

**An archaeological excavation at
Birch Pit, Stage 3 western extension,
Maldon Road, Birch, Colchester, Essex
July-August 2007**

**report prepared by
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**on behalf of
Hanson Aggregates**



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1 Summary

An archaeological excavation was carried out at Birch Pit in 2007 on behalf of Hanson Aggregates. This was due to the expansion of the extraction area on the western side of the quarry-pit. The site is located immediately to the east of Palmer's Farm and to the north of Maldon Road, Birch, near Colchester, Essex. The archaeological work consisted of an excavation adjacent to the north and west sides of areas previously excavated by the Colchester Archaeological Trust in 2004 and 2005-6 (CAT Report 383). The 2007 excavation took place in two areas (Areas D and E), divided by the line of a temporary quarry road excavated in 2004. The 2007 excavation included part of an area showing a surface spread of Roman finds denoting a Roman settlement (CAT Report 8).

A few Late Bronze Age features were revealed. These included a large pit, possibly a waterhole, which yielded a substantial group of Late Bronze Age pottery.

The most intensive period of occupation recorded on the 2007 site is Late Iron Age and Roman. The area of the Late Iron Age and Roman settlement is more extensive than the areas that have been excavated here altogether. Features of this period extend beyond the north edge of the 2007 excavation site and the recorded spread of surface finds extends further to the west. Most of the features exposed were ditches forming enclosures, one of which had a ditched track or driveway on the west side. These features indicate stock management, probably primarily of cattle. Apart from two large pits, dated to the mid to late Roman period, most of the remaining features which can be attributed to this period consist of pits, and small pits or post-holes. No definite buildings were revealed by any of the excavations.

The medieval and post-medieval period saw the establishment of a field system of fields with ditched tracks or driveways, probably associated primarily with sheep farming. There is little evidence of occupation in this area during this period, although a few pits of post-medieval date probably indicate settlement close to the north-eastern part of the excavated area Area D. In the modern period, this field system was replaced by one of ditches forming arable fields.

The overall orientation of the post-Roman and modern field system, as represented by ditches, is similar to the orientation of the land divisions of the Roman period. While there is no direct continuity of features, this suggests a continuity in the overall orientation and arrangement of the field system.

2 Introduction

This report covers an excavation carried out at Birch Pit in 2007 on behalf of Hanson Aggregates by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) between 4th July and 8th August. The requirement for the archaeological work was prompted by an extension to the extraction area on the west of the existing quarry-pit. This new extension is referred to as the 'Stage 3 western extension'. This area is centred to the east of Palmer's Farm and to the north of Maldon Road (B1022) at NGR TL 925 192. Birch Pit is located about 6 km south-west of Colchester (Figs 1-2).

The 2007 archaeological work consisted of an excavation on 1.4 hectares of land, previously arable farmland, situated on and around the 40 m contour. The site is located immediately to the west and north of areas excavated in 2004 and 2005-6. The previous excavations were divided into three areas, ie Areas A, B and C (CAT Report 383, 2), and thus the 2007 site was allocated Area D and Area E (Fig 3). The 2007 fieldwork was carried out in parts of two adjacent fields immediately to the east and north-east of Palmer's Farm. This area is known to be the site of a small Roman rural settlement, presumably a farm, which was initially identified during a programme of fieldwalking by CAT in 1992, in advance of the anticipated expansion of the quarry (CAT Report 8).

This report mirrors standards and practices contained in the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological excavation* (IFA 2001a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (IFA 2001b), and Colchester Borough Council's *Guidelines on standards and practices for archaeological fieldwork in the Borough of Colchester* (CM 2002) and *Guidelines on the preparation and transfer of*

archaeological archives to Colchester Museums (CM 2003). Other sources used are *Management of archaeological projects* (MAP 2), and *Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 1. Resource assessment* (EAA 3), *Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy* (EAA 8), and *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14).

3 Archaeological background

3.1 Archaeology

Except for cropmark plots taken from aerial photographs, little was known of the archaeology of the area immediately surrounding Birch Pit prior to the 1990s. A flint scatter dated as Neolithic, but which also included two early Mesolithic microliths, was known about 2 km to the east of the site (Spencer & Dennis 1988). However, most of the knowledge of the archaeology of the area has come from work carried out in advance of expansion of the quarry since the early 1990s. Prior to this expansion programme, an environmental impact assessment was carried out, the archaeological component of which was undertaken by CAT in 1992 (CAT Report 8, appendix).

Aerial photographs show a large number of undated cropmarks resulting from pre-modern activity beyond the north boundary of Birch Pit. There is an extensive cropmark complex some 0.8 km to the north-west (EHER nos 11548, 11577, 11582), indicating a large sub-rectangular enclosure, associated tracks or droveways and a system of fields (EHER no 11924). Close to these sites, but within the boundaries of the permissible northern quarrying area, there are several smaller cropmark sites (CAT Report 8, appendix).

Of the archaeology identified during the 1992 assessment, the most tangible and significant remains were two areas with a surface scatter of Roman finds, both located to the north-east of Palmer's Farm (CAT Report 8, appendix). A small quantity of medieval pottery was also recovered close to the southern scatter, just north-east of Palmer's Farm. Further work undertaken by CAT in 1997 on the southern scatter identified three small clusters of Roman finds within it; together with another distinct, but more diffuse, area of Roman finds material (CAT Report 8, 4 and fig 2). In 1998, geophysical survey and trial-trenching were undertaken within the area of the southern scatter, targeting these clusters and the area of more diffuse finds. This revealed a number of features, surviving below the ploughsoil, which contained finds of Roman date (CAT Report 23).

Other archaeological work, including excavation and recording, has been undertaken by CAT at various locations in response to the expansion of the quarry extraction area (Fig 1). In 1995, a small oven of Roman date was excavated on the east side of the quarry close to Brake's Farm (NGR TL 9333 2002; CAT excavation 1995 on Fig 1; CAT archive 6/95b). In 2001, evaluation trenching was undertaken by CAT in advance of a northern extension to the quarry (not shown on Fig 1). This revealed features of Bronze Age and Roman date (CAT Report 141). Following these results, an archaeological excavation was carried out in 2003 in part of the evaluation site. This revealed a Bronze Age cemetery, consisting of three ring-ditches associated with sixteen urned and unurned cremation burials, and part of a Roman field system (CAT excavation 2003 on Fig 1; CAT Report 289). In 2005, a watching brief and limited excavation at the Birch airfield compost site (at the former Birch airfield) revealed features of Late Iron Age or early Roman, and Roman date (CAT Report 326; CAT excavation 2005 on Fig 1). In 2004 and again in 2005-6, a watching brief followed by excavation was undertaken prior to extensions to the western side of the quarry (Figs 2-3; CAT Report 383). This work revealed features of prehistoric, Roman and post-medieval date. The main period of activity was during the Late Iron Age/early Roman and Roman period. No traces of remains of buildings were found within the excavated areas, but the remains of ditches revealed enclosures divided by tracks or droveways. An oven was situated within the area of one enclosure, and there was a small number of cremation burials situated to the east of the enclosures. There were also a few features dated to the Late Bronze

Age, and a small number of features of post-medieval and modern date, including some of early post-medieval date containing pottery dated c late 16th-early 17th century.

3.2 Disturbances to the archaeology caused by the construction of Birch airfield

During the course of the excavation of Area D, it was discovered that a thin layer of natural, about 100 mm thick, had been redeposited on top of the natural in the north-western part of this area (Fig 2a). The redeposited material had not been removed during the initial machining as it was indistinguishable from the undisturbed natural. The true character of the material became apparent when a number of Late Iron Age and Roman ditches on the west side of Area D were investigated. These features, as revealed by their fill at the level of the excavation surface, appeared to stop abruptly about 20 m short of the north edge of the excavation.

The surface of the redeposited natural here, and parts of the undisturbed natural beyond its edge, were heavily scored by numerous wheel-ruts, and in places there were areas of fragmented concrete. It appears that this activity relates to the demolition of part of the former Birch airfield, which was built in the early 1940s, some time after WW2 (Figs 1-2). During construction, the whole of this part of the site must have been stripped of topsoil and probably part of the natural, too. Soon after, heavy machinery must have spread stripped natural back on top of the exposed area, masking the archaeological features.

This has implications for previous archaeological work at the site. The scatter of Roman surface finds identified by fieldwalking in 1992 and 1997 did not extend over this disturbed area (Fig 2). However, as Roman features are present here, it seems extremely likely that any scatter of finds in the topsoil here has been entirely removed. The extent of the recorded surface scatter of Roman finds in this particular part of the site, therefore, does not necessarily reflect the extent of the Roman occupation. How far this disturbance extends to the north and west of Area D is not known, but it probably approximates to the works on this southern part of the airfield (Fig 2). A post-medieval ditch (2004 F40), recorded during soil-stripping for the placement of bunds in 2004, was seen to be sealed by redeposited natural (CAT Report 383, fig 2). Seen in the light of the disturbance in the northern part of Area D, the redeposited natural on top of F40 probably results from the same airfield construction work. Ditch F40 is over 100 m west of the recorded disturbance in Area D.

4 Aim

In general terms, the aim of the archaeological fieldwork was to identify, explore and record any significant archaeological features or remains which were threatened by destruction either from extraction or damage from associated quarry works activities.

5 Methods

The work followed a brief (Connell 2004) supplied by P Connell of the Essex County Council (ECC) Historic Environment Management (HEM) team, who also monitored the work. Site work was carried out by professional archaeologists from CAT.

Initially the site was mechanically stripped of topsoil by Hanson Aggregates and the resultant surface inspected during visits by a CAT archaeologist. This identified significant archaeological features in the extension area, concentrated in the northern part of the site (Area D). The whole of Area D and the northern part of Area E were then re-machined, using a mechanical 360° excavator with a toothless ditching bucket, under the supervision and control of a CAT archaeologist.

During the following excavation, records of excavated contexts, layers, features or deposits were entered on pro-forma record sheets. All features, layers or other significant deposits were planned and their profiles or sections recorded. The normal scale of site plans were at 1:20 and sections at 1:10 (illustrated sections Figs 7-13), unless circumstances dictated that other scales were appropriate. The photographic

record consisted of general site shots, and shots of all archaeological features and deposits. Standard recording shots of contexts were taken with a digital camera using a scale and north arrow. A metal detector was used to retrieve objects from the spoil heaps.

6 Site phasing and results

6.1 Introduction

Previous excavation in 2004 and 2005-6 established a framework of site phasing applicable to the information recovered from the features excavated in Areas A, B and C (CAT Report 383, 5-6). The framework of this phasing has been retained. There are some differences between the phasing for Period 2 due to the recognition of a Late Iron Age phase, and the blurring of the distinction between the early-mid and mid-late Roman periods. Also, Period 3 has been divided into two phases. The 2004 and 2005-6 phasing, and the 2007 phasing, are set out together in Table 1 below.

The 2007 excavation recorded 131 separate features, numbered from F135 onwards. These can be divided between three periods. This division is based primarily on the dating of pottery, and relationships, both physical and spatial, between the features. In terms of the dated features (Table 7 in Appendix), there appears to be a clear gap in the occupation on the site between that represented in each of the three archaeological periods, so that each can be treated as independent of one another. However, small quantities of finds indicate continued occupation close by, or sporadic visits to the site, during some of the apparent gaps in occupation. Also it should be noted that, while there is no direct continuity, in general the orientation of the ditches of the field system, which was established in the period of the Late Iron Age and early Roman period, was also followed in the medieval to post-medieval periods and into the modern landscape.

Period 1: prehistoric

This covers the whole of the prehistoric period up to the Late Iron Age 'Belgic' period. Pottery and worked flints from the site can be dated to the Late Bronze Age (*c* 1,000 to 800 BC). Some residual pottery, probably of Early Iron Age date (*c* 700-300 BC) and some residual pottery dated to the Middle Iron Age (*c* 800-50 BC) was also recovered from later features.

Period 2: Late Iron Age and Roman

Period 2 spans the Late Iron Age 'Belgic' period (*c* 50 BC to AD 43) and the Roman period (AD 43 to *c* AD 410). The spatial relationships between the features and dated pottery from them suggest that this period can be divided into three phases. There is little other close dating material such as metalwork from the site, although one late Roman coin was recovered (section 7.1).

Period 2 phases:

Phase 1a – Late Iron Age-early Roman

Phase 1b – early-mid Roman

Phase 2 – mid-late Roman

While this broadly corresponds to the phasing of the earlier 2004 and 2005-6 excavations (CAT Report 383, 5-6), the beginning of the settlement now includes a distinct Late Iron Age-early Roman phase (Phase 1a). The correspondence between the phasing of the excavations for 2004 and 2005-6, and that for 2007, is set out in Table 1 below.

Overall the phasing of the ditches and the phasing of contexts containing late Roman finds are probably the most secure. In relation to the ditches, this is because they generally have both physical relationships and spatial relationships that often involve alignments with other features. Also, as large features they generally produce significant quantities of datable material, usually pottery, from their fills. Features producing late Roman finds are also probably reasonably securely phased.

This is because, given the lack of evidence for permanent settlement on the site in the post-Roman period, by dating from the latest Roman phase this excludes the problem of dating based on residual material. However, due to the settling of their fills, material could accumulate in the top of features long after their abandonment. Features with just a few sherds of pottery, or ones that rely on spatial position alone, are the least securely phased. These include a number of small pit or post-hole features, some of which contained small quantities of Roman pottery. Most of these probably date from Period 2, given that few features can be attributed to Period 1 and the lack of permanent post-Roman settlement on the site.

Period 3: post-Roman (early medieval to modern)

The features assigned to this period are mostly ditches. Many of these are difficult to date. Finds, other than residual prehistoric and Roman material, are generally few, and often not closely datable other than as post-medieval or modern. Some features are assigned to this period based on a similar appearance and alignment to another feature dated to Period 3. The features identified as belonging to this period include a single ditch dated to the late medieval period (15th-16th century), ten features dated as post-medieval, and four features that can be dated as modern.

It appears that the Period 3 features can be divided into two phases based primarily on their spatial layout. This, in part, also corresponds to a division between ditches or boundaries that were extant when the excavations began in 2004 and those which were no longer part of the modern landscape.

Period 3 phases:

Phase 1 – early medieval to post-medieval

Phase 2 – post-medieval to modern

Table 1: concordance of the site phasing of the 2004 and 2005-6 excavations and the 2007 excavation.

2004 and 2005-6 excavations site phasing		2007 excavation site phasing	
Period 1	prehistoric	Period 1	prehistoric
Period 2	Late Iron Age and Roman	Period 2	Late Iron Age and Roman
Phase 1a	early Roman	- Phase 1a	Late Iron Age-early Roman
		- Phase 1b	early-mid Roman
Phase 1b	mid Roman		
Phase 2	late Roman	- Phase 2	mid-late Roman
Period 3	post-Roman	Period 3	post-Roman
		- Phase 1	medieval to post-medieval
		- Phase 2	post-medieval to modern

6.2 Period 1: prehistoric (Figs 2a & 3)

Two pits, one of which was a substantial feature, can be dated to the Late Bronze Age. A few other small pits or post-holes may also be prehistoric and of similar date. There is also a small quantity of pottery dated as Early and Middle Iron Age, all of which was residual in later-dated features. The distribution of the prehistoric pottery was plotted to see if it showed any concentration that might indicate a settlement focus (Fig 5).

The most significant of the prehistoric features are two pits (F233, F238) located in the south-western part of Area D.

F233 was a very shallow pit, about 1.5 m long but only about 90 mm deep, containing a fill of grey stony silt with inclusions of charcoal. The south edge of this feature was cut by the Period 2 ditch F148. Despite being so shallow, this pit produced just over 400g of prehistoric pottery and dated to the Late Bronze Age. A

single spelt glume base was recovered from amongst burnt material sampled from the fill (section 7.8). Two pieces of worked flint were recovered from the fill, one of which was a retouched piece which traditionally is dated to the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age (section 7.2). It was noted that the charcoal fragments in samples from the pit were very abraded, possibly indicating a long exposure prior to burial (section 7.8).

F238 was a large pit, about 2.9 m wide and 1.7 m deep, with steeply sloping sides and a flat base. It was cut on its east side by the Period 2 ditch F222. The fill of F238 consisted of layers of grey silt and some clay-silt with patchy orange clay. These layers were flecked with charcoal, with some patches of iron-stone and some stones. The pit yielded a considerable quantity of pottery, weighing just over 4 kg, and dated to the Late Bronze Age, c 1,000-800 BC. This pottery can possibly be dated to the early part of the Late Bronze Age, c 1,000-900 BC (section 7.3). As a large Late Bronze Age group, this pottery is of some significance. Among three worked flints recovered from the fill was one retouched piece which traditionally is dated as Late Bronze Age and Iron Age (section 7.2). No bone was recovered from the feature, although it should be noted that very little bone was recovered from the site generally, due to the adverse conditions of the soil for preservation. The only other finds recorded from the pit were pieces of fired clay and two intrusive iron nails (section 7.1). The fired clay consisted of five fragments, one with a wattle void and another identified as a possible loomweight fragment on the basis of its fabric.

The function of the pit F238 is not clear. The quantity and condition of the pottery recovered from the fill suggests that the feature was either within or immediately adjacent to a Late Bronze Age settlement. Small pieces of structural daub, together with a possible fragment of loomweight or daub, may be associated with the pit. However, the quantity of this fired clay is very small, and these finds could be intrusive, possibly from F222, especially given that an iron nail and nail fragment are recorded from the upper-mid fill (section 7.1). There is also one piece of burnt flint from the fill and a fragment of crystalline sandstone (section 7.10). One possibility is that it was a quarry-pit, although it is possible that it may have functioned as a waterhole. A number of similar features that are identified as waterholes, associated with Middle Bronze Age sites, have been excavated at Stansted Airport (Cooke *et al* 2008, 38-79 and 49-52). The only material identified in samples of the fill was charcoal fragments. As with F233, it was noted that the charcoal fragments in these samples were very abraded, possibly indicating a long exposure prior to burial; they were also heavily coated with mineral concretions (section 7.8). This could indicate that material in the fill had accumulated over some time, either in the pit itself or perhaps as part of a midden elsewhere which was later used to fill the pit. The presence of a few partial pottery vessels in the pit, and others represented by a significant part of the pot found together as sherds, indicates that these were disposed of and covered over soon after breakage (section 7.3), probably in the pit, although they could have ended up in the pit as partial pots from a midden elsewhere. The absence of carbonised cereals or processing waste from the fill might reflect a livestock-orientated economy, although at least some cereals were present as on the site in the Late Bronze Age, demonstrated by the carbonised spelt glume base from the pit F233 (above). Bone recovered from the site is generally in very poor condition (section 7.7) and might not have survived here. However, with the exception of the pottery, there is a near absence of any other cultural material that can be securely associated with the pit fill.

Close to F238, to the west and south-west, were three small pits or possibly post-holes, which may also be of Late Bronze Age date. One of these features (F264) contained flint-tempered prehistoric sherds; these could be Bronze Age or possibly Early Iron Age in date, but cannot be closely dated. F237 did not contain any finds. It is conceivable that the ditch F232 could also be of Late Bronze Age date as the only finds recovered from it were prehistoric flint-tempered pottery sherds. However, some of these sherds are recorded as abraded, and the spatial relationship of F232 to other features dated to Period 2 indicate quite strongly that it is of Late Iron Age or early Roman date.

Away from this possible concentration of features in the south-western part of Area D, there are three other features which could belong to Period 1, ie F244, F256

and F258. F244 was a small pit or post-hole on the central eastern side of Area D. It was 0.43 m wide and 0.15 m deep, and filled with a grey-brown silty-clay flecked with charcoal. It produced two sherds of flint-tempered prehistoric pottery, one of which, with a finger-wiped surface, is possibly Late Bronze Age. This feature was cut by the Period 2 pit F198. F256 and F258 are also small pits or post-holes located towards the northern part of Area D. F256 was 0.31 m wide and 0.1 m deep and contained grey-brown silt. F258 was 0.37 m wide and 0.09 m deep and filled with grey-brown silt, the upper part or fill being flecked with charcoal. No finds were recovered from F258. F256 contained flint-tempered pottery, which cannot be closely dated but is possibly of Late Bronze Age to Early or Middle Iron Age date.

6.3 Period 2: Late Iron Age and Roman (Figs 2a-2c, 3 & 4a-4b)

6.3.1 The Late Iron Age and Roman settlement

The main area of Late Iron Age and Roman activity excavated in 2007 is defined by a concentration of features within the central and western parts of Area D. This lies within a known surface scatter of Roman finds recorded during fieldwalking in 1992 (CAT Report 8). The scatter extends further to the west beyond Area D (Fig 2). However, no Roman features were recorded close to the west edge of Area D, so that the main part of the Roman settlement probably does not extend beyond this area. The Roman surface scatter did not extend to Area E. Except for the northern part of Area E, no Roman features were recorded in that area, so that the main part of the Roman settlement must lie elsewhere. Although the Roman features clearly extend into the area north of Area D, the surface scatter of Roman finds is absent there. For a probable explanation of this, see section 3.2.

6.3.2 Phase 1a: Late Iron Age-early Roman (Figs 3 & 4a)

The main feature of this phase is a large enclosure (Enclosure 1), parts of the west and south sides of which were defined by ditches in Area D. Originally there was an entrance on the west side of the enclosure. There was also a broad entrance at the south-east corner, located in Area A (CAT Report 383, fig 4a). To the west of the enclosure, some shallow lengths of ditch probably represent a track or droveway on that side (west track or droveway 1), and two further ditches could represent part of a field or another enclosure.

The west and south sides of Enclosure 1 were defined by the ditches F235/F252 and F250 on the west, and F148 to the south. The location of the east side of the enclosure in this phase is not certain, but it is probably coincident with one of the ditches of an east track or droveway excavated in 2005-6 (CAT Report 383, 28). The surviving parts of the ditches F235/F252 and F250 were about 0.5 m to 0.6 m deep. They were filled predominantly with a mottled grey and yellowy-brown clayed-silt, with yellow-brown clay at the base. The deepest surviving part of F148 was about 0.6 m deep. This ditch had an upper fill of dark brown clay-silt and a lower fill of stony dark brown clay-silt. The stone in the fill comes from the gravel natural in this area through which it had been cut. There was an entrance, about 2 m across, on the west side of the enclosure between the ditches F235/F252 and F250. This entrance, and two others between ditches excavated in 2005-6 (CAT Report 383, fig 4a) form a line across the site and together indicate the path of an east-west (south-west to north-east) track. This feature can be defined as a track rather than a droveway as there were no side ditches to prevent animals wandering off it. No surfacing was found associated with this track and its path can only be traced by the gaps left for its passage through the ditches. There was also a broad entrance at the south-east corner. The nature of this entrance in Phase 1a is not clear as the position of the east side of Enclosure 1 is not known in this phase. It appears to have been a broad opening through the ditch, forming a dog-leg or L-shaped entrance in conjunction with a small ditch, to the south, possibly F92 (CAT Report 383, fig 4a).

In the previous excavations of 2004 and 2005-6, no specific Late Iron Age features were identified, although residual finds of clay loomweights and grog-tempered pottery found within features dated to the Roman period suggested a Late Iron Age phase of settlement (CAT Report 383, 28). However, in Area D, pottery finds from the ditches F148, F235/F252 and F250 consist almost entirely of Late Iron

Age grog-tempered ware, including a number of partial pots. There are just a few small sherds dated as Roman. In F235/F252 and F250, these Roman sherds are almost certainly intrusive or accidental inclusions. They may derive either from contamination during excavation or they could have been introduced when the Phase 1b ditches were cut along the existing enclosure ditches here. In F148, Roman sherds are recorded only from the upper fill of the ditch.

It is probable that the ditches F220 and F232 are part of this phase. The ditch F220 was about 0.2 m deep with two fills; an upper slightly stony grey-brown silt and a lower mottled grey-brown silt. F232 was also about 0.2 m deep and filled with a grey silt. No pottery was recovered from F220, and only prehistoric pottery was recovered from F232. However, F220 appears to be clearly associated with the enclosure. The absence of pottery recovered from its fill probably reflects its position outside the enclosure away from the probable focus of settlement. This is probably also the case with the ditch F232. The prehistoric pottery from the fill of F232 was recovered from its east end. This pottery, some of which was abraded, is probably residual from the Late Bronze Age activity here associated with the large pit F238. These two ditches could have formed part of a second enclosure in this phase on the west side of the existing enclosure.

The ditches on the west side of the enclosure were replaced by the ditch F242/F247, cut along their west side. The existing enclosure ditches had silted to at least the level of the excavation surface when this new ditch was cut. This new ditch also cut across the site of the entrance to the enclosure, putting that entrance out of use. Pottery recovered from this ditch consists predominantly of Late Iron Age grog-tempered ware, with a probable Gallo-Belgic import, sherds of Romanising coarse ware and Roman pottery fabrics. The blocking of the earlier enclosure entrance appears to mark a significant change to the enclosure, possibly associated with the creation of the track or droveway on its west side.

To the west of the enclosure were three lengths of small ditch, ie F224, F236 and F246. F224 was cut by the ditch F222, and probably by F223. The very small quantity of dating evidence associated with these ditches are a few sherds of Late Iron Age or early Roman pottery and Roman pottery. It is possible that these ditches were parts of a single, slightly curving ditch forming one side of the ditched track or droveway on the west side of Enclosure 1. The other side of this track or droveway would have been formed by the ditches F242/247 and the ditch F220. The way in which the south end of the ditches bends slightly to east (F236, F224) could be seen to mirror the way in which the ditch F220 is set back from the line of the west side of Enclosure 1. This would maintain a space of about 6 m to 6.5 m wide between these ditches (F236, F224) and the ditches of the enclosure together with the ditch F220. The blocking of the entrance to the existing enclosure (by the digging of the ditch F242/F247) could also be connected with the creation of a track or droveway here as it would seal this exit between the track or droveway and the enclosure. However, it is also possible that these ditches are part of the east side of a second enclosure to the west of the existing enclosure. If so, then this ditch (F236/F246/F224) would then join with the ditch F232. The relationship of these features to one another was destroyed by the confluence of later ditches in this area. These two interpretations are not mutually exclusive, as the creation of a second enclosure so close to the west would automatically create a track running in-between them. No surfacing was found associated with this track or droveway.

Just over 10 m to the south of F232, and parallel to it, was another ditch (F265). This could only be traced for a short length as this part of the site had been disturbed by wheel-ruts caused by heavy machinery crossing the area (section 6.3). A few sherds of Late Iron Age and early Roman pottery were recovered from the fill.

6.3.3 Phase 1b: early-mid Roman (Figs 3 & 4b)

In this phase, the probable earlier track or droveway on the west side of Enclosure 1 was laid out as a more regular feature with straight parallel ditches on either side (west track or droveway 2). The east ditch of this track or droveway was cut into the west side of the enclosure ditch along the whole of its exposed length. The track or droveway extended south of the site of Enclosure 1, probably to meet the Phase 1a ditch F232, although the relationship between them has been destroyed by the

confluence of later ditches in this area. It should be noted that there was a similar track or driveway on the east side of the site of Enclosure 1. This feature was recorded during the earlier excavations of 2004 and 2005-6 (CAT Report 383, fig 4a) and the ditches of this feature were again recorded in the north-eastern part of Area D.

The east ditch of the track or driveway on the west side of Enclosure 1 was defined by the line of two lengths of ditch on the east side (F221, F241) and probably by the ditch F223 on the west. The Phase 1a enclosure ditch F242/F247 was filled at least to the level of the excavation surface when F221 was dug. If the edges of the ditches forming the track or driveway were projected up to the approximate height of the modern ground-level, then the width of the area between them would probably be a little over 2 m. No surfacing associated with the track or driveway was found. The surviving portions of the track or driveway ditches are between 0.75 m and 1.2 m wide and between 0.2 m and 0.46 m deep, although the length of ditch F241 was slightly larger at about 1.7 m wide by 0.5 m deep. These ditches were generally filled with grey-coloured clayed-silt or yellow-brown silty-clay. However, in some sections of F221 there were considerable quantities of charcoal which stained the fill a dark grey. Carbonised material from part of this deposit included what appear to be distorted fragments of large pulse (*Fabaceae*) seeds (section 7.8). A number of Roman partial pottery vessels were also recovered from this ditch (section 7.4), and many of these lay in the charcoal-rich parts of the fill. Most of the more closely-datable pottery from the ditch F221 is 1st-early 2nd century, and much can be dated to the pre-Flavian period (*c* AD 43-69). While the length of ditch F241 also contained early Roman pottery, pottery dating to the mid Roman period (*c* 2nd-3rd century) was also recovered from its middle and upper fills. The reason for this is not clear as the lengths of ditch recorded as F221 and F241 appear without question to be parts of the same ditch. However, these two lengths of ditch were given separate feature numbers and recorded separately, because they lay to the north and south of a ditch F191, orientated north-east to south-west. This ditch also contained some pottery dating to the 2nd and 3rd century, and it seems possible that, through the presence of later-dated pottery, F241 and F191 are in some way related, although no recut was recorded in the fill of F241.

Little dating evidence was recovered from the ditch F223. There was just one sherd of Roman pottery, probably from a flagon, which, while broadly of 1st- to 2nd-/early 3rd-century date, might be imported and could possibly date to the pre-Flavian period. The ditch F223 was cut for most of its length by a later, Period 1c ditch (F222).

In the north-eastern part of Area D was a pair of ditches F143 and F144 defining part of a track or driveway on the east side of the site of Enclosure 1 (CAT Report 383, fig 4a, F62 and F63). No surfacing associated with this track or driveway was found. Dating evidence was only recovered from F144. The more closely-dated pottery from this feature is Late Iron Age and early Roman, dated as 1st-early 2nd century. No features that could be dated to the Roman period were located in Area D to the east of this track or driveway.

About 50 m to the south of Enclosure 1, at the north end of Area E, there was a small ditch F136. This ditch appears to mark a significant boundary on the south side of the settlement as almost no Roman features have been located beyond the line of it further to the south. The ditch extended north-east to south-west and was quite shallow as the surviving part was only about 0.6 m wide and 0.14 m deep. A very small quantity of early Roman pottery is directly associated with its fill, although it is possible that some Late Iron Age pottery, recovered while machining the line of the feature close to the west edge of the site, also came from it. The ditch extended further to the east and part of its length was excavated in Area A (CAT Report 383, fig 2a, F130).

In the southern part of Area D was a narrow slot (F205) aligned roughly north-west/south-east. There was a small post-hole or stake hole (F204), at its north end, just to the west of this were what appeared to be a pair of similarly-sized pits or post-holes (F230, F225). These features are not well dated but are possibly of Phase 1b. The more closely-dated pottery from the slot F205 dates from the Late Iron Age and

the early-mid Roman period of the 1st-2nd/3rd century. A sherd from F204 is of 2nd- to 3rd-century date, while a pottery sherd from the pit or post-hole F225 is of Late Iron Age type. However, the position and orientation of the slot F208 suggests that it might be contemporary with what appears to be a line of posts, dated to the late Roman period (Phase 2), just to the east (see below).

In the northern part of Area D there were two small, shallow linear features (F186, F187). The only finds from them were three sherds of Roman pottery, two from F186 and one from F187, one of which is probably of early Roman date. F186 extended beyond the north edge of the site. Its length could be traced for about 12 m, beyond which it had been entirely removed. The surviving part of F187 was very short at only about 3 m. This feature is similar to F186 and was approximately at right-angles to it, although the surviving length was too short to be sure of its exact alignment. It is possible that both of these features are related, and could have met each other, forming a right-angled corner. The heavy disturbance of this area, during the demolition of Birch airfield (section 3.2), means that insufficient of these two features remains to confidently interpret them, and they could conceivably be modern. However, if of Period 2, then they could indicate the site of post-in-trench built screens or walls forming a shelter or possibly a building.

To the east of these, in the north-eastern part of Area D, was a small length of slightly curved ditch or gully (F161). A single sherd of Roman grey ware was recovered from the fill. This feature was shallow and had been truncated to the north. The south end extended below the safety bund around the quarry-pit and could not be investigated. As with F186 and F187, insufficient remained to confidently interpret this feature. If of Period 2 date, then it might possibly represent part of the curving gully of a round-house. The round-house form, though pre-eminently a prehistoric Bronze Age and Iron Age building type, is known to have survived in the Roman period on some sites in Essex (Timby *et al* 2007, 100-111).

In the southern part of Area D, a number of features appear to pre-date an enclosure (Enclosure 2) attributed to Phase 2. A straight slot or gully (F208) appeared possibly to pre-date the ditch F164 (Enclosure 2). However, the fill of these features here was so similar that the relationship between them could not be securely established. Only the south end of this feature could be located; the other was lost in the area of the north ditch (F163) of the enclosure. No finds were recovered from F208. Immediately to the east of F208 were two others which may be connected with it, and which probably pre-date Enclosure 2. These were a pit (F190) and small slot (F203). Only a single sherd of Roman grey ware was recovered from the fill of F190, and, of itself, the feature is not well dated. However, this pit was located in the north-west corner of the Phase 2 enclosure (Enclosure 2), between two of the enclosure ditches (F163 and F164). This is so close to the edge of both the enclosure ditches, especially the north ditch (F163), that it would have been buried underneath any internal bank. The north end of a small undated slot adjacent to this pit on its east side (F203) would also have been covered by an internal enclosure bank. This slot, therefore, also possibly pre-dates Enclosure 2 and may belong to this phase.

In the northern part of Area D there was a large pit (F173), about 2.2 m wide and 1.4 m deep. The lower fills were of stony clayed-silt, while the upper fill consisted of a finer grey clayed-silt which probably represents settlement into the pit. Almost all of the finds came from this upper fill. The latest closely-dated pottery, from the upper fill, is of mid 2nd-century date or later, and some sherds could date as late as the 4th century (Phase 2).

6.3.4 Phase 2: mid-late Roman (Figs 3 & 4b)

During this phase, another ditched enclosure (Enclosure 2) was laid out in the southern part of the main settlement area. Also, it appears that the south and west ditches of the Phase 1 enclosure (Enclosure 1) and the track or driveway on its west side were abandoned and a new enclosure (Enclosure 3) was laid out over that area. To the east of this enclosure (Enclosure 3) there was a short line of posts, two of which can be dated to the late Roman period. These marked the line of a fence, or, possibly, in conjunction with a small slot, part of a small structure or building. Evidence of iron-working, including the bottom of a smithing hearth, was recovered

from two of the enclosure ditches (F163 and F218). There were two large pits; one of these, located in the north-western part of Area D, was very large and possibly had been a quarry-pit. It should be noted that, during this phase, the ditched track or driveway on the east side of the main settlement area was also abandoned (CAT Report 383, 30 and fig 4b).

