Northamptonshire Archaeology

Iron Age and Roman settlement at The Vale of Catmose College, Oakham, Rutland

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QUALITY CONTROL

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Iron Age and Roman settlement at the Vale of Catmose College, Oakham, Rutland, 2009-2009	
Short description (250 words maximum)	From the middle Iron Age there were two settlements: Area 1 was excavated and Area 3 has been preserved in situ. Area 1 was a small open settlement, probably containing four roundhouses, although not necessarily contemporary. It is suggested that occupation spanned the 2nd to 1st centuries BC. In the early 1st century AD, a boundary division was introduced to Area 1 and it is likely that further settlement was established to the west, Area 2, preserved in situ. At least one roundhouse was present into the early Roman period. The dividing ditch was retained until the mid-2nd century, when there was a new arrangement created respecting the earlier alignment. In the 3rd and 4th centuries a small Roman settlement comprised a rectangular sub-enclosure, layers of domestic debris and two wells. These were probably related to a timber house for which all direct traces had been lost. There was extensive evidence of medieval ridge and furrow throughout the site, and a stretch of medieval road between Oakham and Barleythorpe was excavated in Area 4. A post-medieval parish boundary wall was recorded in Area 1 and a 17th to 18th-century brick well was filled and capped in Area 4.	
Project type (eg DBA, evaluation etc)	Open area excavation and watching brief	
Site status (none, NT, SAM etc)	None	
Previous work (SMR numbers etc)	Geophysical survey (Smith and Fisher 2008), Trial trench evaluation (Brown 2008)	
Current Land use	School sports field	
Future work (yes, no, unknown)	No	
Monument type/ period	Iron Age and Roman settlement	
Significant finds	Pottery, flint, querns, metal finds, animal bone, plant macro-fossils, wood and human remains	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Rutland	
Site address (including postcode)	Vale of Catmose College, Cold Overton Road, Oakham, LE15 6NT	
Study area (sq.m or ha)	11.2 ha	
OS Easting and Northing	SK 8509 0923 (centre point)	
Height OD	*c*117-122m above Ordnance Datum	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originators	Richard Clark, Leicestershire County Council	
Project Design originator	Jim Brown, Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	Jason Clarke, Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project Manager	Iain Soden, Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Sponsor or funding body	Rutland County Council	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	October 2008	
End date	March 2009	
ARCHIVES	**Location (Accession no.)**	**Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)**
Physical	OAKRM 2008.58	Pottery, flint, querns, metal finds, animal bone, sample residues, human remains
Paper		Site context record, plans, section drawings, photographic record, finds drawings
Digital		Mapinfo digital plans and client report PDF
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)	
Title	Iron Age and Roman settlement at the Vale of Catmose College, Oakham, Rutland, 2008-2009	
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IRON AGE AND ROMAN SETTLEMENT AT THE VALE OF CATMOSE COLLEGE, OAKHAM RUTLAND

2008-2009

Abstract

Archaeological excavations took place in advance of the new school development in the winter of 2008-9 at The Vale of Catmose College, Oakham, Rutland.

From the middle Iron Age there were two settlements: Area 1 was excavated and Area 3 has been preserved in situ*. Area 1 was a small open settlement, probably containing four roundhouses, although not necessarily contemporary. The final arrangement included a D-shaped enclosure. The pottery is dominated by storage jars, some in scored ware. It is suggested that occupation spanned the 2nd to 1st centuries BC. Finds included fragments of one saddle and several rotary querns, a triangular loomweight and limited evidence for iron smithing.*

In the early 1st century AD, a boundary division was introduced to Area 1 and it is likely that further settlement was established to the west, Area 2, preserved in situ*. At least one roundhouse was present into the early Roman period. The dividing ditch was retained until the mid-2nd century, when there was a new arrangement created respecting the earlier alignment. In the 3rd and 4th centuries a small Roman settlement comprised a rectangular sub-enclosure, layers of domestic debris and two wells. These were probably related to a timber house for which all direct traces had been lost. A small assemblage of ceramic roof tile survived and a single inhumation burial lay nearby. Domestic items included a scalpel, tweezers, a lead weight and fragments from rotary querns.*

There was extensive evidence of medieval ridge and furrow throughout the site, and a stretch of medieval road between Oakham and Barleythorpe was excavated in Area 4. A post-medieval parish boundary wall was recorded in Area 1 and a 17th to 18th-century brick well was filled and capped in Area 4.

1 INTRODUCTION

Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) was commissioned in October 2008, by Rutland County Council, to conduct an open area excavation and controlled watching brief on 11.2ha of land at the Vale of Catmose College, Oakham, Rutland (Fig 1; centred on NGR SK 85092 09225). This was a condition on the planning permission for new school buildings and drainage improvements on the former sports field. Work proceeded following a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by NA and approved by the Historic and Natural Environment Team of Leicestershire County Council as advisors to the Rutland County Council Planning Authority (Brown 2008a).

The archaeological works comprised a 0.8ha open area excavation followed by a controlled watching brief. The project was designed in such a way as to avoid live services and to provide as comprehensive an area of coverage for archaeological features that could not otherwise be preserved *in situ*. The controlled watching brief monitored new drainage swales, balancing ponds and sports pitch areas to ensure

compliance with the preservation strategy and to record dispersed features that could not otherwise be retained *in situ* (Fig 2).

All work was completed in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists recognised *Code of Conduct* and the guidelines of Leicestershire County Council (IfA 1995, revised 2008; LCC 2000). The material archive will be prepared according to the *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long term storage* (Walker 1990), *Standards in the care of archaeological collections* (MGC 1994) and the recommendations of the Institute for Archaeologists and English Heritage (IfA 2001, revised 2008; EH 1991).

The archive will be offered to Rutland County Museum, Oakham, at the end of the project together with the material from the foregoing evaluation (Accession no. OAKRM 2008.58). This report will be deposited with the Leicestershire Historic Environment Record following approval and will form the basis of any future publication.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Previous archaeological work

Appraisal of the site utilising the Historic Environment Record (HER) information for Rutland was undertaken by the Historic and Natural Environment Team at Leicestershire County Council and revealed that there was potential for archaeological remains to be present within the area of the development (LCC 2008).

The HER records three findspots within the boundary of the site. These comprise; a Neolithic stone axe (MLE 7312), an Iron Age bridle fitting (MLE 6530) and a 13th-century coin hoard (MLE 6951). There was a Roman rubbish dump at Parkfield Road, to the south of Area 1 (MLE 5568). Medieval pottery and an undated well were recorded during a watching brief at Rutland Memorial Hospital to the south-east (MLE 5622).

Cropmarks noted on aerial photographs mark two possible ring ditches in fields to the north (MLE 5020-1). Geophysical survey to the south of Barleythorpe Stud has also identified potential features of unknown date (MLE 4819).

A geophysical survey by Northamptonshire Archaeology in April 2008 preceded trial excavation and identified three main concentrations of magnetic anomalies that were consistent with those typical of buried features (Figs 2-3; Smith and Fisher 2008). The features included at least four circular ditches in Areas 1 and 3, likely to be roundhouses. Concentrations of features were identified in Areas 1-4 (Fig 2). The overall pattern was of Iron Age and Roman settlement comprising roundhouses, enclosures and a trackway. The extent and orientation of medieval ridge and furrow, largely flattened for a former sports field, was confirmed (Fig 3).

Northamptonshire Archaeology conducted a trial trench evaluation of the former sports field in July 2008 (Brown 2008b). A total length of 1000m of linear trenches were excavated within the 11.2ha area targeting feature concentrations and proposed development footprints. Trenches in Area 1 exposed Iron Age settlement features and evidence of Roman enclosures, some of which are still fossilised in the modern parish boundary. Area 2 identified another concentration of Roman enclosures. Area 3 exposed ring ditches of late 1st century date. Area 4 trenches showed the extension of late Roman ditches on a north-east to south-west curving

alignment, along the modern parish boundary. Medieval furrows were present in all of the trenches excavated within Barleythorpe parish, but were absent in Oakham parish.

2.2 Topography and geology

The site is located on the north-west periphery of modern Oakham. It is situated on level ground, *c*117-122m above Ordnance Datum. The site is occupied by the premises of the Vale of Catmose College, formerly comprising buildings in the south of the site and a large sports field area to the north, covering three separate fields. The total area of land is *c*12ha, of which *c*11.2ha were formerly fields. The principal excavated area in Area 1 was 0.8ha in size. The surrounding area was monitored under a controlled watching brief.

The site is bounded by housing estates and factories along Cold Overton Road to the south. Field boundaries on the west continue around the northern perimeter to join Barleythorpe Road which bounds the northern side. Huntsman Drive is on the eastern extent of the site.

The geology of the site consists of Lower Jurassic Limestone of the Marlstone Rock Formation and mudstone of the Whitby Mudstone Formation (BGS 1978; 2001). Substantial variation in the natural substrate was observed during the excavations and watching brief. The east of the site was predominantly clay or sandy clay, to the north there were outcrops of limestone and to the west areas of mixed clay and mudstone.

3 EXCAVATION STRATEGY

3.1 Objectives

The general aim of the archaeological field work was to meet the remit of PPG16 and preserve by record the archaeological evidence contained within the site through a programme of works combining open area excavation in Area 1 with a controlled watching brief during the development of the surrounding area (Brown 2008a).

Specific aims

These were agreed with the Senior Planning Archaeologist and client during compilation of the WSI and expanded where necessary throughout the subsequent fieldwork:

- Establish both relative and absolute chronologies for the site with priority being given to establishing an overall site plan determining the phases and sub-phases of activity that constitute its development.

- Determine the internal morphology of the site and its land use. Identifying the nature, date and range of activities present, together with the spatial dynamics of their distribution over time.

- Address the following research questions:

    1 What evidence is there relating to the origins, development and decline of the Iron Age occupation?

2 Is there any evidence for continuity of occupation into the Roman period?
3 Is there a relationship between the archaeology of the settlement and the modern arrangement of field boundaries?

- Determine the environmental history of the site and its immediate surrounding area throughout the sequence of human activity on the site.

The assessment of the paper and material archives determined that the broad scope of these objectives would remain unchanged and that statements would be possible to contribute significantly to the understanding of the occupation activity. It was agreed during compilation of the WSI that assessment would be conducted as part of standard internal post-excavation management procedure, following *MAP2*, but that production of a formal Updated Project Design document would not be required (English Heritage 1991; Brown 2008a).

3.2 Methodology

The essential procedures involved in the fieldwork were as follows:

- Archaeological excavation of a representative sample of features exposed within the settlement area to provide detailed information on the presence or absence, area of extent, depth of burial, date and function of the deposits and features exposed.

- Compilation of written, illustrative, digital and photographic records that form an archive for all archaeological works undertaken.

- Retrieval of sufficient material evidence in the form of artefact and faunal assemblages, supplemented with environmental samples, to inform interpretations of the site within the context of the agricultural, domestic and industrial activities that may have been on the site and their relationship with the surrounding landscape.

- Keeping the Senior Planning Archaeologist and the client informed of new archaeological developments as they arose during excavation for the purposes of monitoring and the provision of strategic discussion as work proceeded.

Detail retrieved from the geophysical survey and trial trench excavation was used to guide and inform the investigation of the archaeological features.

Open area excavation in Area 1

The principal excavation area was under the sole possession of NA prior to the start of development. Access to this area was limited to staff and machinery necessary for archaeological purposes. Upon completion of the open area excavation responsibility was handed back to Rutland County Council with the agreement of the Senior Planning Archaeologist. A controlled watching brief was then undertaken during the subsequent development by monitoring all topsoil stripping and deep excavation.

The open area excavation area was set out by NA using survey grade GPS (Leica System 1200) in Area 1 and all other non-archaeological surveying was conducted by the principal engineering contractor, Galliford Try. The topsoil, subsoil and medieval furrow layers were removed under continuous archaeological supervision

using a 360° tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket to reveal significant archaeological remains. The topsoil was stacked separately from the subsoil and other deposits outside the working areas and mounded up using a D6 bulldozer. Movement of machinery during site preparation was conducted in such a manner as to avoid impact on the archaeology. Tracked vehicles were used to avoid rutting in the wet winter conditions.

The excavation area was cleaned sufficiently to enable the identification and definition of archaeological features. A hand drawn site plan of all archaeological features was made at scale 1:100 and was related to the Ordnance Survey with significant structures or areas of complex stratigraphy planned in greater detail. All archaeological deposits and artefacts encountered during the course of excavation were recorded. The recording methodology followed the standard NA context recording system with context sheets, cross-referenced to scale plans, section drawings and photographs, both in 35mm monochrome film and on colour slides (NA 2003). Deposits were described on *pro-forma* context sheets to include measured and descriptive details of the context, its relationships, interpretation and a checklist of associated finds. The record was supplemented by direct annotations of the site general plan as required. All levels were related to Ordnance Survey datum. Sections of sampled features were drawn at scale 1:10 or 1:20, as appropriate, and related to Ordnance Survey datum. A representative sample of all exposed archaeological features was excavated, with basal deposits of all sectioned features investigated.

All discrete features were sampled to no less than 50% of the whole, features of particular interest were 100% excavated. Linear features were sampled at frequent intervals to determine their function and date with interventions placed at terminals and midsections. Intersections were excavated where the relationships were not clear in plan. Artefacts and soil samples were collected by hand. Hand spoil and the surface of archaeological features was scanned with a metal detector to ensure maximum finds retrieval from secure contexts.

The palaeoenvironmental potential of the site was reviewed on site with the Senior Planning Archaeologist during the excavations. Samples were taken from potential industrial or domestic features such as domestic pits, hearths and from organic or waterlogged basal ditch deposits. Samples were only sought in deposits with a potential for the recovery of charcoal, carbonised plant remains and other ecofacts from secure and uncontaminated contexts (EH 2002). A minimum of 40 litres was taken for flotation in each case or 100% of the fill where this was less than 40 litres.

Controlled watching brief

The programme of works and deployment of machinery was the responsibility of Galliford Try. Where machining was likely to encounter archaeologically sensitive areas the archaeologist was involved with the machining process by providing a combination of advice to the site manager concerning likely areas of impact and direct instruction to the machine driver where features were encountered. The topsoil and subsoil strip along the lines of individual swales and the areas of balancing ponds were excavated using a 360° tracked excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket (Fig 4). Larger areas for pitches were stripped using box scrapers and the levels carefully monitored to ensure that they did not reach the archaeological level (Fig 5). The pitch areas were subsequently built up with the spoil excavated from elsewhere.

Where archaeological features were encountered the archaeologist assessed the scope of necessary recording upon their discovery and directed the machine driver for their appropriate exposure. The archaeologist on site kept the contractor advised of

any potential changes to the timescale of the works and ensured that the operation of plant continued unhindered whilst archaeological work was undertaken. The process of hand excavation and recording during the watching brief followed the same principles as for the open area excavation.

Post-excavation assessment

Following the completion of the fieldwork a preliminary assessment of the archive and material finds was conducted to inform the original project objectives and provide the basis of further enquiry. Those parts of the archive with the potential to contribute a greater level of information were identified and specific avenues of enquiry outlined as the basis for further progress to reporting. The work comprised:

- Detailed interrogation of the paper archive to unlock the morphological development of the site through the study of key feature groups. This formed the basis for a post-excavation phase plan.

- Examination of the individual pottery fabrics and forms by feature group to provide the basis for dating the morphological sequence.

- Preliminary examination of the soil samples, human remains, wood and artefact groups to identify material that would require more detailed analytical work to be undertaken prior to reporting.

4 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

4.1 Summary of site development

The settlement site comprised eight periods of activity in chronological sequence; the first five of these are illustrated in Figure 6. The date ranges are based upon pottery combined with the sequence of stratigraphic relationships and the overall pattern of features. Certain features in the periphery of the site were likely to have been of Roman date, but as they were not located near to the settlement activity it is difficult to determine with confidence from which part of the Roman occupation that they originated.

Table 1: Summary of site development

Middle to late Iron Age occupation (2nd to 1st century BC)	Two foci of settlement were identified, Area 1 was excavated and Area 3 is preserved *in situ*. In Area 1 at least four roundhouses were built, which culminated with a single roundhouse (Figs 7-9). A D-shaped enclosure with associated pits in the vicinity of domestic occupation lay adjacent.
Late Iron Age to early Roman boundaries and occupation (1st to mid- 2nd century AD)	A roundhouse lay to the south of a major ditch that partitioned domestic occupation in the south and east from less evident activity in the north-west (Fig 7). An area of churned ground formed around the crossing point of this boundary.
Roman field system (mid- 2nd to 3rd century AD)	Domestic activity moved outside the excavated area and the former boundaries were filled in (Fig 14). A new arrangement of ditches was established for a series of large fields that perpetuated the general alignment of earlier ditches and the spatial distribution of the site.

Late Roman occupation (3rd to 4th century AD)	A domestic focus that probably included a timber house was served by two wells (Fig 14). A trackway was established as access leading to the north, closing the building off from the surrounding fields.
Late Roman ditches (late 4th century AD)	The wider field system and the building were abandoned. A ditch was established that redefined the boundary between the east and the west of the site (Fig 14). By the 5th century the land was vacant, leaving earthworks behind.
Medieval cultivation and road	Extensive ridge and furrow cultivation was present across the whole of the west of the site within Barleythorpe parish (Figs 3 and 23). A portion of the medieval road to Barleythorpe was identified in Area 4 (Figs 2 and 24).
The post-medieval parish boundary	A stone wall lay along the line of the present parish boundary, overlying the easternmost medieval cultivation furrow (Figs 23 and 25).
Modern activity	The former college sports field was created by levelling ridge and furrow and flattening out any other earthworks. Buried services, field drains and features associated with sports pitches were also evident.

For narrative purposes each period description focuses upon the principal excavations in Area 1 and then moves on to present contemporary features in the wider landscape with reference to the watching brief, geophysical survey and trial trench excavations (Smith and Fisher 2008; Brown 2008b).

4.2 Middle to late Iron Age occupation (2nd to 1st century BC)

The earliest occupation features within the excavated area were concentrated upon a tight focus of middle to late Iron Age domestic activity (Figs 7-8). Four roundhouses were evident. In the final arrangement a single Roundhouse (R4) and a D-shaped enclosure (E1) lay upon its south-west side. Enclosure E1 may have contained Roundhouse R2, or this may have pre-dated the enclosure. Clusters of pits were arranged in close proximity to each roundhouse, indicating a likely association within the occupation sequence. A smaller number of pits were more widely distributed and their association is less clear. It is likely they are part of the latter stage of this occupation given that Enclosure E1 encompassed the larger part of an area which may have been formerly occupied by Roundhouses R1 and R3.

Roundhouse R1

The crescent of ring ditch [3373] survived on the west side of the roundhouse. The arc of the crescent was 13.4m long and 10m across, between the two ends, indicating an approximate diameter of between *c*10.0-10.5m. Ditch [3373] was 0.42m wide, but little more than a soil mark was present, indicating a very shallow truncated feature. It was filled with mid-grey silty clay.

Within the arc of ditch [3373] was a group of eight circular postholes. Six of these postholes formed a slightly concentric arc within the curve of the gully and two were positioned towards the centre, adjacent to a rounded pit [3408]. The postholes varied in size between 0.14-0.22m in diameter and up to 0.14m deep. Generally they had steep sloped sides and with a narrow flat base. Pit [3408] was 0.74m long by 0.44m wide, and survived as a shallow spread of grey charcoal flecked silty clay little more than 0.10m thick.

Roundhouse R2

Ring ditch [3236] survived on the south-west arc of the roundhouse. The length of the arc was 14.42m and 11.31m across, between the ends, indicating a diameter of *c*13.0-13.7m. The ditch was up to 1.0m wide by 0.38m deep, with gently sloping sides towards a flat base. It had a rounded terminal at the south-east end that curved outwards slightly. The fill comprised friable dark blackish-grey silty clay with moderate small gravels. A single isolated posthole outside this arc, next to the ring ditch, was 0.26m wide by 0.12m deep.

Within the arc of ring ditch [3236] were six features: three discrete pits, two inter-cutting pits and a short straight gully. With the exception of one pit towards the west side, these features were generally closer to the prospective entranceway, where the two discrete pits and the two intercutting pits were set 0.72m apart between centre-points. The discrete pits were 0.30-0.57m wide by up to 0.35m deep with near vertical sides and flat bases. They were filled by similar mid-brown clay silt with moderate burnt stones up to 100mm in size. The two inter-cutting pits were slightly larger still, being 0.62m wide and 1.30m wide respectively. They had fairly steep sides that curved into rounded bases, one of which had a small rectangular hollow impacted into the base and packed with stone. The fills were mid-brownish-grey silty clay with dark blackish-grey charcoal smears containing moderate amounts of gravel. It is possible this group of four pits were the remnants of door posts within the vicinity of the entrance.

A short length of gully was 3.0m long by 0.40m wide by 0.04m deep, aligned north-west to south-east. It had shallow concave sloping sides meeting in a rounded base, filled with mid-greyish-brown silty clay, and produced a fragment of slag. It might be considered as a small internal partition or wattle screen separating two domestic areas.

Roundhouse R3

Wall slots [3261] and [3276] formed two broken arcs on the north and south sides of the roundhouse, cut by the ring ditch of Roundhouse R4 and the D-shaped enclosure (E1) through the prospective entranceway. The arcs were 7.2m and 6.6m long respectively and the distance between them indicated a diameter of *c*8.0m. The slots were 0.24-0.28m wide by 0.07-0.14m deep, with gently concave sloping sides meeting in a rounded base. The fill comprised friable dark greyish-brown silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks. The much smaller diameter compared to Roundhouses R1-2 may indicate that the structure was perhaps set upon a ring beam, without a surrounding ring ditch. However, there was a lack of postholes or stake holes to substantiate the interpretation and a much smaller structure that that of Roundhouse R4 was also possible.

Two pits lay within the interior; one was 0.7m wide by 0.23m deep. It had near vertical sides and a flat base, filled by mid-brownish yellow clay containing moderate charcoal flecks, occasional gravel and fragments of vesicular fired clay. The other pit was over 1.6m wide by 0.18m deep. It had gently sloping sides and a broad flat base, filled with yellowish-orange brown mottled silty clay.

Roundhouse R4

The most complete example of a roundhouse lay in the final arrangement of middle to late Iron Age occupation (Figs 8-9), and was clearly defined in the geophysical survey (Fig 3; Smith and Fisher 2008). This roundhouse comprised both wall slot [3110] and external ring ditch [3196]. It had a south-east facing entranceway flanked

by two portal postholes. Six pits and one partition lay within the roundhouse and one pit lay between the rear wall and the surrounding ring ditch [3196].

Ring ditch [3196] was generally circular in plan, encompassing an area of 11.14m diameter. The ring ditch [3196] was for the most part a single ditch line measuring 1.1m wide by 0.32-0.52m deep, with an entrance to the south-east. Four sections were cut into it, one at each terminal end and two to the rear; [3137], [3180], [3124] & [3196] (Fig 9). It had fairly steep sides that met in a narrow rounded base. It was filled by mid-brownish-grey silty clay containing moderate gravel and charcoal flecks. Where this varied was at the entrance terminals, where three cuts were clearly evident from the maintenance and recutting of the ring ditch, which filled with silt and domestic debris (Figs 9-11). Two-thirds of the Iron Age pottery from Roundhouse R4 accumulated or was deposited within these two terminals, which is a common observation in Iron Age ring ditches (Brown 2009). Pottery was recovered from all the different cuts of the terminals, except [3141], and it was more likely to be a gradual domestic accumulation rather than an end of occupation dump of debris. The south terminal also produced a fragment of quern. Twenty-one radially faced oak chippings attested to the use of carpentry techniques for the structure.

Wall slot [3110] lay within the ring ditch and was concentric to it, although it was oval in plan. There was generally a gap of 0.45-0.98m between the wall and the ditch. The wall encircled an area that measured 9-10m in diameter with a common alignment to the ring ditch. The wall slot was 0.15m wide by 0.03m deep, a fairly ephemeral feature that rarely survives intact from later ploughing or disturbance. Its profile formed a shallow U-shaped scoop in the natural substrate.

At either side of the entrance into the roundhouse, defined by slot [3110], were two postholes, [3113] and [3143], which supported the doorway. Both postholes were elliptical, 0.61-0.67m long by 0.42-0.45m wide, and of comparable depth, 0.42-0.52m deep. Both had near vertical sides meeting in a narrow rounded base. The fills were dark grey and greyish brown silty clay with small pebbles, charcoal flecks and occasional large packing stones.

Six pits and a short gully lay scattered about the interior. Three pits lay on the south side of the roundhouse, [3112, 3113, 3187], of sizes, 0.7-1.0m wide by 0.17-0.30m deep. Beside these pits, a short gully, [3190], 2.7m long by 0.2m wide by 0.1m deep, extended north-west to south-east from wall slot [3110] into the interior. Two pits lay towards the rear of the roundhouse and opposite the entrance, pit [3120] was 0.5m wide by 0.1m deep, and pit [3117] was 1.5m wide by 0.77m deep. Pit [3118], at the centre, was 0.5m wide by 0.4m deep. All of the pits contained dark brownish-grey silty clay fills often flecked with charcoal and a few of which produced moderate amounts of burnt stone. Pit [3112] produced part of a cylindrical loomweight. None of the pits exhibited evidence for burning *in situ.* The central pit, which might otherwise have been considered as a potential hearth, was notable for its low level of burnt material suggesting that it was perhaps periodically cleaned out and that its fill was a secondary deposit.

A single discrete pit [3199] lay between the roundhouse and the wall slot, to the rear of the roundhouse, which was 0.7m wide by 0.2m deep. It had steep sloping sides that met in a rounded base, filled by dark brownish-grey clay.

Pit group P1

A concentration of seven pits and two small postholes (P1) were located to the north-west of Roundhouse R4 and to the north of Roundhouse R3 (Fig 8).

Three of the pits were circular and four of the pits were elongated with rounded ends. The three circular pits were 0.4-0.6m wide by 0.1-0.2m deep, two of them together and one located amongst the other pits. This latter feature contained a small concentration of burnt stones up to 120mm in diameter. The elongated pits were between 1.6-2.8m long, generally 0.30-0.48m wide, with one up to 1.0m wide. Two of the larger pits were up to 0.8m deep, while the smaller pits were little more than surface depressions at 0.12m deep. The fills were similar to those observed elsewhere, comprising dirty soft greyish-brown silty clay with occasional to moderate charcoal flecks and moderate gravel, although generally lighter in colour. Pit [3357] produced a fragment from an Iron Age saddle quern. Pit [3355] produced a piece of fuel ash slag. Pit [3325] produced the largest amount of charcoal from any single feature upon the site, 1000+ fragments, weighing 18g (Sample 19).

The pits appeared to explore small variations in the natural sandy clay gravel to extract patches of clay with less sand, possibly used as a raw material, and were backfilled with whatever waste material was close to hand.

Two small rounded postholes set close together within the pit area were 0.14-0.19m in diameter and little more than 0.03m deep. These soil stains perhaps marked a small timber frame used for utilitarian purposes.

D-shaped enclosure E1

On the south-west side of Roundhouse R4 was a, possibly contemporary, D-shaped enclosure that encompassed an area of *c*0.04 ha (Fig 8). It was difficult to discern the original entrance and it would seem this was either closed off to the south by its straight side, lost to truncation in the west by later features or bridged by a small structure.

Curved boundary ditch [3249] was up to 1.0m wide by 0.5m deep at its most substantial point. On its southern, straight side, the enclosure was marked by two parallel ditches [3274] and [3283], which were 0.4m wide by 0.19m deep and 0.87m wide by 0.47m deep, respectively. Fill material comprised the familiar lighter greyish-brown silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks and moderate gravel. Ditch [3283] produced thick-walled storage jar sherds carrying scored decoration and two sherds from a globular bowl of particular typological interest (Fig 27). Ditches [3249] and [3283] both produced fuel ash slag; the latter also contained a probable smithing hearth bottom.

An irregular sinuous ditch [3287] extended to the north-west from the enclosure, neatly partitioning the domestic area of Roundhouse R4 from the land to the west. Its width varied between 0.40-1.05m and its depth varied between 0.2-0.4m. The sides were generally ragged, uneven and inconsistent, meeting in a narrow uneven flattish base. It gave the impression of a hastily created channel to relieve water from the enclosure interior, desirable if you have standing water at the surface. A pit lay at the southern terminal of this ditch within the enclosure, probably intended as a sump to collect the draining water. The pit was rectangular at the surface, changing towards a circular base with an uneven curving slope that became steeper at depth. The pit was 1m wide by 0.66m deep, filled at the base by an orangey-brown dirty natural sediment deposit, with the more usual light greyish-brown silty clay fill at the top.

