Trench MFP1 narrative

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Introduction

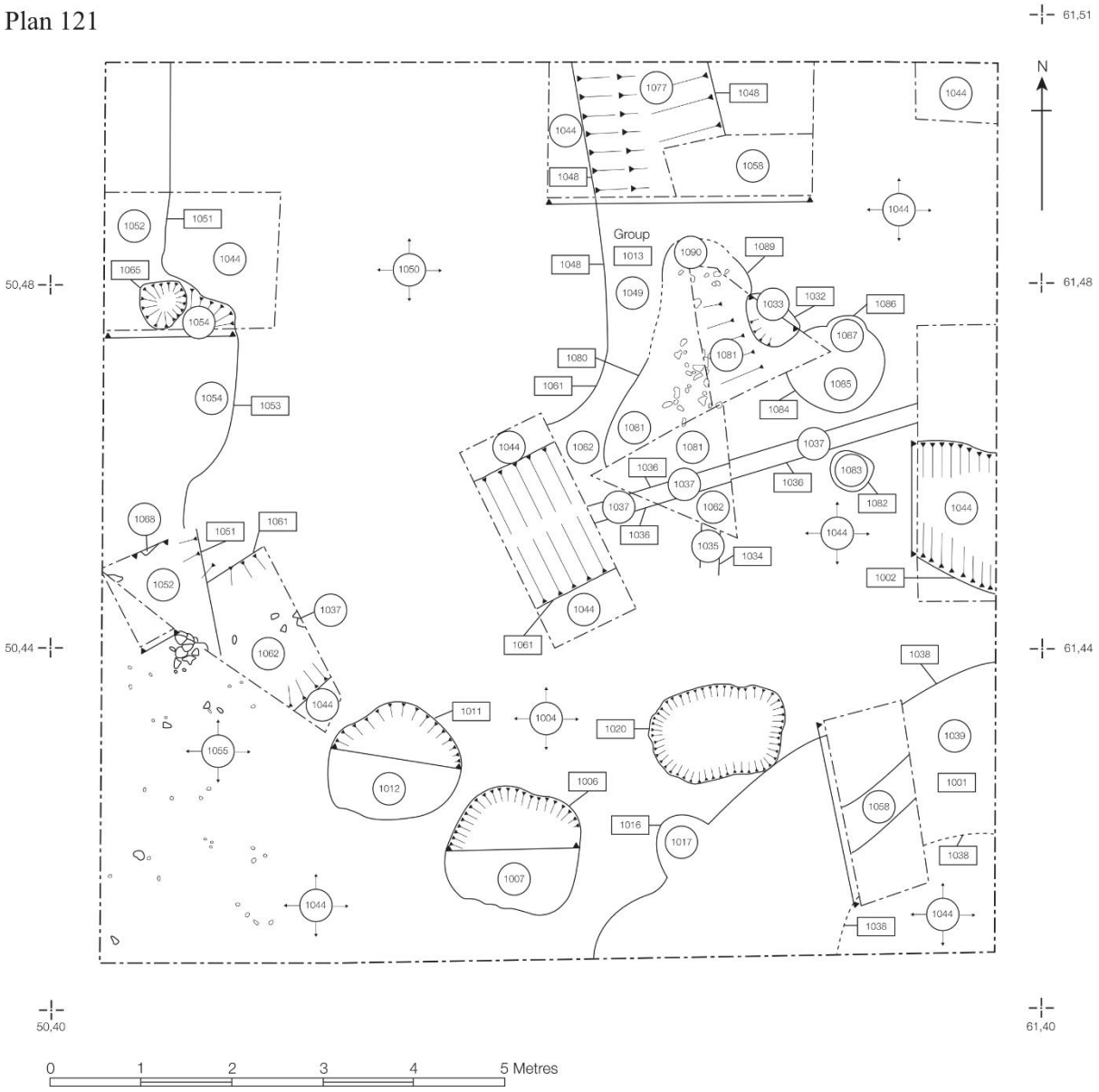
A geophysical survey was carried out in the eastern section of Trendles field approximately 100 metres to the south east of the Roman arena. The survey identified a large group of what were believed to be Iron Age enclosures. The first group consisted of two round enclosures set on a north south axis with one above the other. The most northerly round enclosure was set into the south east corner of a large rectangular enclosure. Further to the east, at approximately 25 metres, three more circular enclosures were identified, each set on a north south axis one above the other together with a number of linear ditches.

