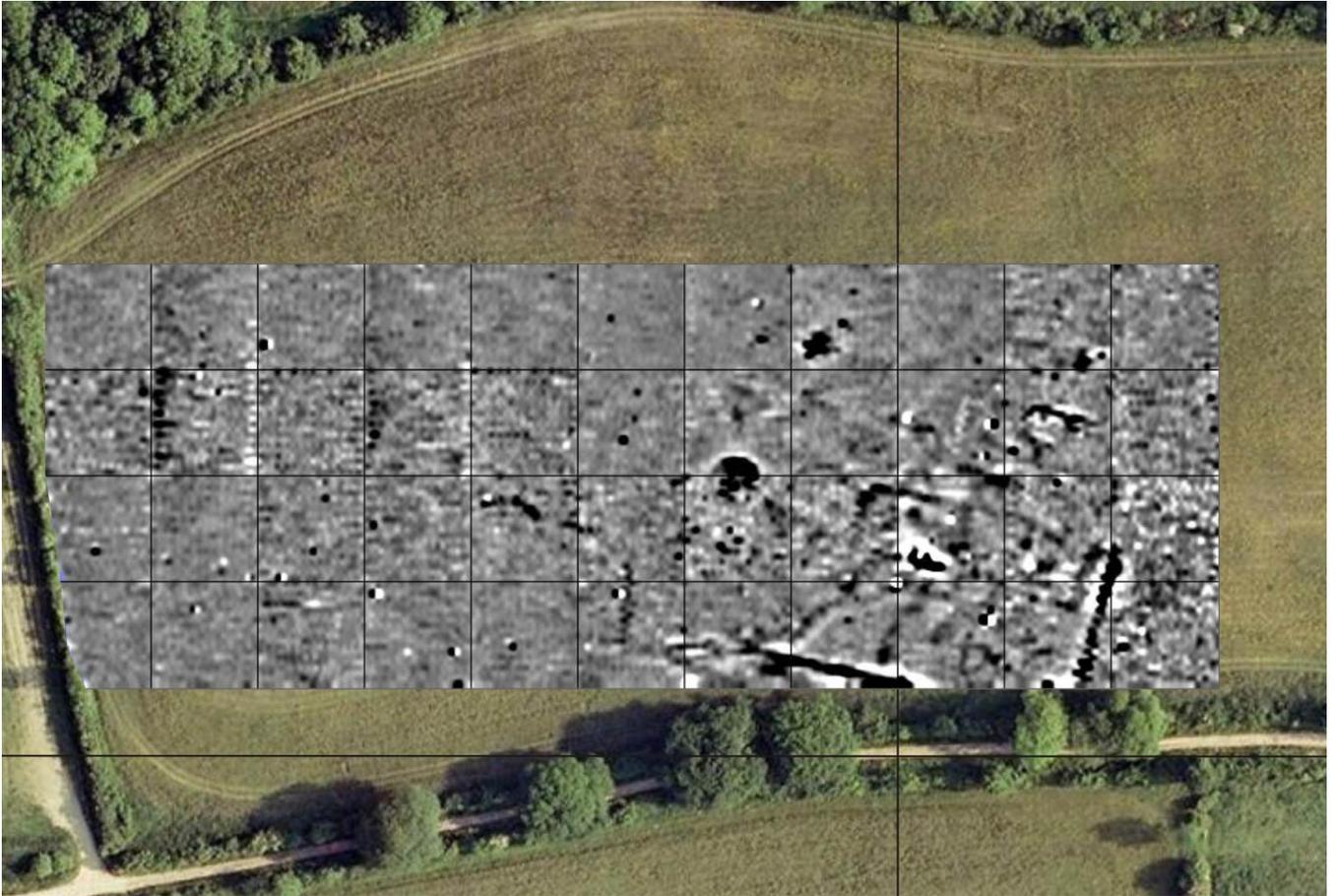




ARCHEOSCAN



HANGING HILL VILLA

Archaeological Evaluation (HH12) at
Hanging Hill
South Gloucestershire.
NGR ST 710 700

A J ROBERTS BSc (Hons) MA AIfA



Title: Excavations at Hanging Hill Villa 2012

Location: Hanging Hill, Upton Cheney, South Gloucestershire

National Grid Ref: ST 710 700

Project Manager: Tony Roberts

Field Team: Tony Roberts
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Landowner: David Hawkins, Manor Farm, Upton Cheney

Date of Excavation: 27 August to 10 September 2012 (HH12)

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REPORT CONTENTS

1.	ABSTRACT.....	4
2.	INTRODUCTION	
2.1	Project background.....	5
2.2	Survey objectives and techniques.....	5
2.3	Site location and description	6
2.4	Site history and archaeological potential.....	7
2.5	Geology and soils.....	8
3.	METHODOLOGY	
3.1	Site grid	8
3.2	Levels datum.....	8
3.3	Trench locations.....	8
3.4	Geophysics.....	9
4.	RESULTS	
4.2	Trench 1.....	10
4.3	Trench 3.....	11
4.4	Trench 4.....	12
4.5	Finds.....	13
4.5.1	Small Finds.....	13
	Copper alloy.....	13
	Iron.....	14
	Organic material.....	14
	Numismatic.....	15
	Stone.....	16
	Ceramic.....	16
	Intaglio.....	16
4.5.2	Pottery.....	16
4.5.3	Bones.....	19
4.5.4	Metal.....	21
4.5.5	Painted Wall Plaster.....	22
4.5.6	Flint.....	23
4.5.7	Other Artefacts.....	23
5.	DISCUSSION	24
6.	CONCLUSION.....	25
7.	REFERENCES.....	26

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS**Figures**

Figure 1	Location of Hanging Hill Villa.
Figure 2	Trench 1 - Views of Trench.
Figure 3	Trench 3 – Viewed to the north.
Figure 4	Trench 3 – Drain.
Figure 5	Trench 3 – Path edging on Terrace.
Figure 6	Trench 4 – Perimeter Ditch.
Figure 7	SF 318 – Toiletry Probe.
Figure 8	SF 319 – Roman Furniture Mount.
Figure 9	SF 306,307 and 308 - Bone Pins.
Figure 10	SF 305 - Radiate of Tetricus I.
Figure 11	SF 315 – Radiate of Claudius II.
Figure 12	SF 313 – Ceramic Gaming Counter.
Figure 13	Ring Intaglio.
Figure 14	Fragment of Samian Ware.
Figure 15	Cologne Beaker with Barbotine Hunting Scene.
Figure 16	Table of Bone Fragment Totals.
Figure 17	Table of Painted Wall Plaster
Figure 18	Fragments of Painted Wall Plaster.

Annexes

Annex A	Gradiometer survey Hanging Hill.
Annex B	Site Excavation Grid and Trench Locations.
Annex C	Trench 1 Plan and Section.
Annex D	Trench 3 Plan and Section.
Annex E	Trench 4 Plan and Section.
Annex F	Context Register.
Annex G	Small Finds Table
Annex H	Pottery Analysis.
Annex I	Finds Matrix.

1 ABSTRACT

1.1 In the nineteenth century antiquarian archaeologists noted the presence of a 'Roman work' in a field at Hanging Hill, east of Upton Cheney, alongside the old Roman road between Bath and Upton. This potential Roman settlement had largely been ignored with only the occasional find by local metal detectorists keeping it in the modern memory.

1.2 In 2012, a geophysical survey indicated the possible presence of an ancient settlement bounded by a large ditch fronting the road. Early indication was of a series of buildings terraced into the hillside of the steep Cotswold scarp enjoying a view to the southwest of Bristol.

1.3 A limited evaluation excavation (HH12), in 2012, verified the presence of a significant Roman settlement. The steep slope of the hillside had been terraced to permit the construction of at least one large stone building, a corner of which was uncovered during the excavation. A second large building further to the west, enjoying the finest view from the terrace, was hinted at through the geophysical anomalies and finds in the evaluation trench. The finds assemblage, including painted wall plaster and fine Gaulish pottery, suggests that a higher status settlement with a significant reach and influence occupied this location for a number of centuries.

1.4 The geophysical survey and the evaluation excavation at Hanging Hill has confirmed the presence of a significant settlement dating from the Roman period. It would appear from the evidence presented by the artefacts that the site is a moderately high status. This is supported by the presence of painted wall plaster and the occupation of an enviable position, with a superb view, in the close proximity of Bath. The numerous artefacts recovered and features exposed during this limited exploration has enabled an initial interpretation of the development of the site to be attempted. However, it must be stressed that only a small fraction of the site has been examined and a more extensive investigation is required to provide a much fuller picture of the sequence of archaeological activity on the site.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Project background

2.1.1 The site at ST 710700 at Hanging Hill, east of Upton Cheney, was first noted by Scarth (1864)¹ who wrote “Adjoining the same road (from Upton to Bath) and nearer Upton, on the north side, remains of a villa were explored and a ring, fibula, coins, millstone etc were found.” In 1880, Irvine J.T wrote “Roman work was opened here enclosing a space of 87 yards by 56 – foundations of only two walls were discovered within the exterior boundary – coins, a ring, pottery, mill stones etc were dug up.”² Clearly a building of Roman origin lies within this undulating pasture field and at the head of a small valley.

