



Land South-West of Bicester, Oxfordshire

Post-excavation Assessment Report
and Updated Project Design for Analysis and Publication





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**Post-excavation Assessment Report
and
Updated Project Design for Analysis and Publication**

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Countryside Properties (Bicester) Ltd to undertake a series of archaeological excavations on land at Whitelands Farm, south-west of Bicester, Oxfordshire (NGR 457100 222000). The excavations formed part of a programme of archaeological work in connection with proposals for development. Prior to the excavations the land was a mixture of arable, pasture and fallow ground.

The Site was located approximately 1.2-2.0 kilometres north-west of the Roman town of Alchester and 0.5-1.0 kilometres north of the route of Roman Akeman Street. The western boundary of the Site was adjacent to the south-west to north-east aligned Dorchester to Towcester Roman Road that extended north of the town. Romano-British settlement on the Site would have formed part of the hinterland of the Roman town and may have been connected with the construction of the roads and subsequent roadside activity.

Seventeen areas were examined, and these were targeted on areas identified by evaluation as having a high archaeological potential or the ability to answer specific research questions as outlined in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (Wessex Archaeology 2008). The location of the areas was also determined by the proposed development. Previous evaluation by Oxford Archaeology (2002a-b) and Wessex Archaeology (2006; 2007) had revealed evidence for settlement and agricultural activity during the Late Iron Age/ Romano-British periods with a scattering of finds and features from the early prehistoric, Saxon and medieval periods.

The excavation strategy was altered during the excavations due to flooding and the scarcity of archaeological features within some areas (e.g. 5A and 13). Area 5 as outlined in the WSI, was sub-divided into eight smaller areas (Areas 5A, 11-17). Areas 14 and 16 were extended to reveal the alignment and density of archaeological remains. Area 8 was also abandoned due to flooding as was the southern third of Area 7.

The results across the Site were varied. Areas 3, 10 and 17 were completely blank. Areas 2, 4 and 6 contained very low densities of mostly undated archaeological remains, including quarry pits, ditches and small hearths. The density of features in Areas 1, 5A and 13 was slightly higher and the features were of greater complexity. In Area 1 there was a steep-sided, rock-cut, Middle to Late Iron Age ditch, three groups of Late Iron Age pits and a single Romano-British pit.

In Area 5A there were three corndrier/ovens and an arc of 15 postholes. Neither the corndriers nor the postholes contained any dating evidence. Area 13 revealed a ditch, a small number of pits and postholes and an undated cremation burial. The

remains in Areas 5A and 13 that were dated were mostly from the Late Iron Age/Romano-British period.

A much greater density of features was recorded on Areas 7 and 14-16. A notable find in Area 7 was a Beaker inhumation burial accompanied by a pottery vessel, a bone toggle, another piece of worked bone and a flint knife. This lay approximately 200m south-west of two ring ditches that were examined during the evaluation (Wessex Archaeology 2006).

Late Iron Age/Romano-British activity across Areas 7 and 14-16 included some settlement evidence, domestic activity, and possible evidence for quarrying. Stone-lined tanks and associated stone-lined channels in Area 16 contained evidence for grain processing and were dated to the Romano-British period. One of the stone-lined features was well-constructed and rectangular in plan; it was connected to a ditch by a stone-lined and capped culvert. The remains of a sluice gate system constructed from limestone slabs were also identified. The fill of the stone-lined feature contained a large quantity of Romano-British pottery. A copper alloy fitting and eight iron objects were also recovered. It is suggested that the stone-lined feature was used to process grain for brewing.

Other features included enclosure ditches, refuse pits, postholes, ditches, and track ways. Several four-post structures were identified in Areas 7 and 14. A number of corndriers/ovens were identified in Areas 5A and 16, some on the latter Site were perhaps associated with the crop processing/brewing activities. A very wide (5.76m), flat bottomed ditch recorded in the north-west corner of Area 15 may have formed part of a Late Iron Age/early Romano-British channel, taking water downhill to the south-west.

A few features have tentatively been dated to the Saxon period. However other than reuse of the stone-line features and adjacent pits in Area 16, there was limited evidence for Saxon activity (e.g. Areas 5A, 7 and 14).

The archaeological excavation of the Site has revealed a multi-period landscape which provides important additions to our understanding of local, regional and national archaeological knowledge. It is proposed that the results, including the significant finds from the evaluations will be the subject of a programme of post-excavation analysis leading to publication in *Oxoniensia*, the county journal.

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Terence O'Rourke Ltd, on behalf of Countryside Properties (Bicester) Ltd, for commissioning the project. The advice and assistance provided by John Trehy of Terence O'Rourke Ltd and Paul Smith (Oxford County Council), who monitored the evaluation, is duly acknowledged. Thanks also to Brian Higgins and the staff of Higgins (Plant Hire) Ltd for their assistance.

The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Paul McCulloch and directed on site by Jon Martin. The site supervisors were Julia Sulikowska, Naomi Hall, Sian Reynolds and Neil Fitzpatrick. The site was excavated by Andy Sole, Georgina Cox, Martin Harrington, Claire McGlenn, Ben Atfield, Sophie Nias Cooper, Simon Flaherty and Michael Fleming. The Site was surveyed by Naomi Hall, Sian Reynolds and Julia Sulikowska.

This report was written by Jon Martin. Angi Britten processed the finds and X-rayed the metalwork. Jessica Grimm assessed the animal bone and Jacqueline McKinley the human remains. Alistair Barclay and Philippa Bradley examined the Beaker vessel and associated grave goods. The worked flint was assessed by Philippa Bradley. Kayt Brown assessed the finds and compiled the finds assessment report. Jörn Schuster commented on some of the metal small finds. The samples were processed by Nicki Mulhall. The bulk samples were assessed by Dr Chris J. Stevens. The molluscs were assessed by Sarah F. Wyles. The illustrations were drawn by Elizabeth James.

Land South-West of Bicester, Oxfordshire

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Countryside Properties (Bicester) Ltd, through their agent Terence O'Rourke to carry out a programme of archaeological excavations on land south-west of Bicester, Oxfordshire (NGR 457100 222000) hereafter the Site (**Figure 1**).

1.1.2 The excavations were carried out as a condition of planning permission for the development, covering 116.45 hectares, granted by Cherwell District Council, and further to the advice of the Oxfordshire County Archaeological Officer (CAO), Mr Paul Smith, following a staged programme of archaeological evaluation.

1.1.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared following consultation with the CAO. The WSI was informed by an aerial photographic survey (Cox 2005), a geophysical survey (Stratascan 2006), and by an Environmental Statement (Terence O'Rourke 2006). It also utilised the results of two stages of trial trench evaluation, including a topographic survey of part of the Site (Wessex Archaeology 2006; 2007).

1.1.4 The archaeological fieldwork was undertaken between 28th January and 31st July 2008.

1.2 Site Location, Land-use, Topography and Geology

1.2.1 The Site (**Figure 1**) is located south-west of the historic town of Bicester, south of Middleton Stoney Road, west of the A41 Oxford Road, and north of Chesterton. Area 10 lay east of the A41, immediately to the west of the Roman Road and to the north of the Little Chesterton Road.

1.2.2 A watercourse, the Pingle Brook, traverses the north-east corner of the Site, while the Gagle Brook lies to the south-west. Prior to the excavation, the land was a mixture of arable and pasture. The topography of the Site is gently undulating, falling away more noticeably down to the Gagle Brook. The Site lies between about 74m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the north and about 68m aOD near Gagle Brook.

1.2.3 The underlying geology is Oxford Clay and Kellaway Beds, while the landscape across the ridge is underlain by Corallian beds of sand and sandy limestone. Mid-late Jurassic Cornbrash outcrops in places comprising a limestone that breaks into loose rubble or brash. It is a thin (up to 0.5m) bed

but laterally extensive, is very shelly, fossiliferous and is oolitic. Upper Corallian Rag also occurs in the area, with sinkholes and springs common.

1.2.4

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1.1 The archaeological background to the Site was described in the Environmental Statement (Terence O'Rourke 2006), and Design Brief (OCC 2006) and is only summarised here:

2.1.2 The existence of archaeological remains within the application area, and the immediate surrounding environs, has been known for some time. This has been confirmed by evaluation at two sites (Land adjoining Middleton Stoney Road and Oxford Road, Bicester (Oxford Archaeology 2002a), and Proposed Community Hospital, Bicester (Oxford Archaeology 2002b). At both sites slight evidence was found for Iron Age activity (Middle and Middle-Late) and the remains of a 1st-2nd century Romano-British farmstead. While a low level of Saxon activity was also identified during the evaluation of the Proposed Community Hospital (Oxford Archaeology 2002b).

2.1.3 The rest of the current application area has been examined by aerial photography (Cox 2005) and a detailed magnetic (gradiometry) survey (Stratascan 2006). These revealed more of the more of the 1st-2nd century farmstead, a number of linear ditches and embanked features, quarries, several pit groups, a set of ditched enclosures west of Whitelands Farm, and a probable Bronze Age barrow cemetery east of Foxey Leys Copse. In addition areas of medieval ridge and furrow was identified, and, on the east side of the A42, what might be an alignment associated with the Alchester to Towcester Roman road.

2.1.4 Two stages of trial trench evaluation were carried out. The first stage, in September 2006, targeted areas of the proposed development containing the perceived greatest archaeological potential as indicted by known sites and find spots, aerial photography and geophysical survey (Wessex Archaeology 2006). This revealed evidence for activity dating from the Bronze Age to the post-medieval period and ten 'zones' of archaeological activity were identified. Of the 134 trenches opened only 41 contained archaeological features and deposits, including:

- Two ring ditches, probably representing round barrow, the largest of which was dated to the Early Bronze Age and the smallest was undated
- A Middle Bronze Age bronze palstave in good condition was found in Area B, but was within a medieval or later deposit
- Late Iron Age settlement represented by a ring-gully, posthole/pits, ditch and possible hearth
- Late Iron Age/Romano-British settlement associated with known cropmarks
- Romano-British pits, postholes and linear features, quarries
- Possible Saxon earthworks; pits, postholes and ditches
- Medieval or later quarries and track
- Post-medieval field boundary

- 2.1.5 The second stage of evaluation (Wessex Archaeology 2007) comprised 76 trenches, only five of which contained archaeological features and deposits. Where datable these features appear to be Romano-British or later date. An additional trench was opened to the south-east of the Site, east of the A41, in order to evaluate the archaeological potential of an area of proposed road works associated with the proposed development. A topographic survey was also undertaken of earthworks in the northern part of the Site.
- 2.1.6 The results of the second stage evaluation do not significantly alter the results of the initial evaluation and that the distribution, nature, date and quality of survival of the identified archaeological potential of the Site is now confirmed. The additional trench opened east of the A41 revealed a ditch of probable Romano-British date.
- 2.1.7 From the topographic survey a surface model of the extant earthworks was produced. These earthworks were also identified on aerial photographs, and by geophysical survey. They were also examined during the first stage of the evaluation. The surface model appears to confirm the general sub-circular shape and uneven interior of the earthwork.
- 2.1.8 As a detailed description of the archaeological background of the surrounding area is provided in Booth *et al.* (2001, 1-5), it is not intended to repeat this here, although a number of important points can be made:
- Other than the Roman small town of Alchester, the immediate area was believed, until relatively recently, to have been sparsely settled prior to the medieval period
 - Aerial photography and salvage excavations have increased the numbers of known archaeological sites and finds in the vicinity
 - The Roman small town of Alchester has had very little large-scale modern excavation, although during road improvements the northern extramural settlement was examined (Booth *et al.* 2001)

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1.1 The principal aim of the programme of excavation was to establish the full extent, date, character, relationship, condition and significance of archaeological features, artefacts and deposits within the Site.
- 3.1.2 To address the archaeological potential as regards to the specific objectives outlined in the WSI. The principal aim of the programme of excavation was to preserve, by record, the archaeological potential of the identified areas.
- 3.1.3 Detailed objectives were identified for Areas 1-10:
- 3.1.4 Area 1: to examine the apparently unenclosed site of Late Iron Age/Romano-British settlement identified in the evaluation Area E.
- 3.1.5 Area 2: the targeted sample excavation of an apparent quarry of medieval date found in evaluation trench 16.
- 3.1.6 Area 3 and 4: to examine an area of upstanding earthworks, watercourses and sub-surface spring lines. Several periods were represented, including

significantly the Saxon period (a single Saxon sherd was found in evaluation trench 6 from a probable buried land surface).

- 3.1.7 Area 5: an area of approximately six hectares, the north-eastern part of the area contained evidence for Romano-British settlement and some Saxon activity. Upon initial stripping the excavation strategy was changed to focus on areas of greatest potential (see **Section 4**).
- 3.1.8 Area 6: an adjacent to the line of Roman Akeman Street where evaluation trenches 68 – 71 indicated the presence of possible Late Iron Age settlement, and Romano-British features, possibly quarries.
- 3.1.9 Area 7: an area of high archaeological potential that included remains of Bronze Age, Late Iron Age, Romano-British and medieval date (evaluation trenches 91 and 92). The excavation was undertaken to elucidate the date, nature, and form of the remains, addressing in particular the potential for further remains of Bronze Age date, in an area of known Bronze Age funerary monuments, and Late Iron Age-Romano-British (roadside) settlement, north of the Roman town of Alchester.
- 3.1.10 Areas 8 – 10: three relatively small areas were targeted on known Romano-British archaeology, particularly to identify potential roadside activity north of Alchester Roman town.

3.1.11

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Excavation methodology and recording

- 4.1.1 Before excavation began, information regarding the presence of any below ground services was sought from the Terence O'Rourke Ltd. Each area was 'swept' with a Cable Avoidance Tool to verify the absence of any underground services.
- 4.1.2 All works were conducted in compliance with the standards outlined in the Institute of Field Archaeologist's *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavations* (as amended 2001), except where they are superseded by statements made below.
- 4.1.3 All work was carried out in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992, and all other relevant Health and Safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice in force at the time.

Mechanical strip

- 4.1.4 The excavation Areas were stripped mechanically by a 360° tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a 2m wide, toothless bucket. Spoil was divided into topsoil and subsoil and heaped on separate bunds. Where possible, i.e. on smaller areas, spoil was heaped adjacent to the excavation. On larger areas spoil was loaded onto dumpers and stored as close as was practical. At the request of Mr Alan Woodley (the landowner) spoil from Area 7 was stored approximately 200m to the north on land not under cultivation.

- 4.1.5 All site stripping was carried out under constant archaeological supervision. Machine stripping continued down to the top of the undisturbed natural soils or archaeological deposits, whichever was encountered first. Once archaeological deposits were exposed all further excavation proceeded by hand.
- 4.1.6 During the mechanical strip the areas and upcast spoil were swept using a metal detector to recover metal artefacts.
- 4.1.7 During stripping it became clear that several areas contained sparse archaeological remains (**Figure 1**). In Area 6 only approximately two-thirds of the area was stripped before it was decided, in consultation with the CAO, that the resources would be redeployed to more productive areas of the Site. Thus Area 5 was sub-divided into Areas 5A, 13-17. Area 11 flooded shortly after stripping and was abandoned and Area 12 was never opened due to the sparsity of remains in Areas 5A and 13.

Pre-excavation mapping

- 4.1.8 Following completion of mechanical excavation, archaeological features and deposits were identified and defined. Features were mapped using a GPS device and a pre-excavation map of each area created. These were distributed, when required, to the CAO and the consultant for determination of the subsequent strategy of excavation.

Excavation of archaeological remains

- 4.1.9 Where archaeological features and deposits were encountered, excavation was carried out by hand. A sufficient sample of each layer/feature type was excavated in order to establish the date, nature, extent and condition of the archaeological remains. Pits and postholes were subject to a minimum of a 50% sample. Sufficient lengths of all ditches, linear boundaries, beamslots *etc* were excavated in order to elucidate the relationships and function of the features. All ditch/enclosure terminals were investigated.
- 4.1.10 Archaeological deposits and features, including burials, were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system and burial excavation guidance and recording protocols. All features and deposits were assigned a unique number.
- 4.1.11 A full graphic record was maintained. Sections and plans were produced at 1:10 and 1:20 respectively. All archaeological features were surveyed by GPS and the Ordnance Datum (OD) height of all features was calculated. The extent of all excavation areas was surveyed using GPS.
- 4.1.12 A photographic record was maintained, consisting of black and white, colour and digital images. The record included detailed images of archaeological deposits and features and other images to illustrate their location and context. The record also included images of the Site location, working shots and digital photographs showing backfilling and reinstatement of excavated areas.
- 4.1.13 All interventions were located in relation to the Ordnance Survey national grid, and all archaeological features were related to Ordnance Survey Datum.

4.1.14 Human remains were excavated and recorded in accordance with Wessex Archaeology's standard human remains policy. All relevant authorities were informed, the appropriate licence was obtained and correct protocols observed.

4.1.15 Un-urned cremation burials and other cremation-related deposits of similar appearance were half sectioned; deposits of > 0.10m depth were collected in spits. Each spit/quadrant was whole-earth recovered and allocated an individual sample number within a sample series.

4.2 Finds and environmental sampling

4.2.1 Appropriate strategies for the recovery of artefacts and environmental samples, and for archaeological science, were devised and implemented by Wessex Archaeology staff in consultation with the CAO, Oxfordshire Museums Service, and English Heritage's Regional Advisor for Archaeological Science.

4.2.2 Detailed sampling followed published guidance (e.g. English Heritage guidance on human bone, environmental archaeology, geoarchaeology, and archaeometallurgy) and Wessex Archaeology's sampling procedures. Wessex Archaeology's specialists were consulted and as necessary provided advice on excavation, recording, and sampling procedures.

Finds

4.2.3 Appropriate strategies for the recovery of artefacts were devised and implemented by Wessex Archaeology staff in keeping with Oxfordshire Museums Service guidance.

4.2.4 All artefacts from excavated contexts were retained, except those from features or deposits of obviously modern date. In such circumstances, sufficient artefacts were retained in order to elucidate the date and/or function of the feature or deposit. Material of undoubtedly modern date observed in up-cast was noted but not retained.

4.2.5 All artefacts were, as a minimum, washed, weighed, counted and identified (off Site). Any artefacts requiring conservation or specific storage conditions were dealt with immediately in line with *First Aid for Finds* (Watkinson and Neal 1998). Ironwork from stratified contexts was X-rayed and stored in a stable environment along with other fragile and delicate material. Suitable material, primarily the pottery, worked flint and non-ferrous metalwork, was scanned to assess the date range of the relevant assemblages.

Environmental samples

4.2.6 Bulk environmental soil samples for plant macro-fossils, small animal bones and other small artefacts were taken from appropriate well-sealed and dated archaeological deposits.

4.2.7 Bulk environmental soil samples were processed by flotation and scanned to assess the environmental potential of deposits, but were not fully analysed. The residues and sieved fractions were recorded and retained with the project archive.

4.2.8

4.3 Monitoring

- 4.3.1 The archaeological works were monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Mr Paul Smith, the County Archaeology Officer. Monitoring included Site visits to observe the stripped areas and provide advice on the excavation strategy, after discussion with the Consultant. It also included the 'signing off' of areas where archaeological excavation of an area, or parts thereof, had been completed.

4.4 The Archive

- 4.4.1 The artefacts and accompanying documentary records from the excavation have been compiled into a stable, fully cross-referenced, and indexed archive in accordance with Appendix 6 of *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991). The archive of the Site and of the previous evaluations is currently stored at the offices of Wessex Archaeology, Salisbury, Wiltshire, under the Wessex Archaeology Project codes 63560 (evaluation), 63561 (evaluation) and 63562 (excavation).
- 4.4.2 A digital archive (Access database) was also produced alongside the paper archive. This is a cross-referenced relational database.
- 4.4.3 Information was obtained prior to the commencement of fieldwork from Oxfordshire County Museums Service concerning conditions for the deposition of finds (see **Section 11.6** below).

5 RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The WSI set out seven areas of targeted excavation and three areas subject to strip, map and record. This strategy was altered during the programme of excavations to accommodate the location and varying densities of archaeological remains encountered. Areas that after partial machine stripping revealed little of archaeological interest were discontinued in favour of areas with greater potential. A total of 17 Areas were investigated. Area 5 was subdivided into eight smaller, targeted areas (Areas 5A and 11-17). The size and extent of these areas was determined by the density and orientation of features revealed.
- 5.1.2 Widely differing results were obtained across the 17 excavated areas. Areas 3, 10 and 17 were completely blank (**Figure 1**). Areas 8 and 11 were discontinued due to a combination of localised flooding and a paucity of archaeological features. It was decided not to excavate Area 12 as Area 11 immediately to the north had very rapidly flooded and Areas 5A and 13 to the west had revealed very low densities of features. Area 14 was extended in order to ascertain whether the high density of features continued to the east. Areas 2, 4, 6 and 9 contained relatively low densities of mostly undated archaeological remains; quarry pits, ditches and small hearths.
- 5.1.3 Much greater numbers of securely dated features were recorded in Areas 7, 14, 15 and 16. These comprised ditches, enclosures, pits, postholes,

hearths, corndriers/ovens and evidence for quarrying. Two stone-lined features, a stone revetted ditch and stone capped and lined culverts were excavated in Area 16. Area 14 contained a circular, stone-lined pit and a large, sub-rectangular enclosure ditch.

- 5.1.4 There was also a great variation in the underlying geology which had an effect on the density and character of archaeological features encountered. For example areas with underlying clay geology tended to produce a much smaller quantity of features than areas of solid limestone. A high percentage of ditches did not extend much deeper than the horizon of the solid limestone.

5.2 Area 1

- 5.2.1 Area 1 comprised a sub-rectangular parcel of land, approximately 1ha, aligned north-west to south-east and measuring 176.10m by 77.70m. It was located on the western part of the Site along the route of the proposed link road (**Figures 1-2**). The land was under cultivation prior to the excavation. The topography is level before falling away to the south with a steep incline towards the Gagle Brook.
- 5.2.2 The Area had been identified during evaluation (Wessex Archaeology 2006) as the possible site of Late Iron Age/early Romano-British (LIA/ERB) settlement and as having the potential to contribute towards the characterisation of the landscape surrounding the Roman town of Alchester. Aerial photography (Cox 2005) indicated the presence of field systems and associated features, the majority of which were located immediately to the north, outside the development area.
- 5.2.3 The soil sequence varied; at the northern edge of the Area the solid limestone lay directly beneath the plough soil at a depth of c. 0.30m. Central and southern parts of the Area revealed reddish brown silty loam subsoil which was deeper towards the centre of the area. The depth of this layer ranged from 0.05m to 0.25m. There was also a variation in the limestone geology, from solid limestone to Cornbrash with abundant limestone inclusions. In the north-west corner of the area there was a small band of silty clay that was relatively free of limestone inclusions.
- 5.2.4 This Area contained a low density of archaeological features. Two ditches, three pit groups, two hearths and a small number of isolated pits and tree-throw holes were recorded.
- 5.2.5 A typical section of ditch Group **22440** measured 2.17m wide by 0.76m deep. The ditch was cut into the underlying natural limestone. It was aligned from north-west to south-east, extending from under the northern baulk and terminating 55m to the north-west. There was no opposing terminal. The fills contained abundant quantities of fire cracked limestone and moderate to abundant quantities of Middle and Late Iron Age pottery. One excavated section (**22417**) of the ditch contained 207 sherds of Middle Iron Age calcareous ware. Elsewhere, three further sections each contained between 3 and 14 sherds of Late Iron Age grog-tempered and calcareous wares. This ditch appears to be part of the southern extremity of a field system visible on aerial photographs (Cox 2005, **Figure 1**). A similar linear feature identified on aerial photographs was aligned approximately was not located.

- 5.2.6 Ditch **12915** was a shallow, slightly curvilinear gully, aligned approximately north to south that was recorded during evaluation (Wessex Archaeology 2006). Ditch **12915** was cut by pit Group **22515**. Small quantities of Late Iron Age pottery were recovered from the fill of ditch **12915**.
- 5.2.7 Three groups of intercutting pits **22481**, **22515** and **25308** were excavated in the north-west corner of Area 1. An undated pit and a Late Iron Age pit, identified during the evaluation (**12906** and **12908**) were located south of these intercutting groups.
- 5.2.8 Pit Group **22481** consisted of two clusters of intercutting pits containing four and six pits and two discrete pits (**22467**, **22469**) located between the two clusters. The pit group has been broadly dated to the Late Iron Age, although the absence of any early Romano-British pottery and further examination of the pottery recovered may point towards a Middle Iron Age date. The pits were sub-circular in plan, the largest, **22446** measured 2.42m long by 2.06m wide and was 1.03m deep. The fills of **22446** contained animal bone and moderate quantities of Late Iron Age calcareous- and grog-tempered wares. All the other pits in this group were less than 0.60m deep and produced smaller quantities of finds. Pits **22459**, **22465** and **22473** each contained between two and seven sherds of Late Iron Age calcareous- or grog-tempered pottery. The remainder of the pits did not contain any dating evidence.
- 5.2.9 Pit Group **22515** contained seven intercutting pits. The pits were sub-circular in plan and mostly less than 0.50m in depth. The largest pit, **22500**, measured 1.96m long by 1.40 wide with a depth of 0.51m. Only the fills of two pits **22500** and **22501** contained small quantities of animal bone and Late Iron Age pottery.
- 5.2.10 Another possible pit Group (**23508**) consisted of four irregular features. No finds were recovered. These features may have resulted from root disturbance or be naturally formed hollows. Adjacent small, sub-circular pits **22443**, **22488** and **22491** did not produce any dating evidence.
- 5.2.11 This concentration of pits was located on a relatively small area of silty clay, rather than limestone or very stony soil. It is possible that these pits represent quarrying, perhaps extracting clay for ceramics or daub.
- 5.2.12 A shallow pit, **22456**, was located on the southern edge of Area 1. A section of the baulk was extended in order to reveal the full extent of this feature. Pit **22456** was sub-oval in plan, measuring 2.42m long, 1.34m wide with a depth of 0.14m. The single fill, **22457**, contained animal bone, pottery, burnt and struck flint, a fragment of a copper alloy object and a glass bead. The pottery comprised Late Iron Age sandy-tempered ware; Romano-British oxidised ware and greyware. The glass bead is of Roman date.
- 5.2.13 Pit **22437** was sub-circular in plan, measured 0.61m long, 0.50m wide and 0.23m deep. The single fill contained charcoal, burnt bone and two sherds of Late Iron Age grog-tempered pottery. This was an isolated feature located c. 18.00m south of the main pit clusters (**Figure 2**).
- 5.2.14 An undated hearth (**22413**) was located south-east of ditch **22440**. It consisted of an irregularly shaped oval of burnt soil measuring 0.72m long

by 0.54m wide with a depth of 0.08m. The fill contained charcoal and small quantities of burnt animal bone. A similar feature was recorded to the north of the terminal of ditch **22440**. Hearth **22421** was sub-circular in plan measuring 0.40m in diameter with a depth of 0.07m. The fill contained charcoal and small quantities of burnt stone.

5.2.15 South-east of hearth **22413** was a scatter of undated features identified during the evaluation (Wessex Archaeology 2006, **13003**, **13004**, **13108**).

5.2.16 A total of six tree-throw holes were excavated (**23423**, **22425**, **22427**, **22429**, **22441** and **22450**). None produced any dating evidence although the fill of **22441** contained a dump of burnt material comprising charcoal and fire cracked stone.

5.3 Area 2

5.3.1 Area 2 was rectangular measuring 34.00m by 28.10m, targeted over an apparent medieval quarry recorded in evaluation trench 16 (Wessex Archaeology 2006). The plot was located in the north-western part of the Site, east of the farm track and approximately 160m to the south of the B4030 (**Figure 1**). The land rises very gently to the south and was lying fallow when the excavation was carried out.

5.3.2 The excavation was carried out to confirm the nature and date of the quarry and investigate any evidence of the exploitation of the immediate landscape during the medieval period.

5.3.3 The soil sequence consisted of dark brown clay silt plough soil overlying orange brown sandy clay subsoil. The underlying geology was solid limestone and small areas of reddish brown silty clay with abundant limestone fragments (Cornbrash).

5.3.4 The quarry pit (**22406**) described during evaluation was identified in the centre of Area 2, and after stripping proved to be an irregular sub-rectangular feature measuring 12.31m by 7.47m. A machine-excavated slot through the feature was taken down to a depth of 1.2m at which point flooding became so severe that excavation was discontinued. This work was carried out during winter, with a high water table (c. 0.40m below the top of the feature); pumping out the pit was not practical therefore the feature was not fully excavated.

5.3.5 Five fills (**22407-22412**) were noted in the slot excavated through the quarry pit. The fills consisted mostly of limestone fragments with very small quantities of silty clay. Very little of archaeological interest was recovered from the pit fills. Only one, **22410**, contained a small sherd of post-medieval redware pottery.

5.4 Area 3

5.4.1 Area 3 comprised a rectangular plot that measured 28.80m by 20.70m. It was located in the north-west corner of the Site in the field immediately to the south of the B3040 and to the east of the farm track (**Figure 1**). The Area was situated in a field of acutely undulating rough pasture. The Pingle

Brook flows diagonally across the field from the north-west corner and along the southern hedge line.

- 5.4.2 The acutely undulating topography in Area 3 appeared to indicate the presence of upstanding and negative features, potentially the remains of intense human activity; earthworks, watercourses and quarrying, possibly dated to the Saxon period - a single sherd of Saxon pottery came from evaluation trench 6 (Wessex Archaeology 2006).
- 5.4.3 The soil sequence was fairly uniform over the whole of Area 3. The natural geology was yellowish brown silty clay with frequent limestone inclusions and was overlain by brown silty clay subsoil and dark brown silty clay topsoil.
- 5.4.4 No archaeological features were revealed in this area. The possible gully recorded during evaluation upon closer examination was revealed to be a natural feature. Intermittent plough furrows were also visible. Small quantities of 19th and 20th century pottery were recovered from the topsoil; no finds were retained.

