
APPENDIX M SUMMARY OF IRON AGE ENCLOSURE SITES

A summary of Iron Age enclosure sites researched follows in alphabetical order:

Site

BARTON COURT FARM

Location

Abingdon, Essex

Intervention

Identified from Cropmark

Area Excavation

Summary

Multi phase site set within a cropmark landscape of settlement and cemetery. Situated on a gravel terrace, excavation revealed evidence for a sequence of enclosures running from the Iron Age through to the Saxon period. The Iron Age remains consisted of a sub-rectangular enclosure 76m x 66m with an internal division marking off its northwestern corner. Within this evidence for two possible roundhouse buildings, two pits containing carbonised cereal remains and animal bones and an inhumation were recorded. A smaller rectangular enclosure 20m x 14m was located to the southeast of the structures. Around the entrance to this were located 14 pits. Two structures which appear to predate the enclosure were located to the south of the main ditch. As well as pottery, evidence for spinning bone-working and cheesemaking were recovered from the site but there was a distinct lack of quernstones.

Interpretation

Interpreted as an Iron Age single unit farmstead undertaking mixed farming economy. The pottery suggests that the life of the enclosure was short lived being created in the first half of the 1st century AD before being succeeded by a Romano-British farmstead sometime in the later 1st century. Evidence for an earlier unenclosed settlement was identified.

Date

An early 1st century AD date was provided from the pottery assemblage and a number of C14 samples.

Site

COLLYFYN HILLSLOPE ENCLOSURE

Location

Llansantffraid Deuddwr

Powys

Intervention

Identified from Earthworks

Area Excavation

Summary

Excavation revealed a sub-rectangular hilltop enclosure defining an internal space of 70 x 80 metres. The defining ditches originally comprised of three concentric ditches with a simple west facing entrance and gateway. Within the enclosure a multitude of roundhouse and posthole structures were identified and could be divided into a number of phases. The first is represented by three large roundhouses, 11m in diameter, across the centre of the site associated with 4 post structures.

The concentration of buildings then shifts onto higher ground within a general pattern of three to four smaller houses and four to five 4 post structures in use at any one time. The final phase is a reorganisation of the settlement in the Romano-British period which sees the traditional buildings going into disuse and a reorganisation and sub-division of the internal area. Evidence for bronze working recovered from two of the earlier buildings.

Interpretation

Interpreted as a high status Iron Age defended enclosure. The shift in spatial organisation and downscaling of the defences which occur in the 1st Century BC is seen as a change in status further emphasised in the late Iron Age / Romano-British period which may mark a change in function. There is evidence for cereal processing, weaving and animal husbandry from the site as well as metalworking.

Date

Phases dated primarily from C14 samples, pottery assemblage and the presence of salt containers. First phase of occupation 3rd - 1st century BC. Reorganisation in 1st Century BC

Site

COXHOE

Location

County Durham

Intervention

Identified from cropmark
Limited excavation

Summary

Cropmarks revealed a sub rectangular enclosure, 55m x 60m, with an east facing entrance and central internal structure. Limited excavation revealed a 5m wide entrance with gate and ditches which could have possibly furnished both an internal and external bank. Central structure identified and excavated to reveal a single roundhouse with a 10m wide internal diameter enclosing a variety of postholes and pits. Possible earlier gully and fence identified but not fully defined

Interpretation

Isolated, Iron Age enclosed farmstead with parallels in Northeast. Evidence for cereal processing was found on site but no pottery was recovered from any context.

Date

5th - 1st century from saddle querns.

Site

DALTON PARLOURS

Location

West Yorkshire

Intervention

Identified from Cropmark
Area Excavation

Summary

Excavation revealed a complex series of Iron Age enclosures superceded by a Roman villa complex. Iron Age settlement divided into five phases which start with a rectilinear enclosure 36m x 32m and a number of associated roundhouse buildings. Settlement develops by encroaching on surrounding land, organically enclosing pre-existing buildings in a piecemeal fashion. This results in a total of nine main enclosures associated with eight roundhouse buildings. Evidence for food storage and processing as well as mortuary practice. Area excavated only 1/3 of the total settlement which continues westward creating a string of enclosures with a frontage of some 375 metres. Cropmarks indicate site is approached by ditched track ways from the west, north and south from which field boundaries run off.

Interpretation

Significant Iron Age settlement undertaking mixed farming practice. Development shows the piecemeal enclosure of an increasing area perhaps relating to changes in population size or farming practice.

Date

Iron Age date based on pottery assemblage and C14 dates. Despite quantity, the pottery was not of sufficient quality to phase site. Site phased on stratigraphic relationships in relation to ditch sequence and spatial characteristics of enclosed features.

