Trench MFP5

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Introduction

Trench 5 was opened in 2011 in the area of prehistoric enclosures on the eastern edge of the site. The purpose of this trench was to investigate another of the large circular enclosures revealed by the geophysical survey of this area and also to investigate the variable geology. A similar sized circular enclosure has been found in nearby Trench MFP3 to the south. A trench measuring 20.5m by 20.5m was opened over the ditch/ditches of the large Circular Enclosure to the east of an unexplored rectangular enclosure. Trench MFP5 lay to the north of Trench MFP3 and the south of Trench MFP4 with a narrow 3.0m trench linking it to Trench MFP4. The geophysical survey of this whole area shows a cluster of many enclosures, both circular and rectangular, but it was only possible to open a trench targeted on one of these large enclosures in 2011. As this trench was opened in the final season with severe time limits, only the large Circular Enclosure and the features set closely in and around it could be explored. So, it should be stressed that what was explored in Trench MFP5 was only part of a whole complex of prehistoric activity in this area with many enclosures and ditches overlapping or intersecting with each other.

The main feature in this trench was the irregular Circular Enclosure, seemingly comprised of an Outer Enclosure Ditch and Inner Ditch, jointly called Circular Enclosure Group [5005], Figure 1. Excavation of these complimentary 'paired ditches' proved that the archaeology was not so clear cut and that in fact these so called 'paired ditches' were different ditches cut at different phases. In most cases where it was clear in our interventions, the 'outer' ditch cut the 'inner', though only on the outer edge of the 'inner ditch' and not across the whole cut. Therefore, this was not a real recut as such but two separate ditches. Occasionally the ditches ran side by side for short stretches. The 'outer' ditch was in all cases shallower, more U-shaped in profile, and often wider than the inner ditch which it cut. The 'inner' ditch was deeper and with a sharper V-shaped profile, sometimes with an extremely narrow flat-bottomed lower section. Because of the total difference in their profiles and because sometimes they ran side by side rather than directly above and below – this sequence does not look like a simple later recutting of the same feature. The latter was what did occur in the big Circular Enclosure Ditch in nearby Trench MFP3, but in the case of the Trench MFP5 Circular Enclosure it appears that the original narrower 'inner' ditch was at some point completely replaced by a larger circular ditch just outside it. Another area on the southern part of the Circular Enclosure revealed what appeared to be the terminal end of the 'inner ditch' only. The outer ditch in this area does not appear to have a terminal end. A potential southern terminal and entrance would be unusual for Marcham. The pattern of many of the large Iron Age enclosures and also of key Roman structures across the site seems to show a preference for eastern entrances e.g. the Barrel-Shaped Enclosure Ditch Terminus [3003] in MFNA3 (see Trench Narrative for MFNA3, this website); the large Circular Enclosure in MFP3, Circular Enclosure Ditch Group [3011] (see Trench Narrative for MFP3, this website); the main Romano-British temple itself within its temenos in Trenches MF18 and

MF15; and even the Roman Arena in Trench MF1. Unfortunately, the eastern side of the Circular Enclosure in Trench MFP5 was never explored, so we cannot say whether there ever was a main entrance and terminal here across both the outer and inner ditches. The geophysics plot in this area does not seem to show any gap in the enclosure ditches on the eastern side, but it must remain a possibility. Both the lack of time to fully explore and record this large Circular Enclosure and problems with the interpretation of the complex of intercutting ditches, has resulted in a feature which we do not fully understand.

