Wessex Archaeology

New Moreton Farm, Standish, Gloucestershire

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NEW MORETON FARM, STANDISH, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT OF THE RESULTS

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Videotext Communications Ltd to carry out archaeological recording and post-excavation analysis on an archaeological evaluation by Channel 4's 'Time Team' at New Moreton Farm, Standish, Gloucestershire (centred at NGR 380000 208900). Previous investigations indicated Iron Age and Romano-British activity on the site, and the aim of the evaluation was to gain a better understanding of the nature, date and duration of that activity, as well as of the condition and survival of the archaeological remains. The work was carried out from 24-27th August 2004.

The site lies *c.* 20km west of the Dubonnic *oppidum* at Bagendon, and 2km west of the Iron Age hillfort at Haresfield Beacon. It is close to the Roman administrative centre of Cirencester, and just 10km south-west of the Roman legionary fortress at Gloucester. The Roman road between Gloucester and Sea Mills lies some 2km west of the site.

The evaluation included a geophysical survey of the site comprising of *c.* 5ha of magnetometer survey and a small area of resistance survey, and six evaluation trenches. The geophysical survey revealed a complex of small subrectangular ditched enclosures arranged around what appears to be an open central area, forming a loosely bounded multiphase settlement containing a number of curvilinear anomalies, a trackway and numerous pit-like features. It also revealed a series of parallel anomalies, aligned approximately east-west, that relate to the medieval or post-medieval ridge-and-furrow cultivation visible in air photographs. The results of the geophysical survey were used to identify suitable locations for the evaluation trenches.

The main evidence for Iron Age activity was recorded in Trench 4, in the form of a penannular gully, *c.* 15m across with an east facing entrance, probably bounding a roundhouse. As well as a possible entrance structure, a deposit of several Iron Age pots, animal bones, burnt and unburnt stone and other materials had been placed in one of the gully terminals. The gully was subsequently cut by a Romano-British ditch. Two Iron Age postholes were recorded in one of the subrectangular enclosures (Trench 5), and the ditch bounding the eastern side of the settlement may also date to the Late Iron Age (Trench 3).

While the most diagnostic Romano-British pottery was of 2nd to 4th century AD date, the presence of Late Iron Age/Early Romano-British pottery, such as the *in situ* base of a large grog-tempered storage jar in Trench 1, does not rule out the possibility of unbroken occupation through the immediate pre- and post-conquest periods. Part of a rectangular Romano-British building was recorded in Trench 4, and further building materials were recorded in Trench 5. The recovery of a single *tessera* may point to the presence of a building of some status in the vicinity, although there was no evidence

that there was a villa on the site. The phasing and development of the ditches defining the sub-enclosures, and possibly bounding the settlement, remains unclear.

An inhumation burial of an adult woman aged over 45 years, possibly of Early Romano-British date, was recorded in Trench 2. Other finds included a number of coins (with a 1st-4th century AD date range), objects of copper alloy and iron, and worked and unworked bone. Environmental samples produced evidence for spelt and possibly emmer wheat, and oats, as well as weed species found on arable land.

Acknowledgements

The evaluation was commissioned and funded by Videotext Communications Ltd. Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Steve and Jane Ruggier, who lease the land from Gloucestershire County Council, for their assistance during the course of the fieldwork, and to Jan Wills Gloucestershire County Archaeologist.

Surveying was undertaken by Henry Chapman, University of Hull, and the geophysical survey was undertaken by GSB Prospection. Expertise on aspects of the excavation was provided by Guy de la Bedoyere, Jane Timby, Mark Corney and Richard Reece.

The archive was collated and all post-excavation assessment and analysis undertaken by Wessex Archaeology, including management (Nick Cooke), finds (Lorraine Mepham), environmental assessment (Chris Stevens), report (Andrew Powell), and illustrations (Rob Goller).

NEW MORETON FARM, STANDISH, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT OF THE RESULTS

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Description of the site

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Videotext Communications Ltd to undertake a programme of archaeological recording and post-excavation assessment on an archaeological evaluation by Channel 4's 'Time Team' at New Moreton Farm, Standish, Gloucestershire. Previous investigations indicated Iron Age and Romano-British activity on the site, and the aim of the evaluation was gain a better understanding of the nature, date and duration of that activity.

1.1.2 The site, some 10km south-west of Gloucester on the valley floor of the River Severn, lies in a large field immediately north of the village of Standish, centred at NGR 380000 208900 (**Fig. 1**). The land slopes gently to the east at *c.* 25-30m aOD.

1.1.3 The field has been used for pasture for the last 20 years and has been ploughed infrequently during this time, although air photographs reveal ridge-and-furrow indicating medieval or post-medieval cultivation. The geology of the site is clay, overlain with gravel in some areas (British Geological Survey, Sheet 234, Solid and Drift Edition).

1.2 Previous archaeological work

1.2.1 The archaeological potential of the site was first recognised in 2000, when Paul Bevan, a local amateur archaeologist, recovered Iron Age and Romano-British material during metal-detecting and field-walking. This included an Iron Age coin and an iron axe-head or chisel (also thought to be Iron Age), Late Iron Age pottery (later 1st century BC – early 1st century AD), Romano-British pottery (2nd to 4th century AD), fragments of Romano-British glass and Roman coins (Bevan, 2002). As a result of this work, GSB Prospection Limited conducted a geophysical survey of part of the field, revealing a number of curved, linear and discrete magnetometer anomalies interpreted as buried archaeological features (GSB 2000).

1.2.2 On the basis of these results, Paul Bevan and the Gloucester and District Archaeological Research Group (GADARG) undertook a small archaeological evaluation in March 2003. This comprised the excavation of three test trenches (TT1-3) (**Fig. 1**), with a resistivity survey by GADARG and a magnetometer survey by Paul Bevan in conjunction with Naomi Price of the Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service. Further evaluation work was undertaken in August 2003, with Paul Bevan assisted by Lisa Donel of the Gloucester City Archaeological Unit, during which a further

seven test trenches (TT4-10) were excavated, some targeted on geophysical anomalies.

1.2.3 Test trenches TT1-4 contained archaeological remains. These included 2nd century AD pottery from TT1, sandstone tiles from TT2, and Iron Age Malvern coarseware pottery and pieces of burnt sandstone from TT3. TT4 contained further sherds of Malvern pottery and a piece of pig bone, found in association with a cobbled surface. TT5-10 contained no archaeology. On the basis of these investigations the site was interpreted as an Iron Age and Romano-British settlement. However, given the small scale of the work, it was felt that further evaluation could further elucidate the nature and extent of the archaeological remains.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The site is on the border of the north and south divisions of the Dobunnic territory in the lower Severn valley, some 20km west-north-west of the *oppidum* at Bagendon, and overlooked by the Iron Age univallate hillfort at Haresfield Beacon on the limestone escarpment 2km to the east. The hillforts at Uley Bury and Crickley Hill occupy similar locations to the south and north-east.

1.3.2 Standish lies close to the Roman centres of Gloucester (*Colonia Nervia Glevensum*) and Cirencester (*Corinium Dubonnorum*) and would be well served by major road networks and trade routes. The Roman legionary fortress at Gloucester was established in the mid-first century AD, and by the end of the century Gloucester had become a colony of retired military veterans and one of Roman Britain's principal settlements.

1.3.3 The Roman road running south from Gloucester to the port at Sea Mills (*Abonae*) lies less than 2km to the west of the site, and there are a number of Romano-British villas in the area. Woodchester, 7km to the south-east, has one of the largest and most important mosaic floors in Britain, while Frocester Court, 6km to the south, is particularly important for showing 5th century occupation of a villa estate. In addition, there was a temple to Mercury and attendant buildings at Uley, 11km to the south.

2 METHODS

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 A project design for the work was compiled by Videotext Communications (Videotext Communications 2004), providing full details of the circumstances and methods of the project, as summarised here.

2.2 Aims and objectives

2.2.1 The main aim of this project was to gain a better understanding of the extent, nature and date of the settlement and to shed light on the transition between the Late pre-Roman Iron Age and the Romano-British occupation. The evaluation sought to provide a context for the finds recovered by Paul Bevan

during field-walking and metal-detecting and, by locating the test trenches of his earlier evaluations, to establish the character of the archaeological deposits recorded within them. Although Paul Bevan had found a traces of a cobbled surface, he did not conclusively identify any Iron Age or a Romano-British features.

2.2.2 The evaluation also sought to establish the character of the varied geophysical anomalies, to investigate the relationships between them, to identify the character and range of the archaeological deposits and features within the site and to determine their degree of preservation and the extent of plough damage. The evaluation sought to understand the site in terms of its wider context, considering for instance its relationship to nearby Iron Age hillforts, and major Romano-British settlements, villas, roads and religious sites in the area, and its siting in a location with relatively poor soils.