2.1.2 Examination of the original records of Irvine showed that he indicated the site of the building in the western half of the survey field. A few sketch drawings of various villa sites accompany a map but it is not clear whether any of them refer to this site. A site visit by Jones P. in 1981 for South Gloucestershire HER³ records a few abraded redsherds found in the field centred on ST710702. More recently, a local Metal detectorist has found Roman material in the field which again appear to be concentrated in the southern and western parts of the field. A subsequent geophysical survey also showed anomalies of a potential settlement in this area.

2.1.3 The programme of proposed works in 2012 (HH12) focused on placing evaluation trenches over significant features visible in the geophysical survey.

2.1.4 The project was coordinated by Archeoscan. Managed by Tony Roberts, excavation staff were volunteers of all experience levels who were provided with instruction and full experience of all tasks applicable to an archaeological excavation.

2.2 Survey objectives and techniques

2.2.1 Looking ahead, the Hanging Hill Villa Project intends to investigate the extent and context of this settlement through a process of continued excavation, further geophysical survey and surface collection. The project will build upon the geophysics and systematically evaluate and record the extent of the archaeology based upon the geophysical anomalies. Little archaeological evidence is available within the South Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) that aids the understanding of Roman occupation in the area. Consequently, this site presents a good opportunity to understand the chronology and advance the archaeological knowledge of the transition from the Iron Age to Roman period and determine the nature of the site. The aim is to achieve a greater understanding of the archaeology in the

¹Scarth H. M. 1864, *Aquae Sulis, Notices of Roman Bath*. 126

²Irvine J.T. 1880 Bath Reference Library Mss Box 2.

³South Gloucestershire HER 1990 – MSG2406

area and inform a longer-term strategy to evaluate the archaeological sequence in greater detail.

2.2.2 A further objective of the project is to allow members of the public to gain practical experience of all aspects of work on an archaeological site. It is intended that work undertaken by volunteers on the site will count towards the practical elements of archaeological qualifications.

2.2.3 There is the possibility to create a learning environment associated with the project and publically display some of the finds and graphics from the site in association with the landowners, at his discretion.

2.2.4 The objectives of HH12 were:

- a. To evaluate the extent and nature of the archaeological deposits and obtain profiles/dating for the enclosure ditches.
- b. To ascertain the broad chronological range of the activity on the site.
- c. To determine the depth of the stratigraphy and the extent of the preservation of the archaeological features.
- d. To enable individuals to experience aspects of work on an archaeological site.
- e. Enhance the South Gloucestershire HER entry.

2.2.5 All archaeological work undertaken was carried out using appropriate methods and practices, which satisfy the stated aims of the project, and which comply with the 'Code of Conduct, Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology', and other relevant by-laws of the Institute for Archaeologists (IFA). The methods and practices for HH12 are detailed in the respective project specifications (Roberts 2012).

2.3 Site location and description

2.3.1 Hanging Hill Villa is located on the west-facing scarp of the Cotswolds close to the village of Upton Cheney and alongside the old road between Upton and Bath (Figure 1). A relatively steep slope has been terraced to facilitate the construction of the stone buildings. This location allows for a splendid view across the southwest of Bristol and enjoys relatively quick and easy access to Bath city. The site is in various agricultural uses but was under grass at the time of the excavation which had not been harvested due to the wet summer.

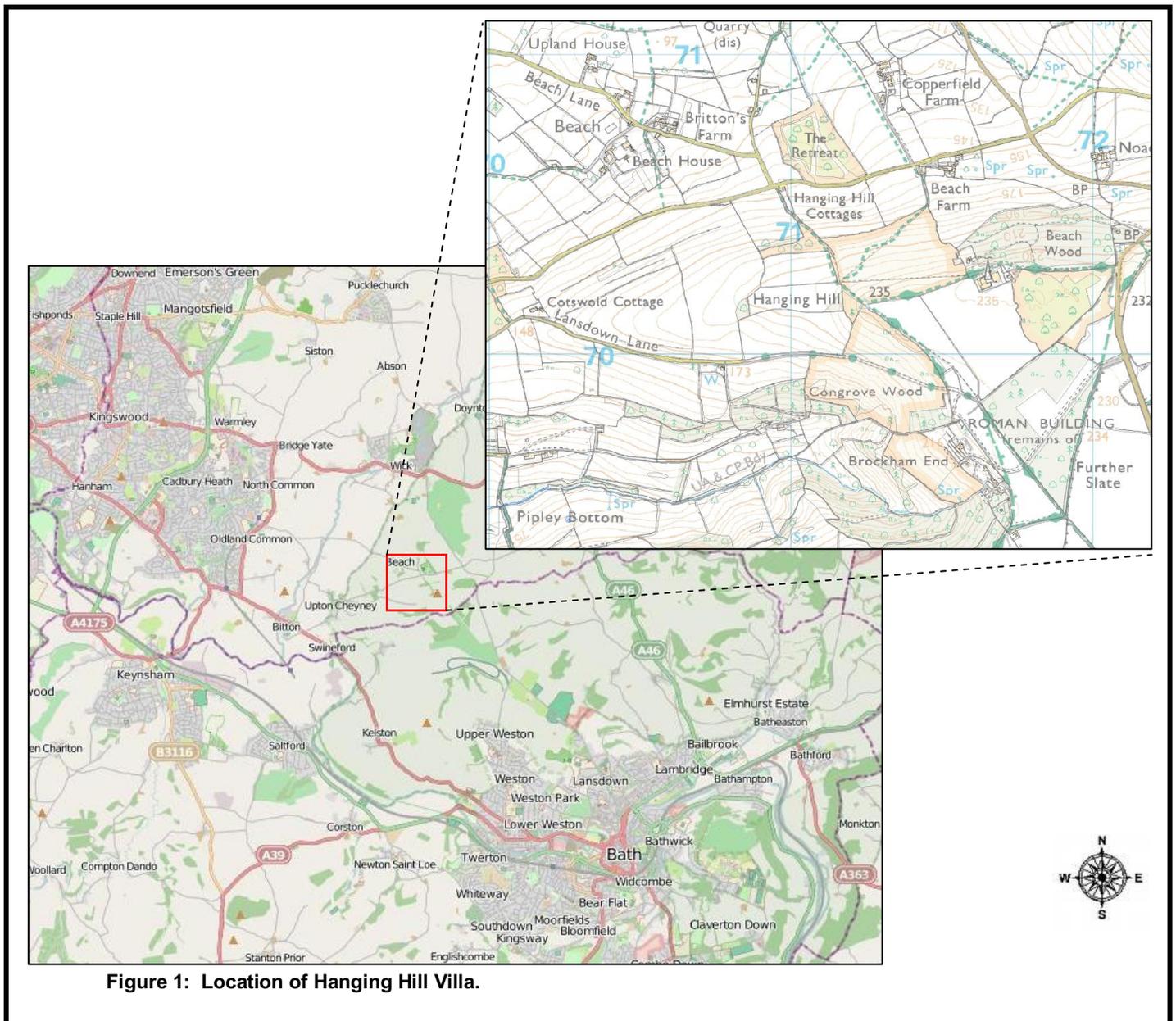


Figure 1: Location of Hanging Hill Villa.

2.4 Site history and archaeological potential

2.4.1 The only known archaeological intervention in the close vicinity of the site has been that conducted by Irvine previously described in paragraph 2.1. A number of other confirmed and possible Roman sites are in the vicinity. The HER notes possible Roman sites closer to the village of Upton Cheney (HER 1,255; 1,256; 13,843) identified by pottery fragments. A known Roman Villa is located at the head of the valley at Brockham End. The Brockham End building was also noted by Irvine as “traces of Roman building occur at this place”. Irvine also notes that a small stone coffin was discovered in association with the site at Brockham End.⁴ With the combination of this knowledge, and the recorded finds by the metal detectorist, the probability of the existence of a Roman settlement on this site was high.

⁴ Handwritten notes and sketch map by J.T.Irvine viewed in Bath Reference Library.

2.5 Geology and soils

2.5.1 The site sits at the junction of some complicated geology. The promontory, the reverse slopes of which the site sits, is noted as limestone with Midford Sands with clay bands in the vicinity⁵. Immediately north-east of the site is on an outcrop of Fullers Earth Rock.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Site Grid

3.1.1 The site grid has been laid out to be coincident with the original geophysics collection grid. 20m grid squares are referred to by an alphanumeric system. All features and small-find spots are referred to by an easting and northing coordinate with an origin in the southwest of the grid (Annex B). All measurements are made using a total station.

