Iron Age and Romano-British Settlement at Lower Easton Farm, Pylle, Somerset

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SUMMARY

Excavations carried out in 2014 at Lower Easton Farm, Pylle, produced evidence of Iron Age and Romano-British activity. This took the form of a small farmstead probably dating to the Middle Iron Age and a much more extensive field system and trackway dating to the middle−late Romano-British period. Material evidence suggests earlier Romano-British activity, however, and an unexcavated presumed villa site lies close by and is likely to be associated.

INTRODUCTION

In 2014 Wessex Archaeology carried out an excavation in advance of construction of a solar energy farm, at Pylle, centred on NGR 362700 138650. (Fig. 1) The work was commissioned and funded by Pylle Solar Energy Ltd. The site lay approximately 5km south of Shepton Mallet and covered an area of approximately 25 hectares. It had previously been used for both arable and grazing, lay at a height of 65−72m above Ordnance Datum (OD) and is located in a wide, gently undulating floodplain. The site is crossed by a small watercourse, known as Whitelake, and the geology is mapped as Langport Member, Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation (British Geological Survey online viewer).

The site lies 0.5km east of the Fosse Way Roman road (currently the modern A37) linking Exeter and Lincoln. A possible villa site (Somerset Historic Environment Record

15053) lies approximately 0.5km south-west, as evidenced by a concentration of high-status Roman building material recovered during fieldwalking (Somerset Historic Environment Record 12222). The line of the former Somerset and Dorset Joint Railway linking Glastonbury and Blandford crosses the site to the north of Easton Lane.

Following a cultural heritage assessment (Astill 2011), a geophysical survey of part of the site was carried out in 2013 (Pre-Construct Geophysics 2013). This covered the two fields on either side of Easton Lane, the northern field bounded to the north by the Whitelake watercourse. In this northern field the survey recorded geophysical anomalies indicating a widespread array of rectilinear enclosure ditches, some flanking a potential trackway in the middle of the site, and a small number of sub-circular enclosures, as well as possible pits (Fig. 1). Taken together, these results suggested settlement activity spread over a relatively wide area, increasing in density beyond the eastern limit of the site.

A second geophysical survey was carried out by Wessex Archaeology in 2014 over the remaining part of the site to the north of the Whitelake watercourse (Wessex Archaeology 2014). However, the dense array of enclosures identified to the south did not seem to continue north of the stream.

These geophysical surveys highlighted the potential for remains of a field system possibly relating to the supposed Roman villa to the south-west of the site. The potential for prehistoric features was also highlighted. Given the size of the site, a staged programme of archaeological mitigation was proposed, with the aim of facilitating the preservation by record of several sample areas with the highest archaeological potential, and the preservation *in situ* of the remaining identified archaeological resource. A total of seven excavation areas were stripped (Fig. 1). Areas 1−3 and 7 (Figs. 2−4) were targeted on specific concentrations of geophysical anomalies, whereas Areas 4, 5 and 6 acted as a control sample. These three areas contained no archaeological features, while Area 3 revealed only modern drainage

gullies. The excavation areas totalled 0.39ha, and this allowed detailed information concerning the more extensive remains to be gathered, providing a general characterisation of the archaeological resource within the site as a whole.

The earliest evidence of activity on the site consisted of worked flint dating to the Early Neolithic, although this was recovered as residual material from later features. Later prehistoric occupation was indicated by a pottery assemblage, not particularly chronologically diagnostic but of probable Middle Iron Age date, as well as by a small number of features. This suggested the presence of a fairly small farming community.

Most features comprised field boundaries and pits dating to the middle−late Romano-British period, and were consistent with settlement and more widespread land use. An extensive scatter of Roman coins, together with other metal objects including brooches, may reflect the proximity of the supposed Roman villa to the south-west (Somerset Historic Environment Record 15053).

LATE PREHISTORIC SETTLEMENT

A limited number of features of late prehistoric, probably Middle Iron Age date were recorded in Area 1 and represent the earliest evidence for occupation of the site. (Fig. 2) These included a length of curvilinear gully 1086, measuring 0.8−1.15m wide and up to 0.18m deep, with a projected internal diameter of 11m. This had a probable SSE-facing entrance, matching the results of the geophysical survey for this area, and suggesting the ring-gully of a roundhouse. Late prehistoric pottery recovered from the single fills of both ditches, a total of 51 sherds, may be of Iron Age date, although the abraded nature of these sherds makes precise dating problematic (see Timby, below).

Immediately south of the eastern terminal of this ring-gully, flanking the entrance, was a small feature, 1042, which contained *in situ* burning and a single sherd of late prehistoric pottery. Stones in the centre of the pit had been heat-affected.

Three late prehistoric pottery sherds were also recovered from a short gully 187, 6.5m long, 0.8m wide and 0.36m deep. This feature was aligned NNE−SSW, an orientation shared by a number of Romano-British and later ditches, so could date to a later period. It is possible that the gully continued further north into a part of site that could not be investigated due to flooding.

ROMANO-BRITISH LANDSCAPE ACTIVITY

Romano-British features, including ditches, pits and trackways, were recorded in Areas 1, 2 and 7, indicating widespread activity across the site. The pottery suggests a broad date range from the 2nd to the 4th centuries AD, which is confirmed by a number of coins.

Area 1

Almost all the Romano-British features in Area 1 were ditches, either for drainage and/or to mark boundaries (Fig. 2). Most of these were orientated either north-west to south-east or north-east to south-west, which matched the general orientation of the enclosures recorded more widely across the site by the geophysical survey (Fig. 1).

At least one of these enclosures is represented by some of the ditches in Area 1. These include ditch 1094 which measured 1.5m wide at its western end but widened towards the east where it then turned to the south before terminating. It continued in a south-westerly direction as a much narrower ditch, however, terminating after a further 7m. An enclosure with an entrance in its south-eastern corner may therefore be suggested. This possible

entrance was closed off by another ditch, 1089, which overlapped 1094 and possibly represents a modification of the enclosure entrance. Ditch 1089 then continued beyond the southern extent of the excavation area, where it was cut by trackside ditches 1088 and 1090, discussed below, making it an earlier feature.

It is unclear what formed the western edge of this enclosure (Fig. 2) as ditch 1091 cut trackside ditches 1088 and 1090. Ditch 1091 may have been a later modification of the enclosure although this is not clear.

Two parallel ditches, 1088 (Fig. 2) and 1090, formed a 5m wide trackway aligned north-west to south-east across the area, which was shown on the geophysical survey as extending for over 40m. These ditches, 23m south-west of 1094 were 0.7−1.3m deep, contained 3rd-century AD pottery and displayed a number of recuts, indicating their prolonged use. One section of ditch 1088 contained a length of Romano-British stone-filled drain along its centre, which is perhaps unsurprising given the location of the site in a floodplain. At its north-western end ditch 1088 turned sharply to the north-east, which corresponds to the eastern side of an enclosure apparent on the geophysical survey; this enclosure appeared to span the trackway. The southern end of 1088, as well as both ends of 1090, extended beyond the limits of the excavation area.

To the south-east, ditch 1092 appears from the geophysical survey to have formed the north-western side of a second enclosure. This ditch was 0.8−1m wide and up to 0.61m deep, and contained Romano-British pottery suggestive of a 2nd- or 3rd-century date. It was cut by trackside ditch 1088 but did not extend beyond this. The ditch was also cut about halfway along its length by a shallow feature, 1093, measuring approximately 4m by 3m and possibly a puddled area caused by repeated trample.

Ditch 1095, on the northern edge of Area 1, appears to represent the southern end of a small rectangular enclosure. This feature lies on a different orientation to the other Romano-

British features in this area and is perhaps later, a possibility borne out by the pottery evidence, although this is not conclusive. It certainly cuts ditch 1091 and contained finds suggestive of a late Romano-British date in its bottom fill. This ditch measured 0.6m wide by 0.25m deep and enclosed an area 13m east-west by at least 5m north-south. Only the southern end of the projected enclosure was visible, the remainder lying outside of the excavation area and being ill-defined in the geophysical survey. It may have been used as a pen or stock enclosure.

A single shallow pit in the south-west part of Area 1, 105, 0.3m wide and 0.1m deep, was also broadly dated to the Romano-British period. Roman pottery was also recovered from two tree-throw holes, 173 and 1003.

Area 1 was crossed by a wide ditch, 1087, aligned NNE-SSW. This contained modern finds as well as residual Roman material and may represent a post-medieval field boundary. Numerous modern land drains followed the same alignment as this ditch and, unfortunately, in some cases these had obliterated stratigraphic relationships between earlier features.

Area 2

The excavation of Area 2 revealed an arrangement of Romano-British ditches (Fig. 3) which corresponds closely to the anomalies recorded by the geophysical survey. These ditches indicate a number of phases of reorganisation of enclosures/field systems. The pottery suggests a broad date range from the 2nd−3rd century.

The stratigraphically earliest features were two short lengths of north-south ditch, 243 and 253, with terminals 6.8m apart, possibly marking an entrance. Ditch 253 continued north of Area 2, while ditch 243 was cut towards the south by east-west ditch 284, and it appears that it may have turned to the west at some point. Ditch 237, aligned east-west but largely truncated by a later ditch (287), may also have been associated.

Ditch 284 was the middle of three ditch cuts which, together with 283 and 285, formed a substantial east-west boundary clearly visible on the geophysical survey (Fig 1). This curved towards the ENE, then 23m east of Area 2 turned to the north, forming the south-eastern part of a substantial field or enclosure. The stratigraphically earliest of these ditch cuts, 285, which was between 0.45m wide and up to 0.24m deep, appeared to terminate approximately 6m from the eastern edge of Area 2. Ditch 284 was 0.73–1m wide and up to 0.58m deep, while ditch 283, stratigraphically the latest of the cuts, was 0.65–0.75m wide and 0.2m deep.

Ditch 283 extended across the southern edge of Area 2, following 284 which it cut. This feature had a shallow U-shaped profile up to 0.75m wide and 0.2m deep.

In the north of Area 2, east-west ditch 286, which was 1.85m wide and 0.5m deep, was almost parallel to ditches 283, 284 and 285, although the geophysical survey appears to indicate it converging on them towards the east, suggesting that they were not closely associated and may represent different phases of activity.