In 2007 excavations started in the eastern section of Trendles field. A small trench approximately 10m x10m (Trench 1) was opened to explore the Iron Age archaeology. The trench was sited in such a way as to pick up the north west edge of the southern circular enclosure, the west/southwest edge of the northern circular enclosure and the bottom east corner of the large rectangular enclosure where it intersects with the northern circular enclosure. Excavation in this first year was only possible for a single week of the season. During which time the trench was cleaned revealing a complex of intercutting curvilinear ditches and pits. These features were not excavated to any significant depth but initially appeared to be Iron Age.

Excavation resumed in 2010 the focus of which was to explore the relationship between the enclosure ditches and pits that were identified on the geophysics. Ditch Group [1001] was the western terminus of the northern circular enclosure ditch. Ditch cut [1002], 0.88m wide by 0.30m deep, was filled with a single fill (1003). The ditch was cut into reddish subsoil (1044) that covered nearly the entire trench. The ditch fill had very high charcoal content along with a relatively large number of animal bones. The fill also contained fragments of large animal bones, including horse. The ditch is much narrower and shallower than the other enclosure ditches in the trench, [1010], [1013] and [1038]. Presumably, this is because the portion of the ditch excavated is a terminus, rather than the main portion of the ditch. Curvilinear ditch [1038] lay to the south of the circular enclosure ditch group [1001]. The ditch which was two metres wide at the top and *c*. 0.7m deep appear to have a broad flat base (*c*. 0.6m wide) when compared to the rectangular enclosure ditches, Groups [1010] and [1013].

The southern side ditch of the rectangular enclosure ran through the centre of the trench. The cut [1061] was a V-shaped ditch *c*. 1.5m at the top and *c*. 0.1 at the base, it was *c.* 0.85m deep. The ditch was similar in shape to that found in ditch Group [1013] which is the eastern turn of the rectangular enclosure ditch. However, the southern turn of the ditch was not nearly as deep, (less than 1m). A linear feature [1036] cut the fill (1062) of ditch [1061]. This shallow and ill-defined feature contained both limestone blocks and a few examples of modern brick, probably of 19th century date. This may have served as a modern agricultural land drain although the line of stones stopped abruptly at the western baulk of the trench and was not laid out in a fashion to maximise drainage down to the river Ock. A further explanation is that the line of stones and modern brick might represent material dragged into the linear alignment at some point by a farm plough.

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Trench 1
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Trench MFP1

The eastern ditch, Group [1013], of the rectangular enclosure that was evident on the geophysics survey ran into the northern baulk ditch cut [1048] and had three separate fills (1060) top, (1063) middle and (1049) bottom. The ditch was *c*. 2.1m wide at the top and *c*. 1.1m deep. The shape of the ditch was similar to that found in ditch [1061]. The phasing of the different enclosures remains unclear as no direct stratigraphic relationship could be established.

The Pits

A series of pits [1032], [1080] and [1089] were located at the corner of the rectangular enclosure where ditch [1061] and ditch group [1013] intersect. A small pit [1032] was cut into Group [1038]. Its fill (1033) contained Iron Age pottery and animal bone fragments. Pit [1080] was much larger in plan (*c.* 1m in diameter) and was probably also later than Group

[1013]. Large sherds from a single large vessel were retrieved from this pit, but unfortunately, due to lack of time this pit was not fully excavated.

A group of three discrete pits were located in the southern central area of the trench [1020], [1006] and [1011]. Pits [1020] and [1006] were excavated in 2007, were very shallow and only *c*. 0.2 m deep. Pit [1011] was the only pit in the trench that is visible on the geophysical survey. This pit was half sectioned and found to have undergone original undercutting of the sides to form a slightly bell-shaped pit, *c*. 0.8m deep, and was significantly larger than the other two pits. The pit contained a single fill (1012) that yielded Iron Age pottery.

During the 2007 season a number of pits and other features were identified and recorded that could not be reidentified in the 2010 season due to weathering and flood damage. Amongst these was pit [1004] with fill (1005).

Cuts and structures

[1002] Ditch West terminus of northern ring ditch. A linear shaped cut with gradual break sides to a mainly flat bottom, *c.* 0.88m wide x 0.31m deep. Pottery suggests it was cut and filled in the Late Iron Age/Romano-British periods, contained residual Early Iron Age pottery.

(1003) Fill Large amounts of animal bone with high concentrations of charcoal. Some of the bone shows signs of burning. Within this bone grouping horse, sheep/goat and bovine teeth were identified within a matrix of hard silty clayey loam.

