
3 Results

3.1 Evaluation

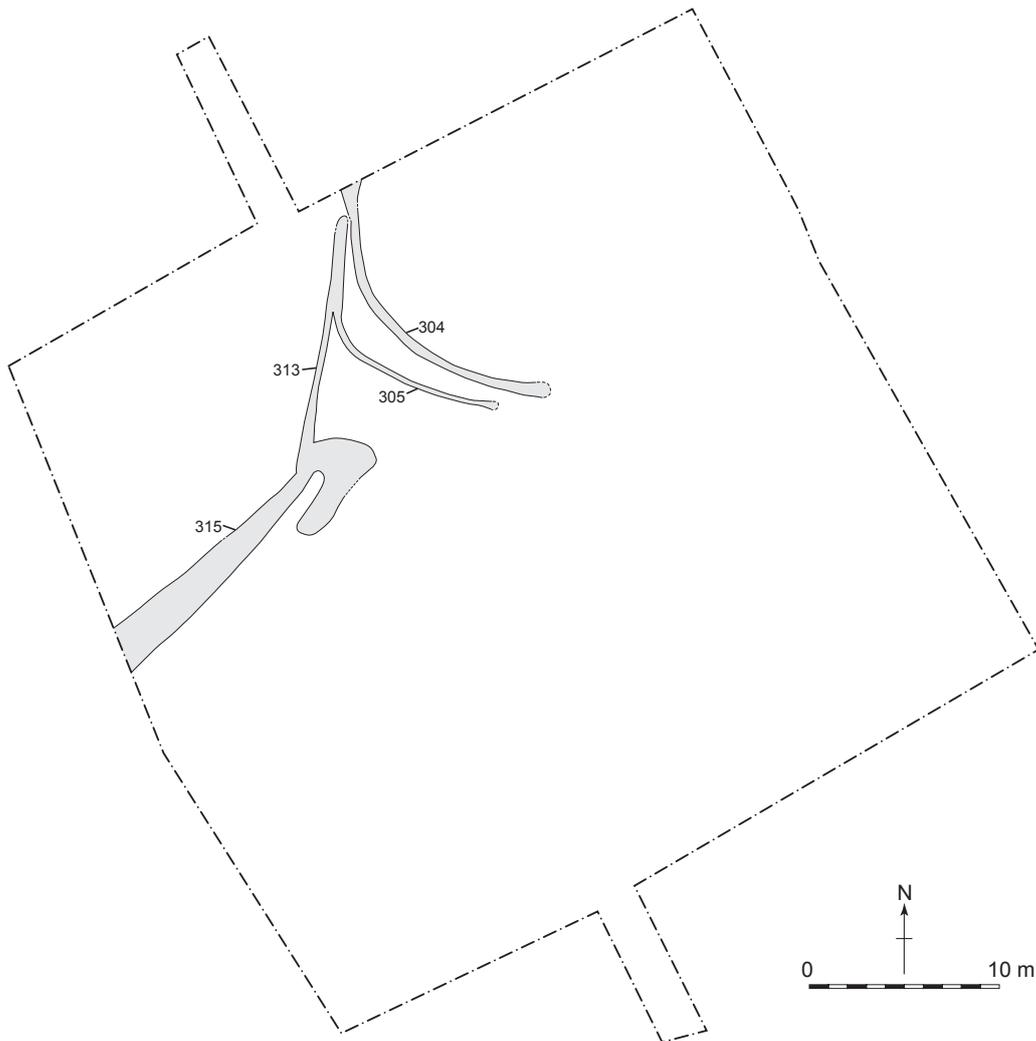
The evaluation consisted of 32 machine-excavated trenches with a combined length of just over 1km and a width of 2m (illus 1), which represents an approximately 0.33% sample of the development area. The majority of the trench positions were selected on topographic grounds, while some were positioned to assess and intersect circular cropmarks located to the north of Gogar Green Farm, in particular NT17SE 21, and also to locate the eastern extent of Gogar Green Roman Temporary Camp. Features of probable prehistoric date were identified in Trenches 1, 7–12 and 21–25. Subsequent excavations were targeted on the areas surrounding these trenches. The findings from these trenches are discussed below within the areas that were opened

around them. With the exception of isolated features of unknown/modern date, nothing of significance was found in the remaining trenches.

3.2 Excavation

3.2.1 Area A

Area A (illus 1) consisted of a roughly rectangular trench approximately 43m long by 39m wide (1700sq m), positioned to investigate features identified during the evaluation in Trench 1. Interpretation of the features identified in Area A is difficult due to a lack of dating evidence or a coherent or understandable pattern. In particular, the protection provided by colluvial deposits elsewhere in the study area was



Illus 4 Plan of Area A, Phase I

absent in Area A, resulting in substantial truncation of features and probably the complete destruction of all but the deepest features. Three stratigraphic phases of activity were identified although it is highly likely that these 'phases' were not separated by any substantial period of time and may represent successive elements of the same settlement.

Phase I

Stratigraphically, the earliest group of features identified at the site consisted of a group of linear and curvilinear features located in the north-west quadrant of the trench (illus 4).

A shallow ditch (context 313) approximately 13m long and aligned from north-east to south-west was identified at the north end of the trench. This appeared to continue as the badly truncated base of a broad ditch (context 315) aligned south-west to north-east which ran for 16m from the west edge of the trench. This was very shallow and irregular in profile (illus 5a). A group of irregular hollows lay in the area where these two features intersected and a stratigraphic relationship could not be determined.

Two roughly concentric curvilinear features (304 and

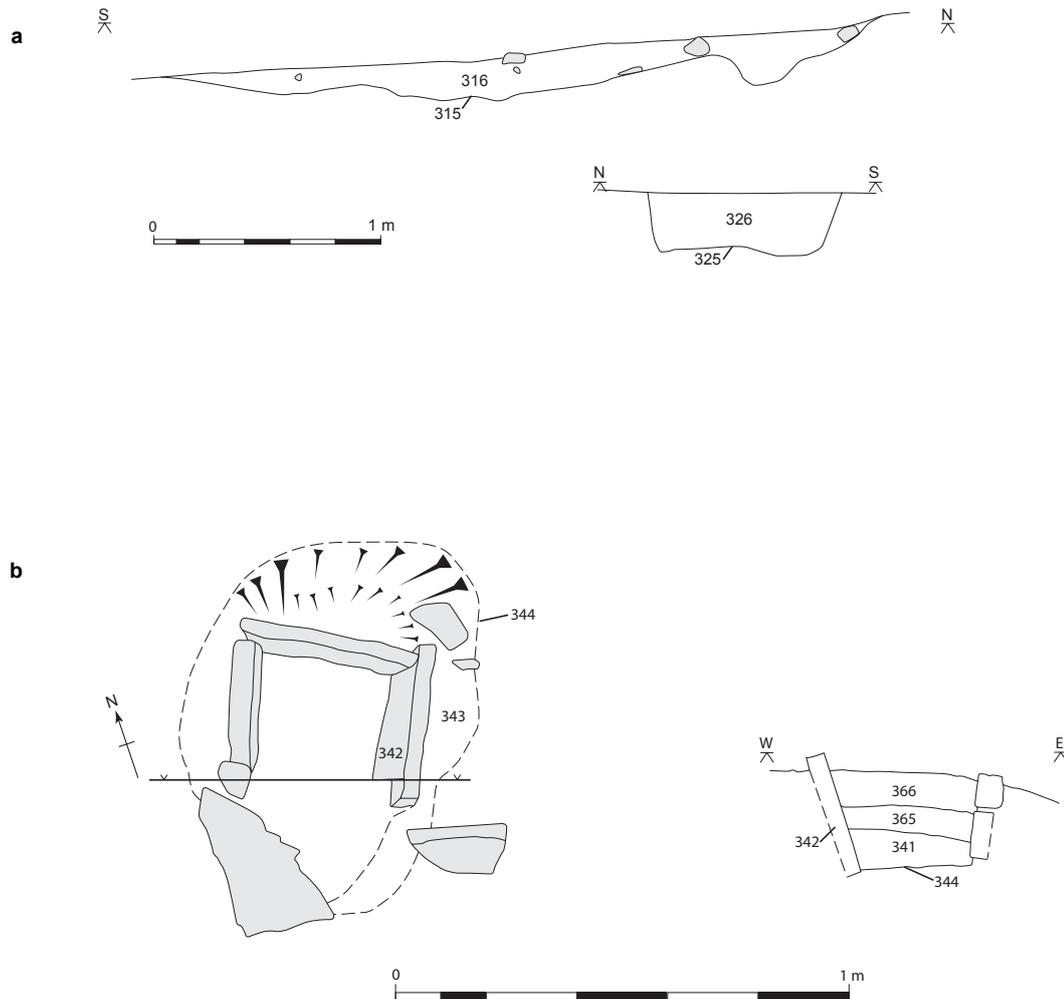
305) intersected with the north end of Ditch 313. These curved off to the south-east where they terminated.

