Neolithic-Bronze age date. The only datable features of this period were three pits (F958, F991 and F806), measuring up to 0.3m

in depth, each containing flint artifacts. Neolithic-Bronze Age activity is represented more widely by scatters of redeposited flint artifacts found in Phase 2-5 features, and in the ploughsoil by fieldwalking and test-pitting (Bevan 1997, 1997a). No pottery of Neolithic to Early Iron Age date was recovered.

#### **4.3: Phase 2. Middle Iron Age (Fig. 2)**

The earliest Phase 2 activity was represented by circular eaves-drip gullies and field boundaries. Later Phase 2 activity comprised the excavation of ditched farmstead enclosures, which were concentrated towards the northeastern corner of the excavated area.

The circular eaves-drip gullies and associated features were heavily truncated. A total of 15 circular eaves-drip gullies, or possible eaves-drip gullies (G1-G15), was excavated. Part of the northern and eastern sides of eaves-drip gully G1 were recorded. Its northern side was cut by eaves-drip gully G2, which measured 12m in diameter internally. It contained an arc of post-holes on its eastern side, and a shallow curvilinear gully on its northern side, which defined the eastern and northern sides respectively of the roughly-curvilinear hut drained by feature G1. Part of the eastern side of this hut could have been open. Traces of re-cutting of the northern hut walls were recorded, corresponding with a thickening recorded at the western end of the northern hut gully. A group of pits cut in the southwest of the hut interior was probably associated. No relationship could be observed between eaves-drip gully G1 and the southeastern side of eaves-drip gully G3 to the north, because of disturbance by a later pit. A group of more fragmentary, curvilinear eaves-drip gullies, or possible eaves-drip gullies (G4-G7), was located to the southeast of the former group. The only possibly associated feature was a single post-hole, located to the northeast of feature G7. Two slightly irregular shallow ditches (F748, F1055), cut to the east and west respectively of features G1-G3, may have been contemporary. Towards its western terminus feature F1055 was cut by a further circular eaves-drip gully (G8), measuring 8m in diameter internally and also belonging to this phase.

A further focus of Middle Iron Age activity, including further eaves-drip gullies and other features, was located towards the southwestern corner of the area excavated. Three incomplete eaves-drip gullies were recorded (G11, G13, G15), measuring between 4-9m in diameter internally, together with three more fragmentary examples (G9-10, G14). Feature G12 cut feature G11. Other features of Middle Iron Age date, located to the east of eaves-drip gully G10, comprised shallow ditches and gullies, including one gully which was U-shaped in plan.

Later Middle Iron Age activity (enclosures E1-E7) was focused towards the northeastern corner of the area excavated. Stratigraphically, the earliest enclosures of this group were enclosures E1 and E2, which may have been contemporary. Enclosure E1 was roughly rectangular in plan, with rounded corners and with an entry-gap positioned mid-way along its southeastern side. It measured 32m by 16m internally, with its long axis aligned northwest-southeast. Enclosure E2, cut in the extreme north of the area investigated, was pentagonal in plan, including straight, concave, and convex sides. The concave southwestern side may have been partly cut following the



line of the southwestern part of disused eaves-drip gully G1. Enclosure E2 was the largest Phase 2 enclosure excavated, measuring a maximum of 38m internally north-south and 35m internally east-west. Traces of re-cutting were noted on its western side. A square four-post building (Structure 1), measuring 3m square, and a pit (F862) were the only internal features associated with enclosure E2.

Subsequently, two further ditched enclosures (E3-E4) were excavated. Enclosure E3 was formed by re-cutting along the northwestern and parts of the northeastern and southwestern sides of enclosure E1. The southeastern side of Enclosure E3 was cut 7m inside the line of the earlier enclosure, the position of this eastern entrance to the later enclosure respecting the position of the earlier enclosure entrance. Later, a further, five-sided ditched enclosure (E4) was dug between enclosures E3 and E2. Enclosure E4 was formed by re-cutting along the southeastern side of enclosure E2, and along part of the northeastern side of Enclosure E3; its remaining sides were cut into the subsoil. Enclosure E4 measured 35m internally (north-south) by 25m (east-west), and had two opposing entrances, positioned on its northwestern and southeastern sides. A northeast-southwest aligned ditch may have sub-divided the southeastern part of the interior of this enclosure. The earliest ditch cut along this line was uninterrupted, but a later re-cut included an entry-gap, adjoining the southeastern entrance to the enclosure. The re-cut of this internal ditch was cut by the western ditch of this enclosure, or more probably by its latest re-cut.

Later enclosures (E5-E8) cut slightly to the west of the former group may belong to the Middle-Late Iron Age. Possibly the earliest enclosure of this later group (enclosure E5) was roughly square in plan. Its northern side was formed by re-cutting along part of the southern side of enclosure E2, and its eastern side was cut to the west of the western side of enclosure E4. The western and southern sides of enclosure E5 were mainly formed by two slightly curvilinear ditches together forming a right-angle, with a further, possibly associated, curvilinear ditch continuing both to the northwest and southeast of this right-angle. Enclosure E5 had two entry-gaps, positioned on its northwestern and southeastern corners, defined by their southern and northern ditch butt-ends respectively. Subsequently, enclosure E5 may have been enlarged to the northwest and to the south (enclosure E6), perhaps also forming a driveway between the southern ditches of enclosures E5 and E6. The eastern side of enclosure E6 was cut to the west of the same side of the former enclosure, and its northern side was formed by a re-cut of the northern side of the earlier enclosure. An offset entry-gap was provided in the northeastern corner of enclosure E6, possibly also defined by the partially-backfilled southwestern ditch of the adjoining enclosure E2, defining the eastern side of a 'funnel-type' entrance arrangement. A second entry-gap to enclosure E6, positioned at its southwestern angle, was closed by a curvilinear palisade gully. A later re-definition of this entrance was represented by two post-pits dug into the backfilled palisade, positioned on either side of the entry-gap. The relative layouts of the northwestern side of enclosure E6, and the concave southwestern side of enclosure E2, could suggest that these enclosures were not only contemporary but were directly associated.

Subsequently, a D-shaped enclosure (E7) was cut to the south of enclosures E5-6. Enclosure E7 cut the western side of Middle Iron Age enclosure E3, and possibly part

of the southeastern angles of enclosures E5-6. The fragmentary remains of a possible timber-framed bridge support were recovered from the northeastern angle of enclosure E7. The positioning of this structure suggests that it bridged the northeastern angle of ditched enclosure E7, and that it was also associated with the driveway between enclosures E5-E6 to the northwest, providing a functional nexus between these three adjoining enclosures which could have been contemporary.

## Dating

Eaves-drip gullies G1, G4 and gully F748 contained Middle Iron Age pottery; the other eaves-drip gullies are ascribed to this phase because of the absence of later pottery, and because they were stratigraphically earlier than Phase 3 features; also because there were no eaves-drip gullies datable to Phase 3. The small quantity of Late Iron Age pottery recovered from ring-gully G14 was probably intrusive. The backfills of enclosures E1-E7 and the feature group to the east of eaves-drip gully G10 contained pottery of Middle Iron Age date. An alternative phasing of some of the eaves-drip gullies is considered in the discussion.

### 4.4: Phase 3. Late Iron Age (Fig. 3)

Earlier Late Iron Age activity was concentrated in the west of the site, adjoining the alluvial zone, with a small focus of activity to the southeast (enclosure E18). Later activity, of Late Iron Age-early Romano-British date, was concentrated in the east of the site. This latter activity is difficult to assign confidently either to the Iron Age or to the early Romano-British periods because of the lack of dating evidence, and disturbance caused by later activity. It is also possible that this activity was continuous.