Possibly more closely associated with the southern boundary was 287, a curvilinear ditch which crossed the western edge of Area 2, perhaps creating a funnel for stock control. Ditch 287, which was 2.4m wide and 0.7m deep, is clearly visible as a geophysical anomaly, and may be associated with an anomaly to the north that curves eastwards.

A shallow east-west ditch 291, 0.5–1.4m wide and up to 0.27m deep, immediately to the south of 287, turned sharply to the north at its eastern end, and terminated on the edge of ditch 287.

A small number of discrete features were also recorded. Pit 211, which was 0.7m wide and 0.28m deep, contained 177 sherds of mid-3rd–4th-century pottery. Two features, 268 and 279, in the possible funnel formed by ditch 287, were both less than 0.2m deep and may be of natural origin, although both produced small quantities of pottery; feature 268 also

contained fired clay and animal bone. Feature 264, cut by ditch 287, measuring 3 m long by at least 1m wide and 0.27m deep, is of uncertain character; it contained six sherds of pottery. To the south, pit 218 also contained pottery and fragments of fired clay. Two other features, probably natural, were undated.

Area 7

The excavation of Area 7 revealed an arrangement of ditches (Fig. 4) some of which correspond closely to geophysical anomalies. These represent parts of two adjacent subrectangular enclosures, both of which appear to be part of the same arrangement of enclosures recorded in Area 1 (Fig. 1). Other ditches present were not detected by the geophysical survey.

Ditches 752 and 754 form parts of the south-western and south-eastern sides of a slightly trapezoidal enclosure, 21−30m long (NE−SW) and 25m wide. Ditch 752 was the most substantial feature in this area, 30 m in length and aligned north-east to south-west, before turning south and continuing beyond the limit of excavation. This ditch was up to 2.8m wide, but narrowed to 1m towards the north, while ditch 754 averaged 0.8m wide. No ditches were detected on the lines of the geophysical anomalies which appeared to represent the enclosure's north-eastern and north-western sides.

The slightly trapezoidal enclosure was linked to an adjacent enclosure to the south-east by ditch 753, 1.6m wide and up to 0.57m deep, which formed the south-eastern enclosure's north-eastern side; its north-western side was either defined by ditch 752, or by another short length of ditch, 714. This lay parallel with 752 before terminating after 3.4m. The terminal may mask an entrance from the narrow (2m) space between the two enclosures.

Ditch 751, forming three sides of a rectangle open to the south-east, and measuring externally 13m long (NE–SW) and at least 8m wide, lay inside the enclosure partly formed

by ditches 752 and 754, but with a different orientation to it. Ditch 751 was 0.2m deep and its south-eastern end consisted of two intercutting terminals, suggesting two phases of use, although no stratigraphic relationship could be determined. Ditch 751 produced 21 sherds of Roman pottery and a small quantity of animal bone. Two small discrete features, 718 and 732, lay just inside and on the edge of the area enclosed by ditch 751; together they contained 117 sherds of late 3rd–4th-century pottery, animal bone, a piece of copper alloy wire (from 718) and an iron nail (from 732). Two other, shallow features, 734 and 743, cut ditch 751.

Towards the southern corner of the enclosure was irregular pit 745, 2.1m wide and 0.6m deep, which produced small quantities of pottery, fired clay and animal bone. Three other features were undated.

Area 7 was crossed by a wide ditch, 750, aligned NNE-SSW and parallel with 1087 in Area 1. Ditch 750 contained medieval or post-medieval ceramic building material as well as residual Roman pottery and may represent a post-medieval field boundary. As in Area 1, numerous modern land drains followed the same alignment as this ditch. Unfortunately, these had obliterated some of the stratigraphic relationships between earlier features.

FINDS

Pottery

by Jane Timby

The archaeological work resulted in the recovery of some 1964 sherds of identifiable pottery weighing 14.88kg. The material mainly falls into two principal phases of activity; one dating to the later prehistoric period, the other of Roman (2nd–4th-century) date. There are also a very small number of potentially earlier prehistoric pieces and at least one glazed post-medieval sherd (layer 739; not discussed further here).

Methodology

The assemblage was sorted into fabrics based on colour, texture and the nature of the inclusions present. The prehistoric material was classified following recommended nomenclature (Prehistoric Ceramics Research Group (PCRG) 1997). Known named or traded Roman wares were coded using the National Roman fabric reference system (Tomber and Dore 1998). Other wares, generally of local origin, were coded more generically according to colour and main inclusions. Fabric descriptions are given in Appendix 1. The sorted assemblage was quantified by sherd count, weight and estimated vessel equivalence (EVE) within each context. Rims were additionally coded to general form.

In general terms, the assemblage is in poor condition with well-fragmented sherds. The average sherd weight was just 7.5g collectively for both the Iron Age and Roman material. Surface preservation is also very poor and finishes such as slips, colour-coats or burnishing were lost in many cases. Pottery was recovered from 111 contexts in 84 features, mainly ditches, gullies, pits and layers. The quantities range from single sherds up to a maximum of 177 (natural feature 211) most of which appear to be from a single vessel.

Early prehistoric

A single body sherd redeposited in ditch 1088 may be of earlier prehistoric date. It is oxidised and contains mixed temper including grog, quartz sand and rare sandstone (GRSST). Slightly more enigmatic and difficult to date are a few very small pieces in a very vesicular fabric where calcareous inclusions have leached out (SH00). Also of slightly uncertain date are two sherds in a fine oxidised handmade ware with limestone (OXLI) and three oxidised sherds with grog (OXGR).

Later prehistoric

Most of the prehistoric assemblage (Table 1) comprises small sherds in fabrics containing Jurassic limestone/fossil shell and other fossiliferous detritus. This amounts to some 172 sherds weighing 1148g. In addition, there is a single small sandy ware sherd.

The calcareous sherds can be divided into three main sub-fabrics (SH1-3) based on the size, character and frequency of the inclusions: SH1 for a sparse to moderate frequency of coarser fossil shell and limestone (up to 3mm in size) or voids; SH2 for a moderate to common density of finer limestone, shell and other fossiliferous material (generally less than 2mm) and SH3 with a sparse frequency of large fossil shell fragments 4–5mm and less in size.

Although later prehistoric material was present in 39 contexts, only four (from ring gully 1089, burnt feature 1042, and ditch 187), are potentially of later prehistoric date; the rest are Roman. The assemblage as a whole produced just seven rims, some very fragmentary (Fig. 5, 1−5). There are no decorated pieces and none of the sherds show any form of surface finish.

With such a small assemblage, dating can only be provisional and there is no certainty that the sherds necessarily belong to one phase of activity. The use of limestone and shelly fabrics is well attested in the area in the Early–Middle Iron Age, at Ilchester (Ellison 1982, 125) and Ham Hill (Morris 1987), for example. Typologically, many of the forms can be paralleled with material dating to this period from Gussage-All-Saints (Wainwright1979). The vessel redeposited in ditch 1088 (Fig. 5, 5) most closely resembles a ‘saucepan-style’ vessel and is in a slightly finer, better prepared fabric. This would suggest a Middle Iron Age or later date. The other slightly coarser limestone-shelly wares are probably earlier in date.

Roman

Roman pottery accounts for 91% (sherd count) of the assemblage and largely dates from the

middle/late 2nd into the 4th century AD (Table 2). It is overwhelmingly dominated by a diverse range of 'local' coarse wares. Continental imported wares are limited to 21 sherds of samian and a single burnt handle from a Baetican Dressel 20 amphora.

Samian accounts for 1% (count) of the assemblage with both Central Gaulish (Lezoux) and East Gaulish vessels. Most sherds are small and the only recognisable forms are dishes Dragendorff (Drag) 31 and 79, a cup (Drag. 33) and a decorated bowl (Drag. 37).

Regional imports include black burnished ware (BB1), colour-coated wares from the Oxfordshire region and New Forest, mortaria from the Oxfordshire region, Savernake ware from Wiltshire and South-west oxidised ware. The BB1 includes both the Poole Harbour (DOR BB1) and South-western (SOW BB1) types, the latter originally suggested to be based in the Brue Valley, Somerset (Holbrook and Bidwell 1991, 88). Although petrological analysis has failed to support this, the density of finds of this ware from the Somerset area suggests a source(s) in this general region.

DOR BB1 accounts for 28.2% of the assemblage by sherd count (32.7% by wt.) whilst SOW BB1 accounts for 16.1% (14.8% wt.). The vessel range is dominated by everted rim jars which account for 67.7% EVE of the BB1 assemblage, followed by plain-walled dishes (19% EVE) and flanged-rim conical bowls (12% EVE). There are single examples of a beaded rim plain-walled dish, a grooved rim dish and a flat-rimmed dish. There is also a strap handle from a flagon in SOW BB1.

Oxfordshire wares are represented by white ware mortaria (OXF WH), colour-coated mortaria and colour-coated ware (OXF RS). Given the poor preservation, it is possible that some of the fine oxidised sherds were also once colour-coated. The mortaria include a heavily burnt example of a Young (1977) form M3 with a production date of AD 140–200 from ditch 1088. Colour-coated wares include two examples of dishes (*ibid*, form C45) and a body sherd from a 4th-century bowl decorated with demi-rosette stamps.

Two types of New Forest ware are present, both with colour-coats, a fine white ware (NFO WH2) and an oxidised or grey ware (NFO RS2). Forms include beakers (Fulford 1975, types F33 and F40), bowls (F61/62 and F63) and a flask (F11/12). Other regional imports include two sherds of Savernake ware and one sherd of South-west oxidised ware in the form of a disk-necked flask. There are two small mortaria sherds of unknown provenance and two small sherds with a fine oxidised fabric which appear to show traces of glaze which may be Roman or post-medieval.

The local wares are quite diverse but most seem to have a common source with the presence of glauconitic sand. There are a small group of grey sandy wares which are probably from north Somerset (fabric GY1). Forms include an everted rim jar and a jug with a bifid rim. Poorly published kilns are known from Congresbury (Lilly and Usher 1964).

