

PREHISTORIC, ROMAN AND POST-ROMAN DISCOVERIES IN SOUTH SOMERSET: THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ILCHESTER TO BARRINGTON GAS PIPELINE 2005–6

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SUMMARY

Archaeological investigations ahead of the construction of a natural gas pipeline between Ilchester and Barrington in Somerset in 2006 examined a range of previously undiscovered prehistoric and Roman sites. Of particular interest was a group at Netherfield Farm, South Petherton that included an Early Neolithic causewayed enclosure, a Middle Neolithic long enclosure and an earlier Bronze Age open enclosure. Assemblages of pottery, flint and charred remains from, in particular, the long enclosure enabled a detailed chronological model of this monument, and a wider discussion of this and the other features of the complex. The re-occupation of the site of the causewayed enclosure in the 5th or 6th century AD, through until the 7th/8th century, was established through radiocarbon dating of the artefact-poor features. Parts of Roman settlements were examined near Compton Durville, Coat, Barrington and Ilchester giving new insights into the density, dating and character of rural settlement in the area at this time.

INTRODUCTION

Between April 2005 and September 2006 Cotswold Archaeology (CA), at the request of Laing O'Rourke on behalf of National Grid (NG), carried out a programme of archaeological works including desk-based assessment, field reconnaissance survey, geophysical survey, auger survey, evaluation trenching and excavation along the route of a new gas pipeline extending between Ilchester (NGR ST 5095 2295) and Barrington (NGR ST 3785 1860), Somerset, part of the South-West Reinforcement Pipeline (Fig. 1). A total of nine excavations were carried out in advance of pipeline construction works and were conducted in compliance with a condition of consent for the scheme granted by the Department of Trade and Industry requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological works to the satisfaction of the Somerset County Council Archaeology Service.

The pipeline route commences at the Above-Ground Installation (AGI) compound to the west of Ilchester, and runs south-westwards terminating at Barrington AGI to the north-east of Puckington village. The total pipeline length is approximately 17km for the most part crossing

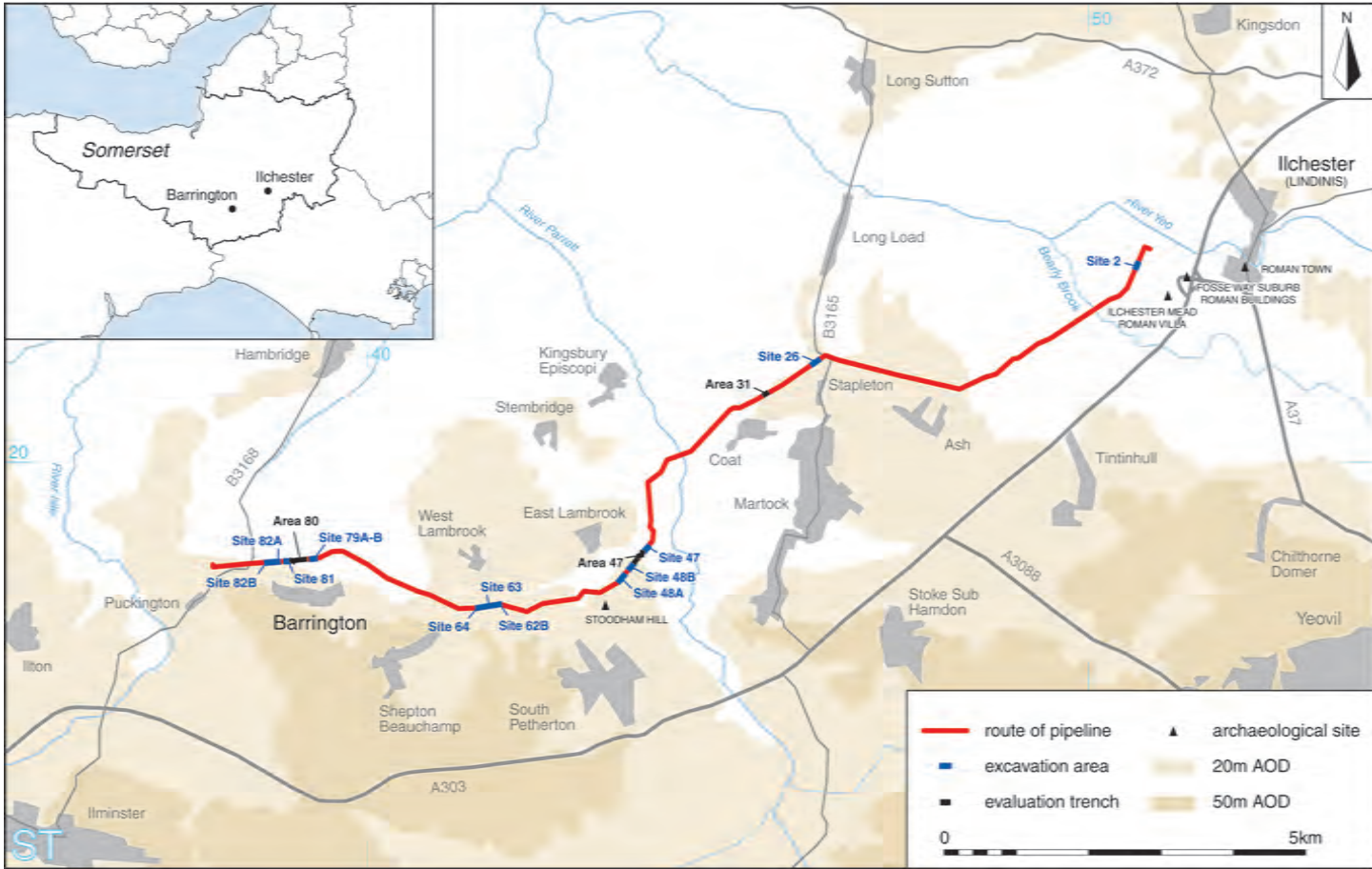


Fig. 1 Site locations. Scale 1:100,000

PREHISTORIC, ROMAN AND POST-ROMAN DISCOVERIES IN SOUTH SOMERSET

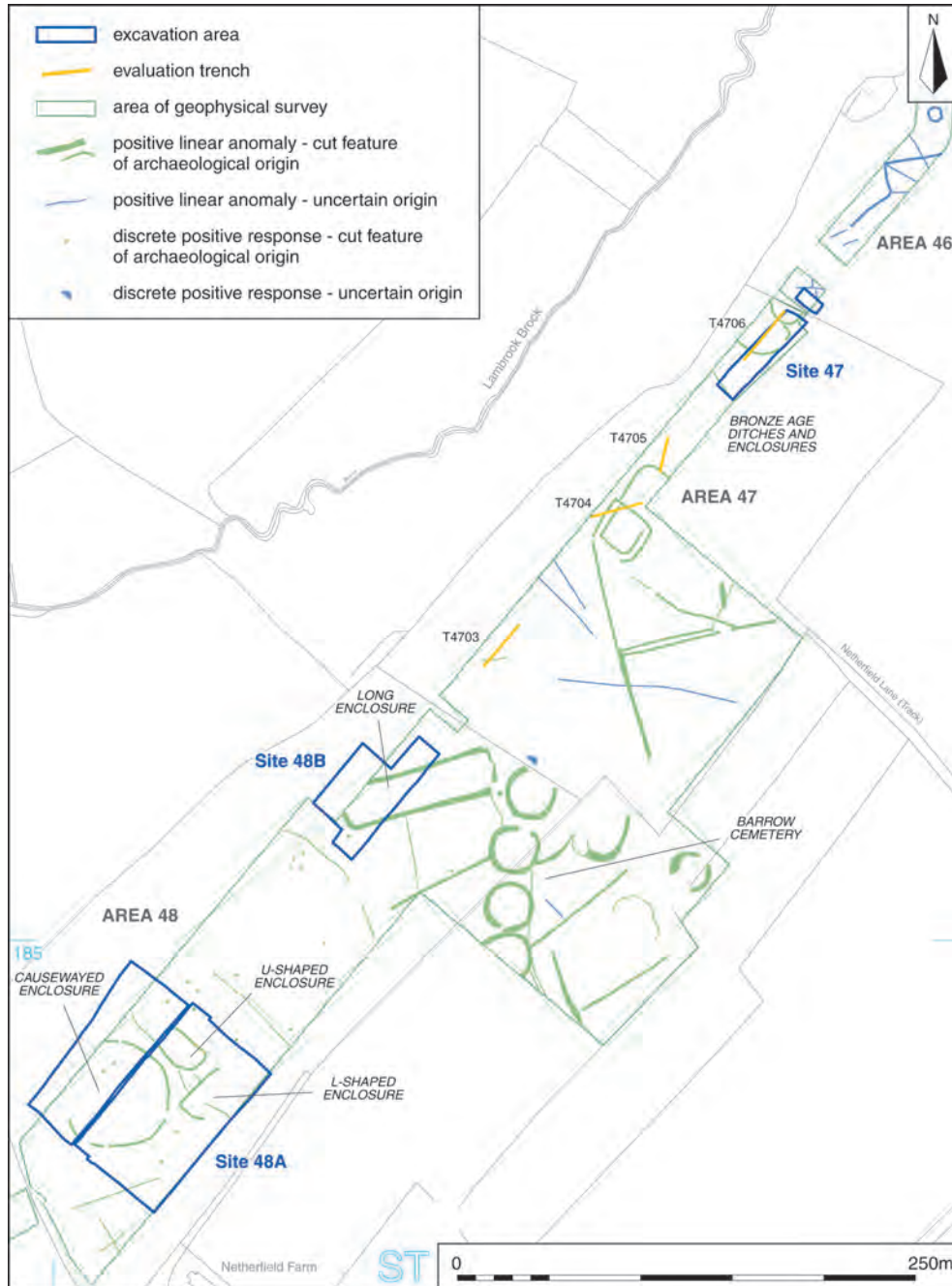


Fig. 2 Netherfield Farm, South Petherton, Areas 47 and 48, showing abstraction and interpretation of geophysical survey results. Scale 1:4000

farmland which, at the time of the fieldwork, was mostly under cultivation. The route as a whole crosses rolling ridges and valleys on the lower ground of the Jurassic scarplands of south Somerset, with the higher limestone and sandstone scarps to the east, and the flatlands of the Somerset Levels and Moors at short distance to the west. West of Ilchester the land lies at about 10m OD and nowhere rises to more than 35m OD. The underlying geology varies from alluvial deposits associated with the broad valleys of the rivers Yeo and Parrett, to Lower Lias clays and Middle Lias silts, marls and sands of the hills (BGS 1973).

The full detail of the background to the project and the archaeological surveys ahead of pipeline construction are contained elsewhere (CA 2009b). For the present report it is sufficient to note that the advance works included a magnetometer survey of the whole route within the pipe easement which was supplemented by an extended survey of sites at Netherfield Farm, South Petherton, where two prehistoric enclosures had been identified (Area 48; Archaeological Surveys 2005, 2007). Trial trenching from April 2006 comprised the excavation of 53 evaluation trenches in 12 separate fields (CA 2009a). Significant archaeological features were discovered in nine of these fields, which have been called Areas. These results informed discussions between NG's archaeological adviser, the Development Control Archaeologist for Somerset County Council, and CA on mitigation measures for dealing with the identified archaeological remains. Subsequently, when the scheme went into construction, set-piece excavations were undertaken in nine Areas, while sites of lesser archaeological significance came within a scheme-wide watching brief.

The results of the geophysics and the preliminary archaeological fieldwork indicated that the two enclosures within Area 48 were likely to be a causewayed enclosure and a long enclosure of Neolithic date and of regional, if not national, importance (Fig. 2). Therefore, it was agreed that the full extent of the circular enclosure and the western end of the rectilinear enclosure would be exposed and subject to archaeological excavation. The complex of features to the north, between Sites 47 and 48B, were subject to a watching brief.

THE EXCAVATIONS

Nine individual sites were excavated, Sites 2, 26, 47, 48A, 48B, 62B-64, 79A-B, 81 and 82A-B, all but Site 79A-B yielding dated remains, the latter site revealing only ditches of unknown date (Fig. 1). The results from six evaluation trenches, where significant archaeological deposits were dealt with without recourse to more extensive excavation, are also included in this report, together with the results of magnetometer surveys where they show the wider picture. The findings of most significance are summarised below. They included, at Netherfield Farm, South Petherton (NGR ST 435184 to 438187), an earlier prehistoric monument complex of Neolithic causewayed enclosure and long enclosure, Bronze Age U-shaped enclosure, and Bronze Age circular, curving and rectilinear ditches apparently related to a linear barrow cemetery and land division (Fig. 2). The site of the causewayed enclosure was re-occupied in the 5th/6th to 8th centuries AD. At Compton Durville, South Petherton (Site 62B-64; NGR ST 419180) Bronze Age ditches may relate to wider land division, and the site was extensively occupied again in the late Iron Age and into the early Roman period. Less extensive Roman enclosures were examined at Ilchester AGI (Site 2; NGR ST 507228), on land to the north of Coat, Martock (Site 26; NGR ST 462214), at Stapleton, Martock (Area 31: NGR ST 455209) and north of Barrington (Site 82A-B; NGR ST 386186).