The latest-dated pottery from the lower ditch fill of Enclosure 2 indicates that it was not constructed before the early-mid 2nd century (CAT Report 383, 8 and table 9, F21). Pottery from the upper fill is of late 3rd- to 4th- or 4th-century date. The enclosure was located in the southern part of Area D and the northern part of Area E within the area of the possible enclosure (Phase 1b) south of Enclosure 1. Three lengths of ditch (F163 and F164 in Area D, and F135 in Area E) formed parts of the north and west sides of the enclosure. These ditches were between about 1.0 and 1.8 m wide and 0.40 and 0.60 m deep. They were filled with a mottled grey clayed-silt. Much of the central and eastern half of this enclosure was excavated in 2004 and 2005-6 in Area A (CAT Report 383, fig 2a). The location of the south edge of the enclosure is not known. As the ditches of the enclosure were not traced beyond the ditch F136 (Phase 1b), it is possible that, when laid out, Enclosure 2 may have incorporated an earlier boundary marked by F136. Certainly the east and west ditches of the enclosure were not traced south of this earlier ditch when they were easily traced to the north of it. However, this is hypothetical, and is not based on any firm evidence. The larger size of the enclosure ditches in relation to F136, and the difference in date between them, may make this unlikely.

There were areas of grey-silt subsoil (F183), a few centimetres thick, on the west side of the enclosure. Prior to machining, this deposit extended beyond Enclosure 2 for some 20 m or so to the west, where, in places, it was up to about 250 mm thick. This was a natural silt deposit which masked features, and most of it had to be machined away. Roman finds of pottery and tile were found incorporated into this silt, presumably through cultivation and worm action. The pottery recovered from this silt deposit includes some 2nd- to 3rd-century types, but is primarily late Roman c mid-late 3rd to 4th century or 4th century, including sherds from Oxford mortaria, Hadham oxidised ware and a Cam 305 flanged bowl.

In the central part of Area D were three lengths of shallow ditch, all on the same alignment and clearly all parts of the same ditch feature. These were, (in order from north to south), F215, F214 and F218. F215 cut the Period 2 ditch F191 and F218 cut the Period 2 ditch F148. The remaining lengths were, in general, so shallow that it was clear that the missing parts had been truncated and removed. Because of this, these lengths of ditch are not well dated. Pottery from them consisted of one Late Iron Age sherd and two sherds of Roman grey ware. They are considered to be Roman based on their apparent association with the ditch F222, to which they are connected by the length of ditch F219. A sherd with flint-temper, possibly Late Roman Rettendon-type ware, was recovered from F219. The fill of F222 contained pottery that can be dated to the late 2nd to mid-late 3rd century. Also, a large storage jar, possibly complete when deposited, had been either dumped as sherds or possibly was smashed, in this part of the ditch (F222 Sx 8 and Sx 9). The area at the south end of F218 and F219 had to be machined heavily as it was obscured by the extensive deposit of natural silt (see F183 above) so that some parts of the ditches here could have been removed altogether during machining. Taken together, all of these ditches form three sides of a long narrow U-shaped enclosure (Enclosure 3), or a possible broad track or driveway, which was between 10 m and 15 m across.

However, it is not clear why such a narrow-ditched enclosure (Enclosure 3) should be laid out, encompassing what had been the east side of a former track or driveway within it. Any hedgerow along the east side of the former trackway would presumably have had to be removed and the silted ditches could still have presented an uneven surface which would probably have needed levelling out. These would seem to present unnecessary problems or difficulties. This raises the possibility that, given the difficulty in machining this area (see above), the ditch represented by F215, F214 and F218 might be post-Roman and relate to the post-medieval ditch F165. However, F218 and F222 do appear to be linked, through F219, and to represent parts of an enclosure.

Just to the east, at the south end of the enclosure (Enclosure 3), there was a row of small pits or post-holes orientated north-west to south-east. These were (in order from the south) F157, F211, F154, F199, F202 and F200. Three of these (F151, F152, F154) can be directly dated to Phase 2. F151 and F154 contained late Roman pottery sherds, while F152 contained a late Roman coin (section 7.1). This row of small features probably represents a row of posts, possibly a fence or screen. Their position could indicate that they had some relationship with the ditch F191 (Phase 1b), the east end of which did not extend beyond the projected line of these features. Also, given the orientation and location of this row of posts, it seems possible that a similarly aligned slot just to the west (F205), attributed to Phase 1b, could be associated with them. This possibility is made more attractive by the approximate match between the extent of the line of the post-holes and the position and length of the slot F205. It is possible that F205 could have formed the base for a post-in-trench built screen or wall. A line of individual posts to the east could then have formed a roof support, possibly leaving the north-east and south sides of the building or structure open to access (Fig 4b). Such a building or structure might suit as a stock shelter or a store barn. However, the parallel alignment between these features is not exact and any association is speculative.

As well as the ditched enclosure(s) there were two large pits. One of these pits (F145) was located in the north-eastern part of Area D. At about 3.7 m wide and 1.85 m deep, this was the largest pit recorded on the site, and its edges had to be machined stepped to make it safe to excavate. Pottery from the middle-lower fill is datable to the late 3rd-4th century. The pit was filled with mottled grey and yellow-brown silt and clayed-silt, with at least two bands of dark charcoal-rich fill in the mid-upper surviving half of the feature. The part of the pit that could be excavated (probably about 50%) produced just over 2 kg of Roman pottery and as well as 3.4 kg of Roman tile. The Roman tile included pieces of both combed flue tiles and roof tiles (*tegulae* and *imbrices*). The original function of the pit is unknown, but a quarry-pit for sand and gravel is one possibility. It appears that in the late 3rd-4th century, after the pit had partly silted-up, several charcoal-rich deposits were dumped in the pit, including cereal-processing detritus or possibly domestic hearth waste (section 7.8).

The other large pit (F172) in Area D was located in the northern part of that area. It was about 1.74 m wide and 0.74 m deep. This pit had two fills, an upper fill of mottled grey clayed-silt and a lower fill of grey-brown clayed-silt. The half of the pit excavated produced just under 1 kg of Roman pottery, all from the upper fill, the latest of which is dated to the mid-late 3rd to 4th century.

6.4 Period 3: post-Roman to modern (Figs 2a-2c & 3)

The features of Period 3 consist primarily of ditches relating to fields and to tracks or droveways. It appears that these features can be divided into two phases. This is based on their spatial relationships and the absence of tracks or droveways among the later-dated fields. Many of the ditches associated with the later fields were extant when the excavations associated with the quarry western extension began in 2004.

6.4.1 Phase 1

A number of features, primarily ditches, can be dated or assigned to Period 3. Several of these are not securely dated by finds, but can be assigned a post-Roman date based on their orientation or spatial relationship to features dated as Roman and post-Roman. Features from which post-Roman finds were recorded are F161, F162, F165, F177, F176 F189 and F266.

Most of these features no longer form part of the modern field system and several appear to have gone out of use in the post-medieval or early modern periods. They are similar in generally providing little or nothing in the way of datable finds, suggesting that they were field ditches away from the main focus of settlement. Where dating evidence was recovered, some have been dated as either medieval or post-medieval. It should be noted that, during the 2005-6 excavation, a Ragstone hone of Late Saxon or medieval date was recovered, and late medieval/early post-medieval pottery was associated with three pits (CAT Report 383,15).

Several post-Roman ditches that can be assigned to Phase 1 were recorded crossing the north-eastern part of Area D. These are F175, F176, F177, F180 and F181. Four of these ditches (F176 and F177, and F180 and F181) appear to be parts of two ditched track or droveways. The ditch F176 contained late medieval pottery from the 15th-16th century. Oyster shell was also common in the excavated section of this feature. Ditch F177, which lay parallel to F176, contained peg-tile, and a sherd of glass dated as modern. These two ditches appeared to form a track or droveway, another length of which was recorded during the 2004 excavations in Area C (CAT Report 383, fig 2c, F13, F15) and are probably contemporary. The possible pair of ditches F180 and F181 are considered to belong to Period 3 based on their spatial relationship to the overall layout of the other features on the site. The only closely-dated finds material associated with these two ditches is late Roman pottery. While the possibility that they are of Late Roman date cannot be excluded, their orientation and relation to features of known Roman date, and to features which can be dated as post-Roman, suggest that they are probably also post-Roman. Together F180 and F181 appear to have formed another track or droveway which is probably to be associated with the post-medieval ditch F165 (numbered F106 during the 2005-6 excavation; CAT Report 383, fig 2a). F174 produced pottery datable to the 17th century.

What appeared to be another ditched track or droveway was uncovered in the northern part of Area E, represented by ditches F251 and F256. These ditches cut the Period 2 ditch F136. A piece of post-medieval brick was recovered from the upper fill of F266. Although it could not be traced further to the north (due to flooding on the site), F266 is almost certainly part of the same ditch as one recorded in 2004 (CAT Report 383, fig 2a, F33). This in turn could possibly also be a part of the ditch F234, recorded in Area D, which is considered, based on its relationship to F165, to be post-medieval.

To the north-west of this track or droveway, in the southern part of Area D, there was another ditch on the same alignment (F183). This feature was previously recorded in 2004 as F22 (CAT Report 383, fig 2a). The position and alignment of this ditch suggest that it was probably part of a field boundary, belonging to Period 3, to the west of the track or droveway.

Only one small pit could be securely dated to this period, ie F189. This was located in the north-eastern part of Area D. Two sherds of post-medieval pottery, dated as 17th-18th century, were recovered from the fill.

6.4.2 Phase 2

The features of this phase are field ditches. Only three of these were recorded on the 2007 excavation site (Areas D and E), ie F174, F178 and F179. The remainder of the features associated with this phase, ie F32, F39, F53, F54 and F55, were recorded in the excavations of 2004 and 2005-6 (CAT Report 383, fig 2 and fig 2a). None of these features formed part of a track or droveway.

The ditches F178 and F179 are associated with an extant modern hedgerow. These were recorded in Area A (F53-F55), but were not traced in Area C. However, the hedgerow itself is clearly associated with the field ditch F32 and the ditches, and the ditches associated with the hedgerow clearly do not extend beyond F32 (CAT Report 383, fig 2a). The ditch F32, which was extant when excavation began in 2004, was clearly an important feature in this field system. While it cannot be demonstrated, it seems very likely that it would have cut the Phase 1 track or droveway formed by F251 and F266. The ditch F174 lay at the east end of Area D. This feature was previously traced across Area C as far as an extant modern ditch (Fig 2c; CAT Report 383, F11/F32). A pottery sherd dated to the 17th century was recovered from it (section 7.5).

Several other modern features were recorded. There were two areas of broken concrete pieces in the northern part of Area D, ie F226 and F227. There was also a large number of wheel-ruts in the same part of the site, one of which (F231) was recorded as an example. The fill of these wheel-ruts was unusual in that it commonly had a faint but distinct greenish hue. The reason for this colouration is not known. These features sealed a layer of redeposited natural in this area (section 3.2). All of this activity can be associated with the demolition of Birch airfield some time after

WW2. In a number of locations, but especially in the southern part of Area D and the northern part of Area E, on either side of what had been a temporary quarry road excavated in 2004, there were large numbers of recent wheel-ruts running parallel to the line of the temporary road. It is possible that the linear feature recorded as F265 is one of these recent wheel-ruts, although it remains possible that it could be a ditch belonging to Period 2.

6.5 Unphased features in Area E

Only two features were identified in the southern part of Area E, ie F248 and F249. Neither can be assigned to a particular phase. F248 was a very small feature probably representing an isolated post-hole or stake hole. F249 was a broad but very shallow feature, probably representing the base of a former pit.

7 Finds

Full lists of all recorded finds are held in the site archive.

7.1 Other material culture

by N Crummy

Coin

A single late Roman coin came from post-hole F152.

SF 48. (279) F152. Post-hole. Roman. Fragmentary coin: House of Constantine, reverse Gloria Exercitus (2 standards). Probably a copy, dated AD 330-45. Maximum diameter of largest fragment 15 mm.

Ironwork

A number of nails came from contexts ranging from prehistoric to post-medieval. All are of Manning Type 1b, with round flat or slightly convex head (Manning 1985, 134) and most are either Iron Age or Roman.

SF 53. (270) F135 Sx 1. Ditch. Prehistoric/Roman? Tapering iron object, possibly part of the tang and blade of an iron tool. The section at the widest end is not triangular as would be expected on a knife. Length 40 mm, maximum width 26 mm.

Iron-working debris

Iron-working slag was found in two Roman ditches (F163 and F218). The fragments from F163, weighing 266 g in total, are the bottom of a smithing hearth, indicating iron-smithing on the site in either the Iron Age or Roman period.

Loomweights

Nine contexts of varying date produced fragments of triangular loomweights, which were used from the Middle Iron Age until sometime during the first few decades after the Roman conquest of AD 43. None of the pieces are illustrated here. The fragments from Roman features and later are, in general, smaller and more abraded than those from Iron Age contexts, although a group of fragments from Roman ditch F235 weighs 652 g, together with another weighing 149 g from the same ditch section and almost certainly from the same loomweight, must represent about half a complete weight, by comparison with examples from elsewhere in the region (Crummy *et al* 2007, 38-45; Gregory 1992, 148).

All four of the fabrics found at the nearby Stanway site are represented in the Birch Pit western extension site assemblage. Fabric A is the one that occurs most frequently and in the greatest quantity in the area. It has some small grits and is fired hard, with a dull orange-brown to buff surface and with a reduced core. Fabric B is similar, but with some pebbles included, and is in consequence more brittle. Fabric C has a high sand content and can be fired either hard or more lightly. Fabric D is hard, with well-formed angles between surface and edge, fired orange-brown to brown, sometimes light brown, with smooth external surfaces. Loomweight fragments in Fabrics A, C and D have previously been recovered at Birch Pit, but Fabric B is an addition to the assemblage from the site. However, the distinction

between Fabrics A and B depends on the presence of pebbles, and at least some of the small sherds described as Fabric A or A? in both the earlier assemblage and from the western extension site may have come from parts of Fabric B weights that lacked this distinguishing characteristic.

The loomweights were used on upright warp-weighted looms and their common occurrence, in locally-made fabrics, on Iron Age sites shows that most communities produced their own cloth, which requires at least some of the animals in a flock of sheep or goats to be allowed to reach maturity, rather than slaughtering them within their first or second year, as would happen if meat and milk production were the main reason for keeping the animals.

The recovery of further loomweight fragments from Birch, even where they are residual in Roman features, adds weight to the likelihood of there having been a Middle or Late Iron Age settlement in the immediate vicinity of the site.

Structural clay

Several small fragments of structural clay (weighing only 438 g in total) were found scattered in several features, a few of which also produced loomweight fragments. Although, in general, the fabrics differ sufficiently for a distinction to be made between the two groups of material, some of the smaller and more abraded pieces of structural clay may be from loomweights. Given the small quantity of material present on the site, most of the pieces are likely to have come from small wattle-and-daub or plain daub structures such as small hearths, ovens or kilns.

Briquetage

Pieces of vessel briquetage came from medieval/early post-medieval ditch F176 (two sherds) and Roman ditch F191/F241 (one sherd). Both belong to the Type A briquetage generally found in north-east Essex, with much vegetable tempering and usually about 19 mm thick or more (Rodwell 1979, 149-53; Fawn *et al* 1990, 11). The sherds from F176 lack one surface but have a great deal of vegetable tempering, more than would be expected in a Type B vessel from the south of the county. The sherd from F191/F241 is oxidised red throughout, and those from F176 show some reduction to a patchy reddish-brown.

Vessel briquetage, made from coastal alluvium mixed with chopped vegetable matter, is found in large quantities at the Essex salt-production sites, or red hills, together with settling tanks, hearths, and hearth furniture such as firebars and pedestals (Fawn *et al* 1990, 69). The peak period of salt-making activity on these sites is generally Late Iron Age to early Roman. Rodwell (1979, 159-60) has suggested that the *oppidum* of Camulodunum owed some of its pre-eminence to trade in this valuable commodity.

Fragments of both vessels and hearth furniture are increasingly being recognised on inland sites, with Baldock, Hertfordshire perhaps the most distant find spot from the coast (Rodwell 1979; Rigby & Foster 1986, 188; Barford 1990, 79-80; Sealey 1995). This has been explained in various ways: that salt production also took place further inland on tidal rivers; that salt was traded in the vessels in which it was made; that production may have been a seasonal occupation, providing a link between inland and coastal sites and a means whereby hearth furniture might travel as well as vessels; and that raw salt-cakes might be acquired at the coast to be refined inland (Hawkes & Hull 1947, 346-7; Niblett 1985, 23; Rodwell 1979, 159-60, 172; Eddy 1982, 26). The continuing lack of any identified production sites inland negates the first suggestion, but any or all of the remaining three could be valid, with the simplest, that salt was traded in the vessels, perhaps the most likely. It has also been proposed that broken briquetage was traded in its own right, perhaps to be used as salt-licks for livestock, but this has since been refuted (Barford 1990, 79; Sealey 1995, 68-9).

(420) F191/F241. Ditch. Roman. Wall sherd from a rectangular briquetage trough of Type A fabric, with slight ridges on the outer surface where it has been wiped smooth with a wet thumb. Maximum dimensions 67 by 63 mm, 19 mm thick. Weight 70 g.

(311) F176. Ditch. Medieval/early post-medieval. Two abraded sherds of Type A briquetage, both certainly from a single vessel. a) Maximum dimensions 58 by 33 mm,

16 mm thick (incomplete). Weight 16 g. b) Maximum dimensions 30 by 19 mm, 13 mm thick. Weight 4 g.

Rotary handquerns (Fig 14)

Small fragments of querns made from Mayen lava, Hertfordshire Puddingstone and Millstone Grit were found in contexts dating to the Roman and post-medieval periods. All are small and at least one has been reused as a hone or rubbing stone. The puddingstone and lava querns are probably contemporary, although the former may possibly be of Late Iron Age date. Most of the quernstone fragments are from imported forms. Querns made of Mayen lava from the quarries in the Eifel Hills in Germany were first introduced into Britain by the Roman army in AD 43 and their subsequent importation into eastern England in considerable quantities was a feature of the new trade links established in the province. Lava querns form the major part of the quernstone assemblage from the Roman fortress and *colonia* at Colchester, but they occur less frequently on rural sites, where the contemporary puddingstone querns were also used. The absence of Hertfordshire Puddingstone querns from the earlier Birch excavation was considered to be fortuitous, and this assumption has proved to be correct with the recovery of fragments in the western extension. Querns of this type predominated in late 1st- to 2nd-century contexts at the nearby farmstead at the Abbotstone site (see section 7.8.5 in CAT Report 312).

Puddingstone querns ceased to be made sometime in the early 2nd century, if not the later first, and the trade in lava querns appears to have declined in the late Roman period, when the Millstone Grit querns from the Pennines tend to appear more frequently, suggesting that the import of British-made stones filled a gap in the market. On this basis, pit F172 and subsoil L2 should be of late Roman date.

SF 58. (397) F165 Sx 3. Post-medieval ditch. Fragment of Hertfordshire Puddingstone, with no worked surfaces remaining. Weight 182 g.

SF 61. (332) F254. ?Post-hole. Roman. Small fragment of Hertfordshire Puddingstone, with no worked surfaces remaining. Weight 24 g.

SF 58. (378) F173. Pit. Roman. Fragment from the lower stone of a Mayen lava quern, with smooth grinding surface and rough underside. Thickness 28 mm. Weight 196 g.

SF 51. (290) F172. Pit. Roman. Fragment of Mayen lava quern, with smooth grinding surface and rough underside. Thickness 34 mm. Weight 143 g.

SF 54. (403) F228 Sx 1. Ditch. Roman. Five very small fragments of Mayen lava, with no worked surfaces remaining. Weight 6 g.

Fig 14.1. SF 49. (363) L2. Subsoil. ?Roman. Rim fragment from the lower stone of a Millstone Grit quern, with diagonal tooling on the worn grinding surface and slightly rough undersurface. Thickness at rim 27 mm, thickness at inner broken edge 21 mm. Weight 285 g.

SF 59. (289) F172. Pit. Roman. Fragment of the lower stone of a Millstone Grit quern, with smooth and slightly scorched grinding surface and smooth undersurface. The smooth underside and a narrow groove worn into it suggest that the fragment was reused as a hone for sharpening both the edges and points of knife blades or other tools. Thickness 30 mm. Weight 226 g.

Building stone?

A small fragment of a large waterworn pebble from Roman pit F172 may have been used as a cobble. Very little of the original pebble remains, and the fragment is certainly residual in its context.

SF 60. (289) F172. Pit. Roman. Fragment of a waterworn mudstone pebble. Maximum dimensions 47 by 42 by 34 mm.

7.2 Worked flint

by H Martingell

A total of 25 flints was studied. Of these, two were naturally flaked pieces. The remaining 23 artefacts included 15 flakes, 4 blades and bladelets, 1 waste block, 1 denticulate from F238 (finds no 508) and 2 minimally flaked natural pieces.

The two retouched pieces are the denticulate from F238 and a flaked gravel piece from F233 (finds no 417). These artefacts come under the category of 'tools of convenience', due to their rough appearance. Traditionally they are assigned to the later prehistoric period, ie the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age.

This agrees well with the recovery of the denticulate (finds no 508) from F238 as a quantity of Late Bronze Age pottery sherds were recovered from the same feature. The flaked gravel piece (finds no 417) comes from a pit (F233) in the same area. The remaining unretouched flakes, blades, bladelets and the waste block were recovered from various other features or were unstratified.

The types of retouched worked flints support a Late Bronze Age presence on the Birch sands and gravels.

7.3 Prehistoric pottery

by S Benfield

Introduction

A total of 5,462 g of prehistoric (pre-Belgic) pottery was recovered during the excavation. Over 75% by weight of this total (4,240 g) comes from one pit, ie F238.

The prehistoric pottery fabrics (Table 2 below) follow those devised for the recording of prehistoric pottery in Essex (Brown 1988). The fabrics and form types recorded are listed below. All of the significant or diagnostic pottery has been numbered and illustrated (Figs 15-19). A full catalogue of the pottery is provided in the site archive.

Table 2: prehistoric pottery fabrics used in this report.

Key -

size of inclusions:

S-small (<1 mm)

M-medium (1-2 mm)

L large (>2 mm)

density of inclusions:

1 = less than 6 per square cm

2 = 6 to 10 per square cm

3 = more than 10 per square cm.

Fabric A	Flint S 2 well sorted
Fabric B	Flint S-M 2
Fabric C	Flint S-M with occasional L
Fabric D	Flint S-L 2 poorly sorted
Fabric G	Sand, S 3
Fabric H	Sand, S 2
Fabric O	Quartz, flint and some sand, S-L 2, poorly sorted
Fabric W	Flint S-L 2, with some sand and vegetable (organic) matter, voids often on exterior

Discussion

Most of the pottery was recovered from one pit (F238), and this pottery can be dated to the Late Bronze Age. A small group of pottery was recovered from another pit (F223), and can also be dated to the Late Bronze Age. The pottery from these two pits is discussed separately. Residual flint-tempered prehistoric sherds, from later-dated features, are probably of Late Bronze Age and possibly Early/Middle Iron Age dates. There is also small quantity of residual sand-tempered sherds that can be dated to the Middle Iron Age. It can be noted that pottery dated to the Middle and Late Bronze Age has been recovered from previous excavation phases of the western extension (CAT Report 383) and a number of Bronze Age cremation burials accompanied by urns have been excavated to the north-east of the site (CAT Report 289).

The pottery from the pit F238

The pottery from the pit F238 is of particular interest as it represents a large group of flint-tempered Late Bronze Age plain ware pottery. The quantity recovered from this

pit is considerable at 504 sherds, weighing over 4 kg (4,240 g). Not all of F238 was excavated, although the excavated portion certainly represents by far the greater part of the feature, so it should be noted that not all of the pottery in the pit will have been recovered.

Based on rims, the pottery recovered from the pit appears to represent a minimum of fifteen different vessels, of which fourteen have been illustrated. However, the pots are hand-made and it is not easy to be certain that sherds are not part of the same vessel, especially given the similarity of the simple rim forms of many of the bowls. Although many of the sherds cannot be joined together, there is no indication that any of them would make a complete pot. Some pots are, or appear to be, represented only by single sherds. This is most clearly demonstrated by a single decorated rim sherd (Fig 17.14), as any other rim sherds from this vessel would be easily recognised. The average sherd weight, ie 8.4 g, appears low in relation to that of Late Bronze Age pottery from a pit at Colchester Garrison, in Area J1 North, ie 15.2 g, where the large sherd weight suggested that the pottery was deposited not long after breakage (CAT Report 412, forthcoming). However, two, possibly three, partial pots, represented by intact sections from vessels, were recorded during excavation on the 2007 site, from the middle-lower fill of F238 (recorded under finds nos 326 and 491). Also, some groups of sherds recovered together appear, based on the fabric, to represent significant parts of individual pots, but which could not be joined together, ie Figure 15.5. Where parts of individual pots could be recognised, most, if not all, of the sherds were recovered from the same finds number. Although many of the pots are represented by one or a few sherds, despite the comparatively low average sherd weight, at least some of the pots had been broken up shortly before they entered the pit.

All of the pottery is flint-tempered. The colour of the pottery is generally dark grey or grey-brown, although a number of sherds have brown or red-brown oxidised areas on their surfaces. Traces of burnishing survive on some sherds of one small bowl (Fig 15.1), and another small bowl (Fig 17.18) was probably also burnished. Although many of the smaller and finer pots have smoothed surfaces, most surfaces have a slightly coarse feel from protruding fragments of flint temper. Apart from a thick base sherd, which could be from a bucket urn (Fig 16.13), and therefore could date to the Middle Bronze Age, the pottery from the pit F238 can be treated as a Late Bronze Age group.

The vessel forms represented in F238 are mainly bowls and larger bowls or jars, although two vessels could probably be classed as cups, ie one small vessel (Fig 16.7) and possibly one thin-walled vessel (Fig 18.23). There are bowls with simple upright or slightly flaring rims (Fig 15.1, 3, Fig 16.10, 11, Fig 17.18, Fig 18.23), and larger, thicker-walled bowls or jars (Fig 16.8 and Fig 17.15, 16 and 17). There are also rim sherds from three large bowls or jars (Fig 15.6, Fig 17.14, Fig 18.22). There is one small jar (Fig 15.5). A single thick base sherd (Fig 16.13) is from a large vessel, possibly a storage jar, although the wall of the vessel is quite upright and it might be a residual sherd from Middle Bronze Age bucket urn. It can be noted that sherds from the base of a large urn, dated to the Middle Bronze Age, were also recovered from a Roman pit during an earlier phase of excavation (CAT Report 383, 17). Apart from the top of one rim (Fig 17.14, a large bowl decorated with 'pie-crust' cuts into the top of the rim), none of the pottery is decorated. There are finger-wipe marks – vertical, or near-vertical indentations from finger-wiping or -smoothing – on the exterior surface above the body carination, on the upper body/necks of the larger vessels (Fig 16.8, Fig 17.15, Fig 18.22). The underside of base sherds from two pots, ie Figure 18.21 and finds number 471 (not illustrated), display dense flint-gritting.

These or similar vessel forms can be paralleled among the large assemblage of Late Bronze Age pottery from Area 16 East at Runnymede, especially the pottery from the earlier Late Bronze Age stratigraphical levels there (Needham & Spence 1996). This is because the pots from F238 on the 2007 site lack the increasingly common decoration and flattened rims seen in the higher Late Bronze Age levels at Runnymede. Within the Colchester area they share characteristics with the assemblages of Late Bronze Age pottery from Colchester Garrison Site J1 North (CAT Report 412, forthcoming) and Frog Hall Farm, Fingringhoe (Brown 2002).

Apart from the vessel forms, including weakly carinated necked bowls, important characteristics shared between these assemblages and that from the pit F238 on the 2007 site are: the exclusive use of flint-temper, the lack of decoration or ornamentation on the pots, and, also, the low number of flattened rims noted at Colchester and Runnymede. At Runnymede it is suggested that the increase in flattened rim forms may be due, in part, to the more common addition of decoration to the rim tops on pots later in the stratigraphical sequence (Needham & Spence 1996, 113).

Sealey suggests that the assemblages from the Colchester Garrison Site J1 North and from Frog Hall Farm, Fingringhoe can be placed at the start of Late Bronze Age plain ware pottery c 1,000-900 BC (CAT Report 412, forthcoming). The pottery from F238 on the 2007 site can also be compared with the pottery from the earliest Late Bronze Age levels at Runnymede Area 16 East. In respect of this, while the pottery from F238 on the 2007 site can be confidently dated to the currency of Late Bronze Age plain ware, c 1,000-800 BC, it is suggested that it could be early within this tradition c 1,000-900 BC.

The pottery from the pit F233

A total of 46 sherds, weighing 408 g, was recovered from the surviving fill of the shallow pit F233. All of the sherds are flint-tempered. The average weight of the sherds is 8.8 g. Apart from one rim, the pottery is plain and undecorated. Almost all of the sherds are body sherds. There is one rim, from a bowl (Fig 18.25), and part of a flat base from a jar or bowl (Fig 18.24). The rim is slightly splayed and is flattened, appearing to have been gently pushed down, forming a small internal and external thickening. There are faint fingertip indentations on the rim top which are almost certainly deliberate decoration. Although the quantity of pottery is small, and there are few diagnostic sherds, given the exclusive use of flint-temper and single incidence of decoration, the pottery from F233 can be identified as probably Late Bronze Age plain ware dated c 1,000-800 BC (see Late Iron Age pottery section in CAT Report 412, forthcoming).

Other prehistoric pottery

The remainder of the prehistoric pottery, ie 182 sherds weighing 1,053 g, was recovered as residual sherds from later-dated contexts. There are some significant differences among the residual sherds from the stratified pottery recovered from the two pits. Of the residual pottery, some flint-tempered sherds have decoration in the form of finger indentations, a few sherds are sand-tempered, and a few contain other temper, ie grog- or organic-temper.

Of the flint-tempered pottery, two rim sherds appear to be similar to the bowl forms recovered from F238, that is, sherds from bowls with slightly flaring simple rims. These are Figure 19.26 (F148 Sx 6, finds number 473) and Figure 19.27 (F222 Sx 5, finds no 442). However, two of the flint-tempered body sherds have rounded decorative indentations from impressed finger-tips. Both sherds are too small to illustrate. On one (Fig 19.29; F250 Sx 1, finds no 479), most of the indentation survives, with the fingernail end clearly visible across the centre. There is a fragment of a possible second indentation on the edge of the sherd. The sherd is relatively thick at about 8-9 mm. The other indentation is partial and at the edge of a finer, thinner sherd which is about 4 mm thick (Fig 19.30; F235 Sx 5, finds no 415). These decorated sherds probably date from the end of the Late Bronze Age or from the Early Iron Age.

There is a small quantity, 29 sherds, of sand-tempered pottery (Fabric H). Three of these sherds (two rims and a base), all from the ditch F242 (finds no 488), could be illustrated. Of the two rims, one (Fig 19.31) is from a jar, the other rim (Fig 19.32) appears to be from a bowl with a simple flaring rim. The sand-tempered sherds can be dated to the Middle Iron Age.

Catalogue of illustrated prehistoric pottery

Pottery from the pit F238

Middle-lower pit fill

Fig 15.1 Fabric B, partial pot, 6 joining sherds from the rim and upper body, small bowl with upright, flat-topped rim, smooth area of burnishing survives on rim exterior, 26 other sherds,

plus many sherd fragments, most if not all from the same pot, total 125 g, dark grey interior, patchy red-brown to grey brown exterior, dark grey fabric. Finds no 325.

Fig 15.2 Fabric B, flaring rim, 3 joining sherds, 30 g, dark grey surfaces, red-brown fabric. Finds no 326.

Finds number 491:

Fig 15.3 Fabric B, pot with flaring wall and flat-topped rim, 4 rim sherds, probably from the same pot, with 2 body sherds, total 30 g, 2 of the rim sherds join with the 2 body sherds as a group of 4 joining sherds, dark grey interior, patchy red-brown to grey brown exterior, grey-brown fabric.

Fig 15.4 Fabric C, partial pot, 1 sherd, 17 g, base sherd, flaring wall above flat base, surfaces abraded, only part of outer surface remains, dark grey surface with grey fabric.

Middle pit fill

Finds number 353:

Fig 15.5 Fabric B, 8 sherds, 104 g, 3 rim sherds (32 g) not joining, rolled over, slightly thickened, rounded rim, probably all sherds are from the same pot, although this is not certain, dense flint-temper, grey-brown surfaces, red-brown fabric. Also, Fabric B, 6 sherds, 71 g, 7 body sherds, not joining, but probably all part of no 5.

Fig 15.6 Fabric C, 1 sherd, 22 g, rim sherd, rolled over, slightly thickened, rounded rim, smoothed exterior, red-brown fabric, dark brown surfaces.

Fig 16.7 Fabric C, 1 sherd, 14 g, upright, flat-topped rim, smoothed surfaces, sparse flint-temper, dark grey surfaces and fabric.

Fig 16.8 Fabric C, 2 sherd, 60 g, 2 joining body sherds from a bowl, dark grey surfaces, grey-brown fabric core with thin red-brown margins, sparse flint-temper, finger-wipe marks on surface, one area of pot surface is degraded and abraded onto the fabric core, this area appears possibly to have been burnt. Also, Fabric C, 3 body sherds, 44 g, not joining but probably also part of no 8, sherds up to 6 mm thick; 2 of the sherds have the same surface damage as no 8.

Fig 16.9 Fabric C, 1 sherd, 3 g, flat-topped internally thickened rim, burnished exterior surface, interior abraded, grey-brown surfaces with red-brown fabric.

Fig 16.10 Fabric A, 9 sherds, 10 g, 2 joining rim sherds with sparse fine flint temper, slightly flaring rim, chipped and degraded, fine ware, burnished dark grey surfaces and fabric.