All of these features were heavily truncated, with only the bases surviving, and all had extremely similar fills, consisting of compact red-brown sandy silt, making it impossible to determine their stratigraphic relationships. The fills were homogenous and no indication of either natural silting or deliberate back-filling was noted. They were all cut by a third curvilinear feature (context 312), very close to the north trench edge, which has been allocated to Phase III.

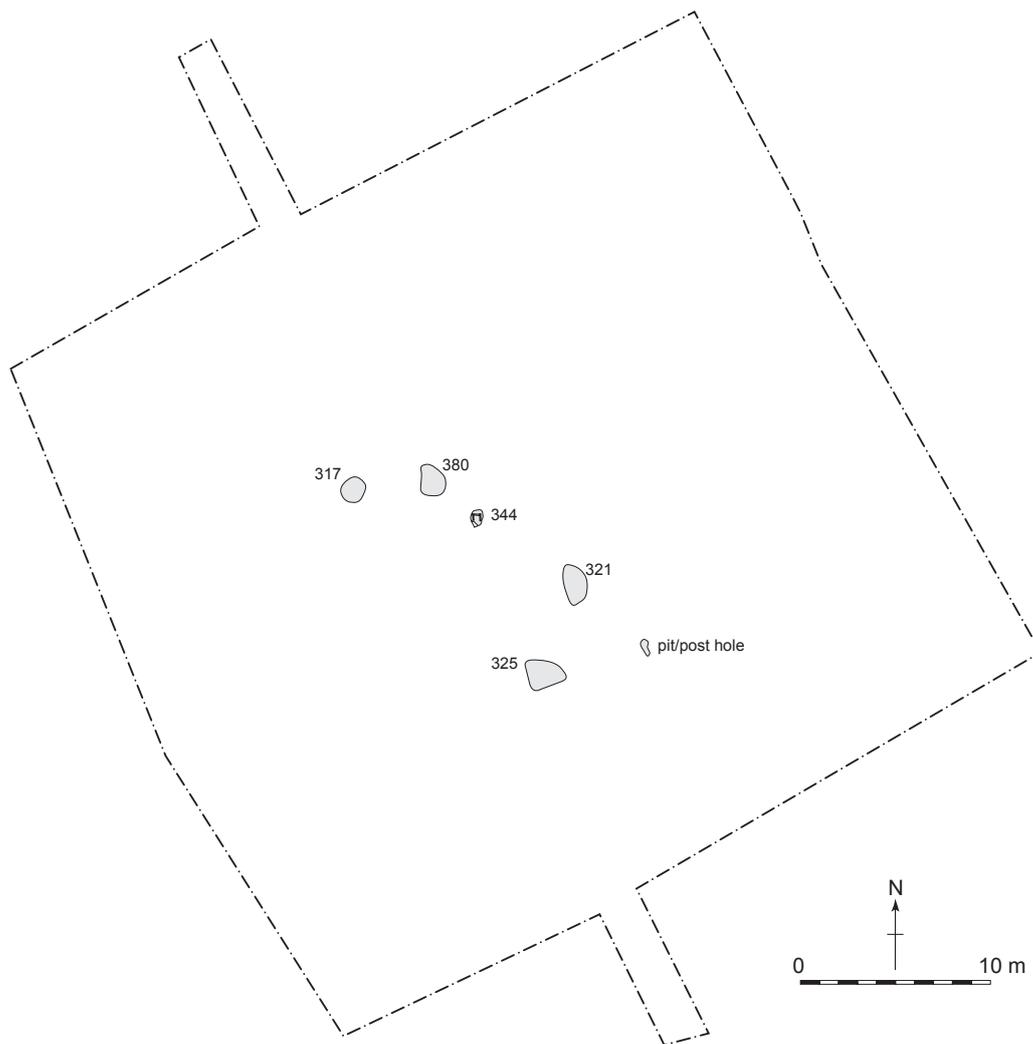
The Phase I features did not survive sufficiently to allow a meaningful interpretation of their date or function. The most logical assumption would be that they represented some form of spatial division be it for domestic, agricultural or ritual purposes. The concentric ditches (310 and 309) are likely to represent two phases of the same boundary. Unfortunately, no chronological indicators were retrieved from these features.

Phase II (illus 6)

Four pits were identified at the centre of the excavation trench (Pits 317, 321, 325 & 380). These



Illus 5 **a** sections of Features 315 and 325; **b** Plan and section of Feature 344



Illus 6 Plan of Area A, Phase II

were largely irregular in plan, with the exception of a roughly circular cut for Pit 317, which formed the easternmost pit of this group. The fills of these features were very similar, consisting of either red-brown clay loam or red-brown silty loam with occasional cobbles or small angular pebbles.

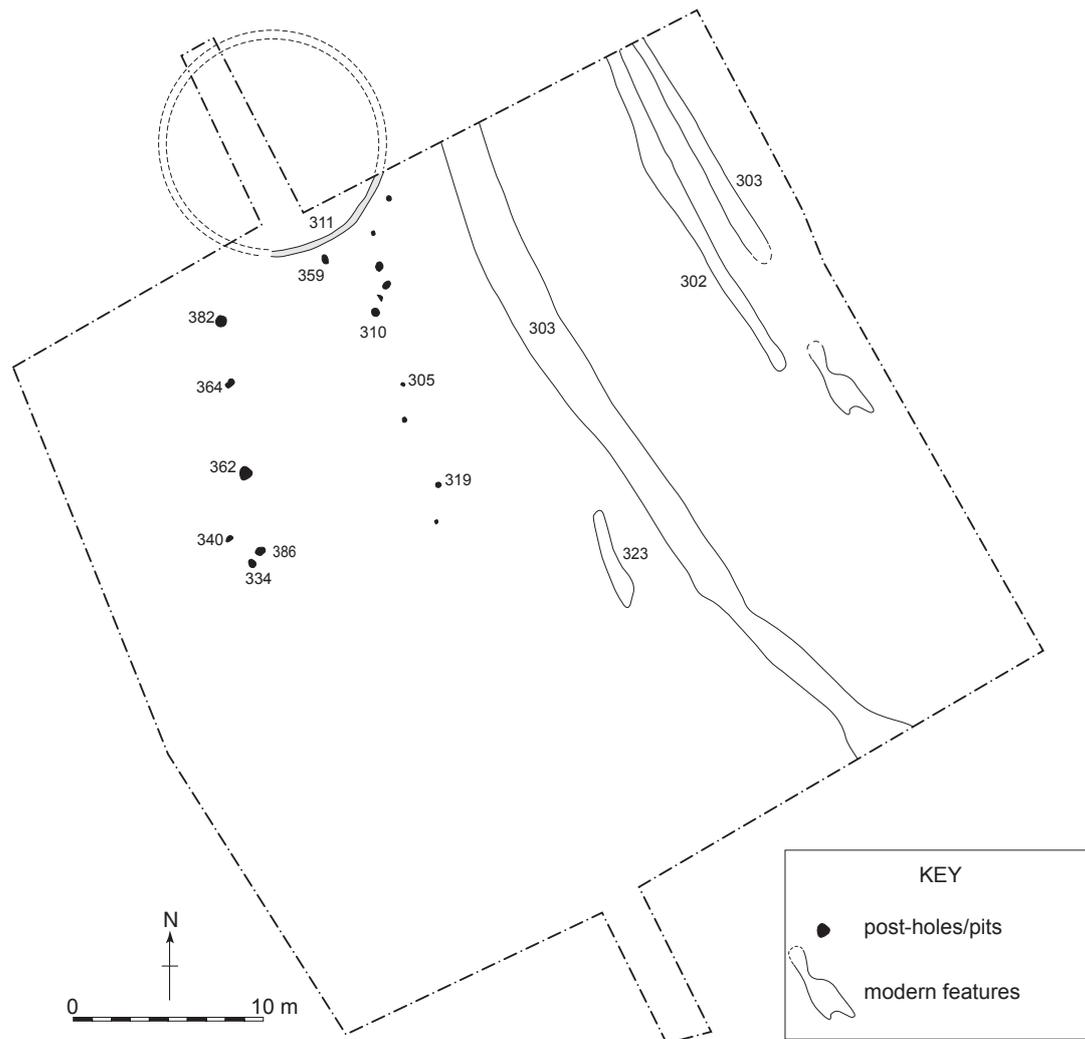
Possibly associated with this group of pits was Feature 344, a stone-lined pit. A fragment of stone slab from the surface of the pit indicated that the feature was originally capped (*illus 5b*). The cut (context 344) was roughly rectangular in plan with slightly concave sides and a flat regular base. Within the cut, three upright slabs were set on the north, east and west sides to form a three-sided box (context 342). This box was set in a matrix of dark red-brown silty loam (context 343). This stone-lined pit was the only feature from Phase II which provided some evidence for date or function on typological grounds. This had the appearance of a cist but no burial or grave goods were recovered from within it. It was also quite small (approximately 0.25m by 0.4m). The lack of human remains is not, however, surprising

as no bone was preserved in any context on the site due to the acidic nature of the receiving environment. It is possible that the cist was either constructed to hold the remains of a small infant or possibly held a cremation, though alternatively it may have simply served some form of storage function.