The commonest ware (fabric GY3) is distinguished by the presence of black glauconitic sand in a slightly micaceous paste with various other inclusions including clay pellets, rounded, polished grains of quartz sand up to 2mm across, limestone and organic inclusions. Firing colour varies from black to various shades of grey, brown and pale orange. This ware accounts for 21.3% of the Roman assemblage and may be from the same or similar source as the SANDRF fabric identified at Shepton Mallet (Evans 2001, 110), which was compared with similar wares from Worberry Gate and Bath fabric 10.12 (Green and Young 1985). Forms are almost exclusively jars with just a single flat-rim dish. Two sherds from layer 1034 and ditch 237 have been fashioned into roughly shaped discs. Fabric GY6 appears to be a refined version of GY3 with a fine textured fabric containing moderate to common, very fine, black, glauconitic sand. Forms are again dominated by jars. One body sherd has a single perforation made prior to firing (ditch 1095) and one base from ditch 287 appears to have been deliberately trimmed.

The other main ware present is a dense, sandy oxidised ware which contributed 9.5%

to the assemblage. This did not provide any featured sherds but did include 157 sherds from pit 211 probably from a single closed vessel. Other fabrics are present in extremely small amounts.

Discussion

The moderately large assemblage of pottery seems to indicate two main phases of activity; one in the later prehistoric period, the other of mid−late Roman date. There is clearly quite a high level of redeposition with earlier material in later levels and this, combined with moderately small groups of pottery from many of the features, makes precise dating difficult in some cases.

The nature of the Roman assemblage, with its overwhelming dominance of local wares, a remarkably limited repertoire of forms dominated by jars and the low incidence of samian (1% count) and other imported fine/specialist wares, suggests a rural settlement of moderately low status. The level of samian and the presence of a few imports from the Oxfordshire and New Forest industries (1% and 1.2% respectively by count of the Roman assemblage), in the late Romano-British period is entirely to be expected from a rural site and can be paralleled at similar contemporary settlements in the region, such as Shapwick (Timby 2007), Catsgore (Leech 1982) and Kenn Moor (Timby 2000).

Catalogue of illustrated sherds (**Fig. 5)**

1. Jar with flat topped, slightly inturned rim. Variably fired. Fabric: SH1. Ditch terminal 1001 (1002)

2. Slightly flared rim jar with an undifferentiated rim. Oxidised surfaces with a grey core. Fabric SH1. Ditch terminal 1001 (1002)

3. Wide-mouthed vessel with a squared-off undifferentiated rim. Oxidised surfaces with a light brown inner core. Fabric: SH3. Ditch 193 (194)

4. Wide-mouthed jar with a slightly expanded rim. Pale grey exterior and outer core and light brown interior and inner core. Fabric: SH2. Redeposited in Roman linear 165 (166)

5. Rim from a slightly beaded saucepan-style vessel. Dark grey–black surfaces and core with a red-brown interior surface slightly sooted. Quite fine version of fabric SH2. Redeposited in Roman ditch 1021 (1022)

Coins and tokens

by Nicholas Cooke

Forty-four coins and a single jeton were recovered. The coins are all small denomination copper alloy issues of the Romano-British period, the majority being of late Roman date. In general, the coins are in relatively poor condition, with a number showing signs of both pre-depositional wear and post-depositional corrosion. As a result of this, many of the coins could not be identified to period. However, of these, it was possible to date 16 to broad periods, with two belonging to the early Romano-British period, and the remainder of late 3rd- or 4th-century AD date. Only one coin could not be dated.

The two earliest coins date to the early Romano-British period. Both are large bronzes (either *asses* or *dupondii*) and are most likely to have been struck in the 1st or 2nd century AD. Their presence hints at activity on site in the early Romano-British period.

The remaining coins all belong to the 3rd or 4th centuries AD, including 14 which could not be dated closely, but can be assigned a broad late Roman date. The late Roman coins which could be dated to period range from the AD 270s through to coins of the House of Valentinian last minted in the AD 370s. Seven of the coins, all radiate *antoniniani*, date to

the late 3rd century. Six of the seven are irregular radiates whilst the sixth is a coin of Claudius II (AD 268–270). These irregular radiates were copies of 'official' coinage, possibly struck to compensate for gaps in the supply of coinage to Britain and to provide sufficient small change for the province's needs. It is unclear whether these copies were officially sanctioned, if at all, but they are not uncommon as site finds, and seem to have circulated in the same fashion as officially struck coins.

The 4th-century coins are dominated by coins of the House of Constantine, struck between AD 330 and the AD 360s. A relatively high proportion were probably also contemporary copies, although the level of corrosion suffered by some of these coins makes this difficult to quantify with certainty. The dearth of coins of the first third of the 4th century AD need not indicate a hiatus in activity or coin use – a similar pattern is noticed across many British sites, indicating a low level of supply. Coin use and loss on the site seems to have been strong throughout the middle years of the 4th century AD, while the latest coins were two of the House of Valentinian, struck between AD 364 and 375. The presence of these coins suggests that there was activity on the site in the last third of the 4th century AD, and they may well have remained in circulation until the end of that century.

In all, the coins represent a fairly typical assemblage of low denomination coins from a rural site. There are perhaps more copies or possible copies in the group than might normally be expected, but this may reflect either the small size of the assemblage or the difficulties in identifying worn and heavily corroded coins with confidence.

The single jeton was minted in Nuremburg by the renowned guild master Hans Krauwinckel II (AD 1586–1635). It is a common type, although slightly smaller than many of his jetons. Jetons were reckoning counters used in medieval accounting and mathematical calculations. They were used in conjunction with checkerboards or cloths in order to record values and sums of money. Specialist tokens for this purpose were produced from the late

13th century onwards, and they were in widespread use from the 14th century until the late 17th century, when they were made redundant by the increasing spread of Arabic numerals. Nuremberg took over from Tournai as the main European centre for jeton manufacture in the 16th century. Prior to this, designs on jetons usually reflected those on contemporary coins, and jetons were often minted under government authority. The only controls on the minting at Nuremburg were those imposed by the Guild organisation, and new designs flourished. This find was unstratified and presumably represents an isolated loss, with no features dating to the same period.

Metalwork

by Elina Brook

Copper alloy

Fourteen objects were found, of which nine are of Roman, one is post-medieval, three are modern and one is of uncertain date.

The Roman items include pieces from six bow brooches dating to the 1st to 2nd centuries AD; all were metal-detected. A well-preserved trumpet brooch (Fig. 6, 1) has a notably large, rectangular head plate decorated with three raised ribs and transverse moulding on the bow; the foot knob is also large. It is comparable to Mackreth's type TR 7 (2011, 128, pl. 87, 5484, 5487 and 5509) which generally date to the 2nd century AD and are known from Somerset and counties to the east. The upper part of a more typical trumpet brooch (not illustrated) has simple, multiple transverse mouldings on the waist of the bow. A strip bow brooch (Fig. 6, 2) has a rolled-under head and is decorated with punched lines down the length of the bow. It is similar to one found at Fosse Lane, Shepton Mallet dating to the 1st century AD (Mackreth 2001, 194, fig. 53.65), although the head is not so expanded. A bow fragment from a second strip bow type with a raised rib along the centre of the bow with

additional impressed/punched line decoration was also found. The other identifiable brooch fragment was from a small T-shaped type dating to the second half of the 1st century AD (Bayley and Butcher 2004, 159). It has a raised rib, with mouldings either side at the head/bow junction, but the foot and pin are missing. Most of this type are thought to have been made in the West Country (*ibid*.). A solid, perforated catchplate fragment from another brooch was also found but is not identifiable to type or closer dating.

Other items of personal adornment include two bracelet fragments, both likely to be of late Romano-British date. One (ditch 1086) is decorated with transverse grooves and a punched dot motif, while the other is plain. An unstratified finger-ring (Fig. 6, 3) has an oval shaped bezel containing the degraded remains of an amber coloured stone, the condition is such that it is impossible to tell if this was an intaglio. A small, square-sectioned fragment of wire was also found in late Romano-British pit 718.

A small, unstratified, internally bevelled rim fragment from a post-medieval cooking vessel may be of relatively local manufacture. Two foundries within Somerset, at South Petherton and Montacute, were leading suppliers of bronze cooking wares in southern England during the 17th and early 18th centuries (Butler and Green 2006).

Catalogue of illustrated copper alloy (Fig. 6)

1. Trumpet brooch, Object number (ON) 6, unstratified

2. Strip bow brooch, ON 15, unstratified

3. Bezel ring, ON 17, unstratified

Iron

A total of 35 iron fragments were recovered from 19 contexts within 12 ditches and two late Romano-British pits (732 and 734). The majority (24) were nails/nail shanks, the dating of which relies on associated material. The remainder of the iron pieces came from features of

Romano-British date and comprised 10 hobnails found in ditch 1094 and a possible boot cleat from gully 1089.

Lead

All eight fragments (112 g) were found unstratified in Area 7. Five pieces are melted waste fragments and off-cuts, one is a rolled-up section of medieval/post medieval window came, one is a lead shot while a small, sub-oval, flat fragment may be a possible token of uncertain date.

Fired clay

by Elina Brook

The fired clay (86 pieces, 102g) was recovered from 33 contexts within a range of features. The dating of all pieces relies on associated material. The majority are small, abraded, featureless fragments made in slightly sandy, micaceous, predominantly oxidised fabrics with rare iron oxide and calcareous inclusions (possibly shell or degraded limestone). Several have flattish surfaces, whilst a small number (from Romano-British ditches 287 and 1089, and feature 268) have concave impressions suggesting the presence of some structural debris, and four fragments (ditches 287, 750 and 1088) are vitrified. All of this material is likely to be derived from the linings or structures of ovens/hearths.

Ceramic building material

by Elina Brook

Four pieces of ceramic building material weighing 63g were recovered. Two are of Romano-

British date and were found in ditch 1091. Based on its thickness, one of these fragments is probably from a brick, whilst the other may be from a box flue or *voussoir* tile. The remaining flat fragments (ditch 750) are probably derived from medieval/post-medieval roof tiles.

Worked flint

by Phil Harding

A small collection of worked flint comprising two blades, a microdenticulate, a flake core and a broken flake were found. Flint does not occur naturally at the site, which means that all flint was imported. Most of the objects have developed a surface patina to greater or lesser degrees, making it difficult to assess the quality of the raw material. However, modern edge damage suggests that, at least in some cases, this material was of good quality and probably obtained directly from the chalk.

The microdenticulate is made on a broken blade and is an especially well-made blank. The core has been worked down to a point at which it might be regarded as exhausted. Details of technology are almost entirely absent; nevertheless, one of the blades does show clear signs of platform abrasion as a means of preparing the core before the blade was removed.

