

**The Quadrant, Redditch, Worcestershire
PN 501**

**August 2016 - Notes on the Draft PXARD Report and the archive
relating to the project**

The following Post-Excavation Assessment and Research Design report was written in 1998. It is an incomplete draft; the stratigraphic analysis is all but complete, and most of the assessment reports have been done to a satisfactory manner, however, there are no figures. No hard copy of the report has been found in archive and it is doubtful that the plans and sections were ever drawn. Even if they had been they are unlikely to have had a digital origin. Despite the fact that the report is unfinished it contains much useful data and, of course, is the only surviving record of the excavation, other than the context record sheets.

The report has been compiled from a series of word documents. The content has been largely left as it was found, although the plant remains data had to be reformatted as an Excel table, and a summary of the stratigraphy has been added as an appendix.

Within the rescued digital archive there is also a draft pottery report, following on from the initial assessment found in this document, together with a full catalogue of the pottery, and several basic archive catalogues of finds.

Correspondence and notes found within the archive, seem to indicate that progress on any publication was delayed by the proposal for a series of watching briefs in the Quadrant some time after January 1998.

Draft recommendations and pre-excavation proposals have also been retained as part of the digital archive.

Evidently the recommendations and project design were never implemented and the project appears to have been shelved and then forgotten.

*Stephanie Rátkai
Project Manager, 'Saving Birmingham Archaeology's Digital Archive'
August 10, 2016*

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit
Project No. 501
November 1999

**The South East Quadrant
Redditch, Worcestershire:
Excavations 1997**

Post-Excavation Assessment and Research Design

DRAFT REPORT

by
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**The South-East Quadrant, Redditch, Worcestershire
Archaeological Excavations 1997**

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Summary
- 2.0 Background
- 3.0 Methods.
- 4.0 Site development
- 5.0 The Finds
 - 5.1 Ceramics
 - 5.2 Other finds
 - 5.3 Building materials
 - 5.4 Environmental
- 6.0 Research Design
 - 6.01 Research potential
 - 6.02 Task list
 - 6.03 Publication synopsis
 - 6.04 Time allocation
- 7.0 Archive
- 8.0 References

Appendix A brief description of context groups and phases

FIGURES (not located)

- 1 Location plan
- 2 Site plan
- 3 East facing section in Areas IIA, IIIA, IVA and IVB
- 4 West facing section in Areas IA and IB
- 5 Plans Areas IVA and IVB
- 6 Plan and section in Area IA
- 7 Plan of main features

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The South-East Quadrant, Redditch, Worcestershire

Archaeological Excavations 1997

1.0 Summary

Following the submission of proposals for development of the South-East Quadrant in Redditch, Hereford and Worcester County Archaeological Service excavated a series of six evaluation trenches across the area of proposed development. Archaeological potential was identified in Trenches 1 and 2. An Archaeological Mitigation Strategy was prepared by John Samuels Archaeological Consultants for their clients, J F Finnegan Ltd. The strategy proposed in the document involved an area excavation of 400 square metres to be undertaken in the vicinity of Trench 2 to the north and west of The Palace Theatre. BUFAU were contracted to undertake this work and the excavation took place in November 1997.

The archaeological features and contexts identified during this exercise have been divided into six phases based on pottery and other finds evidence and on their stratigraphical relationships. Phase I relates to the use of the site as agricultural land in the 13th and 14th centuries. Phase II is divided into two sub-phases, A and B relating to the construction and occupation of a moated manor house on the site, whilst Phase III describes the deposits accumulating in the moat indicating the sites abandonment. Phase IV describes the re-occupation of the site and the construction of a building detected in the southern trench extension and dated to the mid-late 17th century. Phase V relates to the occupation of this building and the use of the area to the north of the buildings as gardens into the mid 19th century. Phase VI refers to the industrial development of the site from c1850 to the present day.

This report provides a post-excavation assessment prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Management of Archaeological Projects 2 (English Heritage, 1991). The purpose of the report is to describe the archaeological sequence of the site, identify the research potential and propose a programme of research leading to publication. Additionally, recommendations are made with reference to further work during the groundwork stage of the proposed development which would enhance the information currently available.