5.5 Area 4

- 5.5.1 Area 4 was located approximately 170m to the east of Area 3 (**Figure 1**). The Pingle Brook lies to the south-east. An area measuring 27.90m by 21.60m was opened up.
- 5.5.2 This part of the field appeared to have been extensively quarried, forming a semi-circular “bowl” approximately 110m in diameter with a 1m high ridge from the north-west to the south-west.
- 5.5.3 The soil sequence in Area 4 proved to be informative. In total four sections were recorded. The topsoil (**22728**) varied in thickness, being very shallow at the base of the bowl and up to 0.50m thick on the inner slope of the bowl. Finds from this layer were all modern. Underneath the topsoil was a layer of pale brown silty clay (**22729**) with frequent limestone fragments, which appears to be the upcast and rejected stone from the quarry. This layer was 0.30m deep and contained no finds.
- 5.5.4 Below this upcast was a layer of mid-brown silty clay, **22730**, from which no finds were recovered. This appears to be the original topsoil buried by quarrying. This layer is only present in fragments, suggesting that the topsoil was stripped before quarrying commenced. Beneath the buried topsoil was a well compacted layer of orange brown silt loam subsoil, **22731**, averaging 0.25m in depth, containing no finds. The natural geology was a mixture of silty clay with small limestone fragments and more solid limestone to the west of Area 4, representing the extent of the quarried area.
- 5.5.5 At the base of the quarry bowl, the soil sequence comprised thin topsoil, less than 0.10m deep, that lay directly over the disturbed limestone natural. This would seem to indicate that the feature is relatively modern.
- 5.5.6 Two features were recorded in the bowl of the quarry. A shallow modern ditch, **25347**, was aligned roughly from north to south across the centre of the area. The fill contained modern debris, tin cans, bricks, window glass. An

irregular linear feature that followed the base of the slope appears to have been the course of a silted stream. The base of the quarry flooded soon after excavation so further investigation of these features could not take place. A penny dated to the reign of George VI was recovered from the topsoil.

5.6 Area 5A

- 5.6.1 Area 5A was a sub-rectangular plot of land measuring 64.80m by 44.50m. It was located in the north-west corner of the original Area 5, as described in the WSI, to the east of the farm track and south of the Pingle Brook. The land rises very gently to the south and was lying fallow at the time of excavation (**Figures 1, 3**).
- 5.6.2 This area was identified during the evaluation (Wessex Archaeology 2006) as the possible site of Romano-British and Saxon settlements and as having the potential to characterise the Romano-British and Saxon period landscapes north of Alchester Roman town.
- 5.6.3 The topsoil was mid-brown silty clay overlying reddish brown silty clay subsoil which in some parts of the Site was up to 0.30m deep. The natural geology varied, in the north it consisted of grey and reddish brown sandy gravel and in the south was patchy Cornbrash and solid limestone.
- 5.6.4 A fairly low density of archaeological features was recorded in this area. These comprised three ditches, three corndrier/ovens, a posthole alignment, a palaeochannel and a sparse scattering of isolated pits and tree-throw holes.
- 5.6.5 Ditch **22547** (Group **25285**), was 1.26 m wide with a depth of 0.27m and was aligned approximately east to west (**Figure 3**). Three sherds of pottery and some ceramic building material (CBM) dated to the Romano-British period were recovered from fills **22549** and **22576**. Two further linear features were recorded to the south of **25285**. Ditch **22565** (Group **25286**) measured 0.77m wide by 0.19m deep and was aligned south-west to north-east. The ditch extended from the eastern baulk and terminated 15.6m to the south-west. No dating evidence was recovered. Only a short, 3.52m length of ditch **22567** was visible as it continued beyond the eastern baulk. The ditch measured 0.71m wide by 0.12m deep and contained one small sherd of Saxon sandy ware.
- 5.6.6 A gentle arc of 15 postholes was recorded roughly in the centre of Area 5A (Group **22708**). The postholes were all circular or sub-circular and regular in plan with steep sides and flat bases. They ranged from 0.44m to 0.68m in diameter and 0.22m to 0.37m in depth. The fills were mostly greyish brown silty clay with rare charcoal flecks. The postholes were not evenly spaced, the two closest were 0.55m apart while the two with the greatest distance between them were 2.97m apart. Thirteen postholes were 100% excavated in order to recover dating evidence but none was found. Environmental samples were taken from three postholes, one of which, **22688**, contained large quantities of charcoal, probably of oak.
- 5.6.7 Three keyhole-shaped corndriers were excavated in Area 5A (**Figure 3**). Two of these, **22531** and **22532** were positioned together forming an L

shape. Both of these features were an elongated, irregular oval shape in plan. The third corndrier, **22554**, was located south-east of **22531** and **22532**. None of the ovens/corndriers identified were as elaborate as the stone-built, T-shaped corndrier recorded at the extramural settlement of Alchester (Booth *et al.* 2001, 147, figs 5.77, 5.81).

- 5.6.8 Corndrier **22531** measured 2.37m long, 0.87m wide and had a maximum depth of 0.32m. It was orientated approximately north to south. There were five fills (**22533-7**) all of which contained evidence of *in situ* burning; ash, charcoal and fragments of burnt limestone. Relatively sparse quantities of ash and charcoal were observed, this is consistent with a feature that would have been cleaned out between episodes of firing. The surrounding natural soil did not show signs of intense burning, which suggests the gentle heat needed to dry grain rather than the intense heat needed to fire ceramics. The feature was not dated. Samples taken from fills **22533** and **22535** yielded only one cereal fragment, a glume base of hulled wheat.
- 5.6.9 Corndrier **22532** measured 2.40m long, 0.99m wide and had a depth of 0.19m at its deepest point. It was aligned from east to west. There were nine fills (**22538-46**), three of which contained ash and charcoal. Dating evidence was not recovered. Corndrier **22554** was located on the eastern edge of the Site, immediately to the north of Ditch **25285**. It measured 1.99m long by 0.95m wide with a depth of 0.33m. Two fills were recorded, both of which contained charcoal but no dating evidence. This feature flooded and the sides collapsed before it could be fully recorded.
- 5.6.10 An irregularly shaped, meandering palaeochannel, **22523**, was recorded in the north-west corner of Area 5A. It entered the site from the western baulk and terminated 18m to the east. The feature measured 1.38m wide by 0.17m deep and contained one fill from which no finds were recovered.
- 5.6.11 Pit **22563** was a shallow, circular feature measuring 0.76m long by 0.71m wide and 0.07m deep, there was one fill which produced small quantities of charcoal but no dating evidence. Tree-throw hole **22573** was an irregular sub-oval feature that contained a single struck flint and an undiagnostic sherd of sandy-tempered pottery (context **22574**) Tree-throw holes **22516**, **22520**, **22527**, **22529** and **22563** remain undated.

5.7 Area 6

- 5.7.1 Area 6 comprised a sub-rectangular plot of land that measured 97.60m by 39.10m located on the eastern edge of the Site, immediately to the west of the A41(**Figure 1**). The land slopes gently to the south and was lying fallow at the time of excavation.
- 5.7.2 Machine excavation in this area was discontinued after approximately two thirds of the Area had been stripped, in consultation with the CAO, it was decided to concentrate on other areas that were potentially more productive.
- 5.7.3 The area is adjacent to the line of the Roman Road and evaluation suggested the possible presence of Late Iron Age settlement activity and Roman-British features related to quarrying.

- 5.7.4 In this area the soil sequence varied. On the northern part of the Site dark brown silty loam topsoil overlay reddish brown silty clay subsoil above solid limestone and patches of Cornbrash. To the south of the area the topsoil lay directly above the solid limestone. The subsoil was 0.25m at its deepest.
- 5.7.5 Very little of archaeological interest was revealed in this area. Four large, irregularly shaped quarry pits were photographed and mapped but not fully recorded. One quarry pit on the northern edge of Area 6 was machine excavated to a depth of 1.4m. It contained a single silty clay fill but no dating evidence was recovered. The largest pit measured 24.4m by 25.6m, the smallest 7.7m by 4.9m. These features correspond with the undated pits recorded during evaluation. Five possible pit/posthole features and a linear feature were investigated and proved to be natural hollows. A few sherds of Romano-British pottery were recovered from the topsoil.
- 5.8 Area 7**
- 5.8.1 Area 7 was a triangular plot measuring 176.20m by 156.30m by 82.60m, with its longest axis aligned approximately north to south (**Figure 1**). A slot 64.10m long by 4.60m wide was extended to the south-east along the axis of the northern boundary. Three 2.00m wide trenches were extended for varying lengths (c. 25m-45m) from the eastern boundary (**Figure 4**). The land slopes to the south-east and was under crop at the time of excavation. The southern half of the area was low lying and prone to flooding; features visible in the three trenches were mapped but not fully recorded for this reason.
- 5.8.2 This area was identified during the evaluation (Wessex Archaeology 2006) as having a high archaeological potential. Features and finds dated to the Bronze Age, Late Iron Age, Romano-British and medieval periods were recorded during evaluation (Wessex Archaeology 2006). The aim of the excavation of this area was to investigate the date, nature and form of these remains, in particular the potential for Bronze Age activity in an area of known Bronze Age funerary monuments. Two Bronze Age barrows, visible on aerial photographs (Cox 2005) and identified during the evaluation (Wessex Archaeology 2006), were located c. 150m to the north-east of the area (**Figure 1**). Pottery recovered from the section dug through the larger, western ring ditch was dated to the Early Bronze Age. A Middle Bronze Age palstave was retrieved from evaluation trench 92 located within the excavation area (Wessex Archaeology 2006; Back Cover). The position of the area, close to the line of the Roman road, was located to reveal any possible remains of Late Iron Age-Romano-British roadside settlement.
- 5.8.3 The topography of this area meant that the soil sequence varied dramatically. Over the low lying, southern part of the site there was a layer of colluvial soil under the topsoil that was 0.30m-0.60m deep. The layer at which archaeological features were encountered was a more clayey, but still possibly colluvial, soil 0.70m-0.90m below ground level. Further west the colluvial subsoil lay directly over Cornbrash and solid limestone. Along the northern boundary the topsoil lay directly over limestone. Generally the colluvial layer became less deep upslope to the west. On the north-western part of the site the natural was mottled greyish blue and pale yellow clay under a c. 0.10-0.15m layer of colluvium and thin topsoil.

5.8.4 The highest density of archaeological remains was recorded on the southern and eastern parts of the area. The features became less frequent towards the north-west, especially on the areas of clay geology. In contrast with other areas investigated, the majority of features recorded were of Late Iron Age date; a few Romano-British features and a single Beaker burial were also identified (**Figure 4**). A small quantity of medieval pottery was recovered from the topsoil and subsoil layers during machine stripping.

Beaker burial

5.8.5 Grave **25126** was a sub-rectangular feature, aligned south-west to north-east, measuring 1.25m by 0.77m with a depth of 0.05m. The grave was located towards the north-east corner of Area 7, approximately 9.00m south of the northern boundary of the site and 2.40m north-west of ditch **25362** (**Figure 4**). The barrows recorded during evaluation (Wessex Archaeology 2006, evaluation trenches 77-79) were approximately 150m to the north-east. The underlying geology was solid limestone.

5.8.6 The grave contained a single crouched male inhumation, with the skull orientated to the north-east. The remains of what had probably been a complete Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age comb-decorated Beaker (Object Number (ON) 93) was located in the south-east corner of the grave immediately to the east of the feet and ankles (**Figure 4**). A backed flint knife was recorded adjacent to the left heel (ON 92) and a cylindrical worked bone toggle (ON 91) found next to the right shoulder. A piece of burnt bone (ON 94) was recovered from between the ribs and the left humerus. The shallowness of the grave meant that the feature had suffered considerable plough damage; both skeleton and pottery were in poor condition.

Iron Age enclosures, ditches and associated features

5.8.7 A small rectangular enclosure (Enclosure Group **25380**) was located in the south-eastern part of the Site. It was composed of Ditch Groups **25373**, **25374** and **25376** (**Figure 4**). The enclosure measured approximately 17m by 13m. The ditches were up to 1.04m wide and 0.25m deep. The fills of ditches **25374** and **25376** contained animal bone, charcoal, fired clay and Late Iron Age pottery.

5.8.8 Two postholes, **25171** and **25188**, were excavated inside the enclosure and the faint traces of two further postholes were observed and mapped; the four postholes possibly forming a sub-rectangular structure. The fill of posthole **25188** contained two fragments of burnt bone, and quantities of charcoal came from **25171**, however no dateable finds were found.

5.8.9 A shallow undated hearth (**25115**) was located immediately east of ditch **25373**. The hearth appears to represent a single episode of burning rather than repeated uses. West of ditch **25373** was an undated ditch (**14004**) identified during the evaluation. A small undated pit (**25209**) was located adjacent to the western edge of ditch **25374**. It measured 0.54m in diameter and was 0.14m deep. Burnt stone and animal bone was recovered from its fill.

5.8.10 The enclosure was cut by a wide ditch aligned north-west to south-east (Group **25375**). It was up to 2.76m wide and was at least 0.57m deep, the feature flooded at this depth. Ditch **25375** produced pottery mostly dated to

- the Late Iron Age with a few small sherds of probably intrusive Romano-British pottery.
- 5.8.11 A number of ditches (**25078**, **25071** and **25366**) intercut at this point. Ditch **20578** appears to have been the earliest in the sequence, being cut by **25375** with **25071** cutting **25375**. Late Iron Age pottery was recovered from the fills of ditches **25078** and **25071**.
- 5.8.12 Ditches **25078** and **25375** were cut by the southern terminal of a long north-east to south-west aligned ditch (Group **25366**). Ditch **25366** typically measured 0.70m wide by 0.25m deep. Late Iron Age pottery was recovered from its fills. Ditch **25366** cut through a curved, possible enclosure ditch (Group **25368**), north-west to south-east aligned ditch **25124**, and was itself cut by a sinuous north to south aligned ditch (Group **25365**). Five sections excavated through the ditch **25365** produced sparse quantities of animal bone and Late Iron Age pottery.
- 5.8.13 To the north-east of enclosure **25380** four curved ditches (Groups **25368**, **25369**, **25370** and **25371**) may have formed a series of small enclosures (Enclosure Group **25381**). The maximum width of the ditches was 0.62m with a maximum depth of 0.16m. Ditch **25371** was aligned north-south. The northern terminal of this ditch formed an entrance with the southern terminal of ditch **25370**. Both **25368** and **25370** cut pit **25158** which was dated to the Late Iron Age. The northern terminal of ditch **25370** was visible 3.50m to the west of ditch **25366**.
- 5.8.14 Animal bone and Late Iron Age pottery were recovered from the fills of ditches **25370** and **25371**. A rectangular fired clay 'brick' came from the fill of ditch **25370** (context **25219**).
- 5.8.15 Ditches **25368** and **25369** were 13m apart and approximately parallel. The southern terminals of ditches **25368** and **25369** formed an entrance 3.56m wide. These ditches may have been for stock management and used in association with ditch Groups **25370** and **25371**. The northern part of this area was however open, no traces of postholes, which may have formed a fence closing off this area, was identified. However small ephemeral features such as postholes may not have survived. Typically the ditches measured less than 1.00m wide and 0.40m deep. The fills of ditch **25368** contained animal bone, charcoal, burnt stone, Late Iron Age pottery and daub. The fill of **25369** yielded Late Iron Age pottery, animal bone and a fragment of loomweight (ON 95).
- 5.8.16 A shallow, undated posthole, **25037**, was recorded within the enclosure. An irregularly shaped, shallow pit (**25117**) containing Late Iron Age pottery was located immediately to the east of ditch **25368**, 3.90m south of the northern terminal. Sub-oval pit **25000** was located c. 2.60m south of ditch **25369**; the upper fill produced sherds of Late Iron Age calcareous and grog-tempered pottery.
- 5.8.17 Pit Group **25378** comprised four sub-circular pits (**25198-25204**) located approximately 1m south of the terminal of ditch **25370**. The largest pit, (**25198**) measured 0.70m long by 0.58m wide with a depth of 0.18m. The remaining pits ranged from 0.40m-0.32m in diameter with depths of 0.19m-0.12m. The fills of all four pits produced notably similar material comprising

burnt stone, fired clay, charcoal and animal bone but no dateable finds were recovered.

- 5.8.18 Two north-west to south-east aligned ditches (**25014** and Group **25372**) extended from the western baulk (**Figure 4**). The western terminal of a third ditch (**25225**), the eastern terminal of which butted up to ditch **25369**. The ditches may have formed part of a field system (possibly ladder enclosures) or may have been associated with the small irregular enclosures. However not enough of these features survived to enable a firm interpretation to be established. The ditches were severely truncated. There were no finds from the fill of ditch **25372** but ditches **25014** and **25225** produced animal bone, charcoal and Late Iron Age pottery.
- 5.8.19 Between the western boundary and ditch **25365** there was a scattering of features that appeared to have no pattern or structure. These comprised seven pits, four postholes, three short ditches and a number of tree-throw holes and natural hollows that contained archaeological material.
- 5.8.20 A short, gently curving ditch (Group **25364**) was aligned north-west to south-east. Severely truncated, the ditch was less than 0.10m deep, the fills contained animal bone but no dating material.
- 5.8.21 Ditches **25245** and **25248** were also aligned north-west to south-east. Ditch **25245** cut ditch **25248**. Both ditches were less than 0.30m deep. Late Iron Age pottery was recovered from the fill of ditch **25248** during the evaluation (Wessex 2006).
- 5.8.22 The pits varied in size and shape; the largest of which (**25131**) was located west ditch **25365**. It was irregularly in plan, measuring 2.66m long by 1.76m wide and a maximum depth of 0.32m. There were three fills, the uppermost contained animal bone and Late Iron Age pottery. Pit **25121**, was sub-circular in plan with a diameter of 1.92m and a depth of 0.39m. Two fills contained animal bone, oyster shell, struck and burnt flint and Late Iron Age grog-tempered and calcareous pottery. Pits **25045** and **25054** were sub-oval in plan. The fills of **25045** and **25054** yielded burnt stone, animal bone and Late Iron Age pottery. South-east of this group of pits was a rectangular pit (**25173**), which measured 2.30m long by 1.20m wide, 0.83m deep and had been cut by a smaller, sub-circular pit (**25195**). Pit **25173** contained probable Late Iron Age pottery. North-east of pit **25173** there was an undated circular pit (**25277**).
- 5.8.23 Four isolated postholes (**25239**, **25241**, **25243** and **25253**) were excavated within this area. None contained any datable finds. A shallow sub-rectangular pit, initially identified in evaluation trench 104 (Wessex 2006) was located south of the scattered pit group. Two iron objects (ON 60 and 63) were recovered from this feature but no dating evidence was found.

Four-post structures

- 5.8.24 Apart from the possible structure within enclosure 25380 described above, three four-post structures were identified (Groups **25145**, **25082** and **25049**). Two of the structures were located towards the northern end of the Site (**25049** and **25082**), with the third (**25145**) positioned between ditches **25365** and **25366**. No dating evidence was recovered from these features but the fills of postholes within Group **25049** contained charcoal.

Other features

- 5.8.25 Ditch **25365** was a sinuous feature that was aligned approximately north to south (**Figure 4**). The northern terminal was adjacent to the southern terminal of a north-west to south-east orientated ditch (Group **25363**). It was suggested that these two may have been the same ditch, the profiles are very different however; the profile of ditch **25363** was steeper, deeper and more regular.
- 5.8.26 Ditch **25365** appears to represent one of the later phases of activity on Area 7. It cut diagonally through straight regular ditch **25366** and a short curving length of east to west aligned ditch to the south (Group **25367**). It was cut by a sub-circular, shallow pit, **25113**, that was filled with large quantities of limestone fragments but did not produce any dating evidence. The fills of ditch **25365** produced charcoal, burnt stone, animal bone and Late Iron Age pottery.
- 5.8.27 A cluster of three irregularly shaped pits, Group **25282**, was located south of ditch 25366. One pit (**25135**) contained 16 sherds of Late Iron Age calcareous pottery.
- 5.8.28 Ditch **25124** was an L-shaped feature of Late Iron Age date; it was cut by ditch **25366**. The stub of a possible south-east to north-west orientated ditch extended from the northern edge of the ditch. It is possible that the line of sub-oval, shallow pits to the north (Group **25379**) was actually a continuation of this ditch albeit heavily disturbed. Pit **25088** (Group **25379**) produced small quantities of Late Iron Age grog-tempered pottery which would suggest the features were contemporary.
- 5.8.29 North of pit Group **25379** was a scatter of mostly undated pits and postholes (**25086**, **25096**, **25180**, **25090** and **25164**). These were small sub-circular features. Only feature **25180** contained any dating evidence: fired clay and two sherds of late prehistoric pottery came from the upper fill. This feature appears to have functioned as a hearth or small oven, the lowest fill revealed evidence for *in situ* burning. The central fill contained unshaped limestone slabs, possibly the remains of a stone lining.
- 5.8.30 Two short lengths of ditch (**25367** and **25233**), immediately south-west of ditch **25124**, were undated. Between these two ditches there was an irregular cluster of four postholes (Group **25377**). This group comprised three closely spaced postholes aligned south-west to north-east and a single posthole cutting ditch **25233** close to its terminal. The postholes were sub-circular in plan and measured 0.50m-0.29m in diameter with depths of 0.19m-0.21m. No pottery was recovered, but posthole **25235** produced an undiagnostic fragment of CBM.
- 5.8.31 Pit **25156** was an isolated located between two four-post structures (**25049** and **25080**). It was sub-circular in plan, measuring 1.30m long by 1.10m wide and was 0.75m deep. The fill contained large quantities of limestone fragments but no dating evidence was recovered. Pit **25265** was located south-west of ditch **25363**. It was oval in plan and was 0.49m deep. No finds were recovered.
- 5.8.32 At northern end of the Site there was a north-west - south-east aligned ditch (Group **25362**). It was a steep-sided, regular feature that typically measured

1.37m wide by 0.41m deep; it did not produce any datable material but appeared to cut ditch **25363** which has been dated to the Late Iron Age. To the north there was a shallow ditch **25052**, the fill of which contained fired clay and small quantities of Late Iron Age pottery.

- 5.8.33 Ten possible archaeological features were investigated in the slot that extended to the south-east along the axis of the northern boundary of Area 7, all of which, save one, proved to be natural hollows or tree-throw holes. Ditch **23262** measured 0.65m wide by 0.23m deep and was aligned south-west to north-east. The fill produced small quantities of Late Iron Age pottery. Several further possible ditches and pits were mapped but not fully recorded in the three trenches opened to the south-west of this slot (**Figure 4**).

Late Iron Age-Early Romano British activity

- 5.8.34 A sparse scatter of features was dated to this period, although the dating evidence is generally very poor.
- 5.8.35 Ditch **25184** extended from under the western boundary and was aligned NNE to SSW for a distance of 11.60m before exhibiting a 90° turn and exiting the site. It measured 1.02m wide by 0.36m deep with a single fill that yielded small quantities of pottery dated to the Late Iron Age/Romano-British period.
- 5.8.36 Pit **25060** was located north-east of ditch 25184. It measured 1.28m long, 0.91m wide with a depth of 0.48. A single sherd of Romano-British greyware was recovered from its fill.
- 5.8.37 Posthole **25164** was located at the northern end of the Site near the terminal of ditch **25366**. It was circular in plan measuring 0.36m in diameter and was 0.12m deep. The fill produced a flint blade, one sherd of Romano-British greyware and small quantities of charcoal and animal bone.

Saxon activity

- 5.8.38 Isolated pit/posthole **25207** was located 2.50m east of these pits and contained four sherds of Saxon organic-tempered pottery.

Post-medieval and modern features

- 5.8.39 Ditch **25229** was a narrow, shallow feature that extended from the eastern boundary of the site on a south-west to north-east alignment for a distance of 10.98m. The fill produced post-medieval redware pottery and CBM.
- 5.8.40 Ditch **25154** was located in the south of Area 7; it was aligned north-west to south-east and proved to be a modern feature containing quantities of glass and 19th-20th century pottery.

5.8.41

5.9 Area 8

- 5.9.1 Area 8 comprised a narrow rectangular plot of land that measured 66.30m by 21.60m, located towards the south-east corner of the Site (**Figure 1**). The land slopes to the south and was under cultivation at the time of excavation.

5.9.2 This was one of three small areas of targeted excavation aimed at identifying the potential for Romano-British roadside/settlement activity immediately to the north of Alchester Roman town. Two undated linear features and a possible palaeochannel were recorded during evaluation. Several colluvial layers were observed in the trial trenches, the underlying geology was up to 1.14m below ground level. The natural layers were dark brown silty clay and patches of blueish grey clay.

5.9.3 This excavation was located on low lying ground and the work was carried out in early February. The Site began to flood shortly after machining commenced and was still flooded eight weeks later. No finds were recovered and no features were observed during machine excavation. In consultation with the CAO the decision was made to abandon this area.

5.10 Area 9

5.10.1 Area 9 was a roughly square plot of land measuring 28.30m by 27.50m. It was located immediately to the east of the A41, in the south-east corner of the Site, at the junction of the proposed link road and the A41 (**Figure 1**). The land slopes gently to the south and was under crop at the time of excavation. This area had not been previously evaluated.

5.10.2 This area lay very close to the north to south line of Akeman Street and the Roman small town of Alchester lay to the south-east.

5.10.3 In contrast to Area 8, the natural geology in Area 9 was less than 0.40m below ground level. The soil sequence comprised topsoil overlying pale yellow Oolitic limestone rubble with coarse pale yellow sand. This particular natural layer was not encountered elsewhere on Site during the excavation but similar geology was observed in evaluation trench 117 (Wessex Archaeology 2006).

5.10.4 Only one archaeological feature was revealed in Area 9. Ditch **22400** (Group **25287**) was 1.48m wide by 0.36m deep with a flat base and was aligned roughly north to south. Two 1m sections were recorded, the fills contained small quantities of charcoal but no dating evidence was recovered.

5.11 Area 10

5.11.1 Area 10 was a sub-rectangular plot of land measuring 33.40m by 20.00m, located immediately to the west of Akeman Street (**Figure 1**). The area was positioned along the route of the proposed link road to the south-east of the main area of the Site. The land here was level and comprised rough pasture and scrub. A small stream flows south-west to north-east along the eastern boundary of the Site.

5.11.2 The soil sequence was broadly similar over the entire Site. The underlying geology was yellowish brown sandy clay overlain by a layer of silty clay alluvium and dark brown sandy loam topsoil. The ground was spongy underfoot and became boggy to the east of the excavation area.

5.11.3 Evaluation revealed a north-south aligned ditch (**22303**) of Late Iron Age/ Early Romano-British date immediately to the north of the area that was eventually excavated (Wessex Archaeology 2007, trench 223). Undulating

remnants of a ridge and furrow system were visible, orientated north-west to south-east across the Site.

5.11.4 No archaeological features were visible after stripping. The water table was close to the ground surface and standing water appeared at, or just below the level of the natural layers. Numerous modern land drains were also identified.

5.11.5

5.12 Areas 11 and 12

5.12.1 Area 11 was abandoned shortly after machine stripping commenced due to combination of rapid flooding and paucity of archaeological remains. Area 12 was not excavated; as the density of archaeological features on Areas 5A and 13 had proved very low it was decided to concentrate on other potentially more productive areas (see **Section 4**).

5.12.2

5.13 Area 13

5.13.1 Area 13 was located approximately 40m south of Area 5A in what would have been the south-west corner of the originally specified Area 5. It comprised a slightly irregular rectangular plot measuring 55.80m by 54.20m (**Figure 1**). The land rises almost imperceptibly to the south and was lying fallow at the time of excavation.

5.13.2 This area was targeted in order to further investigate the environs of a north-east to south-west orientated ditch that was recorded during evaluation (Wessex Archaeology 2006). The feature had not been securely dated; two flint flakes recovered from the fill indicate that the ditch is of possible prehistoric date.

5.13.3 In common with several of the other excavated areas, the soil sequence varied over Area 13. On the northern edge of the area the topsoil lay directly over Cornbrash and solid limestone, in some parts the solid rock was less than 0.30m below the ground surface. Further south reddish brown silty clay subsoil was recorded. On the southern edge of the area the subsoil reached depths of 0.15m-0.20m, decreasing in depth towards the centre of the area before petering out at the northern edge.

5.13.4 A low density of archaeological features was revealed in Area 13 (**Figure 3**), comprising a ditch, pits, postholes, a hearth and an undated cremation burial. A small number of tree-throw holes, natural hollows and the remains of two hedge lines were also investigated.

5.13.5 Ditch Group **25283**, initially recorded during evaluation, was a flat bottomed feature measuring 2.44m wide by 0.41m deep. It was aligned north-east to south-west and was also visible in Area 15 where it was considerably wider (ditch **22715**, **Figure 6**). Two sections were excavated through this feature; both revealed it to have a single fill from which were recovered small quantities of animal bone, three sherds of Late Iron Age pottery and a piece

of worked flint. The pottery consisted of small abraded sherds and may be residual.

