

## 5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES IN AREA 2

Area 2 contained a group of five large pits (Pit Group 1: 390, 406, 418, 423 and 478), seven four-post structures (Four-post Structures 2–8), a roundhouse (Roundhouse 7), an oval post-built structure (Structure 3), a ring ditch (Ring Ditch 545) and numerous other isolated pits and groups of pits (Other features).

### 5.1 Roundhouse 7

Roundhouse 7 (Illus 17) appears to have been part of a small complex of buildings along with Four-post Structures 2, 3 and 5. It consisted of a post ring of eight post holes (435, 440, 433, 446, 453, 442, 450 and 448). This post ring had a diameter of 5.6m. The post holes measured from 0.3m by 0.27m by 0.05m deep (C446) up to 0.63m by 0.5m by 0.27m deep (C442). A single fragment of hazel charcoal was found in Post Hole 450.

Outside the post ring there were two additional post holes (437 and 444) on the southern side which,

along with Post Holes 435 and 448, are thought to represent the remains of an entrance structure. These post holes were located *c* 1.2m apart and 2.4m out from the post ring.

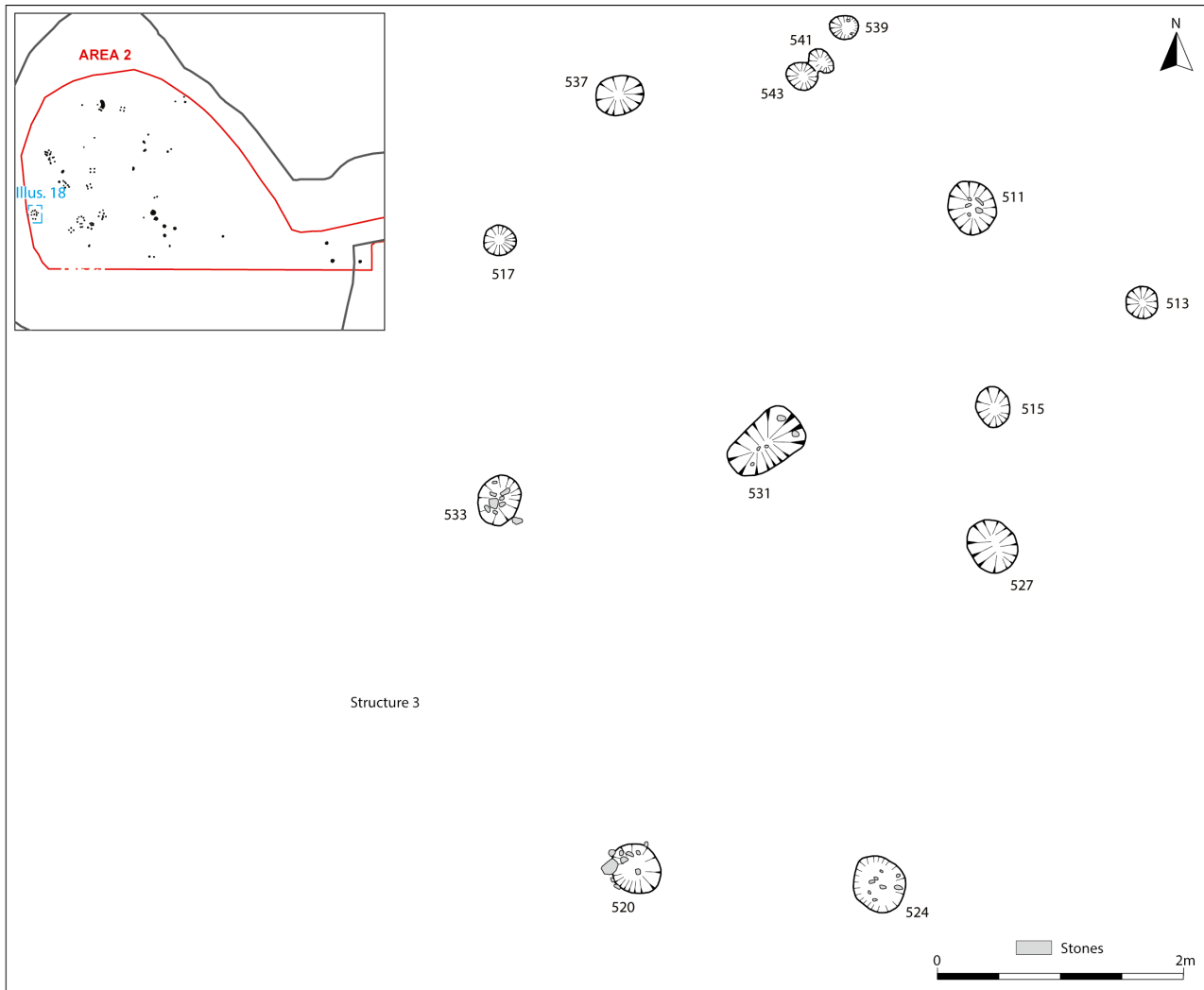
### 5.2 Structure 3

The outline of this oval post-built structure was defined by Post Holes 520, 533, 517, 537, 543, 511, 515, 529 and 524 (Illus 18). This structure measured 6.8m north to south by 4.4m east to west. The post holes measured between 0.2m by 0.26m (C543) and 0.45m by 0.4m (C533) and had depths between 0.09m (C537) and 0.3m (C520). Post Holes 539 and 541 located just outside the outline of this structure are thought to represent replacements or strengthening members for Post Hole 543.