2.0 Background

In 1996, as part of The Central Marches Historic Towns Survey, Hereford and Worcester County Archaeological Service produced An Archaeological Assessment of Redditch, Hereford and Worcester (Project 945, Report 338, Hal Dalwood). Using topographic information augmented by documentary and cartographic sources, the report attempted to establish the likely development of the town of Redditch from its earliest appearance in historic documents through its expansion in the medieval and post-medieval periods. The report demonstrated the probable form of the medieval settlement and its main surviving components, principally, being the road system centred on the medieval market place. The report further indicated areas of archaeological potential and recommended a research design within which future development ought to take place.

In 1996 a planning application was submitted to Redditch Borough Council by J F Finnegan/Tanyaco Developments Ltd. (Ref. 96/485). The application covered an area

known as the South-East Quadrant (SP 043 676) which falls within the boundary of the proposed medieval settlement.

In 1997, in accordance with the constraints outlined in PPG16, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Hereford and Worcester County Archaeology Service and the results presented in An Evaluation of the South-East Quadrant, Redditch by J.D.Hurst and E.A.Pearson (Project 1242, Report 535, HWCM 23156). The evaluation consisted of six trenches excavated by machine followed by hand digging and recording of vertical sections etc. Trenches 1 and 2 lay closest to the line of Alcester Street, an important component of the medieval topography, and produced evidence for occupation in this area during the medieval and early post-medieval periods. Trench 2 indicated the position of a large ditch which was interpreted as belonging to a moated grange once belonging to Bordesley Abbey, an important landowner until the dissolution. The Abbey is situated just to the north of Redditch town. The findings in Trench 2 were entered onto the County Sites and Monuments Record (HWCM 1094)

In May 1997 An Archaeological Mitigation Strategy in Connection with the Proposed Development at the South-East Quadrant, Town Centre, Redditch (JSAC 145/97/01) was produced by John Samuels Archaeological Consultants on behalf of the developer, J F Finnegan Limited. This report outlined the purpose and scope of an archaeological project covering an area of 400 sq. m. to be undertaken in Zone A of the development. (the zones are defined in Figure 8 of Hurst and Pearson 1997). The aims of the archaeological project were to establish the character of land use in this part of medieval Redditch and to provide a dated sequence of occupation.

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit were commissioned to undertake this work which commenced in November 1997.

3.0 Methods

In 1996, in line with the constraints outlined in PPG 16, HWCAS excavated a series of trial trenches across the extent of the proposed development area. Most of these trenches indicated that the greater part of the proposed development would disturb archaeological deposits related to the use of the land as part of the open field system within the medieval period. Trenches 1 and 2 however indicated evidence for the expansion of Redditch town within the medieval and post-medieval periods. These trenches lay close to the frontage of Alcester Street, a major component within the development of the town.

After the results of the test trenches excavated by HWCAS had been analysed it was decided that an excavation covering 400 square metres should be undertaken within the area of Trench 2 where traces of a medieval ditch had been detected with post-medieval infilling. This area lies within a car park attached to The Palace Theatre and is bounded to the south by Alcester Street, to the north by Red Lion Street, to the west by Queen Street and to the east by Grove Street.

The excavation consisted of a main trench 12m by 20m with the longer side running approximately north to south. This was positioned to the north and west of the Theatre. Its northern boundary was constrained by the existence of known services

which were not to be disturbed. A 2m wide trench ran from the southern edge of the main site towards Alcester St. The main trench was intended to pick up the 1996 evaluation trench and provide a significant section across the ditch along with an area of ground on either side of the ditch, thus providing an opportunity to examine the ground surfaces internal and external of the proposed moat.. The extension running towards Alcester St. was intended to discover the potential of archaeological survival relating to the expansion of Redditch town along the street frontage during the medieval and post-medieval periods.

The ground was cleared using a mechanical excavator to a depth of 1.2m within the main trench. This involved the removal of some very recent floor surfaces associated with the industrial usage of the site. Mechanical excavation ceased on top of a black loam layer which related to the Phase V use of the area as a garden, except in the area of the 1996 evaluation trench which was excavated of all its recent backfill. All walls were retained to their demolished height c0.2m below present ground surface. A detailed photographic record was compiled of the surviving masonry and where necessary the walls were dismantled by hand in order to allow deeper excavation of the underlying medieval deposits. All further excavation was undertaken by hand and the trench was stepped inwards with planked walkways constructed on each step to provide ease of access and spoil removal. The maximum depth of the excavation was 3.5m. and this was obtained within the footprint of the 1996 evaluation trench.

