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**Middle and Late Iron Age occupation on land north of Croft  
Road, Spencers Wood, Reading, Berkshire**

**An archaeological excavation  
Area 1a**

**By Will Attard and Andy Taylor**

**CRSW17/256  
(SU 7216 6699)**

# **Middle and Late Iron Age Occupation on land north of Croft Road, Spencers Wood, Reading, Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Excavation Area 1a  
for Taylor Wimpey (West London)**

by Will Attard and Andy Taylor  
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code CRSW 17/256

## Summary

**Site name:** Land north of Croft Road, Spencers Wood, Reading, Berkshire: Area 1a

**Grid reference:** SU 7216 6699

**Site activity:** Excavation & watching brief

**Project Dates:** 23rd April 2019-21st June 2019

**Project Coordinator:** Danielle Milbank

**Site supervisor:** Will Attard

**Site code:** CRSW 17/256

**Area of site:** c.0.45 hectares

**Summary of results:** This report details the excavation of a Middle to Late Iron settlement comprising a round house and adjacent boundaries features. Two main phases of activity were represented from the 4th to the 1st century BC, with the chronology supported by six radiocarbon dates. Faunal remains did not survive but an extensive programme of soil sampling revealed no charred arable remains, which might be taken to indicate a pastoral economy. A waterhole thought to be of Middle Iron Age date contained preserved organic remains and remained in use into early Roman times. The waterlogged remains from it indicated a locally open environment but with mature oak woodland nearby.

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# **Middle and Late Iron Age Occupation on land north of Croft Road, Spencers Wood, Reading, Berkshire An Archaeological Excavation**

by Will Attard and Andy Taylor

**Report 17/256b**

## **Introduction**

This report details the results of an archaeological excavation carried out on land to the north of Croft Road, Spencers Wood, Reading, Berkshire, (SU 7216 6699) (Fig. 1, Pls 1-2). The work was commissioned by Mr Steven Weaver formerly of CgMs Consulting on behalf of Taylor Wimpey West London.

Planning permission (162829) has been granted by Wokingham Borough Council for development of land at Spencer's Wood, Reading, Berkshire. The consent is subject to a condition (33) requiring that a programme of archaeological investigation be carried out. This report relates to a plot of land referred to for development and archaeological purposes as Mitigation Area 1a (SU7216 6699).

The site was stripped using a 13-tonne 360° type excavator fitted with a toothless bucket under constant archaeological supervision. Stripping took place between 23rd April and 24th May 2019 and the excavation took place between 7th May and 21st June 2019. The archive is currently held by Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with an appropriate local museum willing to accept archive material in due course. The work was carried out according to a written scheme of investigation approved by Mr Roland Smith, Archaeology Officer with Berkshire Archaeology, advisers to the Borough on matters relating to archaeology.

## **Location, topography and geology**

The site consists of an irregular portion of land to the south of Ryeish Lane (Fig. 2). Mitigation Areas 1a and 1b lie within a larger field (c.1ha),. Area 1b was located in the north-east quarter of the field, with Area 1a occupying the southern half. Area 1a comprises an irregular portion of land roughly 0.45ha in size, which appeared to have been used partially as a construction dump and spoil heap prior to the commencement of development. A number of trees had been removed by the client prior to archaeological works commencing on site, and a tree protection zone had been established around a large oak in the centre of the field and along the northern boundary of Area 1a. This area sloped gently downwards from west to east. It was bounded in the north by Ryeish Lane, to the south by residential properties and to the east by a tree line, a drainage ditch and the current construction compound and car park. The underlying geology is mapped as fluvial terrace gravel

overlying London Clay (BGS 1981), with the gravel observed across the site. It lies at a height of 50m above Ordnance Datum.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential for the overall development area was highlighted by desk-based assessments (CgMs 2010; 2012). The environs of the site has now witnessed several surveys as well as detailed excavations with fieldwalking survey (Ford 1997), aerial photography (Gates 1975) and geophysical survey (Stratascan 1997a and b) providing general background information. Numerous excavations and evaluations have also take place within 2km of the site and reported Iron Age and/or Roman deposits similar to those reported below, such as at Green Park/Reading Business Park (Brossler *et al.* 2004; 2013; Moore and Jennings 1002), Little Lea Farm, Whitley (Booth *et al.* 2007, 50), Grazeley Road (Ford *et al.* 2013), Mere oak Lane (Milbank 2010), Hollow Lane, Shinfield (Taylor 2010), Cutbush Lane, Shinfield (Kennedy 2015), Crosfields School, Reading (Ford 2019), Ridgeway School, Whitley (Ford 2017) AWE, Burgfield (Booth 2013), Basingstoke Road, Spencers Wood (ASE 2004a; 2004b), and elsewhere on Croft Road itself (Taylor and Dawson 2017), as well as range of smaller and/ or negative investigations.

Fieldwork just on the other side of Croft Road, some 40m to the south of the south limit of Area 1a, and which can probably be regarded as a part of the same complex revealed Iron Age boundaries and a possible ring gully house radiocarbon dated to 400–228 cal BC (UBA30447) and 197–39 cal BC (UBA30446) (Taylor and Dawson 2017).

The specific archaeological potential of the development site was demonstrated by evaluation (Taylor 2012; CA 2017) and four areas for further work were identified within the overall larger site. Two areas of watching brief (Areas 3 and 4), however, revealed little of interest (St John-Brooks 2019), as had an evaluation south of Croft Road (McManus Fry and Elliott 2017), while excavation of Area 2 (Fig. 2) mostly revealed post-medieval and modern features along with a scatter of undated discreet features and some medieval pottery (Attard 2019).

## **Aims and Objectives, Methodology**

The general objectives of the project were to:

- excavate and record all archaeological deposits and features within the area threatened by the proposed development;
- produce relative and absolute dating for deposits and features recorded on the site;
- establish the character of these deposits in attempt to define functional areas on the site such as industrial, domestic, agricultural, etc.; and to

produce information on the economy and local environment and compare and contrast this with the results of other excavations in the area.

The specific objectives for this phase of work were to answer the following research questions:

When was the site first utilised; when was it abandoned?

What is the nature of Iron Age use of the site? Is the occupation enclosed or unenclosed? Does the Iron Age use include field systems as observed recently to the south?

What is the nature of Roman use of the site? Does this continue from the Iron Age activity or there a hiatus? Is the occupation enclosed or unenclosed? Does occupation of the site continue up to the end of Roman rule in Britain, or, as noted elsewhere in the region, does it stop much earlier?

Is there any post-Roman or early Saxon activity on the site?

Is there any medieval activity on the site?

What is the palaeoenvironmental setting of the area?

The excavation for this phase of works was originally intended to encompass Areas designated 1a and 1b. However, due to the latter being used as an active compound area it was agreed to split the site in two. Excavation Area 1a comprised *c.*0.5ha as shown in Fig. 2. Topsoil and subsoil were removed using 360° type machine fitted with a toothless grading bucket under constant archaeological supervision. The area stripped differed slightly from the proposed area due to the presence of a permanent boundary fence in the south and extensive disturbance along the eastern edge of the site and within. It was observed during stripping that the adjacent Mitigation Area 1b had been truncated to a depth of approximately 0.40m prior to archaeological monitoring, and gravel laid to level the area. Some parts of the eastern area had been rutted or compacted by plant and heavy machinery. Accordingly, continuations of linear features from the west to the east side of this boundary are noticeably narrower.

[A Ministry of Justice licence was obtained for the excavation of what was suspected to be cremated human remains but these turned out to be animal bone.]

## **The Excavation**

The excavation of Area 1a revealed a range of fairly typical archaeological deposits and features comprising linear features, pits, postholes, a ring gully roundhouse and a large pit/watering hole. The pottery has dated the features to a span encompassing the Middle and Late Iron Age supported by six radiocarbon determinations, with a very slight presence from the early Roman period. Two principal phases of development are evident within the Iron Age.

### *Phase 0: Neolithic and Bronze Age*

Three struck flints were recovered from the site indicating very slight activity in the Neolithic or Bronze Age. The finds need represent no more than casual loss or discard in the wider landscape setting.

### *Phase 1: Middle Iron Age 1*

A number of small lengths of ditch/gully and discrete pits and postholes stratigraphically pre-dated the linear features of MIA phases 2 and 3 and as they are similar to those features they appear likely to be middle Iron Age also. Pit 1344 was 1.18m across and 0.25m deep with a single fill but no artefactual dating evidence. It was cut by ditch 6009 (Pl. 5). Pit 1215 was up to 0.78m across and 0.23m deep with a single fill but no artefactual dating evidence. It was cut by ditches 6012 and 6014. Gully 6020 was just 3.1m long and was investigated by three slots (1515, 1519, 1520) which revealed it to be 0.24m to 0.4m wide and 0.13m to 0.24m deep with a single fill. It contained no dating evidence but it was cut by ditch 6008. Small fragments of a cow tooth were found in slot 1515 (the only animal bone to survive on the site other than some unidentified burnt fragments).

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

#### Enclosure/trackways

The first phase of cut features on the site belongs to the Middle Iron Age and these were primarily linear features (6008, 6009, 6010-11, 6016 and 6017 and 6002) forming either elongated paddocks or possibly part of a 'funnelling system', which may have allowed allow for the movement of stock into larger areas to east or west. They appear to be too widely spaced to be considered as a trackway in the usual sense. These features were certainly earlier than the larger linear features from the second phase of Middle Iron Age activity with cross cutting ditch 6019/6026 producing a radiocarbon date of 184-48 cal BC (UBA 42693).

Nine slots (1219, 1421, 1430-1, 1435-6, 1438, 1514), dug across ditch 6008 revealed it measured between 0.40m and 0.98m wide and 0.11m and 0.24m deep. It contained no pottery. Ditch 6009 was investigated by seven slots (1231, 1345, 1424-5, 1429, 1440, 1449) and measured between 0.60m and 1m wide, between 0.26m and 0.45m deep and produced 4 sherds of Iron Age pottery. Ditch 6010 was investigated by six slots (1336, 1401, 1406, 1432, 1502, 1505) and revealed that it measured between 0.22m and 1.02m wide and between 0.09m and 0.25m deep. It contained no pottery.

Ditch 6011 was up to 1.26m wide and 0.4m deep and lay parallel to 6008 for c. 20m then turned through 90° to the north beyond the excavation area. It contained no pottery.

It was not clear if ditch 6009 continued eastwards as 6016, but it is thought more likely that 6009 stopped and it's terminal incorporated into ditch 1606/ if only because the latter forms a straight section of feature. It is considered that the latter, with a right-angled bend perhaps forming an entrance way c. 2m wide forming a subsequent addition to the initial enclosure system.

Ditch 6016 was investigated by four slots (1222, 1229-30, 1415) and measured between 0.30m and 0.56m wide and between 0.10m and 0.21m deep. It contained no pottery.

Ditch 6002 was only a short length of gully that might be related to 5024/6010 in controlling access to waterhole 6003. It contained no pottery.

Ditch 6027, was another short length of gully without any datable finds but was truncated by phase 3a ditch 600. Gully 6017 was investigated by two slots (1303, 1323) which revealed it to be between 0.23m and 0.30m wide and between 0.16m and 0.26m deep. Its relationship to ditch 6024 could not be determined but it could be related to 6010 forming another reorganized version of an entrance just 1m wide. It contained no pottery. It is, however, equally plausible in Phase 3a as a continuation of ditch 6012.

Ditch 6007 was examined by five slots (1233, 1313-4, 1318, 1319, 1340-1) with a clear re-cut (6027) evident along most of its length. It measured between 1m and 2.05m wide, between 0.12m and 0.56m deep and produced 31 sherds of MIA pottery. Its relationship with 6012 could not be established but in plan 6007 and its re-cut appeared to be the earlier features, and this would tally with the eastern extent being parallel to ditch 6016, and the western terminus being in line with the terminus of 6024 as they both approached the waterhole. However, assigning ditch 6007 to this phase is not entirely certain, as it could equally have played a role in the layout of the next phase.

### *Waterhole 6003*

This substantial pit may have been respected by boundary ditches 6002 and 6024. It was oval in plan, 3.3m by 2.4m across, and 1.6m deep (Figs, 3 and 4; Pl. 6) It was excavated by hand in opposing quadrants (1324, 1528) to a depth of *c.* 1m, with the remaining segments and lower fills removed by machine. The pit had relatively gentle sloping sides, with two modest breaks in slope but with no evidence of any attempt to maintain the sides from collapse such as by using wattlework, despite good organic preservation. It is suggested that the feature was made to be a waterhole accessible to animals rather than a well needing a bucket to obtain water. At the time of the excavation, the bottom 0.9m was below the groundwater level.

The feature had seven fills. The lowest layer (1665) was a soft blue-grey clay rich in preserved organic matter including tree leaves. A sample of the latter was taken and a radiocarbon date of cal AD62–217 (UBA42692) (Appendix 7) was obtained demonstrating a clear Roman date for the infill. Above the basal fill was a brown /grey sandy silt (1664) which in turn was overlain by another blue-grey clayey silt, rich in organic matter. It is noticeable that these three layers were not horizontal but dipped to the south west and seemed to correspond with a second slight break of slope that defined the deepest part of the feature.