Because of their national significance, the results from the excavations of the Netherfield Farm earlier prehistoric complex with the later occupation are published in detail elsewhere (Mudd and Brett in press), with a brief summary here. The specialist contributions relating to the site are also summarised here; those from the other sites on the route are presented here. Calibrated radiocarbon dates are given at 95% probability unless otherwise stated. Posterior density estimates, derived from Bayesian modelling of the radiocarbon dates, are expressed in italics (Healy, in Mudd and Brett, in press).

Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments at Netherfield Farm, South Petherton (Sites 47, 48A, 48B)

The site lies on a gentle north-west-facing slope in the valley of Lambrook Brook, a stream draining into the River Parrett within a kilometre to the north-west (Fig. 2). The earliest dated feature from the whole pipeline route was pit 48644, between the two arms of the later, Neolithic, long enclosure, (Fig. 3). It was 0.6m deep and contained carbon-rich deposits consisting mostly of oak, and two separate radiocarbon determinations on *Prunus* species charcoal and hazelnut shell provided a consistent date range of c. 3780-3660 cal. BC (NZA-35810, 4944±20 BP; NZA-35816, 4951±20 BP). The pit also contained a few crumbs of pottery of Early to Middle Neolithic date, as well as an assemblage of 29 lithics which included 15 flakes and blades of Portland chert.

The Neolithic causewayed enclosure, measuring approximately 55m in diameter, comprised eleven separate ditch lengths with a large gap along its north-western side (Fig. 4). The lengths of each ditch section varied around the circuit, with some appearing pit-like in shape while the longest, ditch 48j, was approximately 23m long. The individual ditches were 1.2m to 1.9m wide and survived

to an average depth of between 0.1m and 0.3m. Early Neolithic Plain Bowl type ware, as well as less diagnostic Early to Middle Neolithic pottery was recovered in small quantities from primary silts within ditches 48g, 48n and 48p, whilst ditch 48h contained a more considerable 77 sherds from five different vessels, found together with a small group of flint blades and indicating activity close to, if not within, the ditch. Here, as elsewhere, there are no indications that the pottery represents a form of deliberate placement or 'structured' deposit. A small assemblage of worked flint and chert was also recovered from the primary fills of a number of the ditches. Most were undiagnostic flakes, but they included three end-scrapers from the terminal of ditch 48j which would seem an intentional deposit. Soil samples were largely devoid of charred plant remains but a radiocarbon determination on alder charcoal from the same primary fill of ditch 48j returned a date of 3663-3633 cal. BC at 86.6% probability (NZA-35798, 4854±20 BP) which appears to give a reliable indication of the date of the usage of the monument and is fully consistent with South-Western style Early Neolithic ceramics (Ladle and Woodward 2009). The overall assemblage contained few featured Early Neolithic sherds. The vessels appear to be a mix of open and

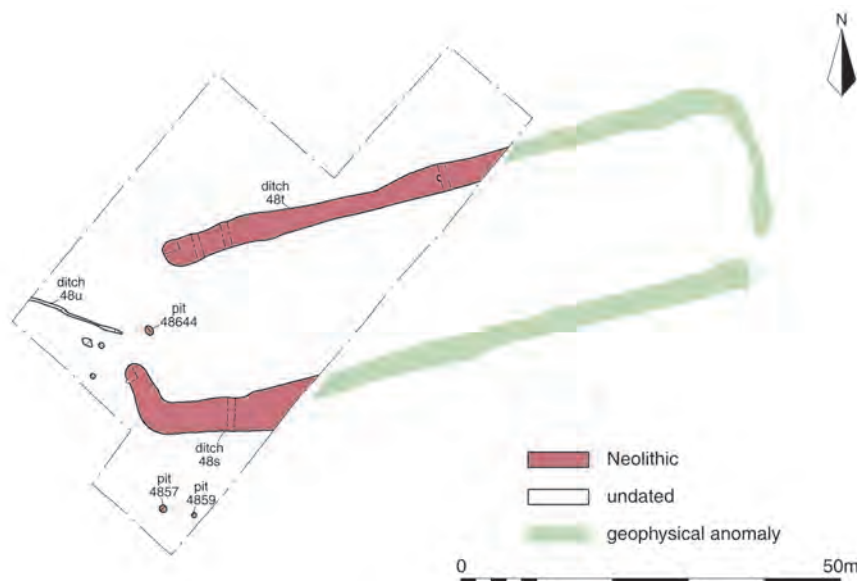


Fig. 3 Netherfield Farm, South Petherton, Site 48B, Middle Neolithic long enclosure, showing archaeological features. Scale 1:1000

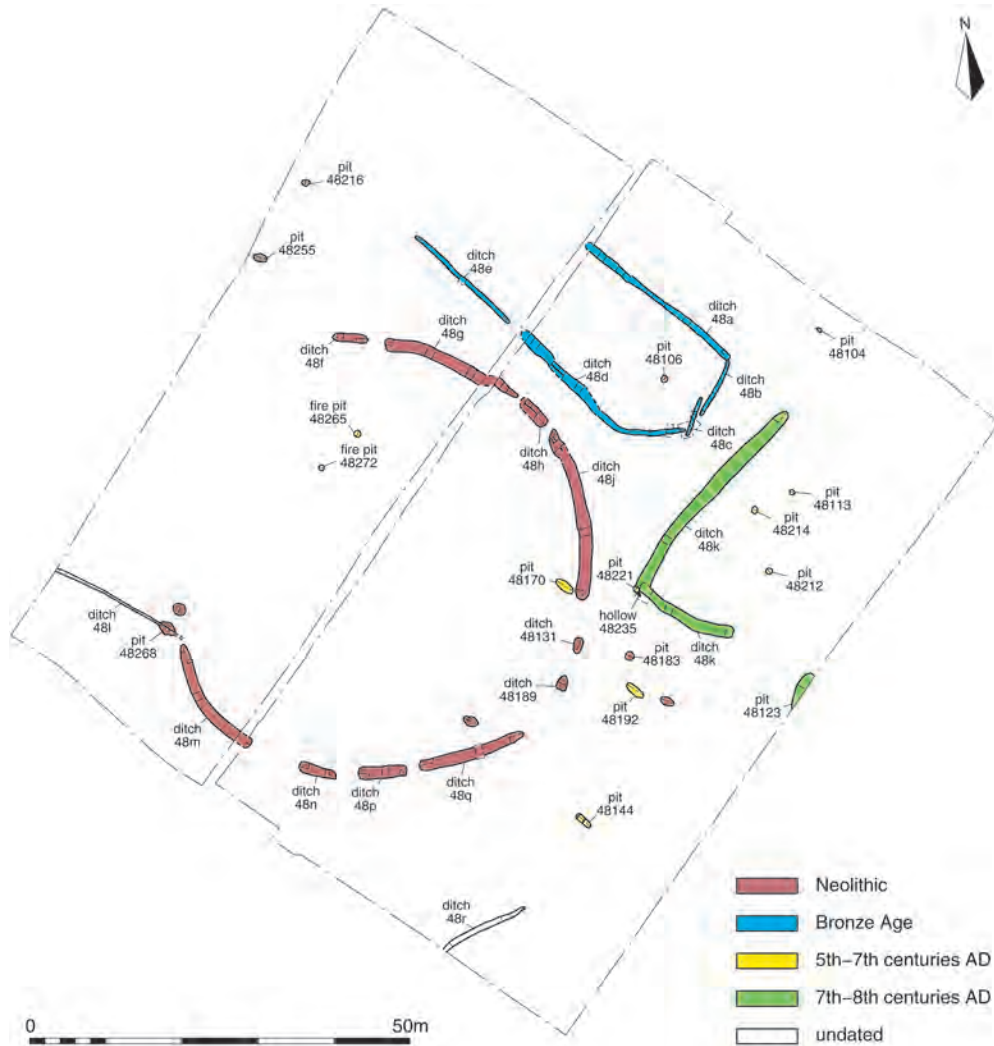


Fig. 4 Netherfield Farm, South Petherton, Site 48A, Early Neolithic causewayed enclosure, showing Neolithic, Bronze Age and early medieval archaeological features. Scale 1:1000

'neutral' bowls with either simple or rolled-over rims, and one features a vertically perforated, 'pinched-out', lug. The most common fabric is a vesicular, mudstone-tempered, type of local manufacture, and there are small numbers of quartzite-tempered and quartzite-and-chert tempered types, which are non-local and may have originated from Carboniferous deposits in the Mendips, although other sources are possible.

After a period of silting the re-establishment

of the enclosure was indicated by re-cutting identified in eight of the ditches. Finds recovered from the re-cut ditches included relatively small quantities of Early Neolithic Plain Bowl type pottery and worked flint, and a radiocarbon determination on ash charcoal from ditch 48p returned a date of 3640-3520 cal. BC (NZA-35803, 4782±20 BP). However, a recut in ditch 48j yielded a large assemblage of 51 worked flints including a chisel arrowhead and a Levallois core,

indicative of a Middle to Late Neolithic date and suggesting re-use of the monument for another several hundred years.

Statistical modelling of the two dates from the causewayed enclosure puts a conservative estimate of construction and primary usage at 3645-3620 cal. BC (30% probability) or 3605-3525 cal. BC (65% probability). The presence of Middle Neolithic flintwork in a later cut suggests use of the monument continuing after c. 3300 cal. BC.

The long enclosure defined by the magnetometer plot and excavation measured c. 85m long by 20m wide internally and had entrances at its western and eastern ends. The western end of the enclosure, formed by ditches 48s and 48t, was excavated (Fig. 3). Ditch 48s was slightly more substantial than its counterpart, surviving up to 4.5m wide and 1.15m deep while ditch 48t was 3.65m wide and 0.6m deep.

The sequence of deposits was similar in both ditches, showing natural infilling with little admixture of cultural material throughout most of the sequence, punctuated by layers of charcoal with, in places, scorched earth (Fig. 5). Small collections

of flint and pottery suggested intermittent activity within or close to the ditches. Animal bone was largely absent throughout suggesting that most had been lost through taphonomic processes and chemical decay. A few specimens were identified as caprovine (*Ovis aries/Capra hircus*) but most were unidentifiable and many burnt. The upper, darker, deposits included more material, particularly worked flint and chert and pottery of Middle Neolithic Impressed ware (Peterborough ware). The condition of the pottery is poor and sherd size small, which, together with the general lack of joining or same-vessel sherds, suggests deposition through gradual accumulation rather than anything more structured. In ditch 48t one of the latest episodes of occupation involved the cutting and filling of a series of shallow pits along the central line of the ditch. The pits seem to have been used as hearths, or more general locations of fire since activities resulted in the scorching of earlier deposits into which they had been cut, and they were filled with charcoal-rich soils. It was determined that there was more than one phase of these burnt pits and their locations were tightly controlled in a single line. Associated charcoal

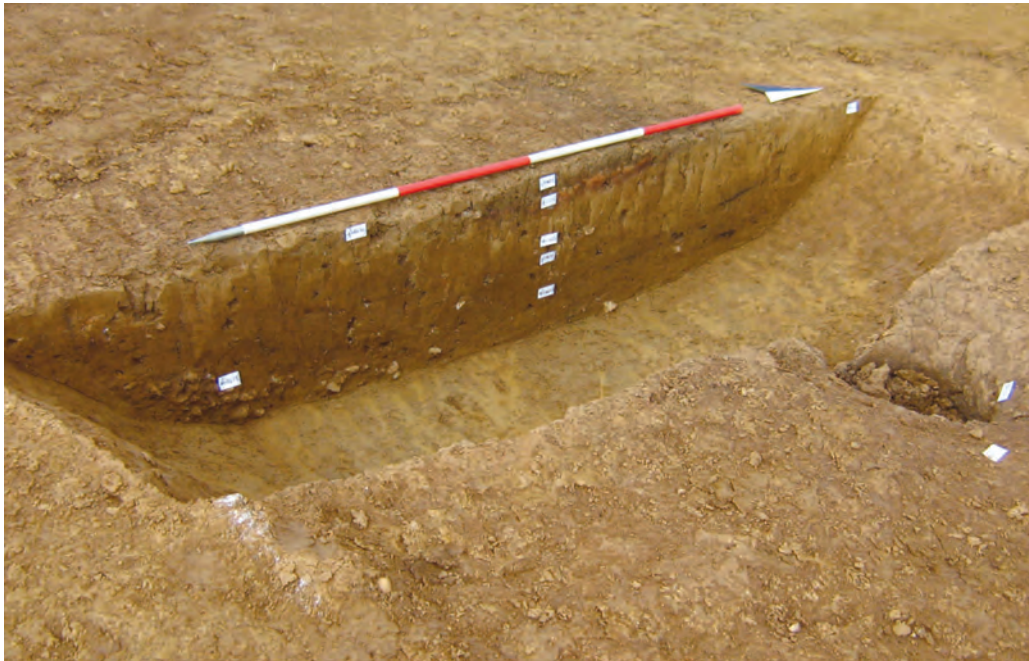


Fig. 5 Netherfield Farm, South Petherton, section through ditch 48t of Neolithic long enclosure, looking north-west. Scale 2m