Site

GREAT AYTON MOOR

Location

North Yorkshire

Intervention

Identified from earthwork

Limited excavation in 1953

Further limited excavation in 1978

Summary

Hilltop enclosure, 60m x 60m, with a 5m wide east facing entrance and internal bank. 1953 excavation revealed evidence for a possible gate but little else. Limited excavation in 1978 identified a roundhouse building, 11m x 8m, oval in plan, located centrally within the enclosure. This feature still retained a paved floor and internal hearth as well as producing 60 sherds of pottery from within the occupation.

Interpretation

Isolated Iron Age enclosed farmstead with parallels in northeast. Unusually no evidence for cereal storage, processing or consumption was found on site.

Date

3rd to 1st century BC from pottery.

Site

HADDENHAM

Location

Cambs.

Intervention

Identified from Cropmark

Area Excavations

Summary

Cropmark revealed a large Neolithic D-shaped causeway enclosure, (350m x 300m), partially surrounded by a series of sub-rectangular and circular enclosures. These included a Bronze Age barrow cemetery, a number of Iron Age enclosures and field systems.

Site

HEMSWORTH BYPASS

Location

West Yorkshire

Intervention

Identified from Gradiometer survey.

Limited Area excavation on two sites

Summary

Site A exposed a sequence of four undated ditches forming part of a rectilinear enclosure system with a shallow entranceway. Several possible gullies were also identified and as were a number of pits containing Romano British pottery. Site C exposed three ditches which terminated at the same point creating the corner of a larger enclosure system. None of these could be dated.

Interpretation

Interpreted as an enclosure system belonging to a low status rural site dating between the 2nd and 3rd century AD. Lack of domestic waste seen as an indicator of another function.

Date

2nd - 3rd century based on pottery recovered from pit group on site C.

Site

LITTLE WALTHAM

Location

Essex

Intervention

Area Excavation

Summary

Excavation of a 30m wide corridor revealed a total of 16 roundhouses of an Iron Age date which exhibited three different construction techniques. The earliest phase of settlement was represented by an open nucleated village of 15 possible structures with internal diameters varying between 10m to 13.7m and east facing entrances. The second phase of occupation involved the enclosure of two structures within a turf bank and palisade. The final phase was represented by a single squat roundhouse dating to the late 1st Century AD. Over 500 kg of Iron Age pottery was recovered during the excavation. Associated with the buildings were a number of sterile pits and several 4 and 2 post structures which were interpreted as

granaries and drying racks respectively. Poor preservation of faunal material.

Interpretation

The site has been interpreted as an evolving settlement with recognised changes in house construction, pottery imports and spatial organisation developing as response to changing economical and political environment through time. The presence of two octagonal buildings may relate to a *special* function of those buildings.

Date

First Iron Age phase dated to 3rd - late 2nd century BC. Second Iron Age phase dated to late 2nd - mid-1st century BC. Final Iron Age phase dated to the end of the 1st century BC. Provisional dates derived from pottery and C14 samples.

Site

PERCY RIGG

Location

Kildale

Intervention

Identified from Cropmark
Limited Area Excavation

Summary

Cropmark revealed a sub-rectangular enclosure 100m in length located near the crest of a ridge at 280m OD. Half way along one side of the enclosure an area 50m square was excavated to reveal the platforms and remains of five circular huts which could be divided into three phases of occupation. The earliest phase consisted of two poorly preserved roundhouse structures defined by drip gullies and post holes. The second phase comprised a single hut as above. The latest phase of occupation consisted of two substantial roundhouses 7m in diameter terraced into the hillside. Both were of dry stone wall construction and had the remains of a paved floor and central hearth in situ, surrounded by substantial drainage gullies. A saddle quern, a beehive quern and a fragment of jet bracelet were recovered from the site along with a small amount of local hand made coarse pottery.

Interpretation

Percy Rigg has been interpreted as a small enclosed farmstead. A part from the two different querns which may indicate a long life to the settlement there was no further evidence of cereal processing or storage on the site. Despite further limited trenching within the enclosure no other archaeological features were located.

Date

The pottery assemblage and querns date the beginnings of the settlement to the 4th century BC.

Site

ROXBY

Location

North Yorkshire

Intervention

Identified from cropmark and earthworks
Limited excavation on two sites

Summary

Very limited work undertaken on a sub-rectangular enclosure measuring 60m x 75m with a simple east facing entranceway. Limited excavation revealed two roundhouses within the enclosure. One had an internal diameter of 9m enclosing a number of postholes, pits, a hearth and a paved floor. Second site comprised a series of four roundhouses organised within an open settlement. The latest of these was of a Roman date. The others contained evidence for crop processing, limited metalworking, structural repair and reuse.

Interpretation

Isolated Iron Age *pastoral* enclosure with parallels in the northeast. Group of roundhouses interpreted as an Iron Age nucleated settlement - low status, possibly one family undertaking mixed farming and light industry.

