

Excavations at Butts Piece, Stanton Harcourt

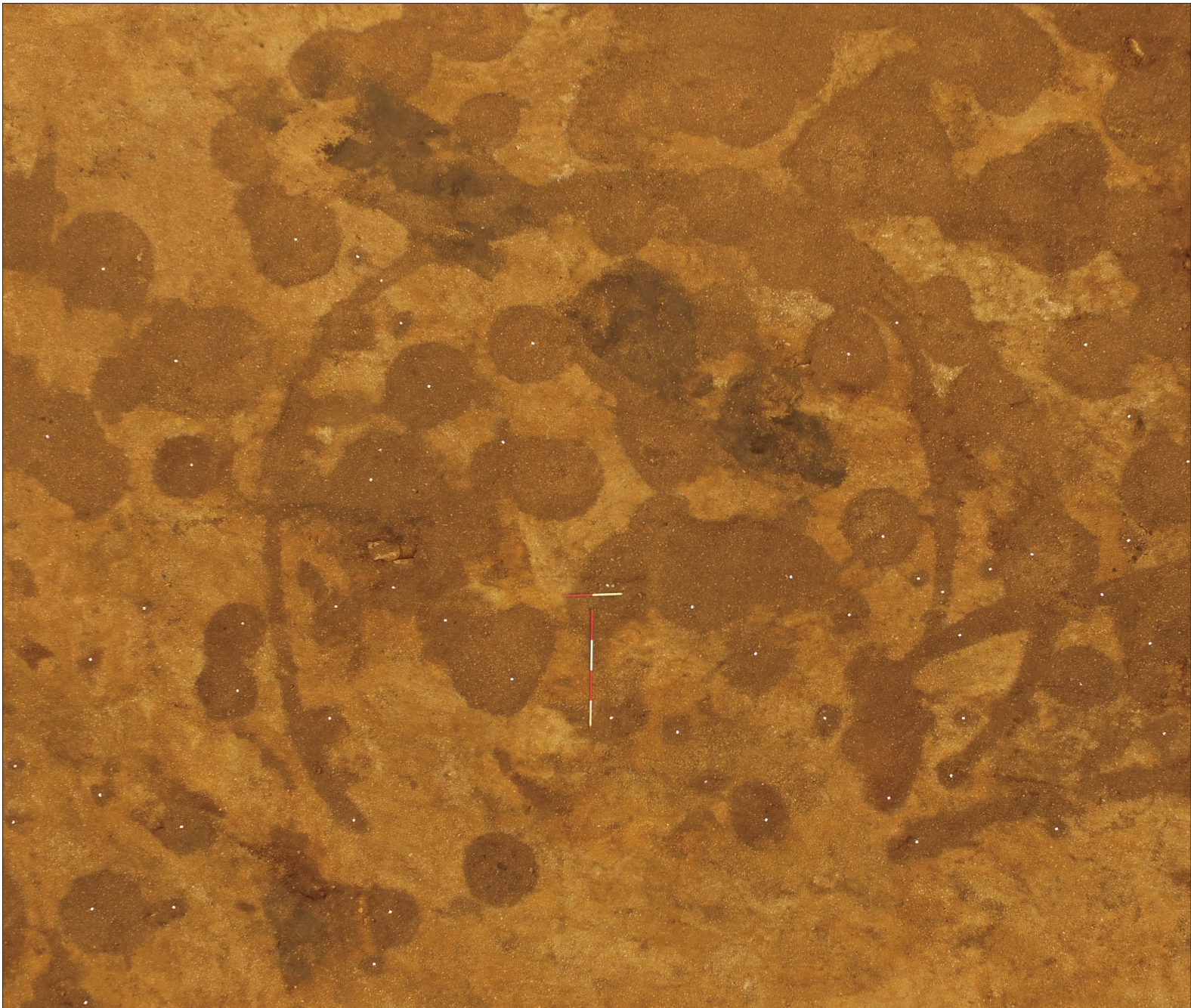
Iron Age (750 BC - 43 AD) Stanton

Iron Age occupation

Occupation of the surrounding areas during the Iron Age has been well documented through multiple excavations and aerial photography over the years. This excavation has further added to the rich Iron Age landscape by uncovering an extensive linear cluster of storage pits which stretches outside the excavation boundary. These pits would have been used to store grain and shows the prolonged and extensive crop production carried out in the area. Excavations about 500m to the west carried out in the 1980's (Gravelly Guy excavations) has shown an extremely similar settlement pattern to this site. It has been theorised that the storage pits are laid out across the landscape in a pattern that encloses the Bronze Age funerary monuments surrounding the Devil's Quoits stone circle and henge.