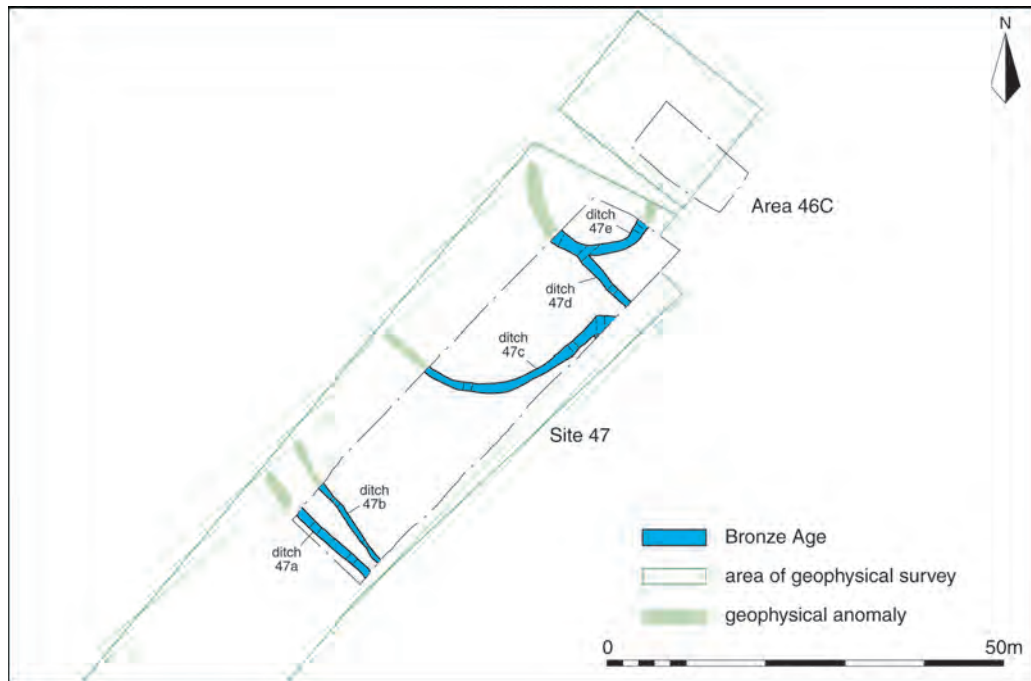


Fig. 6 Netherfield Farm, South Petherton, Area 47; abstraction and interpretation of geophysical survey results in relation to excavated features. Scale 1:1000

derived from a wide range of trees and shrubs, notably including potential food species such as those in the Pomoideae family (hawthorn/rowan, crab apple), *Prunus* (cherry, blackthorn) and hazel, and there was relatively little oak. Among the seeds hazelnut was particularly prevalent, while crab apple, hawthorn, elder and possibly cherry were also present. This suggests that the fires were related to food preparation and would not seem out of place in a domestic context. The charcoal fills also contained significant quantities of pottery and worked flint. Among the 98 sherds of pottery were a small number associated with bowls of Ebbsfleet and Mortlake type. There is a noteworthy division between the locations of the Fengate sub-style of vessel (in ditch 48s) and the Ebbsfleet and Mortlake sub-style of vessel (in ditch 48t), which may reflect patterns of deposition remarked upon elsewhere (Gibson and Kinnes 1997). A total of 135 artefacts of flint and chert was recovered from these hearths, an assemblage that included knapping debris, a range of tools and a high proportion of deliberately broken flakes that may relate to the manufacture

of chisel arrowheads. Two useful radiocarbon dates were obtained from ditch 48s, one from the lower burnt horizon and one from the upper one. From ditch 48t a series of eight dates were obtained throughout the stratigraphic sequence and both groups of dates were used in statistical models for the duration of the enclosure's use (Healy, in Mudd and Brett in press). The more persuasive model indicates that the enclosure was built in 3555-3335 cal. BC (76% probability) or 3300-3130 cal. BC (19% probability). It was abandoned in 3085-2825 cal. BC (94% probability), after a duration of use of 80 to 230 years (21% probability) or 260 to 360 years (73% probability).

Pits 4857 and 4859 south of the long enclosure survived to a depth of 0.15m. Pit 4857 contained pottery (including probable Fengate ware) and two worked flints, and would seem to have been contemporary with the long enclosure. Pit 4859 contained daub, burnt fragments of animal bone and 11 flakes and blades, and would appear to be of broadly Neolithic date. There was also a cluster of three small pits adjacent to the western entrance to the long enclosure and a shallow ditch, 48u.

These were without finds and contained naturally accumulated silts. Their dates are not known.

There were a number of pits scattered around the causewayed enclosure. Several were without any dating evidence and potentially belong with either the prehistoric or sub-Roman to Saxon occupations, or are unassociated with either.

The Bronze Age U-shaped enclosure on the north-east side of the causewayed enclosure comprised five individual lengths of ditch of different form (Fig. 4). Ditches 48a and 48b were deep, almost vertically sided palisade trenches, surviving up to 0.85m wide and 0.7m deep. Ditch 48c was also steep-sided but shallower (0.45m) while ditches 48d and 48e were all less substantial with gradually sloping sides, generally between 0.1 m and 0.35 m deep and not readily interpretable as timber placements. The depth of ditch 48a in particular suggests that the 'enclosure' is substantially complete and the open form is not the result of truncation on the north-western side. Dating is provided by 40 sherds of Early to Middle Bronze Age pottery from ditches 48a, 48c and 48e. The collection of 36 worked lithics are not diagnostic of either date or function and may include residual Neolithic pieces. There is therefore no good indication of the sequence of construction while the broadly Early to Middle Bronze Age would seem to date its construction and use well after the abandonment of the adjacent causewayed enclosure.

The magnetometer survey north of the long enclosure identified a number of ditches in the pipeline easement and the area to the east (Fig. 2). These were targeted by evaluation trenches 4703, 4704, 4705 and 4706 and subsequently by an area excavation centred on the curvilinear ditches 47c and 47e (Figs 2, 6). Bronze Age pottery was recovered from the ditches in trenches 4703, 4704, and in ditches 47d and 47e.

Curving ditch 47e at the northern end of the group may have formed part of a ring-ditch about 13m in diameter, although its northern side would have lain under the modern hedgerow and it was not identified (Fig. 6). It was about 1.6m wide and 0.35m deep with inconsistent sides and a relatively flat base. It was dated by a group of 21 sherds of pottery in the Wessex biconical urn tradition of the later part of the early Bronze Age. It was cut by ditch 48d which was slightly deeper and contained a group of four Bronze Age sherds of similar type. Curving ditch 47c appeared to mimic the line of 47e and was of similar form and dimensions.

It contained several fragments of animal bone and a piece of amorphous fired clay. The only identifiable animal bones were a metatarsal of cattle (*Bos taurus*) from ditch 47c and a humerus from ditch 47e probably from a large bull.

An enclosure of subrectangular form and apparently partly defined by double ditches was identified further south-west and examined in Trench 4704. The trench found three ditches in approximately their expected positions. To the north, the ditch in Trench 4705 contained two sherds of Bronze Age pottery. To the south of this group the ditch in Trench 4703 contained just two worked flints.

The results from these excavations, viewed against the background of the wider magnetometer survey, suggest that the rectilinear pattern of field boundaries is Bronze Age in date. In particular, the outer ditch of the sub-rectangular enclosure appears to be physically part of the field pattern evident in the wider magnetometer plot, while other ditches are physically connected to the ring-ditches east of the long enclosure.

Bronze Age land division at Compton Durville, South Petherton (Site 62B/63/64)

The site at Compton Durville lies about 2km further up the Lambrook valley from Netherfield Farm on gently sloping land. Archaeological features extended for about 220m east-west in three fields. Most features belonged to the late Iron Age and Roman periods (below) but among the ditches and pits of what appears to have been part of a settlement, were a small number of ditches dated to the Early to Middle Bronze Age by a collection of 30 sherds of pottery. The pottery is grog-tempered and is mainly unfeathered, but use of round-toothed comb impressions (Fig. 13.1) is a trait seen with the Collared urn and Wessex biconical urn series, and is the best indication of dating for the group as a whole. The plain rim (Fig. 13.2) could be within Early or Middle Bronze Age traditions. The ditches were fragmentary and widely dispersed, but may have formed part of an extensive division of land at this time (Fig. 7).

Ditch 63t was truncated at both ends by later features but its short exposed section was about 1.5m wide by 0.6m deep with a steep-sided, flat-based profile (Fig. 8). It contained 21 bodysherds of pottery of broad Early to Middle Bronze Age date, fragments of a large cylindrical fired clay

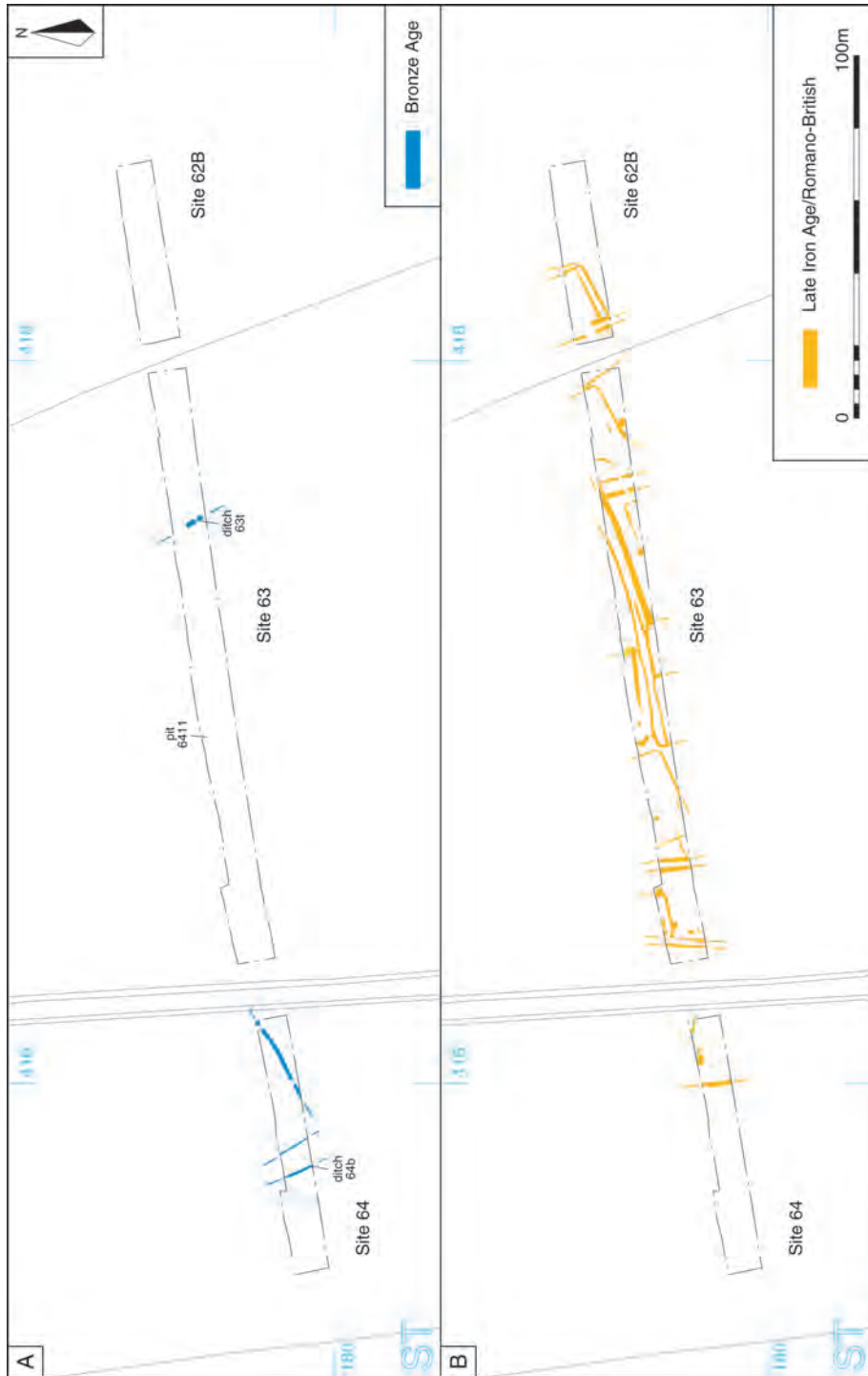


Fig. 7 Compton Durville, Site 62-64: (A) Bronze Age and (B) Late Iron Age to Romano-British land division (see Figure 9 for detail). Scale 1:2000



*Fig. 8 Compton Durville, Bronze Age ditch 63t, with clay object in base. Scales 1m and 0.5m.
Bronze Age clay object from ditch 63t, Compton Durville. Scale 10 cm*

object approximately 120mm in diameter and weighing 2kg (Fig. 8), and 15 flint artefacts, mostly comprising flakes but including a discoid scraper. The fired clay object is difficult to parallel, although the general form, dimensions and seeming use of raw clay is similar to (perforated) weights known from Middle Bronze Age sites in southern England (Woodward 2009, 289–99). The ditch did not extend beyond the truncated ends and it is possible that this feature represents part of a segmented ditch extending beyond the limits of the excavation area in a north-north-west/south-south-east direction.