- 5.13.6 A shallow, unurned cremation burial (**22593**) was situated towards the southern edge of the area. The cremation grave was sub-circular in plan, measured 0.48m by 0.37m and was 0.07m deep. The fill, **22594**, contained charcoal and small fragments of human bone of an adult possibly male. Some redeposited pyre debris was also recovered. No dating evidence was recovered from the deposit.
- 5.13.7 Three pits were recorded (**22579**, **22582** and **22606**). These were all small, shallow sub-rounded features less than 0.15m deep. Pit **22579** contained two pieces of worked flint and was positioned adjacent to pit **22582** which produced a single sherd of Late Iron Age pottery. Pit **22601** contained three pieces of unworked flint but no dating evidence. Tree-throw holes **22595** and **22604** did not contain anything of archaeological interest. Features **22617** and **22630** appear to have been natural hollows.
- 5.13.8 Hearth **22613** was located between the remains of two modern hedge lines (**22619** and **25284**). It was sub-oval in plan and measured 1.20m by 0.62m with a depth of 0.15m. The fill, **22614**, contained charcoal, burnt stone, animal bone, one sherd of Roman greyware pottery and an iron blade, a small ring and a nail (ONs 16, 17 and 18).
- 5.13.9 Postholes **22601**, **22606** and **22608** were irregularly spaced and aligned south-west to north-east. The fill of **22606** produced one fragment of animal bone and all the fills contained small quantities of charcoal. None of the postholes contained any dating evidence. West of this group, two postholes (**3103**, **3105**) were found in the evaluation. Each contained a single sherd of Romano-British pottery.
- 5.13.10 Pit **22577** was a shallow, oval feature measuring 0.31m by 0.26m and was 0.09m deep. There was one fill, **22578**, which produced a partial calf skeleton (ABG 14) and 13 sherds of 5th -7th century Saxon pottery. The pottery comprised sherds of the same vessel, probably damaged by ploughing as the base of the feature was very close to the ground surface. The quantity of pottery and animal bone retrieved suggests a deliberate deposit.
- 5.13.11 The remnants of two post-medieval/modern hedge lines (**25284/22584** and **22619**) originally crossed the area (**Figure 3**). The fill of **25284** produced one residual sherd of Romano-British pottery; the fill of **22584** contained seven sherds of post-medieval earthenware. A residual sherd of Saxon sandy ware and one sherd of post-medieval redware were retrieved from the fill of **22619**.

5.13.12

5.14 Area 14

- 5.14.1 Area 14 was an irregularly shaped plot measuring approximately 68.90m by 38.20m. Additional areas were stripped to the east and south to reveal the extent, density and direction of archaeological activity, although this was

restricted by the presences of overhead power cables and hedge lines (**Figure 1**). The land was lying fallow at the time of excavation.

- 5.14.2 Two ditches containing Late Iron Age/early Romano-British pottery was recovered from this area during evaluation (Oxford Archaeology 2002a, Tr 3). Three ditches and two pits, the fills of which contained early Romano-British pottery, were excavated in a trench approximately 11m to the south of the excavation area (Oxford Archaeology 2002b, Tr 4).
- 5.14.3 The underlying geology was solid limestone over most of the area, changing to Cornbrash on the eastern quarter of the site. To the south of the area this lay directly beneath the topsoil at a depth of c. 0.30m; to the north there was a reddish brown alluvial layer with a maximum depth of c. 0.50m. Area 14 was close to the Pingle Brook which runs from west to east along the hedge line before continuing into the field to the north.
- 5.14.4 A high density of archaeological features was revealed. These comprised ditches, a possible track way, gullies, pits, four- and six-post structures, postholes and two quarry pits containing large quantities of burnt stone. Another pit appears to have been lined with limestone slabs. A number of tree-throw holes and natural hollows were also investigated.
- 5.14.5 The majority of the features in this area can be dated to the Late Iron Age and Romano-British periods with a small number of early Saxon (5th to 7th century) features. There appear to be several phases of activity and or occupation represented. In some cases it was possible to interpret the stratigraphic sequence as the intercutting features were quite substantial with distinctive fills. A great many of the features however, were very shallow (less than 0.20m) and the relationships between them difficult to discern. These features appear to have been dug down as far as the horizon of the solid geology and no further.

Late Iron Age/Romano-British Activity

Enclosure and ditches

- 5.14.6 Ditch Group **25350** appeared to form three sides of what was probably a sub-rectangular enclosure. It was a well defined, steep sided feature that typically measured 2.40m wide by 1.10m deep. The ditches forming the east and west sides of the enclosure continued beyond the northern limit of the excavation (**Figure 5**). The one side fully exposed was 41.46m long and aligned north-west to south-east. The fills contained burnt stone, animal bone, and Late Iron Age and Romano-British pottery. A section cut through the south-east corner of the ditch produced only pottery dated to the Late Iron Age. No entrance was identified in the area of the enclosure that was exposed. The enclosure may represent one of the earlier phases of occupation as it cuts only one feature, a shallow ditch (Group **25352**). The enclosure ditch was cut by two shallow, north to south aligned ditches (Groups **25357**, **25358**), a short south-west to north-east aligned ditch (**25349**) and four apparently unrelated postholes (**22969**, **22971**, **23073**, and **23119**).
- 5.14.7 A dump of pyre debris and fragments of human bone were recovered from section **23031** (context **23037**) dug through the eastern side of the enclosure (see McKinley **Section 6.13**).

- 5.14.8 The pottery assemblages that were recovered from features that either cut, or were cut by, the enclosure ditch were of a broadly similar date to the assemblage retrieved from it. Ditch **25349** was dated to the Late Iron Age/Romano-British period. The fills of postholes **22971**, **23073**, and **23119** all produced small quantities of Romano-British greyware pottery. No dating evidence was recovered from posthole **22969**.
- 5.14.9 A number of features were recorded within the enclosure including pits, postholes, gullies and a four-post structure (see below).
- 5.14.10 Steep-sided ditch **25352** was 0.50m wide by 0.18m deep and was orientated aligned north-west to south-east. The fill produced animal bone and Late Iron Age/Romano-British pottery. It cut two small pits, **22996** and **23167**, the fills of which produced one and six sherds of Late Iron Age calcareous pottery respectively. It was cut by enclosure ditch **25350**.
- 5.14.11 Two shallow parallel ditches, (Groups **25357** and **25358**), approximately 1m apart and were aligned roughly north to south. They both cut the enclosure ditch. Ditch **25357** contained one sherd of Romano-British greyware; ditch **25358** did not produce any dating evidence. Ditch **25358** was in turn cut by a large posthole, **23115**, which measured 0.95m in diameter, 0.40m deep and produced pottery dated to the Romano-British period.
- 5.14.12 There were also isolated postholes and three small sub-circular pits within the enclosure. Pit **22984** and posthole **23083** both produced one sherd of Saxon pottery (see below). Pits **22996**, **23167** and posthole **23136** contained small quantities of Late Iron Age pottery. Posthole **23145** contained one sherd of Romano-British greyware. A shallow gully **23052**, (Group **25359**) was recorded immediately to the north of ditch **25358**. The fill produced animal bone and very small quantities of Late Iron Age/Romano-British pottery.
- 5.14.13 The density of archaeological features was much higher west of enclosure ditch **25350**. Three parallel ditches aligned north-east to south-west (Groups **25344**, **25345** and **25346**) lay immediately to the west of the enclosure ditch. All three extended from the northern edge of the excavation and terminated less than 10m to the south-west (**Figure 5**). The ditches were less than 1m apart and contained Late Iron Age/Romano-British pottery. The terminal of ditch **25344** cut a sub-circular pit, **23060**, that measured 1.30m long by 1.10m wide with a depth of 0.92m. There were three fills, all of which contained animal bone, burnt stone and Late Iron Age pottery.
- 5.14.14 North-west to south-east aligned ditch **23143** (Group **25351**) was 14m long, 0.38m wide and 0.10m deep. Its fill produced Romano-British pottery. Immediately to the south of enclosure ditch Group **25350** there was a shallow, north-west to south-east aligned ditch (Group **25360**). It was cut by gully **23132** and ditch **25358**.
- 5.14.15 Two parallel ditches (Groups **25333** and **25334**) 1m apart, measuring 0.5m wide and 0.2m deep, were aligned south-west to north-east. Ditch **25334** was cut by north-west to south-east aligned ditch **25332**, of early Saxon date (see below). Ditch **25333** terminated approximately 2m to the north-east of ditch **25332**. Both ditches **25333** and **25334** contained Romano-British pottery. Ditch **25334** produced moderate quantities of Romano-British

pottery and one sherd of intrusive Saxon limestone-tempered pottery. These ditches were too close together to have been flanking ditches for a track way, they may represent shallow field boundaries.

- 5.14.16 A number of intercutting ditches (Groups **25341**, **25342** and **25343**) were located to the west of quarry pit **25338** in the north-west corner of Area 14 (**Figure 5**). Only short lengths of these ditches were revealed in the excavation. Ditch **25339** was located less than 1m to the south of this group on the same alignment. All the ditches with the exception of **25341**, which was not dated, contained mostly Late Iron Age pottery, a little Romano-British was also recovered. These ditches may represent part of the earliest phase of activity in this area. The exact function of feature **25341** was not determined; it may have been an irregular gully or the edge of another area of quarrying.
- 5.14.17 Four ditches (Groups **25294**, **25299**, **25301** and **25331**) were excavated in the south-west corner of Area 14. The edge of the site was extended to the south to reveal more of these features in order to establish the relationships between the ditches.
- 5.14.18 Ditch **25294** was aligned parallel to ditch **25332**, but changed to a westerly direction, perhaps forming an entrance with ditch **253301**. Pottery recovered from the fills was dated to the Late Iron Age/Romano-British period. At a later stage ditch **25331** was across this entrance. However the date of this remodeling is unknown as no finds were recovered from ditch **25331**. Ditch **25299** was aligned from north to south and the northern terminal was cut by ditch **25294**. Ditches **25299** and **25301** contained pottery dated to the Late Iron Age/Romano-British period.
- 5.14.19 Between ditches **25331** and **25294** was a short, shallow linear feature, **25300**. It measured 2.60m long by 0.75m wide, and was 0.11m deep. It was aligned from north-west to south-east and appeared to have been the remnant of a ditch that had been largely cut away. Two postholes were cut into the base of the feature, one in the north-west corner and one in the south-east corner. Neither the linear feature nor the postholes contained any dating evidence.

Structures

- 5.14.20 A number of four-post structures were identified during the excavation (**Figure 5**). In the south-east corner of Enclosure 25350 there was a four-post structure, (Group **23123**). The four postholes formed a sub-rectangular feature that measured 2.02m by 1.53m. One of the postholes (**23095**) produced eight sherds of undiagnostic pottery.
- 5.14.21 Three four-post structures were recorded to the south-west of enclosure ditch **25350**. Posthole Group **22968** comprised four small postholes forming a sub-rectangular structure measuring 1.31m by 0.73m. All the postholes were less than 0.25m in diameter and 0.15m in depth. Two postholes, **22956** and **22960** were less than 0.05m deep. Posthole **22956** contained one sherd of Romano-British pottery and a glass bead dated to AD 1st / 2nd century. Posthole **22960** contained one small sherd of Saxon sandy ware which may be intrusive.

- 5.14.22 Immediately south of four-post structure **22968** were two very shallow postholes, **23009** and **23011**. These may represent the remains of a larger structure.
- 5.14.23 Posthole Group **25336** was located immediately to the west of ditch **25334** and was sub-rectangular in plan. The feature measured 1.36m by 1.12m. All four postholes were 0.40m or less in diameter and 0.26m or less in depth. The two postholes forming the southern half of the feature, **23061** and **23077** were much smaller and less deep than the two to the north. None of the postholes were dated but **23048** and **23054** each contained a fragment of metal working slag.
- 5.14.24 Posthole Group **25337** was located between enclosure ditch **25350** and quarry pits **25338** and **25340** and was sub-rectangular in plan. It measured 2.75m by 2.37m, roughly twice the size of **22968** and **25336**, similar in form although larger, to four-post structure **23123** recorded inside enclosure ditch Group **25350**. The postholes were between 0.26m and 0.30m in diameter and 0.20m or less in depth. No dating evidence was recovered.
- 5.14.25 Posthole Group **25361** comprised a cluster of postholes located approximately 1m to the south of ditch **25344**. None of the postholes in this group were dated. These features may have formed part of a six-post or larger structure. Pit **23007** was located adjacent to posthole group **25361** and was a shallow sub-circular feature containing burnt stone, animal bone and pottery dated to the Romano-British period.

Quarry pits

- 5.14.26 A shallow, undated quarry pit (**23236**) was located to the east of enclosure **25350**.
- 5.14.27 Two large, irregularly shaped quarry pits (Groups **25338** and **25340**) were recorded towards the north-west corner of Area 14. Pit **25338** measured at least 9.38m long by 8.75m wide, with a maximum depth of 0.25m (**Figure 5**). The fills produced large quantities of burnt and fire cracked limestone and one worked flint. Quarry pit **25338** was cut by a sub-circular refuse pit, **23174**, that was 2.13m in diameter, 1.17m deep and contained abundant animal bone, ash, charcoal, CBM and Late Iron Age and Romano-British pottery.
- 5.14.28 Quarry pit group **25340** comprised several intercutting sub-circular pits and measured 9.91m by 3.61m. It was located immediately to the south of quarry pit **25338** and may have formed part of that feature. The fills were similar to **25338**. This area of shallow pits cut a much deeper pit **23322**. This pit was roughly circular with undercutting edges and was at least 1m deep; the feature was not fully excavated. The fills contained burnt limestone, Late Iron Age pottery and a badly crushed cattle skull (ABG 48). Pit **23182** was cut into quarry **25340**. Pit **23182** was oval in plan and Late Iron Age pottery was recovered from its fill. A small undated pit (**23171**) also cut **25340**.

Other features

- 5.14.29 A number of pits, postholes and other features were scattered across the area.

- 5.14.30 A group of six postholes/pits (Group **25335**) was recorded on the western edge of the site. The pits/postholes were larger than the postholes recorded elsewhere in Area 14 and irregularly shaped. This group of features appears to represent a concentration of small pits rather than a structure. None of the pits were more than 0.12m deep and no dating evidence was recovered from their fills.
- 5.14.31 A scatter of shallow pits and postholes (**23134**, **23141**, **23158**, **23161** and **23165**) was spread across the southern part of the Site. Three of these features did not contain dating evidence, the fill of pit **23158** yielded animal bone, fired clay, possible quern fragments, three sherds of Late Iron Age/Romano-British pottery and one sherd of Saxon sandy ware.
- 5.14.32 Pit **23147** was oval in plan and measured 1.38m long by 0.80m wide with a depth of 0.44m. The feature possibly represents a consolidation and lining with limestone slabs of an earlier, larger pit (**23185**). Unworked limestone slabs measuring up to 0.30m in diameter covered the bottom and sides of the pit. There were five fills (**23148-51**, and **23184**) which produced animal bone and small quantities of Romano-British greyware. Pit **23185** was 1.64m long by 1.00m wide and 1.00m deep. The pit had partially backfilled before it was lined. There were three fills which produced animal bone, Late Iron Age/Romano-British pottery and an iron nail (ON 41). The pottery assemblage included Late Iron Age calcareous ware, samian, Oxfordshire whiteware and a greyware base stamped [XIIIV].
- 5.14.33 An isolated posthole (**23121**) was located south-east of ditch group 25339 on the western edge of the Site. No dating evidence was recovered from it.

Saxon Activity

- 5.14.34 Ditch **25332** was aligned north-west to south-east and measured 1.40m wide by 0.60m deep revealing it to be the largest and deepest ditch, with the exception of the enclosure, excavated on Area 14. The feature contained a relatively large quantity of early Saxon pottery together with Romano-British pottery.
- 5.14.35 Pit **22984** and posthole **23083** each contained a single small sherd of Saxon pottery. These features were located inside enclosure **25350**. Single sherds of Saxon pottery were also recovered from features **25334**, **22960** and **23158**. Given the small size of the sherds it is suggested that these features are Late Iron Age/Romano-British and that the pottery is intrusive.
- 5.14.36 A number of tree-throw holes and natural hollows were investigated.

5.14.37

5.15 Area 15

- 5.15.1 Area 15 was roughly square measuring 69.50m by 57.90m. It was located to the west of Area 14 and 8-10m south of the Pingle Brook (**Figures 1, 6**). The land was lying fallow at the time of excavation.
- 5.15.2 This area was not previously trial trenched so its potential was, to a certain extent, unknown. A number of linear features were, however, visible on

aerial photographs (Cox 2005) and a geophysical survey had identified several potentially interesting anomalies (Stratascan 2006).

5.15.3 The underlying geology over the area was solid limestone. This was overlain by a reddish brown silty clay subsoil of varying depth, up to 0.25m on the northern part of the site, almost non-existent in the centre and south-east. Topsoil was brown silty clay loam c. 0.30m deep.

5.15.4 The archaeological features revealed in Area 15 were concentrated in the eastern part of the area, with one large ditch in the north-west corner. A total of 12 ditches, 4 pits, the remnants of 2 hedges and 3 tree-throw holes were investigated. The majority of the features were dated to the Late Iron Age and Romano-British periods.

Late Iron Age Activity

5.15.5 Ditch **22715** was located on the western quarter of Area 15. It crossed the site from north-east to south-west, continuing beyond the northern and western edges of the Site, and was identified in Area 13 as ditch **25283** (**Figure 3**), where it was less substantial (see above). In Area 15 one section was hand-excavated and that measured 4.85m wide and 0.62m deep with a flat base. The ditch was at its widest (5.76m) at the northern edge of the site and was at its narrowest (2.45m) towards the eastern boundary. There were three fills, the middle of which, **22717**, produced very small quantities of Late Iron Age grog-tempered pottery and animal bone. The paucity of finds in this feature contrasts with the majority of the features recorded in Area 15, where even very shallow fills often produced good dating evidence. In Area 13 this feature contained a little Late Iron Age pottery although the condition of the sherds indicated it may have been residual (see above).

5.15.6 The function of this ditch is not entirely clear although it may have drained water across the Site

Late Iron Age/early Romano-British Activity

Enclosure and ditches

5.15.7 The corner of a possible enclosure ditch (Group **25288**) was visible in the north-east part of Area 15 (**Figure 6**). A section through the ditch measured 1.92m wide by 0.76m deep. The fills produced animal bone and Late Iron Age/Romano-British pottery. The south-west to north-east axis of ditch **25288** appears to be cut by, or contemporary with, a smaller north to south aligned ditch (Group **25296**), which also contained Late Iron Age calcareous ware, Romano-British greyware and samian pottery. A machine-excavated slot through ditch **25288** produced large quantities of pottery, including 218 sherds of Late Iron Age calcareous ware and 411 sherds of Romano-British greyware.

5.15.8 Two ditches (Groups **25289** and **25298**) appear to be contemporary with, or were possibly cut by, ditch **25288**. Ditch **25289** was a small, shallow south-west to north-east aligned feature that crossed the area. Ditch **25298** extended from the eastern site boundary and was aligned south-east to north-west. The feature cut Late Iron Age/Romano-British ditch **25297** and was cut by ditch **25296** before joining ditch **25288**. The relationship between these features was masked by a large tree-throw hole, **22705**. Sections recorded through **25289** and **25298** produced substantial amounts of Late

Iron Age/Romano-British pottery, including a sherd from a Roman mortaria (ditch **25289** fill **22785**) and a fragment of quernstone (ditch **25298**, fill **22653** ON 21).

- 5.15.9 The lowest fill (**22706**) of tree-throw hole **22705** contained a copper alloy nail cleaner with a spherical bone head (ON 24).
- 5.15.10 Ditch **25297** may have been one of the earliest in use during this phase. It was a slightly sinuous ditch extending from the northern boundary of the Site, terminating 21m from the southern boundary. It was cut by ditches **25296** and **25298** also by pits **22733** and **22738**. It may have been used to funnel livestock into a small paddock formed by ditches **25289** and **25290** (**Figure 6**), or into a larger area defined by ditches **25289** and **25291**.
- 5.15.11 Ditch **25290** was 14.09 m long and orientated from north-west to south-east, and had been dug at right angles to ditch **25289**. Ditch **25292** was almost parallel to **25289**. These ditches were all small, shallow features containing Late Iron Age/Romano-British pottery. These ditches may represent the remnants of a Romano-British field system, an entrance being formed by ditches **25290** and **25297**. Two short lengths of ditch (**22713** and **22762**) were located close to the eastern edge of the Site. Ditch **22713** was 0.35m wide, 0.14m deep and 0.90m long and was orientated from east to west. Ditch **22762** was orientated from north-west to south-east and measured 1.20m long, 0.64m wide and 0.10m deep. Ditch **22713** produced Roman greyware pottery; ditch **22762** was not dated.
- 5.15.12 Extending from the southern boundary of the site, sinuous ditch **25291** terminated 38.3m to the north-east. It was cut by north-east to south-west aligned ditch **25292**. The ditch was heavily damaged over much of its length with more surviving at its southern end where it measured 1.51m wide and 0.52m deep. There was one fill which produced animal bone and Late Iron Age/Romano-British pottery.
- 5.15.13 Ditch **25296** seems to have been the latest ditch in this area of the Site. It was L-shaped and it cut ditches **25297** and **25298** and either cut, or was contemporary with Late Iron Age/early Romano-British ditch **25288**. Ditch **25296** typically measured 0.78m wide by 0.18m and its fills contained burnt stone, animal bone, CBM, pottery and a fragment of glass (ON 20). The pottery included Late Iron Age calcareous and grog-tempered wares and several Romano-British pottery types such as samian, oxidised ware, Oxfordshire whiteware and greyware.

Other features

- 5.15.14 Pits **22733** and **22738** were both steep sided, circular features containing large quantities of a variety of Late Iron Age and Roman pottery and animal bone and appear to have been used as rubbish pits. Pit **22733** measured 2.47m in diameter and was 0.80m deep and cut pit **22738** which measured 0.88m in diameter with a depth of 0.85m. The pits cut through ditch **25297** immediately to the south of ditch **25298**. Shallow pit **22709** contained animal bone and one struck flint. Pit **22758** was filled with limestone rubble but did not contain any dating evidence. A small undated pit (**22770**) was located west of ditch **25291**.

- 5.15.15 In addition to tree-throw hole **22705** described above, two other tree-throw holes, **22711** and **22719** were excavated. The tertiary fill of **22719** contained Late Iron Age grog-tempered ware and Roman greyware pottery.

Post-medieval/modern features

- 5.15.16 The remnants of two north-south orientated hedge lines (Group **25295**) were visible in the north-east corner of Area 15. These shallow, parallel linear features were 4.30m apart and may have formed the hedges for a farm track. The fill of one ditch (**22647**), contained Late Iron Age/Romano-British pottery. The alignment of the hedge lines in relation to other ditches suggests that they were later, probably post-medieval in date.

5.15.17

5.16 Area 16

- 5.16.1 Area 16 was an irregular sub-rectangular plot that measured 101.80m by 65.60m. It was positioned on the eastern boundary of the original Area 5, south of Area 14 and roughly parallel with the A41 to the east (**Figures 1 and 7**). The area rises gently to the west and was cultivated the time of excavation.

- 5.16.2 This area was closest of the excavations to the line of Roman Akeman Street and had the potential to characterise Romano-British roadside settlement north of the Roman town of Alchester and any possible Saxon settlement. An evaluation by Oxford Archaeology had recorded a high density of archaeological features in this area (Oxford Archaeology 2002b). Pottery recovered during the evaluation was dated to the Late Iron Age and early Romano-British period. Aerial photography (Cox 2005) had identified linear features crossing the south-west and north-east corners of the area.

- 5.16.3 The soil sequence varied; to the east the topsoil lay directly over the natural geology which was solid limestone or Cornbrash. Further west there was a layer of reddish brown sandy loam subsoil overlying the solid limestone. On the western half of the Site topsoil lay directly over blue-grey clay and orange-brown clay. The topsoil was less than 0.20m deep in places; archaeological features were often encountered just under the topsoil. As a consequence many features had been severely damaged by ploughing. Towards the centre of the area reddish brown sandy loam subsoil lay between the topsoil and the clay. In the north-west corner, a thin band of blue clay overlay the Cornbrash.

Romano-British Activity

- 5.16.4 A number of linear features were identified, many of which were aligned south-west to north-east, on a similar alignment to the Roman road to the east (**Figures 1 and 7**). Pits, postholes, hearths, small enclosures, track ways, a corndrier or oven and a number of stone-lined features were also identified (**Figure 7**).

Enclosures, Ditches and Track ways

- 5.16.5 Two small enclosures formed by ditch Groups **25327** and **25328** and **25325** and **25318** were located in the south-east of the Site. Group **25325** was associated with a stone-lined feature **22934** (see below).

- 5.16.6 A track way was formed by ditch Groups **25324** and **25323** which was aligned south-west to north-east across the Site. The ditches were shallow features, less than 0.80m wide, that were positioned 3.50m apart. Ditch Group **25326** appears to have been a continuation of ditch **25324**; here the track way became wider, measuring 5.00m. The fills of all three ditches contained Late Iron Age/ Romano-British pottery.
- 5.16.7 A south-west to north-east aligned ditch (Group **25319**) extended from the southern boundary of the area across to the north-eastern side of the excavation. A small slot was machine-excavated to determine the course of the ditch and Area 17 was opened to determine whether this ditch was present north of Area 16 (**Figure 1**). The ditch was typically less than 0.50m deep and between 0.88-2.04m wide. The fills produced animal bone and Late Iron Age/Romano British pottery, including Late Iron Age calcareous ware, mortaria, samian, Black Burnished ware, Oxfordshire whiteware and colour coated wares. A fragment of a forged early Roman *denarius* and a piece of glass and (ON 76 and 77) were recovered from the section excavated near the southern edge of the area.
- 5.16.8 Part of ditch **25319** appears to have been lined or revetted with limestone slabs. The revetting consisted of a double row of overlapping, unshaped stones that were intermittently visible on the surface of the feature. A slot dug through the feature (section **23482**) revealed a ditch 1.33m wide and 0.32m deep with heavy clay fills. This stone lining was first apparent near the southern end of the ditch; the revetting appeared to continue beyond the edge of the excavation. There was no evidence for revetment in sections dug through the ditch to the north of section **23482**.
- 5.16.9 A ditch with similar dimensions (Group **25320**) extended from the southern boundary parallel and adjacent to ditch **25319**. Ditch **25320** was cut by ditch **25319** immediately to the south of ditch **25318**. Pottery recovered from ditch **23520** has been dated to the Late Iron Age/Romano-British period.
- 5.16.10 The south-western terminal of ditch **25323** was cut by the terminal of north-west to south-east aligned ditch **25318**, which was itself cut by ditch **25319** and terminated less than 1.00m to the east of ditch **25319**. A sub-circular pit, **23553** containing Late Iron Age pottery, cut the south-eastern terminal of the ditch. Ditch Group **25322**, aligned north-west to south-east, appears to have formed a narrow entrance with ditch **25318**. At some point a pit, **23553**, was dug effectively blocking off this entrance. The northern edge of ditch **25322** was also cut by a large circular pit (**23561**). Both pits and ditch **25318** were dated to the Late Iron Age/Romano-British period. The northern edge of ditch **25318** was cut by shallow sub-oval pit **23487**, which was also dated to the Late Iron Age/ Romano-British period.
- 5.16.11 In the north-east corner of Area 16 a meandering ditch (Group **25329**) crossed the Site on a south-east to north-west alignment, continuing beyond the edge of the excavation. The ditch was recorded during evaluation (Oxford Archaeology 2002b), plotted on aerial photographs (Cox 2005) and revealed in Area 14 as ditch **25294** (**Figure 1**; see above). The ditch had a wide shallow profile, a typical section measured 1.27m wide by 0.20m deep. The fills produced charcoal, animal bone, Late Iron Age and Roman pottery including small quantities of samian and Black Burnished ware.

- 5.16.12 A narrow, but comparatively deep, curved gully, Group **25330** was located 1.20m to the east of ditch **25329**. It was 0.27m wide by 0.32m deep with a single fill; no dating evidence was recovered. Ditch **22849** was a short north-west to south-east orientated linear feature located immediately to the north of the terminal of ditch **25323**. A small, sub-circular pit, **22790**, was recorded less than 0.50m to the north of the ditch **22849**. The pit contained pottery dated to the Late Iron Age/Romano-British period and the ditch produced eight sherds of Romano-British greyware. Immediately to the north of pit **22790**, tree-throw holes **22793** and **22798** yielded small quantities of Late Iron Age/Romano-British pottery including a small sherd of samian from the fill of **22798**.
- 5.16.13 Another group of ditches was located in the western part of Area 16. Amongst these ditches were a number of other features including a corndrier or oven, pits and postholes.
- 5.16.14 Ditch Group **25309** was slightly irregular, aligned south-west to north-east and measured 34.70m long. Its south-western end was slightly curved (**Figure 7**). A typical section measured 1.01m wide by 0.46m deep and the fill contained animal bone and large quantities of Late Iron Age/Romano-British pottery. A much less substantial ditch (Group **25307**) was located less than 1m to the south of ditch **25309** on the same alignment. Ditch **25307** measured 0.94m wide by 0.34m deep and the fill contained animal bone and Late Iron Age/Romano-British pottery. The ditch was cut by posthole **23385** which measured 0.40m in diameter by 0.25m deep and contained greyware and a Roman copper alloy key handle (ON 51, Area 16, posthole **23385**).
- 5.16.15 The relationship between ditch **25307** and ditch **25309** was unclear and interpretation was hampered by a modern drainage ditch and the Oxford Archaeology evaluation trench which cut the junction of the two ditches.
- 5.16.16 Pit **23304** may have been originally dug for the extraction of clay. It was located adjacent to the terminal of ditch **25309**. It measured 3.03m long by 1.20m wide with a maximum depth of 0.55m, the fill contained animal bone, oyster shell and Late Iron Age/Romano-British pottery suggesting later use as a rubbish pit.
- 5.16.17 Two short sections of ditches, Group **25310** and ditch **22900**, were located approximately 1m to the east of ditch **25309**. Ditch **25310** measured 4.58m long by 0.63m wide with a depth of 0.14m. It was aligned north-east to south-west. Ditch **22900** was 4.15m long, 0.70m wide and 0.18m deep and was aligned NNE to SSW. Both ditches were dated to the Late Iron Age/Romano-British period.
- 5.16.18 Ditch Groups **23505** and **23506** were narrow, shallow, truncated features aligned north-east to south-west. These ditches were almost parallel with ditches **25307** and **25309** which were located roughly 6.0m to the east. Ditches **23505** and **23506** were between 2.39m and 1.88m apart and typically measured less than 0.60m wide by 0.20m deep. The ditches formed a track way that extended from under the western edge of the Site. The fill of ditch **25306** produced small quantities of greyware; ditch **25305** was not dated.

5.16.19 Ditch **25305** was cut on the western edge by corndrier/oven feature **23502**. The feature was an irregular lozenge shape, measuring 4.04m in length by 1.16m in width with a maximum depth of 0.54m. A small circular posthole was cut into the ditch adjacent to the south-western corner of the feature. There were seven fills, the lowest of which showed traces of *in situ* burning. The fills also contained sparse quantities of charcoal, fired clay, animal bone and Romano-British pottery. A little charred grain was also recovered.

