

LATER PREHISTORIC SETTLEMENT AT DAYS ROAD, CAPEL ST MARY

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INTRODUCTION

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS AT Days Road, Capel St Mary have identified a hitherto unknown and well preserved later prehistoric and medieval settlement site to the north of the modern-day village. Significant archaeological remains dating to the Late Bronze Age, Middle Iron Age and the twelfth to fourteenth centuries AD represent a remarkable chronological sequence of occupation punctuated by a settlement hiatus of over a millennium. The excavation results and the recovery of significant artefactual assemblages have provided a rare opportunity to examine the character and economy of a rural settlement site and its development from the later prehistoric period through to the present. This, the first of two papers, details the later prehistoric remains as well the more limited evidence of Early Roman period activity.

The excavation was undertaken in 2009 by Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU) on behalf of Orwell Housing Ltd in advance of a residential development. The development area (centred on TM 0875 3855) comprised 1.2ha of former agricultural land to the east of Days Road and was located approximately 300m to the north-east of the historic core of Capel St Mary, some 7km to the south-west of Ipswich (Fig. 64). Situated at a height of around 47m AOD, the site lies on the transition between two topographical zones determined by geology: the central Suffolk clay uplands and the glacial and river terrace gravels of coastal Suffolk. The underlying geology is London Clay, overlain by drift deposits of Till.¹

Archaeological background

Recorded later prehistoric sites in south-east Suffolk are not uncommon although published excavations are few. Known sites tend to cluster along the major river valleys with lighter soils, while a scarcity of recorded sites on the clay 'uplands' to the north and west has been interpreted as evidence that this area was still heavily wooded well into the Bronze Age.² The lighter soils of the river valleys continued to be favoured during the Iron Age although expansion of settlement and field systems into the clay uplands is also recorded during this period.³

While a number of excavated Iron Age sites such as Darmsden and Foxhall,⁴ occur within a 15km radius of Capel St Mary, evidence of later prehistoric activity in the immediate area is limited. Prior to the excavation at Days Road the only Bronze Age remains recorded in the village comprised fragments of three Collared Urns recovered from an unknown context during building work. Evidence of Iron Age activity was restricted to three ditches containing probable Iron Age pottery sherds which appear to represent elements of a more extensive field system in the area.⁵

Roman remains are much more widespread in Capel St Mary and the surrounding area, indeed prior to the initial trial trenching at Days Road⁶ the major archaeological potential of the site was considered to be Roman. The route of Pye Road, the Roman road connecting the

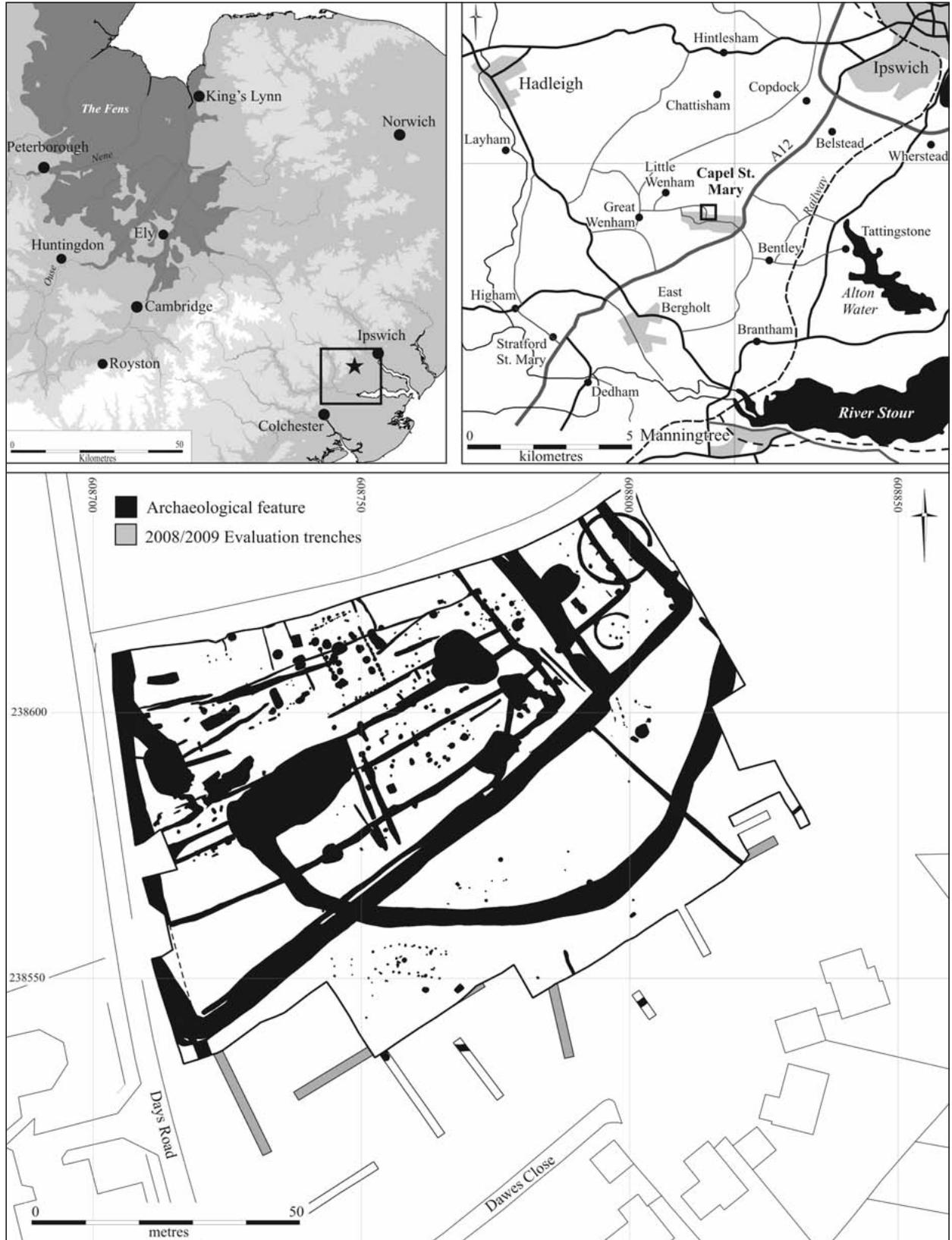


FIG. 64 – Site location.

forts/settlements at Colchester and Baylham (Margary 3c),⁷ before continuing to Caistor St Edmund, is thought to follow approximately the course of the A12 to the east of Capel St Mary, and areas of associated settlement are recorded along its course. The most significant Roman remains, however, comprise a villa site on Windmill Hill to the south-west of Days Road. The site was first investigated in 1927 following the discovery of a pair of bronze lion figurines in a garden, and was subsequently further excavated in 1946–48 and 1966.⁸ Investigations have yielded finds including first and second century AD pottery, painted wall plaster and glass *tesserae* which, alongside unsubstantiated reports of traces of hypocaust and walls, indicate a site of considerable status. In addition, reused Roman building material incorporated into the wall fabric of the nearby church of St Mary provides further evidence of a once substantial Roman building in the vicinity.

THE EXCAVATION

The CAU's excavations at Days Road, which followed trial trench evaluation of the site in 2008–9⁹, comprised two phases of work. Prior to the open area excavation, nine 2m-wide trenches were excavated in order to better define the extent of archaeological activity in the south of the site where the initial trial trench evaluation had identified few remains. The trenching confirmed that this area was of limited archaeological potential, allowing further investigations to focus on the archaeology to the north. Machine stripping of topsoil and subsoil in this area exposed a relatively high density of archaeological features concentrated in the northern half of the site (Fig. 64). The subsequent excavation identified remains associated with three main periods of occupation: the Late Bronze Age, the Middle Iron Age and the twelfth to fourteenth centuries AD, as well as evidence of more limited activity during the Early Roman period.

With a settlement hiatus of up to a millennium between the Early Roman and the medieval occupation of the site, the archaeological remains are best discussed as two separate sites. Consequently this, the first of two papers, is restricted to later prehistoric and Early Roman remains, while the second paper details the twelfth to fourteenth century farmstead.¹⁰

Although finds and residual material in later features – including a fine Late Neolithic to Early Bronze Age flint scraper and two sherds of Beaker pottery recovered from Iron Age pit F.1360 – indicate earlier prehistoric activity at Days Road, no firm evidence of occupation prior to the Late Bronze Age was encountered.

Late Bronze Age occupation

A total of 27 Late Bronze Age features – all pits and post-holes – were recorded (Fig. 65). The most significant of these, located in the east of the excavation area, was pit F.1670, which yielded a total of 528 sherds of Post-Deverel Rimbury Plainware pottery. The pit was sub-circular and measured 2.58m in diameter by up to 0.65m in depth (see Fig. 66). The majority of the pit's finds assemblage, which also included small quantities of animal bone and structural daub, was recovered from a rich charcoal primary fill containing large amounts of burnt stone and flint. Given the quantities of heat-shattered stone and flint, the feature could easily be interpreted as a cooking pit; however the nature of the infilling deposits, and particularly the large quantities of pottery and charcoal recovered from the fills, suggest this is not necessarily the case. Rather, it seems more likely that a nearby midden was cleared into the pit, as alluded to by the varying states of abrasion and fragmentation evident in the pottery assemblage and noted by Brudenell below.

Pit F.1670 was part of a cluster of features (Feature Group 1), which also included a second, smaller, Late Bronze Age pit (F.1665) to the north-east and a group of 17 post-holes, three of

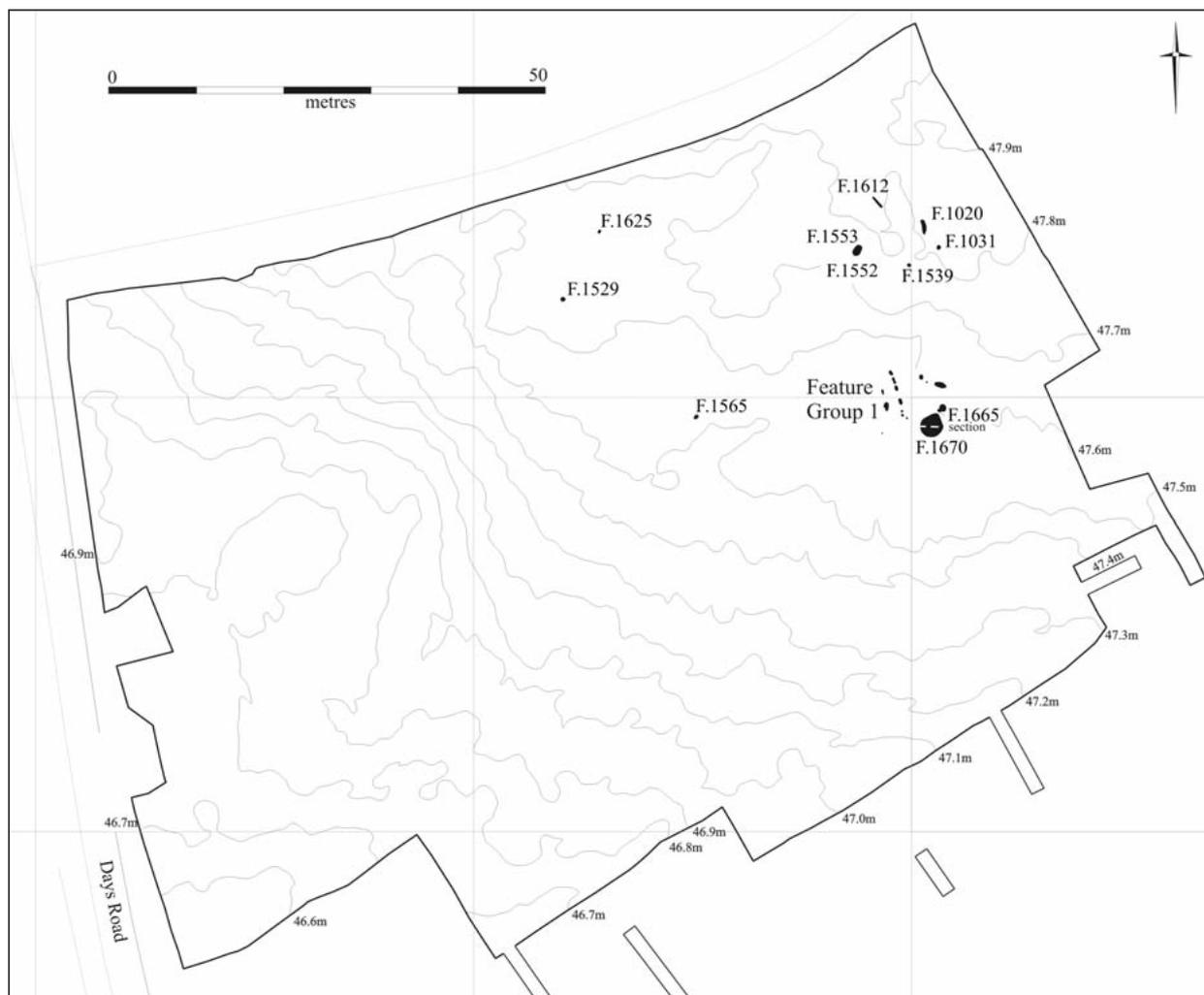


FIG. 65 – Late Bronze Age features.