At the western end of the site ditch 64b, which was 0.7m wide and 0.2m deep, contained six sherds of Early to Middle Bronze Age urn-style pottery and seems likely to be of this date. Another ditch ran parallel to ditch 64b, 7m to the east, while a stratigraphically early ditch ran at right-angles to these ditches and contained just five worked flints (Fig. 7). There were also possible traces of Bronze Age occupation in the central part of the site where stratigraphically early pit 6411 contained a sherd of Bronze Age pottery, and a nearby highly truncated pit, while without finds, lay at the same stratigraphic horizon. There is therefore possible evidence for Bronze Age fields and associated settlement, although the narrow scope of work and extensive truncation of the site precludes definitive interpretation.

Late Iron Age and Roman enclosures at Compton Durville, South Petherton (Site 62B/63/64)

In the Late Iron Age/Roman period an extensive arrangement of ditched enclosures and paddocks was established across the land formerly occupied by the Bronze Age ditches and on broadly the same alignment (Figs 7, 9). This activity was largely confined to the 1st and 2nd centuries AD, although there is a small amount of later material, and, while there are stratigraphic relationships present in a number of cases, the sequence is not confirmed by the ceramic dating. For this reason the site is presented as a single phase, although there were clearly changes and developments during the occupation. In a number of instances these enclosures appear to have been bounded by double ditches, including those demarcated by ditches 62a and 62e, 62f and 62g, 62h and 62j, 63a and 63b, 63d and 63e/63f, 63n and 63l, and 63w and 63x. The ditches generally contained small quantities of pottery and fired clay; the latter material being found in greater quantities within ditches 62j, 63c and 63e. Small quantities of fuel ash were also recovered from ditches 63b, 63d and pit 6412, all located towards the western end of the site, perhaps suggesting locations of domestic activity here. Slightly sinuous, shallow ditch 63g was one of only two on this site to contain quantities of burnt stone, although there is no further evidence to determine whether this material and the fuel ash are derived from domestic or small-scale industrial activities.

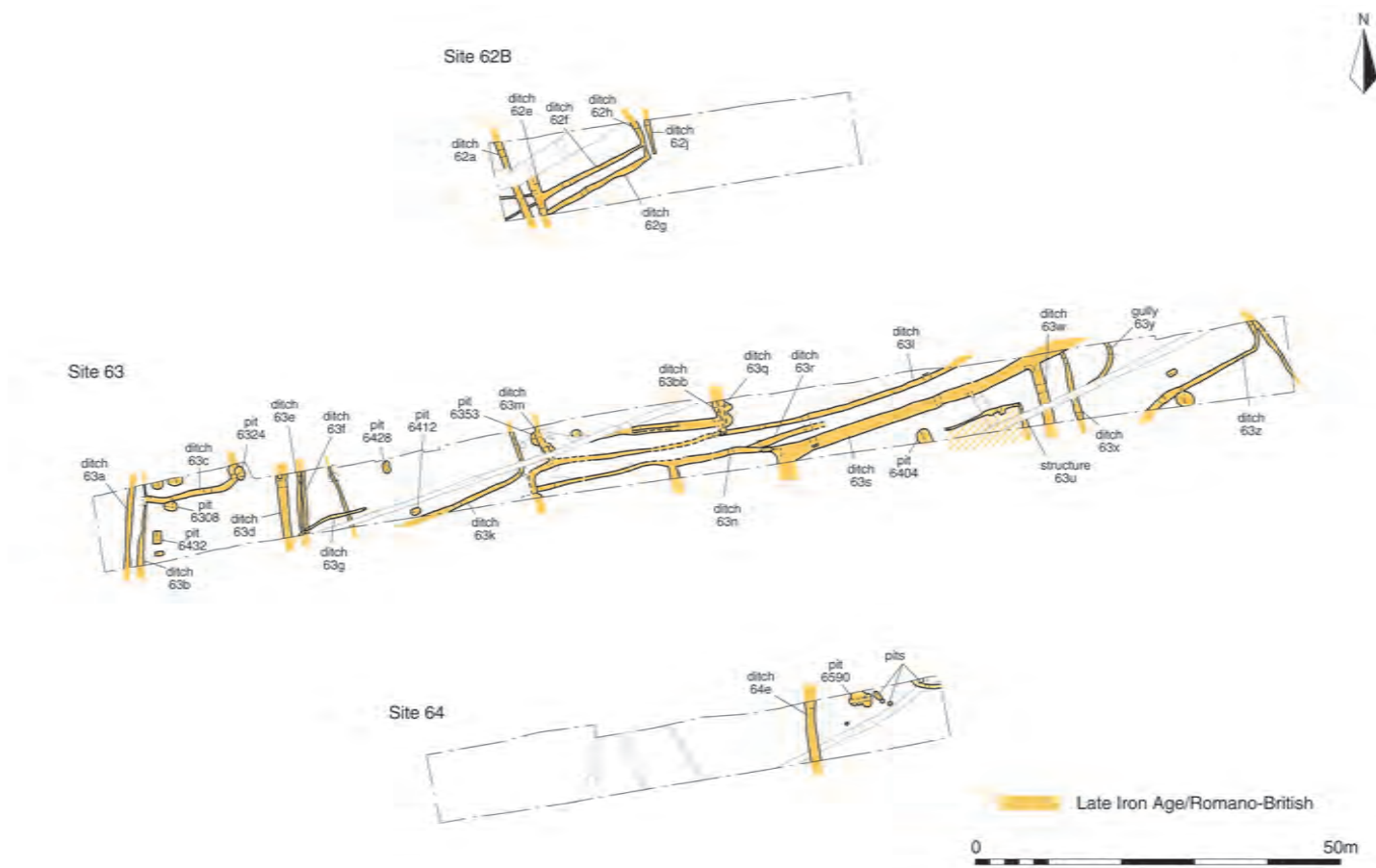
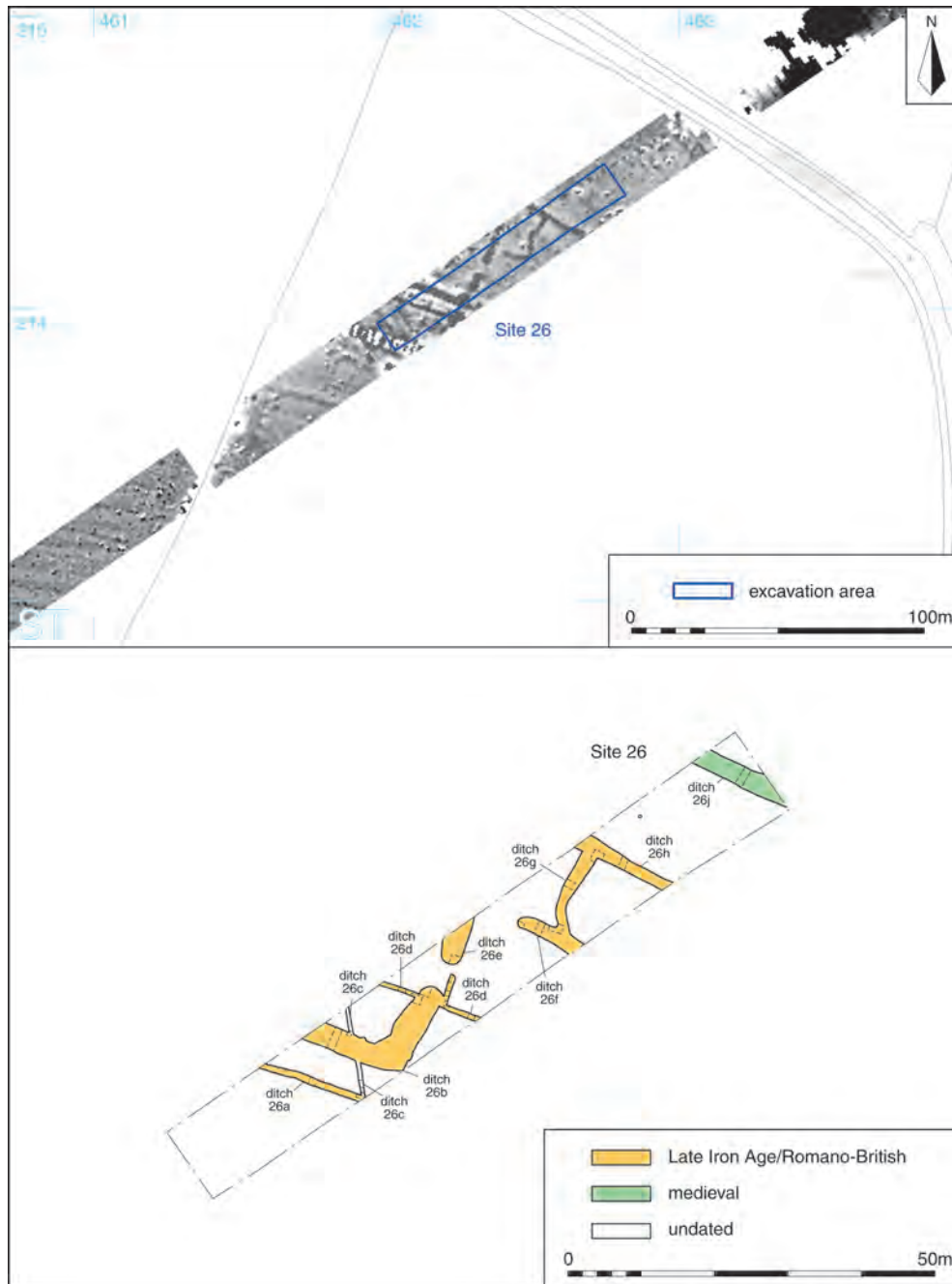


Fig. 9 Compton Durville, Site 62-64, showing Late Iron Age to Roman archaeological features (see Figure 7B for location of trenches). Scale 1:1000



*Fig. 10 Stapleton, Site 26: geophysical survey and plan of archaeological features.
Scales 1:2500 and 1:1000*

It is possible that narrow curvilinear feature 63y represents the only surviving element of a circular feature such as a drip gully associated with a roundhouse. If this were the case, such a structure would have a diameter of approximately 10m. A single flint was recovered from the fill of the gully and it remains possible that the feature is prehistoric.

Structure 63u comprised elements including two probable steep-sided beam slots which incorporated a wider post setting, perhaps indicative of later repair to the building. It was situated within the north-eastern corner of an enclosure formed by ditches 63s and 63w. The exposed part of the structure measured 11m in length and its width extended beyond the southern limit of excavation. The construction cuts contained no evidence of structural materials but sherds of Late Iron Age/Roman pottery and a number of fragments of fired clay or daub were recovered, suggesting that the building may have had walls constructed in wattle and daub. Pit 6404, which also contained a quantity of fired clay, as well as Black-Burnished ware pottery dated to the 1st to 2nd centuries AD, may be associated with the building.

A total of 25 pits was present, indicative of settlement activity. Pit 6308 is notable for containing 34 joining sherds of a handmade jar, likely to be of 1st-century date, whilst a sharpening stone was recovered from pit 6324. Generally, small quantities of pottery, fired clay, and animal bone were recovered from these features, but pits 6428 and 6432, together with ditches 63bb, 63q, 63x and 63z, and pit 6590 towards the western end of the site all contained significantly larger quantities of pottery. The amount of pottery recovered from ditches 63bb and 63q, amounting to over 2.5kg (327 sherds from 106 estimated vessels) suggests deliberate deposition, possibly as a dump of refuse.

The pits varied greatly in size, shape and character. Most were unremarkable but sizeable rectangular pit 6432 contained a primary fill derived from natural silting which was covered by a dark silty clay deposit from which came an almost complete copper-alloy brooch of simplified trumpet form, dating to the late 1st to early 2nd centuries AD, together with pottery of a contemporary date. The sequence was sealed by a mixed backfill deposit containing 33 sherds of

Black-Burnished ware pottery dating to the mid to late 2nd to early 3rd centuries.

Roman ditches and enclosures at Stapleton and north of Coat, Martock (Site 26 and Area 31)

On a ridge between the valleys of the Yeo and Parrett near Stapleton (Area 26), at about 25m OD, previously unknown archaeological features dating broadly to the Late Iron Age/Roman period were identified. Here the exposed features correlated particularly well with anomalies depicted on the geophysical survey (Fig. 10). Ditches 26b and 26e formed the square south-eastern corner of a probable enclosure measuring at least 30m in width. A total of 21 sherds of pottery dating from the Late Iron Age to the Roman period were recovered from the seven ditches assigned to this period, and there were loomweight fragments from ditch 26b. Conjoining ditches 26f, 26g and 26h appear to be broadly contemporary with the enclosure and may form one or more small enclosures or paddocks.

About 500m to the west, linear and curving ditches identified by magnetometer in both Area 31 and Area 30 were for the most part not impacted by the pipe cut but are potentially of Roman date. However, evaluation trench 3134 (Area 31) contained a single ditch that correlated well with a prominent anomaly depicted on the magnetometer plot. It was filled by a single silt deposit from which 79 sherds of pottery from a diverse range of vessels dated to the late 3rd to 4th centuries AD was recovered, along with a small amount of animal bone. It is possible that this ditch represented part of a wider pattern of dispersed occupation on this ridge.