These individual pieces do not make a major contribution to the interpretation of the site, but are useful additions to the corpus of material documenting early human activity in the area. The relative frequency of blades, the technology used to make them, the selection of flint as a deliberate raw material and the inclusion of a microdenticulate all contribute to suggest that this activity can be dated to the Early Neolithic period.

Other finds

by Elina Brook

A fragment of a Greensand rotary quern was found in late Romano-British ditch 284. A narrow band of polish visible close to the outer edge of its grinding surface indicates use; this surface was also blackened. The second piece of stone, from Iron Age ring-gully 1086, is a red Pennant-type sandstone and may have been utilised as a rubstone or whetstone.

One piece (6g) of fuel ash slag/waste was found in late Romano-British ditch 287. Lightweight and vesicular, this material is most likely to be non-metallurgical in origin and probably derived from the vitrification of fired clay (Bayley *et al.* 2001, 21). A single fragment of oyster shell was found in Romano-British ditch 284.

Animal bone

by Lorrain Higbee

A total of 848 fragments (or 6.290kg) of animal bone came from Early−Middle Iron Age and mid−late Romano-British deposits. Once conjoins are taken into account the total count falls to 615 fragments (Table 3). Most (91%) of the assemblage came from ditch fills, and the remainder from a small range of other features including gullies, pits and tree throw-holes. Approximately 29% of fragments are identifiable to species and skeletal element.

A small number of bone fragments were recovered from Early−Middle Iron Age ditch 1086 and a patch of *in situ* burning 1042. The identified fragments include the distal end of a sheep/goat tibia and a horse incisor tooth.

A modest quantity of animal bone fragments came from middle−late Romano-British features, mostly ditches but also a few gullies and pits. The assemblage is dominated by bones from livestock species, particularly sheep/goat and cattle which together account for *c.*82% NISP (Table 3). Less common species include pig, horse and dog.

Sheep/goat bones are marginally more common than cattle bones, and both are represented by a range of skeletal elements. The evidence suggests that livestock were slaughtered and butchered on site for local consumption. Pig bones are relatively scarce in the assemblage and this suggests that pig husbandry was only a minor component of the local economy, perhaps because the landscape had already been opened up for arable cultivation and livestock grazing. Horse bones and teeth were recovered from a small number of ditches and account for 12% NISP. Fragments of dog skull and mandible were also identified from ditch 290.

The relative importance of livestock is broadly similar to other 'native' rural sites in the local area, such as Cannards Grave near Shepton Mallet (Hamilton Dyer 2002, 102-10) and elsewhere in Britain (King 1978; 1984; 1999). Urban sites such as the roadside settlement along the Fosse Way near Shepton Mallet (Albarella and Hammon 2012, W37-W44) tend to have high cattle bone frequencies due the preference for beef from a more Romanised population.

ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

Charred plant remains

by Inés López-Dóriga

Seven bulk sediment samples were taken from mainly late prehistoric and later Romano-British features within Areas 1 and 2, and processed for the recovery and assessment of charred plant remains and charcoal (Wessex Archaeology 2015). Samples were processed by standard flotation methods, with flots and residues collected on to 0.5mm mesh. Samples from late prehistoric ring-gully 1086 (Area 1) and late Romano-British ditch groups 286

(Area 2) and 1094 (Area 1) were chosen for analysis due to their moderately rich assemblages.

Methods

All identifiable charred plant macrofossils were extracted from the flot and the 2 and 1mm residue fractions using stereo incident light microscopy at magnifications of up to 40x. Identifications follow the nomenclature of Stace (1997) for wild plants, and traditional nomenclature, as provided by Zohary and Hopf (2000), for cereals, and with reference to specialised atlases and modern reference collections where appropriate. Quantifications are given as MNI (minimum number of individuals), and are based on anatomy (whole items or identifiable anatomical parts (cereals, based on Antolín and Buxó 2011; legume cotyledons divided by two), or size (hazelnut pericarp fragments, based on Antolín and Jacomet 2015).

Results and discussion

The analysed samples have produced relatively abundant and diverse plant macro-remains (see Table 4; full quantified results are available in archive). The assemblages are very similar in composition and preservation, thus suggesting that they arise from the same type of activities. Preservation was mostly by carbonisation and the condition was in general good, with minimal distortion of seeds are not distorted and preservation of fragile items such as chaff. However, fragmentation rates (MNI compared to number of remains) are very high, such that a great portion of the material is not identifiable to species level, likely to be the result of post-depositional disturbance (including excavation).

In addition, a small amount of waterlogged material (which included uncharred seeds of docks (*Rumex* sp.)) was recovered (during the assessment), from the sample from ring-gully 1086.

For both the late prehistoric and late Romano-British periods, evidence for the utilisation of the local environment has been identified. This included the cultivation of cereals and the exploitation of wild resources such as nuts, tubers and possibly herbs (Fig. 7).

Crop species diversity might have been richer in the Iron Age (spelt, emmer and barley) than in the late Romano-British period (spelt), although the quantities of positively identified cereal remains are so low that it is very difficult to assess which were actually crops or possibly just weeds of other crops. Emmer and spelt were crops of varying importance across different sites in the Somerset area in the Iron Age (Stevens 2006). In the case of the late Romano-British assemblages, it is very likely that a single wheat crop (spelt) is present and the badly preserved indeterminate *Triticum* sp. and *Triticeae* remains probably belong to that taxa. This is consistent with our knowledge about spelt wheat cultivation in much of Southern Britain (Campbell 2016), and very similar results have been obtained from other sites in the region, such as Ilchester (Murphy 1982), RNAS Yeovilton (Pelling 2005) and Upper Row Farm, Laverton (Stevens 2007).

Although we are dealing with dispersed assemblages originating from more than one activity (Fuller *et al*. 2014), the quantities of cereal chaff (glume bases) in proportion to cereal grains indicates that the assemblages probably consist of the by-products of the late stages of crop processing (van der Veen 2007), namely dehusking. Therefore, it is very likely that many of the seeds from wild herbs were probably in the assemblage due to them having been weeds of the agricultural fields (many of them were interpreted as such at the nearby site of RNAS Yeovilton; Pelling 2005).

Oats was also present in the late Romano-British period, but due to the absence of chaff remains other than awns, it is not possible to tell whether the domesticated (*Avena sativa*) or with the wild species (*A. fatua, A. sterilis*) is represented. Ergot was noted in one of the late Roman samples, although its rarity does not suggest it would have been a threat to

human health. This fungus is usually associated with rye, but other plants such as brome or ryegrass can be hosts.

Several of the plant remains found in both the late prehistoric and late Romano-British periods might have belonged to either wild plants or to agricultural crops. This is the case with legumes, none of which are clearly domesticated taxa (Trifoliae, *Vicia*/*Lathyrus*, Fabaceae), but which might have been grown with cereals for enriching soils, for consumption as green vegetables, or for animal fodder. *Brassica* spp., crops well established at the neighbouring Iron Age site of Ham Hill (Stevens 2006) and in the Romano-British period (Campbell 2016), might also have been gathered or grown, and the oil from their seeds used for a variety of purposes.

Many of the other plants present in the samples would have been growing in the immediate environment, around ditches and in disturbed nitrogen-rich soils associated with settlement, and some are also plants of economic interest. For example, broad-leaved plants such as oraches or docks could have been consumed as green vegetables, while the seeds of some plants, such as ryegrass, ribwort plantain, docks, sedges or orache, can be ground into powder and used in bread flour and soups (Fern 1996−2012). Many communities make use of crop processing by-products to feed domestic animals (Palmer 1996), but in this case other resources for foddering must have been available and preferred, as crop processing by-products were discarded into domestic fires and thus became preserved as charred remains.

In addition to cereal and potentially wild herbs, hazel (*Corylus avellana*) nuts and lesser celandine (*Ranunculus ficaria*) tubers were possibly exploited in the Iron Age. Hazelnut shells are usually discarded into fires after consumption of the kernels. Although hazelnuts are gathered in autumn, they might be stored for several months after drying. Lesser celandine tubers are slightly toxic in a raw state, but they are edible when cooked and

have been widely recovered from prehistoric sites. However, they might have been pulled up with grasses and therefore may be represent just another type of crop processing by-product.

There is no evidence of consumption of imported plant foodstuffs, nor of the introduction of weeds known to have arrived in Roman times (Campbell 2016). Evidence for the exploitation of some plants which are known from other contemporary sites in the region is missing, for example legume crops such as garden pea or broad bean, but it is difficult to tell whether this is due a taphonomic bias (e.g. sampling restricted to one type of feature, or material less likely to be preserved by charring) or to an actual selective choice.

Land and aquatic molluscs

by Sarah F. Wyles

The few shells recovered from mid−late Iron Age ring gully 1086 in Area 1 included those of the open country species *Vallonia* sp. and the intermediate species *Trochulus hispidus*.

The large mollusc assemblage from late Romano-British ditch group 1094 in Area 1 included shells of the open country species *Vallonia costata, Vallonia excentrica* and *Vertigo* sp., the intermediate species *Trochulus hispidus* and the shade loving species *Discus rotundatus*, together with those of the aquatic species *Anisus leucostoma* and *Galba truncatula*. This may be indicative of a well-established open landscape with areas of longer grass near or within the ditch, with some evidence for occasional seasonal flooding in this area of the site.

The relatively high number of shells noted in the sample from late Romano-British ditch group 286 in Area 2 included those of the open country species *Vallonia costata, Vallonia excentrica, Pupilla muscorum* and *Vertigo* sp., the intermediate species *Trochulus hispidus* and *Cochlicopa* sp., and the shade loving species *Aegopinella nitidula* and *Discus rotundatus*. This assemblage, like that seen from ditch group 1094 in Area 1, may be

indicative of a well-established open landscape with areas of longer grass near or within the ditch. There is no evidence for any flooding in this part of the site during this period.

DISCUSSION

The earliest finds from the site at Pylle are several worked flints dating to the Early Neolithic. These were all residual within later features but do suggest that there was activity within the vicinity of the site at this time.

The first settlement probably took place during the Middle Iron Age. The evidence is limited, but suggests a small-scale farming community, perhaps consisting of a single family group. It is possible that further Iron Age activity has been obliterated by Romano-British features; much of the later prehistoric pottery comes from Romano-British ditches.

