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A LATE IRON AGE/EARLY ROMAN ENCLOSED SETTLEMENT AT BASING VIEW, BASINGSTOKE

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ABSTRACT

Excavation in advance of housing development at Basing View, Basingstoke, revealed the remains of an Early Roman enclosed settlement that possibly originated in the Late Iron Age and was occupied to the early 2nd century. The settlement was fairly low status, focussed on mixed farming practices, but was notable for the presence of a possible sunken-featured building with a baby burial. The site adds to current knowledge of the Late Iron Age/Early Roman settlement archaeology of the area south of Silchester (Calleva Atrebatum).

INTRODUCTION

In 2018 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council to undertake an archaeological excavation on the site of a proposed commercial development. The earliest remains found at the site relate to early prehistoric activity characterised by a residual worked flint assemblage that potentially dates between the Mesolithic and the Middle Bronze Age. The most significant aspect of the excavation, however, was the remains of an Early Roman enclosed settlement that possibly originated at the very end of the Iron Age. The Romano-British archaeology consisted of a rectilinear enclosure, a probable sunken-featured building and a series of possible chalk quarries. Pottery from the site suggests that the enclosure was laid out in the first or second decade after the Roman conquest of AD 43. A very small number of features dating to the early 2nd century represent a final phase of activity before the site's abandonment. After this point, sporadic Late Roman finds suggest that local activity was focussed elsewhere. This article represents a summary of the results and a full report on the excavation is available from the OA Library (https://library.thehumanjourney.net/4874/).

Location

The site is located at Basing View within the modern town of Basingstoke (Fig. 1; SU 6470 5267). It lies at the northern edge of the chalk bedrock of the Hampshire Downs and overlooks the London Clays of the Middle Thames Valley to the north. The River Loddon rises immediately south of the site and flows north-east towards the River Thames.

Archaeological background

The Basingstoke area is fairly rich in Late Iron Age and Romano-British archaeology. The site lies just less than 10km due south of the oppidum and civitas capital of *Calleva Atrebatum* at Silchester, and it is bypassed by two Roman roads leading south towards Winchester and Chichester respectively (Fig. 2). Winklebury Hillfort lies approximately 3.3km to the west of the site and was occupied in the 6th–5th centuries BC and in the 3rd–1st centuries BC (Smith 1977). The considerable amount of rescue excavation undertaken in Basingstoke during the 1970s and 1980s, and development-led work since 1990, has resulted in the discovery of a relatively large number of Late Iron Age/Romano-British rural settlements. Notable local sites include Oakridge II/IV and Oakridge VII (Oliver 1993), Cowdery's Down (Millett & James 1983), Daneshill (Millett & Schadla-Hall 1991), Rucstalls Hill (Oliver & Applin 1979), Viables Farm (Millett & Russell

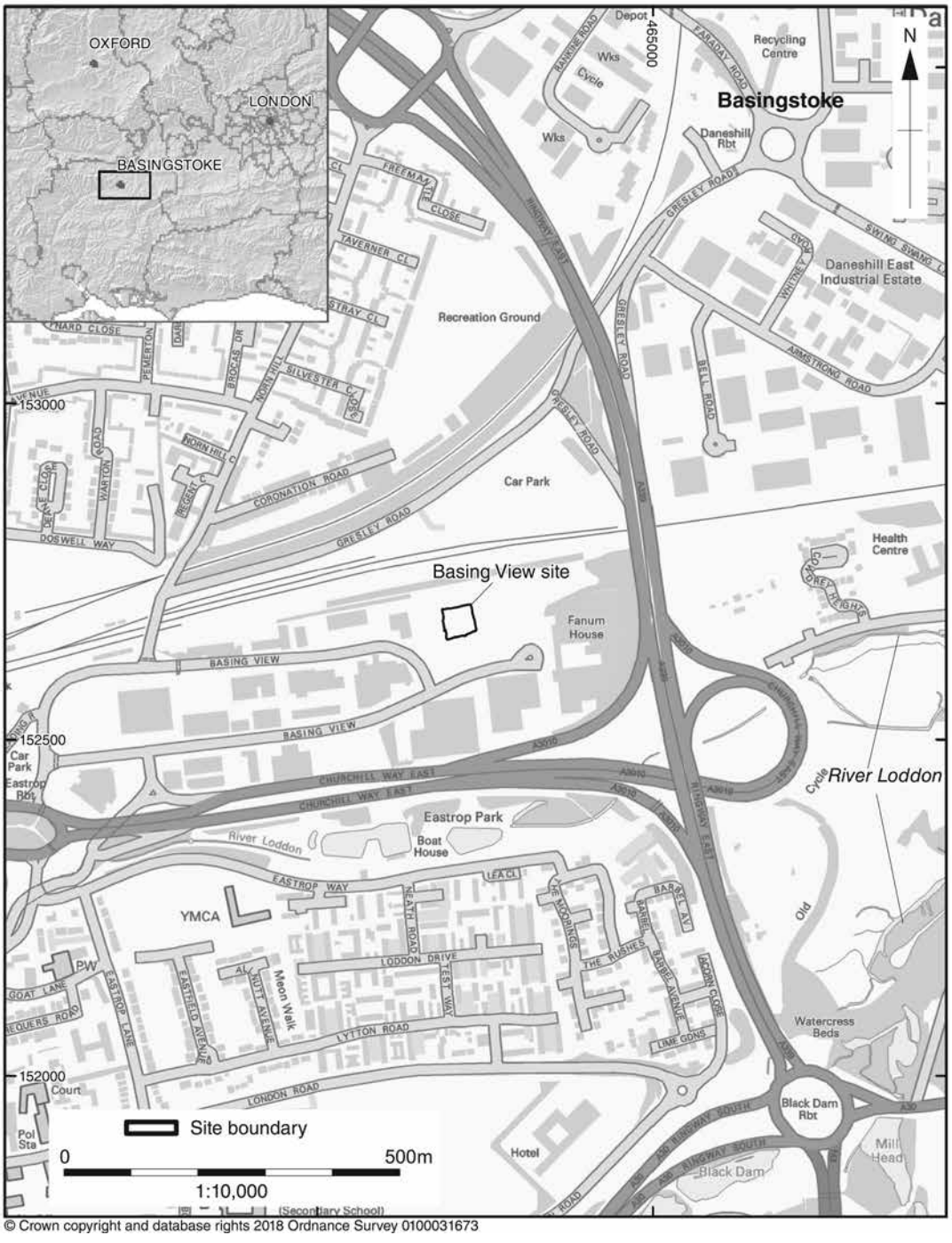

Fig. 1 Site location plan

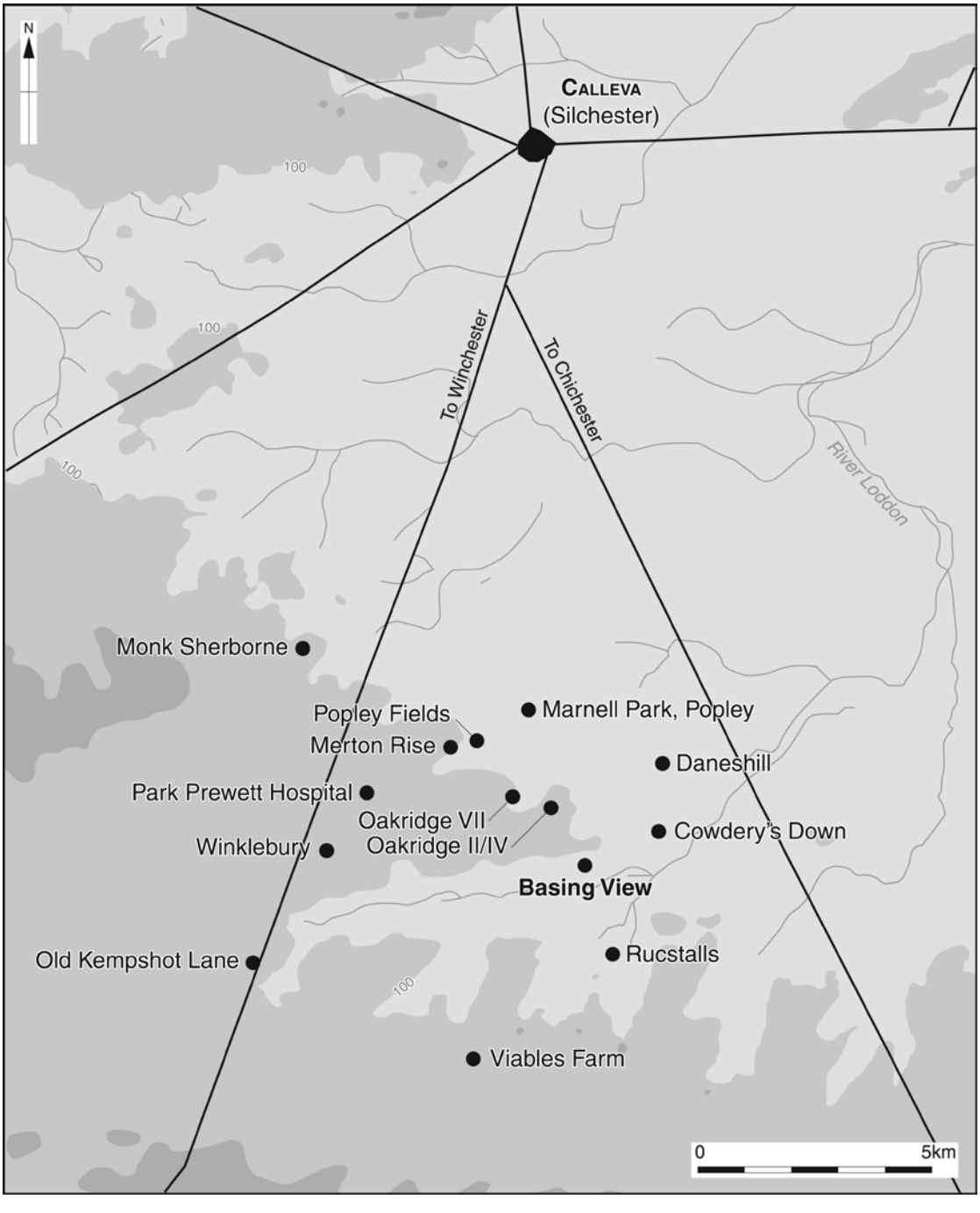

Fig. 2 Selected Iron Age/Romano-British settlements in the Basingstoke area

1984; Gibson 2004), Park Prewett Hospital (Coles *et al.* 2011; OA 2016) and several sites in the Popley area (Mayer 2005; Wright *et al.* 2009). Several more Iron Age/Romano-British settlements are known further south-west in the Brighton Hill and Hatch Warren area of Basingstoke (Coe & Newman 1993; Fasham & Keevil 1995; Howell & Durden 2005) and to these should be added the villa at Monk Sherborne, which was located about 6km north-west of the centre of Basingstoke (Teague 2005). Rural settlements in this area would no doubt have benefitted from their location on the local chalk, with its good drainage and fertile arable soils, and its proximity to the gravel terraces immediately north which would have provided prime grazing pasture for livestock (Booth *et al.* 2007, 24–29).