The same methods were used in the trench excavation to the south although, closer to the street frontage, deep deposits of reinforced concrete and the construction of a drainage sump meant that no examination of archaeological deposits for some 5.0m from the frontage was undertaken.

Due to the disruption of the horizontal stratigraphy by wall foundations dating to recent times no site grid was established and each "room" was allocated a code for archive record purposes starting at the south with IA and ending at the north with VA all planning, photographic and context records refer to this system.

All references within the archive and in this report refer to a north line relating to the long edge of the trench section which fortuitously aligned with the industrial building foundations. Ordinance Survey north lies some 40 degrees to the west of site north. See Figure 2 for disposition of site codes and north relationships.

All contexts and features were recorded on pro-forma cards and where appropriate photographed on colour slide and black and white film. Sections and plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20 or 1:10 as appropriate. Finds were collected by eye from all contexts but a sampling process was used for finds from contexts of obvious 19th century and later date.

Environmental samples (20 litres) were taken from deposits which appeared to have the potential for good recovery, notably from the moat fills.

4.0 Site development

The archaeological stratigraphy of the site and associated features was divided into six Phases. Each Phase covers a discreet block of contexts and features which can be isolated to Phase by analysis of the site stratigraphy and associated finds.

Natural

The natural subsoil consisted of an orange/brown sand with some gravel admix. The following contexts were allocated: IIA; 2228, 2280 and 2281, IIIA; 2272,

Phase I

Consisting of contexts: IB; 2230, IIA; 2225, IIC; 2229, IVB; 2248, 2292, 2293
Immediately overlying the natural subsoil was a deposit of pale grey compressed sandy loam. The average depth was c0.3m The loam is not associated with any structural feature and it seems probable that this area lay outside the early medieval settlement of Redditch and formed part of the open field system attached to the settlement.

Phase IIA (Fig.5b)

Consisting of contexts: IIIA; 2273, 2285, IVA; 2271, 2288, IVB; 2254, 2255, 2279 and Feature: F211

A large ditch was excavated across the site running from east to west with dimensions of 6.0m wide and 3.0m deep (estimated). On the southern side of the ditch a turfline formed whilst waterlogged, silty deposits formed at the base. To the north of the ditch a cobbled area (2288), running nearly parallel with it, possibly indicates the position of a trackway. Only a small area was excavated to natural in this part of the site but it seems probable that the ditch may have been intended to enclose a moated manor house the extent of which cannot be estimated from the present excavations.

Phase IIB (Fig.5a)

Consisting of contexts and features: IIIA; 2269, 2275, IVA; 2232 to 2236, 2238, IVB; 2249, 2250, 2278 and Features 206, 207 and 212.

A large dump of red clay was deposited within the ditch along its southern side whilst to the north a thinner deposit was also dumped over the internal platform. This appears to be a remodelling of the ditch and platform some time in the later 15th century. On the platform two post-holes (F206 and F212) and associated beam slot (F207) appear to date from this period. A turf line and silts then develop on the ditch sides and base.

Phase III

Consisting of contexts: IIIA; 2262, 2263,, 2267, 2268, 2270, 2274, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2287, 2289, IVB; 2244 to 2247,

The ditch was deliberately filled in with a series of compact clay deposits in some instances containing dense concentrations of pebbles. This Phase can be dated to the 17th century by associated ceramic evidence. It seems likely that at this point the

associated platform and house will have also been dismantled. The lack of building debris other than roof tiles in associated contexts would suggest that the structures on the platform were of timber framed construction.

Phase IV (Fig,6)

Consisting of F203 and contexts: (2239), (2265) and (2277) filling depression F214. Within the southern extension to the main trench a series of ashlar sandstone blocks (F203) formed the corner of a substantial building. Within such a small area of excavation no information concerning its interior or usage was obtained. Brick, tile and mortar had been used in conjunction with the sandstone blocks and associated pottery suggests a date of construction in the mid to late 17th century. This building extends to the south and west of the corner exposed by excavation and it will have fronted onto Alcester Street. External to the building, deposits of orange sand with pebble inclusions (2239,2265 and 2277) sitting in a shallow depression (F214) may have been part of a well-drained pathway surrounding the building.