which yielded Late Bronze Age pottery. Eight of the post-holes formed a convincing alignment and, while this could be interpreted as simply a fence line or windbreak, the possibility that, along with other nearby post-holes, they represent the remains of a structure (perhaps measuring *c.* 6m by *c.* 3m) should also be considered. The ‘domestic’ finds assemblage from F.1670, particularly the structural daub, is a clear indication of Late Bronze Age occupation and the presence of contemporary structural remains on site should be expected.

A second loose cluster of Late Bronze Age features was located *c.* 20m to the north of pit F.1670. The feature group comprised a post-hole (F.1539) and two intercutting pits (F.1552 and F.1553), which produced Late Bronze Age pottery and were truncated by the roundhouse gully of Iron Age Structure 2. In addition, a short gully or ‘slot’ (F.1612) contained a burnt fill, which also yielded Late Bronze Age pottery. To this group can be added two features – a short gully and a post-hole – recorded during the 2008–9 trial trench evaluation (F.1020 and F.1031).¹¹ Two isolated post-holes (F.1565 and F.1625) were the only other features which can be assigned a Late Bronze Age date at present, although residual Late Bronze Age pottery was recovered from later features including the Middle Iron Age enclosure ditch and the roundhouse gully of Structure 1. The relatively large quantities of residual burnt stone and worked flint recovered from later features is also of note and potentially indicates more extensive Late Bronze Age activity than the individual ‘feature count’ suggests.

The Middle Iron Age enclosed settlement

Evidence of Iron Age occupation at Days Road included the remains of two roundhouses, as well as settlement-related pits and post-holes, located ‘inside’ a substantial enclosure ditch (Fig. 67). The projected course of the enclosure ditch, which extended beyond the edge of excavation to the north-west and north-east, suggests that a large proportion of the Iron Age settlement remains unexcavated to the north of the site.

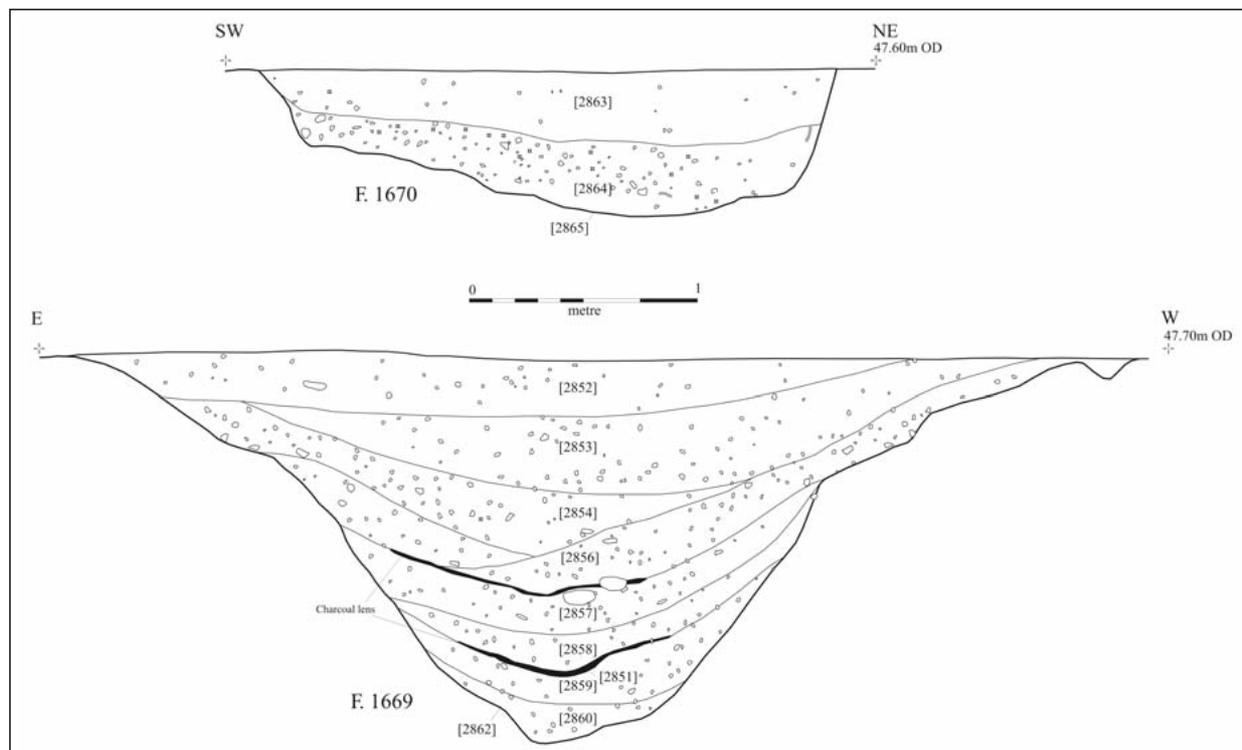


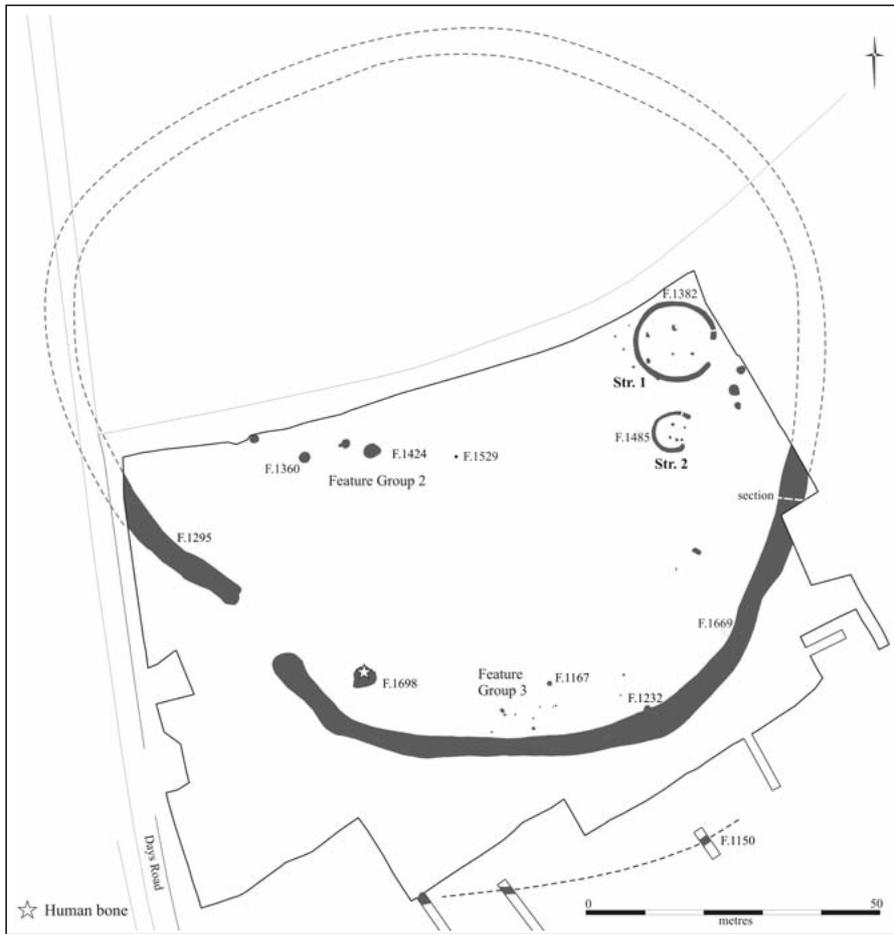
FIG. 66 – Later prehistoric feature sections: Late Bronze Age pit F.1670 (top), Middle Iron Age enclosure ditch (bottom).

The enclosure ditch (F.1669 and F.1295) extended across the site, from north-east to north-west, in a broad curve, defining the extent of the Iron Age features to the north. The ditch was between 2.7m and 4.64m wide by between 0.72m and 1.86m deep, and contained up to 12 largely clayey silt fills (see Fig. 66). The ditch profile, although variable, was characterised by steep sides and either a rounded or narrow tapered base. An entrance was recorded to the south-west, although only one ditch terminus (F.1295) was recorded due to the truncation of the terminus of the eastern arm of the enclosure ditch (F.1669) by a medieval quarry pit. A substantial post-hole set into ditch terminus F.1295 suggests that a gate structure of some kind may have existed over the entrance. A total of nine sections were excavated across the ditch, which yielded a total of 514 sherds of largely Middle Iron Age – with smaller quantities of Late Iron Age pottery – as well as animal bone, worked flint and occasional fragments of triangular clay loomweight. A clayey silt deposit observed in the excavated sections of the enclosure ditch, which appeared to have washed in from the ‘inside’ of the ditch, is potentially significant and can be interpreted as evidence of an internal bank.

In the northern corner of the excavation area penannular gullies marked the site of two Iron Age roundhouses:

Structure 1. This, the larger of the two roundhouses, was marked by a penannular gully measuring c. 14m in diameter with a south-east facing entrance (Fig. 68). The gully itself

FIG. 67 – Plan of Middle Iron Age features showing projection of settlement enclosure (star indicates location of human bone).



BELOW:
FIG. 68 – Middle Iron Age Structure 1 from the south-east.



measured between 0.57m and 0.81m wide by between 0.14m and 0.31m deep. Alternate 1m segments (15 segments in total) of the feature were sample excavated and produced a finds assemblage comprising 160 sherds of Middle Iron Age pottery, animal bone and a number of fragments of triangular clay loomweights. On the interior of the roundhouse gully, three post-holes/pits – two of which produced Middle Iron Age pottery – seem likely to be associated structural components, probably roof supports.

In the vicinity of Structure 1 – both ‘inside’ and just ‘outside’ the roundhouse gully – a further six post-holes were recorded, one of which yielded a single sherd of Middle Iron Age pottery. While these post-holes could be associated with Structure 1 either as structural components or – in the case of four post-holes – a fence line, it is also possible that at least some represent an earlier building. Taking into account possible truncation by Structure 1’s roundhouse gully it can be speculated that at least one four-post structure exists within the post-hole arrangement.