Enclosures and Roundhouses

Postholes relating to possible Iron Age houses and structures have been found alongside circular enclosures within the confines of the pit cluster. Through excavation it has been determined that these structures occupied this zone before being replaced with storage pits.

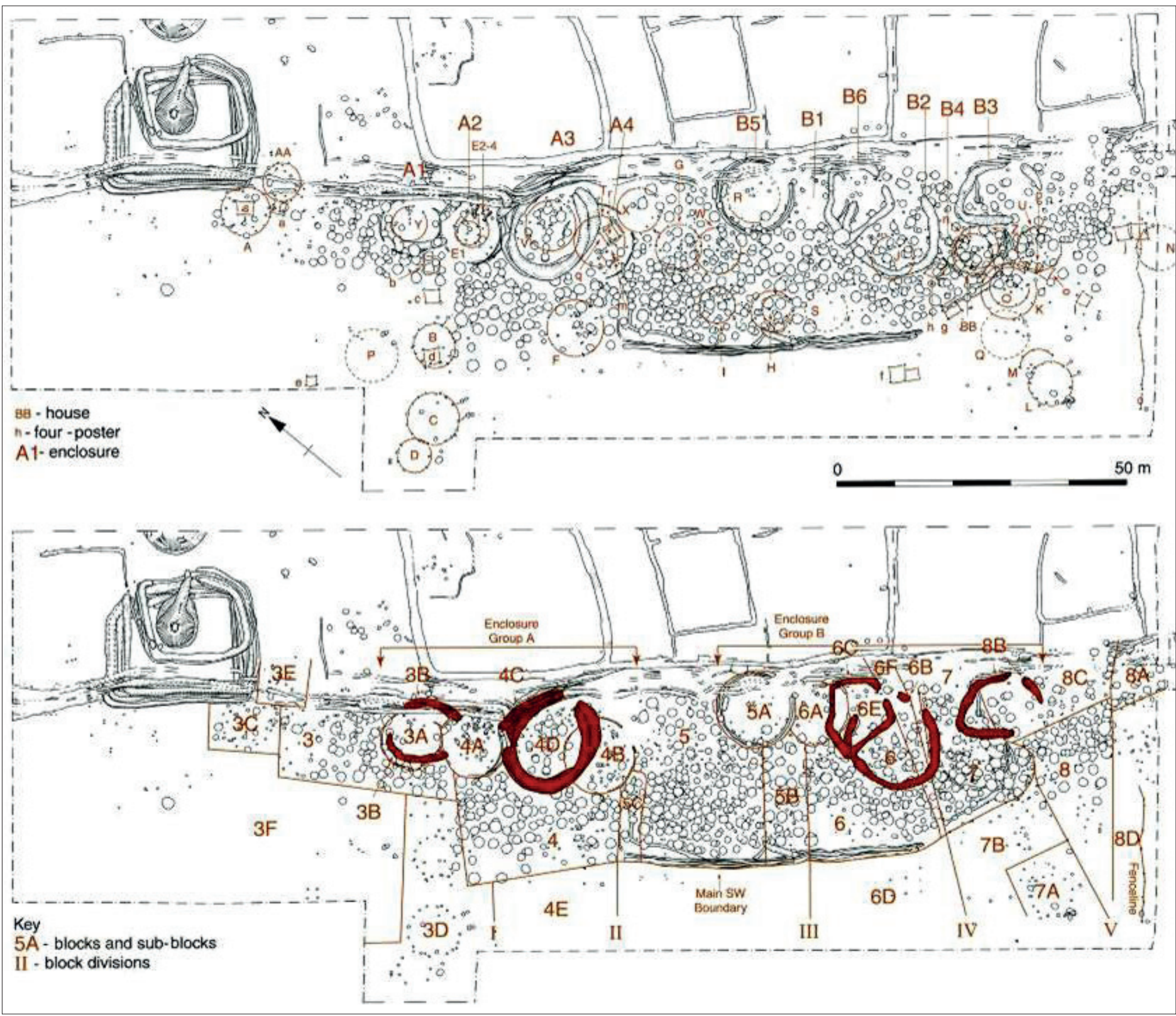


An example of one of the Iron Age enclosures found within the pit cluster viewed from the air before excavation.



Iron Age storage pit. Vertical scale- 1m, Horizontal scale- 2m

An Iron Age storage pit excavated at this site. When grain is placed in these pits and sealed, the accumulation of carbon dioxide given off by initial germination of the grain around the pit sides halts further germination and kills off insects. This, combined with the low temperatures of underground storage is an efficient way of storing grain.



Summary plans of the excavations at Gravelly Guy in the 1980's showing extremely close comparison to our current excavation.