3.2 Levels Datum

3.2.1 As there is no OS benchmark close to the site all levels are taken relative to the top of the a large stone at site grid 33.12/-12.566. All levels in the report are relative to this datum.

3.3 Trench Locations

3.3.1 The trenches were placed in the following order of priority (Annex B):

Trench 1 Located over a circular anomaly to the west of the site. The purpose of this trench is to determine the nature of the feature and the western extent of the site.

Trench 2 Planned to be placed over the geophysical anomaly that indicates a large magnetic anomaly at the centre of the indicated enclosure. It is possible that this represents the main settlement area of the enclosure and could be the remains of a stone structure. The purpose of this trench is to ascertain if the magnetic return indicates a building structure and to ascertain the full profile and dating of the feature. This trench was planned but not excavated due to time restrictions in order to concentrate on the other trenches.

Trench 3 Placed over the corner of a right-angled high magnetic anomaly. This could be a ditch or the robbed out foundation of a wall. The purpose of the trench is to ascertain the nature of the feature and extract dating evidence if possible.

⁵ British Geological Survey, Bristol District special sheet, one-inch series.

Trench 4 Placed over the geophysical anomaly that indicates a large ditch. The purpose of this trench is to ascertain the full profile and dating of the ditch.

3.4 Geophysics

3.4.1 A magnetometry survey was conducted at the site. The detailed survey was conducted using a Geoscan FM256 Fluxgate Gradiometer. All readings are saved to an integral data logger for analysis and presentation. Data was collected at 0.25m intervals with a traverse separation of 1m. The survey area was separated into 20m by 20m grids giving 1600 recorded measurements per grid. This sampling interval is very effective at locating archaeological features and is the recommended methodology for archaeological prospection (English Heritage, 2008).

3.4.2 The position of the survey grids were fixed using local reference points and by measurement to local features for cross-referencing. Locations of key points were recorded by Total Station and GPS. Gradiometer data downloaded from the Geoscan FM256 meter has been analysed in specialist software designed for the equipment called *Geoplot 3.0*. The software allows greyscale and relief plots to be produced for presentation and display. Survey grids are assembled to form an overall composite of data (composite file) creating a dataset of the complete survey area.

3.4.3 Minimal processing is carried out in order to enhance the results of the survey for display. Raw data are always analysed as processing can modify anomalies. The following schedule sets out the data and image processing used in this survey: Clip, Despiking, High Pass Filter, Low Pass Filter, Zero Mean Grid, Zero Mean Traverse and Interpolate.

3.4.4 A number of potential archaeological features have been identified in the survey and formed the basis of the selection of the trenches for HH12. The results of the survey are shown at Annex A. The significant number of high magnetic linear anomalies indicate a large sub-rectangular enclosure within which there are the possibility of a number of buildings. These buildings are characterised by the rectangular arrangement of features within the perimeter ditch. The geophysical anomalies extend up the hill to the north-east and are possibly structures on terraces. The magnetic signature of these buildings is unusual. This was explained during the excavation of Trenches 1 and 3. The high magnetic linears have the signature of a ditch. Excavation indicated that this signal has been given by the layers of fill between the artificially cut terrace and the back wall of the buildings (see Annexes C and D). Combined with the soak-away drain that runs along this, axis the effect manifests itself as a ditch on the geophysics. Consequently it can be extrapolated that the other low resistance linears may, on this site be related to building walls terraced into the slope of the hill.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Three of the four planned trenches were excavated (Trenches 1, 3 and 4). Trench 2 was de-turfed but not continued in favour of concentrating on the remaining trenches in the available time. The archaeology proved to be deeper than anticipated; a layer of clayey silt hill-wash approximately 0.4m deep covered the entire site underneath the topsoil. Consequently, the archaeological remains are relatively well preserved. A description of the contexts for each trench is at Annex F.

4.2 Trench 1

4.2.1 Trench 1 was located over a circular anomaly to the west of the site. (Annex B). The purpose of this trench was to determine the nature of the feature and the western extent of the site. The trench measured 5m x 1m and a maximum depth of 1.21m. The plan and section of Trench 1 are at Annex C. To the north of the trench a terrace had been cut into the natural (105). On the resultant terrace a possible linear structure, oriented northwest-southeast had been constructed. Consisting of a single course of unmortared, but dressed stone to the south side of the trench larger flat stones were laid, possibly as flag or floor stones (Figure 2). There were traces of mortar between these larger stones. Immediately above this level was a demolition layer (106) containing medium-sized dressed limestone blocks. This was in turn covered by a dark silty, humic soil (104). Both of these layers contained significant



Figure 2: Trench 1. Left: View to the Southwest.
Right: View to South.

levels of pottery and animal bone. Fragments of samian ware from (104) and fragments of painted wall plaster hint at the possibility of a higher status building in the vicinity, possibly slightly further south of the current trench. This was sealed by a clayey silt (103) an accumulation of hill-wash on the steep slope. Immediately above this was a thin blackish- red layer (102) that had been subjected to a burning episode. The intensity of the burning increased towards the southern edge of the trench. The topsoil (101) overlay this layer.

4.3 Trench 3

4.3.1 Trench 3 was placed over the corner of a geophysical anomaly that suggested the corner of a rectangular range of buildings (Annex B). The trench measured 5m x 2m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.2m. The plan and section of Trench 3 are at Annex D. In a similar fashion to Trench 1, the natural bedrock had been cut away to form a terrace on which a stone building (306) had been constructed (Figure 3). The evaluation did not excavate beneath this structure. The masonry wall was constructed of large limestone blocks firmly mortared in place. The exposed section of wall formed the northwest corner of a possible structure with the remnants of a simple mortar floor on the projected inside of the building. Between the terrace wall and the rear of the building a soak-away drain had been constructed (Figure 4). It was oriented east-west and ran parallel to the rear of the building. The location would ensure that water draining down the hillside onto the terrace would be adequately channelled away from the rear of the building. The construction of the drain consisted of a layer of larger stones (308), at the lowest level, which were overlain by smaller stones of a medium size thus producing a graded filtering. A layer of thick clay (309) had been laid against the cut of the terrace wall. It can be speculated that this served to stabilise the edge of the cut and help guide drainage water towards the drain. Overlaying the level of the drain were two demolition deposits (303) and (304). Dark black/brown in colour these deposits contained large amounts of Roman pottery and bone. Painted wall plaster, 3rd century coins, bone pins and a nail cleaner (see 4.5.1) from these deposits suggest a domestic use for the immediate area.

4.3.2 On top of the terrace a path edge had been constructed with upright vertical stones (310) to mark the edge towards the drop of the terrace (Figure 5). Some stones had been displaced (312). All of these deposits were sealed under a clay hill wash (302) similar to (103) in Trench 1. Overlying this was the topsoil (301).

Figure 3: Trench 3 viewed to the north. Corner of building in the foreground with drain behind (left to right) and terrace with path edging in the background.



Figure 4: Drain (top left).



Figure 5: Path edging on terrace.

4.4 Trench 4

4.4.1 Trench 4 was placed over a geophysical anomaly that suggested the perimeter ditch to the settlement (Annex B). The trench was planned to be 5m x 2m but once the dimensions of the ditch were clear this was reduced to 3.5m x 1m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.38m. The plan and section of Trench 4 are at Annex E. The ditch has a U-shaped form with an elongated step to the South side (Figure 5). The earliest deposits (404)(405) consisted of a silty-black loam containing significant levels of domestic

rubbish. The lower levels of the ditch fill contained some large limestone blocks that were not removed during the evaluation due to their size. The ditch has undergone a series of re-cuts during its life. The older deposits spot-dated to the 2nd century AD with the later fill (403) dating to the later 2nd century AD suggesting that this was the main period that the ditch was open. The clay hill wash (402), that was present in the other two trenches, also sealed the Roman levels in Trench 4.



Figure 6: Trench 4, perimeter ditch. Left: view to East. Right: view to Northwest.

4.5 Finds

4.5.1 Small Finds by Kurt Adams (see also table at Annex G)

Copper Alloy.

4.5.1.1 The most common copper alloy artefacts were those associated with personal adornment, of which brooch fragments were the most abundant. SF 402 is a fragment of a spring and 304 is a fragment of the pin and partial spring from two bow brooches that date to the 1st-2nd century. SF 102 is a pin and spring from a Polden Hill brooch dated to AD 70-120. SF 318 is a toiletry implement called a probe (Figure 7).

4.5.1.2 Only three items of copper alloy were unidentified SF 301, 404 and 302, all of which were too fragmentary to allow identification.

4.5.1.3 SF 311, and the much more distinctive 319 (Figure 8), are both decorative furniture mounts used throughout the Roman period. SF 403 Indeterminate riveted, the square section hole makes a knife handle end plate a possibility, nevertheless, the fragmentary nature of the piece makes identification uncertain.



Figure 7: SF 318, Toiletry Probe. Figure 8: SF 319, Roman Furniture Mount.