2.3 Fieldwork methodology

2.3.1 A new geophysical survey of the site by GSB comprised 4.95ha of magnetometer survey (which included a 20m by 100m strip in the field to the west), and a small area of resistance survey (within the main survey area). It included the area surveyed previously (GSB 2000), but used a Bartington Grad 601-2 instrument to provide a greater sampling density and depth. The aim was to determine the extent of the settlement, and to help identify features where the evaluation trenches might seek to answer specific questions.

2.3.2 Six evaluation trenches of varying size were excavated over geophysical anomalies, using a tracked mini-digger fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. All machine work was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision and ceased at the identification of significant archaeological deposits. All trenches were then cleaned by hand and archaeological deposits were excavated. The deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* record sheets, and drawn at a scale of 1:20 for plans and 1:10 for sections. A photographic record was kept of the investigations and of individual features. The trenches were located using a Trimble Real Time Differential GPS survey system, and the principal contexts were related to Ordnance Survey datum. All spoil was scanned by metal detector.

2.3.3 The work was carried out from 24-27th August 2004, following which all trenches were reinstated using the excavated spoil, and the turf re-laid or replaced. All artefacts were transported to the offices of Wessex Archaeology at Salisbury where they were processed and assessed.

2.3.4 Details of individual excavated contexts and features, the full geophysical report (GSB 2004) and results of artefact and environmental sample analyses are retained in the archive.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Geophysical survey

3.1.1 The anomalies detected by the magnetometer survey fall into three main categories (**Fig. 1**) – a complex of mostly linear anomalies interpreted as archaeological features that relate to the Iron Age and Romano-British settlement; a series of parallel anomalies, aligned approximately east-west, that relate to the medieval or post-medieval ridge-and-furrow cultivation visible in air photographs; and a scatter of ferrous-type responses of uncertain archaeological significance (GSB 2004).

3.1.2 The settlement features comprised an irregular cluster of small subrectangular ditched enclosures arranged around what appears to be an open central area. Some of the ditches crossed one other, suggesting a multi-phased site. Among them were at least three curvilinear anomalies interpreted as possible round houses. Some of the enclosures had concentrations of discrete, pit-like anomalies that may reflect activity in and around the houses, while others were relatively quiet perhaps indicating the presence of paddocks or garden plots. Two poorly defined ditch-like anomalies in the field to the west suggest the presence of a trackway running west from the south-west corner of the settlement.

3.1.3 The results of the resistance survey reflected differential drainage in the clay and gravel subsoil and indicated no archaeological features.

3.2 Evaluation trenches

3.2.1 All the features and deposits had been significantly truncated by later ploughing.

Trench 1

3.2.2 Trench 1 was L-shaped, measuring *c.* 12m by 15m (**Fig. 2**). It was targeted on a number of geophysical anomalies lying within an apparent subrectangular enclosure towards the south-west of the site, immediately east of where the trackway runs to the west (**Fig. 1**). Excavation revealed a series of archaeological features cutting the clay natural (as well as the locations of two of the earlier test trenches, TT3 and TT4, at the north-west corner of the trench).

3.2.3 The archaeological features included a length of shallow curvilinear gully (114) possibly defining the southern arc of a circle *c.* 7m in diameter. It was up to 0.65m wide and 0.2m deep with moderately steep sides and a 0.25m wide flat base, and contained a light yellowish brown silty clay (113) from which fragments of Romano-British pottery, ceramic building material (CBM) and animal bone were recovered. The gully continued outside the trench to the north-east, while to the north-west it was overlain by traces of a cobbled surface beyond which it did not appear to continue. Approximately 1.6m inside the gully and possibly associated it, a small cut (122), with a moderately sloping curved side and a greyish brown silty clay fill (121), was recorded extending beyond the edge of the trench.

3.2.4 A short length of a second curved gully, which would have had a projected diameter of *c.* 9m, was recorded (but not excavated) at the eastern corner of the trench.

3.2.5 The cobbled surface (116) (which had been previously recorded in TT4) consisted of medium to large flints laid directly onto the natural clay. These, in turn, were partly sealed by a spread of mixed dark grey silty clay (115), possibly the result of trampling, approximately 3m across and 0.03m thick, containing sherds of Iron Age and Romano-British pottery, animal bone, fired clay, CBM and a fragment of iron plate.

3.2.6 Both the cobbled surface and trampled layer were cut on their north-east sides by an elongated oval feature (112/128) (which also cut feature 122). It was 4.5m long and up to 1.3m wide aligned north-west/south-east, and its position appeared to correspond to a magnetometer anomaly recorded by the geophysical survey (**Fig. 1**). It was 0.4m deep with moderately steep sides and an irregular flattish base, with a dark brown silty clay fill. It is of uncertain function, although it may have been excavated as a quarry pit. The nature of its fill(s) is also unclear – in section 112, which contained Iron Age and Romano-British pottery, a large piece of unworked limestone and animal bone, it was interpreted as a deliberate back fill (110/111), while in section 128, containing no finds, it was interpreted as a slow and natural accumulation (127).

3.2.7 A small circular pit (106), *c.* 0.5m in diameter, had been cut into fill 127 at the north-west end of the oval feature, in which had been placed a large thick-walled storage jar (104), probably of Early Romano-British date, the base of which survived *in situ* (**Fig. 2**), packed around with a brown silty clay (105). The fill of the pot (103) (which also contained four other sherds of Romano-British pottery and fragments of animal bone and fired clay) was sampled to establish whether it contained any significant environmental remains.

3.2.8 Three other linear features were recorded in the trench. Gully 126 was 5.2m long, and up to 0.25m wide and 0.1m deep, with concave sides and base. It followed a slightly irregular line from the west, where it appeared to cut gully 114. It is unclear whether either end were the original gully terminals or whether it had truncated at either end by later ploughing.

3.2.9 A second irregular gully (120), *c.* 8m long, ran approximately parallel to gully 126, *c.* 1.7m to the south. It had been truncated by ploughing at its west end, and curved slightly to the north-east where it widened to a maximum of 1.2m, before turning towards the south-east and continuing beyond the edge of the trench. It was up to 0.23m deep with an irregular, shallow concave profile. Its single dark yellowish brown silty clay fill (119), containing Iron Age pottery, fired clay and animal bone, appears to have accumulated slowly. Small quantities of charcoal in the fill may have derived from a dump of fired clay and charcoal (in a reddish brown silty clay – 117) that filled a shallow irregular feature (118), 4m long, at least 1m wide and 0.2m deep, that was cut by the southern edge of gully 120. The positions of gully 120

and feature 118 also appear to correspond to a magnetometer anomaly (**Fig. 1**).

3.2.10 A 1.2m wide ditch (107) ran north-west/south-east across the south-west corner of the trench, cutting the edge of the layer of trample (115). The ditch, which also appears to correspond to a magnetometer anomaly (**Fig. 1**), was 0.35m deep with moderately steep sides and a 0.3m wide flat base. Its lower fill (108), covering the base and sides, was a 0.2m thick layer of dark yellowish brown silty clay containing stone fragments. The 0.2m thick upper fill (109), which was slightly lighter in colour, contained five sherds of pottery (four of Iron Age and one of Romano-British date), as well as small pieces of animal bone and fired clay.

3.2.11 A 0.8m diameter circular feature was recorded 1m south-west of the ditch, but was not excavated.

Interpretation

3.2.12 The two curved gullies may indicate the positions of roundhouses, possibly representing foundation trenches or drip gullies. While it was common for Iron Age roundhouses to have entrances facing approximately south-east, Romano-British gully 114 had no break along its south-west to south-east arc (although it is possible that an east-facing entrance lay immediately outside the trench). Given the absence either of complete circuits or clearly associated postholes, it is therefore unclear what function these gullies served, but they may have had some non-structural function.

3.2.13 Gully 114 was among the stratigraphically earliest features recorded in the trench, possibly contemporary with feature 122 which lay inside it. Many of the other features appear to represent a relatively short but complex sequence of subsequent activity, within the Early Romano-British period. This includes the laying of a cobbled surface across part of the area formerly occupied by the gully and traffic over that surface. Later, there was the quarrying of material from the large oval feature, and the construction, on a similar alignment, of a possibly contemporary ditch. Finally, there was the placing of the large upright storage jar of probably Early Romano-British date, in the oval feature's fill/backfill.

3.2.14 Of the two parallel gullies towards the east, gully 126 also appears to post-date the gully 114, while gully 120 post-dates the dump of burnt material in feature 118, the latter being potentially contemporary with the gully 114.

Trench 2

3.2.15 Trench 2 was laid out over the locations of two discrete geophysical anomalies – a larger one to the north and a smaller one to the south – close to the apparent south-eastern boundary of the settlement (**Fig. 1**). The trench was 7.7m long and 5m wide, with a 2.2m by 2.4m extension at the north-west corner (**Fig. 3**).