A more substantial Middle Iron Age settlement comprising at least four probable roundhouses lies 3.7km north of the site at Cannards Grave (Birbeck 2000), and two of the ring-gullies were of comparable size to the example at Pylle. During this period the area would probably have fallen within the tribal territory of the *Dobunii* (Cunliffe 1991), although close to its southern border with the *Durotriges*. The site has many hillforts in the vicinity, the closet being Small Down Knoll, about 4.6km to the north-east and Creech Hill, a similar distance to the south-east. It is possible that small Iron Age communities such as that at Pylle may have owed political allegiance to regional centres such as these.

Romano-British occupation of the site appears to have begun during the 2nd or 3rd century AD and continued into the 4th century, a fairly typical date range for such sites in southern England. However, the fact that the finds include two coins as well as several fragments of brooches dating to the 1st or 2nd centuries AD shows that there was activity in the vicinity during the early Romano-British period. These finds were all unstratified or residual in later features, so may relate to the possible villa nearby.

Perhaps during the early Romano-British period a villa was established approximately 0.5km south-west of the site, as evidenced by the large quantity of building materials recovered during fieldwalking (Somerset Historic Environment Record 12222). It is clear from geophysical surveys of the site that the features uncovered during the excavation formed part of a wider agricultural landscape probably related to this villa. Most notably a probable track or droveway crossed the middle of Area 1 in a north-west to south-east direction, with field boundary/drainage ditches laid out at right angles to it. The field system continued and apparently became more focused to the east of the excavated areas.

Pottery suggests mid−late Romano-British occupation with a very limited repertoire dominated by jars; higher status wares such as Gaulish samian are almost absent from the assemblage. A few regional imports from the Oxfordshire and New Forest industries were present, however, although the assemblage is still dominated by local wares. This is perhaps likely to reflect a rural settlement of moderately low status. This is unsurprising at a rural site dating to this period and can be paralleled with similar, contemporary sites in the region, such as Shapwick (Timby 2007), Catsgore (Leech 1982) and Kenn Moor (Timby 2000).

Other than the pottery only animal bone occurs in moderate quantities, and there are very few other finds, with none clearly associated with any specialist crafts or industries. The evidence from the animal bone and charred plant remains indicates that the agricultural economy was mixed, with animal husbandry represented, in particular, by sheep/goat but also cattle, and arable farming dominated by spelt wheat.

Within the wider Romano-British landscape, the site at Pylle lies just 0.5km from the Fosse Way, the principal Roman road into south-west England. It also lies about 2km south of Shepton Mallet, a linear settlement along the Fosse Way dating mainly to the 3th and 4th centuries. That settlement in turn lay approximately halfway between the major Roman urban centres of Bath (*Aquae Sulis*) and Ilchester (*Lindinis*).

Although this part of Somerset has few Romano-British urban centres, the town of Ilchester being an exception, the widespread distribution of small rural settlements indicates that the area was well-populated at this time.

The Romano-British farmstead at Pylle may have developed partly as a result of the presence of the Fosse Way. This road would probably have been well-established when the settlement started to grow and passing traffic would no doubt have provided a market for local produce. Over 20 villas have been discovered in the surrounding area, the closest known being at Ditcheat, about 2km to the south. This reflects a concentration of later Romano-British agricultural production in this part of the South-West. In addition, Lamyatt Beacon, the location of a Romano-British temple dated to the 3rd to 4th century (Leech 1986), is also visible from the site and lies approximately 4.5km to the south-east.

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The archive is currently held at Wessex Archaeology's offices in Salisbury, Wiltshire, and will be deposited in due course at Taunton Museum under accession code TTNCM:111/2014.

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Table 1 Later prehistoric pottery totals by ware type

	Code	Description	No	No %	Wt (g)	Wt %	Eve	Eve %
GROG	GRSST	Grog with sand and sandstone	1	0.6	10	0.8	0	0.0
	OXGR	Oxidised with grog	3	1.7	21	1.8	0	0.0
SHELL	SH00	Very vesicular, friable	10	5.6	24	2.0	0	0.0
	SH1	Coarser fossil/limestone/voids	79	44.4	589.5	49.5	29	63.0
	SH2	Finer dense fossil and limestone	56	31.5	328	27.5	10	21.7
	SH3	Sparse fossil shell	26	14.6	206.5	17.3	7	15.2
	OXLI	Oxidised with limestone	2	1.1	10	0.8	0	0.0
SAND	SA1	Handmade sandy	1	0.6	2	0.2	0	0.0
Total			**178**	**100.0**	**1191**	**100.0**	**46**	**100.0**

Table 2 Roman pottery totals by ware type

	Code	Description	No	No %	Wt (g)	Wt %	Eve	Eve %
IMPORTS	LEZ SA2	Central Gaulish samian	18	1.0	136.25	1.0	23	1.6
	EGSAM	East Gaulish samian (various)	3	0.2	128.25	0.9	2	0.1
	BAT AM	Baetican amphorae	1	0.2	119	0.9	0	0.0
REGIONAL	DOR BB1	Dorset black burnished ware	504	28.2	4490	32.8	531	36.0
	NFO RS2	New Forest colour-coat	12	0.7	151.5	1.1	24	1.6
	NFO	New Forest white ware	6	0.3	22.5	0.2	0	0.0
	OXF RS	Oxon colour-coated ware	13	0.7	56	0.4	11	0.7
	OXF RSM	Oxon red slipped mortaria	3	0.2	16	0.1	0	0.0
	OXF	Oxon whiteware mortaria	5	0.3	10	0.3	5	0.3
	SOW BB1	South-west BB1	289	16.2	2025.5	14.8	180	12.2
	SOW OX	Southwest oxidised ware	1	0.1	39	0.3	10	0.7
	SAV GT	Savernake ware	2	0.1	93	0.7	0	0.0
Mortaria	MORT1	Pale pink, fine fabric	1	0.1	8	0.1	0	0.0
	MORT2	Oxid with sandstone trit grit	1	0.1	8	0.1	0	0.0
LOCAL	BWFMIC	Fine black micaceous ware	5	0.3	174	1.3	30	2.0
Sandy	BW	Other black sandy wares	2	0.1	17	0.1	0	0.0
	GY1	North Somerset greyware	11	0.6	66	0.5	31	2.1
	GY2	Finely micaceous grey-brown	2	0.1	8	0.1	5	0.3
	GY3	Grey/oxid glauconitic sandy	382	21.4	2915	21.3	298	20.2
	GY4	Grey micaceous sandy	2	0.1	13	0.1	0	0.0
	GY5	Dense sandy with clay pellets	14	0.8	158	1.2	33	2.2
	GY6	Very fine version GY3	277	15.5	2203	16.1	173	11.7
	GYF	Fine grey wares	2	0.1	22	0.2	0	0.0
	GLAZE	Possible British glazed ware	2	0.1	2.25	0.0	0	0.0
	OX1	Fine oxidised with clay/iron	3	0.2	17	0.1	4	0.3
	OX2	Dense sandy oxidised	170	9.5	517.5	3.8	0	0.0
	OX3	Oxidised sparse quartz	2	0.1	14	0.1	0	0.0
	OXID	Misc other oxidised	4	0.2	10.5	0.1	0	0.0
	OXIDF	Fine oxidised, no surfaces	24	1.3	61.75	0.5	13	0.9
	OXMIC	Finely micaceous oxid. ?OXFRS	9	0.5	35.5	0.3	0	0.0
	WSOXID	White slipped fine oxidised	1	0.1	10	0.1	0	0.0
Grog	GYGR	Grey with sparse grog	1	0.1	12	0.1	0	0.0
Calcareous	GYFLI	Fine grey with limetone	5	0.3	75	0.5	0	0.0
Crumbs	OO	Crumbs	8	0.4	4.25	0.0	0	0.0
Total			**1785**	**100.3**	**13,683.8**	**100.3**	**1373**	**92.9**

Table 3 Animal bone: number of identified specimens present (or NISP)

Species	**Iron Age**	**Romano-British**	**Total**
Cattle	-	67	67
Sheep/goat	1	82	83
Pig	-	7	7
Horse	1	22	21
Dog	-	3	3
Total identified	*2*	*181*	*183*
Mammal	11	419	430
Bird	-	2	2
Total unidentified	*11*	*421*	*432*
Total	**13**	**602**	**615**

Table 4 Charred plant remains

	Group number	**1086**	**286**	**1094**	
	Feature	**1001**	**225**	**1006**	
	Context	**1002**	**228**	**1039**	
	Date	**L.Preh**	**LRB**	**LRB**	
	Sample	**<10>**	**<3>**	**<5>**	
	Vol (l.)	**27**	**27**	**9**	
	Flot size	**250**	**50**	**40**	
	Roots	**60**	**70**	**50**	
Common name	**Scientific name**				**Total**
Cereals					
Barley	*Hordeum vulgare* grain	5			*5*
Spelt	*Triticum spelta* grain	4	5	9	*18*
Spelt	*Triticum spelta* chaff	4	5	31	*40*
Emmer	*Triticum dicoccum* grain	1			*1*
Emmer	*Triticum* cf. *dicoccum* grain	4			*4*
Wheat	*Triticum* sp. grain	16			*16*
Wheat	*Triticum* sp. chaff	163	173	137	*473*
Cereal	Triticeae grain	26	6	5	*37*
Tubers					
Lesser celandine	*Ranunculus ficaria* tuber	2			*2*
Nuts					
Hazelnut	*Corylus avellana* shell	2			*2*
Wild herbs					
Buttercup	*Ranunculus* sp. seed			1	*1*
Orache	*Atriplex* sp. achene	11	2		*13*
Docks	*Rumex* sp. achene	3	6	45	*54*
Cabbage	*Brassica* sp. seed	1		1	*2*
Clover/Medick/Melilot	Trifoliae seed		10	35	*45*
Vetch/pea	*Vicia/Lathyrus* seed	4	1	7	*12*
Legumes	Fabaceae seed		1	1	*1*
Ribwort plantain	*Plantago lanceolata* seed			6	*6*
Red Bartsia	*Odontites vernus* seed		1	4	*5*
Bedstraw family	Rubiaceae seed	1			*1*
Daisy family	Asteraceae seed			5	*5*
Sedges	*Carex* sp. seed	1		2	*3*
Sedges	Cyperaceae seed		1		*1*
Oatgrass	*Avena* sp. grain		1		*1*
Oatgrass	*Avena* sp. chaff		2	4	*6*
Brome	*Bromus* sp. grain		1		*1*
Oatgrass/Brome	*Avena/Bromus* grain			3	*3*
Ryegrass/Fescue	*Lolium/Festuca* grain	3		11	*14*
Meadow-grass/Cat's tail	*Poa/Phleum* grain		2	13	*15*
Grasses	Poaceae grain	14	7	7	*27*
Grasses	Poaceae spikelet base			1	*1*
Fungi					
Ergot	*Claviceps purpurea* sclerotium		1		*1*

Appendix 1: Pottery fabric descriptions

Prehistoric

GRSST: oxidised handmade ware with a mixed temper of grog, quartz sand and rare sandstone.