Iron

4.5.1.4 Four items were recorded, all of which represent items of personal adornment or general domestic use, most of which came from context 303.

4.5.1.5 The items of personal adornment come from context 303. SF 317 brooch pin, judging by the curve of the terminal would have most likely come from a fibular brooch of the 1st-2nd century. SF 303 is a lozenge form strap slide, these are normally made of copper alloy and although are found in both the 3rd and 4th century, they are perhaps more common in the 4th century.

4.5.1.6 The domestic items are represented by SF 101 a bucket handle terminal from the 1st-2nd century. SF 309 is a double spiked loop, this would have been driven into wood to have things tied to the ring, this is a common find particularly on domestic sites.

Organic Material

4.5.1.7 SF 306, 307 and 308 are all pins that have been truncated both at the head and the tip making dating precisely, impossible. However, all would be consistent with bone pin finds on domestic sites throughout the roman period (Figure 9).



Figure 9: SF 306,307 and 308, Bone Pins.

Numismatic

4.5.1.8 Five coins were recovered all of which have been identified and show a distribution over the late 3rd century to the early 4th century. This coin date range is exactly what would be expected from any Cotswolds domestic or villa site.

4.5.1.9 The most common coin found were radiates of the 3rd century with 4 out of the five dating to AD 260-296. The three clearly identified coins SF 305 (Figure 10), SF 315 (Figure 11) and SF 314 show a general date range of AD 268-274. Importantly these coins show little signs of wear, suggesting that they were not in circulation for a long period of time. SF 312 is badly corroded but is a barbarous radiate dating to AD 260-296

4.5.1.10 There is a single 4th century coin, SF 401, this coin is very badly worn but the design of two soldiers is visible on the reverse, dating it to AD 330-341.



Figure 10: SF 305 Radiate of Tetricus I, AD 270-274.



Figure 11: SF 315 Radiate of Claudius II, AD 268 -270.

Stone

4.5.1.11 SF316, a similar small limestone sphere was also recorded from the Frocester excavation. Although its purpose was unknown, it was dated to the 4th century (Price, 2000, 189).

Ceramic

4.5.1.12 SF 313 is a ceramic gaming counter made from South-west oxidised ware, thereby dating this artefact to the 2nd- 4th century (Figure 12).

Intaglio

4.5.1.13 This is a broken stone intaglio which has the fine carving of two animals on the face. The top, smaller, animal appears to be a Capricorn, the larger animal below appears to be another sea creature, but is partly obscured by the damage. This item would have been used throughout the whole of the roman period (Figure 13).



Figure 12: SF 313 Ceramic Gaming Counter.



Figure 13: Ring Intaglio.

4.5.2 Pottery by Jane Timby.

4.5.2.1 The archaeological work resulted in the recovery of 1995 sherds pottery weighing 16607g dating to the Later Iron Age/early Roman, Roman and post-medieval periods. Pottery was recovered from 15 individual contexts with the quantities ranging from a minimum of 2 sherds to a maximum 744 sherds. The material is of mixed preservation with some contexts producing more fragmented material whilst in others sherds are better preserved with relatively fresh edges. Preservation of surface finishes such as slip or glaze is poor. The overall average sherd size is typical of rubbish material with a moderately high level of redeposition at 8.3 g.

4.5.2.2 For the purposes of the assessment the assemblage was scanned to assess the likely chronology and quantified by sherd count and weight for each recorded context. Known regional or traded wares are coded using the National Roman fabric reference collection (Tomber and Dore 1998). These codes are shown in brackets after the names. Other wares were coded more generically according to firing colour and fabric type. The resulting data is summarised at Annex H.

Later Iron Age/Early Roman

4.5.2.3 A total 10 sherds are present in handmade fabrics typical of the later Iron Age, but which also commonly continue to be used into the early Roman period. The fabrics can be broadly split into those with a calcite temper (seven sherds); limestone-tempered (one sherd) and grog-tempered (two sherds). There are no featured sherds and all the pieces appear to residual in later levels.

Roman

4.5.2.4 A total 1975 sherds of Roman date were recorded. The assemblage is quite diverse in terms of compositions with imported continental fine wares and amphorae, regional imports and local wares. Continental imports include nine sherds of samian with examples of both Central Gaulish (Lezoux) and East Gaulish origin. Forms include cups Dragendorff type 33, bowls Drag. 37 and 38 and dishes Drag. 31. One sherd shows a rivet repair hole.

4.5.2.5 One sherd of decorated Central Gaulish Drag 37 bowl (104) shows the stamped name of the mould maker which has broken horizontally across the impression (Figure 14). This belonged to the potter Paternus (Hartley and Dickinson 2010, Vol 7, 58-60, Paternus V die 7a) and dates to the period AD150-85. The same stamp has been recorded from Wanborough and Gloucester.

4.5.2.6 Other continental fine ware imports include a small piece of Moselle black-slipped ware (MOS BS) from (303) and a sherd from a Cologne beaker (KOL CC) decorated with a barbotine hunt scene (Figure 15). Both pieces are probably late 2nd or 3rd century in date. Also from the Continent are nine sherds of amphorae; one sherd from a Dressel 20 olive-oil container from Baetica (BAT AM), South Spain and eight sherds of Gallic wine-amphora (GAL AM) from Gaul.

4.5.2.7 The commonest regional imports of black burnished vessels from Poole Harbour, Dorset (DOR BB1) which accounts for 16% of the total assemblage. Amongst these are various jars, flat-rim bowls, plain-walled dishes and flanged-rim conical bowls. Other regional imports include single sherds of late Roman shelly ware (ROB SH) from the Midlands and Mancetter-Hartshill mortaria (MAH WH) from Warwickshire; several sherds of New Forest ware (NFO CC/RS), one sherd of Oxfordshire white-ware mortaria (OXF WH) and two sherds of Oxfordshire colour-coated mortaria.

4.5.2.8 From sources probably closer to the site are a few sherds of Severn Valley ware and some Savernake ware from Wiltshire. Also likely to come from a Wiltshire source are two sherds of British glazed ware, one piece from a moulded cup (404); the other a small fragment from (403). The cup is comparable to examples found at Wanborough, Wiltshire and dates to the early 2nd century.

4.5.2.9 The bulk of the assemblage comprises grey slightly micaceous sandy wares of presumably largely of local origin. These account for 40% of the total assemblage and include mainly jars with a variety of rim shapes, plain rim dishes, flanged bowls, bowls copying Drag 30 samian types, and colander. One jar has a ridge of calcareous deposit on the inner rim face where the vessel has held or heated water.

4.5.2.10 Further examples of copies of Drag. 30 bowls in a grey fine ware and stamped or incised decoration in a finer grey or black ware may be Wiltshire products. Similarly a fine black sandy wheel-made ware is typical of a later 1st-early 2nd century ware also likely to have a source in Wiltshire.

4.5.2.11 Also well represented is a hard sandy, moderately thin-walled oxidised sandy ware (SOW OX) known as South-west oxidised ware. This includes two mortaria fragments, one white-slipped; jars, flagon, colander and beaker. One jar is handled. This ware seems to largely date from the later 2nd and 3rd centuries and is thought to originate from a source in the Wiltshire or Somerset area. It accounts for 12% of the present assemblage.

4.5.2.12 Other items of note include a possible rim from a crucible from (303) and a sherd of Gloucester mortarium with quartzite trituration grit from (405) of Flav-Trajanic date.

4.5.2.13 Most of the assemblage would thus appear to date from the early 2nd through the 4th centuries AD. There are a few residual sherds which could suggest 1st century activity in the area but these are very sparse. The single sherd of ROB SH indicates continued use of the site into the last quarter of the 4th century.

4.5.2.14 The composition of the assemblage with a number of continental imported items and several regional imported wares suggests a moderately high status site. The samian, at just 1.2%, is typical for a rural site but as the chronological emphasis of the material is after the samian import period this figure may not necessarily be representative.

4.5.2.15 In terms of material access the site appears to be drawing in supplies from both Wiltshire and Gloucestershire although the incidence of Severn Valley wares is perhaps surprisingly low suggesting alternative wares were filling the gap.



Figure 14: Fragment of samian ware.
(Potter: Patarnus)



Figure 15: Cologne Beaker with barbotine
Hunting Scene.

Post-Roman

4.5.2.16 Ten sherds of post-medieval date were recovered from contexts (101), (103), (301) and (302). The sherds include industrial china, slip ware and tin-glazed ware of 19th century or later date. The pieces are very small and probably represent background scatter from plough or topsoil.

