

BHBO15



BRETCH HILL, BANBURY, OXFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION: ANALYSIS REPORT
PLANNING REF. 13/00444/OUT

commissioned by Bloor Homes

March 2018

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PROJECT INFO:

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Museum Service**

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PROJECT SUMMARY

Headland Archaeology undertook archaeological excavation of a site on land at Bretch Hill, Banbury, Oxfordshire. The investigation identified artefactual evidence of probable occupation and activity of late Iron Age/early Roman date in the form of ditches, pits and post-holes. The ditches potentially identified field boundaries and land division. Artefacts included pottery, quern fragments and briquetage and strongly suggested settlement within the immediate vicinity of the site.

Although the site is of some archaeological importance, the focus of activity is likely to be to the west of the excavation area.

Following the completion of a post-excavation assessment an updated project design (UPD) was prepared. The UPD recommended that an AMS date be obtained for a midden pit, the discussion updated in light of that and that a short note be prepared for Oxoniensia. This report collates the results of the original assessment with the further work undertaken and presents the proposed publication note for inclusion in Oxoniensia in Appendix 5.

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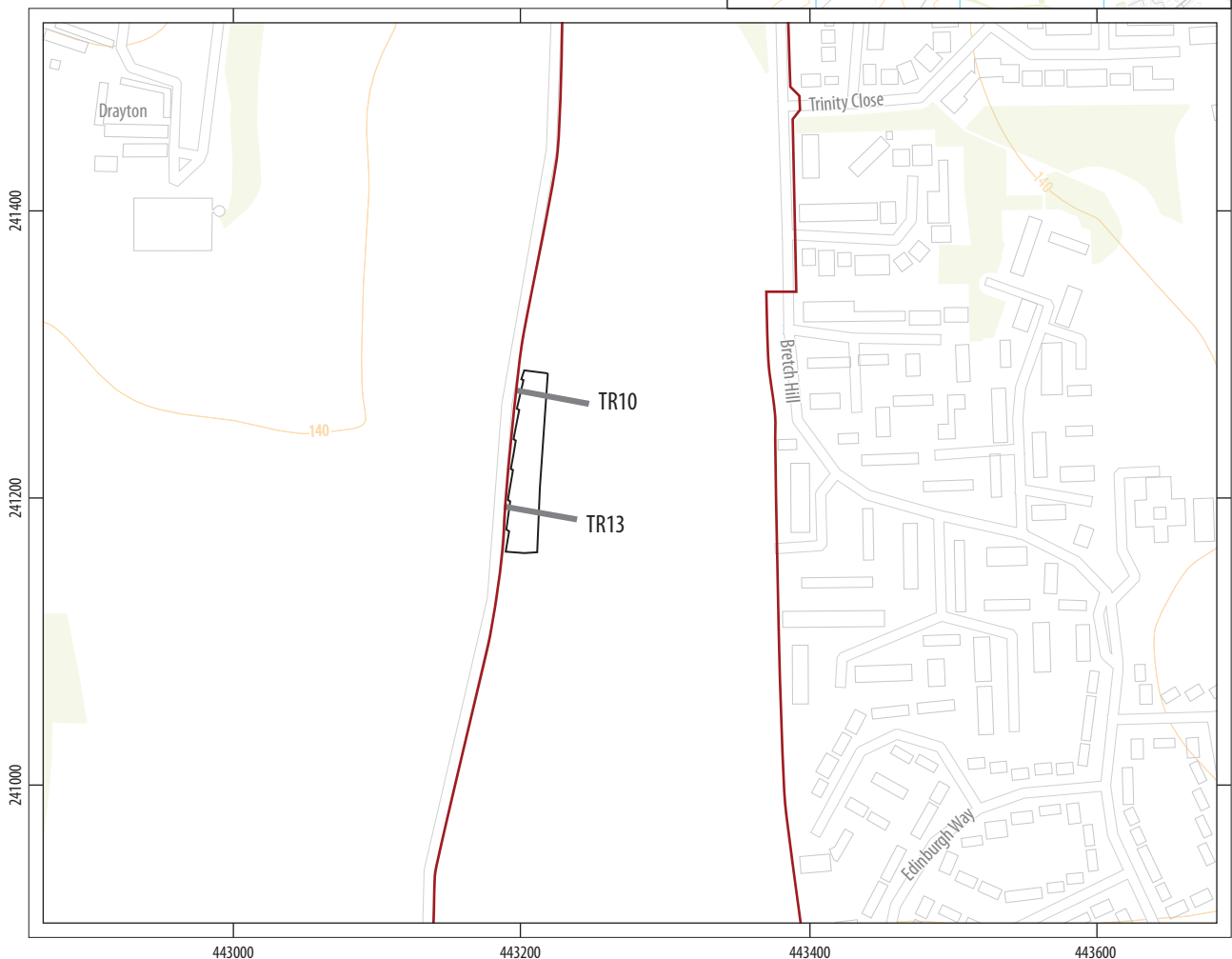
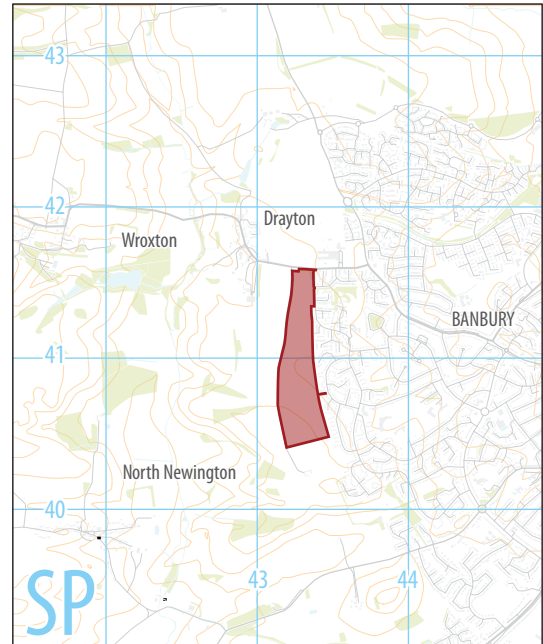
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Land at Bretch Hill
Banbury
Oxfordshire

0 200km
1:10,000,000 @ A4



0 100m
1:5,000 @ A4

development boundary trench location
excavation area

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ILLUS 1 Site location

BRETCH HILL, BANBURY, OXFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION: ANALYSIS REPORT

1 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results and analysis of an archaeological investigation on land at Bretch Hill, Banbury.

1.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND

Bloor Homes Ltd commissioned Headland Archaeology to undertake a strip, map and record programme on an area of land to the west of Bretch Hill in Banbury, Oxfordshire.

The work relates to the proposed development of the site (Planning Ref:13/00444/OUT) and was undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework. A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by Headland Archaeology (Craddock-Bennett 2016) which outlined the objectives and methodologies for the work which was approved by the Archaeological Advisor to Cherwell District Council, Richard Oram.

As a condition of the grant of planning permission, the programme of strip, map and record was intended to mitigate the effects of the development by means of preservation by record. In the event additional archaeological features were discovered during this programme, further excavation would be required, subject to agreement with the archaeological advisor, in order to fully mitigate the impact of the development.

Following completion of the fieldwork, and in accordance with the WSI, a post-excavation assessment report and updated project design was produced (Thomson 2017). The recommendations of that report have been undertaken and are reported on within this document.

1.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The development area comprises three large arable fields within a rectangular parcel of land to the west of Banbury. The site is centred at NGR SP 43290 40950 and covers 26ha. This programme of work concerned the mitigation approach to the northern field (Illus 1).

The development area is bound to the north by the A422 Stratford Road, to the west by a farm track leading to Withycombe Farm and to the south by a public footpath beyond which lies arable farmland. The site lies at approximately 143m AOD and is bound to the east by Bretch Hill, a residential housing estate.

The underlying bedrock consists of Marlstone Rock Formation – Ferruginous limestone and ironstone. No superficial deposits are recorded (NERC 2016). The soils in the north of the site are classified in the Soilscape 7 association, characterised as freely draining, slightly acid but base-rich soils.

1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

A Desk-Based Assessment of the site (Bourn 2013) established that no archaeological remains were recorded within the application area. The site was considered to have a low potential for all archaeological periods with the exception of the Roman period, for which a moderate potential was ascribed.

The site is located in an area where very little formal archaeological investigation has been undertaken and therefore little is known about the prehistoric and Roman potential of the site. The site of a possible Roman Villa was identified 320m west of the development area after a number of Roman coins, a possible mosaic and a bath were found in the C19th (PRN 2347). The site of a Roman farmstead has also been recorded from pottery finds from field-walking 800m to the south of this site, 600m west of the application area (PRN 15894). Recent

geophysical survey 650m south of the site has recorded a series of probable prehistoric enclosures and a small Iron Age farmstead has been excavated on the southern edge of Banbury.

Geophysical survey to the south of the Saltway, 1.5km south of the application site, has recorded a number of previously unknown Bronze Age barrows as well as a continuation of a causewayed enclosure. Further Barrows have been recorded from geophysical survey on two sites 1km north of Banbury. These barrows have proved difficult to identify during evaluation but have subsequently been recorded during excavation which might explain why so little is recorded for this period. This site therefore has the potential to encounter further, previously unknown, archaeological deposits related to the prehistoric and Roman period and contribute to an emerging understanding of the prehistoric and Roman periods in the area.

As part of earlier phases of work on this site, geophysical survey (over the extent of the development area) and trial trenching (within the northern field) was undertaken. Geophysical survey (Harrison 2016) indicated the potential for the remains of a possible enclosure at the western edge of the site. The presence of features corresponding to geophysical anomalies was confirmed during trial trenching (Thomson 2016). An additional shallow ditch was also identified which had not been picked up by geophysical survey.

1.4 OBJECTIVES

In general, the purpose of the investigation was to record and advance understanding of the significance of the heritage assets before they were lost. This would be achieved by determining and understanding the nature, function and character of any remains on the site, disseminating the results of that work and archiving the material and paper records.

The regional research context is provided by the Solent Thames Archaeological Research Framework (Hey & Hind 2014). Any evidence retrieved during the works was to be analysed in light of the objectives and research aims contained in the research framework.

The archaeological investigations were carried out in order to:

- › assess extent, layout, structure and date of features and deposits of archaeological interest; and
- › where possible, place the identified features within their local and regional context.

These objectives would be reviewed in light of the results of the excavation prior to analysis and the project design updated.

The resulting archive (finds and records) will be organised stored temporarily at Headland Archaeology premises until such time as full deposition can be arranged with Oxford Museum Service.

2 METHOD

2.1 MECHANICAL REMOVAL OF OVERBURDEN AND SUBSOIL

Mechanical removal of topsoil and subsoil deposits was undertaken using a 21 tonne, 360°, tracked excavator fitted with a flat bladed bucket. Strata was removed until geological or archaeological deposits were observed. Works took place between the 31st October and 4th November 2016. Weather conditions were generally dry and favourable. All works were undertaken with archaeological supervision.

Topsoil deposits were separated from underlying subsoils and stockpiled awaiting reinstatement. All machinery was kept off the stripped areas.

Archaeological features identified during machine stripping were surveyed using a Trimble dGPS system to produce a pre-excavation plan of the site.

2.2 EXCAVATION

The agreement of the archaeological advisor to Cherwell District Council was sought prior to the commencement of the excavation of archaeological features.

Excavation of archaeological features commenced on the 7th November 2016 with works completed by the 15th November.

Features and deposits were excavated in accordance with the following sampling levels:

- › A 50% sample of the deposits from each pit was removed.
- › 10% of the deposits within linear features were removed.
- › 50% of the deposits of post-holes were removed.