Within the area of the backfilled ditch, deposits of black loam with late 17th century pottery suggest that the earlier backfilling had subsided and that this area may now have been used as a garden area for the sandstone building to the south. the deposits in the ditch area may have been intended to level up the ground surface for this usage. A deposits of green sandy silt (2268) filling a shallow ditch (F####) running from east to west along the same alignment as the southern part of the main ditch might suggest that the subsidence of the ditch backfill had allowed a a lesser ditch to develop which was silting up at the same period as building F203 was being constructed.

To the north of this feature a pit or ditch (F208=F210) was excavated and backfilled with black loams (2251, 2252 and 2286). The feature was so badly disturbed by later masonry that no further interpretation is possible.

Phase V

Consisting of contexts: IA; 2210 to 2216, 2261 and 2276, IB; 2217 and 2218, IIA; 2221 to 2224, IIC; 2206, 2227, IIIA; 2286, IVA; 2204, IVB; 2241 to 2243, 2251 to 2253 and 2290, 2291 and Features F213, 214, 215, 216.

Over the whole site a layer of black loam was deposited or developed to a depth of c0.4m. This layer was excavated in spits with each spit being given a separate context number within each room. The associated finds provide dating material from the late 17th century into the 19th century. It seems highly likely that the area was used as a garden associated with the building to the south (F203).

A flimsy wall, built of brick, tile and sandstone fragments (F202), was constructed, butting up to the corner of the sandstone building and running eastwards. The wall was faced to the north but unfaced to the south suggesting that it acted as a revetting wall to separate two different ground levels outside the sandstone building. Possibly, revetting a flower bed against the wall.

Close to the sandstone foundations were deposits of roofing tile, sitting in and above a black loam deposit (2261) which filled a slight depression (F213). This feature with

its fill possibly dating to the building's demolition in the mid 19th century. The presence of these deposits without any other significant building debris would suggest that the sandstone wall (F203) was used as a dwarf foundation for a timber framed superstructure which at some point before demolition had been roofed with tile.

In the middle of the site to the east was a rectangular building (F209?), constructed of a single thickness of bricks and divided into three equal compartments measuring 1.64m (5ft 6in) from north to south and 0.90m (3 ft) from west to east. No subsidiary details survived to indicate possible usage of this building and there were no associated pits. Despite this it may be possible to suggest that this was a multiple toilet of the earth closet type.

Running southwards from the south-eastern corner was a brick kerb, possibly intended to revet a path or flower bed.

Scattered across the site, cut into the black loam, were a series of pits. In every instance these pits were only partially visible and had been disturbed by later building activity. In most instances the finds may have been contaminated by these later disturbances.

Phase VI

Consisting of contexts: IB; 2226IIC, 2208, IVA; 2202, 2203,2205, IVB; 2240

Most finds are from 2201, which is, effectively, unstratified modern.

The 1880-88 Ordinance Survey of Redditch shows that by the date of publication the area was already being used industrially. The 1964-68 survey shows much more intensive use of the site although generally wall lines appear to respect the lines of the earlier buildings. This was visible in the archaeological record where two major sub-phases were recognised although all walls respected the same alignments from north to south and east to west. A detailed photographic record was made of the surviving masonry and further analysis of the records could allow a more definitive breakdown of the development of this Phase of the site's history.

5.0 The Finds

5.1 The pottery by S.Ratkai

Assessment

All the pottery was examined macroscopically and spot dated. Sherd size was generally small, although there were substantial portions of some early post-medieval vessels. The sherds were largely unabraded, with the exception of the 13th-14th century sherds. The medieval pottery consisted mainly of glazed wares with few cooking pot sherds. The early post-medieval pottery contained a typical range of forms eg pancheons, bowls, jars and drinking vessels.

The medieval pottery consists of a variety of fabrics, the earliest of which, sandy cooking pots, date from the 13th-14th centuries. Similar cooking pots were found at Kings Norton, Birmingham (Jones and Ratkai forthcoming). Red-bodied glazed wares

decorated with ferric oxide stripes were also found on the site and are probably of a similar date. These two types of pottery were not plentiful. A greater proportion of medieval pottery consisted of oxidised wheel-thrown wares which belong in the main to the 15th and 16th centuries, although there were some sherds which may have been Malvernian oxidised wheel-thrown wares which belong to the 14th-15th centuries. There were also some Cistercian ware sherds of the late 15th-16th centuries. The early post-medieval pottery was made up of yellow wares, coarsewares and blackwares of the later 16th and 17th centuries. However the bulk of all the pottery was made up of later 18th and 19th century sherds.