Phase III

The Phase I and II features were, in places, cut by a spread of negative features which have been grouped together as Phase III (*illus 7*). This was made up of two elements: a possible ring-ditch and an 'avenue' of post-holes.

At the north of the excavated area, a curvi linear ditch (context 312) was excavated which may represent part of a ring-ditch. Extrapolation of the curve of the feature would give a diameter of approximately 12m. The cut was regular with a concave base and the fill consisted of red-brown silty loam containing occasional small, angular and round stones. An



Illus 7 Plan of Area A, Phase III and modern features

extension trench was excavated in order to try and locate the northern extent of this feature; however, the results proved negative. The absence of any discernable return is most likely explained by truncation caused by medieval and later ploughing as the ground surface rose gently to the north. No artefacts were recovered from the fill of the ditch.

This ring-ditch may be the remains of a timber building, the dominant type of structure during the later prehistory of Britain (O'Sullivan 1998) and which is recorded, primarily from cropmarks, as occurring widely across the Lothians. Excavated examples – Melville Nurseries, Dalkeith (Raisen & Rees 1995); Lamb's Nursery, Dalkeith (Cook 2000); Monktonhall, Inveresk (Hanson 2002), and Fishers Road, Port Seton (Haselgrove & McCullagh 2000) – have demonstrated that this class of structure was widely used from the mid-second millennium BC to the mid-first millennium AD. The 12m diameter of the Maybury Park ring-ditch fits well with these examples of excavated roundhouses and compares favourably with the Iron Age structures identified both from Monktonhall (Hanson 2002) and

at Fishers Road, Port Seton (Haselgrove & McCullagh 2000), where Structures 1, 2 and 3 at Fishers Road West all measured between 10m and 12m in diameter. Structure CS 1 at Fisher Road East was of similar dimensions.

An unusual variation from the normal plan of such buildings was evident on the south edge of the ring-ditch. Here two parallel rows of post-holes, set 8.5m apart, lead to/from the structure for 15m. The western alignment (Post-holes 382, 364, 362, 340, 386 & 334) ran in a straight line of four, at intervals of between 3.25m and 5m, with two others (Post-holes 340 & 334) lying close to Post-hole 386 at the southern end of the line. These three southern post-holes cut Ditch 315. The eastern alignment of post-holes was composed of 10 smaller features. It was less regular than that to the west, and the intervals were between 0.7m and 4m. Two of the post-holes cut Ditch 304 and one cut a large pit (379). Post-hole 359 was identified between the two lines, approximately 3m west of the eastern alignment.



Illus 8 Aerial view of Areas B, C, D & E, looking west (© RCHAMS)

Elaborate entrances to roundhouses are not uncommon. House 1 at Lairg had three parallel lines of post-holes at the south-east which were interpreted as forming a long, timber-lined passage, possibly up to 6m long (McCullough & Tipping 1998, 37). A number of the early roundhouses at Catterick had extensive areas of paving/cobbling emanating from their entrances for a considerable distance, indicating the space outside the entrance was of considerable importance and heavily used (Moloney *et al* 2003, 13–21). At Maybury, there was no gap at the location where the ‘avenue’ met the ring-ditch and it may be that the arrangement of post-holes formed a small stock enclosure to the side of the building rather than an elaborate entrance or an external extension to the living space. At Catterick, a similar arrangement of post-holes (Structure 8010), 15m long by 6m wide, to the north-east of Structure 8004 was loosely phased with the Iron Age ring-ditches (Moloney *et al* 2003, 5 and fig 3) and interpreted as a rudimentary farm building such as a sheep/goat pen. A similar function could be envisaged for the Maybury post-holes.

Phase IV: Post-medieval

A number of parallel linear features running north to south through the eastern part of the site proved to be the result of medieval and later agricultural activity, ie drainage and rig and furrow (illus 7; contexts 302, 303, 323).

3.2.2 Area B

Area B was located in the saddle between two knolls and measured 4500sq m (illus 1; illus 8). Once the site was stripped, several hundred features were identified; a large proportion of these proved to be either animal burrows or modern features, none of which are discussed here.

Phase I: Neolithic/Bronze Age activity

The earliest activity in Area B comprised a trackway and possible flimsy structure/shelter associated with a large pit. The trackway consisted of a large, broad linear feature (802) which ran from near the north-west corner of the excavation area diagonally to the south-east (illus 9; illus 10). This is likely to have been formed through erosion resulting from human and animal traffic. A length of over 56m was contained within the trench. It averaged about 6m wide and 0.2–0.4m deep, with a flattish, very rough bottom. It crossed the slope at the south edge of the north knoll at an oblique angle. This trackway may well have extended further westwards as its western end, along with much of this section of the site, had been truncated by post-medieval ploughing. The fill of the trackway, which was sealed by a layer of colluvium, consisted of reddish-brown sandy silt (context 560) which contained a single fragment of struck chert.

In its eastern half, the southern edge of the trackway

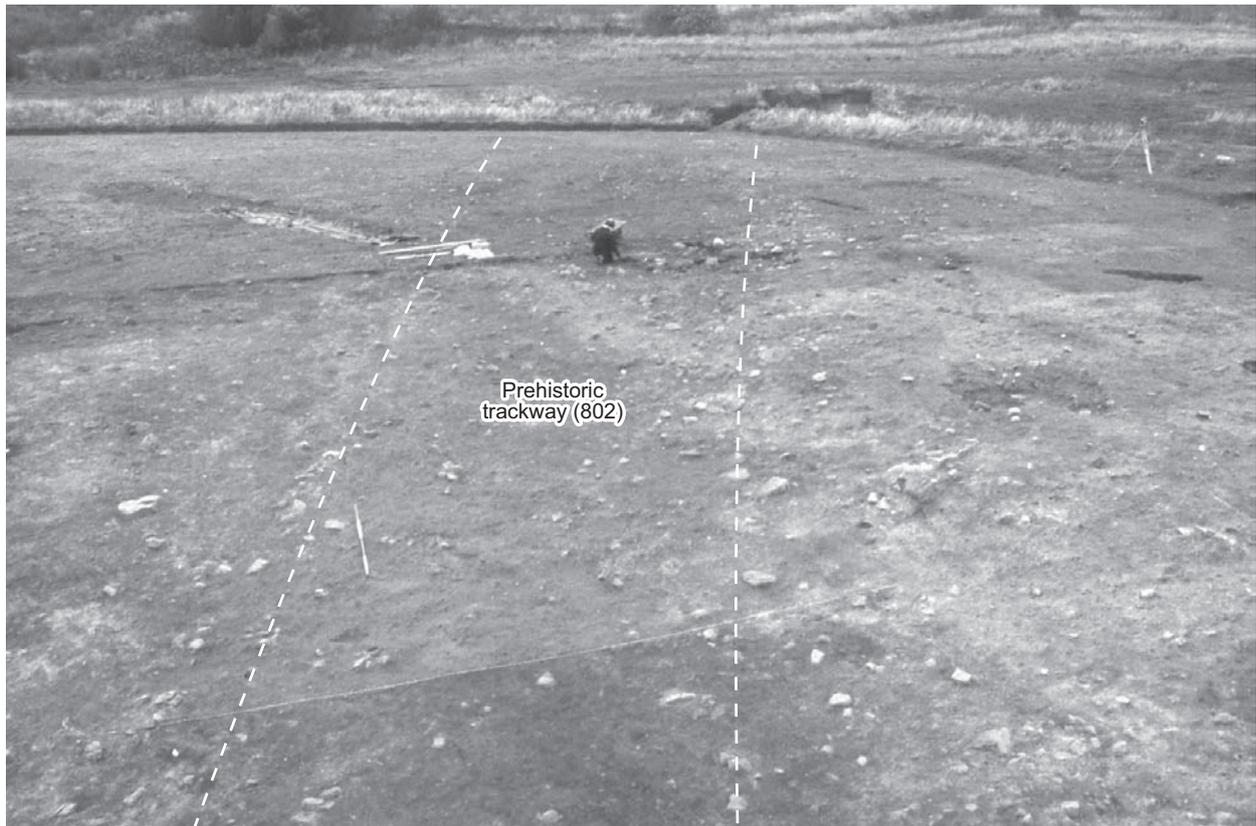


Illus 9 Plan of Area B, Phase I

was marked by a discontinuous line of large stones (context 582), some set on edge. In some places it was just possible to discern a cut and fill associated with these stones, but generally this was not possible. A further element of this feature was identified running

on a north-east to south-west alignment to the south of the main line (context 785).