4.5.3 An Assessment of the Bone Assemblage by Heidi Dawson

4.5.3.1 The bone assemblage consists of 16 bags containing animal bones from 15 contexts. The contents of each bag were assessed to determine how much of the assemblage may be identifiable and to determine if any human remains were present. The bone assemblage is summarised at Figure 16. In general the assemblage was very fragmented with very few complete elements represented. The only complete elements consisted of several foot bones and one vertebra; although several near complete halves of mandibles were recovered. Around 40% of the bones should be identifiable and the species represented from initial inspection are sheep, cattle, pig and possibly dog. The mandibles will be useful for ageing and the initial inspection of these, and the presence of several unfused long bone elements, indicates that several juvenile animals (sheep and cattle) are represented in the collection. Some evidence for butchery was noted and several elements showed evidence of burning.

4.5.3.2 There are some human remains present in the collection with a left femur fragment and a tibia fragment of a neonate present in context 303, as well as an adult vertebral fragment and two other possible human fragments. The adult bone fragments were much darker in colour than the rest of the assemblage and one bone fragment from context 304 was a similar

dark brown colour and also appears to be human. A short summary of each context is presented below.

Trench 1

Context 101: contains one small unidentified bone fragment only.

Context 103: contains one fragment of a long bone with very split and eroded cortical bone.

Context 104: contains approximately 89 fragments of which 50 should be identifiable including; a mandible of a young sheep, a juvenile cattle mandible (with cut marks), eleven loose teeth (sheep and cattle, mainly juvenile), and one pathological femur (sheep?). Four fragments (including a mandible fragment) show evidence of burning.

Context 106: contains 9 fragments, of which 4 should be identifiable, including a metapodial with signs of burning.

Trench 3

Context 301: contains 2 fragments of cattle teeth.

Context 302: contains approximately 24 fragments including 4 teeth (sheep) and at least 4 other identifiable fragments.

Context 303: This context was contained within two separate bags and some human remains were present, including parts of a neonate femur and tibia, and three possible adult human fragments, which were much darker in colour than the rest of the assemblage, including a fragment of cervical vertebrae. Approximately 154 animal bone fragments were present of which at least 71 should be identifiable including; 3 sheep jaws and 24 loose teeth (including sheep, cattle and pig). Two fragments show evidence of burning.

Context 304: This context contains a possible fragment of a human pelvic bone (this is a darker colour as are the human remains in context 303). Approximately 67 fragments were present with at least 34 identifiable elements including; one juvenile sheep mandible, one mature cattle mandible, and three loose teeth.

Context 305: contains one small fragment of a longbone only.

Context 307: Approximately 91 fragments are present in this context with at least 17 identifiable elements including; a very young sheep mandible, 4 loose teeth, and a large portion of a cattle scapula.

Trench 4

Context 401: contains 25 fragments of which 8 are identifiable elements including 6 teeth.

Context 402: contains 31 fragments with 14 identifiable elements including 6 teeth.

Context 403: contains approximately 100 fragments with at least 26 identifiable elements including 15 teeth (sheep, cattle and pig). Nine fragments show signs of burning.

Context 404: contains 12 fragments with at least 6 identifiable, including 2 sheep teeth, and one burnt fragment.

Context 405: 20 fragments are contained in this context with at least 10 identifiable, including 3 teeth.

Animal Bone			
	Context	Number of pieces	Weight(g)
Trench 1	101	1	1
	103	1	2
	104	89	585
	105	9	27
Trench 3	301	2	5
	302	24	125
	303	234	1460
	304	67	790
	305	1	1
	307	91	790
Trench 4	401	25	100
	402	31	140
	403	100	280
	404	12	65
	405	20	367

Figure 16: Table of bone fragment totals.

4.5.4 Metal Artefacts

4.5.4.1 Commensurate with a typical Roman domestic site a number of iron artefacts were recovered during the evaluation. The vast majority of the iron artefacts were iron nails (see Annex I). These can be further divided into general purpose building nails of which 49 were recovered over the 3 trenches. A concentration in the demolition layers of the trenches containing buildings suggests some elements of the building were constructed of wooden components. Of note is the larger number of hobnails present. A number of fragments of iron artefacts were recovered. The majority were treated as Small Finds (see 4.5.1).

4.5.5 Painted Plaster

4.5.5.1 Painted wall plaster was recovered from Trench 1 and Trench 3. The volumes of painted fragments recovered are shown in Figure 17.

Painted Wall Plaster			
	Context	Number of pieces	Description
Trench 1	104	3	Pink and red background colour with white, black and yellow stripes
Trench 3	303	7	Red and white background with possible dot motifs (yellow and black)
	304	5	Red and white background (split 50/50). Possible black floral motif
	305	4	3 Red and 1 white background
	307	1	Red background

Figure 17: Table of Painted Wall Plaster.

The presence of the plaster indicates the proximity of at least two decorated rooms in the vicinity of the trenches. The plaster from Trench 1 has a more pink background and different stripe decoration than that from Trench 3 indicating it is from a different panel. Even within context 304 the background pigments vary suggesting a variation in the origin of the fragment (Figure 18). The striped decoration from trench 1 displays white black and yellow pigment. The background colour from the fragment recovered in Trench 3 is either red or white. A floral pattern, or a series of individual dots, can be distinguished in a dark pigment and possibly a yellow colour. Fragments of the plaster are shown in Figure 18.



Figure 18: Fragments of painted wall plaster.
Left: From Trench 1 (104).
Top Right and Bottom Right: From Trench 3 (304).

4.5.6 Flint by Kurt Adams

4.5.6.1 FF1 and 2 are naturally damaged flint, with FF2 displaying considerable signs of frost damage.

4.5.6.2 FF4 has a large burnt flint, a small fragment of debitage, both of which are undateable. The medium size flint is a fragment from the base of a core and would date to the Late Mesolithic-Neolithic. FF3 is a blade that has a retouched notch near the tip, the style of retouch dates it to the Early Bronze Age.

4.5.7 Other Artefacts

4.5.7.1 All three trenches produced modest quantities of oyster shell indicating a fairly widespread use across the site in the diet of the occupants. As might be expected, Ceramic Building Material (CBM) was present in large amounts in the trenches closest to the buildings (See Annex I). There was also a presence in the ditch indicating that the upper levels of the ditch may have been open at the time of the demolition of the buildings on site. Other indicators of domestic activity on site include numerous fragments of glass and the presence of a stone that had been rubbed flat on one side perhaps whilst used for some domestic process like washing cloths or food preparation.

5 DISCUSSION

5.1 The evidence from the geophysical survey and the evaluation excavation enables an initial impression to be formed about the occupation on this site with an enviable view on the edge of the Cotswolds. Located alongside the old thoroughfare, probably at least of Roman date, between Bath and Upton Cheney, the site enjoys good access both to the east and west.

5.2 The presence of worked flint dating from the Mesolithic-Neolithic and from the Bronze Age would suggest longevity of occupation somewhere in the immediate area for a long period of prehistory. It is not difficult to imagine a pre-historic settlement on the site gradually making the transition from traditional ways to become more 'Romanized', making more and more use of imported goods in everyday life during the years either side of the conquest in AD 43. The presence of the sherds of handmade fabrics typical of the later Iron Age, but which also commonly continue to be used into the early Roman period, point towards that transition. The limited nature of the excavation to date means that structural evidence for this period has not yet been encountered. There are a few residual sherds of pottery which could suggest 1st century activity in the area but these are very sparse.

5.3 It is during the 2nd century AD that the settlement appears to enjoy a transformation and perhaps an expansion. The boundary ditch that fronts onto the main road was opened to become a much more significant feature and this is possibly the time that the range of buildings was developed on the terraced hillside. Cunliffe⁶ notes that, at this time, the town of Bath was enjoying a renewed period of interest in the spring of Minerva and a significant level of expansion and new building was being undertaken in the second half of the 2nd century. This would seem to coincide with the upturn in activity at Hanging Hill. One possibility is that the site became favoured by a richer entrepreneur at this juncture, a perfect place to build a desirable country residence with a view. It is clear that the occupants could now afford to acquire fine pottery vessels from Gaul and the Rhineland as well as from the length and breadth of this country. A vast range of domestic vessels are being brought to the site along with olive-oil from Baetica, South Spain and wine from Gaul. The commonest regional pottery imports were of black burnished vessels from Poole Harbour, Dorset which accounts for 16% of the total assemblage. Amongst these are various jars, flat-rim bowls, plain-walled dishes and flanged-rim conical bowls. Other regional imports include items of late Roman shelly ware from the Midlands, Mancetter-Hartshill mortaria from Warwickshire and vessels from both the New Forest and Oxfordshire. From sources probably closer to the site are vessels made of Severn Valley ware and some Savernake ware from Wiltshire. Unusually, for a site so close to the Seven Valley the amount of Severn Valley ware is relatively low. Domestic artefacts such as brooches, cosmetic implements and ring intaglio suggest

⁶ Cunliffe, B. 1988, *Roman Bath Discovered*, Tempus

that the finer aspects of domestic life were being enjoyed here and that the site enjoyed a relatively wealthy status.