Finds number 362:

Fig 16.11 Fabric B, 3 sherds, 16 g, 3 joining sherds from a small pot with an upright rim, indentations from finger-wiping on exterior. Also, Fabric B, 2 small sherds, possibly part of no 11.

Fig 16.12 Fabric C, 1 sherd, 25 g, base sherd, flaring wall above flat base, slightly abraded patchy grey-brown outer surface, dark grey inner surface and fabric, the flint visible in outer surface of the sherd consists almost entirely fine flint grits.

Fig 16.13 Fabric D, 1 sherd, 34 g, base sherd possibly a large storage jar or a thick-walled tub or bucket-like pot, outer surface slightly abraded, red-brown fabric and surfaces. It is noted that a large body sherd (56 g), with ?vertical indentation grooves on the exterior surface from finger smoothing, is possibly part of this pot.

Finds number 471:

Fig 17.14 Fabric C, 1 large rim sherd, 59 g, externally thickened rim with flat top, decorated with 'pie-crust' incised lines on top of rim, impressions from finger-wiping on area below rim, abraded, red-brown fabric and surfaces.

Fig 17.15 Fabric C, 2 sherd, 74 g, 2 joining sherds from the body of bowl, vertical finger-wipe marks on upper half, brown and grey-brown surfaces with dark grey fabric.

Fig 18.16 Fabric C, 1 sherd, 24 g, slightly flaring rim, finger wipe marks below rim, red-brown exterior surface with grey to dark grey surfaces and fabric. ?Possibly part of no 12.

Fig 18.17 Fabric B, 1 sherd, 29 g, body sherd from a carinated bowl with rounded body, finger-wipe marks on neck, patchy brown to grey-brown surfaces and fabric.

Fig 18.18 Fabric B, pot with plain slightly flaring rim, 1 sherd, smooth surface, probably originally burnished on exterior, 13 g, patchy brown to grey-brown exterior surface, grey-brown fabric and red-brown interior.

Fig 18.19 Fabric B, 1 sherd, 19 g, base sherd, wall flaring above flat base, red-brown surfaces, grey-brown fabric. See catalogue no 28, ?part of same pot.

Fig 18.20 Fabric D, 1 sherd, 43 g, base sherd, flaring, carinated, pot wall above flat base, red-brown surfaces and fabric.

Fig 18.21 Fabric A, 1 sherd, 27 g, base sherd, wall flaring above flat base, tempered with fine flint grit, exterior of base has dense flint gritting, dark grey surfaces, grey-brown fabric.

Middle-upper pit fill

Fig 18.22 Fabric C, flat-topped plain rim above curving neck, with faint finger-wipe marks on neck, 5 rim sherds join as two separate groups, 6 other body sherds, not joining, are probably all part of the same pot, total 81 g, dark grey fabric and surfaces. Finds no 443.

Upper pit fill

Fig 18.23 Fabric C, upright rim, 2 other non-joining sherds probably from the same pot, 12 g, outer surfaces smoothed but slightly abraded, sherds about 4 mm thick, dark grey surfaces and fabric. Finds no 319. Also Fabric C, 4 sherds, 11 g, sherds up to 4 mm thick, possibly part of no **23**, dark red-brown or dark grey surfaces, with dark grey surfaces fabric.

Pottery from the pit F233

Fig 18.24 Fabric C, 2 sherd, 60 g, 2 joining base sherds, wall flaring above flat base, slightly abraded, red-brown exterior with grey-brown fabric and interior. Finds no 408.

Fig 18.25 Fabric B, bowl with flattened rim top and broad impressions or decoration from fingertips on top of the rim, 3 joining sherds (27 g), grey-brown to dark grey-brown surfaces and fabric. Finds no 506.

Pottery from other contexts

Fig 19.26 Fabric B, 1 sherd, 7 g, rim sherd, rim top heavily chipped, dark grey fabric and surfaces. F148 ditch, Sx 6, finds no 473.

Fig 19.27 Fabric B, 1 sherd, 5 g, rim sherds from a pot with rounded slightly flaring rim, smoothed exterior, now slightly degraded, and smoothed-over rim just into interior at top of pot, grey-brown fabric and surfaces. F222 ditch, Sx 5, finds no 442.

Fig 19.28 Fabric B, 1 sherd, 2 g, rim sherd, rolled-over rim, dark grey surfaces, grey-brown fabric. F243, small pit, finds no 452, middle fill.

Fig 19.29 Fabric C, 1 sherd, 4 g, small body sherd, about 9 mm thick, with finger-tip indentation decoration, one indentation clear, edge of another depression indicates a possible second indentation just to one side of the first, dark grey interior, dark-brown surface. F250, ditch, Sx 1, finds no 479.

Fig 19.30 Fabric B, 1 sherd, 3 g, body sherd, 4 mm thick, part of decorative ?finger indentation on edge of sherd dark red-brown exterior surface, dark grey fabric and inner surface. F235, ditch, Sx 5, finds no 415, middle-lower fill.

F242, ditch, Sx 1, finds number 488:

Fig 19.31 Fabric H, 2 sherd, 11 g, 2 joining sherds, flat-topped rim over a curving neck, burnished exterior, dark grey-brown fabric and surfaces, Middle Iron Age.

Fig 19.32 Fabric H, 2 sherd, 6 g, rim, 2 joining sherds, slightly flaring rim, smoothed exterior, dark grey-brown to dark grey fabric and surfaces, Middle Iron Age.

Fig 19.33 Fabric H, 2 sherd, 42 g, rim, base, 2 joining sherds, smoothed exterior surface, dark grey-brown to dark grey fabric and surfaces, Middle Iron Age.

7.4 Late Iron Age and Roman pottery

by S Benfield

Introduction

In total, there is just under 37 kg (36,829 g) of Late Iron Age and Roman pottery from the excavation. The pottery was recorded using the Roman pottery fabric type series devised for *CAR 10*, in which the fabrics are recorded as two-letter codes. The letter codes, together with the full fabric name, are set out in Table 3. Additional codes for Late Iron Age grog-tempered wares (Fabric GTW), Romanising coarse wares (Fabric RCW) and Rettendon-type wares (Fabric RET) have been introduced and these fabrics are described below. Where appropriate, the fabric code for the National Roman Fabric Reference Collection has been included (Tomber & Dore 1998). The pot forms were recorded, where possible, using the Camulodunum (Cam) Roman pottery form type series (Hawkes & Hull 1947; Hull 1958). Samian vessels are recorded using Dragendorff (Dr) form numbers or other common form type references following those used in Webster 1996. The pottery fabrics and the vessel forms present in each site context were recorded for each finds number. The number of sherds was recorded and the identifiable pottery forms present for each fabric type. The total weight of pottery and a spot-date was recorded for each finds number. This information is set out in the Catalogue of Late Iron Age and Roman pottery below and Table 4.

Fabrics and descriptions additional to *CAR 10* fabrics used in this report:

Fabric GTW: Late Iron Age grog-tempered wares
Generally thick sherds with patchy red-brown, brown or grey-brown surfaces. Fabric contains various quantities of crushed fired clay (grog).

Fabric RCW: Romanising coarse ware.
Sherd thickness is generally medium to thin. Surfaces are dark grey-brown. The fabric is grey-brown with red-brown margins and contains fragments of burnt organic matter and grog. The fabric sometimes has a tendency to laminate.

Fabric RET: Rettendon-type wares
Roman coarse ware, principally grey wares, tempered with various quantities of crushed burnt flint. The Rettendon-type ware is defined as a fabric type rather than as the product of any specific kiln or kilns (Going 1987, 10, fabric 48).

Table 3: Roman pottery fabric codes and fabric names used in this report (after CAR 10).

Fabric code	Fabric name	National Roman Fabric Reference Collection fabric
AA	amphoras, all excluding Dressel 20 and Brockley Hill/Verulamium amphoras	
AJ	amphoras, Dressel 20	BAT AM 1, BAT AM 2
BA	plain samian forms (unsourced)	
SG	South Gaulish plain samian	LGF SA
CG	Central Gaulish plain samian	LEZ SA 2
EG	East Gaulish plain samian	
BX	decorated samian (unsourced)	
SG	South Gaulish decorated samian	LGF SA
CG	Central Gaulish decorated samian	LEZ SA 2
BPW	butt-beaker parchment ware	NOG WH3
CH	oxidised Hadham wares	HAD OX
CL	Central Gaulish and 'Rhenish-type' fine colour-coated wares	
NF	Trier fabric	MOS BS
CS	Pompeian-red wares	
CZ	Colchester and other red colour-coated wares	COL CC2
DJ	coarse oxidised and related wares	
DZ	fine oxidised wares	
EA	Nene-Valley colour-coated wares	LNV CC
GA	BB1: black-burnished ware, category 1	DOR BB1
GB	BB2: black-burnished ware, category 2	COL BB2
GTW	grog-tempered wares	SOB GT
GX	other coarse wares, principally locally-produced grey wares	
HD	shell-tempered and calcite-gritted wares	
HZ	large storage jars and other vessels in heavily-tempered grey wares	
GT	large storage jars with grog-temper	
KX	black-burnished ware (BB2) types in pale grey ware	
MQ	white slipped fine wares and parchment wares	
RCW	Romanising coarse ware	
RET	Rettendon-type flint-tempered ware	
TK	Oxford, white/cream fabric, unslipped with pink grits	OXF WH
TN	Oxford, red/grey fabric with cream slip	OXF WS
TZ	mortaria, Colchester and mortaria imported from the Continent	

The pottery assemblage

Late Iron Age pottery

Exclusively or predominantly Late Iron Age pottery was recovered from the ditches F148, F235/F252, F250 and F242/F247.

Almost all, by weight, of the Late Iron Age pottery was recovered from the ditches F148, F235/F252 and F250. A total of just over 2 kg (2,156 g) of Late Iron Age grog-tempered ware was recovered from these features. Assemblages of Late Iron Age grog-tempered pottery (Fabric GTW), also commonly referred to as Belgic pottery, can be dated on settlement sites in Essex from c 50/25 BC (Sealey 2007, 31). This pottery fabric was replaced after the Roman conquest in AD 43 by Roman wares, though the pace of this replacement probably varied from place to place, especially between the more isolated rural sites and major towns. Some of the grog-tempered pottery from the ditches consists of partial pots and large sherds (Fig 20). This indicates that this pottery is not residual, and is current with the fill of the ditches. Late Iron Age pottery from these features that could be attributed to specific numbered form types consisted of a Cam 218 bowl from F148; Cam 229 ripple-shouldered bowls from F148 and F235 (two examples); and Cam 233, a bowl decorated with a burnished broad lattice pattern, from F148. There is also large shoulder sherd (455 g) from a Dressel 2-4 amphora in an orange-red fabric (Fabric AA, from F148, finds no 473). Among the pottery recorded from F235, F250 and F252 there is a small number (16) of Roman sherds. Almost all of these (13 sherds) come from one finds number (finds no 483), from the ditch F250. All of these Roman sherds could be explained as contamination from the fills of the later Roman ditches which cut the length of these features.

The pottery from the ditches F242 and F247 is also almost entirely of Late Iron Age date, although a smaller quantity (333 g) of Late Iron Age pottery was recovered. Most of the Iron Age pottery is grog-tempered ware (Fabric GTW), including a probable ripple-shouldered bowl from F242 (finds no 435). There are also three sherds from a butt-beaker in a fine oxidised fabric (Fabric DZ) from F247 (finds no 330) dated Tiberian to Claudio-Neronian and most probably a pre-conquest import.

Residual pottery sherds of Late Iron Age date were also recovered from a number of later-dated contexts. Apart from one bowl with a simple flat-topped rim, possibly of form Cam ?255, from F163 (finds no 371), these were mainly body sherds which could not be assigned numbered pot forms or specific vessel types.

Illustrated Late Iron Age grog-tempered pottery

Fig 20.1. F148, ditch, finds no 394, Sx 3, upper (silt) fill. Jar or bowl with scored or grooved body, Fabric GTW, 13 sherds, partial pot, joining sherds from upper body and rim, dark grey surfaces and dark grey fabric, Late Iron Age.

Fig 20.2. F148, ditch, finds no 276, upper fill. Cam 223 bowl with broad lattice decoration on body, Fabric GTW, one large sherd, rim and shoulder are lightly burnished and dark-grey in colour, body is red-brown, Late Iron Age.

Fig 20.3. F148, ditch, finds no 282, upper-mid fill. Cam 218 bowl, Fabric GTW, about 40 sherds and fragments from the base body and rim of a partial pot, much of pot present, Late Iron Age.

Fig 20.4. F235, ditch, finds no 455, Sx 3. Cam 229, ripple-shouldered bowl, Fabric GTW, single sherd, abraded orange-brown surface, Late Iron Age.

Fig 20.5. F235, ditch, finds no 455, Sx 3. Large jar with rippled upper body, Fabric GTW, rim missing, inside surface flaked away, firing-clouded surface, orange-brown and dark grey, single sherd, Late Iron Age.

Fig 20.6. F235, ditch, finds no 460, Sx 5. Cam 229, ripple-shouldered bowl, Fabric GTW, 2 joining sherds, dark grey-brown surface, Late Iron Age.

Fig 20.7. F235, ditch, finds no 460, Sx 5. Bowl with rilled shoulder and vertical wipe-marks on body, Fabric GTW, partial pot, 14 sherds, of which 10 join to make a complete profile, orange-brown and dark grey-brown surface, Late Iron Age.

Fig 20.8. F250, ditch, finds no 343, fill at surface. Cam 211, carinated bowl with concave cordoned wall, Fabric GTW, single sherd, abraded dark grey-brown surface, Late Iron Age.

Fig 20.9. F250, ditch, finds no 478, Sx 1, upper-mid fill. Rim sherd from a large jar or bowl, Fabric GTW, dark grey surface, Late Iron Age.

Fig 20.10. F247, ditch, finds no 330, lower fill. Cam 218 bowl, Fabric GTW, 5 sherds, 4 joining, Late Iron Age.

Fig 20.11. F250, ditch, finds no 343, fill at surface. Cam 271 large storage jar, Fabric GTW, 6 sherds, 3 joining to form about 20% of rim, dark grey surface, Late Iron Age.

Fig 20.12. F235, ditch, finds no 460, Sx 5. Cam 270B large storage jar, Fabric GTW, single rim sherd, dark grey-brown surface, Late Iron Age.

Fig 20.13. F242, ditch, finds no 487. Jar or bowl rim, Fabric GTW, single sherd, dark grey-brown surface abraded to reddish-brown on edge of rim, Late Iron Age.

Fig 20.14. F250, ditch, finds no 343, fill at surface. Large storage jar base, Fabric GTW, single sherd, abraded, hard fired, grey fabric and surfaces, Late Iron Age/early Roman.

Roman pottery

About 34 kg of Roman pottery was recovered during the excavation (Late Iron Age pottery excluded). The date ranges of the pottery types recorded together cover the whole of the Roman period. The main concerns of the report on the Roman pottery are to help provide a dating framework for the site, and to consider if the assemblage can add to the interpretation of the site. The pottery associated with some of the features can be divided into two broad groups, that is, groups containing pottery dating no later than the early-mid Roman period, and groups containing pottery that can be dated to the late Roman period. Only the pottery from features with a significant quantity of pottery or which are major site features is described in this way. Individual or small numbers of sherds from small pits or post-holes are described separately below. Dating of the pottery for all features by finds number is presented in the catalogue of Late Iron Age and Roman pottery (pp 27-38).

Pottery dating to the early-mid Roman period

A number of features contained pottery which can be dated to the early Roman period of the 1st-early 2nd century and the mid Roman period of the 2nd-3rd century. None of the pottery recovered from these features need date later than the mid-late 3rd century.

Approximately 10 kg (9,649 g) of the Roman pottery, almost one-third of the site total by weight, comes from ditch F221/F241. Approximately 7 kg (6,971 g) was recovered from F221 and about 2.5 kg (2,668 g) from F241. Most of the more closely-datable pottery associated with F221 can be dated to the early Roman period, that is the 1st century (c AD 43) to early 2nd century. A smaller quantity, almost entirely from F241 and associated with the mid-upper fill, is of 2nd- to 3rd-century date.

Within the early Roman period, some of the pottery from ditch F221/F241 can be dated to, or probably dates from, the pre-Flavian period, ie c AD 43-69. This group of material consists of a samian cup of form Dr 24/25, a possible Pompeian-red ware platter of form Cam 17, a flagon of form Cam 140, a ring-necked flagon form Cam 154/155, cooking pots of form Cam 256 and Cam 258, a jar of form Cam 260B and the storage jar form Cam 275. Much pottery is more broadly datable to the 1st-early 2nd century, ie: the cup form Dr 27 and decorated bowl Dr 30 in South Gaulish samian (Fabrics BA(SG) and BX(SG)); Cam 108 beaker; Cam 119 butt-beaker; Cam 195 mortarium, with gritting over the flange; Cam 218 bowl; Cam 221 bowl; Cam 243-244/246 bowl; Cam 266 jar; and Cam 259 cooking pot.

Some of the early Roman pottery was deposited into the ditch as partial pots. Partial pots are loosely defined here as pots of which a significant or uncommonly large proportion of the original vessel is present, usually as joining sherds, although large single pieces of pots are also included. The more closely-datable of the partial pots are all pre-Flavian, ie a Cam 140 flagon (finds no 453), Cam 154/155 flagon (finds no 438), from the length of ditch F221, and a Dr 24/25 cup (finds no 482) from F241. Two others, both from F221, are the lower half of a jar in Romanising coarse ware (Fabric RCW, finds no 439) and a Cam 195 mortarium with gritting over the flange (finds no 484), could be pre-Flavian. It should be noted that no partial pots were recorded among the later-dated, 2nd- to 3rd-century pottery.

There is some pottery from the ditch that can be dated to the 2nd-3rd century. Most of this comes from the fill of F241, although some was also recovered from F221. The later-dated pottery from the ditch F241 consists of sherds of: form Dr 37 in Central Gaulish samian (Fabric BX(CG)); Cam 37A bowl; Cam 40B bowl; Cam 268 jar; and the fabric types Central Gaulish plain samian (Fabric BA(CG)), late Colchester colour-coated ware (Fabric CZ) and black-burnished ware forms in pale grey ware (Fabric KX). One sherd recorded as Rettendon-type ware (Fabric RET) is almost certainly either mis-identified or intrusive, as this fabric dates to the late 3rd to mid-late 4th century and is the only closely-datable pottery of that period from these ditches. It is possible that this sherd is prehistoric flint-tempered pottery. Where the relevant information is available, all the later-dated sherds are from either the upper-mid or mid-lower fill. The later-dated sherds from ditch F221 are few in number. These are a form Dr 31 bowl, probably in an East Gaulish samian fabric (Fabric BA(EG)), and a Cam 268 jar. Both these sherds are recorded from the upper and upper-mid fill respectively and could be encompassed within a date range of the early-mid 2nd to 3rd century.

Also among the pottery from the ditch are sherds from two types of amphoras – represented by Fabric AA and Fabric AJ, the latter almost certainly from Dressel 20 amphoras – and large storage jars (Fabric HZ). All of these are primarily of 1st- to 2nd-century date, although Dressel 20 amphoras were current into the early 3rd century and large storage jars are dated 1st-2nd/3rd century. The single pot from ditch F223 consists of an abraded flagon base, which is either of local coarse oxidised ware, which cannot be closely dated other than as 1st-2nd/early 3rd century, or may be an import, possibly of 1st-century date.

A number of ditches and other features contained pottery of early or mid Roman date, or which need not date later than the mid-late 3rd century. However, the quantities of pottery from all of these features are small.

The pottery from F191 (444 g), which is related to the ditch F221/F223/F241, includes sherds from pots datable to the 1st-2nd and 2nd-3rd centuries. There is a Cam 243-244/246 bowl, dated 1st-early 2nd century, from Sx 1, and a partial pot, a small jar or bowl with a simple everted rim of probable 1st- to 2nd-century date from Sx 2 (finds no 380). From its junction with ditch F241 Sx 3, there are sherds from a Cam 37/38 bowl in Fabric KX, dated ?late 2nd to mid-late 3rd century, and a Cam 37B bowl in Fabric GB, dated late 2nd to mid-late 3rd century.

Just to the west of the ditch F221/F223/F241, and parallel to it, were several inter-cutting ditches (F224, F236, F246, F222, F223). The quantity of pottery recovered from these ditches was small.

Although a large quantity of pottery by weight (5,648 g) was recovered from the ditch F222, almost all of this (5,582 g) consists of sherds from a single partial pot. This is a large Roman storage jar of form Cam 273, dated 1st-2nd/3rd century (finds nos 268 and 457). Among the small quantity of other pottery from this ditch is a sherd of black-burnished ware category 2 (BB2, Fabric GB), from a bowl of form Cam 37B, which can be dated to the late 2nd to mid-late 3rd century. The three lengths of ditch (F224, F236, F246), possibly all part of the same feature, produced in total only six sherds, weighing 17 g. This pottery consists of three abraded sherds of Romanising coarse ware (Fabric RCW) and three sherds of Roman grey ware (Fabric GX). The ditch F223 produced only one sherd of coarse oxidised ware (Fabric DJ), dated 1st-2nd/3rd century.

Only 373 g of pottery was recovered from the small ditch F136. None of this pottery need date later than the early 2nd century, but can only be broadly dated as 1st-2nd/3rd century. Sherds from one secure section excavated across the ditch included a probable partial pot, consisting of 49 sherds in coarse oxidised ware (Fabric DJ). The sherds include the pot base and are probably from a flagon. A second section on the line of the ditch produced four sherds of Late Iron Age grog-tempered ware (Fabric GTW), including the base of a large jar or bowl.

A single section excavated across the ditch F144 produced 2,128 g of early Roman pottery. This included a partial pot, a carinated bowl in Romanising coarse ware (Fabric RCW), a Cam 109 beaker, dated 1st century, and a Cam 231 flask dated 1st to mid-late 2nd century.

A pit (F173) produced a moderate quantity of pottery (312 g) that could date from the mid Roman period as none of the pottery need date later than the mid-late 3rd century. The latest closely-datable sherd from this pit is a Dr 38 samian bowl in East Gaulish fabric (Fabric BA(EG)) dating from the mid-late 2nd to early-mid 3rd century. However, a probable form Cam 299 bowl was recorded among this pottery which is dated early Antonine-4th century, and could date to the late Roman period (see also F172).

Pottery dating to the late Roman period

The pottery associated with a number of features can be separated into a late Roman category. This is pottery that can be closely dated to the period of the early-mid 3rd to 4th century. The latest most closely-dated pottery types from the site are the fabrics Rettendon-type ware (Fabric RET), latest-dated to the late 3rd-4th century; oxidised ?Hadham ware (Fabric CH), dated mid-late 3rd to 4th century, but predominantly 4th century in date (*CAR 10*, 297); and Nene Valley colour-coated ware (Fabric EA), dated early-mid 3rd to 4th century, but most common in the period after c AD 275 (*CAR 10*, 279). There are also sherds from Oxford white ware mortaria (Fabric TK) which can be broadly dated to the 3rd-4th century; the earliest dated record in *CAR 10* is from a pottery context dated up to c AD 300 (*CAR 10*, 194, Fabric TK, Type 44.56). There are also examples of the flanged bowl form 305, in black-burnished ware category 1 (BB1, Fabric GA); Cam 305A and black-burnished types in pale grey ware (Fabric KX) or in coarse reduced ware (Fabric GX); and Cam 305B. Both Cam 305 types are dated to the third quarter of the 3rd century to the end of the Roman period (*CAR 10*, 482).

The only ditch which contained late Roman pottery is that represented by F135, F163 and F164. The quantity of pottery from these features totals 1,620 g. This is made up of 493 g from F135, 985 g from F163 and 142 g from F164. The latest-dated pottery from these features are sherds of Rettendon-type ware (finds no 498), Oxford mortaria (Fabric TK, finds no 265), a probable sherd of oxidised ?Hadham ware (Fabric CH, finds no 265), and a Cam 305B flanged bowl (finds no 265). Apart from the Rettendon-type ware which is simply recorded as from the ditch fill, all of these sherds were recovered from the upper fill of the ditch. Other pottery of note, or significance as a record, from this ditch is three sherds from a Rhenish beaker (Fabric CL(NF)), dating to the 3rd century (*CAR 10*, 275); East Gaulish samian (Fabric BA(EG)); one sherd of form Dr 27, dated early-mid 2nd century; and probably the form Cam ?299 in Fabric GX, dated early Antonine-4th century.

Three sherds (weighing 257 g) were recovered from the ditch F219. These have some fragments of flint temper in the fabric and could be late Roman Rettendon-type ware (Fabric RET), but are probably better dated more broadly as Roman.

There were two pits (F145, F172) which contain a significant quantity of pottery and that can be dated to the late Roman period. The pit F145 was unusually large and 2,286 g of pottery were recovered from this feature. Among this pottery is a single sherd identified as oxidised Hadham ware (Fabric CH, finds no 274), which is attributed to the mid-lower fill of the pit. An abraded sherd from a pedestal jar in a white-slipped fine ware fabric (Fabric MQ, finds no 292) is probably also of late Roman to 3rd- to 4th-century date. Other sherds, from the upper and mid-lower fill, include the bowl form Cam 37B in black-burnished ware category 2 (BB2, Fabric GB), which can be dated to the late 2nd to mid-late 3rd century. The pit F172 contained 834 g of pottery. Late-dated pottery from the pit consists of seven sherds of Rettendon-type ware, a form Cam 308 lidded bowl in Nene Valley colour-coated ware (Fabric EA), forms Cam 305A and Cam 305B. All of these came from the upper fill.

Only two of the small pits or possible post-holes on the site (F151 and F154) contained closely-datable late Roman sherds which can be dated to the late 3rd-4th century (see below).

Pottery recovered from an extensive patch of cover-loam (L2) also contained late Roman pottery. Among 325 g of pottery from this layer are four sherds in oxidised Hadham ware (Fabric CH), including a flask with a frill below the collar and the dish form Cam 317; there is also an Oxford mortarium (Fabric TK) and the flanged bowl form Cam 305B.

Pottery from isolated features, small pits or post-holes

A number of small features produced pottery, commonly consisting of a few small sherds, or just single sherds. Between them, the pottery recovered from these features spans the Late Iron Age and Roman period.

A few sherds were recovered from three small linear features (F186, F187, F205). Of six sherds recovered from F186, one is Late Iron Age (Fabric GTW), while the remainder are early Roman (Fabric RCW), probably of 1st-century date. The single sherd from F187 can only be dated as Roman. Of the three Roman sherds from F205, none need date later than the 1st-2nd/3rd century.

Nine of the small pits or post-holes in the central part of the site produced pottery sherds. There is a single sherd of abraded Late Iron Age grog-tempered ware (Fabric GTW), from the fill of F225. Sherds from many of these features date from the early-mid Roman period. Some of the sherds from F200 and F206 date from the 1st century, possibly from the pre-Flavian period. A single sherd from F149 is probably of 1st- to early 2nd-century date. The pottery from F157, which includes the jar form Cam 268, and F204, which contained a sherd of late Colchester colour-coated ware (Fabric CZ) can both be dated to the early 2nd century or later. Late Roman sherds were recovered from F151 and F154; both features contained a sherd from flanged bowls of form Cam 305B and F151 also contained a sherd of Rettendon-type ware. All three of these sherds can be dated to the late 3rd-4th century. F199 produced two sherds which can only be dated as Roman.

Pottery was recovered from two small pits or post-holes on the north side of the area, ie F254 and F256. The more closely-datable pottery from F254, which includes four sherds from a Dr 24/25 samian cup, can be dated to the pre-Flavian period and to the 1st century. That from F256 is probably also of 1st-century date.

At the south end of the main site was a slot F208 and post-hole F209, both of which produced pottery. The pottery from F208 dates from the early 2nd-3rd/?4th century. Three sherds from F209 can only be dated as Roman.

Catalogue of the Late Iron Age and Roman pottery

F135, ditch

Finds number 265 (192 g), upper fill

Fabric ?CH, 3 sherds from an open bowl, circle of short incised lines on interior around centre of base, late 3rd-4th century/4th century;

Fabric GX, 4 sherds, Roman;

Fabric KX, 1 sherd, Cam 305B, third quarter of the 3rd century-4th century;

Fabric TK, 2 sherds, mid-3rd-4th century.

Pottery dated: late 3rd-4th century, probably 4th century.

Finds number 270 (301 g), upper-mid fill

Fabric BA(EG), 1 sherd, Dr 27, early-mid 2nd century;

Fabric GX, 30 sherds from several pots, Cam ?268 rim, early-mid 2nd to late 3rd/early 4th century, Cam 270B, 1st-2nd/3rd century, jar with rilled shoulder, probably late Roman,

Fabric HZ, 1 sherd, 1st-2nd/3rd century.

Pottery dated: Roman, ?late Roman.

F136, ditch

Finds number 271 (201 g), mid fill

Fabric DJ, 52 sherds, 49 sherds from the base and body of a ?flagon, 3 other sherds from a second pot, 1st-2nd/early 3rd century;

Fabric GX, 4 sherds, possibly early Roman ?1st-2nd century.

Pottery dated: Roman, ?1st-2nd century.

F136?, ditch

Finds number 505 (172 g), machine section on line of F136

Fabric GTW, 4 sherds, including base from a large jar, Late Iron Age.

Pottery dated: Late Iron Age.

F144, ditch

Finds number 314 (166 g), upper-mid fill

Fabric RCW, 21 sherds with a few fragments from 3 pots, base sherd from large ?flask (finds no 272), also sherds from a coarse tempered pot, 1st century.

Pottery dated: Roman, 1st century.

Finds number 272 (2,012 g)

Fabric DZ, 1 sherd, Late Iron Age/Roman;

Fabric GTW or RCW, 12 sherds, partial pot, several joining to make profile, from a carinated bowl, Late Iron Age;

Fabric GX, 1 sherd, silty grey ware, Roman.

Fabric RCW, about 100 sherds, Cam 109 with small point stab marks around shoulder (CAR 10, Fabric GX, types 95-96), sherds from a large ?flask with a flattened shoulder, partial pot, body and base sherds representing much of the pot, rim missing, Cam ?231, sherds from at least one other pot,

Pottery dated: Late Iron Age-early Roman.

F145, pit, upper fill

Finds number 273 (534 g), upper fill

Fabric DJ, 1 sherd, ?1st-2nd century;

Fabric GX, 7 sherds, oxidised grey ware, Roman;

Fabric HZ, 4 sherds from 2 large storage jars, one with decorated shoulder, Cam 270B, 1st-2nd/3rd century.

Pottery dated: Roman, ?1st-2nd century.

Finds number 274 (1,370 g), mid-lower fill

Fabric AJ, 2 sherds, 1st-2nd/early 3rd century;

Fabric CH, 1 sherd, mid-late 3rd to 4th, probably 4th century;

Fabric GB, 1 sherd, Cam 37?B, late 2nd to mid-late 3rd century;

Fabric GX, 2 sherds, Roman;

Fabric ?KX, 1 sherd, early 2nd-3rd/4th century;

Fabric HZ, 16 sherds, Cam 270B, Cam 273, 1st-2nd/3rd century.

Pottery dated: mid-late 3rd to 4th, probably 4th century.

Finds number 292 (382 g), upper fill

Fabric ?AJ, 1 abraded sherd.

Fabric BA(EG) sherds from 2 pots, slightly abraded, early-mid 2nd to mid 3rd century;

Fabric GB, 1 sherd, Cam 37B, late 2nd to mid-late 3rd century;

Fabric GX, 20 sherds, Cam 268 early/mid 2nd-late 3rd/early 4th century;

Fabric MQ, 1 sherd from a pedestal jar, abraded, probably late Roman, ?mid 3rd-4th century.

Pottery dated: late 2nd-3rd/4th, possibly mid 3rd-4th century.

F148, ditch

Finds number 276 (152 g), upper fill

Fabric GTW, 5 sherds, Cam 223 bowl with broad lattice decoration on body, rim and shoulder dark-grey, body red-brown, Late Iron Age.

Finds number 282 (367 g), upper-mid fill

Fabric GTW, 42 sherd, about 40 sherds and fragments from the base body and rim of a ripple-shouldered bowl, partial pot with much of pot present, also 2 sherds probably from another pot, Late Iron Age.

Finds number 394 (202 g), upper (silt) fill

Fabric GTW, 13 sherds all from one pot, small jar or bowl with rilled body, partial pot, joining sherds from upper body and rim, dark grey surfaces and dark grey fabric, Late Iron Age.

Fabric HZ(GT), 1 sherd, probably 1st century.

Finds number 473 (455 g), Sx 6

Fabric AA, 1 large sherd, shoulder from a Dressel 2-4 amphora in orange-red fabric, Late Iron Age-early Roman, 1st century.

Finds number 489 (29 g), lower fill

Fabric GTW, 3 sherds from one pot, Late Iron Age.

F149, pit/post-hole

Finds number 277 (7 g), upper fill

Fabric ?DJ, very abraded rim from a bowl, Cam ?326/331, 1st-?early 2nd century.

F151, post-hole

Finds number 278 (80 g)

Fabric GX, 3 sherds, abraded, possibly oxidised sherds, 305B, third quarter of the 3rd century-4th century.

Finds number 305 (34 g), upper fill
Fabric RET, rim sherd, grey exterior, red-brown fabric, tempered with sand and sparse crushed flint, grooves around shoulder, late 3rd to mid-late 4th century.

F154, pit/post-hole

Finds number 280 (114 g), upper fill
Fabric AA, 1 sherd, 1st-2nd/early 3rd century,
Fabric GX, 1 sherd, Roman.
Pottery dated: Roman, ?1st-2nd/early 3rd century.

Finds number 377 (42 g)
Fabric ?GA, 1 sherd, early 2nd-4th century;
Fabric GX, 2 sherds, Roman;
Fabric KX, 1 sherd from a flanged bowl, Cam 305B, late 3rd-4th century.
Pottery dated: Roman, late 3rd-4th century.

F157, pit/post-hole

Finds number 281 (25 g), upper fill
Fabric GX, 1 base sherd from a jar or bowl, Roman.

Finds number 320 (114 g), upper fill
Fabric GX, 1 sherd, rim, probably Cam 268, early-mid 2nd-late 3rd/4th century.