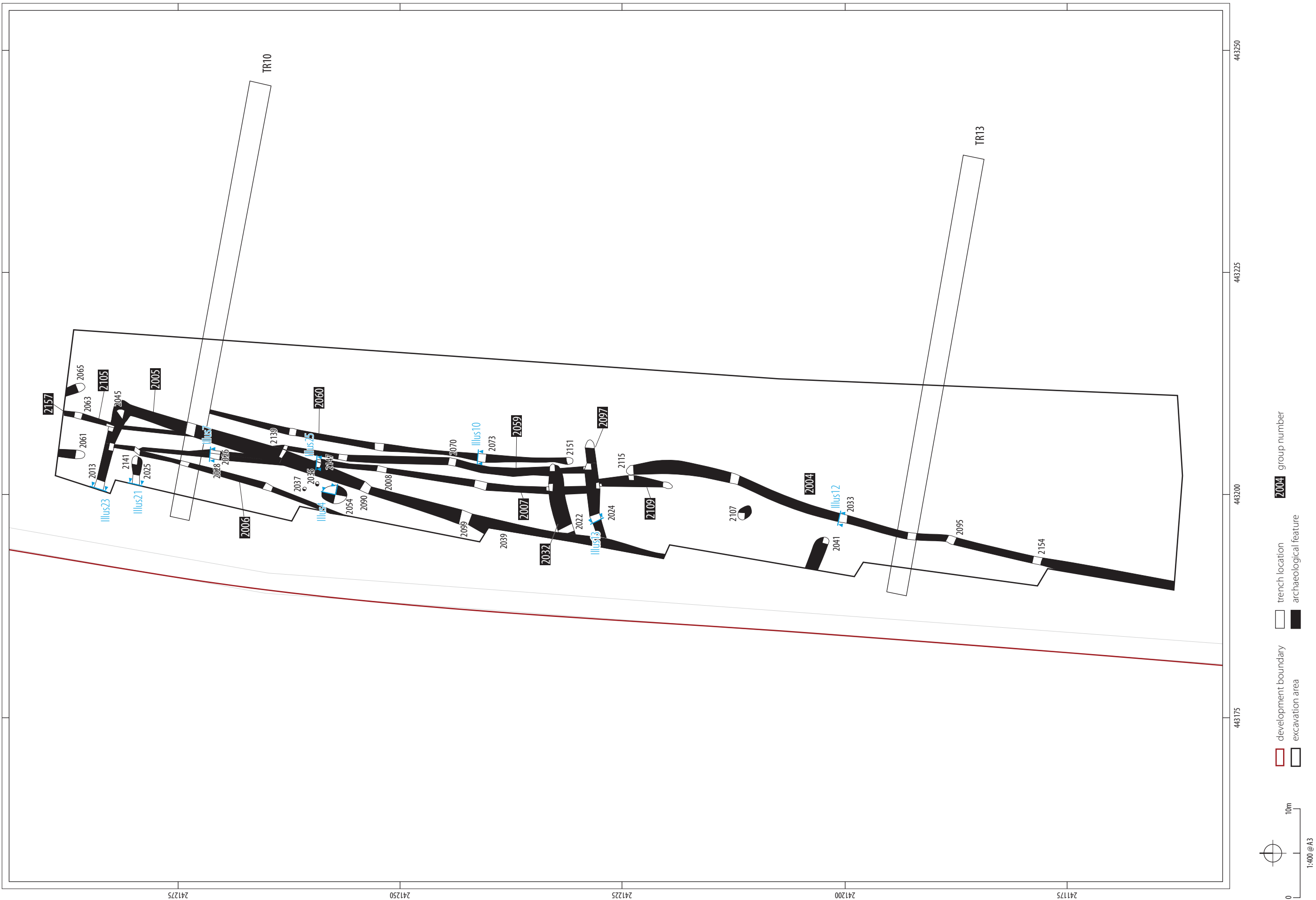
2.3 RECOVERY OF FINDS

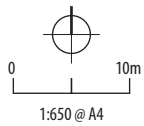
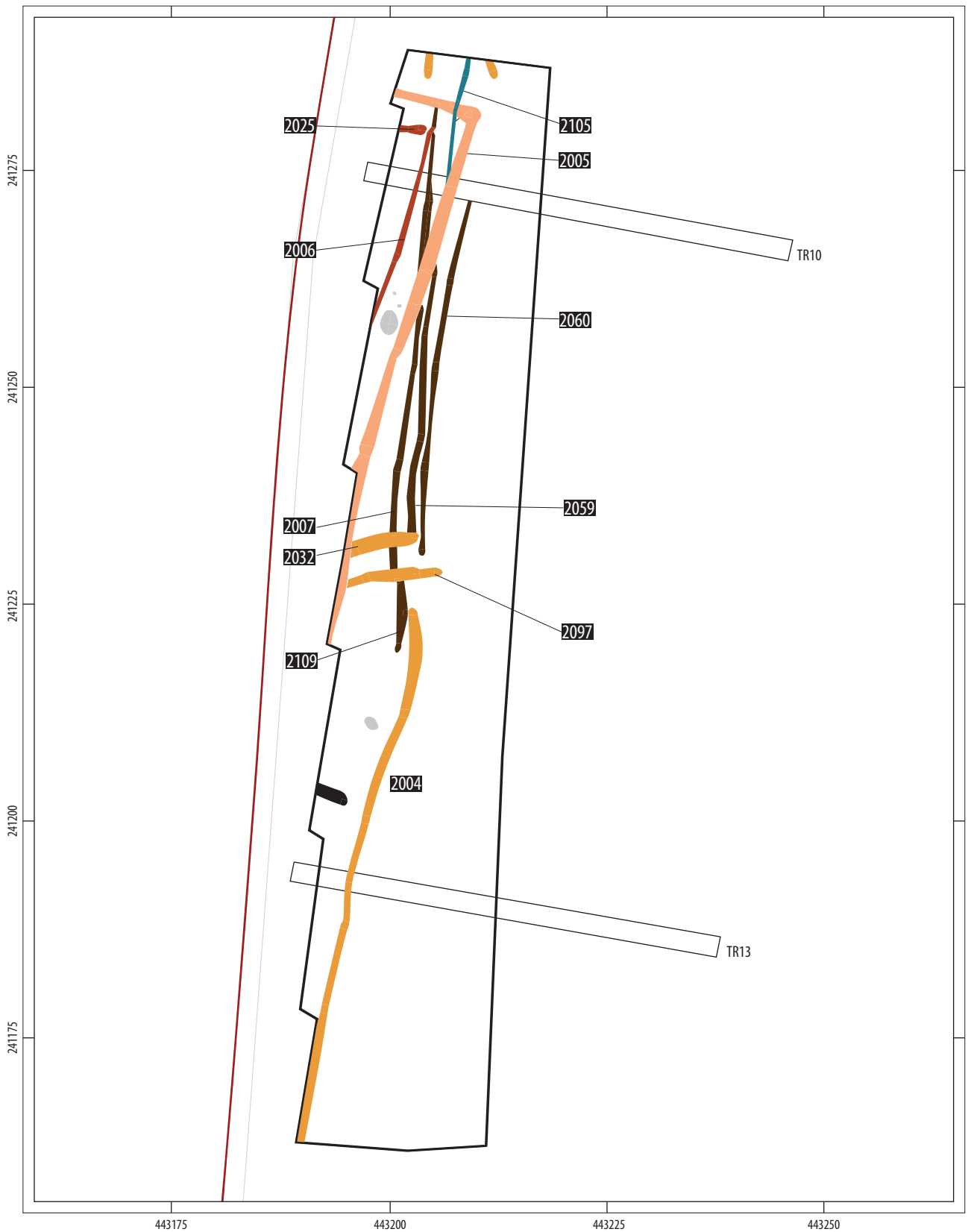
All artefacts and other finds from significant archaeological deposits were collected, identified by stratigraphic unit, catalogued and retained. Any finds considered to be typologically distinct or significant were assigned a small find (SF) number and the location of the find was recorded three dimensionally.

2.4 PALEO-ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLING

Bulk samples were collected from archaeologically significant deposits to recover environmental material and finds. Where possible, a bulk sample measured 40 litres, however, sample size varied depending on the amount of material available for sampling and in light of evaluation sampling results.

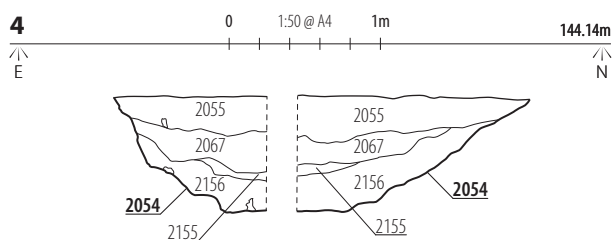
Where the same ditch fill could be identified in a number of ditch slots, the deposit was not sampled in every slot.





- | | | |
|----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| development boundary | Iron Age | Romano-British 4 |
| excavation area | Romano-British 1 | Romano-British 5 |
| trench location | Romano-British 2 | Post-medieval |
| group number | Romano-British 3 | |

ILLUS 3 Site plan showing archaeological phases



ILLUS 4 Section through midden pit [2054]

2.5 RECORDING

All recording followed the CIfA Standard and Guidance for conducting archaeological excavations.

- Context numbering commenced at 2000 to avoid any duplication of numbers recorded during the prior evaluation of the site;
- A pro forma context record was completed for each stratigraphic unit;
- A digital plan of the excavated area and features was produced using a Trimble dGPS unit;
- Sections through stratigraphic units were hand-drawn at a scale of 1:10;
- A photographic record of all stratigraphic units comprised black-and-white prints supplemented by digital photographs; and
- A diary record of the progress of the archaeological work was maintained, including details of liaison and monitoring meetings, visits and a record of the staff on site.

3 3 RESULTS

An initial description of the general stratigraphy of the site is given, thereafter results are presented by phases following analysis. Where possible, contexts are grouped to enable ease of explication. Contexts and features discussed are located on Illustration 2 with contexts forming groups detailed in Tables 1 to 5 below. A plan showing archaeological phases (Illus 3) is also provided.

3.1 GENERAL STRATIGRAPHY

The earliest deposit encountered was a mid-brownish yellow mud or sandstone and sandy clay deposit (2003), brash like in appearance, which was exposed across the entire excavation area and represented a geological deposit, probably a mudstone marl.

This was variably overlain by a mid-reddish brown slightly clayey, silty sand subsoil (2002) which contained abundant angular stone and varied in depth to a maximum thickness of 0.25m towards the north and east of the excavation area. Towards the eastern limit of excavation subsoil deposits were entirely absent with colluviation from the north-east to the south-west likely occurring. It is also likely

that extensive ploughing of the site had denuded subsoil deposits on the slightly higher and level ground over time.

Sealing the subsoil and directly overlying the geology at the eastern extent, was a mid-greyish brown slightly clayey, sandy silt plough-soil (2001).

The stratigraphy represented a free draining, brown earth soil profile.

3.2 NATURAL FEATURES

Several features were targeted for excavation and were subsequently identified as bio-turbation, likely representing tree or shrub throws. Two such features containing large amounts of iron ore type stone, common within the geology, were also not of archaeological origin.

3.3 LATE IRON AGE AND EARLY ROMANO-BRITISH DEPOSITS

Pits and post-holes

Towards the northern and western edge of the excavation area, a sub-circular cut [2054] measuring 2.85 x 2.18m and a maximum of 0.82m deep was identified as a midden pit. A sequence of four deposits was identified within the pit (Illus 4 and 5). The earliest fill (2156) was similar to the parent geology containing a relatively large amount of animal bone and was interpreted as deriving from a combination of dumping of refuse with an element of capping of the same. This was overlain by a dark grey fine silty sand (2155) from which burnt bone was recovered. This deposit appeared to be a discrete episode of dumping of probable fire rakings as part of wider disposal of refuse. This was in turn sealed by a further dark grey silty sand (2067), similar in character but containing coarser inclusions from which animal bone and pottery, including briquetage, dating to the later Iron Age/early Roman period was recovered. A dumped layer of poorly sorted clays (2058) sealed (2067) in the southern section of the feature and was interpreted as a possible capping layer. The clay was noted to have an irregular interface with (2067) in the north suggesting some post-depositional change, probably through bio-turbation.

The upper deposit of mid-brown silty clay (2055) was interpreted as representing a gradual infilling of the feature, probably from surface run-off with pottery dating to the later Iron Age/early Roman period recovered.

An environmental sample (ES 007) taken from deposit (2067) yielded charred barley and wheat grains, together with animal bone, burnt bone and pottery. An AMS carbon date was obtained from a barley grain from (2067) indicating a date for the deposit of cal 51 BC to AD 60 (28) (Appendix 4).

Adjacent to [2054] to the north, two post-holes [2035 & 2037] were recorded. Both were sub-circular measuring 0.52 x 0.45 x 0.16m and 0.50 x 0.30 x 0.07m respectively. The single fills of the features were greyish brown in colour and suggested a leached former organic content, possibly representing the in situ decay of former post bases. It is likely that the post-holes were associated, though due to the high level of truncation no further interpretation could be offered.



ILLUS 5 East facing section of deposits in [2054]



ILLUS 6 North facing section through pit [2107]

Located within the southern half of the excavation area a sub-circular feature [2107] measuring 1.87 x 1.25m was interpreted as a further possible midden pit. A section positioned through the feature revealed it to be 0.50m deep and contain two fills (Illus 6). The primary fill was a mudstone sandy clay (2106) likely to derive from collapse during or shortly after cutting of the pit. This was sealed by an upper fill of slightly stoney sandy clay (2096) containing rare flecks of charcoal from which flint and pottery dating to the late Iron Age/early Roman period was recovered.

3.4 FIELD BOUNDARIES

A sequence of ditches, likely land division and field boundaries appear to have been re-cut and developed over time. This is presented below in phases based on relative stratigraphy and potential association identified during the course of the excavation.

Phase 1

Aligned north-south, three ditches, Groups 2007, 2059 & 2060 appeared to be the earliest ditches identified. Group 2060, whilst having no immediate stratigraphic associations, followed the same alignment to ditches 2007 and 2059 and its proximity to 2059 may have indicated re-cutting of an existing boundary.

Slots were positioned through the ditches to characterise and establish relationships (Table 1).

TABLE 1 Phase 1 ditches, Group contexts

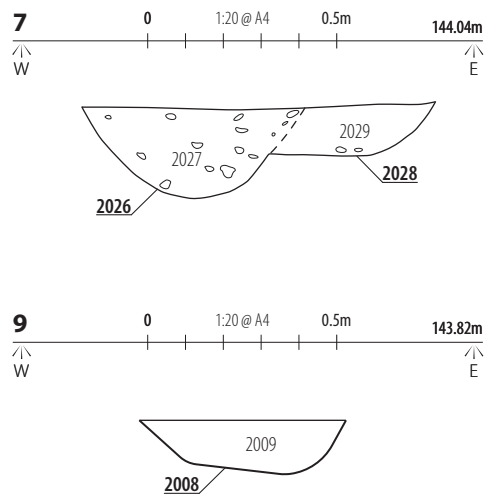
Group	Cut	Associated deposits (fills)	W (m)	D (m)	Reason for intervention
2007	2008	2009	0.55	0.20	1m slot to characterise
2007	2010	2011	0.75	0.25	1m slot to characterise
2007	2026	2027	0.63	0.27	1.20m slot to establish relationships
2007	2078	2079	0.58	0.42	0.70m slot to establish relationships
2007	2080	2081	0.3	0.12	Relationship slot with [2078]
2007	2109	2108	0.65	0.14	1m Slot positioned over terminal

Group	Cut	Associated deposits (fills)	W (m)	D (m)	Reason for intervention
2007	2113	2112	0.50	0.30	1m slot to establish relationships
2007	2121	2120	–	–	Sondage to establish relationships
2007	2145	2144	>0.43	0.33	Slot to establish relationships
2007	2149	2148	0.3	0.3	Slot to establish relationships
2059	2028	2029	0.46	0.14	1.20m slot to establish relationships
2059	2070	2068, 2069	0.85	0.35	1m slot to characterise
2059	2127	2126	0.75	0.24	1m slot to characterise
2059	2124	2123	>0.18	0.20	Slot to establish relationship
2059	2131	2130	0.40	0.21	Slot to establish relationship
2059	2136	2137	0.40	0.25	Slot to establish relationships
2060	2073	2071, 2072	1.02	0.38	1m slot to characterise
2060	2104	2102, 2103	0.90	0.23	1m slot to characterise
2060	2135	2133, 2134	0.81	0.39	1m slot to characterise
2060	2151	2150	0.80	0.28	Slot positioned over terminal

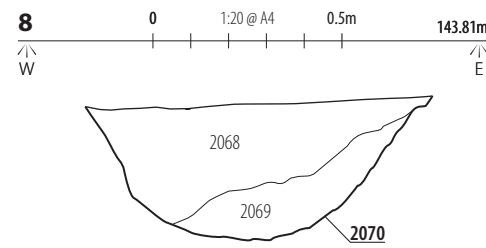
Group 2059 measured some 44.50m north-south with both ends of the ditch truncated by later ditch digging and no terminal ends identified. Slots positioned to characterise the ditch revealed it to be substantially truncated, surviving between 0.14 and 0.35m in depth and c.0.80m wide.

A section positioned towards the northern extent [2028/2026] (Illus 7) demonstrated it to be truncated by Group 2007. It was also cut at its southern extent by later ditches and was not observed to continue beyond these points.

