

# STANWICK QUARRY, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE RAUNDS AREA PROJECT: PHASING THE IRON AGE AND ROMANO-BRITISH SETTLEMENT AT STANWICK, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE (EXCAVATIONS 1984-1992)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORT: VOLUME I

Vicky Crosby and Liz Muldowney, with illustrations by Eddie Lyons



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## STANWICK QUARRY, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

### **Raunds Area Project** **Phasing the Iron Age and Romano-British settlement at** **Stanwick, Northamptonshire (excavations 1984-1992)**

#### Volume One

Vicky Crosby and Liz Muldowney  
Illustrations by Eddie Lyons

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## SUMMARY

Extensive excavations at Stanwick, Northamptonshire (SP972716) were carried out in advance of gravel extraction between 1984 and 1992. Extensive and productive in their own right, in the broader context of the Raunds Area Project they offer a unique opportunity to examine the development of Iron Age and Romano-British rural settlement, society and economy in a landscape setting and in the context of earlier and later evidence for settlement and agriculture.

This report describes the early Iron Age to fifth/sixth century AD phases of the site. The phasing methodology is outlined, including the problems encountered and solutions reached.

Fields and droveways of mid/late Bronze Age date formed the backdrop to scattered occupation from the earliest Iron Age and continued to influence the landscape. An unenclosed settlement developed in an organised landscape from the middle Iron Age. A circular enclosure containing a single structure lay north-east of the main occupation during the late Iron Age. The trackways and enclosures established in the first century AD formed the framework for the development of an agricultural village in the late first to third centuries AD. Stone construction was gradually introduced in buildings and yard walls replaced ditches, but circular buildings persisted alongside rectilinear. More complex building types appeared from the mid third century AD, and one aisled building was increasingly elaborated, finally being incorporated into a corridor villa in the late fourth century AD. This was accompanied by significant change in the settlement layout – the villa was fronted by a large enclosure which cut across existing boundaries, and nearby building groups declined or went out of use. Occupation continued in well into the fifth century AD, but with a marked change in character. The villa enclosure remained in use and burials were placed along the outside of its wall as late as the mid fifth or sixth century AD.

## CONTRIBUTORS

The excavations at Stanwick (1984-1991) were directed by David Neal, and the Irthlingborough excavations (in 1986-7) by Claire Halpin. Additional work at Stanwick in 1991-2 was by Frances Blore, and Dennis Jackson directed the trial excavations in 1979. The Raunds Iron Age and Romano-British Project was managed by David Neal from 1984-1993, by Rob Perrin between 1993 and 1997, and by Vicky Crosby from 1997. An interim report on the first five years' work was published by Neal (1989) and the methods are described by Perrin and Neal (1994). David Neal has continued to act as a consultant throughout, and provided valuable comments on this report.

The phasing methodology was devised by Vicky Crosby and developed through discussion with the phasing team. Individual areas were phased by Vicky Crosby, Gareth Hatton, Helen Moore, Liz Muldowney, Dan Stansbie, Pip Stephenson and John Taylor.

The sequences were linked into site-wide phases by Liz Muldowney. The Phase descriptions were drafted by Liz Muldowney and edited by Vicky Crosby. The Introduction is by Vicky Crosby.

The phase plans were produced by Eddie Lyons using drawings generated by Liz Muldowney.

The pottery dates were provided by Elaine Morris (Iron Age) and Ed McSloy and Colin Wallace (Romano-British). Ed and Colin also provided detailed feedback on the phasing of each area in light of the pottery evidence. Coin identifications and dating were by John Davies. The small finds assessments were collated by Jan Summerfield and Angela Wardle: Angela also provided additional information and dating for the metal objects from some of the burials.

The Assessment reports (Perrin 1995a, b) have been valuable sources of information, in this instance particularly about the artefacts and their dating. In addition to those mentioned above, these include the reports on glass (Hilary Cool), querns and other stone objects (Jeremy Evans), brooches (Adrian Olivier) amphorae (David Williams), mortaria (Lindsay Rollo), samian (Brenda Dickinson), architecture and sculptured stone (Martin Henig and Thomas Blagg), post-Roman pottery (Paul Blinkhorn), and mosaics (David Neal).

Frances Healy (Raunds Prehistoric Project) discussed the earlier phases and the reuse of prehistoric features in the Romano-British period. She also gave us access to the draft text of the publication report.

The geophysical surveys were carried out by Andy Payne.

Methods for single context digitising from multi-context plans were established by Eddie Lyons, and the digitising was carried out by Eddie Lyons, Helen Moore and John Vallender. The batch plotting utility for the scanned plans and the Visual Basic/Auto LISP utility to generate AutoCAD phase plans from lists of contexts were written by Miles Hitchen.

Context matrices covering most of the site were drawn up by Peter Busby, Adam Gwilt, Nick Shepherd, and Niall Oakey.

The work was carried out using a database (RRAD) written in MS Access 2 by David Coombes of Bedfordshire County Archaeological Service (now Albion Archaeology). The specification for the database was produced by Brian Attewell and Vicky Crosby. Database development to support the block and site wide phasing was carried out by Vicky Crosby.

Initial work on the Raunds GIS was by Paul Cripps, and the GIS is now being designed and implemented by Andrew Lowerre.

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**ARCHIVE LOCATION**

English Heritage, Fort Cumberland, Portsmouth

**DATE OF FIELDWORK AND REPORT**

The excavations were carried out between 1984-1992.

This report was completed in February 2013.

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# INTRODUCTION

## Introduction to the report

The aim of this report is to present a summary of the development of the extensive Iron Age and Romano-British settlement excavated at Stanwick, Northamptonshire (NGR SP 972716) by Dr D.S. Neal of English Heritage between 1984 and 1992. It represents the interim dissemination of the results of detailed stratigraphic phasing carried out between 1998 and 2002. The report also describes the methods used in the excavation and phasing, and the issues encountered in handling the large Stanwick dataset.

The report should be seen as work in progress. Although the stratigraphic framework is now well established, additional information from the finds and environmental analyses will certainly increase our understanding of the site. In particular, further work should allow questions of longevity and continuity to be resolved.

The report describes the development and layout of the Stanwick settlement. It provides the framework for the analysis of the site, and of the objects and environmental evidence it produced. It makes the results achieved to date more widely available. It also provides an opportunity to review the work carried out, and gives a brief account of the methods used and some 'lessons learnt' in dealing with this large and complex site. The understanding of the stratigraphic sequence demonstrated in the following pages and figures will form the basis of the specialist analyses that should follow. It also provides an indication of the huge potential of this archive and the opportunities for research that it offers.

## The significance of the Stanwick excavations

The excavations at Stanwick are of national importance. Extensive and productive in their own right, in the broader context of the Raunds Area Project they offer a unique opportunity to examine the development of Iron Age and Romano-British rural settlement, society and economy in a landscape setting and in the context of earlier and later evidence for settlement and agriculture.

Over thirty hectares were excavated in advance of destruction by gravel quarrying. The phasing described below has established a sequence from unenclosed early/middle Iron Age settlement to small-scale early post-Roman occupation. The timescale, density of occupation and phasing allow long term questions of continuity and change to be addressed.

Fields and droveways of mid/late Bronze Age date formed the backdrop to scattered occupation from the earliest Iron Age and continued to influence the landscape. An unenclosed settlement developed in an organised landscape from the middle Iron Age. A

circular enclosure containing a single structure lay north-east of the main occupation during the late Iron Age. The trackways and enclosures established in the first century AD formed the framework for the development of an agricultural village in the late first to third centuries AD. Stone construction was gradually introduced in buildings and yard walls replaced ditches, but circular buildings persisted alongside rectilinear examples. More complex building types appeared from the mid third century AD, and one aisled building was increasingly elaborated, finally being incorporated into a corridor villa in the late fourth century AD. This was accompanied by significant change in the settlement layout – the villa was fronted by a large enclosure which cut across existing boundaries, and nearby building groups declined or went out of use. Occupation continued well into the fifth century AD, but with a marked change in character. The villa enclosure remained in use and burials were placed along the outside of its wall as late as the mid fifth or sixth century AD.

This development took place within a setting which has been extensively researched. It succeeded a Neolithic and early Bronze Age ritual landscape; some of the monuments survived as landscape features, and were reused during the Romano-British period. The unenclosed Iron Age settlement can be seen in relation to the hillfort at Crow Hill on the north side of the Nene and the early Iron Age occupation at Stanwick Silt Pond. In the Romano-British period, the site lay between the river and the road from the nearby small walled town of Irchester to Durobrivae (Water Newton). The Stanwick evidence is supplemented by the results of excavations at Redlands Farm (excavated by Oxford Archaeology) and Mallows Cotton (excavated by Northamptonshire Archaeology), which also form part of the Raunds project. Together they fall into the wider pattern of settlement along the Nene Valley, which includes the nearby roadside settlement at Higham Ferrers, recently excavated by Oxford Archaeology (with post-excavation funding by English Heritage). The end of domestic activity at the site in the fifth or sixth century AD can be placed within a framework established by the Survey, including the excavations of early/middle Saxon settlements and the development of villages in the late Saxon and medieval periods. And while most of the excavations are clustered on the gravels of the valley bottom, the Raunds Survey provides the background of settlement patterns and development which includes the valley sides and boulder clay plateau. (Harding and Healy 2007; Parry 2006).

The Raunds Iron Age and Romano-British Project is very much a landscape study, examining the organisation of space for domestic occupation and agricultural production, and the ways in which religious and ritual activities are incorporated into or separated from the everyday. It raises issues of landscape continuity and change, such as the persistence of boundaries. The front of the late fourth-century AD villa follows the line of long-vanished middle Iron Age ditches, and the alignment of the mid/late Bronze Age field system is still apparent in the enclosures of the first century AD onwards. On phase plans, how do we treat features in phases where, while there is no evidence for their use, they were evidently still visible and possibly significant in how the landscape was used and perceived? The Romano-British reuse of round barrows and the post-Roman burials in or



around the villa cast light on attitudes to the past in the past. This project provides an opportunity to develop ideas of landscape archaeology in a domestic and agricultural setting in contrast to the greater emphasis there has been on earlier ritual landscapes.

The Stanwick excavations include one of the most extensive modern excavations of a villa. The main building was fully exposed, and its complex structural history established. The yards, wells, corn dryers and other buildings which surrounded it were also excavated, as were the roundhouses which preceded the aisled hall at its core. The importance of setting the villa in its landscape was recognised from the start of the excavations, and hence the area investigated expanded as new discoveries were made prior to quarrying. The wide range of evidence for the development of the villa within the settlement will allow interpretation to move beyond simple explanations based largely on building styles (see Taylor 2001, 49).

The excavations produced a vast amount of material. The 11000 individually recorded finds included over 3500 coins, and over 1000 items of personal adornment. The architectural stone includes an important collection of figurative sculpture, probably originally from two mausolea. There were 300kg of Iron Age ceramics – and over 2.5 tonnes of Romano-British pottery. The environmental evidence included more than 1600 samples taken to retrieve charred and waterlogged plant material, insect remains, snail shells and pollen. The animal bone weighs 1.4 tonnes. There were 112 inhumation burials, and 8 isolated finds of whole or partial skulls.

The huge analysis potential of the finds and environmental evidence has been detailed in the Assessment Reports (Perrin 1995 a and b), and need not be restated here (the reports will, where necessary, be updated in light of the phasing). The strengths includes large assemblages (especially in the context of Romano-British rural settlement), intra-site variability and the possibility of systematic study which will in many case contribute to national as well as regional and site-specific research aims. In some cases, combination with material from the Prehistoric or Saxon to Medieval parts of the Raunds Project will allow developments over a very long time span to be examined.

Research already carried out includes ICP (inductively coupled plasma spectrometry) analysis used to provenance mortaria and coarsewares of the second century AD (Paynter et al., 2003 and 2009). Residue analysis of Iron Age pottery has contributed to the Natural Environment Research Council and English Heritage research project on prehistoric dairying in Britain (Copley et al 2003). Paintings and discussion of the mosaics are included in the first volume of *Roman Mosaics of Britain* (Neal and Cosh 2002, 254-9). Work on one aspect of the Iron Age pottery formed the basis for an undergraduate dissertation (Cooper 2004). An early draft of the Stanwick phasing contributed to research on aggregated Iron Age settlement in the East Midlands (Thomas 2005). Study of charred plant remains from some of the Iron Age four-post structures provided a project for a placement student (Summers 2004).

## The Raunds Area Project – an early research framework

The excavations at Stanwick, Northamptonshire form the major part of the Iron Age and Romano-British element of the Raunds Area Project. This is a collaborative project between English Heritage and Northamptonshire County Council Archaeology Unit, examining the evolution of the landscape in an area of 40 square kilometres of the Nene valley in Northamptonshire (Figure 1). The Project combines rescue excavation in response to gravel extraction, housing development and road-building with field survey, environmental investigations and documentary research. It covers sites ranging from the late-glacial to the post-medieval periods. The project as a whole is described by Parry (1994). Both the Raunds Area Survey (Parry 2006) and the Raunds Prehistoric Project are now published (Harding and Healy 2007). The medieval part of the Raunds project includes the development from early Anglo-Saxon settlement to medieval village at North Raunds (Audouy and Chapman 2008), the Anglo-Saxon church and churchyard at Raunds Furnells (Boddington 1996), and the medieval hamlet and watermill at West Cotton, where there was also some early to mid Anglo-Saxon activity (Chapman 2010).

The position of Stanwick within the Raunds Area Project means the site can be viewed in the context of preceding, contemporary and successive settlements and landscape development. This greatly enhances the analysis and synthesis which will be possible.

The key themes of the RAP were summarised in the paper *The Raunds Area Project: A Reassessment of the Research Design*, submitted to EH's Ancient Monuments Advisory Committee in 1989. For the Iron Age to Romano-British period, they were:

“Agricultural expansion in the Iron Age and Roman period (c. 500 BC – AD 400) and the development of a complex rural economy in the Roman period. (The study of the subsequent 5th century decline is also an objective, though hampered by the elusive nature of remains from that period).”

### Reasons for fieldwork

The site occupied a gravel terrace on the east bank of the River Nene, west of the A605 Stanwick village bypass. Trial excavations in 1979 established the location of Roman stone buildings, which had been noted in the late eighteenth century. Further work in 1984 showed that there was good preservation of archaeological deposits and environmental evidence and that occupation of the site had started at least by the late Iron Age. However, approval for gravel extraction - necessarily involving the destruction of the site - had been given some years previously. The threat of destruction and the quality and extent of the evidence from the trial excavations, together with the fact that Stanwick was the only villa in this part of the Nene valley which had not already been adversely affected

by development, led to the decision to excavate the site and include it within the Raunds Area Project.

The Amey Roadstone Corporation agreed to delay the gravel extraction on this part of the site for five years to allow excavations to take place. As the permission to extract gravel pre-dated PPG 16, it was decided that the work would be carried out by English Heritage's Central Excavation Unit (CEU).

### **The excavations: scope, extent and methods**

The excavations continued during summer months from 1985 to 1992. As the topsoil stripping progressed, it became clear that the extent of the well-preserved Romano-British settlement was considerably greater than envisaged. This had not been recognised earlier due to the masking effects of alluvium and ridge-and-furrow. The importance of placing the villa in its landscape setting was recognised, and the area to be investigated was almost doubled, with the period allowed for excavation extended to seven years. The resources available, however, were largely unchanged. This led to a concentration on excavation at the expense of record checking and other initial post-excavation work, which has resulted in considerable problems in later stages of the project.

A block of land about 900m long and between 300 and 400m wide (roughly 30 hectares) was included in the research programme. The type of investigation varied: while substantial areas were fully excavated, other parts were machine-stripped and visible features recorded with limited sampling of archaeological features.

Recording methods followed the Central Excavation Unit's recording system. Planning was multi-context, generally as successive 1:20 plans of each 10 metre grid square. For some of the areas which were simply stripped and planned, recording was at a scale of 1:100.

The excavation methodology developed considerably during the course of the fieldwork in response to increasing knowledge of the extent and nature of the site.

Initially, work concentrated on the identified clusters of stone buildings, with the primary aim of recovering as full a plan of possible of the stone buildings, yards and walls, then considered to represent a "villa estate". Machined trenches 2m wide linked the building groups to identify the ditches dividing up the landscape, and areas below stone buildings were investigated to look for Iron Age antecedents. Problems were soon recognised - the narrow machined trenches were both time-consuming and uninformative, as they were too small to deal with complexity of the frequently recut multi-period ditch systems. In addition, the method led to a significant bias against the recovery of Iron Age features. The importance and duration of the Iron Age activity was initially underestimated during the fieldwork, and fewer features (particularly pits) were excavated than would now be considered desirable.

In response to these issues, the revised method involved the cutting of trenches 20 to 30m wide across the site, with strips of similar width left unexcavated between them. However, it remained difficult to see how the ditches linked between the areas. The increasing recognition of Iron Age features and of the importance of the field ditches in understanding the development of the site led to a further change, and in the latest seasons the unexcavated bands were machine stripped and features planned, although resources allowed for little excavation.

After the excavations had ended, a watching brief was carried out by the Northamptonshire County Archaeological Unit during the gravel quarrying and destruction of the site in 1991-2, and some further areas were recorded (typically as notes and measured sketches at 1:200).

One other feature of the excavation methodology had important effects on understanding the site sequence. Across the site, below the level of the stone buildings, a layer about 0.3m deep overlay undisturbed subsoil. Although many features were cut into this, they were very difficult to distinguish, particularly because the layer was also subject to disturbance and reworking. It was decided to machine strip this layer (referred to on site as the "homogeneous muck"). This effectively meant that features were recorded at two distinct levels, and the stratigraphic relationships between them were not directly recovered. This complicated matrix compilation and was at times misleading. The "homogenous muck" was not a stratigraphic unit, but sometimes was treated as such during earlier post-excavation work. It was at first interpreted as representing a gap in occupation, but it is now known this was not the case. Dark brown and in places black in colour, the deposit is analogous to the 'dark earth' more usually described in urban contexts (MacPhail *et al* 2003, 354; Sidell 2001, 35).

The methods used and the constraints operating during the fieldwork had a considerable impact on the nature of the site record and hence on the phasing. As with many projects, there were necessary compromises, and a combination of intensive excavation and 'strip, map and sample' was used. The excavation methodology was reviewed regularly and adapted to meet the changing circumstances of the project, and the phasing process similarly recognised the limitations of parts of the archive. For the areas where excavation was limited, the interpretative stages often required comparison with or extrapolation from more fully recorded areas.

The recording of this extensive landscape was a major achievement. Methods were developed throughout in line with experience and increasing demands, and the high quality of the excavation is clear. The photographs and detailed multi-context plans have allowed many questions to be resolved.

Additional information about the Stanwick landscape was derived from the excavations in 1986-7 and 1992 of an extensive prehistoric ritual landscape in areas immediately north, south and west of the main Stanwick site. These were excavated as part of the Raunds

Prehistoric Project (Harding and Healy 2007), but numerous Iron Age and Romano-British features were also recorded.

### **Post excavation work: review**

This review section has two purposes:

- to aid understanding of the site phasing by describing the constraints on fieldwork and post-excitation, the problems which arose, and how they were solved
- to contribute to the understanding of post-excitation processes and use of information systems.

The latter aim relates to English Heritage's Revelation project, intended to provide a coherent digital information system that will make the capture, analysis and dissemination of research data faster and more effective. A major aim of the first stage was to understand how archaeological data is used throughout the life of a project, through an examination of work processes in the (then) Centre for Archaeology and of practice throughout the sector. A thorough review of the literature revealed little describing the use of information systems throughout the life of a project. Much has been written about recording but little about analysis, and the emphasis has been on the work of individuals rather than teams (May *et al* 2004, 24).

The expansion of the area excavated at Stanwick and the decision to concentrate resources on fieldwork, while understandable in the circumstances, left a considerable legacy of problems for post-excitation. The sheer size of the project created difficulties in data management – as an indication, there were over 18000 context records, 2000 A1 drawing sheets, and nearly 3000 photographs. These figures indicate both the great potential of the record and the scale of the task ahead

The IT solutions available were good by 1980s standards. The written site records were computerised at an early stage, using the CEU Delilah database. In some years, the context sheets were input on site, and some of the finds were recorded directly into the database. The remaining records were batch entered at the end of each season. However, the checking routines and glossary controls were generally disabled, and the need to allocate resources chiefly to excavation limited the amount of work carried out between seasons. As a result, the quality of the data varied, and the outcome was a large digital data set which subsequently required a great deal of cleaning in order to increase its reliability and make it usable. The records from the Raunds Iron Age and Romano-British and Prehistoric Projects were separated into two Delilah databases. This decision produced some odd results – for example, Romano-British finds from some areas of the site were in one database, while the contexts or samples they came from were in the other, while a few records were missed from both. In addition, the Delilah database itself had serious limitations. Querying the data in tabular form and producing reports was

difficult. By the 1990s, Delilah's capabilities lagged well behind contemporary relational databases.

Unfortunately, little documentation now exists for some of the earlier post-excavation work, which is regrettable given that much hard work was put in by the team. With staff changes, the impetus and continuity of knowledge were often lost. For example, a number of coloured phase plans were produced, but supporting information is lacking. Some record corrections and some specialist data did not find their way onto the database

However, two major tasks were completed. An overall site plan was digitised from hand drawn composites, and this formed the basis for the Site Atlas of Plans. It was an essential tool during the phasing - but it could be misleading, as relationships between features were at times shown incorrectly and interpretation was sometimes not distinguished from fact. Context matrices covering most of the site were produced in 1993-4. The majority were drawn (not generated) digitally using a basic CAD (computer-aided design) package. This aided compilation, but they were difficult to use on screen, and the huge printouts which resulted were equally difficult to handle. The traditional paper matrices were considerably easier to use. Nevertheless, both were a valuable source of information during the phasing.

In 1994, the initial post-excavation work and pot spot dates were used to produce a rough indication of the period to which most contexts belonged, and this was used as the basis for the Assessment in 1994/5 (Perrin 1995a and b). This demonstrated the considerable potential for analysis, but did not provide a sufficient basis for the analysis of the objects, the environmental evidence or the development of the site. It was acknowledged that many of the assessments would need revision once reliable site phasing became available.

Following the Assessment, Central Archaeology Service (CAS – the successor to the CEU) management endorsed the need to establish an analysis programme which would do justice to this nationally important project. However, it was accepted that a "first stage analysis" was required to prepare for the full analysis programme. This included commissioning and implementing a new project database, producing the Stanwick phasing, and revision of the assessment reports in light of the phasing information.

It was agreed in 1997 to commission the database and recruit project-specific staff to carry out the phasing and analyse the Romano-British pottery. In line with English Heritage's commitment to developing skills in the sector, two stratigraphic analysts and one pottery researcher were specified as training posts. The database specification was written, and the major task of 'cleaning' the context data started. The guidelines for the phasing were written, and conversion of graphical data to digital formats began with scanning the site drawings and the colour slides. By early 1998, the new staff and the database (RRAD – Raunds Roman Analytical Database) were in place and the phasing started.

Data digitising and development of IT solutions continued during the phasing. The colour slides were scanned and the images were held on compact disks. Using printouts of the scanned plans to create area composites at scales of 1:100 or 1:50 was a vital tool in the phasing, and a purpose written 'batch plotter' utility, which enabled plans to be printed to exact scale in batches rather than individually, saved a great deal of time. The lack of functionality of the CAD site plan proved to be a real hindrance as it meant that local phase plans could not be generated and annotated in parallel with the phasing. The work to re-digitise by context was finally agreed, and has achieved the digital dataset of single context drawings needed for analysis (and to generate the plans in this report). However, due to limited graphics resources, this work was not completed until near the end of the phasing.

It soon became clear that the phasing team was producing good results. The phasing methodology and the IT solutions were developed in light of experience as the work proceeded, and thorough documentation meant that team changes went smoothly. Close liaison with the pottery specialists and the continued contribution of David Neal were vital. The emphasis on team work, and a clearly specified methodology and documentation, together with resources not available previously to the team, allowed us to establish the structural history of this complex site.

### **Stratigraphic analysis – methods**

Some basic principles underlay the phasing methodology:

- The phasing would be based on the development of the settlement and landscape rather than arbitrary slices of time.
- The work would follow clearly defined methods to achieve consistent results across the team
- The phasing would be entered directly into the project database, to prevent double handling of data.
- Emphasis would be placed on thoroughly documenting the work.
- Crucially, the phasing also would be selective – while no areas of the site could be excluded, it was explicitly recognised that there would be contexts or groups of contexts for which insufficient evidence was available to derive reliable phasing and which would be of little value in understanding the site overall.

### **From contexts to local phases**

The phasing process was modified to meet the specific needs of this complex site. It followed a formal methodology with written guidelines to ensure consistency. The initial phasing was carried out in 36 areas, varying in size depending on the density of features and location of breaks in excavation.



Subgroups were defined as a single event or activity (e.g. construction of a posthole), and groups defined as associated events or activities which were securely linked stratigraphically (e.g. construction of a building). As relatively few layers on site could be regarded as stratigraphic units, groups tended to be fairly small. Local phases consisted of contemporary events and activities – they were not related to pre-determined time slices, but were treated rather as ‘super groups’. For this reason local phases varied across the site – they were based on the different patterns of activity which could be seen in each area.

The process was selective, and at each stage records which could not be phased were excluded from further consideration by assigning them to ‘junk’ subgroups, groups or local phases. A ‘structured junking’ approach was used, so that if later work, perhaps in an adjacent area, suggested it might be possible to phase a group of these features, they could be readily found and reconsidered.

For the villa area, the methods were modified, and the stages of structural development already identified by David Neal were incorporated into the phasing sequence. This was intended to save time and avoid duplication of work, and in many ways it succeeded. However, it left questions which have required further work since the main phasing was completed, especially to tie in non-structural contexts and to resolve a few stratigraphic conflicts.

In parallel with the phasing, the spot dating for the Romano-British pottery was revised, giving a clearer indication of the likely date, the quantity of pot present and the importance of intrusion or residuality. The Iron Age pot was also spot dated for contexts where it was not considered likely to be residual.

Dates were assigned at the group level, using the pottery spot dating and coin dates, but little other artefactual or environmental information. Group dating information was combined to assign date ranges to the local phases.

## **Landscape elements**

The phasing also introduced the concept of landscape elements. These are defined as spatial (not stratigraphic) entities, and are created by assigning groups to them. They can simply be features for which it is useful to have an overall identifying number or label (such as wells or buildings), but their main purposes are:

- describing extensive features in the landscape (boundaries, field systems, trackways) which are frequently present in several phasing areas, by listing all groups (and hence all contexts) belonging to the feature
- allowing the sequence of the individual landscape features to be described in greater detail (for example, a building might have several stages of development within a single site phase or even local phase)



Landscape elements can allow for considerable complexity and overlapping: for example, a stretch of ditch can be part of a boundary, which is part of a trackway and part of a field system, but might also be part of an enclosure which is part of a building complex. Each of these landscape elements can be separately described and their relationships noted. The landscape elements have been enhanced since the completion of the phasing. In particular, their internal sequences are now defined explicitly rather than by reference to local phases, and the concept of landscape complexes is being introduced to handle nested landscape elements.

It is expected that the landscape elements will be useful in analysing the development of the site layout and landscape, and in examining intrasite variation in structural, environmental and artefactual evidence.

### **The local phasing 'product'**

Consistency and collaboration were essential aspects of the phasing, and there was a standard product at the completion of each area. This included the database records (including descriptive text intended to form the basis for producing text in later stages), and subgroup, group and local phase matrices. As each area was completed, the Romano-British pot specialists provided feedback on the phasing, and produced a 'rolling assessment' of the pottery's potential for analysis.

A structured summary report on the phasing of each area was produced, and the results presented in a seminar to the rest of the core phasing team (including stratigraphic analysts, Romano-British pot specialists, the graphics officer and David Neal) and other interested parties. This process was extremely useful. The reports proved invaluable in clarifying thinking, providing continuity after team changes and in linking the areas into site wide phases. The seminars ensured that the core phasing team was kept fully informed - one aspect of the phasing work was the need to concentrate on a particular area while keeping the wider picture in mind, and the presentations greatly helped this.

Phase plans were drawn up by hand colouring of the Atlas of Plans sheets for the area as the individual context AutoCAD drawings (and hence the ability to generate phase plans digitally) were available only at the very end of the local phasing work. This resulted in problems later, particularly in the area of continuity. Here the difficulty arose where, for example, a wall was constructed in one phase, and continued in use in the following two. This was easily shown on the hand drawn phase plans, but as no contexts were assigned to the use of the wall, it was not explicitly captured in the database and hence the information needed to be added in when a phase plan was subsequently generated in AutoCAD. The problem did not arise with all features – ditches, for example, usually included use and disuse contexts, which would be assigned in the database to as many local phases as required. Some information needed to be added individually to the AutoCAD phase plans since it did not exist as context drawing files. Features which were not given context numbers on site (such as unexcavated sections of ditches or features

seen in geophysical survey) could be selected and copied from the overall CAD drawing. Interpretive information and extrapolation was also added to the local phase plans, clearly distinguished from the excavated evidence.

These issues arose from the largely process-based approach taken to the phasing and the non-availability of the single-context CAD files at this stage. They demonstrated the need for spatial aspects to be incorporated as early as possible in phasing and stratigraphic analysis. The spatial continuity is now included in the database, for both continuity and its converse (where a phase of a feature is represented only by contexts post-dating it, such as the construction of a building being represented in the record solely by the robber trenches which destroyed it).

### **Local phases to site wide phases**

Once local phases were defined for all areas of the site, they were combined first within eight blocks covering wider areas of the site and then into a single site wide sequence. This was a complex process, based on stratigraphy (especially of extensive landscape features linking areas), spatial patterning, and dating evidence. It has resulted in phasing which represents the spatial and structural development of the site rather than assigning events to arbitrary chronological periods.

By this stage, the AutoCAD single context drawings were available, and the block and site wide phase plans were generated using these and a Visual Basic/Auto LISP utility. Interpretation was added at both levels as appropriate, with a clear distinction made on the plans between evidence and interpretation.

The completion of this stage resulted in the clear understanding of the development of the site which the series of phase plans in this report presents.

### **Some landscape phasing issues**

Issues of continuity and longevity were often hard to resolve. For example, it could be difficult to assess how long a feature such as a wall continued in use. This was a particular problem towards the end of the occupation, where the lack of subsequent datable features and the problems in recognising fifth-century material culture combined to increase the uncertainty. A conservative view was generally taken at this stage, and it is likely that further consideration, with more detailed specialist information, will result in some features from the later Romano-British phases being assigned a longer duration. Similarly, some much-recut ditched boundaries might have originated earlier than the surviving evidence initially suggests. The phase plans will therefore be fleshed out as the analysis proceeds.

Some features appear to have influenced later landscape developments after a period in which there is no archaeological evidence for their existence, and when the evidence suggests they were not visible (fully-silted ditches, for example). In some cases there may have been an intervening feature which left no traces (a hedge or footpath alongside an earlier ditch line, for example). A number of the Romano-British enclosures have their northern edges on a line parallel to one of the Bronze Age field systems – but is this real persistence of alignment or the outcome of the topography of the river valley?

Some of the prehistoric earthworks (such as the round barrows) clearly existed as landscape features throughout the period between their Bronze Age creation and use and their reuse in the Romano-British period, but there is no evidence for activity at them during this time. Should they be shown as physical entities on the plans for the intervening phases? (In the present report, they are shown only when activities are known.)

These questions will be revisited as part of the landscape analysis, and the Stanwick data offer the chance to examine and test ideas, and consider alternative interpretations and ways of presentation.

## Looking ahead

The site wide phasing was presented to the project team at a seminar in August 2002. Work since then has concentrated on some of the issues raised above, especially continuity and longevity in the landscape and defining landscape elements. This has enhanced the spatial aspect of a phasing methodology which was initially largely process based.

We now have a large and reliable digital dataset, consisting of well checked and cross-referenced database records (RRAD—the Raunds Roman Analytical Database) and the single context AutoCAD drawing files. The combination of attribute data (from RRAD) and spatial data (the AutoCAD drawing files) is ideally suited for integration using GIS (Geographic Information Systems) software. A new project GIS will replace the RRAD and the individual AutoCAD drawings by incorporating them into an ArcGIS geodatabase and building on the data they contain. Work on the GIS and a linked Access 2002 database to accompany it is in progress. The database will also allow specialist data to be related to the GIS.

At the most basic level, the GIS will be used to produce distribution plans and other data for project specialists who do not work with it themselves. The GIS will also be employed when revising and completing some of the Assessment reports.

The use of GIS will greatly enhance the analysis programme. To illustrate only one intended avenue of inquiry, it will be possible to analyse finds and environmental evidence phase by phase in their contemporary landscapes (for example comparing different building complexes) and examine how patterns of activity and land-use changed over

time. The combined GIS dataset from the Stanwick excavations will be large, rich and spatially extensive, and as such will stand serious statistical spatial analysis, unlike many intrasite GIS datasets.

Further, the position of Raunds Iron Age and Romano-British within the wider Raunds Area Project and the results of the Raunds Survey provide an almost unique opportunity to link intrasite analysis to a wider area. Carefully selected data from other projects in the vicinity of Raunds will be incorporated into the project GIS in order to place the Stanwick site in a broader context. As well as contributing to the Raunds analysis, the work will allow the project GIS specialist Andrew Lowerre to develop GIS methodologies, for example, approaches to moving between scales of investigation.

### **The structure of the phasing report**

The phasing text is organized chronologically by phase (Phases 01 to 14). The phasing does not follow an artificial subdivision (such as first century AD, second century AD); it has been based on the identified spatial and structural development of the site, and phases therefore vary considerably in duration

The description of each phase is organized in a standard manner:

- A heading comprising a brief description, reference to the phase plan, and the date range of the phase described
- An introduction summarizing the key aspects of the phase
- The main body of the phase text, which is subdivided spatially to focus on activity zones and to aid navigation through the phase plans

The text is designed to be used with the accompanying AutoCAD plans. These have not been integrated into the text but are presented separately for ease of use. The majority of the plans represent a single phase at a scale of 1:2500 aligned on the OS grid (however, references to direction in the text are to site grid north, which runs parallel to the limits of excavation and is approximately NNE on the OS grid). Each phase plan has a small amount of topographical information added, as well as the outline of all trenches. Detailed figures at an appropriate scale are included where required. As with the text, these plans are working drawings: they will be revised and edited prior to publication. Some interpretation has been added, but errors in the original planning have not been smoothed out at this stage.

In the Phase descriptions, the features referred to are shown on the relevant overall phase plan unless otherwise indicated (that is, figure references are only given where a feature is also in one of the detailed figures or is of a different phase). Where features are shown in a detailed figure, their numbers are not usually given on the overall phase plan but the location and number of the detailed figure is shown.

Phases 01 to 14 do not represent all recorded contexts. Three additional phases (20 to 22) have been created to draw together the contexts that could not be incorporated into Phases 01 to 14 (Phases 15 to 19 have not been used). Phase 20 includes all contexts believed to be Iron Age in date, but not more closely datable, and Phase 21 similarly contains contexts only datable to the Romano-British period. 637 contexts are assigned to Phase 20, and 328 to Phase 21. Phase 22 incorporates all contexts that are currently unphased.

Table 1 summarizes the phases.

## **Further work - towards publication and dissemination**

Publishing this large and complex site will be a challenge, and will need to take full advantage of the developing methods of digital dissemination. This section outlines the approach suggested, and publication proposals will be included in the Updated Project Design.

The published report should be a synthesis of the development of the landscape – the social and economic use of space - in this area of the Nene Valley across a period of over a thousand years, from the early Iron Age to the late use and eventual disuse of the Romano-British settlements in the fifth to sixth centuries AD. The Stanwick excavations will be at its core, but the results of the smaller excavations at Redlands Farm, Mallows Cotton and the Stanwick Silt Pond will be included (**Figure 2** shows their location). The Raunds Area Survey and the other Raunds projects enable these sites to be placed in a broader context in both time and space.

It is suggested that the data from the excavations and analysis should be published as supporting volumes to the synthesis. The pottery, other material culture and bio-archaeological sections will have introductory papers summarizing their contents, highlighting the major contributions to understanding, and cross-referencing to both the synthesis and the specialist reports. Much of the detailed data will be presented electronically, in a way which will allow researchers to access it in a readily usable form.