F161, ditch/gully

Finds number 288 (1 g), Sx 1 upper fill
Fabric GX, 1 small sherd, probably Roman grey ware.

F163, ditch,

Finds number 284 (200 g), Sx 1 mid-upper fill
Fabric DJ, 2 sherds, slightly abraded, 1st-2nd/early 3rd century;
Fabric GTW, 4 sherds from at least 2 pots, Late Iron Age;
Fabric GX, 8 sherds from several pots, Roman;
Fabric ?MQ, 1 sherd, Roman.
Roman, possibly early Roman.

Finds number 285 (103 g), Sx 1 lower fill
Fabric GTW, 2 sherds, Late Iron Age;
Fabric GX, 8 sherds, Cam 266, 1st-early 2nd century;
Fabric HD, 1 sherd, Cam 259, 1st century.
Roman, 1st century.

Finds number 371 (649 g), Sx 1 upper fill
Fabric CL(NF), 3 sherds, 2 joining, from a beaker with shoulder moulding, 3rd century
(*CAR* 10, 275);
Fabric DJ, 4 sherds, 1st-2nd/early 3rd century;
Fabric GTW, 10 sherds, includes sherds from a bowl with a simple flat topped rim, Cam ?255,
Late Iron Age.;
Fabric RCW, 4 sherds, 1st century;
Fabric GX, 15 sherds, rims from 2 jars, Cam ?299, early Antonine-4th century, Roman;
Fabric HZ, 6 small sherds, Cam 270B, 1st-2nd century.
Pottery dated: 3rd century, with residual Late Iron Age and early Roman.

Finds number 373 (33 g), Sx 1 lower fill
Fabric GX, 8 sherds, abraded, Roman, ?1st-2nd century.

F164, ditch

Finds number 286 (200 g), Sx 2
Fabric GX, 1 sherd, Roman;
Fabric HZ(GT), 1 sherd, Late Iron Age/early Roman.
Pottery dated: Roman, ?1st century.
Finds number 498 (112 g), Sx 3
Fabric GX, 2 sherds, Roman;
Fabric RET, 1 large sherd from a base, late 3rd to mid-late 4th century.
Pottery dated: late 3rd to mid-late 4th century.

F165, ditch – post-medieval

Finds number 396 (23 g), Sx 3
Fabric GX, sherds from a large pot.
Pottery dated: Roman – residual.

F172, pit,

Finds number 289 (834 g), upper fill

Fabric EA, 1 sherd, Cam 308, early-mid 3rd to 4th century; Fabric GA, 2 sherds, Cam 39, Cam 305A, third quarter of the 3rd century-4th century; Fabric GX, 26 sherds, includes form Cam 218 (residual), Roman; Fabric HZ, 3 sherds, Cam 273, 1st-2nd/3rd century; Fabric KX, 2 sherds, Cam 305B, third quarter of the 3rd century-4th century; Fabric RET, 7 sherds, probably from 2 pots, late 3rd to mid-late 4th century.

Pottery dated: third quarter of the 3rd century-4th century.

F173, pit,

Finds number 291 (21 g)

Fabric GX (or DJ), oxidised rim sherd, slightly abraded, Cam 266?, 1st-early 2nd century.

Finds number 317 (27 g), mid fill

Fabric GX, 1 sherd, Roman.

Finds number 378 (264 g), upper (grey silt) fill

Fabric BA(EG), 1 sherd, Dr 38, mid-late 2nd to early-mid 3rd century;

Fabric CZ (unsourced), 1 sherd flake with abraded red colour-coat on one side, Roman.

Fabric GX, 3 sherds, Cam ?299 bowl, early Antonine-4th century;

Fabric HZ, 2 sherds.

Pottery dated: mid-late 2nd to early-mid 3rd/4th century.

F176, ditch – post-Roman

Finds number 311 (77 g)

Fabric GX, 5 sherds, Roman;

Fabric HZ, 1 sherd, scorched or burnt, 1st-2nd/3rd century.

Pottery dated: Roman – residual.

F180, ditch – post-medieval

Finds number 300 (2 g)

Fabric GX, 1 sherd, Roman – residual.

Finds number 313, Sx 1 (518 g)

Fabric GX, 14 small sherd and fragments, Roman – residual.

F181, ditch – post-medieval?

Finds number 301, Sx 1 (132 g)

Fabric AJ, 3 sherds, 1st-2nd/early 3rd century;

Fabric CH, 1 sherd, Dr 38 flanged bowl, mid-late 3rd to 4th, probably 4th century.

Pottery dated: mid-late 3rd to 4th, probably 4th century; residual Roman.

F182, ditch

Finds number 302, Sx 1 (1 g)

Fabric ?DJ, 1 small abraded sherd or possibly a tile fragment, Roman.

F183, silt spread (see L2)

Finds number 304 (86 g)

Fabric GB, 1 sherd, Cam 39, early-mid 2nd to mid-late 3rd century;

Fabric TN, 1 sherd, grey fabric with cream slip and quartz grits, mid-late 3rd to 4th century,

?later 4th century.

Pottery dated: mid-late 3rd to 4th century, ?later 4th century.

F185, pit

Finds number 331 (5 g)

Fabric GX, 1 sherd, Roman.

F186, slot/gully

Finds number 306, Sx 1 (7 g)

Fabric GTW, 1 sherd, Late Iron Age.

Finds number 307 Sx 1 (12 g)

Fabric RCW, 5 sherds, 1st century.

F187, slot/gully

Finds number 308 (4 g)

Fabric GX, 1 sherd, Roman.

F190, pit

Finds number 318 (19 g)
Fabric GX, 1 sherd, Roman.

F191, ditch

Finds number 400, Sx 1 (16 g)
Fabric GX, 1 rim sherd, from a Cam 243-244/246 bowl, 1st-early 2nd century.

Finds number 380, Sx 2 (214 g)
Fabric GX, 42 sherds and fragments representing much of a small jar or bowl with simple everted rim, partial pot, Roman.

Finds number 347, Sx 3 (69 g)
Fabric GTW, 4 sherds, Late Iron Age;
Fabric GX, 1 sherd, Roman.
Pottery dated Roman with Late Iron Age.

Finds number 431, Sx 3 (145 g)
Fabric DJ, 7 sherds, 1st-2nd/3rd century;
Fabric GB, 1 sherd, Cam 37B, late 2nd to mid-late 3rd century;
Fabric GTW, 1 sherd, c 50 BC-AD 43;
Fabric GX, 10 sherds, Roman;
Fabric KX, 1 sherd, Cam 37/38, probably late 2nd-3rd century.
Pottery dated: late 2nd to mid-late 3rd century.

F199, pit/post-hole

Finds number 321 (3 g)
Fabric GX, 2 small sherds, Roman.

F200, pit

Finds number 446 (59 g)
Fabric AJ, 1 sherd, 1st-2nd/early 3rd century;
Fabric RCW, 1 sherd, probably 1st century.
Pottery dated: 1st-2nd/early 3rd century.

F200, post-hole

Finds number 383 (3 g)
Fabric CZ, 1 sherd, colour-coat abraded, early 2nd to mid-late 3rd century.

F205, pit

Finds number 381, Sx 1 (10 g)
Fabric HZ(GT) Late Iron Age/early Roman.

Finds number 382, Sx 1 (2 g)
Fabric DJ, oxidised sandy ware, abraded, Roman, probably 1st-2nd century.

Finds number 391, Sx 3 (4 g)
Fabric GX, 1 sherd, Roman, possibly 1st-2nd century.

F206, pit

Finds number 384 (119 g)
Fabric DJ, 1 sherd, abraded, bowl with out-turned flattened rim and groove in rim edge, ?1st-early 2nd/2nd century;
Fabric GX, 6 sherds, 1 rim from a large jar/storage jar, sharply carinated body sherd, possibly Cam ?212-217, Late Iron Age/early Roman, or Cam ?69B/320, or Cam 327, Flavian-2nd century.
Pottery dated: Roman, some pot possibly later 1st-2nd century, overall probably 2nd century or later.

F208, slot

Finds number 387, Sx 2 (119 g)
Fabric DJ, 2 sherds;
Fabric KX, 1 sherd, early 2nd-3rd/4th century;
Fabric HZ, 2 sherds, joining, very abraded.
Pottery dated: Roman, ?early 2nd-3rd/4th century.

F209, post-hole

Finds number 388 (68 g)
Fabric GX, 3 sherds, Roman.

F211, pit/post-hole

Finds number 390 (8 g), upper-mid fill

Fabric GX, sandy fabric with red core and grey surfaces, Roman.

F215, ditch

Finds number 393, Sx 1 (67 g)

Fabric GX, 1 sherd, thick sherd, very hard fabric, Roman.

F218, ditch

Finds number 463, Sx 2 (34 g)

Fabric GTW, 2 sherd from a straight-sided dish/bowl with small groove below rim, Late Iron Age;

Fabric GX, 1 sherd, Roman.

Pottery dated: Roman.

F219, ditch

Finds number 398, Sx 1 (5 g)

Fabric GX, possibly RET 1 sherd, dated Roman (?late 3rd to mid-late 4th century).

Finds number 401, Sx 2 (252 g)

Fabric GX, possibly RET, 2 sherds, dated Roman (?late 3rd to mid-late 4th century).

F221, ditch

Finds number 453, Sx 5 (199 g) lower fill

Fabric DJ, 18 sherds from a Cam 140 flagon, body slightly distorted, partial pot, sherds from body, handle and rim, some sherds join, Claudio-Neronian/Flavian.

Finds number 495, Sx 1 (13 g) lower fill

Fabric GX, 1 sherd, dark sandy sherd, wheel turned, no obvious temper, Roman.

Finds number 497, Sx 1 (87 g)

Fabric GX, 2 sherd, Roman.

Finds number 416, Sx 2 (15 g) surface/upper fill

Fabric GX, 1 sherd, Roman.

Finds number 425, Sx 2 (460 g) mid fill

Fabric DJ, 30 sherds, 1st-2nd/early 3rd century;

Fabric RCW, 50 sherds, Cam 119 (probably 2 examples, 1 burnt), Cam 266, 1st-early 2nd century.

Pottery dated: Roman, 1st century.

Finds number 438, Sx 2 (460 g)

Fabric DJ, Cam 154/155 flagon, Claudio-Neronian, most of neck and body, base missing, partial pot.

Finds number 439, Sx 2 (250 g)

Fabric RCW, 5 joining sherds forming part of the lower half of a jar, partial pot, probably 1st century.

Finds number 436, Sx 3 (149 g)

Fabric GX, 9 sherds, from 3 pots, Cam ?266, 1st-early 2nd century.

Finds number 467, Sx 3 (247 g)

Fabric RCW, 7 sherds, Cam 218 bowl, 1st-early 2nd century, probably 1st century;

Fabric GX, 16 sherds, Cam 221 bowl, 1st-early 2nd century, probably early Roman, 1st century.

Pottery dated: Roman, 1st century.

Finds number 367 Sx 3/4 (216 g) fill at surface

Fabric BA(SG), 15 sherds, 13 sherds from a Dr 27 cup, also 2 from another Dr 27 with groove inside rim, 1st century;

Fabric GX, 19 sherds from 2 or 3 pots, flat rim probably from a Cam 243-244/246, 1st-early 2nd century.

Pottery dated: probably 1st century.

Finds number 422, Sx 4 (114 g) upper fill

BA(?EG), 1 base sherd, probably Dr 31, mid-late 2nd to ?mid 3rd century;

Fabric GTW, 1 sherd, Late Iron Age;

Fabric GX, 7 sherds, Cam 24244/246, 1st-early 2nd century;
Fabric RCW, 1 sherd, 1st century.
Pottery dated: early Roman with one sherd ?mid 2nd-mid 3rd century.

Finds number 432, Sx 4 (229 g) upper-mid fill
Fabric GX, Cam 234-244/246 (2 pots), 1st-early 2nd century, Cam 266 (2 pots), 1st-early 2nd century, 1 abraded rim sherd, Cam ?268, early-mid 2nd to late 3rd/early 4th century.
Pottery dated: 1st-early 2nd/?mid 2nd century.

Finds number 433, Sx 4 (503 g) mid-lower fill
Fabric DJ, 7 sherds, probably from a Cam 140 collared flagon, Claudio-Neronian/Flavian;
Fabric GX, 54 sherds and fragments, Cam 108 (body sherds), Cam 266 (upper part of pot), both dated 1st-early 2nd century;
Fabric RCW, 6 sherds, 1st century.
Pottery dated: 1st century, ?pre-Flavian.

Finds number 459, Sx 4 (370 g)
Fabric ?AJ, 1 sherd, 1st-early 3rd century;
Fabric DJ, 4 sherds, 1st-2nd/early 3rd century;
Fabric GTW, 2 sherds, c 50 BC-AD 43;
Fabric GX, about 30 sherds and fragments, Roman;
Fabric RCW, about 40 sherds and fragments, Cam 218, 1st century.
Pottery dated: Roman, ?1st century.

Finds number 459, Sx 4 (860 g)
Fabric AJ, 3 sherds, 1st-2nd/early 3rd century;
Fabric BPW, 1 sherd, Late Iron Age to pre-Flavian;
Fabric DJ, 4 sherds, 1st-2nd/3rd century;
Fabric GTW, 6 sherds, sherd joins with F235 Sx 5 (finds no 460), Late Iron Age;
Fabric GX, 14 sherds, Cam 227, 1st-early 2nd century;
Fabric RCW, 14 sherds, Cam 218, 1st-early 2nd century, 1st century.
Pottery dated: Roman, 1st century.

Finds number 366, Sx 5 (260 g)
Fabric DJ, 6 sherds, joining sherds from footring base and lower body, large body sherds, 1st-2nd century;
Fabric GX, 10 sherds, Cam 108, 1st-early 2nd century, 3 sherds from storage jar.
Pottery dated: Roman, ?1st century.

Finds number 454, Sx 5 (442 g)
Fabric BX(SG), 2 sherds, Dr 30, large sherd decorated with leaves and tendrils, probably pre-Flavian;
Fabric DJ, 24 sherds, many joining, neck of flagon, Cam 140, Claudio-Neronian/Flavian;
Fabric GX, 30 sherds, Cam 108 and Cam 218, dated 1st-early 2nd century.
Pottery dated: 1st-early 2nd, ?pre-Flavian.

Finds number 349, Sx 6 (274 g)
Fabric DZ, 1 sherd;
Fabric GX, 3 sherds, probably early Roman;
Fabric HZ, 1 sherd, 1st-2nd century;
Fabric RCW, Cam 259, coarse grey fabric with grog- and organic-temper, 1st century, ?pre-Flavian, Cam 218, 1st-early 2nd century.
Pottery dated: Roman 1st-early 2nd century, ?pre-Flavian.

Finds number 472, Sx 6 (56 g)
Fabric GTW, sherd from a large storage jar, Late Iron Age.

Finds number 484, Sx 6 (1,111 g) upper fill
Fabric DJ, 1 sherd, Cam 140 flagon top, burnt, pre-Flavian;
Fabric GTW, 1 sherd, ?burnt, Late Iron Age;
Fabric GX, 16 sherds, Roman;
Fabric TZ, 33 sherds, much of a Cam 195, joining sherds, much of body and rim including spout, partial pot, Neronian-Flavian.
Pottery dated: Neronian-Flavian.

Finds number 485, Sx 6 (465 g) mid fill
Fabric GTW, 2 sherds, Late Iron Age;

Fabric GX, 15 sherds, 10 grey sherds from a Cam 108 beaker, much of pot present, partial pot, 1st-early 2nd century, other sherds sandy, one with simple rim ?Late Iron Age;
Fabric HD, 19 sherds, Cam 258 cooking pot, much of vessel present, partial pot, Late Iron Age-Claudian.
Pottery dated: 1st-early 2nd century, ?Claudio-Neronian.

Finds number 486, Sx 6 (191 g) lower fill
Fabric GTW, 10 sherds, Cam 259, grey fabric (possibly Fabric RCW) 1st century;
Fabric RCW, 1 sherd, 1st century.
Pottery dated: Roman, 1st century.

F222 (F140 machine section of F222), ditch
Finds number 442 Sx 5 (52 g)
Fabric GX, 4 joining sherds, Roman.

Finds number 457, Sx 8 (5,582 g)
Fabric GX, 1 sherd, Roman;
Fabric HZ, about 40 sherds, including many large sherds, from a Cam 273 large storage jar, partial pot, part of finds number 268, Roman 1st-2nd/3rd century.

Finds number 268 (F140), Sx 8 (7344 g)
Fabric HZ, Cam 273, partial or nearly-whole pot, grey Roman fabric, part of finds no 457, 1st-2nd/3rd century.

Finds number 493, Sx 9 (11 g)
Fabric GB, 1 sherd, Cam 37B, late 2nd to mid-late 3rd century.

Finds number 344, Sx 10 (3 g)
Fabric GX, 1 sherd, sandy fabric, possibly Fabric GB, Roman, ?2nd-3rd century.

F223, ditch
Finds number 510, Sx 3 (10 g)
Fabric DJ, 1 sherd, base from a flagon, very abraded, possibly imported white ware but not clear, 1st-2nd century, ?1st century.

F225, pit
Finds number 449 (2 g)
Fabric GTW, 1 sherd, abraded, Late Iron Age.

F228, ditch
Finds number 402, Sx 1 (42 g) upper fill
Fabric GX, 3 sherds, Roman.

F229, ditch
Finds number 404, Sx 1 (86 g)
Fabric GX, 2 sherds, abraded, Roman;
Fabric RCW, 3 sherds, 2 from rim and 1 thick body sherd, with burnt organic temper;
Fabric RET, 6 sherds, abraded, late 3rd to mid-late 4th century.
Pottery dated: late 3rd to mid-late 4th century.

F234, ditch
Finds number 412, Sx 2 (14 g) upper fill
Fabric GX, 2 abraded sherds, probably Roman grey ware.

F235, ditch
Finds number 418, Sx 2 (62 g) mid-lower fill
Fabric GTW, 6 sherds, Late Iron Age.

Finds number 429, Sx 2 (11 g)
Fabric GTW, 1 sherd, Late Iron Age.

Finds number 468, Sx 2 (42 g) stratification poor
Fabric GTW, 3 sherds Late Iron Age;
Fabric GX, 1 sherd, Roman;
Fabric HZ, 1 sherd 1st-2nd/3rd century.
Pottery dated: Roman, ?early Roman.

Finds number 455, Sx 3 (140 g) part of **F242**
Fabric GTW, 5 sherds, 2 ripple-shouldered bowls, Cam 229, Late Iron Age.

Finds number 460, Sx 5 (388 g)
Fabric GTW, 20 sherds from 2-3 pots, Late Iron Age;
Fabric HZ(GT) 1 sherd, Late Iron Age.

F236, ditch

Finds number 413, Sx 1 (5 g)
Fabric GX, 1 sherd, Roman.

F241, ditch

Finds number 420 (371 g), intersection with **F191**
Fabric AJ, 1 sherd, 1st-2nd/early 3rd century;
Fabric BA(?SG), 1 fragment, ?1st century;
Fabric DJ, 8 sherds, mostly small, Cam 275 with small handle, Claudio-Neronian to Flavian,
joins with F241, finds no 464;
Fabric GB, 1 sherd, Cam 40B, early 2nd to mid-late 3rd century;
Fabric GTW, 1 sherd, Late Iron Age;
Fabric GX, 7 sherds, Roman.
Pottery dated: early 2nd to mid-late 3rd century.

Finds number 464, Sx 1 (318 g), mid fill
Fabric DJ, 30 sherds, mostly small, Cam 275, Claudio-Neronian to Flavian, joins with finds
number 420 F241/F191 intersection;
Fabric GX, 33 sherds, Roman, ?1st-2nd century;
Fabric HZ, 14 fragments, 1st-2nd/3rd century.
Pottery dated: ?early Roman.

Finds number 465, Sx 1 (55 g), upper-mid fill
Fabric GTW, 1 sherd, Late Iron Age;
Fabric GX, 2 sherds, ?early Roman;
Fabric RCW, 1 sherd, 1st century;
Fabric HZ, 1 sherd, 1st-2nd/3rd century,
Fabric RET, 1 sherd late 3rd-mid-late 4th century.
Pottery dated: Roman, one sherd late 3rd-mid to late 4th century.

Finds number 421, Sx 2 (95 g), upper-mid fill
Fabric AA, 1 sherd, ?1st-mid 2nd century, though possibly Dressel 20 (Fabric AJ);
Fabric BA(SG) 1 sherd, 1st century;
Fabric BA(CG) 1 sherd, 2nd century;
Fabric BX(CG) 1 sherd, Dr 37 bowl, 2nd century;
Fabric DJ, 5 sherds, 1st-2nd/early 3rd century;
Fabric GTW, 1 sherd, Late Iron Age;
Fabric GX, 5 sherds, Cam 218, 1st-early 2nd century.
Pottery dated: 2nd century.

Finds number 430, Sx 2 (278 g), mid-lower fill
Fabric DJ, 1 sherd, 1st-2nd/early 3rd century;
Fabric GX, 35 sherds, Cam 266 jar, 1st-early 2nd century, Cam ?260B, pre-Flavian;
Fabric ?KX, bowl rim with triangular section, Cam ?37A, early 2nd-early 3rd century.
Pottery dated: ?early 2nd-early 3rd century.

Finds number 475, Sx 3 (12 g), upper-mid fill
Fabric GB, 2 sherds from a chamfered bowl, early 2nd to mid-late 3rd century;
Fabric GX, 3 sherds, 1 sherd, oxidised, possibly from a storage jar of 1st-2nd century date,
Roman; Fabric HZ, 2 sherds, one rim sherd, Cam 256, Late Iron Age to pre-Flavian, 1st-
2nd/3rd century.
Pottery dated: early 2nd-3rd century

Finds number 476, Sx 3 (173 g), lower fill
Fabric DZ, 1 sherd, ?Late Iron Age or Roman;
Fabric GTW or RCW, 10 sherds from one pot, a carinated bowl, Late Iron Age or early
Roman.
Pottery dated: ?Late Iron Age or early Roman.

Finds number 480, Sx 4 (22 g), mid fill
Fabric GX, 2 sherds, grey fabric, Roman;
Fabric HZ, 1 sherd, fabric contains black burnt organic temper, ?1st century.
Pottery dated: Roman, ?1st century.

Finds number 504, Sx 4 (55 g), mid fill
Fabric GX, 4 sherds from 2 pots, Roman.

Finds number 481, Sx 5 (81 g), upper-mid fill
Fabric GX, 17 sherds, 1 sherd oxidised sandy grey ware, 16 body sherds from one small jar or beaker, Roman;
Fabric RCW, 1 sherd, 1st century.
Pottery dated: Roman, ?early Roman.

Finds number 482, Sx 5 (115 g), mid-lower fill
BA(SG) 14 sherds, all from one Dr 24/25 cup, partial pot, pre-Flavian;
Fabric ?CS, platter probably of form Cam 17, very abraded red-brown sandy fabric, 1st century, probably pre-Flavian;
Fabric GTW, 2 sherds, Late Iron Age.
Pottery dated: 1st century, pre-Flavian

Finds number 339, Sx 6 (187 g)
Fabric DJ, 6 sherds, 5 sherds from a small flanged bowl, ?Cam 312 or 317, or a small mortarium, abraded, also 1 other sherd, 1st-2nd/3rd century;
Fabric CZ (unsourced), 2 sherds from a closed mouth pot, Roman;
Fabric GX, 10 sherds, Cam ?268, early-mid 2nd-late 3rd/early 4th century; rims from 2 small ?flasks.
Pottery dated: probably early-mid 2nd century to 3rd/4th century.

Finds number 341, Sx 6 (35 g), mid-lower fill
Fabric DJ or DZ, sherd from the shoulder of an enclosed pot with a shallow groove around the shoulder, ?1st-2nd century;
Fabric GX, 2 sherds, Roman.
Pottery dated: Roman, ?1st-2nd century.

Finds number 342, Sx 6 (772 g), lower fill
Fabric DJ, 3 sherd from a lid, sandy orange fabric, 2 sherds join; 1st-2nd century;
Fabric RCW, 2 sherds, 1st century.
Roman, 1st century.

F242, ditch

Finds number 435, Sx 1 (15 g)
Fabric GTW, 1 sherd, ?rippled bowl, Late Iron Age;
Fabric RCW, 4 fragments, ?early Roman.
Pottery dated ?Late Iron Age or early Roman.

Finds number 487 Sx 5 (59 g) recovered from machine section
Fabric GTW, 5 sherds from 2 or 3 different pots, Late Iron Age.

F243, ?pit

Finds number 409 (5 g)
Fabric DJ, oxidised sandy ware, Roman.

F245, pit

Finds number 450 (30 g)
Fabric GTW, 1 sherd, bowl with flattened out splayed rim, thickened at the edge and with a small lip on the top edge, grey fabric with dark grog-temper, red-brown surfaces, possibly variant on bowl forms Cam 43-44 (Hawkes & Hull 1947, 223-4);
Fabric GX, 3 sherds, Roman.
Pottery dated: Roman.

F246, ditch

Finds number 346, Sx 5 (12 g)
Fabric GTW or RCW, 3 small abraded sherds, Late Iron Age or early Roman;
Fabric GX, 1 sherd, pale grey ware, Roman.
Pottery dated: Roman, ?early Roman.

F247, ditch

Finds number 330 (102 g) lower fill
Fabric DZ, 3 sherds from a Butt Beaker, imported, Tiberian to Claudio-Neronian;
Fabric GTW, 5 sherds, 4 joining from a Cam 218 bowl, Late Iron Age;
Fabric GX, 2 sherds in pale grey ware, Roman.
Pottery dated: Roman, Late Iron Age with ?early Roman.

Finds number 466, Sx 1 (18 g)
Fabric GTW, 1 sherd, Late Iron Age;
Fabric GX, 1 sherd, Roman.
Pottery dated: Roman, Late Iron Age with ?early Roman.

Finds number 477, Sx 2 (102 g), machine section
Fabric GTW, 6 sherds all from one pot, Late Iron Age.

Finds number 333, Sx 3 (30 g)
Fabric ?GTW, sandy sherds, 3 sherds from 2 pots, one sherd from a ?bowl with faint
burnished lattice decoration, probably Late Iron Age.

Finds number 329, Sx 4 (7 g), lower fill – ?fill of **F241**
Fabric HZ, 2 fragments, soft fabric with organic-temper, 1st-?2nd century.
Pottery dated: ?Late Iron Age/Roman.

F250, ditch

Finds number 343, Sx 1 (927 g), fill at surface
Fabric GTW, 4 sherds, Cam 211, Late Iron Age;
Fabric GX, 1 small sherd, Roman;
Fabric HZ (GTW) 9 sherds from 3 pots, sherds from each of the same pots join, 5 sherds from
one Cam 270B, Late Iron Age.
Pottery dated: Late Iron Age with 1 small sherd probably Roman.

Finds number 478, Sx 1 (224 g), upper-mid fill
Fabric GTW, 7 sherds, including rim sherd and base sherds, and several fragments, probably
from 3 pots, Late iron Age.

Finds number 479, Sx 1 (68 g), fill at surface
Fabric GTW or RCW, 5 sherds, thick sandy sherds with sparse fine dark grog-temper, ?Late
Iron Age or early Roman.

Finds number 483, Sx 2 (50 g)
Fabric GX, 13 small sherds and many small fragments, 4 small degraded sherds from a
cordoned pot, probably burnt, probably 1st century, 9 small sherds and other fragments,
probably burnt, possibly Roman ?1st century.

Finds number 336, Sx 3 (5 g), mid fill
Fabric GX, 1 sherd, very abraded, very light, possibly burnt, Roman.

Finds number 340, Sx 3 (10 g), upper fill
Fabric GTW, 1 sherd, Late Iron Age.

Finds number 327, Sx 1 (37 g) lower fill
Fabric GTW, 3 sherds, one sherd with zig-zag burnished line, Late Iron Age.

Finds number 328, Sx 1 (12 g)
Fabric GTW, 3 sherds, Late Iron Age;
Fabric GX, 1 sherd, Roman;
Fabric HZ, with sparse grog-temper 1 sherd 1st-2nd/3rd century.
Pottery dated: Late Iron Age with 1 sherd Roman.

F254, post-hole

Finds number 332 (25 g)
Fabric BA(SG), 4 sherds from a Dr 24/25 cup, pre-Flavian,
Fabric GTW, 1 sherd, Late Iron Age.
Pottery dated: Roman, pre-Flavian.

Finds number 359 (154 g)
Fabric DJ, 1 sherd 1st-2nd/3rd century;
Fabric GTW, 2 large sherds, Late Iron Age;
Fabric GX, 1 sherd, Roman;
Fabric RCW, 3 sherds, 1st century.
Pottery dated: Roman ?1st century.

F259, pit

Finds number 351 (7 g)
Fabric GX, 1 sherd, Roman.

F265, ditch

Finds number 356, Sx 1 (1 g)

Fabric ?RCW, 2 small sherds or fragments, probably both from the same pot, ?1st century.

Finds number 358, Sx 2 (7 g)

Fabric GTW, 1 sherd, rim, Late Iron Age.

L2, natural silt deposit

Finds number 462 (325 g)

Fabric CH, 4 abraded sherds, Cam 317, late 3rd-4th century and jar or flask with frill below collar, late 3rd-4th, probably 4th century;

Fabric GX, 15 sherds, Cam 268, early/mid 2nd-late 3rd/early 4th century;

Fabric KX, 1 sherd, Cam 305B late 3rd-4th century;

Fabric TK, 1 sherd, Oxford mortarium with plain upright rim and hooked flange (*CAR 10*, 194 Type 44) mid-late 3rd to 4th century.

Pottery dated: late 3rd-4th, probably 4th/late 4th century

Table 4: pottery vessel types and forms recorded.

vessel types	recorded numbered form types
amphoras	Dressel 2-4, Dressel 20
beaker	Cam 108, Cam 109
bowl	Dr 30 (samian), Dr 31 (samian), Dr 37 (samian), Cam ?37A, Cam 37B, Cam 37/38, Dr 38 (samian), Dr 38 (Fabric CH), Cam 69B/320 or 327, Cam ?212-217, Cam 218, Cam 221, Cam 223, Cam 227, Cam 229, Cam 243-244/246, Cam 299, Cam 305A, Cam 305B, Cam 308, Cam 312 or 317, Cam ?326/331
cooking pots/jars	Cam ?255, Cam 256, Cam 258, Cam 259, Cam 260B, Cam 266, Cam 268
cup	Dr 24/25 (samian), Dr 27 (samian)
dish	Cam 39, Cam 40B, Cam 317
flagon	Cam 140, Cam 154/155
flask	Cam ?231
large storage jars	Cam 270B, Cam 273, Cam 275
mortaria	Cam 195, Oxford mortaria with plain upright rim and hooked flange – <i>CAR 10</i> , 194 Type 44
platter	Cam 17 (Fabric CS)

Discussion

Late Iron Age

The Late Iron Age grog-tempered pottery is of some significance. It should be noted that previous excavation of other areas of the site produced small quantities of Late Iron Age grog-tempered ware, including a small number of partial pots, which are also discussed below (CAT Report 383, 21). Also recovered at that time were sherds from a platter, imported butt-beakers and large flagon of North Gaulish origin, and these pots can be dated to the Late Iron Age or the early post-conquest, Roman period. The quantity of Late Iron Age pottery from the 2007 excavation, and its association with one of the ditches, more clearly indicates a distinct Late Iron Age phase preceding the occupation in the Roman period. Other sites in the immediate area with pottery of Late Iron Age or early Roman date that include Gaulish imports, are the Abbotstone site to the north of Birch Pit (section 7.3 in CAT Report 312) and the Birch airfield compost site (CAT Report 326, 12) just to the west of the present site.

Of interest among the pottery associated with the fill of the ditch F148, all of which can be dated as Late Iron Age, is a large shoulder sherd from a Dressel 2-4 amphora (from Sx 6, finds no 473) in an orange-red fabric (Fabric AA). It should be noted that the stratigraphical context of the amphora sherd is poor and, while a late Iron Age context is likely, it is not certain. Dressel 2-4 amphoras (Cam 182/183) are most common on early Roman sites, but were imported into Britain during the Late Iron Age (Tyers 1999). In the Late Iron Age they are commonly associated with

burials of high status; for example, there were eleven, possibly thirteen, of these amphoras present in the Lexden Tumulus, dated c 15-10 BC (Foster 1986, 130, 178). However, they are also recorded from the settlement at Camulodunum in contexts attributed to the Late Iron Age (Period 1; Hawkes & Hull 1947, 251) which are dated c AD 5-43 (Niblett 1985, 3).

Roman

The Roman pottery fabrics and forms recorded potentially span the whole of the Roman period of the 1st-4th centuries, although the latest-dated fabric and form types, generally datable at Colchester to the late 4th century, were not recorded. However, some of these latest-dated Roman pottery fabric types (Oxfordshire-type red colour-coated ware and late shell-tempered ware) have been recorded during previous excavations on the site (CAT Report 383, 18-23).

The majority of the pottery recovered is locally-made coarse wares. There is a small number of imports to the site from British regional and Continental potteries. In the 1st-2nd/mid 3rd century, these were mainly small numbers of fine table ware pots, ie samian, and some containers for imported commodities, ie amphoras. The small quantity of samian includes two mould-decorated vessels, one from South Gaul (Dr 30) and one from Central Gaul (Dr 37). Other samian forms are from South Gaul, ie Dr 27 (2 examples) and Dr 24/25 (2 examples) and from East Gaul, ie Dr 27, Dr 31 and Dr 38. None of the Central Gaulish plain samian could be identified to a specific form type. The amphoras consist of a small number of sherds of Dressel 20 olive oil amphora and two sherds from an unidentified amphora type or types. There is also a sherd from a Cam 17 platter, from F241 (finds no 482), which is probably Pompeian-red ware (Fabric CS), and probably a pre-Flavian import. Of note are three sherds from a Rhenish ware beaker from Trier (Fabric CL(NF)). This came from F163 (finds no 371), and can be dated to the 3rd century (CAR 10, 275). The late Roman period, c mid-late 3rd to 4th century, saw a greater number regional imports, these from three sources, ie the Oxford region, the Nene Valley and the Hadham potteries. The Oxford region products are mortaria (Fabric TK and Fabric TN). To these can be added a very small quantity of Rettendon-type ware, a fabric type which is absent from Colchester itself. Rettendon-type ware is a fabric type centred on east central Essex (Going 1987, 10), the closest known production to Birch Pit being a kiln at Inworth, near Kelvedon (Going 1987, 78).