Two Late Iron Age boundaries were represented by two partly parallel, northwest-southeast aligned ditched boundaries (F1250-1), cut approximately 60m apart. The northernmost ditch (F1250) appeared to follow the alignment of the southwestern side of Phase 2 enclosure E7. The Phase 3 ditch was slightly sinuous in plan, and broadened in width towards the centre of the area excavated. The ditch may have been diverted southward to avoid a ring-ditch which may have been visible as an earthwork feature at the time. This feature was recorded as a crop-marked feature earlier in this century, but had been totally ploughed-out by the time of the excavation. The southernmost ditch (F1251) was the smaller feature, only measuring an average of 1m in width. North-south aligned ditch F1252, cut between the western ends of ditches F1250-1, was probably contemporary. Ditch F1252 defined the approximate eastern extent of the alluvium adjoining the former stream-course running along the western margin of the excavated area, and was heavily disturbed by Phase 4 re-cutting. A further ditch (F1253) was cut approximately north-south between ditches F1250 and F1251, forming an approximate southward continuation of the line of the southeastern side of Phase 2 enclosure E7 (Fig. 2).

Another focus of Late Iron Age activity partly straddled north-south aligned ditch F1252. Rectangular enclosure E8 was located towards the south of this focus. This enclosure was defined by the southern ends of ditches F1252 and F1253, and by the

western end of ditch F1251 on its western, eastern and southern sides. The northern side of this enclosure was formed by two ditches, interrupted by an entry-gap positioned slightly off-centre. A further entry-gap was probably retained between the eastern terminal of the northern side and the adjoining north-south ditch F1253.

To the north were two D-shaped ditched enclosures (E9-10), the westernmost (E9) dug into alluvium. Its straight side was aligned northeast-southwest, appearing to follow the approximate alignment and positioning of the adjoining Phase 2 field boundary (F1055, Fig. 2). The second D-shaped enclosure (E10) lay to the east of the former enclosure. The curvilinear eastern side of enclosure E10 was markedly irregular (possibly as a result of later re-cutting). This ditch was continued to the northwestern corner of the enclosure, possibly defining the northern side of a further enclosure (E11), cut to the north of enclosure E9. The curvilinear southeastward continuation of the southern side of enclosure E10 may have formed the northeastern side of a further, adjoining enclosure (E12). The southern and western sides of this enclosure were formed by two ditches together forming an L-shape, its western side cut slightly offset from the southeastern corner of Enclosure E10. Enclosure E12 had two entry-gaps, on its opposing northwestern and southeastern sides, the latter framed on its northern end by a possible external gate-post. Activity in this area could have been continuous into the Romano-British period.

A second focus of Late Iron Age activity was formed by ditched enclosures E13-E17, cut to the southwest of contemporary east-west aligned ditch F1251. The largest of these enclosures (E13) was roughly rectangular in plan, with a curvilinear southern side. Its eastern side, cut into the eastern edge of the alluvium, was irregular in plan, possibly as a result of being cut along the line of a meandering stream-channel. Its southwestern corner may have been cut along the line of the southwestern side of Phase 2 caves-drip gully G15. Measuring approximately 33m square internally, enclosure E13 was the largest Late Iron Age enclosure recorded during the 1997-8 excavation. No associated features could be identified within its interior. An entrance was located midway along its southern side, but only the northern terminal of this entrance survived later re-cutting.

A roughly circular enclosure (E14), measuring approximately 23m in diameter, cut to the south of the latter, may have been contemporary. This enclosure was mostly defined by a curvilinear ditch dug in sections, with slight changes of angle. Its northern side was formed by an east-west aligned ditch. The eastern and western ends of this ditch may have defined the northern sides of two entry-gaps, the latter defined on its southern side by a slightly out-turned ditch terminal. Two further enclosures (E15, E16) were located between enclosures E13 and E14. Enclosure E15 was irregular in plan. Its southern side was formed by the northern side of circular enclosure E14 to the south, and its northern limit extended up to the southern entrance of enclosure E13 to the north, but the relationship between the enclosure E13 and E15 ditches was destroyed by a later, Phase 4 ditch. The curvilinear eastern side of enclosure E15 was extended beyond the southern side of this enclosure, cutting the backfilled eastern ditch of enclosure E13. A narrow entry-gap was retained in the southeastern corner of enclosure E15, further defined by a short length of an east-west aligned ditch, defining the southern side of an offset entrance. A southwest-northeast

aligned ditch was cut diagonally across the interior of enclosure E15, which was in turn cut by the outer enclosure ditch, or, more possibly, by its re-cut.

Roughly rectangular-shaped enclosure E16, cut wholly into alluvium, may have formed a western annexe to the adjoining enclosure E13. An entry-gap was probably located in the southeastern angle of enclosure E16, although this area was heavily disturbed by Phase 4 activity. The southeastern angle of enclosure E16 also appeared to respect the position of Middle Iron Age eaves-drip gully G13 (Fig. 2). The western and southern sides of irregularly-shaped enclosure E17 to the south were formed by the southwards continuation of the western side of enclosure E16. The eastern side of enclosure E17 was defined by the western ditch of the adjoining enclosure E15. The western and southern ditches of enclosure E17 together formed an L-shape in plan, and were continued to the southeast of the enclosure, cutting the backfilled curvilinear ditch of enclosure E14. This ditch could not be traced to the south of the curvilinear enclosure.

A third focus of Late Iron Age activity, located in the southeast of the area excavated, comprised the western side of a curvilinear enclosure (E18). This enclosure was represented by two curvilinear ditches interrupted by an entry-gap further defined by a post-pit dug on the inside of the northern entrance terminal. The southern side of this entrance was slightly inturned, and was also slightly mis-aligned with the northern terminal. The enclosure contained a number of probably contemporary features, including a curvilinear eaves-drip gully (G16), a re-cut linear gully, and a pit.

Later Late Iron Age activity, which may have continued into the Romano-British period, was characterised by the excavation of a group of mainly rectilinear enclosures, defined by shallow ditches, and interpreted as animal pens. This focus of activity was defined by ditches F1250 (or its re-cut F1255), F1253 and F1251, on its northern, eastern, and southern sides respectively.

Enclosures E19-E21 were laid out along the southern side of ditch F1250, which was re-cut (F1255), in late Phase 3 or early in Phase 4. Only the northwestern part of enclosure E19 was identified, the remainder of this enclosure may have been removed by plough truncation. To the northwest was an adjoining rectilinear enclosure (E20), with an entry-gap positioned mid-way along its northwestern side, which was closed by a shallow palisade trench. This entrance led into a smaller, roughly-square-shaped enclosure to the north (E21). An entry-gap located in the southeastern angle of this enclosure was further defined by a gully, cut diagonally between the eastern terminal of the southern ditch of enclosure E21 and the southwestern angle of the adjoining enclosure E20. Entry-gaps were retained adjoining the northwestern and southeastern terminals of this gully. The northwestern entry-gap contained a centrally-positioned gate-post, and the southeastern entry-gap may have been further defined by a short northwest-southeast aligned gully, joining the northwestern angle of enclosure E20, forming an offset entrance. Three post-pits cut to the northwest of enclosure E21 may have formed a fence, and further post-pits, cut to the south of rectilinear enclosure E20, may be similarly interpreted. Two ditches cut to the south of Enclosure E20, together forming an L-shape, could have defined the southwestern corner of a further enclosure (E22), mostly scoured-out by ploughing. The northeastern corner of a

further possible enclosure (E23) was located to the southeast of enclosure E22, and appeared to be cut following a similar alignment.