The ditch contained an anthropogenically sterile primary fill which derived from the parent geology and would appear to represent erosion and collapse following the original excavation of the ditch. Only in slot [2070] was a 0.10 to 0.35m thick secondary

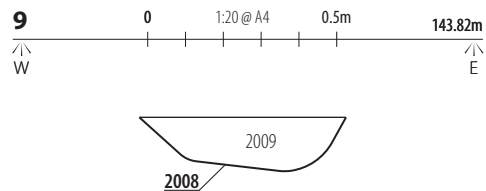


ILLUS 7 South facing section through [2026] and [2028], Groups 2007 and 2059



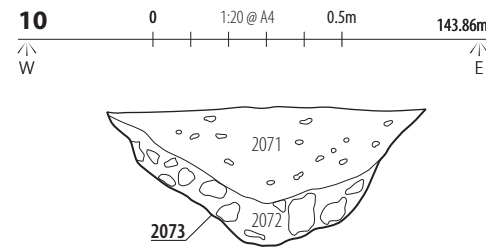
ILLUS 8 South facing section through [2070], Group 2059

ILLUS 9 North facing



section through [2008], Group 2007

ILLUS 10 South facing section through [2073], Group 2060



deposit observed (2068) (Illus 8). This comprised fine grained sandy clay sediments and appeared to represent a period of gradual sedimentation in the ditch deriving from surface run off. Pottery dating to the late Iron Age/early Roman period was recovered.

Group 2007 followed the same alignment as Group 2059 and appeared to be of a similar character but surviving to slightly greater depth, up to 0.42m, and was likely to represent re-cutting or re-establishment of the same boundary. A single fill was consistently identified in slots positioned through the ditch (eg [2008]) which appeared to represent a combination of erosion of parent geology or up-cast combined with surface run off and gradual sedimentation (Illus 9).

Group 2060 lay immediately east of 2007 and 2059 and was also orientated north-south but curved slightly to the north-east at its northern extent. The ditch had no physical relationships with any other features but its location, alignment and similar character suggested it relates to the same boundary.

A southern terminal end [2151] was identified but to the north, the ditch was not visible beyond the point where it met the trench from previous evaluation. It is possible it terminated around this area though this could not be positively attested due to the level of disturbance from the evaluation trench.

The ditch displayed variable truncation, measuring between 0.80 and 1.02m wide and surviving between 0.23 and 0.39m in depth. A maximum of two fills were identified (Illus 10). A primary fill of clayey sand and mudstone deriving from the parent geology and likely representing erosion of up-cast and sides of the cut (eg 2072) was sealed by a reddish brown sandy clay (eg 2071) which represented a natural gradual accumulation in the ditch. Pottery was recovered from deposit (2071).

Phase 2

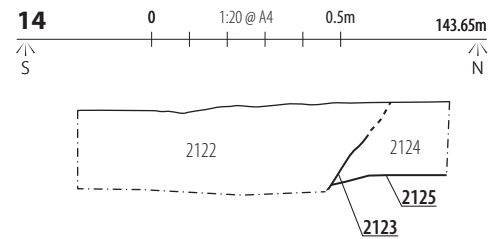
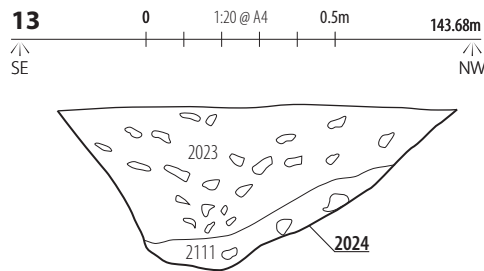
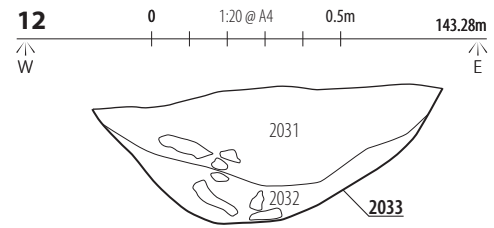
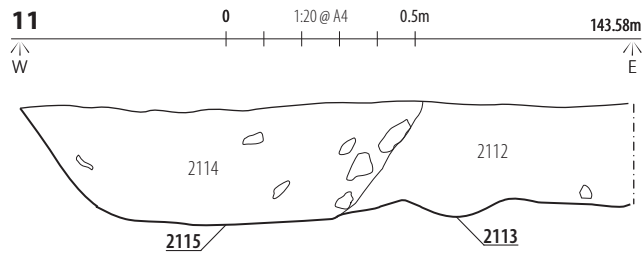
Group 2004 was a north-east/south-west orientated ditch measuring 63m long and extending beyond the limit of excavation to the south. A series of sections through the ditch (Table 2) revealed it to survive between 0.80 and 1.07m wide and 0.30 to 0.37m deep. The ditch had a broad 'u' shape profile and curved slightly north towards its northern terminal [2115] where it was observed to truncate the phase 2 ditch, Group 2109 (Illus 11).

The ditch contained two fills (Illus 12); a primary fill of clayey sand and stone (eg 2032) and a secondary deposit of reddish brown sandy clay with frequent stone (eg 2031). The deposits represented a period of erosion or collapse of up-cast or sides of the cut followed by general sedimentation in the ditch. This was consistent along the length of the ditch with the exception of the terminal end where a single fill, also representing a combination of erosion and general sedimentation was identified.

Pottery dating to the late Iron Age/early Romano-British period was recovered from (2031, 2093 & 2095) with animal bone and flint also recovered from (2031). A fragment of possible Romano-British disc quern was also recovered from (2025). Further pottery, industrial residue and flint were recovered as surface finds along the length of the ditch (2004).

TABLE 2 Phase 2 ditches, Group contexts

Group	Cut	Associated deposits (fills)	W (m)	D (m)	Reason for intervention
2004	2033	2031, 2032	0.97	0.35	1m slot to characterise
2004	2053	2151, 2152	1.04	0.30	1m slot to characterise
2004	2095	2093, 2094	0.80	0.37	1m slot to characterise



ILLUS 11 North facing section through ditch slots [2113] and [2115], Groups 2004 and 2109 **ILLUS 12** South facing section through [2033], Group 2004

ILLUS 13 North-east facing section through [2024], Group 2097 **ILLUS 14** East facing section through [2123] and [2125], Groups 2059 and 2097

Group	Cut	Associated deposits (fills)	W (m)	D (m)	Reason for intervention
2004	2115	2114	1.07	0.31	Slot positioned over terminal and to establish relationship
2004	2154	2152, 2153	0.96	0.30	1m slot to characterise
2097	2024	2023, 2111	1.06	0.44	1m slot to characterise
2097	2092	2091	1.08	0.25	Slot positioned over terminal end
2097	2119	2118	–	–	Slot to establish relationships
2097	2123	2122	–	–	Slot to establish relationships
2132	2022	2019, 2020, 2021	1.71	0.68	–
2132	2129	2128	0.60	0.30	Slot to establish relationships
2132	2143	2142	–	–	Slot to establish relationships

Orientated east-west, with a very slight south curve at its western extent, Group 2097 was a partially exposed ditch which extended west beyond the limit of the excavation area. Approximately 11m of the length of the ditch was exposed and it was located 3m north of the terminal end of Group 2004.

A section in the ditch revealed it to survive to 0.44m deep and 1.06m wide and contain a primary fill similar to the parent geology, deriving from erosion of up-cast and the sides of the cut, sealed by a reddish brown slightly silty sandy clay and stone representing gradual sedimentation within the ditch (Illus 13). Pottery dating to the late

Iron Age/early Roman period was recovered from (2023). A sondage towards the terminal determined it truncated Group 2059 (Illus 14).

Against the western limit of excavation, the ditch was observed in plan to be cut by a later ditch, however, this was too close to the site limit to enable a section to be excavated to demonstrate this further.

Lying 2.50m to the north and parallel to 2097 (Illus 15), Group 2132 extended 8m east-west, curving very slightly to the south at its western extent where it continued beyond the limit of the excavation area.

A section positioned at the western extent [2022] revealed the ditch was 0.68m deep and was cut by a later phase ditch (Illus 16). The southern edge was steep with a more gradually sloping northern edge suggesting it had been quarried out from the north. Three deposits were identified. A primary fill deriving from initial collapse or erosion from initial excavation of the ditch (2021) was sealed by a similar sandy clay and stone (2020) interpreted as deriving from a combination of erosion of up-cast and gradual sedimentation. The final fill (2019) represented a period of gradual sedimentation in the ditch from which pottery dating to the late Iron Age/early Roman period was recovered.

Sections positioned to establish relationships with Groups 2007 and 2059 evidenced Group 2132 cut both (Illus 17 and 18).

Located at the northern edge of the site, two ditch cuts [2061 & 2065] were partially exposed. Both were orientated broadly north-south with essentially only the terminal ends exposed.

The westernmost, [2061], extended 3m into the investigation area, measuring 1.05m wide and 0.25m deep. A single fill of reddish-brown stoney silty clay (2062) appeared to represent gradual sedimentation of the feature.

Approximately 6m to the east, ditch [2065] extended 2m into the investigation and measured 1.00m wide and 0.25m deep. The fill (2066) was of the same character as (2062) suggesting a possible level of contemporaneity, the ditches representing the definition and re-cutting of an established boundary.

Phase 3

Extending some 27m north-east/south-west and extending beyond the western edge of the site, a ditch, Group 2006 (Table 3) was identified in the northern half of the site. A section through the ditch [2039] (Illus 19) revealed it to survive to 0.62m wide and 0.20m deep. A single fill was identified (2038) suggesting gradual sedimentation of the ditch mixed with possible collapse and erosion of the up-cast. Pottery dating to the late Iron Age/early Roman period was recovered from (2038).

Relationships were investigated and the ditch was evidenced to truncate Group 2007 (Illus 20) and was in turn cut by Group 2005 recorded in plan.

TABLE 3 Phase 3 ditches, Group Contexts

Group	Cut	Associated deposits (fills)	W (m)	D (m)	Reason for intervention
2006	2039	2038	0.62	0.20	1m slot to characterise
2006	2076	2077	–	–	Slot to establish relationships
2006	2084	2085	–	–	Slot to establish relationships
–	2025	2012	1.04	0.25	1m slot to characterise
–	2141	2140	>0.6	0.36	Slot positioned in terminal end

Located in the northwest corner of the site, a 3m long, east-west orientated ditch was partially exposed and extended west beyond the limits of the excavation area. A slot positioned at the western extent [2025] (Illus 21) evidenced it to survive to 0.25m depth and 1.04m wide, containing a single fill indicative of a combination of erosion of up-cast and gradual sedimentation within the ditch.

A further slot established the presence of the terminal end of the ditch [2141] with a similar single fill (2140).

Phase 4

Located in the north of the site, Group 2005 extended 10.50m in an east-west direction where it turned south-west and continued for 64m, continuing beyond the western limit of the excavation area. A series of slots excavated through the ditch suggested the feature was a field boundary (Table 4).



ILLUS 15 General view looking south, sections through Groups 2132 and 2097 (background)

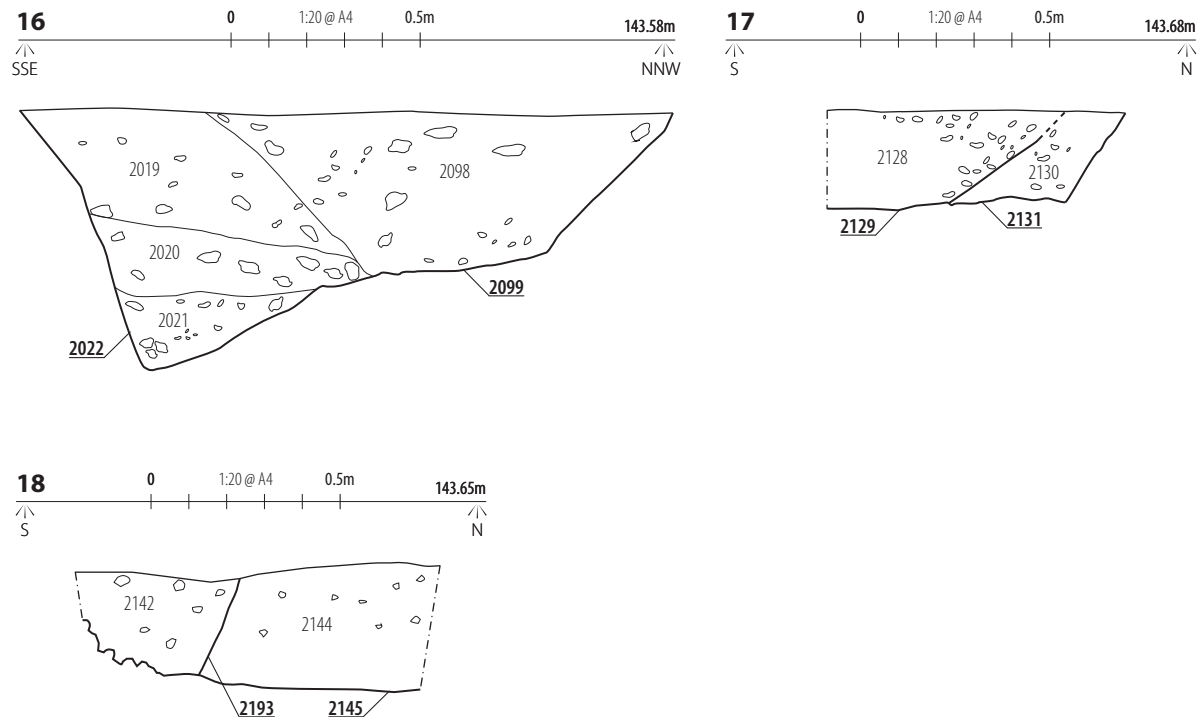
TABLE 4 Phase 4 Group 2005 contexts

Cut	Associated deposits (fills)	W (m)	D (m)	Reason for intervention
2013	2014, 2030	1.35	0.43	1m slot to characterise
2015	2016	1.20	0.25	Slot to establish relationships
2043	2044	1.70	0.55	1m slot to characterise
2045	2046	1.20	0.20	Slot to confirm corner turn
2090	2088, 2089	1.15	0.32	1m Slot to characterise
2099	2098	–	0.42	Slot to establish relationship
2139	2138	0.77	0.32	Slot to establish relationships
2147	2146	0.50	0.30	Slot to establish relationships

Slot [2045] confirmed that the point at which the ditch turned south was a continuous cut, as opposed to two intercutting segments.

A section positioned to characterise the ditch along the east-west arm [2013] evidenced the width to be 1.35m, with two fills identified to a combined depth of 0.43m (Illus 22 & 23).