No special-purpose pots were identified, such as the cheese press (form Cam 199) or pots modified for special purposes such as having post-firing holes made through the base or body. However, single examples of both of these were recorded among the assemblage recovered from the earlier phase of excavation at Birch Pit (CAT Report 383, 22 and table 8).

The date of the latest pottery from Birch Pit is of some interest as the pottery recovered during excavations at the Abbotstone site in 1999-2001 – the only other isolated rural settlement site close to Colchester to have been extensively excavated – indicated that there was a rapid decline after c AD 150, with no evidence for activity in the 3rd-4th century (section 7.2 in CAT Report 312). Also other rural farmstead sites within the area of the Iron Age *oppidum*, closer to the Roman town, were abandoned during the 3rd century, ie at the Kirkee McMunn Barracks site (Shimmin 1998); Colchester Garrison Areas 2, 6,10 (CAT Report 292, 94-5); and Colchester Garrison Site E (CAT Report 412, forthcoming). The latest-dated pottery types from Birch Pit can only be dated to the late 3rd-4th century, although the oxidised Hadham ware sherds (Fabric CH), most probably date to the 4th century. No sherds of the latest closely-datable pottery types recorded at Colchester were recovered during this phase of excavation, ie Mayen ware, Oxfordshire red-colour coated ware, Romano-Saxon pottery forms or late shell-tempered ware dating to the late 4th-century date (CAR 10, 444, 497). However, Oxfordshire red-colour coated ware and late shell-tempered ware have been recovered from the site during previous phases of excavation (CAT Report 383, 18-23). Also, with the possible exception of late shell-tempered ware, these latest-dated fabrics are generally not particularly common. The pottery assemblage from Birch Pit does not suggest any decline here in the late Roman period.

Partial pots

Of interest are the presence of a number of partial pots. These divide into two groups, ie Late Iron Age and early Roman/pre-Flavian.

There are three Late Iron Age partial pots, as noted above, ie F148 (finds no 282), F148 (finds no 394), and F235 (finds no 460), illustrated as Figure 20.1, 20.3 and 20.7. There are also single large sherds and joining sherd groups from F148 (finds no 276), F247 (finds no 330), and F250 (finds no 243), illustrated as Figure 20.2, 20.10, 20.11 and 20.14. During the previous excavations on the site, four Late Iron Age partial pots were recovered from F102 (Area A), which is the same ditch as F148 (CAT Report 383, 21 and fig 13).

Several Roman partial pots were also recovered; most come from the ditch F221/F241. These are a Cam 140 flagon (finds no 453), a Cam 154/155 flagon (finds no 438), the lower half of a jar in Romanising coarse ware (finds no 439), a Cam 108 beaker (finds no 485), a Cam 195 mortarium with gritting over the flange (finds no 484), a Cam 258 cooking pot (finds no 485), all from F221; and a Dr 24/25 cup (finds no 482) from F241. All of the mostly closely-datable of these pots are pre-Flavian. There is also a partial pot, a small jar or bowl from the ditch F191 (finds no 380), of probable 1st- to 2nd-century date and a large ?flask, of form possibly Cam ?231 (dated pre-conquest to late 2nd century), from the ditch F144 (finds nos 272 and 314), and a carinated bowl (finds no 272), from the same ditch. The only other partial pot is a Cam 273 large storage jar, dated 1st-2nd/3rd century recovered from the ditch F222/F140, from F222 Sx 8 (finds no 457) and F140 (finds no 268). It is clear that, unusually, a considerable portion, possibly all, of this large pot was broken in this part of the ditch as, by weight, the sherds of this pot recovered total nearly 13 kg (12,926 g). It should be noted that no partial pots were recorded among the later-dated, 2nd- to 3rd-century pottery associated with F221/241, or among the later-dated pottery from the site.

It is not possible to directly interpret the reasons for the deposition of these partial pots in ditches on the site. A number of partial pots were associated with the ditches of the Stanway enclosures (ie enclosures 3-5; Crummy *et al* 2007, 281-3). However, the pots from the Stanway site are from a funerary site and can be associated with funeral feasts enacted at the end of the Iron Age and in the early years of the Roman period *c* AD 35-55 (Crummy *et al* 2007, 439). The site at Birch is of an entirely different character and it could be suggested that the two episodes of deposition, ie Iron Age and early Roman, result from unusual events on the site. It can be noted that similar deposits of pottery which included freshly broken vessels, and dating from the early Roman period (*c* AD 40-60), have been recovered from ditches at a site at Woodham Walter, Essex, where they are interpreted as having been associated with an unusual event (Priddy & Buckley 1987, 39).

At the Abbotstone site, to the north of Birch Pit, it was suggested that the change from Late Iron Age grog-tempered fabrics to Romanising and Roman sand-tempered fabrics had happened quite quickly in relation to many rural sites in general located in the south-east of Britain (section 7.2 in CAT Report 312). Also, at the Stanway site, although of a different character to this site, being a funerary site associated with the élite, the coarse pottery associated with enclosures 3-5 dated *c* AD 35-55 (Crummy *et al* 2007, 439) was dominated by Romanising fabrics rather than Late Iron Age grog-tempered ones (Crummy *et al* 2007, 279). A relatively rapid change from grog-tempered fabrics can also be suggested at Birch pit. The partial pots recovered from the ditches F235/F252 and F250 are entirely of Late Iron Age grog-tempered ware. A small amount of pottery from a ditch F242/F247 (which cut F235/F252) contained some grog-tempered sherds but also sherds from a number of pots in Romanising coarse ware. The collection of partial pots from the ditch F221/F241 (which cut F242/F247) are entirely in Romanising coarse ware or Roman coarse ware fabrics and do not include any in Late Iron Age grog-tempered ware. Apart from a few individual sherds possibly of 2nd- to 3rd-century date from the upper surviving fill, the most closely-datable of the pots from F221/241, including samian, are pre-Flavian. This suggests that the partial pots from this ditch may have been deposited within 30 years of the Roman conquest. It would appear from this that, for much or most of that time, vessels in Romanising and Roman wares were the types produced by local potters and in use on the site, and also that vessels in

these fabrics had replaced the grog-tempered wares entirely. Although a small sample, the implication is that soon after the Roman conquest the grog-tempered wares were no longer current at the 2007 site.

7.5 The medieval and later pottery

by H Brooks

A small group of medieval and later pottery (23 sherds, 619g) was recovered from five site contexts. The pottery fabrics have been classified according to fabric descriptions given in *CAR 7*. Fabrics present were medieval sandy grey ware (Fabric 20), sandy orange ware (Fabric 21), Colchester-type ware (Fabric 21a), post-medieval red earthenware (PMRE, Fabric 40), and Border ware (Fabric 42).

Catalogue

Finds number 283 (F162 Sx 2)

Body sherd of medieval sandy grey ware (Fabric 20, 29g). Date: 13th century.

Finds number 297 (F174)

Single body sherds of Border ware (Fabric 42, 88g), and post-medieval red earthenware (PMRE, Fabric 40, 43g). Group date: 17th century.

Finds number 298 (F176)

Eight body sherds of Colchester-type ware, probably two different vessels (Fabric 21a, 301g). Two body sherds of medieval sandy grey ware (Fabric 20, 39g). Group date: 15th-16th century.

Finds number 310 (F189)

Five sherds of post-medieval red earthenware (PMRE, Fabric 40, 62g), two unglazed. Two body sherds of sandy orange ware (Fabric 21, 18g). Group date: 17th-18th century.

Finds number 396 (F165)

Three sherds of post-medieval red earthenware (PMRE, Fabric 40, 39g). Very glossy and modern-looking. Date: 19th century.

7.6 Roman and post-Roman tile and brick

by E Spurgeon

A total of 17,474 kg of Roman tile was recovered during the excavation. The majority of this consisted of small pieces with no significant distinguishing features other than that they could be identified as Roman tile. Among these, 153 pieces could be certainly identified as Roman roof tile, made up of 131 pieces of *tegula* and 22 of *imbrex*. There were also three pieces of combed flue tile. Quantities of Roman tile were plotted onto the site plan (Fig 6), to ascertain whether the Roman tile was concentrated in any particular part of the site, which might indicate the site of a building. Most features that did contain tile only had one or two fragments. Five features had significantly more tile present, including F145 (3.46 kg), F164 Sx 1 (1.30 kg), F172 (1.31 kg), F173 (1.98 kg), and F183 (0.86 kg). The plot showed that although there is no obvious concentration, there is a slightly greater amount of tile towards the south to south-eastern part of the site and that most of the tile appears to be from mid to late Roman (Period 2, Phase 2) features, both in pits and ditches. However, it can be noted that the largest quantity of tile from a single feature came from an isolated pit F115 in Area A, which had almost 8 kg of tile.

Very small quantities of post-Roman tile were recovered from hand-excavated features. Of the pieces recorded, there was a fairly equal ratio of peg-tile and post-Roman brick. Both had fragments within the fills of F137, F174, F177 and brick on its own within F165. There was also one intrusive fragment of peg-tile in F231 Sx 1.

7.7 Faunal remains

by J Curl

Methodology

All of the bone was examined primarily to determine range of species and elements present and the amount of material that could produce measurable, ageable bone; bone was scanned to determine if there was evidence of bone-, horn- or antler-working in the assemblage. Evidence of butchering and any indications of skinning,

horn-working and other modifications was recorded. When possible, a record was made of ages and any other relevant information, such as pathologies. Counts and weights were taken and recorded for each context and counts taken for the number of bones for each species identified. Due to the small size and poor quality of the assemblage, measurements were not taken as there would have been too little data for any meaningful interpretation. All information was input directly into an Excel database for analysis. The analysis was carried out following a modified version of guidelines by English Heritage (Davis 1992). A catalogue of the assemblage is included as a table with this report (Table 5).

The assemblage – results and discussion

A total of 2.356kg of faunal remains, consisting of 473 pieces, was recovered from seventeen features. The features were mostly of a Roman date, although some Late Iron-Age/Roman and post-medieval finds were recovered. The bulk of the assemblage (77%) was derived from Roman ditch fills, with a further 18% recovered from Late Iron-Age/Roman ditch fills; the remaining 5% was distributed amongst a Late Iron Age ditch, a post-medieval ditch and a Roman pit fill. The assemblage is in very poor condition, highly fragmented from both butchering and wear. Tooth and bone fragments were mainly in very small pieces and much reduced to powdering remains; tooth fragments, however, were, in most cases, the only surviving evidence. Some fills yielded remains encrusted in sediment, and in the Roman ditch fill F191 Sx 2 (finds no 395) produced poor-quality bone encrusted in iron-pan or iron-working debris. Burnt bone was noted in the Roman ditch fill F221 Sx 3 (finds no 467).

A total of five species were identified (see Table 5 below), and all five species were recorded in Roman ditch fills. Cattle were the most frequently recorded, although highly fragmented and often only found as teeth. Most remains were from adult animals, although one juvenile premolar was found in F235 (finds no 468). Few sheep/goat remains were found; three fills produced metapodial fragments and a pieces of a radius, and the metatarsal in the Roman ditch fill F241 (finds no 342) Sx 6 was from a small, delicate sheep such as the Soay that was commonly kept in the Roman period. A single phalange from a pig was seen in F221 (finds no 349).

Table 5: quantities of fragments for each species identified for each period and fill type, including bone identified only as 'mammal'.

Date/type	Cattle	Deer - Red	Equid	Mammal	Pig	Sheep/goat	Totals
Late Iron Age ditch				7			7
Late Iron Age/ Roman ditch	59			10			69
Post-medieval ditch						2	2
Roman post-hole				8			8
Roman ditch	119	19	44	107	1	2	292
Roman pit	7		12				19
?Roman	29						29
Totals	214	19	56	132	1	4	426

Equid bone was recorded from three Roman features. A small pony-sized proximal phalange was identified from the ditch fill. Molar fragments were found in other fills in poor condition.

Sixteen fragments of mandible and molars from a Red Deer were identified from the Roman ditch fill F221 Sx 6 (finds no 485); these were from an adult animal with well-worn molars. This species of deer would have been more common in the Roman period and widely hunted for meat, hides and antler, although they are not recorded as often locally as the smaller Roe Deer (CAR 12, 142). Red Deer has also been recorded from contexts dated to the Roman period at the nearby Birch airfield compost site (CAT Report 326, 9-11).

7.8 Environmental remains

by V Fryer

Introduction and method statement

The archaeological excavation revealed a small number of pits and ditches of prehistoric and Roman date, most of which appeared to be associated with an agricultural/pastoral landscape. In accordance with the excavation specification, samples for the retrieval of the plant macrofossil assemblages were taken, and five were submitted for assessment.

The samples were processed by manual water flotation/washover and the flots were collected in a 500 micron-mesh sieve. The dried flots were scanned under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 16 and the plant macrofossils and other remains noted. All plant macrofossils were charred. Modern seeds were present throughout.

The non-floating residues were collected in a 1 mm-mesh sieve and sorted when dry. All artefacts/ecofacts were retained for further specialist analysis.

Results

Cereal grains, chaff and seeds of common weeds were recorded at a low to moderate density in all but one of the samples studied. Preservation was poor to moderate, with a high proportion of the grains being puffed and distorted, probably as a result of combustion at very high temperatures.

Sample 20, from the fill of the Roman pit F145, contained a moderate density of cereal grains including oat (*Avena* sp.), barley (*Hordeum* sp.) and wheat (*Triticum* sp.), the latter being predominant. The wheat grains were mostly of an elongated 'drop' form, typical of spelt (*T. spelta*), and spelt glume bases were also recorded. Weed seeds within the same assemblage included specimens of knotgrass (*Polygonum aviculare*), vetch/vetchling (*Vicia/Lathyrus* sp.) and an indeterminate small grass (Poaceae), all of which would have been common cornfield contaminants.

The remaining assemblages were largely composed of charcoal/charred wood fragments, although sample 23, from the pit F233, contained a single spelt glume base; sample 25, from ditch F247, contained a small number of goosegrass (*Galium aparine*) seeds; and the assemblage from sample 21, from the ditch F221, appeared to include distorted fragments of large pulse (Fabaceae) seeds. The charcoal fragments within sample numbers 23 and 24, from the Late Bronze Age pits F233 and F238 respectively, were noticeably very abraded, possibly indicating either prolonged exposure prior to burial or mechanical damage as a result of subsequent disturbance. Material within sample 24 was also heavily coated with mineralised concretions.

Conclusions and recommendations for further work

The occurrence of cereal grains, chaff and weed seeds within the assemblage from sample 20 may indicate that the material is derived from either cereal-processing detritus or domestic hearth waste. Although cereals are more abundant than chaff, possibly suggesting materials accidentally spilled during culinary preparation, it should be noted that the temperatures of combustion to which this material was subjected may have destroyed many of the more delicate chaff elements, creating an artificial bias within the assemblage. The remaining assemblages contain insufficient material to enable conclusive interpretation, and it is considered most likely that the few macrofossils recorded are probably derived from low densities of scattered or wind-blown refuse, some or all of which was accidentally incorporated within the feature fills.

As none of the assemblages contain sufficient material for quantification (ie 100+ specimens), no further analysis was undertaken.

7.9 Glass (Fig 21)

by E Spurgeon

The site yielded only four fragments of glass, three of which were modern. Only one sherd was Roman in date and can be assigned to Phase 1b, of the Roman conquest period. The sherd was a small fragment of a pillar-moulded bowl in polychrome

glass of a form common on early Roman Colchester sites (CAR 8, 15-26), including the 9-39 Head Street site (CAT Report 268) and Sheepen (Niblett 1985).

Fig 21.1 (467) F221 Sx 3 ditch. Small fragment of a pillar-moulded bowl with a partial surviving vertical rib. In polychrome mosaic with the combination of translucent dark blue with opaque white rods. H 160, W 190, D 25 mm.

7.10 Miscellaneous finds

Table 6: miscellaneous finds.

Finds no	Feature/ layer no	Description	Notes	Weight (g)
267	F139	Small fragment of heat-affected stone (quartz)		9.1
273	F145	2 small fragments of burnt flint		72.0
371	F163 Sx 1	Small lump of heat-affected flint		68.6
372	F163 Sx 1	Large lump of unworked flint		1,066.1
298	F176	5 oyster shell fragments		43.1
311	F176	4 small fragments of oyster shell and 6 tiny mussel shell fragments		23.3
384	F206	Small fragment of heat-affected stone		16.0
472	F221 Sx 6	Small fragment of heat-affected stone		25.5
369	F224	12 fragments of very worn plaster (possibly originally painted, but no noticeable paint survives). One fragment has an impressed line across the centre	total area of all fragments = 109 cm ²	278.7
427	F232 Sx 1	1 medium and 1 small fragment of heat-affected flint		125.9
417	F233	6 small fragments of heat-affected stone and 3 small fragments of heat-affected flint		223.7
418	F235 Sx 2	Small fragment of heat-affected flint		4.9
437	F235 Sx 2	Small fragment of heat-affected flint		27.1
443	F238	Small fragment of heat-affected flint		23.7
508	F238	Small fragment of stone (highly crystalline sandstone)		36.2
333	F247 Sx 3	2 small fragments of heat-affected flint and 2 small fragments of heat-affected stone		139.7
324	F253	6 small worn oyster shell fragments		8.7

8 Discussion

8.1 Period 1: prehistoric

The earliest securely-dated activity in the area is a small number of Middle Bronze Age cremations burials located about 1 km to the north-east of the present site (CAT excavation 2003 on Fig 1; CAT Report 289). These have urns of Ardleigh type and are associated with three small ring-ditches. A similar ring-ditch in Area A is possibly also of Middle Bronze Age date; and one or two sherds recovered from Areas A, B and D are also possibly of Middle Bronze Age date, although if of that date then all are from residual contexts.

The earliest securely-dated features from the areas excavated as part of the quarry western extension (Areas A-E) form a small group of pits that can be dated to the Late Bronze Age. There was a small group of three pits of this date in Area B, close to the Maldon Road, and two pits in Area D. One of the pits in Area D is of very large size and was possibly a waterhole. The smaller pits could represent limited or occasional activity. However, the fill of the large pit contained a considerable amount of pottery. A few pieces of fired clay, including a possible loomweight fragment, were also attributed to this feature, but these might be

intrusive along with two iron nails (section 6.3.1). The abraded nature of charcoal with mineral concretions in the fill indicates that some of the material there could have been exposed prior to burial (section 7.8). This suggests that the fill of the pit accumulated slowly, although it also raises the possibility that at least part of the fill may have come from a midden which accumulated elsewhere. Certainly, where it is possible to tell, the pottery from the fill had been broken elsewhere, but a small number of partial vessels as well as sherds were recovered from the pit, and these are represented by a significant part of the pot found together. It would seem most likely that these broken partial vessels were put into the pit soon after breakage, but it is possible that they had been incorporated in a midden which was later used to fill the pit. There is almost no other cultural material from the pit fill; however, the quantity of pottery indicates close proximity to a settlement site which as yet remains unlocated.

Almost no evidence of the economy in terms of the farming regime has been recovered for the Late Bronze Age. None of the ditches can be dated to this period, so the landscape appears to have been generally open. Apart from the as yet-unlocated settlement, constructed markers in the landscape would have consisted of small burial monuments, such as the ring-ditches to the north-east of the site, and possibly on the site itself (Area A). This could indicate a predominance of stock husbandry, and the possible waterhole (F238) might support this. Fragments of fired clay from F238 include a possible loomweight fragment, although this could be intrusive. No cereal remains were recovered from the material filling F238. However, cereals appear to have been present, represented by a single carbonised spelt glume base associated with the pit F233. The fact that this is a glume base probably indicates that it is part of a local grown crop. Also a large worn sandstone piece re-used as a post base, but probably originally a prehistoric saddle quern, was recovered from Area A (CAT Report 383, 15-16 and fig 10).

The focus of settlement must have shifted away from this area by the Middle Iron Age. The fingertip decoration on some body sherds indicates that some of the flint-tempered pottery may be Early Iron Age; however, there are only very few sherds that can be dated as Middle Iron Age. While this probably indicates sporadic activity in this area, the quantity of this material is small, and there are no features that can be dated to the period of the Early or Middle Iron Age.

Figure 5 shows a distribution plan of the prehistoric pottery in Area D, which, given the small quantities of prehistoric pottery recovered from previous excavations (CAT Report 383, appendix 4 table 6), could indicate a concentration of residual finds toward the west side of the site.

8.2 Period 2: Late Iron Age and Roman

Period 2, the late Iron Age and Roman period, is the major period of occupation on the site. While no certain buildings, and certainly no dwellings, could be located, the number of features (small pits or post-holes, pits and ditches) and the quantity of material which ended up in them, including domestic equipment such as quern stones, shows that, while not necessarily always continuous or permanent, the site was certainly occupied during this period (Period 2).

8.2.1 The development and layout of the settlement

The Period 2 occupation began during the currency of Late Iron Age grog-tempered pottery. At that time two ditches, meeting at right-angles, probably formed the east and west sides of a large enclosure (the 2007 Enclosure 1). The east side of this enclosure could not be located, but is probably marked by the position of the track or driveway on the east side, and which defined the main settlement area in the Roman period. The north ditch probably lies beyond the excavation site. Late Iron Age grog-tempered pottery probably did not appear in quantity on settlement sites in Essex until c 50-25 BC (Sealey 2007, 31). It was replaced by Roman wares from c AD 43 onwards, but how long it remained current or continued in use on sites is not clear, the variance probably depending on the inclinations and isolation of particular people from the new networks of power. Indications from pottery assemblages at the Abbotstone and Stanway sites indicate a fairly rapid move away from Late Iron Age (grog-tempered) pottery fabrics in the early Roman period

(section 7.2 in CAT Report 312; Crummy *et al* 2007, 283-9). This also appears to have been the case at Birch Pit, where the line of the original enclosure ditch (Enclosure 1), containing only Late Iron Age pottery types, was recut by two further ditches, probably in the pre-Flavian period. While by no means conclusive, the probable time span for this to happen indicates an origin for the enclosure within the Late Iron Age, pre-conquest period. There are also some fragments of triangular loomweights from the site, the form and function of which are entirely of Iron Age origin (CAT Report 383, 12), and which should belong to the same period as the Late Iron Age pottery on the site.

Enclosure 1 formed the core of the layout of the site through the early-mid Roman period. The original enclosure had an entrance on the west side, which was blocked either in the Late Iron Age or early Roman period, when the enclosure ditch on that side was recut. This entrance is on the line of a track, indicated by gaps left through the line of ditches, which extended across the enclosure from north-east to south-west. This track, while blocked to the west by the Phase 1 re-cut of the enclosure ditch, was maintained on the east side of the enclosure throughout the middle and possibly the late Roman periods. As there are no ditches to define this track, it cannot be traced beyond the enclosure. The gaps through ditches left for its passage are only between about 2 m and 5 m across, and, in places, ditches cut across its path, so that it may have been restricted to the interior of the enclosure, or small wooden bridges would have been required to cross them. However, if the track were projected to the east, then this would take it close to a small group of Roman cremation burials dating to the early-mid Roman period and located about 150 m east of the main settlement area (CAT Report 383, 9-11). This may partly explain the location chosen for the burials, that is to be close to and visible from the track. Further to the east was a small oven (CAT excavation 1995 on Fig 1; CAT archive 6/95b) which is also close to the projected line of the track. Given this eastward projection, the track would in effect become a small road. This possible track would not appear to be significant beyond a local importance, although it was possibly the main link between the settlement and the wider world.

In the early-mid Roman period (Phase 1b), the layout of the settlement, based on the recoverable pattern of ditches, indicates that there was a considerable livestock element present. On each side of Enclosure 1 there was a track or droveway. These would have funnelled livestock past the interior of the enclosure and give access to a broad area to the south, although it is possible that this area was crossed by the east track or droveway (CAT Report 383, fig 4a). The area is about 50 m across and bounded by ditches on its south, east and north sides, including part of Enclosure 1, but extends for at least 120 m towards the east. There may have been an entrance through the south ditch toward the east end. The south side of Enclosure 1 also appears to have opened onto this area via a broad L-shaped entrance toward its east end. Overall, livestock could have been moved between areas to the north and south of Enclosure 1, keeping them away from the interior of the enclosure itself, and the areas on either side. This suggests that the settlement, and perhaps some of its more intensively farmed areas, extended north-east to south-west, following the alignment of the proposed track (see above); and an orientation, based around this north-east to south-west alignment, is followed by almost all the features which can be dated to Period 2. However, in terms of settlement or occupation, there is no clear evidence for any buildings in Enclosure 1. A large pit feature situated next to the track could have been a well or waterhole associated with watering stock (CAT Report 383, 29) so that this enclosure could also at times have been used to corral livestock.

By the late Roman period, significant changes had been made to the layout of the site. This is defined as Phase 2. The layout centred around the original enclosure (Enclosure 1) appears to have been replaced by one involving two new enclosures (Enclosure 2 and Enclosure 3). The track or droveway 2 on the west side of Enclosure 1 also appears to have been abandoned, and replaced by one of the new enclosures (Enclosure 3) which was laid out over it. The remains of Enclosure 3 are a long narrow U-shape of shallow ditches, and it is not possible to be certain that all of these features thought to make up the enclosure belong together. Also, it appears possible that, rather than an enclosure, it could represent a broad track or

droveway. On the east side of Enclosure 1 (Area A) it is possible that the northern part of the track or driveway could have been retained, although there is no evidence that it was, and ditches here may point to the area having been divided up into fields. Enclosure 2 was laid out over part of the area to the south of Enclosure 1. The south side of this enclosure was not located, although the enclosure could have been laid out against the north side of the Phase 1 ditch here. There may have been a small oven within this enclosure (CAT Report 383, 29). Within Enclosure 1, the track crossing the site may also have been abandoned as it was cut by the ditch of Enclosure 3, and by some possible graves for inhumation burials (CAT Report 383, 30). However, there is an indication from one ditch, on the east side of the site, that the track may have been retained on the east side of the settlement (CAT Report 383, 30). The implications for these changes in terms of the site economy during Phase 2 are not clear.

There is a small number of large pits that can be dated to the mid-late or late Roman period (F172, F173 and also F46; CAT Report 383, Area C). The function of these pits is not known, but they seem to be a feature of the mid-late Roman period.

In the areas excavated in 2007, no clear evidence for the location of any buildings was encountered, although there are a few features that could indicate the sites of what might have been low-status, agricultural buildings in the area of Enclosure 1. A small number of fragments identified as wall-plaster, and therefore probably from a dwelling, were recovered from F244 (section 7.10). There are also significant quantities of Roman ceramic building material from the site. These are predominantly roof-tile pieces with some brick and a few pieces of combed flue tiles (section 7.6; CAT Report 383, appendix 7). These building material pieces are predominantly associated with features of mid-late Roman date. These suggest a building or buildings on the site with tiled roofs. One need for a tiled roof would be on a bath building, which would also require flue tiles for ducting the heat and fumes. However, while this tile probably indicates as yet-unlocated buildings on the site, tile and brick were also frequently recycled for use in structures other than buildings, especially in flue bases for ovens, corn-dryers or malting floors. It can be noted that one feature containing a substantial quantity of tile was located away from the main settlement area, in the southern part of Area A (CAT Report 383, fig 2a, F115).

8.2.2 Economy and material culture

The evidence for the site economy, such as it is, indicates a mixed farming base. While the provision of ditched tracks or driveways in the early-mid Roman period indicates stock management, the quantity of faunal remains recovered is very small, and the pieces of bone that survive are often in poor condition. One pattern which has been recorded from all of the excavations is that among the domesticated animals, the remains of cattle are the most common, and almost all identified are adults (section 7.7; CAT Report 383, 26). There are some remains of sheep, one identified as a delicate breed such as Soay, some equid, including one of pony size, and one example of pig. The loomweights of Late Iron Age type recovered from the site would have been used for domestic cloth-production during the early part of Phase 1, presumably using wool produced from sheep on the site (section 7.1). This suggests a viable sheep herd during Phase 1a. The remains of a red deer indicates at least some hunting of locally available wild animals (section 7.7).

Remains of cereals have been identified from four contexts, two in Phase 1 and two in Phase 2 (section 7.8; CAT Report 383, 27). Most specimens are poorly preserved. The only ones clearly identifiable to species are from a large late Roman pit (F145). These consist of wheat, probably spelt, with lesser quantities of oat and barley. With this were other seeds typical of cornfield contaminates, so this may be the remains of processing of cereals, but could also be from culinary waste (section 7.8). It seems most likely that these cereal crops were produced on the site. There is also a small quantity of what are possibly carbonised fragments of large pulse seeds from the Phase 1 ditch F221.

There was some iron-working at the site in the late Roman period, but this almost certainly reflects some small-scale, domestic activity (section 7.1). No metal objects such as toiletries and items of personal adornment have been recovered from the

site, and there are only two coins, both late Roman (section 7.1; CAT Report 383, 13). However, there are links to wider markets.

The pottery assemblage, while dominated by locally-produced coarse wares, includes imports during the 1st-3rd centuries, including some Gallo-Belgic wares, a few amphoras other than Dressel 20, samian table wares (plain and decorated), and, during the late Roman period, regional imports (section 7.4; CAT Report 383, 18-23). During the Roman period, this supply was most probably obtained through the market provided by the *colonia* at Colchester. All of these types of pottery were available in the *colonia*. An early Roman polychrome pillar-moulded glass bowl, of a type common in the early Roman *colonia*, was probably obtained through the same market source (section 7.9). However, there are a few sherds of Rettendon-type ware, which is a fabric type that has not been identified among pottery assemblages at Colchester. This is a late Roman fabric type is centred on east central Essex (Going 1987, 10) and its presence at Birch Pit indicates market links other than through Colchester. However, this may not be particularly significant as the closest known production of Rettendon ware fabric to Birch Pit is at Inworth, near Kelvedon (Going 1987, 78), which is only about 2.5 km south-west of the site. One possibility is that the Roman small town at Kelvedon (*Canonium*) was also a market centre for the site at Birch.

Previously quern pieces recovered from the site had been predominantly of Mayen lava, with a few in millstone grit. This follows the stone types used for querns in the Roman *colonia* at Colchester (*CAR 2*, 75; *CAR 6*, 157-61), and the most obvious market source for these would have been the *colonia*. Other rural sites, occupied in the Late Iron Age and the early Roman period of the 1st-early 2nd century, are known to have commonly used querns of Hertfordshire Puddingstone, for example at the Abbotstone site, about 3 km north of Birch Pit (section 7.5 in CAT Report 312). This made the situation at Birch Pit slightly anomalous; however, puddingstone querns have now been recovered from the site (section 7.1), bringing this into line with other rural sites of this period. These presumably would not have been traded through the *colonia* and possibly hint at earlier, pre-conquest trade and market links.

The ability to obtain material goods in the Late Iron Age may have been socially determined. That wine may have been available to the settlement at Birch Pit (section 7.4) raises the possibility that the inhabitants could have had some status and influence. Socially embedded economic structures or patterns of trading may have continued into the early Roman period, possibly represented by the puddingstone querns, which were not used in the Roman *colonia*. However, the ability to obtain goods throughout Period 2 – pottery, imported querns, olive oil, glass and ?wine – although, admittedly, mostly of the evidence recovered is for utilitarian items, suggests that in the Roman period there was a surplus of production enough to produce some modest income.

Pottery evidence shows that occupation declined dramatically or was not continued in the late Roman period (c mid-late 3rd to 4th century) on a number of rural sites where excavation has taken place: the Abbotstone site, Gosbecks sites A, B and C and Colchester Garrison. This also coincides with the abandonment of many of the extra-mural suburbs close to the town walls at the same time (Crummy 1997, 113-18). In contrast, the pottery from Birch Pit shows that it was still occupied in the Late Roman period, and possibly into the late 4th century (section 7.4). This may be because it was far enough away from the town to have been difficult to farm from the town itself (CAT Report 383, 31-2).

8.3 Period 3: post-Roman to modern

8.3.1 Phase 1

Most of the features associated with this phase are field ditches, some forming tracks or droveways. Many of these can be associated as part of a field system of connected land division and stock management. The dating of the elements within this field system of ditches is extremely difficult, as little or no substantial dating has been recovered from many of these features.

The earliest dated of the post-Roman finds from the site is a single small find, dated as Anglo-Saxon or early medieval (CAT Report 383, 13). The earliest post-Roman pottery is a sherd dated as 13th century and a small quantity of late medieval pottery, dated as 15th-16th century, from the ditch F176 (section 7.5).

These fields and tracks or droveways are probably associated with sheep husbandry. Although little in the way of faunal remains was recovered from features of this period during the current excavation, previous work here produced significant quantities of sheep remains (CAT Report 383, 25-7). These suggest that the sheep during this period were generally in poor health. The parts recovered showed evidence of skinning and horn-working, the main meat bones from the carcasses being absent (Curl 2007).

8.3.2 Phase 2

There are a small number of ditches which appear to be later than the ditches of Phase 1. Most of these were extant boundaries in 2004 when the excavations began and are represent the modern land divisions of the area. These ditches are not associated with tracks or droveways and are clearly primarily arable field divisions.

9 Further work

This is the final report on the work undertaken in 2007, ie the Stage 3 extraction area of the western extension to the quarry. The areas excavated are not the full extent of the known archaeology in this part of the quarry. Both the Roman features and surface spread of Roman finds extend beyond the limits of the excavation, and, in addition, significant remains of prehistoric and early post-medieval date have also been revealed in this part of the quarry. The recording of the extent and nature of the remaining archaeology will need to be addressed in any future expansion of the quarry.

10 Archive deposition

The paper and digital archive is held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at 12 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex CO3 3NF, but it will be permanently deposited with Colchester and Ipswich Museums under accession code COLEM 2004.316.