Above these was a much thicker and extensive layer (1383=1657), a blue/grey clay and silty sand without a marked organic component: a single sherd of Iron Age pottery came from this deposit. Above this was another thick layer (1382=1656) with a variation of a blue/grey clay and silty sand. Above this was (1381=1654) a grey brown sandy clay, then partially on the north east side was a grey brown sandy clay with gravel (1457=1655) followed finally by a brown clayey sand with gravel (1380=1653) which filled the feature to the stripped surface. Twelve sherds of middle Iron Age pottery came from layer 1654, including one retaining carbonized residues, and the residue returned a radiocarbon date of 358–275 cal BC (UBA42691) at a with a probability of 61.2% (Appendix 6) but leaving a 38.8% possibility that it is up to 100 years later (260–180 cal BC). Although this determination supports the chronology for pottery using activity on the site in the 4th-2nd centuries BC, the sherd must be residual in this context.

The radiocarbon determination clearly dates the bottom of the pit to the Roman period, yet this is at odds with the paucity of other Roman deposits or finds on the site but may explain the paucity of Iron Age finds in the feature. However, it may have been cleaned out comprehensively, on many occasions and thus it may have been in use for a long period of time, ie from the Middle Iron Age and through the Late Iron Age. The top fill (1380) did contain two sherds of Roman *amphora*, virtually the only stratified Roman finds on the site.

#### Pits and postholes

Just a single shallow pit (1201) had dating evidence that allowed it to be assigned to this phase.

Table 1: Phase 2 discrete features

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill</i>	<i>Diameter (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Profile</i>	<i>Finds</i>
1201	1257	0.61	0.30	Deep bowl-shaped	8 MIA sherds
1204	1254	0.53	0.22	Bowl-shaped	1 MIA sherd

#### *Phase 3: Middle Iron Age 3*

The second Middle Iron Age phase was identified using stratigraphy, pottery and further radiocarbon dates.

#### Ring gully structure (RG1) (Figs 3 and 5; Pls 1 and 5)

A single roundhouse is represented by an intermittent penannular ring gully (6000), along with nine discrete internal features (6001) assumed to be associated with the structure. RG1 had a diameter of 12.75m and was investigated by 14 slots (1235, 1238-40, 1244, 1304, 1322, 1405, 1408, 1410, 1503-4, 1507-8). It measured between 0.20m and 0.60m wide and between 0.03m and 0.26m deep. The feature was partially disturbed by rooting on its eastern side and on its southern side by modern truncation. Two terminal ends of the gully formed a likely entrance on its eastern side, facing towards gully 6006, but a south-east entrance cannot be ruled out. Some 112 sherds of pottery were recovered from the gully, almost all from the eastern side.

A radiocarbon date of 174-19 cal BC (UBA42689) was obtained on charcoal from terminal 1235 of the ring gully.

A single length of slightly curving gully (6006) stops short of the ring gully on its eastern side and may be some sort of funnel or definition of the entrance to the ring gully, but may also relate to the surrounding field system.

#### Enclosures/ditches

##### *A) Southern component, associated with ring gully RG1*

Several linear features are certainly or probably contemporary with the roundhouse. These appeared to be forming a field system with internal divisions. Six linear features (6006, 6007, 6012, 6015, 6018 and 6025) appear to form a rectilinear pattern adjacent to the roundhouse and seem to reflect an integrated system around it. It is considered that gully 6006 was contemporary with 6012 though the relationship was lost due to the presence of a modern ditch. The line of gully 6006 is subsequently extended eastwards as gully 6025. The latter cut and terminated at ditch 6012. The relationship of gully 6012 to ditch 6007 is not entirely clear but the latter is likely to be earlier, and both it and its recut have been assigned to phase 2. However, its continuation into phase 3 is not impossible. Short, perhaps intermittent gullies 6015 and 6018 were aligned parallel to 6012 and represent the west margin of the system.

Gully 6006 was investigated by two slots (1200, 1241) and revealed it measured between 0.35m and 0.80m wide, between 0.15m and 0.25m deep. It contained nine sherds of MIA pottery.

Gully 6025 was investigated by two slots (1311, 1321) and revealed it was 0.8m wide and 0.25m deep. It contained one sherd of MIA pottery and one sherd from a Roman flagon, considered intrusive.

Ditch 6012 was investigated by four slots (1249, 1301, 1307, 1310) and revealed it was between 0.36m and 0.44m wide, and varied between 0.2–0.44m deep. It contained two MIA pottery sherds.

Gully 6015 was investigated by three slots (1349, 1400, 1403) and revealed it was between 0.18m and 0.30m wide and between 0.04m and 0.06m deep. It contained no datable artefacts.

Gully 6018 is also allocated this phase due to its same alignment to 6012 and 6015. It was investigated by five slots (1411, 1413-4, 1439, 1521) and revealed it to be between 0.33m and 0.64m wide and between 0.09m and 0.26m deep but did not produce dating evidence.

Ditch terminal 1518 is dated to the MIA by pottery but its assignment to this phase is tentative based on what little could be seen of its alignment.

### *B) Northern rectilinear enclosure*

Ditches 6019, 6021 and 6022 form another rectilinear field system comprising larger boundary features. Regrettably a modern ditch removed any relationship of 6021 with 6012 but it is possible that these link the north and south field complexes together.

Ditch 6019 was examined by three slots (1437, 1448, 1522) but was extensively recut (6026)(Pl. 6) removing most of the original profile. It contained 10 MIA sherds. The recut (6026) was examined by three slots (1433, 1500, 1525) which revealed it to be between 1m and 1.22m wide, between 0.30m and 0.56m deep. It contained 6 MIA sherds. It also returned a radiocarbon date from carbonized residue on pottery from slot 1433 of 184-48 cal BC (UBA 42693).

Ditch 6021 was an E-W boundary feature which turned to the north east (as 6022) and continued beyond the excavation boundary. It was recut (1332, 1441) either locally or had been largely removed by the later extensive recut 6023. The western end of the ditch merged with a convergence of other ditches where the exact sequence could not be determined but 6021 is thought to swing north to terminate (as 1442). Whatever the details in this confused area, ditches 6021/6023, 6022 and 6019/6026 form three sides of a large rectangular enclosure which continued northwards beyond the baulk. Ditch 6021 was examined by nine slots (1317, 1329, 1331, 1346, 1505, 1511, 1428, 1441/2, 1443) which revealed it was between 0.40m and 1.0m wide and between 0.11m and 0.6m deep. It contained 14 sherds of MIA pottery. Recut 6023 was examined by six slots (1316, 1333, 1338, 1407, 1427, 1510) which revealed it was between 0.68m and 1.45m wide and between 0.29m and 0.32m deep. It contained 103 sherds of MIA pottery. It terminated at the west end.

Ditch 6022 was examined by eight slots (1224-5, 1227-8, 1230) which revealed it was between 0.30m and 0.52m wide and between 0.12m and 0.17m deep. It contained no dating evidence.

### C) Other ditches

#### *Ditches 6004,6005*

These two ditches are assigned to phase 3 on the basis of both pottery and a radiocarbon date but are not physically linked to the other ditches on the site and ditch 6004 meets and cuts ditch 6005 at an oblique angle. Ditch 6005, was investigated by four slots (1523,1526, 1529, 1531) it was revealed to be between 0.92m and 1m wide and between 0.16m and 0.30m deep. It contained 20 sherds of MIA pottery.

Ditch 6004 cut and terminated ditch 6005 and investigated by four slots (1416, 1418, 1524, 1530) which revealed it to be between 0.92m and 1m wide and between 0.24m and 0.28m deep. It contained six sherds of MIA pottery. A radiocarbon date of 200-89 cal BC (UBA 42690) was obtained from a sherd with carbonized residue from slot 1530.

### Ditches 6014 and 1209

These two ditches may have functioned together representing an entrance to a field or enclosure complex to the south east. Ditch 6014 cut ditch 6012 placing it late in the phase 3 sequence. Ditch 6014 was investigated by three slots (1205, 1214, 1343 along with 1209) and revealed it to be between 0.70m and 0.90m wide and between 0.18m and 0.50m deep although this remained undated.

### Pits and postholes

Apart from the cluster 6001, just three small pits and postholes (Table 2) can be assigned to this phase based on eighteen sherds of MIA pottery (1348) or stratigraphy ().

Table 2 MIA phase 3 pits

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill</i>	<i>Diameter (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Profile</i>	<i> Finds</i>
1309	1363	0.25	0.13	Bowl-shaped	
1348	1459,60	0.45	0.18	Bowl-shaped	18 MIA sherds
1527	1652	0.65	0.10	Shallow bowl-shaped	

### Cluster 6001

A cluster of nine pits and postholes (1202-4, 1207, 1234, 1236-7, 1242, 1509) were identified within the interior of ring gully RG1 (Fig. 5; Table 3). Pit 1204 contained a sherd of MIA pottery and has been assigned to phase MIA1 (above), though not necessarily with much confidence. Posthole 1509 also with 1 sherd cut the ring gully. The features together formed no obvious pattern such as an internal post-built roundhouse, but most lay on the east side of the ring gully site and four formed two close-spaced pairs (1202-1234 and 1236-7). Possibly some of the features formed an internal porch.

Table 3 Feature cluster 6001 details

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill</i>	<i>Width (m)</i>	<i>Depth(m)</i>	<i>Profile</i>	<i> Finds</i>	
1202	1252	0.38	0.20	Deep bowl-shaped	-	
1203	1253	0.89	0.24	Bowl-shaped	-	
1204	1254	0.53	0.22	Bowl-shaped	1 MIA sherd	(Phase 2)
1207	1258	0.53	0.20	Bowl-shaped	-	
1234	1288	0.40	0.10	Shallow bowl-shaped	-	
1236	1290	0.40	0.14	Bowl-shaped	-	
1237	1291	0.35	0.15	Bowl-shaped	-	
1242	1296	0.65	0.10	Shallow bowl-shaped	-	
1509	1581	0.40	0.11	Shallow bowl-shaped	1 MIA sherd	

## *Undated features, presumed M-LIA*

### Pits and Postholes

Some fifteen pits or postholes contained no dating evidence other than smithing slag from feature 1300 (Table 4). The features are mostly variations on a bowl-shaped profile, usually with a single fill. They are no deeper than 0.23m but varied between 0.26m and 1.57m across.

Table 4 Undated pits and postholes (presumed MIA)

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill</i>	<i>Width (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Profile</i>	<i>Find</i>
1243	1297	0.35	0.10	Shallow bowl-shaped	-
1245	1299	0.39	0.22	Bowl-shaped	-
1246	1350	0.29	0.21	Bowl-shaped	-
1247	1351	0.42	0.07	Shallow bowl-shaped	-
1248	1352	0.63	0.07	Shallow bowl-shaped	-
1300	1354	0.28	0.05	Bowl-shaped	Slag; charcoal rich
1305	1359	0.26	0.08	Bowl-shaped	-
1306	1360	0.26	0.23	Deep bowl-shaped	-
1312	1366	0.28	0.11	Bowl-shaped	-
1404	1468-9	1.57	0.18	Shallow bowl-shaped	-
1409	1474	0.28	0.15	Bowl-shaped	-
1513	1586	0.75	0.17	Shallow bowl-shaped	-

### *Phase 4: Roman*

A single sherd of Roman pottery was also recovered from gully 6006, although this likely an intrusive piece. Two sherds of *amphora* were also recovered from the top fill of waterhole 6003. This feature was still open and waterlogged to allow for the preservation of leaf litter which returned an early Roman radiocarbon date from its bottom fill. In the absence of any Roman features and just seven sherds of Roman pottery from the site as a whole (the rest from the modern ditch), it is interpreted that the site had in fact been abandoned in the Late Iron Age, by or during the early 1st century AD.

### *Phase 5: Post Medieval and Modern*

The site was traversed by a large number of field drains and a large ditch aligned N-S ditch which was still an extant boundary just prior to the excavation.

## **Finds**

### *Pottery by Richard Tabor*

The later prehistoric pottery comprised 365 sherds weighing 3263.0g and a further six indeterminate crumbs weighing 2g giving a moderately low mean sherd weight of 8.9g (Appendix 2). The material varied from fairly fresh condition and retaining inclusions to having rounded fractures with some loss of inclusions. A small num-

ber of sherds may have dated to the later Bronze Age but it is more probable that almost the entire assemblage is from within a span extending from the earlier middle to the late Iron Age.

### Methodology

The sherds were allocated to fabric groups based on the material, size and sorting of the principal inclusions. Vessel forms were grouped also by characteristic profiles, where reconstruction was possible, or by rim or other diagnostic features, including surface treatments and decoration in accordance with guidelines for the recording and analysis of prehistoric pottery (PCRG 2010). A new fabric series has been devised but where possible it has been related to that developed for neighbouring areas of the site by Jane Timby (2017).

The assemblage includes a very small amount (1.8% by weight) of predominantly flint-tempered sherds although sandy fabrics with flint inclusions account for the greatest amount (50.6% by weight). Other minority fabrics are quartz/sand (9.6%) and grog (2.5%) but the representation of fabrics which are vesicular due probably to the loss of calcareous inclusions is unusually high for the Reading area (35.5%).