5.4 Between the early 2nd century and the 4th century the stone buildings were built and continually enhanced on terraces cut into the hillside. The presence of painted wall plaster testifies to the wealth of the site. The differing types of plaster and different find spots suggest at least two rooms with such ornamentation. Whilst only one corner of a substantial stone building was uncovered, the geophysics indicate an extensive range of buildings across the site that still have to be explored and explained in terms of chronological development. The sheer volume of pottery recovered from a relatively small area and the variety of different domestic animal bone present suggests intense domestic activity between the 2nd and 4th centuries AD. Albeit a relatively small sample, the larger number of coins date from the late 3rd century when activity was possibly at peak. A 4th century coin and the single sherd of late Roman Shelly ware (ROB SH) indicates continued use of the site into the last quarter of the 4th century.

5.5 From this evaluation nothing has been recovered that suggests occupation of the site in the immediate post-roman period; however, the excavation of the site thus far has been very limited. Further excavation will reveal more of the geographical nature of the site and facilitate a greater understanding of the chronology of the phases of occupation that have been determined thus far.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The geophysical survey and the evaluation excavation at Hanging Hill has confirmed the presence of a significant settlement dating from the roman period. It would appear from the evidence presented by the artefacts that the site is a moderately high status. This is supported by the presence of painted wall plaster and the occupation of an enviable position, with a superb view, in the close proximity of Bath. The numerous artefacts recovered, and features exposed, in this limited exploration has enabled an initial interpretation of the development of the site to be attempted. The work to date has not been able to identify the “two walls within the exterior boundary” that were reported by Irvine. Therefore, it can only be assumed at this stage that both pieces of research relate to the same complex of buildings. However, it must be stressed that only a small fraction of the site has been examined during this evaluation and a more extensive investigation is required to provide a much fuller picture of the sequence of activity on the site.

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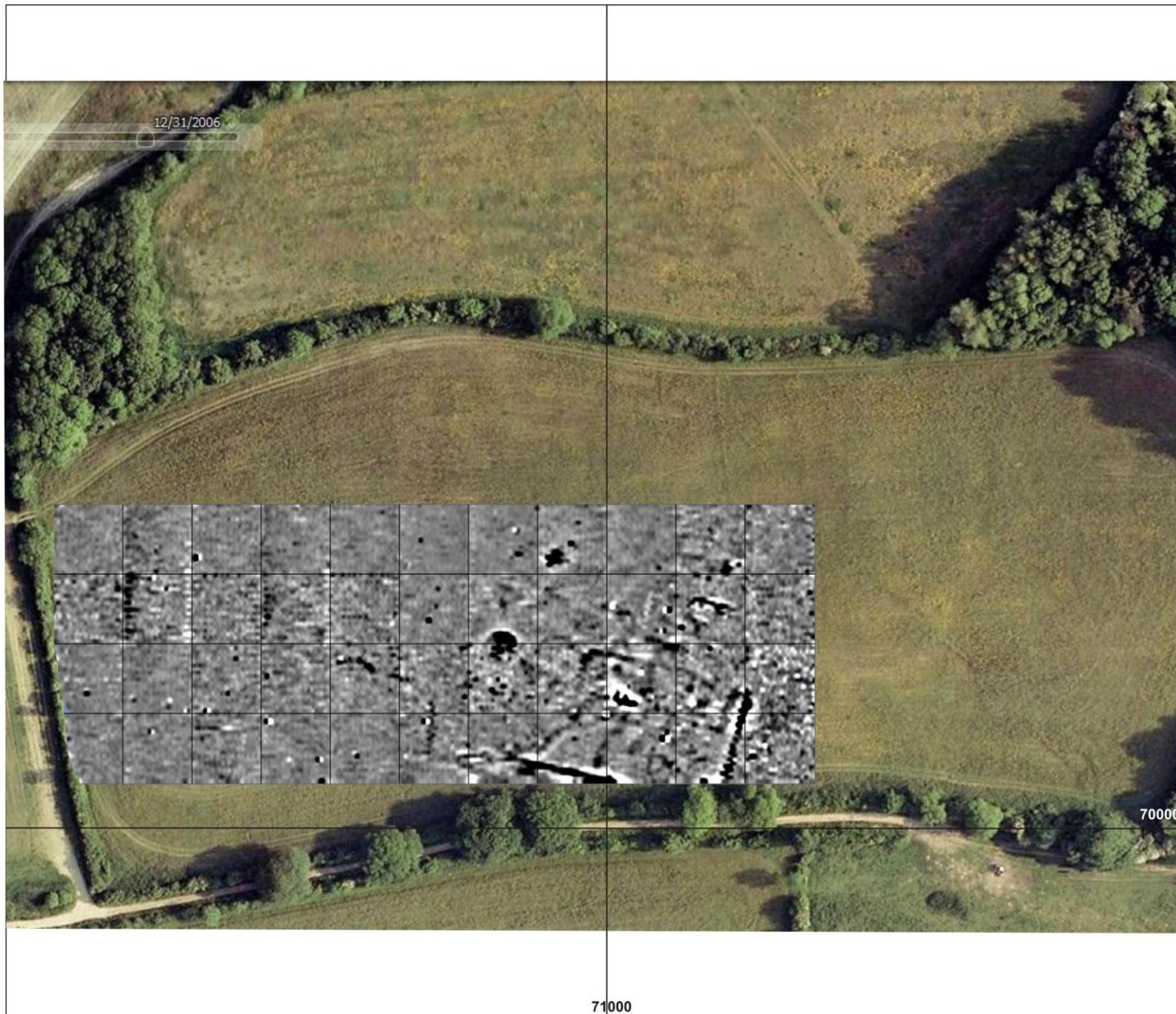
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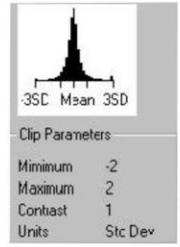
Prehistoric: <http://www.pcrq.org.uk> (Prehistoric ceramics research group)

Roman: www.potsherd.uklinux.net (Paul Tyers website)
www.sgrp.org (Study group for Roman pottery)
www.worcestershireceramics.org (Worcester Unit fabric series)

Medieval: www.medievalpottery.org.uk (Medieval pottery research group)



