

Excavations at Maybury Park, Edinburgh (1990–2)

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1 Summary

This paper presents the results of a series of excavations carried out by the City of Edinburgh Council Archaeology Service between 1990 and 1992 in advance of the Edinburgh Park development. Following a programme of test excavations, seven areas were opened up for excavation. Three of these contained significant archaeology dating to the Neolithic, Bronze and Iron Ages. The main findings included a Neolithic trackway, evidence for Bronze Age settlement and a large stone-built structure dating to the beginning of the first millennium AD.

2 Introduction

The Edinburgh Park development was undertaken by New Edinburgh Ltd, a joint venture company made up of Miller Developments and Enterprise Edinburgh – Edinburgh City Council’s property development company. The development involved the construction of industrial units, office buildings and housing, as well as large-scale landscaping. The Maybury Park investigations (centred on NGR: NT 178720) undertaken by CECAS covered part of the Phase I Edinburgh Park Development, located at South Gyle on the western edge of Edinburgh ([illus 1](#)).

The area of investigation was bounded to the west by the Edinburgh City Bypass, to the east by South Gyle Broadway and several recently developed sites and to the south by the West One development. In all, the site was over 1km from north to south and 0.5km from east to west, with a total area of 66ha. At the time of the excavation, it was bisected from north to south by the Gogar Burn and from east to west by a farm road giving access to Redheughs and Gogar Green Farms, located at the south of the site on either side of the burn; both farms have since been demolished and the site re-landscaped. The geology consisted of fluvio-glacial sands and gravels.

Prior to development the site was characterized by undulating arable farmland forming part of Redheughs Farm. The area to the north of Area C, however, was lower-lying and formed part of the former Gogar Loch which extended eastwards to just south-west of Corstorphine. Geo-technical boreholes sunk by Beattie Watkinson in 1988 across the site of the present-day South Gyle Shopping Centre recorded peat deposits up to 2.50m in depth. These deposits, however, remain undated and it is therefore not possible to state at what point during the prehistoric or Early Historic period the loch stopped being a permanent body of open water.

Historic records indicate that the loch has not been a permanent body of open water since the 17th century. Rather, it is described in 1650 as an area ‘full of bogs and marshes’ ([NSA 1845](#), 245) acting as a natural flood plain for the Gogar Burn. Flooding of this area has been an historic problem as exemplified by Lord James Foresters’s petition to Parliament in 1661 which describes the ‘whole meadow ground and low lying lands...undone by the

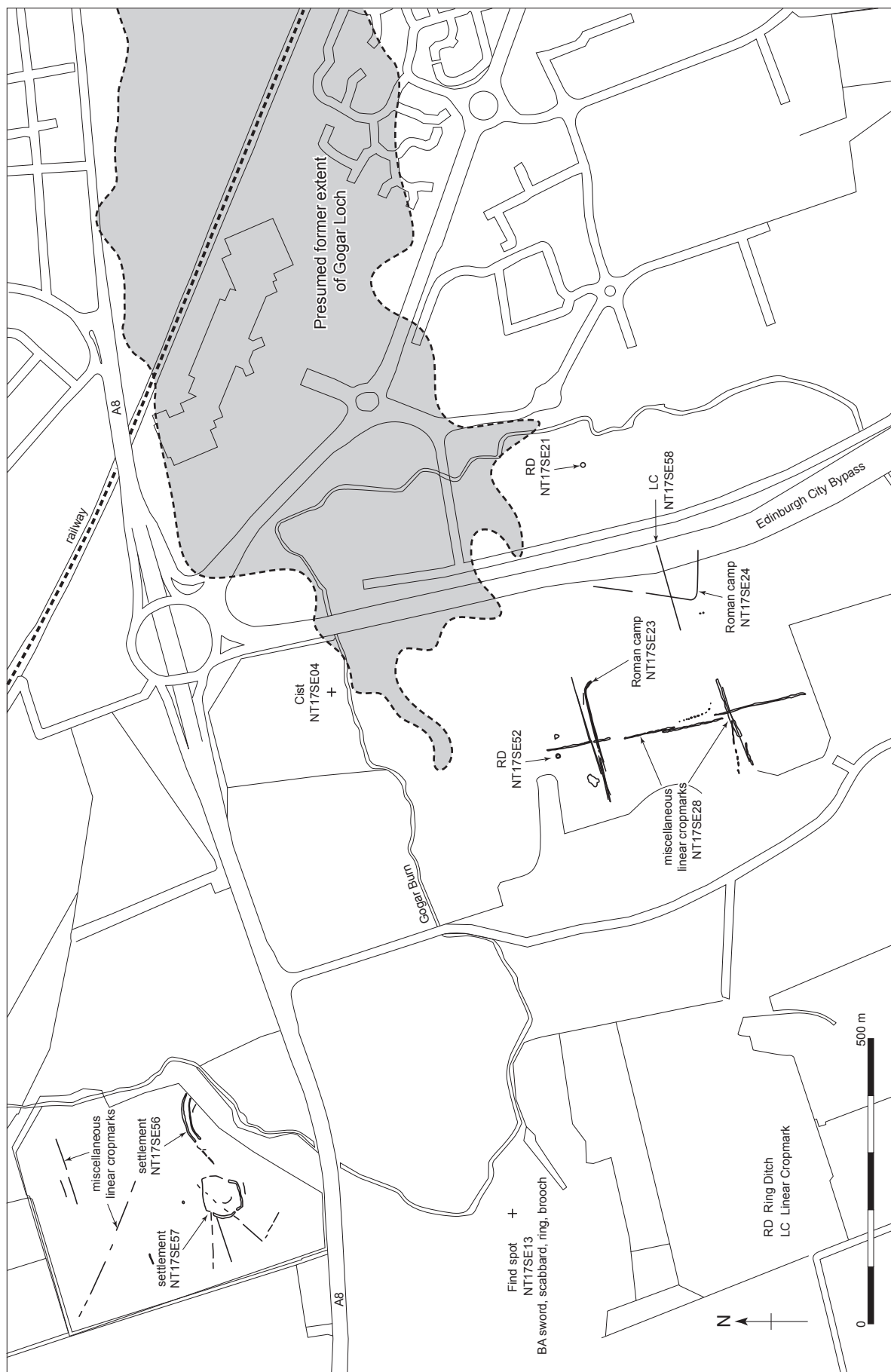
overflowing Gogar-burne’ ([NSA 1845](#)). This area still remained susceptible to flooding until the construction of this development which saw the canalization of the Gogar Burn.

The only previously known site or find of archaeological interest within the proposed development site was a small circular cropmark (NGR: NT17SE 21), interpreted as a ring-ditch to the north of Gogar Green Farm ([illus 2](#)). Chance finds of cists (NGR: NT17SE 4 and NT17SE 20) have been fairly common in the surrounding area although none from within the boundary of the study area. Two Roman camps, Millburn Tower and Gogar Green (NGR: NT17SE 23 and NT17SE 24), have been identified in the area. Sections were excavated through the defensive ditches of the Gogar Green camp in 1980 ([Maxwell 1984](#)) in advance of the construction of the City Bypass and it was hoped that the 1990–2 excavations would confirm the eastern extent of this monument. In addition, a possible palisaded enclosure was identified to the south of the site from aerial photographs at Cultins Road (NGR: NT17SE 54). This site was evaluated by CECAS in 1996 ([Collard 1996](#)) and the results seemed to support its identification as a multi-ditched enclosure. However, when the southern extent of the site was opened up and excavated in 2002 ([Jones 2002](#)) in advance of development, the cropmark was demonstrated to be predominately natural in origin, with the outer ditches formerly excavated by CECAS proving to be part of a series of post-medieval field/enclosure boundary ditches.

Based upon this archaeological evidence, an archaeological evaluation was therefore felt to be necessary by the City of Edinburgh Council in advance of development. Overall management of the project was undertaken by the then City Archaeologist Mark Collard, with the field work managed by Daniel Johnson. The evaluation was undertaken during October and November in 1990, with the results leading onto three main phases of archaeological excavation: Areas A and U, December 1990 and January 1991; Areas B–E, October to December 1991; Area F, January to March 1992 ([illus 1](#); [illus 3](#)). The following report is based upon the draft data structure report written by Daniel Johnson for CECAS.



Illus 1 Site location, showing test trenches and excavation areas



Illus 2 Prehistoric / Roman cropmarks in the immediate area of site with the presumed extent of Gogar Loch



Illus 3 Aerial view of excavated areas (©RCAHMS)

3 Results

3.1 Evaluation

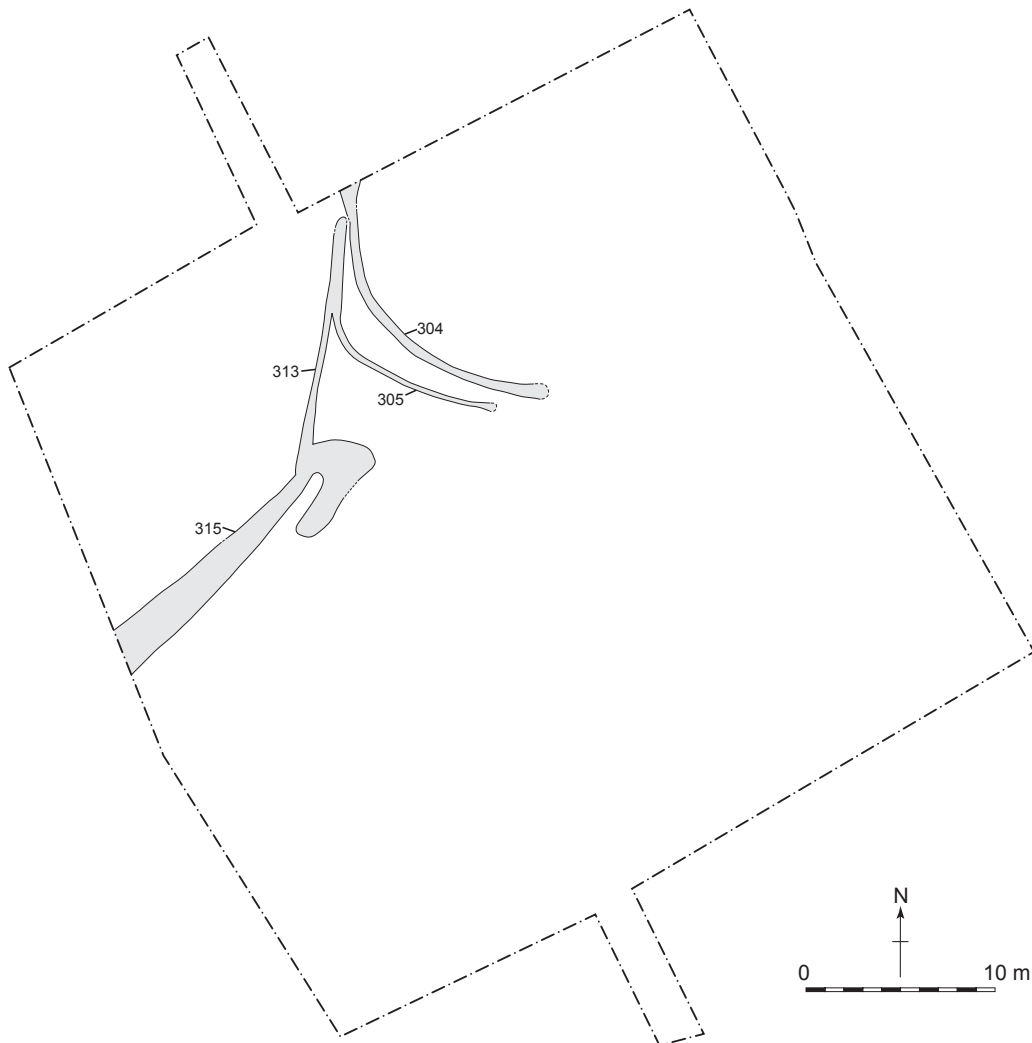
The evaluation consisted of 32 machine-excavated trenches with a combined length of just over 1km and a width of 2m (illus 1), which represents an approximately 0.33% sample of the development area. The majority of the trench positions were selected on topographic grounds, while some were positioned to assess and intersect circular cropmarks located to the north of Gogar Green Farm, in particular NT17SE 21, and also to locate the eastern extent of Gogar Green Roman Temporary Camp. Features of probable prehistoric date were identified in Trenches 1, 7–12 and 21–25. Subsequent excavations were targeted on the areas surrounding these trenches. The findings from these trenches are discussed below within the areas that were opened

around them. With the exception of isolated features of unknown/modern date, nothing of significance was found in the remaining trenches.

3.2 Excavation

3.2.1 Area A

Area A (illus 1) consisted of a roughly rectangular trench approximately 43m long by 39m wide (1700sq m), positioned to investigate features identified during the evaluation in Trench 1. Interpretation of the features identified in Area A is difficult due to a lack of dating evidence or a coherent or understandable pattern. In particular, the protection provided by colluvial deposits elsewhere in the study area was



Illus 4 Plan of Area A, Phase I

absent in Area A, resulting in substantial truncation of features and probably the complete destruction of all but the deepest features. Three stratigraphic phases of activity were identified although it is highly likely that these 'phases' were not separated by any substantial period of time and may represent successive elements of the same settlement.

Phase I

Stratigraphically, the earliest group of features identified at the site consisted of a group of linear and curvilinear features located in the north-west quadrant of the trench (**illus 4**).

A shallow ditch (context 313) approximately 13m long and aligned from north-east to south-west was identified at the north end of the trench. This appeared to continue as the badly truncated base of a broad ditch (context 315) aligned south-west to north-east which ran for 16m from the west edge of the trench. This was very shallow and irregular in profile (**illus 5a**). A group of irregular hollows lay in the area where these two features intersected and a stratigraphic relationship could not be determined.

Two roughly concentric curvilinear features (304 and

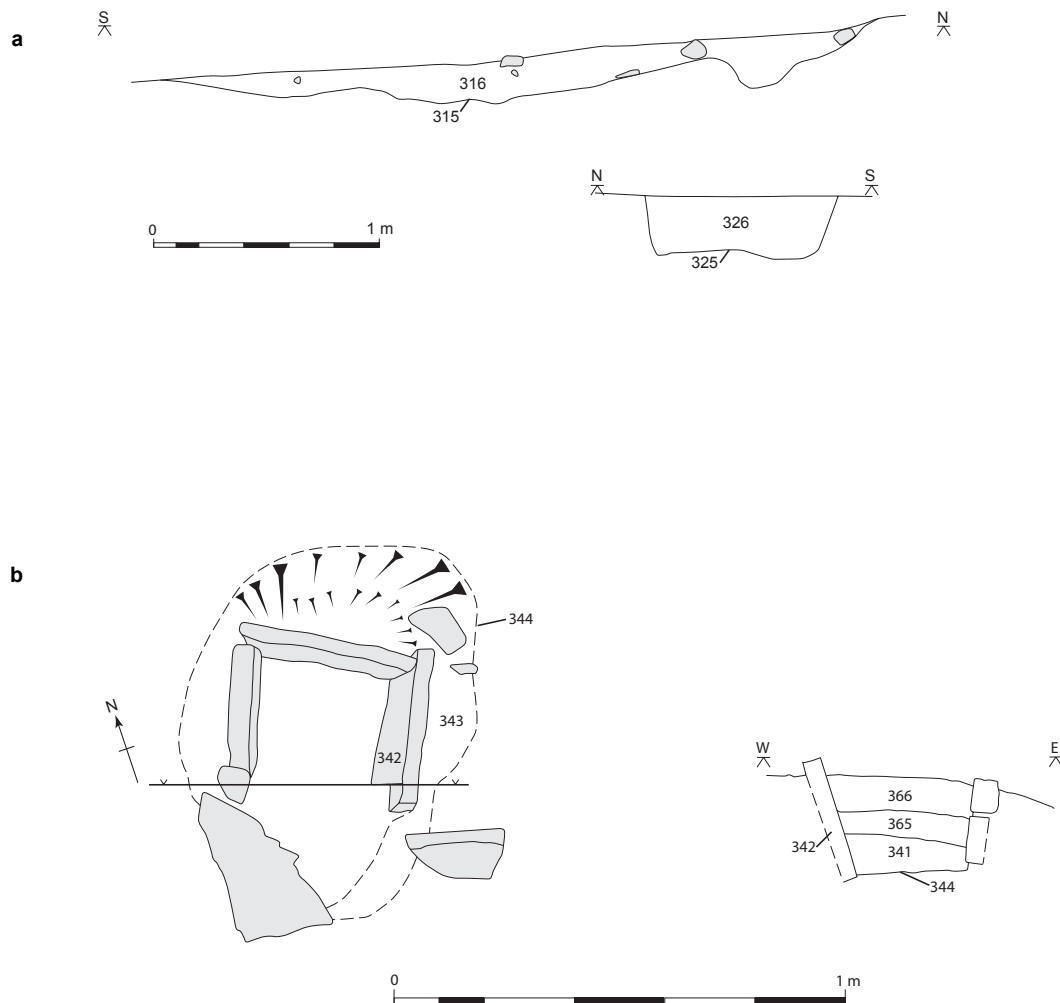
305) intersected with the north end of Ditch 313. These curved off to the south-east where they terminated.