Analysis from earlier investigation demonstrated the presence of middle and late Bronze Age fabrics but there is no clear evidence for contemporary material in the present assemblage. None of the identifiable classified forms are likely to pre-date the earlier middle Iron Age although there is scope for the re-allocation of sherds from bowl and jar forms BA2.3 and JB1.3 to late Bronze Age antecedents. The pottery from this phase of investigation has in common with the pottery from previous work, flint and flint and sand fabrics distinguishable from each other solely by the presence or absence of iron in the matrix. This is likely to reflect diversity in the local clay sources but it may also relate to a change in source over time. The association of fabrics with forms and the co-occurrence of fabrics in particular features would allow iron-rich sandy flint fabrics to predate fabrics lacking iron but otherwise similar, taking into account sherd condition. Previously it was noted that flint and flint and sand fabrics tended to date to the late Bronze Age and early Iron Age (Timby 2017, 19). Comparable contemporary fabrics have been found elsewhere in and around Reading. Quartz/sand fabrics were rare in the late Bronze Age assemblage at Reading Business Park phase 2 but were a significant component of a very small loosely dated Iron Age assemblage from phase 3's Green Park (Morris, 2004, 62; 2013, 46). Quartz/sand fabrics made up less than 20% of a substantial early Iron Age assemblage from the same project's Moores Farm site but it included five undiagnostic glauconitic sherds in a fabric very similar to SF4. The only directly datable traits for comparable fabrics from the present Ridgeway School assemblage are middle Iron Age although some sherds in S1 and S2 are associated with potentially earlier middle Iron Age sherds in other fabrics. Diagnostic vesicular sherds are exclusively middle Iron Age. A small later Iron Age component shows a marked change with the introduction of coarser quartz fabric Q1, possibly from south-east Dorset, and sherds tempered with fine grog. Based on the sparse morphological evidence from this and other local sites the fabrics have been divided into

overlapping early middle to middle and middle to later middle Iron age groups and a more closely defined late Iron Age group, although the latter group may include Roman sherds (Appendix 2.4).

### Fabrics

#### *Later Bronze Age to early middle Iron Age: Flint*

**F1** (medium) Friable pink, micaceous silty sand fabric including common fine (<1mm), sparse to moderate medium (<2mm), sparse medium/coarse (<4mm) burnt angular flint and rare to sparse mainly fine (<1mm) iron oxides. Possible traces of a reddish brown slip. Possibly equivalent to later Bronze Age fabric FEFL1 but if slipped the five sherds may be from a Roman storage jar (Timby 2017, 18).

**F2** (medium) Moderately hard grey fabric including abundant fine (<1mm), sparse to moderate medium (<2mm) and rare to sparse medium/coarse (<4mm) burnt angular flint.

**SF1** (coarse) Moderately hard, grey sandy fabric including common fine (<1mm), sparse to moderate medium (<2mm), and rare to sparse medium/coarse (<4mm) burnt angular flint, rare to sparse mainly fine (<0.5mm) to medium (<1mm) sub-rounded quartz and carbonised streaks, typically 1mm wide and up to 8mm long. Possibly related to later Bronze Age fabric FLSAOR (Timby 2017, 18).

**feSF1** (medium) Moderately hard grey, sandy fabric including common very fine (<0.2mm) to rare medium (<1mm) sub-rounded quartz, poorly-sorted sparse fine (<1mm) to medium/coarse (<4mm) burnt angular flint and sparse fine (<1mm) medium/coarse (<3mm) iron oxides. Possibly equivalent to late Bronze Age and later SAFEFL (Timby 2017, 18).

**feSF2** (medium) Moderately hard grey, sandy fabric including abundant very fine (<0.2mm) to rare medium (<1mm) mainly sub-rounded quartz, rare to sparse fine (<1mm) to rare medium (<2mm) burnt angular flint, some cortex, and sparse fine (<1mm) to rare medium (<2mm) iron oxides.

#### *Middle to later middle Iron Age: vesicular sand*

**SSh1** (medium) Moderately hard grey, sandy, vesicular fabric with buff pink to grey exterior and grey interior surfaces including abundant very fine (<0.2mm) to sparse medium (<1mm) sub-rounded quartz and poorly-sorted coarse (<5mm) sub-rounded calcareous voids. Possibly related to later prehistoric fabric SH (Timby 2017, 19).

**feSSh1** (medium) Moderately hard grey, sandy, vesicular fabric with buff pink to grey exterior and grey interior surfaces including abundant very fine (<0.2mm) to sparse medium (<1mm) sub-rounded quartz, poorly-sorted coarse (<5mm) sub-rounded calcareous voids and sparse fine (<1mm) to medium/coarse (<4mm) iron oxides.

**feSSh2** (medium) Friable to moderately hard grey, micaceous sandy, vesicular fabric with buff pink to grey surfaces including abundant rare fine (<0.5mm) to medium (<1mm) sub-rounded quartz, poorly-sorted coarse (<5mm) sub-rounded calcareous voids and sparse fine (<1mm) to medium/coarse (<4mm) iron oxides.

#### *Middle to later middle Iron Age: quartz/sand*

**S1** (medium) Moderately hard grey, sandy fabric including abundant very fine (<0.2mm) to rare medium (<1mm) mainly sub-rounded quartz, sparse fine (<1mm) to rare medium (<2mm) iron oxides and rarely coarse (<4mm) rounded flint.

**S2** (medium) Hard grey, sandy fabric including abundant fine (<0.5mm) to sparse medium (<1mm) mainly sub-rounded glauconitic quartz and rarely fine (<1mm) sub-angular flint. May be burnished. Possibly related to Iron Age fabric SA4 (Timby 2017, 19).

**S3** (medium) Moderately hard grey, micaceous sandy fabric including abundant very fine (<0.2mm) to rare medium (<1mm) mainly sub-rounded quartz, sparse fine (<1mm) to rare medium (<2mm) iron oxides and rarely fine (<1mm) sub-angular flint. Possibly related to mid-later Iron Age fabric BWSYFL (Timby 2017, 19).

#### *Middle to later middle Iron Age: Quartz/sand and flint*

**SF2** (medium) Moderately hard grey, sandy fabric including abundant fine (<0.5mm) to rare medium (<1mm) mainly sub-rounded quartz and rare to sparse fine (<1mm) to rare medium (<2mm) and rarely medium/coarse (<4mm) burnt angular flint, some cortex.

**SF3** (medium) Moderately hard grey, micaceous sandy fabric including common fine (<1mm), sparse to moderate medium (<2mm) sparse medium/coarse (<3mm) burnt angular flint and rarely fine (<1mm) to medium (<2mm) iron oxides. Surface may be burnished. Possibly related to later prehistoric fabric SAFL1 (Timby 2017, 18).

**SF4** (medium) Moderately hard grey, fabric including abundant fine (<0.5mm) to rare medium (<1mm) mainly sub-rounded quartz, some glauconitic, sparse fine (<1mm), medium (<2mm) and medium/coarse (<3mm) burnt angular flint and sparse fine (<1mm) to rare medium (<2mm) sub-rounded iron stones.

*Late Iron Age/Roman: quartz/sand*

**Q1** (medium) Hard grey, fabric including abundant fine/medium (0.5mm) to medium (<1mm) sub-rounded quartz and rare medium (<2mm) to coarse (<8mm) burnt angular flint and rare fine (<1mm) to medium (<2mm) iron stone

*Late Iron Age/Roman: Grog*

**G1** (medium) Moderately soft, grey fabric including abundant fine (<1mm) to moderate medium (<2mm) grog, rare to sparse mainly fine (<0.5mm) to medium (<1mm) sub-rounded quartz and rarely fine (<1mm) to medium (<2mm) sub-angular flint.

**G2** (medium) Moderately soft to moderately hard, grey fabric including abundant fine (<1mm) to moderate medium (<2mm) grog and rarely fine (<1mm) to medium (<2mm) sub-angular flint.

**G3** (medium) Moderately soft, grey, micaceous fabric including abundant fine (<1mm) to moderate to common medium (<2mm) grog, rare to sparse fine (<1mm) sub-angular flint and sparse fine (<1mm) iron oxides. Possibly related to later Iron Age pre-conquest fabric GRFL (Timby 2017, 22).

The relatively few feature sherds are in forms which correlate with the general classification adopted and developed by the Danebury Environs Project (DEP) (Brown 2000). Some sherds retained traces of burnishing but only two of the vessels represented carried any decoration which was restricted to one instance of fingertip impressions on a shoulder (Fig. 6, P1) and one of burnished horizontal lines on an outer base angle (Fig. 6, P8). The latter is a typically middle to later middle Iron Age device but the profile and use of fingertipping on the former would fit well within a span from the late Bronze Age to the early middle Iron Age and the straight lower wall might favour the earlier date rather than that implied by attribution to DEP type JB1.3. The vessel was from a discrete pit. However, the near absence of sherds with predominantly flint temper implies that most of the assemblage post dates the late Bronze Age.

An everted, tapering rounded rim from a shouldered bowl (Fig. 6, P2) might also be earlier but an upright, rounded, slightly internally bevelled rim with slightly concave short neck from a high-shouldered, slack profiled, jar, JB4.1, and an upright, flattened rim with a slightly concave short neck over a rounded shoulder, JC1 (Fig. 6, P4-5), from the same context (1289) have more distinctively middle Iron Age traits. At DEP the inception of the JC1 form was judged to be from the early middle Iron Age which would allow contemporaneity with either of a round profiled jar, JB3.1, with a slightly everted, flattened rim and concave medium length neck (Fig. 6, P3) or a potentially later upright, flattened, outwardly expanded rim set on a short/medium neck with slight ledge at its base from a globular jar, JD1 (Fig. 6, P6). Profiles P2-6 are all from ditch 6000. Although the JC1 form can remain current until the later middle Iron Age the associations with the other sherds are sufficiently



strong to imply a mid-late 4th or early 3rd century BC date for the group. Other notable sherds from 6000 include two moderately splayed bases from gully terminus 1235. One in fabric SSh1 has three post-firing drilled holes biased towards one side of the base. The inside of a similar base in the same fabric from 1529 had two fingertip impressions adjacent to the join of the wall on one side.

There is no coherent contextual group for the remainder of the material but the range of forms shows a distinctive middle to later middle Iron Age assemblage of high shouldered JC2 and open PB1.1 jar types and includes a base angle with two horizontal burnished lines, a technique typical of the later middle Iron Age (Fig. 6, P7 and P9; P10; P8). There appears to be relative continuity of fabric preference but no firm conclusions can be drawn from so small an assemblage. In contrast there is a marked change move to grog-tempering in the latest Iron Age material represented by bead rims from a probably BD5 bipartite bowl and a high shouldered JC3.1 jar (Fig. 6, P11 and P12) which are likely to date to the second half of the 1st century BC or later.

### Roman Pottery

The Roman pottery amounted to seven sherds weighing 285g from three different vessels. A few quartz-tempered sherds which may be of either late Iron Age or Roman date have been included in the prehistoric pottery report.

A 4mm thick wall sherd from a wheel-thrown flagon (ditch slot 1321) was in a grey, fine sandy fabric including rare to sparse very fine (<0.5mm) sub-rounded dark brown iron stones. The surfaces of the matrix were orange but the exterior was covered with a very thin, non-micaceous matt grey 'dusting'. The exterior was covered with concentric ridges and had a raised area along the line of fracture where a handle had been seated.

Two re-fitting sherds (pit 1324) are from a long, narrow *amphora* with deep concentric wheel-throwing furrows on the internal wall. The buff pink, fine, slightly micaceous silty sand fabric includes moderate very fine (<0.5mm) to sparse fine (<1mm) mainly sub-angular limestone grits and rare fine (<1mm) reddish brown iron oxides. The interior is covered with a reddish brown slip.

Four sherds from the modern north-south ditch were in a hard, grey fabric including abundant fine/medium (0.5mm) to medium (<1mm) sub-rounded quartz and sparse medium (<2mm) to rare coarse (<6mm) burnt angular flint and sparse fine (<1mm) to medium (<2mm) iron oxides. They refitted to form an externally bevelled everted rim over a deep, roundly concave neck and rounded upper wall from a large hand-made jar.

The jar rim is of a type which persisted throughout the Roman period but the flagon sherd from 1321 is probably a southern British fineware, possibly dating to the first half of the 2nd century AD (Seager Smith 1993, 225). The straight lower wall and well-defined internal throw patterning of the *amphora* sherd is similar to that

of a flat-bottomed *Gauloise 4* form from Dorchester, Dorset. The type had a long currency spanning the mid-1st century AD to the 3rd and possibly the 4th century AD (Williams 1993, 214, fig. 117, 8).

#### Post Medieval Pottery

The exterior and interior surfaces of a single china cup rim sherd weighing 3g from the 'cast up' of the modern N-S boundary ditch were covered with blue transfer willow pattern designs. The glaze was finely crazed. English reproductions in the style circulated first during the late 18th century but similar styles remain in production.

#### *Slag* by David Dungworth

A small quantity of non-diagnostic ironworking slag (193g) was recovered from Middle Iron Age features (Appendix 3). All of the material submitted for assessment was examined visually and recorded following standard guidance (HE 2015). The colour and density of the material suggests that it was all produced during ironworking; however, none of the material manifested characteristics that would allow the identification of a specific ironworking process. This confirms that some sort of ironworking took place on (or very near) to this site in the Middle Iron Age; however, the material itself provides no indication of the precise nature of the ironworking process. The small size of the assemblage would fit iron smithing better than smelting.

