

Trench FF/J description

This trench was excavated in 1992 and was situated at the northern end of FF/F, to the north of wall 5391 and just east of Trench FF/I. Its layers and deposits join with those in FF/I though the connection with FF/F needs a bit more checking at the time of writing.

Phase 3

Clay layer 5227 from FF/I extended into this trench and in this phase was built on by a possible hearth 5465. What was left of this possible hearth was a large irregularly shaped block, situated at the western end of trench FF/J close to the tower like structure 5250 in FF/I. It was filled with a slightly red burnt clay 5460

Phase 4a

Two layers of floor surface and occupation levels were found in this area, post-dating the possible hearth and lying over the early clays. It is possible these surfaces were related to the building of the church and may be the same as the 'builders' yard' surfaces found in FF/F, FF/G and FF/K.

Phase 4b

After the initial construction of the church, this area was built upon to create a mausoleum on this north side (found in FF/I mostly) In this trench the construction trench 5468 was cut into the re-deposited burnt clay of the hearth, the tower like structure 5250 (mostly in FF/I) was built within this trench with deposit 5469 infilling around it.

The context records state that at this time floor layer 5381 was laid, which extends into FF/F, this floor was the floor of the vaulted tunnel created by walls 4610 and 4603 for the church, this still needs some checking but if it is so then wall 5391 was demolished by this phase as 5381 was seen to cover this wall. 5494 was a crushed and decayed section of this floor.

The deposit 5466 was a silty build-up on this floor surface at the western end of the trench. Clay layer 5467 was also found at the western end of the trench, covering the floor surface, with the ashy deposit 5459 above it.

Above these patches of clay and ash was the burnt deposit 5447, this deposit had abundant charcoal inclusions and covered almost the entire space of this trench. This burnt layer had nothing to do with the Saracen attack though and must just have been a dump of burnt material; perhaps from the earlier kiln phases, used to level up this area.

Above this was a dump of clay, again probably put in to level up this area during the construction of the mausoleum and for the mortar surface 5220/5348 to be laid on. This is where Trench FF/J and trench FF/I join and no further contexts are recorded for Trench FF/J.