All of these features were heavily truncated, with only the bases surviving, and all had extremely similar fills, consisting of compact red-brown sandy silt, making it impossible to determine their stratigraphic relationships. The fills were homogenous and no indication of either natural silting or deliberate back-filling was noted. They were all cut by a third curvilinear feature (context 312), very close to the north trench edge, which has been allocated to Phase III.

The Phase I features did not survive sufficiently to allow a meaningful interpretation of their date or function. The most logical assumption would be that they represented some form of spatial division be it for domestic, agricultural or ritual purposes. The concentric ditches (310 and 309) are likely to represent two phases of the same boundary. Unfortunately, no chronological indicators were retrieved from these features.

Phase II (**illus 6**)

Four pits were identified at the centre of the excavation trench (Pits 317, 321, 325 & 380). These



Illus 5 a sections of Features 315 and 325; b Plan and section of Feature 344



Illus 6 Plan of Area A, Phase II

were largely irregular in plan, with the exception of a roughly circular cut for Pit 317, which formed the easternmost pit of this group. The fills of these features were very similar, consisting of either red-brown clay loam or red-brown silty loam with occasional cobbles or small angular pebbles.

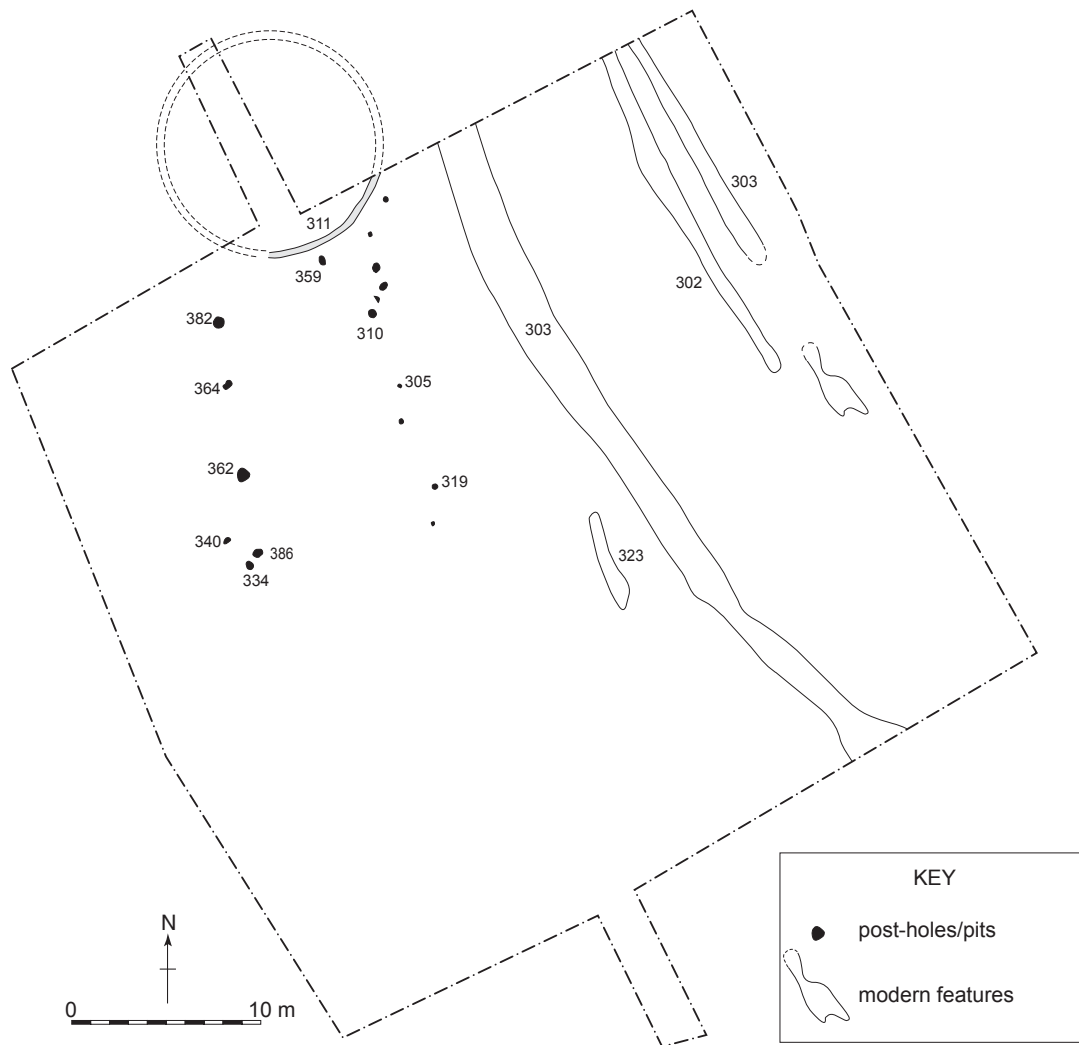
Possibly associated with this group of pits was Feature 344, a stone-lined pit. A fragment of stone slab from the surface of the pit indicated that the feature was originally capped (*illus 5b*). The cut (context 344) was roughly rectangular in plan with slightly concave sides and a flat regular base. Within the cut, three upright slabs were set on the north, east and west sides to form a three-sided box (context 342). This box was set in a matrix of dark red-brown silty loam (context 343). This stone-lined pit was the only feature from Phase II which provided some evidence for date or function on typological grounds. This had the appearance of a cist but no burial or grave goods were recovered from within it. It was also quite small (approximately 0.25m by 0.4m). The lack of human remains is not, however, surprising

as no bone was preserved in any context on the site due to the acidic nature of the receiving environment. It is possible that the cist was either constructed to hold the remains of a small infant or possibly held a cremation, though alternatively it may have simply served some form of storage function.

Phase III

The Phase I and II features were, in places, cut by a spread of negative features which have been grouped together as Phase III (*illus 7*). This was made up of two elements: a possible ring-ditch and an 'avenue' of post-holes.

At the north of the excavated area, a curvilinear ditch (context 312) was excavated which may represent part of a ring-ditch. Extrapolation of the curve of the feature would give a diameter of approximately 12m. The cut was regular with a concave base and the fill consisted of red-brown silty loam containing occasional small, angular and round stones. An



Illus 7 Plan of Area A, Phase III and modern features

extension trench was excavated in order to try and locate the northern extent of this feature; however, the results proved negative. The absence of any discernable return is most likely explained by truncation caused by medieval and later ploughing as the ground surface rose gently to the north. No artefacts were recovered from the fill of the ditch.

This ring-ditch may be the remains of a timber building, the dominant type of structure during the later prehistory of Britain (O'Sullivan 1998) and which is recorded, primarily from cropmarks, as occurring widely across the Lothians. Excavated examples – Melville Nurseries, Dalkeith (Raisen & Rees 1995); Lamb's Nursery, Dalkeith (Cook 2000); Monktonhall, Inveresk (Hanson 2002), and Fishers Road, Port Seton (Haselgrove & McCullagh 2000) – have demonstrated that this class of structure was widely used from the mid-second millennium BC to the mid-first millennium AD. The 12m diameter of the Maybury Park ring-ditch fits well with these examples of excavated roundhouses and compares favourably with the Iron Age structures identified both from Monktonhall (Hanson 2002) and

at Fishers Road, Port Seton (Haselgrove & McCullagh 2000), where Structures 1, 2 and 3 at Fishers Road West all measured between 10m and 12m in diameter. Structure CS 1 at Fisher Road East was of similar dimensions.

An unusual variation from the normal plan of such buildings was evident on the south edge of the ring-ditch. Here two parallel rows of post-holes, set 8.5m apart, lead to/from the structure for 15m. The western alignment (Post-holes 382, 364, 362, 340, 386 & 334) ran in a straight line of four, at intervals of between 3.25m and 5m, with two others (Post-holes 340 & 334) lying close to Post-hole 386 at the southern end of the line. These three southern post-holes cut Ditch 315. The eastern alignment of post-holes was composed of 10 smaller features. It was less regular than that to the west, and the intervals were between 0.7m and 4m. Two of the post-holes cut Ditch 304 and one cut a large pit (379). Post-hole 359 was identified between the two lines, approximately 3m west of the eastern alignment.



Illus 8 Aerial view of Areas B, C, D & E, looking west (© RCHAMS)

Elaborate entrances to roundhouses are not uncommon. House 1 at Lairg had three parallel lines of post-holes at the south-east which were interpreted as forming a long, timber-lined passage, possibly up to 6m long (McCullough & Tipping 1998, 37). A number of the early roundhouses at Catterick had extensive areas of paving/cobbling emanating from their entrances for a considerable distance, indicating the space outside the entrance was of considerable importance and heavily used (Moloney *et al* 2003, 13–21). At Maybury, there was no gap at the location where the ‘avenue’ met the ring-ditch and it may be that the arrangement of post-holes formed a small stock enclosure to the side of the building rather than an elaborate entrance or an external extension to the living space. At Catterick, a similar arrangement of post-holes (Structure 8010), 15m long by 6m wide, to the north-east of Structure 8004 was loosely phased with the Iron Age ring-ditches (Moloney *et al* 2003, 5 and fig 3) and interpreted as a rudimentary farm building such as a sheep/goat pen. A similar function could be envisaged for the Maybury post-holes.

Phase IV: Post-medieval

A number of parallel linear features running north to south through the eastern part of the site proved to be the result of medieval and later agricultural activity, ie drainage and rig and furrow (illus 7; contexts 302, 303, 323).

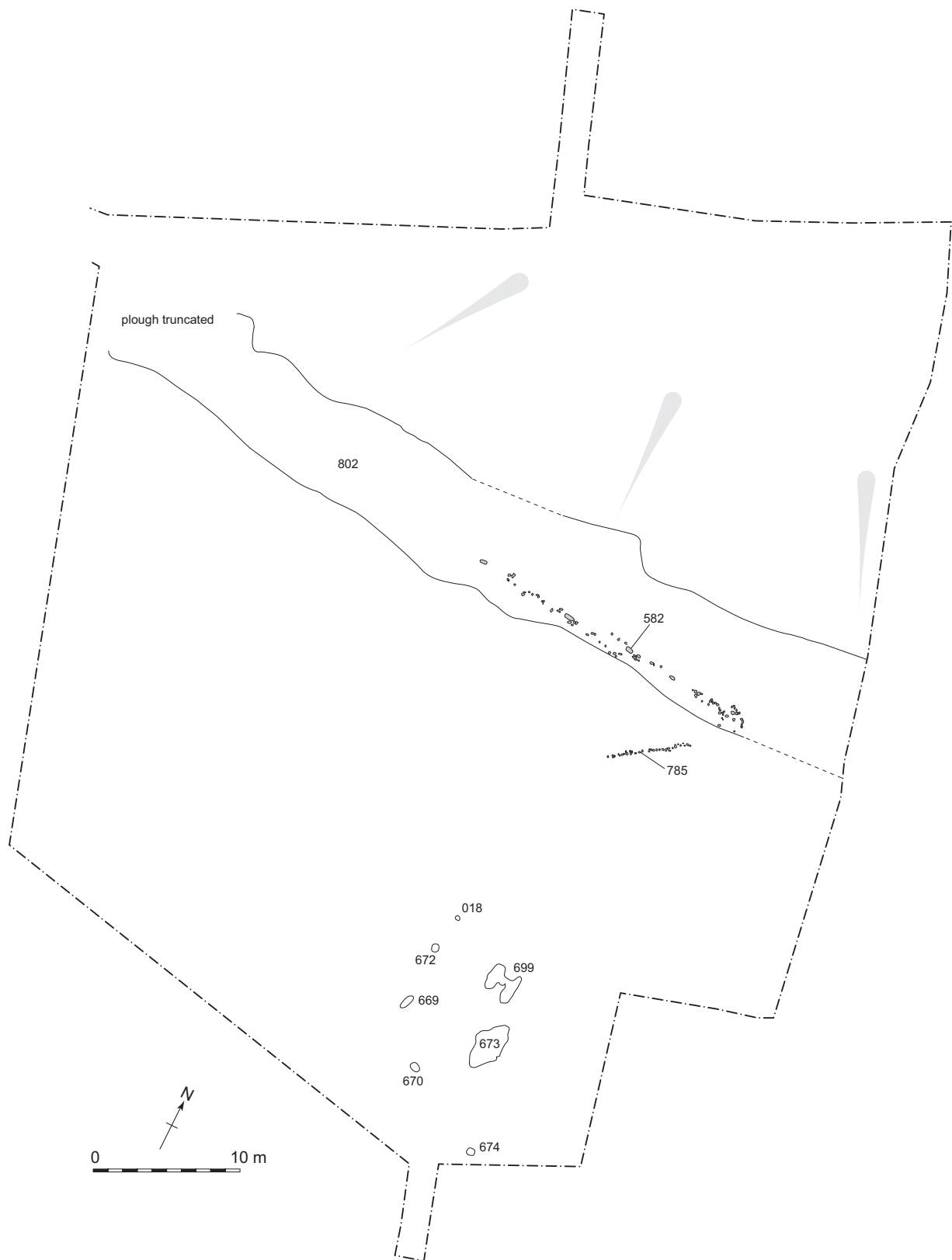
3.2.2 Area B

Area B was located in the saddle between two knolls and measured 4500sq m (illus 1; illus 8). Once the site was stripped, several hundred features were identified; a large proportion of these proved to be either animal burrows or modern features, none of which are discussed here.

Phase I: Neolithic/Bronze Age activity

The earliest activity in Area B comprised a trackway and possible flimsy structure/shelter associated with a large pit. The trackway consisted of a large, broad linear feature (802) which ran from near the north-west corner of the excavation area diagonally to the south-east (illus 9; illus 10). This is likely to have been formed through erosion resulting from human and animal traffic. A length of over 56m was contained within the trench. It averaged about 6m wide and 0.2–0.4m deep, with a flattish, very rough bottom. It crossed the slope at the south edge of the north knoll at an oblique angle. This trackway may well have extended further westwards as its western end, along with much of this section of the site, had been truncated by post-medieval ploughing. The fill of the trackway, which was sealed by a layer of colluvium, consisted of reddish-brown sandy silt (context 560) which contained a single fragment of struck chert.