#### *Struck Flint* by Will Attard

Only three pieces of struck flint were discovered during the excavation of Area 1a, from ditch 6011 (slots 1422 and 1517), and waterhole 6003 (1324). All were residual finds in features of Iron Age or Roman date. All three are non-diagnostic flakes, and cannot be closely dated other than probably to the later Neolithic or Bronze Age.

#### *Ceramic Building Material* by Danielle Milbank

Four fragments of tile and two pieces of brick (weighing 424g in total) were collected from post-medieval ditch 1218 (1269). The brick pieces are of insufficient size to enable dating, while the tile pieces are of a fairly hard, evenly-fired fabric with fine sandy inclusions and an orange red colour. Based on the form and finish, they represent roof tile of broadly post-medieval date, most likely 18th or 19th century.

### *Fired Clay* by Danielle Milbank and Cristina Mateos

Fired clay was recovered from a total of five contexts in the Area 1A excavation. These comprised a small quantity of fragmented material, which is summarized in Appendix 3. The material is largely of a homogeneous, poorly-fired soft clay with occasional fine limestone inclusions, in a range of dark red and dark brown colours.

Among these, two ball-like objects can be identified (Pl. 8), recovered from deposits 1361 and 1660. Both are balls of sandy fired clay with small-medium flint inclusion and moderate small mica, quartz and feldspar inclusion.

The first object, from ditch 6004 (1660) is the more spherical of the two, though irregular, 57mm to 78mm in diameter, weighing 349g and may be a slingshot. The archaeological records of England and Ireland show varying sizes of slingshots from the size of an orange to the size of plum, with some being artificially made and more bullet-shaped, others spherical, and yet others are natural pebbles collected to serve as slingshots (Vigors 1888, 361; Swan 2014).

According to Cunliffe the slingshot came into its own in Britain in the Middle Iron Age in parallel with the need to defend (and attack) the hillforts, but it can be found in earlier times (normally in fired clay) on settlement sites and need not always have been connected with warfare. In domestic contexts, slings may have served for hunting or driving off predators from herds (Cunliffe 2005, 534). This last assumption is the one that would best fit in our case due to the characteristics of this site (there is besides, remarkably little evidence for hunting in the British Iron Age). The pottery recovered from the same deposit (1660) provides a date from the early-middle Iron Age.

The second 'ball', from gully 6012 (1361) has an ovoid shape, 65mm x 47mm, weighing 210g. It shows signs of having a rope tied around it. This find can be considered more a domestic object than a slingshot, maybe to warm water but more probably a loom weight. The context is undated but these objects in fired clay have been recorded from Iron Age sites (Cunliffe, 2005, 485).

### *Clay Tobacco Pipe* by Danielle Milbank

A single clay pipe fragment was recovered from the subsoil. It comprised a stem moulded with a scaled pattern and represents part of the stem of a claw-type clay pipe. These were decorated to resemble a bird (a large, eagle-type) claw and this example is of broadly 19th century date.

### *Burnt flint* by Andy Taylor

A total of 2124g of burnt flint was recovered during the excavation (Appendix 5), all from the sieving of environmental samples. None of it was otherwise worked. There were no marked concentrations in any feature or group of features. This material was weighed and then discarded.

### *Animal Bone* by Ceri Falys

Twelve fragments (9g) of highly fragmented tooth of a “large” sized animal (horse or cow) were recovered from gully 1515 (1588).

Three pieces (2g) of burnt non-human bone were recovered from pit 1532 (1662) (Pl. 7). The fragments were poorly preserved, chalky and fragile, and were uniformly white. In order for bone to achieve a white colour during the burning process, the fragments had been subjected to temperatures in excess of 600 °C (Holden 1995a and b). The fragments ranged in size from 7.3mm to a maximum of 12.3mm. The small fragment size and non-descript appearance of the bone prevented identification of the animal or element(s) of origin. No further information could be retrieved.

### *Environmental Sampling* by Mark Robinson

A total of 60 samples, mostly of 8 litres, were floated onto a 0.25 mm mesh to recover carbonized plant remains. A sample from the cremation was divided into a series of six sub-samples with depth and likewise floated and the remains identified. A bulk sample of waterlogged sediment was taken from the bottom of the waterhole, a 0.25 kg sub-sample of which was washed over onto a 0.2mm mesh and sorted in water under a binocular microscope for plant and invertebrate remains. These were identified by comparison with modern reference material using a binocular microscope at magnifications of up to x50. The results for charcoal from the bulk samples are given in Appendix 6: Table A6: 1 and the results for charcoal from the cremation in Table A6:2. The results from the sample sieved for waterlogged plant remains are given in Table A6: 3. Some waterlogged wood was found in other bulk samples floated for carbonized remains from the waterhole, their identifications are given in Table A6: 4.

### Charcoal

Charcoal was found in eleven of the 60 samples and in all cases it was *Quercus* sp. (oak). Oak was also the only charcoal that had been collected by hand. Young, small-diameter wood was absent and some fragments had tyloses in their vessels, showing them to have been from trunk or old branch wood. Two of the features which contained

charcoal were part of the Roman waterhole, Features 1528 and 1324, the others were all either middle Iron Age or undated but likely to be middle Iron Age. Charred seeds were absent from these samples.

Oak charcoal predominated from the cremation Feature 1532 but old wood with tyloses was not noted and twigs were present. There were also a few fragments of charcoal of *Prunus* cf. *spinosa* (sloe) and Pomoideae indet. (hawthorn, apple etc).

It is unusual for such a high proportion of the charcoal from an Iron Age site in the region to be oak. It strongly suggests that there was a very ready supply of mature oak available. Possibly the site was in a clearing which had been created in oak woodland. Some of the contexts contained relatively large quantities of charcoal whereas carbonised cereal remains, which tend to be found on settlements, were absent. The dense charcoal of oak is particularly favoured for iron-working and the charcoal from old wood is denser than that from young coppice growth. Interestingly, the charcoal from the animal cremation showed a different selection of wood than that from the other assemblages. The occurrence of younger wood and of hedgerow or scrub species, such as sloe and hawthorn, is more what would be expected of fuel for domestic hearths.

#### Waterlogged Plant Remains

The sediment which constituted Context 1665 of the Roman waterhole Feature 1324/1528 comprised almost-comminuted decayed tree-leaf fragments. Two well-preserved leaves could be identified as oak from their basal margins, fragments of another 24 had outlines and venation matching oak. There were also bud scales and an acorn cupule of oak. Most of the badly-preserved wood fragments in the other samples from the waterhole was oak. A slight presence of other trees or shrubs was suggested by some leaf fragments and a bud of *Salix* sp. (willow / sallow) and some remains of *Prunus* sp. (sloe, cherry or plum). These results would be consistent with the waterhole being in close proximity to oak woodland. However, the seeds, although very sparse, were from herbaceous plants that include some which would not grow in dense woodland, such as *Brassica rapa* ssp. *campestris* (wild turnip), *Potentilla erecta* cinquefoil), *Polygonum lapathifolium* (pale persicaria) and *Lapsana communis* (nipplewort). More seeds would have been expected if the surrounds of the waterhole were fully open. A human presence was indicated by the discovery of a single waterlogged paired glume of *Triticum spelta* (spelt wheat). The waterhole seems to have been a hostile environment for invertebrates. All that were found were some cladoceran ephippia (water flea egg cases) and single elytra (wing cases) of the beetles cf. *Cyphon* sp. and *Limnebius* sp., both of which are associated with water. There were no remains of fully terrestrial insects.

The oak woodland postulated for the middle Iron Age apparently persisted into the Roman period. It is possible that the waterhole also persisted from the Iron Age because it received little mineral sedimentation. There does, however, appear to have been very limited activity around it.

### *Radiocarbon Dating*

Six samples of material for radiocarbon dating were submitted to the Chrono Centre, Queens University Belfast for radiocarbon dating. The material chosen included wood charcoal, organic residue on pottery, and a plant macrofossil (leaf). Details of methodology and an assessment of the reliability of the results are held in archive. In summary, all results were considered reliable. The results presented in Appendix 7 were calibrated using CALIB rev7.0.1 (Stuiver and Reimer 1986/2019 with atmospheric data from Reimer *et al.* 1993. The calibrated date probabilities are expressed as relative area under the curve at 2-sigma range (95.4% probability).

### **Conclusion**

The excavation revealed a moderate density of archaeological features, with almost all of those that could be dated (other than modern) being from the Iron Age period. These mostly comprised linear features, most likely representing two main phases of an Iron Age field system, each with minor modifications (Fig.7). The pottery assemblage, while small, is consistent with a middle to late Iron Age date. The chronology is further refined by the six radiocarbon dates. Five of the dates span the 4th century BC to 1st century AD with an emphasis between around 200 and 60 cal BC. A further early Roman date is interpreted as indicating a *terminus ante quem* for the abandonment of the site. Two comparable radiocarbon dates in the 4th and 2nd centuries BC were obtained from Iron Age boundaries on similar alignments to the south of the current excavation area (Fig. 2). The one definitively earlier radiocarbon date (UBA 42691) seems to have come from a sherd redeposited into the top fill of the waterhole, but must have come from the near vicinity and even if residual in its context, does suggest the length of the Middle Iron Age occupation.

The small pottery assemblage also supports the division into two broad phases for the Iron Age occupation, with a suggestion that there may be both earlier middle and later middle Iron Age components, though as ever there is scope for overlap.

The full extent of the Iron Age settlement may not have been established, with linear features extending in all directions, but perhaps more so the east and north. It is possible that many of these linear features are simply field boundaries and the earlier fieldwork to the south which only revealed a few linear features, supports this notion. The boundaries to the south could be the limit of the enclosure around the round house here.

Activity on the site appears to commence as early as the mid 4th century BC but could easily be of late 3rd century date and it is tempting to consider that the phase 2 features belong to this period, yet none are directly radiocarbon dated. The main dating comes from the radiocarbon-dated residue on a pottery sherd recovered

from the waterhole, but also that from the field boundary to the south. Phase 2 mostly comprises linear features and is not obviously accompanied by any house sites. This leads to the possibility that the core of the phase 2 occupation lies beyond the excavated site boundaries. However, the focus of these features does appear to be inwards and the lack of a house site may simply be a factor of poor preservation. Whilst phase 2 is predominantly defined by a series of ditches and gullies, it is difficult to consider these as indicative of an enclosed site; rather they are boundaries or trackways defining fields and paddocks adjacent to the settled area.

The phase 3 activity is more readily interpretable comprising a house site (ring gully) very typical of the period and associated paddocks/fields. The radiocarbon chronology based on three dates is consistent and indicates that this phase belongs to the 2nd or 1st century BC and seemingly going out of use well before the onset of the Roman period. Although described here as a distinct phase, and indeed its components cross cut and replaced the phase 2 layout, there is no need to envisage a large chronological gap, if any, between phases 2 and 3. If the ring gully is regarded as central to the site, then it is difficult to regard the site as enclosed. Rather the site comprises a roundhouse with various paddocks/fields adjacent.

Some observations, albeit negative are in order to facilitate comparison with other sites in the nearby region. There are no other infrastructure remains such as 4-post 'granary' structures nor deep storage pits (though a high water table would have mitigated against the use of the latter). Quite a number of local Iron Age sites have been shown to be practicing small scale iron production, but here the slag recovered only indicated iron smithing and that on a minuscule scale. The analysis of the Iron Age charcoal suggests the nearby presence of established oak woodland and it is interesting to note that mature wood might have been selected for charcoal production with regards to iron production or working. Faunal remains did not survive and this aspect of the subsistence economy cannot be explored, however, an extensive programme of soil sampling took place (60 samples) and revealed no charred cereal remains and just a single waterlogged wheat glume from the (Roman) waterhole. It is considered that this paucity of arable evidence supports the notion that the subsistence economy is again largely based on pastoralism and which may be more a more suitable use of a relatively wet environment.

Unusually for the Iron Age sites in the region, the site at Croft Road not only contained a waterhole but that contained preserved organic remains which provide a window on the local environment. As discussed above, the chronology of the development of the waterhole is complicated with a radiocarbon date firmly in Roman times recovered from leaves at the base of the pond. It is argued that the waterhole, with its shallow sides, was mainly for the watering of animals and that it originated in the middle Iron Age, perhaps as early as phase 2 (4th/3rdC BC) and that it was episodically cleaned of silt and peat up until quite late in the Iron Age until the settlement was abandoned. As such the radiocarbon date can be considered as providing a *terminus*

*ante quem* for abandonment of the Iron Age site. The environment data in early Roman times recovered from the waterlogged water hole was sufficiently open to allow light needing herbs to be present, but with mature oak woodland in close proximity, as suggested for the preceding Iron Age.