The primary fill was a thin layer of silty clay and mudstone (2014) concentrated to the northern side of the cut, which derived from initial erosion or collapse of up-cast. This was observed to be of greater depth in further slots through the ditch (eg 2016, 2089)



ILLUS 16 North facing section through [2022] and [2099], Groups 2005 and 2132 **ILLUS 17** East facing section through [2129] and [2131], Groups 2132 and 2159 **ILLUS 18** East facing section through [2143 and 2145], Groups 2007 and 2132

suggesting variability in initial deposition along the length of the ditch. Elsewhere the fills appeared to be a heterogeneous mix of deposition through probable erosion and surface run-off (eg 2044, 2138) (Illus 24).

Two sections positioned through the south-west/north-east arm [2139 & 2147] (Illus 25 and 26) confirmed that the ditch truncated Phase 1 ditches, Groups 2007 and 2059. A further slot [2099] demonstrated that the ditch truncated Group 2132 [2022] (Illus 16), though this was observed obliquely due to the location against the western limit of excavation.

Pottery dating to the late Iron Age/early Roman period and flint were recovered as surface finds along the length of the group (2005) with flint and animal bone recovered from (2044). A single sherd of black-burnished ware pottery recovered from deposit (2030) within group 2005 was the latest positively dateable Roman sherd, being of the 2nd to 4th centuries.

Phase 5

The final phase of ditches was represented by Group 2105 (Table 5) which was a highly truncated, shallow ditch orientated north-south. The ditch measured approximately 14m long and extended beyond the limit of excavation to the north.

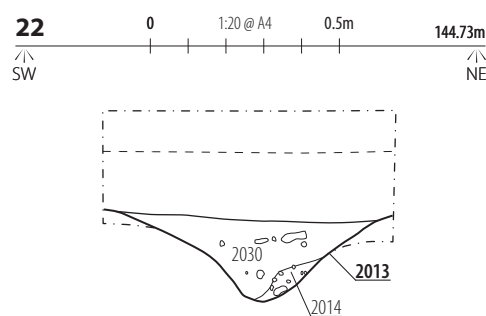
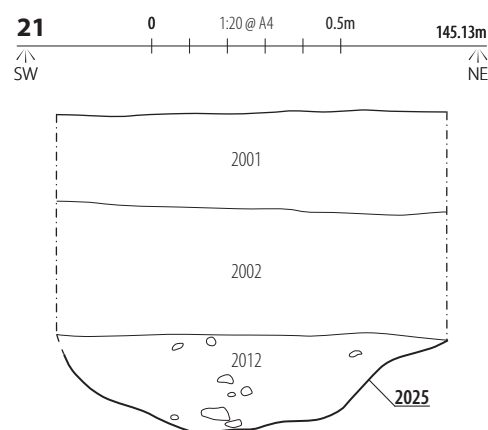
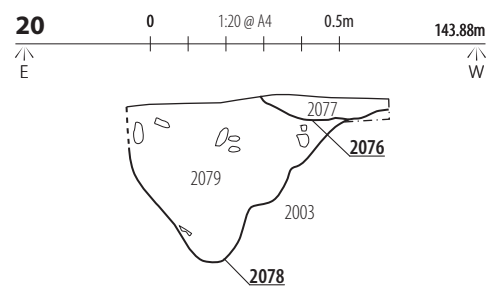
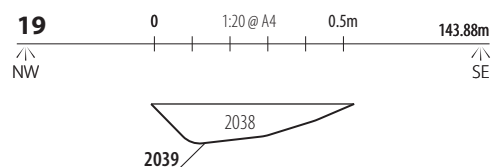
TABLE 5 Phase 5, Group 2105 contexts

Cut	Associated deposits (fills)	W (m)	D (m)	Reason for intervention
2017	2018	0.40	0.08	Slot to establish relationships
2047	2048	0.45	0.25	Slot to confirm relationships
2063	2064	0.40	0.06	1m Slot to characterise

A slot positioned at the intersection with Group 2005 [2017] (Illus 27) demonstrated that it cut the larger boundary ditch at this point but only survived to 0.06m depth. The fill (2018) comprised a light brown silty clay with little or no inclusions, in contrast to the underlying fill of Group 2005 (2016) which contained frequent angular mudstone.

Further slots positioned to the north to characterise the ditch further [2063] and confirm relationships, also revealed it to be exceptionally shallow to a maximum of 0.25m (2047) and contain single fills (2064 & 2048) similar to (2017).

The ditch intersected with Group 2005 again along the southern arm at the point where the former evaluation trench was positioned and the disturbance in the area rendered a further section impractical. The ditch was not observed continuing beyond this point.



ILLUS 19 North facing section through [2039], Group 2006 **ILLUS 20** North facing section through [2078] and [2076], Groups 2006 and 2007 **ILLUS 21** East facing section through [2025] **ILLUS 22** East facing section through [2013], Group 2005

3.5 POST-MEDIEVAL AND MODERN DEPOSITS

Post-medieval remains were represented by the remnant of a furrow [2041] oriented broadly east-west and located in the southern half of the excavation area. Clay pipe stem was recovered from the fill of the furrow (2040).

4 DISCUSSION

The stratigraphy on the site demonstrated denudation of subsoils to the north and east with a complete absence of subsoil deposits towards the eastern limit of the excavation area. A very abrupt interface between the plough-soil and geology was particularly noticeable in this area. Greater depth to the subsoil was noted towards the south and west and it seems probable that a degree of colluviation has contributed to the loss of subsoil on the slightly higher and more level ground to the north and east. The reduction of the depth of subsoil is also likely to have contributed to the truncation of the features on the site with more destructive, deeper modern plough damage having occurred. Earlier agricultural Ridge and Furrow evidence identified during evaluation, itself extensively truncated, would also have added to high levels of truncation to the archaeological remains. Features also survived to a slightly greater depth in the southern and western extent of the site.

The nature of the fills, subsoil and geology on the site were all of a similar character which made understanding positive relationships between features difficult, with only one relationship appearing obvious in plan; between a Phase 2 and Phase 4 ditch. However, it can be stated that relationships recorded were ultimately done so with a relatively high degree of certainty following close examination of deposits in slots positioned through intercutting features.

Critically, the high level of truncation often frequently left only primary fills within ditches, deriving from erosion and collapse of the sides of cuts and up-cast and consequently a lack of environmental evidence with only limited results from sampling of ditches and generally poorer preservation (Appendix 3).

Where secondary deposits survived in ditches the number of artefacts retrieved could be considered to be relatively high. Many pottery sherds were conjoining with clean breaks suggesting primary deposition in the ditches, probably as disposal of refuse. The nature of the finds recovered from the features on the site suggest occupation during the Iron Age/Roman transition and that all features identified relate to this chronological period.

Artefactual evidence recovered from the fills of a large midden pit were strongly suggestive of domestic occupation within close proximity. Similarly, the presence of quern stone fragments and domestic pottery within ditch fills would suggest domestic activity during the later Iron Age and 1st to 2nd centuries. Of further interest is the presence of briquetage within the midden pit. This would



ILLUS 23 Ditch [2013], Group 2005 looking west

also emphasise the domestic context, with salt being brought into the area. Salt production from Cheshire is associated with VCP (very coarse pottery) as opposed to briquetage, with the closest salt production site probably located at Droitwich. However, salt could be brought in from areas such as Lincolnshire, East Anglia, Dorset and more detailed analysis would be required to explicate this further.

Whilst providing sufficient material for AMS dating, environmental sampling of the midden pit provided little insight into site economy with generally poor preservation.

Whilst settlement may be postulated, the limited exposure of the archaeological remains makes interpretation and association of the pits, post-holes and ditches difficult, with pottery dating providing a relatively broad chronology for the features and only relative stratigraphic dating available for phasing of the ditch cuts.

A presumed Roman Villa site is recorded some 320m to the west of the investigation area but it is unlikely that this is associated with the majority of remains identified, more likely to be later in date rather than relating to the Iron Age/Roman transition. A presumed Romano-British farmstead, some 800m to the south of the investigation area, would also appear unlikely to be a source for the dumping of domestic material within recorded features due to the distance away from the site.

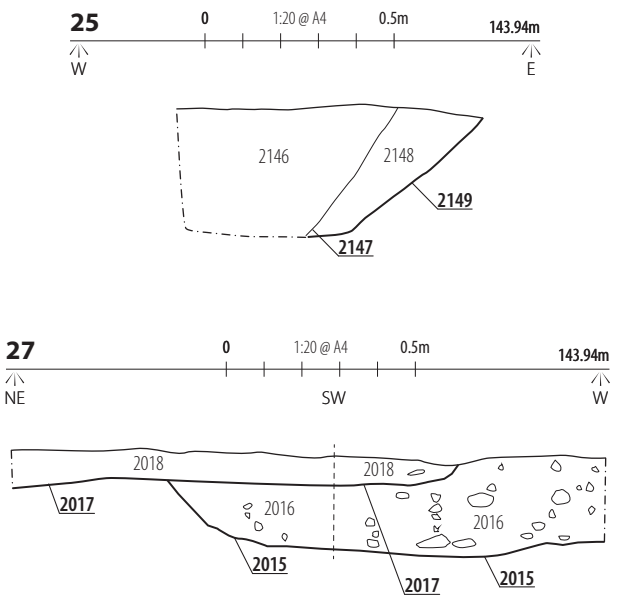
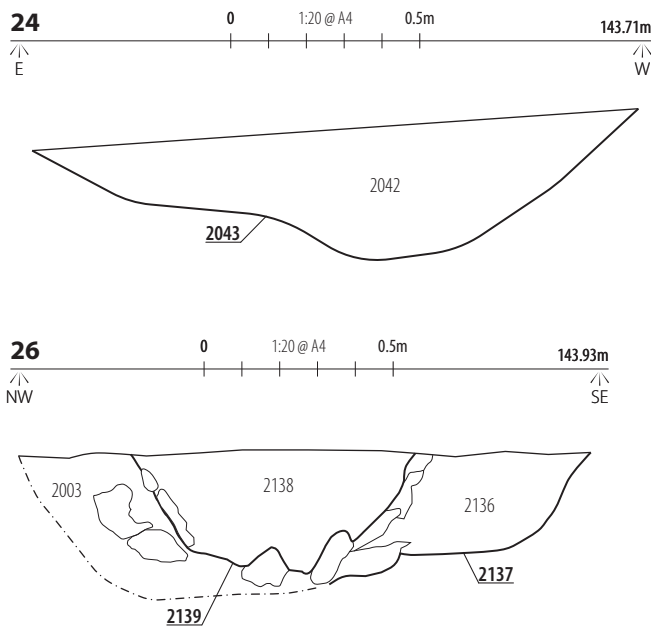
This would suggest a more localised site, possibly a further farmstead in the immediate vicinity. This may have been located on more level

ground to the immediate north-east of the limits of the excavation with high degrees of truncation erasing traces of such evidence. Alternatively, there is the possibility of associated remains lying to the west beyond the hedgerow into the adjacent field. The 4th phase of ditches, represented by a continuous, seemingly 'enclosing' cut, could point towards this being the most likely scenario. If within a potential enclosure, this would place any settlement on a gradient, the land sloping more steeply away to the south and west in the adjacent field.

The calibrated date of 51 BC – AD 60 (2σ) obtained from AMS dating a deposit within the midden pit [2054] would suggest that the initial focus of occupation related to the late Iron Age – Romano-British period, with potential development of the site and occupation occurring during the 1st and 2nd centuries.

Certainly, the phases of ditch excavation, all on broadly similar alignments, potentially representing the redefining and re-establishing of boundaries, point to relatively prolonged use of the land with adaptation and greater complexity to field systems or enclosure of land. Full understanding of this apparent complexity cannot be made, with the probable focus of the site lying to the west out-with the development area.

Whilst the underlying geological strata was free draining it is possible the ditches were positioned to catch surface run off and rainwater movement downslope from the north and east, potentially protecting any settlement from inundation. They may



ILLUS 24 South facing section through [2043], Group 2005 **ILLUS 25** South-west facing section through [2147] and [2149], Groups 2005 and 2007
ILLUS 26 South-west facing section through [2139] and [2137], Groups 2005 and 2059 **ILLUS 27** West and north facing sections through [2017] and Group 2005

equally have been simple field boundaries, demarcating land divisions. The level of re-cutting or re-establishment of the ditches appears, on face value, to be exceptionally high. However, this occurred over at least a 200 year period and is likely to be reflective of developing agricultural practices and changes in land use and possibly ownership. The limited exposure makes further comment regarding this speculative.

Group 2005, a continuous cut east-west turning north-east/south-west, does suggest a more formal division of land, some form of consolidation. It is worth noting that the latest positively dated pottery was recovered from this phase. It may be possible that this one phase of activity is associated with the presumed villa to the west and that this ditch relates to estate boundaries or more formalised field systems associated with the villa. However, in the absence of any dateable evidence of the supposed villa to the west, this also remains entirely speculative.

Later use of the land was attested in the form of the remains of a probable furrow, part of a ridge and furrow agricultural system. Tentative suggestions of earlier agricultural use of the land were also found with medieval pottery recovered as intrusive finds within ditch fills. These are likely to derive from manuring scatters with no features dating to the period identified.

5 FACTUAL DATA

Following the completion of the fieldwork an ordered, indexed and consistent site archive has been compiled in accordance with specifications presented in the Management of Archaeological Projects (EH 1991). A database of all contextual and artefactual evidence has also been compiled and cross-referenced to spot-dating. The fieldwork comprises the following records:

Context Sheets	157
Plans (1:10)	1
Sections (1:10, 1:20)	27
Sample register	1
Monochrome Films	2
Photographic registers	4
Diary sheets	12
Context registers	4
Drawing register	1

The majority of features contained only one or two fills. Archaeological remains survived as negative features with some evidence for the truncation of the upper parts of features from post-medieval or modern intrusion. Few stratigraphic relationships were identified, however, it was possible to ascribe the majority of features based on artefactual, spatial or morphological grounds.

5.1 STRATIGRAPHIC RECORD

Five phases of ditches dating to the late Iron Age/early Romano-British periods have been identified on the site. Due to the limited complexity of the site stratigraphy, and the understanding of the site development derived from assessment of the primary archive, no further work was undertaken, in line with the recommendation of the updated project design.

6 ARTEFACTUAL RECORD: FACTUAL DATA

All finds collected during the excavation have been cleaned, marked, quantified and catalogued by context. The full finds assessment report is included as Appendix 2.

The finds assemblage numbered 179 sherds (1.655kg) of pottery, 19 finds of chipped stone, two finds of coarse stone, six of ceramic briquetage, five of other fired clay, 233g of industrial waste and a single clay pipe find. Most were found in a series of ditches and pits. Most dated to the late Iron Age and Early Roman periods, though medieval and post-medieval finds were also present.