3.2.16 The large anomaly may correspond to a large feature (211) occupying the north-eastern part of the trench and defined on its south-west side by a moderately steep edge. A sondage was cut into the fills of this feature to a

maximum depth of 0.7m, but did not reach its base. This revealed a lower fill of dark brown silty clay (214) at least 0.3m thick, containing Romano-British pottery, CBM and an oyster shell, overlain by 0.4m thick layer of dark yellowish brown silty clay (210/212). The upper layer contained further Romano-British pottery (including Black Burnished ware (BB1) dropped-flange bowls and Oxfordshire *mortaria*, both of Late Romano-British date – late 3rd or 4th century AD), CBM, lava quern fragments, sandstone tiles, fired clay including a crucible containing residues of metalworking, animal bone (some worked) and an oyster shell, as well as iron nails and a possible iron lift key, a copper alloy coin and brooch fragment, and slag. Towards the top of this upper layer there was an extensive spread of medium to large limestone blocks (215), some of which appear to have been shaped.

3.2.17 An unexcavated layer of dark greyish brown silty clay (213) in the north-east corner of the trench may be a further, upper fill of the same feature, or alternatively the fill of a medieval/post-medieval furrow, its edge corresponding to the line of a furrow recorded by the geophysical survey. It contained further pottery, CBM and sandstone tiles.

3.2.18 A very shallow, flat bottomed linear feature (209), 1.4m wide and 0.06m deep, was recorded running north-north-west from the south-east corner of the trench, filled with a dark yellowish brown clay (208). Although it appeared to be cut by feature 211, their stratigraphical relationship was not firmly established. Parallel to it, 1.5m to the west in the south-west corner of the trench, a second possible linear feature, at least 0.9m wide, was recorded (but not excavated).

3.2.19 Between these two linear features there were two further features – a grave (205) aligned almost parallel to feature linear 209, and an ovoid scoop (207). The grave, which was 1.5m long, 0.6m wide and 0.15m deep, contained the skeleton (204) of a woman over the age of 45, who had been buried on her left side with her head to the south and her legs slightly flexed. Her left hand rested under her chin and her right hand lay on her right thigh. The fill of the grave (203), which had been disturbed by animal burrows, contained a fragment of pale blue glass, an iron nail, six sherds of Romano-British pottery and one of possibly pre-conquest date, and two pieces of probably residual animal bone.

3.2.20 The ovoid scoop, which was 1.1m long, 0.5m wide and 0.1m deep with a shallow concave profile, had a light greyish brown fill (206) containing animal bone.

Interpretation

3.2.21 The large feature occupying the north end of the trench is of uncertain function, although it may have been excavated as a quarry for clay. It is unclear whether the lower fills recorded result from dumping or natural infilling. Although the stones above them either had been used, or had been intended for use, as building material, there was no structure evident in their arrangement, suggesting they may have been deliberately dumped or spread over the top of feature 211, perhaps to consolidate its surface.

3.2.22 The form of the burial, and the finds from it, suggest an Early Romano-British date.

Trench 3

3.2.23 Trench 3, some 10m south of Trench 2, measured 9.7m east/west by 5.2m north/south. It was located over the north-east corner of the eastern of three adjacent subrectangular enclosures along the southern part of the settlement, as indicated by the geophysical survey. The survey suggested the presence of up to three possible parallel ditches along the sides of this enclosure, possibly indicating different phases of activity.

3.2.24 A ditch (309), corresponding to the most prominent ditch indicated by the geophysical survey, was recorded running from the north-west corner of the trench, curving towards the south. A sondage along the southern edge of the trench, excavated only to a depth of 0.5m, indicated that it was over 3m wide, the upper part of its profile being moderately steep on the outside but shallow on the inside. The lowest recorded fill (308), containing five sherds of Late Iron Age/Early Romano-British pottery and animal bone was a mid brown silty clay at least 0.35m thick which had the appearance of a secondary fill. This was overlain in the centre of the cut by 0.35m thick tertiary fill of pale blue clay (311) containing stone fragments. The whole ditch was sealed by a 0.2m thick layer of light grey brown clay (303) containing Romano-British pottery.

3.2.25 A second, inner ditch (310) crossed the south-west corner of the trench, aligned north-west/south-east. It was at least 2.4m wide and 0.75m deep with moderately steep convex sides and a 0.25m wide flat base. The primary fill (306), consisting of a series of bands of grey clay and yellowish brown sandy clay, was overlain by a secondary fill (304) of blue grey gleyed clay with charcoal flecking. Both layers contained Romano-British pottery, the upper layer also containing animal bone and an iron nail.

3.2.26 An irregular band of brown silty clay, 1m wide at the south widening to 2m at the north, ran approximately north/south between the two ditches, and was apparently cut by them. It was not excavated.

Interpretation

3.2.27 There was no stratigraphical relation between the two ditches, although both cut the possible feature running between them. Nor is it possible, from the results of the geophysical survey, to ascertain the sequence of construction resulting in the array of parallel, and in places inter-cutting, ditches in this part of the settlement. The pottery, however, suggests that the outer ditch may have been the earlier, and of possibly Late Iron Age date.

Trench 4

3.2.28 Trench 4 was 20m long and 5m wide, aligned approximately north/south (**Fig. 4**). It was targeted on the intersection of two features recorded by the geophysical feature in the north-eastern part of the settlement – a prominent ring-shaped anomaly with a break on its east side, and a linear anomaly aligned north-west/south-east (**Fig. 1**).

3.2.29 The trench revealed the eastern part of what appears to be a penannular gully (403), with a projected external diameter of approximately 15m, and with the break on the east side defined by two terminals *c.* 4m apart. The gully was between 0.7m and 1.6m wide, and was up to 0.4m deep with a variable irregular profile. The southern terminal had a relatively regular rounded form, and contained a single fill of dark greyish brown silty clay (426). A line of three small depressions (427, 428 and 429), between 0.2m and 0.3m in diameter and up to 0.2m deep, in the base of the gully terminal may represent part of a timber structure. The gully was at its narrowest (0.7m) at the northern terminal, where it contained a mid to dark brown clay (419) containing 18 sherds of Iron Age pottery. An oval patch of fill at the end of the terminal was left unexcavated, and although interpreted as the fill of a possible posthole (430), matching the depressions in the base of the opposing terminal, this was not established.

3.2.30 Immediately north of the northern terminal, an elongated cut (417), 2.6m long and 1.2m wide, had been made in the gully fill, extending across the gully's inner edge. A series of objects had been placed in the base of this cut, including several Iron Age pots (some placed in a stack), animal bone, burnt and unburnt stone, fired clay, an iron nail and slag, as well a small dump of fine ashy material (**Fig. 4**). The pottery was concentrated towards the south-eastern end of deposit, with the unburnt stone towards the centre and the burnt stone in the centre and north-west. The deposit was covered with a dark brown blue clay (418), containing one intrusive Romano-British sherd.

3.2.31 The only possible feature recorded within the circuit of the gully was an unexcavated oval patch of mid grey silty clay (422), measuring 0.85m by 0.6m, some 2.5m inside the gap between the terminals. It had burnt stone, fired clay and charcoal on its surface, and may represent a posthole.

3.2.32 A number of small features were also recorded outside the line of the gully, to the south, including an arc of three adjacent possible postholes. Posthole 413, measured 0.7m in diameter and 0.3m deep, while posthole 420 measured 1.1m by 0.5m and 0.2m deep. Both had similar fills dark brown blue clay (414 and 421). Posthole 404 was 0.5m in diameter and 0.3m deep with a shallow extension on its western side; its dark brown clay fill (405), containing gravel and stone, contained five sherds of Iron Age pottery and animal bone. An irregular feature (415) to their south was probably a natural tree throw, although its fill (416) contained further Iron Age pottery, animal bone and fired clay.

3.2.33 The southern terminal of the penannular gully intersected a ditch (406), 1.2m wide and up to 0.6m deep with moderately steep sides and a concave base, running north-west/south-east across the trench. Although the excavated sections did not show the stratigraphical relationship between the ditch and the gully, the lower fill of the ditch at this point, a mid-dark brown clay (410), contained five pieces of CBM (and a fragment of Romano-British pottery) and as well as 16 presumably residual Iron Age sherds and animal bone, pointing to a probable Romano-British date; the upper fill was a dark brown silty clay (409). A sondage through the ditch along the western edge of the trench indicated that it had been recut on its southern side. The recut

(411) was 1.1m wide and 0.35m deep with steep sides and a flattish base, its fill (412), which was similar to the original cut, containing further residual Iron Age pottery, fired clay, animal bone and a large, possibly utilised, pebble.

Interpretation

3.2.34 The gully is interpreted as indicating the location of a roundhouse, its entrance gap, defined by the two terminals, aligned just south of east, so conforming to an orientation typical in Iron Age roundhouses. The gully was both larger and of a greater diameter than the two curvilinear features recorded in Trench 1, and rather than having some structural function relating to the construction of the roundhouse, it is more likely to have constituted a formal boundary around it, circumscribing the limits of the domestic space in opposition to the area outside and around the house. The formality of this boundary is expressed in part by the deliberate deposition within it of objects and materials potentially symbolic of the domestic sphere – pottery, a weaving comb and animal bone, and burnt stone and ash possibly derived from a hearth. The suggestion, not fully established, that the gully terminals held some timber structure, possibly a gate or a portal frame spanning the entrance, would have reinforced the symbolic visibility of the threshold.