Internally, there was a single post hole (C531) situated in the centre of this structure. This measured 0.76m by 0.46m and had a depth of 0.18m, and may imply that the structure had a large central post to support some form of roofing. Two fragments of degraded hazelnut shell were found in it.



**Illus 17** Plan of Roundhouse 7 and associated four-post structures



**Illus 18** Plan of Structure 3

### 5.3 Ring Ditch 545

Ring Ditch 545 (Illus 19–21) is thought to have been part of a roundhouse. It is crescent-shaped in plan, measuring 6.08m north to south by 2.08m east to west by 0.46m deep. The fill (C546) contained numerous rounded stones and boulders. There were no finds associated with this ring ditch, but it contained hazel charcoal which has been radiocarbon dated to the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age (780–400 cal BC, 95% probability; 2503±26 BP SUERC-100351, 2414±26 BP SUERC-100352).

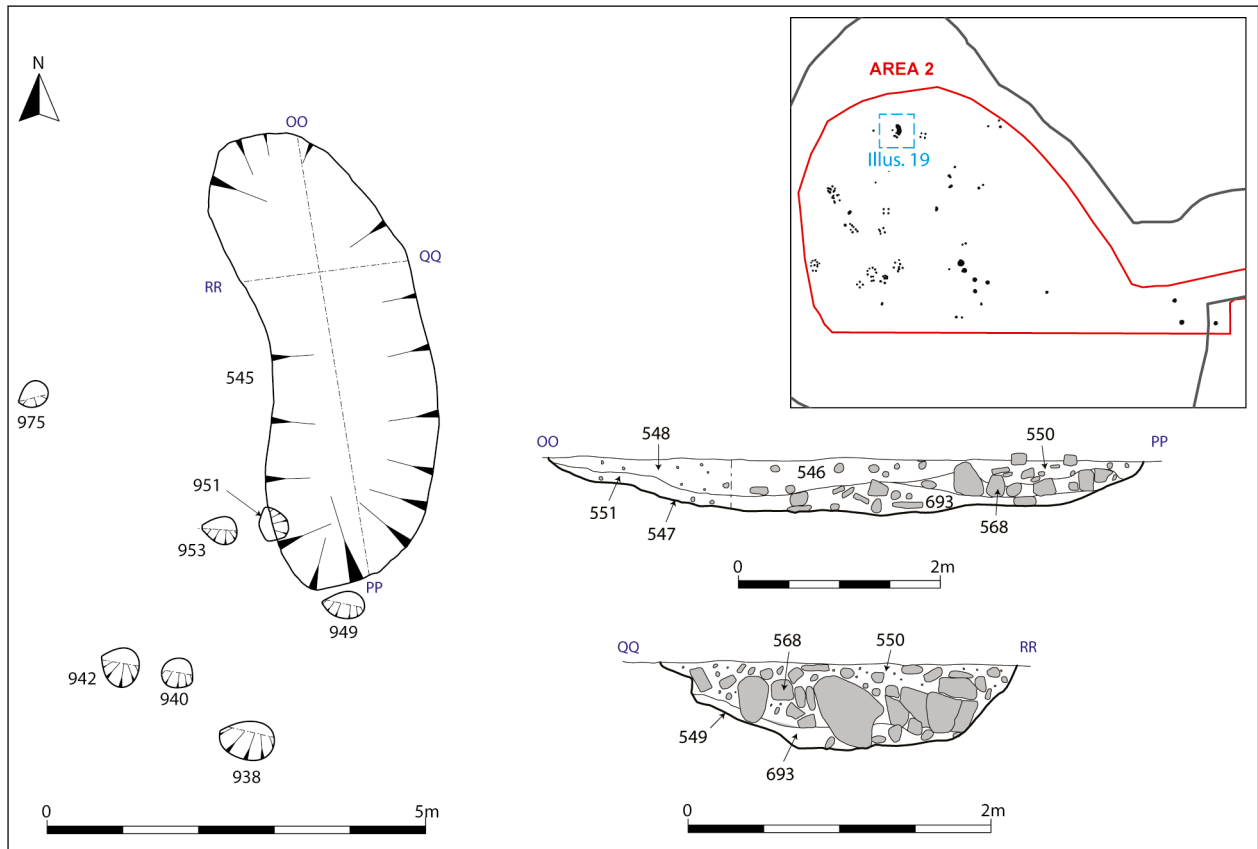
There were seven post holes (938, 940, 942, 949, 951, 953 and 975) located within close proximity to this ring ditch. One of these post holes (C951) had been cut into the upper edge of the ring ditch. The remaining post holes appear rather randomly placed (although Post Holes 938, 942, 949 and 953 could