5.16.20 A straggling line of three postholes, Group **25311**, aligned NNE to SSW was located between **25305** and ditch **25307** and may represent the remains of a structure associated with the corndrier/oven. One of the postholes, **23327**, contained greyware and samian.

Stone-lined features and Pits

5.16.21 A stone-lined, rectangular feature, **22934**, was located 4.52m to the north-west of ditch **25319** (**Figure 7**). The pit was connected to **25319** by a short stone-lined gully **25325**; all three features appear to be contemporary.

5.16.22 Feature **22934** had vertical sides and a flat base. It measured 3.34m long by 2.30m wide and was 0.42m deep. The natural clay base was lined with unworked and unshaped limestone slabs and all four sides were lined with similar stone. The quantity of stone recorded from the fills and immediate vicinity of the tank suggested that the walls originally extended above ground level. It was positioned with the long side aligned south-west to north-east, parallel to ditch **25319**.

5.16.23 This feature was revealed c. 0.25m below the ground surface; it is probable that any upstanding remains would have been destroyed by ploughing. There was one fill, **22935**, which produced abundant quantities of charcoal, animal bone, Roman, Romano British and early Saxon pottery. The Roman and Romano-British pottery included samian and 4th century greyware. A significantly high percentage of the Roman pottery assemblage comprised trimmed pot bases and rim sherds. The Saxon assemblage comprised sandy and organic-tempered wares and was given a broad 5th to 7th century date. In total 45 sherds of Saxon pottery weighing 604 grams and 219 sherds of Romano-British sherds weighing 4076g were recovered from the fill.

5.16.24 Eleven small finds were recovered; these consisted of five iron nails, an iron ring, an unidentified socketed iron object, a possible broken knife blade, a stamped pot base, an incomplete shale bracelet and a copper alloy object (ONs 65-72, 78, 81, 98). The feature appears to have been fallen into disuse during the early Saxon period.

5.16.25 The function of feature **22934** is not yet fully understood although it has been suggested that it may have been used for malting barley. Environmental samples taken from the tank, culvert and ditch produced quantities of grain, mostly spelt but also barley, some of which was germinated. The malted grains may be evidence for brewing.

5.16.26 At the south-east corner of the tank, culvert **25325** linked the pit to ditch **23519** 4.52m to the east. It measured 0.67m wide with a depth of 0.40m. The culvert curved gently and was neatly lined and capped with unworked limestone slabs. A set of upright and horizontal slabs and a posthole

positioned at the junction of the culvert and the ditch appear to be the remnants of a sluice gate system. The slabs lining the culvert were fitted closely together and bedded into the natural clay. The capping stones were covered in a layer of clay that did not produce any finds. Fills **23356** and **23360**, taken from two separate sections, contained small quantities of animal bone, oyster shell and pottery dated to the Late Iron Age/ Romano-British period.

- 5.16.27 Large circular pit **23561** measured 4.30m in diameter by 1.30m in depth. There were four fills which produced very small quantities of animal bone, CBM and Late Iron Age/Romano British pottery; this was unusual for a site where features generally contained an abundance of archaeological evidence. This was the largest pit excavated on Area 16. It was also the only pit recorded east of ditch **25319**. Two further pit features were recorded in this vicinity. Pit **23521** was a shallow oval feature c. 2.80m to the south-west of the stone-lined feature that produced seven sherds of Romano-British oxidised ware, one sherd of Romano-British greyware and one sherd of Saxon sandy ware. Pit/posthole **23472** was also a shallow oval feature that did not yield any dating evidence and was severely truncated by ditch **25318**.
- 5.16.28 Two small, undated pits, **22907** and **22910** were located near the southern terminal of ditch **25326**. These had been cut by a modern field drain.
- 5.16.29 Posthole Group **25316** comprised three, possibly four, postholes extended in a north-west to south-east orientated line from the southern edge of ditch **25318**; pit/posthole **23472** may be part of this group. None of the features produced any dating evidence.
- 5.16.30 Feature **22837** was similar to stone-lined feature **22934**, although not as elaborate. It was located 1.75m north-west of track way ditch **25324** and approximately 6.50m to the west of a small three-sided enclosure (Groups **25327**, **25328**). It was a slightly irregular rectangular pit with vertical sides and measured 2.90m long by 2.56m wide with a depth of 0.40m. A close fitting layer of unworked limestone slabs was recorded within the pit but unlike **22934** these were positioned c. 0.20m above the base of the feature. Two shallow fills lay beneath the slabs, the upper of which contained small amounts of animal bone and Romano-British pottery. A single fill above the slabs yielded greater quantities of animal bone and pottery, as well as oyster shell and two iron nails (ONs 31, 32). There was no evidence for any internal walls. The southern edge of the pit had been disturbed by an evaluation trench and as with **22934** the feature was very close to the ground surface and had suffered plough damage.
- 5.16.31 The pottery from **22837** included colour coat, Black Burnished and Oxfordshire whiteware. In common with feature **22934**, environmental samples taken from the fills contained mostly grains of spelt with a lesser quantity of barley, some of which had germinated.
- 5.16.32 There was no evidence for a culvert, ditch or pit cluster associated with feature **22837**.
- 5.16.33 Another stone-lined feature (**23335**) was of completely different morphology to the previously described rectangular features. It was cut into ditch **25324**,

close to stone-lined feature **22934**. The functions of the two features may be connected.

- 5.16.34 Feature **23335** was an irregular linear shape in plan; it measured 5.87m long by 1.79m wide with a depth of 0.22m and was aligned north-east to south-west. It was located 3.90m north of the terminal of ditch **25324**, cutting into the western edge of the ditch. The feature comprised two adjacent stone capped gullies which were associated with four postholes. The gully to the west was 0.29m wide by 0.18m deep; the gully to the east was 0.22m wide with a depth of 0.08m. The fills of the gullies produced small quantities of animal bone and Late Iron Age/Romano British pottery. Its function is unknown.
- 5.16.35 Pit **23338** was cut into the eastern edge of ditch **25324** approximately 1.50m from the south-west terminal. The pit contained small quantities of pottery dated to the Late Iron Age/ Romano-British period.
- 5.16.36 Pit **23374** was a sub-rectangular feature adjacent to **23335** and aligned north-west to south-east roughly at right angles to **23335**. It was 2.86m long by 1.13m wide with a depth of 0.31m. Two sherds of Romano-British pottery were recovered from the lower of the two fills. Pit **23325** was sub-circular in plan and it lay next to **23374**. It was 0.43m in diameter with a depth of 0.10m, there was a single fill which did not contain any finds.
- 5.16.37 Ditch Group **25314** comprised a short curved section of ditch, orientated north-west to south-east, 4.80m north of **23335** that may have been associated with the feature. The fill contained animal bone and one sherd of undiagnostic sandy-tempered pottery.
- 5.16.38 To the north-east of ditch Group **25314** there were a number of shallow, irregular features (**22943**, **23352**, **23377**, **23379** **23425**, **23453**). These comprised five very shallow pits, a spread of material and a pit containing modern debris that was mapped but not recorded. Three of the pits and the spread produced pottery dated to the Late Iron Age/Romano-British period. Pit **23352** contained a small amount of Romano-British greyware and a possible limestone post-pad. Pit **23379** contained 12 sherds of Late Iron Age calcareous ware. Pit **23453** contained four sherds of Romano-British greyware. Three other possible features proved to be natural hollows.
- 5.16.39 In the south-west corner of Area 16 there was a scatter of irregularly shaped pits (Group **25317**), a posthole and a short curved ditch (Group **25315**). There were at least 22 pits, seven of which were excavated. The pits were mostly sub-circular or sub-oval in shape and measured from 3.75m to 0.52m in length with a maximum depth of 0.50m. Pottery collected as surface finds and from the pit fills was dated to the Late Iron Age/Romano-British period. Pit **23516** contained an iron nail (ON 83), small quantities of Late Iron Age grog-tempered ware, Romano-British greyware, shelly ware and amphora. Posthole **23529** was located within the pit group, the fill contained limestone packing and two sherds of Late Iron Age/Romano-British pottery. Pit **23544** lay north-east of pit **23542**; it was slightly irregular in plan but was not excavated. A little Romano-British pottery was retrieved from the surface of this pit.

- 5.16.40 Feature **23548** measured 8.28m long by 4.35m wide and seems to have been composed of several intercutting features. A small area of the feature was excavated, which contained six sherds of Romano-British greyware and one sherd of samian pottery. Excavation revealed frequent limestone inclusions ranging from small fragments to large flat slabs. These features may have been quarry pits for clay, which occurs naturally in this part of the Site. The limestone slabs may represent an attempt to consolidate the backfill of the pits in what would have been very muddy conditions.
- 5.16.41 Ditch **25315** was located between the concentration of pits and pit **23548**. It was cut by pits **23476** and **23452**. Ditch **25315** measured 0.86m wide by 0.15m deep; there was one fill which produced small quantities of Romano-British pottery. Pit **23452** had six fills which contained animal bone, shell, Late Iron Age/Romano-British pottery, four Iron objects (ON 55-58), a fragment of glass (ON 82) and a copper alloy fitting (ON 59). Pit **23479** was an isolated feature located to the north of ditch **25315**, one fill produced Romano-British greyware pottery and a partial sheep/goat skeleton (ABG 75).
- 5.16.42 To the north-east of this group of features there was a sub-circular, shallow hollow, **23477** a small quantity of Romano-British pottery.
- 5.16.43 In the north-west corner of Area 16 there was a group of features including three ditches, pits, a posthole and tree-throw holes.
- 5.16.44 Two short lengths of north-east to south-west orientated ditch (Groups **25303** and **25304**) and associated pits comprised the western-most features excavated on Area 16. Ditch **25303** was 4.96m long 0.34m wide, 0.08m deep and cut by sub-circular pits at both of its terminals. Ditch **25304** was 2.45m long, 0.55m wide, 0.15m deep and curved to the north at its terminal. The fills of both ditches contained Late Iron Age/ Romano-British pottery including Late Iron Age grog-tempered ware, greyware and Oxfordshire whiteware. The southern terminal of ditch **25304** was cut by a large sub-rectangular **23302**. Sub-circular pit (**25313**) cut ditch **25303**, so that in plan these features formed an almost continuous line.
- 5.16.45 Pit **23302** was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 2.60m long by 0.70m wide with a maximum depth of 0.16m. The pit shared an alignment with the two ditches and the northern edge of the pit cut through the southern terminal of ditch **25304**. There was one fill which produced animal bone and Romano-British pottery including sherds of a nearly complete greyware narrow necked jar (ON 47). Pit **23404** (Group **25313**) was sub-oval in plan and measured 0.86m by 0.52m with a depth of 0.20m. It was positioned immediately to the north-west of the terminal of ditch **25304**. The single fill was composed almost entirely of Romano-British pottery, fired clay, oyster shells and charcoal and also contained the neck of a Roman glass vessel (ON 49).
- 5.16.46 Pit **23406** was cut into the southern terminal of ditch **25303** and was adjacent to pit **23404**. It was sub-circular in plan and measured 0.56m in diameter with a depth of 0.20m. In common with the pit immediately to the south the fill produced quantities of pottery including a complete grog-tempered jar (ON 52, dated mid-2nd-late 3rd century). It also yielded animal

bone, fired clay, charcoal and an iron object (ON 53). Cut into the northern terminal of **25303**, pit **23318** was sub-oval in plan and measured 0.94m long by 0.70m wide with a maximum depth of 0.56m. In contrast to the other pits relatively small amounts of Romano-British pottery were recovered from the fills. An undated pit and a tree-throw hole were recorded c. 1.0m to the east of ditch **25303**.

- 5.16.47 Two ditches (Groups **25302** and **25312**) extended from the northern boundary of the Site to east of ditch **25303**. Ditch **25302** was a narrow, shallow feature orientated from NNE to SSW that cut through pit **23283** before terminating 5.45m from the northern edge of the Site. Both features were both dated to the Late Iron Age/Romano-British period; the ditch produced one sherd of amphora. A small sub-oval pit, **23296** and a linear feature **23298** were recorded immediately to the west of ditch **25202**. Very little survived of the linear feature, it may have been the remnant of a north-west to south-east aligned ditch. These features were also dated to the Late Iron Age/ Romano-British period.
- 5.16.48 Ditch **25312** was very shallow, aligned NNW to SSE; it extended 12.80m from the northern edge of the Site and terminated immediately north of sub-oval pit **22883**. The terminal was cut by a shallow tree-throw hole **22887**. The fills of all three features produced small quantities of Late Iron Age/Romano-British pottery. Pit **22883** also contained articulated horse spine (ON 34). A copper alloy finger ring (ON 35) of probable Late Iron Age/Romano-British date was retrieved from the fill of the ditch terminal.
- 5.16.49 There was an irregular scatter of features between ditches **25302** and **25312**, including five pits, one posthole and two tree-throw holes. Pit **22862** was circular in plan with steep sides and measured 1.07m in diameter with a depth of 0.46m. The sides of the pit were partially clay lined; three fills contained Late Iron Age/Romano-British pottery, one sherd of amphora, CBM, animal bone and a complete copper alloy hair pin dated to the second half of the 1st or the early 2nd century AD (ON 33). Irregular sub-circular pit **22856** contained animal bone and Late Iron Age/Romano-British pottery that included several large sherds of amphora. Pits **23294**, **22894**, **22860**, posthole **23287** and tree-throw hole **22858** all produced small quantities of pottery dated to the Late Iron Age/Romano-British period. Tree-throw hole **22865** contained small quantities of Romano-British pottery including two sherds of Oxfordshire colour coated ware and one sherd of Oxfordshire whiteware.

Saxon Activity

- 5.16.50 Saxon reuse of stone-lined feature 22934 has been discussed above. Adjacent to this feature was a group of intercutting pits **25321**.
- 5.16.51 Pit Group **25321** comprised seven circular or sub-circular features clustered around the southern end of stone-lined feature **22934**. The pits measured from 1.16m to 0.62m in diameter and from 0.30m to 0.12m in depth. Five of the pits formed an intercutting cluster, the edge of which was located less than 0.20m from the south-west corner of **22934**. The fills typically contained charcoal, animal bone, shell, and pottery. Six of the seven pits contained a mixture of Romano-British and Saxon pottery, the seventh pit, **23538**, was not dated. The quantities of pottery recovered were generally small for both

Roman and Saxon wares, one to four sherds of ten different pottery types, eight Romano-British wares and two Saxon. The exceptions were pits **22932** and **23420** which both contained 12 sherds of Saxon sandy ware. There were four small finds. Pit **22932** contained an iron nail (ON 80); pit **22928** contained an iron nail, a fragment of bone comb and the rim of an Romano-British flagon ON 73, 74 and 79). These pits may have served some function connected with the stone-lined feature but their final function appears to have been as rubbish pits.

- 5.16.52 Two pits, **23418** and **23538**, cut **22934**, and although no dating evidence was recovered from the latter, these features seem to be part of the same activity as pit Group **25321**.

5.17 Area 17

- 5.17.1 Area 17 comprised a rectangular plot measuring 15.70m by 9.80m and was located between Areas 14 and 16 (**Figure 1**). The soil sequence was fairly uniform over the whole area: topsoil overlay a very thin layer of reddish silty clay subsoil which in turn overlay Cornbrash and solid limestone. The natural geology was encountered at a depth of 0.35m below ground level. This area was opened in order to determine the course of ditch **25319** from Area 16 and associated ditches which were not visible in Area 14 despite continuing beyond Area 16 on a south-west to north-east alignment. Nothing of archaeological interest was recorded in Area 17. It was established later by further machining that ditch **25319** turned north-east (**Figure 7**).

5.17.2

6 FINDS

- 6.1.1 Finds were recovered from all areas with the exception of Areas 3, 10 and 17. All finds have been quantified by material type within each context, and the results are summarised by area in **Table 1**. Subsequent to quantification, all finds have been at least visually scanned in order to ascertain their nature, potential date range and condition. Spot dates have been recorded for datable finds (pottery, ceramic building material). An assessment of the potential of the finds assemblage to contribute to an understanding of the Site, and/or to any regional research agendas is presented, and recommendations for further analysis have been made.

- 6.1.2 Reference is made here to finds recovered during the evaluation of the Site by Wessex Archaeology (Wessex Archaeology 2007), but this material has not been re-examined as part of this assessment.

- 6.1.3 The assemblage ranges in date from Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age to post-medieval, but is relatively restricted in terms of material types; pottery was the most commonly occurring material type, and apart from this only animal bone was recovered in any significant quantity. The condition of the assemblage is variable, but generally fair to poor.

6.1.4

6.1.5

Table 1: Summary of the finds assemblage (count/weight in g)

Material type	Evaluation	Excavation	Total
Pottery			
<i>Early Bronze Age</i>	27/131	100/350	127/481
<i>Middle Iron Age</i>		208/2213	208/2213
<i>Late Iron Age</i>	180/1826	2532/24463	2712/26289
<i>Late Prehistoric</i>	1/1	12/81	13/82
<i>Roman</i>	83/1194	4402/51717	4485/52911
<i>Saxon</i>	23/140	189/2176	212/2316
<i>Medieval</i>	28/423	18/168	46/591
<i>Post-medieval</i>	27/340	52/723	79/1063
<i>Unknown</i>		14/18	14/18
Total	369/4055	7527/81909	7896/85964
Ceramic Building Material	4/1089	67/5885	71/6974
Fired Clay	9/52	59/1432	68/1484
Glass	2/6	16/115	18/121
Metalwork			
<i>Iron</i>	12/838	72/846	84/1684
<i>Copper Alloy</i>	1/452	9/113	10/565
Coins		2/-	2/-
Flint	9/158	47/263	56/421
Animal Bone	228/1256	3741/30308	3969/31564
Worked Bone		3/13	3/13
Human Bone		51/66	51/66
Stone	48/4050	258/17131	306/21181
Other finds	1 shell fragment.	1 shale fragment, 5 fragments clay pipe, 5 pieces of slag.	

6.2 Pottery

6.2.1 A rapid scan of the pottery was undertaken to ascertain spot-dates, the general nature and range of fabrics within the assemblage, and to provide a basic archive report. This scan comprised a brief examination of each context and a sherd count by broad ware group (e.g. sandy ware, flint-tempered ware), and totals are presented in **Table 2**. The range of vessel forms, condition and cross-context joins were also noted. Most of the vessel forms could be paralleled in published typologies, principally Young's Oxfordshire Roman Pottery (1977). This information was entered into an Access database which forms part of the project archive.

Table 2: Quantification of pottery

Date	Ware	No. sherds	Weight (g)
Early Bronze Age	Grog-tempered	127	481
Middle Iron Age	Calcareous wares	207	2145
	Sandy	1	68
Late Iron Age	Calcareous wares	871	4803
	Sandy wares	138	744
	Grog-tempered wares	1702	20736
	Flint-tempered ware	1	6
Late Prehistoric	Calcareous	11	44
	Flint-tempered	1	4
	Sandy wares	15	52
Roman	Amphora	44	3151
	Samian	81	629
	Oxfordshire colour coat	54	977
	Oxfordshire white ware	87	1026

	Oxfordshire Parchment ware	2	30
	Oxfordshire mortaria (all types)	13	585
	Reduced sandy wares	3013	26570
	Black Burnished ware	26	547
	Grog-tempered wares	409	13493
	Shelly wares	118	885
	Sandy wares	136	1184
	Oxidised sandy wares	499	3383
	White-slipped wares	2	50
Saxon	Sandy	178	2089
	Limestone	18	153
	Organics	16	74
Medieval	Coarsewares	22	502
	Sandy wares	4	18
	Brill type wares	20	71
Post -medieval	Redwares	42	674
	Refined whitewares	6	5
	Stoneware	2	20
	Unspecified	29	364
Total		7896	85964

6.2.2 The earliest pottery identified comprised a late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age Beaker **25127** from inhumation burial **25126**, in Area 7. Associated with this burial were a flint knife (ON 92) and bone toggle (ON 91) (**Figure 4**). The Beaker vessel, although in a highly fragmentary state, has all over comb decoration and a bevelled rim, suggesting an early date within this tradition. A comparable burial was discovered at Sewell (Matthews 1976, 202). Coarse, grog-tempered sherds were also recovered from **7909** (evaluation trench 79) and were tentatively identified as Early Bronze Age, based on fabric grounds alone due to the paucity of diagnostic sherds. The remains of two ring ditches were identified during the evaluation in trenches 77-79 (Wessex Archaeology 2006); these were located approximately 200m north-east of Area 7 (**Figure 1**).

Beaker by Alistair Barclay

6.2.3 A fragmentary Beaker (numerous old and new breaks) was found in an inhumation grave. The vessel is typically manufactured from a fine grog-tempered fabric and has been well-fired so that the outer surface is reddish-brown. It is of mid-carinated form (160 mm tall) with the waist (115 mm) slightly wider in diameter than the mouth (105 mm). The undecorated rim has a slight collar. Decoration consists of all-over comb impressions that have been made with a relatively short comb. These impressions are evenly spaced across the upper part of the vessel and rather haphazard lower down.

6.2.4 The vessel form would fit within Clarke's early styles (European and Wessex Middle Rhine) (Clarke 1970) or Needham's mid-carinated group (2005, 188 and fig 6). There are a number of similar vessels from the Oxford area of the Upper Thames Valley including one from Yarnton (found inside a Wessex Middle Rhine Beaker) that comes from a flat grave, another from Summertown, Oxford and others from the Thames gravel terraces. Based on rim and vessel form, and decoration the vessel is likely to be early within the Beaker sequence (?2250-2050 cal BC), although this assumption should be tested by radiocarbon dating.

- 6.2.5 Although a significant proportion of the assemblage is Late Iron Age in date, a small, potentially Middle Iron Age component was identified, comprising sand- and calcareous-tempered wares. Although there are few diagnostic sherds, a group of over 200 calcareous sherds were recovered from ditch **22417** (ditch Group **22440**, Area 1). Calcareous fabrics were used during the Middle Iron Age to the north and east of the Thames, and identified at Bicester Fields Farm (Brown 1999). Calcareous- and sand-tempered sherds have been also been assigned a late Iron Age date where they occur alongside grog-tempered fabrics. These wares are of indigenous Late Iron Age origin, but continued in use into the early post-conquest period (late 1st century/early 2nd century AD). Consequently a distinction has been drawn between contexts where these wares occur alongside wheelthrown 'Romanised' wares and therefore likely to be post-conquest in date, and those which lack this association with Romanised wares and are pre-conquest in date. A similar range of Mid- to Late Iron Age fabrics have been identified in the near vicinity at Bicester Fields Farm (Brown 1999), Slade Farm (Woodward and Marley 2000), and Oxford Road, Bicester (Mould 1996). At Alchester shell-tempered fabrics were present in the earliest Roman occupation and remained in use until the end of the Roman period (Evans 2001, 367).
- 6.2.6 Imported wares were restricted to amphora and samian. The majority of amphora sherds were Dressel 20 amphora, with only 3 sherds unidentified to source. Within the Dressel 20 sherds, one example from **22863** comprised a neck with a sawn off handle, indicating re-use of the amphora vessel as attested to elsewhere on Romano-British sites. Samian accounted for fewer than 2% of the Roman material by sherd count (1.2% by weight), often surviving just as small flakes or abraded fragments. Identified forms comprised Dragendorff types 18, 18/31, 29, 31, 33, 35, 36 and 79. Three stamped bases were recovered; a single, illegible example from **23316**, and a further two from **22935** comprising one partial and one complete stamp [CIITNNI]. Body sherds from a Dr29 with panel decoration were identified from **22942** and sherds from **23316** are also likely to belong to this vessel. The decoration is typical of that employed towards the end of this form's production, AD 70-85. A single example of a Dr79 from **23360** can be assigned a mid-late 2nd century date.
- 6.2.7 Romano-British finewares were poorly represented, although to some extent this may be due to adverse soil conditions affecting the survival of surface finishes with a proportion of the finer oxidised sherds comprising unidentifiable Oxfordshire colour-coat sherds. A significant proportion of the identified Oxford colour-coat sherds were recovered from **22935** and included a Young type C29 and C84, the latter of which was produced from AD 350. Also within this group were six complete trimmed colour-coat bases and two partial re-shaped bases and an Oxfordshire parchment ware trimmed base with a drilled hole. One other Parchment ware sherd was identified, from **23176**. Oxfordshire whiteware occurred primarily as body sherds although a flagon neck and beaker rim were identified from **23175** and **23016** respectively.
- 6.2.8 Mortaria comprised Oxfordshire products, including whiteware forms M17 and M18, and red colour-coat body sherds. Half a white-slipped mortaria base and a trimmed colour-coat base were recovered from **22935**.

- 6.2.9 Romanised wares are dominated by the reduced sandy coarsewares, most, if not all of which are likely to be locally produced between the late 1st to 4th centuries. Jars were the predominant form, often with insufficient profile surviving to enable identification to specific types. Rim fragments that could be readily identified on the whole fall within the ubiquitous Young type R24 necked jar. A single 4th century narrow necked jar was identified from **22935**. Bowls were likewise well represented, including Young bowl types R41, R43, R45, R53, R62 and R68, the latter two of which are 2nd century copies of samian forms Dragendorff 27 and 37 respectively. A single stamped bowl base was recovered from **23187**. The stamp is complete and reads [XIIIVV]. Trimmed or re-shaped bases were observed from **22840**, **22955** and **23301** and bases with post-firing perforations from **22785**, **22863**, **22864** and **23261**.
- 6.2.10 Black Burnished wares formed a small component of the coarsewares; diagnostic forms included a jar rim, a drop flange bowl and three shallow, straight sided plain rim bowls, including a complete profile from layer **22935** with a graffiti mark on the exterior. It was not always clear during assessment whether grog-tempered coarsewares occurring alongside later Roman material were residual Late Iron Age sherds or later, Roman products. The obvious exception to this was the distinctive 4th century Pink grog-tempered ware sherds identified within the assemblage. A complete, grog-tempered, double handled jar form **23047** is likely to be 2nd-3rd century in date, and a very substantial grog-tempered storage jar from **23405**, with herringbone decoration below the rim and measuring approximately 480mm in diameter has also been dated to the 2nd century. Shell-tempered fabrics were also present although given the lack of diagnostic sherds there may be overlap with residual Iron Age material within this category.
- 6.2.11 A significant Early/Mid-Saxon component of the assemblage was identified, with fabrics occurring as either sandy or organic-tempered, and comparable to wares found previously in Bicester (Mephram 2002). Over 40 sherds were recovered from **22935**, fill of the stone-lined feature **22934** (Area 16) including one sandy base with a central hole, alongside late Roman and samian sherds.
- 6.2.12 Medieval wares consist largely of Brill/Boarstall type glazed wares (OXAM) of 13th/14th century date. There are also some sandy and flint-tempered/calcareous coarsewares (OXAG and OXAQ respectively), probably 12th/13th century.

6.3 Ceramic Building Material

- 6.3.1 A small quantity of ceramic building material was recovered, ranging in date from Romano-British to post-medieval. The only diagnostic fragments comprised three Roman *tegula* fragments from **22702**, **23175** and **23481** and a small quantity of medieval roof tiles, including a single nib tile from **25281**.

6.4 Fired Clay

- 6.4.1 The small assemblage of 68 fragments (1484g) of fired clay was dominated by small, worn, abraded fragments, unidentifiable to type. The only

exception was a rectangular 'brick' type object from **25219**, measuring 100mm x 40mm, with a surviving length of 80mm.

6.5 Glass

- 6.5.1 The glass assemblage comprised 16 vessel fragments and two glass beads. Three glass fragments are post-medieval in date (**9101**; ON 120 **22986**; ON 121 **25059**). A small dark fragment from **22979** (ON 119) may be Roman, occurring as a residual find. Two vessel fragments in a clear glass and a single vivid green are of uncertain date (ON 97 **23016**; ON 116 **22588**; ON 117 **22779**). The most diagnostic vessel glass fragments were a single dark blue vessel fragment with opaque white spirals (ON 99, **22792**) presumably from a cup or bowl and a long cylindrical phial neck fragment with a broad, horizontal folded rim (ON 49 **23405**). The rest of the glass fragments are small, blue/green vessel pieces, all of which are Roman in date.
- 6.5.2 Both beads are dark blue, the larger (ON 12 **22457**) had an external diameter of approximately 15mm. The smaller bead (ON 39 **22957**) is more spherical in shape and has an external diameter of just 4mm. Both are Roman in date.

6.6 Metalwork

- 6.6.1 A total of 84 iron objects were recovered from all stages of fieldwork. Over half of this assemblage (49 objects) comprises structural nail fragments, with 17 objects of unidentifiable type. A small number of fragments have been identified as various structural fittings and fastenings. Personal items included a group of hobnails from **23451**, probably the remains of a boot. Post-Roman objects comprised a post-medieval horseshoe (evaluation trench 12) and spur (**22757**).
- 6.6.2 A small assemblage of 10 copper alloy objects including a palstave of Middle Bronze Age date (unstratified in evaluation trench 92; Wessex Archaeology 2006, fig. 4), with the remainder of the assemblage Roman in date. Personal objects comprise a plain finger ring (ON 35), a complete pin of probable 1st – 2nd century date (ON 33) (Cool 1990, 157-8 fig. 5) and a nail cleaner (ON 24) with a spherical head of bone, which can be closely paralleled at Alcester (Crummy and Eckardt 2003, fig. 3, 53 no. 33). Fastening and fitting fragments included the top of a key handle (ON 51).