Methodology

Following the evaluation, a roughly square area measuring approximately 43m by 45m was excavated to examine several Late Iron Age/Early Roman features exposed by the trial trenches (Fig. 3). The site was stripped using a mechanical excavator and the exposed area was cleaned to define the archaeological features. These were sample excavated following standard OA guidelines, including 10% of all ditches/gullies, with terminals and intersections examined in 1m slots, and half-sectioning of all pits, postholes and other discrete features. The excavation archive will be deposited with Hampshire Cultural Trust under the accession code A.2017.91.

STRATIGRAPHIC NARRATIVE

The site was occupied over a relatively short period of time, with most features dating to the 1st century AD. Analysis of the distribution of pottery against the stratigraphic sequence prompted the sub-division of the first period of activity into phases 1a and 1b. Phase 1a features potentially dated anywhere between AD 1 and AD 70, and often contained local, Silchester-type, flint-tempered wares. Phase 1b features are likely to have been established in the post-conquest period, owing to the presence of more-distinctive oxidised and reduced wares that date to AD 43–70. Phase 2 is represented by a very small number of features containing pottery dating from around AD 90 to AD 150, some of which cut phase 1b features. It seems likely that this constituted the final period of activity at the site before its abandonment.

A tree-throw hole contained a single sherd of 3rd/4th-century pottery, though this appears to be a stray find relating to possible Late Roman activity (phase 3) focussed elsewhere. An undated linear feature cut several phase 1b pits at the southern end of the trench. Although this feature was on the same alignment as other Roman ditches, its shallow profile suggests that it was a post-Roman feature, possibly a medieval furrow (phase 4).

Phase 1a: AD 1–70

Phase 1a was characterised by a large number of postholes, several short gullies, and a couple of intercutting pit groups (Fig. 3). It is likely that many of these features were broadly contemporary with phase 1b activity, though some were clearly earlier than (and cut by) the enclosure ditches.

Pit group 20003

A group of intercutting pits was located in the south-western corner of the trench. This feature consisted of at least seven pits that were later truncated by phase 1b ditches 1564 and 20004 (Fig. 4). Pit group 20003 covered an area of about 6m × 8m, though its western edge was not fully exposed. Most of the pits were over 1m wide, with the largest (1596) measuring 1.04m × 1.84m across, while the smallest (1585) measured approximately 0.6m × 0.68m. The depths of the pits ranged up to 0.64m below the surface. Five of the pits contained local flint-tempered wares and all were devoid of post-conquest pottery.

Pit group 20009

A group of four intercutting pits was dug about 10m north-east of pit group 20003. These were similar in plan to those in 20003, ranging between 0.6–0.84m wide and 0.86–1.6m long, but were comparatively shallow at 0.16–0.26m deep (Fig. 5, section 1515). The sequence of

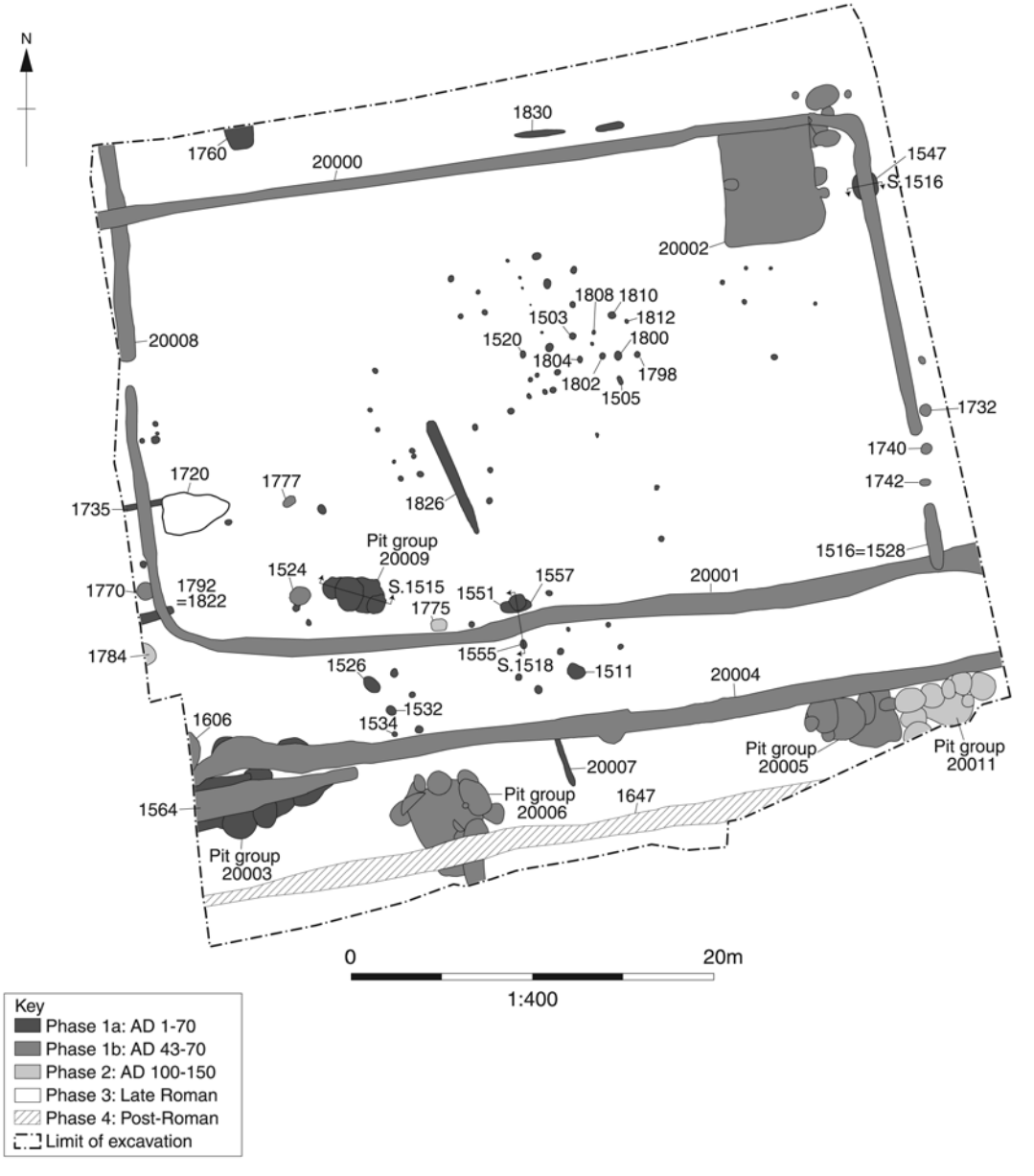

Fig. 3 Phased site plan

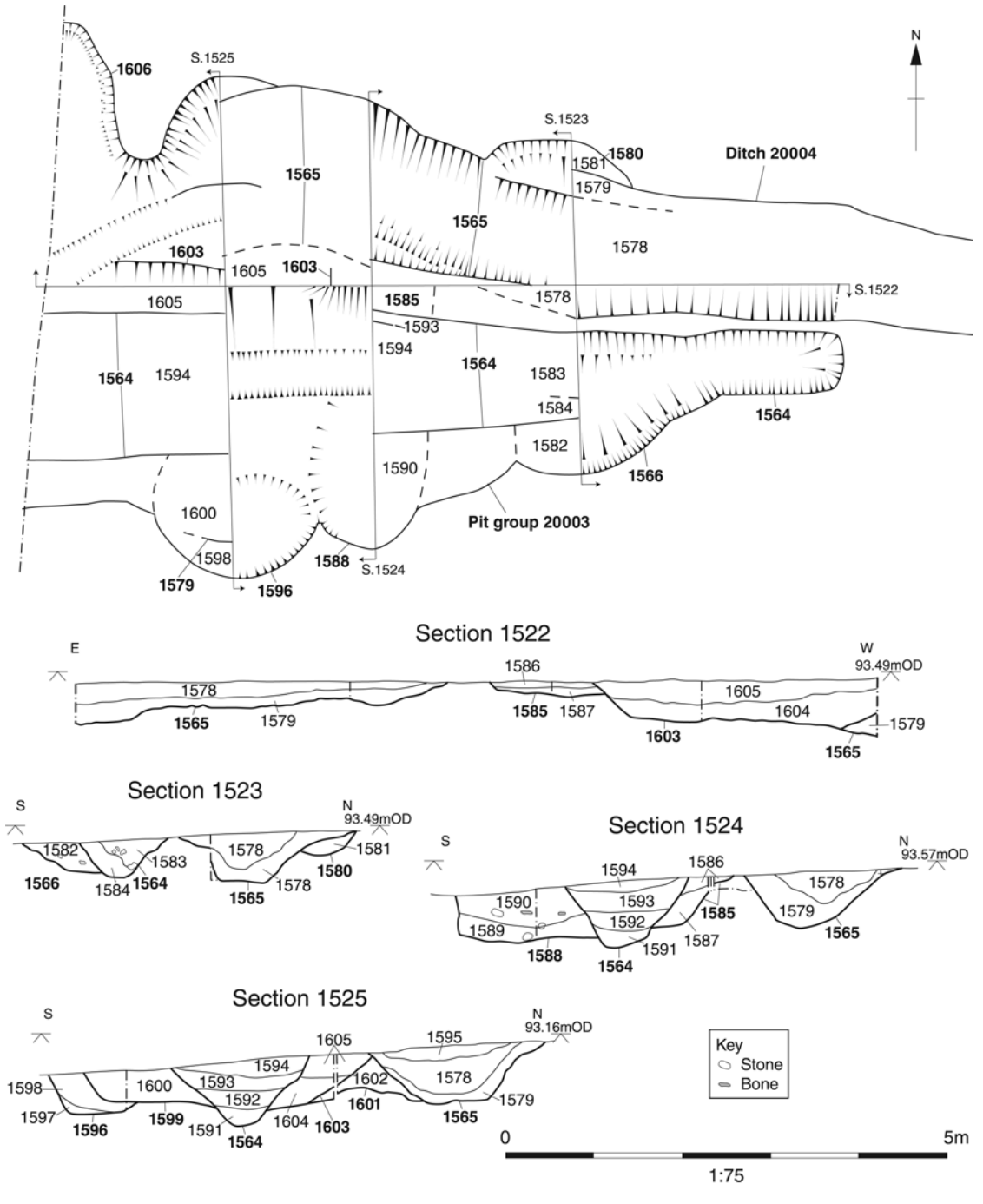

Fig. 4 Plan and sections of pit group 20003, ditch 1564 and ditch 20004 (1565)