possibly be interpreted as a four-post structure) and measured between 0.45m in diameter by 0.11m deep (C975) and 0.7m by 0.56m by 0.34m deep (C938). Post Holes 951 and 953 contained oak charcoal.

Due to the survival of this probable roundhouse being confined to the features described above, the original overall dimensions of this structure could not be determined.

### 5.4 Four-post Structure 2

Four-post Structure 2 (Illus 22) consisted of Post Holes 505, 510, 522 and 526, and measured 3.1–3.2m south-east to north-west by 3m–3.2m south-west to north-east. Both of the north-eastern post holes (C510 and 526) showed evidence of having been re-cut (C507 and 535 respectively).



**Illus 19** Plan and sections of Ring Ditch 545



**Illus 20** Ring Ditch 545 pre-excavation





**Illus 21** Ring Ditch 545, north-facing section

The post holes forming this structure measured between 0.46m long by 0.4m wide by 0.22m deep (C505) and 0.68m long by 0.5m wide by 0.22m deep (C510), with the re-cut post holes having the larger dimensions. Three sherds of prehistoric pottery, including a base, were recovered from Post Hole 522.

### 5.5 Four-post Structure 3

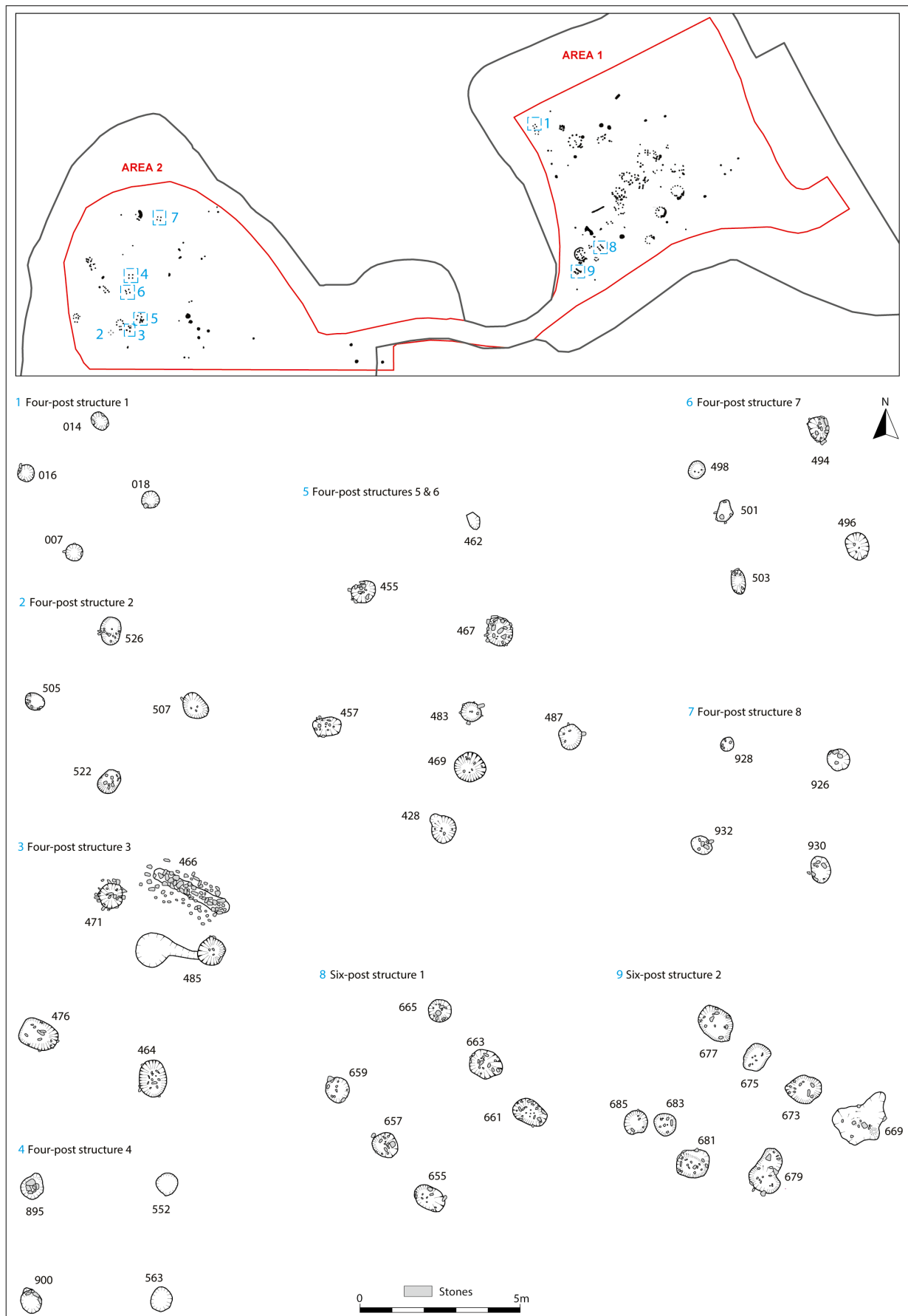
Four-post Structure 3 (Illus 22 and 23) had slightly irregularly spaced post holes (C464, 471, 476 and 485) measuring 3.95m–4.25m north-east to south-west by 3.2m–3.6m south-east to north-west. The two southern post holes (C464 and 476) were both oval in plan and had very similar measurements of 0.86m long by 0.64m wide by 0.39m deep and 0.88m long by 0.68m wide by 0.35m deep respectively. Likewise, Post Holes 471 and 485 were very similar, both being circular in plan, with