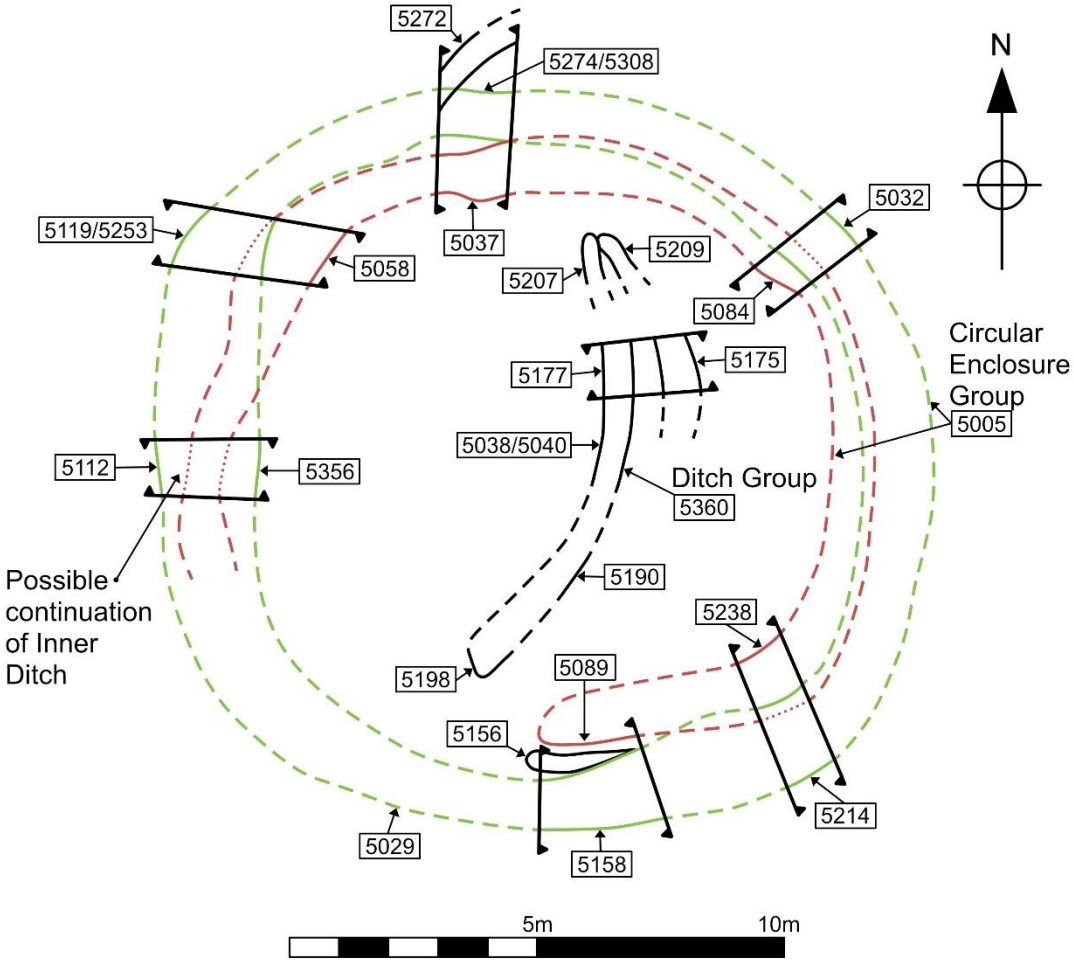


Figure 1. Simplified plan of the MFP Trench 5 Circular Enclosure group [5005] and internal Ditch Group [5360]. The ditch shown in green is later than that shown in red.

Another potentially significant feature seen on the geophysical survey appeared to be a sinuous ditch running roughly N/S before turning SSW and cutting across the interior of the Circular Enclosure. Various interventions revealed it to be mostly made up of paired shallow ditches, possibly ending in a terminus in the southern part of the interior of the Enclosure. This is detailed below under Ditch Group [5360]. Besides this there was a NE/SW Ditch or Gully [5272] in the north side of the Circular Enclosure, which may have cut outer ditch [5274]. In the NE corner of the trench a wide E/W Ditch [5058] was found. The continuation of this ditch eastwards may have intersected with the outer ditch of the Circular Enclosure, but this potential junction was not explored.