Two other features lay within the east arc of the enclosure that did not clearly associate with any of the earlier roundhouses; a short straight gully, [3251], and a discrete pit, [3211]. The gully was 4.2m long by 0.5m wide by 0.2m deep. It had

shallow gently curving sides that met in a rounded base. The adjacent pit was circular, 0.6m wide by 0.2m deep, with sharp sloping sides that curved into a flat base. Both features were filled with light brownish-grey silty clay and presumably relate to activities either within Enclosure E1 or outside of Roundhouses R2-3 that predate the enclosure.

Scattered pits

Nine pits and four postholes lay outside of Enclosure E1, to the south-east of Roundhouse R4. Pit [3213] and the four postholes were clustered together. The pit was 0.96m wide by 0.16m deep, and the postholes *c*0.3m wide by up to 0.12m deep. The fills comprised darker greyish-brown silty clay with moderate charcoal flecks. Their arrangement in plan initially suggested that this was a fire pit utilised for cooking purposes. It comprised a fire pit with surrounding postholes for a small A-frame, but analysis of Sample 18 from the pit produced such low quantities of carbonised material it is hard to substantiate. The large quantity (3.93kg) of fired clay recovered may suggest the clay lining of a small earthen oven or kiln.

The other eight pits scattered in the south-east were for the most part uninspiring. The best preserved example was 0.8m wide by 0.46m deep with steep sides curving into a flat base. Although a few produced pottery or animal bone, most were largely devoid of finds or distinctly organic fills.

The wider landscape

Archaeological monitoring during the watching brief did not identify any further evidence for middle to late Iron Age activity. The concentration of features in Areas 2 and 3 were identified by geophysical survey and were investigated by trial excavation. Only features in Area 3 produced evidence for settlement that could potentially have been present from the middle Iron Age. The natural substrate here was encountered at *c*119m above Ordnance Datum. Two probable roundhouse ditches and a hearth pit were evaluated in Trench 10 (Brown 2008b). There were two sides of a curving ditch with a recut on its northern side and between the ditches was a large pit containing *in situ* burning and residues characteristic of a small hearth. A ditch to the south of the roundhouse contained three sherds of Iron Age pottery. The remains are preserved *in situ* beneath a build up of modern levelling layers in Area 3 (Figs 2-3; Smith and Fisher 2008; Brown 2008b, 7-8).

Along the north boundary of the site the natural substrate was higher at *c*121.8m above Ordnance Datum (Brown 2008b, 6). A single pit was located in the west end of Trench 5 in the vicinity of the north swale (Fig 2), but further features were not identified during the watching brief. The pit produced ten sherds of Iron Age pottery.

4.3 Late Iron Age to early Roman boundaries and occupation (1st to mid- 2nd century AD)

A major boundary was established that partitioned land in the south and east from land in the north-west (Fig 7). Occupation features contemporary to the boundary were exclusively to the south of this divide. Geophysical survey and trial excavation prior to the main excavation had demonstrated a general absence of features to the immediate north-west of this boundary (Fig 3; Smith and Fisher 2008; Brown 2008b).

The principal boundary and crossing

Initially the boundary was defined by ditch [3008], which was aligned west to east, turning north-east. Ditch [3349] continued the alignment on a north-north-east trend

after a break of at least 6.5m, and although this section of ditch itself was only 19m long, the trend was observed to continue on the geophysical survey following the line of gully [3395] (Fig 3; Smith and Fisher 2008). It marked the first stage of development for a boundary which continued to exist in various modified forms up until the removal of a hedgerow, extant prior to these excavations. Ditch [3008] was 0.98m wide at the top with sharp sloping sides that dropped off at a near vertical angle into a 0.45m wide flat channel at the base, 0.48m deep. The base channel was filled with firm orangey-grey clay silt with infrequent small gritty inclusions, disturbed by worm castes. It produced two sherds of local Roman pottery of early to mid- 2nd-century date. The upper fill comprised firm light orangey-brown clay silt with grit and some larger pebbles. In contrast, ditch [3349] was 1.8m wide by 0.28m deep with less pronounced sides that curved into a slightly rounded base without an evident central channel. The line was recut twice, with its latest recut extending further north as gully [3395], which was 0.4m wide by 0.24m deep. Less substantial boundaries appeared to be extended with more substantial definitions over time, implying that the boundary gradually gained greater importance within the late Iron Age to early Roman period.

On the east side of the boundary crossing was an area of ground covered by a 0.05-0.12m thick layer of soft dark greyish-black silty clay (3158) that had been heavily mixed and possessed diffuse boundaries that thinned out at the edges. Two shallow surface soil marks extended towards the north-east of this area that may originally have been shallow gullies. The likely explanation is that the crossing was churned up, perhaps by livestock, and that this area tended to collect water. The gullies would have done little more than try to relieve water from a boggy wet area of ground and, as their ephemeral nature suggested, were not intended as permanent features. The larger part of the undisturbed east portion of the spread produced late Iron Age pottery. A quern fragment was recovered from the west portion where late Roman ditches cut the layer (Fig 32, 1).

Two postholes were located within the vicinity of spread (3158). Posthole [3165] was a discrete feature on the north-west side of the spread that was 0.65m wide by 0.22m deep, it had steep curved sides and an uneven base. It was filled by mid-greyish-black silty clay. Posthole [3173] lay within the area of the spread and given the similar colouration of the soils it was not possible to determine whether it cut or was sealed by it. The feature was 0.54m wide by 0.15m deep with sharp near vertical sides and a narrow flat base.

Enclosure E2

Ditch [3008] lay parallel to ditch [3363] at its east end, with the two ditches separated by a space of *c*40m (Fig 7). Their orientation indicated a wide entrance into the area south of ditch [3008], Enclosure E2. Ditch [3363] was 1.9m wide by 0.8m deep and terminated within the excavation. It had sharp sloping sides that became near vertical towards a broad flat channel at the base. Its fill was firm greyish-brown silty clay. It was recut by ditch [3361] which was shallower, 1.9m wide by 0.48m deep, and filled with slightly darker firm greyish brown silty clay, the top of which was cut by later features and thus heavily disturbed.

Enclosure E2 was formalised by the realignment of ditch [3008] by the cutting of ditch [3049], easily the most substantial ditch upon the site for any period (Fig 12). This ditch was observed crossing the area of the former tennis courts during the watching brief (Fig 2). Ditch [3049] was fairly straight, aligned from west to east, and terminated at a point that was *c*30m west of ditch terminal [3363], closing the width of the entranceway. It was 3.6m wide by 1.1m deep, the sides had a gradual slope at

the upper edge, becoming steeper towards the middle and dropped sharply into a broad rounded base that was *c*1.0m wide. The fill was largely a blend of light to mid-bluish-grey clay silt, darker towards the surface and containing mottled orange-brown patches, evidence of standing water within the ditch was supported by the presence of *Planorbis* sp. snails (Sample 4). The lower fill produced spelt wheat, barley and a small amount of chaff that was not observed elsewhere on the site and in quantities indicating little more than wind-blown or water-borne detritus (Sample 4). The uppermost fill was a deliberate dumping deposit. Structural debris such as wattle-impressed fired clay was amongst the finds, together with a wide range of pottery types placing the filling of the ditch in the mid- to late 2nd century. Spreads of material were evident along its length to either side, where silt and material considerably later than its basal deposits continued to accumulate in an earthwork depression well into the 3rd-4th centuries AD.

In the south-west corner of the excavation were three other features were present in close proximity to Enclosure E3. Two parallel gullies, [3020] and [3097], extended from the principal ditch [3049] into Enclosure E2. Both gullies were aligned from north to south and were 0.36m wide by 0.20m deep and 0.55m wide by 0.16m deep respectively. Neither gully had a profile more prominent than a gentle shallow U-shape in section. They were filled with firm greyish-brown clay silt with frequent orange mottles.

A single pit, [3022], lay in the section of the excavated area and cut through gully [3020]. The pit was 1.6m long and probably of similar width, with a depth of 0.3m. It had ragged shallow concave sides that were ill defined and the base was a broad flattish bowl. The fill was bright red scorched clay, darker towards the base, which suggested *in situ* burning with patches of lighter orange brown silty clay in the upper fill. Sample 3 produced 260g of fired clay indicating demolition of an earthen structure, possibly a small clay oven or kiln, demolished after use.

Roundhouse R5

A single roundhouse stood within the northern part of Enclosure E2, following the local native tradition (Fig 7). It was the only roundhouse present to produce pottery dating it to the early Roman period. Gully [3084] encircled an area that was *c*9.8m in diameter and was very badly truncated by medieval ploughing. It was up to 0.46m wide by 0.11m deep, with only the south arc and its south-east terminal surviving. A single sherd of late Iron Age pottery was recovered from the light greyish-brown clay silt fill. The terminal was cut by pit [3067] that was 0.95m wide by 0.4m deep with steep sides and a rounded base. The pit was filled with firm black and greyish-brown charcoal stained silty clay with flecks of burnt clay. It produced Roman pottery including a white-ware flagon strap handle of early 2nd-century origin. Approximately 3.4m to the north-west of pit [3067] was a badly truncated pit, [3055]. It was 0.48m wide by 0.15m deep and was probably the surviving base of a pit marking the other side of the roundhouse entrance terminal. Fired clay scattered amongst the features was probably structural debris.

Within the roundhouse were three pits, all grouped towards the rear of the structure. They were between 0.46-0.67m wide and the deepest example was 0.12m. The pits were generally filled with firm russet-brown clay silt containing dark grey streaks caused by worm castes; fibrous root intrusions were also evident.

Enclosure E3

This was defined by two terminal arms of a small rounded enclosure that extended into the excavated area at the south-west end of the site (Fig 7). Ditch terminal [3015]

was 0.52m wide by 0.18m deep; it had steep sloping sides that met abruptly with a flat base on top of a bed of natural iron rich mudstone. Its counterpart was comparable but cut by circular pit [3024] which was 1.47m wide by 0.37m deep. The pit had steep sides and a broad flat base, also set upon the natural stone and was probably cut to close off the narrow entrance after its disuse. The fills were of firm dark blackish-grey silty clay containing occasional charcoal flecks and fired clay. Pottery from these and nearby features was consistent with the late Iron Age and early Roman local fabric types. The high incidence of molluscs indicated that this area was particularly wet (Sample 5).

The purpose of this minor enclosure could not be ascertained as it continued beyond the excavated area. The north facing entrance was less than 1.5m wide and faced directly onto the principal ditch [3049]. An interesting detail of the ditch sectioned at this point was a step cut into the natural substrate on the south side, upon which was laid a wooden oak plank (Figs 13 and 33). It would seem that the access from Enclosure E3 was specifically for the purpose of reaching that step and presumably sourcing water from the base of the ditch.

The wider landscape

The continuation of ditches [3008] and [3049] were identified during earlier geophysical survey and trial excavations to the west (Fig 2). These ditches were visible, although not obvious, upon the geophysical survey (Fig 3; Smith and Fisher 2008). They are likely to extend further west to become part of a focus of archaeological features at the west end of the sports field in Area 2, preserved *in situ*. This focus probably represents an arrangement of smaller enclosures at the corner of a larger field system, and the rectangular distribution may indicate a possible building location. Trial excavations identified a number of features, the majority of which produced mid- to late 2nd-century pottery, with only one gully that produced a single sherd of late Iron Age pottery (Brown 2008b, 6).

4.4 Roman field system (mid- 2nd to 3rd century AD)

In the late 2nd century the distribution of domestic activity changed. Either the former occupation was cleared, it relocated, or the focus of activity shifted further to the south and ceased to extend as far as the excavated area. The former boundaries were filled in and a new arrangement of ditches was established forming a series of large fields of broadly rectangular form (Fig 14). Although the positions of the ditch lines were shifted, but the general alignment of earlier ditches was echoed in parts of the new boundary system so that the spatial distribution of the site retained its large open spaces in the south, east and north-west. Up to seven enclosures (E4-E10) extended within the excavated area, the greater extents of which were not easily visible (Figs 2-3; Smith and Fisher 2008). Enclosures E4 and E5 lay to the east, they seem to have been fields for livestock as suggested by the smaller enclosure (E8) that lay between the two. Enclosures E9 and E10 were probably part of larger areas that lay to the west and could have served either arable or stock-rearing purposes. Between the two, occupying the central portion of the excavated area, were Enclosures E6 and E7. Enclosure E6 was probably part of a larger area that lay to the north; it was connected to land south of Enclosure E7 by a possible trackway. Enclosure E7 bounded a field that subsequently became the focus of occupation in the 3rd century. It originally opened into Enclosure E6 from its north-east corner, but at the time of its settlement was partitioned from the former fields to become a separate unit of land.

The principal divisions

Enclosures E4 and E5 were divided from Enclosures E6 and E7 by ditch [3169]. This north to south boundary ditch, [3169], maintained part of a late Iron Age and early Roman boundary, shifted to the east by *c*22m. The ditch was 1.7m wide by 0.42m deep; it had gently sloping sides at the top that curved sharply to drop with a steep slope into a broad flattish base where it met with a natural shelf of iron rich mudstone. The lower fill was firm mid-brown silty clay sediment with few charcoal flecks and merged gradually into darker greyish-brown charcoal smeared upper fill comprising a steady accumulation with occasional dumps of material. Excavation indicated that the ditch had been recut on at least two occasions where it adjoined Enclosure E8 and was vulnerable to heavy silting. The fills produced five sherds of Roman floor and roof tile.

Enclosures E4 and E5 were also separated by a north-west to south-east ditch, [3171]. It was 1.4m wide by 0.54m deep, the sides were steep and dropped sharply into a V-shaped ditch with a narrow flattish base. The fill comprised firm brownish-grey silty clay with slight charcoal stains that became darker towards the surface and were indicative of natural silting. This ditch coincided with the alignment of middle to late Iron Age boundaries on the south side of D-shaped Enclosure E1, suggesting that they may still have been relict landscape features.

Enclosure E6 and a possible trackway in its south-west corner were separated from Enclosure E7 by ditch [3082]. The ditch extended northward for *c*29m before turning through 90° to proceed eastward for another *c*63m. This north boundary ran parallel to a late Iron Age to early Roman boundary along its east to west extent, offset to the north by *c*7m, probably beside an earthwork. Ditch [3082] was 1.56m wide by 0.84m deep. It had steep sloping sides which were asymmetrical. On the inner side of Enclosure E7, along its west boundary, the ditch had a small shelf on the natural stone that was *c*0.2m wide (Fig 16). The outer side was a continuous steep slope towards a narrow base channel that had a flat bottom. The shelf was absent along the north boundary where the profile had symmetrical steep sloping sides and a broad flat base. The base fill comprised firm light orangey-yellow to bluish-grey mottled clay silt. The upper fill contained dumps comprising patches of firm dark purplish-blue amongst bluish-grey silty clay with occasional burnt stones up to 120mm in diameter. The pottery assemblage included white-wares, colour-coated wares, shelly wares, grey ware and grog-tempered ware indicating a late 2nd-3rd century accumulation of occupation debris. Part of the lower portion of a Roman quern was also recovered. The channel contained standing water as suggested by the presence of *Planorbis* sp. snails (Sample 6). The stone shelf along the inner enclosure was quite deliberate and not the product of a recut. It may have assisted access to the ditch channel in a similar manner to that observed in the earlier period.

Enclosures E9 and E10 were separated from a possible 16m wide trackway on their east side by ditch [3029]. These enclosures were separated from each other by ditch [3018]. Unlike other ditches of this period, these two contained less finds, indicating a position further away from domestic activity. Ditch [3018] extended west for *c*50m before it turned south and terminated (Fig 2). Ditch [3029] continued northward and curved gradually towards the east, seemingly crossing the whole site. Both ditches were of comparable size, ditch [3018] was 1.5m wide by 0.64m deep, while ditch [3029] was of similar width it had received greater truncation from medieval ploughing along its length. Steeply angled sloping sides dropped toward a broad, slightly rounded, base for each. Fills were almost identical, comprising firm light bluish-grey and yellowish-green mottled clay silt, a gradual silt accumulation that was lighter in colour towards the base. They produced a combined total of 49 sherds of

pottery, including Roman grey wares, largely of mid- to late 2nd century date. Ditch [3018] was roughly parallel to a late Iron Age to early Roman boundary, offset to its south by *c*6m.

An animal fold (E8)

A single small fold, Enclosure E8, lay in the south-west corner of Enclosure E4 which encompassed an area of *c*0.02 ha. An entrance could not be clearly defined because the ditch separating it from Enclosure E4 had been recut on four occasions, hence its apparent width in plan. This recutting emphasised that the fold was used frequently. It was apparent that the east side contained only one cut for the period (albeit through a middle to late Iron Age ditch), which indicated a closed-off point of access. The unusual form of the terminal of ditch [3171] suggested that this also closed-off a gap in its southern boundary. Enclosure E8 may have been a minor stock fold, between Enclosures E4 and E5, in which animals could be gathered temporarily between enclosures.

A section across the ditch on the north side of Enclosure E8 indicated four very distinct cuts (Figs 17-18, S102). The largest and deepest of these, ditch [3309], would have been up to 1.8m wide by 0.7m deep before it was recut. Later recuts were slightly smaller and showed a constant need for maintenance. The three fills in the initial cut of [3309] were all of light to mid-brownish grey silty clay containing few stones, often with patches of eroded natural gravel clay indicative of rapid silting. Pottery included both residual Iron Age material and Roman pottery of the late 2nd century. Later cuts continued to demonstrate this trend and it would seem that whatever stock care activity was active within the fold was probably causing the erosion and rapid silting of the ditches on all sides (Fig 18). Such an activity might have involved taking animals into the fold to check their condition, perhaps involving washing, grooming, preventative cures and treatment of ailments, as well as cleaning down the fold after its use. Animal bone from the ditches included cattle with signs of arthritis, common only amongst milking stock which would be kept until their milk dried up and they could no longer produce calves. Soil samples produced a couple of pulse grains, perhaps fodder, and nothing to indicate crop-growing (Sample 24).

The wider landscape

Two ditches were likely to be a part of the Roman field system, which were identified crossing the north swale and west balancing pond (Fig 2). The lack of finds means that their exact date is not certain and both ditches had been truncated by medieval ploughing. They are thought to belong to a wider network that was established from the mid- to late 2nd century and incorporated focal areas in the principal excavations (Area 1) and to the west (Area 2) with larger field enclosures that crossed Areas 3 and 4.

Ditch [5019] was 0.5m wide by 0.3m deep and aligned north-west to south-east. It had a shallow rounded U-shaped profile and was filled with dark reddish brown silty clay, with occasional small rounded grit. It joined into a network of Roman ditches in Area 4, the majority of which are preserved *in situ* at the northern boundary of the field.

Ditch [5021] was originally identified by geophysical survey, but did not cross Trench 13 during the subsequent trial excavations (Fig 3; Smith and Fisher 2008; Brown 2008b). It was 1.1m wide at the surface and was reburied beneath the subsoil without opportunity for excavation, the ditch was filled with light to mid- reddish brown and grey clay silt containing moderate fragments of mudstone up to 50mm in

diameter. This ditch probably extends westward to connect with Roman ditches crossing Areas 2 and 3 (Fig 2).

Areas 2-3

Roman ditches in Areas 2 and 3 are preserved *in situ*, what is known about them is confined to the foregoing trial excavations (Brown 2008b, 5-6).

Features in Area 2 were identified cutting the natural substrate at *c*122-123m above Ordnance Datum. Seven ditches were investigated that matched the approximate positions of geophysical anomalies (Fig 3; Smith and Fisher 2008). Between them, the ditches produced twenty-one sherds of pottery dating from the mid- to late 2nd century.

In Area 3 one Roman ditch cut across the top of Iron Age roundhouses and produced a single sherd of pottery dating from the mid-2nd century.

4.5 Late Roman occupation (3rd to 4th century AD)

The Roman field system continued in use with modifications added to the interior of Enclosure E7 in the mid- to late 3rd century (Figs 14-15). A small rectangular enclosure surrounded a possible timber structure (Building 1), the remains of which were masked by a substantial spread of material. Its north side was bounded by ditches that channelled movement between a trackway from the north, around the north side of the building towards its entrance on the west side. Two stone-lined wells were present, one within the enclosure of Building 1 and one to the west. A human inhumation lay on the west side of the Enclosure E7 boundary.

Building 1

The area was heavily truncated by medieval ploughing to a depth of 0.45m which made defining its extent difficult and during the wet winter conditions this area was subject to continual inundation (Fig 19). Through the use of a pump and extensive cleaning it was possible to remove masking layers and to reveal the edges of features where they had not been obliterated by furrows. Several investigative sections were excavated through features and the principal spread.

Surrounding the area was a small roughly rectangular enclosure, 23m long by 14m wide, with a clearly defined entrance on the west side that was 1.85m wide (Figs 14-15). The two ditches, [3347] and [3058], formed the rectangular west end. The ditches were of similar sizes 0.9-1.1m wide by 0.20-0.27m deep, with steep sides that curved gradually into broad flat bases upon the natural stone. Fills comprised light to mid-yellowish-brown and orangey-brown clay silt with iron salts throughout, suggesting a gradual silting deposit containing casually discarded waste. Within the fills were colour-coated ware bowl sherds and sherds from a copy of a samian dish (Fig 30, 15), both tablewares used in the 4th-century.

Two pits were excavated beneath the central spread. They were of similar size, *c*1.0m wide by 0.25-0.30m deep, filled by dark greyish-brown silty clay which could not be distinguished from the overlying spread but produced a fairly reasonable amount of pottery. The overlying spread (3358) was unevenly distributed within the interior of the enclosure and had the characteristics of an extensive abandonment or levelling deposit (Fig 19). The deposit comprised loose to friable dark greyish-black and brown silty clay with moderate charcoal flecks and occasional fragments that was up to 0.48m thick. Despite excavating a long section across the spread in an

attempt to identify structural features beneath it, only the aforementioned pits were found.

The layer produced a high concentration of pottery that mainly comprised jars, bowls and other household forms; there was also butchered animal bone, a collection of iron nails and other artefacts including a copper alloy scalpel suggesting domestic use. The low number of storage jars indicated that crop processing was probably not part of the domestic activity. The pottery was exclusively of late Roman date, extending into the 4th-century and presented a marked absence of late 2nd-century material. There was very little ceramic tile from the site, none of which was associated with Building 1, and almost all of which came from ditch [3169] or furrow deposits.

The lack of ceramic building materials or stone would indicate that any structure must have been built in less durable materials and that given its heavily truncated condition. Features relating to a timber frame, post-pad or sleeper beam structure had not survived. The base was sunken by up to *c*0.5m below the surrounding natural ground surface within parts of the rectangle, and not consistently throughout. This depression thinned out gradually on the south side, whereas on the west side the cut was sharp and distinct. Much of this inconsistency is likely to have been the result of medieval ploughing and it would be misleading to attempt to interpret it further. Precedents for Roman timber sleeper beam buildings on smaller farmstead sites of 1st to 2nd century date have been excavated at Empingham, *c*8.5km to the east, and were replaced in stone in the 3rd century (Cooper 2000, 4-16). It is worth noting that their disuse and demolition was marked by dark levelling deposits as a precursor to the stone replacement. At Oakham timber structures continued to be used until the abandonment of the site in the early 4th century.

On its south side a large sub-circular pit-like spread (3406) merged with layer (3358). It was between 6.0-6.5m in diameter and 0.15m deep. Whether it was a feature in its own right or the result of the vagaries of preservation was unclear, however, it was distinguished by a sizable concentration of 39 Roman pottery sherds including a colour-coated flanged bowl and jar (Fig 29, 7) of 4th-century date and a grey ware flanged-rim jar (Fig 29, 8).

Wells

There were two stone-lined wells. Well [3064] lay within the north-west corner of the small enclosure around Building 1. Well [3077] lay to the west of Building 1 within the larger Enclosure E7.

Well [3064]

The well had an internal diameter of 0.75m at the mouth, widening below into a bell-shaped shaft that was 0.9m in diameter (Fig 20). The full depth of the well was 1.4m. The stonework that made up the lining comprised rough unfaced slabs of mudstone, unfinished and unfaced, that measured up to 300mm by 200mm by 100mm in size. Many of the stones were thinner flat pieces that could be laid flat into an interlocking dry-stone structure. Fourteen courses were identified in section and the base of the well contained a number of large unworked stone blocks of similar proportions, perhaps having fallen into the well before it was filled. The main fill of the well shaft was firm light to mid-greyish-blue clay silt merging towards darker purplish-blue silty clay near the surface. It contained occasional flecks of burnt clay, moderate charcoal flecks and small stones up to 25mm in diameter. A small amount of cereal with a little chaff indicated little more than household food preparation nearby (Sample 22). The well appeared to have been deliberately filled with soil that carried a mixture of

colour-coated and grey ware pottery suggesting residual late 2nd-century material amongst 4th-century fabrics.

Well [3077]

The well had a vertical shaft that was 1.15m in diameter and was 1.9m deep (Fig 21). The stone lining comprised squared blocks of rough hewn mudstone, unfinished and unfaced, that measured up to 300mm by 240mm by 120mm in size. The stones were laid flat into an interlocking dry-stone retaining wall that comprised twenty-four courses. The base of the well flooded rapidly and could not be safely investigated. The main fill of the well shaft was firm dark greyish-brown silty clay with orange-brown patches and frequent large stone blocks that indicated the demolition of a surface structure from above the well and definite deliberate infill. Amongst the stone cast down the well was a mortar (Fig 32, 2), 27 pottery sherds, indicating a 4th-century date and one piece of *tegulae* roof tile.

Human burial [3163]

An inhumation burial lay to the west of ditch [3082], outside of Enclosure E7, and was aligned roughly parallel with the boundary. The burial was very badly damaged by both medieval ploughing and modern field drains (Fig 22). The grave cut was roughly rectangular and measured 1.8m long by 0.64m wide by 0.12m deep. The skeleton was slumped in a supine position askew with the grave cut. The entire skull, shoulders and most of the left side were lost to later ploughing, while the knees had been destroyed by a land drain. Ribs and vertebrae were visible as little more than soil marks. Two nails were recovered, one of which lay upon the individuals sternum. The grave was filled with soft light to mid-greyish-brown mottled silty clay which produced a single sherd of Roman greyware. The position of human burials aligned upon existing enclosure boundaries and set outside of the settlement area is a common occurrence, the use of the west enclosure boundary was also observed at Yaxley in Huntingdonshire (Brown 2008c).

Trackway and access to Enclosure E7

To the north of enclosure E7, ditch [3129] was added as a parallel ditch to [3169], and joined onto the end of ditch [3082] to create a 16m wide trackway between the enclosure and land to the north (Fig 14). It is likely that the ditch extended from the relic late Iron Age to early Roman boundary ditch [3049], and seems to have imitated boundaries [3008] and [3349] to the north. Extensions of ditches were observed on this northward alignment during the watching brief and consistent with the results of the geophysical survey (Figs 2-3). Ditch [3129] was 1.5m wide by 0.58m deep; it was a steep V-shaped cut with a narrow flat channel at the base. The fill comprised friable mid-greyish-black silty clay that appeared to be deliberate backfill material that included 47 sherds of well preserved 4th-century pottery and a single body sherd of tile.

Ditches on the north side of Building 1 appeared to divert movement from the trackway around the north side of the building to its entrance on the west side. Gully [3092] was 0.54m wide by 0.32m deep, it was a steep sided, U-shaped cut with a rounded base. This was soon replaced by ditch [3094] which was 0.93m wide by 0.58m deep, it had steep sloping sides that met with a narrow flat base. The east end of these ditches was badly disturbed by modern activity and it was not clear if they connected with the earlier ditch network. Both ditches were shallower at the west end than towards the east and clearly drained towards the south-east.

A single pit [3336] lay to the north of ditch [3049], within the access route. The edges were difficult to define as it was heavily truncated by medieval ploughing and the surface was disturbed by root activity. The pit appeared to be in the region of *c*1.6m wide and was no deeper than 0.15m with poorly defined base and sides. It was filled by dark brownish-grey clay silt with occasional pebbles and contained three burnt and sooted Roman colour-coated jar sherds.

The wider landscape

To the east of the balancing ponds one ditch was excavated that probably related to late Roman activity, extending into the late 4th century (Fig 2). A lack of finds means that this is not confirmed, but it fits the broad geophysical pattern for this period.