11 Acknowledgements

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13 Glossary

Anglo-Saxon	end of the Roman period (c AD 410) to the Norman invasion in 1066
Bronze Age	prehistoric period defined by the introduction and use of metal (bronze) in Britain, c 2,000-700 BC
bund	discrete piles of stored overburden soil removed prior to mineral extraction
EDM	electronic distance measuring
EHHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
feature	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain, a floor; can contain 'contexts'
Iron Age	prehistoric period defined in Britain by the introduction and use of iron, c 700 BC-AD 43
layer	distinct or distinguishable deposit of soil
medieval	period from AD 1066 to Henry VIII
modern	period from the 19th century onwards to the present
NGR	National Grid Reference
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
Neolithic	period which saw the introduction of farming practices into Britain, c 4,000-2,000 BC
peg-tile	rectangular thin tile with peg-hole(s) used mainly for roofing, first appeared c 1200 and continued to present day, but commonly post-medieval to modern
post-medieval	after Henry VIII to around the late 18th century
Roman	period of assimilation of Britain as part of the Roman Empire, c AD 43-410
struck flint flake	distinctive flakes removed by blows to a flint core, can either be utilised or discarded as waste
worked flint	any flint, discarded waste or used piece, which has been worked as part of the process of producing usable flint pieces or tools

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14 Appendix 1

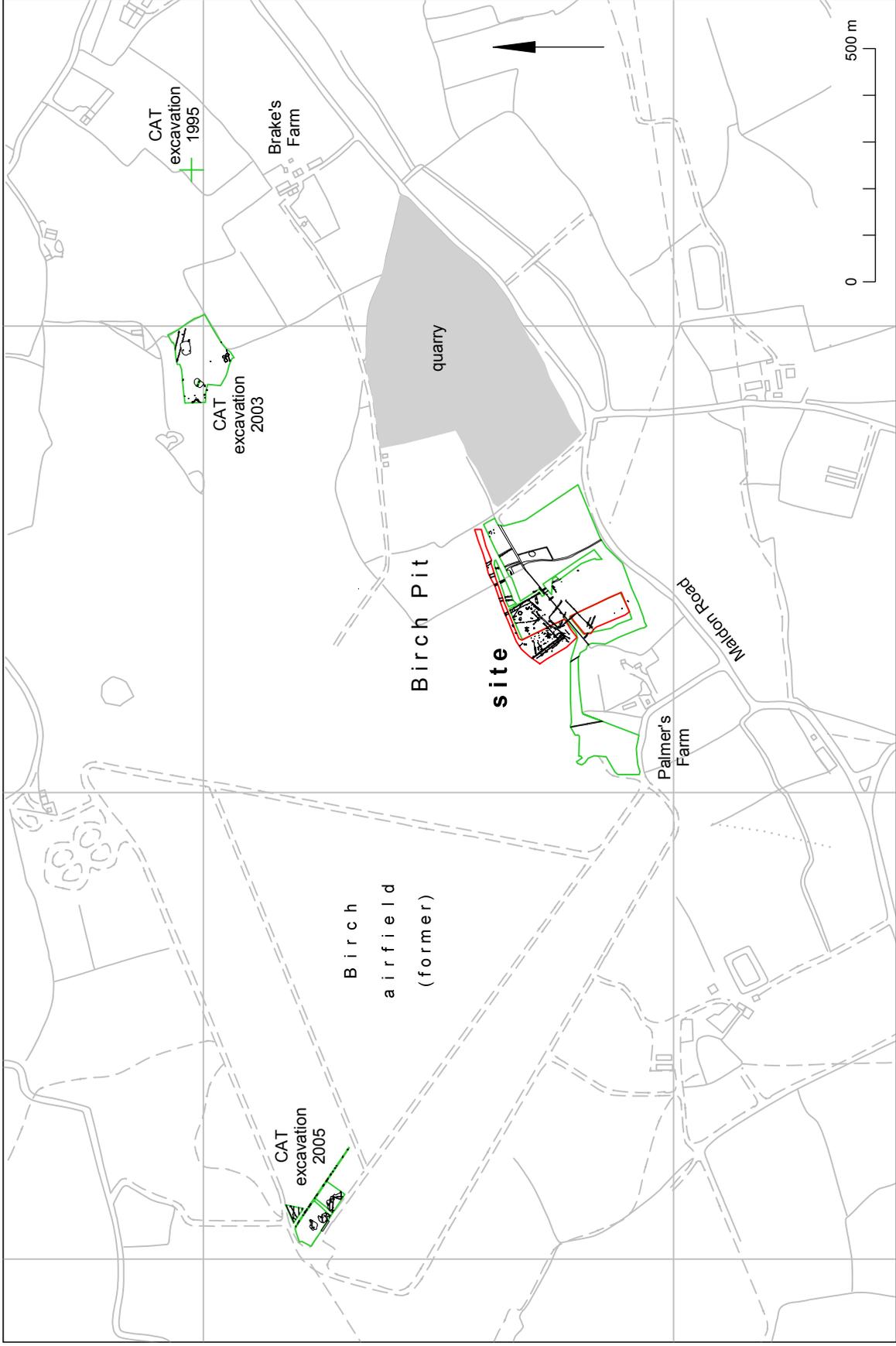
Table 7: list of all numbered features, with attribution to general date (prehistoric, Roman, post-medieval, modern) and finds spot-date (section 7).

context Area D	context Areas A-C	feature type	Notes	overall pottery/finds date
F135	F19	ditch		late Roman
F136	F130	shallow ditch		Late Iron Age/early Roman
F137		ditch	Later renumbered as F266	post-medieval
F139		ditch	Later discovered to be part of F222 (location is the same as F222 Sx 9)	-
F140		ditch	Later discovered to be part of F222 (location is the same as F222 Sx 9)	mid Roman
F141 (part of F223)		ditch	Later discovered to be part of F223 (location is the same as F223 Sx 7)	-
F142		pit		-
F143	F62	ditch		-
F144	F63	ditch		early Roman
F145		large pit		mid-late Roman
F146		natural	Not shown on site plan	-
F147		natural	Not shown on site plan	-
F148	F91, F102	ditch	Continuation of F220, F235 and F252	Late Iron Age
F149		pit/post-hole		early Roman
F150		natural		-
F151		post-hole		late Roman
F152		pit/post-hole		late Roman
F153		pit/post-hole		-
F154		pit/post-hole		late Roman
F155		pit/post-hole		-
F156		pit/post-hole		-
F157		pit/post-hole		mid-?late Roman
F158		pit/post-hole		-
F159		pit/post-hole		-
F160		pit/post-hole		-
F161		ditch/gully	Cut by modern drain	Roman
F162		?pit	Pit or disturbance into large natural feature	?medieval
F163	F108, F128, F131	ditch	Continuation of F164. Same ditch as F135. Cut F208	mid-late Roman
F164	F19	ditch	Continuation of F163. Same ditch as F135. Cut F208	late Roman
F165	F106	ditch		post-medieval
F166		pit/post-hole		-
F167		pit/post-hole		-
F168		pit/post-hole		-
F169		pit/post-hole		-
F170		pit/post-hole		-
F171		pit/post-hole		-
F172		pit		late Roman
F173		pit		mid-late Roman
F174	?F12	ditch	Parallel to F175	early post-medieval
F175	?F31	small ditch	Parallel to F174	post-medieval
F176	?F13	ditch	Parallel to F177	late medieval (15th-16th century)
F177	?F15	ditch	Parallel to F176	-
F178	F54, F55?	ditch		post-medieval
F179	F53	ditch		post-medieval
F180	F56	ditch		post-medieval
F181	F57	ditch		late Roman
F182	F22	ditch	Cut F183	Roman
F183		trample area/silty patch		late Roman
F184		natural		-
F185		pit		Roman
F186		gully/slot	Associated with F187?	Late Iron Age/early Roman?
F187		gully/slot	Part of the same gully as F186?	Late Iron Age/Roman
F188		natural	Cut by F244	-
F189		pit		post-medieval

context Area D	context Areas A-C	feature type	Notes	overall pottery/finds date
F190		pit		Roman
F191		ditch		early-mid Roman
F192		natural		-
F193		pit/post-hole		-
F194		pit/post-hole		Roman
F195		natural		-
F196		natural		-
F197		pit/post-hole		-
F198		Pit/post-hole		-
F199		pit/post-hole		Roman
F200		small pit		Roman
F201		natural	Cut by land drain	-
F202		pit/post-hole		-
F203		slot/gully		Roman
F204		post-hole	Cut by F205	early-mid Roman
F205		slot	Cut F204	Late Iron Age/ early Roman
F206		pit	Cut by modern pipe trench	early-mid Roman?
F207		pit/post-hole		-
F208		slot	Cut by F164	mid Roman
F209		post-hole		Roman
F210		natural		-
F211		pit/post-hole		Roman
F212		natural		-
F213		natural		-
F214		ditch	Part of F215 and continuation of F218?	Roman
F215		ditch	Part of F214 and continuation of F218?	Roman
F216		natural		-
F217		natural		-
F218		ditch	Continuation of F219 and F222; part of F214 and F215?	Roman
F219		ditch	Continuation of F222 and F218; part of F214 and F215?	late Roman
F220		ditch	Part of F148	-
F221		ditch	Continuation of F241	early Roman
F222		ditch	Continuation of F208 and F219; part of F214 and F215?	mid Roman
F223		ditch		early Roman
F224		ditch	Part of the same ditch as F236?	-
F225		pit		Late Iron Age
F226		concrete	Not shown on site plan	modern
F227		concrete	Not shown on site plan	modern
F228		ditch	Continuation of F221, F223 and F229	Roman
F229		ditch	Continuation of F221, F223 and F228	mid Roman
F230		pit		-
F231		wheel-rut		modern
F232		ditch	Cut by F222	prehistoric
F233		pit		prehistoric Late Bronze Age
F234		ditch	Cut by F219	Roman
F235		ditch	Continuation of F242	Late Iron Age
F236		ditch	Continuation of F224?	Roman
F237		pit/post-hole	Not shown on the site plan, located between F234 Sx 3 and F265 Sx 2	-
F238		pit	Cut by F222	prehistoric Late Bronze Age
F239		pit/post-hole		-
F240		natural	Not shown on the site plan	
F241		ditch	Continuation of F221 and F191	early-mid Roman
F242		ditch	Continuation of F148 and F252; associated with F250	Late Iron Age- early Roman
F243		pit?		Roman
F244		pit/post-hole	Cut F188	prehistoric
F245		pit		Roman
F246		ditch		early Roman?
F247		ditch		Late Iron Age- early Roman
F248		pit		-

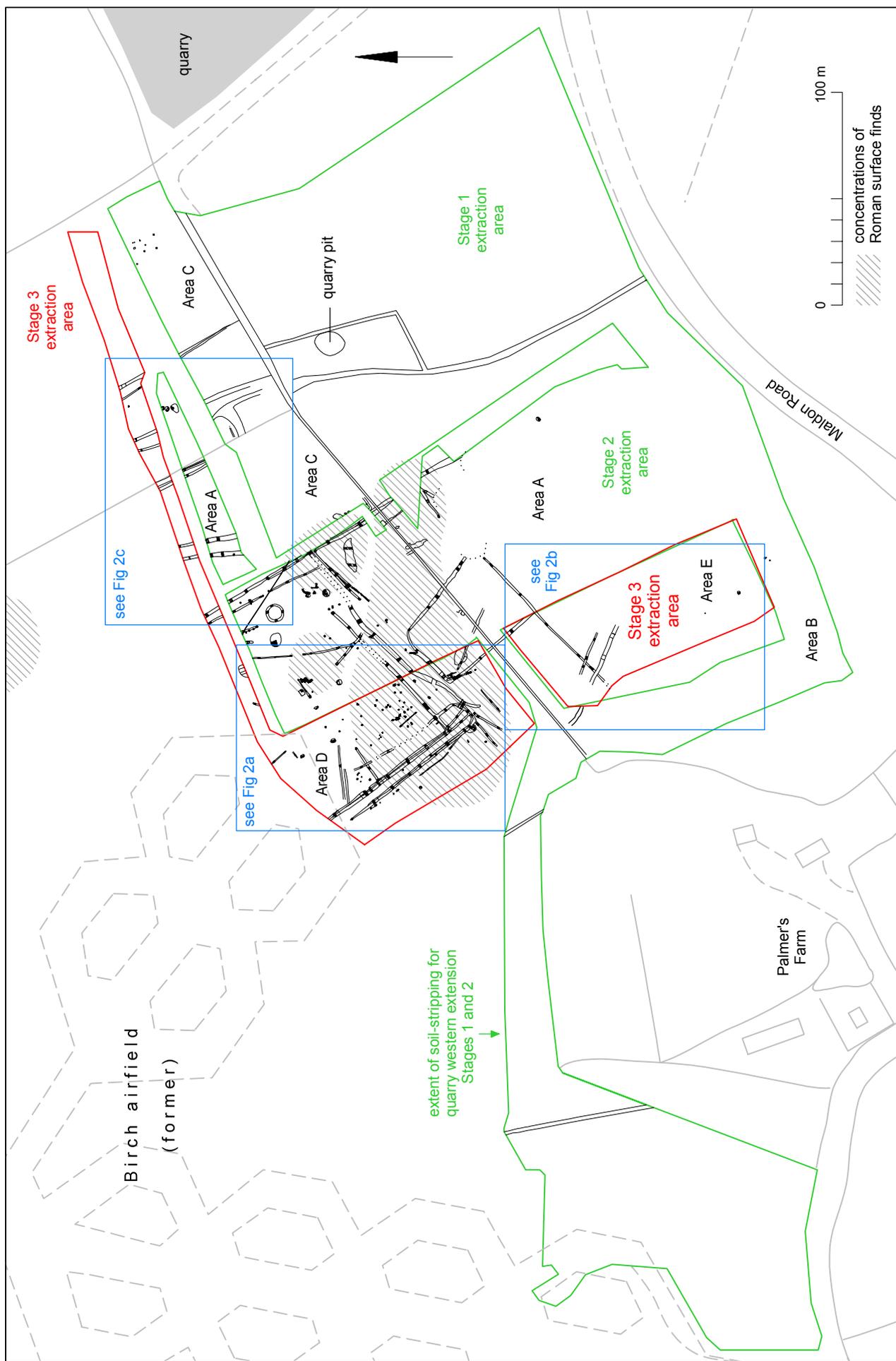
context Area D	context Areas A-C	feature type	Notes	overall pottery/finds date
F249		pit		-
F250		ditch	Associated with F235, F252 and F148. Sx 4 cut by drain F262	Late Iron Age-early Roman
F251		ditch		post-medieval
F252		ditch	Continuation of F242	Late Iron Age-early Roman
F253		post-hole	Cut F241, F247 and F250	-
F254		post-hole		early Roman
F255		pit/post-hole		-
F256		pit/post-hole		prehistoric Early Iron Age/Middle Iron Age
F257		pit/post-hole	Not shown on the site plan; part of the same group of post-holes as F256 and F258	
F258		pit/post-hole		-
F259		pit		Roman
F260		natural		-
F261		natural		-
F262		drain		modern
F263		natural		-
F264		pit/post-hole		prehistoric
F265		shallow ditch		Late Iron Age-early Roman
F266	?F033	ditch	Cut F136; parallel to F251	post-medieval
L2 (F183)		silt deposit (natural)		Roman-late Roman

Note: other appendices are in the site archive.



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Fig 1 Site location and locations of previous excavations in the surrounding area.



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Fig 2 Areas covered by archaeological watching briefs and excavations, showing the Stage 3 (2007) extraction area.

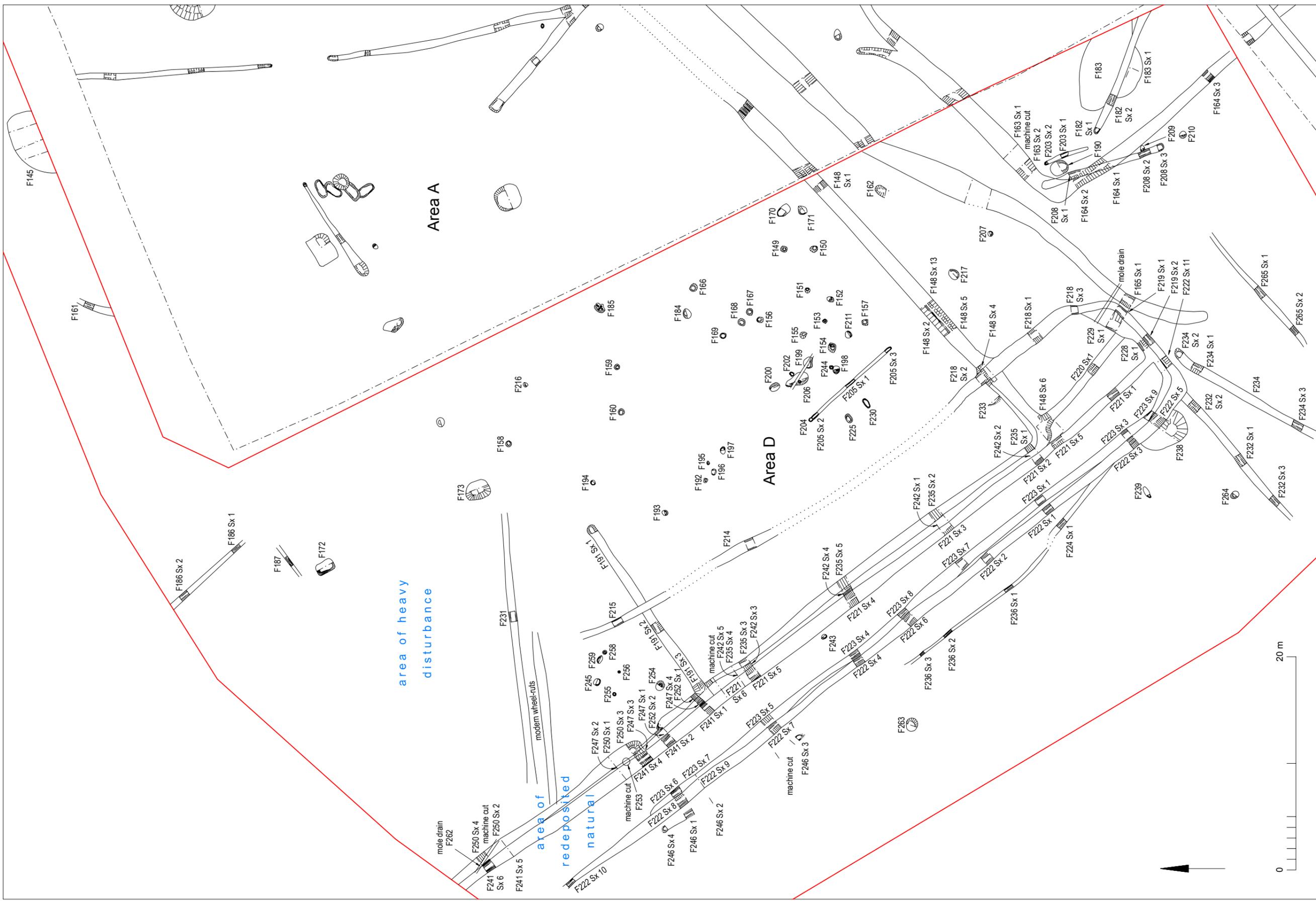


Fig 2a Area D. Insert to Figure 2.

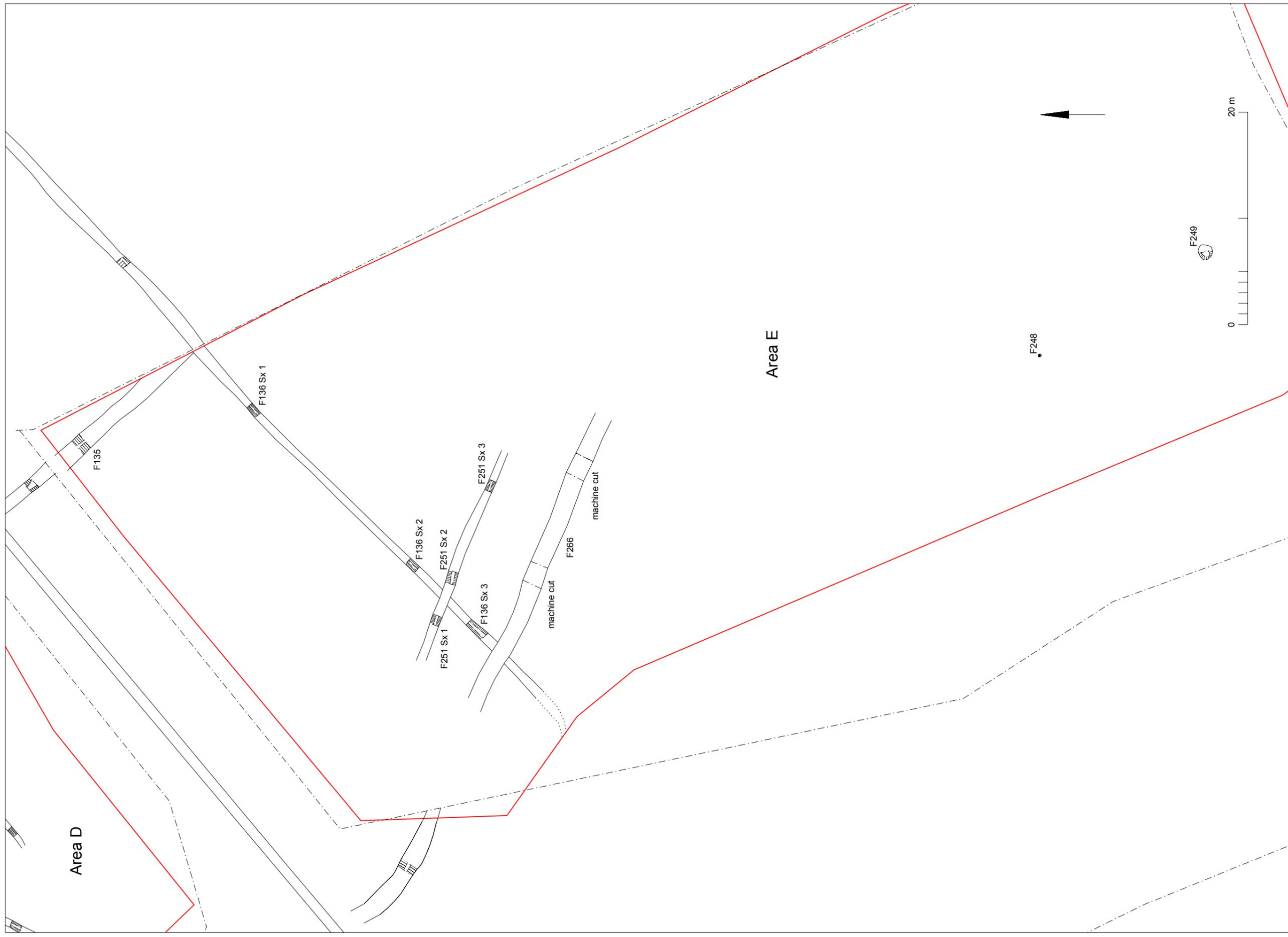


Fig 2b Area E. Insert to Figure 2.

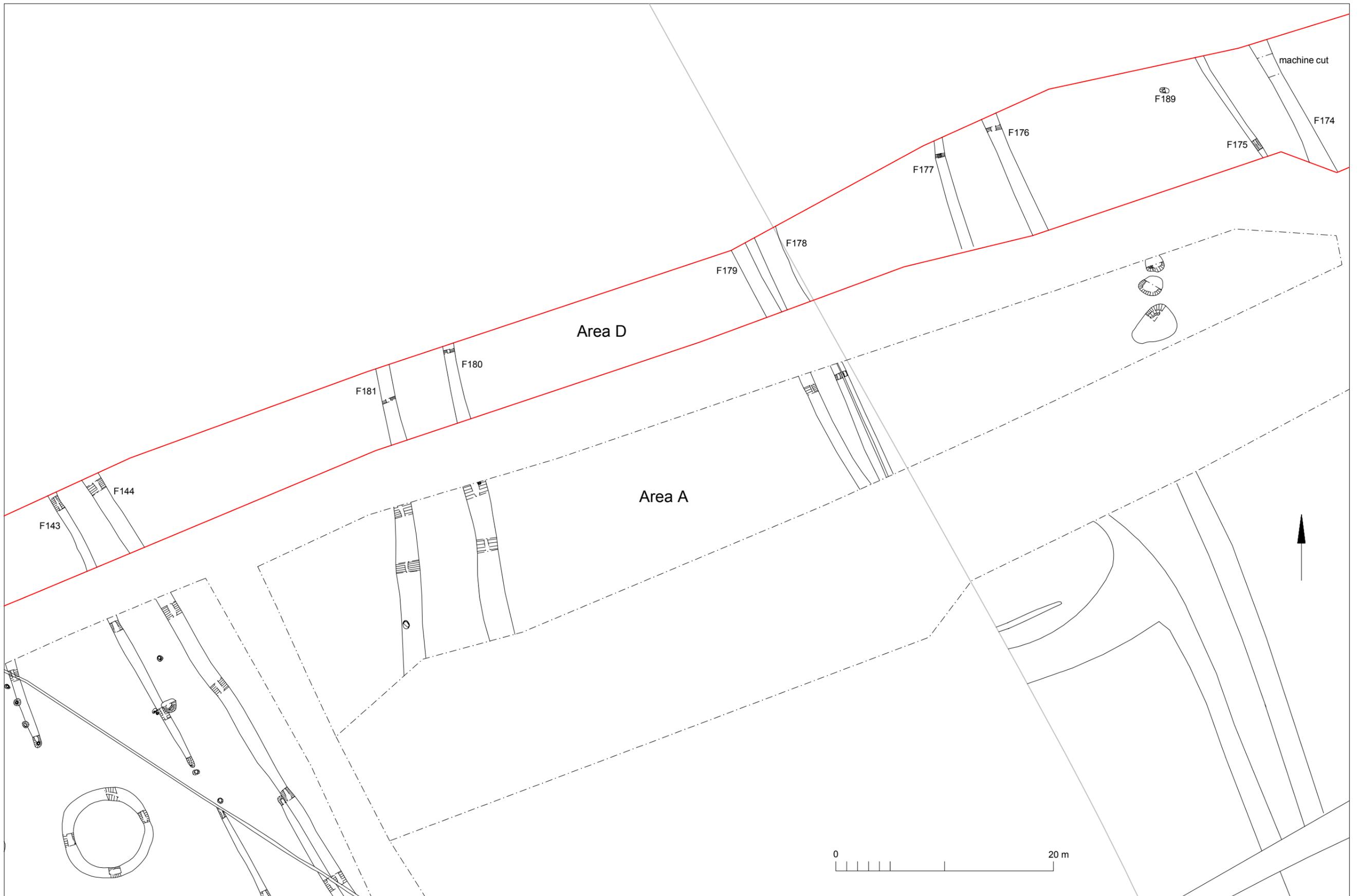


Fig 2c Areas A and D. Insert to Figure 2.

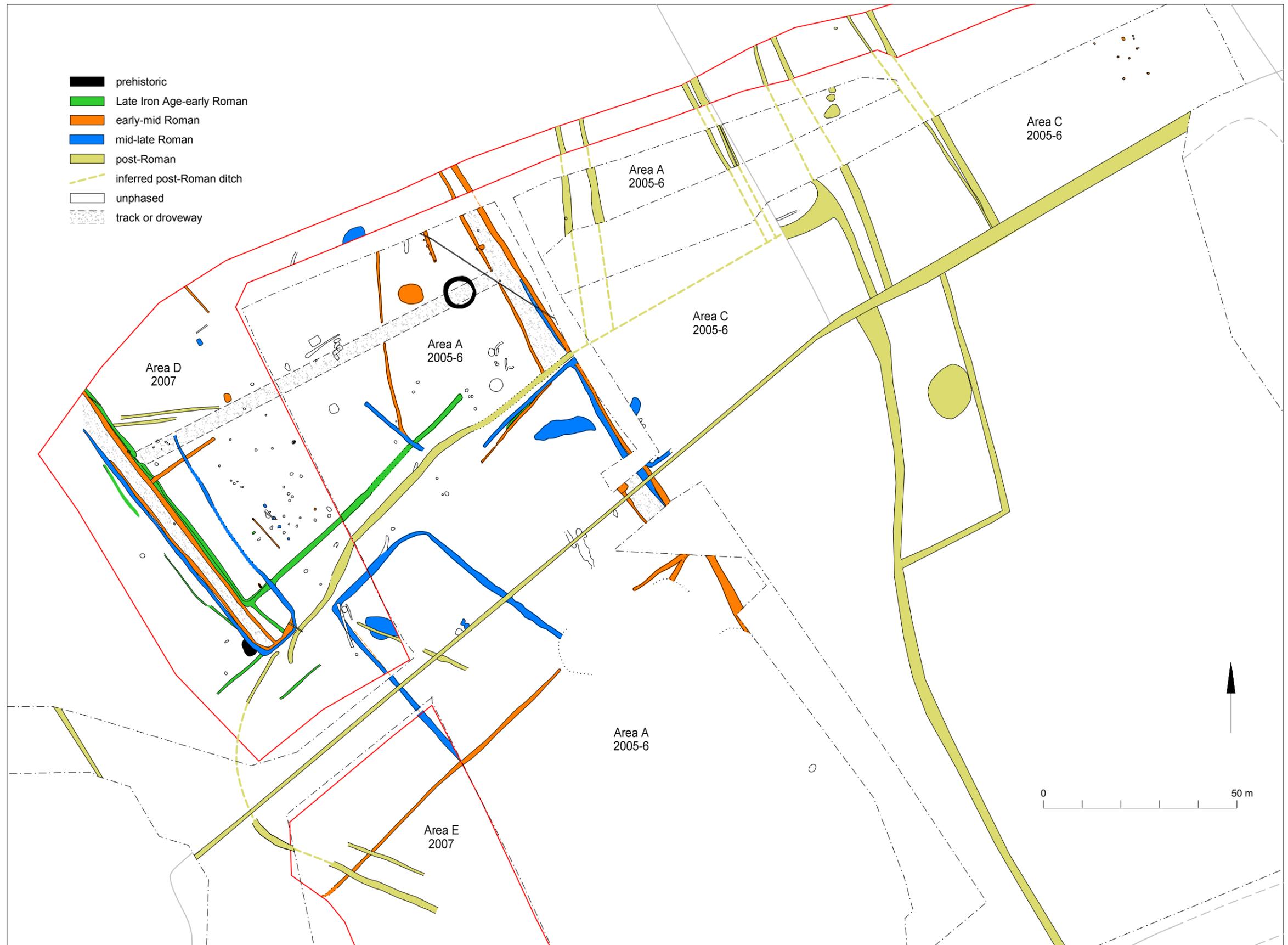


Fig 3 Phasing of features, including adjusted phasing for the 2004, 2005-06 excavation areas.

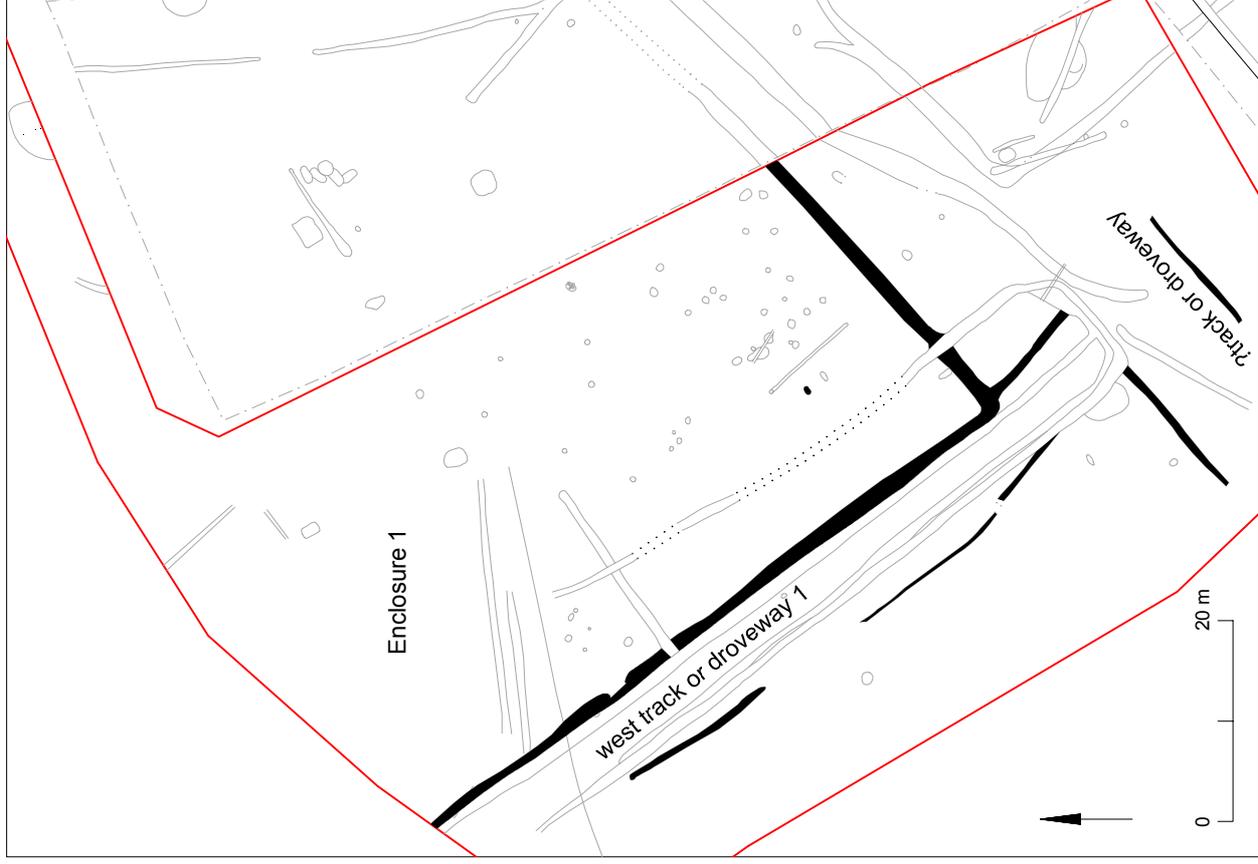
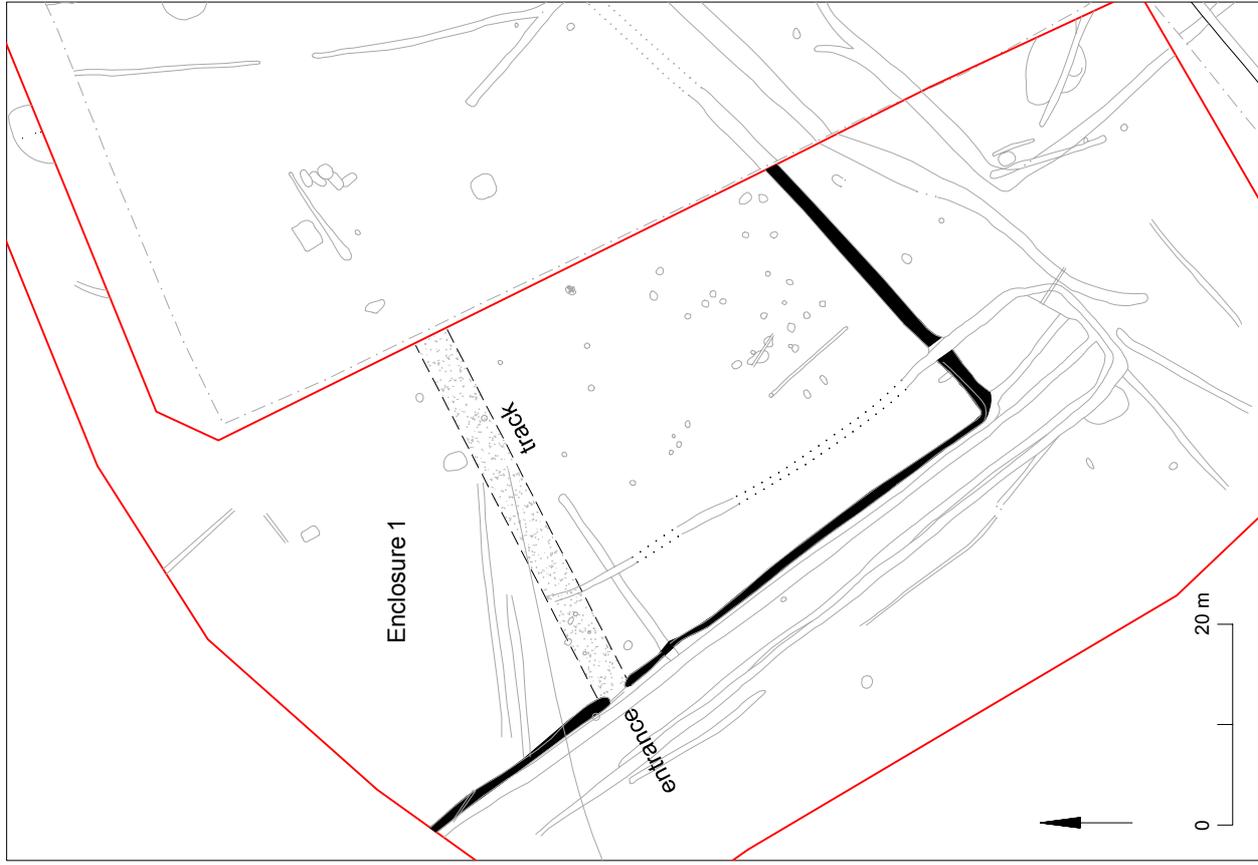


Fig 4a Left: interpretative plan of Area D for Period 2 early Phase 1a. Right: interpretative plan of Area D for Period 2 late Phase 1a.