There were several other smaller features in the trench, such as several shallow pits (depths *c.* 0.25 – 0.6m) inside the enclosure, namely Pits [5108], [5192], [5194] and [5034]. There were many other potential narrow gullies, pits, and postholes across the trench, including clusters of pits and other cuts in the NW corner and NE corner and a series of largely unexplored postholes and possible ditches in the SW corner of the trench. Besides the outer and inner ditches of the Circular Enclosure, sixty possible cut features were identified in this trench. Many of these potential cuts were not excavated or only partly excavated, so they will not feature in this summary report. They are however listed in the full Trench MFP5 Context Stratigraphy spreadsheet. Without full exploration of many of these features our best suggested breakdown of what all these cuts were is: *c.* 16 pits, including potential sand quarry pits in the NE; *c*. 22 postholes or small pits; 13 gullies or ditches; and nine cuts of an indeterminate nature.

The vast majority of features in this trench are prehistoric and can be assigned to the Iron Age. A total of 2,980 sherds of pottery were found, of which 2,953 sherds (97.4%) were dated to the Iron Age period and 77 sherds (2.6%) to the Roman period. Twenty-three early Saxon sherds were found in shallow Pit [5003] cutting subsoil, but this is the only potential Saxon feature in this area and does not represent any kind of focus of Saxon activity in this part of the site. Most of the Roman pottery was found in topsoil layer (5000) and layer (5006) which was a large spread overlying all the Iron Age features on the west side of the trench.

The animal bone assemblage consisted largely of sheep and cattle with smaller amounts of pig bone. Horse bones were present in 24 contexts and small quantities of dog bone were found in four contexts. Only sixty-eight small finds were found in this large trench, consisting largely of worked flint flakes and scrapers (31) and fired clay fragments (12), plus small amounts of iron slag (8), worked bone tool fragments (8) as well as a handful of iron object fragments, quern stone fragments, and single examples of a Roman glass sherd and a clam shell. No copper alloy fragments of any type were found in this trench. The finds of iron slag and fired clay (including three loom-weight fragments and a spindle whorl) in certain contexts may suggest that industrial or craft activities like iron working and cloth production may have taken place here, though on a very small scale.

If we compare the finds assemblage to the nearby Trench MFP3, which also featured a large Circular Enclosure and other Iron Age ditches and pits, the assemblage is both smaller and also contains far fewer Roman period finds. There are only 77 Roman pottery sherds in MFP5, as opposed to 843 sherds in MFP3. Though the small find assemblage in MFP3, as with MFP5, was not a very rich and diverse assemblage, it did contain almost double the number of small finds than found in MFP5 and does include some Roman coins and seven copper alloy fragments. The latter are totally lacking in MFP5. So there seems to be less activity in terms of deposition in both the Iron Age period and also especially in the Roman period in this area, as compared to the neighbouring large features in Trench MFP3. This may also be an indication that there was less votive activity in this area, if the majority of the large features are attested to be of ritual function rather than domestic, which may well be the case.

Prehistoric Phase

This trench contained a number of prehistoric features, both large and small, as well as the main Circular Enclosure ditches. Due to the great complexity of features and the fact that this trench was only opened in the last season of excavation, this area is very imperfectly understood compared to other prehistoric parts of the site. Many of the observed cut features were never excavated or only partly excavated and even extensive exploration of the key features like the two Circular Enclosure ditches could not be undertaken. As discussed above, the Outer Ditch and Inner Ditch of the Circular Enclosure Group [5005] proved to be two separate ditches of different phases, with the outer ditch usually just cutting the outer edge of the inner ditch rather than replacing it or fully re-cutting it. How far apart in time the digging of these two ditches was, is not possible to say. Unfortunately, though an initial survey of all the pottery was done by the Heritage Lottery volunteers establishing that the vast majority of the pottery assemblage was Iron Age – lack of funding meant that no detailed analysis and dating of this pottery could be done. As with other parts of the site, most of the prehistoric pottery here is probably Middle Iron Age, but whether the pottery from the fills of the stratigraphically 'earlier' inner ditch was significantly earlier than that found in the fills of the outer ditch is not known. The reasons for digging another ditch right next to the inner ditch is not clear. It may well be that this inner ditch was still visible and partly open when the outer ditch was dug. This is a very different arrangement from the one revealed in exploration of the large Circular Enclosure in the neighbouring Trench MFP3. Here the whole ditch was completely recut once, and in many areas twice, in a later period. Clearly in MFP3, the large enclosure ditch had filled up and required re-opening and recutting at some point in the Late Iron Age and Roman periods, as the upper fills of these recuts are full of both Iron Age and Roman pottery. The latter may well imply a continuity of ritual deposition in this area.