Ditch [5009] was aligned south-west to north-east and may have been a continuation of ditch [3129]. It was 0.6m wide by 0.26m deep and had sharp sloping sides that curved rapidly into a narrow rounded base. It was filled with firm reddish-brown sandy clay. The recut of this ditch was slightly more substantial at 0.7m wide by 0.32m deep and its fill was very slightly darker.

4.6 Late Roman ditches (late 4th century AD)

In the late 4th century Building 1 and the west portion of the Roman field system was abandoned. Any ditches that had not already silted up were filled in. Ditches were established reusing the north to south boundary along the west side of the former trackway. There was no late 4th-century activity to the west of this boundary line.

Ditches [3160] and [3399] formed the late 4th-century boundary between east and west (Fig 14). Ditch [3160] was 1.1m wide by 0.46m deep; it had steep sloping sides that curved swiftly into a narrow rounded base. The ditch was filled with friable mid-greyish-black silty clay, a mixture of natural silt deposits towards the base with areas of dumping towards the surface containing late 4th-century colour-coated ware. Extensions of the ditches were observed during the watching brief to the north of Area 1 that demonstrated their continued alignment and a general eastward curving trend (Fig 2).

Livestock enclosures

It is likely that the main area of Enclosure E4 was probably still in use and that the smaller enclosures to the east of ditches [3160] and [3399] were a part of continued stock rearing activities located to the east. Enclosure E11 was 0.02ha in area and formed a pen in the corner of the main enclosure. It backed onto another small enclosure (E12), the full extent of was probably *c*0.28ha in size, forming an elongated rectangular field at the edge of the main boundary with a slight eastward curve. Much of the material in the vicinity of this enclosure was residual.

Inside Enclosure E11 was a small group of six postholes, clustered together at the north end and then trailing in no discernable pattern towards the south. The postholes were mostly circular, between 0.12-0.16m in diameter and up to 0.3-0.6m deep. Amongst the postholes were seven sherds of 4th-century Roman pottery. They may have been fence or tether posts as no other structural evidence was discovered and they had no distinct planned arrangement. Certainly they were embedded solidly and this could well have been to do with the animals being kept, had they been cattle or horses, such animals can easily break less substantial timber uprights.

The wider landscape

Late Roman ditches were identified by geophysical survey, curving north-east, and were investigated by trial excavation (Figs 2-3; Brown 2008b, 13). These ditches form a concentration of early boundaries preserved *in situ* in Area 4 and are the forerunners of the modern parish boundary. They were revealed at *c*117.24m above Ordnance Datum and matched geophysical surveys (Fig 3; Smith and Fisher 2008). They are thought to have a late Iron Age to early Roman element that extends north from the principal excavations in Area 1, although this was not demonstrated by trial excavation, which did not cross the full extent of the boundary. Two other gullies, further into the field were probably northern extensions of the late Roman boundary system. Not all of the geophysical anomalies within Area 4 were of archaeological origin. Two of the features examined during trial excavation were geological fissures of sandy gravel-clay within the natural sandy clay beds.

Dereliction

There was no evidence for activity during the 5th century and the former settlement was abandoned. This marked a break in the occupation evidence over a period of up to 500 years.

4.7 Medieval cultivation and road

The advent of open field cultivation in Barleythorpe parish, probably emerged from the late Saxon period onwards, certainly it would be expected to have existed by the 10th century.

Medieval landscape evidence was best demonstrated by the geophysical survey showing cultivation remains across the whole development site that were confirmed by trial excavations (Fig 3; Smith and Fisher 2008; Brown 2008b). The medieval road to Barleythorpe was not identified clearly until the watching brief when a ragged stone surface was discovered at the base of a filled-in holloway.

Ridge and furrow

Across the whole of the west of the development area the open fields of Barleythorpe parish were clearly defined ridge and furrow cultivation on varied alignments in alternate parts of the sports field (Fig 3). The east of the site in Oakham parish showed no such signs of ridge and furrow (Fig 23). Furrows that were aligned north-north-east to south-south-west within Barleythorpe parish stopped at the parish boundary and the area within Oakham parish was devoid of such medieval ploughing evidence. Furrows were generally spaced at *c*7-8m intervals towards the west, bunching together at their eastern extent to *c*3-5m intervals indicating that the furrow arrangement had been redefined along the boundary during its cultivated past. Furrows were generally *c*2-3m wide and 0.30-0.45m deep, the deepest furrows in Area 1 were located towards the parish boundary. Furrow deposits (3003) comprised mixed light to mid- orangey-brown silty clay that frequently included mottled greyish-brown clay silt containing more recent material from levelling, filling and flattening of the ridges.

Barleythorpe Road

The medieval road surface of the Barleythorpe Road was identified in the area of the east balancing pond during the watching brief (Figs 2 and 24). This was visible on the geophysical survey as a break between two different alignments of ridge and furrow cultivation, demonstrating that the road was part of the same period landscape (Fig

3; Smith and Fisher 2008). The roadside gully was identified along its north-west extent as a strong positive magnetic signal. Whilst ridge and furrow earthworks were prominent in the area of the west balancing pond, there were no earthworks present in the east balancing pond. Trial excavation failed to identify the holloway within Trench 15 because the difference between medieval furrow deposits and the holloway fill was distinguished only by the frequency of stone in the deposits.

Gully [5015] was 0.6m wide by 0.1m, aligned from east to west along the south verge of the road and was lost at the roads edge (Fig 2). Along its exposed eastward stretch the ditch was filled with firm reddish brown sandy clay within an area noticeably devoid of cultivation deposits (Fig 3). At its west extent the material from the road surface had spilled over into and filled the gully, so that a stone-packed ditch profile was clearly visible in section and giving a good idea of the height of the holloway bank (Fig 24). This profile indicated steep sloping sides and a narrow flat base, not evident along its eastward length. It is likely that the holloway was in use from the medieval period well into the post-medieval period and that a gradual creep of surface material at the bend in the road, accelerated by later horse, cart and carriage movements, led to the gradual infill of the ditch with stones.

The road surface (5012) was the principal deposit defining the base of the holloway; it comprised large rounded cobbles and fragments of compacted mudstone shale of varying sizes up to 100mm by 90mm by 50mm. The density of the stones was moderate to frequent but did not constitute total coverage (Fig 24). The area covered by the stones was a corridor *c*5.5m wide and was aligned roughly east to west with a gentle northward curve at its west end. The stones were compacted into the top of the natural clay and sandy clay horizon, at the base of a holloway that was 0.65m deep. The sides of the holloway had a very gradual slope towards the base, giving the surface an uneven camber. The holloway had subsequently been filled by mid-orangey-brown clayey loam subsoil (5002), which accumulated during the post-medieval period to a depth of 0.4m, and over which a 0.25m thick layer of topsoil (5001) had formed.

4.8 Post-medieval boundaries and well

Parish boundary

Directly along the line of the parish boundary, within the excavated area, was a stone wall (Figs 23 and 25). Wall [3103] was 1.32m wide by 0.45m high, bedded onto the top of the underlying subsoil and medieval furrow soil. Between three to four courses of dry stone walling survived. Roughly hewn mudstone blocks that had been squared off and roughly finished were arranged as facing stones on the outer sides and a rubble fill packed the interior with unshaped stone. Stones used for facing were up to 350mm long by 300mm wide by 140mm thick, although most were much smaller, and the rubble fill was generally no greater than 150mm in diameter. The wall was identified along the parish boundary for *c*88m and deviated towards the west, away from the parish boundary at its north end and was lost to modern levelling on the former sports field. The wall was probably of 18th-19th century origin. After the demolition of wall [3103] the parish boundary was marked by a hedgerow which accumulated modern vegetative debris and litter.

Ditch [5005]

In Area 4, in the east balancing pond, a ditch was excavated that clearly cut the top of the medieval road surface (5012) (Fig 2). Ditch [5005] was aligned north to south;

it was 1.32m wide by 0.38m deep and had sharp sloping sides that curved gently into a broad rounded base. The ditch was filled by light yellowish-brown clay silt.

Well [5018]

During the archaeological watching brief the top of a well shaft, [5018], was uncovered in Area 4, on the south side of the medieval road (Fig 2). The well had an aperture that was 0.9m in diameter internally, and was constructed using curved bricks. Below the aperture the bricks were of a more familiar size and shape, and formed fourteen courses of unbounded stretcher around a circular shaft. Below the shaft was a cistern forming the base of the well. The well was 4.0m deep from the aperture to the surface of the sediment at its base. There was 1.0m of water above the sediment that filled the circular cistern, *c*2.0m in diameter. The walls of the cistern were constructed from rough hewn fissile limestone. A single wooden beam was visible across the cistern, below the level of the shaft. The top of the well had been capped with fissile limestone slabs and were sealed by the subsoil (5002). A single sherd of Midland Black pottery was recovered from above the well and is a wall sherd from a Tyg, an upright tankard, dating from *c*1600-1650. The well is likely therefore to have been of 17th-18th-century use.

4.9 Modern features

Most of the ridge and furrow had been flattened or filled in to create a more even surface for the sports field and this process probably removed wall [3103] and any other earthworks that had not already been ploughed out (Brown 2008b).

There were two patterns of field drainage. The red ceramic field drains were aligned from north-west to south-east and were laid in narrow trenches 0.15m wide and up to 0.40m deep. They comprised crude non-uniform sections of pipe that were *c*305mm (1 foot) long by *c*70mm (2 3/4 inches) in diameter with a thickness of 8-11mm (3/8 inch) and a bore *c*45mm (1 3/4 inches) in diameter. The crudely fired cylindrical pipes were in a fabric fired to a light to medium pinkish-red and orange from fine grained clay with occasional coarse limestone grit inclusions. Most were silted up and were replaced by stone-filled drains, *c*0.2m wide by *c*0.35m deep, that were aligned from north to south. The fill of these later drains comprised exclusively rounded greyish-blue pebbles with a uniform size around 50-60mm in diameter.

Modern disturbances were present wherever the southern boundary of the fields bordered upon modern housing developments. This was evident from all stages of archaeological fieldwork (Figs 3 and 6). Three large service lines crossed the development area; they almost certainly truncated any archaeological features along their routes. Patches of high magnetic shadow were recorded during the geophysical survey where former goal posts stood and were observed in pairs (Fig 3). The former cricket pitches and long jump are also visible in Area 2.

Across the fields to the east and west the subsoil (3002) was 0.15-0.20m thick comprising mid- orangey brown clay silt loam containing moderate small pieces of iron rich mudstone up to 50mm in diameter. The topsoil (3001) was generally between 0.25-0.30m thick and comprised loose to firm mid- to dark greyish brown silty clay loam, grassed at the surface with frequent root intrusions.

5 THE FINDS

5.1 **Worked flint** by Yvonne Wolframm-Murray

In total 24 pieces of worked flint were recovered from the subsoil, or as residual finds from Iron Age and Roman features and a medieval furrow. The artefacts comprise one core, seventeen flakes, one blade and five retouched tool forms (Table 2). Post-depositional edge damage was present on most artefacts and ranged from isolated nicks to extensive crushing and edge spalling. Varying degrees of patination were present on eight pieces.

The raw material was a vitreous flint ranging from a light to a dark greyish-brown with one opaque flint of a mid-brown colour and one piece of black chert. The cortex present on the dorsal surfaces of eleven artefacts was a light to mid-brown colour, occasionally there was also cortex present on the striking platform. The flint was procured from the local gravel beds.

One core was recovered, which was cylindrical in shape and had two platforms opposing each other. The core produced small flakes. The seventeen un-retouched flakes recovered included four broken flakes, and one possible medial blade section, also there was one complete blade. A third of the flakes possessed broad striking platforms and were squat. Both soft hammer and hard hammer techniques were employed.

The five retouched tool forms comprised of one leaf-shaped arrowhead, two end/side scrapers, one hollow scraper, and one piercer. The arrowhead had semi-abrupt retouch extending its circumference on the dorsal surface and the tip was invasively retouched on the ventral surface. The piercer was fashioned on a medial section of a core fragment. The point, formed through abrupt retouch to either side, was present on the distal end of the flake. There were two end/side scrapers; one had abrupt retouch on its convex distal end and a lateral edge. It was manufactured on an elongated flake and had a large flake removed from its dorsal surface. Another end/side scraper only the distal end was present. It had abrupt retouch on the distal end and retouch was present on the lateral edges. Another scraper was a hollow scraper made on a natural flake, which had abrupt retouch along one edge that formed a hollow edge.

Table 2: Summary of the worked flint

Item	Whole	Broken	Totals
Flakes	12	5	17
Blades	1	-	1
Cores	1	-	1
Scrapers	3	-	3
Piercer	1	-	1
Arrowhead	1	-	1
Totals	**19**	**5**	**24**

Technological and typological characteristics of the un-retouched flakes and retouched tool forms indicate an early Neolithic to late Neolithic or early Bronze Age date for the collection.

5.2 **Iron Age pottery** by Andy Chapman

A total of 541 sherds, weighing 3.14kg, come from hand-built vessels dated to the middle to late Iron Age. The material was recovered from 45 separate contexts, but the majority of these produced very small quantities; with 27 contexts containing no more than five sherds. Only 13 contexts produced more than 100g of pottery and five of these are related to Roundhouse R4, as discussed below.

The average sherd weight is 5.8g, illustrating the fragmented nature of much of the assemblage. Some of the larger groups are evidently from only two or three vessels, but all of these are also highly fragmented, with few joining sherds. This is largely a result of the poorly-fired nature of the majority of the vessels, which are in soft fabrics that have often lost most of the shell inclusions and have abraded edges (see below).

While rim sherds are present, they are often short, making it impossible to accurately estimate rim diameters. As a result, Estimated Vessel Equivalents (EVEs) have not been calculated. Instead, the number of sherd families per context has been estimated. This provides an estimate of 74 vessels for the entire assemblage, in which it is notable that the 13 contexts that produced over 100g of pottery all had sherd family counts of only 1 to 5.

Fabrics

Four fabrics were defined by visual examination of the sherds:

Coarse shell

Containing large platelets of crushed shell, up to 4mm diameter. Usually a soft fabric and in many instances much of the shell has been lost to leaching, leaving voids within the body of the fabric and pitted surfaces.

Fine shell

Containing sparse smaller platelets of crushed shell, typically measuring no more than 1mm.

Sandy

Harsh surface texture from the fine sand component and containing small, grains of quartz.

Grog

Containing small pellets of rounded grog, and typically also sandy.

Table 3: Quantification of Iron Age pottery by fabrics and sherd count

Fabric	Coarse shelly	Fine shelly	Sandy	Grog (+ sandy)	Total
Sherd count	450	36	37	18	541 (3143g)
Percentages	83.2	6.7	6.8	3.3	

The majority of the assemblage is in a fabric containing coarse dense inclusions of crushed shell, although in many examples the fabric is soft with abraded surfaces, and much of the shell has been lost, leaving voids in the fabric and pitted surfaces. Although there is no clear-cut distinction between the two shelly fabrics, a smaller group contains only sparse and smaller shell inclusions. These vessels are typically smaller, thinner-walled and better-finished vessels, usually bowls, and include some vessels in a black fabric with burnished surfaces.

Around 10% of the assemblage comprises sherds in hard, coarse sandy fabric, and a proportion of these also contain sparse small pellets of grog, measuring 1-2mm. These vessels are often smaller jar and bowl forms, but some of the larger scored ware jars have sandy fabrics. The presence of grog in some of the vessels in sandy fabrics is suggestive of a late Iron Age date, around the 1st century BC.

The sherds typically have a grey to grey-black core and similarly dark internal surfaces are the normal. The external surfaces are more variable, often patchy, ranging from dark grey through grey-brown to orange-brown or light brown. The overall impression is that darker colours predominate, which is typical of later assemblages. Oblique breaks were evident on several sherds, indicating that they had fractured along the overlapping coil joins.

Form and decoration

There are few vessels for which the form can be securely reconstructed, but by comparison with other contemporary sites it can be concluded that the assemblage contains a high proportion of the large thick-walled storage jars that are so characteristic of middle Iron Age assemblages in the Midlands. These vessels have walls around 10mm thick. However, thinner-walled small jar and bowl forms are also present.

The most common rim form is a simple flattened rim, sometimes expanded, while the thinner-walled vessels have simple rounded rims. In both instances the rims usually rise straight from the body, with no developed neck. At least one small vessel has an everted rim, but this came from a feature at the western end of the site, and not the main area of Iron Age settlement. There are no examples of fingernail or fingertip decoration on rims or bodies.

Nineteen of the 74 sherd families, 25.6%, comprise scored ware vessels, with one or two examples occurring in all of the larger context groups within Roundhouse R4 and beyond. This is a higher percentage of scored ware to plain vessels than is usually found on middle Iron Age sites, where scored ware is more typically 5-10% of the total assemblage.

The scored decoration typically comprises deeply incised lines that are closely-spaced and roughly parallel, running down the body of the vessel slightly off the vertical, and sometimes overlaying or overlaid by a second series of scoring at an oblique angle, but not horizontal (Fig 26, a-c). In all instances these sherds have come from thick-walled storage jars, although there are also similar jars that are plain and undecorated.

One of the more complete examples comprises multiple non-joining sherds from Ditch [3283] (not illustrated). The body sherds are typically 110mm thick, and the jar has a flat-topped rim, *c*250mm in diameter, and no neck. The body was decorated with parallel scoring, set slightly oblique to the vertical and stopping 30mm below the rim, but the decoration was shallowly incised and has been largely lost. This vessel has a patchy orange-brown to grey external surface, abraded and pitted from leaching of the shell inclusions.

Of particular interest are two sherds from a globular bowl with no neck and just a short upright, rounded rim (Fig 27). The body of this vessel has been decorated with neatly and deeply incised vertical lines that were cut by a series of slightly more widely-spaced horizontal lines, to form a semi-regular grid pattern. This decoration is

a variation of scored ware, but the neatness of the grid pattern is not a feature of middle Iron Age scored ware. It is therefore suggested that this is probably a late vessel, transitional in decoration between middle Iron Age scored ware and the comb decorated vessels that become common in the late pre-Roman Iron Age, during the early decades of the 1st century AD. The suggested date for this vessel is the final decades of the 1st century BC.

It has been argued that more regularly scored vessels from other Iron Age settlements are probably also of a late transitional form. This group includes a large jar with combed scoring and a scored base from Manor Farm, Newton Bromswold, Northamptonshire (Chapman 2006, plates 4 and 5); with the continued use of this site into the mid-1st century AD confirmed by the presence of small quantities of early Roman pottery. There is a similar scored base from Late Iron Age/Early Roman features at Alma Road, Peterborough (Timby 2006, fig 4, 8). Another vessel with a complex decorative scheme of roughly horizontal and vertical scoring forming a crude latticework or grid pattern comes from Littlehey Prison, Perry, Cambridgeshire (Chapman 2009).

From the terminal of Roundhouse R4, [3180], there are two sherds in a black fabric with a coarse uneven surface from a small bowl with a rounded rim. This has been decorated with scored curvilinear decoration. There are insufficient sherds to determine the pattern, but it may have comprised intersecting circles.

Pottery distribution

A total of 131 sherds, weighing 912g, of pottery was recovered from the ring ditch of Roundhouse R4 and pit [3113], within the roundhouse. This is over a quarter of all the Iron Age pottery from the site; 24% by sherd count and 29% by weight. As is typical of major domestic roundhouses, two-thirds of this material had been deposited in the terminals of the ring ditch, with 312g, perhaps from some five vessels, coming from the northern terminal and 300g, perhaps from some seven vessels, coming from the southern terminal. Sherds from scored ware storage jars were present in all but one of these contexts. The fill of the southern terminal, [3180], also contained a small bowl with unusual scored curvilinear decoration, perhaps intersecting circles. There were also four rim sherds from flat rims, and part of a flat base.

A small number of contexts towards the western end of the site produced small quantities of Iron Age pottery, probably largely as residual finds indicating that there was some activity in this area prior to the development of the Roman ditch systems. The largest group, 34 sherds weighing 195g, came from Roman linear boundary ditch [3018], and included sherds from two vessels: the body of a scored ware jar and part of a thin-walled burnished bowl with an everted rim, suggesting a late Iron Age date. The western arm, [3015], of a curvilinear ditch system at the western end of the site produced a single thin-walled sherd in a sandy fabric, which might also date to the late Iron Age. In addition, there was a single small fragment of probable Iron Age pottery from curvilinear ditch [3084], part of Roundhouse R5, which also produced Roman pottery dated to the early 2nd century AD. There is also a body sherd from a scored ware vessel from Roman boundary ditch [3082] (Fig 26, b).

Residual sherds of Iron Age pottery came from the Roman ditch systems overlying the western side of the main Iron Age occupation area. There is Iron Age pottery from an extensive soil deposit (3158). There are also sherds from Roman boundary ditch [3169], from two groups within [3363] and from the ditches that formed Enclosure E8. With the complexity of later recutting of the Roman ditches, it is likely

that the western arm of the Iron Age D-shaped enclosure (E1) had been partly lost and obscured, with the residual Iron Age pottery probably coming from disturbed lengths of ditch.

Chronology

The assemblage is dominated by thick-walled vessels from a mixture of plain and scored ware storage jars. The assemblage has the characteristics typical of a Midlands assemblage of the middle Iron Age.

A number of factors suggest that the assemblage may be of a relatively late date, running into and perhaps largely of late Iron Age date. The presence of small quantities of vessels in a sandy fabric that also contain grog is one indicator, while the more regular scored ware, with its grid pattern, is another. More general indicators of a later date are predominance of darker colours and shortness or absence of developed necks.

As there is little indication that the site was occupied for an extended period of time, it is suggested that occupation may have begun in the 2nd century BC, and probably continued through the 1st century BC, perhaps into the early decades of the 1st century AD. Only two sherds containing grog were present in the ring ditch of Roundhouse R4, but more sherds containing grog came from the ditch of the D-shaped enclosure (E1) to the south of the roundhouse, which also produced the scored vessel with its semi-regular grid pattern, from ditch [3283] (Fig 27). It is suggested that the roundhouse may have fallen out of use slightly earlier than the D-shaped enclosure to its south.

While the roundhouse and enclosure system is dated to the middle to late Iron Age, perhaps the 2nd-1st centuries BC, the final usage of this part of the site certainly continued into the early to mid-1st century AD. In ditch [3363], a small group of Iron Age material was accompanied by a wheel-finished storage jar in an orange oxidised fabric, with a concave neck, a heavy expanded rim and boldly incised decoration on the body. This dates to the 1st century AD.

Illustrated vessels

Fig 26 Iron Age scored ware body sherds
- a ditch [3180], southern terminal of Roundhouse R4
- b ditch [3082], Roman enclosure E7
- c pit [3113], within Roundhouse R4

Fig 27 Late Iron Age grid-pattern scored ware, ditch [3283], Enclosure E1

5.3 Iron Age finds

Querns by Andy Chapman

A fragment of a saddle quern in fine-grained cream to brown mudstone, came from pit [3357] lying to the north-west of Roundhouse R4. The stone is 270mm long by 140mm wide, with a single original, roughly straight edge surviving. It is 75-90mm thick, and the under side is uneven and undulating. The grinding surface is well worn and slightly concave.

The southern terminal of Roundhouse R4, ditch cut [3182], contained a fragment from a lower stone of a rotary quern in fine-grained grey mudstone. The stone was

*c*500mm in diameter and was 38mm thick at the circumference. There were no other diagnostic features.

Loomweights by Tora Hylton

A fragment of a cylindrical loomweight was recovered from pit [3112] inside Roundhouse R4 (Fig 9). Stylistically it is more like those of Bronze Age date, but this seems unlikely given its context. The fragment is 95mm by 60mm by 55mm, but the curvature of the piece and the presence of a longitudinal perforation, indicates that it is part of a cylindrical loomweight. The weight would have been *c*100mm in diameter. The fabric is coarse and tempered with sand, quartz inclusions and small stones, whilst the core is black and the surface oxidized.

Eighteen fragments of a loomweight were recovered from pit [3165] at the crossing of the late Iron Age to early Roman ditch boundary, close to spread (3158). Some of the fragments join together to form part of a triangular weight with rounded corners, weighing in excess of 1.2kg. Two rounded corners survive, these still retain vestiges of the perforation/suspension holes, their position indicates that the weight represents a Poole Type 1 weight where all three corners were pierced from side to side (Poole 1984, 401, 403). The perforations would have been made by pushing a stick through the clay, these are oval in section measuring 15mm by 10mm. The weight has been manufactured from 'natural' clay and fired to a buff/pink colour, there are few discernable inclusions, making the fabric soapy to touch. The weight measures *c*190mm from corner to corner and is *c*80mm wide, this together with the weight of the piece, suggests that it corresponds with examples at the top of the mean range recovered from Danebury (ibid 1984). Although the function of triangular weights is speculative, they are often assumed to have been used in groups as loomweights.

5.4 Metalworking debris by Andy Chapman

There is a small amount of debris from features, the majority of which are of Iron Age date or are Roman features that cut through the Iron Age occupation area. The material mainly derives from high-temperature processes.

Seven contexts produced metalworking debris. Four of the deposits were exclusively Iron Age within gully [3242] inside Roundhouse R2, ditch [3249], pit [3355] in group P1 and ditch [3283], part of the D-shaped enclosure (E1). Ditches [3285] and [3309] around Enclosure E8 truncated Iron Age features and were likely to carry residual Iron Age material. A single feature, ditch [3082], which bounded Enclosure E7 was Roman in date. These features produced small quantities of light and vesicular fuel ash slag from undefined high-temperature processes, with a total weight of 205g.

Ditch [3283] contained a small concave disk of iron slag, 78mm long by 55mm wide, weighing 162g, which is a probable smithing hearth bottom.

A fragment of ironstone, weighing 245g, with worn and burnt, red to purple, surfaces, also from the D-shaped enclosure (E1) is probably merely a burnt stone and not a fragment of roasted ore.

The collected material therefore provides limited evidence that some iron smithing was carried out on the site in the Iron Age period.

5.5 **Fired clay** by Pat Chapman

There are 107 fragments from 24 contexts, weighing 1.085kg, which are typically irregularly-shaped, small and worn, fairly hard and fired to red with a black core, or pale brown. A few fragments have features indicating their possible use. One piece, from ditch [3049], larger than most at 60mm long, has the only wattle impression, with a diameter of 15mm. Two large pieces from Roundhouse R5 have smoothed surfaces from being on the exterior of a structure, one with a 65mm-long stem impression that is 8mm in diameter. Other fragments from a posthole within Enclosure E11 and layer (3158) have similar smooth surfaces. These fragments are structural debris. The fabric of fragments from a discrete pit within Roundhouse R3 is slightly vesicular from being exposed to prolonged high temperatures.

There are 37 fragments, weighing 260g, from pit [3022] in Sample 3, in slightly soft fine orange clay. One fragment has a smoothed surface. There was also 3.93kg of fired clay that came from pit [3213], Sample 18. About 2kg of this comprised crumbs of 5mm or less in diameter and were discarded after weighing. The remaining fragments are irregularly-shaped, the largest no more than 35mm in diameter. They are orange to pale brown in colour, fairly hard with very rough surfaces. These could be the remnants of clay lining. One small fragment, weighing 10g, comes from pit [3024], Sample 2.

5.6 **Roman pottery** by Jane Timby

The assemblage of 863 sherds of Roman pottery, weighing 14.4kg, was fairly well preserved in terms of fragmentation, reflected in the overall average sherd weight of 16.7g. Many of the sherds are quite abraded and surface treatments, such as colour-coating, poorly preserved, possibly a reflection of fairly soft fabrics and slightly adverse ground conditions.

Methodology

The pottery was sorted into broad fabric groups based on the inclusions present, their frequency and grade, and the firing colour. Known regional or traded wares were coded following the system advocated for the National Roman Reference Collection (Tomber and Dore 1998). Local wares were coded following a system developed by the author for other assemblages studied in the wider region, for example, Higham Ferrers (Timby forthcoming a) and Irchester (Timby forthcoming b) to ensure some compatibility.

The sorted assemblage was quantified by sherd count and weight for each recorded context. Forms were recorded for rims, which were also measured for estimated vessel equivalence (EVE). The data has been entered onto an MS Excel spreadsheet a copy of which is deposited with the site archive. A quantified summary by fabric is presented in Table 4.

Description of Roman fabrics and forms

Imports

Samian: Just eleven sherds of samian are present, three are South Gaulish and eight are Central Gaulish in origin. The former includes a Dragendorf 27 cup and a decorated Dragendorf 30 bowl sherd. The latter includes at least two Dragendorf 31 bowls. The South Gaulish Dragendorf 30 bowl is decorated with an eagle (?O2180) set within a medallion in a style similar to that used by Mercator (*cf.* Dannell 1999, fig 2.20.283). The vessel probably dates to the period *c*AD 75-90.