Dating of the trackway is dependent on stratigraphy. Fragments of probable Bronze Age pottery were found in a small pit which cut into the centre



Illus 10 View of possible trackway (context 802)

Table 1 Radiocarbon dates

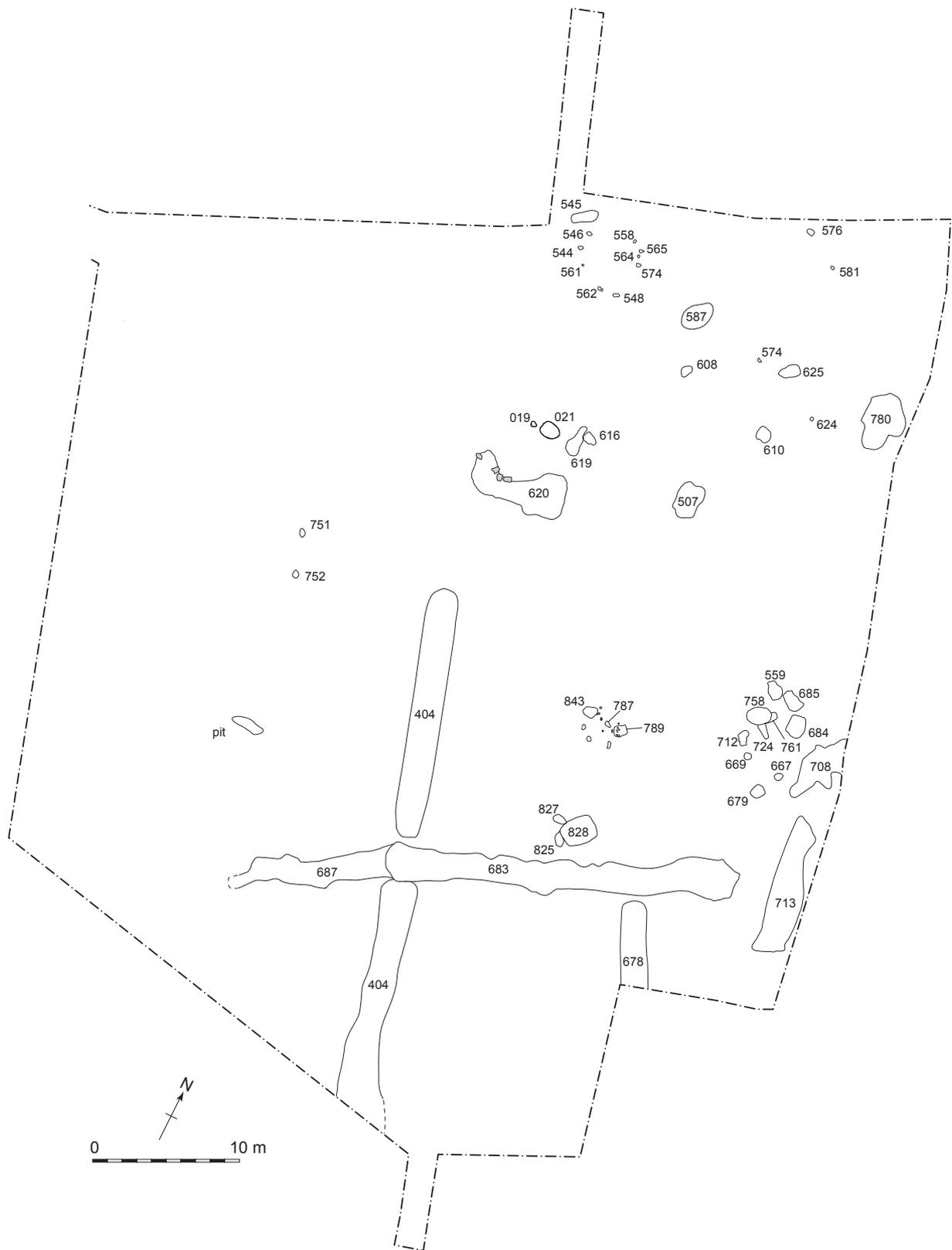
Lab code	Area/Context	Sample material	Lab age BP $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ (0/00)	Calibrated (2-sigma)
GU-11069	B 552	Hazel	2830±50	880–830 BC
GU-11070	B 636	Alder	3740±50	2310–1950 BC
GU-11071	B 649	Hazelnut	4710±55	3640–3360 BC
GU-11072	B 671	Hazel	4995±55	3950–3660 BC
GU-11073	B 718	Plum	2730±45	980–800 BC
GU-11074	F 1129	Hazel	2020±50	170 BC–AD 80

of the trackway, and radiocarbon analysis of a sample from a small pit (712) which cut the edge of the trackway provided a date of 2310–1950 cal BC at 2-sigma (GU-11070; Table 1), again indicating a Neolithic or Early Bronze Age date for the abandonment of the feature.

Prehistoric trackways or droveways have been identified in numerous locations throughout Britain and Ireland and these are generally of the same form throughout prehistory. From the earliest known examples these have consisted of two parallel ditches which are believed to have had external banks surmounted by hedges. Animals were driven along between the ditches, sometimes causing a hollow to be eroded by the traffic. Such droveways were in existence from the Neolithic, as at the Ceide Fields, Co Mayo, Ireland, and continued in use up to the Late Iron Age and beyond, as with the extensive

trackway system recorded in West Yorkshire in advance of the construction of the M1–A1 Link Road (Roberts *et al* 2001). The Maybury ‘trackway’ has no evidence for such defining ditches identified elsewhere. It is possible, however, that hedges grown each side of the hollow may have left no visible trace in the archaeological record (as demonstrated by Pryor 1998, 71). However, the stone linear feature (582) has been tentatively identified as remnants of a boundary; possibly packing stones for a fence.

Trackways are generally designed to manage the movement of animals. At Fengate, a sufficient area of a prehistoric landscape was excavated to postulate the function of such a trackway (Pryor 1998). Here it was shown that the trackway formed the main element of a field system that was laid out along the fen edge and at right angles to the wetlands. Animals stayed on the dry edge of the fen



Illus 11 Plan of Area B, Phase II

during winter and were moved into the wetlands during the drier months of the summer. Assuming trackways were designed for 'structured mobility', it is difficult with the available evidence to determine the function of the Maybury 'trackway'. The prehis-

toric topography would have consisted of higher and drier ground to the south of the site, with a broad, lower area of marshy ground running west/east along the northern edge (S Carter, pers comm) (illus 2). Using the Fengate model, it would be assumed



Illus 12 'Banjo-shaped' Feature 620



Illus 13 Hearths 789 and 843

that the 'trackway' would have linked these two environments and not run parallel to them. It is possible, however, that the trackway was skirting around the knoll at this point, heading towards the Gogar Burn and a possible crossing point.

A slightly curving line of five widely spaced large post-holes or small pits (018, 669, 670, 672 & 674) was located near the south edge of the excavated area (illus 9). These varied in depth between 0.16m and 0.33m and were irregular in plan and profile. The fills were consistently dark brown silty sand containing occasional rounded stones. A large, elongated oval pit (673) appeared to be partially enclosed by the five post-holes. On excavation, this feature proved to be very irregularly shaped. Its west side was very shallow, forming a 'step' down into the deeper east side. The north and south ends were both deeper than the central part. A bank or dump of stones had been placed on the base of the pit across the shallow central area, separating the north and south ends. The main fill of dark yellowish-brown silt (649) was uniform, and contained two sherds of prehistoric pottery interpreted as from a Carinated bowl (see Section 5.1). This type of pottery is not indicative of function and could have derived from a domestic, ritual or funerary context (A Sheridan, pers comm). A radiocarbon date of 3640–3360 cal BC at 2-sigma (GU-11071) was obtained from carbonized material retrieved from this deposit, which would confirm the Neolithic date attributed to the pottery. A very fine, dark, probably burnt lower fill (context 671) was recognized in the deep part of the south end of the pit only. A radiocarbon date of 3950–3660 cal BC at

2-sigma (GU-11072) was obtained from this deposit, again confirming the Neolithic date. Immediately north of Pit 673 was a shallow H-shaped feature (699) filled with burnt stone and clay that was orange from the effects of heat. The excavator considered it more likely that the deposit was dumped after burning rather than burnt *in situ* as the surrounding subsoil was not affected by heat.