3.2.35 The only evidence for any structure inside the gully was the unexcavated feature interpreted as a possible posthole. The proximity of the three possible postholes outside the gully suggest that they were probably associated, perhaps forming some small timber structure.

3.2.36 While there remains some uncertainty as to the stratigraphical relationship between the penannular gully and the ditch, the finds suggest that the ditch was of Romano-British date. On the basis of the geophysical survey the ditch runs south-east towards what appears to be a wide entrance gap in the outer boundary of the settlement, while to the north-west it may curve round to the north, so bounding a small sub-enclosure inside the entrance.

Trench 5

3.2.37 Trench 5 had an irregular shape with maximum dimensions of *c.* 20m north/south and 15m east/west (**Fig. 5**). It was located, to the south-east of Trenches 2 and 3, within the eastern of the three adjacent subrectangular enclosures on the south side of the settlement, as indicated by the geophysical survey (**Fig. 1**). This enclosure contained an area of increased magnetic responses that was interpreted as a likely location for a Romano-British building, if one was present on the site.

3.2.38 Iron Age activity is represented by two adjacent probable postholes (512 and 514), exposed towards the west side of the trench where the machine had stripped down to the natural clay. They were both *c.* 0.3m in diameter and less than 0.1m deep, and were sealed by a layer of brown silty clay equivalent to Romano-British layers 503 and 505 (below). Posthole 512 contained four sherds of Iron Age pottery.

3.2.39 A number of the stone structures aligned north-west to south-east at the south end of the trench were associated, and appear to form part of the foundations of a Romano-British building. Foundation 517, on the south side, was at least 4.3m long and up to 0.65m wide, although it had been severely damaged by ploughing, particularly at its west end. At its better-preserved south-east end it consisted of a compact setting of large undressed and unmortared limestone and sandstone blocks and tiles, a single course high, sitting directly on the natural clay, with a dark brown clay (504) between and around the stones. Approximately 1.5m to the north-east there was a similar, parallel foundation (511), 5.3m long and up to 0.7m wide, possibly turning inward at a right angle at the north-west. Some of the stone blocks here had been shaped, and among them were two rotary quern fragments (of quartz conglomerate).

3.2.40 The outer faces of foundations 511 and 517 were relatively clearly defined, but the stones spreading into the area between them blurred their inner edges. A third possible foundation (518), *c.* 0.5m wide and of similar construction, ran between them near their mid-points. No foundation cuts were recorded. The mid brown silty clay (504) around and over the foundations and within the building contained Romano-British pottery, CBM (including four *tegulae* and two *imbrices*), two pieces of glass, a copper alloy coin, iron nails and animal bone.

3.2.41 A number of limestone blocks to the east of foundation 511 may represent its continuation for a further 2.5m, although these also lie at the north-western end of another stone structure (510) running for *c.* 4m towards the south-eastern edge of the trench, and with a line slightly offset from that of 511. Unlike the foundations, where the stones were generally laid flat, those in structure 510, which included a large quern fragment, had a more tumbled and haphazard arrangement, suggesting that the structure had collapsed. Many of the larger blocks lay along its southern edge.

3.2.42 On both sides of these structures there was mid brown silty clay from which was recovered Romano-British pottery, sandstone tiles, CBM, iron nails, animal bone and small pieces of coal. The soil to the south-west (503), which also contained a single limestone tessera, was relatively loose, while that to the north-east (505) was more mixed and compact and contained a larger number of finds. Among the pottery in layers 503, 504 and 505 were sherds of BB1 dropped-flange bowls and Oxfordshire *mortaria*, both of Late Romano-British date (late 3rd or 4th century AD).

3.2.43 Running north-north-east to south-south-west close to the western edge of the trench was a further 1.6m length of stone structure (519). While the generally flat setting of the stones is comparable to foundations 511, 517 and 518, it was most intact along its eastern face, suggesting that it may represent instead a retaining wall. A roughly linear spread of small stones (520) on the edge of the trench to the east may be the remains of a further structure running east/west, but both features had been severely truncated by a later furrow.

3.2.44 The only other feature in the trench was a shallow, apparently circular cut (507), 0.75m in diameter, half of which lay outside the trench near its eastern extent. The base of the shallow cut, consisting of a layer of intensely burnt clay (509) was overlain by a light yellow brown clay (508), but it contained no datable finds.

Interpretation

3.2.45 Iron Age activity was represented by the pair of postholes, and a number of residual sherds within the Romano-British layers. This activity may be associated, therefore, with the surrounding enclosure, the outer ditch of which, of possibly Late Iron Age date, was recorded in Trench 3. In contrast, all the stone structures were aligned either east/west or north/south and therefore do not correspond to the orientation of the enclosure, as might be expected if they were associated with it.

3.2.46 The nature of the Romano-British building(s) represented by the various stone foundations is not clear. The small 'rooms' between foundations 511 and 517 were only 1.5m wide and possibly no more than 3m long, and they are more likely to have formed part of a larger building, perhaps extending to the north and west, as represented also by features 519 and 520. The mix of material in foundations 511 and 517, including dressed and undressed stone, CBM, sandstone tiles and quern fragments, suggests the re-use of materials from other sources, including perhaps another building, not yet identified, on the site. The foundations were laid directly on the natural subsoil and there was no evidence that mortar was used. It is likely, therefore, that these structures were the remains of stone footings for a timber-framed building.

3.2.47 The more irregular stone setting to the east would appear to be associated with this building, sharing the same general orientation, but it seems to have had a different function. The fact that many of the larger blocks lay along its southern edge may suggest that it formed a south-facing revetment, but this is by no means certain. However, it did appear to form some sort of boundary – although the soils on either side were similar in colour and texture, those to the north (i.e. behind the 'revetment') were more compact and contained more finds, perhaps indicating heavier traffic in that area.

Trench 6

3.2.48 Trench 6, measuring 3.1m by 1.5m aligned approximately north/south, was excavated at the southern end of the same enclosure as Trench 5 (as indicated by the geophysical survey), lying on the edge of the same area of increased magnetic responses.

3.2.49 Four features were recorded cutting the natural, but none was excavated and no finds were recovered. Feature 610, consisting of an area of mid brown silty clay (611) and measuring at least 0.7m by 1.4m, was recorded at the south end of the trench, continuing beyond it to the south and east. It was cut on the west side by feature 608, measuring at least 0.6m by 1.8m, which contained a dark grey silty clay (609) and continued to the west and south of the trench. Feature 606, extending beyond the north-west corner of the trench, was at least 0.4m by 1.2m and contained a mid-light yellow clay (607).

3.2.50 A irregular, possibly natural feature 604, measuring 0.6m by 1.2m and containing a mid grey silty clay (605), was recorded approximately the centre of the trench.

Interpretation

3.2.51 This trench revealed what appeared to be a relatively dense cluster of features, indicating more than one phase of activity. However, as none were excavated it is not possible to relate them specifically to either the Iron Age or Romano-British phases of settlement on the site.

4 FINDS

4.1.1 Finds were recovered from Trenches 1-5, but not Trench 6. They have been quantified by material type within each context, and the results are summarised by trench in Table 1. They have been visually scanned in order to gain an overall idea of the range of types present, their condition, and their potential date range. Spot dates have been recorded for selected material types as appropriate. All finds data are currently held on an Access database.

4.1.2 The assemblage is almost entirely related to settlement activity during the Iron Age to Romano-British period, with sporadic residual pre-Iron Age artefacts, and a few of post-medieval date.

4.2 Pottery

4.2.1 The pottery assemblage dates from Middle/Late Iron Age to Late Romano-British. Its condition varies – much of the Iron Age assemblage consists of sherds in quite friable fabrics, which have suffered accordingly, although several partial profiles are present within the large group from Trench 4. Calcareous fabrics show some leaching of inclusions. The Romano-British assemblage is more fragmentary. Severn Valley wares are notoriously susceptible to soil conditions (Tomber and Dore 1998, 148); these and the other oxidised wares (samian, Oxfordshire finewares) exhibit a high level of abrasion which has, in most cases, removed all traces of surface treatments such as slips or burnishing. Other Romano-British wares survive in better condition.

4.2.2 The assemblage has been quantified by known ware type (e.g. samian, BB1) or ware group (e.g. calcareous wares) within each context. Spot dates have been recorded by context, and the presence of diagnostic sherds noted. Table 2 gives the overall ware totals by period.