Table 4: Quantification of Roman pottery sherds by fabric

	Fabric	Description	No	%	Wt (g)	%	EVE	%
Imports	LGF SA	South Gaulish samian	3	0.3	36	0.2	12	1.0
	LEZ SA	Central Gaulish samian	8	0.9	28	0.2	11	1.0
	? IMP PR	?imported Pompeian redware	1	0.1	2	0.0	0	0.0
Nene V	LNV CC	Lower Nene Valley colour-coat	186	21.6	3069.5	21.3	420	36.3
	LNV RE	Lower Nene Valley greyware	102	11.8	2402.5	16.7	214	18.5
	LNV WH	Lower Nene Valley whiteware	26	3.0	238.5	1.7	0	0.0
	LNV WHM	Lower Nene Valley mortaria	1	0.1	31	0.2	0	0.0
Local:grog	BWGR	black grogged ware	6	0.7	37	0.3	0	0.0
	GROG	sandy grog-tempered ware	5	0.6	37	0.3	0	0.0
	GYGR	grey grog-tempered	2	0.2	29	0.2	0	0.0
	PNK GT	Midlands grog-tempered	2	0.2	37	0.3	0	0.0
Local:sand	BW	black sandy ware	44	5.1	558	3.9	29	2.5
	BWNSY	brown sandy	4	0.5	48	0.3	15	1.3
	BWHSY	burnt whiteware sandy	3	0.3	14	0.1	0	0.0
	BPNKSY	burnt pink sandy	1	0.1	30	0.2	0	0.0
	GREY	grey sandy ware	184	21.3	2686	18.6	211	18.3
	GREYF	finer grey ware	37	4.3	1812	12.6	24	2.1
	OXID	oxidised sandy medium fine	34	3.9	207.5	1.4	15	1.3
	OXIDF	fine oxidised ware	1	0.1	2	0.0	0	0.0
	PNKSY	pink sandy	13	1.5	233	1.6	5	0.4
Calcareous	SHELL	dense shelly handmade	174	20.2	2660	18.5	188	16.3
	BWHSH	black ware with sparse shell/limestone	19	2.2	119	0.8	12	1.0
	GREYLI	grey ware with limestone	1	0.1	56	0.4	0	0.0
	OXIDSH	oxidised ware with shell/limestone	3	0.3	27	0.2	0	0.0
Grog/shell	GRSH	grog and shell-tempered ware	1	0.1	7	0.0	0	0.0
Misc		miscellaneous	2	0.2	4	0.0	0	0.0
Totals			**863**	**100**	**14411**	**100**	**1156**	**100**

?Imported Pompeian redware (IMP PR) (Tomber and Dore 1998, 45). A small sherd with just the internal surface surviving recovered during the watching brief. This is smooth, pinkish-orange and self-coloured. The sandy paste contains frequent flakes of muscovite and biotite mica suggesting a source from an igneous or volcanic region.

Lower Nene Valley wares (Tombre and Dore 1998, 117-9)

Products of the Lower Nene Valley are well represented collectively, accounting for 36.5% of the assemblage by count. Lower Nene Valley colour-coated wares (LNV CC) alone account for 21.6% making it the commonest ware in the assemblage. The date of the earliest production of colour-coated wares is not known precisely but the industry appears to have become fairly well established by the later 2nd century (Perrin 1999, 87), when the principal products were beakers, flagons and boxes. The assemblage here is overwhelmingly dominated by jars, accounting for 44.8% EVE, followed by bowls at 35%, beakers at 10.7%, dishes at 8% and a single lid. Amongst the bodysherds are examples of a flagon from spread (3358) with painted decoration. The bowls mainly comprise straight-sided flanged forms (Fig 29, 9), bowls with flat or rounded rims (Fig 29, 6) and copies of samian forms Dragendorf 38 (Fig 30, 13) and 36 (Fig 30, 15); all typical later 3rd-4th-century forms. The dishes and bowls are mainly plain-rimmed types (Fig 29, 10).

Lower Nene Valley grey wares (LNV RE) account for 11.8% of the total Roman assemblage. This industry, established by the second quarter of the 2nd century, continued through until the late 3rd or early 4th century (ibid, 78). The vessel repertoire is dominated by jars, which account for 69.2% EVE of the ware category, the commonest forms being everted simple or rolled rim types (Fig 28, 1-2, 5). The remaining 30.8% comprise dishes and bowls.

Lower Nene Valley white wares (LNV WH) are less well represented compared to the other products from this industry accounting for just 3%. Only a single sherd of mortarium was recovered from the excavation.

Local wares: grog-tempered

The grog-tempered category of wares can be divided into three groups: sandy grog-tempered brown wares, black and grey grogged wheel-made wares and pink grog-tempered ware storage jar (Tomber and Dore 1998, 210). Collectively this group formed quite a small percentage of the assemblage, accounting in total for just 1.7%. The term ‘grog’ is used loosely as the paste contains largely rounded to sub-angular clay pellets, which may occur naturally. Very few of the sherds were featured but most appear to come from jar forms with a few bowls (Fig 28, 4).

Local wares: sandy

The sandy wares to some extent mirror the grog-tempered wares in that the divisions made for some of the groups have been primarily based on firing colour rather than any other distinguishing characteristics. A small number of vessels have been deliberately blackened on the exterior, for example a burnt white ware (BWHSY) and a burnt pink sandy ware (BPNKSY); in addition there are black, brown, orange (oxidised), grey and pink sandy wares. The sandy wares account for 37.2% by count, 38.8% by weight of the Roman assemblage. Grey wares are by far the most common at 21.4%. Forms are dominated by jars, some with hooked, flanged or flaring rims (Fig 29, 8), flanged straight-walled bowls and plain-rimmed dishes. The pink wares feature a reeded-rim bowl.

Local wares: calcareous

The calcareous group is dominated by shelly ware with small amounts of black, grey or oxidised wheel-made ware containing sparse shell or limestone. A single grog and shell-tempered piece is also present probably a residual earlier Roman sherd.

The calcareous wares account for 20.2% by count, 18.5% by weight. Vessels include both handmade and wheel-made forms. Nearly all the vessels made in the shelly ware are jars with large storage and medium-sized jars showing various rim forms, including, everted rolled, hooked and triangular (Fig 30, 14). A single conical, flanged-rim bowl is also present.

Site discussion

Amongst the earliest features to contain Roman pottery is the gully of Roundhouse R5, which produced six sherds: limestone-tempered black ware, grog and shell-tempered ware and a sherd of white-ware. A strap handle from a white-ware flagon came from pit [3067] in the terminal. The range of products and the chronology of this component of the Nene Valley industry are little understood but it is likely that flagons were being made by the Hadrianic period (Perrin 1999, 108).

Probably not much later than Roundhouse R5 are the inter-cutting ditches on the north side of Enclosure E8 which produced just three small sherds of grey or black ware and a single colour-coated sherd. Gully [3020] produced a single oxidised sherd. The three sherds from pit [3024] could potentially be earlier Roman. This suggests a late 2nd century date for Enclosure E8 and supports continuous occupation of the site with boundary alterations around the mid-2nd century. The main line of ditch [3049] produced a much larger assemblage of some 157 sherds. This includes several examples of multiple sherds from single vessels (Fig 28, 1-5). The range of fabrics is quite diverse with sandy, grog, calcareous and Lower Nene Valley wares present. Significantly the latter mainly comprises grey wares and white wares with just a single colour-coated sherd. One sherd of a South Gaulish samian cup (Dragendorf 27) is also present. The group suggests filling of the ditch in the mid- to late 2nd century. Ditch [3008] produced two local sherds of probable early to mid-2nd-century date.

The remaining Roman pottery was recovered from a series of ditches, three pits, two wells, a grave and a large spread. The pits produced quite modest assemblages, the largest coming from pit-like spread [3406] with 39 sherds indicating a 4th-century date from a colour-coated (LNV CC) flanged bowl and jar (Fig 29, 7) and a grey ware flanged-rim jar (Fig 29, 8). Seven sherds that were probably of similar date were recovered from postholes within Enclosure E11. Three sherds of colour-coated jars from [3336] had been burnt and sooted after breaking. Well [3064] produced just six unfeatured sherds, amongst which were colour-coated and grey wares, suggesting residual later 2nd-century wares mixed amongst the later fabrics. Well [3077] with 27 sherds was abandoned in the 4th century. A single, very small, friable, unfeatured sherd of Roman grey ware was recovered from burial [3163].

The site produced pottery which ranged in terms of average sherd size from just 8.3g in ditches [3160] and [3094] through to 21.6g in ditch [3129] suggesting that there may be a high level of redeposition in some cuts. Starting on the west side of the site, ditch [3018] produced two residual Iron Age sherds and 12 grey wares. A complete absence of any diagnostic later Roman pieces might suggest this ditch could date to the 2nd century. Similarly, ditch [3029] contained 35 sherds all of which could date from the mid- to late 2nd century including a grey ware devolved butt beaker. There are grog-tempered sherds, a single sherd of grey ware and shelly wares.

Ditch [3082] produced a total 52 sherds with an average sherd weight of just 11g. This produced no diagnostically late Roman forms. The assemblage contains nine sherds of white-ware, two colour-coated wares, seven shelly wares, grey ware and grog-tempered ware and could thus date to the later 2nd-3rd centuries. The apparently contiguous eastern arm [3129] produced a further 47 sherds with a different ceramic profile. This group, much better preserved with an average sherd weight of 21.6g contains 14 colour-coated wares including a bifid rim jar, 17 grey wares with flanged bowls, 14 shelly wares and no grog-tempered ware, which is 4th-century in character and thus a much later addition to the field system. Ditch [3160] had 51 fragmented sherds that clearly contained 4th-century colour-coated forms.

Ditch [3169] on the eastern side of the site produced 21 sherds amongst which there were two sherds of samian and four sherds of colour-coated ware suggestive of a late 2nd-3rd century date.

Medieval furrows and layers within spread (3358) produced a very large quantity of pottery, 346 sherds, 40% of the total recovered Roman assemblage. The sherds are surprisingly well preserved with an overall average sherd weight of 20g. In terms of composition, Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware accounts for 31.5% with a high incidence of jars and flanged bowls, shelly wares for 24.3% and grey wares for 25.7% (Figs 29-30, 9-14). There are no white-wares present apart from a single mortarium sherd. The Roman wares indicate the accumulation probably extended into the later 4th century.

The small enclosure around Building 1 is of 4th-century date and produced 27 sherds amongst which is a colour-coated ware flanged bowl and a bowl copying a samian dish (Fig 30, 15). Ditch [3094] which appears to cut this enclosure produced just four sherds of grey ware and shelly ware.

Summary

The main assemblage recovered from Oakham appears to indicate activity from around the mid- 2nd century through to the later 4th century. It is likely that there was continuity in occupation throughout this period. The small size of some of the individual assemblages combined with probable redeposition, means that only the earliest and the latest groups stand out. Samian contributes 1.1% of the assemblage, and this with the low incidence of other continental or regional imports and specialist wares such as mortaria, indicates a fairly low status rural assemblage. Two additional sherds recovered from the watching brief give a slightly different view; one is a sherd of South Gaulish samian of Flavian date, found in the extension of ditch [3049], which might indicate earlier occupation nearby; the other appears to be a coarse-ware import, slightly conflicting with the low status conclusion from the excavated material. Both sherds were recovered from outside of the settlement focus.

The assemblage is dominated by jars which collectively account for 65.4% EVE, followed by bowls and dishes at 28.2%, and beakers at 4.8%. This is reflective of the rural nature of the group and the emphasis on later material. The Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware production concentrated on beaker, flagon and box production in the later 2nd century (Perrin 1999, 87). From the late 3rd century or early 4th century the range of jars and bowls made in grey wares were also made in colour-coated ware and it is these which are prevalent in this assemblage. A very low incidence of storage jars suggests there is unlikely to have been much agricultural processing or storage nearby and that this is essentially a domestic assemblage.

Catalogue of illustrated pottery

Figs 28-30

1 Round-bodied, squat jar with girth grooves. Lower Nene Valley grey ware. Ditch [3049].
2 Wide-mouthed jar with rouletted decoration. Lower Nene Valley grey ware. Ditch [3049].
3 Flared rim jar. Grey sandy ware. Ditch [3049].
4 Flattened angular rim, squat rounded bowl. Grog-tempered sandy brown ware. Ditch [3082].
5 Several joining sherds from a jar with a short, slightly everted rim. Lower Nene Valley grey ware. Ditch [3049].
6 Bowl with a thickened, rounded rim and a wire-cut base. Grey Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware. Ditch [3129.
7 Necked jar, pink fabric with trace of red-orange colour-coat. Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware. Pit-like spread [3406].
8 Flanged-rim wide-mouthed jar. Grey sandy ware. Pit-like spread [3406].
9 Flanged, straight-sided bowl. Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware. Spread (3358).
10 Plain-sided bowl. Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware. Spread (3358).
11 Small necked bowl. Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware. Spread (3358).
12 Necked beaker. Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware. Spread (3358).
13 Flanged-wall bowl copying a Dragendorf 38. Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware. Spread (3358).
14 Wide-mouthed, triangular-rimmed jar. Dense shelly handmade. Spread (3358).
15 Bowl copying samian Dragendorf 36. Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware. Ditch [3058].

5.7 **Roman tile** by Pat Chapman

The overall assemblage comprises 51 sherds, weighing 2.089kg, including possible tile fragments from a sample. The 14 hand excavated tile sherds weigh 1.629kg, and are small and worn. The five roof tile sherds comprise two *tegulae* from a medieval furrow and well [3077], and two *imbrices* from a furrow and ditch [3169]. There is part of a possible ridge tile, also from a furrow, with a slight flange along the edge before tapering into the curve. One of the four fragments of floor tile, also from a furrow, has a blackened surface while another sherd, from ditch [3169], has been worn smooth. The remainder are undiagnostic body sherds. There are two shellyware sherds, while the other fabrics are slightly soft silty orange, hard slightly brittle orange with a rough fracture, very hard orange with cream streaks and hard fine sandy orange.

Table 5: Quantification of ceramic tile

Context/feature	No	Wt (g)	Description
(3003)/medieval furrow	2	365	*Tegula*, ridge tile
(3076)/well [3077]	1	363	*Tegula*
(3102)/medieval furrow	5	460	*Imbrex*, 2 floor tiles, body, fragment
(3128)/ditch [3129]	1	35	body
(3159)/ditch [3169]	1	124	Floor tile (SF46)
(3167)/ditch [3169]	1	28	body
(3303)/ditch [3169]	3	254	*Imbrex* (broken), floor, body
Totals	**14**	**1629**	

5.8 **Roman finds** by Tora Hylton (except where stated)

There are 22 Roman finds, fourteen were recovered from stratified Roman deposits and eight were recovered as residual finds in medieval or subsoil deposits. Stratified finds comprise an iron punch, six forged nails, a copper alloy brooch pin, a surgical instrument, a pair of tweezers, one quern fragment, a stone mortar, two spindle whorls and a fragment of vessel glass. Residual finds from later contexts are comprise four coins, a lead weight, one quern fragment and a fragment of vessel glass.

Smithy punch by Ian Meadows

An iron punch was recovered from Building 1. Stylistically it resembles a small smithy punch, it is 120mm long, tapered with a rectangular cross-section and the head is burred (Fig 31, 1). This type is not uncommon and similar examples dating to the mid-1st century have been recovered from Hod Hill (Manning 1985, A30-A32). This suggests that the punch is residual, since it was recovered from a 3rd to 4th century context but it accompanies late Iron Age smithing evidence comfortably.

Nails

Six nails were recorded; two from burial [3163], one from ditch [3160] and three from Building 1. Where possible the nails have been classified according to Mannings typology (1985, fig 32). Three of the nails are Type 1b, which have a flat sub-circular head; complete examples range in recorded length from 38-100mm. This type of nail is common and would have had numerous applications with wood, for furniture or light structural fixings. Other forms of nail represented include; Type 5 where there is no discernable head; Type 8 with a domed head; and a possible upholstery stud.

Brooch pin

A copper alloy brooch pin, complete with part of the spring was recovered from the fill of ditch [3129]. The corroded remains appear to part of a simple one-piece brooch, a Nauheim Derivative which developed from continental forms and was in use before the conquest and until the end of the 1st century AD (Mackreth 1973, 11; 1996, 303).

Scalpel/blunt dissector

Of particular interest is the presence of a scalpel/blunt dissector, a surgical instrument used for delicate operations. It was recovered from the upper abandonment spread (3101) of Building 1 together with a pair of tweezers. The presence of such an instrument is significant as it may allude to specialist medical use in Roman times. The scalpel/blunt dissector is a surgical knife, it comprises a cast bronze handle with ornamented grip and with circular or square-sectioned mouldings (Fig 31, 2). One end terminates in a flat, slender leaf-shaped blade (blunt dissector) and the other in a bifurcated slot into which a blade, usually of iron (scalpel) would have been secured but no longer survives. The instrument equates to Jacksons Type II scalpel/blunt dissector, an instrument used for fine/delicate surgery; similar items have been recovered with surgical instruments associated with eye surgery (Jackson 1986, fig 1, 7-9, 135). Medical instruments of this type are not common single finds on archaeological sites, when found they are recovered with a range of instruments as part of a medical set, like that purchased by the British Museum (Jackson 1986).

Tweezers

The tweezers have been forged from copper alloy sheet metal and are 52mm long, they have slightly flared arms, chamfered blades and a pronounced bow which still efficiently holds the tension (Fig 31, 3). The exterior surface of the arms is decorated with marginal grooves like examples from Bancroft Villa, Milton Keynes (Hylton 1994, fig 145, 115) and Gadebridge Park, (Neal and Butcher 1974, fig 62, 181).

Coins by Ian Meadows

There were four coins of Roman date recovered during the fieldwork:

SF1 A corroded coin, 16mm in diameter, possibly a CONSTANTINOPOLIS issue (AD330-5) but the surface is too corroded for any positive identification beyond 4th century. Medieval furrow (3003).

SF8 A corroded coin, 13mm in diameter, with a GLORIA EXCECITVS reverse of two soldiers and 1 standard (AD335-41). The obverse was too corroded to identify the bust. Building 1, spread (3101), part of spread (3358).

SF9 A 16mm diameter GLORIA EXCERCITVS, two soldiers, two standards, issued (AD330-5). The obverse is Constantine I, the obverse legend is only partially visible. Medieval furrow (3003).

SF10 A highly corroded coin flan, 16mm in diameter, no surface detail and therefore precludes identification. Flan size would suggest a probable 4th century date. Medieval furrow (3003).

All four coins were heavily corroded and the original surfaces had largely spalled off in each instance leaving only slight impressions. The state of corrosion means these pieces would not reward any further work. As coins they are probably all 4th century and belong to types frequently found in the archaeological record, presumably their small size and low denomination contributed to their loss rate.

Lead weight

A biconical steelyard weight manufactured from lead was recovered from topsoil deposits. The weight still retains a vestige of the corroded iron suspension loop and it measures 29mm in diameter at its widest point (Fig 31, 4). A small percentage of the lower section is missing. The weight appears to correspond to 4 *unciae (quadrans)*, it weighs 102.6g, which equates to 3.76 ounces.

Roman querns by Andy Chapman

The two fragments of Roman rotary querns are in fine-grained cream-grey mudstone, speckled with fine black mineral inclusions, which is Spilsby Mudstone from Lincolnshire.

A large part of a flat upper stone is from the disturbed western portion of layer (3158) (Fig 32, 1). The stone is 375mm in diameter (30% surviving) with a tapering central eye, 100mm in diameter. The stone has a roughly flat top, with some dimpled tool marks surviving, and there is an abrupt 90° angle with the vertical circumference, where linear vertical tools marks are also faintly visible. The grinding surface is worn and deeply concave, with the stone 78mm thick at the circumference and only 44mm thick at the central eye.

Part of a lower stone, *c*400mm in diameter (13% surviving) comes from Roman boundary ditch [3082]. It is 45mm thick at the circumference, and this increases rapidly, indicating that the stone was domed to take a deeply concave upper stone, similar to the one recovered.

Mortar by Andy Chapman

A small stone mortar was found in the stone-lined well [3077] (Fig 32, 2). It is a block of fine-grained mudstone, 163mm long by 147mm wide and 63mm thick, with two edges worked nearly straight, with a rounded corner, while the other two sides are more rounded. The base is roughly flat and lightly worn. The top surface has a level margin, 20-30mm wide, worn smooth through use and surrounding a central hollow, which is up to 10mm deep. The hollowed surface is covered with dense dimpled tool marks, although the ridges between them have been smoothed through use, presumably through grinding.

Vessel glass

There are two undiagnostic base sherds of bluish-green glass. A fragment of a 'kick' that is 28mm by 17mm was recovered from ditch [3129]. A flat base sherd, 23mm by 17mm, displaying signs of extreme wear on the underside and faint concentric rilling was recovered from the upper abandonment spread (3101) of Building 1. Bluish-green (natural) glass was the most common colour used in the 1st-3rd century (Price and Cottam 1998, 15).

Spindle whorls

Two spindle whorls were recovered, one manufactured from the base of a ceramic pot and the other crudely manufactured from clay. The former was recovered from spread (3158), the broken edges of the base sherd have been pared down and a circular perforation drilled through the centre to form a perforated disc measuring 50mm in diameter. The latter, a sub-spherical or conical whorl with a centrally placed tapered perforation, has been made from oxidized sandy fabric.

5.9 Medieval and post-medieval finds by Tora Hylton and Pat Chapman

Finds that were recovered from furrows of medieval date included a Henry III (1247-1272) half cut long cross halfpenny (Monyer: WALTER), a copper alloy double-looped buckle frame dated to *c*1500 and a small late medieval horseshoe with calkins and five extant nails.

A brick was retrieved from the top of a well, [5018], which is curved, 75mm thick, 110mm wide, with the inner and outer stretchers measuring 210mm and 250mm long respectively from edge to edge. The curve of the brick would imply an overall diameter of *c*1.10m at the level at which it was laid where similar bricks were used to complete the circle. The brick was mould-made from fine silty pink clay with a few inclusions of grog and calcareous material.

A single sherd of Midland Black pottery is a wall sherd from a Tyg, an upright tankard, dating from *c*1600-1650. It was recovered from subsoil (5002) overlying well [5018].

Finds amongst the subsoil included an illegible half penny, a 19th-century copper alloy furniture fitting and a piece of lead shot.

6 THE HUMAN REMAINS by Sarah Inskip

A single skeleton, [3163], was recovered (Figs 14 and 22). The burial was not part of a formal cemetery and lay outside the focus of settlement activity. No clear evidence for a coffin was found, but two nails were recovered. The skeletal material is highly fragmented and incomplete due to medieval ploughing and insertion of a field drain. This has severely limited the amount of osteological information available from the burial, particularly because of the lack of a skull and severe damage to the pelvis. The individual was an adolescent or young adult, based on tooth development. An unusual dental non-metric trait was observed in the form of a protostylid. No significant pathologies were noted.

Recording followed the standard methods in Buikstra and Ubelaker (1994). An inventory was taken following Buikstra and Ubelaker (1994, appendix 5).

Completeness

The lower femurs, patella and upper tibia are absent. The burial is approximately 50% complete. There is no skull, clavicles, sternum, carpals or tarsals. Virtually all of the ribs and vertebrae are missing.

Taphonomy

Preservation is scored as Stage 2 according to the Behrensmeyer (1978) weathering scale. As some cortical bone surfaces were still present, observation of pathology was possible. Root etching is evident on all the bones. Due to the surface actions taking place over the burial, it is unsurprising that all long bones are broken into at least three or more fragments, none could be fully reconstructed. There was no evidence for animal gnawing.

Age

Very little information on age was available. The skull and pelvis have suffered substantial damage and all of the long bone epiphyses except a fragment of each femoral head are unobservable. The bones are of an adult size with little of the porosity associated with younger juveniles. Based on this information the individual is probably an adolescent or older.

Two teeth were recovered, both of which were permanent dentition; the upper right first incisor and a lower left molar. Root completion of the upper right incisor is misleading and suggests an age estimate of around 9 years +/-24 months according to Buikstra and Ubelaker (1994). Studies by Smith (1991) indicate that on average root completion takes place at 7.5 years. It should be noted that some dentine exposure was visible on the crown of the tooth.

Without the entire dentition, it can be difficult to ascertain whether the tooth is molar 2 or molar 3. Considering the size, robusticity and lack of porosity of the postcranial bones, it seems likely that it is an incomplete molar 3. Therefore root completion indicates an age of 15-21 years of age according to Buikstra and Ubelaker (1994) and Smith (1991). There is no dental wear on the molar. This tooth probably belonged to an adolescent or young adult based on its dental development.

Gender

No information on gender was available for this individual. The skull is absent and the pelvis is highly fragmented.

Metric data

No measurements could be taken as all of the bones were fragmented

Non-metric traits

The molar is of an unusual morphology which made it problematic to identify. Although the molar had three roots, which is a trait of upper molars, the crown dimensions, when viewed from the occlusal surface, were rectangular, which is a feature of lower molars. It is not unusual for lower teeth to have three roots (von Beek 1983). As there are only four normal cusps, it is unlikely to be a lower first molar, which usually have five. The molar has an additional cusp on the protoconid (mesiobuccal) cusp. An extra cusp associated with this position on lower molars is termed a protostylid. It can range from a small ridge or groove through to a cusp with a free apex (Hillson 1996, 97). The cusp found on this tooth is of the latter form. It is a dental non-metric trait found in varying frequencies in different populations. The protostylid cusp is more commonly found on molar 1 and molar 3, as is the case here.

Pathology

The only observable pathology was a small amount of active periostitis on the distal third of the left fibula. This could have been caused by trauma or infection (Ortner 2001). No other evidence of trauma or peri-mortem cut marks was found.

Conclusion

The skeletal remains are probably that of an adolescent or young adult aged 15-21 years. Very little osteological information is available due to the disturbance and subsequent incompleteness of the burial. The unusual dental non-metric trait can not be further analysed as it is a lone burial.

It is not unusual for isolated burials to be found from the Roman period in Britain. It was customary for places of burial to be away from settlement areas, albeit normally within a cemetery. Similar examples can be found at Snettisham, East Anglia (Flitcroft 2001, 76), Burgh, Suffolk (Martin 1988) and Droitwich in Worcestershire, where a 10-15 year old child was found (Henderson 1988).

7 THE ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

7.1 **Animal bone** by Karen Deighton

There is a total of 21.7kg of animal bone from a range of features across the site. The material was analysed to add to the understanding of the site and its economy.

The bone was sorted into identifiable anatomical units and unidentifiable bone fragments. Identification of mammals was made with the aid of Schmidt (1972). Cohen and Serjeantson (1996) was used for bird bone. Bone identified to species was recorded and quantified following Halstead (1985), after Watson (1979). The following data was collected; anatomical element, taxa, fusion, side, fragmentation, modification, cut marks and were possible, gender. Ribs and vertebra were counted but not included in the quantification so as to avoid over-representation. The method for fusion analysis follows Silver (1969). Ageing of *ovicaprid* teeth follows Payne (1973), aging for pig teeth is after Bull and Payne (1982) and Halstead (1985), after Payne (1973) is used for cattle teeth. Butchery is recorded according to Binford

(1981). Pathologies are described following Baker and Brothwell (1980). Measurements were taken recorded as shown in von den Driesch (1976). The phasing of the animal bone assemblage is based upon the dating of pottery fabrics.

Preservation

Fragmentation was fairly heavy with only 15% of identifiable long bones complete. A total 1.6% of fractures were the result of fresh breaks, possibly the result of heavy handed butchery, trampling or compaction in the soil. Evidence for butchery was limited to five possible instances including two examples of filleting. Canid gnawing was seen on 26.4% of bone, suggesting that dogs scavenged material left exposed for a time before it was incorporated naturally into the soil matrix and resulting in a preservation bias against smaller bones (Payne and Munson 1985). Only one identifiable bone and six indeterminate fragments were burned, this did not appear to be a preferred method of disposal.

Ageing

One cattle bone was classified as neonatal and one pig bone as young. Of the cattle teeth only seven from twelve mandibles could be assigned to a single wear stage. For sheep or goats only six out of twelve examples could be allocated to a single age class and for pigs only four of seven mandibles could be assigned.