Date

Iron Age date for both sites based on pottery assemblage, beehive quern fragments and C14 samples.

Site

SOUTH ELMSALL

Location

West Yorkshire

Intervention

Identified from Cropmark

Gradiometer Survey

Evaluation Trenching

Intensive Watching Brief

Area Excavation

Summary

Gradiometer survey undertaken over several stages on a site of 18.75 ha revealed a double ditched trackway 180m long, three lengths of further trackway, a rectilinear field system with ditches running off perpendicular to it including a number of rectangular enclosures and a number of possible hearths and kilns. Fieldwork broken into three elements:

Limited trenching tested for the presence of the observed cropmark and geophysical anomalies. An intensive Watching Brief over an area of 180m x 40m revealed a small Romano- British rectangular enclosure containing evidence for a post built rectangular domestic dwelling with evidence for reuse and recutting of surrounding boundaries. An irregular sub-square enclosure measuring 40m x 50m was excavated 450m to the north. This revealed a number of pre-enclosure features including 10m length of gully and two pits containing carbonised grain. A further group of four pits, one of which contained partially articulated human remains were also excavated. The enclosure had an internal bank and a possible entranceway located at a narrow point in the ditch in the southeast corner.

Interpretation

Cropmark appear to represent a substantial Pre-historic and Romano-British pattern of land use and settlement. Small domestic structure based on structural remains, 4 post granary, animal bone assemblage and saddle quern. Evidence for stock management and funerary activity. Overall interpretation difficult due to lack of structural evidence.

Date

4th century BC - 4th century AD based on analogy and excavation. Romano-British date based on pottery recovered from ditches and pits. 4th -1st century BC based on pottery and C14 samples recovered from the ditch and pits.

Site

ST AIDAN'S

Location

West Yorkshire

Intervention

Identified from Cropmark

Gradiometer Survey

Summary

Cropmark and Geophysical survey revealed an extensive pattern of north-south enclosure ditches at 100m intervals radiating off a possible east-west aligned trackway located on the upper terrace between the River Aire and Calder. Evidence for further sub-divisions which included a series of rectangular enclosures 20m x 15m in a ladder formation and a series of possible circular enclosures were also identified as well as the location of three possible kilns or industrial pits.

Interpretation

Settlement enclosures similar to those identified elsewhere along the upper terrace. The scale of the enclosures and presence of hearths/kilns suggests occupation as opposed to merely stock enclosures.

Date

General Iron Age or Romano-British date based on morphology of enclosures in comparison with other sites in the area

Site

STANTINGLEY LANE

Location

Crofton, Wakefield, West Yorkshire

Intervention

Identified from Cropmark

Gradiometer survey

Summary

Cropmark revealed a sub-rectangular enclosure with curved sides 65m x 50m located 150m to the north of the development area. Gradiometer survey on the site revealed a continuation of a field boundary running from the cropmark to the north as well as evidence for a possible trackway.

Interpretation

Possible settlement enclosure and field system?

Date

Date unknown

Site

THORNTREE HILL

Location

Walton, Wakefield West Yorkshire

Intervention

Identified from cropmark

Gradiometer Survey

Limited trenching

Summary

Cropmark revealed a series of two square and one D-shaped enclosure linked together. Limited trenching over ditch intersections and geophysical anomalies revealed evidence for hearths and a possible oven.

Interpretation

Little can be offered for interpretation but the D-shaped enclosure may be for corralling stock.

Date

2nd - 3rd century date for D-shaped enclosure based on pottery recovered from ditch

Site

THORPE THEWLES

Location

Cleveland

Intervention

Identified from Cropmark

Area Excavation

Summary

Cropmark revealed evidence for a sub-rectangular enclosure with a central round feature. Excavation of 3/5 of the enclosure revealed a complex sequence of settlement evidence with surviving areas of horizontal stratigraphy. Main enclosure measured 80m x 90m with a simple east facing entrance. Site divided into four main phases. The First phase consisted of a pre-enclosure ditch. Phase two consisted of the sub-rectangular enclosure with a central roundhouse defined by postholes probably associated with another four smaller roundhouse structures within the enclosure. The central roundhouse had two rebuilds. Phase three was represented by a number of roundhouse structures and small enclosures in an open settlement. This was eventually superseded in phase four by a system of field boundaries. Evidence for spinning, cereal processing, animal husbandry and metalwork was recovered from the site. There were, however, no deep storage pits or post built granaries recorded, the only pits being relatively shallow features situated within the roundhouse structures. A number of high status pieces of metalwork were recovered around the vicinity of the central roundhouse structure including a gold ring and a number of brooches.

Interpretation

Thorpe Thewles has been interpreted as an evolving Iron Age rural settlement located on good lowland agricultural soils. A general pattern of a high status enclosed farmstead expanding through population growth and economic prosperity into a more extensive open settlement is put forward by the excavator who sees the site as a central place within the Iron Age landscape.