Structure 2. A smaller roundhouse, Structure 2, was located approximately 5m to the south of Structure 1. The horseshoe-shaped roundhouse gully measured *c.* 7m in diameter with an entrance to the south-east. Once again, alternate 1m segments of the gully were excavated (a total of eight sections), which measured between 0.33m and 0.64m wide by between 0.05m and 0.2m deep. The fills of the roundhouse gully yielded 50 sherds of Middle Iron Age pottery and a small assemblage of animal bone. In the interior of the gully a ‘square’ arrangement of five post-holes (*c.* 2.5m across) was recorded. Whether this post-hole arrangement represents a separate phase of building from the roundhouse gully, or whether the two components were part of the same structure is open to debate, although the position of the post-holes compared to the roundhouse gully perhaps suggests the former.

The majority of Iron Age houses excavated in Suffolk comprise annular and penannular trenches/gullies and in this sense Structures 1 and 2 are typical of the region. It has been argued that, given a lack of evidence for internal structural posts in many of Suffolk’s Middle Iron Age house plans, in these instances the gullies themselves may be structural rather than ‘eaves-drip gullies’.¹² However, the fact that the fills of Structure 1’s ring gully were characterised by a gradual accumulation of silt and relatively large amounts of domestic material culture – most notably pottery and loomweight fragments – suggests that that it was ‘open’ during the building’s occupation and is more likely to represent a drip gully. In this sense the roundhouse gullies are perhaps more comparable to those excavated at St Osyth in Essex where, as at Days Road, no evidence of the gullies functioning as foundation trenches was encountered.¹³

Aside from the structures, 24 pits and post-holes within the enclosure have been attributed to the Middle Iron Age, either from finds assemblages or by association with dated features. Of the well-dated features two main feature groups were recorded:

Feature Group 2. A cluster of five pits and one post-hole was located in the north-east of the excavation area. Three of the pits yielded Middle Iron Age pottery, however, aside from F.1360 with its redeposited Early Bronze Age material (see above), only pit F.1424 is worthy of individual mention due to the large amounts of burnt clay/daub recovered from its fills.

Feature Group 3. Located just ‘inside’ the enclosure ditch, a group of five pits and eight small pits/post-holes was recorded. Generally much smaller than the pits in Feature Group 2, six of the pits produced Middle Iron Age pottery whilst a number also contained frequent burnt stone fragments. While the high incidence of burnt stone indicates the use of ‘hot rocks’,

probably for cooking as with Late Bronze Age pit F.1670, the features themselves are not interpreted as cooking pits *per se*. Pits within this group also yielded re-fitting fragments of a triangular clay loomweight and a possible stone rubber. Finally, pit F.1698, located to the west of Feature Group 4 and more comparable in size to those in Feature Group 3, yielded 55 sherds of Middle Iron Age pottery as well as two fragments of adult-sized human skull.¹⁴

No direct evidence of the function of the pits was encountered, although the most obvious interpretation is perhaps that the larger pits, such as those in Feature Group 2 and pit F.1698, were utilised as storage pits. All of the pits would appear to be broadly contemporary with the enclosure, although the location of Feature Group 3 in an area which is likely to have been occupied by the enclosure's presumed bank is notable, as is the fact that pit F.1232 was slightly truncated by the enclosure ditch. Consequently, although speculative, it is possible that many of the pits in Feature Group 3 belong to an 'early' phase of unenclosed settlement.

Beyond the enclosure, the only evidence of further Iron Age activity was ditch F.1150, which was encountered during additional trenching to the south of the main excavation area and yielded two fragments of Middle Iron Age pottery. The ditch is considered too small (1.35m wide by 0.39m deep) to be an outer enclosure ditch, although at first glance its course does seem to suggest this, and is potentially evidence of the 'Iron Age' field system identified elsewhere in Capel St Mary extending into the Days Road area.¹⁵ The chronological relationship of this possible field system to the main enclosure – namely whether or not it was contemporary – could not be established.

Early Roman activity

It would appear that the settlement *foci* shifted away from the site in the Late Iron Age. Nevertheless, despite a lack of evidence for contemporary activity, it seems likely that the site saw continued 'use' throughout this period and into the Early Roman period, when significant landscape reorganisation took place with the establishment of a clearly defined rectilinear field system (Fig. 69). The truncated remains of the field system comprised six ditches, of which four yielded small quantities of Roman pottery, and was aligned on a dominant north-east to south-west axis. Although 'gaps' in the system are apparent, this appears to be largely as a result of truncation by elements of the later medieval enclosures, which clearly adhered to the Early Roman layout.¹⁶

Located in the south-west of the excavation area, an arrangement of 30 truncated post-holes marked the site of a rectangular building (Structure 3). The structure, measuring *c.* 8.5m by *c.* 5m, occupied a slightly different (east-west) alignment to the Early Roman field system and while this may cast some doubt on their contemporaneity, an assemblage of mid to late first century AD pottery from the structural post-holes strongly suggests it is of Early Roman date. In the interior, close to the west end, a post-hole/pit (F.1195) which was significantly larger than the other structural post-holes, measuring 0.85m in diameter, contained a relatively large quantity of Roman brick and tile fragments, which had potentially been used as packing material. Other finds from Structure 3's post-holes included a fragment of worked bone, possibly part of a knife handle.¹⁷

To the west of Structure 3, a cluster of 14 post-holes, three of which yielded Roman pottery, were almost certainly associated with the building. To the west of this, a possible six-post structure occupied the same east-west alignment as Structure 3. While this suggests that the two were potentially associated, pottery recovered from two of the post-holes – two sherds dated to the thirteenth to fourteenth, and nineteenth centuries AD respectively – does cast doubt on its Roman attribution. To the south-east of Structure 3, two pits produced small assemblages of mid to late first century Roman pottery.

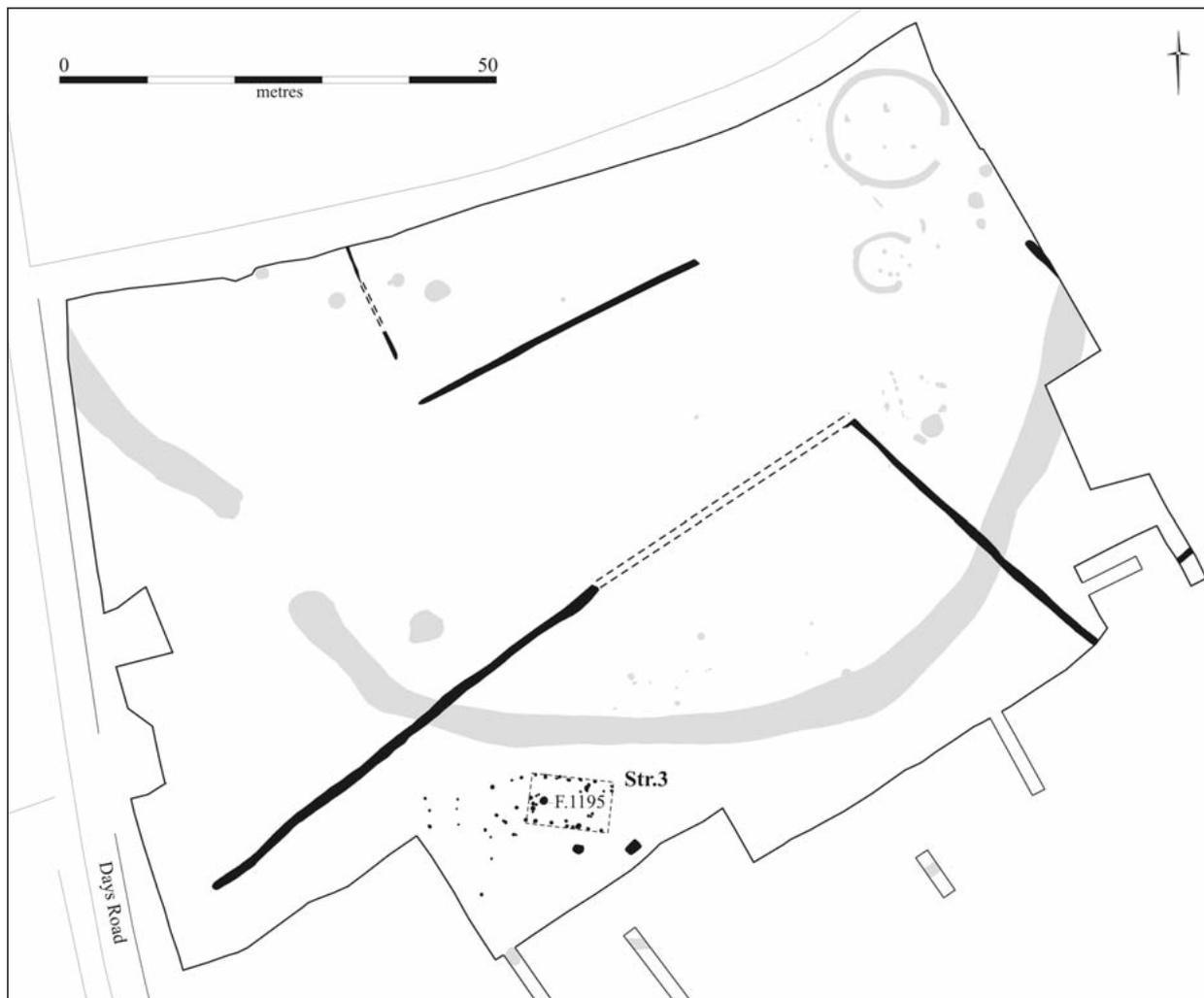


FIG. 69 – Early Roman features.

RADIOCARBON DATING

Samples from two later prehistoric features – Late Bronze Age pit F.1670 and Iron Age roundhouse gully F.1382 (Structure 1) – were submitted for radiocarbon dating. The results are shown in Table 1, below.

<i>Laboratory code</i>	<i>Feature</i>	<i>Material</i>	<i>13C/12C (o/oo)</i>	<i>Radiocarbon Age (BP)</i>	<i>Calibrated Date (95% confidence)</i>
Beta-296835	F.1670	Carbonised pot residue	-27.4	2750 +/- 30	970–820 BC
Beta-296834	F.1380	Carbonised pot residue	-26.4	2150 +/- 30	350–100 BC

TABLE 1 – Radiocarbon dating results.

THE FINDS

The later prehistoric and Early Roman finds assemblage is dominated by pottery, with other artefact types present in only limited quantities. The lack of metal finds or evidence of metal

working is particularly notable with only 11 small (broken) fragments of slag recovered from one section of the enclosure ditch.¹⁸

The worked flint (Lawrence Billington)

A total of 180 worked flints (2160.4g) were recovered. The worked flints were generally found in low densities as a residual component in the fills of later features. The majority of the flintwork appears to represent a later prehistoric industry, and several Iron Age features contained assemblages that are probably broadly contemporary with the features. Raw materials appear to derive exclusively from the abundant flint available in the local boulder clay. This takes the form of generally good quality nodular flint, sometimes of large size.

The assemblage is dominated by an expedient, *ad hoc*, flake-based technology, probably in part a response to the abundance of local raw material, but also reflecting technological traits typical of later prehistoric (Middle Bronze Age and later) flintwork.¹⁹ Alongside this irregular flake-based material are occasional pieces that show rather different technological traits and probably represent earlier activity. These include a fine bladelet collected as a surface find, which is the sole representative of Mesolithic or earlier Neolithic blade-based technology, and a later Neolithic/Early Bronze Age sub circular scraper recovered from Iron Age pit F.1360.

Although the later prehistoric flint is not closely dateable, its frequent occurrence in Iron Age enclosure ditch F.1295/F.1669 and in the roundhouse gully of Structure 2 suggests it relates to the Iron Age settlement of the site. It is only in recent years that the use of flint in the Iron Age has received sustained attention.²⁰ It is clear that, whilst some communities at this time were not making use of flint, others as at Capel St Mary continued to make extensive use of lithic resources. At Capel St Mary it can be argued that the continued use of flint is at least partly linked to the abundance of local raw material.