6.7 Coins

- 6.7.1 Two coins were recovered details of which are given in **Appendix 1**. One (ON 76, Area 16 ditch Group **25319**) is a badly damaged plated silver *denarius* of early Roman date, whilst the second is a penny of George VI.
- 6.7.2 The Roman coin is both heavily corroded and incomplete – with less than half of the flan surviving. Where the surface of the coin can be seen, it also shows traces of some wear, suggesting that the coin was in circulation for some time before its loss or deposition. Damage to the coin clearly shows that it is a forgery of a silver *denarius* of the early Empire – these denominations continued to be used until c. AD 260, when the *denarius* was replaced by the radiate *antoninianus*. Originally struck to a high level of purity, the silver *denarius* suffered successive debasements throughout the

first to third centuries AD, with the silver content of the coins being reduced each time. Fake *denarii* such as this are not uncommon, and often comprise a copper core played in silver, as this one does. This is likely to be a contemporary forgery, although heavy corrosion prevents the identification of the exact issue being copied. It cannot therefore be dated any closer than the 1st to 3rd centuries AD.

- 6.7.3 The penny of George VI shows some signs of corrosion, but is clearly legible. It was struck in 1937, early in his reign.

6.8 Flint

- 6.8.1 Fifty-three pieces of worked flint were recovered. Typologically distinctive pieces date from the Palaeolithic and the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age, although the majority of the material consists of fairly undiagnostic debitage. The flint is summarised in **Table 3**.

Raw material

- 6.8.2 The flint is generally fairly poor quality material with frequent flaws and ranges in colour from dark brown to grey. The cortex where present is thin and abraded. Iron staining was noted on a number of pieces. Cortication varies from light to quite heavy. A little slightly better quality flint seems to have been used and this may have come from the Berkshire Downs to the south or the Chilterns to the east. The majority of the flint however is probably from local gravel deposits. Post-depositional damage was noted on a number of pieces. Five pieces of worked flint were burnt.

- 6.8.3 There were also four pieces of burnt unworked flint (83g) from three contexts.

Flintworking

- 6.8.4 The assemblage is dominated by debitage (flakes, cores and two blades), with only four retouched pieces identified (**Table 3**). Technologically diagnostic artefacts are of widely differing dates (Palaeolithic to Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age). A single small flake core was recovered and two flake core fragments. Some platform edge preparation was noted and the presence of a core rejuvenation flake (tablet, context **8601**) would indicate that some care was taken during knapping. Two broken blades, one with possible usewear (ctx **22581**) were recovered. The presence of the blades, the core tablet and the abraded platform edges on the core and core fragments may indicate an early Neolithic element. However the numbers of pieces are small and therefore this must remain tentative.
- 6.8.5 Many of the flakes are small and squat with little evidence for preparation or care taken during knapping. Given the poor quality of the majority of the flint these may simply reflect the available raw material. They may also indicate a later Bronze Age date for some of the debitage.
- 6.8.6 The retouched element is limited to four pieces (**Table 3**). The tip of a Palaeolithic handaxe came from context **23347**, a serrated flake (**23201**) made on a slightly blade-like flake, a possible scraper (**25281**) and a backed knife (**25127**) from burial **25126**. The handaxe fragment is of some interest although it came from a later context, represents activity away from known findspots of Palaeolithic material (Hardaker 2007). The serrated flake is

quite finely worked and may be of Neolithic date; it is worn although no evidence for edge gloss was noted. The backed knife has been carefully worked and was located near the left heel of the individual. The possible scraper is rather crudely worked and may belong with the undiagnostic debitage.

Table 3: Summary of worked flint

Flakes	Blades	Cores, core fragments	Retouched forms	Total
44 (inc 1 core rejuvenation flake)	2	3 (1 flake core, 2 flake core fragments)	4 (1 handaxe fragment, 1 backed knife, 1 scraper, 1 serrated flake)	53

6.9 Stone

6.9.1 Bicester lies at the junction of the Middle Jurassic (Cornbrash) and Upper Jurassic (Kellaway beds). Nearly all of the material recovered consists of a variable mixture of very hard green/brown hard calcareous fossil-rich glauconitic sandstones and limestone. All typical of rocks of the Middle/Upper Jurassic and are therefore natural or brought in from very short distances. This material was used for stone-linings and walling in various features across the Site. The exceptions are six small German lavastone fragments from context **23261** and a very red fine mudstone (**22890**), which may have been worked.

6.9.2 Forty-eight fragments of burnt unworked stone were also recovered from various features identified during the evaluation.

6.10 Worked Bone

6.10.1 Several pieces of worked bone were identified on Site and within the animal bone assemblage. Object Number 91 in context **25127**, Beaker burial in grave **25126** (Area 7; **Figure 4**), is a toggle made from a medium mammal tibia. A similar toggle was recovered from a Beaker burial from Sewell, Totternhoe (Matthews 1976, 19-22. pl III; Clarke *et al.* 1985 85, fig. 4.5). The Bicester toggle was found next to the right shoulder, at Sewell the toggle was found on the sternum of the crouched male inhumation. A worked bone fragment, possibly from a pin or awl (species unidentified) (ON 94) was also recovered from the burial (context **25127**, **Figure 4**). Context **22419** contained a toggle made out of an unfused sheep/goat metacarpal. Context **22899** contained a piece of worked bone with unknown function. Object Number 74 found in context **22929** is a side plate of an antler composite comb. Several pieces of sawn (red) deer antler were found in contexts **22967**, **23148** and **23222**. The finished products and the sawn pieces of antler indicate bone and antler being worked near the site.

6.11 Other Finds

6.11.1 Other finds comprised single fragments of shell and shale, five fragments of clay pipe and five pieces of slag of unidentifiable type.

6.12 Animal Bone

- 6.12.1 The potential of the assemblage to provide information about husbandry patterns, population structures and consumption practices was ascertained from the number of bones that could give information on the age and sex of animals, butchery, burning and breakage patterns. The number of bones that could provide metrical information was also counted.
- 6.12.2 Conjoining fragments that were demonstrably from the same bone were counted as one bone in order to minimise distortion. No fragments were recorded as 'medium mammal' or 'large mammal'; these were instead consigned to the unidentified category.
- 6.12.3 The extent of mechanical or chemical attrition to the bone surface was recorded, with 1 indicating very poor condition, 2 poor, 3 fair, 4 good and 5 very good. The numbers of gnawed bone were also noted. Marks from chopping, sawing, knife cuts and fractures made when the bone was fresh were recorded as butchery marks.
- 6.12.4 A total of 2315 bones of mammals, birds and fish were hand-recovered with some bone coming from soil samples (see **Section 7.7**). Most of the material dates to the Late Iron Age and Romano-British periods with small quantities of earlier and later material. Most bone fragments were in fair condition with quite a large proportion being in poor condition; 40% of the bones were identifiable to species. With 8%, the number of loose teeth is normal and some re-working can be assumed. Gnawing marks probably made by dogs were seen on 1.5% of the bones. The lack of gnawing marks might be related to bone from some contexts being in quite poor condition resulting in loss of bone surface. The level of scavenger destruction is thus probably higher. Forty bones showed signs of contact with fire. This low number indicates that occasional burning bone waste could have been practiced.

Animal husbandry

- 6.12.5 The material included horse (8%), cattle (50%), sheep/goat (33%), pig (6%), dog (1%), deer (1%), bird (1%) and fish (n=1). Some bones of mole were also found, but these are likely intrusive. None of the bird or fish bones could be identified due to their poor preservation.
- 6.12.6 In total, 186 bones could be aged to provide insight in the population structure of the animals. The presence of foetal cattle bones in context **22433** and foetal sheep in contexts **22979**, **23176** and **25002** indicates local breeding. A total of 107 bones could be measured to provide insight into the phenotype of the animals.

Consumption and deposition

- 6.12.7 The presence of elements of all parts of the animal body makes it likely that the animals were butchered locally. Butchery marks were seen on 1% of the bones and were made with cleavers and knives.
- 6.12.8 The assemblage contained several articulated bone groups (ABG):

- ABG 14 in context **22578** consists of a partial calf skeleton. As mainly elements of the feet are present, the find might represent a skin or primary butchery waste
- ABG 48 in context **23321** consists of a very fragmented cattle skull
- ABG 75 in context **23478** consists of a partial sheep/goat skeleton. As mainly elements of the feet are present, the find might represent a skin or primary butchery waste
- ABG 85 in context **23532** consists of the partial skeleton of a calf
- ABG 87 in context **23547** consists of a lower hind limb of cattle
- ON 34 in context **22884** (pit **22883**, Area 16) consists of a horse spine (subadult) with three cervical and eight thoracal vertebrae

6.13 Human Bone

6.13.1 Human bone was recovered from three contexts, one each from Areas 7, 13 and 14. The Area 7 bone represents the remains of a flexed (left side, upper body slumped back to supine) inhumation burial dated to the Beaker period. The bone from Areas 13 and 14 is cremated, the former derived from the remains of an undated, unurned burial with redeposited pyre debris and the latter from what appears to have been a dump of pyre debris made in the upper levels of the fill of a Late Iron Age/Early Romano-British enclosure ditch.

Methods

6.13.2 The bone was subject to a rapid scan to assess its condition, demographic data, potential for indices recovery and the presence of pathological lesions. The cremated bone was weighted by context (**Table 4**). Assessments of age and sex were based on standard methodologies (Buikstra and Ubelaker 1994; Scheuer and Black 2000). Grading for bone preservation follows McKinley (2004a, fig. 6).

Table 4: Summary of human bone

Context /Area	Cut	Deposit type	Quantification	Age/sex	Comment
22594/ Area 13	22593	un. burial + rpd	729.4g	adult >18 yr. ??male	well oxidised; some trab. bone; much in small fraction residues
23037/ Area 14	23031	rp/ ?un. burial + rpd	457.2g	adult >20 yr.	very variable oxidation; trab. & compact
25127/ Area 7	25126	inhumation burial	c. 60%	adult c. 40-55 yr. male	2-4; heavily fragmented, little reconstruction, few metrics; some burnt bone with thorax sample

KEY: un. – unurned; rpd - redeposited pyre debris

Results

6.13.3 Both graves (**25126** and **23031**) had been heavily truncated and survived to depths of only 0.05-0.07m. There were some indications for displacement of bone within grave **25126** as a result of this disturbance but the main impact was that of heavy fragmentation to the bone, with almost no skeletal elements surviving intact and some heavily comminuted. Some bone may have been lost from the remains of the cremation burial as a result of

disturbance but the quantity is unlikely to have been substantial; increased bone fragmentation may, however, have occurred. The cremation-related deposit in ditch **23031** was sealed by the final episode of backfilling/silting and does not appear to have been disturbed.

- 6.13.4 The relatively low level of skeletal survival within the inhumation grave (**Table 4**) is primarily a consequence of heavy fragmentation of the bone and poor preservation related to the shallow surviving depth of the grave; most of the trabecular bone from the axial skeleton has completely degraded. The cremated bone is in good visual condition and includes a relatively high proportion of trabecular as well as compact bone.
- 6.13.5 A minimum of three individuals is represented within the assemblage, one from each deposit. Although the nature of the deposit made within the ditch fill is unclear, it represents the only cremation-related deposit in this area of the site and cannot have derived from the same cremation as the bone recovered from grave **22593**.
- 6.13.6 No pathological lesions were observed during this rapid scan other than mild calculus deposits on the teeth from inhumation burial **25127**.
- 6.13.7 Tooth samples from the Beaker inhumation **25127** have been taken for inclusion in The Beaker People Project. This study aims to analyse the diet and mobility of over 250 Beaker-period burials from across Britain. The central aim is to find out whether Beaker people were migrants to Britain. Subsidiary aims are to investigate dietary patterns and the degree of mobility within subsistence practices. It utilizes isotopic analyses of carbon, nitrogen, sulphur, strontium and oxygen as well as microwear analysis of dentition and osteological analysis of age, sex and pathology. The project is being undertaken by a team from Sheffield, Bradford, Durham Universities and the Max Planck Institute, under the direction of Professor Mike Parker Pearson. It is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

6.13.8

7 ENVIRONMENTAL REMAINS

7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 A total of 72 samples were taken from the excavations at Bicester. The majority of these came from Late-Iron Age to Late Romano-British features, although a few may be Early Saxon in date. Most of these dated samples came from Areas 14 and 16, while all in Area 5A were undated.

The samples break down into the following areas and feature types: -

Area	Number of samples	Volume processed	Features and Types	Periods Represented
Area 1	7	92 litres	Ditches (2) Pits (4)	Mid-Late Iron Age/early Romano British
Area 5A	7	47 litres	Pit (1) Kiln/Oven (2), Postholes (3)	All undated
Area 7	7	61 litres	Hearth/oven(1) pits (2) postholes (4)	Late Iron Age Romano British

Area 13	5	34.5 litres	Pit (1), cremation (1)	Romano-British Cremation
Area 14	25	226 litres	Ditch (9) postholes (7) pits (6)	Late Iron Age/ Romano- British/Saxon
Area 15	3	17.5 litres	Pit (1) ditches (2)	Late Iron Age/early Romano British
Area 16	18	192.5 litres	Ditch (3), channel (1), pits (6), stone-lined pits (2), corndrier (1)	Late Iron Age/ Romano- British/Saxon
TOTAL	72	670.5 litres	59	

7.2 Assessment Results, Methods and Data

Charred Plant Remains and Wood Charcoals

7.2.1 Bulk samples were processed by standard flotation methods; the flot retained on a 0.5 mm mesh, residues fractionated into 5.6mm, 2mm and 1mm fractions and dried. The coarse fractions (>5.6mm) were sorted, weighed and discarded. Flots were scanned under a stereo-binocular microscope at x10 – 40 magnification and the presence of charred remains quantified (Appendix 1, Table E1) to record the preservation and nature of the charred plant and wood charcoal remains. Preliminary identifications of dominant or important taxa are noted below, following the nomenclature of Stace (1997).

7.2.2 Few of the flots were particularly large and material was often reasonably well preserved. While many of the features were quite shallow, few contained high numbers of roots and as such stratigraphic movement, reworking and the degree of contamination by later intrusive elements may be relatively minimal.

Charred Plant Remains

7.2.3 The samples were quite variable in their richness. Most of the samples richer in cereal remains, as might be expected, came from those Areas that yielded most archaeological evidence in general, in particular Areas 14 and 16. The poorest samples came from Areas 5A and Area 1, while only a few samples from Area 7 produced cereal remains. The samples are summarised below by area.

Area 1

7.2.4 As stated above relatively few of the samples from this part of the site yielded cereal remains. Cereal remains were not recovered from either ditch. However, all but one of the pits contained some cereal remains, mainly of hulled wheats (*Triticum spelta/dicocum*). Other remains included a fragment of hazelnut shell (*Corylus avellana*) and sloe (*Prunus spinosa*), as well as occasional seeds of common weeds, persicaria (*Persica maculosalpathifolium*), campion (*Silene* sp.), oats (*Avena* sp.) and meadow grass/cat's tails (*Poa/Phleum* sp.).

Area 5A

7.2.5 All of the samples from this area came from undated features. Unlike the other areas only a single cereal remain, a glume base of hulled wheat, was recovered from the corndrier/oven **22531**, along with a single seed of clover (*Trifolium* sp.).

Area 7

- 7.2.6 While sporadic cereals were present in three of the samples, only one, from pit **25123**, was relatively rich in charred cereals along with remains of hulled wheat grains and a possible glume of emmer wheat (*Triticum dicoccum*). A few grains of barley (*Hordeum* sp.) were also recovered from pit **25050**. Other remains included seeds of cleavers (*Galium* cf. *aparine*) and vetch/wild pea (*Vicia/Lathyrus*)

Area 13

- 7.2.7 Five samples from two features were examined from this area. Very few remains of any kind were recovered from the cremation. The possible Romano-British pit **22613** contained several highly degraded grains of barley (*Hordeum vulgare* sl.) along with a few degraded grains of unidentified wheat (*Triticum* sp.). Unlike the other samples there were no remains of hulled wheat which may raise a question as to whether the material and feature could be Saxon or later in date.

Area 14

- 7.2.8 A number of samples from this area produced relatively abundant remains of charred cereals. In particular pit **23174** was very rich in cereal remains, mainly glumes and grains of spelt wheat (*Triticum spelta*). Some of the grain displayed clear signs of having germinated, while detached elongated/sprouted coleoptiles from germinated (sprouted) grain were also frequent. A wide variety of seeds of probable arable weeds were also frequent including black bindweed (*Fallopia convolvulus*), corn gromwell (*Lithospermum arvense*), docks (*Rumex* sp.), rye-grass (*Lolium* sp.), clover (*Trifolium* sp.), scentless mayweed (*Tripleurospermum inodorum*), red bartsia (*Odontites vernus*), plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), cleavers (*Galium* sp.), runch (*Raphanus raphanistrum*), oats (*Avena* sp.), campion (*Silene* sp.), selfheal (*Prunella vulgaris*), corn spurrey (*Spergula arvensis*), sedge (*Carex* sp.), spikerush (*Eleocharis palustris*) and probable grass vetchling (*Lathyrus nissolia*). The species indicate a wide variety of habitats from wet soils to dry calcareous and sandy soils. The lower sample from this pit also had possible charred dung within it. The samples from this pit are very similar to others from Area 14 in that they contained waste, potentially from malting.
- 7.2.9 Two other rich samples came from ditch **23085** and pit **23185** where a similar array of species was represented, although in neither sample were sprouted coleoptiles or germinated grains seen. The remainder of the samples varied in the number of cereal remains they contained, although few had more than 10 grains and/or chaff. The weed seeds in these poorer samples were noticeably restricted to mainly larger seeded species such as oats, cleavers, black bindweed and vetch/wild pea. Pits **23060** and **22971** and postholes **22980** and **22990** had no cereal remains.

Area 15

- 7.2.10 Only three samples were examined from samples in this area. Both pit **22733** and ditch **22776** had no more than single cereal grains. That from the possible Late Iron Age ditch **22778** was somewhat richer with several grains and other seeds including one of possible pea (*Pisum sativum*).

Area 16

- 7.2.11 The samples from this area were by far the richest of all those examined. The richer samples came from a variety of features, but most significantly from the two stone-lined square pits, **22837** and **22934**, as well as the stone-lined channel (**23354**) and drainage ditch **23361** associated with pit **22934**. All these features contained reasonable quantities of grain, mainly of spelt (*Triticum spelta*), but also barley. Significantly in some cases grain could be seen to have germinated, while several detached elongated/sprouted coleoptiles were also present. The predominant remains in these samples though were glume bases, which where identifiable were seen to be only of spelt wheat.
- 7.2.12 Weed seeds and other remains were also relatively frequent in the Area 16 samples. Most of the species represented are those already listed above as recovered from pit **23174**. One significant addition however are seeds of stinking mayweed (*Anthemis cotula*), identified in all of these features but the drainage ditch. This species is an indicator of the cultivation of clay soils, and is generally only found on more Romanised sites, becoming more common in the later Romano-British period; and ubiquitous by the Saxon period. The species has previously been recorded from Romano-British contexts at Alchester (Pelling 2001).
- 7.2.13 The only other significant remains from these samples is that of a flax capsule (*Linum usitatissimum*) from drainage ditch **23361**.
- 7.2.14 Of the remaining samples in this area only one, that from pit **23550** contained no cereal remains, while those from pits **22790** and **23303** contained no more than background material. The rest of the samples like those described above were relatively rich in cereal remains, although not all contained signs of germinated or “malted” grain. Of those with germinated grain, sprouted coleoptiles and a generally similar composition to those described above, we may list those from ditch **23550** and corndrier **23502**, the latter of which also had a single stone of sloe (*Prunus spinosa*). Rich samples also came from pits **22856**, **23452** and **23561**, although none contained evidence for malting. The samples from pit **23420**, with Saxon pottery adjacent to the stone-lined pit and channel contained mainly glume remains and it must be considered that this material may have been re-deposited from earlier activity.
- 7.2.15 The general richness of remains within this area would seem to be associated with the archaeological evidence for structures and features potentially related to the processing of cereals. The evidence for the potential preparation of malt may be particularly significant in that brewing is one of the possible functions for the stone-lined pits and the channel.

7.3 Wood Charcoal

- 7.3.1 Wood charcoal was noted from the flots of the bulk samples and is recorded in **Appendix 1** (Table E1) and outlined below:

Area 1

- 7.3.2 Charcoal was reasonably common in the possible Middle to Late Iron Age ditch **22417** (Group **22440**), while a smaller dump of charred material

contained twig and bark material. Comparatively to samples from other areas all these samples contained higher quantities of wood charcoal.

Area 5A

- 7.3.3 All but one of the samples from this area had little to no charcoal. The single exception was one of the “arc forming” postholes **22688**, which was very rich in charcoal, and had a high proportion of ring-porous charcoal, probably of oak (*Quercus* sp.). It was not possible to tell if such remains represented a burnt out post, although no obvious twig or branch material was seen.

Area 7

None of the samples contained very much wood charcoal, although a single thorn of hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) was recovered from posthole **25050**.

Area 13

- 7.3.4 The samples from the undated cremation contained very little wood charcoal, which may indicate that the cremated bones were separated from pyre material prior to burial. However, there were a number of roots in the sample, as well as intrusive modern coal and it might be noted that wood charcoal is particularly susceptible to break up and subsequent loss within the active soil horizon. Wood charcoal was relatively abundant within pit **22613** along with some twig and branch wood and an immature fruit of hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*).

Area 14

- 7.3.5 Several features within Area 14 were relatively rich in wood charcoal, including dumps in ditches **23031**, **22977**, **22964** and pit **22971**, all of which contained relatively few cereal remains. Within this area only those samples from pit **23174** were rich in charred plant remains and wood charcoal. The charcoal in this sample also contained some fragments of possible bark.

Area 15

- 7.3.6 None of the samples from this area contained much in the way of wood charcoal.

Area 16

- 7.3.7 While charcoal was reasonably well represented in both the corndrier **23502** and pit **23452**, in light of the number of samples taken from this area and in comparison to the samples from the other areas, it was generally poorly represented within this part of the site.

7.4 Discussion

- 7.4.1 The samples from the site are fairly typical of Late Iron Age and Romano-British occupation in general. Spelt wheat dominates Romano-British assemblages in this part of the country (Pelling 2001; Robinson and Wilson 1987). Of some interest are the relatively rich assemblages with evidence for malting associated with the stone-lined pits and channel and would corroborate the evidence suggesting a possible function of the features within brewing. The date of the material and the features themselves is uncertain, but it might be noted that such activities and similar features to

the east at Weedon Hill, Aylesbury. have been radiocarbon dated to the conquest period (Wessex Archaeology 2008), while a dump of similar material in ditch at Alchester was associated with an Early Saxon context (Pelling 2001). The remains seen here are by no means as extensive or rich as seen at Weedon Hill, but at least point to a relatively intense, but possibly short-lived period of brewing activities.

- 7.4.2 Despite the evidence for the presence of Saxon pottery in a few of the features, no remains of free-threshing wheat or rye were seen in any of the samples and only a little barley, the three cereals that eventually come to dominate Saxon assemblages. While hulled wheats have certainly been recorded for sites in the Upper Thames (Pelling and Robinson 2000), there is a strong likelihood that here, as with the Roman pottery, such remains have been reworked at a later date. While similar material relating to malting was also found at Alchester in a potential Early Saxon context, no radiocarbon date was obtained and this material must also be regarded as of possible Romano-British date (Pelling pers. comm.)

7.5 Molluscs

- 7.5.1 Molluscs were represented in many of the bulk samples and where richer assemblages or assemblages of interest were present, they are listed and summarised in **Appendix 1** (Table E2). No specific mollusc samples were taken as there was generally a low level of preservation of shells per litre.

Area 1

- 7.5.2 Molluscs were well represented in a sample from the possible Middle to Late Iron Age ditch **22417**(Group **22440**).

- 7.5.3 The assemblage comprised mixed assemblages of open country, intermediate and shade-loving species, dominated in particular by *Vertigo* spp., *Vallonia* spp., *Trichia hispida*, *Carychium* spp., *Discus rotundatus* and Clausiliidae.

- 7.5.4 The remaining samples contained only a few shells. These included occasional open country and intermediate species from the ditch and mainly small numbers of open country species from the pits, e.g. *Vallonia* sp. and *Helicella* sp.

Area 5A

- 7.5.5 All the samples from this area without exception contained a mixture of land and freshwater species.

- 7.5.6 Molluscs were observed in high numbers within the undated corndirier/oven **22531** and **22532** as well as in postholes **22682** and **22692**. The land snail elements to the assemblages were similar to those observed in the ditch in Area 1. There was also a marsh and fresh water component to the assemblages, mainly represented by shells of Planorbids and *Lymnaea/Bithynia* spp. There were also a few shells of *Vertigo* cf. *angustior*.

Area 7

- 7.5.7 Fewer samples in this area contained molluscs than those in the other areas. Of the seven samples examined only one from pit **25115**, contained a few mollusc remains, including shells of *Trichia hispida* and *Vallonia* sp.

Area 13

- 7.5.8 No mollusk shells were recovered from the cremation burial, while pit **22613** contained a single shell of *Vallonia* sp.

Area 14

- 7.5.9 A number of samples from this area produced reasonably substantial numbers of mollusc shells. Water snails were present in several samples including features **23174**, **23185**, **22977**, **23100**, and **23031**. In general the remainder of samples contained only single to a few shells of mainly *Vallonia* sp. and *Helicella itala*.

- 7.5.10 Rich mollusc assemblages were observed in samples from Enclosure ditch **23031** and ditch **22977**. The dominant species within the assemblage from the enclosure ditch were *Vertigo* spp., *Helicella itala*, *Vallonia* spp., *Trichia hispida*, *Carychium* spp., *Aegopinella* spp., Planorbids and *Lymnaea/Bithynia* spp, while the predominant species within ditch 22977 comprised *Vallonia* spp. and Planorbids.

Area 15

- 7.5.11 Only the sample from ditch **22778** had any mollusc remains comprising of single shells of *Vallonia* and *Helicella itala*.

Area 16

- 7.5.12 Only a few samples from this Area also yielded moderately rich assemblages including water molluscs (see **Appendix 1**, Table E2), while smaller numbers of shells, mainly of *Vallonia* spp., *Pupilla muscorum* and *Helicella itala* were recovered from all the remaining features but ditch **23550**, and pit **23420**.

- 7.5.13 The mollusc assemblage observed within tank **22934** was dominated by the open country species, in particular *Vertigo* spp., *Vertigo* c.f. *angustior* and *Vallonia* spp. with a few intermediate, shade-loving and fresh water species, whereas the smaller assemblage from drainage ditch **23361** mainly comprised *Vallonia* spp. and *Trichia hispida*.

7.6 Discussion

- 7.6.1 The richer mollusc samples are diverse with a wide range of species, generally including a significant fresh and brackish water element. The assemblages appear to be indicative of an open local landscape with some areas of shade, possibly represented by long grass and/or scrub, together with areas of a wetter environment.

7.7 Small Mammal and Fish Bones

- 7.7.1 Generally such remains were rare or absent but their presence is noted in **Appendix 1**, Table E1. A few burnt small mammal bones were present in a

possible Late Iron Age/early Romano-British pit **25024** in Area 7, and pit **23185** in Area 14. Another pit **22984** in this same area had a few anuran (frog/toad) bones and a single vertebra of eel (*Anguilla anguilla*). Eel vertebrae were also recovered from pits **22856** and **22837** in Area 16. The channel **23354** samples and that from pit **22856** contained quite frequent bones of small mammals, while occasional bones of small mammal bones were recovered from pits **23361** and **23420**.

7.8 Radiocarbon Dating

- 7.8.1 A number of features have been identified across the Site where radiocarbon dating would have the potential to answer particular questions that have been identified during the assessment.
- 7.8.2 The features and activities within Area 16 could usefully be clarified by radiocarbon dating. In particular there is question over the date of the main phases of construction and use of the two stone-lined pits (**22934** and **22837**), which radiocarbon dating has the potential to shed light on. In particular pit **22934** contains later Roman and Saxon pottery, while the pottery from the stone-lined channel **23356** and the associated drainage ditch (**23362**) suggest a possible earlier Romano-British date for all these associated features. All these features have sufficient material to date. In particular much of this material is believed to be associated with malting and/or relatively intense agricultural activities.
- 7.8.3 The second stone-lined pit **22837**, also in Area 16, contained pottery dating from the Late Iron Age to late Romano-British period, but also contained charred material of a similar nature to that seen in the other stone-lined feature. A further feature of interest with a similar dump of material came from the corndrier **23502**, also in Area 16. A dump of charred material from pit **23174** in Area 14 would also appear to comprise of material similar in composition and potentially contemporary with the activities possibly associated with the stone-lined pits, while the pottery also suggests a late Romano-British date for this feature.
- 7.8.4 Burial **25127** is dated by its accompanying grave goods (Beaker vessel, worked bone and flint), and is likely to be early within the Beaker sequence (?2250-2050 cal BC). A high precision date will enable this to be confirmed and will provide a date for the bone toggle.
- 7.8.5 Cremation burial **22593** in Area 7 is undated. As there is insufficient charcoal from the deposit, a date can be obtained from the cremated bone itself.

7.8.6

8 STATEMENT OF POTENTIAL AND UPDATED PROJECT DESIGN

8.1 Potential of the Features

- 8.1.1 Excavations in Areas 1-17 revealed evidence for extensive land use and to a lesser extent settlement during the Middle to Late Iron Age and Romano-British periods. There was very little evidence uncovered for land use or settlement during the early prehistoric, Early Iron Age, Saxon or medieval

periods. Although some important finds dating to these periods were made (e.g. Beaker burial, Area 7).