SHOO: Very fine textured with frequent voids.

SH1: A generally slightly softer ware containing a sparse frequency of coarser shell and limestone (2–3mm), sometimes dissolved out leaving voids.

SH2: A moderately hard ware with a moderate to common frequency of finer shell, limestone and other fossiliferous debris (less than 1mm).

SH3: A moderately softer ware with a sparse frequency of fossil shell 4–5mm.

SA1: A handmade, hard granular red-brown ware with a brown core. The paste contains a common frequency of moderately well-sorted rounded to sub-angular clear and white opaque quartz sand mainly 1mm and less in size with occasional grains up to 3mm.

Uncertain date

Oxidised with limestone (OXLI). A soft, fine ware with sparse limestone flecks (less than 1mm), occasional clay pellets and red iron.

Oxidised with grog (OXGR). Three handmade sherds in a fine oxidised ware with grog.

Roman

IMPORTS

Central Gaulish samian (LEZ SA2) (Tomber and Dore 1998, 32).

East Gaulish samian.

Baetican amphora (BAT AM2) (ibid. 84).

REGIONAL

South-east (Dorset) black burnished ware (DOR BB1) (*ibid*. 127).

South-west black burnished ware (SOW BB1) (*ibid*. 129).

New Forest red-slipped ware (NFO RS 2) (*ibid*. 142).

New Forest white ware (NFO WH2) (*ibid*. 146).

Oxfordshire colour-coated wares (OXF RS) (*ibid*. 176; Young 1977).

Oxfordshire white-ware (OXF WH) (*ibid*. 174; Young 1977).

Savernake ware (SAV GT) (Tomber and Dore 1998, 191).

South-west oxidised ware (cf. SOW WS *ibid*. 192).

MORTARIA

MORT1: pale pink smooth fine fabric with a scatter of fine sub-angular to rounded quartz less than 0.5mm, fine mica and rare rounded pinkish-red argillaceous inclusions (?iron) from less than 0.5mm to 2mm in size.

MORT2: oxidised, fine fabric with sandstone and quartz trituration grits averaging 2mm in size.

LOCAL/ UNKNOWN

Fine black micaceous ware (BWFMIC). Hard black, fine sandy ware with a dark brown core. Sparse scatter of rounded polished quartz sand (1mm and less) and a scatter of fine glauconitic sand.

Black sandy wares (BW). Hard black sandy wares containing a moderate frequency of fine quartz sand (0.5–1mm) and glauconitic sand.

North Somerset grey ware (GY1). A fine to slightly sandy well fired ware. Probably from the North Somerset industry.

Fine micaceous grey-brown ware (GY2). A hard, sandy grey-brown ware, very finely micaceous. Could be a burnt Oxfordshire ware.

Grey/oxidised glauconitic sandy (GY3). Found in a range of firing colours ranging from shades of grey and black through to brown and pale orange. Characterised by a scatter of fine glauconitic sand (0.5mm and less) accompanied by various other inclusions including visible quartz sand (0.5–1mm), rare limestone, organic inclusions and iron.

Grey micaceous sandy (GY4). A fine grey micaceous sandy ware with a sparse scatter of larger rounded quart sand grains generally less than 1mm in size and rare fine black iron/glauconite.

Dense sandy with clay pellets (GY5). A pale grey, hard ware with a common frequency of fine, rounded quartz sand (less than 0.5mm), a sparse scatter of rounded pale coloured clay pellets (2–3mm) and rare dark grey shale/slate. Possibly a burnt/degraded BB1 fabric.

Fine glauconitic sand (GY6). A very fine version of GY3 with a common frequency of fine black glauconitic sand giving a finely speckled appearance.

Fine grey sandy (GYF). Very fine grey ware with few visible inclusions other than occasion black iron.

South British glazed ware? GLAZE. A fine oxidised sandy textured ware with traces of a poorly adhered crackled glaze. Either Roman or post-medieval.

Fine oxidised with clay pellets (OX1). A fine oxidised ware containing a sparse scatter of rounded, dark orange-red, iron-rich clay pellets, 1mm and fine in size.

Dense sandy oxidised (OX2). A pale orange fabric containing a common frequency of well-sorted, rounded quartz sand up to 0.5mm in size.

Oxidised, sparse quartz (OX3). An oxidised ware with a sparse scatter of fine, rounded to sub-angular quartz (0.5mm and less) and rounded grains of iron-rich, red-orange clay pellets up to 1mm in size.

Miscellaneous oxidised (OXID). Other oxidised wares.

Fine oxidised (OXIDF). Very fine oxidised fabrics with few or no visible inclusions. Probably includes New Forest colour-coated wares with no surviving surfaces.

Fine micaceous (OXMIC). As above but finely micaceous. Probably Oxfordshire colour-coated ware.

White-slipped oxidised (WSOXID). A single sherd of very fine oxidised ware with traces of a white slip.

Grey with sparse grog (GYGR). A single fine grey ware with sparse grey grog. Probably a Wiltshire product.

Fine grey ware with limestone (GYFLI). A fine grey ware with a sparse scatter of fine (less than 1mm) limestone inclusions.

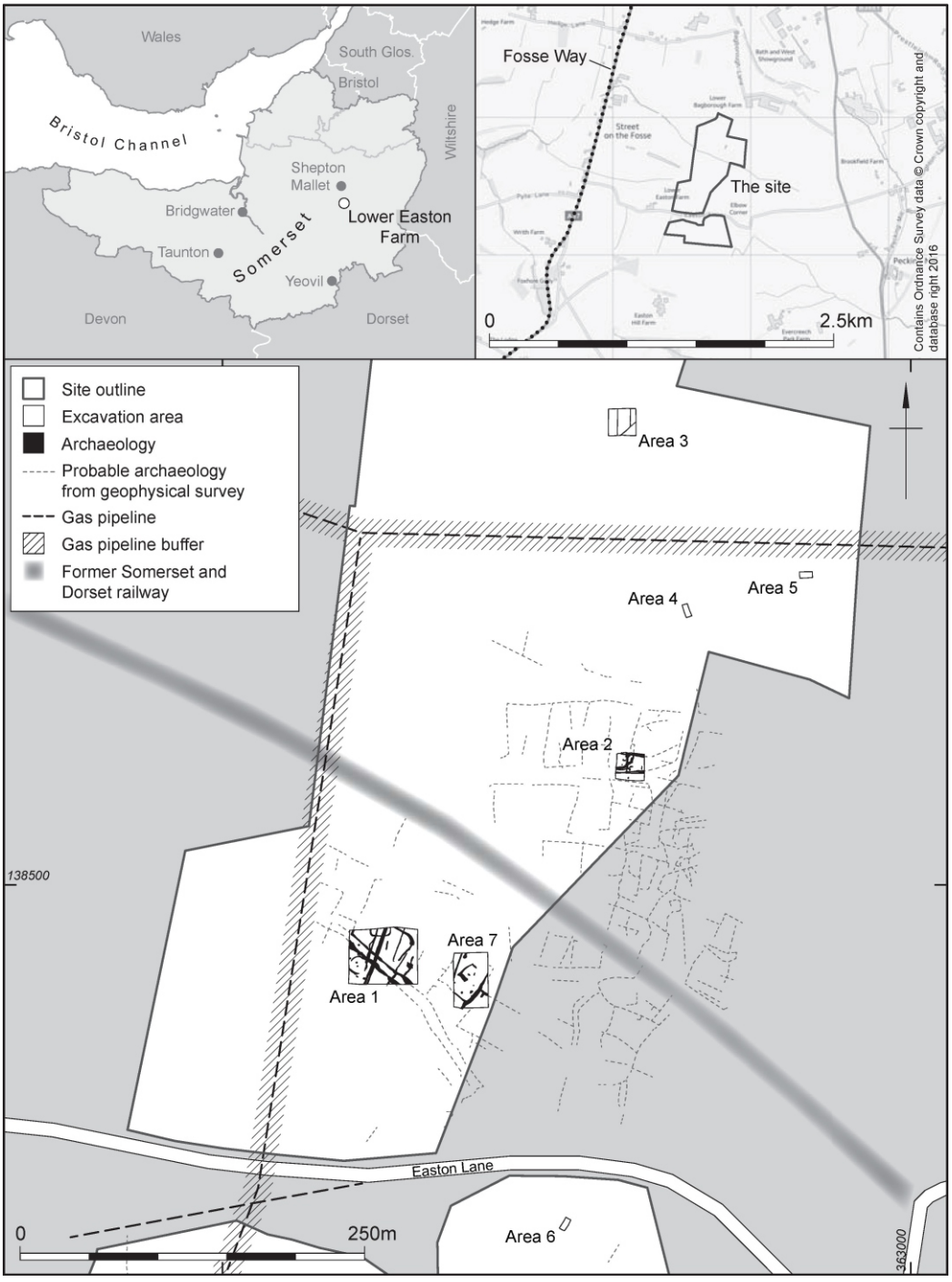

Figure 1. Site location showing the excavated areas and the results of the geophysical survey