It is assumed that the curving line of five pits/post-holes were related to the central pit and the hollow filled with burnt material. The pit appears to have been deliberately shaped to form a stone-lined depression with a step down into it, presumably for ease of access. The primary fill exhibits evidence of burning and the adjacent hollow filled with heated stones and clay would also appear to indicate that fire was involved in the activity represented by the group. As the prevailing wind is from the west, it is possible that the post-holes held some form of wind-break to assist with the process which involved fire. This may represent a simple domestic shelter. The location of this group of features adjacent to the trackway may be significant and it is plausible that the two are related.

Phase II: Later prehistoric features (illus 11)

A series of four ditch segments appeared to form a small enclosure system to the south of the possible Phase I trackway. These did not align with the trackway although Ditch Segment 404 appeared to terminate at the southern side of Ditch 802, indicating it may have respected the line of the trackway.

Alternatively, this may be a coincidence due to later truncation.

The longest of the ditch segments (404) ran for approximately 36.5m to the south edge of the excavated area and was 2.75m wide and 0.23m deep at maximum. The feature was filled by a deposit of dark brown silty sand (403) with no inclusions. The other main ditch (contexts 683 & 687) in the complex ran from east to west for approximately 33m, and averaged about 1–1.5m wide. The average surviving depth was about 0.15m. The fill of the feature consisted of dark red-brown sandy clay (661). Two similar ditches were identified aligned on the same grid pattern: Ditch 678 extended into the site from the south trench edge for 8m terminating at Ditch 683, and had a fill of dark brown sandy loam with occasional gravel inclusions (645); Ditch 713 was located in the south-east corner of the excavation. This consisted of a shallow cut 2.02m wide and 0.29m deep. A length of 8.1m of the feature survived, although it may have been part of the same ditch as an irregular linear feature (708) located directly to the north and cutting the line of the trackway (802). None of these features contained any datable finds.

A scatter of features of Bronze Age and later date was located to the north of the enclosure system to which they may relate. The earliest of these is likely to date to the Early Bronze Age. This consisted of a large irregular pit (507) with gently sloping sides located at the top of the slope, beyond the northern edge of the colluvium. It contained an assemblage of prehistoric artefacts (SFs 28, 38 & 45), including a smashed Beaker vessel (see [illus 21](#) & [illus 22](#) in [Section 5.1.1](#)) and a flint scraper found immediately under the vessel. Several large lumps of charcoal were found adjacent to the vessel. Also present was a large, irregular stone block, with two faces shaped by pecking, one dished and the other saddle-shaped; both were pierced by pecked conical holes (see [illus 18](#) in [Section 4.2](#)). The whole assemblage was found near one edge of the feature. The fill of the feature consisted of dark yellowish-brown clay silt (506). Although no bones were found within the pit, it is conceivable that the feature represents a burial pit. Bone preservation was extremely poor throughout all areas investigated due to the acidic nature of the gravel subsoil. Sheridan (see [Section 5.1](#)) states that undecorated Beakers are relatively rare in funerary contexts. All things considered, it is probable that Pit 507 represents an isolated Beaker burial and that the majority of the other features in the area relate to the Later Bronze Age.

Immediately north of Ditch 683, a large pit (828) was identified measuring 1.9m in diameter (north to south) and 0.45m deep ([illus 12](#)). It had a clay fill (contexts 837, 838 & 839) and overhanging sides, and was cut by a shallow irregular feature (context 827) (possibly an angled post-hole) which contained several sherds of pottery of probable Late Bronze Age date (SFs 68, 78, 80 & 81; see [illus 25](#) in [Section 5.1.1](#)). Another small irregular feature (825) was cut by the pit.

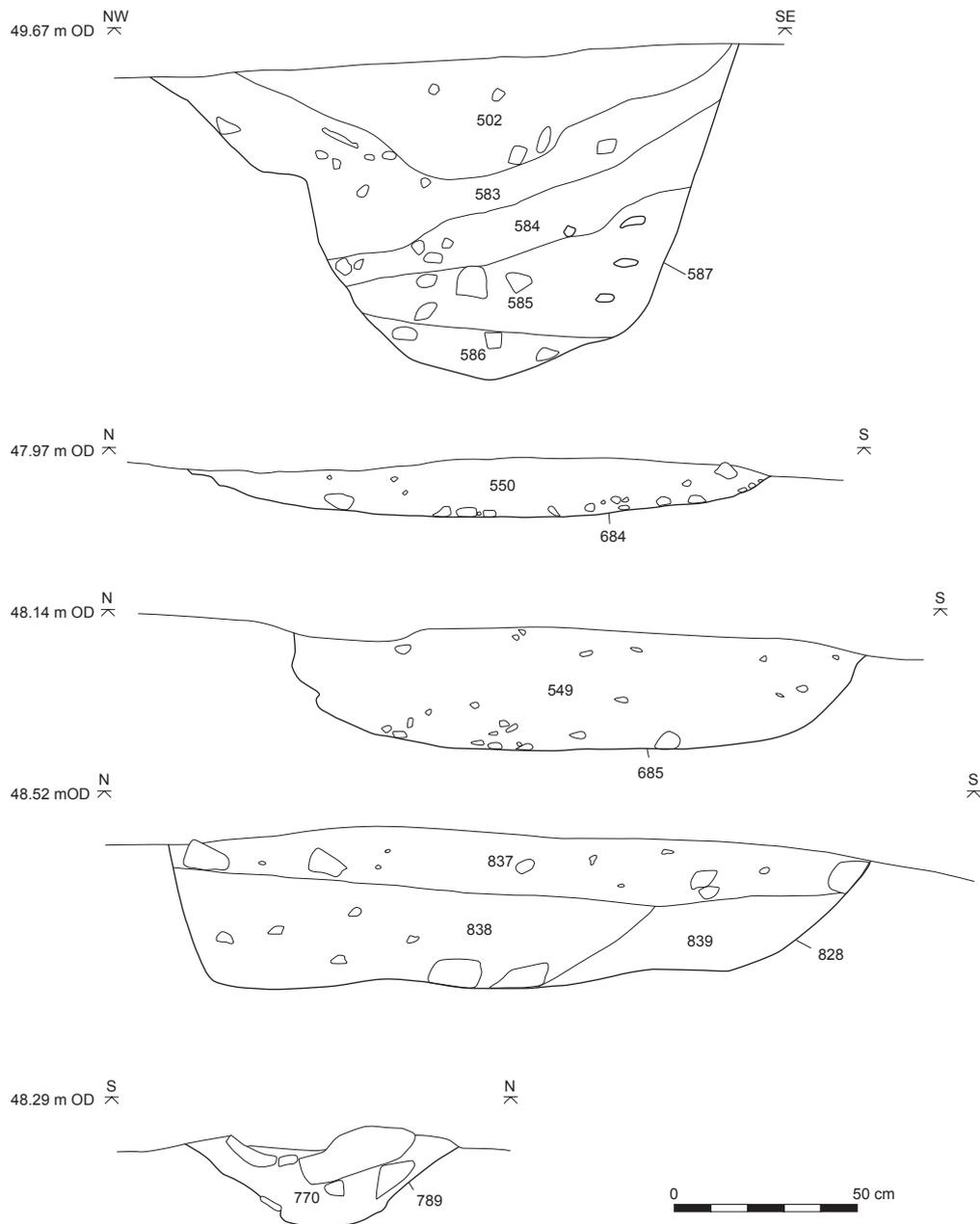
North of Pit 828 were three small pits in a row, aligned north-west to south-east (Pits 787, 789 &

843). Each had a very distinctive main fill of bright orange sand and gravel, in the surface of which was a hollow filled with a brown soil ([illus 13](#)). Each pit was surrounded by large numbers of stake-holes; many of these cut the orange primary fills, but were overlain by the brown soil upper fill. In the case of the largest pit (789), some of the stake-holes cutting the orange fill formed a very regular semi-circular pattern on the west side of the pit. The orange colour of the main fills, which was not paralleled in any other part of the site either in natural or archaeological deposits, is likely to be the result of heating or chemical processes. The most likely interpretation would be that it served as a hearth with an associated stake-built structure, possibly to assist with cooking.