The publication proposals will be based on five principles:

- The synthesis – the central product - will describe the development of the landscape, and it should be possible to read this as a free-standing narrative. It will be effectively cross-referenced to the detailed evidence supporting it.
- Analysis and publication will be selective - identifying the aspects which make this project important and concentrating on them.
- The report should be structured to facilitate the integration of the wide range of data available into a coherent and accessible whole. Cross-referencing between the different parts of the publication will be key

- Electronic publication techniques will be used to allow effective dissemination of the data. Clear links will be established with the project archive, especially the digital archive. The Stanwick data should be seen as a valuable resource for future research well beyond the end of the current project.
- There should be different entry levels to the information – the landscape synthesis, the specialist overviews and structural summaries, and the detailed specialist reports and evidence. This will make the results of the project readily accessible to a range of potential users. There will also be a popular publication, either separately or as part of a book covering the whole Raunds Area Project.

## Conclusions

The phasing of this large, long-lived and complex rural settlement (**Figure 3**) has been a major undertaking, and phasing methods and IT applications have been developed and modified to achieve it. The strong teamwork of the core group of stratigraphic, pottery, computing and graphics staff was an essential factor. The contributions of many colleagues and members of the wider Raunds team are gratefully acknowledged. The work has resulted in a reliable dataset with great potential, with much of the information accessible digitally.

The result is a clear understanding of the development of the Stanwick settlement and landscape and a solid basis for analysis, synthesis and publication. Because of the scale of the Stanwick excavations, their physical place within the detailed landscape survey of the Raunds Area Project and their chronological place between the studies of the Neolithic and Bronze Age landscape and the development of the Saxon settlement pattern, the analysis of this site will make a major contribution not just to our knowledge of a small area of Northamptonshire, but to our understanding of the development of economy and society in Iron Age and Roman Britain.

### Note: CEU, CAS and CfA

English Heritage's Central Excavation Unit, based at Fort Cumberland, Portsmouth, became the Central Archaeology Service in 1990, and merged with the Ancient Monuments Laboratory to become the Centre for Archaeology in 1999. Following reorganisation of English Heritage's Research and Standards Division in 2004, CfA teams engaged in the Raunds project formed part of three Research Department teams: Archaeological Projects, Archaeological Science and Imaging, Graphics and Survey. After further reorganisation in 2011, the teams engaged in the Raunds project now form part of the Heritage Protection Department's Intervention and Analysis and Imaging and Visualisation teams.

**Table 1: Summary of the phases**

- 01 Early Neolithic and Early to Mid Bronze Age: prehistoric ritual landscape
- 02 Mid to Late Bronze Age: rectilinear field systems and post-built roundhouses
- 03 Late Bronze Age to Early/Mid Iron Age, c. 900 to 400 BC: scattered occupation evidence including pits, posthole structures, ditches and roundhouses defined by gullies
- 04 Mid to late Iron Age c. 400 to 100 BC: establishment of a major landscape boundary and several distinct settlement foci with ring ditch roundhouses to its north.
- 05 Late Iron Age c. 100 to 1 BC: the unenclosed settlement continued to develop, including a ditched trackway. A circular enclosure was constructed to its north-west.
- 06 Early to mid 1<sup>st</sup> century c. 1 to 70 AD: appearance of ditched enclosures between the trackways, but fewer buildings visible. First enclosures in the south of the site, and first signs of the reuse of Barrow 5 as a *temenos*.  
  
From the late 1<sup>st</sup> to early 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, an agricultural village gradually developed within the established framework of enclosures and trackways (Phases 07-09)
- 07 Mid 1<sup>st</sup> into the early 2<sup>nd</sup> century c. 70 to 130 AD: first circular buildings on stone footings
- 08 Early to mid 2<sup>nd</sup> century c. 130 to 170 AD: circular and rectangular buildings on stone footings. First stone built wells. Elaboration of the *temenos*.
- 09 Mid 2<sup>nd</sup> to early 3<sup>rd</sup> century c. 170 to 230 AD: stone walls begin to be used for enclosures, including one containing two temples/shrines situated at a road junction. First corn drying oven.
- 10 Mid 3<sup>rd</sup> century c. 230 to 270 AD: increased use of stone for enclosure walls and yard surfaces, and the appearance of two distinctive new buildings, including the aisled hall. In the now disused south-west area, an inhumation cemetery was established.
- 11 Late 3<sup>rd</sup> to mid 4<sup>th</sup> century c. 270-340 AD: bath suite and cross range added to aisled hall, but some other building groups show signs of decline. Changes to the *temenos*.
- 12 Mid 4<sup>th</sup> to early 5<sup>th</sup> century c. 340-410(?) AD: construction of winged corridor villa incorporating the aisled hall, with major changes to the surrounding parts of the settlement. Occupation continued in the northern area. Use of *temenos* changed then declined.
- 13 Early 5<sup>th</sup> century onwards: evidence for late activity in and around the villa and elsewhere on site, including burials, the latest two dating to the mid 5<sup>th</sup> to mid 6<sup>th</sup> centuries AD.
- 14 Medieval and post medieval: ridge and furrow ploughing, stone removal ('robbing'), and construction of a road or causeway leading to the river.

## PHASE 01: PREHISTORIC ACTIVITY PREDATING THE MID TO LATE BRONZE AGE FIELD SYSTEMS

### EARLY NEOLITHIC TO EARLY BRONZE AGE

#### *Figure 4*

#### **Introduction**

This phase covers the period from the early Neolithic to the early Bronze Age. The full report on the important prehistoric ritual landscape, extending from South Stanwick to West Cotton, is now published (Harding and Healy 2007). We thank Frances Healy for making earlier drafts of the report available to us.

The intention in this section is to provide a brief background to the later phases, particularly as some of the earlier monuments may still have been important landscape features, and some of them were re-used in the Romano-British period (the evidence is reviewed by Harding and Healy 2007, 196-198). Only the monuments within the area of the Stanwick excavations are referred to here.

As these features lay outside the remit of the Iron Age and Romano British Project, they were not dealt with following the standard phasing methodology. Most contexts were simply assigned to catch-all subgroups and groups before being assigned to a single phase for all contexts pre-dating the Middle Bronze Age field systems (Phase 2).

#### **The mid to late 4th millennium**

#### **The Avenue**

The earliest datable activity on the site was the construction and use of an Early Neolithic avenue LE191144 (Harding and Healy 2007, 64-67). It was located towards the southern end of the site and consisted of two parallel segmented ditches aligned north-east to south-west. It was between 7 and 7.5m in width and ran for approximately 60m from its south-western causewayed terminus before disappearing. The ditch fills included burnt material, some of which related to burning in situ and has been interpreted as being the remains of fires set within partially silted ditches. Two radiocarbon dates were retrieved from two separate pieces of charred oak and a third from a hazelnut shell provided a date estimated to be between 3860 and 3620 cal BC at 92% probability. The evidence for rapid backfill and absence of much natural silting suggested that this was a short lived monument, and so these dates might be close to its construction.



## Causewayed Ring Ditch

A Neolithic ring ditch LE192163 (Harding and Healy 2007, 98-104) with a 3m wide west facing entranceway was the next datable feature. It measured approximately 20m in diameter and was located towards the northern end of the site. There was evidence for two phases of construction. Initially the ditch was 'V' shaped with a narrow slot noted in the base. It was not established whether this formed a continuous circuit within the feature. The profile suggested the possibility that either there had been a narrow slot dug to accommodate a slight timber circle, which was subsequently dug out causing the 'V' shaped upper sides. Or it may have been a steeply sided revetted ditch. After being rapidly backfilled with sand and gravel deposits, the feature was recut and silted up gradually. A posthole and pit were phased with this structure on the basis of pottery retrieved from them although there is no reason to believe they were associated with the use of the enclosure. Radiocarbon dates were retrieved from wood samples close to the base of the original ditch and from an antler implement on the base of the recut. The construction has been estimated to be between 3340 and 3020 cal BC at 95% probability.

## The Southern Enclosure

A Neolithic or Early Bronze Age ditched enclosure LE192164 (Harding and Healy 2007, 104-108), whose north-eastern entranceway faced towards the south-western end of the Early Neolithic avenue or the superimposed segmented ditch circle, was located at the southern end of the site. The enclosure might have been associated with a number of internal postholes and pits, some of which mirrored the line of the enclosing ditch. The absence of artefacts and environmental material in the ditch suggested a non domestic function. At the end of its use or immediately after, the ditch and possibly the whole area of the enclosure was burnt, though the significance of this fire is unclear. This feature is not well dated. The ditch produced no datable material and the discrete features within its confines may not be contemporary. Only one pit produced pottery dated to the Early Bronze Age but doubts were raised over its relationship to the enclosure. The assemblage of struck flint, animal bone, hazelnut shell, a sloe stone, onion couch grass tubers and three cereal grains from some of the other features suggested a Neolithic or possibly Early Bronze Age date.

## Early to mid 3rd millennium

### A possible henge monument

A circular enclosure was noted on aerial photographs and interpreted as a henge monument (Harding and Healy 2007, 120-122). It was not conclusively located during the trial trenching. A short stretch of ditch LE192165 was found, and it is not clear why this was not investigated further. Although the ditch does not tally precisely with the plotted feature, it has been included here as a possibility. An unexcavated ditch further north may also be part of this monument. No dating material was retrieved.

## The late 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium and the Early Bronze Age monuments

### Barrow 5

A round barrow (LE192162; Harding and Healy 2007, 141-147) lay 74.7m to the north of the Neolithic causewayed ring ditch at the northern limits of the site. Its first phase consisted of two posthole arcs, presumed to be the remains of a timber circle, characteristic of the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age; these predated the construction of the first mound and the inner ditch. This mound sealed a central pit of uncertain function. It was subsequently enlarged after the initial ditch had partially silted up and the outer ditch was cut. Two pits were recorded cutting through the mound which contained pyre debris and the remains of three cremated individuals. There is some uncertainty over the dating and relationships of these two cut features. Dating evidence for this barrow is poor. No primary contexts provided material for radiocarbon dating, but dates were retrieved from a tibia fragment from one of the inserted cremations. This has been used to suggest a possible *terminus ante quem* for the construction of 2140-2070 cal BC at 15% probability or 2050-1880 cal BC at 80% probability. Two further undated cremation burials were later than the barrow mound and a third lay between the two barrow ditches. Despite the lack of dating evidence they were phased as being possibly contemporary. Two pits that predated the Mid to Late Bronze Age field system [Phase 02] may have been of this date and are tentatively included. They are situated 12m and 17m south-west of the causewayed enclosure LE192163.

### The segmented ditch circle

The segmented ditch circle (LE 191143; Harding and Healy 2007, 147) was sited precisely over the south-western terminus of the Early Neolithic Avenue, indicating that the earlier monument must have been visible within the landscape over a thousand years after its construction. This circle was on an alignment with the Long Barrow at Stanwick and the Cotton Henge. It was approximately 9.5m in diameter and was composed of a series of

interconnecting segments suggesting a single event of construction by more than one person. There was a small amount of primary silting thought to derive from inwash immediately after its construction. The sharpness of the edges suggested that this was not a long-lived feature that had been regularly cleaned out. The construction of the circle has been dated from two antler picks associated with the primary silting. They provided a date of 2020-1680 cal BC at 95% probability.

The ditch was rapidly backfilled after its construction. Some burnt material was included in these deposits but was confined to the areas where it cut through the earlier Avenue and was therefore believed to be redeposited. Three cremations were associated with it; one of a child aged between 10 and 15 had been inserted above the primary silting immediately prior to backfilling. A second cremation of a female aged 50 or more was incorporated into the backfill. A third of an adult male was inserted into a small pit just against the inside edge of the ditch; the stratigraphic relationship between the two was not discernible. There was some slight evidence for recutting of the feature but the records are unclear.

#### **A further barrow?**

A large undated ring ditch (LE192143; Harding and Healy 2007, 147) lay to the south-west of the Neolithic causewayed ring ditch. It measured approximately 22m in diameter and was thought to have been a continuous circuit. However, as the feature was recut in the Romano-British period this is uncertain.

## PHASE 02: THE MID TO LATE BRONZE AGE RECTILINEAR FIELD SYSTEMS

### *Figure 5*

#### Introduction

This phase is also published in the Raunds Prehistoric report (Harding and Healy 2007, 191-196). It represents a significant change in land use. A system of droveways and rectilinear fields succeeded the ritual landscape of the earlier prehistoric period [Phase 01]. They form part of a concentration of Later Bronze Age field systems in the Nene corridor (Yates 2007, 86-93).

There appear to have been two distinct overlapping field systems on different alignments laid out in this period, in the north and south of the site. Unfortunately no clear stratigraphic relationship between the two was established. Two post-built circular structures associated with the southern field system are included in this phase and represent the only evidence for domestic occupation within the area of the field systems.

The ditches rarely show evidence for recutting, and may have filled rapidly. The fields and droveways they defined, however, are likely to have been much more long-lived features of the landscape, probably defined by fences (Yates 2007, 93) or by hedges (Pryor 2005, 84-5), which are easy to establish and hard to grub out (Pryor 1998, 85-6, 94). Their layout may have continued to influence aspects of the site development well beyond this Phase.

#### **The north-west to south-east aligned field system LE192152**

At the northern end of the site there is good evidence for a 5m wide droveway bounded by narrow linear ditches, on this alignment, running for a distance of about 250m. Offset from the southern side of this droveway were at least two fields which were roughly the same in size. A second droveway aligned south-west to north-east ran towards the south-west corner of the western field. Its western boundary ditch curved into the unexcavated area to the west and may have formed part of a continuation of the field system in this direction. An area of disturbance between these two field corners, on the line of the droveway, suggests that there may have been a gate/entranceway at this juncture, possibly to control the separation of livestock.

The alignment of the southern field boundary was probably picked up further to the south-east as a cursorily-recorded narrow linear ditch. A short stretch of ditch offset from its southern side may have divided up the area into smaller plots similar to those to the north. If this ditch were part of the same field system its line would have run across the undated but probably Bronze Age ring ditch LE192143. There is some evidence to

suggest that the area to the north may also have been subdivided but there was too little excavation carried out to prove this.

Two very short stretches of north-west to south-east aligned ditch (65379) and (81175) were recorded in the central and southern part of the site. Both were phased as part of this Bronze Age field system despite the fact that they were not well aligned with the WNW-ESE alignment prevalent over the southern half of the site. Neither was dated and both were isolated but their alignment and early stratigraphic position suggests the tentative possibility that they may have been part of this field system. These less well attested features do not prove that there were two differently aligned phases across the site, but it does remain a possibility.

The introduction of this field system is not well dated. The southern ditch of the northern droveway was cut by a pit containing a pottery vessel dated to the Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age transitional period. This provides the best *terminus ante quem* for the whole field system.

### **The ESE-WNW aligned field system**

The majority of the evidence for a field system on this alignment comes from the central and southern parts of the site. If it does indeed represent a different episode of landscape organization, its form suggests that it did not represent a different usage. There is some evidence to suggest occupation in association with this agricultural landscape, but it is sparse and open to interpretation.

### **The main droveway and associated fields LE192146**

An 8m wide droveway on this alignment lay 245m to the south of the north-west to south-east droveway and formed the northern limit of part of field system LE192146. It was similarly constructed with narrow parallel boundary ditches. Its full extent was not recovered. The ditch (65379) was originally interpreted as the remains of a funnelled entranceway, but the possibility that it formed part of separate field system LE192152 has already been discussed.

A similarly aligned single ditch lay 144m to the south. At its eastern end there was some evidence to suggest that it may have been part of a droveway with ditch (81015) funneling the movement of livestock into the unexcavated area to the east. Both this boundary/droveway ditch and the droveway to the north had narrow entranceways on the same north-south alignment.

A north-south aligned ditch running between these two entrances subdivided the area into plots. These were presumably similar to the fields recorded to the north. A short stretch of stratigraphically early ditch ran from this north-south boundary to the west. Its

inclusion is tentative because of the lack of direct dating evidence and the density of occupation in the area, but its eastern terminus apparently respected the boundary ditch and thus it may have been a contemporary feature. A similarly short stretch of stratigraphically early ditch lay approximately 50m to the east of this north-south boundary. Its survival was poor and its inclusion is therefore extremely tentative. Both may represent the further subdivision of the landscape.

To the north of the driveway in LE192146 were three further short stretches of stratigraphically early ditch, LE192141 and LE191123. None are confidently included in this phase and the most northerly (LE192141) has a recorded relationship to one of the ditches believed to form part of the putative north-west to south-east field system that is stratigraphically impossible. Therefore some caution is again required when considering these features as part of the field system.

### Fields to the south

Approximately 133m the south of LE192146 lay an ESE-WNW aligned narrow ditch forming the southern boundary to another subdivided plot (LE191147). This ditch was parallel to yet another lying 20m to the south (LE191142). The distance between the two is thought too great to represent a driveway but the coincidence of alignment suggested the possibility that they were contemporary. This ditch cut across the Early Bronze Age Segmented Ditch Circle [Phase 01] without respecting its presence in any way.

A similarly aligned ditch on the extreme southern edge of the site may also have been part of this landscape layout but the lack of excavation in the intervening area makes any such interpretation speculative. The ditch cut across the Neolithic or Early Bronze Age Southern Enclosure, but was unexcavated. In fact two ditches were noted on this alignment (one being cut from a higher level than the other), but it is not recorded which was the earlier.

The ditch LE191142 cutting the early Bronze Age Segmented Ditch Circle provides a *terminus post quem* for the laying out of the ESE-WNW fields. The mid to late Bronze Age date applied corresponds to the analogous systems recorded at Fengate (Pryor 1998, 89-108). The remainder of the features believed to form part of this phase of landscape organization were included on the basis of early stratigraphic positions, leached fills associated with no finds and distinctive profiles.

### Possible Domestic occupation

Two structures are believed to be associated with the use of this field system. Both were post-built roundhouses of comparable diameters. The northernmost building (LE192161) (Figure 6a) measured 6.1m in diameter. There were no associated features or dating

evidence available but its proximity to the driveway LE192146 suggested its possible association.

The southern building LE191135 (**Figure 6b**) was slightly larger with a diameter of 6.45m. Here again there were no surviving internal features but it may have had a post-built porch/entrance passage leading to the east. One of its postholes contained an abraded sherd, possibly from a Beaker. Some of the postholes clustered in the immediate vicinity of the structure are interpreted as two fence lines. One of the postholes produced a radiocarbon date of 1390 to 1140 cal BC from an ash post which had burnt *in situ*. A sample from a posthole from the second fence produced over 600 charred cereal grains (mainly emmer), and two grains from these were dated to 1110-830 Cal BC and 1050-830 Cal BC (Harding and Healy 2007, 193-4, Table 3.124).

## PHASE 03: SCATTERED OCCUPATION EVIDENCE FROM THE LATE BRONZE AGE TO THE EARLY/MID IRON AGE

c 900 TO 400 BC

*Figure 7*

### Introduction

Phase 03 represents the earliest occupation post-dating the middle/late Bronze Age field systems. It has a broad date range (approximately 500 years) and while some features can be dated to either the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age transition or the early/mid Iron Age transition, many can only be assigned to the overall phase. This phase cannot be regarded as a single or continuous period of activity.

Because of the limited evidence for the later Bronze Age and earlier Iron Age, it is useful to consider this phase in the context of the evidence from adjacent sites described by the Raunds Survey and Prehistoric Projects, particularly for the late Bronze Age and late Bronze Age/early Iron Age transition.

There are two late Bronze Age sites very close to the Stanwick settlement. Three clusters of late Bronze Age flint knapping were identified on Irthlingborough Barrows 1 and 3 (Ballin 2007, 187-188). This is a common location for such activity (Harding and Healy 2007, 189-90). At Scours Field (Raunds Survey Site 5: Tomalin 2007) “an ovoid setting of slots, ditches and post-pits” represented a roundhouse with an external drainage gully and a palisade slot and foundation ditch defining the inner and outer faces of its wall.

The hill fort at Crow Hill, Irthlingborough (Raunds Survey Site 1: Parry 2006, 139-151) overlooks the Stanwick excavations from the slope on the other side of the River Nene. Fieldwalking evidence and limited trial trenching suggest that its defences were probably originally constructed during the early or middle Iron Age. There is evidence for occupation (not necessarily continuous) stretching up to the middle Saxon period, and none of the other features inside or close to the hillfort identified by aerial photography and magnetometer survey can be assigned to the early period.

Early-middle Iron Age activity was also recorded during rescue excavations south of the Stanwick excavations before the construction of a quarry silt pond (Raunds Survey Site 4, Middle Sands: Parry 2006, 154-6). Ditches parallel to the river, a possible ditched trackway, two small D-shaped enclosures and one or two roundhouses with an occupation spanning the early-middle to late Iron Age were excavated under difficult conditions by Jackson (1984). This work will be published as part of the Raunds Iron Age and Romano-British Project.



Dating for the Iron Age at Stanwick is based on the ceramic phases defined by Elaine Morris. This phase covers ceramic phases CP1 and continues into CP2 (Tables 2 and 3).

A few features are ascribed to the earliest Iron Age (Iron Age ceramic phase 1). The scarcity of datable features for this early period is probably partly a result of the density of later occupation and the nature of evidence for unenclosed early Iron Age settlements. The excavation methodology is also a factor, as few pits were excavated. It is likely that aspects of the previous landscape were retained in this period. However, the evidence for persistence of some alignments in conjunction with the disregard for some boundaries produces an unclear pattern of activity, which will be examined in the analysis stage of the project. Both a boundary ditch to the north-west and a pit alignment and ditch (LE 191145) to the south appear to be laid out in relation to the mid/ late Bronze Age field system. However the scatter of four post structures in the north ignores the ditches of the northern field system, and the enclosure ditches adjacent to roundhouse LE 192208 cut across a boundary of the southern field system (**Figure 9**). An L-shaped ditch north of that could however have been constructed against an existing boundary.

The largely undated scatter of four-post structures in the north is included in this phase based on its similarity to some other unenclosed sites of the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age in the county. This area also contained several pits with undiagnostic Iron Age pottery, and a pit with pottery dated to the CP1/2 and fragments of human skull vault (skeleton 6454). It is possible that the incomplete cranium (skeleton 6043) found inverted in the top fill of one of the field system ditches (Harding and Healy 2007, 193) was also deposited during this period, but there is no direct evidence for this.

There are possibly six roundhouses in this phase, two of which were well preserved with evidence for post-built superstructures and outer gullies. The other four survived as gullies only. Some L-shaped ditches may have partly defined small enclosures. Where datable, these features are of CP2. There is also fragmentary evidence for possible domestic activity in the south-west, in the area between the palaeochannels. Too little survives to be certain of its form or function. The limited evidence for this period and the long time span indicate that only one or two houses may have been in occupation at a time.

Enclosure LE 190050 (assigned to late Iron Age Phase 5: **Figure 15**) is very reminiscent of later BA ringworks, such as that at Thrapston (about 7km north of this site). Both these roughly circular features have the appearance of being dug as a series of separate arcs. While the Thrapston ringwork is much larger, LE 190050 is within their characteristic size range (Hull 2001, Fig 1 and 87-9). However, the Stanwick ring ditch has no evidence to support an early date (no datable pottery was recovered from the lower fills of the ring ditch). The circular house in its interior is securely dated to Phase 5, and at present this date is preferred for the enclosure itself. However, it can be noted that the Thrapston ringwork did have a phase of reuse during the late Iron Age, with late Iron Age pottery in its upper ditch fills (ibid, 90).

Table 2: Iron Age Ceramic Phases

Iron Age Ceramic Phasing

|     |                                                                                  |      |                    |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|--------------------|
| CP1 | Late Bronze Age-Early Iron Age, first half of the 1st millennium BC (9th-6th BC) |      |                    |
| CP2 | Early-Middle Iron Age transition; probably 5th-4th century BC                    |      |                    |
| CP3 | 3rd-1st century BC                                                               | CP3A | 3rd/2nd century BC |
|     |                                                                                  | CP3B | 1st century BC+    |

Latest Pre-Roman Iron Age/Early Roman Ceramic Phasing

|    |                |
|----|----------------|
| CI | 1st century AD |
|----|----------------|

Table 3: Iron Age Ceramic and Site Phases

| Centuries BC    |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 | AD              |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 9 <sup>th</sup> | 8 <sup>th</sup> | 7 <sup>th</sup> | 6 <sup>th</sup> | 5 <sup>th</sup> | 4 <sup>th</sup> | 3 <sup>rd</sup> | 2 <sup>nd</sup> | 1 <sup>st</sup> | 1 <sup>st</sup> | 2 <sup>nd</sup> |
| CPI             |                 |                 |                 | CP2             |                 | CP3A            |                 | CP3B            |                 |                 |
|                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 | CI              |                 |
| Phase 03        |                 |                 |                 |                 | Phase 04        |                 |                 | 05              | 06              |                 |

### Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age transition

A pit datable to this period (context 38646) cut the southern boundary ditch of the north-west to south-east droveway of the mid to late Bronze Age field system LE192152 (**Figure 8a**). It was an unusual feature, and its function is still unknown. It had been recut, after a period of initial silting, within its original limits and a charred oak fragment and a CPI pottery vessel datable to 900 to 500 BC were placed on the base. It is possible that it was a complete vessel on insertion; it had been crushed and some of the fragments may not have been retrievable. The disuse of this ditch does not necessarily imply the disuse of the whole mid to late Bronze Age landscape; hedges may have been established to consolidate the droveways and field systems, providing durable boundaries.

A rectangular four-post structure LE192166 (**Figure 8a**) associated with a shallow, irregular, steeply sided pit that respected the presence of the posts but splayed out between them may have been a contemporary feature. It is unusual and currently lacks a convincing interpretation. It contained a single sherd of Neolithic pottery, one of CPI/CP2 date and a Romano-British sherd. Its inclusion in this phase should be treated with some caution. The possibility that it might have been a robbed-out Anglo-Saxon funerary structure has not been ruled out (cf Chapman 2001, fig. 11).

A ditch and pit alignment (LE 191145) cut a ditch (LE 191147) of the southern mid/late Bronze Age field system. It seems to have run up to the ditch line and ended there, suggesting the boundary was still visible. There is no other direct evidence for its date, but by comparison with other pit alignments it is likely to belong in the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age. In Northamptonshire, there is no evidence that the shape of the pits (here rectangular) has chronological significance (McAree 2005, 16-17), although Deegan and Foard (2007, 122-3) suggest that rectangular pits may be indicative of a late Bronze Age/early Iron Age date. The combination of ditch and pit alignment though unusual is paralleled at Gayhurst Quarry, Bucks (Chapman 2007, 182-4) where two alignments of circular pits preceded two alignments of rectangular pits, one of which was re-defined by a series of interrupted ditch lengths. Chapman notes that where pit alignments have been respected into the later Iron Age and beyond, they have usually been replaced by nearby ditches on the same alignment. The Gayhurst pit alignment has a radiocarbon date in the early Iron Age for the final filling of one rectangular pit alignment.

## Early to Mid Iron Age activity

### Adaptation of the Bronze Age farming landscape

The landscape laid out in the mid to late Bronze Age probably retained some significance in the subsequent land use. A multi-recut boundary ditch ran parallel to the north-east to south-west aligned driveway in the north-west corner of the site. It lay 30m to the east of the earlier boundary and was recorded over a distance of 106.2m. It was not clear whether it formed a continuous boundary as it was recorded in isolated machine trenches. It had been recut two or three times along part of its length but at its known northern limit only a single ditch cut was visible. This boundary was originally interpreted as being of Romano-British date; however, despite extensive excavation no pottery was retrieved which suggests that it was less likely to be of Romano-British origin. The fact that it seemed to mirror the line of the Bronze Age boundary suggested the possibility that it may have been (early to mid) Iron Age in date if the earlier boundary was still visible in the landscape.

### The focus of occupation

Although the dating for this boundary ditch sequence is poor, there is strong evidence for occupation on the site in this period. Three roundhouses have been included in this phase, two of which (LE192024 and LE192036) were very well dated to CP2 (**Figure 8b**). Both were post built structures within outer gullies and had evidence for at least two phases of use incorporating some structural alteration. The pottery analysis already undertaken upon the material from the buildings suggested that the pottery from LE192036 was slightly later than that from LE192024. This might indicate that it was a replacement for the earlier building, although it is possible that there was a period when they were both in use. These structures were unusual because of the survival of floor

surfaces and the large quantities of pottery associated with them. The lower floor surface of the later building LE192036 produced a substantial assemblage of large unabraded pottery sherds. Site photographs suggest that some of these may have come from vessels set into the floor.

The third building LE192012 survived only as an undated gully. Its stratigraphic position indicates that it predated part of a mid to late Iron Age boundary ditch sequence (LE192014) and pit cluster (LE192013) assigned to Phase 4, and so an early to mid Iron Age date seems reasonable.

About 20m north of the roundhouses shown on **Figure 8b**, another group of features (see **Figure 9**) also suggest this area of the site was a focus for early to mid Iron Age activity. A curvilinear ditch (82679) may have defined an enclosure, but as only its northern part was uncovered its original form was not established. It post-dated a straight east-west aligned ditch (82629), which was later than the mid to late Bronze Age field system. Too little survived to suggest an interpretation for this feature. The curvilinear enclosure was stratigraphically earlier than (LE192208), a fourth probable roundhouse which dates to the CP2. The building survived only as an irregular oval ditch. No internal features were attributable to this structure, but a large pit (82301), interpreted on site as a cesspit, is possibly associated with the house because of its CP2 date.

To the west two parallel 'L' shaped enclosure ditches are believed to be stratigraphically early, although neither produced clear dating evidence. The easternmost ditch was recorded as being truncated by a pit dated to the CP2. If the date of this pit is reliable and the relationship is correct, then this would place these enclosures in the CP2 or earlier. However, stratigraphic relationships were not well established in this area, and there is some uncertainty.

An 'L' shaped ditch to the north-east was similar in form to the L-shaped features described above, and it produced 17 sherds of CPI/CP2 pottery retrieved from a single excavated segment. Its location may relate to the L/MBA field system, but this remains to be examined. An adjacent later roundhouse may also belong in this phase, but this is not certain (its stratigraphic position places it later than the enclosure ditch and earlier than a first century AD enclosure).

### **A second cluster of domestic activity**

Two larger ring ditch structures are tentatively included in this phase. The westernmost (LE191083) was a narrow circular ring ditch, with a single phase of construction. It had an internal diameter of approximately 12m and a possible north-east facing entranceway. The building is well dated with 94 sherds of pottery datable to the early to mid Iron Age. The second building (LE191074) was similar, but had an internal diameter of about 15m. However, it produced only 9 sherds of pottery of this date, and there was evidence for further adaptation and continuing use into the mid to late Iron Age period, and it is

possible that the small quantity of earlier pottery was residual. Two fragments of ill defined ditches were incorporated into this cluster because of the presence of reasonable quantities of early to mid Iron Age pottery.

### **Scattered activity to the west of the site**

On the south-west side of the site a number of pits and ditch segments which predate mid Iron Age activity were phased as indicating early to mid Iron Age occupation. However, only two pits contained pottery of this date; the remaining features were undated and in non-secure stratigraphic positions. The dating remains tentative.

### **The northern part of the site – a different activity zone?**

There is an extensive scatter of pits and postholes across the northern area of the site. These included twenty nine four-post, six five-post and three six-post groups. Most produced no datable material, and they were grouped together on similarity of form. A few of these pits and posthole structures produced small quantities of non diagnostic Iron Age pottery. This area also contained the CPI pit (context 38646) referred to above and pit 37683, which produced pottery dated to CPI/2 and fragments of human skull (Skeleton 6454; Mays 1990, 10),

The inclusion of these features in this phase is tentative – it is very possible they do not all belong to a single phase. Some similar posthole scatters may have been present further south, where later activity could have destroyed them or masked their presence. But while a few four-post structures have been recognised in the main areas of occupation during the mid/late Iron Age, no concentrations have been identified. They are included in this phase on the basis of the limited dating evidence and because of their similarity to other late Bronze Age/early Iron Age sites, for example, the features in activity zone 2 at Reading Business Park (Brossler 2001, 135-7). The site at Weekley Hall Wood (Jackson 1976) has similar structures, which are adjacent and spatially related to an (undated) ditched driveway.

An alternative interpretation is that the features could be part of a zoned landscape of the middle or late Iron Age. None of the pottery from features in this area was datable to the later part of the Iron Age (CP3), but this may be because there was no domestic activity here.

Samples from eight of the four post structures at Stanwick were rich in charred grain, and analysis of the material from LEs 191912 (from this concentration of structures) and 192224 (one of the small number of four-posters in the area of denser mid/late IA occupation) supported the interpretation of the structures as granaries (Summers 2004). The dominant crop species present were spelt wheat and hulled six-row barley, and one sample may have represented a barley/oat maslin. Brome was also present, noticeably more abundant in the samples from LE 192192 than those from LE 192224. Based on the

variation of the samples from its postholes, LE 192192 appears to have been used to store more than one crop.

This differs from the evidence from the later BA at Stanwick, where a sample from a posthole in a fence line associated with one on the post-built roundhouses (LE 191135) of Phase 02 produced over 600 charred grains, mostly of emmer wheat.

Spelt is not common on late Bronze Age/early Iron Age sites, but only 4 sites of the period in the East Midlands had been sampled at the time of the recent Resource Assessment. One of these (Crick, Northamptonshire) does have spelt at this period. Spelt is the main wheat crop in the region from the middle Iron Age onwards (Monckton 2006, 268-270).

## PHASE 04: ESTABLISHMENT OF A SIGNIFICANT LANDSCAPE BOUNDARY AND ASSOCIATED OCCUPATION

MID TO LATE IRON AGE, c 400 TO 100 BC

*Figure 10*

### Introduction

This phase represents the first clear reorganisation of the landscape after the creation of the rectilinear field system of the middle to late Bronze Age: the construction of a ditched boundary LE192014 curving across the site. This boundary forms a significant land use division. The activity seen to its north is absent from the south, where only one small cluster of pits is assigned to this phase. This is a real difference and not a product of the excavation strategy or survival.

Despite its appearance on the plan, the boundary was probably not a multiple ditched feature. However, none of the excavated segments allowed stratigraphic relationships between the cuts to be established. The boundary was recut several times and established a clear distinction in land use throughout this and succeeding phases. Its line was still maintained through to the late fourth century AD, long after the ditch itself was filled.

Settlement in this phase was predominantly unenclosed, and represented by roundhouses defined by penannular gullies. There are three distinct foci: buildings and a pit cluster alongside the north side of the boundary, another group of buildings lying further north, and a further concentration to the west. The palaeochannel separating the latter area from the rest of the site is not yet dated, and may not have been present at this time. Difficulties in dating mean that some of the domestic structures are only tentatively assigned to this phase.

### Establishment of north-east to south-west boundary ditch LE192014

The sequence of ditches forming boundary LE 192014 curved from the south-west corner of the site to the north-east before passing beyond the limits of the excavation. Its full plan was not established during excavation, and therefore it is not known whether it formed a continuous boundary. No entrances were identified. Only four sections were excavated across its line. Between three and five ditch cuts were visible, each perpetuating the original alignment. Later activity in the centre of the site had severely truncated the ditches, leaving only very shallow, disturbed remains. The ditch line survived to a greater depth in the less densely occupied eastern and south-western peripheries.

The boundary was a key element in defining Phase 4, and the dating for the phase is to some extent dependent upon the date of the establishment of this boundary, as the other

structural remains respect its presence, suggesting that they were contemporary with or later than its foundation. Therefore it is unfortunate that the boundary is not well dated. One section through the ditch produced non-diagnostic Iron Age pottery; one had two sherds of CP1/CP2+ (early to mid Iron Age) pottery. The section to the north-east of this produced 10 sherds of non-diagnostic Iron Age pottery and a small amount of late pre-Roman Iron Age pottery. However, it was almost completely truncated in this area by later boundaries, and intrusion is highly probable. In the section excavated at the eastern side of the site non-diagnostic Iron Age pottery and second to third century AD wares were present. Photographs show considerable quantities of limestone on the surface of the ditch here, suggesting again that there is a strong possibility of intrusion. No dating evidence was retrieved from the feature in the south-west corner of the site. The limited evidence suggests that this boundary was established in the mid Iron Age (CP2 to CP2/CP3 transition) with its use possibly continuing into the mid to late Iron Age.