- 8.1.2 As has been noted, the density of archaeological remains varied greatly. Areas 3, 8, 10, 11 and 17 contained nothing of archaeological interest and Areas 2 and 9 revealed one undated feature each. There were four large quarry pits in Area 6 that were not securely dated but may have been associated with the construction of the Roman road. Areas 1, 5A and 13 revealed a low density of features, mostly dated to the Late Iron Age/Romano-British period. The foci of agricultural, industrial and settlement centred on Area 7 and Areas 14-16 (**Figures 1, 4-7**).
- 8.1.3 Areas 14-16 contained the greatest density and largest area of archaeological remains, unsurprisingly these lay close to the line of the Roman Road (**Figure 1**). The features were mostly dated to the Late Iron Age/Romano-British period, with limited evidence for Early Saxon activity. The underlying geology also played a part in the location of features, with far more limited evidence for activity on the lower, wetter, clay areas.
- 8.1.4 The excavation has to some extent achieved the original research aims as outlined in the Written Scheme of Investigation (**Section 3**). The results have clarified the nature, extent and date range of the occupation of the Site. Although certain features require further examination (e.g. the stone-lined pits and gullies/ditches in Area 16) to fully clarify their function and date range.
- 8.1.5 Area 1 – excavated to examine the apparently unenclosed Late Iron Age/Romano-British settlement in evaluation Area E. The excavation revealed a relatively low level of activity of mostly Middle and Late Iron Age date. A single Romano-British pit was excavated. The Middle Iron Age ditch (Group **22440**) can be seen to be part of a wider field system known from aerial photography (**Figure 1**, Cox 2005)
- 8.1.6 Areas 2, 3-4 – excavated to examine an apparent medieval quarry, upstanding earthworks, spring lines and watercourses. To located any further evidence for Saxon activity. The quarry pit in Area 2 was examined and characterized although very little dating evidence was recovered. The apparent earthworks in Area 3 proved upon excavation to be natural undulations, and a relatively modern quarry was identified in Area 4. Thus although these areas were not particularly productive archaeologically, the excavations have clarified the date and form of the activities identified during the evaluation
- 8.1.7 Areas 5A, 13-17 – this area was originally identified as of high potential for Romano-British settlement and also some Saxon activity was identified. Changes to the excavation strategy on site meant that a number of smaller areas were opened up. In Area 5A low levels of activity were identified, and included a number of undated corndriers/ovens. In Area 13 a relatively low-level of activity was identified, the main feature being ditch Group **25286** which was identified in Area 15 as ditch **22715** and can be seen on the aerial photographs to continue to the south-west (**Figures 1, 6**). This ditch may form a boundary and forms part of a more complex pattern of features, some of which were also examined during the excavations. In Areas 14-16 a

high density of archaeological features was identified (**Figures 1, 5-7**). Here enclosures and ditches of Late Iron Age/Romano-British date were identified and it can be seen that these form part of a larger enclosure system (**Figure 1**). Within these enclosures there was evidence for settlement and domestic or semi-industrial processes (four-post structures, pits, postholes, corndriers/ovens etc). A complex of stone-lined features on Area 16 has been interpreted as being used for probable crop processing, possibly brewing. The substantial Late Iron Age ditch (**22715/25286**) with its gentle profile and shallow depth suggest that this was not a defensive ditch and the paucity of archaeological material recovered from it would indicate that it was some distance from domestic activity. In addition the ditch seems to have been too large to have served merely as a field boundary or drainage ditch. It is possible that this feature functioned as an aqueduct, carrying water from the Pingle Brook to the south-west.

- 8.1.8 Areas 6, 8-10 – these areas were targeted on known areas of Romano-British activity including roadside settlement. Unfortunately due to a combination of flooding and the general low-level of archaeological features identified, these areas have contributed relatively little to the overall picture of the Site.
- 8.1.9 Area 7 – identified as an area of high potential, Area 7 contained a complex of largely Late Iron Age ditches, enclosures and associated features. A single Beaker burial was identified and there was limited evidence for Romano-British and Saxon activity. The apparently isolated Beaker burial was located approximately 200m south-east of two ring ditches identified during the evaluation (**Figure 1**).
- 8.1.10 The quantities of pottery and animal bone and other domestic refuse recovered from rubbish pits and backfilled ditches from across the Site however, indicate domestic settlement activities. Fragments of quernstones and the presence of corndriers /ovens attest to crop processing, baking and possibly brewing. The recovery of a small quantity of loomweight fragments indicate textile production. The presence of sherds of amphora and samian pottery, Roman glass, toiletry items and jewellery indicate that the inhabitants were reasonably affluent and attest trade with the Continent. Very small quantities of CBM were recovered; the abundant availability of easily split and shaped limestone would have made the use of tile and brick almost unnecessary. Further evidence of settlement was borne out by the presence of hearths, four- and six-post structures. Many of the postholes recorded were very shallow, others have almost certainly been lost altogether; it is possible that Late Iron Age/Romano-British roundhouses existed but the remains have been wholly or partially lost.
- 8.1.11 The chronologies of these sites reveal a pattern of discontinuous/intermittent settlement observed in this area during the Iron Age. It appears that two areas of the Site were also abandoned in the Late Iron Age at approximately the same time that Slade Farm and Bicester Fields Farm were also abandoned, perhaps indicating that the military occupation of the area had a profound effect on local settlement patterns; shifting the focus of settlement to the north-east and east in the case of this Site.
- 8.1.12 Evidence for Late Neolithic/ Early Bronze Age activity in the immediate area is fairly sparse, although a scattering of features tentatively dated to this

period were recorded during excavation of the extramural settlement north of Alchester (Booth *et al.* 2001). Small quantities of redeposited worked flint and domestic Beaker pottery were also recovered from features of a later date. An isolated cremation burial containing Deverel-Rimbury (Middle Bronze Age) pottery was excavated north-west of the Roman town within the easement of what is now the A41 dual carriageway (Booth *et al.* 200).

- 8.1.13 The south-west extremity of the Site was located approximately 1.25km north-west of the Roman town of Alchester and the route of Roman Akeman Street passed c. 500m to the south. The western boundary of the Site was adjacent to the line of the south-west to north-east aligned Dorchester to Towcester Roman road that extended north from Alchester. The north-western areas (14-17) of the Site; i.e. those with the highest density of features, were positioned less than 50m from the Roman road and the track ways visible onsite may have converged with the Roman road to the north of the excavated area. The earlier phases of Romano-British land use may have been connected with the construction of the two roads, in particular the creation of the large quarry pits immediately to the west of the Roman road. The enclosure ditch may have represented, if not a Roman fort, a defensible “frontier” settlement which fairly rapidly became unnecessary and was backfilled.
- 8.1.14 It seems likely that the Roman presence in north Oxfordshire commenced soon after the initial Roman occupation. There is evidence for a Roman military presence in the environs of Alchester as early as AD 44, the precise date being derived from dendrochronological dating of a gatepost timber (Sauer 1999). There appear to have been several phases of military activity. The remains of a large temporary camp were identified to the south-east of the town; the camp was later succeeded by a rectangular enclosure that has been interpreted as a parade ground (Sauer 1999b). Items of military equipment and early Imperial coins have been recovered from the excavation of the double ditched defences of a fort to the west of the town walls (Booth *et al.* 2001).
- 8.1.15 The construction of Akeman Street has also been dated to the 1st century AD. An excavation at Wilcote, to the west of Alchester, has suggested that the road had been built by c. AD 47 (Hands 1993). A Roman settlement aligned on Akeman Street was excavated at Asthall further west and was given a broadly similar date (Booth 1997b). The date of the construction of the Dorchester to Towcester Roman Road appears to have been contemporary with the earlier civilian settlement of Alchester. North of the Site, the ‘outlines of six stone buildings’ dated to the Romano-British were observed at South Farm, Bicester (Chambers 1989) and stone foundations were noted at Kings End Farm (Chambers 1979). The sites were not fully excavated so little is known about these potentially substantial farmsteads/villas. Kings End Farm and South Farm were respectively approximately 2km and 3km north of the present Site.
- 8.1.16 The extramural settlement of the area that was later enclosed by the town walls appears to have been established in the latter part of the 1st century AD and directly overlay one or more of the military phases. The origins of the walled Roman town of Alchester date from the later 2nd century; a sub-rectangular rampart and town wall were constructed to enclose an area of c.

10.5 ha. Aerial photographs, subsequent evaluation, excavation and find spots suggest the extramural settlement and associated features could have eventually covered an area of c. 45 to 50 ha (Booth *et al.* 2001). Dating evidence from ceramics indicates that the town and its environs were occupied throughout the Romano-British period and into the Anglo-Saxon (5th – 8th century) period. The duration of the Anglo-Saxon settlement of the town is not known, but does not seem to have extended into the late Saxon period, possibly by this time it had been superseded as a focus of population by the establishment of the settlement at Bicester, 2km to the north.

8.2 Research Aims

8.2.1 The main objectives of any further analysis will focus on issues identified in the Solent Thames Archaeological Research Framework (www.buckscc.gov.uk) which provides a broad overview and research agenda.

Early Prehistoric activity

8.2.2 The earliest evidence from the Site is an unstratified fragment from a Palaeolithic handaxe, which extends the known distribution in this area.

8.2.3 Limited evidence for Neolithic and Bronze Age occupation was recovered in the form of largely redeposited pottery and flint. A notable find was the Beaker burial from Area 7.

8.2.4 The Beaker burial of regional and inter-regional importance. The vessel found with the burial places it at the beginning of the Beaker period (c. 2250-2050 cal BC). The location of the burial, on limestone geology rather than gravel and towards the north-west extremity of the study area, adds to its comparative rarity. The quantity of grave goods (bone toggle, bone point (?pin), flint knife and Beaker vessel) make this a relatively rich grave. The burial has been included in the Beaker People Project (see human bone below) an international research project that is looking at the diet and origins of Beaker using communities. This will shed light on the origin of the individual.

8.2.5 The burials can be compared with other examples from the region (e.g. Radley and Yarnton). The Bicester burial will provide important regional evidence from a non-gravel terrace site. The form of the Beaker pot provides a link with other sites and burials on the gravel terraces (e.g. Yarnton) while the bone toggle has only one other known parallel, the Beaker burial with copper spiral-headed pin from Sewell, Totternhoe on the Chiltern Ridge (Bucks) (Clarke 1970. pl3). It will be important to obtain radiocarbon dates for the burial, so that the potentially early date of the vessel can be confirmed (Needham 2005, Barclay in *Finds* and Stuart Needham pers. comm.). This will also provide a close date for the bone toggle.

8.2.6 The Bronze Age palstave from evaluation trench 92 is an important finds and will be compared with examples in Oxfordshire.

Iron Age/Romano-British

8.2.7 Evidence for Iron Age settlement in the environs of Bicester has been recorded at Oxford Road, Bicester (Mould 1997), Bicester Fields Farm

(Cromarty *et al.* 2000) and Slade Farm (Ellis *et al.* 2000). Nearby Graven Hill has been suggested as the site of a possible hillfort. Iron Age linear features were recorded immediately to the south-west, and were probably truncated by, the town walls of Alchester. Archaeological work carried out in advance of the A41 Wendlebury to Bicester road improvements revealed settlement dated mostly to the Middle Iron Age (MIA) with evidence for Late Iron Age occupation being relatively scarce (Booth *et al.* 2001).

- 8.2.8 Further research will help shed light on settlement patterns and types during the Late Iron Age/early Romano-British period. It has been demonstrated that two settlement areas within the Site appear to have been abandoned by the beginning of the Romano-British period and this parallels the evidence revealed on other Late Iron Age/Romano-British sites in the vicinity of Bicester (Booth *et al.* 2001) and possibly the wider Solent Thames area. Evidence for settlement on Site was somewhat limited as no circular structures were identified, however indirect evidence for domestic activities included corndriers/ovens, pits, four- and six-post structures, hearths.

Romano-British/Early Saxon

- 8.2.9 The function of the stone-lined tanks and associated features has been tentatively described as connected to malting and brewing. The dating of the features remains problematic and further work, including radiocarbon dating and more in depth analysis of environmental samples, is desirable. Parallels may be drawn with a similar, although much more elaborate, feature excavated at Weedon Hill, Buckinghamshire (Wessex Archaeology in prep.).

8.2.10

9 FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT OF POTENTIAL

9.1 Finds Potential

Pottery

- 9.1.1 The Beaker burial is of regional importance. The remainder of the assemblage appears to potentially span the late Iron Age through to the Saxon period and pottery has the potential, through more detailed analysis, to facilitate a better understanding of the site chronology and enable comparisons with assemblages in the region, principally the relationship between this hinterland settlement and that of Roman Alchester. Although much of the assemblage is in a relatively poor condition there are unusual characteristics within the assemblage, such as the number of re-shaped and re-used base sherds, and the possible curation of Roman sherds during the Saxon period. The medieval and post-medieval sherds are of little further potential although a statement on this material will be included in the publication report.

Ceramic Building Material

- 9.1.2 This small assemblage has no potential for further analysis.

Fired Clay

- 9.1.3 There is no potential in further analysis of this material.

Glass

- 9.1.4 There is no potential in further analysis of this material.

Metalwork

- 9.1.5 A more detailed examination of these objects may help further identification of types and parallels, although this will be of limited potential in understanding the chronology and function of the site.

Coins

- 9.1.6 There is no further potential for analysis of this very small assemblage.

Flint

- 9.1.7 The bulk of the flint is undiagnostic debitage, although a few datable pieces were recovered. The earliest of which is the tip of a Palaeolithic handaxe; Neolithic and Bronze Age pieces were also identified.

- 9.1.8 This small assemblage is of limited significance given its size and largely residual nature. However the fragment of Palaeolithic handaxe is of some interest given its location. The backed knife from the burial is a fairly typical grave good for this period. The rest of the material probably represents a background scatter of Neolithic and Bronze Age date, which can be paralleled in the vicinity (e.g. Bradley 2001, 214).

Animal Bone

- 9.1.9 Although the assemblage is only small, it is proposed that all animal bones are fully analysed. Full analysis will include the identification of all dateable bones. In addition, the fair state of the bones enables the recognition of some butchery marks and these should be recorded and described. Particular attention should be paid to the various articulated bone groups in order to shed light on deposition practices. The analysis of the worked bone will contribute to our understanding of local handicrafts. The measurements should be made available on ABMAP (hosted by the ADS).

Human Bone

- 9.1.10 Analysis will provide more detailed and secure demographic data with regard to the number, age and sex of individuals. With limited reconstruction some metric data can be recovered from the inhumed bone but this has little potential for the calculation of specific skeletal indices. Detailed analysis may reveal the presence of more pathological lesions which could contribute towards the assessment of the health status of individuals.

- 9.1.11 The bone from both cremation-related deposits is in good condition. Data recovered from further analysis of the bone, used in corroboration with the site data and that from the environmental analysis, should inform further on the deposit type and aspects of the mortuary rite (e.g. efficiency of cremation, pre- and post-cremation treatment). The form and nature of the cremation-related deposits will be considered in their regional and national contexts; in order to fulfil this potential it will be necessary to ascertain the date of the burial from grave **22593**.

- 9.1.12 All three deposits, which potentially cover a wide temporal range, represent singletons within the landscape. Although their individual value may appear limited, such deposits commonly occur in the archaeological record which

collectively represents an important part of the mortuary landscape within any one period. Whilst a comprehensive review of such deposits in the vicinity may fall outside the scope of this project, the recovery of data which would facilitate such a review is vital to furthering our understanding of this singular mortuary practice.

Stone

- 9.1.13 The small assemblage has no potential for further analysis.

Other Finds

- 9.1.14 There is no potential in further analysis of this material

9.2 Environmental Potential

Charred Plant Remains

- 9.2.1 The charred plant remains have the potential to explore the range of crops grown and exploited on the site as well as general agricultural practices. In particular they have the potential to provide information on the possible role of malting on the site and the potential to shed light on the function of various features excavated upon the site.

Wood Charcoal

- 9.2.2 The wood charcoal has the potential to examine the use of woodland resources for fuel and the selection and possible management of such resources. Such potential is limited however by the phasing and/or relation of the charcoal to specific activities in some of the features. The undated cremation unfortunately does not contain enough charcoal to reveal the selection of wood for the pyre itself.

Molluscs

- 9.2.3 The mollusc assemblages have the potential to provide more information on the local environment and local land-use. The detailed analysis of a number of the bulk samples may assist in characterising the nature of the fresh water element. There may also be some spatial variation in the assemblages across the site. These samples could be compared with other assemblages in the vicinity, for example at Alchester (Robinson 2002) where the mollusc assemblages were more dominated by the fresh water species than the assemblages here.

Small Mammal and Fish Bones

- 9.2.4 The small mammal bones and fish bones were generally only recovered in very small numbers and as such have little further potential.

9.2.5

9.2.6

9.3 Radiocarbon Dating

- 9.3.1 Radiocarbon has the potential to provide more accurate phasing for several of the main features, as well as to provide an indication on the degree of

contemporaneity of the construction and use of certain features and associated activities on the site.

- 9.3.2 Radiocarbon dates from the stone-lined features in Are 16 will clarify whether these features are broadly contemporary and represent a single main phase of activity on Site.
- 9.3.3 Two high precision radiocarbon dates will be obtained for burial **25127** (Beaker, ?2250-2050) (see below).
- 9.3.4 Cremation burial **22593** in Area 7 is undated, and it is proposed to obtain a date on the cremated bone.
- 9.3.5 Due to the nature of the calibration curve within the Romano-British period and depending on the radiocarbon determination it is not always possible to distinguish 2nd from 4th century AD deposits or more rarely late Romano-British 3rd to 4th century from Early 6th century Saxon. However, with extending counting (smaller \pm error margins of 20-25 years), as shown at nearby Weedon Hill, Aylesbury, there still exists a good potential for radiocarbon to distinguish at the very least earlier Roman from late Romano-British/Saxon.

10 PROPOSALS FOR ANALYSIS, PUBLICATION AND ARCHIVE

10.1 Finds

Pottery

- 10.1.1 The later prehistoric and Romano-British pottery from selected context groups containing significant numbers of sherds (at least 50) will be recorded in accordance with the Wessex Archaeology Guidelines for recording of pottery (Morris 1994) and conforming to the nationally recommended guidelines and minimum standards (PCRG 1997; SGRP 1994). This will include a more thorough identification of fabric and form types, which will facilitate a better understanding of the site chronology and enable comparisons with assemblages in the region. Correlations will be made with previously published work in the area, primarily Alchester (Evans 2001). A publication report will be produced which describes the pottery and discusses the assemblage within chronological groups, places this assemblage in its local and regional context and explores aspects of pottery supply and any functional implications. A catalogue of illustrated vessels, selected to support the text, will be produced. The early prehistoric and Saxon pottery will be examined in their entirety. The Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age Beaker will be reconstructed and illustrated and further comparisons sought. For an assemblage of this size, it is recommended that up to 50 vessels be illustrated.

Ceramic Building Material

- 10.1.2 A short summary report will be prepared for inclusion within the final publication.

Fired Clay

- 10.1.3 A short summary report will be prepared for inclusion within the final publication.

Glass

- 10.1.4 A short summary report will be prepared for inclusion within the final publication.

Metalwork

- 10.1.5 A catalogue of the metal objects and a short publication report will be prepared. A number of objects will be illustrated (palstave, complete pin, nail cleaner).

Coins

- 10.1.6 A short summary report will be prepared for inclusion in the final publication.

Flint

- 10.1.7 A short summary based on this assessment will be written for the publication.

- 10.1.8 The handaxe fragment and the backed knife will be illustrated.

Worked bone

- 10.1.9 The four worked pieces of bone as well as a representation of the sawn pieces of antler will be illustrated. The bone artefacts from the Beaker burial will be described and further parallels will be sought.

Animal Bone

- 10.1.10 The results of the analysis of the animal bone from the extramural settlement (Powell and Clarke 2001) will be compared with other suitable Romano-British sites from Oxfordshire (e.g. the settlement at Abingdon (Parrington 1978), Mingies Ditch (Allen and Robinson 1993), Watkins Farm Northmoor (Allen 1990), Farmoor (Lambrick and Robinson 1979) and the small town of Asthall (Booth 1997).

Human Bone

- 10.1.11 Analysis of the cremated bone will follow the writer's standard procedure (McKinley 1994, 5-6; 2004b). All unsorted <4mm residues will be subject to a rapid scan at this stage to extract any identifiable material, osseous or artefactual.

- 10.1.12 Taphonomic factors potentially affecting differential bone preservation will be assessed. The age of individuals will be assessed using standard methodologies (Brothwell 1972; Beek 1983; Buikstra and Ubelaker 1994; Scheuer and Black 2000). Sex will be ascertained from the sexually dimorphic traits of the skeleton (Bass 1987; Buikstra and Ubelaker 1994). Where possible measurement will be taken on the unburnt bone (Brothwell and Zakrzewski 2004) and non-metric traits recorded (Berry and Berry 1967; Finnegan 1978).

10.1.13 Pathological lesions are recorded in text and, where appropriate, via digital photography. It is unlikely that any lesions will warrant photographing for publication purposes or that X-radiographs will be required.

10.1.14 It is recommended that bone from the undated cremation burial 22594 is submitted for radiocarbon dating to allow the data from this deposit to be set in its correct temporal context.

Stone

10.1.15 No further work is required, although relevant details of the stone obtained during the assessment will be included in the publication report.

10.2 Environmental

Charred Plant Remains

10.2.1 It is proposed to analyse 11 samples from the site, while a further two duplicate samples should be re-scanned in detail from features **22837** and **23174** to establish that they are indeed broadly similar and the presence of any unusual species.

10.2.2 All identifiable charred plant macrofossils will be extracted from the 2 and 1mm residues together with the flot. Identification will be undertaken using stereo incident light microscopy at magnifications of up to x40 using a Leica MS5 microscope, following the nomenclature of Stace (1997) and with reference to modern reference collections where appropriate, quantified and the results tabulated.

Wood Charcoal

10.2.3 A selection of three samples from corndrier **23502** and pit **23174** are proposed for analysis. It is hoped that this will provide information about local woodland management and the exploitation of this resource. It may also augment information on the function and nature of these specific features.

10.2.4 Identifiable charcoal will be extracted from the 2mm residue together and the flot (>2mm). Larger richer samples will be sub-sampled. Fragments will be prepared for identification according to the standard methodology of Leney and Casteel (1975, see also Gale and Cutler 2000). Charcoal pieces will be fractured with a razor blade so that three planes can be seen: transverse section (TS), radial longitudinal section (RL) and tangential longitudinal section (TL). They will then be examined under bi-focal epi-illuminated microscopy at magnifications of x50, x100 and x400 using a Kyowa ME-LUX2 microscope. Identification will be undertaken according to the anatomical characteristics described by Schweingruber (1990) and Butterfield and Meylan (1980). Identification will be to the lowest taxonomic level possible, usually that of genus and nomenclature according to Stace (1997), individual taxon (mature and twig) will be separated, quantified, and the results tabulated.

Molluscs

10.2.5 It is proposed to analyse a selection of eight samples from Areas 1, 5a, 14 and 16 to characterise the local environment and land-use and assist in interpreting the nature of the environment represented by the fresh water

mollusc assemblages. The samples have been provisionally selected in Table E2 (**Appendix 1**).

- 10.2.6 Analysis of selected samples involves the extraction of apical and diagnostic fragments from both flots and residue. The recovered shells are identified and quantified using stereo incident light microscopy at magnifications of up to x40 using a Leica MS5 microscope, following the nomenclature of Kerney (1999) and with reference to modern reference collections where appropriate. The results are tabulated and species diversity indices calculated (Shannon index, Brouillon index, Delta 2 index and Delta 4 index). Mollusc histograms are produced where applicable.

Small Mammal and Fish Bones

- 10.2.7 No further work is recommended.

Radiocarbon Dating

- 10.2.8 It is recommended that two high precision radiocarbon dates are obtained on human bone from the Beaker burial **25127**.

- 10.2.9 It is recommended that radiocarbon dates are obtained from the dump of material from drainage ditch **23361**, material from the corn-drier **23502** and stone-lined pit **22837**. This will date the main phase of malting type activity and the approximate construction and use of the stone-lined pit and channel. It will then help establish whether the Late Iron Age/early Romano-British pottery is reworked (in the event of a later date) or if the stone-lined pit was dug out and refilled during the Saxon period (in the event of an earlier date).

- 10.2.10 The dating of cremated bone from cremation burial **22593** is also recommended.

11 PUBLICATION AND PROGRAMME

- 11.1.1 Upon approval of the assessment report by the CAO the programme will be confirmed.

- 11.1.2 It is anticipated that the report will be submitted to the regional journal, *Oxoniensia*, and a draft synopsis is presented below:

Introduction	300 words
Project background, location, topography and geology	500 words
Beaker burial and finds	750 words
Middle Iron Age landscape (pits, postholes and ditches)	750 words
Late Iron Age agriculture and settlement (pits, postholes, ditches, enclosures)	1000 words
Romano-British agriculture and settlement (pits, postholes ditches, enclosures)	2500 words
Early Saxon reuse of stone-lined pit and associated features	750 words
Pottery	3000 words
Metalwork	1000 words
Fired clay, stone and other finds	500 words
Human bones	3000 words
Animal bones	2500 words
Environmental remains	2500 words
Discussion	3500 words

11.1.3 The report will be accompanied by line drawings and/or photographs and tabulated material. It is envisaged that the report will be in the region of 25-30 pages in length.

11.2 Management Structure

11.2.1 Wessex Archaeology operates a project management system. The team will be headed by the Project Manager, in this instance Philippa Bradley, who will assume ultimate responsibility for the implementation and execution of the project specification as above, and the achievement of performance targets, be they academic, budgetary, or scheduled.

11.2.2 The Manager may delegate specific aspects of the project to other key staff, who both supervise others and have a direct input into the compilation of the report. They may also undertake direct liaison with external consultants and specialists who are contributing to the publication report, and the museum named as the recipient of the project archive. The Manager will have a major input into how the publication report is written and will define and control the scope and form of the post-excavation programme.

11.3 Performance Monitoring and Quality Standards

11.3.1 The Post-excavation Manager (Philippa Bradley) will be assisted by the fieldwork manager (Paul McCulloch) and the Reports Manager (Julie Gardiner), who will help to ensure that the report meets internal quality standards as defined in Wessex Archaeology's guidelines. The overall progress will be monitored internally by the Head of Post-Excavation (Karen Walker).

11.4 Designated Project Team

11.4.1 The team consists primarily of internal Wessex Archaeology staff. Table 5 summarises the Wessex Archaeology staff and external specialists that are scheduled to undertake the work as outlined in the task list (Table 6) and the programme.

11.5 Personnel

11.5.1 It is currently proposed that the following Wessex Archaeology core staff and external specialists will be involved in the programme of post-excavation analyses, although WA retains the right to make changes to this if circumstances arise.

Table 5: Project team

Head of Post-excavation	Karen Walker BA, MPhil, MIFA
Fieldwork Manager	Paul McCulloch BA, MIFA
Senior Technical Manager (publications)	Julie Gardiner BA, PhD, FSA MIFA
Senior Technical Manager (finds and environmental)	Andy Crockett BTech, MIFA
Project Officer	Jon Martin BA AIFA
Senior Project Manager (prehistoric pottery, BA palstave)	Alistair Barclay BSc, PhD, MIFA
Project Manager (post-excavation manager, flint specialist)	Philippa Bradley BA, MPhil, MIFA
Senior Project Officer (LIA-RB pottery; finds)	Rachael Seager Smith BA MIFA
Senior Project Officer (environmental, radiocarbon dating)	Chris J. Stevens BSc, PhD, MIFA
Project Officer (environmental)	Sarah Wyles BA, AIFA
Project Officer (conservation)	Lynn Wootten BSc ICON accredited

Archive assistant	Helen MacIntyre HND (Practical archaeology) BSc
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11.6 Storage and Curation

Museum

11.6.1 It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the excavation be deposited with Oxfordshire Museums Service. The Museum has agreed in principle to accept the project archive on completion of the project. Deposition of the finds with the Museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.

11.6.2 The Oxfordshire County Museum Service accession number OXCMS 2006.83 has been allocated and the finds have been marked with this accession number. A unique WA project number (**63562**) was allocated.

11.6.3 Arrangements will also be made with an Archive Store for the deposition of the archive resulting from the excavation of the Site, subject to agreement with Countryside Properties (Bicester) Ltd.

Conservation

11.6.4 No immediate conservation requirements were noted in the field. Finds which have been identified as of unstable condition and therefore potentially in need of further conservation treatment comprise the metal objects.

11.6.5 Metal objects have been X-radiographed as part of the assessment phase, as a basic record and also to aid identification.

Finds Storage

11.6.6 The finds are currently stored in perforated polythene bags in three cardboard or airtight plastic boxes, ordered by material type, following nationally recommended guidelines (Walker 1990).

Environmental Storage

11.6.7 The standard Wessex Archaeology archive policy will be followed; this is available upon request.

Discard Policy

11.6.8 Wessex Archaeology follows the guidelines set out in *Selection, Retention and Dispersal* (Society of Museum Archaeologists 1993), which allows for the discard of selected artefact and ecofact categories which are not considered to warrant any future analysis. In this instance, no artefactual discard is anticipated.

11.6.9 The discard of environmental remains and samples follows the guidelines laid out in Wessex Archaeology's 'Archive and Dispersal Policy for Environmental Remains and Samples'. The archive policy conforms with nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1993; 1995; English Heritage 2002) and is available upon request.

Archive

11.6.10 The complete site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics, artefacts and ecofacts, will be prepared following the

‘Requirements for transferring archaeological archives’ for Oxfordshire Museum Service (2005), and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995).

Copyright

- 11.6.11 The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the Site will be retained by Wessex Archaeology Ltd under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved. The recipient museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-profitmaking, and conforms with the Copyright and Related Rights regulations 2003.

Security Copy

- 11.6.12 In line with current best practice, on completion of the project a security copy of the paper records will be prepared, in the form of microfilm. The master jackets and one diazo copy of the microfilm will be submitted to the National Archaeological Record (English Heritage), a second diazo copy will be deposited with the paper records, and a third diazo copy will be retained by Wessex Archaeology.

12 TASK LIST, RESOURCES AND PROGRAMME

- 12.1.1 The tasks necessary to complete the proposed programme of post-excavation analyses and publication are summarised below. Indications of which individuals will carry out specific task are provisional.