6.1 ARTEFACTUAL RECORD

In accordance with the recommendations of the updated project design no further work has been undertaken on the artefactual assemblage.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL RECORD: FACTUAL DATA

All ecofacts recovered from the excavation have been cleaned, marked, quantified and catalogued by context. A total of seven bulk samples, ranging in volume from 10 to 30 litres, were recovered from the site. All

samples were taken for the recovery of environmental remains. The full environmental assessment report is included as Appendix 3.

Wood charcoal

Wood charcoal comprising abraded oak and non-oak rectilinear fragments was present in varying quantities in six contexts.

Cereal grain and chaff

Cereals present were predominantly hulled barley with smaller numbers of bread/club wheat, indeterminate wheat and cereal indeterminate grains. An abundance of glume bases were recovered from deposit (2067) of midden pit [2054].

Other charred plant remains

Fruits from the pea family were recovered from midden pit [2054] and ditch slot [2043]. Charred weed seeds comprising grasses, wild radish, common chickweed, bedstraws, common nettle and achenes from the daisy family were also recovered from samples.

Animal bone

A small assemblage of fragmented animal bone was recovered from seven contexts. The majority of the bone was heavily fragmented and demonstrated mixed levels of preservation ranging from moderate to very poor. A number of the bones were heavily abraded and exhibited signs of being affected by soil chemical weathering.

TABLE 6 Summary of finds assemblage by feature with spot dating

Feature	Pottery (Rom)		Pottery (Medi)		Ceramic		Stone		Lithics	Clay pipe	CBM		Ind Waste	Dating
	Count	Wgt (g)	Count	Wgt (g)	Count	Wgt (g)	Count	Wgt (g)	Count	Count	Count	Wgt (g)	Wgt (g)	
ditch [2004]	51	532	1	1	–	–	1	47	4	–	3	36	63	LIA-E Rom
ditch [2005]	6	47	2	42	–	–	–	–	4	–	–	–	10	LIA-E Rom, Medi
ditch [2006]	7	7	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	30	5	LIA-E Rom
ditch [2025]	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	297	–	–	–	–	–	?
ditch [2059]	1	24	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	LIA-E Rom
ditch [2060]	2	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	E Rom
ditch [2097]	3	5	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	LIA-E Rom
ditch [2132]	1	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	LIA-E Rom
pit [2054]	26	131	–	–	6	45	–	–	3	–	–	–	130	LIA-E Rom
pit [2107]	75	845	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	22	LIA-E Rom
deposit [2042]	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–
furrow [2041]	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	PM
subsoil	4	15	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	–	–	–	–	IA/Rom
unstrat	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	–	–
Total	176	1612	3	43	6	45	2	344	19	1	5	66	233	

7.1 ENVIRONMENTAL RECORD

The small charred plant assemblage does not offer any significant information relating to site economy other than possible crop choices, though the range of species present is consistent with the spectra of crops commonly associated with Iron Age and Roman sites in the south east of England. The animal bone assemblage provides limited information pertaining to site economy despite the presence of domesticates in small quantities.

In line with the recommendations of the updated project design AMS dating of cereal grain recovered from midden pit [2054] has been undertaken. The feature is confirmed as Iron Age in date.

8 STORAGE AND CURATION

The archive is currently held by Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd, Midlands and West. Upon completion of the project and with the legal agreements in place, the full archive will be deposited with Oxfordshire Museum Service.

9 PUBLICATION AND DISSEMINATION

Whilst the results of the excavation at Bretch Hill are archaeologically significant, the excavation area was located at the eastern extent of the archaeological activity, with the main focus of activity likely to exist to the west. A short note has been prepared for publication in *Oxoniensia* and appears as Appendix 5 to this report. This document represents the final grey literature report which will be submitted to Oxfordshire HER and the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS).

10 TIMETABLE

A publication note will be submitted to *Oxoniensia* in February 2018, for inclusion within the 2018 journal.

11 REFERENCES

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- Hey G & Hind J (eds.) 2014 *Research Framework for the Historic Environment Resource Assessments and Research Agendas* Oxford Wessex Monograph No. 6.
- Thomson S 2016 *Land West of Bretch Hill, Banbury, Oxfordshire: Archaeological Evaluation* [unpublished client document] Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd
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12 APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 CONTEXT REGISTER

Basic Context Description Context	Subgroup	above Context	Basic INT	Extended Context Description - Cuts			Orientation	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)	Diameter	Comments	Extended context description - Deposits		Composition
				Shape in Plan	Base	Sides							Compaction	Colour	
2000	-	-	Unstratified finds	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2001	-	2002	Topsoil	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.30	-	-	Friable	Mid-greyish brown	Clayey silty sand
2002	-	2003	Subsoil	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.25	-	-	Loose	Mid-reddish brown	Clayey silty sand
2003	-	-	Geological deposit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Compact	Mid brownish yellow	Stone and clayey sand
2004	-	-	Group - ditch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Group number NE-SW linear	-	-	-
2005	-	-	Group - ditch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Group number NE-SW linear	-	-	-
2006	-	-	Group - ditch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Group number - N-S Linear	-	-	-
2007	-	-	Group - ditch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Group number - N-S linear	-	-	-
2008	2007	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	Flat	steep	NE-SW	1.00	0.55	0.20	-	-	-	-	-
2009	2007	2009	Fill of 2008	-	-	-	-	-	0.55	0.20	-	-	Loose	Mid-brownish red	Silty sand
2010	2007	2042	Ditch slot	Linear	Flat	steep	NE-SW	1.00	0.75	0.25	-	-	-	-	-
2011	2007	2011	Fill of 2010	-	-	-	-	-	0.75	0.25	-	-	Loose	Light brown	Silty clay
2012	-	2025	Fill of 2025	-	-	-	-	-	1.04	0.25	-	-	Friable	Light reddish brown	Silty sandy clay
2013	2005	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	Concave	Steep	E-W	1	1.35	0.43	-	-	-	-	-
2014	2005	2013	Fill of 2013	-	-	-	-	-	0.12	0.23	-	-	Friable	Light brown	Silty clay
2015	2005	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	Concave	Steep	E-W	1	1.2	0.25	-	-	-	-	-
2016	2005	2015	Fill of 2015	-	-	-	-	-	1.2	0.25	-	-	Friable	Light brown	silty clay
2017	2105	2016	Ditch slot	Linear	Uneven	Shallow	N-S	1	0.4	0.08	-	-	-	-	-

Basic Context Description	Subgroup	above Context	Basic INT	Extended Context Description - Cuts			Orientation	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)	Diameter	Comments	Extended context description - Deposits		Composition
				Shape in Plan	Base	Sides							Compaction	Colour	
2018	2105	2017	Fill of 2017	-	-	-	-	-	0.4	0.08	-	-	Friable	Light brown	silty clay
2019	2132	2019	Fill of 2022	-	-	-	-	-	1.71	0.3	-	-	Loose	Dark reddish brown	sandy clay and stone
2020	2132	2021	Fill of 2022	-	-	-	-	-	0.7	0.2	-	-	Loose	Mid-yellowish brown	sandy clay and stone
2021	2132	2021	Fill of 2022	-	-	-	-	-	0.53	0.2	-	-	Loose	light yellowish brown	sandy clay and stone
2022	3132	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	uneven	complex	-	1	1.71	0.68	-	sth side steep, nth gradual with slight step	-	-	-
2023	2097	2111	Fill of 2024	-	-	-	-	-	1.06	0.35	-	-	Loose	mid-reddish brown	silty, sandy clay and stone
2024	2097	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	uneven	steep	-	1	1.06	0.44	-	-	-	-	-
2025	-	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	flat	complex	E-W	1	1.04	0.25	-	Sth side sloping, nth steep	-	-	-
2026	2007	2029	Ditch slot	Linear	concave	sloping	N-S	1.2	0.63	0.27	-	-	-	-	-
2027	2007	2026	Fill of 2026	-	-	-	-	-	0.63	0.27	-	-	Friable	Light reddish brown	Silty clay
2028	2059	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	flat	sloping	N-S	1.2	0.46	0.14	-	-	-	-	-
2029	2059	2028	Fill of 2028	-	-	-	-	-	0.46	0.14	-	-	Loose	Mid-yellowish brown	silty, sandy clay
2030	2005	2014	Fill of 2013	-	-	-	-	-	1.35	0.43	-	-	Friable	Brown	Sandy clay and stone
2031	2004	2032	Fill of 2033	-	-	-	-	-	0.97	0.39	-	-	Loose	Dark-reddish brown	Sandy clay and stone
2032	2004	2033	Fill of 2033	-	-	-	-	-	0.64	0.16	-	-	Loose	Yellowish brown	sandy clay and stone
2033	2004	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	concave	Steep	NE-SW	1	0.97	0.35	-	-	-	-	-
2034	-	2035	Fill of 2035	-	-	-	-	0.52	0.45	0.16	-	-	Firm	Light greyish brown	Sandy clay
2035	-	2003	Post-hole	Sub-Circular	uneven	steep	-	0.52	0.45	0.16	-	-	-	-	-
2036	-	2037	Fill of 2037	-	-	-	-	0.5	0.3	0.07	-	-	Firm	Mid-brownish grey	silty clay
2037	-	2003	Post-hole	Sub-circular	uneven	steep	-	0.5	0.3	0.07	-	-	-	-	-
2038	2006	2039	Fill of 2039	-	-	-	-	-	0.62	0.2	-	-	Loose	Dark reddish brown	sandy clay and stone

Basic Context Description	Subgroup	above Context	Basic INT	Extended Context Description - Cuts			Orientation	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)	Diameter	Comments	Extended context description - Deposits		Composition
				Shape in Plan	Base	Sides							Compaction	Colour	
2039	206	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	uneven	steep	NE-SW	1	0.62	0.2	-	-	-	-	-
2040	-	2041	Fill of 2041	-	-	-	-	-	1.49	0.3	-	-	Loose	mid-reddish brown	sandy clay
2041	-	2003	Furrow	Linear	uneven	sloping	E-W	1	1.49	0.3	-	-	-	-	-
2042	-	2003	Bio-turbation - natural feature	-	-	-	-	2.8	1.46	0.15	-	-	Compact	Light reddish brown	sandy clay
2043	2005	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	Flat	Sloping	NE-SW	1	1.7	0.55	-	-	-	-	-
2044	2005	2043	Fill of 2043	-	-	-	-	-	1.7	0.55	-	-	Loose	Mid-brown	silty clay
2045	2005	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	concave	sloping	NE-SW	1	1.2	0.25	-	-	-	-	-
2046	2005	2045	Fill of 2045	-	-	-	-	-	1.2	0.25	-	-	Friable	Light brown	silty clay
2047	2105	2050	Ditch slot	Linear	uneven	Sloping	N-S	1	0.45	0.26	-	-	-	-	-
2048	2105	2047	Fill of 2047	-	-	-	-	-	0.45	0.26	-	-	Friable	Reddish brown	Silty clay
2049	-	2003	Natural feature	Irregular	uneven	irregular	-	0.9	0.4	0.07	-	Vegetation hollow	-	-	-
2050	-	2049	fill of 2049	-	-	-	-	0.9	0.4	0.07	-	-	Loose	Mid brownish yellow	Stone and clayey sand
2051	2004	2052	Fill of 2053	-	-	-	-	-	1.04	0.12	-	-	Loose	Yellowish brown	Slightly stoney, sandy clay
2052	2004	2053	Fill of 2053	-	-	-	-	-	0.78	0.18	-	-	Loose	yellowish red	Slightly stoney sandy clay
2053	2004	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	concave	sloping	NE-SW	1	1.04	0.3	-	-	-	-	-
2054	-	2003	Midden pit	Sub-circular	complex	Steep	-	2.85	2.18	0.82	-	base appears near V shape	-	-	-
2055	-	2058	Fill of 2054	-	-	-	-	-	2.18	0.35	-	-	Friable	Mid brown	Silty clay
2056	-	-	VOID - Animal burrow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2057	-	-	VOID - Fill of animal burrow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Basic Context Description	Subgroup	above Context	Basic INT	Extended Context Description - Cuts			Orientation	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)	Diameter	Comments	Extended context description - Deposits		Composition
				Shape in Plan	Base	Sides							Compaction	Colour	
2058	-	2067	Fill of 2054	-	-	-	-	-	1.4	0.45	-	-	Compact	mottled red, blue, yellow	Clay
2059	-	2003	Group - ditch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Group number - N-S linear	-	-	-
2060	-	2003	Group - ditch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Group number - N-S linear	-	-	-
2061	-	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	Flat	Sloping	N-S	-	1.05	0.25	-	-	-	-	-
2062	-	2061	Fill of 2061	-	-	-	-	-	1.05	0.25	-	-	Friable	Reddish brown	Silty clay
2063	2105	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	Uneven	Sloping	N-S	1	0.4	0.06	-	-	-	-	-
2064	2105	2063	Fill of 2063	-	-	-	-	-	0.4	0.06	-	-	Friable	Reddish brown	Silty clay
2065	-	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	Flat	Steep	NW-SE	1	1	0.25	-	-	-	-	-
2066	-	2065	Fill of 2065	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.25	-	-	Friable	Reddish brown	Stoney, sandy clay
2067	-	2155	Fill of 2054	-	-	-	-	-	>1	0.4	-	-	Loose	Greyish black	Silty clay
2068	2059	2069	Fill of 2070	-	-	-	-	-	0.85	0.35	-	-	Loose	Mid-reddish brown	Sandy clay
2069	2059	2070	Fill of 2070	-	-	-	-	-	0.57	0.14	-	-	Loose	Mid-yellowish brown	Sandy clay and stones
2070	2059	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	Concave	Steep	N-S	1	0.85	0.35	-	-	-	-	-
2071	2060	2072	Fill of 2073	-	-	-	-	-	1.02	0.26	-	-	Loose	Reddish brown	Sandy clay
2072	2060	2073	Fill of 2073	-	-	-	-	-	0.7	0.12	-	-	Loose	Mid-brownish yellow	Sandy clay and stone
2073	2060	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	uneven	steep	N-S	1	1.02	0.38	-	-	-	-	-
2074	2005	2085	Ditch slot	Linear	uneven	steep	E-W	0.8	0.6	0.29	-	-	-	-	-
2075	2005	2074	Fill of 2074	-	-	-	-	-	0.6	0.29	-	-	Friable	Light brown	Silty clay
2076	2006	2079	Ditch slot	Linear	unexcavated	sloping	NE-SW	0.7	0.3	0.12	-	-	-	-	-
2077	2006	2076	Fill of 2076	-	-	-	-	-	0.3	0.12	-	-	Loose	Dark reddish brown	sandy clay and stone
2078	2007	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	uneven	sloping	N-S	0.7	0.58	0.42	-	-	-	-	-
2079	2007	2078	Fill of 2078	-	-	-	-	-	0.58	0.42	-	-	Friable	Mid-yellowish brown	Silty clay