In its eastern half, the southern edge of the trackway

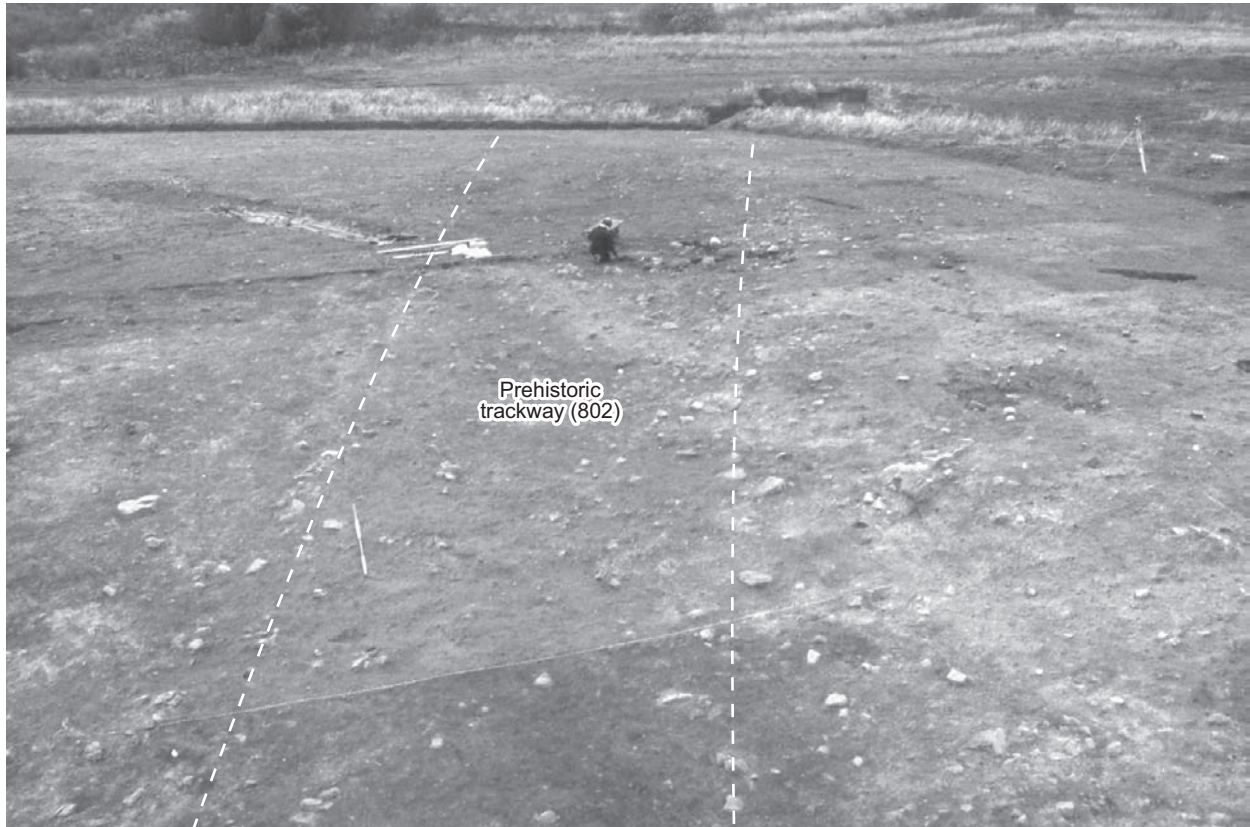


Illus 9 Plan of Area B, Phase I

was marked by a discontinuous line of large stones (context 582), some set on edge. In some places it was just possible to discern a cut and fill associated with these stones, but generally this was not possible. A further element of this feature was identified running

on a north-east to south-west alignment to the south of the main line (context 785).

Dating of the trackway is dependent on stratigraphy. Fragments of probable Bronze Age pottery were found in a small pit which cut into the centre



Illus 10 View of possible trackway (context 802)

Table 1 Radiocarbon dates

Lab code	Area/Context	Sample material	Lab age BP $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ (0/00)	Calibrated (2-sigma)
GU-11069	B 552	Hazel	2830±50	880–830 BC
GU-11070	B 636	Alder	3740±50	2310–1950 BC
GU-11071	B 649	Hazelnut	4710±55	3640–3360 BC
GU-11072	B 671	Hazel	4995±55	3950–3660 BC
GU-11073	B 718	Plum	2730±45	980–800 BC
GU-11074	F 1129	Hazel	2020±50	170 BC–AD 80

of the trackway, and radiocarbon analysis of a sample from a small pit (712) which cut the edge of the trackway provided a date of 2310–1950 cal BC at 2-sigma (GU-11070; [Table 1](#)), again indicating a Neolithic or Early Bronze Age date for the abandonment of the feature.

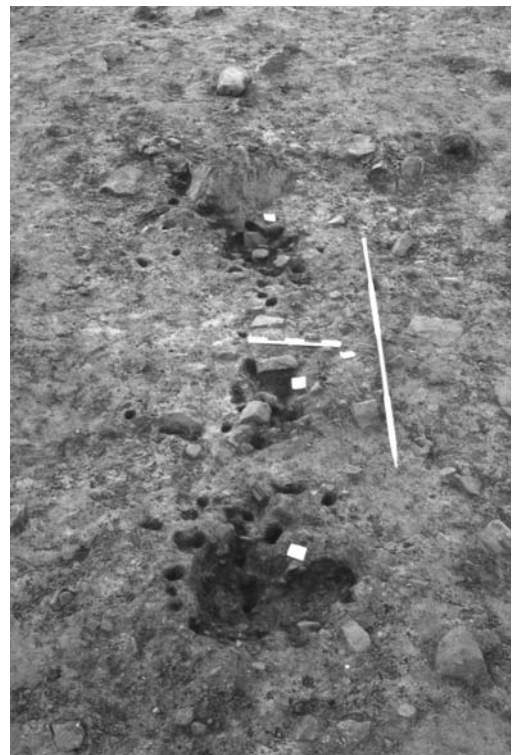
Prehistoric trackways or droveways have been identified in numerous locations throughout Britain and Ireland and these are generally of the same form throughout prehistory. From the earliest known examples these have consisted of two parallel ditches which are believed to have had external banks surmounted by hedges. Animals were driven along between the ditches, sometimes causing a hollow to be eroded by the traffic. Such droveways were in existence from the Neolithic, as at the Ceide Fields, Co Mayo, Ireland, and continued in use up to the Late Iron Age and beyond, as with the extensive

trackway system recorded in West Yorkshire in advance of the construction of the M1–A1 Link Road ([Roberts *et al* 2001](#)). The Maybury ‘trackway’ has no evidence for such defining ditches identified elsewhere. It is possible, however, that hedges grown each side of the hollow may have left no visible trace in the archaeological record (as demonstrated by [Pryor 1998](#), 71). However, the stone linear feature (582) has been tentatively identified as remnants of a boundary; possibly packing stones for a fence.

Trackways are generally designed to manage the movement of animals. At Fengate, a sufficient area of a prehistoric landscape was excavated to postulate the function of such a trackway ([Pryor 1998](#)). Here it was shown that the trackway formed the main element of a field system that was laid out along the fen edge and at right angles to the wetlands. Animals stayed on the dry edge of the fen



Illus 12 'Banjo-shaped' Feature 620



Illus 13 Hearths 789 and 843

that the 'trackway' would have linked these two environments and not run parallel to them. It is possible, however, that the trackway was skirting around the knoll at this point, heading towards the Gogar Burn and a possible crossing point.

A slightly curving line of five widely spaced large post-holes or small pits (018, 669, 670, 672 & 674) was located near the south edge of the excavated area (illus 9). These varied in depth between 0.16m and 0.33m and were irregular in plan and profile. The fills were consistently dark brown silty sand containing occasional rounded stones. A large, elongated oval pit (673) appeared to be partially enclosed by the five post-holes. On excavation, this feature proved to be very irregularly shaped. Its west side was very shallow, forming a 'step' down into the deeper east side. The north and south ends were both deeper than the central part. A bank or dump of stones had been placed on the base of the pit across the shallow central area, separating the north and south ends. The main fill of dark yellowish-brown silt (649) was uniform, and contained two sherds of prehistoric pottery interpreted as from a Carinated bowl (see Section 5.1). This type of pottery is not indicative of function and could have derived from a domestic, ritual or funerary context (A Sheridan, pers comm). A radiocarbon date of 3640–3360 cal BC at 2-sigma (GU-11071) was obtained from carbonized material retrieved from this deposit, which would confirm the Neolithic date attributed to the pottery. A very fine, dark, probably burnt lower fill (context 671) was recognized in the deep part of the south end of the pit only. A radiocarbon date of 3950–3660 cal BC at

2-sigma (GU-11072) was obtained from this deposit, again confirming the Neolithic date. Immediately north of Pit 673 was a shallow H-shaped feature (699) filled with burnt stone and clay that was orange from the effects of heat. The excavator considered it more likely that the deposit was dumped after burning rather than burnt *in situ* as the surrounding subsoil was not affected by heat.

It is assumed that the curving line of five pits/post-holes were related to the central pit and the hollow filled with burnt material. The pit appears to have been deliberately shaped to form a stone-lined depression with a step down into it, presumably for ease of access. The primary fill exhibits evidence of burning and the adjacent hollow filled with heated stones and clay would also appear to indicate that fire was involved in the activity represented by the group. As the prevailing wind is from the west, it is possible that the post-holes held some form of wind-break to assist with the process which involved fire. This may represent a simple domestic shelter. The location of this group of features adjacent to the trackway may be significant and it is plausible that the two are related.

Phase II: Later prehistoric features (illus 11)

A series of four ditch segments appeared to form a small enclosure system to the south of the possible Phase I trackway. These did not align with the trackway although Ditch Segment 404 appeared to terminate at the southern side of Ditch 802, indicating it may have respected the line of the trackway.

Alternatively, this may be a coincidence due to later truncation.

The longest of the ditch segments (404) ran for approximately 36.5m to the south edge of the excavated area and was 2.75m wide and 0.23m deep at maximum. The feature was filled by a deposit of dark brown silty sand (403) with no inclusions. The other main ditch (contexts 683 & 687) in the complex ran from east to west for approximately 33m, and averaged about 1–1.5m wide. The average surviving depth was about 0.15m. The fill of the feature consisted of dark red-brown sandy clay (661). Two similar ditches were identified aligned on the same grid pattern: Ditch 678 extended into the site from the south trench edge for 8m terminating at Ditch 683, and had a fill of dark brown sandy loam with occasional gravel inclusions (645); Ditch 713 was located in the south-east corner of the excavation. This consisted of a shallow cut 2.02m wide and 0.29m deep. A length of 8.1m of the feature survived, although it may have been part of the same ditch as an irregular linear feature (708) located directly to the north and cutting the line of the trackway (802). None of these features contained any datable finds.

A scatter of features of Bronze Age and later date was located to the north of the enclosure system to which they may relate. The earliest of these is likely to date to the Early Bronze Age. This consisted of a large irregular pit (507) with gently sloping sides located at the top of the slope, beyond the northern edge of the colluvium. It contained an assemblage of prehistoric artefacts (SFs 28, 38 & 45), including a smashed Beaker vessel (see [illus 21](#) & [illus 22](#) in [Section 5.1.1](#)) and a flint scraper found immediately under the vessel. Several large lumps of charcoal were found adjacent to the vessel. Also present was a large, irregular stone block, with two faces shaped by pecking, one dished and the other saddle-shaped; both were pierced by pecked conical holes (see [illus 18](#) in [Section 4.2](#)). The whole assemblage was found near one edge of the feature. The fill of the feature consisted of dark yellowish-brown clay silt (506). Although no bones were found within the pit, it is conceivable that the feature represents a burial pit. Bone preservation was extremely poor throughout all areas investigated due to the acidic nature of the gravel subsoil. Sheridan (see [Section 5.1](#)) states that undecorated Beakers are relatively rare in funerary contexts. All things considered, it is probable that Pit 507 represents an isolated Beaker burial and that the majority of the other features in the area relate to the Later Bronze Age.

Immediately north of Ditch 683, a large pit (828) was identified measuring 1.9m in diameter (north to south) and 0.45m deep ([illus 12](#)). It had a clay fill (contexts 837, 838 & 839) and overhanging sides, and was cut by a shallow irregular feature (context 827) (possibly an angled post-hole) which contained several sherds of pottery of probable Late Bronze Age date (SFs 68, 78, 80 & 81; see [illus 25](#) in [Section 5.1.1](#)). Another small irregular feature (825) was cut by the pit.

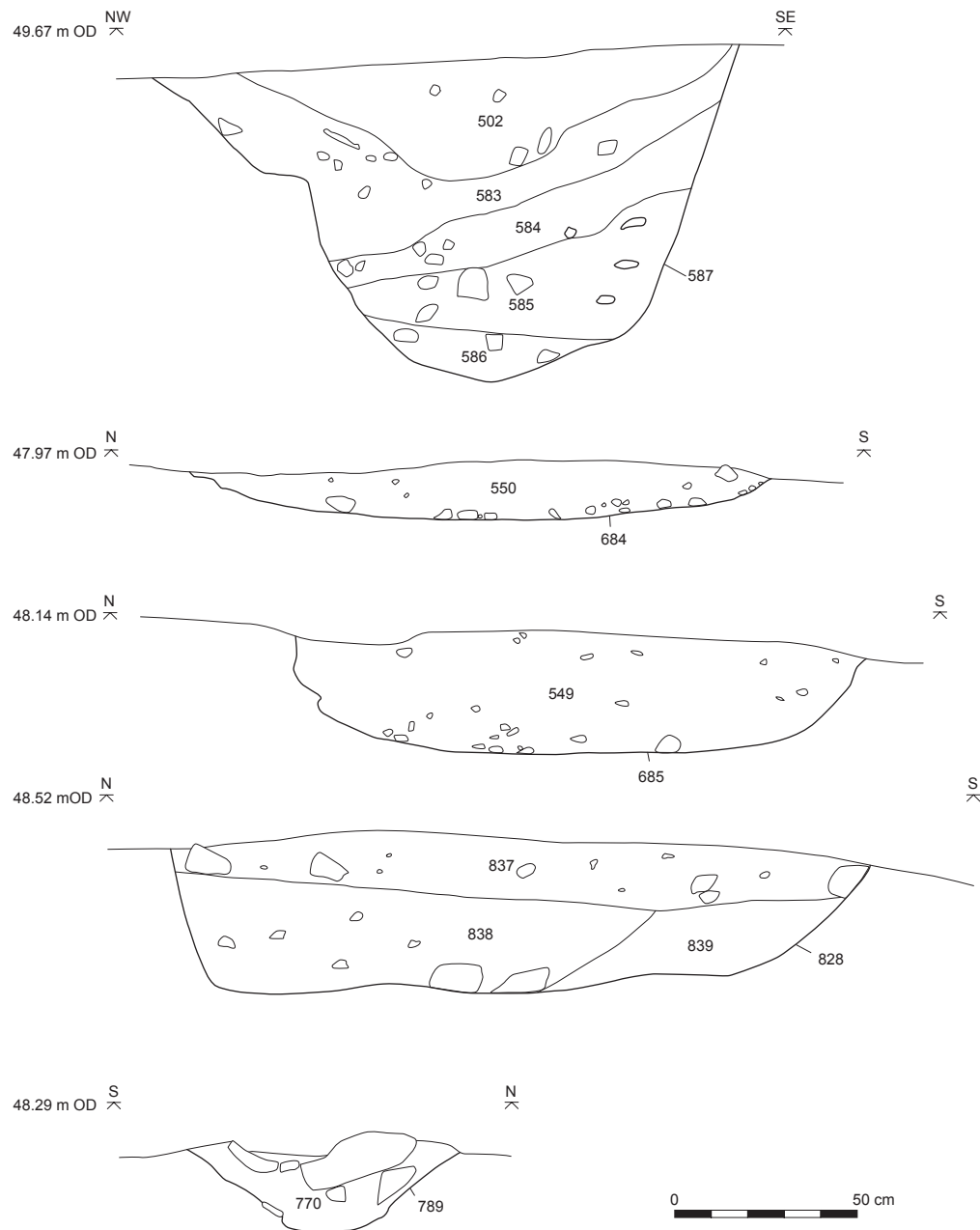
North of Pit 828 were three small pits in a row, aligned north-west to south-east (Pits 787, 789 &

843). Each had a very distinctive main fill of bright orange sand and gravel, in the surface of which was a hollow filled with a brown soil ([illus 13](#)). Each pit was surrounded by large numbers of stake-holes; many of these cut the orange primary fills, but were overlain by the brown soil upper fill. In the case of the largest pit (789), some of the stake-holes cutting the orange fill formed a very regular semi-circular pattern on the west side of the pit. The orange colour of the main fills, which was not paralleled in any other part of the site either in natural or archaeological deposits, is likely to be the result of heating or chemical processes. The most likely interpretation would be that it served as a hearth with an associated stake-built structure, possibly to assist with cooking.

A concentration of features lay near the east edge of the excavated area, some cutting the possible trackway. A small, shallow, sub-rectangular pit (559), which cut the possible trackway, contained a near-complete bucket-shaped vessel of probable Late Bronze Age date (SF 40; see [illus 23](#) & [illus 24](#) in [Section 5.1.1](#)). This feature had a very indistinct fill, and had been particularly badly damaged by burrowing animals. It was associated with three larger pits with very distinct, dark reddish-brown fills containing charcoal flecks (contexts 758, 684 & 685). Prehistoric pottery was recovered from the fill of Pit 758, which was oval in plan and measured 1.8m by 1.27m by 0.39m deep. Radiocarbon dates of 1130–830 and 980–800 cal BC at 2-sigma (GU-11069 and GU-11073, respectively) were produced from charcoal sampled from this feature. The fill consisted of reddish-brown sandy silty loam (context 552). This feature also cut the trackway, and had an apparent structure in its base, represented by a sub-oval arrangement of small stake-holes surrounding a small post-hole. Pit 685 was roughly rectangular and measured 1.56m by 0.82m and was 0.34m deep. The fill (549) consisted of dark reddish-brown sandy loam. The final pit in the group (684) measured 1.53m by 1.24m in plan, was 0.14m deep and was filled by a deposit of dark reddish-brown sandy loam (550). Pit 758 cut two smaller pits, one of which (Pit 761) contained the rubber from a saddle quern (SF 74) positioned together with two other stones as packing for a post.