Roman enclosures at Ilchester AGI (Site 2)

The site lies on the floodplain of the River Yeo, within 800m of the known Roman villa at Ilchester Mead and approximately 1.3km west of the Roman town of *Lindinis* (also *Lendinae*). A series of ditches in Area 2 correspond well with the anomalies depicted on the magnetometer survey plot despite being located beneath 0.3m of alluvium (Fig. 11). Collectively, they contained

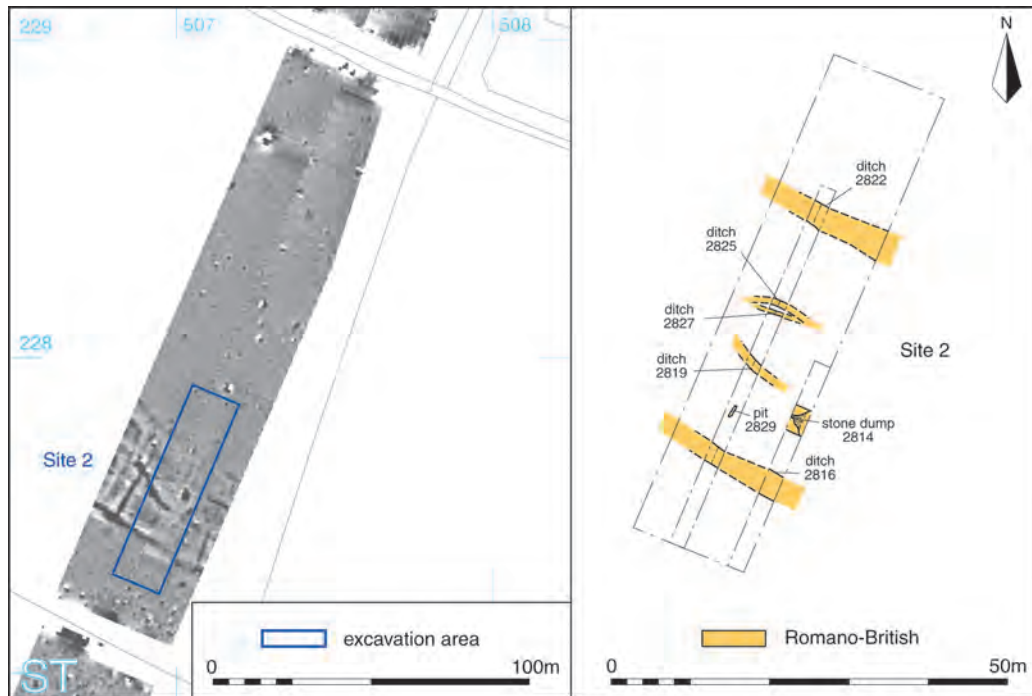


Fig. 11 Ilchester AGI, Site 2: geophysical survey and plan of archaeological features.
Scales 1:2500 and 1:1000

considerable quantities of artefactual material dated to the mid 3rd to 4th centuries AD, with a chronological focus around c. 250-70. A total of 649 sherds of pottery from a diverse but largely utilitarian variety of wares was recovered, with a relatively large mean sherd weight, indicating that the material has not been transported any great distance and must be associated with settlement within the immediate vicinity. Other finds include animal bone, fired clay, fuel ash, and a coin of AD 270-3. A soil sample from ditch 2816 contained charred plant remains comprising mainly cereals and arable weeds suggesting a deposit of crop processing waste.

The features evidently silted up and the area between the two large outermost ditches was inundated, probably as a result of flooding from the nearby River Ye. The alluvium deposited filled the tops of some of these ditches and contained finds dated to no later than the mid 3rd to 4th centuries AD, suggesting that flooding occurred not long after the abandonment of the site. Later alluvium indicates that the area continued to flood, probably well into the medieval period.

Roman enclosures north of Barrington village (Area 80, Sites 81, 82A, 82B)

A series of previously unknown features, including ditches forming parts of enclosures, were identified across a stretch of c. 400m of flat, low-lying land (Fig. 12). These were mostly dated to the Roman period but a slot truncated by one of the Roman ditches in Site 82B contained five sherds of pottery of possible Iron Age date hinting at an earlier origin to this feature.

In Area 80, trenches 8031 and 8046, a series of pits and ditches were identified although only one was excavated as it alone was to be impacted by the pipe trench. It contained two sherds of broadly Roman Black-Burnished ware pottery. Small quantities of similar material were recovered from the surface of a number of the remaining features, together with a few fragments of animal bone and fired clay.

Site 81 contained two ditches and a cluster of at least six intercutting pits. Finds recovered from these features included animal bone, flint and 87 sherds of pottery with a probable focus in the

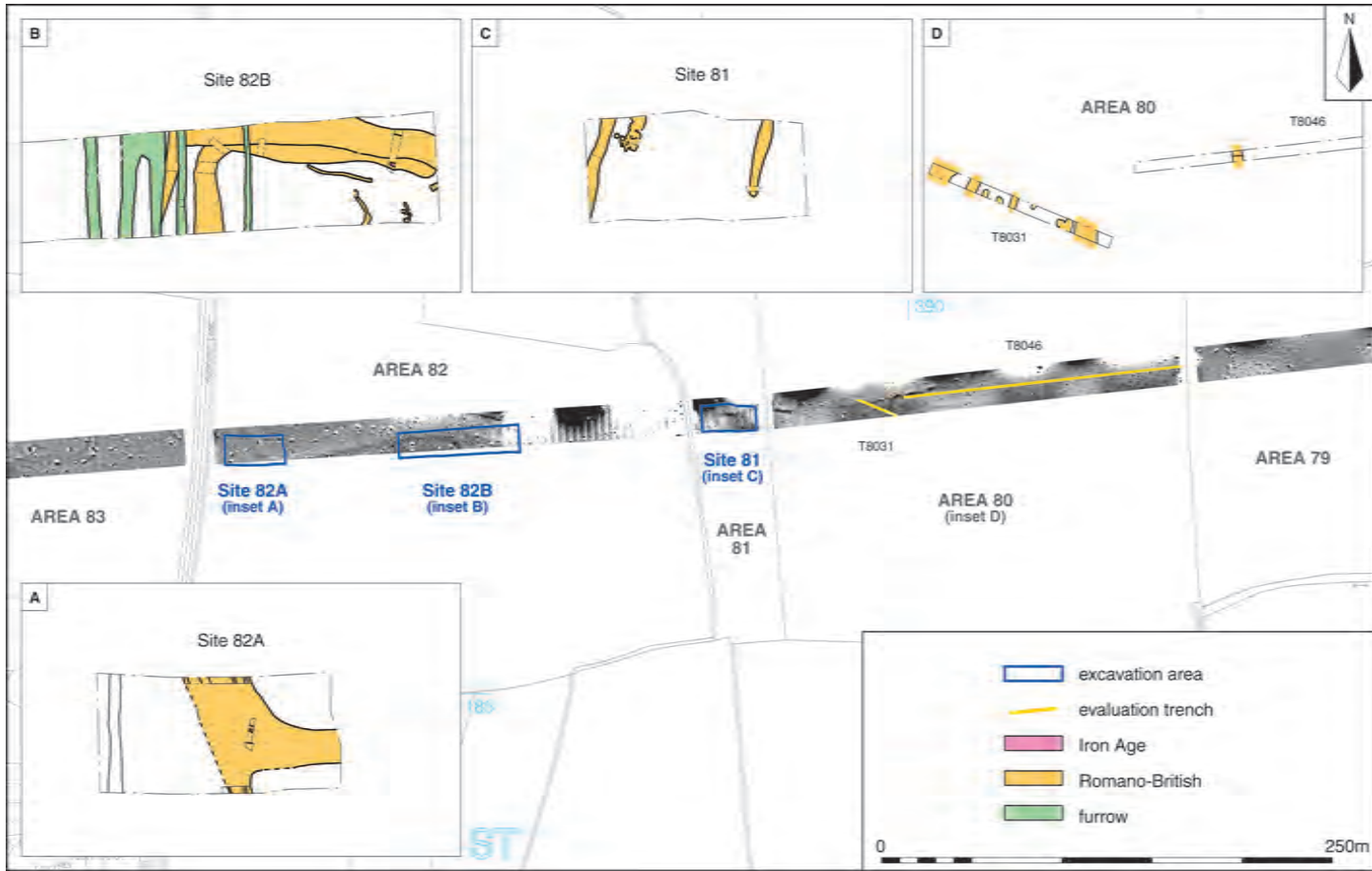


Fig. 12 Land North of Barrington, Areas 80 to 82: geophysical survey results with excavation results inset. Scales 1:1000 and 1:4000

second half of the 2nd century AD. Of intrinsic interest were three fragments of a worked bone object, most likely representing a blank for a hair pin, from one of the ditches.

In Site 82A a series of at least five intercutting ditches formed a roughly T-shaped intersection, presumably representing major land boundaries. Evidence of progressive re-cutting indicates the periodic re-establishment of these boundaries. Due to the level of truncation by the re-cutting, it was difficult to determine the size of the earlier features but the latest ditch in the series was 3.4m wide and 0.55m deep. All the ditches were filled by similar homogeneous dark, compact clay fills, presumably derived from general silting. A number contained no artefacts although, collectively, finds included pottery broadly dated as Roman, as well as small quantities of animal bone, flint and burnt stone. In addition, a copper alloy Colchester derivative T-shaped brooch, likely to date to the first half of the second century, was recovered from the latest ditch.

In Site 82B a series of large east/west ditches turned southward to form a right-angled corner and contained significant quantities of animal bone and pottery spanning the 1st to 4th centuries AD. Nearby, several smaller gullies and pits contained similar material. A cluster of five irregular pits also contained other artefacts, including a fragment of a copper-alloy brooch of probable 'Nauheim' derivative, dating to the 1st century AD.

Early Medieval occupation at Netherfield Farm, South Petherton (Site 48A)

Within and close to the causewayed enclosure was a group of pits containing burnt material and evidence of scorching (Fig. 4). Two of these features, 48265 and 48272 (of uncertain function) are described as fire-pits, and three were pits of distinctive lozenge shape (48144, 48170, 48192), while another, 48221, appeared oven shaped comprising a burnt fire-pit and a shallower rake-out pit (48235). None of these features contained artefacts but their dating to the 5th to 7th centuries AD is shown by a series of seven radiocarbon dates on charred grain and charcoal from five of these features (Wk-22463, 1505±35 BP; NZA-35808, 1510±15 BP; Wk-22464, 1465±35 BP; NZA-35797, 1430±15 BP; NZA-35800, 1404±15 BP; NZA-35802, 1428±15 BP; NZA-35807, 1557±15

BP). In addition, L-shaped ditch 48k has a likely 7th to 8th-century date from two radiocarbon dates on cattle bones (NZA-3613, 1368±20 BP, calibrating to AD 641-675; NZA-36712, 1287±20 BP, calibrating to AD 670-772).

Fire-pit 48265 measured 0.85m in diameter and 0.1m deep while fire-pit 48272 was slightly smaller and deeper and both showed heavy scorching of the substrate. The charred plant remains from fire pit 48272 included charcoal from a range of species including *Maloideae* (hawthorn, rowan, crab apple), and seeds dominated by grains, particularly barley and bread wheat and oats. The shallower firepit, 48265, had similar charcoal and burnt flint and clay fills and yielded a very similar range of crops and charcoal species.

The three lozenge-shaped pits were of similar dimensions, 2.45-2.75m long, 0.8-1.1m wide and 0.35-0.4m deep. They contained a similar range of contents which reflected the crops, weeds and fuel found in the hearths, but their purpose remains unclear. Despite the presence of burnt material in their fills, laboratory analysis of geoarchaeological samples from pit 48144 indicates that there is no evidence of *in situ* burning, and that the pits were not clay-lined. It appears therefore that the fills comprised secondary burnt material. Four radiocarbon dates on charred wheat grains and dogwood charcoal from the primary fills provided dates consistent internally and with the series from the hearths.

Pit 48221 was different in form, being circular, 0.9m in diameter and 0.3m deep, with a shallow hollow on its southern side. Its western side was almost vertical, but on the east it had been cut away by ditch 48k. Like the other pits it was without finds except charcoal. The underlying substrate showed evidence of intense scorching. Geoarchaeological samples throughout the sequence of fills showed that the lower fill had heat-fused clay and sand grains, indicating a temperature in excess of 650 degrees C. Chemical analysis found unusually high concentrations of zinc, copper and silver in the sediment, suggesting that the pit might have been used for metalworking, although no slags were present in those samples.

Ditch 48k was an L-shaped partial enclosure to the east of the causewayed enclosure cutting pit 48221 (Fig. 4). It was a substantial feature, 43.5m long, up to 2m wide and 0.75 m deep with rounded terminals, and generally moderately sloping, uneven, sides. The base was generally concave.