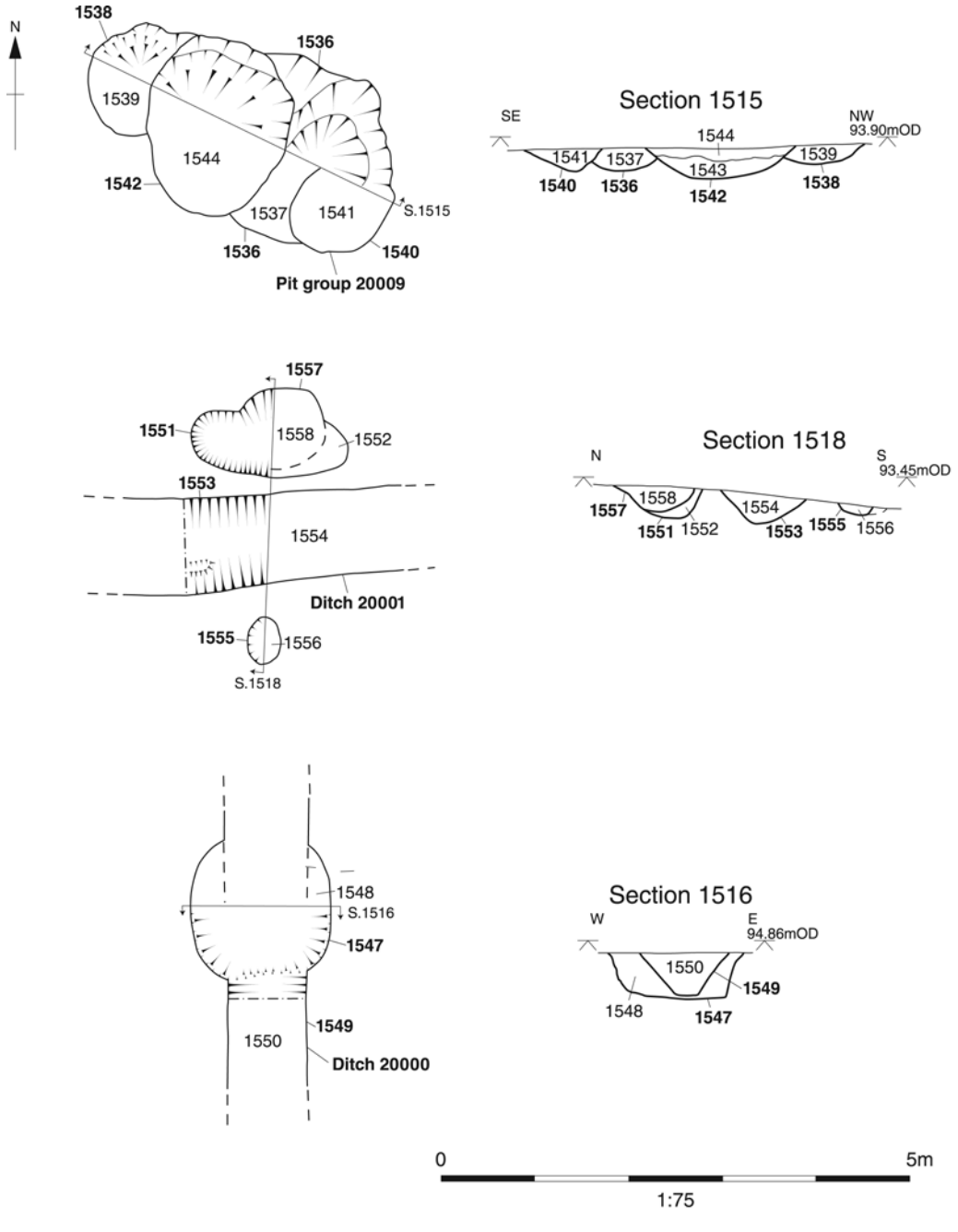

Fig. 5 Plan and sections of pit group 20009, ditch 20001 (1553) and ditch 20000 (1549)

digging was clearer here than in pit group 20003, as these pits were not truncated by later activity. Three of the pits contained single fills, while pit 1542, the largest and latest in the sequence, contained two fills with pottery that dated broadly to the 1st century AD.

Other pits, postholes and gullies

Several pits and postholes lay to the south and east of pit group 20009 between phase 1b ditches 20001 and 20004 (Fig. 3). A group of six (including features 1526, 1532 and 1534) lay between ditches 20001 and 20004, and their consistent alignment suggests that they may have formed a small post structure. The three on the western side varied in size, however, ranging from 0.33–1.01m long, and may have been too big to have been postholes. Pit 1532 contained sherds of local Silchester-type ware. Pits 1511, 1551 and 1557, and posthole 1555, were also located in this area. Pit 1551 was oval in plan, measuring 1.68m long and 0.7m wide. It was cut by circular pit 1557, which was 0.86m across, but much shallower than its earlier counterpart (Fig. 5, section 1518). The numerous postholes in this area may have formed small structures or fence lines, though it was difficult to see any consistent arrangement in their locations.

A large group of postholes was found closer to the centre of the rectilinear enclosure, concentrated mostly in the central area. Several of these were excavated, including 1503, 1505, 1520, 1798, 1800, 1802, 1804, 1808 and 1810. These were all fairly small and circular in plan, measuring 0.25–0.5m across and 0.08–0.18m. None produced any dating evidence, though their position within the enclosure suggest that they may have been in use at the same time. It was notable that several postholes were clearly on alignment and many were probably related, though it is difficult to know whether they were all contemporary or represented successive phases of building. Gully 1826 was located within the less dense area of postholes to the south-west. The gully was almost 7m long, 0.72m wide and 0.14m deep. As with the postholes in this area, the gully could not be dated, but it may have been related and it appears to have been dug on a similar orientation to several of the posthole alignments. A group of four postholes immediately west of gully 1826 was probably a four-post structure. The postholes were not excavated and were phased through their association with the gully.

Pit 1547 was a circular feature located close to the eastern edge of the trench. It measured 1.45m across and 0.5m deep with fairly steep sides and a flat base (Fig. 5, section 1516). The pit contained a sterile silty fill, but it was cut directly through the centre by ditch 20000 (1549). Another large pit, 1760, extended from the northern edge of the trench. This feature was sub-rectangular in plan, measuring >1.1m by 1.2m across, and had a sloping, concave profile that reached 0.36m. It is possible that the feature represented a ditch terminal, though it would have been much wider than other ditches at the site.

Phase 1b: AD 43–70

Phase 1b was largely characterised by the digging of the enclosure ditches, a rectilinear sunken feature, and a possible trackway extending along the southern boundary of the enclosure. As mentioned above, many of the features attributed to phase 1a, particularly those within the enclosure, were probably contemporary with this phase of activity.

Pits 1524, 1770 and 1777

Pit 1770 was located next to the western trench edge. It was circular in plan, measuring 1.2m across and almost a metre deep, and it contained four fills. The second fill contained four sherds of post-conquest oxidised ware, while the uppermost fill contained local flint-tempered sherds that were probably still in use by this time. The pit was clearly dug earlier than the enclosure ditches as it was cut on its eastern side by ditch 20001. Pits 1524 and 1777 were located within the enclosure about 8–9m east of pit 1770. Pit 1524 was very similar in size and profile to 1770, while 1777 was sub-circular and slightly smaller than the other two. Both contained post-conquest pottery sherds.

The enclosure boundary

The main enclosure was rectilinear in plan, measuring approximately 22m × 40m across, and was bounded by two L-shaped

ditches (20000 and 20001) with adjoining sections (1516=1528 and 20008). Ditch 20001 extended westward from the trench edge over approximately 45m to where it curved north and continued for about 13.5m before terminating. The basal fill of the ditch terminus contained post-conquest pottery, as did two upper fills in other interventions. The terminus of ditch 20001 was opposed by the southern terminus of ditch 20008, which extended south over about 12m from the northern trench edge. The two termini were dug 1.2m apart and formed a western entrance into the enclosure.

Ditch 20008 was cut by ditch 20000, which extended eastwards from here over 42m, before turning fairly sharply south from where it continued for a further 17m to its terminus. Ditches 20000 and 20001 had largely identical sandy silt fills and they shared similar profiles, with straight sides and narrow concave bases about 0.5m deep (Fig. 5, sections 1516 and 1518).

A short ditch section, 1516=1528, was dug into ditch 20001, extending north just less than 4 m, to form an opposing terminus with ditch 20000. The fact that this ditch did not extend south of ditch 20001 indicates that it was deliberately dug to create an eastern entrance to the enclosure. Two postholes, 1740 and 1742, were located within the 4 m-gap between the ditch termini and, along with 1732 to the north, may have formed the bases of a gate or similar structure across this entrance. These postholes were fairly substantial, measuring 0.42–0.72m across, while the deepest, 1732, reached 0.32m below the surface.

Feature 20002

In the north-east corner of the enclosure lay a sub-rectangular feature (20002) that appeared to be aligned against ditch 20000 (Fig. 6). A sequence of intercutting pits was identified next to and below the north-eastern corner of the feature. Pit 1762 was the earliest feature in this sequence (Fig. 6, section 1560). It was fairly deep, reaching 0.64m below the surface, and was cut on its northern side by pit 1764, which was cut by ditch 20000 (1748) and pit 1752 (see below). Pits 1762 and 1764 may belong to phase 1a, as both were clearly earlier than the enclosure ditch, though neither feature produced any dating evidence.

Two oval pits, 1752 and 1754, lay immediately north and south of ditch 20000. These appear to have respected the ditch and may have been contemporary with it. Pit 1754 was steep sided with a flat base about 0.5m deep. Its fill contained post-conquest pottery sherds. Pit 1752 was slightly wider (1.2m) but shallower (0.2m) with a broad flat base. This pit was flanked on both sides by two postholes, 1756 and 1758, both of which were approximately 0.45m wide and 0.05m deep, and these may have related to a structure that stood next to or over the pit (Fig. 6, sections 1561 and 1562).

Feature 20002 (cut 1567) measured approximately 5.6m × 6.9m across and reached over 1m deep. The depth of the base varied considerably, and it is possible that an earlier pit was recut to create a flat base (Fig. 6, section 1527). The lowest fill (1574) contained two sherds of local flint-tempered ware, but the upper two fills (1568 and 1571) contained pottery sherds from at least 18 vessels, including local flint-tempered wares and post-conquest oxidised and reduced wares, mostly jars. The remains of a neonate were recovered from fill 1568 in the north-west corner of the feature, next to a large posthole, 1569, that was dug into the edge of feature 20002 (Fig. 6, section 1591). No relationship between the northern edge of feature 20002 and ditch 20000 (1572) was found and the two appear to have abutted. However, further to the east, pit 1750 cut the southern side of ditch 20000 (1748), though it is uncertain whether 1750 was a later pit or a continuation of feature 20002 in this area (Fig. 6, section 1559).