Taxonomic distribution

The count of bone fragments identified by taxa is presented in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6: Count of hand collected animal bone identified by taxa

Taxa	Common name	Number (Iron Age)	% of Iron Age total	Number (Roman)	% of Roman total
Bos	Cattle	43	62.3	109	57.9
Equus	Horse	9	13	19	10.1
Ovicaprid	Sheep/goat	12	17.4	44	23.4
Sus	Pig	3	4.3	10	5.3
Canid	Dog	1	1.4		
Gallus	Chicken			2	1.1
Ovicaprid/*Capreolus*	Sheep/goat/roe	1	1.4	4	2.2
Total		**69**		**188**	

Table 7: Count of sieved animal bone identified by taxa

Location	P1	Building 1	E1	E1	Building 1	R4
Feature	Pit [3325]	Well [3064]	Ditch [3249]	Ditch [3283]	Pit [3328]	Ditch [3178]
Sample	19	22	25	26	28	29
Bos			1			
Equus			1			
Ovicaprid	1	1	1	1	1	
Sus					1	1
Mus sp					1	
Avis sp					1	
Small ungulate					1	
Total	**1**	**1**	**3**	**1**	**5**	**1**

Pathologies

Exotosis was noted around the acetabulum of a *Bos* pelvis from the north side of Enclosure E8, and extensive exotosis was seen on a *Bos* first phalanx found in ditch [3082]. Both are indicative of arthritis in cattle.

Discussion

More material was recovered from the Roman contexts than from the Iron Age, although in certain contexts some of this material is likely to be residual in a manner proportional to that observed amongst the pottery. More domestic activity may also have been present during the Roman period. No differences in fragmentation were detected between the two broad periods.

The assemblage is heavily dominated by cattle, followed by lower numbers of sheep or goat in both periods. Horse and pig remain at similar moderate percentages. Dog is represented by teeth from an Iron Age context only, which suggests it was not usually a food animal, but more likely present as a hunter, herder, guard, companion or feral scavenger. The presence of mouse could be intrusive or commensal. Detailed temporal comparisons are difficult due to the thin distribution across phases, but an increase in sheep or goat and a decrease in cattle appears probable for the Roman period.

The lack of neonatal bone and mandibles in the earliest age class suggests the possibility of little animal husbandry on site, although bias against neonatal bone preservation cannot be ruled out due to its less robust nature, particularly considering the high level of canid gnawing and fragmentation for other bones. Little can be said of kill patterns due to the small amount of data available. Pig mandibles and teeth are largely from animals less than 22 months old which could suggest members of this taxon were slaughtered as they reached their optimum weight. For cattle a number of very elderly animals were present which suggests they were slaughtered after other uses, such as the ability to produce milk or provide traction, were expended.

Not enough bone was present for body part analysis to be reliable and no concentrations of specific bone elements were noted for any species.

The taxa present are nothing unusual for the Iron Age and Roman periods. The comparison of Iron Age material with that excavated from Airfield Farm, Market Harborough, suggests a similar range of species and a dominance of cattle followed by sheep or goat (Deighton 2008). This is the case at Enderby and at Tixover, which is also dominated by cattle followed by sheep (Gouldwell 1992; Baxter 1994). There are differences observed amongst the minor species. At Enderby there were pigs and chickens, but no horses or dogs, the remains of a hare was also present. Differences in the order of species dominance are seen during the Roman period. At Empingham, the transitional phase covering both the late Iron Age and early Roman period was dominated by sheep followed by cattle with horse, pig and hare in smaller proportions (Hamilton-Dyer 1996).

Conclusion

The animal bone represents a small assemblage containing the remains of major domesticates utilised at the site and which is roughly comparable to other assemblages in the region.

7.2 **Soil sample analysis** by Karen Deighton

A total of twenty-nine samples were collected from features with evidence for waterlogging or considered likely to produce remains associated with domestic hearth waste. Initial assessment was undertaken to exclude sterile samples and those likely to contain intrusive matter and the remaining twenty secure context deposits were then taken to full analysis with a view to aiding the understanding of the economy and environment of the site.

Method

The selected samples were processed in a modified siraf tank fitted with a 250 mesh and flot sieve. The resulting flots were dried and examined with a microscope at 10x magnification. Charred seeds identifications were made with the aid of the author's reference collection and seed atlases (Cappers *et al* 2006; Schoch *et al* 1988). Mollusc identifications were made with reference to the work of Glöer and Meier-Brook (2003), Kerney and Cameron (1994) and the Conchological Society website. Charcoal was quantified and passed to Dana Challinor for further analysis (see below).

Preservation

For plant remains preservation was exclusively by charring. Grains, seeds and charcoal were heavily fragmented and abraded. The preservation of molluscs was reasonable.

Table 8: Quantification of the contents of soil samples

Location/feature	No	Volume (litres)	Seeds			Molluscs	Charcoal
			Cereal	Chaff	Wild		
E2 Ditch [3049]	4	40	14	24	3	10-20	30-50
E3 Ditch [3035]	5	40	-	-	-	50-100	2-10
E7 Ditch [3082]	6	40	-	-	-	20-30	2-10
R4 Posthole [3133]	12	10	1	-	-	-	2-10
E11 Posthole [3145]	13	10	-	-	-	-	10-20
E11 Posthole [3147]	14	10	3	-	-	-	10-20
E11 Posthole [3149]	15	10	-	-	-	-	20-30
E11 Posthole [3151]	16	10	1	-	-	-	2-10
R4 Posthole [3143]	17	10	-	-	-	-	-
Scattered pits Pit [3213]	18	40	-	-	-	-	100-200
P1 Pit [3325]	19	20	-	-	-	-	1000+
Building 1 Well [3064]	22	30	7	2	1	-	200-300
E8 Ditch [3171]	24	20	2pulse	-	3	-	2-10
E1 Ditch [3249]	25	20	1	-	-	-	10-20
Building 1 Pit [3328]	28	20	-	-	-	-	50-100
R4 Ditch [3178]	29	20	1pulse		1	-	500-1000

The cereal types observed included spelt (*Triticum spelta*) and barley (*Hordeum vulgare*). Wild/weed taxa included grass (*Poa* sp) and sheep sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*). The mollusc types were *Discus rotundatus, pupilla muscorum* and *Planorbis* sp.

Discussion

Analysis shows a small assemblage with a limited range of taxa. The amount of cereal recovered from the site was poor. The low numbers suggests that this material was largely washed or blown into features from activities taking place in the vicinity. Spelt wheat and barley were common crops during the Iron Age and Roman periods. Sheep sorrel frequently occurred as a weed in such crops, separated out during

secondary processing. It is likely that these seeds were imported onto the site as foodstuffs as there is insufficient evidence to support the presence of cultivation and crop processing as a primary product.

The number of molluscs is too low to attempt a full environmental reconstruction. The presence of *Planorbis* sp. suggests that many of the principal ditches during the Roman period contained standing water over long periods of time.

7.3 **Charcoal** by Dana Challinor

The charcoal from twelve contexts was submitted for analysis. Eight of these samples contained identifiable material in varying quantities. Only two assemblages contained more than 20-30 fragments, which is unusual for a Roman site given the generally decent sample sizes (20-40 litres). The nature of the contexts is likely to account for the paucity of charcoal and its condition, which tended to be poor, limiting the statements that could be made. A broad characterisation of the taxonomic composition was undertaken by using the following methodology.

The charcoal was put through a stack of sieves to ensure that a size range of 4mm and 2mm was represented. Selected fragments were fractured and sorted into groups based on the anatomical features observed in transverse sections at 7x to 45x magnification. Representative fragments from each group were then selected for further examination using a Meiji incident-light microscope at up to 400x magnification. Identifications were made with reference to Schweingruber (1990), Hather (2000) and the author's reference collection. Classification and nomenclature follow Stace (1997).

Results

The results are presented in Table 9. The charcoal was generally poorly preserved, small and scrappy with pores infused with sediment. Six taxa were positively identified: *Acer campestre* (field maple), *Corylus avellana* (hazel), *Fraxinus excelsior* (ash), Maloideae (hawthorn, pear, apple etc.), *Prunus spinosa* (blackthorn), and *Quercus* sp (oak). It was not always possible to distinguish between genera of the same family, but all of the specimens were consistent with native taxa. Fragments of *Corylus avellana* were confirmed in two samples and the others could be either *Alnus* or *Corylus*. Similarly, it was only possible to distinguish between the *Prunus* species in one sample.

Discussion

There was no evidence for *in situ* burning amongst these contexts. The charcoal probably represents a secondary deposit of spent domestic fuel wood. There was a general consistency in the recovery of the same taxa across the site, and throughout the sample assemblage. The presence of roundwood in many samples indicates a tendency towards use of small branches or coppiced wood rather than larger logs. Only one fragment of ash was confirmed as heartwood, indicating some maturity in its age. The taxa recovered would all have grown in local deciduous woodland or scrub; a hedgerow component is indicated by the cherry/blackthorn and hawthorn groups. Both blackthorn and ash are light demanding trees often found as colonisers in cleared woodland.

In general, the utilisation of fuel wood at Oakham is consistent with other sites of late Iron Age and Romano-British date such as at Peterborough (Challinor 2007). The

picture which emerges from this analysis suggests the gathering of firewood for domestic fires from local hedgerows and marginal areas of woodland or scrub.

Table 9: Results of the charcoal analysis

Location/feature		R4 Ditch [3178]	R4 Posthole [3133]	E11 Posthole [3145]	E11 Posthole [3149]	P1 Pit [3325]	Building 1 Well [3064]
Sample number		29	12	13	15	19	22
Quercus sp.	oak	+		++		+++ s	+
Corylus avellana	hazel			+			
Alnus or *Corylus*	alder or hazel	+				+ r	
Prunus spinosa	blackthorn						
Prunus sp.	cherry type	++ r	+ r		+ r	++ r	++ r
Maloideae	hawthorn group	++ r			+ r	++ r	
Acer campestre	field maple		+				
Fraxinus excelsior	ash	+				+ h	
Total charcoal		**++**	**+**	**++**	**++**	**++++**	**++**

Key: r=roundwood; s=sapwood; h=heartwood; + = infrequent, ++=moderate, +++=frequent, ++++=abundant

7.4 **Wood** by Steve Allen

There are 96 fragments of wood that were recovered from five contexts. The wood was wet packed, in grip-top finds bags with water, and all of the bags were retained in a medium Stewart's Storer with additional water. Most of the objects had been previously washed and the Stewarts box is kept in a refrigerator to inhibit mould growth. All objects were in turn removed from their packaging, rinsed under cold running water to remove adhering burial deposits and returned to their packaging after recording, assessment and species identification.

Condition

All of the wood has been preserved through burial in a waterlogged anoxic environment and it appears that these conditions were maintained in all contexts in which the material survived up to the time of excavation. The wood was in a generally good condition. All of the surfaces had been abraded to a greater or lesser extent and all of the wood had undergone a degree of mineralisation leaving it hard and brittle, though still waterlogged.

Catalogue

The wooden finds are tabulated (Table 10). All species identifications follow Schweingruber (1990). The wood species was exclusively Oak (*Quercus spp*), although the exact variety was not determinable.

Discussion

All the wood has a high mineral content, having absorbed mineral salts from the surrounding environment during burial. A De-Jong pin test indicates that all are category 'C', i.e. that a mounted needle requires strong pressure to penetrate the wood below 1mm depth, indicating a very solid core below the more decayed surface layer. The wood is not fossilised and if allowed to dry out would suffer the same degree of collapse as any other piece of waterlogged wood.

Table 10: Wood artefacts

Context/feature	Description
(3011)/ditch [3049]	12 non-refitting flakes from a radially faced board. Largest piece 107mm long, 43mm wide, 4mm thick
(3011)/ditch [3049]	5 non-refitting fragments of board. Three radially faced, two tangentially faced. Largest piece 63mm long, 35mm wide, 15mm thick
(3011)/ditch [3049]	Radially faced chipping. 164mm long, 52mm wide, 9mm thick
(3011)/ditch [3049]	Radially faced chipping. One end hewn, other broken in antiquity. 111mm long, 54mm wide, 17mm thick
(3011)/ditch [3049]	Fragment of radially faced board. One end hewn, other broken in antiquity. 173mm long, 84mm wide, 18mm thick
(3011)/ditch [3049]	Fragment of radially faced board. Both ends broken in antiquity. 175mm long, 96mm wide, 17mm thick
(3011)/ditch [3049]	Fragment of radially faced board. Both ends broken in antiquity. Part of one face lost, leaving stepped profile- not part of a joint. 167mm long, 61mm wide, 22mm thick
(3011)/ditch [3049]	Fragment of radially faced board. Both ends broken in antiquity. 97mm long, 110mm wide, 24mm thick
(3011)/ditch [3049]	Offcut from radially faced board. Both ends abraded. One edge hewn to form taper towards one end. 156mm long, 40mm wide, 20mm thick
(3011)/ditch [3049]	Fragment of radially faced board. One end hewn, other broken in antiquity. 99mm long, 80mm wide, 17mm thick
(3011)/ditch [3049]	Fragment of radially faced board. One end hewn at slight angle to axis, other end broken in antiquity. 176mm long, 130mm wide, 16mm thick
(3011)/ditch [3049]	Fragment of radially faced board. One end hewn at slight angle to axis, other end/edge hewn to form continuous curve. 107mm long, 153mm wide, 21mm thick
(3011)/ditch [3049]	Fragment of radially faced board. One end hewn at slight angle to axis, other end broken in antiquity. Flake detached from surface but refitting. 190mm long, 119mm wide, 19mm thick
(3011)/ditch [3049]	18 non-refitting chippings from a tangentially faced board or timber. Largest 48mm long, 67mm wide, 15mm thick
(3017)/ditch [3018]	6 non-refitting flakes from a radially faced board or timber. Largest 41mm long, 21mm wide, 2mm thick
(3074)/ditch [3049]	22 non-refitting flakes from a radially faced board or timber. Largest 84mm long, 23mm wide, 11mm thick
(3105)/pit [3106]	Tangentially faced flake. 30mm long, 18mm wide, 4mm thick
(3137)/ditch [3196]	21 radially faced chippings. Very evenly sized. Largest 64mm long, 38mm wide, 10mm thick

All the wood surfaces are abraded to a greater or lesser degree, indicating that the wood has been buried in an abrasive environment with moving water and or sediment before the burial deposit was stabilised. This process has removed any tool marks which might have otherwise survived on the wood surface. It is clear that the wood has been modified through human agency and has not arrived in its current state or condition through entirely natural processes. All of the material has been converted, deliberately split or cut up into board or plank-like timber rather than being derived from natural breakage or decay. The presence of chippings implies that wood was being worked in the vicinity and what we have may be the offcuts and debris from the preparation or construction of a timber structure.

There are no diagnostic features which would indicate a date for this wood, which would not be out of place in any context from late prehistoric to medieval. The wood is of similar appearance, condition and character and is almost certainly of the same date. The wood all appears to have been slow grown but the size of the individual pieces means that none will have enough rings for dating by dendrochronology. In any case, there is no sapwood present which would be necessary for an estimated felling date. Radiocarbon dating would be feasible for any or all of the material but without knowing how close the sample is to the bark edge, this will just supply a date for when that particular part of the tree was alive, which could be significantly earlier than the date at which it was felled. The majority of the wood comes from a single wooden plank from ditch [3049] dated by pottery from the 1st to early 2nd centuries AD and largely filled in the mid-2nd century AD. Four other contexts produced wood, another from ditch [3049], two features associated with Iron Age Roundhouse R4 and a Roman ditch [3018] that cut through Enclosure E3.

All recording has now been completed and the material in itself does not merit sufficient significance for conservation. For archive purposes, the joining pieces are illustrated (Fig 33).

8 DISCUSSION

Results of the mitigation strategy

The overall preservation of archaeological deposits is variable between the four principal areas of the site (Fig 2). The 11.2ha area of the former sports field encompassed land from the neighbouring parishes, Oakham and Barleythorpe. The historical land use has been different in each case and has incorporated elements of both preservation *in situ* and preservation by record into the mitigation strategy for this development.

Area 1

Archaeological remains in Oakham parish were generally better preserved since they had not been subjected to agricultural ploughing throughout the late Saxon, medieval and early post-medieval periods. Topsoil and subsoil in these areas, whilst having been flattened out for a football pitch, had received less movement historically and this had resulted in the gradual accumulation of blanketing soils. Features in the Oakham parish were concentrated in Area 1 with the individual ditches of former enclosures extending away from it to encompass areas of lower archaeological density (Fig 2). The larger extent of the enclosures was preserved beneath the car park adjoining Huntsmans Drive, the base level of which was not significantly graded below the extant subsoil. The ditches no longer survive beneath the footprint of the building. The watching brief observed the ditches continuing from Area 1 across the

development footprint to the north-east. No new features were identified to indicate further concentrations of settlement.

In Barleythorpe parish the whole of the development area had formerly been under extensive ridge and furrow cultivation (Fig 3). These earthworks had subsequently been flattened out, filled in and new drainage had been added on two occasions. The overall impact was been that archaeological remains across this area were generally more truncated and subject to post-depositional disturbance with a tendency to introduce intrusive material or redeposit artefacts of antiquity in later features. This was particularly the case with Building 1 where extensive medieval ploughing dragged Roman finds away from their point of deposition and scattered them all along the west side of the parish boundary. Field drains had also introduced early 20th-century material into Roman levels. Ditches extending to the west of Area 1 were recorded during the watching brief.

Area 2

Roman features identified by geophysical survey and subsequently confirmed by trial excavation have not been further investigated or exposed by development. In the present works this portion of the sports field has remained in use by the college. Its eventual improvement will be by the build-up of additional material and there has been no declared intention to strip the field other than to remove the grass surface for the preparation of the new sports field level.

Area 3

A small group of middle to late Iron Age roundhouses and parts of the Roman enclosure system have been preserved *in situ*. The soil level across the whole of this area has been built up to create a terrace upon which the new sports pitches have been laid. The dividing swales are cut into this build-up material, the bases of which did not cut below the original subsoil.

Area 4

In Oakham parish, features along the principal parish boundary remain preserved *in situ*. Whilst there has been surface preparation of the car park on its south side, this did not cut to sufficient depth to expose archaeological remains.

In Barleythorpe parish, those features investigated within the bounds of the balancing ponds and crossing the swales are preserved by record and are included within the wider narrative of the site. Features within the west balancing pond were previously truncated by substantial ridge and furrow, the earthworks of which survived until the present work. No such disturbance was evident within the east balancing pond, and this area had been filled either in the late medieval or early post-medieval period.

Topography and location

The site lies in the headlands of the River Gwash, a tributary of the River Welland, largely flooded by Rutland Water reservoir, 1975-1979. The headlands are located at the western extent of the valley, above the 100m contour which is the approximate height range at which the topography of the valley changes most significantly from the lowland flood plain, to the upper valley slopes and the ridgelines around the watershed. Most significant of these is the glen in which Oakham has developed along with the settlements at Barleythorpe, Langham and Ashwell, further up the valley. This location brings together a combination of gently rising, well lit east facing slopes that are sheltered from prevailing westerly winds at a height sufficient to provide well drained land and avoid flooding. However, it provides no shelter against

frost, no advantage to the growing season of crops and no significant benefits to the development of cultivable soils. The benefits for pastoral land use are therefore far greater than those for arable farming in societies where land improvement and management regimes were limited to clearance, seeding, drainage, irrigation and enclosure.

The distribution of known Iron Age sites from excavation and from aerial photographic evidence within the Gwash Valley has been depicted topographically (Cooper 2000, fig 64, 145). It is invariably an incomplete and fragmented distribution, but assists in the gradual assembly of a pattern of occupation in which there appears to be a preference towards the occupation of sites upon valley slopes where favourable conditions for subsistence may come together.

Iron Age settlement characteristics

The known Iron Age and Roman sites in the Gwash Valley are relatively few, the majority of which have been identified by aerial photography and have not received validation through further archaeological fieldwork. It is also likely that others disappeared beneath Rutland Water before the advent of archaeological planning guidance.

The Oakham settlement evidence is comparable with three individual roundhouses that were excavated at Empingham West in 1971, which are the only other whole exclusively Iron Age buildings to be excavated in the valley (Cooper 2000, 46-49).

Gully fragments for part of a possible 1st century AD roundhouse were excavated south-east of Hambleton Wood (Jones 1997, 320). The domestic focus at Empingham West was unenclosed, there was no associated small enclosure and it was not clear if the three buildings represented a succession of structures or were contemporary. Roundhouse R4 at Oakham was comparable to Empingham West, Building 3. Both buildings were key domestic structures exhibiting evidence for recuts on at least two occasions and in both cases the evidence for this was solely identifiable at the entrance terminals. Wall slots were not evident at Empingham West. Neither structure exhibited good evidence for an internal arrangement of postholes. At Oakham the interior was largely occupied by small pits, rather than postholes, and at Empingham West the postholes were more likely to belong to the corner of a rectangular building of later date than to be associated with the roundhouse. Both structures contained a central hearth pit and at Empingham West it would appear that only one side of the entrance portal was identified. Roundhouse forms of this kind are fairly typical of those excavated in the wider region and structures of middle to late Iron Age date have exhibited a general consistency. Examples excavated at the middle Iron Age settlement at Newton Leys in Milton Keynes and the late Iron Age to Roman settlement at Yaxley in Huntingdonshire share similar characteristics (Brown 2008c; 2009; forthcoming a and b). The internal open plan nature of the native roundhouse tradition, set behind two principal portal posts and with an encircling ring ditch open towards a south-east entrance summarises the typical pattern.

The nature of roundhouse groups and their relationships to enclosure and evidence for landscape continuity is much more varied with both enclosed and unenclosed sites known in the local and wider region. The site excavated at Whitwell, Rutland, was of an enclosure with a series of shallow pits, but without evidence for roundhouses (Todd 1981). There are cropmarks that suggest enclosures near to Oakham on the Hambleton Peninsula, at Edith Weston, at North Luffenham and further east near Ryhall and Little Casterton (Cooper 2000, 144-146). All of these

are generally sub-rectangular and have never been tested for chronology, although the site near Hambleton contains two circular features that may be roundhouses. Fieldwalking there in 1992 produced two sherds of abraded scored ware together with a wider distribution of late Roman material. This similar typological pattern was exhibited by the fieldwalking evidence from Whitwell together with the postulation that there was a probable break in the occupation of the site (Todd 1981). The college fields at Oakham have also produced greater abundance in both middle to late Iron Age and late Roman finds assemblages, however, there has been sufficient late Iron Age and early Roman material to demonstrate continuity in landscape at a lower level, thought to be the result of a shift in occupation focus. Roundhouses at Empingham West were abandoned by the end of the 1st century BC and yet the Romano-British farmstead and its access trackway less than 1km away came into existence from the mid-1st century AD onwards. Other local sites have yet to produce sufficient evidence to place continuity of landscape within a local context and whilst a drop in occupation density might be suggested, shifting patterns of occupation foci seem more plausible. As yet neither theory can be substantiated or refuted until further sites have been excavated and the broad connecting links of trackways or enclosure have been made.

A common characteristic with both enclosed and unenclosed settlement was its association in the late Iron Age with major linear boundaries that often survived as earthworks and were reused in later periods (Taylor 2007; Brown 2008c; forthcoming a). At Oakham the continued use of a late Iron Age boundary that was partly incorporated into a Roman field system, later formed the basis for the Saxon manorial boundary between Oakham and Barleythorpe. It has survived to the present in the form of the parochial administrative boundary and addresses one of the principal research objectives of the project. An example of another late Iron Age boundary that survived into the Saxon period was at Empingham II where a ditch and trackway later formed the southern boundary of an early Anglo-Saxon cemetery (Cooper 2000, 48). Parts of major boundaries that were established in the late Iron Age have continued to echo in subsequent land use either by direct reuse or with later ditches using similar positions of alignment incorporated with wider patterns of subdividing enclosure. This continuity in the landscape is visible despite later cultural, political and administrative changes that are often characterised by “Roman” and “Saxon” styles or methods.

Roman growth and recession

The wider context of local occupation evidence for Roman farming settlement is distorted by the nature of 1970s rescue excavation having been focused by necessity upon the principal settlement evidence, mainly buildings, around the dam near Empingham rather than throughout the Gwash Valley. This unfortunately means that the low density occupation, often exhibited in peripheral areas and which often comprised large patterns of field enclosure, is largely absent amongst the excavated evidence and appears in the archaeological record only where it has been recorded by the Historic Environment Record. Consultation of this evidence lay beyond the scope of the present work but metal detecting, fieldwalking and cropmarks show a moderately dense distribution of potential Roman sites in the Gwash Valley (ibid, 148-149). Maps of settlements recorded as earthworks, cropmarks, find scatters and excavated sites show a low distribution area (Taylor 2007, figs 3.2-3.5, 14-17).

At The Vale of Catmose College, Oakham, settlement in the late Iron Age to early Roman period bridged the 1st to mid-2nd century AD. Domestic activity continued to tail off well into the Roman period so that whilst an extensive network of substantial enclosure ditches was laid out in the mid-2nd century, the quantity and variety of

finds provided very little indication of the proximity of the domicile. A timber building was present from the mid-3rd century and there was little evidence to support its existence before this date because the smaller proportions of mid- to late 2nd-century finds were all residual in later contexts. It was in use well into the 4th century prior to its abandonment and was demolished before the late 4th century. The construction date for the timber building at Oakham compares favourably with sites excavated at Whitwell, Empingham and Normanton, all in Rutland. It also suggests that these other sites may have post-dated extensive field systems that were not the subject of the 1970s rescue archaeology. At Empingham Romano-British farmstead timber sleeper beam structures of the mid- 1st to 2nd centuries were replaced in stone from the early 3rd century onwards and occupied until the late 4th century (Cooper 2000, 4-16). They almost certainly would have occupied land associated with extensive field systems. The villa at Empingham, probably part of the same agricultural estate straddling the lower Gwash Valley, exhibited the expansion of a stone aisled building from the mid- to late 3rd century (ibid, 147). Any potential "estate" would certainly have been a part of an extensive managed agricultural landscape. However, these wealthier stone-built domiciles continued to be occupied in the late 4th century, possibly into the early 5th century and were likened to the Roman villa at Great Casterton. In contrast the Roman timber building at Oakham bears greater similarity to that of the stone-built farmstead at Whitwell, where a lack of coinage or pottery belonging to the second half of the fourth century indicated a much earlier abandonment (Todd 1981).

The impression is, that whilst there was an overall localised pattern of prosperity around the early 3rd century, reflected in the construction of new buildings and the replacement of timber buildings in stone, its duration was disproportionate between different farmsteads. Oakham and Whitwell, both smaller farmsteads, fell into disuse earlier than the larger, wealthier estates that occupied the farmland in the valley to the east. Although insufficient environmental evidence exists to compile an impression of the agricultural land use in the valley at this time, it has been suggested that the longer-lived villa sites benefited from prime arable land (Cooper 2000, 149). At Oakham the environmental sampling suggested that cultivation was not the primary mode of subsistence. Enclosures E8 and E11 were smaller areas that opened into larger field enclosures and there were also trackways from Enclosure E6 to the south and later from Enclosure E7 to the north. This pattern of enclosure would benefit a pastoral economy and accounts for the low levels of cultivated seeds in the samples. Charcoal has also shown that the nearby wood available for fuel was largely from species that prefer more open ground and are associated with scrubland or hedgerows. Such species would not have been out of place within rough grazing environments. The site lies close to a concentration of known sites termed "linear system settlements" which suggests a wider distribution of similar sites to that at Oakham (Taylor 2007, fig 4.3, 26).

The larger villa-type estates such as the one at Empingham were also positioned closer to the markets at Great Casterton and Water Newton (*Durobrivae*) where the Roman way of life is likely to have continued well into the 5th century and would have afforded greater security for those living in their hinterlands. The late 4th-century ditches at Oakham were a contraction of the larger network extending west and the refinement of the boundary represented a reduction in the amount of land in use. It is also probable that dwellings such as the timber building at Oakham, were no longer economically viable as either independent smallholdings or the minor dwellings for tenants and workers of a larger villa estate. Having become redundant, they were abandoned. This recession of agricultural land use fits within the broader pattern of change in the Gwash Valley at end of the Roman period as observed previously (Cooper 2000, 149).