The primary silting contained small quantities of early prehistoric and Roman pottery, worked flint and a quantity of cattle bone fragments. Two upper deposits contained a range of finds that included ferrous slag, identified as smithing hearth cakes, and a tiny sherd of medieval chert-tempered pottery. The animal bone assemblage included both cattle and sheep. Two radiocarbon dates on cattle bones from the primary fill yielded mutually consistent dates in the 7th to 8th centuries AD, and this would appear to confirm that the feature is of this date, and that the medieval sherd was intrusive.

Probably contemporary with ditch 48k was a large pit or ditch terminal 48123 only partly within the excavation area to the south-east. It was at least 5.3 m long, 1.2 m wide and 0.4 m deep and contained a similar range of material to ditch 48k. These included cattle bones, a piece of ferrous slag and iron objects including a binding strip. Nearby, three pits (48212, 48213 and 48214) were partially enclosed by ditch 48k and may well have been contemporary with it although none contained dating evidence and there was no clue as to their functions.

THE ARTEFACTS

Pottery by *E.R. McSloy*

Neolithic and Bronze Age

The Neolithic pottery amounts to 369 sherds (1455g) from the Netherfield Farm causewayed enclosure, long enclosure and associated features (Sites 48A and 48B). There were 75 sherds (802g) of Bronze Age pottery from area of the monument complex (the U-shaped enclosure and the ditches to the north in Area 47). A full report on the pottery from the Netherfield Farm monument complex, including a selective programme of thin-section analysis, is published elsewhere (Mudd and Brett, in press). In addition, 30 Bronze Age sherds (210g) came from features at Compton Durville (Site 63-64). These are mainly bodysherds in grogged fabrics. Two rims are illustrated (Fig. 13.1-2)

Illustrated Bronze Age vessels from Compton Durville

13.1 – Biconical or Collared Urn? Simple rim with round-tooth comb stabs. Site 63; Ditch 63t; single fill 6457. Fabric GROG.

13.2 – Biconical or barrel-shaped vessel; squared rim. Site 63; Ditch 64b; single fill 642408. Fabric GROG.

LATE PREHISTORIC

A small group of handmade late prehistoric pottery (54 sherds, 293g) comes primarily from Compton Durville (Site 62B-64) and Barrington (Site 81), but few conclusions are possible regarding the date and longevity of activity they represent. The pottery consists, for the most part, of unfeatured bodysherds in fabrics with calcareous inclusions, and probably of fairly local origin. Two vessels belonging to the South-Western Decorated ware (formerly Glastonbury ware) tradition and of non-local manufacture were identified from Area 81, with a possible third from Site 82B. Most indications are that the undecorated material is of broadly comparable Middle and Late Iron Age dating, probably after c. 200 BC.

Fabrics

IA RT – Rock-tempered. Dark grey throughout or with patchy brown surfaces. Hard, with (where not burnished) a sandy or harsh feel and irregular sherd break. Inclusions comprise abundant moderately-sorted sub-angular/irregular rock, probably feldspar (non acid-reactive and soft) in range 0.5–1mm; also common rounded, shiny black grains, 0.3–0.6mm. It is not possible with confidence to match this fabric with Peacock's Groups (Peacock 1969), although a Mendip or Jurassic-era rock source can probably be discounted.

IA SA – Sandstone-tempered. Dark grey throughout. Hard, with sandy feel and finely-irregular fracture. Abundant sub-rounded, reddish-brown sandstone (1–1.5mm) and sub-rounded sandstone quartz grains (0.2–0.3mm). Almost certainly Peacock's Group 2: Old Red sandstone, from Mendip (Peacock 1969, 46).

IA LI – Limestone-tempered. Dark-grey throughout. Smooth/soapy feel with irregular fracture. Common sub-rounded or sub-angular limestone; typically moderately sorted (0.5–1.5mm). May contain sparse fossil shell, 0.5–2mm or rounded or and/or plate-like voids where inclusions have leached. Decorated

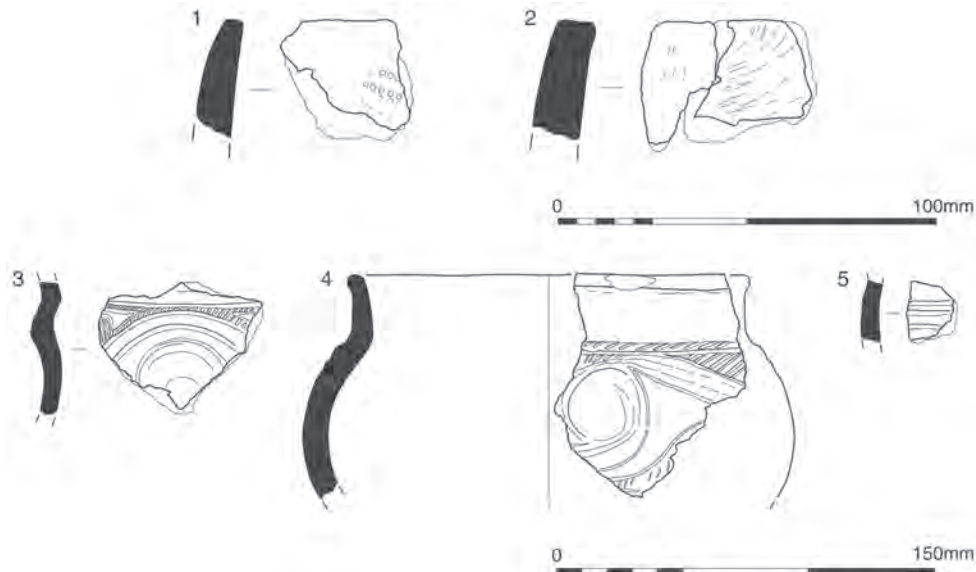


Fig. 13 Bronze Age pottery (nos 1-2). Scale 1:2. Iron Age pottery (nos 3-5). Scale 1:3

sherd no. 23 occurs in this fabric and equates to Peacock's Group 4 (Peacock 1969, 48).

IA SH – Shell-tempered. Dark grey throughout. Smooth/soapy feel with laminated fracture. Common, plate-like voids (1-3mm) suggestive of leached fossil shell inclusions.

Compton Durville (Site 62B-64). A total of 42 sherds (152 g) of pottery in leached calcareous fabric IA LI came from three deposits (pit 6308, and ditches 6314 and 63p). The largest group, that from pit 6308, consisted of 34 joining sherds making up the lower portion of a handmade jar with flat base.

Barrington (Sites 81, 82A/82B). Seven sherds (135g) were recovered mostly residually alongside pottery of earlier Roman date, or unstratified. Five sherds are unfeatured bodysherds in handmade limestone-tempered fabrics. More notable, although unstratified, are two vessels of South-Western Decorated ware (Fig. 13.3-5). Both vessels are necked bowls with similar decoration, although the fabrics suggest differing origin (below). The South-Western Decorated style is widespread across the region; work begun by Peacock (1969) indicating production grouped in the Mendips, the Permian rocks of east Devon and the Lizard, Cornwall. Middle and Late Iron

Age dating is suggested by Cunliffe (2005, 108), with the style possibly current in the eastern part of the region up to the Roman invasion. Two small bodysherds (5g) came from ditches in Site 82A/82B. One sherd (Fig. 13.5) features scored decoration and is probably of the South-Western Decorated ware tradition and of later Iron Age date.

Illustrated vessels from Barrington

- 13.3 – South-Western Decorated ware necked bowl. Decoration consists of notched ('cabled') cordon below neck; curvilinear and in-filled triangle designs defined by narrow and wider scored grooves. Site 81; subsoil. Fabric IA SA.
- 13.4 – South-Western Decorated ware necked bowl. Decoration consists of scored groove and 'cabled' cordon below neck and curvilinear design defined by double grooves and circular indents. Site 81 Unstratified. Fabric IA RT.
- 13.5 – Sherd with scored curvilinear(?) decoration. Site 82A Roman ditch 8229, fill 8230. Fabric IA LI.

Roman

For the Roman pottery, regional and traded wares follow the National Roman reference

TABLE 1: ROMAN POTTERY. SHERD COUNT BY SITE

<i>Site ></i>	<i>2</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>48A</i>	<i>62-64B</i>	<i>81</i>	<i>82A/B</i>	<i>T31</i>	<i>T80</i>	<i>US</i>	<i>Totals</i>	
Fabric										<i>Ct.</i>	<i>Wt(g)</i>
DOR BB1	396	2	3	203	5	8	49	5	24	695	5646
SOW BB1	16	15		721	51	217		6		1026	6458
LOC GW1	95			75	3	18	6	1	10	208	1931
LOC GW2	18			20	13	23	6			80	842
LOC GW3	75			13	5	6	9	1		109	1937
LOC GW4				6	1					7	31
LOC GRG				1		1				2	10
SAV GT				1		1				2	280
NFO CC	15			3		3	4			25	328
NFO RS2	1						2			3	74
NFO WH1	2									2	47
NFO WH2				1						1	11
OXF RS	10						1			11	198
MSC OX1	5						2			7	174
MSC OX2	14	1		1		3			1	20	94
MSC CC						1				1	1
LEZ SA2	1	1			2	1			1	6	62
EG SA	1									1	2
BAT AM				12						12	333
Total	649	19	3	1057	80	282	79	13	36	2218	18459

collection (Tomber and Dore 1998), and the local and unsourced wares correspond to the series developed for Ilchester (Leach 1982). Form nomenclature for Black-Burnished ware is taken from that used at Greyhound Yard, Dorchester (Seagar-Smith 1993, 229-84). In all cases quantification is by fabric, and by sherd count, weight in grams and rim estimated vessel equivalents (EVEs).

A total collection of 2218 sherds (18.4kg) derives from six excavated sites and three evaluation trenches (Table 1). The condition of the pottery is mixed with surface preservation varying according to fabric. Individual site groups are described below and aspects of the overall collection discussed subsequently. The

comparative composition of the assemblages across the sites is presented in Table 2.

Fabrics

Local and unsourced

DOR BB1 – South-East Dorset (Poole Harbour) Black-Burnished ware (Tomber and Dore 1998, 127).

SOW BB1 – South-West Black-Burnished ware (Tomber and Dore 1998, 129). Note that the source for 'south west BB1 is unknown, but thought likely to be west Dorset or south Somerset (Holbrook and Bidwell 1991, 90).

LOC GW1 – Sandy greyware. Equivalent to Ilchester fabric G1 (Leach 1982, 141).

LOC GW2 – Dark grey-firing sandy and micaceous coarseware. Equivalent to Ilchester fabric G2 (Leach 1982, 141).

LOC GW3 – Greyware, coarse gritty inclusions. Equivalent to Ilchester fabric CW. (Leach 1982, 142).

LOC GW4 – Fine greyware. Pale grey throughout. Sparse quartz inclusions.

LOC GRG – Coarse, grey-firing grogged fabric.

Regional imported wares

SAV GT – Savernake grog-tempered ware (Tomber and Dore 1998, 191).

NFO CC – New Forest colour-coated (Tomber and Dore 1998, 142; *Fabric Ia*: Fulford 2000, 24–5).

NFO RS2 – New Forest red-slipped (Tomber and Dore 1998, 144; *Fabric Ib*: Fulford 2000, 25).

NFO WH1 – New Forest white-firing (mortaria). (Tomber and Dore 1998, 142).

NFO WH2 – New Forest white-firing/parchment ware. (Tomber and Dore 1998, 144; *Fabric Ib/c*: Fulford 2000, 26).

OXF RS Oxfordshire red slipped ware (Tomber and Dore 1998, 174).

MSC CC – Colour-coated fabric. Buff/grey fabric with dark chocolate brown slip. Possibly equivalent to Ilchester fabric CCii: Thought by Leach to be from south or south-west England (Leach 1982, 138). A north Wiltshire source is possible (Anderson 1978).

MSC OX1 – Oxidised ware, coarser. Largely or entirely weathered New Forest wares.

MSC OX2 – Oxidised ware, fine. Largely or entirely weathered New Forest wares.

Continental imported wares

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

EG SA – East Gaulish samian, source uncertain.

BAT AM – Baetican amphora (Tomber and Dore 1998, 84)

Compton Durville (Site 62B-64). This site produced the largest assemblage: 1057 sherds weighing 7972 grams (4.79 EVEs). Fragmentation is among the highest and the mean sherd weight correspondingly low at 7.5 grams. Selected

features in the westernmost part of the site (Site 64), including pit 6590, produced pottery dating no earlier than the mid 3rd century and suggest that a focus for Late Roman activity lay beyond the western site limit (Fig. 9). New Forest traded wares suggest dating after *c.* AD 260 and, significantly, the Black-Burnished wares are solely of the (later) South-East Dorset variety. Other than these few Late Roman elements, the assemblage is uniform in its composition, comprising mainly Black-Burnished wares with fewer local or unsourced reduced wares and a small number of regional and continental imports (Table 1). The later prehistoric pottery (above) provides evidence for late pre-Roman activity, perhaps extending into mid 1st century AD, and to this might be added some material among the Dorset Black-Burnished ware, which is characterised by thicker-walled vessels and in a few instances Durotrigian style vessel forms, probably dating to the second half of the 1st century.