The later Phase 3-Phase 4 enclosures in this area were cut following a predominant east-west axis. Two conjoined rectilinear enclosures (E24-E25) were cut across abandoned enclosures E22-23. The smallest of these conjoined enclosures (enclosure E24 to the east) contained an east-west aligned gully positioned slightly off-centre within its interior and presumably forming an internal division. The southern side of this enclosure was not fully identified, probably because of plough truncation. Its eastern side was continued beyond the southeastern corner of the enclosure by a slightly offset, north-south aligned ditch, possibly defining part of the eastern side of a further conjoined enclosure to the south, almost wholly removed by plough truncation. An entry-gap was recorded towards the northern end of the western side of Enclosure E24. This entrance was closed by a possible palisade gully and a possible gate-post was cut just outside the southern terminal of this entrance. Rectangular enclosure E25 to the west measured 30m by 35m internally and had an entrance towards the northern end of its western side.

Subsequently, this enclosure was re-defined to the west by a further enclosure with its long axis aligned north-south (Enclosure E26). The northern side of this enclosure cut the same side of enclosure E25, and the southern side of the later enclosure was cut just to the south of its predecessor. The two mis-aligned ditches defining the eastern side of Enclosure E26 were cut towards the centre of abandoned enclosure E25 and defined an entry-gap measuring 7m in width. Later enclosure E26 probably also had an entry-gap towards the northern end of its western side, but only the southern terminal of this entrance survived later disturbance. Subsequently, the northern, southeastern, southern, and western ditches of enclosure E26 were re-cut forming a further enclosure (E27). The western ditch of this enclosure was cut slightly to the west of the former enclosure. Later this enclosure was extended to the northwest, forming a D-shaped enclosure (E28) whose southern and northwestern sides extended up to the eastern side of ditch F1253. The curving northeastern sides of this enclosure was formed by the northwestwards continuation of the western ditch of enclosure E27. A shallow palisade trench was cut inside this northwestern side of enclosure E28. Part of the presumed southwestern side of enclosure E28 had been dug-away by later ditches (enclosures E29-E31).

The backfills of Phase 2 enclosure E7 included Late Iron Age-transitional pottery. The ditch F1250, F1252 and F1253 backfills contained Late Iron Age pottery, and the ditch F1251 backfills contained Late Iron Age-transitional pottery. The backfills of the western enclosure group (E8-E12) contained Late Iron Age pottery, enclosures E10-E12 also containing transitional pottery. Enclosures E16-7 within the southern enclosure group (E13-E17) contained no datable pottery, the remaining enclosure ditches contained Late Iron Age pottery. The backfills of the southeastern focus, represented by enclosure E18 and the associated features, contained Late Iron Age and transitional pottery.

The backfills of the eastern enclosure group (E19-E28) contained pottery of Late Iron Age-Romano-British date. Enclosures E20-1, E23-E28 contained Late Iron Age

pottery. Enclosures E20 and E28 additionally contained transitional pottery, and enclosures E20-1 and E24 were associated with Roman pottery which could be residual. Enclosures E19 and E22 contained no pottery.

#### **4.5: Phase 4: Romano-British (Fig. 4)**

In the Romano-British period, the ditches of abandoned enclosure E28 were re-excavated (E29), and a ditch (F1254A) was cut to the north of this enclosure parallel to re-cut ditch F1253 (F1254). Ditch F1254A formed the southeastern side of a droveway measuring 4m in width, extending northwards to ditch F1250, which was also re-cut in this phase, or in late Phase 3 (F1255). The curvilinear, western side of enclosure E29 was cut approximately 4m to the east of ditch F1254A, forming a southward continuation of the droveway recorded to the north of the enclosure. Enclosure E29 was formed by the re-cutting of the southern side of enclosure E28, but the eastern and northern sides of the later enclosure were cut outside the line of its predecessor. An entry-gap was recorded in the northwestern angle of enclosure E29, defined on its southern side by a slightly out-turned terminal. The southern, eastern and northern sides of this enclosure were subsequently re-cut (E30). The eastern side of enclosure E31 was cut inside the southwestern corner of the former enclosure, while its remaining sides were formed by re-cuts of the enclosure E29-30 ditches. Enclosure E31 had an entrance on its northwestern corner, defined by two ditch terminals forming a right-angle. The positioning of the northern terminal across the southern end of the northern droveway suggests that this feature had gone out of use, although the southern terminal was only partly cut across the eastern side of the droveway to the south of the enclosure, suggesting that the southern droveway may have continued in use.

Phase 4 enclosures E28-E31 were distinguished from Phase 3-4 enclosures E19-E27 not only by their irregular morphology, but also because of the size of their defining ditches. The ditches of the Phase 3-4 enclosure group measured an average of 0.8m in width and 0.1m in depth, while the Phase 4 enclosure ditches measured an average of 1.5m in width, and 0.5m in depth. Fragments of other enclosure ditches were identified (e.g. in the northwestern interior of enclosures E29-E31), but no coherent details of their arrangement could be obtained because of the intensity of Phase 3-4 activity here.

A further focus of Romano-British activity was located in the west of the area excavated. Phase 3 north-south ditch F1252 was re-cut, and also extended to the south (F1256), and a further ditch was cut eastwards (F1257), extending from the southern terminal of the former ditch. At least two entry-gaps were located along the length of ditch F1256. This western focus of Phase 4 activity contained two small, conjoined, roughly-rectangular enclosures (E32-33), both cut into alluvium. The entry-gap between these enclosures was positioned adjoining an entry-gap in north-south ditch F1256. The northern entry-gap to the northernmost enclosure (E33) was defined on its western side by a round-ended terminal. A palisade trench was cut diagonally across the entrance, with which two adjoining pits could have been associated.

The area to the east of ditch F1256 was divided by an east-west ditch (F1258), dug in two, offset sections, the westernmost formed by the re-excavation of the southern ditch of Phase 3 enclosure E10 (Fig. 3). The area to the south of this ditch, also defined by ditches F1256, F1251 and F1254 on its western, southern, and eastern sides respectively may have formed a compound, following the abandonment and backfilling of the Phase 3 ditched enclosure within this area.

A series of irregularly-shaped ditched enclosures was laid out in the area bounded by the northern ends of ditches F1254 and F1256, the western end of ditch F1256, and ditch F1258, which defined the western, eastern, northern and southern sides respectively of this area. Ditch F1259, formed by the re-cutting of the eastern side of Phase 3 enclosure E10 (Fig. 3), was interrupted by two entry-gaps, defined by rounded ditch terminals. The largest of the enclosures in the area defined by the four contemporary ditches (enclosure E34) was rectangular in shape, its southern and eastern sides defined by ditches F1258 and F1259 respectively. The northern side of this enclosure was formed by an east-west aligned ditch, which returned to the south at its eastern end, forming an L-shape, defining the western side of an in-turned entrance adjoining ditch F1254. This entry-gap was closed by a palisade trench, cut diagonally across the opening. The interior of this enclosure contained three large pits. The northeastern corner of enclosure E34 also defined part of the southern side of an adjoining rectangular enclosure (E35), positioned in the angle between Phase 4 ditches F1254 and F1255, which formed the eastern and northern sides respectively of this enclosure. The northwestern side of enclosure E35 was defined by a northeast-southwest aligned ditch which returned to the east at its southern terminal, forming the northern terminal of an entry-gap. The opposing, southern side of this entry-gap was defined by a roughly-parallel, curvilinear ditch, together forming a 'funnel-type' arrangement. This entry-gap adjoined the eastern side of a narrow rectangular enclosure to the west (E36), whose western side was formed by ditch F1259. An entry-gap was located mid-way along the northern side of this enclosure. The western side of this entry-gap was defined by a slightly out-turned ditch segment, terminating in a possible gate-post, forming an offset entrance. A north-south aligned ditch, adjoining the southern side of enclosure E36, may have joined the southwestern side of this 'funnel-type' entry-gap.