This cluster of features may represent a domestic structure, although no discernible foundation could be identified. The presence of a hearth, pottery and a quern stone would be consistent with the contents of a domestic building. Pit 685 also contained the highest concentration of barley from the site as well as emmer wheat and oat-grass. Barley was also contained in other features from the group, although in lesser quantities. It can only be assumed that, if the group does represent a building, the structure had negligible or no foundations. It is assumed that the two small groups of features to the south-west (centred on Features 787 and 828) are representative of ancillary activities associated with this possible structure.

Immediately to the south of the pit group there was a pair of shallow hollows (669 and 712), interpreted as hearths. Both contained large quantities

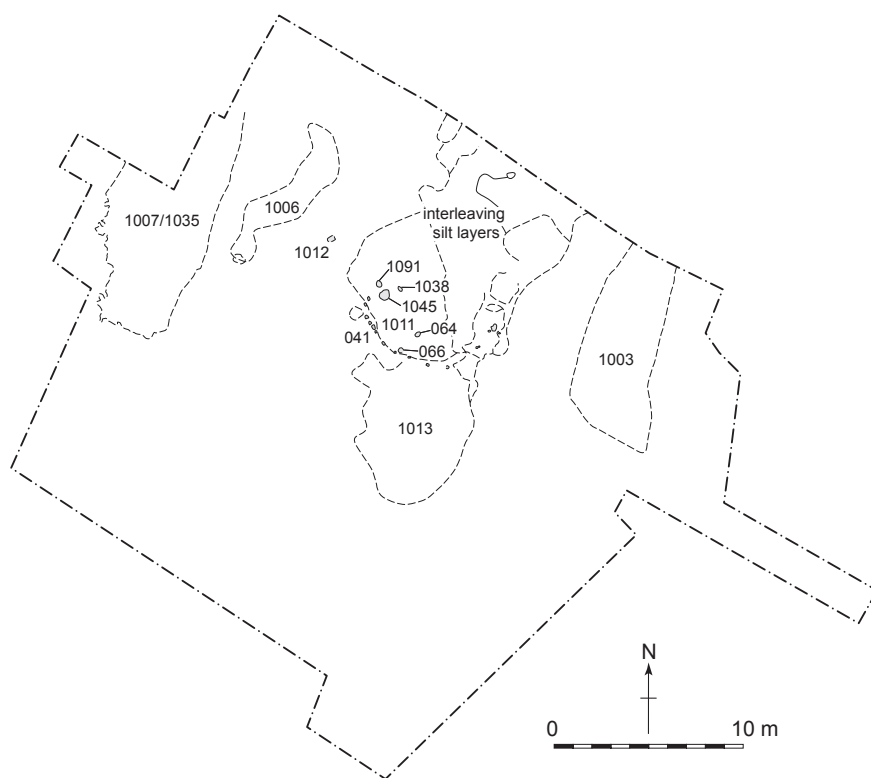


Illus 14 Selection of sections from Area B, Phase II

of very heavily burnt water-rolled pebbles, heated from one side. A very dark deposit, including crushed charcoal, lay at the centre of the reddish fill of each hollow. The fill of Hollow 669 was overlain by the spread fill of Hollow 712, which contained a sherd of undiagnostic prehistoric pottery. Two small post-holes (667 & 679), both different in character to each other, were adjacent to the hearths but contained no dating evidence. These features could also be associated with the tentative domestic structure immediately to the north and may relate to the heating of stones to add to a trough in order to boil water as would be expected with a burnt mound.

Positioned on the top edge of the slope, but further to the west, was a possible domestic structure (620).

It consisted of a broad, shallow sub-oval hollow cut into the slope, with a very irregular bottom and a maximum (surviving) depth of 0.3m (*illus 14*). It became very shallow and indistinct on its southern (downhill) side. The western side extended into a narrower, passage-like feature which ran for approximately 3.9m to the west before turning sharply to the north and ending at a rounded terminal. Overall, the feature was roughly banjo-shaped, and resembled some of the 'miniature souterrain' type features found at the Iron Age settlement of Dalladies (*Watkins 1980*, 122–64). A number of prehistoric potsherds of probable Iron Age date were found on the surface of the feature. One post-hole (019) and a pit (021) were found immediately to the



Illus 15 Plan of Area C

north during the evaluation, and the only piece of daub found in the project was located immediately adjacent to the feature.

The majority of features identified further north on the summit of the knoll proved to be of modern date. Three features or groups of features of possible pre-historic origin were, however, identified in this area. A small, shallow, flat-bottomed pit (610), sub-oval in plan, was lined with large stone blocks (611). The feature measured 1m by 0.9m in plan and was 0.19m deep. The stone lining was sealed by a deposit of reddish-brown sandy silt (context 482). This feature was located at the southern edge of the summit area. Another small pit (608), located closer to the centre of the summit area, contained several contrasting fills (contexts 604, 605, 606 & 607) and had a large, flat stone pressed up against one side. At the south-west corner of the summit area, the bases of two very badly truncated inter-cutting, sub-rectangular features (616 & 619) were identified. The only find recovered from any of these features was a single piece of burnt bone from context 592, the fill of context 616.

At the extreme north of the excavation trench, a group of post/stake-holes (544, 546, 548, 558, 562, 564, 565 & 574) defined a roughly circular area approximately 4m in diameter. Associated with this group of stake-holes was an oval-shaped pit (545) which measured 1.8m by 0.79m in plan and was 0.15m deep. The fill consisted of dark reddish-brown clay sand (423). No evidence for a hearth or entrance was identified and no finds were recovered which would suggest

domestic habitation. The apparent flimsy nature of the structure would suggest that it either represents a temporary shelter or possibly an animal pen.

A large area to the west of Ditch 404 and south of the possible trackway was largely sterile. One elongated, shallow pit and two post-holes (751 & 752) were recognized, but could not be dated, and there were several modern post-holes filled with topsoil. Most of this area was not protected by colluvial deposits and any prehistoric features in this area would have been particularly vulnerable to destruction by ploughing.

The lack of stratigraphic relationships does not allow for chronological or spatial connections to be made between groups of features. The segmented enclosure may relate to some or all of the features located to the north of it. Both the radiocarbon dating programme and the pottery analysis suggest activity from the Early and Later Bronze Age and the Iron Age. The only conclusion that can be drawn from these chronological indicators is that the site shows evidence of human activity throughout the prehistoric period.

3.2.3 Area C

During the evaluation, three groups of features were identified in Trial Trench 9: a pair of gravel surfaces at the edge of the floodplain; a discontinuous arc of individual cobbles on the slope above and to the south of the surfaces, surrounding a very shallow deposit, formed apparently by the disturbance of the subsoil

surface, and overlying a scatter of small stake-holes; a pair of post-holes lying in the area between the first two groups. All of these features were covered by a thick colluvial layer; towards the base of the slope this was mixed and interleaved with alluvial silt.

During the main excavation, an area of approximately 850sq m was opened surrounding these groups of features (*illus 1*).

The gravel surfaces

The northern surface (contexts 1007/1035), lying slightly further out onto the alluvial plain, was stratigraphically later than the southern surface (1006), which lay directly at the base of the slope down to the edge of the plain (*illus 15*). The later, northern surface sat on the floodplain, at a stratigraphic interface between (underlying) alluvial silt mixed with coarser material washed down the slope and (overlying) pure alluvial silt. It proved to consist of several layers of small gravel, interleaved with layers of alluvial silt, implying a series of episodes of flooding followed by deposition. This resulted in a gradual process of extension to the north. The only artefactual association was a single flint flake found in a shallow hollow cutting the surface of the feature (interpreted as a pothole resulting from wear), but this cannot be seen as dating evidence.

The earlier surface (1006) was on the edge of the gravel slope, where it met the edge of the (overlying) alluvium mixed with coarser material. It was an irregular, discontinuous deposit of small to medium cobbles.

Other features

No continuation of the arc of cobbles (041) seen in the evaluation was recognized in the wider excavation area. This highly ephemeral feature, which had been interpreted as defining the edge of a possible circular structure, could easily have been destroyed or damaged either in antiquity or during machining and cleaning for the excavation. Furthermore, most of its area was overlain by a broad band of cobbles (1013) similar in size to those which formed the arc, making its recognition even harder. However, the deposit (1011) that had been defined by the arc of cobbles was recognized, together with several more associated stake-holes (1091, 1038, 1045, 064 & 066). These could not be shown to represent a clear structural pattern and the surrounding area was heavily disturbed by animal burrowing. It is very unlikely therefore that the possible circular structure identified during the evaluation was a real feature.

The overlying cobbles (1013) were spread over a band approximately 8m wide, running across the slope. It could not be definitively proven to be of anthropogenic nature, although it could have been a spread bank. A hammerstone and some sherds of prehistoric pottery were recovered from it, but these

cannot be treated as secure dating evidence and may derive from soil washed down the hill from the settlement identified in Area B.

Only one other feature, a single post-hole (1012), was recognized between the possible structure and the cobbled surfaces. This area had been extensively disturbed by animal burrows, which may have destroyed more features or affected their recognition.

Discussion

It would appear that the deposits initially interpreted as archaeological in Area C are the result of episodes of flooding on the edge of the loch, with finds washed in from either dumping or hill wash from the settlement in Area B. The presence of Neolithic artefacts may indicate that the focus of activity during this period was located between Areas B and C and was not excavated.

3.2.4 Areas D and E

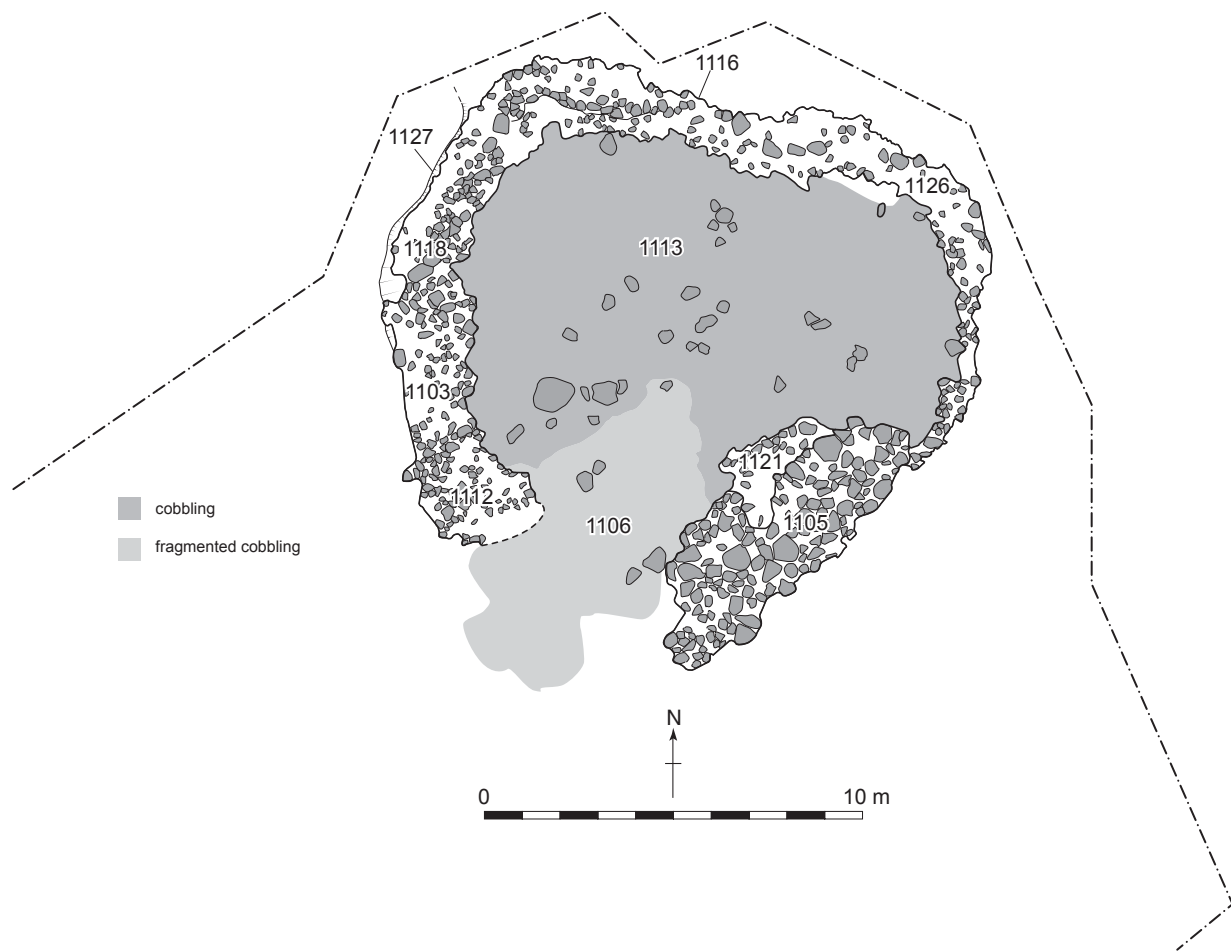
Two small areas of approximately 100sq m each were excavated at the lower west edge of the plateau (*illus 1*). No archaeological features were recognized, although it was shown that the gravel deposit forming the plateau had a very sharp edge where it had been cut away by an old course of the Gogar Burn.

3.2.5 Area F

This area of approximately 3000sq m was excavated to investigate a cobbled surface recognized in Trial Trench 25, and in a further attempt to locate the cropmark ring-ditch which had not been located in Trial Trenches 21–24 (*illus 1*). As no sign of the ring-ditch was recognized and no other concentrations of features were identified, resources were concentrated on the investigation of the area around the cobbled surface. This transpired to form part of a large stone structure (*illus 16*).

Topographic position of the structure

The stone structure was located in a natural hollow on the eastern edge of a flat-topped plateau, where it was cut by the valley of the Gogar Burn. The subsoil in the area of the structure varied with gravel at the north-east corner, clays and silts beneath the area covered by the structure and to the north and south of it, and silt and sand to the west. In places, and particularly to the west, there were outcrops of small to medium angular stones and larger areas of continuous stone. The presence of the clays created an effective spring line, so that the lower (eastern) part of the hollow filled with water following rainfall and remained flooded for some time.



Illus 16 Plan of Area F

Description of the structure

The structure consisted of a series of continuous stone banks and surfaces forming an oval, bowl-shaped feature, measuring approximately 15m north to south and 16.5m east to west. It had been constructed in a natural hollow in the eastern edge of the plateau, with a steep scarp to the west, gentler slopes to north and south and level ground stretching away for 60m to the east, up to the edge of the burn. The hollow had been enhanced before construction by clearing away all the topsoil and cutting into the subsoil at the north-west corner, to create a near-vertical face (context 1127). Further to the east, the cut was less steep and the face lower. The east-facing slope was unmodified, and lay at an angle of 45°.

The base of the hollow was concave, and was lowest near its east edge. During excavation, the easternmost 7–8m filled with water during rainfall, and did not drain afterwards; bailing during periods of dry weather was required to empty it.

The inner metallised surface The primary construction event was the metallising of the hollow with hard-packed gravel (context 1113). The whole surface of the cut was covered, with the exception of the

near-vertical slope at the north-west corner. The constituents of the metallising varied from small rounded gravel, which covered most of the hollow, to larger angular stones up to 0.30m long. There had been no attempt to create a level surface prior to metallising, and projecting stones in the underlying subsoil were incorporated into the metallised surface; some of these projected as much as 0.40m above the finished surface. In places, the surface had been eroded and damaged, possibly by use or by ploughing.

The stone banks The metallising of the hollow had been followed by the construction of upstanding stone features around the perimeter of the hollow, overlying the metallised surface. This appears to have followed the metallising almost immediately, as no sediment had accumulated and there was no apparent damage to the surface where it was covered by these features. The outer edges of these features coincided with the edge of the metallising, except on the south side, where the metallising extended 1m further to the south, and on the near-vertical slope in the north-west corner, where the metallising was absent.

The stone features were varied in both the materials used and the method of construction. It is unclear whether these variations were determined by topographic or functional factors, or by both.

The west side of the structure consisted of a simple revetment of the steep, east-facing natural slope of the edge of the subsoil forming the plateau. It consisted of a single layer of medium to large sub-rounded to angular stones (contexts 1103/1112), laid along the slope in a band approximately 10m long from north to south and averaging 2.4m wide. The highest point on the west edge of this band was approximately 1.4m higher than the east edge. This feature could perhaps be seen as a coarser continuation of the metalling, rather than a separate feature. Like the metalling, it incorporated naturally outcropping stones, and it was badly damaged by ploughing along its upper west edge.