That most activity belongs to the earlier Roman period, is shown by the dominance of South-Western Black-Burnished ware, a type probably not outlasting the earlier 3rd century (Holbrook and Bidwell 1991). Forms comprise mainly jars (Table 2); primarily early classes (Seager-Smith 1993, 230: Types 4 and 8/9); including vessels with short, everted rims and countersunk handles. Other wares comprise mainly sandy reduced wares of which micaceous, black-firing type LOC GW2 is most common. Forms in this fabric consist of bead-rim/short everted-rim jars which are similar to those in Black-Burnished ware and probably share similar 1st or 2nd-century dating. Coarse greyware fabric LOC GW3 and grogged fabrics are unfeatured sherds, although of a thickness suggesting these come from large storage vessels.

Ilchester AGI (Site 2). Pottery amounting to 649 sherds (6803g, 6.05 EVEs) was recovered ditch fills and alluvial deposits. Mean sherd weight, at 10.5g, is the highest among the larger site assemblages. The assemblage is diverse in terms of fabrics represented (Table 1), but the chronological focus appears to be narrow, in the range *c.* AD 250/70 to 400, and evidence for earlier activity is limited to residual sherds of Central and East Gaulish Samian, and South-West Black-Burnished ware. Dating is provided primarily by the (Dorset) Black-Burnished ware and the typically late suite of forms comprising conical flanged bowls, flaring-rim jars with obtuse-angle burnished

lattice and plain-rim dishes. Also significant are the ‘traded’ wares consisting of Oxfordshire and New Forest finewares and mortaria. The occurrence of Oxfordshire wares presumes a date after *c.* AD 270/300, with bowl form C75 probably after *c.* AD 325 (Young 1977, 164–6). New Forest colour-coated ware dates after *c.* AD 260.

North of Barrington (Area 80, Sites 81, 82A, 82B). A small group from Site 81 (80 sherds, 716 g, 0.98 EVEs) consists mainly of Black-Burnished type wares, with South-Western Black-Burnished ware prominent. A ‘Durotrigian’ style vessel suggests activity as early as the second half of the 1st century. Most identifiable vessel forms occur among the Black-Burnished ware and comprise jars with short, everted rims and with acute-angled burnished lattice. There is in addition one decorated Gaulish Samian vessel, a Drag. 37 bowl. Most of the dating evidence suggests a focus in second half of 2nd century. From Sites 82A and 82B a modest assemblage (280 sherds, 1648 g, 0.43 EVEs) was recovered and 80% were Black-Burnished wares, mainly South-Western type (Table 1). Local/unsourced reduced sandy wares make up the bulk of the remainder with regional imports made up of a few sherds of New Forest type colour-coated wares and, more unusually, a sherd of Savernake grog-tempered ware from east Wiltshire. Forms among the (South-Western) Black-Burnished wares consist of earlier Roman type bead-rim/short everted-rim jars (as Holbrook

and Bidwell 1991, 116; type 9). Dating overall is consistent with an early Roman focus, confined within the mid 1st to 2nd centuries. Evidence for late Roman activity (after *c.* AD 260) is scarce, but present as three beaker sherds in New Forest colour-coated fabric from ditches in sites 82A and 82B. Pottery from Area 80 amounts to only 13 sherds (55g, 0.05 EVEs) from five features, sufficient only to imply broad Romano-British dating.

North of Coat (Area 31). Material from Area 31 amounted to 79 sherds, (911g, 0.55 EVEs), of which 75 sherds came from the ditch in Trench 31. Dating after *c.* 270/300 AD is indicated by the regional traded wares and in its composition this group is most similar to the Late Roman assemblage form Ilchester AGI.

Discussion

Typically for the South West the Roman pottery collection across the sites represented presents a narrow range of wares, with Black-Burnished wares foremost (78% of total sherd count; 65% by EVEs), a pattern probably reflecting the closeness of the production sites. Reduced coarsewares thought to be of relatively local origin (LOC GW1-4) make up the bulk of the remainder (16% by count; 25% by EVEs). Oxidised fabrics including colour-coated types are uncommon and mainly restricted to Later Roman traded ware

TABLE 2: ROMAN POTTERY VESSEL FORM TOTALS BY SITE

Site >	US	2	26	T31	48A	62-64	T80	81	82A/B	Total	
Form										No.	EVES
flagon		4		1						5	0.66
bk		3								3	0.10
jar		32	1	2		33	1	9	8	86	12.81
jar/bowl									1	1	0
jst		4		1		1				6	0.23
bowl	1	24		4		3		4		36	2.93
mort		2								2	0.15
dish		11			1	3		1		16	1.24
platter									1	1	0
lid		2			1					3	0.11

types (Table 1). As would be expected, given the closer proximity of the production sites, New Forest types are most common and occur as a range of beakers, bowls and one mortarium. The Roman assemblage compares in its broad fabric range with published assemblages from Ilchester (Leach 1982; Leach 1994).

There is no evidence from the pottery for 'elevated' status or for a specialised function for any of the sites. Levels of Samian (0.4% of the total), which can be an indicator of economic status for sites occupied from the early-mid Roman period, are well below the 2% figure common to many 'lower status' rural assemblages, and substantially less than at Ilchester (Leach 1994, 147). The range of vessel forms is at all sites heavily biased to the utilitarian, with jars accounting for 53% and 85% (EVEs total) for Ilchester AGI and Compton Durville respectively. Diversity of vessel form is at its greatest among the Late Roman groups at Ilchester AGI and North of Coat (Table 2). Fineware bowls and beakers and mortaria are mainly the products of the major Late Roman traded wares from outside of the region. Similarly flagons are present only from Ilchester AGI and North of Coat although are supplied from (presumed local) greyware and Black-Burnished ware industries.

Objects of metal and bone by E.R. McSloy

A total of 29 metal objects including items of copper alloy, iron and lead or lead alloy was hand-collected from six separate sites, almost all from Roman deposits. Nineteen items, mostly iron nails, come from Ilchester AGI (Site 2). A bone hairpin and a 'rough-out' came from North of Barrington (Site 81). The catalogue presented below comprises items dateable typologically or of intrinsic interest; none are illustrated. A summary catalogue describing all objects is contained in the archive.

Brooches (copper alloy)

No. 1 – Fragment of strip-like bow with portion of open(?) catchplate of Nauheim Derivative brooch. The lower part of the bow is shouldered and narrows to an elongated 'foot'. Central 'cabled' rib to bow set between grooves. Its incompleteness makes classification difficult.

The overall form is consistent with simple one-piece brooches of the first half of the 1st century AD. The perforated catchplate and particularly the elongated 'foot' are however untypical of Nauheim derivatives. A possible parallel for the treatment of the lower bow is from northern Germany (Schuster 2006, Taf. 1; no. 2). Length (surviving): 47mm. Site 82B; Roman pit 8227.

No. 2 – Colchester Derivative brooch with iron pin and axis bar. Hinged, with axis bar held in plain, tubular wings. The bow is flattish in section, the underside hollowed, tapering towards the foot with plain catchplate. Simple, double-grooved decoration at foot and raised triangular moulding at head with raised stud. The overall form conforms to the T-shaped class; its simplicity and absence of head loop, suggesting it is of the initial series. Close parallels for the head moulding are lacking. There are some similarities with an uncommon group of brooches, mainly from the South West (Mackreth 1982, 243, no. 1; Mackreth 2001, 189, no. 29) where the moulding is vestigial or from sprung forms requiring a riveted plate to secure the chord. Mackreth places such brooches early in the series, possibly before c. AD 70 (Mackreth 1982, 241). Length: 52mm. Site 82A; Roman ditch 8212.

No. 3 – Trumpet brooch spring and axis bar, which are only partially present, are fixed through a simple lug. The bow moulding is of triple form, the central element of exaggerated size. The foot moulding is damaged but appears to be a simple two-part knob. Other elaboration is confined to lines of knurling each side of the catchplate at the junction with the bow. The overall form is typical of 'plain' trumpet brooches. The trumpet series dates in the range c. AD 75–175 (Mackreth 1998, 134), with a likelihood that it is early in this range, before c. AD 120 (Butcher 2001, 58). Length 66mm. Site 63; Roman pit 6432.

Worked bone

No. 4 – Joining fragments almost certainly from hairpin or possibly needle 'roughout'. Roughly knife(?) trimmed from cortex of horse or cow longbone. Appears to have broken part way through the manufacturing process, prior to finishing on a lathe. The length and conical head would be appropriate for Crummy's Type

1 or Type 2 hairpins, both earlier Roman forms (Crummy 1979, 159–160). With no. 5, this object provides evidence for craft activity on site. Evidence for large-scale bone working is known mainly from urban sites, the best known being Colchester (Crummy 1983, 150–60). Unfinished items thought to be hairpins are few, but include a late Roman example from Deansway, Worcester (Greep 2004, 497, no. 48). Length 110mm. Site 81; Roman ditch 8104. No. 5 – Rough-trimmed fragment from horse or cow longbone. It retains a portion of the original bone surface and seems to represent a stage of object manufacture preliminary to that of no. 4. Length 52mm. Site 81; Roman ditch 8104.

ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

Plant macrofossils and charcoal *by Sarah Cobain*

Bulk soil samples were taken for the recovery of palaeoenvironmental remains from the Netherfield Farm Neolithic causeway enclosure ditch, the Neolithic long enclosure ditches and pits, a Roman ditch at Ilchester AGI, and the early medieval pits on the site of the Neolithic causeway enclosure. A report on the prehistoric and early medieval material from Netherfield Farm, South Petherton is published elsewhere (Mudd and Brett in press).

Roman ditch at Ilchester AGI (Site 2)

A sample from fill 2817 from ditch 2816 contained plant macrofossils indicative of an arable environment, including vetches (*Vicia* spp.), chess (*Bomus* spp.) and cereals including oats (*Avena* spp.), emmer wheat (*Triticum dicoccum*), spelt wheat (*Triticum spelta*), spelt glume bases and emmer/spelt glume bases. This cereal assemblage is relatively small, and it is not possible to ascertain the dominant crop present. This assemblage is typical of Roman sites in Somerset such as Catsgore (Hillman 1981, 144), Kenn Moor (Rippon et al. 2000, 125–127) and Ilchester (Murphy 1982, 288 and Paradine 1994, 195). Cereal crops had a wide range of uses. Oats were mainly used as fodder but were known to be used to make porridge, unleavened bread or oat cakes. Spelt wheat was used to bake bread and

emmer wheat, which had a lower gluten content and did not rise as well, was more often used for making porridge and cakes (Cool 2006, 70–71).

Animal bones by Sylvia Warman and Jonny Geber

A relatively small number of animal bones (908 fragments; 7,298g) were recovered from 11 sites, with just 116 identifiable to species. Following assessment, the osteological analysis was focused on the identification and distribution of species by period. No statistical analyses or comparisons have been undertaken. The bones were identified with the aid of an osteological reference collection and reference literature (Ellenberger and Baum 1912, Iregren (ed.) 2002; Prummel 1988; Schmid 1972; Wolsan 1982). The prehistoric animal bones (86 fragments, 291g) are reported upon elsewhere (Mudd and Brett, in press).

Late Iron Age and Roman bones from all sites

Bones of this date comprised 483 fragments (6,066g) from six sites (Table 3). They were dominated by elements from the main domesticates: cattle (*Bos taurus*), caprovine (*Ovis aries/Capra hircus*) and pig (*Sus* sp.). Four fragments of horse bones (*Equus caballus*) were identified from Ilchester AGI (Site 2) and Compton Durville (Site 63/64). Also from Ilchester AGI, fragments of long bones of fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) were found in ditch 2816, and vole (*Microtus agrestis*) and amphibian (*Amphibia* sp.) bones were identified from other deposits. No cut marks indicative of fur exploitation were identified on the fox bones (Baxter and Hamilton-Dyer 2003), and the presence of the latter two species is assumed to be natural intrusion. One deer bone of unidentifiable species (*Cervus* sp.) was recovered at North of Barrington (Site 82B) and indicates that venison also contributed to the local diet.

The animal bone is dominated by remains of adult and juvenile animals, and there is a lack of neonatal or infant bones which are usually taken as an indication that stock-rearing was taking place on site (Higham 1967). This absence may indicate that the animals kept and slaughtered at these locations were all adult or juvenile animals, or it may be that the material from the youngest age groups has simply not survived. Given

TABLE 3: IDENTIFIED ANIMAL BONES BY FRAGMENT COUNT (NISP)
FROM LATE IRON AGE AND ROMAN DEPOSITS BY SITE.Abbreviations: S/G = caprovine: sheep/goat; Amph. = Amphibian.
* = includes 147 fragments recovered from processed samples.

Site	Cattle	S/G	Pig	Horse	Fox	Deer	Vole	Amph	Indet	Total
2*	22	10	1	3	2	-	2	2	252	294
26	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	6
63/64	3	3	1	1	-	-	-	-	9	17
81	12	3	8	-	-	-	-	-	78	101
82A	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4
82B	4	2	2	-	-	1	-	-	52	61
<i>All</i>	42	20	12	4	2	1	2	2	398	483
<i>%NISP</i>	49.41	23.53	14.12	4.71	2.35	1.18	2.35	2.35	-	-

the variable preservation, the latter is entirely possible.