This is not the case for the fills of either the Inner Ditch or the Outer Ditch in MFP5. Firstly, the small amount of Roman pottery found in MFP5 was largely concentrated in topsoil and in layers (5006) and (5050) in the NE corner of the trench. Since it was not found in the upper fills of either of the Circular Enclosure ditches, there is no evidence of a Roman period re-use or re-cutting of these ditches in MFP5. Equally, and again unlike the MFP3 Enclosure, the largest groups of Iron Age pottery in MFP5 were mostly found in general layers and not focused in the fills of the Circular Enclosure Ditches. All the contexts which contained over 100 Iron Age sherds were layers, apart from the fill (5036) in Inner Ditch cut [5037], and fill (5215) in Outer Ditch cut [5214]. Though a number of the fills explored in sections across the Outer and Inner Ditch of the Circular Enclosure did contain reasonable amounts of Iron Age pottery, they did not contain large quantities. Nor were there many small finds in these various Inner and Outer Ditch fills. The few small finds from this trench occurred mostly in twos or threes in various fills and layers across the trench, but certainly not concentrated in the fills of the Circular Enclosure ditches. The only contexts containing slightly larger amounts of small finds were topsoil layer (5000) with eight small finds, fill (5044) of small pit [5295] in the NE corner with eight small finds, and finally the top fill of Inner Ditch cut [5238] in the south with eight small finds. Nor did these ditch fills contain the unusual evidence of burning or burnt deposits that some of the fills of the MFP3 Circular Enclosure

Ditch and a few MFP3 pits did. Does this indicate that there was not such a focus of ritual activity including ritual deposition in the MFP5 Enclosure? Or perhaps a different kind of ritual activity took place around and inside the MFP5 Circular Enclosure that did not leave the kind of evidence found in the MFP3 features?

The other large group of features explored in MFP5 were the ditches and gullies cutting across the interior of the Circular Enclosure, described below under Ditch Group [5360]. As discussed below, though this appeared on geophysics to be a continuous sinuous feature cutting across the whole of the interior of the Circular Enclosure, it was actually made of a series of narrow paired ditches or gullies and also some pits. The paired ditches may well have been of the same phase, but they intersected with pits of different phases. The occurrence of these paired ditches in the internal space of the Circular Enclosure, when taken together with the 'paired' inner and outer ditches of the Circular Enclosure itself, is of great interest. It is not something that is common in the other prehistoric areas of the site, though of course the Barrel-shaped Enclosure in Trenches MNA1, 2, and 3 does have a narrow internal palisade ditch beside the much larger main ditch. And many large enclosure ditches are re=cut. But the 'paired' ditches in MFP5 run side by side and are of fairly similar widths. Though admittedly the outer ditch of the Circular Enclosure does cut the edge of the inner ditch in many places they do still effectively run side by side, as if mirroring each other. What this doubling of ditches signifies is difficult to say, but it seems significant and potentially ritual fitting with the overall interpretation of all the small circular Iron Age enclosures in this eastern area of the site. We do not know if the ditches in the interior were of the same phase as those in the Circular Enclosure, but they clearly did not completely divide the interior space into two zones. It is worth speculating whether the interior paired ditches may have appeared first, for ritual use of some sort, and that these may have inspired the later construction of a much more ambitious scheme, i.e. the digging of a large Circular Enclosure with some form of closely spaced double ditches.

