# Iron Age and Romano-British Remains at Filkins and Carterton

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SUMMARY

*Between July and August 2002 Cotswold Archaeology (CA), excavated two sites during a programme of archaeological recording along the route of a new gas pipeline between Filkins and Carterton in Oxfordshire. At Site 1, located 0.6 km. to the south of Filkins, the investigation of previously known cropmark evidence was carried out. Excavation revealed probable agricultural activity dating to the middle Iron Age, and a trackway dating to the 1st to 2nd centuries AD. Associated with the trackway were eight inhumation burials and three cremation burials, which dated to the mid 3rd century AD. Site 2 was located 0.4 km. to the south-west of Carterton and comprised the remains of a Romano-British drying oven. An assemblage of pottery dating to the 1st to 3rd centuries AD was recovered from its fill. No other archaeological features were identified on the pipeline route.*

In July and August 2002, Cotswold Archaeology (CA), formerly Cotswold Archaeological Trust (CAT), carried out a programme of archaeological recording for RSK ENSR Environment Ltd (RSK ENSR) on behalf of Transco on the route of the Filkins to Carterton gas pipeline. The pipeline route was 4.7 km. in length and linked existing gas pipelines to the south of the village of Filkins (SP 2355 0338) and to the west of Carterton (SP 2725 0635), both located in Oxfordshire (Fig. 1). The programme of archaeological recording was undertaken to mitigate against the damage or destruction of archaeological finds, features and/or sites during pipeline construction.

Preliminary work comprised the compilation of a desk-based assessment[1] and a geophysical survey.[2] A project design for a programme of archaeological recording was approved by Hugh Coddington, Deputy County Archaeological Officer, Oxfordshire County Council, who also monitored the fieldwork through a series of site visits.

## LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

The south-western end of the pipeline route is located to the south-west of the village of Filkins. The pipeline runs in a north-easterly direction, crossing the Broadwell Brook and passing to the north of the village of Kencot before terminating to the west of Carterton (Fig. 1).

This end of the pipeline route is located on the river gravels of the Quaternary period, within the relatively flat ground of the Upper Thames Valley. Sites 1 and 2 lie on the 2nd (Summertown–Radley) Terrace Deposits.[3] To the north-east of the Broadwell Brook the pipeline traverses higher, more undulating ground located on cornbrash of the Middle

[1] RSK ENSR, *Filkins to Carterton Gas Pipeline: Desk-Based Assessment* (RSK ENSR unpubl. report, 2002).
[2] Stratascan, *Filkins to Carterton Pipeline: Geophysical Survey* (Stratascan unpubl. report, 2002).
[3] BGS, *1:50,000 Series England and Wales Sheet 235: Cirencester Solid and Drift Geology* (1998).

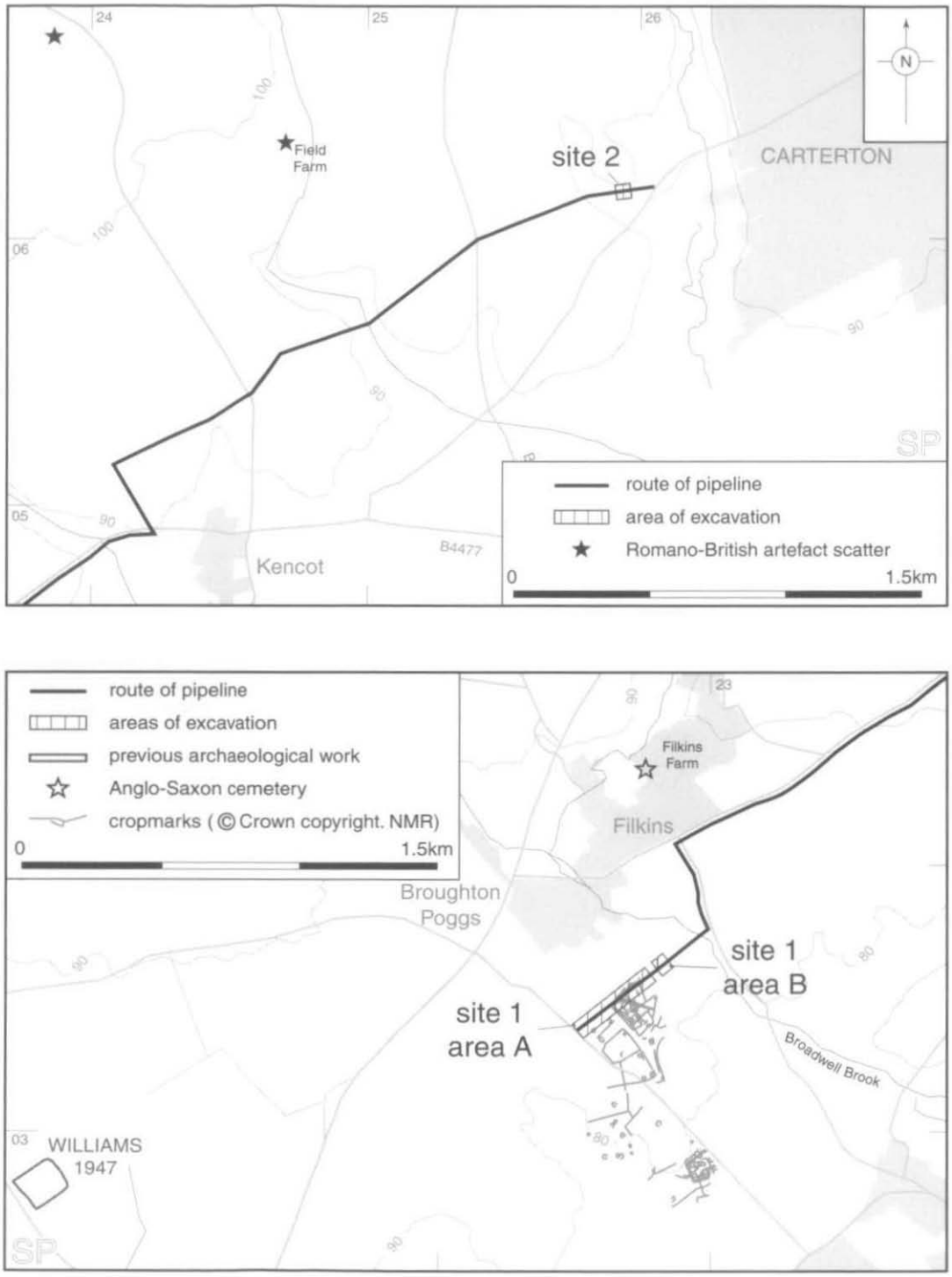


Fig. 1. Location of pipeline route and adjacent sites of interest (1:25,000).

Jurassic period.[4] The fields traversed by the pipeline route were generally under arable cultivation. Two fields, located immediately to the south-west of the Broadwell Brook, were under pasture.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

While archaeological activity is well attested on the gravels within the Upper Thames Valley, the majority of the pipeline route was located on undeveloped agricultural land and did not cross any known archaeological sites. However, cropmarks identified at the south-western end of the pipeline route and a number of sites in the vicinity gave some indication of the potential of the area.

The most recent survey of cropmarks in this area was the Thames Gravel Survey.[5] This survey depicted an extensive area of cropmarks to the south of the south-western end of the pipeline route, representing probable agricultural boundaries, trackways and settlement activity. Immediately adjacent to the pipeline route it showed a zone of more intensive cropmarks, with intercutting enclosures and evidence of occupation bounded by a double-ditched trackway (Fig. 2). A programme of archaeological recording was conducted in 1993 within the zone of less intensive cropmarks during construction of an earlier gas pipeline between Highworth and Broughton Poggs. Excavation identified a number of ditches and a probable storage pit dating to the Iron Age.[6] A group of features identified during the subsequent watching brief[7] were in the vicinity of two small sub-square enclosures identified by the cropmark survey. One of these enclosures was excavated and was found to contain pottery dating to the Iron Age.

Iron Age settlement and funerary activity was identified during excavations in 1947 at Langford Downs, 2 km. to the south-west of Site 1 (Fig. 1). The remains of two small, irregular enclosures were identified together with two post-built roundhouses and a substantial pit alignment.[8] Surprisingly, despite seemingly unambiguous evidence for occupation, no storage pits were identified. The pottery assemblage, recovered wholly from the enclosure ditches, comprised mainly 'Belgic' wheel-made types with a smaller quantity of 'Iron Age A' handmade types, which were considered to be residual.[9]

Probable Romano-British settlement activity has been identified 1.25 km. to the west of Site 2 in the vicinity of Field Farm (Fig. 1). A note in the Oxfordshire Sites and Monuments Record refers to the casual recovery of coins, pottery and building stone (including part of a pillar 0.3 m. in length) dating to the Romano-British period from the surface of the ploughed field. The note also refers to another scatter of Romano-British artefacts on the line of the main runway of the disused airfield, a further 0.9 km. to the west. Artefacts recovered included pottery, coins and building material, from the surface of the field.[10]

[4] BGS, *1:50,000 Series England and Wales Sheet 236: Witney, Solid and Drift Geology* (1982).

[5] RCHME, *Thames Gravel Survey Sheet SP20SW, 1:10,000* (1993).

[6] OAU, *British Gas plc. South-Western Pipeline, Highworth to Broughton Poggs: Watching Brief Report* (OAU unpubl. report, 1993).

[7] Ibid. 9.

[8] A. Williams, 'Excavations at Langford Downs, Oxon. (Nr. Lechlade) in 1943', *Oxoniensia*, xi–xii (1947), 44–64, Fig. 14.

[9] Ibid. 58.

[10] RSK ENSR, op. cit. (note 1) 7.

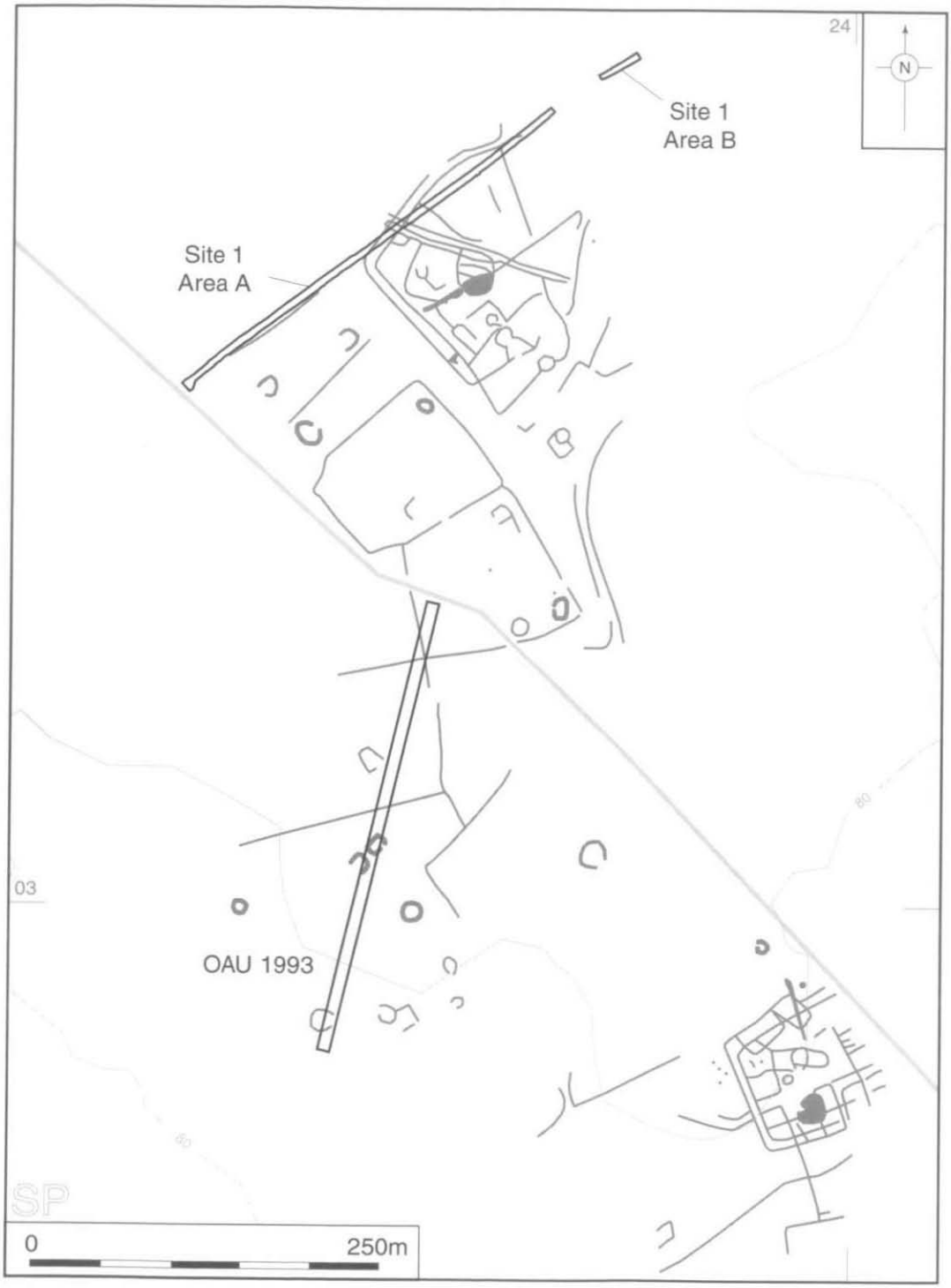


Fig. 2. Site 1, with adjacent cropmarks (© Crown copyright, NMR; 1:5000).