Butchery marks were noted on animal bones from most of the sites. This commonly took the form of long bones with the diaphyses chopped through. This is usually interpreted as waste from marrow extraction (Morales Muñiz 1988). Additionally, three fragments of worked bone were found in a Roman ditch at Site 81 North of Barrington, which appear to be from a blank for a hairpin (see McSloy, above, Objects of Metal and Bone, no. 4). The most likely element would appear to be a cattle metapodial as this provides the required length and thickness of strong cortical bone (MacGregor 1985). This suggests the production of bone objects here, although a greater number of finished items and waste material would be required to confidently identify if bone working was carried out on a regular basis. The bone in question is useful for both marrow extraction and bone working, so both processes may have been carried out.

DISCUSSION

The early prehistoric monument complex at Netherfield Farm, South Petherton is the first of its kind to be found in Somerset and, significantly, lies away from the regional concentrations of prehistoric monuments well-known from Mendip, the Cotswolds and the Wessex chalklands

(Webster 2008, 96-7). The causewayed enclosure is one of the furthest west (Oswald *et al.* 2001, fig. 1.1) and, at 0.25ha, one of the smallest. It is also of simple design and, whether originally of unfinished appearance or suffering truncation on its north-western side, its form is not uncommon among this class of monument. Its siting in a location without topographic prominence is not unusual in itself, but the fact that the Early Neolithic enclosure apparently became a focus for monument construction, with the Middle Neolithic long enclosure and the Bronze Age U-shaped enclosure and round barrows covering a time-span of perhaps a millennium, is remarkable (Fig. 2).

The date of construction of the causewayed enclosure has been modelled at 3645 – 3525 BC from two radiocarbon dates. The sequence of charred wood in the ditches of the long enclosure has enabled a more detailed chronology to be proposed for this feature despite the dates lying on a plateau in the calibration curve which prevents the precision that would otherwise have been achieved (Healy, in Mudd and Brett, in press). The degree of precision obtained for the dating of these two monuments does not extend to the complex as a whole and there is still a lack of clarity as to the sequence of activity. There is also little evidence as to how the monuments were used.

The earliest dated feature on the site is pit 48644 (c. 3780 – 3660 cal. BC: NZA-35810, 4949±20 BP; NZA-35816, 4951±20 BP) in the north-west

entrance of the long enclosure. Despite the location of the ditch, the dates show that it does not seem to have been related to the construction of the long enclosure as might have been suspected. There therefore seems to have been some pre-enclosure activity (to which some of the undated pits may have belonged) that may have marked the site for much later monument construction.

The sequence and duration of the initial construction of the causewayed enclosure is not known. Its later use entailed re-digging at least parts of the existing ditch segments, and this activity may have been widespread and have included joining up segments to make longer ditches, although the uniform nature of most fills made recuts difficult to define with confidence. Re-cutting continued into the Middle Neolithic and it appears that activity at the causewayed enclosure was partly concurrent with that at the long enclosure. The activities carried out at the causewayed enclosure have left little trace in the archaeological record, and this paucity may be particularly due to the non-preservation of bone. The prevalent view is that causewayed enclosures functioned as venues for group participation in occasional, perhaps seasonal, gatherings and a range of activities including feasting, exchange, lithic production and perhaps mortuary rituals (Webster 2008, 96). There is some patterning evident at Netherfield Farm, with most finds coming from ditch terminals, but little evidence of placed deposits other than small groups of flint such as three scrapers from ditch 48j.

The long enclosure ditches contained more remains but also present problems of interpretation. The lower naturally accumulated fills were largely sterile but thin layers of charcoal, shown to be mostly oak in ditch 48s, suggest the deposition of burnt or burning wood from nearby activities. The upper darker fills contained most of the material remains, and it is possible the nature of activity changed in the last phases of the monument's use. A series of hearths were dug along the centre line of ditch 48t associated with charcoal and large amounts of flint and pottery. The charred remains included a range of tree and shrub species as well as seeds of fruits such as hazelnut, cherry, sloe, crab apple and elder, which may indicate gatherings for the preparation and consumption of wild foods. Bayesian modelling of eleven radiocarbon dates from the long enclosure was undertaken (Healy in Mudd and Brett, in press). The preferred model sees the start

date for the long enclosure at 3555–3335 *cal. BC* (76% probability) or 3300–3130 *cal. BC* (19% probability) and abandonment at 3085–2825 *cal. BC* (94% probability). The dating is unusually good for this type of monument as long enclosures (like cursuses, which are of similar general date) tend to be poor both in artefacts and organic material. There is an absence of Late Neolithic or Beaker pottery from the excavated areas and it is unclear what, if anything, succeeded the long enclosure. The U-shaped enclosure is imprecisely dated by pottery to the Early to Middle Bronze Age, but its position suggests a respect for the causewayed enclosure (Fig. 4). It had deep narrow palisade trenches on its eastern and southern sides, but a much shallower ditch on its northern side and the intended form and purpose of the structure remains enigmatic. A presumed contemporaneity with the linear barrow cemetery to the north-east (Fig. 2) suggests it may have had a role in mortuary rituals.

The layout of ditches and enclosures to the north of the barrow cemetery is, on the dating provided by pottery, Early-Middle Bronze Age and broadly contemporary with the U-shaped enclosure, although the fact that they probably post-date at least some of the barrows may make them slightly later. Excavation was unable to determine whether this layout was domestic or funerary in nature, but apart from its context next to the funerary monuments, there is nothing intrinsically non-domestic about the features or their finds, and a domestic function appears likely. Settlements are fairly common in the wider region from the Middle Bronze Age, sometimes with individual or small groups of roundhouses set within a field system. There are examples from Castle Hill, Brinor, Devon (Fitzpatrick *et al.* 1999), the Marlborough Downs (Gingell 1992) and in the Poole/Wareham region of Dorset, Wytch Farm Oilfield (Cox and Hearne 1991) and Bestwall Quarry (Ladle and Woodward 2009). Until now there have been no examples in Somerset (Webster 2008, 120). That Bronze-Age land division is more common in the county than hitherto realised is suggested by the discovery of Bronze-Age ditches at Compton Durville (Site 62-64; Fig. 7). The pattern here is, however, fragmentary and uncertain as a consequence of the later, Roman, settlement and ditch system on a quite similar alignment. The presence of a reasonable amount of Bronze Age pottery and a fired clay object of unknown function (Fig.

8) from one of the ditches would seem to be an indication of settlement here, although it lacks any definition.

There was no evidence of Early or Middle Iron-Age occupation from anywhere along the pipeline route, but new discoveries included early Roman occupation at Compton Durville (Site 62-64), North of Barrington (Site 80-82A/B) and Stapleton (Site 26), and in each case pottery indicates Late Iron Age origins of uncertain nature, probably not pre-dating the 1st century AD. The occupation at Compton Durville extended over 200m east-west and represents a form of rural settlement spread among ditched enclosures, many of them double-ditched and probably flanking banks and hedgerows. The substantial quantity of pottery was of a largely utilitarian nature and among the few other finds were a trumpet brooch, a clay spindlewhorl, a fragment of clay loomweight and a sharpening stone. There was a complete absence of building materials, reinforcing the impression of a settlement of native architecture. That said, there was evidence of a rectangular building formed by beam slot 63u, which would appear to be of the Late Iron Age/Roman tradition. A building with similar characteristics was excavated in the Fosse Way suburb of Ilchester where it was dated to the later 1st century AD (Leach 1982, 61-5). Comparisons extend to the apparent combination of beam and vertical post construction and the absence of evidence for one end wall, making a detailed consideration of structural technique problematic. The presence of a roundhouse, about 10m in diameter, may be indicated by curving gully 63y. This lacks firm dating evidence as well as evidence for the structure itself, although a 1st-century AD date is plausible. A Bronze-Age date is less convincing as buildings of this period tend to be defined by rings of postholes rather than eaves-drip gullies (e.g. Fitzpatrick *et al.* 1999, 216-17).

Too little of the Compton Durville site was exposed to be able to define the site layout or pattern of activity, but finds date predominantly to the 1st and 2nd centuries AD. Later pottery from the western end of the site may indicate a shift in settlement in this direction to a focus outside the pipeline corridor, although a more fundamental dislocation of settlement in the 2nd or 3rd century is possible. This dating is echoed at North of Barrington (Sites 80-82A/B) where Iron-Age sherds are also present among the predominantly 1st- and 2nd-century AD assemblage. There

is also some later pottery although the long sequence of enclosure ditch re-cutting and the consequent mixing of pottery makes the detailed chronological framework unclear. The re-establishment of the same enclosure boundaries over the long term may indicate a different form of settlement to the web-like pattern at Compton Durville, although the evidence at both sites is limited. At Stapleton (Site 26), occupation is again in the form of sub-rectangular enclosures, which date to the early Roman period and lie in a relatively discrete group within the landscape as shown by the magnetometer plot.

There may have been a general reorganisation of settlement in the later Roman period in this part of south Somerset, as the evidence tends to suggest for rural settlement in the county generally (Holbrook 2011, 48). North of Coat a ditch in Trench 31 contained exclusively 3rd- and 4th-century pottery, and similar dating comes from the discrete group of enclosures at Ilchester AGI (Site 2). That site may well have been part of a farmstead and it was possibly associated with the villa at Ilchester Mead (c 800m away) which is shown to have reached its greatest expansion in the late Roman period (Hayward 1982). The burial of the Ilchester AGI enclosures beneath alluvium meant that features and finds were relatively well preserved. Despite the site's low lying location and proximity to the River Ye, the presence of crop-processing waste and arable weeds from a relatively rich soil sample suggests that the site had an arable component. It has been suggested that the floodplain south of Ilchester was drained in Roman times (Thew 1982, 169) and the evidence from Ilchester AGI shows that it was capable of supporting arable farming. There was no evidence of a buried soil, which perhaps suggests a short occupation, and no direct indications of the nature of land use at this time. The alluvial layers infilled the tops of the late Roman ditches giving a clear indication that flooding and alluviation commenced, at the latest, shortly after the abandonment of the settlement, and may even have been the cause of abandonment. This is significantly earlier than previous estimations, based on the sequences from Heave Acre and Townsend Close in the southern suburb of Ilchester, which suggested that post-Roman alluviation did not take place until late Saxon times and recommenced in the medieval period. A further observation in relation to the Fosse Way suburb sites is the closely

similar alignment of ditches, in both cases at right-angles to, and parallel with, the Fosse Way itself (Leach 1982, fig. 30). In view of the distance between Ilchester AGI and the Fosse Way (about 900m) this may be no more than coincidence, but it may be worth considering the implication of a widespread, systematic allotment of land on the western side of the town in tandem with its drainage.

These fragmentary sites take their place in the wider Roman landscape and settlement pattern of south Somerset which, in the immediate area of the project, includes an extensive, and possibly defended, site at Stoodham Hill, South Petherton which lies *c.* 500m south-west of Netherfield Farm. This site is known from superficial finds of Iron Age and Roman date and its character is poorly understood (Burrow *et al.* 1981). To the west of Barrington inhumation burials have been recorded at Puckington and these are probably Roman although an immediately post-Roman date is possible (Webster 2002; Holbrook 2011, 46). The current work has revealed a density of previously unknown Roman activity which is noteworthy, particularly in view of the emphasis in the planning stages of avoiding known archaeological sites.

There was no record of post-Roman settlement within the pipeline corridor except at Netherfield Farm, South Petherton where the re-occupation of the site of the causewayed enclosure in the 5th/6th century AD is an interesting addition to evidence for settlement at this time, which in regional terms is “remarkably elusive” (Webster 2008, 170). The scatter of pits were without any artefacts and the L-shaped ditch contained only ironwork and slag undiagnostic of date, as well as some residual and intrusive pottery. Radiocarbon was the only means of providing any date for the pits and resolving the ambiguous dating of the ditch, which is strongly indicated to have been in use in 7th and/or 8th centuries. The form and status of this occupation is not known although the presence of crop-processing waste perhaps suggests part of a settlement. There is no indication of high status from the features excavated and its location within and around a prehistoric enclosure would not seem of comparable significance to the re-occupation of defended sites in the immediate post Roman period, such as South Cadbury and Cadbury Congresbury, sometimes with exotic imports (Burrow 1981, Dark 2000, 125-44; Webster 2008, 171-75). There is intriguing evidence for non-

ferrous metalworking from chemical analysis of soil in a furnace-like pit, but any wider implications of this activity are not clear. The other features include ‘fire pits’ that may have been used for drying crops, although these are not in the form of the large, rectangular, ‘grain dryers’ of 7th/8th century AD date excavated at Chantry Fields, Gillingham, Dorset (Heaton 1992), and the features may have been a more general type of domestic oven. There is a good range of evidence for the types of cereals cultivated and the wood used as fuel, which appears to derive mainly from hedgerow or scrub species. The dominance of barley in the cereal assemblage is notable and may be a site-specific or regional adaptation.

The site is a significant addition to knowledge about post-Roman Somerset and, typical of such discoveries, a consequence of excavations aimed at more visible archaeological sites. The apparent absence of Roman and medieval remains nearby suggests it was a relatively short-lived component of a dispersed pattern of settlement prevalent at that time.

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