Finally, the excavation of the Circular Enclosure and other features in MFP5 made it very clear that whatever this enclosure was used for, it was very different from what was happening in a similar-sized Circular Enclosure just to the south in MFP3. The MFP5 Enclosure lacks the burnt and potentially 'votive' material found in some parts of the MFP3 Enclosure and adjacent features. It also lacks the larger quantities of Iron Age pottery and other material found in the main ditch fills of the MFP3 Enclosure. And it lacks the quantity of Roman pottery found in the recuts of the MFP3 Enclosure ditches and all that implies for the continuity of use and ritual practise from the Iron Age into the Roman period. The fact that activity and deposits in these closely neighbouring enclosures was so different highlights the question of what all these enclosures of differing shapes and dimensions found across the wider site were used for? Looking at the two circular enclosures of MFP5 and MFP3, were they created and used by different groups of communities in the area? Did whole villages dig their own enclosures in their own way and practise different ritual activities from those of their 'neighbours' in the nearby enclosure? Without really close dating of the pottery, we simply cannot tell if these two enclosures in MFP5 and MFP3 were created and/or used at the

same time in the Iron Age – but if they were, it does seem they were created and used in distinctively different ways.

MAIN CUTS

Circular Enclosure Group [5005]

Several interventions were made across the Outer Enclosure Ditch and Inner Enclosure Ditch. These were: outer ditch [5274]/[5308] and inner ditch [5037] in the north sector; outer ditch [5032] and inner ditch [5084] in the north-east; outer ditch [5214] and inner ditch [5238] in the south-east; outer ditch [5158] and inner ditch and possible inner terminal [5089] in the south; outer ditch [5029] possibly in the south-west corner; outer ditch [5112] and possible inner ditch [5356] in the west; outer ditch [5119]/[5253] and inner ditch [5058] in the north-west. As these various sections across the two ditches often intercut on their edges, we will deal with each pair of ditches in each separate intervention below:

Outer Ditch [5274]/[5308] was in the northern sector and was *c.* 0.75m to 1.1m in width and *c*. 0.5m deep with a rounded base and roughly U-shaped profile. There is some confusion with cut [5274] and cut [5308] and it seems they are one and the same feature. The ditch had three possible fills, the upper being (5275) and the lower or basal fill was (5279) which may be the same as fill (5278). This ditch may have been cut by NE/SW linear ditch [5272]. Inner Ditch [5037] was V-shaped with a flat narrow bottom. It measured *c.* 1.1m across and was *c.* 0.85m deep. It contained two fills, the top one being (5250) and the basal fill was (5283). The section did not resolve whether this inner ditch was cut by the outer or the reverse in this sector.

Outer Ditch [5032] was in the north-east sector and was *c.* 1.2m across and *c.* 0.55m deep. It contained four fills. The profile was broad but more V-shaped here rather than the fully rounded one seen in most sections across this outer ditch. It cut inner ditch [5084]. Top fill (5033) overlaid fill (5064), which overlaid fill (5065). This lay on top of basal fill (5067). This outer ditch cut the edge of inner ditch [5084]. Inner ditch [5084] was *c*. 1.1m across and *c.* 1m deep. The profile of this ditch is more sharply V-shaped with a flat bottom. It was cut by ditch [5032] on its outer edge. It contained three fills. Top fill (5061) overlaid fill (5071), which overlaid basal fill (5072).

Outer Ditch [5214] was situated in the south-east sector and was *c*. 1.7m wide and *c.* 0.6m deep with a U-shaped profile and rounded base. The ditch contained four fills. Top fill (5215) overlay (5248), which in turn overlay basal fills (5241) and (5244), which may be the same fill This outer ditch appears to cut inner ditch [5238], just on its outer edge. Inner ditch [5238] was, as with all the excavated stretches of these inner ditches, much deeper than the outer ditch. It is *c.* 1.5m wide and has a much sharper V-shaped profile than the outer ditch with a narrow flat bottom. There are three fills. Top fill (5237) overlays middle fill (5330), which in turn overlays basal fill (5331).