Summary

Overall there was general continuity in the occupation of the site. Land use changed considerably from the middle Iron Age through to the late 4th century AD together with the probable size and density of occupation. However, there was no evidence for any stage of abandonment between the Iron Age and Roman periods. The site at Oakham was occupied in the middle to late Iron Age by at least two roundhouse groups combining domestic activities with household crafts and subsistence needs. In the late Iron Age the positions of settlement had shifted and a major ditch was introduced. Settlement continued to shift in the 1st to 2nd centuries AD, with the late Iron Age ditch continuing to be used. Whilst the artefacts upon the site took on a more Roman character, the structural evidence remained in the native tradition. From the mid-2nd century there was a drop in domestic activity, presumably the result of another shift in settlement, and the late Iron Age ditch was partially incorporated within a wider network of Roman ditches bounding probable pastures. This marked a probable move away from the native tradition and in the early 3rd century a timber building was constructed, which was subsequently occupied as a low status dwelling and probably survived until the third quarter of the 4th century. The extent of land used for pasture was reduced in the late 4th century and was probably abandoned before the 5th century.

Continuous occupation of the site, albeit with minor changes in its land use and layout ensured continuity in the broad distribution of the land as a whole. This has meant that a boundary established in the late Iron Age, although it ceased to be a continuous boundary in its own right in the mid-2nd century, is still reflected in the modern parochial administrative boundary between Oakham and Barleythorpe parishes.

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APPENDIX – FINDS INDEX

Table 11: Finds index

Context	Type	Feature	Pottery weight (g)	Animal bone weight (g)	Other bulk finds	Small finds	Soil samples (litres)
Open area excavations, area 1							
3001	layer	topsoil				Pb weight vessel glass	
3002	layer	subsoil				Pb shot worked flint (x3)	
3003	layer	medieval furrows	239		tile	Cu alloy coins (x4) Cu alloy buckle Cu alloy furniture fitting Cu alloy strip Cu alloy casting waste Pb cylinder Fe horseshoe worked flint	
3004	group	enclosure group E2					
3005	group	enclosure group E3					
3006	fill of	3008	23				
3007	fill of	3007					
3008	cut of	ditch					
3009	fill of	3013	190	64	fired clay		
3010	fill of	3013					
3011	fill of	3013	579	957	fired clay wood	pivot stone burnt stone	10
3012	fill of	3013					
3013	cut of	ditch					
3014	fill of	3015	3	6			
3015	cut of	ditch terminus					
3016	fill of	3018	115	22	fired clay		
3017	fill of	3018	95	457	fired clay wood		
3018	cut of	ditch					
3019	fill of	2020	34	80			
3020	cut of	gully					
3021	fill of	3022					
3022	cut of	pit					30
3023	fill of	3024	9				40
3024	cut of	pit					
3025	fill of	3026					
3026	cut of	gully					
3027	fill of	3029	66	65			
3028	fill of	3029	121	170	fired clay		
3029	cut of	ditch					
3030	void						
3031	void						
3032	fill of	3026					
3033	same as	3025					
3034	same as	3032					
3035	same as	3026					
3036	same as	3016					
3037	same as	3017					
3038	same as	3018					

Context	Type	Feature	Pottery weight (g)	Animal bone weight (g)	Other bulk finds	Small finds	Soil samples (litres)
3039	fill of	3040					
3040	cut of	ditch					
3041	fill of	3043	63	376			
3042	fill of	3043	11	137			
3043	cut of	ditch					
3044	void						
3045	fill of	3046	201	478			
3046	cut of	ditch					
3047	fill of	3049	7	516	fired clay	worked flint	
3048	fill of	3049					
3049	cut of	ditch					
3050	group	roundhouse R5					
3051	fill of	3053	68	145	fired clay		
3052	fill of	3053					
3053	cut of	ring ditch					
3054	fill of	3055					
3055	cut of	pit					
3056	fill of	3058	222	33			
3057	fill of	3058					
3058	cut of	ditch					
3059	void						
3060	fill of	3061	76	16			
3061	cut of	gully					
3062	fill of	3064			charcoal		30
3063	fill of	3064	49	16			
3064	cut of	well					
3065	fill of	3024					
3066	fill of	3067	50	51			
3067	cut of	pit					
3068	fill of	3069	649	211			
3069	cut of	ditch					
3070	fill of	3072	80				
3071	fill of	3072	32	123	fired clay		
3072	cut of	ditch	56				
3073	fill of	3049	194	931			
3074	fill of	3069	1057	10	wood		40
3075	fill of	3077	36	22			
3076	fill of	3077	330	563	tile	stone mortar	
3077	cut of	well					
3078	same as	3054					
3079	same as	3055					
3080	fill of	3082	72	1614	fired clay slag	quern	
3081	fill of	3082	34	1168			40
3082	cut of	ditch					
3083	fill of	3084		4	coal		
3084	cut of	ring ditch R5					
3085	fill of	3086					
3086	cut of	pit					
3087	fill of	3088					
3088	cut of	pit					
3089	fill of	3090					
3090	cut of	pit					

Context	Type	Feature	Pottery weight (g)	Animal bone weight (g)	Other bulk finds	Small finds	Soil samples (litres)
3091	fill of	3092					
3092	cut of	gully					
3093	fill of	3094	80	235			
3094	cut of	ditch					
3095	fill of	3046	173	198			40
3096	fill of	3097					
3097	cut of	ditch					
3098	fill of	3100					
3099	fill of	3100	9	7			
3100	cut of	ditch	195				
3101	spread	abandonment	293	23		Cu alloy coin Fe nail	
3102	spread	abandonment	2495	218	tile stone	Cu alloy scalpel Cu alloy tweezers Fe nails (x2) vessel glass	
3103	masonry	wall	106	196		whetstone Fe rod Fe nail	
3104	group	roundhouse R4					
3105	fill of	3106			wood		
3106	cut of	pit					
3107	fill of	3108					
3108	cut of	pit					
3109	fill of	3110	8	11			30
3110	cut of	wall slot R4					
3111	fill of	3112				worked flint	10
3112	cut of	pit					
3113	cut of	pit					
3114	fill of	3112	95	38		loomweight	30
3115	fill of	3117			daub		20
3116	fill of	3117					
3117	cut of	pit					
3118	cut of	pit					
3119	fill of	3118		8		worked flint	
3120	cut of	pit					
3121	fill of	3120					30
3122	fill of	3123					
3123	cut of	pit					
3124	cut of	ring ditch R4					
3125	fill of	gully		49			
3126	cut of	posthole or pit					
3127	fill of	3126					
3128	fill of	3129	524	713	tile	Cu alloy brooch worked flint	
3129	cut of	ditch	475				
3130	fill of	3131					
3131	cut of	boundary				Ag coin	
3132	fill of	3133			stone charcoal		10
3133	cut of	posthole					
3134	fill of	3135	191				
3135	cut of	pit					
3136	fill of	3137	206	366	fired clay stone	worked flint	
3137	cut of	ring ditch R4			wood		

Context	Type	Feature	Pottery weight (g)	Animal bone weight (g)	Other bulk finds	Small finds	Soil samples (litres)
3138	fill of	3139	106	154			
3139	cut of	pit					
3140	fill of	3141					
3141	cut of	ring ditch R4					
3142	fill of	3143				worked flint	10
3143	cut of	posthole					
3144	void						
3145	cut of	posthole					
3146	fill of	3145			charcoal		10
3147	cut of	posthole					
3148	fill of	3147			charcoal		10
3149	cut of	post hole					
3150	fill of	3149	113				10
3151	cut of	posthole					
3152	fill of	3151		102			
3153	fill of	3151					10
3154	fill of	3155	260		fired clay		
3155	cut of	ditch					
3156	cut of	posthole					
3157	fill of	3156	12				
3158	layer	abandonment	64	405	fired clay	spindle whorl worked flint quern	
3159	fill of	3160	172	154	brick stone	Fe nail	
3160	cut of	ditch					
3161	fill of	3163				Fe nail	
3162	burial	inhumation SK1	2		human bone	Fe nail	
3163	cut of	grave					
3164	fill of	3165	87	57		loomweight	
3165	cut of	posthole					
3166	layer	spread					
3167	fill of	3169	53	218	tile		
3168	fill of	3169	7				
3169	cut of	ditch					
3170	fill of	3171		218			
3171	cut of	ditch					
3172	fill of	3173					
3173	cut of	post hole					
3174	fill of	3175	46				
3175	cut of	post hole					
3176	fill of	3137					
3177	fill of	3178	8		charcoal	worked flint	20
3178	cut of	ring ditch R4					
3179	fill of	3180	156	139	fired clay		
3180	cut of	ring ditch R4					
3181	fill of	3182	144	76	fired clay	quern	
3182	cut of	ring ditch R4					
3183	fill of	3184					
3184	cut of	ditch					
3185	fill of	3186					
3186	cut of	ditch					
3187	cut of	pit					

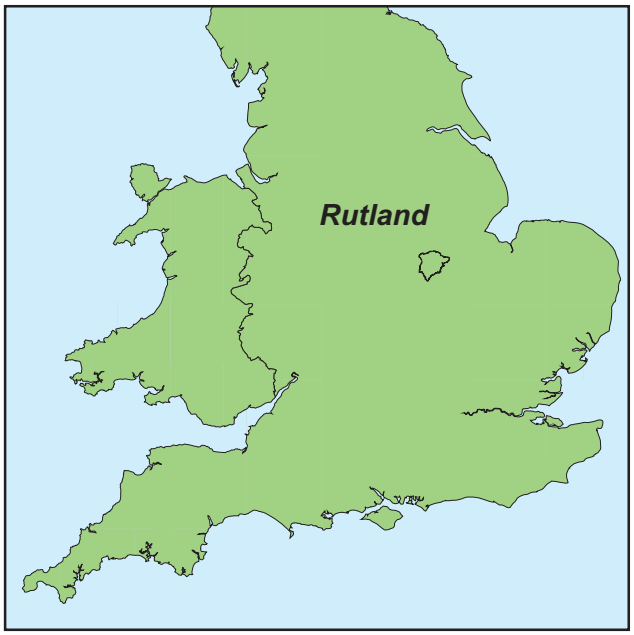
Context	Type	Feature	Pottery weight (g)	Animal bone weight (g)	Other bulk finds	Small finds	Soil samples (litres)
3188	fill of	3187					
3189	fill of	3190		22			
3190	cut of	gully					
3191	fill of	3192					
3192	cut of	post hole					
3193	fill of	3194					
3194	cut of	gully					
3195	fill of	3196	2	89			
3196	cut of	ring ditch R4					
3197	fill of	3199					
3198	fill of	3199					
3199	cut of	pit					
3200	fill of	3202		133	slag		
3201	fill of	3202	102	31			
3202	cut of	gully					
3203	fill of	3204	4				
3204	cut of	pit					
3205	fill of	3207					
3206	fill of	3207					
3207	cut of	posthole					
3208	fill of	3209					
3209	cut of	pit					
3210	fill of	3211				worked flint	
3211	cut of	pit					
3212	fill of	3213					40
3213	cut of	pit					
3214	fill of	3215					
3215	cut of	stake hole					
3216	fill of	3217					
3217	cut of	post hole					
3218	fill of	3219					
3219	cut of	post hole					
3220	fill of	3221					
3221	cut of	posthole					
3222	fill of	3224					
3223	fill of	3224					
3224	cut of	post hole					
3225	fill of	3226					
3226	cut of	posthole				worked flint	
3227	fill of	3228					
3228	cut of	posthole					
3229	fill of	3230					
3230	cut of	posthole					
3231	fill of	3232					
3232	cut of	pit					
3233	fill of	3234					
3234	cut of	pit					
3235	fill of	3236	77	132			
3236	cut of	ring ditch R2					
3237	fill of	3238					
3238	cut of	post hole					
3239	fill of	3240		2			

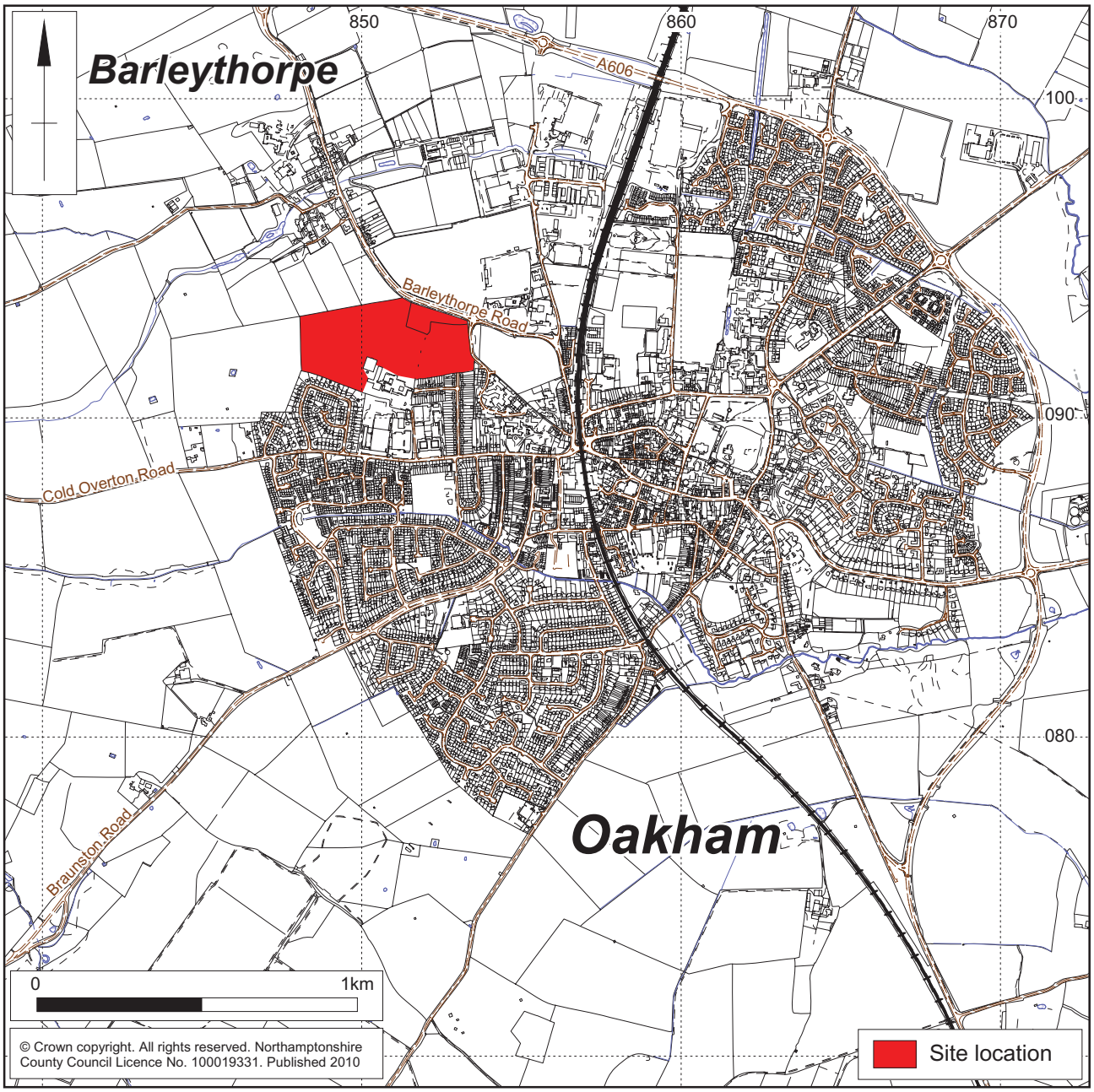
Context	Type	Feature	Pottery weight (g)	Animal bone weight (g)	Other bulk finds	Small finds	Soil samples (litres)
3240	cut of	posthole					
3241	fill of	3242		2	fired clay slag		
3242	cut of	gully					
3243	fill of	3245					
3244	fill of	3245					
3245	cut of	pit					
3246	fill of	3247					
3247	cut of	gully					
3248	fill of	3248	8	91			
3249	cut of	ditch					
3250	fill of	3251					
3251	cut of	gully					
3252	group	enclosure E1					
3253	fill of	3251					
3254	fill of	3249	4	23			
3255	fill of	3256		6			
3256	cut of	gully					
3257	fill of	3259	22	10	fired clay		
3258	fill of	3259	5				
3259	cut of	pit			fired clay		
3260	fill of	3261					
3261	cut of	gully					
3262	cut of	gully					
3263	fill of	3262					
3264	fill of	3265	2	1			
3265	cut of	gully					
3266	fill of	3267					
3267	cut of	gully					
3268	fill of	3269					
3269	cut of	gully					
3270	fill of	3272					
3271	fill of	3272	4				
3272	cut of	gully					
3273	fill of	3274	13	58			20
3274	cut of	ditch					
3275	fill of	3276					
3276	cut of	gully					
3277	fill of	3278					
3278	cut of	posthole					
3279	fill of	3280					
3280	cut of	pit					
3281	fill of	3283	274	248	fired clay slag		20
3282	fill of	3283					
3283	cut of	ditch					
3284	fill of	3285	41	78	slag		
3285	cut of	ditch					
3286	fill of	3287	197	79			
3287	cut of	ditch					
3288	fill of	3289			fired clay		
3289	cut of	pit					
3290	fill of	3291					

Context	Type	Feature	Pottery weight (g)	Animal bone weight (g)	Other bulk finds	Small finds	Soil samples (litres)
3291	cut of	posthole					
3292	fill of	3293					
3293	cut of	posthole					
3294	fill of	3294					
3295	cut of	posthole					
3296	fill of	3297					
3297	cut of	posthole					
3298	fill of	3299					
3299	cut of	posthole					
3300	fill of	3301					
3301	cut of	posthole					
3302	group	group					
3303	fill of	3305	153	506	fired clay tile		
3304	fill of	3305	133				
3305	cut of	ditch			brick		
3306	fill of	3309		268	daub		
3307	fill of	3309	18	501			
3308	fill of	3309	18	68			
3309	cut of	ditch					
3310	fill of	3312		61			
3311	fill of	3312					
3312	cut of	ditch					
3313	fill of	3314	10	42			
3314	cut of	ditch					
3315	fill of	3317	5	16			
3316	fill of	3317	9		fired clay	worked flint	
3317	cut of	ditch					
3318	fill of	3320					
3319	fill of	3320					
3320	cut of	pit					
3321	fill of	3322	42	102	slag		
3322	cut of	gully					
3323	fill of	3325					
3324	fill of	3325			charcoal	worked flint	20
3325	cut of	pit					
3326	fill of	spread					
3327	fill of	ditch	2004	763		Fe nail Fe punch spindlewhorl	20
3328	cut of	ditch					
3329	fill of	3330	14	5			
3330	cut of	pit					
3331	fill of	3332	24	334		worked flint	
3332	cut of	ditch					
3333	fill of	3334					
3334	cut of	pit/posthole					
3335	fill of	3336	41	3	fired clay		20
3336	cut of	pit					
3337	fill of	3338	51	2			
3338	cut of	gully					
3339	fill of	3340	14	161		worked flint	20
3340	cut of	ditch					

Context	Type	Feature	Pottery weight (g)	Animal bone weight (g)	Other bulk finds	Small finds	Soil samples (litres)
3341	layer	possible surface					
3342	fill of	3343	6				
3343	cut of	post hole					
3344	fill of	3345					
3345	cut of	post hole					
3346	fill of	3347					
3347	cut of	ditch					
3348	fill of	3349	183	736			
3349	cut of	ditch					
3350	fill of	3351					
3351	cut of	posthole					
3352	fill of	3353					
3353	cut of	posthole					
3354	fill of	3355		13	slag		
3355	cut of	pit					
3356	fill of	3357				quern	
3357	cut of	pit					
3358	layer	spread	2371	1018		Fe nails (x2)	
3359	fill of	3361	169	679			
3360	fill of	3361					
3361	cut of	ditch					
3362	fill of	3363	563	652			20
3363	cut of	ditch					
3364	fill of	3365					20
3365	cut of	ditch					
3366	fill of	3367		354			20
3367	cut of	gully					
3368	fill of	3369	8				
3369	cut of	gully					
3370	fill of	3371					
3371	cut of	post hole					
3372	fill of	3369	199	459	slag		
3373	feature	ring ditch R1					
3374	void						
3375	void						
3376	void						
3377	void						
3378	void						
3379	void						
3380	fill of	3381	25	40			
3381	cut of	ditch					
3382	fill of	3384	225	407			
3383	fill of	3384	221	273		Cu alloy binding strip	
3384	cut of	ditch					
3385	fill of	3387					
3386	fill of	3387					
3387	cut of	ditch					
3388	layer	spread					
3889	fill of	3391					
3390	fill of	3391					
3391	cut of	ditch					
3392	fill of	3393					

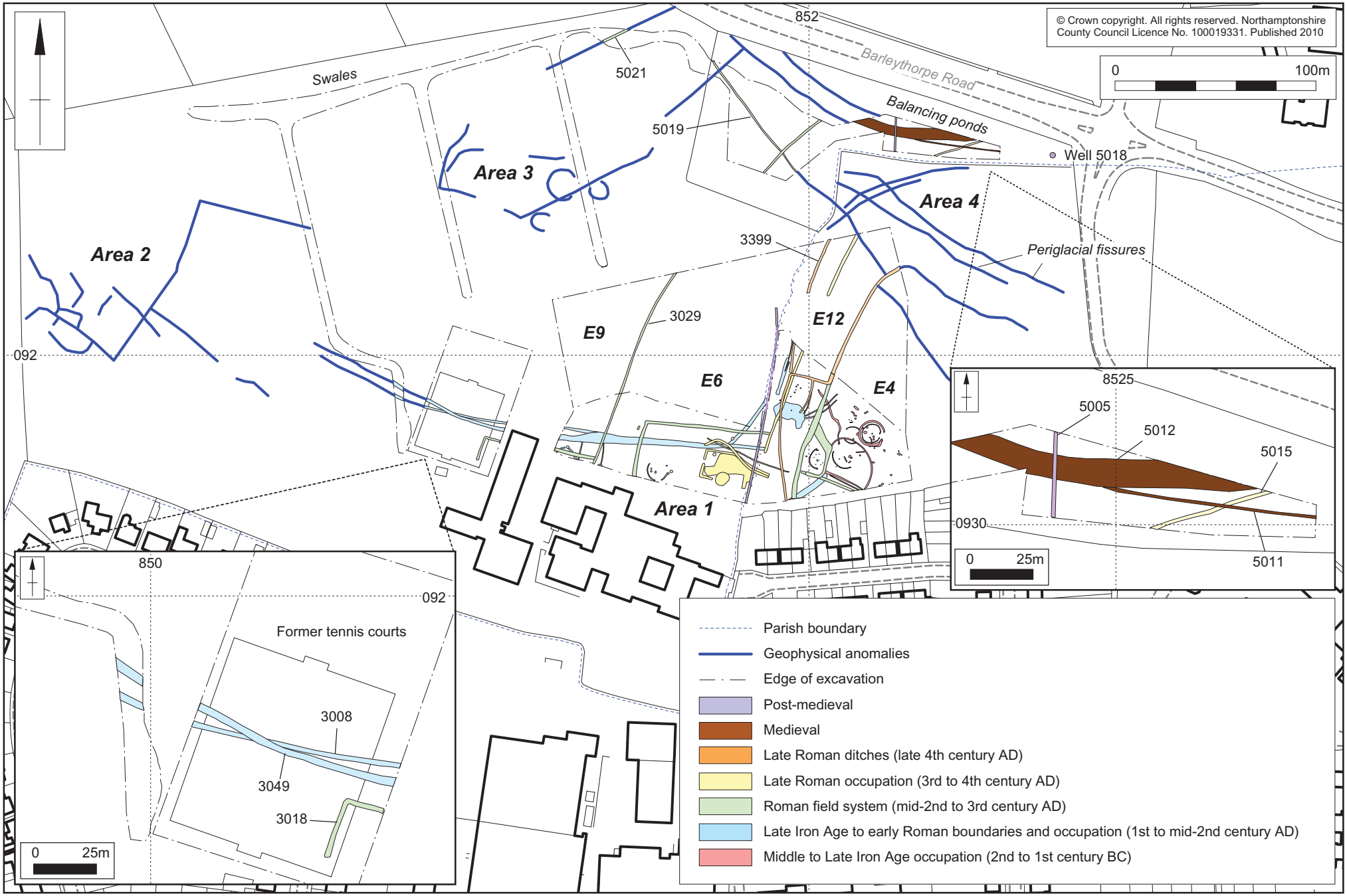
Context	Type	Feature	Pottery weight (g)	Animal bone weight (g)	Other bulk finds	Small finds	Soil samples (litres)
3393	cut of	ditch					
3394	fill of	3395					
3395	cut of	gully					
3396	fill of	3397					
3397	cut of	gully					
3398	fill of	3399					
3399	cut of	ditch					
3400	fill of	3402					
3401	fill of	3402					
3402	cut of	ditch					
3403	fill of	3404	17	112		vessel glass	
3404	cut of	ditch					
3405	fill of	3406	637	1430			
3406	cut of	pit					
3407	fill of	3408					
3408	cut of	pit					
3409	natural						
Watching brief, areas 2-4							
5001	layer	topsoil					
5002	layer	plough soil					
5003	layer	subsoil					
5004	natural						
5005	cut of	ditch					
5006	fill of	5005	✓				
5007	fill of	5005					
5008	fill of	5009				worked flint	
5009	cut of	ditch					
5010	fill of	5011					
5011	cut of	ditch					
5012	layer	road surface					
5013	layer	road sub-surface					
5014	fill of	5015				worked flint	
5015	cut of	ditch					
5016	fill of	5017					
5017	cut of	ditch					
5018	group	well & cistern	✓		brick		
5019	cut of	ditch					
5020	fill of	5021					
5021	cut of	ditch					
5022	fill of	5023	✓				
5023	cut of	ditch					
5024	fill of	5025					
5025	cut of	ditch					
5026	fill of	5027					
5027	cut of	ditch					
5028	fill of	5029	✓				
5029	cut of	ditch					
5030	fill of	5019					





Scale 1:20,000

Site location Fig 1



Scale 1:2500

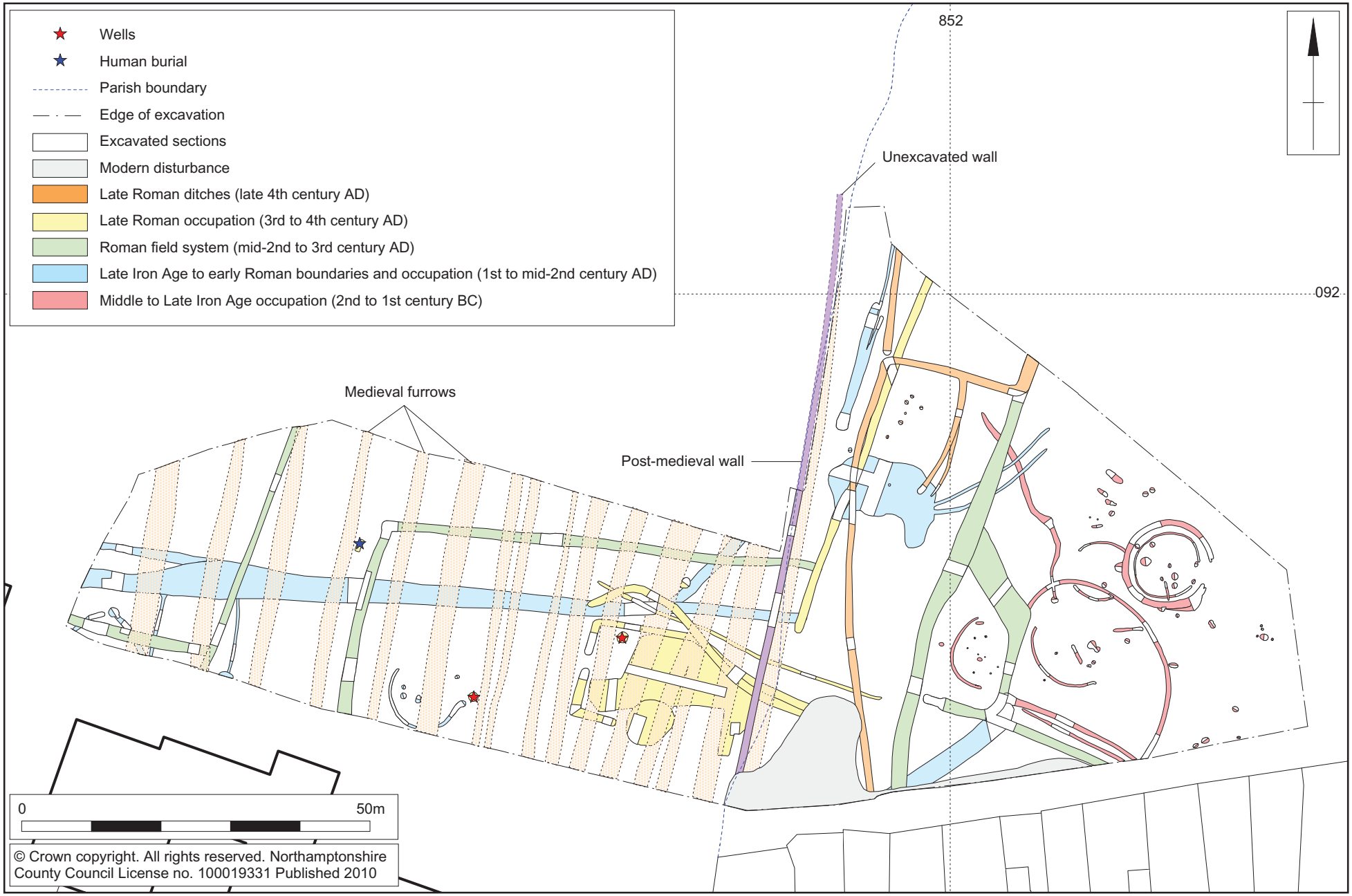
General plan of the development site Fig 2