Later prehistoric pottery (Matt Brudenell)

The excavations yielded an assemblage of 1648 handmade sherds of prehistoric pottery (14499g), with a mean sherd weight (MSW) of 8.7g. Apart from three residual earlier prehistoric sherds (a single early Neolithic T-shaped rim (7g), and two sherds of rusticated Beaker (99g)),²¹ all the pottery was dated either Late Bronze Age or Middle Iron Age. The material was recovered from a total of 71 features, though 33 of these were Roman or post-Roman in date. All pottery, including the residual sherds, has been fully recorded and quantified following the recommendations of the Prehistoric Ceramics Research Group.²² In general, the pottery was in a fair condition, but sherd sizes were predominantly small (71% measuring <4cm in size).

The fabric series:

Burnt flint tempered fabrics

- F1: Sparse to common coarse to very coarse burnt flint (mainly 2–4mm, with some pieces to 6mm in size).
- F2: Moderate to common finely crushed burnt flint (mainly <1mm in size).
- F3: Sparse to moderate finely crushed burnt flint (mainly <1mm in size).
- F4: Small sherds with burnt flint inclusions too fragmented or abraded to assign to a more specific fabric category.

Burnt flint and voids fabrics

- FV1: Moderate medium flint (mainly 1–2mm) and moderate medium voids (mainly 1–2mm) in a sandy clay matrix.

Burnt flint and sand tempered fabrics

- FQ1: Sparse to common medium flint (mainly 1–2mm in size) in a dense sandy clay matrix. Some sherds contain rare sub-rounded quartz grains (up to 1.5mm in size).
- FQ2: Sparse to moderate coarse flint (mainly 2–3mm in size) in a dense sandy clay matrix.
- FQ3: Sparse to moderate finely crushed flint (mainly <1mm in size) in a dense sandy clay matrix.

Voids and sand fabrics

- V1: Moderate coarse and very coarse sub-oval voids (mainly 2–4mm) and rare medium and coarse flint (mainly 1–3mm in size) in slightly sandy clay matrix.

Burnt flint and grog fabrics

- FG1: Sparse to moderate medium to coarse flint (mainly 1–3mm in size) and sparse to moderate medium to coarse grog (mainly 1–3mm in size).

Burnt flint and quartz grain fabrics

- FQI1: Common coarse to very coarse burnt flint (mainly 2–4mm), with moderate sub-rounded quartz grains (mainly 1–3mm in size).

Sand tempered fabric

- Q1: Moderate to common quartz sand. Some sherds contain rare sub-rounded quartz grains (up to 1.5mm in size) and/or rare linear voids from burnt-out organic matter.
- Q2: Sparse to moderate fine quartz sand with sparse to moderate mica in clay matrix.
- Q3: Sparse to moderate quartz sand with sparse to moderate linear voids from burnt-out organic matter.
- Q4: Sparse to moderate quartz sand with sparse to moderate sub-rounded chalk inclusions (up to 2mm in size).

Sand and quartz grain fabrics

- QI1: Moderate quartz sand with sparse to moderate sub-rounded or sub-angular quartz grains (mainly 1–2mm in size).

Grog and sand fabrics

- G1: Sparse to common fine (mainly <1mm in size) grog in a slightly sandy clay matrix.
- G2: Moderate medium grog (mainly 1–2mm in size) in slightly sandy clay matrix. Some sherds contain rare to sparse mica.
- G3: Moderate coarse grog (mainly 2–3mm in size), slightly sandy clay matrix. Some sherds contain rare to sparse mica.

A total of 660 sherds (7035g) of Late Bronze Age pottery were identified in the assemblage, with a MSW of 10.7g. The pottery belongs to the Plainware phase of the Post-Deverel Rimbury ceramic tradition, conventionally dated *c.* 1100–800 BC.²³ The ceramics were recovered from 26 separate features, although only ten were of Late Bronze Age origin; the contemporary contexts yielding 583 sherds (6328g). These included a series of pits, post-holes and a short length of gully, most of which clustered towards the eastern side of site in an area undisturbed by later features.

Burnt flint gritted sherds dominated the assemblage, notably coarseware fabric F1 (Table 2). The addition of crushed burnt flint is characteristic of the Late Bronze Age PDR tradition in Suffolk and most parts of eastern England; the grade and density of the inclusions varying

along a spectrum of coarse to fine and common to sparse, linked largely to the quality of ware and vessel size. By weight, 70% of the pottery had burnt flint; 12% displayed a combination of burnt flint and sand, and 10% had burnt flint and voids (possibly dissolved calcareous inclusions). The remaining 8% was shared between sherds with burnt flint and grog; voids; burnt flint and quartz grains, and sand inclusions. Most of the clays and tempering agents used in the production of the site's prehistoric pottery (including the Middle Iron Age ceramics) could have been obtained from the immediate local landscape. Flint would have been available from the site's own subsoils, whilst sands and suitable potting clays may have been extracted from alluvial deposits flanking the small tributary of the River Stour, less than 1km east of the site.

Fabric	No./wt. (g) sherds	% of fabric (by wt.)	No./wt. sherds burnished	% of fabric burnished (by wt.)	MNV	MNV burnished
F	9/17	0.2	-	-	1	-
F1	412/4736	67.3	-	-	21	-
F2	14/107	1.5	4/62	57.9	4	1
F3	10/75	1.1	5/51	68.0	1	1
FG1	10/95	1.4	-	-	1	-
FQ1	50/389	5.5	-	-	5	-
FQ2	32/444	6.3	7/133	30.0	3	1
FQ3	2/31	0.4	1/21	67.7	-	-
FQI1	2/122	1.7	-	-	1	-
FV1	66/688	9.8	-	-	2	-
Q1	1/2	<0.1	-	-	-	-
V1	52/329	4.7	-	-	1	-
Total	660/7035	99.9	17/267	3.8	40	3

TABLE 2 – The quantified Late Bronze Age assemblage.
MNV = minimum number of vessels calculated as the total number of different rims and bases identified (excluded is the early Neolithic sherd in fabric F1 (7g) and the two Beaker sherds in FG1 (27g) and G2 (72g)).

Based on the total number of different rims and bases identified, the assemblage represents a minimum of 40 vessels, with an *Estimated Vessel Equivalent* (EVE) of 3.38 (28 different rims, 12 different bases). However, few forms could be established, owing to the small size of the assemblage and the fragmented condition of the sherds. Overall, only 14 vessels could be classified, including a total of 46 plain sherds (1028g) representing 7% of the Late Bronze Age assemblage by sherd count or 15% by weight. Unburnished coarseware jars were the most numerous (11 examples). The forms included ellipsoid jars with upright or slightly in-turned rims (Form B; six examples, Fig. 70: 1, 7, 10–13, 15); ellipsoid jars with 'hooked' rims (Form C; 2 examples, Fig. 70: 4); barrel- or tub-shaped vessels with a slight change in wall profile creating a distinct neck-zone (Form D; two examples, Fig. 70: 3, 6); and a jar with relatively long inward sloping neck and short everted rim (Form E, Fig. 70: 2). Where measurable, the jars displayed rim diameters of 18–28cm. Four sherds (92g) belonging to the largest vessel (a Form C jar) had carbonized residue adhering to their interior rim-edge, which was subsequently sampled for radiocarbon dating (see discussion). Elsewhere in the assemblage, only three other sherds (98g) retained similar deposits.

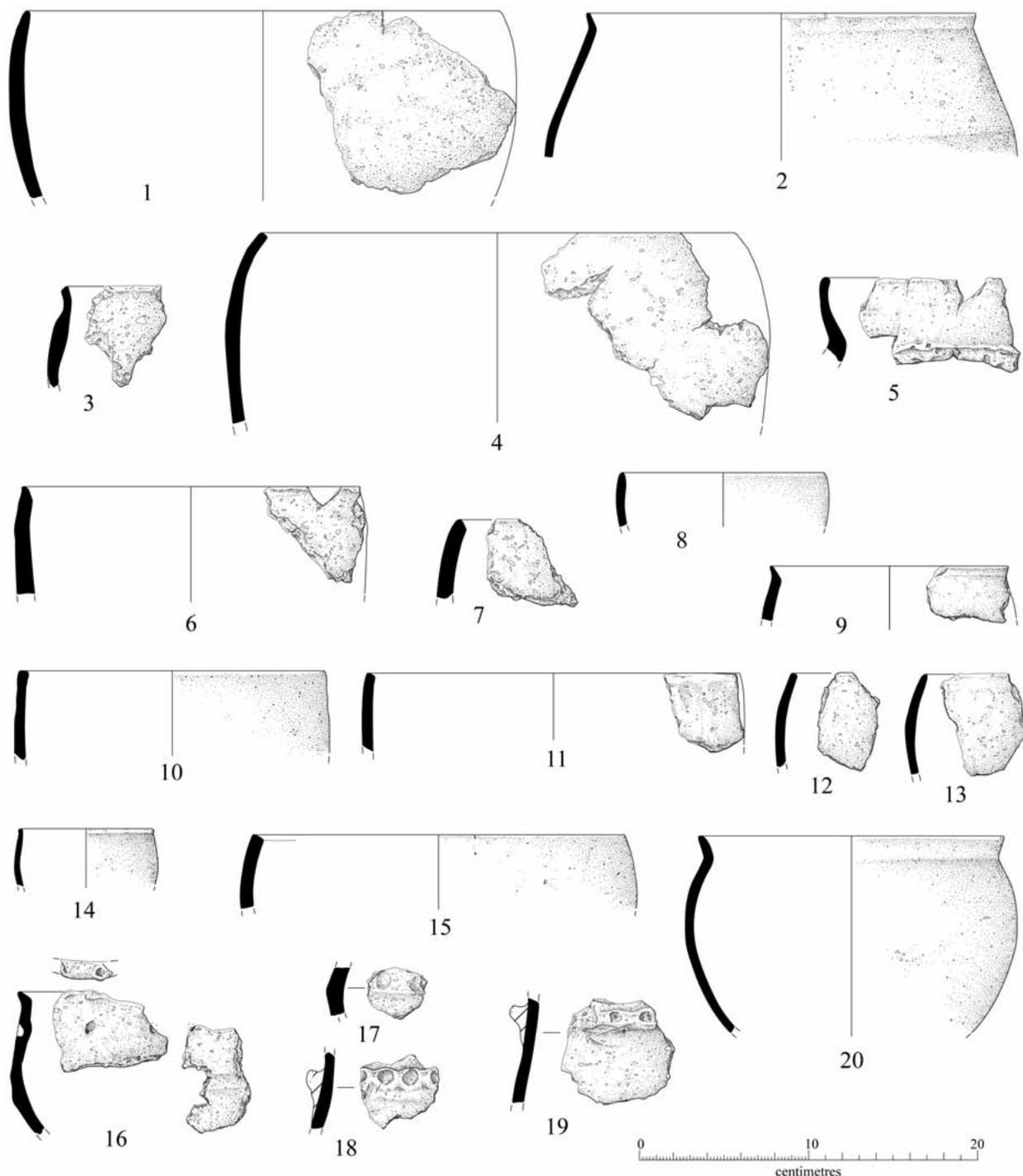


FIG. 70 – Late Bronze Age pottery (nos 1–19, pit F.1670; no 20, pit F.1667; vessel class categories after Barrett 1980): 1. Form B, Class I, Fabric F1 (5% rim of circumference). 2. Form F, Class I, Fabric FV1 (23% of rim circumference). 3. Form D, Class I, Fabric F1. 4. Form C, Class I, Fabric F1 (13% of rim circumference). 5. Fabric F1, burnt and warped vessel rim. 6. Form D, Class I, Fabric F1 (9% rim circumference). 7. Form B, Class I, Fabric F1. 8. Form J, Class IV, Fabric F3 (15% rim circumference). 9. Fabric F2, vessel rim (10% rim circumference, form uncertain). 10. Form B, Class I, Fabric F1 (8% rim circumference). 11. Form B, Class I, Fabric FG1 (7% rim circumference). 12. Form B, Class I, Fabric F1. 13. Form B, Class I, Fabric FQ1. 14. Form S, Class V, Fabric F2 (5% rim circumference). 15. Form B, Class I, Fabric V1 (16% rim circumference). 16. Fabric F1, vessel with fingertip impressed rim-top and pre-firing perforation hole on neck (form uncertain). 17. Fabric F1, shoulder sherd with fingertip impressions. 18. Fabric F1, cordon with fingertip impressions. 19. Fabric F1, cordon with fingertip impressions. 20. Form K, Class IV, Fabric FQ2 (17% rim circumference).