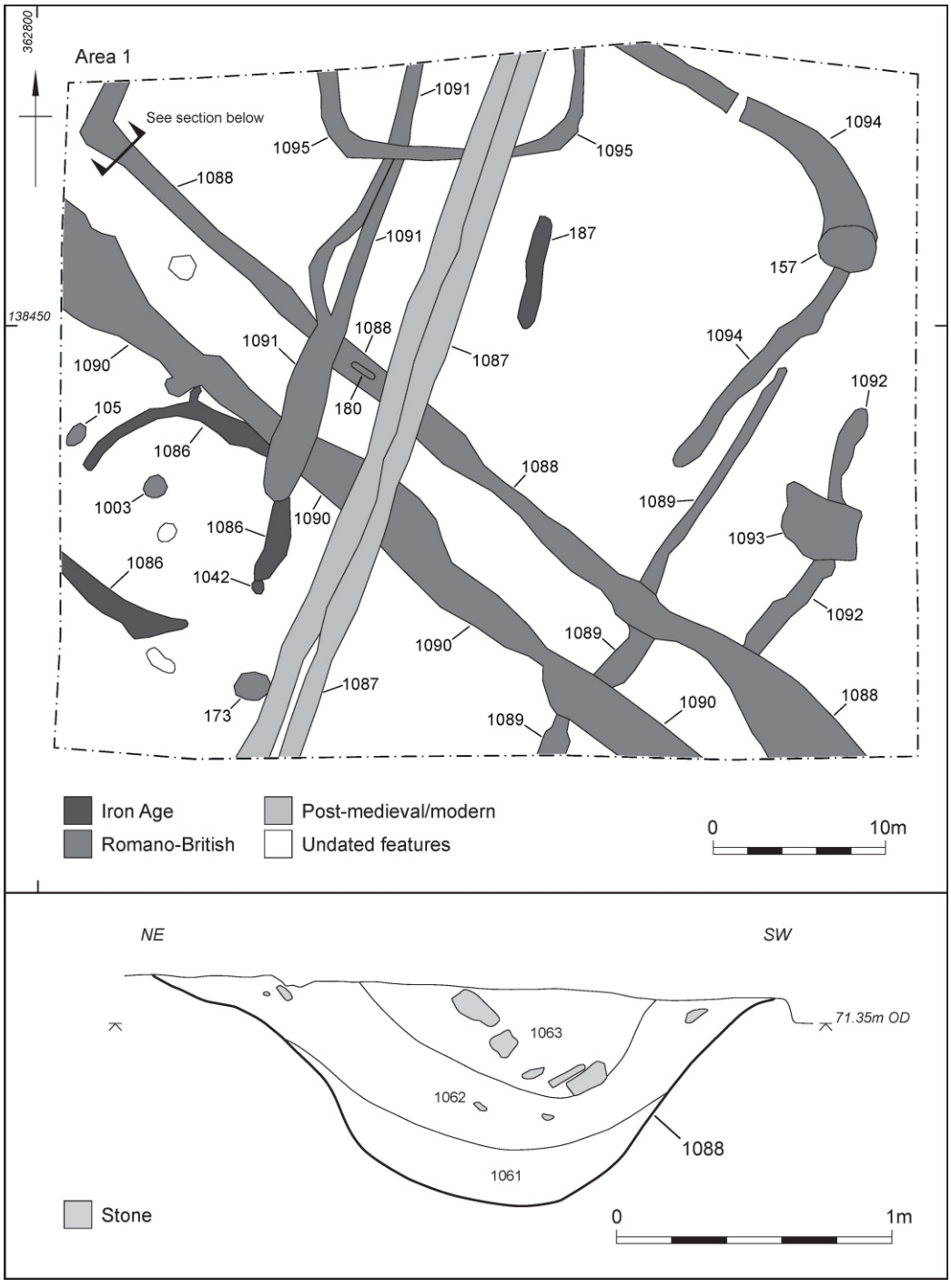

Figure 2. Plan of Area 1 and north-west facing section through ditch 1088

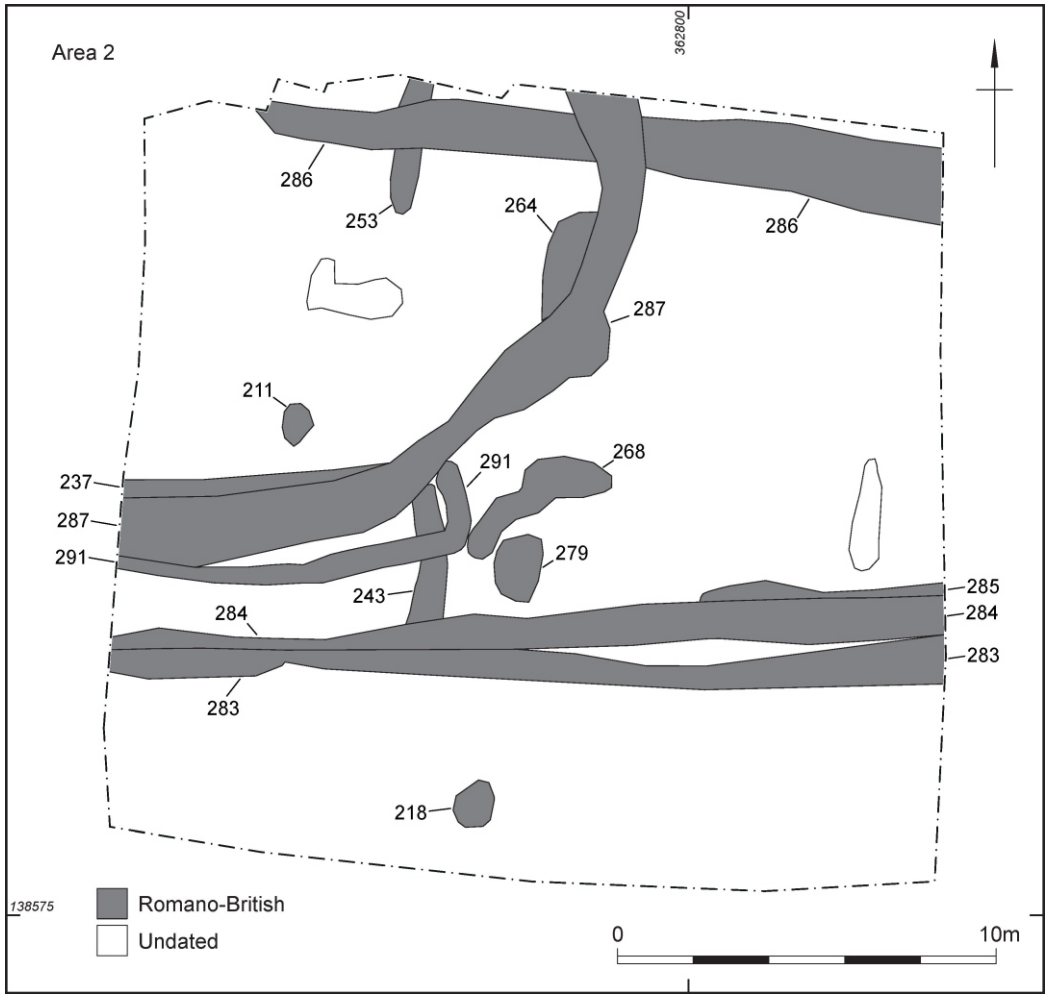

Figure 3. Plan of Area 2

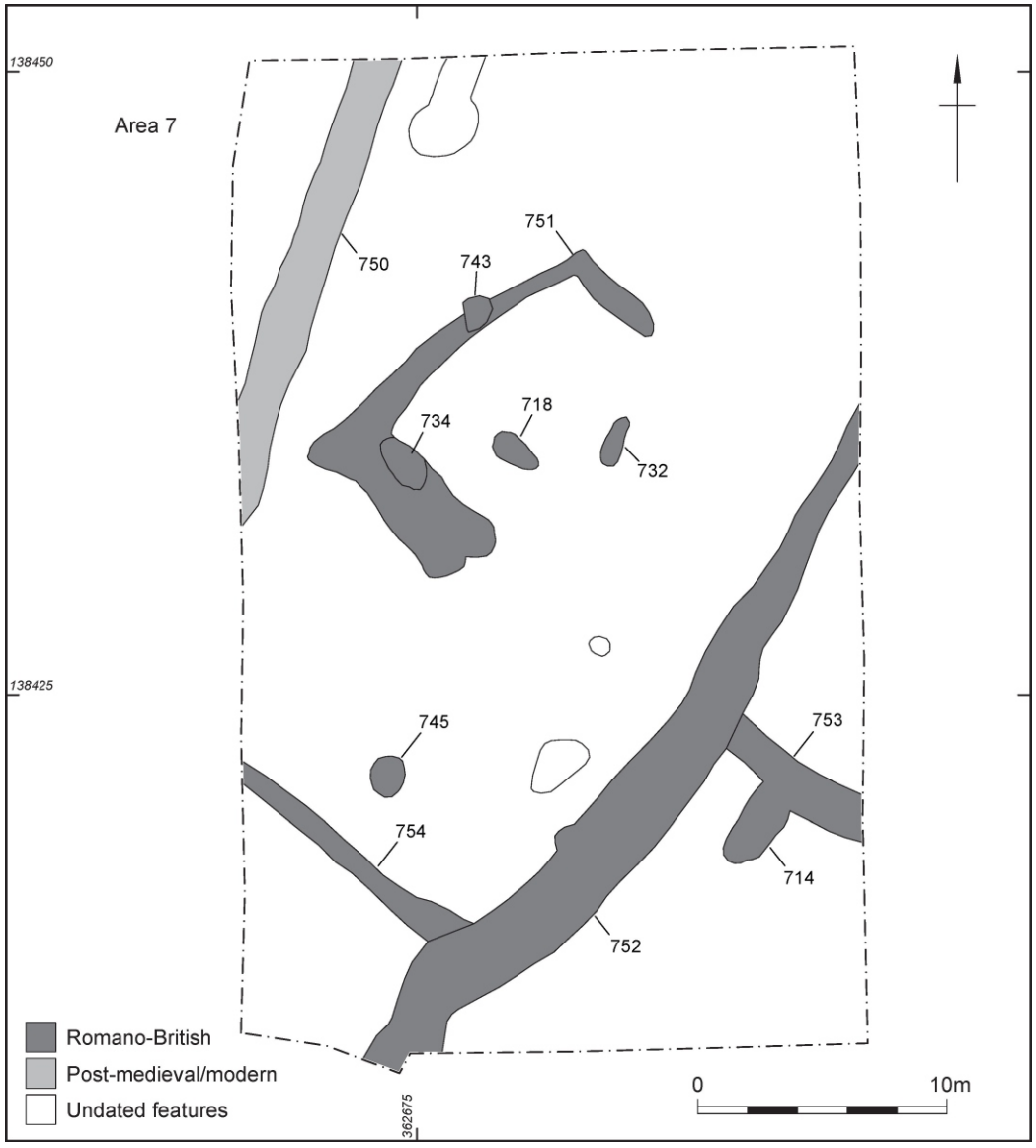

Figure 4. Plan of Area 7

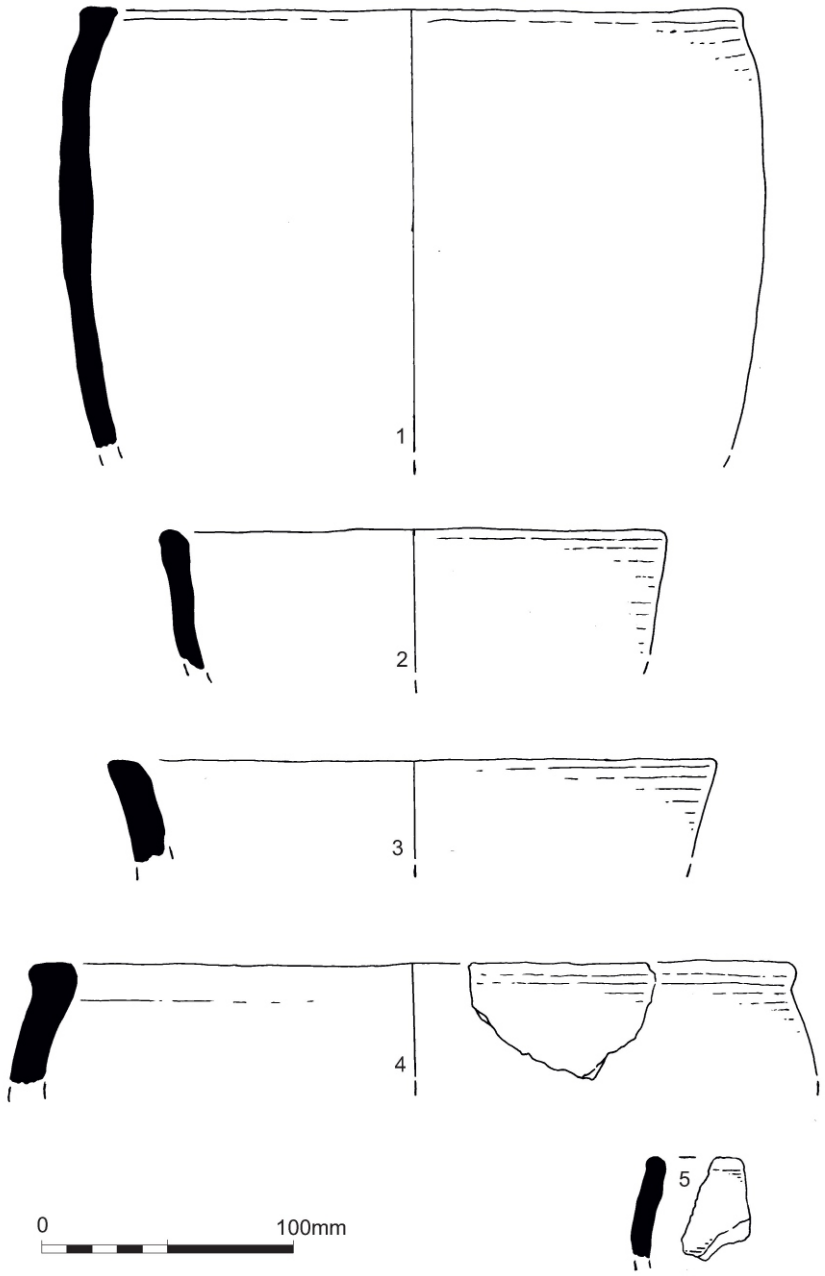