Pit group 20006

Pit group 20006 was located near the southern end of the excavated area. The feature comprised a complex sequence of 21 pits (Fig. 7), and the earliest may have belonged to phase 1a since they did not contain post-conquest wares. The pits were sub-circular or oval in plan but ranged in size. The smallest, 1621, measured 0.3m × 0.46m across, while the largest, 1631, was over 2m long. Most of the pits were fairly shallow features with gradually sloping sides, and depths ranging from 0.15m to 0.64m. Most of the pits contained single silt

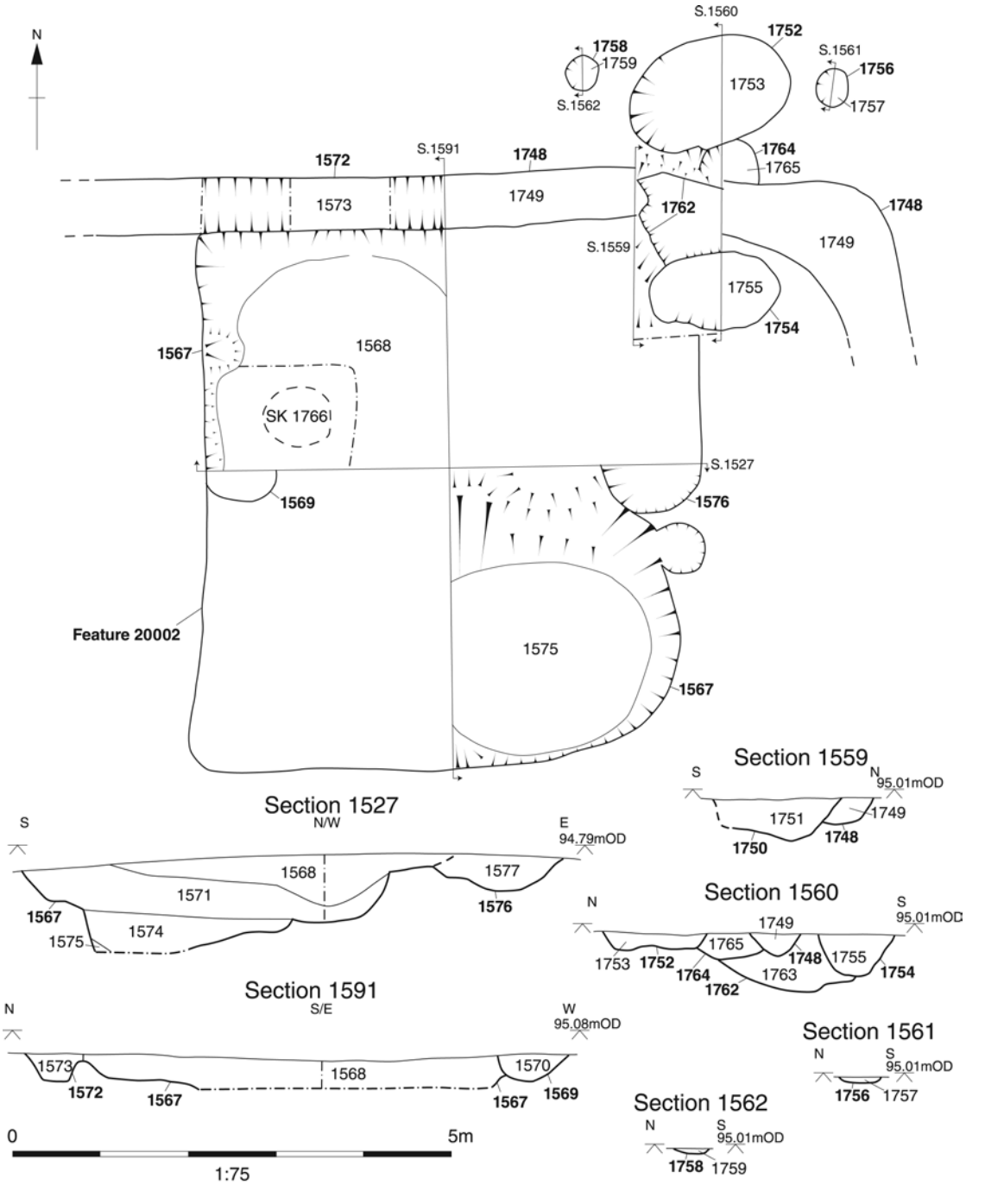

Fig. 6 Plan and sections of feature 20002 and associated features

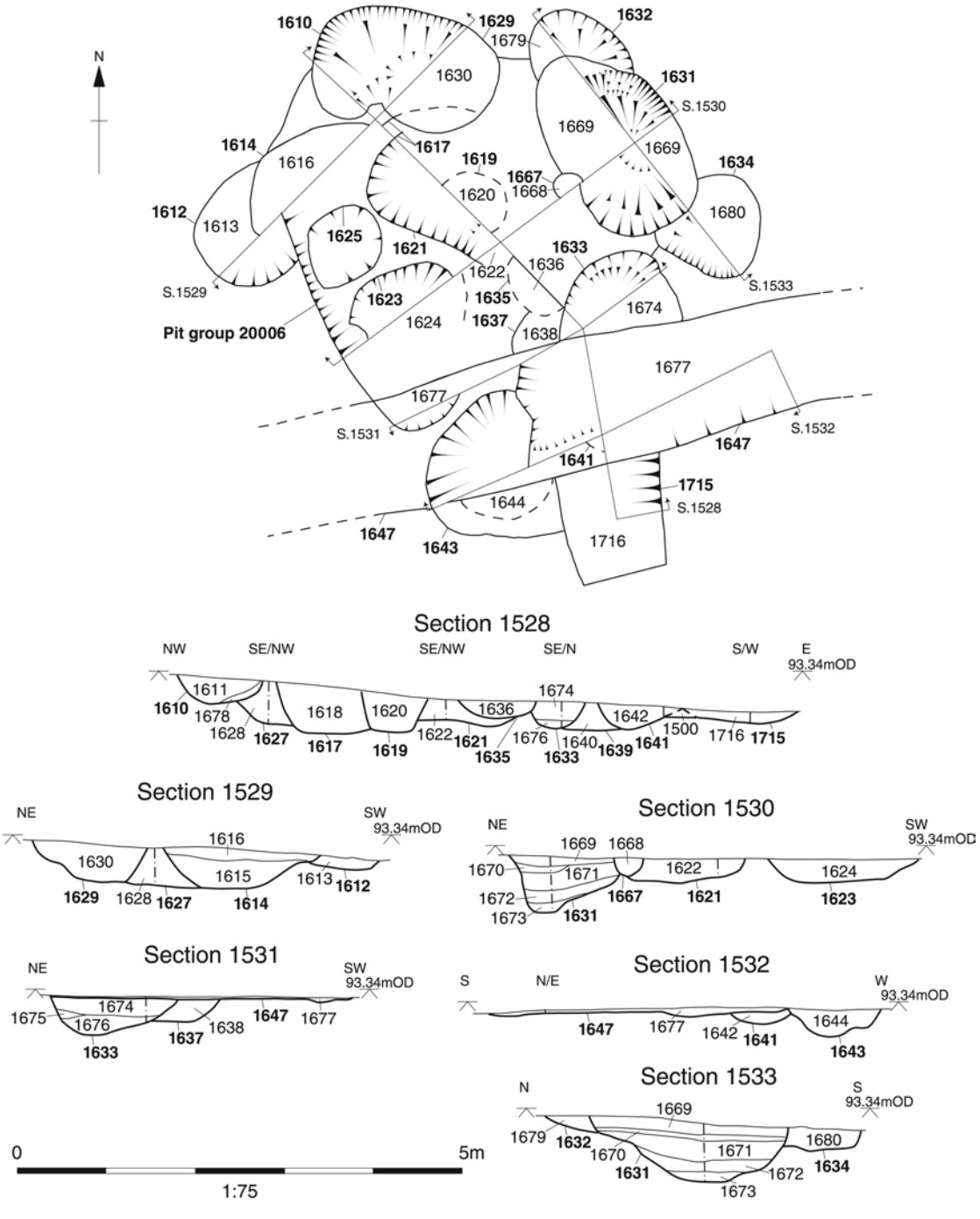

Fig. 7 Plan and sections of pit group 20006

fills, though 1631 contained five fills (Fig. 7, sections 1530 and 1533). Local flint-tempered pottery was recovered from eight pits, including two of the earliest (1623 and 1634), while post-conquest pottery was found in pits 1610, 1614 and 1625, all of which were fairly late in the sequence. Pit group 20006 was cut across by linear feature 1647, which was seen in section as a very shallow deposit, possibly the remnant of a furrow (Fig. 7, section 1532; see *Phase 4: Post-Roman*).

Pit group 20005

Pit group 20005 lay adjacent to pit group 20011 (phase 2), in the south-eastern corner of the excavated area, but the two were differentiated by the fact that the former was cut by ditch 20004, which was cut by the latter (Fig. 8). A total of eight pits was identified in group 20005. These were mostly sub-circular in plan, ranging between 0.61–2.0m long. The profiles of the pits varied: pit 1655 was comparatively shallow (approximately 0.38m deep) with gradually sloping sides, while pit 1656 had fairly steep sides with a flat but slightly undulating base that reached 0.66m deep (Fig. 8, sections 1538 and 1539). The deepest, pit 1714, was dug at least 1.2m below the surface. Pits 1655 and 1656 were both cut on their northern sides by ditch 20004. Pit group 20005 is considered to be a phase 1b feature owing to 1664 and 1714 both containing pottery dated to the post-conquest period, while none of the pits contained flint-tempered wares alone.

The trackway

Ditch 20004 extended east–west across the full width of the southern end of the excavated area and it appears to have formed a trackway along the southern side of the enclosure. A gap of about 5m was maintained between ditches 20001 and 20004, and it seems likely that the phase 1a pits and postholes in this area had been abandoned by this time (Fig. 3). The ditch varied in width from 0.6–1.36m and reached a depth of 0.5–0.6m all along its length. The ditch had a V-shaped profile with straight sides and a narrowed base (Fig. 8, sections 1535–9). Post-conquest pottery was recovered from the basal (1698) and upper fills (1703) of the ditch. At its western end, the ditch cut pit group 20003. At this end, the ditch curved slightly northwards, perhaps to follow the northward curve of ditch 20001 on the opposite side of the trackway. Ditch 20004 also appears to respect ditch 1564, which extended approximately 9.5m eastward from the trench edge to its terminus. Ditch 1564 was similar in depth and profile to ditch 20004 (Fig. 4, sections 1523, 1524 and 1525), and it is possible that they were both open at the same time. At its very western end, ditch 20004 was cut by pit 1606. This feature was not fully exposed in the trench but measured at least 3.1m across and nearly 1m deep. It had steep sides and a flat base and contained post-conquest pottery.

Phase 2: AD 90–150

Only three features dated to the 2nd century AD, one possibly to the end of the 1st century AD. Pit 1784 was half exposed near the western trench edge, close to the corner of ditch 20001. The pit measured 1.26m across at the top but increased to 1.33m about two-thirds of the way down, giving the feature a 'bell-shaped' profile. The base was reached at 0.94m below the surface. Alongside animal bones and large flints, the pit contained a Farnham-type lid dating AD 90–150, which would have been associated with imitation Gallo-Belgic dishes and it is significant as being the only Alice Holt vessel at the site dating after AD 90.

Pit 1775 was located 16m east of pit 1784. It was sub-oval in plan, measuring 0.88m across and 0.4m deep, with steep, almost vertical sides and a flat base. The pit contained a sizable pottery assemblage that included 2nd-century Black Burnished Ware.