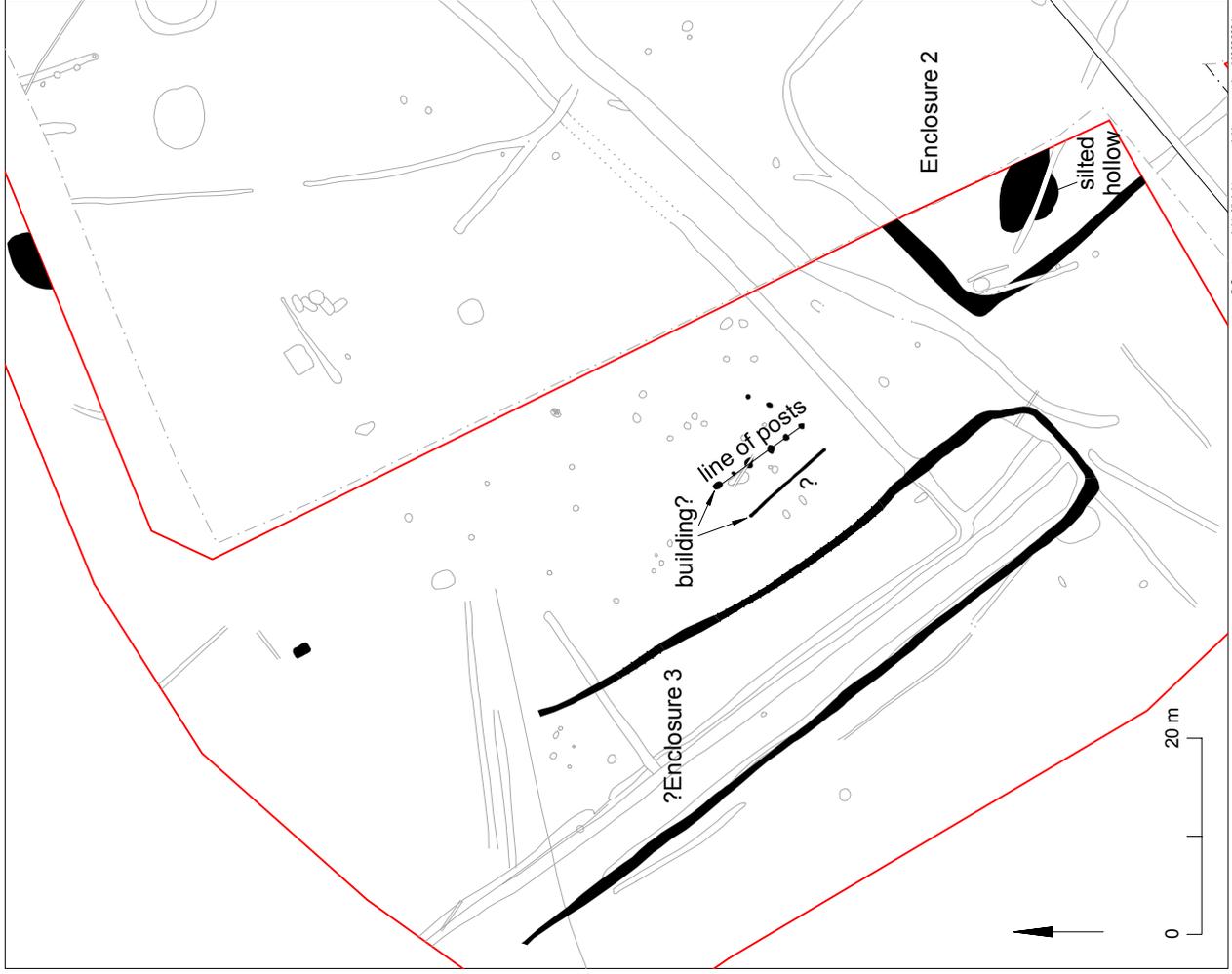
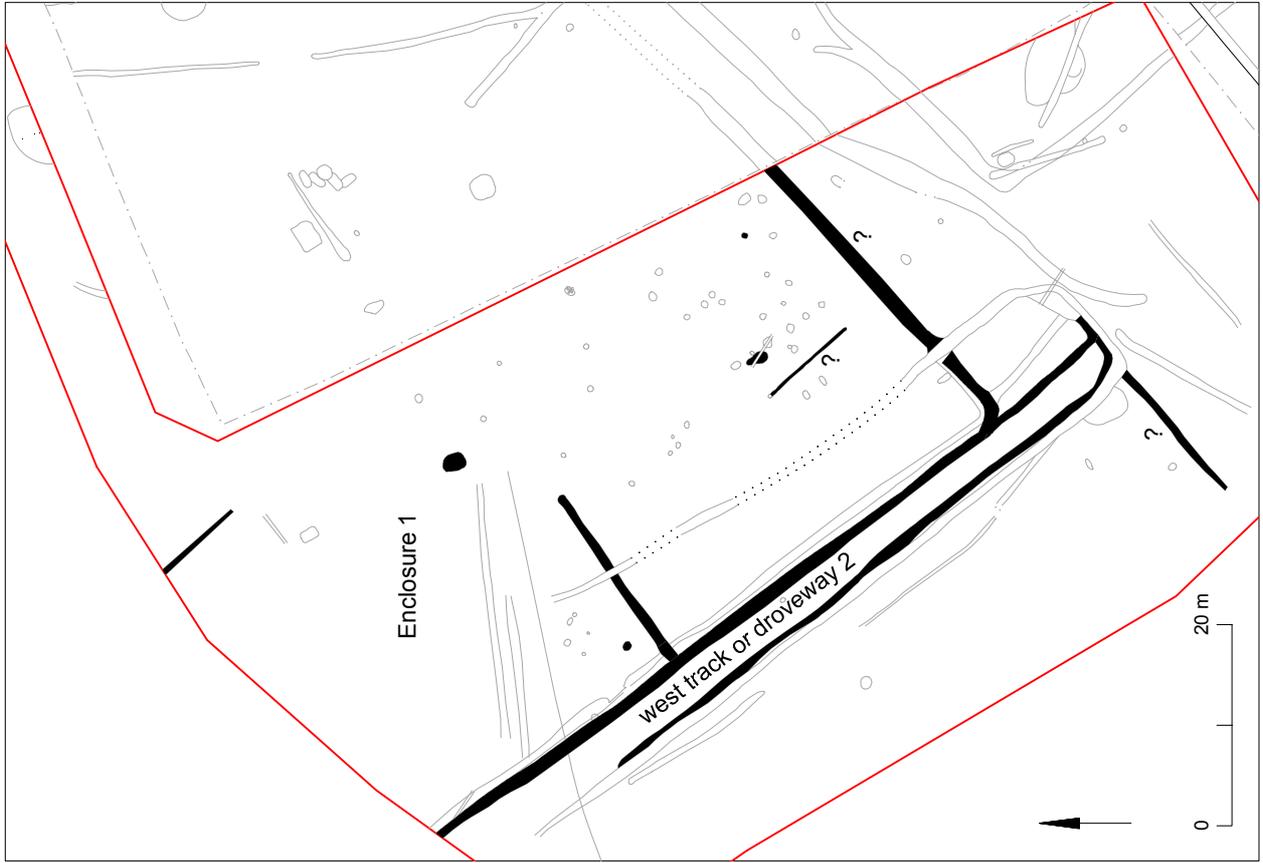


Fig 4b Left: interpretative plan of Area D for Period 2 Phase 1b. Right: interpretative plan of Area D for Period 2 Phase 2.

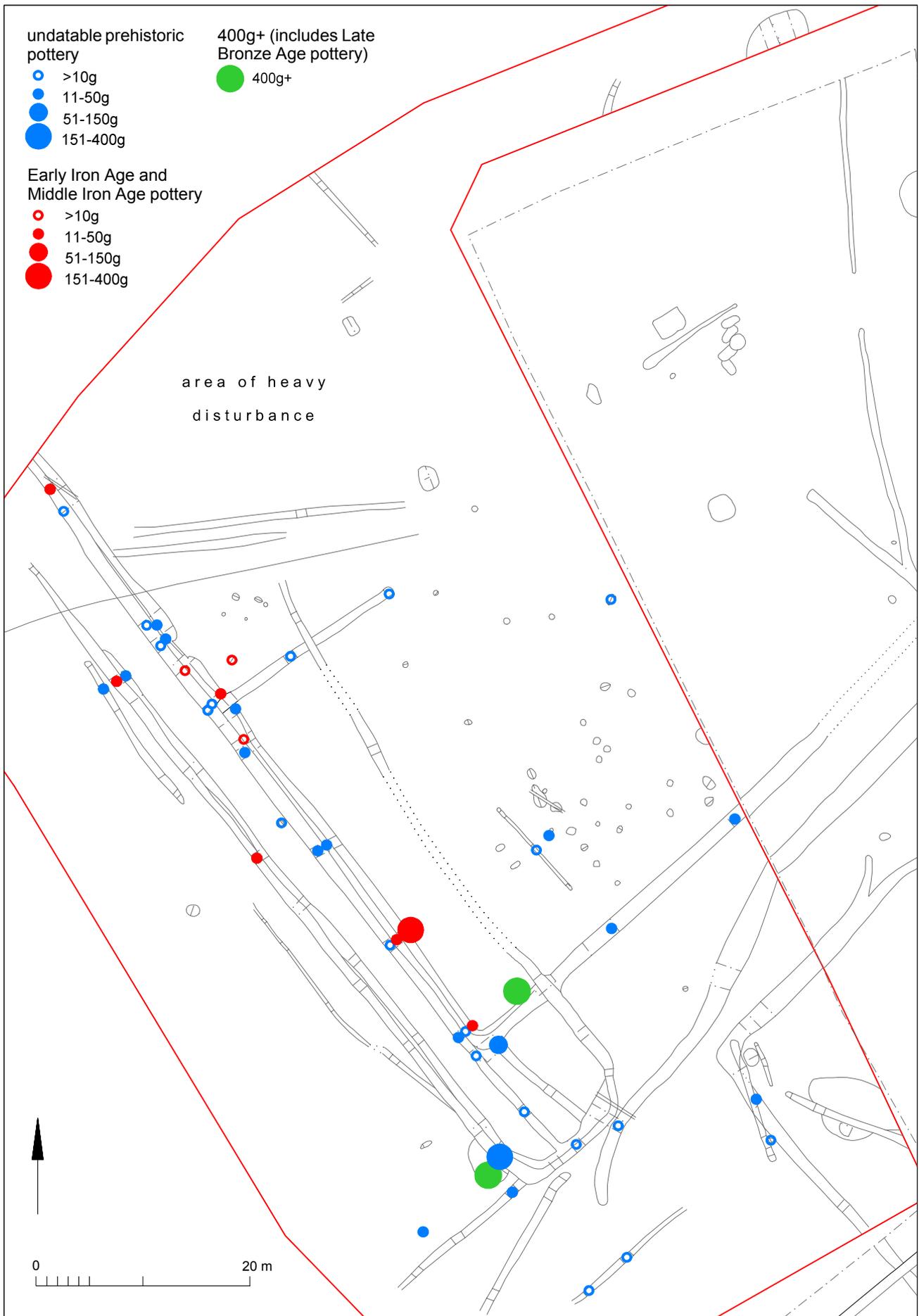


Fig 5 Distribution by weight of prehistoric pottery from Area D.

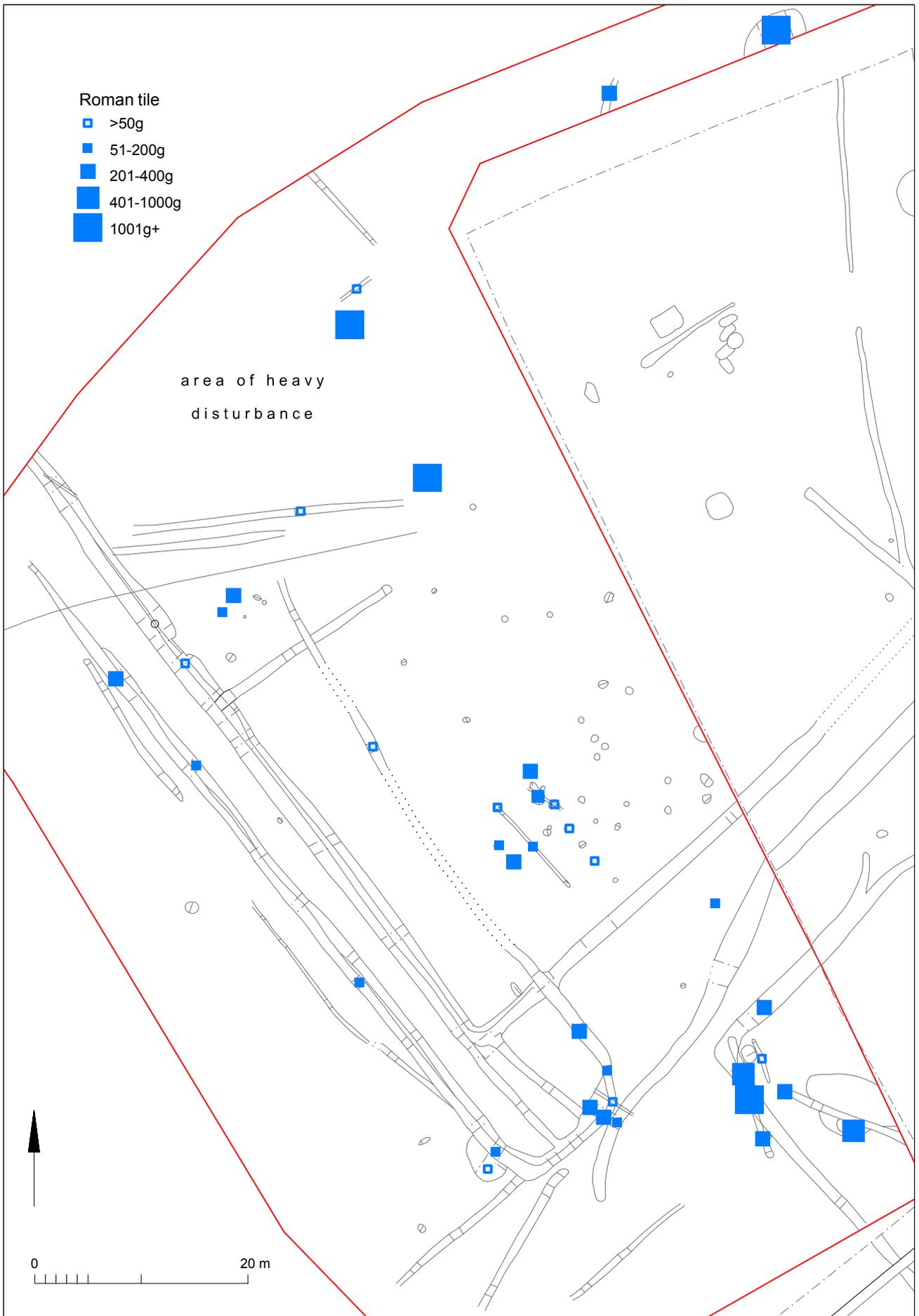


Fig 6 Distribution by weight of Roman tile from Area D.

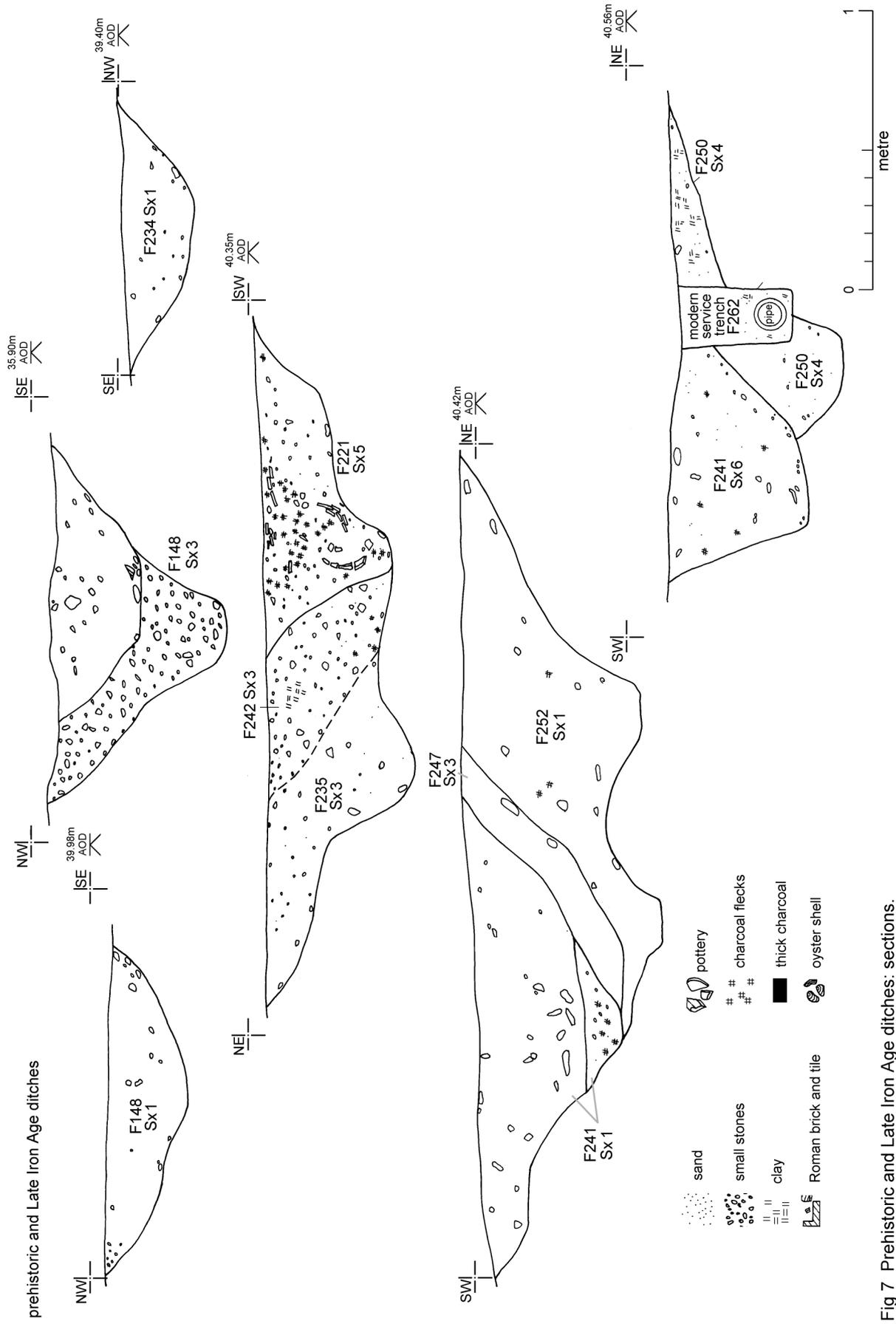


Fig 7 Prehistoric and Late Iron Age ditches: sections.

Roman ditches

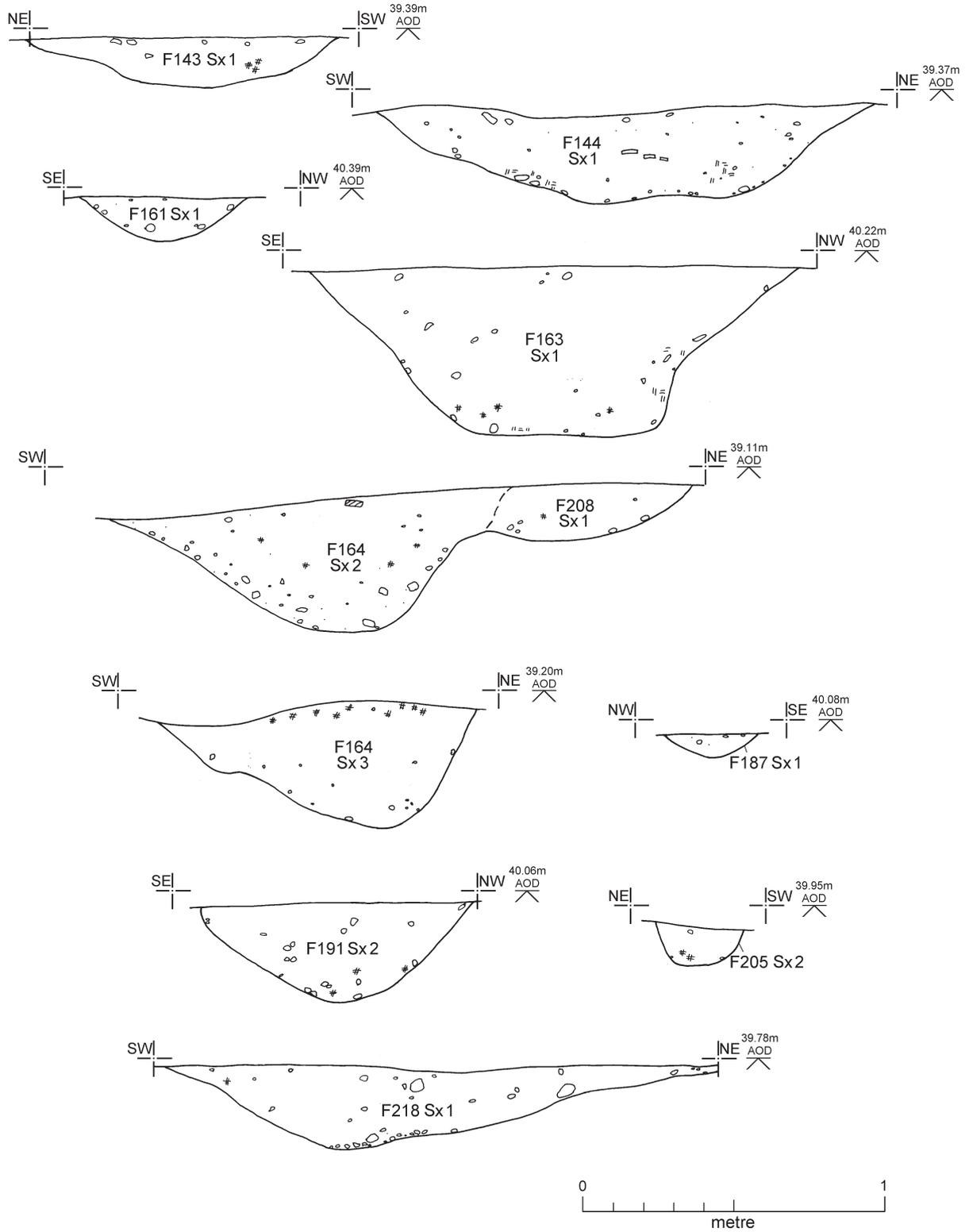


Fig 8 Roman ditches: sections.

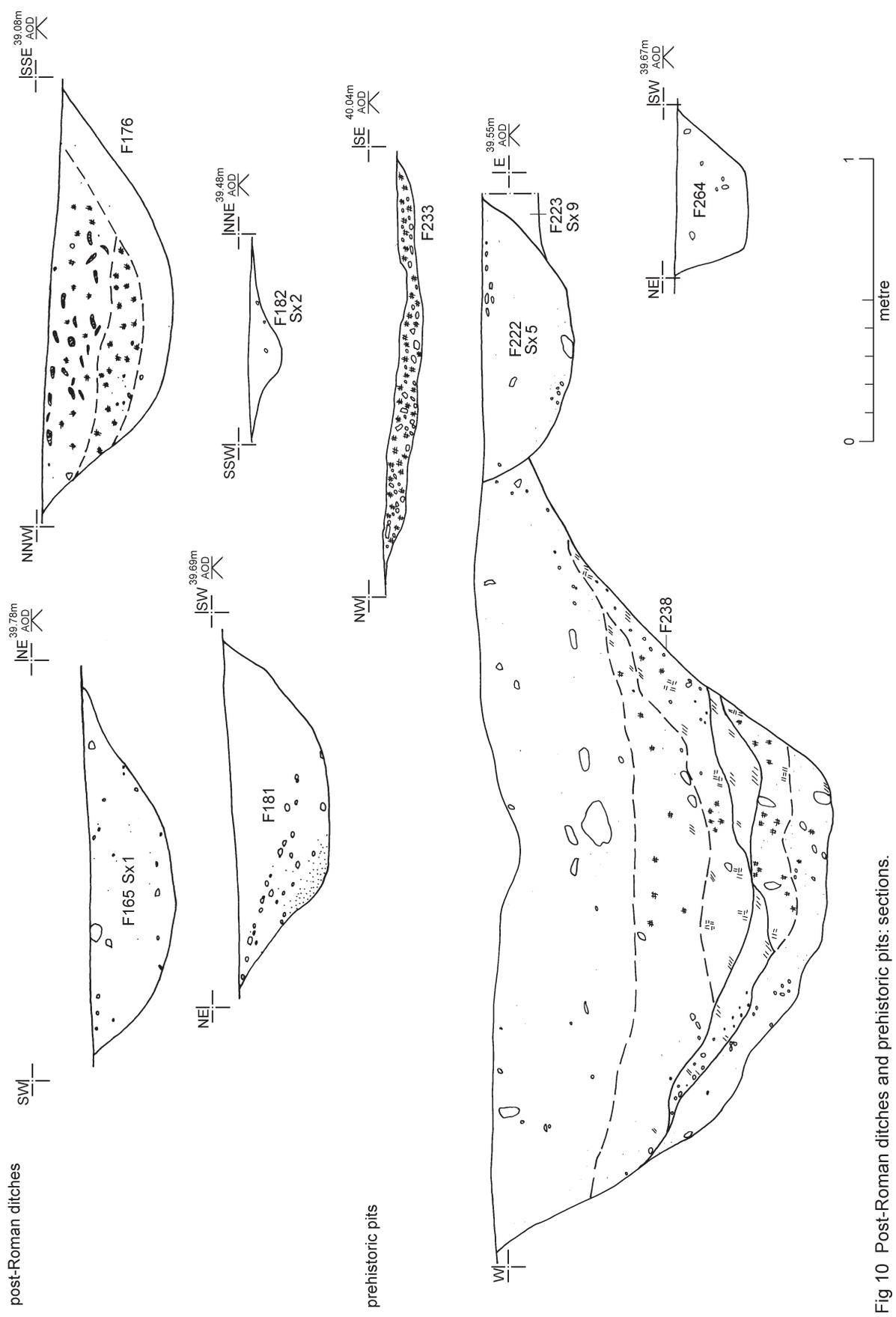


Fig 10 Post-Roman ditches and prehistoric pits: sections.

Roman pit

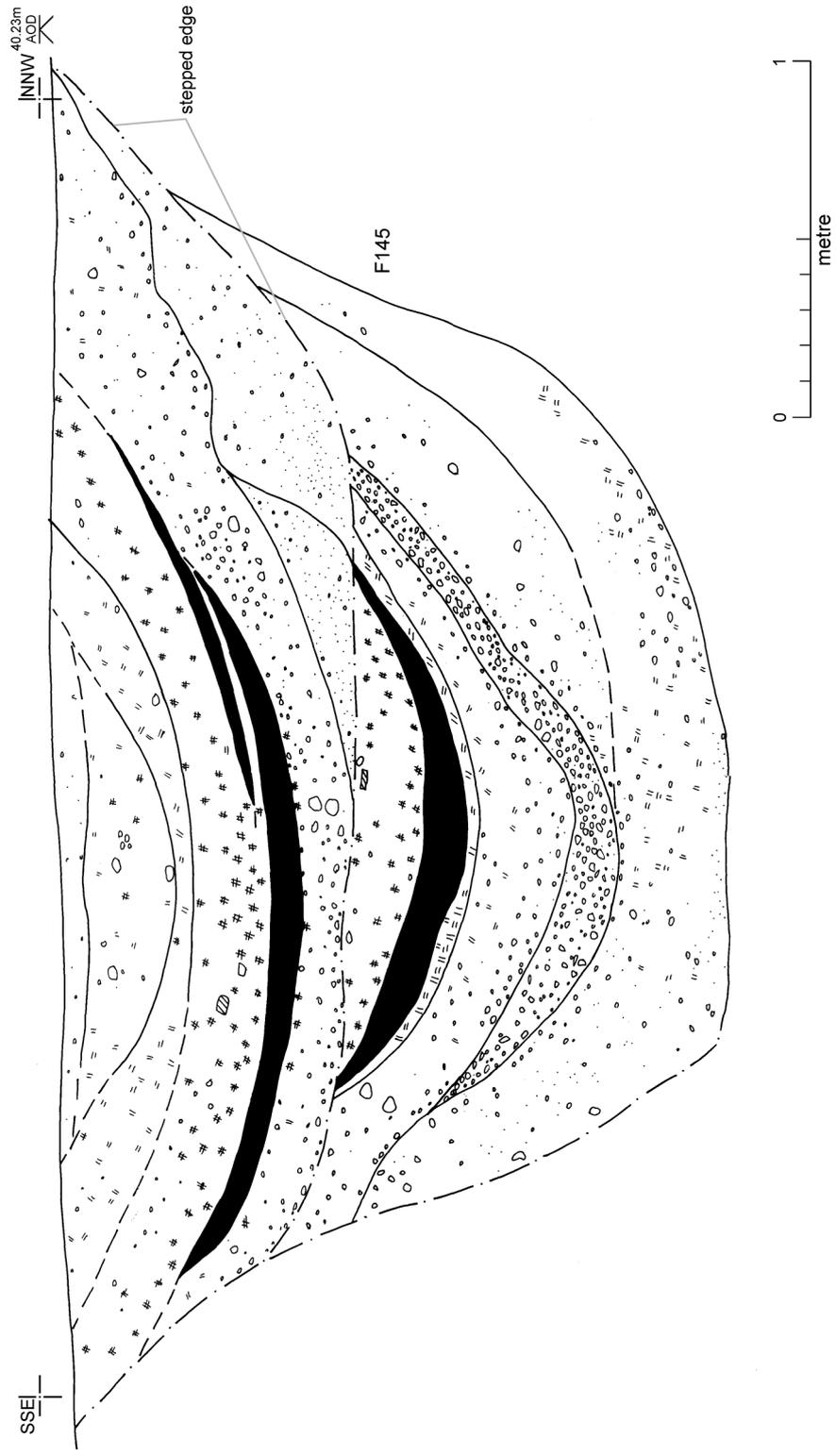


Fig 11 Roman pit F145: section.