Outer Ditch [5158] was situated in the southern sector of the Circular Enclosure and was *c.* 1.3m wide and *c.* 0.4-0.5m deep. As with the other outer ditch sections, this ditch was U-

shaped with a rounded base. It contained three fills. Top fill (5159) overlay middle fill (5211)/(5212), which overlay basal fill (5223). This outer ditch may have cut a narrow gully [5156] but the records are not clear on this relationship. Terminal Ditch Cut [5089] appears to be a terminal end of Inner Ditch [5238], as identified in the intervention just to the east. However there does not appear to be a terminal end and therefore an entrance in the accompanying Outer Ditch cut [5158] just to the south. As we have established that the inner cut was done at a different and earlier phase than the outer cut of this Circular Enclosure, then it seems the entrance to the enclosure was not placed in this spot in the later phase when the outer ditch was cut. This terminal end contained four fills, but only half of this cut was explored so there may have been more. The top fill was (5088) which overlay fill (5180), which overlay basal fill (5196). An earlier erosion fill (5179) on one edge of the cut must have preceded all of these. The full width of this terminal end can only be estimated as the section only stretched across part of it, but it was probably *c*. 1.4m wide. The depth was *c*. 0.8m and the profile was V-shaped with a flat bottom and as usual deeper than the outer cut.

Outer Ditch [5029] appears to be another intervention across the circular Enclosure but its position and that of its sections is not marked on the plans. It may be situated somewhere in the SW corner, to the west of Outer Ditch cut [5158]. It appears to cut a narrow ditch or gully called [5069] - which may be a continuation of the narrow gully [5156] seen in the intervention further east. The ditch measured *c.* 1.2m -1.3m across and was *c*. 0.4.5m deep with a roughly V-shaped profile. This ditch contained only two fills, namely top fill (5031) and basal fill (5042). The position of these two features remains uncertain on the overall trench plan, so it must remain a suggestion only that this is part of the outer ditch of the Circular Enclosure.

Outer Ditch [5112] appears to be a cut in the western sector of the Circular Enclosure, but the records are rather confused. This part of the outer ditch is much wider than some other stretches at *c.* 1.9m – 2.5m wide. The depth was *c.* 0.5m – 0.6m and the profile was very broadly U-shaped with a rounded base. The ditch contained five fills. Top fill (5113)/(5114) overlay fill (5203), which in turn overlay lower fills (5357) and (5232). The basal fill was (5233). This broad ditch cut through the centre of and obscured an earlier and deeper ditch [5356]. The ditch only has one remaining fill which is (5251). This ditch may represent the Inner Ditch of the Circular Enclosure even though, unlike all the other investigated stretches, the outer ditch here does not just cut the inner edge of the earlier ditch but cuts the whole width of the earlier ditch. This earlier ditch was an estimated 1.1m – 1.2m in width and what remains is *c.* 0.5m deep. The profile of this ditch is roughly V-shaped with a flat bottom, rather like the many examples of the inner ditch. However, the excavators of this feature speculated that this lower earlier ditch might not continue further south into the next intervention, so might terminate somewhere in this area. This is difficult to prove either way as the records and sections of the area just to the south-east of this are incomplete and confused. So, the possibility remain that lower ditch [5356] might represent a feature which predates the outer ditch of the Circular Enclosure, but which is not part of the Inner Ditch circuit. A further possible very broad cut was noted below ditch [5356], namely possible cut [5334]. However, only one small part of this was observed, and the area was not bottomed or

taken down to natural, so it may simply represent the line of another layer below these two ditches rather than an even earlier very large cut.

Outer Ditch [5119]/[5253] was situated in the north-western sector of the Circular Enclosure but due to various factors this area was imperfectly understood and imperfectly recorded. We can say that the outer ditch varied in its width on the two sections drawn from *c.* 1.1m – 1.4m and was *c.* 0.5m - 0.6m deep and roughly U-shaped in profile. The ditch may have had five fills, but the records and stratigraphic relationships are very confused. Top fill may have been (5252) and below this in some order were fills (5254), (51180, and (5197). The only certainty is that the basal fill was (5277). This feature was cut by a small pit [5325]. It also seems that, as with the other sections across the pair of ditches, this outer ditch cut the inner ditch [5048]. Inner Ditch [5048] was *c.* 1.1m – 1.7m across and *c.* 1.1m deep. It was V-shaped in profile with a very narrow and flat bottom. It was cut by outer ditch [5119]/[5253] on its outer edge. This ditch had five fills. Top fill (5049), overlay fill (5074)/5081), which overlay (5228). Below this was fill (5227) and basal fill (5222).