At its northern end, context 1103 merged into context 1118 without a discernible boundary, although the overall character of the two features was substantially different. Context 1118 was a stone bank built up against the near-vertical face of Cut 1127. It ran in a straight line for approximately 5m from south-west to north-east, with a maximum height of 0.85m at its south-west end, decreasing to the north-east, following the natural slope of the subsoil. It was built of small to medium stones and earth placed against the subsoil face and held in place by a revetment of larger stones placed in roughly horizontal courses at the lower level. The smaller stones and earth had been placed first, and the larger, revetting stones last.

At its north-east end, context 1118 turned to the south-east and continued in a straight line as a lower bank (context 1116) of similar construction. Unlike context 1118, however, this feature stood slightly above the level of the subsoil to the north. Its maximum height was 0.50m, at its junction with context 1118, and it became slighter towards the south-east end.

The eastern side of the complex was defined by a slight stone bank (context 1126) running in an arc from the south-east end of context 1116 around to the south-east corner of the structure. This feature ran along relatively level ground, proud of the subsoil surface and immediately beneath modern ground level. Consequently, it had been badly plough-damaged and spread; in some places only patches of the bank survived, and its average height was around 0.2m. At its southern end it was only 0.4m wide.

The stone platform The south end of Bank 1126 joined onto the east end of a platform 8.5m long built mainly of large, flat-topped stones (context 1105), which formed the south side of the complex. The south side of this platform had a straight edge, while its northern edge was much more irregular.

A line of medium to large stones (context 1121) ran from east to west, oblique to the north face of the platform. The west end of this terminated in an irregular patch of cobbles, which appeared to return to fill a hollow in the face of context 1105. A similar patch of cobbles filled the gap between the east end of contexts 1121 and 1105. This feature appeared to

form a secondary extension or modification to the main part of the platform.

Two large stone artefacts were found within the banks and platform. A large hexagonal stone 0.34m in diameter (SF 99; see [illus 19](#) in [Section 4.2](#)) had two flat faces, each with a shallow central depression. This object had been built into the platform (1105). SF 100 (see [illus 20](#) in [Section 4.2](#)), a large polygonal stone with a deep conical bowl and two smaller flanking holes in its flat upper surface, was found upside down within context 1103.

The ramp The south-west corner of the structure was occupied by a long, shallow ramp passing through a gap approximately 3m wide, between the west end of the platform and context 1112. The ramp ran north-eastwards into the interior of the hollow, and the metalling of its surface (1106) had a high proportion of larger, rough stone blocks and only a few areas of small pebbles.

The fills of the hollow There were two different primary fills in the hollow. A small area of dark green-brown silty loam (1129, not illustrated) had accumulated within the north-east corner of the base of the feature, overlying the base of the eastern stone bank (1126). This deposit contained an inclusion of crunchy black nodules, some of which were shattered. Charcoal was also recovered and provided a date of 2020 ± 50 (70 BC). In the remainder of the hollow, the primary fill was a thin, distinctive layer of pale silvery sandy silt (1130, not illustrated), which covered the whole of the lower part of the metalled surface and in places lapped over the edge of the stone banks. A single sherd of prehistoric pottery was recovered from this deposit (SF 97). This was overlain in the southern half of the hollow by a very dark greyish brown silty loam (context 1102, not illustrated) up to 0.2m thick, containing two sherds of prehistoric pottery (SFs 88 & 91; see [illus 27](#) in [Section 5.1.3](#)) and a small fragment of burnt bone (SF 96).

The whole complex as described above was covered by a deep accumulation of colluvial deposits. The lower element of this (context 1120) was a very dark grey clay loam with reddish mottling towards the top of the deposit. This graded upwards into a dark reddish-brown sandy silty loam (1101), which became much sandier closer to the modern ground surface. These colluvial deposits filled the entire hollow, covering the stone structures, and directly underlay the modern ploughsoil.

The upper part of the colluvium was partly removed by machine, leaving the lower 0.25m of context 1101 and the whole of context 1120 to be removed by hand. This hand excavation produced two sherds of Iron Age pottery (SFs 87 & 89; see [illus 27](#) in [Section 5.1.3](#)) from context 1101 and a single sherd from context 1120.

The cairn A small cairn (1117, not illustrated) was encountered within the thickness of the upper

colluvial deposit (1101). At the core of this cairn was a single massive boulder, 3m long and oval in plan, with a curved upper surface and flat base. Around it had been placed a quantity of stones of the same type found in the stone banks. This cairn most likely relates to medieval/post-medieval field clearance of stones brought up by the plough from the underlying structure.

Discussion

The Maybury structure is very unusual and comparison with similar sites is difficult. It does not compare well with scooped cobble structures such as those excavated at St Germain's (Alexander & Watkins 1998) and Port Seton (Haselgrove & McCullagh 2000) and it is difficult to see how the structure could have been roofed. The nearest comparable structures have been excavated at Easter Kinnear in north-east Fife by Stephen Driscoll (Driscoll 1997). Morphologically, one of these sites, excavated at Hawkhill, was similar to the Maybury example, with a stone-lined circular scoop and a ramped entrance from the south. The walls were constructed of rough boulders and the floor was consistently rough. The main contrast was that the structure at Easter Hawkhill was much smaller, measuring approximately 9m by 8m, and had been deliberately backfilled. Other scooped stone-lined buildings were also identified at Easter Kinnear but none of the others compared so strikingly with the Maybury example. Interpretation was difficult at the Easter Kinnear sites as little evidence for function was retrieved. However, as the floors were roughly finished and there was no evidence for a hearth, a storage function was assigned to these. It was also suggested that they functioned as cellars for timber buildings. Chronologically, it is believed that the group of Easter Kinnear structures formed a 'hamlet' that was occupied for several centuries, possibly up to the medieval period. An attempt was made to identify further examples of these monuments from cropmark evidence in Fife (Fletcher 1993). Nine comparable sites were identified at South Friarton (NO42 NW68), Burnside (NO42 NE45), West Third (NO41 NE17), Newbridge of Ceres (NO41 SW17), Monimail (NO31 SW54), Esky Loch (NO42 NW56), Western Friarton (NO 42 NW64), Kirktonbarns (NO42 NW00) and Forgan (NO42 NW46). The largest group of scooped

structures was identified at South Friarton, where 18 were noted, indicating a substantial or long-lived settlement. It has been tentatively suggested that these settlements are the precursor to the fermtoun.

No evidence was recovered for any superstructure at Maybury and interpretation of the original form and function of the structure is difficult. If the structure served as a cellar for a large circular timber structure, massive timbers would have been required to found such a building and these would surely have left a mark on the archaeological record. Again no evidence was identified for a hearth or for the general detritus that would be expected from domestic habitation. Therefore it seems unlikely that the site served a domestic function. This would leave either an industrial or ritual function, neither of which can be proved nor disproved with the available evidence. The location of the site next to the stream and that fact that it may have had standing water in it may point to an industrial function.

Dating for the Maybury example was restricted to a single radiocarbon date from the primary fill of the interior of the structure, which places the site in the Iron Age [170 BC (95.4%) 80 AD] 170 cal BC to 80 cal AD at 2-sigma (GU-1174). A fragment of possible Dark-age pottery (see *illus 21* in *Section 5.1.1*) was recovered from the topsoil in this area. However, as the fragment did not come from a secure archaeological context, it could not be related to the excavated features.

3.2.6 Area U

During the evaluation, a number of agricultural features likely to be of medieval or later date had been identified in Trial Trench 14. Several of these had overlain a stone-filled linear feature aligned north-east to south-west, which was seen as a possible structure. An irregular excavation area of approximately 280sq m was opened and this feature was traced to both ends of the excavated area. It now seems unlikely to be structural, and is more likely to be a drain. Post-medieval green-glazed pottery was found in its fill. No other significant features were recognized.

4 Lithic Artefacts *by Alan Saville*

4.1 Struck lithic artefacts

A small collection of 17 artefacts was recovered from a variety of contexts. Few, if any, of the artefacts are likely to be contemporary with these contexts, in which they are probably residual. [Table 2](#) gives the typology and raw material of the struck artefacts and [Table 3](#) summarizes their contexts.

None of the artefact types is clearly diagnostic of period, but a very wide chronological range is almost certainly represented. There are two unretouched bladelets, one of grey-green chert (SF 6, topsoil), the other of flint (SF 83, Area C, context 1013), which could both be of Mesolithic date, while the edge-trimmed flake (SF 44, Area B, context 543) is an incomplete blade perhaps more likely to be Neolithic. One of the miscellaneous retouched pieces (SF 45, Area B, context 589) is a fresh flint

flake with denticulate scraper-like retouch at the distal end and could be of Middle Bronze Age date. Another of the (?flint) unretouched flakes (SF 10, context 046) could possibly be Mesolithic, as could the core rejuvenation flake (SF 86, Area C, context 1013) from the platform edge of a flint bladelet core. While none of these attributions is certain, it can at least be concluded that this is not a homogeneous assemblage.

The raw material, both numerically and by weight, is predominantly flint of mixed colour and type, with grey-green chert the only other significant material exploited. Two pieces are so heavily burnt that it is difficult to say if they are of flint or chert, and a further two unretouched flint flakes and one flint miscellaneous retouched piece have been burnt.

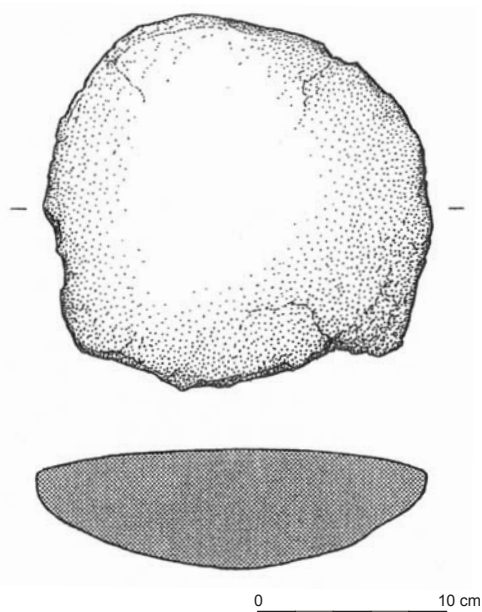
That some actual knapping was taking place in the vicinity is attested by the fragmentary core

Table 2 Typology and raw material of the struck lithic artefacts

	Grey-green chert	Purple chert	Flint	Flint or chert, burnt	Quartz	Total nos	Weight in grams
Unretouched flakes	4	1	4	1	1	11	20.3
Core fragment	–	–	–	1	–	1	1.6
Edge-trimmed flake	–	–	1	–	–	1	1.9
Miscellaneous retouched pieces	1	–	3	–	–	4	20.1
Total numbers	5	1	8	2	1	17	
Weight in grams	11.7	1.7	26.5	3.1	0.9		43.9

Table 3 Struck lithic artefacts by context

Context	Unret. flakes	Core fragment	Edge-trim flake	Misc. retouched	Total
Topsoil	3	–	–	–	3
25	1	–	–	–	1
37	1	–	–	–	1
46	1	–	–	–	1
50	1	–	–	–	1
103	–	–	–	1	1
104	–	1	–	–	1
520	1	–	–	–	1
543	–	–	1	–	1
560	1	–	–	–	1
589	–	–	–	1	1
1001	–	–	–	1	1
1007	–	–	–	1	1
1013	2	–	–	–	2
Total	11	1	1	4	17



Illus 17 Quernstone (SF 79)

(SF 19, context 104) and the presence of two core platform rejuvenation flakes, one of flint (SF 86, Area C, context 1013), the other of grey-green chert (SF 25, topsoil), among the unretouched flakes. However, the very low numbers of struck artefacts as a whole indicate no intensity to this knapping, and no significant conclusions can be reached on the basis of their presence.

4.2 Coarse stone artefacts

Four modified coarse stone items were recovered. These are described separately and each one is illustrated.

Quernstone (SF 79, Area B, context 760, *illus 17*). This small quernstone of diorite, green-grey-buff in colour, is broken at one end and has several cracks, perhaps the result of heat damage. It has an oval planform and a basically semi-circular cross-section, though the upper surface is slightly convex. The quernstone has been shaped by pecking and the upper surface is worn smooth by use. Length 200mm; maximum width 205mm; thickness 50–80mm. Weight 3.9kg.

As Ballin Smith has discussed (*Ballin Smith 1994*, 204), small plano-convex quernstones of this type are somewhat problematic in terms of function. They are too large to be a hand-held upper stone or rubber, but as a lower stone it is difficult to envisage the purpose of the abrasive use which would produce a convex surface.

Stone block with two opposed hollows (SF 38, Area B, context 506, *illus 18*). An irregular block of sandstone (grey-buff-brown colour) with diametrically opposed hollows or cups pecked into the upper

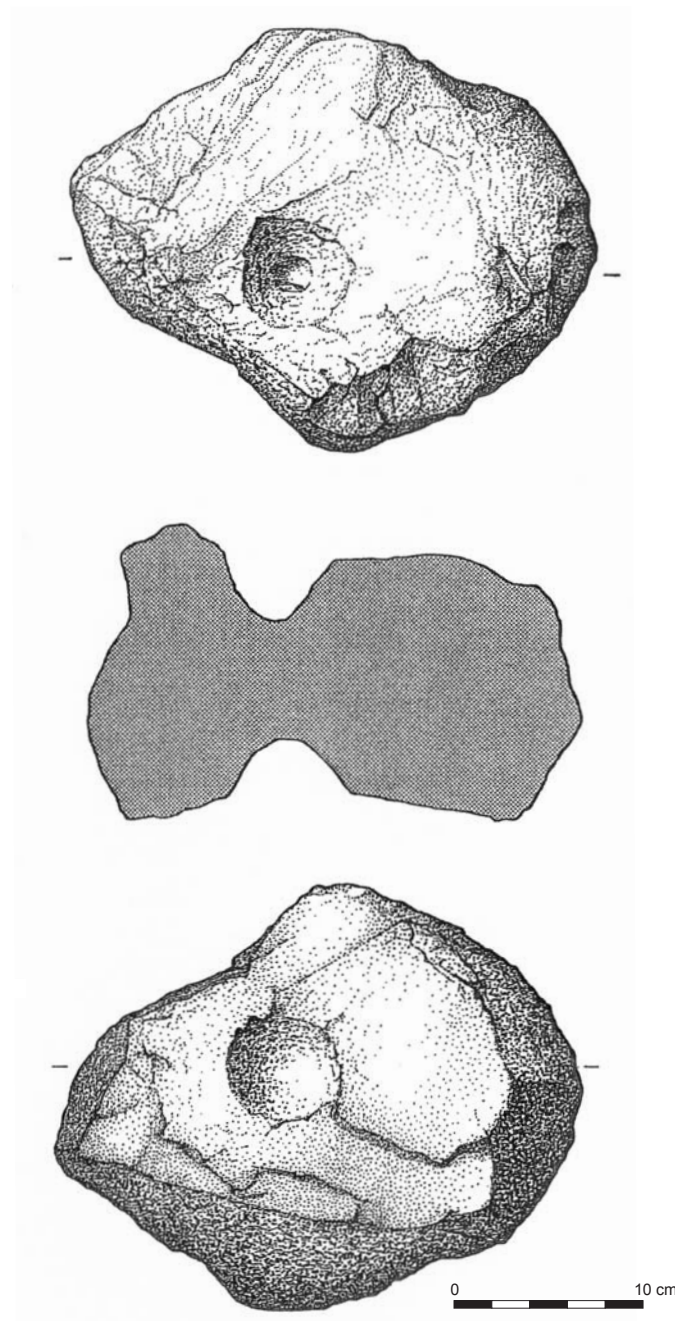
and lower flattish surfaces. The hollows are conical in profile, one 60mm diameter and 35mm deep, the other 59mm in diameter and 30mm deep. The block is approximately 280mm by 215mm in planform and 145mm deep/thick. The weight is approximately 9kg. The interiors of the hollows are rough and show no signs of use. There is some shaping of the block by pecking, including the dished surface with the lower hollow in the illustration, while other facets appear unpecked and the result of breakage.