### **Associated occupation along the north of the land boundary**

There is a distinct difference between the land use north of boundary LE192014 and that to its south. A cluster of approximately fifty pits (LE192013) was arranged in a band along the northern edge of the best preserved segment of the boundary. Although only one was excavated (in line with the excavation strategy at the time), they appear to form a distinctive cluster in an area where pits were generally absent. The pits were confined to the north side of the boundary. The excavated pit (89233) was well dated with 14 sherds of CP2 (early to mid Iron Age) pottery and 8 sherds of possibly intrusive second century AD pottery. There were also three fragments of saddle quern.

Another pit cluster was recorded on the same side of the boundary in the south-west corner of the site. Although these pits were undated they have been interpreted as part of this same cluster (LE192013) because of their similar form and location in relation to the boundary.

Roundhouse LE192011 was also thought to be in use during this period. It survived only as an outer gully measuring 8.0m in internal diameter, with evidence for at least one recut on the same line (**Figure 11**). Both phases appear to have had a south-west facing entrance. There is no datable material from the building, but this structure is believed to be contemporary with the use of the boundary and pit cluster. A distinct kink in the line of the northernmost cut of the boundary mirrored the curve of the gully, and some of the pits respected its presence.

Four further small circular buildings defined by gullies (LE192210-3) lay in a line close to the northern side of this boundary. None was fully recorded in plan but their projected diameters were between 6.2 and 8.0m. Their location suggests that they were laid out in relation to the boundary. Iron Age pottery was recovered from three of the buildings, but was only diagnostic in one case, which contained a mixture of CP2 and later material.



Their similarity in form and relationship to the boundary is the principal evidence for assigning them to this phase.

### **The northern group of roundhouses**

Three roundhouses lay in a relatively confined area further north. Two were of comparable diameter; LE191127 measured approximately 11.5m, LE191124 was slightly smaller at about 11.0m. Both were probably more regular in plan than their survival suggests. Neither had any associated occupation evidence. The third building was less well attested lying at the limit of excavation and recorded only in box sections. This building had the best dating with 25 sherds of CP2 pottery. Only one of the other two was dated, by the presence of 15 sherds of CP3 pottery. Although their use was not necessarily contemporary, their comparable date ranges and location suggests that they were probably part of a single broad occupation phase.

These buildings were on a similar east-west alignment to roundhouse LE191074. It had been established at the end of the early to mid Iron Age period [Phase 03] and in this phase underwent alteration with the construction of a second circular gully within the line of its predecessor, retaining the same east facing entranceway. The reconstruction and secondary use of the building has been dated to the CP3A. The quantities of tightly datable pottery are quite substantial, and the small amount of Romano-British pottery present is likely to be intrusive. A short stretch of curvilinear ditch to the north-west of this building may be the remains of another similar building of this period, but too little was recorded to be certain of this interpretation.

### **The western area**

This area appears to be a separate cluster of buildings, but it was probably not physically separated from the rest of the site. Palaeochannel LE191006 is not yet dated, but it may be a later feature (there is some evidence to suggest it existed in the later part of the Romano-British period). A ditch (context 48063) appeared to define the western edge of the settlement, and probably separated it from the river, similar to the layout seen at the Silt Pond at Middle Sands (Parry 2006, Figure 6.7). Its full line was not established

At least eight roundhouses (which could not all have been in use simultaneously) are probably broadly contemporary. Six survived as circular gullies only, three of which (LE191009, LE191027 and LE191038) had evidence for recutting on the same line.

The single phase roundhouse LE191017 is interpreted as an enlargement and realignment of the earlier single phase building LE191016. Multi-phase building LE191008 (**Figure 12**) had a better surviving structural history, with two phases of adaptation. In phase I the gully was comparable to the narrow ditches of LEs 191016 and 191017. It lay very close to the boundary ditch (context 48063).

Building LE191038 had a similar structural history to building LE191008; a narrow ring ditch that was replaced by a much broader circuit (**Figure 13**). Although no stratigraphic relationship could be established between this building and the single phase narrow ditched roundhouse LE191035 to the south, the pottery suggested that it was the slightly later of the two.

To the north of this lay a multi-phase subrectangular enclosure LE191029 (**Figure 14**); its primary construction and use was believed to be contemporary with these roundhouses. In its first phase the enclosure had a north-eastern entranceway close to the multi-recut roundhouse LE191027. Only its north-east part remained of a probable circular structure (LE191030) within the enclosure. It is likely to relate to its primary phase. The buildings in this area mostly survived only as ring ditches, and LE 191030 was unusual as it consisted of a stake ring and slot.

The date range for this cluster of buildings is quite broad with the potential for overlap with later phases. The multi-phase building LE191008 might have been one of the earlier foundations, with CP2 pottery dating its first phase. Building LE191016 was dated to the CP3, as was sub-rectangular enclosure LE191029 and building LE191027. Building LE191009 was dated to the CP3A, as were the two intersecting roundhouses LE191035 and LE191038.

### **South of boundary LE192014**

This boundary marks a distinct difference in the use of the settlement in this period. The settlement activity seen north and west of the boundary was absent from the area to its south. However, some use of this area is attributable to this period. A cluster of eight pits with similar profiles was located over 100m to the south of the boundary. These pits are of interest because of the presence of worn and burnt stones within their fills. These were thought to have been used in the production of pottery prevalent on the site in the Iron Age period (but the material has not yet been re-examined). The pit cluster was well dated. Two of the eight pits produced diagnostic pottery. One had 61 sherds of CP2+ pottery and the other had 11 sherds dated to the CP3, including vessels of types continuing in use from the previous phase

### **Roundhouses**

Roundhouses are a continuing feature of the settlement from the post-built structures associated with the middle Bronze Age field systems of phase 02 to the stone built roundhouses of the later Romano-British period (phase 12). The variation in their construction and evidence for chronological change will be considered during analysis. Many of the later Iron Age roundhouses, from phase 04 onwards, survive as eaves drip drainage ditches, occasionally with additional structural evidence in the form of wall trenches, stakeholes and postholes. The ring ditches of some of the earlier houses, especially the narrower and smaller diameter ones, may be wall trenches rather than

eaves drip drainage ditches. This seems to be the case with two roundhouses from phase 03, where the floor deposits ran up to the inner edge of the ditch (LEs 192024 and 192036, **Figure 8**). Eaves drip drainage gullies may be becoming the norm at Stanwick during phase 04, but further detailed work is needed. The frequent lack of other structural evidence reflects the extent of truncation of many of the Iron Age features.

## PHASE 05: DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNENCLOSED SETTLEMENT

### LATE IRON AGE, c 100 TO 1 BC

#### *Figure 15*

##### Introduction

The pattern of unenclosed settlement north of the major land boundary (LE192014) established in Phase 04 developed gradually through this period. New features were added, but there was little evidence for significant alteration to the existing landscape layout.

Clusters of unenclosed roundhouses remained the *foci* of settlement. Only the circular gully survived from most buildings, but a few had evidence for associated structural elements. These occupied a broad band across the site on the northern side of the land boundary.

Palaeochannel LE191006 was probably not present in this phase – it is currently undated and will be considered during work on water table changes during the analysis stage of the project (Robinson, Appendix 4H and Campbell Appendix 4C, in Perrin 1995b). No artefacts were recovered from the section through the palaeochannel. It does not seem to have been an active feature in the landscape until Phase 9 or 10, when rising water levels may have created a new channel or led to an old one once again becoming a constraint on activity on the site. Flooding in river valleys seems to have become a problem later in the Nene Valley than in the Thames or even the Ouse Valleys, and analysis of the Stanwick palaeochannels and waterlogged ditches should contribute to understanding of this (Robinson 1992, 201 and 206). Palaeochannel LE 191006 was however certainly a factor during excavation of the site – reading some of the context records gives a very clear picture of the difficulties this wet and reworked area posed.

The occupation between the two palaeochannels (LEs 191006 and 191022) was again morphologically similar to the rest of the site. As well as roundhouses, some ditches are assigned to this phase, and these included a few possible round or oval enclosures within the settlement area, particularly in the lower lying area closer to the river. A ditch at the north-west edge of the settlement may have separated it from wetter ground.

This phase did, however, see three new features added to the landscape.

The first phase of a gravel surfaced and ditched trackway (LE192007) was constructed. This ran through the settlement, roughly parallel to the major boundary in its eastern half and probably turning towards the river at the west.

A ditched enclosure (the first phase of LE 192037) was constructed along the southern side of the major land boundary. Apart from a few pits, this was the first archaeologically

visible activity south of the boundary since its construction. There is no evidence for contemporary occupation in the interior of the enclosure.

A circular enclosure (LE 190050) with a central roundhouse (LE190051) were constructed north-west of the main settlement. The enclosure bears a resemblance to a late Bronze Age ringwork, but the building is well dated to this phase and there is no evidence for an earlier construction date for the enclosure. This feature is very different in character to the rest of the settlement.

### **Continued importance of land boundary LE192014**

The boundary was probably recut in this period, but as no stratigraphic sequence between its cuts could be established, it is not certain which of the ditches was in use at this point. The relationship between the earlier Phase 04 roundhouse LE192011 and the ditches might suggest that the northern cut was later, bending slightly to avoid the house and its pits (**Figure 11**). Although the pottery evidence for use of the boundary ditch in this period is not substantial, it evidently retained a significant effect upon the organization of the settlement. The difference in the land use between the area to the north of its line and that to the south persisted in this phase. All evidence for domestic occupation, in the form of ring ditch structures, lay to the north, whereas the area to the south continued to be treated somewhat differently.

### **Associated occupation to the north of the land boundary**

The four small roundhouses from the previous phase probably passed out of use. Perhaps significantly, four larger ring ditch buildings were recorded in the same area with a similar relationship to the boundary. The internal diameters of their ditches ranged between 10.65 and 12.9m, almost twice the size of the earlier buildings. All four lay very close to, or in one case directly above, the smaller buildings; too close to be contemporary features. The three easternmost structures (LEs192214-6) survived only as ring ditches with few associated external features. They were poorly dated, with only one or two sherds of non-diagnostic Iron Age pottery present in two of the three.

The fourth roundhouse LE192051 (**Figures 16 and 17**) was, however, much better preserved with two distinguishable phases of construction and was well-dated. In its phase I its outer ditch had an east facing entrance and closely surrounded a stakehole ring set into a narrow wall trench, which presumably represented the outer wattle and daub wall. Postholes were noted within the line of the wall suggesting it may have had internal supports. Phase II of the building altered little its position or aspect (**Figure 17**). Internal pits and other features were associated with both phases of the building. The similarity of these features suggests that the reconstruction did not alter its function greatly.

Its primary construction phase produced mainly non-diagnostic Iron Age wares, in association with some of early to mid Iron Age date. However, the pits thought to be in use in this first phase contained mid to late Iron Age pottery as well as less tightly datable sherds. The second phase of construction was dated to the CP3B (late Iron Age). Both phases of use were ascribed a CP3B date.

### **Construction of the road LE192007**

The road (LE192007) was probably constructed in this period although its dating is not secure. In its original form it was composed of sand and gravel. Its alignment, where known, mirrored that of the boundary LE192014, turning towards the river at its western end. It was bounded initially by narrow gullies and a broader ditch subsequently replaced the south-eastern gully. The gullies and replacement ditch produced non-diagnostic Iron Age pottery. The road was probably a very long-lived feature, and its original limits may have been lost. A less well defined trackway leaving no archaeological traces could have preceded the ditched roadway.

### **North of the road**

The presence of the road (LE192007) probably influenced the siting of a group of roundhouses on its north-western side. These buildings, which had few associated features, were in general poorly dated, and some could well have been in existence earlier. Their internal diameters ranged between 6.53 and 10.27m. Three of the six (LE191100-2) were closely spaced and lay in an arc on the line of the later Romano-British road. Three similar structures (LE191103-4 and LE192148) are included in this phase, although LE191103 was set slightly further to the north-west. The close spacing of some of the structures strongly indicates that they were not in use simultaneously. LE191100 produced a small amount of non-diagnostic Iron Age pottery and some intrusive Romano-British wares. LE191101 was the most closely datable with four sherds of CP3B. The multi-recut structure LE191102 may have had its final phase in the late Iron Age to early first century AD. LE191103 produced only small amounts of non-diagnostic Iron Age pottery but was stratigraphically later than CP2/CP3 ditches. LE191104 and LE192148 contained only non diagnostic Iron Age pottery. Therefore, although a CP3B date has been applied there are serious reservations. The presence of roundhouse LE192149 to the north of this cluster might suggest that occupation was more widespread in this area than its survival suggests. This structure was larger at 13.29m in diameter and was probably associated with an ill defined scatter of postholes. It produced better dating evidence; 29 sherds of CP3A/B pottery were retrieved from its southern ditch terminal, although earlier Iron Age pottery was also present.

## The western area

As noted above, the gap in the area of palaeochannel LE 191006 between the two main clusters of buildings may reflect later changes due to the palaeochannel and excavation conditions rather than the late Iron Age reality.

Roundhouse LE191008, constructed in the mid to late Iron Age (Phase 04), underwent two phases of reconstruction and use, with an east facing entrance established in the broader ring ditch. This was the only one of the eight roundhouses of the mid Iron Age period to have a definable Phase 05 (CP3B) use phase. Phase II of the building was associated with a narrow internal gully possibly representing a wall trench (**Figure 18**). Phase III marked the enlargement of the ring ditch and the change to a four post internal support (**Figure 19**).

Later in Phase 05, the roundhouse was cut by one of a series of boundary ditches that replaced the earlier western boundary (48063, shown on **Figure 12**). The ditch produced pottery with non-Romanized first century AD forms suggesting a late Iron Age date. Several irregular, curvilinear ditches of uncertain purpose were also noted within the northern part of this area, but produced no dating evidence. Some of the ditches east of building LE191008 may have been contemporary with the final use of the building. The inclusion of the oval enclosure in this phase is tentative, but it post-dated the use of the mid to late Iron Age building LE191009 (shown on **Figure 10**). This area is interesting because of the distinct lack of evidence for domestic occupation in the second half of Phase 05 (the later first century BC) in comparison to its continued presence in the area to the south of the newly established north-west to south-east aligned boundary ditch sequence (LE191023). The ditch was reasonably well aligned with the northern limits of the boundaries described to the north, although perhaps more regular in form. In this primary phase two parallel ditches 2.3m apart were in use.

To the south of this boundary the sub-rectangular enclosure (LE191029) established in the mid to late Iron Age [Phase 04] remained in use, and its enclosure ditches were recut, closing the original north-eastern entranceway. This corner of the enclosure lay only 2.8m south of boundary LE191023, and its presence may have prompted this change in form. The stake built roundhouse (LE191030; see **Figure 14**) was probably out of use by this point, but it was poorly-dated and this is not certain. A scatter of ill defined ring ditches or enclosure ditches and pits lay to the west of the sub-rectangular enclosure. It was not possible to establish the extent and nature of activity in this area due to the constraints on excavation, but there is a strong indication of further occupation here during Phase 05.

Two single phase roundhouses (LE191033 and LE191039) lay to the south of LE191029. Their location was very similar to the earlier buildings LE191035 and LE191038 (shown on **Figure 10**) suggesting the possibility that they were replacements. To the south-west was a small and possibly sub-rectangular enclosure with an entrance in its northern side;

there was no evidence for contemporary internal features. Its apparent mirror image to the east may have been its replacement, but only a short stretch of ditch remained.

A sub-circular feature (LE 192249) consisting of two ring ditches approximately 10m in diameter lay about 25m east of palaeochannel LE191006. The nature of the excavation in this area means there is some uncertainty over the interpretation, but it is feasible that this was a severely truncated structure. The disuse of this feature was closely dated to the CP3B by the presence of a deliberate deposit of a complete pot and quern into a pit (3290) cut into the partially silted terminal of the outer ditch. CP3B pottery present in the ditch fills suggested that its use was also in this period. This double ring ditch feature was stratigraphically earlier than an enclosure or boundary ditch with several recuts (LE192250) which was well aligned with the boundary LE192014 16m to its east. The primary phase of the boundary produced CP3A pottery (probably residual), and its recuts contained CP3B pottery.

### **The northern extent of the settlement**

None of the mid to late Iron Age roundhouses in the north of the settlement in Phase 04 produced evidence for continuation into the late Iron Age period. However an isolated roundhouse (LE192217) with CP3B pottery was excavated close to the position of these earlier structures. As it was badly truncated by later activity and situated at the limit of excavation, few associated features were found. It is not clear whether this represents a real retraction of occupation from this northern area in this period or whether it is a reflection of the circumstances of the excavation. This will be examined further during analysis.

### **North of the unenclosed settlement - enclosure LE190050 and roundhouse LE190051**

Enclosure LE192037 was not the only unusual feature on the site in this period. A roundhouse set within a circular enclosure lay about 200m north of the unenclosed settlement and 300m north of the major boundary (LE192014). This was in marked contrast to the rest of the site.

Roundhouse (LE190051) was 11.4m in diameter. It consisted of a ditch, circular except for a small semicircular bulge on its south-eastern side. It had an east facing entrance, with two postholes. It was situated in the centre of a ditched enclosure (LE190050), approximately 48m in diameter internally. Roughly circular in plan, the ditch gave the appearance of been dug as a series of arcs. The entrance to the enclosure may also have faced east, but it was not within the excavated areas. The roundhouse was well dated to the CP3B, and pottery in its upper fills suggests that it may have continued in use into the early first century AD.



The enclosure also contained a small asymmetric pit (context 60414) containing structured deposits of pottery, in four distinct groups separated by layers of soil. Not all this pottery was seen by the specialist (Elaine Morris) at assessment, but one of the groups was spot dated to CP3, with some possibly earlier material. A pair of postholes 2.4m apart could be from a four-post structure (the other two postholes would have lain outside the excavated areas). The postholes are undated, as are the other internal features (a short stretch of ditch and a possible fence line)

Enclosure LEI90050 is morphologically similar to late Bronze Age ringworks such as Mucking North Ring (Bond 1988) and Thrapston, Northamptonshire (Hull 2000-1), and the lower fills of the enclosure ditch produced no datable finds. The central building is, however, securely dated, and the absence of material from the enclosure ditch fills is in marked contrast to the finds from Mucking and Thrapston. Reuse of an earlier enclosure seems unlikely, but cannot at present be excluded (see Phase 02, Introduction).

The function of this enclosure and its relationship to the contemporary unenclosed settlement remain to be investigated. It illustrates the variety of Iron Age activity in this landscape. The Phase 03 boundary ditch lying about 90m east of the enclosure is not securely dated. It had several recuts, and the boundary might still have been in use at this time, separating two areas of the site.

### **South of land boundary LEI92014**

The distinction between the areas to the north and south of this boundary is retained in this period, and no roundhouses were found to the south.

However, the first phase of the 'horseshoe' shaped enclosure (LEI92037) was probably established at this point. A single sherd of non-diagnostic Iron Age pottery was retrieved from the primary phase ditch, identified only in two excavated sections. Because the later recut (Phase 06) appears to have retained its alignment, they may be fairly close in date, and a late Iron Age date is suggested. It was badly truncated by the later recut, but the presence of a series of unexcavated recut ditches to the west may indicate its continuation. If these ditches were part of this feature, they indicate that the original enclosure did not have the wide western entrance of the Phase 06 enclosure.

The location of the enclosure suggests that it related to the still functioning boundary LEI92014 and would have encompassed an area approximately 55 m by 34m. No contemporary interior features were identified, but this might reflect the limited excavation of the earlier deposits here.

## PHASE 06: SIGNIFICANT LANDSCAPE ALTERATION: CONSTRUCTION OF ENCLOSURES AND ASSOCIATED OCCUPATION

### EARLY TO MID FIRST CENTURY, c 1 TO 70 AD

#### *Figure 20*

#### Introduction

The late Iron Age settlement of Phase 05 underwent significant alteration between the end of the first century BC and the first half of the first century AD. The major boundary (LE192014) was probably not retained as an open ditch, as there was very little evidence for accumulation of material of this date (although the ditch fills had been truncated). There is no evidence for any other feature defining the boundary, yet its line appears to have been maintained, and the distinction in land use either side of it persisted, though with some changes. The large open-ended enclosure (the 'horseshoe' enclosure, LE 192037) defined by a wide ditch lay immediately south of the boundary, with its northern side overlying it.

Within the settlement there is a considerable reduction in the number of structures. This might, however, reflect changing construction methods and their archaeological visibility, if ring ditch houses were being replaced by, for example, rectangular buildings constructed on timber cill beams. Beam slots for one such building were found. This was also noted at Bancroft (Bucks), where in Period 2b (early CIAAD) "a gradual change in construction techniques from circular to rectangular buildings resulted in fewer ground plans surviving" (Williams and Zeepvat 1994, 5).

In general Phase 06 shows a reduction in occupation evidence to the west, and the appearance of ditched enclosures associated with trackways.

The reuse of the Bronze Age barrow (LE191044) in the north-east of the site as a *temenos* started during this phase, and continued until the late fourth century. This was not an isolated example of reuse in this area: both Irthlingborough Barrows 1 and 3 produced deliberately deposited early Roman weapons, and the pottery scatters associated with the barrows appear to have been the result of deposition of vessels on the mounds (Harding and Healy 2007, 197). The pottery mostly dates to the first or second centuries AD, with some later material. Magnetometer survey of a round barrow (SAM 13676) near Higham Ferrers suggested the presence of a wall, bank or revetment around the mound. The response inside this ring was atypical for a burial mound, and suggested occupation or deposited material, possibly pyre activity. The local name for the barrow was 'flat-top barrow'. An L-shaped negative anomaly was interpreted as a possible excavation trench (Payne in Harding and Healy 2007). This barrow is close to the Redlands Farm villa, and while a number of explanations are possible, it is possible this is

another example of a round barrow modified as a ritual/religious focus in the Romano-British period – the possibility that the L shaped feature could be the remains of a structure is intriguing.

Two burials are assigned to this phase, suggesting a local tradition of crouched inhumation in the first and second centuries AD.

These changes took place within the established landscape, maintaining significant boundaries and route ways. North and south of the area of denser mid/late Iron Age settlement, the alignment of the Phase 03 field systems also seems to persist. The question of the extent to which this represent real continuity of alignment rather than a relationship to site topography will be examined during analysis, but there does seem to be an argument for long-term boundary survival. The exception to this was the construction of a group of rectilinear enclosures set out against a new straight trackway in the part of the site south of the major land boundary LE192014. This use of an area that had been without much archaeologically-visible activity since the mid to late Bronze Age is significant, but the change cannot be dated closely.

Overall this is a fairly tightly-datable period of landscape reorganization and use over a period of approximately seventy years. Although some elements would have been present from the final years of the previous century, the majority included here were well dated to the early to mid first century AD with only small quantities of Iron Age material present. This contrasts well with the previous phase which produced good late Iron Age assemblages and small quantities of first century AD material.

### **The 'horseshoe' enclosure LE192037**

The enclosure, established in Phase 05, was recut on a massive scale. In its phase II the ditch was in excess of 7m wide and survived to a depth of 1.7m. A west facing entrance was recorded, although only the south-west terminal was found. The plan indicates that the entrance would have been in excess of 20m wide. No evidence for a gateway was found. Although the relationship between this ditched enclosure and the major boundary ditch sequence LE192014 was not clearly established stratigraphically, its northern side appears to have been positioned over the line of at least the southernmost elements of the boundary. The orientation of the enclosure perpetuates that of the boundary suggesting that the latter was still defined in some way even if it no longer existed as an open ditch. The area inside measured approximately 47m by 34m. No internal features were attributable to this phase, and its function has not yet been investigated. The enclosing ditch, much wider than any other ditches on the site, was initially cleaned out regularly leaving minimal undated silt deposits. A period of gradual silting followed which produced a mix of non-diagnostic Iron Age and some late Iron Age to mid first century AD pottery. The ditch was rapidly backfilled in the mid to late first century.

A single crouched inhumation burial (skeleton 6059), associated with an early to mid first century AD pottery vessel, lying just to the east of the enclosure probably belongs to this phase. There was some uncertainty over the date of the layer through which the grave was cut, but this has been reassessed and a first century date is now thought likely. The burial of a child (skeleton 6121) was found within the fills of the enclosure ditch itself. Along with skeleton 6023 (Phase 08) and two undated skeletons (6169 and 6177) these may represent a local tradition of crouched inhumation burial in the first and second centuries AD.

### **Linear landscape layout in the south of the site**

The archaeologically visible activity expanded to the south in this phase. An east-west aligned road (LE190031) bounded by ditches was established. In its primary phase it was unmetalled and approximately 13m wide. Its foundation was not well dated, but its original boundaries probably predate the mid to late first century. Offset from this road, both to the north and south, were rectilinear boundary ditches.

North of the road and set within this field system there was a subrectangular enclosure with a north facing entrance (LE190030). The majority of the enclosures and boundaries offset from this road were poorly dated with small quantities of late Iron Age to first century AD pottery. However, this enclosure produced a small quantity of first century and mid to late first century pottery including a single sherd of Dressel 2-4 amphora, which would have been imported between the late first century BC and the early first century AD. A second enclosure (LE191047) was offset from the field boundary LE191051. Its position suggests that it may have been aligned with another new road (LE192144) curving round the south side of enclosure LE192037, but this road is only clearly defined in later phases. The laying out of this field and enclosure system marked a significant expansion in the visible size of the site, though the area may well have been used in other ways without leaving recoverable evidence.

### **Construction of enclosures within the existing landscape framework**

Most of the significant landscape features north of the major land division LE192014 were retained. The sand and gravel road LE192007, probably established in the late Iron Age, continued to function. Its continuation to the south-west is uncertain but it is possible that the multi-phase ditch LE191023 bounded it. To the north-east it is likely that its line forked, but later activity removed much of the evidence for the early roads in this area. The continuation of these features has been highlighted because they form the framework within which changes to the settlement took place. Although the site plan in this Phase is radically different from its predecessors, north of the major land boundary it developed within the earlier landscape.

Phase 06 appears to be dominated by the presence of relatively large enclosures, absent from the earlier landscape of unenclosed roundhouses and linear boundaries. Some of the Phase 05 structures could have continued to function into the early first century, but significant numbers were put out of use by this phase of enclosure construction. Some of these enclosures may have had earlier origins (in the second half of the last century BC) but there is little evidence for this.

Two enclosures lay in the area between the 'horseshoe' enclosure (LE192037) and road LE192007. The westernmost survived best with its northern side respecting the presence of the roadside boundary ditch. It may have been relatively small at approximately 16.7m in width and in form appeared to be a subrectangular enclosure. Both enclosure ditches cut through the outer gully of the Phase 05 roundhouse LE192051 (**Figures 16 and 17**) but neither transgressed the line of the building itself, perhaps indicating that the structure was still extant.

It has not been possible to date the disuse of the three similar Phase 05 roundhouses to the east of LE192051. However, the central building was truncated by an ill-understood sequence of ditches dated to the late Iron Age to early first century AD.

To the north of this there is further evidence for landscape reorganization. A large and probably sub-rectangular enclosure (LE192150) was constructed measuring 49.8m in width by about 53.3m in length. Its northern limits are not known at this time, but remained fairly constant in later phases, and some form of boundary probably existed. This enclosure would be comparable in overall area to the enclosure LE192037 but was significantly different in construction and enclosed a much larger usable area. It was constructed in the early to mid first century, and diagnostic pre-Flavian pottery was present. This date provides the *terminus ante quem* for the disuse of building LE192148 (shown on **Figure 15**). There was no conclusive evidence for occupation in association with this primary phase of the enclosure, but one small roundhouse (LE192218) produced pottery consistent with this date.

Immediately to the west of this large enclosure lay a sequence of smaller enclosure ditches post-dating the Phase 05 roundhouse LE192149 (**Figure 21**). Two sequences of activity were present. The earliest was an 'L' shaped ditch defining a space to the north and extending beyond the excavated area. It was in turn truncated by a series of concentric sub-rectangular enclosures. These seem to belong to the same activity phase - they shared a common southern limit - and though not well dated, on balance they were probably of early to mid first century AD date.

A larger sub-rectangular ditched enclosure (LE191084) lay to the north-east of LE192150. No eastern boundary to the enclosure was located, and it may have been delineated by the edge of the road. The enclosure was not well dated. Small quantities of Iron Age as well as first and second century pottery were present but its stratigraphic position suggests an early to mid first century date. No internal features could be assigned to this

phase. Part of its northern side is parallel with the alignment of the northern MBA field system.

## Buildings

Few structures could be dated to this period, but there was a cluster of three partly-excavated roundhouses in a relatively confined area to the west of the enclosure LE191084. Although they were not necessarily all in use at the same time, their date range is consistent enough to suggest that they formed a coherent phase of occupation. Circular gullies LE192015 and LE192019 had evidence for small round buildings inside them. The third (LE192017) was too fragmentary. The only datable pottery from LE192019 was two sherds of CP3 pottery, so its dating to this Phase is unsure, and its similarity to LE192015 is the basis for its dating. LE192017 was associated with early wheel thrown pottery indicative of the Iron Age to Romano-British transition period. The better surviving LE192015 also produced pottery of the late Iron Age to early first century, some of which was closely datable to the pre-Flavian period. This occupation area is significant because the pottery analysis carried out so far suggests that there was a significant early to mid first century assemblage in and around building LE192015. There is a caveat in that the majority of this material derived from unphased layers and later features. However, the presence of Gallo-Belgic types and copies may suggest a relatively high status for the occupation of the area in Phase 06.

A multi-phase roundhouse (LE191132) lay 35m to the west of this building group. It was thought to be a contemporary, though morphologically significantly different, structure. In the area immediately to the north of this building lay traces of a possible second single phase roundhouse. This lay at the limits of excavation and was only examined in keyhole trenches, but there is sufficient evidence to suggest that it was of early to mid first century date. A possible rectilinear enclosure LE191129 is included on the basis of stratigraphy and a small quantity of both CP3B and early to mid first century AD pottery.

## Occupation to the south-west

This area remained in use in this period although significant changes were taking place. Road LE192007 possibly extended into this area and might have been bounded by the ditch sequence LE191023, continuing from Phase 05. To the north of this a multi phase structure (LE191014) was constructed (**Figure 22**). Initially it was a sub-square enclosure ditch recut at least once. This was followed by the construction of an inner rectilinear trench which has the appearance of a beam slot for a rectilinear timber building. This was established in the early to mid first century but was not long-lived, passing out of use by about 70AD. The inclusion of the divergent north-south aligned ditch is tentative. The sub-square enclosure might have been surrounded by a curvilinear enclosure, although it is also possible that this was a later replacement. Its survival was fragmentary and its dating poor.

South of boundary LE191023 occupation seems to have dwindled. Immediately to its south an area of humic material (LE191028) mixed with limestone fragments and gravel is well dated to this period. A number of ill-defined ditches were recorded here suggesting some continued usage, but without evidence for its form or nature. Two parallel east-west aligned ditches (LE191031) lay 32.3m to the south of boundary LE191023. The primary phases of these ditches LE191031 produced no datable material but stratigraphically they post-dated one of the two Phase 05 structures and were part of a sequence in use till the mid to late second century. It is probable that none of the features seen to the south of this line in Phase 05 continued in use into Phase 06.

### **Reuse of the Bronze Age barrow LE192162**

Irthlingborough Barrow 5 (probably built before 2140-1888 CAL BC: Harding and Healy 2007, 141-147), lying in the north-eastern corner of the site, must have been visible in the landscape throughout the Iron Age period, but there is no evidence for its use or significance in the Iron Age landscape prior to this period. In Phase 06 it was modified and reused (LE191044). Given its later development, this is interpreted as the first stage in the reuse of the barrow as a *temenos* (enclosed shrine).

A narrow ditch was dug round the base of the barrow, and a sand and gravel path encircling the mound was deposited. The date for this change is not well established, but the presence of first century fabrics with a small amount of Iron Age material suggested a possible late Iron Age to first century date. The similarly constructed north-east to south-west aligned road LE192153 heading in this direction may have been an access route to the shrine (but because of the distances involved this is a tentative suggestion).

## PHASE 07: DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENCLOSURES WITHIN THE ESTABLISHED SETTLEMENT LAYOUT

MID FIRST INTO THE EARLY SECOND CENTURY, c 70 TO 130 AD

*Figure 23*

### Introduction

This phase represents adaptation and growth of the well established first century AD settlement, and the changes can be regarded as gradual and organic.

Structural remains were again probably underrepresented in the archaeological record. There were still a few buildings defined by ring ditches, but some circular buildings were constructed with wall trenches and lacked external eaves drip gullies. The first circular building on stone footings dates to this period. Two pottery kilns, lying outside the known enclosures, also belong in this Phase. The *temenos* constructed around Barrow 5 continued in use, probably in much the same form as before.

There was considerable continuity in the layout and form of the settlement in this period. The boundaries and routeways were retained, but there was a degree of fluidity. The forked road (LE192007), established in Phase 05 continued in use, though the expansion of enclosure LE191084 led to changes in its line. The greater definition of the road boundaries in this period gives it the appearance of a significant routeway (though on a fairly irregular line). Recut ditch LE191023 may have marked its southern side, and LE192022 may have been the eastern continuation of this boundary. As this feature was unexcavated there is no evidence for any earlier phases to correspond with those included in Phase 06. The northern extent of the road remained uncertain in this phase – it may not have been as clearly defined outside the settlement area.

There was evidence for at least one probable rectilinear enclosure (LE192008) offset from the road. Although its full form was not established, the enclosure had evidence for at least three phases of construction, and was probably associated with the use of circular building LE192023. This structure survived only as the southern half of a narrow trench, and no encircling eaves drip gully or associated features were recorded. The relationship between the enclosures to the north and the road, hinted at in the first half of the first century, is firmly established in this period.

The roadway itself was undated, but its boundaries provide an indication of its date range. Ditch LE192022, enclosure LE192008 and associated roundhouse LE192023 were dated by surface pottery collection to the mid to late first century with the early second century as a latest disuse date. The recut of its possible boundary was dated to the late first to early second century, which suggests a consistent date for this period of use.



In the west of the site, there were minor modifications in the already reduced occupied area. Its rectilinear layout was mirrored to the east, where there was settlement expansion as well as the continued use of the established ditched enclosures. The new enclosures constructed in this phase were situated in areas where previous occupation is known (though poorly understood due to limited excavation or survival). Very little entirely new land was incorporated into the settlement area. The distinct rectilinear layout in the southern part of the site was maintained and developed.

## Development of the enclosures in the northern part of the settlement

Phase 07 saw the development of several of the early to mid first century enclosures as well as the creation of new ones, expanding the settlement in all directions.

Enclosure LE191084 (in the area between the forks of road LE192007) underwent slight modifications in its second to fourth phases, originally contracting from and then expanding to the north. Its northern boundaries were still closely parallel to the alignment of the northern MBA field system. Its southern boundary remained fairly constant. The roadside boundary LE191069 was probably constructed in this phase and formed the eastern limit to the enclosure, increasing its width. However, there is little evidence for the boundary's continuation south beyond the limits of the enclosure at this time. Development took place gradually from the mid to late first century till the early second, consisting of several episodes of minor modification.

A new enclosure (LE190043) was established on the eastern side of the eastern fork of the road. The northern boundary was curvilinear, encompassing circular building LE191064. This structure, like LE192023, survived only as a narrow wall trench with no evidence for an eaves drip gully. The southern side of the enclosure was more rectilinear. Phase I of the enclosure was contemporary with phases II to IV of its neighbour LE191084. It was poorly dated but its southern part produced evidence for the mid to late first century date. There is a suggestion that this may not have been the first phase of the enclosure, but without dating its origins cannot be placed any earlier. To the south were further possible rectilinear enclosures on this alignment, but these were very short lived and replaced by features on different alignments. Though not well understood, these features formed a well stratified sequence of activity dating to the second half of the first century.

On the western side of the western fork of the road the curvilinear enclosure LE192150, established in the previous phase, was recut maintaining its original limits, including the non-apparent northern boundary (**Figure 24a**). Its western side lay outside the northern area, and it is interesting to speculate whether its northern extent could have been defined by a pre-existing boundary such as a hedge, which based on its distance from the northern boundary of LE 191084 could also have derived from the earlier field systems.