An inhumation cemetery dating to the Anglo-Saxon period was found in the 1850s at Purbricks Close, to the west of Filkins Farm. Up to 15 graves were excavated, 10 of which contained grave goods including spearheads, a sword, buckles, bronze pins, saucer brooches, beads and a girdle hanger.[11] Medieval and post-medieval settlement and agricultural activity have also been noted in the vicinity of Filkins and Broughton Poggs, including extant ridge-and-furrow earthworks close to the south-western part of the pipeline route (not illustrated).

## METHODOLOGY

The presence of archaeological features on the pipeline route was confirmed by the geophysical survey, but the results did not produce any additional data and therefore are not reproduced here. The area of archaeological remains thus identified at the south-western end of the pipeline route was subject to excavation (Site 1), with a watching brief maintained on all other intrusive groundworks along the rest of the route. The identification of a Romano-British drying oven (Site 2) during the watching brief also resulted in its excavation.

Site 1 was divided into two areas (A and B) by the presence of a wide, dense hedgerow. Area A measured 340 m. by 6 m. and Area B measured 35 m. by 6 m. (Figs. 2–4). Ploughsoil, *c.* 0.3 m. deep, was removed from both of these areas by mechanical excavator under archaeological supervision. The fills of the medieval furrows were also removed by machine to expose the underlying features dating to the Iron Age and Romano-British periods cutting the natural gravel.

The watching brief commenced with the stripping of topsoil by mechanical excavator of a 6 m.-wide wayleave at the north-eastern end of the pipeline route (Fig. 1). Topsoil and, if present, subsoil layers were removed to an average depth of 0.3 m. under archaeological supervision and the location of any archaeological findspots, features or deposits were noted for further investigation. Towards the south-western end of the route, the pipeline was located within the unclassified road between Filkins and Langford. Machine excavation of a trench 0.5 m. in width, 0.6 m. in depth and 30 m. in length was undertaken through the modern road surface and the underlying make-up to accommodate the pipe.

The total area subject to archaeological excavation measured 0.23 ha. whilst *c.* 2.6 ha. were examined during the watching brief. Within the excavation areas all discrete features (postholes and pits) were sampled by hand excavation with the average sample being 50% of the feature. All linear features (ditches) were sectioned at least once with a typical section being 1 m. in length. Intersections between features were also excavated to examine any stratigraphic relationships.

In a number of cases features identified on site were almost entirely truncated by later features and so were only visible in section. Such features could not be depicted on the illustrations reproduced here (Figs. 3–4) and where these features are described in the text, they are accompanied by the abbreviation n.i. (not illustrated). The medieval furrows which intersected Site 1 have been omitted from the illustrations for the sake of clarity.

A small assemblage of animal bone was recovered during the excavation. No meaningful discussion of this assemblage is possible and the results are therefore briefly summarised within the discussion at the end of this report. A number of environmental samples were taken during the excavation. Analysis of these samples was again of limited assistance in considering the environment and economy of the site and a summary of these results is similarly presented within the discussion. These reports are available for consultation in the archive. All other artefact types recovered are reported on in this report.

[11] Ackerman, *Archaeologia* 37, (1856), 140–7.

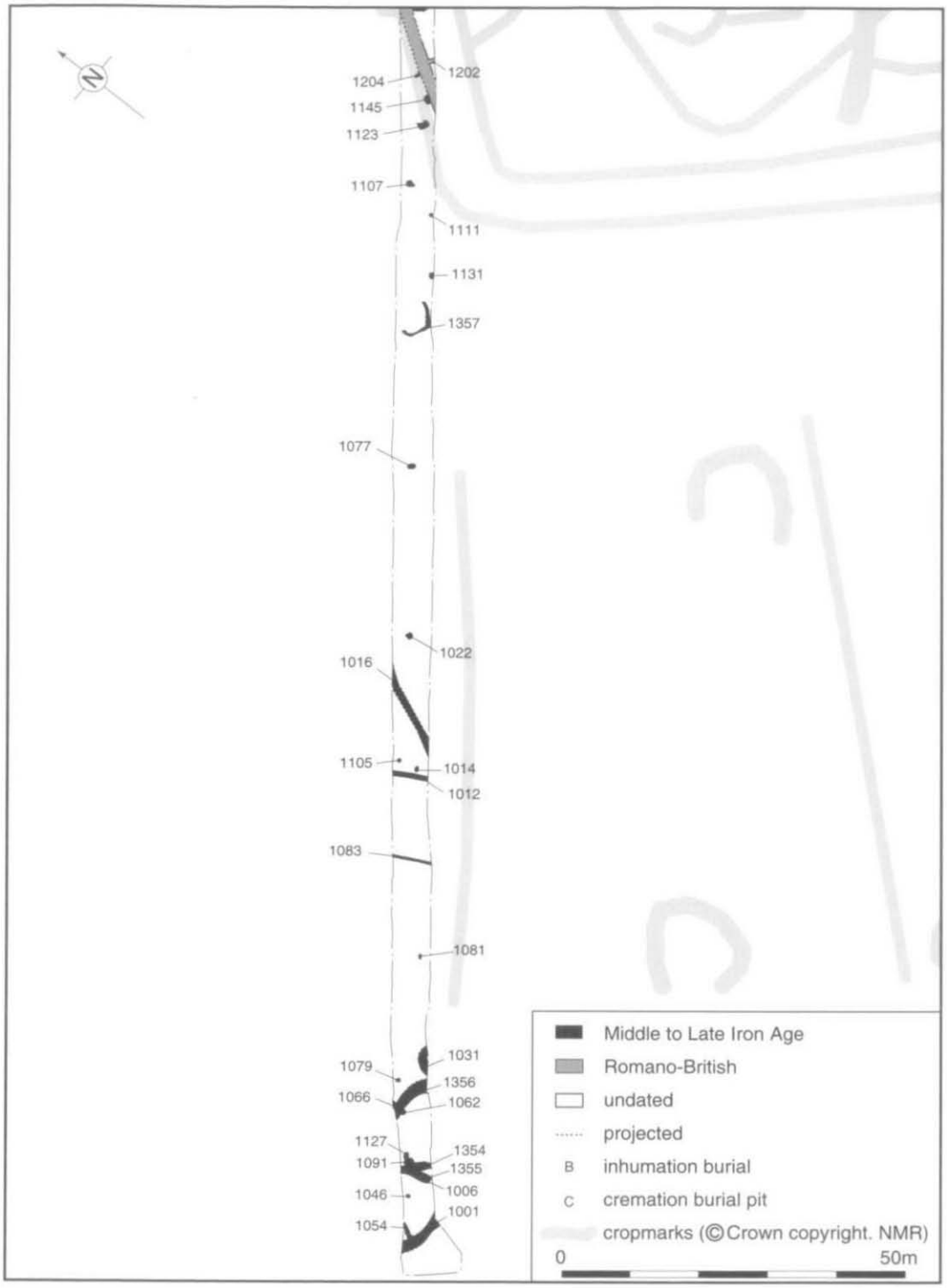


Fig. 3. Site 1, Area A, west (all feature plan; 1:1000).

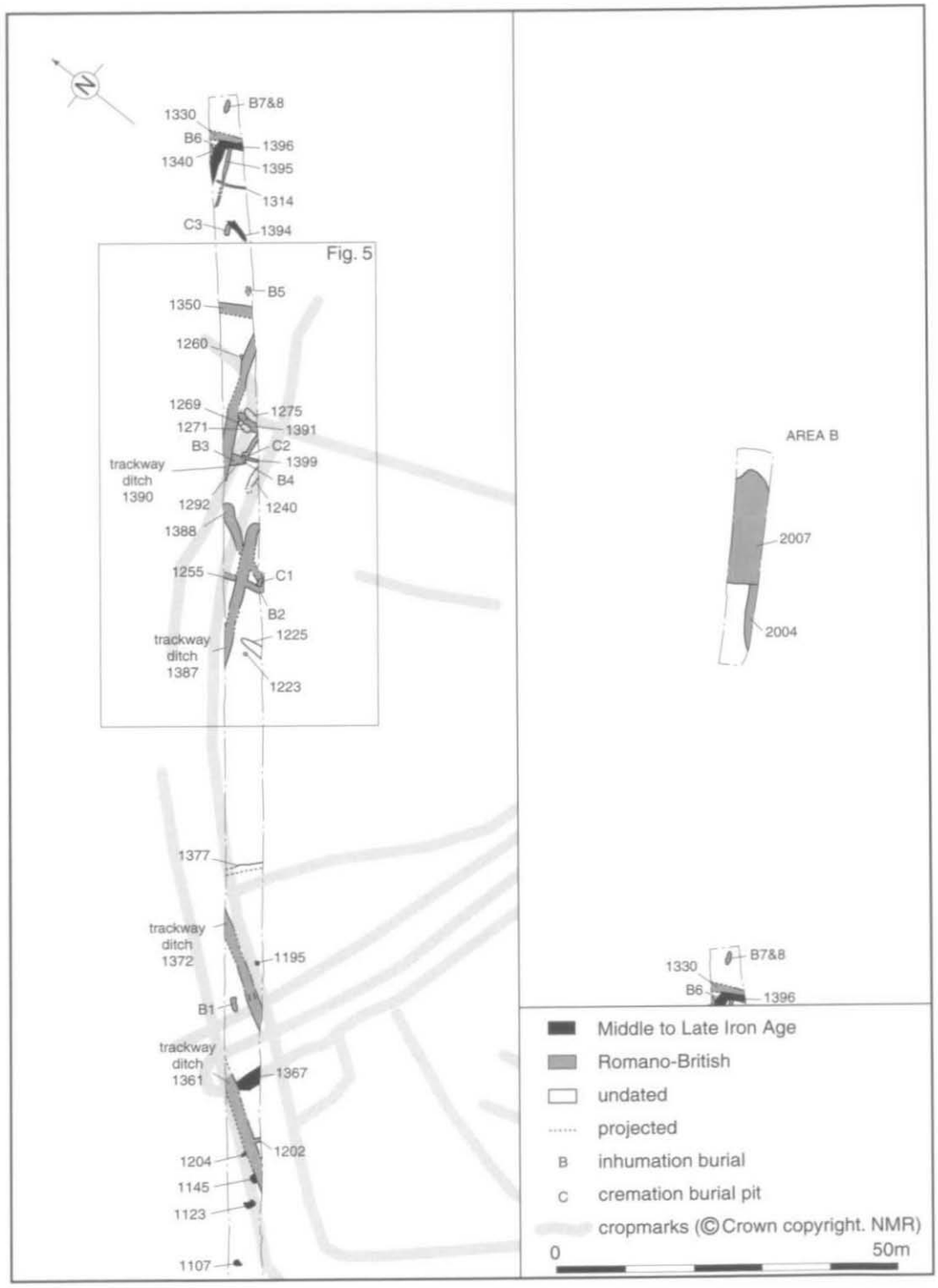


Fig. 4. Site 1, Area A east and Area B (all feature plan; 1:1000).

## RESULTS

### *Site 1, Area A*

*Period 0: Late Neolithic to Bronze Age (residual).* Five pieces of worked flint were recovered, all of which had been redeposited in late prehistoric and later features. A single, crudely fashioned end-scraper was the only tool present, with the remainder of the material comprising secondary or tertiary flakes. All pieces are heavily patinated to a pale grey to cream colour. None of the recovered material is diagnostic of date although a later-Neolithic to Bronze Age date is likely based on the technology and the 'squat' proportions of the removals.

*Period 1: middle Iron Age (400 BC to 100 BC).* Evidence of activity dating to the middle Iron Age was recovered throughout Site 1. Interpretation of the excavated evidence is difficult due to the lack of stratigraphic relationships between various zones of activity and the recovery of a pottery assemblage only generally datable to the middle Iron Age. The features dating to this period therefore cannot be further subdivided into chronological phases.