Basic Context Description	Subgroup	above Context	Basic INT	Extended Context Description - Cuts			Orientation	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)	Diameter	Comments	Extended context description - Deposits		Composition
				Shape in Plan	Base	Sides							Compaction	Colour	
2080	-	2003	Void-natural feature	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2081	-	2080	Void-natural feature	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2082	-	-	Void	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2083	-	-	Void	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2084	2006	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	Flat	Steep	NE-SW	>2m	0.4	0.3	-	-	-	-	-
2085	2006	2084	Fill of 2084	-	-	-	-	-	0.40	0.3	-	-	Friable	Light reddish brown	Silty clay
2086	-	-	Natural feature	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2087	-	-	Fill of natural feature	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2088	2005	2089	Fill of 2090	-	-	-	-	-	1.15	0.18	-	-	Loose	Mid reddish brown	Slightly stoney sandy clay
2089	2005	2090	Fill of 2090	-	-	-	-	-	0.65	0.14	-	-	Loose	Yellowish brown	Stoney sandy clay
2090	2005	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	concave	steep	NE-SW	1	1.15	0.32	-	-	-	-	-
2091	2097	2092	Fill of 2092	-	-	-	-	-	1.08	0.25	-	-	Loose	Mid-reddish brown	sandy clay and gravel
2092	2097	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	concave	steep	E-W	1	1.08	0.25	-	-	-	-	-
2093	2004	2094	Fill of 2095	-	-	-	-	-	0.8	0.25	-	-	Loose	Dark-reddish brown	sandy clay and stone
2094	2004	2095	Fill of 2095	-	-	-	-	-	0.51	0.12	-	-	Loose	Light yellowish brown	slightly clayey sand and stone
2095	2004	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	uneven	steep	NE-SW	1	0.8	0.37	-	-	-	-	-
2096	-	2106	Fill of 2107	-	-	-	-	-	0.9	0.32	-	-	Loose	Mid-reddish brown	Stoney, sandy clay
2097	-	-	Group - ditch	-	-	-	E-W	-	-	-	-	Group number linear cut	-	-	-
2098	2005	2099	Fill of 2099	-	-	-	-	>1	>1	0.42	-	-	Loose	Mid-yellowish brown	Sandy clay and stone
2099	2005	2019	Ditch slot	Linear	Steep	-	NE-SW	>1	>1	0.42	-	-	-	-	-

Basic Context Description	Subgroup	above Context	Basic INT	Extended Context Description - Cuts			Orientation	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)	Diameter	Comments	Extended context description - Deposits		Composition
				Shape in Plan	Base	Sides							Compaction	Colour	
2100	-	2101	Fill of natural feature	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2101	-	2003	Natural feature	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2102	2060	2103	Fill of 2104	-	-	-	-	-	0.9	0.17	-	-	Loose	Reddish brown	Sandy clay
2103	2060	2104	Fill of 2104	-	-	-	-	-	0.72	0.06	-	-	Loose	Mid-brownish yellow	Sandy clay and stone
2104	2060	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	uneven	sloping	N-S	1	0.9	0.23	-	-	-	-	-
2105	-	-	Group - ditch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Group number linear cut	-	-	-
2106	-	2107	Fill of 2107	-	-	-	-	-	0.71	0.38	-	-	Loose	dark-reddish brown	Stoney, sandy clay
2107	-	2003	Midden pit	Sub-circular	uneven	steep	-	1.87	1.25	0.5	-	-	-	-	-
2108	2007	2109	Fill of 2109	-	-	-	-	-	0.65	0.14	-	-	Loose	Mid-reddish brown	Sandy clay and stone
2109	2007	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	uneven	sloping	N-S	1	0.65	0.14	-	-	-	-	-
2110	-	2117	Fill of natural feature	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Tree throw	-	-	-
2111	2097	2024	Fill of 2024	-	-	-	-	-	0.68	0.09	-	-	Compact	mid-yellowish brown	sandy clay and stone
2112	2007	2113	Fill of 2113	-	-	-	-	-	0.50	0.30	-	-	Loose	mid-reddish brown	sandy clay and stone
2113	2007	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	-	-	N-S	1	0.5	0.3	-	-	-	-	-
2114	2004	2115	Fill of 2115	-	-	-	-	-	1.07	0.31	-	-	Loose	mid-yellowish brown	silty, sandy clay and stone
2115	2004	2112	Ditch slot	Linear	concave	steep	NE-SW	1	1.07	0.31	-	-	-	-	-
2116	-	2117	Fill of natural feature	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	tree throw	-	-	-
2117	-	2003	Natural feature	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	tree throw	-	-	-
2118	2097	2119	Fill of 2119	-	-	-	-	-	>0.4	>0.3	-	-	Loose	Mid-yellowish brown	Sandy clay and stone
2119	2097	2120	Ditch slot	Linear	-	-	-	>1	>0.4	>0.3	-	-	-	-	-

Basic Context Description	Subgroup	above Context	Basic INT	Extended Context Description - Cuts			Orientation	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)	Diameter	Comments	Extended context description - Deposits		Composition
				Shape in Plan	Base	Sides							Compaction	Colour	
2120	2059	2121	Fill of 2121	-	-	-	-	-	>0.35	>0.3	-	-	Loose	Mid-reddish brown	Sandy clay and stone
2121	2059	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	-	-	-	>1	>0.35	>0.3	-	-	-	-	-
2122	2097	2123	Fill of 2123	-	-	-	-	>1	>0.82	>0.20	-	-	Loose	Mid-yellowish brown	Silty, sandy clay and stone
2123	2097	2124	Ditch slot	Linear	-	steep	E-W	>1	>0.82	>0.20	-	-	-	-	-
2124	2059	2125	Fill of 2125	-	-	-	-	-	>0.18	0.2	-	-	Loose	Mid-reddish brown	Sandy clay and stone
2125	2059	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	-	-	N-S	-	>0.18	0.2	-	-	-	-	-
2126	2059	2127	Fill of 2127	-	-	-	-	-	0.63	0.24	-	-	Loose	mid-reddish yellow	stone, sandy clay
2127	2059	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	Flat	sloping	N-S	1	0.63	0.24	-	-	-	-	-
2128	2132	2129	Fill of 2129	-	-	-	-	-	0.6	0.3	-	-	Compact	Mid-yellowish brown	silty, sandy clay and stone
2129	2132	2130	Ditch slot	Linear	uneven	steep	E-W	0.8	0.6	0.3	-	-	-	-	-
2130	2059	2131	Fill of 2131	-	-	-	-	-	0.3	0.21	-	-	Loose	Mid-reddish brown	Sandy clay and stone
2131	2059	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	uneven	steep	N-S	0.5	0.3	0.21	-	-	-	-	-
2132	-	2059	Group - ditch	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Group number linear cut	-	-	-
2133	2060	2134	Fill of 2135	-	-	-	-	-	0.81	0.33	-	-	Loose	Reddish brown	Sandy clay
2134	2060	2135	Fill of 2135	-	-	-	-	-	0.46	0.15	-	-	Loose	Mid-brownish yellow	Sandy clay and stone
2135	2060	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	uneven	steep	N-S	1	0.81	0.39	-	-	-	-	-
2136	2059	2137	Fill of 2137	-	-	-	-	-	0.4	0.25	-	-	Loose	Mid-reddish brown	Slightly stoney sandy clay
2137	2059	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	flat	steep	N-S	1	0.4	0.25	-	-	-	-	-
2138	2005	2139	Fill of 2139	-	-	-	-	-	0.77	0.32	-	-	Loose	Dark-reddish brown	Stoney sandy clay
2139	2005	2136	Ditch slot	Linear	Flat	steep	NE-SW	1	0.77	0.32	-	-	-	-	-
2140	-	2141	Fill of 2141	-	-	-	-	1	0.5	0.36	-	-	Loose	yellowish brown	silty, sandy clay and stone

Basic Context Description	Subgroup	above Context	Basic INT	Extended Context Description - Cuts			Orientation	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)	Diameter	Comments	Extended context description - Deposits		Composition
				Shape in Plan	Base	Sides							Compaction	Colour	
2141	-	2003	Ditch terminal	Linear	concave	steep	E-W	1	0.5	0.36	-	-	-	-	-
2142	2132	2143	Fill of 2143	-	-	-	-	-	>0.38	>0.33	-	-	Loose	Dark reddish brown	sandy clay and stone
2143	2132	2144	Ditch slot	Linear	-	Steep	E-W	0.9	>0.38	>0.33	-	-	-	-	-
2144	2007	2145	Fill of 2145	-	-	-	-	-	>0.43	0.33	-	-	Loose	Light brown	Silty clay
2145	2007	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	-	Steep	N-S	0.8	>0.43	0.33	-	-	-	-	-
2146	2005	2147	Fill of 2147	-	-	-	-	-	>0.6	0.3	-	-	Loose	Mid-reddish brown	Sandy clay and stone
2147	2005	2148	Ditch slot	Linear	-	-	NE-SW	0.5	>0.6	0.3	-	-	-	-	-
2148	2007	2149	Fill of 2149	-	-	-	-	-	>0.3	>0.3	-	-	Loose	Mid-yellowish brown	Sandy clay and stone
2149	2007	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	-	Steep	N-S	0.5	>0.3	>0.3	-	-	-	-	-
2150	2060	2151	Fill of 2151	-	-	-	-	0.75	0.8	0.28	-	-	Loose	Mid-reddish brown	Sandy clay and stone
2151	2060	2003	Ditch terminal	Linear	uneven	steep	N-S	0.75	0.80	0.28	-	-	-	-	-
2152	2004	2153	Fill of 2154	-	-	-	-	-	0.96	0.20	-	-	Loose	Dark-reddish brown	sandy clay and stone
2153	2004	2154	Fill of 2154	-	-	-	-	-	0.65	0.10	-	-	Loose	Light yellowish brown	slightly clayey sand and stone
2154	2004	2003	Ditch slot	Linear	uneven	steep	NE-SW	1.00	0.90	0.30	-	-	-	-	-
2155	-	2156	Fill of 2054	-	-	-	-	-	>1	0.20	-	-	Loose	Dark black	Fine charcoal deposit
2156	-	2054	Fill of 2054	-	-	-	-	-	>1	0.20	-	-	Loose	Dark-reddish yellow	Stoney sandy clay

APPENDIX 2 FINDS ASSESSMENT

Introduction

The finds assemblage numbered 179 sherds (1.655kg) of pottery, 19 finds of chipped stone, two finds of coarse stone, six of ceramic briquetage, five of other fired clay, 233g of industrial waste and a single clay pipe find. Most were found in a series of ditches and pits. Most dated to the late Iron Age and Early Roman periods, though medieval and post-medieval finds were also present. The finds are summarised by feature in Table A2.1 and a complete catalogue is given at the end.

Results

Romano-British pottery

In total 176 sherds (1.612kg) of pottery could be dated to the later Iron Age/early Roman and Roman periods. The condition of the material was moderately poor with an overall average sherd weight of 9.2g, though surface preservation was generally quite good. In some cases, there were multiple sherds from single vessels but the number of diagnostic rim sherds was very limited.

For the purposes of the assessment the pottery assemblage was sorted into fabric types, scanned to assess its likely chronology and quantified by sherd count and weight for each recorded context. Prehistoric wares were recorded following recommendations in PCRG (2010) where letters denote the main inclusions. Named Roman wares were coded following the National Roman fabric reference series (Tomber & Dore 1998), whilst other wares were coded more

generically according to firing colour and fabric. The fabrics found are noted in Table A2.2.

Fabric Code	Fabric	Dating	Sherds	Wgt (g)
BWSY	black sandy ware	E Rom	11	54
DORBB1	Dorset black burnished ware	L2nd-4th	1	11
GR	grog-tempered	LIA-E Rom	126	1258
GRLI	grog and limestone	LIA-E Rom	5	20
GRLI/OR	grog and limestone	LIA-E Rom	2	39
GRSA	sandy with grog	LIA-E Rom	1	20
GRSH	grog with shell	LIA-E Rom	3	80
GYFSY	fine grey sandy	E Rom	2	13
GYGR	grey with grog	E Rom	1	14
LI	limestone-tempered	LIA-E Rom	8	39
OXID	oxidised	Rom	1	2
OXIDF	fine oxidised	Rom	2	3
SA	sandy	LIA-E Rom	9	55
SA?LI	sandy ?with limestone	LIA-E Rom	1	2
OO	crumbs	-	3	2
Total			176	1612

TABLE A2.2 Prehistoric pottery type series

Feature	Pottery (Rom)		Pottery (Medi)		Ceramic		Stone		Lithics	Clay pipe	CBM		Ind Waste	Dating
	Count	Wgt (g)	Count	Wgt (g)	Count	Wgt (g)	Count	Wgt (g)	Count	Count	Count	Wgt (g)	Wgt (g)	
ditch [2004]	51	532	1	1	–	–	1	47	4	–	3	36	63	LIA-E Rom
ditch [2005]	6	47	2	42	–	–	–	–	4	–	–	–	10	LIA-E Rom, Medi
ditch [2006]	7	7	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	30	5	LIA-E Rom
ditch [2025]	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	297	–	–	–	–	–	?
ditch [2059]	1	24	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	LIA-E Rom
ditch [2060]	2	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	E Rom
ditch [2097]	3	5	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	LIA-E Rom
ditch [2132]	1	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	LIA-E Rom
pit [2054]	26	131	–	–	6	45	–	–	3	–	–	–	130	LIA-E Rom
pit [2107]	75	845	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	22	LIA-E Rom
deposit [2042]	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–
furrow [2041]	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	PM
subsoil	4	15	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	–	–	–	–	IA/Rom
unstrat	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	–	–
Total	176	1612	3	43	6	45	2	344	19	1	5	66	233	

TABLE A2.1 Summary of finds assemblage by feature with spot dating

Approximately 155 sherds date to the later prehistoric or early Roman period. These can be divided into five broad fabric groups: calcareous (LI); sandy with calcareous inclusions (SALI); sandy (SA); grog-tempered (GR) and grog with shell/limestone (GRSH/LI).

The commonest fabric is the grog-tempered group. Vessels include both handmade and wheel-made forms. The grog-tempered tradition dates back to the later Iron Age but continued into the early Roman period, probably up until the Flavian period or slightly later. Vessels include triangular-rimmed and expanded rim jars. Ditch [2004] included 44 sherds probably from a single vessel. Accompanying the grog-tempered wares were a few pieces with grog and calcareous inclusions (shell/limestone) in the fabric, sandy wares and limestone-tempered sherds.