It is not clear whether the Phase 06 roundhouse LE192218 (**Figure 20**) continued in use in phase II of the enclosure, and it has not been included in Phase 07. There was evidence for some subdivision of the enclosure, and in its the final stage it divided the enclosure lengthways from north-east to south-west. In the area to the south of enclosure LE192150, the 'L' shaped ditch was replaced by a much more substantial ditch, the north-east to south-west return of which was aligned with the internal division of the enclosure.

Phase II of LE192150 was short-lived with further modification rapidly following in the late first century. In its phase III (**Figure 24b**), it was contracted slightly to the north and south and its form was altered to a more rectilinear 'wedge' shape. It was again subdivided, but this time along a south-east to north-west axis. This alteration might indicate that the enclosure was now accessed from the road LE192007. Phases II and III of the enclosure were closely datable, but no evidence for occupation within the enclosure was attributable to this period.

There is greater evidence for occupation to the south and west during this phase. The 'L' shaped ditch was recut on the same line, now butt ending about 37m to the south of enclosure 192150. Several similar boundary or enclosure ditches lay in this area and may represent expansion of occupation from its late Iron Age to mid first century AD precursors. These enclosures were less well datable from their finds, but stratigraphically relate to this period.

North of LE192150, there was evidence for badly truncated enclosures dating to the first half of the first century, and Phase 07 saw the construction of large enclosure LE192155. This measured approximately 55m by 47m, and underwent several phases of recutting within a relatively short timescale. Limited excavation in this area means that there is some extrapolation involved in this interpretation, but the evidence is reasonably good. Like enclosure LE192150, its longest bowed edge faced east and may have been aligned with the projected continuation of road LE192007. Its construction marked the disuse of roundhouses LE192015 and LE192017 (shown on **Figure 20**). The development of this enclosure cannot be tightly defined. There was evidence for two to three phases of construction, with dates ranging between the early to mid first and the early to mid second century, though predominantly of the mid to late first century. Stratigraphically this date seems reasonable for its original construction, with continued use in this form continuing perhaps until the early second century.

Two roundhouses may have been associated with the use of enclosure LE192155. Immediately outside its north-west corner lay a multi-recut enclosure ditch (LE192221) apparently surrounding building LE191111. This enclosure could not have been contemporary with the Phase 06 enclosure, but could have been in existence in Phase 07. It was probably of mid to late first century date: some earlier material was present, but its stratigraphic position supports the date. Within the south-western corner of the enclosure lay the remains of the southern half of another roundhouse (LE192220).

Despite the presence of pottery dating to the first half of the first century, its location suggests the roundhouse relates to the use of the enclosure.

West of enclosure LE 192155 there were the possible remains of a non-continuous boundary ditch running parallel to the enclosure. The northern part had a pre-Flavian date, but the southern section had pottery of late first to second and late second to mid third century date. This feature was explored in keyhole trenches and the possibility of intrusion is extremely high. The dichotomy in the dating is still to be addressed and may require reconsideration of the evidence for the boundary during analysis.

### **The south-west area**

Enclosure LE191014 and its rectilinear building passed out of use and were replaced by a new rectilinear north-south aligned enclosure LE191020. Within this lay the confusing remains of what may have been a smaller rectilinear enclosure with a west facing entrance (LE191015), dating to the late first to early second century. It is unclear whether these features functioned simultaneously. East-west aligned boundary LE191031 remained in use, with evidence for recutting in this period, although only a small quantity of pottery dating between the second half of the first to the first half of the second century was retrieved.

### **Enclosure LE192037**

The major boundary LE192014 established in the mid to late Iron Age (Phase 04) was no longer present as an open ditch, but it may still have been visible in some form in this period as it still seems to have (directly or indirectly) affected the layout of the landscape. Phase 07 saw phase III of the use of enclosure LE192037. The massive ditch was backfilled in the mid to late first century, and was recut in this Phase as a much narrower ditch along the outer edge of the earlier ditch, retaining the west facing entrance. This recut would have greatly increased its available internal area without greatly altering its overall size. It is possible that the masonry footed roundhouse LE192038 was constructed in the period immediately after the infilling of the massive ditch of the previous phase. Although it was poorly dated, its stratigraphic relationship to the backfilled ditch and its position in relation to this recut suggests that it was a contemporary construction. This is the earliest stone or stone-footed building surviving on the site.

Two intercutting pottery kilns lay just to the west of enclosure LE192037. Though spatially and stratigraphically somewhat isolated, they are included in Phase 07 based on the pottery analysis. A publication report on the kiln structure and products has already been prepared by Ed McSloy, and the description following has been extracted from it.

## The pottery kilns

The earlier kiln (McSloy's Kiln 'A', Group I 56344) formed a figure of eight shape in plan, aligned roughly east-west. The stoke-pit at the west had been partly truncated by the furnace of Kiln 'B' (Group I 56397). The furnace pit of Kiln 'A' was oval in plan, steep sided with a flat bottom. It was 1.20m in wide and 0.40m deep, and its sides of the furnace pit were burnt to a bright orange colour. Sufficient of the stoke pit survived to show it was smaller than the furnace and oval in plan with steeply sloping sides. The flue, at the constriction between the furnace and stoke pits, was 0.7m wide with slightly concave, steeply sloping sides. Limestone slabs lining the flue sides evidently represent a reinforcing structure at this point, and further slabs in the 'disuse' fills around the flue probably represent its collapsed roof.

Kiln 'B' (Group I 56397) was also figure of eight shaped in plan, measuring 2.75m along its long (north-south) axis. The furnace pit to the south was a similar shape and size to that of Kiln 'A', although it was shallower. Its edges of this feature were also discoloured by heat. The flue was less well defined compared to the first kiln, although similarly it was cut a little deeper than either the furnace or the oval stoke-pit.

A 'dumb-bell' shaped pedestal was in its original position, upright on the furnace floor of Kiln 'A', and the bases of two dumb-bell shaped pedestals remained in situ on the furnace floor of Kiln 'B'. There is limited evidence for other kiln furniture. However, the Kiln 'A' assemblage was dominated by large rim sherds, and it seems likely that they were selected to be used during the operation of the kiln, either as impromptu furniture or built into the superstructure.

Both kilns belong to Swan's 'La Tène III derived semi-sunken kiln' class (Swan 1984, 55). The simple updraft technology and use of pre-fabricated re-usable kiln furniture is believed to have been introduced to Britain from the continent in the decades preceding the Claudian invasion. The development of simple updraft kilns in the Nene valley are discussed in their regional context by Woods, and in the Nene and Ouse valleys, kilns using this simple technology appear to be prevalent in the pre-Flavian period (Woods 1974, 262-279) though continuing well into the second century (Brown 1994,44). The two Stanwick structures conform best to Woods' semi-sunken type IC, characterised by interconnecting chambers in a figure of eight shaped arrangement. The similarity of form shown by the two Stanwick kilns make it likely that their construction and use represent successive events, with the later structure integrating the hollow created for the earlier stokehole into its own furnace. Similar re-use of existing features into new kiln structures has been noted elsewhere by Swan (Swan 1984, 55).

For Kiln 'A', a date of the final quarter of the first century AD is indicated both by the probable kiln products and the small quantity of sherds of non local origin. The smaller quantity of material from Kiln 'B' is closely comparable.

## The southern rectilinear fields and enclosures

The rectilinear field system laid out in the previous phase was modified in the late first to early second century. The east-west aligned unmetalled road LE190031 remained in use but was narrowed slightly by the recutting of its boundary ditches. It is possible that the offset boundary ditches to the south passed out of use; neither had evidence for recutting and one was cut by a pit containing a second half of the first century vessel. This change might be contemporary with the creation of a boundary ditch running parallel to and about 32m to the south of the road. There are problems with the inclusion of this boundary but it is possible that it marked the southern limit of a rectilinear enclosure offset from the road. Its somewhat dubious dating is based on a surface pottery collection dated to the late first to second century, and the usual caveats associated with surface collection are compounded here by a probable context number confusion. This will be examined further during analysis. The spatial positioning of the ditch does not help as it would also sit happily in the mid to late Bronze Age field system, and this feature therefore needs further consideration. The inclusion of the extremely fragmentary masonry footed roundhouse LE192060 in this proposed enclosure is equally tentative. It lacked dating evidence, but post-dated the first phase of roadside ditch while seeming to respect this later recut.

To the north of the road the relatively small rectilinear enclosure LE191047 of Phase 06 (**Figure 20**) was altered radically. Its western limits (LE191051) were retained and recut, its northern limits were brought further south, away from the probable line of road LE192144, and it was expanded to the east. It now formed a single much larger enclosure alongside road LE190031. Its western boundary was well dated by a dump of early to mid second century pottery associated either with its final disuse or a secondary use. A narrow undated 'L' shaped ditch, perhaps forming part of a structure or enclosure lay immediately to its east. The presence of a possible cess pit (context 81021), containing mid to late first century pottery, just to its north indicates occupation of this date in the vicinity. The inclusion of the parallel north-south aligned ditches to the north of LE191047 seems incongruous in this phase, and might they relate better to the first phase of the enclosure. The use of the earlier enclosure LE190030 (**Figure 20**) facing onto road LE190031 might have overlapped with these changes, although it was probably contemporary in its construction with the first phase of the roadside ditches.

This phase has again raised a number of issues relating to the continuity of landscape alignments and features from earlier periods. When implemented, the Raunds Iron Age and Romano-British GIS will be used to investigate these questions further.

## PHASE 08: ALTERATION TO AND CONTINUED USE OF THE ENCLOSED SETTLEMENT

EARLY TO MID SECOND CENTURY, c 130 TO 170 AD

*Figure 25*

### Introduction

The settlement pattern seen in Phase 07 continued to develop with changes both to the layout of the enclosures and to access routes. There is considerable continuity from the previous Phase, and Phase 08 represents a relatively short time span of around forty years. Within the Phase, some of the enclosures underwent several, probably rapid, phases of modification, though the majority of these were episodes of cleaning out or recutting existing ditches.

The change in access routes may reflect the setting out of a road along the valley from the walled Roman town at Irchester to the important small town at Titchmarsh. Although there is only clear evidence for the road in the Phase 09, the series of ditches at the east of the site may suggest its presence. The Romano-British settlement at Stanwick, unlike nearby Higham Ferrers, was not a roadside settlement in the Romano-British period.

Although the pattern is one of expansion of enclosures, it is not universal. Change in land use was also apparent with the disappearance of some of the enclosures from the previous phase. More structural remains are included in this phase, probably due to the increase in archaeologically visible masonry footings for both circular and rectilinear buildings. This phase also includes the earliest of the stone built wells which became a common feature of the site.

The area occupied by buildings expanded, with the construction of a building to the north, between the main settlement and the elaborated *temenos*. The western area saw an increase in visible occupation evidence within the established landscape. The apparent expansion to the south might in part reflect the excavation strategy, as this area saw little excavation below the later Roman levels. The occupation here in this phase is less rectilinear in form; this overrides the previously established landscape layout.

A further crouched burial (see Phase 06) and two infant burials inserted below the floor of a stone roundhouse are assigned to this phase.

### The northern part of the settlement

Road LE192007 was still present in the early second century and continued to provide access from the north to the two 'wedge' shaped enclosures LE191084 and LE190043. However, the eastern fork was no longer a major route to the south-west. The expansion

of enclosure LE191084 and the continuation of its western boundary ditch to the south-west would have cut off access to the southern part of the road. Part of the line of the eastern fork might have been picked up to the north, if it swung round to join road LE190015. However, this passes through an area of trial trenches and limited excavation, and this cannot be firmly demonstrated at present. A rectilinear timber building LE190011 possibly dating between the late first to second century was located just to the south of road LE190015. It was apparently on a south-west to north-east alignment, but was much truncated by the later buildings in the area. Only short lengths of wall trench, a few postholes and a possible threshold area survived. This is a new occupation focus.

Adjacent to road LE192007, the enclosure LE192008, boundary LE192022 and presumably also the roundhouse LE192023 on the old alignment were passing out of use in the early years of the second century.

### **Expansion of enclosures alongside road 192007**

This phase saw a significant alteration to the size of the rectilinear ditched enclosures with expansion both to the north and south. Phase III of enclosure LE191084 saw its expansion to its greatest limits. Once established these ditches were regularly cleaned out throughout the first half of the second century. A similar expansion was seen in phase II of the eastern enclosure LE190043. When it reached its southern limits it was recut three to four times on the same line within the first half of the second century. The exact northern limits of both enclosures were uncertain and the eastern limit of LE190043 was not established (it lay within an unexcavated area). It is possible that it incorporated more land to the east than the plan suggests - the presence of ditches on similar alignments in this area suggests that its limits were not fully established.

Within subdivided enclosure LE 191084, evidence for occupation in this period is fairly sparse. A single masonry footed roundhouse, LE191076, centrally positioned within one of the ditched plots, was in use during the late first to mid second century. A small single cell rectilinear masonry footed building LE192055 was constructed against the outside southern edge of this enclosure. Its inclusion as an early to mid second century building is tentative. It was certainly constructed whilst the enclosure ditch was open, but it was not well dated and could have been constructed later in the second century. Its presence would certainly have encroached upon, although not necessarily blocked, the eastern fork of road LE192007. Evidence for occupation within the eastern enclosure LE190043 is equally slender. In its north-western corner, a daub filled trench represented roundhouse LE190040.

### **Contraction of enclosure LE192150**

Conversely, whilst these eastern enclosures were expanding, phase IV of this enclosure saw its contraction from its first century eastern limits. Its southern limits were not located

but may have followed the same line as its precursor. Although this represented a distinct change in the morphology of the enclosure the early to mid second century pottery assemblage was very similar to that of the previous phase suggesting both that it was a rapid alteration and that it did not greatly affect its function. Its new eastern boundary ditch mirrored that of the extended western boundary of enclosure LE191084 suggesting their contemporaneity. The 15m gap between the two delimited the new road line for the western fork of LE192007, and the contraction of LE192150 was presumably designed to accommodate the need for a new road alignment. No evidence for activity within the enclosure could be attributed to phase IV, but to the west a single roundhouse defined by a ring ditch may have been in use, as the fourth century material in its pottery assemblage is believed to be intrusive. This structure lay just to the east of a multi-recut drainage ditch (the start of the ditch sequence could not be firmly dated and is tentatively assigned to this phase because of residual second century pottery in later fills).

In the area immediately to the south of enclosure LE192150 the rectilinear enclosures of the previous phase may well have continued in use, but dating evidence for this was not recovered and they are not shown on the plan.

### **Enclosure LE192155 and roundhouse LE192009**

The Phase 07 enclosure LE192155 (**Figure 23**) was short lived, established in the second half of the first century and passing out of use by the early second century. It is possible that the masonry footed roundhouse LE192009 was constructed in the early to mid second century and continued in use throughout this phase. However, its relationship to the enclosure is uncertain. It was constructed above at least part of the disused ditch sequence, but it had no clear relationship to the southernmost ditch in the sequence and so (if the southernmost ditch were the latest in the sequence) the building could have been contemporary with the final use of the enclosure. It was undated but a *terminus ante quem* for its disuse was provided by an overlying make-up deposit dated to the second half of the second century. The construction of this building might have been contemporary with the construction of the well LE191109 and associated building LE191112 over the opposite north-west corner of the disused enclosure. The form of this building was not established – it survived only as mortar layer interpreted as a internal floor surface butting the well wall and seen only in section in the box trench dug to excavate the well. It post-dated the enclosure ditch and predated the deposition of a mid to late second century make up layer for a subsequent structure. The well with which this building was associated was thought to have been constructed in the first half of the second century with its use continuing into the second half of the century. Roundhouse LE191111 (**Figure 23**) is thought to have passed out of use by Phase 08.



## The *Temenos* LE191044

The *temenos* underwent some modification and elaboration in the late first to second century (its phase II). The narrow encircling ditch was sealed by the deposition of a layer above the original mound and a limestone surface was laid down replacing the earlier sand and gravel walkway. On to this to the west of the mound was set a possible pier base (predating the northern pier of the later ambulatory entrance).

A pit was cut in the centre of the mound of Barrow 5, disturbing what was probably an original burial pit and two secondary pits (Harding and Healy 2007, 141-6 and Fig 3.79). There were problems with the on-site recording and interpretation of this pit, including changes to the record numbers. However, the Romano-British pit seems to have been dug in the second century AD, and the 'iron rim' (an iron-pan lined interface) 0.95m in diameter probably represents its cut. It is not clear what its purpose was, but the pit could have been dug to hold a central feature of the shrine, such as a post or column. This could have been removed towards the end of the life of the shrine, resulting in the incorporation of some fourth century pottery in the fills (contexts 47168-70).

This interesting area of the site will require further work in analysis to clarify its development in the Romano-British period.

## South of road LE192007: Enclosure LE192037

Three further phases of modification took place within enclosure LE192037 during the late first to mid second century (**Figures 26-28**). In phase IV a significant change took place, and the enclosure deviated for the first time from its original lines with its south-western terminal opened out to incorporate the area to the west (**Figure 26**). This multi-recut ditch may have continued to the south-west to form a boundary to road LE192144 which ran round the south side of the enclosure. However, a complete plan of this ditch line was not retrieved, and therefore it is not clear whether this was the southern side of a single large enclosure or whether it was one of several enclosures offset from the same road. What evidence there is suggests that the entranceway into the enclosure faced east at this point and that the eastern side of the enclosure retained its original line. If this were a single enclosure its northern boundary may have been defined by the remnants of the boundary LE192022 and its recut to the south. This phase of the enclosure produced pottery broadly dated to the late first to second century. Within the enclosure the roundhouse LE192038 probably remained in use.

Phase V of enclosure LE192037 represents poorly dated modification to the enclosure in this form (**Figure 27**). The north-east side of the enclosure was expanded but its eastern limits were uncertain. Building LE192038 probably remained and a second similar masonry footed roundhouse LE192047 was constructed over the backfilled ditch. It was not well dated. A few sherds of first century or later pottery and mid second century or later

pottery were retrieved from a floor surface, but this deposit was not sealed and was open to intrusion. A smaller ditched enclosure (LE192222) was constructed within the north-eastern extension, immediately to the east of the roundhouse LE192047. Its inclusion is somewhat tentative because of problems during recording. It apparently post-dated the phase IV ditch, suggesting the late Iron Age and first century wares present were residual. A four post setting (LE192050) situated within this ditched enclosure might have been constructed at this point. Three sherds of pottery were retrieved from the only excavated posthole. One dated to the CP2 whilst the other two were late pre-Roman Iron Age. As it was subsequently incorporated into a larger masonry footed building it is thought that this material may be residual and that its construction might have dated to this period.

The sixth phase of the enclosure saw further modifications (**Figure 28**), including division into at least two separate enclosures. This phase was slightly better dated with first to second century as well as more tightly defined early to mid second century pottery recorded. The western boundary of the original enclosure was reinstated but there was no evidence to suggest a western entrance in this period. The western enclosure probably had an eastern entrance onto a path leading from the road LE192144. Its northern limits were unclear but it is possible that the ditch to the south of LE192022 marked its limits in this phase. Its southern boundary was moved slightly to the south to bring it into line with the expanded eastern enclosure.

The eastern enclosure reached its final extent, to the south and east, in this phase. The road LE192144 was believed to be in existence throughout at least phases IV – VI of enclosure LE192037, but it is only at this point that evidence for a gravelled surface survives. The slight alterations to the southern side of these newly separated enclosures would not have expanded the interiors greatly but would have straightened the roadside boundary. The expansion southwards of enclosure LE190043 and north-eastwards of enclosure LE192037 brought their boundaries into close proximity. This would have affected any further development of both the enclosures as well as the area of land between them.

Buildings LE192038 and LE192047 probably continued in use during phase VI of the enclosure. Two infant inhumations (skeletons 6056 and 6057) were inserted below the floor of the roundhouse LE192047 (**Figure 29a**). The smaller internal enclosure LE192222 and building LE192050 probably also remained in use. The inclusion of the possible rectilinear structure LE192044, associated with a well, within the western enclosure is extremely tentative. Although the early to mid second century date supplied by the well suggests it may belong to this phase, the survival of the building was poor in the extreme.

### **Road LE192144 and associated occupation**

It has not been possible to date the origins of the road LE192144 accurately. It is possible that there had been some form of route around the southern side of the enclosure LE192037 since its original construction. However, it is only in the early second century that clear boundaries to this road were established. It is not known whether this was a

continuous boundary or whether it was a series of enclosures aligned with the road. There is some evidence to suggest that if it were a continuous boundary then there was some sub-division in this period. There is also strong evidence to suggest that this was not a static layout, with modifications to boundaries frequently occurring. West of enclosure LE192037, the line of the road reflects the alignment of the mid/late Iron Age land division LE192014 which originated in Phase 04.

Development to the west of this road is less well understood because of the lack of excavation below the level of the stone buildings. The apparent hiatus between the late Iron Age enclosure and the early to mid second century ditched enclosure LE192027 may be misleading. There is strong evidence for domestic occupation within the enclosure at this time, similar in form to that within enclosure LE192037. Close to its southern limits were the slight remains of timber roundhouse LE192156, tentatively included on the basis that it predated later second century activity. This part of the enclosure also contained an oven and areas of burning suggesting productive or craft activity. To the north of this lay a masonry footed roundhouse (LE192034) which overlay the remains of a possible enclosure subdivision ditch also of this period, indicating fluidity in the enclosure layout. A second masonry footed roundhouse LE192026 (**Figure 29b**) lay to the north-west. Both these structures were associated with stone lined wells with evidence for construction and use in the first half of the second century.

The western limits of this enclosure were never satisfactorily established, but a sequence of intercutting ditches recorded in an isolated machine trench might represent an earlier recut boundary (**Figure 29b**). The limited dating evidence for this ditch sequence suggests a late first to second century date. Although the dating is poor it may be evidence for a slightly earlier phase. A single crouched inhumation (skeleton 6023) was inserted into part of the disused ditch sequence, immediately to the north of building LE192026. Whilst the dating of the burial is based on the presence of a single sherd of slightly abraded late first to second century pottery, and therefore may not be reliable, it is similar to a number of other first to second century AD crouched burials which may also be associated with enclosure ditches.

South-east of the road LE192144, the eastern roadside boundary ditch doglegged in a peculiar fashion. At least one enclosure was set against this boundary, although lack of excavation in the area at this level means that a full picture of its use could not be ascertained.

The east-west aligned road LE190031 continued in use and the boundaries were again recut, narrowing the road surface. It is presumed that the recutting of both sides took place simultaneously but the southern ditch sequence was extremely poorly dated. The northern ditches produced late first to second and second century pottery and so an early to mid second century date seems reasonable on balance. There was evidence to suggest that this also represented a straightening of the boundaries, perhaps similar to that taking place to the north in phase VI of enclosure LE192037. This road probably

continued to the west to join road LE192144, although the meeting of the two was not directly recorded.

Phase III of enclosure LE191047 was narrower and more 'wedge' shaped. This alteration was not well dated but late first to second century pottery was present and its preceding phase was dated to the second half of the first century. Its western side ran parallel to but just to the east of the earlier western boundary. Its broader northern end faced onto the road LE192144 reinstating the earlier northern limits of the enclosure from Phase 06. This shift back to the north divorced the enclosure from road LE190031. This modification probably related to the construction of a small building complex on the north side of the road LE190031 as the enclosure LE191047 would have backed onto it. A masonry footed roundhouse (LE190032) and square well (LE190033) lay within the ditched and walled rectilinear enclosure LE190035. Mid second century pottery from the use/disuse of the well suggests a first half of the second century construction date for this complex. To the south of the road the undated masonry footed roundhouse LE192060 might have continued in use.

### **The eastern extent of settlement and a new road?**

The inclusion of the poorly-dated parallel ditches to the east of the main occupied area in Phase 08 is tentative. They were on the same roughly north-south aligned as enclosure LE191047, but lay 94m to its east. This was probably a single boundary shifting slightly over time rather than a double ditch. This area was excavated in advance of the construction of the new A602 road which replaced Cotton Lane.

The ditched boundary may be the earliest indications of the road (LE192045) seen from Phase 09 onwards. LE192045 is a continuation of the roads identified during the evaluation at Redlands Farm (Moore 1989, Figure 12) and at Higham Ferrers (Lawrence and Smith 2009) where it formed the boundary of the excavated part of a roadside settlement dating from the earlier second century AD. These correspond to the Viatores road 570 (1964, 339-341 and 494-5), described as a "Romanized trackway wavering on the lower ground more or less parallel with the Nene" (ibid, 340). Deegan and Foard (2007, Fig 6.24 and Table 6.1) follow the RCHME (1975, 1979) in showing the road from Irchester to Titchmarsh on the west side of the Nene, based on crop marks of a trackway on that alignment. However, given the excavated evidence (and looking at the location of settlements) a route east of the river running more directly to the small town at Titchmarsh seems more likely.

If road LE192045 was first established during this Phase, it would explain why it was no longer necessary for road LE192007 to provide a route through the centre of the settlement (see above). In contrast to the roadside settlement at Higham Ferrers, the Romano-British settlement at Stanwick was set back from the major road.

## The south-western area

The north-south aligned boundaries and enclosures of the late first century were superseded by the construction of a major east-west aligned boundary ditch (LE191005) in the first half of the second century. A similarly aligned enclosure ditch (LE191021) lay just to the south. The boundary LE191023 continued in use and may have formed the southern boundary to this enclosure. It is possible that the road LE192007 continued in this direction on the basis of the alignments of boundaries LE191023 and LE192022 but there was no evidence for a surface here. A masonry footed small rectilinear building (LE191018) was constructed within this enclosure close to its north entrance. The building was not well dated with only pottery of late first to second century date present. Probable mid third century pottery was found in a wall context, which raises questions over the dating but its proximity to the later building LE191019 might account for some later disturbance. Several of the features phased in association with this structure are also poorly dated.

There is little evidence for the use of the area between LE191023 and the east-west boundary LE191031, which remained in use till the mid second century. A second masonry footed rectilinear structure (LE191032) lay just to the south of LE191031, but was better aligned with the boundary LE191023. A third similar structure, LE191037, on a north-south alignment, is tentatively included in this phase (there is uncertainty about its dating).

## PHASE 09: INTRODUCTION OF WALLED ENCLOSURES WITHIN THE EXISTING SETTLEMENT

MID SECOND TO EARLY THIRD CENTURY, c 170 TO 230 AD

*Figure 30*

### Introduction

The settlement continued to develop with modifications to the pre-existing enclosures and routeways. The junction of roads LE190031 and LE192144 became an important focus of activity, and the north-south road LE192045 east of the settlement is clearly present. The Stanwick settlement's location, set back from the through road from Irchester to Titchmarsh (the Viatores' route 570), is established (although the limited extent of excavation in the east of the site must be remembered, the trial trenches in the A602 road corridor would have shown if there was comparable dense activity in that area).

The other significant change is the adoption of walled enclosure boundaries. Although limestone had been used earlier for the construction of some building (or at least building foundations), this phase saw a notable increase in its use. The appearance of the stone walls tended to fossilize enclosure limits, although modifications continued within their confines. Expansion of the settlement did continue, especially to the north, and changes in land use were noted to the south.

The move from ditched enclosures to more static walled boundaries creates a serious problem for the dating. The best dating for the initial construction of the walls derives from the underlying ditches, and dating their longevity or subsequent modifications to them is often very difficult. Maintaining a wall, unlike the repeated silting and cleaning of a ditch, may leave no archaeologically visible traces.

There are distinct spatial differences across the site in the use of stone walls. The adoption of stone did not entirely replace the use of ditches, with some enclosures being partially walled or not walled in this period. In general, stone walls were most prevalent in the block of land along the northern side of road LE192144. The area to the south-east of this saw a distinct increase in the use of stone that mirrored changes to its land use, whereas to the north its use for anything other than building footings was not as widespread.

Several wells were constructed, and the earliest of the corn drying/malting ovens also dates to this phase.

Evidence of religious/ritual activity developed and increased, with two distinct foci. A walled enclosure (LE192231) at the junction of two roads LE190031 and LE192144

contained two stone buildings, one apsidal in form, interpreted as small temples or shrines. The *temenos* also continued in use, with the addition of a second plinth or pier base possibly associated with an entrance and a metalled approach road.

## Enclosures north of road LEI92144

Phase 08 had seen the development of several enclosures in this area, set back from the north side of the road. They seem to have been separately delineated enclosures. Although some distinction between them remained in Phase 09, their layout, organization and form suggests a continuous block of land subdivided at right angles to the road with a surprising amount of uniformity. In this area there was an almost complete transition to stone walling during this Phase, a significant change in the landscape. Generally the walls were a direct replacement of the final ditched phase of their enclosures, little changing the area enclosed but significantly altering their outward appearance. The change to stone was universal along the road frontage, but, particularly towards the west of the area, some of the northern sides of the enclosures appear to have remained as ditches.

### Enclosures north of road LEI92144: Enclosure LEI92037

This enclosure, which had its origins in the late Iron Age, formed part of this new walled enclosure system in its seventh phase (**Figure 31**). It had reached its final extents in the previous phase, and the walls were constructed over the final ditch in the sequence backfilled in the first half of the second century. An access route from the road LEI92144 was maintained between this enclosure and its western counterpart. Despite the retention of this boundary both these enclosures were subdivided into regularly spaced walled plots between 20.5 and 22.5m in width. The walls within the western annexe survived extremely poorly, but the presence of large quantities of limestone rubble and some fragments of wall line indicated that walls had indeed replaced the ditches. Although the survival of the division walls was also fragmentary in the main area of the enclosure, two were of the same construction phase as the main enclosure wall. A gate provided access from the road into the southern part of the enclosure. It is not known whether this replaced an earlier entrance through the ditched boundary because the area was not excavated to natural. The north-eastern annexe to the enclosure had at least one if not two routes in from the east in this period.

In the original enclosed area three walled plots were created each with a small single cell rectilinear masonry footed building. In the westernmost plot the southern half of building LEI92035 lay in the excavated area and a stone lined well LEI92227 was noted during the watching brief under the line of the modern hedge. Its position in relation to the building suggested that they might have been contemporary. The central enclosure contained the badly disturbed remains of a similar structure, LEI92061 (**Figure 32**), the walls of which were keyed into the main enclosure wall. The possibility that a stone packed circular depression just to the north may have been the remains of a well has

been suggested, but the feature was not excavated. The construction of the dividing wall between these two plots marked the disuse of the roundhouse LE192038. A third similar structure LE192040 associated with a stone lined well (LE192228) in the easternmost plot was constructed against the subdivision wall (**Figure 33**). At some point this building underwent alteration with the annexation of the area between its south wall and the main enclosure wall (LE192039). It is not clear whether this formed an ancillary structure or whether it was a small walled off part of the yard. The construction of both buildings (LE192061 and LE192040/39) was associated with the deposition of limestone floors and metallated yard surfaces. None of the single cell masonry buildings were well dated, but the well associated with LE192040 was constructed in the second century and passed out of use in the late second to third century. This building underwent several phases of adaptation and reuse and as such the pottery retrieved was of mixed date. The laying out of the walled plots and the construction of the almost identical buildings were believed to represent a single phase of activity. However, dating the slight modifications to the associated floors and yard surfaces is problematic; most layers were subject to intrusion and some surfaces remained in use throughout the life of the buildings. Despite this the use of this part of enclosure LE192037 probably remained fairly constant throughout phases VII to IX of the enclosure.

This is not the case for the north-eastern annexe, which underwent three discernible phases of change within the period between the mid second and early third century. During the initial construction of the yard walls and single celled buildings to the west the use of this area was markedly different. The roundhouse LE192047 and associated ditched enclosure LE192222 were out of use. Building LE192050 was rebuilt as a 25.5m long masonry footed rectilinear structure, overlying part of the earlier enclosure ditch. This building, producing second and third century pottery, was badly disturbed but its interpretation is feasible. A metallated road ran along the northern edge of this building into the enclosure and a stone based water tank was constructed on this surface against the wall of the building. A second similarly aligned metallated road (LE190016) probably entered the enclosure to the south, although the date for its deposition is not well established. The full form and structural history of building LE192050 is uncertain but in this phase it appears to have been associated with quarrying. A very large quarry pit, backfilled with second century material, lay immediately to its south. An unusual drainage feature, interpreted on site as a latrine, might have been in contemporary usage. It was the best dated feature containing a large discrete assemblage of (early) mid second century pottery vessels. A sealing layer above this feature contained similarly dated wares suggesting that its use was not prolonged. It was composed of a steep sided 'L' shaped channel dropping from east-west before turning to the south. The partial remains of a wall were recorded against its northern side. This feature seems to have been aligned with building LE192050 to the north. The combination of evidence for the quarrying and a possible latrine in association with the very large building prompted the theory that they were associated with the construction of the walled plots and buildings to the west. This would explain why they were so short-lived and unusual in form.



Whatever the purpose of these structures, it is clear that they were not in use in this form for long. In the eighth phase, the enclosure to the west remained fairly constant with only minor modifications apparent. However, in the area of the north-eastern annexe considerable changes took place. This phase saw the contraction of the building LE192050 within the confines of the re-established internal enclosure LE192222 (**Figure 34**). The use of this smaller building was probably associated with the construction and use of large masonry footed roundhouse LE192048. Its construction was closely datable to the mid second century, sealing earlier second century quarrying activity. It had evidence for radial partitions and a square central floor delimited by postpads. Substantial postpads were also noted around the edge of the wall, suggesting the possibility that this was a two storey structure. The ditched enclosure of phases IV to VI was re-established as a walled yard. This enclosed area was subdivided with walls running from the roundhouse. One wall ran between LE192048 and LE192050 suggesting their contemporary usage. The new eastern wall of this building was aligned with the eastern internal yard wall. Metalled yard surfaces were laid down, but their survival is patchy. The bedding layer for the yard surface produced second half of the second century pottery with earlier second century wares retrieved from initial use layers suggesting a mid second century construction date. The northern road into the enclosure was transgressed by the new yard wall and a disuse deposit developed over its surface to the east of the yard. The western part of the road was probably incorporated into the yard surface. The drainage feature probably ceased to function and was certainly falling into disuse at this point.

The tenth phase of the enclosure saw further modifications to the north-eastern annexe, the main area to the west probably continued to be used in the same form, although there is little dating evidence to indicate the lifespan of some of the single celled rectilinear structures (**Figure 35**). Roundhouse LE192048 remained in use and had a corn dryer set against its southern side (this might have been present in the first phase of its use, but is poorly dated.) Some floor surfaces were replaced but fundamentally it retained its original form. These alterations were well dated: initial changes were made in the mid to late second century, with later modifications in the late second to early third century.

The metalled yard underwent a significant change. A large hollow was dug through it to create a sheltered area for metalworking. A cluster of stakeholes was noted in the base of this hollow in association with evidence for *in situ* burning episodes. The backfill of this feature contained considerable quantities of ash and slag as well as numerous metal objects including several blades and keys. Most of the blades were described as worn and thus this has been interpreted as reworking rather than creation. The use of this area has been loosely dated to the second to third century, post-dating the initial laying out of the yard. Other smaller pits were cut through the surface, one of which may have been a cesspit. All were believed to relate to this phase. The limits of the yard were also modified; it was contracted slightly with the walls reconstructed immediately within the line of their predecessors. Its north-eastern line altered more radically to accommodate the construction of the small (ancillary?) roundhouse LE192049 at the corner of this new yard. Building LE192050 was probably again contracted to the west. In this form it would

have been a single celled rectilinear structure, similar in area to the original four-post building.

The inclusion of the small building complex (shown on **Figure 31**) south of the road LE190016 is tentative. It is possible that it was present in this phase, although the dating looks a little late with third to fourth century pottery. However, the potential for intrusion is high, as Saxon pottery was also noted. The complex consisted of a small dubious masonry footed roundhouse LE190112, which would have been put out of use by the construction of the road LE190016. A much larger masonry roundhouse (LE190110) lay to the south of this road and was associated with a metalled yard. It is not clear whether the location of this complex on the other side of the road from the enclosure annexe made this a separate entity or whether it formed part of a single developing enclosure.