The most intensive zone of activity in this period was at the south-western end of the trench and comprised a number of intercutting curvilinear ditches and pits (Fig. 3). Large sherds of coarse pottery were recovered from these features. Three probable phases of activity were identified from the stratigraphic evidence, the earliest of which comprised Ditches 1006 and 1066 and Pits 1062 and 1127. The ditches and pits had been backfilled with material rich in occupation debris including burnt stone and pottery. Pit 1062 was circular and measured 0.48 m. in diameter and 0.09 m. in depth. The complete, and probably articulated, skeleton of a dog was found at the base of it.[12]

The lengths of the long bones indicated that the shoulder height of the animal was 472 mm.[13] indicating an animal of average size for the period.[14] The remains of a dog, the right distal humerus of which had an incompletely healed fracture, were recovered from a pit dating to the early Iron Age at Farmoor, Oxfordshire.[15] There is no reason to suppose that such burials signify any more than the death, through natural causes, of animals that worked and/or provided companionship, although animal burials, including dogs, may also be indicative of ritual activity. A pit containing the remains of two dogs was the only feature found within a Bronze Age ring ditch located outside the north-west entrance of Salmonsbury hillfort, Gloucestershire.[16] A skull of a dog was also found in a middle Iron Age pit at Lechlade.[17]

Ditches 1006 and 1066 were cut by Ditches 1354 and 1356 respectively. Pit 1062 was also cut by Ditch 1356 and Pit 1127 by 1091. Two of the ditches curved towards one another and may have represented an oval enclosure. Pit 1091 was a substantial circular feature with a diameter of 1.2 m. and a depth of 0.9 m. It was probably a storage pit, the primary fill of which appeared to represent gradual silting, while the secondary fill comprised rubble backfill. The fills of Pit 1091 contained a relatively large assemblage of animal bone and had been truncated by a further curvilinear ditch, 1355, which contained abundant quantities of burnt stone and pottery. The analysis of environmental samples from Pit 1091 and Ditch 1356 indicated that these features had not contained standing water.[18]

Across the whole of the south-western part of Area A was a scatter of postholes and small pits. The distribution of these features appeared to be arbitrary, with no structures or fencelines detected. Excavation produced middle Iron Age pottery from the fills of three of these features (1081, 1107 and 1123). The remainder of the features were assigned to this period on the basis of stratigraphic evidence, form, fill characteristics and/or their spatial association with better dated features. This interpretation is supported by

[12] L. Higbee, *Filkins to Carterton Gas Pipeline: Animal Bone* (Cotswold Archaeology unpubl. report, 2003).

[13] R. Harcourt, 'The Dog in Prehistoric and Early Historic Britain', *Jnl. of Arch. Sci.* 1 (1974), 151–76.

[14] K.M. Clark, 'Dogged Persistence: The Phenomenon of Canine Skeletal Uniformity in British Prehistory' in S.J. Crockford (ed.), *Dogs Through Time: An Archaeological Perspective. Proceedings of the 1st ICAZ Symposium on the History of the Domestic Dog.* (B.A.R. Int. Series. 889, 2000), 163–70.

[15] B. Wilson, 'The Vertebrates', in G.H. Lambrick and M.A. Robinson *Iron Age and Roman Riverside Settlement at Farmoor, Oxfordshire* (C.B.A. Research Report 32, 1979), 128–33.

[16] H.E. O'Neil, 'Salmonsbury, Bourton on the Water' *Trans. Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeol. Soc.* 95 (1977), 11–23.

[17] C.M. Bateman, D. Enright and N. Oakey, 'Prehistoric and Anglo-Saxon Settlements to the Rear of Sherborne House, Lechlade: Excavations in 1997' *Trans. Bristol and Gloucestershire Arch. Soc.*121 (2003), 23–96.

[18] E. Hutchins, *Filkins to Carterton Gas Pipeline: Environmental Remains* (Cotswold Archaeology unpubl. report, 2004).

the absence of similar features dating to the Romano-British (or earlier) periods, although the possibility that all or some of these features do date to other periods cannot be discounted.

Three straight ditches were identified within this broad zone of activity. Ditch 1016 was orientated north-east/south-west, and produced pottery. To the south-west was a pair of smaller parallel ditches, 1012 and 1083, orientated north-west/south-east. No dating evidence was recovered from these features but they are ascribed to this period on the basis of spatial association, fill characteristics and form.

Part of a small incomplete ring ditch, 1357, with a diameter of 5 m. was also recognised. The ditch was narrow and shallow, but would have been more substantial prior to medieval truncation. Pottery of late Iron Age date was recovered from the fill, although this may have been intrusive. The ring ditch may represent either a drip gully of a roundhouse, although this would lie at the minimum diameter for such a feature, or it may represent part of a small circular enclosure.

Two parallel ditches, 1175 and 1180 (n.i.), were identified at the centre of the trench. Pottery of middle Iron Age date was recovered from the fills of both, which were truncated by a substantial ditch, 1367 (Fig. 4). Pottery of the same date was recovered from the third fill of Ditch 1367 and this corresponded to one of a series of three parallel linear cropmarks. These cropmarks extend at least 140 m. to the south-east and must have formed a major landscape feature. The remaining two parallel ditches identified by the cropmark survey were not identified within the excavation area; they may have been truncated by ridge-and-furrow cultivation.

A number of features dating to this period were also identified at the north-eastern end of Area A (Fig. 4). Ditch 1284 (n.i.) was cut by an L-shaped ditch 1396, which contained middle Iron Age pottery. Immediately to the west were the truncated remains of another ditch, 1394, orientated north/south, which also produced pottery of a similar date.

*Period 2: Romano-British (1st–4th century* AD). Activity dating to the Romano-British period was recovered in the north-eastern part of Site 1. Interpretation of the excavated evidence is more easily facilitated by the better stratigraphic coherence of the features associated with the trackway, the cropmark evidence and the recovery of a more closely dated pottery assemblage. On the basis of this evidence four broad phases of activity have been identified.

*Period 2.1: pre-trackway features.* The earliest Romano-British features comprised a number of ditches and pits scattered across the central part of the site. Ditch 1202 contained pottery dating to the 1st to 2nd centuries AD. It was truncated by Trackway Ditch 1361. Ditch 1176 (n.i) was located *c.* 10 m. to the north of Ditch 1202. It was on the same orientation as the western part of the later trackway ditch, 1361, which also truncated it. Romano-British pottery was recovered from the third fill of Ditch 1176. Ditch 1255 (Fig. 5) contained 1st-century AD pottery and was also truncated by the later trackway ditch, 1387. An L-shaped ditch, 1399, was identified within the north-eastern part of the later trackway; this feature contained pottery dating to the Iron Age and Romano-British periods and appeared to be contemporary with a large pit or ditch terminus, 1292. The L-shaped ditch, 1399, had been truncated by Cremation Burial C2 (period 2.4). Feature 1292 was truncated in turn by the outer Trackway Ditch 1390 (period 2.2), Inhumation Burials B3 and B4 (period 2.3) and Cremation Burial C2 (period 2.4) (Fig. 5, section 1).

*Period 2.2: trackway and associated features.* A trackway defined by a single ditch on either side was investigated in two locations within the trench. The ditch on the inner, south-east, edge was investigated to the south-west (where it is termed 1372) and to the north-east (where it is termed 1387). The outer, north-west, ditch is 1361 and 1390. Both 1372/1387 and 1361/1390 are considered to be contemporary.

The trackway was *c.* 7 m. in width and the majority of the pottery recovered from the ditches dated to the 1st to 2nd centuries AD. A radiocarbon date obtained from charred plant remains from the fill (1200) of one of the ditches (WK-14328 40 cal BC – 140 cal AD) is consistent with the pottery evidence. Pottery dating to the Iron Age recovered from two of the sections excavated through the ditches is considered to be residual. The outer trackway ditch was cut by period 2.3 ditch, 1391. Where the trackway ditches had not been significantly truncated by medieval ridge-and-furrow cultivation, they survived as substantial features up to 1.7 m. in width and 0.9 m. in depth (Fig. 5, section 2).

A group of ditches and a possible well were probably contemporary with the trackway. Ditch 1350 was perpendicular to the trackway and contained Romano-British pottery. Running parallel to the trackway was a severely truncated ditch, 1395 (Fig. 4), which yielded pottery dating to the 1st to 2nd centuries AD. Ditch 1330 was located immediately to the north-east of and truncated the L-shaped middle Iron Age Ditch 1396. No dating evidence was recovered. Like Ditch 1350, it was perpendicular to the trackway. Immediately to the north was a probable circular feature, 1340, the majority of which was located beyond the excavation area. The regular, steeply sloping sides and apparent circular form of the feature suggest that it may have represented the top of a well. Pottery dating to the 1st to 2nd centuries was recovered from its fill.

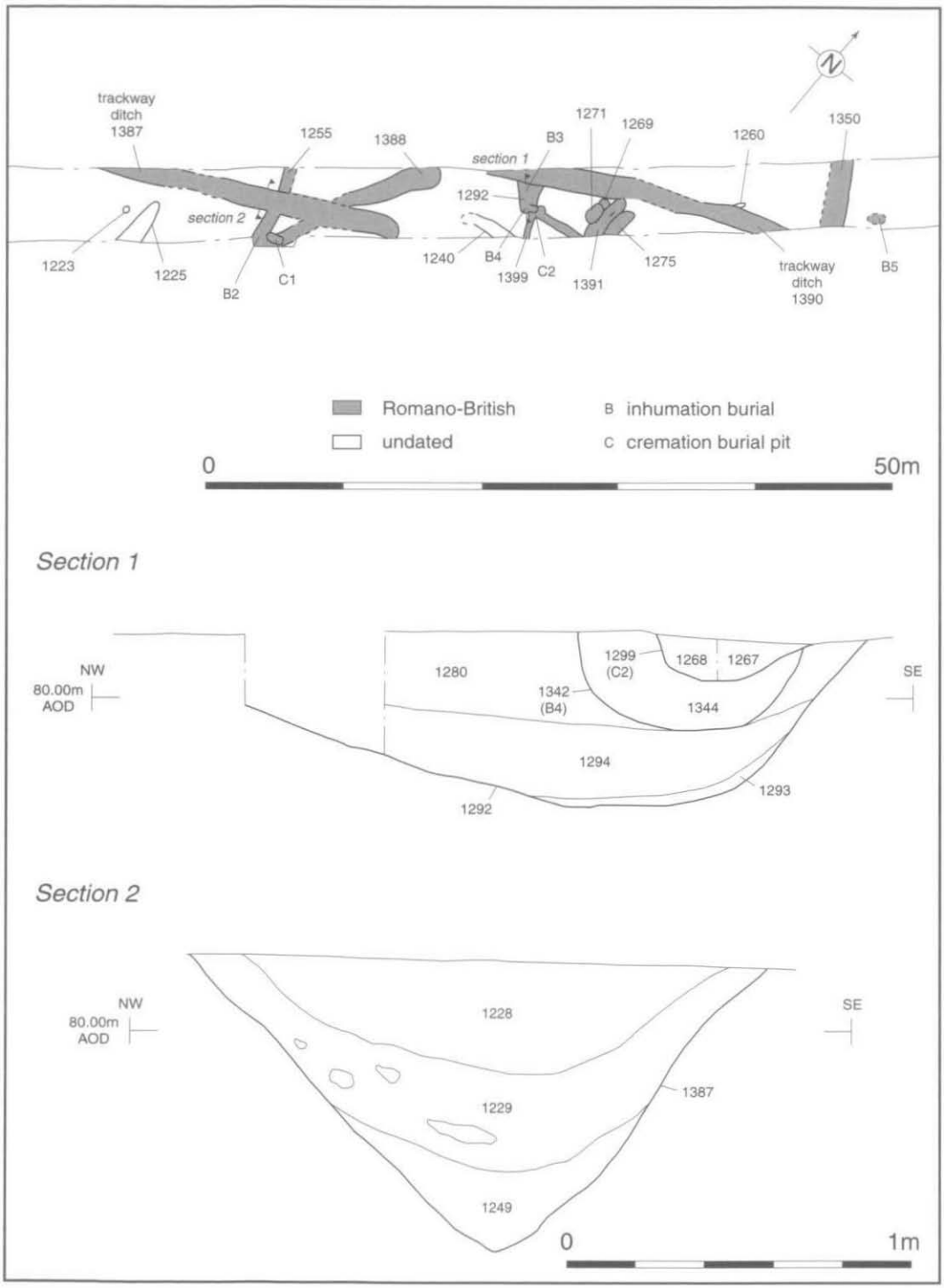


Fig. 5. Site 1, Area A, trackway east and sections (1:500 and 1:20).

*Period 2.3: post-trackway features and inhumation burials.* Excavation of one section across outer Trackway Ditch 1361 produced pottery dating to the 2nd to 3rd centuries AD, suggesting that this ditch was still partially open at this time. Ditch 1388 (Fig. 5) cut obliquely across the trackway and contained pottery dating to the mid 3rd to 4th centuries AD, suggesting that the former had fallen out of use by this time. Unfortunately the intersection between Ditch 1388 and Trackway Ditch 1387 had been truncated by medieval ridge-and-furrow cultivation and the stratigraphic relationship between these features could not be investigated. Ditch 1388 was cut by Cremation Burial C1 (period 2.4).

The outer trackway ditch was truncated by Ditch 1391, which contained residual Iron Age to 1st-century AD pottery. This ditch was cut by Pits 1271 and 1275, while another pit, 1269, was considered to be contemporary on the basis of the similarity of the forms of the features and the characteristics of their fills.

A group of eight inhumation burials was identified in the vicinity of the trackway. Details of the burials can be found in Table 4. No direct stratigraphic relationships between the burials and the period 2.2 trackway ditches were identified; however, two of the inhumations (Burials B3 and B4) cut through period 2.1 feature 1292 (Fig. 5, section 1). Two of the inhumations (B1 and B7) contained residual sherds of pottery dating to the late Iron Age to early Roman period. The burials exhibited extremely variable states of preservation, largely dependent on the depth of burial and the degree of later truncation. Grave goods were restricted to hobnails and shoe cleats from Burial B1 (Fig. 4), which also contained seven coffin nails. This was the only conclusive evidence for a coffin from any of the burials. Inhumation B5 was orientated in the opposite direction to the other burials, with the head to the south-west, and Inhumation B2 was probably prone while the remainder were supine. The grave located at the north-eastern end of the excavation area (Burials B7 and B8) was of particular interest. It appeared that the initial grave, with Burial B8, had been re-excavated and the majority of the skeleton removed, leaving only the femurs in place. Burial B7 was then deposited and buried.