Date

The enclosed farmstead is dated from the pottery assemblage to the 4th century BC. The unenclosed settlement is dated to the 1st century BC by similar means.

Site

TOLLARD ROYAL

Location

Cranbourne Chase
Dorset

Intervention

Identified from Cropmark
Area Excavation

Summary

Cropmark revealed a kite-shaped enclosure set within a landscape of extensive unenclosed settlement and other field systems. Complete excavation of the enclosure and its interior revealed a solitary roundhouse, 5.5m in diameter, defined by a single ring of posts, located in the western corner. Clustered around this were thirty four pits and three possible post built granary structures. The enclosure measured 50m x 45m, was 2m wide and 0.8m deep, had an internal bank and a simple south facing entrance. Evidence was recovered for cereal processing and animal husbandry in the form of two saddle quern fragments and seven spindle whorls and 315 pieces of bone respectively. A single crouched inhumation was located to the northeast of the enclosure and may have been contemporary with the settlement.

Interpretation

Tollard Royal has been interpreted as a single family enclosed farmstead undertaking a mixed farming subsistence economy.

Date

Dated from the pottery assemblage to the early part of the 1st century AD.

Site

UPTON

Location

West Yorkshire

Intervention

Identified from cropmark
Gradiometer Survey
Area Excavation

Summary

Excavation revealed a D-shaped enclosure 30m x 25m with a simple East facing entrance. Contained internal post holes which did not form a discernable pattern. Possible internal bank and revetment. Enclosure sited over possible Bronze Age funerary monument? Later 4th century cremation inserted into ditch.

Interpretation

Interpreted by excavator as a possible stock enclosure for surrounding Romano British farms.

Date

2nd-3rd century based on pottery recovered from postholes. Ditch undated.

Site

WAKEFIELD EUROPORT

Location

West Yorkshire

Intervention

Identified from Cropmark

Gradiometer Survey

Trial Trenching and Limited Area Excavation

Summary

Cropmark evidence was supplemented by a gradiometer survey to reveal at least four rectilinear enclosures located on the terrace of the River Calder. Limited excavation in two areas revealed four roundhouse buildings, three of which were intercutting, located within and outside an enclosure ditch contemporary with a ditched track way to the West. This was superseded by a Roman rectangular enclosure measuring 48m x 30m which respected the alignments of the earlier boundaries. Within this, evidence for a post and stone building was recorded. The final phase of activity consisted of the recutting of the pre-Roman boundary offset slightly to the west and north.

Interpretation

Small scale Iron Age settlement within enclosed landscape which shifts northwards in the 2nd century AD. Evidence for continuity in land use, if not settlement, from reuse of land divisions up to the 4th century AD.

Site

WATTLE SYKE

Location

Colingham, West Yorkshire

Intervention

Identified from Cropmark

Summary

Study of aerial photographs revealed a complex sequence of enclosure and land divisions located 1.5 Km north of Dalton Parlours. These cropmarks represent a series of washing line enclosures aligned WNW - ESE consisting of a series of sub-rectangular and rectangular enclosures running off a major ditch.

Interpretation

Area of late prehistoric and Roman settlement and land use.

Date

General dating based on cropmark morphology and size.

Site

WEST BRANDON

Location

County Durham

Intervention

Identified from Cropmark

Limited Area Excavation

Summary

Cropmark revealed a sub-square enclosure measuring 85m x 95m located on the spine of a flat sandstone ridge. Excavation was limited to the entranceway, central area and five sections cross the ditch. This revealed three phases of occupation on the site. Phase one consisted of a single pre-enclosure roundhouse 7.5 metres in diameter defined by a simple ring of posts. This structure contained an internal hearth and was cut by the enclosure ditch at its southeastern corner. Phase two consisted of a central roundhouse, 17 metres in diameter, defined by four concentric rings of post. This was enclosed within a palisade formed by two concentric post trenches 6 metres apart with a gated entrance along its eastern length. Phase three was characterised by the rebuilding of the central roundhouse with a wall foundation trench and central hearth contemporary with the cutting of the enclosure ditch just outside the line of the palisade. Within the limited excavations of the internal area two bowl furnaces and a number of 2 post structures were identified.

Interpretation

This site has been interpreted as a single unit enclosed farmstead with parallels in the Northeast. The enclosure of a settlement by a palisade which is then replaced with a ditch or wall has been identified at Huckhoe, (Northumb) and Withy Neuk (Northumb). Evidence for metalworking and cereal processing were recovered from the site.

Date

The pottery recovered from site was of insufficient quality to provide a date. The settlement therefore has been dated by analogy with other sites to between the 3rd and 2nd century BC.