A further rectangular enclosure (E37) was located to the north of enclosure E36. Enclosure E37 also lay to the east of re-cut ditch F1259, and the eastern side of this enclosure was formed by two north-south aligned ditches, separated by an entry-gap. Entry-gaps were also recorded at the eastern and western ends of its northern side, the latter defined on its eastern side by a post-pit. Two further enclosures (E38-9) may have been defined to the north and east respectively of enclosure E38. The interior of enclosure E39 contained two pits. Re-cut ditch F1259 may have defined the eastern side of a further, D-shaped enclosure (E40), its eastern and southern sides defined by ditches F1259 and F1259, occupying much of the area of Phase 3 enclosure E10. An entry-gap was located in the southeastern angle of enclosure E40, which was further defined by a palisade.

A further focus of Romano-British activity was located towards the southwest of the area excavated. The main Phase 4 feature in this area was an irregularly-shaped

enclosure (E41) formed by the re-cutting of the Phase 3 enclosure E13 and E16 ditches. This enclosure measured 45m internally northwest-southeast and 32m internally southwest-northeast. An entry-gap was located towards the mid-point of its southern side, slightly offset from the position of its Phase 3 predecessor (enclosure E13). There were no associated internal features in this Phase 4 enclosure.

Later Romano-British activity was represented by two pits (F1260, F1261) and a north-south aligned ditch (F1262) which was cut to the south of the northeastern corner of Phase 4 enclosure E41. This ditch, which was recorded for a length of 85m, was V-shaped in profile, measuring an average of 4m in width and 1.3m in depth. No features associated with this ditch were noted, with the exception of ditch F1263, which cut the southern end of ditch F1261 and returned to the southwest, forming a U-shape in plan.

### Dating

Roman pottery of 1st-early 2nd-century AD date was recovered from enclosures E29-E32, and E34. No pottery was found in the backfills of the enclosure E33 ditches, nor was any pottery found in the group of enclosures immediately to the south of the western end of ditch F1255 (enclosures E35-E39). Large quantities of Roman pottery were recovered from the terminals of ditch F1256, dug along the edge of the alluvium. Roman pottery was found in enclosures E40-E41, and in the ditches and pits in the southwest of the area excavated (pits F1260-1; ditches F1262-3). More extensive scatters of Romano-British finds were recovered during the excavation or the uppermost fills of Phase 1-3 features in the northeast and east of the excavated area, possibly deposited during manuring and dished into the compacted features.

### **4.6: Phase 5: Medieval**

The only medieval features identified at excavation were a series of parallel east-west aligned ditches, dug at an average separation of 10m and extending over the majority of the area investigated. A few of the ditch fills contained abraded sherds of medieval glazed pottery. No post-medieval features were found.

## **5.0: FINDS**

### **5.1: Flint by Lynne Bevan**

A total of 28 items of humanly-struck flint was recovered, comprising two scrapers, two blades, a retouched flake, and 23 flakes. The scrapers and blades were unstratified surface finds. Small quantities of flint flakes were recovered from cleaning over the alluvial zone in the west of the excavated area and during cleaning of the remainder of the excavated area.

The raw material used was pebble flint of an unpredictable quality, with a high incidence of burning and re-cortication, probably obtained from a local river gravel source. While the presence of flint tools and flakes denotes some low-level of activity



during prehistory, there is a complete absence of any chronologically-diagnostic material. However, the general shape of the flakes is suggestive of a Neolithic to Bronze Age date.

### **5.2: Iron Age pottery**

A total of 5156 sherds of Iron Age pottery was identified from the excavations. The pottery was divided roughly into three chronological groups on the basis of form: Middle Iron Age, dating from the 4th to 1st centuries BC, Late Iron Age types probably of early-1st century AD date, and transitional wares with a probable currency starting in the mid-to-late-1st century AD. Assemblages belonging to the latter group were often associated with early Romano-British forms. The main fabric types were tempered with shell and sand, with shelly wares most common in the Middle Iron Age assemblages and an increased occurrence of sandy, and also grogged, fabrics in the Late Iron Age groups.

The range of Late Iron Age 'Belgic' fineware types is slightly wider than that recorded at Tort Hill West (Hancocks, Evans and Woodward 1998), or Fengate, Cat's Water (Pryor 1984), but this may be due to the fact that Little Paxton is situated a little further south, and thus closer to the areas where an extensive repertoire of 'Belgic' pottery had been adopted.

### **5.3: Romano-British pottery**

A total of 2568 sherds of Roman pottery was recovered from the excavation. This material mainly derived from well-stratified contexts, and in some cases small quantities of residual pottery of transitional pottery was associated with this material. The Romano-British pottery dated to the late-1st to early-2nd-century AD and comprised channel rim jar forms in grog and shell fabrics, Verulamium region white wares such as ring-necked flagons, bifurcated rim jars and amphorae and locally produced greywares. This material does not include the transitional 'Belgic'-style pottery which can be dated as late as the 1st-century AD.

Notable absences from the Romano-British assemblage include Black burnished ware (BB1), Nene Valley colour-coats and greywares. These are good benchmarks for confirming the actual date range of the assemblage since no Antonine or late material was present. The range and variety of material recovered is closely restricted to the dates stated above and comprised predominately locally-produced coarsewares with little evidence of 'exotic' pottery such as samian, mortaria or amphorae or finewares.

### **5.5: Other finds by Lynne Bevan**

A copper alloy mount, probably of Roman date, with a crescentic-shaped terminal and a circular-sectioned base was recovered from the ploughsoil. Other small finds consisted of: a pair of copper alloy tweezers (ditch F1262); two fragments from a copper alloy fitting, possibly from horse equipment (F1251); two brooches without fastenings, one of which is pennanular (unstratified, SF. 12), and the other, a bow brooch (F1254, a possible small fragment from a third brooch (enclosure E26); a

length of ridged strip (enclosure E7); a fragment of strip (F1254); two fragments of chainlink and a hooked strip (F1259); a possible stud (unstratified); and several unidentified fragments (F1258).

Iron objects consisted of nail fragments, a fragment of plate and several unidentifiable, corroded lumps.

#### **5.6: Wooden trough** by Erica Macey (with identification by Steve Allen)

The trough was derived from the western side of enclosure E15. The trough is 300mm wide and survives to 400mm long, with an estimated original length of c. 700mm. The rim of the trough is rounded to the top of the vessel sides, with a horizontal flange which is cut back and chamfered. This flange is 26mm thick and 75mm long, before the item is cut down towards the upper edge of the side. Possible toolmarks can be seen on both the internal and external surfaces. The exterior toolmark is rather abraded, which would have been caused by wear during use, but it can be identified as a stop mark from an implement at least 52.5mm wide. A smaller tool, 24mm wide, was used to work the interior surfaces; a complete stop mark can be seen at the side/base interior angle.

The trough had been cut from a half log of a hardwood tree. The exact species is uncertain, but a sample has been taken for species identification. Several small knots indicate that the log from which the item was cut either grew low to the ground in an open area, or higher up the tree in a more enclosed environment; both are areas where extra branches would have room to spread.

Similar troughs are known from Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman and early Christian contexts. Other known examples vary in size from 300mm long to very large specimens of up to 1000mm long, but the majority are unstratified.