diameters of  $\approx$  0.58m and 0.6m and depths of 0.26m and 0.19m respectively. A trough quern was recovered from Post Hole 471.

Immediately to the north-east of this structure there was a shallow depression measuring 2.1m long by up to 0.48m wide containing numerous tightly packed cobbles (C466). This may have been some kind of entrance surface or working area associated with the usage of this structure.

### 5.6. Four-post Structure 4

Four-post Structure 4 (Illus 22) (Post Holes 552, 563, 895 and 901) measured 3.2m north to south, and 3.5m–3.6m east to west. The post holes measured between 0.5m (C901) and 0.6m (C895) in diameter and had depths ranging between 0.28m (C895 and 901) and 0.38m (C552). Post Hole 552 contained evidence of a possible post pipe and packing stones.



Illus 22 Four- and six-post structures





**Illus 23** Four-post Structure 3 post-excavation

### 5.7 Four-post Structure 5

Four-post Structure 5 (Illus 22) (Post Holes 455, 457, 467 and 469) measured 3.8–3.85m NNE to SSW by 3.85m–4.1m WNW to ESE. The post holes measured from 0.5m by 0.48m by 0.28m deep (C457) up to 0.72m by 0.68m by 0.44m deep (C455). There were no finds from this feature. Four-post Structure 5 partially overlay or was partially overlain by Four-post Structure 6, suggesting two phases of construction.