A concentration of features lay near the east edge of the excavated area, some cutting the possible trackway. A small, shallow, sub-rectangular pit (559), which cut the possible trackway, contained a near-complete bucket-shaped vessel of probable Late Bronze Age date (SF 40; see [illus 23](#) & [illus 24](#) in [Section 5.1.1](#)). This feature had a very indistinct fill, and had been particularly badly damaged by burrowing animals. It was associated with three larger pits with very distinct, dark reddish-brown fills containing charcoal flecks (contexts 758, 684 & 685). Prehistoric pottery was recovered from the fill of Pit 758, which was oval in plan and measured 1.8m by 1.27m by 0.39m deep. Radiocarbon dates of 1130–830 and 980–800 cal BC at 2-sigma (GU-11069 and GU-11073, respectively) were produced from charcoal sampled from this feature. The fill consisted of reddish-brown sandy silty loam (context 552). This feature also cut the trackway, and had an apparent structure in its base, represented by a sub-oval arrangement of small stake-holes surrounding a small post-hole. Pit 685 was roughly rectangular and measured 1.56m by 0.82m and was 0.34m deep. The fill (549) consisted of dark reddish-brown sandy loam. The final pit in the group (684) measured 1.53m by 1.24m in plan, was 0.14m deep and was filled by a deposit of dark reddish-brown sandy loam (550). Pit 758 cut two smaller pits, one of which (Pit 761) contained the rubber from a saddle quern (SF 74) positioned together with two other stones as packing for a post.

This cluster of features may represent a domestic structure, although no discernible foundation could be identified. The presence of a hearth, pottery and a quern stone would be consistent with the contents of a domestic building. Pit 685 also contained the highest concentration of barley from the site as well as emmer wheat and oat-grass. Barley was also contained in other features from the group, although in lesser quantities. It can only be assumed that, if the group does represent a building, the structure had negligible or no foundations. It is assumed that the two small groups of features to the south-west (centred on Features 787 and 828) are representative of ancillary activities associated with this possible structure.

Immediately to the south of the pit group there was a pair of shallow hollows (669 and 712), interpreted as hearths. Both contained large quantities

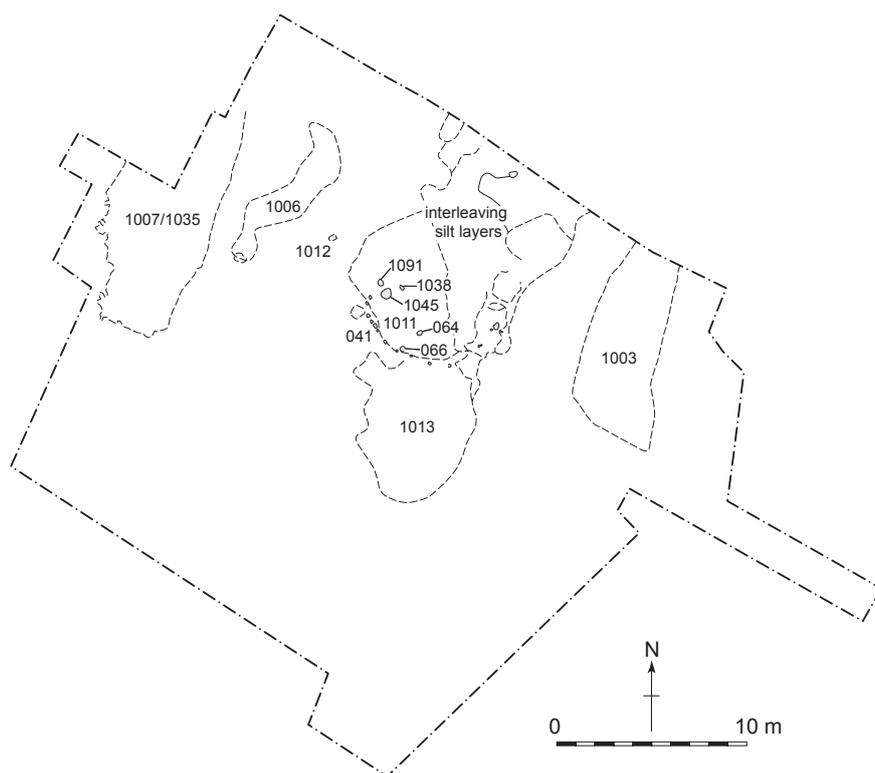


Illus 14 Selection of sections from Area B, Phase II

of very heavily burnt water-rolled pebbles, heated from one side. A very dark deposit, including crushed charcoal, lay at the centre of the reddish fill of each hollow. The fill of Hollow 669 was overlain by the spread fill of Hollow 712, which contained a sherd of undiagnostic prehistoric pottery. Two small post-holes (667 & 679), both different in character to each other, were adjacent to the hearths but contained no dating evidence. These features could also be associated with the tentative domestic structure immediately to the north and may relate to the heating of stones to add to a trough in order to boil water as would be expected with a burnt mound.

Positioned on the top edge of the slope, but further to the west, was a possible domestic structure (620).

It consisted of a broad, shallow sub-oval hollow cut into the slope, with a very irregular bottom and a maximum (surviving) depth of 0.3m (illus 14). It became very shallow and indistinct on its southern (downhill) side. The western side extended into a narrower, passage-like feature which ran for approximately 3.9m to the west before turning sharply to the north and ending at a rounded terminal. Overall, the feature was roughly banjo-shaped, and resembled some of the 'miniature souterrain' type features found at the Iron Age settlement of Dalladies (Watkins 1980, 122–64). A number of prehistoric potsherds of probable Iron Age date were found on the surface of the feature. One post-hole (019) and a pit (021) were found immediately to the



Illus 15 Plan of Area C

north during the evaluation, and the only piece of daub found in the project was located immediately adjacent to the feature.

The majority of features identified further north on the summit of the knoll proved to be of modern date. Three features or groups of features of possible pre-historic origin were, however, identified in this area. A small, shallow, flat-bottomed pit (610), sub-oval in plan, was lined with large stone blocks (611). The feature measured 1m by 0.9m in plan and was 0.19m deep. The stone lining was sealed by a deposit of reddish-brown sandy silt (context 482). This feature was located at the southern edge of the summit area. Another small pit (608), located closer to the centre of the summit area, contained several contrasting fills (contexts 604, 605, 606 & 607) and had a large, flat stone pressed up against one side. At the south-west corner of the summit area, the bases of two very badly truncated inter-cutting, sub-rectangular features (616 & 619) were identified. The only find recovered from any of these features was a single piece of burnt bone from context 592, the fill of context 616.

At the extreme north of the excavation trench, a group of post/stake-holes (544, 546, 548, 558, 562, 564, 565 & 574) defined a roughly circular area approximately 4m in diameter. Associated with this group of stake-holes was an oval-shaped pit (545) which measured 1.8m by 0.79m in plan and was 0.15m deep. The fill consisted of dark reddish-brown clay sand (423). No evidence for a hearth or entrance was identified and no finds were recovered which would suggest

domestic habitation. The apparent flimsy nature of the structure would suggest that it either represents a temporary shelter or possibly an animal pen.

A large area to the west of Ditch 404 and south of the possible trackway was largely sterile. One elongated, shallow pit and two post-holes (751 & 752) were recognized, but could not be dated, and there were several modern post-holes filled with topsoil. Most of this area was not protected by colluvial deposits and any prehistoric features in this area would have been particularly vulnerable to destruction by ploughing.

The lack of stratigraphic relationships does not allow for chronological or spatial connections to be made between groups of features. The segmented enclosure may relate to some or all of the features located to the north of it. Both the radiocarbon dating programme and the pottery analysis suggest activity from the Early and Later Bronze Age and the Iron Age. The only conclusion that can be drawn from these chronological indicators is that the site shows evidence of human activity throughout the prehistoric period.

3.2.3 Area C

During the evaluation, three groups of features were identified in Trial Trench 9: a pair of gravel surfaces at the edge of the floodplain; a discontinuous arc of individual cobbles on the slope above and to the south of the surfaces, surrounding a very shallow deposit, formed apparently by the disturbance of the subsoil

surface, and overlying a scatter of small stake-holes; a pair of post-holes lying in the area between the first two groups. All of these features were covered by a thick colluvial layer; towards the base of the slope this was mixed and interleaved with alluvial silt.

During the main excavation, an area of approximately 850sq m was opened surrounding these groups of features (*illus 1*).