## **6.0: DISCUSSION**

### **6.1: Phase 1. Neolithic-Bronze Age**

Ploughsoil scatters of flint artifacts, recovered by fieldwalking, were concentrated towards the north of the area investigated (Bevan and Dingwall 1997, 1997a). The number of scrapers and retouched implements suggests settlement in the immediate area, although the excavated Phase 1 features were few, possibly because of plough truncation, as has been suggested elsewhere at the quarry (e.g. Jones 1998, 9). The flint from Phase 1 features F806, F958 and F991 was mainly Neolithic in date. Excavation elsewhere in the quarry has uncovered probable pit circles and hut circles (Jones 1995, 11, Area B, Fig. 1C) of Neolithic-Bronze Age date. More recent fieldwork at the quarry in 1998 (to the northwest of Areas E-F: not illustrated) investigated a number of deeply-cut pits of possible Neolithic-Bronze Age date, including one pit group forming a pattern of 'rose petals', with a single pit cut in the centre, similar to a pit group excavated at Sarn-y-bryn caled (Gibson 1994, fig. 5), although no trace of the surrounding pit circle was found at Little Paxton.

Another possible element of the Neolithic-Bronze Age landscape could be the suggested ring-ditch, formerly located by aerial photography to the south of the western end of Trench 22 (Fig. 1C) to the southeast of Phase 2 enclosure E7 (Fig. 2), but ploughed-out by the time of excavation. This feature may have survived as an upstanding earthwork into the Iron Age, as is suggested by the possible diversion of ditch F1250 around it.

A nearby ring-monument of early prehistoric date (Evans 1997a, 19) was associated with a cremation pyre. More extensive early prehistoric activity in the river valley is represented by cropmarked ring-ditches, the ploughed-out remains of barrows (Field 1974). Brown and Murphy (1997, 14) have noted that a feature of the early prehistoric landscape was the clustering of ritual monuments, and it is possible that the Little Paxton excavations have uncovered components of such a cluster.

As in other phases of excavation at Little Paxton, no artifactual or structural evidence of Early Iron Age activity was forthcoming. The alluvium recorded in the west of the area investigated in 1997-8 could have been deposited during the Neolithic-Bronze Age. Its deposition certainly pre-dates the Middle Iron Age. The evidence from Areas B and E-F at the quarry (Fig. 1C), suggests an element of continuity between the Neolithic/Bronze Age and the Middle Iron Age settlement pattern.

## **6.2: Phase 2. Middle Iron Age**

The earliest Middle Iron Age activity was represented by heavily truncated eaves-drip gullies surrounding circular huts, and by field boundaries. One gully (G2) was especially well-preserved, and traces of the internal hut walls, defined by a shallow curvilinear gully, and by a post-hole alignment, were recorded. Many of the eaves-drip gullies were only fragmentary, only surviving in the more deeply-cut parts of their circumference. If deliberate, the excavation of differing segments to different depths could have been intended to create soakaways. Two main concentrations of these gullies were recorded, in the north and southwest of the area excavated, defining zones of apparently-unenclosed settlements.

The later Middle Iron Age settlement was clustered in the northeast of the site, and comprised a group of ditched enclosures (E1-E7). The other zone of earlier Middle Iron Age activity (eaves-drip gullies G9-G15), in the southeast, on more low-lying land and located closer to the stream channel to the west, appears not to have been settled in the later part of Phase 2.

The earliest enclosures were E1 and E2. Enclosure E2 was associated with a square four-post structure, usually interpreted as a granary, the only building associated with this enclosure group. An alternative interpretation of eaves-drip gullies G1 and G2 is that they were contemporary with enclosure E2, and joined the southwestern and eastern ditches of the enclosure respectively. This possible arrangement would have assisted water run-off from features G1 and G2, and is paralleled by a similar juxtaposition of eaves-drip gullies and enclosure ditches similarly interpreted by Evans (1997b, 222) at Wardy Hill. Unfortunately, at Little Paxton the later re-cutting

of the enclosure E2 ditches has destroyed the relationship between enclosure E2 and features G1 and G2. If these eaves-drip gullies at Little Paxton emptied directly into the enclosure ditches, this would imply that the enclosure bank lay outside the ditch, which might be an unusual arrangement, or that it was interrupted: neither of these possible alternative arrangements was supported by the evidence from Little Paxton.

Perhaps the most notable feature of this conjoined group of Middle Iron Age enclosures was their apparent clustering. Some of the adjoining enclosures were probably in contemporary use. Enclosure E3 was formed by the re-cutting of the enclosure E1 ditches, and enclosure E4 was formed by re-cutting lengths of the backfilled ditches of enclosures E3 and E2. Similarly, the later enclosure group (E5-E7) was also formed by the partial re-excavation of earlier enclosures within this cluster. This apparent association between the enclosures within the cluster could suggest that the intention was to create a system of inter-linked channels for drainage (e.g. as at Wardy Hill, Cambridgeshire, Evans 1997b, fig. 21.3), in addition to defining the bounds of individual ditched enclosures. Alternatively, the enclosure layout could have been intended to bring water closer to the settlement, possibly to water livestock. An alternative interpretation of the evidence for ditch re-cutting is that it was intended as a labour-saving device, although this is the less-likely alternative. Another attribute of this cluster of enclosure ditches was the evidence for longevity of many of the main ditches, which remained open into the Romano-British period.

The layout of elements of this enclosure cluster may also have been functionally-determined. Enclosure E1 may have formed an eastern annexe to enclosure E3, and the southeastern corner of enclosure E4 may also have formed an annexe. The layouts of the adjoining southern sides of enclosures E5 and E6 may have defined a droveway, as is also suggested by the recovery of fragments of a timber ?bridge support in the northeastern angle of later enclosure E7. The complex treatment of the southwestern entrance to enclosure E6 (palisade gully, succeeded by post-pits) also suggests an association with livestock herding, possibly contemporary with the occupation of the adjoining enclosures (E2, E4).

The placement of the entry-gaps mainly on the opposing northwestern and southeastern sides of the individual enclosures could indicate that this axis, which was represented extensively within the Late Iron Age layouts in this, and the surrounding areas (e.g. French and Wait 1988, fig. 26), may have been established in this phase.

The suggested evidence for the layout of this enclosure cluster, forming an apparently integrated system of 'water-management', either for drainage or to water livestock, perhaps implies an element of social organisation on the part of this small community. Clearly, a considerable effort would be required to excavate, and then periodically clean-out, the ditches. This ditch system suggests an adaptation by a small but permanent settlement to the problems of water-management in this low-lying area, rather than merely a seasonal centre for a community based upon transhumance. Indeed, the replacement of the unenclosed early Middle Iron Age settlements (represented by eaves-drip gullies) by the ditched settlement cluster suggested to be associated with water-management, coupled with the abandonment of the lower-lying

land to the southwest of enclosures E1-E7 (eaves-drip gullies G9-G15), together suggest adaptation to a wetter climate.

Further ditched enclosures and associated ditches, pits and wells of Middle Iron Age date have been excavated at Little Paxton (Fig. 1C, Area B, Jones 1995).

### **6.3: Phase 3. Late Iron Age**

Although some continuity of Mid-Late Iron Age settlement is suggested by the possible occupation of enclosures E5-E7 into the Late Iron Age, the Phase 3 settlements were mainly concentrated to the south and southeast of the later Middle Iron Age enclosure cluster, and the remains of this later phase were also the more extensive. Another element of Mid-Late Iron Age continuity is provided by Phase 3 ditch F1250, which followed the northwest-southeast axis possibly first-defined in the preceding phase, and this ditch also followed the alignment of the southeastern side of Phase 2 enclosure E7. The alignment of ditch F1251 suggests it may have been deflected northwards to avoid enclosure E18. Further ditches were cut approximately north-south (F1254 and F1256), the former cut along the edge of alluvial zone, presumably for drainage.