The remaining form-assigned vessels included an unburnished ellipsoid cup (Form S; Fig. 70: 14), and two burnished fineware bowls. These comprised a small but broadly hemispherical bowl (Form J; Fig. 70: 8); and one round-bodied bowl with an everted rim (Form K, Fig. 70: 20). With the exception of this latter vessel (residual in Middle Iron Age pit F.1667), all the form-assigned pots were recovered from pit F.1670.

Burnishing was rare in the assemblage, with only 17 sherds (267g) treated. This represents just 2.6% of the assemblage by sherd count or 3.8% by weight. Such low frequencies are not uncommon. Patterns now emerging from Cambridgeshire and other parts of East Anglia suggest that coarseware-dominated assemblages are the norm in this region.²⁴ In this context burnishing was restricted to sherds from just four of the 12 different fabric groups identified, principally those with the finer, better-sorted inclusions which facilitated smoothing (i.e. F2, F3 and FQ3).

Decoration was limited to six sherds (187g) in the assemblage, potentially relating to just two different vessels. This was exclusive to the coarsewares, and included two fragments of a fingertip-impressed neck cordon (86g); three shoulder sherds with fingertip impressions (67g), and one fingertip impressed rim-top (34g, see Fig. 70: 16–19). Also, the decorated rim and one of the shoulder sherds each had a pre-firing perforated hole on their neck (probably being part of the same vessel), neither of which penetrated all the way through the vessel wall.

The only Late Bronze Age feature assemblage worthy of comment derived from pit F.1670. This yielded a total of 528 sherds (5853g) of Late Bronze Age pottery, accounting for 80% of the period assemblage by sherd count, or 83% by weight (91% of non-residual pottery by sherd count/92% by weight). The pottery was recovered from contexts [2863] (131 sherds, 1319g) and [2864] (397 sherds, 4534g), with 13 refitting sherds identified between them (86 refitting sherds from the feature as a whole, including joins between burnt and unburnt sherds). Combined, they comprised a mixed dump of ceramics, with a minimum of 33 separate vessels represented, each varying in terms of its level of abrasion and overall fragmentation. Though the deposit stands out for its size in this context, the general character and composition of the assemblage is fairly typical for the Late Bronze Age, and was probably derived from a surface rubbish heap/midden.²⁵

The Middle Iron Age assemblage, dated *c.* 350–50 BC, comprised 985 sherds (7358g). The pottery was recovered from a total of 57 features, of which around half (27) were Middle Iron Age in origin; contemporary contexts yielding 915 sherds (7004g). These included pits, post-holes, hollows, enclosure ditches, roundhouse eaves-gullies and other linear features. The assemblage was more fragmented than the Late Bronze Age one, displaying a slightly lower MSW of 7.5g, and a higher frequency of small sized sherds (77% measuring <4cm, as oppose to 67% in the Late Bronze Age).

Although a range of Middle Iron Age fabrics were identified, the bulk of the assemblage could be divided into sherds in sandy fabrics (Q1–Q4), and sherds with flint and sand (FQ1–FQ3). As is characteristic of ceramics in this period, sandy wares dominated, accounting for 62% of pottery by weight, prominent amongst which was fabric Q1 (Table 3). The mica in fabric Q2 was a natural inclusion in the clay matrix, suggesting that the site's sandy wares were made with clays from at least two different (but probably still local) sources. The chalk in fabric Q4 is also likely to be a natural inclusion, probably derived from the local Boulder Clay tills.

Flint and sand fabrics accounted for 30% of the pottery by weight. In appearance, some of the sherds in this group were very similar to the Late Bronze Age ones, though on the whole the burnt flint inclusions in the Iron Age pottery were more uniform in size, and tended to be evenly sorted throughout the clay matrix. Nevertheless, the similarities did present problems for the identification of residual material, possibly resulting in the misassignment of some

sherds (though not enough to affect the dating of individual feature assemblages). In general, the use of burnt flint as a tempering agent had a long currency in later prehistoric potting traditions in East Anglia. This is particularly so in Norfolk, Suffolk, and areas of south Essex, where it continued to form a major component of fabric recipes throughout the Middle Iron Age period. Frequencies at Days Road are possibly quite normal for the area, though there is a scarcity of published data from the county with which to compare it. Figures from Barnham and Great Bealings reveal sherd count frequencies between 40 and 45%, but both are very small assemblages with fewer than 200 sherds.²⁶

The remaining 8% of the pottery was split between sherds with sand and quartz grains (4%); grog (3%); and flint and voids (15). Grog tempering is commonly associated with the region's Late Iron Age wares, but also occurs in small quantities in Early and Middle Iron Age assemblages. In the absence of any diagnostic ceramics of the 'Belgic' tradition, there is no reason to suppose that these sherds are Late Iron Age in origin.

Fabric	No./wt. (g) sherds	% of fabric (by wt.)	No./wt. sherds burnished	% of fabric burnished (by wt.)	MNV	MNV burnished
FQ1	206/1439	19.6	7/29	2.0	8	1
FQ2	51/549	7.5	1/7	1.3	4	-
FQ3	53/245	3.3	3/12	4.9	6	1
FV1	3/57	0.8	-	-	-	-
G1	16/113	1.5	-	-	2	-
G2	10/64	0.9	-	-	2	-
G3	2/9	0.1	-	-	-	-
Q1	429/3070	41.7	19/243	7.9	40	7
Q2	120/760	10.3	26/273	35.9	9	3
Q3	59/655	8.9	2/23	3.5	9	-
Q4	11/94	1.3	1/22	23.4	3	-
QI1	25/303	4.1	-	-	1	-
Total	985/7358	100.0	59/609	8.3	84	12

TABLE 3 – The quantified Middle Iron Age assemblage.

MNV = minimum number of vessels calculated as the total number of different rims and bases identified.

Based on the total number of different rims and bases, the assemblage is estimated to include a minimum 84 different vessels, with an EVE of 4.06 (65 different rims; 18 different bases; 1 complete profile). In total, 24 vessels were sufficiently intact to ascribe to the form (Table 4). These included 65 sherds (982g) representing 7% of the period assemblage by sherd count or 13% by weight. The forms were typical of Middle Iron Age-type assemblages in East Anglia, and have been classified using the type-series developed by J.D. Hill.²⁷ Half the form-assigned vessels were ovoid jars with either slack (Form A; eight examples) or high rounded shoulders (Form E; five examples) with short upright necks; most ending in flat-topped rims (Fig. 71: 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12, 14–16). These were accompanied by a more varied range of squat jars, bowls and tub-shaped vessels in Forms K (five examples, Fig. 71: 6, 10–11, 13) and L (five examples, Fig. 71: 4, 8). Other vessels in the assemblage included fragments of two S-shaped jars (Form G), and the partial profile of a globular vessel, probably a bowl, with a beaded rim.

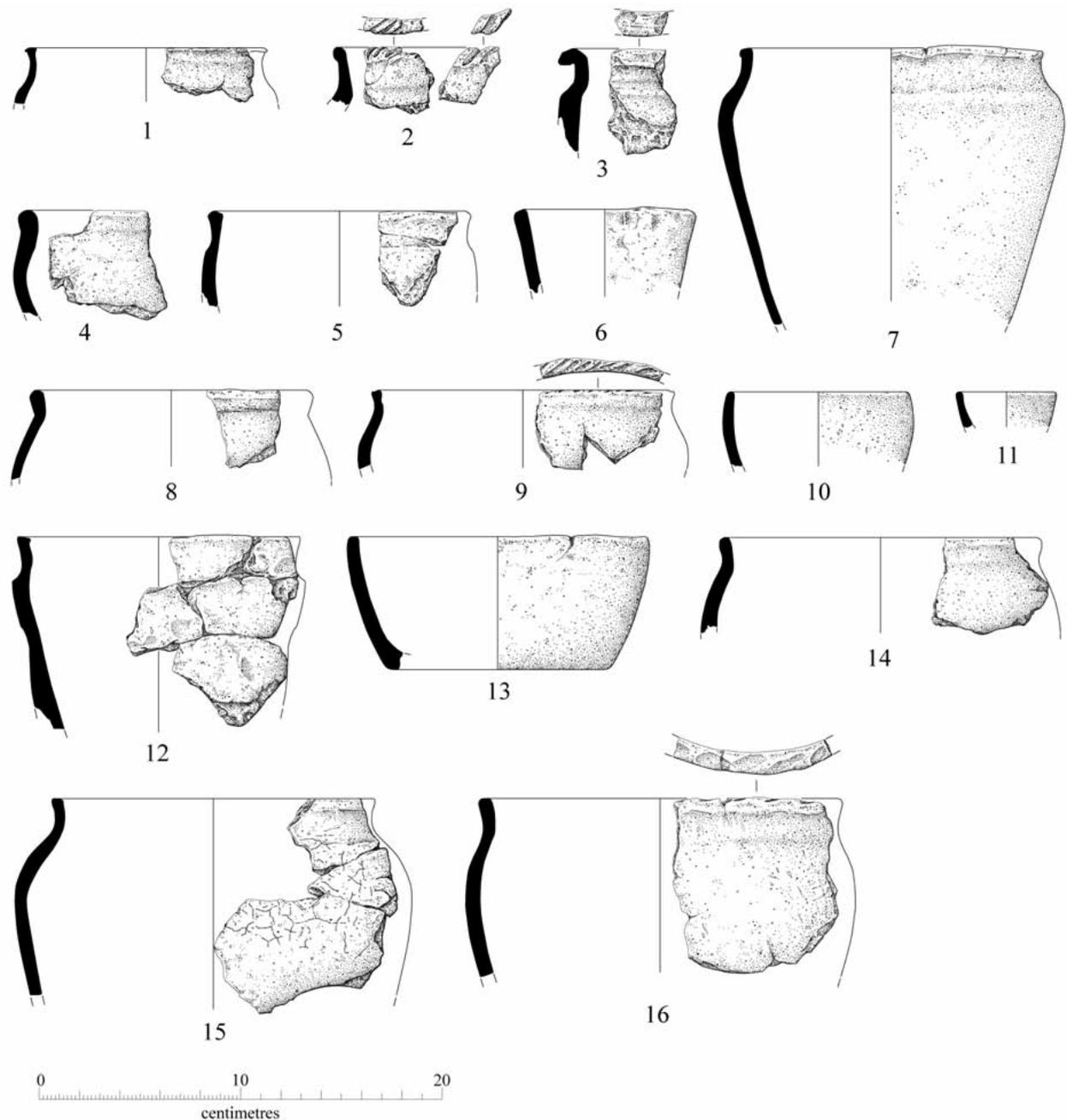


FIG. 71 – Middle Iron Age pottery Middle Iron Age pottery (nos 1–3, 15–16 enclosure ditch; nos 4–5, 7–14 eaves-gully of Structure 1; nos 6, 14 pit F.1360): 1. Form E, Fabric Q3 (10% rim circumference). 2. Fabric FQ1, vessel with slashed rim-top . 3. Form A, Fabric FQ1, fingertip impressed rim-tip. 4. Form L, Fabric QI1. 5. Form A, Fabric Q1 (10% rim circumference). 6. Form K, Fabric G2 (14% rim circumference). 7. Form E, Fabric Q3 (18% rim circumference; residue sample form radiocarbon dating). 8. Form L, Fabric Q1 (8% rim circumference). 9. Form A, Fabric Q1, tool impressed rim-top (12% rim circumference). 10. Form K, Fabric Q1 (20% rim circumference). 11. Form K, Fabric Q1 (20% rim circumference). 12. Form A (waster, burnt), Fabric Q1 (13% rim circumference). 13 Form K, Fabric G1 (18% rim circumference). 14. Form A, Fabric Q3 (6% rim circumference). 15. Form E, Fabric Q1 (burnt, 13% rim circumference). 16. Form A, Fabric Q1, fingertip impressed rim-top (20% rim circumference).

functions.²⁸ Direct evidence for use was found in the form of soot and carbonised residues adhering to the rims of two of the forms-assigned pots, and a total of 16 sherds in the period assemblage overall (345g). A thick food crust was present on a Form E jar (Fig. 71: 7) recovered from the eaves-gully of Structure 1, which was sampled for radiocarbon dating (see discussion).