*Period 2.4: post-trackway cremations.* A group of three cremation burials was identified, in the vicinity of the north-eastern part of the trackway. One of the cremation burials (C1) truncated the period 2.3 Ditch 1388. Cremation Burial C2 truncated period 2.3 Inhumation Burial B4 (Fig. 5, section 1). The cremated material comprised burnt bone, charcoal and clay which had been placed in sub-rectangular pits that appeared to resemble small graves. Cremation Burial Pit C1 measured 1.35 m. x 0.64 m. x 0.29 m., Cremation Burial Pit C2 measured 0.8 m. x 0.5 m. x 0.15 m. and Cremation Burial Pit C3 measured 1.7 m. x 0.65 m. x 0.65 m. A very small assemblage of residual 1st- to 2nd-century AD pottery was recovered from Cremation Burials C2 and C3. All three cremation burials represent the remains of adult individuals. No pyre goods were identified, although a single iron nail was recovered from Cremation Burial C3. A pairing of radiocarbon samples taken from spelt wheat contained within Cremation C3 were submitted for analysis and two date ranges were obtained. These are WK-14329 50-240 cal AD and WK-14330 120-340 cal AD (Table 8), which suggest that the cremation is most likely to date to the period between AD 120 and AD 240. There was no evidence for *in situ* heating of the natural substrate or for the location of skeletal elements in correct anatomical positions.

*Period 1 and 2 undated features.* A number of features were identified which could not be ascribed to either period 1 or 2 due to an absence of stratigraphic data and dating evidence; neither are these features clearly spatially associated with more closely dated features.

*Period 3: medieval and post-medieval.* The ploughed-out remains of medieval ridge-and-furrow earthworks orientated north-west/south-east were encountered throughout Area A, and survived as extant earthworks in the field immediately to the north-west. The density of the furrows suggests that the remains of two field systems were superimposed on one another. Pottery and iron-nail artefacts dating to both the medieval and post-medieval periods were recovered from the fills of the furrows, together with residual pottery dating to the Iron Age and Romano-British periods.

### *Site 1, Area B*

*Period 2: Romano-British.* Activity dating to this period was also identified in Area B. Although there was no continuation of features from Area A to Area B, it is probable that the activity noted in Area B was broadly contemporary with the trackway and associated features identified in Area A. Ditch 2004 was orientated north-east/south-west, and its north-eastern end intersected a palaeochannel, 2007, orientated broadly north-west/south-east. The fill of the ditch and the palaeochannel were identical, indicating that silting had taken place simultaneously. Romano-British pottery was recovered from the fill of the ditch. The ditch was probably for drainage.

### *Site 2*

Site 2 (SP 2710 0620), the Romano-British drying oven, was the only site identified during the watching brief, despite good visibility of the natural substrate after topsoil stripping.

*Period 2: the drying oven (2nd century AD)* The remains of a Romano-British drying oven were identified towards the north-eastern end of the pipeline route and were subject to excavation (Figs. 6 and 7). The drying oven had been badly truncated by ploughing, with only one course of stonework, comprising earth-bound limestone blocks built directly on the bedrock, surviving *in situ*. The feature comprised a stone-lined flue with a stokehole at one end and fragmentary remains at the other, probably indicative of a T-shaped structure. The remains of the drying oven measured 3.5 m. in length and 2.5 m. in width. The stone lining and the bedrock floor of the structure had been discoloured by heat in the vicinity of the stokehole and appeared to have been swept clean following the final use of the oven. The feature was then deliberately backfilled with clay containing a large quantity of pottery sherds dating to between the late 1st and the mid 3rd centuries AD. The construction and use of the oven was probably during the 1st to 2nd centuries AD, a date supported by the apparent T-shaped form of the feature.[19] No other features were found in the vicinity of the drying oven, although a small assemblage of pottery only broadly datable to the Romano-British period was recovered from the vicinity.

## THE ARTEFACTS

### *LATE PREHISTORIC POTTERY* by E.R. McSloy

A total of 402 sherds (3768 g.) of late prehistoric pottery was recovered from 38 contexts. The minimum number of vessels (MNV) recovered was 240. Total estimated vessel equivalence (EVE) is 2.76 (Table 1). An additional quantity of Iron Age material amounting to some 20 sherds was recovered from soil samples, though this material was of small size and poor condition and is not considered further. The majority of this pottery can be assigned to the middle Iron Age with a small quantity of late (pre-Roman) Iron Age date.

TABLE 1: IRON AGE POTTERY QUANTIFICATION BY FABRIC

| *Fabric group* | *Fabric* | *Quantity* | *% quant.* | *Weight (g.)* | *% Weight* | *EVEs* | *% EVEs* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Shell-tempered | SH1 | 108 | 26.9 | 1198 | 31.8 | 0.24 | 8.7 |
| | SH2 | 72 | 18 | 962 | 25.5 | 0.64 | 23.2 |
| | SH3 | 98 | 24.4 | 676 | 17.9 | 1.15 | 41.77 |
| | SH4 | 2 | 0.5 | 39 | 1 | 0.05 | 1.8 |
| Limestone-tempered | LI1 | 1 | 0.3 | 16 | 0.4 | 0.08 | 2.9 |
| | LI2 | 67 | 16.5 | 320 | 8.5 | 0.20 | 7.3 |
| | LI3 | 1 | 0.3 | 4 | 0.1 | – | – |
| Quartz-tempered | QU1 | 22 | 5.5 | 357 | 9.5 | 0.23 | 8.3 |
| | QU2 | 6 | 1.5 | 57 | 1.5 | – | – |
| Grog-tempered | GR1 | 5 | 1.3 | 30 | 0.8 | – | – |
| | GR2 | 20 | 5.0 | 109 | 2.9 | 0.17 | 6.2 |
| | **Totals** | **402** | **100** | **3768** | **100** | **2.76** | – |

The condition of the pottery is generally good, with calcareous and other inclusions surviving well. In most instances surfaces are intact, permitting survival of surface treatments such as burnishing and lightly scored decoration. Average sherd weight is relatively high at 9.4 g., though this figure is exaggerated by the occurrence of heavy thick-walled vessel sherds (see below). The bulk of the late prehistoric pottery derives from cut features, mainly linear features located in the south-western and central sections of Site 1. A small proportion (ten sherds) of the Iron Age pottery was residual in Romano-British or later contexts. Two sherds were unstratified.

[19] P. Morris, *Agricultural Buildings in Roman Britain* (B.A.R Brit. Ser. 70, 1979), 20.

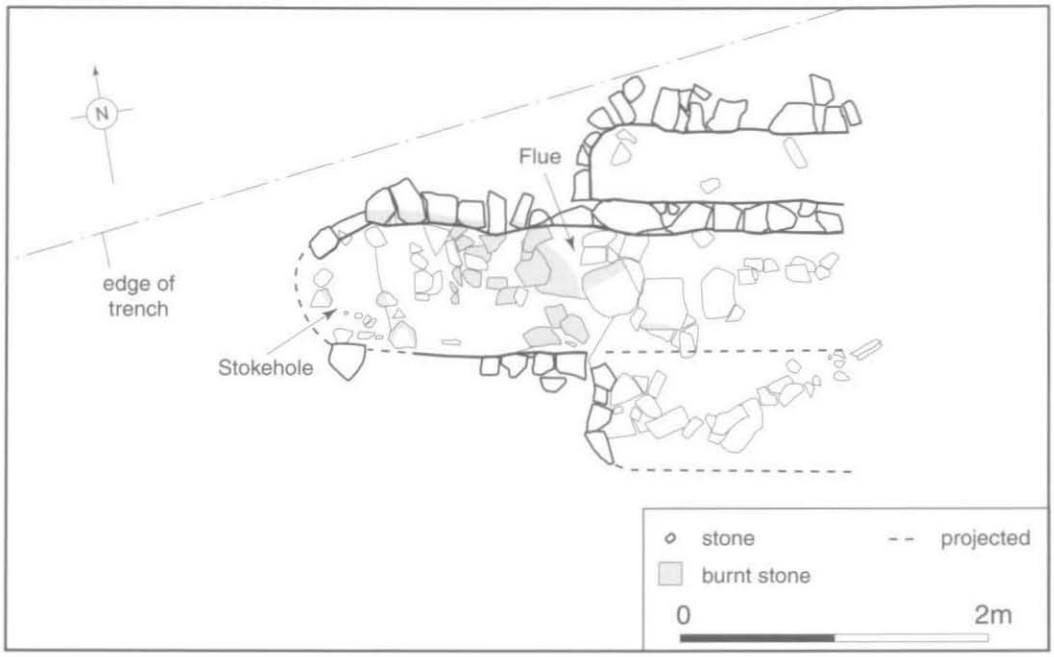


Fig. 6. Site 2, drying oven (1:50).

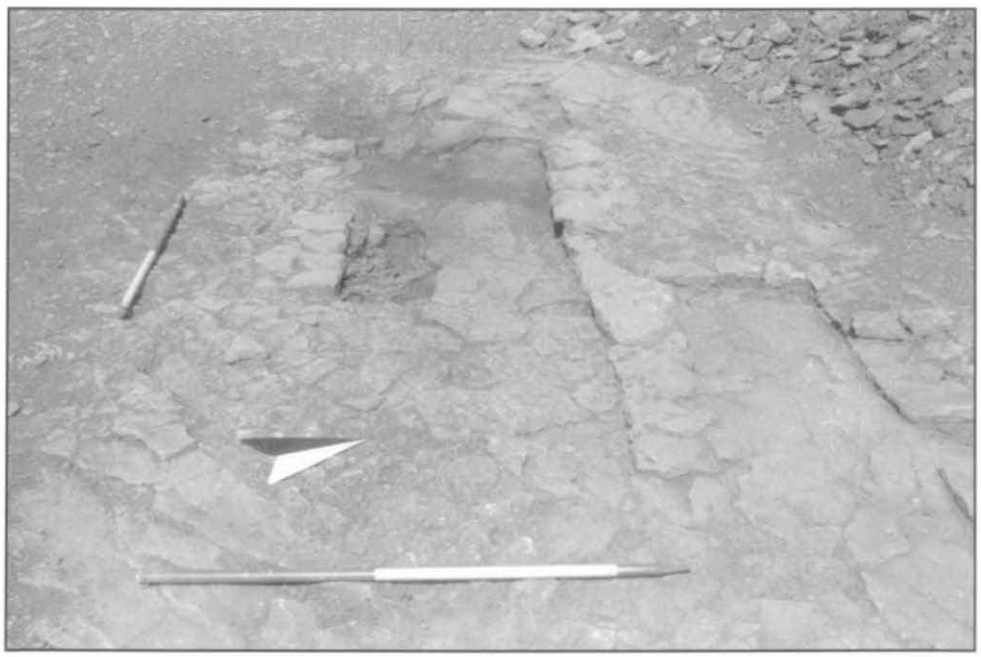

Fig. 7. Site 2, drying oven (scales both 1 m.).

*Fabrics*

Fabrics were identified by eye, or on occasion verified using a x20 binocular microscope. Fabrics as defined were grouped according to dominant inclusion type and secondly according to inclusion size.

Fossil shell and limestone-tempered/gritted fabrics dominate, accounting for 87% of the total according to sherd count (Table 1). In all cases Iron Age ware types could have been made in the locality. The emphasis on calcareous fabrics would appear to be consistent with what is known for Iron Age sites in the area up to the 1st century AD. The range of fabric types compares with other sites in the locality, including Sherborne House[20] and The Loders,[21] both in Lechlade, as well as sites further to the east located in the Oxfordshire Thames or Windrush valleys, including Gravelly Guy,[22] Farmoor,[23] Deer Park Road, Witney[24] and Watkins Farm, Northmoor.[25]

*Fabric descriptions*

SHELL-TEMPERED GROUP (SH)

Coarse shelly type (SH1)

Handmade. Typically red-brown surfaces with grey core or occasionally dark greyish brown throughout. Fabric is soft with a soapy feel and irregular fracture. Inclusions are poorly sorted, comprising abundant coarse (1–3 mm.) and very coarse (>3 mm.) fossil shell; and rare coarse (1–3 mm.), sub-rounded, limestone fragments.

Date: middle Iron Age.

Shell with common limestone type (SH2)

Handmade. Most typically light brown surfaces with grey core or occasionally brown throughout. Fabric is soft with a soapy feel and irregular fracture. Inclusions are poorly sorted, comprising very common coarse (1–3 mm.) fossil shell; and moderate or common coarse (1–3 mm.) or very coarse (>3 mm.), sub-rounded, limestone fragments.

Date: middle Iron Age.

Medium–coarse shelly type (SH3)

Handmade. Typically red-brown surfaces with grey core or occasionally dark greyish brown throughout. Fabric is soft with a soapy feel and irregular fracture. Inclusions are moderately sorted, comprising abundant coarse (1–3 mm.) fossil shell and rare medium or coarse (0.5–1 mm. or 2 mm.), sub-rounded, limestone fragments.

Date: middle Iron Age.