Iron Age and Late Iron Age/Early Romano-British

4.2.3 Iron Age sherds occur in either calcareous (limestone- or calcite-tempered) or grog-tempered fabrics, of which the former are predominant. The largest group of Iron Age material (628 sherds) came from the cut (417) in the ring gully terminal in Trench 4, and comprised sherds from a number of vessels apparently deliberately placed within the feature. No attempt has been made at this stage to reconstruct the vessels, but forms appear to consist exclusively of rounded jars with short everted or upright rims, frequently

burnished. The few other rims noted from other contexts are from vessels of uncertain form. Smaller groups of calcitic wares came from other contexts in Trench 4 (ploughsoil, posthole 404, penannular gully 403, ditch 406/408, tree throw 415). Sporadic occurrences of calcitic wares, largely residual, were noted in other trenches, but the limestone-tempered wares were confined to Trench 5. Grog-tempered wares, in contrast, were concentrated in Trench 1, where a large group of sherds from pit 106 represents the lower part of a single large, thick-walled storage jar.

4.2.4 Both the fabrics and the forms within the Iron Age assemblage can be paralleled within the much larger published Late Iron Age/Romano-British assemblage from West Hill, Uley (Leach 1993). Some chronological variations can, however, be observed within this assemblage. The calcareous wares appear to be largely if not entirely pre-conquest in date. The largest group (from cut 417) was associated with a single sherd of 'Romanised' greyware, but this could be intrusive. The residuality of calcareous sherds in other contexts containing 'Romanised' wares is suggested by their small size and abraded condition. Grog-tempered wares, on the other hand, have a date range spanning the conquest period, and the large vessel from pit 106, and most other grog-tempered sherds, are more likely to be of Early Romano-British date.

Romano-British

4.2.5 Apart from a few finewares that have been identified to type, the Romano-British assemblage has been very broadly divided. Two common coarseware types can be identified to type and/or source area (Severn Valley wares and BB1 from the Poole Harbour area of Dorset); other coarsewares have been subdivided into miscellaneous classes for greywares, oxidised wares and whitewares.

4.2.6 As expected, Severn Valley wares predominate. They are seen here in a range of oxidised fabrics, including coarser variants with red and brown inclusions (clay pellets or iron oxides) and other impurities that have been identified by Timby as early (pre-conquest) within the Severn Valley ceramic tradition (Timby 1990, 249). Other variants fall within the better known post-conquest types (e.g. Tomber and Dore 1998, 148-50). The tradition also includes reduced fabrics, and it is possible that some of these remain at this stage unrecognised amongst the miscellaneous greywares. The poor condition of many of the sherds from the site has already been noted, and relatively few diagnostic forms are present. These include tankards, wide- and narrow-mouthed jars, frequently cordoned, and flanged bowls. None of these are particularly chronologically distinctive (Webster 1976).

4.2.7 BB1 is also common on the site. The range of forms present (everted rim jars, 'dog dishes', dropped-flange bowls) suggests that this source was supplying the site only from the 2nd century AD, a pattern also noted at West Hill, Uley (Leach 1993, 229), and on other non-military sites outside the Durotrigian tribal area. Dropped-flange bowls and jars with flaring everted rims extend the date range for the site into the late 3rd/4th century AD. The largest group came from Trench 5 (204 sherds), with smaller groups from

Trenches 2 (76 sherds) and 3 (55 sherds). One BB1 sherd from Trench 3 subsoil had been re-used as a spindlewhorl.

4.2.8 The greywares almost certainly include the products of more than one source; as noted above, reduced products of the Severn Valley industry could also be included. Few diagnostic forms are present, but include everted rim jars and at least one dish.

4.2.9 The whitewares include two Oxfordshire mortaria from one context (soil layer 504 within wall foundations), both dated as late 3rd or 4th century AD (Young 1977, types M18 and M22). Other whiteware sherds are of uncertain source.

4.2.10 Finewares are particularly scarce on the site. There is a small quantity of samian, including both South and Central Gaulish products; vessels include a form 45 mortarium and at least three platters (18/31 or 31), and there is also one stamp. All these sherds are heavily abraded. All 14 amphora sherds derive from Spanish Dressel 20 amphorae, with a wide date range of 1st to 3rd century AD. Other imports comprise one sherd of Central Gaulish colour coated ware with roughcast decoration (late 1st-early 2nd century AD), four of Central Gaulish black-slipped ware (mid 2nd to early 3rd century AD) and one of Trier black-slipped ware (late 2nd to mid 3rd century AD). British finewares are confined to a few sherds of Oxfordshire colour coated wares although, given the poor condition of many of the oxidised wares, it proved difficult to identify these once colour coats had been abraded.

Conclusions

4.2.11 The pottery assemblage indicates fairly restricted activity in the pre-conquest period (including the deliberate deposit of several vessels within one feature). Some of the Severn Valley wares may be pre-conquest, but otherwise pottery belonging to the immediate pre- or post-conquest period is difficult to identify without ambiguity. Overall, most of the diagnostic Romano-British vessel forms date to the 2nd century AD or later, and indicate a date range at least into the late 3rd and probably into the 4th century AD. Ware types represented form a pattern comparable to other sites of this date in the region, and are typical of a small farmstead with access to some luxury goods.

4.3 Ceramic building material

4.3.1 The ceramic building material (CBM) is entirely of Romano-British date. Its condition is quite poor – fragments being generally small and abraded – but identifiable pieces of *tegula* and *imbrex* roof tiles are present (but not, apparently, any box flue tiles). Some variation in fabric type is apparent, probably indicating different sources of supply over time

4.4 Fired clay

4.4.1 The majority of the fired clay is also likely to be of structural origin, from upstanding structures or from hearth/oven linings – this material comprised small, abraded and featureless fragments. The largest group (67 fragments)

was associated with Iron Age pottery in Trench 4 (cut 417); the rest occurred in small quantities, mainly in Romano-British contexts in Trenches 1 and 2.

4.4.2 Also included in this category are fragments of a ceramic crucible, containing the residue from metalworking, recovered from a large, late Romano-British feature (211) in Trench 2.

4.5 Stone

4.5.1 This category includes both portable objects and building material. Portable objects comprise seven small fragments of lava quernstone from Trench 2, and two rotary quern fragments from Trench 5, the latter both in quartz conglomerate probably deriving from the Devonian Old Red Sandstone (perhaps from the Wye Valley: see Roe 1993); all are of Romano-British date. Seven rounded flint/quartz pebbles of varying sizes, from four different contexts in Trenches 1, 2 and 4 are not obviously worked or utilised, but may have been deliberately collected.

4.5.2 A large dump (over 42 kg) of burnt (but apparently unworked) limestone came from cut 417, associated with several Late Iron Age pottery vessels.

4.5.3 The remaining stone comprises building material, most of which consists of fragments of sandstone tiles (either Devonian Old Red or Pennant sandstone). A single limestone roof tile (with surviving nail hole) is also present. One sandstone tile from Trench 1 topsoil has possible wear grooves (perhaps through use as a whetstone?). Sandstone tiles are commonly found on other Romano-British sites in the area, such as Gloucester, Frocester, Great Witcombe and Kingscote, often alongside limestone tiles (Bevan 1998).

4.5.4 A single small, white limestone *tessera* from Trench 5 (soil layer 503) is the only indication that any Romano-British structure(s) in the vicinity were furnished with tessellated floors.

4.6 Glass

4.6.1 Of the six small fragments of glass recovered, three are likely to be Romano-British – a ribbon handle from a bottle in blue-green glass (soil layer 504 between wall foundations), and two plain blue-green fragments (backfill of grave 205; soil layer 504). The other three fragments are post-medieval.

4.7 Metalworking slag

4.7.1 A very small quantity of material that may derive from metalworking was collected. Contexts 101 and 502 contained a few fragments of probable iron smithing slag, weighing 29g and 53g respectively. Clinker was recovered from 210 (46g) and 418 (35g), but this may not have derived from metalworking.

4.7.2 The most interesting material comprised light, slightly vitrified hearth lining weighing a total of 266g from context 212, the upper fill of a large Roman feature (211) of uncertain form and function. All the fragments showed a

slight curvature, had a reduced inner face, and one had the possible remains of a tuyere hole, where the nozzle of the bellows sat in presumably an iron smithing hearth. A single nodule of ironstone was recovered from the same context.

4.8 Metalwork

Coins

4.8.1 Of the five Roman coins recovered during the excavation, the earliest was an *as* of the Emperor Vespasian (AD 69-79) (Trench 1 subsoil). Three date to the late 3rd or 4th centuries and consist of two radiate antoniniani (Trench 2 topsoil, feature 211) and a follis of the House of Valentinian (Trench 2 topsoil). The fifth (Trench 2 subsoil) is a quartered copper alloy coin, probably an antoninianus or follis of the late 3rd or 4th centuries AD, but which is too corroded to be closely dated. None of these are unusual on Late Romano-British sites. The coins recovered during fieldwalking in 2000 had included a silver plated coin of the *Dubonni* (*c.* 30-0 BC) and a number of Republican coins (Bevan, 2002).

4.8.2 The irregular or 'barbarous' radiate (feature 211) is a contemporary copy of 'official' coinage of the time. These were possibly struck to compensate for gaps in supply of coinage to Britain and to supply sufficient small change for the provinces needs. It is unclear whether these copies were officially sanctioned, if at all, but they are not uncommon as site finds, and seem to have circulated in the same fashion as officially struck coins.