Burnishing was present on 59 sherds (609g), representing 6.0% of the assemblage by count or 8.3% by weight. These frequencies are fairly low, but another 50 sherds had wiped smooth exterior surfaces (500g), both treatments being most common on pottery in fabric Q2. Decoration was identified on a total of 36 sherds (365g) from a maximum of 18 different vessels. Applications included tool impressions, finger-tipping and slashing on the rims of vessels (27 sherds, 309g; 14 vessels); scoring or heavy wiping on the body (eight sherds, 50g; three vessels), and light grooving on the neck of one pot (one sherd, 6g).

Form	Description	MNV	MNV burnished	No./wt. (g) sherds	Rim diameter range (cm)
A	Slack shouldered jar with a short upright neck and rim	8	-	26/387	13–18cm
E	High round shouldered jar with a short upright neck	3	-	14/303	12–18cm
G	S-shaped jars with concave neck and everted rim	2	2	3/34	20cm
K	Open profiled jars, tubs and bowl with no neck. The rim is essentially where the vessel wall ends.	5	-	10/18	5–16cm
L	Squat jars with no distinct neck, but a clearly defined rim	5	3	10/130	14cm
M	Globular ‘fish-bowl’ shaped vessel with beaded rim	1	-	2/10	-
Total	-	24	5	65/982	5–20cm

TABLE 4 – Quantification of vessel forms. The lettered form series relates to that developed by J.D. Hill which is widely employed in northern East Anglia. The descriptions are a simplified version of those fully published by Hill and Horne and Hill and Braddock.²⁹

MNV = minimum number of vessels. In total 16 form-assigned rims could be measured.

Leaving aside the residual pottery (70 sherds, 354g), the vast majority of Middle Iron Age feature assemblages were small, yielding less than 250g of pottery (Table 5). These deposits were primarily derived from pits and post-holes, containing between 1 and 27 sherds per feature (median, two sherds) with MSWs ranging from 1.0 to 19.5g (mean 6.7g). In general, the features contained small fragmented sherds. These probably derived from surface scatters of pottery unintentionally caught in dumps of soil during backfilling. The only noteworthy assemblage was from pit F. 1360 which contained the complete profile of a grog tempered bowl (Form K, Fig. 71: 13).

The two features yielding medium-sized assemblages were pit F.1167 (76 sherds, 428g) and the roundhouse eaves-gully of Structure 2, F.1458 (47 sherds, 340g). The pottery from both features was highly fragmented, and consisted of small sherds belonging to a range of different vessels. The bulk of the period assemblage, however, derived from the three features yielding large pottery groups: pit F.1698 (55 sherds, 586g); the roundhouse eaves-gully of Structure 1, F.1382 (140 sherds, 1204g), and enclosure ditch F.1295/F.1669 (491 sherds, 3766g).

Combined, the pottery from these contexts accounted for 70% of the total period assemblage (76% by weight). The material from pit F.1698 was in much the same condition as that from features yielding medium-sized assemblages. So too was pottery from the enclosure ditch. This was stratified throughout the fill sequence, with most individual contexts yielding less than 100g of ceramics. Importantly, no differences were observed in the character or content of the material in these stratified deposits. Even the fabric frequencies were broadly similar between the lower, middle and upper ditch silts: sandy wares being numerous in all three instances. The pottery from eaves-gully of Structure 1 contained fragments of least 18 different pots, including the partial profiles of eight form-assigned vessels. Amongst these were large refitting fragments of a Form E jar (Fig. 71: 7), and parts of a burnt and slightly warped vessel which appears to be a waster (Form A, Figure 71: 12). The latter are quite unusual in later prehistoric contexts, and probably suggest that pottery was being fired on the site.

Feature type/pottery deposit size (by wt. category)	Small <100g	101-250g	Medium 251-500g	Large 501-1000g	>1000g
Ditch	1	-	-	-	-
Enclosure ditch	-	-	-	-	1
Eaves-gully	-	-	1	-	1
Hollow	1	-	-	-	-
Pit	9	1	1	1	-
Pit/post-hole	1	-	-	-	-
Post-hole	9	-	-	-	-
Total (27)	21	1	2	1	2

TABLE 5 – Number of Middle Iron Age feature assemblages by pottery deposit size category (excluding residual pottery from later features).

By contemporary standards, neither the Late Bronze Age nor Middle Iron Age assemblage can be considered substantial. However, since few groups of later prehistoric pottery have been published from Suffolk in the last three decades, this modest sized assemblage is of some importance, particularly as it is associated with radiocarbon dates. Perhaps of greatest significance is the Late Bronze Age component, as pottery definitively dated to this period is still relatively scarce in the county. This material belongs to the Plainware phase of the Post-Deverel Rimbury (PDR) tradition, but includes only a narrow range of the vessel forms known to characterise the Plainware repertoire. The vast majority recovered from this context are convex walled jars ending in upright, in-turned or short everted rims. On typological grounds, these recall the bucket and barrel-shaped urns of the antecedent Deverel Rimbury tradition, and are potentially points of continuity in the ceramic series. Similar observations have been made by Nigel Brown with regard to the Late Bronze Age pottery from Broads Green, Essex, which closely parallels the Days Road assemblage.³⁰

Given these connections, it was initially thought that the Days Road assemblage might constitute an ‘Early’ Plainware ware group, dating to the late second millennium BC. This, however, has not proved to be the case. Instead, the radiocarbon date associated with the main pottery assemblage from pit F.1670 (derived from carbonized residue) delivered a 2σ (95.4% probability) determination of 970–820 cal. BC. This fits perfectly within the known currency of the Plainware tradition, but was slightly later than that anticipated on purely typological grounds. In many respects, this serves to highlight our imperfect understanding of the finer

details of typo-chronological development within the Plainware series. It also suggests that variability in assemblage composition may result from factors other than date alone such as differences in the character of consumption activities. This topic requires further investigation, but should encourage a more critical approach to thinking about the role played by certain pots in the PDR tradition.

The Middle Iron Age assemblage is fairly typical for Suffolk, displaying a range of shouldered jars and globular bowls, and a series of tub-shaped vessels, most made in dense sandy fabrics or a combination of sand and crushed burnt flint. The vessel forms, which constitute fragments of typical domestic repertoire, can be widely paralleled with published groups from Great Bealings, West Stow and some of the handmade pottery at Burgh.³¹ This potting tradition appears to have continued throughout the Late Iron Age in Suffolk, persisting alongside the introduction of wheel-made ceramics and grog tempered 'Belgic' pottery from c. 50 BC in some contexts.³² However, no Late Iron Age wares were identified at Days Road, suggesting the settlement was abandoned sometime before this point. This conclusion is supported by the radiocarbon date associated with pottery from the eaves-gully of Structure 1, which delivered a 2σ determination of 350–100 cal. BC.

Roman pottery (Katie Anderson)

A small assemblage totalling 112 sherds (467g) was recovered. The assemblage comprised primarily small sherds, with a mean sherd weight of just 4g. Fine sandy greyware fabrics, which were often micaceous, were the most common, followed by coarse sandy greywares, which is typical of Roman rural assemblages. Although no definite sherds from known kiln sites were identified, it is likely that most of these fabrics would have been made locally. The exception to this was a single sherd of South Gaulish Samian which broadly dates to the mid to late first century AD. This sherd was residual in a later feature and comprised a very small and abraded fragment, therefore the vessel form could not be identified.

Much of the Roman pottery was residual within later features. Exceptions to this include 18 sherds (50g) which were recovered from field system ditches. These were Early Roman in date (mid to late first century AD), and comprised fine and coarse sandy greyware sherds, including one angular beaded rim jar. Also, 30 sherds of Early Roman pottery were recovered from the post-holes of Structure 3. Some caution is required given that this is not a large quantity of material, however the pottery was recovered from several different post-holes (in the case of F.1195, associated with fragments of Roman brick and tile) and it seems likely that the structure is Early Roman. The sherds were primarily of fine, micaceous sandy greyware, and were mostly non-diagnostic.

The pottery implies that Roman activity did not continue beyond the mid/late first century AD, while the comparatively small size of the assemblage suggests that occupation was not as intensive as it had been during the Middle Iron Age and that the focus of the settlement had moved elsewhere.

Roman ceramic building material (Katie Anderson and Sue Anderson)

A total of 71 pieces (3596g) of tile and 47 pieces (456g) of brick or tile were recovered from a single post-hole (F.1195), the only Roman feature to contain significant quantities of ceramic building material. The assemblage includes pieces of floor tiles, *imbrex* tiles and *tegulae*, all of which were small and fragmented although there were several re-fitting pieces.

Fourteen fragments (357g) of ceramic building material of Roman date were also recovered from four ditches within the Early Roman field system, as well as a post-hole of Structure 3 and a pit to the south of the structure. Fragments were generally heavily abraded and not identifiable or measurable, although there was one fragment of *imbrex*. A much larger

assemblage of Roman ceramic building material was recovered from medieval contexts and is discussed alongside the medieval assemblage.³³

Worked and burnt stone (Simon Timberlake)

A stone rubber (1.205kg) recovered from an Iron Age pit (F.1232) appears to be part of a quern/rubber pair. This is interesting as rubbing stones are less frequently found (or recognised) than saddle querns. Its identification remains slightly ambiguous given that, although in size and shape it resembles a ‘bun-shaped grain rubber’,³⁴ its flat underside or rubbing surface is very slightly concave (not dissimilar to a saddle-quern) and seemingly not at all polished. The underside of the stone is also much more irregular than one might expect. Differential weathering following extreme exposure, or perhaps exposure to fire, might account for this and it is interesting therefore that the stone was found associated with the burnt stone fill of an Iron Age pit, perhaps suggesting its reuse as a pot-boiler or as an oven stone. A possible fragment of sandstone quern was also recovered from the gully of Structure 1. One other potentially utilised stone, a cobble recovered from a medieval pit, appears to have been used as a hammerstone and is probably prehistoric, having been redeposited in a later feature. The only worked stone recovered from a Roman context comprised ten small fragments of Niedermendig lava quern recovered from a pit to the south of Structure 3.

Some 29.86 kg of burnt stone and flint was recovered from the site both as primary deposits in prehistoric features and – assuming that the majority of burnt stone derives from prehistoric activity – as residual material in later features. The widespread distribution of burnt and fractured pebble/cobble stone (so typical of prehistoric cooking places) across the site might indicate that the actual level of Iron Age and particularly Late Bronze Age activity was higher than the number of dated features suggest.