The medieval pottery was unusual in that it had little in common with other pottery from Worcestershire, nor did it share a particular affinity with pottery from Warwickshire. One or two sherds may have been Boarstall-Brill or Chilvers Coton products. The former type is commonly found in Warwickshire and Worcestershire, the latter in Warwickshire. A small number of Malvernian sherds, commonly found in the two counties, were present. However the red sandy glazed wares from the site seemed to have more in common with pottery from Staffordshire and Cheshire. It would seem that the presence of Bordesley Abbey may well have had an effect on the supply of pottery in Redditch either because it was instrumental in establishing local production, which kept non-local pottery at bay, or because of tenurial links.

Proposal

Although there was a comparatively small group of medieval pottery, it is nevertheless of interest, since it indicates a different ceramic tradition in this area of Worcestershire. This in turn presents a useful insight into the social and economic dynamics of Redditch in the medieval period.

The early post-medieval pottery fits into the north Worcestershire-south Staffordshire regional tradition, by and large, but adds information for an area of the county for which there is little published material of this date.

The medieval pottery and early post-medieval pottery should be reported on in full, sourced if possible and illustrated as appropriate. The later post-medieval pottery requires no further work.

5.02 Other finds

Animal bone

A little over 1000 fragments of animal bone were recovered from the site. The greater majority of these were stratified. Although small the assemblage deserves analysis and discussion as an introduction to the animal husbandry and eating habits adopted in this part of Redditch. The analysis might detect changes in farming practice between the late-medieval and post-medieval periods

Vessel glass

Over 200 sherds of bottle glass and 40 sherds of other vessel glass were recovered and these deserve to be examined in conjunction with the pottery assemblage with the aim

of establishing the relative and growing importance of glassware within the domestic setting in the early post-medieval period.

Clay pipe

Over 150 fragments of clay pipe were retained. These should be examined and the dating information incorporated into the site analysis.

5.03 Building materials

An assemblage of roofing tile consisting of some 300 fragments was recovered from medieval and post-medieval contexts. A note on these ought to illuminate the changing style of production/design in the course of the important change between the two periods

Over 200 fragments of window glass were retained and these deserve a note incorporating them into the text.

In addition, sample materials consisting of brick, tile, mortar and sandstone were taken from the walls of F### and F### and these may be combined with the general tile assemblage..

5.04 Assessment of the plant macro-remains

by Lisa Moffett

During excavation samples were taken for the recovery of plant remains from some of the main levels of the site. One of the deposits was waterlogged (2285) and contained visible organic material. The others were thought to be well-drained, but the site was excavated under wet conditions and it was difficult to be certain. One of the apparently well-drained deposits (2284) produced abundant uncharred organic material and is therefore likely to have been waterlogged also.

Methods

All of the samples except 2285 were processed by water flotation using a York sieving machine. The floating fraction (flot) was decanted onto a 0.5mm mesh sieve and the residues retrieved on a 1mm mesh. The flots were air dried at room temperature, bagged and labelled. A 100 ml. subsample of 2285 was processed by wet sieving using 1mm and 0.300mm sieves to retain the large and small fractions respectively. The seeds were sorted by an assistant from the resulting organic material. The flots were not sorted and no items were removed.

The flots and waterlogged seeds were scanned under a low power binocular microscope at x10 magnification. The presence of species and general abundance of material was briefly noted. All identifications were made rapidly, without consulting a reference collection, and should therefore be regarded as tentative and subject to possible error. The results are presented in the table below, with an indication of whether or not further analysis is needed.

Results

Little charred material was found in any of the samples apart from wood charcoal. A few cereal grains were found, as indicated below. Samples 2284 and 2285 which had

waterlogged preservation were more promising. Although the material from 2284 had been dried, the preservation was still reasonably good, though more delicate seeds may have been too damaged to recognise. Both samples showed a range of plants which may give some indication of local environmental conditions. Sample 2284 also had a few economic plants.

Recommendations

Further processing of the remaining sample from 2285 is needed to obtain a larger total subsample of about 250-300 mls. This should ensure the recovery of a representative amount of material. Both samples 2284 and 2285 should be analysed for the recovery of environmental and economic information.