There are now several Iron Age sites in the region supported by a radiocarbon chronology with which to compare and contrast the Spencer's Wood sites, and a typology of sites is emerging. At the simplest level several sites are now known, where occupation is represented below ground by little more than a single, or small groups of, unenclosed ring gully structures, such as at Staff College, Bracknell (Lowe 2013), Matthews Green, Wokingham (Ford 2017) or Crosfield School, Shinfield (Ford 2019). Some similar sites show extensive time depth to their development as at Grazeley Road, Three Mile Cross (Ford *et al.* 2013) and Elvian School, Reading (Preston and Taylor 2018). Similar occupation sites but with more infrastructure are represented at, for example, Odiham Road, Risesley (Taylor and Ford 2019) and now Croft Road where a house is accompanied by several boundaries which could be considered as defining fields. Others sites show considerably more infrastructure and these would formerly have been considered to be the 'typical' Iron Age farm comprising densely occupied, usually enclosed, sites with roundhouses, storage pits (or above ground granaries represented by 4-post structures), and animal pens (Cunliffe 1984, 34). These comprise densely occupied enclosed sites as at Park Farm, Binfield (Roberts 1995), and Riseley Farm, Swallowfield (Lobb and Morris 1993), Burghfield (Booth 2013), Lea Farm, Hurst (Manning and Moore 2011), Jennets Park, Bracknell (Simmonds *et al.* 2009) and Amen Corner, Binfield (Lovett 2019).

The final topic of note is that until recently Iron Age fields or field systems, despite the nomenclature 'Celtic', widely applied to systems now often demonstrable as being of Bronze Age or Roman date, Iron Age field systems were regarded as uncommon. A review in 1999 (Yates 1999) failed to identify any convincing examples, but subsequent extensive fieldwork both within this region and beyond has begun to characterize formal landscape organization in the Iron Age. However, it has been previously stated that field systems on the same large scale as organized landscapes of Bronze Age or Roman date, as for the Heathrow/Colnbrook area (Lewis *et al.* 2013; Ford *et al.* 2012) or the Berkshire Downs (Ford *et al.* 1990) are yet to be recorded for the Iron Age, and while this may be true at the scale of coherent designed systems covering large areas, modern fieldwork has now recorded systems of modest scale and less rigorous planning (as implied by markedly rectilinear layouts). Such examples include that of several hectares recorded at Cippenham, Slough (Taylor 2012) with others at Dryleaze Farm, Glos. (Bray *et al.* 2020), Wetstone Bridge, also Glos. (Beaverstock 2020) and Hatch Farm, Winnersh (McNicoll-Norbury and Ford 2017). It is to this latter group of sites, therefore, that the layout here at Croft Road should be compared.



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## Appendix 1: Catalogue of Excavated Features

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Phase</i>	<i>Comment</i>
529	1659	6005	Ditch	MIA3	C14 - 210-49 BC. Pottery
1200	1250	6006	Gully	MIA3	Pottery
1201	1251		Pit	MIA2	Pottery
1202	1252	6001	Post hole	MIA3	By association
1203	1253	6001	Pit	MIA3	By association
1204	1254	6001	Post hole	MIA2	Pottery
1205	1255-8	6014	Gully terminus	MIA3b	Stratigraphy
1206	1257		Posthole		
1207	1258	6001	Posthole	MIA3	By association
1208	1259	6001?	Posthole	MIA3	By association
1209	1260		Gully terminus	MIA3b	By association
1210	1262		Pit		
1211	1263		void		
1212	1264		Gully		
1213	1261	6013	Ditch	Post-medieval	By association
1214	1265	6014	Ditch	MIA3b	Stratigraphy
1215	1266		pit	MIA1	Stratigraphy
1216	1267		void		
1217	1268		void		
1218	1269	6013	Ditch	Post-Medieval	Brick and Tile
1219	1270	6008	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1220	1271		Gully?		
1221	1272-4		Pit		
1222	1275	6016	Ditch	MIA2	Stratigraphy
1223	1276		Tree throw		
1224	1277	6022	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1225	1278	6022	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1226	1279	6024	Gully	MIA2 or 3	By association
1227	1280	6022	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1228	1281	6022	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1229	1282	6016	Ditch	MIA2	Stratigraphy
1230	1283	6024	Gully	MIA2 or 3	By association
1231	1284	6009	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1232	1285	6010	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1233	1286-7	6007	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1234	1288	6001	Posthole	MIA3	By association
1235	1289	6000	Ring gully terminus	MIA3	C14 - 174-19BC, Pottery
1236	1290	6001	Posthole	MIA3	By association
1237	1291	6001	Posthole	MIA3	By association
1238	1292	6000	Ring gully	MIA3	By association
1239	1293	6000	Ring gully terminus	MIA3	By association
1240	1294	6000	Ring gully terminus	MIA3	By association
1241	1295	6006	Gully terminus	MIA3	By association
1242	1296	6001	Pit	MIA3	By association
1243	1297		Posthole	M-LIA?	
1244	1298	6000	Ring gully	MIA3	By association
1245	1299		Pit	M-LIA?	
1246	1350		Pit	M-LIA?	
1247	1351		Pit	M-LIA?	
1248	1352		Pit	M-LIA?	
1249	1353	6012	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1300	1354		Pit	M-LIA?	
1301	1355	6012	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1302	1356		Posthole	MIA3b	Stratigraphy
1303	1357	6017	Gully	MIA3	Stratigraphy
1304	1358	6000	Ring gully	MIA3	Pottery
1305	1359		Pit	M-LIA?	
1306	1360		Pit	M-LIA?	
1307	1361	6012	Gully	MIA3	By association
1308	1362	6013	Ditch	Post-medieval	Pottery
1309	1363		Pit	MIA3	Stratigraphy
1310	1364	6012	Ditch	MIA3	Pottery
1311	1365	6025	Gully	MIA3	By association
1312	1366		Pit	M-LIA?	
1313	1367-8	6007	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1314	1369-70	6007	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1315	1371	6027	Gully	MIA2 or 3	Stratigraphy
1316	1372	6023	Ditch	MIA3b	By association
1317	1373	6021	Ditch	MIA3	By association

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Phase</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1318	1374	6007	Ditch terminus	MIA3	By association
1319	1375	6007	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1320	1376	6027	Gully	MIA2 or 3	Stratigraphy
1321	1377	6025	Ditch	MIA3	Pottery
1322	1378	6000	Ring gully	MIA3	Pottery
1323	1379	6017	Gully	MIA3	Stratigraphy
1324	1380-3, 1457	6003	Waterhole	MIA/Roman	C14 - AD 62-217, Pottery
1325	1384		field drain		
1326	1385	6009	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1327	1386	6002	Ditch terminus	MIA2	Stratigraphy
1328	1387	6002	Ditch	MIA2	Stratigraphy
1329	1388	6021	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1330	1389	6022	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1331	1390	6021	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1332	1391	6021	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1333	1392	6022	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1334	1393	6024	Ditch	MIA2 or 3	By association
1335	1394		Pit		
1336	1395	6010	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1337	1396,1398	6024	Gully	MIA2a or 3	By association
1338	1397	6023	Ditch	MIA3b	By association
1339	1399		Gully		
1340	1450	6007	Ditch	MIA3	Pottery
1341	1451	6007	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1342	1452		Pit		
1343	1453	6014	Ditch	MIA3b	Stratigraphy
1344	1454		Pit	MIA1	Stratigraphy
1345	1455	6009	Ditch		By association
1346	1461	6022	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1347	1462	6024	Ditch	MIA2 or 3	By association
1348	1459-60		Pit	MIA3	Pottery
1349	1458	6015	Gully	MIA3	Pottery
1400	1463	6015	Gully	MIA3	By association
1401	1464	6010	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1402	1465-6		Posthole		
1403	1467	6015	Gully	MIA3	By association
1404	1468-9		Pit	M-LIA?	
1405	1470	6000	Ring gully	MIA3	By association
1406	1471	6010	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1407	1472	6023	Ditch	MIA3b	Stratigraphy
1408	1473	6000	Ring gully	MIA3	By association
1409	1474		Posthole	M-LIA?	
1410	1475	6000	Ring gully	MIA3	By association
1411	1476	6018	Dicht	MIA3	By association
1412	1477-8		Posthole		
1413	1479	6018	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1414	1480	6018	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1415	1481	6016	Ditch	MIA2	Stratigraphy
1416	1482	6004	Ditch	MIA3b	By association
1417	1483		Posthole		
1418	1484	6004	Ditch	MIA3b	By association
1419	1486	6011	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1420	1485	6010	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1421	1487	6008	Ditch	MIA2	Pottery
1422	1488	6011	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1423	1489		void		
1424	1490	6009	Ditch	MIA2	Pottery
1425	1491-4	6009	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1426	1492	6026?	Ditch	MIA3b	Pottery
1427	1493	6023	Ditch	MIA3b	Pottery
1428	1494	6021	Ditch	MIA3	Pottery
1429	1495	6009	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1430	1496	6008	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1431	1497	6008	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1432	1498	6010	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1433	1499,1550-1	6019	Ditch	MIA3	Pottery
1434	1552	6023	Ditch	MIA3b	By associaton
1435	1553	6008	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1436	1554	6008	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1437	1555	6019	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1438	1556	6008	Ditch	MIA2	By association

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Phase</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1439	1557	6018	Gully terminus	MIA3	By association
1440	1558	6009	Ditch terminus	MIA2	By association
1441	1559,1562	6021	Ditch terminus	MIA3	By association
1442	1563	6021	Ditch terminus	MIA3	By association
1443	1560	6021	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1444	1561	6023	Ditch	MIA3b	By association
1445	1564	6019?	Ditch terminus	MIA3	By association
1446	1565	6026	Gully terminus	MIA3b	By association
1447	1566-8	6021	Ditch terminus	MIA3	By association
1448	1569	6026	Ditch terminus	MIA3b	By association
1449	1572-3	6009	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1500	1574-5	6026	Ditch	MIA3b	By association
1501	1570	6010	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1502	1571	6010	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1503	1576	6000	Ring gully	MIA3	By association
1504	1577	6000	Ring gully	MIA3	By association
1505	1578	6010	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1506	1579	6021	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1507	1580	6000	Ring gully	MIA3	Pottery
1508	1581	6000	Ring gully	MIA3	By association
1509	1582	6001	Posthole	MIA3	Pottery, stratigraphy
1510	1583	6023	Ditch	MIA3b	Stratigraphy
1511	1584	6022	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1512	1585		Pit		
1513	1586		Pit		
1514	1587	6008	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1515	1588	6020	Gully	MIA1	Stratigraphy
1516	1589		Posthole		
1517	1590	6011	Ditch	MIA2	By association
1518	1591		Ditch terminus	MIA3	Pottery
1519	1592	6020	Gully terminus	MIA1	Stratigraphy
1520	1593	6020	Gully terminus	MIA1	Stratigraphy
1521	1594	6018	Gully terminus	MIA3	By association
1522	1595,1596-9	6019	Ditch	MIA3	Pottery
1523	1596	6005	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1524	1597	6004	Ditch	MIA3b	By association
1525	1650	6026	Ditch	MIA3b	Pottery
1526	1651	6005	Ditch	MIA3	By association
1527	1652		Pit	MIA3	Stratigraphy
1528	1653-8,1663-5	6003	Waterhole	Iron Age/Roman	C14 - 358-180 BC. Mixed Pottery
1530	1660	6004	Ditch	MIA3b	C14 – 200-89 BC, Pottery
1531	1661	6005	Ditch	MIA3	Pottery
1532	1662		Posthole		

## APPENDIX 2: Catalogue of Pottery

### 2.1. Association of identified vessel forms with fabrics

	Group	Cut	feSF1	feSF2	feSSh1	SF2	SF3	G1	G2	F2	SSh1	S2	S3
JB1.3		1201	1										
BA2.3	6000	1235		1									
JB3.1	6000	1304		1									
JB4.1	6000	1235			1								
JD1	6000	1322				1							
JC1	6000	1235				1							
JC2.1	6006	1200			1								
JC2.3		1528				1							
JC2.0	6009	1333			1								
PB1.1	ditch	1340						1					
BD5		1522							1				
JC3.1		1531								1			
BS5.1				1								1	1
BS5.4					1	1					2		1

### 2.2. Distribution by cut and deposit of early middle to middle Iron Age fabrics (weight in g)

Group			F1		F2		SF1		feSF1		feSF2		Total		mean
	Cut	Deposit	no	wt (g)	no	wt (g)	no	wt (g)	no	wt (g)	no	wt (g)	no	wt (g)	wt (g)
	1201	1251							8	130.0			8	130.0	16.3
6001	1204	1254									1	4.0	1	4.0	4.0
6000	1235	1289									2	23.0	2	23.0	11.5
6000	1304	1358									47	128.0	47	128.0	2.7
6012	1310	1364									2	5.0	2	5.0	2.5
6009	1333	1392									93	471.0	93	471.0	5.1
6007	1340	1450									1	18.0	1	18.0	18.0
6015	1349	1458									3	13.0	3	13.0	4.3
6021	1428	1492									14	9.0	14	9.0	0.6
6019	1433	1550	5	16.0									5	16.0	3.2
	1518	1591					1	27.0					1	27.0	27.0
6003	1528	1654									1	17.0	1	17.0	17.0
6005	1529	1659									1	5.0	1	5.0	5.0
6004	1530	1660			3	43.00							3	43.0	14.3
			5	16.0	3	43.0	1	27.0	8	130.0	165	693.0	182	909.0	5.0