Copper alloy

4.8.3 There were three other copper alloy objects – the catchplate from a bow brooch (feature 211), a small, unidentifiable lump (Trench 2 topsoil), and a small oval link (Trench 3 subsoil).

Iron

4.8.4 Ironwork consists mainly of nails (undatable, although most are assumed to be Romano-British). There was also a possible lift key fragment (feature 211), a U-staple and a medieval horseshoe (both from Trench 3 topsoil).

4.9 Worked bone

4.9.1 One animal bone from Trench 2 (large Romano-British feature 211) has been worked. This is a large mammal rib worked into a serrated edge on its anterior edge. Its function is not known and no parallels have yet been found.

4.10 Human bone

4.10.1 Human bone comprised the remains of a probably Early Romano-British inhumation burial of an adult woman aged over 45 years from Trench 2 (grave 205) and a fragment of redeposited neonatal bone from the topsoil in Trench 3 (Table 3). It was subject to a rapid scan to assess the condition of the bone, demographic data, potential for indices recovery and the presence of pathological lesions. Assessments were based on standard ageing and

sexing methodologies (Buikstra and Ubelaker 1994; Scheuer and Black 2000), and grading for bone preservation according to McKinley (2004).

4.10.2 Grave 205 survived to a depth of only 0.10m, resulting in heavy fragmentation and poor bone survival (*c*. 40% of skeleton), with the loss of much of the axial skeleton and other trabecular bone, although there is mild-moderate root marking and surface erosion (Grade 2). The redeposited bone fragment from Trench 3 is in relatively good condition (Grade 0-1).

4.10.3 Numerous pathological lesions indicative of dental disease and various degenerative joint diseases were observed in skeleton 204. Tooth wear is moderate-heavy, being heavier in the anterior teeth possibly as a result of *ante mortem* tooth loss and carious lesion in the distal teeth, rendering their use uncomfortable. Calculus deposits are moderate (Brothwell 1972, fig. 58). *Ante-mortem* tooth loss was observed at a rate of 37.5%, dental caries at 42% and dental abscesses at 31%. The carious lesions had totally destroyed many of the tooth crowns thereby masking the origins of the lesions. The rates of dental diseases are considerably higher than the averages recorded for the period of 2.9% caries, 1.1% abscesses and 3.2% *ante mortem* tooth loss (Roberts and Cox 2004, 101-2). Overall, the condition of the dentition suggests a poor level of nutrition, probably based on a predominantly vegetable or cereal diet, with a low level of dental hygiene (Hillson 1990, 285-7).

4.10.4 Some fragments of sheep tooth were found with the legs bones and various small fragments of animal bone were observed, but these appear to have been residual within the grave fill.

4.11 Animal bone

Results

4.11.1 The animal bones have been quantified by trench so as to differentiate between areas of occupation, and because the pottery assemblage roughly dated each trench (Iron Age pottery dominating in Trench 4, Late Iron Age/Early Roman in Trench 1 and Romano-British in Trenches 2, 3 and 5). Some bones were recovered from samples and are discussed with the hand-recovered material.

Condition

4.11.2 A total of 877 bones (953 fragments) was recovered and of these 93% were in fair condition (Table 4). Substantial numbers of poorly preserved bone was seen only in Trench 5, where some were eroded, although this did not seem to affect the proportion of bones that could be identified to species which was lowest in Trench 2 and highest in Trench 3. Chopping of bone may have resulted in the low proportion of identified (and measurable or ageable) bones in Trench 2, where butchery marks were most commonly observed, in marked contrast to Trench 3 where far fewer bones had been marked by butchery. Burning follows the same pattern and may also have contributed to this effect.

4.11.3 The incidence of gnawing does not appear to be related to condition, being highest in Trench 1 and lowest in Trench 2. However the proportion of loose teeth is highest in Trench 5, reflecting the poorer condition of bone from this area.

Animal husbandry

4.11.4 Cattle were the most common species represented in Trenches 1 and 2 (Table 5). Dog is most common in Trench 3, probably all parts of a single individual, and if omitted then cattle bones are marginally the most frequent. Sheep/goat (one positive identification of sheep) were more common in Trenches 4 and 5, and this is more typical of Iron Age farming. Horse bones were seen in all but one trench and were more common than pig bones, seen in only three trenches. Bird bones were infrequent, and in Trench 5 at least resembled domestic fowl, and small mammal bones were seen only in 103.

4.11.5 Eighty bones overall could be aged, and 30 measured; it was noted that some very large and fairly small cattle were seen. Sheep/goat appeared to be of the small, slender variety typical of Iron Age individuals, with the exception of a large individual in 502, and many were killed in early adulthood. Several almost whole limb bones from 418 were of a small horse. One male pig was present. One large mammal long bone fragment showed evidence of modification probably caused from infection of the bone.

Consumption and deposition

4.11.6 Butchery marks were observed on 51 bones, from all trenches. Trench 4 contained mainly cuts from disarticulation and helical fractures, while chopping was seen on bone from the other trenches. Marks from filleting of meat from the bone were seen in Trenches 1 and 2. One bone in 210 is a broken large mammal rib that had been worked into a serrated edge on its anterior edge; the serrated section is at least 40mm long but probably extended to at least 70mm originally. Burning was seen on a few bones from all trenches other than Trench 3.

4.11.7 Some unusual deposits were present, most notably the remains of a relatively large, mature dog was found mainly in 302, with articulating elements in 301 and 303. Most of the hind limb elements and spinal column was missing, and no marks from dismembering or flesh removal were seen. Other deposits also indicate particular activity, perhaps butchery waste, for example 418 was dominated by sheep/goat teeth and mandibles with some long bone fragments, and the remains of whole but gnawed horse limb bones (pelvis, tibia, metatarsal, radius and metacarpal). Groups of fragmented large mammal long bones were seen in 101, 212 and 301, with some almost complete cattle limb bones in the latter.

Discussion

4.11.8 This is a relatively small assemblage, with 265 identified bones, but is in fair condition with some interesting deposits that can inform on spatial activity and deposition practice. Further analysis is dependent on whether the

contexts from which bone was recovered are stratigraphically secure or of particular archaeological interest.

4.12 Other finds

4.12.1 Other finds comprise five worked flints and two fragments of oyster shell.

4.13 Potential

4.13.1 The finds have helped to elucidate the nature and date range of the activity on the site. The coins and pottery indicate occupation at least from the Late Iron Age to the Late Romano-British period. Structural evidence in the form of ceramic and stone building materials points to the existence of substantial and relatively well appointed structures on the site during the Romano-British period. The range of material and object types present, which is well paralleled on contemporaneous sites in the region, reflects, therefore, the occupation of a small Iron Age farmstead rebuilt in Romanised form and with access to some luxury items, presumably through local markets.

4.13.2 The overall quantities, however, are relatively small, so limiting the potential of the assemblage for further analysis, although the pottery, metalwork and worked bone do warrant some further work. The pottery should be subjected to fabric and form analysis (checking the identification of fabric types recorded during the assessment) to enable quantified comparison with other assemblages from the region. A small selection of representative vessels (concentrating on the Iron Age) should be illustrated. A few metal objects (e.g. the brooch fragment and lift key) require conservation treatment to aid identification and/or to stabilise for long-term storage; parallels for some objects could be followed up in order to check and possibly refine their dating. Parallels for the serrated rib have not yet been found and this should be described.

5 PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

5.1.1 Six bulk samples (between one and 30 litres) were taken from Iron Age and Romano-British features – the fill (103) of the Romano-British pot in Trench 1; fills of feature 211 in Trench 2 and ditch 306 in Trench 3; and the placed deposit (418) near the terminal of the Iron Age penannular gully in Trench 4 (three samples).

5.1.2 These were processed by standard flotation methods for the recovery and assessment of charred plant remains and charcoal – the flot retained on a 0.5mm mesh and the residues fractionated into 5.6mm, 2mm and 1mm fractions and dried. The coarse fractions (>5.6 mm) were sorted, weighed and discarded. The flots were scanned under a x10 - x30 stereo-binocular microscope and presence of charred remains quantified, to record the preservation and nature of the charred plant and charcoal remains.

5.2 Charred plant remains and charcoal

5.2.1 The flots were generally small, and in the case of pot fill 103 and placed deposit 418 contained quite high proportions of modern roots. Cereal remains and plant macros were quite abundant in three of the samples, but were absent in those from the placed deposit 418, although the latter contained considerably more fragments of charcoal (most between 2-4mm) than the other samples (Table 6).