Fine shelly type (SH4)

Handmade. Light brown surfaces with pale grey core or light brown throughout. Fabric is hard with a harsh feel and irregular fracture. Inclusions are very well sorted, comprising abundant medium (0.5–1 mm.) fossil shell.

Date: late Iron Age/late pre-Roman Iron Age.

[20] J.R. Timby, 'Pottery', in C.M. Bateman, D. Enright and N. Oakey, 'Prehistoric and Anglo-Saxon Settlements to the Rear of Sherborne House, Lechlade: Excavations in 1997' *Trans. Bristol and Gloucestershire Arch. Soc.* 121 (2003), 47–63.

[21] R. Hingley, 'The Pottery' in T.C. Darvill, R. Hingley, M.U. Jones and J.R. Timby, 'A Neolithic and Iron Age Site at The Loders, Lechlade, Gloucestershire', *Trans. Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeol. Soc.* 104 (1986), 42.

[22] G. Lambrick and T. Allen, *Gravelly Guy, Stanton Harcourt: The Development of a Prehistoric and Romano-British Landscape* (OA Thames Valley Landscapes Monograph, 2005).

[23] G. Lambrick and M.A. Robinson, *Iron Age and Roman Riverside Settlement at Farmoor, Oxfordshire* (C.B.A. Research Report 32, 1979).

[24] J.R. Timby, 'The Pottery' in G.T. Walker, 'A Middle Iron Age Settlement at Deer Park Road, Witney: Excavations in 1992', *Oxoniensia*, lx (1996), 78–83.

[25] T.G. Allen, *An Iron Age and Romano-British Enclosed Settlement at Watkins Farm, Northmoor, Oxon* (1990), 32–46.

LIMESTONE-TEMPERED GROUP (LI)

Coarse limestone type (LI1)

Handmade. Dark grey surfaces/outer margin with light brown interior/inner margin. Fabric is hard with a soapy feel and irregular fracture. Inclusions are poorly sorted, comprising moderate or common coarse (1–3 mm.) or very coarse (up to 6 mm.), sub-rounded, limestone fragments and rare, coarse (1–3 mm.) calcite rhombs.

Date: middle Iron Age.

Fine limestone type (LI2)

Handmade. Dark grey/black throughout. Fabric is hard with a soapy feel and irregular fracture. Inclusions are moderately sorted and comprise common medium (1–3 mm.) sub-rounded, limestone fragments and rare, medium (0.25–1 mm.) rounded clay pellets.

Date: late Iron Age/late pre-Roman Iron Age.

Oolitic type (LI3)

Handmade. Dark grey/black throughout. Fabric is hard with a soapy feel and hackly fracture. Inclusions are moderately sorted and comprise common spherical ooliths (0.25–0.5 mm.) and sparse, sub-rounded, coarse (1–3 mm.) limestone fragments.

Date: middle Iron Age.

QUARTZ-TEMPERED GROUP (QU)

Fine sandy type (QU1)

Handmade. Dark grey/black throughout or with dark reddish brown margins or core. Fabric is hard with a sandy feel and fine fracture. Inclusions are well sorted and comprise moderate, sub-angular, fine (0.1–0.25 mm.) quartz and rare, sub-rounded, coarse (1–3 mm.) limestone fragments.

Date: middle Iron Age.

'Silty' type (QU2)

Handmade. Dark grey/black throughout. Fabric is soft with a smooth feel and fine fracture. Inclusions are poorly sorted and comprise rare, sub-angular, fine (0.1–0.25 mm.) quartz.

Date: middle Iron Age.

Quartz/argillaceous type (QU3)

Handmade. Dark grey/black throughout. Fabric is hard with a sandy feel and fine fracture. Inclusions are well sorted and comprise moderate, sub-angular, fine (0.1–0.25 mm.) quartz and rare, rounded, coarse (1–3 mm.) reddish brown clay pellets.

Date: middle–late Iron Age.

GROG-TEMPERED GROUP (GR)

Grogged type (GR1)

Wheel-made. Dark grey/black throughout. Fabric is soft with a soapy feel and fine fracture. Inclusions are well sorted and comprise moderate, medium (0.25–1 mm.) dark grey grog.

Date: late Iron Age/early Romano-British.

Grog and limestone type (GR2)

Wheel-made. Dark grey/black throughout. Fabric is soft with a soapy feel and fine fracture. Inclusions are well sorted and comprise moderate, medium (0.25–1mm.) dark grey grog and rare medium (1–3 mm.) sub-rounded, limestone fragments.

Date: late pre-Roman Iron Age/early Romano-British.

*Forms (Figs. 8 and 9)*

It was not possible to reconstruct any complete vessel profiles. Comparisons with other, larger and broadly contemporary, site assemblages indicate that those Iron Age vessels represented are mostly jars of slack-shouldered profile. Most of the vessels can be described as utilitarian forms, suitable for cooking or storage. The vessels described below are based primarily on variations of the rim or neck/shoulder zone. Base forms

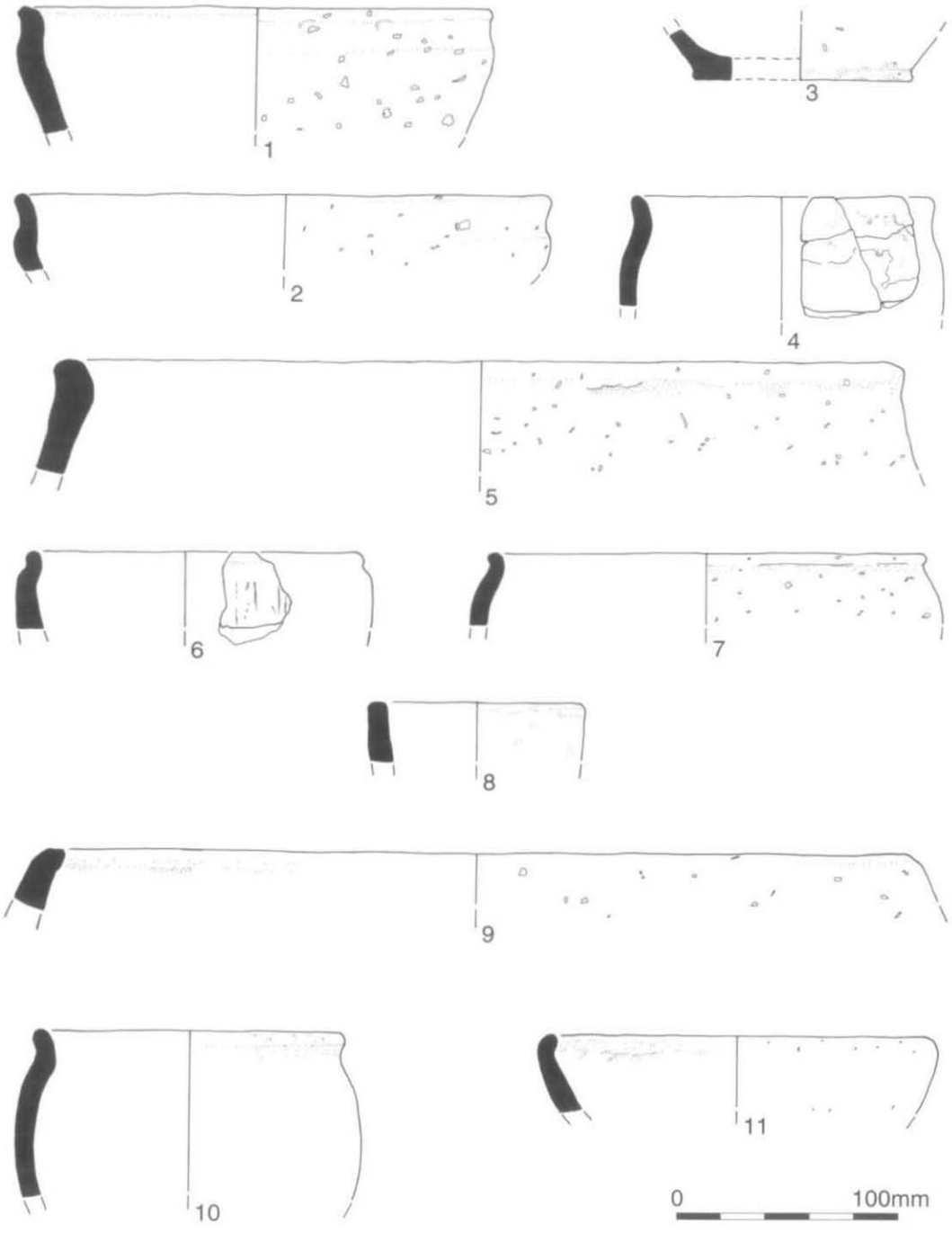


Fig. 8. Late prehistoric pottery (1:3).

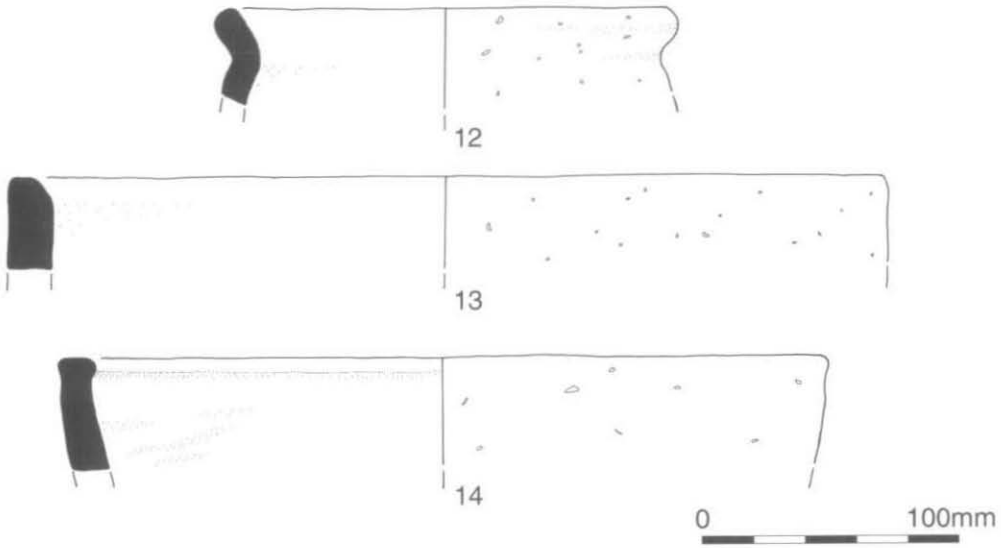


Fig. 9. Late prehistoric pottery (1:3).

are not defined; however, two basic forms were apparent: a pushed-out slightly flaring type (Fig. 8.3) and a simple flat base. Similar pushed-out vessel bases are a feature of middle Iron Age assemblages from the region and beyond, and were well represented at Farmoor.[26]

Recording of sherd thickness (minimum/maximum) was undertaken, and indicated that the bulk of sherds fall within the thickness range 7–12 mm. A proportion of sherds (approx. 8%) are in the thickness range 13–17 mm. and are presumed to belong to large storage jars similar to J2 and J3 below. The thick-walled sherds occur predominantly in coarse shelly or mixed shell and limestone fabrics SH1 and SH2.

*Middle Iron Age forms* (Table 2)

TABLE 2: FABRIC/FORM QUANTIFICATION (MINIMUM VESSEL COUNT AND EVES)

| *Fabric* | *GR2* | | *QU1* | | *SH1* | | *SH2* | | *SH3* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Form* | *Vess. No.* | *EVEs* | *Vess. No.* | *EVEs* | *Vess. No.* | *EVEs* | *Vess. No.* | *EVEs* | *Vess. No.* | *EVEs* |
| B | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | 1 | 0.07 |
| J1 | – | – | 2 | 0.23 | 2 | 0.05 | 3 | 0.21 | 2 | 0.07 |
| J2 | – | – | – | – | – | – | 2 | 0.12 | 1 | 0.05 |
| J3 | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | 1 | 0.05 |
| P1 | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | 2 | 0.11 |
| JN | 1 | 0.17 | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |

[26] G. Lambrick, 'The Iron Age Pottery', in G. Lambrick and M.A. Robinson, op. cit. (note 23), 35–47.

J1 Jar or bowl with slack, ill-defined shoulder, upright or slightly everted neck and plain rim. Sherd thickness is in range 8–12 mm. Handmade.
J2 Neckless, barrel-shaped or slack-shouldered jar with plain rim. Thick-walled sherds in range 13–17 mm. Vessel diameters in large storage jar range, approx. 380–400 mm. Handmade.
J3 Neckless, barrel-shaped or possibly ovoid jar with flattened rim. One vessel represented with thick walls (12 mm.). Vessel diameter approx. 300 mm. Handmade.
P1 Neckless, probably a barrel-shaped jar or pot with squared rim. Single represented vessel is small with a diameter of approx. 100 mm. Sherd walls are 9 mm. thick. Handmade.
B Neckless bowl with curving profile and plain rim. Single represented vessel is quite small with a diameter of approx. 180 mm. and with walls 9 mm. thick. Handmade.

*Late Iron Age forms*
JN Necked jar or bowl with curved rim and cordon at junction of neck and shoulder. One vessel with a rim diameter of 200 mm. and 8 mm. thickness. Wheel-thrown.