[1004] Pit Identified in season 1 but not excavated until season 2. Large circular pit 1.4m x
[1020] 1.0m. Shallow cut through reddish sub-soil. Positioned in the southwest corner of the main trench.

(1005) Fill Considerable quantity of pottery sherds three layers thick together with animal
(1021) bone, flint and charcoal.

[1006] Pit Shallow pit 1.4m x 1.2m x 0.15m deep.

(1007) Fill Single fill of compacted mid grey, brown soil with animal bone, pottery sherds flint and charcoal inclusions.

[1011] Pit Oval pit 1.3m x 1.1m x 0.8m deep with steeply undercut side forming a bell shape. Contents suggest a large rubbish pit that contained a small quantity of Iron Age pottery sherds.

(1012) Fill Single fill dark grey/brown silty soil with inclusions of Iron Age pottery, animal bone, flint, burnt stone and charcoal.

Group 1013

1013 Ditch Eastern ditch of rectangular enclosure. Part of northern rectangular Enclosure, *c.* 1.9m wide x 0.85 m deep. Together with intercutting pits.
[1048] Ditch Cut and filled in the Middle Iron Age.
[1002] Ditch Cut of the west terminus.
[1080] Pit Large elliptical pit situated in the intersection between the northern ring-
[1089] Pit ditch and the large rectangular enclosure. This pit was not fully excavated,

although its depth was recorded at 0.4 m. Overall this pit measured *c*. 2.2 m x 1.2 m. [1089] although recorded as a separate pit it is most likely an extension of the main pit [1080].

(1049) Fill Includes secondary and primary fills. Grey, brown silty loam. MIA pottery.

(1060) Fill Primary fill of [1048]. Compacted greenish grey clay with charcoal and limestone pebbles.

(1063) Fill Middle fill of [1048]. Friable reddish brown silty loam with charcoal and limestone pebbles. Inclusions of Iron Age pottery sherds, animal bone, flint and pieces of charcoal.

(1062) Fill Lower fill of [1048]. Dark grey clayey loam with Iron Age pottery sherds and animal bone.

(1081) Fill Single fill. Dark bluish brown silty loam. This pit also contained IA pottery sherds, animal bone and limestone pieces. Three small finds were recorded, a quern stone fragment, a Cu-Alloy earing fragment and a Cu-Alloy bracelet.

Group 1001

[1038] Ditch Curvilinear ditch in southeast corner of trench together with intercutting pits. Cut of the northwest arc of the southern ring enclosure. This ditch measured 2.0m wide at the top x 0.8m deep forming a V-shape with rounded bottom.

[1016] Pit North side of curvilinear ditch. oval pit *c*. 0.6m x 0.7m. Cut into the side of southern ring ditch. Not excavated in 2007 but was reidentified and excavated in 2010.

[1018] Pit Cut into the northwest edge of the curvilinear ditch. The full extent of this pit is unknown as the pit extended into the southern baulk of the trench.

(1039) Fill Single fill of [1038]. Dark brown, grey silty clay together with IA pottery sherds, animal bone, pieces of flint and charcoal.

(1017) Fill Fill of [1016] although no fill data recorded.

(1019) Fill Dark brown, grey silty clay with IA pottery sherds, animal bone, flint, burnt stone and charcoal.

(1014) Pit No data.

(1015) Fill No data.

[1020] Pit Shallow pit approximately 1.15m in diameter x 0.2m deep.

(1021) Fill Contained a large amount of Iron Age pottery stacked in three layers together with animal bone, flint and charcoal in a matrix of grey, brown silty clay. In total there were 276 pieces of Iron Age pottery.

[1028] Posthole

(1029) Fill No data.

[1032] Pit A small shallow pit approximately 0.6m in diameter x 0.26m deep.

(1080) Fill Not completely excavated.

(1033) Fill Single fill containing animal bone, Iron Age pottery sherds, burnt stone and

(1081) Fill compacted brown silty loam with charcoal, bone and pottery sherds.

(1090) Fill Same as 1081.

[1034] Cut Linear feature in southeast corner of the trench. Runs north to south from enclosure ditch [1061]. Not excavated.

(1035) Fill Not excavated.

[1036] Drain Possible modern land drain. lost during excavation through silting.

(1037) Fill Stone and 19th century brick loosely packed into cut forming a line that silted over after heavy rain.