### 5.8 Four-post Structure 6

Only three post holes (C428, 483 and 487) associated with Four-post Structure 6 (Illus 22) were identified, with a possible fourth post hole surviving only as a vague hollow within the correct location. This structure measured 2.8m WNW to ESE by 3.35m NNE to SSW. The post holes measured between 0.47m by 0.41m (C483) and 0.6m in diameter (C428) and had depths between 0.15m (C428) and 0.21m (C487). There were no finds

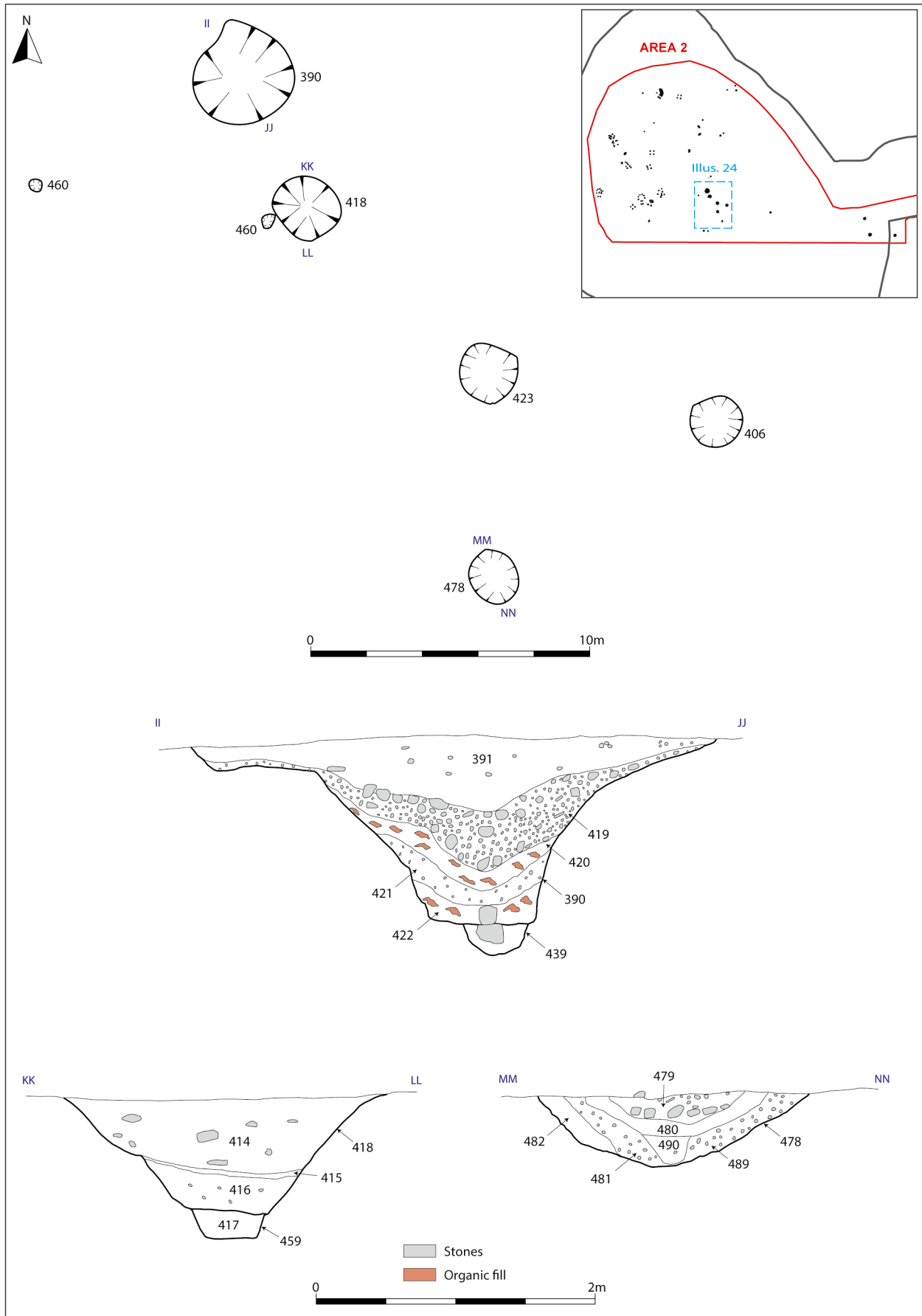
from this feature. Four-post Structure 6 partially overlay or was partially overlain by Four-post Structure 5, suggesting two phases of construction.