The gravel surfaces

The northern surface (contexts 1007/1035), lying slightly further out onto the alluvial plain, was stratigraphically later than the southern surface (1006), which lay directly at the base of the slope down to the edge of the plain (*illus 15*). The later, northern surface sat on the floodplain, at a stratigraphic interface between (underlying) alluvial silt mixed with coarser material washed down the slope and (overlying) pure alluvial silt. It proved to consist of several layers of small gravel, interleaved with layers of alluvial silt, implying a series of episodes of flooding followed by deposition. This resulted in a gradual process of extension to the north. The only artefactual association was a single flint flake found in a shallow hollow cutting the surface of the feature (interpreted as a pothole resulting from wear), but this cannot be seen as dating evidence.

The earlier surface (1006) was on the edge of the gravel slope, where it met the edge of the (overlying) alluvium mixed with coarser material. It was an irregular, discontinuous deposit of small to medium cobbles.

Other features

No continuation of the arc of cobbles (041) seen in the evaluation was recognized in the wider excavation area. This highly ephemeral feature, which had been interpreted as defining the edge of a possible circular structure, could easily have been destroyed or damaged either in antiquity or during machining and cleaning for the excavation. Furthermore, most of its area was overlain by a broad band of cobbles (1013) similar in size to those which formed the arc, making its recognition even harder. However, the deposit (1011) that had been defined by the arc of cobbles was recognized, together with several more associated stake-holes (1091, 1038, 1045, 064 & 066). These could not be shown to represent a clear structural pattern and the surrounding area was heavily disturbed by animal burrowing. It is very unlikely therefore that the possible circular structure identified during the evaluation was a real feature.

The overlying cobbles (1013) were spread over a band approximately 8m wide, running across the slope. It could not be definitively proven to be of anthropogenic nature, although it could have been a spread bank. A hammerstone and some sherds of prehistoric pottery were recovered from it, but these

cannot be treated as secure dating evidence and may derive from soil washed down the hill from the settlement identified in Area B.

Only one other feature, a single post-hole (1012), was recognized between the possible structure and the cobbled surfaces. This area had been extensively disturbed by animal burrows, which may have destroyed more features or affected their recognition.

Discussion

It would appear that the deposits initially interpreted as archaeological in Area C are the result of episodes of flooding on the edge of the loch, with finds washed in from either dumping or hill wash from the settlement in Area B. The presence of Neolithic artefacts may indicate that the focus of activity during this period was located between Areas B and C and was not excavated.

3.2.4 Areas D and E

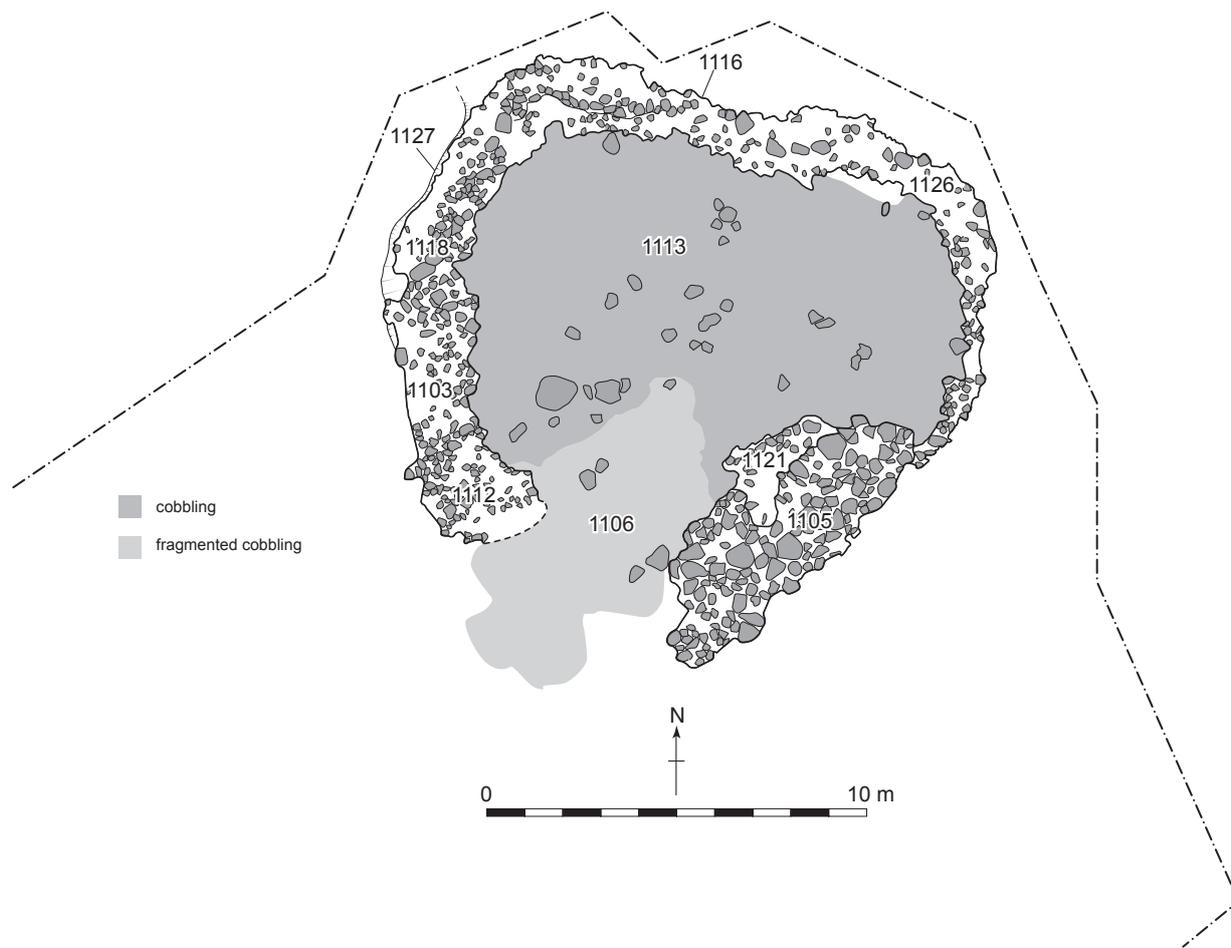
Two small areas of approximately 100sq m each were excavated at the lower west edge of the plateau (*illus 1*). No archaeological features were recognized, although it was shown that the gravel deposit forming the plateau had a very sharp edge where it had been cut away by an old course of the Gogar Burn.

3.2.5 Area F

This area of approximately 3000sq m was excavated to investigate a cobbled surface recognized in Trial Trench 25, and in a further attempt to locate the cropmark ring-ditch which had not been located in Trial Trenches 21–24 (*illus 1*). As no sign of the ring-ditch was recognized and no other concentrations of features were identified, resources were concentrated on the investigation of the area around the cobbled surface. This transpired to form part of a large stone structure (*illus 16*).

Topographic position of the structure

The stone structure was located in a natural hollow on the eastern edge of a flat-topped plateau, where it was cut by the valley of the Gogar Burn. The subsoil in the area of the structure varied with gravel at the north-east corner, clays and silts beneath the area covered by the structure and to the north and south of it, and silt and sand to the west. In places, and particularly to the west, there were outcrops of small to medium angular stones and larger areas of continuous stone. The presence of the clays created an effective spring line, so that the lower (eastern) part of the hollow filled with water following rainfall and remained flooded for some time.



Illus 16 Plan of Area F

Description of the structure

The structure consisted of a series of continuous stone banks and surfaces forming an oval, bowl-shaped feature, measuring approximately 15m north to south and 16.5m east to west. It had been constructed in a natural hollow in the eastern edge of the plateau, with a steep scarp to the west, gentler slopes to north and south and level ground stretching away for 60m to the east, up to the edge of the burn. The hollow had been enhanced before construction by clearing away all the topsoil and cutting into the subsoil at the north-west corner, to create a near-vertical face (context 1127). Further to the east, the cut was less steep and the face lower. The east-facing slope was unmodified, and lay at an angle of 45°.

The base of the hollow was concave, and was lowest near its east edge. During excavation, the easternmost 7–8m filled with water during rainfall, and did not drain afterwards; bailing during periods of dry weather was required to empty it.

The inner metalled surface The primary construction event was the metalling of the hollow with hard-packed gravel (context 1113). The whole surface of the cut was covered, with the exception of the

near-vertical slope at the north-west corner. The constituents of the metalling varied from small rounded gravel, which covered most of the hollow, to larger angular stones up to 0.30m long. There had been no attempt to create a level surface prior to metalling, and projecting stones in the underlying subsoil were incorporated into the metalled surface; some of these projected as much as 0.40m above the finished surface. In places, the surface had been eroded and damaged, possibly by use or by ploughing.

The stone banks The metalling of the hollow had been followed by the construction of upstanding stone features around the perimeter of the hollow, overlying the metalled surface. This appears to have followed the metalling almost immediately, as no sediment had accumulated and there was no apparent damage to the surface where it was covered by these features. The outer edges of these features coincided with the edge of the metalling, except on the south side, where the metalling extended 1m further to the south, and on the near-vertical slope in the north-west corner, where the metalling was absent.