[1038] Ditch Curvilinear ditch in southeast corner of the trench forming the northwest arc of the round enclosure.

(1039) Fill Single fill of dark brown silty clay, within which were Iron Age pottery sherds with animal bone, flint, burnt stone and charcoal.

[1051] Ditch Ditch on the west side of the trench set on a north south axis. This ditch cuts ditch [1053] with the southern end cutting through the V-shaped ditch [1062].

(1052) Fill Single fill of grey, brown loam that contained animal bone, Iron Age pottery sherds, flint and flecks of charcoal.

[1053] Ditch in northeast corner of the main trench. This ditch is cut by ditch [1051] and May be part of the north south ditch. This ditch is also cut into by Pit [1065].

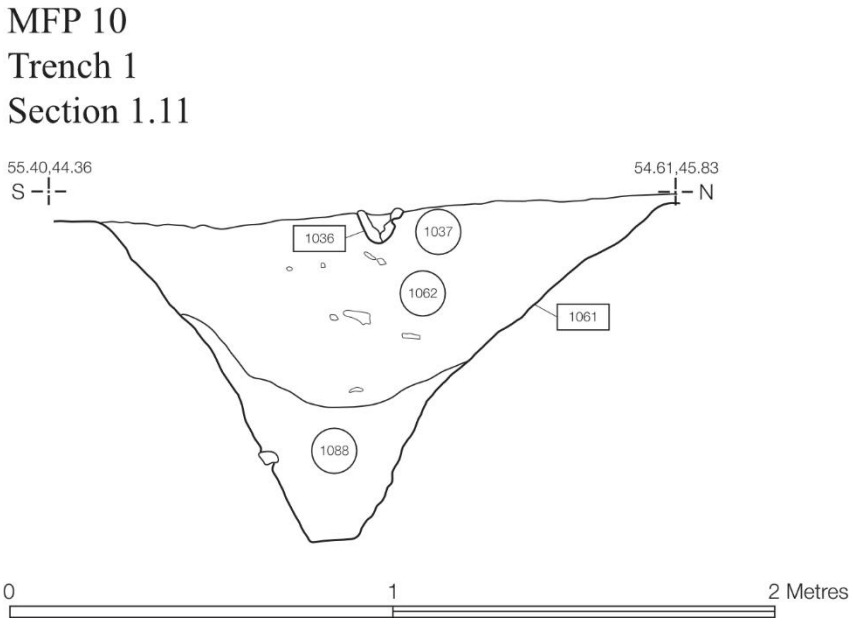
(1054) Fill Top fill. Soft dark brown sandy loam with much charcoal.

(1069) Fill Middle fill. Inclusions of animal bone, Iron Age pottery sherds and flint.

(1071) Fill Bottom fill of compacted stones lining the base of the ditch.

[1061] Ditch This is the ditch cut of the southern turn of the large rectangular enclosure. V-shaped with a flat bottom and sharp straight sides. Measuring 1.5m x 0.9m deep and with a 12cm wide flat bottom. Originally this ditch was recorded as part of group [1010] together with [1036] the modern land drain, however, on further consideration this does not form a group therefore they are listed separately. Cut and filled in the Early Iron Age.

(1062) Fill Top fill of dark grey, brown silty loam with EIA sherds, flint, limestone pieces and charcoal. A metal buckle and pieces of early glass were also found.



Ditch [1061]

[1065] Pit A small pit measuring 0.47m in diameter x 0.58m deep. This pit cuts through pit fill (1054) and ditch [1052] and obscures the western edge of ditch [1053] as it cuts ditch [1051].

(1066) Fill Single fill of sticky green, yellow clay with Iron Age pottery sherds and flint inclusions.

[1080] Pit Circular pit not fully excavated. With very little data recorded except depth at
[1089] 0.4m. This pit was positioned in the intersection of rectangular enclosure and the northern ring ditch enclosure.
(1081) Fill Compacted bluish brown loam containing Iron Age pottery sherds, animal bone,
(1090) and limestone pieces.
[1082] Pit Pit associated with the west terminus of the round enclosure [1002]/[1003]. Pit not excavated. Relationship unclear.
(1083) Fill No data.
[1084] Pit It is unclear if pit [1086]/(1087) cuts [1084]/(1085) or vice versa.
(1085) Fill No fill data. Confirmed that [1084] is not physically related to [1032] or [1080].
[1086] Pit Unclear if [1086] cuts feature [1084] or vice versa. No other data.
(1087) Fill No data.