Given the character of this piece, and its association with a Beaker vessel in a pit, an interpretation as a double cup-marked stone is a distinct possibility. In this case a reasonably close parallel (though with shallower cups) would be provided by the double cup-marked sandstone block from the mound of a round barrow at Kilburn in North Yorkshire (*Kinnes & Longworth 1985*, 90). Alternatively, it is possible that the two hollows relate to an intended but unfinished perforation. The reason for the perforation being abandoned could be that the block broke into an unsuitable form. The most obvious purpose for shaping and perforating a stone like this would, in that case, be to produce an upper quernstone, but this would assume the block was originally much larger and capable of being appropriately shaped, which is now impossible to determine, and would also imply a chronological mixture of Beaker and later artefacts within this feature, which is unlikely on stratigraphic grounds.

Stone block with a shallow hollow (SF 99, Area F, context 1105, *illus 19*). A roughly cylindrical block of an igneous porphyritic rock (buff-brown with red amphibole and green olivine phenocrysts) has been pecked to shape. The upper flat surface (illustrated) is smooth and has been used for some abrasive purpose, presumably grinding. It is flat apart from a small central dimple, 20mm in diameter and of maximum depth 2mm. The lower surface is less flat and has an approximately central shallow hollow of maximum diameter 79mm and depth 17mm. The surface within the hollow is smooth but with no trace of rotary motion. The block is roughly 320–350mm in diameter and 170mm deep/thick. The weight is approximately 38kg.

The lower hollow is obviously deliberate, the upper dimple could conceivably be the result of damage. Because the lower hollow is worn smooth it cannot be regarded as the beginning of an attempted perforation and its purpose, as does that of this object as a whole, remains obscure.

Stone block with large hollow (SF 100, Area F, context 1103, *illus 20*). A large block of sandstone, buff-brown in colour, is irregular in planform but has a flattish upper surface. This surface has a large U- to V-shaped hollow 200–210mm in diameter and 145mm deep. The hollow has been formed by coarse pecking, the marks from which are clearly visible for most of its depth. The bottom 20mm or so of the hollow are worn completely smooth, but without any indication of rotary motion. Adjacent to the large hollow (both at 30mm from its edge) are two small



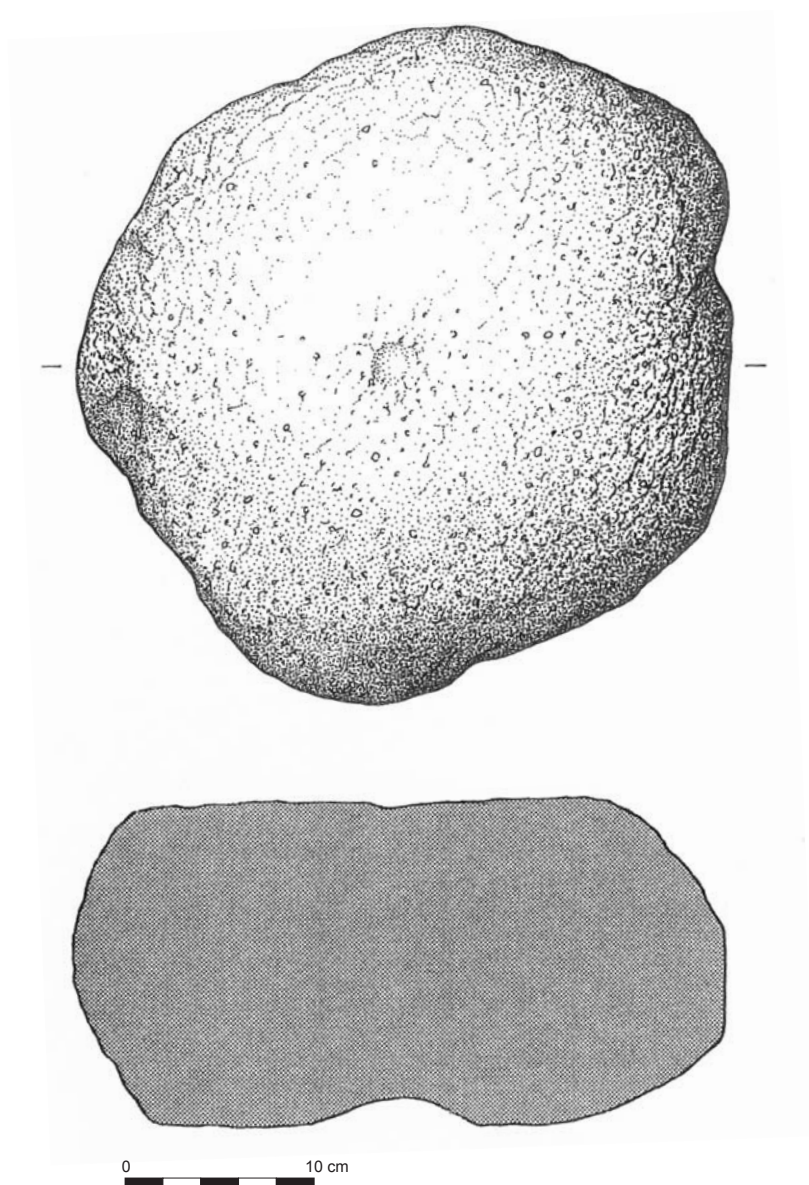
Illus 18 Stone block with two opposed hollows (SF 38)

drilled hollows, one 34mm in diameter and 27mm deep, the other 31mm diameter and 27mm deep. The interiors of these holes are worn smooth. The distance between the two small hollows is 140mm centre to centre. The opposite surface or base is partly convex but otherwise irregular, and the block does not sit upright with the hollowed surface uppermost. The flattish surface with the hollows is approximately 470mm by 410mm, and the block is 260mm deep/thick. The weight is approximately 57kg.

Because there is no indication of rotary wear in the main hollow this cannot be a socket or pivot stone, and it seems more likely to be a kind of mortar.

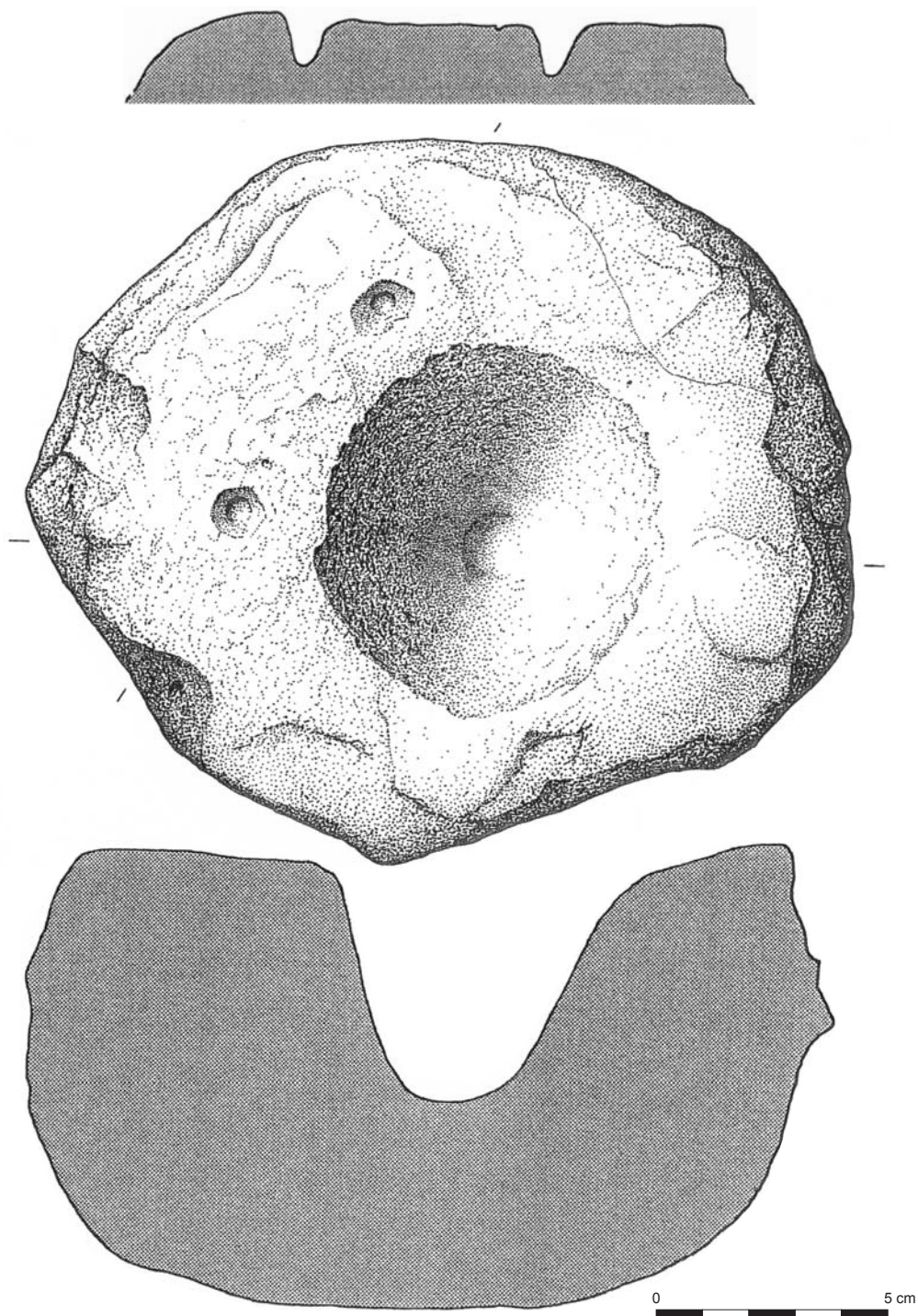
However, the base of the large hollow is too narrow for it to have served as a grain mortar, for which a shallower or more cylindrical hollow is required. The two smaller holes suggest the possibility of being the seating for a cover or flap of some kind for the main hollow.

None of the four coarse stone objects is in itself conclusively diagnostic as to period, though in general terms the small, plain quernstone is unlikely to post-date the Iron Age and the double cup-marked stone would be appropriate to a Late Neolithic/Bronze Age context. There are no positive indications of metal tools having been used to work these stones and a prehistoric attribution is certainly most likely,



Illus 19 Stone block with hollow (SF 99)

though later manufacture cannot be entirely ruled out for those examples where the contextual association is ambiguous. The apparent absence from the site of the hammerstones used to work these stones, or the grinders used on the two with abraded surfaces, may hint that the contexts in which they were found bear no relation to their original manufacture and/or use.



Illus 20 Possible mortar (SF 100)

5 The Pottery

5.1 Pottery of prehistoric and indeterminate date *by Alison Sheridan & Catherine McGill*

This was found in Areas B, C and F, and comprised:

- a plough-truncated, undecorated Early Bronze Age Beaker from Area B (SF 28)
- one near-intact coarse plain bucket-shaped pot from Area B (SF 40) of probable Late Bronze Age date (early 1st millennium BC)
- 35 sherds and several fragments from Areas B, C and F, mostly small and undiagnostic, but probably ranging from Early Neolithic to Iron Age date
- fragments of daub, of probable Iron Age date (SF 3), from Area B.

5.1.1 Area B

Neolithic

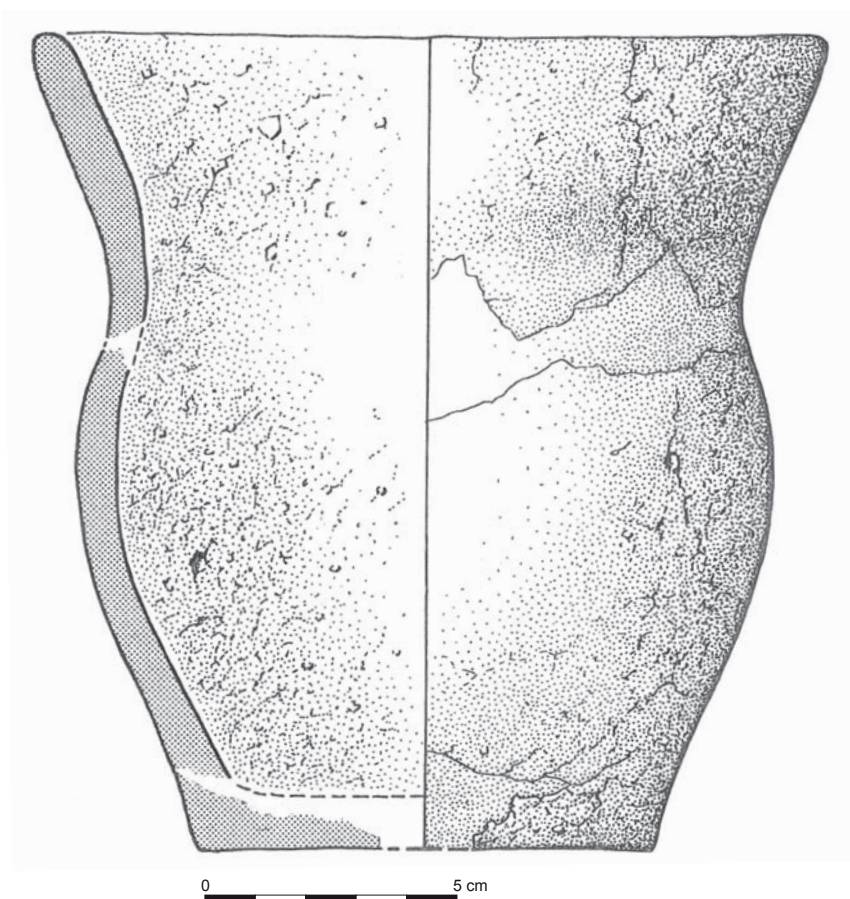
Four small body sherds (of which two conjoin to form a piece 45mm by 33mm), together with a fragment and a crumb, from between one and three vessels (SFs 54, 55 & 59; not *illus*). From fill of Pit 673 (context 649). All slightly abraded. These near-featureless body sherds would be hard to date on their own, but the fact that they come from a pit that has produced two fourth millennium radiocarbon dates (GU-11071 and GU-11072, 3640–3360 and 3950–3660 cal BC, respectively) suggests that they are Neolithic. The burnished finish, albeit crudely executed, on both surfaces of SF 55 and on the interior of SF 54 is consistent with an attribution to the Carinated Bowl ceramic tradition (*Sheridan 1997; Sheridan 2003a*). However, given the discrepancy between the dates and the otherwise undistinguished nature of the sherds, it is impossible to say whether they are of the earliest, ‘traditional’ kind of Carinated Bowl pottery or the later, ‘modified’ variety. Linear marks on both surfaces of these two sherds relate to the process of smoothing and burnishing, and do not represent deliberate decoration. The sherds have wall thicknesses up to 9mm. The conjoining sherds SF 55 and the sherd SF 59 are black throughout; the SF 54 sherd has a black interior and core and a pinkish-brown exterior. SF 55 has hackly fracture surfaces and uneven exterior and interior surfaces, interrupted by the stone temper inclusions. The latter are sparse (with a density of *c* 5%), rounded to angular, up to *c* 4mm × 3mm in size, and of more than one kind of stone. They include a black and white speckled crystalline stone, which may also be present in SFs 54 and 59.

Beaker (SF 28; *illus* 21; *illus* 22) From fill of truncated pit (context 507); associated with cup-marked stone (SF 38). Sherds from the rim, belly and base of an undecorated Beaker; much of one side is missing, through plough damage. The pot was tilting when discovered, but had probably been deposited upright. It contained densely packed sediment from the pit fill. The estimated height, rim diameter and base diameters are *c* 160mm, 158mm and *c* 92mm, respectively; the wall thickness ranges between 5.5 and 10.5mm. The rim is gently rounded; the neck short and splaying; the belly high and slightly globular; and the base flat on its exterior. (Its interior base shape cannot be determined.) The exterior and upper part of the interior surfaces are a light orange-brown, darkened in places by the recent application of a consolidant; the lower part of the interior is a medium-brown; and the core is blackish, indicating that the pot had been fired rapidly. There are no traces of any former contents. The surfaces have been smoothed and slipped, but fragments of the stone temper protrude, especially through the interior surface. The fabric tends to spall and has a hackly fracture. Inclusions occupy 10–15% of the body and consist of angular fragments of a blackish-brown crystalline stone up to 6mm by 8mm in size. Overall, the pot is neither markedly fine nor markedly coarse in appearance.