### *Surface treatments and evidence for use*

Decoration of any kind is uncommon. Burnishing, a technique which was clearly unsuited to the coarser calcareous fabrics, is recorded on one vessel, a jar of fabric QU1 from Ditch 1009 (Fig. 8.9). Two further vessels (fossil shell types SH1 and SH3) feature light vertical scoring (Fig. 8.6). Scoring such as this is seen rarely in the region, though common elsewhere in the middle to late Iron Age.[27] It may be that the lightly scored lines resulted from wiping or brushing.

Evidence for use is a little more abundant and occurs as external sooting (five vessels) and as burnt-food residues (three vessels), all of which probably result from the use of vessels for cooking. Sooted and residue-bearing sherds consist of shelly or quartz-bearing fabrics SH1, SH3 and QU2. Significantly, thick-walled storage jar sherds do not occur among this material.

A single vessel occurring in Fabric LI1 (from Gully Fill 1313) features a post-firing perforation to its base. Similar perforations which occur either singly or in multiples are widely known in the Iron Age and indicate the use of vessels as food strainers or possibly cheese moulds/presses. Other evidence for use is more ephemeral: a vessel from Ditch Fill 1002 in Fabric QU1 (Fig. 8.4) exhibits wear to the neck/rim zone which might have resulted from securing a cover, possibly of leather or fabric. A sherd from this deposit with burnt residue was submitted for radiocarbon dating and a middle Iron Age date was returned (WK14327 410–340 cal BC; Table 6).

### *Discussion*

The larger part of the assemblage comprises handmade vessel forms occurring in calcareous fabrics, which is consistent with what is known of the middle Iron Age (*c.* 4th/3rd to 1st centuries BC) in the Upper Thames valley region. This can be seen most clearly in the narrow range of forms characterised by slack profiles, generally simple rim forms and the virtual absence of decoration. Conspicuous by their absence are any of the angular early Iron Age forms, frequently featuring fingernail decoration, which are known from the nearby sites at Roughground Farm[28] and the Loders.[29]

The closest parallels, in terms of vessel forms, are with middle Iron Age assemblages from central Oxfordshire: Farmoor,[30] Watkins Farm, Northmoor,[31] and Period 2 of Ashville.[32] There have been few systematic attempts to date such assemblages using radiocarbon dating; however, a later 3rd to mid 2nd century BC date was obtained from Phase II occupation at Farmoor, and a date of 390–115 cal BC for a roundhouse gully associated with middle Iron Age pottery from Deer Park Road, Witney.[33] It has been

[27] A.M. Gibson and A. Woods, *Prehistoric Pottery for the Archaeologist* (1990), 237–8.
[28] R. Hingley, 'Early Iron Age Pottery' in T.G. Allen, T.C. Darvill, L.S. Green and M.U. Jones, *Excavations at Roughground Farm, Lechlade, Gloucestershire* (1993), 40–3.
[29] R. Hingley op. cit. (note 21), 36–43.
[30] G. Lambrick, 'The Iron Age Pottery', in Lambrick and Robinson, op. cit. (note 23) 35–47.
[31] T.G. Allen, *An Iron Age and Romano-British Enclosed Settlement at Watkins Farm, Northmoor, Oxon* (1990), 32–46.
[32] C.D. DeRoche, 'The Iron Age Pottery' in M. Parrington, *The Excavation of an Iron Age Settlement, Bronze Age Ring Ditches and Roman Features at Ashville Trading Estate, Abingdon, Oxfordshire 1974–76* (C.B.A. Research Report 28, 1978), 40–73.
[33] G.T. Walker, 'A Middle Iron Age Settlement at Deer Park Road, Witney: Excavations in 1992', *Oxoniensia*, lx (1996), 89.

suggested that the proportion of quartz-tempered wares among middle to late Iron Age assemblages in the region may be significant, with the proportion increasing over time.[34] The Filkins assemblage may be somewhat earlier compared with the sites noted above, all of which produced, proportionally, significantly greater quantities of quartz-tempered fabrics, although other early Iron Age diagnostic traits are absent (see above). Likely to be significant is the absence of jars with bead rims, forms which are characteristic of the latest handmade Iron Age pottery in the region.

Evidence for the late pre-Roman Iron Age to early Romano-British period (*c.* 1st century BC to mid 1st century AD) is restricted, occurring as a small number (approx. 6% by sherd count) of grog-tempered sherds, some of which are clearly wheel-thrown. Finer, crushed limestone-tempered fabric LI2 may also be of this date.

*Catalogue of illustrated vessels (Figs 8 and 9)*

1 Jar form J1. Fabric SH1. Ditch 1001.
2 Jar form J1. Fabric SH2. Ditch 1001.
3 Pushed-out base. Fabric SH1. Ditch 1001.
4 Jar form J1. Fabric QU1. Ditch 1001.
5 Large storage-jar form J3. Fabric SH2. Ditch 1001.
6 Jar form J1 with scored decoration. Fabric SH3. Ditch 1008.
7 Jar form J1 – poss. globular. Fabric SH2. Ditch 1008.
8 Jar/pot form P1. Fabric SH3. Ditch 1008.
9 Large storage-jar form J3. Fabric SH3. Ditch 1008.
10 Bowl form B1. Fabric SH3. Ditch 1064.
11 Jar form J1. Fabric QU1. Ditch 1091.
12 Jar form J1. Fabric SH2. Ditch 1091.
13 Large storage jar form J3. Fabric SH2. Ditch 1087.
14 Large storage jar form J4. Fabric SH3. Ditch 1172.

## *ROMAN POTTERY* by E.R. McSloy

A total of 206 sherds of Roman pottery weighing 1637 g. was recovered from 30 contexts. The condition of the material is generally poor, with much loss of surfaces apparent and average sherd weight low at 7.9 g.

The Roman pottery was quantified according to sherd count, minimum vessel count (sherd families) and weight. Fabrics were identified by eye or with the use of a (x 4) hand lens and matched against the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit (OAU) pottery recording system[35] and the National Roman Fabric Reference Collection.[36] The assemblage is dominated by locally produced wares (Table 3), with a few regional or continental imports including central Gaulish Samian, Dorset black-burnished ware, pink grog-tempered ware from the Northamptonshire/north Buckinghamshire region and (probably) grogged grey ware from the Savernake forest area.

A large proportion of the Roman pottery, 122 sherds, derives from the drying oven excavated at Site 2. Frequent cross-context vessel joins indicate rapid filling of this feature, or some mixing. The number of vessels represented in this feature is actually quite small, with most sherds deriving from two substantially complete grey ware necked jars. Most material is only broadly datable to the mid 2nd to mid 3rd century based on the presence of certain fabrics/forms as well as the absence of distinctly late Roman types. The presence of a grog-tempered grey ware fabric resembling Savernake-type ware would tend to indicate an early Roman date, as does a grey ware lid[37] and probable tankard with burnished line decoration. A date of after *c.* 140/150 AD is indicated by the presence of a Dorset black-burnished ware dish or bowl.

The remainder of the Roman pottery, 84 sherds weighing 720 g., was recovered from dispersed, mostly linear features within Site 1. The overall quantity is very small, with most features producing only small numbers of sherds which are frequently abraded. Small amounts of residual pottery were also recovered from medieval furrows. Much of the pottery, including the dominant grey ware types R37 and R50, is long-lived, extending in use over much of the Roman period. This and the low numbers of sherds per context makes

[34] Allen, op. cit. (note 31), 42.
[35] P.M. Booth, *Oxford Archaeological Unit Roman Pottery Recording System* (Oxford Archaeological Unit TS. Document).
[36] R. Tomber and J. Dore, *The National Roman Fabric Reference Collection: A Handbook*, Museum of London Archaeology Service (1998).
[37] C.J. Young, *Oxfordshire Roman Pottery* (B.A.R. British Series 143, 1977), 226.

dating difficult. Of the few diagnostic types, most are datable to the period after *c.* AD 240, including sherds of Oxfordshire red colour-coated ware, a white ware ring-necked flagon of Young's form W15[38] and a grey ware flanged bowl. Earlier Roman types are restricted to scraps of Samian and fine grey wares.

The trackway is poorly dated, producing little in the way of diagnostic pottery forms or fabrics. However, a coarse white ware jar and, more unusually, a sherd from a fine grey ware 'Castor box' indicate use of the trackway in the later 2nd to 3rd centuries. Burial deposits were similarly unproductive: Inhumation Burial B7 produced a grey ware sherd and Cremation Burial C3 produced scraps of probable 2nd-century material including Samian, black sandy coarse wares and fine grey wares.

TABLE 3: ROMAN POTTERY QUANTIFICATION BY FABRIC

| | *Code* | *Fabric name* | *Vess no.* | *Count* | *Weight (g.)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Site 1* | | | | | |
| Local | C10 | Shell-tempered | | 1 | 6 |
| | F51 | Oxfordshire colour-coated | 3 | 3 | 45 |
| | O11 | Oxfordshire fine white ware | 1 | 1 | 18 |
| | O13 | Fine micaceous oxidised type | 1 | 28 | 276 |
| | R11 | Fine Oxfordshire grey ware | 2 | 2 | 18 |
| | R32 | Reduced with buff lumps | 1 | 9 | 32 |
| | R37 | Oxfordshire grey ware | 27 | 27 | 252 |
| | R50 | Reduced, dark surfaces | 8 | 9 | 50 |
| Regional | O81 | Soft pink grog-tempered ware | 1 | 1 | 9 |
| | R94 | Grogged grey ware?Savernake | 2 | 2 | 15 |
| Continental | S | Samian | 3 | 3 | 1 |
| *Sub-total* | | | *48* | *84* | *720* |
| *Site 2* | | | | | |
| Local | O10 | Fine oxidised | 3 | 3 | 5 |
| | R35 | Fine ?north Wiltshire grey ware | 1 | 7 | 179 |
| | R21 | Coarse Oxfordshire reduced ware | 2 | 2 | 11 |
| | R37 | Oxfordshire grey ware | 13 | 91 | 507 |
| Regional | R94 | ?Savernake ware/local grogged grey ware | 1 | 13 | 57 |
| | B11 | Dorset black-burnished ware | 1 | 6 | 157 |
| *Sub-total* | | | *21* | *122* | *916* |
| **Total** | | | **69** | **206** | **1637** |

*Discussion*

The sparse quantities and generally poor condition of the material probably indicate that the main area of occupation lay at some distance from the area of excavations. Dates of the 2nd to 4th century are indicated by the pottery, with a slight tendency towards later Roman material apparent from Site 1. Typically for the area and period, the pottery derives mostly from local sources with small quantities of material from outside the region. The pottery can tell us little as to the nature or status of either site, though certainly there is no abundance of fine wares or non-utilitarian forms which might indicate something other than low-level rural settlement.

[38] Ibid. 102.

## *METAL ARTEFACTS* by E.R. McSloy

Recovered metal artefacts consist near exclusively of iron nails, hobnails and shoe-cleats from Inhumation Burial B1. Corrosion for all items of metal was minimal and conservation treatment other than low-humidity storage was unnecessary. Seven nails[39] from this feature almost certainly represent coffin fittings and two nail-shaft fragments exhibit traces of mineral-preserved wood. A single nail from Inhumation Burial B4 may suggest that this was also furnished with a coffin. A single iron nail was also recovered from Cremation Burial C1. Nails are not uncommon finds in cremation deposits and it is often assumed that they relate to the reuse of structural timber as pyre fuel.

A buckle fragment from Furrow 1038 represents the only copper alloy item recovered. The form of the buckle is characterised by an ornate outer edge to its single loop, probably indicating a late medieval date, *c.* AD 1250–1400.[40]

*Inhumation Burial B1 shoe fittings*

Ten cleats and two hobnails were recovered from the area of the feet of Inhumation Burial B1. Similar finds located in burials at Rotherley, Dorset[41] and Bokerley Dyke, Dorset[42] would seem to indicate use as shoe fittings. The association with hobnails further supports use in this way. Two cleats are illustrated (Fig. 10).

Fragment of cast copper-alloy buckle frame, 1038 (not illustrated). Single looped type with crudely moulded 'knops', scored cross decoration and notch for pin. Height 26 mm.

Set of 10 iron shoe cleats and two iron dome-headed hobnails, 1062 (Fig. 10). Cleats consist of central flat oval bodies 13–15 mm. in length and tangs 12–17 mm. long. Hobnails are 14 mm. long.

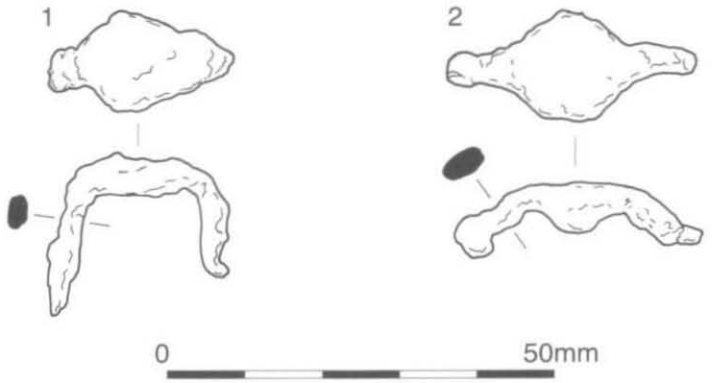


Fig. 10. Iron shoe cleats (1:1).