Roman pits

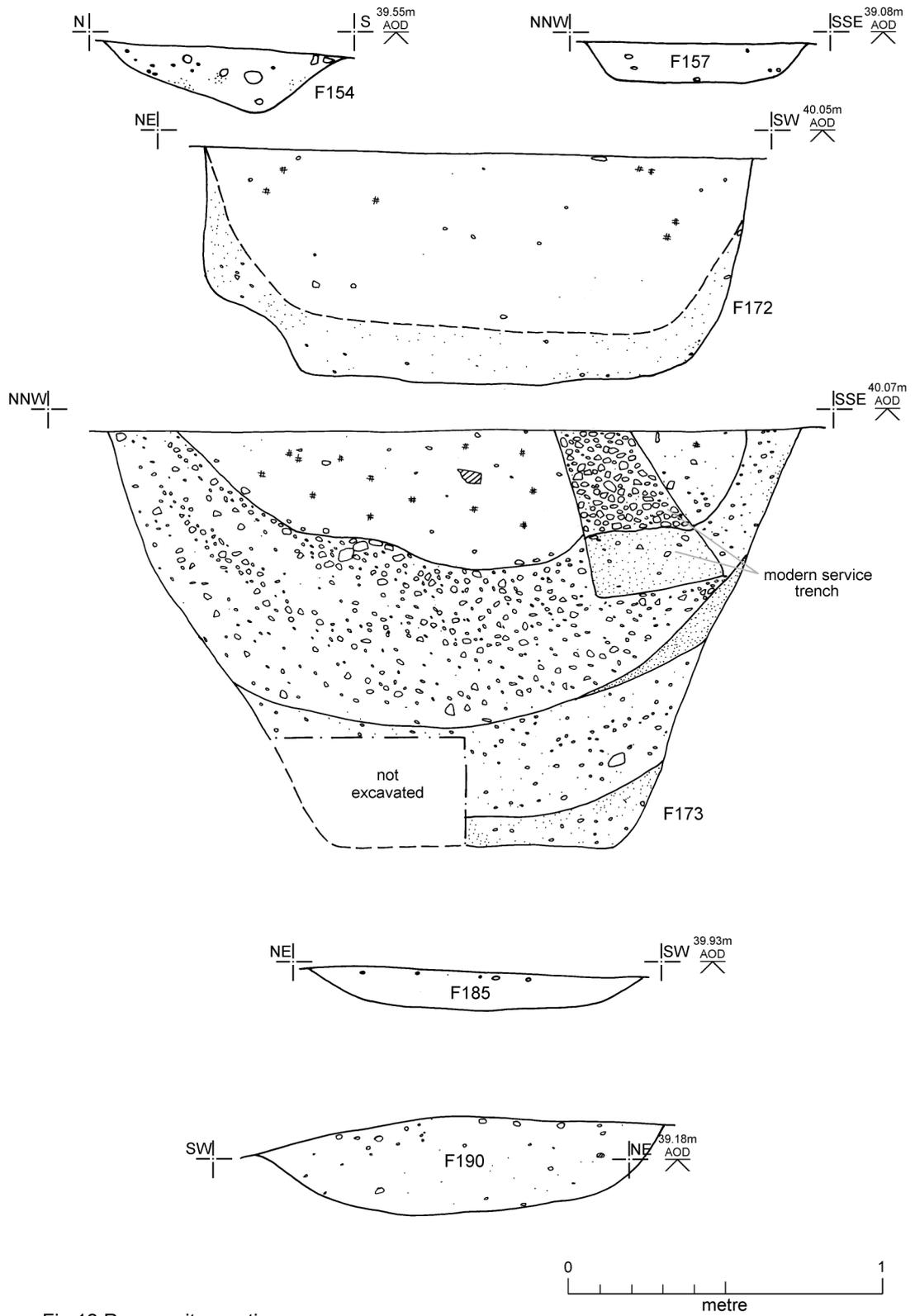
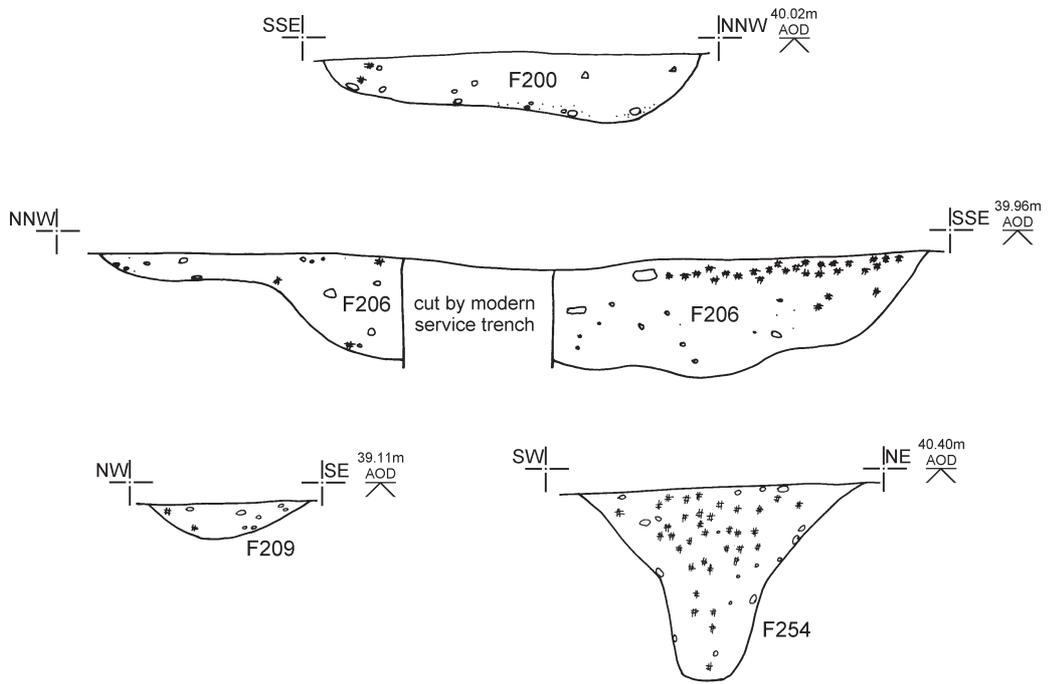


Fig 12 Roman pits: sections.

Roman pits



post-Roman pit



Roman post-holes

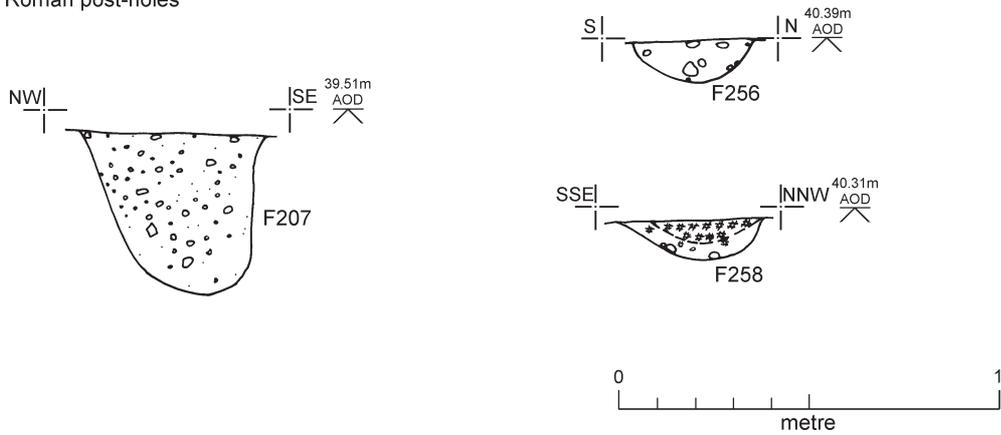


Fig 13 Roman pits, post-Roman pit and Roman post-holes: sections.

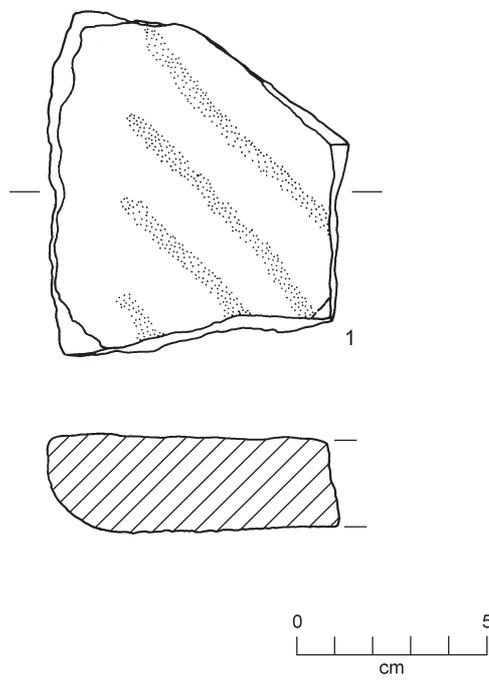


Fig 14 Object of worked stone.

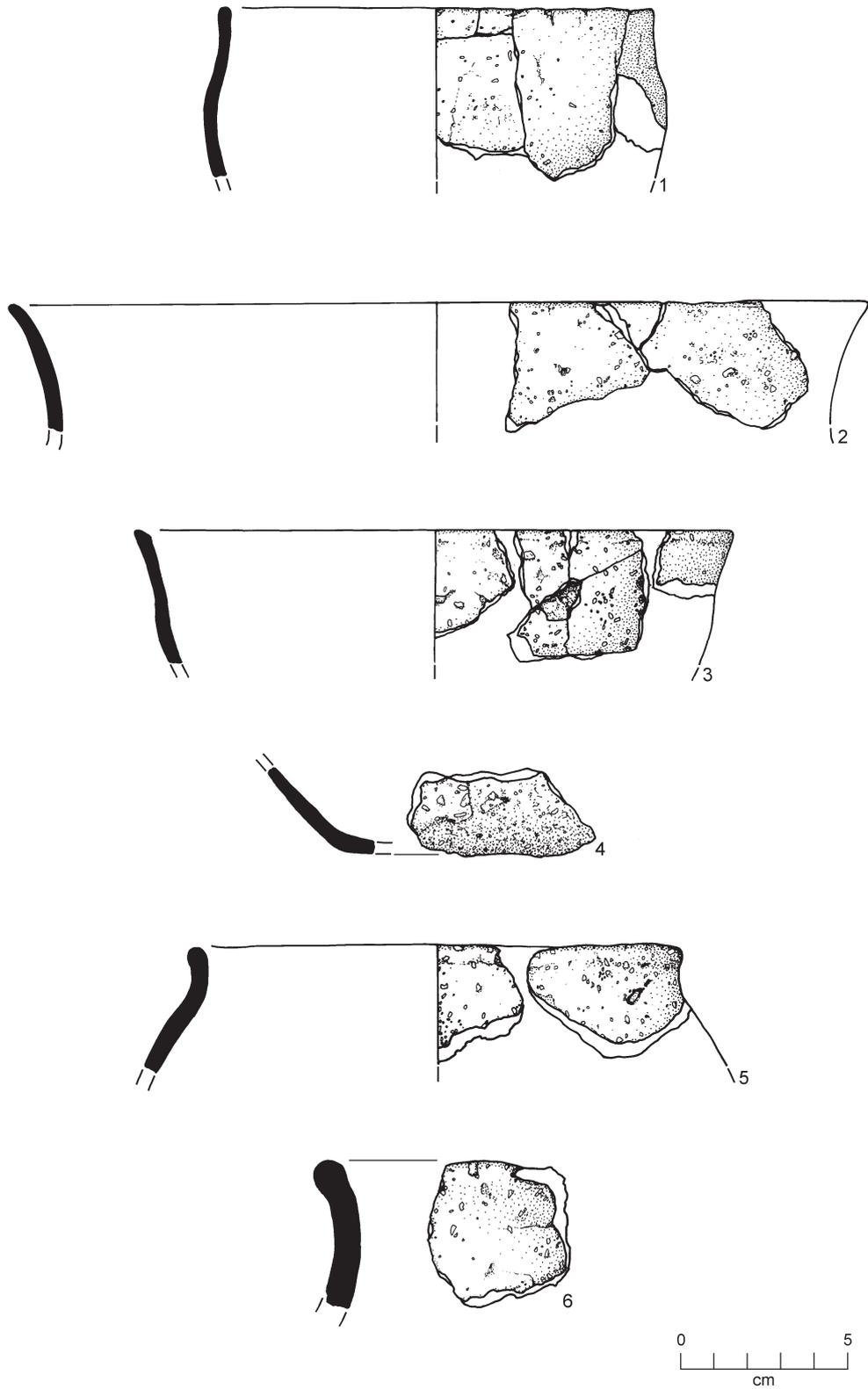


Fig 15 F238: prehistoric pottery.

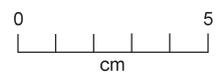
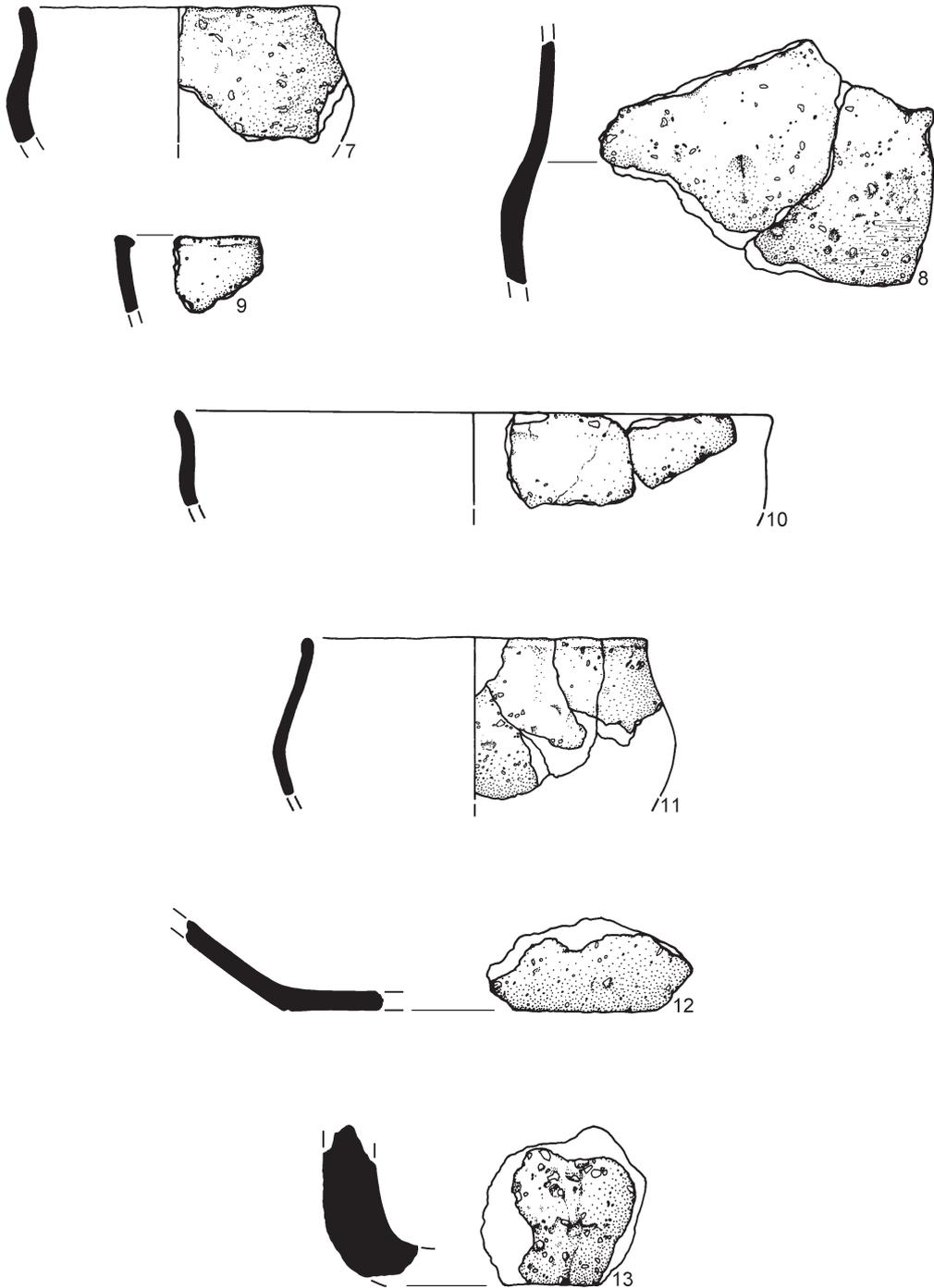


Fig 16 F238: prehistoric pottery.

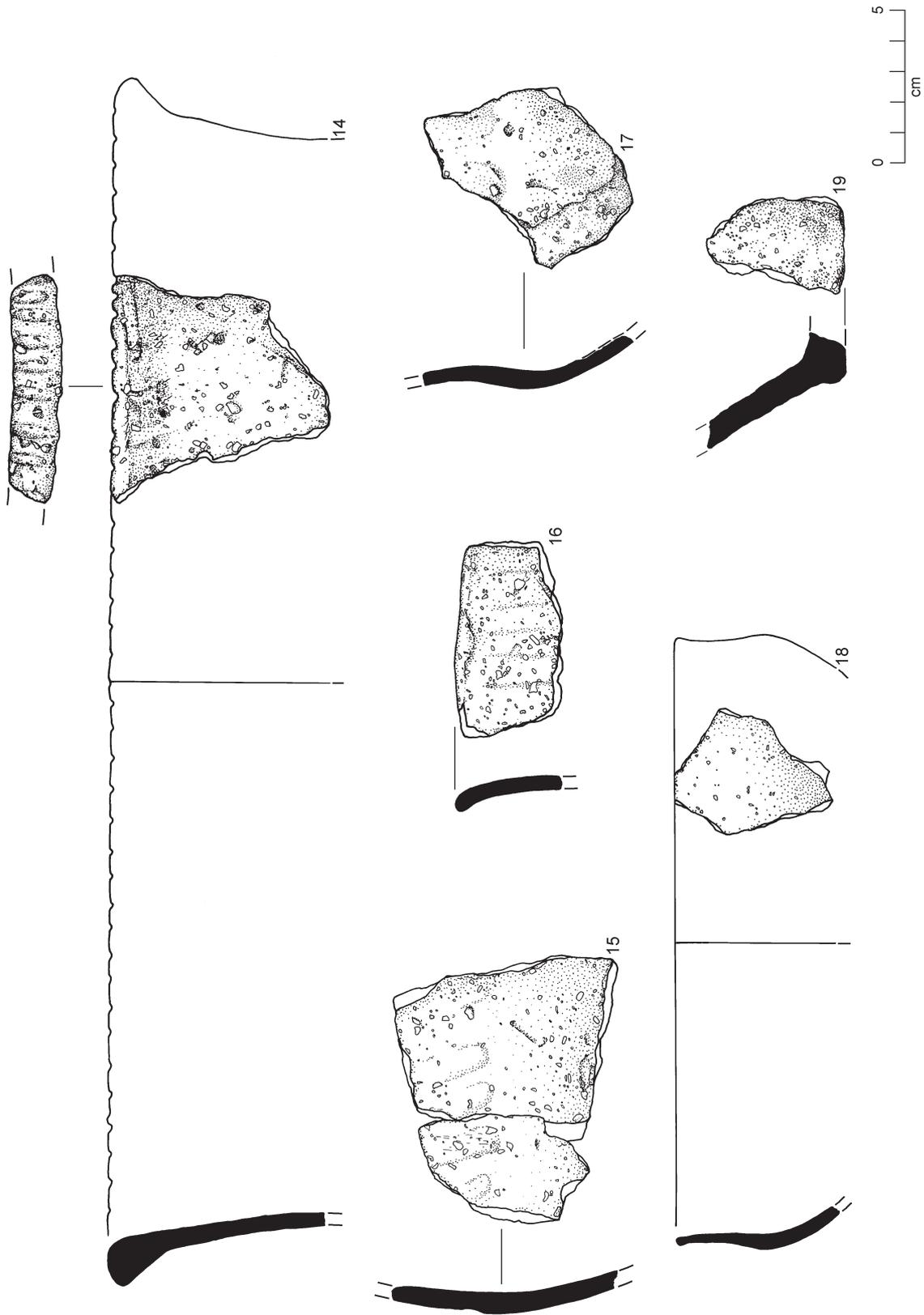


Fig 17 F238: prehistoric pottery.

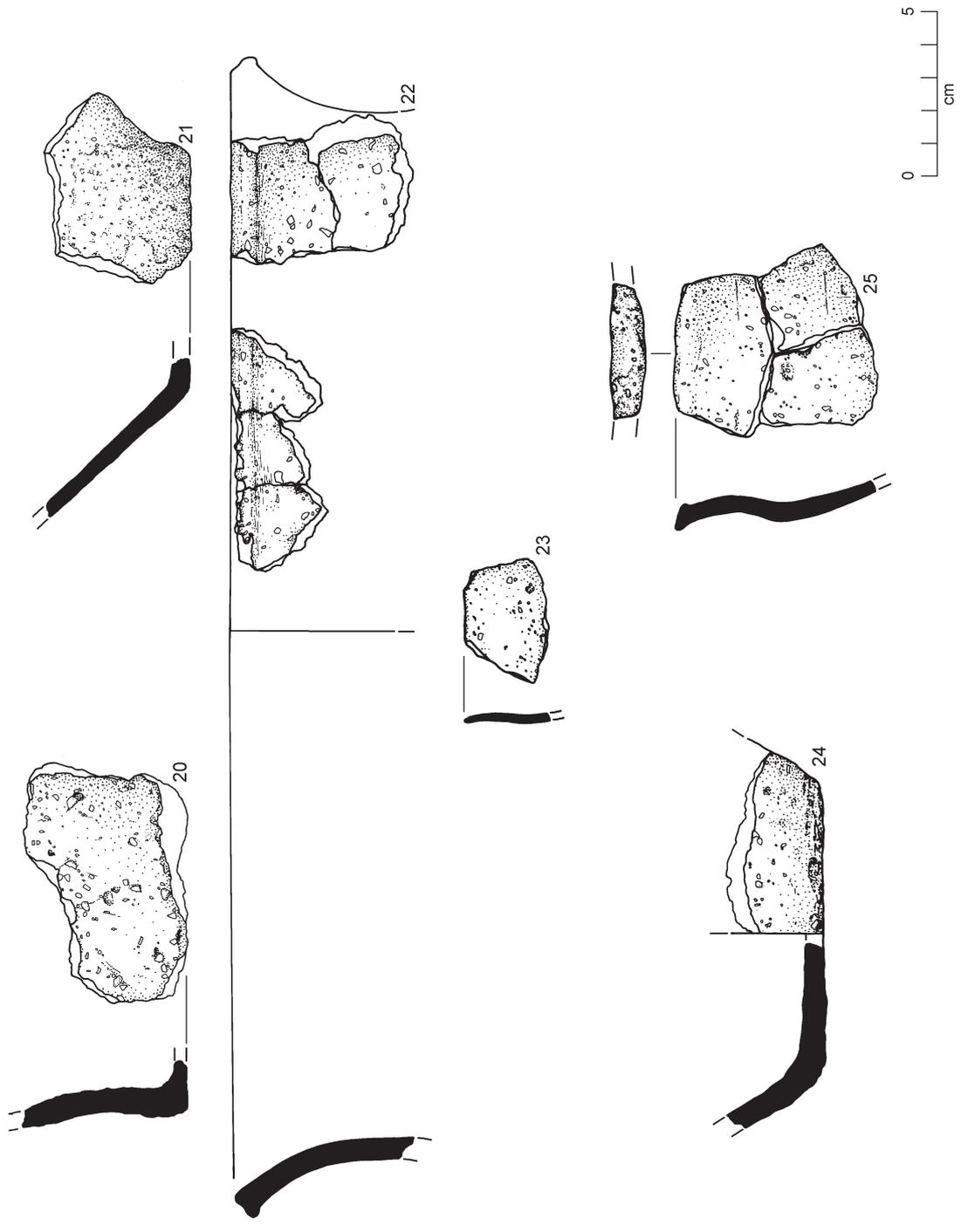


Fig 18 F238 nos 1-4, F233 nos 5-6: prehistoric pottery.

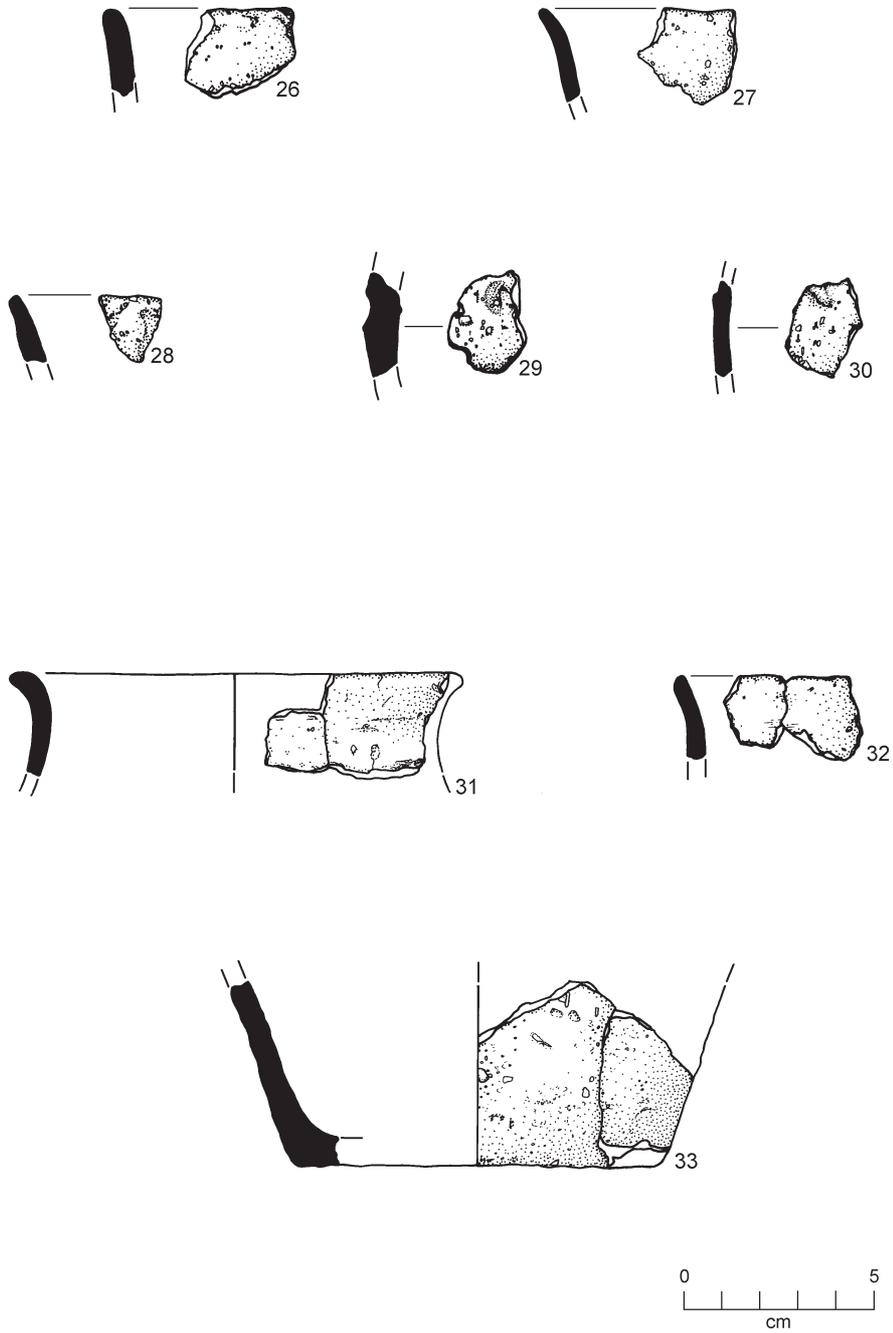


Fig 19 Residual contexts: prehistoric pottery.

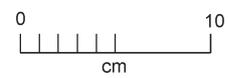
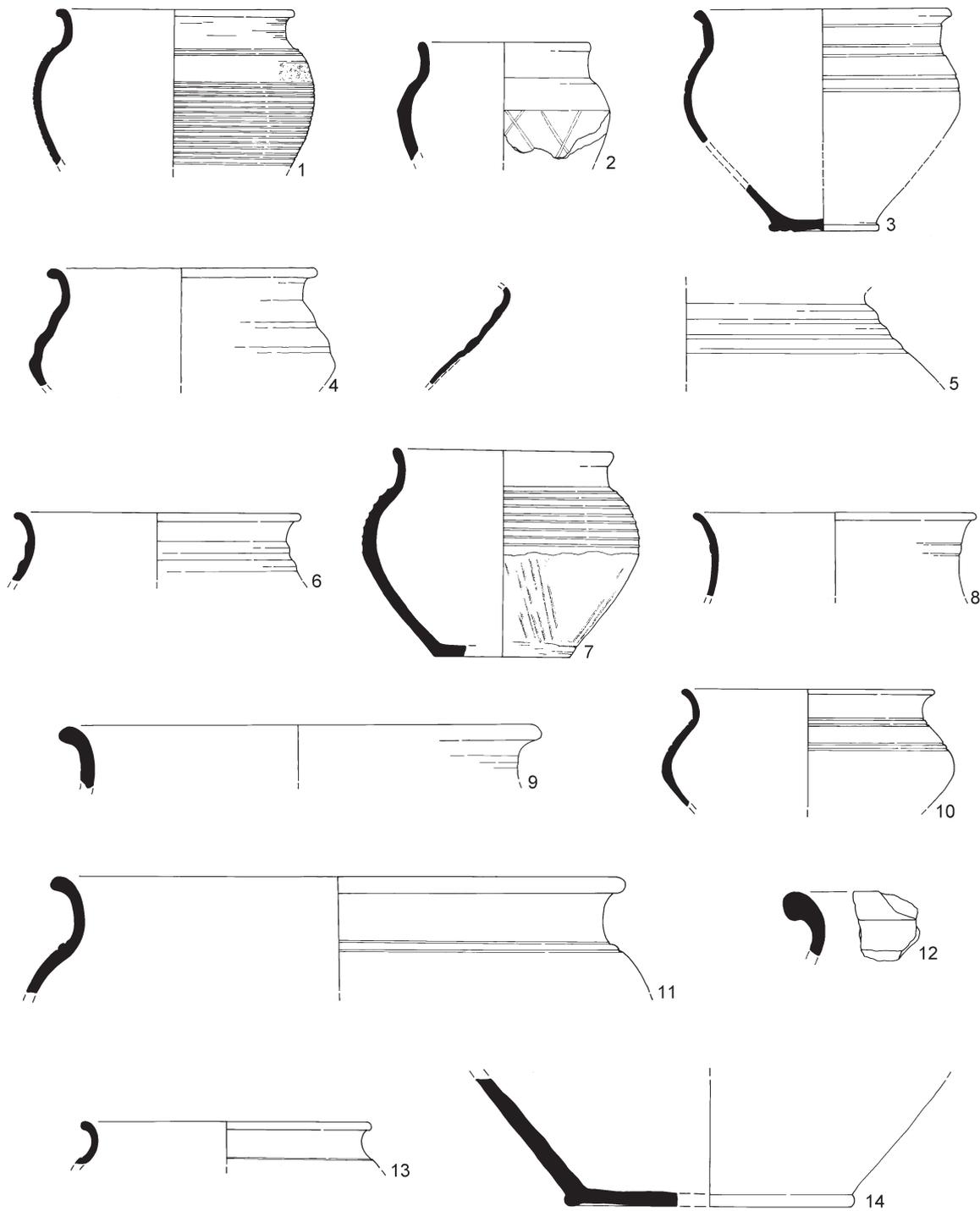


Fig 20 Late Iron Age pottery.

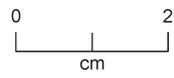
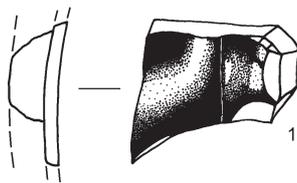


Fig 21 Roman glass.

**Essex Historic Environment Record/
Essex Archaeology and History**

Summary sheet

Site address: Birch Pit, Stage 3 western extension, Maldon Road, Birch, Colchester, Essex	
Parish: Birch	District: Colchester
NGR: TL 925 192	Site code: Museum accession code COLEM 2004.316
Type of work: Excavation	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: 4th July to 8th August 2007	Size of area investigated: 1.4 hectares
Location of finds/curating museum: Colchester and Ipswich Museums	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? Yes	Related EHER nos: 11548, 11577, 11582, 11924
Final report: CAT Report 485 and summary in EAH	
Periods represented: Middle-Late Bronze Age, Roman, post-medieval	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results:</p> <p><i>An archaeological excavation was carried out at Birch Pit in 2007 on behalf of Hanson Aggregates. This was due to the expansion of the extraction area on the western side of the quarry-pit. The site is located immediately to the east of Palmer's Farm and to the north of Maldon Road, Birch, near Colchester, Essex. The archaeological work consisted of an excavation adjacent to the north and west sides of areas previously excavated by the Colchester Archaeological Trust in 2004 and 2005-6 (CAT Report 383). The 2007 excavation took place in two areas (Areas D and E), divided by the line of a temporary quarry road excavated in 2004. The 2007 excavation included part of an area showing a surface spread of Roman finds denoting a Roman settlement (CAT Report 8).</i></p> <p><i>A few Late Bronze Age features were revealed. These included a large pit, possibly a waterhole, which yielded a substantial group of Late Bronze Age pottery.</i></p> <p><i>The most intensive period of occupation recorded on the 2007 site is Late Iron Age and Roman. The area of the Late Iron Age and Roman settlement is more extensive than the areas that have been excavated here altogether. Features of this period extend beyond the north edge of the 2007 excavation site and the recorded spread of surface finds extends further to the west. Most of the features exposed were ditches forming enclosures, one of which had a ditched track or driveway on the west side. These features indicate stock management, probably primarily of cattle. Apart from two large pits, dated to the mid to late Roman period, most of the remaining features which can be attributed to this period consist of pits, and small pits or post-holes. No definite buildings were revealed by any of the excavations.</i></p> <p><i>The medieval and post-medieval period saw the establishment of a field system of fields with ditched tracks or driveways, probably associated primarily with sheep farming. There is little evidence of occupation in this area during this period, although a few pits of post-medieval date probably indicate settlement close to the north-eastern part of the excavated area Area D. In the modern period, this field system was replaced by one of ditches forming arable fields.</i></p> <p><i>The overall orientation of the post-Roman and modern field system, as represented by ditches, is similar to the orientation of the land divisions of the Roman period. While there is no direct continuity of features, this suggests a continuity in the overall orientation and arrangement of the field system.</i></p>	
Previous summaries/reports: CAT Report 383	
Keywords: Late Bronze Age, Late Iron Age, Roman, enclosure, farmstead, tracks, field system, quarry, pottery, puddingstone	Significance: ***
Author of summary: S Benfield and E Spurgeon	Date of summary: August 2008