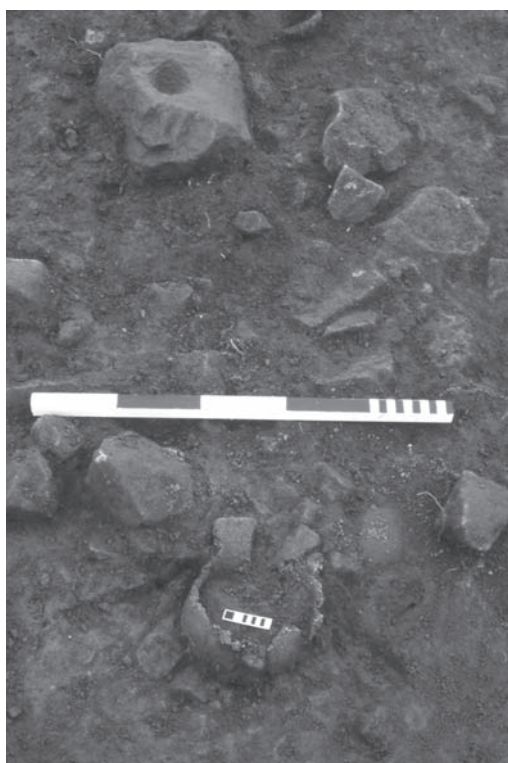
In shape, the Beaker is comparable with Clarke’s ‘Developed Northern’ (N2 or N3) types, and with a few ‘Northern/North Rhine’ (N/NR) examples (*Clarke 1970*). According to Lanting & van der Waals’ scheme, it can be ascribed to their ‘step 4’ (*Lanting & van der Waals 1972*).

Pottery of definite and probable Late Bronze Age date

SF 40 Near-complete, undecorated, roughly bucket-shaped coarseware pot (*illus* 23; *illus* 24). From fill of shallow pit (context 547), cut into the top of – and thus post-dating – the trackway; there were no associated finds. The pit is close to two others that also post-date the trackway (contexts 758 & 712), with radiocarbon dates of 1130–830 and 980–800 cal BC at 2-sigma, respectively (GU-11069 & GU-11073). Just over a third of the rim is missing, and below the fracture edge a large part of the exterior surface has spalled off. The pot had been deposited upright, and it contained a hard-packed deposit of sediment from the pit fill, including some sizeable pebbles; there were no traces of any original contents. The height, rim and base diameters and wall thickness are 143mm, 158mm, *c* 100mm and 10–13.5mm, respectively. The pot has a squared-off, internally-bevelled rim and a body that swells out slightly (and unevenly) from below the rim before narrowing (again unevenly) towards the base, forming a slight and discon-



Illus 21 Beaker (SF 28)

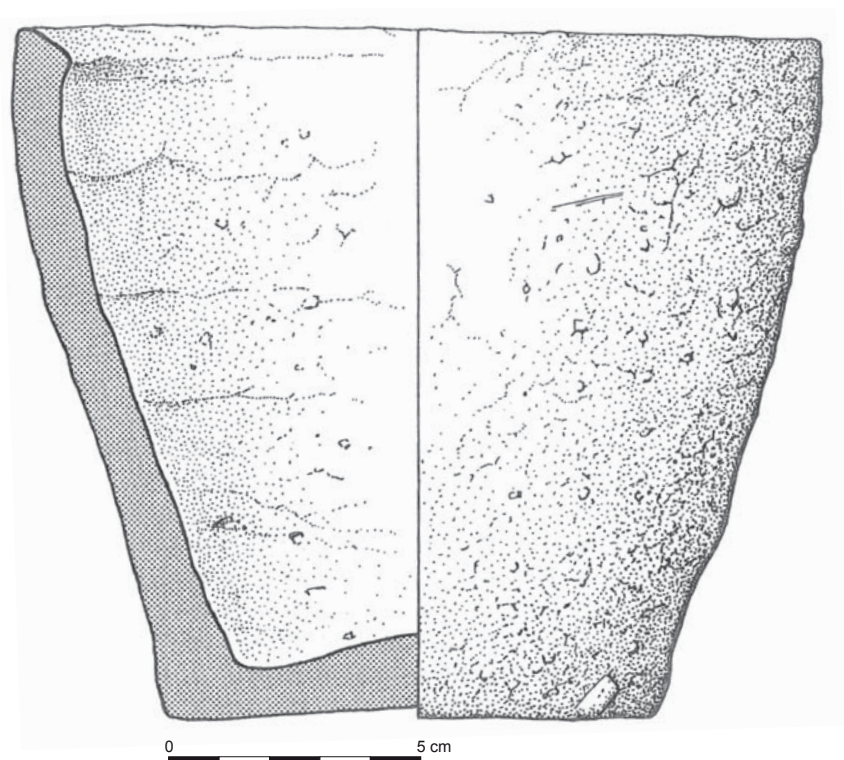


Illus 22 Beaker (SF 28) and stone object (SF 38)

tinuous pedestal immediately above the base. The latter is slightly dished on the outside and convex on the inside. Although covered with a thick slip, the surfaces are very uneven, with roughly smoothed-down coil joints clearly visible on the interior surface, and many grits protruding through the surfaces. The exterior, which has hairline cracks, is a mottled medium and dark brown; the core and interior are blackish. The pot has fairly abundant (c 15–20%) angular and sub-angular fragments, mostly of the black and white speckled crystalline stone as previously noted in SF 55; they range in size up to at least 17.5mm by 13.5mm, and their angularity indicates that the stone had been deliberately crushed and added as temper.

SFs 68, 78, 80 & 81 Rimsherd and three body sherds of similarly coarse pottery, probably from two vessels (*illus 25*). From the fill of a post-hole (context 826) cut into the fill of Pit 828. The rim (SF 68, estimated diameter c 200mm; wall thickness c 10mm) is flat and has a shallow bevel; below it, the body curves inwards. The surfaces, though slipped, are uneven, and the sherd edges are slightly abraded. Inclusions are sparse (<5%) and small (up to 4mm × 2mm), and are of the speckled crystalline stone. Most of the external surface had spalled off from the body sherds, but where it survives the wall thickness is 13mm. The interior had been slipped or wet-smoothed. Inclusions comprise sparse but fairly large (up to 8mm × 5mm) angular and subangular fragments of black and brownish stone.

SF 64 Small, very slightly abraded rimsherd (*illus 26*) from pit fill (context 552, Pit 758), post-dating the



Illus 23 Bronze Age bucket-shaped pot (SF 40)

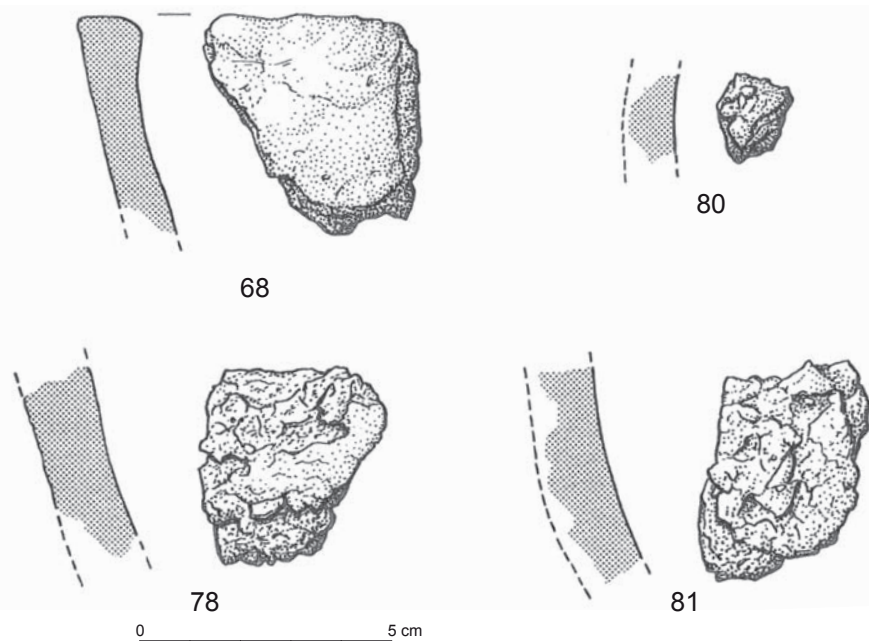


Illus 24 Bucket-shaped pot (SF 40) under excavation

trackway. Charcoal from this context produced the aforementioned date of 1130–890 cal BC (GU-11069), and this provides the basis for dating this sherd to the Late Bronze Age; otherwise, it could pass for Early Neolithic carinated pottery, although its small size (28mm × 12mm) renders any definitive dating on stylistic grounds alone impossible. From a fairly fine-textured pot, with a wall thickness of 9mm and hackly fracture surfaces; the sherd is too small to allow diameter estimation. The rim is very slightly rolled over and flattish. The surfaces have been smoothed to a low sheen; the exterior is pinkish-brown, the core greyish and the interior grey-brown. Inclusions

comprise sparse (<5%), fairly small (up to 4mm × 2mm), angular fragments of the speckled crystalline stone.

SF 65 Featureless body sherd (not illus) from the fill of one of the putative hearths near the southern edge of the trackway (context 718, Hearth 712). As with SF 64, the attribution of this sherd to the Late Bronze Age is based solely on the radiocarbon date of 980–800 cal BC at 2-sigma (GU-11073) obtained from charcoal in this fill. The sherd measures 35mm × 32mm, with a wall thickness of up to 9mm; the surfaces are uneven, and there are traces of a thin blackish encrustation on the exterior. Inclusions are



Illus 25 Rimsherd and three body sherds of probable Late Bronze Age coarse pottery

hard to discern, being the same grey-brown colour as the fabric, but appear fairly sparse.

Pottery and daub of probable Iron Age date from in and near the 'banjo' feature

SF 1 Rimsherd from a large flat-rimmed pot with an upright neck (*illus 26*) from the surface of the 'banjo' feature (context 009). The rim diameter had been at least 200mm, and the wall thickness 13.5mm. Although slightly uneven, the surfaces had been smoothed and slipped. The exterior and interior are medium brown, the core blackish. The inclusions comprise fragments of angular and sub-angular crushed stone of various kinds up to *c* 10mm × 9mm in size, and with a density of 7–10%; they include the black and white speckly crystalline stone noted in other Maybury Park pottery, as well as a fine-grained blackish stone.

SF 2 Rimsherd from a thinner-walled (*c* 6mm), flat-rimmed pot with upright neck (*illus 26*), from the same context. The rim is club-shaped and too small to permit diameter estimation. The colour varies throughout from pinkish-brown to blackish-brown. Inclusions comprise angular and sub-angular fragments of the speckly crystalline stone along with a fine-grained dark brown stone, up to 7mm × 5.5mm, at a density of 10–15%.

SF 3 Lump of daub in several pieces (not illustrated, context 012), found adjacent to the 'banjo' feature. Soft, pinkish-brown, virtually inclusion-free clay. On one side they bear impressions of the ?wattlework structure against which the daub had been applied.

Sherds of indeterminate date

These comprise a rimsherd, a base sherd and five featureless body sherds.

SF 41 A small, abraded rimsherd (from colluvium, context 543; *illus 26*) from a fairly fine flat-rimmed pot. The wall thickness is *c* 6mm; the surfaces brown and the core black. Inclusions are sparse (<5%) but may include the speckly crystalline stone.

SF 29 A very abraded basal sherd (from topsoil, context 401, not illustrated) from a fine, vessel of soft fabric.

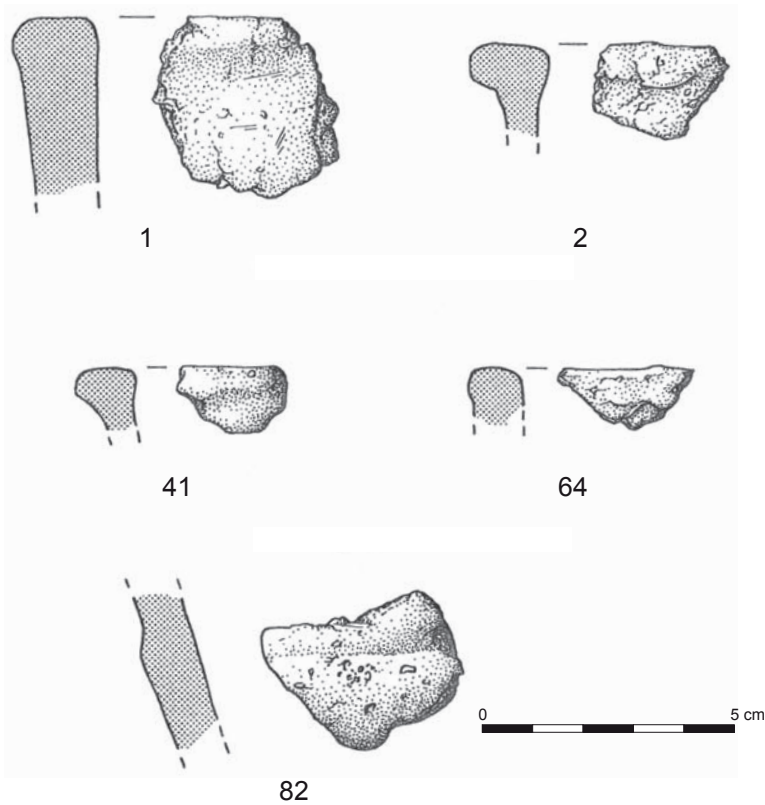
SF 20 (not illustrated, from Trench 8 extension); **SF 30** (from topsoil); **SF 36** (from colluvium, context 543); **SF 49** (from pit fill, context 550); and **SF 52** (from stone-lined Pit 681) are featureless body sherds from coil-built pots. Little can be said about them other than that all but SF 36 are abraded to varying degrees, and that SF 36 contains fragments of the speckly crystalline stone.

5.1.2 Area C

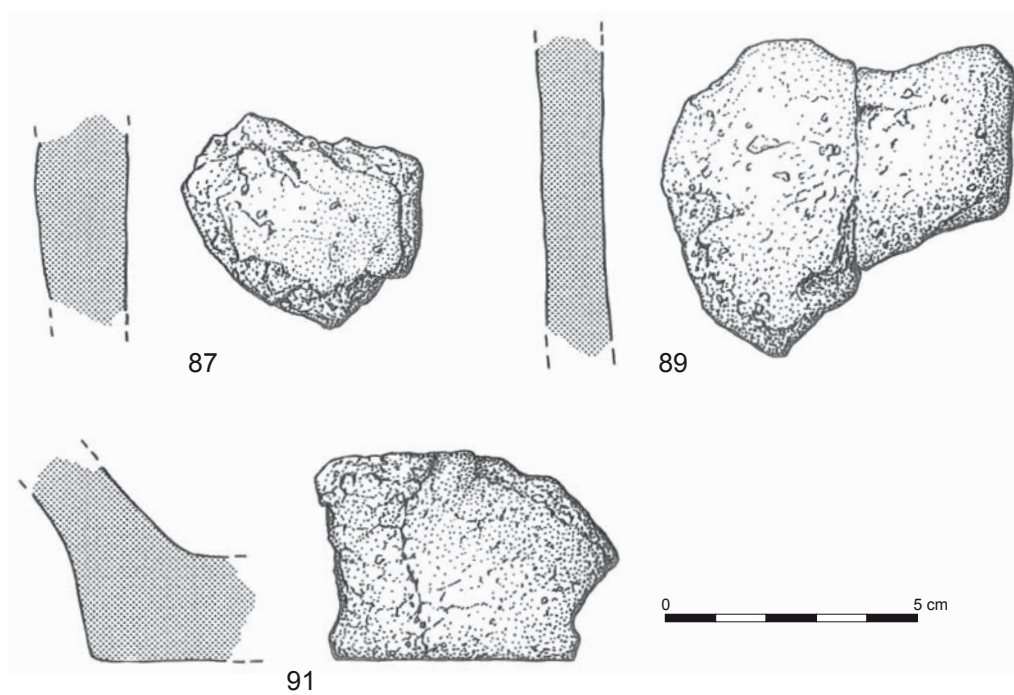
Probably and possibly Early Neolithic

SF 82 Gently carinated sherd from a carinated bowl of probable Early Neolithic date (*illus 26*); stray find (context 1000). The sherd is 40mm × 32.5mm, with a wall thickness of 10–12mm and an estimated carination diameter of *c* 170mm. Its edges and interior surface have been abraded; the fabric is fairly soft. The exterior is smooth, but pitted where inclusions have fallen out. The exterior is black, the core and interior mid-brown. Inclusions are sparse (5–7%) and small (up to 3mm × 2mm), varying in shape from round to angular; they include speckled crystalline grits similar to those seen in the other Maybury Park pottery.