Trench 1, pot fill 103

5.2.2 The sample produced some twenty glumes and two spikelet forks of hulled wheats emmer or spelt (*Triticum dicoccum* or *Triticum spelta*), and although most were too poorly preserved for positive identification some could be identified as spelt. Ten grains were also recovered, most resembling spelt, although one spindle-shaped grain was tentatively identified as emmer. The sample also contained a large basal grass culm possibly from cereals although possibly from false-oat grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius ssp. bulbosum*) as a corm/tuber was also identified. Several seeds of probable weed species were also recovered – *c.* 10 of vetches/wild pea (*Vicia/ Lathyrus* sp.), and single identifications of smooth tare (*Vicia tetrasperma*), spikerush (*Eleocharis palustris*), cat's-tail (*Phleum* sp.), clover (*Trifolium* sp.) black bindweed (*Fallopia convolvulus*), and hedge parsley (*Torilis* sp.).

Trench 2, fill 210

5.2.3 The sample contained similar quantities of cereal remains, although only a few grains were identified. A single basal culm node was also recovered. Several weed seeds were present, including curled-leaved dock (*Rumex crispus*), medick (*Medicago* sp.), perennial rye grass (*Lolium perenne*), fig-leaved goosefoot (*Chenopodium ficifolium*), and annual meadow grass (*Poa annua*).

5.2.4 The sample also contained twig wood and a thorn of probable hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)/sloe (*Prunus spinosa*).

Trench 3, ditch fill 306

5.2.5 The sample from the primary fill of ditch 310 contained only a few grains of emmer or spelt and several highly degraded glume bases. Weed seeds were also fewer in number with only single identifications of clover (*Trifolium* sp.), cat's-tail (*Phleum* sp.) and one possible fragment of runch (*Raphanus raphanistrum*).

Trench 4, placed deposit 418

5.2.6 The three samples produced only two unidentified wheat grains and a single grain of oats (*Avena* sp.). This suggests that the cut, into which the deposit was placed, may have been backfilled immediately (or at least shortly) after the items had been deposited.

Discussion

5.2.7 The samples reveal the range of cereals used by the occupants of the site, as well as something of crop-processing activities and the conditions under which the crops were drawn. Those from Trenches 1-3, by virtue of having

higher numbers of glumes, are representative of waste from the dehusking of hulled wheats (van der Veen 1992). Spelt has been noted as the commonest wheat during the Iron Age and Romano-British period in much of central to south-west England (Robinson and Wilson 1987; Campbell 2000).

5.2.8 Most of the weed species are common arable weeds and grow under a wide range of conditions. However, the presence of spikerush (*Eleocharis palustris*) is indicative of the cultivation of wet, periodically flooded soils. The high presence of vetches/wild pea (*Vicia/ Lathyrus* sp.) is a common feature of Late Iron Age and Romano-British sites, where their increase has been contrasted with declining numbers of seeds of the Chenopodiaceae to suggest declining levels of soil fertility (Jones 1981).

5.3 Land snails

5.3.1 The samples from Trenches 1-3 produced quite high numbers of shells of land snails. Those from pot fill 103 were predominately of open country land species, *Vallonia* spp. and *Vertigo* spp., while those from feature 210 and ditch 306 contained high numbers of fresh-water mainly planorbids, but also some *Lymnaea* sp. They also contained shells indicating shaded conditions, *Discus rotundatus* and *Aegopinella* spp., alongside those of more open grassland *Vallonia* spp., *Vertigo* spp., *Helicella itala* and *Pupilla muscorum*.

5.3.2 In contrast, only one the samples from placed deposit 418 produced land snails – a single shell of *Vallonia* spp. As with the plant remains, this may indicate the deliberate backfilling of the feature.

5.4 Potential

5.4.1 The environmental samples have a limited potential for the analysis of either the charred plant remains or the charcoal, although plant remains of Romano-British date reveal the range of cereals utilised by the site's occupants, as well as the conditions under which the crops were grown and something of the crop-processing activities. As all the charred plant material (with the exception of the glumes) was quantified, and given the small numbers of samples, no further work is required.

6 DISCUSSION

6.1.1 The evaluation largely achieved its stated aims, providing a greater understanding of the extent, nature and date of the settlement, and the transition between the Late Iron Age and the Romano-British occupation. It has, however, raised more questions than it answered concerning the development of the site and its relationship, particularly in the Romano-British period, with other settlements in the area, including villas, the legionary fortress and the military forces in the immediate post-conquest period, and the subsequent Roman town at Gloucester.

6.1.2 The evaluation revealed features, including buildings, of both Iron Age and Romano-British date, but how these relate to the nucleated complex of

subrectangular enclosures (as indicated by the geophysical survey) was not firmly established. While the configuration of enclosures, possibly bounded by an irregular outer ditch (in places possibly by a double ditch) and arranged around an open area in the central and eastern part of the site, displays a measure of organisation and planning, there also appear to be many inter-cutting features suggesting repeated modifications to the settlement's layout over the period of the site's occupation.

6.1.3 The penannular gully investigated in Trench 4, probably containing an Iron Age roundhouse, appears to be related to the wider arrangement of enclosures. Its east-facing entrance is aligned on the gap in the outer ditch so that it would have been the first structure a person encountered on entering the settlement from that direction. In addition, the house was located within the large open area in the central and eastern part of the site, indicating that it may have been one of, if not *the* primary domestic structure in the settlement. Other, similar curvilinear anomalies were recorded by the geophysical survey within the settlement, but none was in an equivalent open area and none appears to have had an east or south-east facing entrance.

6.1.4 The two curvilinear gullies in Trench 1 were both considerably smaller than the penannular gully in Trench 4. At least one was of Early Romano-British date and the complex sequence of features in Trench 1 indicates some intensity of activity in this part of the site during this Early Roman period.

6.1.5 The phasing and development of the ditches both defining the sub-enclosures and possibly bounding the settlement remains unclear. The absence of Romano-British pottery from the outer ditch (309) excavated in Trench 3 may indicate a Late Iron Age date for this feature, although the ditch inside it produced only Romano-British pottery. To what degree these features remained in use during the Romano-British period is also unclear. The Romano-British ditch (406) that cut across the penannular gully in Trench 4 appears to be aligned of the eastern 'entrance', suggesting the continued use of at least the settlement's outer boundary. However, the main Romano-British building recorded in Trench 5 had a different alignment to the surrounding sub-enclosure (although the short length of truncated 'wall' along the west side of the trench runs parallel to the ditch to its west).

6.1.6 The heavy truncation of the building in Trench 5, means that little can be said about its form or function, although its rectangular form and stone wall footings highlight the fundamental changes in the methods of construction from those used in Iron Age roundhouses. The relatively poor quality its construction, however, incorporating for instance quern and tile fragments, does not suggest a high status building, although the finding of a single *tessera* from the adjacent soil raises the possibility of a more substantial structure in the vicinity.

6.1.7 There are similarities between this site and the Middle-Late Iron Age and Early Romano-British phases of the settlement at Frocester, *c.* 6km to the south. There, elements of the Middle-Late Iron Age enclosure were retained in the Early Romano-British period, during which time the major structural change was the replacement of a number of circular buildings with

rectangular buildings (although at many sites, such as Winterton, Lincs, roundhouses remained in use well into the Romano-British period). Only with the establishment of the Late Romano-British villa, which continued the occupation at Frocester into the 5th century AD, were the remaining traces of the Iron Age farmstead almost entirely removed.

6.1.8 There is little from the site to suggest that it was more ever more than a rural farmstead. Although it lies within the likely sphere of influence of the Iron Age hillfort at Haresfield Beacon, 2km to the east, it is possible that, as throughout much of Wessex, the hillfort had been abandoned by about 100 BC (Cunliffe 1984, 10). However, following the Roman conquest the site would have lain close to, and possibly under the control of, the legionary fortress at Gloucester. It would certainly have been influenced by the proximity of the subsequent Roman town and its market, and by the Roman road lying just 2km to the west, giving it ready access to some luxury goods. However, although there are a number of Romano-British villas in the area, there is no direct evidence that the settlement at Standish developed as such.

6.1.9 Direct evidence for uninterrupted occupation from the Iron Age into the Romano-British period has been found on only a few sites in Gloucestershire, such as at Iron Age Dobunnic *oppidum* at Bagendon, and at Bourton-on-the-Water, although it is implied for a number of other Romano-British settlements (RCHME 1976, xxix). Although there was limited ceramic evidence of immediate pre- and post-conquest activity, there was nothing in either the pottery assemblage, or in the collection of coins found during the fieldwalking and excavation, to indicate any clear break in the occupation of the site between the Late Iron Age and the late 3rd or 4th century AD.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1.1 Given the above assessment of the results of the evaluation, only limited further analysis of the pottery, metalwork and animal bone, as outlined above (para. 4.13.2) is considered to be necessary. No further analysis of the environmental data is required.

7.1.2 A report on the evaluation will be submitted to the Gloucestershire Sites and Monuments Record, and it is recommended that a report summarising the results of this assessment is published in the *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*.

8 ARCHIVE

8.1.1 The archive, which includes all artefacts, written, drawn and photographic records relating directly to the investigation undertaken, is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology under the site code STAN 04 and Wessex Archaeology project no. 55760. The paper archive is contained in one lever-arch file. In due course, Time Team will transfer ownership of the archive to the Stroud Museum.