Title: **Annex A**
HANGING HILL
Gradiometer Survey
July 2012



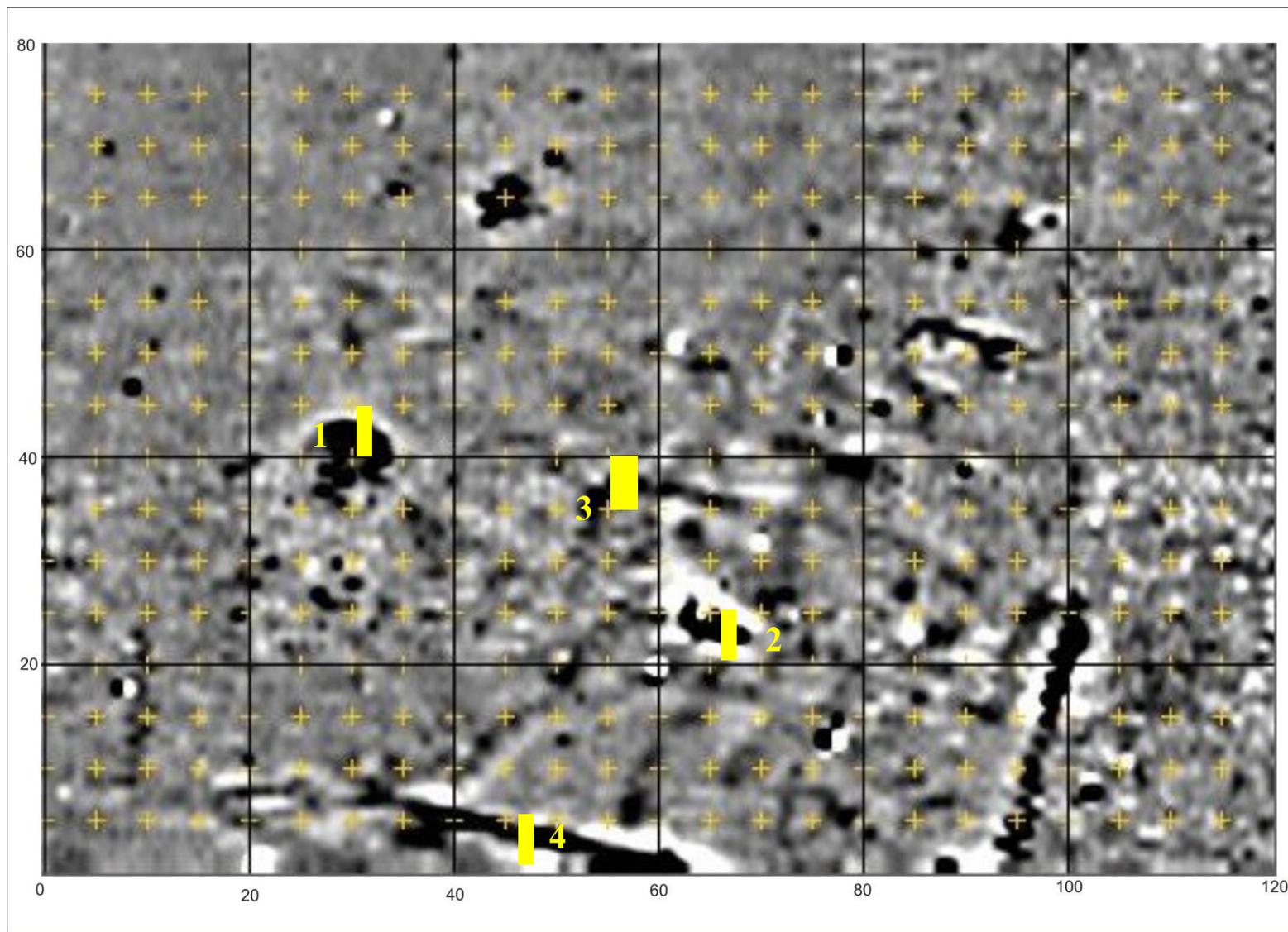
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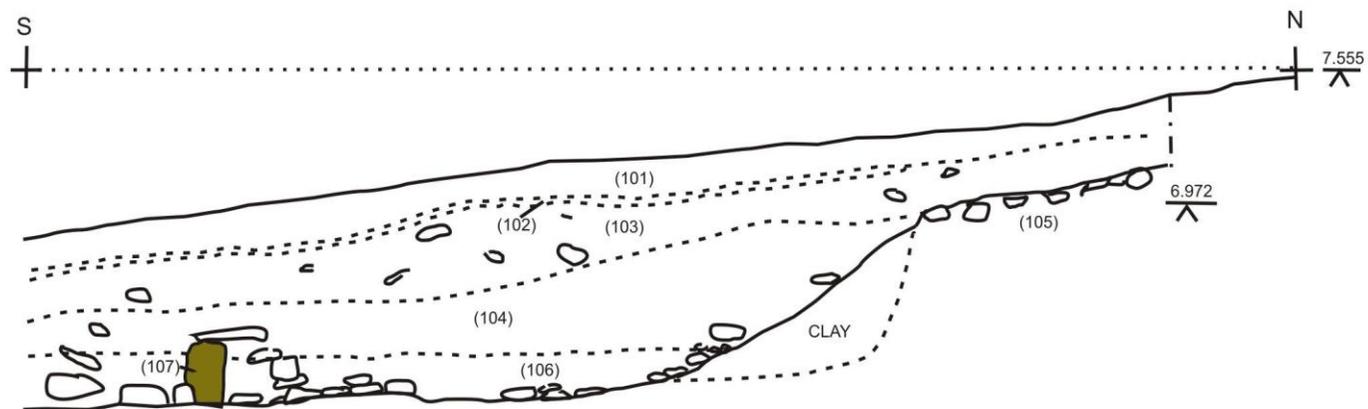
SITE EXCAVATION GRID AND LOCATION OF TRENCHES

ANNEX B





Trench 1



Section A - B

Title: ANNEX C

HANGING HILL

TRENCH 1

September 2012

-  Possible wall line (non load bearing)
-  Flat laid stones possible floor



Scale: Drawn at 1/20



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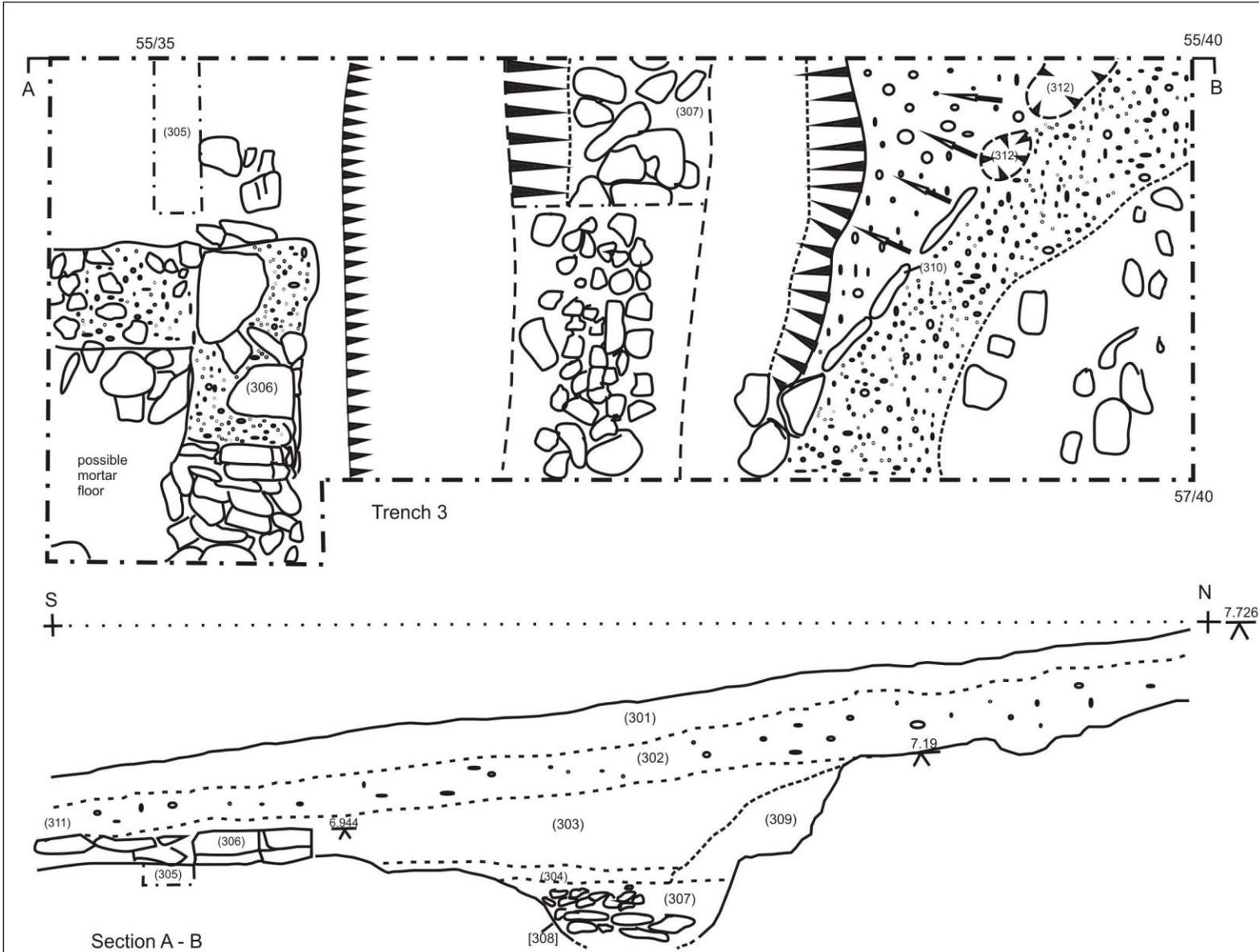
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Title: ANNEX D

HANGING HILL

TRENCH 3

September 2012



Scale: Drawn at 1/20



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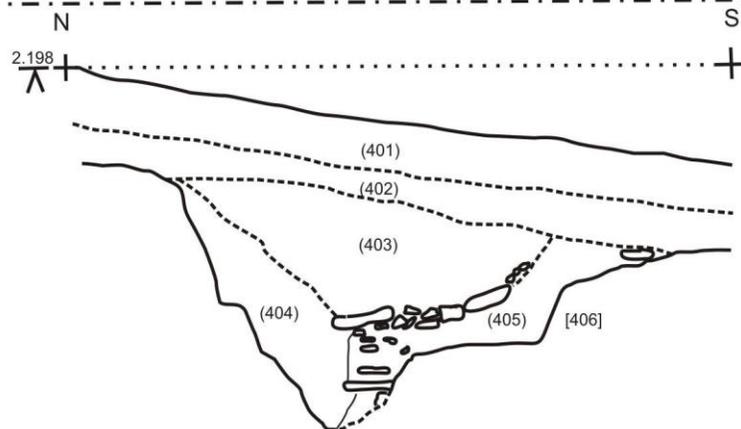
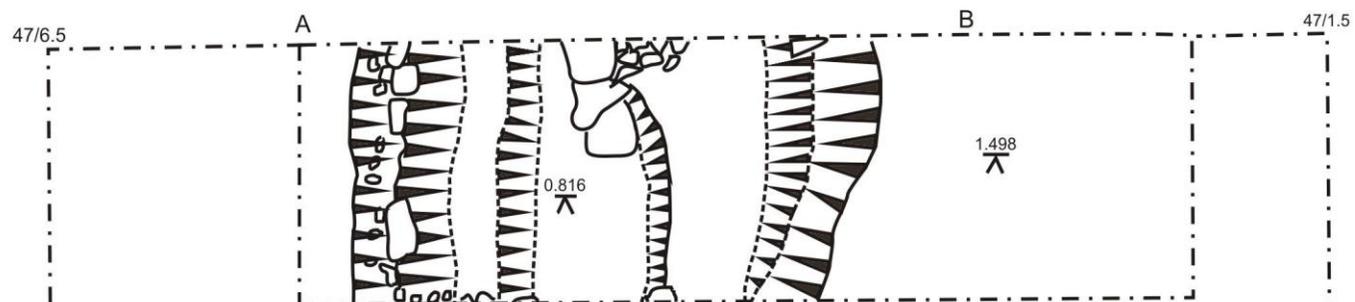