Table 6: Task list

Task No	Task	Grade	Name	Days
Management				
1	General management	PM	Bradley P	10
2	QA	Head	Walker K	1
3	Management & consultation	PM	McCulloch P	3
4	Finds and environmental management	SPM	Crockett A	4
5	IT support	SPO	Neuberger J	2
6	Project meetings	All	All	3
Stratigraphic analysis				
7	Check and enhance phasing	PO	Martin J	10
8	Update database & digital plans	PO	Martin J	7
9	Site narrative	PO	Martin J	15
10	Figures for publication	DO	James E	10
Finds				
11	Cleaning non-ferrous metalwork	PS	Wootten L	5
12	Investigative conservation	Ext	WCC	1
13	Beaker vessel & palstave reports	SPM	Barclay A	1
14	Flintwork and misc Beaker grave goods	SPM	Bradley P	1
15	Pottery analysis and report writing	SPO	Seager Smith R	21

Task No	Task	Grade	Name	Days
16	Metalwork	SPO	Seager Smith R	3
17	Summary of other finds (fired clay, stone etc)	SPO	Seager Smith R	2
18	Animal & worked bone	PO	Grimm J	12
19	Human bone	SPO	McKinley J	3.5
20	Finds illustration	DO	James E	10
21	Edit finds reports	SPM	Bradley P	1
Environmental				
22	Selection of radiocarbon samples, submission forms, calibration and results	SPO	Stevens C	3
23	Radiocarbon dating – 6 samples	Ext	Rafter	1
24	Extraction of charred plants and charcoal from selected samples	EO	Wyles S	3
25	Analysis CPR	SPO	Stevens C	7
26	Analysis charcoal	SPO	Barnett C	3
27	Analysis snails	EO	Wyles S	6.5
28	Overview and palaeo-environmental summary	SPO	Stevens C	1
29	Edit CPR, charcoal reports	SPO	Stevens C	1
Report				
30	Assemble report, introduction, background, captions, bibliography	PO	Martin J	3
31	Write discussion	PO	Martin J	3
32	Write discussion	PM	Bradley P	5
33	Edit report	PM	Bradley P	5
34	Review report	SPM	Gardiner J	2
35	Editors corrections	All	All	3
36	Illustration corrections	GO	James E	2
37	Proofs check	All	All	4
38	Publication grant	Ext	Oxoniensia	1
Archive				
39	Archive preparation	PO	Martin J	2
40	Microfilm jobsheets and checking	PO	MacIntyre H	2
41	Microfilm paper records	Marathon		1
42	Archive deposition + car hire and fuel	PO	MacIntyre H	1
43	Box storage grant			1

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14 APPENDIX 1 ENVIRONMENTAL TABLES

Table E1: Assessment of the charred plant remains and charcoal

Feature	Context	Sample	size litres	flot size ml	% roots	Grain	Chaff	Flot Charred other	Seeds	Charcoal >4/2mm	Other	Analysis
Area 1												
Mid-Late Iron Age ditch												
22417	22419	38	9	40	²	-	-	C	Persicaria, Corylus avellana	8/5ml	moll-t (A*) smb- (C)	-
Late Iron Age/Early Romano-British Ditch												
22415	22416	40	8	60	¹	-	-	-	twig and bark wood	15/20	moll-t (C)	-
Late Iron Age/Early Romano-British Pits												
22413	22414	37	2	50	³⁰	-	-	-	-	5/2	moll-t(C) smb- (C)	-
22413	22414	39	2	30	⁵	-	C	C	Silene, some chaff	5/4ml	moll-t (C)	-
22437	22438	42	36	30	²	B	C	C	8x Triticum grain. 1-2x glume bases, 1x Poa/Phleum	8/4ml	moll-t (C)	-
22446	22449	43	5	50	³	-	-	C	Persicaria, hawthorn	8/8ml	moll-t (C)	-
22456	22457	44	30	120	⁵⁰	C	-	C	Sloe, cereal, ?Persicaria type, rootlet	8/8ml	moll-t (C)	-
Area 5A												
Undated Pit												
22563	22564	48	1.5	10	²	-	-	-	-	-	moll-t (C) moll-f (C)	-
Undated Kiln/Oven												
22531	22533	45	9	175	⁴⁰	-	-	-	-	0.5/0.2 ml	moll-t (A) moll-t (A)	-
22532	22542	46	9	50	³	-	C	C	Trifolium, 1x gb	-	moll-t (B) moll-f (B)	-
22532	22542	47	1.5	35	²	-	-	-	burnt stem	-	moll-t (B) moll-f (B)	-
Undated Postholes												
22682	22683	51	9	20	⁵	-	-	-	-	0/2ml	moll-f (A) moll-t (A*)	-
22688	22689	52	7	450	⁰	-	-	-	oak.	40/80	moll-t (A) moll-f (A)	-
22692	22693	53	10	40	⁰	-	-	-	-	0.5/0.2	moll-t (A) moll-f (A)	-
Area 7												
Late Iron Age Hearth/Oven												
25180	25183	112	5	8	⁴⁰	C	-	C	2x grain, 1x Vicia	4/1	-	-
Late Iron Age?Early Romano-British Pit												
??	25123	104	19	35	²⁰	A	C	A(h)	Spelt/emmer grains, emmer glume, Vicia Galium, Corylus,	4/2	smb-(C)	-
Romano-British 4-Poster												
g25049 25023	25024	87	6	4	²	-	-	-	-	0/3	-	-
g25049 25025	25026	88	5	3	⁵	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25031	25032	98	9	8	⁵⁰	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25050	25051	99	9	5	²	C	-	-	2x barley, 1x wheat, hawthorn thorn	0/0ml	-	-
Romano-British Pits												

Feature	Context	Sample	size litres	flot size ml	% roots	Grain	Chaff	Charred other	Seeds	Charcoal >4/2mm	Other	Analysis
25115	25116	103	8	30	10	C	-	C	Indet. Cereal. Arrhenatherum stem? Galium	1/1ml	moll-t (C)	-
Area 13												
Romano-British Pit												
22613	22614	50	20	120	2	A	-	-	5-10x barley, 2-5x wheat, immature hawthorn fruit. Chenopodium album	6/10ml	moll-t (C)	-
Undated Cremation 22593												
NE	22594	49a	1.5	4	1	-	-	-	woody roots,	0.2/3ml	bone (A)	-
SE	22594	49b	4	6	10	-	-	-	coal	1/2ml	bone (C)	-
SW	22594	49c	4	30	80	-	-	-	coal	0/0.1ml	bone (B)	-
NW	22594	49d	5	8	40	-	-	-	-	1/1ml	bone (A)	-
Area 14												
Late Iron Age Ditch												
2312	23414	86	8	20	2	B	A	C	Triticum grain, 2x Vicia, 2x Lens?, Eleocharis, Carex,	0/1	Moll-t (B)	-
Late Iron Age/Romano-British Ditch												
23031	23037	75	10	240	2	-	C	C	parenchyma, 1x Avena, 1x Galium, 3x Rumex, 1x glume base	8/10ml	Moll-t (A) Moll-f (B)	-
23085	23086	79	10	40	8	A	A*	A*	30+ T. spelta/dicocum, culm base, 2x Arrhenatherum tuber, 2x Vicia/ Lathyrus. Carex sp, Eleocharis ++, Trifolium, Avena, Rumex, Polygonum	3/5ml	moll-t (C)	P
Romano-British 4-Poster												
22958	22959	63	7	10	5	C	C	-	Cereal. glume base	2/2	moll-t (C) smb-(C)	-
22962	22963	64	4	4	2	-	-	-	-	0/0ml	moll-t (C)	-
23048	23049	76	7	15	3	-	C	C	2x Trifolium grain, 1x spelt gb	1/2ml	moll-t (C)	-
23054	23055	77	9	8	2	-	-	C(h)	1x Corylus avellana	0/3ml	moll-t (C)	-
23061	23062	78	2	4	60	C	-	-	bits of coal. Barley x1	0/0.2	moll-t (C)	-
23095	23096	81	7	60	8	C	C	A	1x Hulled wheat grain 4x spelt glumes. Hawthorn stones x5, Arrhenatherum, Avena, Fallopia convolvulus x1, Lathyrus x1, Carex x1.	3/5ml	moll-t (C)	-
23100	23102	82	7	8	5	C	C	C	1x cereal indet. 3-4 glume bases 1x Vicia/Lathyrus	0.2/0.2 ml	moll-t (C) moll-f (C)	-
Romano-British Ditch												
22977	22978	69	7	60	1	C	-	-	2x Barley, Vicia	0.1/0.1 ml	moll-t (A*) moll-f (A*)	-
Romano-British Pits												
23060	23059	80	16	10	5	-	-	-	-	0/4ml	moll-t (C)	-
25204	25206	113	10	15	50	C	-	C	1x grain frg. 1x Vicia	0/0.4ml	moll-t (C)	-
22971	22972	66	17	400	3	-	-	-	-	25/80ml	moll-t (B)	-
23185	23188	83	17	70	5	A	B	B	8+ spelt+barley, spelt glumes, immature Vicia/lens, Galium, Vicia, Chenopodium, Torilis, Lolium	7/9ml	moll-t (C) moll-f (C) smb (C)	-
23174	23177	84	19	120	8	A**	A**	A**	Spelt glumes, Hulled wheat grains (some germinated), coleoptiles. culm nodes, Hawthorn thorn, Eleocharis, Lithospermum, Lathyrus cf. nissolia. Lolium, Trifolium, Carex	12/10ml	moll-t (C) moll-f (C)	P(s) C

Feature	Context	Sample	size litres	flot size ml	% roots	Grain	Chaff	Charred other	Seeds	Charcoal >4/2mm	Other	Analysis
									Galium, Tripleurospermum, Odontites, Vallonia			
23174	23179	85	18	160	5	A**	A**	A**	Charred dung? Spelt grains (some germinated), glumes, coleoptiles. Culm & basal nodes. Barley, Avena, Fallopia, Rumex, Eleocharis, Trifolium, Carex, Poa, Raphanistrum, Vicia, Galium, Scandix, Prunella, Silene, Lolium, Plantago, Tripleurospermum, Poa/Phleum, 1x Spergula. indet seed?	7/10ml	moll-t (A) moll-f (B) fish-(C)	P C
Romano-British Postholes												
22980	22981	67	6	3	5	-	-	-	Occasional fragments of coal.	-	-	-
22982	22983	68	10	3	5	C	C	-	1x gb. 1x cereal indet.	0/0	moll-t (C)	-
22990	22991	70	2	10	9	-	-	-	coal	3/2ml	moll-t (C)	-
223001	223002	73	2	3	40	C	C	C	1x glume, 1x barley, 1x Poa, coal?	0/0ml	moll-t (C)	-
223003	223004	74	4	4	5	C	-	-	Cereal indet.	1/2ml	moll-t (C)	-
Romano-British/Saxon Ditches												
22977	22979	72	2	170	3	C	-	-	2x cereal indet. 2x barley. Hawthorn	15/15ml	moll-t (C)	-
22964	22967	65	8	250	2	B	-	C(h)	Hulled barley, Corylus	20/20ml	moll-t (C) smb- (C)	-
Romano-British/Saxon Pit												
22984	22985	71	17	50	8	C	B	C	5x Triticum, 3-5x glume bases, 2-3x Vicia, 1x Poa type.	7/3ml	moll-t (C) anuran (C)	-
Area 15												
Late Iron Age Pit												
22733	22735	54	0.5	7	2	C	-	-	grain frag.	0.1/0.1 ml	-	-
Late Iron Age? Ditch												
22778	22779	56	9	40	5	A*	C	A	3x cereal grain/T. spelta gr., 1x Pisum?, 1x Vicia, Avena, 1x Bromus, 1x Rumex, 1x Lolium 1x Eleocharis	1/2	eel- (C) moll-t (C)	P
Late Iron Age? Romano-British ditch												
22776	22777	55	8	20	10	C	-	-	1x Hordeum grain	0/0.1	-	-
Area 16												
Late Iron Age Ditch												
23550	23551	101	9	4	2	-	-	-	coal frgs & bones	0/0.1ml	bone (C)	-
Late Iron/Romano-British Pits												
22790	22791	57	19	5	5	C	C	-	1x Hordeum, hulled grain; glumes	1/2	moll-t (C)	-
22856	22857	62	15	60	2	A	A*	A	6x Triticum. s/d grain, T. spelta. Vicia, Corylus avellana x1, Galium aparine, Lolium, Rumex, 1x Silene. Raphanus raphanistrum, Fallopia convolvulus, Sparganium erectum,	2/2	moll-t (C) smb-(A) eel- (B)	P
23452	23451	97	9	30	5	A	A*	A	Several glume wheat grains + spelt ?barley, Torilis, Eleocharis, Rumex, Vicia, Lolium, Trifolium, Anthemis cotula, Avena. charcoal. Parenchyma	4/4ml oak	moll-t (C)	P

Feature	Context	Sample	size litres	flot size ml	% roots	Grain	Chaff	Charred other	Flot	Seeds	Charcoal >4/2mm	Other	Analysis
Late Iron/Romano-British Stone Lined Channel													
Tank-end 23354	23356	90	4	20	2	B	A*	B		A few germinated grains and coleoptiles, Rumex, Anthemis cotula	0/1.5ml	moll-f (C) moll-t (C) smb (A)	-
Middle 23354	23356	91	7	20	5	B	A*	A		Spelt glumes, grain, Anthemis cotula, Lolium	0/2ml	moll-f (C) moll-t (C) smb (A)	P
Ditch end 23354	23356	92	6	8	4	A	A	B		1x germinated hulled wheat grain, 25+gb spelt, Lolium cf. Anthemis cotula	0/0ml	smb (B)	-
Romano-British Drainage ditch (from 23354)													
23361	23362	93	15	40	0	A**	A**	A*		Germinated barley, spelt. Several grains germinated, some elongated coleoptiles. Avena, glumes silene, Rumex and Lolium. Flax capsule. Chenopodium album.	-	smb-(C) moll-t (C)	P
Romano-British Stone Lined Square Pit													
22837	22839	60	18	8	5	A	A*	C		Hulled wheat grain, barley, spelt glume bases, 1x Vicia/Lathyrus, 2x Eleocharis	1/1	moll-t (C)	P(s)
22837	22840	61	20	12	25	A	A*	A		Hulled wheat gr. Spelt. 1x Hawthorn. Tripleurospermum, Bromus, Lolium, Avena, Anthemis, Poa type. Trifolium	1/0.5	moll-t (C) eel- (C)	P
Romano-British Pit													
23302 pot 47	23303	114	1.5	2	50	-	C	-		2x glume bases	0/0ml	-	-
22862	22863	58	8	7	2	A	B	-		Triticum d/s grain+ spelt glumes. 1x Germinated grain	1/1ml	moll-t (C)	-
23561	23568	102	8	10	3	A	A**	B		Spelt grain+glumes++, Lolium Anthemis cotula, Eleocharis Silene, Rumex sp, Odontites vernus, Poa/Phleum. Oak frgs.	3/1ml	moll-t (B) smb-(C)	P
Romano-British Corndrier/Oven													
23502	23505	96	13	45	2	A	A*	C		4-5 grains (inc. 1x germinated). Glumes incl spelt. coleoptiles, Prunus spinosa, Lolium ?flax capsule, Poa, Odontites, Medicago	9/8ml	moll-t (B)	P C
Romano-British ditch													
23550	23552	100	9	10	4	B	A	A		Spelt gbs+grain, some germinated grain, Silene, coleoptile, Trifolium, hawthorn thorn, culm node, Lolium, Carex	0.2/0.4 ml		
Romano-British/Saxon Stone lined pit (runs into channel 23354)													
22934	22935	89	15	20	5	A	A	A		Corylus, grain frgs, germinated grain, spelt glume, coleoptile, Lithospermum, Lens, Atriplex Avena Torilis, Anthemis cotula Eleocharis, Plantago, Odontites	3/2ml	moll-t (A) moll-f (C)	P
Romano-British/Saxon pits (adjacent to 22934 above)													
23420	23421	94	7	8	2	C	A	C		5x T. spelta gb. 2x cereal indet. Tripleurospermum	0.2/0.1 ml	-	-
23420	23421	95	9	8	2	B	A	-		Triticum d/s glume bases. some cereal grains	0/2ml	smb-(C)	-

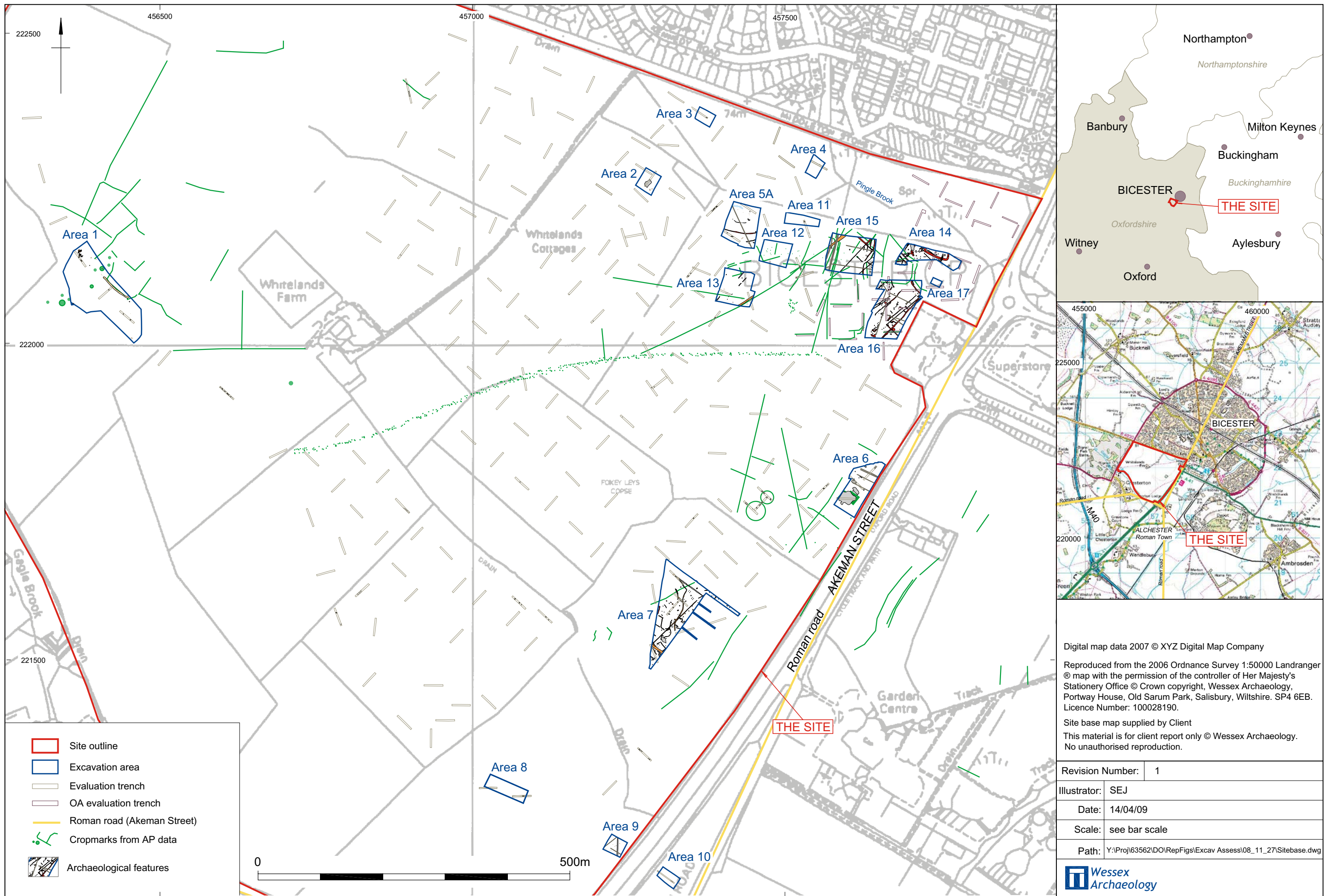
KEY: A*** = exceptional, A** = 100+, A* = 30- 99, A = ≥10 items, B = 9 - 5 items, C = < 5 items, sab/f = small animal/fish bones; Moll-t = terrestrial molluscs Moll-f = freshwater molluscs; Analysis: C = charcoal, P = plant, (s = scan) , M = molluscs, C14 = radiocarbon suggestions
Analysis: C = charcoal, P = plant, (s = scan) , M = molluscs, C14 = radiocarbon suggestions

Table E2. Land and Fresh/Brackish water snail assessment

SITE PHASE	MIA-LIA	?	?	?	?	?	RB	RB	RB	RB	RB	RB	RB	RB
Area	1	5a	5a	5a	5a	5a	14	14	14	16	16	16	16	16
FEATURE TYPE	Ditch	PH	PH	Kiln			Enc. Ditch	Pit	Ditch	Tank	Channel			Drain-age ditch
FEATURE	22417	22692	22682	22531	22531	22532	23031	23174	22977	22934	23354	23354	23354	23361
CONTEXT	22419	22693	22683	22533	22535	22542	23037	23179	22978	22935	23356	23356	23356	23362
SAMPLE	38	53	51	45	46	47	75	85	69	89	90	91	92	93
DEPTH (m)	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot
WEIGHT/ VOLUME	9L	10L	9L	9L	9L	1.5L	10L	18L	1500g	16L	4L	7L	6L	15L
Open country species														
<i>Pupilla muscorum</i>	B	A	B	C	-	-	B	C	C	C	B	C	-	C
<i>Vertigo</i> spp.	A	A	A	A	B	C	A	C	C	A	-	-	-	-
<i>Vertigo</i> c.f. <i>angustior</i>	-	C	C	C	-	C	C	-	-	B	-	-	-	-
<i>Helicella itala</i>	C	C	C	C	C	C	A	C	B	C	C	C	-	C
<i>Vallonia</i> spp.	A	A	A	A	B	A	A*	B	A	A	B	C	-	A
Intermediate species														
<i>Trichia hispida</i>	A	A	A	A	A	B	A*	C	B	B	-	C	-	A
<i>Cochlicopa</i> spp.	B	B	C	C	C	-	B	-	C	C	-	-	-	C
<i>Cepaea</i> spp	C	C	C	C	-	C	-	-	C	C	-	-	-	-
<i>Punctum pygmaeum</i>	C	C	C	-	-	C	-	C	B	-	-	-	-	-
Shade-loving species														
<i>Carychium</i> spp.	B	A*	A	A*	B	A*	A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Discus rotundatus</i>	C	A	A	A	C	A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Acanthinula aculeata</i>	C	C	-	C	-	C	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Oxychilus cellarius</i>	C	C	C	B	-	C	C	-	-	C	-	-	-	-
<i>Aegopinella</i> spp.	B	A	B	A	C	B	A	-	C	-	C	C	-	-
Clausiliidae	A	A	C	A	C	C	C	-	-	C	C	-	-	-
<i>Ena</i> spp.	C	+	-	-	-	-	C	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Vitrea</i> spp.	-	-	-	C	-	B	C	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Helicigona lapicida</i>	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Marsh Species														
<i>Succinea/Oxyloma</i> spp	-	C	C	-	-	-	-	-	-	C	-	-	-	-
Fresh and Brackish water species														
Planorbids	-	A*	A	A*	B	B	A	B	A*	C	-	-	-	C
<i>Lymnaea/Bithynia</i> spp.	-	A	B	A*	B	C	A	C	B	C	-	-	-	-
<i>Valvata</i> spp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	C	C	-	-	C	-	-
<i>Pisidium</i> spp.	-	-	-	-	-	C	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Burrowing species														
<i>Cecilioides acicula</i>	C	C	C	C	C	C	A*	A	C	A	-	C	-	A
Approx totals	100+	100+	100+	100+	50	100+	100+	27	100+	75	17	14	0	35
Analysis	X	X		X		X	X		X	X				X

SITE PHASE	MIA-LIA	?	?	?	?	?	RB	RB	RB	RB	RB	RB	RB	RB
Area	1	5a	5a	5a	5a	5a	14	14	14	16	16	16	16	16
FEATURE TYPE	Ditch	PH	PH	Kiln			Enc. Ditch	Pit	Ditch	Tank	Channel			Drain-age ditch
FEATURE	2241 7	2269 2	2268 2	2253 1	2253 1	2253 2	2303 1	2317 4	2297 7	2293 4	2335 4	2335 4	2335 4	2336 1
CONTEXT	2241 9	2269 3	2268 3	2253 3	2253 5	2254 2	2303 7	2317 9	2297 8	2293 5	2335 6	2335 6	2335 6	2336 2
SAMPLE	38	53	51	45	46	47	75	85	69	89	90	91	92	93
DEPTH (m)	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot
WEIGHT/ VOLUME	9L	10L	9L	9L	9L	1.5L	10L	18L	1500 g	16L	4L	7L	6L	15L
Open country species														
<i>Pupilla muscorum</i>	B	A	B	C	-	-	B	C	C	C	B	C	-	C
<i>Vertigo</i> spp.	A	A	A	A	B	C	A	C	C	A	-	-	-	-
<i>Vertigo</i> c.f. <i>angustior</i>	-	C	C	C	-	C	C	-	-	B	-	-	-	-
<i>Helicella itala</i>	C	C	C	C	C	C	A	C	B	C	C	C	-	C
<i>Vallonia</i> spp.	A	A	A	A	B	A	A*	B	A	A	B	C	-	A
Intermediate species														
<i>Trichia hispida</i>	A	A	A	A	A	B	A*	C	B	B	-	C	-	A
<i>Cochlicopa</i> spp.	B	B	C	C	C	-	B	-	C	C	-	-	-	C
<i>Cepaea</i> spp	C	C	C	C	-	C	-	-	C	C	-	-	-	-
<i>Punctum pygmaeum</i>	C	C	C	-	-	C	-	C	B	-	-	-	-	-
Shade-loving species														
<i>Carychium</i> spp.	B	A*	A	A*	B	A*	A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Discus rotundatus</i>	C	A	A	A	C	A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Acanthinula aculeata</i>	C	C	-	C	-	C	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Oxychilus cellarius</i>	C	C	C	B	-	C	C	-	-	C	-	-	-	-
<i>Aegopinella</i> spp.	B	A	B	A	C	B	A	-	C	-	C	C	-	-
Clausiliidae	A	A	C	A	C	C	C	-	-	C	C	-	-	-
<i>Ena</i> spp.	C	+	-	-	-	-	C	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Vitrea</i> spp.	-	-	-	C	-	B	C	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Helicigona lapicida</i>	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Marsh Species														
<i>Succinea/Oxyloma</i> spp	-	C	C	-	-	-	-	-	-	C	-	-	-	-
Fresh and Brackish water species														
Planorbids	-	A*	A	A*	B	B	A	B	A*	C	-	-	-	C
<i>Lymnaea/Bithynia</i> spp.	-	A	B	A*	B	C	A	C	B	C	-	-	-	-
<i>Valvata</i> spp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	C	C	-	-	C	-	-
<i>Pisidium</i> spp.	-	-	-	-	-	C	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Burrowing species														
<i>Cecilioides acicula</i>	C	C	C	C	C	C	A*	A	C	A	-	C	-	A
Approx totals	100+	100+	100+	100+	50	100+	100+	27	100+	75	17	14	0	35
Analysis	X	X		X		X	X		X	X				X

KEY: A*** = exceptional, A** = 100+, A* = 30- 99, A = ≥10 items, B = 9 - 5 items, C = < 5 items, + = frag



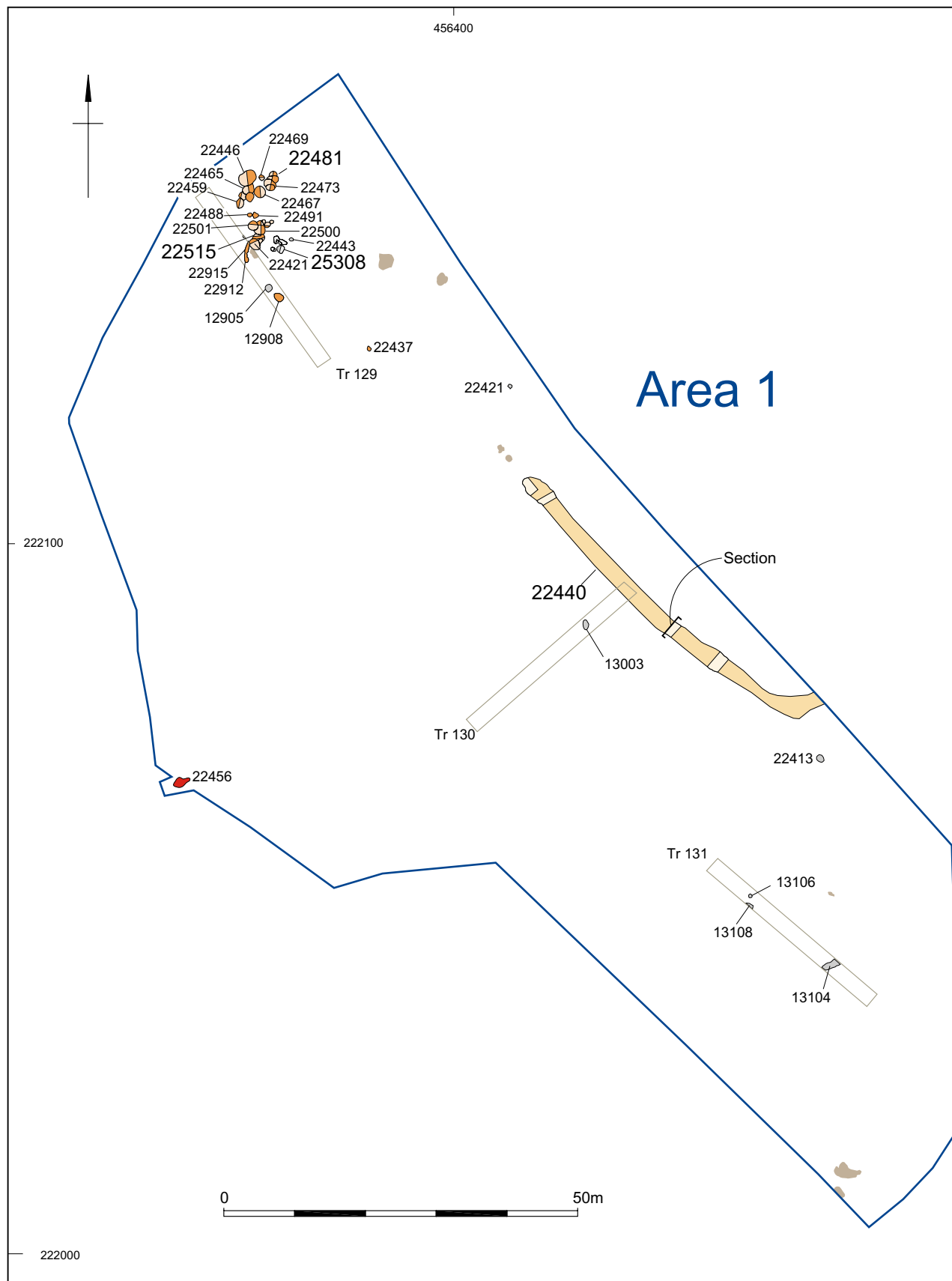
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Scale:	see bar scale
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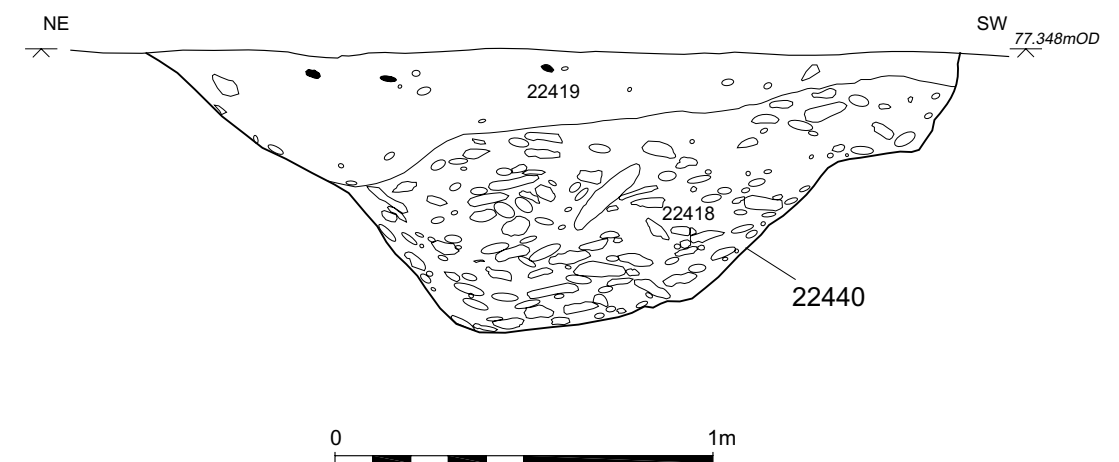