The stone features were varied in both the materials used and the method of construction. It is unclear whether these variations were determined by topographic or functional factors, or by both.

The west side of the structure consisted of a simple revetment of the steep, east-facing natural slope of the edge of the subsoil forming the plateau. It consisted of a single layer of medium to large sub-rounded to angular stones (contexts 1103/1112), laid along the slope in a band approximately 10m long from north to south and averaging 2.4m wide. The highest point on the west edge of this band was approximately 1.4m higher than the east edge. This feature could perhaps be seen as a coarser continuation of the metalling, rather than a separate feature. Like the metalling, it incorporated naturally outcropping stones, and it was badly damaged by ploughing along its upper west edge.

At its northern end, context 1103 merged into context 1118 without a discernible boundary, although the overall character of the two features was substantially different. Context 1118 was a stone bank built up against the near-vertical face of Cut 1127. It ran in a straight line for approximately 5m from south-west to north-east, with a maximum height of 0.85m at its south-west end, decreasing to the north-east, following the natural slope of the subsoil. It was built of small to medium stones and earth placed against the subsoil face and held in place by a revetment of larger stones placed in roughly horizontal courses at the lower level. The smaller stones and earth had been placed first, and the larger, revetting stones last.

At its north-east end, context 1118 turned to the south-east and continued in a straight line as a lower bank (context 1116) of similar construction. Unlike context 1118, however, this feature stood slightly above the level of the subsoil to the north. Its maximum height was 0.50m, at its junction with context 1118, and it became slighter towards the south-east end.

The eastern side of the complex was defined by a slight stone bank (context 1126) running in an arc from the south-east end of context 1116 around to the south-east corner of the structure. This feature ran along relatively level ground, proud of the subsoil surface and immediately beneath modern ground level. Consequently, it had been badly plough-damaged and spread; in some places only patches of the bank survived, and its average height was around 0.2m. At its southern end it was only 0.4m wide.

The stone platform The south end of Bank 1126 joined onto the east end of a platform 8.5m long built mainly of large, flat-topped stones (context 1105), which formed the south side of the complex. The south side of this platform had a straight edge, while its northern edge was much more irregular.

A line of medium to large stones (context 1121) ran from east to west, oblique to the north face of the platform. The west end of this terminated in an irregular patch of cobbles, which appeared to return to fill a hollow in the face of context 1105. A similar patch of cobbles filled the gap between the east end of contexts 1121 and 1105. This feature appeared to

form a secondary extension or modification to the main part of the platform.

Two large stone artefacts were found within the banks and platform. A large hexagonal stone 0.34m in diameter (SF 99; see [illus 19](#) in [Section 4.2](#)) had two flat faces, each with a shallow central depression. This object had been built into the platform (1105). SF 100 (see [illus 20](#) in [Section 4.2](#)), a large polygonal stone with a deep conical bowl and two smaller flanking holes in its flat upper surface, was found upside down within context 1103.

The ramp The south-west corner of the structure was occupied by a long, shallow ramp passing through a gap approximately 3m wide, between the west end of the platform and context 1112. The ramp ran north-eastwards into the interior of the hollow, and the metalling of its surface (1106) had a high proportion of larger, rough stone blocks and only a few areas of small pebbles.

The fills of the hollow There were two different primary fills in the hollow. A small area of dark green-brown silty loam (1129, not illustrated) had accumulated within the north-east corner of the base of the feature, overlying the base of the eastern stone bank (1126). This deposit contained an inclusion of crunchy black nodules, some of which were shattered. Charcoal was also recovered and provided a date of 2020 ± 50 (70 BC). In the remainder of the hollow, the primary fill was a thin, distinctive layer of pale silvery sandy silt (1130, not illustrated), which covered the whole of the lower part of the metalled surface and in places lapped over the edge of the stone banks. A single sherd of prehistoric pottery was recovered from this deposit (SF 97). This was overlain in the southern half of the hollow by a very dark greyish brown silty loam (context 1102, not illustrated) up to 0.2m thick, containing two sherds of prehistoric pottery (SFs 88 & 91; see [illus 27](#) in [Section 5.1.3](#)) and a small fragment of burnt bone (SF 96).

The whole complex as described above was covered by a deep accumulation of colluvial deposits. The lower element of this (context 1120) was a very dark grey clay loam with reddish mottling towards the top of the deposit. This graded upwards into a dark reddish-brown sandy silty loam (1101), which became much sandier closer to the modern ground surface. These colluvial deposits filled the entire hollow, covering the stone structures, and directly underlay the modern ploughsoil.

The upper part of the colluvium was partly removed by machine, leaving the lower 0.25m of context 1101 and the whole of context 1120 to be removed by hand. This hand excavation produced two sherds of Iron Age pottery (SFs 87 & 89; see [illus 27](#) in [Section 5.1.3](#)) from context 1101 and a single sherd from context 1120.

The cairn A small cairn (1117, not illustrated) was encountered within the thickness of the upper

colluvial deposit (1101). At the core of this cairn was a single massive boulder, 3m long and oval in plan, with a curved upper surface and flat base. Around it had been placed a quantity of stones of the same type found in the stone banks. This cairn most likely relates to medieval/post-medieval field clearance of stones brought up by the plough from the underlying structure.

Discussion

The Maybury structure is very unusual and comparison with similar sites is difficult. It does not compare well with scooped cobble structures such as those excavated at St Germain's (Alexander & Watkins 1998) and Port Seton (Haselgrove & McCullagh 2000) and it is difficult to see how the structure could have been roofed. The nearest comparable structures have been excavated at Easter Kinnear in north-east Fife by Stephen Driscoll (Driscoll 1997). Morphologically, one of these sites, excavated at Hawkhill, was similar to the Maybury example, with a stone-lined circular scoop and a ramped entrance from the south. The walls were constructed of rough boulders and the floor was consistently rough. The main contrast was that the structure at Easter Hawkhill was much smaller, measuring approximately 9m by 8m, and had been deliberately backfilled. Other scooped stone-lined buildings were also identified at Easter Kinnear but none of the others compared so strikingly with the Maybury example. Interpretation was difficult at the Easter Kinnear sites as little evidence for function was retrieved. However, as the floors were roughly finished and there was no evidence for a hearth, a storage function was assigned to these. It was also suggested that they functioned as cellars for timber buildings. Chronologically, it is believed that the group of Easter Kinnear structures formed a 'hamlet' that was occupied for several centuries, possibly up to the medieval period. An attempt was made to identify further examples of these monuments from cropmark evidence in Fife (Fletcher 1993). Nine comparable sites were identified at South Friarton (NO42 NW68), Burnside (NO42 NE45), West Third (NO41 NE17), Newbridge of Ceres (NO41 SW17), Monimail (NO31 SW54), Eskey Loch (NO42 NW56), Western Friarton (NO 42 NW64), Kirktonbarns (NO42 NW00) and Forgan (NO42 NW46). The largest group of scooped

structures was identified at South Friarton, where 18 were noted, indicating a substantial or long-lived settlement. It has been tentatively suggested that these settlements are the precursor to the fermtoun.

No evidence was recovered for any superstructure at Maybury and interpretation of the original form and function of the structure is difficult. If the structure served as a cellar for a large circular timber structure, massive timbers would have been required to found such a building and these would surely have left a mark on the archaeological record. Again no evidence was identified for a hearth or for the general detritus that would be expected from domestic habitation. Therefore it seems unlikely that the site served a domestic function. This would leave either an industrial or ritual function, neither of which can be proved nor disproved with the available evidence. The location of the site next to the stream and that fact that it may have had standing water in it may point to an industrial function.

Dating for the Maybury example was restricted to a single radiocarbon date from the primary fill of the interior of the structure, which places the site in the Iron Age [170 BC (95.4%) 80 AD] 170 cal BC to 80 cal AD at 2-sigma (GU-1174). A fragment of possible Dark-age pottery (see *illus 21* in *Section 5.1.1*) was recovered from the topsoil in this area. However, as the fragment did not come from a secure archaeological context, it could not be related to the excavated features.

3.2.6 Area U

During the evaluation, a number of agricultural features likely to be of medieval or later date had been identified in Trial Trench 14. Several of these had overlain a stone-filled linear feature aligned north-east to south-west, which was seen as a possible structure. An irregular excavation area of approximately 280sq m was opened and this feature was traced to both ends of the excavated area. It now seems unlikely to be structural, and is more likely to be a drain. Post-medieval green-glazed pottery was found in its fill. No other significant features were recognized.