The focus of earlier Late Iron Age activity adjoined the eastern edge of the alluvial zone. The area bounded by ditches F1250, F1251, F1252, F1253, on its northern, southern, western and eastern sides respectively, may have formed a 'compound', an arrangement which may be distinguished from the later use of the land to the east of ditch F1253. Parts of this 'compound' may have formed enclosures (E8, E10), although further enclosures (E9, E11) appeared to straddle the western boundary of this area (F1252). The relationship between this ditch and the enclosure group could not be established because of a Phase 4 re-cut of the ditch. The layout of the southeastern side of enclosure E9 appeared to respect the alignment and position of Phase 2 field boundary F1055, and a similar association may be suggested between early Phase 2 eaves-drip gully G8 (Fig. 2) and enclosures E9-E11. It is difficult to establish coherent ground-plans of the Phase 3 enclosures in this area because of later, Romano-British activity.

A further group of ditched Late Iron Age enclosures (E13-17) was located to the south of the former group. The ditches of enclosures E13-E17 were more-deeply-cut than those of enclosures E8-E12, and the areas defined by the former group were also more extensive. The irregularly-cut western sides of enclosures E13 and E16 are unusual, suggesting a re-cutting of slightly meandering stream-channel. Another possibility is that the slightly sinuous form of these ditches was intended to slow water flow.

An alternative interpretation of Phase 2 eaves-drip gully G15 (Fig. 2) is that it could have been contemporary with enclosure E13, and was located adjoining the southwestern angle of the enclosure ditch to aid drainage, as is suggested above for Phase 2 eaves-drip gullies G1-G2.

Enclosure E18, in the southeast of the excavated area, appeared to represent a further contemporary focus of activity, mostly located to the east of the area excavated.

The remains of the later Late Iron Age-Romano-British periods (Phases 3-4) were morphologically and probably also functionally distinct from those of earlier Phase 3 activity. This Phase 3-4 activity was mainly concentrated in the angle between Phase 3 ditches F1250 and F1253, which defined the northern and western limits respectively of this later Iron Age-Romano-British activity. This later activity may span the Late Iron Age/Romano-British transition, and it is not possible to distinguish these two phases on the present evidence.

This Phase 3/4 activity was represented by a group of rectilinear ditched enclosures, including three (E19-E21) laid out adjoining the southern side of the eastern excavated end of ditch F1250. A further group of rectilinear enclosures (E22-E27) lay to the south. Enclosures E19-E27 may be interpreted as animal pens (e.g. Orton Hall Farm, Mackreth 1996). This feature group provides an element of continuity with the Middle Iron Age landscape, although the enclosures of this later phase are morphologically very distinct. Even after allowing for the undoubted truncation of the enclosure E19-E27 ditches by modern agriculture, the ditches and presumably the associated banks may not have been adequate to contain livestock. It is possible that fences may have been erected along tops of the banks to further contain the animals. Such earthen banks would have most probably have been built outside the ditches, a more suitable arrangement to contain, rather than to exclude animals, although this cannot be proven from the heavily truncated ditch profiles at Little Paxton. Traces of fencing is suggested by the scattered post-pits located to the southwest of enclosures E20 and E21.

Enclosure E28, stratigraphically the latest feature of the enclosure E22-E28 group, was formed by a D-shaped enclosure joining the northwestern corner of rectangular enclosure E27. The northwestern side of enclosure E28 was formed by the southern part of ditch F1253, and an entry-gap was retained between this ditch and the northwestern terminal of the northeastern side of this enclosure.

A feature of the enclosure E19-E28 group was the evidence for the complex treatment of their entrances. Most notably, one of the entrances to enclosure E21 was defined by a possible palisade with an associated post-pit, and traces of an offset entrance retained at the southeastern terminal of the palisade. Such entrance arrangements support the interpretation of this enclosure group as being associated with animal husbandry. Comparatively few finds were recovered from this enclosure group. Few fragments of animal bone were recovered from the enclosure ditch fills, but more would not be expected unless the enclosures were used as slaughter-pens.

Other excavated elements of the Late Iron Age landscape at Little Paxton comprise a ditched enclosure (Fig. 1C, Area B, Jones 1995) and a possible square barrow (Fig. 1C, Area D, Jones 1998). The suggested evidence for an Iron Age precursor to the Roman temple complex (Cambridgeshire SMR No. 2482: French and Wait 1988, fig. 26, Alexander n.d.), located to the west of the area excavated (not illustrated), could suggest an alternative interpretation of the evidence for Phase 3 activity - namely that it was conducted in a ritual, rather than a purely pastoral, context - although this

hypothesis cannot be proved or disproved on the present information. Regrettably, few details of the temple and its associated features are presently available.

#### **6.4: Phase 4. Romano-British**

As discussed above, elements of the later Late Iron Age enclosures E19-E28 may have continued in use into the Romano-British period, and it is also possible that elements of Phase 3 enclosure group E8-E17 may have also been occupied into the Romano-British period.

To the east of Phase 3/4 ditch F1254, Phase 4 is represented by the cutting of a ditch (F1254A) forming a droveway with ditch F1254. To the south of the droveway lay enclosures E29-E31. The southwestern sides of these enclosures may have defined a further droveway adjoining ditch F1254 to the west. The 'antennae' of enclosures E29-E31 are perhaps similar to the entrance arrangements of 'banjo' enclosures (e.g. Micheldever Wood, Hampshire, Fasham 1987), interpreted as being associated with animal husbandry. The Little Paxton enclosure group may be distinguished from the Micheldever Wood example (*op cit*, fig. 3) because the entranceway to the enclosure (defined by ditches F1254 and F1254A) lay at a right-angle to the entrance.

The arrangement of enclosure group E34-E40, located to the west of ditch F1254, although more irregular in plan than the former group, could also suggest an association with animal husbandry. A notable feature of this enclosure group to the west of the ditch was the evidence for continuity in layout between the later Late Iron Age-Romano-British periods. It is possible that the area to the south of enclosures E34 and E40, also defined by the southern ends of ditches F1256 and F1254, and the northern side of Phase 4 enclosure E41, could have formed a 'compound'. A further, large enclosure (E41) located to the south could also have been associated with animal husbandry.

This settlement area was abandoned no later than the mid-2nd-century, and was not re-occupied during the Romano-British period. Given this suggested date for the abandonment of this settlement, and the later 2nd century date for the earliest occupation of the other Romano-British settlement focus in the south of the quarry concession, it is tempting to suggest a settlement shift between the two foci, although this cannot be proven. Such a settlement shift could have been influenced by climatic factors, such as increased rainfall. The economy of this later Romano-British settlement was also at least partly based upon animal husbandry (Jones and Ferris 1994).

Other evidence of nearby Romano-British settlement and activity is provided by the excavated temple complex to the east of the site (Alexander n. d.), and by ditched settlement complexes located to the south of the quarry (e.g. Greenfield 1969).

#### **6.5: Medieval**

The Phase 5 ditches, interpreted as 'lazy beds', were cut at right-angles to the orientation of the stream approximately following the line of the western boundary of

the excavated area. Traces of ridge-and furrow earthworks have been identified in Field 1 (Fig. 1C), to the south of the area excavated. Field 2 probably formed part of the outlying pasture fields of the village of Broughton.