### 2.3. Distribution by cut and deposit of middle to later middle Iron Age fabrics (weight in g)

Group			SF2		SSh1		feSSh1		feSSh2		S1		S2		S3		SF3		SF4		Total		mean
	Cut	Fill	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	no	wt	wt
6006	1200	1250					9	85.0													9	85.0	9.4
6000	1235	1289	25	401.0	12	493.0	5	43.0			4	33.0	2	39.0							48	1009.0	21.0
6000	1322	1378	14	204.0																	14	204.0	14.6
6003	1324	1383															1	26.0			1	26.0	26.0
6022	1333	1392					2	107.0					8	86.0							10	193.0	19.3
6007	1340	1450											26	96.0	4	35.0					30	131.0	4.4
	1348	1459			11	26.0															11	26.0	2.4
6009	1424	1490					3	8.0													3	8.0	2.7
6009	1425	1491															1	4.0			1	4.0	4.0
6000	1507	1580											1	35.0							1	35.0	35.0
6001	1509	1582															1	37.0			1	37.0	37.0
6026	1525	1650															1	46.0			1	46.0	46.0
6003	1528	1654			11	89.0															11	89.0	8.1
6003	1528	1657	5	30.0	1	5.0															6	35.0	5.8
6005	1529	1659			10	281.0															10	281.0	28.1
6004	1530	1660							3	21.0											3	21.0	7.0
6005	1531	1661															1	20.0			1	20.0	20.0
			44	635.0	45	894.0	19	243.0	3	21.0	4	33.0	10	125.0	27	131.0	8	164.0	1	4.0	161	2250.0	14.0

2.4. Distribution by cut and deposit of later middle to late Iron Age fabrics (weight in g)

<i>Group</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Deposit</i>	<b>Q1</b>		<b>G1</b>		<b>G2</b>		<b>G3</b>		<b>Total</b>		<b>mean</b>
			<i>no</i>	<i>wt (g)</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>wt (g)</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>wt (g)</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>wt (g)</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>wt (g)</i>	<i>wt (g)</i>
6025	1321	1377	1	8.0							1	8.0	8.0
	1348	1459	7	15.0							7	15.0	2.1
6019	1522	1595			1	3.0	9	19.0			10	22.0	2.2
6005	1531	1661					3	56.0	1	3.0	4	59.0	14.8
			8	23.0	1	3.0	12	75.0	1	3.0	22	104.0	4.7



**APPENDIX 3: Catalogue of Slag**

<i>Group</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Deposit</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>
6000	1235	1289	Non-diagnostic ironworking slag	34
	1300	1354	Non-diagnostic ironworking slag	75
6007	1340	1450	Non-diagnostic ironworking slag	84

**APPENDIX 4: Catalogue of Fired Clay**

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill</i>	<i>Group No</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>
1204	1254	5008	Post hole	1	34
1340	1450	6010	Ditch	1	8
1526	1651	6005	Ditch	4	46
1530	1660		Ditch	1	349

**APPENDIX 5: Catalogue of burnt flint**

<i>Cut</i>	<i>Deposit</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>
1200	1250		Gully		6
1203	1253		Post hole		5
1204	1254		Post hole		14
1206	1257		Posthole		3
1240	1294		Gully terminus		21
1318	1374		Ditch terminus		9
1322	1378		Ditch		77
1324	1383		Pit		195
1333	1392		Ditch		15
1348	1459		Pit		4
1404	1468		Pit		8
1409	1474		Posthole		5
1424	1490		Ditch		14
1430	1496		Ditch		4
1439	1557		Gully terminus		21
1442	1562		Ditch		4
1514	1587		Gully		5
1528	1657		Ditch		39
1528	1663		Waterhole		6
1529	1659		Ditch		43
1532	1662		Posthole		45

**APPENDIX 6: Environmental Samples**

**TABLE A6:1:** Charcoal (excluding Cremation Feature 1532)

Feature	Fill	Sample	<i>Quercus sp. (oak)</i>	
1201	1251	20	++++	tyloses
1204	1254	24	+	
1221	1272	27	+++	tyloses
1240	1294	35	+++	
1243	1297	36	+	tyloses
1289	1235	33	++	
1300	1354	40	+	
1322	1378	-	+	
1324	1382	-	++	tyloses
1340	1450	-	+++	
1404	1468	52	++	
1404	1469	53	+++	tyloses
1433	1550	-	++	
1528	1657	77	+	
1529	1659	78	+	
1529	1659	-	+	

+ present, ++ some, +++ much, ++++ very much

**TABLE A6:2:** Charcoal from Cremation 1532, (1662), Sample 79

Depth (mm)	<i>Prunus cf. Spinosa sloe</i>	<i>Pomoideae indet. hawthorn, apple, etc</i>	<i>Quercus sp. oak</i>
0-10	-	-	++
10-30	-	-	++
30-50	-	-	++ inc. twigs
50-70	-	-	++
70-90	+	+	++
90-110	-	-	++ inc. twigs

+ present, ++ some

**TABLE A6:3:** Waterlogged Macroscopic Plant Remains (Seeds unless Stated) from Feature 1324 (1665), Sample 82

			Number of Items
<i>Brassica rapa ssp. campestris</i>	wild turnip		2
<i>Potentilla erecta</i>	cinquefoil		2
<i>Prunus / Crataegus sp.</i>	sloe / hawthorn	- thorns	4
<i>Polygonum lapathifolium</i>	pale persicaria		1
<i>Rumex conglomeratus</i>	sharp dock		1
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	stinging nettle		3
<i>Quercus sp.</i>		- cupule	1
<i>Quercus sp.</i>		- bud scales	15
<i>Quercus sp.</i>		- leaves	2
cf. <i>Quercus sp.</i>		- leaves	24
<i>Salix S. Caprisalix sp.</i>		- leaves	4
<i>Salix sp.</i>	willow / sallow	- bud	1
<i>Lapsana communis</i>	nipplewort		1
<i>Juncus effusus sp.</i>	creeping rush		4
<i>Triticum spelta</i>	spelt wheat	- paired glumes	1

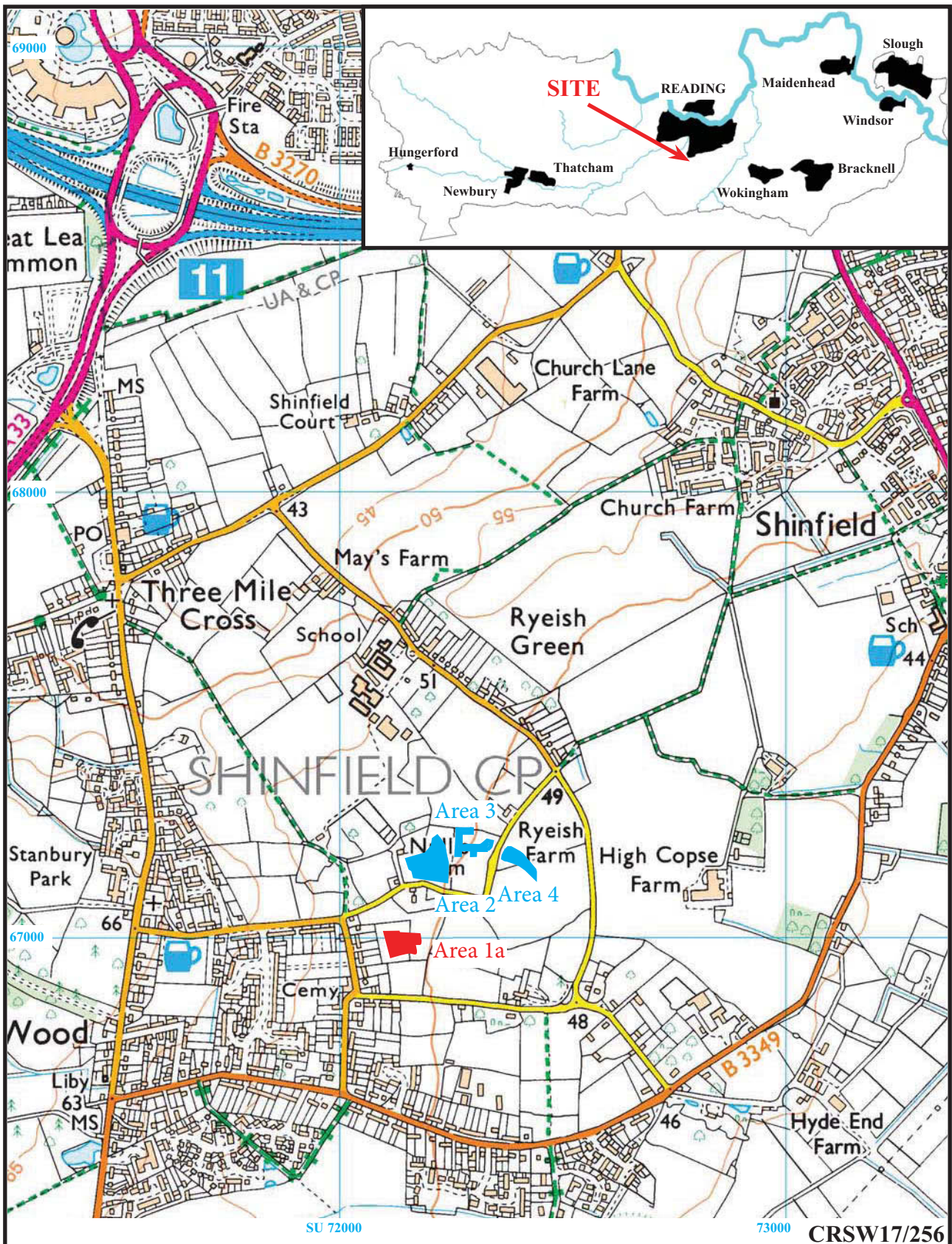
**TABLE A6:4:** Badly Preserved Waterlogged Wood

Feature	Context	Sample	<i>Prunus sp. sloe, plum etc</i>	<i>Quercus sp. oak</i>
1324	1383	49	-	++
1324	1664	81	+	+
1528	1657	77	-	++

+ present, ++ some

**APPENDIX 7: Radiocarbon Dating** (*all given at 2-sigma, most probable date highlighted*).

<i>Lab ID</i>	<i>Context</i>	<i>Material</i>	<i>F14C</i>	<i>Radiocarbon Age (BP)</i>	<i>Calibrated Age (BC/AD)</i>	<i>Probability</i>
UBA42689	Ring gully 1235 (1289)	Charcoal	0.7727 ± 0.0029	2071 ± 30	<b>174-19</b> 12-1	<b>97.2%</b> 2.8%
UBA42690	1530 (1660)	Residue on pot	0.7682 ± 0.0018	2119 ± 19	<b>200-89</b> 74-59	<b>95.7%</b> 4.3%
UBA42691	1528 (1657)	Residue on pot	0.7617 ± 0.0022	2186 ± 23	<b>358-275</b> <b>260-180</b>	<b>61.2%</b> <b>38.8%</b>
UBA42692	1324 (1663)	Leaf	0.7909 ± 0.0029	1885 ± 29	<b>AD 62-217</b>	<b>100%</b>
UBA42693	1433 (1550)	Charcoal	0.7704 ± 0.0024	2096 ± 25	<b>184-48</b>	<b>100%</b>
UBA42694	1529 (1659)	Charcoal	0.7672 ± 0.0034	2128 ± 35	351-300 227-224 <b>210-49</b>	12.7% 0.4% <b>87%</b>

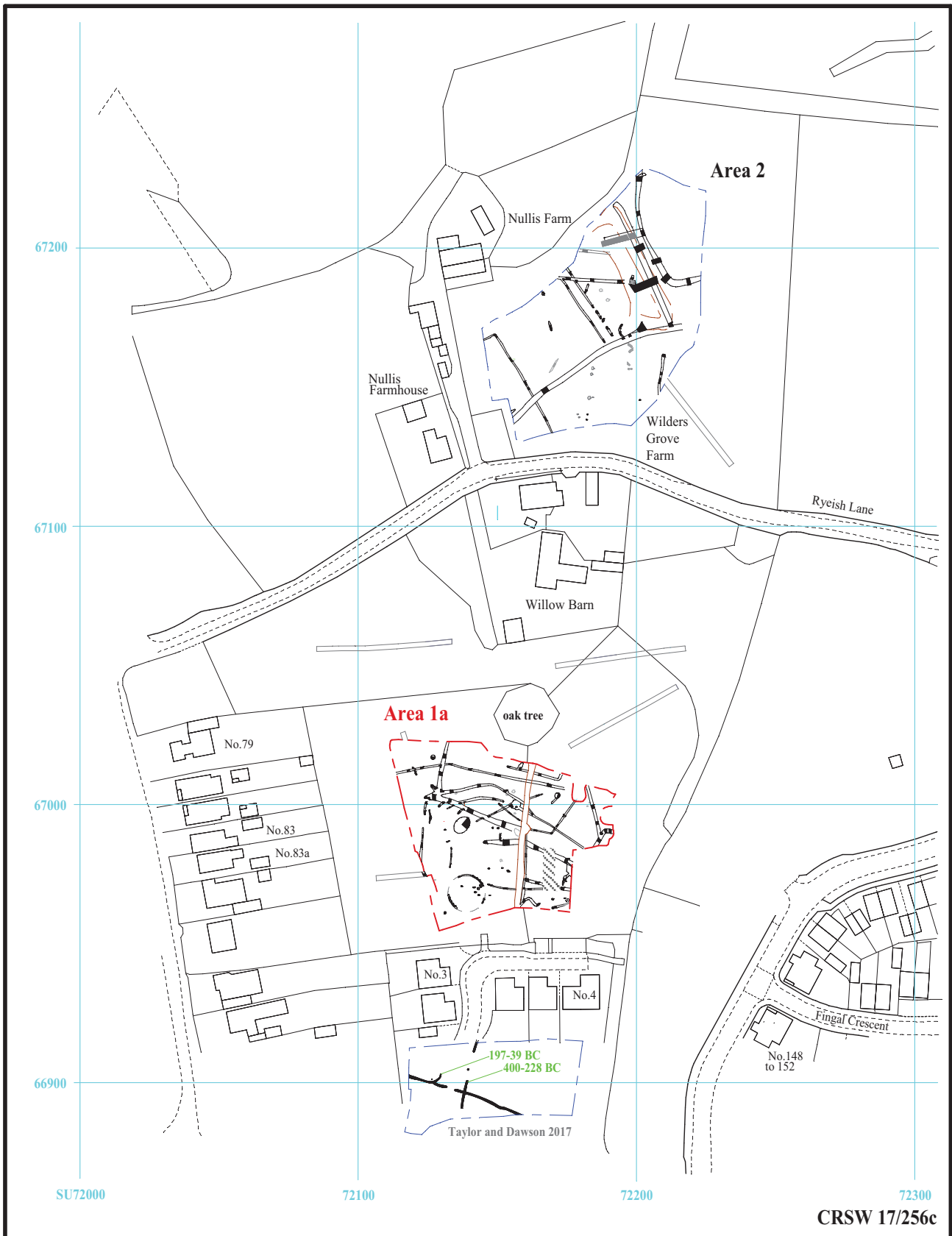


**Middle and Late Iron Age occupation on land north of  
Croft Road, Spencers Wood, Reading, Berkshire  
Archaeological Excavation**

Figure 1. Location of site within Spencers Wood and  
Berkshire.