### 5.9 Four-post Structure 7

Four-post Structure 7 consisted of Post Holes 493, 496, 498 and 503 (Illus 22) and measured 3.25m–3.45m NNW to SSE by 3.3m–3.4m WSW to ENE. The post holes measured between 0.44m long by 0.4m wide by 0.17m deep (C498) and 0.62m long by 0.54m wide by 0.34m deep (C496). It is unclear if a fifth pit/post hole (C501) between C498 and C503 was part of this structure.

### 5.10 Four-post Structure 8

Four-post Structure 8 (Illus 22) (Post Holes 926, 928, 930 and 932) measured 2.8m–3.1m north to south, and 3m–3.3m east to west. The post holes measured from 0.3m in diameter (C928) up to 0.6m by 0.55m (C926 and 930) and had depths of between 0.1m (C928) and 0.18m (C926 and 930).



**Illus 24** Plan of Pit Groups 390, 406, 418, 423 and 478 and sections of pits with evidence of posts





**Illus 25** Pit Group 1 (390, 406, 418, 423 and 478) pre-excavation

### 5.11 Pit Group 1

A group of five large pits (C390, 406, 418, 423 and 478) (Illus 24 and 25) was identified *c* 50m to the east of Roundhouse 7. These measured between 3.77m and 1.95m across by 0.67m to 1.4m deep. They contained charcoal with trace finds of hazelnut shell. Pits 390 and 418 were of particular note because they both had a post hole (C439 and 459 respectively) cut into the base of them (Illus 26 and 27). These post holes measured 0.75m by 0.45m by 0.25m (C439) and 0.6m by 0.6m by 0.21m deep (C459). Evidence of these pits having contained posts was also identified within Pit 478, which contained a possible post pipe (C490). The purpose of these posts is unclear, but the size of these pits would indicate that they held substantial timber uprights. Pits 390 and 418 showed no evidence of a post pipe within the fill deposits, suggesting that the pits may have been re-excavated for the removal of the posts so that they could be reutilised elsewhere or, on the basis of the charcoal assemblage, they could have been fire pits.

### 5.12 Early medieval features

Two features interpreted as a corn-drying kiln and possible field oven were located to the south-east of Four-post Structure 8 (C955 and 960). Both contained charcoal (hazel, alder, willow/poplar) and carbonised cereal grain (hulled barley, naked barley and oat) along with weed seeds indicating *in situ* burning.

Kiln 960 was roughly keyhole-shaped in plan, measuring 2.1m north-west to south-east by 1.1m south-west to north-east by 0.24m deep. It had a rounded shallow bowl at the north-western end and a steeper-sided channel (possible flue) to the south-eastern end, suggesting that it may have been a kiln.

Pit 955 was an irregular linear pit measuring 2.14m long by 0.22m deep. Its upper fill (957) contained frequent fire-cracked stone and has been interpreted as a possible field oven.

Radiocarbon dates from charred grain from the possible flue of Kiln 960 were dated to the very early medieval period (540–660 cal AD, 95% probability; 1428±24 BP SUERC-99194, 1493±24





Illus 26 Pit 390, west-facing section



Illus 27 Pit 418 post-excavation



BP SUERC-99198). Dates from Pit 955 were a little earlier, calibrating to 250–540 cal AD (95% probability; 1666±26 BP SUERC-100362, 1631±26 BP SUERC-100363).

### 5.13 Other features in Area 2

Numerous isolated pits and groups of pits were also identified within Area 2. It is possible that other structures are present in these pit groupings which cannot be readily identified.

Three large pits (C317, 319 and 376) were recorded at the eastern end of this area. The largest of these (C317) measured 2.4m by 2.25m by 0.79m deep, and Pit 319 contained large quantities of fire-cracked stone and oak charcoal, indicating in situ burning.

A line of five pits (C577, 579, 581, 583 and 585) was identified to the west of Four-post Structure 7. These sat opposite a further three erratically located pits (C569, 571 and 587). Three sherds of later prehistoric pottery, including a rim, were recovered from Pit 587. Pit 577 contained oak charcoal and was perhaps a fire or waste pit. A larger group of seventeen pits to the north-west had two pits (C905 and 920) containing later prehistoric pottery, including rims.

Pit 944, located with two other undated small round pits close to Kiln 960, is the only feature from the site to be dated to the Middle Neolithic, with radiocarbon samples from oak and hazel charcoal returning a date range of 3360–3090 cal BC (95% probability; 4516±26 BP SUERC-100360, 4498±26 BP SUERC-100361).