Table of results for the botanical samples from the Quadrant, Redditch can be found in Excel file:- 0501 Plant Remains Table.xls

6.0 Research Design

6.01 Research Potential

The following proposals rely strongly on the Archaeological research framework outlined in Section 6 of an Archaeological Assessment of Redditch, Hereford and Worcester, The Central Marches Historic Town Survey compiled by Hal Dalwood for Hereford and Worcester County Council (Project 945: Report338). This Research Design addresses the points raised in that report and establishes the potential for further research leading to publication.

a: The well stratified sequence of structures and deposits recorded in this excavation will provide a basis for further work within the town of Redditch. The information gained assists in understanding this part of the town's chronological and spatial development.

b: The findings of the excavation reveal the excellent survival of archaeologically significant deposits and structures within the town of Redditch. Publication should highlight this survival and ensure an archaeological presence on future development sites within the town.

c: The study of the limited range of finds from this excavation would provide little possibility of furthering our knowledge of the town's industrial or agricultural significance in the medieval period. The exception lies in the pottery assemblage which allows of close dating of the stratified deposits and, as S.Ratkai notes, deserves further study and publication in order to examine regional trade patterns and the relationship between the town and Bordesley Abbey, from where a significant assemblage has already been published.

d: The bone assemblage is small and can be expected to reveal only broad information for agricultural or dietary practices. Publication of the results of an examination of the bones would nevertheless be a start in beginning to understand this aspect of medieval life in the town and comparison with similar sites might illuminate the basic material.

e: The survival of environmental remains from layers dating to the later medieval period provides excellent information on the surrounding environment and on the types of crops being cultivated at this period. No other environmental remains have been recovered from redditch.

7.0 The research archive

The research archive will be deposited with:-

Hereford and Worcester County Museum Service
Hartlebury Castle
Hartlebury
Near Kidderminster
Worcestershire DY117XZ Tel. 01299 250416

8.0 References

- Dalwood H Archaeological Assessment of Redditch, Hereford and Worcester
(Hereford and Worcester County Council, County Archaeological
Service, Project 945: Report 338. Rev. December 1996)
- Hurst J D and Evaluation of the South-East Quadrant, Redditch
Pearson E A (Hereford and Worcester County Council, County Archaeological
Service, Project 1245: Report 535)
- John Samuels An Archaeological Mitigation Strategy in Connection with the
Archaeological Proposed Development at the South-East Quadrant, Town Centre,
Consultants Redditch (May 1997)

APPENDIX 1

THE QUADRANT, REDDITCH: A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF CONTEXT GROUPS AND PHASES

G1, Natural: *The natural subsoil*

IIIA 2272

G2, Phase I: *Medieval plough soils*

IA 2264, IB 2230, IIA 2225, IIC 2239,
2281 (2280)
F204

G3, Phase IIA: *The moat and its early turflines and silts*

IIIA 2273
F211

G4, Phase IIB: *The remodelling of the main ditch and earliest silting*

IIIA 2269	red clay under=2263?
2285	silt
2284	turfline
2267 2275	silt

G5, Phase III: *Deliberate backfilling of the ditch with clays etc from the northern edge*

IIIA 2262 IVB 2245=2247
2283
2270
2287
2282
2274

G6, Phase IV: *A ditch within the upper fill of the main ditch possibly caused by subsidence.*

IIIA 2268 F20

G7, Phase V

IA 2214	IB 2217	IIA 2221	IIC 2206	IIIA 2231	IVB 2242
2211=2213	2218	2222	2227	2237	2243
2212=2215=2216	2226	2223	2266		2244
2261		2224			
F213					

IVB cont. 2291 (2253)
 2290=2244=2266 2204 F209

G8, Phase VI: *All contexts likely to be associated with industrial development of the site.*

All areas 2201

IA 2210	IIC (2208)	IVA 2202 = 2240
2276	F205	2203 = 2205 = 2241
F201		

G9, Phase IV: *Construction of the building, sandstone walls*

IA 2261 (see G7)
 2239
 2265 2277 F203 = The masonry.

G10, Phase IIB: *The fills of a beam slot and post holes situated in main building platform.*

IVA (2234) (2235)	IVB
F207 F206	
2232 yellow =	2249
2233 red clay =	2250

F212=posthole

G11, Phase IIA: *Grey clay loams forming material associated with the use of the pebble floor surface.*

IVA 2236	IVB 2246
2238	2278=2248=2254
2271	
2288 pebble floor surface	

G12, Phase IV: *Dark grey loams filling a pit or trench in above areas.*