Title: ANNEX E

HANGING HILL

TRENCH 4

September 2012



Scale: Drawn at 1/20



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ANNEX F

CONTEXT REGISTER				
	Context	Type	Description	Date
Trench 1	101	F	Plough soil	PM/Roman
	102	F	Burnt Layer	PM/Roman
	103	F	Clayey-silt hill wash	
	104	F	Dark humic loam - Demolition layer	mid C3+
	105	F	Pebble/clay layer - natural	
	106	F	Lower demolition layer	late C2+
	107	M	Possible wall line	
Trench 3	301	F	Plough soil	PM/Roman
	302	F	Clay sub-soil layer	PM/C4
	303	F	Dark humic loam - Demolition layer	C4
	304	F	Fill inside building above mortar floor	C4
	305	F	Fill in sondage sw corner (same as (303))	Roman
	306	M	Wall	
	307	F	Upper Fill of Drain	C2+
	308	C	Cut of Drain	
	309	F	Clay fill on terrace wall	
	310	M	Markers on edge of path	
	311	F	Fill of trench extension to SE (same as (303))	
	312	F	Post holes for missing path edge markers	
Trench 4	401	F	Plough soil	C4
	402	F	Clay sub soil layer	Late C4
	403	F	Upper Ditch fill	C2+
	404	F	Ditch Fill	C2
	405	F	Ditch Fill	C2
	406	C	Cut of ditch	

ANNEX G

SMALL FIND REGISTER						Location			Finder
	Small Find	Context	Material	Description	Date	East	North	Level above datum(m)	
Trench 1	101	102	Iron	Bucket handle terminal	1st-2nd century	30.942	42.488	7.024	V. Hill
	102	104	Cu-alloy	Polden Hill brooch pin	AD 80 -120	30.711	42.911	6.836	J. Presley
	103	Spoil	Stone	Intaglio	Roman				S. Mahoney
Trench 3	301	303	Cu-alloy	Indeterminate copper alloy fragment	unknown	56.485	36.18	6.887	S. Adams
	302	303	Cu-alloy	Indeterminate copper alloy fragment	unknown	56.485	36.18	6.887	S. Adams
	303	303	Iron	Iron strap slide	2nd - 3rd century	55.465	37.073	6.99	C. Goulbourne
	304	303	Cu-alloy	Probable copper alloy brooch pin with indeterminate copper alloy fragment	1st-2nd century	56.708	36.476	6.853	S. Adams
	305	303	Cu-alloy	Coin: radiate of Tetricus I	AD 270-274	55.601	36.764	6.832	W. Partridge
	306	303	Bone	Carved bone pin	Roman	56.01	36.197	6.788	S. Adams
	307	303	Bone	Carved bone pin	Roman	56.613	37.618	7.001	T. Ziabek
	308	303	Bone	Carved bone pin	Roman	55.377	37.825	7.016	J. Hunt
	309	303	Iron	Loop	Roman	55.879	37.615	6.937	J.Cusworth
	310	303	Bone	Tooth shaped as a tool?	unknown	55.295	36.333	6.703	D. Brookes
	311	303	Cu-alloy	Furniture fitting	Roman	56.345	36.439	6.719	S. Adams
	312	303	Cu-alloy	Coin: Possibly a barbarous radiate with calcified bone fragment	AD 260-293	56.131	36.768	6.791	S. Adams

	313	303	Ceramic	Oxfordshire ware gaming counter	3rd-4th century	56.525	36.855	6.67	P.Hibbs
	314	303	Cu-alloy	Radiate coin of Tetricus II	AD 273-274	56.565	37.295	6.775	S. Adams
	315	303	Cu-alloy	Coin: Radiate of Claudius II	AD 268-270	56.312	37.206	6.692	J. Smith
	316	303	Stone	Ball	Roman	56.236	37.131	6.179	J.Smith
	317	303	Iron	Iron brooch pin	Roman	56.394	36.99	6.138	S. Adams
	318	307	Cu-alloy	Copper alloy probe from a toilet set	Roman	55.681	37.076	6.617	J. Smith
	319	303	Cu-alloy	Furniture fitting	Roman				
Trench 4	401	403	Cu-alloy	Roman coin. Possibly house of Constantine two soldiers type 330-341	AD 330-331	46.659	5.092	1.871	S. Mahoney
	402	403	Cu-alloy	Brooch spring	1st-2nd century	46.659	5.092	1.871	S. Mahoney
	403	403	Cu-alloy	Holed plate	Roman	47.098	4.797	1.572	S. Mahoney
	404	403	Cu-alloy	Indeterminate copper alloy fragment	Unknown	47.098	4.797	1.572	S. Mahoney

POTTERY ANALYSIS**ANNEX H**

Context	IA	Sam	Fw	Amp	SOWOX	SVW	BB1	Oxford	Other Regional	Gy	Oxid	Other	PM	Tot No	Tot Wt	Date
101	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	5	0	0	4	13	66.5	PM/Ro
103	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	4	10	Pm/Ro
104	1	6	1	7	37	11	62	1	3	167	34	23	0	355	4826	mid C3+
106	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	18	0	0	0	19	313	late C2+
301	0	1	0	0	1	0	5	0	0	3	10	0	3	23	78	PM/Ro
302	0	3	0	0	22	0	41	8	0	52	26	4	2	158	841.5	PM/C4
303	0	9	1	0	126	0	137	16	5	328	110	12	0	744	6230.5	C4
304	1	0	0	0	9	5	23	10	1	49	4	4	0	106	1197	C4
305	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	6	Roman
307	0	0	0	0	19	0	2	0	0	6	1	0	0	28	298	1C2+
401	0	0	0	1	7	6	11	5	1	22	0	5	0	58	335	C4
402	1	0	0	0	6	6	10	3	2	22	11	42	0	103	438	late C4
403	6	6	0	0	9	7	18	0	2	72	20	145	0	285	1200	C2 +
404	0	0	0	1	0	0	6	0	0	12	3	12	0	34	174	C2
405	1	0	0	0	1	3	7	0	3	38	2	8	0	63	593.5	C2
TOTAL	10	25	2	9	240	41	324	43	17	796	221	255	10	1995	16607	

IA – Iron Age, Sam – Samian, Fw – Fine Ware, Amp – Amphora, SOWOX - Southwest oxidised Ware, SVW – Severn Valley Ware, BB1 – Black Burnished Ware 1, Oxford – Oxfordshire Ware, Gy – Grey Ware, Oxid – Oxidised Ware, PM – Post Medieval

FINDS MATRIX**ANNEX I**

Context	Description	A. Bone	A. Bone (g)	Flint	Flint (g)	CBM-RB	CBM - RB (g)	Tile	Tile (g)	Painted Plaster	Plaster	Slag	Slag(g)	Fe	Fe Nail	Fe Hobnail	Cu	Pb	Oyster	Glass	rub stone
Trench 1																					
101	Plough Soil	1	1									6	20								1
102	Burnt Layer																				1
103	Clay Hill wash	1	2			7	200							1	1						
104	Demolition Layer	89	585	1	5	53	1000	12	1950	3	3	2	10		10				9	1	
105	Pebble/Clay natural	9	27																		
106	Demolition(lower)											1	140								
107	Wall											5	180								
Trench 3																					
301	Plough Soil	2	5			1	1					1	3		1	2				1	
302	Clay Wash Layer	25	125	3	20	8	125	7	600			2	10		4	2				1	1
303	Demolition layer	234	1460			32	785	22	2040	7	3				17	9				2	1
304	Fill inside building	65	790			4	220	8	900	5					1	1				1	
305	Fill of sondage	1	1							4	2										
306	Wall																				
307	Drain Fill	95	790			4	20	3	260	1					1	5					
308	Cut of Drain																				
309	Clay on terrace																				
310	Path edges																				
311	Same as (303)																				
312	Post holes for path																				
Trench 4																					
401	Topsoil	25	100	1	10	7	60					4	60	1		1		1			
402	Clay sub-soil	33	140	2	5							1	3	1	8	12					
403	Fill of Ditch	101	280			31	310					1	20	1	6	4				6	1
404	Fill of Ditch	12	65																		
405	Fill of Ditch	21	367																		
406	Ditch Cut																				1