A small group of some 18 sherds can be more securely dated to the Roman period. The only diagnostic sherd in this group is a rim from a plain-walled dish in Dorset black burnished ware found in ditch [2005] (2030). Such vessels are likely to date from the later 2nd century through to the 4th century. The other sherds are wheel-made black and grey sandy wares or oxidised wares of indeterminate source and not as closely dateable.

The pottery was concentrated in pits [2107] (2096) and [2054] (2055, 2067) and ditch [2004] (2031, 2093) (see Table A2.1), these features accounting for 94% of the assemblage by weight. The largest feature assemblage was that from pit [2107]. Pottery was spread through a number of other ditches though never more than seven sherds or 47g. Thus dating for these features is less secure.

Medieval pottery

Three sherds (43g) of medieval pottery were recovered. They were recorded using the conventions of the Oxfordshire County type-series (eg. Mellor 1994). The fabrics found are shown in Table A2.3.

Fabric Code	Fabric	Dating	Sherds	Wgt (g)
OXBB/OXCX	Minety-type/ Wychwood-type	12th–16th	1	1
OX68	Potterspury Ware	L13th–17th	1	3
OXAM	Brill/Boarstall Ware	13th–16th	1	39
Total			3	43

TABLE A2.3 Medieval pottery type series

The range of fabric types is typical of sites in the region. The sherd of Brill/Boarstall Ware (OXAM) is a strap handle from a glazed jug and has a slashed thumb-groove. The Potterspury Ware (OX68) is a body sherd from a similar vessel. Both are typical products of their respective traditions.

All three sherds were found in ditches [2004] and [2005]. The sherd from ditch [2004] is small and in a features containing a good assemblage of Romano-British pottery and thus seems to represent later contamination. Ditch [2005] contained roughly equal small assemblages of Romano-British and medieval pottery and thus its dating is less clear.

Briquetage

Sherds of briquetage were found in pit [2054] (2067), associated with Romano-British pottery. They represent a thick, flat rim sherd in a friable and laminated fabric. It is markedly different to pottery fabrics from the site and is likely to represent a salt 'pan'.

Coarse stone

There are two coarse stone finds. One is a piece of sandstone decorated with rows of pit-marks. It may be part of a decorated Roman disc quern. It was found in ditch [2025] (2012) though with no associated finds to indicate dating. The other find is a fragment of pumice-like stone. It shows no signs that it has been modified or used but it is not noted in the local geology and may be an imported material. It was associated with Romano-British material in ditch [2004].

Lithics

A small assemblage of 19 lithics was retrieved. Six of these were poorly stratified and the remaining finds were all residual in Romano-British features. The small size of the assemblage precludes any assessment of technological attributes

There were two cores, 12 pieces of debitage and five tools. There were no distinctive tool types to aid dating, however, there were two blades and one trapezoidal section suggesting some pieces belong to a blade industry. These examples would suggest an early to middle Neolithic date although blades were produced into the early Bronze Age for specific tool types. These blade industry finds were noted in subsoil (2002), and ditches [2005] (2044) and [2004] (2152).

Clay pipe

A single clay pipe stem was found in furrow [2041] (2040). Its wide bore indicates a date between the late 16th and early 18th century.

Ceramic building material

Fired clay weighing 66g was retrieved from ditches [2004] (2152) and [2006] (2039). These were fragmentary pieces with probable wattle impressions suggesting use as daub for a superstructure.

Industrial waste

A number of fragments (74g) of possible iron slag and 159g of magnetic residues were retrieved during sample processing. The iron slag is not particularly distinctive and in a few cases may, in fact, be ironstone. The magnetic residues represent all magnetic material <2mm retained from sieving. This material appears to be largely gravel, magnetised whether due to the presence of ironstone or to high temperature processes in the vicinity. In a few instances there may be some small traces of hammerscale.

Discussion

Residual evidence for Neolithic or Bronze Age activity is present in the form of the small lithic assemblage. The earliest stratified finds are of late Iron Age or early Roman date. Types present are not distinctive enough to define start and ends points for this occupation. The single sherd of Black Burnished dish implies activity into at least the late 2nd century AD, but the paucity of evidence of this later Roman date suggests the focus of activity may have moved on by this stage. The pottery is accompanied by a fragment of possible disc

quern, pieces of briquetage representing a possible salt pan or other oven furniture and fragments of daub. The assemblage represents a small-scale domestic assemblage, typical of rural settlements of the period.

Evidence for later activity is limited to a few sherds of medieval pottery and post-medieval clay pipe. These probably representing low key agricultural activity. Sometimes these finds appear to be intrusive in otherwise Romano-British features.

Recommendations

The assemblage is largely unremarkable and too small to determine whether there was continuous or intermittent activity into the Roman period. No further work is recommended.

Archive recommendations

The Romano-British pottery, briquetage, daub and stone are of limited archaeological value but might be retained. The medieval pottery, clay pipe, industrial waste and lithics are of no further archaeological value and may be discarded.

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Appendix 2.1 *Finds catalogue*

Context	Feature	Sample	Qty	Wgt (g)	Material	Object	Description	Spot date
2012	ditch 2025	–	1	297	Stone	?Quern fragment	small fragment with man-made pit marks on one face - possibly a fragment of a decorated disc quern?	–
2067	pit 2054	7	6	45	Ceramic	Briquetage	rim of probable salt 'pan'	–
2071	ditch 2060	–	1	2	Pottery (Rom)	BWSY	–	E Rom
2055	pit 2054	–	1	2	Pottery (Rom)	BWSY	jar?, found in pit or in subsoil 2002	E Rom
2067	pit 2054	–	9	50	Pottery (Rom)	BWSY	jar, eb	E Rom
2005	ditch 2005	–	1	7	Lithics	core	exhausted core, surface find	–
2002	subsoil	–	3	29	Lithics	core,debitage and tool	remains of a core possibly used as a scraper, an inner blade missing proximal and a hard hammer flake with edge retouch	–
2152	ditch 2004	1	2	33	CBM	Daub	fragments with possible wattle impressions	–
2039	ditch 2006	–	2	30	CBM	Daub	fragments with two possible wattle impressions	–
2042	deposit 2042	–	1	1	Lithics	debitage	inner flake	–
2004	ditch 2004	–	1	1	Lithics	debitage	primary hard hammer flake, surface find	–
2152	ditch 2004	1	3	0	Lithics	debitage	inner medial blade fragment, inner flake and a chip	–
2030	ditch 2005	5	1	0	Lithics	debitage	secondary hard hammer chip	–
2000	unstrat	–	2	3	Lithics	debitage	indeterminate flint	–
2055	pit 2054	–	3	8	Lithics	debitage and tool	two secondary hard hammer flakes and an inner blade with distal and right lateral retouch	–
2096	pit 2107	–	2	5	Lithics	debitage and tool	broken secondary flake in two conjoining pieces with a left lateral notch and a secondary hard hammer flake	–
2030	ditch 2005	–	1	11	Pottery (Rom)	DORBB1	dish	L2nd-4th
2004	ditch 2004	–	1	3	CBM	Fired clay	small amorphous fragment, surface find	–
2004	ditch 2004	–	4	56	Pottery (Rom)	GR	5=4; mainly 1 vessel	LIA-E Rom
2004	ditch 2004	–	1	14	Pottery (Rom)	GR	jar	LIA-E Rom
2004	ditch 2004	–	40	330	Pottery (Rom)	GR	jar, mainly 1 vessel; wm	LIA-E Rom
2038	ditch 2006	–	1	2	Pottery (Rom)	GR	–	LIA-E Rom
2019	ditch 2132	–	1	2	Pottery (Rom)	GR	–	LIA-E Rom
2067	pit 2054	–	1	8	Pottery (Rom)	GR	–	LIA-E Rom
2096	pit 2107	–	68	443	Pottery (Rom)	GR	–	LIA-E Rom
2096	pit 2107	–	7	402	Pottery (Rom)	GR	hm	LIA-E Rom
2002	subsoil	–	3	1	Pottery (Rom)	GR	–	LIA-E Rom
2038	ditch 2006	–	3	3	Pottery (Rom)	GRLI	–	LIA-E Rom
2067	pit 2054	–	2	17	Pottery (Rom)	GRLI	–	LIA-E Rom
2093	ditch 2004	–	2	39	Pottery (Rom)	GRLI/OR	–	LIA-E Rom
2005	ditch 2005	–	1	20	Pottery (Rom)	GRSA	hm	LIA-E Rom
2031	ditch 2004	–	3	80	Pottery (Rom)	GRSH	jar, or cxt 2039; 5=1 fresh breaks; wm	LIA-E Rom
2030	ditch 2005	–	2	13	Pottery (Rom)	GYFSY	–	E Rom
2002	subsoil	–	1	14	Pottery (Rom)	GYGR	jar, HM	E Rom
2023	ditch 2097	–	3	5	Pottery (Rom)	LI	voids	LIA-E Rom

Context	Feature	Sample	Qty	Wgt (g)	Material	Object	Description	Spot date
2055	pit 2054	–	5	34	Pottery (Rom)	LI	jar, voids	LIA-E Rom
2152	ditch 2004	1	–	8	Industrial Waste	Mag res	possible hammerscale	–
2044	ditch 2005	3	–	10	Industrial Waste	Mag res	possible hammerscale	–
2038	ditch 2006	5	–	5	Industrial Waste	Mag res	possible hammerscale	–
2068	ditch 2059	2	–	3	Industrial Waste	Mag res	possible hammerscale	–
2067	pit 2054	7	–	116	Industrial Waste	Mag res	possible hammerscale	–
2155	pit 2054	–	–	14	Industrial Waste	Mag res	possible hammerscale	–
2096	pit 2107	4	–	3	Industrial Waste	Mag res	possible hammerscale	–
2152	ditch 2004	1	1	1	Pottery (Medi)	MEDI	limestone tempered	Medi
2004	ditch 2004	–	1	47	Stone	Natural	appears to be natural but is an unusual pumice like stone collected as may be non-local geology, surface find	–
2038	ditch 2006	5	3	2	Pottery (Rom)	OO	–	–
2044	ditch 2005	3	1	3	Pottery (Medi)	OX68	Potterspur Ware	L13th-17th
2005	ditch 2005	–	1	39	Pottery (Medi)	OXAM	Brill/Boarstall Ware	13th-16th
2075	ditch 2005	–	1	2	Pottery (Rom)	OXID	–	Rom
2044	ditch 2005	3	1	1	Pottery (Rom)	OXIDF	Fine Oxon Reduced Ware	Rom
2071	ditch 2060	–	1	2	Pottery (Rom)	OXIDF	jar	Rom
2093	ditch 2004	–	1	13	Pottery (Rom)	SA	jar	LIA-E Rom
2068	ditch 2059	–	1	24	Pottery (Rom)	SA	jar/bowl	LIA-E Rom
2055	pit 2054	–	1	3	Pottery (Rom)	SA	–	LIA-E Rom
2067	pit 2054	7	6	15	Pottery (Rom)	SA	–	LIA-E Rom
2055	pit 2054	–	1	2	Pottery (Rom)	SA?LI	–	LIA-E Rom
2004	ditch 2004	–	–	32	Industrial Waste	Slag	possibly iron slag, amorphous lumps, surface find	–
2152	ditch 2004	1	–	23	Industrial Waste	slag	possibly iron slag, amorphous lumps	–
2096	pit 2107	4	–	19	Industrial Waste	slag	possibly iron slag, amorphous lumps	–
2040	furrow 2041	–	1	5	Clay Pipe	Stem	wide bore	L16th-E18th
2044	ditch 2005	3	1	4	Lithics	tool	secondary burnt flake missing distal tip, proximal and some lateral edges. Abrupt retouch visible on some of the remaining left lateral	–
2044	ditch 2005	–	1	1	Lithics	tool	inner flake with inverse left lateral acute retouch, broadly trapezoidal sectioned flake but missing distal end	–

APPENDIX 3 ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Introduction

Seven samples, ranging in volume from 10 to 30 litres, were recovered during archaeological works in relation to the proposed development of land at Bretch Hill, Banbury, Oxfordshire. Samples derived from various midden pits and ditches, dating to the Late Iron Age and Early Roman periods. In addition to the bulk samples, four further contexts were sampled for hand collected bone. The aims of the assessment were to assess the presence, preservation and abundance of any environmental remains in the samples and to characterize the assemblage as far as possible in order to place sampled features within their local and regional context.

Method

Bulk samples were subjected to flotation and wet sieving in a Siraf-style flotation machine. The floating debris (the flot) was collected in a 250µm sieve and once dry, scanned using a binocular microscope. Any material remaining in the flotation tank (retent) was wet-sieved through a 1mm mesh and air-dried. All samples were scanned using a stereomicroscope at magnifications of x10 and up to x100. Identifications, where provided, were confirmed using modern reference material and seed atlases including Cappers et al (2006) and Zohary et al (2012) nomenclature for wild taxa follows Stace (1997). After careful consideration of the uncharred seeds present in the samples they were determined to be a modern intrusive component and were therefore not considered further.

Faunal remains were examined under low magnification and, as far as possible, identified to species and skeletal element, using modern reference material and with reference to Schmid 1972), and Hillson (1992). Measurements are taken as per von den Dreisch (1976). Ageing criteria were recorded using various methods outlined in Amorosi (1989). Fragments were recorded together with their weight and level of preservation and included any signs of butchery or modification.

Results

Results of the assessment are presented in Tables A3.1 (Retent samples), A3.2 (Flot samples) and A3.3 (Faunal remains). Material sufficient for AMS (Accelerated Mass Spectrometry) radiocarbon dating is shown in the tables. The majority of samples had varying proportions of modern roots and occasional intrusive uncharred seeds.

Wood charcoal

Wood charcoal was present in varying quantities in 6 contexts (Tables A3.1 and A3.2). The assemblage comprised abraded oak and non-oak rectilinear fragments. Charcoal sufficient for AMS dating was only recovered from 1 context; (2067) of midden pit [2054].

Cereal grain

Cereal grain was recovered from five contexts (Tables A3.1 and A3.2). Cereals present were predominantly hulled barley (*Hordeum* c.f. *distichum*/*H. vulgare*) with smaller numbers of bread/club wheat (*Triticum* c.f. *aestivo-compactum*), indeterminate wheat (*Triticum* sp.)

and cereal indeterminate grains. The grains exhibited mixed levels of preservation ranging from moderate to very poor, with the majority of specimens falling into the latter category. The richest cereal grain assemblage derived from deposit (2067) of midden pit [2054].

Cereal chaff

An abundance of glume bases were recovered from deposit (2067) of midden pit [2054] and were common in deposit (2155) also from midden pit [2054]. Smaller numbers of glume bases were also present in ditch slot [2070] (Ditch Group 2059) and ditch slot [2039] (Ditch Group 2006).