Worked and burnt clay (Simon Timberlake)

The later prehistoric worked clay assemblage consisted for the most part of fragments of baked clay loomweights (total weight 5.9kg). The majority of the assemblage (4.05kg) was recovered from the roundhouse gully of Structure 1, although re-fitting fragments of most of a single loomweight were also recovered from Iron Age pit F.1167. These large ‘brick-like’ triangular loomweights are fairly typical of Iron Age contexts, and this marks a distinct change from the earlier Bronze Age forms. Appearing at the beginning of the Iron Age, this form continues in use well into the Romano-British period. A large assemblage of similar loomweights was recovered from Middle Iron Age contexts at Lodge Farm St Osyth, Essex,³⁵ while recent excavations by the CAU at Morland Road, Ipswich also yielded a number of clay loomweights of this type.³⁶

Burnt clay and daub was distributed quite widely across the site and recovered from Late Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman, medieval and post-medieval features. The majority (c. 75%) of the burnt clay comprised clay with a dominant inclusion of crushed chalk, with lesser amounts of flint and organic material such as straw. Smaller amounts of up to five other ‘fabric types’ with varying inclusions were identified. Little association between fabric type and period was recorded.

A small assemblage of burnt clay/daub (weighing 303g) was recovered from Late Bronze Age pit F.1670. It included fragments of structural daub with wattle impressions of round rods and split wood; impressions of wood grain were also visible on several pieces.³⁷ An assemblage weighing 4.64kg was recovered from Iron Age contexts, mainly the enclosure ditch and a single Iron Age pit (F.1424). The majority of the burnt clay/daub almost certainly derives from floors or walls of structures, although it is possible that in some contexts loomweights could have become so highly fragmented that they could have been mistaken for burnt daub. It is

also possible that the burnt clay recovered from pit F.1424 derives from the lining of a hearth or oven.

ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

The site produced only modest assemblages of animal bone and carbonised plant remains, evidently as a result of poor preservation.

Faunal remains (Vida Rajkovača)

Four pits dated to the Late Bronze Age yielded 45 assessable fragments of bone, the preservation condition of which was largely quite poor. The majority of identifiable bone specimens (21 fragments) were cattle or cattle-sized mammal, with three sheep/goat specimens also present in the assemblage. Both cattle and sheep/goat were represented by mandibular and tooth elements only.

The Middle Iron Age sub-set was recovered from 16 different features (pits, ditches, post-holes and gullies) and comprised 367 bone specimens, 326 (89%) of which were possible to identify to element and a further 135 (37%) to species. The material showed an overall moderate state of preservation.

Cattle were the prevalent species when both the Number of Identified Specimens (NISP=64) and Minimum Number of Individuals (MNI=3 individual animals) methods of quantification are taken into account (Table 6). Horse was the second most frequent species, although this animal was represented by loose teeth and tooth fragments only. This was followed by the two 'food species', ovicaprids and pig, as well as dog and cat. Red deer was positively identified based on a humerus and a calcaneum and roe deer was represented by a mandible and metatarsus.

Taxon	NISP	%NISP	MNI
Cattle	64	47.4	3
Ovicaprid	24	17.8	2
Horse	25	18.5	1
Pig	15	11.1	2
Dog	2	1.5	1
Cat	1	0.7	1
Red deer	2	1.5	1
Roe deer	2	1.5	1
Sub-total to species	135	100	-
Cattle-sized	129	-	-
Sheep-sized	76	-	-
Mammal n.f.i.	27	-	-
Total	367	-	-

TABLE 6 – Number of Identified Specimens and Minimum Number of Individuals for all species from Iron Age contexts. The abbreviation n.f.i. denotes that the specimen could not be further identified.

Analysis of distribution of taxa and skeletal elements by feature type showed a pattern previously observed on similarly dated sites across East Anglia.³⁸ Ditches and other peripheral features contained relatively large quantities of faunal material identified as cattle and horse, whereas contexts associated with domestic activities such as post-holes and gullies contained

smaller quantities of sheep and sheep-sized mammal bone fragments. The roundhouse gullies of Structures 1 and 2 generated different quantities of bone. The former produced a total of 51 bone specimens, the majority of which were sheep, and the latter contained a single pig specimen. This could indicate that these two structures were built to serve different purposes, Structure 1 being a dwelling and Structure 2 a storage place.

Butchery was observed on 24 specimens (*c.* 7% of the sub-set), the majority of which were cattle and cattle-sized fragments and the actions include disarticulation, meat removal and, in one instance sawing. Gnawing was observed on eight specimens only, implying quick deposition of the material. Material was highly fragmented with no complete specimens available for measurement.

A detailed discussion of the economy of the site is limited by the nature of the assemblage, and interpretation is largely restricted to species ratios. Unlike in sheep-dominated central southern Britain, cattle appear to have been the favoured species across East Anglia throughout prehistory. In that respect, the findings from Capel St Mary fit well with broader regional and period patterns of cattle dominance and, in terms of contemporaneous assemblages from the region, West Stow would offer an appropriate comparison with its dominant cattle cohort.³⁹ Whether brought about by environmental factors particular to the area or by a cultural preference, the predominance of cattle clearly shows that beef played a major part in the diet of local Iron Age populations.

Charred plant remains (Anne de Vareilles)

All plant remains recovered were carbonised. A full methodology and comprehensive tabulated results are included in the archive report.⁴⁰

A single sample from Late Bronze Age pit F.1670 generated a very large flot of 300ml of charcoal, some hulled barley (*Hordeum vulgare sensu lato*), emmer wheat (*Triticum dicoccum* L.), possibly spelt (*Triticum spelta* L.) and a possible grain of naked barley. Goosefoots (*Atriplex patula/prostrata*) and wild grass seeds make up the majority of the wild plant assemblage and are likely to have been collected with the crop. Seeds and grains did not occur in sufficient quantities to clearly represent a specific processing or cooking event, although the near complete absence of chaff suggests the remains accumulated after most of the processing was finished, perhaps during cooking sessions. The charcoal's condition is good with many large pieces (>4mm across) still surviving; it is therefore likely that charcoal was discarded into the pit relatively soon after use.

A total of seven Iron Age samples taken from the roundhouse gullies of Structures 1 and 2, the enclosure ditch and two pits were processed. The enclosure ditch samples were almost completely sterile, and only two or three grains associated with no more than six wild plant seeds were recovered from the roundhouse gullies of Structures 1 and 2. Pit F.1360 [1803] had the largest assemblage, with 18 cereal grains – including a naked barley grain demonstrating the continued use of this early prehistoric crop – as well as a little hulled wheat chaff and 20 wild plant seeds.

Burnt waste from the final stages of crop cleaning and cooking appears to have been accidentally incorporated or 'swept' into the roundhouse gullies of Structures 1 and 2. Potential differences in the function of the two roundhouses could not be ascertained from the samples although, interestingly, the sample from the smaller roundhouse contained several clumps of agglomerated phytoliths, burnt plant fibres (possibly straw), very fine charcoal, calcite and possibly clay. These remains could point to intensive burning of sedge/reed/grass straw. The expected change from Bronze Age emmer wheat to Iron Age spelt wheat is nicely demonstrated by the presence of spelt chaff and seeds.⁴¹ Free-threshing wheat grain (*Triticum aestivum* *sl.*), and four stinking chamomile seeds (*Anthemis cotula*) were also found in Iron

Age contexts. These species are more commonly associated with the Roman period and the associated technical advances achieved in the production and processing of crops.⁴² Indeed, stinking chamomile is a typical weed of heavy clay soils, and has been used to demonstrate the introduction of heavy mouldboard ploughs, enabling agriculture to expand onto clay-rich soils.⁴³

DISCUSSION

The later prehistoric and Early Roman remains at Days Road provide evidence of activity spanning some 1000 years. However, during this period, far from being continuous, occupation appears to have occurred in just two relatively short-lived episodes during the Late Bronze Age and Middle Iron Age. Furthermore, the absence of residual Early and Late Iron Age pottery suggests that the area saw no significant activity during the intervening periods and that the Early Roman field system utilised an area that had long since been abandoned as a settlement site.

Late Bronze Age

The Late Bronze Age remains excavated at Days Road, although comparatively few in terms of number of features, are of increased significance largely due to pit F.1670 and its associated pottery assemblage. As discussed above, although the function of the pit remains unknown, the evidence suggests that pit F.1670 was not necessarily a cooking pit and that the burnt fills probably reflect the disposal of accumulated midden material into the pit rather than *in situ* material. The environmental and faunal remains from the pit, although limited, reflect a mixed farming economy, with evidence of processing and consumption of grain recovered together with fragments of cattle and sheep/goat bone. Of more significance is the assemblage of over 525 sherds of Post-Deverel Rimbury pottery, particularly as it came from a single feature. Comparable assemblages of Late Bronze Age pottery in the region, in terms of sherd count, are few, and within Suffolk are limited to sites such as Barham (307 sherds from a single pit) and Ipswich (965 sherds from six pits).⁴⁴ The features were interpreted as an oven, in the case of Barham, and as ritual features associated with cremated bone and an undated inhumation at Ipswich. In this sense the features from both sites appear very different to pit F.1670.

While no definite structures were recorded – although the group of post-holes (Feature Group 1) to the north of pit F.1670 can easily be interpreted as such – the significant ‘domestic’ assemblages recovered, particularly the fragments of structural daub, suggest that the site can be defined as a settlement and as such it is a site of considerable significance. As Brudenell (above) notes, a shortage of Late Bronze Age radiocarbon dates in Suffolk generally makes that obtained from pit F.1670 (970–820 cal BC) particularly important. Unfortunately the context of the site and its place within the wider Late Bronze Age landscape remains somewhat ambiguous. That no contemporary ditches were encountered during the excavation appears to rule out that the site was enclosed – like for example, the broadly contemporary enclosed settlement at Lofts Farm in Essex⁴⁵ – and the site would appear to have been an ‘open settlement’ (it has been considered that the Iron Age enclosure ditch may have had Late Bronze Age origins, but since it yielded only one sherd of residual Late Bronze Age pottery, and with no evidence of any ‘re-cuts’ or modifications, it must be considered a purely Iron Age feature). To what extent the settlement remains were situated within an organised landscape, perhaps with field systems as seen at Game Farm, Brandon, is also unclear.⁴⁶ Fragmentary evidence of Bronze Age field systems has been recorded to the south of Capel St Mary at Vince’s Farm, Ardleigh in Essex, with possible field systems also identified to the north-east at Wherstead and at Ipswich airport.⁴⁷ However, it seems likely that these field systems,

particularly the Vince's Farm system, which was associated with Middle Bronze Age cremations, predate the settlement at Days Road.

In terms of the wider environmental and landscape setting, the Days Road site provides further evidence that although the lighter soils of the Breckland and coastal areas may have been preferred,⁴⁸ by the Late Bronze Age expansion of settlement into the claylands was taking place. Similar settlement patterns have been recorded in Essex, where work along the route of the A120 between Stansted and Braintree bisected a landscape that is in many ways the equivalent of the Suffolk clay uplands.⁴⁹ Evidence of Late Bronze Age settlement has also been recorded at Stansted Airport,⁵⁰ while the closest regional parallel to the Days Road site is probably the Late Bronze Age site at Broad's Green to the north of Chelmsford. Similarly located on the periphery of a boulder clay plateau, the site comprised the remains of a small rectilinear structure and associated pits.⁵¹ Brown speculates that the site was related to the more extensive settlement along the nearby river valleys yet also specifically located in order to exploit the clay uplands to the north. The same could be said for Days Road which, located on the transition between clay uplands and the lighter soils of the river valleys, was ideally placed to do this.