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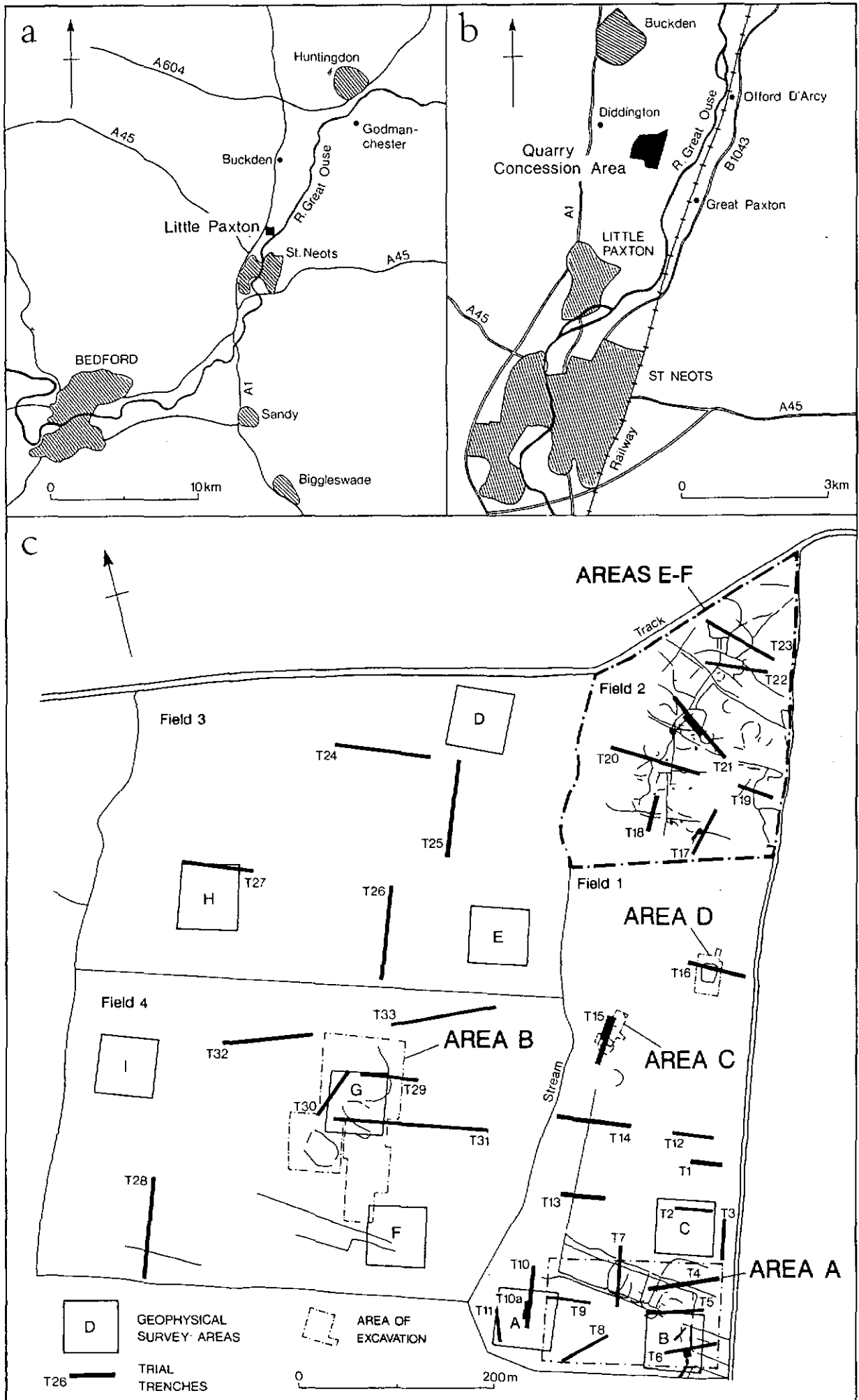