Scale 1:2500

Geophysical survey Fig 3

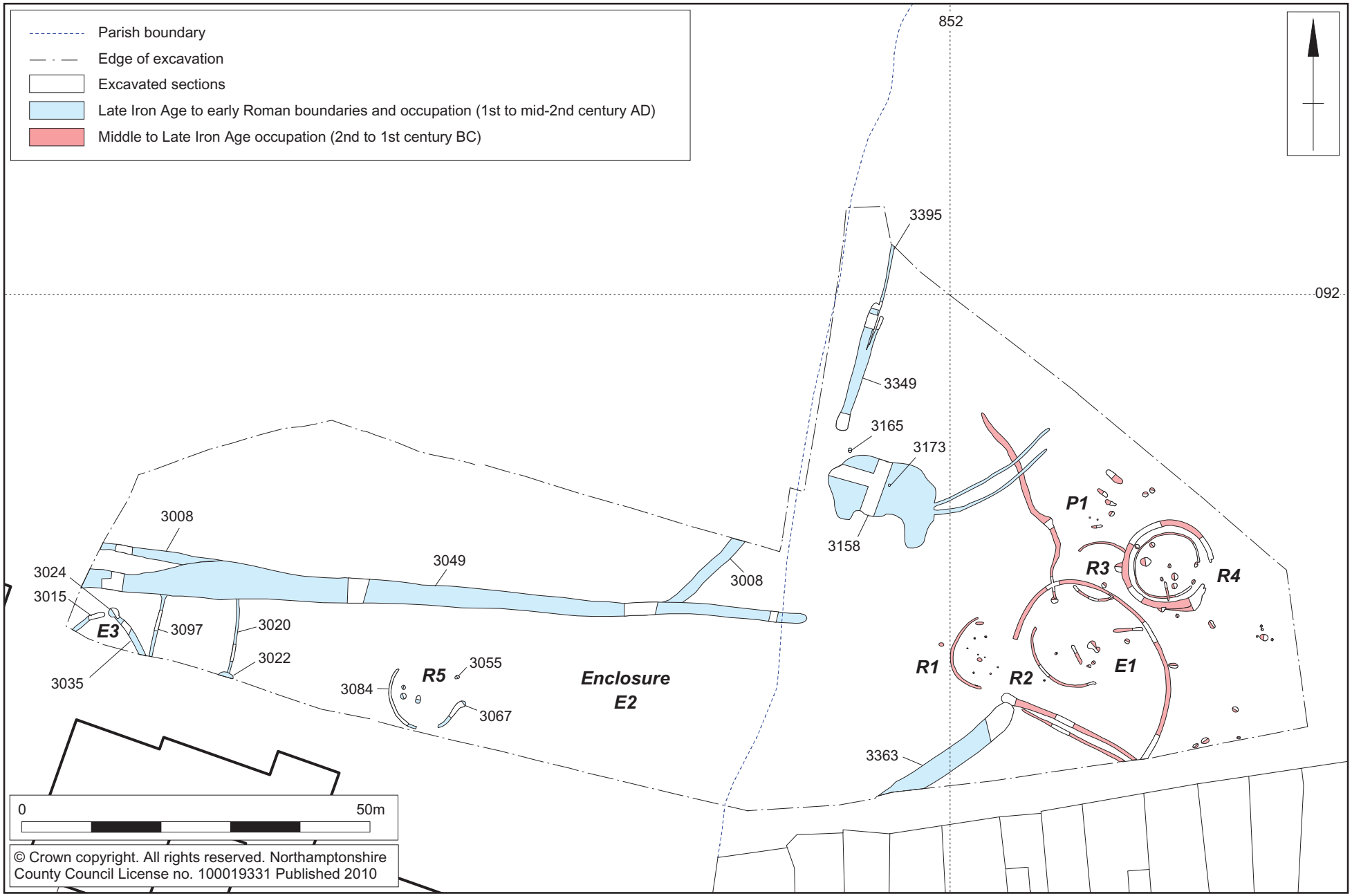
North swale excavated under a controlled watching brief Fig 4

Box scrapers removed the topsoil in the area of future pitches Fig 5



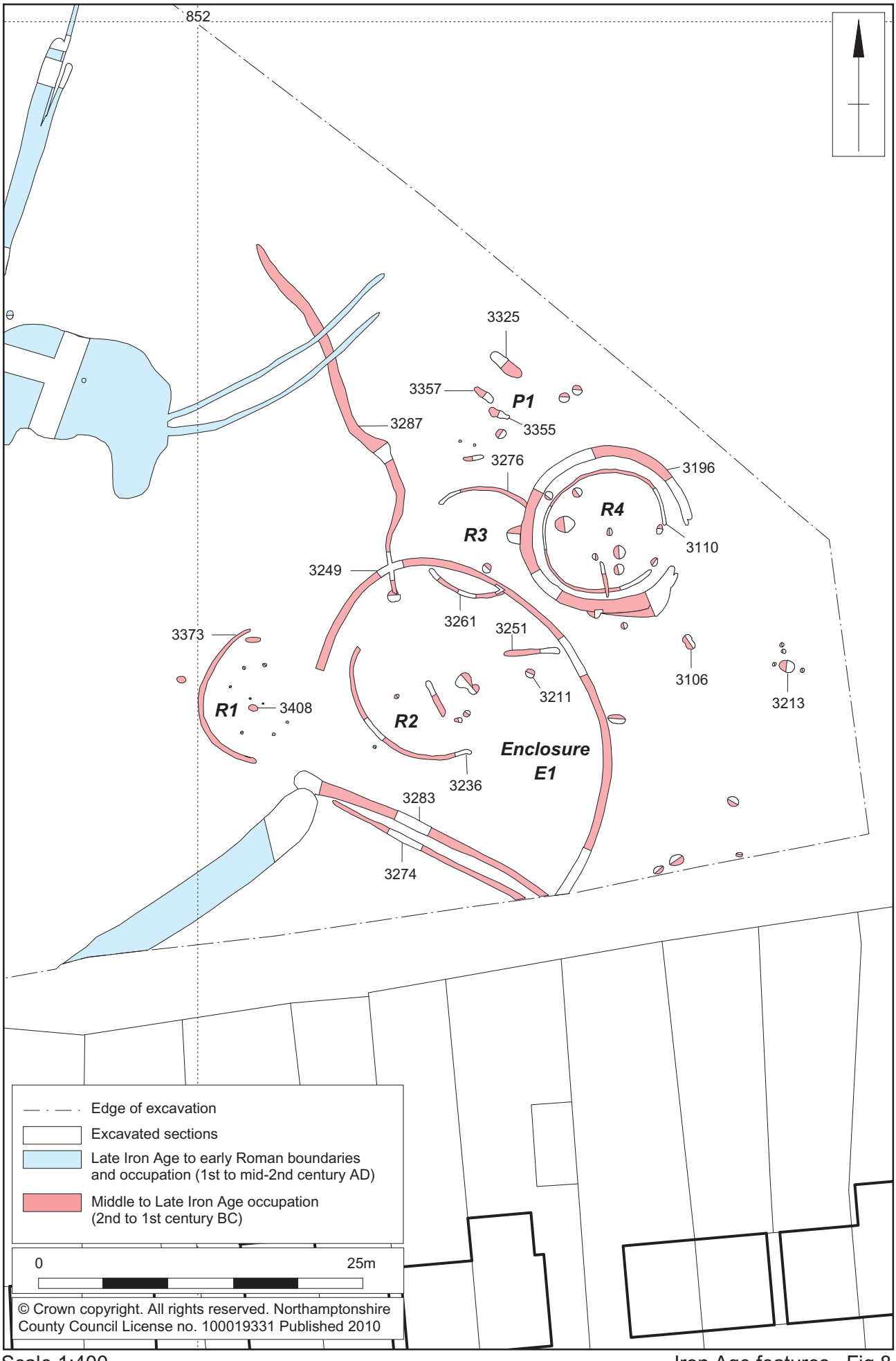
Scale 1:750

General plan of archaeological excavation Fig 6



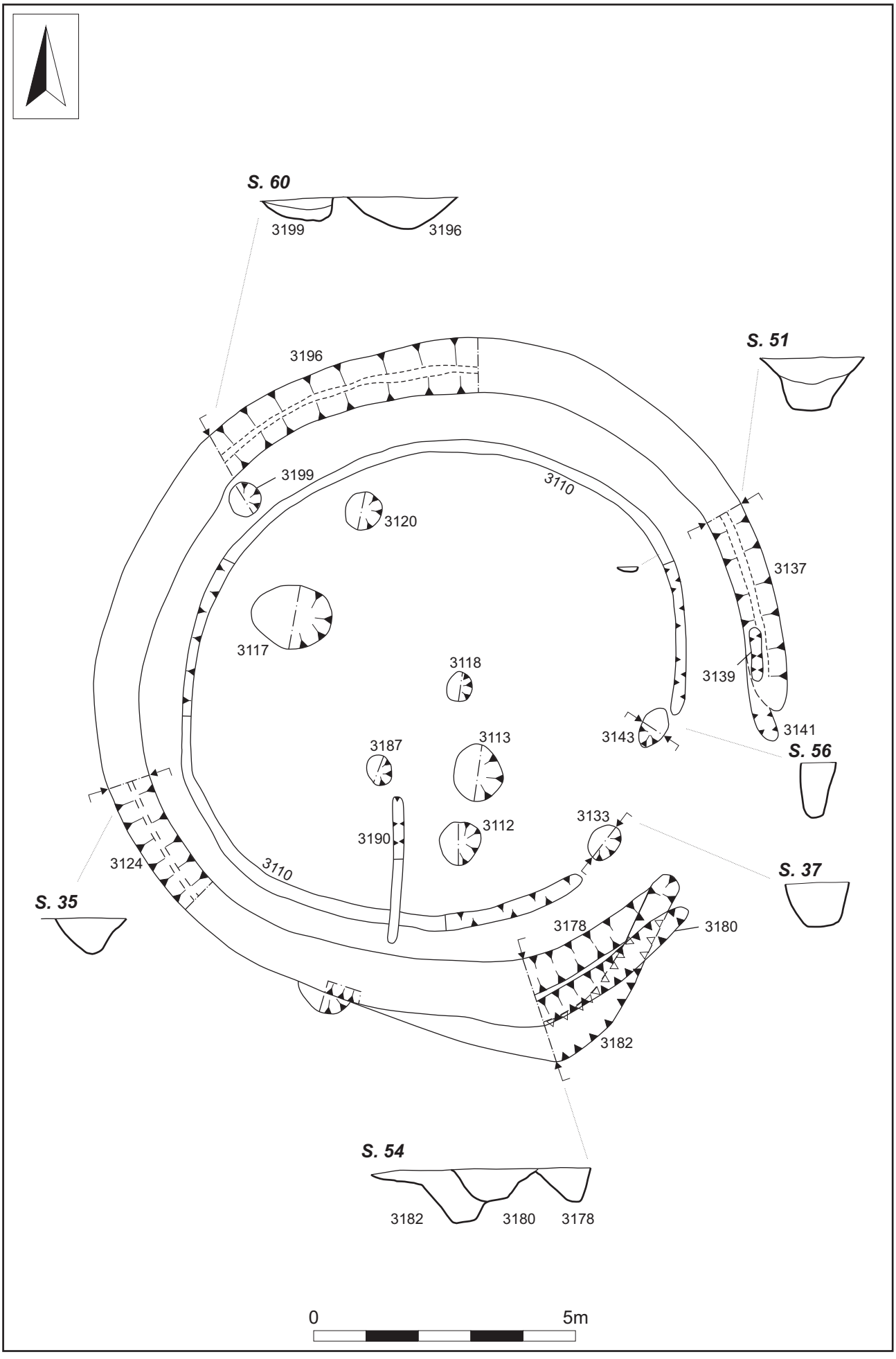
Scale 1:750

Iron Age and early Roman features Fig 7



Scale 1:400

Iron Age features Fig 8

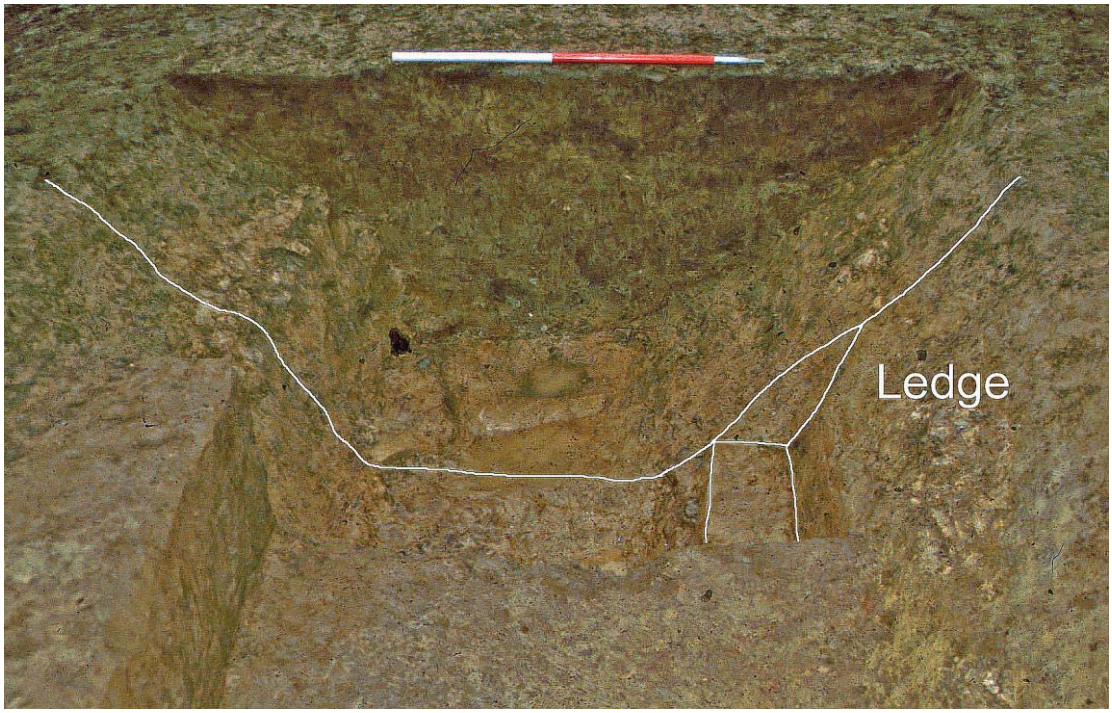


Iron Age Roundhouse R4 Fig 9

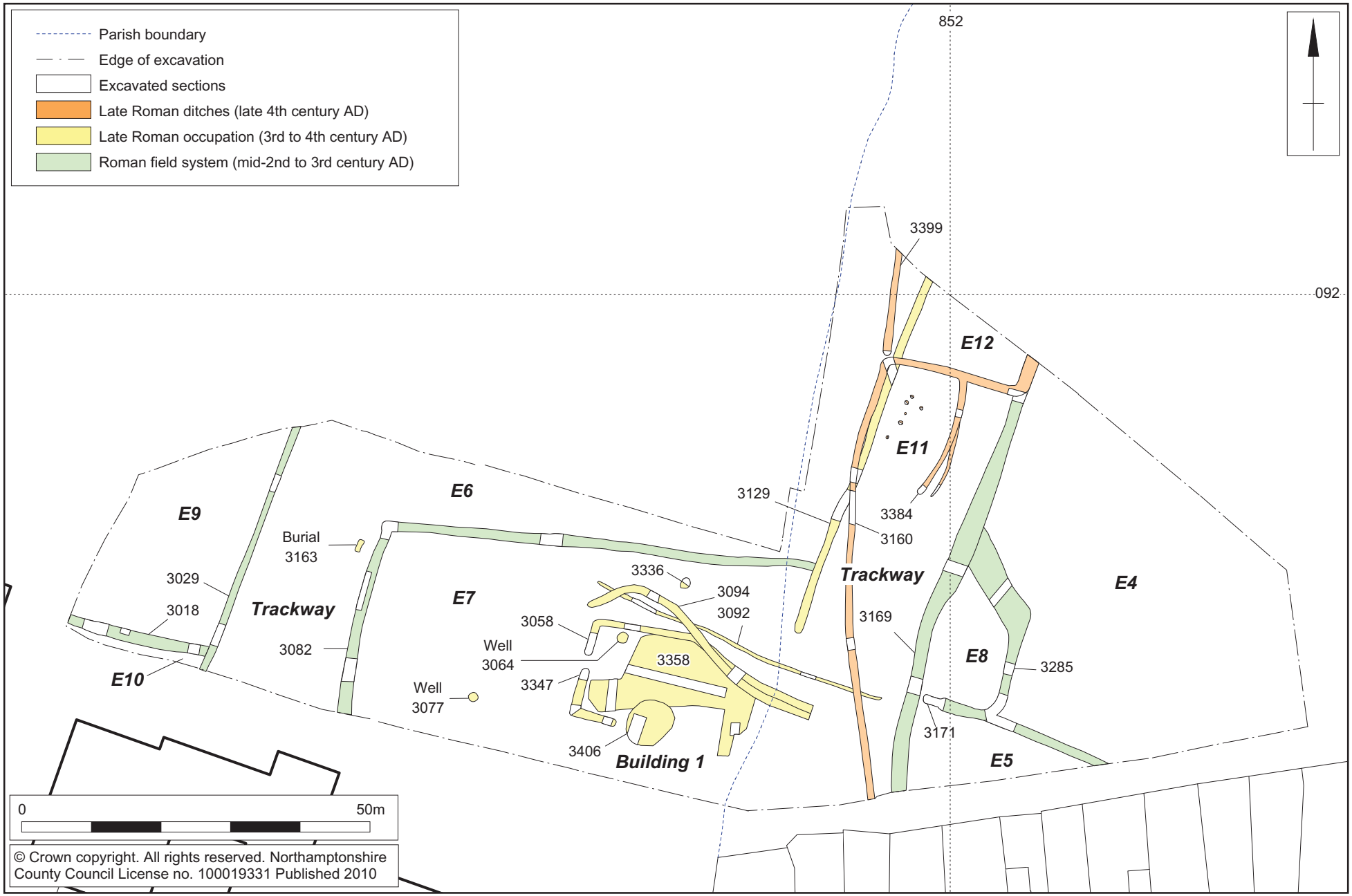
Iron Age Roundhouse R4, pre-excavation, facing south-west Fig 10