Site location and plan showing area excavations

Figure 1



Ditch 22440 viewed from the south-east



- Excavation area
- Evaluation trench
- Mid-Late Iron Age
- Late Iron Age
- Late Iron Age - early Romano-British
- Undated
- Tree-throw hole

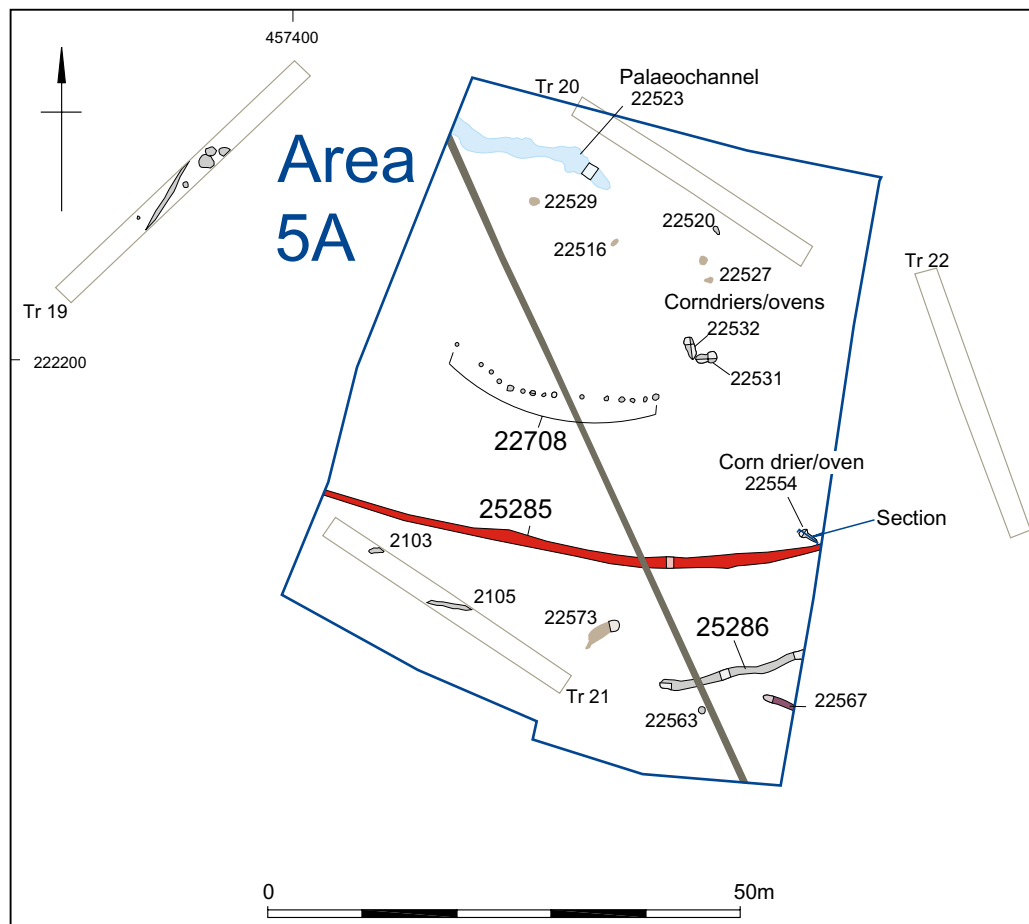


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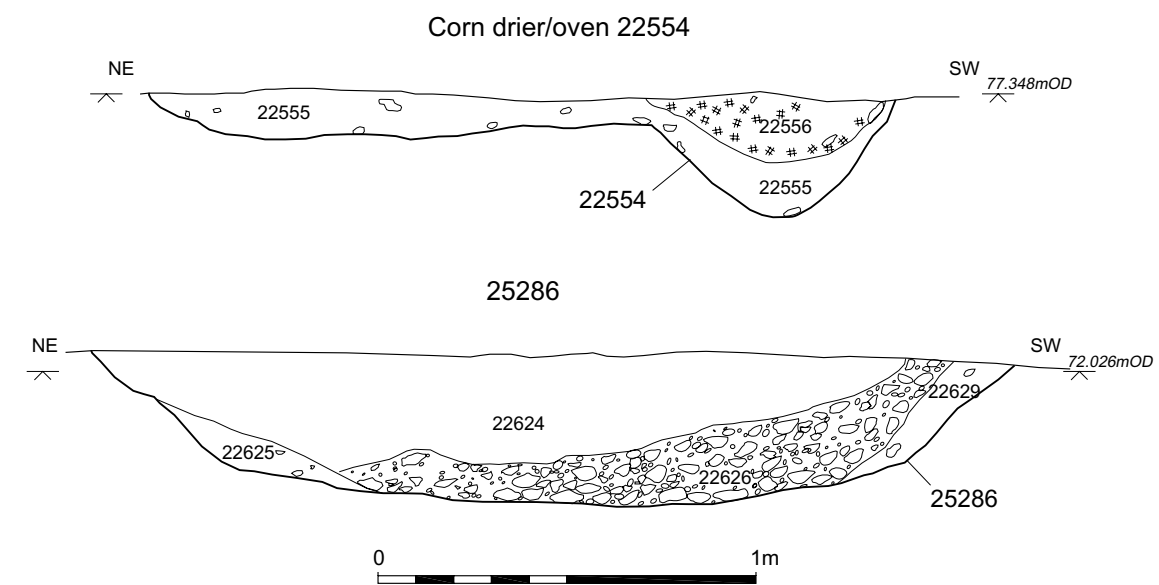
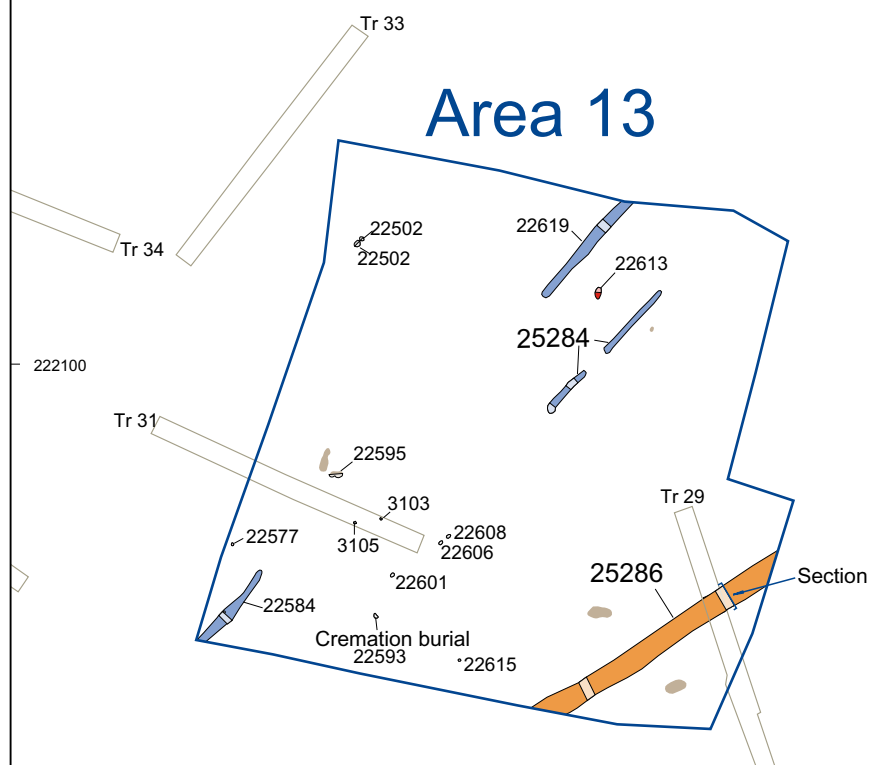
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Scale:	1:800 & 1:20	Illustrator:	SEJ
Path:	Y:\Proj\63562\DO\RepFigs\Excav Assess\08_11_27\Sitebase.dwg		

Area 1 showing phased features and details of ditch 22440

Figure 2



Corn drier/oven 22554 viewed from the west



- Excavation area
- Evaluation trench
- Early Bronze Age
- Late Iron Age
- Late Iron Age - early Romano-British
- Saxon
- Post-medieval
- Modern
- Undated
- Tree-throw hole

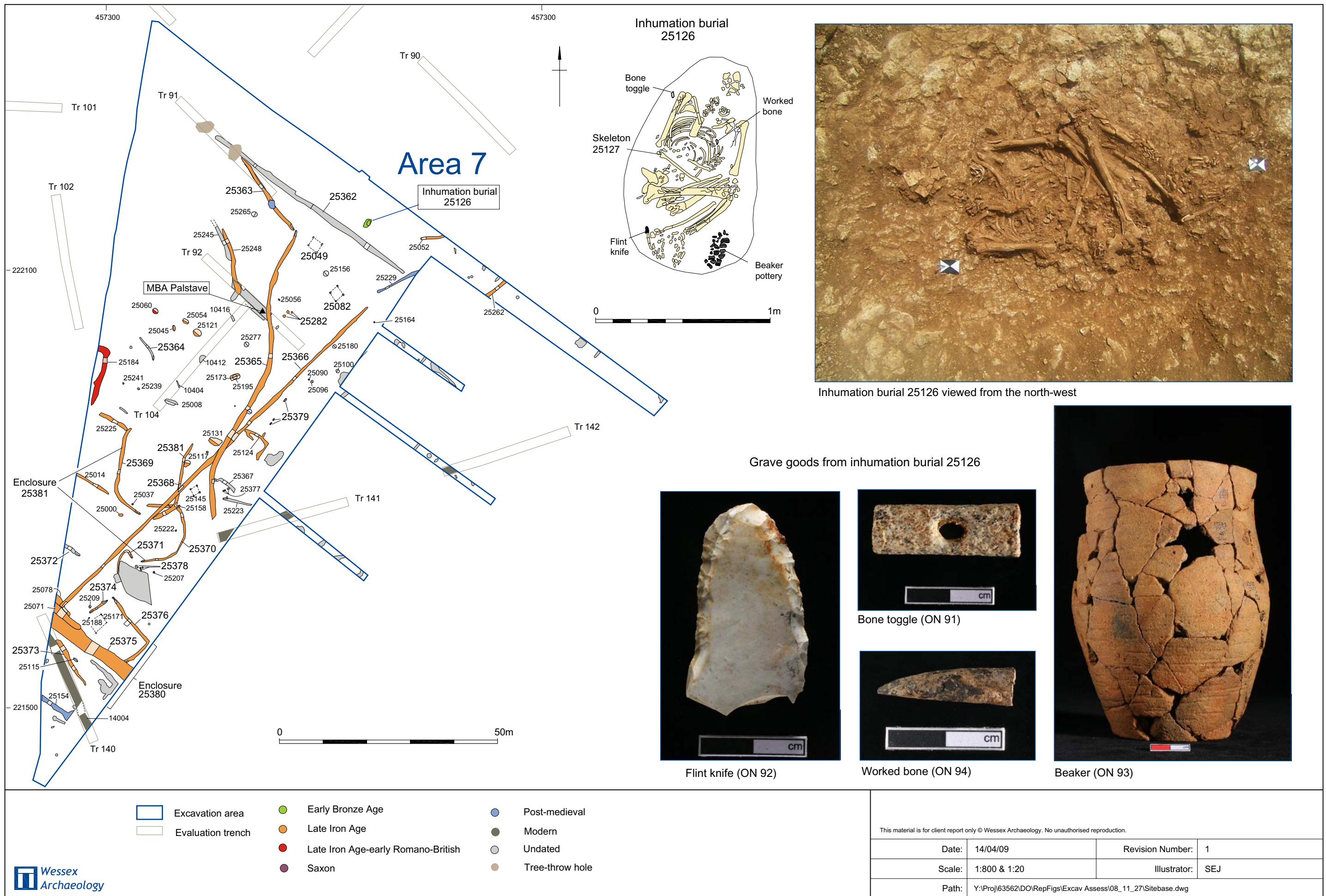
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Areas 5A and 13 showing phased features with details of Corn drier/oven 22554 and ditch 25286

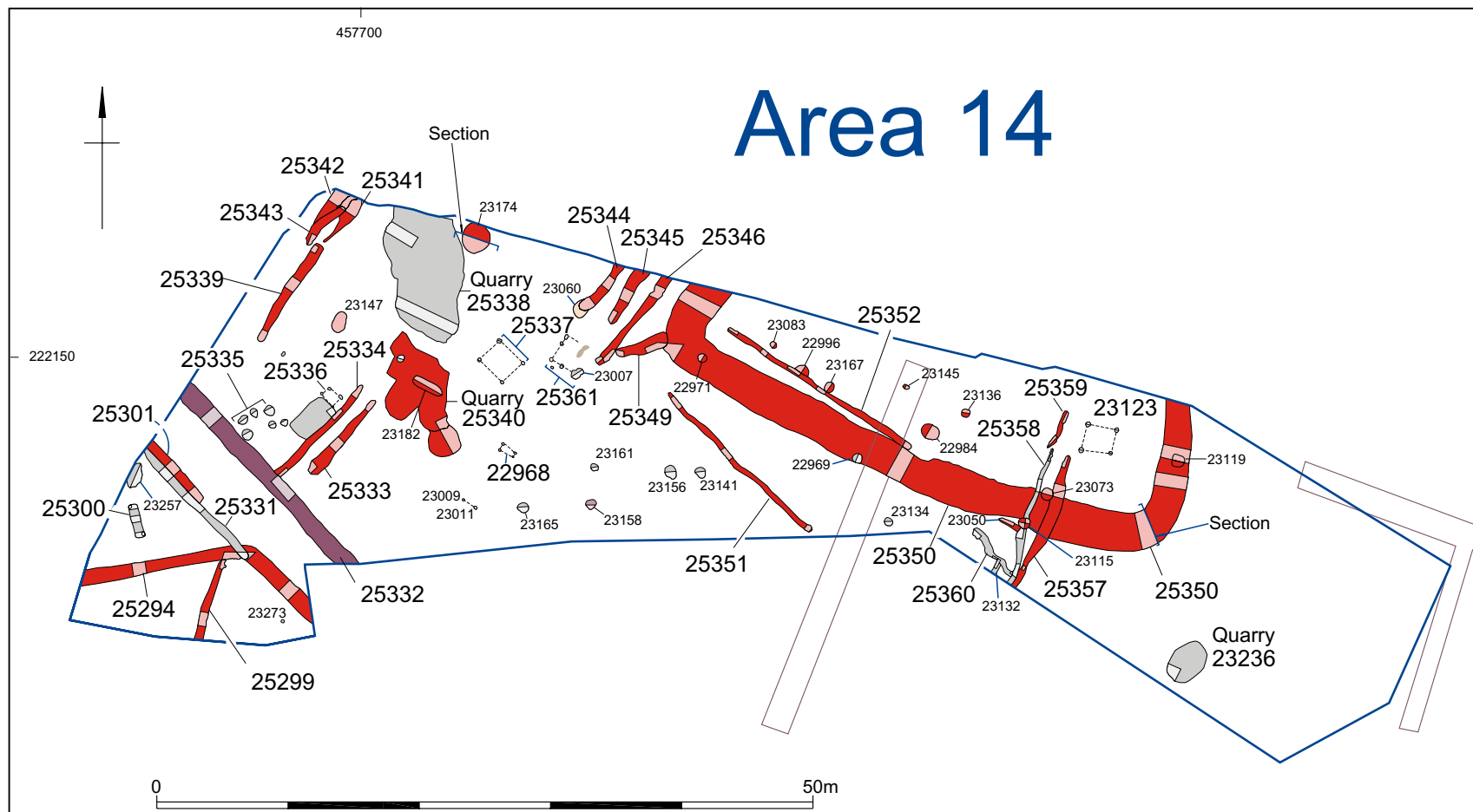
Figure 3



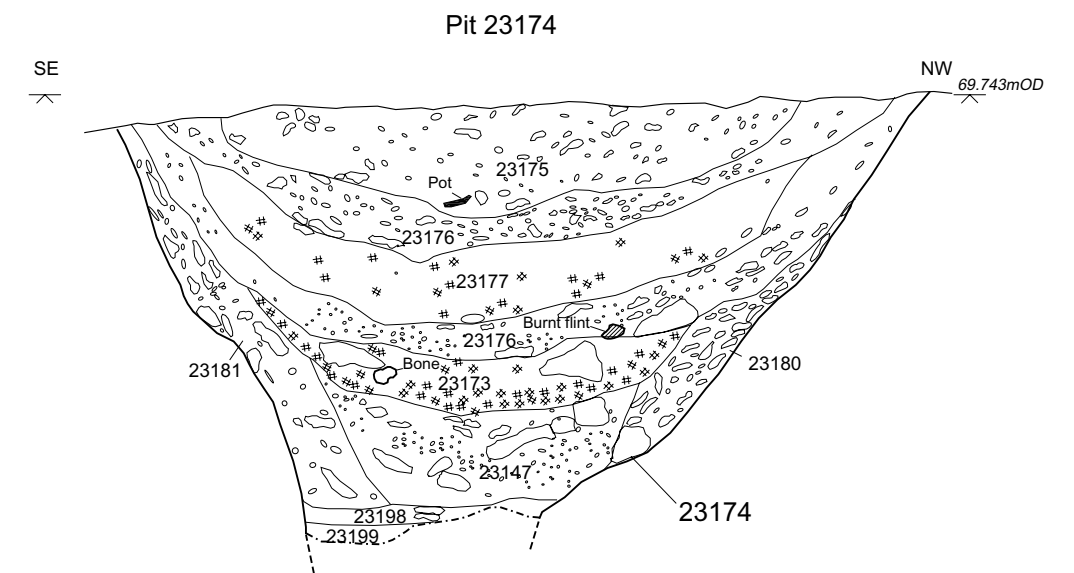
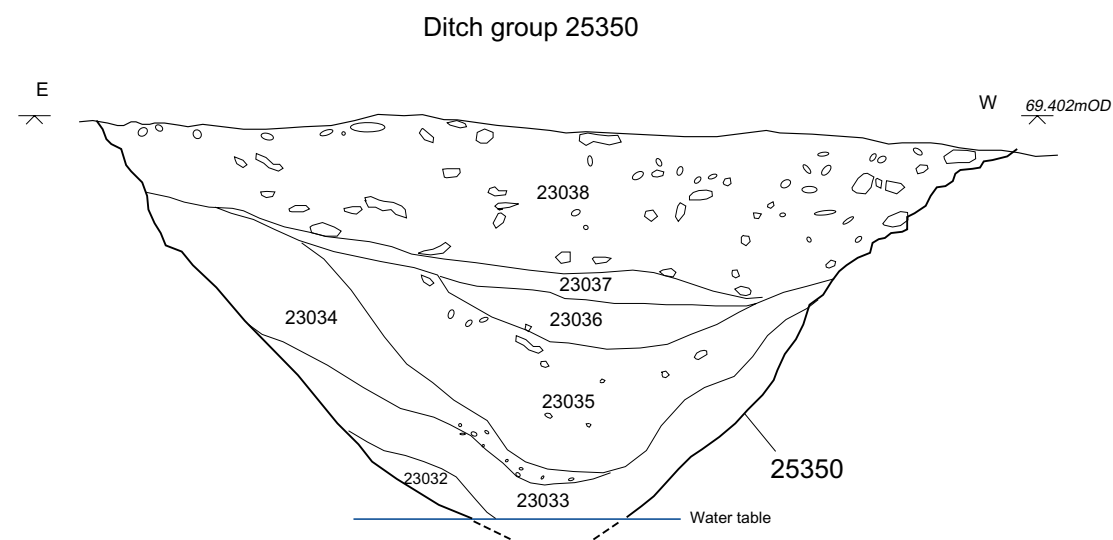


Area 7 showing phased features and detail of Inhumation burial 25156

Figure 4



Pit 23174 viewed from the south

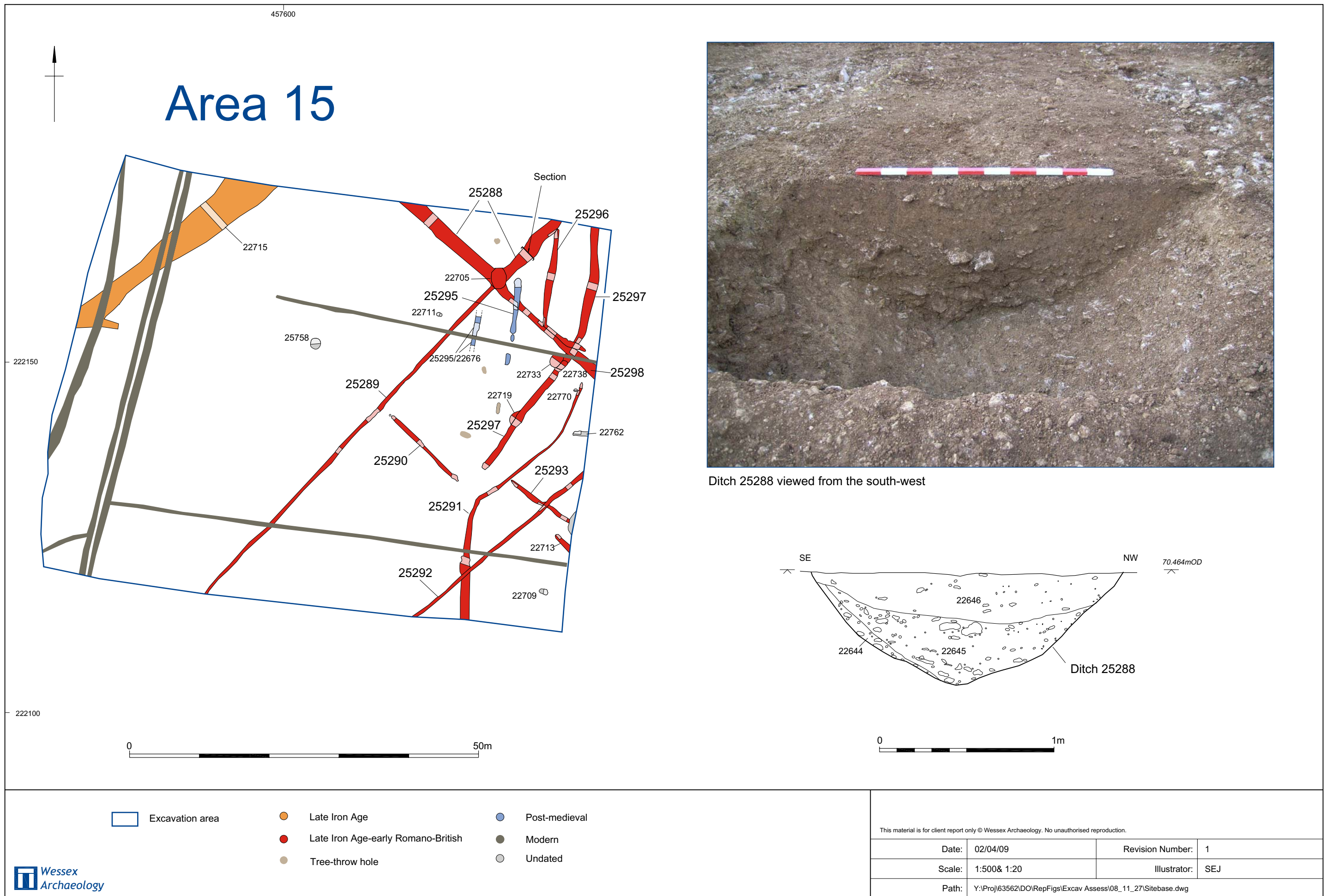


- | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Excavation area | Late Iron Age | Saxon |
| OA evaluation trench | Late Iron Age-early Romano-British | Undated |
| | Possible Saxon | Tree-throw hole |

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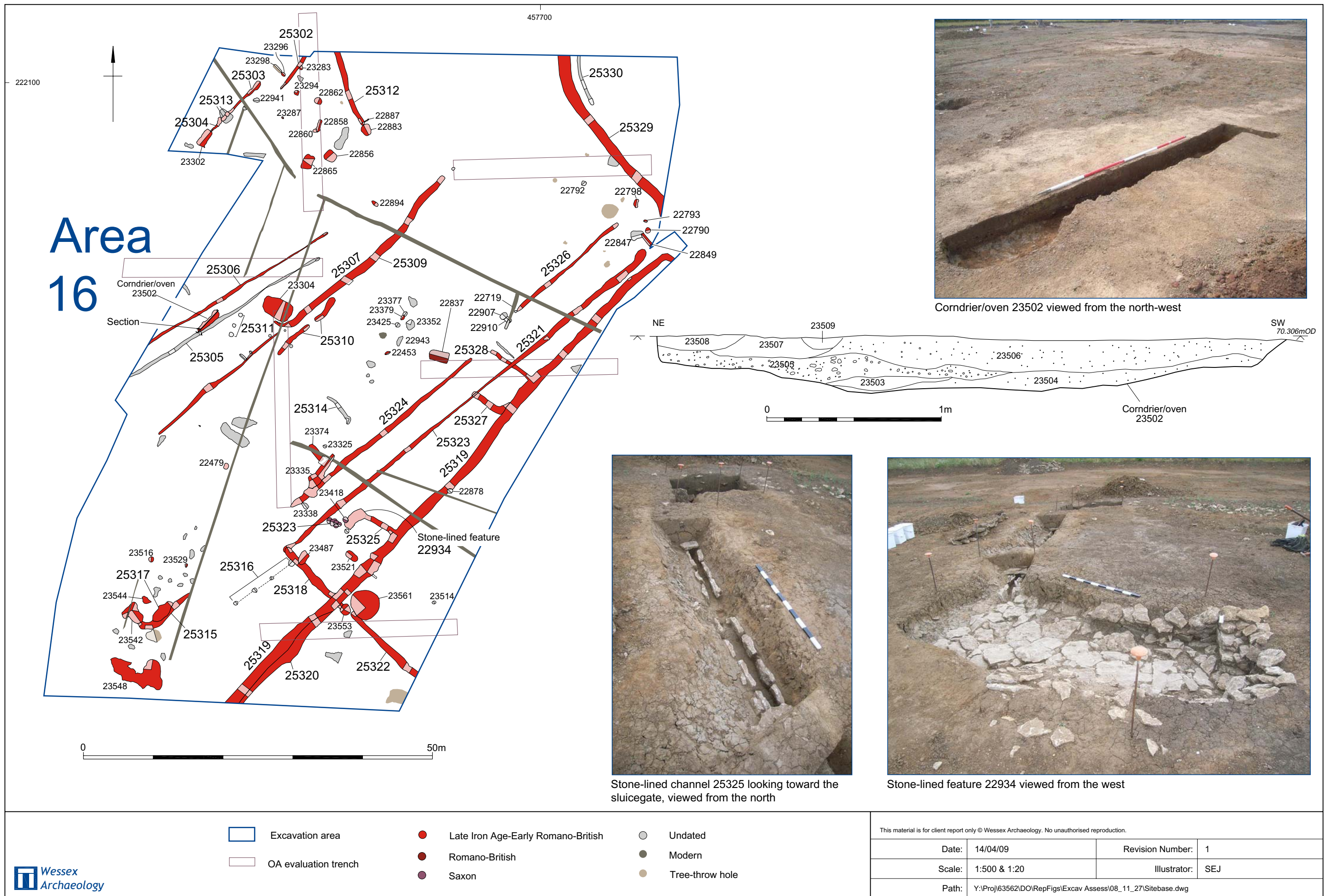
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Area 14 showing phased features with details of Ditch group 25350 and Romano-British pit 23174



Area15 showing phased features with details of ditch 25288

Figure 6



Area16 showing phased features with details of Corndrier/Oven 23502 and Stone-lined feature 22934

Figure 7



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