A series of nine intercutting pits (group 20011) was located in the south-eastern corner of the trench. The pits ranged in size from about 0.5m across (1660) to over 1.8m long (1650). Within this group, pits 1648, 1649, 1650 and 1652 were found to cut ditch 20004 (1659) (Fig. 8, sections 1535–7). Pit 1652 also cut pit 1653 of the earlier group 20005 (see above). First-century post-conquest pottery made up the bulk of the ceramic material in this feature. However, a small quantity of 2nd-century Black Burnished Ware sherds was recovered from pit 1661, which was later cut by pit 1660, suggesting

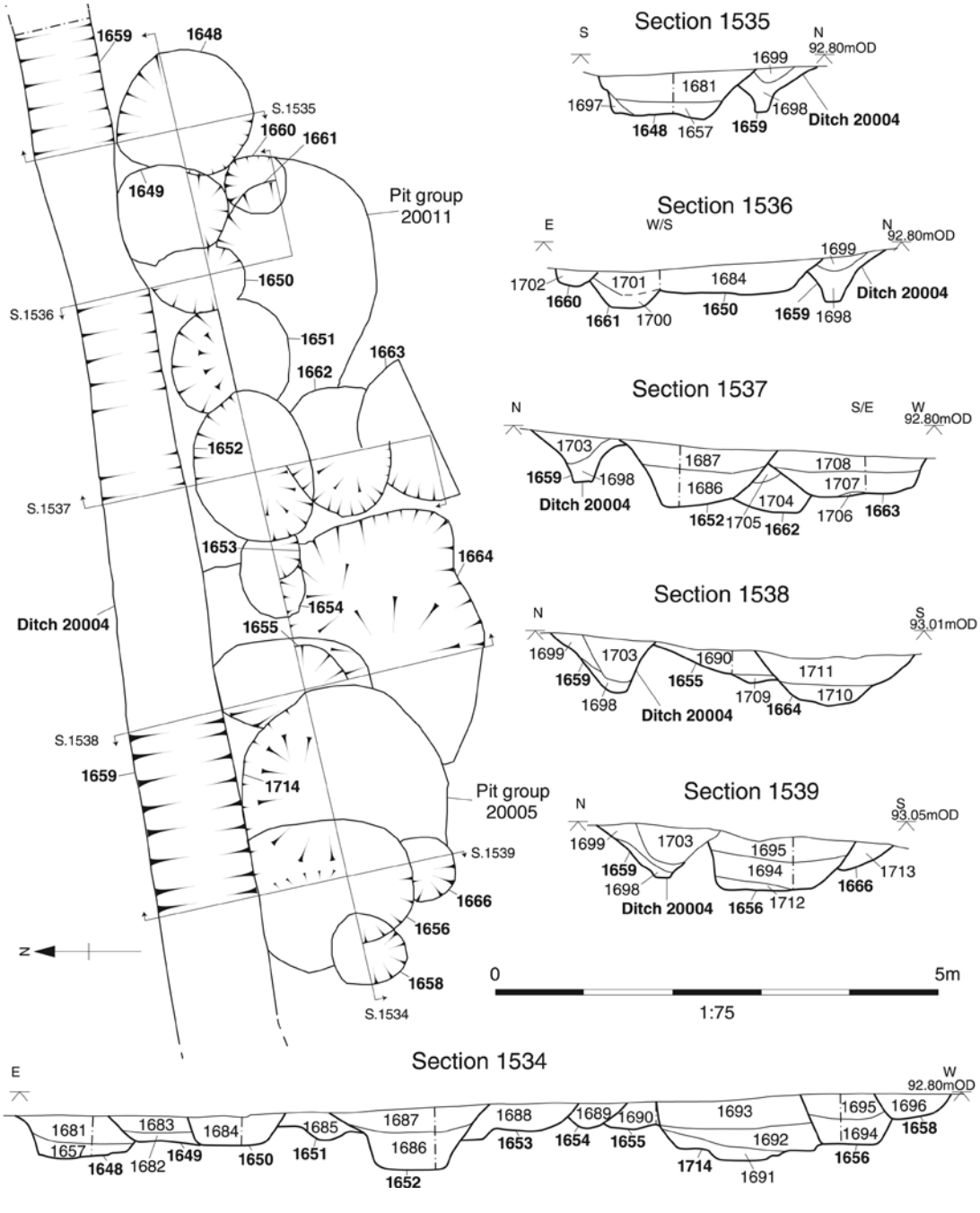

Fig. 8 Plan and sections of pit groups 20005 and 20011

that these features were dug towards the end of the period of occupation.

Phase 3: Late Roman

Phase 3 was represented by the presence of a sherd of New Forest colour-coated ware dating AD 260–370 that was recovered from tree-throw hole 1720 (Fig. 3). The presence of this Late Roman pottery sherd does not indicate continued use of the enclosure, but suggests probable agricultural activity in the area after the settlement's abandonment.

Phase 4: Post-Roman

Linear feature 1647 was located at the southern end of the site. It extended east–west for approximately 35 m, continuing beyond the limit of excavation in both directions. The feature was sampled in two interventions but remains undated. It cut all the pits associated with group 20006 (see above). It is possible that the feature represents a Roman ditch, as it was on the same alignment as ditches 20001 and 20004, but it was far shallower by comparison at 0.06–0.1m deep (Fig. 7, section 1532), and on balance it seems likely that this was a later feature, possibly a furrow.

THE FINDS

Worked and burnt flint by Mike Donnelly

The excavation yielded 222 struck flints (including six from the previous evaluation) and 282 fragments of unworked burnt flint, the latter weighing 1839g. All the material was recovered from Roman features and included numerous pieces from environmental samples. The assemblage contained a typically early prehistoric group, including at least two artefacts of probable Mesolithic date, and a number of later prehistoric debitage, potentially dating to the Middle Bronze Age or later, that was associated with the unworked burnt material. The flints were recorded according to the OA South standard system of broad artefact/debitage type (Anderson-Whymark 2013).

The assemblage contained no cores, a few tools (4.2%), many flake and blade blanks (31.5%) and significant amounts of knapping waste (63.1%). The remainder of the assemblage consisted of specialist debitage including a microburin and a janus flake. The assemblage had a moderate blade index of 20% which is characteristic of earlier Neolithic knapping (Ford 1987), though the scatter was probably created from several events. There was also a small number of crude squat flakes, typically later prehistoric in character, but these were limited in number and found dispersed across the site. Flint tools included one microlith of probable Early Mesolithic form, as well as a rare form of central microburin that is often found in crescent microlith assemblages dating to the beginning of the Late Mesolithic. Two of the remaining three tools were blades including a microdenticulate very common in Early Neolithic assemblages, though these can also feature in Mesolithic assemblages.

The well-balanced character of the assemblage closely resembles an *in-situ* industrial assemblage. Its constitution probably results from the fact that a large percentage (81.5%) of the assemblage was recovered from environmental samples. The lack of cores may be due to recovery issues or that the remains from primary knapping did not become incorporated in later features. Cores are often found at a distance from knapping foci, simply because they were often thrown away.

The assemblage indicates that the site was probably utilised during early prehistory. While later prehistoric finds were limited, these included flints used as pot-boilers for cooking and other domestic activities. It is very likely that the whole assemblage had lain in prehistoric soils that survived until the Roman period before being truncated away.

Roman pottery by Kate Brady

Introduction

Some 987 sherds of Roman pottery, weighing approximately 17.95kg, were recovered from the excavation. The assemblage was recorded following guidelines set out by PCRG *et al.* (2016). Each context group was sorted into ware types, which were assigned codes following OA guidelines (Booth 2016). Forms

were identified by rim and assigned OA form codes expressed as a two-letter code, such as CK for 'cooking pot'-type jar. Each vessel was quantified by sherd count, weight, minimum number of vessels (MV), and estimated vessel equivalents (EVE). EVE percentages are converted to fractions, i.e. 100% = 1 EVE and 50% = 0.5 EVE. Ware codes pertaining to regional fabrics were cross-referenced with the National Roman Fabric Reference Collection (Tomber & Dore 1998).

Assemblage composition and chronology

Pottery from context groups spot-dated to the 1st century AD and assigned to phase 1 (including phases 1a and 1b) accounted for 68% of the assemblage by weight and 81.5% by EVE (Table 1). This phased group was dominated by E wares (E20, E30, E60 and E80), which made up 91% by weight although reduced wares and oxidised wares were represented (7.3% by weight). Flint-tempered wares dominated the assemblage and were available as large coarse-tempered storage jars (CN) and bead-rimmed jars (CH), accompanied by a single globular jar (CG) in an early upright beaded-rim form. Known locally as Silchester ware, these flint-tempered fabrics dominate assemblages around Calleva Atrebatum from the Middle Iron Age to the early Flavian period (Timby 2018). Several of the fabrics closely match those found at Silchester, though whether this was the source of the material is uncertain.

The small number of phase 1a groups consisted entirely of E ware bead rim jars and storage jars, and the absence of Romanised oxidised and reduced wares may point to a pre-conquest date for these features, but this is by no means conclusive. Phase 1b groups contained several forms closely paralleled in the early Alice Holt/Farnham industry output at site AH5, where production is thought to have started around AD 60 (Lyne & Jefferies 1979). E wares still dominate, and this may suggest that phase 1b sits early in the period of this output. This is supported by the absence of flat-rim jars and lids which Lyne and Jefferies (Ibid.) suggest appeared around AD 90. Several of the phase 1b vessel forms, mostly everted or bead-rim jars, are paralleled in the earliest products of

Table 1 Late Iron Age to Early Roman pottery fabrics

Fabric		*No. sherds*	*Weight (g)*	*MV*	*EVE*
B Black-burnished wares					
B11	Dorset Black Burnished ware (DOR BB 1)	4	14	0	0
E Iron Age/early Roman wares					
E20	Fine sand-tempered fabrics	1	26	0	0
E30	Medium to coarse sand-tempered fabrics	21	273	1	0.1
E60	Flint-tempered fabrics	529	9783	33	2.9
E80	Grog-tempered fabrics (SOB GT)	185	1723	11	1.03
F Fine wares					
F57	New Forest oxidised colour-coated ware	1	52	0	0
O Oxidised wares					
O20	Sandy oxidised ware	121	3479	3	0.3
R Reduced wares					
R10	Fine reduced ware	4	14	0	0
R20	Coarse sandy reduced wares	41	543	3	0.31
R30	Medium to fine sandy reduced wares	23	317	2	0.06
R50	Dark surfaced sandy reduced wares	50	1286	9	1.39
R90	Coarse grog-tempered reduced ware	7	437	0	0

the Alice Holt/Farnham kilns. One jar in fabric R50 had a cordon at the base of the neck and a carinated shoulder, and several jars had thick, rolled bead rims with high rounded shoulders (Ibid., fig. 15).

Phase 2 pottery accounted for 31.9% of the assemblage by weight and 18.5% by EVE. E wares (E30, E60 and E80) continued in use along with an increase in reduced and oxidised 'Romanised' fabrics, though this phase was marked by two bead-rimmed jars and a lid in fabric R50 (context 1787), the latter appearing in the region alongside flat-rimmed jars around AD 90 (Lyne & Jeffries 1979), plus four sherds of Dorset Black Burnished Ware dating after *c.* AD 120.

The latest material was a footring base of a vessel of unknown form in New Forest oxidised red/brown colour-coated ware (F57). This dates to AD 260–370 and was recovered from the fill of tree-throw hole 1720.

Preservation, distribution and use

The mean sherd weight of 18.1g suggests a well-preserved assemblage, though this is possibly inflated by the large flint-tempered storage jar sherds as reflected in the mean EVE of 0.16 (10% completeness). The surfaces of the sherds were not significantly abraded. Pottery was recovered mainly from pits (79.1% by weight), with smaller amounts coming from ditches (19.3%), tree-throw holes (0.79%) and postholes (0.17%).

Evidence of use was restricted to six vessels. One flint-tempered jar from context 1571 showed external sooting and one had a line of sooting on the interior at shoulder level. Several large storage jars in flint-tempered fabric (including body sherds from context 1620 and 1766) had scorched patchy surfaces (see also Timby 2018), and this may suggest a specialist function aside from storage for these large vessels (Biddulph 2015).

Conclusion

The small sample and the restricted range of fabrics and forms makes it difficult to assess the social status of the inhabitants. However, the complete lack of imported fine wares and amphorae at a site this close to Silchester, where access to traded pottery and imported goods would have been high both pre- and post-conquest, is revealing. The pottery is indicative of a low-status rural settlement that had yet to be influenced by 'Roman' food preparation and dining practices.