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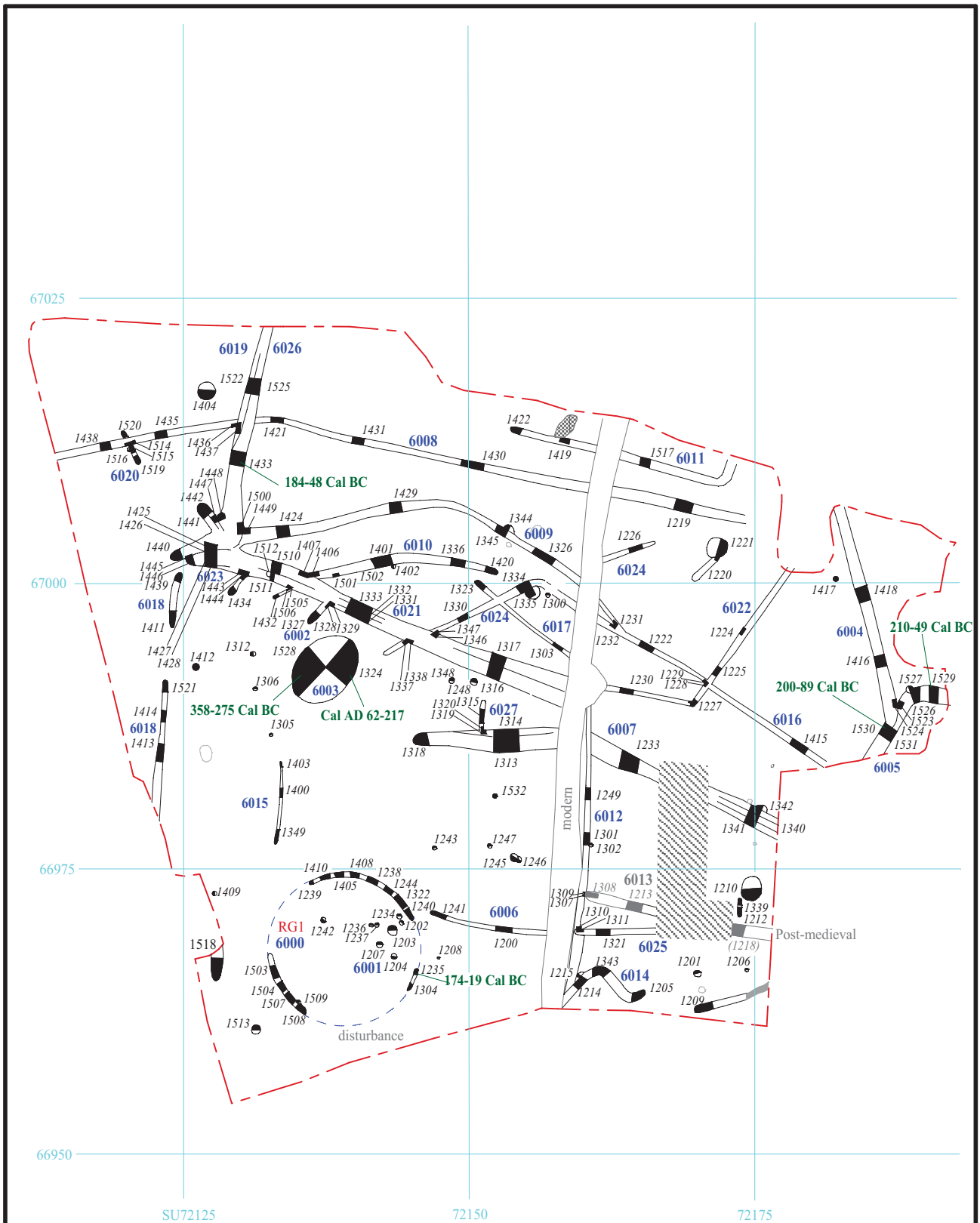


**Land north of Croft Road, Spencers Wood,  
Reading, Berkshire  
Archaeological Excavation Area 1a**

Figure 2. Detailed location of excavation Area 1,



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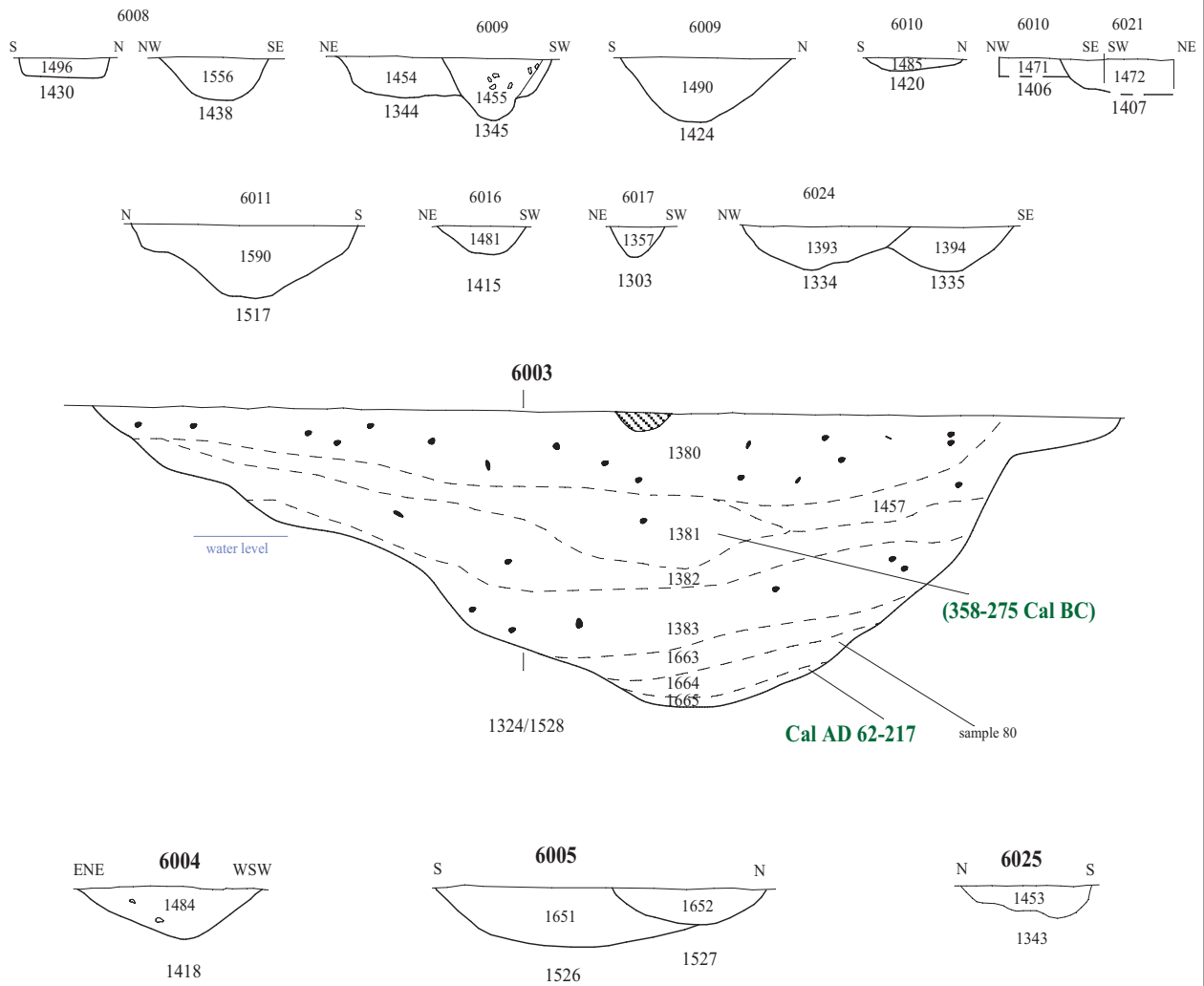
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Land north of Croft Road, Spencers Wood,  
Reading, Berkshire  
Archaeological Excavation Area 1a

Figure 3. Plan of all excavated features.



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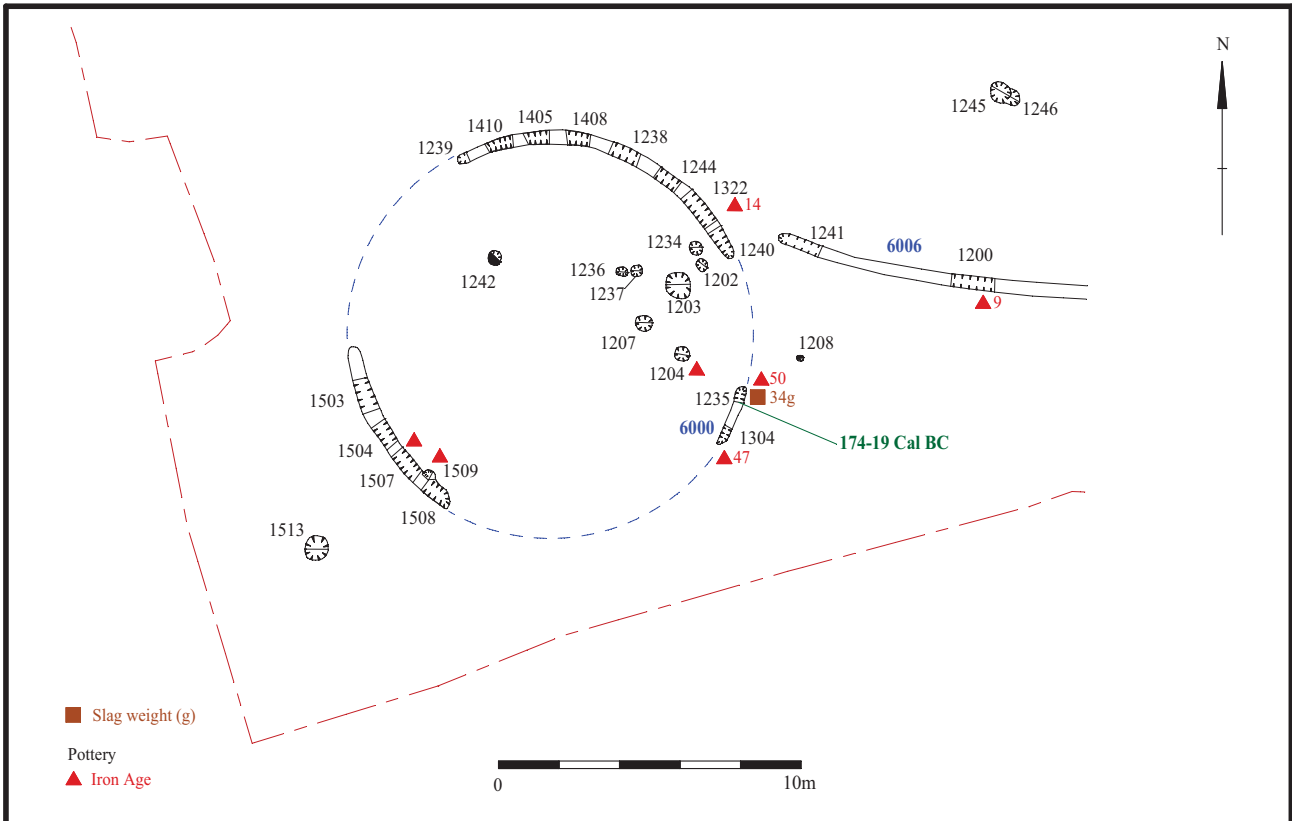
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Land north of Croft Road, Spencers Wood,  
Reading, Berkshire  
Archaeological Excavation Area 1a

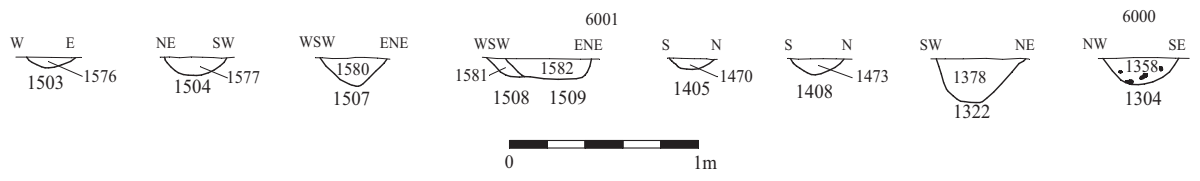
Figure 4. Sections.