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Material / **Trench**	**1**		**2**		**3**		**4**		**5**		**Unstrat.**	**Total**	
Pottery:	310	6872	357	3749	160	2548	682	4708	586	5850	-	2095	23,727
Iron Age	*25*	*147*	*12*	*102*	*1*	*5*	*676*	*4650*	*19*	*176*	-	*733*	*5080*
Romano-British	*285*	*6725*	*345*	*3647*	*159*	*2543*	*6*	*58*	*567*	*5674*	-	*1362*	*18,647*
Ceramic building material	8	280	89	4011	20	2062	5	54	135	5462	-	257	11,869
Fired clay	29	411	24	320	-		77	730	2	49	-	132	1510
Stone	2	2239	54	8144	2	291	196	43,359	46	9973	-	300	64,006
Flint	4	262	1	3	-		-		-		-	5	265
Glass	-		2	9	-		-		2	16	2 5	6	30
Slag	1	29	8	233	-		2	35	3	53	-	14	350
Metalwork	5		28		12		2		15		4	65	
Coins	*1*		*3*		-		-		-		*1*	*5*	
Copper alloy	-		*2*		*1*		-		-		-	*3*	
Iron	*4*		*23*		*11*		*2*		*13*		*3*	*56*	
Lead	-		-		-		-		*1*		-	*1*	
Worked bone	-		1	18	-		-		-		-	1	18
Human bone	-		1 indiv.		1	3	-		-		-	1 indiv. + 1	
Animal bone	79	864	137	1440	111	1152	480	4118	143	1069	-	950	8643
Shell	-		2	41	-		-		-		-	2	41

Table 1: Finds totals (number / weight in grams) by material type and trench

Date range	Ware type	no.	g.
Iron Age	Limestone-tempered wares	15	64
	Calcite-tempered wares	718	5016
	Grog-tempered wares	242	6427
	sub-total Iron Age	*975*	*11,507*
Romano-British	Samian	20	180
	Amphorae	14	1267
	Other imports	6	12
	Oxfordshire colour coat	14	114
	Severn Valley wares	510	5404
	Black Burnished ware	342	2943
	Greyware	204	1708
	Other oxidised wares	5	60
	Whiteware	5	532
	sub-total Romano-British	*1120*	*12,220*
Total		**2095**	**23,727**

Table 2: Pottery totals (number / weight in grams) by ware type/group

Context	Deposit type	Quantification	Age/sex	Pathology
204	*in situ* burial	*c.* 40%	adult >45 yr. female	calculus; caries; abscesses; *ante mortem* tooth loss; osteoarthritis – 2C, 1L; degenerative disc disease – 2C; osteophytes – distal IP joints (hand), 2C; exostoses - calcaneum
301	redeposited	frag. left femur	neonate	

Table 3: Summary of results from the human bone scan

Context	Condition		Identified	Gnawed	Loose teeth	Butchery	Burnt	Measurable	Ageable
	poor	fair							
Trench 1		100	32	8	7	9	3	4	12
Trench 2		100	22	2	7	13	5	2	6
Trench 3		100	39	4	5	5		10	17
Trench 4	<1	99	30	4	8	4	1	2	8
Trench 5	42	58	30	5	14	3	1	4	7
Total	7	93	30	4	8	6	1	3	9

Table 4: Percentages of animal bones with the potential to inform on preservation, husbandry, butchery and disposal practice

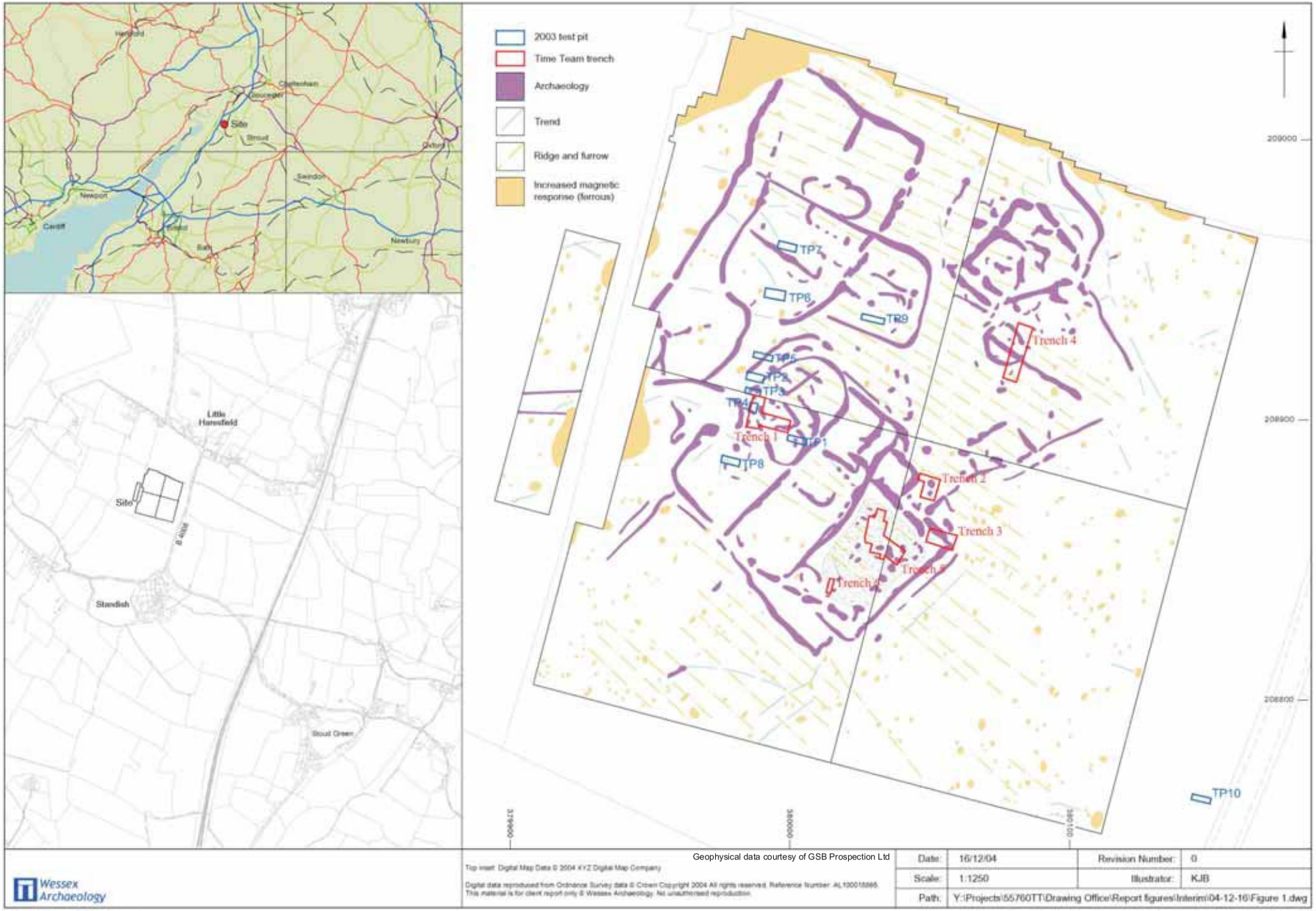
Context	Horse	Cattle	Sheep/goat	Pig	Dog	Bird	Small mammal	Unidentified	Total
Trench 1	5	11	6				2	50	74
Trench 2	3	17	8			1		104	133
Trench 3	1	8	7	2	21	1		63	103
Trench 4	11	28	87	4				299	429
Trench 5		17	24	1				96	138
Total	20	81	132	7	21	2	2	612	877

Table 5: Animal bone species list (number of identified specimens)

Sample location					Flot								Residue
Tr.	Feature	Cont.	Sample	Size (l)	Flot size (ml)	Root %	Grain	Chaff	Weed seeds uncharred	Weed seeds charred	Charcoal >5.6mm	Other	Charcoal >5.6mm
1	Pot 104	103	7	12	40	80	A	A	A	A	C	Moll-t (A) Smb (C)	-
2	Feature 211	210	4	10	20	50	A	A*	B	A	C	Moll-t (B) Moll-w (A*) Smb (C)	-
3	Ditch 310	306	8	15	35	5	B	A	-	C	-	Moll-w (A**) Moll-t (B)	-
4	Pot fill	418	9	1	15	5	C	C	-	C	B	Moll-w (C) Moll-t (C)	
5	Ring gully	418	5	30	125	80	-	-	-	-	B	Moll-t (C)	-
	417	418	6	1	8	20	C	-	-	C	B	-	-

KEY: A* = 30+ items, A = ≥10 items, B = 9 - 5 items, C = < 5 items
Moll-t = terrestrial molluscs, Moll-f = freshwater molluscs, Smb = small mammal bones

Table 6: Assessment of the charred plant remains and charcoal



Site and trench location plan

Figure 1

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