Catalogue of illustrated pottery (Fig. 9)

1. Globular jar with thickened everted rim and line of sooting on interior. Coarse flint-tempered ware. Context 1571, fill of pit 1567. Phase 1b.
2. Bowl with thickened everted rim. Coarse flint-tempered ware. Context 1571, fill of pit 1567. Phase 1b.
3. Jar with slightly hooked rim. Coarse flint-tempered ware. Context 1571, fill of pit 1567. Phase 1b.
4. Bead-rim jar. Medium quartz-sand-tempered oxidised fabric with some mica and red clay pellets. Context 1571, fill of pit 1567. Phase 1b.
5. Bead-rim jar. Coarse rounded quartz-sand-tempered brownish reduced fabric. Context 1571, fill of pit 1567. Phase 1b.
6. Large storage jar with everted rim. Coarse flint-tempered fabric. Context 1693, fill of pit 1714. Phase 1b.
7. Carinated jar with cordon at base of neck and bead rim. Medium sandy reduced ware. Context 1711, fill of pit 1664. Phase 1b.
8. Large storage jar with narrow mouth and upright everted rim. Coarse quartz-sand-tempered fabric. Context 1776, fill of pit 1775. Phase 2.
9. Bead-rim jar with burnished surface and burnished zig-zag decoration. Medium sandy reduced ware. Context 1788, fill of pit 1784. Phase 2.

Fired clay by Cynthia Poole

The fired clay assemblage (97 fragments, 3512g) may be interpreted as the remains of oven structures and associated portable furniture. Fragments of lightly heated chalky cob from ditch 1564 and pit 1610 may have been used for a low-temperature activity, perhaps forming a drying floor in a crop-processing oven. The thickness of the fragments and size of the wattles are not consistent with known building daub (e.g. Poole 2008, 167–70). Part of a triangular perforated brick, though traditionally regarded as a loomweight,

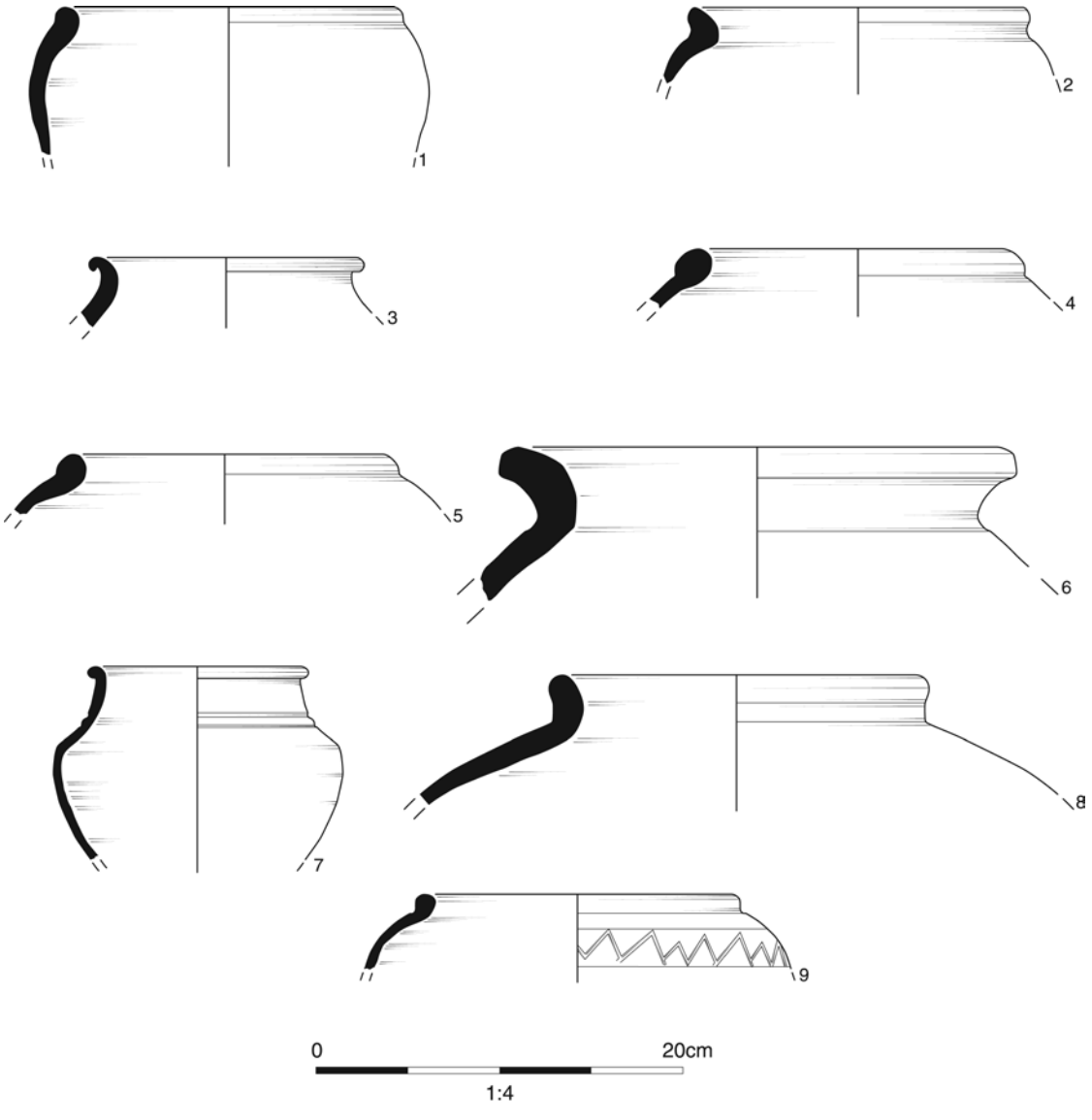

Fig. 9 Roman pottery

was probably used as oven or hearth furniture (Poole 2015). The variable firing pattern on this example is a common feature of these objects and may indicate they were often used as oven or flue lining or as supports in ovens or hearths, with only one face exposed to the heat source.

Metalwork by Ian R. Scott

Four iron artefacts were recovered including a 1st century AD Durotrigian brooch and a simple bow brooch fragment, both from phase 1b ditch 1564. The Durotrigian brooch had a broad plain bow flat section, narrowing from

the head to the catch-plate in a continuous curve. The head was formed by rolling the bow under to hold the axle for the pin. These brooch types are usually found in Late Iron Age and later first-century contexts, and Mackreth (2011, 150) records their distribution being concentrated in Dorset, Wiltshire, Somerset and Gloucestershire, though one is known from Silchester. The bow brooch consisted of a pin with part of the spring. This brooch form dates to the 1st century AD and is found in both Late Iron Age and post-conquest contexts. Two other finds consisted of a short length of thin rod/thick wire from phase 1 pit 1760 and an L-shaped strip from a possible bracket from phase 2 pit 1784. The latter measured 120 mm long and was pierced by four nail holes.

Slag by Leigh Allen

A total of nine slag fragments weighing 109g were recovered from four contexts. Four fragments from ditch 20000 (fill 1519) re-fitted to make a single lump. This was identified by David Dungworth as fayalitic (black) material and is probably associated with ironworking. The lump is small and lacks a distinctive surface morphology, and it is not possible to identify the precise metal-working process. The remaining material consisted of fuel-ash slag or undiagnostic slag.

Stone objects by Ruth Shaffrey

Pit 1775 produced two stone objects, one a small, unworked quartzite pebble, and the other a larger cobble with a flat, smoothed face suggesting that it was used as a rubber.

Iron sulphide nodule by Robert Knight

An iron nodule, comprised of either pyrite or marcasite (both iron sulphide, FeS_2), was recovered from phase 2 pit 1775 (Fig. 10). Pyrite is commonly known as 'fool's gold', though this piece has lost its original colour and shine. The outer surfaces are now oxidised and rusty, and both pyrite and marcasite are particularly vulnerable to oxidation. Individual crystal faces remain on the surface of the specimen, including characteristic pyrite cube faces in some places. It is not known where this nodule originally formed, though it is possible that it was recovered from local rocks and marcasite is particularly common in chalk formations.

The archaeological significance of the object is difficult to substantiate. The specimen may have been sought for its mineral content, though given the potential for pyrite to oxidise with air and moisture it would not be suitable for jewellery. Also, because the piece showed no sign of manipulation, it perhaps seems more likely that it was taken and kept as a decorative object in its own right (a manuport).

THE BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Human skeletal remains by Helen Webb

The remains of an articulated juvenile skeleton (1766) and part of an adult skull were recovered from phase 1b feature 20002. The human bone was subject to full osteological analysis in accordance with the recommendations set out by CIfA and BABAO (Brickley & McKinley 2004; Mitchell & Brickley 2017).

Skeleton 1766

Skeleton 1766 was recovered from fill 1568. It comprised both upper and lower limbs, left and right rib fragments and parts of the lower spine. The skeleton was in poor condition. None of the skull had survived. The post-cranial bones were highly fragmented and had suffered a moderate level of taphonomic erosion in keeping with McKinley's (2004, 16) grade 3. Measurement of a complete right humerus indicated that the child had died within or around a few weeks of birth.

A probable pathological deformity was observed in the right tibia. Although the surfaces of the bone were very eroded it was clear that the distal end (metaphysis) of the bone was notably angled (medially). Diagnoses for this deformity include infantile rickets (vitamin D deficiency), in which medial tilting of the distal tibial growth plate is one of the recognised changes (Brickley & Ives 2008, 97–8). Skeleton 1766 would not have been bearing weight on any limbs when they died, which is

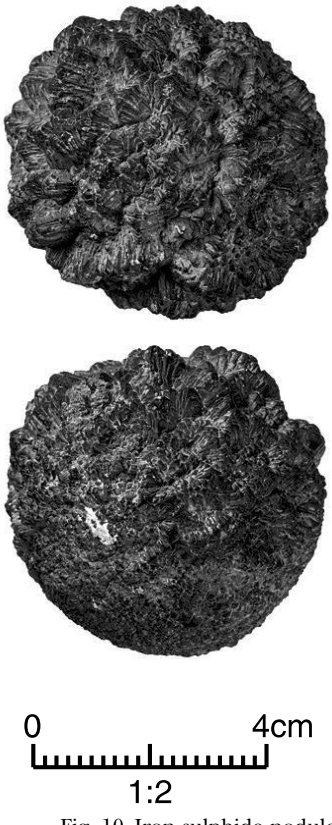

Fig. 10 Iron sulphide nodule

a key factor in the development of long-bone bending deformities (Ibid., 92). Alternatively, the deformity may be a developmental or congenital abnormality.

Adult skull

The human bone from fill 1571 comprised five adjoining fragments of a frontal bone about 80% complete. The bone was assigned to McKinley's (2004, 16) condition grade 3. While there was general surface erosion with some rootlet action, there were also multiple scratches and scrapes on the bone surface, consistent with taphonomic abrasion. None of the broken margins were indicative of perimortem trauma. The size and morphology of the bone was in keeping with an adult (>18 years). The glabella region was fairly gracile, which suggests it may have belonged to a female (Brickley 2004).