Plough Furrows
Normally plough furrows are not recorded however for completeness there were six plough furrows recorded during the excavations in Trench 1.

[1022] On an east west axis, *c.* 2m long x 0.07m deep. Shallow cut heavily truncated. This furrow cuts across furrow [1045].
(1023) Fill Dark greyish clayey silt.
[1024] No data.
(1025) Fill No data.
[1026] In south east corner of the trench. No data.
(1027) Fill No data.
[1040] In southwest corner of the trench. No data.
(1041) Fill No Data.
[1042] In southwest corner of the trench. No data.
(1043) Fill No Data.
[1045] This furrow cut across [1022]. Shown as an irregular cut.
(1046) Fill Hard dark greyish brown clayey silt.

Pottery Analysis
In total there were 929 sherds of pottery which was made up of 859 Iron Age pottery sherds and 70 sherds of Romano-British pottery. The following table provides an overview of the Iron Age pottery recovered from Trench 1, identifying significant contexts and their locations.

Iron Age pottery

Context.	PCW.	PFW.	PFWRE.	Dec.	Location.
1000.	17				Top soil.
1003.	33			1	West terminus of northern Ring Ditch.
1005.	2				Pit 1004/1020
1007.	20				Pit 1006
1012.	65	5			Pit 1011
1021.	276				Pit 1020
1033.	7	1			Pit 1032
1037.	5				Modern drain cut.
1039.	41	1			Southern Ring Ditch.
1047.	29	1			Layer
1049.	87	3			Northern Ring Ditch.

1050.	3				Layer
1052.	40	3			Ditch on western side of main trench.
1054.	23	2			Ditch 1053
1055.	4				Layer
1062.	113	4	4	1	Enclosure Ditch 1061
1066.	1				Pit 1065
1069.	2				Ditch 1053
1075.	2				Layer
1081.	33	1			Pit 1080
1088.	13	1			Eastern ditch 1048 of rectangular enclosure
1090.	13	1			Pit 1089

Romano-British pottery

Context.	RCWO.	RFWOX.	RCWR.	RFWR.	SM.	RWW.	RFWW.	BWW.	GR.	ROBSH.	D. O.	Total
1000.	7	2	4									13
1003.	3		2	3								8
1012.	3											3
1021.											1	1
1044.		1		1								2
1047.		8		3			3	1	3	1	1	20
1049.		1										1
1050.		7		5	1	2				1		16
1052.				1								1
1066.										5		5

The majority of Romano-British pottery finds (70%) were found in topsoil 1000 and layers (1047) and (1050).

Bone Analysis

In total 188 animal bones were recovered predominately sheep/goat, cattle and pig.
The following table identifies the location, type and number of bones found.

Context.	Sheep/Goat.	Cattle.	Pig.	Bird.	Horse.	Dog.	MM.	Location.
1003.	11				1		1.	West terminus Nth Ring Ditch
1007.	4							Pit 1006
1012.	15	2	1	1		1	1	Pit 1011
1021.	2							Pit 1020
1031.	1							
1033.	2							Pit 1032
1039.	5	5	2			2		Sth Ring Ditch
1047.				1(chicken)				Layer
1049.	12	6	6	2				Nth Ring Ditch
1050.	1							Layer
1052.	6	1	2		1		1	Ditch on west side of trench
1054.	2		2					Ditch 1053
1055.			2					Layer
1062.	25	9	8				3	Enclosure Ditch 1061
1064.			1					Enclosure Ditch 1061
1066.	1	1						Pit 1065
1069.	2							Nth east Ditch 1053

1075.	2							Layer
1081.	17	4	3		7			Pit 1080
1088.	3		1					Ditch rectangular enclosure.
1090.		1						Pit 1080;1089
Total	111	29	28	4	9	3	6	

Of particular note are Pit [1012] (21 bones) and Pit [1080] (31 bones) which may have a ritual association.

Small Finds
In total 16 small finds were recovered.

Context.	No.	Find type
1000	6	1 lead rolled sheet/1 Cu-A object/1 piece quern/1lead token/1 flint/1Cu-A Pin
1049	2	1 iron cleat/1Cu-A wire.
1054	1	1 animal bone pin or needle.
1062	1	1 glass vessel fragment.
1070	1	1 flint flake.
1075	1	1 glass fragment
1081	3	1 stone quern frag/1 Cu-A earing fragment/1 Cu-A bracelet
1090	1	1 iron tool/hoe