Large E/W Ditch [5058] ran East-West in the NW sector of the trench and may represent another enclosure which intersected with the Circular Enclosure on its north-western side. This ditch measures *c.* 1.8m across and was *c.* 0.8m in depth. The profile was V-shaped. Because the ditch was only explored some distance to the west of the Circular Enclosure and not in the area where it may have intersected with the latter – we do not know if this feature cut or was cut by the Circular Enclosure. It contained three fills. The top fill was (5053) with 23 sherds of Iron Age pottery, which overlay middle fill (5059) with three sherds of Iron Age pottery and finally basal fill (5082) which had no dating material.

Pit [5108] was situated inside the Circular Enclosure on the eastern side. The pit was circular with a sharper and more V-shaped profile than most of the pits in this trench. It measured *c.* 1.6m across and was *c.* 0.6m deep and cut possible posthole cut [5104]. It contained two fills, the uppermost being fill (5109) and the basal fill being (5306) which contained seven sherds of Iron Age pottery.

Square pit [5194] was situated inside the Circular Enclosure at the northern end. It was rectangular in shape with a flat base and sloping sides. It measured *c.* 1.3m by 0.8m and was *c.* 0.5m deep. There were only two fills, the upper fill being (5195) and the basal fill was (5226). The upper fill contained some Iron Age pottery and a collection of large stones, and the lower fill contained a very small amount of Iron Age pottery. The function of the pit is unknown.

Narrow Ditch [5268]/[5272] ran in a NE/SW orientation and was situated in the north-west corner of the trench outside the Circular Enclosure but probably intersecting with it. This ditch does appear to intersect with the outer ditch of the Circular Enclosure in this area, but records for this potential intersection are very confusing, and the section does not agree with the plan. The plan shows the northern part of this narrow ditch 0.5m to the north of the Circular Enclosure 'outer ditch' [5274] in this N/W corner and not intersecting with it. The section unfortunately shows it cutting or being cut by another cut named [5308] which may

or may not be the same as 'inner ditch' [5274] though it seems far too small to be this outer ditch. Further south, the plans show the narrow ditch running very close to 'outer ditch' [5037] and possibly cutting it, but this is by no means certain. So, whether this NE/SW ditch is earlier or later than the 'outer ditch' of the Circular Enclosure is not certain. Ditch [5268]/[5272] from the plan is *c.* 0.5m - 0.6m wide. The section of it is too unreliable to be sure of its depth. This ditch contained two fills, namely top fill (5275) with 20 Iron Age sherds, which overlay basal fill (5269)/(5279)/(5284) with eight Iron Age sherds. As this ditch tracks northwards, it may peter out, but the area is confused by a series of other possible pit cuts, so it is difficult to be sure.

Ditch Group [5360] – ditches and pits running N/S across centre of Enclosure

A sinuous line of possible ditches was observed on the geophysics running across the middle of the Circular Enclosure in a N/S orientation in the northern part and switching to a NNE/SSW orientation in the southern part. Interventions across parts of this sinuous collection of cuts suggested that this result on the geophysics was made up of a series of ditches and narrower gullies, as well as some pits, rather than one continuous feature. They also do not all seem to be of the same phase. The group is largely made up of two sets of possible paired ditches running approx. NNE to SSW across the middle of the Circular Enclosure [5005].