FIG. 1

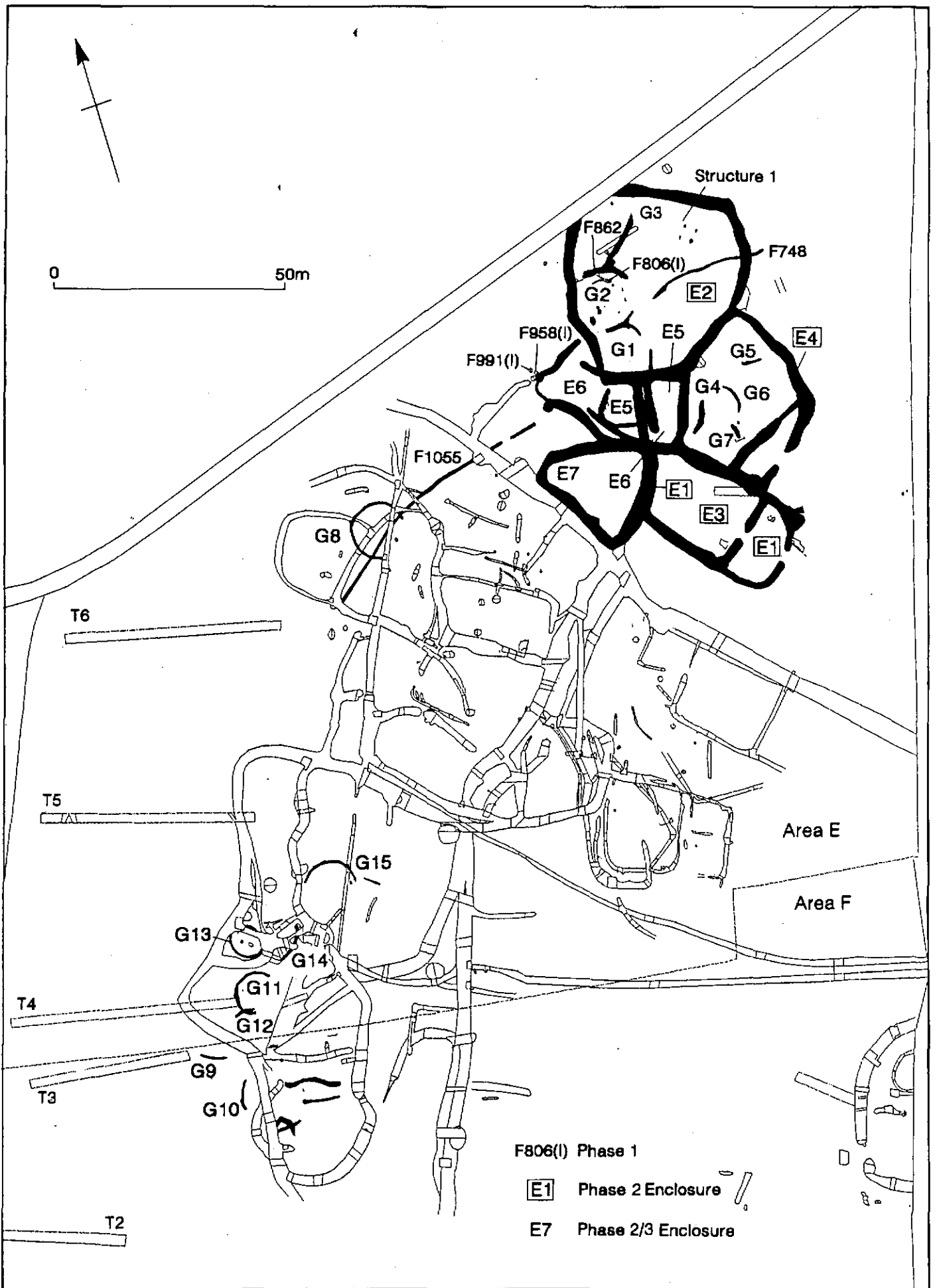


FIG. 2

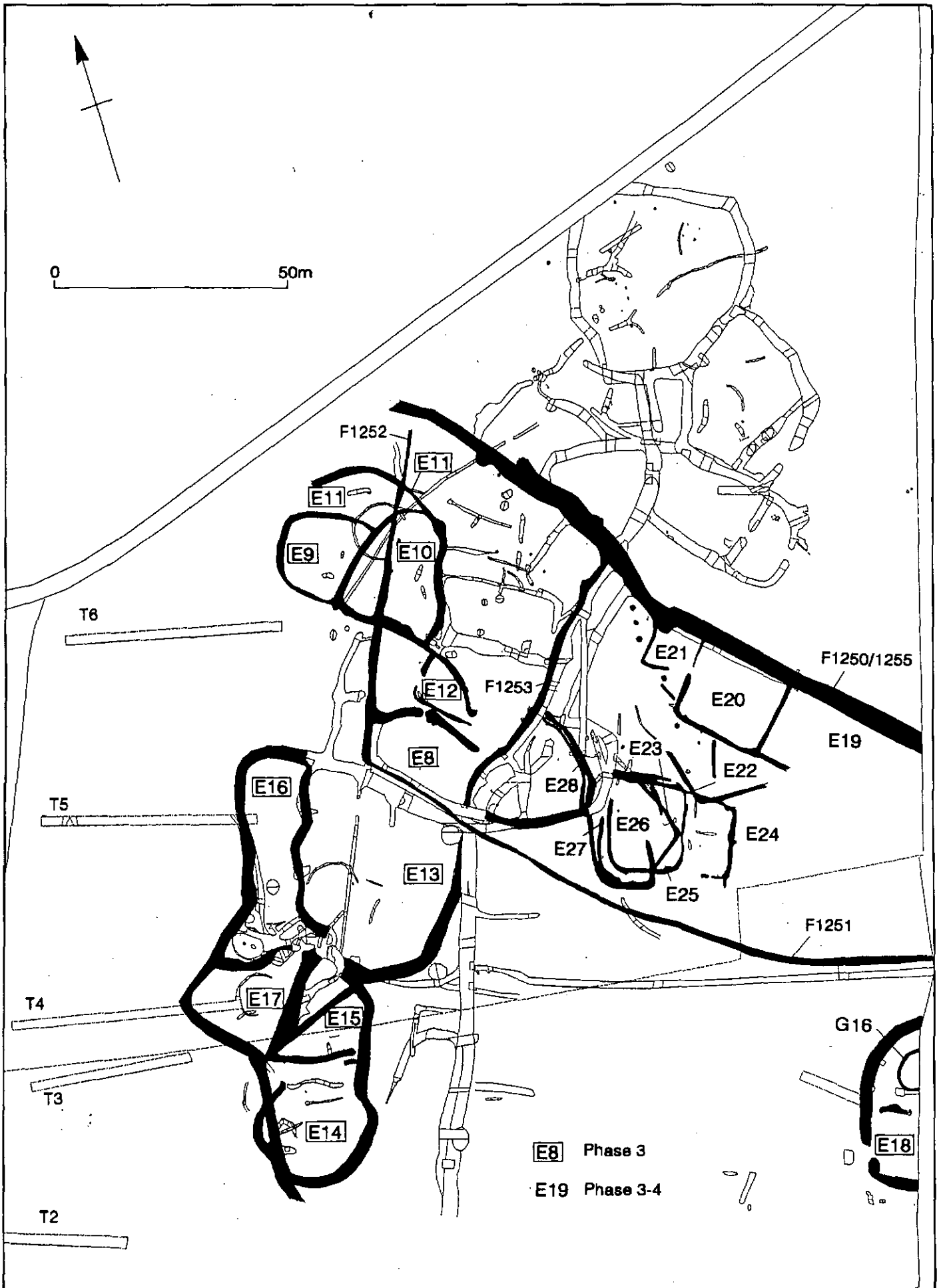


FIG.3

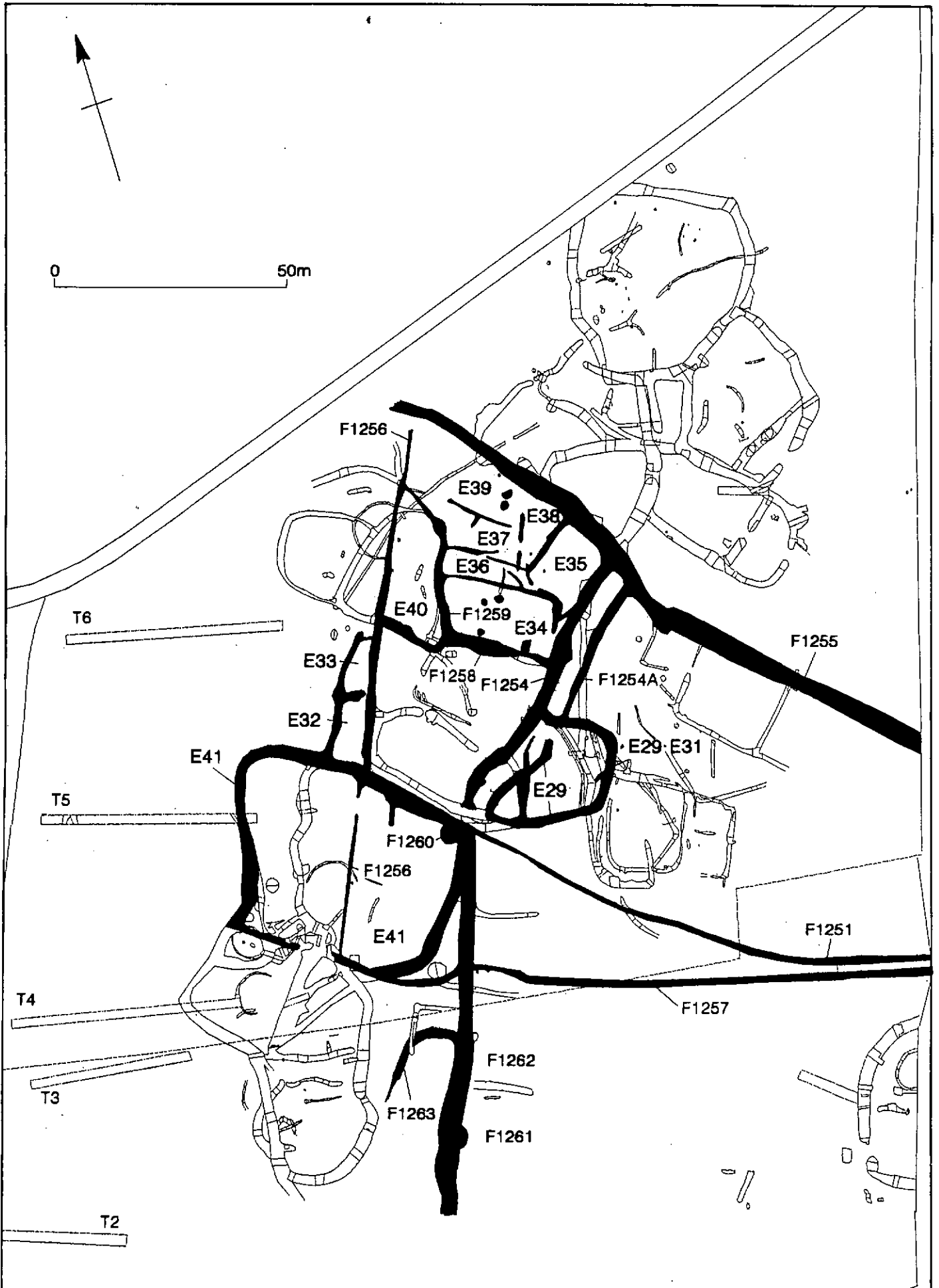


FIG.4