SFs 69, 71, 72, 74, 76 Five featureless body sherds, with wall thicknesses between 8mm and 11.5mm, abraded to varying degrees from the base of the colluvium (not illustrated, context 1002). SF 69 and SF 76 may belong to the same pot – a smooth-surfaced vessel, with tiny patches of blackish encrustation on the exterior surface



Illus 26 Probable Late Bronze Age property



Illus 27 Probable Iron Age Pottery from Area F

of SF 76 and inclusions, up to 8mm × 6mm in size, of the speckled crystalline stone. Although they have no diagnostic features, an Early Neolithic date cannot be ruled out.

5.1.3 Area F

Pottery of Iron Age (and possibly later) date from the stone structure

Sherds of four pots were found at various depths in the fills of the hollow.

SFs 87 & 89 (context 1101); **SF 91** (context 1102)

Three soft, abraded body sherds (of which two are now conjoined) and a wall-and-base sherd from a large, undecorated, thick-walled coarseware pot (*illus 27*). The pot had a flat, pedestalled base above which the wall splayed. The estimated base diameter is c 200mm; wall and base thicknesses are 11.5–17.5mm and 21mm, respectively. The largest sherd is 75mm × 60mm. The exterior surface is a mottled orange-brown, pale and dark grey and black; the core blackish; the interior orange. The surfaces are uneven, and SF 91 has hairline cracks on both its interior and exterior. Inclusions are relatively sparse (c 7%) and mainly comprise angular and sub-angular fragments of the speckled crystalline stone up to 5mm × 4.5mm. Some small reddish, iron-rich(?) inclusions are also present in SF 87.

SF 97 Body sherd (not illustrated, context 1130), 50mm × 35mm, from just above the base of a coarse, flat-based pot, from the basal silt. The sherd had broken along a coil joint line at the junction of the base and wall; the latter rises with a very slight splay from the base, suggesting that the pot had probably been bucket-shaped. The pot's estimated diameter at this point is c 160mm; wall thickness is c 12mm. The exterior is a purplish-brown, and the core and interior are black. The fabric is hard and the surfaces slightly uneven, with grits protruding. Inclusions comprise sub-angular and angular fragments of the speckled crystalline stone up to c 7mm × 6.5mm, at a density of 10–15%.

SF 88 Heavily abraded fragment, 16.5mm × 13 × 9mm (not illustrated, context 1102). Mottled orange and dark grey throughout. Contains one inclusion of the speckled crystalline stone.

SF 93 Burnt and abraded curving body sherd, 37mm × 34mm × 10mm (not illustrated, context 1120). Buff-orange throughout, with a dark grey encrustation on the exterior. Soft, fine, no inclusions visible.

5.1.4 Discussion

This small assemblage reflects the chronological diversity of the activities attested at Maybury Park; and the recurrent presence of a particular kind of stone as temper, in pottery from different periods, suggests that most, if not all, of the pottery had probably been made locally. (Geological sourcing of the stone would, however, be required to verify this.)

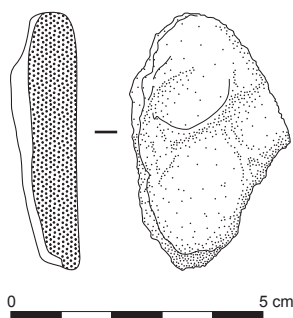
The ten small sherds of probable and possible Neolithic date from Areas B and C are not particu-

larly informative as regards the nature of Neolithic activities at Maybury Park; but the carination sherd SF 82 appears to belong to the Early Neolithic Carinated Bowl tradition, whose dating is consistent with the dates (GU-11071–2) obtained from the fill of the oval Pit 673, which also produced Carinated Bowl pottery (see [Sheridan 1997](#) and [Sheridan 2003a](#) on the dating of this pottery in Scotland).

The Beaker is scarcely more informative as to its circumstances of deposition – and the severe plough-truncation of the large oval pit in which it was found hinders interpretation. The size and shape of the pit would be consistent with it being a grave pit, but no trace of human bone was found; indeed, the presence of several large lumps of charcoal adjacent to the Beaker is puzzling. Furthermore, Clarke has pointed out that undecorated Beakers are relatively rare in funerary contexts ([Clarke 1970](#), appendix 7.20). Unfortunately, it is not currently possible to allocate the Beaker to a date range narrower than c 2600–1800 BC ([Kinnes *et al* 1991](#)) – a situation that may eventually be remedied through new dating programmes such as the one currently underway for the National Museums of Scotland. However, the date of 2310–1950 cal BC at 2-sigma (GU-11070), obtained from a disturbed hearth around 19m to the south-east, is further evidence for Beaker period activity and might indirectly provide a date for the Beaker in the pit.

The flat-based coarse vessels from Area B are of particular interest because, despite their superficial homogeneity, they appear to span at least a millennium. Four pots (detailed above) probably date to c 1000–800 BC (in line with the radiocarbon dates obtained from Features 552 and 718 in Area B, ie GU-11069 and GU-11073, respectively), while the pottery from the 'banjo' feature in Area B and from the structure in Area F is likely to date from the centuries around the time of Christ (in line with the date GU-11074 from Area F).

The flat-based and flat-rimmed undecorated coarseware of the Bronze and Iron Ages is notoriously difficult to date on stylistic grounds and has been the subject of some debate. In his discussion of the late second to early first millennium BC assemblage from Ormiston Farm, Fife, Halliday ([Halliday 1988](#)) proposed the abandonment of Coles & Taylor's term 'Flat-rimmed Ware' ([Coles & Taylor 1970](#), 97–8) to describe this kind of pottery, as it implies an unwarranted unity of tradition. The same could be said for the term 'bucket urn' to refer to flat-rimmed coarse pots from Bronze Age funerary contexts, whose currency appears to span up to a millennium from c 1700 BC to at least 800 BC ([Sheridan 2003b](#), 210–13). The formal simplicity of flat-based undecorated coarseware has led several commentators (eg [McLellan 1992](#)) to suggest that it is unlikely to show chronological or regional patterning. However, as Halliday and others (eg [Cool 1982](#); [Burgess 1995](#)) have suggested, this may not be the case. This position is vindicated by the doctoral research carried out by one of us (CMcG), which has succeed-



Illus 28 Possible Post-Roman pottery

ing in teasing out some such patterning, however subtle.

The four probable Late Bronze Age pots can be paralleled in shape, size and fabric among funerary and domestic pottery dating to between the 13th and 9th centuries BC. This includes:

- 1 The assemblage relating to secondary, funerary activity at Old Keig recumbent stone circle in Aberdeenshire (Childe 1933, 44; Childe 1934, 386–8), recently dated to 2820 ± 50 BP (1130–830 cal BC at 2-sigma, GrA-21696: Sheridan 2003b).
- 2 The urn from Duff House, Banff, which looks like a slenderer version of Maybury pot SF 40 and is dated, through its associated gold jewellery, to around the 13th century BC (Eogan 1994, 75–7).
- 3 The Late Bronze Age domestic assemblage from Myrehead, Falkirk, dating to between 1260 and 810 cal BC (2825 ± 85 BP, GU-1608; 2830 ± 60 BP, 1190–830 cal BC at 2-sigma, GU-1609: Barclay 1983, SFs 6, 9 & 10; cf in particular SF 6 with Maybury SF 68).
- 4 The aforementioned domestic assemblage from Ormiston Farm (Sherriff 1998), dated to 2935 ± 60 BP (1370–940 cal BC at 2-sigma, GU-1669). A further example of coarseware, from Claish, Stirling – albeit coarser in fabric than the Maybury material – has recently been radiocarbon dated to 3005 ± 35 BP (1380–1120 cal BC at 2-sigma, AA-49634: Sheridan 2003a, illus 20).

As for the pottery of probable and possible Iron Age date, the date of 2020 ± 50 BP (170 cal BC–cal AD 80, GU-11074) from the structure in Area F provides the basis for dating this pottery; there is no reason to believe that the sherds in question were residual from an earlier period of activity. The base sherd with its splaying wall (SF 91) invites comparison with a near-complete bucket-shaped pot from Myrehead

(Sheridan 2003a, SF 15), from a context dating to 1885 ± 60 BP (cal BC/AD 0–cal AD 320, GU-1610). As for sherds SF 1 and SF 2 from the ‘banjo’ enclosure in Area B, general similarities in form and fabric are to be found among assemblages such as Traprain Law (eg Curle 1915, figs 11–13; Curle & Cree 1921, fig 13; McGill forthcoming a), Kaimes Hill (Simpson 1969), Cardean (McGill forthcoming b) and the souterrains in Angus and Perth & Kinross (eg Shanzie: McGill 2002; McGill forthcoming c; McGill forthcoming d), so perhaps a date in the late first millennium BC to early first millennium AD can be proposed. Upright-rimmed pots with wall thicknesses comparable to that of SF 1 tend to appear on Late Iron Age settlement sites such as Traprain Law and Enochdhu (RCAHMS 1990).

5.2 Post-Roman pottery by John A Lawson

A tiny buff body sherd (32mm × 14mm × 6mm at its maximum) with a slightly paler oxidized surface. A sandy/gritty fabric rich in quartz inclusions and some unidentified black rock fragments. The quartz varies from opaque to a pinkish brown in colour with the grains varying in size up to c 2mm × 2mm × 4mm. What is almost certainly the exterior surface is decorated with what may possibly be a thin applied c 8mm broad. This strip has been impressed to form what maybe a row of shallow slightly random oval impressions 6mm × 8mm. Due to the small size of the shard it is not possible to ascertain if this decoration is vertical or horizontal. Context 103, Area F, illus 28.

This sherd does not fit within any known Scottish ceramic groupings, being rejected by prehistorians (A Sheridan, pers comm), Romanists (F Hunter, pers comm) and medievalists (G Haggarty, pers comm). This might suggest a possible later first millennium AD date and would benefit from being compared to the Scottish Redware database, and in particular with the Anglian loomweights excavated from South Platt hill near Ratho (Norton & MacSween 1995).

5.3 Post-medieval pottery by Valerie E Dean & John A Lawson

A small assemblage of domestic post-medieval pottery was recovered from areas B, F and U. The assemblage consisted of four sherds of Scottish post-medieval Reduced Ware and three sherds of Scottish post-medieval Oxidized Ware dating to the 16th–17th centuries.

6 The Carbonized Remains by Mhairi Hastie

6.1 Introduction

During the excavations, bulk soil samples and a number of 'special' samples (primarily fragments of charcoal) were taken for palaeo-environmental analysis.

The samples were processed and assessed by Sheila Boardman in 1994. The sample fractions not sorted during the assessment stage were submitted to Headland Archaeology in 2002 for further post-excavation analysis. Plant remains removed from the samples and previously identified by Sheila Boardman were lost during the interim period. Consequently, further analysis could not be carried out on this material.

The following report concentrates on the carbonized plant remains. The summary tables amalgamate the results from the sample assessment as identified by S Boardman (Banks & Boardman 1995), with the carbonized plant remains removed and identified from the available sample fractions not originally sorted during the assessment stage.

A mixture of cereal, weed seeds/fruits, flax seeds and hazelnut shell were recovered from a number of the samples albeit in low quantities. The presence of naked barley, hulled barley and emmer grain is consistent with the prehistoric date for the site indicated by pottery recovered from a number of the archaeological features.

The absence of any high concentrations of cereal remains suggests that most was not charred *in situ*. The plant material recovered is likely to represent the remnants of food/grain burnt during food processing or corn drying that had been reworked and redeposited across the site.

6.2 Results

6.2.1 Distribution

A mixture of carbonized plant remains, including cereal grains, seeds/fruits of wild taxa and one chaff fragment, were recovered, although no samples contained more than 15 identifiable cereal grains.

Seven areas (A, B, C, D, E and U) were excavated during the fieldwork. Carbonized plant remains were recovered from three of these areas – B, C and F – the bulk of which were in Area B.

6.2.2 Cereal remains

The most commonly encountered element was carbonized cereal grain including hulled barley (*Hordeum vulgare*), naked barley (*Hordeum vulgare*

var *nudum*) and wheat tentatively identified as emmer wheat (*Triticum* cf *dicoccum*). In addition, one emmer glume base fragment was recovered from context 698 [Area B: burnt deposit (context 699)] and one barley internode was recovered from Context 1102 [Area F: shallow scoop (context 1130)].

6.2.3 Weed seeds

Small quantities of seeds/fruits of wild taxa were recovered from a number of samples including: *Bilderdykia convolvulus* (black bindweed), *Carex* spp (sedge), cf *Aphanes* sp (parsley piert), *Rumex* spp (dock), *Chenopodium album* (fat hen), *Polygonum* sp (knotgrass), *Spergula arvensis* (corn spurrey), *Stellaria media* (corn marigold), *Brassica* cf *rapa* (white cabbage/mustard) and Gramineae indet (grass family). In addition, one grain and one tuber of *Arrhenatherum* sp (oat-grass) were also recovered.

6.2.4 Potential economic species

Two seeds of cultivated flax (*Linum usitatissimum*) were recovered from context 460 [Area B: burnt deposit (context 715)] and low quantities of hazelnut shell (*Corylus avellana*) were recovered from contexts 547, 649 and 671 (all from Area B).

6.3 Discussion

6.3.1 Concentration and distribution

The quantity of plant remains is low and there is no evidence for any *in situ* burning. In all cases it is unlikely that the plant material relates to the original function of the feature from which they were recovered.

The lack of any obvious conflagration deposits within the excavated areas suggested that the plant remains area likely to be remnants of food or grain burnt during preparation/cooking activities or small-scale corn drying, and then reworked or re-deposited across the site. The slight increase in plant remains, particularly from pit fills in Area B, may suggest that the burnt grain or food debris was being dumped in the pits along with other rubbish.

6.3.2 Plant assemblages

The plant assemblages consisted principally of cereal grain and seeds/fruits of wild taxa with occasional

fragments of charred hazelnut shell and two flax seeds. The recovery of both naked and hulled barley along with emmer grain corresponds well with the archaeological evidence indicating a prehistoric date for the features.

The quantity of weed seeds/fruits and other plant remains recovered was low, limiting the potential for discussion of these remains. The wild taxa present are commonly associated with cultivated land or waste places and were probably brought to the site via clothing, tools and with the harvested crops.

Hazelnut shell and flax seeds have been recovered from other prehistoric sites and the recovery of such remains at Maybury, albeit in low quantities, fits a well-established pattern. The low quantities recovered, however, are not sufficient to allow detailed discussion.

6.4 Summary

- A limited amount of carbonized plant remains were recovered from the site.
- The majority of plant remains were recovered from Area B with pit fills containing slightly larger average quantities of plant remains.
- The presence of naked barley, hulled barley and emmer cereal grains corresponds well with the prehistoric date indicated by pottery recovered from a number of the archaeological features.
- There is no evidence for *in situ* burning of plant remains and the material is unlikely to be associated with the original function of the features from which they were recovered.
- The lack of any obvious conflagration deposits within the excavated areas suggests that the plant material recovered is probably remnants of grain accidentally burnt during food processing or corn drying.

7 Conclusion

It is difficult to interpret the nature of human activity in the area with the available evidence although some broad assumptions can be made. The area was settled at the beginning of the Neolithic period and occupied sporadically since. It is probable that the land was put to agricultural use with settlement on the edge of the Gogar Loch between Areas B and C. It is likely that animal husbandry was important in the Neolithic as indicated by the trackway. The edge of the loch would have been an excellent environment for fishing and fowling, which would have supplemented agriculture throughout the prehistoric period. The segmented enclosure system may have served as stock enclosures later in the prehistoric period. Evidence for habitation was scant but evidence was recovered for temporary settlement in the Neolithic, with more permanent settlement in the Bronze/Iron Age. The stone structure identified in Area F is an unusual feature and likely to be of either industrial or ritual function; it is very difficult to assign a domestic function to it on the available evidence. A possible cist and a number of possible funerary pits were identified in Areas A

(Phase II) and B (Phase II), although it is difficult to confirm this without the presence of human bone. If these features do represent human burials they are likely to represent isolated burials adjacent to settlement.

While significant archaeological deposits were recorded in the areas excavated, particularly areas B and F, it was unfortunate that it was not possible to open much more extensive areas. The evaluation, while extensive for its day (in Scotland), represented less than 0.5% of the surface area of the site which would be considered grossly inadequate in modern (post-1994 publication of NPPG5) archaeological practice, where a 5% sample area is the norm. The results of the excavations appear to indicate that the areas investigated were located at the periphery of more intense foci of activity. It is recognized that, with hindsight, and in a modern development context, a more robust sampling strategy would have been pursued initially and that the entire development site would have been subjected to a more exhaustive programme of works including the stripping and excavation of much larger areas.

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