At the north end of this group are the terminals of two narrow gullies [5207] and [5209]. To the south of this, on a similar trajectory but broader and therefore not necessarily part of the same features, is another pair of ditches running side by side. These are N/S ditch [5177] and just to the east of this N/S ditch [5175]. Just to the south of these ditches in another intervention, was N/S Ditch [5038]/5040], which appears to represent the continuation of the westernmost of the paired ditches going southwards – but the plans and sections are rather confused. Another possible continuation of the westernmost of these paired ditches continuing even further south is NNE/SSW Ditch [5190] but it was only partly excavated, so again the archaeology is not clear. It is at this point that the ditch orientation changes from N/S to NNE/SSW. This possible combination of paired ditches only takes us about two-thirds down the length of the interior of the Circular Enclosure. It is not clear, or indeed definite, that these paired ditches ever ran completely across this internal space. At the point where ditch [5190] may represent a southern continuation of the westernmost ditches across the interior, the whole area is confused by a number of pit cuts. The largest of these is Square Pit [5034] cutting Ditch [5190], and to the south-east of this is another pit, namely Pit [5192]. This in turn is cut by Ditch [5198], described as a 'ditch terminus'. This may indeed be the terminal end of the westernmost of the paired NNE/SSW ditches, but the records are very confused in this entire area. The 'terminus' measured *c.* 1.3m by *c.* 0.4m, with a depth of *c.* 0.3m. It does seem likely that this is the southern terminus of the westernmost of the internal paired ditches. Whether the easternmost of the internal ditches also terminates here is not known, as the area just to the east of this 'terminal' was never excavated.

In general, the broader paired ditches in this area (Ditch cuts [5177], [5175], [5038]/5040], [5190] and ditch terminal [5198] are all of a shallow, roughly U-shaped profile with either

gently rounded or flattish bottoms. Their widths vary slightly between *c*. 0.5 to 0.7m. Their depths range from 0.2m to *c.* 0.4m deep. The narrow gullies to the north of these, namely [5207] and [5209] may represent the northern terminals of the paired ditches to the south but the records for these are incomplete. They are in any case shallower than the ditches to their south, at only *c.* 0.1m deep, and also narrower at *c*. 0.35 to 0.5m wide. Therefore, the relationship between these two sets of 'paired' ditches is uncertain. As the narrow gullies at the northernmost end of this group do not join or interact with the large Circular Enclosure ditches at the north, and there is no evidence that the larger NNE/SSW paired internal ditches go as far as the Circular Enclosure to the south – this group of ditches/gullies apparently do not separate the Enclosure into two halves. The lack of any close dating evidence in any of these ditches means we cannot be sure if these paired ditches in the interior of the Circular Enclosure were earlier or later or of the same phase as the Outer and inner Ditches of the Circular Enclosure,

North-East Group [5361] a mix of natural features and pits in the NE corner

This is a very confused area in the NE corner of the trench, just outside the Circular Enclosure. It was only partly excavated and seemed to contain a series of pits and possible gullies and natural features. The features include cuts [5186], [5187], [5188], [5224], [5225], Some of these were described as possible quarry pits for the sandy material found in this area. This Group number was assigned in post-ex.

North-West Group [5362] a mix of pits and possible gullies/ditches in the NW corner

This is another confused area consisting of a variety of cuts that could not be properly excavated or explored, in this case in the NW sector just outside the Circular Enclosure and just to the south of the large E-W ditch [5058]. It includes pits and possible ditches, whose function and relationships are unclear. This Group number was assigned in post-ex.

South-West Group [5363] a series of small cuts in the SW corner

In this area, a number of small cuts was initially identified, representing possible pits, post-holes and small gullies. Very few of these were even partly excavated, so the exact nature of activity in this area remains unknown. This Group number was assigned in post-ex.

Saxon Feature

The is only one potential Saxon feature in this trench which is cut [5003]. This is an isolated Saxon feature and does not suggest any substantial Early Medieval activity in this area.

Shallow Pit [5003] This is situated on the eastern edge of the trench, well outside the Circular Enclosure. The pit was broad but very shallow at *c.* 1.4m wide and *c.* 0,2m deep with a very flat base. Single fill (5004) produced 23 early Saxon sherds (including a number of the distinctive Saxon organic tempered fabrics) and a small amount of animal bone. Why this pit with its Saxon pottery was located in this almost exclusively prehistoric area is unknown.