Middle Iron Age

The site's pottery indicates that the enclosed settlement phase belongs entirely to the Middle Iron Age, with radiocarbon analysis of material from roundhouse gully F.1382 dating Structure 1 to 350–100 cal BC. The settlement is an important addition to the growing list of Iron Age settlement sites in Suffolk that are providing new evidence for a region which, until as recently as the early 1990s, was considered something of a 'blank' area in terms of Iron Age studies.⁵² Both in terms of settlement type and distribution, the evidence from Days Road is significant.

While there is some evidence of a preceding 'open' phase of settlement – particularly the location of Feature Group 3 in relation to the enclosure ditch and presumed bank – any notion of multiple phases of Middle Iron Age settlement is to some extent speculative and the vast majority of remains are almost certainly associated with the enclosure. The full extent of the enclosed site remains unknown, and neither aerial photographs nor topography provide any clue as to the likely extent of the enclosure. Nevertheless it is reasonable to say that at most half of the enclosure was exposed within the excavation area and even a conservative estimate of size and form (see Fig. 67) suggests it was substantial, measuring a minimum of 120m across and with an internal area certainly in excess of 1ha. Taking into account the dimensions of the enclosure ditch itself (up to 4.64m wide by 1.86m deep) it is clear that considerable labour would have been required in excavating the ditch and constructing the (presumed) bank, which must be considered to have had a 'defensive' aspect and resonates with 'defended sites' such as Wardy Hill and the 'ringworks' of the East Anglian fens.⁵³

Of the structures present, both the relative size and the finds assemblages recovered from each, as well as their apparent contemporaneity, suggest that while Structure 1 was almost certainly a domestic dwelling, Structure 2 was probably an ancillary building of some description. While it can be argued that post-hole arrangements may represent multiple phases of structure on the sites of both Structures 1 and 2, we can be confident that no more than two structures existed at the same time. Consequently, the structures would appear to represent a single household, which both the limited size of the pottery assemblage and a lack of 'prestige' items within the finds assemblage suggest was not of particularly high status and was possibly relatively short-lived. Whether or not more structures may exist within the enclosure is currently impossible to predict, especially given that potentially less than half of the enclosure was exposed. However, it is clear that within the excavation area the well-

defined ‘domestic space’ is tucked away to the side of the enclosure (away from the entrance), leaving a large open area – aside from the two clusters of pits/post-holes – that would allow for the gathering of either people, or perhaps more likely, livestock. It is also interesting to note that, as at sites such as the Haddenham V enclosure, rather than facing the open space of the enclosure interior, the roundhouse doorways adhere to a strict eastward orientation.⁵⁴ In effect, both the enclosure entrance and its interior space were situated ‘behind’ the roundhouses. As such, it is clear that while the position of the enclosure entrance may well have been influenced by many factors, and was probably a purely pragmatic choice, the roundhouses clearly adhered to a rigid and widespread building tradition.⁵⁵

Environmental samples and animal bone suggest the settlement subsisted on a mixed farming economy during the Middle Iron Age. Cattle bone was prevalent in the animal bone assemblage, with smaller amounts of horse, sheep/goat and pig as well as wild species such as red deer and roe deer. The quantity of plant remains recovered from Iron Age features was relatively low but does indicate the continued use of the early prehistoric crop naked barley, while the presence of stinking chamomile appears to confirm that cultivation of the local heavy clay soils was taking place. Once again, although the lighter soils of the river valleys were probably favoured during the Iron Age, as in the Bronze Age, this clearly did not prevent the further expansion of settlement on to the claylands.

In terms of the material culture and faunal and environmental assemblages, the Days Road settlement can be considered fairly typical and it fits in well with current understanding of the rural farming economy during the Iron Age in Suffolk.⁵⁶ However, in terms of settlement morphology the site is in marked contrast to the predominant settlement pattern of open villages and farmsteads identified across the region. The Days Road site, with its substantial enclosure ditch clearly defining an interior settlement area, appears to be an anomaly in the proposed model of ‘wandering villages’ with non-permanent boundaries.⁵⁷ Indeed, enclosed or ‘defended sites’ in Suffolk appear to be the exception rather than the rule, with sites such as the *oppidum* at Burgh and the probable ritual enclosure at Barnham generally being considered of special status and dated firmly to the Late Iron Age,⁵⁸ while the Middle Iron Age enclosed farmstead at Foxhall to the north-east of Capel St Mary appears much smaller in scale.⁵⁹ Potential parallels are, however, recorded as (largely undated) cropmarks in Essex, indeed a cluster of broadly similar enclosures is recorded overlooking the Stour estuary c. 10km south-east of Capel St Mary.⁶⁰

Whilst lacking the defensive architecture of a ‘fort’ (although in size it is potentially comparable to East Anglian sites such as Wardy Hill, Cambridgeshire and Narborough, Norfolk)⁶¹ the Days Road site is clearly more than a ‘domestic compound’ like Foxhall, for example.⁶² In some respects – particularly the size and morphology of the ditched enclosure – the closest parallels are the classic enclosed farmsteads of Wessex: sites such as Little Woodbury.⁶³ However, the Days Road settlement appears to lack both the longevity and/or density of activity recorded at these sites, as well as the apparent wealth – with its limited artefactual and faunal assemblages, the settlement clearly cannot be seen as the home of a wealthy individual/member of the elite, as the Wessex sites are commonly interpreted.⁶⁴ Neither does the evidence suggest a place of communal gathering as at Wardy Hill, for example, where extensive midden deposits potentially reflect ‘group feasting’.⁶⁵ Generally, the apparent low status of the settlement, together with the fact that it appears to have been relatively short-lived and occupied by a single household, does not sit comfortably with the size of the enclosed site, the impressive dimensions of the ditch, and the fact that some ‘communal’ effort (i.e. more labour than the single household recorded could provide) seems likely to have been required to construct it. How then does the Days Road enclosed settlement fit into the local social and economic landscape during the Middle Iron Age and what sets it

apart from the predominant ‘open settlements’?

To some extent we must accept that an investigation on the scale of the Days Road excavation cannot answer such questions without associated landscape-scale projects. Nevertheless, the Days Road site suggests that enclosed sites occur alongside more open settlements, as has been observed in Essex,⁶⁶ and that a relatively diverse range of Iron Age settlement morphology probably exists, certainly within the south of the county. It seems highly likely that the enclosed settlement at Days Road existed within a wider landscape of field systems, and the presence of probable field boundary ditches dated to the Iron Age – albeit broadly – is recorded immediately to the south of the enclosure (ditch F.1150) and elsewhere in the Capel St Mary area.⁶⁷ Given that neither the site as a seat of a member of the elite nor as a place of communal gathering seems credible, perhaps the settlement is best interpreted as a relatively modest enclosed farmstead, albeit – considering the amount of ‘open space’ within the enclosure – also with a function associated with the gathering of livestock. This could potentially be connected with the need to protect herds and/or with livestock management and corralling. As discussed by Evans in relation to Wardy Hill, ‘defensive’ architecture represents a reaction to possible threat rather than necessarily war or conflict, and the enclosure may well reflect a potential need for refuge at certain times.⁶⁸ Furthermore, that the enclosure may have been used, indeed relied upon, by an extended family or small community is perhaps indicated by both the its scale and the communal effort required in constructing it, which contrast markedly with the limited settlement evidence within it.

Early Roman

Following the apparent abandonment of the Middle Iron Age settlement, the mid to late first century AD saw the establishment of a field system and the reorganisation of the landscape. The Early Roman ditches truncated the preceding Middle Iron Age settlement enclosure without reference to its boundary, and would appear to be part of an extensive Roman field system in the Capel St Mary area, which has been recorded on the same alignment in a number of small scale building projects in the village.⁶⁹

The Days Road site was undoubtedly part of an extensive agricultural landscape, probably belonging to the estate of the first- to second-century AD villa at Windmill Hill to the west. As such, Structure 3 is best interpreted as an agricultural building such as a barn: little evidence of occupation was recovered from the Roman features and a pottery sherd count of *c.* 100 largely small, abraded sherds is not suggestive of a domestic context. Further indirect evidence of Roman activity in the landscape is provided by the relatively large quantities of Roman tile, which appear to have been brought to the site and reused in the medieval period. The source of this material is unknown, but the nearby villa site must be a good candidate.

Virtually no evidence of activity during the later Roman and Early to Middle Saxon periods was encountered at Days Road and, while the land no doubt continued to be farmed – apparently utilising the same basic field divisions established during the Early Roman period – contemporary settlement was clearly located away from the site. It was not until the twelfth century and the establishment of the medieval farmstead, detailed in the forthcoming paper, that the site was once again inhabited.

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NOTES

- 1 British Geological Survey 1991.
- 2 Martin 1999a, 38.
- 3 Martin 1999a, 40.
- 4 Martin 1999b, 65–66.
- 5 Meredith 2006.
- 6 Smith and Sutcliffe 2009.
- 7 Margary 1955, 233.
- 8 Maynard 1951, 209; Owles and Smedley 1967, 74–75.
- 9 Smith and Sutcliffe 2009.
- 10 Tabor, forthcoming.
- 11 Smith and Sutcliffe 2009.
- 12 Martin 1999b, 69.
- 13 Germany 2007, 116.
- 14 Dodwell in Tabor 2010, 74.
- 15 Meredith 2006.
- 16 See Tabor, forthcoming.
- 17 Rajkovača in Tabor 2010, 82.
- 18 Timberlake in Tabor 2010, 73–74.
- 19 See Ford *et al.* 1984.
- 20 E.g. Humphrey 2004.
- 21 M. Knight pers. comm.
- 22 Prehistoric Ceramics Research Group 1997.
- 23 Barrett 1980.
- 24 Brudenell 2008, 38; 2011, 21.
- 25 See Brudenell and Cooper 2008.
- 26 Martin 1993, 15, 44.
- 27 See Hill and Horne 2003, 174; Hill and Braddock 2006, 155–56.
- 28 Hill and Braddock 2006, 169–75.
- 29 2003, 174; 2006, 155–56
- 30 Brown 1988b, 10.
- 31 Martin 1993, 44–46; West 1989, 60–68; Martin 1988, 34–63.
- 32 Martin 1988, 34–37; Sealey 2007, 27–31.
- 33 Tabor, forthcoming.
- 34 See Curwen 1937, 134–37.
- 35 Major 2007, 79–80.
- 36 Hogan 2011; Brudenell and Hogan 2014, 216.
- 37 G. Appleby pers. comm.
- 38 E.g. Haddenham; Serjeantson 2006, 242, 246.
- 39 Crabtree 1990, 101–5.
- 40 de Vareilles in Tabor 2010, 82–92.
- 41 Greig 1991.
- 42 Cf. Grieg 1991; Jones 1981; 1996.
- 43 Jones 1981; 1984; 1991.
- 44 Martin 1993, 23–26, 31–33; Martin *et al* 1996, 477.
- 45 Brown 1988a.
- 46 Gibson 2004.
- 47 Brown 1999; Yates 2007, 79–80.
- 48 Martin 1999a, 38.
- 49 Timby *et al.* 2007, 13–80.
- 50 Havis and Brookes 2004; Cooke *et al* 2008.

- 51 Brown 1988b, 7–14.
 52 See e.g. Cunliffe 1991, 115, 265
 53 See Evans 2003.
 54 See Evans and Hodder 2006, 272.
 55 See Parker Pearson 1999.
 56 Martin 1999b, 46–47.
 57 Hill 1999; Martin 1999b, 49–52.
 58 Martin 1988; 1993, 1–22.
 59 See Martin 1999b, 62–63.
 60 E.g. Bradfield (Buckley *et al.* 1987).
 61 Evans 2003; Davies *et al.* 1991, 66–68.
 62 See Martin 1999b.
 63 See e.g. Cunliffe 1991, 241–44.
 64 Cunliffe 1991, 251–53.
 65 Evans 2003, 255.
 66 Germany 2007, 115.
 67 Meredith 2006.
 68 Evans 2003, 258.
 69 E.g. Meredith 2009.

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