### **Enclosures north of road LE192144: Enclosures LE192027 and LE192234**

This development from ditched to walled enclosure was also apparent to the south-west but was not as tightly datable with a mid second to mid third date range suggested by the pottery analysis. The sequence of activity included is not always clearly definable, due to the poor survival of features and the limited nature of the excavation. Most of the datable contexts related to long-lived surfaces that were subject to intrusion. The north-west roadside boundary ditches were replaced with walls on the same alignment; however, the south-eastern side of the road may have had a mix of wall and ditched boundaries. Both enclosures LE192027 and LE192234 had walled subdivisions closely similar to those within enclosure LE192037. Initially these were two separate enclosures set against road LE192144. Although the gap between them might not have been maintained for long, it does suggest that this phase represented the gradual merging of at least two separate enclosures rather than the creation of a single enclosure. The road (LE192144) was metalled, although its survival was patchy and it is possible that further to the north-east it remained a sand and gravel surface. A metalled road ran north-south to the west of LE192027 and may have formed the boundary on this side. Part of the original ditch circuit was recut during this period and this may have formed an additional boundary as well as being used for drainage. There is no good evidence for walls on the back of these plots, unlike the 'horseshoe' enclosure but as the western limits of this enclosure were never well attested it is possible that any walls present were lost. One or two very short fragments of wall were found which could have been part of a circuit.

Within enclosure LE192027 the two masonry footed roundhouses LE192026 and LE192034 were interpreted as remaining in use into the early third century, despite the lack of dating evidence for the structures themselves and the fact that the pottery from their associated wells/pits suggested a use date in the first half of the second century with a marked lack of late second to early third century types. This may need further consideration. However, there is better evidence for continuity of occupation in the southern part of the enclosure with the replacement of the timber roundhouse with a masonry footed version LE192156. This reconstruction was probably associated with the

construction of a wood and stone lined well (LE192226) immediately outside its wall to the south-west. This building was in contemporary usage with a second masonry roundhouse of similar proportions, LE192157 (Figure 36a). This building had a complex structural history and underwent two phases of rebuilding (Figures 36b, 37a) in this period, which altered its form but probably not its domestic function. A ring of postpads was inserted inside the wall, possibly to support an upper floor. Subsequently the eastern wall was squared off and an entrance was created facing north-east, but the presence of a central hearth in both these phases of use suggested the continuity of function. This southern part of the enclosure contained no evidence for subdivision and it is possible that it remained undivided. Interestingly the three roundhouses LE192156, LE192157 and LE192034 appear to be on the same north-east to south-west axis. Within the enclosure metalled yard surfaces were laid down and a forge or furnace was in use close to the earlier areas of burning and/or ovens. This suggests that the addition of walls did not significantly alter the function of the area. Only roundhouse LE192157 had good dating evidence. It was believed to be constructed in the mid second century with alteration in the late second to early third century. The yard surfaces associated with these buildings produced second to third century pottery but would have been subject to intrusion. This makes it difficult to date the laying out of the walled plots. However, the early to mid second century use/disuse date for the preceding ditched enclosure suggests that it too may have been a mid to late second century change.

#### **Area south of road LE192144: features either side of Road LE190031**

During this period the east-west aligned road LE190031 continued in use although its alignment was subtly altered to run WNW-ESE. There is good evidence for a ditched boundary to the road on the south side, although a comparable northern boundary ditch was not found. On the south side of the road there was a sequence of at least two ditches on this alignment, the second of which incorporated a gap marking an entrance to the southern enclosure.

The road ran up to and joined the curving metalled road LE192144, although the survival of the surfaces and boundaries at this western end was poor. The roadside boundary was finally stabilized by the replacement of the boundary ditches with walls on this same altered alignment. The road may have been metalled at this point although metalling survived in very few places along its line. The best evidence for the form of the road came from an isolated trench to the east of the excavated area. The road (LE192046) excavated there was well aligned with LE190031 and was presumably part of the same construction. It was believed to continue to the east where it would have joined the main north-south road LE192045 running up the eastern side of the settlement.

LE192046 was composed of a bedding layer of sand and limestone fragments, containing a single sherd of mid first to second century pottery, over which was laid a surface of small limestone cobbles set into clayey material. This upper surface did not survive further

to the west, and it is not clear whether this road treatment was more widespread or whether it had been restricted to the area closest to the junction with the main road.

The main north-south road (I92045) was elusive. However, a very short stretch was recovered during trenching. The suspicion is that the majority of the road lay below Cotton Lane. Its construction is included in this phase as other roads on site were metalled at around this time. However, as this was a main road it could well have been present much earlier, possibly represented by the ditches seen in Phase 08. The presence of horseshoes on the road surface and in overlying deposits strongly suggests that if this were a Roman road then it remained in use into the Medieval period. This road is interpreted as the Viatores Road 570 from Irchester to Titchmarsh, and related to roads identified during evaluation and excavation further west at Redlands Farm and Higham Ferrers (see discussion under Phase 08).

The area to the south of road LE190031 was bounded by a rectilinear ditched enclosure with rounded corners, LE192225 (**Figure 38**). The juncture of the enclosure ditch and the road boundary ditch was not excavated, but in plan the two seemed to merge suggesting that they were contemporary. This enclosure ditch was recut at least twice but dating evidence was only retrieved from the upper fill of the recut, which placed its use broadly in the second to third century. How much earlier this enclosure could have been laid out is unclear, but its coincidence of alignment with the new road layout suggests that its construction was contemporary with it. The nature of the occupation in this enclosure is not clear. It is possible that the masonry footed roundhouse LE192059 (**Figure 38**) was constructed during this phase. It survived only as undated fragments of wall and comb-rash flooring, possibly associated with a 'T' shaped corn dryer positioned in its centre. Second to third century pottery was retrieved from the corn dryer's backfill but the possibility that this could have been residual material must be considered. A metalled yard surface was laid down, patches of which survived to its east. A small probably rectilinear ancillary structure enclosed an area between the building and the enclosure ditch. The inclusion of a stone lined pit (possibly a cesspit) to the south is tentative, and it lay beyond the enclosure boundary. However, it was the best dated feature of this period with late second to third century pottery, including an almost complete early to mid third century vessel. The ditched enclosure may well have continued in use with the masonry road frontage. An entranceway was maintained close to the gap in the earlier ditches and a metalled path leading from the road towards the roundhouse LE192059 was laid down.

Whether similarly dated enclosures were offset from this road further to the west is uncertain, as excavation in this area was very limited and later activity had removed much evidence (possibly during deliberate clearance associated with the creation of the Phase 12 villa frontage enclosure). However, the presence of a broad boundary ditch running towards, although perhaps not up to, the road on the same alignment as enclosure LE192225 suggests that the area was in use at this point. The full form and date of this boundary was not well established because of the proliferation of ditches, which perpetuated its alignment into the fourth century.

To the north of road LE190031, building complex LE190057 (**Figure 39**) remained in use. Its western boundary ditch was replaced by a wall on the same alignment. This wall may have formed the eastern boundary to a large enclosure at the juncture of the two roads LE192144 and LE190031. The east-west walled northern boundary was retained and the roundhouse, associated with a square well, was rebuilt and metalled yard surfaces were laid down. The alterations to the enclosure complex are poorly dated; one pit produced late second to probably mid third century pottery and the well continued in use into the third century. Part of this metalling on the eastern side of the complex was believed to be a path leading from the road LE190031. A ditch aligned NNE-SSW formed the eastern boundary to the complex and the area to the east of this was thought to have an agricultural function in this period.

### **Between roads LE192144 and LE190031: Enclosure LE 1992231 and its shrines**

A large stone walled enclosure LE192231 (**Figure 40**) was constructed at the corner of the two roads, immediately to the west of the building complex LE190057. Its eastern wall retained the north-south boundary LE191051. Its northern wall overlay and replaced a smaller ditched enclosure on the same alignment. It measured 74m by 46m, with no surviving evidence for subdivision. Within this enclosure lay two structures, LE192158 and LE191138 interpreted as small temples or shrines. The temple/shrine LE192158 was heavily robbed out and the dating evidence for its construction is limited. In its first phase it was composed of an apsidal *cella* set against the northern side of a walled ambulatory. The use of this temple is not well dated but a small cluster of coins dating to the second half of the second century was retrieved from an overlying layer below the lower plough soil. Building LE191138 is undated; however, there are similarities between it and the first phase of the adjacent temple and it is on this basis that it is included in this Phase. The building was a small two cellular rectilinear structure of comparable size to the apsidal temple building and was also set within a walled yard or ambulatory. The survival of the structure is poor, but it is possible that it was set up against the road boundary wall.

It is possible that the nationally important sculptured stone reused in the construction of part of the Phase 12 villa derived from this enclosure. The sculpture probably formed part of one or more funerary monuments (different types of limestone are present), and most of the fragments have mythological themes (Henig and Blagg, Appendix 3B in Perrin 1995b). Their date is compatible with this phase:

“Dating Romano-British sculpture is not easy but on the whole I am tempted to date these to the later second century or early third century, approximately contemporary with the sculptures of Trier etc” (Henig, pers comm).

David Neal considers the sculpture could not have come from the shrines/temples themselves, as their footings were not substantial enough and the sculpture is likely to have come from tower tombs. There are two stone foundations near the north wall of this enclosure, but these are at present assigned to Phase 12 (**Figure 54**).

A similar example of a temple within an enclosure in a rural setting is provided by the temple/mausoleum at Bancroft (Buckinghamshire), where survival was better. Its *cella* was sunk below ground level, and evidence for pedestal scars for supporting lead coffins or stone sarcophagi survived on the *opus signinum* floor. Constructed in the second half of the C2 AD, the Bancroft temple/mausoleum continued in use until its systematic demolition during the mid C4 AD (Williams and Zeepvat 1994, 89-102, Figs 46 and 47).

A small triangular enclosure LE192232 lay in the area north of enclosure LE192231. Part of the boundary ditch LE191051 was recut to form its eastern limit, and the north-western side of the enclosure was marked by the road boundary ditch LE191052. The creation of this enclosure marked the disuse of the 'wedge' shaped enclosure LE191047. There was no archaeological evidence for use of the area to the east of boundary LE191051 in this phase. An entrance gap was established in the multiphase roadside boundary ditch, which was subsequently shifted slightly to the south-west. This change related to the construction of the masonry footed rectilinear building LE191054. A metalled path led from the road south into the enclosure past the western wall of the building. The path may have served a post-built structure (LE191058) but its survival was poor and thus its interpretation is somewhat uncertain. The construction and initial use of the triangular enclosure was not well dated, but the recut roadside boundary ditches indicated a late second to third century date.

### **Burials in enclosure LE192232**

Two burial groups were phased as belonging with the primary use of the triangular enclosure LE192232, but the dating evidence is poor. Two east-west aligned supine burials (skeletons 6100 and 6108) were inserted close to the eastern boundary of the enclosure. Although they were widely spaced they may have been contemporary. The northern one was disturbed by the insertion of a north-south aligned decapitation burial (skeleton 6104). The head was placed between the feet, which were to the north. This burial was aligned along the edge of the early to mid first century ditch forming part of the boundary LE191051. A second north-south aligned decapitation burial (skeleton 6105) was located just to the south of the southern east-west inhumation. It too was aligned with the earlier phases of the boundary LE191051. The feet were also to the north although in this case the head was replaced in its usual position. A third century date was suggested from their associated pottery but fourth century pottery was also present and their inclusion here is dubious. Looking at the overall site-wide phasing, these burials might fit better in the group of burials aligned along these boundaries in Phase 12 (Figure 54), and their dating will be reconsidered.

### **The northern part of the settlement**

Although the use of stone also increased during Phase 09 north of enclosure LE192037, ditched boundaries remained prevalent and changes to the settlement here were less

visually dramatic. The realigned road LE192007, established in this form in the first half of the second century, continued in use and the roadside boundary LE192159 was retained.

### **The northern part of the settlement: east of realigned road LE192007**

The occupation of this area remained fairly constant. The enlarged 'wedge' shaped enclosures were maintained but adapted slightly. The western enclosure LE191084 went into its VI<sup>th</sup> phase of use, and there was evidence for recutting/cleaning out of the existing ditches. However, it may have been further subdivided to create more plots. Within one of these episodes the late first to mid second century roundhouse LE191076 was replaced by a masonry footed rectilinear building LE191079. Although the building was badly disturbed it was thought to have been a large rectangular structure with a smaller annexed room at its south-western corner. This smaller structure was constructed over the earlier roundhouse. The building was set against the eastern side of the enclosure fronting onto the road. Yard walls leading from this building enhanced the frontage on part of this eastern side. The building probably burnt down in the early third century as a layer of ash and charcoal covered the area of its footprint. Building LE192055 further south may have been constructed in the first half of the second century (Phase 08) but it was certainly in existence at this point. The original eastern fork of road LE192007 continued to provide access to these enclosures. There is no evidence to suggest that there was an entrance into this enclosure from the broad road on the west side.

The eastern enclosure LE190043 also underwent minor modifications in its third phase. There was no evidence for the replacement of its ditched boundaries with walls, although recutting certainly took place throughout the second half of the second century. A gap was established in the western boundary to provide access from the old road. Building LE190040 was rebuilt as a masonry footed structure and a metalled yard surface was laid down. The ditches forming the northern boundary to the enclosure were elaborated in this period with the construction of a stone lined channel. This may have related to activity within the nearby building.

Although the old road LE192007 (east) continued to provide access to both these enclosures from the north, it is not clear where it went south of building LE192055. The area between the north side of the walled enclosure LE192037 and the boundary LE192159 for the newer part of road LE192007 (west) saw considerable, if poorly definable, activity. Two distinct phases of activity took place in this area in Phase 09 (Figure 41a, b). A ditched enclosure (LE192160) was constructed as an offset from the northern side of the enclosure LE192037 in the mid to late second century. Similar in date were the construction of a ditch across the line of the south-western part of the old road LE192007 and its southern boundary ditch. The presence of pits and ditches of this date cutting into the old road surface indicated that it was out of use at this point. A possible post-built rectilinear structure (LE192052), aligned with the ditch that cut across the road, was constructed in the second half of the second century but was probably disused by the late second to early third century. In the second phase the enclosure



LE192160 was recut on similar lines. The earlier ditches and building to the west of this went out of use rapidly and were superseded by two parallel north-south aligned ditches of uncertain function.

### **The northern part of the settlement: west of road LE192007**

Enclosure LE192150 continued to develop in this period. This was an extremely elusive phase of activity with most of the evidence for the form of the enclosure masked by later recuts. Only a single segment could be ascribed with certainty to the second half of the second century. It is probable that its form was very similar to the later phases of the enclosure. This theory is supported by the presence of notable quantities of mid second to early third century pottery in otherwise respectable third and fourth century contexts. Again there was no evidence for structures within the enclosure in this period. However, two wells (LE191107-8) were present and may have been within the limits of the enclosure as extrapolated. Both had construction dates between the late second and early third century.

Structure LE191112 and well LE191109 did not remain in use for long and were replaced by a probably masonry footed roundhouse (LE191116). This building was also very poorly preserved: only one fragment of wall, a floor surface, some levelling deposits and a hearth remained. The levelling layer sealed the earlier mortar floor indicating that this was a rapid reconstruction/alteration to the earlier building. The well was backfilled in the second half of the second century. Its disuse coincided with the construction of the second building on this plot. Its earthen floor contained a large number of unabraded mid to late second century pottery sherds. The overall pottery assemblage from this building suggested continued use into the early years of the third century. A rubbish deposit accumulated in a hollow above the backfilled well. A north-east to south-west aligned boundary ditch (LE191120) immediately to the west of this building was constructed in this phase; this was the first phase of a long-lived boundary that might have run the full length of the settlement. Stretches of ditch on this alignment further to the south are included in this phase and may have been part of the same boundary. A road ran along the western side of this boundary in later phases and it may have been present at this point, but dating its foundation is not possible at this stage.

The roundhouse LE192009 that overlay part of the south-eastern corner of the earlier enclosure LE192155 was replaced by a masonry footed rectilinear building LE192002 (Figure 42). The replacement of the roundhouse with the rectilinear building was dated to the second half of the second century. A make up layer of this date below the floor of the building sealed the earlier roundhouse and provided the *terminus post quem* for its construction. This building retained the width of the original building over which it was sited, indicating that it too was a direct replacement. A series of ditches (LE192005) to the east of this building were constructed in the mid second century although frequent recutting left a confused stratigraphic picture. These may have joined the eastern side of enclosure LE192150 to form a possibly continuous boundary to the realigned road



LE192007. A number of less well attested ditches of this date were recorded in the centre of what had been the earlier enclosure, but their full extents and function were unclear. A curvilinear enclosure ditch to the west of building LE192002 is tentatively included. Its date is somewhat confusing; it contained a small quantity of Romano-British pottery in association with 74 sherds of Iron Age CP2-CP3A pottery. However, as recorded, it was stratigraphically later than the enclosure LE192155 (Phase 07, **Figure 23**).

The north-eastern corner of the old enclosure was also built over by two masonry roundhouses, LE190103 and LE190105. LE190103 was extremely fragmentary and undated. LE190105, although better attested was badly damaged by ploughing, and it too was undated. It is possible that the two structures were not contemporary. They lay within a ditched enclosure, curvilinear to the south, rectilinear to the north (LE192139/LE192145). The northern boundary of the enclosure cut ring ditch LE192143 (**Figure 5**) exactly in two. This ring ditch was probably a later 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium or Early Bronze Age barrow (Harding and Healy 2007, 147). The ring ditch must have remained visible into the C4 AD, as its circuit was recut in this period. The eastern edge of this enclosure was well aligned with the projected northern continuation of the road LE192007. A masonry well and two post-built structures (not contemporaneous) associated with short ditches have been included in this phase, although the post-built structures were not well understood. There was no evidence for walled boundaries associated with this enclosure. The dating evidence for its phase I is extremely poor. It post-dated the mid second century disuse of enclosure LE192155. The well had second century or later pottery in its final use/disuse deposit, but the construction date for the enclosure ditch itself is insecure. Its initial use deposit contained five sherds of very abraded late first to second century pottery; its recut had two sherds of equally abraded late first to second century and second to third century pottery as well as an Iron Age sherd.

### **The northern part of the settlement: road LE 190012 and the temenos LE191044**

The unmetalled road LE190015 continued in use and was presumably a continuation of the road LE192007. The Phase 08 timber structure LE190011 just to the south-east of this was replaced by a masonry footed rectilinear building (LE190012) on a similar alignment. It incorporated an eastern veranda and underwent alteration after an episode of subsidence. Quarrying took place in its immediate vicinity both during this and the preceding phase, perhaps accounting for the subsidence problems. The use of this building was dated to the second half of the second century. The unmetalled road LE190015 produced pottery dating to the late second century.

Road 190015 may have continued to the north-east to approach the *temenos* LE191044. The religious precinct and its surroundings underwent further modification in this phase with the laying down of a second metalled walkway, and a second plinth or pier base was positioned on this surface. The plinths now formed some kind of entranceway which lay

on a metalled approach road leading to the west. To the west of this road lay a north-west to south-east aligned masonry footed rectilinear building (LE191046). Its south-eastern wall was not found and it was originally interpreted as an open ended building on this basis. It was aligned with the fragmentary remains of a metalled surface/masonry linear feature. It has been suggested that this may have been a wall that demarked the *temenos* area from the building. A post-built structure to the south of this is included because of the coincidence of its alignment with that of the masonry structure. The restricted nature of the excavation in this area means that interpretations are necessarily tentative.

The mid to late second century date suggested for the modifications to the *temenos* is not entirely secure. A second to third century date was suggested for the relaying of the metalled walkway. Building LE191046 was placed within the same timeframe on rather scant evidence: a small number of second to third century sherds were associated with the building and second century sherds were also found on the pavement surrounding the well. The late second to early third century disuse date for the building came from a pit sealed by masonry rubble believed to derive from its demolition. Second century pottery was associated with the metalled road leading west from the *temenos* and late second to third century or later pottery was retrieved from pits close to the post-built structure. On balance, a Phase 09 date was preferred, but this will be reconsidered during analysis.

### **The south-western area of the site and palaeochannel 191006**

Although palaeochannel LE191006 remains undated (discussed under Phase 05), it may have become a significant feature of the landscape during Phase 09, when rising water levels could have created a new channel or led to an old one once again becoming a constraint on activity on the site. From Phase 09, the activity west of the palaeochannel begins to look very different from the rest of the settlement.

During Phase 09, a multi-recut drainage channel followed the line of this watercourse on its eastern side, and this may have formed the western boundary to a road running up the western side of the settlement. Deposits of rubble were noted at the edges of both this and the western boundary ditch and may represent crossing points. The recutting of the boundary LE191023 was loosely dated to between the mid second and mid third century, although it was believed to terminate shy of the western boundary. To the north of this a second masonry footed rectilinear building (LE191019) was constructed immediately to the north-east of the earlier building LE191018, which may have been retained as an ancillary structure. The use of this building was consistently dated to the mid second to third century. The cesspit to the south of boundary LE191023 was more closely dated to the mid second to early third century but it is not clear whether the two were associated. The construction of this second building marked the disuse of the enclosure ditch associated with building LE191018. Whether the northern boundary ditch continued to function is debatable: the presence of a short stretch of robber trench and a possible buttress suggested there may have been a heavily robbed out walled phase of the boundary. South of boundary LE191023 there was little evidence for use of this area, and

it is possible that the domestic occupation ceased before the mid second century.  
Disturbance to features in this area suggested that it might have suffered from inundation.

## PHASE 10: CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENCLOSED SETTLEMENT

### MID THIRD CENTURY, c 230 TO 270 AD

#### *Figure 43*

#### Introduction

During Phase 10, gradual developments took place within the enclosures and building complexes, taking the form of adaptation of the existing settlement rather than sweeping change. There was a further increase in the use of limestone in this period, both for yard boundaries and road surfaces. Many ditched boundaries were still retained, especially in the northern part of the site.

Despite the organic nature of the changes taking place across the settlement, this Phase included the construction of two distinctive buildings of new types for the site. The first (LE192003) was a formal arrangement of buildings around a walled courtyard, and the second (LE192235) was a substantial stone walled aisled hall with an apse at its north-west end. Both replaced buildings within already existing building complexes and were set within the existing enclosure pattern.

Domestic settlement of the area to the west between the palaeochannels (LEs 191006 and 191022) appears to have ceased in this period, and part of the area was subsequently used as an inhumation cemetery.

#### North of road LE192144: Enclosure LE192037

In its tenth phase, enclosure LE192037 had a slight contraction of occupation and a significant change to the formalized layout of the enclosure plots established in the mid to late second century. It retained the same external limits but underwent changes to its access routes and internal organization. At least one of the enclosure's internal dividing walls was taken down and building LE192040 rebuilt across its line (**Figure 44**). It is not clear whether the other dividing walls or structures (LE192035 and LE192061, shown on **Figure 35**) remained in use in this phase; all were subsequently robbed and none produced good dating evidence for their longevity. Building LE192040 was extended both to the east and west, making use of the original masonry footings but with a wooden superstructure in this period. Two postholes to the east were thought to represent either a porch added onto the original eastern wall or a post-built extension to the whole wall. A mix of building techniques were applied to this reconstruction: the south wall was composed of a series of postholes that diverged slightly from the original wall line, whereas the north wall was composed of a beam slot with no evidence for posts. The western wall was too badly disturbed to determine the nature of its construction. A stone floor surface was laid down in this western extension to the building but it was much less

substantial than the well laid flagged floor of the original building. The extension of the building might have blocked off the access to the gate in the southern wall of the enclosure. The reconstruction of this building was not well dated but it may have been third century, with continued use until the late fourth century accounting for the mixed nature of the pottery assemblage.

A second building LE192041 (**Figure 44**) was probably constructed across the line of the removed dividing wall. It had deep stone footings and has been interpreted as a non-domestic structure. Its inclusion in this phase is tentative, as it produced no reliable datable material and the division wall did not survive well. The postpad structure LE192043 might have been associated with this phase of change. It was constructed on the yard surface to the east of building LE192040 as a lean-to against the southern wall of the enclosure. Wear pattern on the yard surface suggests that it was in use contemporarily with the ancillary structure LE192039. This building/yard area could have been retained despite the alterations to LE192040.

The alignment of the road LE190116 into enclosure LE192037 from the east changed slightly to become more east-west. Its original northern boundary wall was razed and incorporated into the surface. The road now ran towards the eastern end of the masonry footed building LE192041 instead of running into the yard surface associated with LE192040. This might support the view that building LE192041 did indeed belong to this phase, but the road realignment itself was not well dated. This alteration to the road line and razing of the boundary wall may have related to the abandonment of the roundhouse LE192048. The roadside boundary wall was thought to have formed part of the boundary of the yard associated with the building. Well-dated disuse deposits placed the final occupation of this building and the yard in the mid third century at the latest. Widespread disuse deposits accumulated in the north-eastern annexe in this period.

The small rectilinear enclosure LE192160 set north of the enclosure wall was still in use in this phase. Its final ditch was backfilled and a wall was built over its line. The area within was not fully excavated, and so there is no direct evidence for occupation in this period. The wall was substantially robbed out but there are slight traces of its presence remaining. The poorly-defined activity to the west did not appear to continue in this phase and the area may have remained unimportant in the third century.

On the southern side of the road LE190116, building complex LE190115 (**Figure 45**) underwent modification. Its inclusion in this phase is tentative because of poor dating and because its structural history was not fully established. The pottery present dated between the second and fourth century. However, two rectilinear masonry footed structures (LE190111 and LE190113) were located within a walled yard with its northern wall well aligned with the southern side of realigned road LE190116. The larger of the two structures (LE190113) was associated with a rectangular corn dryer (LE190114) set against its western wall. It is possible that this corn dryer post-dated the use of the building, although it has been phased as integral to it. A similar feature was situated within

the south-west corner of building LE192041 but in this case it was set into the remains of the partially demolished walls (Figure 56).

### Occupation north of road LE192144: Enclosures LE1912234 and LE192027

Enclosure LE1912234 (immediately to the west of LE192037) probably continued in use in Phases 10 and 11. However, only undated traces of masonry buildings survived the plough damage and the effects of heavy earth moving equipment in wet ground conditions, and so no clear occupation evidence could be ascribed to this phase. Further to the west, the walled enclosures of the previous phase remained in use and the gap between the two was plugged by the addition of a slightly curved wall. The addition of this wall would have increased the area of enclosure LE192027 and tidied the appearance of the roadside boundary. The two roundhouses LE192026 and LE192034 (Figure 30) were disused before the end of the second century. No diagnostic early third century pottery was found in association with either structure or associated features. A smaller masonry footed roundhouse was included as an early third century structure on the basis of pottery retrieved from an associated building platform. However, later pottery was present in this deposit and its interpretation as a building platform is not secure. It was interpreted as lying within one of a series of walled plots offset from the southern side of the enclosure wall. These walls were fragmentary and undated, but it is entirely possible that they were later features associated with the expansion of the structures to the south and may not relate to this phase. There was no evidence for other structures in the northern part of the enclosure in this period.

In the southern part of enclosure 192027 significant alterations were taking place. The southern boundary/drainage ditch was recut. It was again only explored in isolated box sections thus its full line was never established. The walled boundaries to the enclosure underwent alteration, and in the phasing as presented none are included for this period. Roundhouse LE192157 (Figure 37b) remained but was substantially altered; in its third phase of use its western wall was squared off and at least one if not two donkey mills were incorporated. This represents a significant change in function, from domestic to agricultural. This final phase of reconstruction and use of the roundhouse was very poorly dated. Only one context associated with it produced any pottery; however, its stratigraphic position suggested a late second to possibly mid third century date for its reconstruction. The change in function could explain this decrease in dating evidence.

This reconstruction was probably contemporary with the replacement of the demolished roundhouse LE192156 (Figure 30) with an aisled building with an apse at its north-west end (LE192235). The construction date for the aisled building could not be tightly defined - its subsequent structural history made determining its origins very difficult. However, it was probably built at some point in the early to mid third century.

The building was originally 18m in internal length and 9.5m wide. There was no conclusive evidence for partitioning of the aisles in this phase, but partitioning could have left very

little trace. The form of the building suggests a certain amount of architectural elaboration in comparison to earlier structures, but the western end of the building was sited directly above the earlier stone roundhouse and it was probably a replacement for it. The south-east corner of the aisled building met the known end of the earlier enclosure wall. This wall is interpreted as being disused in Phase 10, but it is possible that the eastern limits of this building were in the first instance constrained by the continued presence of this boundary. The yard surfaces previously laid down remained in use and an area immediately to the north of the aisled building was set aside for the deposition of agricultural/domestic waste.

The eastern end of the aisled building was set against the road LE192144 at its junction with the east-west road LE190031. Although the building was at an angle to this road it would presumably have been visible from the approach, and this may have been deliberate. The walled boundaries to the road LE192144 probably remained in place but their survival was not uniform.

### **Areas south of road LE192144: Enclosures LE192231 and LE192232**

The walled boundaries of the 'temple enclosure' LE192231 probably remained in place during Phase 10. The western shrine/temple LE192158 had a second phase of construction (**Figure 46**). The apsidal building was demolished and replaced by a square building set in the middle of the courtyard. The positioning of this second structure suggested that the walled area was still in use, although there are problems with the phasing of the episodes of robbing. The repositioning of this structure would have created an ambulatory around a central *cella*. The second shrine/temple (LE191138) has not been shown as continuing in Phase 10 because of the complete absence of dating material, but equally there is nothing to show it had been demolished. As in Phase 09, there were no other structures in the enclosure.

The small triangular enclosure LE192232 immediately to the north of the walled 'temple enclosure' remained in use in this period. The roadside boundary ditch (LE191052; **Figure 30**) that formed its north-western boundary was recut, but its terminal retreated to the north-east towards its earlier limit. The eastern and southern boundaries remained unchanged. Building LE191054 apparently remained in use, although the change to the roadside ditch must have affected access to it. Post-built structure LE191058 was modified with the deposition of a series of rubble surfaces in the area of the original building (**Figure 47**). It was suggested that four of the original postholes were retained as the central supports for a circular structure, but the poor survival of this building means that this is a somewhat uncertain interpretation. The changes to this enclosure were loosely dated to the third century, although later pottery was also present.

## Areas south of road LE192144: road LE190031

Road LE190031 continued on its modified alignment, connecting with the main north-south road LE192045 to the east. On its south side there was evidence to suggest that the construction of the road boundary wall was piecemeal rather than a single activity (**Figure 48**). In the first instance modifications were made to the entranceway into the enclosure and a subdivision wall was added. A narrow rectilinear masonry footed building measuring 4m by 10.7m was apparently tacked onto the western side of this wall. The relationship between this building and the probable internal stone filled drain was not established (**Figure 48a**). A walled yard was then added to the eastern side of the division wall (**Figure 48b**). Structurally this was not a continuous building phase but it is likely that the changes were broadly contemporary.

Although fragmentary in survival, this yard was probably associated with the construction of the masonry footed roundhouse LE192058 associated with a 'T' shaped corn dryer. It has no construction date but the final use of the associated corn dryer was dated to the late third to the mid fourth century, and therefore the construction and early use of the building probably dated to around the mid third century. A series of poorly-defined clay lined pits, a furnace and a well were associated with the use of the complex in this period. The well was constructed in the late second to third century; its disuse was tightly dated to the mid to late third century from an assemblage including some almost complete pots. The pits associated with the craft activity/industrial processing produced material of a similar date. The presence of this dense cluster of features suggests that some form of industrial/craft processing was taking place. It is possible that the ditched enclosure remained during this phase but the dating evidence is not good and so it is currently not included. There was no evidence to indicate that the roundhouse LE192059 (**Figure 38**) remained in use (and so it is not shown in this Phase), but continued use is possible.

To the north of the road the building complex LE190057 also underwent modification. Roundhouse LE190032 (**Figure 39**) probably remained in use till the mid or late third century (on the basis of the probable disuse date for its well). The enclosure wall was demolished and replaced by a recut ditched boundary, which cut off the north-eastern corner of the original yard, possibly to exclude an area of intercutting pits. The curve of the ditch respected the presence of the roundhouse and it may have continued to the east as part of the roadside boundary, but lack of excavation in this area makes this uncertain. The eastern boundary ditch was allowed to silt up and its disuse deposit spread over the excluded area of cobbling. This ditch was subsequently recut after this period of disuse. The insertion of the animal burial into the outer ditch probably occurred when it was partially silted and replaced by the later ditch to the south. The dating evidence was not strong, but a small quantity of grey ware pottery loosely dated to the second to third century was present. However, the almost total lack of fourth century pottery from the complex suggests that domestic occupation probably did not continue beyond the late third century.



## The north of the settlement: east of road LE192007

The realigned road LE192007 remained in use, though it is not clear if boundary LE192159 (**Figure 41**) continued to function.

Both the 'wedge' shaped enclosures LE191084 and LE190043 remained in use in this period, although in modified forms. They both contracted northwards after the late second to early third century from their southern limits established in the first half of the second century. The new southern limits were not located with certainty; and the equally uncertain northern limits may have remained unchanged during this phase with recutting of existing boundary ditches. The seventh phase of enclosure LE191084 saw the demolition of the burned down rectilinear building LE191079 (**Figure 30**) in the early third century. Above these rubble layers a small masonry footed roundhouse (LE191080) was constructed. The building measured approximately 3.6m in internal diameter and lay close to the roadside boundary wall. The use of stone walls for the boundary to this road increased in this phase, although it did not completely replace the use of ditches. This building was interpreted as lying in the SE corner of a small yard; however, no walls survived on the south and western side. A second masonry footed roundhouse, LE191081, c. 6.8m in internal diameter, lay within the confines of this proposed yard and was set against the northern wall. Unlike the smaller structure this building did not open into the yard but had an entrance to the north. This difference in entrance suggested the possibility that the smaller structure may have been ancillary to the larger building. Both were associated with metalled yard surfaces, though of different construction type, those associated with LE191081 being better laid. The belief that these two buildings were set within an enclosed yard is supported by the fact that a ditch subdivided the enclosure to the west and respected a non-surviving boundary. A metalled entranceway into the enclosure was recorded between fragments of boundary walls. In the southern part of the enclosure a single celled, masonry footed rectilinear building (LE191068) was probably constructed in the mid third century. It was tacked onto the southern end of the boundary wall; the boundary ditch was then recut from its southern wall. In its first phase of use the building was associated with a walled metalled yard immediately to the north which contained a well and an oven.

The fourth phase of enclosure LE190043 was somewhat elusive. Its boundaries were for the most part uncertain, although the entranceway from the subsidiary road was probably retained. There was no evidence for walls replacing boundary ditches. Less structural evidence survived in this enclosure. A small patch of rubble was thought to be the remains of a roundhouse but it could have been the remains of a truncated larger rubble surface and there is no real evidence to connect it to the nearby third to fourth century well (LE192236). Roundhouse LE190040 passed out of use and was replaced by a small masonry footed rectilinear structure LE190041, aligned with the recut boundary ditch immediately to the north (**Figure 49**). Its construction and use was closely datable to between the mid third and early fourth century. Traces of irregular, though badly

disturbed, walls were associated with it and have been interpreted as the remains of a walled yard, within which a midden/rubbish deposit accumulated.

### **The north of the settlement: west of road LE192007**

This period saw the sixth phase of use of the enclosure LE192150; the roadside ditches LE191121 might have formed the missing western boundary although this is speculative. The eastern limits of the enclosure remained stable, although an entranceway was established in the formerly continuous ditch. A 6m wide gap was created between the butt ending ditches and a patch of metalling was deposited to consolidate the area. A number of postholes were associated with this layer and were believed to be the remains of a gateway. The enclosure in this form remained in use till the early fourth century. This phase had the first tentative evidence for structures within the enclosure since the first half of the first century (Phase 06). A small masonry footed roundhouse (LE192151) lay just to the north of the entranceway. Its construction was undated but the building plot was known to remain in use until the late fourth century and a third century construction date seems reasonable. Despite the lack of structural evidence for buildings, three wells, two of which were constructed between the mid second and early third century, were in use throughout the third century with some having evidence for continued use till the mid fourth century. Their presence suggests that the occupation was more intensive than the evidence might suggest.