Animal bones by Martyn Allen

Introduction

A total of 704 animal bone specimens were recovered by hand. Given the short chronology and the small sample size of the assemblage, the assemblage is considered here as a single group. The assemblage was generally poorly preserved owing to the slightly acidic soil of the site, which biased against the recovery of bones from smaller animals. Evidence of small-scale horn-working was identified and a butchered dog bone was of interest. Full details of the methodology used during the analysis (along with additional data) is presented in the full excavation report.

Taxa representation

Cattle remains constituted 54.5% of the hand-collected assemblage, followed in number by sheep/goat remains (33.8%), while pig, horse and dog were represented by 12, 11 and five bones respectively (Table 2). No clear evidence of goats was found. Red deer was represented by two teeth from ditch 1564. Bird bones were represented by four specimens, consisting of a possible femur shaft from ditch 1564 plus two ribs and a possible sternum fragment from pit 1775. All the bird bones came from unidentified wild species.

Fish, rodent and amphibian bones were identified from environmental samples. Two eel bones—a vertebra and a cleithrum fragment—were recovered from ditch 1564 (sample 1501) and identified by Rebecca Nicholson. Several rodent bones (24) from at least two individuals, tentatively identified as mouse remains, and some frog/toad bones (22) were recovered from the basal fill (1788) of phase 2 pit 1784 (sample 1511). This feature produced over 100 bones from small animals, all from either rodents or amphibians. Three pieces of oyster shell were also recovered from the site (see full excavation report).

Cattle

Cattle bones were dominated by skull and mandible fragments. Post-depositional breakage is indicated by the high number of loose teeth (34.8%). However, skull and mandible specimens were notably better represented than

post-cranial bones when minimum numbers of elements were considered. At least seven cattle skulls and 13 mandibles were recovered, representing a minimum of nine animals. Although generally fragmented, the remains of probably complete skulls were noted in several contexts, notably in ditches 1564 and 1659 (ditch 20004).

Thirteen cattle specimens had butchery marks. Five were horncores, three of which had heavy cuts around the base and two had been chopped through the base to remove the whole horn from the skull. A largely complete skull from ditch 1659 had a hole approximately 20–30 mm across in the centre of the frontal bone. Examination of the breakage indicates that it occurred in antiquity and it appears to have been caused by poleaxing. Cut marks were noted on a mandible and a maxilla, while a second mandible had chop marks on the lateral ramus. One scapula had possible hook-damage in the centre of the blade, and a second had been chopped through on side of neck above the glenoid.

All the cattle bones were skeletally mature and there was no evidence of neonates or juveniles/infants in the assemblage. The presence of early fusing elements, such as the scapula, proximal radius and distal humerus indicate that all the remains come from animals over 7–18 months old, while late fusing elements, such as the distal femur and distal radius, suggest that most were probably older than 3.5 years (cf. Getty 1975). Four of the nine ageable dental specimens derived from cattle older than eight years. Another two specimens were from animals over three years old, one was probably in its second year, and another was slaughtered below 18 months old.

A cattle skull from ditch 1659 (20004) had several perforations on the caudal surface of the occipital bone. Such lesions have been recorded from a wide range of sites in multiple periods. However, there is little consensus as to the cause of the perforations and interpretations have ranged from the use of head-yokes, the presence of parasites, infections and even tumours, to being more simply a congenital condition (Baxter 2002; Brothwell *et al.* 1996; Manaseryan *et al.* 1999).

Table 2 Number and percentage of hand-collected animal bone fragments

Taxon	*No. fragments*	*%NISP*
Cattle	158	54.5
Sheep/Goat	98	33.8
Pig	12	4.1
Horse	11	3.8
Dog	5	1.7
Red Deer	2	0.7
Bird	4	1.4
Large mammal	149	–
Medium mammal	82	–
Small mammal	4	–
Unidentified	179	–
Total	704	–

Sheep/goats

Sheep/goat remains were dominated by mandible and tibia elements, which are often well represented in archaeological assemblages owing to differential survival. Other well-represented elements include the distal humerus, the proximal radius and the metapodials. Only two sheep/goat specimens exhibited butchery marks (a cut tibia and a chopped astragalus).

Sheep/goats tended to be slaughtered at young ages. The presence of unfused distal tibiae indicates that some were killed in their first year, while one was undergoing fusion suggesting that it was culled around ten months. Several elements suggest culling prior to three years, and there is a complete lack of late fusing elements that had undergone epiphyseal closure. Two bones, a metacarpal and a femur, belonged to a foetus. Only seven dental specimens provided ageing data, but over half of these were animals aged between ten and 24 months. The presence of one animal older than nine years shows that some of the flock were retained to older ages.

Pigs

A total of 12 pig fragments was identified, mostly skull, mandible and tooth specimens. Fragments of two skulls were recovered from pit 1784 and ditch 1564. A loose lower canine from ditch 1564 was from a male. One ulna,

also from ditch 1564, was unfused at the proximal end, which suggests the animal was slaughtered before four years (cf. Getty 1975). Tooth eruption and wear data show that two pigs were culled between one and six months, and two between six and 12 months.

Horses
A total of 11 horse bones included post-cranial body parts and loose teeth. All the post-cranial elements with surviving epiphyses had undergone closure and there was no evidence of juveniles. One distal tibia from ditch 1564 had possibly been deliberately fractured through the shaft and there were signs that it had been burnt close to the break.

Dogs
Five dog bones were recovered from four contexts, all from adult animals. A proximal humerus from pit 1567 included a cut mark on the shaft just below the humeral head. The mark is suggestive of cutting through the tendon near the shoulder.

Discussion
Although small and poorly preserved, the assemblage indicates that cattle and sheep were the mainstay of the livestock economy. A focus on the culling of older cattle suggests a reliance on plough animals, and possibly dairying. A lack of evidence for intensive culling of young cattle suggests the presence of a small local herd. The poleaxed cattle skull is interesting given that animal slaughter methods are rarely identified, and a comparable Roman find was discovered at Wattle Syke, West Yorkshire (Richardson 2013, plate 55; Allen 2017, 119–20, fig. 3.44). Horn-working appears to have been undertaken at the site, though perhaps only at a domestic level.

Very few sheep bones were measurable, though several were notably very small and slender and it is possible that the sheep at Basing View were of a short and unimproved type often associated with Iron Age sites (cf. Hambleton 2008, 48–9; Allen 2017, 105–7). The presence of foetal and elderly animals indicates that sheep were being bred and raised at the settlement. Pigs were often culled within their first year, though it is uncertain whether they were bred at the site or brought in from elsewhere.

The possible butchered horse bones are not evidence of horse-meat consumption, as the bone may have been burnt and broken for other reasons. However, the cut dog humerus is less easy to explain as it appears to reflect dismemberment rather than skinning. It is possible that the dog was eaten or that the butchery reflects an elaborate burial rite. The recovery of a few deer, bird and eel bones indicates that hunting and fishing was rare, but perhaps undertaken to supplement the diet on special occasions.

ENVIRONMENTAL REMAINS

Charred plant remains by Sharon Cook

Introduction
Eleven bulk samples were taken during the excavation and processed in their entirety by floatation to 250µm (flot) and 500µm mesh (residue). The condition of the charred material was generally poor with most grains being clinkered, fragmented and in some cases vitrified. All flots included charcoal, though in some cases only in small quantities and a few were minerally encrusted.

Results
Three samples, phase 1b pits 1610 and 1770 and phase 2 pit 1784, produced significant remains (Table 3). Pit 1610 (sample 1502) contained small quantities of grain together with a variety of probably uncultivated seeds, typically arable weeds, though examples of opium poppy and basil thyme are of interest. Pit 1770 (sample 1508) produced large quantities of emmer/spelt glume base fragments and a moderate quantity of charred grain in poor condition. Large numbers of uncultivated plant seeds were mainly from crop contaminants, though it should be noted that not all the chenopod seeds were certainly charred. Pit 1784 (sample 1511) produced a large flot mostly composed of fine modern roots. However, this sample produced more identifiable grain than the other samples and included both glume wheat and barley as well as awns that may be from wild

or cultivated oats. A possible pea hints at the cultivation and consumption of this legume.

Discussion

The charred-plant assemblage was small and poorly preserved. The vitrification of some grain and the 'exploded' appearance of many dock seeds was largely a result of burning as opposed to preservation conditions. Spelt wheat and barley were the main arable crops at the site, and these were staples in this region during the Late Iron Age and Roman periods (Lodwick 2017a, 16–21). The presence of glume base fragments indicates that at least some of the indeterminate grain must also be wheat. Uncultivated plant seeds were common and biased towards those commonly associated with arable crops. The presence of glume wheat chaff together with wild-plant seeds indicates that crop processing took place at or near the site. Charred remains were concentrated in the south-western part of the trench, though the low frequency of material suggests domestic production.

The existence of probable pea fragments in sample 1511 indicate that these were consumed on site and it is possible that legumes may have been cultivated locally. The small quantity of hazelnut shell in samples 1505 and 1506 also indicate some limited collection and consumption. The presence of opium poppy and basil thyme may have been deliberately cultivated for medicinal and culinary uses, though the former may have been growing wild amongst arable crops. Opium poppy has been observed in assemblages from early excavations at Silchester and more recent work at Insula IX (Lodwick 2017b).

SITE DISCUSSION

The excavation at Basing View revealed a well-defined enclosed settlement. The site was almost certainly located within the political territory of the Atrebates, which had its administrative centre at Silchester (*Calleva Atrebatum*) and today falls within the Solent-Thames research area (Fulford 2014a, 155). The number of contemporary sites in the Basingstoke area suggests that the Basing View settlement was established within a relatively densely occupied landscape. The site can add some understanding of local settlement archaeology during the 1st and 2nd centuries AD and has the potential to contribute to several Roman-period research agenda for the wider region (Fulford 2014b). The following discussion seeks to draw out the significance of some of the findings from the excavation and place them within their local context.

Chronology

Dating evidence for the establishment of the settlement is imprecise. It rests largely on the presence of Silchester-type pottery, which is common throughout the period of occupation, and the relative lack of distinctive 'Romanised' wares. This pottery is common at 1st-century AD sites in north Hampshire and south Berkshire, and it dominated the large Late Iron Age ceramic assemblage (c. 10 BC–AD 45/50) from Silchester where it accounted for almost 40% of the sherd count and nearly 60% by weight (Timby 2018, 152, table 8). While there was probably a nearby production source for the Silchester ware from the oppidum and early town (Ibid., 166), it is uncertain whether the pottery found at nearby rural sites derived from the same kilns or were locally produced in very similar fabrics. Although the source of the Basing View pottery is unknown, its dominance in phase 1a contexts suggests that the earliest activity preceded AD 43. While Silchester-type fabrics can potentially date any time from the Early Iron Age (Ibid., 167), a date in the first half of the 1st century AD seems most likely for this site. At Silchester, flint-tempered wares superseded grog-tempered as the dominant fabric around the middle of the 1st century AD and thereafter declined as more Romanised sandy wares became more popular.