Other charred plant remains

Deposit (2067) of midden pit [2054] and deposit (2044) of ditch slot [2043] contained fruits from the pea family (*Fabaceae*) (Tables A3.1 and A3.2).

A number of charred 'weed seeds', (here used to include seeds, fruits, achene, caryopses etc) were recovered from 4 contexts. Of the weed taxa present the majority were grasses (*Poaceae*), with smaller numbers of wild radish (*Raphanus raphanistrum*), common chickweed (*Stellaria media*), bedstraws (*Galium* sp.), common nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and achenes from the daisy family (*Asteraceae*). These weed taxa are species common in arable fields and disturbed ground (Stace 1997).

The samples also contained a small quantity of material classified as charred indeterminate vesicular matter. This material was organic in origin and in some cases more than likely to be cereal but was so poorly preserved that all diagnostic features such as shape, surface and countable elements were missing.

Faunal remains

A small assemblage of fragmented animal bone was recovered from seven contexts, this included hand collected material in addition to material extracted from the bulk samples (Tables A3.1 and A3.3). The assemblage comprised elements such as skull and mandible fragments, scapula fragments and indeterminate long bone fragments from indeterminate medium sized mammals, possibly of the common domesticates such as sheep and possibly cattle. The majority of the bone was heavily fragmented and demonstrated mixed levels of preservation ranging from moderate to very poor. A number of the bones were heavily abraded and exhibited signs of being affected by soil chemical weathering. This was particularly apparent on animal bone from deposits (2031) ditch slot [2033], (2044) ditch slot [2043] and (2030) ditch slot [2013].

Burnt bone

Fragments of indeterminate burnt animal bone were recovered from 4 contexts (Tables A3.1 and A3.3). Deposit (2055) of midden pit [2054] contained fragments possibly from an indeterminate medium sized mammal.

Discussion

The small charred plant assemblage does not offer any significant information relating to site economy other than possible crop choices, though the range of species present is consistent with the spectra of crops commonly associated with Iron Age and Roman

sites in the south east of England (Parks 2012). The range of crops at the site was ascertained through the presence of both cereal grains and chaff recovered from a range of features. Species present included hulled barley, bread/club wheat and glume wheat.

The presence of weed seeds alongside the cereal grains and chaff offers potential insight into crop processing at the site. The charred assemblage from midden pit [2054] contained a large component of hulled barley grain and larger weeds such as wild radish, bedstraws and mixed grasses this suggests that it is likely the remains of a later processing stage in which only items of a similar size remain before final cleaning of the crop. The presence of glume bases within the context indicates a mixing of waste products from the processing stages of two crop types (hulled barley and glume wheat) and the most likely explanation for its charring is during an accident or conflagration in the kitchen thereafter finding its way into midden pit [2054].

The animal bone assemblage provides limited information pertaining to site economy despite the presence of domesticates (cattle, sheep/goat) in small quantities in the fills of various pits and ditches. Due to the size and fragmented nature of the assemblage, it is unlikely that analysis at this stage would provide significant further information other than dietary preferences and practiced butchery techniques. The identifiable bones present in the assemblage represent middle and low utility bones which carry less amounts of meat and so likely represent the less desirable elements discarded during the butchery process. The overall mixed preservation of the material suggests that the bones were left exposed for a period of time before deposition suggesting the idea of unrequired or waste material.

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32 **TABLE A3.1** Retent sample results

Context	Sample	Feature	Group	Sample Vol (l)	Ceramic		Stone		Industrial Waste		Burnt bone	Unburnt bone	Charred plant	Charcoal		Material sufficient for AMS dating	Comments
					Pottery	Daub	Lithics	Stone	Fe slag	Magres				Qty	Max size (mm)		
2155	006	Fill of midden pit [2054]	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	++++	+++	+++	-	+	2	N	(2.7g) indet burnt mammal bone fragments
2067	007	Fill of midden pit [2054]	-	20	++	-	-	+	-	++++	+++	+++	++	++	14	Y	(11g) indet mammal bone fragments, (6.9g) burnt bone, charcoal knotlike fragments, cereal grains very poor preservation. charcoal may be sufficient for dating if non-oak
2096	004	Fill of midden pit [2107]	-	10	-	-	-	-	++	+++	+	+	+	+	2	N	(0.2g) burnt mammal bone fragment, hazel nutshell fragment
2068	002	Fill of Ditch slot [2070]	2059	10	-	-	-	-	-	+++	-	-	-	-	-	N	-
2152	001	Upper fill of ditch slot [2154]	2004	30	+	+	+	-	+	++++	-	-	+	+	3	Y	Charred wheat grains, mixed preservation
2038	005	Fill of ditch slot [2039]	2006	10	+	-	+	-	-	++++	-	-	-	+	2	N	-
2044	003	Fill of ditch slot [2043]	2003	30	+	-	+	-	++	++++	+	+	-	+	2	N	indet burnt mammal bone frags (<1g)

Key: + = rare (0-5), ++ = occasional (6-15), +++ = common (15-50) and ++++ = abundant (>50)
NB charcoal over 10mm is sufficient for identification and AMS dating

TABLE A3.2 Flot sample results

Context	Sample	Feature	Group	Total flot Vol (ml)	Barley	Bread/ club wheat	Wheat	Indet. cereal	Cereal chaff	Lath/ vic 2-4 mm	Pisum	weeds	Other Charred plant remains	Charcoal Qty	Charcoal Max size (mm)	Material sufficient for AMS dating	Comments
2155	006	Fill of midden pit [2054]	-	5	+	-	-	+	+++	-	-	++	-	+++	5	cereal grain done at risk	Grains of hulled barley and cereal indeterminate; mixed grasses, wild radish pods, Very poor preservation.
2067	007	Fill of midden pit [2054]	-	35	++++	-	-	++	++++	+	+	++++	-	+++	6	cereal grain	barley grain rich sample, glume bases, weeds including: wild radish, common chickweed, nettle, mixed grasses, bedstraws, Asteraceae
2096	004	Fill of midden pit [2107]	-	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	4	N	indeterminate vesicular matter (plant)
2068	002	Fill of Ditch slot [2070]	2059	5	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	glume base
2152	001	Upper fill of ditch slot [2154]	2004	50	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	+	++	3	cereal grain	Grains of bread wheat and cereal indeterminate; moderate to poor preservation. Indeterminate vesicular matter (plant), charred culm node
2038	005	Fill of ditch slot [2039]	2006	20	+	++	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	7	cereal grain	grains of barley, bread/club wheat, cereal indeterminate, preservation good to v poor with majority poor (sediment coated), glume bases
2044	003	Fill of ditch slot [2043]	2003	45	+	-	+	+	-	-	+	-	+	++	5	cereal grain done at risk	pea fragments, indeterminate cereal grains <10, poor to very poor preservation, culm node
Key: + = rare (1-5), ++ = occasional (6-15), +++ = common (16-50) and ++++ = abundant (>50) NB charcoal over 10mm is sufficient for identification and AMS dating																	

TABLE A3.3 Faunal remains

Context	Feature	Group	Condition	Wgt (g)	Comments
2055	Fill of midden pit [2054]	–	moderate to poor	4.9	Burnt indeterminate medium sized mammal bone fragments
2067	Fill of midden pit [2054]	–	poor	–	(18.7g) medium sized mammal frags, scapula fragment, possible skull/mandible fragments (18.7g), indeterminate medium sized mammal bone fragments (1.3g)
2156	Fill of midden pit [2054]	–	moderate	73.4	indeterminate medium sized mammal skull and mandible fragments, indeterminate canine fragment
2031	Fill of ditch slot [2033]	2004	poor to very poor	–	Indeterminate burnt bone frags (1.5g), unburnt long bone fragment from medium sized mammal, very poor preservation (soil chemical weathering) (2.5g)
2038	Fill of ditch slot [2039]	2006	very poor	3.3	medium sized mammal fragmented tooth
2044	Fill of ditch slot [2043]	2005	very poor	56.6	medium sized mammal indeterminate bone fragments, possibly long bone fragments heavily abraded (soil chemical weathering)
2030	Fill of ditch slot [2013]	2005	very poor	19.7	medium sized mammal indeterminate fragments heavily abraded (soil chemical weathering)

APPENDIX 4 RADIOCARBON DATING CERTIFICATE



RADIOCARBON DATING CERTIFICATE 13 November 2017

Laboratory Code SUERC-75875 (GU45438)

Submitter Angela Walker
Headland Archaeology Ltd
13 Jane Street
Leith
Edinburgh
EH6 5HE

Site Reference BHBO
Context Reference 2067
Sample Reference 007

Material charred cereal grain : Barley

$\delta^{13}\text{C}$ relative to VPDB -24.6 ‰

Radiocarbon Age BP 2003 \pm 25

N.B. The above ^{14}C age is quoted in conventional years BP (before 1950 AD) and requires calibration to the calendar timescale. The error, expressed at the one sigma level of confidence, includes components from the counting statistics on the sample, modern reference standard and blank and the random machine error.

Samples with a SUERC coding are measured at the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre AMS Facility and should be quoted as such in any reports within the scientific literature. The laboratory GU coding should also be given in parentheses after the SUERC code.

Detailed descriptions of the methods employed by the SUERC Radiocarbon Laboratory can be found in Dunbar et al. (2016) *Radiocarbon* 58(1) pp.9-23.

For any queries relating to this certificate, the laboratory can be contacted at suerc-c14lab@glasgow.ac.uk.

Conventional age and calibration age ranges calculated by :

E. Dunbar

Checked and signed off by :

P. Naysmith

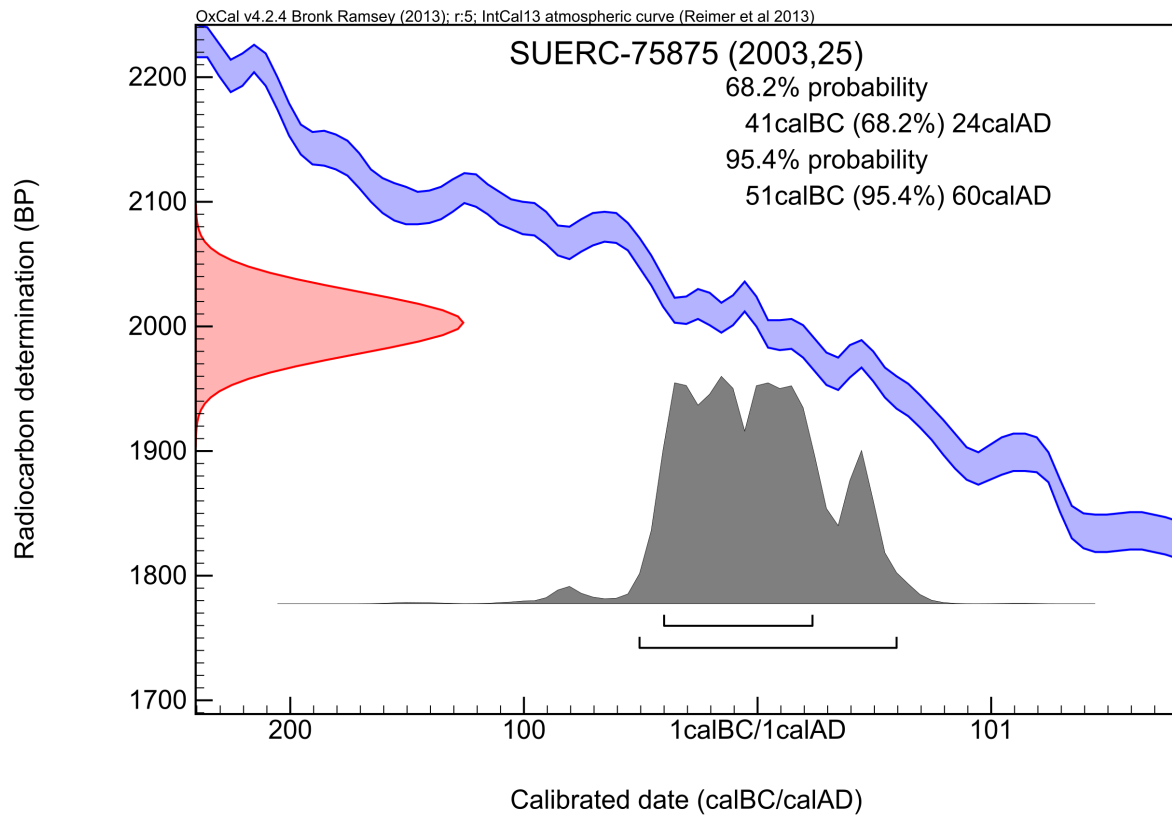


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The radiocarbon age given overleaf is calibrated to the calendar timescale using the Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit calibration program OxCal 4.*

The above date ranges have been calibrated using the IntCal13 atmospheric calibration curve†

Please contact the laboratory if you wish to discuss this further.

* Bronk Ramsey (2009) *Radiocarbon* 51(1) pp.337-60

† Reimer et al. (2013) *Radiocarbon* 55(4) pp.1869-87

APPENDIX 5 PUBLICATION NOTE

Archaeological Excavation on land at Bretch Hill, Banbury

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Archaeological Excavation was undertaken by Headland Archaeology in November 2016 on Land at Bretch Hill, Banbury, Oxfordshire (NGR SP 43290 40950) in advance of residential development. The excavation identified evidence of late Iron Age and Romano-British occupation in the form of a partially exposed possible enclosure, land division and a limited number of associated midden pits and post-holes. The focus of this activity appeared to lie to the west, outwith the excavation area. The site displayed high levels of later agricultural truncation.

Five phases of ditches on north-south and north/north-east and east-west alignments were recorded. The ditches appeared to represent land division and field boundaries. The fourth phase of ditches was represented by a continuous ditch which turned east-west and suggested the eastern extent of a possible enclosure which measured greater than 62m north-south and 10m east-west. Pottery recovered from the ditches dated to the 1st and 2nd centuries.

A limited number of discrete features were identified with no evidence of structural remains. A midden pit measuring 2.85 x 2.18m and 0.82m deep contained a sequence of four fills which contained dumped domestic detritus. Late Iron Age pottery was recovered, with barley and wheat grains identified within an environmental sample. An AMS date of 2003 BP (± 25) was obtained from a barley grain from a secondary fill of the pit. Later Iron Age pottery was also recovered from a second probable midden pit, though this contained less domestic material. Other finds recovered from the site suggested domestic occupation in proximity with a fragment of probable disc quern and briquetage also recovered.

The limited extent of the mitigation area made full understanding of the site difficult with the apparent focus lying to the west in adjacent fields. However, it appears that limited domestic occupation commenced in the later Iron Age, with land division or field systems and a possible enclosure developing and adapting during the 1st and 2nd centuries. The lack of material later than the 2nd century suggest that the focus of occupation may have moved around that time.



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