The eastern boundary to enclosure LE192150 formed part of a longer, though possibly segmented, ditched roadside boundary continuing to the north as LE192005. A similar gap was established in this boundary, and metalling was deposited to consolidate the underlying ditches.

This entranceway served a walled courtyard building group (LE192003) of some architectural elaboration. This complex was composed of a large walled yard with pavilions attached to the eastern frontage. Masonry buildings LE192000 and LE192001 attached to this courtyard were carefully placed to form a symmetrical layout. This was a new and unusual feature of the settlement, but it seems to have developed from a fairly typical layout comprising an enclosure and single celled masonry footed rectilinear building (LE192002). Building LE190002 has been interpreted as continuing in use along with the formal courtyard complex on the basis of the relationship between the courtyard wall and the structure. While the continued presence of the building would have marred the symmetry of the new layout, it is possible that it was not visible from the road LE192007. It would, however, have been seen from the south and east.

The construction of the courtyard building was tentatively phased as being perhaps late second though more probably early third century in date. The roadside ditches LE192005 continued to be recut throughout the third century.

No function has as yet been ascribed to this complex, nor is it clear why it developed here. However, this plot of land was of interest in the pre-Flavian period because of the high status wares associated with the timber roundhouses. It is possible that it was always an area of some status, but that this was never previously displayed architecturally – or at least not in the building's ground plan. Plain coarse red tesserae were found in this area, in contexts dating from Phase 09 onwards, but none were in situ.

As with the aisled building LE192235, this formal building was constructed within the existing settlement framework and with no suggestion that it represented any discontinuity in the nature of the settlement overall.

The ditched boundary LE192005 continued northwards in this period replacing the earlier southern part of the enclosure LE192145 (**Figure 30**). It is not clear what happens to the northern side of the enclosure LE192139, established in the previous phase, but an entranceway through the boundary ditch provided access to the altered complex. The two masonry footed roundhouses LE190103 and LE190105 (**Figure 30**) were replaced by a single celled masonry footed rectilinear structure (LE190104) associated with a rectilinear walled yard to the south. A small limestone platform in the yard may have been some kind of oven or kiln. This area was stripped and planned, but little excavation took place. Much of the pottery found associated with it was probably residual. However, the stratigraphy suggests that the changes were related to the alteration to the roadside boundary ditch.

All three of these substantially different building complexes (LEs 192003, 192150 and 192139) were aligned with road LE192007 and were accessed from it. They lay in a block of land between road LE192007 and road LE191118, which was now metalled. The date for the metalling is not well attested, but the eastern roadside boundary ditch LE191120 was recut in this period, shifting slightly to the west and realigning to the north. The northern limits of this road and boundary were not established - constraints on resources and time available meant this area was rapidly recorded and little excavation could be carried out.

On the eastern side of road LE191118 a very short stretch of wall on the same alignment to the shifted boundary ditch was recorded. This wall was set on the edge of a partially silted up first phase ditch, and this fragment survived because it had subsided into a backfilled well construction pit. It is possible that it was originally part of an enclosure wall or possibly another roadside boundary. Immediately to the east of this wall fragment, roundhouse LE191116 (**Figure 30**) was replaced by a possibly rectilinear structure (LE191117). Only a short stretch of its western wall survived, which was well aligned with the roadside boundary. The full plan of the structure could not be established because later alterations had almost removed it. The wall cut through the second to third century rubbish deposit over the disused well associated with the earlier building. The western side of the road did not have a matching boundary ditch, but an oval ditched enclosure (LE191114) was set against the edge of the road (**Figure 50**). The development of this

enclosure and associated occupation is uncertain but initially it surrounded a single masonry footed roundhouse LE191113 and was subsequently, and probably quite rapidly, expanded to include a second similar structure (LE191115). The northern terminus of the enclosure, in either stage, was never established. No metalled surfaces were associated with the undated buildings. The enclosure ditch had a disuse date between the mid third and mid fourth century tentatively suggesting that the construction and use of this complex may have dated to the first half of the third century.

### **The north of the settlement: roads and the *temenos* LE 191044**

Road LE192007 was presumed to carry on northwards as the unmetalled road LE190015. In Phase 10 this northern stretch of the road was significantly altered. The unmetalled hollow way was filled in and a metalled surface was laid above it. The metalling did not continue to the south towards the known line of LE192007, instead it swung away to the south-east over the now demolished veranda building LE190012 as road LE192135. It is possible that LE192007 joined this road, but its appearance suggests that LE192135 could have been the main route from the Irchester-Titchmarsh road LE192045 towards the *temenos* LE191044. A new rectilinear masonry building LE 190013 was constructed against the south-western side of the new road LE192135, above the site of the earlier timber structure. There are indications that this might have been an aisled building, but its survival was poor. The demolition of the veranda building, the consolidation of the area, the construction of the metalled road and the possible aisled building took place during the first half of the third century. The building apparently had a very short lifespan passing out of use in the middle of the century. The fragmentary remains of the north-west corner of a second masonry footed rectilinear building (LE192134) have been included because the building was probably aligned with the metalled road. However, as it was undated its inclusion is tentative; if the road continued in use, the building could have been constructed at any time subsequently.

There was no evidence for change to the form of the *temenos* in this period, although the construction of the road LE192135 may have affected its approach.

It is not known whether any of the Phase 09 features in the vicinity of the *temenos* continued in use during the third century, and they are not shown for Phase 10.

### **The south-western area: disuse and an inhumation cemetery**

West of palaeochannel LE191006, the buildings north of boundary LE191023 passed out of use in the third century, possibly before the middle of the century. Boundary LE191023 itself could have continued in use; its final dated recut was placed between the mid second and mid third century but there was a later undated recut.

The ditched east-west boundary LE191031 from Phase 07 (**Figure 23**) produced no dating evidence to indicate continuing use beyond the middle of the second century AD. However, its line may have persisted in some form (perhaps a hedge) into the third century because it appears to form the northern boundary to an inhumation cemetery post-dating the second century domestic or agricultural buildings in the area. The majority of the burials were restricted to the area to the south of the ditch, although three were inserted immediately to its north. The burials were for the most part clustered in the north-west corner between the continuing (but difficult to phase) riverside ditches and this east-west boundary. Some further burials were recorded beyond this to the south and east.

Domestic occupation in this part of the settlement south of LE191023 probably ceased in the second half of the second century at the latest. The disuse of the south-western area probably reflects the development of palaeochannel LE191006, and the area would have been a suitable burial location, close to but separated from the settlement. It is not clear how long a period of disuse this area might have had before the cemetery was established.

The cemetery contained 36 burials and an isolated skull, and initial work indicated that few graves were closely datable. Most of the fills contained residual pottery of Iron Age to second century AD date, though one has also late third or fourth century pottery. Few had grave goods, but skeleton 6139 at the extreme west of the cemetery had two copper alloy bracelets of fifth century type. The burials are therefore phased as being broadly third to fifth century in date, and the overall use of the cemetery has been assigned to Phases 10 to 13.

## PHASE II: CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF THE SETTLEMENT, ELABORATION OF THE AISLED HALL INTO A 'VILLA' COMPLEX AND ALTERATIONS TO THE TEMENOS

LATE THIRD TO MID FOURTH CENTURY, c 270-340 AD

*Figure 51*

### Introduction

For the most part Phase II saw gradual development with considerable continuity in land use over approximately seventy years.

Modifications to the aisled building LE1992235 (including the addition of a bath suite and a cross range including two rooms with hypocausts) and the development of a formal rectilinear group of buildings around it resulted in a recognisable 'villa', and this stands out as a distinctive episode of change in an otherwise fairly static landscape. In contrast, the other unusual building from Phase I0 (courtyard building LE192003) fell into disuse in this phase, though the yard itself remained in use.

The tripartite division in the use of stone for boundaries across the settlement was still apparent in this phase. Although there was again an increase in its use in the northern part of the settlement it did not represent a wholesale change to the layout of the area. A band of circular stone buildings along the western edge of the settlement suggests this may have been a distinct area in terms of its function and relation to the wider landscape.

There were also significant changes at the *temenos*, including the laying of a new metalled surface and the construction of an enclosing wall and a series of drains, possibly related to some kind of water feature. Spreads of oyster shells outside the walls may have been a deliberate way of emphasizing its appearance and visibility in the landscape.

Changes to boundaries at the north of the site were accompanied by the final silting or filling of ring ditch LE192143 (another probable early Bronze Age barrow), which seem to have remained a visible feature until this time.

### North of road LE192144: enclosure LE192037

The walled boundaries to the enclosure remained unchanged and there was little evidence for change of use within the main part of the enclosure. The reconstructed building LE192040 (**Figure 44**) probably continued in use throughout this period. Its adjunct LE192039 and the postpad/lean-to building LE192043 also continued to function. Pottery retrieved from in and around these structures suggested their use probably continued into the second half of the fourth century at least. Although the reconstruction of the building may have taken place in the early to mid third century, the peculiar mix of

building techniques displayed indicates that these changes could have been part of a gradual process. Building LE192041 (possibly non-domestic) probably ceased to function in this Phase. Although no disuse deposits were associated with it, it was known to have been at least partially dismantled by the mid to late fourth century. The two undated single celled structures LE192035 (**Figure 31**) and LE192061 (**Figure 32**) are included as they possibly continued in use, though neither exhibited signs of modification or adaptation.

The north-eastern annexe to enclosure LE192037 had little discernible occupation in this phase. The pottery 'rolling assessment' highlighted the large size and discrete nature of the assemblages over the main area of the yard. The disuse deposits which accumulated above the disused metalworking hollow, the cesspit and the yard surfaces were well dated to the late third to mid fourth century. The other disuse deposits here were less tightly defined but dated to the third to fourth and fourth century. Only two features represented construction activity. A deep square posthole was dug through the yard surface to accommodate a square post. It was backfilled with third century material but its function was unclear. This posthole was on the same alignment as a possible beam slot cut through the western side of the disused roundhouse LE192048 (**Figure 34**). Despite the coincidence of their alignment there is no proof that these features were part of a single construction phase, and they were the only structural evidence in this area in Phase II.

Road LE190116 presumably continued to provide access to building LE192040 (**Figure 44**) and associated structures. However, to the south the building complex LE190115 (**Figure 45**) passed out of use in the late third to fourth century. Although considerable quantities of earlier Roman pottery were retrieved from the features included in this Phase, this material was thought to be residual. The enclosure walls were robbed out and rubble layers containing late third to fourth century pottery accumulated over the disused structures.

The small walled enclosure LE192160 offset from the northern wall of the enclosure LE192037 probably remained in use. Although little evidence for occupation was found, the well sited within it was in use during the late third to early or mid fourth century, but the pottery assessment notes that if it was cleaned out at times, its construction could have been earlier.

#### **North of road LE192144: Enclosure LE192234**

The subdivided walled enclosure (LE192234) presumably remained in use in its original form despite the fact that the survival of the walls was not good. Two circular masonry footed roundhouse buildings were located within the individual plots. Building LE192010 survived only as a rubble filled robbed out foundation trench. No other structural elements survived, and its use date is inferred from the fourth century pottery associated with its robbing. The second circular building survived only as a fragment of curved

masonry wall associated with a small patch of external metalling. As the building was undated its inclusion here is by association with the better attested LE192010 and is thus extremely tentative.

There was some evidence for activity to the north of the enclosure in this period. An 'L' shaped ditch cut across the original alignment of road LE192007, but appeared to respect its southern boundary ditch. Too little survived to be certain of its function (and there were problems with its recording) but it does appear to have been fourth century in date. The poorly preserved remains of a masonry footed rectilinear building (LE192021) have been tentatively included because of the coincidence of its alignment with this fourth century ditch. The structure was post-dated a ditch disused in the early second century, but otherwise undated but otherwise undated.

### **North of road LE192144: Enclosure LE192027**

Further to the south-west the rectilinear subdivided walled yard forming the northern part of enclosure LE192027 remained in use but with some modification. Continued use is suggested by a small quantity of third to fourth century pottery in these surfaces/layers (there were also considerable quantities of residual second and third century material). The southern half of the blocking wall, added in the previous phase, was razed and incorporated into the road surface. This change was probably contemporary with the realigning of the yard wall facing on to the road. Oddly, the northern part of the blocking wall did not appear to be worn and it was therefore interpreted as remaining in place. A masonry footed rectilinear building (LE192029) was built in the new north-eastern corner of the yard against the road. Two smaller rooms were built onto its southern side. Although internal features survived, including evidence for a wooden partition, a stone lined drain and at least one if not two ovens/furnaces, dating evidence was scarce. Small quantities of third to fourth century material were retrieved from the internal features (along with residual second century pottery).

The only burials specifically assigned to Phase II are a small group of infant burials in this area (skeletons 6019 to 6022), though the inhumation cemetery to the west continued in use throughout the fourth century.

The changes to this eastern yard wall might have reflected alterations taking place further south, where a formal rectilinear layout of buildings, walls and yards surfaces was laid out. The eastern wall of the aisled apsidal building was extended by approximately 3m to the east and two masonry footed rectilinear flanking buildings were constructed aligned with this same façade (Figure 52). The extension of the aisled building was well dated to the late third to early fourth century. The southern building LE192240 survived only as a skim of mortar in the base of a foundation trench. The northern building LE192241, unlike the one to the south, had its long axis against the road, indicating that they were not positioned for their symmetry. This structure was sited above the earlier domestic/agricultural rubbish heap and although better preserved its function was not



clear. There is some evidence to suggest there may have been an oven in the building in this phase. A metallised surface was laid down between the aisled building and the southern flanking building, which continued up the eastern frontage of the main building. This surface abutted its new eastern wall and was considerably less worn against the wall indicating that its deposition was contemporary with or post-dated the extension.

A third masonry footed single celled rectilinear building (LE192033) was constructed to the north of the aisled building and aligned with respect to it. Its western wall was well aligned with the projected continuation of a walled passage leading to it. At some point this building was extended north across the line of a demolished yard wall. It produced neither evidence for its function nor datable material. A series of scrappy wall fragments on this alignment were originally phased as being plots associated with earlier activity. However, their alignment suggests that they were yard boundaries associated with the developing aisled building. The western and southern limits to this building complex remained elusive, although the presence of ditch segments in isolated machine trenches suggested that some of the earlier boundaries might have persisted.

The aisled building underwent considerable modification in Phase II, and it is at this point that it becomes recognisably a 'villa' building. The exact sequence requires further analysis, but the extension eastwards was broadly contemporary with the construction of the first western cross range. This involved the subdivision of the western end of the aisled building, within its original limits, into three separate rooms. Although this is the first structural evidence for internal subdivision, it is possible there was some earlier partitioning. This cross range was then extended both north and south to create a larger subdivided space without greatly decreasing the remaining aisled portion of the building. Although the expansion did not vastly alter the size of the building three further small rooms would have been incorporated. The second cross range was probably added at around AD340. During this period walls were added to divide the aisles from the nave in the main building, replacing the aisle posts. The construction of the western bath suite was thought to be contemporary with the elaboration to the cross range, although there was no dating evidence from it (it replaced the apse, and was itself demolished in Phase I2). The inclusion of the cesspit immediately to the west of the bath suite is tentative because its dating could not be defined beyond the broad third to fourth century date range. However, its location suggests that it may have related to this phase of use.

This phase represents a considerable adaptation of the aisled building and its associated compound. Although there is no longer the evidence for corn drying and milling, as the mill building LE192157 (**Figure 43**) had passed out of use, the presence of three associated ancillary structures suggests that significant farming activity was still taking place. Building LE192241 (**Figure 52**) contained a corn drying or malting oven (context 86309), which was probably also removed in this phase. The placing of one of the structures over the area previously given to the deposition of probable agricultural waste material also suggests that the use of the yard/compound had changed. The presence of the walled path heading north towards the enclosure and the suggestion of a boundary wall marking

an enclosed area to the north of the aisled building indicates that this area was the focus of associated activity in this period. The presence of the southern flanking building and road/yard surface suggests that activity was not entirely restricted to the northern side of the aisled building.

#### **Area south of the road LE192144**

The eastern extension to the villa building and the construction of the two flanking buildings indicated that the road was still in use during this phase. But its eastern boundary ditch sequence LE191052 indicates that there was some encroachment on to the line of the road. If the forked curvilinear ditch is correctly phased, then all access north of this point was effectively blocked.

#### **Area south of the road LE192144: 'the 'temple enclosure' LE192231**

There is strong evidence to suggest that the walls of this enclosure remained in place, but the temple building (LE192158) was demolished and its outer wall robbed in the late third or early fourth century. A poorly understood post-built structure and a stone built clay lined tank are tentatively included as being within the enclosure in this period. The tank's dating evidence was not conclusive and survival was poor; the undated structural remains were equally scrappy. They were originally phased as being of early Roman date but the basis for this assumption is not clear; proximity to the tank prompted their inclusion. The poor survival of features in this area highlights the fact that what remains is only a fraction of the original, and that a great deal more was present than can now be extrapolated from the evidence. In this part of the site, poor survival may be the result of thorough clearance of the area in Phase 12, when it was incorporated into a large walled enclosure fronting the villa.

On the opposite side of road LE190031 from this enclosure lay an undated roundhouse LE192238 (**Figure 52**), associated with two 'T' shaped corn drying or malting ovens which cut into the edge of the road metalling. Survival in this area is again poor but it appears to have been sited at the southern corner of the junction of the two roads. Its inclusion here is tentative as its relationship to the road surface provides only a *terminus post quem*.

#### **Area south of road LE192144: enclosure LE192232**

The eastern ditched boundary (LE191051) of this triangular shaped enclosure was re-dug in the fourth century slightly to the east of its earlier line. Its southern terminus was not established, but it may have related to the north-eastern corner of the temple enclosure as previously. The north-western limits to the enclosure were less easily defined in this phase; the roadside boundary ditch LE191052 (**Figure 53**) probably shifted to the south-west, which would have left a large opening onto the road. This naturally raises questions

over whether this was still a major thoroughfare. The belief that the northern wall of the temple enclosure remained is supported by the fact that a late third to fourth century ditch (subdividing the enclosure?), which seems to relate to the new terminus of LE191052, was recorded on geophysics plots as continuing up to the line of the wall.

Within the western portion of the enclosure the remains of roundhouse LE191053 were recorded close to this partitioning ditch which respected its presence (**Figure 53**). The dating of this building is somewhat difficult - it was originally phased as an Iron Age post-built roundhouse surrounded by a gully, on the basis of five sherds of pottery dated to the Iron Age (possibly CP3), from the southern ditch terminal. However, the evidence was not convincing: the context (81834) which contained these sherds also contained a small quantity of fourth century AD pottery. An Iron Age date seems unlikely as it was visible at the same level as the latest Roman features, in an area known to have been in use until at least the early fifth century. The postholes associated with the structure contained the remains of limestone packing, which would be unusual for a building of CP3 (Phase 05) date on this site. These stones were visible on this same plan of the latest Roman levels. On site the building was thought to have had a stone wall set into the ring ditch. Its survival was poor and it was later interpreted as rubble sunken into the underlying feature. This is possible, but it is interesting that this stone feature marked the boundary to a worn metal surface lying to the east, perhaps indicating that the construction of this building related to the deposition of the yard surface. On balance, the fourth century AD date is preferred.

In the eastern part of enclosure LE192232, occupation evidence was scant in this phase. Buildings LE191054 (**Figure 43**) and LE191058 (**Figure 47**) appear to have gone out of use.

## Road LE190031

The road continued on its altered alignment connecting to the north-south road LE192045. However, to its north complex LE190057 passed out of use, and the lack of fourth century pottery suggests that its use did not continue much past the late third century. The inclusion of the small dumbbell shaped furnace and pit in this phase is tentative; both clearly post-dated the disuse of the enclosure but neither was otherwise well dated. It is possible that they were associated with the craft activity to the south of the road but their distance from it might indicate otherwise.

To the south of the road, roundhouse LE192058 remained in use until at least the first half of the fourth century. This date is derived from the fourth century final use deposits of its corn dryer. During this period modifications took place within the yard to the west, and an amorphous hollow was created in the area of the clay lined pits and ovens of the previous phase. This hollow was associated with a cluster of stakeholes and sequential deposits of sand and charcoal indicating *in situ* burning. Although there are problems with the relationship between this hollow and the earlier activity, its appearance is reminiscent

of the metalworking hollow associated with the roundhouse LE192048 in use during the late second to mid third century. The presence of iron slag, clay, charcoal and considerable quantities of hammer scale in its backfill support the interpretation that this was a metalworking area. It produced a large assemblage of mixed Romano-British pottery mainly late third to mid fourth in date. The disuse of the area was therefore believed to date to the first half of the fourth century, despite the fact that the disuse deposits above the well, corn dryer and building contained only residual second to third century pottery.

To the west of this a subrectangular ditched enclosure LE191136 was constructed against the road edge. Its eastern boundary retained the alignment of the third century north-south boundary ditch. The nature of the occupation within this enclosure was not established, but it was believed to be out of use by perhaps the mid fourth century.

### **The northern part of the settlement**

The realigned road LE192007 presumably continued to function but there is some evidence in this phase to suggest encroachment on to its line. However, for the most part the boundaries in this part of the settlement remained relatively static.

### **The northern part of the settlement: east of road LE192007**

The boundaries of enclosure LE191084 probably remained unchanged in its eighth phase of use, with recutting of the ditches on the same alignments. In the northern part of the enclosure, the building complex incorporating the two roundhouses LE191080 and LE191081 continued to function. No distinct episodes of change were discerned but the date range for their use spanned the mid third to mid fourth century. Building LE191068 underwent no structural changes but the associated yard saw a change in function. The oven was demolished and replaced by a rectangular corn dryer. Immediately to the south of the building a short stretch of wall was added to the roadside boundary above the partially backfilled enclosure ditch increasing the walled façade. The enclosure ditch was then re-dug from a point just to the south of the wall. In the corner between the building and the wall a rubbish deposit accumulated. This modification to the boundary was interpreted as replacing the yard space lost to the north with the construction of the corn dryer. The building was demolished before the middle of the fourth century and a possible building (LE191070) was constructed immediately to the north. This structure presumably incorporated the still functioning corn dryer. The well associated with building LE191068 was disused and sealed over. It was thought that a new entranceway into the enclosure was established through the gap where the building had once been. The initial changes to the use of the Building LE191068 were dated to the late third to early fourth century. This date was mainly derived from layers within the building and from the rubbish deposit that accumulated to its south above the backfilled portion of the enclosure ditch. Dating the construction of the corn dryer was less precise, with only third to fourth

century pottery in its disuse fills. The demolition of this structure was dated to the first half of the fourth century, with both pottery and coinage of that date present. The subsequent construction, use and disuse of the building LE191070 rapidly followed. The absence of mid to late fourth century pottery in association with this later structure suggested that its disuse might also have occurred prior to the late fourth century.

The entranceway into enclosure LE190043 may have been altered at this point to bring it into line with the new entrance into LE191084. A late subdivision ditch formed part of the eastern boundary to the enclosure in this period. A cluster of postholes, aligned with this ditch may have been associated with this phase, but they formed no recognizable structure. The rubble spread originally interpreted as a possible roundhouse and well LE192236 (**Figure 43**) probably did not continue in use. They are included here because they were phased with the use of the roundhouse buildings LE191080 and LE191081, which has been brought forward into this phase because of its broad date range. This period saw the final phase of use of the rectilinear building LE190041. The continued use of this enclosure is less well attested. Although the building LE190041 was interpreted as continuing in use until the early to mid fourth century, the majority of pottery from the only dated context associated with this final phase of use dated to the late second to early third century. The small amount of late third to fourth century pottery present might represent its real disuse date however.

### **The northern part of the settlement: west of road LE192007**

The enclosure LE192150 entered its seventh phase of use in this period. The eastern boundary was probably retained till the late third century before its alteration to a partially walled enclosure saw expansion eastwards onto the line of the road. The northern ditched boundary to the enclosure remained in use, although a fragment of wall might indicate that this too was superseded by a walled phase. Despite the expansion to the east the entranceway was retained. The western limits to the enclosure lay within the line of the original first century enclosure. To the south there is some evidence to suggest that a similar walled enclosure was constructed above the earlier ditched plot. Within the enclosure the roundhouse LE192151 underwent modification. The eastern foundations were retained but the building was extended to the west as a rectilinear structure. The northern and southern walls survived as a beam slot and a line of postholes respectively. This odd amalgamation of building techniques making use of an earlier building's footings is reminiscent of the early to mid third century adaptation of the structure LE192040 (**Figure 44**). The alterations to the enclosure LE192150 were dated to the late third to fourth century although the introduction of the walls is based mostly on their stratigraphic position rather than datable contexts. The initial alterations to building LE192151 were not well dated, the best dating evidence came from an associated pit which produced a second half of the fourth century date, however, this pit could well have related to the continued use of the building. A broader fourth century date is reasonable for the reconstruction of the building.

To the north the roadside boundary ditches LE192005 were recut and an entranceway into the courtyard LE192003 was maintained. The use of the main buildings was not thought to continue beyond the late third century. This did not mark the disuse of the courtyard though and after a possible period of disuse, areas were re-metalled and a poorly dated post-built lean-to structure was set against the northern wall. The suggestion that it represented a later reuse of the yard derived from evidence that it had been constructed after a disuse deposit, containing some third to fourth century pottery, which had accumulated over the original metalled yard surface. Although this is evidence for continuing use it does not necessarily reflect maintenance of function.

Further to the north, building LE190104 and associated yard LE192139 might have continued in use into the fourth century, although dating evidence for this complex was scant. Pottery of this date in the overlying plough soil indicates continued domestic occupation in some form. A ditched enclosure (LE192138) to the north of this might also indicate continued occupation, although its association to the complex to the south is not secure. A similarly aligned feature (LE192140) was recorded further to the north although its form and function are ill understood. The plan suggests it doglegged across the projected line of the road LE192007, but archaeological recording in this area was hurriedly carried out in far from ideal conditions, and this may represent a confusion of features rather than a single enclosure/boundary ditch. The ring ditch of the adjacent Bronze Age barrow LE192143 silted up in this phase, although its relationship to this enclosure ditch was not well established. The silting up of the ring ditch and construction and use of ditch LE192140 were interpreted as being third to fourth century activities. Some mid third to early fourth century pottery was present in the only dated group, but the majority of the assemblage was mid to late fourth century in date.

It is possible that the ditched enclosure LE192138 related to a fence line noted to the west rather than to the complex to the south, though this is tentative as the fence line was not conclusively traced this far east. However, the series of well aligned ditches/gullies recorded in machine section to the south of the enclosure may have contained its continuation. It produced a good late third to mid fourth century date, and its continuation across the road LE191118 might indicate a later rather than earlier date within this range, as the roadside ditches LE191121 probably continued in use into the fourth century. The gully/fence line might suggest that it and the northern part of the road were out of use in the mid fourth century, as it was recorded cutting through the upper Roman levels implying a late construction date. A possible post-built structure may have been associated with the construction of this boundary. It produced no datable material but was visible at the upper level of excavation. However, a possible enclosure of fourth century date respecting the southern part of the road LE191118 might indicate that its disuse came somewhat later. It is also possible that the undated curved enclosure ditch cutting across the line of the road may be incorrectly phased.

Just to the south of the fence line the poorly surviving rectilinear building LE191117 underwent modification in the late third to mid fourth century with the construction of

stone lined drains to the north associated with a tank in which a hoard of unused metal objects including a ploughshare and a wheel hub were found. This structure may have been associated with some sort of craft activity as a small limestone platform with evidence for burning on its surface was located just to its south-east. This feature may have been a corn dryer originally but appears to have had a secondary use. It was similar to the platform associated with the third century usage of building LE190104 to the east. The building remained until the very end of the Roman period at least and possibly beyond. The earlier pottery present within the assemblage was presumably residual (and to be expected since this had been a building plot from the mid second century onwards).

### **The northern part of the settlement: west of road LE191118**

To the west of the road LE191118, enclosure LE191114 remained in use (**Figure 50**). Although neither circular building was well dated, pottery from associated drains and the enclosure ditches themselves indicates that occupation continued into the mid to late fourth century. To the south of this a similar though slightly larger masonry footed roundhouse (LE191122) was in use at this point. Its positioning suggests that it too related to the road. Its construction date was uncertain, but the presence of some second half of the fourth century pottery in an associated drain might indicate continued use throughout this period. Unlike the two structures to the north there was no evidence that this building lay within an enclosure.

Further south, another masonry footed roundhouse (LE191001) may have been positioned close to the line of road LE191118. It was associated with a metalled yard and possibly also a well (LE191002) to the north. The well was disused in the late third to fourth century but could conceivably have been constructed earlier in the third century. The form of the yard was not established with certainty; it was originally interpreted as being circular - but all except one of the ditch segments attributed to its enclosure have been shown to be either bogus or parts of other features. A single segment is being given the benefit of the doubt despite the fact that it was not drawn and not photographed. The occupation on this western side of the road suggests that the road did not mark the limits of the settled area, at least in this phase.

A third isolated masonry footed roundhouse (LE190100) was in use in this period. Although the evidence is not conclusive, the pottery analysis indicates that the building may have been constructed during the third century and continued in use till the early to mid fourth century.

This band of roundhouses down the western side of the settlement in Phase II is interesting, and the possibility they have a different function or status to the main area of the settlement will be examined. They might relate to the use of the land nearer the river, for example for seasonal grazing.



## **The northern part of the settlement: the *temenos* LE191044**

Major alterations to the *temenos* took place in the late third to mid fourth century, but poor dating evidence and confused stratigraphy hampers interpretation of this area, which had suffered damage due to later agricultural activity in its northern half.

An encircling wall was constructed, but only its south-western quadrant survived well. A series of three probably interconnecting drainage channels were recorded immediately to the east of the plinths, and their construction was believed to be contemporary with remetalling around this entranceway. The interpretation suggests that these may have formed some kind of water feature associated with the formal entrance into the *temenos*. Inside the walled area a metalled surface was deposited which provided the best dating evidence for this phase of alteration. The construction of the wall and deposition of the metalled inner walkway was thought to be late third century in date on the basis of coins found within its line. There is no evidence for an earlier surface within this walled area and the oyster shell layers deposited outside the walls were not recorded within them. The narrow curvilinear gully was included in this phase because it may have bounded the inner walkway. Its stratigraphic relationship to the metalled surface was not clear, however, appearing to be beneath it at one point, but it did seem to mirror the line of the wall for part of its course.

A thick layer of oyster shells was deposited on the metalled surface outside the walls, spreading for a distance of approximately 11m out from the walls and decreasing in thickness at the furthest edges. Shell layers were also recorded above the roads leading from the *temenos* to the west and above the disused building LE191046 (**Figure 30**). These oyster shell layers were probably deposited over a long period of time (which could account for their presence below a metalled road surface thought to be contemporary with a road to the north-east that was covered by shells). Spreading these shells may have been part of a deliberate attempt to create a distinctive pathway to the monument. Further to the south-east oyster shells were not recorded along the line of the road LE192135, suggesting that their deposition was probably restricted to the immediate vicinity of the *temenos*.

## **The south-west of the site: the inhumation cemetery**

The cemetery probably continued to be used throughout the fourth century and into the fifth, but no burials can be specifically dated to Phase II at present.



## PHASE 12: ELABORATION OF THE VILLA, REORGANIZATION OF THE LANDSCAPE TO THE SOUTH OF ROAD LE192144 AND RETRACTION OF THE SETTLEMENT

MID FOURTH TO EARLY FIFTH CENTURY, c 340-410 AD

*Figure 54*

### Introduction

This period was one of considerable change, and by about AD 380 the site must have looked very different from how it appeared in AD 340.

The villa was substantially redeveloped after AD 364, with a new frontage formed by a corridor and wing rooms. The Phase 10 aisled building LE192235 remained at its core, and hence its alignment still reflected the Iron Age boundary ditch from Phase 04. A new bath suite was built, and several rooms had mosaic floors and painted wall plaster. The approach to the villa was cleared of buildings on either side of the road (accounting for the poor survival of earlier phases in these areas). A large walled courtyard was laid out in front of the villa, necessitating the removal of the 'temple enclosure' from Phase 09.

Initially the *temenos* continued in use, though its focus shifted from the west to the east. But it subsequently seems to have declined, as few of the coins recovered post-date AD 364. Another change in ritual or belief may be represented by the re-used sculpture, derived from funerary monuments, built into the hypocaust of the southern room of the villa. The origin of the sculpture and architectural stone used remains uncertain, but it may have been removed from structures in the shrine/temple enclosure LE192231 (described in Phase 09, **Figures 30 and 40**).

The absence of other occupation evidence in the immediate vicinity of the villa and its courtyard is noticeable. Activity further north continued, with some new development, but the overall appearance suggests a somewhat scaled down settlement. This phase also saw several instances of long established alignments being disregarded across the site, which represents a significant event in a previously rather static landscape.

The villa courtyard also cut across road LE192144. It is possible that the northern section of this and the other north-south roads through the settlement were now linked to a road running north-south between the villa and palaeochannel I91006 (**Figure 13**). This road is currently placed in Phase 13 and thought to be medieval, but its origins could have been earlier. Road I90031 continued to provide access from the Irchester to Titchmarsh road.

The partial recutting of ring ditch LE192143 near the north of the site is noteworthy. This was probably an early Bronze Age barrow ditch which had remained visible in the

landscape but largely silted or filled during Phase II. An inhumation burial (skeleton 6138) was inserted into its fills.

A generally conservative approach to the dating has been taken, and so some features currently in this phase may be reassigned to the next as analysis continues. This perhaps applies particularly to the two ditched enclosures east and north-east of the villa courtyard. Because of the well-known dating problems for the early fifth century, the end date for this phase is far from certain.

## The development of the villa complex

The second half of the fourth century witnessed significant changes to the aisled villa building with the creation of a continuous eastern façade (**Figure 55**). The alterations to the villa building may not have been in a single year of construction but perhaps a series of building episodes taking place over a short period during the later part of the fourth century. Two new ranges to the north and south were added, replacing the earlier outlying flanking buildings.

The southern range extended the building to the limits of the previous structure and was provided with a room provided with a hypocaust and one with a mosaic floor (Neal and Cosh 2002, 257-8). This floor sealed a coin dating to 364-378 AD in association with a good assemblage of late fourth century pottery types.

The northern range incorporated a new bath suite, and this was probably rapidly followed by the demolition of the western bath suite from Phase II. Although the disuse of the earlier bath suite was not well dated from the finds, it was very heavily robbed in contrast to the rest of the villa buildings.

The construction of a large well immediately to the west of the new bath suite marked the disuse of the walled walkway which had led north from the aisled building. This well presumably supplied the bathhouse with fresh water; complete and almost complete mid to late fourth century vessels were retrieved from its disuse deposits.

A porticus was added onto the new eastern façade suggesting that in this period access to the building was through the eastern side (access to the aisled building had been from the north). Mosaic floors were laid down in the corridor and the southern pavilion (Neal and Cosh 2002, 254-9). The sawpit immediately in front of the new eastern entrance would have only been in use for the duration of construction.

Contemporary with these alterations to the buildings was the construction of a walled courtyard east of the villa (**Figure 55**), measuring approximately 68m by 56m. The northern wall of this yard blocked the road (LE192144; **Figure 51**). A channel was cut through the disused road surface to drain the cold plunge bath, taking the water out of the courtyard under the wall to drain away to its north. Evidence for scouring at the base

of the wall on the northern side suggested that a soakaway might have been quite close. The creation of this courtyard also marked the disuse of the 'temple enclosure' LE192231. Its relationship to the east-west road LE190031 suggests this might now have been a private access rather than a routeway into the settlement, and represented discontinuity with the previously fairly stable landscape in this area.

Within the yard a number of metalled surfaces possibly relate to this phase, but their dating was poor and it is possible that some of the metalling related to earlier phases. The use of a poorly defined corn dryer was probably contemporary with or post-dating the metalled surfaces. Its interpretation is debatable: although it was associated with burning, its form was indistinct. A single masonry footed rectilinear structure LE192056 (**Figure 55**) was recorded within the confines of the courtyard. Its survival was fragmentary and no associated features were found to suggest a possible function. However, the presence of considerable quantities of stone roof tile in a demolition deposit suggests that its superstructure was also masonry. No clear date could be applied to the construction and use of this building. Its alignment and positioning close to the southern wall of the yard indicates that it may have been contemporary with it, but it could also have been set out in relation to the Phase II buildings, which may make more sense architecturally.