# THE BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

## *INHUMATION BURIALS* by Teresa Gilmore

Eight inhumation burials were recovered from Site 1, all from discrete burials in the vicinity of the later trackway ditch, 1361 (Table 4). The inhumation burials included three juveniles (B4, B5 and B6), two adult males (B1 and B7), one adult female (B3) and two adults (B2 and B8). Standard methodological approaches were used and limited metric analysis was possible due to the fragmentary nature of the remains.

[39] W.H. Manning, *Catalogue of the Romano-British Iron Tools, Fittings and Weapons in the British Museum* (1985), form 1B.

[40] R. Whitehead, *Buckles 1250–1800* (1996), 23.

[41] A.H.L.F. Pitt-Rivers, *Excavations in Cranbourne Chase* Vol. i (1887), 86.

[42] A.H.L.F. Pitt-Rivers, *Excavations in Cranbourne Chase* Vol. ii (1892).

TABLE 4: OSTEOLOGICAL AND DENTAL PATHOLOGY SUMMARY

| *Burial* | *SK no.* | *% Present* | *Age* | *Sex* | *Orientation of body* | *Dimensions of grave* | *Body position* | *Artefacts* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| B1 | 11163 | 70–55 | 33–45 | ?M | E–W | 2.10 x 0.7 m. | Supine, extended arms by side | RB pottery Fe Objects |
| B2 | 11296 | 5–10 | ?Adult | ? | EVW | 0.54 x 0.28 m. | Prone, left arm under ribs | – |
| B3 | 11281 | 75–80 | 33–45 | F | NE–SW | 1.6 x 0.45 m. | Supine, extended arms by side | – |
| B4 | 11343 | 45–50 | 7–8 yrs. +/- 6 mths. | ? | E–W | 1.2 x 0.54 m. | Supine, legs slightly flexed | Fe nail |
| B5 | 11348 | 5 | 6–20 yrs | ? | SW–NE | 0.7 x 0.39 m. | Right side | Pottery |
| B6 | 11288 | 15 | 5 yrs. +/- 6 mths. | | ? | NE–SW | Left side slightly flexed | Pottery |
| B7 | 11334 | 20–5 | Adult | ?M | E-W | 2 x 0.8 m. | Supine, extended arms by side | – |
| B8 | 11346 | 5 | ? | ? | E–W | 2 x 0.8 m. | extended | – |

Preservation varied across the site. Inhumation Burials B2 and B8 were the least well preserved, with the integral structure and surface severely affected. Inhumation Burials B1 and B6 were of moderate preservation, whereas Inhumation Burials B3, B4, B5 and B7 demonstrated the best preservation of the cortex.

The group comprised two adult males (B1 and B7), one adult female (B3), three juveniles (B4, B5 and B6) and two adults of indeterminable sex (B2 and B8). Due to the fragmentary nature of the remains, it was impossible to determine stature for any of the individuals present. Evidence of degenerative joint disease was only present in one individual (B1), with osteophytic lipping being present on the rims of the cervical vertebral bodies. The second and third cervical vertebrae were fused together at the articulation facets. Inhumation Burial B1 demonstrated the only evidence for metabolic disease, with cribra orbitalia probably being present in the left eye socket. Signs of healing were present suggesting that the iron-deficiency mainly occurred during childhood.

One individual (B7) demonstrated evidence of non-specific infection with extensive infection affecting the femora, tibiae, fibulae and metacarpals. The characteristic features of infection are the presence of either immature woven bone or mature, striated lamellar bone covering the surface of the bone, representing an inflammation of the surface cortex as a long-term response to infection.

Pathology of a dental nature was the most frequently encountered type of pathology from this sample of skeletons (Table 4). Three individuals (B1, B3 and B7) were affected. Inhumation Burial B1 demonstrated the highest rate of cavities, with three teeth being affected on the cheek side, and seven teeth were lost before death. Inhumation Burial B3 displayed a cavity lesion in the middle surface of the lower left premolar, with slight calculus along the base of the crown junction of the majority of teeth.

One individual (B7) demonstrated uneven wear of the front teeth, with both maxillary and mandibular incisors, canines and first premolars being severely affected and second premolars and molars being relatively unaffected. This uneven wear could be activity-induced, but the presence of a potential abscess, periodontal disease and ante-mortem loss of several of the molars could suggest otherwise.

A selection of normal skeletal traits was present. One individual (B1) had a wormian bone present in the lambdoidal suture. Inhumation Burial B1 also demonstrated a left double superior articulation facet on the atlas. Inhumation Burial B3 displayed a left accessory sacral facet on the pelvis. Two of the juvenile individuals (B4 and B6) demonstrated similar dental non-metric traits, with incisors (both maxillary and mandibular lateral and medial) displaying notching of the biting surface and shovelling of the lingual surface.

| *Meric index* | *Cnemic index* | *Osteo-arthritis* | *Non-metric variation* | *Pathology* | *Caries* | *Abscess* | *AM Loss* | *Other dental pathology* | *Other dental anomaly* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Platymeric | – | Vertebral osteophytes | R Double atlas facet, wormian bone | Probable cibra orbitalia | 3/14 | 0/14 | 7/14 | Periodontal disease | |
| – | – | – | – | – | 0/2 | 0/2 | 0/2 | – | – |
| Platymeric | Eurycnemic | – | L Accessory sacral facets | – | 1/25 | 0/25 | 0/25 | Calculus | – |
| – | – | – | – | – | 0/33 | 0/33 | 0/33 | – | Notching, shovelling |
| – | – | – | – | – | 0/1 | 0/1 | 0/1 | – | – |
| – | – | – | – | – | 0/40 | 0/40 | 0/40 | – | Notching, shovelling |
| – | – | – | – | Periostitis | 0/15 | 2/15 | 5/15 | Calculus, uneven attrition, periodontal disease | – |
| – | – | – | – | | 0/0 | 0/0 | 0/0 | – | – |

Due to the small sample size, tests of statistical significance are not suitable. The variable preservation and completeness of the skeletal material is likely to have had an effect on the survival of pathological features, and therefore is unlikely to provide a true representation of the health of the complete population. This hypothesis is suggested as the individuals with the best preservation also displayed the best pathological features.

As these individuals formed a discrete burial group, it is possible that a family group is represented (five adults and three children). The two juveniles (B4 and B6) with similar dental variation would help support this hypothesis. Unfortunately the preservation of the adult dentition was not as good as the juvenile and therefore cannot be used to test this hypothesis.

## *CREMATION BURIALS* by TERESA GILMORE

Cremated material from three un-urned cremation burials was submitted for analysis. The burials were retrieved from site in the form of bulk samples. Some of the larger fragments were hand-recovered on site from Burials C1 and C2. Cremation Burial C3 was half-sectioned, whereas Burials C1 and C2 were quarter-sectioned. All samples were wet-sieved using a 2 mm. sieve.

Analysis involved separating the cremated material into fractions, >10 mm. and >2 mm. and weighing accordingly. Dimensions of the largest fragments were taken using sliding callipers and the dominant colour of the cremated material was noted along with any recognisable skeletal elements.

Due to the high degree of fragmentation and as few of the fragments demonstrated key diagnostic traits, the minimum number of individuals (MNI) was hard to assign. Three individuals are believed to be present. No duplications of bones were observed during analysis. Sex could not be assigned to any of the burials present due to the absence of any fragments displaying key sexual differences.[43] All three burials have been assigned an adult age (greater than 18 years) due to epiphyseal fusion and general characteristics of the bone submitted for analysis.

[43] D.R. Brothwell, *Digging Up Bones* (1981).

An estimation of the efficiency of the cremation process can be gained from analysis of the colour of the different fragments of the cremated bone, as fully oxidised bone is white in appearance. Cremation efficiency is related to various factors, the most important being time, temperature and oxygen.[44] The majority of the cremated bone was either white or light grey in colour, suggesting a high state of oxidation, therefore an efficient method of cremation. However, some fragments were black or dark grey in colour, suggesting possible charring and therefore a less efficient method of cremation.

Spatial distribution of colour changes within the burial feature can provide some clues as to the style of cremation carried including any redeposition of any cremated material. Cremation Burial C1 demonstrated a fairly uniform spread of white and dark grey bone throughout, with the main concentration of white and light grey bone being on the eastern side of the burial. Significant amounts of charcoal and the main concentration of cremated material was located in the east of the feature.

Cremation Burial C2 appears to display similar characteristics as Burial C1. White and light grey fragments were distributed evenly throughout the feature but with more dark grey fragments being located on the eastern side, along with significant amounts of charcoal. Cremation Burial C3 displayed an even spread of charcoal and oxidation of bone throughout.

The weight of cremated bone (Table 5) recovered can provide details as to how the cremated remains were collected if they were not left *in situ*. The expected range for adult remains covers a range of *c.* 1000–2400 g., with an average of *c.* 1650 g. observed from modern crematoria.[45] In practice on archaeological sites, this range is seldom achieved. At the Romano-British cemetery at Baldock, Hertfordshire, cremation burials displayed a range of 1–1599.1 g. with an average of 452 g. for un-urned burials.[46]

TABLE 5: WEIGHT OF CREMATION BURIALS

| *Cremation burial* | *Total weight (g.)* | *Total weight of >10 mm. fraction (g)* | *Fraction percentage* | *Total weight of >2 mm. fraction (g.)* | *Fraction percentage* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C1 | 169.3 | 61.1 | 36.1 | 108.2 | 63.9 |
| C2 | 468.9 | 206.3 | 44 | 262.6 | 56 |
| C3 | 196.6 | 29 | 14.8 | 167.6 | 85.2 |

The range of cremation burial weights at Filkins is 169.3–468.9 g. with an average of 278.3 g. Although this range is below that expected, it is comparable to the Baldock cemetery. The low weight of these burials could be due to the high fragmentation of the bone, with the main proportion of the cremated remains being within the >2 mm. fraction.

A high degree of fragmentation was present, resulting in few diagnostic traits being present to allow for bone element recognition. Out of the bones identified, the majority belonged to the larger skeletal elements mainly cranial vault and diaphyses of the long bones. The only smaller bones identified were a tooth root and a distal phalanx. This would suggest a separate pyre site and hand collection of larger cremated fragments for burial in a different location.

Uneven distribution of skeletal elements within the burial feature was only apparent in Cremation Burials C1 and C2, with the cranial vault being mainly concentrated to the eastern sides, alongside the significant amount of charcoal. Long bone diaphyseal fragments were found in both burials uniformly.

Pyre goods were not noted, although a single iron nail was present in Cremation Burial C3. Non-human remains were noted within the samples for Cremation Burials C1 and C2. No pathology was noted on any of the fragments of cremated bone. This could be partially due to the highly fragmented nature of cremated bone and incomplete skeletal recovery.

The three cremation burials all display similar trends and features. All demonstrate similar efficiency of the cremation rite, and similar fragmentation of the remains. Cremation Burial C2 appears to be the best preserved, recording the highest weight and largest fragments. However, the low weights of all three burials are not unusual, and could reflect the deliberate hand retrieval of key elements from the pyre. The absence

[44] J.L. McKinley, 'Cremation Burials' in B. Barber and D. Bowsher, *The Eastern Cemetery of Roman London Excavations 1983–1990*. MoLAS Monograph 4 (2000), 264–76.

[45] J.L. McKinley, 'Bone Fragment Size and Weights of Bone from Modern British Cremations and their Implications for the Interpretation of Archaeological Cremations', *Internat. Jnl. Osteoarch.* 3 (1993), 283–7.

[46] J.L. McKinley, 'Cremation Burials' in B. Barber and D. Bowsher, *The Eastern Cemetery of Roman London Excavations 1983–1990*. MoLAS Monograph 4 (2000), 264–76.

of many small bones could be significant to this type of bone retrieval, as they would be harder to notice on the funeral pyre. If the pyre had been raked, then more small bones such as phalanges and tooth roots should have been noticed within these samples.

### *RADIOCARBON DATING* by ANNETTE HANCOCKS

Four radiocarbon measurements were obtained from samples within Area 1, from cremations and the trackway. The samples were processed during February 2004 at the Radiocarbon Dating Laboratory, University of Waikaito, New Zealand.

The results are conventional radiocarbon ages[47] and calibrations are given in Table 6. All have been calculated using the calibration curve of Stuiver et al.[48] and the computer program Oc Cal (v3.5.).[49] To the archaeologist it is the dates of archaeological events represented by the samples that are of interest.

The aims of the dating programme were: to date the middle Iron Age pottery; to date the trackway to see whether this was an earlier feature than the burials; to date the cremations to provide a date on burial, and to ascertain their contemporaneity or otherwise with one another.

The earliest dated activity on the site is represented by a burnt residue on pottery from a period 1 Pit Deposit 1002. This confirms the middle Iron Age date for the prehistoric pottery assemblage.

Charred plant remains from the period 2 Trackway Deposit 1200 were submitted for dating and were found to date to the 1st to 2nd centuries AD. The cremation burial was found to date to the 3rd century AD and these features are therefore not contemporary.