Figure 5. Late prehistoric pottery (nos 1−5)

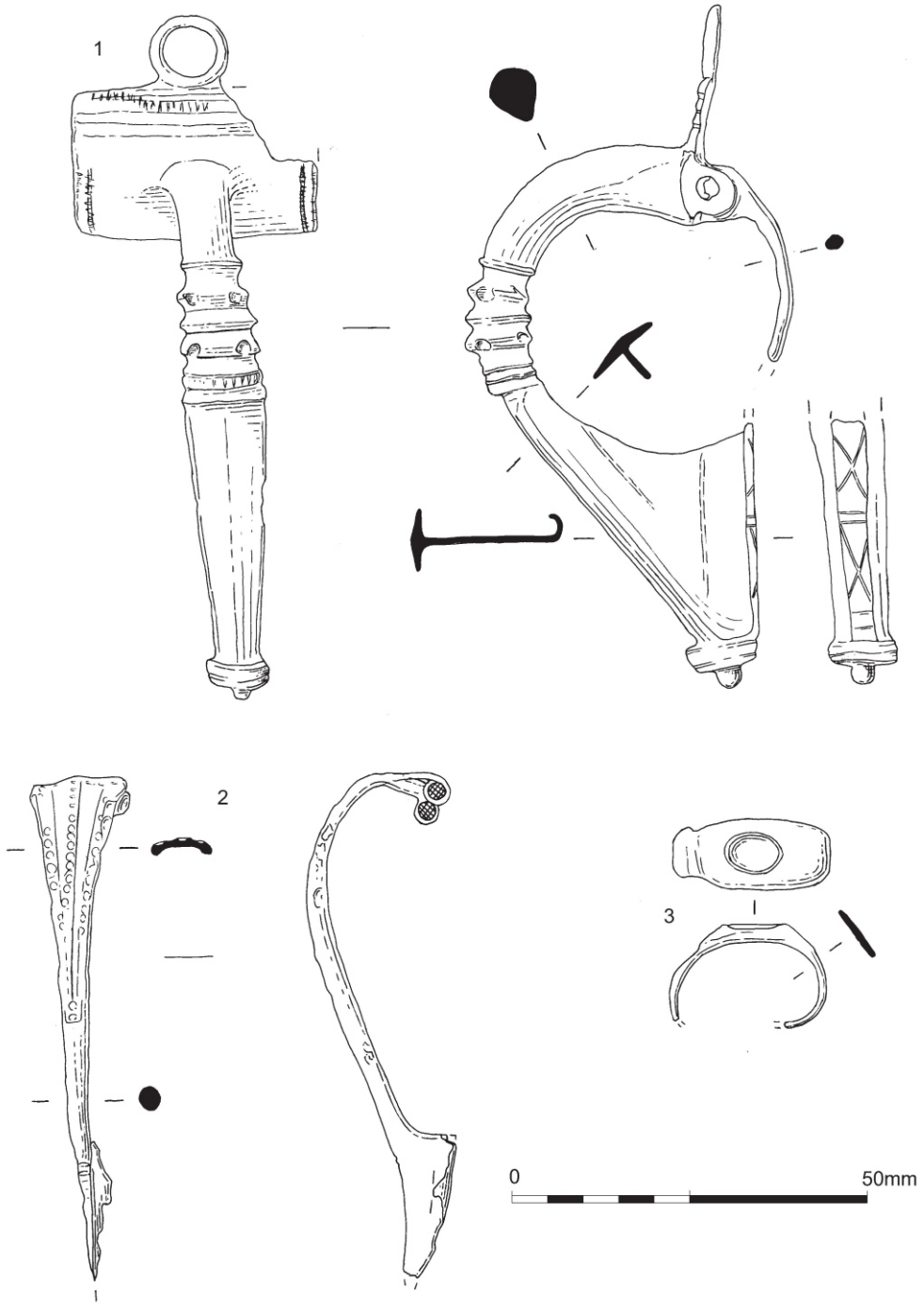

Figure 6. Copper alloy objects (nos 1−3)

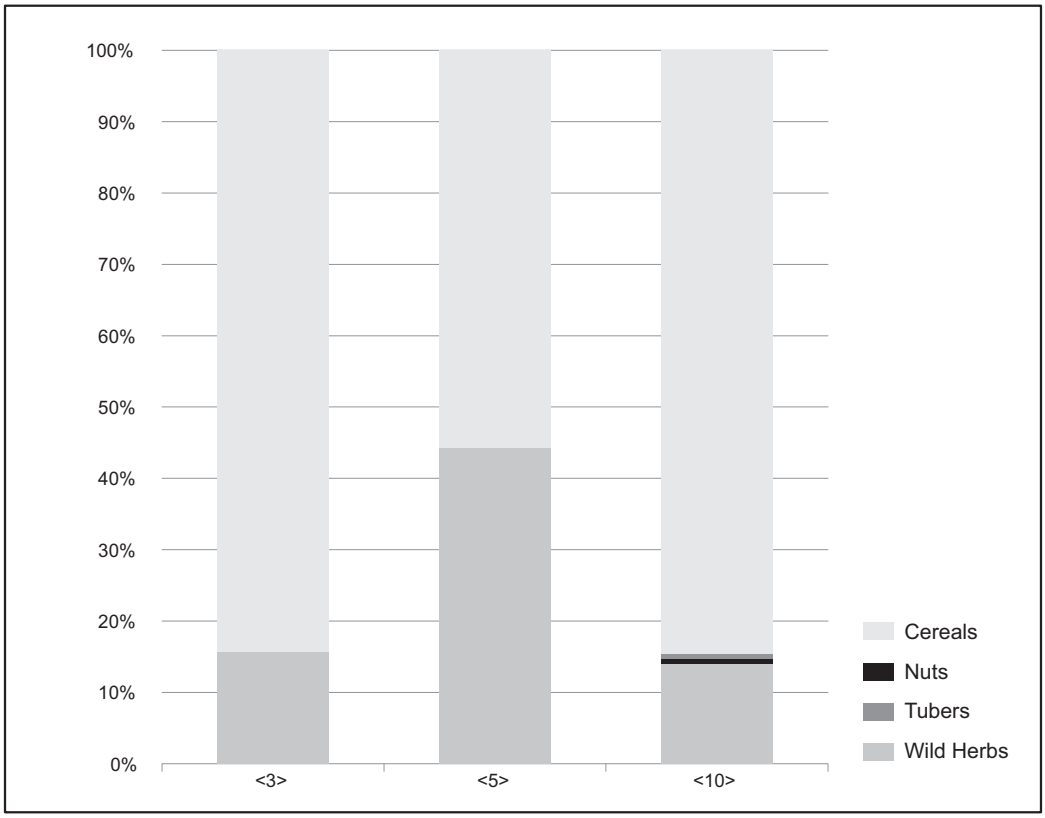

Figure 7. Charred plant remains (nos = MNI per category)

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