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■ Slag weight (g)  
 ▲ Pottery  
 ▲ Iron Age



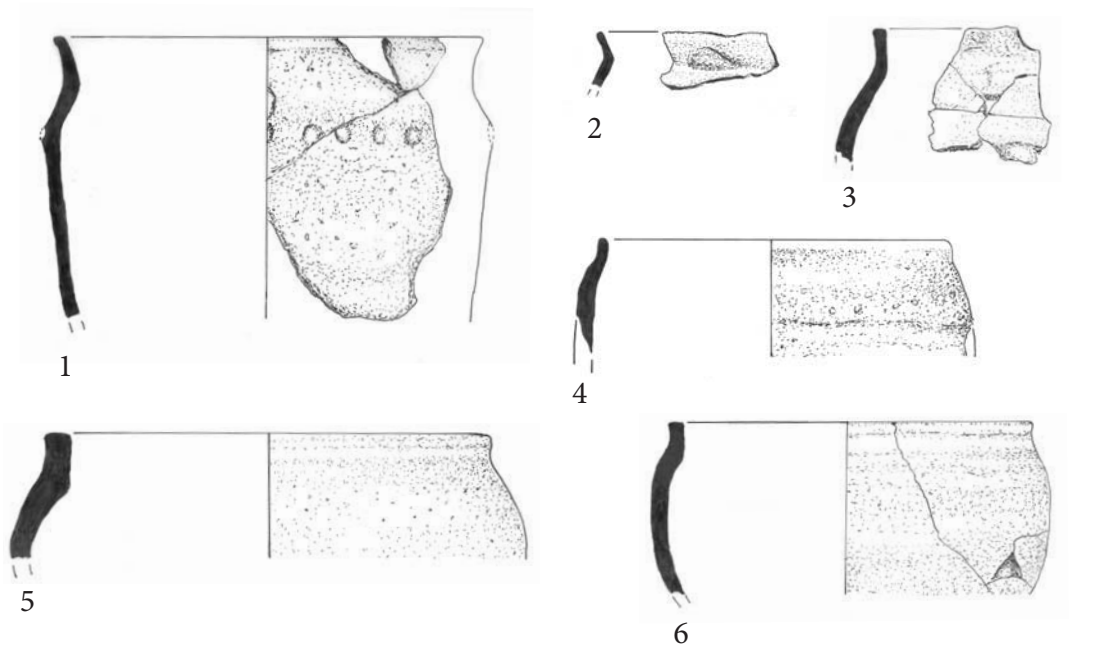
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Land north of Croft Road, Spencers Wood,  
 Reading, Berkshire  
 Archaeological Excavation Area 1

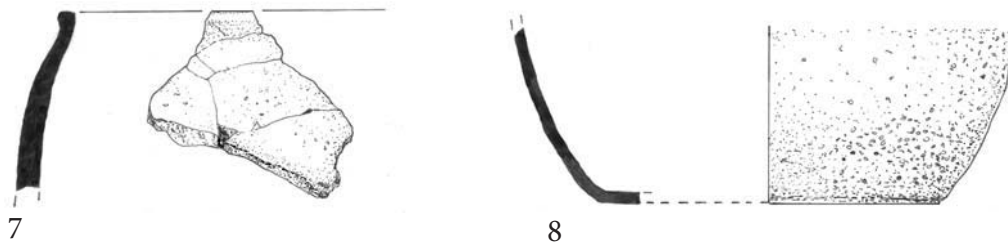
Figure 5. Ring gully



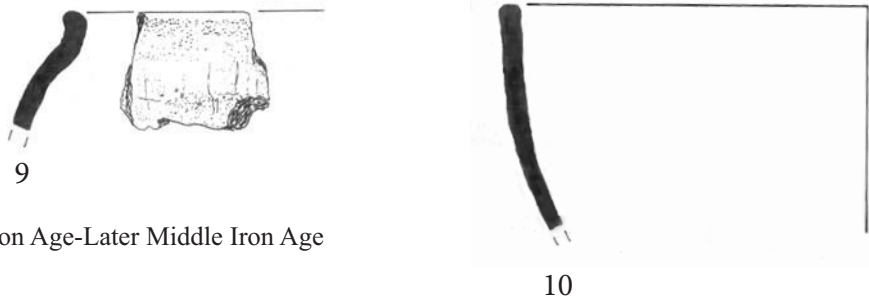




Early-Middle Iron Age



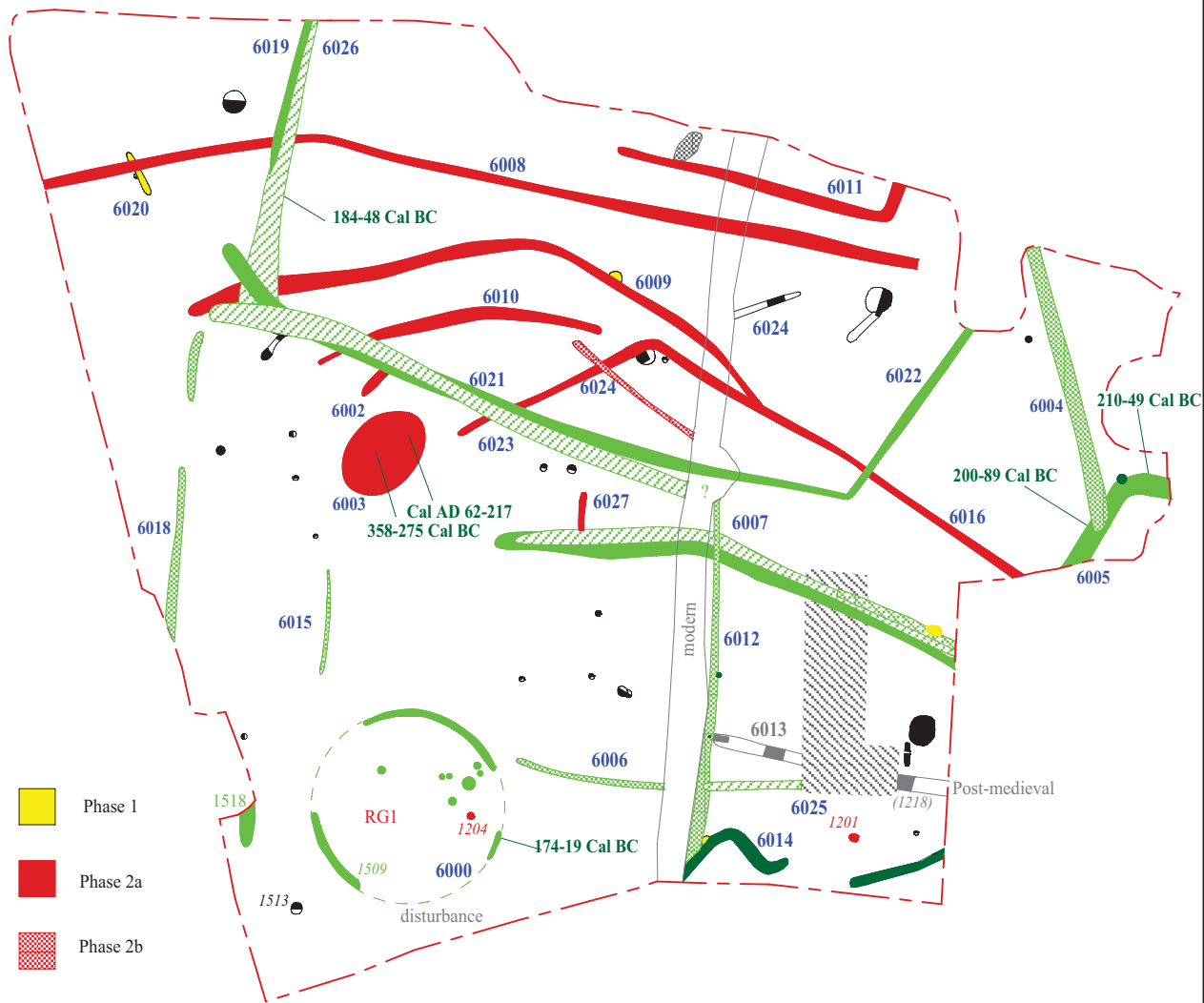
Middle Iron Age-Later Middle Iron Age



Late Iron Age



Figure 7: Iron Age pottery.



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Archaeological Excavation Area 1a

Figure 7. Plan of all excavated features.



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Plate 1. Aerial view of site looking NW. Waterhole to left and field ditches (centre



Plate 2. Aerial view of site looking south west towards ring gully. Waterhole to right.

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**Land at Croft Road, Spencers Wood,  
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**Archaeological Excavation (Area 1a)**  
Plates 1 and 2.

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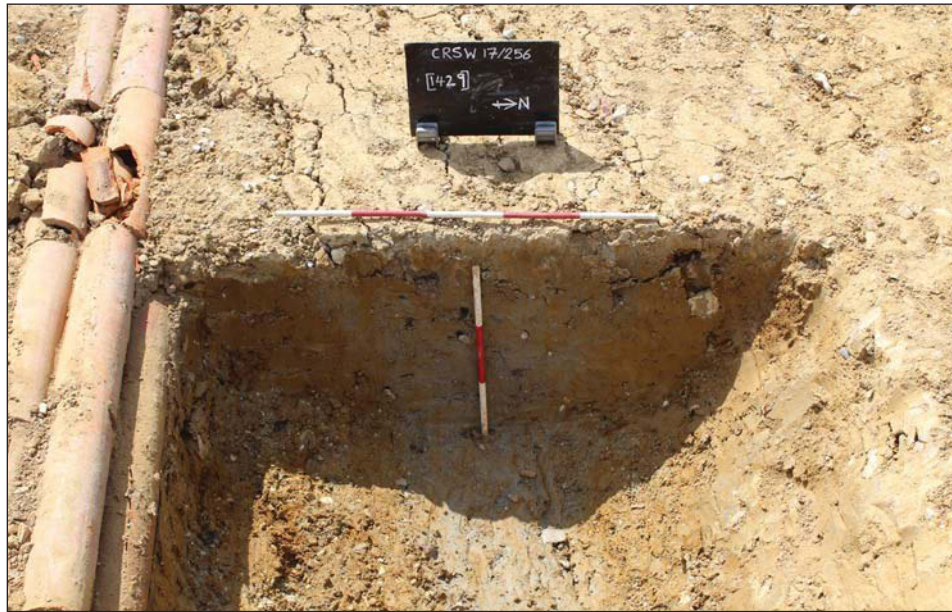


Plate 3. Ditch 1429, looking E, Scales: 0.5m and 0.3m.



Plate 4. Ditch 1433, looking SSE, Scales: 1m and 0.5m.

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**Land at Croft Road, Spencers Wood,  
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Archaeological Excavation (Area 1a)  
Plates 3 and 4.**

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Plate 5. Ring gully segment 1235, looking SW, Scales: 0.5m and 0.1m.



Plate 6. Waterhole segment, looking NE, Scales: 2m and 1m.

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**Land at Croft Road, Spencers Wood,  
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Archaeological Excavation (Area 1a)  
Plates 5 and 6.**

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Plate 7. Pit 1532 with burnt bone (pre-and post excavation, looking N, Scales: 0.5m and 0.3m.



Plate 8. Fired clay shaped balls, Scales: 500mm.

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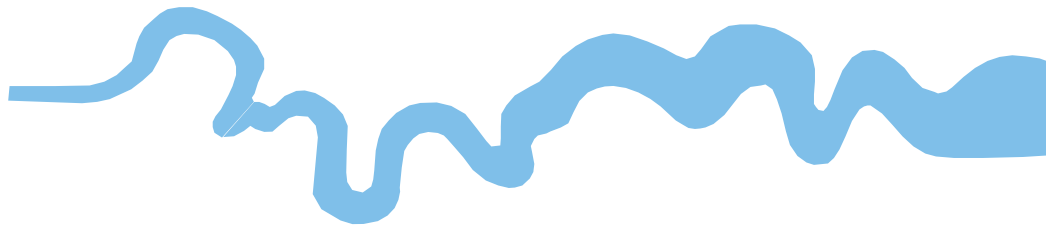
Land at Croft Road, Spencers Wood,  
Reading, Berkshire  
Archaeological Excavation (Area 1a)  
Plates 7 and 8.

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## TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43 AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	750 BC
Bronze Age: Late _____	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle _____	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early _____	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late .....	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early .....	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late .....	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early .....	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper .....	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle .....	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower .....	2,000,000 BC





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