TABLE 6: RADIOCARBON RESULTS

| *Laboratory code* | *Context* | *Material* | *$C^{13}$ (‰)* | *Radiocarbon age (BP)* | *Calibrated date range (95% confidence)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14327 | 1002 | Burnt food residue from pottery sherd | -26.9 | 2278 +/-39 | 410–340 cal BC |
| 14328 | 1200 | Carbonised spelt wheat | -21.5 | 1930 +/-39 | 40 cal BC –140 cal AD |
| 14329 | 1290i | Carbonised spelt wheat | -23.9 | 1876 +/-39 | 50-240 cal AD |
| 14330 | 1290ii | Carbonised spelt wheat | -23.7 | 1807 +/-39 | 120-340 cal AD |

## DISCUSSION

### *Middle Iron Age (400 BC to 100 BC)*

The potential for the interpretation of the results at Site 1 is enhanced by the clearly defined cropmarks to the south of the site and the earlier examination of a number of these cropmarks during the watching brief conducted on the route of the Broughton Poggs to Highworth gas pipeline (Fig. 2). Coupled with the middle Iron Age activity identified at the south-western end of Site 1, which is indicative of small intercutting enclosures, it is possible that a number of the small sub-circular and sub-square features identified from cropmarks may also be of middle Iron Age date.

A similar pattern of settlement was identified at Farmoor, Oxfordshire, where excavation revealed discrete groups of penannular and sub-square partial enclosures, for example Enclosure Groups 1, 2 and 3,[50] often associated with storage pits. The penannular gullies

[47] M. Stuiver and H.A. Polach, 'Reporting of 14C data', *Radiocarbon* 19 (1977), 355–63.

[48] Stuiver et al. 'INTCAL98 Radiocarbon Age Calibration, 24,000–0 Cal BP' *Radiocarbon* 40 (1998), 1041–83.

[49] C. Bronk Ramsey, 'Radiocarbon Calibration and Analysis of Stratigraphy: The Oxcal Program' *Radiocarbon* 37 (1995), 425–30.

[50] Lambrick and Robinson, op. cit. (note 23), 8.

were associated with roundhouses while suggested functions for the annexes included animal pens, work compounds, gardens and storage areas.[51] The curvilinear ditches identified at the south-western end of Site 1 may represent features of this type. It is also possible that much of the field system dates to the same period, as do the significant north-west/south-east orientated parallel ditches located at the centre of Area A. The overall impression of the middle Iron Age activity is therefore one of scattered areas of unenclosed occupation within an extensive field system. It should be noted that this settlement may continue to the north where cropmarks are likely to be masked by extant ridge and furrow earthworks.

The environmental (molluscs and charred plant remains) and animal bone assemblages are of limited assistance in reconstructing the economy and environment of the settlement. A number of environmental samples were taken during the excavation and have been subject to analysis. The mollusc assemblage suggests that the local environment during the middle Iron Age and Romano-British periods was predominantly open and calcareous and that one of the middle Iron Age curvilinear ditches, 1356, and the probable storage pit, 1091, had not contained standing water during their use. The charred plant remains were similarly disappointing, with only a few badly preserved seeds present and no evidence for chaff. The latter evidence suggests that the major crop processing and cooking areas were elsewhere.

The assemblage of animal bone dating to the middle Iron Age was small and comprised domesticated animals including cattle, sheep/goat, pig, horse and dog. Of these species a relatively large number of horse bones was recovered. The assemblage is small and no meaningful discussion of animal husbandry can be undertaken. The complete dog skeleton recovered from Pit 1062 represented the remains of an adult animal.

No evidence for the continuity of settlement activity from the middle Iron Age to the early Romano-British period was identified, although the area may have been used for agricultural purposes during this transitional period as well. However, it is apparent that throughout these periods there was a shift in settlement pattern which exploited the arrangement of the landscape and space and adapted to change over time. Pottery dating to the late Iron Age to the early Romano-British period was relatively scarce. It was generally recovered from contexts also containing late Iron Age handmade pottery or was residual within Romano-British features. A discontinuity of activity is also supported by the locations and orientations of the middle Iron Age and Romano-British trackways. The latter is clearly not a development of the former as they are perpendicular to one another. However, a common shift of settlement from the middle Iron Age to late Iron Age has been observed, in which the existing middle Iron Age settlement area is abandoned in favour of a late Iron Age one nearby.[52]

*Romano-British (1st to 4th century AD)*

Early Romano-British activity was characterised by a small number of pits and ditches, and a major curvilinear trackway. Although the term 'trackway' has been used throughout this report, the use of the feature may have been more complex than simply to facilitate the passage of people, carts and/or animals. The feature also appeared to function in part as an

[51] Ibid. 138.

[52] G. Lambrick, 'The Development of Late Prehistoric and Roman Farming on the Thames Gravels', in M. Fulford and E. Nichols (eds), *Developing Landscapes of Lowland Britain. The Archaeology of the British Gravels: A Review* (1992), 78–105.

enclosure boundary, defining an area of visibly more intensive remains that may be indicative of settlement activity (Fig. 2). The feature may also have had a more symbolic function or meaning, given its later association with funerary activity.

The trackway was *c.* 7 m. in width, which is within the range of the droveways of comparable date identified at Farmoor.[53] To the south-east the trackway became lost within a number of cropmarks, similarly the continuation of the feature to the north-east is unclear. No evidence of either metalling or wheel ruts was identified between the trackway ditches, although this may have been truncated by later ridge-and-furrow cultivation and modern ploughing.

No evidence for settlement activity dating to the Romano-British period was identified at Site 1. It would appear that the trackway and associated features lay within the hinterland of any associated settlement located to the south of the trackway. This interpretation is supported by the cropmark and limited environmental evidence, pottery and animal bone assemblages. The excavated evidence suggested that the trackway was no longer used by the mid 3rd to 4th century AD. A number of pits and ditches were found to post-date the feature, after which it became a focus for funerary activity.

The inhumation and cremation burials date to the later part of the Romano-British period (mid 3rd century AD), which corresponds with the lack of late Roman pottery recovered from the site. This interpretation is based on limited stratigraphic evidence, the location of seven of the cremation and inhumation burials within or close to other features, and the presence of shoe fastenings and coffin nails in Burial 1. None of the inhumation or cremation burials were truncated by later features (other than furrows). The tradition of Romano-British inhumation burial generally dates to the 3rd and 4th centuries AD, both nationally[54] and in Oxfordshire in particular.[55] The broad east/west orientation of the inhumation and cremation burials is noted but may simply reflect the orientation of the trackway and associated features.

Despite the total number of inhumations and cremation burials exceeding ten (with more probably lost to ridge-and-furrow cultivation) they do not appear to have comprised a formal cemetery, but the possibility that these remains comprise part of a larger cemetery located to the north-west or south-east cannot entirely be discounted. However, the dispersed nature of the burials and their possible association with a trackway and ditches at the edge of an area of probable Romano-British activity seems to represent a more informal pattern of burial commonly identified at the fringes of Romano-British rural settlements.[56]

Excavation at Heyford Road, Steeple Aston, Oxfordshire revealed a similar example of Romano-British burial practice. Five inhumation burials were identified, both extended and supine. Three were found in a ditch which ran parallel to a Romano-British trackway and two were found within associated ditches. All of the inhumation burials were orientated south-east/north-west, parallel to the trackway. The trackway was considered to represent a continuation of activity dating back to the late Iron Age with the inhumation burials broadly contemporary.[57]

[53] Lambrick and Robinson, op. cit. (note 23), 72.

[54] R. Philpott, *Burial Practices in Roman Britain* (B.A.R. British Series 219, 1991), 53.

[55] P.M. Booth, 'Late Roman Cemeteries in Oxfordshire: A Review', *Oxoniensia*, lxvi (2001), 34–6.

[56] J. Pearce, 'The Dispersed Dead: Preliminary Observations on Burial and Settlement Space in Rural Roman Britain' in P. Baker et al. (eds), *Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference, Leicester 1998* (1999), 151.

[57] S. Cook and C. Hayden, 'Prehistoric and Roman Settlement near Heyford Road, Steeple Aston, Oxfordshire', *Oxoniensia*, lxv (2001), 209–10.

Romano-British agricultural, settlement and funerary activity was identified within the Windrush Valley at Gill Mill, Ducklington, Oxfordshire.[58] Three inhumation burials and nine cremation burials were identified. One group, comprising three cremation burials and one inhumation burial, was located within a small rectangular enclosure. However the remainder of the burials were associated with a multiple-ditched feature running north/south through the site.

The identification of three cremation burials dating to the later part of the Romano-British period is perhaps surprising. Generally the cremation rite appears to have been the most common (i.e. archaeologically visible) method of disposing of the dead in the south-east of England from the mid 1st to 3rd centuries AD, whilst inhumation burial increased in significance from the mid 2nd century onwards.[59] However, cremation burials dating to the 3rd to 4th centuries are not unknown and examples in the Middle and Upper Thames Valley include Bray, Berkshire (though these appeared to represent *in situ* cremations[60]) and Barrow Hills, Radley, Oxfordshire.[61] Excavation at Frocester Court Roman Villa, Gloucestershire, resulted in the discovery of 20 inhumation burials, 3 cremation burials, and 37 perinatal inhumation burials, dating from the Iron Age to the late Romano-British period. The three cremation burials all comprised the cremated remains of adults contained within black-burnished ware cooking pots dating to the early to mid 3rd century AD.[62]

The rectangular forms of the pits containing the cremation burials are of interest, being less common than circular and oval pits.[63] Such rectangular pits are not unknown, and excavated examples include at least ten cremation burials with lengths of up to 1.75 m. at St Stephens (Halsmede) cemetery, St Albans, Hertfordshire.[64] There is no evidence to suggest that the cremation burials at Site 1 represent *in situ* cremations. Late Romano-British cremation burials have been considered to represent intrusive Germanic traditions, but more probably represent the survival of earlier Romano-British traditions.[65]

Excavation at Owlesbury in Hampshire produced an assemblage of inhumation and cremation burials dating from the 3rd or 4th centuries BC to the 4th century AD.[66] From the beginning of the 2nd century AD to the end of the Romano-British period many of the inhumation burials comprised individuals or small groups frequently associated with, and/or aligned parallel to, enclosure ditches and trackways. Two other contemporary groups comprising rich cremation burials and inhumation in coffins were also identified. The evidence was thought to indicate that the former group represented lower-class labourers and slaves while the latter represented a single 'rich' family.[67]

Burials on the edge of settlements, and/or in disused contexts such as ditches, drying ovens, pottery kilns or wells, are also seen as representing the disposal of tenants, slaves

58 P.M. Booth, 'Ducklington: Gill Mill', *OAU Newsletter* 18 No. 3 (1990), 20–2.

59 Philpott, op. cit. (note 54), 8.

60 C. Stanley, *Roman Site at Hoveringham, Bray, Berkshire,* Joint Committee for Archaeology Newsletter 3 (1972), 4.

61 S.S. Frere, 'Roman Britain in 1983: I. Sites Explored', *Britannia*, 15 (1984), 302.

62 R. Reece, 'The Frocester Cemetery and Rural Burial in Roman Britain' in E. Price, *Frocester: A Romano-British Settlement, its Antecedents and Successors. Volume 2: The Finds* (2000), 205–9.

63 Philpott, op. cit. (note 54), 8.

64 S.S. Frere, 'Roman Britain in 1986: I. Sites Explored' *Britannia*, 18 (1987), 330 and Fig. 15.

65 Philpott, op. cit. (note 54), 51.

66 J. Collis, 'Owlesbury and the Problems of Burials on Rural Settlement' in R. Reece (ed), *Burial in the Roman World* (C.B.A. Research Report 22, 1977), 26–34.

67 Ibid. 34.

and/or workers with no formal attachment to the land.[68] In contrast, the landowners would be buried in formal cemeteries near to the centre of settlement, thus confirming their ownership.[69] Alternatively, the disposal of the dead can be seen as part of an evolving structure of settlement use which also had an influence on the perceptions of the living.[70] The latter argument may be supported by Burial 1, which contained evidence for shoes and a coffin, and Burials 7 and 8, which exhibit evidence for ritual activity where exhumation seems to have taken place.

The identification of the Romano-British drying oven is indicative of substantial contemporary agricultural activity, even though no evidence for such activity was identified during the project. The relationship between these sites and that identified at Site 2 is unknown; however, the evidence may suggest that an area of fairly intensive activity is located on the higher ground to the north of the pipeline route.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The excavation and this publication were generously funded by Transco. We are grateful to Sarah Revans of RSK ENSR Environment Ltd. and Hugh Coddington and Susan Lisk of Oxfordshire County Council for their help and support. The fieldwork was directed by Laurent Coleman with management by Clifford Bateman. The post-excavation was managed successively by Martin Watts and Annette Hancocks and the illustrations were prepared by Lorna Gray. The text was edited by Tim Darvill and Neil Holbrook. The contribution of the field and finds staff and the specialists is gratefully acknowledged. Permission to use the RCHME[71] cropmark transcription was kindly arranged by Lindsay Jones, NMR Enquiry and Research Services, National Monuments Record Centre. The project archive and finds have been deposited with Oxfordshire County Museums Service under accession no. 2002.187.

68 R. Philpott and R. Reece, 'Sépultures rurales en Bretagne romaine' in A. Ferdière (ed), *Monde des morts, monde des vivants en Gaule rurale* (1991), 420–2.

69 Ibid.

70 Pearce, op. cit. (note 56), 159.

71 RCHME, op. cit. (note 5).