Ring ditch [3196], south-east terminal Fig 11

Ditch [3049], mid-section, facing west Fig 12

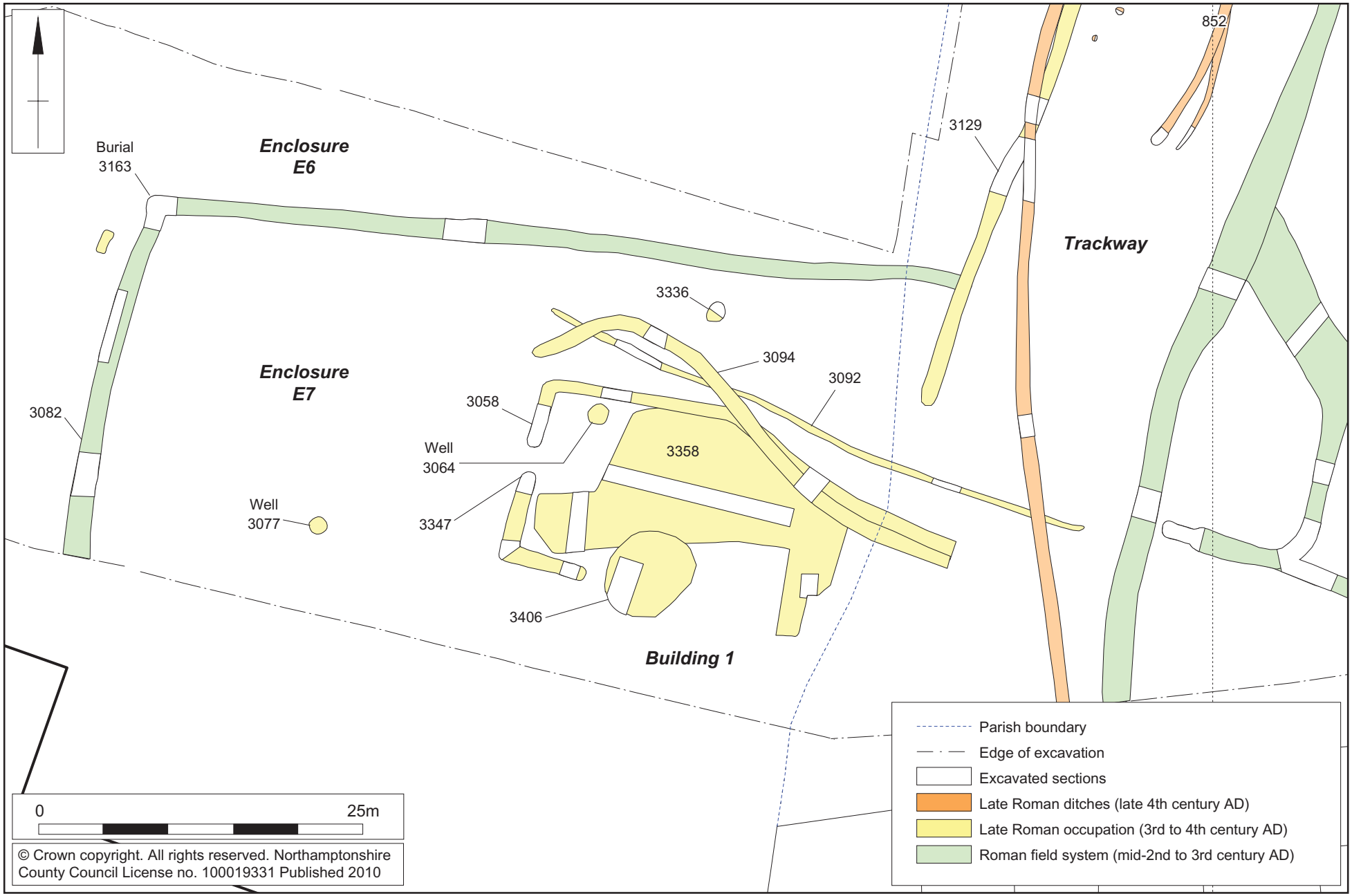


Ditch [3049], showing step cut into south edge, facing east Fig 13



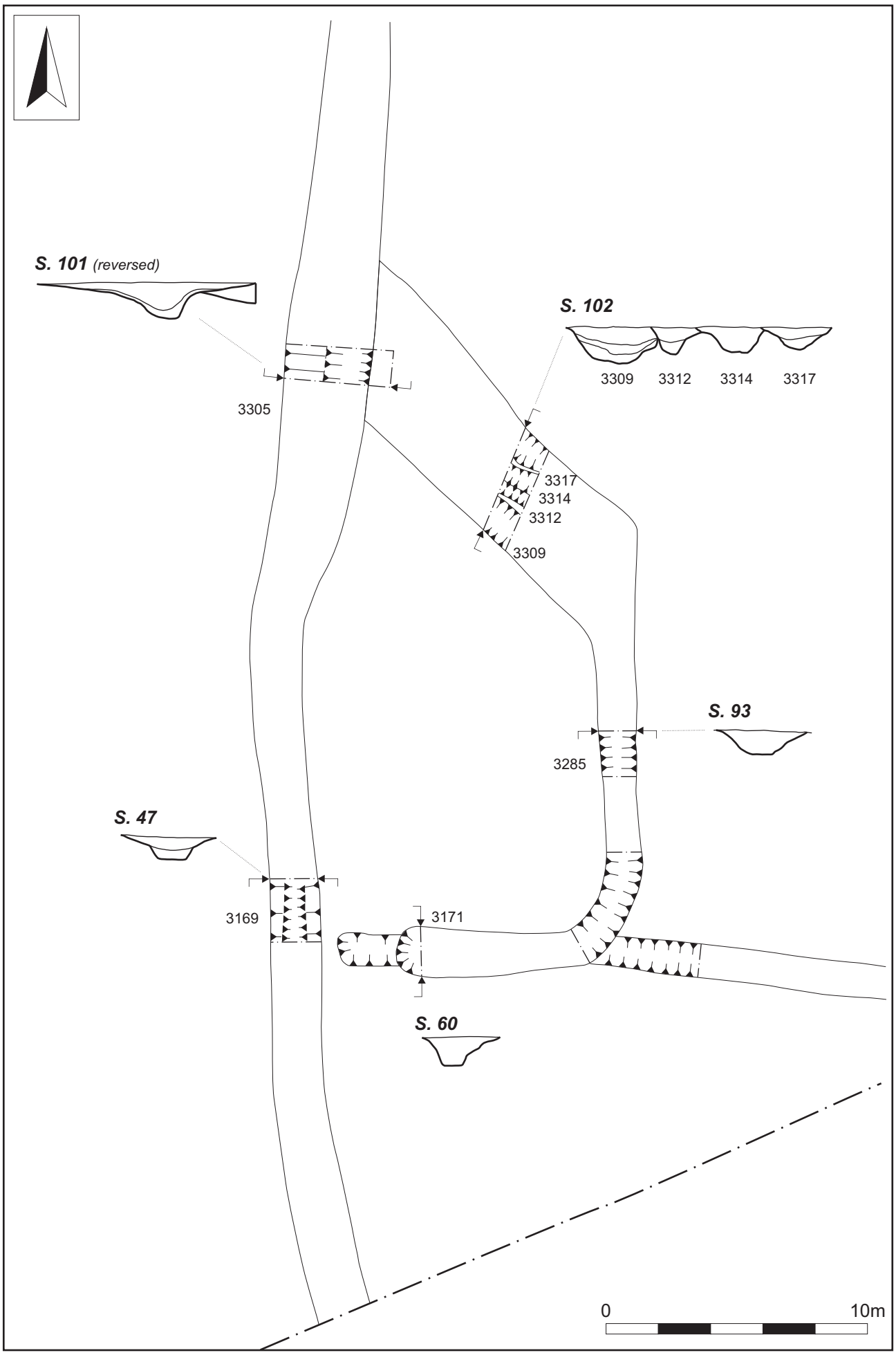
Scale 1:750

Roman features Fig 14



Ditch [3082], facing north Fig 16

Enclosure E8, section 102, facing north Fig 17



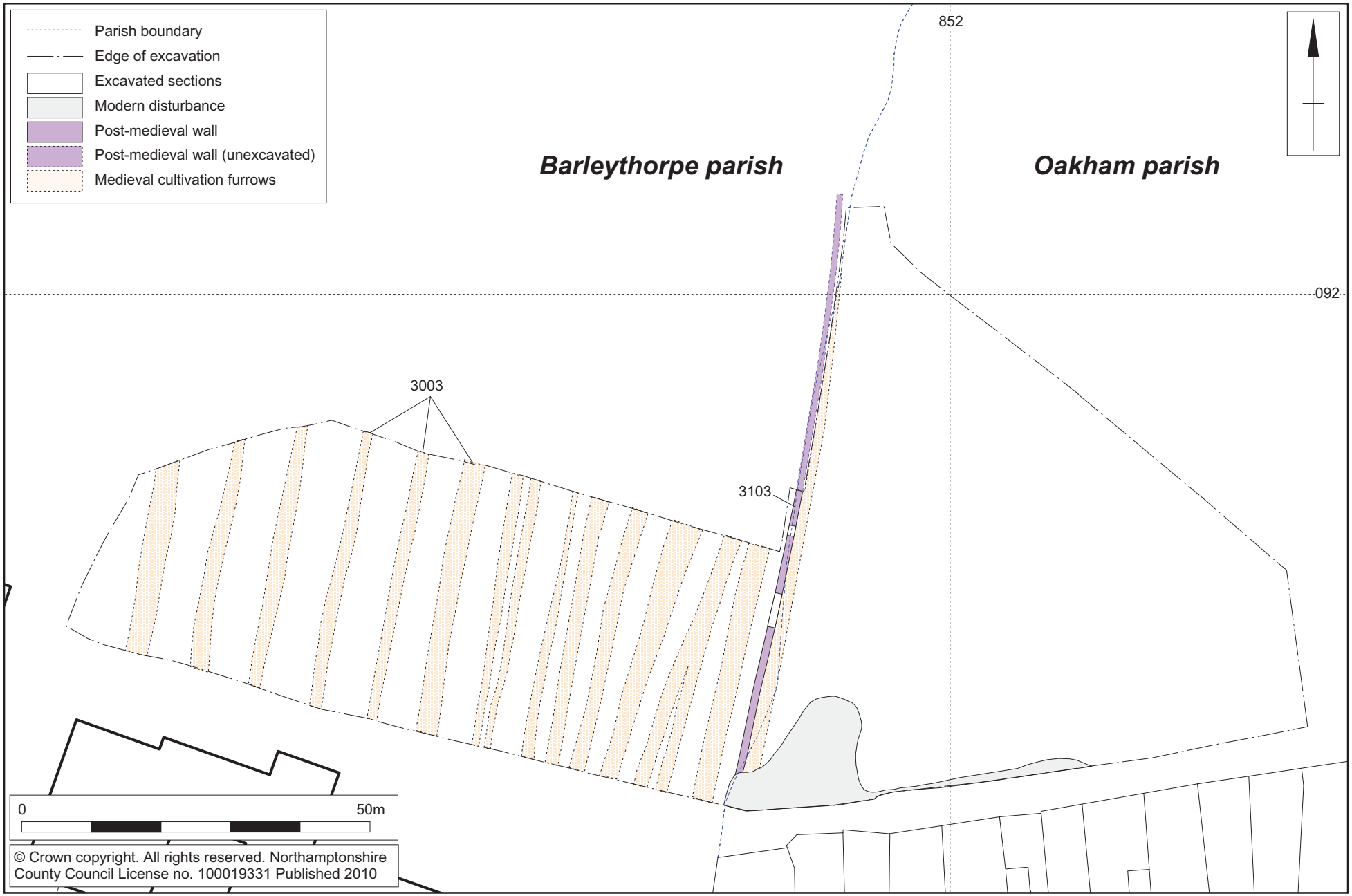
Enclosure E8 Fig 18

Building 1 spread (3358), facing south-east Fig 19

Well [3064] shown in section, facing west Fig 20

Well [3077] shown in section, facing south Fig 21

Human burial [3163], facing north Fig 22

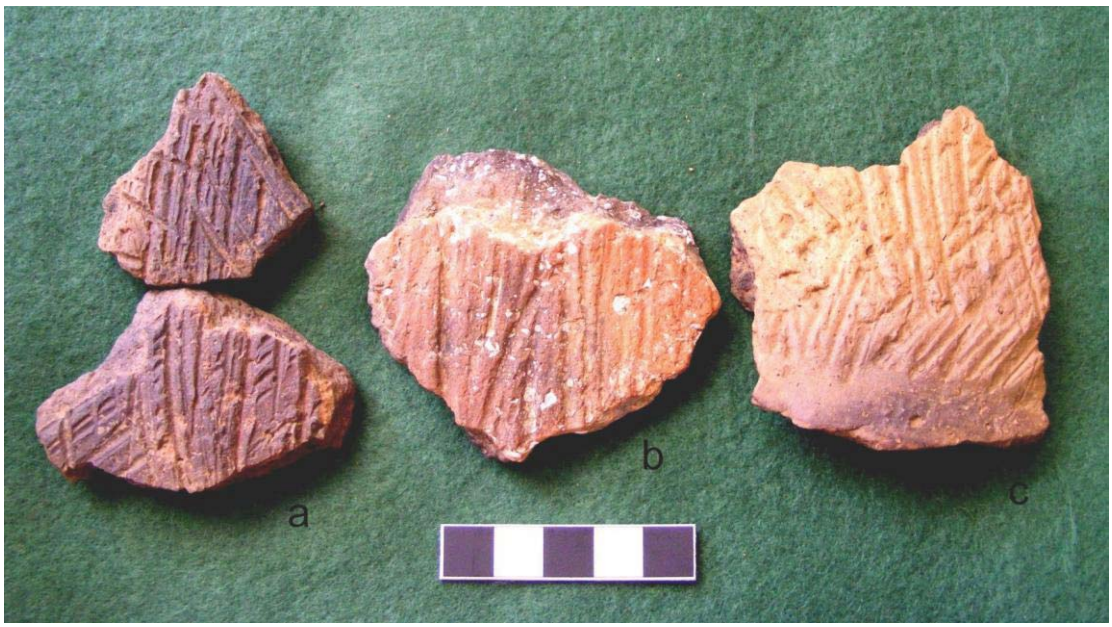


Scale 1:750

Medieval and post-medieval features Fig 23

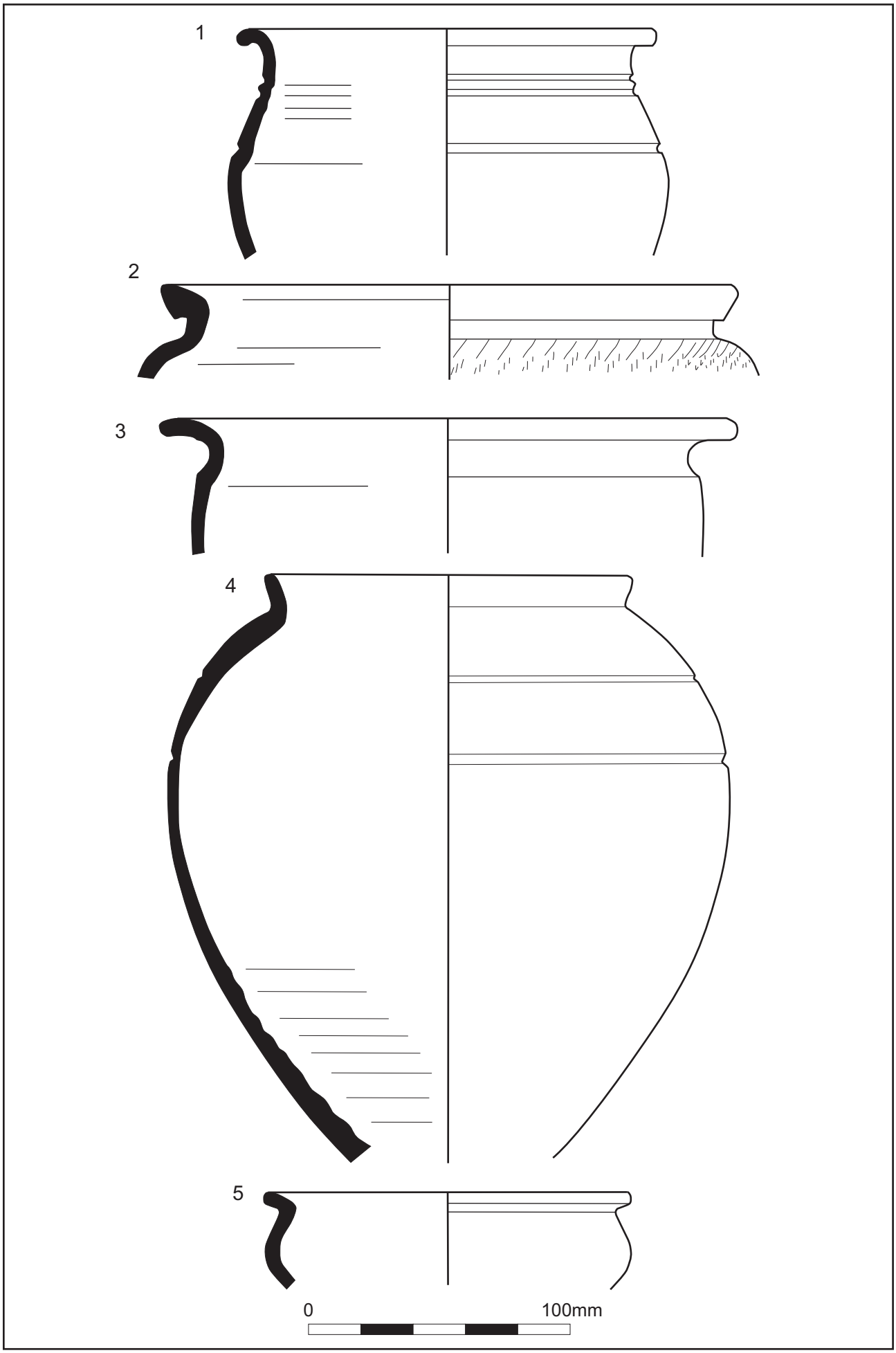
Road surface (5012) and stone-filled ditch [5015], facing west Fig 24

Wall [3103], facing north Fig 25

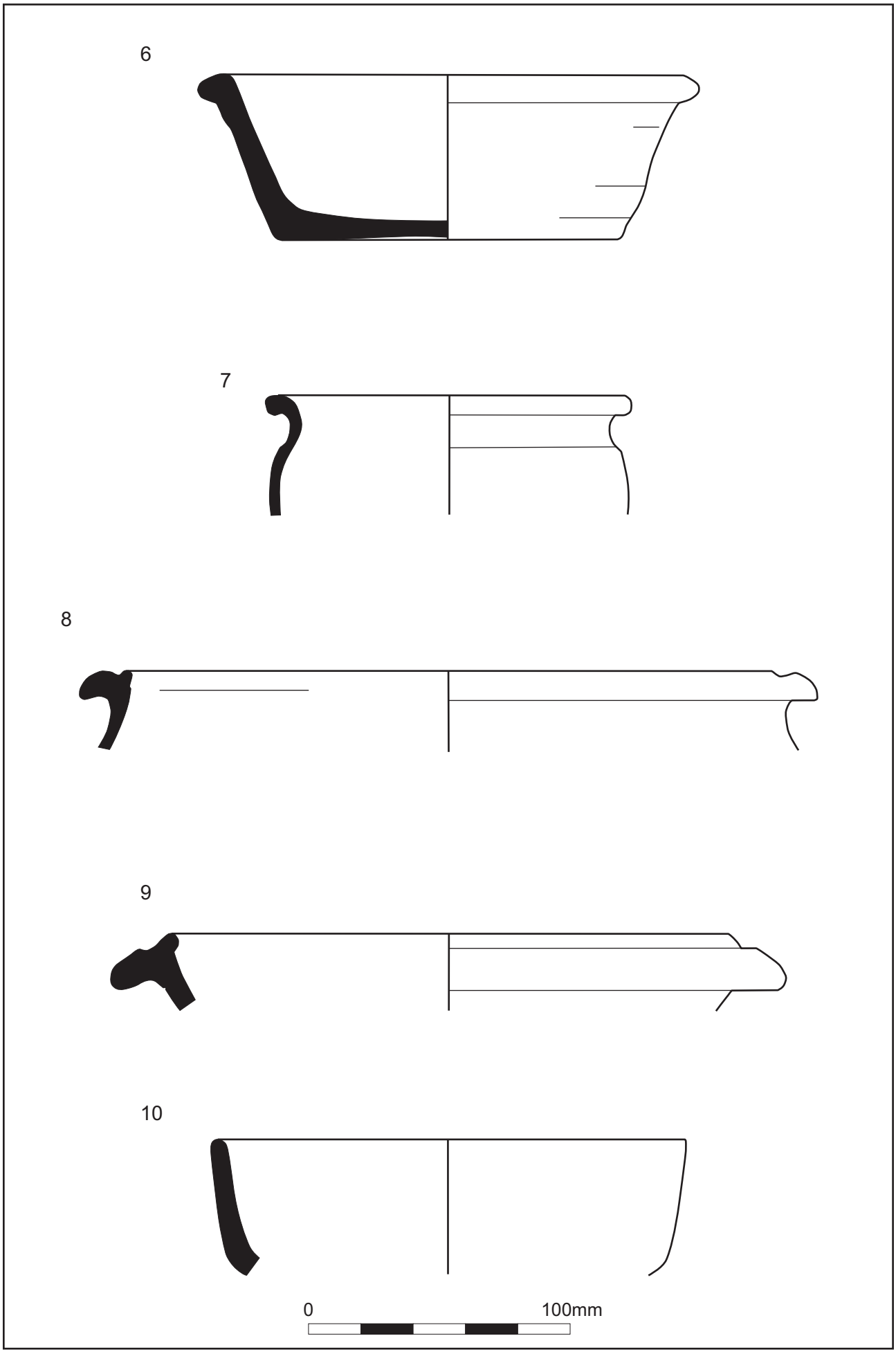


Iron Age scored ware body sherds, a-c Fig 26

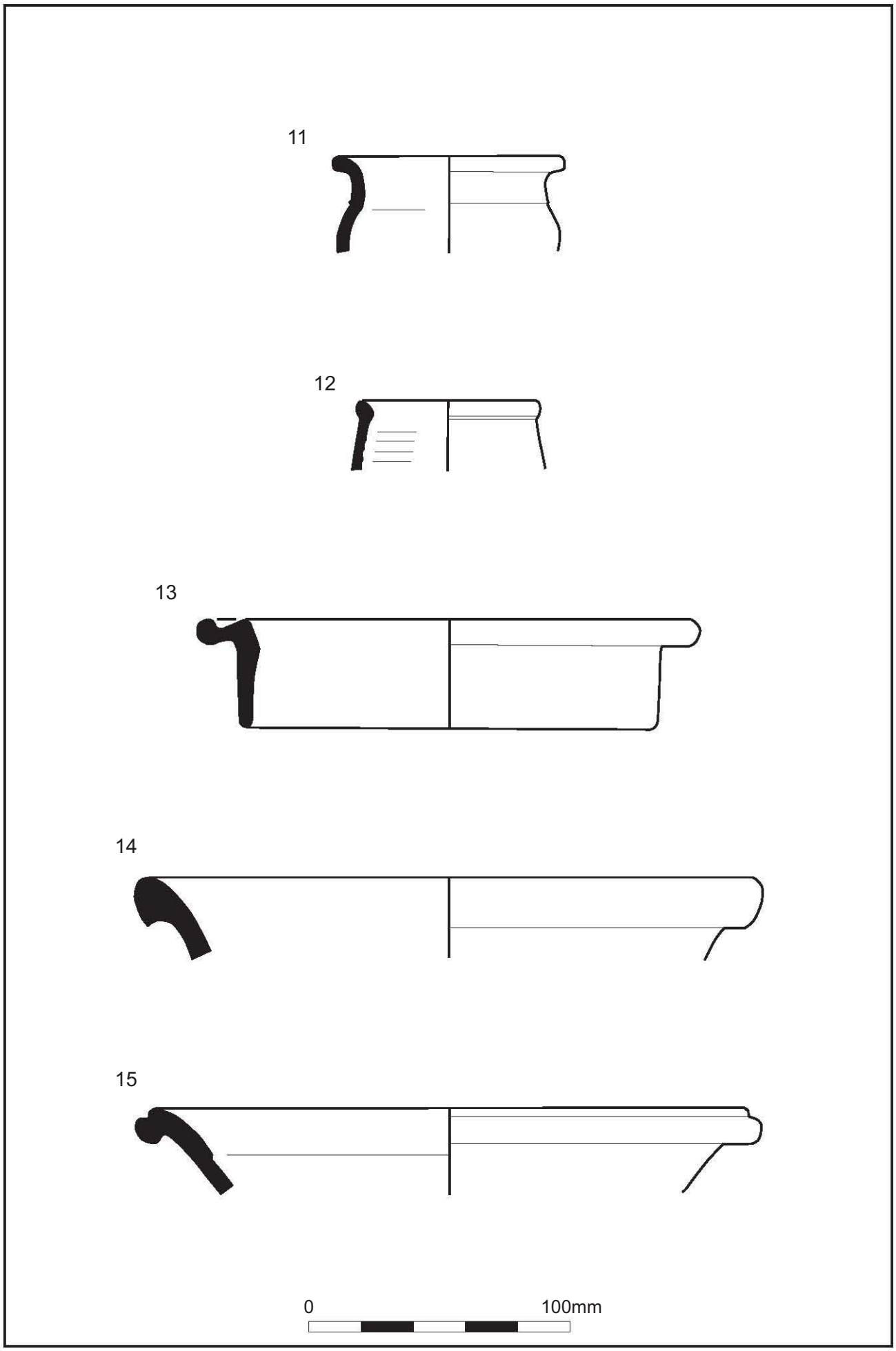
Late Iron Age grid-pattern scored ware, ditch [3369] Fig 27



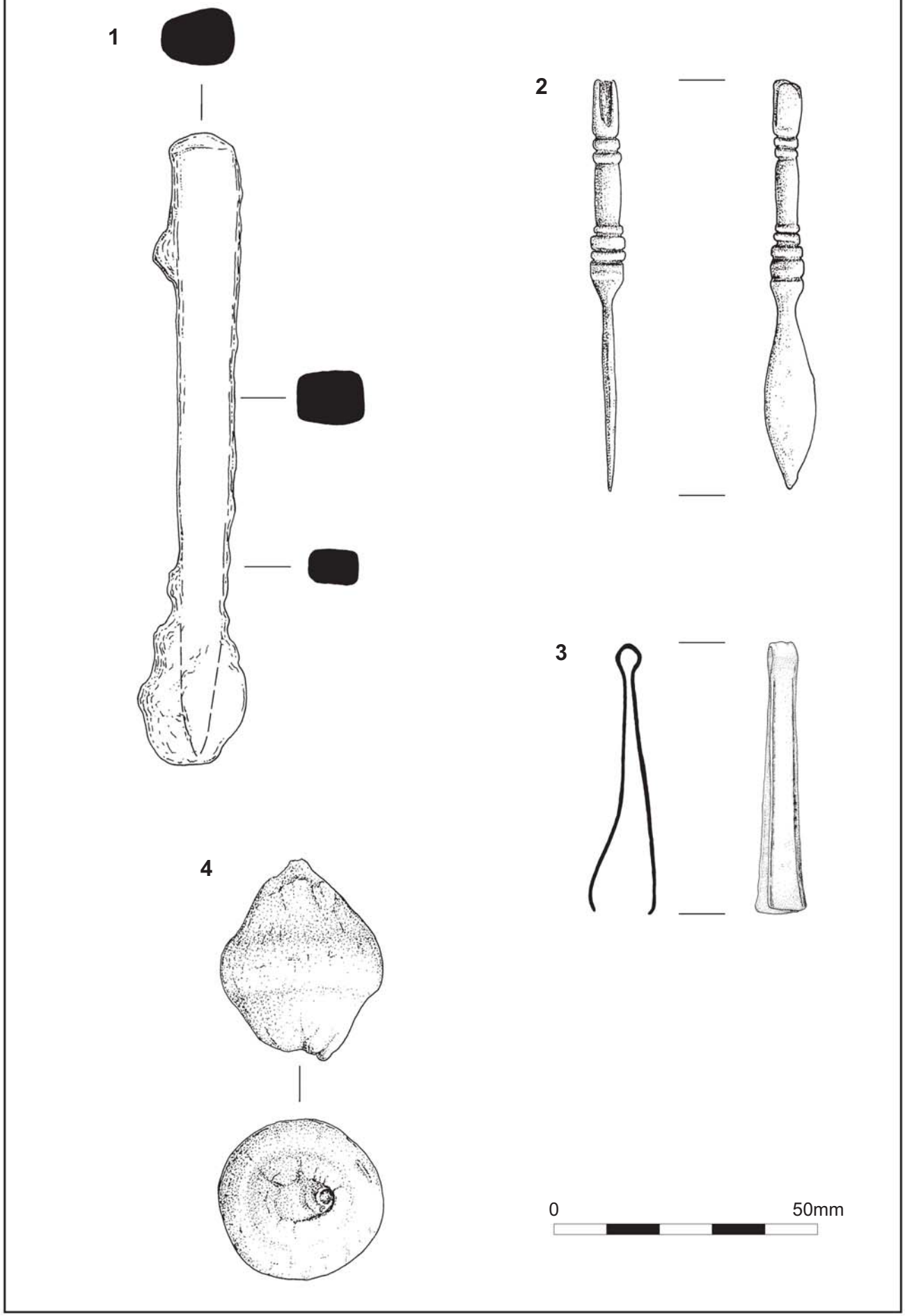
Roman pottery, 1-5 Fig 28



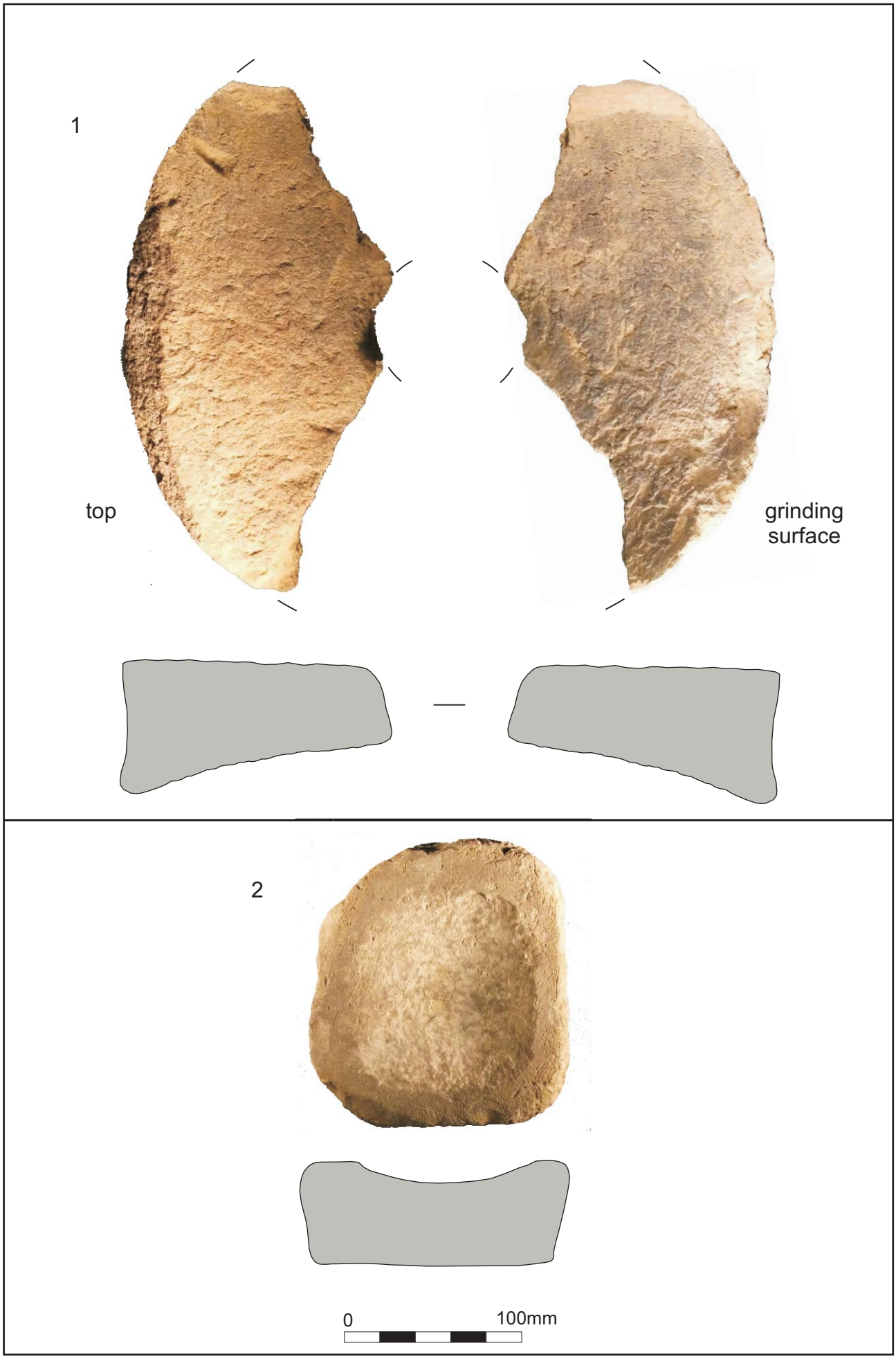
Roman pottery, 6-10 Fig 29



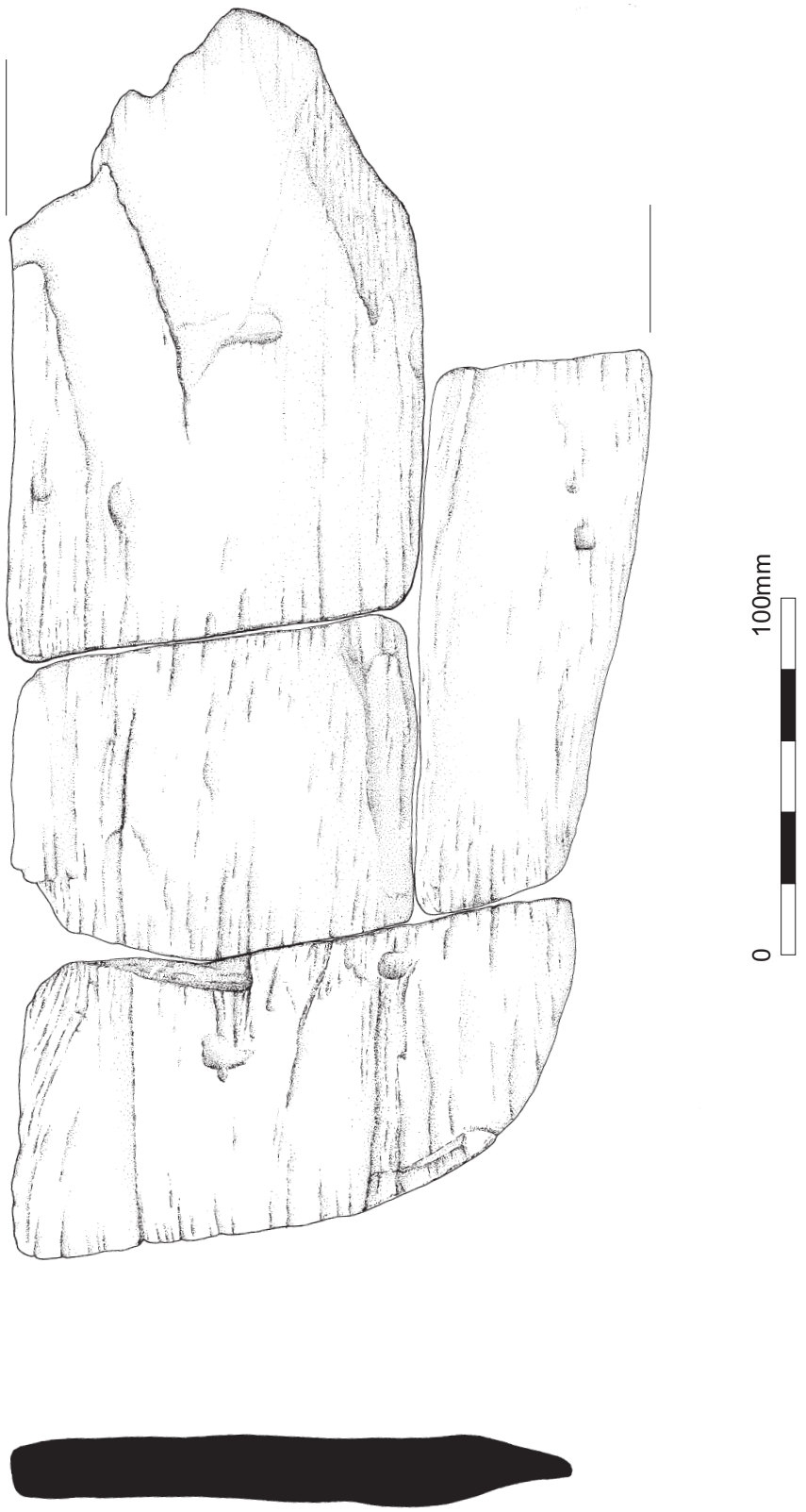
Roman pottery, 11-15 Fig 30



Smithy punch (1), scalpel (2), tweezers (3) and lead weight (4) Fig 31



Roman quern (1) and stone mortar (2) Fig 32



Oak timber plank, ditch [3049] Fig 33

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