Around the time of the conquest, probably sometime within the first two decades thereafter, the settlement was defined by a straight-sided enclosure. Enclosure ditches clearly cut earlier features, and their fills tended to contain small quantities of 'Romanised' oxidised and reduced sandy wares. This period saw the appearance of Alice Holt/Farnham type wares, though these were largely restricted to early forms with very

Table 3 Summary of the charred plant remains (continued over the page)

Sample no.		1500	1501	1502	1503	1504	1505	1506	1507	1508	1510	1511
Context no.		1571	1592	1611	1607	1692	1721	1728	1755	1772	1776	1788
Feature		pit 1567	ditch 1564	pit 1610	pit 1606	pit 1714	tree throw 1720	ditch 1727	pit 1754	pit 1770	pit 1775	pit 1784
Group		20002	/	20006	20003	20005	/	20000	20002	/	/	/
Date		AD 43–70	AD 1–100	AD 43–100	AD 43–70	U/D	AD 260–370	AD 1–100	AD 43–410	AD 43–100	AD 120–150	AD 43–100
Phase		1b	1b	1b	1b	1b	2	1b	1b	1b	2	2
Processed vol. (L)		38	35	35	20	35	40	35	40	40	35	40
Flot vol. (ml)		16	50	75	400	14	75	22	50	—	20	450
% analysed		100%	100%	100%	25%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Charcoal	>4mm	++	+++	++	+++		+++			++	+	+++
	2–4mm	+++	+++	+++	++++	++	+++	+++	++	+++	+	+++
Cereal grain												
cf Triticum sp.	cf. wheat											1
Hordeum sp.	barley			1								10
cf Hordeum sp.	cf. barley	1	1					1				5
Avena/Bromus	oat/brome		2							4	1	6
Cerealia	indet cereal		5	6		1	2			53	3	24
Chaff												
Triticum dicoccum/spelta	emmer/spelt glume base fragment		5	1				1	1	296	3	40
Triticum/Hordeum	rachis fragments									1		
Avena sp.	oat awns			**						**		***
Cerealia	indet detached embryos									1		
Fruit, nutshell etc												
Corylus avellana	hazelnut shell						4	1				
cf Pisum	pea?											8
Wild species												
Papaver somniferum	opium poppy			6								
cf. Fabaceae	pea family (small)			6						8		
Vicia/Lathyrus sp. 4–2 mm	vetch/vetchling /tare			1						2		9

Table 3 Summary of the charred plant remains (continued from the previous page)

Sample no.		1500	1501	1502	1503	1504	1505	1506	1507	1508	1510	1511
Context no.		1571	1592	1611	1607	1692	1721	1728	1755	1772	1776	1788
Vicia/Lathyrus sp. <2 mm	vetch/vetchling /tare			7						61	1	18
Polygonaceae	knotweed family			3								
Rumex sp.	docks		1							56	1	1
Caryophyllaceae	pink family									1		
Chenopodium album	goosefoot			4						146		
Montia fontana	blinks									1		
Sherardia arvensis	field madder		1							1		2
Galium aparine	cleavers (small and large types)									76	2	4
Lithospermum arvense	field gromwell											1
Clinopodium acinos	basil thyme			3								
Asteraceae	daisy family									3	2	
Leucanthemum sp.	oxeye daisies			3						14		3
Tripleurospermum sp.	mayweed			1						1		1
Valerianella dentata	narrow fruited cornsalad			1						8		1
Juncus sp.	rushes									5	1	
Cyperaceae	sedge family									1		
Carex sp.	sedges									3		
Poaceae	grass seeds (various)			12						34	13	22
Other												
Indet.	seed/fruit			11						17	2	4

*1–5, **5–25, ***25–100, ****100+

little dating after *c.* AD 70. A small collection of pottery dating between AD 90 and 150, including a Farnham-type lid that almost certainly post-dates AD 90 and Black Burnished Ware sherds (*c.* AD 120–150), indicates continued activity at the site potentially as late as the middle of the 2nd century AD. The apparent gap in ceramic dating between AD 70 and AD 90 is more likely to be a product of pottery supply rather than an absence of activity.

Compared with other sites in the area, the relatively short period of occupation at Basing View is fairly unusual. Several settlements were occupied from the Middle Iron Age, including Oakridge II/IV (Oliver 1993), Rucstalls Hill (Oliver & Applin 1979), Viables Farm (Millett & Russell 1984) and Brighton Hill South (Fasham & Keevil 1995), all of which were inhabited when the hillfort at Winklebury was in use (Smith 1977). The settlement at Oakridge II/IV was extensively enlarged in the 1st century AD, while a new enclosure was established within a larger Iron Age enclosure at Rucstalls Hill. Sites at Danebury Road, Hatch Warren and Brighton Hill South were abandoned by the end of the 1st century AD, slightly earlier than at Basing View. The settlement at Merton Rise, Popley, perhaps best matches that at Basing View, being established just before the conquest and lasting until the mid-2nd century AD (Wright *et al.* 2009). Several other settlements were also established in the 1st century AD but appear to have survived well into the Late Roman period (e.g. Marnel Park, Popley (Ibid.), Daneshill (Millett & Schadla-Hall 1991), Cowdery's Down (Millett & James 1983), Oakridge VII (Oliver 1993)). Together, the broad dating evidence from different sites in the area does not indicate any widespread reorganisation of the landscape, but instead a varied pattern of establishment, expansion and decline of settlements over time.

Site status and economy

Most Early Roman rural settlements south of Silchester were small, rectilinear enclosures. Basing View compares well with two similarly sized enclosures at Merton Rise, Popley (Wright *et al.* 2009, 19–25). Both enclosures contained numerous four-post structures, probably representing small granaries. The Basing View enclosure also contained numerous postholes, and at least one four-post structure was identified. Crop processing appears to have occurred near the south-western corner of the site, as evidenced by waste from wheat glume-bases and wild-plant seeds. Cattle tended to survive to fairly old ages suggesting that plough animals may have been important, perhaps alongside milk production. The remains of older cattle were also identified in contemporary assemblages at Merton Rise and Marnel Park, Popley, where a similar interpretation of traction and dairying was also forwarded (Ibid., 36). Horn-working was undertaken at Basing View, albeit on a small scale probably for local use. This contrasts with Late Iron Age/Early Roman evidence from Brighton Hill South (sites B/C and K), where a large number of cattle horncores (at least 125 with saw marks) were recovered from pits and ditches and interpreted as horn-working on an 'industrial' scale (Maltby 1995).

There is little evidence for imported pottery and a general lack of material wealth at Basing View. The high proportion of Silchester-type pottery is very similar to that found at Merton Rise (Seager Smith 2009, 30), and while this is a product of the chronology of these sites, the dominance of fairly crude hand-made wares is also a reflection of the inhabitants' status. It seems unlikely that these settlements were tied to a more centralised economy centred on the oppidum/early civitas capital, such as at Oakridge II/IV (Oliver 1993) and Marnel Park (Seager Smith 2009) where Samian and amphorae was found in Early Roman deposits. Overall, the excavated remains at Basing View suggest the presence of a fairly low-status settlement based on small-scale, mixed farming.

Buildings and burials

Although numerous postholes were found at Basing View, particularly in the central part of the enclosure, none could be resolved into a structure (other than a single four-post structure). In terms of buildings, perhaps the most conspicuous feature was feature 20002. Located in the north-eastern corner of the enclosure, feature 20002 was sub-rectangular in plan, measuring about 5.5m by 7m across.

Several earlier pits along the eastern side of the feature complicates its interpretation. In the south-eastern corner, the excavators initially recorded a single cut (1567) for the whole feature, but re-examination suggests that the upper fill of a pre-existing pit (1574) may have been cut when the base of feature was dug (Fig. 6, section 1527). It is also notable that while local Silchester-type ware sherds were recovered from all the fills in this area, only the upper two fills (1571 and 1568) contained post-conquest wares. Several postholes were recorded within the edges of feature 20002 on the western and eastern sides (e.g. 1567 and 1569), and these may have supported posts for a superstructure and/or perhaps a raised floor. To the north-east, the positions of pits 1754 and 1752 and postholes 1576 and 1758 suggest that they were also associated with feature 20002 (the latter three being external to the enclosure). Their precise function is uncertain, though it is possible that they supported a structure that allowed access into the enclosure and perhaps directly to feature 20002.

Sunken-featured buildings, so often associated with the early medieval period, are becoming increasingly known from Romano-British sites. Three features excavated at the nearby Danebury Road, Hatch Warren site were suggested to be possible sunken-featured buildings, based on their resemblance to Saxon *Grubenhäuser* (Howell & Durden 2005, 43, 45, 50). Two of these features were located within a square enclosure and were dated to the Middle–Late Iron Age. These were rectangular in plan but were slightly smaller than the Basing View example, measuring approximately 4m × 4.65–4.80m across and 0.28–0.35m deep. The third feature was located outside the enclosure and was dated to the 1st century AD. It was also larger than its later Iron Age counterparts, measuring 8m × 10m across and 0.5m deep. A general lack of postholes in all these features makes their interpretation as buildings uncertain, and it is possible that they were working hollows. The Basing View building may be comparable to sunken-featured buildings excavated along the East Kent Access Road (EKA) on the Isle of Thanet (Andrews *et al.* 2015, 333–9). These first appeared in the Early Roman period, when they replaced post-built roundhouses as the dominant building type and continued to be used into the Late Roman period. The Basing View building falls comfortably within the size range of the EKA buildings and had a more regular plan than most of these examples, many of which contained postholes (Ibid., 336–7, table 4.2).

The remains of a neonate were recovered from the upper fill (1571) of feature 20002, while part of a human skull was deposited in the lower fill (1568). No clear sign of a burial cut could be seen in feature 20002 and it seems that the neonate had been placed in the backfill along with pottery vessels and butchery waste. Baby burials were also discovered in three of the sunken-featured buildings excavated along the East Kent Access Road. As at Basing View, these were generally found to have been placed in the bases of the features and covered over (Ibid., 318, fig. 4.111). The placement of infant burials in and around buildings during the Late Iron Age and Roman periods is far from unusual; examples of babies found sealed within successive floor layers and others overlain by domestic debris have been identified at several sites (Millett & Gowland 2015, 184–5). It may be tempting to see the Basing View infant as being conveniently disposed of with domestic waste. However, it is now increasingly argued that infants were rarely buried in such a haphazard or random manner but were often specifically located in places of meaningful interest (Moore 2009, 48). One possibility forwarded by Millett and Gowland (2015, 185–7) is that the burial of babies in the home, or elsewhere within the settlement, represents a concern for maintaining a 'physical and symbolic connection' between the family and the infant, particularly the mother. Citing anthropological evidence (Ibid.), they suggest that pre-term and neonatal deaths not only cause significant emotional distress to the parents, but that mothers often perceive themselves as being indistinct from their offspring, so that the death of a new-born is seen as a loss of part of oneself.

CONCLUSIONS

The Late Iron Age/Early Roman settlement at Basing View contributes to our understanding in several areas of the rural settlement archaeology south of Silchester. The northern edge of the Hampshire Downs was fairly densely populated by rural settlements from the Middle Iron Age up to, at least, the end of the Roman period. The enclosed settlement at Basing View was established and survived for a relatively short period during the 1st and early 2nd century AD, a period when Silchester developed from a major Late Iron Age political centre into the region's civitas capital. However, it is difficult to know the degree to which Basing View's inhabitants were tied to the economy of Silchester and how far the oppidum/civitas capital influenced patterns of land tenure. The evidence suggests that Basing View largely operated on a subsistence basis, focussing on small-scale mixed farming practices. Although the site appears to have been fairly low status, there is little sign of social differentiation amongst local settlements and patterns of establishment/abandonment and economic fortunes may have been tied to local circumstances as much as they were influenced by Silchester.

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