There is no evidence for continued occupation in the walled enclosure to the north of the villa. Both the buildings LE192029 and LE192033 were interpreted as being disused. Disuse deposits above the buildings produced some late Roman material dating between the third and fourth century, but residual second to third century pottery prevailed. A small cluster of infant inhumations (skeletons 6028 to 6030) was inserted into post-use deposits that accumulated around building LE192033. The lack of firm dating evidence entails that their inclusion here is tentative. It is not known whether the walls of the enclosure remained after the demise of the structures within.

An earlier interpretation held that these changes indicated that the villa no longer served an agricultural function. However, it is not clear that this was the case. There was clearly a reorganization of space both within the villa and its immediate surroundings with a change in focus of activity and access from the north-east side of the building to its south-east side. However, the aisled hall was retained, and the building could have had two quite separate areas of use. Whether a 'working farm' element was retained remains to be investigated.

Following the reconstruction of the villa sometime after AD 375, there is evidence for further modifications suggesting continued use of the building as a prestigious domestic structure in the late fourth or early fifth century at least, on the basis of stratigraphy. The doorway between corridor R31 and room R30 was blocked by the insertion of a partition wall, the posts of which neatly cut through the western end of the mosaic in corridor R31 (Neal and Cosh 2002, fig. 228). There are also some indications that Room 30 (**Figure 55**) remained in an unfinished state internally, which might account for the blocking and suggest that the ambitious refurbishment of the villa was not fully completed. The wall

separating rooms R28 and R29 was taken down and replaced by a buttressed entranceway. This may have been contemporary with modifications to the hypocaust in room R28 (these changes were slight and would have been carried out whilst it was still functioning as a heating system).

### **South and east of the villa**

A ditched enclosure (LE192245) lay immediately to the south of the villa courtyard (its appearance on **Figure 55** reflects a problem with the planning grid between excavation levels). The ditch was well dated to the mid to late fourth century with reasonable quantities of large unabraded sherds of diagnostic second half of the fourth century pottery. A coin of AD 364-7 found in the upper fill supports this use/disuse date. A dump of tesserae offcuts in the lower fill of the ditch suggests that it was open during the building of the eastern frontage to the villa.

To the east, the road LE190031 presumably provided access to the villa through the courtyard despite the encroachment. It is not clear whether the roadside boundary walls that lay outside the area of the new yard were retained, but the building complexes to the north and south of the road were out of use. To the south an irregular enclosure ditch (LE192244), possibly defining an enclosure, cut through the remains of the roundhouse LE192058 which was in use till the mid fourth century. The southern arm of the ditch appears to respect the northern side of the second to third century enclosure, and this might argue against a very late construction date. However, boundaries persist, and this enclosure might well be of fifth century date. Closer analysis may see it moved into Phase 13.

### **North-east of the villa: disuse of the 'temple enclosure' LE192231**

Although the construction of the new courtyard represented the disuse of the temple enclosure, two features interpreted as building platforms just to the south of the enclosure wall are included in this phase. One was stratigraphically later than the third to fourth century irregular curvilinear ditches of the previous phase, but the more easterly platform had no such stratigraphic dating and was well aligned with the defunct enclosure wall. It is possible that these two features were not contemporary and that the eastern platform needs to be rephased. David Neal suggested it was the footing for a funerary monument, which would probably place it in Phase 09.

### **The triangular enclosure LE192232**

The triangular enclosure was also modified in this phase. It is not clear whether the northern part of the road LE192144 (**Figure 51**) remained in use; none of the roadside boundary ditches LE191052 were shown to have continued in this period. However, a

revetted channel was recorded cutting through the road surface on the line of this boundary. It was originally interpreted as a water channel possibly serving the bath suite but there are reservations over its form and function.

The roundhouse (LE191053, **Figure 53**) is phased as being out of use but the dating evidence was not overwhelming, and its presumed end did not mark the disuse of the enclosure LE192232. The eastern boundary LE191051 was recut, and a sub-rectangular ditched enclosure of at least two phases of construction was set against the western side of this boundary. Its southern limits were not confirmed in excavation and it was originally interpreted as being approximately 46m long, however, the geophysical evidence strongly suggests that this was a confusion of the evidence in an under excavated area. From this data it is possible to suggest that it was 20m long and that its southern limit was defined by an uncontexted recut of the eastern boundary. This ditch was on the same line as the earlier walled boundary and on balance it seems that this ditch replaced part of the wall. Its fill produced an interesting finds assemblage including burnt roof slates, tile, glass and limestone fragments. Some of the ceramic tiles were interpreted as being possible voussoirs. The origin of this material is clearly of interest – it may have come from the original bath-suite at the western end of the aisled building (**Figure 52**). A sub-triangular enclosure was constructed immediately to the north of the sub-rectangular enclosure. A small entrance gap measuring 1.5m in width existed between the two at its south-western corner. The combination of plan and geophysical evidence indicates that either a second enclosure was added to the southern side of the sub-rectangular enclosure or that the original enclosure was expanded. The eastern boundary to this additional enclosure is uncertain but the geophysics plot indicates that it respected the line of the boundary LE191051. However, in this area there is no surviving evidence for a boundary on this line in this period.

There is no evidence for activity taking place within the enclosures in this period. However, a cluster of six pits was recorded cutting through the fill of ditch LE191051. Although they clearly post-dated its use they were confined to the limits of the ditch suggesting that it still represented a boundary. Their relationship to the sub-rectangular enclosure has been inferred from the fact that the northern side of the northernmost pit was aligned with the enclosure entrance. The recutting of boundary LE191051 continued into the mid to late fourth century, the use and disuse of the sub-rectangular enclosure was very well dated to this same period. Some late fourth century pottery was retrieved from the pits perpetuating the boundary, indicating its continued use into the latest years of the century at least.

At least two infant inhumations (skeletons 6106 and 6107) were recorded inside the enclosure immediately to the west of this pit cluster, and although they were undated, they might have been contemporary with it.

A group of adult inhumation burials lay immediately to the east of boundary LE191051. Three of the graves were well aligned with the ditch, a fourth was at a slightly divergent

angle and may have cut into the disused ditch but this relationship was not conclusively proven. The group are of interest for a number of reasons.

Firstly, their insertion marked the first archaeologically visible activity to take place to the east of this line since the mid to late second century (even the late fourth century pits did not transgress it). The insertion of burials close to this boundary was not necessarily a new phenomenon. The burials within enclosure LE192232 and originally dated to Phase 09 (mid second to early third century AD) lie alongside the western side of the same boundary. However, the dating of these burials as a group will be reconsidered.

Secondly, the burial rites afforded to these individuals were divergent from the earlier practices. Two of the graves contained flexed burials (skeletons 6101 and 6113); 6101 appears to have been somewhat carelessly deposited. A second burial (skeleton 6122) was in the same grave as 6113. Only part of the later burial 6122 survived, and it was not clear if the two had been buried at the same time. The third grave contained three burials haphazardly thrown into the pit at the same time, with little care over their final body position (skeletons 6109-11). The fourth grave contained a supine burial (skeleton 6102) but it too lacked care over the positioning of the limbs and the grave appeared too small. It is possible that the shift in burial from the west to the east of the boundary was contemporary with the construction of the enclosures and subsequent change in land use. Without firm dating evidence all that is certain is that at least three of the four graves related to the still visible boundary ditch.

The unusual nature of these burials means that other possibilities must be considered. Could they have been a later Saxon execution cemetery? They have many of the characteristics listed by Reynolds (1998; 2005, 217), but burials grouped along field or enclosure boundaries is a common late Romano-British rural burial practice. The three skeletons in the pit were apparently neither decapitated nor had their hands tied behind their backs, though analysis of the bones may produce evidence of violence. One of them, skeleton 6109, had a copper alloy bracelet dated to the third to fourth century 'with no positive indications that it could be later' (report by Angela Wardle). The other dating evidence is probably irrelevant – Reynolds noted that most of the finds from the burials at Staines were residual (prehistoric or Romano-British) or intrusive pot sherds (2005, 217-220), and the burials were radiocarbon dated to the eighth to twelfth centuries AD. The Stanwick burials are near both the road and the river, which was the hundred boundary in the nineteenth century AD (the parish boundary was 300m further north). The analysis of the skeletons should help, but it is likely that only radiocarbon dating could fully resolve the dating question for this interesting group of burials.

A mid/late Saxon (eighth to ninth century AD) execution site cemetery has been inferred at the middle Saxon estate centre at Higham Ferrers, only a few kilometres south of the Stanwick excavations. Here an incomplete female skeleton and disarticulated parts of at least two males were found in a ditch fill, and it was suggested that the bodies or body

parts had been collected from an execution site where they had been exposed before being dumped in the ditch (Hardy *et al* 2007, 206-7).

## Enclosure LE192037

The twelfth phase of the 'horseshoe enclosure' LE192037 (**Figure 56**) saw its continued use in an altered form. The reconstructed building LE192040 remained in use until at least the end of the Romano-British period. Late pottery was recorded in the vicinity of the ancillary building LE192039 and the postpad lean-to LE192043, and therefore their continued presence is suggested. The continued use of LE192040 may have been associated with the insertion of a corn dryer and an oven into the partially demolished remains of building LE192041. The construction and use of the corn dryer was dated to the fourth century but the oven was more closely datable, to the late fourth century. Both clearly post-dated the partial dismantling of building LE192041. It is not clear whether the road LE190116 continued to serve the building, and it has been phased as out of use due to the absence of associated later fourth century pottery.

Although it is clear that the use of building LE 192040 continued, the walled boundaries to the enclosure may not have been maintained in their entirety. Mid to late fourth century pottery was present in the robber trench of a subdivision wall, but the north-eastern corner produced both fourth century and Saxon material. On the northern side the wall was cut through by at least one of two undated curvilinear ditches. Although their inclusion is tentative the north-eastern corner of the wall was robbed out and two interconnecting limestone based water tanks were constructed. Their form suggests that they were Roman in origin, and so a date in the second half of the fourth century seems appropriate. To the south of the enclosure, a ditch dating to the second half of the fourth century was recorded in section and traced in geophysics plots following the curve of the enclosure, but its function is uncertain. A number of quarry pits were recorded, in section only, to the south of this ditch, and may have been in use in this period.

Further to the west, evidence for later fourth century occupation was fragmentary, and there is no proof that any of the buildings tentatively included in Phase 11 continued into the later part of the century. However, the presence of a rectangular spiral flued corn dryer (89025), producing a diagnostic assemblage of pottery suggesting a final use and disuse date in the second half of the fourth century, indicated that some occupation was still taking place. It is of interest because of its north-south alignment, which suggested discontinuity with the preceding activity that had respected the north-east to south-west alignment originating in the mid to late Iron Age with boundary ditch LE192014. The inclusion of the ill understood ditches to the south is tentative: one was dated broadly to the fourth century but it was the coincidence of the north-south alignment that prompted their phasing.



## The northern part of the settlement: east of road LE192007

The realigned road LE192007 probably continued to function in this period, as did occupation in the enclosures offset from it, although on a slightly smaller scale.

East of road LE192007, the 'wedge' shaped enclosure LE191084 was maintained during its ninth phase with recutting of the earlier boundary ditches. However, within the enclosure the occupation altered significantly. The two roundhouses LE191080 and LE191081 were demolished in the mid fourth century and LE191081 was replaced by a masonry footed rectilinear structure (LE191082). A mid to late fourth century layer of mixed clayey material was recorded within the confines of the roundhouse LE191081, below the level of the later buildings floor surfaces. It is possible that this deposit was either a final floor surface or a leveling layer deposited immediately prior to the construction of the new building. Despite the presence of this layer very little material of this late date was found in association with the structure. The majority of the material was not more closely definable than to the fourth century with late third to fourth and first half of the fourth century pottery also present. However, the stratigraphy suggests that it must have been at least a mid fourth century construction. A fenced yard was probably constructed to the south of the building as was a well. The alignment of this new building did not respect the boundaries of the enclosure nor did it front onto the road, although the deposition of a metalled surface to the east presumably provided access onto the road. It was, however, aligned with a newly constructed internal subdivision ditch to the south of the yard. This subdividing ditch was the first not to maintain the original alignment of the enclosure. In the southern half of the enclosure, building LE191070 associated with the corn dryer may have had its final use/disuse during this period (despite the lack of convincing pottery evidence). Since it was constructed in the mid fourth century this seems to be a reasonable assumption, and the presence of large quantities of pottery of this date in the nearby enclosure ditches suggests that domestic occupation was indeed taking place in the vicinity.

The enclosure ditches of LE191084 and LE190043 (**Figure 43**) both produced sizeable second half of the fourth century pottery assemblages suggesting their continued use until the end of the Romano-British period. Occupation in the eastern enclosure LE190043 in its sixth phase was less well defined. The masonry footed building LE190041 was robbed out but there was some evidence for the recutting of the enclosure ditches in this period. The robbing of the building has been dated to the middle of the fourth century but the pottery evidence was not convincing. However, a late fourth century coin was noted in association with its disuse. It is possible that the western ditches were retained because they bounded the road between the two enclosures. An inhumation burial (skeleton 6039) was inserted into the enclosure ditch close to the road.



## The northern part of the settlement: west of road LE192007

The walled boundaries of enclosure LE192150 were probably retained in its eighth phase of use. Within the enclosure, building LE192151 underwent further modification and use. The curved east wall was replaced by a rectilinear post-built extension. A posthole line immediately inside the western wall also suggested repair and adaptation. A metallised surface was laid down within the building and was associated with a stone lined feature, possibly a trough. In appearance this structure is similar to the reconstructed LE192040 (Figure 56) in enclosure LE192037. The reconstruction and continued use of this building was surprisingly well dated. Pottery from postholes and the floor surface indicate a second half of the fourth century date. Enclosure LE192150 may have continued in use despite the lack of datable contexts associated with it. The reconstructed eastern wall of the building respected the line of the enclosure supporting the interpretation that it was still present in some form.

To the north of this, courtyard LE192003 (Figure 51) is interpreted as being disused in this phase. A somewhat irregular gully was cut through the yard surface that was well dated to mid to late fourth century. The roadside boundary ditch LE192005 was retained in the late fourth century, but its full form in plan was not established.

Further to the north, there was no evidence for continued use of the earlier building complex into the later part of the fourth century. A short stretch of ditch was the stratigraphically latest feature known, but its date, form and function were uncertain. Enclosure LE192138 was apparently recut, but the pottery retrieved was only datable to the fourth century in general. Only its northern side was established with certainty but it is possible that its southern side was seen in the isolated machine sections to the south. The continued use of this enclosure was probably contemporary with the construction and use of a small single celled masonry footed rectilinear building (LE192137). It was well dated to the second half of the fourth century, with large closely datable pottery assemblages supported by coin dating.

The construction of building LE192137 corresponded with the partial recutting of the BA ring ditch (LE192143) to the north. Only part of the circuit was recut, and its purpose is unclear but it was well dated to this period. An inhumation burial (skeleton 6138) was inserted into the ring ditch fill. The grave fill produced large quantities of pottery, including mid-late fourth century types, presumably derived from the final backfill of the ring ditch. This burial was found (and damaged) during machining, and excavated very rapidly (no drawing was made) – this part of the site was excavated under ‘rescue’ conditions. Although some medieval pottery was also noted in the grave fill, the presence of coffin nails, hob nails and a copper alloy bracelet suggest that it is more likely to be a late Roman burial.

Building LE191117 continued in use in its altered form until the last part of the fourth century at least. A latest Roman type sherd featuring ‘Romano-Saxon’ decoration

indicated the possibility that its use continued into the fifth century. The disuse of the building was also reasonably well dated with large quantities of abraded pottery dating from the second half of the fourth century in the rubble layer over the structure. A rubble deposit within the disused drains produced similarly dated pottery as well as a sherd of Saxon pottery (which might support the theory that the final use of the building took place in the fifth century). To the west, enclosure LE191114 remained open and it is possible that the two structures within it (LE191113 and LE191115, shown on **Figure 50**) saw their final use in this period. Pewter vessels were found in the fill of part of the ditch recut. However, the structures inside the enclosure did not produce diagnostic late material and it is possible that they went out of use before the ditches finally silted up. To the south building LE191122 may also have had its final phase of use at this point, but again the pottery evidence is not conclusive.

A north-west to south-east aligned metalled road (possibly part of LE 191000) running across a disused broad water channel (interpreted as part of LE 191006) was phased to the second half of the fourth century, based on dating material and its relationship to the metalled yard surface associated with the disused roundhouse LE191001, part of which it incorporated. The area was consolidated prior to its construction; its southern edge was kerbed, presumably to counteract the problem of subsidence. A distinct wear pattern on the surface aligned well with the known course of the road. This road was not recorded continuing east into the main area of the site. It might have been heading west to a crossing point over the river.

However, a similarly aligned medieval metalled road (LE191000) (**Figure 59**) was recorded running towards the river. It overlay a silted up palaeochannel which was radiocarbon dated to 660-980 cal AD. Therefore the phasing of this section of road needs reconsidering - it may also be medieval, though it could have been an earlier road on a similar alignment. More work on palaeochannel LE191006 and the ditches alongside it may clarify the dating.

Roundhouse LE190100 passed out of use, and no late fourth century pottery was found there. A horseshoe was noted within one of the deposits, suggesting medieval disturbance or robbing.

### **The northern part of the settlement: the temenos**

The *temenos* continued in use during this phase, but its form and approach were altered. The superstructure of the western entranceway into the ambulatory was demolished although the bases remained in situ. Rubble was noted to the west of the bases, and within the line of the wall a large fragment of a child's skull (skeleton 6450) was found in the layer. The skull may be from a disturbed earlier or later burial, but at Cosgrove (Northamptonshire) two human skull fragments found in the wall of the *cella* of a shrine were interpreted as a foundation deposit (Quinnell 1991, 21, 61 and fig. 12). The rubble layer was believed to have been incorporated into the metalled ambulatory. The wall was

probably retained as the deposition of the oyster shell layer continued to respect its presence. Examination of the lower plough soil coin distribution plots suggested that there might have been a shift in the focus or access to the *temenos* from the western entrance to the north-east. Coins dating between 330-378 AD were found in the north-east part, whereas in the west they appeared to stop c. 330 AD. This 378 AD date for the latest coins does not reflect the site in general, where coins of a later date were retrieved: 127 coins (3.9% of the total of datable coins) were dated to issue periods XVb and XVI, 378-402AD (Davies, Appendix 3H in Perrin 1995b). This suggests that the *temenos* ceased to function prior to the end of the use of the settlement, or at least that its use changed and coins were no longer deposited as offerings significantly before the end of the fourth century.

The change in focus to the north-eastern side of the *temenos* might have coincided with the disuse of the road LE192135. The fragmentary remains of an undated masonry footed building were recorded cutting through part of the earlier masonry structure. Evidence is limited, but its alignment suggests that it post-dated the use of the road. A small group of four inhumation burials (skeletons 6456 to 6459) were recorded just to the south-west of this wall. All were aligned south-west to north-east with their heads (where surviving) to the south-west. They were a distinct group, and their feet appear to point towards this wall suggesting that it was still standing at the time of their insertion. An isolated burial, disturbed and incomplete (skeleton 6455) located a little further to the north may have related to this group.

### **The south-west of the site: the cemetery**

The cemetery is assumed to have continued in use throughout Phase 12. However, due to the limited dating evidence available, no individual burials can be securely assigned to this phase.

One of the graves within the cemetery (skeleton 6139) contained two copper alloy bracelets, one on the left wrist and the other found outside the grave cut. Both were of a similar type and have been recorded in fifth and early sixth century contexts; this form was not seen in fourth century contexts in London and has been interpreted as being of fifth century date (report by Angela Wardle). This may be the latest burial in the cemetery, and it may belong in Phase 13. However, the cemetery may have gone out of use at the end of Phase 12, as the other fifth century burials are located closer to the villa. This shift in burial location may be a key element of the change between Phases 12 and 13.

## PHASE 13: OCCUPATION IN THE SUB-ROMAN/SAXON PERIOD INCLUDING THE CONTINUED USE OF THE DECAYING VILLA

### EARLY FIFTH CENTURY TO SIXTH CENTURIES AD

#### *Figure 57*

#### Introduction

Occupation of the site continued to the end of the fourth century and beyond. Of the datable Roman coins from Stanwick, 3.2% belong to issue period XVI, 388-402AD (Davies, Appendix 3H in Perrin 1995b). This contrasts with the nearby roadside settlement at Higham Ferrers, which was 'no longer a functioning small town by the end of the fourth century' and where no Romano-British coinage of the second half of the fourth century was found. As Hardy *et al* note, this 'does not necessarily represent conclusive proof of abandonment, only the breakdown of the money economy'. Interpreting Stanwick as an agricultural village, the economic difference between this and the roadside small town is marked. Where the early Saxon occupation at Higham Ferrers started in the mid fifth century, the 'incomers showed no interest in the relict Romano-British infrastructure' (Hardy *et al* 2007, 186). At Stanwick, both continuity of landscape structure (especially around the villa and in the long-lived enclosure LE192037) and disregard for established boundaries can be seen.

Neither the start nor the end of this phase can be closely dated, for all the well-known reasons affecting dating in this period. It is not known for how long the settlement continued in its late fourth century form. Some of the buildings across the settlement clearly show adaptation and use until, at the least, the latest years of the fourth century. However, the lack of datable assemblages of early fifth century date means that none are provided with a clear terminus. 'What does a fifth century finds assemblage look like?' was identified as a key question for the finds analysis, and one which for which Stanwick can contribute to understanding regionally and nationally (Summerfield and Wardle, Appendix 3A, 18-19 in Perrin 1995b).

The stratigraphy of the villa strongly suggests that it continued to function as a prestigious building for some time after its major reconstruction of around AD 375. Again the problem of accurate dating arises, and when this ended is to a considerable extent still guesswork. Occupation of the villa continued, but with indications of a different kind of use. Postholes and an oven or furnace were cut through mosaic floors, and hearths set into a partly removed flagged floor. The villa courtyard seems to have continued in use, as a small group of burials were set along the outside of its southern wall. Some of these can be dated to the mid fifth to mid sixth centuries. Other burials were inserted in and around the villa (though not in the areas where late occupation is attested).

Elsewhere, evidence for later occupation is largely restricted to the central part of the site, north-east of the villa. Much of it consisted of fragments of irregular ditches, isolated cut features and quarry pits, but a small post built rectilinear structure and a sub-rectangular building or enclosure with wattle walls and round corners were constructed. A few further burials are also assigned to this period. As previously noted, some of the ditched enclosures currently assigned to Phase 12 may in fact belong in this period.

At first sight, and in comparison with previous phases, the evidence looks scrappy. But given the general paucity of the record for sites of this date, it may hold considerable potential for investigating the post-Roman transition period (see Esmonde Cleary 1989, 204). Detailed analysis of the finds, burials, environmental and structural evidence should greatly add to our understanding of this phase.

### The decaying villa

There is good evidence to suggest that parts of the villa building were still occupied during its decline from being an overtly prestigious structure (**Figure 58**). Two hearths were set into partially removed flagged floors within the southern range and the cross range. Postholes were cut through the mosaic floors in the southern range, corridor and southern pavilion. These either related to *ad hoc* repairs to the fabric of the building or to a changing use of the rooms themselves. It is possible that in this period these rooms were of significance because the floors were well constructed and useful rather than decorative. A dumb-bell shaped oven cut through the floor of room R29 might support this theory. In the northern bath suite there was evidence for dismantling of some of the fixtures and fittings, with a robber trench removing a pipe (perhaps made of lead) and an ill defined oven structure associated with disuse material incorporating some melted lead. The use of the decaying villa structure is extremely difficult to date. The dumb-bell shaped oven contained some third to fourth century pottery and the oven in the bath-suite contained some fourth century pottery. However, their stratigraphic position indicates that they related to a period when the luxury elements of the villa were no longer significant. The fifth century plus date is based on allowing a certain amount of time to pass following the reconstruction of the elaborate villa in the second half of the fourth century for the earlier modifications to have taken place, before elements of disuse would have crept in.

This continuing occupation of the front parts of villa for uses of a different nature has parallels, for example at Frocester, Gloucestershire (Price 2000, 111-16, Figure 6.6).

The eastern courtyard associated with the villa probably continued in use as long as the building did, though there is little stratigraphic or dating evidence from within it to show this. Its continued use and the maintenance of its boundaries into the fifth/sixth centuries are inferred from the burial group along the outside of its southern wall (**Figure 58**).

Two adult burials (skeletons 6123 and 6126) were aligned with their feet close to the wall, indicating that the wall was still present when they were interred. Both were set into stone features of ill defined form, and one had a secondary infant inhumation (skeleton 6125) inserted into its surrounding stonework. One of the adult burials was associated with two mid fifth to mid sixth century brooches and beads. The second similar burial is dated to this period because of its similarity and location. The inclusion in this cluster of a second infant inhumation (skeleton 6131) just to the east is less secure; a single late fourth century sherd was retrieved from the backfill. The inclusion of the undated Juvenile(?) inhumation (6171) further to the east is even more tentative. It is included mainly on the basis of its alignment with the projected continuation of the courtyard wall. Another inhumation burial (skeleton 6140) lay immediately east of the courtyard wall. The grave cut was not clearly defined, but stones were set behind the head and at the feet. This burial contained a knife, which has been dated to the fifth century or later, supporting the theory that these were a coherent burial group relating to the continued presence of the villa courtyard. The inclusion of the isolated human skull (skeleton 6141) just to its west is based on solely its location.

Three other inhumations were found in or close to the villa. One burial (skeleton 6127) was cut into a burnt demolition or collapse layer inside the building. Another (skeleton 6124) lay outside the south-west end on the villa; it may have been in a stone cist partly set into the wall, but had been badly disturbed by later stone removal. It was accompanied by sherds of an early/mid Saxon pot. The third burial (skeleton 6170) lay just north of the building.

### **North of the villa**

There was fragmentary evidence for late activity in the area to the north of the villa, none of which related well to the earlier use of the same area. An undated curvilinear ditch cut through the northern wall of the earlier rectilinear enclosure, and just to the south of this a pit containing a single sherd of Saxon type pottery was located. An adult inhumation (skeleton 6024) in a stone lined grave was inserted into demolition rubble from the building LE192033. Close by, a small dog was given a similar burial. Very little Saxon pottery was retrieved from this area, but some was noted in the demolition layer into which the burial was cut. The burials themselves produced only small quantities of residual late first to mid second century pottery from their grave fills. The location of these burials might relate to the presence of several infant inhumations from Phase 12. These lay close to the dog burial, and within the layer it cut, but they lacked clear grave cuts.

There was some evidence for construction of new buildings after the end of the fourth century. To the north-east of the villa a small post-built rectilinear structure (LE191057), measuring 7.6m by 2.5m, was constructed. The posts were very closely spaced suggesting that the walls were constructed of wattles. It cut across the western side of the mid to late fourth century sub-rectangular enclosure in the previous phase, which was believed to have remained in use until at least the late fourth century. However, although the building

cut the enclosure its alignment followed the line of the wall or ditch forming the southern side of the earlier triangular enclosure LE 192232.

Within enclosure LE192037 there is further evidence for occupation activity. A sub-rectangular structure or small enclosure (LE192042) was cut through the disused building LE192041. It was a trench built structure with evidence for stakeholes in the base. The presence of daub in the backfill of the trench perhaps indicated that it had a wattle and daub superstructure. A very mixed assemblage of pottery dated to the late fourth century or later was found within the backfilled trench, and the majority was highly abraded. Saxon sherds were also present suggesting that this was indeed a post Roman/early Saxon structure. The area enclosed was approximately 12 by 10 metres, and without substantial postholes it may have been too big to be a roofed structure. It maintained an east facing entrance and as such might have continued to make use of the metalled road LE190116 (though this road is currently phased as being out of use due to the lack of late dating material relating to it).

To the south a ditched enclosure was constructed, perhaps incorporating part of the surviving wall circuit. No western limit to the enclosure was established nor was it clear what it may have enclosed. Although pottery was retrieved from all three excavated segments, two produced only a small number of sherds of second to third century date. The third and largest assemblage produced mid to late fourth century pottery with late fourth century types present, including a black burnished ware copy and a Romano-Saxon type sherd. Its stratigraphic position indicates that it was at least of very late fourth century date, if not probably later, because it disturbed the western wall of the building LE192040, which was probably in use until at least the end of the fourth century. The Phase 13 dating is supported by the presence of a small cluster of Saxon sherds within and around it derived from the lower ploughsoil. A small number of Saxon sherds were also retrieved from contexts around the site of the mid first to second century building LE192038 (**Figure 26**) which lay within the area of this enclosure. The deposit above its floor and the outer yard surface both contained Saxon wares.

Robbing of the walls of the enclosure presumably continued into this period, and some of the stone might have been reused to line graves. Two stone lined graves were noted close to the robbed out north-eastern corner of the enclosure. One of them contained an adult inhumation (skeleton 6058) accompanied by a complete pottery vessel of mid to late fourth century type (Hadham oxidised ware) and its rim had been cut down, presumably to extend its life after it was damaged in use. This might indicate that this burial dates to a time in the fifth century when pottery was less readily available. The second juvenile(?) inhumation (skeleton 6055) produced only first century plus pottery but has been dated by association to the nearby adult grave because of the similar use of stone for the grave lining (which seems to relate to later graves at Stanwick). The inclusion of the two undated burials (skeletons 6037 and 6038) further to the east is extremely tentative – there is no direct evidence to support this.



## Further evidence for activity

There was fragmentary evidence for other late activity, mainly restricted to the southern part of the settlement. This activity is for the most part defined by stratigraphically late irregular curvilinear ditches, most of which do not relate well to the previous settlement pattern.

In the area of building complex LE190115 (**Figure 45**), ditches cut through the earlier cobbled yard surface. The pottery dating evidence for these features is not specific and the fact that they appear to be well aligned with the earlier walled boundary might indicate that they were of Roman date but they are tentatively included here because of their disregard for the earlier metalling. To the south of the enclosure LE192037 (**Figure 43**) there was a large irregular pit (probably a quarry pit) containing Saxon pottery. This suggests activity in the area, though the pot might be residual in the pit fill. West of the enclosure, two stratigraphically late irregular curvilinear ditches were recorded. Their use was probably unrelated, but their presence suggests that use of this area continued after the more regular earlier enclosures went out of use. One of the ditches was similar in alignment to the earlier landscape, but it was stratigraphically late, and the fill was comparatively very dark. A single coin dated to AD 332-3 was retrieved from it. The western ditch, although undated, was also stratigraphically late and at variance with the layout of the earlier features.

East of the villa courtyard, a stratigraphically late undated irregular ditch cut into the road surface LE190031 before its line was lost to the south where it merged with earlier boundary ditches on similar alignments. Although it produced no datable material its stratigraphic position later than the road, the roadside boundary wall and a fourth century enclosure indicated that it may have been of fifth century date.

The northern part of the settlement has little evidence for later activity, although how long some of the structures in use in the second half of the fourth century might have continued is a matter for further consideration. The possible mid to late fourth century road running from the western side of the settlement in the direction of the river was cut by a shallow east-west aligned linear feature. It is included here because of the quantity of burnt and abraded mid to late fourth century pottery recovered from its fill. Despite the absence of later material the level of abrasion and the relationship to the road suggests a late date, but the possibility this stretch of road was itself much later than originally phased must be considered, and the feature could be medieval or later.

It is perhaps worth noting that, unlike Redlands Farm and Higham Ferrers, no early Saxon sunken feature buildings were excavated at Stanwick.



## PHASE 14: MEDIEVAL AND POST-MEDIEVAL ACTIVITY

### Figure 59

#### Introduction

Some time in the fifth or sixth century, settlement on the Stanwick Quarry site ceased. The work of the Raunds Area Survey and the excavations at Kings Meadow Lane, Higham Ferrers (Hardy *et al* 2007; Lawrence and Smith 2009) will allow this to be set into the broader patterns of landscape change identified for the Raunds Area in the post-Roman and Saxon period (Parry 2006, 91-5 and 126-7).

The primary medieval land use was cultivation, in the form of ridge and furrow ploughing. Much of the stone removal ('robbing') from the villa probably occurred in this period, and the east-west road or causeway was constructed re-using Roman building materials. Three roads were in use, and at least two seem to have had their origins in the Romano-British period.

Other medieval and post-medieval features include field boundaries (hedgerow ditches) and stone lined culverts. These features are stratigraphically late but lack direct dating evidence.

#### The roads

Three roads might have been in use in the medieval period.

One was a metalled surface running north-south immediately to the west of the western bath suite of the aisled villa building. Its relationship to the demolished bathhouse was not established with certainty but it was believed to post-date it. Its construction date is uncertain; it may have originated in the late Roman period, perhaps in Phase 12, but a medieval horseshoe was retrieved from a ditch below its surface. The presence of this object does not provide a *terminus post quem* for the construction of the road - the metalled surface was patchy and disturbed. It does suggest that even if the road were of Roman origin, it may have been in use in the medieval period.

To the north-west, a second metalled road surface LE 191000 was recorded in a series of trenches running east-west towards the river. Part of the surface overlay a silted up river channel with a radiocarbon date of 660-980 cal AD, implying a late Saxon or medieval date. The relationship of this road with the stretch further east (**Figure 54**) has been debated since they were excavated. Initially both were believed to be Romano-British (based on the large amount of Romano-British material in the make up of the western stretch), but the detailed phasing suggested the eastern part could belong in Phase 12

while the radiocarbon dates for the infill of the palaeochannel place the western section considerably later.

Excavations at the nearby site of Ditchford Pit, Wellingborough, suggested that the metalling of a similar stretch of road there may have been “very localised” representing a causeway over wet ground (Keevill and Williams 1995, 75). Keevill and Williams note that stone causeways are a distinctive feature of medieval land use in the floodplain of middle Nene, in contrast to rarity of metalling of medieval roads elsewhere in the country. The Ditchford road has radiocarbon dates of cal AD 980-1230 (at 2 sigma) for a deposit sealed below it and cal AD 1270-1410 from resurfacing (ibid, 73). Both the stretches of this metalled road LE191000 lay over former palaeochannel.

The north-south road LE192045 to the east of the main settlement probably continued to function into the medieval period and beyond, becoming the precursor of Cotton Lane. Horseshoes were found in deposits overlying this road.

## **Alluviation**

Alluvial deposits were recorded over many areas of the site, but have not yet been fully mapped. In some places they overlie the ridge and furrow, but in other cases they directly overlie or form the top fills of late or early post Roman features. This is in keeping with the evidence for alluviation in this part of the Nene Valley (Robinson 1992, 201-2), with substantial alluvial deposits overlying ridge and furrow, but earlier deposits occupying lower lying areas and hollows. Robinson suggests alluviation largely ceased after the mid fourteenth century (ibid, 201). The evidence for changes in water table will be examined during analysis (Robinson, Appendix 4H in Perrin 1995b).

## **Field boundaries**

Immediately to the west of the north-south aligned road lay a shallow ditch on the same alignment. Its relationship to the road was not clearly defined but it was thought possible that material accumulated in the ditch whilst the road was in use. The irregularity of its profile and its shallowness prompted the interpretation that this may have been the remains of a hedgerow. A similarly aligned hedgerow ditch was recorded 174m to the north and may have been part of the same boundary. There was no evidence for the continuation of the road in this area though. A short stretch of stone lined culvert was recorded 16m to the east on this same alignment and is probably post-medieval in date.

Another boundary ditch believed to be of medieval or post medieval date lay 66.8 m to the east of the southern part of the hedgerow. It was stratigraphically late, but was not respected by the plough furrows that were recorded to either side. No relationship between the two was established, though the boundary is perhaps likely to be later.

## APPENDIX I: LIST OF LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS

| <i>Landscape Element</i> | <i>Description</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 190010                   | A series of RB stone buildings (LEs 190011-3) adjacent to successive north-south roadways (LEs 190014-5). There was a roadside wall, but these buildings were not inside a ditched enclosure.                                                                        |
| 190011                   | A rectangular timber building represented by two short stretches of wall trench, a few postholes and a rubble spread which may indicate the building's northern extent and the position of the threshold.                                                            |
| 190012                   | Rectangular building on stone footings.                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 190013                   | Rectangular stone building, possibly aisled.                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 190014                   | Metalled roadway heading north-west, then NNE before turning east towards Temenos LE191044. Seen in several disconnected sections (LEs 190014, 190015, 192135, 192154), with an earlier unmetalled trackway in one. The central part continues the line of LE192007. |
| 190015                   | Metalled roadway heading north-west, then NNE before turning east towards Temenos LE191044. Seen in several disconnected sections (LEs 190014, 190015, 192135, 192154), with an earlier unmetalled trackway in one. The central part continues the line of LE192007. |
| 190016                   | A small cemetery of five late Roman inhumation burials, situated close to a disused RB building group (LE190010).                                                                                                                                                    |
| 190030                   | A rectilinear ditched enclosure lying north of trackway LE190031.                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 190031                   | A trackway, defined initially by ditches and later by walls, running roughly east-west. LE192046 further east is probably the continuation of this road. It probably joins the north-south road LE192046.                                                            |
| 190032                   | Circular stone building with two phases. Set within enclosure LE190035, and probably associated with use of well LE190033.                                                                                                                                           |
| 190033                   | A rectangular stone-lined well, with closure deposits in its fill. In enclosure 190035.                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 190035                   | Enclosure with three phases of use. It contained well LE190033 and building LE190032.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 190036                   | Rectilinear landscape layout covering the south-east of the site and possibly extending further west.                                                                                                                                                                |
| 190040                   | Circular building, with an initial timber (wattle and daub) phase later rebuilt on stone footings.                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 190041                   | Rectangular stone building.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 190043                   | The eastern of two 'wedge shaped' enclosures, separated by a road/trackway LE191067 from enclosure LE191084.                                                                                                                                                         |
| 190050                   | Circular ditched enclosure containing a single central building LE190051.                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 190051                   | A roundhouse with a semi-circular extension, defined by an eaves drip gully and two entrance postholes. In enclosure LE190050.                                                                                                                                       |
| 190052                   | Large circular enclosure LE190050 containing a single roundhouse LE190051.                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 190100                   | A circular building with stone walls or wall footings.                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 190101                   | Complex consisting of a circular stone building LE190101 with associated yard surface and two possible post-built structures.                                                                                                                                        |

| <i>Landscape Element</i> | <i>Description</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 190102                   | Circular well with a masonry lined shaft, associated with enclosure LE192139.                                                                                                                                                |
| 190103                   | Poorly surviving building of uncertain form on stone footings. Two postholes possibly associated with wall or entrance.                                                                                                      |
| 190104                   | Rectangular stone building (poor survival at southern end).                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 190105                   | Circular masonry building, north of building LE190103 and west of building LE190104. Heavily plough damaged.                                                                                                                 |
| 190110                   | Large circular building with stone walls/footings (south-east part only surviving).                                                                                                                                          |
| 190111                   | Rectangular stone building lying to the south of road LE190116 at the eastern side of the settlement.                                                                                                                        |
| 190112                   | Small masonry footed circular building south-west of enclosure LE192037. Only a small part survived.                                                                                                                         |
| 190113                   | Large rectangular stone building with a drain through its north-west corner and containing a corn-drying/malting oven LE190114.                                                                                              |
| 190114                   | The corn-drying/malting oven within building LE190113.                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 190115                   | Building group enclosed by stone walls.                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 190116                   | East-west aligned metalled road near the east of the settlement.                                                                                                                                                             |
| 191000                   | Metalled medieval road or causeway crossing the wide palaeochannel west of the excavated areas.                                                                                                                              |
| 191001                   | A circular stone building with metalled yard surface.                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 191002                   | Circular stone lined well.                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 191003                   | Short stretch of unexcavated ditch, interpreted as part of an enclosure.                                                                                                                                                     |
| 191004                   | Short stretch of unexcavated ditch, interpreted as part of an enclosure.                                                                                                                                                     |
| 191005                   | Ditch running east-west across the site, turning to run SSW. Probably a boundary and drainage ditch separating the contemporary occupied area from the wetter ground near the river channel.                                 |
| 191006                   | Palaeochannel, separating the south-western area of the site from the rest. This channel is not yet dated, but it may not have been a significant feature of the landscape until Phase 09 (mid 2nd to early 3rd century AD). |
| 191007                   | Ditch east of palaeochannel LE191006, probably for drainage and forming an western boundary to the settlement.                                                                                                               |
| 191008                   | Roundhouse with three phases, possibly showing a change in building techniques. An interior wall trench survived from the second phase.                                                                                      |
| 191009                   | Roundhouse with three phases of eaves drip gully.                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 191010                   | Part of a curved ditch, possibly part of a circular enclosure.                                                                                                                                                               |
| 191011                   | Arc of ditch, interpreted as the north-west part of an enclosure with a north-east entrance and extending beyond the excavated area.                                                                                         |
| 191012                   | Possible enclosure, represented by three ditch segments.                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 191013                   | Ditches forming the north-west and north-east sides of a possible subrectangular enclosure, post-dating roundhouse LE191008.                                                                                                 |
| 191014                   | Rectangular ditched enclosure with at least three phases.                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 191015                   | Subrectangular ditched enclosure, with two phases.                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 191016                   | Roundhouse, represented by a ring-ditch.                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 191017                   | Roundhouse, represented by a ring-ditch, partly overlying roundhouse LE191016.                                                                                                                                               |

| <i>Landscape Element</i> | <i>Description</i>                                                                                                                                                      |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 191018                   | Poorly preserved small rectangular building, represented by stone wall and floor foundations. In line with similar structures LE191032 and LE191037.                    |
| 191019                   | Small rectangular building with stone wall footings, adjacent to LE191018.                                                                                              |
| 191020                   | Field, represented by two parallel straight ditched boundaries.                                                                                                         |
| 191021                   | Sub-rectangular ditched enclosure, probably enclosing Building LE191018.                                                                                                |
| 191022                   | Palaeochannel at the western edge of the excavated area, close to the present day river channel.                                                                        |
| 191023                   | A sequence of ditches, probably for drainage but which may also have functioned as a land boundary.                                                                     |
| 191024                   | A series of relatively narrow ditches, with its line moving northwards over time as it was recut.                                                                       |
| 191025                   | A rectangular rubble spread, possibly a floor foundation layer.                                                                                                         |
| 191026                   | Circular ditched enclosure or structure.                                                                                                                                |
| 191027                   | Roundhouse, represented by ring-ditch, possible wall trench and a posthole.                                                                                             |
| 191028                   | A large sub-circular spread of dark humic material, with a concentration of gravel and pot. Possibly an animal pen, crewyard or midden.                                 |
| 191029                   | The north-east corner of an enclosure, with at least two phases. Contains structure LE191030 and four-post structure LE192209.                                          |
| 191030                   | Structure represented by an arc of wall slot and stakeholes, within enclosure LE191029.                                                                                 |
| 191031                   | A series of ditches running east-west towards the river, possibly a trackway in its earlier stages.                                                                     |
| 191032                   | Rectangular stone building, in line with similar structures LE191018 and LE191037. Associated with a well and tank.                                                     |
| 191033                   | Roundhouse represented by a ring-ditch and possible central posthole.                                                                                                   |
| 191034                   | A cemetery of 36 inhumation burials located west of the villa.                                                                                                          |
| 191035                   | Roundhouse defined only by its ring-ditch.                                                                                                                              |
| 191036                   | A series of ditches on the east side of palaeochannel LE191022. Boundary or water management.                                                                           |
| 191037                   | Rectangular stone building which was partially exposed but was not excavated or planned due to time constraints. In line with similar structures LE191018 and LE191032. |
| 191038                   | Roundhouse defined by ring-ditch, with at least two phases of development.                                                                                              |
| 191039                   | Roundhouse defined by a ring ditch.                                                                                                                                     |
| 191040                   | A possible post-built roundhouse (without a ring ditch) which was not recognised as a building during the excavation. It contained three clay-lined pits.               |
| 191041                   | Roundhouse, represented by part of its ring ditch and a few possible internal features.                                                                                 |
| 191042                   | A group of three roundhouses, one larger and two smaller (LEs 191035, 191039 and 191033).                                                                               |
| 191043                   | A group of four rectangular stone buildings (LEs 191018, 191019, 191032 and 191037) aligned roughly north-south near the west of the site.                              |

| <i>Landscape Element</i> | <i>Description</i>                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 191044                   | Temenos created by a stone wall enclosing the mound of Irthlingborough Barrow 5. Associated features and surfaces, and numerous finds, especially coins.           |
| 191046                   | Rectangular masonry building of which parts of 3 walls survived.                                                                                                   |
| 191047                   | Large rectilinear ditched enclosure, with three phases.                                                                                                            |
| 191048                   | Corner of a rectilinear ditched enclosure adjacent to the eastern side of enclosure LE191047.                                                                      |
| 191051                   | A long-lived north-south boundary with six phases of construction and use. It runs south from road LE192144 to the east-west ditch boundary along road LE190031.   |
| 191052                   | Roadside boundary ditch, south of road LE192144.                                                                                                                   |
| 191053                   | A poorly preserved circular building, represented by a robber trench and an internal circle of postholes.                                                          |
| 191054                   | Rectangular building with stone footings.                                                                                                                          |
| 191057                   | Rectangular post-built building with no surviving internal divisions.                                                                                              |
| 191058                   | A group of postholes and two short stretches of stone wall have been interpreted as a building with several phases.                                                |
| 191060                   | Ditch enclosing a triangle of land west of boundary LE191951 and north of enclosure 191061, the northern part of enclosure LE192232 in Phase 12.                   |
| 191061                   | Subrectangular ditched enclosure on western side of boundary LE191051, part of enclosure 192232 in Phase 12.                                                       |
| 191062                   | A group of inhumation burials located alongside ditched boundary LE191051.                                                                                         |
| 191064                   | A roundhouse defined by a narrow slot, possibly for a wattle wall.                                                                                                 |
| 191065                   | Roundhouse defined by a ring-ditch. A few postholes lie inside the building, but it is not clear if they are associated with it.                                   |
| 191066                   | Boundary ditches LE191066 and LE191069 define a north-east to south-west trackway LE191067 and form part of the boundaries of the enclosures adjacent to the road. |
| 191067                   | A north-east to south-west trackway defined by boundary ditches LE191066 and LE191069. A few patches of metallurgy survive.                                        |
| 191068                   | A rectangular stone building. Only robbed-out wall trenches survived. In enclosure LE191084.                                                                       |
| 191069                   | Boundary ditches LE191066 and LE191069 define a north-east to south-west trackway LE191067 and form part of the boundaries of the enclosures adjacent to the road. |
| 191070                   | Stone building or enclosed yard with a corn-drying oven.                                                                                                           |
| 191071                   | A stone-lined square well north of building LE191068.                                                                                                              |
| 191073                   | Series of ditches forming a boundary west of road/trackway LE192007 and acting as the western side of enclosure 191084 lying between the two forks of LE192007.    |
| 191074                   | A roundhouse with two phases represented by concentric ring-ditches.                                                                                               |
| 191075                   | Probable roundhouse, represented only by curved section of ditch.                                                                                                  |
| 191076                   | A poorly preserved circular stone building, with a threshold stone and possible central postpad.                                                                   |

| <i>Landscape Element</i> | <i>Description</i>                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 191078                   | Ditched boundary with several phases, forming the northern side of enclosure group 191086.                                                                                                                 |
| 191079                   | Building consisting of an extensively robbed rectangular stone footing with a small annex at one corner. This may have been an aisled barn with an external stairwell. It may have been destroyed by fire. |
| 191080                   | Circular stone building in a yard, within enclosure LE191084.                                                                                                                                              |
| 191081                   | Circular stone building in enclosure LE191084.                                                                                                                                                             |
| 191082                   | Rectangular stone building, overlying circular stone building LE191081 in enclosure LE191084.                                                                                                              |
| 191083                   | Probable roundhouse, represented only by parts of its ring-ditch.                                                                                                                                          |
| 191084                   | A long-lived large subrectangular ditched enclosure with several phases of development. Between the two forks of road/trackway 192007. Its road frontage had stone walls in its later phases.              |
| 191085                   | Poorly defined rectilinear stone structure, either a building or two phases of a yard wall.                                                                                                                |
| 191086                   | A group of enclosures, developing from the extension and subdivision of enclosure LE191084.                                                                                                                |
| 191100                   | Roundhouse defined by a ring-ditch with possible entrance, but no other surviving features.                                                                                                                |
| 191101                   | Roundhouse, represented only by its ring-ditch.                                                                                                                                                            |
| 191102                   | Roundhouse: ring-ditch with at least three recuts. Several (unexcavated pits) are possibly associated with the building.                                                                                   |
| 191103                   | Roundhouse represented by two narrow ring-ditches and a possible central pit.                                                                                                                              |
| 191104                   | Roundhouse: ring-ditch, with a few stakeholes noted in the ditch and five postholes in the interior.                                                                                                       |
| 191105                   | Circular stone-lined well.                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 191106                   | Circular well. The top part of the stone lining has been rebuilt.                                                                                                                                          |
| 191107                   | A circular stone lined well, possibly associated with LE192150 in its fifth phase.                                                                                                                         |
| 191108                   | A circular stone built well within enclosure LE192150.                                                                                                                                                     |
| 191109                   | Circular well with stone lining, associated with a mortar floor surface from a building or structure for which there was no other surviving evidence (LE191112).                                           |
| 191110                   | Several segments of ditch possibly defining a circular building or enclosure.                                                                                                                              |
| 191111                   | Probable roundhouse defined by two segments of its ring-ditch.                                                                                                                                             |
| 191112                   | A mortar floor surface seen only in section during the excavation of well LE191109 may represent a building contemporary with the well.                                                                    |
| 191113                   | Circular stone building of which little survived. Associated with first phase of enclosure LE191114.                                                                                                       |
| 191114                   | Oval ditched enclosure with 2 phases, containing buildings LE191113 and LE191115.                                                                                                                          |
| 191115                   | Circular stone building, with two associated drains.                                                                                                                                                       |
| 191116                   | Probable circular stone building, of which little survived. Overlying the floor of building LE191112.                                                                                                      |



| <i>Landscape Element</i> | <i>Description</i>                                                                                                                                                                              |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 191117                   | A short stretch of stone wall, with a stone lined tank and drains, suggests a possible rectangular stone building.                                                                              |
| 191118                   | Metalled road/trackway lying between north-south boundary LE191120 and enclosure LE19114.                                                                                                       |
| 191119                   | A group of 6 unexcavated postholes, possibly a building or other structure.                                                                                                                     |
| 191120                   | Ditched boundary with two phases. Road/trackway LE191118 lay to its west. Close to building LE191117, the boundary included a stone wall. This boundary includes the roadside ditches LE191121. |
| 191121                   | Roadside ditches, part of boundary LE191120.                                                                                                                                                    |
| 191122                   | Circular stone building, with central postpad, drain and threshold.                                                                                                                             |
| 191123                   | Two straight ditches. The southern one is part of LE192146, the southern block of the Mid/Late Bronze Age field system; the northern one may also be, but is not as well aligned with it.       |
| 191124                   | Roundhouse defined by two ring-ditches.                                                                                                                                                         |
| 191125                   | Roundhouse, represented by a short arc of its ring-ditch.                                                                                                                                       |
| 191126                   | Arc of a ring-ditch probably containing a building or other structure. Its diameter (about 4.5m) is much less than the roundhouses nearby.                                                      |
| 191127                   | Probable roundhouse defined by an arc of a ring-ditch. Two unexcavated postholes might indicate an entrance.                                                                                    |
| 191128                   | An L-shaped ditch, probably part of a subrectangular enclosure extending beyond the excavated area.                                                                                             |
| 191129                   | Rectangular ditched enclosure, inferred from its north-east and south-west parts only.                                                                                                          |
| 191130                   | Unexcavated ditch, possibly the southern side of an enclosure.                                                                                                                                  |
| 191131                   | Two parallel ditches, possible the southern side of an enclosure.                                                                                                                               |
| 191132                   | Roundhouse represented by 4 ring-ditches.                                                                                                                                                       |
| 191133                   | Rectangular corn-drying or malting oven, with spiral flue terminating in the centre of the structure. Context 89025.                                                                            |
| 191134                   | Building represented only by an L-shaped fragment of stone wall.                                                                                                                                |
| 191135                   | A circular post-built roundhouse probably contemporary with the Bronze Age field systems (see Harding and Healy 2007, 193-4).                                                                   |
| 191136                   | Large rectangular ditched enclosure south of road LE190031.                                                                                                                                     |
| 191138                   | A rectangular stone building divided into two rooms, surrounded by a courtyard and wall. Interpreted as a small temple/shrine, and in the same enclosure (LE192231) as temple/shrine LE192158.  |
| 191139                   | Rectangular stone building: only 2 short stretches of wall, 6 internal postpads and part of a water tank survived.                                                                              |
| 191140                   | L-shaped stone feature, probably a poorly preserved corn-drying/malting oven inside the villa courtyard LE191141.                                                                               |
| 191141                   | A large stone walled enclosure or courtyard lying in front of the developed villa LE192235.                                                                                                     |
| 191142                   | LEs 191142 and LE191147 are two parallel ditches about 20m apart, probably forming a broad driveway. Part of LE192146, the southern block of the Mid/Late Bronze Age field system.              |
| 191143                   | Segmented Ditch Circle, sited over the southern end of Avenue LE191144 (Harding and Healy 2007, 147).                                                                                           |



| <i>Landscape Element</i> | <i>Description</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 191144                   | Early Neolithic Avenue comprising two parallel segmented ditches (Harding and Healy 2007, 64-67).                                                                                                                                                             |
| 191145                   | Pit alignment and ditch (Harding and Healy 2007, 196). Appears to terminate when it meets LE191147, part of LE192146, the southern block of the Mid/Late Bronze Age field system.                                                                             |
| 191146                   | A cluster of about 8 circular pits, possibly associated with pottery manufacture.                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 191147                   | LEs 191142 and LE191147 are two parallel ditches about 20m apart, probably forming a broad droveway. Part of LE192146, the southern block of the Mid/Late Bronze Age field system.                                                                            |
| 191148                   | A straight ditch, probably a field boundary. Part of a group of rectilinear fields or enclosures in the south-east part of the site, aligned on road/trackway LE190031.                                                                                       |
| 192000                   | A small square stone building, butting against building LE192001.                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 192001                   | A rectangular stone building facing onto walled courtyard LE192003 (this was described on site as the 'Bailiff's House').                                                                                                                                     |
| 192002                   | Rectangular stone building, which seems to have continued in use alongside building LE192001 and courtyard LE192003.                                                                                                                                          |
| 192003                   | A rectangular stone walled courtyard, with 2 flanking buildings facing road LE192007. Building LE192001 faced onto the courtyard. This building complex LE192006 was described on site as the 'Bailiff's House'.                                              |
| 192004                   | A ditched boundary roughly at right angles to roadside boundary LE192005, probably part of an enclosure.                                                                                                                                                      |
| 192005                   | A series of ditches forming a western boundary to road/trackway LE192007 and the eastern boundary of the enclosures lying to its west.                                                                                                                        |
| 192006                   | A formal building group (described on site as the 'Bailiff's House') comprised rectangular walled courtyard LE192003 with 2 flanking buildings against road LE190015 and buildings LE192000-1 opposite the entrance. Building LE192002 also continued in use. |
| 192007                   | A road running through the settlement from the late IA onwards, with several phases of realignment in response to settlement reorganisation. It forked into 2 branches.                                                                                       |
| 192008                   | An L-shaped ditch along the northern side of road LE192007 is probably the side of an enclosure, containing roundhouse LE192023.                                                                                                                              |
| 192009                   | Circular stone building.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 192010                   | Part of a circular ditch with stone rubble in its fill. Probably either the ring-ditch of a timber building or the robber trench of a stone one.                                                                                                              |
| 192011                   | Part of an unexcavated ring-ditch, probably a roundhouse.                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 192012                   | Part of an unexcavated ring-ditch, probably a roundhouse. Truncated by IA boundary ditch LE192014.                                                                                                                                                            |
| 192013                   | Group of pits lying along the north side of boundary LE192014. Only one was excavated. A similarly located group of pits lying further SW have been included in this LE.                                                                                      |
| 192014                   | A ditched boundary and major land use division originating in mid/late Iron Age. Its line can be traced in the layout of the settlement until the end of the Roman period.                                                                                    |

| <i>Landscape Element</i> | <i>Description</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 192015                   | Probably a roundhouse, represented by its ring-ditch. Alternatively, an enclosure surrounding small ring-ditch LE192219.                                                                                                                                         |
| 192016                   | Series of ditches - the south-east corner of enclosure LE192155.                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 192017                   | Possible roundhouse, represented by part of a ring-ditch.                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 192018                   | Narrow linear gully with another joining it roughly at right angles. Possibly palisade trench defining a field or enclosure.                                                                                                                                     |
| 192019                   | Roundhouse represented by two ring-ditches, part of a possible wall trench and two postholes.                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 192020                   | Circular stone lined well.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 192021                   | Three fragments of stone wall may represent the corner of a rectangular building adjacent to roadway LE192007.                                                                                                                                                   |
| 192022                   | A boundary ditch running along the southern side of the western part of road/trackway LE192007.                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 192023                   | Unexcavated arc of a ring-ditch, possibly a roundhouse within enclosure 192008.                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 192024                   | Circular building with two phases. Badly damaged, but with parts of an external ditch, some floor surfaces, postholes, a gully and internal pits surviving.                                                                                                      |
| 192026                   | Roundhouse on stone footings, within enclosure LE192027.                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 192027                   | Rectilinear enclosure with stone walls.                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 192029                   | Rectangular stone building with ovens, within enclosure LE192027..                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 192030                   | The surviving south-east corner of a wall defining a rectilinear enclosure, part of a group of similar enclosures LE192234.                                                                                                                                      |
| 192031                   | A circular stone-lined well, east of roundhouse LE192026 inside enclosure LE192027.                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 192032                   | Circular stone lined well situated outside enclosure 192027. There was limited excavation of the top fill only.                                                                                                                                                  |
| 192033                   | Rectangular stone building, with an extension that overlay the wall of enclosure LE192027.                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 192034                   | Circular stone building, underlying LE192033.                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 192035                   | Rectangular stone building, extending beyond the excavated area. Probably associated with well LE192227.                                                                                                                                                         |
| 192036                   | Roundhouse, consisting of a circle of postholes, floor surfaces, a hearth and a shallow ditch, probably a wall trench. Two phases of use. The earlier floor surface contained a large quantity of pottery.                                                       |
| 192037                   | The 'Horseshoe' enclosure, long-lived and lying along the south side of boundary LE192014. In the later IA it was a substantial (7m wide) open ended ditched enclosure. It developed through Phases 5 to 12, and was defined by stone walls in its later phases. |
| 192038                   | Circular stone building, with part of a flagged floor surviving. Within enclosure LE192037, overlying its backfilled ditch.                                                                                                                                      |
| 192039                   | Stone walled building, yard wall or other structure between building LE192040 and part of the wall of enclosure LE192037.                                                                                                                                        |
| 192040                   | Rectangular stone building, rebuilt in timber. Poor survival.                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 192041                   | Rectangular stone building north of building LE192040 in enclosure LE192037.                                                                                                                                                                                     |

| <i>Landscape Element</i> | <i>Description</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 192042                   | Structure represented by a narrow trench with indications of stakeholes. Subrectangular with rounded corners. Either a building or an enclosure wall.                                                                                                                |
| 192043                   | Eight postpads, probably representing a rectangular structure against the wall of enclosure LE192037.                                                                                                                                                                |
| 192044                   | Two fragments of stone wall suggesting a rectangular stone building of which little survived.                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 192045                   | Metalled road surface on the eastern side of the site. This was probably the main Roman route east of the Nene from Irchester to Titchmarsh, and/or a precursor to Cotton Lane. Road LE190031/LE192046 runs at right angles to it, heading west.                     |
| 192046                   | Metalled road with wheel ruts, probably continuation of road LE190031. It probably joins north-south road LE192045.                                                                                                                                                  |
| 192047                   | Circular stone building with the remains of a combrash floor. Two infant burials lay inside the building, close to the wall and under the floor.                                                                                                                     |
| 192048                   | Circular stone building, in the extension to enclosure LE192037 and associated with metalled yard LE192222.                                                                                                                                                          |
| 192049                   | Small circular stone structure, about 3m in diameter. Only part of the wall survived.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 192050                   | Building with four phases, the first represented only by 4 postpads. The second was a large stone walled rectangular building, which was later decreased in size.                                                                                                    |
| 192051                   | Roundhouse with two phases, both with an external ring-ditch. Better preserved than most on site, both phases had some internal postholes and all or part of their wall trenches surviving.                                                                          |
| 192052                   | Possible rectangular timber building, represented by postholes from 2 of its sides.                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 192053                   | Possible structure consisting of 4 unexcavated postholes.                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 192054                   | Four post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 192055                   | Rectangular stone building aligned against the southern edge of enclosure ditch LE191084.                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 192056                   | Large rectangular stone building in the courtyard in front of the villa LE192235. Possibly a barn.                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 192057                   | Ditch, possibly part of a circular enclosure.                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 192058                   | Circular stone building, with a 'T' shaped corn drying oven inside. It had a possible foundation deposit, and was associated with yard walls and a well.                                                                                                             |
| 192059                   | Circular stone building, with a central 'T'-shaped corn drying oven. Only parts of the wall and a few patches of the combrash floor survived.                                                                                                                        |
| 192060                   | An arc of stone wall, probably from a circular stone building.                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 192061                   | A probable rectangular stone building in enclosure LE192037, much disturbed.                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 192134                   | The corner of a rectangular stone building, seen in an evaluation trench.                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 192135                   | Metalled roadway heading north-west, then NNE before turning east towards Temenos LE191044. Seen in several disconnected sections (LEs 190014, 190015, 192135, 192154), with an earlier unmetalled trackway in one. The central part continues the line of LE192007. |
| 192137                   | Rectangular stone building with entrance in its eastern end.                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

| <i>Landscape Element</i> | <i>Description</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 192138                   | Rectangular ditched enclosure west of road LE192007.                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 192139                   | Ditched enclosure, rectilinear but curved along road LE190015 at its SE. Its north edge bisected BA ring-ditch LE192143 which would still have been visible. Only the south part continued in use in its later phases. Contained buildings LEs 190103-5.             |
| 192140                   | Ditch, a boundary or the side of an enclosure. Its 'dog leg' shaped reflects the line of enclosures to its south. The ditch stopped when it met BA ring-ditch 1921143.                                                                                               |
| 192141                   | Straight ditch, the northernmost ditch of LE192146, the southern block of the Mid/Late Bronze Age field system.                                                                                                                                                      |
| 192143                   | A large undated ring ditch, possibly an Early Bronze Age barrow (Harding and Healy 2007, 147). Evidently still visible in the later RB period, when it was partly recut.                                                                                             |
| 192144                   | Road/trackway running along the south side of the 'horseshoe enclosure' LE192037. It met LE190031 east of the building group which became the aisled hall/villa LE192235. It extended east as LE190116.                                                              |
| 192145                   | A group of buildings (LEs190103-5) and yards in the southern part of enclosure LE192139. Three phases, with 1 or 2 buildings in use in each.                                                                                                                         |
| 192146                   | The southern block of the Mid/Late Bronze Age field system (Harding and Healy 2007, 193-4).                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 192147                   | A subrectangular ditched enclosure with an opening to the west.                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 192148                   | Roundhouse represented by its ring-ditch only.                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 192149                   | Roundhouse represented by its ring-ditch only.                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 192150                   | A long-lived enclosure, with 7 phases and considerable changes in its layout.                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 192151                   | Initially a circular stone building, this was considerably modified with first the west and then the east sides being replaced with rectilinear post-built walls.                                                                                                    |
| 192152                   | The northern block of the Mid/Late Bronze Age field system (Harding and Healy 2007, 191-3).                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 192153                   | Road or track running south-west to north-east in the northern part of the site, on a similar alignment to earlier boundary ditches.                                                                                                                                 |
| 192154                   | Metalled roadway heading north-west, then NNE before turning east towards Temenos LE191044. Seen in several disconnected sections (LEs 190014, 190015, 192135, 192154), with an earlier unmetalled trackway in one. The central part continues the line of LE192007. |
| 192155                   | A large subrectangular ditched enclosure. Contained building LE192220.                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 192156                   | Circular building, originally in timber but with a second phase constructed on stone footings.                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 192157                   | Originally a circular stone building, this structure underwent considerable modification including the insertion of an upper floor and 2 donkey-powered mills.                                                                                                       |
| 192158                   | A temple or shrine with two phases. A square walled enclosure containing a rectangular stone building, apsidal in its first phase. In the same enclosure (LE192231) as temple/shrine LE192158.                                                                       |
| 192159                   | Boundary along the western side of road/trackway LE192007. It continued the line of the western edge of enclosure LE191084/LE191086.                                                                                                                                 |

| <i>Landscape Element</i> | <i>Description</i>                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 192160                   | Subrectangular enclosure offset from the northern side of enclosure 192037. Initially ditched, it may later have had stone walls.                                                                   |
| 192161                   | Post built roundhouse, of which six postholes survived. Its location suggests it was mid-late Bronze Age and contemporary with droveway LE192146 (Harding and Healy 2007, 193-4).                   |
| 192162                   | Early Bronze Age round barrow (Harding and Healy 2007, 141-147) reused in the RB period as a Temenos (LE191044).                                                                                    |
| 192163                   | Causewayed Ring Ditch dating to the mid/late 4th millennium BC (Harding and Healy 2007, 98-104).                                                                                                    |
| 192164                   | The 'Southern Enclosure' - a Neolithic or Early Bronze Age ditched enclosure whose north-east entrance faced the SW end of the Avenue (LE191144) or the Segmented Ditch Circle (LE191143).          |
| 192165                   | A short length of ditch excavated in a trial trench may be part of a circular enclosure noted on aerial photographs and interpreted as a possible henge monument (Harding and Healy 2007, 120-122). |
| 192166                   | Four-post structure, with its postholes arranged around a pit with steep sides and a flattish base.                                                                                                 |
| 192167                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 192168                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 192169                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 192170                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 192171                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 192172                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 192173                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 192174                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 192175                   | Rectangular six-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 192176                   | Rectangular six-post structure, possibly a four-post structure which has been extended.                                                                                                             |
| 192177                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 192178                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 192179                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 192180                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 192181                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 192182                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 192183                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 192184                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 192185                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 192186                   | A group of 9 postholes, possibly forming a circular structure about 4m in diameter.                                                                                                                 |
| 192187                   | Five post structure (a four-poster with an additional post in the middle of one side).                                                                                                              |
| 192188                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 192189                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 192190                   | Rectangular six-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 192191                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 192192                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                |

| <i>Landscape Element</i> | <i>Description</i>                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 192193                   | Four-post structure which had 2 construction phases.                                                                                                      |
| 192194                   | Four-post structure. One posthole cut the fill of one of the M/LBA system ditches.                                                                        |
| 192195                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                      |
| 192196                   | Four-post structure. One posthole was recut.                                                                                                              |
| 192197                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                      |
| 192198                   | Four-post structure with an additional smaller central posthole.                                                                                          |
| 192199                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                      |
| 192200                   | Five-post structure, a four-poster with an additional off-centre internal posthole.                                                                       |
| 192201                   | Five-post structure, a four-poster with an additional off-centre internal posthole.                                                                       |
| 192202                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                      |
| 192203                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                      |
| 192204                   | Five-post structure (a four-poster with an additional posthole in one side).                                                                              |
| 192205                   | Four-post structure, with a possibly associated external fifth posthole.                                                                                  |
| 192206                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                      |
| 192207                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                      |
| 192208                   | A probable roundhouse represented only by its ring ditch, lying to the north of two further early to mid IA buildings LE192024 and LE192036.              |
| 192209                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                      |
| 192210                   | A probable roundhouse represented only by its ring ditch. One of a group of four similar structures aligned along the northern side of boundary LE192014. |
| 192211                   | A probable roundhouse represented only by its ring ditch. One of a group of four similar structures aligned along the northern side of boundary LE192014. |
| 192212                   | A probable roundhouse represented only by its ring ditch. One of a group of four similar structures aligned along the northern side of boundary LE192014. |
| 192213                   | A probable roundhouse represented only by its ring ditch. One of a group of four similar structures aligned along the northern side of boundary LE192014. |
| 192214                   | A probable roundhouse represented only by its ring ditch.                                                                                                 |
| 192215                   | A probable roundhouse represented only by its ring ditch. It replaced earlier building LE192212.                                                          |
| 192216                   | A probable roundhouse represented only by its ring ditch.                                                                                                 |
| 192217                   | A probable roundhouse represented only by its ring ditch.                                                                                                 |
| 192218                   | Probable timber roundhouse, consisting of a segment of a ring ditch and possibly a hearth base and posthole.                                              |
| 192219                   | A small ring-ditch (internal diameter approximately 2.7m).                                                                                                |
| 192220                   | Roundhouse defined only by two arcs of its surrounding circular ditch. In enclosure LE192155.                                                             |
| 192221                   | The SW corner of a ditched enclosure lying north of enclosure LE192115. Contained roundhouse LE191111.                                                    |

| <i>Landscape Element</i> | <i>Description</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 192222                   | Roughly triangular enclosure inside the extension to enclosure 192037. Initially it was ditched and probably related to building LE192047 to its west. It contained LE192050. In its later phases it was walled and also contained buildings LE192048-49. |
| 192223                   | Four-post structure.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 192224                   | Possible five-post structure (three corner postholes, and an off-centre posthole on one side).                                                                                                                                                            |
| 192225                   | Rectangular enclosure, defined by a ditch and a roadside wall (road LE190031). Contained building LE192059.                                                                                                                                               |
| 192226                   | Well, the upper part circular and stone lined, with a rectangular wooden lining at the base. Outside round building LE192156.                                                                                                                             |
| 192227                   | Stone lined circular well, recorded during the watching brief.                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 192228                   | Circular stone lined well, north of building LE192040 in enclosure LE192037.                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 192229                   | Circular stone lined well in enclosure LE191084.                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 192230                   | Well, with a stone lining. It was circular at the top but became square lower down. It had a square wooden lining at its base.                                                                                                                            |
| 192231                   | Large stone walled enclosure lying at the junction of roads LE190031 and LE192144. The enclosure contained two temple/shrines LEs 191138 and 192158.                                                                                                      |
| 192232                   | Triangular enclosure, bounded by enclosure LE192331, boundary LE191051 and road LE192144.                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 192233                   | A small masonry footed circular building probably within walled and ditched enclosure LE192027. Heavily truncated.                                                                                                                                        |
| 192234                   | A large ditched rectilinear enclosure north of road LE192144. It was later subdivided into 3 similarly sized walled enclosures.                                                                                                                           |
| 192235                   | The main villa building, developing from an aisled hall into a winged corridor villa.                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 192236                   | Stone lined circular well, possibly associated with the later phases on enclosure LE190043.                                                                                                                                                               |
| 192237                   | Stone lined roughly circular well.                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 192238                   | The position of two T-shaped corn drying or malting ovens (contexts 86211 and 86239) suggested they had been situated inside a circular building for which no further evidence remained.                                                                  |
| 192239                   | A square stone lined well on a wooden base, close to the extended cross range of the aisled hall (LE192235).                                                                                                                                              |
| 192240                   | A poorly surviving rectangular building south of aisled hall LE192235, represented by the backfill of part of its western wall trench and a possible internal floor surface and hearth.                                                                   |
| 192241                   | Rectangular building with stone walls, north of aisled building LE192235.                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 192242                   | A poorly-surviving building, represented by an short arc of stone wall footings.                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 192243                   | Circular well with limestone shaft and flagstone base, in enclosure LE192160.                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 192244                   | Ditched enclosure south of road LE190031.                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

| <i>Landscape Element</i> | <i>Description</i>                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 192245                   | Rectilinear ditched enclosure or field south of the villa LE192235. Evidently large, but its full extent was not established. |
| 192246                   | Well-built circular stone well on stone base, close to the bath suite of the corridor villa.                                  |
| 192247                   | Circular stone lined well, in enclosure LE191084 south of building LE191082.                                                  |
| 192248                   | Well discovered during quarrying watching brief. Stone slab sides and base, undated.                                          |



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